

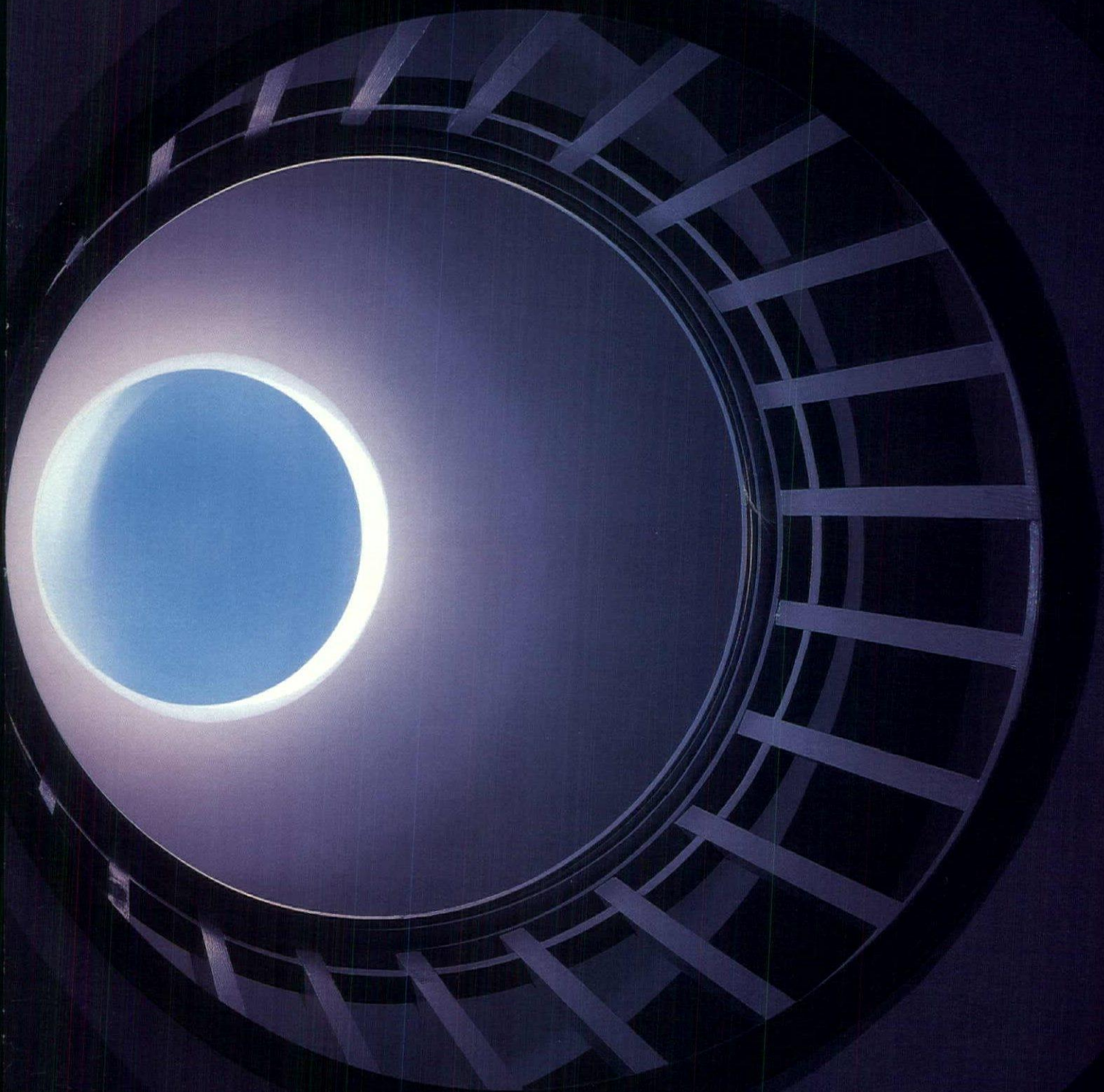
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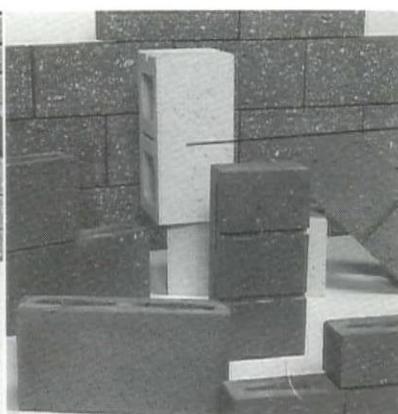
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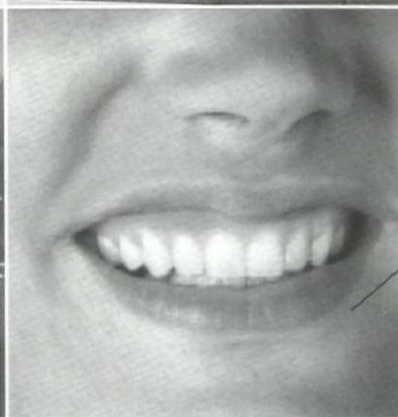
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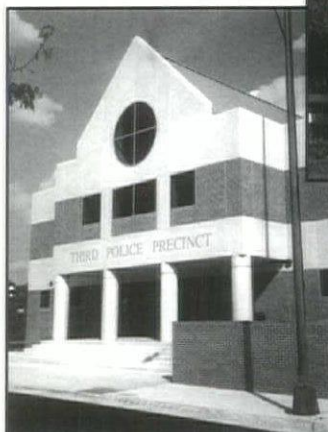
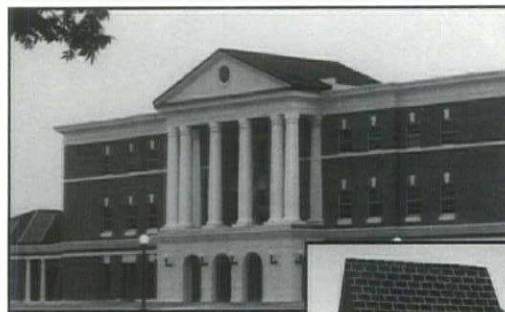
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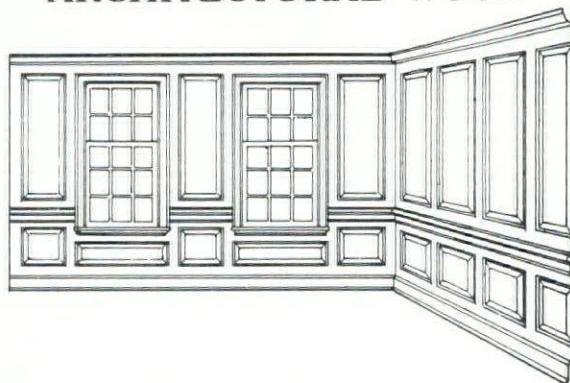
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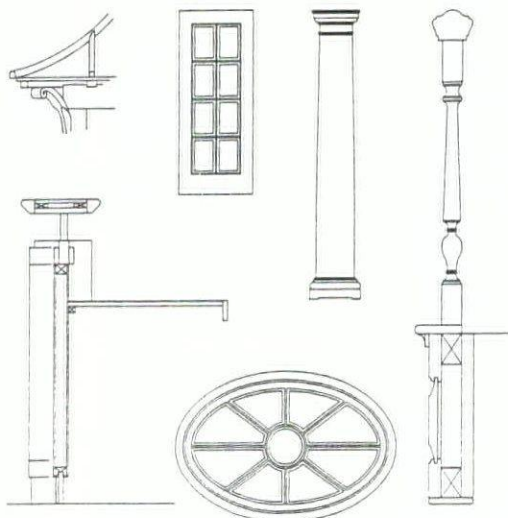
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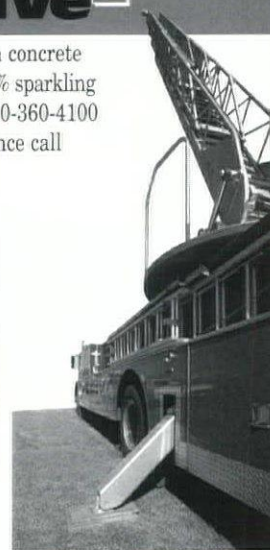
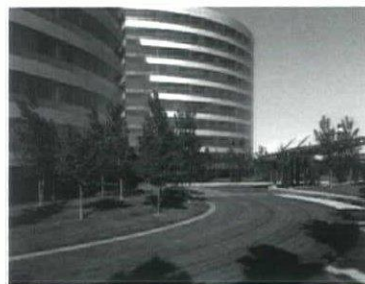
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volume seven number three

13

## Inform Awards: Life on the Inside

Once again, accomplished examples of interior architecture predominate among the winners in the fifth annual Inform Awards program. Ten projects earned the jury's seal of approval, out of a total number of 81 wide-ranging submissions.

Harris Teeter Supermarket, Shook Design Group  
Farkas Residence, Robert M. Gurney, AIA  
Cottage Row, Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co.  
Stoner Residence Garden, Graham Landscape Architecture  
Tanner/Mellos Residence, Robert M. Gurney, AIA  
Diggs Town Revitalization, CMSS Architects  
Arlington Maintenance Complex, KressCox Associates  
McKinney Residence, Hugh Newell Jacobsen, FAIA  
Green Top, Rixey-Rixey Architects  
Air Quality Exhibit, Norbert Hamm



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## Virginia Design Forum II

For the second time, a panel of leading thinkers hosted an enthusiastic audience of architects at the Virginia Design Forum in Williamsburg. In an eight-page special supplement, Inform publishes excerpts from the popular event.

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### Design Lines

new developments in design

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### Profile

a 20th century eye: Fred Brandt

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### Books

the literary lodgings of Edith Wharton

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### Taking Notice

doing the small thing well

On the cover:

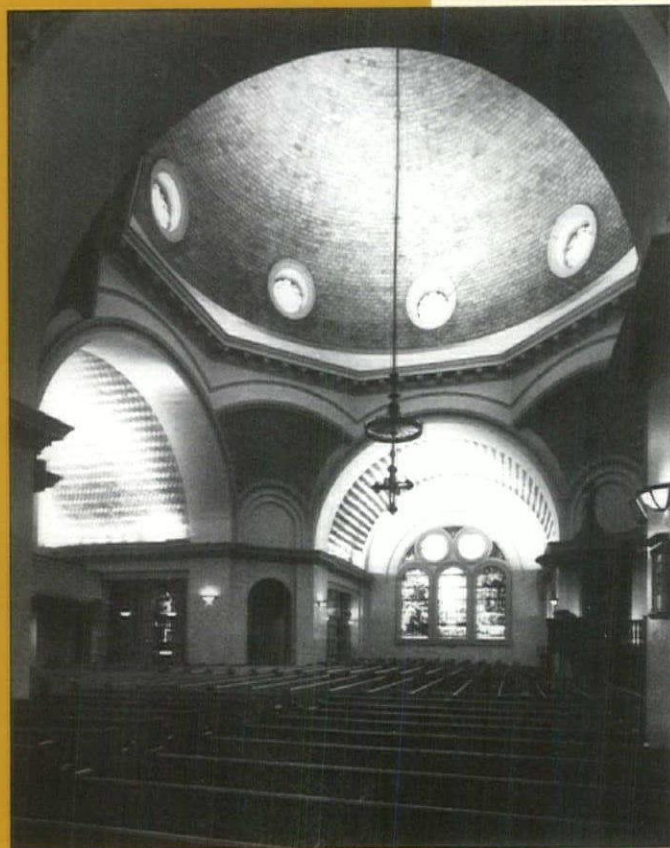
Skylight at Green Top.

Photo by Maxwell MacKenzie.

In our next issue:

Preservation





Photos: Courtesy The American Architectural Foundation

## Achieving Style with Tile:

# THE GUASTAVINO Co.

**Guastavino's vaulting techniques were used in the dome and vaults of Central Congregational Church in Providence, R.I.**

of the firm remained unknown to the public. The tiles they used were available in colorful glazes, sometimes accentuated by a corrugated texture. Guastavino tiles were roughly the same volume as common bricks but – at 1 x 6 x 12 inches – they were longer, wider, and flatter. Architects took note of their work in 1889 on the Boston Public Library, a job that established a lasting relationship with prominent architects McKim, Meade & White.

Although lightweight, the tiles were able to withstand heavy loads. The spaces they enveloped ranged from the heavy and ponderous to the light and abstract. And, as architects began to experiment, the material was used in more diverse ways, as in the Art Deco interior of the San Francisco Stock Exchange. For the better part of four decades, the company thrived. But steel and concrete gradually replaced Catalan vaulting, and the company shut down. In the end, the story of the Guastavino family and its rise to prominence is more interesting than the exhibition, which falls a bit flat. As a document of a lost technology, the exhibit also is a troubling reminder of a time when civic pride was once synonymous with public architecture – which today seems to be more about the art of compromise than the art of building.

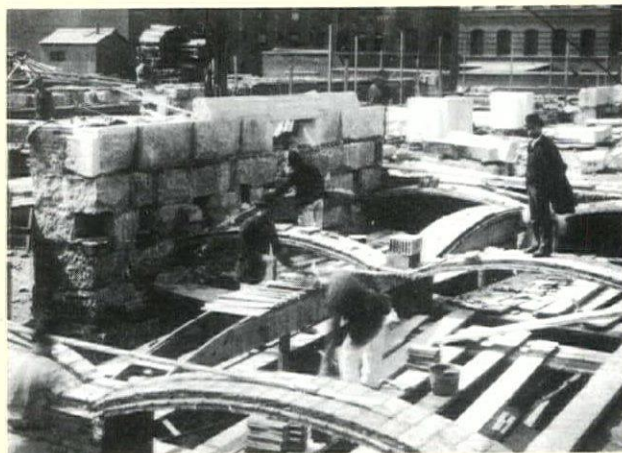
– Vernon Mays

Many of America's early 20th century architectural landmarks – from Grand Central Station to the U.S. Supreme Court and including buildings at the University of Virginia – share one unique-but-often overlooked characteristic: their use of the ingenious Catalan vault, thanks to an immigrant Spanish family known as Guastavino.

Rafael Guastavino, born in 1842, came of age at a time when Barcelona was growing rapidly. In his search for an economic fireproof construction technique, he revived a traditional method of construction using tile-and-mortar vaults. Prompted by business opportunities, Guastavino moved to New York in 1881. In time, he acquired U.S. patents on his process and founded the Guastavino Fireproof Construction Company. The company and its methods are the subject of an exhibition, "The Old World Builds the New: The Guastavino Company and the Technology of the Catalan Vault," which continues through January 5 at The Octagon in Washington, D.C.

Guastavino's arrival in New York coincided with two architectural trends: the beginning of the Beaux Arts-inspired American Renaissance and the development of steel, portland cement, and concrete as building materials. By the time the firm closed in 1962, it had installed masonry floors, ceilings, vaults, domes, and stairs in a wide variety of monumental buildings. Nearly 400 works were built in New York alone. Regional examples include the 1904 Cathedral of the Sacred Heart and the 1921 Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond, Cabell Hall at the University of Virginia, Duke Chapel in Durham, N.C., and the U.S. Army War College in Washington, D.C.

The Guastavinos' techniques made it possible for the country's leading architects to create bold spaces. But because Guastavino served as the contractor, his name did not appear on the buildings and the accomplishments



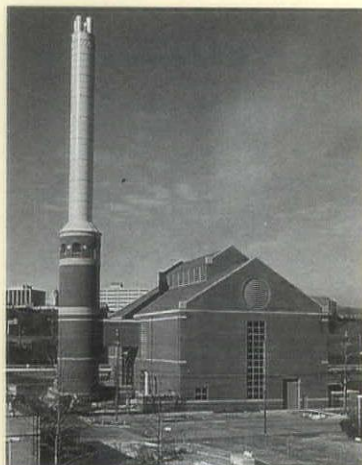
Rafael Guastavino supervises work on the Boston Public Library.



## Firms Honored with **Masonry Awards**

From the fluid complexities of works by Antonio Gaudi to the straightforward tectonics of Louis I. Kahn, masonry spans the gamut of architectural expression. This expression is honored yearly in a competition sponsored by the Virginia Masonry Council.

Among the winners this year for commercial/industrial buildings was the Medical College of Virginia Steam Plant in Richmond. Designers at Marcellus Wright Cox & Smith Architects of Richmond, in association with Black & Veatch, selected brick as the primary material to reduce the scale of the mammoth building. Because of the building's visibility along I-95, even the most industrial features were given careful architectural treatment. Other winners in the same category were the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Building VII, by Scribner Messer Brady & Wade of Richmond, and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, designed by The Weihe Partnership of Washington, D.C.



