ARCHITECTURE FOR ART

THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER, CINCINNATI; ZAHAA HADID
ON THE DRAWING BOARDS
Building for the Arts: Philip Johnson/Alan Ritchie Architects, Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn, Weiss/Manfredi Architects, Robert A. M. Stern Architects, the Polshek Partnership.
Museum competitions. Pennsylvania Station improvements by HOK.

IN THE STREETSCAPE
Eclipse on 81st Street: the Natural History Museum's new Hayden Planetarium and Rose Center for Earth and Space by the Polshek Partnership and Ralph Appelbaum Associates, with the Eclipse Garden by Kathryn Gustafson.

IN THE GALLERIES
Architects in Soho: LOT/EK, Craig Konyk, Hani Rashid's Paperless Studio, Asymptote

AN EYE ON AN ISSUE: Architecture for Art
 Betting on the Architect
 Are Art and Architecture on the Same Track? A Discussion.
 Museums in Print: Books on Museum Architecture.
 Wings that Don't Fly: The Debate on Museum Architecture.
 Richard Gluckman at the Architectural League
 Daniel Libeskind at the Architectural League

IN THE BOOKSTORES
Michael Sorkin Studio: Wiggle
Bernd Schulz on Allan Wexler

AT THE PODIUM
Architects' Dream Clients

AROUND THE CHAPTER
A New School Downtown designed by Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg
Lessons Learned for Schools
Stephen A. Kliment on Writing
Deadlines for Upcoming Grant and Competition Applications
Architectural Exhibitions around New York
The AIA New York Chapter Website
Best-Selling Architecture Books
AIA New York Chapter Committee Meetings
Construction with a Light Touch: the "Invisible Construction" Conference
Avoiding Brickwork Failures
The 1998 Heritage Ball
Construction 1998
The 1998 Annual Meeting
Chapter Notes on Upcoming Events: the 1999 Heritage Ball
The Last Word: Introducing the new Chapter Executive Director, Sally Siddiqi
Lectures, Discussions, Tours, Exhibitions and Events at the Chapter and around New York

back cover
Although newspapers often neglect to mention the architects of major projects, and developers insist designers focus on the bottom line, museum boards increasingly pin hopes for future success on superstar architects, assuming that fame will attract contributions and crowds.

In fact, the last few months have seen a veritable parade of big-name architects tromping through town for the benefit of the design press. Officers and trustees of The Museum of Art, Houston, have shown, with the Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, plans for a 192,447-square-foot, $115 million expansion currently under construction across the road from buildings they have now. Museum officials from Milwaukee have come to Manhattan with Moneo’s countryman, Santiago Calatrava, to discuss the first building he will complete in this country—a $50 million, 125,000-square-foot addition with a huge parabolic reception hall and a pedestrian bridge to connect the existing museum campus, on the shores of Lake Michigan, with downtown Milwaukee. And a group from the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati transported architect Zaha Hadid here from London to reveal preliminary designs for her 11,000-square-foot, five-story, downtown Cincinnati exhibition space, catercorner to a three-year-old performing arts center designed by Cesar Pelli. The dramatic new $27.5 million project with a theater, cafe, education area, and 74,000 square feet of galleries will be the Hadid’s first building in North America.

Closer to home, Skidmore College officials unveiled plans for the new $10 million, 34,000-square-foot interdisciplinary Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery on their campus in Saratoga, New York. The scheme, by Antoine Predock of New Mexico, will be his first major commission in the eastern United States. And in November, the Guggenheim Museum announced intentions to build a Frank Gehry-designed branch on Pier 40 in Manhattan, just west of Houston Street. Studies predict the project—currently stalled by conflicts with plans for Hudson River Park—would generate $1 billion in tax revenues, tourism, and job growth during the first two years of operation.

The Guggenheim Bilbao proved that architecture can make the essential difference in the bottom lines of both a museum and a city. Last year it attracted more than 1.4 million visitors and many millions of pesetas to the Basque city. But its success may be the exception that proves the rule. While the enthusiasm museums bring to the art of building is admirable, the expectations associated with high-profile projects may be unrealistic. Instead of encouraging other types of institutions to invest in ambitious architecture—the way schools, businesses, landlords, and even department stores routinely did a hundred years ago—expecting magic from buildings could backfire now the way it did at Pruitt-Igoe.
Building for the Arts
by Nina Rapppaport

New York architects continue to profit from the building boom of museums and other cultural facilities...

- Philip Johnson/Alan Ritchie Architects is planning an addition to Johnson’s 1961 Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. With Carter & Burgess of Fort Worth, the architects will triple the square footage of the galleries—from 9,000 to more than 27,000 square feet—and create a new indoor public space. The two-story atrium, topped by a low, sweeping dome, will link street-level rooms to the upper level of a new brown-granite building replacing the rear of the original structure. A paper conservation lab, 170-seat auditorium, improved library facilities, and larger retail spaces will also be added.

- A museum in Kansas City’s historic railroad terminal—Science City at Union Station, by Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn—will be completed later this year. The $50 million, 250,000-square-foot interactive science museum will offer an “immersion experience” intended to stimulate interest in science through a variety of exhibits, “discovery labs,” and programs. There will also be a state-of-the-art planetarium. This museum reinforces the mixed-use nature of the 50-acre, $234 million Union Station project, which mingles retail and entertainment facilities with commuter- and Amtrak rail service. Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn will also supervise facade and interior renovations for the reuse of the Classical 1914 Beaux Arts station designed by Jarvis Hunt of Chicago. With Grand Boulevard improvements and a new light rail system, the centrally located complex will become the hub of a new intermodal transit facility.

- For the Fresno Metropolitan Museum, Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn is working on a master plan that will organize the historic, arcaded Bee Building (along with several adjacent structures of varying vintage and pedigree) into a “cultural campus.” Phased renovation and expansion of galleries—as well as a new lobby, vertical circulation system, and entertainment, education, and special event facilities—are intended to make the Met into the centerpiece of the California city’s revitalized Uptown district.

- The Paleontological Research Institution has selected Weiss/Manfredi Architects to work with exhibition designers Douglas/Gallagher on the Museum of the Earth in Ithaca, New York. The museum, which will open in two years on the city’s West Hill, will tell the planet’s story using the institution’s millions of fossils and shells, and the geological and biological records of New York State.

- For the former site of the Music Hall and Coliseum in Houston, Robert A.M. Stern Architects and Morris Architects of Houston are designing the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts. A 2,650-seat main hall, a 500-seat multipurpose proscenium theater, 3,800 square feet of rehearsal space, and a performing arts school are planned for the $85 million complex. The architects’ scheme features a glass facade 60 feet high, a dramatic copper-colored roof, and a terrace that will be accessible to patrons from the lobby, piano bar, and 290-seat restaurant. Interior of the project, especially the “Theater Under the Stars,” will recall Broadway theaters.

- Carnegie Hall president Isaac Stern announced in January that the building’s cinema—hidden for decades in its basement—will be demolished for a 640-seat performance space designed by the Polshek Partnership. The versatile auditorium for “new music” concerts and educational programs, which will be located directly under the orchestra hall, will be named to honor Judith Arron, the late executive director who conceived the idea. A flat floor will rise on elevators to become a traditional raked theater, or a theater-in-the-round. Permanent balcony seating for 140 concertgoers will surround the 5,200-square-foot underground space, which was built in 1891 as a 1,200-seat recital hall.

Intended to create a technologically sophisticated contemporary space that has an identity of its own (but is still unambiguously a part of Carnegie Hall), the architects’ plan is a rectangle within an ellipse. Four canted walls, floating within the ellipse, will define the space without completely enclosing it. The ellipse will appear structurally detached since it will penetrate the mezzanine, creating visual connections between levels, and its form will become perceptible as one moves around the hall. From the seats, the curved walls will be visible through cut-outs.

The new space will have a separate lobby, marquee, and box office on Seventh Avenue, around the corner from the entrances to the 2,804-seat main Carnegie Hall and the 268-seat Weill Recital Hall, which Polshek renovated in 1987 and 1991 respectively, as part of a 1978 master plan. Completion of the $50 million project is expected in 2001.
The Polshek Partnership is also renovating Symphony Space at 95th Street and Broadway and the new flexible presentation theater in Broadway and the new flexi-space at 95th Street and also renovating Symphony between 95th and West End interior redesigns, and the old Thalia Theater made possible by the sale of mechanical upgrades were Related Properties, for a residence on Broadway at 94th Street Costas Kondylis.

There will be another commission at Two Columbus Circle—if the city finally decides to sell the Gallery of Modern Art that Edward Durrell Stone designed and Huntington Hartford built in 1965 for a now-defunct museum. Only one of the six bidders is willing to restore the building, which recently housed offices for the City Department of Cultural Affairs. This bidder is the Dahesh Museum—miraculously just the right size to fit into the narrow, convex, 12-story tower. And the Dahesh specializes in nineteenth- and twentieth-century European academic painting, so it would even revive the building’s original purpose, showing figurative art at a time when abstraction constituted the mainstream. The Alexander and Louisa Calder Foundation appears to be the only other bidder interested in using the structure for galleries, but that foundation would reclad the perforated white-marble exterior, which more and more New Yorkers seem to like every day.

