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25th Year of Publication



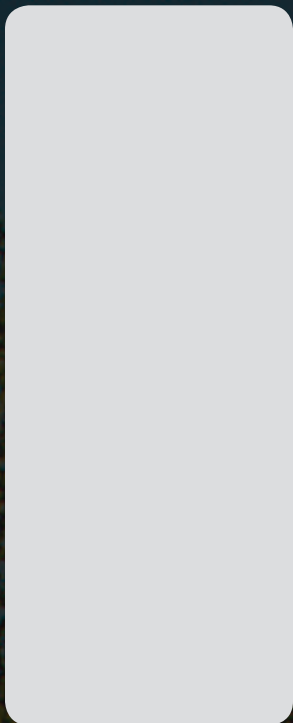
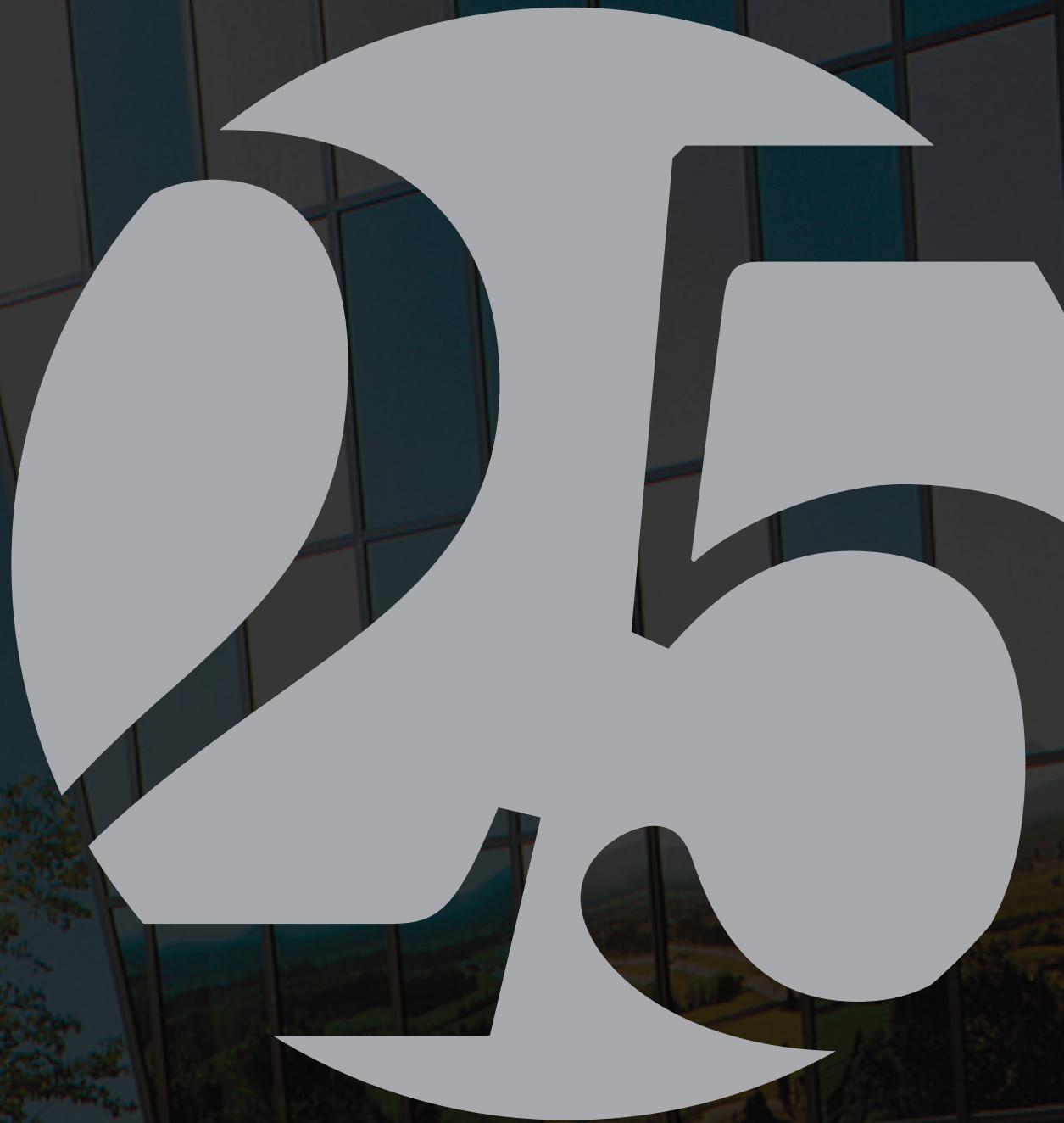
Design Forum Retrospective



1993: VSAIA Women of Action



And a Look to 2014





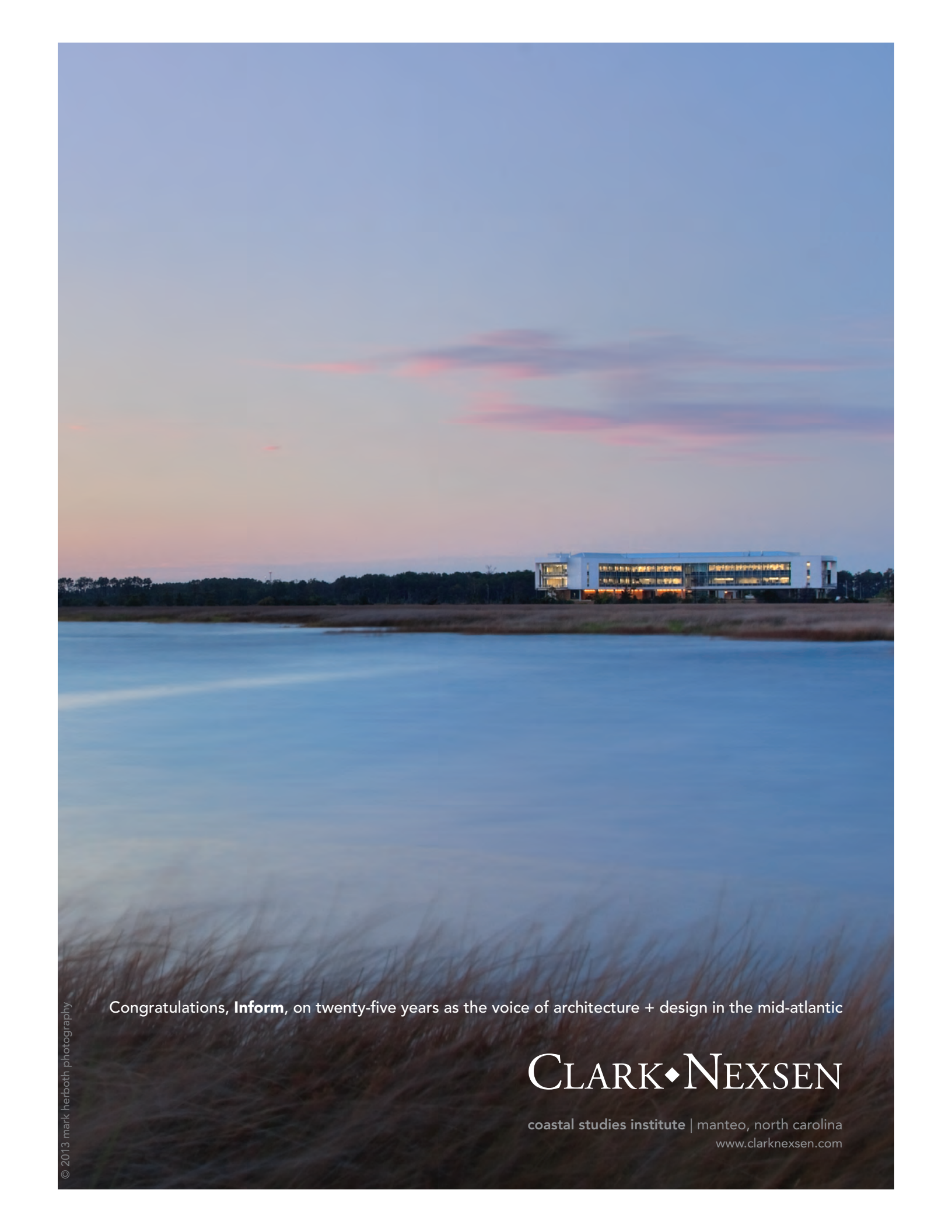
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FSC

The DNA of *Inform*

A generation of AIA members in our region, as well as the thousands whose hands have turned the pages of this magazine over many years, no doubt view *Inform* with a sense of familiarity—something that’s always been around.

For others of us, opening the pages that launch our 25th year of publication—a “silver anniversary!”—seems impossible.

In addition to publishing much of the current notable work in the Mid-Atlantic region, *Inform*’s secondary role as a repository of architectural activity makes it a virtual archive of the work of Virginia architects for the past quarter century. To make that story more complete, it is only right that *Inform* use this occasion to record the names of several people whose contributions can truly be said to constitute the magazine’s genetic material.

Gary Arnold, AIA

Chairing the Communications Committee in the late 1980s, Gary took to heart the Virginia Society AIA’s 1987 long-range plan in its aspiration to have a magazine that embodied professionalism and spoke well for the profession of architecture that spawned it—excellent writing, graphic sophistication, exciting photography, the highest quality printing, and public distribution. Gary shepherded perhaps the hardest-working committee in my tenure with the Society, and he wrote the final, 30-page report on the feasibility study that encouraged the VSAIA Board to authorize the launching of a new magazine. His contribution to the Society and the profession was immense; he is one of the Society’s heroes, and my partnership with Gary in laying the groundwork for this ambitious publication remains one of the most rewarding of my career with the Society.

Peter Anders Rand, FAIA

The network of executives who manage AIA components around the country is notably tight; we know to whom we can turn for sound advice and encouragement. The long-time publisher of *Architecture Minnesota*, Peter was one whose patience, depth of experience, generosity of spirit, and plain good humor were such that Gary and I had a ready expert who tirelessly taught us what we needed to learn about magazine publishing. Peter’s *pro bono* consultancy, added to Gary’s hundreds of volunteer hours, were very much part of the talent pool that helped *Inform* come to life. Peter died in late August at age 69, but *Inform* will always be in his debt and that of *Architecture Minnesota* for illustrating how important a state-published AIA magazine can be in helping to shape and stimulate a region’s architecture culture.



Vernon L. Mays

When I put out the call for resumes in early 1989 for an editor-in-chief to create a new magazine in Virginia, I did not yet understand that in the heart of every editor is the desire to create his or her *own* magazine. Thus, I was unprepared for the good fortune of triggering serious interest from senior editors at all three major, national architecture magazines. Vernon Mays was ready-made for the job. A native of Richmond and an alum of Virginia Tech’s graduate architecture program, Vernon knew the region. But more importantly, he had the creds as a UNC journalism graduate with a stint as design writer for the *Hartford Courant*. He knew how to write for real people, not just designers, about the important issues of architecture and its related design fields. Vernon took our aspirations, and he made them real, garnering many national-level awards along the way, for more than 16 years.

Steven Longstaff, Hon. VSAIA

Graphic sophistication was one of our founding goals for a new magazine, so selecting a professional graphics team followed the appointment of the first editor-in-chief in short order. The initial appointment of a team of Virginia Commonwealth University professors headed by Robert Meganck led to the initial design decisions that shaped *Inform*. For more than 20 years, however, Steven Longstaff has managed and refined the magazine’s graphic identity so smoothly and subtly that he has made it his own. The Virginia Society AIA, in turn, made Steven its own by conferring Honorary Membership on him in 2013.

These are the four people who, more than any others, brought life to an idea that a visionary generation of architects had the optimism and determination to imagine in 1987. As we open the Centennial year of the AIA in Virginia, I offer my toast to the team who made it possible this past quarter century as we watched to see how Virginia and the region around us continued to take shape under the design and guidance of our architects.

—John W. Braymer, Hon. AIA

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Princeton Theological Seminary Library

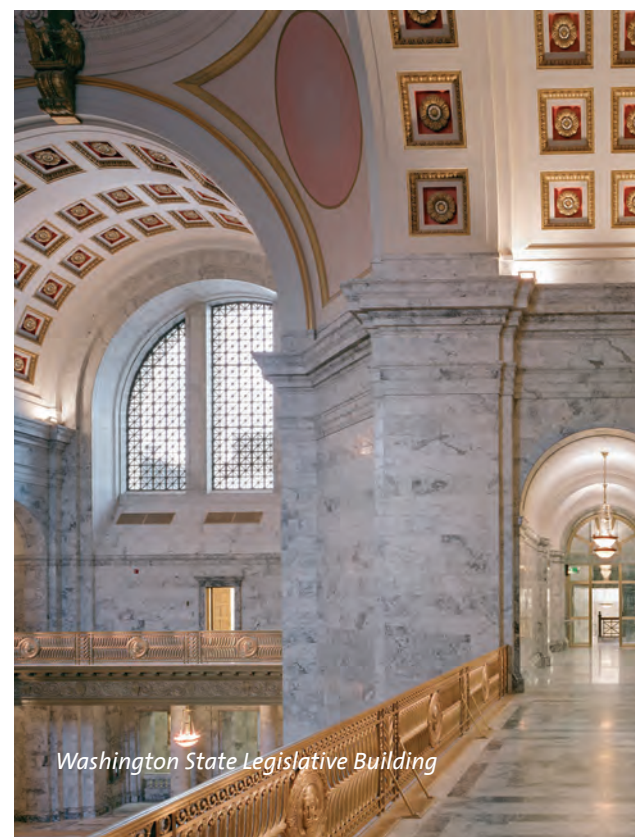


Tidewater Community College Health Professions Center

Thank You
for putting design on
display for 25 years.



*James Madison University, College of Integrated Science & Technology
(CISAT) Bioscience Center*



Washington State Legislative Building

inform

25
Years

volume twenty-five number one

9 Every Quarter Century Has Its Beginnings

14 The Design Forums as Context

From its inception 20 years ago, the biennial Design Forum, planned by the VSAIA Design Committee, has been a marker of the state of contemporary architectural thought. Here is an annotated synopsis of DFI.

