

Spring 2006

# Oculus

PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS NEW YORK CHAPTER VOLUME 68 ISSUE 2 \$10

## **Beyond Manhattan:** Steps in Uniting a Region

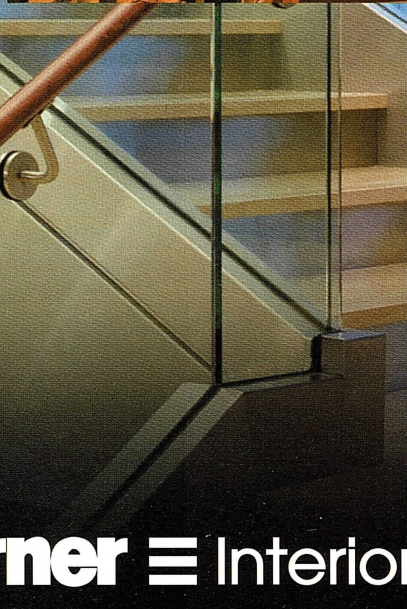
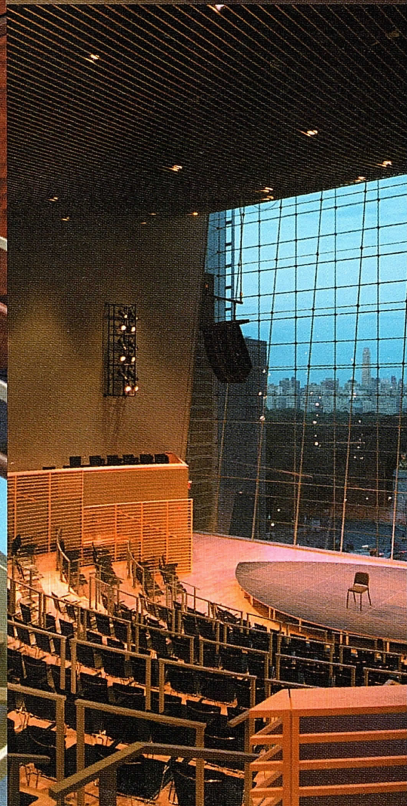
Managing Growth in  
the Tri-state Region

The Bronx Does Design

Green and Clean in Queens

Gulf Coast Update

On the Waterfront: Lessons from Melbourne



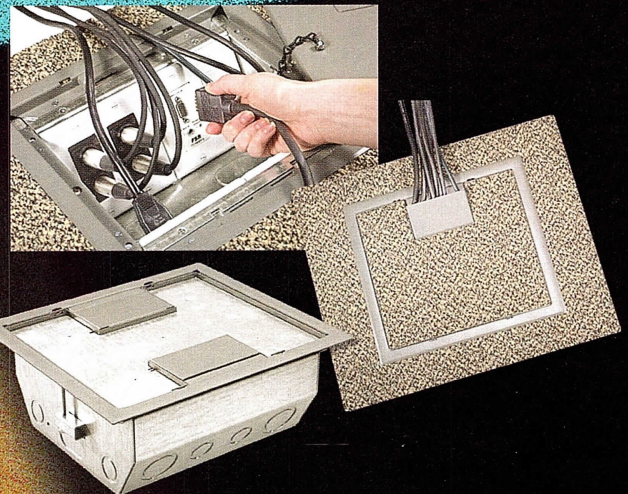
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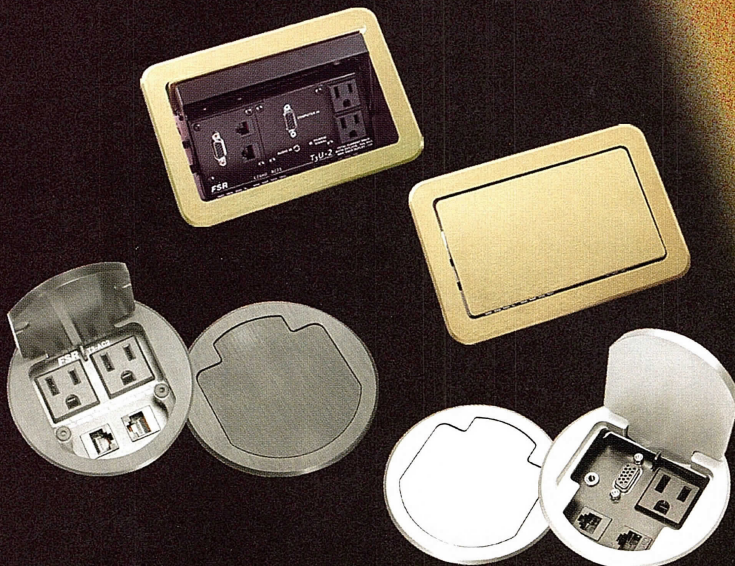
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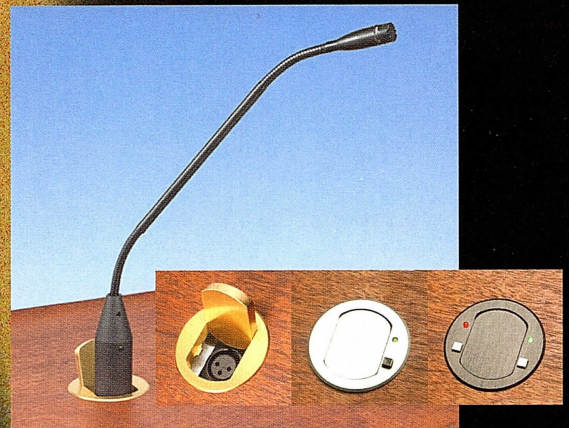
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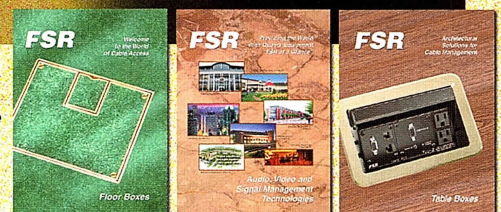


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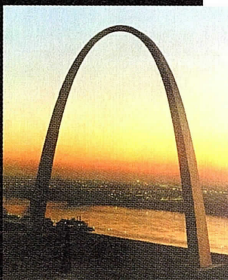
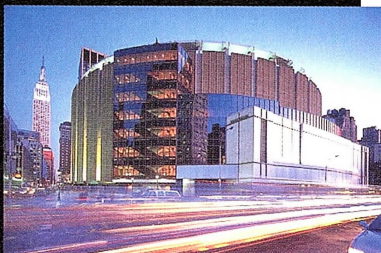
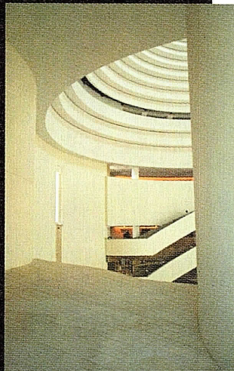
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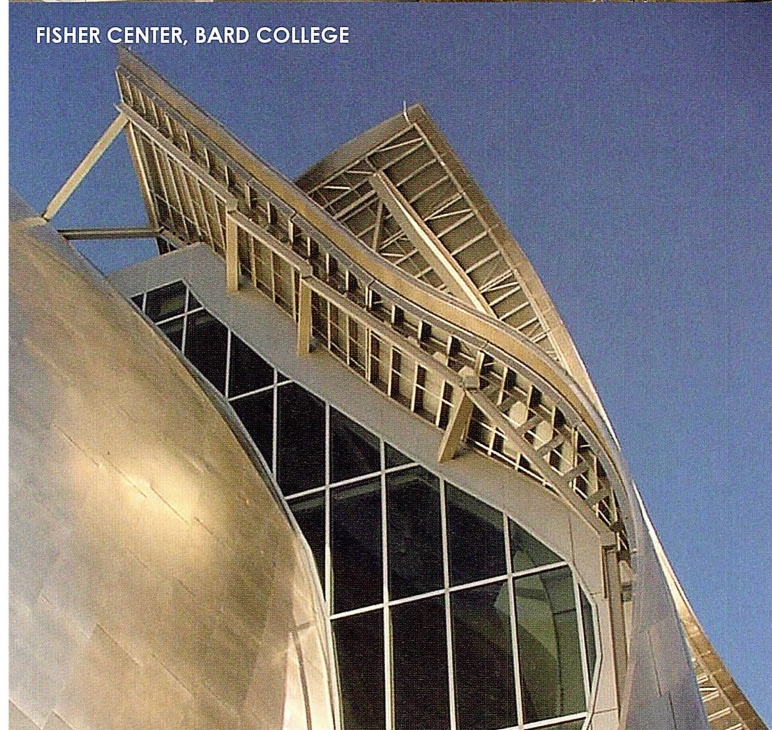
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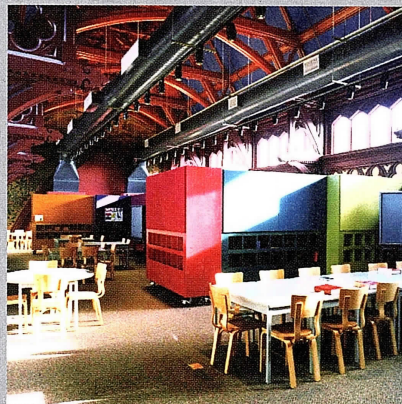
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# No Architect is an Island

First Words

Letter from the President

For many architects of my generation, (children of the 1950s and '60s), our passion for architecture took root in high school with the reading of *The Fountainhead*, Ayn Rand's novel about the making of the architect Howard Roark. Whether or not one was sympathetic to Rand's political point of view, how could we not be attracted to this "Lone Ranger" of the design world, fighting for the integrity of design visions everywhere – an architect who would rather lose the commission than compromise the ideal. We learned from Rand through Roark that, "Independence is the only gauge of human virtue and value."

It is no wonder that many architects prefer to design alone. Like Roark, we come from a tradition of the lone artist, designing in our garrets, and descending with our beautiful "uncompromised" vision of tomorrow's world.

Nevertheless, most of us have learned, perhaps the hard way, that the world of architecture really doesn't work that way any longer – if, in fact, it ever did. We discovered that clients expect their architects to meet a program, a schedule, and a budget. And we learned that when working within established communities, the public also wants to have a say in the design process.

How do we reconcile the independent ideal of the artist with the recognition that we have clients, a professional team, and public interest groups to accommodate? How does one create an award-winning design vision, when one also must make sure that local community issues are taken into account?

Although the purpose of this issue of *Oculus*, "Beyond Manhattan," is to explore the design activities of our chapter members beyond the insular bulkheads of Manhattan, it also examines how New York architects respond to local issues and concerns in these other contexts. Despite Roark's view to the contrary, John Donne tells us that, "No [architect] is an island, entire of itself." Not only are practitioners in Manhattan leading in the redevelopment of the region. In the process, we are also discovering how to hear what diverse clients and local interest groups have to say, and we are learning to address those concerns in our design processes.

This creates opportunities, but there are also inherent constraints. For one thing, when one is designing a new library in the Bronx, a community center in Mount Hope, or redefining a landmarked hospital complex in Jersey City for housing, one can't impose a top-down vision of what these new facilities might be without simultaneously developing a bottom-up outreach effort that educates and creates buy-in from local community groups and residents.

As architects, we are learning that we can't isolate ourselves on our "island." We have to interact with the city around us. In response to these issues, the AIA New York Chapter has established its theme for 2006 as "Architecture as Public Policy." The purpose of this theme is to motivate the architectural community to become more engaged



JANE MEDALLA

**President rebuilding New York block by block**

with the public to influence policy and encourage quality design.

As our members lead redevelopment efforts around the region, we are redefining the practice of architecture to not just think about how to create great buildings. As we make our region better, the architectural profession in New York is becoming more involved in helping to define what is necessary to create great neighborhoods. In the process, we are learning that we don't have to isolate ourselves to make great architecture, and we are beginning to come down from our Manhattan towers and connect with the city as a whole.

Mark E. Strauss, FAIA, AICP

President, AIA New York Chapter

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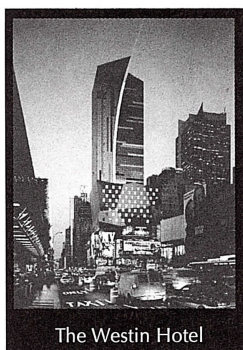
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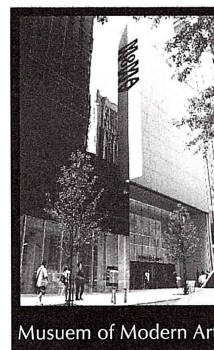
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# New York Offshore

A Word from the Editor

We're all familiar with Saul Steinberg's famous 1976 cover of *The New Yorker*, "View of the World from 9th Avenue" – sometimes referred to as "A Parochial New Yorker's View of the World." (Interesting factoid: In 1940, Steinberg graduated from the Politecnico di Milano with a degree in architecture.)

For this issue, "Beyond Manhattan," we've reversed the view, placing the focus on what is happening in places outside of Manhattan. Beginning with the big picture, Robert Yaro, president of the Regional Plan Association, outlines the challenges faced by planners and architects in our region, where the experts expect the population to grow by four million over the next few decades. Terrence E. O'Neal, AIA, President, AIA New York State, offers an overview of what is going on in other major urban areas in the state.

The view then telescopes in on development initiatives in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, and how AIA Chapters in these boroughs are grappling with planning, density, and demographics. Zeroing in on details, project profiles highlight how architecture is affecting social and cultural changes in the four boroughs – and Roosevelt Island. Zooming out again, we offer an update on New York City's role in the rebuilding of New Orleans.

Our regular departments stick to the theme. In "So Says...," Brooklyn-based Wids DeLaCour, AIA, discusses everything from affordable housing to Gehry. "Outside View" hails from Australia, as Julie Dillon, editor of *Houses* magazine, describes how Melbourne's once unapproachable waterfront is being transformed into "an architectural hotspot" of new neighborhoods and glorious public spaces. "30-Year Watch" bids a fond farewell to Mitchell/Giurgola Architects' 1976 Liberty Bell Pavilion in Philadelphia, a gem of a building set to be demolished before it has decayed. Fittingly, "In Print+" reviews a book that examines the history of demolition, another applauds architecture that combines high design with green design, and a third, small book celebrates small, everyday marvels of design. "Click Here" tools around the NYC Department of Design and Construction website and finds a wealth of information, opportunities, and, well, design. "Good Practices" clarifies some of the major – and controversial – changes in New York State's continuing education requirements.

Even restaurant guides are an indication that there is a good life to be had beyond Manhattan's shores: nine of Zagat's Top 50 restaurants are in the outer boroughs (up from three in 2004), and two restaurants in Brooklyn won stars in the Michelin Guide to New York inaugural edition released last fall. Be that as it may, while working on this issue, I couldn't shake Cole Porter's "Take Me Back to Manhattan" out of my mind – parochial New Yorker that I am.

Kristen Richards  
[kristen@aiany.org](mailto:kristen@aiany.org)



Editor well beyond Manhattan – trying to get home

K&G PANIC GRAPHICS

# Center Highlights

Center for Architecture

KRISTEN RICHARDS



The successful New Practices Roundtable series, co-sponsored by The Architect's Newspaper, presented strategies for business management, technology, and marketing to a packed Lecture Hall for every program.

RICK BELL



On December 21, 2005, the AIA NY Chapter Disaster Preparedness Task Force and the Civic Alliance to Rebuild Downtown Manhattan hosted a roundtable discussion with members of the AIA New Orleans Chapter.

RICK BELL



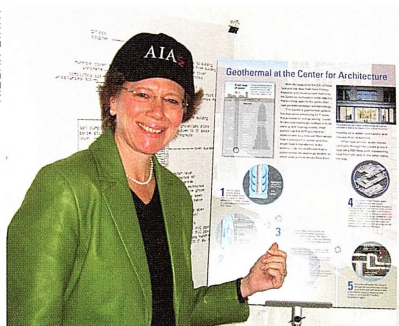
(l-r): AIA NY Chapter Committee on the Environment (COTE) Co-Chair Chris Garvin, AIA, LEED, Council members Melissa Mark Viverito and Alan Gerson, and the Sallan Foundation's Nancy Anderson, PhD, at the January 26 final High Performance Buildings panel, which presented sustainable solutions for New York City.

KRISTEN RICHARDS



Three architect/architectural photographer teams featured in the exhibit "ESTO NOW: Photographers Eye New York," sponsored by Dawson Publications and IBEX Construction, discussed their collaborations. (l-r): Guido Hartray, Rogers Marvel Architects, and David Sundberg; Ronnette Riley, FAIA, and Peter Aaron; not pictured: Erica Stoller, Director, Esto; Claire Weisz, AIA, weisz + yoes studio, and Albert Večerka.

ANNIE KURTIN



Department of Buildings Commissioner Patricia Lancaster, FAIA, toured the Center's geothermal system during a recent visit.

Brad Cloepfil, AIA, with Allied Works model of the new Two Columbus Circle design; in February, he was joined by artist Christine Jetten to talk about creating the individual tiles for the new façade of the Museum of Arts and Design's future home.

