Encouraging Tourism

Guest room at Shoreham Hotel

Manella + In Stolzman + Stolzman Architects
News from the Chapter. The George S. Lewis public policy discussions are often the liveliest Chapter events. This season’s first, on “Empowerment Zones and Inner City Development,” was no exception. President Clinton’s empowerment zone program is a topic that provokes discussion; it is also an experiment that is being tested in a Manhattan neighborhood described with a variety of contradictory superlatives. Discussion moderator Drew Greenwald, AIA, president of Grid Properties, said he sees promise in Harlem, and he is not alone. Greenwald is developing Harlem USA, a 275,000-square-foot retail and entertainment complex for West 125th Street.

J. Max Bond, FAIA, a partner at Davis Brody & Associates, used poetry and fiction to sketch a brief history of Harlem. At its height, Harlem’s entertainment and cultural resources exceeded those of many cities ten times its size. In some ways it has always behaved as if it were a city-within-a-city. But now, Bond said, it is intimately linked to the city and its politics. “Harlem is relatively undeveloped,” he said, “and has wonderful housing stock. The pressures in the rest of Manhattan are about to force dramatic change in Harlem.” If such forces are permitted to change the place somewhat, which some community members might resist, “Harlem will finally have a chance to become more of a balanced community,” Bond said.

Balance is exactly what empowerment zones are intended to foster. Deborah Wright, president and CEO of the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Committee, is hoping that for Harlem, and for the parts of the South Bronx that the zone also includes, some of the designation’s legacy of balance will include reconnecting the local work force with the economy. “Right now, only 48 percent of working-age people in Harlem are employed,” she explained. “That’s why we have to look not only at bricks and mortar but also at jobs and training as important pieces of this effort.” While the area is rich in institutions, with six major hospitals and Columbia University nearby, only four percent of the jobs in those institutions are held by people who live in the empowerment zone. And other contradictions, Wright said, hold the neighborhood back. Although Harlem is considered a mecca of sorts, and tour buses rumble through its streets on the way to the Abyssinian Baptist Church and the Apollo Theater, there is no “tourism infrastructure,” she said. “Thousands of people are already coming up there. Now we have to get them off the bus.”

Wright’s main goal is to diversify the economy so that it can remain stable over time. But this approach, she acknowledged, must include local entrepreneurs. “Of course it is important not to cut locals out of the community. In fact, success will hinge on that factor. And it’s clearly now or never.”

The notion of the empowerment zone designation as the area’s last hope was a common theme. Mitchell Moss, director of the Urban Research Center at New York University, cited the area’s transportation connections as its greatest asset, and called for commercial

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Buildings for Learning and Living

The first project in New York by the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, the new Lehman Maupin Gallery at 39 Greene Street in Soho, grew not out of a major international competition, but the architect's long-standing friendship with one of his owners, David Maupin. And his treatment of the space was not the product of an elaborate theory, but a response to be unusual program of the gallery, which opened on October 3. The space is intended to accommodate different kinds of exhibitions as well as artistic collaborations between artists of various disciplines who will work on them together at the gallery. Koolhaas designed a pair of movable walls on tracks about two-thirds of the way back in the T-shaped, 35,000-square-foot round-floor space, which is divided by a row of unpainted cast iron columns. With reveals to the top and bottom, the nine-inch-thick walls appear to float in front of the skylighted space, allowing a variety of spatial configurations. Raw plywood floors and ceilings create an atmosphere somewhere between that of an artist's studio and a classic Soho gallery.

With the first phase of its 20 million renovation completed, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum reopened on September 17 with the exhibition, “Mixing Messages: Graphic Design in Contemporary Culture” (which loses on February 16). One of the main goals of the renovation, designed by Polshek and Partners Architects, was to improve handicapped accessibility in the historic Andrew Carnegie house (designed by abb, Cook & Willard in 1903 and converted to a museum in 1977 by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates). Its 94-year-old conservatory, which has 1,000 pieces of leaded glass, was restored, and the HVAC systems were improved. In the next phase, to be completed next year, a two-story gallery bridge will connect the mansion to the two adjacent townhouses on East 90th Street, which will house the new design resource center for the Parsons School of Design master’s program in the history of decorative arts. The second-floor galleries will reopen in the final stage of the restoration in 1998.

Greenfield Sawicki Tarella Architects is designing a new facility for the Ukrainian Museum at 220 East 6th Street. The existing warehouse will be demolished, and a new 22,000-square-foot structure for exhibitions, study and storage of the collections, and programs will be built on the old foundations. Its tripartite brick-and-stone facade will be unified by a blank arcade on the third floor, where the wall protects the archives and storage space. A curved metal canopy will echo the arched facade. The new building, to be completed in the spring of 1998, will respect the streetscape in scale and massing.

The Cleveland Public Library restoration and expansion by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, awarded in a competition five years ago, is now well under way. The east wing, a 250,000-square-foot, ten-story addition with an oval tower set within a stone base, will be completed next month. The original 1923 neoclassical building by Walter and Weeks will be preserved, and the Eastman Reading Garden will be restored in collaboration with landscape architect Robert Hanna. The dedication of the entire 500,000-square-foot facility is scheduled for April 1997.

Smith Ottiano Architects, Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut Architects, Lehr Associates, and Gandhi Engineering have been selected by the NYC School Construction Authority to provide comprehensive architecture and engineering services for the renovation of schools in Manhattan and the Bronx for a total of $40 million.

Joseph Pell Lombardi & Associates initiated and designed the conversion of the 1929 art deco Hudson Square Building to residential lofts. The firm is building another 96,000 square feet of new apartments 42 units above three floors of commercial space on the adjacent 19,000-square-foot lot. Because the old 15-story warehouse at 145 Hudson Street has a plot larger than the 5,000 square feet allowed for residential use, a special permit was required from the City Planning Commission. And because the property is part of the Tribeca West Historic District, the designs of both structures had to conform to specific guidelines for massing, materials, and height, as well as, of course, relating to one another. The combined cost for the renovation and the new construction will be $25 million. Construction of the renovated portion of the project will begin in May.

Across the Hudson River, Brennan Beer Gorman/Architects recently completed an office building on another Hudson Street in Jersey City. The firm is continuing its work there with LCOR and Morse Diesel International on the design of the 20-acre Colgate Center master plan and a twelve-story office building at 90 Hudson Street (following its last building at 101 Hudson Street). The
Architecture on Exhibition

Marcel Breuer's Whitney Museum was almost consigned to history in the 1980s until it received a stay of execution — twice — when plans to engulf it in a massive postmodern addition by Michael Graves were defeated, largely by neighborhood groups. But it survived to be renovated, more discretely expanded, and celebrated in an exhibition of 46 drawings, models, and archival photographs commemorating its thirtieth anniversary and eligibility for landmark status.

Now it is Graves’s scheme that is relegated to history in “Breuer’s Whitney,” along with images of the old Whitney Studio Club on West 8th Street, the art deco Whitney Studio Galleries transformed by Noel and Miller into the first museum of American art in 1931, Auguste L. Noel’s 1949 color rendering of the Miesian Whitney on West 54th Street, Philip Johnson’s drawing for its garden elevation, designed to reinforce his own MoMA garden next door, and Breuer’s preliminary facade studies, plans, and sketches for the building.

The work of New York architect Der Scutt is on exhibition in his hometown at the Reading (Pennsylvania) Public Museum through November 10. Drawings, models, and photographs survey the New York architect’s career. Der Scutt is currently designing the $6.3 million renovation and expansion of the museum, which will begin construction later this year. For exhibition information, call 610-371-5850.

The National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., will exhibit the finalists and semifinalists of the recent architectural competition for the American Embassy in Berlin, from November 15 through February 23. The exhibition highlights the winning submission by architects Moore Ruble Yudell and Gruen Associates, but also includes schemes by architects Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, Kallman

ON THE DRAWING BOARDS

Marcel Breuer reflected in the window of the Whitney Museum

“House for an Art Lover,” Charles Rennie Mackintosh

TrumP Tower, Der Scutt

Louis I. Kahn drawing, Temple Beth-El Synagogue, Chappaqua, New York

Nicholas Olsberg, chief curator of the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, organized the show and wrote the catalog essay. His research has proven useful to Richard Gluckman, who is renovating the fifth-floor galleries and a pair of town houses for the museum around the corner on 74th Street. Perhaps the biggest surprise is the fact that the signature trapezoidal windows jutting out into the street were not a part of the original scheme but a concession to the building committee’s concern that the galleries would be too “claustrophobic and disorienting” without windows.

“Breuer’s Whitney” will be on view in the first-floor galleries through December 8.

In conjunction with the Glasgow School of Art’s centennial celebration of its Charles Rennie Mackintosh building, two exhibitions of the turn-of-the-century Scottish architect’s work are taking place in New York City — at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New York School of Interior Design. The Met is hosting the first American retrospective of Mackintosh’s career with 250 works, from November 21 through February 16. The exhibition was organized by the Glasgow Museums with the Hunterian Art Gallery, the University of Glasgow, and the Glasgow School of Art.

