



The 3 W's:

Women, Wisdom, and Wealth



Knowledge is like a
baobab tree; no one
can encompass it with
their hands. Do not
follow the path; go
where there is no path
to begin a trail.

Ghanaian Proverb

Design for Liberation:
A Wealth of Wisdom
page 17

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ADVERTISING RATES

The NOMA Magazine has a reader base of 20,000 that includes 1,500 licensed African-American Architects and hundreds of other minority architects dispersed throughout all level of government, the corporate world, institutions, and privately owned professional practices. Many of these men and women have final authority to specify a combined total of billions of dollars annually in construction materials, building equipment, fixtures, and furnishings. Many are owners and partners in architectural firms that range in size from 130 persons to sole proprietor. Additionally, The NOMA Magazine is distributed to the Congressional Black Caucus and NOMA Counterpart Professional Organizations in the fields of law, medicine, real estate development, engineering & technology, film, television, music, general entertainment and more. Others include over 5,000 graduate intern architects, 5,000 architecture students, and thousands of affiliated professionals. If you wish to place your ad in the NOMA website, please contact use at info@noma.net.

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NOMA MAGAZINE

FALL 2007

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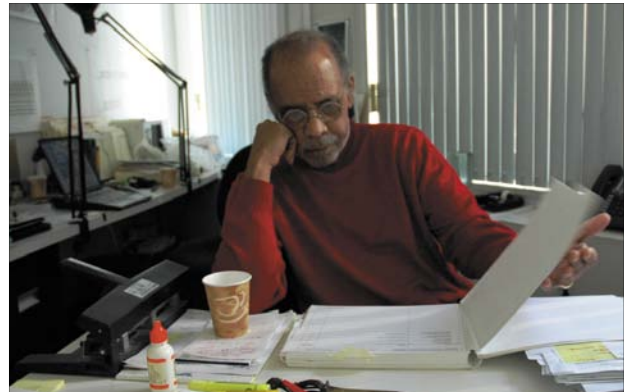
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NOMA

Strength in NOMA is built through unity

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am proud to say that after more than thirty five years of service, NOMA continues to leave its mark on the profession and communities that we serve. Today we continue to gain unparalleled visibility for our members and our organization. With the successes comes the burden of demands on the management of the organization. For all of these years, we have depended on the volunteer efforts of the National Board for that leadership and management. We have reached the tipping point where the time has come to reconsider how we will meet the demands and expectations placed on the organization.

as the times and events that were the seeds of it's founding have evolved, so must we

Our membership deserves superior "Member Services". It becomes increasingly difficult, and quite frankly, we have sometimes failed to deliver those services, as we are currently structured. We must also consider change in order for NOMA to maintain its position among our constituent organizations. Our constituents all have Executive Directors and staff that can more easily respond to the demands placed on their organizations. Unlike previous attempts to outsource the day-to-day management of NOMA, we are

in need of developing a course of action that will allow us to fund full time positions, possibly through grants and donations. You will hear more on this topic as it is developed further.

At the 2006 San Francisco Conference, members were polled, the outcome of which identified three priority issues; while we are still attempting to respond to the myriad of other worthy concerns. Our primary focus is on:

- Creating a national High School Architecture Summer Camp Program
- Supporting HBCU's
- Creating a meaningful presence for NOMA in the recovery efforts in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast Region.

High School Architecture Summer Camp Program

Based on the success of the Summer CAMP program co-developed by Ohio Southwest NOMA, we wish to provide a national framework from which local chapters would be able to implement their own programs. The engagement of middle to high school students is so vital to assuring a stream of future Architects. We have all come to realize that young students are not being exposed to Architecture, unlike many other professions. We must be at the forefront of these efforts if they are to succeed, particularly amongst students of color.

