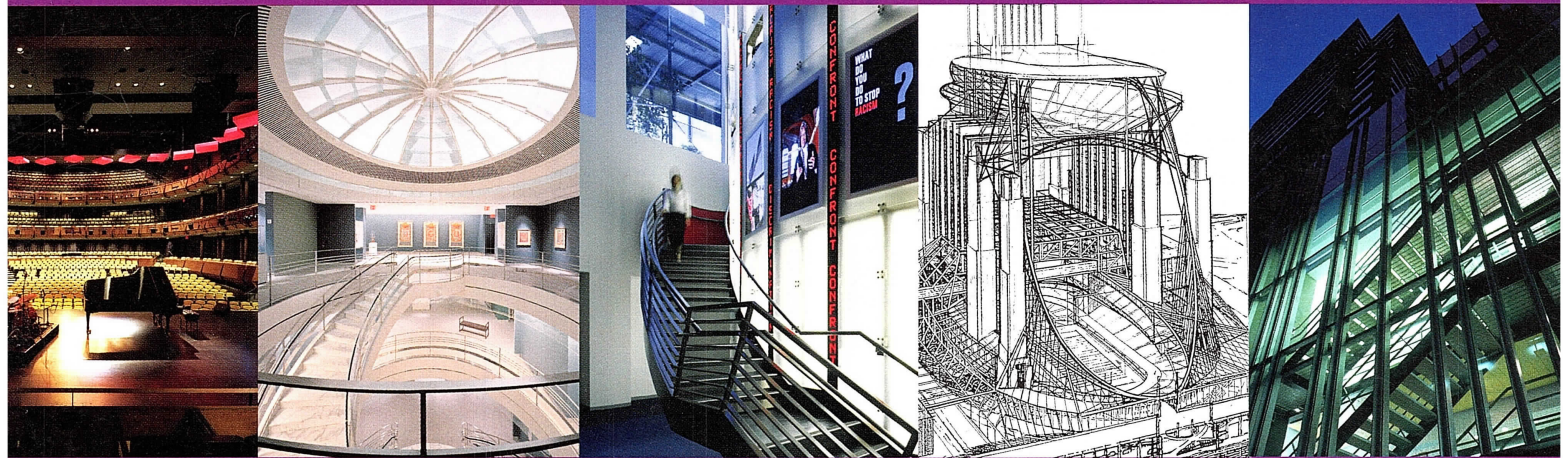


Winter 2004/05

Oculus

PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS NEW YORK CHAPTER VOLUME 66 ISSUE 4 \$10



Lifting It Up Crossing Boundaries Lights on 59th Street Gamesmanship Dream Factory The Fame Game

Fun City



AIA 2004 Design Award Winner



Architect: Daniel Goldner Architects
Photo: ©2004 David Joseph

The new, state-of-the-art **Ironworker's Training Facility** in Long Island City, NY is a big winner — not only as a showcase for the talent and skill of the union members who helped build it, but for its architect, Daniel Goldner Architects, whose work recently won the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter 2004 Design Award.

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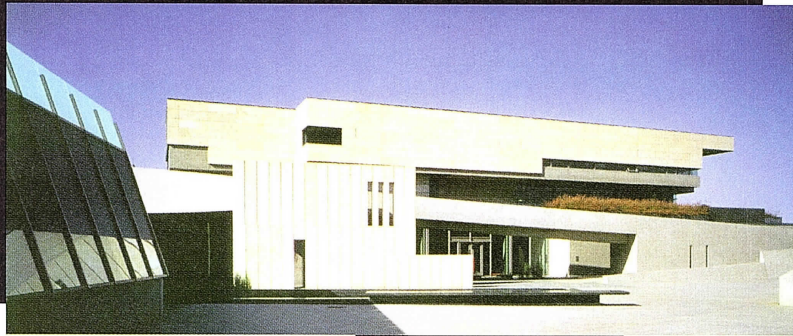
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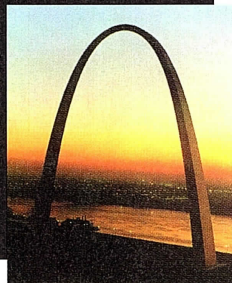
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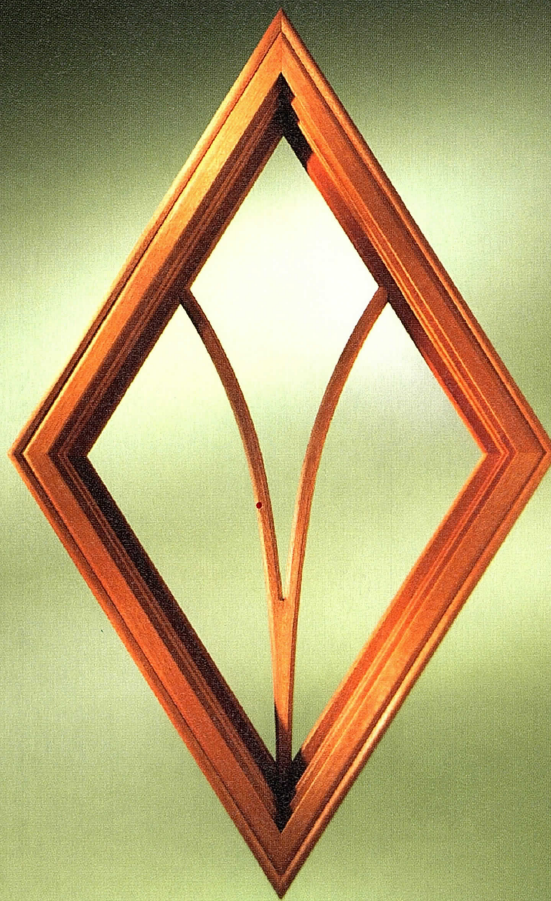
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Winter 2004/05

Vol. 66, No. 4

**Oculus: A publication of the AIA
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Oculus is published quarterly and is a benefit of both AIA New York Chapter and Center for Architecture membership. For information on professional and public memberships, please call 212-683-0023 ext. 115

One-year subscription (4 issues) to Oculus: \$40 (U.S.), \$60 (foreign)

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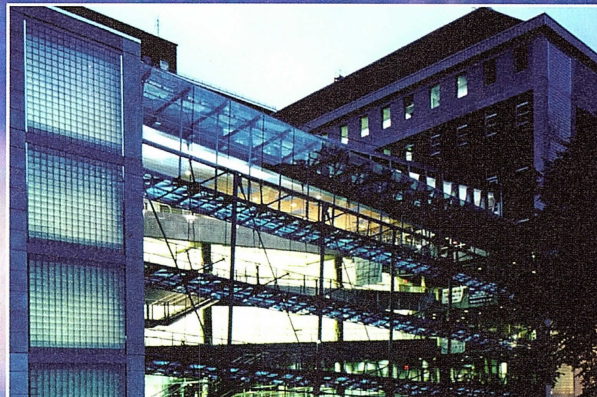
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STRENGTH BY DESIGN

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WINDOW COVERINGS

NY, NY: Double Fun City

First Words
Letter from Two Presidents

The term “Fun City” was born during the Lindsay Administration – an era known not only for “happenings,” but a commitment to provide adequate housing, education, food, and health coverage for all; anti-war protests; labor unrest; and racial strife. The late 1960s and early 1970s was a time of contrasts and great change. John Lindsay did a lot to cultivate the arts and re-shape New York City – culturally, physically, and psychically. In “Fun City” of the ‘60s, we had Joe Papp putting on Shakespeare in the Park; Charlotte Moorman, the Topless Cellist, playing “Opera Sextronique” by Nam June Paik; and Miriam Colon touring the boroughs with the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater.

New institutions flowered – the Studio Museum in Harlem, El Museo del Barrio, Bronx Museum of the Arts, and Staten Island’s Snug Harbor Cultural Center – all symbols of the City’s diversity and history. Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts was a pivotal achievement, and Lindsay served as chairman of Lincoln Center Theater for years.

Fun was not only in one place. It was happening all over the City, as it is today. In “Fun City” 2004/05, we are witnessing the evolution of the great public arts and cultural institutions – the Brooklyn Museum’s new entrance, the opening of Jazz at Lincoln Center, the expansion of the New York Hall of Science and Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Children’s Museum, the reopening of the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, the Bronx Zoo Lion House, and the Queens Botanical Garden master plan. New open spaces along Hudson River Park, new pocket parks in Lower Manhattan and East River Park (now named for John Lindsay), are recreational hot spots. Hotels and restaurants continue to serve millions of tourists and New Yorkers as destinations and fun spots. Times Square has become a family fun place and the Time Warner building at Columbus Circle heralds change on the West Side.

The screams of fans at the Cyclones ball park or riders on the Cyclone roller coaster, pedestrians strolling on the Coney Island boardwalk or visiting the Aquarium – and this issue of *Oculus* – remind us that New York architects, engineers, and artists design places for all kinds of fun ranging from hotdog stands to performing arts venues, from the Bronx to Baden-Baden. Mayor Bloomberg, like Mayor Lindsay, values design and public art in parks, schools, hospitals, and courthouses throughout the City – a sign of pride in our public realm.

The AIA New York Chapter’s first year at the Center for Architecture is a microcosm of the events that are re-shaping our City. The 25 exhibitions and, believe it or not, 1,000 programs far exceeded the hopes of its sponsors. The Center’s presentations of the NYC2012 Olympic plan, Hudson Yards, the New York Sports and Convention Center, the Freedom Tower, 80 South Street Tower, the Learning from Lower Manhattan conference, and Groen Hoek and Housing competitions reflected on past, present, and future.



DARBY CURTIS

A toast to two presidents: Susan Chin, FAIA, and Mark Ginsberg, AIA

A restless, creative spirit drives the need to reinvent our cities. Architects and other design professionals shape our journey, whether by a novel ride on the AirTrain or through public art at subway stations all over the city. They create spaces where we mingle with others, suspend our disbelief, and reflect values in the structures they design. So, what’s next? Read on.

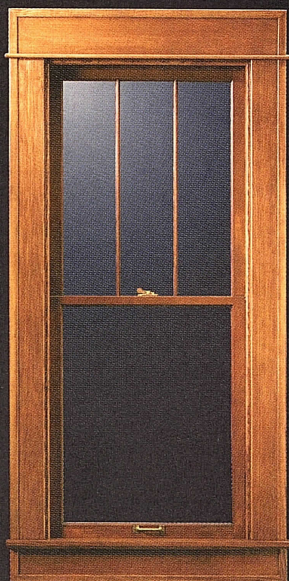
Susan Chin, FAIA
Mark Ginsberg, AIA

I applaud Mark Ginsberg’s enthusiastic leadership of the Chapter in its start-up year at the Center for Architecture. It has been my great privilege to collaborate with Mark in serving our members, civic and industry leaders, and the general public to promote design excellence and improvement of our City. His leadership brought us the NewHousingNewYork competition, the AIA Learning from Lower Manhattan conference, and continued participation in New York New Visions. Mark has been a model for me in my preparation for leading the Chapter. As both a public architect and an Asian American, I look forward to the coming year of “Architecture: Bringing Cultures Together.”

Susan Chin, FAIA

Over the last year and a half I have had the great pleasure to get to know and work with Susan Chin. She is an extremely thoughtful and talented person who has led us in developing a new Long Range Plan to guide us as the Chapter moves forward. We are very lucky to have her leading the Chapter in the next year.

Mark Ginsberg, AIA



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The one on the right, last week.

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Are we having fun yet?

First Words

Letter from the Editor

I thought this issue would be easy: create two separate sections – one devoted to cultural projects, and one to show off entertainment architecture – and call it “Fun City.” Needless to say, that simplistic approach bit the dust very early on. Instead, we’ve gathered projects ranging from serious-minded cultural venues wrapped in delightfully entertaining environments, and entertainment spaces embraced by serious architecture.

Fittingly, in “So Says...,” Lee Skolnick, FAIA, offers an insider’s take on how technology has blurred the lines between media and environment. “Around the Corner” is a Coney Island subway station that has become a destination in its own right. “Outside View” comes from the architecture editor for Chicago Public Radio, who examines a “ground zero” in his own city. “14-Year Watch” revisits New York’s largest mosque and finds it still fresh. “Good Practices” takes on the fame game (which will be explored further in programs at the Center for Architecture and future editorial). “In Print+” reviews a book that details the deals and intrigues that went into the makeover of Times Square, and the web site of an architectural journal that promises more than it delivers.

The toughest – and most fun – part of pulling this issue together was sifting through hundreds of photographs of events and personalities to create a scrapbook of highlights from the Center for Architecture’s first year. A thousand programs and 25 exhibitions later, we filled three pages – and could have filled the entire issue, and then some!

Putting this issue together has been serious fun.

Looking ahead, we hope you will find the 2005 Oculus editorial calendar fun – and provocative:

February special issue: AIA New York Chapter Design Awards

Spring: Think Green

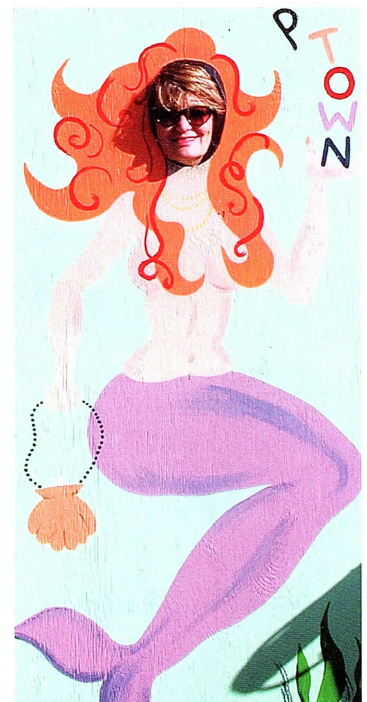
Summer: The Rambunctious and Tumultuous State of Architectural Practice

Fall: Think Small

Winter: Tapping into the Publication Wars

As always, your input and insights are most welcome.

Kristen Richards
Kristen@aiany.org

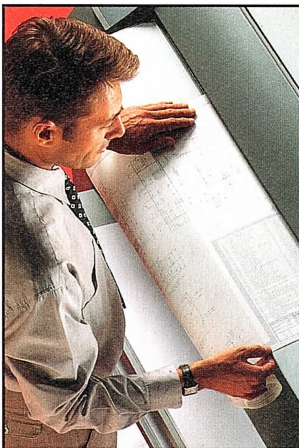
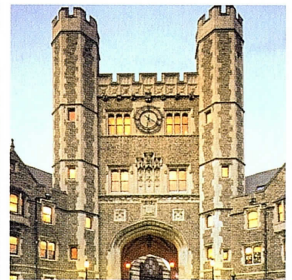
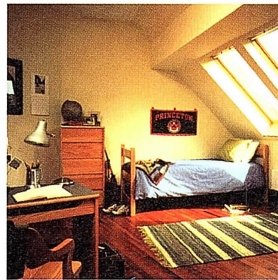
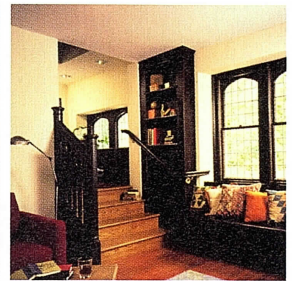
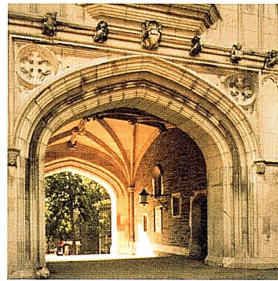
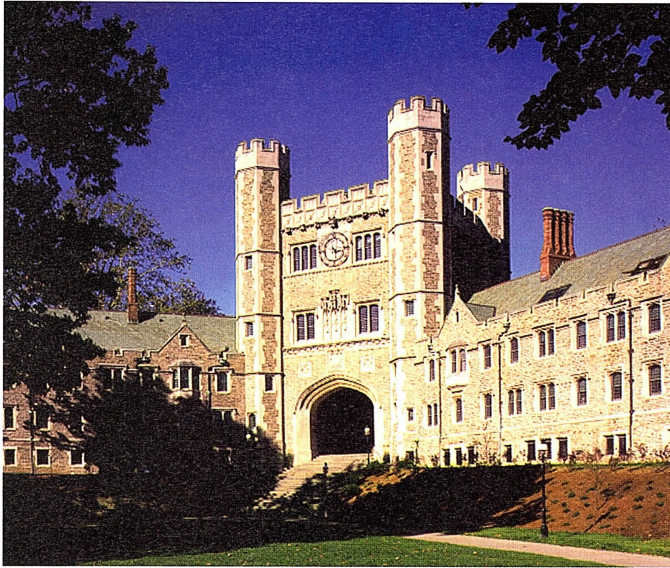


Editor having fun

K&G PANIC GRAPHICS

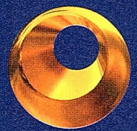


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A Scrapbook of memories from the Center's first year