Almost concurrently, the New York School of Interior Design is showing Charles Rennie Mackintosh’s portfolio and furnishings for a “House for an Art Lover” from November 20 through February 8. The 1901 house was Mackintosh’s incomplete submission for an international competition, which was recently constructed in Glasgow.

Travel sketches and synagogue projects by Louis I. Kahn are on view at the Jewish Museum through December 15. “Louis I. Kahn Drawings” contains rarely exhibited watercolors, charcoal, and pastels from the architect’s grand tours that provide insight into his early architectural thinking, the transition from a classical Beaux-Arts tradition into European modernism, and the evolution of his unique, personal, classically-disciplined modern style. The show also features the first comprehensive look at his internationally renowned synagogues. Kahn’s own drawings and models are supplemented by a computer-generated model of his little-known Hurva Synagogue project. Other Kahn drawings are being shown at the Max Protetch Gallery in Soho through November 3.
McKinnell & Wood, Kevin Roche
John Dinkeloo and Associates,
Robert A. M. Stern, and Venturi
Scott Brown and Associates.

Pratt Institute has appointed
Thomas Hanrahan, AIA,
dean of the school of archi-
tecture. A New York architect
known both for the quality of
his design and his teaching,
he founded Hanrahan
Meyers Architects with his
wife, Victoria Meyers, in 1987.
The firm designed the AIA
New York Chapter headquar-
ters at 200 Lexington Avenue,
received four Progressive
Architecture awards, and has
been honored in the Chap-
ter’s Design Awards competi-
tions almost every year since
1989.

Both Meyers and Hanrahan
teach at Columbia University,
where Hanrahan has been
serving as director of core
graduate studies and the
editor of the journal Abstract.
He has also been a visiting
instructor at Yale University
and the Harvard Graduate
School of Design, where he
received an M.Arch. in 1982
and was awarded a Wheel-
wright Fellowship. Born in
Chicago in 1956, Hanrahan
received a B.S. Arch. from the
University of Illinois in 1978.

Hanrahan Meyers, a four-per-
son firm in Union Square,
won the commission for the
Chapter’s offices in a limited
design competition in 1993,
and recently completed a
major renovation of the
Columbia University gymnas-
ium. The firm is currently
working on a community cen-
ter in Red Hook for the New
York City Housing Authority.

—N.R. and J.M.

A Feast for (Some of)
the Masses
by Todd W. Bressi

If you want to see the
future of New York City’s
waterfront, head to the
Chelsea Piers, which offers
both visionary and cautionary
insights. Chelsea Piers is a
remarkable place, foremost for
the entrepreneurial energy of
Roland Betts and Tom
Bernstein, principals of
Chelsea Piers Management,
which owned an indoor ice
rink on West 33rd Street and
wanted to expand. They came
across the piers, which were
being used as a towing pound,
tour-boat terminal, and televi-
sion studio, and asked to lease
space from the state transporta-
tion department, which had
acquired the piers as part of
the Westway project. Instead,
the state put the whole site up
for bid, and they found them-
selves with a lease for the entire
30-acre complex — piers,
sheds, and head house. Betts
and Bernstein decided to
anchor the project with spaces
for activities that wouldn’t fit
elsewhere in Manhattan, and
have been opening sports facili-
ties, studios, and shops since
last summer.

Chelsea Piers is a study in reoc-
cupation, rather than a place
that makes a great statement of
architectural style. The designer
from Butler Rogers Basket
(James G. Rogers, Ill, partner-
in-charge; Steve Kratchman,
project designer; Larry Marner,
project manager) made supple
use of the raw material — the
remnants of an ocean-liner ter-
inal that Warren and
Wetmore designed (about the
same time as Grand Central
Terminal). They had to
observe historic preservation
protocols while negotiating the
contemporary building- and
fire-code issues of building over
a pier. Emergency fire escapes,
for example, were designed as
canvas-covered staircases
appended to the pier sheds,
recalling the gangways that may
have led to ships once docked
there.

The most memorable aspect of
the design is its spatial quality.
Inside the pier sheds, a pleasur-
able sense of openness results
from the enormous clear-span
spaces and oceans of natural
light that pour through
clerestories and side windows.
The most spectacular space,
though, is the outdoor golf fair-
way, which stretches from a
teasure driving range to a
600-foot-long pier, and is
enclosed by netting hanging
from a 15-story frame.

Then one is also struck by the
variety of spaces, with layers of
activity in the sports and gym-
nastics centers. The photo-
graphy studios contain a progress-
ion of increasingly private, inti-
mate spaces: the studios them-
selves, a cafe, and a reception
area are boxy and high-
celinged. Then an angular
staircase leads to an office
suite, with tiny, private lofts
above, tucked between the
trusses and insulated from the
action.

By giving activities the space
they deserve (as opposed to
the minimum that will suffice,
the usual operating principle
in Manhattan), the designers
and developers have dignified
these pursuits. In recognizing
and responding to the demand
for these facilities, Chelsea
Piers gives the hidden commu-
nities of rock climbers, golfers,
ice skaters, gymnasts, and
indoor soccer players a more
visible presence. And grand-
stands, glass walls, and viewing
terraces within the facilities
make it clear that observing
the scene is part of the game.
For a price, anyone can partici-
pate. However, there are not
even enough places for casual, non-

Thomas Hanrahan,
novely appointed dean,
Pratt Institute

Chelsea Piers,
Butler Rogers Basket Architects
paying visitors to take in the action, and there are no spaces designed intentionally to celebrate public voyeurism in the way that the Wollman or Rockefeller Center skating rinks do.

Connections to the city are a more serious problem. The fact is, Chelsea Piers remains a five-block-long wall between Chelsea and the Hudson. The community’s hopes for dramatic visual and spatial penetration through the head house, raised by the West Side Waterfront Panel’s proposal, were dashed by the placement of large, closed-off studios and soundstages along the street edge. The only effective way to get in on foot, after dodging many lanes of traffic, is at the northern end, where a waterfront park will eventually be built. Once inside, seas of driveways and parking lots make pedestrians second-class citizens.

The public walkway that runs along the west side of the head house, playfully called Sunset Strip, is a welcome component of the project, but it is rather disappointing. There is little incidental activity to encourage casual strolling; only the river views and the Chelsea Brewing Company at the south end encourage lingering. The mix of shops and their relative isolation will make it difficult to attract pedestrians from the neighborhood or the waterfront park.

The strip’s plastic guardrails, concrete walkways, and metal walls punctuated with windows and mural-sized photographs have none of the texture or resonance of successful boardwalks and promenades. There’s an interesting inside-out duality created where the indoor strip and the outdoor promenade adjoin each other, but little is made of it. There are no level changes, even modest ones, which are found at almost every successful waterfront promenade.

What undermines the public spaces the most is the way they defer to other elements of the program. Sunset Strip dodges an elevator shaft, loses spatial and visual definition when it crosses lateral vehicle routes, and dead-ends at the golf clubhouse instead of punching through to the south end of the site. And in April, state highway officials announced plans to narrow the park that will run between the complex and rebuild Route 9A to make more space for an access road to loading zones and the three piers where parking is located.

Although Chelsea Piers has matured immeasurably over the last year, as the new shops, restaurants, and marina have added charm and bustle, the isolation of the public spaces and the conflicts between parking, servicing, and public access suggest that strong planning guidelines and more political backbone are in order at every waterfront site. The 1.2-mile waterfront promenade, credited to the city’s waterfront zoning resolution, shows, however, what can be accomplished when well-considered rules are enforced.

The book contains excellent period and recent photographs. Well-drawn plans and elevations reveal the project’s complexity — 67 tracks on two levels, the IRT subway, an elevated roadway, and a monumental waiting room, all integrated into 16 city blocks of buildings. Irrespective of its classical detailing, Grand Central is a superb example of how a complicated building can contribute to a dense urban environment.

IN THE STREETSCAPE

Grand Central Terminal — Warren and Wetmore

by Kenneth Powell

IN THE BOOKSTORES

Grand Central Terminal Considered

by Lester Paul Kozluz

The major renovation of the public spaces at Grand Central Terminal now under way is not the first attempt to improve a railroad station in that location, and it pales in comparison with the work that went on the last time it was decided that something had to be done, according to a new book by Kenneth Powell (Grand Central Terminal — Warren and Wetmore, Phaidon Architecture in Detail Series, 1996, 60 pages, 95 illustrations, 16 in color, 11 3/4 x 11 3/4, $30.00 paper).

The present terminal, dating from 1914, is the second on the site. The scope of the last project was vast, extending from 42nd to 50th streets, and from Lexington to Madison avenues. It required the demolition of 200 buildings.

Reed and Stem won a limited competition in 1905 by proposing a City Beautiful “court of honor” along Park Avenue. (McKim, Mead & White, another firm that entered the competition, proposed what would have been the world’s tallest skyscraper.) Unhappy with the results, William K. Vanderbilt appointed Warren and Wetmore as collaborators.

