

TRADITIONAL BUILDING ■ August 2018 ■ Vol. 31/No. 4 ■ Hospitality & Commercial Interiors/The Clem Labine Award/Doors/Hardware/Flooring/Decorative Painting/Lighting/Stairs/Woodworking

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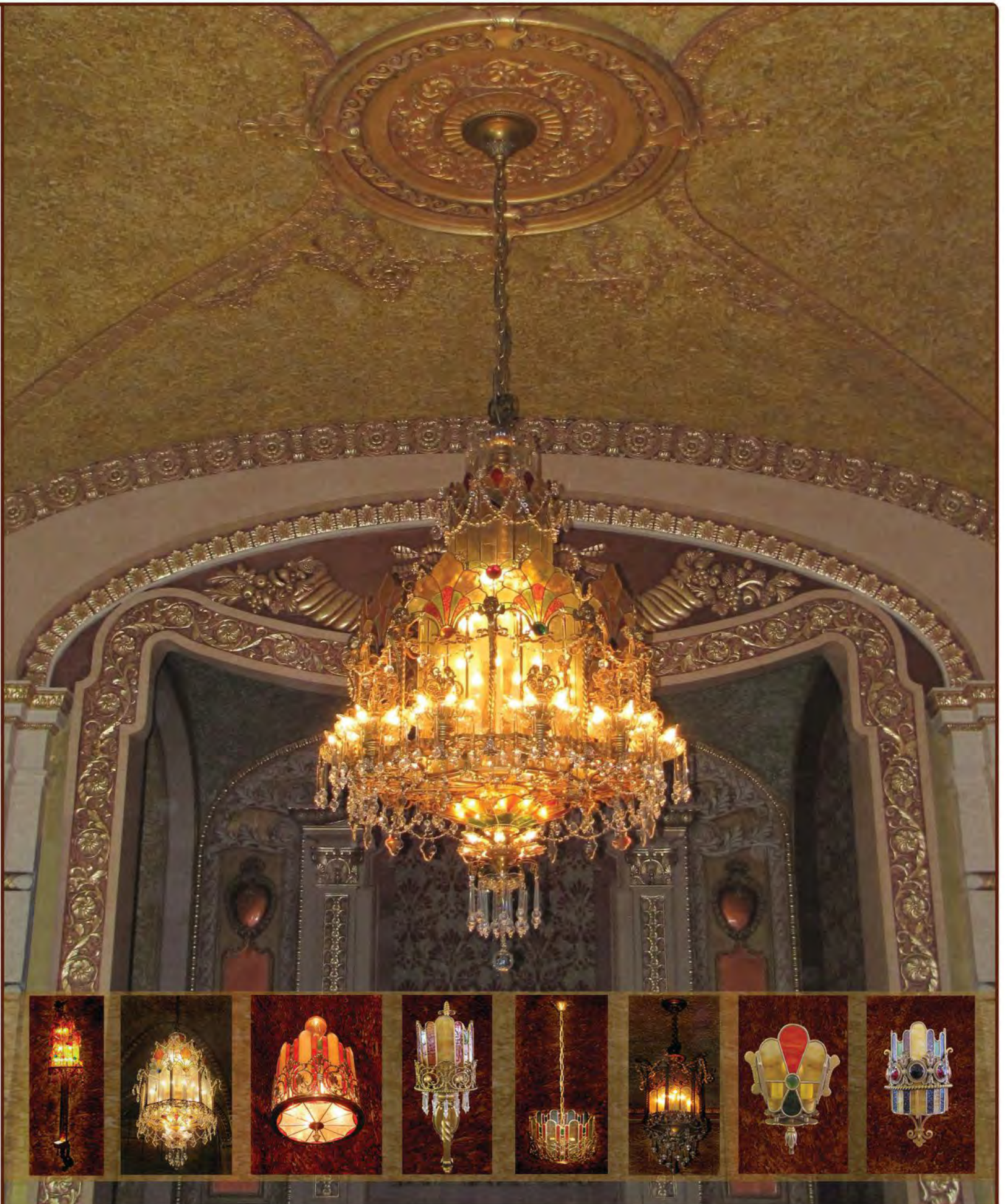
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August 2018

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A view of the restaurant in the  
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# 2019 PALLADIO AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRIES



The Palladio Awards program is produced by *Clem Labine's Traditional Building* and *Clem Labine's Period Homes*. Presented by The Traditional Building Conference, the award is named in honor of Andrea Palladio, the Renaissance architect who created modern architecture for his time while drawing on past models for inspiration.



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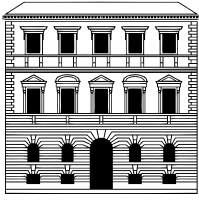
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**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2018, AT 2PM EASTERN**

### AN INTRODUCTION TO ORNAMENTAL METALS

*1 AIA HSW Learning Unit*

**Speaker:** Douglas Bracken, Wiemann Metalcraft

This course will provide an overview of different types of metal alloys used for ornament, fencing, lighting and more. The session is organized to support architects' efforts to integrate the use of metal ornament into projects for new construction, historic preservation, residential, commercial, and institutional work. You will learn about production methods and finishes for the metal alloys.

After attending this session, participants will know or do the following:

- List the basic mechanical properties of and differences between the most commonly used metal alloys including wrought iron, cast iron, steel, aluminum, brass, and bronze.
- Compare and contrast casting and forging in the production of decorative metal products.
- Describe the most common finishes applied to decorative metals.
- Consider how changes in the manufacture of ornamental metal components and fencing have given architects more options for their use in projects today



**TUESDAY OCTOBER 2, 2018, AT 2PM EASTERN**

### DESIGNING SECURITY AND SWING: LOCKS, HINGES AND THEIR APPLICATIONS

*1 AIA Health/Safety/Welfare Learning Unit*

**Speaker:** Betsy O'Day, Business Development Manager, Nostalgic Warehouse

Responsible design work demands good specifications and a knowledge of options for all types of architectural elements, including door hardware, such as locks and hinges. This session will provide a brief history of locks and hinges; an overview of five different lock types; a summary of lock operation and handing by different users, such as right-hand and left-hand applications; and a review of appropriate sizes and weights for various doors.

The presentation will address ANSI standards for finishes and cycle-testing and UL fire ratings.

Different types of keying systems including high security and electronic keys will be discussed.

The session will conclude with questions and answers.

After attending this session, participants will know or do the following:

- Compare and contrast tubular, cylindrical, mortise, multipoint and rim locks.
- Assess and apply size and weight considerations for common door sizes and cycles.
- Consult ANSI standards, UL ratings and building codes when specifying hinges and locks.
- Consider the range of users when selecting locks and hinges for a variety of installations.





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**GLASS AND WINDOWS:  
TECHNOLOGY AND PERFORMANCE**

1 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speaker:**

Kyle Sword, Manager Business Development, Pilkington North America



1

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**WINDOW RETROFITS FOR OCCUPANT  
COMFORT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

1 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speakers:**

Russ Eisenberg, Vice President, Sales, Indow



2

**ON DEMAND**

**TRADITIONAL MATERIALS,  
CONTEMPORARY METHODS: A CASE  
STUDY OF CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT HALL**

1 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speakers:**

Lori Snyder Garrett, FAIA,  
H. Randolph Holmes, Jr. AIA,  
Glavé and Holmes Architecture



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**ON DEMAND**

**APPLYING BUILDING CODES  
TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

1.5 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speaker:**

Theodore Vedock, AIA,  
Hammel Associates Architects



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**ON DEMAND**

**HISTORIC MASONRY:  
MORTAR AND METHOD**

1 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speaker:**

John Speweik,  
Speweik Preservation Consultants, Inc.



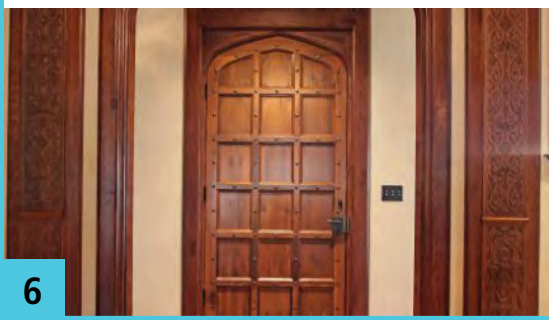
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**ON DEMAND**

**TRADITIONAL DOORS: A MASTER CLASS  
ON CRAFT, FORM, AND FUNCTION**

1.25 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speaker:** Brent Hull, Hull Historical, Inc.



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**ON DEMAND**

**TRADITIONAL PLASTER 101**

1 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speaker:**

Patrick Webb,  
The Center for Traditional Craft



7

**ON DEMAND**

**TRADITIONAL WINDOWS & HISTORIC  
SETTINGS: DETAILS DETAILS DETAILS**

1 AIA HSW Learning Unit

**Speaker:** Steve Lien, CSI, AIA,  
Marvin Windows and Doors



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**UPCOMING  
COURSES**

**DECEMBER 4, 2018**

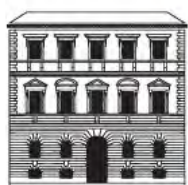
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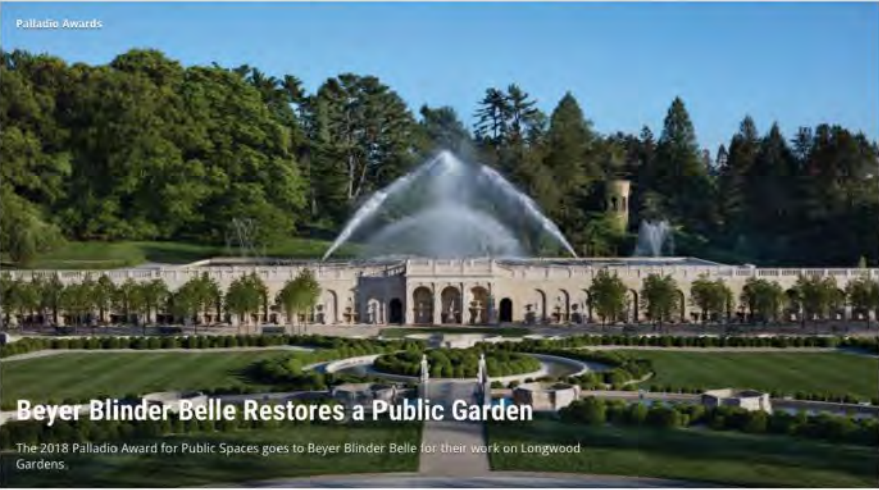
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Palladio Awards





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FAR LEFT: Michael W. Mehaffy

LEFT: Nikos A. Salingaros

BELOW: *Design for a Living Planet*, by Mehaffy and Salingaros, published in 2014, was described by reviewer Almantas Samalavicius in the *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* as ‘A brilliant critical discussion of contemporary architectural enterprise as well as guidelines to a practice.’

BOTTOM: Salingaros was lead author for *Unified Architectural Theory*, published by Mehaffy’s Sustasis Press in 2013. Mehaffy was a contributing author.

# Championing the Art and Science of Beautiful Places

By Nancy A. Ruhling

THROUGH THE AGES, art and science have not always seen eye to eye. Beauty, it is claimed, lies in the eye of the beholder, and artists, conventional wisdom tells us, use intuition to create beautiful objects that elicit an emotional response. Science has little to do with it.

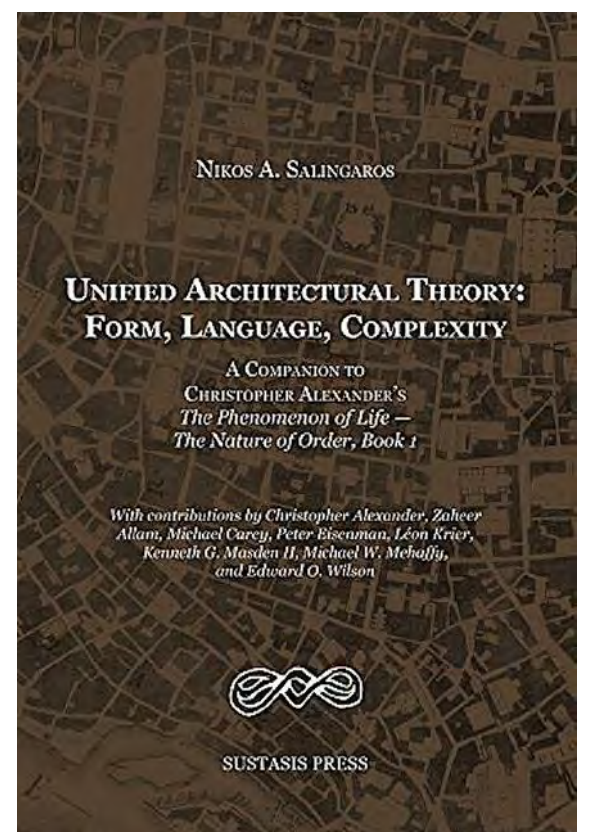
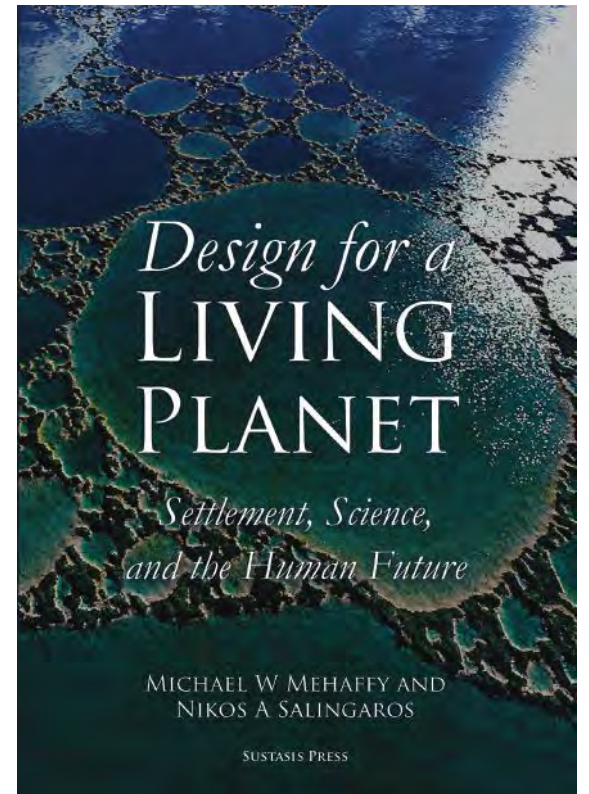
But this year’s Clem Labine winners see a game-changing contribution to architecture from the sciences, giving us a decidedly different picture. Beauty is a largely shared experience that is rooted in the physical structure of things, they say. The sciences offer us a useful lens for understanding that structure and how we can create and improve it with more emotionally powerful and transcendent results.

Nikos A. Salingaros, who is a Texas-based mathematical physicist with an interest in architecture and

urban planning, had experienced these transcending emotions first-hand. Traditional-style buildings made him feel happy; steel and glass modernist structures punched him in the gut.

Two decades ago, he set out to find a scientific explanation for the night-and-day difference. What he knew was that over the course of 100,000 years, people had created architecture—and art, music and dance—that had a healing effect that somehow had been snuffed out in the 20th century in the name of progress.

“I applied mathematical rules for the kinds of buildings that give healing feedback,” he says, “and I worked with architect Christopher Alexander, the inventor of pattern language. With my formula, I can judge a building, even a door, as positive, neutral or negative.” His formula validated his own experience: Traditional





architecture always gave positive results. In the intervening time, science caught up with him. “Recent developments, including brain scans, eye tracking and neurological tests,” he says, “prove the validity of my findings (and those of Alexander and others) about architectural structures and their physical effects on the brain.”