24 The American House

DFIII was the best attended of all. And *Inform* was there to capture unadulterated remarks from the likes of Kenneth Frampton and Hugh Newell Jacobsen.

28 Dwelling in Century XXI

Here's a sneak peak at the 2014 Design Forum XI.

32 Breaking Out

With the first AIA Gold Medal going to a woman, 2014 is being hailed as the year the glass ceiling finally broke. But a quick glance back shows how many of our leaders today were positioning themselves in 1993.

7 Museum Medley

A sampling of four compelling exhibitions from around the mid-Atlantic.

36 Bookmark

40 Taking Note

Large and small firm principals talk about 2014 positioning.

On the cover:

The background image from the first *Inform* cover is the Center for Innovative Technology.

Photo by Karen Schneebaum.

See page 10 for a full-resolution rendition.



p29

p40

p32

Next issue:
Design for
Well-being



St. Anne's-Belfield School
Charlottesville, Va.



Norfolk Academy
Norfolk, Va.



Wakefield High School
Arlington, Va.



South Run Recreation Center
Springfield, Va.

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Museum Medley

By Margaret Hancock

Through one-of-a-kind installations and exhibitions, museums across the mid-Atlantic offset the cold weather with inspirational viewing experiences.

▼ Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke

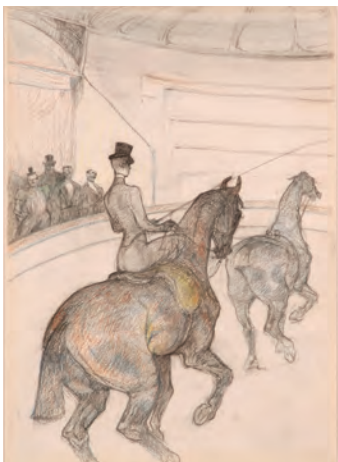
taubmanmuseum.org

From Picasso to Magritte: European Masters from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

January 25–August 23, 2014

While each work of art in this exhibition is exquisite in its own right, the show's academic value comes from its organization. Arranged in mostly chronological order, the works span from 1816 to the 1960s and offer a visual timeline of the changing styles, progression of concepts, and expanding narratives by European artists. With names familiar to even the most novice museum-goer, the included masters range from Impressionist Edgar Degas and Post-Impressionist Vincent van Gogh to the famed

Henri de Toulouse-Latrec and Pablo Picasso



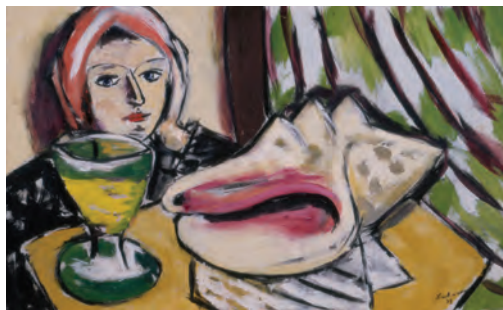
● Baltimore Museum of Art

artbma.org

German Expressionism: A Revolutionary Spirit

January 29–September 14, 2014

Curated from private collections and the Baltimore Museum of Art's permanent collection, this exhibition features



the expressionist masters and their paintings that defined the 20th century movement. Marked by bold subjects, vivid colors, and angular outlines, the more than 30 works bring to light the characteristic drama and intensity that define German Expressionism. Highlights include a vibrant still life by Max Beckman and quiet yet colorful landscapes by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

■ Ackland Art Museum, Chapel Hill, N.C.

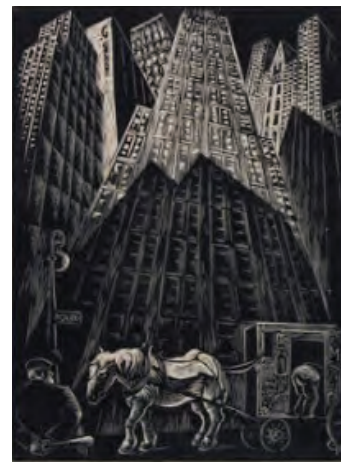
ackland.org

America Seen: The Hunter and Cathy Allen Collection of Social Realist Prints

January 31–April 13, 2014

Familiar subjects abound in this rare exhibition of almost 40 prints made in 1930s America. Of particular note are the detailed built environments—including cityscapes, architectural elements, and the New York subway—shown alongside imagery of urban entertainment, as

well as rural life and hardship. Printmaking is revered for its accessibility and unique qualities, which this collection, gifted to the Ackland Art Museum, successfully presents. The exhibition is both an homage to the printmaking medium and a powerful visual statement about America during the Great Depression.



◆ William King Museum, Abingdon, Va.

williamkingmuseum.org

There/Here: Architectural Research Practices in Urban and Rural Virginia

January 31–June 15, 2014

Two unique architectural projects overlap in this research-based show: Tyler King's revitalization initiative in Richmond and Vivian Coletti's ample documentation of Washington County. Composed of blueprints, surveys, and additional primary documents, *There/Here* showcases King's research exploring 40 vacant urban buildings alongside Coletti's extensive historical survey records created for the Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks. Together, the projects parallel the approach of two architectural historians working nearly 20 years apart, ultimately revealing the evolution of research methods and the rural/urban relationship within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

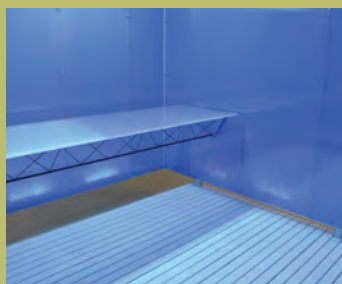


The 23rd annual

inform 2014

A W A R D S

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CALL FOR ENTRIES

The program is open to anyone in *Inform* magazine's primary circulation area—architects, interior designers, landscape architects, furniture designers, industrial designers, students, and faculty. Your business address must be located in Virginia; Maryland; West Virginia; Washington, D.C.; or North Carolina. *All work submitted must have been completed after January 1, 2008.*

2014 Schedule

December 2, 2013: Registration opens
March 7, 2014: Registration closes
March 14, 2014: Project submissions due
April 18, 2014: Winners will be announced
May 16, 2014: Winners appear in a special section of *Inform* magazine.

2014 Fees

\$140.00 per project
Members of the Virginia Society AIA
\$185.00 per project
Non-Members
Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable

Awards

Award winners in both
the Honor and Merit
categories will be featured
in a special section of
Inform magazine and
announced to the public.

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IT'S GOOD, OCCASIONALLY, TO

Look Back

As John Braymer points out in his introductory column, 2014 is the 25th year of publication. (The 25th anniversary issue, if you're doing the math, isn't until 2015, but with the kickoff of the 100th anniversary of the Virginia Society and 60th of the Virginia Center for Architecture, this retrospection of *Inform* seemed appropriate now.)

For his first editorial in 1990, Founding Editor Vernon Mays offered the revelatory headline "A magazine not (only) for architects." Of the genesis of that new magazine, he explained, VSAIA members "chose to eschew the professional journal in favor of a well-designed, general interest magazine covering the full spectrum of design interests."

For the 10th-anniversary issue in Y2K, he had titled his editorial "A Decade of New Directions." As will be abundantly clear throughout the issue now in your hands, although a lot has changed since 1990, a lot has stayed fundamentally the same. So, to get us up to speed incrementally, following are two pieces. The first is by Mays, and the second, "Cover Matters," by his immediate successor as *Inform* editor, William Richards, marked the 20th *Inform* anniversary. (And excuse my occasional bracketed truncations and comments to keep the running text timely to 2014.)

—DEG

inform

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Center for Innovative Technology

100 Years of Preservation

A Retrospective of Eighties Architecture

The Best Product Designs of the Decade

Wright's Fallingwater

A Decade of
New**Directions**

Even on
Inform Magazine's
premiere 1990 cover
(left), the feature
stories looked back
as well as forward.

This is a time for celebration—a landmark edition of *Inform*. How long ago it seems that a buoyant crowd in tuxedos and gowns gathered to toast the premiere of the Virginia Society AIA's new magazine. At that moment early in 1990, *Inform* was fresh, new, and exciting. *[And every issue still feels that way.]* Everyone associated with it was brimming with optimism, even as we could see the first signs of a recession that would plague the architecture profession and drive any number of arts-related magazines out of existence. *[Oh Vernon, if we only didn't know now what we didn't know then.]* By sheer will, *Inform* survived.

That first issue charted a course for a general interest publication that we were fond of calling “the *Smithsonian* magazine of design for our region.” That was the standard of excellence we were striving for, the kind of ecumenical breadth that we believed would engage a reading audience envisioned to be not *[only]* architects, but a readership of *[all]* people who are the shapers of our world. After 10 years, with minor adjustments here and there, we are still following that course.

So this is a time for tribute *[to Gary Arnold, AIA, vital to Inform's early development; Steve Weisensale, AIA, for keeping it going; the VSAIA Communications Committee; Communication Design, which developed the magazine's identity; Steven Longstaff, who has kept it fresh since 1993; colleagues at the VSAIA; and, especially] John Braymer, who as publisher skillfully allows the editor a free hand to do his job while overseeing the business side of our publishing venture.*

Finally, this is a time for renewal. Once we have paused a moment to take stock of the past decade and raise another toast for a job well done, the next task is to find ways to make *Inform* better and improve its ability to champion the cause of good design *[through new partnerships]* to strengthen the magazine as a business entity while spreading its influence as an advocate for the design community *[and the value of VSAIA members].*

The best news is that *Inform* is on solid footing. It has the enthusiastic support of the vast majority of our members ... and it is perceived as a credible voice for good design among a growing constituency of architects and non-architects alike. Ten years ago I urged our new crop of readers to spread the word about *Inform*. I renew that call today, knowing that with readers' support and involvement there are many contributions the magazine can make both to the region's design community and to the cities and towns in which we live.

—Vernon Mays



Cover Matters



Looking back over two decades of covers, *Inform*'s graphic designer, Steven Longstaff, is hard-pressed to name a favorite. "There are so many, but the third issue from 1994 stands out," he says [*right page, upper left*]. "At the Landmark Theatre in Richmond—what we used to call The Mosque—the photographer used infrared film and skewed the angle to create a captivating, glowing effect." Prakash Patel's image still captivates us and is, in many ways, the quintessential *Inform* cover: an unexpected view of a familiar project in the region.

Inform's cover has always been a big part of its identity: whether it presents details like an oculus or a scrim, or raises topical issues like preservation theory of the role of art in architecture, the cover must reveal enough to entice, but conceal even more to compel you to actually open it.

"A good cover should pull you into the page and capture the personality of the subject matter," says Longstaff, who has helped shape this magazine's look for the past 16 years [*and received VSAIA Honorary Membership in 2013 in recognition of that fact*]. "I try to understand the nuances of each project we are representing and imagine myself in the space."

Citing "white space" in design as a "good friend," Longstaff consistently approaches each layout with aplomb; his signature restraint lets the work—textual, photographic, and architectural—speak for itself.

For the cover's role, what does it say about the magazine's identity?

"Modern Memorable," he reports. "Sometimes this is accomplished by focusing on an abstract detail and other times it can be more literal. No matter the perspective, it should always engage."

Inform's mandate, precisely.

—William Richards





Virginia Design Forum

architecture +

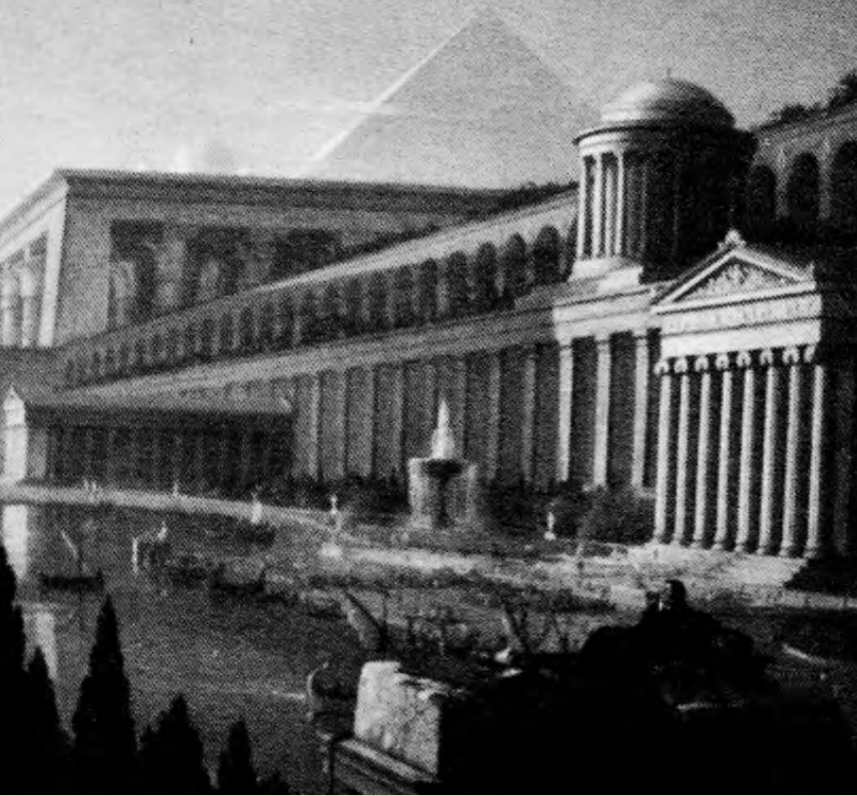
The First Design Forum: A 20-Year Retrospective

One of the more eye-opening excursions back in time through the pages of *Inform* involves the Virginia Design Forum, the first of which occurred in March 1994 at the Homestead in Bath County. The theme was Architecture + Innovation, and the presenters were stellar, including Glenn Murcutt, who would go on to receive the AIA Gold Medal in 2009; Moderator

Robert Campbell, who was two years shy of receiving the Pulitzer Prize for Criticism; and Adele Naude Santos, who received the ACSA/AIA Topaz Medallion, also in 2009.