The architect-selection committee for the new Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin (formerly the Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery) has recommended Herzog & de Meuron of Basel, Switzerland, as design architect in collaboration with Booziotis & Company of Dallas. Two semifinalists were also chosen from among 61 firms which responded to inquiries: Steven Holl Architects of New York and Antoine Predock Architect of New Mexico. The museum’s 100,000 square feet of galleries, classrooms, conservation labs, and storage rooms will be located at one of the main entrances to the UT campus. The opening is scheduled for 2002.

Terence Riley, the curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Modern Art, is a member of the architect-selection committee for a new building to house the Forum for Contemporary Art in St. Louis, Missouri. None of the semifinalists chosen from among more than forty firms are New Yorkers. The eight semifinalists are: William P. Bruder of Arizona; Brad Cloepfil, Allied Works Architecture, Oregon; Carlos Ferrater of Spain; Enrique Norten, TEN Arquitectos, Mexico; Elva Rubio and Philip Durham, Rubio/Durham Architects, Missouri; and Annette Gigon and Mike Guyer of Gigon/Guyer, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron of Herzog & de Meuron, and Peter Zumthor of Atelier Zumthor, all of Switzerland.

The Museum as Urban Instigator

A jury meets in New York this month to select five firms to participate in an international competition sponsored triennially by the Canadian Centre for Architecture. The contest fosters innovative designs for a key area in a specific city. This year’s $100,000 prize will be awarded to a scheme sited at the tangle of Manhattan rail yards and transportation networks between 30th and 34th streets, from Eighth Avenue to the Hudson River. The jury includes chairperson Phyllis Lambert, founding director and chair of the CCA; jury director Ralph Lerner, dean of the School of Architecture at Princeton; architects Elizabeth Diller of Diller + Sckfiddio, Frank Gehry, Arata Isozaki and Rafael Moneo; Charles A. Gargano, chairman and commissioner of the Empire State Development Corporation; dean Gary Hack of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania; and Joseph B. Rose, chairman of the NYC Planning Commission. Projects will be judged in July—then exhibited in New York and published. Visit the website www.cca.qc.ca for additional information.

Getting to the Arts

While plans to replace Pennsylvania Station proceed slowly, Hellmuth Obata & Kassabaum has begun a renovation to prepare the station for Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor high-speed rail service, which begins next year. The redesign will create a streamlined flow of pedestrian traffic and provide new escalators from the platforms to larger, comfortable waiting areas equipped with telephones and fax machines. Scheduled improvements include a taxi stand, new storefronts, improved signage, and softer overhead lighting. HOK/NY has already begun to upgrade back-office, life safety, and support facilities. Stations throughout the northeast are being renovated to accommodate the new service.
IN THE STREETSCAPE

"Scales of the Universe Exhibit," Rose Center for Earth and Space, American Museum of Natural History, Polshek Partnership

Eclipse on 81st Street?
by Gavin Kenney

Neighbors who protested the American Museum of Natural History’s plans to demolish Hayden Planetarium were right about one thing. The streetscape is certainly changing. A magical, eclipse-themed garden by one of the world’s most inventive landscape architects will soon replace the Museum’s bland backyard along West 81st Street. And although the museum razed its 1936 planetarium, fragments of the beloved historic space will be preserved in Polshek and Partners’ dazzling new high-tech, interactive exhibition halls. The new Hayden Planetarium, sited exactly as its predecessor was, will be housed in a 90-foot-diameter sphere encased in a monumental glass box. Programatically, the planetarium will act as an entrance hall for the north end of the Museum with the adjoining sequence of new galleries leading to the older, anthropological collections. The 1871 Calvert Vaux courtyard plan for the Museum is acknowledged, in passing, with a garden-terrace adjacent to the planetarium. The terrace will be located atop a three-level parking garage at the north end of the site.

In developing the concept for the new construction, project architect Todd Schliemann evaluated planetariums such as the Buell in Pittsburgh, the Adler in Chicago, and the Griffith in Los Angeles. The new Hayden, which is scheduled to open in 2000, is intended to trump them all. The technological wizardry of the sphere-in-a-glass-box composition is based (in part) on a scheme by Peter Rice and Hugh Dutton for the La Villette science museum in Paris. The curtain wall at the Hayden is made of clear, water-glass panels. It is single-glazed (to heighten transparency) and pinned to rods attached to the roof. The designers limited structural members to obstruct only about nine percent of the surface, in order to further maximize the view into the box. Inside, the sphere, with a surface area of 26,000 square feet, is clad in perforated, double-curved metal plates with five-degree longitudinal and latitudinal lines expressed by joints. Both sphere and box will be subly illuminated, with modulations of color and intensity producing atmospheric effects.

In section, the planetarium resembles Étienne Boulée’s cenotaph for Isaac Newton. The main event will be the Sky Theater, located in the upper portion of the sphere. The space is surrounded by suspended orbs representing the relative sizes of atomic, planetary, and stellar systems. The Sky Theater is animated by a $3.5 million specially-modified Zeiss Mark VIII computerized projection system (it pops out of the floor) and a surround-sound audio program with rumblers in the bases of the 440 seats. The lower, concave portion of the sphere will contain the Big Bang Theater. From a surrounding platform, theatergoers will experience a dramatic, multisensory re-creation of the first moments of the universe. Kaboom!!!

The new complex, to be known as the Frederick Phineas and Sandra Priest Rose Center for Earth and Space, will be packed with 30,000 square feet of exhibits by Ralph Appelbaum Associates of New York. The firm was responsible for the Hall of the Universe, the Cosmic Pathway, the Hall of the Planet Earth, with its bizarre natural wonders such as a several-ton meteor and a black smoker (a hydrothermal vent from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean).

The Eclipse Garden

Judges of a limited design competition held in 1997 for the Museum’s terrace selected landscape architect Kathryn Gustafson’s Eclipse Garden, which was inspired by the planetarium’s imposing sphere. Gustafson is an American-born, French-trained landscape architect—a graduate of the École Nationale Superieure du Paysage in Versailles—who maintains offices on Vashon Island near Seattle, in London, and in Paris.

At a recent talk for the New York Botanic Garden Landscape Design Lecture Series, she explained that she construed the new sphere as a lunar orb projecting its “shadow” onto the plaza to the west. Her design is an “eclipse garden” with interstellar phenomena. Fountains will depict meteor showers. The well-known constellation Orion will be picked-out in sparkling lights.

The garden is, by necessity, a multipurpose terrace intended to provide flexible space for social events. Gustafson integrated changes in surrounding grade by canting the central black-granite panel to the east (toward the planetarium) and by folding two lateral, triangular, reinforced-grass panels upward and downward to meet the

Arthur Ross terrace and the Rose Center for Earth and Space, American Museum of Natural History, Polshek Partnership and Kathryn Gustafson

The Eclipse Garden, American Museum of Natural History, Kathryn Gustafson

"The Eclipse Garden," Rose Center for Earth and Space, American Museum of Natural History, Polshek Partnership and Ralph Appelbaum Associates
surrounding deck. These canted surfaces eliminate the need for steps, stairs, or ramps and give the garden a sculptured edge.

An eclipse, of course, throws a shadow on the surface of the Earth—or blocks the light of the sun, revealing celestial bodies normally obscured during daylight hours. Gustafson’s Eclipse Garden is both an educational device and an étude distinct from the rational, scientific program of the Museum. An elevated dining platform to the west of the garden will be the principal public place for viewing the garden and illuminated glass box. A series of informal open-air “classrooms” at the north edge of the terrace will be located beneath a double row of trees with golden leaves. These areas will be separated from the main terrace by a low, faceted seating wall inscribed on its surface with yet-to-be-determined astronomical data or the names of scientific luminaries.

The new planetarium and garden are going to change the streetscape for the better. They could even become symbols of New York sophistication as iconic as the spectral Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the backyard of the New York Public Library, Bryant Park.

Architects in Soho Galleries

Artists are not the only ones filling galleries with architectural subject matter these days. An installation called TV Tank, at Deitch Projects on Grand Street, gave gallerygoers a chance to snuggle up in steel cocoons. LOT/EK Architecture sliced an old petroleum tanker like a salami, lined the sections with foam rubber tubing, and installed a color television and TV remote-control in each. The sections, presented as makeshift multimedia lounge-chairs, were realigned like a sliced loaf of bread 35 feet long, filling the mysterious, darkened gallery. The side wall of the room displayed TV-Life—illuminated, computer-generated images of the project. LOT/EK partners Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano, who worked with Henry Urbach Architecture on this show, studied architecture at the University of Naples. The pair came to New York to do graduate work at Columbia University in 1989 and now practice in the Meatpacking District.