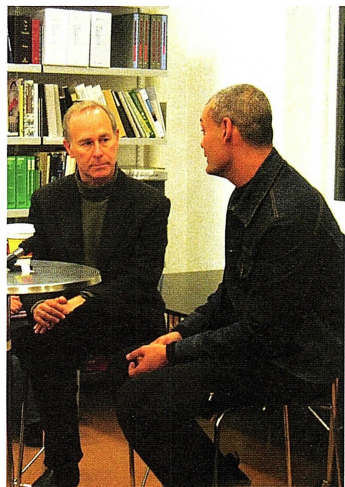
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Calvin Tsao, AIA, of Tsao & McKown, at "Architecture Now: The Scene in China," the first event in the Center's new "Asia Dialogues" program series in partnership with the Asia Society.



ANNIE KURTIN

The Center's "Cultural Exchange in Mentoring" exhibition opened December 3, 2005, with a conversation between Amman-based architect Sahel Al-Hiyari (right) and Clifford A. Pearson, Deputy Editor, Architectural Record, on the subject of architectural mentoring in today's cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary world.



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8 May

### Announcement of Award Recipients and Jury Symposium

Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place

6:00-8:00pm

*Selected projects discussed by our internationally prominent jury:*

Natalye Appel, FAIA, Natalye Appel + Associates Architects

Odile Decq, Odile Decq + Benoît Cornette

Ammar Eloueini, AEDS

Jeffrey Hoover, AIA, Tappe Associates

Raymond Huff, AIA, Huff + Gooden

Alan Plattus, Yale University

Moshe Safdie, FAIA, Moshe Safdie and Associates Inc

David Salmela, David Salmela Architect

Ales Vodopivec, University of Ljubljana

28 June

### First Annual Design Awards Luncheon

7 World Trade Center

11:30am-2:30pm

2006 Design Awards winners  
honored during Awards Ceremony  
celebrating the 25th Anniversary  
of our premier awards program

*Keynote speaker:* John Maeda,  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

29 June

### Exhibition Opening

Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place

6:00-8:00pm

Newly expanded exhibition of 2006 award-winning  
projects with models and renderings on view at the  
Center for Architecture through August 26th

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# So Says... Wids



For more than 30 years, Wids DeLaCour, AIA, has practiced as a principal in architectural firms. He co-founded Brooklyn-based DeLaCour & Ferrara Architects, PC, with Richard Ferrara in 1987. He is active in projects throughout New York City and is known for his extensive experience in housing and institutional projects. He is co-chair of the AIA NY Chapter Housing Committee, serves on the Residential Committee of the NYC Model Code Program, and is active in the AIANY task force on affordable housing. *Oculus* sat down with DeLaCour at his office on the Heights side of Atlantic Avenue to talk about affordable housing, building code revisions, and his change of heart about Gehry building in his borough.

**Kristen Richards:** Your firm has done a lot of housing throughout New York City. What trends do you see emerging in housing design and production?

**Wids DeLaCour:** Throughout the outer boroughs, in neighborhoods where we built affordable housing projects 10 to 15 years ago, they're now building market rate housing. New zoning in areas like Williamsburg and Greenpoint will bring market rate housing and encourage affordable housing, which wasn't possible before the zoning change. Even in places like East New York, people are either holding on to their property because they think it's worth a goldmine, or buying up properties, building, and selling. And they're "affordable" in the sense that they're neighborhoods that are not expensive to buy a house in.

Lots of housing is getting built, but we're getting architects who are doing just mediocre design. Because this is market rate we're talking about, good design should get better prices.

**KR** What is affordable housing anyway?

**WD** My definition is housing that is subsidized by the government – whether for home ownership or rental. Public/private partnership projects have helped to create building booms in areas people once wanted to move out of instead of move into!

**KR** Where are the 165,000 units Mayor Bloomberg says he wants built going to go?

**WD** That's a very important issue because when all the sites the city owns are gone, there will have to be programs that encourage private developers to create affordable housing. I think groups like ACORN [Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now] will continue to develop affordable housing. There will have to be ways to finance projects with a mixture of affordable and market rate housing. That's why the zoning initiatives of getting bonuses for 80/20 and affordable housing are so important. There are some tax credit deals in the areas where people are willing to buy or rent market rate mixed with affordable housing. I think this is the way to go. In Europe, for example, affordable housing is often mixed in with market rate. It integrates people better into society.

**KR** Is there resistance to it without the credits?

**WD** There has been. In Park Slope, for example, the Fifth Avenue Committee was pushing for an affordable housing bonus on the zoning division in Park Slope and the area along Fourth Avenue. They couldn't get it.

**KR** You're very involved in revising the city's building code. How's that going?

**WD** The AIA task force on affordable housing tried to put through two different building types in the NYC building code – what we now call the new building code. It isn't clear yet if they will be approved under an International Building Code [IBC] for New York City. We're still working on it. The main building type is an affordable housing unit that fits into all five boroughs: a four-story walk-up with one exit; a similar type has been allowed through special reconsiderations under the current code.

**KR** Are there aspects of the city's building code that make it difficult to build high quality affordable housing in New York? Will the adoption of the IBC change all that? What's the difference?

# DeLaCour, AIA

**WD** There's a huge difference between the two codes. In terms of housing, the New York City code has more stringent regulations on fire ratings between apartments and corridors, between buildings, between walls and materials and separations. The IBC relies much more on sprinkler systems, alarm systems, and far less on fire ratings. Different professionals, like firemen as well as architects and builders, want to put their two cents into the new code. The committee is trying to make the end result of this new code cost-neutral, particularly for affordable housing. It's a difficult process – but I'm optimistic.

**KR** How will the code changes affect the type of housing that can get built?

**WD** It shouldn't. If they're cost-neutral it shouldn't affect whether or not affordable housing will be built. Affordable housing should still be able to be built. The intent is not to affect the affordable housing, not to make it worse.

**KR** Where is Brooklyn headed?

**WD** There's going to be good housing built in areas along the waterfront that were formerly zoned for manufacturing. It's going to be a different waterfront. And I think that those areas are going to demand better architects and better developers because of the complexities of building at the water's edge. The big problem is there needs to be serious waterfront transportation developed because subways are a distance away.

**KR** What's your take on Atlantic Yards and having a Gehry in Brooklyn?

**WD** I think Frank Gehry is a great architect. I love his stuff and always thought it was interesting. You can't imagine a better place to have a stadium in Brooklyn. It's right next to all the subways, so people can come by public transportation. But I was still apprehensive about it until I went to the presentation at the Center for Architecture last November. Gehry gave such a good presentation that people who were on the fence about it began to think it's going to be a good project.

First of all, it's got a huge percentage of affordable housing, way more than 80/20. And organizations like ACORN and others are going to fight pretty hard to keep it from becoming a gated community.

Just like the Brooklyn Bridge Park project, which has instituted housing as part of the park. A lot of people were against it because they felt it would become a gated community controlling the park.

Housing with a smaller footprint gives you a much greater return on the investment to maintain the park than hotels and conference centers. Actually, in the new plan there's a lot less commercial development and a lot more park because the housing takes less space. There are complaints about it, but hopefully the plan as it is will win.

**KR** When did you become involved in the AIA/NY Housing Committee?

**WD** Years ago, a house I designed and built in Brooklyn Heights was given an award by the Chapter. I figured if the AIA gave me an award, I'd better join. I've been on the Housing Committee for well over 10 years.

**KR** Have you always been based in Brooklyn?

**WD** Yes, since 1973. Twenty years in this office and before that I was around the corner.

**KR** Why did you choose to base your office in Brooklyn?

**WD** Because I live around the corner.

**KR** Was the Consolidation of Greater New York in 1898 – when Brooklyn voted itself out of existence – a mistake?

**WD** I don't know. I wasn't here.

**KR** Is Brooklyn the next Manhattan?

**WD** Hopefully not!



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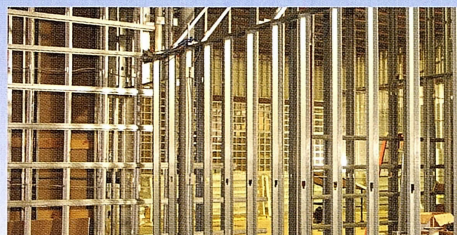
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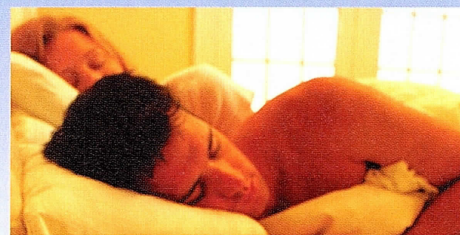
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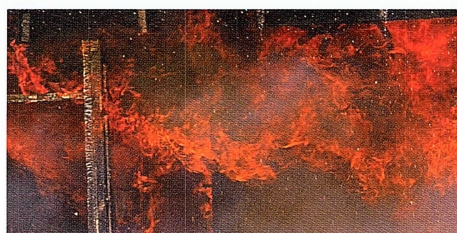
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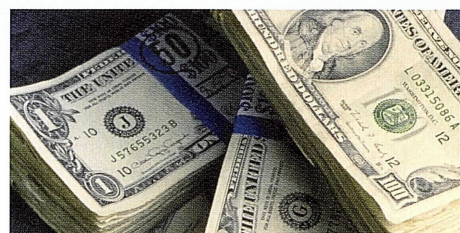
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# Managing Growth in the Tri-State Region

REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION



REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION



**Visualization of a neighborhood in Stamford, CT before and after streetscape improvements and main street zoning to encourage contextual mixed use development**

The past quarter-century has been a period of accelerating growth and prosperity for the New York - New Jersey - Connecticut Metropolitan region. After growing by barely 100,000 between 1970 and 1990, the region has added more than two million residents and gained over half a million jobs since 1990. And this growth is expected to continue. The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) forecasts that the region will add four million new residents and three million new jobs by 2030. The overarching challenge for planning and design professionals in the Tri-state region in coming decades will be how to accommodate this growth.

Since 1990, New York City has added more new residents – nearly 800,000 – than any other city in the United States. In no small measure, this growth is a product of the city's success in tackling several fundamental and seemingly insoluble problems since 1980, including rebuilding its failing subway and commuter rail systems, restoring hundreds of thousands of abandoned housing units, reducing crime, and rescuing a failing public school system.

While the city continues to drive the metropolitan economy, this has truly become a polycentric region, as Stamford, White Plains, Jersey City, New Brunswick, and other regional centers experience continued employment and population growth. The Stamford-Greenwich area, for example, has become one of the nation's largest financial services hubs. New high-rise office and residential towers in White Plains and other suburban "edge cities," such as central New Jersey's Somerset Regional Center, and the emerging Nassau Hub on Long Island, symbolize their transformation into mature, 24-hour

regional centers, with good transit access, street life, multi-family housing, and a range of retail and entertainment activities.

The underlying economic and demographic indicators for the Tri-state region suggest that the predominant growth trend should continue for decades if we can provide enough development and infrastructure capacity to accommodate it. The region's economic success has been driven by its globally competitive advanced service and technology sectors: finance; media; business services; fashion; pharmaceuticals; and medicine.

The wealthy Baby Boom generation is entering the empty nest and retirement period of their lives – and choosing urban living, which is good news for New York City and the region's other urban and suburban centers. In addition, many recent immigrants are comfortable with higher density, multi-family living, so a large proportion of these groups choose to live in New York City's outer boroughs or older suburban centers.

## Creating Growth Capacity

The question now facing planners and public officials is how to create this capacity for continued growth in a region that is literally running out of space. New York City and older inner-ring suburbs, including Nassau, Westchester, Bergen, and Fairfield Counties, have little available undeveloped land and will quickly use up the few available sites that remain. New York City and a number of suburban communities have actually been "downzoning" large areas to reduce the potential for new higher density development. And in the region's outer ring, greenfield development will in many cases conflict with the

need to protect the region's "ecostructure" of public water supply watersheds, wildlife habitat, and prime farmland. This growing shortage of easily developed sites has contributed to the run up in housing prices over the past decade, pricing millions of Tri-state residents out of the housing market.

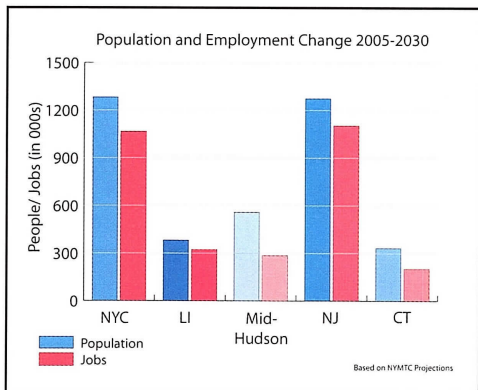
The region must find new ways to grow, and that requires that we promote the widespread infill and redevelopment of existing village, town, and city centers as well as underutilized commercial strips and former industrial areas. A special focus for these efforts should be developing around the region's several hundred subway and commuter rail stations. Many of these places have large areas of surface parking or one-story "taxpayer" retail development, which could easily be redeveloped for more intensive uses. In New Jersey, Regional Plan Association has worked with NJTransit and more than a dozen municipalities on "transit village" plans that have resulted in hundreds of new housing units, revitalized commercial districts, and structured parking facilities in these strategically located centers. Similar efforts must be made in New York City's outer boroughs and throughout the region, including the poorest urban and suburban communities.

### Regional Visioning

How can we create the public support and political leadership for widespread urban and suburban infill and development? One potential solution has been initiated by more than 30 metro regions across the country, including

Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, and Boston. These places have conducted "regional visioning" projects designed to engage the public in shaping infill and redevelopment strategies for entire regions. RPA and several other civic groups are initiating a similar effort on Long Island, which could pave the way for a region-wide visioning initiative.

Regional visioning utilizes several new technologies, including geographic information systems, computer generated visualization, and electronic town meetings to engage citizens, developers, and elected officials in making enlightened choices about future development patterns. In large, SimCity-like simulation workshops, citizens choose among two or more alternative development patterns for their region. In every region where visioning processes have been completed, citizens have chosen compact and higher density, transit oriented development over low-density, automobile-oriented alternatives. The good news is that the Tri-state region has thousands of acres of under-utilized land that could be suitable for similar infill and redevelopment, which could accommodate most or all of the region's development needs for decades to come.



**The region's population and employment change 2005-2030, based on NYMTC projections**

### HOT and TOT Lanes

Even if we can create the capacity for growth in expanded transit-oriented centers, however, the region must also create new capacity in highway, transit, and goods movement networks that are already overcrowded and have little capacity to accommodate projected increases in travel demand.

The technologies needed to better manage the highway system and reduce traffic congestion and delays are already available. The widely-accepted EZ-Pass automated tolling system and real-time information systems offer the potential to move to time-of-day congestion pricing. These technologies are now being used in California and a growing number of world cities where access to highways, or new dedicated "High Occupancy Toll," or HOT lanes, is priced to reduce congestion by providing incentives for drivers to travel during off-peak periods, car pool, or seek transit alternatives. In addition "Truck-only-Toll," or TOT lanes, could be added to key interstate links to provide new capacity for goods movement and reduce conflicts with automobiles.

On the transit side, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Port Authority, and New Jersey Transit are now proceeding with several major transit expansion projects that will provide significant new capacity and connectivity in the regional rail system. These projects represent the first large-scale expansion in the transit system since 1940, and include:

- the East Side Access project connecting the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal;
- the Second Avenue Subway;
- the new Hudson River tunnel bringing NJTransit trains into Penn Station;
- the #7 Subway extension to Manhattan's Far West Side;
- the proposed new JFK-Lower Manhattan rail link;
- a new Tappan Zee Bridge, which will include a trans-Hudson transit link; and
- four new transit terminals, including the new Fulton and Path terminals in Lower Manhattan, a proposed new intermodal station in Long Island City, and the proposed Moynihan Station in the old Farley Post Office in Midtown Manhattan. The recent proposal to relocate Madison Square Garden into the western half of the Post Office provides the possibility of rebuilding the existing Penn Station and significantly expanding its capacity.

All of these projects are at least partially funded, and taken together can add much of the new transit capacity needed to accommodate the next generation or more. Ultimately, it will fall to the governors of New York and New Jersey and the region's congressional delegation to make sure these projects are fully funded and realized. The Tri-state region's future depends on its ability to offer its citizens even greater opportunities for good jobs, livable communities, and environmental quality for decades to come.

Robert D. Yaro is President of Regional Plan Association and Professor in Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.

# Urban Planning in the Empire State

Architects, planners, and communities strive for consensus

By Terrence E. O'Neal, AIA

Architects are increasingly becoming involved in not just designing their communities, but planning them as well. It is a role that is crucial and long overdue.

Throughout New York State, members of our profession are targeting and articulating the merits as well as the challenges of a great variety of often controversial issues, including affordable housing, downtown redevelopment, waterfront revitalization, transportation, and zoning. Architects are becoming real participants in the process. And the earlier the involvement, the greater the opportunity to advocate for sustainable communities that benefit us all.