The other noted presenters were Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstin, himself a Pulitzer laureate; Charles Gwathmey; Urban Planning Prof. Dana Cuff; Architecture Prof. Edward Ford; and Knoll designer Paul Haigh.

Oddly familiar in tone two decades later were Vernon Mays' words synopsizing that year's program: "Despite the fact that many architects have been bruised by a tough economy the past few years, the mood at the first Virginia Design Forum was clearly optimistic. Provoked, prodded, and cajoled by an all-star panel of speakers, a receptive group of architects, students, and university faculty gathered ... to be challenged."



Daniel Boorstin

Daniel J. Boorstin kicked off Design Forum I with his thoughts on the architect's unique relation to time. "The architect's prophecies are embodied in stone and reinforced in concrete," he proclaimed, adding: "The architect needs not only spatial plans, but time plans."

"What does that mean? For most of Western history, the architect has been engaged in a battle against time. In fact, it is doubtful that this is altogether changed, and whether the architect has succeeded in making his truce with time. But evidence of this is the fact that the construction of monumental or public buildings in the West has been, until recently, primarily in stone. Stone is the architect's arsenal against time."

"For most of Western history, since 'architect' has entered our English vocabulary, the term has meant a master builder. It emphasized the craftsmanship, rather than the conceptual plan, of the architect. When the word began to be associated with designing in the mid-17th century, it was identified first with a supreme architect—the Supreme Builder who was assumed to be the Creator or God. It was first used in English in the early 16th century, in the other sense. It was long identified with making and the maker."

"The architect's battle with time, when it was victorious, often produced what I would call Pyrrhic victories. There are many examples of this. The Parthenon, for example, in its pristine glory—and we forget, of course, that it was a polychrome monument—became an example of classic elegance and symmetry. But the intact column, with its delicate entasis, became the broken column. And the classic, which stood for rigorous geometric symmetry, became the romantic in its delightful disarray."

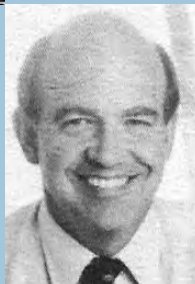
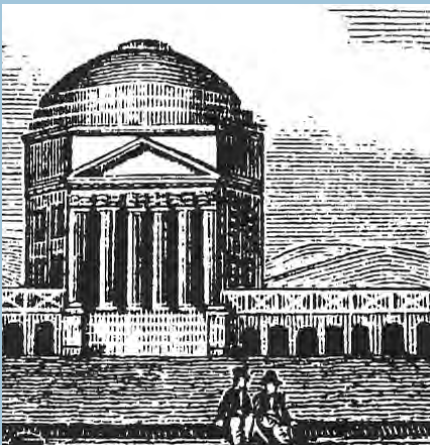
Boorstin's thesis—delivered in similarly erudite discourse—was that the progressively rapid acceleration of social and technological change had transformed the architect of the late 20th century into "the role of prophet ... How will you wear the prophet's mantle," he concluded "and exercise the prophet's powers?"

Interestingly, that has been one of the fundamental tenets of the VSAIA Design Committee over the past two years as it has shaped the upcoming Design Forum XI program, *Dwelling: The Art of Living in Century XXI*.

Dana Cuff, Paul Haigh

Dana Cuff played her part as prophet, pointing to the four trends in architectural practice that architects are still contending with—along with a myriad of others: The complexity of projects, the influence of politics in planning and design, burgeoning advancement in technology, and the cyclical nature of the construction market. Despite 20 years of advancement in practice approaches—including BIM, cloud computing, political action committees, 3D scanners and printers, expanded services, and cross-discipline teaming—there are still naysayers who pre-tell the end of the architectural profession. On the brighter side, as Cuff foretold: “We have to invent the practices that will work in the 21st century if we are going to survive.” And you did.

Paul Haigh addressed technology as an emerging enigma in 1994: Should it be expressed or hidden behind a screening façade? His feeling, he said, was that advanced technologies are most effectively communicated through an exploration of their relationship to time, the human body, and the objects that surround us. The challenge, he said, is “to communicate through diverse languages that embrace the culture we seem to be desperately needing—things to do with symbol, memory, ambiguity, and myth.”



Charles Gwathmey

Charles Gwathmey, whose critical abilities were noted in the 1960s as one of the New York Five, based his presentation on a letter he had sent in 1991 to then-U.Va University Architect and Architecture School Dean Harry Porter, in which Gwathmey Siegel & Assocs. pulled out of the Darden School design competition. Interestingly, in many ways, his words then are parallel to the university's current master plan:

“The nostalgic reverence [at the time] for The Lawn is misplaced and has, unfortunately, created a mediocre philosophical and physical environment. The ideas, ideals, and aspirations of Jefferson were manifested in his consummate work of architecture. The reason it is revered and classic is that the basis of its realization was not the emulation of style, but content and invention. What the campus needs is another strong architectural manifestation, with equal aspirations but at a different time and place and for a different program. A classicized, imitative stage set is as transparent as the insecurity of the past made present. It is neither accurate nor relevant.

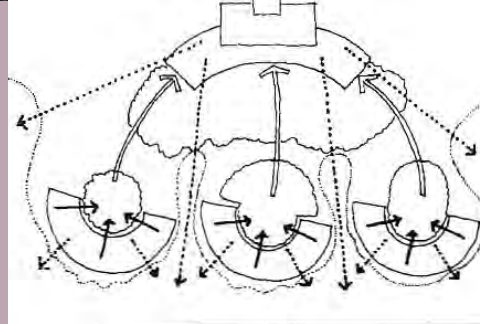
“Research for information to provoke redefinition is positive. Research as regression to justify the known is negative. Architects create art not by reestablishing the established but by questioning, reinterpreting, and provoking perceptual reevaluation and new means of form and space. Jonathan Swift said, ‘Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.’ Jefferson proved Swift. The University of Virginia needs a great modern complex that is aspirational, contemplative, speculative, and undatable.”

Adele Naude Santos

Adele Naude Santos, founding dean of the UCSD School of Architecture talked of housing as “a very complex issue and one that is underrated in schools of architecture. In this country we have an extremely poor record of housing design. Particularly at the low end, we’ve created truly horrendous environments. And it’s not just medium- and high-density projects that suffer. I’m thinking also of suburban sprawl, which is really costly in the long run.”

She described a gap between supply and affordability that was growing at an outstanding rate. “One alternative is co-housing,” she said as she described her prescient vision:

“Recently I was commissioned to propose a co-housing scheme for 36 families. The idea was to use very little of the land, leave most of it for the Nature Conservancy, and create a series of clusters done in such a way that they wouldn’t be extremely visible. We limited ourselves to a crescent-shaped footprint, minimizing the road and creating parking clusters so people would walk to their dwellings. There is literally marshland coming into the site. We designed housing with trellises and every one has a porch beneath it. Co-



housing is about the common space—12 families actually living together and sharing a space. One possibility in such a development is the residents’ sharing a vegetable garden.

“Our basic thesis [behind the La Brea/Franklin Apartments] was to create something more like a village, with small-scale environments around a series of courtyards. We divided the units into smaller parts, expecting people to share a garage, porch, lounge, and laundry. A pedestrian street runs through the project. There were lots of sociological issues in this case: You begin to have eyes on all these areas so that people can monitor them and feel they are part of their living environment. A lot of housing design is really a matter of understanding problems we haven’t solved, working at all scales from huge to small, and never presuming we know it all. That’s an ongoing attitude—always trying to rethink the issues.”

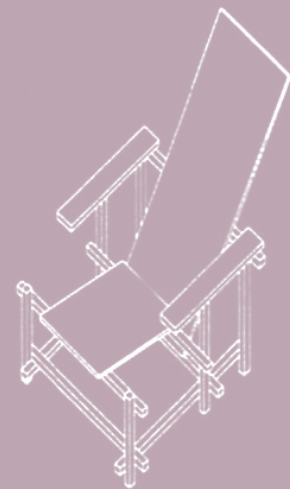
Edward Ford

Edward R. Ford, a professor of architecture at the University of Virginia, talked of the more timeless aspects of teaching architecture students how to analyze design problem solving. Specifically, he explored the relationship between architecture and furniture, which he said, are two different structural languages addressing similar issues.

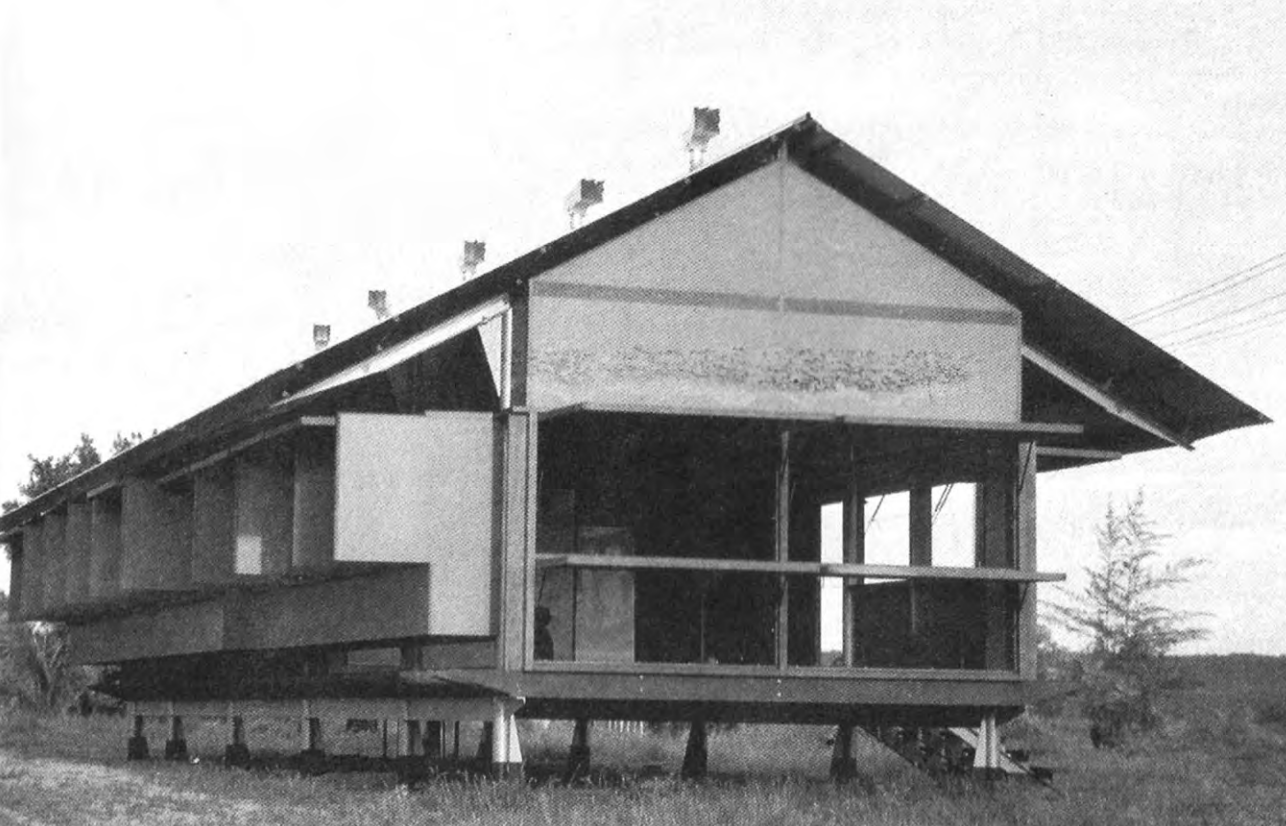
“Although they talk about structure, connection, and craft, they convey meanings in different ways,” he said. “The language of architecture is about weight finding its way to the ground. The language of architecture must articulate itself in very specific ways. Furniture, on the other hand, contains columns, beams, and cantilevers and all sorts of structural elements in different types of stress—and yet they are all the same material.

“I wanted to get these ideas into the students. In studio, I gave them 10 pieces of furniture and asked them to begin by doing structural analyses in some fairly simple things. Why is this joint this way? Why would you accept this sort of connection in a building, provided you could do it structurally? Why would you find this disturbing?

“It had to do with the question of weight and gravity. The language of furniture operates on a smaller scale in terms of connection, craft, standardization, and anthropomorphism. By



its very type of structural joints we know its size. I asked my students to use these elements, thinking of them as studies, and enlarge them. By taking a non-architectural object, the student didn’t consider the architecture and had to look at it objectively to understand it and to derive principles from it ... an indirect route for understanding materials. Students felt far more comfortable analyzing non-architecture.”



Glenn Murcutt

"I am interested in the things that are unarguable, such as where the sun rises, where it moves during the day, and where it sets," said Australian architect Glenn Murcutt. "I am also looking to the wind patterns and humidity patterns because, unlike your country, I don't use air conditioning—the nullifier of all things environmental."