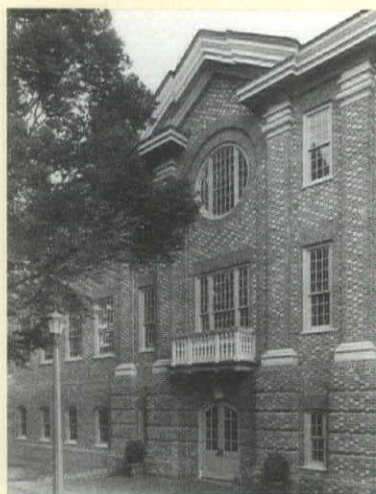
**MCV Steam Plant**



**St. Elizabeth Seton Church**

St. Elizabeth Seton Church in Lake Ridge was selected a winner in the religious/institutional category. Designers of the church were Intec Group, Inc., of Fairfax. Also recognized in the category were Motley + Associates of Roanoke for Kipps Elementary School in Blacksburg and Rancorn Wildman Krause Brezinski of Newport News, for their association with Allan Greenberg on the design of Tercenary Hall at the College of William & Mary, which takes cues for its I-shaped plan and masonry details from the nearby historic Wren Building.

Stephen Childrey Architect of Richmond received an award in the residential category for his design of Plainview Estates.



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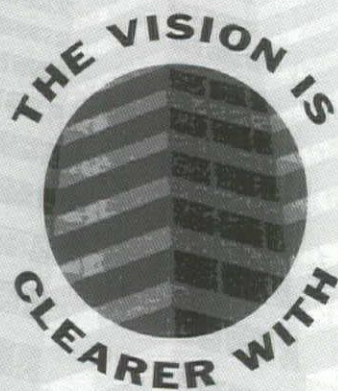
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## A Conversation with Jane Jacobs

In several free-wheeling discussions earlier this year during Founder's Day week at the University of Virginia, urban theorist and author Jane Jacobs applied her common sense litmus test to the American living condition and found it lacking. Whether the topic was zoning, mass transit, or New Urbanism, Jacobs said that the rules adopted by governments and developers are contrary to the way people live best.

Jacobs, who was widely acclaimed for her insightful articles in *Architectural Forum* magazine and her landmark book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, chastised planners for concentrating on "things" to the exclusion of "process." She called that fundamental emphasis "the besetting sin of planning" and noted that's why so much of modern planning is a disaster. As in life, she said, cities and communities must be allowed to follow their destinies in incremental ways. Cities, too, are living, breathing entities. Thus, she said, New Urbanism – the popular planning theory that guided the development of neo-traditional towns such as Seaside, Florida – is more valuable as a model than as a vision of a finished product. "It has nothing much to do with cities," she said, but it can



Jacobs signs an autograph after U.Va. talk.

give people an idea of how the suburbs could be different, and thus reduce their residents' fear of change. But change must come, she said. "We are in terrible trouble with our suburbs, with our sprawling, nitwit things. I don't think we need new communities as much as we need to make changes in our existing suburbs. We are going to have to make existing communities denser because they aren't going to last forever as they are."

Jacobs said the organizing premise of suburbia isolates people from work, worship, and recreation. Part of the cure for suburban ills is a revamped transportation network, she said. To accomplish that, she recommended returning mass transit to private enterprise. "This is going to be hard for governments to do, especially if they have some puny, failing system of their own. They're going to think of these things as competition and feel they have to protect that miserable failing thing [that they already own]. It will be forgotten that the transportation systems we once had – the railroads, the bus systems, the streetcars – started in that way and were taken over by the government. Whereupon they began to decline."

Modern zoning practices also were blasted by the feisty critic. "Nonsense – that's what I think about zoning. It has made categories of use that have nothing to do with any sensible aims or policies, what people need, or what cities need. But for some reason, it's almost impossible to really overhaul the damn thing. It hangs on even in Charlottesville and it victimizes people." As an example of restrictive zoning, Jacobs cited the case of a local photographer who uses his home as his office. The city required him to obtain a special permit guaranteeing no foot traffic would result from his business. "This boggles my mind. What's so terrible about foot traffic in a residential area? You want it to be deserted?" Such policies make earning a living as difficult and expensive as possible by forcing people to rent space elsewhere in the city and then waste time and resources getting to and from a remote office. "And this infuriates me."

In her remarks, Jacobs revealed a deep conviction that people need to work and live together with their environment. She observed that architects often focus too keenly on aesthetics at the expense of the relationships of buildings to each other, to the sun, and to people. But that shortcoming, she said, has nothing to do with lack of money. Perhaps just the opposite. "It's where there are difficulties that the imagination is put to work. And one of the difficulties is not enough money. If you think of what you can do with less money, often you can do a great deal."

– T. Duncan Abernathy, AIA





■ **"The Old World Builds the New."** An overview of The Guastavino Company and the technology of the Catalan vault, used from 1885 to 1962 in many of America's landmark buildings. Drawings, photographs, company documents, and architectural fragments recount the firm's work at Grand Central Terminal, the National Cathedral, the U.S. Supreme Court Building, and others. Through Jan. 5 at The Octagon. 202-638-3221.

■ **"An Evening with Antoine Predock."** A lecture by the preeminent New Mexico architect who blends art and architecture. Dec. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at the Virginia Beach Center for the Arts. Reservations required; seating limited. Sponsored by AIA Hampton Roads. 757-461-2899.

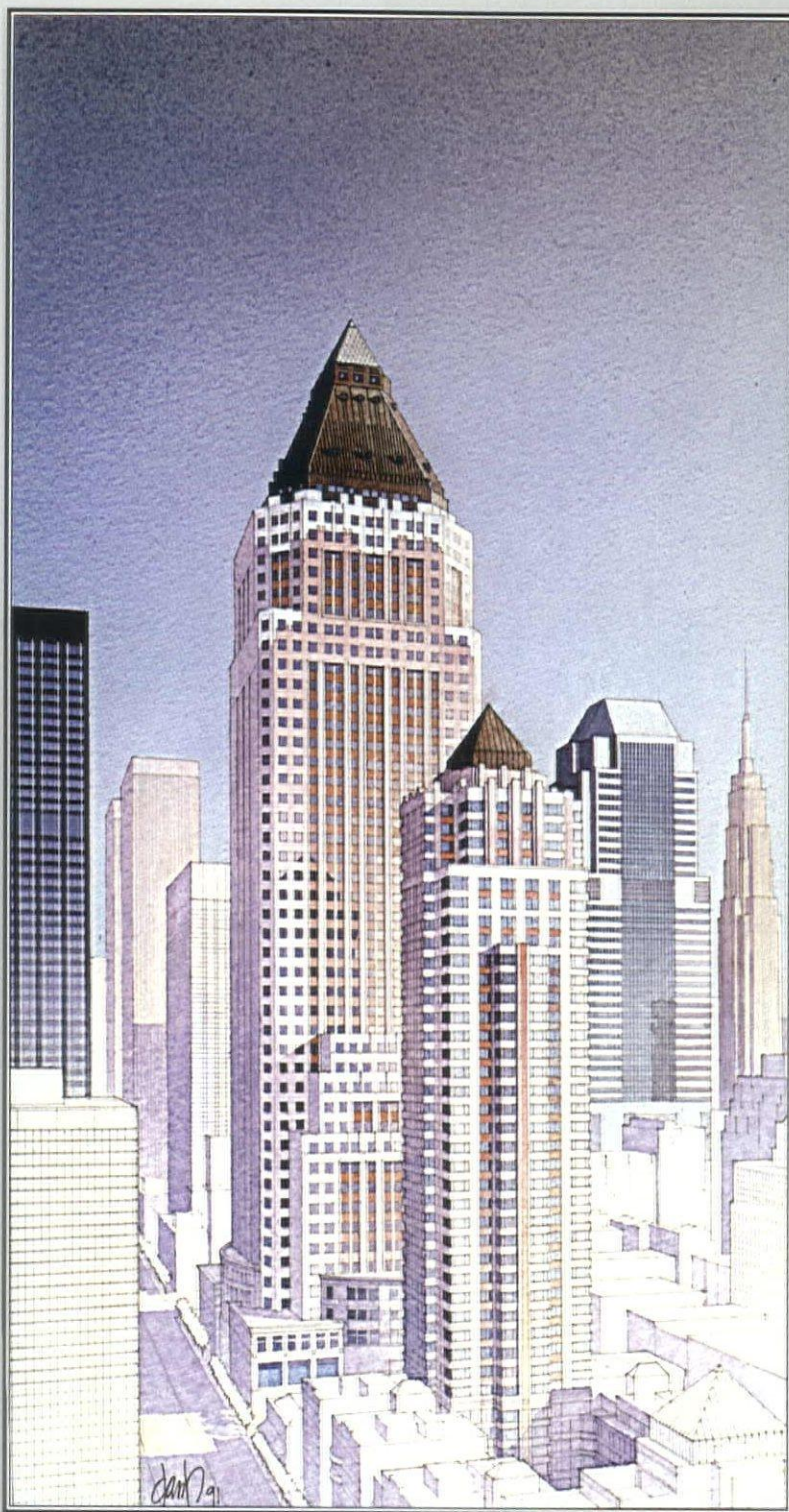
■ **"An American Embassy in Berlin."** Examines the recent architectural competition held by the State Department. Exhibition features models and drawings of the winning entry, from Moore Ruble Yudell and Gruen Associates, and the semifinalists. Through Feb. 23 at the National Building Museum, Washington, D.C. 202-272-2448.

■ **"Federal Presence: Buildings for the Millennium."** Photographs and models of the first crop of buildings constructed under the "Design Excellence" program, which was initiated by the General Services Administration to improve design quality of federal construction projects. Dec. 6 through Jan. 17 at The AIA Gallery, Washington, D.C. 202-638-3221.

■ **"American Spirit Alive in Japan."** Examines the historical development of three of Frank Lloyd Wright's works in Japan, including the Imperial Hotel. Through Jan. 19 at the National Building Museum. 202-272-2448.

■ **"Meissen Porcelain, 1710-1756."** An introductory survey of porcelain produced during the 18th century in Meissen, Germany. Through Feb. 9 at the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, N.C. 704-337-2000.

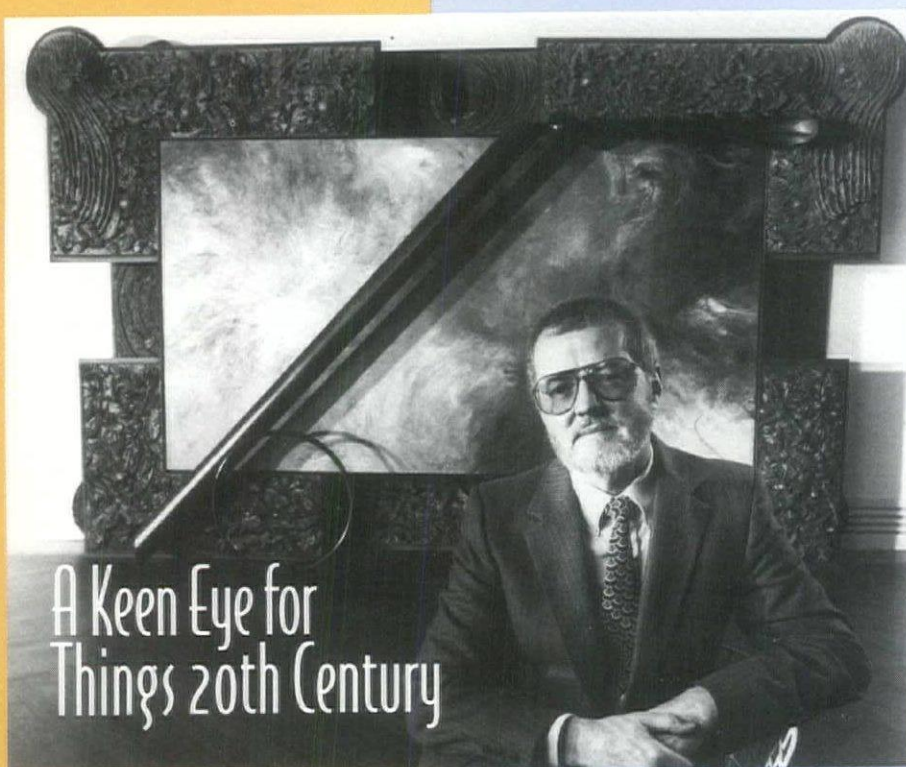
■ **"Impressionists on the Seine."** Works by Renoir, Caillebotte, Morisot, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley. Through Feb. 9 at the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. 202-387-2151, ext. 274.



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## A Keen Eye for Things 20th Century

Brandt (above) dedicated nearly all of his career to advancing the status of the Virginia Museum.

10 By Vernon Mays

Directors come and directors go. But Fred Brandt has called the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts home long enough to have outlasted them all. Last summer, after a distinguished association with the museum that ran almost continuously since 1960, Brandt announced his retirement, cleaned out his office, and walked away from an institution that will long bear his personal imprint.

As curator of 20th century art, Brandt was a moving force in building the museum's reputation as a leading repository of late 19th and early 20th century decorative art. He still recalls with characteristic humor the first time he approached museum officials with a proposal to organize a furniture exhibition on Art Nouveau. The puzzled response: Art who?

Luckily, Brandt persisted. And through a combination of his own initiative and the close relationship that developed between him and Richmond collectors Sydney and Frances Lewis, the Virginia Museum acquired a body of paintings, sculptures, and decorative

objects that are the envy of curators nationwide. At a time when the museum was still in its formative years, Brandt was a godsend. His command of modern art and his passion for design gave the Virginia Museum the equivalent of two curators for the price of one. His departure also puts the museum, which faces dwindling budgets, in a difficult position: Who to hire in Brandt's place – a curator of art or design?

When he first arrived at the museum fresh from Penn State with a degree in art history, Brandt was plunging headlong into the working world. "I'd never set foot in Virginia, much less the museum," he says. He was quickly caught up in the enthusiasm of the place, where he performed education functions – producing labels, training docents, and writing manuals. After he went back to Penn State to earn his Master's, he returned to town with his wife, Carol. "I liked Richmond," he recalls with a clipped inflection that still belies his New Jersey roots.

After coming back South, Brandt found himself repeatedly bumping elbows with a young Richmond couple at art events. "They started calling me to ask about

things. I did some research for them and we got to be friends," he recalls of the duo, Best Products founders Sydney and Frances Lewis. As the Lewises grew more adventurous as collectors, they developed an interest in Art Nouveau furniture. Brandt shared their passion for the sinuous lines of Art Nouveau, which scholars hadn't begun to take seriously, he says. But his 1971 exhibition on the subject was a hit. "The response was so good that the Lewises gave the museum \$500,000 to build an Art Nouveau collection."

It was a groundbreaking decision, and one that gave the Virginia Museum a jump on the competition. Brandt secured a sideboard by Emile Gallé, a punch bowl by Louis Tiffany, and a buffet by Louis Majorelle – the list kept growing. By 1973, Brandt also had agreed to serve as the Lewises' private curator, a position he still holds. Eventually the Lewises let it be known that they wanted their collections to go to a museum. "The Metropolitan wanted the decorative arts. The Whitney wanted the American paintings. And we wanted everything." He persuaded them to keep the entire collection – except the Tiffany lamps – in Virginia. "And I had my pick of the lamps," he says.

In 1986, Brandt pleaded for seed money to build a collection of contemporary designed objects. The result was the Good Design Collection, which includes pieces ranging from a classic 30s-style Electrolux vacuum to the ubiquitous "Tizio" lamp, designed in 1972. "Good design does not necessarily mean that an object must be expensive, nor does the mere fact that an object can be acquired inexpensively mean that it lacks good design," Brandt noted in the collection's catalog. Now, he says, an entire gallery would be needed to display all the design objects he gathered.

Brandt has written extensively on 20th century art for both the scholarly and popular press. He served as a trustee of the Valentine Museum in Richmond and an advisor to the Virginia Commission for the Arts. But, despite lingering questions about the growth of the Virginia Museum's design and decorative arts collections in the wake of his retirement, Brandt hesitates to say the future is uncertain. "Everybody realizes how important this collection is. They are not, by any stretch of the imagination, going to let it go to sleep."