Supporting HBCU's

There is no excuse. We know the importance of our HBCU's. We know the statistics. We must each ask ourselves, what have I done to help? Nearly all of the programs are in need. We can no longer say someone else will solve the problems. The Board is committed to working with the leadership at the HBCU's to develop a plan of action that will be meaningful to the aiding the success of these programs. As more information is available, we will disseminate it to the membership for action.

Creating a meaningful presence for NOMA in the recovery efforts in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast Region

There is no doubt, by all accounts, that it has been difficult for most efforts to gain traction in the region. NOMA is no exception. While there have been disappointments and setbacks to our efforts, our resolve has never been greater as these were the very reasons we felt compelled to act originally. We are continuing to seek opportunities that we feel will have a meaningful impact on the Region.

Our wonderful organization continues to thrive. But as the times and events that were the seeds of it's founding have evolved, so must we. I hope that you will join the Board of Directors in supporting efforts that will allow the organization to serve you, its members in the manner that you deserve.



PEOPLE MAKING NEWS



1. CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE HONORS NORMA MERRICK SKLAREK, FAIA, NOMA

by Mark Christian

Norma Merrick Sklarek, FAIA, NOMA was recognized and honored by the California State Legislature on the floors of the State Assembly and State Senate on August 20th, 2007, in Sacramento, California. Ms. Sklarek is a woman of many firsts. She is the first African-American woman to be licensed as an architect in the United States, to have Fellowship bestowed upon her by the AIA, and to form an architectural firm.

Over the years Ms. Sklarek has served the profession and public in many capacities. She just completed a term as a governor-appointed member of the California Architects Board, served as a master juror for the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, served as a member and chair of the AIA Ethics Committee, taught architecture at UCLA, lectured at many architectural schools including Howard University, Tuskegee University, and Columbia University, and coached hundreds of emerging professionals preparing for the architectural registration examinations.

“First African-American woman to be licensed as an architect in the United States”

Because of these and other pioneering accomplishments in the architectural profession, the California State Legislature honored Ms. Sklarek.

**2. KENNARD DESIGN GROUP 1957-2007
LOS ANGELES FIRM CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY**

Kennard Design Group (KDG) celebrates its 50th year of operation this year. Founded in Los Angeles by the late Robert Kennard, FAIA, today it is the oldest continuously operated African-American owned architecture firm in the western United States. Following Kennard’s death in 1995, Gail Kennard, one of his daughters, assumed the leadership of the 10-person firm.

Robert Kennard began his practice after working for several prominent architectural firms in the 1950s including Victor Gruen, Richard Neutra and Daniel Mann Johnson Mendenhall (DMJM). His interest in Modernist architecture led him to pursue the design of numerous residential projects in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He started as Robert Kennard & Associates, and in the early 1960s, Arthur Silvers joined him



Photo description and credit:

Assembly Majority Leader Karen Bass and Norma Merrick Sklarek, FAIA, after her introduction on the floor of the Assembly. Photo Credit: Russell Collins Stiger, State Assembly Photographer



PEOPLE MAKING NEWS



“the firm has continued his life-long effort to encourage young people to enter the design professions”

to form the firm of Kennard & Silvers. With Silvers, the firm moved into institutional and governmental design work.

After Mr. Silvers left the firm to pursue his interest in teaching, Kennard brought in Ron Delahousie and Jeff Gault and the firm was re-named Kennard, Delahousie & Gault or KDG. With fellow architect Delahousie and planner Gault, the firm moved into larger projects and international assignments in Mexico, Central and South America.

Following the departure of Delahousie and Gault in the 1980s, the firm was renamed Kennard Design Group, and Shirley Downs joined the firm as an administrative partner.

During those years, the firm successfully completed transportation planning projects and designed numerous light and heavy rail and bus facility projects. In 1984, the firm completed three new parking structures and the heliport at the Los Angeles International Airport for the 1984 Olympics games held in Los Angeles.

The firm has designed more than 800 projects including the city's 77th Street Regional Police Facility, UCLA School of Engineering, the Wilshire/Normandie Metro Red Line Station, Carson City Hall and Community Center, and projects at the Hollywood Bowl, an outdoor amphitheater.