Architecture Week '04



Civic Spirit:
Changing the Course
of Federal Design

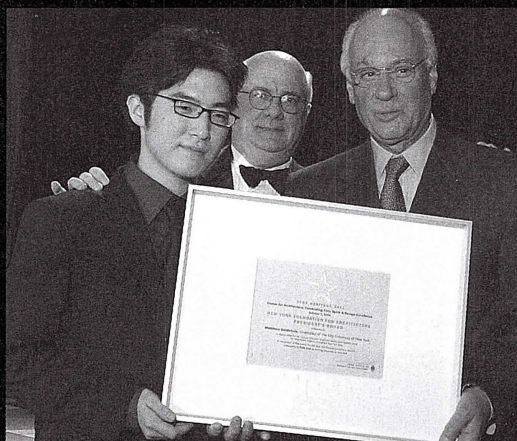
The Heather Harrington Dance Company pranced through the Center – and the street



Dinner Chair Daniel Tishman chats with Amanda Burden, Hon. AIA New York Chapter at the 2004 Heritage Ball



Fran and Edward Feiner, FAIA, Gussie and Joseph Moravec, George Campbell, Mark Ginsberg, AIA, Darby Curtis, AIA, Amanda Burden, Hon. AIA New York Chapter, join with Marcia and Bruce Fowle, FAIA, at the head table



Foundation President Walter Hunt, AIA (center) congratulates scholarship winner Yule Lee and CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, recipient of the Foundation President's Award at the 2004 Heritage Ball

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LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY

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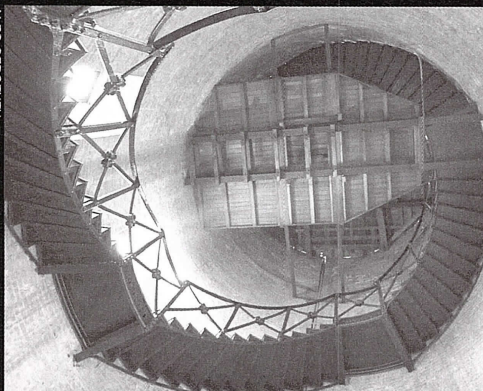
LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY

LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY



Musician/composer Brian Eno redirects his presentation on the aural and spatial dimensions of air terminal sites from JFK's Terminal 5 to the Center

ALEC SERGEYEV



The Center served as the welcome center for the 50,000 people who visited 100 spaces and places throughout the city during openhouse-newyork; Alec Sergeyev's Jefferson Market Library Tower was one of the winners in the OHNY Focus on Architecture photography competition

LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY



Susan Chin, FAIA, Edward Feiner, FAIA, Patricia Lancaster, FAIA, Bruce Fowie, FAIA, Mark Ginsberg, AIA, Walter Hunt, AIA, Pamela Puchalski, and Rick Bell, FAIA, enjoy the terrace view at the 2004 Heritage Ball at Chelsea Piers

LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY



2nd annual Architecture Week Design-In: "Collaboration on the Edge" East River presentation by Ken Smith, Michael Sameulian, AIA, Chris Sharple and Michael Davies

LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY



After the Ball...

KRISTEN RICHARDS



GSA's "Civic Spirit": artist Leo Villareal's multi-colored neon study for a much larger installation in the U.S. Courthouse in El Paso, TX

Exhibitions

KRISTEN RICHARDS



Tina and Santiago Calatrava, AIA, with Stephen Kliment, FAIA, and Guy Geier, AIA, at the opening reception for the 80 South Street Tower exhibition

KRISTEN RICHARDS



Filmmaker Nicole Cattell with Charlie Rose and Amanda Burden, Hon. AIA New York Chapter, at the opening reception for the 80 South Street Tower exhibition



LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY

2005 Chapter President Susan Chin, FAIA, with Lance J. Brown, FAIA, Chris Calori, and Ted Liebman, FAIA, at the December Board Inaugural

Board Inaugural



LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY

2004 AIA New York Chapter President Mark Ginsberg, AIA, passing the gavel – and some gravel – to incoming 2005 President Susan Chin, FAIA, at the Board Inaugural

Foundation Activities



JESSICA KEMPER

Students work with Jose Castillo on a mapping activity at the Foundation's Mexico Now Family Day in November



AMY HITCHCOFF

Students from the Urban Assembly School for Design and Construction work on a design charette hosted by the Foundation



LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY

Susan Chin, FAIA, being congratulated by David Burney, AIA, and Umberto Dindo, AIA



RICK BELL

On September 3, New York City's Department of Design and Construction presented new design excellence initiatives in the Center's crowded and ever-busy lecture hall



LARRY LINK PHOTOGRAPHY

Robert Campbell, FAIA, Bill Lacy, FAIA, U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Stephen G. Breyer, Judge Douglas Woodlock, and Henry Cobb, FAIA, discuss the Boston Courthouse at one of the more than 20 programs accompanying the GSA "Civic Spirit: Changing the Course of Federal Design" exhibition

Antoine Predock, FAIA, and Richard Meier, FAIA, consider a question from the standing room-only crowd at the GSA program "No Official Style: Creating the Modern Courthouse"



KRISTEN RICHARDS

Programs

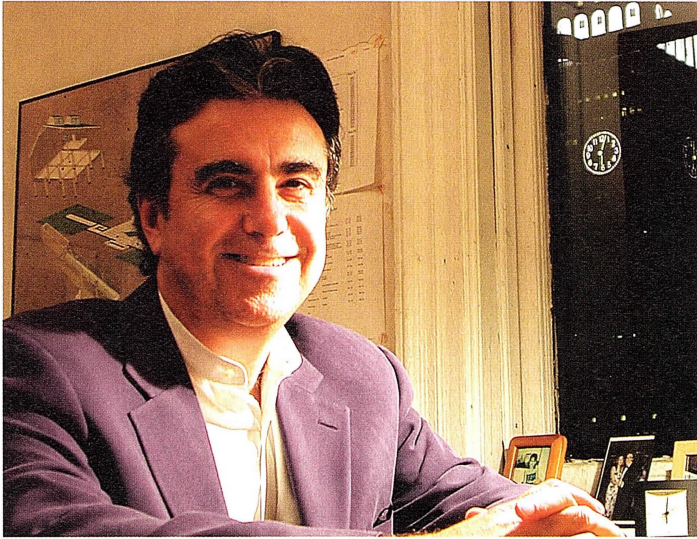


RICK BELL

More than 600 people attended the opening of the "4 Teams 4 Visions: Design Approaches to the High Line Master Plan" exhibition last June

So Says... Lee H.

KRISTEN RICHARDS



Lee H. Skolnick, FAIA, founded Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership in 1980. Six years later, Paul S. Alter, AIA, joined the firm as Design Principal and Project Administrator, and museum educator Jo Ann Secor signed on as Principal and Director of Museum Services. Today, the 25-person firm, made up of architects, designers, educators, and museum specialists, has architecture and exhibit design projects across the country. Skolnick spends much of his time on the road, but *Oculus* caught up with him during a brief stopover at his Chelsea office between trips to Louisville and Anguilla (or was it between Omaha and the Hamptons – even he was confused).

Kristen Richards: What led you to architecture?

Lee Skolnick: I've been a musician my whole life. I studied music theory at a liberal arts college, along with literature, philosophy, science, history, and math. They were all exciting to me, and I started to get very confused about what I wanted to do, until I took a history and theory of architecture elective and started reading Vitruvius and Alberti – all the way through to the modern theorists. I realized architecture was the one discipline where you have to learn about everything, and you actually get to do something with all this knowledge, synthesize it into something concrete. That got me hooked. I had the good fortune to be accepted into Cooper Union and began to learn all over again.

KR Who did you work with?

LS Initially with professors from Cooper, like Tod Williams and Rick Scofidio. Elizabeth Diller was in my class so I started working with them during school and for about a year afterwards. But

I started on my own very soon after graduating Cooper because I had little projects, like building a deck on somebody's house, or rearranging their closets and such.

KR How did that funnel its way into the specialties that you're known for?

LS A friend of mine who was the director of a children's museum on Staten Island asked me if I wanted to interview to design an interactive exhibit for kids. I didn't even know people designed exhibits! I did some sketches and was hired. I had to learn what interactive exhibits were about, what interpretation within a museum context meant, how to design for an audience – a particular audience and their developmental needs – and how to make it exciting and meaningful for them.

I look for a narrative, a storyline that is contained within an architectural experience. That's what links everything we do here, whether it's a large master plan project, a building, an interpretive exhibit, an educational program, or anything in between.

KR What do you mean by a "narrative?"

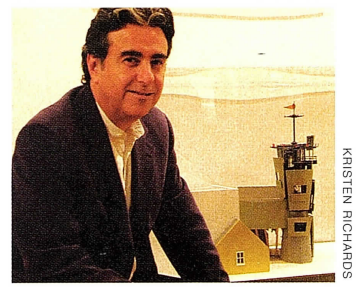
LS It's the content informing the design. In the case of an exhibit, the narrative is essential because there is a subject. For a synagogue, on the other hand, I thought about the large-scale stories or themes that would be germane to this particular situation; the fact that Judaism focuses on celebrating the cycles of life on earth as opposed to the hereafter. So the synagogue took on this processional quality that starts with a garden wall, which grows into a much larger wall that goes into the building, defining the sanctuary, and then continues back out into the landscape.

Our process always starts with a total immersion in the content of the situation, whether it's a corporate office or a museum. From there, we develop an approach and a language unique to that situation. From how you select a site or how you site a building, all the way through issues of program, design, and detailing – all decisions are informed by and filtered through this initial conceptual synthesis. I don't know any other way to design now.

KR What is the difference between having the whole project – a museum building and interiors – and designing just the interiors?

LS You asked the crucial question – and it's a very touchy one. Often, either we or another architect is hired to come up with a rendering or model of a building that can be used for fund rais-

Skolnick, FAIA



KRISTIN RICHARDS

ing and public information – before they have any idea what this place is about or what's going to be inside.

This is exactly the wrong way to do things, conceptually and architecturally, but it's the way the world seems to work. I have been speaking and teaching for years about the need to “design from the inside-out.” Doing it otherwise can result in a terribly inefficient process. There's a great potential for serious gaps between the architectural and interior/exhibit documents because they weren't well coordinated, and that can affect budgets, schedules, and contracts. We've seen millions of dollars have to be inserted into a project at the last minute to bridge those gaps.

Our best projects have been the ones where we were called in early. For instance, the Creative Discovery Museum in Chattanooga. We developed a mission, goals and objectives, an audience profile; the concept wound up being the creative process as an integration of the arts and sciences – an approach to creativity as embodied by Leonardo da Vinci. We worked with the city planning agency to find the ideal site and designed a seamlessly integrated building and exhibits that would perfectly embody these themes and concepts. It taxed all our creativity and intellectual discipline.

KR Do you see the lines blurring more and more between cultural and entertainment architecture?

LS The general public has come to expect a high quality experience in their leisure time. Cultural institutions have been learning from entertainment venues, theme parks, and other places, how to make that happen. How do we harness the strength that entertainment has in creating experiences, delivering messages? We were in that sort of curve very early on because we were dealing with children's museums where there was a lot less preciousness about what is okay and not okay. Science and natural history museums also caught on early. And, along the way, technology stormed the citadel.

The last test, of course, would be the art museums. An interesting thing happened, which is that the art world – forget the art museums, but the artists – began experimenting with all sorts of technologies. Now, how do you justify that this can't be in the museum when an artist like Bruce Naumann and others have been doing it for years? And then the Whitney did the exhibits “Bit Streams” and “Data Dynamics.” Art absolutely co-opted technology as a medium.

The bottom line is that there's no such thing as a bad medium – it's how you use it. The architectural possibilities fueled by what technology can do – the blurring of the lines between media and environment – offer us endless opportunities.

KR Do you have a lot of high-tech wizards in your firm?

LS I think we're strong at harnessing technology in the service of telling the stories we need to tell. We're constantly revising our understanding of what technology can do, then we find the people with the specific expertise we need to help us do that.

KR What project types do you like to work on most?

LS It's impossible to say. Each is an opportunity to pursue our passion for the interpretive design process. I've been particularly captivated by our work for the Muhammad Ali Center in Louisville, Kentucky – a joint venture with Beyer Blinder Belle where all the initial concepts married the interior and exterior and site – as well as for places of worship and education, and for Sony.

I also love to do houses. I've always done houses. For us, it's about: Who are these people? How does it manifest itself? Sometimes they take as long and as much work as a whole museum. But they're wonderfully distilled and condensed. We're talking about inches as opposed to meters of meaning.

KR How would you describe the current state of architecture?

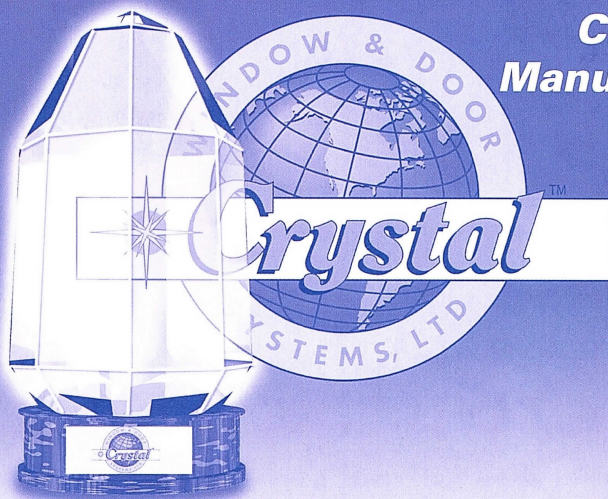
LS If you look at the architectural landscape now, there's more diversity of design than I've ever seen. Some architects are being expressive with natural materials and others are integrating high technology. Hopefully, we'll see even more individuality.

KR Who or what has inspired your work?

LS Philosophy, physics, literature, art, music – all these things are inter-connected. And architecture is one discipline or profession that combines them all.

KR Do you still play any musical instruments?

LS When I realized that I was not going to be a professional musician, I decided to make up for it by buying really good instruments that would force me to always play. So I have a beautiful Steinway baby grand and a synthesizer and several incredible guitars. I travel a lot, but I try to play every day.



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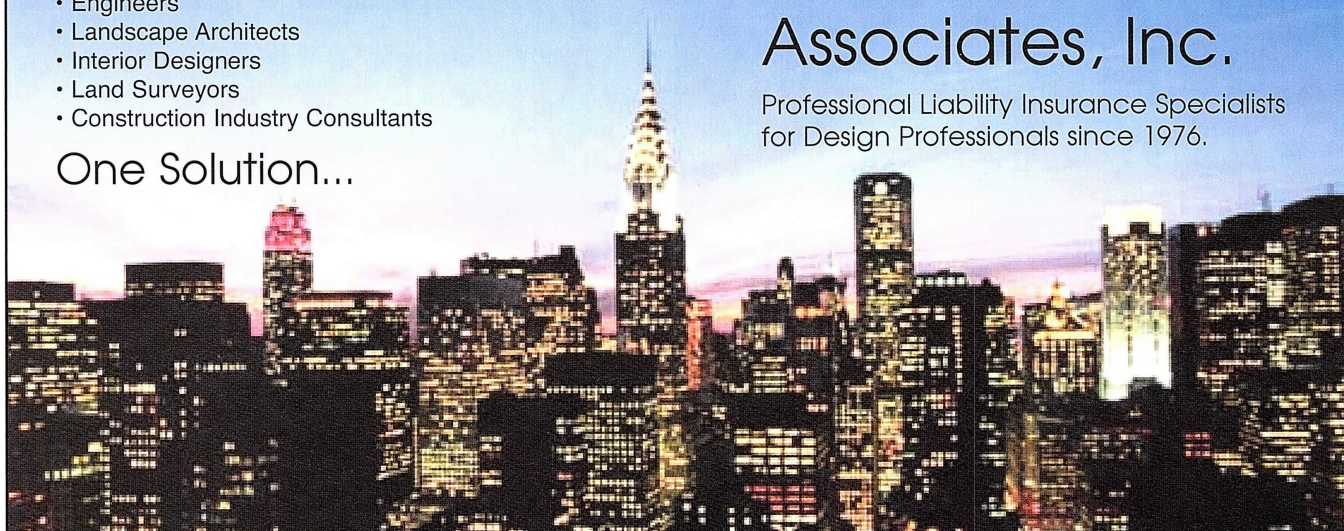
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Elevated

Fun on an Elevated Subway

Around the Corner

Coney Island West 8th Street Station by Daniel Frankfurt PC and Vito Acconci

By Eva Hagberg



DANIEL FRANKFURT PC

Getting Manhattanites off the island is hard enough. Getting them out to Coney Island is nearly impossible. The prospect might seem much more appealing after the completion of the new West 8th Street Station renovation. Designed by Daniel Frankfurt PC (DFPC) in collaboration with Vito Acconci under the Metropolitan Transit Authority Arts for Transit program, the renovation is a play on the freakery of the funhouse, a tweaking of standardized materials and colors into a three-dimensionally manipulated ride-flavored subway.

DFPC brought a proposal to renovate the BMT West 8th Street Station to New York City Transit and MTA Arts for Transit, focusing on the façade as their point of reconstructive entry. Art prevailed over bureaucracy and wild-child artist turned architect-friendly collaborator Vito Acconci was selected as co-designer.