Courtesy Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



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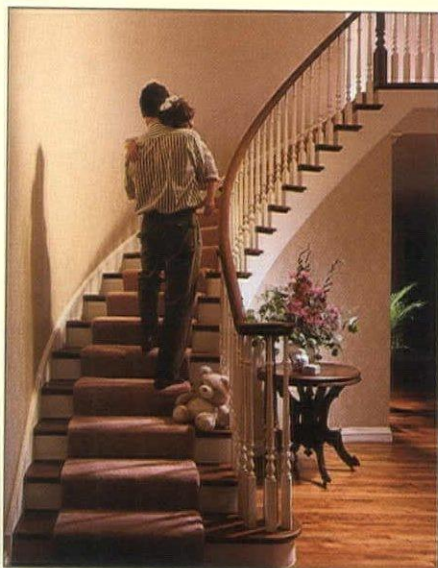
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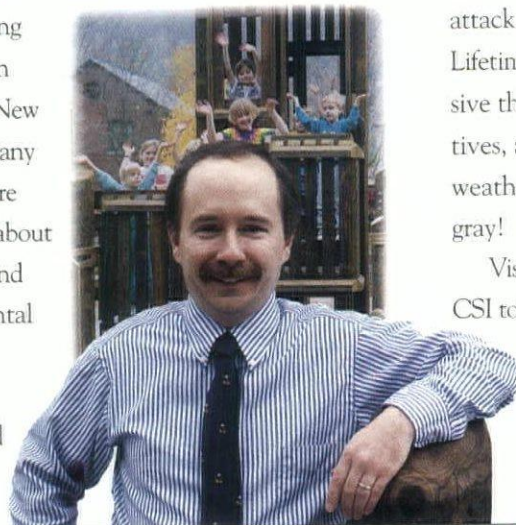


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# inform

## A W A R D S

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### Interiors + Landscapes

A wide assortment of projects from the realms of interiors and landscape architecture came up winners in the fifth annual Inform Awards program.

This year, ten projects were chosen for recognition in the fifth annual edition of the regional Inform Awards program. As our ever-growing tradition would have predicted, this year's field of 81 entries revealed a preponderance of interiors. Two "exteriors" made the cut as well. But, after serious deliberation, the jury opted to pass on giving any awards in the "objects" category. "There's a consistency of aesthetic here that belies us," quipped juror Shavaun Towers. Looking over the results, her colleague Harold Roth had to agree: "There is. That's right. Everything with hard-edged steel and exposed nuts has been eliminated from the field."

#### The Jury

##### Tai Soo Kim, FAIA

Founder of Tai Soo Kim Partners in Hartford, Connecticut. This Korean native came to Yale in 1961 to study with Paul Rudolph and worked with Philip Johnson. Known in the U.S. for his educational projects, he has built large museums and laboratories in Korea.

##### Harold Roth, FAIA

Partner of Roth and Moore Architects of New Haven, Connecticut. He has been a critic in architectural design at Yale since 1972, chaired the AIA's National Committee on Design, and served on the board of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.

##### Shavaun Towers, ASLA

Partner of Rolland/Towers, a landscape architecture firm in New Haven, Connecticut. She began her career in the Office of Dan Kiley and joined Peter G. Rolland and Associates in 1973. She has served as guest critic at Harvard, Yale, and U.Va.



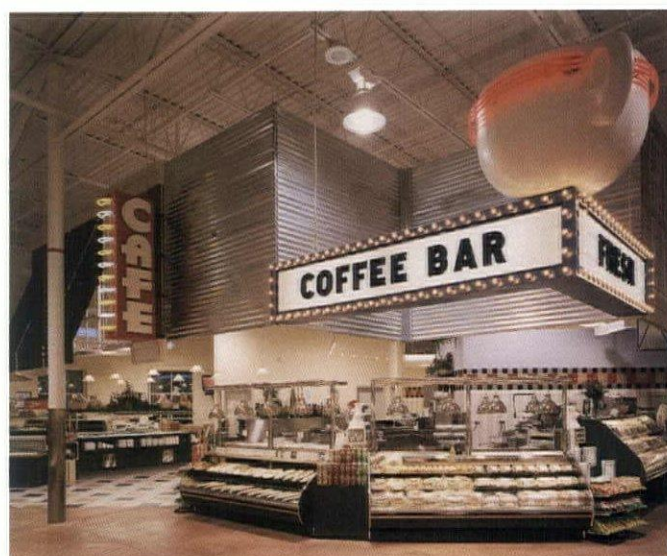
# All Pumped Up

## Harris Teeter Supermarket

Few stores are anything like the Harris Teeter Supermarket in Cary, N.C. — which has been jokingly referred to as a “grocery store on steroids.” In it, the architects sought to create a welcoming atmosphere, and one that would change perceptions of grocery shopping from a routine chore into a more entertaining experience.

Many aspects set this store apart from the pack. By creating the appearance of many rooms within the supermarket, the architects arranged the seafood, deli, and bakery areas into something akin to a market hall. One sign of the times is the coffee bar, distinguished by a giant pop art coffee cup overhead. In the produce section, shoppers encounter a roadside stand built of antiqued, galvanized, corrugated metal, while colorful murals tout a variety of fruits and vegetables. Special lighting creates areas of high spectral quality and, to convey the impression of things well done, the concrete floor was treated with reactive stain in combination with through-body porcelain. Clear directional signs and bold graphic imagery orient shoppers, often with a touch of wit, as they make their way through the cavernous space.

“I love the really huge graphics,” said Tai Soo Kim. “It’s for your eyes. It’s a lot of fun.” Noted Harold Roth: “I think it’s very commendable to have this typical American building type, the supermarket, given a good deal of design attention. Why not make this place, where everybody spends so much of their time, a place that’s a lot of fun with a lot of visual interest?”



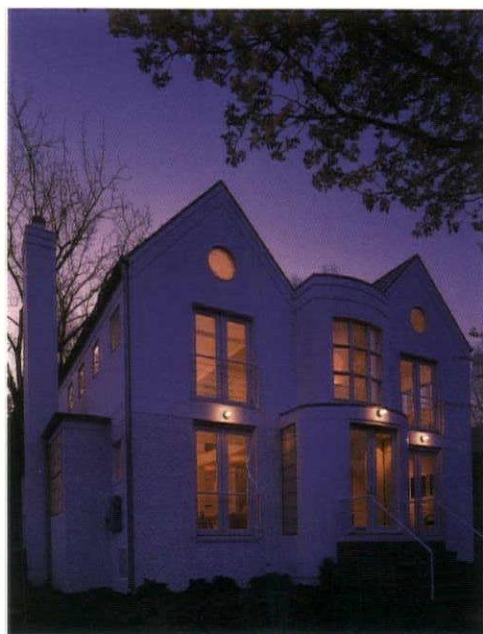
**Architects:** Shook Design Group, Charlotte, N.C.  
**Owner:** Harris Teeter, Inc.  
**Contractor:** J.D. Beam  
**Sign Fabricator:** Shaw Design





## Center of Attention

### Farkas Residence



Photos: Hoachlander Photography Associates

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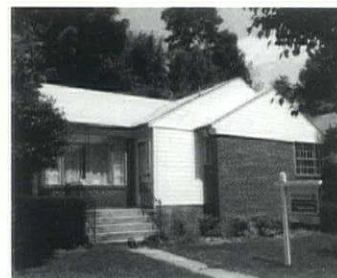
Unlike many of the city's tradition-rich neighborhoods, a small enclave in the Palisades section of northwest Washington, D.C., is comprised of nondescript brick ramblers built in the 1950s. The simplicity of these structures provided the cues for architect Robert Gurney's pared-down approach to a major overhaul of one of the prosaic houses.

Although the owner voiced his preference for a house with abundant glass and light, the site offered no opportunity for pleasing views from the existing house. On top of that, zoning restrictions greatly limited expansion of the ground floor. The only way to expand was up, and Gurney developed a scheme based on the addition of a second floor.

In the final solution, views from the house to the landscape are tightly controlled. The focus, instead, becomes internal, with the entire house organized around a double-height living room. This soaring interior space magni-

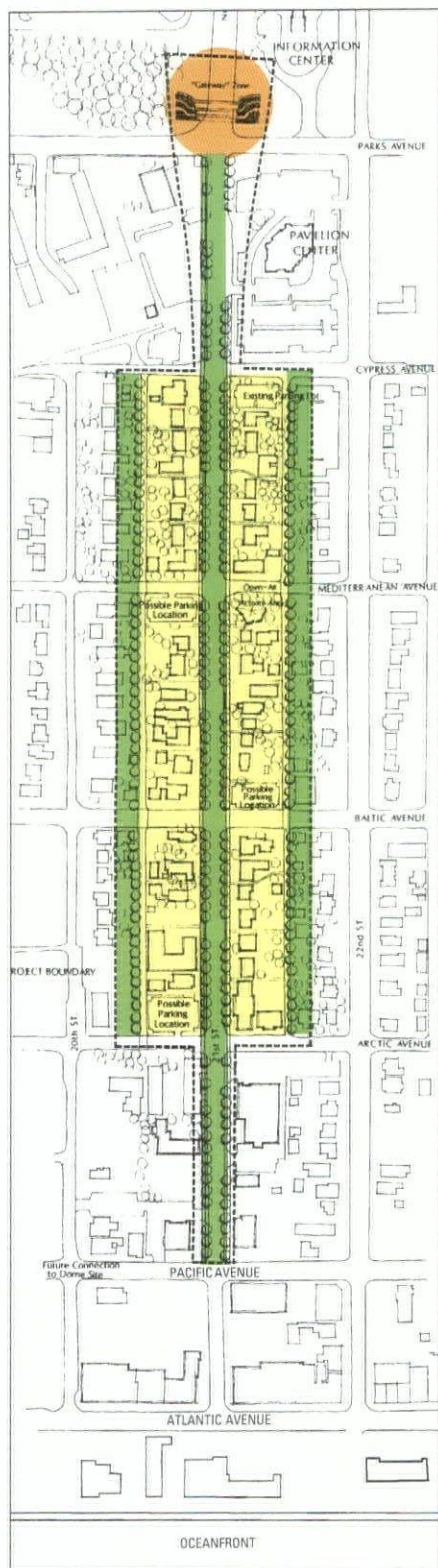
fies the interior scale and provides rich amounts of light into the both the central room and adjacent ones.

"It's a transformation that is handled very beautifully and with a great deal of panache — kind of amazing," said Harold Roth. "It's primarily a spatial solution that doesn't rely on expensive materials." Tai Soo Kim noted that the modified floor plan was executed with great competence. "And it's consistent," said Shavaun Towers. "Part of the problem with some of the other entries is that there were very specific details that created a focus, and yet they were out of balance. They overwhelmed the rest of the interiors. Not this one."

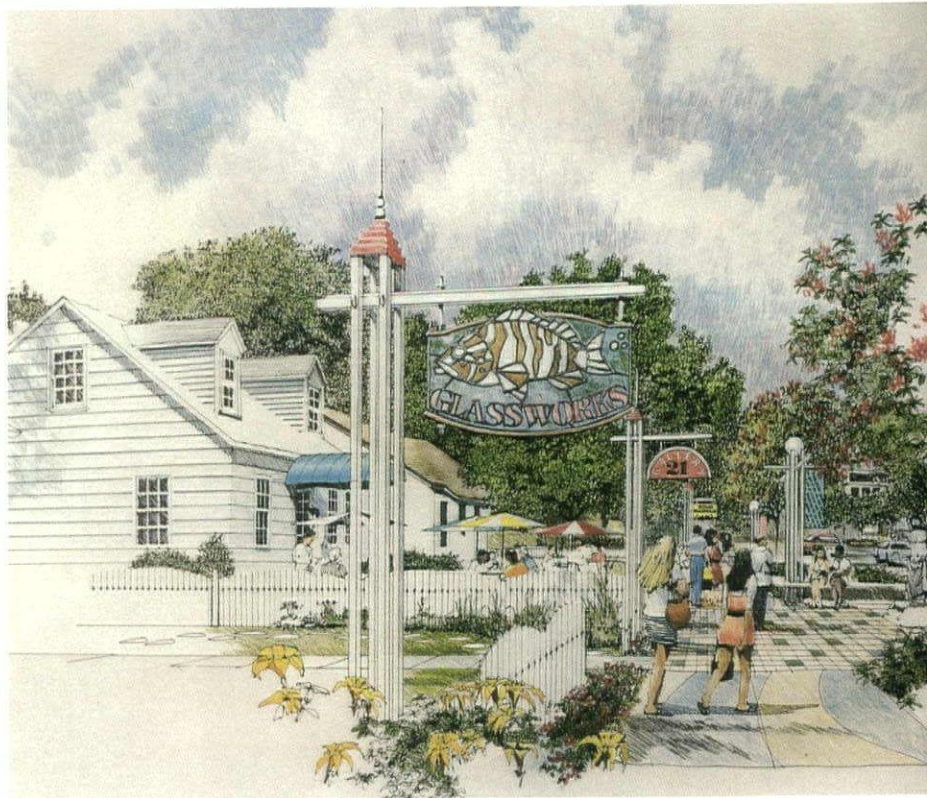


**Architect:** Robert M. Gurney, AIA, Alexandria  
**Owner:** L. Peter Farkas  
**Contractor:** L. Peter Farkas  
**Interior Design:** Robert M. Gurney, AIA, and Therese Baron Gurney, ASID





- Gateway Zone
- New Retail Community
- Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvements



## Small Scale Streets

### Cottage Row

Most tourists arrive in Virginia Beach's resort area via I-44, the Norfolk/Virginia Beach Expressway. But because the highway empties abruptly into a four-lane road with a chaotic, unkempt character, the local business community believed serious work was needed to upgrade the image and create a vital commercial district. The architects recommended several planning and streetscape improvements to enhance the existing residential scale. Among the proposals were relocating utilities underground, eliminating on-street and driveway parking, converting existing parking lanes into

buffers planted with trees and shrubs, widening sidewalks, developing sign standards, and constructing a new landscaped gateway that announces one's arrival at the resort area. The jury strongly endorsed the plan, noting that such a process is far more desirable than trying to let such changes happen without planning and forethought. "It's a very compelling, believable solution to what I've got to say is a very tacky entrance to town," noted Shavaun Towers. "Spatially this approach starts to create a very different environment."

#### Architects:

Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co.,  
Norfolk (Wesley L. Page, AIA)

#### Client:

City of Virginia Beach Resort Area Advisory  
Commission (Tom Kyrus, Task Force Chairman)



# Virginia design forum II

In planning the makeup of the second Virginia Design Forum, which was held March 22-23 in Williamsburg, the organizers from the Design Committee of the Virginia Society AIA sought to assemble a slate of speakers with a broad array of professional interests and abilities. The thread that would tie them together was a theme. And, in this case, the theme was to be a discussion of the origins of form – be it the form of architecture, art, landscape, the city, or everyday objects. Speakers were invited to explore their own particular generators of form and then elaborate on how that fundamental intention was expressed in the finished product. The combination of personalities made for a rich mix of presentation and conversation that transported many architects to an ideal past, back to their early years of practice when the design of buildings was the primary concern of the workday – unfettered by the details of running the office, paying the bills, and scouting the next commission. Clearly the tone of the weekend was optimistic, led by Michael Hopkins' spirited outline of buildings from his London office that showed profound connections one to another. While several speakers emphasized the importance of place in creating a building, Hopkins embellished the idea with his own take on the profession and departed for a moment from characteristic British formality. "It's not just place – it's also about brief," he said. "For me, one of the challenges and enjoyments about being an architect is you have to deal with a fresh, new set of circumstances with each new building. And that's the real buzz about the job."

– Vernon Mays, Editor

## Form: Origin + Intent

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"Marilyn Monroe" © 1996 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

## Tom Armstrong

Tom Armstrong is director emeritus of the Whitney Museum of American Art and was inaugural director of the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, which opened in May 1994.

Out of the work of artists Frank Stella and Robert Rauschenberg came the response of a group of artists who realized after the second World War that the culture of this country was a dominant export. The culture of the country, they realized, represented something that should be dealt with. And so you had artists like Andy Warhol producing very bizarre objects. One of them was his hand-painted page from the *New York Mirror*, which happened to be about the tragic death of the patrons of the Atlanta Museum. They were killed in an airplane crash outside of Paris. Warhol, who was preoccupied by death all of his life,

In "Marilyn Monroe" (above), Andy Warhol took one of Hollywood's most unique images and reduced it to a mass-produced commodity through silkscreening.

wanted to take something that had presumably no artistic importance and make a work of art out of it. He wanted to reorder our thinking about what is a work of art. In his work, Warhol constantly took objects, took situations, and reordered our thinking about them. For instance, the Campbell soup carton stenciled by Warhol was made to look exactly like the carton in the grocery store. He took a familiar object, reproduced it exactly, and said: "I made it. It is a work of art." It's a Duchamp idea, but it's taken to another level.