Around the corner, at Artists Space, on Greene Street, there was another sensuous environment on view during November and December. Designed by Craig Konyk, A Pale Soft Plane allowed visitors to sink into an aquacolored carpet of square foam tiles. The plane, which was tilted, was made from Pudgee, a pressure-sensitive, viscoelastic gel foam with a memory. Like dough, it recorded three-dimensional footprints of visitors—or other bodily impressions, like finger marks—for about a minute. Pudgee was developed for NASA by Dynamic Systems, but Konyk’s design seemed more happy-heavenly than space-age.

On December 12, the 220 Minute Museum, “a timed sequence of 11 different virtual museums” developed in Hani Rashid’s Paperless Studio at Columbia University, was shown at StoreFront for Art and Architecture, on Kenmare Street. Images exploring the viability of the museum as a digital environment with VRML—Virtual Reality Modeling Language—were projected onto six large, movable fabric scrims which were hinged to the gallery’s facade. The sequence was projected first with the cut-out-wall (designed earlier by Steven Holl and Vito Acconci) closed and then with it open so the virtual museums could be glimpsed in the cityscape. Inside StoreFront, ballasts allowed visitors to control their tours along a row of scrims, which grew longer and narrower towards the gallery’s narrow end and would swing in response to the model projected. Students responsible for the models were: Stephen Luk, Ryan Hullinger, Kak Lai, Benjamin Aranda, Beril Guvendiik, Lukas Huggenberger, Benjamin Pollard, Daniel Yang, Philippe Waelle, Yanni Kastamanis, and Quang Su.

Last month, Rashid and his partner at Asymptote, Liseanne Couture, showed their preliminary sketches of the Guggenheim Museum’s gallery of digital art (OCULUS, November 1998, p. 4) at Fredrieke Taylor/TZ’ART on Broome Street. The images in “iscapes 1.0” appeared on 24 flat-screen monitors housed in a transparent polygonal chamber where reflections through prismatic glass created a three-dimensional effect. A mini-monitor with constantly rotating images and a series of prints of the sketches were also included in the show. This month, from February 11 to March 20, another exhibiton of Asymptote’s work, entitled “OffsideOn,” will take place at the new Henry Urbach Architecture gallery on West 26th Street in Chelsea.—J.M.
Once again, the boundaries between art and architecture are breaking down, and New Yorkers are in a unique position to benefit. Stories in this issue describe numerous ways that the two fields have converged, especially in New York, a center of the international art world. Architects are creating gallery installations (pp. 7, 17), while artists are exploring architectural subjects, working at an architectural scale, and placing their works in public spaces (p. 8-9). Artists, dealers, and collectors have proven to be some of our most permissive and supportive clients, commissioning new studios and living spaces. And these opportunities come at a time when corporations have nearly closed their pocketbooks.

Museum commissions just keep coming. New books on museum architecture describe trends in museum design (p. 10) which were also discussed at a sold-out November panel sponsored by the Municipal Art Society's Urban Center Books (p. 11). As well, two prominent museum architects lectured at the Architectural League last fall. One of them, New York’s Richard Gluckman (p. 12), has been working with artists since the 1970s. He has slowly absorbed their ideas, discovering how to create environments ideally suited to various kinds of art. The other lecture was by architect Daniel Libeskind (p. 14), who operates more like an artist. Libeskind’s buildings are typically memorial monuments where form and content are rolled into one. He has been living in Berlin for the past decade, while his first commission, the new Jewish Museum wing in that city, has been realized.

Are Art and Architecture on the Same Track?
by Jayne Merkel

The reasons that art and architecture operate under different rules and assumptions became clear—ironically—at a roundtable discussion about how the two fields are converging. With the Architectural League and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, author Carole Rifkind organized "Resonance and Reverberation" at the Cooper Union’s Great Hall in November. The event was held to celebrate the publication of Rifkind’s A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture (Dutton, 374 pages, 8¼ x 10¼, 112 black-and-white illustrations, cloth, $45.00).

"My concentration in the book was on mainstream work. But when I came up for air, I realized that something else important was happening," Rifkind said. "The boundaries between the disciplines—supposedly diverging since the eighteenth century—now seem to be blurring and even overlapping each other. It’s true that there have been other episodes in the twentieth century in which art and architecture moved together—one thinks of the Russian Constructivists, De Stijl, Expressionism, the Bauhaus, Le Corbusier—but those chapters are now almost ancient history."

"The current tendencies owe a great debt to the late 60s, to such pioneers as Gordon Matta-Clark, Donald Judd, James Turrell, Robert Irwin, Robert Smithson, Richard Serra, Robert Venturi, James Wines, Frank Gehry, Peter Eisenman, Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys, and John Hegjuk. But there has been a remarkable acceleration since the late 80s," Rifkind explained. "Not only has the engagement between the disciplines been more active; it has become vivacious, daring, and broadly diffused."

To prove her point, she flashed slides of work that illustrated the trend. Siah Armajani, David Hammons, RePo History, the Acconci Studio, Dan Graham, Connie Beckley, Donna Dennis, James Casebere, Rachel Whiteread, and Silvia Kolbowski were among the artists. Rifkind showed architects and designers: Mark Robbins, Stanley Saitowitz, Kennedy & Violich, RoTo Architects, Samuel Mockbee, Kuth and Ranieri, Office d’A, and New Yorkers Allan Wexler (see p. 17), Kevin Walz, Deamer + Phillips, Stan Allen, and Bernard Tschumi.

A group of artists and architects then discussed what their work has in common (and what it does not). Vito Acconci, an artist who became known in the early 1970s for using his own body in his art, spoke first. He colorfully summarized his early career, when the work moved off the page and onto the street: He followed people around. Then came the days when he would "apply some physical stress" to his body, followed by years when he created installations with furniture which became "a kind of self-erecting architecture." If the viewer "sat down on a swing, panels would rise to become an instant house." He remains interested in architectural subjects and now operates a studio, staffed with architects, doing public art projects.

Acconci doesn’t think these projects are architecture, though he is beginning to think: "If you’re going to do something on the street, maybe you should follow the rules of architecture." Silvia Kolbowski made the same point. She noted that art and architec-
Cure have "a shared heritage in the apprenticeship system of the medieval guilds, where work was anonymous. As late as 1456, innovation was seen as bad," she said. "With the rise of bourgeois culture, the two disciplines began to diverge. The profession wanted to develop an image of the architect as a service provider, whereas the personification of the artist as eccentric has been safeguarded by the culture." She joked that alienation and eccentricity are not qualities clients seek in architects.

Unlike sculptures, buildings have functions and sites. Also, "artists are expected to produce unique objects, whereas architects can show antecedents," Kolbowski noted. She demonstrated this qualitative gap by quoting Richard Serra: "If Bilbao is a sculpture, it's a very traditional sculpture. It has a base, an armature, and a skin." As she pointed out, "Art is anything I call art—in the very modern sense that one can cross all boundaries—while architecture is largely determined by large commercial developers."

Mark Robbins directs the Wexner Center at the Ohio State University. His own architectural work consists mostly of art gallery installations. "In architecture and the applied arts, an abundance of things work against innovation," he said. "But in the context of mass culture, as in Las Vegas, art and architecture play similar roles." Both serve commerce directly.

"There are a lot of things we don't share," added architect Peggy Deamer of Deamer + Phillips. "Architecture is primarily a service industry," dependent on clients and confined by contracts. Because there are few opportunities for architects to break out, they "are left with formal innovation. The idea in architecture is that, if you are more experimental, you are more art-like and less functional." But compared to art, where the object may be dispensed-with altogether, architectural invention isn't very radical. "In art there is the critique of the museum, the gallery system, the art market. Artists want to break out. What corresponds to that in architecture?"

Architects might question the conventions of architecture," said Sheila Kennedy, of Kennedy & Violich of Boston. She and her partner are "interested in problems of language, the frame wall versus the stud wall . . . the influence of history and modernism . . . especially the rhetoric about materials. Never has architecture been so bombarded with new materials, and yet never has there been such dreadful, formulaic consumer architecture," she said. "Architecture has its own problems. It doesn't need to take on art's."

New Museum Senior Curator Dan Cameron believes the "hybridization" of art and architecture is actually "an idealized way of thinking about either of them. On the contrary, artists and architects seem to be defining their territory. Even fundamental precepts fluctuate wildly. [The overlaps] we see may just be grudging acceptance of one's neighbors' rights." Fortunately, as he pointed out, institutions have proven as malleable as art itself. "Arts have convinced museums to stay open all night, host live animals, intercept satellite transmissions, break laws."

Come to think of it, museums seem to be up for anything architects can dish out, too.
Museums are prestigious and continue to attract attention—witness the incessant construction of new galleries and the stacks of recent books about museum architecture. Yet Victoria Newhouse’s *Museums in Print* (The Moncelli Press, 1998, 288 pages, 8 1/4 x 10 1/8, 300 illustrations, 130 in color, $45) will surely remain the definitive survey of recent museums in Europe and the United States for some time, since it includes not only just-completed museums like Richard Meier’s Getty Center, Daniel Libeskind’s Jewish Museum in Berlin, Steven Holl’s Kiasma in Helsinki, and Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim Bilbao, but also some (such the Rafael Moneo addition to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston) that are still under construction.