"When I first went out there, I got out of the train and had no idea it was Coney Island," project architect James McConnell, AIA, says. "They had these 17-foot-high windscreens up, and it just became a station that had no identity." Now, you exit the train and behold the towering Cyclone, out a bulging windscreen and across a painted bridge. "The façade warranted extra study," McConnell explains. "The aquarium, the boardwalk, the beach, and the parachute jump – all of that inspired the idea." The station hadn't been rehabilitated since its 1919 opening, and since the MTA had already closed Stillwell Avenue it made sense to kill both proverbial birds with one closing. Construction on West 8th Street Station began in 2002 and the station was re-opened, partially complete, a few months ago. Everything should be spic-and-span by summer 2005.

The wall of windscreens bulges in and out to accommodate stairways and seats, weav-

ing between levels and playing off the forms of the undulating roller coaster along the street. A long, prismatic incision made into the southern façade extrudes outwards, almost inviting waiting riders to try and crawl inside – if only you weren't so high off the ground. Where you can curl up is the cubbyhole stairway, the most exaggerated example of the teasing space, an almost precariously held together system of triangular panels, a haphazard reiteration of the area's architectural and cultural complexity – the Cyclone on one side, Nathan's Famous on the other.

The designers were challenged by the MTA's prescribed materials and colors – windscreens and turquoise-lined green panels – but the almost psychedelic result of the constancy of the color-scheme teamed with a twisting of the materials creates a station completely in its element. Coney Island is all about fun. But you can't have fun if you can't get there.

Eva Hagberg is a New York-based freelancer who has written for *The Architect's Newspaper*, *Metropolis*, and the *New York Times*. She is the web editor of Project Rebirth (www.projectrebirth.org), a web site documenting the World Trade Center reconstruction process.



DANIEL FRANKFURT PC

Top: BMT West 8th Street Station, after Above: BMT West 8th Street Station, before



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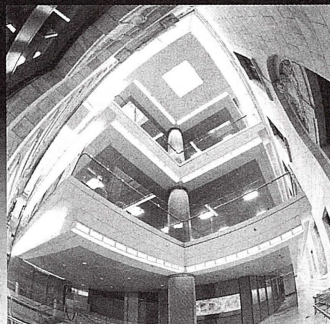


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Now, at the turn of the 21st century, the difference between the two grows ever more blurred – and in some cases, has completely disappeared.

Alan G. Artner's comment on the transformed museum building seems appropriate to quote: "...this plain-showy building will readily become what the Modern now seems bent on embracing – entertainment."

For some "plain-showy" projects that add to all our fun, read on.

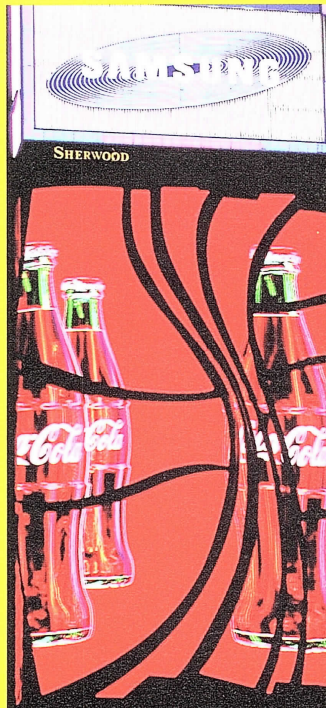
Kristen Richards



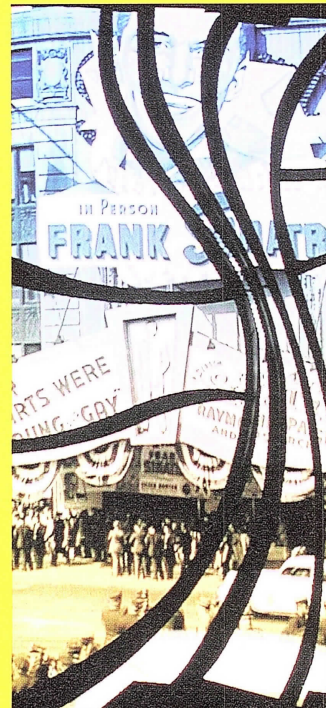
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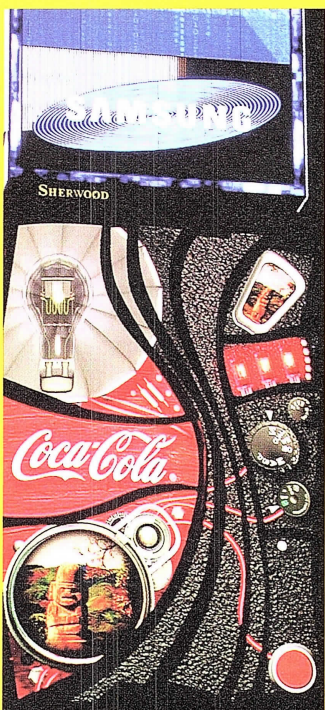


KRISTEN RICHARDS

What happened? Rapid advancements in technology, for one. But just as influential are changes in society and in our attitudes toward our cultural environments.

Does that mean the world is turning into Times Square? No. But we cannot ignore the impact that the likes of Viñoly and Rockwell – and other star architects and designers highlighted in this issue – are having on the built environment in New York and beyond.

Not featured in this issue is MoMA's redesign, but Chicago Tribune art critic



KRISTEN RICHARDS



KRISTEN RICHARDS

High-tech Coke sign on Times Square is thoroughly entertaining; I watched it for 20 minutes, and images never repeated

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Riffing It Up

Rafael Viñoly Architects' Jazz at Lincoln Center serves up audiences and performers with new rules of engagement.

By Richard Staub



BRAD FEINKNOFF

A 90-by-50-foot glass window with views of Columbus Circle and Central Park is an impressive backdrop for the Allen Room stage

When it comes to fun, Rafael Viñoly, FAIA, has definite ideas. The topic came up when we met to discuss Rafael Viñoly Architects' design for one of 2004's most far-reaching additions to the nation's music scene: Jazz at Lincoln Center, the new performance and education complex in Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Time Warner Center.

Remember that Viñoly comes from a background of performing arts shaped by Latin America's political turmoil during the 1960s and '70s. Uruguayan by birth, his father was director of that country's National Theater and later moved his family to Argentina to direct the Teatro Colón, that country's most prestigious theater. Classical music was a part of Viñoly's life; he studied with one of the country's leading piano teachers and still plays today.

An established architect in Argentina, Viñoly came to the U.S. at 32 to get away from the oppressive military regime. He now has offices in New York and London with a combined staff of over 170 people. Viñoly continues to be one of the leading architects for institutional buildings, from theaters and museums to research centers,

not to mention a few convention centers and justice facilities along the way. And it is his born-in-the-trunk appreciation for theater of all kinds, together with a deeply held political sense, that informs his thinking.

How then is Jazz at Lincoln Center fun? Says Viñoly: "I think fun is a major function of life – a consequence of being truly alive." And he contrasts it with passive entertainment, "where you sit in front of the T.V. or movie screen and let it all wash over you. It's diminishing. Thinking and the facility for critical thought is suspended. You are the victim rather than participant. Fun is engagement, which makes New York the ultimate fun city. You can't pass through as a spectator in New York or you suffer like hell or get anesthetized.

"When we designed Jazz at Lincoln Center, we wanted to suggest a real sense of arrival for the art form which is the greatest musical invention of this country. We didn't emphasize the visual as much as the people who are a part of it and worked to dilute classifications of audience and performer. It's similar to what we did at Philadelphia's Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts [the new home for the Philadelphia Orchestra]. There, we wanted to emphasize the commu-

nity, which has such a variety of ethnic sources, and saw the possibility of making an enclosed plaza that drew people all day long. We set Kimmel's two theaters, which have strong sculptural forms, within it. A performance isn't ultimately about the difference between the audience and the artist. I think of theater as 'enabling' an audience and we tried to maximize that."

Although jazz first received Lincoln Center's institutional embrace 14 years ago, it was forced to make do with performance spaces designed for classical chamber and orchestral music. Now with its own versatile trio of small, medium, and (relatively) large theaters, plus a multi-classroom education center and a recording studio, the organization can present the complete range of jazz styles and musicians in venues that suit them best. And for the first time, Lincoln Center has theaters appropriate in scale to the music they present.

While Jazz's theaters differ in style and atmosphere, they are very simple. Viñoly avoided obvious design motifs from Bourbon Street and 3:00 a.m. jam sessions in favor of blurring the separation between performers, audience, and community.

The Allen Room, Jazz's main room, is the best example. Its *coup de théâtre* is a breathtaking 90-by-50-foot glass window wall behind the performance area that looks out on Columbus Circle and the city. The room curves around the window, with the seating area, capable of accommodating between 310 and 550 people, divided into concentric arcs that can be raised or lowered according to use. Each arc is wide enough to accommodate tables with seating or rows of chairs. Performers and audience members enter through the same wide opening, nine feet high and 30 feet long, that occupies most of the back wall.

Several design gestures direct all eyes to the performers and the city beyond. The ceiling swoops down from the back of the hall to the window, an inverted version of the roofline of many Viñoly projects. Slim railings divide sections of the seating areas; long wood slats on sidewalls continue the visual draw to the performers and view. This great windowed space was originally planned to be Jazz's lobby. Viñoly persuaded developer The Related Companies and Lincoln Center to make it into a performance hall instead.

The Rose Theater, the largest of the three, is technically a black box facility with all of the flexibility that allows. It was designed in response to Lincoln Center's long-standing desire for a more intimate theater not only for jazz, but for smaller scale opera and dance performances as well, and can seat between 1,100 and 1,200 people. (By comparison, the Metropolitan Opera has 3,800 seats and the New York State Theater has 2,755.)

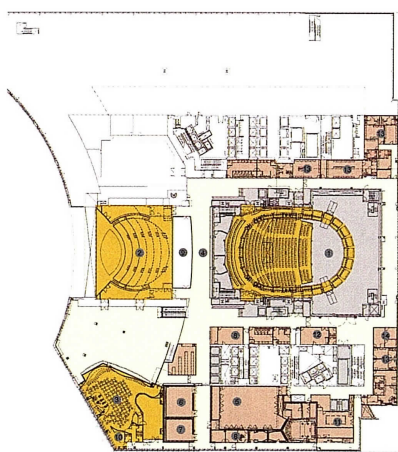
The oval theater set into the black box is classic and subdued, a

warm space that seems to close around the stage. A ring of columns and three tiers of balconies, all covered in the same dark, rich wood, circle around the stage and main seating area, which is upholstered in a rich, pale ochre color. Diamond-shaped light boxes are installed flush with the ceiling; they circle in front of the columns and can be programmed to glow in different colors. When jazz is being presented, a small portion of seating circles behind the stage. When the Rose is rearranged for a proscenium stage, the columns and balconies behind the performance space move back and flies descend from the ceiling.

The design temperature rises in Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, a true jazz club with table seating for 140. It's a fluid space with three-foot-high sinuous ribbons of bamboo that undulate around the curved walls and ceiling. The back wall is broken by another generous window behind the stage that looks out onto New York. Bring on the Marilyn Monroe analogies. It's that kind of space.

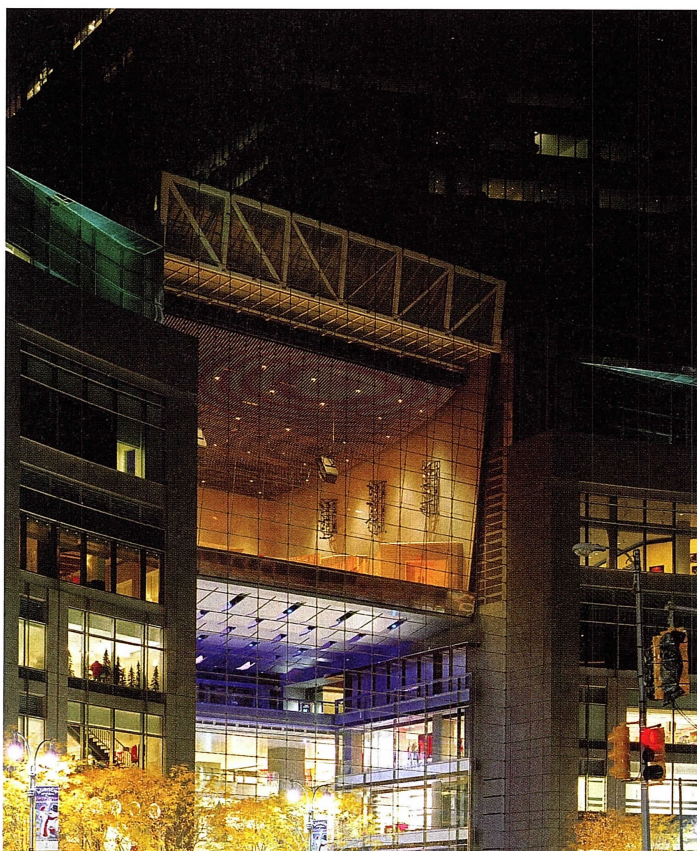
What's ironic about theaters designed to engage performers, the audience, and the city is that they are tucked away on the fifth floor of the complex, far from the street and Time Warner's Dallas-meets-Columbus Circle shopping mall. The only evidence of Jazz's presence on the street is a jaunty Pentagram-designed marquee at one end of the building marking the entrance to ticket booths and the elevators that go up to its actual lobby.

The lobby, once you get there, is another attempt by Viñoly to bring together audiences and performers. At the Kimmel Center, audiences enter from the plaza directly into the theaters. At Jazz there is one lobby for all the theaters – a great, tall, energetically colored space with a two-story window view. Unfortunately the shape has an arbitrary feel, as if it's what was left over after the theaters wer



Jazz at Lincoln Center floorplan

RAFAEL VIÑOLY ARCHITECTS



Jazz at Lincoln Center perches atop the four-story-high entrance to the Time Warner Center

BRAD FEINKNOFF

planned. Ideally, the entrances to the theaters should be directly off the lobby, but given the restrictions of the Time Warner floor, each theater is off to one side or another, undermining the sense of entry and arrival and dissipating the concentration of energy.

Now on the boards at Viñoly's London office is the Leicester Theatre and Performing Arts Centre in England. Scheduled to open in 2006, it is to be a theater "turned inside-out," according to Viñoly's brochure, where "theater production, construction, craft, and technical components will be on public view. The work of the staff will be

BRAD FEINKNOPE



The intimate, 140-seat Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola is wrapped in sinuous bamboo walls with a dramatic view of the city

BRAD FEINKNOPE



The 1,200-seat black-box Rose Theater is designed for jazz and smaller scale opera and dance performances





integrated in the experience on the street. Inside, the theatrical space will be an extension of the public domain." The 123,786-square-foot complex will include Arts Incubator Workshops and broadcast technologies for both professional artists and the community.

Given the wealthy and powerful boards that control major performing arts groups, Viñoly's ability to gain approval for his transformations is all the more remarkable. While he appreciates that tradition of privilege, he understands that getting decision-makers to think differently is an educational process and he's gradually achieving success.

"The interesting part is the dialogue between convention and change," says Viñoly. "That's where the real revolution occurs. When talking about the bold rooflines that are a Viñoly signature, he avers, "there is, of course, a love of the [visual] one-liner, but at the end of the day, there are things more important than the roof. Some level of clarity helps you address what is important about the building, which is the social action."

So in a world where architectural fashion statements seem to have the greatest currency, Viñoly keeps challenging clients to think along different lines about artistic communication and the nature of society.

Richard Staub is a marketing consultant and writer who focuses on issues important to the design and building community.

Jazz at Lincoln Center

Architect: Rafael Viñoly Architects

Design Team: Rafael Viñoly, FAIA, Jay Bargmann, AIA (Principals), Charles Bloomberg, AIA, Peter Girgis, Stephanie Goto, Issei Horikoshi, Rehna Huber, Shigeru Kotoda, Sandra McKee, AIA, Steve Moon, Takeshi Miyakawa, Nida Rehman, Anno Rahman

Structural Engineers: Dewhurst Macfarlane and Partners Inc., in assoc. with Goldreich Engineering

Acoustical Consultant: Sound of Jazz – a joint venture of Artec Consultants and Walters-Storyk Design Group

Theater Planning: Artec Consultants

Mechanical Engineers: Flack + Kurtz Consulting Engineers

Construction Manager: Turner/Santa Fe Construction Company

Photography: Brad Feinknopf



Left: Kimmel Center: the enclosed public plaza leads to the two theaters
Above: Leicester Theatre and Performing Arts Center, England: the interior life will be visible from the street

Concept drawing for a
West Side stadium

ROCKWELL GROUP

Inventive Optimism

From a Santa's workshop on Union Square, Rockwell Group serves up environments that are both theatrical and architecturally inventive
By Fred Bernstein

n the bitter campaign over the West Side Stadium, with hundreds of millions of dollars, political reputations, and the future of a neighborhood at stake, a central consideration – architecture – has been strangely off the table.

But hope springs eternal at the Rockwell Group, which occupies two crowded floors overlooking Union Square. Among the projects covering the walls is a design for a stadium with towers rising from its perimeter to support a basketball arena high in the air. Not only does the composition speak to the verticality that makes New York New York, but, like most Rockwell Group projects, it will evoke strong responses from architects and non-architects alike: the former may see Tatlin, the latter, a vast Olympic torch. New York has plenty of iconic buildings, but this icon – which could help the city win the 2012 games – ought to be a contender.