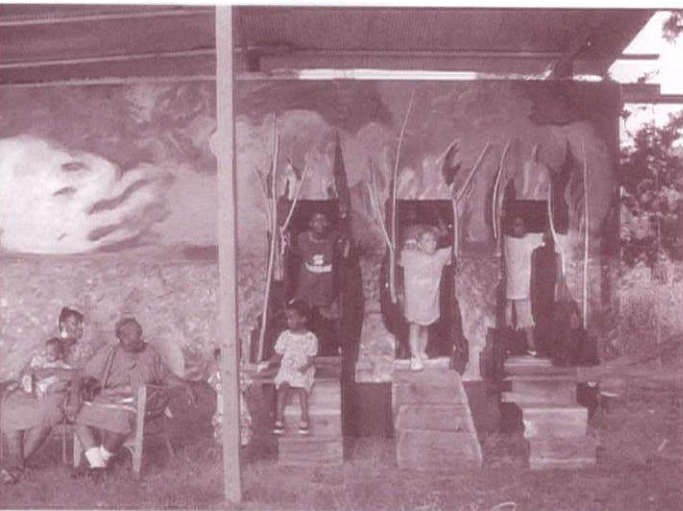
Warhol is the most difficult artist to understand, because he never told us in any kind of writing, in any kind of conversation, what he was thinking. And he was thinking in such difficult ways that you have a tendency to reject what was really going on. You sort of like it, but you don't give him credibility for the great concepts which went into his work.

I was going to show you a film by Warhol, but it takes five-and-a-half hours. And if you had sat here through it, you would have been among the first to do that. It's called "Sleep." It features John Giorno, a poet, and it's simply five hours of watching ... John ... sleep. What Warhol has done in these films, these motionless films, is taken a medium that moves — motion pictures — and made them still. He has taken all of the content out. This is an artist who eliminated content and, by eliminating content, he made the statement by virtue of the void. The boredom of this sort of thing became monumental. I mean, if you could last three hours, you waited for every heaving of the stomach. It was just incredible.

But Warhol had a tremendous impact in terms of reordering people's concepts of content. He took established art forms, he took our preconceived ideas about what they were meant to be, and totally reordered them. Look at *Interview* magazine, for instance. *Interview* is a magazine he started. It's about celebrities interviewing other celebrities. It was a fashionable, very superficial situation. But it was what people yearned to read. And it became the basis for a whole level of journalism in this country — *People* magazine, etcetera, etcetera. So you cannot forget this artist if you are studying painting of the 20th century, journalism of the 20th century, film making of the 20th century, or music — he was the great proponent of The Velvet Underground, this very early rock group.

Warhol brought two things into the formal aspects of art. One is photography. He took photography and brought it into the realm of fine art. He took public photographs of Jacqueline Kennedy from the press and had silkscreens made out of them, and made the paintings that are on the wall of the Warhol museum today. The point is that into fine art came another discipline — photography — and a commercial way of doing things, which is silkscreening. It was picked up immediately by Rauschenberg and other artists. What I'm trying to show you is how artists adopt a direction from something that precedes them and then use it in a new way. If they're really important, if they really have "got the stuff," they then can take it another step.





L. David Fox

# Samuel Mockbee

Samuel Mockbee, FAIA, is a principal of Mockbee-Coker Architects in Canton, Mississippi, and professor of architecture at Auburn University. He is director of the design/build Rural Studio, dedicated to finding solutions to restore fragile and poverty-stricken cultures.

Some years ago, I was driving outside of my home town of Meridian, Mississippi. It was a dirt road and I had to stop, because a road grader was working. To kill some time, I walked around a nearby graveyard in the country. I came upon the grave of James Chaney. Now James Chaney was one of the three civil rights workers who was killed in 1964. He'd be a man about my age today. But, more importantly, I have now come to believe he represents the true heroes of the South. He

defines who I am and who I am not. I consider him a hero by the fact that he had the courage to risk his life and accept responsibility. His courage, I think, is a gift to me and a gift to all of us. As architects, we're also given this responsibility, though it's certainly much more passive than it was for James Chaney. But the question for us is the same as it was for him: Do you have the courage to make your gift count for something? Do you have the courage to make your presence felt on this earth?

Architects need to step over the threshold of justice and address the true needs of neglected American families – in particular, the needs of children. Of all Southerners, young children are the most likely to be living in poverty. These children come of age without any vision of how to rescue themselves from the curse of poverty. To them, physical poverty is not an abstraction. But, for a moment, imagine that it's a condition from which we may draw enlightenment in a very practical way.

The purpose of my placing these murals in the context of Miss Baldwin's home in Sheridan, Mississippi, was to approach her neglected world directly through art. The intent was to be as evocative as possible, in order to make both the life experience of Miss Baldwin, and our limited understanding of it, accessible to a stranger. I believe if you are to broaden your views, you must first see something. The murals I placed in her yard are somewhere between easel painting and architecture – I'm not really sure how to classify them. The intent is to seduce the viewer to enter this work both mentally and physically, to step over a threshold of misunderstood values. These things are trying to establish a discourse among those of us who become mentally or morally stalled in our modern obligations. These families have no prospects of such obligations.

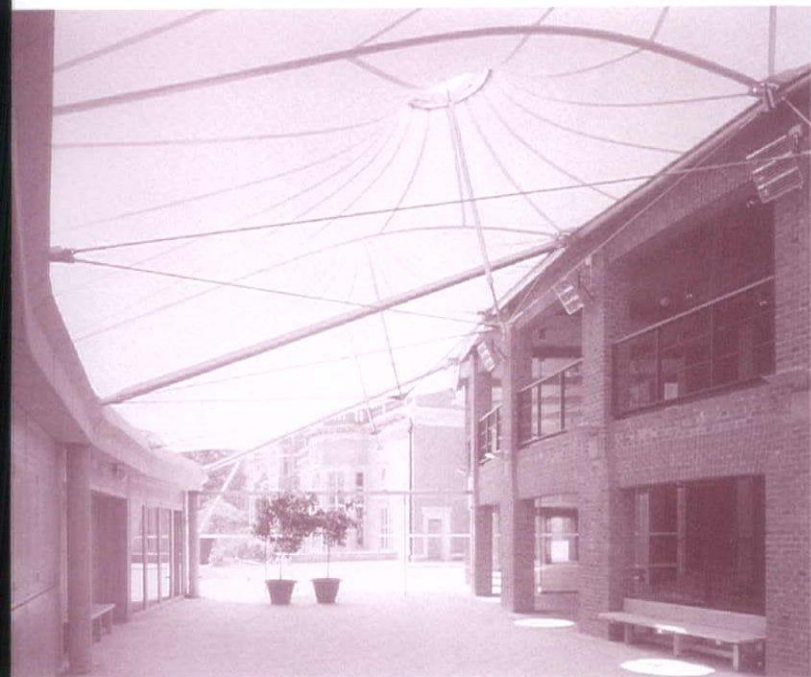
But this is by no means an attempt to aestheticize poverty. These things are about stepping across a social impasse to an honesty that refuses to gloss over the facts. Not just the facts of hardship, faced each day, but also the facts of the spiritual strength of Miss Baldwin's family. It's about honesty that permits differences to exist side-by-side with great tolerance and respect. Poverty concerns the writer, and other artists who have lived through it. It can also create an opportunity, even for a comparatively advantaged architect, to step into the opening – to experience the simple and the actual, rather than the grand and ostentatious. It's not about the greatness of architecture, it's about the goodness of architecture. It's not about your passion, it's about your compassion.

So the murals are part of Miss Baldwin's home in order to help rebuild an integrity that makes deceit and evasion impossible. And also to pay homage to a life. Miss Baldwin's daughter, Bertha, has had three children by one man and two by another man. During the three years that I have known this second man, he remains aloof and independent. He shows up only so often to help with plumbing or cutting wood. One of these paintings is based on my trying to understand his circumstances. Even though I haven't got to really know him, I do know that I like him. And I believe that he possesses an accurate sense of his world. He understands the limitations imposed on him by us.

I believe that it is the fear of knowing this man that continues to divert our attention away from having any real human contact and any real understanding of poverty. I'm the first to admit that architecture won't begin to alleviate all social wrongs, but what is necessary is the willingness to seek solutions to poverty in its own context, not outside it. What is required is the replacement of abstract opinions with knowledge based on real human contact.

Sam Mockbee's murals for Miss Baldwin (above) grew out of his attempt to understand her life experience and convey it to others.





# Michael Hopkins

Sir Michael Hopkins was the 1994 joint winner of the RIBA Royal Gold Medal along with his wife and partner Patty. Hopkins studied at the Architectural Association in London under Peter Smithson and later worked in the office of Sir Norman Foster.

*Hopkins' design for the Glyndebourne Opera House (these pages) is both a response to a particular place and an exercise in devising a new architecture.*

I'm going to talk about the Opera House at Glyndebourne, which we completed quite recently. When I talk about our work I keep going back, referencing earlier buildings, but it's how we work. We move backwards and forwards, looking back to an old one to find an idea and then take it forward again. And I want to show you how the parti for the Glyndebourne building grew out of the organization of the Schlumberger project, our Research Center in Cambridge.

Firstly the similarities. Glyndebourne, like Schlumberger, had a detailed and complex brief with the principal activities and many supporting features. Whereas at Schlumberger, the brief could have been interpreted in many ways, we chose to centralize the main activity along one axis to simplify the complexity. At Glyndebourne, we have an opera house which starts with a fixed, functional relationship between the stage and the auditorium. The stage has to be in the middle of the auditorium. And, from there, you reinforce it on either side with side stages and the scenery store behind it. At Glyndebourne, we grasped this basic organization and reinforced it, pushing everything in support. Following the Schlumberger concept, the small-scale cellular spaces occupied every day by people – the studios, work rooms, offices, and dressing rooms – are put around the outside overlooking the countryside.

In section, the main difference is that at Schlumberger, we sought to let as much light as possible into the middle, which is why we used big membrane structures. Whereas at Glyndebourne, we needed mass to exclude both light and external sound, as well as to eliminate vibration and structure-borne sound. So we wanted a heavy building. And this, of course, led us to consider heavier, denser materials. And it's in the materials used that Glyndebourne is to look quite different than our building at Schlumberger.

Although led by this functional difference, it is given a specific direction by the site context. Schlumberger was in the middle of a 17-acre field. On the other hand, at Glyndebourne, we are in the fold of the Sussex countryside on a site which has been inhabited for at least 500 years, surrounded by a group of much-loved buildings in brick and bits of stone. There we used the opportunity of the functional requirement for mass and the site context to explore an architecture of brick. The context was used as a tool to generate a way forward, rather than from any belief that it was necessary to match, in order to fit in.

Dealing with the siting of the Glyndebourne building, we made three specific moves. We reused the site of the old building to avoid extending the developed area. Then we took the foyers around the garden side, where people naturally want to be – Glyndebourne is an opera house in the country, it runs a well-known summer season and people come from London in their dinner jackets. The gardens are a very important part of it. Then we used the existing buildings around the opera house, which is a very massive thing, to mediate between the inherent mass of the opera house and the surrounding countryside.

In the context of scale, we then placed the rooms which are occupied every day around the central core of the opera house, not only so that they should have light and air, but to use the smaller scale of these spaces to mediate between the large, windowless volumes of the opera house and surrounding domestic buildings.

Now, dealing with materials – we decided to build in brick, just like that, because it was heavy. But how do you make a brick architecture? It sounds a silly question. People have been doing it for centuries, but we'd only laid our first bricks a few years before. And I was the only person in the office at that point who had a book on proper brickwork technology. It's a completely lost skill. But we reasoned that if we were going to start a completely new building, we had to invent our own brick architecture. And it had to be a contemporary way of doing it, which for us meant putting the materi-



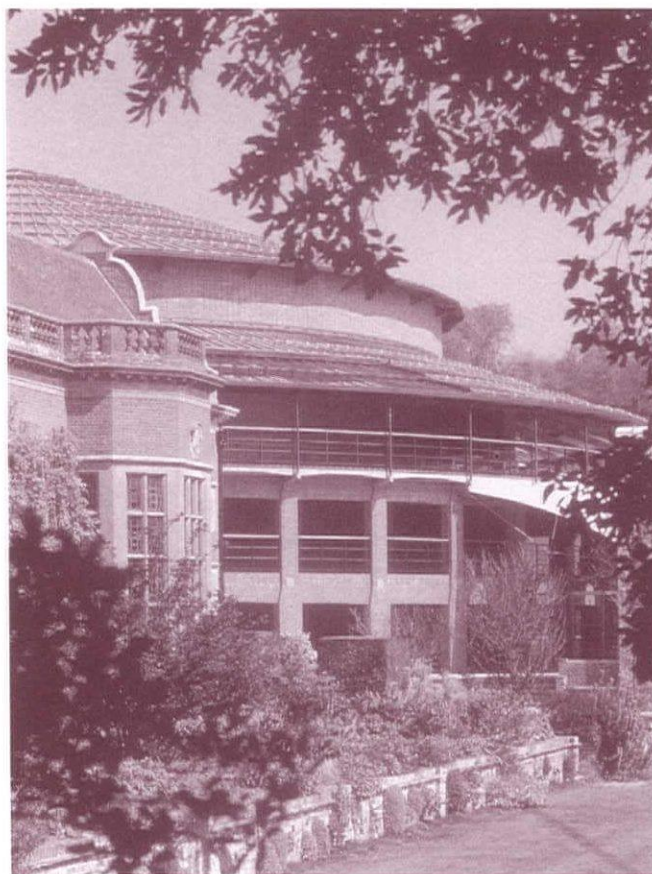
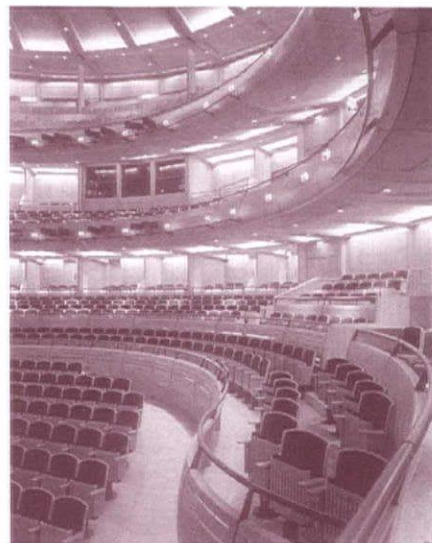
al under greater stress and seeing how much wall could be carved away, yet leaving just enough brick to hold up the building. Just enough brick – and this is important – to feel its “brickyness.”

At Glyndebourne, the immediate inspiration was Louis Kahn’s Exeter Library, where he uses a brick wall and makes it work in a Modern way, using this same reducing-pier technique with the loads getting lighter at the top and shallow-camber arches, making the brickwork almost a skeletal frame. So when we came to Glyndebourne we built a load-bearing wall out of a Hampshire brick and we used imperial sizes, as opposed to the new metric sizes, because they make a better-shape brick. We used shallow-cambered arches spanning nearly three meters, which is pushing arches. The important thing to note here is that the openings are larger than the surrounding structure, so it’s going in the direction I wanted to go.

The roof is a large span sitting on a brick drum. We didn’t use a steel frame at Glyndebourne because we needed a relatively heavy roof for acoustic reasons, and the auditorium itself has a double structure, with the visible lower surface being in beautifully made precast concrete. We developed a horseshoe-shaped auditorium, because it makes an intimate shape. But yet it needs to be quite a big drum in order to create enough volume for there to be a good acoustic. We were encouraged by our acoustic consultant to think of this as a musical instrument in its own right, a columnar space surrounded by the audience with their ears on the edge of this drum, as were earlier 18th and 19th century opera houses.