## Current redevelopment initiatives

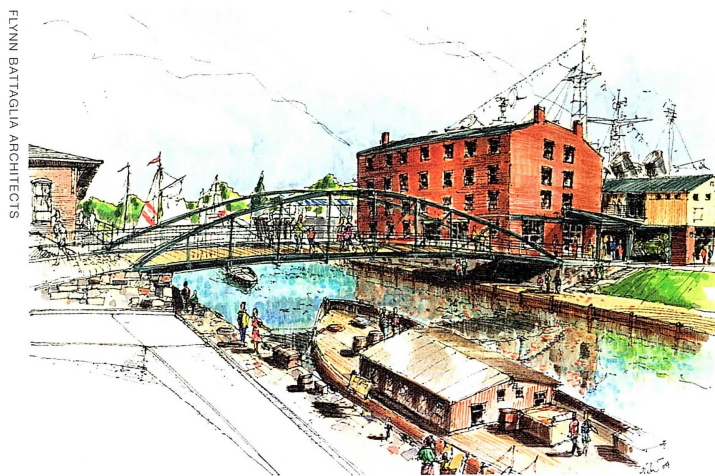
Planning, particularly urban planning for New York State, covers the New York City metropolitan area, including Long Island and Westchester/Rockland counties – an area that comprises well over half of the state's population – plus five major population centers: Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and the Southern New York region (including Binghamton, Corning, Elmira, Endicott, and Ithaca). A brief overview of planning activity in the regions outside the New York City metropolitan area reveals a diversity of developments.

### Albany

After years of discussion, the proposed Albany Convention Center may finally come to fruition. Governor Pataki included funding for the

center in his budget, released in January, and in February, a new authority that will oversee the project met for the first time. The Governor's plan is for the state to contribute \$75 million, with the remaining \$85 million to come from a combination of a local hotel tax and private investment.

Our state capitol has also implemented "neighborhood plans" for several areas, including Arbor Hill, South End, Midtown Colleges and Universities, and Park South, in an attempt to create a blueprint for upcoming revitalization efforts.



Buffalo: Erie Canal Harbor Commercial Slip by Flynn Battaglia Architects

### Buffalo

New York's second-largest city boasts an architectural legacy difficult to match, with buildings by such legends as Frank Lloyd Wright, Adler & Sullivan, and H.H. Richardson. The Peace Bridge Expansion Project, designed by Dr. Christian Menn, proposes a cable-stayed structure to extend the Peace Bridge, which opened in 1927 to commemorate 100 years of peace between the U.S. and Canada.

Truly a waterfront city, Buffalo has the opportunity to take full advantage of its adjacency to Lake Erie, as well as the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers. Administered by the Empire State Development Corporation, Robert Shibley's regional plan for Buffalo, "Queen City Hub," includes a plan for the Erie Canal Harbor and outlines further development in the residential, commercial, and retail sectors.

In 2002, New York State approved three casinos for the region, to be operated by the Seneca Nation. One is already located in nearby Niagara Falls, NY, and another is slated for a site on the Buffalo River. As demolition to clear the site was underway, a lawsuit was filed, halting construction and challenging the plans for the waterfront. The successful suit led to revisions that may prove to be worthy. Proponents of the casino plan argue that it will create jobs and provide incentive for further development in the long-dormant area.



Albany: Midtown Colleges and Universities Study, Ontario Street existing view and proposed streetscape by URS and IPM



MOSHE SAFDIE AND ASSOCIATES

**Rochester: Renaissance Square transit center by Moshe Safdie and Associates**

## Ithaca

The city of Ithaca has accepted development proposals for a waterfront parcel, Inlet Island. This area, on Cayuga Lake, is zoned as a mixed-use "Waterfront District" with retail, offices, housing, hotels, and other uses permitted as of right. This is an encouraging application of Smart Growth principles, as opposed to traditional zoning strategies that contribute to sprawl.

## Rochester

Renaissance Square is one of several large projects awaiting approval in Rochester. Designed by Moshe Safdie, the project would include a performing arts center, community college, and a controversial transportation center, including a new central bus terminal. Like most cities, Rochester needs more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly sidewalks and roadways, but at the same time, people are reluctant to use public transportation.

Like Syracuse, Rochester is making progress in bringing housing downtown, with several developments completed and in the works. However, the scarcity of shopping and other services remains an issue. A hopeful sign is the movement of professionals to the center city, providing economic stimulus and stability for the tax base.

The Fast Ferry, Rochester's main waterfront project providing service to Toronto, was cancelled by the newly-elected mayor, due to financial concerns. This serves a blow to this once-promising start to further develop the city's Genesee River/Lake Ontario waterfront. The mayor agrees with the architectural community that success can be eventually achieved for this important economic resource.

## Syracuse

Developers in Syracuse are planning an expansion of a different type: to Carousel Center, an existing shopping mall on the waterfront of Onondaga Lake. Named DestinyUSA, the project was first announced in 2000 and has come under criticism from the local architectural community for its lack of integration into the surrounding

area, while proponents of the plan say that jobs and future development for Syracuse will inevitably result.

After years of a much reported (and lamented) decline, upstate cities are planning for a rebirth in downtown vitality, and Syracuse is no exception. While the general downtown area still contains many vacant upper floors and a lack of activity after 5:00 p.m., the historic district of Armory Square thrives as a lively, vibrant center in the evenings; it may help to inspire other development downtown. Syracuse University's School of Architecture has located temporary classrooms in Armory Square during renovation and expansion of its campus building, and the Amos Building near Clinton Square is under development for a much-needed full service grocery store and upscale town apartments.

Local architects bemoan the lack of a unified plan and design standards to protect the character of existing historic neighborhoods. They also suggest the creation of a Business Improvement District, which would provide funding for revitalization efforts.

## Statewide Issues

The lack of affordable housing is most acute downstate. Prices have increased so rapidly in this region that it is nearly impossible for professionals beginning their careers and middle-income families to purchase a home. This crisis led Nassau County Executive Thomas Suozzi to implement the "Next Generation Housing" plan, intended to stem the outflow of young professionals from Long Island. Even a portion of Mayor Bloomberg's ambitious New Housing Marketplace plan includes housing for families with incomes up to \$100,000.

All our cities have issues with brownfields. In Rochester, it is said that one-third of the population lives within one mile of a Superfund site. Albany's Rapp Road landfill will reach capacity in four years. Plans are underway for a new site. Syracuse, like other formerly industrial-based cities, is cleaning up its sites as development takes place. Fortunately, there is legislation and state funding available for brownfields remediation.

## Conclusion

One common thread among these diverse areas is their desire to redevelop their waterfronts. Every major region in our state, upstate and downstate, has a waterfront and is working diligently to either begin to develop it, or continue and extend its development. The 2006 theme for AIA New York State is "One New York State" – perhaps this will be the issue to unify us as AIANY celebrates our 75th anniversary. We may find ways we can work together as One State to spur real development for our citizens state-wide. The hope is that architects will remain at the forefront of such efforts.

Terrence E. O'Neal, AIA, is 2006 President of AIA New York State, and Principal of New York City-based Terrence O'Neal Architect LLC.

This article includes information provided by the following individuals: Matthew Moscoti, AIA, and Peter Murad, AIA, Buffalo; Dean Biancavilla, AIA, and Robert Haley, AIA, Syracuse; Trevor Harrison, AIA, Rochester; Francis Pitts and Randolph Collins, AIA, Albany; and John Barradas, AIA, Ithaca.

# Building for the Long Term

Development in the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island

By Thomas D. Sullivan

The current building boom in New York extends through all five boroughs, and significant major development projects are planned for the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island. If those initiatives get built, they will represent significant shifts in the growth patterns in the city, and mark a new era in the built character of the city.

What's driving these changes? Amanda M. Burden, Hon. AIA, Chair of the City Planning Commission and Director of the Department of City Planning (DCP), is quick to note the city's growing population. As of 2004, New York City's population was at 8,104,079. (New York City's population grew from 7,322,564 in 1990 to 8,008,278 in 2000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.)

Burden points to other trends as well – in past eras, new immigrants would arrive in the city, get their start, and then move out to “fulfill other dreams.” Immigrants are staying, and others are coming to the city as well. The city is “so safe,” she points out, which makes it additionally attractive for current city residents to remain, and for newcomers to move here.

Like the national AIA's “10 Principles for Livable Communities,” the “Guiding Principles” of Department of City Planning's Strategic Plan, emphasize the importance of comprehensive planning, vibrant public spaces, and design excellence.

“Growth in every borough,” as Burden says, is a mainstay of the city's planning strategy, which dovetails with long-term development trends. Since 1999, the city has issued increasingly larger numbers of building permits for privately owned residences, surpassing the recent peak of 11,872 permits of total housing units in 1989. Growth has accelerated – the city issued permits for 21,218 units in 2003, for 25,208 units in 2004, and for 31,599 units in 2005. Since 2003, the city has issued more than half of these permits for housing units outside of Manhattan.

Like the national AIA's “10 Principles for Livable Communities,” the “Guiding Principles” of Department of City Planning's Strategic Plan, released in the summer of 2005, emphasize the importance of comprehensive planning, vibrant public spaces, and design excellence.

## Bronx

Among the objectives of the DCP is to strengthen Regional Business

Districts. The Bronx Terminal Market is one of the largest developments slated, with one million square feet of shopping.

The Port Morris district was designated in 1997 as the first mixed-use (light industrial, commercial, and residential) neighborhood, and has seen the expansion of antiques businesses, as well as gaining residential units. In March 2005, the City Council approved the expansion of the mixed-use zoning for the neighborhood.

## Queens

The city's easternmost borough has three Regional Business Districts – Long Island City, Downtown Flushing, and Jamaica. The city plans to build upon the existing strengths of each place.

Long Island City has great views from its waterfront, excellent transportation links, and an enviable collection of cultural institutions.

The city's vision for planning in residential neighborhoods in Queens is part of DCP's pattern: to channel growth to wide streets, and to preserve the built character of neighborhoods.

In Jamaica, the city wants to prompt development linked to airline travel and air freight. Burden describes the area as “very under-zoned.” The AirTrain station will provide additional impetus for growth – the city will encourage tower development close to the station. Bill Gati, AIA, of Architecture Studio, and president of AIA Queens Chapter, sees “lots of sensitivity” in the Jamaica plans – with development there geared to the context.

John Young, director of the Queens office of the Department of City Planning, describes two major objectives for development in the borough: “to sustain the distinct quality of life” in neighborhoods, and “to direct the growth and density to the regional hubs.”

The city's vision for planning in residential neighborhoods in Queens is part of DCP's pattern: to channel growth to wide streets, and to preserve the built character of neighborhoods. Gati sees these plans as “a noble ideal,” but adds that they “need to be tweaked.”

## Brooklyn

Burden emphasizes that her department and city government need to build public consensus for planning changes. According to Burden, residents find terms such as “R-3,” etc., “dry and rather frightening,” while engaging illustrations build support for change and “create expectations” for better neighborhoods. The city has produced some attractive

In Park Slope, the city plans to channel development along Fourth Avenue, while protecting the character of interior streets in the neighborhood.

Perhaps the most significant city initiative is the master plan for transforming 2,200 acres of Fresh Kills (an area three times the size of Central Park) into a public park. Full realization of this plan will take 30 years.

The city designated the entire borough of Staten Island as a “Lower Density Growth Management Area,” which imposes new rules for sizes of buildings and lots, as well as new regulations for open space, yards, landscaping, and parking. Businelli says that the principle of preserving side streets while encouraging development along major thoroughfares “makes sense,” but we’ll have “wait to see what the actual execution looks like.”

Transportation remains a critical issue for developing the city. Mark



Strauss, FAIA, AICP, president of AIA New York Chapter, points to the recent Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line in New Jersey as an example of how mass transit can encourage and shape development. The availability of mass transit figures significantly in DCP's vision. Burden speaks of channeling growth where good public transportation is available. She looks forward to "vastly increased waterborne transportation," to Manhattan with "seamless connections to upland bus service" over the next four years.

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

# Meet the AIA Local Chapter Presidents

Specific priorities vary, but the presidents of Manhattan's sister chapters all stress inter-chapter communication, outreach to civic officials, and a higher profile for the profession

By Bill Millard

**Local AIA chapters grapple with questions affecting citizens' lives: Should a neighborhood be down-zoned? Do market pressures impede creative practice? How much density is enough?**

## AIA Bronx: The Craftsman

Antonio Freda, AIA, Freda Design Associates, describes his chapter's members as down-to-earth practitioners, concerned largely with the practical obligations of designing homes, overseeing sites, and dealing with official red tape. "The more you go into the boroughs," he says, "the more you find that style is dictated by zoning." With small lots, tight restrictions, and accelerating zoning changes, Bronx designers tend to make the most of the allowable envelope.



**Bronx: Freda Design Associates: condominium and town houses on Dean Avenue facing Eastchester Bay and Long Island Sound**

"I've been in the Bronx since 1966," Freda says. "I've seen it go from a fairly nice area to decay," then back to robust growth over the past decade. He's glad to see the city support South Bronx rehab projects, including the planned Yankee Stadium revitalization. He's seen too much corner-cutting, though. "There are a lot of wannabe architects or students who get seals from engineers; basically, they're practicing architecture with an engineering seal."

Freda would like both clients and government agencies to recognize the difference between architects and expeditors. "If you expect someone to be responsible, you should expect it from a professional," he says, and not base all choices on cost alone.

## AIA Brooklyn: The Diplomat

Although Dmitriy Shenker, AIA, of Shenker Architects, came to the United States from Ukraine in 1992 and has practiced here only since the late 1990s, he grasps the political realities surrounding development in New York's most populous borough. Grateful to his predecessors for building a strong organization, he identifies improved contact with government and the public as his chapter's next goals.

ENRIQUE BRANDO



**Brooklyn: Scarano Architects: ELLA 82 at 82 Guernsey Street in Greenpoint, a 5-story, 9-unit condominium, won an AIA Brooklyn 2005 Merit Award**

Zoning disputes, he believes, too often involve strong opinions disconnected from a professional understanding of how neighborhoods develop.

"Unfortunately, I don't see much relation between the profession and the general public," he says. "We're too far apart. We do a particular project, for a particular site, for a particular client – but as a result, we're getting a city consisting of these particular sites." More coordination between city planners and architects, Shenker believes, would clarify development debates. He welcomes new accents on Brooklyn's skyline and speaks approvingly of two high-profile projects, the proposed Atlantic Yards Arena and Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Architects should support each other in professional controversies and communicate their point of view to the public, says Shenker, adding, "People work in what we do, people live in what we do, and people die in what we do. They are always surrounded by architecture – it is an innate part of everybody's life."

WILLIAM GATI, AIA



**Queens: William Gati, AIA, Architecture Studio: traditional styling for a major expansion of a one-story ranch in Floral Park fits in very well with its surroundings**

### AIA Queens: The Advocate

When William Gati, AIA, Architecture Studio, arrives for an interview by bike, it's not hard to predict that his thoughts will turn to the environment. He's an enthusiast about radiant floors and solar-cell roofing. His own firm is organized as a network of telecommuters: "I really don't believe in taking up another space when you can do everything digitally." Extending this approach to chapter meetings, he's won over his initially teleconference-averse colleagues.

While some officials have proposed down-zoning Queens neighborhoods to curb overdevelopment, Gati believes the new R2A designation is the wrong solution. He differentiates well-built large homes from McMansions, which often involve off-the-shelf designs rubber-stamped by non-AIA practitioners. ("There's a prevalence of illegal practice of architecture in the boroughs to an astounding degree," he says.) Applying voluntary standards and educating clients about the long-range disadvantages of "monuments to ego," he finds, work better than simply banning the eyesores. He's pro-development, but more importantly, "pro-good development."

### AIA Staten Island: The Historian

More than any other part of the city, Staten Island views itself as a suburb. The very term "urban" strikes many residents as a threat. So when Timothy Boyland, AIA, Boyland Architecture, calls for more transit-oriented, mixed-use, and mid-rise development to spare the wetlands and make better use of existing features, he notes that anything resembling New Urbanism ought to travel under an assumed name. "That's not to say that some of the concepts wouldn't work or wouldn't be accepted," he says, "but you have to be careful how you propose things."

The borough's isolationist tendencies manifest themselves as NIMBY-ish resistance to planning, particularly in the local press, though Boyland praises numerous elected officials for receptiveness to AIA input. (The Mayor's 2003 Lower Density Growth Management Task Force relied on contributions from his predecessor Robert Englert, AIA, and the chapter, working with Councilman Jim Oddo; its



**Staten Island: Salvadeo Associates Architects: FastTracKids, an early childhood development center, won a Citation for Interior Architecture from 2005 AIA Staten Island Architecture Awards**

report was even drafted on AIA stationery.)

"This community is changing," Boyland states, "whether they want to or not." He offers his chapter as a professional resource for informing citizens, officials, the media, and the marketplace about how architecture can help stable neighborhoods accommodate growth.

### AIA Westchester/Mid-Hudson: The Futurist

Michael Shilale, AIA, Michael Shilale Architects, directs the state's third largest chapter, with over 500 members across seven counties. This region includes communities ranked among the nation's most desirable; however, its architects struggle to create sustainable environments that can accommodate a diverse population. Metro-North and the Hudson riverfront make transit-oriented development a logical organizing principle (Shilale cites The Harbors at Haverstraw as an exemplary New Urbanist case). He remains sanguine about his region's future and his chapter's capacity for public education.