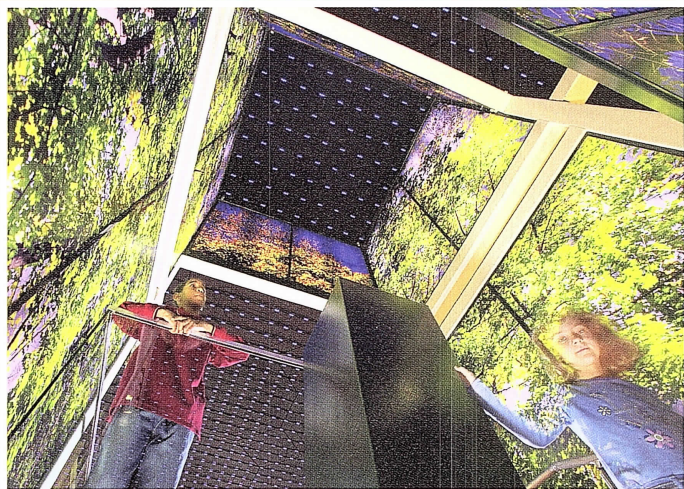
True, founder David Rockwell hasn't designed an entire football stadium before, and in the era of architectural specialization, a couple of giant firms appear to have that market to themselves. But Rockwell wasn't a retail designer until a couple of years ago. Now his projects include the risen-from-the-dead FAO Schwarz, which opened in November. Confounding anyone who thinks they know the "Rockwell look," the store is surprisingly minimalist, with a tree house that could have been designed by Richard Meier. At the soda fountain, the counter, which is made of thousands of marbles set into acrylic, and the frieze – or is it freeze – of ice cream scoops are vintage Rockwell: ingenious and playful.

Rockwell's retail savvy has taken him far beyond Fifth Avenue. Meijer, a Midwestern discount chain, plans to complete nearly 100 Rockwell-designed stores by the end of 2006. While he had the Meijer

where Rockwell put the kitchen between diners and the million-dollar view. A new Nobu at 40 West 57th Street is under construction, and, as always, Rockwell is experimenting with materials, including floors of bamboo suspended in terrazzo (his minions have spent months testing the durability of the hard-soft combination). Banquettes are based on Japanese fishing baskets; mockups fill the Rockwell offices, which have the feel of Santa's workshop minutes before Christmas.

Rockwell hadn't designed a hospital – another building type that is largely relegated to specialists – until he did the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in the Bronx, for which he spent four months interviewing doctors, nurses, and patients. He ordered his staff to do every drawing from eye level – child's eye level, that is. And he worked to eliminate features, such as hospital curtains, that make children uneasy – and replace them with items that would evoke a sense of wonder. "It's about substituting curiosity for fear," says the designer. A new children's hospital in Grand Rapids is on the boards. For that project, Rockwell has been playing with solar-powered butterflies, one of which looks ready to take off from his windowsill. "We're looking at a ceiling of these that would flap their wings," he remarks.

Nor was Rockwell known as a theater designer until the 1990s, when he began designing not only theater buildings (the Kodak Theater, home of the Oscars, is his) but theater sets: his evocation of Baltimore for "Hairspray" won him a Tony nomination his second time out ("The Rocky Horror Show" in 2000 was his first Broadway production). Two more shows ("Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" and "All Shook Up") are coming to Broadway in March. Nor was he a hotel designer before he did the W New York (a renovation) and then the ground-up Chambers, in midtown; now he is renovating one hotel at 29th Street

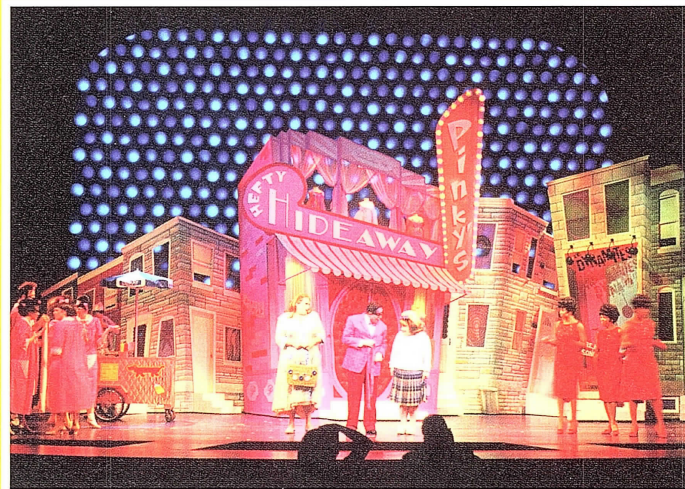


FRED CHARLES

The recently re-opened FAO Schwarz is surprisingly minimalist; the tree house could have been designed by Richard Meier

executives' attention, Rockwell proposed a series of household products that are already in the stores – and which some have said will compete with Martha Stewart's line for Kmart and Todd Oldham's for Target.

Of course Rockwell wasn't a restaurant designer before he did Sushi Zen on 46th Street in 1984. That led, 10 years later, to Nobu, which led to so many other commissions that his name has become synonymous with the restaurant-as-theater. The approach may have reached its zenith last year with Cafe Gray in the Time Warner Center,

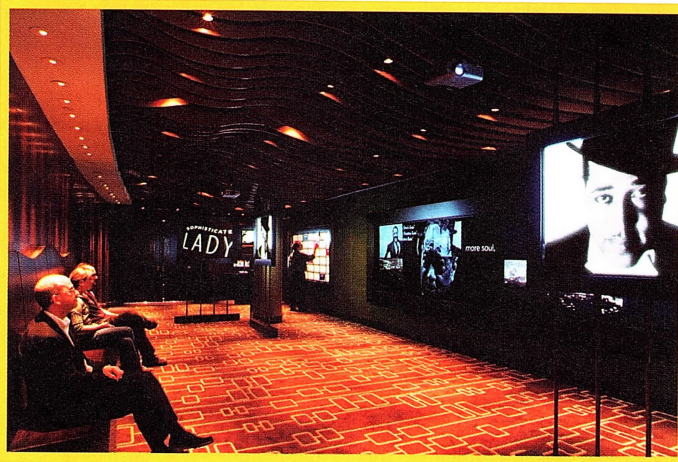


ERIC LAIGNEL

Hefty's Hideaway: a vision of Baltimore in Broadway's "Hairspray"

and Madison Avenue, and building another in TriBeCa. And he wasn't a museum designer until (in collaboration with Architecture Research Office) he won the competition for the Motown Center, a Berry Gordy-inspired museum in Detroit. He did the Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame (part of Jazz at Lincoln Center) last year, and, while he's in the neighborhood, is working on a new look for the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Although Rockwell's career has benefited from both luck and bril-



Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Time Warner Center

liance, his disciplined approach to professional development may be the real secret of his success. He has loved Broadway since he was nine, when he stood for a performance of “Fiddler on the Roof” and was transported by Boris Aronson’s sets. But it was in the mid 1990s that he began to think about theater from an architect’s perspective. “Every time I was asked to give a talk,” Rockwell says, “I used it as an opportunity to research some aspect of theater design. It takes five to seven years of preparation before I’m ready to enter a new field.”

A few years ago, Rockwell began taking the same methodical approach to airports. (He has even consulted a choreographer for insights into how people move through vast terminal spaces.) Expect a major airport announcement soon.

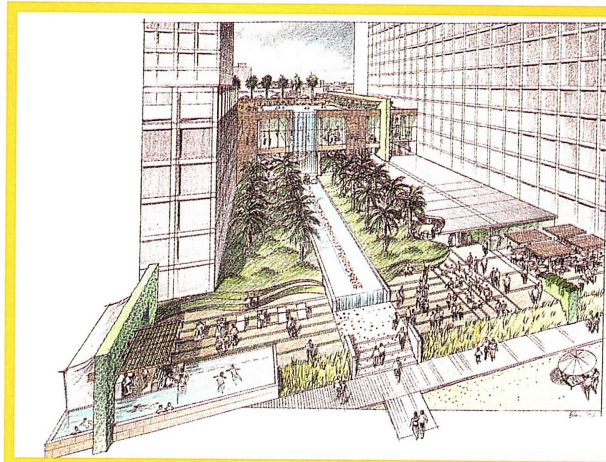
His record suggests he is a collaborator *par excellence*; he was a member of the THINK team, which designed the skeletal towers that would have dangled cultural buildings above Ground Zero. Fred Schwartz, AIA, another member of that team, calls Rockwell “brilliant, inventive and quick.” Adds Schwartz, “I met David in the darkness of 9/11. His commitment to his community, to his city, was boundless.”

Rockwell worked with the creators of “South Park” on the sets for the animated film *Team America*, and with Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio on a couple of Manhattan projects. Obviously, he can go high, low, and anywhere in between.

Rockwell, who studied architecture at Syracuse University and the Architectural Association in London, says he isn’t hung up on whether his creations will be permanent. In the theater, he notes, “a show that runs for two years is a success, which changes your perspective.” And that, he declares, is liberating.

Born in Chicago, Rockwell didn’t have permanence as a child. He lost his father when he was two, and lived in New Jersey until he was 10, when his stepfather retired and the family moved to Guadalajara, Mexico. His mother, a vaudeville dancer until she had five sons, died when he was 15. “My personal history is being brought up in a world where things constantly changed,” he says.

When one of his brothers died of AIDS, Rockwell decided to support the Design Industries Foundation for AIDS (DIFFA); he is now the chairman of its board. His designs for DIFFA galas are some of his most inventive – and, fittingly, impermanent – creations. (He is also on the boards of the Big Apple Circus, Citymeals-on-Wheels, and the Public Theater.)



Canyon Ranch Living, Miami Beach, with Arquitectonica and WSG Development Company

Rockwell wouldn’t mind doing a few permanent buildings. He is waiting for the Motown Center to break ground. And he is also hoping to build Xanadu, a vast mall in the New Jersey Meadowlands, with such amenities as a 400-foot-long indoor ski slope and a cooking school sponsored by Viking.

He also hopes to design a permanent Manhattan theater for Cirque du Soleil. It would be his biggest contribution yet to the Manhattan skyline. His East River park (with Diller Scofidio + Renfro), which would have floated on platforms, and a planned “arts incubator,” a series of studios near Ground Zero (with Kevin Kennon), aren’t likely to be built. And the THINK team’s towers are history. But Rockwell, ever optimistic, has proposed a weekend flower market surrounding Ground Zero, an affordable effort to enrich the neighborhood and a sign that Rockwell is no sore loser.

Such enthusiasm gives him entree to such self-assured clients like Disney’s Michael Eisner, who hired him to do the Cirque du Soleil theater in Orlando, and Virgin’s Richard Branson, for whom he is designing a spa and conference center on a hillside in New Jersey. At Canyon Ranch Living, a spa community on the site of the former Carillon Hotel in Miami Beach, Rockwell has teamed with Arquitectonica to see that visitors enter to the right sounds (splashing water), textures (Mexican pebbles underfoot), and even smells (aromatherapy in the port cochere).

Rockwell projects begin with ideas, and the ideas aren’t about a particular aesthetic. “I respect people who have one look, but it isn’t what I do,” he says. At the original Nobu, his inspirations ranged from the translucency of thinly sliced fish to the conventions of Kabuki theater to the craftsmanship of Japanese farm buildings. Some might say he has too many ideas, but the public doesn’t seem to mind. His vast Mohegan Sun casino, in northeastern Connecticut, is positively bursting with invention. (A “foliage” canopy over the lobby required a mere 30 million glass beads. As for a massive room meant to resemble a geode, principal Edmond Bakos recalls, “At one point, we created a worldwide shortage of onyx.”) The casino is a draw not just for high-stakes gamblers, but also for lovers of high-stakes design.

But the casino holds bittersweet memories for Rockwell. It opened a month after 9/11. He lives in lower Manhattan with his wife and two young children, and recalls feeling self-conscious about the advent of



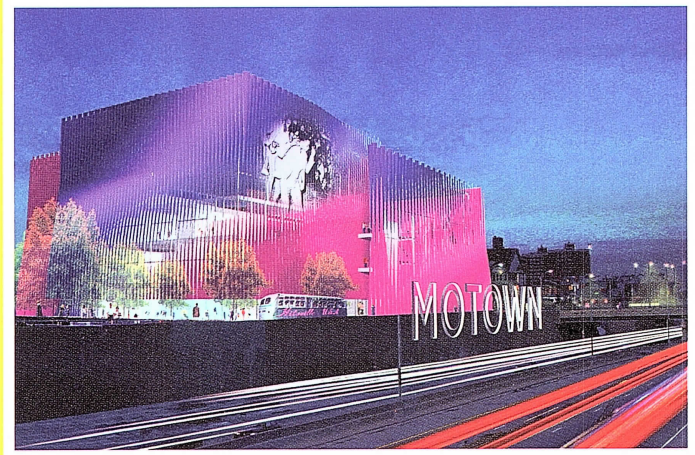
ROCKWELL GROUP/KEVIN KENNON ARCHITECT

Concept for an “arts incubator” near Ground Zero, with Kevin Kennon

the lavish pleasure palace so soon after the attacks.

So, working *pro bono*, Rockwell teamed up with Kennon and Diller + Scofidio to design a series of viewing platforms at Ground Zero. Around the same time, he got a call from the principal of P.S. 234, a TriBeCa school that was moving into temporary quarters on West 13th Street. The principal wanted Rockwell to help choose paint colors for the cafeteria.

Instead, Rockwell enlisted 40 people from his office (out of about 150) and artists, including Tom Otterness and Joost Elffers, whose work appeals to children. He states, “We did an urban barn-raising and totally renovated the school.”



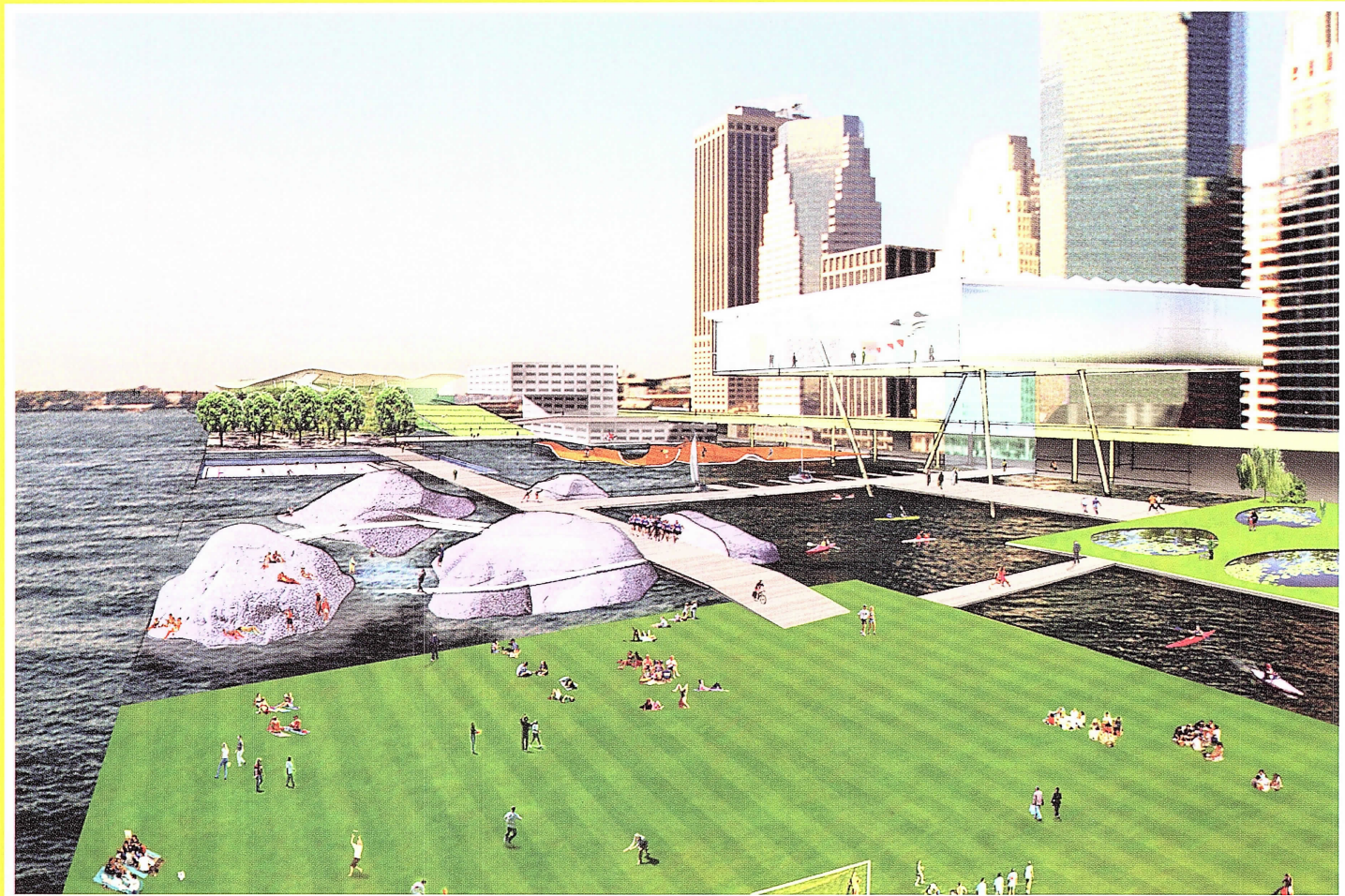
ARCHITECTURE RESEARCH OFFICE/ROCKWELL GROUP/HAMILTON

Winning design for Motown Center, Detroit: Architecture Research Office with Rockwell Group, in association with Hamilton Anderson Associates

He remarks that, after 9/11, “I realized there was a connection between making something and being proactive and not feeling helpless. Clearly, optimism is the smarter choice.”