Construction began in 1903, although design work was not completed until 1910. Warren and Wetmore became the sole architect in 1911 after the death of Reed. Stem successfully sued, and the AIA expelled Warren. (Who said architecture was a gentleman’s profession?)

The book is available at McCraken + Koritzus and writes for Oculus regularly.
Considering the Ghetto  
by Jayne Merkel and Craig Kellogg

Discussions of three different aspects of "The New 'Ghetto" — racial, regional, and political — took place at the Municipal Art Society on three Wednesday evenings in September. They were inspired by the exhibition of photographs from Camilo José Vergara's *The New American Ghetto* on the walls all around.

At the first panel on "Emerging Forms and Racial Implications," Vergara showed slides from South Central Los Angeles, which described the separation of the African-American and Latino communities. "You never see a mixed child," he noted. "I would ask people about that, and they would say, 'There are some but you rarely see one.'" Now that South Central is two-thirds Latino, black families are moving to the edges or beyond. The pictures showed yard sales everywhere. "It is extremely crowded. If there is a piece of land, someone will find a use for it," he said. But there is also violence and an ever more paralyzing fear of violence that drives those with resources to other communities, such as San Bernardino and Riverside, outside of the city. "The private battle that is somewhat lost is the battle for their history," he said, showing murals of clean-cut black teenagers at the Watts public library in what is now a predominantly Latino area.

Panelists debated what "ghetto" means in America today. Are white enclaves ghettos? No, they decided, because they are self-selected, but they are evidence of racism. "Americans report they're for integration," said George Galster, a professor of urban affairs at Wayne State University, "but I don't think we are. We are accused of segregation for redistricting."

Ted Shaw, associate director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, said, "The first time I went to Watts, having grown up in the projects in Harlem and Brownsville, I thought, 'Where's the ghetto here? These people live in what we used to call private houses.' Only when one gets to know them, they're not so different." He defined ghettos as "economically isolated communities. The assumption is that the people who live in these communities are responsible for their condition, but we can show it is the result of decades and decades of social engineering."

"The photos showed the change in banks," observed April Tyler, a research analyst with the Community Service Society, which tracks how New York City policy is affecting investment and disinvestment. "The banks that used to provide access to capital are gone, replaced by the new check-cashing stations." She noted that though the exhibition describes decay, the slides Vergara showed "speak to rebirth, as do the minority communities I'm familiar with. (I live in Harlem.) While there is devastation, there is also tremendous revitalization, often through the efforts of community members themselves."

But the panel agreed that revitalization is difficult to achieve in isolation. "I don't think it's possible for these communities to turn around without massive governmental investment. People assume that white communities don't have that investment, but they do," Shaw said, citing the FHA loan program that encouraged white flight after World War II.

At a panel the following week on "The New 'Ghetto' in the Region: Is the Decline of Central Cities Inevitable?" panellists agreed that for the ghetto to improve, urbanites will have to convince the now vastly suburban populace of the value of cities. That discussion began with a slide show by Vergara that concentrated on Fifth Street in L.A., where defensive facades of manufacturing buildings line sidewalks occupied by the homeless, until bulldozers roll over the pitiful make-do shelters nestled against windowless factory walls. Mercy missions figure prominently in the Fifth Street landscape because they loom like thinly-disguised prisons done up in the Tuscan terracotta of the California postmodern palette, but the atmosphere is openly hostile to workers and the homeless alike.

The discussion weighed the economic benefits of factories against the alienating physical environment they create.

Deborah Wright, CEO of the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation, said that in a place like Harlem, misguided civic largess and the absence of these private sector, small-scale economic generators have created a weakness that is part of a downward spiral affecting the entire community. Both Marshall Berman, professor of political science at CUNY, and Robert Fishman, professor of history at Rutgers, suggested that progressive political action could bring solutions, but at a monetary price. Because of the larger consequences of urban decay, without action we may be placing more than the ghetto and its residents in the hopeless path of a civic bulldozer driven by some well-intentioned outsider, they said.
In this place where the highest peaks are shaped by building codes and even the sheep meadow is man-made, architects play a greater role in the $12.4 billion tourist industry than in any other sector of the economy. But who ever says so?

Oculus readers know about the active involvement of architects on 42nd Street and in Lower Manhattan, where major tourist initiatives are underway. Even the general public knows that Philippe Starck designed the Royalton and the Paramount hotels, that Andrée Putman did the guest rooms at Morgan’s, that Philip Johnson was responsible for the Four Seasons Restaurant, and perhaps that I. M. Pei designed the Four Seasons Hotel decades later. Robert A. M. Stern’s role in the rebirth of 42nd Street is well-known, as are Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer’s renovations of the historic theaters there and Arquitectonica’s scheme for the proposed hotel. But how many people are aware of Henry Stolzman’s work at the Shoreham, which is more original and elegant than Putman’s at Morgan’s, or know that Rafael Viñoly is also doing hotels for developer Bernard Goldberg?

While fashion designers’ names go on everything from underpants to china patterns (Ralph Lauren even has a line of house paint), architects rarely get credit for anything. Though we have been able to uncover a few recent projects, it would have been a whole lot easier if it was standard practice to sign projects the way French architects do — or even to put the designer’s name on a hotel brochure or restaurant menu, as the celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck does in Los Angeles for his wife, designer Barbara Lazaroff. Architects would have more visibility with New Yorkers and the 30 million people who are visiting the city every year now.

The Gang on 42nd Street

Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer’s New Victory Theater, which opened last winter, and New Amsterdam Theater for the Disney Corporation, scheduled to open next spring, will have some company when Livent, a Canadian company, renovates the Lyric and Academy theaters across the street. Plans for the first phase of the Tishman Development Company’s huge mixed-use project on Eighth Avenue and 42nd Street — the four-story retail-and-entertainment complex to be called “E-walk” — were announced in September. The facades were designed by the Boston firm D’Agostino, Izzo, Quirk to conform to Stern’s guidelines. Colorful, lighted, kinetic supersize signs will be created by TDI signage. (The old Times Square waterfall may even rise again.) The anchor tenant will be a 90,000-square-foot, multistory, 13-screen, 3,500-seat Sony movie theater complex with even more up-to-date, sensational, and luxurious features than its Lincoln Center cousin. And in a perverse reversal of the area’s attempt to build on its history, the Cunningham Group architects of Minneapolis is designing a 17,000-square-foot theme restaurant called Vegas! with live Vegas-style entertainment for Creative Cafes of Los Angeles. (Could it be revenge for the new New York, New York Hotel in the real Las Vegas?) It will join the more indigenous Ferrara Pasticceria by David Beers Architects on the corner, the Stardust Dine-O-Mat by David Turner Associates just up Broadway, and Hansen’s Times Square Brewery across Broadway by Yui + Bloch Design. That firm is currently designing three restaurants with Phil George Design Studio, to open next season at the USTA National Tennis Center in Flushing.

Down the street, Arthur Rosenblatt of RKK&G, who...
wrote the *Movie Song Catalog* with his wife, Ruth Benjamin, and is working on *Who Sang What on Broadway*, designating the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame Museum. Around the corner on Broadway and 43rd Street, Tobin/Parnes Design Enterprises is creating a new theme restaurant for Planet Hollywood International in the old Paramount Theater space and restoring the original florid 1927 marquee.

**Wall Street Recoup**

While 42nd Street has been cleaning up its image, Wall Street has been trying to add glitter to its financial glamour so that tourists headed for the Statue of Liberty and other attractions while they are downtown. To that end, Heritage Trails New York offers two-hour guided tours (for $10 per person) and encourages self-guided visits with kiosks and color-coded pathways on the pavement. New galleries, stores, restaurants, and even outdoor spaces are opening downtown all the time. One of the latest is Robert F. Wagner, Jr., Park at the tip of Battery Park City, which has a viewing platform to take in the Statue of Liberty and a striking panorama of Lower Manhattan, by the Boston architects Machado and Silvetti. Another is the stunning new hexagonal Museum of Jewish Heritage by Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates.

The Skyscraper Museum that architectural historian Carol Willis is organizing plans to open this month in a renovated 1920s banking hall at 44 Wall Street. The 8,000-square-foot space in the building designed by Trowbridge & Livingston has 28-foot ceilings and extends all the way to Pine Street from the entrance on the corner of Wall and Williams streets.

In June, the Emil family opened Windows on the World, redesigned by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer. The tallest (on the 106th and 107th floors at 1,314 feet) and one of the biggest (at 80,000 square feet, with 2,500 chairs and a staff of 500) restaurants anywhere, the new Windows is also one of the most fully designed (Hugh Hardy was in charge; Setrak Ohannesian was the project architect; Manuel Mergal was the project designer; Francesca Bettridge was responsible for lighting; Milton Glaser did the graphics, menus, and dinnerware; and Carrie Robbins designed the elaborate staff uniforms).

Patrons arriving by elevator encounter a Venetian terrazzo floor simulating the Mercator projection of the earth. Throughout the complicated multilevel space the decorative scheme reflects the landscape with abstract representations of clouds, celestial skies, water, topography, and aerial urban vistas. Even the color scheme, in the cool blues of sunrise and the warm reds of sunset, reflects the views all around.