By contrast, Justin Henderson’s *Museum Architecture* (foreword by Arthur Rosenblatt, Rockport Publishers, 1998, 192 pages, 12 x 8 7/8, 300 color illustrations, $50) covers far fewer buildings—his 27 to her 55, which Newhouse discusses with square footages and costs. Henderson’s sumptuous book, illustrated with large and lavish photographs, does, however, address more types, such as James Ingo Freed’s U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

Henderson is also far more global in his selections. In addition to the two works by Richard Legorreta in Mexico, Henderson gives three Canadian museums their due. He understands that Asian countries will soon approach parity with the West in the construction of new buildings for art and includes Japanese museums by Tadao Ando and Kisho Kurokawa, and the Whanki Museum in Seoul by Kyu Sung Woo. But astonishingly, neither author analyses the work of Fumihiko Maki nor Arata Isozaki, surely architects who can stand alongside Meier, Moneo, Piano, and Gehry as consummate masters of the museum enterprise.

Both books provide plans but, sadly, they are cursory, tiny, and difficult to read. Sections are non-existent in Henderson’s volume. And while some appear in *Towards a New Museum*, they too suffer from miniaturization, so that comparisons of certain common lighting and circulation solutions are difficult for the reader to make. Fortunately, Newhouse pays painstaking attention to these issues when describing the built works.

Henderson’s text, with its descriptive comments, is a jovial and celebratory supplement to his book’s color images. Newhouse, on the other hand, is analytical and critical. She is particularly opinionated about the subject of museum additions, to which she devotes a long chapter, “Wings That Don’t Fly, and Some That
Do." Each of the four New York art museums, which seem forever-occupied with expansion, is scolded for destroying the integrity of their existing building(s) and for making a muddle of circulation. I.M. Pei’s extensions and renovations of the Louvre similarly arouse her ire. One can take issue with her conclusions, but must concede that she has done her homework. The author lays groundwork for her critiques with observations made from visits to the buildings in question.

Newhouse offers alternatives to expansion. Museums may freeze their collections or disperse them to be displayed in scattered buildings elsewhere. Or, if an addition is necessary, she suggests making it work independently of the original structure. She cites approvingly four “wings that fly”: Louis I. Kahn’s Yale University Art Gallery, Stirling and Wilford’s extension to the Stuttgart Staatsgalerie, the Sainsbury Wing by Venturi and Scott Brown (the only project by that firm to be discussed), and Moneo’s Houston project, now under construction. All are perceived as separate entities, with only the most tangential connections to existing structures. One might also add that they offer few concessions to the architecture of their mother institutions and make independent statements inside and out.

Newhouse has visited museums in Europe and the U.S. which are not generally accessible to the public. Her first chapter is on private museums, which she compares to the “Cabinets of Curiosities” of an earlier age. The enviable tour she maps includes the Museum Insel Hombroich in Dusseldorf by Erwin Heerich and a private museum in Montana by Emilio Ambasz.

In another chapter, titled “The Museum as Sacred Space,” she summarizes the oft-told origins of the public museum and discusses four monumental urban museums of Modern art (in Helsinki by Holl, in Barcelona by Meier, in San Francisco by Mario Botta, and in Bregenz by Peter Zumthor). Chapters on the single-artist museum and “The Museum as Subject Matter: Artists’ Museums and Their Alternative Spaces” follow. I found these particularly original and thought-provoking.

Four unexecuted museum projects by Frank Stella were a surprise to this reader because of their strongly Expressionist character. After the section on additions, Newhouse concludes with the museum as entertainment (emphasizing the Centre Pompidou and the Getty Center) or as “Environmental Art,” (where she tackles Peter Eisenman’s Wexner Center, Rem Koolhaas’s Kunsthalle in Rotterdam, and a trio of museums by Gehry, including the inevitable Bilbao). For those counting citations, Gehry and Piano are the winners.

Newhouse has tried to develop a taxonomy for the various types of museums (mostly for modern and contemporary art) that she discusses. While this works well for private and single-artist museums, several categories overlap and seem rather arbitrary. Nevertheless, anyone touring museums of the Western world must carry Newhouse’s paperbound volume with them, as it is the most complete survey of recent museum architecture I know.

Helen Seching, a professor of Art History at Smith College, has written extensively on museum architecture.
Talking about Museum Architecture

Rarely have so many architects been swiped with so few words. At a panel discussion sponsored by the Municipal Art Society's Urban Center Books in November, Victoria Newhouse said most museum additions either change an institution's personality or desecrate the original architecture. She then cited, as unfortunate examples, the Gwathmey/Siegel addition to Wright's Guggenheim, I. M. Pei's reorganization of the Louvre, Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo's projects at the Met, Richard Gluckman's Carnegie Mellon Museum, and Yoshio Taniguchi's proposal for MoMA. These were comments that should have sparked lively debate, but the four panelists—Philip Johnson, Bernard Tschumi, artist Frank Stella, and new Whitney Museum of American Art director Maxwell Anderson—refused to cooperate.

Newhouse, of course, is a respected architectural historian, editor, and former director of the Architectural History Foundation. She started work on the topic long before MoMA began its most recent expansion, and though her husband, S. I. Newhouse, Jr., is a MoMA trustee, she apparently felt little obligation to support its plan. Johnson too has criticized the approach that MoMA took in planning the expansion, and Tschumi is a disappointed finalist in the competition.

The moderator of the discussion organized in celebration of Newhouse's book, Towards a New Museum, architecture critic Suzanne Stephens, tried to advance the author's argument that museum additions are "wings that don't fly." (Not coincidentally, this is also the title of a critical chapter in the book—see review, p. 10.) Stephens asked Stella what he thought of the Guggenheim addition, and what role large-scale contemporary art played in the creation of spaces like "the 450-foot boat ramp at Bilbao." She questioned, "Do you go for the warehouse look?"

"I'm not a fan of warehouses, but I think the design of spaces can be solved," Stella said. He did not agree that big art necessarily led to big spaces. "I haven't seen Bilbao, but Bilbao is a museum in search of a collection," he said, adding, "It's a matter of luck where work ends up." Then he defended the Guggenheim addition: "For years they used the best part of the museum for restoration."

"You don't mind the changed circulation?" Stephens asked. Stella answered: "It's a question of how picky you want to get."

Undaunted, she turned to Johnson. "Philip, you were there at the Modern. You came up with a tower, on 54th Street, east of the garden's travertine windowless facade, and the Museum actually said, 'No.'"

"I haven't the slightest idea, since I've forgotten all about it," Johnson answered, uncooperatively. "Let's not forget that it was a lousy building to start with. What difference does it make?"

"I like it," Stephens replied. "You'll like this one much better," Johnson said, continuing. "I like it because the garden is restored. I think to shoot for perfection is very difficult. When it's done, it's not."

So Stephens tried Anderson. Referring to what she called the "soft and subtle scheme by Richard Gluckman" as compared with the earlier brazen one by Michael Graves, she asked, "Is this..."
"There is very little architecture that can solve all the problems. Obviously the pressure will continue since the collection keeps growing. But I've been in the position for eight weeks. To make changes in the architecture would be a bit hubristic," Anderson said.

Still upbeat and undiscouraged, Stephens turned to question Tschumi about the MoMA. "Bernard, would you have done better?" He said the reason the commission interested him was "not just because it was the MoMA, but because, as Philip said, it was an impossible program on an impossible site. We decided not to worry about the context. We said, ours will be addition 6 or 27, it doesn't matter. Within that we are going to carve the most extraordinary spaces you can create."

Stephens then gave the author a chance to restate her point. "I think there are many alternatives to wings," Newhouse said. "For several decades, artists have been searching for alternatives to the museum. You can have exhibition spaces around the city."

Anderson interjected, "One reason you can't go all over town is that most museum budgets are labor costs. You would have to duplicate security staff, registrars . . ."

"The whole question of art and architecture is shifting under our feet," Johnson said as the discussion began to wind down.

"We have to accommodate change and allow for change. It's good to start small. We should think about expanding competitions," Stephens said, summing up. "Our conclusion has to be that there is no real solution." —J.M.

Richard Gluckman at the Architectural League

Richard Gluckman is nothing if not modest. In his early projects for artists, he describes himself as merely the "expeditor." But over the years—building on lessons from those early days—he has developed into one of the most original and influential architects of his generation.

As Gluckman explained at the Urban Center in November, he built houses while a student at Syracuse University, before coming into contact with "minimalist" art. However, even as a boy, he was fascinated with the heavy-industrial architecture of the Buffalo waterfront. And it was only later that he became aware of more-refined works in his hometown designed by Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Eliel Saarinen, and Gordon Bunshaft.

The opportunity to develop a voice of his own came after college and three years of practice in Boston, when he set up a design-build firm in New York City, in 1976. He was subsequently asked to renovate a brownstone for Heiner Friedrich and Phillippa deMenil, the art collectors who established the Dia Foundation. Explaining to the audience that the baseboards and crown moldings on the main floor were not original to the brownstone, Gluckman said he "took them off, and artist Dan Flavin, who had great respect for good architectural detail, created new ones with rays of fluorescent light."