**Westchester/Mid-Hudson: Matthew Bialecki Associates, New Paltz, NY: Sam's Point Conservation Center, Craigsmoor, NY, won an A Chapter Honor Award and Special Sustainable Architecture Honor Award**

One looming problem is the Tappan Zee Bridge, which Shilale says "has exceeded its useful life, both structurally and functionally." Will its replacement be a new bridge with multimodal transport, or a frugal upgrade carrying vehicles but ignoring rail, pedestrians, and bicycles? Shilale believes his chapter deserves a voice in the decision.

His vision extends beyond the region. Citing observations by Edward Mazria, AIA, that buildings contribute about 50% of global greenhouse-gas emissions, Shilale calls for aggressive outreach about sustainable design strategies. Clients should understand how their long-range energy savings align with planetary imperatives, he believes; communities should embrace planning to strengthen tax bases and reduce sprawl. "We could never build the communities we all love again" under existing regulations, Shilale laments, calling for regional planning and closer alliances with allied professionals: "You can't plan in a vacuum."

Bill Millard is a freelance writer and editor whose work has appeared in *Oculus*, *Icon*, *Content*, and other publications.

MATTHEW BIALECKI, AIA

ZBIG JEDRUS

# The Bronx Does Design

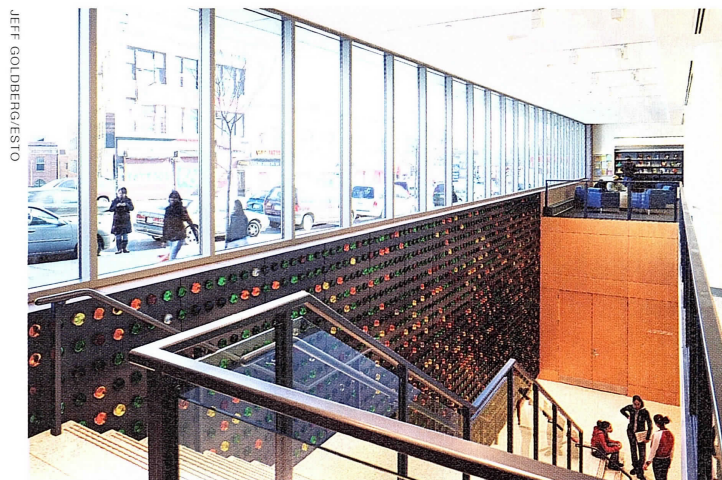
The Bronx Library Center by Dattner Architects signals the borough's emerging design profile

By Richard Staub



JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO

**Above:** The Bronx Library Center is a once-declining Bronx neighborhood's step into the 21st century **Below left:** A mural of glowing glass dots by Inigo Manglano-Onvalle animates the stairway to the concourse level **Below right:** A lounge area on the third floor includes an outdoor terrace



JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO



JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO

If your image of a public library is a hushed neo-classical space overseen by admonishing librarians, think again. A striking example of current library design that also showcases the Bronx's emerging design consciousness opened in January. It's the Bronx Library Center, a long, glass and red granite building with a swoosh-shaped roof hovering overhead, designed by Dattner Architects. Set among long rows of discount stores and 1920s brick apartment buildings, it looks like the 21st century has landed in the borough.

The Center is a light-filled building where talking is allowed, computer terminals are omnipresent, and librarians are active helpers. More than just a repository of books, the Center serves as a community gathering place, a relaxed space to read, information resource center, teen lounge, and children's story room – all inhabiting one building.

In the mid 1960s, I lived half a block from the site, which is around the corner from one of the borough's great shopping thoroughfares, Fordham Road. There was a movie palace-era Paramount Theater up

the street, and an ice cream parlor and Con Ed building where the library now stands. In the 1970s, the neighborhood went into a deep decline. Working class whites migrated, to be replaced by poorer Hispanics and blacks. Drug wars took their toll, the Paramount Theater was demolished, and the ground floors of art deco commercial buildings were ripped out to accommodate discount stores. While the bustle remained, it was a tougher, meaner environment.

Enter the library.

The five-story, 78,000-square-foot structure is a straightforward design where a great deal of planning has delivered deceptively simple, open, flexible interiors. Filled with light, activity, technology, and patrons, it's three times the size of the nearby 1923 building it replaces and cost a total \$50 million. The first sustainable building created for the City of New York, the architects are aiming for a LEED silver rating.

The most obvious, symbolic element is the façade window wall that rises four stories. At street level, it gives passersby a hint of what the new facility offers. On higher floors, patrons get increasingly greater views of the neighborhood skyline until they arrive at the fourth floor with its 12-foot-high window wall offering a panoramic view over the Bronx and Manhattan skyline. Then the swoosh takes over. The fourth-floor ceiling sweeps in and then rises another 12 feet over the fifth-floor mezzanine level. A row of windows over the fifth-floor offices lets the afternoon sun rake down across the ceiling. Clad in perforated acoustic panels with a light brown wood veneer, it takes on a golden glow.

The floor layouts are similar, with changes dictated by the programs offered on each floor. There's an information desk directly in front of the elevator and to either side, computer stations, areas for collections, study tables, and special services. Extending along the window wall is a row of paired upholstered chairs where patrons can relax with a book or laptop and enjoy the view. The entire building is set up for wireless computer access, along with computer terminals at 127 of the library's 375 seats.

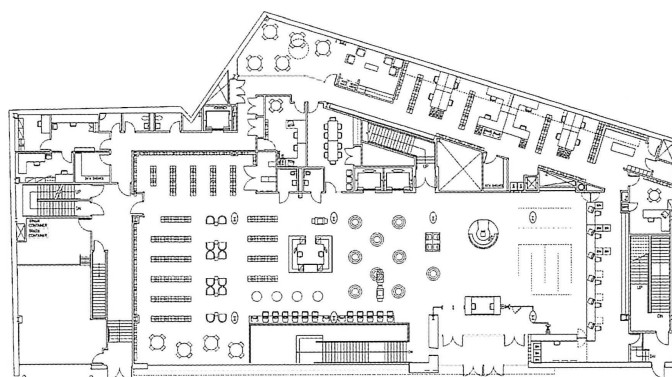
The second floor, which is devoted to children, is painted in bright pastels and has a program room with windows placed low to meet a child's perspective. The third is for adult books (the teen collection and services are on the first), and has an outdoor reading terrace. The fourth floor has the reference section and a Latino and Puerto Rican Cultural Center. The fifth floor mezzanine offers programs on business and career building.

A grand terrazzo clad stairway on the ground floor leads down to the 150-seat auditorium, exhibition and event space, and conference rooms. An abstract mural of glowing glass dots set against a dull lead background, by the artist Inigo Manglano-Onvalle, animates the stairway wall.

Light comes in the back of the building, but in subtler ways. Says Daniel Heuberger, AIA, the architect for the project, "We wanted the main stairway, which wraps around the elevator, to be a significant transitional event. So we wrapped it in channel glass to make it an open, welcoming space." Almost all of the offices are located in the rear of the building and have daylight coming in either through clerestories or skylights. And an occasional punch of color such as the

blue elevator wall – or the introduction of the same red granite used on the façade – energizes what is for the most part a neutral palette.

The building was over 15 years in planning. Says Susan Kent, director of the New York Public Library's branch libraries, "It took that long to get the site and funding in place from all of the sources we needed to tap. But it gave us the time to plan the building correctly. We've always seen the Bronx Library Center as a beacon and gateway building, welcoming the next generation of immigrants the way its predecessor building had, to life in the U.S. This time we felt it was important to give the neighborhood an iconic, welcoming, green building that would suit several generations of users. And judging from the surge in use since the day we opened, we were right."



**First floor plan**

The very public buzz the building has generated is for Richard Dattner, FAIA, another sign that good design has come to the outer boroughs. Dattner comments, "Across the board there's an increased consciousness of the importance of design. There are some terrific buildings recently completed at the Bronx Zoo by H3 Hardy Collaborative, Mitchell Giurgola, and Polshek Partnership; there's a cluster of new buildings underway at Fordham University; and Rafael Viñoly's Bronx Criminal Courthouse will open this year. And private developers have gotten the message that good design sells so we're seeing more interesting residential buildings being built."

Based on the local population's response to the Bronx Library Center both during construction and after it opened, one can only think "bring it on." The Bronx is obviously hungry for the kind of quietly exciting, functional design the Center represents.

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

Client: The New York Public Library  
 Architect: Dattner Architects  
 Structural Engineer: Severud Associates  
 Geotechnical/Civil Engineer: Langan Engineering  
 Mechanical/Electrical Engineer: Robert Derector Associates  
 Landscape Designer: MKW & Associates  
 Lighting Consultant: Domingo Gonzalez Design  
 Acoustical A/V, Telecommunications Consultant: Shen Milsom & Wilke, Inc.  
 Graphic Designer: Wojciechowski Design  
 Commissioning Agent: Steven Winter Associates  
 Security Consultant: Ducibella, Venter & Santore  
 Construction Manager: F.J. Sciamie Construction Co., Inc.

St. Francis College has lent its stable presence to Brooklyn Heights for 148 years – now its new Academic Center by Helpern Architects is changing campus life as never before By Roger Yee

# A College Grows in Brooklyn

What is it about Brooklyn Heights that attracts New Yorkers as much as tourists? Walk down any street in the Heights and you enter a lively architectural conversation between lovingly preserved 19th-century buildings. In this prosperous and well-manicured neighborhood, New York City's first Historic District (1965), St. Francis College has thrived since its founding by Franciscan Brothers in 1858. The interconnected buildings on its Remsen Street campus, established in 1960, have enabled the private, independent, co-educational institution to evolve from a school for boys in the Brooklyn diocese to a college for 2,300 students.

The first major step in implementing a master plan prepared by Helpern Architects was a new 13,000-square-foot multipurpose gymnasium, named the Anthony J. Genovesi Center. Given priority to support a winning competitive sports program and to provide a much-needed community meeting space, Genovesi is a vertical expansion atop the college's original athletic building.

But the latest campus addition, the attractive, new, seven-story, 35,000-square-foot Academic Center, is changing college life as never before. It's not that the minimally detailed, glass, granite, and limestone-clad modern structure, designed by Helpern Architects, disrupts its urban context. As David Helpern, FAIA, principal-in-charge, explains, "The Academic Center continues the floor levels and some of the materials of its campus neighbors on Remsen Street," namely the Arts Building, an eight-story Beaux Arts edifice, erected as Brooklyn Union Gas Company's headquarters in 1914, and the Science Building, a six-story, pre-cast modern structure built by the college in the 1960s. Though its façade looks stark compared to the Arts Building, the Academic Center neatly balances the Science Building's unadorned fascia.

Prior to the construction of the Academic Center, Helpern's master plan laid the groundwork for a quiet revolution, rationalizing the college's balky existing circulation to let students, faculty, and staff move freely from one building to another. It's a big deal for a small campus where five structures operate as one, sharing elevators, escalators, and stairs. Not only would the channeling of pedestrian traffic on each level into one major corridor stretching from the Science Building at the west end to the Academic Center at the east end save everyone time, it would help unify the campus.

## The hidden life behind the façades

The impact of the Academic Center is best experienced inside the college's walls, where even a casual visitor could observe that the complex has grown organically, with buildings expanding as needed, much like a hospital. But as hospitals also demonstrate, haphazard growth frequently spawns mazes, cul-de-sacs, and other inconsis-

RAJ DESHPANDE, AIA/HELPERN ARCHITECTS

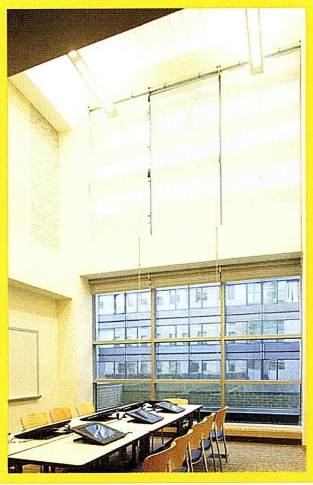


**St. Francis College Academic Center has a glass, granite, and limestone-clad modern façade**

tencies that can block growth.

The Academic Center delivers considerably more than better circulation. The new construction introduces such needed facilities as 14 "smart" classrooms, a state-of-the-art library, a 90-seat theater/lecture hall, and an HDTV studio and digital production facility. However, in an historic urban neighborhood like Brooklyn Heights, the reorganized corridors have had a profound impact. "What the new Academic Center has done for us, among many good things, is to make what were clearly separate buildings into a unified whole," notes Dr. Frank J. Macchiarola, president of St. Francis College. "We've given up rabbit warrens and freed up space without losing the intimacy of a small community of scholars."

Yet the effect of the Academic Center's new facilities shouldn't be downplayed either. For example, since air is distributed through a modern underfloor system, the ceilings are higher here, even though floor-to-floor heights match those in the older structures. Exposed ceilings contribute significantly to the classrooms' distinctive appeal as lean, high-tech, and dynamic environments, aided by carpeted

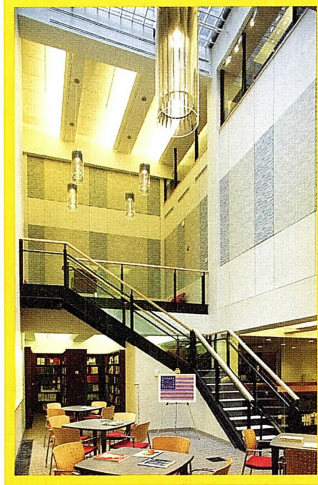


NORMAN MOGRATH

**A seminar room overlooking Remsen Street features built-in computer terminals linked to the college network; translucent (pictured) and blackout shades control the light**

floors, daylight and views, high-efficiency lighting, and advanced information technology and audio-visual gear. The new library accommodations take students out of a windowless basement (the book stack and special collections remain in the Arts Building and Science Building) and place them in open, airy lounges and reading rooms with Internet-linked computers and outdoor views. Everybody is so fond of the theater/lecture hall, a two-story "black box" of wood paneling and black painted metal, it's never vacant.

Because the Academic Center is part of Brooklyn Heights, every effort was made to engage the community as well as the college in its development. "We were open to the public about everything thing we



NORMAN MOGRATH

**At the base of the academic center is a dramatic triple-height space that allows natural light to penetrate the interior of the library; the steel-and-maple staircase leads to a lounge**

did," Helpern is proud to report. "There's a community spirit in Brooklyn that is less competitive and more family-oriented than you'd find in Manhattan, and we respected that." Adds Dr. Macchiarola, "Our new building reaffirms our presence as a good neighbor. It brings simplicity, harmony and respect to the campus and the community that reflect our Franciscan values." Though the Academic Center is too new for local historic tours, who knows what could happen in a century or two?

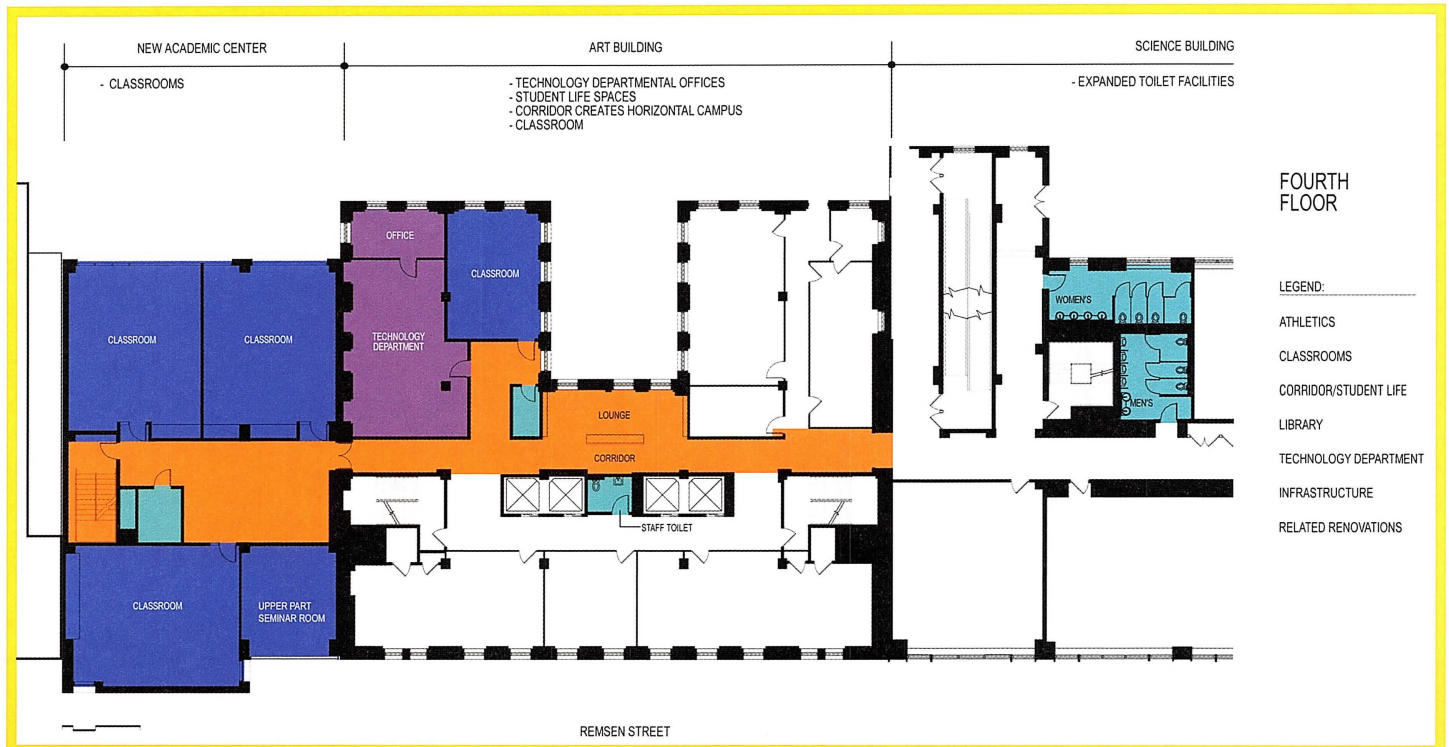
Roger Yee is an architecture and interior design editor for Visual Reference Publications and a consultant to organizations in the design community.