In the middle of Lower Manhattan at 70 Broad Street, Ingrid Hustvedt Architect is completing the Wall Street Kitchen and Bar for Goldman Properties in the old American Banknote Company building, which is being restored by Joseph Pell Lombardi. The first and second floors will become a 220-seat restaurant; the kitchen will be in the basement. Like the Soho Kitchen and Bar, which Tony Goldman created as a pioneer in that neighborhood, the new space will have a large central bar, platform seating, and art on the walls. But the new restaurant, which opens on December 1, will have modern details in rustic materials such as gray and rust slate, cherry, cedar, and maple wood, leather, black steel, and gold and red decorative paint.

**Sleeping Well**

Sites and sounds, shops and restaurants may attract visitors to New York, but their lodgings determine whether or not they are comfortable, secure, and happy when they get here. Statisticians say tourism blossomed after Mayor Giuliani reduced the hotel tax, but no one has assessed the larger influence of hotel offerings. Someone should, because appealing, sensibly-priced places to stay are more likely to encourage frequent visits than anything else.

Bernard Goldberg’s Gotham Hospitality Group is certainly doing its share. Its 92-room Hotel Wales at Madison and 92nd streets, the 53-room Franklin at East 87th, the 84-room Shoreham behind MoMA on 54th Street, and the new 129-room Mansfield at 12 West 44th Street are small, individualized, historic, modestly-priced (around $140 to $170 a night) and intimate — everything most American chain hotels are not. The Franklin, Shoreham, and Mansfield were all designed by Henry Stolzman of Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg. Now Rafael Viñoly is working on the 211-room Roger Williams at Madison and 31st Street and a new 162-room hotel being built in an Emery Roth building at 141 East 44th Street, to be called Grand Central Station. Like the Shoreham it will have murals by Winold
Reiss, in this case acquired from the Cincinnati Union Terminal (those at the Shoreham came from Longchamps Restaurant in the Empire State Building). All the hotels have original works of art, specially designed furnishings, libraries, and common breakfast rooms, sometimes with roaring fires and live music.

**Only in New York**

Goldberg’s approach typifies a trend in New York today. Each hotel is unique, and either overtly modern or scientifically historical — or, best of all, some combination of the two. Stolzman stripped the paint from the hollow metal door backs in the modest, traditional Franklin, which gives them a gleaming contemporary look. At the sleek Shoreham, he reinforced the Moderne detailing by using art from the 1930s and original Warren McArthur tubular furniture in the espresso bar, and designing new perforated metal headboards in the shape of airplanes. At the Mansfield, he restored the rich, classical moldings under dropped ceilings in the entry. In the guest rooms, he designed wrought-iron sleigh beds with backlit stained-steel mesh.

The main attraction of New York is that it is different from the rest of America, and even from big European cities. So it makes sense that hotels and restaurants here should be as different as possible, despite the popularity of placeless, timeless theme restaurants and you-know-what-you-get chains in the rest of the world. Even K-Mart realized that opening stores in New York not only required accommodations (a multistory plan, economy of space usage, and small trucks to make deliveries on busy city streets) but also offered opportunities. The company is tailoring some merchandise to foreign tourists and testing high-style fashions on the hip young people here.

Similarly, at the other end of the economic scale, the Inn at Irving Place puts a new twist on the country inn. Larry Wente of Gertler & Wente Architects has managed to turn two derelict brick row houses in the middle of a charming cluster of sidewalk cafes and restaurants just off Gramercy Park into one of the most elegant Victorian inns in America with the help of owner Naomi Blumenthal. If they were not so immaculate and bright (both because of modern electric wattage and because of the woods are stained light oak rather than dark mahogany), they would seem like holdovers from the Gilded Age. With only twelve suites and inviting parlors for afternoon tea or a brandy nightcap, the inn really feels like grandmother’s house.

The Soho Grand Hotel is neither historic nor modern, and with 367 rooms, it isn’t exactly small. Its boxy, red brick, stepped-back exterior, 16 stories high, bears little resemblance to the lacy cast-iron industrial buildings nearby. But David Helpern, who had to make maximal use of the available lot on a limited budget, managed to give it character with a grand open metal staircase that has the feeling, if not exactly the look, of Soho. And he used the setbacks to create terraces with marvelous views of the neighborhoods all around. The interiors designed by William Sofield are filled with works by area artists. Despite the controversy that surrounded its construction, the hotel’s bar and Canal House restaurant have been attracting a crowd that gives the place a Soho atmosphere the physical fabric may lack. And because it is owned by Emanuel Stern’s Hartz Mountain Industries, there is even a watering hole for dogs in a seventeenth-century French stone basin at the front door.

**Restaurant as Theme Park**

Despite the often excruciating functional requirements, all hotels and restaurants are stage sets to some extent, but the quest for authenticity that has been influencing lodgings has had little effect on eating places. Restaurants, especially those catering to tourists, rarely draw on existing architectural elements or neighborhood character for inspiration. One exception is the Rockwell Group’s Monkey Bar in the Hotel Elysee on East 54th Street, a reborn Depression-era hot spot. The architects reinstalled the original monkey sconces, restored Vella’s original monkey murals, and resurrected large mirrors intended to evoke the naughty fun of earlier times. Even the famed mahogany bar was revived along with the banana leaves stenciled onto the cobalt blue linoleum floor. But since the original monkey bar didn’t have a restaurant, they had to invent one. They did so with murals of New York skylines, deep toned woods, rich red surfaces, and the intense colors of Maxfield Parrish.

Usually, however, as at Vegas!, the intent of theme restaurants is to transport the diner as far away as possible — and sell real souvenirs of the fantasy voyage along the way.
The trend today is almost the opposite of what it was in the 1980s, when major buildings were based on historical wishful thinking, but restauranters went for avant-garde designs like Thomas Leeser’s Red Bar in 1980 on East 7th Street or his Gold Bar five years later on East 9th. Even sophisticated, unique restauranters designed for neighborhood patrons and other cognoscenti tend to be more welcoming than startling, and more crafted than daring.

Theme restaurants are not exactly a new idea. They go back at least to the 1920s when Murray’s Roman Gardens carried patrons back in time. Typically, Lewis Mumford deplored the trend. “The more heavily they pile on ‘atmosphere,’ the worse they will be, and the more impossible it will be for a moderately sensitive person even to enjoy a cup of coffee within their pseudo-artistic walls,” he said in a March 8, 1932, New Yorker “Skyline.” It didn’t have much effect. Pruitt & Brown designed the Old Algiers and Old London for William Childs in the 1930s, complete with waiters in period costume. In the age of television when Murray’s Roman Gardens carried patrons back in time. 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Among the most successful are the Rockwell Group’s designs for the Planet Hollywood restaurants, which are still being built all over the world. The firm recently designed the Official All Star Cafe in Times Square, a 20,000-square-foot space with big-screen televisions encircling the 600 seats. A race-track-shaped bar allows patrons to eat and watch sports simultaneously without actually going to a real event. Smaller TV monitors hang from the dining alcoves. Interactive TV brings live sports to the restaurant, while leather upholstery, wood beams, and spotlights recreate the atmosphere of a stadium.

For New York Torre di Pisa, a 160-seat Italian restaurant, Rockwell decorated rooms with the Tower of Pisa and Futurist imagery, and wallpapered the wine bar with love letters.

Different theme restaurants evoke different emotions — laughter, of course, at Comedy Nation, an expansion of Caroline’s Comedy Club that will open early next year. The Hillier Group Architects and FMS are designing the 18,000-square-foot, 200-seat space at Broadway and 49th Street as the entrance to the downstairs comedy club. Karen Babb at the Hillier Group said, “These restaurants have to be multifaceted and multilayered so that the client keeps coming back for a different experience... The client will have an image in mind, but we, as architects, are asked to define what laughter is, and to come up with an image of laughter.”

For the Eerie Entertainment Group, Rosenberg Kolb Architects designed the Jekyll & Hyde Club, a horror-theme restaurant styled after an English gentlemen’s club at 1409 Avenue of the Americas. Its five-story atrium provides glimpses of different horrors on different dining levels. The rooms are filled with memorabilia and props that move and talk to the diners. Actors roam the floors, staging scenes that involve the diners.

Talk about avoiding reality: Rosenberg Kolb’s Night Gallery at 117 Seventh Avenue in Greenwich Village is a 200-seat restaurant based on the television show. Paintings and sculpture throughout the space come to life, creating an atmosphere similar to that at the beginning of the show.

Other recent theme restauranters popular with tourists are the Fashion Cafe at 51 Rockefeller Plaza designed by Michael Le Clerc, the Motown Cafe 104 West 57th Street by Jay Haverson Design, and the Harley Davidson Cafe by Tony Chi around the corner on Sixth Avenue.