Gluckman designed the New York Earth Room (at 393 West Broadway) for an installation by Walter de Maria, as well as projects for Andy Warhol, Cy Twombly, Donald Judd, Fred Sandback, Francesco Clemente, Richard Serra, Jenny Holzer,
and James Turrell. At first, in the 1970s phase Gluckman described as the expeditor period, he was "by no means collaborative" with artists. Now, he says, "I tell my students [at Harvard and Syracuse] and my staff to take as much as they can from them—but give credit."

Though many of those he worked with were called minimalists, the artists didn't like that word any better than Gluckman does when it is applied to him. "Judd preferred the term Maximalism," Gluckman remembered. In art, he explained, "by the mid-twentieth century, the way-of-seeing had shifted radically to a concern for the object in-and-of itself. Pigment, canvas, stone, or metal became the subject. Art was an active presence, and artists began to engage the space in front of the picture plane." In fact, Gluckman thinks of himself as a "maker of frames," which explains why he finds his work "incomplete until the [art]work is in place."

Both for Gluckman and for West Chelsea, the renovation of a West 22nd Street warehouse for the Dia Foundation in 1987 was a breakthrough. "Reading Reyner Banham helped me understand the old Buffalo industrial architecture," he said, remembering its influence. However, the Dia "style" was also based on simple common sense. With little money to spend on renovations, Gluckman used the building as it was. Later, when the surrounding neighborhood began to supplant Soho as the center of contemporary art, the raw concrete-and-plaster style predominated for both galleries and residential lofts.

Gluckman's firm has been commissioned to design more than 40 commercial galleries, including the influential Gagosian Gallery on Wooster Street, the old Mary Boone Gallery in Soho, and Paula Cooper's space in Chelsea. Each was a different response to the clients' needs and to the kind of art exhibited, he said. But bare concrete floors, natural light from skylights, and glazed garage-door facades opening onto the street are typical. "In the 80s we convinced gallery directors to use pinpoint lights rather than track lighting," he said. And he has pushed his consultants as well, working very closely with engineers. He believes "too many architects abdicate to them."

"We're intuitive designers," Gluckman added, though "over time our approach was informed by experience." He remains concerned with budgets, a philosophy that governed later museums, even when funds were more generous. Gluckman designed the Andy Warhol Museum in an historic building in Pittsburgh where, for a change, he was allowed to do more than just interiors. His firm designed a pavilion at the Augustus St. Gaudens Historic site in rural Cornish, New Hampshire; the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin on the Unter den Linden; and the subtle recent addition to the Whitney Museum. He is now at work on a second, 42,000-square-foot building for Dia on West 22nd Street, and the new partnership, Gluckman Mayner Architects (established in 1998), is designing a small art museum in Braga, Portugal; the Austin Museum of Art in Texas (OCCULU, November 1998, p. 4); the Museo Picasso Malaga, on the site of first-century Roman ruins; and the Mori Museum in Tokyo, atop the 54-story Roppongi 66 tower, a building with 60,000-square-foot floor
Nussbaum Museum, he says, "One feels very vulnerable to all by synagogue, and to the museum entrance. Just entering the gallery, which occupies a volume separate from the adjacent building housing the Berlin Museum (of which the Jewish museum is a department). The connection is buried underground, and the area between the two structures will remain open to suggest "the space that the Jewish community, which arrived when the city began 700 years ago, can never fill again." In this void, 49 square meters designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox.

Clarity, careful detail, and an excelling sense of proportion make Gluckman Mayner’s apparently-raw architecture elegant. The firm is still doing galleries—neighboring Andrea Rosen and Luhring Augustine on West 24th Street are the most recent—and artists’ residences, but the architects are now designing other projects which offer different opportunities for expression. They are working on the Second Stage Theatre with Rem Koolhaas (OCULUS, September 1998, pp. 5-6), and were asked by Richard Serra to collaborate on a Holocaust Memorial in Berlin. (This was “before Peter Eisenman asked Serra to work with him,” a relationship that later collapsed.) Gluckman was invited to work with scenic artist Robert Wilson on a 16-block neighborhood in Pittsburgh, “using the alley system to turn the theaters inside out and to identify a district.” The firm has undertaken a Methodist church for an Hispanic group in the Bronx and several boutiques, including Helmut Lang in Soho (OCULUS, January 1999, p. 29), the new Versace store on Madison Avenue in Manhattan, and another for Versace in South Beach (Miami), where one façade is of solid masonry and the other is a vitrine of dichroic glass that becomes opaque for five minutes each hour.

Daniel Libeskind at the League

Presenting the four buildings he has been commissioned to design, Daniel Libeskind, who turns 53 this year, demonstrated an almost-annoying self-confidence at odds with his boyish manner and soft-spoken, accent English. The earliest of these projects, although he discussed it last, was the Jewish Museum in Berlin, which apparently sprung full-blow from the head of a then-young architect, but was based on theoretical projects he had been working on for decades. It has been underway for ten years. The three others were also European museums won in international competitions. None of the buildings had yet opened to the public.

Libeskind has been dealing with poignant material. He began by describing his museum in Osnabrück—a memorial to the Jewish painter Felix Nussbaum, who fled from the German occupation in 1944, Nussbaum was betrayed to authorities by his neighbors in Belgium who smelled the artist’s paint fumes.

Because Nussbaum “could never get away from his paintings,” Libeskind thought it important not to let the viewer stand back from them, either. “Museums usually provide some distance so paintings can speak objectively. Here, I thought a space that was less than 2 meters [about 6 feet] was perfectly adequate.” Only a few paintings will be displayed at a time in the new gallery, which occupies a volume separate from the adjacent Cultural History Museum and the rectangular wooden structure. A zinc-covered bridge ties the gallery to the existing museum, while a second, “sliver” bridge penetrates it. This last, the white Nussbaum bridge, is paved with open grating “so you can hear people going through the new and old buildings.”

Showing an aerial view of the complex, the architect told the audience his design was “planned just for birds and angels—you can’t see this perspective from the ground.” The three buildings in the scheme collide “because, despite in the continuum of history, there is no continuity.” To orient the structures conceptually, Libeskind projected a line from the city gate, through a nearby synagogue, and to the museum entrance. Just entering the Nussbaum Museum, he says, “One feels very vulnerable to all these layers of history.”

Libeskind then showed a scheme for the Imperial War Museum in Manchester, England. The museum, set in a partly-abandoned wharf area, represents “the crust of the earth, broken into shards and re-erected on this particular site.” Exhibits at the museum, which owns a large archive of war films and photographs, will be electronic. “Huge projections of citizens and their stories” will make the museum building at the wharf visible from the center of the city at night and provide “a completely new way of relating private memories of experiences,” he said.

Next was Libeskind’s Spiral Extension to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Unlike other competitors for the V&A project, Libeskind decided that “the extension was about museum founders Philip Webb’s and William Morris’ idea of showing whatever demonstrates that England can compete in design. It’s a very avant-garde idea for the post-industrial transition.”

The spiral, designed with Ove Arup & Partners, will serve as a new entrance and connector “to be entered from a number of different directions.” It provides glimpses and views of the museum’s evolving collection of “fifty buildings done by fifty different architects. The angles are not arbitrary, but developed in close linkage to what’s around it and the angles of the roofscape.” And though it is an unusually modern and assertive addition to a British cultural monument, its concrete wall is tiled with wild patterns for a Victorian effect. The architect noted with pride that the spiral eventually managed to win necessary approvals, despite an outraged response to it from the press.

As at the Nussbaum, Libeskind’s zigzagging Jewish Museum in Berlin is not grafted directly onto the existing eighteenth-century building housing the Berlin Museum (of which the Jewish museum is a department). The connection is buried underground, and the area between the two structures will remain open to suggest “the space that the Jewish community, which arrived when the city began 700 years ago, can never fill again.” In this void, 49 square columns with rounded corners are arranged in a grid. Forty-eight of the columns, which project from the ground, are filled with the earth of Berlin. One contains the soil of Israel.

“I was the only architect not to design a neutral box,” Libeskind told the audience. As at the Nussbaum, the haunting building in Berlin is a museum of empty, angular spaces. “Some of the voids are not enterable; some are enterable from underground. . . you begin to feel the nausea of disorientation.” The 27-meter-high (about 75 foot) Holocaust Tower is another extreme experience—“boiling hot in summer and freezing cold in winter. You see the changing light of Berlin and hear the noises around you.” The strange stairs are “not whimsies”; they result from being designed with minimal structural supports.