If Rockwell sounds too good to be true, there are only two appropriate responses: ask him for a job, or try to be more like him.

Fred Bernstein, an *Oculus* contributing editor, has written about design for more than 15 years. He also contributes to the *New York Times*, *Metropolitan Home*, and *Blueprint*.



DILLER SCOFIDIO + RENFRO/ROCKWELL GROUP

Concept for an East River park, with Diller Scofidio + Renfro, would have floated on platforms

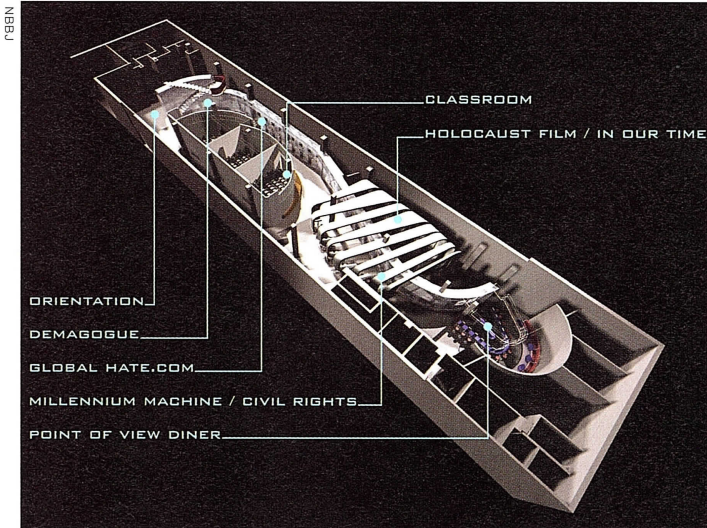
Tolerance

The bronze globe in the lobby of the former Daily News building on East 42nd Street is a fitting symbol for the New York Tolerance Center – a new multimedia exhibition and training facility where visitors explore issues of prejudice and racism. Tucked away in the concourse level of the Raymond Hood 1930 landmark is a 20,000-square-foot program that includes classrooms, a theater, and several interactive exhibitions geared toward groups such as students and police officers.

The New York office of NBBJ teamed up with the Simon Wiesenthal Center to design a local counterpart to its Museum of

Tolerance in Los Angeles (also the model for a Frank Gehry-designed museum currently underway in Jerusalem). In the context of current architectural debates as to expression and appropriateness in redeveloping Ground Zero, NBBJ's design is an example of how a dark and didactic message can be communicated through new technologies.

The underground space is marked by one defining element, the Smart Wall. Clad in back-lit acrylic panels, it contains the program's infrastructure and provides the narrative thread. Intermittently supporting graphics, LED strips, touch screen monitors, and plasma screens, the Smart Wall is the spine of the project, and allowed the designers to create a variety of areas, each with its own mood and



Plan model defines the serpentine Smart Wall that visually and technologically creates the narrative thread through the New York Tolerance Center



GlobalHate.com: Touch screen monitors direct viewers to hate sites on the Internet; bleacher seats can be pushed in when not in use



Millennium Machine: interactive exhibit engaging issues of global human rights; plasma screens show news clips; monitors display questions which can be answered by pressing buttons set into the surface of counter

intent. "When designing the space, we took the content very seriously and tried to understand what type of space would best support the content message," says NBBJ partner Timothy Johnson, AIA.

Take the Millennium Machine. Aluminum-clad counters curve up and across the ceiling, forming a shiny ribcage upon which flicker images from the plasma screens, immersing visitors in color, light, and words. "It was intended to be futuristic, open and dynamic," says Johnson. "On the opposing side of the Smart Wall is the Holocaust theater. Architecturally, it is driven from the same form, however it is more enclosed, nurturing and private, due to the traumatic content." In contrast, the Point of View Diner, with its chartreuse colors and 1950s Formica tables, seems like a puzzling setting for watching videos about the darker sides of humanity. Created by the director in Los Angeles as a fixture in the program, its aim is to create a more casual and recognizable forum for group discussion. However, its iconography teeters on the edge of *Learning from Las Vegas*. To bring visitors back to earth and New York City, the designers created an exit sequence, which, with its concrete columns, unfinished floor, and

Center

NBBJ's high-tech design for the New York Tolerance Center illustrates a dark journey

By Kriti Siderakis



MICHAEL MORAN

The Smart Wall leads visitors from the street-level entry that includes a screening room theater and a pre-function space, to the concourse with exhibits, classrooms, and administrative areas

stark light, evokes the subway because, says Johnson, "that is where all cultures in New York mix."

Today's institutions more and more must adapt to new forms of communication without resorting to a multi-sensory ESPN-type techno-glitz experience. "The content is harsh and we needed to be sure people were motivated to transform themselves. I think you need to instill that hope in people and I hope the spirit of the architecture does that to some extent," remarks Johnson. Toward this end, the architects and their associates have created an atmosphere that engages but does not oppress, using new technologies as a support, not an overriding element. Images and words are not enough: architecture has to provide the setting.

Kriti Siderakis is a designer and writer in New York City.

Architect: NBBJ

Design Team: Timothy Johnson, AIA (Partner-in-Charge), Scott Hunter, AIA (Senior Designer/Project Manager), Angela Chang (Interior Designer), Joseph Nocella, Reggie Aviles (Designers), Sara Agrest (FF&E)

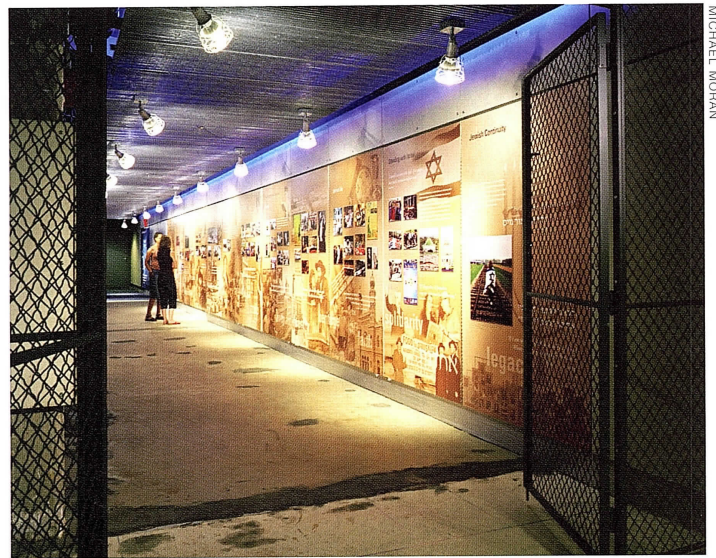
Exhibits: HKD Design

General Contractor: Lehr Construction

Structural Engineering: Leslie E. Robertson Associates

Lighting: Horton Lees Lighting Design

Photography: Michael Moran



MICHAEL MORAN

New York Subway Scene: Panels flip to change exhibit; open, they tell the history of Jews in the U.S.; closed, they feature artwork conceived of by New York City high school students



MICHAEL MORAN

Point of View diner: Interactive videos and touch screen monitors engage visitors in situations of conflict in contemporary America

Crossing Boundaries

Boundaries are dissolved between streetscape and landscape as Diller Scofidio + Renfro teams with Field Operations on the High Line, and with Fox & Fowle Architects for Lincoln Center's new "Street of the Arts"

By Eric P. Nash

Diller Scofidio + Renfro are known for thinking outside the box. Their propensity for blurring traditional distinctions like natural vs. industrial or streetscape vs. building are at play in two new high-profile commissions: turning the rusty dinosaur of the High Line elevated railway into a post-industrial park, and giving the monumental modern dowager Lincoln Center a fresh new bloom appropriate for a younger generation of culture-goers.

The architects play with preconceptions by using an interdisciplinary approach. In combination with landscape design firm Field Operations, they plan numerous programs for the High Line, including a *plein air* amphitheater, a swimming pool, and even a city beach with a sloping sandy shore. A sequence of walkways will lead pedestrians through environments ranging from "the wild, the cultivated, the intimate, and the hyper-social" in a strategy the firm calls "Agri-ecture."

The design for the 22-block, 1.5-mile-long rail line "combines organic and building materials into a blend of graduated proportions," says Hayley Eber, who is working on the project for the firm. "In contrast to the Hudson River Park, the High Line is about slowness, not wheels and fast movement. It engages the contemplative and illicitness."

Time plays a major role in the team's work, as in their iconic Slow House, with its time-delayed viewing screen. The High Line will incorporate a natural element of time by being allowed to grow wild in parts. The pedestrian is led through, under, and above habitats that change with the seasons along the two-story high walkway. The architects intend to preserve the High Line's "melancholic, unruly beauty" as an industrial object in the center of the city that is slowly being taken back by nature.

At the unveiling of their plans for Lincoln Center, Elizabeth Diller spoke about skipping across disciplines: "The project's scope requires an effort that dissolves boundaries between urban planning, architecture, streetscape, and landscape design." Working with associate architect Fox & Fowle Architects, the ambitious \$325 million project to turn West 65th Street into a "Street of the Arts" includes major renovations like remodeling the Juilliard School and Alice Tully Hall with a giant mitered corner open to Broadway, and a restaurant with a campus-like green built on top of it. The concept is to make the participating Lincoln Center institutions more open to the street. In a sense, the plan is a reversal of interior and exterior, bringing the lively cultural scene that goes on within the walls out into the public arena.

Changes involve narrowing West 65th Street by one car lane, expanding the sidewalk to 27 feet wide, and adding transparent

façades, street-level entrances, and a translucent pedestrian bridge to give light to what had been a near-subterranean space. In their approach to the elevated rail and to the elevated cultural institution, the firm is transforming spaces that had each become marginalized in their own way.

Eric P. Nash is the author of *Manhattan Skyscrapers* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), and co-author with Randall C. Robinson, Jr., of *MiMo: Miami Modernism Revealed* (Chronicle Books, 2004).

High Line Team: Diller Scofidio + Renfro and Field Operations (architects); Olafur Eliasson (artist); Piet Oudolf (horticulture); Halie Light and L'Observatoire International (lighting)

Lincoln Center Team: Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Fox & Fowle Architects (associate architect); L'Observatoire International (lighting); 2x4 (graphic design); Arup (SMEP)



Above: Lincoln Center's new "Street of the Arts" will include a remodeled Juilliard School and Alice Tully Hall, and a more pedestrian-friendly West 65 Street Below: A section of the High Line will be a skating pond in winter and sandy beach in the summer



Lights on 59th Street

Ured Architecture's 59E59 Theaters brings a little nightlife to midtown
By Sara Moss

59E59 Theaters – a theater complex for non-profit performing arts companies – sits in the middle of an upscale neighborhood, between Park and Lexington Avenues, surrounded by high-end boutiques, corporate high-rises, and posh East Side apartment buildings. The building, designed by Ured Architecture principal Leo Modrcin, AIA, feels both luxurious and understated in its use of materials and lighting, and most of all, in its clever layout. Three black box performance spaces (seating 199, 99, and 50 people) are flanked by four layers of dressing rooms, and on the other side, five mezzanines, keeping the business end of the theater separate from public circulation. Its generous corridors and consistent layout avoid making a small space feel labyrinthine. It is, instead, graceful and unfussy.

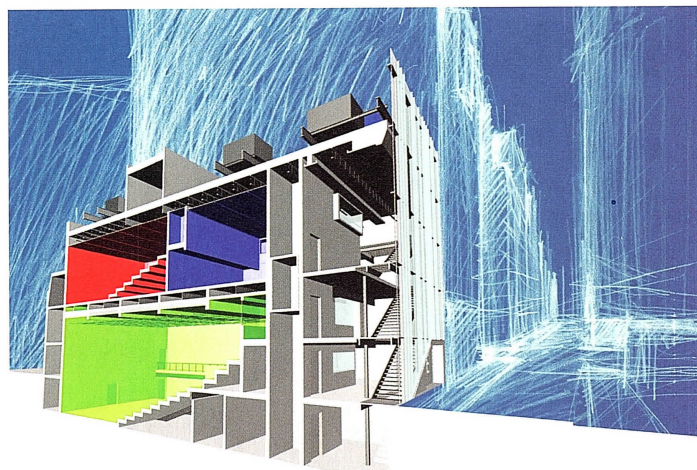
The 11,000-square-foot project entailed a careful reshuffling of square footage, the construction of a new façade, and the insertion of mezzanines. The original steel-frame building served, at different times, as a former facility for Christie's Auction House and temporary home for the Asia Society. The two sidewalls, the roof, and some structure were kept; the floor was lowered to the cellar and beams were raised to create sufficient height for the 199-seat Theater A. A double floor above was kept to acoustically isolate the theaters (a vital technical consideration).

59E59 Theaters was built for Elysabeth Kleinhans, president and artistic director of the Elysabeth Kleinhans Theatrical Foundation, and plays host to resident company Primary Stages for eight months of the year. A former residential client of Modrcin's, Kleinhans played a vigorous role on the project, including the complex process of consolidating the various properties into one.

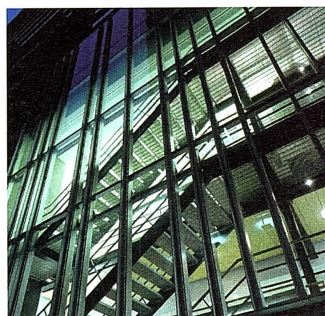
Modrcin wanted to "make the façade different from its masonry neighbors." By using a thin façade and suspending the circulation behind it, he thickened the building's front into a zone. The staircases are lit behind the curtain wall (laminated wire glass behind an asymmetrical pattern of vertical steel mullions; the material reappears inside as a surface for the bar), which serves to activate the street and even attract theatergoers. "It looks alive," says Executive Producer Peter Tear, "and we get a lot of walk-ups because of that."

Modrcin conceived of entering the building as an experience of anticipation – like theater itself. He sees the façade literally as a curtain, with its corner lifted up to allow a peek. Inside, the warmth of cement stucco wall panels and wooden handrails offsets the steel grating of the stairs and landings and poured concrete floors. Modrcin likens this zone to the proscenium missing in the utilitarian theaters.

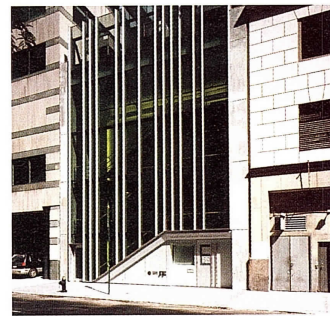
59E59 Theaters is an example of what a dedicated client and inventive designers can produce, and Modrcin, who spent "three years day and night" on the project, is quick to credit his many collaborators, including Kleinhans and Franke, Gottsegen, Cox Architects. He knows there can be a "huge difference between conceptual thinking and final product," and that success is based on col-



URED ARCHITECTURE



FRANK OUDEMAN



FRANK OUDEMAN

Top: 59E59 section **Left: Illuminated staircases animate the curtain wall**
Right: The façade is laminated wire glass behind an asymmetrical pattern of vertical steel mullions

laboration. Modrcin concludes, "Architectural quality really comes from allowing other people into the process."

Sara Moss [works for the Fulton Street Transit Center project and writes about architecture.](#)

Client: Elysabeth Kleinhans Theatrical Foundation, Inc.
Architect: Ured Architecture
Design Team: Leo Modrcin, AIA, Alan Chan, Mimi Hoang, Luka Melon, Dario Solman
Associated Architect: Franke, Gottsegen, Cox Architects
Structural Engineer: Guy Nordenson and Associates
Building Systems Engineer: I.R. Group, Inc.
Lighting Design: Lightfield, Inc.
Consultants: Israel Berger and Associates (curtainwall); Davis Crossfield Inc. (theater design); William Dailey Building and Zoning Consultant; Marshall/KMK (acoustics); Tracey Cameron (graphics/signage); Wave Enterprises (audio/visual); Construction Specifications Inc.
Construction Manager/General Contractor: Yorke Construction Corporation
Photography: Frank Oudeman

Dream Factory

The Brooklyn Navy Yard
goes Hollywood

By Thomas D. Sullivan

STEINER BUILDING NYC



View from the inside out

Hollywood is where movies and TV shows were made in studios, and New York is where they were shot on location. Or so went the pattern of cinema history.

While some cities have been making inroads as stand-ins for New York City “exteriors” (notably Toronto), New York remains an attractive place to film. One of the biggest advantages the city has is that many talented people in the film industry live here. Knowing that home is a taxi ride away could be the factor that prods an actor or director to sign on for a film project being shot in New York.