Restaurants aren’t the only institutions taking tourists to the netherworld. Even a genuine tourist attraction like the Empire State Building is doing it. In September, a simulation theater opened in the basement. “Transporter: Movies You Ride” was designed by Brennan Beer Gorman and developed by Simulation Adventures Ltd. of Louisville, Kentucky, with IWERKS motion-simulation theater technology. The theme is “urban post-apocalyptic,” and is carried out in the lighting, the use of existing pipes, and the series of spaces that lead participants down into the 32-seat theater space. The seats are hydraulically powered and move 320 degrees per second in response to the on-screen video action.

Back to Reality

Neighborhood restaurants today often take the opposite approach, by providing a relaxed atmosphere with a contemporary aesthetic, typified by the work of Larry Bogdanow & Associates, whose concern is comfort and fine

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craftsmanship. For Savoy at Prince and Crosby streets, the firm recently completed a waiting area and a second-story renovation for private parties as an addition to their eclectic 1990 design, which complements the approach of the Savoy’s innovative kitchen. The walls are clad in blond masonite with cherry wood trim, and the floors in end-grain fir block for low maintenance. The ceiling has acoustical duct lining concealed behind a vault of bronzed window screen with curved ribbing.

In another cozy Bogdanow-designed space, the Cub Room on 131 Sullivan Street of 1994, the furniture is contemporary but craftsmanlike, with patterned upholstery in warm colors. Natural woods are juxtaposed with metal and glass. Acoustics are controlled with various surface materials and panels.

In the spring Obeca, Bogdanow’s new 11,000-square-foot Japanese restaurant on Thomas Street in Tribeca, will open. The design provides eight different areas of food specialties on three levels, with bridges linking one section to another, so that the restaurant will be intimate as well as vast.

Also in Tribeca, but in a manner as different as possible from its wild theme restaurants, the Rockwell Group designed the quietly elegant Nobu in 1994, Drew Nieporent’s esteemed Japanese venture at 105 Hudson Street. With natural materials such as birch tree trunks used as sculptures and ash wood branches for lighting columns, the atmosphere is one of modern serenity. The architects designed custom bar stools with black-lacquered legs shaped like chopsticks, which support the fish-patterned fabric seats. The bar is made of pea-green onyx, which is backlighted to give a green glow to the area. One wall is decorated with 1,000 glossy uplighted Japanese riverbed stones. (Nieporent and his partner, Robert De Niro, are also teaming up with Melba Wilson of Sylvia’s Restaurant in Harlem to resurrect the famous Minton’s Playhouse, where bebop was born, at 118th Street and Seventh Avenue, exactly the kind of tourist attraction administrators of the new empowerment zone believe is needed; see page 2).

With similar versatility, Boston’s Peter Niemitz of the Niemitz Design Group, which designed the Docks restaurants at 2427 Broadway and at 633 Third Avenue, this year completed the craftsmanlike Emerald Planet at 417 Lafayette Street. A mural by Carol M. Cutler flows across the length of the space. The deep, narrow restaurant has cone-shaped columns and sconces, exposed brick walls and ductwork, as well as other works of art that go with the South American food.

Not all noteworthy restaurant designs are for grand formal spaces. Rohnette Riley Architect, which designed the New World coffee bars all over town, recently completed the Emerald Planet, a 1,700-square-foot “Wrap and Smoothie” parlor in Noho. It is frankly modern and functional, but uses natural materials and colors juxtaposed with glass, stone, gunmetal, and concrete surfaces. Key design components such as the curved service bar and pendant lighting become sculptural elements. Riley said that “restaurants have high square footage costs associated with equipment, so often we have to do ‘more with less’ out front.”

Designer Tony Chi has even managed to achieve real elegance in the spare, muted, textured Zen Palate restaurants he has designed on upper Broadway, Union Square, and Ninth Avenue. A fourth will open soon on East 76th Street.
The problem with architectural education today, practicing architects say, is that there isn’t enough of it. "The architectural school period is not long enough to even dent the material you need to know," Charles Gwathmey said, especially for students who do undergraduate liberal arts programs and spend only three or three-and-a-half years in graduate school. And the problem is exacerbated by the time devoted to teaching computer skills.

Students fail to learn what architectural practice is really like. "Probably the weakest aspect of the schools today is that they do not develop a sufficient sense of the predicament of the architect. Students often emerge with a very strong sense of their own personae but very little sense of the strategic possibilities — how you can approach practice to extract something positive from that predicament," Harry Cobb said.

"It’s not easy to do in schools because a lot of the people teaching are removed from practice... not just separated from it which is inevitable, but kind of alienated from practice."

"The worst thing is the students’ lack of understanding of the process used to create architecture," John Winkler explained. "All their lives they have been their own clients. They lose sight of the fact that as a professional, you are not the one who decides. You provide options for other people to make decisions."

"Schools emphasize design, and I’m not sure that should change," Ronnette Riley said, "but students with work experience realize that design is a very small part of what we do — maybe ten minutes in six months — and that in reality design is hindered by all kinds of things — pocket-books, schedules, personal taste, handicapped access."

Almost every architect Oculus interviewed said students would benefit from spending time in offices. Tod Williams, who spent two years working for an industrial designer before he went to college, said he would like to see "all the schools have work-study programs, not reducing the time you are in school, but extending it."

"The biggest problem today is that students are not particularly prepared to enter the workplace," Williams said. "They are so interested in the product, but not in the process."

"One problem with extending the time students spend in school is that a lot of students have to borrow to attend school, and the salaries they can command when they graduate are so much lower than those in the other professions" that their loans are hard to repay as it is, Gwathmey noted.

"The economy has prevented a lot of students from getting in-between jobs and summer jobs in architects’ offices," said Adam Yarinsky, who worked for an architect in the town where he grew up during the summers when he was in school in the 1980s. Few paid jobs for students exist, and "students who have to finance their education can’t afford to work in architects’ offices for free."

"The schools and offices have to be more interactive," Gwathmey said, articulating one goal of AIA New York Chapter president-elect Robert Geddes. "It’s sort of an unspoken obligation," according to Gwathmey, whose partner, Robert Siegel, started an internship program with Pratt Institute ten years ago. Pratt students receive academic credit for the semester they spend in an office, but the internships limit their options to some extent. They cannot take other courses during that time. Of course, not all offices have enough work to give interns or income to pay them.

One way to prepare students for work is to make studios in schools more like those in offices, as Yarinsky is trying to do in a studio he is teaching at Harvard this semester with his partner, Steve Cassells. "We’re trying to bridge the gap between the way you work in the studio, where you come up with an idea of your own and there is a premium on invention, and the way you work in practice, where there are a number of conditions to consider," Yarinsky said. He wants the students to "develop their creative thought out of those conditions and to realize that the things you get as givens can be transformed, but they have to be addressed."

Another way to make the studio experience more realistic is to bring in a client, a real estate broker, structural, electrical, and mechanical engineers, and a community activist, as Gene Kohn did in a twelve-week studio he taught at UCLA. "They all had to be there at the final jury and judge the large-scale, mixed-use project, as they might on a real job. Even the students’ presentations had to be directed to these people," he said, not just to other architects.

Kohn said he believes in "bringing in as many profes-
An argument against preparing students as possible from day one." He said that at Wharton, where he is on the board, "I'm quite amazed at how the students just eat it up when people involved in the field come to speak. In architecture schools, the students tend to ignore practicing architects who are not intellectual leaders or writers."

He noted that when he was a student at Penn, his teachers were practicing architects. "Not only was Bob Geddes there, but Venturi, and Ronald Giurgola, and Lou Kahn." The reason Kohn thinks it is so important for students to have contact with practicing architects, he said, is that "the profession has changed so dramatically in the last few years. The major offices have computers all over the place. We communicate by e-mail and the Internet. And it came in time for global practice. It would have been hard to imagine 10 or 15 years ago that we would be working in 26 different countries. My education has been broadened by that work. Most of us went there because people thought we had special expertise, but you realize that the Japanese architects and the French and architects in Korea have a lot to teach us."

Gwathmey said he thinks it is important for students to see how architects really work, because it isn't clear whether architecture is an art form or a business or a profession. "Many times they are conflict. If you're an artist, you don't worry about how long it takes. You work until you get it right. But if you are a businessman, you work only as long as it pays."

An argument against preparing students too specifically for work in offices is that there may not be work for many of them when they get out. "There are way too many graduates for the number of positions that there are in this field," Mary-Jean Eastman noted. "I don't think it's in a university's interest to tell its students that. But I think an architectural education could be used in other ways, and I don't think schools do a good enough job thinking about how. We are not building as much as we used to. People don't need to work in an office. They can work at home," she said, so fewer new buildings will be needed.

**Computer Literacy**

Eastman made one point with which most practicing architects would agree: "One of the things the schools seem to do better than they used to is provide useful computer skills." The architects disagreed, however, on the value of computer literacy. "People are totally fluent in the computer, which we don't use, except for word processing," Williams explained.

Most firms today do use computers, of course, but their principals still see drawbacks. "I think the positive is that the computer has a great advantage, with a sense of impatience with which most practicing architects would agree: "One of the things the schools seem to do better than they used to is provide useful computer skills." The architects disagreed, however, on the value of computer literacy. "People are totally fluent in the computer, which we don't use, except for word processing," Williams explained.