- Owner/Client: St. Francis College
- Architect: Helpern Architects
- Project Team: David Paul Helpern, FAIA (Principal-in-Charge), Raj Deshpande, AIA (Project Manager), Jennifer Bailey, R.A. (Project Architect)
- Structural Engineer: Robert Silman Associates
- M/E/P: Joseph R. Loring & Associates
- Theater Consultant: Harvey Marshall Berling Associates
- Lighting Consultant: Ann Kale Associates
- Acoustical Consultant: Arup Acoustics
- Elevator Consultant: Van Deusen & Associates
- Architectural Signage: Whitehouse & Company
- General Contractor: Turner Construction Company



NORMAN MOGRATH

**The third-floor corridor has a lounge with computer stations offering students the opportunity to socialize and check e-mail on the go**



HELPERN ARCHITECTS

**Fourth-floor plan shows new Academic Center classrooms and seminar room, left, and the corridor (with lounge) that serves as the main thoroughfare connecting to the Arts Building, with technology department in place of underutilized classrooms**

## New York's first sustainable bus maintenance facility by di Domenico + Partners takes shape

By Andrew Berger, AIA, ASLA

# Green and Clean in Queens

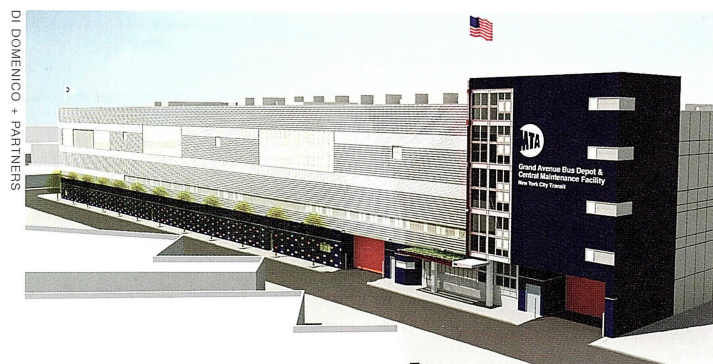
In a gritty industrial neighborhood in Queens, a modest but noteworthy milestone is being realized by the New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority. There, di Domenico + Partners has designed a bus depot and maintenance building that establishes a new sustainability standard for this challenging building type.

Officially known as the MTA/NYCT Grand Avenue Bus Depot and Central Maintenance Facility, the project is the most ambitious undertaken to date by the Department of Buses, which runs the largest fleet of buses in the country and is celebrating its 100-year anniversary. Now under construction, the 550,000-square-foot structure is a two-story destination for fueling, cleaning, and storing 200 buses. The building will also house administrative offices on two mezzanines and provide rooftop employee parking.

This type of facility is typically an architectural eyesore and environmentally problematic due to pollution and noise from idling buses, compounded by the chemicals and pollutants that leak into the soil and groundwater from the facility's operations.

At the outset of the planning process, the team undertook exhaustive field surveys of other existing bus maintenance facilities to benchmark existing shortcomings and establish improved design criteria. The team adopted a "whole facility" design philosophy and systems approach by incorporating energy conservation and efficiency strategies into the design and construction practice with methods to conserve natural resources, prevent pollution, maximize all material recycling opportunities, and establish a responsible waste management program.

The impetus for the sustainable building design is Executive Order No. 111, issued by New York Governor George Pataki in June 2001, establishing guidelines for "green and clean" state buildings and vehicles. The forward-thinking directive requires that new state agency



**Patterned glazed block at the base and varying bands of corrugated metal panels and transparent wall panels above form a pattern that breaks down the building volume**

buildings achieve "at least a 20% improvement in energy efficiency performance relative to levels required by the State's Energy Conservation Construction Code." Further, it calls for the purchase of renewable power sources and the procurement of energy-efficient building materials. Green goals and objectives established, analyzed, and weighted at the outset to shape the design process included:

- Maximize energy efficiency;
- Maximize the quality of the interior environment;
- Reduce wastewater generation;
- Maximize usage of non-potable water;
- Reduce ozone depletion and prevent pollution;
- Conserve materials and resources;
- Reduce site disturbances.

### Heat Reduction

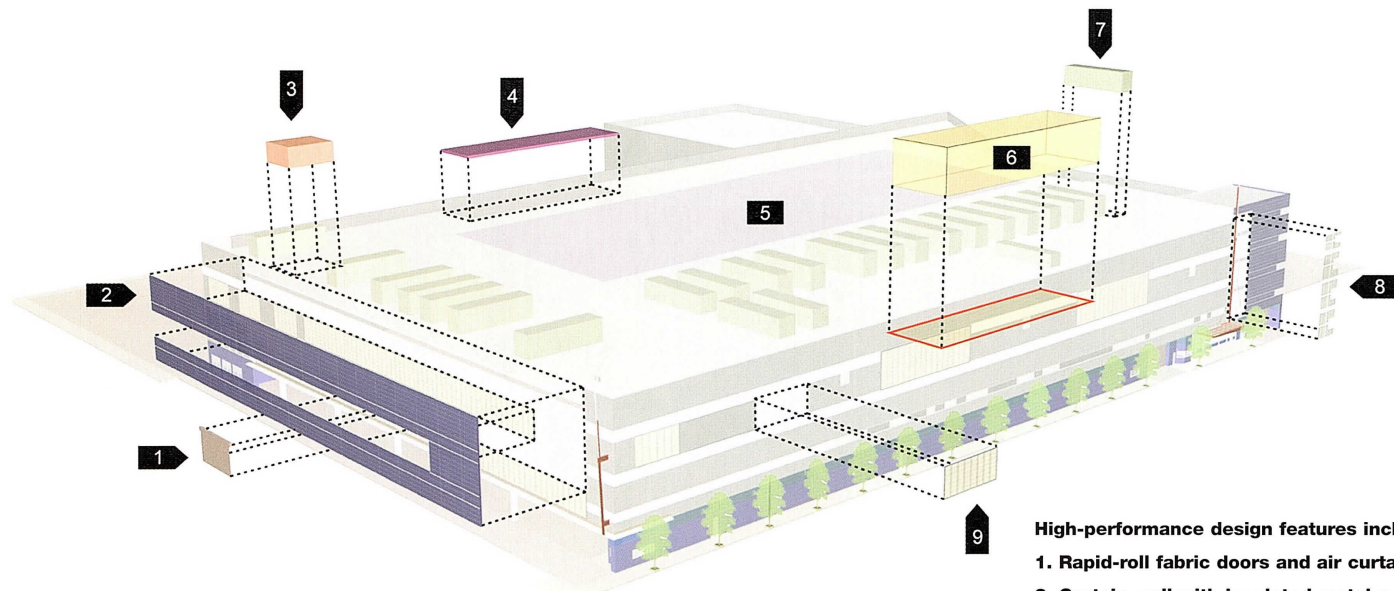
Heating is the greatest energy consumer in this building type. Early in the project, the design team focused on ways to implement creative temperature control measures.

High-performance materials for the exterior walls, including a lightweight curtain wall material with core metal wall panels, provide a thermally efficient outer envelope. This is constructed with a thermal break to minimize heat loss or gain. For insulation, a foam core, thermally efficient, two-inch-thick exterior wall was specified. Heat recovery systems were engineered to achieve an average effectiveness of approximately 71% versus code requirements of 50%.

To effectively control interior heating and cooling, high-speed, fast seal fabric doors work in conjunction with an air curtain. Intake air is compressed and forced through an opening located over the open doorway. In winter, the air curtain re-circulates hot air that naturally rises to the ceiling plane, creating a barrier to cold air. In summer, the air curtain keeps humid air out.

### Maximizing Daylighting

The fenestration incorporates a combination of conventional glass windows, glass block, and translucent panels. Windows are dual-glazed and fabricated of insulating glass separated by a one-half-inch dehydrated and sealed air space. The translucent glass block filters sunlight and eliminates heat and glare. In other locations, lightweight, translucent wall panels constructed of structural aluminum panels transmit a



**High-performance design features include:**

- 1. Rapid-roll fabric doors and air curtain**
- 2. Curtain wall with insulated metal panels**
- 3. Fuel cell**
- 4. Photovoltaic panels**
- 5. Gray water collection system**
- 6. Paint booth, zero emission VOC**
- 7. Heat recovery units**
- 8. Material conservation**
- 9. Translucent wall panels**

diffused level of natural light and provide significant insulation. The interior lighting is industrial with high-output fixtures whose light level adjusts based on the amount of penetrating exterior daylight.

### Renewable Energy

Photovoltaic (PV) panels in the building's roof convert sunlight to electricity that can be used directly or stored in batteries for future use, or even fed back to the main utility supplier. A 200 kW hydrogen-based fuel cell system will be installed on top of the roof to minimize the import of grid power and maximize use of PV power. Hydrogen fuel cells are extremely clean energy systems, as there are no harmful emissions and the only by-products are heat and water. Heat from the fuel cells is recovered and used for domestic hot water.

### Storm Water Management

Key to achieving the desired level of sustainability for the building was a plan for gray water collection. The volume of water required for on-site operations is reduced by collecting rainwater runoff to help conserve natural water flow. Captured rainwater is stored and reused for washing buses, while a reclamation system for storm water runoff from the roof will recycle 85% of water used for the bus washing operation.

### Site and Community Concerns

The project team took steps to minimize the impact of construction and operation on the surrounding communities. Their efforts included designing a compact structure – for its building type, erecting pre-assembled components in place to reduce material waste, recycling the maximum amount of waste possible, and using zero VOC emitting materials. The facility incorporates dual ramping for buses and cars, as well as a bus queuing system to minimize traffic in the neighborhood.

### Getting the Design Concept Right

The architectural team was challenged to find an appropriate design for the building that would visually minimize its massive size and integrate into the industrial aesthetic and scale of the existing neighbor-

hood. The architects needed to balance the amount of wall space required for equipment and other functions

with the goal of creating maximum transparency. On the exterior, a patterned glazed block is introduced at the base, above which varying bands of corrugated metal panels and transparent wall panels form a pattern that breaks down the building volume. The MTA's signature gray and blue color palette is used on both interior and exterior panels with visual accents including safety orange and yellow and "barn red" at the main entry canopy. To provide penetration of daylight into the bowels of the interior as well as visual interest and transparency on the façade, translucent panels and glass block are interspersed with the other building materials.

The architects planned the facility for efficiency and functionality. The first floor houses the bus depot operation, fueling, revenue collection, and cleaning. A 40,000-square-foot mezzanine above the first floor is used for employee support areas. The second floor is dedicated to bus maintenance, and the mezzanine space above is used for support functions for the bus maintainers.

The lasting significance of the sustainable design and construction of this building may be found in its ambition to set standards that all communities with similar facilities can use.

Andrew Berger, AIA, ASLA, is a principal with New York City-based di Domenico + Partners, LLP.

Client: MTA/NYC Transit

Design/Builder: Granite Halmar Construction Company, Inc.

Architect & Landscape Architect: di Domenico + Partners, LLP

Structural & Civil Engineers: Gannett Fleming Engineers & Architects, P.C.

M/E/P FP Engineer: DMJM/Harris

Construction Managers: Tishman Construction Corporation; The Washington Group

Twenty years after restoring the Alice Austen House, Beyer Blinder Belle returns to rescue a neighboring gem By Linda G. Miller

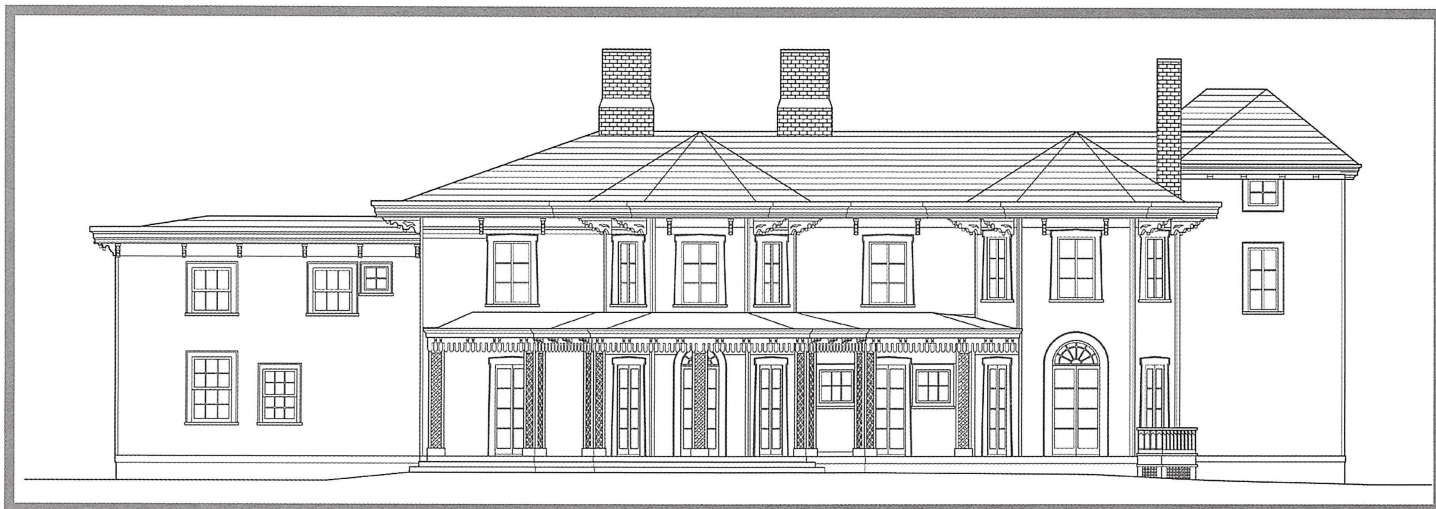
# Alice in Historic Preservation Land on Staten Island

RICK BELL



Top: East elevation of Brett House as it looks today Below: East elevation of Brett House after planned restoration

BEYER BLINDER BELLE



The grounds, littered with tangled vines, are fenced and padlocked, and the windows of the old house that neighborhood kids claim is haunted are boarded up. Though abandoned for years, the McFarlane-Bredt House (known locally as the Bredt House) in the Rosebank section of Staten Island, under the stewardship of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, has finally been stabilized. A sliver of sun peeks through an exposed corner of a jewel-toned stained glass window, and a room full of original decorative carved-wood gingerbread trim awaits restoration.

"The Bredt House is now a shell of its former self, but it is primed for its next step," says Richard Southwick, AIA, Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners partner and Director of Historic Preservation. "The building is hibernating, and there is nothing worse for an historic building than being empty." The firm has performed a feasibility study and preservation plan for what is to become an additional 13,000 square feet of space for the Alice Austen House Museum, so named for the celebrated turn-of-the-century Staten Island photographer Alice Austen (1866-1952), and located a few paces downhill towards a waterfront esplanade and an expansive view of New York Harbor.

The Friends of Alice Austen House, which administers the museum under license from the Parks Department, has secured \$250,000 from the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, and two City Council capital grants, totaling \$1 million, requested by Staten Island Council Member Michael McMahon. "The people of Rosebank thought this eyesore could become something wonderful – and I agreed," says McMahon.

The Bredt House is an excellent example of a 19th-century Italianate villa. Built in 1841 on property that once boasted two greenhouses, stables, an icehouse, a gardener's cottage, and a fishpond, the house had a series of private owners before and after it served as home to the New York Yacht Club from 1868-1871. The Austen House, originally a simple, circa 1690s Dutch farmhouse, was purchased by Austen's grandfather in 1844. He transformed it into a Carpenter Gothic cottage with a Victorian garden. Called "Clear Comfort," it stands today as an example of the houses that dotted the shoreline and hills of 19th-century Staten Island.

In the mid 1960s, concerned Staten Islanders saved both houses from the wrecking ball, only to let them fall into a state of disrepair. Eventually, both properties were designated New York City and National Historic landmarks and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. They were purchased by the City of New York in 1975. Dictated by available funds, the Austen House was the first to be restored – by Beyer Blinder Belle.