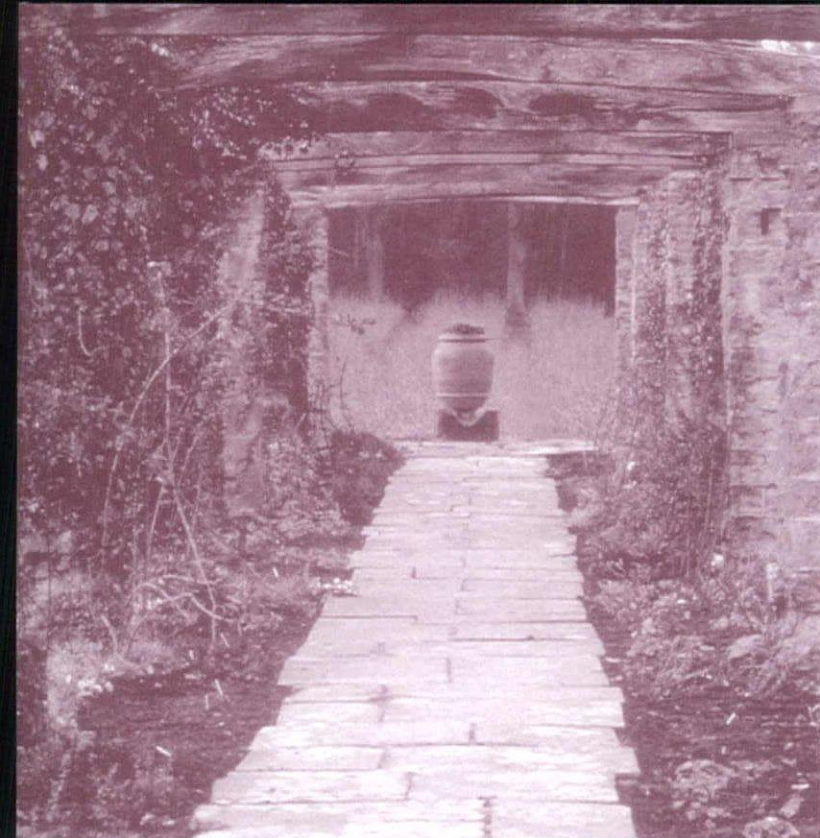
Then we decided to fit out the auditorium in wood. This was an easy decision in a way, because the old Glyndebourne had been fitted out in wood. And they liked that. It has the right resonance for music, but we didn’t want it to be “executive” joinery. We wanted it to be more Puritanical. There were two sources of inspiration for the materials we were to use. First was the concert hall at Snape in England, which was converted from a 19th century industrial building that had a simple brick-and-wood interior. This was always in our mind when thinking about Glyndebourne. Then by chance we found in Parma, Italy, the Teatro Farnese, which is a great 16th century brick palace arsenal. It was fitted out with a great Renaissance horseshoe theater, itself rather like an elaborate stage set. At one time, it had an elaborately painted ceiling. Now, through the course of time, it is just a plain pine interior of the basic construction. And it positively glows, it has this marvelously warm interior. Then we discovered a source of reclaimed pitch pine – not dissimilar from a Douglas fir – from 19th century warehouses. And this was to be the material we used. It was over 100 years old, very stable, with this marvelously warm color. And it’s only finished with an invisible fire retardant. Finding that fire retardant, so it didn’t spoil the quality of the wood, was perhaps the most difficult part. Then just a light wax.

The curve on the inside of the auditorium is then used to generate the geometry of the rest of the building. And this gives a clarity to the whole building. The horseshoe geometry is turned over to enclose the scenery store at the back of the building, which of course isn’t entirely fixed functionally in its shape, so we can make it a horseshoe. We then surround the whole of the working area, stages, backstage, and auditorium with a continuous route at each level, part of which at the foyer end is open to the audience. The curve – always with the large accommodation on the inside and the ancillary accommodation and rooms on the outside – gives you a great deal of information about where you are in the opera house. Anybody who has been backstage at a large opera house or theater will know how claustrophobic and confusing the intricacies of the theater are. But through this simple device, by putting the curve in there, you always have a clear indication where you are in this otherwise quite complex building.



Photos: Martin Charles





Sam Abell from *The Inward Garden*

# Julie Moir Messervy

## Archetypal Places:

- The Sea
- The Cave
- The Harbor
- The Promontory
- The Island
- The Mountain
- The Sky

*The trellis at Little Thakeham (above) in Sussex, England, is a hybrid of two garden elements: enclosure and threshold.*

Julie Moir Messervy, trained in architecture and urban design, is a Boston garden designer whose work with Japanese garden master Kinsaku Nakane has informed her extensive work in garden design. She is the author of the recent book *The Inward Garden* and its highly acclaimed predecessor, *Contemplative Gardens*.

One thing that you need to do in creating the inward garden is to understand the primary elements of all gardens. This gives us a set of images from which to operate. Every garden basically has the same set of elements that come from nature and, on some level, grow out of what I believe are archetypal places. An interior courtyard garden and the huge exterior stroll garden have the same basic elements. Let me explain what they are.

The first element of an inward garden is a cosmic tree. When I say that word, what comes to mind? A huge beech tree? A Louisiana live oak? A catalpa? On some level, almost every tree is a cosmic tree, but maybe some of the best ones have majestic size, wonderful form, or incredible bark—maybe even weird burls. And every garden could use a sacred grove. The grove brings to mind the image of being immersed in the land into your garden. It's like the sea. The feeling of being immersed in a bamboo grove is a pretty wonderful experience, if you've ever had it. A grove can be a live oak alley on a Mississippi plantation. Or it can be an orchard, which is a kind of formal grove.

The hut is the cave of our gardens. I use the word "hut" because it really gives the right image for what garden architecture is. It's often primitive—made of simple, rough materials. It's often penetrable by the elements. It's usually an intimate place. The hut needs to be located in remote places in the garden, where you can get away from everybody. You can see out but no one can see you. There are many examples: the teahouse in a Japanese garden or the little known-but-beautiful bean arbor at Monticello.

The enclosure in the garden suggests the archetype of the harbor. It's the little place in English gardens surrounded by 15-foot hedges. Enclosures are terribly important to gardens, and we don't use them enough in America. In Japan it's such a finely developed art—using woven bamboo, which is permeable so that you have a sense of the beyond, but you're still within the established frame.

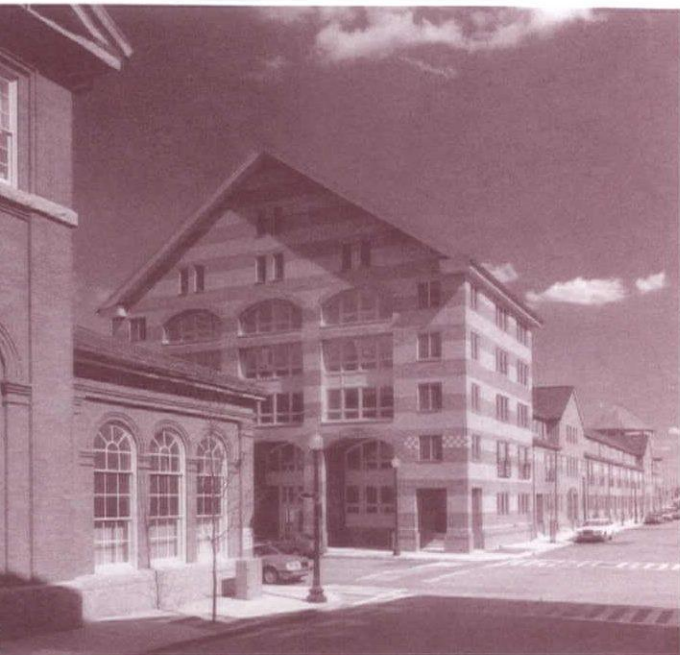
Thresholds are a part of gardens as they are a part of architecture. It's the place where you stop and pause and look. It's the place where you're not inside and you're not outside—the transition between up and down, between outside and inside, between landscape and garden. It relates to the promontory. It is the place where you are perched "out over" but not quite "in" the water or land. When you think about the threshold in that way, the terrace becomes that transition zone between landscape and building. The balcony is a promontory that's both inside and outside. The gateway is a kind of threshold, as is the bridge. It's subtle, but very important, in the choreography of the garden.

The meadow is the floor of our garden. This is where we get back to the island archetype. What is that experience? Imagine being in a poppy field: you want to lie back and look up at the sky. It's an archetypal experience. When we see a field, it's what we want to feel again and again. There are various kinds of "meadowy" fields. There's obviously grass—which is a very ornamental form of meadow. And the dell is another image of a meadow, but a shady place that has moss or ivy.

The high place in the garden is the mount, a high bridge where you get up and look down. The vertical place in the landscape is the focal point. It's the place you want to climb up to in your mind. So any vertical object in a garden allows your mind, if not your body, to rise up and look over the landscape.

Finally, water is an essential garden element—like a sacred spring. The spring can come in various forms, a still pool or water that flows. It makes sound. It has fantastic thermal and aural qualities. It blocks out noise. Paley Park in New York is one of the most brilliant examples of simple garden architecture, where a water wall blocks the sounds of the city and acts as a focal point at the same time. Water is related to the archetype of sky. The reflective qualities of water brings the sky into your garden. Almost nothing else can, unless you have a huge view overlooking the sky. At least in New England, getting that reflection into water is one way of bringing the sky into the experience of the garden.





Steve Rosenthal

## William Rawn

**William Rawn, FAIA, is principal of William Rawn Associates of Boston and a highly regarded urban designer. His firm has received national awards from the AIA for four consecutive years, including a 1996 Honor Award for the West Main Street Corridor Study in Charlottesville.**

**A**s architects, we agree that city making is an art form. As one looks at the great cities of the world or even the great cities of this country, whether it is Paris or Barcelona or San Francisco, or wonderful smaller towns such as Alexandria, Edgartown, or St. Tropez, the design of cities represents the confluence of art and policy. I think in 20th century American cities like Los Angeles or Phoenix or Atlanta, or newer edge cities like Tysons Corner, there is a sense that we have lost our standing, lost our balance. I want to talk about that balance.

Some have accurately described the chaos, the helter-skelter diversity of the city. They seek to celebrate that disjointed quality. They talk about constantly changing cinematic form and maybe they would build buildings very big. Instead, I choose to pursue city-making at a much more human scale. Philosophically, it is about coming together. It is about mutual exchange. It is about black and white, young and old, rubbing shoulders and creating excitement.

I want to explore the relationship of city and form. And I would raise the question: Can there be an architecture formally based on city making ideas? I'd like to explore the architecture of city making at that fascinating place where the water meets the city – a particular edge condition, if you will.

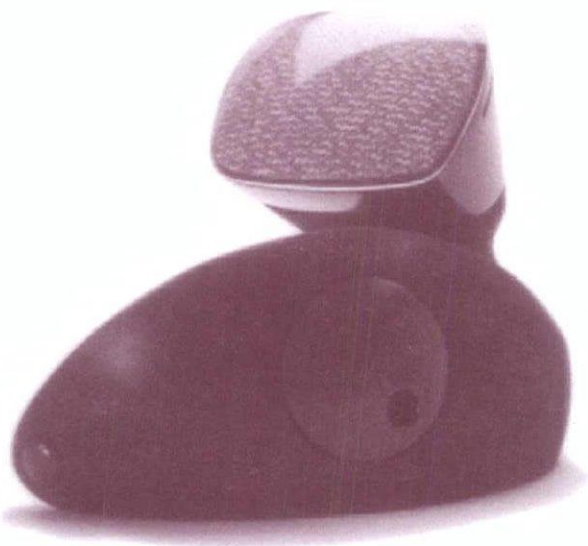
Where the city meets the water, let me ask: Is it where the city – the ordered, the patterned, the usually rectilinear city – meets the natural, organic, meandering edges of the water? Or is it where the contiguous, enigmatic, the irrational, unpredictable city meets the continuous, linear, and generally fixed edge of the water? These inherent ambiguities and these fundamental choices generate design choices that excite the architect. Herman Melville, in describing Manhattan in the first pages of *Moby Dick*, stated: "There now is your insular city of the Manhattos, belted around by wharves as Indian isles by coral reefs. Right and left the city streets take you waterward. What do you see? Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands and thousands of mortal men fixed at ocean revery. Here come more crowds pacing straight for the water and seemingly down to the ground. Nothing will contempt them but the extremest limit of the land. They must get just as high near the water as they possibly can without falling in and there they stand – miles of them – inlanders all, they come from lanes and alleys, streets and avenues, north, east, south and west, yet here they all unite."

That is a very powerful architectural statement. It is about the edge, but it is also about those streets that come down to the edge – those streets that gather the people of the community. It is clear to me that cities – and certainly this state is full of cities with relationships to waterways – 18th and 19th century cities have the advantage of being located on waterways. It generates special qualities of open space, ambience, tranquility, and excitement. And it gives those cities a remarkable advantage vis-a-vis their suburbs, which tend to be out in the fields without that relationship to the water. The waterfront is a place of great economic potential. And it is about much more than building festival marketplaces. We have to recognize that it is not about a single building on the waterfront, but about a city which organizes itself to relate completely to the water.

Thus there are four elements that I think of in terms of city-making at the water's edge. One is the continuous, or nearly continuous, path along the edge of the water and parallel to it. Second is the creation or improvement of the main street of the district. Usually there is a main street perpendicular to that waterfront, or parallel to it, that needs to generate strength if the area between that main street and the water is to have strength and identity. A third is the question of connector streets, the streets that connect that main street to the water or connects the life blood of the city to the water. You can't just put something on the water's edge and think it's going to survive; it must be connected to the life blood of the city. And fourth is about building patterns that seem appropriate.

William Rawn Associates' affordable housing at Charlestown Navy Yard (above) establishes the link between a main street and the waterfront.





## Peter Stathis

Peter Stathis is Chair of the 3-D Design Department at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. He is the founder of Virtual Studio, through which he provides services in the areas of consumer electronics, residential and contract furniture, and lighting.

The shift from industrial design to post-industrial design is a symptom of "hyperinformation" and, with it, our corresponding transformation from a society that produces hard, material goods to one that produces soft, immaterial ones. This shift is being taken by many educators and practitioners to mean that software is omnipotent and, therefore, that hardware is inconsequential.

But by breaking free of both time-worn use scenarios and traditional paradigms of "product," designers of consumer products can transcend their role as mere stylists.

One of Stathis's prototype designs is Satori (above), a personal TV that, when touched, automatically turns its screen up toward the viewer.

Designers can begin to conceptualize "hyperproducts" with multi-sensory qualities such as brightness, thinness, instantaneity, and flexibility. Designers can begin to conceptualize a creative participatory process beyond today's rules-based game, a process that is externalized, customizable, and relaxed. Designers can begin to conceptualize new play tools and work tools for today's hyperinformational tribes and their accelerated, fluid lifestyles.

Abraham Moles, for one, described how any immaterial culture will be heavily materialized, because even the most immaterial goods are linked to the telemechanical infrastructure that produces assigns, and controls those goods. To succeed in this arena, hardware designers must develop an awareness of the advancing extension of human perceptual abilities.

Ezio Manzini, author of *The Material of Invention*, reassures us that there will always be products made of granite, bronze, and oak. Today, however, traditional manufacturing techniques have collided with immateriality and multiple representations to the point where an image is no longer a fragile copy, but an object in itself. Current technology has attained such a capacity for manipulation that we now need a new understanding of traditional design criteria such as form and function. So, too, the static experience of our space-time environment is being invalidated – and is pointing to a far more varied and expansive system of hyperproduct possibilities.

Since the early 1980s, the 3-D Studio at Cranbrook has been contextualizing enigmatic, technological objects within a skin of textual information. Early experiments in product semantics showed that the same techniques taking place in the realm of communications must be employed to decodify emergent hyperproduct designs. In their most potent form, iconographic information was distributed over the surface of these hyperproducts to offer clues as to how they work, and what cultural role they might play.

In virtual reality, every product is a shimmering perfect image filmed from some "ideal" model where the participant is able to move and look about much like we do in the real world. In that case, the technology becomes an extension of human sensory systems. The move from reality to "virtuality" represents a shift from symbolic representation to absolute simulation. It is no longer a picture being viewed, but a place being visited. All of this begins to make immateriality "real" – a compelling experience built by merging digitized sight, sound, and tactility. Critic Michael Sorkin's prediction that we are "the last generation that will enjoy (or suffer) nonvirtual subjectivity" asserts that virtual reality technologies are unavoidable and unretractable. So we must acknowledge a world where simulated mathematical chairs are good enough to sit in and where virtual bullets are real enough to kill.

Today, much of what is made is conceived of mainly as something to photograph or film, instead of something to be physically experienced. We perceive only a limited materiality, one circumscribed by the two dimensions of the cathode screen and the printed page. Decades ago, artist Richard Artschwager signaled the beginning of this condition by incorporating wood-grain Formica into his sculptures. The sculpture, he said, looked "as if wood had passed through it, as if the thing only half existed" and that, due to the medium, each sculpture was both a picture of something and a thing in itself. His work challenges designers of hyperproducts to consider the paradoxical question: What happens when you are looking at "it," when all the time "it" might not even be there?

Traditional oppositions between real and artificial are not adequate for understanding the new hyperinformateriality. I believe we must fantasize the tools and scenarios that allow people to simultaneously live both on and in the [hyper]natural, [tele]physical world surrounding them. But instead of viewing this as a problem to solve, designers see it as a magic to occupy.



Gradually, over the span of 15 years, this residential garden in the heart of historic Annapolis has taken shape. From the beginning of his involvement, landscape architect Jay Graham was charged with increasing the usable space on the lot, which had only a tiny rear yard. But because the house sits 85 feet from the street, he gained that space by carving a private family garden out of part of the front yard. The strategy was a good fit for the Italian theme that the owners wanted to create. Graham established a strong axis to lend order to the various parts of the garden, with repetitive elements placed to draw the eye along the axis. A final layer of architectural pieces was added to define the exterior space.