Most firms today do use computers, of course, but their principals still see drawbacks. "I think the positive is that the computer is a design skill. The slickness of computer skills makes possible shows up in other areas and points to a difference between school and practice. "I'm always leery of overly fabulous portfolios because I think, 'How long did it take them to do that?'" Riley said.

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The polish typifies the emphasis on product at the expense of process that Williams said he deplores. "They come out of school with a sense of impatience about entering the marketplace at all costs, appearing to be ready" when they are really not. "It's good that they are able to do things on the computer we can only dream about, but many young architects are not able to draw or think with a pencil. We don't want drawing to become a lost art. The computer has a great advantage, but they may not have had a chance to express themselves with the line."

Riley also said, "I'm seeing fewer people with a good hand. Right now in my office, I have several people with a fine hand, and they didn't develop that overnight."

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Williams said he didn't learn the importance of "the hand and the eye" until after he graduated from architecture school (at Princeton, where he was also an undergraduate). "I got my real graduate degree teaching at Cooper Union, from many of the people there. It was a very different kind of place."
Several practicing architects mentioned the importance of teaching in their own educations. Yarinsky taught full-time for several years, first at the University of Michigan, then at the University of Virginia (where he had been an undergraduate), and briefly at Yale after he earned a graduate degree at Princeton and worked in Steven Holl’s office for four years. Now he teaches only part-time and tries to bring the experience of his office into the classroom. He said he thinks the presence of practitioners in the classroom is valuable for the students too because “there are a lot of different ways to teach,” and it’s good “if you’re exposed to a lot of different teaching styles.”

The Diversity

Several practitioners praised the variety in architectural education today. “I think the best thing is that they are teaching students to find their own way. They are not teaching dogma. They are encouraging students to discover architecture for themselves... That openness brings with it a sense of possibilities that is going to be very important for the future of architecture,” observed Cobb.

Winkler said, “The best thing is the balanced enthusiasm for architecture” that freedom produces. “Students today work in a modern architectural climate that supports invention and investigative research, as opposed to a postmodernist time when portfolios tended to be poché and facade-making,” Gwathmey said. Williams concurred, “The best thing about architecture schools now is the plurality of the education. There are many ways you can look at architecture, which emerged after Venturi’s Complexity and Contradiction, not only in the design studio, but also in the way we can see that technology plays a vital role in the making of architecture — in building, with materials, and in construction. It is particularly rich now.”

“A lot of people are trying to balance concepts and getting things built. They see them as integral, rather than distinctly separate,” noted Yarinsky, who said he sees a “whole trend toward increasing contact with building and making things. People are really interested in rolling up their sleeves.”

In general, Yarinsky, who has the most contact with the schools, having taught in half a dozen recently, seemed the most optimistic. “I am amazed at the level of skills a lot of the students are coming out with. I think it’s very high. I’m not so convinced that what’s going on is bad.”

His one concern — besides the lack of opportunities to work in architects’ offices — is that “a lot of students want to know what they’re supposed to do. I tell them, ‘You’re supposed to ask hard questions.’” The thing he said he respects the most is a healthy skepticism. He said he worries about schools like the universities of Miami, Florida, and Notre Dame, where there are pre-supplied answers.

Even though he is not particularly enthusiastic about all the work produced in them, Cobb thinks there is a place for classical programs. “We live in a pluralist world. There are far too many schools of architecture and far too many students, but that creates opportunities for many different positions.

“Accreditation and licensing are justifiable, but once they ensure minimum standards, it’s very important to establish one’s identity,” he said, noting that some of the schools with the strongest identities, such as SCI-Arc in L.A. and the Architectural Association in London, are independent even though most schools in this country are in universities. He said he thinks individuality is important, because “architecture is a profession where you have to remake your reputation on every project.”

Riley said she believes that “it doesn’t matter too much where they’ve gone to school as long as you get the top people. The schools are advancing too many marginal people.”

Yarinsky said, “If someone is working really hard they’ll eventually get there. Everybody blooms at a different time. A lot of the critics I had said, ‘You’ll never become an architect.’”

What Worked for Them

Architects’ perceptions of architectural education today are colored by their own experiences. Cobb values the lack of dogma because when he was a student at Harvard, he said, “there were right and wrong ways of doing things, and studying history was actively discouraged.” Later as chair, he gave particular attention to including architectural historians on the architecture faculty. Yarinsky, who was trained during that era, said he appreciated “the ability to take a lot of history courses,” especially now when he sees students “on reviews who think they are very innovative and wouldn’t if they knew more history. At Virginia [when he was a stu-
Remembering Frank Israel

For several years in a row, the fall arts season here began with an exhibition, lecture, book, or discussion of Frank Israel’s work. This year was no exception, even though he died on June 10.

A ballroom full of Israel’s architect friends and admirers gathered on September 11 at the Metropolitan Club to honor his memory. Sponsored by the American Academy in Rome and the Architectural League, the evening turned out to be more than a testimonial to one man and his art, for it described what it means to be an architect in the fullest sense of the word.

Academy president Adele Chatfield-Taylor began by saying, “Many of us, had we been in Frank’s shoes, might have given up on being brilliant... but Frank refused to stop being alive, or making friends... He refused to stop being an artist; he was either dreaming, or designing, or like a Roman fountain springing and splashing, undaunted, finding new ways that his gifts could be expressed, and making life joyous for other people. He refused to stop being the age he was, where increasingly, the responsibilities of his achievements made him teach, love, share, become a father figure. He refused to be an invalid, and although or perhaps because he was a committed hypochondriac, his demanding medical upkeep was a source of fascination, rather than despair... He made the most of everything.”

Architect Jaquelin T. Robertson called Israel, who was born in New York but practiced in Los Angeles and helped define the L.A. style as we know it, “the most New York architect I have ever known.” Robertson talked about the Frank he had known years ago when they were working together on a job in Iran. “He ran the model shop, and he had all these little Pakistani ladies working away night and day. They followed him around everywhere he went. They loved him.” He added, “And he was just as at home in our very stuffy London office.”

Critic Suzanne Stephens talked about the time in the Hamptons when he made a magnificent chowder out of “almost nothing.” She said, “You can tell a lot about an architect by the way he or she cooks.”

Israel’s sister, Roslyn Steinberg, talked about how she once arrived in L.A., and he decided “something must be done about your hair.” He found her a hairdresser, took her there, paid the bill, and she emerged, inappropriately but not surprisingly recreated in the image of Marilyn Monroe, whom he adored.

Richard Meier talked about how he and Frank had wandered around the sites of Rome together when they were fellows at the Academy.

Frank’s partner, Barbara Callas, talked about how he would call her up in the middle of the night with an idea, teach all the next day, stop by the office for a desk crit, go to a wedding, join friends for dinner, stop by the office again to discuss some emergent schemes, then take in two or three parties, only to begin the cycle again. She remembered how, right after Frank’s death, when she and a colleague were visiting a client, a complete stranger rang the bell, having seen “that famous architect’s” hand in the unfinished job site, and asked if it was his.

Designer Kamal Kozah read from a letter Israel had written to him almost ten years earlier: “The difference between the real and the imaginary is a thin line operating between truth and wonder, fear and the unknown, love and desire, water and just air....”

Julia Bloomfield, a scholar associated with the Getty Center, remembered how, also in Rome, Frank had gotten her over “a blip in my love life” that had left her despondent by taking her shopping every day on the Via Condotti, suggesting things for her to try on, supervising her purchases, boosting her confidence, and leaving her with an amazing collection she still has in her closet more than 20 years later.

Everyone talked about how Frank knew everything going on in L.A. and how he loved to share it all with friends who passed through. It was, in the end, that generosity, that desire to give and get a good performance in every sense, that was the essence of his life and his architecture.

Herbert Muschamp, as usual, had the last word: “I think that he left behind a major gift, something quite apart from his work and his friendship, and it is this: You don’t try to make a person fit the measure of history. You make history fit the measure of a person. I think Frank Israel did this in his work. He absorbed the histories of Rome, New York, and Los Angeles and created his own architectural history. And I think this is very much what makes him such an important figure of his generation. We grew up with the fundamentally nineteenth-century belief that history is something outside ourselves.... It turns out that the authority is internal; time is ours to shape.”

—J.M.
The Art of the Process
by Kira L. Gould

Rafael Viñoly, FAIA, has been praised for structural originality that transcends passing fads, but it may be his way of working that is most resistant to current trends. He engages in only a few projects at a time and leaves aggressive marketing to other firms altogether. His office may not attract as many clients as those that are structured as corporations, but his investigation of the design process is penetrating.

At the AIA New York Chapter's first AIA Honors lecture in September, Viñoly shared slides of sketches, models, drawings, and even the matrix used to select the design solution for the new Princeton football stadium, as well as shots from two major recent Asian projects. But his slides revealed that learning about his work means learning about the way he works.

Viñoly called corporate and multidisciplinary architectural firms "white elephants," and then stepped back a bit. "Those kinds of firms give you a different result," he said. "There must be an authenticity to the design and construction processes, and that inherently limits your marketing choices, otherwise you end up on an endless series of consulting jobs."