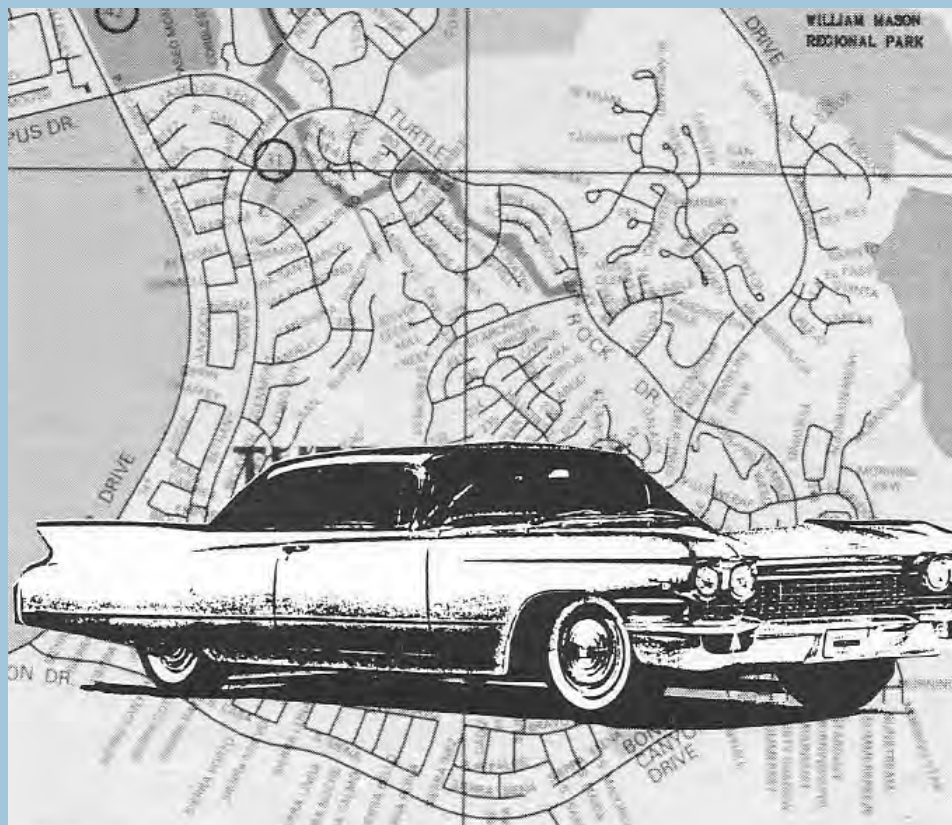
"I sometimes have to work with local building authorities who put out lengthy lists of design guidelines [structured by] planners who are educated at universities. My buildings are in scale and deal with issues like typology and morphology. But the authorities fight me on the basis that my buildings don't harmonize and they don't blend with the environment. By definition, to harmonize is when disparate sounds are put together to make a pleasing whole. Then they'll ask you to blend. Show me an architecture that blends. I can blend a cake. I can blend an egg. Now, what they're really asking for is monotony. Not harmony—monotony. And the result is a disaster. Total barrenness of mind and poverty of spirit."

Murcutt also talked of what he learned from working with the aboriginal people of Australia, which he described as "the most rewarding experience of my career ... These people have survived for 40,000 years this way."

"They know about the dry platform in the tropics. They know about the open end. They know about keeping off the ground, because you can put a fire under the house to dry the mosquitoes out. And a fire to rid the mosquitoes is built at the monsoonal time, when the crocodiles are on the move. And crocodiles don't like fire."

To the aboriginal people a healthy building "is not only a building where the air is moving in and out and getting through quickly," Murcutt explained. "But it's also a building that, psychologically, can hold 2 people or 25 people and open up sufficiently for all those kin to be inside and not feel crowded ... The aboriginal people know how to build a shelter. And they know what freedom is, what it is to be outside. They know what the "ings" of things are—sitting, observing, relating, communicating, storytelling, loving, touching, smelling. We are humans. These are the things we need to perceive. When we are taken away from those, we have great difficulties."

"At all times they want to be able to look out of the building and feel a part of the landscape. They live all over the building—it's wonderful to see. These people will care for a building that cares about them."



Robert Campbell

Boston Globe architecture critic Robert Campbell chose to begin with some satire on the urban planning and settlement patterns of Irvine, Calif., which, he claimed, has the fewest street intersections per square mile of any city in the world.

His thesis: "If Irvine was the solution, then what were the design criteria?"

One criterion, he posited, must have been: "How can we maximize traffic congestion?" You spread development out as thinly as possible so everything is far away from everything else and there's no way of getting from anywhere to anywhere else except by getting in a car. Second, you sort out all uses so everybody works in the office park, shops in the shopping mall, recreates in the recreation complex, and lives in the condo pod. Just sort out the uses and limit the densities as much as possible.

A second criterion: "How do we maximize the use of the Earth's planetary resources?" You demolish all the orange groves while you name the place Orange County in order to attract people. All of the things that generate oxygen in the atmosphere? Get rid of them. Moreover, through criterion one, you have maximized transportation and, therefore, energy consumption.

Third: "How can we isolate each group of Americans from every other group of Americans to the greatest possible extent?" Maybe we can't achieve perfection, but we can come close by creating "trees" in the city plan. (Hint: He is not referring to real trees, and a tree-like city plan is not good.)

If you fly over older parts of American, you see grids. The Continental Survey in 1801 divided the whole country into a one-mile-square grid. Jefferson was a big advocate of the continental grid, which does several interesting things. It makes every place equal to every other place. It makes hierarchies impossible. It is a democratic idea because it links everything.

The opposite is a tree. In Orange County you start at the interstate highway, off of which come arterials, then secondary road, which splay off into the cul-de-sac-capped

capillaries of your little gated communities. It is entirely hierarchical, and everybody is separated from everybody else. The grid would absorb far more traffic with far less congestion than the tree, but it has the disadvantage of connecting everybody and making it impossible to isolate different groups, as the tree does. At the end of one twig you'll find the rich lawyers. At the end of another twig you'll find the retired empty nesters. Every twig is a different subset of the population and different types of people never meet each other, because there is no public realm. There are no accidental encounters.

"The essence of city life is the unplanned encounter," Campbell said in conclusion and all seriousness. "Cities enhance unplanned encounters, as do grids. In Orange County, if you're residing in your isolated community, there is nothing you can possibly do there except reside. I regard this as a way of settling the land that is disastrous in every possible way."

Roundtable Discussion

Robert Campbell Moderating

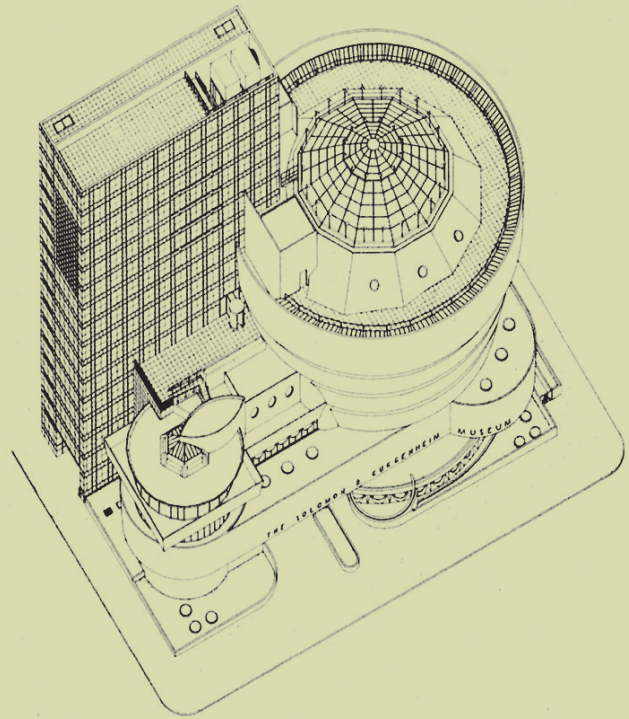


Campbell: I'd like to begin with a question for each of the three keynote speakers. The first is for Glenn Murcutt. You have made an exceptional career as a kind of loner. You associate creativity with individualism, and you said you had been influenced by Thoreau, who is sometimes accused of making a fetish of individualism. In Australia you design Walden-like houses—incredibly sensitive to the environment—and then you get on airplanes and fly to Virginia at great expense of jet fuel to talk about them. Is there a contradiction in all this? Is there something in the modern world that makes this contradiction essential?

Murcutt: The answer to the first part is yes. Is there a contradiction in my lone nature of working and getting on a jet to come and talk here? In very simple terms, yes, because every time I take off in a 747 to fly to the United States, I understand there is enough fuel consumed in that takeoff to supply a township of 10,000 people for about four weeks. I am very conscious, every time I sit on an aircraft, of the fuel and energy required to get me here. But then I can also say that when I do come I actually go to a number of places and get about 10 things out of the way, instead of taking 10 trips. So I combine things. Now, regarding Thoreau—he was very influential in my life. I was raised on phrases like: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. Their resignation is confirmed desperation." My father was a pioneer in Papua New Guinea. He was also a major polluter and, as most major polluters do, became chief environmentalist of the state. We were raised at the environmental end of his life. The idea of conservation became very important to us because for him there was a morality between conservation and economics. And that's an important issue to me, because I come from a society that is probably still the most egalitarian capitalist society on the planet.

Campbell: For Charles Gwathmey—You quoted John F. Kennedy as saying: "We should get rid of the rules and impediments that hinder interrogation and creativity." My question to you: Do rules and impediments hinder interrogation and creativity or are they the indispensable enabling conditions for creativity?

Gwathmey: I will address John Kennedy's remark through my experience with the Guggenheim Museum, where you attribute those rules and constraints to the preservation movement, particularly, where the buildings become sacrosanct and untouchable, where tradition for tradition's sake becomes the bylaw of imitation. I've always believed preservation is antithetical to interrogation. It's antithetical to the history of architecture and it's definitely antithetical to the intellectual obligation that all artists have to look at what went before and reinterpret it. The preservationists that opposed the new addition to the Guggenheim were the same people who picketed Frank Lloyd Wright 30 years earlier. They tried to stop Wright from building that building out of a kind of resentment of the imposition of this alien object in the magnificent Manhattan grid. If they had prevailed, we wouldn't have the provocation, the inspiration, and the aspiration that this building has given us. So I'm suspect of those kinds of rules. I'm suspect of the irrational, emotional do-gooders who protect the status quo and maintain tradition.



Campbell: My last question is for Daniel Boorstin—taking off from comments that make the point that technology seals us off from nature, from sensual experience. Should we convince people that there might be a better way? How to prevent the 21st century from becoming the century of the totally artificial, sensually impoverished environment that we always see in futuristic films?

Boorstin: That's a cosmic question, and a question for a prophet. I'm just a mere historian. I don't know. One of the problems I would like to focus on is the difference between authentic and spurious innovation, and I think that a laboratory for testing that is Deconstruction—the Deconstructive school of philosophy. I was surprised that I didn't hear that word mentioned by anyone here, which is suggestive in itself. There is perhaps a difference between innovation made for its own sake, for the sake of novelty, and innovation made either for an aesthetic or a functional purpose. That's a very important distinction. I think there may be a way of determining whether innovation is for one of those purposes or the other—and that is the test of time. If people stop talking about Deconstructivist architecture, then it suggests perhaps that was a style of architecture produced for the sake of novelty. I think it was Gropius who said: "I don't want to be original, but I want to be better." That is the opposite of Rousseau's observation that: "I may not be better than other people, but least I'm different." I think I prefer Gropius's emphasis.

Campbell: What are some of the real issues that architects need to be innovating responses to?

Murcutt: There's no question that one is limited material resources. For me the environment is going to be a lasting question and a force that's going to change all of our lives in the next 50 years. We don't fully understand it yet, but we will respond when we finally hit bottom.



From the Audience: Do we engage in false innovation because of a preoccupation with the avant garde?

Cuff: This weekend I've been advocating that the profession represent the public good—taking that role very seriously—but I also think there's an extremely important role for an avant garde in architecture. It's important for us to distinguish when each is appropriate. At least one distinction that makes sense is when we are talking about background buildings that are the fabric of our cities, which is certainly the place not to be avant garde, or at least a place to innovate in a way that is more sensitive or subtle. There's another form of innovation that might be appropriate to those kinds of buildings.

Ford: I think if innovation is a response to problems, it's very often a conscious one. How many of us, 15 years ago, felt the desperate need for a personal computer? How many of us today, being deprived of our personal computers, would feel absolutely helpless? That's a technological innovation. But I am reminded of an introduction Louis Kahn wrote to a book about Boullée and Ledoux. He said: "Did we need these people before they existed?" And the answer is, of course, no. "Could we get along without them now that they exist?" I used to hate it when Kahn preached like this. But as I get older, I begin to understand what he meant. He said architecture was offerings. And I think he meant that when it's really transcendent, architecture goes beyond responding to problems. It's more about responding to spiritual problems. Once we have it, once we have what is the best, we realize that we can't get along without it.

Boorstin: I am concerned there has been so little talk about one aspect of novelty—not what the architect can introduce that is new, but the architect's ability to deal with the novel. And I think there are two conspicuous examples of disastrous failures of architects to deal with cataclysmic novelties. First, the automobile. I don't think that architects have really found ways to deal satisfactorily with the automobile. And the airplane. All airports, I

think, are monumental disasters, without regard to the concerns of the users. Why haven't architects been able to show the same ingenuity in dealing with these innovations that in the past they have found in enlisting the use of cast iron, for example, or steel or aluminum or glass? It seems to me that's a challenge to architects that is so obvious, and I wish someone would do something about it. You're the architects.

Ford: In defense of Eero Saarinen, I think we have a wonderful example in Virginia at Dulles. And if you know the history of that, Saarinen did extensive work—including spending time at other airports with stopwatches, figuring out the different ways people use airports. He explored a number of innovations, including structural innovations, which I think were quite successful. Today it is clearly obsolete. I'm sure the most optimistic predictions about the number of planes that would be flying in the U.S. were extremely low. Nevertheless, if Dulles is a failure, it is certainly one of the most beautiful failures in architecture.

Boorstin: As a frequent user of Dulles Airport, I can say it is a disastrous failure. It's a monument to the failure of the architect to imagine the future. The original design, which is attractive, is a piece of sculpture. It is beautiful and I enjoy it every time I approach it. Nevertheless, it was not expandable. Now we have to go to a midfield air terminal. So instead of building one airport, Saarinen just built a piece of a whole string of airports. I don't know what you mean by calling it beautiful.

Gwathmey: I have to defend architects here. May I? We are not responsible for all the things you are accusing us of. I want to make a distinction between an architect and an artist—the latter of which can have the opportunity of self-motivation and result in a way that is uncontaminated by the client. The architect is a responder to situations and not all situations are ideal. Not all situations are clear. To blame Saarinen for his inability to foresee the dynamics of jet travel and population is unfair criticism.