Austen was a prolific photographer, and more than 3,000 of the approximately 8,000 glass plates she created survive. Her photographs captured two divergent lost worlds: the genteel, "larky life" of Staten Island, and the hard luck life of new immigrants a ferry ride away in Manhattan. Austen frequently used her home as a subject, as well as the backdrop for family and friends get-togethers. Because of the wealth of saved interior and exterior photos available, John Belle, FAIA, RIBA, was able to fully restore the house 20 years ago. The parlor looks as it did in the 1890s with ornate period furniture, rugs, Delft fireplace tiles, and Oriental vases – a true showplace for Victorian-era



ELLIOTT KAUFMAN



BEYER BLINDER BELLE



ELLIOTT KAUFMAN

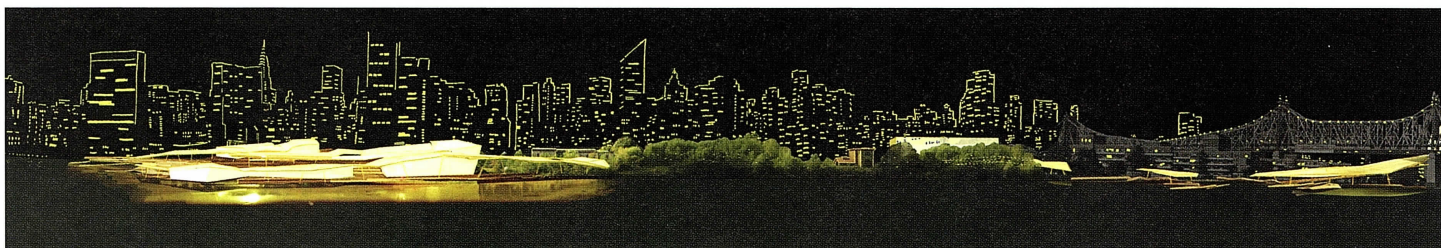
**Top: Bredt House interior today; carved-wood gingerbread trim will be restored to the exterior Middle: Alice Austen House Museum today; Bredt House can be seen through trees at left Above: Bredt House west elevation today**

*objets d'art* and architecture.

As planned, the first floor of the restored Bredt House will be multi-purpose, with classrooms, meeting rooms, and catering facilities. The second floor will accommodate administrative offices, a gallery to exhibit a permanent collection of Austen's photos and changing exhibits of guest photographers, as well as an Austen resource room. It is certain that Austen took photos of the Bredt House, but none remain. Instead, Southwick and staff architect Meghan Lake are working with illustrations from the time when the New York Yacht Club defended the America's Cup in 1870 and thousands watched the victory from the Staten Island shore.

It is expected that thousands will return (perhaps via the Staten Island ferry boat named the "Alice Austen") when the Bredt House is restored and the two sites are linked thematically and physically by a pathway. Once combined, on six acres of parkland with an incomparable view spanning the Verrazano Bridge to the Statue of Liberty, the two houses will become a fascinating, and no doubt popular, cultural attraction.

Linda G. Miller is a freelance writer. She formerly served as director of communications at the Municipal Art Society.



**ENYA Prize (\$6,000):** Nina Baniahmad, Paris, France; Vienna University of Technology student: A new social and cultural landmark for Roosevelt Island and New York City with open, public spaces, panoramic views, and protected enclosures housing the arts center program; temporary exhibition space inhabits the Smallpox Hospital Ruin.

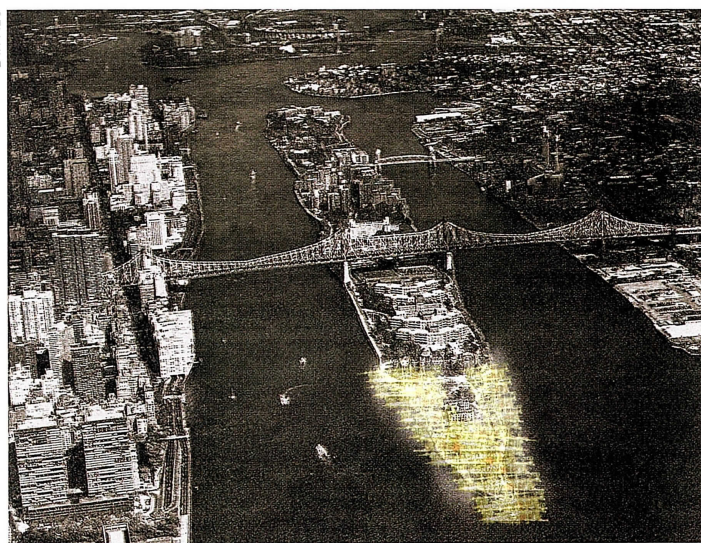
# Emerging Architects Synthesize Southpoint

ENYA honors concepts for Roosevelt Island cultural center  
By Jessica Sheridan, Assoc. AIA

The success of an ideas competition comes from the critical mass of innovative entries, and their ability to inspire a community. The program for “Southpoint: From Ruin to Rejuvenation, The Roosevelt Island Universal Arts Center,” the AIA New York Chapter Emerging New York Architects (ENYA) Committee’s second biennial international ideas competition, came together as a synthesis of shared experiences and reactions to a charged site and the complex community of Roosevelt Island.

The competition was an opportunity for design students and emerging professionals to engage in both the development of the southern tip of Roosevelt Island and the preservation of James Renwick, Jr.’s 1856 Smallpox Hospital. The program called for a multi-use facility accommodating performing and visual arts. Designed with the entire Roosevelt Island constituency in mind, including the high percentage of residents with disabilities, the program was tailored to fit the needs of the Roosevelt Island Visual Arts Association (RIVAA) and Coler-Goldwater Hospital Therapeutic Recreation Services.

While firmly rooted within the fabric of New York, certain elements of the site transcend location and speak to larger universal issues of city landscape, preservation, and urban identity. The competition addressed the puzzle of how architecture can coexist with urban green space; how cities choose to utilize available riverfront



**2nd Prize (\$2,500):** Cellule/Oliver Brandenberger, José Bento, Stephan Buehrer, Céline Guibat, Basel and Zürich, Switzerland: Nicknamed “the horizontal lighthouse” by the jury, this poetic entry scatters a field of lights across the site. A wooden platform links the Coler-Goldwater Hospital to the ruin housing the arts center.



**3rd Prize (\$1,000):** Dominic Leong and Brian Price, New York, NY: Mobile Art Park: a network of floating bi-level barges, each incorporating leisure and art space, aims to integrate art into everyday life.

resources; and, working close to the confines of an existing ruin, how creative adaptive reuse solutions intertwine with new construction.

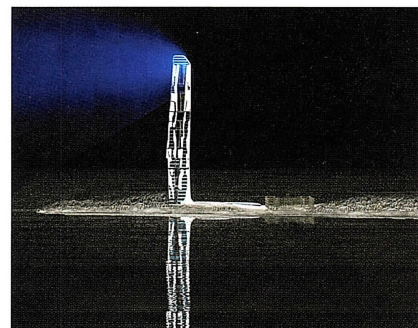
After the jury toured the Smallpox Hospital Ruin and joined a panel discussion with representatives for the clients, the island constituency, and the government, it began judging on January 28, 2006, at the Center for Architecture. The four-step process winnowed down 310 entries to 63 selections for exhibition; 41 inclusions in the publication; and finally, winners of the ENYA Prize, 2nd Prize, 3rd Prize, Student Prize, Historic Preservation Award, and five Honorable Mentions.

Incorporating every idea clearly and concisely onto a 30- by 40-inch board proved to be difficult for many. "I wish that each entrant had the opportunity to be a juror so they could understand the importance of capturing the eye of a juror," claimed Robert Silman, Hon. AIA NY, during the proceedings. Because the competition attracted many designers entering a competition for the first time, Lebbeus Woods noted that it seemed as if many emerging architects had trouble transitioning from an academic setting to the competition format. Perhaps this is why the winning entry board stood out. Tadeusz Sudol summed it up: "This highly stimulates our imagination with excellent light effects and a well established program proposal."

The winning entries represent the vast scope of issues. Although none of these proposals are intended to be built, hopefully the competition will spark the imagination of future decision-makers. The competition was sponsored by AIA New York State, the Graham Foundation, and the Rubin Family Foundation. An exhibition of selected entries is on view at the Center for Architecture through June 17. The publication "Southpoint: from Ruin to Rejuvenation" (Studley Press, Massachusetts, 2006, \$20) is available at the Center for Architecture or can be ordered at [www.ENYACompetitions.org](http://www.ENYACompetitions.org).

Jessica Sheridan, Assoc. AIA, is an architectural designer at Martin E. Rich Architects, PC, and Editor of e-Oculus. She is a member of ENYA, and has spent the last two years coordinating the Southpoint competition.

**Student Prize (\$1,000):**  
**Nam Gun Wook, Inha University, Incheon, Korea:** This proposal side-steps the ruin, placing a tower, acting as a beacon, at the southern tip of Roosevelt Island. People will experience the ruin on their way to the tower.



NAM GUN WOOK

## Jury

Pedro Calzavara di Matteo, Calzavara-Flora-Recoba Studio, Uruguay, 2004 ENYA Prize winner

Mimi Hoang, Principal, nARCHITECTS; 2004 PS1/MoMA Young Architects Program winner; 2001 Architectural League Young Architects Forum winner; critic, Yale School of Architecture.

Kate Orff, ASLA, Principal, SCAPE; landscape architect & professor, Columbia University, GSAPP

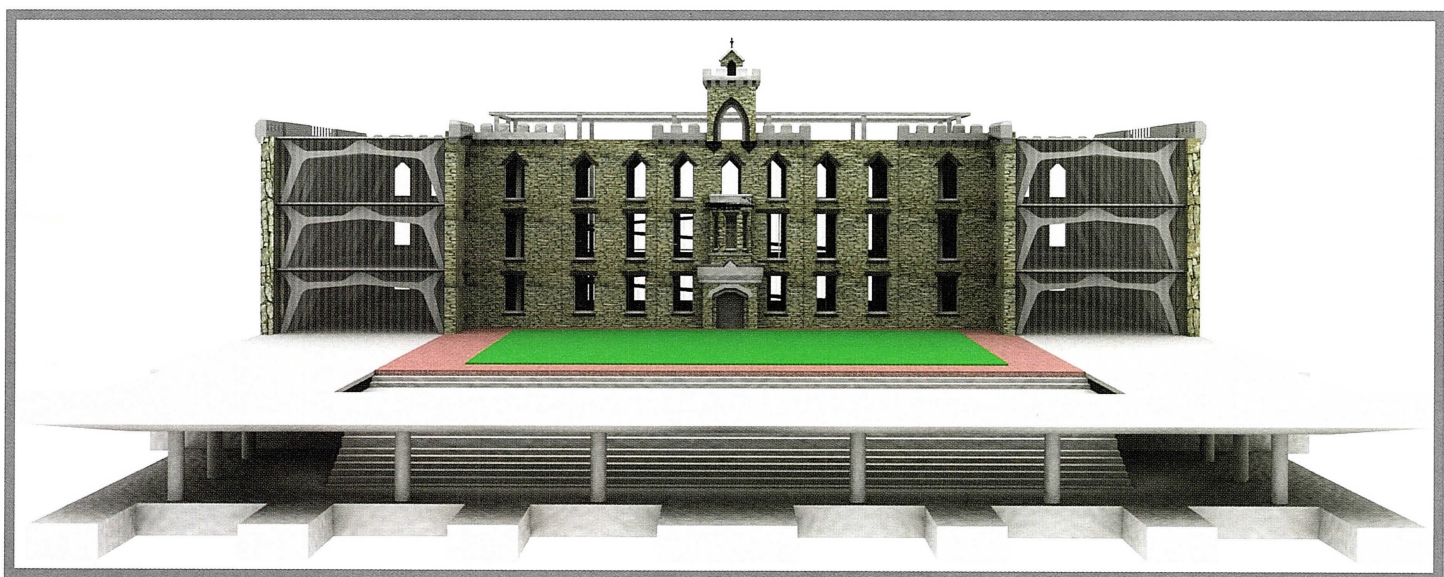
Robert Silman, Hon. AIA NY Chapter, President, Robert Silman Associates PC, Consulting Engineers; historic preservation & sustainable engineering expert; involved in analysis, documentation, and stabilization of Smallpox Hospital Ruin

Tadeusz Sudol, Roosevelt Island Visual Arts Association (RIVAA) president; senior associate, Office of Thierry W. Despont; representing RIVAA and Coler-Goldwater Specialty Hospital

Beth Tauke, associate professor of architecture, University of Buffalo-SUNY; editor, Universal Design: New York and Diversity in Design

Lebbeus Woods, Director, Research Institute for Experimental Architecture, Switzerland; professor of architecture, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art

Evan Douglass, Principal, Evan Douglass + Associates; Chair, Pratt Institute: School of Architecture



ERIC BRODFUEHRER

**Historic Preservation Award (\$1,000):** Eric Brodfuehrer, New York, NY: The reconstruction of the Smallpox Hospital Ruin façade creates a walkway reusing fallen stone blocks. A performance space leads to the water's edge, where a boat dock provides mass transit to other boroughs. The preserved ruin houses the entire program.

# Gulf Coast Update

Rebuilding New Orleans

By Lance Jay Brown, FAIA

My last report on events in the Gulf Coast region followed an ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) forum and day-long tour of the devastation in New Orleans in October 2005. Since then there have been many more meetings, commissions, and workshops at the federal, state, and local levels, and daily news about decisions that will fundamentally affect the future of the Gulf region.

## People and Plans

The complexity of assessing the future of the Gulf Coast is nowhere more evident than in New Orleans. How big will it be? How many will return? Who will they be? How many rich, poor, black, chocolate, white?

As one of the first organizations to begin discussions on the future of this important American city, the Congress for a New Urbanism (CNU) held charrettes in Mississippi and is credited with providing early and invaluable recovery inspiration. However, implementation strategies and local services are currently in short supply. A plan put forth by the Urban Land Institute, suggesting which areas of New Orleans should never be re-inhabited, was deftly taken apart by Jonathan Barnett, FAIA, of Philadelphia-based Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT), at the Center for Architecture in December, where he offered his own firm's approach to the challenge of post-Katrina reconstruction. The WRT plan has since caused a major flurry as it calls for constructive shrinking of the city, upsetting those who would be relocated.

The Louisiana Recovery and Rebuilding Conference, held in New Orleans last November, brought local and national design and planning professionals together with Louisiana public officials, civic groups, and business organizations to develop a body of principles that will guide the state's long-range recovery efforts. The program was presented by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in collaboration with the American Planning Association (APA), and co-sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, among others (the final report is available at [www.louisianarecoveryandrebuilt.org](http://www.louisianarecoveryandrebuilt.org)).

ACORN, the nation's largest community organization of low- and moderate-income families, continues its heroic efforts to represent those displaced and disenfranchised by Katrina. The ACORN Katrina Survivors Association has organized NO BULLDOZING initiatives, rallies in Baton Rouge and at FEMA headquarters, and joined Senator Kennedy in introducing the Rebuild and Respect Act. In January, ACORN members organized opposition to the rebuilding plan announced by New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin's Bring New Orleans Back commission that would have placed a four-month moratorium on building permits, forcing residents of low and moderate income communities to prove the "viability" of their neighborhoods.

## Common Themes: Big Issues

**1. Return and Resettlement:** Some say New Orleans's population, conservatively 475,000 before Katrina, will never again be more than 250,000. Others say 130,000 will not return. Of course, this matter is tied directly to the policies of reconstruction, funding, issuance of building permits, and a "plan in spirit" (my quotations) that will help inform people about their future.

**2. Sustainability:** This has been an issue from the day the city was founded. Flooding and water control are part of the equation, but so are education, economy, and communications. New Orleans has been suffering in these areas for years and this is as good a time as any to take such issues in hand. The Bring New Orleans Back Commission is calling for measures well beyond those proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers, while the Corps is studying how to provide better hurricane protection throughout Southern Louisiana, including New Orleans.

**3. Social Equity:** Mobility is fast becoming the definition of social equity in our cities. A regional railway is part of the CNU plan for the Mississippi coast, and most of the plans being generated for New Orleans include proposals for light rail and transit-oriented development.

**4. Levees, Insurance, and Finance:** The chicken-and-the-egg. If storm level five levees are built, then insurance can be acquired and financing will be available. But first the money for the levees needs to be secured. Likewise, those wishing to return need money for reconstruction and repairs. Congress has been slow to commit funds to the Gulf Coast.

## The Scales: The Region, States, Cities, Towns, and the Hinterland

It should be understood that a robust regional approach is necessary to secure the long-term health of the entire coast, from Florida to Texas. State lines are so literal and state funding so political that planning across borders seems a monumental challenge. Nothing less than a Tennessee Valley Authority or a Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is necessary to get the governors to address their mutual concerns.

## Coast Connections: The Big Apple and the Big Easy

New York and New Orleans are certainly having a big love affair. During her participation in the Louisiana Recovery and Rebuilding Conference, Margaret Helfand, FAIA, offered that the AIA New York Chapter sister up with AIA New Orleans Chapter; this resulted in the NOLA AIA leadership coming to New York and returning home with a \$10,000 check to help with their recovery work. Likewise, representatives from the newly formed Gulf Coast Community Design Studio

in Biloxi visited the Chapter and returned south with funds to help with their statewide community advocacy and recovery work in Mississippi.

Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe and tourism bureau NYC & Company Chairman Jonathan Tisch led a delegation to the Big Easy in February, along with Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott and real estate developer William Rudin, who heads Association for a Better New York. The city organized this mission to encourage New Yorkers to support the battered tourism industry there. The New Orleans tourism bureau is also lining up special discounts for visiting New Yorkers.

In addition, many of the schools in the northeast and especially the New York region have designated studios working on designs for New Orleans. Students are working on environmental research, hous-

[Learning From 9/11s, Tsunamis, Katrinas, Pakistans, and Philippines](#)

We need to rethink how we are designing our landscape alterations. We are aware of natural phenomena: volcanoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and mudslides, Krakatoa, San Francisco – and our own environmentally destructive actions, terrorism and war. But designing in fear of these eventualities is neither in our nature nor what is called for. Design with awareness of all such possibilities certainly is. Designing with and for nature, including human nature, remains our foremost issue.

One last observation about the Gulf Coast disaster trumps all others: The lack of immediate response and recovery activity should be an embarrassment to us all. The supposedly greatest nation in the history of civilization demonstrated a spectacular lack of leadership, responsibility, and humanity when the needs of its citizenry were most critical.



LANCE JAY BROWN



LANCE JAY BROWN



LANCE JAY BROWN

**Can it ever be business – and play – as usual in New Orleans?**

ing competitions, and urban design plans making numerous forays to New Orleans to assess building conditions and undertake reconnaissance for their studio work. The results of these efforts should be available as the spring semester concludes.

[Gulf Coast Legacy: Disaster Preparedness](#)

Following the devastating 2004 tsunami, the AIA New York Chapter and New York New Visions (NYNV) created a Disaster Preparedness Task Force (DPTF) to address the issues of disaster preparedness and mitigation relative to the needs of New York and the metropolitan region. If done well, this important initiative can help connect and coordinate the design professions with government policies. The DPTF is undertaking research and forming policy and plans for how urban designers, architects, planners, engineers, and environmental graphic designers can apply their talents to respond to issues confronting our environment.

[Lance Jay Brown, FAIA](#), practices architecture and urban design in New York City and is ACSA Distinguished Professor at the School of Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture, CCNY/CUNY. He is co-Chair of the AIA/NYNV Disaster Preparedness Task Force and Chair Emeritus of the National AIA Regional and Urban Design Committee.

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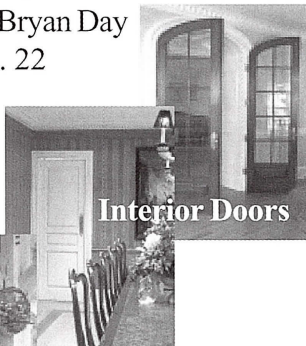
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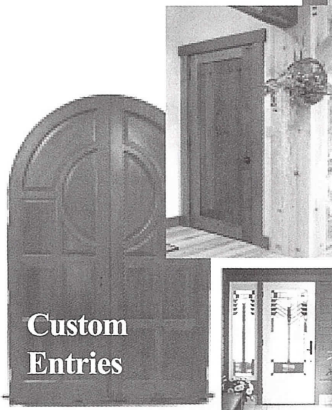
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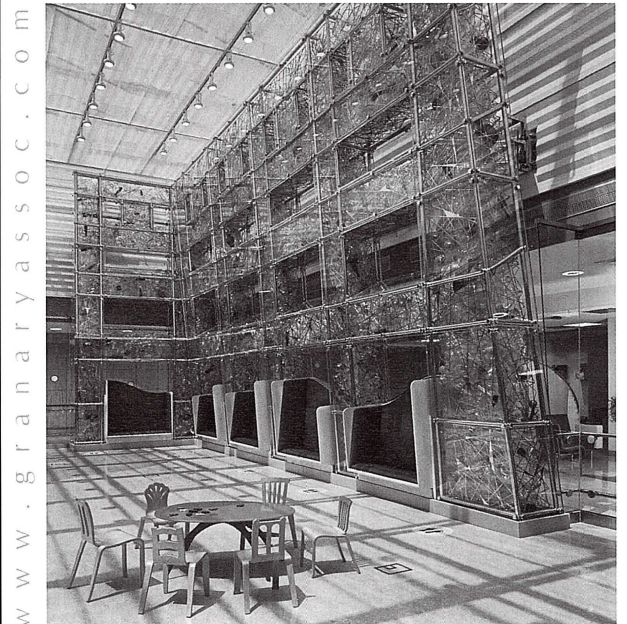


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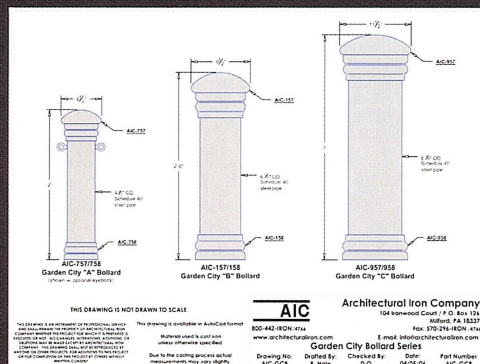


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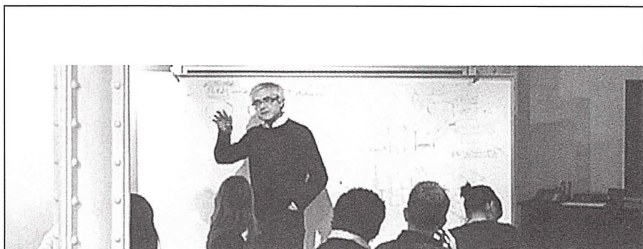
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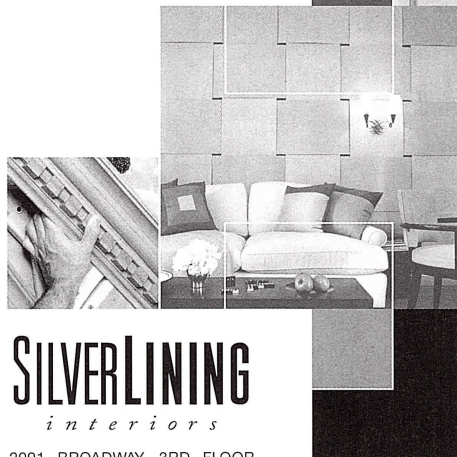
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# On the Waterfront: Lessons from Melbourne

Outside View

By Julie Dillon

As the southern-most capital of mainland Australia, Melbourne is almost as remote as you can get without bumping into Antarctica. This city of more than three million people grew up around the mouth of a navigable river – but whereas Sydney embraces its famous harbor, Melbourne was planned as a grid of elegant boulevards with their backs to the water. The water, after all, was a working port, officially off limits to all but waterside workers and the occasional shipload of weary immigrants. Lapping the edge of the central business district (CBD), the docks were visible but inaccessible – a last mysterious frontier physically severed from the city by a ribbon of railway tracks.

A few years ago all that changed. Commercial shipping had moved to deeper waters further west and the abandoned docks were ripe for revitalization. In 1996, architecture firm Ashton Raggatt McDougall released its master plan for the area – a flowing, organic response to the rigid city grid – and a year later the government-appointed Docklands Authority invited bids for the development of the area. By 2000, ground was broken and Melburnians began wandering down to inspect this sprawling waterfront that had been denied them for so long.

Six years later Docklands is an architectural hot spot with distinctive neighborhoods, each with its own relationship to the water. Old city streets have been extended down to the water (bridging the railway tracks) to link the new suburb back to the CBD – and new tram tracks have been laid to bring Docklands into the public transport network. A pedestrian overpass designed by Wood Marsh Architects links the railway platforms of Southern Cross Station (by Grimshaw in association with Daryl Jackson Architects) to the football stadium concourse and the main waterfront boulevard. Docklands is still a building site, but – like a giant jigsaw puzzle – parts of the complete picture are now discernable.

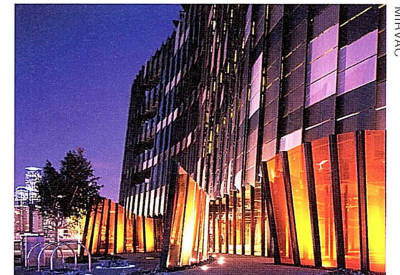
Out of the chaos of construction dust and jackhammers, significant buildings are emerging. Elenberg Fraser Architects was early to the scene with Watergate, a perforated-steel-and-glass pair of residential towers perched on a podium, yards from one of the old wharves. Further north, the five towers of New Quay have been born of collaborations between developers MAB and architecture and interior design firm FKA/SJB. One tower is curved like a ship's prow, while the others are less dramatic in form but layered with public art elements and textures such as timber paneling and perforated steel. Along the promenade that used to be the preserve of burly waterfront workers, pod-shaped buildings now house restaurants, bars, and a fish-and-chip shop (this is an Australian suburb after all). The two larger glass-and-steel-mesh pods, by McGauran Giannini Soon Architects, hover out over the harbor – if you score a good table, you feel you can touch the water with your fingertips. This promenade, and indeed the whole of Docklands, is peppered with public sculptures.



MIRVAC

**The skeletal Webb Bridge, designed by Denton Corker Marshall and sculptor Robert Owen, connects Yarra's Edge to a wetlands park on the opposite bank of the Yarra River**

Victoria Harbour is further south. Here, Bligh Voller Nield's light-filled, sustainable headquarters for the National Australia Bank houses several hundred relocated city workers, and a residential tower by John Wardle Architects is still under construction. A nearby path weaves through a new wetlands park down to the skeletal Webb Bridge



MIRVAC


**Melbourne Docklands: Yarra's Edge, MIRVAC's \$1 billion luxury riverfront development, includes the recently-completed 40-story Tower 5 by Wood Marsh Architects with HPA Architects**

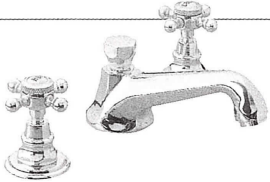
designed by Denton Corker Marshall and sculptor Robert Owen. This snaking conduit conveys pedestrians across the river through a web-like filigree of steel to Yarra's Edge, a five-tower enclave developed by Mirvac. The latest, Tower 5, is by Wood Marsh Architects with HPA Architects and, like its neighbors, commands views of the city.


Docklands has not forgotten its past in the midst of all this change. An abandoned 1880s warehouse will be reused, as will the delightful Missions to Seamen building (1905). At New Quay you'll find the words "Leading Hand and Shift Supervisor" in peeling paint on the side of the wharf, and near the new park a giant anchor has been wedged in the ground since before anyone can remember. But the most poignant reminder of Dockland's past is its ongoing popularity with a cluster of aging fishermen, possibly former waterfront workers, who spend their mornings sitting still, with fishing lines dangling, in the middle of this maelstrom of urban revitalization.

Julie Dillon is currently the editor of the Australian residential architecture magazine *Houses*. She has lived in Melbourne all her life and, like most Melburnians, had never been down to the docks until a few years ago. Now she lives there, and enjoys watching the suburb developing week by week.

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# 30-Year Watch

**Liberty Bell Pavilion,  
Philadelphia, by  
Mitchell/Giurgola  
Architects, 1976  
By Fred Bernstein**

In preparation for the U.S. bicentennial in 1976, the National Park Service commissioned Romaldo Giurgola (of New York's Mitchell/Giurgola Architects) to design a new building for the Liberty Bell.

Moving the bell from Independence Hall to a modern structure was bound to create controversy. Giurgola, said to be "keenly aware" of the concern, worked to maintain a strong relationship between the bell and its traditional setting. Visitors entered his building through a long, spine-like room that angled up until it culminated in the tall chamber housing the bell itself. A skylight, running down the center of the spine, ensured that the top of Independence Hall remained in view. And, with only glass behind it, the bell appeared to rest at the base of the old building.



**Pavilion viewed from new pavilion**

*Philadelphia Inquirer* architecture critic Inga Saffron has described the glass and aluminum building as "an architectural origami" with "swoops that prefigured by decades the work of Frank Gehry and Santiago Calatrava." But, at just 4,000 square feet, it had a hard time holding its own against the vastly larger masonry buildings around it.

Two years ago, the Park Service unveiled a larger, brick and granite Liberty Bell pavilion, designed by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson. Unlike the Giurgola building, which – by design – was smack in the center of the mall, the new building was moved to the edge, leaving a lot of space for greenery.

For a time, the Giurgola building was used as a security checkpoint for visitors. But it stood in the way of a lawn that planners hoped would run, uninterrupted, from Independence Hall to the National Constitution Center (a new building by Pei Cobb Freed and Partners).

Demolition of the pavilion began in March. "Removal will be complete and the area will be landscaped in time for the Fourth of July celebration," Frances Delmar, a spokesperson for Independence National Historical Park, wrote in an e-mail.

As a building that dies before it has decayed, the Liberty Bell pavilion is in good company. In Minneapolis, the Guthrie Theater, designed in the early 1960s by Ralph Rapson, and still functioning beautifully, is slated to be torn down this year. (The Guthrie's last season in the building ends in May, and its new building, by Jean Nouvel, will open later in 2006.) The original Guthrie, connected to the Walker Art Center by a common lobby, will be replaced – like Giurgola's pavilion – by a lawn.

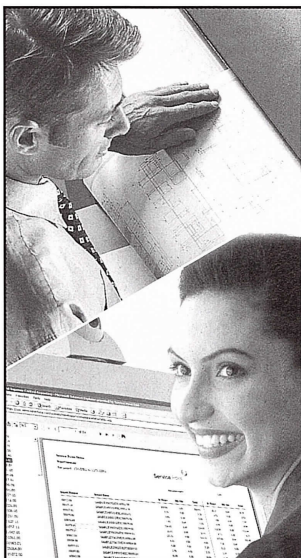
Rapson (who still practices in Minneapolis) and Giurgola (now living in Australia) have both outlived their buildings. Born in Italy, Giurgola came to New York on a Fulbright fellowship in 1949. In the 1970s, he moved to Philadelphia, where he began teaching at Penn and was closely associated with Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, and Ed Bacon – a group that was sometimes labeled "the Philadelphia School." In the 1980s, he became chair of the architecture department at Columbia, and later spun off his firm's Philadelphia office (which is now the firm MGA Partners Architects). From New York, he moved to Canberra, Australia, to supervise construction of his Australian capital complex. (The New York office of Mitchell/Giurgola Architects has carried on without Giurgola.)

For a while, it looked like the Liberty Bell pavilion would, like Giurgola, find a new home. American College in Bryn Mawr agreed to relocate the building to its suburban campus – which has several other Giurgola buildings. The deal was announced with great fanfare. But then, when the college was unable to raise the money for the project, it said little publicly. That left people thinking the building had been saved; in fact, the bell was about to toll. Last-minute attempts to find a taker (for \$1) failed.

Perhaps it's time for someone to create an outdoor architecture park, the American equivalent of Japan's Meiji Mura Museum, where dozens of buildings endangered by development – including much of Frank Lloyd Wright's stunning Imperial Hotel – have been relocated. Preserving buildings out of context, though not ideal, is better than not preserving them at all.

"Someday," said a ranger at the new Liberty Bell pavilion, who didn't want his name used, perhaps because he seemed to care almost as much about Giurgola as about the Liberty Bell, "we may read that the National Park Service tore down one of the Philadelphia School's most important buildings."

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*.



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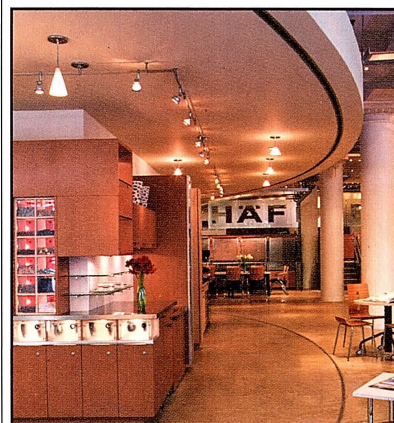


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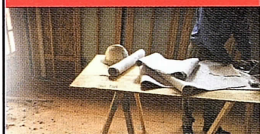
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# Continuing Education Requirements for Architects: Clarifying the Changes

**Good Practices**

**By Robert Lopez, RA**

Are you aware that there have been recent changes to New York's mandatory continuing education requirements for architects?

Over the last year, the New York State Education Department (SED), with the assistance of the State Board for Architecture, and with input from the professional community, developed amendments to regulations related to mandatory continuing education requirements for architects in New York State. The New York State Board of Regents approved the changes in December 2005.

In New York State, architects are licensed for life unless their license is suspended, revoked, or annulled for reasons of misconduct. To practice the profession of architecture in New York, a licensee must be currently registered.

To renew your registration as an architect, New York State Education Law requires you to complete 36 hours of continuing education (CE) in each three-year registration period. At least 24 hours must be in the areas of health, safety, and welfare. If you are a first-time licensee in New York, you are exempt from the continuing education requirement for your first registration period.

For continuing education to be acceptable, it must meet all three of these criteria:

- It must be offered by an approved sponsor (provider);
- It must be in an approved subject area;
- It must be in an approved format, either a course of learning or educational activity. A course of learning is defined as a course where a student has the opportunity for immediate interaction with an instructor or presenter.