What this all means for Viñoly is that while a major project is under way "we disappear from the arena."

Viñoly explained that the Princeton football stadium "was really more of a civic structure than a typical sports venue. We had to put together a strategy that would allow us to explore all the possibilities and make them understandable to all the interest groups." This resulted in a matrix of features such as viewing angles, intimacy, and stylistic elements. The matrix was employed to describe 24 individual design approaches, which were then narrowed to 16. For each of those, models and drawings were prepared. Eventually, the strategy resulted in elegant upper bleachers that provide enough room for a big football crowd. When the bleachers are empty, as when smaller crowds attend lacrosse and soccer games, they serve as trellises over the galleria—a public space that reprises the old stadium's civic gesture.

Even commercial space needs to make some room for the public, as Viñoly's team has shown in its designs for a Samsung building in Seoul, South Korea. It is actually a redesign of an HOK structure at an important retail corner in the city. "It was a high-profile building that didn't do much," Viñoly said. He revised the exterior presence of the form, and drew from the energy of the street retail that takes place all around the building and throughout the city. "In Seoul, even the biggest companies have a street presence, so I wanted to bring that kind of energy to the building." In the public plaza at ground level, the way to do this was by using huge video screens, which Viñoly called "part of today's vocabulary."

Such brash commercialism wasn't part of his most recently completed project, the Tokyo International Forum, which will open to the public in January. The first event, he noted with pleasure, will be a gathering of the Japan Institute of Architects. Even more fascinating than details of the highly engineered (and earthquake-proof) building was his discussion of how the Japanese social structure and work ethic affected the design and construction process. "In Japan, the whole approach is nonconfrontational and nonlitigious," he explained. One pleasing result of this condition, to Viñoly's mind, was that "the building changed in the way that is supposed to happen when you discover things along the way. Removing the shadow of litigation released the project from constraints that we labor under here and produced a sense of collaboration that is all too rare."

He also showed slides of workers treating "structural elements as if they were sculpture" as an example of the strong work ethic in Japan. Another example of the different approach was that when the gigantic opening party was held in August, it was for the 6,000 people who had worked on the project—not just officials and members of the press, as is often the case in this country.

And they had much to celebrate. The glass hall, which serves as the main reception area and is the structure's signature, is a skeletal wonder during the day and a glowing beacon at night. Intersecting glass and steel ellipses enclose the lobby and create a dramatic space inside; a series of ramps and bridges connects the hall to the four theaters, which range in size from one that seats 5,000 (the largest in Tokyo) to an intimate experimental theater. The structure also includes an exhibition space, conference center, restaurants, stores, and an open plaza peppered with trees and benches.

The project was the result of the first design competition to be sponsored by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. In another departure from the typical American approach, the city...
November 1, 8:30 am
Transportation and Infrastructure

November 4, 6:30 pm
Learning By Design:NY

November 6, 5:30 pm
Public Architects at Municipal Art Society

November 7, 8:30 am
Professional Practice

November 11, 6:00 pm
Housing

November 12, 6:00 pm
Computer Applications

November 13, 6:00 pm
Interiors at Perkins Eastman Architects

November 14, 6:00 pm
Minority Resources

November 15, 8:00 am
Zoning and Urban Design

November 19, 6:00 pm
Foreign Visitors

November 20, 8:30 am
Public Sector Liaison

November 20, 12:30 pm
Architecture for Education

November 20, 6:00 pm
Architecture Dialogue

November 21, 6:00 pm
Building Codes

November 21, 6:00 pm
Marketing and Public Relations

November 26, 6:00 pm
Design Awards

November 27, 6:00 pm
Women in Architecture

Please confirm meeting times and locations by calling AIA New York Chapter headquarters at 683-0023, ext. 17.

Who's in Charge?
Increasingly, it's not designers, but business-minded professionals who specialize in the coordination of projects — bringing them in on time and within budget. Recently, the Interior Committee presented a panel of experts to talk about the effect project managers have on the designers whose projects they are managing. In many cases, such outside management — typically by those with design, real estate, or business backgrounds, though some are architects — can take lots of pressure off the design firm, explained Roslyn Brandt, who heads her own design-firm consultancy, Brandt Resources. "It's crucial that design professionals decide if they can manage projects, and if they want to do so. This is no easy choice. Projects today are completed under tremendous financial and deadline pressures, and they have become infinitely more complex than in years past, especially those that include many high-technology features. And while these changes have taken place in the last five to ten years, we've seen design fees decline," she said.

Ellen Albert, AIA, manages the facilities and architecture division of M-TV, which is responsible for space that accommodates 2,000 employees in New York City and another 700 in regional facilities. While she doesn't employ project managers on Manhattan jobs, she finds them invaluable on regional ones. "Local coordination of jobs that typically involve up to 20 consultants is absolutely necessary," she explained. "I need to be sure that someone there is representing us in our absence, and that is what the project manager can do." But there are drawbacks. Sometimes the consultants and others involved with the job feel that they are dealing with middlemen rather than the owners themselves. The solution to this, Albert said, is making sure that the project manager (often referred to as the "PM" or owner's representative) and owner have a comprehensive understanding of the issues and share a viewpoint; that way the PM's interaction with consultants has a better chance of being informed and productive.

Project managers can be involved with almost any aspect of a project; their specialty is process. As project manager Robert Bennis of Bennis & Reissman explained, this can include site selection, lease evaluation and negotiation, determining what consultants are necessary, where and how their contracts will mesh, settling any claims that are brought during construction, and handling project closeout. "Some clients don't have a lot of expertise in dealing with these aspects of a job. But as much as the money and organization side of this is our bailiwick, cost-control should never outstrip design," he said.

John Robbins of Ferran, Robbins & Associates, another PM firm, concurred, and explained that working with those who will be using the facility is a crucial piece of the approach. "This is not just about getting something built, but about living with it," he said.

How do architects and designers feel about "out-
Chapter Notes

On Tuesday, November 12, at 6:00 pm, the Building Codes Committee will host an open discussion with the new commissioner of the New York City Department of Buildings, Easton Silva, R.A. Commissioner Silva will speak about recent plans and proposals for improving the department. RSVP to 683-0023, ext. 21.

The fourth annual ANstruction competition, sponsored by the AIA New York Chapter, the Society of Design Administration NY Chapter, and the Decoration and Design Building, will be held on November 14. This design-build competition invites architects, engineers, and students to create structures built entirely of canned goods. The collected food will be donated to Food for Survival, the New York City rod bank. On Thursday, November 14, the judging awards ceremony, and cocktail reception will offer participants and guests the opportunity to view the innovative designs. Awards will be given for best meal, best use of technology, and irv's favorite. Jurors include Andrea Bloodworth, director of Art in Transit at MTA New York City Transit; Mayer Ruses, director-in-chief of Interior Design; Irvin A. Seinuk, P.C., structural engineer; and architects odd Dalland, FAIA, obert Hillier, FAIA, and enore Lucey, FAIA. The ANstructions will be on display through November 22 at the Decoration and Design Building, 979 Third Avenue. For more information, call hei C. Melillo at 686-9677.

On Tuesday, November 19, at 6:00 pm, the Women in Architecture Committee is hosting "The Business of Small Offices." During this two-evening colloquium, experts in finance, management, insurance, and legal issues will discuss planning, accounting, staff, equipment, and contracts for small offices. Moderator Erika Rosenfeld will be joined by Susan Appel, Kathy Gianetti, Mary Homer, Carol Patterson, Arlene Petry, Suzanne Warner Raboy, and Maggi Sedlis, AIA. The event will be held at the Wilkhan USA Showroom at 150 East 58th Street at 6:00 pm. The cost is $40 for members ($50 for nonmembers) for both evenings. For reservations, call 683-0023, ext. 21.

On Tuesday, November 26, at 5:00 pm, the Chapter will hold its annual open nominating meeting to create the ballot for the election of the 1997 Nominating Committee members. If you have someone in mind for this committee, you must attend this meeting to put your candidate on the ballot. Ballots will then be mailed to all voting members. Since Chapter bylaws state that a minimum of 100 members constitute a quorum for this meeting, it is important that members who cannot attend return their proxies before November 26. Members elected to the Nominating Committee will convene in January to begin selecting the slate of officers and members of the elected committees for the following year. The results of their efforts will be announced at the Chapter's Annual Meeting in June. The nominating meeting will take place at 200 Lexington Avenue on the sixteenth floor. For more information, call 683-0023, ext. 17.

Also on Tuesday, November 26, partners from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill will participate in a panel discussion on recent projects and issues related to partnership. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill was honored at this year's AIA Convention with the architecture firm award, the highest honor bestowed by the Institute for consistent production of distinguished architecture. Participants include David Childs, FAIA, Marilyn Jordan Taylor, AIA, John Winkler, FAIA, and newer partners. This is the third in the Chapter's AIA Honors series, which is held to encourage a dialogue on practice between Chapter members and architects who have recently received honor awards. Following their presentation, the partners will answer questions from the audience. The event will be held on the sixteenth floor at 200 Lexington Avenue. Refreshments will be available when doors open at 6:00 pm. The presentation will begin at 6:30 pm, and an informal reception will follow. The cost is $5 for members, $10 for nonmembers, and there is no charge for students. For more information or to reserve a place, call 683-0023, ext. 21.