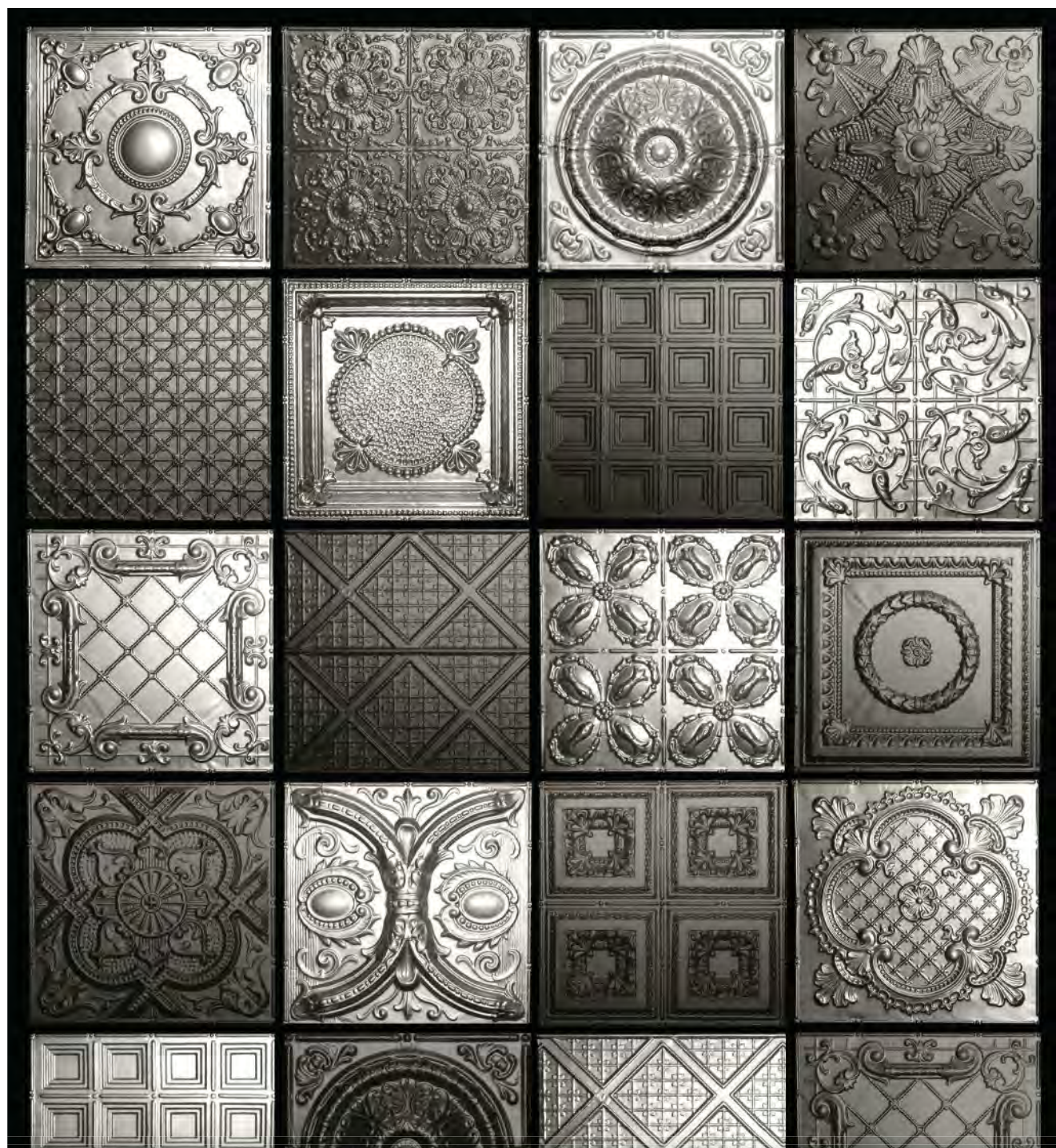
While he was thus engaged, Michael W. Mehaffy, an architectural theorist, urban philosopher and university researcher based in Portland, OR, was coming to similar conclusions. “A city is not just a sculpture garden,” he says. “It’s our habitat, and it shapes our lives in countless ways. But there is a disturbing tendency today to treat all of architecture as some kind of giant avant-garde sculptural art form. That’s a profound misplacing of art, which should be the servant of urban life and not its master.”

Their tireless advocacy for the traditional architectural languages in rebuttal to modern orthodoxy led to their being named recipients of the 2018 Clem Labine Award, “a personal achievement award given annually to people who over many years have devoted pro bono time and energy to create a more humane and beautiful built environment.”

The first co-winners of the award, which was established in 2009, Mehaffy and Salingaros were recognized for the work they accomplished together. In announcing the awards, Clem Labine, founder of *Traditional Building*, *Period Homes* and *Old House Journal* magazines, said, “Their work is unique because they are not just peddling opinions and dogma. Rather, they underpin their arguments with the evidence found in mathematics and the social sciences.”

They each started out in the arts. Salingaros, son of the composer Stelios Salingaros and the nephew of the opera singer Spyros Salingaros, was a painter in his youth. The sciences, however, soon seduced him, and he earned bachelor’s, master’s and doctorate degrees in these fields.

Mehaffy, a student of music composition and the arts, earned degrees in liberal arts, philosophy, science, architecture and urban planning that culminated in a doctorate in architecture from Delft University of Technology. They met about two decades ago—neither remembers precisely when or where—while they were working independently with Alexander, the anti-modernist originator of human-centered design. It was Salingaros who edited Alexander’s *The Nature of Order* and Mehaffy who re-published, with new commentaries, Alexander’s classic paper *A City Is Not a Tree*.



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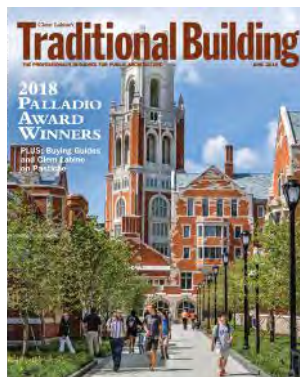
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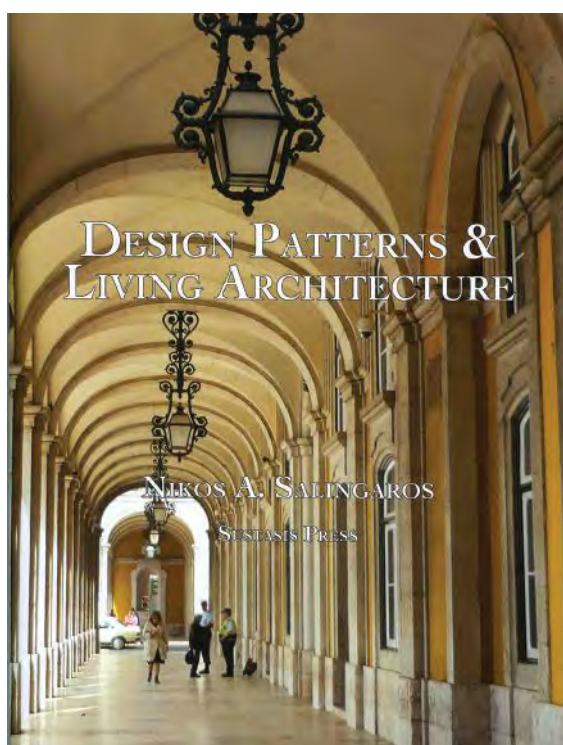
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**ABOVE: Design Patterns & Living Architecture by Salingaros was published by Sustasis Press in 2017.**

Once they found common ground, they collaborated on papers, books, lectures and pro-bono design proposals that bucked the high-modernists' starchitect agenda. In addition, they developed innovative design theories and tools that fuse New Urbanist principles with Alexandrian design methods.

Mehaffy, who lives in a 1911 courtyard apartment in a sustainable, walkable neighborhood in Portland that he deems "almost perfect," is the director of the Future Places Research Network and executive director of the urban think tank the Sustasis Foundation. The chair of the College of Chapters of the International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture and Urbanism (INTBAU), which is a United Kingdom charity founded by the Prince of Wales, and a former education director of The Prince's Foundation in London, he has written or contributed to more than 20 books.

He helped design and develop the award-winning Orenco Station on the Portland, OR, light-rail line. The pedestrian-friendly mixed-use transit-oriented development is built explicitly on the patterns of the city's older, more traditional neighborhoods. He has also held teaching or research appointments at seven universities in six countries.

"I've always tried to bridge the gap between theory and practice in my career," Mehaffy says. "I like to get in the trenches instead of just building castles in the sky, as happens too often in academia. I also try to work at many different scales, from big regional plans to neigh-

borhoods to houses to gardens and furniture."

Salingaros applied his own biophilic ideas to set up house in a 30-year-old small, flat suburban brick house that opens onto a riverbed. "I can see nature directly, and I have access to a nature trail in the neighborhood where I walk every day," he says. "I didn't have time to change the house before moving in, but I did bring the colors of nature inside."

A math professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio, Salingaros has made notable contributions to the new disciplines of biophilia, design patterns, architectural complexity, neurogeometric design, the fractal city and the network city. Salingaros is on INTBAU's committee of honor, and he won a 1997 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant to study mathematics and architecture. It was the first time the Sloan foundation recognized research on architectural topics.

In the preface to Salingaros's 2006 book, *A Theory of Architecture*, Britain's Prince Charles praised his work, writing, "Surely no voice is more thought-provoking than that of this intriguing, perhaps historically important new thinker?"

Mehaffy and Salingaros prefer to avoid speaking of architectural "styles" and instead favor the idea of "form languages"—systems of design elements that can be used, like a language, to create coherent places with endless variations. "There is this weird idea that every period of history has only one style 'of its time,' which on the evidence is nonsense," Mehaffy says. "History



LEFT & BELOW: Salingaros worked with Hadi Simaan and José Cornello-da-Silva on the design of a new commercial center for Doha, Qatar (unbuilt). It was displayed at the New Palladians Exhibition, The Prince's Foundation, September 2008.



is more like a fugue of different design elements that come and go, and weave together in different ways in different eras. Except that in the modern period, we've seen a claim that only modernism is 'of our time'—which has been an incredibly destructive idea."

Salingaros agrees. "Traditional architecture in America has 50 different form languages, and classical is one of them," he says. "There are 500 other traditional form languages around the world and they all give good feedback to users." Mehaffy adds, "I like to say that style doesn't matter—but geometry sure as heck does! It affects our comfort, our well-being, our tendency to walk and linger and interact socially within public spaces. There's even evidence that it directly affects our health."

The rise of modernism in the 1920s broke all the rules of the traditional form languages. Mehaffy and Salingaros see its origin as a kind of marketing exercise to glorify the industrialization of the built environment—with fateful consequences. Particularly, it broke the ability to combine "words" in a meaningful manner—it became a non-language.

Mehaffy relates that "in 1908, the architectural theorist Adolf Loos wrote an extremely influential paper called 'Ornament and Crime'—essentially he argued that because we in the West were now a racially and technologically superior industrial civilization, we had to dispense with ornament. That wrong-headed idea, and the modernist movement that followed it, had

profound and tragic consequences for the modern built environment."

Salingaros notes that "the majority of the buildings in the world are traditional, even now. Only a tiny percentage are in a modernist contemporary style. But you wouldn't know this because the propaganda machines—the architecture schools and the architectural press—show only glass and steel skyscrapers and other modernist boxes."

Mehaffy notes that research shows a strong divergence between what most people prefer and what the experts insist on creating: "If you ask most people to look at traditional places, they love them. That's where we almost all go on our holidays. Ask them to look at modern places, and the reaction is far more mixed, if not downright negative." Yet new traditional architecture is often weak, if not downright bad—in part because it has gotten so little support from the architectural leadership in the modernist era.

Salingaros says that "it doesn't always work to copy traditional styles because sometimes architects have incomplete knowledge of a traditional form language and mess it up. You need to speak that particular language fluently."

## New Lessons from the Sciences

Mehaffy and Salingaros see the new findings from the sciences as a game-changer—illustrating the value of traditional architecture for challenges like sustainability,

health and well-being.

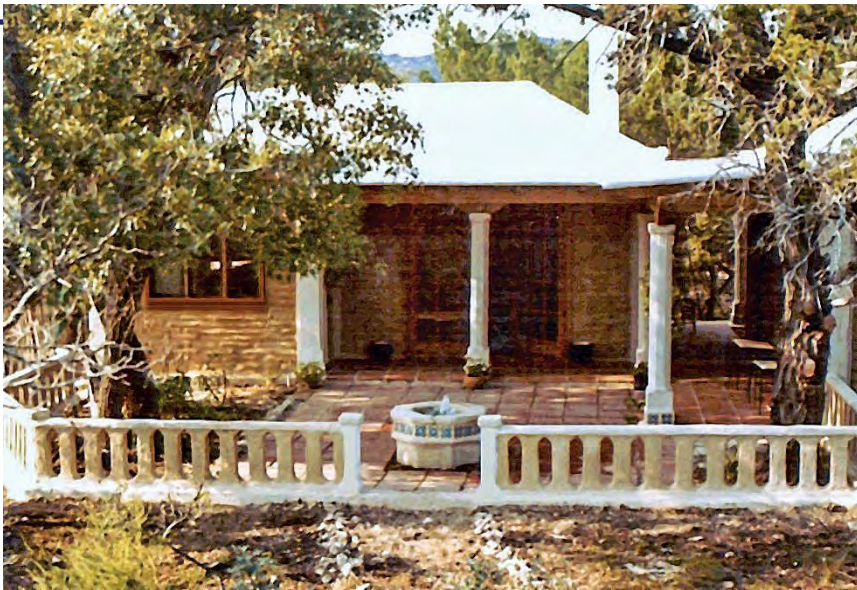
In their essay in *Traditional Building* earlier this year, they wrote, "The new research is helping us to better understand how the structure of buildings affects human experience and well-being ... Other disciplines, including anthropology, sociology and environmental psychology, have also recently revealed a great deal about the effects of the environment on human beings, including aesthetic impacts."

Science, they argue, can and does quantify beauty. "It tells us what works for us and what doesn't," Mehaffy says. "It gives us a kind of 'lens' on the world, and a guide to our work in transforming it. But you have to be careful about being reductionist. The idea is not to reduce this to a formula. It's to enrich intuition so we can be better designers and city makers."

Salingaros notes that "there is no single formula for good design. Rather, we now have a rich science-based toolbox that combines different mechanisms. If you apply all of them, you are pretty well guaranteed to create an environment that is good for the health of the eventual users."

What makes good traditional architecture work, they say, is that the form language always evolves. Mehaffy says, "It has a rich and complex provenance. It represents the accumulated experience of how to live well in a beautiful, healthy environment. And it's better adapted to the intricacies of human experiences because it evolved over a long period of time."





**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Mehaffy served as development project manager and co-designer for Orenco Station, a new walkable, mixed-use, transit-oriented community of 2,000 homes near Portland, OR.

Mehaffy designed and built this small affordable home using recycled materials and stackable masonry units, called wet bricks, with recycled materials and simple decorative pour-in-place forms.

The upper terrace of this house in Austin, TX, designed and built by Mehaffy, offers a cozy retreat.

One of Mehaffy's earliest projects was this barn complex at Deepwater Ranch in the Texas Hill Country.

Culture, climate, materials—that's where design should start, they argue. The modernist buildings—what the architectural authorities claim, without evidence, are in the only legitimate style “of our time”—draw attention and sometimes pleasure from their stark, sculptural shapes, but that doesn't mean that they foster human well-being.

There is also evidence that the modernist aesthetic of newness doesn't wear as well as traditional designs, which often grow more beautiful and more valuable as they age. That finding has an important implication for sustainability and resilience, they say.

Recently, Mehaffy and Salingaros have been collaborating on their own design projects. “This is important because it will demonstrate our talking points and writings,” Salingaros says.

Like Mehaffy, he believes in bridging theory and practice. The buildings they are proposing, Salingaros says, “are innovative with a hint of tradition. The give a vague feeling of tradition, and that vague feeling is the

healing process acting on your body.”

They say that the impact of their work goes far beyond the elementary arrangement of brick and stone. “We are working to leave something for posterity,” Salingaros says. “We are publishing our work for free so architects and architectural students anywhere in the world can learn how to build buildings within a healing environment.”

Mehaffy sees a larger movement of which he and Salingaros are just two prominent voices. “A lot of people are enlightened by Nikos and others like him. We are not just two people—we are two of many people, including Jane Jacobs, Christopher Alexander, the Prince of Wales and many others in many fields, who are pushing for human-centered solutions. It's painfully slow, but it's happening—I see this groundswell happening all over the world.”

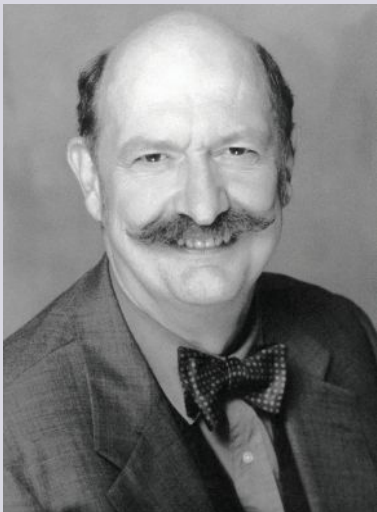
Salingaros is more skeptical: “It's so difficult even to talk about these healing concepts, let alone their mathematical and scientific background. In today's

intellectual desert, where rules for adaptive design have vanished, even the vocabulary for doing so has been forgotten.”

Mehaffy thinks their legacy will be in recognizing what kinds of tools will be needed to effect the transition back to traditional form languages, which he is sure is on the horizon. “The rules, laws, zoning codes and standards of the last 50 years have had horrible consequences because they reward the superficial and fragmented growth of our environment,” he says. “You cannot merely bolt on new technology to an old, failing system.”

Mehaffy and Salingaros admit that getting the establishment to turn away from industrial architecture is an uphill battle. Salingaros says, “Michael and I are fighting this giant profitable machine driven by trillions of dollars. The regime run by the top architecture schools propagates the same old ideas from the early 20th century. And the mainstream media is blindly following the architectural media, which promotes contorted





Clem Labine, founder of *Old House Journal*, *Traditional Building* and *Period Homes* magazines.

#### PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS OF THE CLEM LABINE AWARD

Previous Clem Labine Award winners include Alvin Holm, Alvin Holm AIA Architects; Steven W. Semes, Professor and Director of the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, University of Notre Dame School of Architecture; Ray Gindroz, FAIA, co-founder of Urban Design Associates; Jean Carroon, FAIA, Preservation Principal, Goody Clancy Architects; Milton W. Grenfell, Grenfell Architecture; Robert Baird, Historical Arts & Casting, Inc.; Christine G.H. Franck, Center for Advanced Research in Traditional Architecture (CARTA), University of Colorado Denver College of Architecture & Planning; and Duncan G. Stroik, Duncan G. Stroik Architects.

buildings and glass and steel architecture. That promotion is being driven by the global building industry and its business-as-usual approach.”