This agonizing maze of a museum will contain “furniture, toys, cinema. It’s about the development of city life and is marked by 1,000 different windows onto the real city beyond. The concrete structure “is clad in zinc which has not been pre-treated, so it will become the blue of Berlin.” It’s a blue which Schinkel recommended: “If you want to be successful, use as much zinc as you can.” Such is the advice from an architect who knew Berlin but nothing of the Holocaust, seized by another who must link the two. —J.M.
Michael Sorkin’s Wiggle
by Gavin Keeney

The late-modern city becomes a lush network of blobs, nobs, pods, and islets in the dense, visual text of Michael Sorkin Studio: Wiggle (The Monacelli Press, 1998, 192 pages, 7 1/ 8 x 10, 140 illustrations—60 in color, paper, $35). Infiltrations of blue (sky/water) and green (parks/fields) counter an agglomeration of vibrant, amorphous hybrid buildings which invite free association, as they seem to be changing constantly. At times, Sorkin’s combinatory zeal reaches critical mass in a concoction resembling spaghetti or even lasagna, where here and there resembling strands of custards, or caramelized carrots served in a slather of greenish cream sauce and topped with a sprig of fines herbes.

Analogs pile upon analogs in rich and often hilarious “urbanagrams” which are leavened by the famous Sorkin penchant for zoomorphic exuberance. From skyscrapers in Hamburg to courtyard housing in Neurasia (a mythical Asian city), from the political precinct of Spreegoben in Berlin to post-Ceaucescu Bucharest, the Sorkin Studio suggests uncontrolled complexity and systematic re-integration of cityscape, biosphere, and noosphere.

But below this somewhat-silly surface is a deadly serious urbanism. Missing here is Sorkin’s grave plan for the Black Triangle in the former East Germany. He proposed flooding the strip-mined zone to create lake-front villages and islands linked by slender bridges and causeways. The obsession with “inhabited” water is preeminent in the book, and Wiggle does include projects for the Brooklyn waterfront and Governors Island.

The production values of the Sorkin studio rival cinema—and images of the urban fabric produced are intensely tactile and textured through shifting, turning, and stacking traditional and nontraditional urban units. Event horizons and iconic structures punctuate these visions of layered urban quarters. Transportation systems and other interlocking modes of conveyance structure the density of Sorkin’s cities, generating a strip-cluster dichotomy. The drawings retain traces of this process, with registration lines and site lines crisscrossing the large-format rendered and shadowed plans, so that the textile images are not unlike ones at the heart of Italo Calvino’s seminal antinovel, Invisible Cities. They seem to suggest that a craftsmanlike sensibility might one day replace the abstractions and statistics of modern urban planning.

Allan Wexler: Between Architecture and Art

In tiny but habitable houses serving only one function at a time and in rough-hewn models, handmade furniture, and purposeful-looking follies, Allan Wexler explores “the relationship between art and architecture,” as he puts it. The new monograph, Allan Wexler (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 64 pages, 8 1/4 x 10 1/8, 99 illustrations, 56 in color, paper, $25) with an introduction by Bernd Schulz, traces the career of the New York artist who holds degrees in both art and architecture, shows his work at the Ronald Feldman Gallery, and teaches architecture at Pratt Institute.

In 1973, when he arrived in New York, Wexler proposed timing the lights in the new World Trade Center to create images of the Empire State Building and other monuments on its facades at night. But soon he was making simple wood structures that explicitly showed how they had been made. By 1980, he had begun to zero in on functions—sheds with fold-away dining tables, chairs, and beds that slid through the walls. He built changeable, freestanding rooms where avant-garde plays were performed. As the rituals of life became the subject of his art, architectural forms became his language.

Wexler’s art constitutes a kind of architectural “research,” as Schulz calls it, and some of his works, like the fold-away Parsons Kitchen of 1991 (Oculus, December 1998, p. 6) have impressive lessons to teach about efficient storage. But there is always a super-rational quality that, combined with raw craftsmanship, gives Wexler’s work an iconic quality. It looks like art because of its simplicity, straightforwardness, and Wexler’s control. More than the size (small) or the setting (usually a gallery), it is the fact that no one but the artist has had a hand in its creation or use that distinguishes it from architecture.

The projects “suggest an everyday kind of usefulness,” though “their creator was much less interested in solving problems than in exploring fields within which certain phenomena (such as collecting rainwater or eating a meal together) give rise to a whole range of questions,” Schulz writes, placing Wexler “firmly within a tradition of humane and ecological thought that goes back to Thoreau, Emerson, and Buckminster Fuller.”

For the last few years, Wexler has been working with his wife, Ellen Wexler, an artist, designer and educator,
on a series of projects in public places and museums. In 1996, the pair collaborated on a permanent, interactive exhibit at the Henry Luce Nature Observatory at Belvedere Castle, in Central Park. Now, for the High Museum in Atlanta, they are working on an environment which fosters new ways to experience the art with the architecture (by Richard Meier). At the Albany Institute of History and Art, they are building the “smallest museum in the world,” the 5 x 5 x 6-foot Museum of Egyptian Art. And for Expo 2000 in Hannover, Germany, they are creating an artwork which “brings the wind turbine’s graceful shape and majestic scale down to earth” for the public to experience firsthand. —J.M.

Architects’ Dream Clients by Kira L. Gould

As part of a lecture series about the business of architecture, the Architectural League hosted an evening with two enlightened men who surely should be called patrons, rather than simply clients.

Jay Chiat, a founder of the Chiat/Day advertising powerhouse, possesses a trait most admirable in a client—confidence in his architect. In the early years of his break-the-rules ad agency, Chiat thought about how he and his colleagues worked, concluding that the traditional office was all wrong. At least it was wrong for the ad business. “The traditional office seems like grammar school,” he explained. “Your supervisor always knows where you are supposed to be. I wanted to create something that’s more like college. I wanted people to take responsibility for their actions. I also didn’t want them to be in positions where they might opt to hoard—rather than share—information.”

Chiat has worked with people such as Frank Gehry (on the Oldenburg-binocular structure in Santa Monica and other projects) and Gaetano Pesce (on a Lower Manhattan resin-floored playpen-office sited in a staid building). From the beginning, these collaborations with architects have been satisfying. Chiat is apparently not a linear thinker, so he was thrilled when his first architect asked him how he “wanted to live”—not “what kind of house” he wanted. He said, “I’ve always believed that I could get great architecture if I stayed with that philosophy.”

“I have wanted spaces that are provocative and inspirational climates for innovation. Telling that to an architect is not like telling him what kind of aesthetic I’m looking for. I don’t really think it’s the client’s role to have preconceived notions about what the building might look like. We should be concerned with what will go on inside and trust the architect to push the design as much as we are pushing the behavior.” Perhaps the best thing about Chiat as a client is that he truly believes in the creative impulse and is fascinated when that impulse is turned toward building something. “If I had the money, I would build much more,” he mused. “What a charge!”

Jorge Vergara is a client building on an even larger scale. He heads Omniflue, a major Mexican manufacturer of nutritional supplements which is building a major convention complex in Guadalajara, Mexico. The complex will have cultural components, offices, hotels, and housing. Coop Himmelblau, Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, Jean Nouvel, Stephen Holl, and Tod Williams and Billie Tsien have been selected to design projects there. Vergara was scheduled to speak but his flight was delayed, so Mexico City architect Enrique Norten spoke instead. Moderator Joseph Giovannini fielded questions.

Norten is the only Mexican architect who will design for the campus. He has helped educate Vergara about contemporary architecture over the past two years. “Even as he was realizing how much he had to learn about architecture, Vergara was aware that he might possess one of the great moments of opportunity to create something that would represent the best of this generation,” Norten said. The project may begin construction next year, with completion scheduled for 2003.

How did Vergara make his selections? “After we looked at work in slides and in person, it was an intuitive process,” Norten said. “It was really about how the architects felt about things. Jorge always wanted to talk to them about the human condition and the spirit of the people in this world.” According to Norten, Vergara “wants to create a cohesive whole. He wants it to be a successful real estate development, and he feels it critical to contribute to the city in a meaningful way. Beyond those concerns, he would love to create an architectural event. He was very taken with the Guggenheim in Bilbao. The building impressed him, of course, but he was even more impressed with what it has done for the city.”

IN THE BOOKSTORES

Allan Wexler, introduction by Bernd Schulz

Parsons Kitchen, Allan Wexler

Yardsaver Houses, Allan Wexler

Picket Fence Furniture, Allan Wexler
P.S./I.S. 89: A New School Downtown  
by Kira L. Gould

Last fall, when AIA New York Chapter members toured the new 100,000-square-foot, 5-story school in Battery Park City, the project proved a reminder of the difficulties and opportunities associated with building in New York. Henry Stolzman, AIA, of Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg led the tour. His firm worked with Costas Kondylis & Associates (the architect of record) and Richard Cook & Associates on the project, which is actually two separate schools with some shared facilities located in the base of an apartment building. Cook was primarily responsible for the exteriors, while Kondylis designed the apartments. Stolzman’s partner, Wayne Berg, FAIA, was the principal designer of the school interiors.

Getting natural light into the schools’ main public spaces was a problem. The insertion of fire doors in the main corridor—between the two primary entrances—made a glazed cast wall possible, bringing wonderful light into the cafeteria, which would have otherwise had no windows. “We struggled hard for this,” Stolzman said. “It was one of those things that we simply refused to let go. We just couldn’t live with such an important gathering space devoid of daylighting.” Fighting for crucial aspects of the design was natural, because the residents of Tribeca and Battery Park City had fought so hard for the school itself. The design team, naturally, drew on this passion: “There’s no question that they inspired us,” Stolzman said.