On Tuesday, December 3, at 6:30 pm, the AIA New York Chapter Inauguration and Design Awards presentation will be held at the Seagram Building, 375 Park Avenue. This event offers the opportunity for the Chapter to welcome its new Board members and to thank those Board members who have dedicated their time to the Chapter for several years. Phyllis Lambert, director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, will speak briefly following the Design Awards presentation. The cost is $5 for members, $10 for nonmembers, and there is no charge for students. RSVP at 683-0023, ext. 21.
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**BOOK LIST**

Rizzoli Bookstores’ Top 10
As of September 25, 1996
1. *Constructive View*, Joseph Rosa (Rizzoli, cloth, $50.00).
2. *Skyscrapers*, Judith Dupre (Blackdog, paper, $24.98).
4. *Feng Shui*, Enso Wong (Paradigm House, cloth, $28.00).
5. *Interweaving*, Steven Holl (Princeton Architectural Press, cloth, $34.95).
9. *El Croquis 74/75*, Frank Gehry (El Croquis, cloth, $75.00).

Urban Center Books’ Top 10
As of September 25, 1996
5. *El Croquis 78*, Stephen Hall (El Croquis, paper, $49.00).
8. *Interweaving*, Steven Holl (Princeton Architectural Press, cloth, $34.95).
Correction

Oculus regrets several errors in Susanna Torre’s article on the Boyer Report in the September 1996 issue (“Building on Divided Ground?”, page 10). The phrase “texte de jour” should, of course, have read “texte du jour.” The sentence in the last paragraph with specific recommendations for an integrated curriculum should have read: “Topics should include the profession’s responsibility for educating future practitioners and providing equal access to higher levels of training, and academia’s responsibility for devising design curricula based on sophisticated levels of integration (to replace outdated a-la-carte design studio offerings).” The final sentence should have read: “It is in their friction about ideas and practices that architectural education and architectural practice remain relevant to one another.”

Awards

□ In September, the AIA New York State announced honor awards for outstanding achievements that “advance the benefits of architecture and the contributions of architects in the built environment of society and their communities.” The James William Kidney award went to I. Donald Weston, FAIA, of Martyn & Don Weston Architects, Brooklyn, in recognition of his professional leadership. The Matthew W. DelGaudio award was conferred on David Castro-Blanco, FAIA, and Thomas L. Penn for their leadership in the state association.

Honorary membership in the AIA New York State was conferred upon Joan Davidson, president of Furthermore and former commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation; Patricia Manfre-Staab, business manager and senior associate with the Spector Group; and Joel Miele, Sr., P.E., commissioner of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection and the former commissioner of the Department of Buildings.

The Community Development Award was presented to the Abyssinian Development Corporation of Harlem and Brooklyn Union.

□ The Brooklyn Chapter of the AIA awarded first prize in its Gowanus Canal design competition to a team of architecture students from Parsons School of Design — Soshu Hayashi, Tony Tai, and Priya Varadachary. —N.R.
development to offer shopping options that Harlem residents have had to travel elsewhere in the city to find for years. "Retailing is a huge job-entry point, especially for young people. But right now, those opportunities aren't available," Moss said. "Harlem is an island, but it doesn't need to be. Compare it to Lower Manhattan, another hot development area; there's no convenient way to get down there by car. Harlem has far better access. From this standpoint, the area has tremendous regional potential."

Easy access and a ready job pool are two characteristics lacking in many neighborhoods around the country, most of them predominately minority, that have struggled in recent years. Kenneth Lombard, president of Magic Johnson Theaters, hasn't invested in Harlem yet, but his company is making retail and entertainment features a part of similar areas in Los Angeles, Houston, Las Vegas, and Atlanta and is planning one in Jamaica, Queens. "We are trying to increase the overall quality of retail and entertainment that's available to these communities," he explained. They've had success in California, where they convinced a large pension fund that inner-city retail has great potential. The net effect, Lombard said, is increasing the overall involvement of minorities in their own communities. "We've got young people working in the theaters." Lombard’s approach places heavy emphasis on inclusion, and it requires a serious commitment on the part of all the players. "You have to come to the table with an understanding that this is to benefit everyone," he said. "We try to work with people who understand our approach. We are proving that economic soundness with some social responsibility goals firmly in mind is the only way to work."

When someone in the audience asked, "What can we do to help push these aims?", Bond reminded architects to "avoid pushing these great rebuilding studies and schemes. The grand oversimplifications often marginalize the neighborhood units that are struggling for cohesion, and that's a grave mistake." Lombard, however, had something much simpler in mind. "Lower your fees," he laughingly pleaded. Robert Geddes, FAIA, came back with: "Sure. Right after Magic Johnson lowers his take." —Ken L. Gould
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<th>Date</th>
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<td><strong>November</strong></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Monday Lecture: Embracing Uncertainty – Practical Wisdom on Design for the Web By Elisabeth Rosky and Ellen Lupton. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E 91 St. RSVP 869-0241. $15.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tuesday Lecture: Artist Andy Goldsworthy Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. 457 Madison Ave. RSVP 935-3915. $3.</td>
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<td>Lecture: Manhattan Vernacular – An Introduction to Urban Vernacular Architecture By Martha Cooper. Sponsored by the Museum of American Folk Art. 6:00 pm. 2 Lincoln Square, Columbus Ave. at 65th St. 977-7170.</td>
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<td>Lecture: Peter Batlin, Current Work Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. $7.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Sunday Bus Tour: Bronx Deco By Anthony Robbins. Sponsored by Cooper Union. 11:00 am. RSVP 533-4195. $18.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Tuesday AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT Lecture: Plans and Proposals for Improvement of the New York City Department of Buildings By Gaston Silva, R.A.. Sponsored by the Building Codes Committee. 6:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. $5 members ($10 nonmembers, students free).</td>
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<td>Forum: Environmental Justice and the Design Professions Sponsored by Van Alen Institute Projects in Public Architecture. 6:30 pm. 30 W. 22 St. 924-7000.</td>
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<td>Lecture: Charles Gwathmey, Current Work Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. Caspary Hall, Rockefeller University. 1250 York Ave. 753-1722. $7.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Thursday Lecture: Preserving America’s Historic Buildings By Norman Weiss. Sponsored by the Museum of American Folk Art. 6:00 pm. 2 Lincoln Sq., Columbus Ave. at 65th St. 977-7170.</td>
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<td>AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT CANstruction Awards Ceremony Cosponsored by the Society of Design Administration NY Chapter and the Decoration and Design Building. 6:30 pm. 979 Third Avenue. 686-0677.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Tuesday AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT Panel: The Business of Small Offices Sponsored by the Women in Architecture Committee. With Maggi Scellis, AIA, Carol Patterson, Arlene Petry, Suzanne Warner, Raby, and Susan Appel, with moderator Erika Rosenfeld. 6:00 pm. Wilkman USA Showroom, 150 E. 59th St. 683-0023, ext. 21. $40 members ($50 nonmembers) for two-day event. Continues on Wednesday, November 20.</td>
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<td>Lecture: Sacred Space and the Influence of Louis Kahn By Richard Meier, AIA, and Vincent Scully. Sponsored by the Jewish Museum. 6:30 pm. 710 Fifth Ave. 879-3950. $10.</td>
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<td>Panel: Documenting Latino and Hispanic Design With Miguel A. Bretos, Luis A. Badillo, Gustavo LeClerc, John Loomis, Jorge Martelli, and Madeleine Sanchez, AIA. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E 91 St. 860-0321.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Thursday Lecture: Edith Wharton – A House Full of Rooms, Architecture, Interiors, Gardens By Theresa Craig. Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 12:00 pm. 457 Madison Ave. 935-3955.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Tuesday AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT Nominating Meeting All members are encouraged to attend. 5:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. 683-0023, ext. 21.</td>
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<td>AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT AIA Honors Panel: Skidmore, Owings &amp; Merrill With David Childs, FAIA, Marilyn Jordan Taylor, AIA, and John Winkel, FAIA. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. $5 members ($10 nonmembers, students free).</td>
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<td>December 3 AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT Inauguration and Design Awards Presentation With Phyllis Lambert. The Seagram Building. 6:30 pm. 375 Park Avenue. 683-0023, ext. 21. $5 members ($10 nonmembers, students free).</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Thursday Forum: Building and Rebuilding New York City With Joseph B. Rose and Robert Geddes, FAIA. Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 8:30 am. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. RSVP 935-3960. $12.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Friday Lecture: On Charles Rennie Mackintosh By Anthony Jones. Sponsored by Pratt Institute School of Architecture, Puck Manhattan Center. 6:00 pm. 295 Lafayette Street. 718-399-4308.</td>
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