Already an asset to the property, the pool occupies the center of the main axis extending toward the street. Graham widened the terrace that joins the house and garden and moved the stairs to clarify circulation and sitting areas. Vines create a lush privacy screen behind a row of white columns. The owners' request for fruiting plants was satisfied by placing an orchard in front of the house. This layer of vegetation, adding depth to the landscape, now frames the house with dwarf trees in a grid near the street.

"It's a very elegant solution reusing a number of existing elements and making them into a coherent vocabulary over time," said Shavaun Towers. "And I think what's happened is the spaces are made better spaces and the flow from one to another happens in a way that's modulated with a lot of care."



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## *Nature in the City*

### **Stoner Residence Garden**



Photos: Pearson Photography

**Landscape Architects:**

Graham Landscape Architecture, Annapolis, Md.  
(Jay Graham, ASLA)

**Owners:**

Tom and Kitty Stoner

**Landscape Contractor:**

Pully Landscaping, Inc.



Elegance is not to be taken for granted in the nation's capital, as attested to by the mundane three-story rowhouse that architect Robert Gurney first encountered on Capitol Hill. The original house, built in 1990, was a poorly organized hodgepodge of rooms. Bland carpeted floors and eight-foot ceilings contributed further to the overwhelming impression of ordinariness.

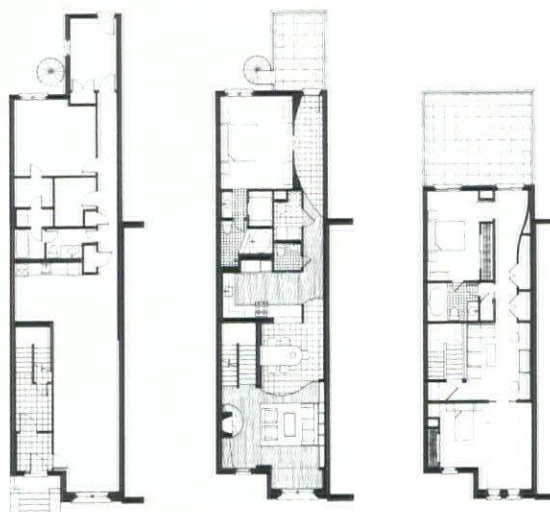
Gurney's design solution involved opening the space within the house while creating visually distinct areas for living, dining, and cooking. He raised the living room ceiling to nine feet by removing twelve inches of plenum space beneath the second-floor structure. Maple-and-sandblasted-glass cabinetry on the west wall further enriches the space. On the east wall, Gurney combined the maple cabinetry and fireplace as a single element. In the narrow dining room, a glass-and-steel table is inset into the canted west wall. And the open kitchen was enlarged by supplementing and relocating existing cabinetry to provide a more functional workspace. Throughout the house, maple flooring, limestone flooring, and maple cabinetry are consistently used to define space.

"The design harmonizes the existing and new elements," said Tai Soo Kim. "And I think in very constrained spaces they did a very nice job of creating different zones by manipulating the floor plane and the ceiling very subtly," added Shavaun Towers.



## *Dressed For the Occasion*

### Tanner/Mellos Residence



Ground Floor Plan

First Floor Plan

Second Floor Plan



**Architect:**

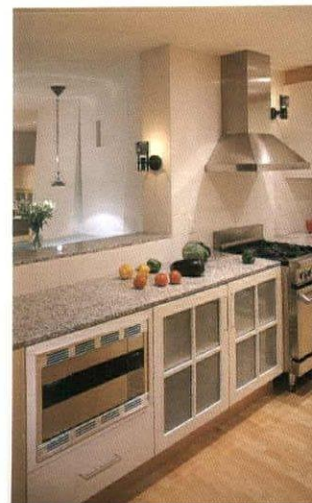
Robert M. Gurney, AIA, Alexandria (Robert M. Gurney, AIA, and Therese Baron Gurney, ASID, designers)

**Owners:**

Stephen Tanner & Sophia Mellos

**Construction Manager:**

Terry Busby





**D**iggs Town, home to more than 1200 residents in 428 apartments, suffered the problems of many low-income housing projects – physical deterioration, crime, and rampant drug trafficking in the open spaces between buildings. To make the Norfolk community more like a neighborhood than a warehouse for people, the architects created a landscape program that delivered more than just cosmetic improvements. First they carved the large superblock plan into smaller pieces by building new streets, which provided a numbered address for each unit and created parking spaces near each dwelling. New picket fences give definition to individual back yards, and these are grouped to create small clusters or villages within the larger neighborhood. Front porches were added as outdoor living areas, which should encourage individuality as each one is furnished and provide an arena for tenants to forge community bonds. The fences, in addition, give residents control over outdoor areas that were previously claimed by gangs, offering safer areas for children to play. Overall, the modest changes have made for big improvements in the residents' quality of life.

"I think the creation of several layers of semipublic space into an exterior private space, which this housing lacked before, is what really



Paul Rocheleau

## *Eyes on the* Street

### Diggs Town Revitalization

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makes it succeed on a social basis. It certainly does it visually," said Shavaun Towers.

"This type of solution is talked about a lot," added Tai Soo Kim, "but here I see the realization of this porch and front yard and street and people sitting out on the porch and beautifying their front garden. It's a good example of what can be done with public housing."



**Architects:**

CMSS Architects, Virginia Beach,  
with UDA Architects, Pittsburgh

**Owner:**

Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority

**General Contractor:**

CBC Enterprises, Inc.





## *Lay of the Land*

### **Arlington National Cemetery Maintenance Complex**



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**D**ue to the historical significance of Arlington National Cemetery, the construction of any new structure is rare – and subject to great scrutiny. In this case, a badly needed maintenance building for the facilities staff was approved for placement on the only remaining ground not used for interment.

The design solution provides a clear separation between the quiet and contemplative world of the ceremonial grounds and the mundane world of backhoes and trucks, while unobtrusively fitting into the landscape. The building blends into the site with a rubble-stone garden wall – similar to the perimeter stone wall at the boundary of the cemetery – as a continuous backdrop for the ceremonial grounds. Architectural forms, details, and changes in materials are kept to a minimum on the side facing the cemetery. Grass berms form ramparts against the



stone wall, and a series of identical pavilions with low-sloped roofs rise above it. In addition, the pavilions' repetition establishes a gentle rhythm of roof forms above the linear garden wall, while the building's functional and utilitarian side faces inward to a sunken work yard.

"It's an unusually site-sympathetic solution, carefully worked out and landscaped with a good deal of design panache for a very difficult program," observed Harold Roth. "The service areas are well-concealed in this courtyard. It's just a very accomplished piece of work." Noted Tai Soo Kim: "From the cemetery you really don't see a lot of buildings. What you see is roof lines. And the combination of materials is very strong."

**Architects:** KressCox Associates, Washington, D.C.  
**Owner:** Arlington National Cemetery  
**Landscape Architects:** Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc.  
**General Contractor:** John C. Grimberg Company, Inc.

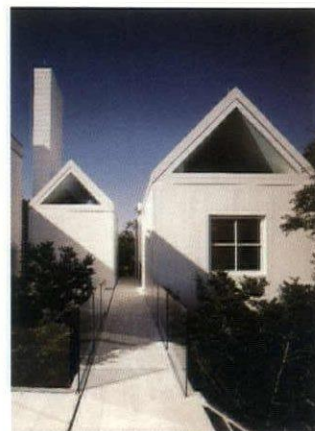


## *Solace in the Trees*

### McKinney Residence

**P**rotected and reinforced by the root systems of 20 ancient live oak trees, the site for this house along North Carolina's Outer Banks is a seagrass hillock 50 feet above sea level. Dominant among the owner's requirements was the preservation not only of the dune, but of every single tree on the site. The main views of the house focus on the savanna, the vast 3,000-acre wetland to the west. Views toward the Atlantic are deliberately secondary. But to

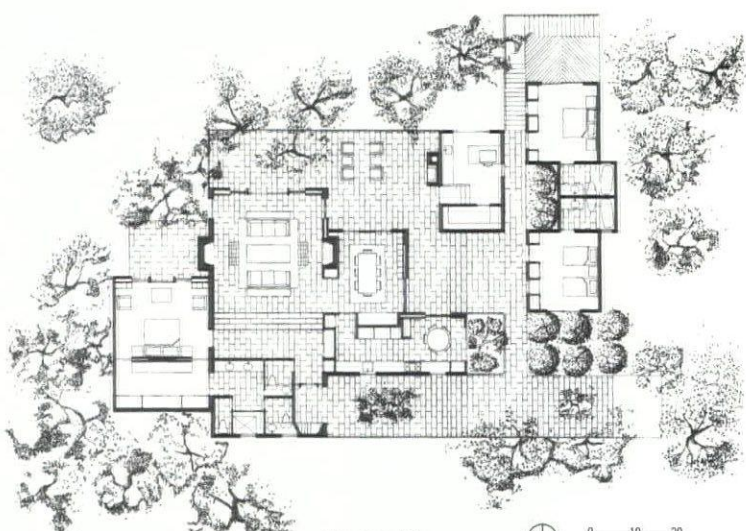
Photos: Robert Lautman



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emphasize the views, the house interiors are minimally detailed; there are no baseboards, moldings, or casings inside. Instead, each room is presented as pure form. Though they vary in size, the rooms are handled similarly with white walls, peaked ceilings, sliding glass doors that open to exterior decks, and travertine floors.

Shavaun Towers noted: "In this house, you can't separate the inside from the outside from the planning, because it is all one. And here so many of the circulation spaces are exterior rooms. What I find fascinating is that it is all, in fact, perched on a platform and yet the use of the stone inside and outside is very ambiguous. You really float in the trees, and yet you are floating on a stone platform."



First Floor Plan



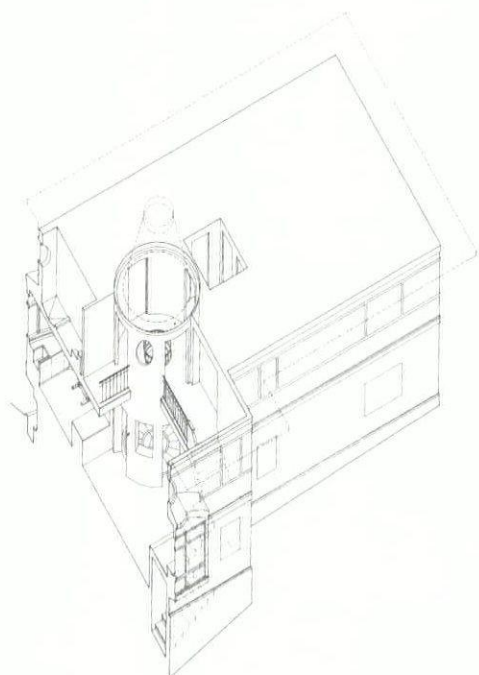
**Architect:** Hugh Newell Jacobsen, FAIA  
**Owners:** Mr. and Mrs. Charles McKinney  
**Contractor:** Clancy & Theys Construction Co.





## *Retreat to Nature*

### **Green Top**



**Architects:**

**Owners:**

**Contractor:**

Rixey-Rixey Architects, Washington, D.C.

Nancy and Wilson Coudon

Gruver & Cooley Builders

Stepped back from its suburban cul-de-sac frontage and nestled in trees across a natural ridge, this 5,000-square-foot house on land adjacent to Maryland National Capital Park feels like a retreat in the wilderness. Visitors approach the house, known as Green Top, along a stone drive which meanders through mature trees, then draw closer along an oblique pathway. They enter the house and encounter the main event: a tall narrow cylinder that gathers and reorients them into a central two-story dining room. Located in the literal center of the plan, the dining room is bracketed on the south wall by a massive stair. This loftlike open space provides a connection for virtually all of the public and private areas on two floors of the house.

The owners, an ecology-minded working couple with two teenage children, asked for a house that included many and varied recreation and work areas, a terrace for entertaining friends and enjoying the site's natural attributes, a large kitchen and dining room, and four bedrooms.



Most important to them, however, were two things: an open relationship between the main living spaces and a sensitive response to the site.

"Though we are primarily looking at the interiors, the entire project is beautifully designed," said Harold Roth. "It's a wonderful contextual house that has a lot of historic references. And it certainly looks like it belongs in the place — in Maryland. The rotunda concept is the generator of the interior space and circulation system. It's really the heart of the whole organization of the house. It's highly resolved and exquisite without being pretentious." Shavaun Towers noted that the effort to work the house into the hillside of a very difficult, steep site worked to advantage to create a distinct entry. "It's that entry and the solution to that problem that starts to generate the interior solution," she observed.

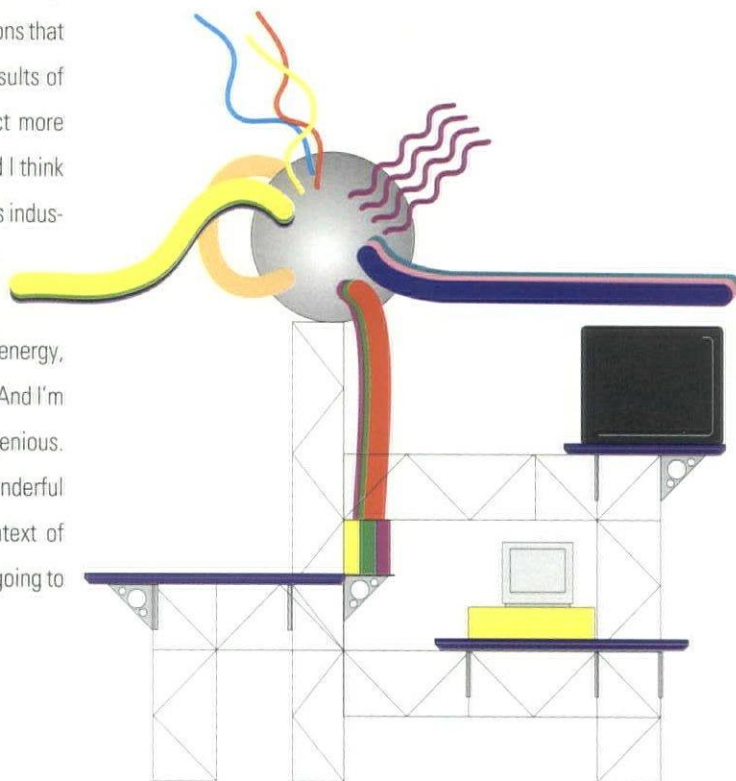




## One *Solution* to Pollution

### Air Quality Exhibit

Formality stops at the door of Richmond's Math & Science Center, where a former classroom takes on a new life as the DuPont Air Quality Simulation Center. Eight custom-designed workstations allow students to investigate the causes and effects of air pollution in a setting that touches on real world activities. The impact of transportation, burning, material production, and natural events are interpreted through stations that explain causes of pollution. Other stations address the negative results of polluted air. A whimsical design approach helps make the subject more accessible to a wide range of students. "This is real fun design, and I think the spirit of the place is very well presented," noted Tai Soo Kim. "It's industrial design — the whole thing. There are many different colors and different materials — it's very difficult to put so many different things together and have them work well. That's what creates the sense of energy, without trying to be overly designed. It comes together so naturally. And I'm sure children really are enjoying it." Added Harold Roth: "It's ingenious. There's lots of whimsy, but a lot of serious issues are explored in a wonderful way. Important environmental issues are handled within the context of things that are very commonplace in the culture, so the public is not going to be put off by overly technical or complicated design."



**Designer:** Norbert Hamm  
**Owner:** Mathematics & Science Center  
**Fabricators:** Allen Display & Store Equipment, Inc. and Math & Science Center Staff



**Edith Wharton, *A House Full of Rooms: Architecture, Interiors and Gardens*.** By Theresa Craig. 208 pp. Illustrated. New York: The Monacelli Press. \$45.00 cloth.

Review by Douglas Greenwood

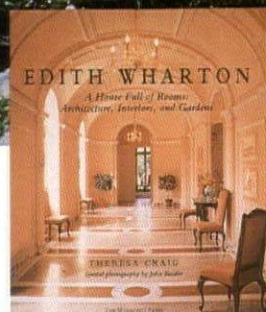
Edith Wharton is not easy to pigeonhole. Born into an affluent, upper-class American family, a number of academic types have tried to fit her into one box or another. But she was far too complex for that – debutante at 17, married at 23 (to Teddy Wharton, a flamboyant, vacuous Harvard grad who lived off an inheritance), published writer at 28, divorcee after 28 tumultuous years of marriage and more than one torrid extramarital affair, first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for literature, and the first to be awarded an honorary doctorate of letters, by Yale.