Campbell: But regardless of whether he could have foreseen particular conditions, Saarinen created a building that is, in concept, extraordinarily inflexible and complete in itself.

Murcutt: But that doesn't make it any less a marvelous place to visit, in terms of architecture. With every good building, there is a very good client. Any building is absolute clarification of the value system of the culture of the time. Very few architects actually take society beyond where it is. That is our responsibility, but if a client doesn't project the needs of the future, it is very hard for an architect to respond to something that is not presented to him or her.

From the Audience: The automobile is another strong force that destroys the urban fabric. What are the implications for architects?

Naude Santos: The costs of sprawl were clearly articulated 30 years ago. But developers went on doing it, and architects worked with developers, and the rape of the land continued. There are very few architects who have the guts to say: "No, forget it. I'm not going to do another dreaded subdivision. I'm not going to be part of this stupid game." But the profession does have a role in this, because we have a responsibility to educate clients or to refuse jobs that are impossible. And the schools of architecture can play a role. We can come up with new prototypes. Otherwise, the status quo is going to continue.

Campbell: I hoped we'd get to this, because this is innovation in the largest sense—about the settlement patterns of the Earth. How do we, either as practitioners or citizens, innovate within the culture rather than innovating in a particular building?

Haigh: The political climate in which we operate often comes down to your choosing between being responsive or being an initiator. The future is going to be much more about that decision to initiate change in the political arena prior to building anything. That's going to become a more crucial aspect of practice.

Campbell: I think the reputation of the architectural profession is at a bottom at the moment in our culture. Architects are seen in two ways, either as the corrupt handmaidens of bankers and developers who are destroying the planet, on the one hand, or as elitist artists who do weird fantasies that nobody else can understand, on the other hand. There are many times in my life it hasn't been true. But those are the two images we have to deal with. If we could somehow assert ourselves as the critics of the environment, as the promisers of something new and better, as the advocates of a better way of settling the Earth, I think we'd make more money, and have more respect, and get better jobs. And I don't know why we don't do it. Why don't we do it?

Murcutt: Jourdain speaks of invention, which I prefer to call discovery. But he says that before true invention can be made, one must first be dissatisfied with that which already exists. And if we look at the car and all the other things we are choking ourselves with, we're not really sufficiently dissatisfied. Design must be driven by a need. The great communities of the world came about because of need—not the need to make money, but the need for life.

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The American House

March 27-28, 1998 • Charlottesville, Virginia

Design Forum III

The American House



Topically, the predecessor to the upcoming Design Forum this April 11-12, 2014, (Dwelling: The Art of Living in Century XXI) was The American House, also held in Charlottesville. The dates were March 27-28, 1998, and Vernon Mays offered the synopsis in that next *Inform*.

Kenneth Frampton kicked off the discussion with his analysis on the house design of some of the leading designers of the 20th century: Wright, Johnson, Moore, Gwathmey, and Legoretta. Donald McDonald explained the imperatives of affordable housing design. James Cutler engaged the audience with a personal account of learning to engage nature on Bainbridge Island, Wash. Barry Berkus argued that New Urbanism is largely a matter of stage-set façade making. Hugh Newell Jacobsen revealed his true reason for pursuing high-end residential projects. And David Lake described how Lake/Flato finds high design in Texas vernacular.

Twentieth-century canons

Frampton's thoughts, based on his *American Masterworks* anthology of 20th century American houses:

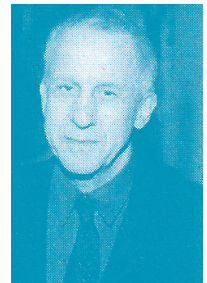
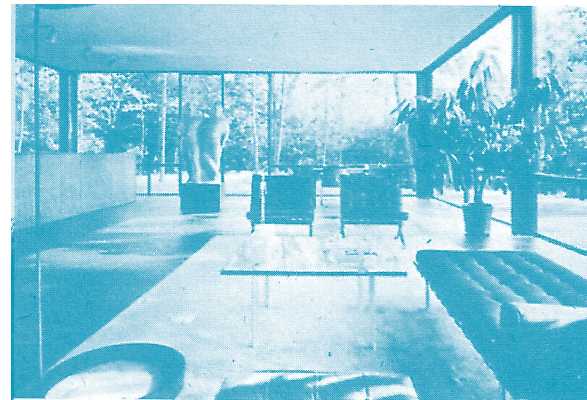
"Wright's Usonian houses remain some of the most remarkable, really democratic American contributions to world architecture. Sadly, they are not used referentially by architects today. But look how they distinguish between the private and the public, the L-shaped house as an almost quasi-courtyard house enclosing a garden. The continuity of the living space and the continuity of vertical doors in relation to the terrace, embedding the pipe in the concrete floors, the staining of the floor in Cherokee red, the use of built-in storage, the centralization of the services. All of this is Wright at his most brilliant.

"Philip Johnson's Glass House remains the master work of his life. In many ways, given all of the stuff Philip has built since, he might as well have stopped right there and never built another thing. And it is not just Mieseanism, it is a different rendition. It is particularly New England and very American—and Johnson would never equal it.

"There is not a single Charles Moore building that equals Sea Ranch. From the point of view of accessibility and the point of view of a belief in collective life—Sea Ranch is *it*. And in terms of the nature/culture relationship, it seems to me that Sea Ranch is impeccable.

"Charles Gwathmey's house for his parents, completed in 1967, exploits the interplay between the house and studio. This is, of course, neo-Corbusian, but it is filtered through Edward Larabee Barnes and through a kind of American minimalism, a kind of American barn construction. The play of the geometries between the two volumes and the kind of space they create are among the best—Gwathmey's most sublime house.

"One of the sad things is that North America doesn't look to Latin America. Given the production of Latin America, we know nothing of the last 25 or 30 years, and we seem to be indifferent about whether we know any more. Ricardo Legoretta is an exception. Legoretta is an incredibly important architect because he has somehow been able to do three things. One, to make modern work that is unequivocally of its own time. Two, to make this work in such a way that it can be read at many levels and is accessible to the society at large. And third, to be able to do it rather economically."



Poster design from the Design Forum III (left).

On a mission: Affordable housing

Donald McDonald, FAIA, principal of MacDonald Architects in San Francisco, believes passionately in the concept of every human's right to a home—not just a shelter. He began with a profile of beliefs:

"America's middle class has been the real glue of our society. But making the climb up to the middle class is very difficult today, and there is an architectural piece to that puzzle.

It is what I call affordable housing, which goes back to the basics of building a house and doing it simply. That's where I come from: What really makes a home? It's a place that is safe and secure, a place that has privacy—privacy in the interior of the home and on the exterior with its relationship to other homes.

"Flexibility is very important because it's a multi-generational thing, as well as a matter of customizing your own home. The idea is to build a house that can change so you don't have to leave the community as you get older. You can stay in that house and you can rent a part of it or use the whole space. It can be bought by one person, subdivided into two pieces, or sold off. It would have a long-term life to it.

"You also need a stable neighborhood, so I'm interested in community. Then we go even further. You have to have a city that has a clear boundary. By clear boundary I mean you can't allow the city to continually grow and let the middle of it decay. My work focuses on these issues.

"At least in Western culture, the 45-degree roof with plants in front and windows is an icon that says: 'I am a home,'" McDonald said. "I have used that icon in most of my buildings, especially in communities that aren't affluent and are missing a real sense of community."

In the future, housing, particularly in urban areas, will be more complicated, McDonald said. Architects have to take different roles and be much more aggressive to solve these problems creatively. "We are the profession with the ability to take the bull by the horns. We have to go beyond architecture. We can't just wait for someone to walk in the door and say: 'We need you.' We have to lead by example."



Soft-spoken steward of the earth

James Cutler, FAIA, principal of James Cutler Architects in Bainbridge Island, Wash., learned to balance his dedication to design excellence with his revelatory reverence for the environment. From the coal fields of Pennsylvania where he grew up, Cutler moved in 1974 to the Northwest rain forests.

"After a while there, I'd bicycle down roads and notice areas that had been clear cut for some architectural masterpiece—and I felt the land had been insulted ... devastated." In 1983 he received his first big commission for a nine-acre parcel of old-growth timber with a 200-foot waterside frontage. "With six-foot-diameter trees everywhere, it was like being in a cathedral, it was so beautiful. My design fit the building into these massive trees."

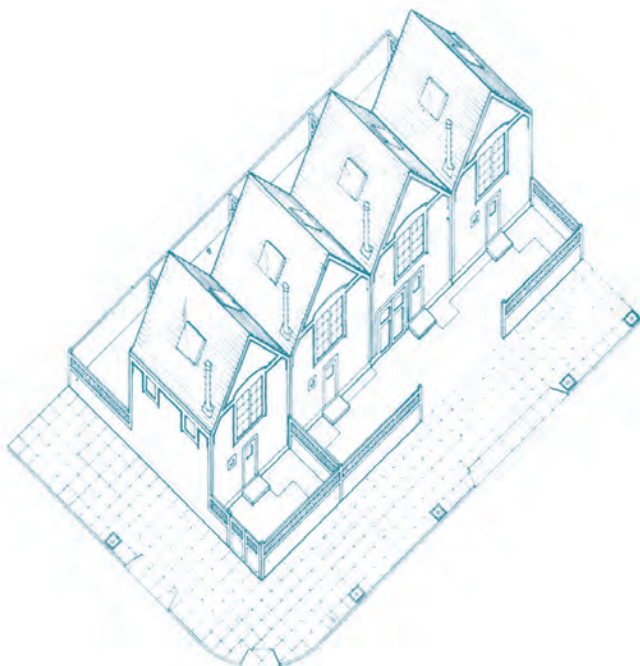
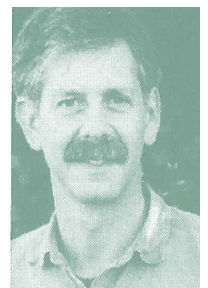
But the owner wanted it clear cut. He tried to convince them he could bring in the light off the water without that, but they did it on their own anyway because they could get \$4,000 for the trees, which would mean better draperies. "It was like waking up one morning and finding out that you're the enemy, that you're part of the system killing everything you love," he said.

Later, another couple came in, said they had some land and a permit to fill in the little stream running through it, and asked if he could design them a south-facing colonial. He told them he couldn't, politely explained why, and they left. A month later they called back, said they'd found a nicer place, and confessed to feeling bad about wanting to fill the stream on the other piece of land. Cutler's recollection:

"I had just finished reading *Arctic Dreams*, by Barry Lopez, which conveys the message that people treat land the way they perceive it—you respect a place you perceive as pristine and full of life. If you perceive it as a junkyard, you treat it like a junkyard.

"We thought we could design a building with so little impact on the land that it would be a great example for the next person who comes and buys the next lot over, no matter where they came from." Realizing that the typical construction site will end up with "some architectural monument in the middle of a small nuclear blast site," Cutler started the construction site by sitting down with the contractor and construction crews to say: "Hey, this is a really beautiful place. It's sort of sacred to us. Can you just help us and try to keep it alive."

"And they wanted to," Cutler said. "They took it as their job. It wasn't a burden on them, and we find that on all of our construction projects now, people willingly want to do this. They want to help. And it probably costs \$500 to stage the just-in-time delivery of materials that avoids a lot of that cycle of construction destruction." Since then, he said, he has become an "undeveloper," buying crippled land and restoring it through well-designed and staged redevelopment.



Neotraditionalism as stage-set façade

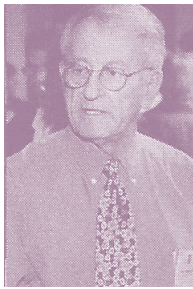
Barry A. Berkus, AIA, is founder and president of Berkus Design Studio and B3 Architects + Planners of Santa Barbara, Calif. His teams have their own hybrid approaches to residential street planning.

"I went to the Kentlands, Md.; Celebration, Fla.; and Harbor Town, Tenn. I looked at the streets, then went to the alleys, and I tried to figure out: Is that where I want to live? Why does it work? Why doesn't it work?"

"It's a façade. It really is a stage set. It really does talk about a place that existed before, but it doesn't have a hand of contemporary society on it at all, and that bothers me," Berkus said. He gave as example Celebration, "plotted in a way that the grid looked great on paper but never was thought about on topography. Land will tell you what the buildings should be, even in subdivisions."

Berkus said he believed in the Olmsted residential enclave image of romantic, landscaped streets. We should live in a park, which, Berkus said, is still very important.

"I believe that most people really want to live in a quiet neighborhood where you can entertain on the street, the kids play street hockey, and the street itself ends up in the greenbelt system that takes you to the school or to the parks. The organic edge to me is very important, because in a subdivision, or in any development, it's important to have a sense of density in the center that comes apart on the edge. Moreover, I think that neotraditionalist design has lost the concept of creating landmark points of reference for community way finding."

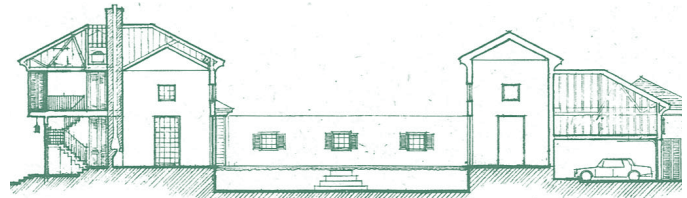


Ruminations on house and home

Hugh Newell Jacobsen, FAIA, established his architecture practice in Washington, D.C., in 1958. In the next 40 years, his buildings had won 110 awards for design excellence, including six national AIA Honor Awards.

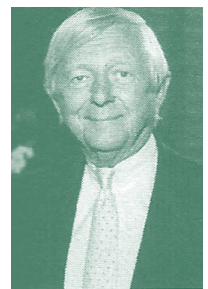
Everybody is born, lives, and dies in houses. Therefore, everybody believes they know all about them Jacobsen lamented: "Then in come the professionals, like ourselves, who spent our entire career and absolute dedication trying to improve the trinity of the w.c., sink, and tub to make a better bathroom, only to have Mrs. America tell you how it should be done. Then you're right back to where the plumber was years ago. I've always believed if plumbers can do a better job, let them do it. *Our* job is to design something that, hopefully, will be an improvement, a contribution."