Mehaffy is more sanguine: “Nikos is focused on storming the gates of architecture, and understandably he gets frustrated because they are closed to him. I’m not as cynical as he is, maybe because I am looking at a bigger audience. I see many people in many other fields converging on the new findings from the sciences and looking at things in a very different light—especially now that people are connecting the dots to human health and sustainability. It’s just that it’s taking time for an isolated architectural establishment to awaken to the new reality. We have to keep pushing.”



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The design of this transitional ceiling from Decorators Supply shows that the style is not traditional, but it's not modern either.

# WHAT'S UP WITH TRADITIONAL CEILINGS?

**As the tides of taste recede from ornament, some venerable ceiling suppliers alter course with subtler ways to decorate.**

*By Gordon H. Bock*



**BELOW:** This open tracery pattern on an existing ceiling from Decorators Supply represents a trend toward simpler ceiling design.



**C**HANGING STYLES in ornamental ceilings come as no surprise to companies in the decorative features industry for generations. With their perspective, they know how the pendulum of preference swings back and forth between modest and magnificent, and they're ready to serve their clients no matter which way the winds of fashion blow.

According to Jack Meingast at Decorators Supply in Chicago, IL, a company known for its classical architectural detailing, "This is our 135th year of business, where everything we've done has been ornamented and traditional. I think we all knew traditionalism, which has had such a long run, would eventually taper off, and now we've had to re-evaluate the entire market and develop some simpler types of relief ceilings."

Among his clients, the shift in ceilings became apparent within the last three years. "They're plainer, with an open tracery that's mounted on an existing ceiling—similar to what used to be called Gothic tracery," referring to the complex patterns inspired by window stonework.

At Driwood, makers of millwork and architectural embellishments in Florence, SC, Mitchell Powell reports, "Here in the Southeast, we've seen a trend predominantly toward a plainer, cleaner style. It's got a traditional feel, but it doesn't necessarily adhere completely to the classical orders or other traditional styles."

As an example, he points to a recent large-scale commercial building project right outside of Savannah. "We did the majority of the interior woodwork at the Pooler, Georgia, City Hall, and it was almost exclusively plain, hardly any ornamentation at all."

The firm's specialty is embossed millwork that replicates the hand-carved moldings found in historic buildings in Greco-Roman styles—egg-and-dart, acanthus leaves and so on. "We do those same ornaments but with embossing, and we have hundreds and hundreds of designs."

Stephanie Croce at J.P. Weaver Co., architectural ornament and design in Los Angeles, CA, agrees. "Tastes have changed over roughly the last 10 years, from very ornate, dripping-off-the-ceiling decoration to very refined, almost minimalist designs."

Every zeitgeist comes and goes, she reminds us, "but what's really big right now are strapwork-style ceilings,



**ABOVE:** Driwood cites a trend toward simpler ceilings.

**SHOWN HERE:** Driwood's specialty is embossed millwork that replicates the hand-carved moldings found in historic buildings in Greco-Roman styles, such as egg-and-dart and acanthus leaves.

using very geometric forms with interlocking parts." The trend she says is definitely away from complexity but she still sees plenty of ornamental interiors. "We've done quite a few Adam-style ceilings," she notes, "and we try to create whatever the client is envisioning, whether it's a Rococo-style ceiling from the 18th century or Baroque or Neoclassical."

One ornamental ceiling type that appears to float above whatever the day's vogue is decorative pressed metal. "People get interested in new ideas unrelated to 'tin ceilings' all the time," observes Mark Quitno of W.F. Norman in Nevada, MO, "but I don't think anybody has thought of a new use or purpose for the material." The current market he says, "really just goes down the 'center lane' of the history of the product. It's especially appropriate if the room or building is going to have a little bit of turn-of-the-20th-century style—not chrome or glass, but décor popular from the late 1800s up to the Great Depression."

Whatever the reason for the sea change in ceilings, it has sought its own level in a new normal. "Here at

Decorators, we use the term transitional," says Meingast, "that is, not necessarily traditional and not necessarily modern, but a design that can be used in both cases."

His company was quick to respond to the shift. "We developed six or seven new designs in plaster (our sole medium for ceilings) that can be used in a very 'clean,' cut-and-dry building or a very traditional home, and they've received an incredible response."

The feedback has been so positive, he says, that they've even adapted some of their old designs to fit the new call. "For example, we took two of our existing 'Old English' ceiling designs with complete panels and made them plain with just the raised ribbing." Another benefit he says is that the designs are easy to install. "Just pre-drill, screw up, fill the screw holes and joints, and then move on—nothing complicated whatsoever."

According to Powell of Driwood "Even though public buildings lean towards plainer ornament interpretations these days, it's nice to do these jobs because they tend to be a little bit more by-the-book in terms of design, proportion and the orders." His company,





which is known for maintaining architectural authenticity, has supplied architectural millwork and design services for nearly a century and been involved with scores of commercial projects. “We’ve done numerous court houses, and some work on the State Capitol here in South Carolina, the Augusta National Golf Club, and even the Pentagon in Washington, DC.”

Croce points out another trend. “We get a lot of

clients who want a very ornate ceiling or room, but they want to paint it all white—like a wedding cake!” She notes this is a departure from the heavy gold that was so popular in many places 10 or so years ago, and a move more towards background.

“The other work we’re doing a lot more of is restorations” she says, “particularly in the Los Angeles area. We’re asked to basically replicate what was existing

**LEFT & ABOVE: J.P. Weaver still sees an interest in ornamental ceilings, such as the ones shown here, and notes that many clients want them painted white, like wedding cakes.**

where the building is water damaged or the room has to be gutted to add modern services but they’re saving the moldings and having us clean and remake them.”

In fact, Quitno says his customers just want an authentic stamped metal ceiling, and come to a company that still offers the exact same patterns they did 120 years ago. “There aren’t any types of traditional and historic buildings where people don’t use metal ceilings.” The material was once ubiquitous in small-town shops, he explains, from 5&10-cent stores and barber shops, to taverns, restaurants and pool halls. “They were—and still are—used in every kind of government building,” he says. “It’s amazing how many small-town churches used pressed metal back then, for walls as well as ceilings. We still help fix those up today, and even do some new churches.”

### How Do You Spell Relief?

For ceilings, Croce says her company’s material of choice is usually either cast plaster or their polyester resin Petitsin product. “It’s a two-part system that’s poured into a silicone mold, and then cures to an almond color.”

Croce explains that she uses plaster and resin ornament a lot in her design work because it’s ship-able and installation is well within the realm of a good trim carpenter. In fact, if they have the proper molds, her company can make an ornament item in either plaster, resin or even ‘compo’ composition ornament—“it





## Key Suppliers

**Above View, Milwaukee, WI**

**Chelsea Decorative Metal,**  
Houston, TX

**Decorators Supply,** Chicago, IL

**Driwood,** Florence, SC

**J.P. Weaver Co.,** Los Angeles, CA

**W.F. Norman,** Nevada, MO

**LEFT:** This hand-painted tin ceiling was fabricated by W.F. Norman.

**BELOW:** A copper ceiling from W.F. Norman shows that clients still want designs that have been around for 120 years.

really depends upon the delicacy of the part.”

But that doesn’t mean all-white ceilings need to be flat or bland. “The heavier the detail, and the more undercuts in the detail, the more the light picks up the shapes of the moldings. So one of the things we like to do, which is made possible by the plaster and resin products, is to give the ornamentation a lot of undercuts.” She explains that undercuts have long been a technique of wood carving, but because wood is dark, the effect is even more successful with cast plaster.

Powell says his company is exclusively wood. “We work in various hardwoods, tropical and domestic, and we’ve made just about everything. If you can think of it, we can manufacture it.” As he explains, embossing is a special process that, at his company, uses machinery over a century old. “We basically take a steel or bronze die carved with the design and, by applying a lot of pressure and a little bit of heat in the right proportions, we create a decorative molding.”

He adds that the company prides itself on the ability to produce really heavy, deep designs—nothing like the paper-thin impressions seen at big box stores. “Our embossing profiles are cut so much deeper than you find in most places that sometimes you can pass them off as actual carvings.”

Pressed metal too has historically offered ceilings rich with deep design but without the effort of complicated construction. “It’s always been lightweight,” explains Quitmo, “so for ceilings you didn’t have to build an additional structure for support; existing ceiling beams and furring are sufficient.”

He says that the drop-press stamping of the late 1800s made pressed metal relatively mass-produced, so it was inexpensive enough for homeowners and small shop owners. “And it doesn’t require special installation skills. If you can hang wallpaper, or do some simple, around-the-house DIY projects, you can install a pressed metal ceiling just fine.” He adds, “We can help with all the technical issues: layout questions, sending samples, or talking to installers.”

Fashion cycles aside, ornament remains alive and well in some interesting places. “We find the seaboard of the Northeast and the Southeast are strong, and that trickles down into Florida,” says Meingast. California is hit-or-miss, he says, “but Canada is very strong.”

The hospitality and entertainment industries too are



often ornament omnivores. Croce says that along with many residential commissions, their non-residential clients are mostly restaurants and hotel ballrooms. “When the Plaza Hotel in New York City underwent a major renovation eight or ten years ago, we were selected to do all the moldings in the lobby of the hotel portion.”

She adds that being based in Southern California since 1914, “Movie studio designers also come to us to create backdrops for their sets, and we have documentation of our ornament used in early films right up to today.”

For Quitmo as well, the entertainment industry and period TV and movie sets are longstanding customers, along with theme parks around the world. “Besides the big parks that have Old New York-type attractions for visitors, we’ve done a lot with clients like Disney that also film at different parts of their parks.”

In fact, Meingast recalls that by good fortune, when the building industry flattened out after 2008, his company got involved with a lot of TV shows and

movie sets. “Believe it or not, I think what got that ball rolling was *Game of Thrones*. While we didn’t work on that program, it had offshoots, such as *Outlander* shot in Scotland and *Rome* in Canada, and we supplied ornaments to both of those sets and their designers.” He too works regularly with Disney. “They revitalize their parks a lot and, since we often supplied original ornamentation, they come to us just to put back what was there.”

Powell reports that when he hears people exclaim, “Wow, we didn’t know companies exist that do this stuff anymore,” he has a ready reply. “Yes, there are still people out there, like ourselves who know how interiors should be done with proportion, scale, and architecturally correct detail, and who are capable of and willing to work in the old-world style.”

*Gordon Bock is an architectural historian, instructor with the National Preservation Institute ([www.npi.org](http://www.npi.org)), and a speaker. He can be reached at [www.gordonbock.com](http://www.gordonbock.com).*



ESI Design updated 160 Federal St. in Boston, MA, a historic Art Deco building that opened in 1930 as the headquarters of the United Shoe Machinery Corporation. It was Boston's first skyscraper. All Federal Street photos: Trent Bell

# UPDATING Office Buildings

Two firms are working together to bring historic office buildings up to date while keeping the original styles.

By Nancy A. Ruhling

**H**ISTORIC OFFICE BUILDINGS offer a unique opportunity to update and enhance the properties in ways that respect their architecture yet transform them into state-of-the-art contemporary workplaces.

Renovations allow developers to modernize infrastructure, apply for LEED certification, create recycling programs and add amenities like lounges, rooftop decks, beehives and free Wi-Fi access without sacrificing historical accuracy. The new-old work often begins in the lobby, which is the first space tenants and visitors see, and sets the tone for the building.

Boston-based Beacon Capital Partners, which

invests in high-quality office properties in core urban markets that have highly educated workforces, and New York City-based ESI Design have a long history of collaborating on such conversions to create distinct workplaces that engage tenants and the public.

Here are the stories of three traditional buildings in three very different cities.

## 160 Federal Street, Boston, MA

Scan the skyline of Boston's Financial District, and it is 160 Federal Street, aka the United Shoe Machinery Corporation Building, that is most likely to catch the eye. The 24-story historic Art Deco Class-A building,

## 160 Federal Street Project Partners

Experience Design: **ESI Design**, New York City

Architect of Record: **Nelson Architects**, New York City

Fabricator: **DCL (Design Communications Ltd.)**, Boston

Systems Integration: **Diversified**, Kenilworth, NJ

Software Developer: **AV&C**, New York City

General Contractor: **MJA Construction**, Medford, MA

Lighting Design: **Available Light**, Boston, MA

Historic Lighting Fixture Replacement: **Custom Metalcraft**, East Taunton, MA

built in 1929, features a stepped gold-tone and terra-cotta crown that outshines its newer neighbors, especially at night when it is illuminated like a theatre stage.

The building, at Federal and High Streets across the Rose Kennedy Greenway from South Station, is anchored by street-level retail shops and surrounded by a bevy of financial firms and institutions, including the Federal Reserve of Boston and Bank of America, as well as a number of service and technology companies.

Beacon Capital Partners had updated the infrastructure and added restaurants, on-site parking and rooftop beehives, and the building was awarded LEED Platinum certification. The improvements boosted occupancy to 92%, up from 85%. ESI Design was commissioned to add drama to the street entrance of the 367,000-sq.-ft. building and bring the lobby up to date while paying homage to its historic roots.

The team started with the building's directory, which was displayed in a bronze-molded frame built





The new lobby directory, set in the original frame, is filled with media content that includes weather, transit delays, upcoming local events, this day in history and a poem of the day.

into the wall of the lobby. “We kept the frame, but we inserted a digital display to showcase dynamic media,” says ESI Design Creative Director Angela Greene. “We used a gradient glass border over the LCD display that melded the edges so it didn’t look electronic. The animations—of current weather and transportation options and the history of the building from the time it was the home of the shoe company—appear out of the dark glass like a magic 8-ball.”

The lobby’s historic elements, such as the gilded crown moldings, were refurbished. The elaborately patterned lobby carpeting, which was not original, was replaced with a custom design based on interior plasterwork and exterior grillwork. “It has a more modern feel,” says Elizabeth Ward, senior EGD designer for ESI Design.

The front desk, which was nothing more than a marble lectern, was repositioned and enlarged to accommodate new technology and provide 280-degree views to encompass the building’s three entrances. “It is circular, with Art Déco references,” Greene says. “It has a Corian surface in color tones of the original.”

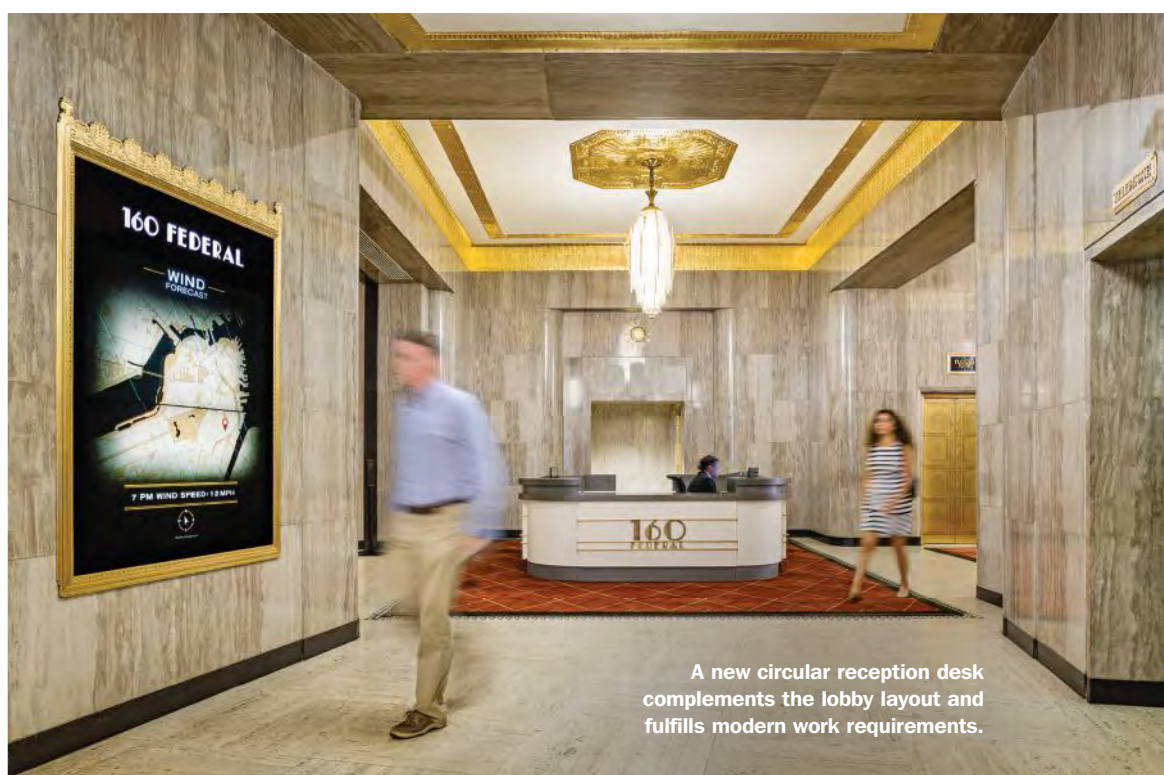
A new type font, based on letters that remained on the mailboxes and elevators, was created for signage and brand identity.