Now New York has new added attractions for television and film production. First, Steiner Studios, a 280,000-square-foot facility has opened in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Second, in September, Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg signed into law the Empire State Film Production Credit Program and the Made in New York Incentive Program. These give tax and marketing credits, along with a specialized concierge service, for film and television projects so long as they complete 75 percent of their production in New York City.

The Steiner Studios design team includes Gensler, PS&S Architecture, Dattner Architects, and Janson Design Group. While the products of studios are glamorous, studio buildings are factories of dreams, with an emphasis on efficiency in manufacture. Richard Dattner, FAIA, describes the buildings as “great big boxes in a very gritty area.” (The Navy Yard employed 75,000 people during World War II.) According to Dattner’s web site, “The studio buildings are true ‘New Yorkers’ – tough on the outside, intelligent and sensitive on the inside.” The studio lives up to the billing, with large precast concrete walls punctuated by small square windows and sections of aluminum and glass curtain wall.

The Janson Design Group “did everything inside,” explains Dennis Janson, AIA, whose firm specializes in studio design. The studio spaces needed to be large, but also soundproof and suited for the spoken word (or, in the case of some directors, the shouted epithet). To get a sense of the state of the art, Janson visited many studios in and around Los Angeles. Then he set out to create the East Coast’s first large-scale studios designed for 21st-century film and television technology.

Steiner Studios has five huge soundstages – three 18,000-square-foot spaces, one that’s roughly 25,000 square feet, and one that’s approximately 28,000 square feet, the largest in the Northeast. Support spaces include dressing and makeup rooms, conference rooms, editing and post-production facilities, on-site studios for artisans to create graphics and props, and parking for 1,000 cars.

Fittingly, the studio’s first major production currently in the works is Mel Brooks’s “The Producers: The Movie Musical,” directed by Susan Stroman and starring Matthew Broderick, Nathan Lane, Nicole Kidman, and Will Ferrell – all New Yorkers working in their own backyard.

DATTNER ARCHITECTS



Bird's-eye view

Thomas D. Sullivan, formerly the architecture critic of the *Washington Times*, is a freelance writer and *Oculus* contributing editor.

Master Planning, Graphics: Gensler
Building Design: PS&S Architecture
Building Exterior: Dattner Architects
Studio Design: Janson Design Group LLC
Construction Manager: Steiner Building NYC
Engineer: Arthur Metzler & Associates

Gamesmanship

Design Laboratories
brings home lessons
from Las Vegas

By Thomas D. Sullivan

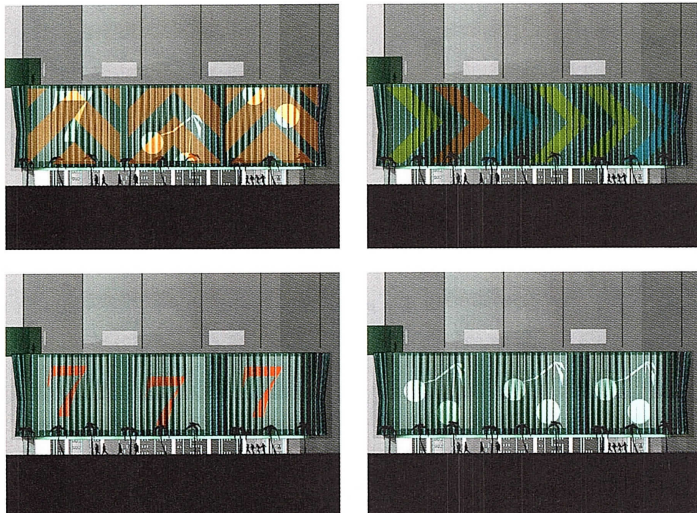
The thing to remember about Las Vegas is that it's "a city based on the dreams of individuals who see an opportunity to build a Mecca of moneymaking and fantasy," says architect David Ruff. Ruff and Karen Frome, AIA, partners at Design Laboratories LLC, designed handsome and economical office spaces for the Brooklyn Academy of Music and residential renovations before taking on Las Vegas.

"Gaming," as it's known locally, is the big draw. And Vegas attractions continually outbid each other with garish eye candy. In their project to redesign and link two Las Vegas hotels, Ruff and Frome aim to up the ante, creating surfaces and spaces to provide spectacle – and a game of chance.

The designers plan to mount 90-foot-high, 300-foot-long LED signs on the walls of the Las Vegas Club, turning it into a slot machine that passersby can play using their cell phones. The electronic light

of the fastest-growing areas of the country. Ruff sees its hot, flat spaces as a *tabula rasa*. There, Frome says, the "architectural context is so vastly different from New York City."

For Ruff, designing in the anything-goes Las Vegas building environment is both energizing and debilitating. "You have an empty desert. What do you want to build?" In Las Vegas, you need to bring your dream – and everything else – for a project. In New York, you have historical precedent and a context to work in. He says his Las Vegas experience is helpful when he returns to work in New York, where projects can become too focused on the "problem-solving aspects" of architecture. In New York, where he often finds himself trying to please a number of constituencies simultaneously, he wants to recall what he's aiming at "in the context of an inspirational dream." A lesson from Las Vegas.



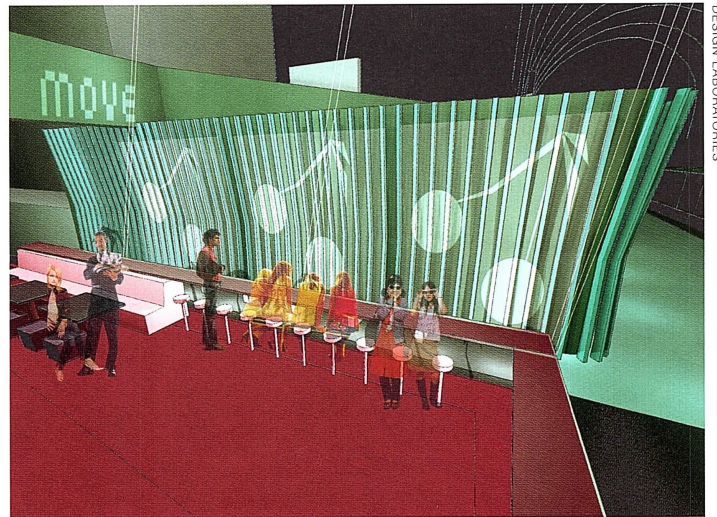
Freemont Street façade studies

games will run on a ten to 15 minute loop, 24 hours a day, "bringing the game to the street," says Frome.

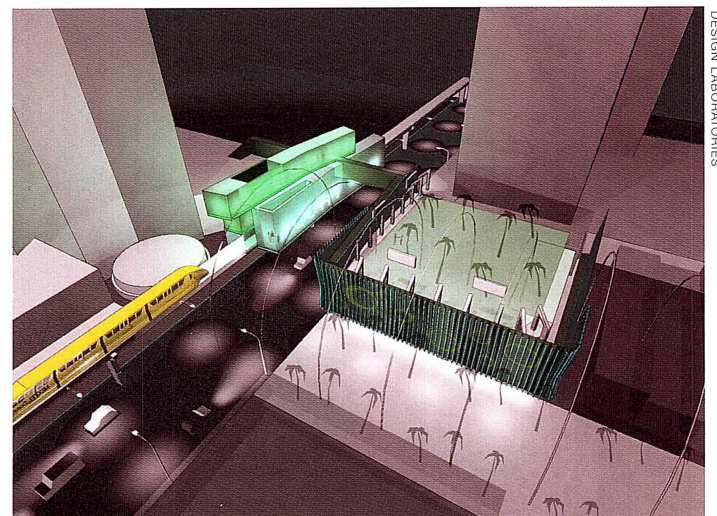
The design will place a glass-walled nightclub over a planned monorail line. A bridge linking the Las Vegas Club with the Plaza Hotel will traverse this combined structure. The passing monorail cars and the human traffic within and without make the space "doubly active," says Ruff.

The monorail treatment shows that Ruff and Frome are learning from Las Vegas. The project links up with a city effort to revive the downtown locale, not far from Block 16, the old red-light district. From the city's ads, it is clear that Las Vegas is not overly ashamed of its reputation as Sin City. As Ruff says, "Las Vegas is about extremes," and seeing the city's "larger than life" mindset, he wants to extend its logic to "take the infrastructure and turn it into performance."

Both Ruff and Frome relish working in a city that's so architecturally malleable – creative destruction is the norm in Las Vegas, one



Above: The nightclub interior will be animated by the "game" façade across the street Below: Aerial perspective shows glass-enclosed nightclub over a planned monorail line

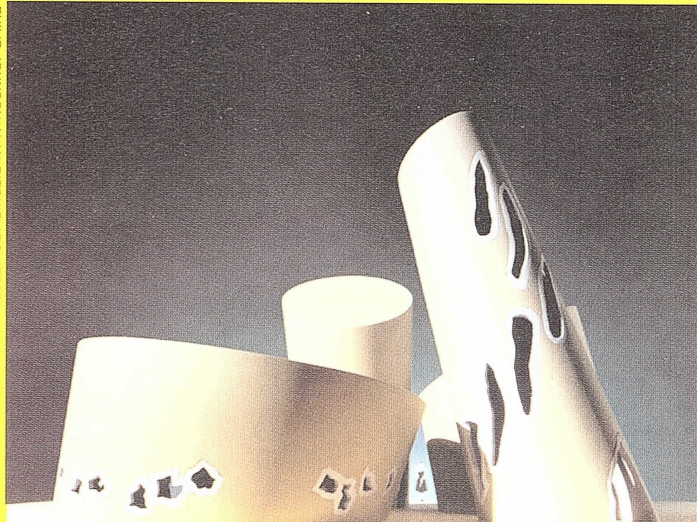


DESIGN LABORATORIES

DESIGN LABORATORIES

Postcards

PHILIP JOHNSON/ALAN RITCHIE ARCHITECTS



Children's World: JVC Centro de Cultura, Convenciones, y Negocios, Guadalajara, Mexico
Architect: Philip Johnson/Alan Ritchie Architects

Client: Jorge Vergara/Omnilife
Projected completion date: 2006

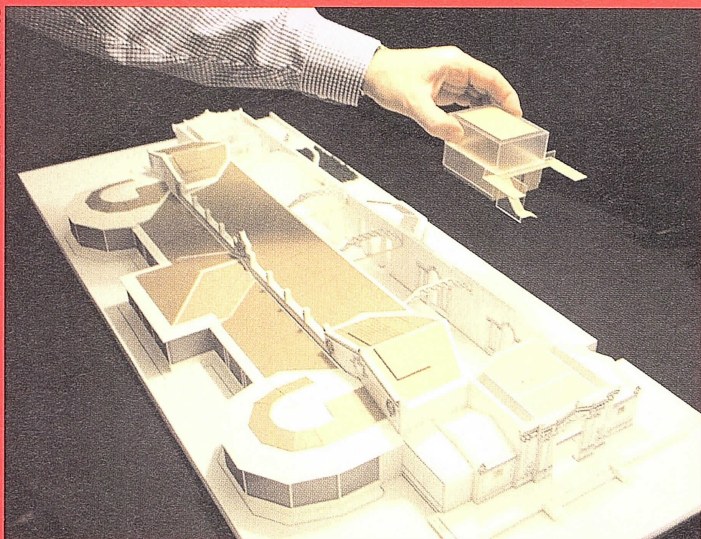
The museum, part of a major development for Omnilife in Guadalajara, defines architecture as sculpture. Rather than designing a single building, we decided to use classical geometrical shapes - the cube, the pyramid, the cone, and the cylinder. Taking these forms and composing them in abstract relationships creates fun spaces children can easily relate to. We set out to design a fun place, a play space as well as a space to learn, explore, and grow. Placing these pavilions on a man-made island in a man-made lake, part of but separate from the rest of the busy and high-g geared development, it truly becomes a "children's world."

Alan Ritchie, AIA, ARIBA

I don't like straight lines. I like warped lines. I like the forms that are the basis of the world. Regular forms are also what create the basis for architecture. This is why I would speak of classicism. After all, I distort the forms to make the thing more fun.

Philip C. Johnson, FAIA

FOX & FOWLE ARCHITECTS



The landmarked Bronx Zoo Lion House, one of New York City's truly magical spaces, is roaring back to life! Closed to visitors since the lions, panthers, and tigers were moved to a more hospitable environment in the 1970s, the 1903 Beaux-Arts building is being transformed to house a new exhibit, "Madagascar!," featuring the baobab tree and ring-tailed lemurs. The project integrates new and old building elements - and will be the first New York City landmark to seek the U.S. Green Building Council LEED™ Gold certification.

Sylvia J. Smith AIA, Principal-in-Charge

Bronx Zoo Lion House, Bronx, NY
Architect: Fox & Fowle Architects
Client: Wildlife Conservation Society; NYC Department of Design and Construction
M/E/P: Kallen & Lemelson

Structural Engineer: Anastos Engineering
Preservation: Building Conservation Associates
Size: 40,000 square feet
Completion: 2006

from

USA 23

New York architects send in short takes on their cultural (and fun) projects from the Bronx to Baden-Baden, Midtown to Guadalajara
Compiled by Akiel Catwell

A place that was designed to display and sell Hermès, Chanel, and Valentino, the new Rubin Museum of Art has now become a space that transports visitors into the spiritual realm of the art of the Himalayas. The design team had to provide all the practical requirements, such as museum-quality environmental and lighting systems, and spaces for higher-volume program activities. Perhaps more important, we needed to give this building the appropriate spirit for exhibiting Himalayan art.

Our solution involved the discreet introduction of motifs associated with the dominant religion of the region, Buddhism, and also the design of well-crafted details. The Rubin Museum of Art evokes the luminous tranquility of its collection, and also something more: the haunting echoes of the building's past lives.

Richard L. Blinder, FAIA, Partner-in-Charge

Rubin Museum of Art, New York, NY

Lead Architect: Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners LLP

Associate Museum Architect: Atelier Imrey Culbert

Graphic Design: Milton Glaser

Hardware Design: Erich Theophile

Size: 70,000 square feet

Inaugurated: October 2004



PETER ARON/ESTO

The expansion of the Nelson Atkins Museum will occur through five new "lenses" forming new spaces, new viewpoints, and new angles of vision. Glass lenses bring different qualities of light to the galleries, while the sculpture garden's pathways meander through them.

The museum's strong holdings in Oriental Art demonstrate the timeless merging of art, architecture, and landscape. The addition celebrates this fusion with the new Noguchi sculpture court, serving as a connection to the existing Sculpture Gardens and the new addition.

Steven Holl, FAIA, Principal, and Chris McVoy, Partner-in-Charge

Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri

Architect: Steven Holl Architects

Associate Architect: Berkebile Nelson Immenschuh McDowell Architects

Structural Engineers: Guy Nordenson and Associates; Structural Engineering Associates



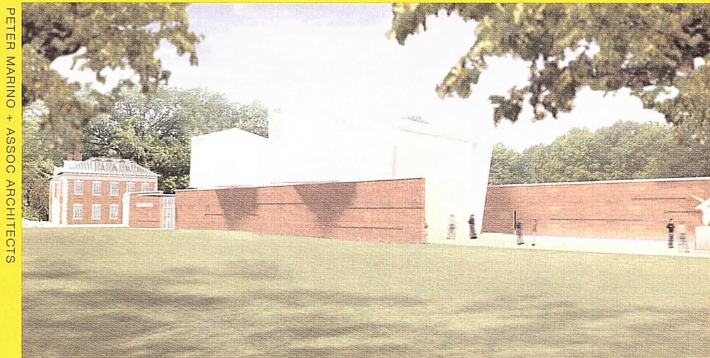
STEVEN HOLL ARCHITECTS

Mechanical Engineers: Ove Arup & Partners / W.L. Cassell Associates

Landscape Architects: Olin Partnership / Gould Evans Goodman

Size: 160,000-square-foot addition, 240,000-square-foot renovation, 460-car garage

Completion: 2007



PETER MARINO + ASSOC ARCHITECTS

Nassau County Museum of Art Expansion, Roslyn Harbor, NY

Architect: Peter Marino + Assoc Architects

Size: 18,000 square feet

Completion: 2007

A dialogue between the new and old is reinforced by the new wing's palette of materials, which match the color, size, and texture of the museum's original c. 1900 brick and limestone Bryce-Frick mansion, located on the 145 acres of the William Cullen Bryant Preserve. The 18,000-square-foot wing is on the east side of the mansion and will house a new entry, 11 galleries, and a multi-purpose auditorium. The pavilion's walls and roofs cascade away from the original building, and glass fissures are cut into the walls and ceilings to admit light and views of the sky and environs.

I'm inspired by the organic processes of the English greenhouse - the concept of glimpsing glass conservatories above a high garden wall, as in the English countryside. Here, rather than growing cherries, we grow art.