A somewhat novel approach is taken by Theresa Craig, an academic herself, in *Edith Wharton, A House Full of Rooms*. As Craig rightly points out, homes had a special place for Wharton, in part because of the lifestyle she had enjoyed since infancy. Born in New York City shortly after the start of the Civil War, Edith Newbold Jones knew Europe before she knew America. At age four, she left with her family for the splendors of Old World culture, taking up residence overseas not so much because it was fashionable, but because it was cheaper. American dollars stretched further abroad in the years just after the Civil War. Living for the next six years in Paris, Florence, and Rome, Edith and her father toured museums, ruins, cities, and churches whose indelible impressions would later appear in her writings. Returning to New York in 1872, the Joneses maintained their elegant townhouse in Manhattan and summered in Newport, Rhode Island, which by then had become a fashionable watering hole for wealthy New Yorkers and Bostonians seeking to escape summer in the city.

Newport also had become the place where the rich did their best to outdo their

equally well-heeled neighbors in the ostentatious “cottages” that popped up all the way down its storied Bellevue Avenue to the battered cliffs overlooking the ocean. It was not one of American architecture’s finer moments, as even the most prestigious firms seem to have thrown good taste out the window in pursuit of the next commission. And much of the architecture was, in the fashion of the day, shamelessly imitative of European or British models. They should have listened more closely to Ralph Waldo Emerson’s earlier rebuke: “We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe.”

Not surprisingly, when Edith Jones wed the dashing Teddy Wharton in 1885, the newlyweds began their married life in a cottage called Pencraig in Newport, later moving to a larger cottage called Land’s End, which Edith Wharton described in her memoirs as “an ugly wooden house,” but one which she loved because of “its windows framing the endlessly changing moods of the misty Atlantic, and the night-long sound of the surges against the cliffs.” With the help of architect Ogden Codman, Jr., Wharton set about transforming Land’s End. Their collaboration, and their conviction that what they set about doing at

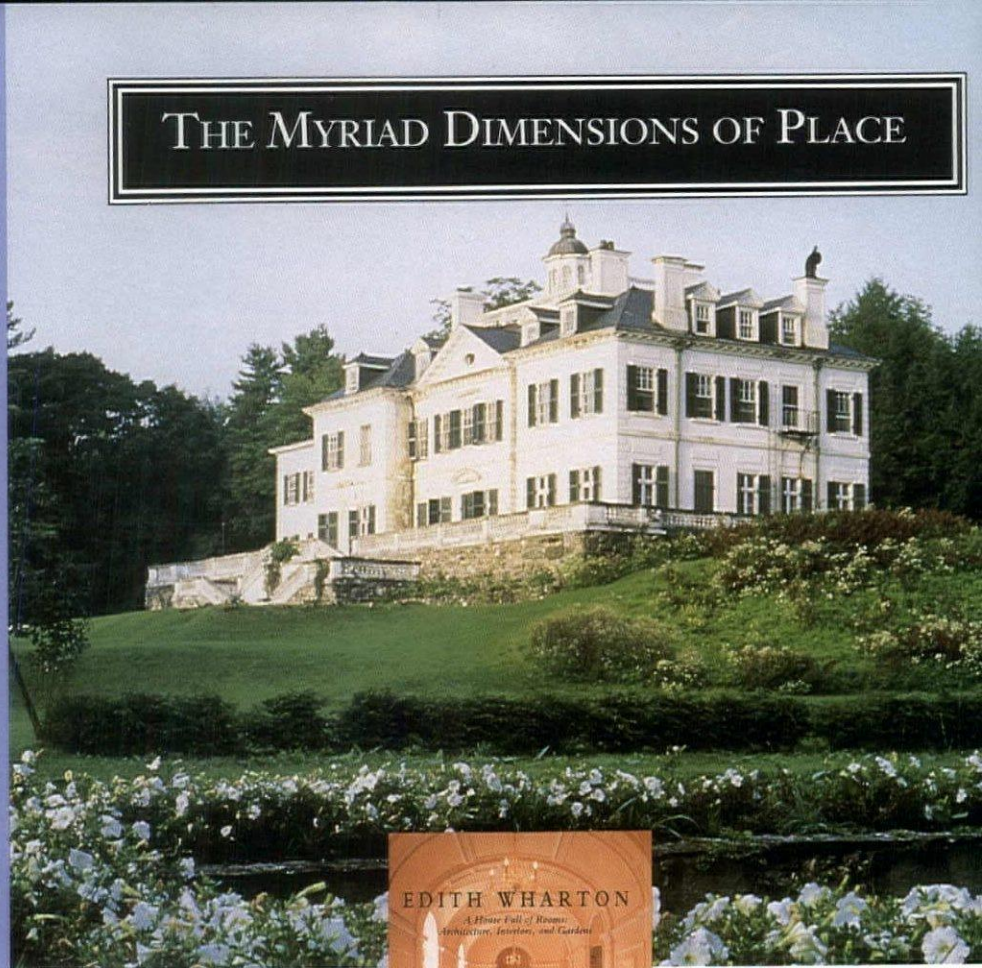


**Wharton completely transformed the estate she renamed *The Mount* (top).**

Land’s End was worth writing about, led to Edith Wharton’s first published book, *The Decoration of Houses*, an instant best-seller. More familiar to most readers are the works of fiction Wharton produced

over her enormously successful literary career – novels such as *The House of Mirth*, *The Age of Innocence*, *The Custom of the Country*; shorter works such as *Old New York*; her memoirs, *A Backward Glance*; and a string of brilliant short stories, including the capstone of her literary life, “Roman Fever.” But in so many cases, especially through the lens of Theresa Craig’s eye, we can see how often the physical settings in Wharton’s work convey more than just backdrop. As with her friend and confidante, the great American expatriate novelist Henry James, the social, sociological, and psychological dimensions of place always matter. Always.

One of the best things about *Edith Wharton: A House Full of Rooms* is that we get a legitimate feel for the interior life of Wharton through the pictures and descriptions of the rooms, apartments, and mansions she lived in, and the terraces, gardens, and outcroppings she made her own over the course of a life that witnessed extraordinary cultural shifts. When she was born in 1862, the Victorian Era was in full bloom in





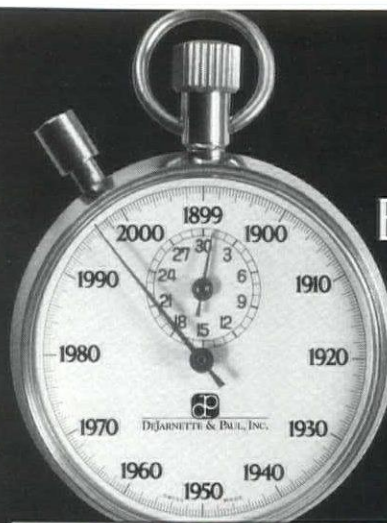
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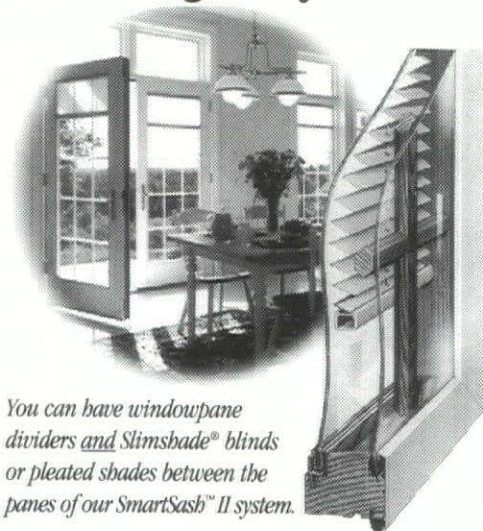
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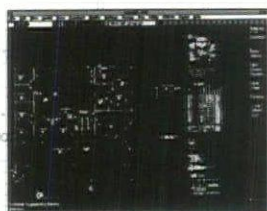


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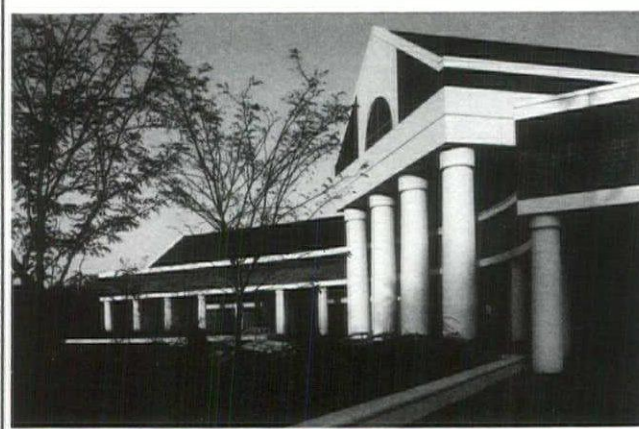
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England and Abraham Lincoln was in the White House. At her death in 1937, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was already into his second term as President and Pan American Airways was celebrating 10 years of commercial airline service.

As Craig suggests, Wharton's sensitivity to the fine points of architecture, interior design, and garden planning were no accident – she studied each of these disciplines assiduously and wrote several articles and a second book, *Italian Villas and Their Gardens*, on these topics. Her experiences at Land's End, later at The Mount, and then in villas in France and Italy were all learning experiences for Wharton. Varied as they all were, Wharton viewed them as cut from the same cloth. Land's End, however, was little more than a dead end for her intellectual preoccupations. She wanted something more substantial and found it in Laurel Lake Farm, a 113-acre property in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts that she bought in 1901 and renamed The Mount. The site, as described by historian Scott Marshall, included, "woodland pasture, an orchard, manicured lawns, formal gardens, and at least ten outbuildings in addition to the mansion." Here was an opportunity to put to work ideas she had articulated in *The Decoration of Houses*. The results were, as the book's images reveal, stunning.

The gardens at The Mount took shape in Wharton's mind most clearly in early 1904, when she traveled to Italy to write on villas and gardens for *Century* magazine. From the surviving drawings for The Mount, it is clear that gardens meant far more than simply flowers in bloom to Wharton. She elaborated extensive formal designs, complete with walkways, terraces, trellises, pools, statuary, stone arches, and benches, and delineated instructions for the greenery and flowers to be cultivated there.

Clearly, she was as attuned to the subtleties of mood and atmospheric landscape afforded as she was to the shifts in mood and feeling inside the minds of her fictional characters. And they had a salutary effect on Edith Wharton's literary output as well. But as her marriage disintegrated and her affair with journalist Morton Fullerton peaked, Edith spent less and less time at The Mount. When it was finally sold in 1911, she had been living in Paris for most of three years and would spend virtually the rest of her life in France as an expatriate writer.

Theresa Craig's commentary, which follows Edith Wharton's moves back and forth from America to Europe, tends to be somewhat formulaic: this is where she lived and who she entertained; here is what was going on at the time. That is to say, Craig, who teaches at the New School for Social Research, fills in the gaps, identifies somewhat obscure characters in the Wharton canon, and reintroduces many insights of earlier Wharton critics and biographers. It is not inspired narrative. Craig's thesis, that the character of the places Wharton knew worked their way into the very fabric of her writing, is indisputable. Her subtext, that Edith Wharton was a talented arbiter of interior design, seems interesting, but tends toward the pigeonholing mentioned above. If no one has articulated that thought before, it certainly has not been overlooked, especially by such recent scholars as Eleanor Dwight. Nonetheless, one can bet that Craig's students find her illustrated lectures, complete with anecdotes covering Edith Wharton's exceedingly rich life, both exhilarating and informative. The book comes close to doing the same.

*Douglas Greenwood is a freelance writer based in Vienna.*





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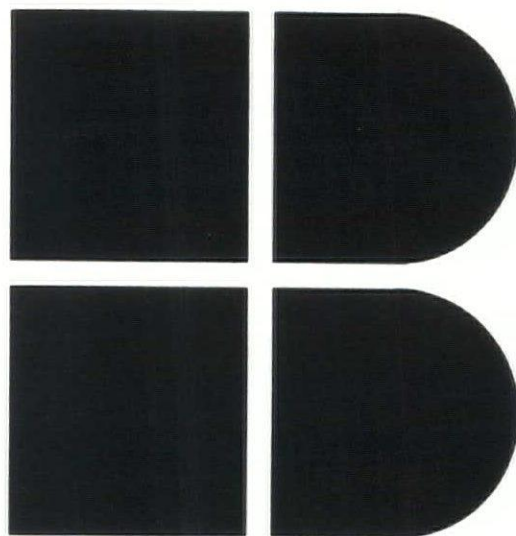
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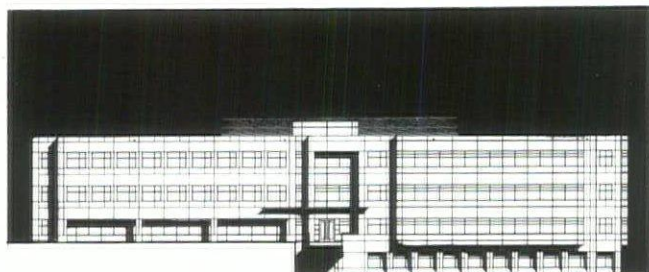
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**Architect:** Scribner Messer Brady & Wade, P.C., Richmond

**Project:** Office Building Number VI, The Boulders

This 80,000-square-foot building in Richmond, made of precast concrete slabs ordered with delicate reveals, tautly detailed metal panels, and a metal-and-glass curtain wall, emerges from its earthen plinth in an affirmation of Modernism. A grid of lacy trees defines a forecourt to the entrance. 804-782-2115.

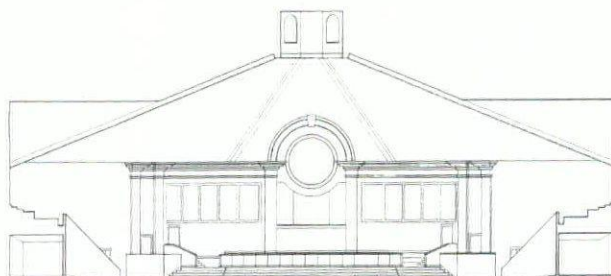
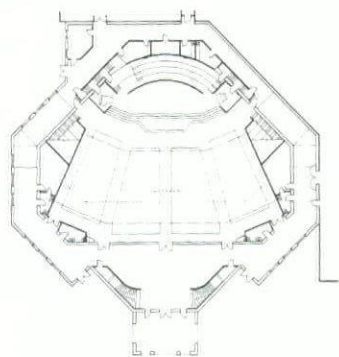


**Architect:** Carlton Abbott & Partners, Williamsburg

**Project:** Addition to Piedmont Arts Association

This project in Martinsville will add more than 12,000 square feet of space to the existing Piedmont Arts Association, which currently occupies a prominent c. 1900 residence. The addition features exhibit and multipurpose spaces, classrooms, and support areas on two levels. 757-220-1095.

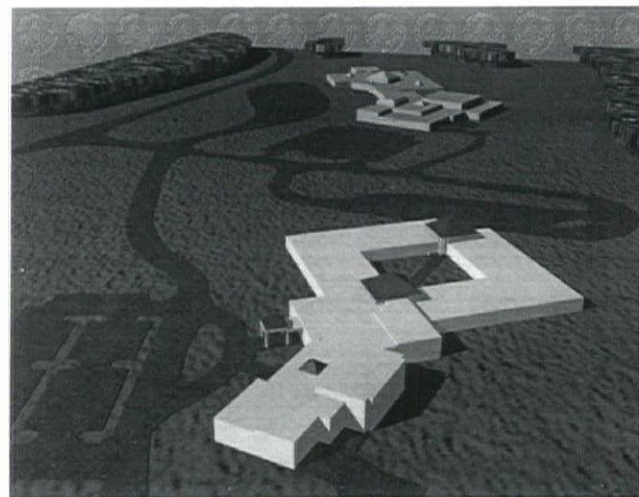
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**Architect:** Huff-Morris Architects, P.C., Chesterfield

**Project:** First Baptist Church Worship Center Addition

This 28,500-square-foot addition to First Baptist Church in Newport News is the fourth expansion of the church performed by Huff-Morris. The building, which seats 900, allows greater visibility by incorporating a balcony that flows downward and a main floor that slopes toward the chancel. 804-796-2330.