To create what Greene calls “an entry moment” at the main entrance, the team turned to the exterior, which ESI Design adorned with signature images of shoes. “We embedded brass shoe prints—a men’s set and a women’s set—in the sidewalk at each entrance,” Ward says. “It is a nod to the building’s heritage, and we worked with Boston’s Landmark Commission to have it approved as an artistic addition.”

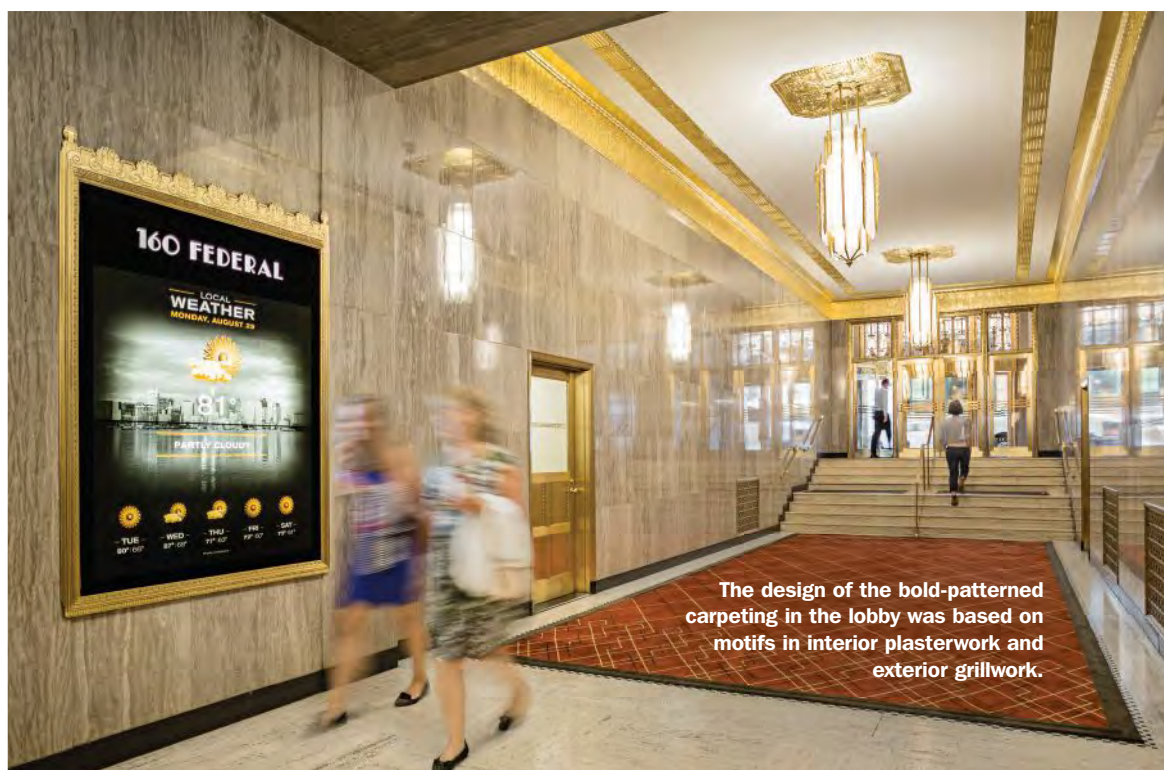
The most dramatic change in the lobby is the lighting. “What was there was harsh and unpleasant,” Greene says. ESI Design re-lamped the original chandeliers with LED lights and uplighted them to highlight the ceiling medallions and crown molding. In addition, at the entryways, it surrounded the brass door frames with LED lights and added uplighted LED bars. The elevator call system was also re-lamped using the original casings.

All of these elements, Greene says, create an “experiential makeover. The lobby feels like a place where people want to spend time. It reflects the history of the building, but it also modernizes the space.”

At the entrance to 160 Federal Street, the ESI Design team embedded bronze footprints in the sidewalk to accent the Art Deco elements of the building, which was built for a shoe company.



A new circular reception desk complements the lobby layout and fulfills modern work requirements.



The design of the bold-patterned carpeting in the lobby was based on motifs in interior plasterwork and exterior grillwork.





## Exchange Building, Seattle, WA

Seattle's Exchange Building, a 23-story, 275-ft.-high Art Deco skyscraper that was declared a city landmark in 1990, is the original home of the Seattle Stock Exchange. Completed in 1930, it was designed by John Graham & Associates, the firm responsible for a host of other Seattle landmarks, including the Frederick & Nelson Building, which is now Nordstrom, the Bon Marche, which became Macy's, and the Dexter Horton Building.

Its original tenants, which included General Electric, Edison Lamp Works and Standard Oil, were as iconic as the building, which, at the time, held the title of second tallest reinforced concrete skyscraper in the country.

When ESI Design was called upon to work on the project, Beacon Capital Partners had already transformed the building into a Class-A property by modernizing the infrastructure, including a voluntary seismic retrofit, improving its sustainability, optimizing its connectivity and adding a host of amenities, including a fitness center, a bike-storage space and rooftop beehives.

The ESI Design team focused on the main entrances—one on 1st Avenue and a grander one on 2nd Avenue—that are four floors apart. "Seattle has very steep hills," Ward says, "and the public often uses the building's elevators as a shortcut."

In each lobby, ESI Design inserted electronic media into the vintage directory frames, relocating the one in the 1st Avenue space, moving it nearby the elevator bays to make it more prominent.

It also created a custom vintage-style font for signage, elevator numbers and amenity spaces, including the gym, bike-storage room and conference center.

A new identity logo was installed on an exterior lobby canopy at 1st Avenue and illuminated with LED lights. The new ID also was embedded in a new terrazzo floor in the 2nd Avenue space after its white tiles, which were not original, were removed.

The interiors of the elevators were redone in an up-to-date historic style, and the desks in the lobbies, which were not original, were redesigned. "The desks are always a big issue in these types of projects," Ward says. "They don't accommodate computers or technology, and they don't function well enough for the guards to do their jobs efficiently or effectively." For the 2nd Avenue lobby, the ESI Design team created a more efficient desk with a striking brass veneer that has plenty of space to accommodate modern technology and packages.

## Exchange Building Partners

Experience Design: **ESI Design**,  
New York City

Architect of Record: **JPC Architects**,  
Bellevue, WA

Systems Integration: **Diversified**,  
Kenilworth, New Jersey

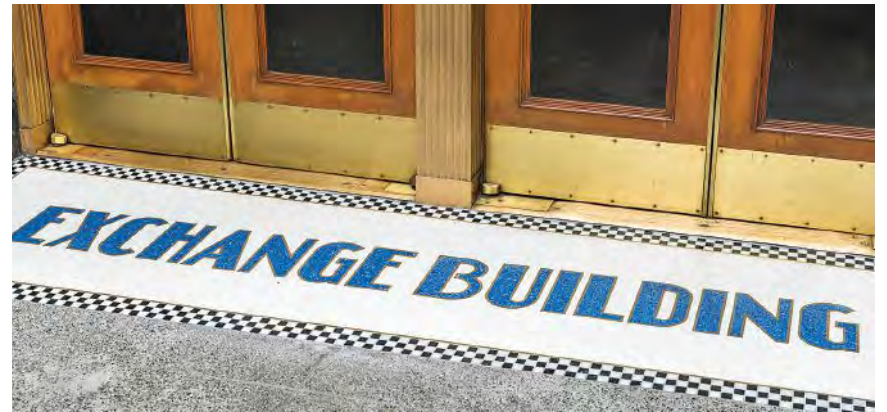
Software Developer: **AV&C**,  
New York City

Signage: **Trade Marx**, Seattle, WA

Lighting Design: **Stantec**, Seattle, WA

General Contractor: **HST Construction**,  
Bellevue, WA





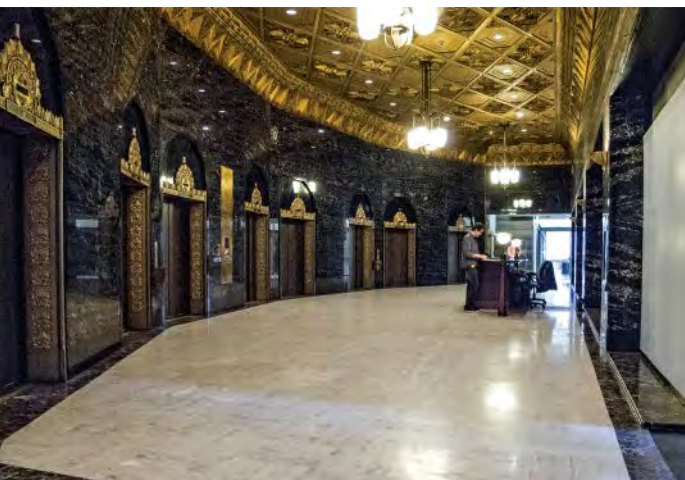
**ABOVE:** In the directory, a new dynamic media program showcases the history of the building and highlights up-to-the-minute information such as tenant listings, weather, transit delays, this day in history and upcoming local events.

**TOP RIGHT:** The new terrazzo nameplate at the front door is bold, bright and Art Deco-inspired.

**OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** The 2nd Avenue entrance to the Exchange building, which leads to the larger lobby, now features a sapphire and white terrazzo inlay welcome mat bearing the building's name.



**HERE & INSET:** Lighting in the elevator bay in the Exchange Building was added to enhance historical details.

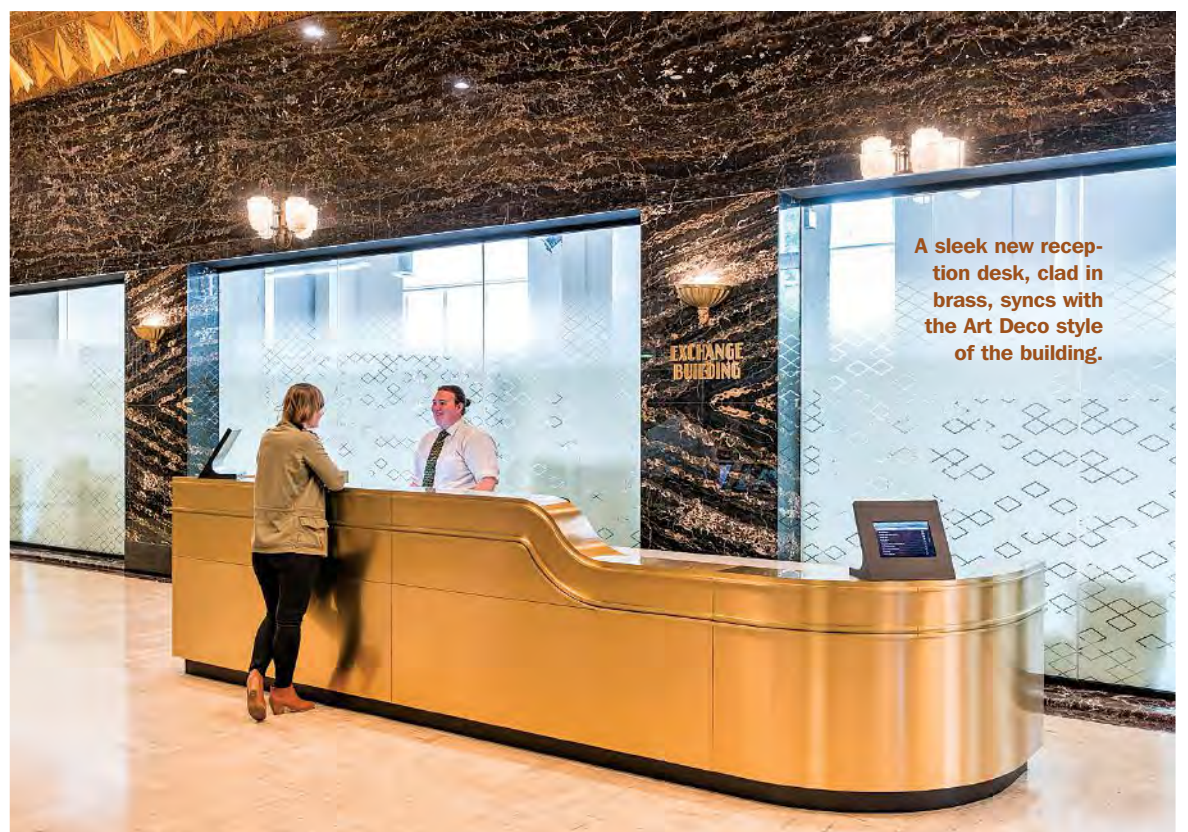


The most dramatic transformation was in the 2nd Avenue lobby, where the circa 1990s wood paneling behind the front desk was removed and replaced with glass. “When Beacon brought us into the project, it had been decided to turn that area back into a tenant space,” Ward says. “We created a modern diamond-shaped diffusion pattern inspired by Art Deco designs to make the space more private and to allow natural light to flow into the lobby.”

Innovative lighting helped bring the lobbies back in time: The wall clocks were illuminated, and the stained-glass panels above the doors, barely visible, were highlighted with LED lights.

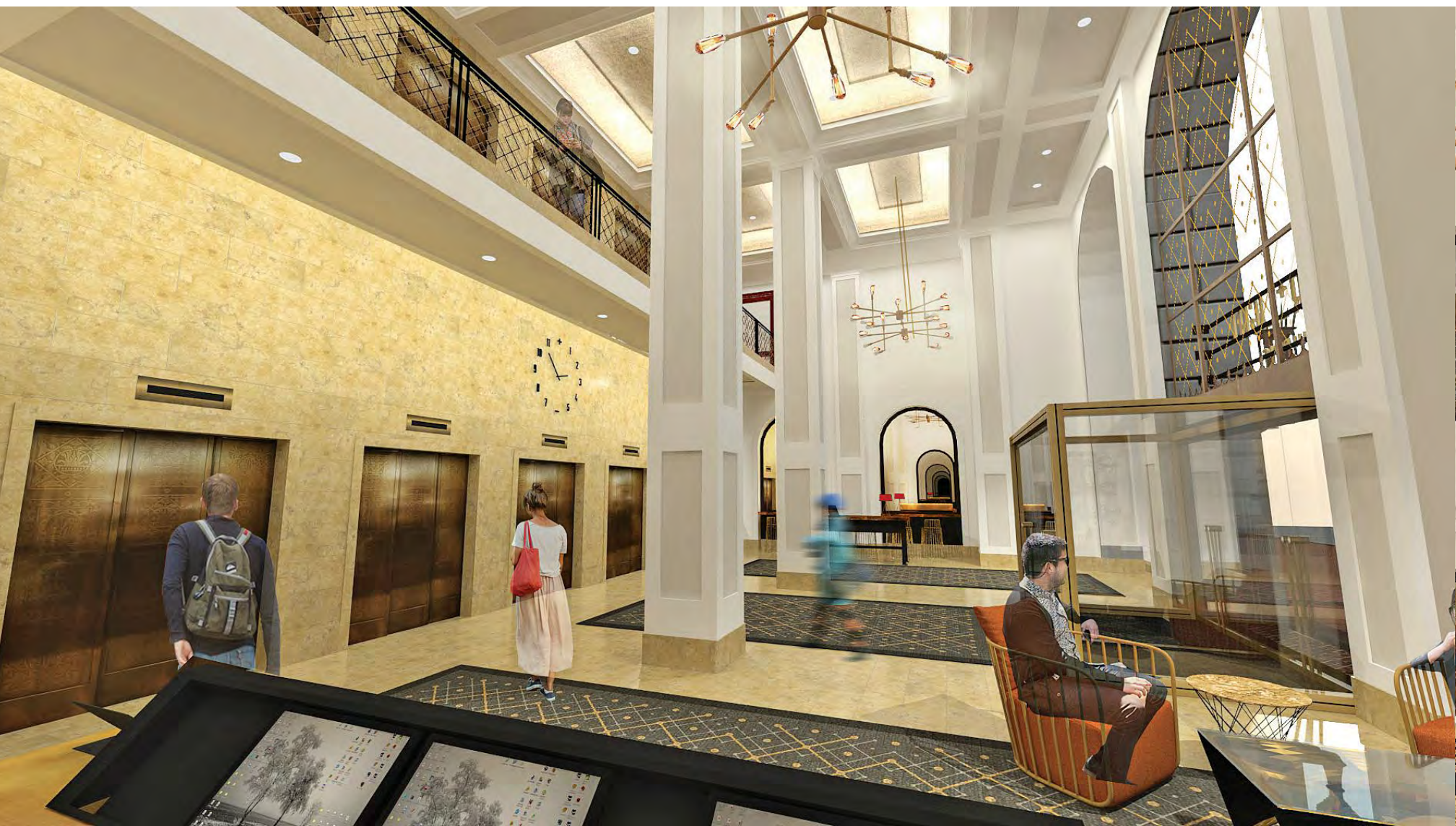
The new building branding and ID were extended to the signage of the retail shops around the lobbies. “We created a consistent signage band across the top of the storefronts,” Ward says. “All the tenants are using the same font, and we created color, fabrication and retail signage guidelines for them.”