"As far as New Urbanism and the charm of Windsor and Seaside,



I remember a marvelous debate between Andrés Duany and Peter Eisenman. And Peter said: 'What in God's name are you guys doing down there in Florida?' And Andrés said: 'We are doing cutting-edge planning and architecture.' And Peter said: 'If that's cutting-edge, I'm a crypto-Fascist.' And Andrés said: 'I'll accept that.'

"One of the questions I'm often asked is why I design houses. I have three children, a wife, and a family, and I need work. I was trained, like all of us, as a generalist. There is not a building type I have not designed and not built. But you get typecast like Lassie in this profession, and right now 90 percent of my work is single-family detached houses. Prior to the great crash of '88 to '90, 80 percent of my work was in university buildings. I have not had a jingle on the telephone since. I remember a number of years ago, I was introduced: 'Jacobsen has chosen to remain small.' What a crock! I am doing houses because that is what I have to do. But I do love doing them."



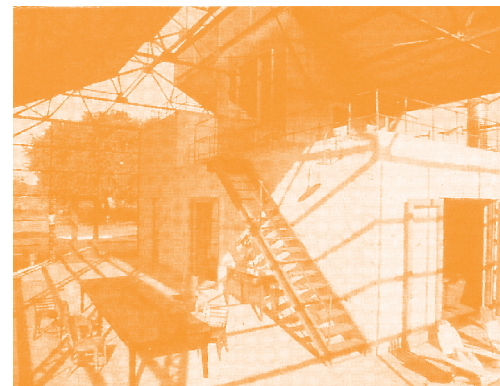
Regionalism, Texas style

David Lake, FAIA, is principal of Lake/Flato Architects in San Antonio. Since 1984, the firm has been constructing practical buildings whose ingenuity and craftsmanship merge tradition with new technologies.

"Ted Flato and I met in O'Neil Ford's office in 1980. When others might start considering where the bedrooms and bathrooms belong, he would say: 'Why don't you go down the timeline a bit and see what this house would be like as a ruin? If it's a good ruin, I like it. I don't care about the bathrooms.' He believed that all five senses are engaged by great, old pre-Modern structures, such as the adobes.

"Among the things that inspire us are the great architectural and industrial buildings sitting out in the Texas landscape. The silos, especially, are a very powerful element. We had a client who had little money—but he had a Butler building. We couldn't do anything with it, so he traded it for an old Alamo Cement Plant that was to be salvaged for the steel. This client is a great scrounger. Not only did he trade for this building, which had great girder trusses in it, but he worked out a deal where they would go out to his ranch 30 miles away and erect it.

"We took the building and broke it into three pieces. The trusses are 40 feet wide and the span between them is 12 feet. So for about \$125,000, we built this house, and it is still on of my favorites. We used a myriad of industrial materials. To turn the corner to go into the building, you go from corrugated metal to sheet metal, which solves the tricky corner detail you always have with corrugated metal. And on the screening, we came up with a detail of doing an angle and running the screen laterally. It's the largest screened porch in Texas, which of course makes it the largest screened porch in the world."



Design Forum XI: Dwelling



This year's Design Forum, April 11-12 in Charlottesville, was inspired by the 1998 Forum on the American House (pp 25-27). In revisiting the topic, though, the VSAIA Design Committee decided to move far beyond an examination of custom residential design and the U.S.

When crafting the program for Dwelling: The Art of Living in Century XXI, the committee's first focus was on selecting speakers here and abroad whose work exemplifies design excellence. Discussions swirled around a half dozen theme ideas and dozens of well-known and -respected architecture firms small and large. The theme and speakers also had to address the concerns and interests of mid-Atlantic architects, involve interdisciplinary schools of design, engage the imaginations of interns and younger architects, and touch on future technologies and social issues foreseeable today.

With 2014 VSAIA President Jack Davis, FAIA, and AIA CEO/EVP Robert Ivy, FAIA, agreeing to kick off the Friday evening keynote presentation, the program was ready for the committee to share.



THE QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED

How is residential architecture that is being put in place today already setting the tempo for how we can expect to enjoy life in the coming decades?

With the backdrop of climate change, geo-political uncertainty, population shifts, and burgeoning technological capabilities, it is always interesting to look to the one environment in which we would like to feel most secure: home. What that will mean in the next 20 to 50 years is exactly what architects, engineers, landscape architects, developers, and public entities (government and NGO) are conceiving and building today.

For urban populations, there is the eternal quest for more "livability" through transportation innovation, a selection of housing density, cleaner air, more green space, and a myriad of other amenities to facilitate how we work, shop, play, and congregate. China, India, and Africa are particularly interesting in the grand scope of geographic and socio-economic diversity. As those regions of the world continue to expand dramatically in the coming years, we will be seeing context derived from—in many cases—tabula rasa landscapes. How they come together in society-building ways is the largest picture we might be facing in our lifetimes and those of immediate generations to follow.

All of these aspects—again, together with design excellence—led to the committee selecting Friday keynote speaker and Saturday panelist Ma Yansong, founding principal of MAD Architects, Beijing, and Saturday panelists Kai-Uwe Bergmann, AIA, managing partner of BIG, with offices in Copenhagen and New York City; Peter Gluck of New York City architect-led design-build firm Gluck+; and Jeff Kovel, AIA, founding principal of Skylab Architecture, based in Portland, Ore. The moderator for the all-day Saturday portion of the Forum is author and educator Ghazal Abbasy-Asbagh, of the University of Virginia School of Architecture, a graduate of the Harvard GSD.

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MA YANSONG

Ma graduated from the Beijing Institute of Civil Engineering and Architecture and earned his MArch from Yale. He has since taught architecture at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and his reputation worldwide has risen rapidly during the past decade.

As the founder of MAD Architects, in 2004, Ma's first international success, in 2011, was "Absolute World," two high-rise buildings in Mississauga, Canada. This marked the first landmark-building competition won by a Chinese architect for an overseas market. In China, MAD gained note from Ma's design of the Hutong Bubble, a series of Modern extensions to traditional Chinese housing intended to save the Hutong alley neighborhoods of Beijing and preserve them as living communities rather than the tourist attractions many are devolving into.

Of his own work, Ma says: "The freedom and independence [in the traditional siheyuan homes that make up the Hutongs] have had a significant influence on my work. The idea of architecture coexisting with nature fascinates me. So much of today's architecture is like a consumer product—mass-produced. A mass-produced item has no spirit. It's disposable—something to be used once and then simply thrown away. I want to create timeless designs that move with people and inspire people—to make them feel and think."

MAD Architects' residential projects strive for a symbiotic relationship between man, shelter, and nature. They include the Huangshan residential villas and the more traditional Qingdao private residential courtyard. The firm currently is designing a residential development in the heart of Rome and a mixed-use development in Amsterdam.



MAD's Urban Forest, above, comprises upper-level apartments for people in all stages of life and get sunlight, fresh air, and views. Offices merge with life on the street. BIG's 8House near Copenhagen, below, received a 2012 AIA Institute Honor Award.

29



Of BIG's Scandinavian tradition, Bergmann says: "Scandinavians have always been very pragmatic because they have not had a lot of resources, historically. And they've had a harsh climate. Having to make do with very little is actually part of the work that we and other Scandinavian architects do. Added to that would be a social responsibility that we are actually doing things that are not only for certain clients or groups, but we are making things that are more accessible to the larger part of society."

Moreover, he says, "BIG does not only work with new construction, we do a lot of renovation, such as within the historic context of Copenhagen. One of our latest projects is restoring an old dry dock, such as you'd find in Norfolk. We are re-programming it with new life as a cultural institution. Knowing that Virginia has a plethora of really historic structures, I would say that even those members who are more historically inclined can see a lot for themselves from some of our projects."

KAI-UWE BERGMANN

Among his design and management responsibilities, Bergmann manages BIG's New York City office and heads up the firm's global business development and communications operations. His expertise includes project proposals in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the U.S.

Having grown up in Atlanta, Bergmann earned his BS in architecture from UVa. and MArch from UCLA. And he has architectural registration in the U.S., UK, and Denmark.

"I'm not your quintessential kind of 'BIGster,' the majority of the partners are Danish," he says. "And because I'm a little bit of an anomaly, I'm able to bridge between the life and experiences of growing up in this country with living 10 years in Europe and experiencing the Danish approach to design."

PETER GLUCK

Gluck received both his BA and, in 1965, his MArch from Yale University. After designing a series of houses from New York to Newfoundland, he went to Tokyo to design large projects for a leading Japanese construction consortium. This experience influenced Gluck's later work both in his knowledge of Japan's traditional aesthetics and of its efficient modern methods of integrated construction and design.

His firm, Gluck+ (formerly Peter Gluck and Partners) in New York City, has been designing and building throughout the country since 1972. In 1992, Peter Gluck and Partners joined ARCS, a construction-management firm established to build the firm's designs. It became Gluck+ in 1997 when it also joined Aspen GK, Inc.

"We are architects, first of all," Gluck says of his firm. "We design as any architect would. And, likewise, there is always value engineering in architect-led design-build delivery. The difference with what Gluck+ is able to do is keep the value engineering in line with the programmatic goals. What also sets us apart is that a lot of architects are afraid of the fact that architect-led design build is capital intensive."

Design-build can also be a means of risk management (although, of course, not risk avoidance). Of that topic, Gluck does not mince words: "The lawyers run the country, which is part of this country's problem. Somehow, at the full scale they are at now, they feel that by making the proper contracts and coming up with the proper relationship among different companies where each has different responsibilities, then you know in court whose job and whose responsibility it was. Thus, it is all conceptual on the premise that you are going to be in court. So when you are in court, you've already lost."



The Stack, above, used offsite modular construction to create moderate-income housing in Manhattan. The solidly built infill design went up in 19 days.

Below, the Hoke Residence, aka, the *Twilight* Cullen House.

30



JEFF KOVEL

Growing up in a Modern home just outside New York City, Kovel was interested in architecture from an early age. After studying architecture in Rome and graduating with a professional degree from Cornell University in 1995, he went west to settle in Portland, where he could combine his love of nature with his New York Modernist roots. His early portfolio included a series of high-profile spaces for rock musician Lenny Kravitz.

In 1999, he founded Skylab Architecture and continued his exploration of how historic precedence blends with aspirations for the future. He also continued to gain public exposure. The Hoke House (above), completed in 2007 and designed as a speculative


development, sold within days of going on the market. A movie location scout saw the house in a regional architectural periodical, contacted owner John Hoke, and the house became familiar internationally as the Cullen House in the movie *Twilight*.

Skylab's process is research-based and iterative. Their work is recognized for its innovation, merging high concept design with sustainable building goals. "We look for authentic meaning and relationships," Kovel says. "We do not rush aesthetic conclusions."

"One thing we're really interested in is the concept of regenerative design. There are situations where we can go into blighted sites and create mechanisms that actually restore the natural condition in conjunction with the built form. In that respect, we're approaching a partnership between landscape and architecture across many scales, whether in an apartment building, single-family home, or prefabricated system. We have been using nature-based approaches to heal sites and develop closer harmony between people and their environments when they are in more natural conditions."



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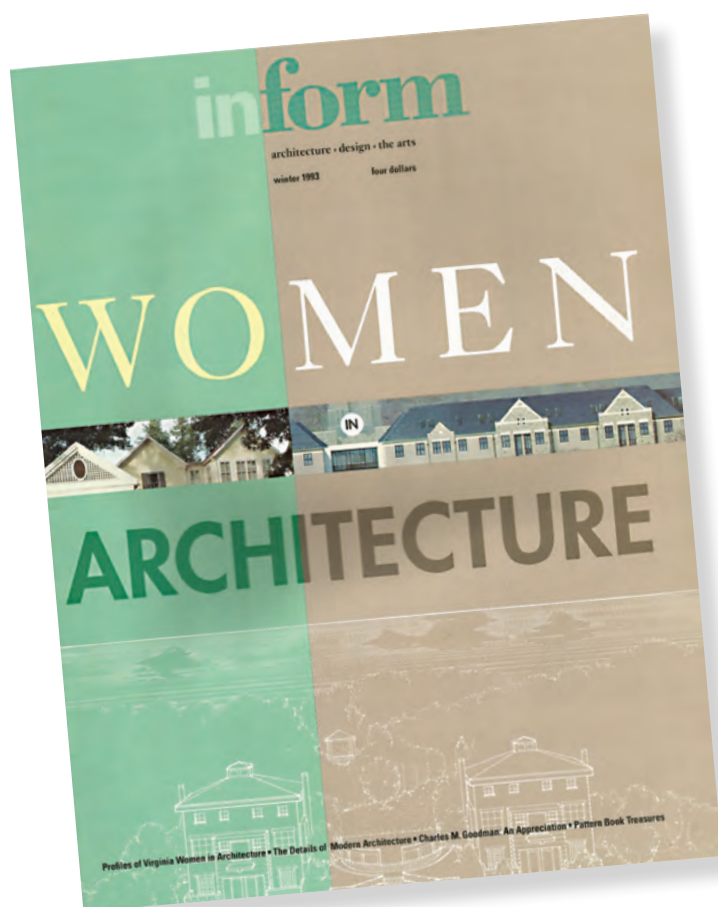
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Women in Architecture: Taking Stock

These excerpts are from the winter 1993 issue. Written by Vernon Mays—and reprinted here retaining present tense—they accompanied an article by Aimee Cunningham that surveyed the situation of female architects in Virginia and their work through 1993. The opening essay, “From Humble Beginnings,” spoke of Louise Blanchard Bethune, the first woman elected to membership and elevated to Fellowship in the AIA. It also recognized Susan A. Maxman, FAIA, who was serving her term as the first national AIA president that very year. More recently, women elected to the highest AIA elected office include Kate Schwennsen, FAIA, who, coincidentally, has agreed to chair the 2014 Inform Awards jury; this year’s AIA President—also the Chief Executive of the Virginia Center for Architecture—Helene Combs Dreiling, FAIA; and 2015 President-elect Elizabeth Chu Richter, FAIA. Perhaps a quick look back will show a measure of progress as women move from, in many cases, the margins to central positions of professional leadership.