Peter Marino, AIA, Principal-in-Charge



KLAUS FRAHM

Burda Collection Museum, Baden-Baden, Germany

Architect: Richard Meier & Partners Architects LLP

Associate Architect: Peter W. Kruse, Freier Architekt

Client: Frieder Burda Foundation

Structural Engineer: Schumer + Kienzle

Geotechnical Engineer: Geyer-Hettler-Joswig

Mechanical Engineer: Schneider, Ebinger, Früh Ingenieurgesellschaft

Electrical Engineer: b.i.g. Bechtold Ingenieurgesellschaft

This new museum has been designed to be a jewel in the lush landscape of the Lichtentaler Allee Park in Baden-Baden, and great efforts were made to preserve as many trees as possible. The overall form and scale of the new building correspond to the classical profile of the adjacent Staatliche Kunsthalle [Baden-Baden State Art Gallery], but each institution keeps its own tectonic identity. The main gallery's opaque roof is animated by clerestory light, while a recessed floor plate filters natural light through to the lower levels. Using light and glass, the new building achieves an alternating relationship between interior and exterior, art and nature, resulting in an open, transparent daylit museum.

Richard Meier, FAIA, FRIBA, Principal-in-Charge, and Bernhard Karpf, AIA, Design Partner

Facade Consultant: Lothar Rudolph, Berater f. Fassadentechnik

Lighting Consultant: Zumtobel Staff

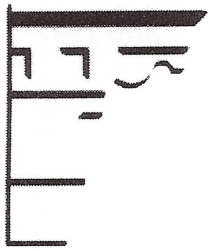
Acoustic Consultant: Müller BBM Munich

Landscape Architect: Bernd Weigel

Project Management: Heinz Lehmann, Ingenieurbüro für Bauwesen

Size: 10,700+ square feet

Inaugurated: October 2004



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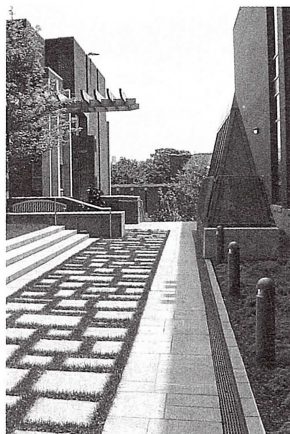


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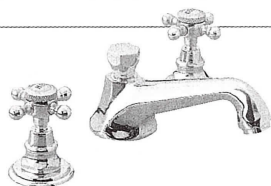
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Another Ground Zero

Outside View

By Edward Lifson

WBEZ Chicago Public Radio

remember the buildings – they seemed so tall at the time. Their site is now a void in the urban fabric. But unlike lower Manhattan, I think the “empty” Block 37 in the middle of downtown Chicago ought to remain building-free.

Block 37 is Chicago’s “Ground Zero.” Before being leveled by the Chicago Fire in 1871, this block bounded by State Street, Dearborn, Washington, and Randolph boasted some of the tallest buildings in the city. In 1989, Mayor Richard M. Daley approved the demolition of the block for a mixed-use skyscraper. But then the economic bust of the 1990s hit and the skyscraper was never built. Today, the land is something between a lunar and a prairie landscape.

Plans for New York’s Ground Zero and Chicago’s are, in some ways, similar. So are the problems. Chicago would like to build an underground train station there, with express trains to O’Hare and Midway Airports (might we – American architectural Mecca – borrow Santiago Calatrava?).

The city is still searching for financing for what has become a spurned downtown area. Over the years, various efforts have been made to revitalize the block. Helmut Jahn drew up a hotel/retail complex. Kohn Pedersen Fox took a turn, and so did Solomon Caldwell Buenz. Lord & Taylor was to be an anchor tenant; even Harrods of London considered moving there.

All of these efforts failed to move beyond the drawing board.

The Mills Corp is the latest developer, working with one of Chicago’s most talented architects, Ralph Johnson of Perkins & Will. Tenants are nowhere to be found.

But that’s fine with me. Like many Chicagoans, I think Block 37 ought to be turned into a gorgeous contemporary public square. This block marks where the north side meets the south side. Blacks and whites mingle here more than in most parts of the city. On the east side of the block, you have the great symbol of retail, Marshall Field’s (D.H. Burnham & Company, 1892) with its fine narrow-wide-narrow Chicago windows. (Please, please put the cornice back on!) To the west, “government,” with City Hall and County Building (Holabird & Roche, 1905-1911). “Justice” is present with the courtrooms of the

Daley Center (Jacques Brownson, C.F. Murphy Associates, 1965), and through its glass lobby you see Helmut Jahn’s po-mo State of Illinois Building (1979-83). And on the north side, “entertainment,” with the Goodman and Oriental Theaters, and the Old Heidelberg Inn from the 1933 Century of Progress World’s Fair. On the south side, “leisure” is represented by the Hotel Burnham in the Reliance building (Burnham and Root 1890-95).

Poking their heads into the square from beyond are the towers of the Art Deco Carbide and Carbon building (Burnham Brothers, 1929), and the dome of the classical Jeweler’s building (1925-27). Look up Washington Street for that great framed view of Gehry’s band shell, or



The view looking north from Block 37 after demolition, 1990: Daley Center (far left); Oriental Theaters and the Old Heidelberg Inn (center); Jeweler’s building (with cupola); Marshall Field’s (far right)

if you prefer older metalwork, down State Street is Louis Sullivan’s Schlesinger and Meyer Department Store (1899-1904), where the cornice is being replaced!

All this around one block! What a great city. New York must rebuild. But Chicago ought to consider the minimalist approach at Block 37. Our “Ground Zero” is not empty; it’s full of what people need in a city: light, air, sky, and terrific views of great buildings.

Edward Lifson [hosts “Hello Beautiful!” on Chicago Public Radio. He is also Editor of Arts, Architecture and Culture at the radio station, a position supported by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.](#)

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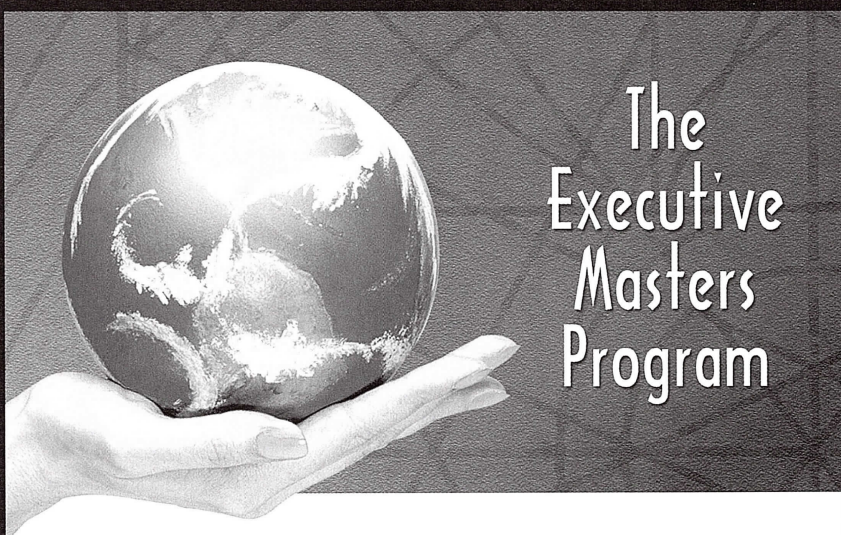
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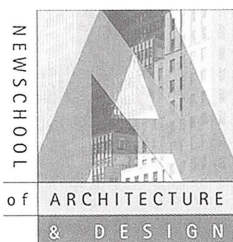
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14-Year Watch

Islamic Cultural Center of
New York, by Skidmore,
Owings & Merrill; Swanke
Hayden Connell, 1991

By Fred Bernstein

The Islamic Cultural Center, one of the largest religious buildings in Manhattan, is also one of the most intimidating, thanks to a high metal fence surrounding its site on the northeast corner of Third Avenue and 96th Street. I have visited the building half a dozen times, curious about this apparition – a square, domed mosque, angled sharply from the Manhattan street grid to ensure that worshipers face Mecca, and its accompanying, 15-story-high minaret.

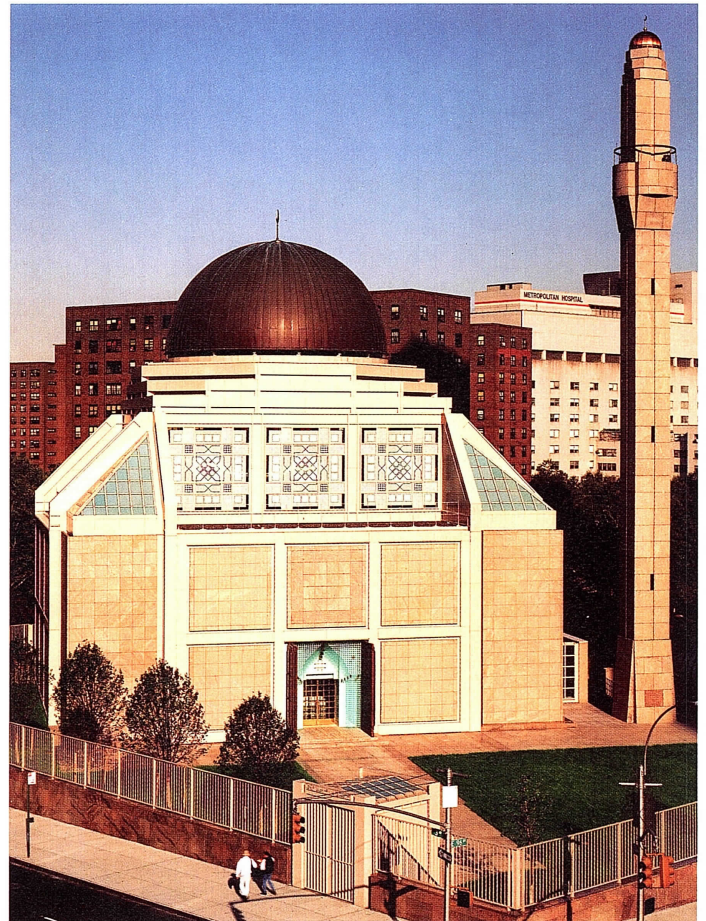
The mosque, completed in 1991, is the work of Michael McCarthy, FAIA, and Mustafa Abadan, AIA, of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The firm was well known to the building's sponsors, the Saudi and Kuwaiti governments, for such Middle Eastern projects as the Hajj pavilion at King Abdul Aziz Airport in Jeddah. In New York, an architecture advisory committee spent years debating how traditional the building ought to be before settling on a domed, Ottoman-style mosque that used the materials and methods of the late 20th century.

Fritted glass panels replace the *mashrabiyas* (carved wooden screens) common to Islamic architecture, and large panels of pinkish granite are hung from concealed steel supports. The building is impressive, yet oddly awkward in places – the angled, greenhouse-like corners below the dome are pedestrian. And so little is done with the lawn (and there is so little connection between indoors and out) that one wonders if a building that filled the entire lot wouldn't have been a better solution for Manhattan.

Although the minaret wasn't in the original scheme, David Rockefeller eventually put up \$1.5 million for that symbolic element, and Swanke Hayden Connell Architects was brought in to design it. Alton Gürsel, Assoc. AIA, a Turkish-American architect, succeeded in creating a classy mini-skyscraper. For much of its height, the minaret – which culminates in a tiny copper dome – appears to be a four-square stack of granite blocks, which gives it a geometric simplicity that the mosque itself lacks. An Islamic school was partly constructed next door to the mosque, but remained unfinished for years. The site was recently leased for 99 years to The Related Companies, which is building a 42-story, 475-unit apartment building there. (Called One Carnegie Hill, it will have a lobby and other amenities, including a dog-grooming room, by David Rockwell.) Space for the Islamic Cultural Center in the building's base will have a separate entrance.

The mosque itself has a new entrance, since security concerns after 9/11 led to the closing of the Third Avenue gate. Instead of walking through giant bronze portals toward the prayer wall facing east, as McCarthy (who died in 2002) intended, one arrives via a basement door on 97th Street. Upstairs, the sanctuary, now entered from one side, is surprisingly clean-lined. After 14 years, the room has picked up none of the expected encrustations – signage, mismatched furniture – that so often diminish religious buildings.

Echoing the geometry of the dome, lighting is provided by dozens



WOLFGANG HOYT

Islamic Cultural Center of New York

of small fixtures hanging from long poles to form a circle. The carpet, boldly geometric and colorful, is a key feature, since there are no pews or seats of any kind. (The Arabic word *masjid*, from which mosque derives, means “the place where one prostrates oneself in worship.”)

On Friday, when men are commanded to pray communally, the room can be quite crowded. (Women occupy a separate balcony.) Many of the worshipers drive cabs, which fill the streets around the buildings. Had they designed this 20th-century mosque, there might not have been a minaret, but surely there would have been parking.

Fred Bernstein, an *Oculus* contributing editor, has written about design for more than 15 years. He also contributes to the *New York Times*, *Metropolitan Home*, and *Blueprint*.

The Fame Game

Good Practices
By Roger Yee

Why do some architects become famous when most of their equally hard-working colleagues don't?

What are the odds that an architect will appear on the cover of *Time* magazine? Better than his or her peers might imagine. Twelve architects have achieved the honor so far: Ralph Adams Cram (December 13, 1926), Frank Lloyd Wright (January 17, 1938), Lewis Mumford (April 18, 1938), Charles Luckman (June 10, 1946), Richard J. Neutra (August 15, 1949), Wallace K. Harrison (September 22, 1952), Eero Saarinen (July 2, 1956), Edward Durell Stone (March 31, 1958), Le Corbusier (May 5, 1961), Minoru Yamasaki (January 18, 1963), William L. Pereira (September 6, 1963), and Philip Johnson (January 8, 1979). Given the movie stars, world leaders, champion athletes, and corporate chieftains who must be dodged along the way, each of those covers could still be seen as a miracle. (Yet, what does it say about our time when the most recent cover was 25 years ago?)

Robert A.M. Stern, FAIA, dean of the Yale School of Architecture and head of Robert A.M. Stern Architects, remembers one vividly. "I had just started my career when Saarinen made the cover of *Time*," he recalls. "I was so impressed. This implied that architects could be as important as generals, presidents, and popes."

Architects are certainly enjoying their share of Andy Warhol's 15 minutes of fame. A report on new luxury condominiums in the November 1, 2004, issue of *New York* magazine treated the buildings' architects – Charles Gwathmey, Richard Meier, Santiago Calatrava, Norman Foster, and Jean Nouvel – as matinee idols. Real estate developer Aby Rosen credited "celebrity architects" with adding one to three percent more value to projects.

Is there a secret to becoming famous? "The obvious road to fame

It's not a matter of luck. You make your own luck. But fame fades when you can no longer top your last accomplishment. Frank Gehry must continue to out-Bilbao Bilbao. That's hard.

Robert A.M. Stern, FAIA

is to do great work," Stern says. But creating work that wins the respect of fellow architects falls short of fame. "Few architects are famous even to an informed public," Stern maintains. "Compare the careers of Louis Kahn and Frank Gehry. As the strippers say in "Gypsy," "You gotta have a gimmick."

Unique – and photogenic, please – talent must also be actively promoted in a world crowded by fame seekers. "Fame never chases you," counsels Stephen Viscusi, president of Viscusi Executive Search. "You must grasp it. The only way is to step outside the design community. Why do fashion designers like Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, and Dolce and Gabbana achieve fame much more than architects? Fashion people never leave the world alone, promoting themselves constantly, conducting market research, and licensing their work to others."

The lasting fame acknowledged by architectural historians requires work that is deeply embedded in the culture of its time. Terence Riley

Can we talk?

Getting a media-obsessed society to pay attention means cooperating with the media, a challenge many architects consider easier said than done. To Roslyn Brandt of Brandt Resources, the ability to speak articulately is almost as important as talent in the pursuit of fame. "Do you understand what you're doing in the context of the world around you?" she asks architects. "You must be able to communicate your ideas in words. The public doesn't always understand what you've done until you've explained it."

The architects Brandt cites as "getting it" and transforming their careers include Thom Mayne, Michael Graves, and Arthur Gensler. "Without being a star architect himself, Arthur Gensler transformed design into a business that business people could understand and trust," she says. "By surrounding himself with talented designers who shared his vision, he built a great firm."

A public relations consultant can make media contact faster and more effectively, argues Susan Lewin, president of Susan Grant Lewin Associates. "If it's the architect's job to know about building," she says, "it's the publicist's job to know about media." Yet there may

be nothing quite like having a powerful and influential client or a sympathetic and well-connected mentor. "You really cannot do great work without a great patron," insists Joan Capelin, president of Capelin Communications. "A patron gives you support to build something no one has seen before." Similarly, a mentor's advice and introductions can open doors that might otherwise remain closed.

What fame won't get you

Stardom's benefits do exact a price. Staying famous requires effort. "It's not a matter of luck," Stern emphasizes. "You make your own luck. But fame fades when you can no longer top your last accomplishment. Frank Gehry must continue to out-Bilbao Bilbao. That's hard."

Stern reminds colleagues that fame guarantees nothing, including new commissions. "I know a little about the fame business myself," he cheerfully concedes. "But being famous means I'm still being interviewed with the same seven architects I just saw at the last job. Even opera singers and Hollywood actors must audition. We can't all win the prize. Being famous lets you make the call."

Are there drawbacks to fame? "Fame gets you exposure for everything you do, good and bad," Capelin warns. "Plus, the bigger you are, the more people try to bring you down." She urges would-be stars to keep clients in the loop. "Your client must be in cahoots with you," she says. "He must know what you're going to do and why, if he's going to be your champion."