After the renovation, the building was awarded LEED Platinum certification and was named BOMA’s Outstanding Building of the Year in the Historic Building Category in 2016. Occupancy increased nearly 30%, and many of the new tenants are from the creative and technology fields.

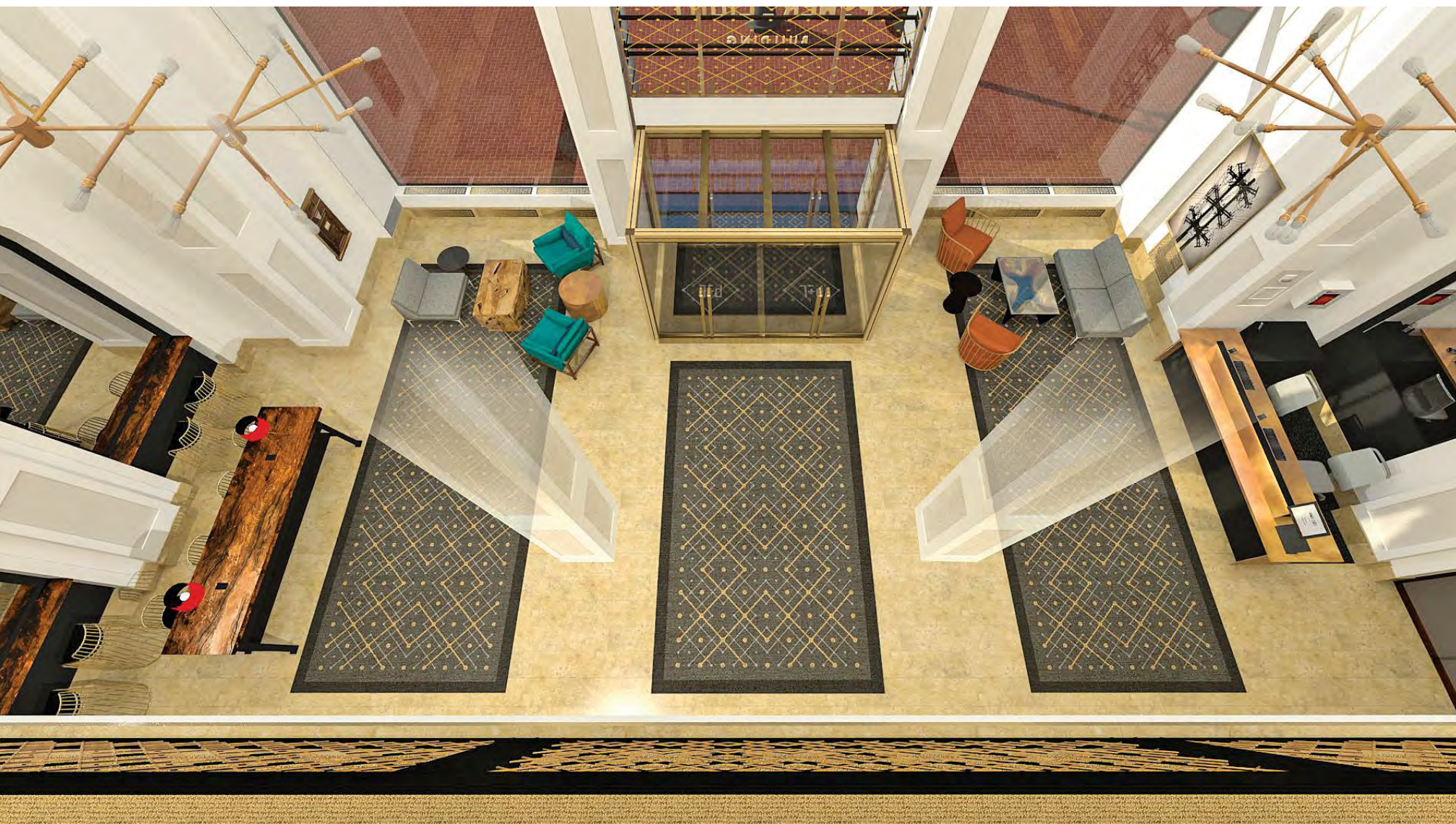


A sleek new reception desk, clad in brass, syncs with the Art Deco style of the building.









## Power + Light Building, Portland, OR

For more than three decades, the Public Service Building reigned over the Portland skyline as the tallest structure in The City of Roses. It announced its stature and its purpose from four neon signs—POWER, HEAT, GAS and LIGHT—atop its roof.

The 15-story Italian Renaissance-style terracotta and gray brick building at Salmon and Sixth Streets, which opened in 1928 and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1996, was designed by local architect A.E. Doyle, whose firm worked on two others, the 1924 Bank of California Building and the 1926 Pacific Building, in the city.

Architecture aside, it was an important building: The city's main power plant was originally in its basement, and it still houses the city's main power feeds. Although it lost its sky-high bragging rights in 1962 when the Hilton Portland Hotel bested it by all of nine feet, the one-time home of the first Niketown store is the largest block of contiguous office space in the city's Central Business District.

The project, which is expected to be completed in 2018, began with a large-scale renovation by Beacon Capital Partners, which has applied for LEED Gold certification. The ESI Design team exploited the building's rich history to rebrand it and rename it the Power + Light Building, which has an

energetic, contemporary ring.

"We took the two most positive words—power and light—from those once-existing rooftop signs that we saw in vintage black-and-white photos," says Matt Weisgerber, ESI Design senior physical designer. "And we built branding around the theme of the plus and minus charge signs of a battery." Thus, the building's logo, and the carpeting, clock and mezzanine railing in the lobby make use of those simple symbols.

The reception desk, which was from a 1980s remodeling, will be modernized and given a bronze finish to complement the honey-color marble on the wall. "The space felt very monochrome," Greene says, "so we will use pops of color on the upholstery of the furniture. We also added an eight-seat co-working table, which is something everyone is asking for, that has an industrial base and walnut top."

Updated lighting brought the lobby to life. The ESI Design team removed a series of ill-placed pendants (one was blocking the view of the original clock on the elevator wall) of seesawing heights and designed two new bronze ones and added cove lighting to create a focal point.

"The lighting will make a big difference," Weisgerber says. "People will notice the lightbox effect from the outside, and it will elevate the space."

## Power + Light Partners

Experience Design:  
**ESI Design,**  
New York City

Architect of Record:  
**TVA Architects,**  
Portland, Oregon

General Contractor:  
**Lease Crutcher Lewis,**  
Portland, Oregon

Specialty Fabricator and Signage:  
**CREO Industrial Arts,**  
Woodinville, Washington

Lighting Design: **Stantec,**  
Seattle, Washington

Land-Use Attorney: **Radler White,**  
Portland, Oregon

**LEFT:** The building's new name, Power + Light, was inspired by the original neon signs on the rooftop. The logo was derived from fonts on the building's original door handles. New illumination turns the exterior into a lightbox that draws the eye to the interior.

**OPPOSITE TOP:** Reflective materials in the interior arches, custom light fixtures and an updated clock brighten the lobby and give it a more inviting feel.

**TOP:** In the lobby of the P + L Building, details and patterns from the graphic identity are repeated on the railings, columns and carpets.





# Beaux Arts Beauty

A 1914 Beaux Arts building and its historic pier are restored and given new life as a luxury hotel on the Baltimore waterfront.

*By Eva Leonard*

After a rehabilitation led by Beatty Harvey Coco Architects, the historic Sagamore Pendry Hotel is once again drawing patrons to Baltimore's Fells Point neighborhood. All photos: Todd Harvey unless otherwise noted

## PROJECT

Sagamore Pendry Hotel, Baltimore, MD

**ARCHITECT:** Beatty Harvey Coco Architects LLP, Baltimore, MD; Todd Harvey, AIA, Partner in Charge; Jonathan Seltzer, AIA, Project Architect

**I**N 2017, A LONG-AWAITED luxury hotel, the Sagamore Pendry, opened in a landmark Beaux Arts building on Baltimore's historic Recreation Pier. The waterfront hotel's grand opening followed a two-year, \$60-million restoration of the building and pier, which had stood vacant and in disrepair for 15 years in Baltimore's historic Fell's Point neighborhood.

The building's original architect was Theodore Wells Pietsch, and, following its construction in 1914 as a commercial pier, it also served at different times as the country's second-largest immigration landing point, a storage facility, a community center, the set for the TV show *Homicide Life on the Streets*, and as the offices and dock for a tugboat company.

Todd Harvey, partner in charge, Beatty Harvey Coco Architects LLP, describes the backdrop for the restoration: "Fells Point is an historic community, and this is the largest, most iconic building there, so we went to dozens of meetings



**RIGHT:** The historic building and pier had stood vacant and in disrepair for 15 years.

**BELOW:** This view of the completed project shows hotel and pier surrounded on three sides by water.



of the local community groups, the Historical Society, and the neighborhood coalitions, making sure that everybody was comfortable with the approach we were taking.”

Considerable time was also spent documenting existing conditions, since no original drawings for the building were available. Says Harvey, “We hired a company, Trimble, to do laser surveys of the interior of the building to create existing plans for all the moldings and all the detailing in the ballroom.

“The main building was in many ways as it had been originally built. When we started work on it, we realized how well built it was. We were very surprised to find that the condition of the masonry—the stonework and the brickwork were all in wonderful shape. There was not much asbestos to be removed, but there was a fair amount of lead paint that had to be abated before we could start.”

Restoration included the wood windows, which had to be replaced or completely rebuilt, as well as the brickwork, stone and coping. The windows, which had been painted a cream color, were repainted to their original black. The original clear, single-pane glass was replaced with new glass to match.

Renovations over the years had covered up the original paint on the walls and on the plaster, and there were no color photographs from the original building. But the key elements—the original coffered ceilings, moldings and maple wood floor were in very good shape.

Says Harvey, “The only thing we did that was a contemporary touch was to insert a very modern glass wall behind the ground floor arch facing Thames Street. The arch had been used as a truck driveway, but we needed to capture that space for the hotel lobby and restaurant and do it in a way that preserved the historic character of the building.”

“All of the grand spaces; the ballroom, the formal stair and its hall and the loggias were restored to their former glory,” says Patrick Sutton, principal of the project’s interior design firm, Patrick Sutton Interiors. “The interior of the public spaces uses white oak, which is the state tree of Maryland, and industrial steel as the predominant materials.”

“The goal was to restore the ballroom to as close to its original condition as possible,” notes Harvey. “We found some documentation on the original moldings and flooring. Where we could restore what was there, we did and then augment it with new finishes and materials that blended in with the original architecture.”

“We restored about 12,000 square feet of surface,” says Doug Boyd, of DL Boyd, Inc., who helmed the historical plaster restoration. “About two-thirds of the work was in the ballroom, and most of the rest was in the corridors. We found a lot of bubbling plaster





# Key Suppliers

Contractor/CM: **Whiting Turner Construction**, Baltimore, MD

Owner/Client/Project Management: **Sagamore Development**, Baltimore, MD

Interior Designer: **Patrick Sutton Interiors**, Baltimore, MD

Landscape Architects: **Mahan Rykiel Associates**, Baltimore, MD

Structural/Civil Engineer: **Whitney Bailly Cox & Magnani LLC**, Baltimore, MD





**OPPOSITE:** A modern glass wall was inserted into the arch on Thames Street that had been used as a truck driveway, opening space for the restaurant and lobby.

**THIS PAGE:** An open-air courtyard provides an outdoor space for hotel guests and features sculpture by renown artist Fernando Botero.

MEP/FP Engineer: **Vanderweil Engineering**, Alexandria, VA

Lighting Designer: **Clark Johnson – EVOKE**, Guadalajara, Mexico

Millwork Subcontractor: **Allegheny Millwork**, Pittsburgh, PA

Historic Plaster Renovations: **DL Boyd, Inc.**, Hyattsville, MD

Roofing subcontractor: **Tecta America**, Rosemont, IL

Brick restoration: **Worcester Eisenbrandt, Inc.**, Baltimore, MD

Interior Laser Surveying: **Trimble**, Sunnyside, CA, and **Whiting-Turner Virtual Design Department**, Baltimore, CA



peeling off the wall, damage done by birds, a lot of old damage to cornice and some vandalism.”

Boyd replaced the extensive damaged crown molding, taking samples of the ornament to his warehouse and making molds to create new pieces. He applied a bonding agent, mixing plaster and adding sand to match existing sand finishes on corridor walls. In the ballroom, Boyd replaced the original lime plaster that had been weakened by extensive leaks, with gypsum plaster.

“On the grand ballroom level, we provided wood trim work that had to match to the existing historic details,” says Ed Banachoski, vice president, Mid-Atlantic for Allegheny Millworks. “We provided entryways and cut specific custom knives to match the profiles at the ballroom entrances, including some arched openings.”

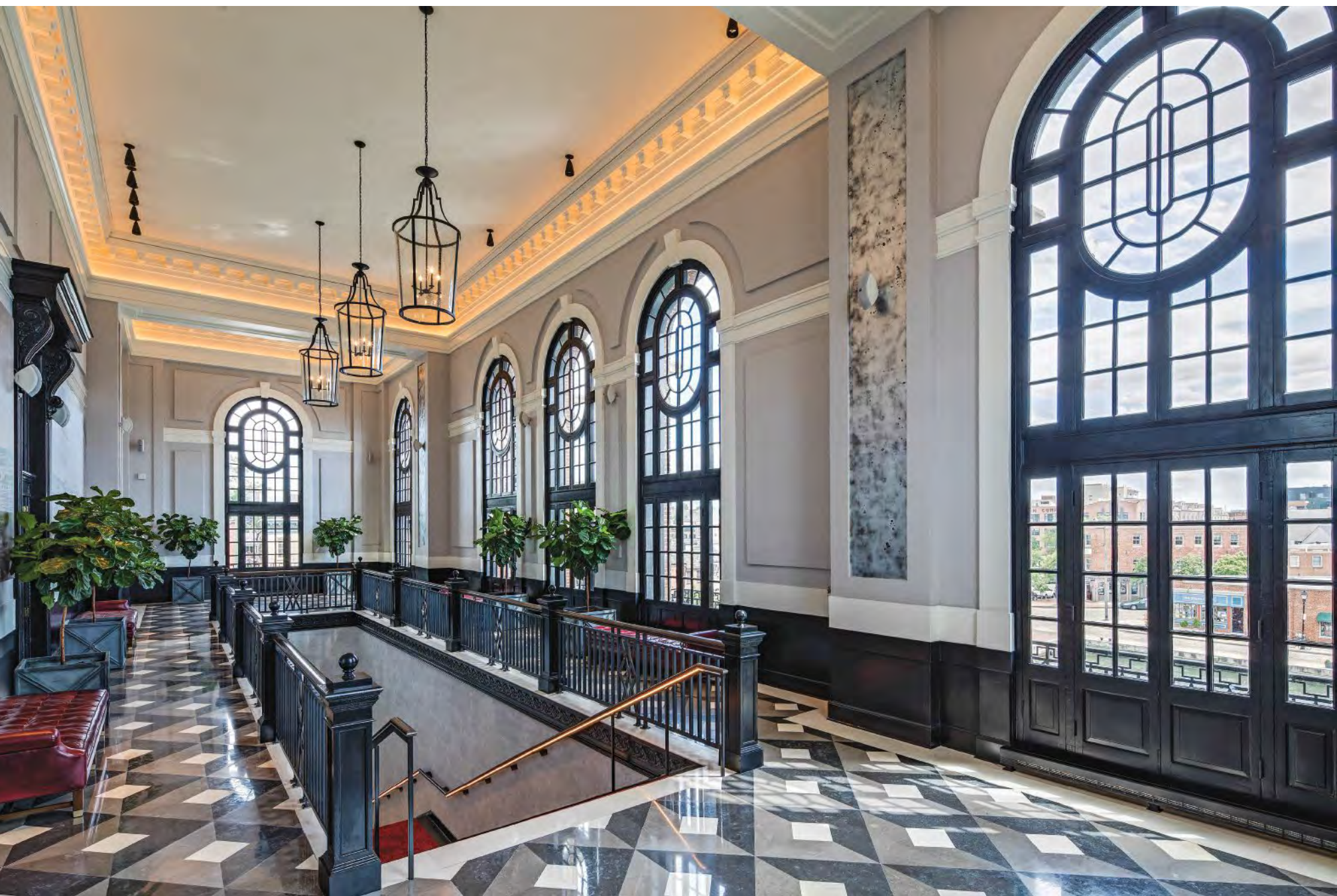
In contrast to the relatively well-preserved main building, the pier building had been an open ware-

house, with large overhead doors around the perimeter to allow ships to unload and trucks to pick up and deliver cargo. Existing walls and roof materials had deteriorated to a point beyond restoration.

“Working with the Maryland Historic Trust and the National Park Service, we developed a design with all new materials—insulated glass doors and windows,” says Harvey. “It was in the same vocabulary as the original architecture, but it was not a restoration.

“For historic reasons, we had to retain the existing structure of the pier and fit two levels of guest rooms within it. We retained all the existing steel framing and exposed it in the courtyard and in other elements of the building. But, it also meant that we had to create guest room designs that were atypical. Where a standard guest room is typically 13 or 14 feet wide by 30 feet deep, we created a guest room that worked on a size of 20’ x 20’, which matched the column grid.”