Throughout the building, corridors curve, softening the space. And though the walls are concrete block, the architects managed an important variation. Ground-face concrete block—not a Board of Education standard—is a noticeable refinement. “We had to demonstrate to the Board of Ed that this material would be structurally and otherwise comparable to the standard. But the time and effort was worth it. When there’s so much of it around, a small improvement can have a dramatic impact,” Stolzman explained.

The designers saw the corridors as streets and took care to provide carpeted ledges, landings, and other incidental meeting spaces along the way. As well, there are “stoops” outside the classrooms. These “break-out” spaces allow groups to have a change of scenery—and teachers to vary their environments more. Also, some classrooms can be joined to produce opportunities for team teaching.

The library remains unfinished, and the fifth-floor outdoor space adjacent to it still does not have the park furniture that was specified because it was cut from the budget. But kids have been attending the school since September, and the community has already begun to respond to invitations to use the larger rooms after school hours. As Stolzman pointed out, any facility this long in coming is one that the community wants used in every possible way.

Lessons Learned for Schools  
by Kira L. Gould

In December, the Chapter’s Education Committee sponsored the reprise of a Professional Interest Area event in Chicago. At that event, Kenneth Karpel, AIA, director of design for the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), and Rose Diamond, New York City Board of Education (Division of School Facilities) senior director for planning and capital development, discussed the prognosis for urban schools. At the progam in New York, Diamond was replaced by Cheryl Hood Francis, director of the Office of Strategic Planning, Division of School Facilities for the Board of Education.

The challenges, as everyone knows, are huge. Enrollments have been growing, while classroom space and buildings continue to deteriorate. The numbers are stunning. “The price tag for relieving overcrowding, bringing existing buildings to a state of good repair, and providing appropriate space for educational initiatives was $2 billion per year for the next ten years. Yet the average annual capital allocation prior to 1988 was less than $200 million—10 percent of the need,” Karpel said. SCA was created in 1988 as a response to the problem, and things have since been slowly improving. But inventive solutions and partnerships are still needed.

As Karpel explained, one of the most important partnerships is between the SCA and the Division of School Facilities. “The concept of ‘managing architect’ is alive and well in New York City,” he said. “Since the turn of the century, the Division of
School Facilities—comprised of planners, architects, and engineers—has been the planning, design, and construction department of the public school system translating pedagogical needs into brick-and-mortar architectural solutions.

"With the advent of the SCA, a professional staff was retained. It’s responsible for system-wide needs-assessment, establishing budgets, prioritizing projects, site identification, and drafting requirements for capital programs. While the Division itself is the SCA’s client, a key role is representing the ultimate clients: the end users (superintendents, principals, teachers, and, most importantly, students). This can be quite a challenge in a decentralized school system comprised of 32 community school districts (each led by a superintendent and an elected school board), six high school superintendents, and a city-wide education district."

"The SCA is essentially the developer, responsible for site acquisition, scope, design, construction, and post-occupancy evaluation of the capital program. The entire program is managed by SCA’s professional staff. Additionally, forty percent of all design services are executed by in-house staff. Projects designed in-house include minor improvements to new schools. The remainder of the design work—and all construction—is executed by consultant architects, engineers, and contractors."

Hood discussed the capital plan that the New York City Board of Education is writing for the fiscal years 2000 through 2004. Some $10.9 billion is needed to eliminate overcrowding, make buildings watertight, expand technology initiatives, upgrade building interiors, and provide program accessibility. Existing structures, for which $4.32 billion is earmarked, require ADA improvements, building envelope repairs, and replacement of all coal-fired boilers. New-capacity requirements, earmarked at $3.17 billion, are derived from current overcrowding numbers, with enrollment growth (from 1997 to 2002) of some 17,000 students. All told, 75,600 seats must be created—44,900 of them in new construction.

The division is also trying to implement a Life-Cycle Replacement Program “different from previous capital plans,” Hood said, “because of its process, which includes Building Condition Assessment Surveys, superintendents prioritizing projects, an asset management approach, and multiple delivery systems: the SCA, the Department of Design and Construction, private developers, and nonprofit partners.” Hood expects the plan to be approved this spring. Opportunities for architects will undoubtedly follow.

The Importance of Being a Writer
by Kira L. Gould

"The debate about what architects should learn has raged for decades, but one discipline remains scarce in almost every architecture school. Yet writing is a skill needed for marketing, project management, publicity, and effective communication with clients."

Architect, educator, and former Architectural Record editor in chief Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA, spoke to Chapter members and others in December about his new book, Writing for Design Professionals (W.W. Norton, 1998, 232 pages, 7 ¼ x 9 ½, 26 illustrations, 17 in color, cloth, $36.50), "Good communication skills are critical," he pointed out, "not just nice to have. This is not really about being able to write ‘better,’ but about being able to write the things that architects need to write."

Looking at a design practice, it’s clear that architects need to write effective proposals, reports, memos, websites, E-mail, design-award submittals, press releases, and more. Writing is key to a successful practice.

Kliment identified several principles of good writing. First, he said, “Write as you would talk.” He advised keeping sentences short (usually no more than 18 or 20 words). Another important rule: avoid design-babble and jargon. “Don’t let yourself believe that phrases such as this project decontextualizes its site, ‘the owner articulates his experiential experience,’ or contrapuntal juxtaposition actually mean anything” at all. "There are moments when technical terminology is required, but keep your audience in mind and define if necessary.

Another related rule of thumb: Keep things simple, and be specific. “If you are talking about a classroom, don’t call it a self-contained instructional space.” Also, know what you want to say, and use the active voice. (“We did this” rather than, “This was done.”) Kliment emphasized the importance of featuring the architects, engineers, and others involved in projects. Including these actors in a story will bring a project to life.

As Kliment said, “These rules are not meant to make Hemingways out of people. Not all people can become great writers, but all people can become lucid writers.”
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FACULTY POSITIONS-FALL 1999  

All positions require a Ph.D. or equivalent degree or a Master's degree and professional licensure or registration. A CV should be sent by 3/1/99 to the individual listed.  

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ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN, Asst. Prof. A knowledge and experience in the application of computers to architectural design is desirable. Professor Carmi Bee.  

Salary ranges: Asst. Prof. $30,829-$53,779, Assoc. Prof. $40,173-$64,226, Prof. $49,866-$77,229. See also http://www.ccity.cuny.edu/positions.  

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CONTINUING EXHIBITIONS
The new website, www.aiany.org, has many of features that we hope will be useful to our members and to the public. These include a searchable database of architecture firms in New York City; a membership directory; answers to frequently asked questions about licensing, registration, and the AIA Continuing Education System (CES); Chapter events listings; and an RSVP line. Check it out!

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BOOKLIST
Rizzoli Bookstores’ Top Ten
As of December 1998


2. Steven Ehrlich: Architects, Joseph Giovannini and Steven Ehrlich (Rizzoli, cloth, $60).

3. The Houses of McKim, Mead & White, Samuel G. White (Rizzoli, cloth, $70).

4. Steven Ehrlich: Architects, Joseph Giovannini and Steven Ehrlich (Rizzoli, paper, $40).


8. Greene & Greene: Masterworks, Bruce Smith, Alexander Verhoo (Chronicle, cloth, $49).


10. Fontainebleau, Jean-Matte Pruvost De Montelou (Seila, cloth, $40).

ATTENTION MEMBERS!
The AIA New York Chapter Committee on the Environment’s Sustainable Design Booklet provides information on green architecture. AIA members can earn CES learning units by reading the booklet and filling out the included AIA CES Self-Report form. The booklet is available from the Chapter for $6 (members) or $10, plus $2 for shipping. Send payment and order request to 200 Lexington Ave., 6th fl., New York, NY 10016. Please make checks payable to the AIA New York Chapter.
In New York, old water mains burst, bridges erode, and leaky sewers sink streets. But preventative maintenance on civil infrastructure can be as inconvenient as these disasters are. At last fall’s “Invisible Construction Conference,” held at New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, the Institute for Civil Infrastructure Systems asked, “How do we revitalize these lifelines without disrupting the people and businesses we serve?”

“Invisible construction” encompasses any method allowing physical repairs to be handled unobtrusively, with little or no impact (such as road closures and noise pollution) on the surrounding community—especially during peak times. The conference examined pioneering methods, such as the pothole repair unit by Leo Mara of Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore, California. Mara’s “on-the-fly” repair vehicle allows potholes to be filled and smoothed while the vehicle runs down the road at 35 miles per hour. The invention makes roadway repair more efficient and self-contained, and fewer lanes of traffic are disrupted.

At the conference, many of the methods and techniques were still fledgling innovations. So the turnout was, in fact, just as interesting as the presentations. (Political officials on stage obviously realized infrastructure repair is a critical issue in the quest for an improved quality of life in cities.) One of the most vociferous in attendance was Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, who recognizes the phenomenal costs of maintenance and its potential negative impact on citizens.