Linda Michael

There was no hoopla and little recognition when Linda Michael broke the gender barrier in 1965. That’s when Michael, a graduate of the University of Virginia Architecture School, received her license and applied for membership in the AIA—becoming the state’s first female member.

She apprenticed with firms in Richmond and Charlottesville before moving to Alexandria in 1962. A year later, she opened her own firm. Michael says she and then-husband Revell Michael picked Alexandria as a place to pursue their careers because both had backgrounds in traditional architecture.

In 1967, they formed Michael & Michael, just as Alexandria was on the verge of a renaissance. They began with small jobs, then designed townhouses and small commercial projects on infill lots as developers began to target Old Town. The practice evolved to include small mixed-use project, and by the 1980s was designing commercial/residential complexes covering entire city blocks.

Michael has been active all along in Alexandria’s business community, serving as the first woman president of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and holding positions on the boards of a local bank and hospital. She helped create the Northern Virginia Chapter of the AIA.

She earned a doctorate in architecture and raised three children while working, and credits Revell Michael with taking up the slack when child-rearing duties called her home. A steady stream of developer clients helped Michael & Michael grow to 13 people in the 1980s, but the slow economy has shrunk the firm to four. Still, Michael says she is lucky to have worked with developers who were interested in quality construction as well as projects that would sell.

“I can drive down streets past block after block of my projects, and I feel like they fit will into this city. I feel good about them.”

[Dr. Michael has retired from practice and lives in Roswell, Ga.]



Susan Woodward Notkins, AIA

Susan Notkins is nothing if not a realist. She freely acknowledges that her five-person firm in McLean exists in order to work on small projects for individual clients.

“Many of our clients are not easily able to afford the services of an architect,” she says. “But they come believing that we can give them something better than they can provide for themselves—a modicum of delight, if you will—and that we can somehow guide them more safely through the mine fields of construction.”

Notkins came into practice in a roundabout way. With a degree in politics and Russian studies from Hollins College, she worked from 1963 to 1968 as a writer and editor for political newsletters. She soon tired of

focusing on others' accomplishments, however, and decided to pursue a line of work that would give her a sense of "doing." Looking back, she says, I went into architecture because I loved buildings and cities and towns. I loved to look at them and imagine about them."

In 1972, Notkins left the University of Maryland with the first graduating class of architects, then worked with area firms for two years before hanging out her shingle during the 1974 recession. Why so quick to strike out on her own? "First, there wasn't much work out there that was very interesting," she says. "And, second, I wanted to see what I could do by myself. I really set up my practice as a challenge." Taking that risk allowed her to complete the renovation of her own house, and set her off on a course in which she concentrates on small commercial projects, new residences, and a variety of renovation work.

With each type of project, Notkins makes herself think of buildings according to how people will experience them. "I was fortunate to have the last of the great people-oriented educators, which had a profound effect on the way I think about buildings," she says. For that, she credits her mentors Charles Moore and John Wiebenson, both of whom conveyed a sense of buildings as "joyful shelter."

Hers is a career that also has left room for service to the profession. A recent addition to the Virginia Society AIA Board of Directors, she has been active in the AIA at the local and national levels and recently has won chapter awards for houses she designed. For five years she also served on the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board. Notkins considers service to clients as equally vital to the health of her practice and the cause of good architecture. "The very best buildings come from a profoundly excellent relationship between client and architect," she says. "I am a conduit—not a vacuum—to transfer the client's desire."

[Notkins continues to practice in McLean, Va.]

Judith A. Kinnard, FAIA

Teaching architecture is as central to Judith Kinnard's existence as practicing architecture. Her stops along the tenure track include teaching appointments at the Boston Architectural Center, Syracuse, Princeton—and now the University of Virginia, where she believes her presence helps provide the role of mentor for young women who may consider careers in architecture. Since 1987, Kinnard has made her home in Charlottesville, balancing a full-time teaching post with the management of Schwartz-Kinnard Architects, a small practice she maintains with her husband and U.Va. colleague Kenneth Schwartz. Prior to founding the firm in 1983, Kinnard worked for several Boston architects both while she was in school at Cornell and immediately after her graduation in 1977.

Because of the time demands generated by their university commitments, Kinnard and Schwartz do little marketing, waiting instead for word-of-mouth to bring work to them.

Whether the job is an apartment complex or a small residential addition, Kinnard says each of the firm's projects reflects a concern with important issues such as context, public space, and the overlap of inside and outside space. While most of the competitions they have chosen to enter have focused on multifamily housing, their most recent winner was a proposal made in association with architect John Meder for the Little Theatre, a performing arts complex in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Kinnard says the decision to participate in competitions, which is clearly not a money-making strategy, hinges on "whether we find the project to be intellectually engaging and something we can use as a forum to explore architectural ideas." That interest has been enough to catapult them to top prizes in 1988 for a 165-unit townhouse development in Baltimore, in 1986 for the Coldspring Newtown/Cylburn Arboretum design competition on Baltimore, and in 1985 for the Hillside Trust Housing competition in Cincinnati.

As for pursuing commissions in the architecturally conservative heart of Jefferson Country, Kinnard says it is a natural extension of the firm's interests. "I think in some ways we are conservative architects because we are interested in tradition," she says. "But we like to reinterpret tradition."

[Kinnard is currently the Harvey-Wadsworth Chair of Landscape Urbanism at Tulane University, and professor of architecture. In 2010, she was elected as president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture with a three-year term on the national board. Her presidential year began in July 2011 during the ACSA 100th anniversary.]

Jane Cady Wright, FAIA

Jane Wright's love of architecture was kindled at a young age, when she traveled through Europe with her family and witnessed the history of building first-hand. "The other thing is that I had artistic leanings," she says. "I have liked to draw and do photography ever since I was very young." That combination of interests and talent led her to architecture school at Virginia Tech, where she was the winner of the first Virginia Society Prize competition for students. After graduating in 1980, she took the sheepskin and two summers' worth of experience at John Carl Warnecke & Associates and went to work at VVCR Inc. in Roanoke.

Wright says the turning point in her career was when she landed a job at Hanbury & Co. in Norfolk. "I was really taken by the amount of freedom they allowed me. They just let me make my own path. Even though she left Hanbury briefly to work for the Army Corps of Engineers, Wright soon returned to the reconstituted Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co. "I knew it was a firm that was going to go places. There were a lot of creative thinkers. I like a place where people challenge your thinking. And Hanbury offered that." Now a partner in the firm, Wright has recently gained recognition through state and local design awards for a private residence in Norfolk and a child care center at the College of William & Mary.

The college/university connection is becoming an increasingly important one for Wright, who plays a lead design role in many of the



A: Michael's mixed-use Colcraft Station

B: Notkin's Darman Residence

C: Kinnard's Bruner Residence addition

firm's higher-education commissions. The project list includes residence halls at Longwood, Virginia Tech, and William & Mary; a cultural arts building at Virginia Military Institute; an administration building at Tidewater Community College; studies for a performing arts center at James Madison University; renovation of a theater at Old Dominion University; and numerous master planning projects.

"I like to work with people on college campuses," she says. "Academic people are current, up-to-date—they are progressive in their thinking. They are worldly. And they are seeking to improve something they already have. I also like context, and a campus has a very definite sense of place and time. Working in that vernacular is wonderful."

Wright makes no secret of the fact that she has little interest in doing speculative office space for a tenant whose identity and needs are unknown. "I like getting to know the users and tailoring the building to their needs." A mother of two, Wright feels so positive about her own early exposure to architecture that she is passing along some of her enthusiasm by volunteering in an Architecture in Education program with second graders at Norfolk Academy.

[As a name principal of Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company, Wright continues to shepherd the firm's well-recognized reputation for design excellence.]



34

Helene Combs Dreiling, FAIA

"I had a really unusual beginning in architecture, particularly for a woman," says Helene Combs Dreiling, whose college breaks were spent working for a contractor who made it his job to teach her all he could about making buildings. Her first task was to dig footings. Later she graduated to pouring concrete. "It gave me a good understanding of how things go together," she says.

Since graduating from Virginia Tech in 1981, Dreiling has worked for firms both large and small, with a stop in-between at Colonial Williamsburg. "I chose to go there because I was very interested in historic preservation and reworking old buildings. Over the next decades I think that experience will be valuable."

Dreiling moved to Roanoke in 1986 and went to work for Smithey & Boynton. Three years later, she resigned to care for her newborn son and set up a practice at home. Her firm, which specializes in house additions and small commercial projects, keeps her as busy as she wants and allows her time to be active in state and local AIA affairs.

"Since I work in my home, involvement in the AIA allows me to maintain close contact with other professionals—and that's important," she says. Her civic mindedness was recognized recently when she was honored in the Girl Scouts Women of Distinction program. In 1994, she will become president of AIA Blue Ridge, the first woman to hold that post.

[Virginia Center for Architecture Executive Director Combs Dreiling is currently serving as the national AIA President.]



Leslie W. Loudon, AIA

Leslie Loudon's penchant for following projects from inception to completion has introduced her to a wide range of activities. A 1977 U.Va. graduate and self-described contextualist, Loudon says urban design has influenced much of her work. As a project architect at Marcellus Wright Cox & Smith in Richmond, she participated in a variety of planning, educational, residential, and office projects.

Her track record in school and university buildings has served her well since she was hired in 1990 as a project manager at Virginia Commonwealth University. At VCU, Loudon wears a different hat, functioning as the coordinator between hired consultants, usually architects, and representatives of MCV hospital. A \$20 million ambulatory care facility soon to break ground is the largest single building she has been associated with.

Loudon served on the James River Chapter AIA Board for nine years, chairing its Women in Architecture Committee in 1991. A member of the Richmond Mayor's Commission for the Disabled, she also is active in Hanover Habitat for Humanity. Her long-range goal is to return to private practice as a design architect.

[Loudon is currently an associate with Bowie Gridley Architects in Washington.]



Donna M. Phaneuf, AIA

Graphic design is only one of the ways in which Donna Phaneuf expresses her creative instincts. "I do a lot of graphic work and I try to bring the simplicity of strong graphic forms into my architecture," she says. A 1983 honors graduate of Virginia Tech and accomplished flutist, Phaneuf began her career in Switzerland. She returned to the U.S. and landed in Norfolk, working for Williams & Tazewell then moving over to Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas. Having a baby in 1989 sidetracked her briefly, but by mid-1990 she was back at work on her own. Operating as Phaneuf & Associates, she rented office space from architect Glen Anders and soon the two began going after projects together. In 1992, they incorporated as VIA Design Architects, a six-person Norfolk firm that is building its reputation with small commercial projects and residential work. Phaneuf brings to the partnership an emphasis on marketing, proposal-making, schematic design, and design development. In her design work, she aspires to combine the best traits of architects Frank Gehry and Hugh Newell Jacobsen—the former for his expressive simplicity, the latter for his detailing skills.

[Phaneuf continues as owner of VIA Design Architects, one of the most respected architectural master planning and design firms in the mid-Atlantic region.]



Joanne J. Goldfarb, AIA

When Joanne Goldfarb was applying to architecture schools in the early 1950s, many schools turned her down flatly because she was female. She clearly recalls the letter from Cornell, "which made it clear they did not accept women because they felt it was a waste of a

professional education.”

She opted for Syracuse instead, graduating in 1957. While in college, Goldfarb held summer jobs in the offices of Minoru Yamasaki and Eero Saarinen. But it was her personal decision, rather than her brushes with greatness, that most influenced her career. “My career was altered by a lot of moves around the country. And then the decision to have children was extremely influential.” Staying home to raise three children, she maintained a small practice, which, by necessity, focused on residences.

Goldfarb has executed many adaptive reuse projects, too, including her own residence carved from a 19th century firehouse (*Inform*, Winter 1992). Three-dimensional models are critical to her way of working, and she believes that “when you are dealing with small buildings that aren’t multiples of anything, you should be able to make changes during construction. It is not a building because it is on paper.”

[Joanne Goldfarb has retired from architectural practice and lives in Key Biscayne, Fla.]

S. Dorothea Scott, AIA

Thea Scott may have found her niche designing civic buildings. “I love them, because they all have personality,” she says. A 1985 master’s graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, Scott came into architecture from a fine arts background. After graduation, she joined a Houston practice doing space planning and design for offices. Later she switched to a firm that specialized in high-end retail. In 1989, she moved to Virginia and was hired by Hughes Group, where she has designed a community center, bath house, indoor aquatics center, library, and two fire stations.

Scott hadn’t worked long for Sterling architect Wayne Hughes before she was infected with his enthusiasm for ARCHES, a volunteer program in which architects teach design to elementary students. She sees it as a chance to improve the American cityscape. “ARCHES is something where seeds are planted. It helps children ask questions and wonder what could be. It’s really the hope for the future.”

[Scott-Fundling is now principal of Design Matters in Reston.]

Beth Reader, FAIA

Beth Reader served her apprenticeship in Middleburg, Va., where architectural commissions typically address the needs of well-heeled clients. To strike some balance in her work, she began contributing her free time to City Light Development Corp., a nonprofit group that builds affordable housing. Later, when Reader opened an office with husband-architect Chuck Swartz, her good intentions paid off. City Light commissioned Reader & Swartz to design nine single-family houses for low- to moderate-income families. That job, in addition to an adaptive reuse project for the Shenandoah Valley Independent Living Center, led to a number of small commissions for the young Winchester

firm. Reader, a 1986 honors graduate of Virginia Tech, says she is inspired by architects such as Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Greene & Greene, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Fay Jones.