**The interior third floor hallway before (LEFT) and after (ABOVE) restoration.**

**BOTTOM LEFT: A workman applies plaster the wall of the grand stairway. Photo: DL Boyd**

**BELOW: The top of the grand stairway running from the lobby to the ballroom level shows damage caused mostly by leaks and vandals. Photo: DL Boyd**



“We had to rebuild the original pier,” he continues, “which was sitting on woodpiles and not structurally sound. In order to support it, we had to build a whole new structure over it and then we hung the original pier off the new structure. And that was before any work could begin on the hotel or the building itself.”

During the pier restoration, three historic cannons were discovered in the harbor, removed and put in a vat of bay water to preserve them in their original environment. They were then cleaned, repaired, restored and painted and used to add another historical dimension to the hotel, with two framing the entry to the rear pool deck and one visible through the floor in the whiskey bar.

The hotel’s waterfront location presented other issues. Floodplain requirements made it necessary to raise the floor of the building by three feet and flood-proof the perimeter of the building.

Says Harvey, “The walls around the building are kind of like a bathtub to keep water out, so at all the entrances, there are floodgates and flood doors, and there’s waterproofing underneath the building to keep water from coming up from the bay. It was a challenge doing that within an existing, historic building, and incorporating those features without them being noticeable.”

The new heating and cooling system was also





The finished ballroom reflects its historic past.

**BELOW:** The ballroom before restoration. DL Boyd restored all of the pilasters in the room and the adjacent ornamental plaster. Photo: Doug Boyd

ingeniously hidden. Says Harvey, “The original head house had operable louvers on the roof that would open to allow air to flow naturally through the building, so there was never any air conditioning. Most of the old steam boilers and radiators had already been removed by the time we got there.”

“We put most of the new central heating and air-conditioning equipment on the roofs of the pier and the head house, so it was not visible from the street. We had to distribute it without impacting the existing architecture. Our engineers came up with some clever ways of feeding ductwork in through the ceiling of the old building, and then bringing it down into the new lobby and restaurant behind the existing brick walls.”

Sutton says the hotel’s design conveys two stories: that of Baltimore’s industrial past and that the national anthem was written within a thousand yards of the hotel. Those histories were expressed through some of the industrial elements retained and added throughout and by a wall of laser-cut steel at the entrance, whose cut-out letters make up the stanzas of The Star Spangled Banner.

The oak-paneled arrival hallway features a series of brass wall sculptures depicting Baltimore icons such as the blue crab and Edgar Allen Poe, and the bronze reception desk was designed to evoke a flag billowing in the breeze. The guest rooms, which overlook the



water, were designed with mahogany louvers and nautical brass accents, so guests would feel as if they were sleeping in the captain’s berth of a ship.

Says Sutton, “The property is bound on three sides with water, and the remaining side is a protected historic façade, so this made not only building it a challenge, but there was little flexibility to fit all the operational necessities into the floor plans. The only way to over-

come it was squeezing every inch out of the available space and being intelligent with our choices.”

*Eva Leonard is a New York City-based freelance writer whose outlets include The Architect’s Newspaper, The Designer, Landscape Architecture Magazine, and Modern Luxury Interiors South Florida. Her RetroQuesting site and blog is devoted to historic architecture and adaptive reuse.*





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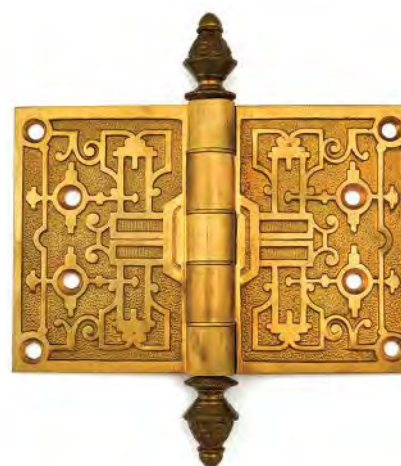
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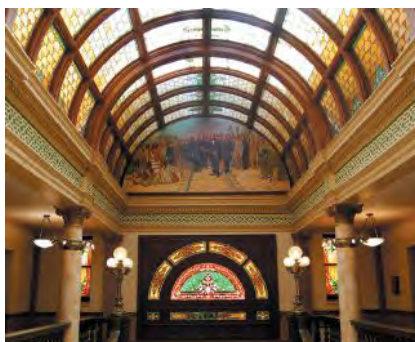
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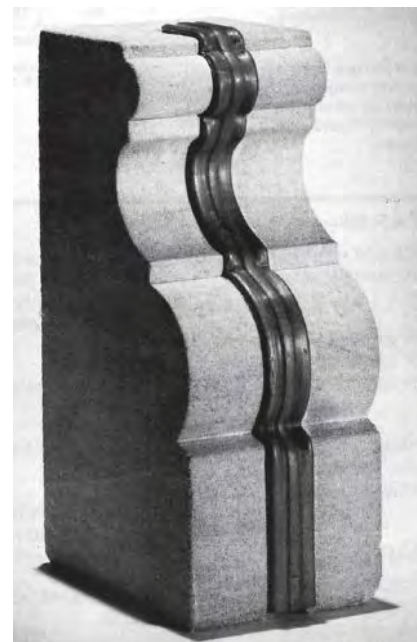
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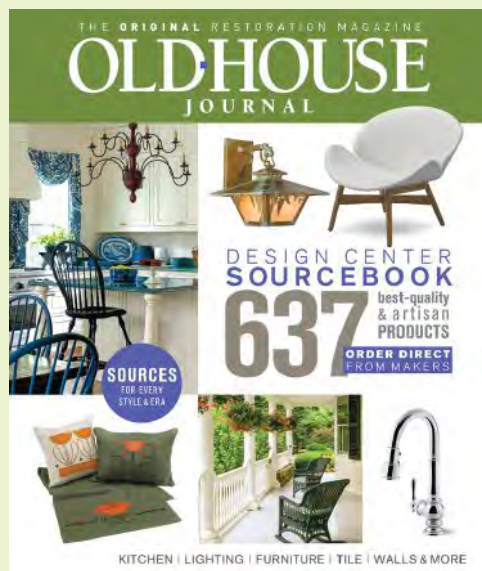
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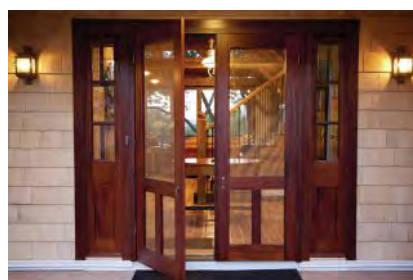
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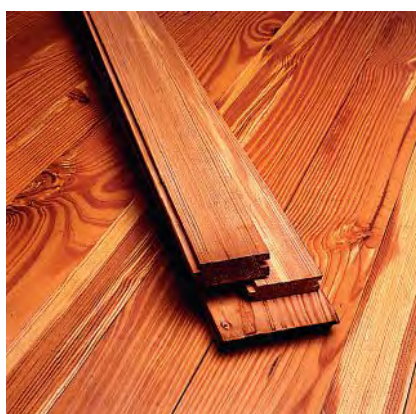
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## Flooring

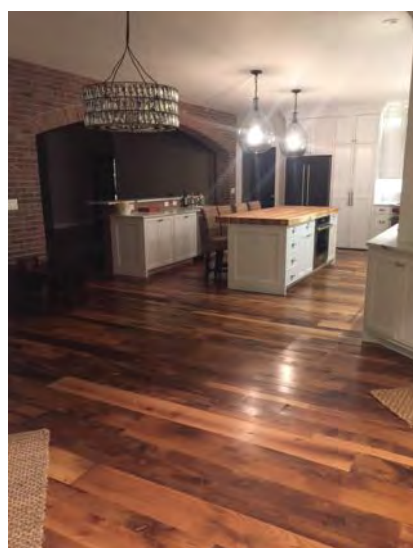


Resawn longleaf yellow heart pine from **Sylvan Brandt** comes in widths of 3 to 5 in. and lengths of 5 to 16 ft.

**Brandt, Sylvan**  
717-626-4520; Fax: 717-626-5867  
[www.sylvanbrandt.com](http://www.sylvanbrandt.com)  
Lititz, PA 17543

Manufacturer of salvaged wood flooring, ceiling boards & paneling: wide board, random width & weatherboard (barn siding); chestnut, oak, pine, heart pine, cypress, walnut, hemlock, fir & hickory; doors & hardware.

Call for more information.



**Carlson's Barnwood** provided the flooring for this room.

**Carlson's Barnwood Co.**

309-522-5550; Fax: 309-522-5123

[www.carlsonsbarwood.com](http://www.carlsonsbarwood.com)

Cambridge, IL 61238

Supplier of antique barn wood & salvaged materials: planks, beams, dimensional lumber, re-milled flooring & architectural antiques; pine, oak, heart pine & mixed species; salvaged doors, windows & shutters; antique lighting & art glass; hardware.

Call for more information.

**Chestnut Specialists, Inc.**

860-283-4209; Fax: No fax

[www.chestnutspec.com](http://www.chestnutspec.com)

Plymouth, CT 06782

Manufacturer of antique wood for flooring: chestnut, oak, pine & hemlock; hewn barn beams, weathered siding & sheathing planks.

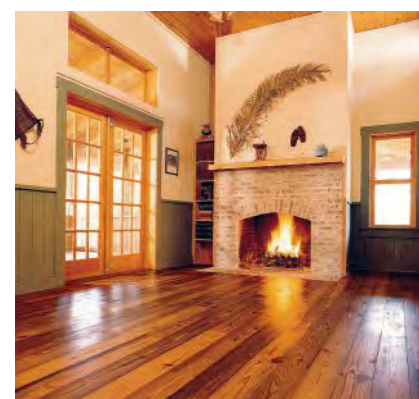
**Goodwin Company**

800-336-3118; Fax: 352-466-0608

[www.heartpine.com](http://www.heartpine.com)

Micanopy, FL 32667

Supplier of centuries-old, river-recovered, reclaimed harvested wood: for flooring, stair parts, millwork; solid or engineered, finished or unfinished.



**Goodwin Company's** antique heart-pine flooring is milled from reclaimed logs and timbers.

**Housatonic Hardwoods, Inc.**

800-924-5684; Fax: 860-927-3911

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Supplier of wide plank flooring: up to 20-in.-wide planks; oak, ash, cherry, maple, walnut, birch, heart pine, beech, antique oak & chestnut.



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**Conrad Schmitt Studios** designed and painted this Art Deco style mural for the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City.

### Conrad Schmitt Studios, Inc.

800-969-3033; Fax: 262-786-9036

[www.conradschmitt.com](http://www.conradschmitt.com)

New Berlin, WI 53151

Creator, conservator & restorer of decorative painting: stained & art glass; ornamental plaster work & ceilings; gilding; murals, mosaics & statuary; for public & religious buildings; since 1889.

Call for more information.

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212-244-2800; Fax: 212-244-6204

[www.evergreene.com](http://www.evergreene.com)

Brooklyn, NY 11232

Decorative arts studio: murals, decorative painting, gilding, plaster, wood, metal, stone & mosaics; new design, conservation & restoration; ecclesiastical, institutional, public & commercial projects; offices in NYC & Chicago.

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**EverGreene** hand-painted and gilded the murals at the Faena Hotel's "Cathedral" lobby, in Miami Beach, FL.



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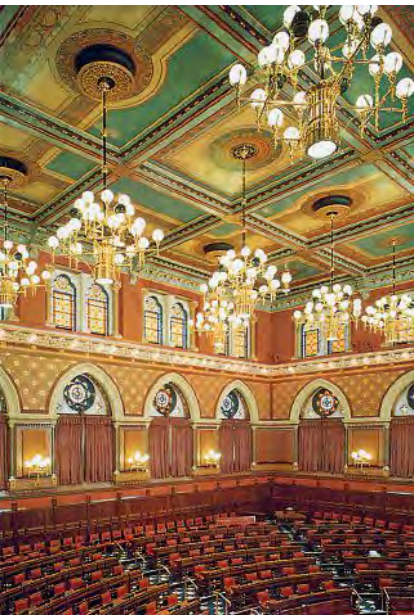
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Restoration and gilding of the more than 13,000 terra cotta roof tiles and copper finial of the 1900 dome.



The Sherry-Netherland, NYC



Canning Studios carried out the decorative painting in the Connecticut House of Representatives.



R. Alden Marshall & Associates did a complete restoration of "Wall of Towers" by Jackie Ferrara at the University of Houston Main Campus.

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Material science laboratory & preservation studio for the conservation of art & architecture: monuments, sculptures, paintings & murals & more; projects include national historic sites & ecclesiastical commissions.

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## John Canning Conservation & Painting Studios

203-272-9868; Fax: 203-272-9879

[www.JohnCanningCo.com](http://www.JohnCanningCo.com)

Cheshire, CT 06410

Restorer, conservator & designer of decorative finishes, ornamental plaster & wood; historic paint analysis; plaster consolidation & stabilization; decorative paint, murals, interior & exterior gilding, wood graining, metal & stone cleaning.

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# Ornamental Ceilings & Fans



**Above View's** Classic Panel Ceiling Tile (TL-0002) was used for the ceiling in the Texas Christian University Amon G Carter Stadium in Fort Worth, TX.

## Above View Inc.

414-744-7118; Fax: 866-728-5586  
www.aboveview.com  
Milwaukee, WI 53221

Supplier of ornamental plaster ceiling tile made in US: Each 2x2-ft. tile drops into standard 15/16-in. T-bar grid; tile is non-toxic, non-combustible & biodegradable; more than 70 standard designs; custom capabilities; since 1984.

Call for more information.



**American Tin Ceiling's** tiles are available in 50 colors and 35 patterns.

## American Tin Ceiling Co.

888-231-7500; Fax: 941-359-8776  
www.american tinceilings.com  
Bradenton, FL 34203

Manufacturer of tin panels: for ceilings, back-splashes, wainscoting & walls; multiple installation methods for any ceiling substrate including SnapLock™ tiles that screw directly into drywall; 35+ patterns in 50+ colors.

Call for more information.

## Chelsea Decorative Metal Co.

713-721-9200; Fax: 713-776-8661  
www.tinman.com  
Houston, TX 77074

Manufacturer of pressed-tin ceiling & wall panels: tin-plated steel has shiny silver finish, can be painted with oil-based paint; 3-, 6-, 12- & 24-in. patterns ranging from Art Deco to Victorian; easy-to-install 2x4-ft. sheets.

Call for more information.



A pressed tin ceiling from **Chelsea Decorative Metal** enhances this restaurant.

## Classic Ceilings

800-992-8700; Fax: 714-870-5972  
www.classicceilings.com  
Fullerton, CA 92831

Supplier of decorative wall & ceiling ornament: pressed-metal wall & ceiling tiles, tin ceiling panels, cornices & backsplashes; decorative stampings; perforated tin ceiling panels & tin ceiling imitations; crown moldings & more.



**Entol Industries** fabricated this classically inspired molded-GRG ceiling, which was installed on a standard metal suspension system.

## Entol Industries, Inc.

800-368-6555; Fax: 305-247-6211  
www.entol.com  
Homestead, FL 33030

Manufacturer of architectural ornament: ceiling panels (more than 150 designs), moldings & more; polymer, wood, gypsum, GRG, FRP & more; primed or pre-finished; stock & custom.



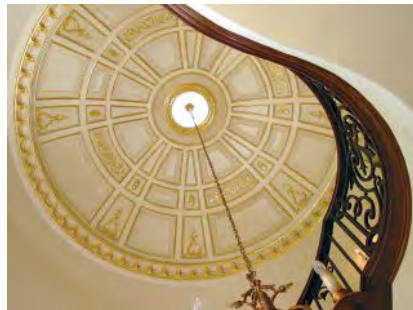
**Canning Studios** carried out the gilded stenciling in the ceiling and other areas in the Senate Chambers at the Connecticut State Capitol.

## John Canning Conservation & Painting Studios

203-272-9868; Fax: 203-272-9879  
www.JohnCanningCo.com  
Cheshire, CT 06410

Restorer, conservator & designer of decorative finishes, ornamental plaster & wood: historic paint analysis; plaster consolidation & stabilization; decorative paint, murals, interior & exterior gilding, wood graining, metal & stone cleaning.

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**JP Weaver** created this ornate ceiling dome.

## JP Weaver Company

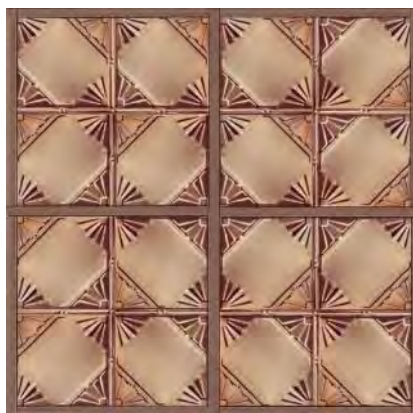
818-500-1740; Fax: 818-500-1798  
www.jpweaver.com  
Glendale, CA 91201

Supplier of more than 8,000 types of molded ornaments cast from carvings: products are pliable & will contour & self-bond to any sealed surface such as mirror, plaster, drywall, wood, metal, ceramic; scaled-design books (1/4 in. = 1 in. scale). Call for more information.