Ferrer is pushing for rejuvenated rail lines in order to reduce truck traffic on area roadways. “Ninety percent of the freight coming in and going out of the metro area is on trucks,” he pointed out. “One tractor-trailer wears roadways 5,000 times faster than a car. And in my community, there’s no question that the exhaust has caused—and continues to worsen—our astronomical asthma rates, which eclipse those anywhere else in the nation.” Ever the politician, Ferrer could not resist tossing a few hyperbolic jabs at the proposed site for a new Yankee Stadium. The new stadium, he insisted, would cause “the biggest traffic jam in the Western Hemisphere.”

Architects and their allied professions should keep an eye on infrastructure issues and the emerging technologies that invisible construction spawns. No single building project in New York (or any other urban area) is fully separate from the infrastructure supporting and surrounding it. When architects understand how infrastructure can be created, preserved, and repaired efficiently, their own projects can proceed more smoothly.

The Brick’s the Thing

At a meeting of the AIA New York Chapter’s Codes Committee in October, Michael Gurevich, of the New York City Brickwork Design Center, addressed issues of designing, troubleshooting, repairing, and maintaining brick walls. As Gurevich explained, defects in brick walls can often be traced to poor maintenance and design. The application of waterproof sealers and quick-fix repointing are two common problems. Wall flashing must drain to the exterior. And neglecting to provide enough control joints (to accommodate wall movement) can cause deterioration.

Brick buildings experience thermal expansion, as well as another kind of movement related to moisture. When bricks are heated to 2000 degrees Fahrenheit during manufacture, the clay temporarily shrinks. However, once exposed to the atmosphere, bricks expand as they reabsorb moisture. As a result, brick walls can move as much as one eighth of an inch in 20 feet, both laterally and vertically.

Cracks which subsequently appear in brick walls will often develop at locations where joints should have been placed. Vertical cracks are a common sign of uncontrolled lateral expansion. Gurevich explained that, when bricks rest on horizontal shelf angles, support must be continuous. Otherwise, unsupported portions will expand more than portions in areas where brick is supported, resulting in vertical shear cracks.

Of course, flashing is required at the bottom of walls and in other locations where water can accumulate. Walls bearing on foundations, shelf-angle supports, or lintels above wall openings must be flashed to channel water out of the wall. However, Gurevich cautioned that flashing material placed atop angles, lintels, and brick supports must extend horizontally to the face of the brick. The drainage openings (weep holes) placed immediately above this flashing allow water to drain. But if flashing stops short of the face—or if weep holes are clogged—then trapped water will eventually rust structural steel lintels and shelf angles.
The recent Heritage Ball honored what Paul Goldberger has called the "stunning impact" of Lewis Davis, FAIA; Samuel Brody, FAIA; and Richard Ravitch on New York City. Architects, business and civic leaders, friends, and family of the honorees packed The Pierre to celebrate the presentation of the 1998 President's Award to the trio for forty years of outstanding contributions to cities and the belief in the social responsibility of architecture. With close to 700 people in attendance, the event honored Davis, Brody, and Ravitch's collective work, with a tribute video featuring Beverly Sills, the Honorable Edward Koch, and Eugene Kahn, FAIA.

1. Carmi Ber, FAIA; Jerry Davis, FAIA; and Robert Geddes, FAIA.
2. Christopher Scholz, AIA, and Ines Elshof, ASNE, AIA.
3. Richard Ravitch and Peter Skidmore, FAIA.
4. Denise Hall, AIA, and Lawrence Lang.
6. Dana Gallo; Michael Davis; Peter Davis; Lewis Davis, FAIA, and Steven Davis, FAIA.
7. Walter A. Hunt Jr., AIA; J. Max Bond Jr., FAIA; Lewis Davis, FAIA; and Rolf Ohlson, FAIA.
8. Friends and family toast the occasion with Sally Brody.
Actor Stanley Tucci and artist Nane Annan, the wife of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, opened the Sixth Annual Construction display this past November in the United Nations Visitors' Lobby. According to national executive director of Construction Cheri Melillo of the New York firm Butler Rogers Baskett, 28 cities participated in the event this year. New York winners included Water of Babel by Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum (the Juror's Favorite), Enlightenment by Ove Arup & Partners (awarded for Structural Ingenuity), Goya in Goya by R.M. Kliment & Frances Halsband Architects (Best Use of Labels), 72 Percent Solution by Perkins Eastman Architects (named Best Meal).

Honorable Mentions went to Sole Food by Butler Rogers Baskett Architects and Blueprint to End Hunger by The Phillips Group. Thirteen hundred emergency programs throughout the five boroughs received more than 80,000 pounds of canned food after this year’s 26 New York Constructions were disassembled.

In December, at the prestigious Seagram Gallery (thanks to the support of Joseph E. Seagram & Sons and Israel A. Seinuk) the AIA New York Chapter celebrated the year’s end and the arrival of a new president. Outgoing president Rolf Ohlhausen, FAIA, introduced the Design Awards Committee leadership in his parting remarks. His “top ten” list of what we saw in 1998 and what 1999 promises to bring the Chapter cited the premises effort, the expansion of the New York Foundation for Architecture, the new fellows (nine women and five men), the Jefferson Award (and Heritage Ball honors) presented to Lewis Davis, FAIA, the annual meeting (with the moving speech by Tony Hiss), the development of the website, the final year of Carol Clark’s successful tenure as executive director (and the appointment of Sally Siddiqi in Clark’s place), and last year’s 32 design awards.

Following this, Design Awards Committee Chair Miguel Rivera, AIA, presented the awards. Walter A. Hunt, Jr., AIA, the new Chapter president, commended departing board members, welcomed new ones, and challenged the membership to do more and work harder in the year to come. “There are many things on our plate as a Chapter,” he said, “and I’m thrilled to be a part of this group at such an exciting time. Let’s not waste a single opportunity this year.” —K.G.

Save the Date

At this year’s Heritage Ball, the 1999 President’s Award will be presented to John L. Tishman and the New York partners of Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates. The Ball will take place on Wednesday, September 22, at The Waldorf-Astoria. Invitations will be mailed in July; reservations are required.

Corrections

The photographs by Katherine McGlynn that accompanied our January 1999 story “John Hejduk Honored by The Cooper Union” (p. 6) were mistakenly credited to another photographer. OCUULUS apologizes.

The Chapter apologizes for printing the incorrect firm name for Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, P. C. in the capital campaign donor list.
Sally Siddiqi has brought her diverse and impressive experience to the position of executive director of the AIA New York Chapter, a post which she assumed last month. However, it's her energy, enthusiasm, and passionate belief in the power of design that will really make a difference for the Chapter.

A Minneapolis native, Siddiqi began her career on Bainbridge Island, near Seattle. There she worked for more than a decade as a partner at Siddiqi & Siddiqi, an architecture and landscape design firm which specialized in energy-efficient houses and ecologically sensitive landscapes. Upon moving to New York City in 1983, she joined Mark K. Morrison Associates, a landscape architecture firm, working on master plans for Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx, Von Briesen Park on Staten Island, and other projects. "I had always been very involved in the environment, but New York gave me many more ways to put my designer's knowledge to work in the realm of sustainability," Siddiqi has said.

While running her own consulting firm, she served as a director and as president of Architects Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility/New York. As a Loeb Fellow at Harvard in 1993-94, she studied strategic planning and organizational management at the Kennedy School of Government and at the Harvard Business School. Siddiqi has since done strategic planning, fund-raising, marketing, and public relations for environmental organizations including the United Nations Environment Programme. At the UN she helped develop a strategic plan for the organization—as well as produced a conference, a book, and a PBS television program about women global-environmental leaders.

Siddiqi's multifaceted background is well suited to current AIA New York Chapter needs. "Architects are poised to embrace their important role in moving forward in the next century," Siddiqi has explained. She believes, as do other Chapter leaders, that a critical moment is upon us. "We have an opportunity to look at society from a new perspective," she said. "With the skills that designers have, we can work toward something much bigger than ourselves. What architects do today can have a larger impact on the world. With our training and experience, we have a unique opportunity to contribute to the common good in our city, as well as nationally and globally."

"We have the ability to work with a number of different professions...we have to be careful not to shut anyone out. I believe that the architects and designers in New York City can be leaders in moving the profession forward, to help solve some of the most pressing local, regional, and global urban and environmental issues." Siddiqi is reluctant to outline specific goals while she is becoming acquainted with the Chapter and its members, but she places a priority on strengthening connections with other organizations in the city. And, like Chapter President Walter A. Hunt, Jr., AIA, Siddiqi sees increasing the percentage of active members to be as important as attracting new ones. She also hopes to boost the profile of the AIA and heighten the public perception of local architects in the media. In the meantime, Siddiqi encourages members and others to tell her what they think. "I don't have an agenda," she said "I only have ideas. I have a process in mind, but not a specific product. Now is the time for learning, input, and collaboration." —K.G.
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