Some of the important changes enacted by the Regents approval, effective January 1, 2006, include:

- Architects must now take a minimum of 18 hours of courses of learning, and may take up to 18 hours of educational activities. Educational activities include preparing and teaching a course or making a technical presentation, authoring an article or published book, obtaining a patent related to architecture, completing a self-study program, or completing an educational tour.
- The quantity of approved sponsors has increased to include the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and The Practicing Institute of Engineering (P.I.E).

Acceptable and non-acceptable subject areas for continuing education have been clarified. Subject areas that do not contribute to the professional practice of architecture, as defined in section 7301 of the Education Law, are not acceptable. These topics include, among others: Risk management; limiting the design professional's liability; project management related to profitability and maximizing fees; marketing

and public relations; insurance; laws related to arbitration, mediation, liens (unless they relate to safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of the public); real estate and real estate development; expanding a design professional's business; basic AutoCAD; personal development; general office management; accounting/financial planning; succession planning; zoning as it relates to increasing a developer or architect's profitability; design build (unless 75% of the course content relates to the laws related to design build in New York State).

Additionally, service on boards and/or professional committees, and active participation in technical and/or professional organizations are not eligible for continuing education credit.

There are some differences between the American Institute of Architects (AIA) requirements and New York's requirements. Some of these differences include:

- Carryover of continuing education credits is not permitted in New York;
- Use of a self-report form is not permitted in New York;
- The definition of acceptable subject matter;
- New York cannot grant an exemption to the continuing education requirement. However, the Education Department may grant an adjustment to the requirement if it determines it is impossible for a licensee to comply.

Finally, it is important that you receive adequate proof of your attendance at either a course or educational activity. Licensees must maintain the information on continuing education in their records for a period of six years from the date of completion.

The State Education Department audits random samples of mandatory continuing education records to assure compliance with the continuing education requirement. Willfully making or filing a false report is unprofessional conduct, according to Section 29.1 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. Penalties may include censure and reprimand, fine, and/or suspension or revocation of your license.

It is critical that licensees remain current with changes and developments in the profession to render quality services and to ensure public protection. If you have further questions related to the continuing education requirements in New York, visit the State Board for Architecture's website at [www.op.nysed.gov/archce.htm](http://www.op.nysed.gov/archce.htm) or call 518.474.3817 x110.

Robert Lopez, RA, is the Executive Secretary to the New York State Board for Architecture and Landscape Architecture within the Office of Professions at the New York State Education Department.

# Rubble in NY

In Print +

## RUBBLE

UNEARTHING  
THE HISTORY OF  
DEMOLITION



**Rubble: Unearthing the History of Demolition, by Jeff Byles. New York: Crown/Harmony Books, 2005. \$24.**

Demolition, creative or natural, has a long history – Sodom and Gomorrah, Jericho, Samson (perhaps the first technically savvy demolitionist – he knew exactly which pillars to pull down to implode Delilah's palace), London (1666), Chicago (1871), Paris under Baron Haussmann (1853-

70), San Francisco (1906), Coventry (1943), Dresden (1945), Pennsylvania Station (1963), Pruitt-Igoe (1972), Seattle's Kingdome (2000), the World Trade Center (2001), New Orleans (2005). Why did it take all those years for a writer finally to take demolition – or in huckster hype, “unbuilding” – and deal with it, miraculously, in 303 pages?

Now Jeff Byles has managed to transform what seems at first a banal topic into a quasi-romantic history of great cities destroyed, great buildings demolished, and fortunes made by commercial wrecking companies and commercial interests to whom a great landmark is only so much underused real estate. He introduces the heroes and the villains and the in-betweens (was Baron Haussmann a hero for slicing those grand new boulevards through the ancient Paris fabric, or was he a villain for displacing the occupants of 27,500 houses – and replacing them with 102,000 others?).

In the end, demolition is a tug-of-war between the champions of preservation and the devotees of destruction. Byles quotes what has to be the most pregnant statement in the book, as he cites George F. McDonnell, identified as “an industry consultant”:

“A lot of people would like to preserve every damn building where Millard Fillmore ever used the public convenience... There's a lot of sentimental drivel about all that.” McDonnell is further quoted as “calling it a blemish on the national heritage to go blubbering on about buildings and institutions and laws that have grown bowlegged with age. When they don't work anymore, they should be torn down.” Sad to say such voices still carry clout in the nation's public affairs.

At one point Byles asserts that for many the mere love of demolition is a top instigator of rubble. There seems to be little evidence for this, except perhaps in the case of Piranesi and his ruins. Even a cursory look at most demolition reveals causes that are economic, demographic, political, technical, military, programmatic, stylistic, religious, and Acts of God.

*Rubble*, an inspired title, looks at demolition from every angle. An engaging series of vignettes discusses the founding fathers of demo-

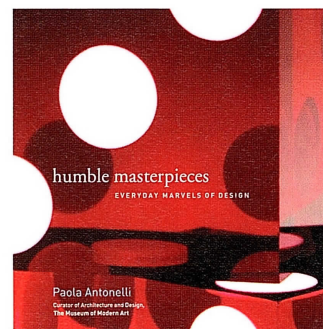
lition – Byles calls Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite in 1867, “the patron saint of creative demolition.” I suggest a comparable saint is Mark Loizeaux, the brilliantly inventive professional wrecking contractor who has to his credit, if that's the word, the flawless demolition of structures ranging from Seattle's Kingdome to St Louis's Pruitt-Igoe.

From a purely economic viewpoint, demolition is big business. The 2002 U.S. Economic Census cited 2,097 wrecking contractors in the U.S., doing \$3.1 billion of business on a payroll of \$944 million with almost 30,000 employees. Still, the nation's annual construction volume of about \$675 billion dwarfs wrecking by a ratio of over 200:1. So all is not lost.

Byles has an easy style that often borders on the breezy – terms and phrases such as “bamboozling,” “pulling the plug on,” “down the tubes,” “kicking around the drawing rooms,” “bumping along at a fearsomely rapid clip” – should have been headed off at the pass by a diligent editor.

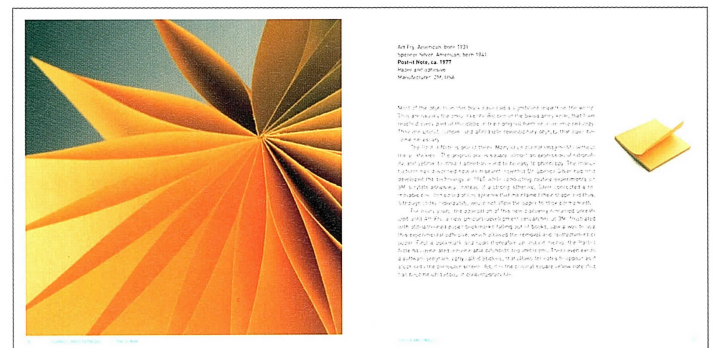
Meanwhile, one can only trust that when Mies said that “less is more,” he wasn't referring to demolition.

Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA



**Humble Masterpieces: Everyday marvels of design, by Paola Antonelli. New York: HarperCollins/Regan Books, 2005. \$22.**

Little did I know that when some years ago I brought back from Finland a nifty looking pair

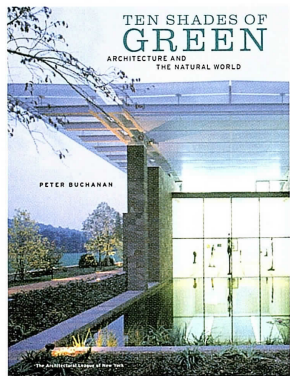


of red plastic-and-stainless-steel scissors I had in my hand a masterpiece. Those scissors are only one of 100 ordinary objects featured in *Humble Masterpieces*, some dating back 5,000 years (chopsticks) and 116 years (the humble paper clip), that are perfect combinations of form and function. Writes Antonelli:

"Everything is designed, one way or another: Some objects are designed well, while others are not; some are designed pretentiously, others unassumingly; some are designed to optimize materials and techniques, while others are wasteful; some are approachable and understandable, others instead trade on their unattainability."

Each pair of pages of this smart-looking little volume has an image on the left, and on the right there's a paragraph or two of description and assessment. Other examples include the safety pin (invented 1849), the band-aid (1921), the friction match (1826), the Phillips head screw (early 1920s), the digital compact disk (1970s), and the Post-it Note (1977).

Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA



**Ten Shades of Green: Architecture and the Natural World, by Peter Buchanan. New York: The Architectural League, 2005. \$24.95. Distributed by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.**

To date, the environmental movement has produced few buildings of a high design caliber. As Rosalie Genevro, executive director of the Architectural League, writes in her

preface: "American environmentalism in architecture has been largely focused on technical fixes, on figuring how to build essentially the same buildings that have always been built, but to make them consume less energy."

In this book, derived from a major traveling exhibition organized by the League, curator and critic Peter Buchanan shows, via 13 buildings including four bespoke houses, that it is possible to combine a concern for green with good design. "Green" offers architects the chance to develop a whole new formal vocabulary.

The ten shades of green that make up the title are: low energy/high performance; replenishable sources; recycling; embodied energy (that is, the energy required to extract, manufacture, and transport a building's materials); conservation; life cycle costing; embedded in place (concern for context, especially in an urban framework); access (transportation); health/happiness; and community links.

The handsome publication shows examples, each across several pages, of the work of such figures as Norman Foster (Commerzbank Headquarters, Frankfurt), Renzo Piano Building Workshop (Beyeler Foundation Museum, Basel), and Fernau & Hartman, Rick Joy, Lake/Flato Architects, and Brian Mackay-Lyon, each with a house.

Stephen A. Kliment, FAIA

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For evidence of architectural life Beyond Manhattan click on [www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/home.html](http://www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/home.html) for the website of the New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC). This is not your department of yore knee deep in, well, not design. Rather, under Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Commissioner David J. Burney, AIA, the DDC is on a mission "to deliver the city's construction projects in a safe, expeditious, and cost effective manner while maintaining the highest degree of architectural, engineering, and construction quality." However, you will not find this statement on the website until clicking on "Contact Information" and "About DDC." So request an Agency Brochure 2006 and see for yourself a metropolitan-wide commitment to design.

The home page gives an abbreviated Project Gallery that includes all the boroughs. Under "Doing Business with DDC" you can better understand how to become a Consultant, as they call architects who answer a Request For Proposal, qualify, and are awarded a commission. But you are still doing work for the government, so be prepared for a bureaucratic structure and the paperwork that goes with it. Yes, searching for projects will yield "Emergency Power Generator," but it will also pull up a nugget like the "Studio Museum of Harlem." The DDC is not fitted out with big budgets, but with its heart in the right place, as the recent RFP for 15 Pedestrian Bridges in Bronx, Queens, Manhattan, and Brooklyn indicates, we may finally get architecture and engineering to replace the rusting steel over our streets and highways. For an up-close look at DDC progress and opportunities borough by borough visit:

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Bronx: <http://bronxboropres.nyc.gov> (note: no www.)

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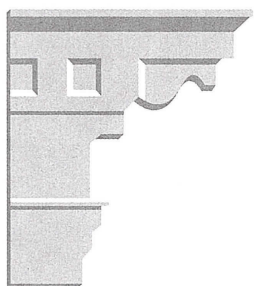
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# I'll Take Manhattan

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the zoo (with you).  
It's very fancy, on old Delancey  
Street, you know.  
The subway charms us so...**

Lorenz Hart, from *The Garrick Gaities* of 1925

**All these elements must amalgamate and join.**  
Garibaldi, 1855

**Unite the disciplines.**  
Clodagh, 2003

**D**oes it matter whether the Washington Square Park statue of Garibaldi, the Great Unifier, faces west toward the rebuilt fountain or south to the Center for Architecture on LaGuardia Place? Giuseppe Garibaldi spent some time in Greenwich Village and two years on Staten Island, from 1850 to 1851. Before returning to the seven fractious mini-states on the Italian peninsula, he helped lead nationalist military struggles in Uruguay and Peru. At a recent Art Commission hearing, the AIA New York Chapter endorsed the shift for a variety of reasons: accessibility, connectivity, and the creation of congregative space.

Our Garibaldi was Andrew Haswell Green, the subject of a long-overdue homage at the Museum of the City of New York. Green's dream was the 1898 Consolidation that created Greater New York, subsuming Brooklyn, then the nation's third largest city.

In her book *Subways: The Tracks that Built New York City*, Lorraine Diehl notes that the construction by August Belmont of New York's first subway line "changed the city's face" and that "by unifying and connecting the city, the subway had truly urbanized it." She quotes Mayor George B. McClellan at the IRT's 1904 opening ceremonies, saying that Greater New York was now born, and that, in comparison, the 1898 political union was "little more than a geographical expression." In 1912, with the linking of the IRT to the Brooklyn-based BRT, the transit of the "dual city" described by Diehl was combined into a single connected system, or One MTA.

Similarly, for the architectural community, the sesquicentennial mantra, "One AIA," elicits some of the same skepticism as earlier appeals for suspension of self-interest. Perhaps it will ultimately have the same success as earlier mergers and acquisitions. The trend toward unification and expansion has worked well in cities as diverse as Budapest and Istanbul and in organizations as different as the AFL-CIO and the National Football League.

Buda and Pest might not have made it on their own. It is the same with London, straddling the Thames; would the Docklands have been

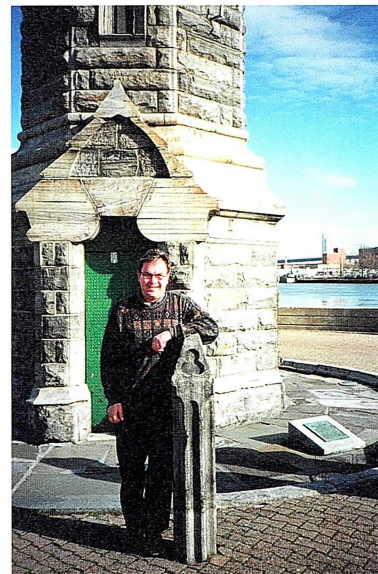
built in Jersey City? As in other world-class cities, it is high time that New York realizes the unlimited potential of places outside the geographic center. The first conference organized by the Center for Architecture was "1=5: The Multi-Centered City," and it highlighted development projects in the "outer" boroughs that could inform the re-envisioning of Lower Manhattan. Sites like Queens West, the Nassau Hub, St. George, and Atlantic Yards tell us something about density and the link of development to transportation infrastructure.

But it is not at the major projects, but in the parks and neighborhoods across New York City that the lessons are learned that can inform the growth of the City as a whole. The beacon at the heart of New York is the 1872 James Renwick Jr. lighthouse on Roosevelt Island. In *Images of America: Roosevelt Island*, Judith Berdy notes that the lighthouse was built to keep boats away from the north end of the island, and to "effectually illuminate" the asylum located there. The light also marked the treacherous rocks of Hell Gate. As a symbol of unification, the removal of these navigational hazards was as important as bridge-building and water tunnels; so too is the broad view from the 4.5-acre Lighthouse Park by Quennell Rothschild and Partners. The recent Southpoint competition by the AIA's Emerging New York Architects (ENYA) Committee may point the way on how to face south in the middle of the East River, despite the ongoing controversy over Louis Kahn's un-built memorial for President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Now, as we approach the 150th anniversary of the founding of the AIA in Manhattan, it is time to remove the shoals that separate colleagues in the Institute and in the design professions. An attitudinal shift will be taking place in DC, with the planning of the AIA's "American Center of Architecture." Isn't it time for the five separate AIA borough components in New York City to start planning an historic collaboration at the reinvigorated "New York Center for Architecture," where each borough will be equally and proportionally represented with a piece of the Public Information Exchange? If we don't hang together, we most assuredly will draw apart.

## Last Words

**Rick Bell, FAIA  
Executive Director  
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CAROLYN SPONZA

**Beyond Manhattan boundaries: Bell at the lighthouse at the north end of Roosevelt Island**



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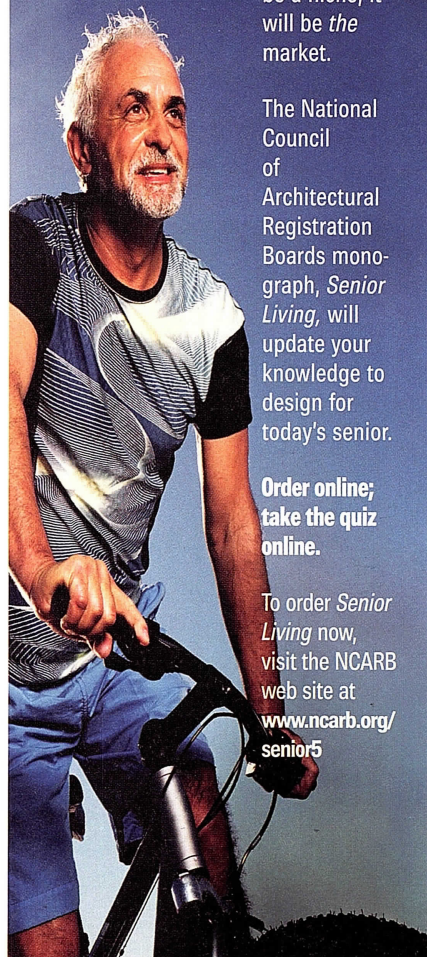
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