## MetalCeilingExpress

941-723-2288; Fax: 941-729-1470  
www.metalceilingexpress.com  
Palmetto, FL 34221

Manufacturer of ceilings: ornamental; decorative painting & faux finishes; architectural, standard & custom sheet metal.



**Shanker Industries** has copper panels and grids to enhance any decor; shown here is pattern 307.

## Shanker Industries

877-742-6561; Fax: 631-940-9895  
www.shanko.com  
Deer Park, NY 11729

Manufacturer of decorative metal walls & ceilings: 2x2 ft. & 2x4 ft. for nail-up, 2x2 ft. & 2x4 ft. for lay-in grid; finishes include steel, brass, copper, chrome & pre-painted white; perforated for acoustics.



**W.F. Norman Corp.'s** expansive stock of sheet-metal ornament includes pressed-tin ceiling and cornice panels.

## W.F. Norman Corp.

800-641-4038; Fax: 417-667-2708  
www.wfnorman.com  
Nevada, MO 64772

Manufacturer of sheet-metal ornament: hundreds of stock designs; cornices, moldings, brackets, pressed-metal ceilings, roofing, siding, finials & more; zinc, copper & lead-coated copper; duplication from samples or drawings.

Call for more information.



**Woolen Mill Fan Co.** offers a selection of traditionally styled belt-driven ceiling fans.

## Woolen Mill Fan Co.

717-382-4754; Fax: 717-382-4275  
www.architecturalfans.com  
New Park, PA 17352

Manufacturer of decorative ceiling fans: historic & new designs; belt-& pulley models & beltless single-motor units; iron, bronze & aluminum castings.

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## Interior Lighting



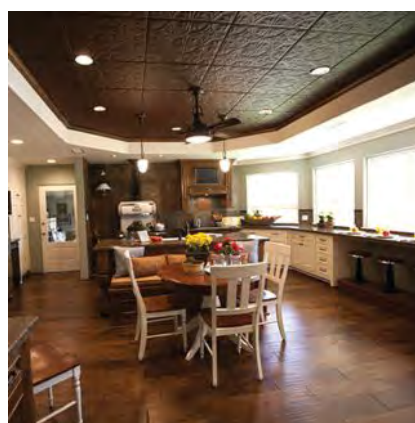
**Authentic Designs'** Armillary chandelier measures 38-in. high and 28-in. dia. Its is made of solid brass and is shown in an antiqued brass finish.

### Authentic Designs

800-844-9416  
[www.authenticdesigns.com](http://www.authenticdesigns.com)  
West Rupert, VT 05776

Manufacturer of historical lighting fixtures & specialty metal products: chandeliers, lanterns, sconces & table lamps crafted in brass, copper, terne metal & Vermont maple; Early American & Colonial; CUL/UL listed for wet & damp locations; library binder \$30.

Call for more information.



This hanging round lantern from **Ball & Ball Lighting** measures 10½x27 in. and can be custom built to other dimensions.

### Ball & Ball Lighting

610-363-7330; Fax: 610-363-7639  
[www.ballandball.com](http://www.ballandball.com)  
Exton, PA 19341

Fabricator of historical lighting: chandeliers, sconces, pendants, lanterns & table lamps; Early American & Turn of the Century styles; antique & salvaged originals, new designs, custom work & reproductions; stair handrails; restoration services.

Call for more information.



**Deep Landing Workshop** created the custom chandeliers as well as the alcove lights for the Abbott Hall, Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, NJ.

### Deep Landing Workshop

877-778-4042; Fax: 410-778-4070  
[www.deeplandingworkshop.com](http://www.deeplandingworkshop.com)  
Chestertown, MD 21620

Manufacturer of custom lighting fixtures: chandeliers, sconces, pendants & lanterns; new designs, historic reproductions & custom work; handcrafted in wood, tin, brass or copper; glass, mica or alabaster shades.

Call for more information.



**Grand Light** restored this historic lighting fixture.

### Grand Light

800-922-1469; Fax: 203-828-6307  
[www.grandlight.com](http://www.grandlight.com)  
Seymour, CT 06483

Restorer of historic lighting fixtures & manufacturer of custom lighting fixtures: metal fabrication, glass fabrication, metal finishing, polishing, painting, welding, abrasive blasting; historical replication & reproduction.

Call for more information.






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Open flame burning is an optional light source available in most of our fixture designs or custom made to match your own design. We offer an electronic ignition option for gas burning lanterns, which can be configured to run dusk to dawn. These igniters also have a feature that will relight the flame if it gets blown out by high winds. Ignition systems are proudly US made.


Ball and Ball continues to create **authentic** reproductions of period designs using period fabrication techniques and superior craftsmanship. We have over 65 years of experience fabricating reproductions of lighting fixtures.




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The Coterie hanging lantern from **Heritage Metalworks** features an elegant bell jar, hand-blown glass, fine lost-wax castings and subtle imperfections in the hand-made custom chain.

### Heritage Metalworks

610-518-3999; Fax: 610-518-7264  
www.heritage-metalworks.com  
Downingtown, PA 19335

Atelier of skilled blacksmiths & craftsmen: exclusively to trade; lighting, hardware, gates & railings; custom & signature lines available in iron, brass, bronze, copper, nickel, zinc & stainless steel. Call for more information.



The model #H2 ceiling fixture from **Herwig Lighting** is made of a cast-aluminum alloy and opal glass.

### Herwig Lighting

800-643-9523; Fax: 479-968-6422  
www.herwig.com  
Russellville, AR 72811

Designer & manufacturer of handcrafted cast metalwork: period-design lanterns, street lighting, posts, custom outdoor lighting, street clocks, benches, bollards, custom plaques, signs & more; aluminum & bronze; since 1908.

Call for more information.



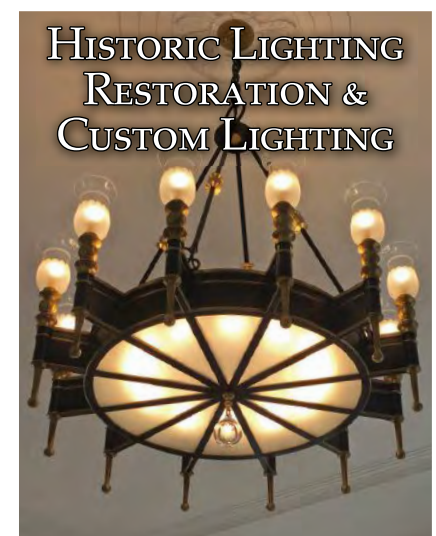
**House of Antique Hardware** manufactured this English Victorian chandelier with etched-glass shades.

### House of Antique Hardware

888-223-2545; Fax: 503-233-1312  
www.houseofantiquehardware.com  
Portland, OR 97232

Manufacturer & supplier of vintage reproduction door, window, shutter, cabinet & furniture hardware & accessories: Federal, Victorian, Colonial Revival, Craftsman & Deco styles; lighting fixtures, push-button switches & plates; bathroom accessories; registers & grilles.

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The San Remo rectangle chandelier is one of the many fixtures available from **Lantern Masters**.

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[www.lanternmasters.com](http://www.lanternmasters.com)  
Westlake Village, CA 91362

Custom designer & manufacturer of lighting:  
interior chandeliers, pendants, ceiling flushes &  
sconces & exterior lanterns including wall, flush  
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**Lanternland**  
855-454-5200; Fax: 480-962-1997  
[www.lanternland.com](http://www.lanternland.com)  
Mesa, AZ 85210

Manufacturer of lighting: artisan handmade copper  
& brass lanterns & outdoor lighting; many period  
styles.



**Scofield Historic Lighting** created this English box sconce with 22K gold detail for the dining room at the New York Botanical Garden.

**Scofield Lighting**  
610-518-3999; Fax: 610-518-7264  
[www.scofieldlighting.com](http://www.scofieldlighting.com)  
Downingtown, PA 19335

Creator of historic lighting: 17th through 19th cen-  
tury inspired lanterns, sconces, ceiling lights &  
chandeliers; finished in natural, bronzed, leaded,  
oxidized copper or aged tin; collection is customiz-  
able to the specific needs of projects & clients.



This chandelier was fabricated by **St. Louis Antique Lighting**.

**St. Louis Antique Lighting Co.**  
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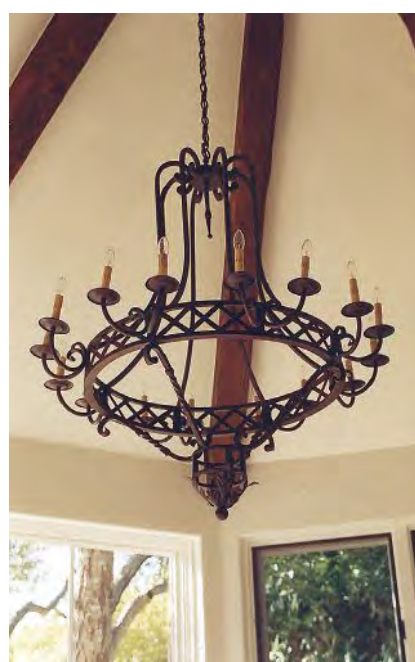
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**Steven Handelman Studios'** 16-light Weaver chandelier is 50 in. tall.

## Steven Handelman Studios

805-962-5119; Fax: 805-966-9529

[www.stevenhandelmanstudios.com](http://www.stevenhandelmanstudios.com)

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Manufacturer of hand-forged traditional lighting, grilles & fireplace accessories: many types & styles of lighting & grilles; fireplace screens, grates & inserts; historic reproduction & restoration services.

**Call for more information.**

## Victorian Revival / Vintage Lighting

416-789-1704; Fax: 416-789-2279

[www.victorian-revival.com](http://www.victorian-revival.com)

Toronto, ON M6B 1E9 Canada

Antique & reproduction of pre-1920 lighting fixtures & architectural details: fully restored vintage lighting fixtures; interior & exterior; salvaged lighting.



**Vintage Hardware & Lighting** created this fixture.

## Vintage Hardware & Lighting

360-379-9030; Fax: 360-379-9029

[www.vintagehardware.com](http://www.vintagehardware.com)

Port Townsend, WA 98368

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501-455-1000; Fax: 501-455-1004

[www.restorationtile.com](http://www.restorationtile.com)

Mabelvale, AR 72103

Custom manufacturer of historical tile: for fireplaces, flooring, kitchens, baths & custom mosaics; restoration & new construction; custom matching of glazed & unglazed tile.



**Fires of Tradition's** Oak Barrington, shaped granite hearth features an arched Hamilton back-panel, the Valor 530, with a President front.

## Fires of Tradition

519-770-0063; Fax: 519-770-1295

[www.firesoftradition.com](http://www.firesoftradition.com)

Brantford, ON N3T 5L6 Canada

Manufacturer of fireplaces: electric fires, grates, Rumford fireplaces, mantels & more.

Call for more information.



The Delaware mantel from **Forshaw of St. Louis** combines two large trims to create a unique look.

## Forshaw of St. Louis, Inc.

314-874-4316; Fax: 314-874-4339

[www.forshawmantels.com](http://www.forshawmantels.com)

St. Louis, MO 63044

Manufacturer of handcrafted mantels & over-mantels: pine, oak, poplar, cherry & other solid hardwoods; unfinished & ready for paint or stain; precast-stone mantels with 33-, 36-, 42- & 43-in. openings; custom & ground shipped.

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**JP Weaver** created this stately georgian inspired fireplace.



**Motawi Tileworks** provided the tile for this fireplace; the pattern and hues are from the Zelda style group.

## Motawi Tileworks

734-213-0017; Fax: 734-213-2569

[www.motawi.com](http://www.motawi.com)

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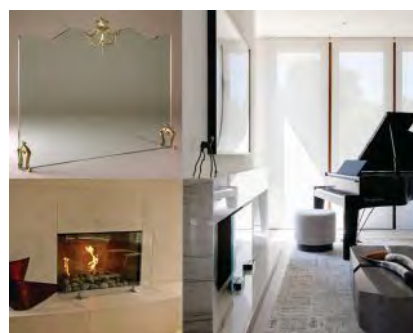
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**Wiemann Metalcraft** created this bronze fire screen.

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**Zepa** fabricated the custom interior woodwork for this mantel.

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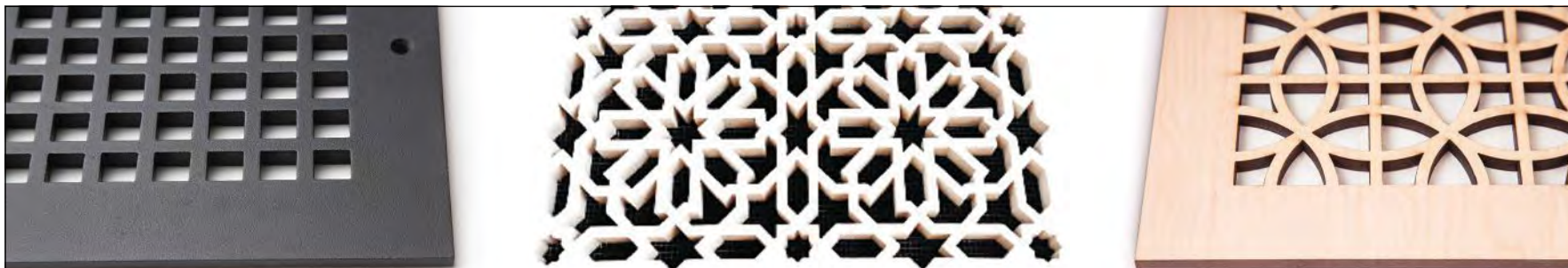
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## Coming in the October 2018 issue:

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Read about them in a feature written by historian Gordon Bock.

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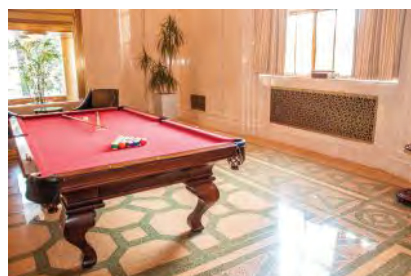


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The historically styled grille for this billiard room was fabricated by **Coco Architectural Grilles**.

**CoCo Architectural Grilles & Metalcraft**

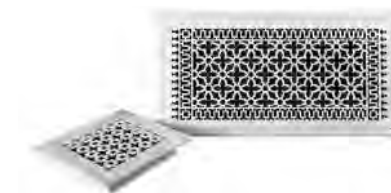
631-482-9449; Fax: 631-482-9450  
[www.cocometalcraft.com](http://www.cocometalcraft.com)  
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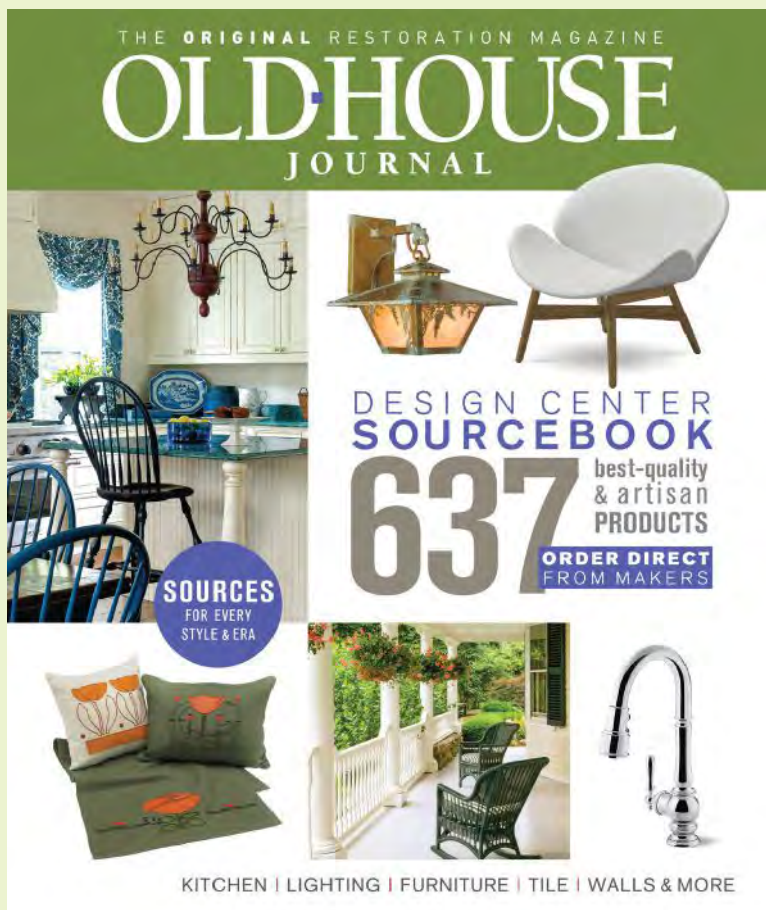
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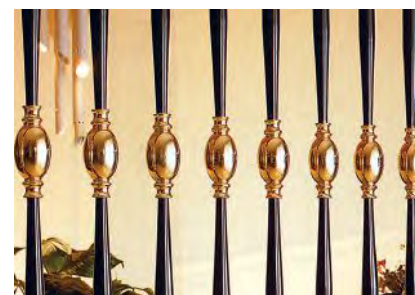
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This wood spiral staircase with decorative balusters was fabricated by **Stairways, Inc.**

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**Zepa** designed and built this monumental staircase.