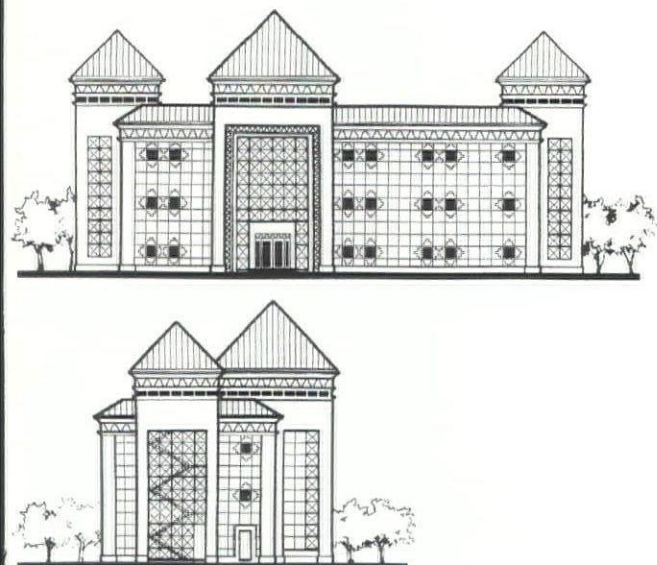


**Architect:** Rancorn Wildman Krause Brezinski, Newport News

**Project:** Bethel Elementary School

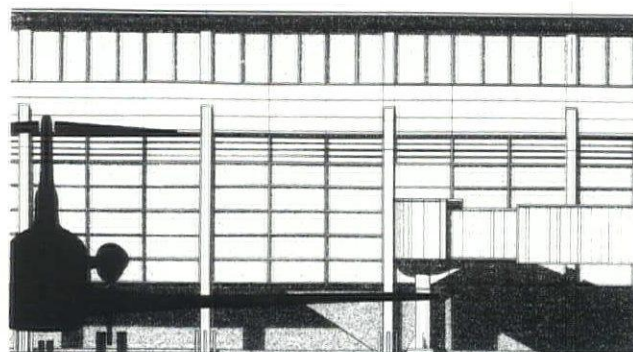
RWKB is overseeing design and construction of this new school for Gloucester County that will house 750 students in a bright atmosphere. The school shares land with Peasley Middle School, also designed by RWKB, and features similar design elements such as pyramid-shaped metal roofs. 757-873-6606.





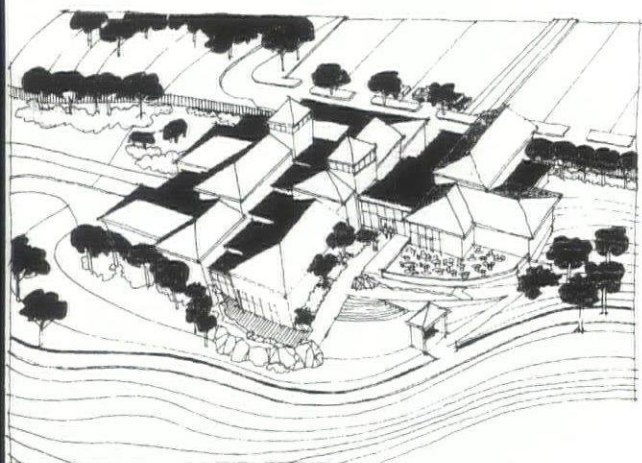
**Architect:** Chou & Associates, P.C., Virginia Beach  
**Project:** Child Development and Family Service Center

Under the U.S. Navy's quality of life improvement policy, this 1,800-square-meter building in Bahrain consolidates child care, family services, housing offices, youth center, and library facilities for the base personnel and dependents. The context of Arab/Islamic culture is reflected in the design. 757-499-3667.



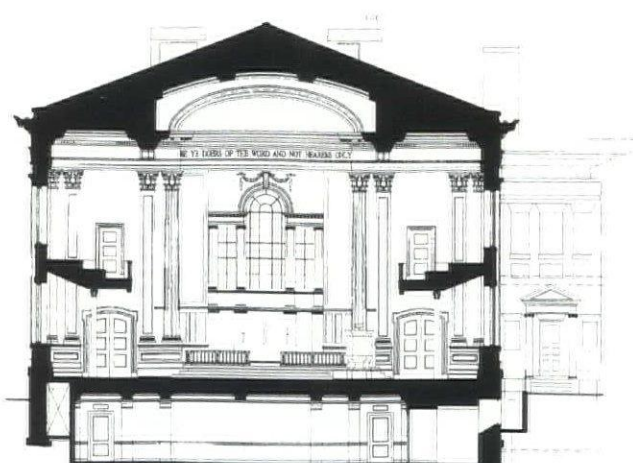
**Architect:** HNTB Corporation, Alexandria  
**Project:** Satellite Terminal Expansion, Lehigh Valley Airport

HNTB Corporation (in association with Breslin, Ridyard & Fadero) designed this concourse expansion for the Lehigh Valley International Airport. Phase I includes the provision of a 33,000-square-foot, eight-gate concourse. Contact Rob Busler, Director of Business Development, at 703-684-2700.



**Architect:** Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner Architects, Richmond  
**Project:** The Nature Center at Maymont

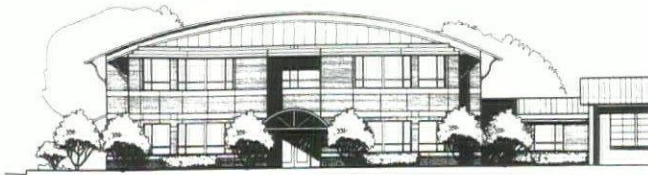
The Nature Center at Maymont, in Richmond, will serve as an environmental resource center for students and the public, with emphasis on developing an understanding of the individual's role as a good steward of the environment. Exhibit designers are Cambridge Seven Associates of Boston. 804-788-4774.



**Architect:** Marcellus Wright Cox & Smith Architects, P.C., Richmond  
**Project:** St. James's Church

This project involves reconstruction of a Richmond church sanctuary damaged by fire. Finish details will follow the original 1912 design and the center ceiling will be raised to improve acoustics in the space. Stained glass windows will be restored and reinstalled in their original locations. 804-780-9067.





**Architect:** Morgan Gick & Associates, Falls Church  
**Project:** All Saints Educational Center Addition

MGA has master planned the future campus with a new school wing and rectory for the All Saints Parish in Manassas. This 30,000-square-foot brick and steel structure is the first addition to the parish complex in 20 years. 703-876-5600.



**Architect:** Odell Associates, Richmond  
**Project:** Sheltering Arms Physical Rehabilitation Hospital

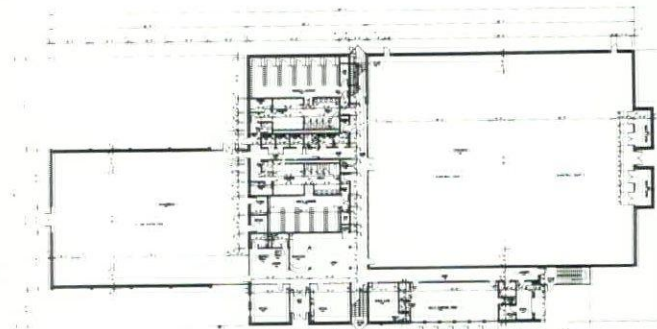
This 46,500-square-foot complex of 40 private rooms and related ancillary space is the latest addition planned for the Hanover Medical Park in Hanover County. Redesigned more as a residentially scaled facility than are neighboring buildings, it is expected to be completed in Fall 1997. 804-644-5941.

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**Architect:** Rose Architects, Richmond  
**Project:** Corporate Headquarters for Heilig-Meyers

This 6-story, 210,000-square-foot headquarters facility has been carefully sited on a 29-acre parcel in Richmond's WestCreek development. The building will be the first phase of an anticipated 450,000-square-foot complex, master planned by Rose Architects. Construction began in October. 804-747-1305.



**Architect:** Hayes, Seay, Mattern & Mattern, Inc., Roanoke  
**Project:** Franklin County Family YMCA

This 46,000-square-foot building accommodates a swimming pool and gymnasium around a central core of changing facilities. Part of an overall campus master plan, the project recently received an award of Excellence in Design from the AIA/Blue Ridge chapter. 540-857-3100.



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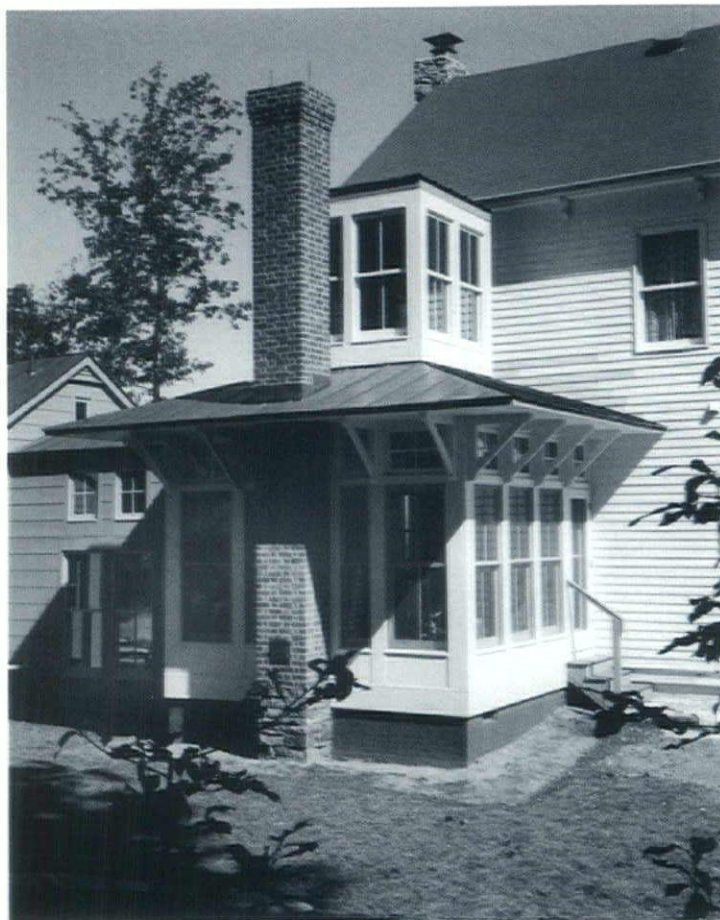
When daylight fades into nothingness, so too does the connection between Train & Spencer's pavilion addition and the original white farm house in Rappahannock County. The separation, quite intentional, is further emphasized by the difference in the exterior color scheme and scale. Yet the two are visually linked by the two-over-two double-hung windows used in the old home and the new.

"The sun room pavilion is intended to be gazebo-like," says Charlottesville architect M. Kirk Train, AIA. "The idea is to step out into nature, to allow the room to jut into the landscape." With windows on three sides of the pavilion and the exaggerated lantern providing greater height, the effect is as a jewel only tenuously attached to the main body of the house. With its scant fascia line and slight slope, the pavilion's copper roof seemingly disappears in the evening shadows, allowing the lantern to float above the pavilion. "It becomes more a garden artifact and less a part of the house," Train says.

Despite its slim lines, the wide overhang of the house's standing-seam roof provides sun and rain protection for operable transom windows. The goal: to provide natural ventilation and an aural connection to the outside, regardless of the weather. And once the surrounding plantings of azaleas and rhododendrons grow to maturity, the pavilion will blend more naturally into the landscape.

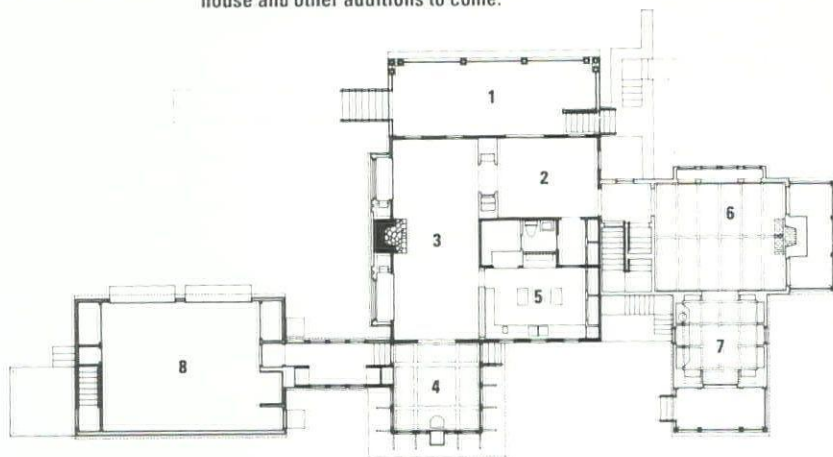
The original charge to the architects was to provide a modest addition to the 1980s speculative house sited on a ridge crest. During planning, however, the owners spent many weekends in their rural retreat, and they became increasingly enamored with the eastward views across the Piedmont and, to the west, of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As their appreciation grew, so grew the scope of the project. Now Train & Spencer has designed two major additions and phased the project to allow the owners to live in the house during construction. When the additions are complete, they will renovate the original structure in preparation for the owners' permanent emigration from Washington, D.C.

— T. Duncan Abernathy, AIA



Photos: Enoch Snyder

The sun room is painted white to contrast with the gray shade of the original house and other additions to come.



First Floor Plan

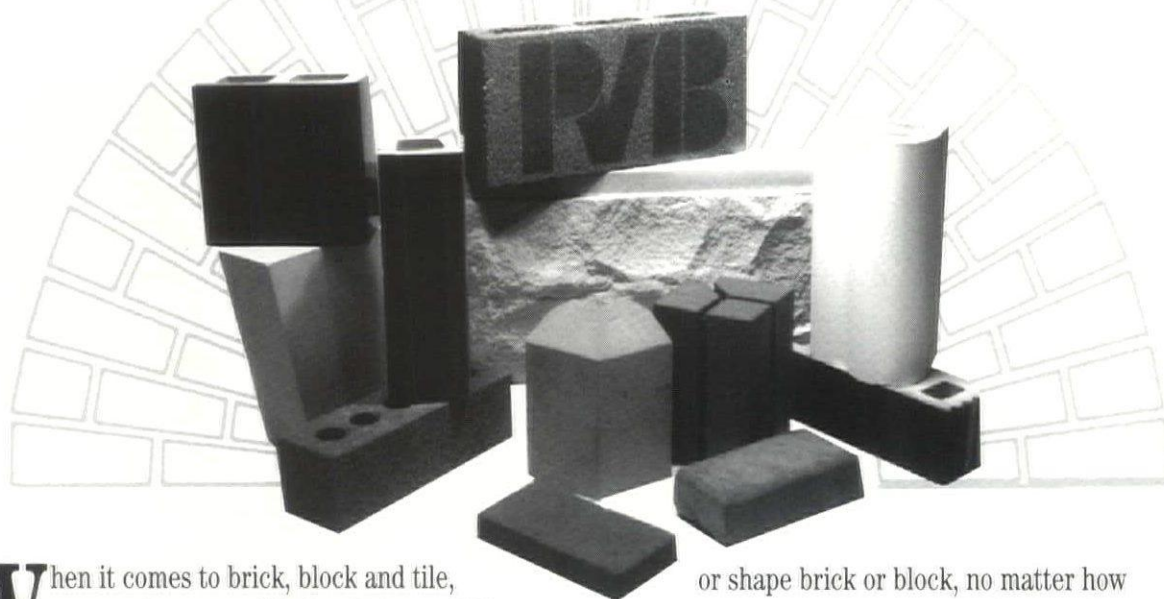
- 1 Front Porch
- 2 Entry Hall
- 3 Hall
- 4 Sun Room
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Living Room
- 7 Library
- 8 Garage

Custom wood brackets, although not a structural requirement, visually support the overhanging eaves of the sun room.



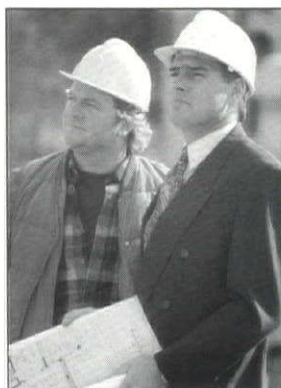


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# USING ANDERSEN® WINDOWS, AN ARCHITECT CREATES A MASTERPIECE HOME FOR THE ARTS



PHIPPS CENTER FOR THE ARTS, HUDSON, WI • KKE ARCHITECTS, INC., MINNEAPOLIS, MN • PROJECT ARCHITECT: GREG HOLLENKAMP, AIA

THE PHIPPS CENTER FOR THE ARTS HOUSES TWO THEATRES, TWO ART STUDIOS AND THREE ART GALLERIES. A FACILITY THIS FLEXIBLE NEEDED A WINDOW TO MATCH. ANDERSEN® FLEXIFRAME® WINDOWS HAVE PERFORMED WELL IN THIS ROLE.

ACCORDING TO PROJECT ARCHITECT, GREG HOLLENKAMP, "ANDERSEN® FLEXIFRAME® WINDOWS PROVIDED THE ONLY SYSTEM THAT WOULD ALLOW US THE FLEXIBILITY TO MAINTAIN THE DESIGN CONCEPT. WITH FLEXIFRAME® WINDOWS, WE WEREN'T LIMITED IN HOW WE FINISHED THE INSIDE. WE WENT TO A LIGHT PAINT TO SOFTEN THE LOOK OF THE INTERIOR AND THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE WITH ALUMINUM."

TO SEE HOW ANDERSEN CAN HELP YOU CREATE YOUR NEXT WORK OF ART, CONTACT YOUR ANDERSEN DISTRIBUTOR BELOW.

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