Ironically, fame doesn't even assure aspiring Frank Lloyd Wrights a place in history. "Architects will find that celebrity and notoriety can be bought or acquired by accident, but both are fleeting," says Terence Riley, chief curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Modern Art. "The lasting fame acknowledged by architectural historians requires work that is deeply embedded in the culture of its time." Interestingly, Riley regards fame as both good and bad for the profession. "Fame certainly helps talented architects to attract commissions," he admits. "But clients who only want to consider architects who are public figures could arbitrarily limit the pool of good candidates."

Riley observes that Yoshio Taniguchi, the architect of MoMA's acclaimed new home, has never courted the media. "Taniguchi is not on the dinner party circuit," he says. "That could change now, however."

Are you ready for your 15 minutes?

Roger Yee is an architecture and interior design editor for Visual Reference Publications and a consultant to organizations in the design community.

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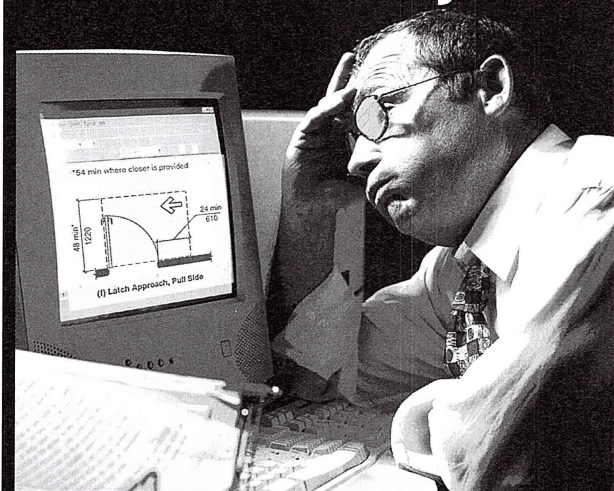
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Taking back

Times Square Roulette: Remaking the City Icon, by Lynne B. Sagalyn. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2004 (paper). First published in 2001. 620 pages. \$29.95.

Reviewed by: Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA

O tempora, o mores (oh times, oh manners)! No longer can urbanist Marshal Berman write about Times Square, as he did in 1997 in *Signs of the Times: The Lure of Times Square* (Dissent magazine): “[it is] a human sinkhole, a place where no decent person would willing [sic] go, and where the only helpful thing would be to blow it all away.” And blow it away they did. The nice family from Dubuque, Fun City-bound on an affordable package tour (clean midtown hotel room, breakfast and dinner, walking tour of Times Square, airport taxes included) now feels safer than they would in Disneyland as they march along 42nd Street, not an item of trash in sight, with wholesome souvenirs at every store to take home to grandma.

Gone, alas, is the “exotic seediness” that author Lynne Sagalyn,

professor of city and regional planning at the University of Pennsylvania, says used to pull in the visitors from all around town, the outer boroughs, and beyond. “Pleasure-seekers and tourists came to ogle, see the bright lights of Times Square, say they’d been there. Titillation. The allure of danger and desire for a new experience involving some degree of risk-taking and thrill-seeking also attracted many to the ‘night frontier.’”

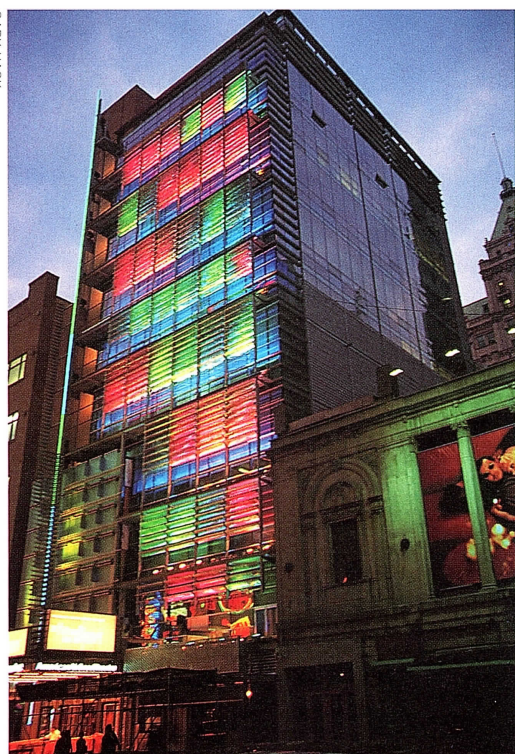
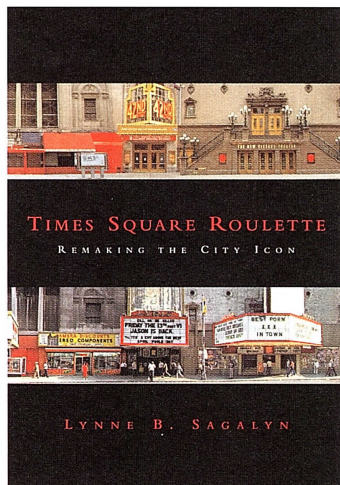
Warming to her task, Sagalyn quotes sociologists William Kornblum and Vernon Boggs: “[This is] a place where the laws of conventional society are suspended, people come to seek adventure, to take risks in dealing in the fast life...to con and be conned.”

The area drew the regulars, in Kornblum and Boggs’ words: a “loosely connected society of people ‘in the life,’” supplemented by the daily advent of transient youngsters, runaways, and an assortment of what Sagalyn describes as “hucksters, chickens and chicken hawks, johns and [small-time pimps].” It was a “reliable economic market for every possible human need.”

It was not, however, a market championed by the city’s political and business establishment. As far back as 1976, then Mayor Abraham Beame launched the Office of Midtown Enforcement to return Times Square (and its Great White Way – 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, which *Rolling Stone* once called the “sleaziest block in America”) to “good commercial uses.” Heading the team from 1978 to 1984 was Carl B. Weisbrod, an energetic and con-

scientious New Yorker who today presides over the Alliance for Downtown New York and is a Lower Manhattan Development Corporation board member.

The rest is history. An ambitious plan advanced by advertising executive Frederic Papert, sponsored by the Ford Foundation, and called The City at 42nd Street, Inc. would have transformed, writes Sagalyn, the “entire three block area from 41st Street to 43rd Street between Seventh Avenue and Eighth Avenue into a combined world’s fair, theme park, and cultural showcase for New York,” at an estimated cost of \$600 million. That plan ran out of steam, largely, it was said, because, despite powerful commercial backing it smacked to many of just one



**The New 42nd Street Studios by Platt Byard Dorell
White Architects**



New Years Eve, 1995

GARY HACK

TIMES SQUARE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

the night

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more instance of urban renewal. Sagalyn also quotes former City Planning Commission chairman Donald Elliott, who states that the proposed redevelopment was a Mayor John Lindsay project and the new Mayor Edward Koch decided to “pull the plug.”

Instead, Koch in 1980 organized the 42nd Street Development Project, also known as 42DP, which in due course issued a set of design guidelines along with an RFP for developers. By 1984, two sets of developers had been approved conditionally, but 42DP was beset by difficulties, and by 1989 had attracted as many as 40 lawsuits, writes Sagalyn. Three sets of interests competed for commercial limelight in the area – the sex industry, the performing arts industry, and the real estate industry. The performing arts industry was the first to bring results. In 1988, the non-profit 42nd Street Entertainment Corporation was formed to oversee the restoration of several historic theaters along the street. Disney’s Michael Eisner visited the decrepit New Amsterdam Theater, formerly one of the grandest of the playhouses, and came away with a fierce desire to see it restored to its former grandeur. It reopened in April 1997, 15 months after the opening of the remade New Victory theater. The sex industry subsequently moved to a less conspicuous neighborhood south of 42nd Street.

Meanwhile, in 1992 the old 42DP collapsed, and for years no office towers were built during what had turned into a serious recession. But as the recession receded in the late 1990s, large corporations, sensing the optimism and opportunities in the area, began to build office towers and high-rise hotels at the western and eastern ends of 42nd Street, and north along Broadway. Many of the structures used spectacular state-of-the-art electronic display technology. At 43rd Street, NASDAQ, the OTC stock market, “plugged in an eight-story ‘techno-turret’ capable of projecting constantly changing, colorful, swirling images on a 90-by-120-foot screen produced by powerful minicircuitry.”

Times Square Roulette provides not only the highlights of the Times Square makeover, but also the details of the deals, intrigues, and conflicts and pressures that accompany any attempt to bring urban change, especially in a notoriously contentious community such as New York. Sagalyn’s style does justice to the effort – her writing is lucid, well balanced, and captures the labyrinthine byways of what is known as process. No detail escapes her. She even includes a detailed map showing the location of every theater and every house of ill repute from 37th Street to 47th Street, from Sixth to Ninth Avenue.

But that was 1901. The bordellos then outnumbered the theaters by a ratio of about 15 to one. Today, as the Disneyfication of Times Square presses on, it’s good to know that our family from Dubuque will have had fun in Fun City, and return home with a sense of blameless experience, leaving nostalgia to the locals.

Click here: www.306090.org

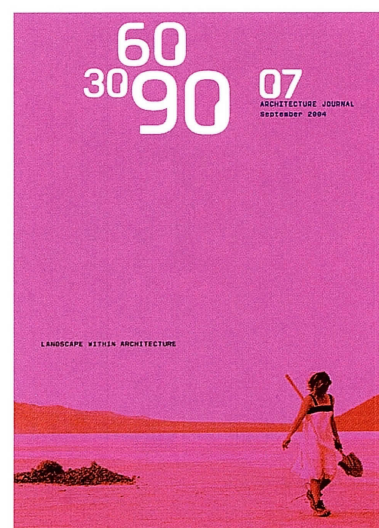
Reviewed by: Margaret Rietveld, AIA

If you are looking for something student-run that touches on architectural developments in academia across building design, landscape design, and urbanism, you may think you should turn to www.306090.org, the web presence of the biannual *306090 Architecture Journal*. Geared toward students and young design professionals, this non-profit, self-described “arts stewardship founded by architecture students in 2001” should be a tantalizing place for the current and the provocative. Unfortunately, disappointment and frustration are likely to ensue if you click here.

At first glance, the layout is promising – if somewhat small in scale. When you click menu items on the home page, even smaller pop-up windows neatly arrange themselves all around, but there’s not much information offered in these – the first indication of this site’s much-ado-about-nothing character.

If you were at the Municipal Art Society in November for the launch of the current issue and picked up a print copy, you’d know far more than the web site visitor can ever access. The current issue is titled “Landscape within Architecture,” with guest editor David L. Hays. By the time you read this, you might be able to read the editorial promised in the “Current Issue” window. But at the time of this writing, the text had not yet been posted. Similarly, thumbnails of past issues for sale offer only a cursory outline of their contents and authors.

So what is www.306090.org really about? Who knows? It is frustrating – and a missed opportunity, since the objective of www.306090.org and the *Journal* is to promote new and as yet unknown design work. With international distribution by Princeton Architectural Press, the *306090 Journal* and the efforts behind it should warrant a first class web site.



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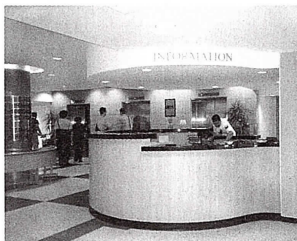
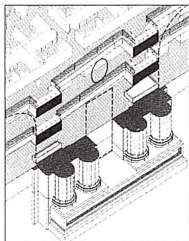
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Ain't We Got Fun

Last Words

Rick Bell, FAIA

Executive Director

AIA New York Chapter

We'll have fun fun fun... Beach Boys, 1964

Kicks just keep gettin' harder to find... Paul Revere & the Raiders, 1966

Mean Time

Manhattan has been called a funhouse without rival, even by those who fled to Los Angeles during the Great Depression. Is it the architecture of New York that makes it so, or merely the din of its mean streets? How many euphoric buildings were built in John Lindsay's Fun City after the Dodgers, Giants, and Joltin' Joe followed Greeley's advice and went west?

In *My Lost City* (1932), Fitzgerald recalled "New York had all the iridescence of the beginning of the world...I remember riding in a taxi one afternoon between very tall buildings under a mauve and rosy sky; I began to bawl because I had everything I wanted and knew that I would never be so happy again." Intersecting and overlapping circles, Circle Game painted ponies, Columbus Circle, Frederick Douglass Circle, and the playfully dancing 2012 Olympic five-color circles, all make us gladly dizzy. John Barth, in *Lost in the Funhouse* wrote: "The important thing to remember, after all, is that it's meant to be a funhouse; that is, a place of amusement. If people really got lost or injured or too badly frightened in it, the owner'd go out of business."

Between Time

Motown exhorts us not to forget Motor City. But all other American music has done so. Songs are about either New York or Los Angeles. *Positively 4th Street* ("You see me on the street") or *Surfin' USA* ("...all over Manhattan"). Richard Rodgers's "Isle of Joy" in *(We'll Have) Manhattan* or Jim Morrison's "City of Night" in *L.A. Woman*.

Music during the Roaring Twenties talked about how to enjoy life – it is always later than you think – without visible means of support. Lyrics like "times are bum and getting bummer, the rich get rich and the poor get poorer" beg the question, "Ain't we got fun?" In 1931, the last stanza of *Life is Just A Bowl of Cherries* set to lyrics the daily decision not to jump off the top of the Empire State Building, concluding "it's not the berries / in a building that tall."

Lack of visible structural support exhilarates Fun City architecture, whether at New York's Guggenheim or L.A.'s Lovell. Ebullient buildings by Angelino architects will soon pop up next to the Cooper Union and the Wedge of Light. Los Angeles is the street-level City of Light, a car culture of convertibles and adaptive re-use. Superior Oil offices become the Standard Hotel pleasure dome with an upside-down logo and red-shed waterbeds next to the pool. L.A. speeds by top-down, transparent, visible, consumerist and consuming, while New York is a trickle-down city of lights held high, a star-lit Rockefeller Center conifer or sky-club Chrysler Building imperial. Our Camelot was an ardent



MARGA ROSE HANCOCK

Bell in L.A., top down in T-bird

myth of come-again counter-culture happening in the parks and taking over the streets at the bright dawn of the Age of Aquarius.

Got Fun?

Edith Wharton's New Yorkers in *The House of Mirth* "drifted on a languid tide of curiosity from restaurant to concert-hall, from palm-garden to music-room, from art exhibit to dress-maker's opening." In L.A., where garages and parking lots surround concert hall and music room, money talks, nobody walks. Gehry's Bunker Hill masterpiece is a Santa Monica fun-pier maze of mixed Muschamp-metaphor: "Serpentine lobbies surround the auditorium, which is set diagonally to the building site. The adjustment is initially disorienting, but you won't get lost if you let your intuition lead the way. That is the way to go anyway inside Disney Hall. Ahead lies a gallery of hunches: let's try it this way. No, maybe this way. Make up your mind! I don't want to." (NYT 10/23/03).

In New York, indecision between competing opportunities for ongoing excess conflict daily with the inability, of many, to even get started. Barth's conclusion: "The climax of the story must be its protagonist's discovery of a way to get through the funhouse. But he has found none, may have ceased to search. What relevance does the war have to the story?"

The war does have relevance. How could it not? As they say in L.A., show me the Moneo.

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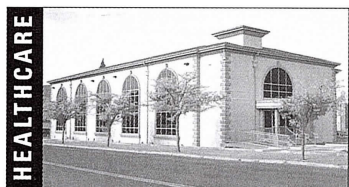
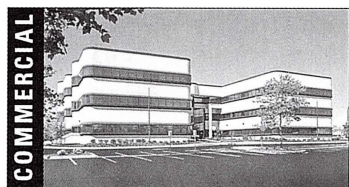
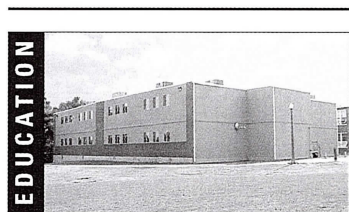
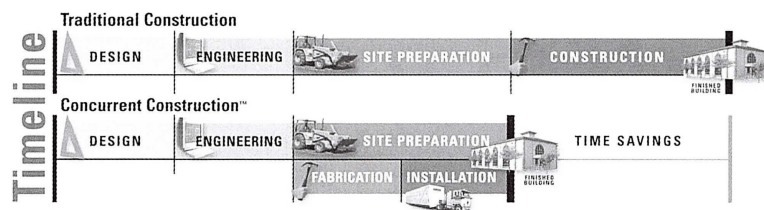
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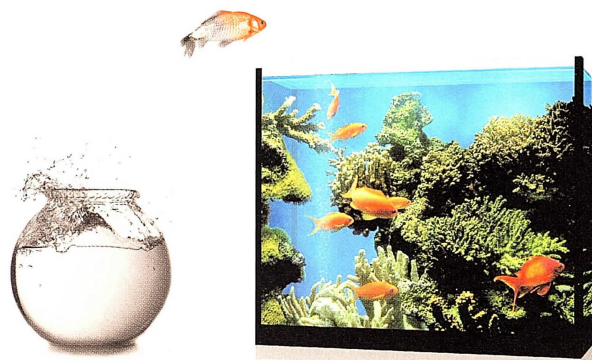
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