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## Coming in the October 2018 issue:

Materials and Methods discusses historic techniques and projects. It's researched and written by Judy Hayward, executive director of Historic Windsor, Inc., and the Preservation Education Institute in Windsor, VT, and the education director for the Traditional Building Conference.

# Interior Woodwork & Moldings



**Driwood** provided the interior millwork for this new old South Carolina vernacular farmhouse.

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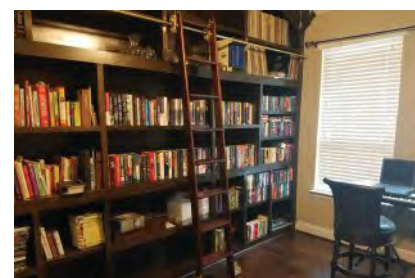
## Kuiken Brothers Company, Inc.

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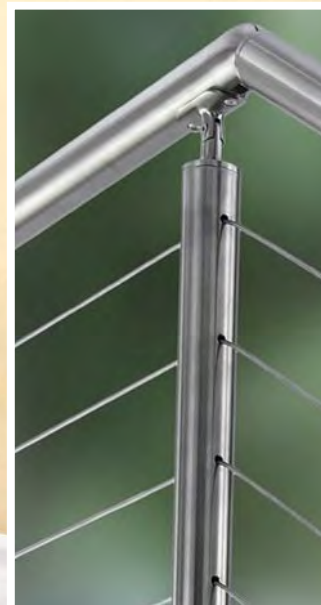
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This casement window is one of thousands repaired annually by **Seekircher Steel Window Corp.**



**Architectural Antiques of Indianapolis** offers an extensive collection of antique light fixtures, mantels, hardware, stained glass, doors and interior elements.



**Carlson's Barnwood** provides a variety of woods such as this antique dimensional lumber.



Lighting fixtures, furniture, columns, antique doors are among the many items offered by **Southern Accents Architectural Antiques.**



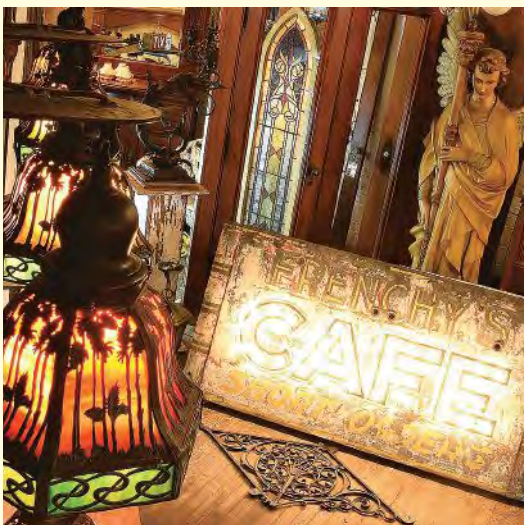
River-Recovered® wood from **Goodwin Company** was used for the inlay in this room.



**Auburn Tile** specializes in four lines of tile in a variety of colors finished in either a brushed or smooth finish.



**Bathroom Machineries** has an extensive line of restored faucets and valves.



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This pair of massive Spanish early modernist cast iron urns is available from **Eron Johnson.**



This Mission style door-knocker fabricated in hammered bronze is available from **Aurora Mills Architectural Salvage.**



This antique wood flooring by **Old Wood Workshop** is just one of many salvaged & antique flooring available.



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**Gavin Historical Bricks** supplied the reclaimed Old English cobblestones with rounded tops for this walkway.



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**Brosamer's Bells** offers a wide selection of restored historic bells.



**B & P Lamp Supply** offers replacement parts such as these chains to meet any need.



**American Historic Hardware** offers a wide selection of original hardware, all cleaned and researched, such as this door lock set.



**Architectural Accents'** 30,000 sq. ft. show-room holds a comprehensive selection of 17th 18th and 19th century architectural antiques and reproductions.



**Pinch of the Past** salvages and restores a variety of architectural components.



Salvaged clay tile supplied by **Tile Roofs, Inc.** was used to create an instant patina on this roof.



Before restoration the mural showed paint loss, inappropriate infill painting and suffered from poor lighting. Photo: courtesy of BVH Architecture

## RESTORING A Historic Mural

By Judy L. Hayward

Since the installation of the Hall of Justice murals in the Douglas County Courthouse in Omaha, NE, in 1912, the murals have endured mobs, fire, water infiltration and multiple insensitive infill painting campaigns. They are part of a complex and richly ornamented setting for a stained-glass dome in the courthouse.

Omaha architect John Latenser was responsible for the monumental French Renaissance Revival style building. The murals were the work of William Rau. They depict a veritable history of the expansion of the United States in the Midwest: Native American encampments, the coming of white settlers, the growth and culture of agriculture, and the importance of the Missouri River.

The restoration of the stained-glass dome, completed in 2010, solved a long-term water infiltration problem and set the stage for restoring the murals.

The installation of art in public places is a humane effort. “Anything we can do to improve anyone’s experience in a courthouse helps; people are usually in court for less than pleasant reasons,” said Paul G. Cohen, Administrator of the Omaha Douglas Public Building Commission. When the recession hit the county budget in particularly harsh and inhumane ways, the mural restoration had to wait. By 2016, business was improving, resulting in growing revenue, and the Building Commission took up the charge. Dr. Ronald Roskens, Commission Chair, turned to the local community and

within a few weeks raised half of the money needed for the restoration. With such a resounding vote of confidence from the Omaha philanthropic community, the commission voted to include the matching funds in its budget.

As most *Traditional Building* readers know, architects, owners and build- ings often develop long-term relationships to see projects through to completion. Dan Worth, AIA, FAPT, is a principal with BVH Architecture that has offices in Lincoln and Omaha. Dan has worked with Paul Cohen and the Omaha Douglas Public Building Commission to steward the courthouse for more than 20 years.

He had worked on the skylight and laylight restoration; he and his team, including conservators from Evergreene Architectural Arts directed by Terry Vanderwall, had done as much analysis as they could from the fifth floor. However, in order to proceed safely and efficiently, a 55x55x90-ft. scaffolding system was erected 5½ stories up under the rotunda. The deck floor was placed about six feet below the ceiling of the dome. The project begun in November 2016 was completed by May 2017 with the safety of the workers, building employees and the public assured by the enormous scaffolding.

The Evergreene Architectural Arts team revealed exposure windows and conducted paint analysis to determine original color schemes, understand subsequent painting campaigns and to document materials. Some of the murals were restored in the company’s New York Studio on their original canvases and some were so deteriorated they were completely repainted on new canvas. Some of the earlier mural restoration work had removed canvas and painted directly on the plaster niches. Cleaning and varnish removal were completed as well. The entablature under the dome was analyzed and evaluated using exposure windows and paint analysis and repainted and gilded based on testing results.

Simultaneously, the BVH team went to work documenting and assembling archival information: building plans, newspaper articles and other historical items were gathered, studied and prepared for the creation of a new building archive that will serve the needs of future building restoration efforts. The badly damaged canvases that could not be restored due to severe deterioration have been prepared for long-term archival storage in the new archive, for example. When the canvases were re-applied after the plaster restoration, some were cut into sections to accommodate the curvature of the plaster niche.

The lighting system under the mural panels was upgraded during the project to LED fixtures, saving energy, lessening the impact of light degradation and improving the view for the public.

The entire project including the prior stained-glass work and the complete replication of the dome was done for \$600,000. It has brought about a long-term solution to protect the building and the murals, improved energy efficiency and encouraged an increase in visitors who come to the court house “just to see the murals.”

The benefits of a long-term partnership between architect and the board and staff are evident in this project. Trust was a key factor in the project’s success given that the final analytical work could only be done once the scaffolding was in place. Architect Dan Worth can be reached at [dworth@bvh.com](mailto:dworth@bvh.com) and conservator Terry Vanderwell can be reached at [tvanderwell@evergreene.com](mailto:tvanderwell@evergreene.com) for more information.

Judy L. Hayward is the executive director of Historic Windsor, Inc., and the Preservation Education Institute in Windsor, VT, and the education director for the *Traditional Building Conference Series* and online education programs. She recently joined the adjunct faculty at Kennebec Valley Community College in Maine to teach a new online course, *Architectural Style and Building Construction in New England*. She blogs for *Traditional Building* online. She can be reached at [jhayward@aimmedia.com](mailto:jhayward@aimmedia.com).

Better lighting highlights the extensive restoration of the skylights, lay lights, mural and entablature. Photo: Amoura Productions



Reviewed by Clem Labine

# Classicism Challenges Gotham

## The Classicist No. 14: New York City

Institute of Classical Architecture & Art, New York 2017

Editor: Charles D. Warren; Managing Editor: Stephanie Salomon;  
Foreword by Robert A.M. Stern

139 pp; softcover; numerous color and B&W images; \$35

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A casual glance at today's new construction in New York City—with its hodgepodge of banal glass boxes—would lead you to conclude that the victory of orthodox Modernism is complete.

But more careful inspection will show that the “heresy” of traditional design is beginning to creep back into some of Gotham's new buildings. You'll never learn this from the mainstream architectural press, but you will discover it in *Classicist No. 14: New York City*—the latest annual publication from the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art (ICAA).

The *Classicist* is ICAA's annual peer-reviewed journal that serves as a forum for contemporary classical practice and scholarship. *Edition No. 14* is devoted to one of the most vexing of topics: how contemporary classicism can engage with a 21st-century metropolis like New York City. Setting the tone for this examination is a passionate foreword by the architect who has had the greatest success in re-introducing traditionalism into the fabric of New York City: Robert A.M. Stern.

The bulk of *Edition No. 14* is divided into three major sections: past, present and future. The “looking back” portion leads off with a scholarly review by Jon Ritter on how the Roman triumphal arch has been used in New York to impose some sense of classical order on existing street layouts by framing views and providing civic gravitas. Often built in plaster and meant to be temporary monuments for special occasions, sometimes these arches (like the Washington Square arch) were so popular they were eventually rebuilt in stone and became permanent city landmarks.

Mark Alan Hewitt follows with a survey of classical residences built by New York's 20th-century merchant princes, creating what Hewitt calls the largest collection of modern urban and country houses anywhere in the world. Janet Parks gives us a tantalizing peek at a few of the historic architectural drawings in the amazing archive of the Avery Library at Columbia University. Guest editor Charles D. Warren takes a deep dive into one of his favorite topics: The awesome load-bearing seven-story cast-iron-and-steel book stacks at the core of the New York Public Library.

The historical survey that most intrigued this reviewer was Allan

Greenberg's essay on New York skyscrapers—past and present. Greenberg shows how New York's Building Zone Resolution of 1916 embodied an architectural vision for the city that shaped the set-back towers that became Manhattan's iconic skyline, with Rockefeller Center (1931–38) as its apex achievement. But when Lever House (1952) became the paradigm of Modernist urban design, the zoning code was changed in 1961, abandoning architectural vision to allow more design leeway. The unfortunate consequence, Greenberg declares, was that “city planning is now the province of lawyers and developers whose interests usually center solely on profit, leaving the public realm unrepresented and adrift.”

Greenberg's castigation of contemporary skyscraper design segues neatly into the next major section, which presents a photo portfolio of recent New York City projects rendered in Classical and traditional forms. Traditionalists will find this section most encouraging, because despite many developers defaulting to brand-name Modernists like Richard Meier, Frank Gehry and Herzog & de Meuron, a truly impressive array of recent projects have been completed in Classical and other sympathetic traditional styles. The special significance: Many of these projects are large-scale commercial and residential buildings with major streetscape impact—not just high-end townhouses.

This proves that perceptive developers realize there is a growing market for buildings that relate to their context in scale, materials and form, and which provide visual nourishment for pedestrians. Fairfax & Sammons, Robert A.M. Stern Architects, Peter Pennoyer Architects, Roman and Williams, Morris Adjmi Architects, Atelier & Co. and Allan Greenberg Architects are among the firms showcasing recent larger-than-townhouse projects.

Looking to the future, the last major section is an Academic Portfolio that presents extremely accomplished student drawings from 12 institutions in the U.S. and U.K. that provide training in classical architecture and art. This exhibit provides reassurance that a cadre of well-trained designers, fluent in the language of classicism, will be ready and able to interpret the classical vision for the next generation.

Hard-copy versions of *Classicist No. 14* can be ordered from the ICAA website at [www.classicist.org](http://www.classicist.org). There you can also read a digital version of *No. 14* free online, as well as get information about the earlier 13 editions of this annual chronicle. Despite the continued dominance of orthodox Modernism in most architectural academies, the annual appearances of the *Classicist* journal prove that the desire for reasoned order in architecture is gaining traction in our chaotic world.



**This new 17-story Manhattan residential building by Peter Pennoyer Architects shows that savvy developers understand the appeal of traditional design. The building's limestone-and-brick façade heightens the character established by older buildings on its block and presents a pleasing face to passersby.**



# Statues in Urbanism, Part 2: Richmond Fumbles

By Carroll William Westfall

The war did not end when Grant took Richmond. It dragged on to Appomattox, it reappeared when a huge encampment of veterans installed their Valhalla of Lost Cause heroes on Monument Avenue. It lived on, in candidatures of men like George Corley Wallace, in the Charleston shooting, in the toppling of statues, in the murderous Charlottesville melee a year ago.

Shortly before Charlottesville, Richmond's Mayor had established a ten-person commission to address the public affront of Monument Avenue. As the capital of the Confederacy it carries a special burden to right the wrong that remains evident in its present. The commission's report, just released, should have provided a model for other cities, but it falls far short.

Richmond has atoned somewhat in recent years. Since 1996 it has installed statues commemorating prominent local African Americans: Arthur Ashe, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, and Maggie Walker. Where slaves were landed for sale it placed a bronze replica of the crate in which Henry "Box" Brown mailed himself to Philadelphia and freedom in 1849. And J.E.B. Stuart Elementary is now Barack Obama Elementary.

But Monument Avenue remains untouched. Intended as a national rebuke to the war's victors, it deserves a national response. Laid out in 1887 with a broad, planted median, in 1890 the bronze Robert E. Lee on his horse arrived with others following: in 1907, Jeb Stuart and Jefferson Davis, then Stonewall Jackson in 1919, and finally Matthew Fontaine Maury, 1929, all during the most intense years of Jim Crow.

The commission's report, acknowledging that Monument Avenue's narrative can simultaneously be "more cautionary than celebratory, more tragic than triumphal," offers a few simple actions.

Remove Jeff Davis. The president was a non-Virginian, and his monument's is the "most unabashedly Lost Cause in its design and sentiment." Replace it with someone else left unnamed.

Elsewhere on the Avenue add a monument, perhaps one honoring the former slaves fighting as "the United States Colored Troops" in a nearby battle, or perhaps someone else from among those the public recommended.

For the other statues add "signage" and a mobile app presenting new information.

Have the "museum community" prepare permanent and rotating exhibits with more information and context, and have the tourism industry note the city's "key role in the domestic slave trade" and its "entire monument landscape as an example of its diversity and modernity."

Finally, the commission wants more art, and by local artists. "All great cities have public art to adorn, teach and reflect its history culture and values over time...Major works of art are an expression of a community's collective

self and de facto represent that community to the larger world." Public art is "just as important as good schools, libraries, robust economy, sound infrastructure and responsive government."

That catalogue's entries are necessary but not sufficient to fulfill the purposes of the city or the nation, and more is needed than a purge, signage presenting more and better information, an additional monument or two, and some "new contemporary works" of art by local artists. That is not enough to countermand the cause those bronzed individuals served, the purpose of those who installed them, and the desires of people who would perpetuate injustice.

Monument Avenue's statues and those elsewhere stir people's passions because what they express is embedded in a familiar tradition that allows comparison between the past and their hopes for the future. Some want no

more men on horses while others want to preserve injustice and roll back equality. The statues and the setting stand for the legacy of Jim Crow that left people bottled up within the city limits while the suburbs and its tax revenue expanded and their city was left to mold.

For redress, the commission wants more statues from Richmond's "arts community." That community values creativity conquering the anathema of tradition. It revels in its latest acquisitions, the 2010 addition to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Steven Holl's brand new Museum of Contemporary Art. Highly visible in public but hardly public art, these personal expressions, latest cutting edge, "of their time!" and intentionally rebuke Richmond's traditional buildings from Jefferson's Capitol forward.

The commission fails to understand that good public art—statues, buildings, urbanism—belongs to a tradition that people can relate to. It seeks beauty as the counterpart to justice, and like justice, beauty is based on principles that are congruent with human reason that endure across time within a tradition that absorbs the innovations that address ever changing circumstances.

Needed here is the very best that tradition now offers. Fight the fire of Monument Avenue's "celebratory" injustice with more and better fire. Here and in other cities add new monuments that move the ensemble into the present with works whose pedigree in tradition and quest for beauty, the counterpart to justice, give the lie to past and present injustice.

And furthermore, address the many injustices in the metro region's urbanism so that it may fulfill the hope that these urban amendments to the city kindle in the enlarged "community's collective self."

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The unveiling of the Robert E. Lee statue on Monument Avenue in 1890.

Photo: Virginia Common Wealth Library





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