“Their work was designed at a good scale for people. It’s organic and site-specific. I like the details.” In its work, Reader & Swartz seeks to maximize the view, the site, and the relationship to the outdoors—bringing the outside in and the inside out, she says. “We go for fairly open spaces.

[Reader currently serves on the VSAIA Board, and Reader & Swartz continues its award-winning work in residential, commercial, and community work.]

Candace M.P. Smith, AIA, and Lori Snyder Garrett, AIA

As business partners, Candace Smith and Lori Snyder Garrett are a complementary pair. But they came to the practice of architecture in very different ways. Smith had studied anthropology and history in college, and was working as office manager of a research firm when she decided to return to graduate school in architecture.

Snyder Garrett, on the other hand, knew as a teenager that she would be an architect. She was advised, however, to get a good liberal arts education first—and she did, majoring in math and art.

The pair met in 1983 when they enrolled in the same master’s program at U.Va., but the notion of working together didn’t strike them for years to come. Smith completed her degree and worked for Johnson, Craven & Gibson for three years. Snyder Garrett graduated and joined the office of Bruce R. Wardell. As their careers progressed, the two women joined a breakfast group that met weekly, so each was well aware when the other began to seek change.

“We basically share a good business sense and our moral sense of architecture is very similar. We don’t want to do schlock architecture,” says Smith. They opened their doors as Smith Garrett in 1991 and had fortunate beginnings. “We didn’t have to market one bit,” Smith says. “And we had many women clients who were very eager to work with a woman-owned firm.”

While both partners in the five-person Charlottesville firm participate in all aspects of a job, they bring different strengths to the practice: Snyder Garrett in design, Smith in construction supervision and working drawings. While they have completed a number of small houses and impressive residential additions, their bread-and-butter work these days comes from U.Va.—primarily interiors and renovations. Notes Smith: “We would like to do more institutional and ecclesiastical work.”

[Smith is currently principal of Candace M.P. Smith Architect, P.C. Garrett is senior principal and vice president of Glavé & Holmes Architecture and was the 2012 VSAIA President.]



D: Wright's Child Care Center at William & Mary; E: Combs Dreiling's Salon One, Roanoke; F: Louden's study for Jepson Hall, University of Richmond;
G: Phaneuf's Crisler Residence addition; H: Goldfarb's Warneck Pool House; I: Scott's Herndon Community Library; J: variations on Reader's low-cost housing;
K: Smith and Snyder Garrett's Casa Maria facelift.

Visions of Seaside: Foundation/Evolution/Imagination—Built and Unbuilt Architecture

By Dhiru A. Thadani, Foreword by Vincent Scully,
Introduction by Paul Goldberger

New York City, Rizzoli 2013

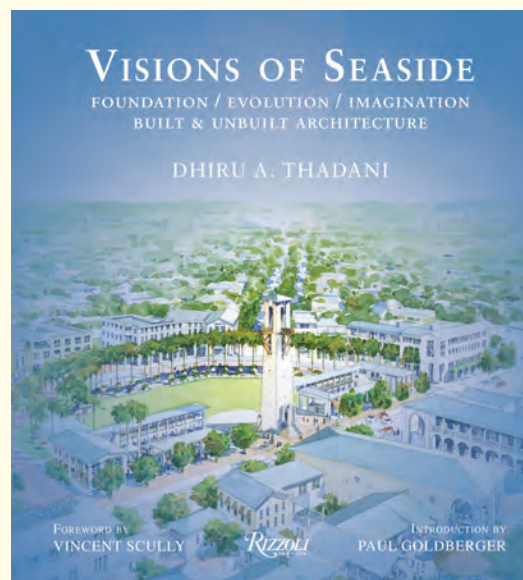
608 pages, \$75

Seaside represents different things to different people. It's an incredibly compelling small town that's been luring design aficionados and fun seekers to the Florida Panhandle for more than three decades. But whether one comes to Seaside for its architectural icons, groundbreaking town plan, or white sandy beaches, the place continues to engage, entertain, and educate visitors to this holiday town and Mecca of New Urbanism.

Founded in 1981 by Robert and Daryl Davis on 80 acres of Gulf-front land that had been in the family since the 1940s, Seaside set the stage for return to traditional town planning and the yet-to-be-named New Urbanism movement. Seaside's urban code and town plan (unusually innovative at the time) were designed by Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. As the utopian town was slowly becoming a reality, Seaside was already the subject of architectural discussions and academic polemics, as well popular lifestyle magazines.

Although Seaside has been featured in countless scholarly and popular publications over the years, Dhiru Thadani's *Visions of Seaside* is the definitive tome on the history of this small town and a work of art in its own right. Weighing in at 608 pages, it's not exactly light beach reading. It is, however, a worthy addition to any coffee table or library.

Visions of Seaside is filled with insightful essays and graced with literally thousands of drawings, current and historical photographs, and imaginative illustrations that offer a sweeping narrative of how Seaside came to be, including precise floor plans and elevations of iconic homes and civic structures, elaborate unbuilt schemes, romantic watercolor renderings, and grand ideas for the future of a small town along the Gulf.



A foreword by architectural historian Vincent Scully and introduction by critic Paul Goldberger are followed by essays by key players including, Robert and Daryl Davis, Leon Krier, Robert A. M. Stern, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Andrés Duany.

The scope of *Visions of Seaside* is astonishing, addressing the evolution of the town plan and dissecting nearly every notable structure. The organization is brilliant, the text engaging, and illustrations a delight. This book is for anyone who has visited Seaside or ever wanted to. It promises to be a timeless source of information and inspiration.

Seaside was conceived as a "city of ideas" to serve as a model for a more beautiful and civil way to build and live. *Visions of Seaside* is surely a "book of ideas" in keeping with the best traditions of the original vision and realized town.

—Lynne Nesmith

Lynne Nesmith is former architecture editor of *Southern Living* and senior editor of *Architecture*. The author of *Seaside Style* and *30A Style*, she lives just down the beach from Seaside in Seagrove, Fla.

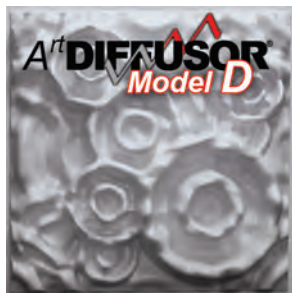


Seaside came to be just as New Urbanism was emerging as a school of urban planning thought. Theory and reality have evolved on their own merits ever since.

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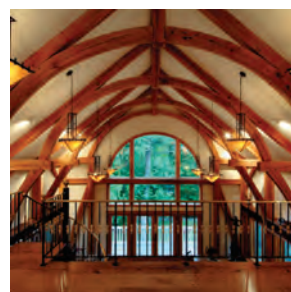


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GS&P was invited to participate in a design competition for what is expected to be the world's largest satellite terminal when it is completed in 2018, with 105 aircraft gates. Tel: 804.788.0710 / www.greshamsmith.com



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LPDA is designing a vibrant pedestrian space that serves as a gateway, public park, and promenade while connecting Danville’s river front heritage and business environment. Tel: 434.293.2034 / www.lpda.net



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Project: The Standard, Charlottesville

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What's to Come for Bigs and Smalls?

There are many opportunities for revitalization in Northern Virginia, as Cooper Carry has shown with its welcoming and much-needed renovation of Landmark Mall, a long-time fixture along I-95.

"We've always emphasized smart development: striving for a balance of uses and destinations as close in to the city core as you can get and afford as the market drives it. I think that the overall move back to the urban cores will last for a good long time—and that applies to the second- and third-tier cities as well. We see a lot of young people moving to Raleigh, for example, because it is affordable and they can have the urban setting and lifestyle they are looking for."

A vacuum of demographic shift

"I do mostly residential projects," Shertz says. "But anecdotally, from talking to local business people, there is a general feeling as we enter 2014 that the real estate market is strengthening. Hopefully, this means businesses will be opening and people will feel comfortable renovating and building again. A lot of my work when I moved here in 2005 involved people building a second, third, or fourth home. At the end of 2008 that stopped, which is a hard reality in a community where a lot of our economy is tied up in money from elsewhere."

After what he calls "a steady diet of kitchen renovations and modest additions"—as well as some mutually beneficial collaborative work with a nearby landscape architect—Shertz is looking forward to a turnaround in the custom residential market, but he remains cautious. "I've had to turn away projects because it was clear the people were shopping for a bargain. There is a point where I can't incur the professional liability for a prospective fee that, on top of being low, is in no way guaranteed."

After the past five years, cautious optimism is understandable, of course. "I do know some architects who have decided to retire or find work outside of the profession," says Shertz, who himself has been devoting many hours to establishing a commercial nano-brewery, the Chester River Brewing Co. "It is all about doing the things you love. And things will get better. But, for now, I think people looking for 2007 to come back all of a sudden are deluding themselves. Things are different, and we either have to adapt or we die."

—DEG

Now it's time to turn from memories of the past toward hope for the future. To get some anecdotal idea of the prospects architects are seeing for 2014, and how they are positioning themselves, *Inform* consulted two people in particular: David Kitchens, AIA, corporate vice president and partner-in-charge of the Cooper Carry Alexandria office, and Kevin Shertz, AIA, a sole practitioner in rural Chestertown, Md.

With an office of more than 50 people in Alexandria, Kitchens is preparing for an uptick in business for 2014. During the difficult years, the principals have positioned the firm for flexibility and growth "by maintaining our most valuable and critical staff leadership with the most diverse experience—project architects and above," he says. Now, in anticipation of higher workloads, the firm is rebuilding strength from the intern through staff-architect positions.

When bringing in young architects, talent and adaptability to the firm culture are two key factors, Kitchens notes: "We also maintain relationships with a strategic list of universities. We want to make sure all of our architects are trained thoroughly all the way through building construction. Once they get to our office, we want them to be immersed fully in every aspect of architecture. We put a lot of emphasis on urban design, as well. Our work is cross-disciplinary as a full-service design firm, so Cooper Carry does not grow pure designers and we don't grow pure technicians." And, as they work together, designers share strengths to shore weaknesses, he says.

What's to do for 2014?

"My advice in general as we move into 2014 is to be aggressive but cautious," Kitchens says. "You have to be aggressive with your marketing pursuits because, let's face it, in the Washington area at least, if you're not two years out ahead of a job being announced, you've missed the boat. But be cautious in your growth. In the early entitlement and conceptual design phases of a project, it is a lengthy, pick-up-put-down process. When you have a project that will take two-and-a-half years to gain development approvals, your staff needs are not full-time, and you only need full project staff periodically to meet submission and presentation deadlines leading to entitlements. Full project teams are not assembled until the project carries forward into full architectural basic services."

"In most of the urban areas—which would include Atlanta, for instance—this is a great time to be doing urban infill architecture. That growth should continue because of the incredible influx of the Millennials who are going to be there for awhile. And there are enough people in that demographic group that they will continue to bring a whole new attitude of sustainability and smarter development into the mix."

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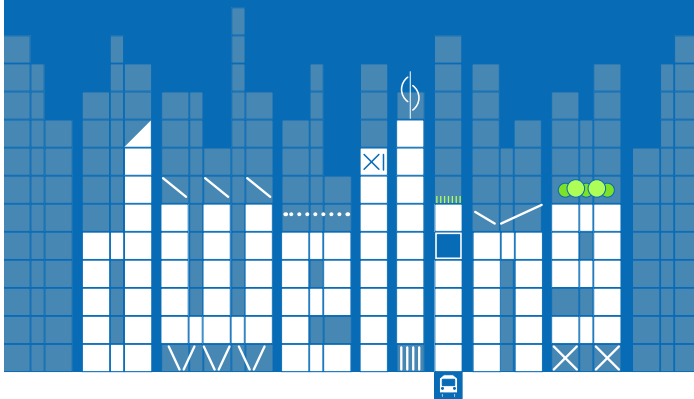
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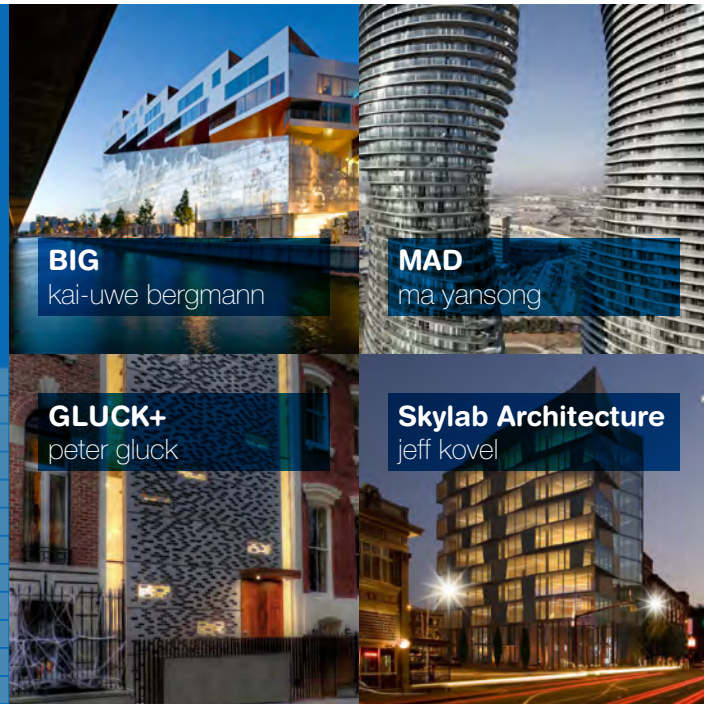
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Clark Nexsen	ClarkNexsen.com	p.1
Concrete Ideas	ConcreteIDEASva.com	p.37
Dreaming Creek Timber Frame Homes		
	DreamingCreek.com/Resources/Architects-Specifiers	p.37
EYP Architecture & Engineering	eypae.com	p.4
Marvin Windows	Marvin.com	p.6
Old Dominion Innovations	OldDominionInnovations.com	p.37
Simonton Windows	Simonton.com/archdetails	inside front cover
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