Design awards include recognition from the American Library Association, Los Angeles Conservancy, Coalition for Adequate School Housing, California Preservation Foundation, American Institute of Planners, and the American Association of School Administrators.

Throughout its history, Kennard Design Group has been committed to improving the quality of life for the less fortunate members of the Los Angeles community. Its projects include child care centers, schools, libraries, recreational facilities, community clinics and transportation projects for rail and bus riders.

Firm founder Robert Kennard was a 1949 graduate of the University of Southern California's School of Architecture, and the firm has continued his life-long effort to encourage young people, especially women and people of color, to enter the design professions. The Robert A. Kennard Scholarship is awarded each year, and past recipients are now employed by some of the top architectural firms in the region.



PEOPLE MAKING NEWS



3. JOANNA HALL REMAINS ON NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Joanna has been very active battling political issues in her community. As an activist, she helped block the building of an incinerator plant in her Cradock neighborhood. Now, there are plans to build an ethanol plant, and Joanna is involved again, representing the residents in that fight as well. She is also the recipient of the 2007 Hampton Road's AIA Chapter Honor Award for Emerging Professionals. Joanna recently joined the firm of Hayes, Seay, Mattern and Mattern, Inc. (HSMM).

4. DONALD KING WINS TOP SBA AWARD

SEATTLE — Architect Donald King, president of DKA Inc., has been selected Regional Minority Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration. King won the award for Region X, which covers Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska.

King will be honored this week in Washington, D.C., during National Minority Enterprise Development Week. He also will be honored Sept. 24 at the Showcase Business Conference and Opportunity Fair at the Washington State Convention & Trade Center in Seattle.

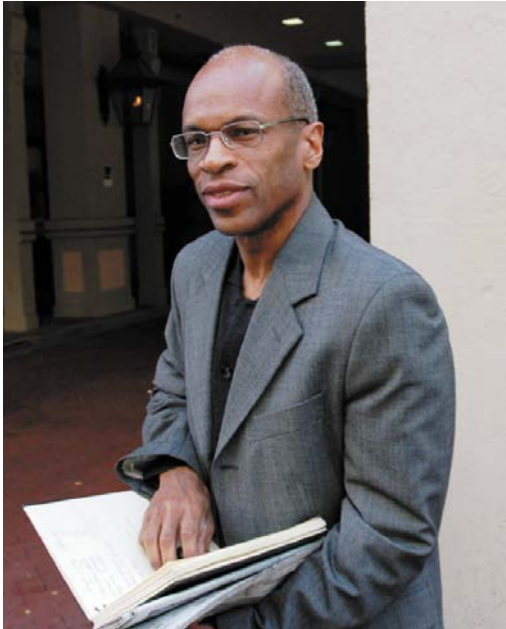
5. CHERYL MCAFEE-MITCHELL, FAIA, NOMA APPOINTED 2008 AIA CONFERENCE CHAIR

AIA President-Elect Marshall Purnell, FAIA, NOMA has appointed Cheryl McAfee Mitchell, FAIA, NOMA the 2008 convention chair. Purnell presented the theme of the next convention, May 15-17, 2008, in Boston. "We the People"—words spoken by an architect more than 200 years ago—will define the convention and architects working for the public good, he said. "We the People" will demonstrate our essential role in solving the most pressing issues of our time. Aside from her new appointment as conference chair, Ms. McAfee-Mitchell serves as president of Charles F. McAfee Associates, a firm founded by her father. In this capacity, she is responsible for CFM's Atlanta office, as well as the firm's international development.





PEOPLE MAKING NEWS



Maurice Cox

6. NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS ANNOUNCES MAURICE COX AS DIRECTOR OF DESIGN

by Victoria Hutter

October 2, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- The National Endowment for the Arts announced today that Maurice Cox, an architecture professor at the University of Virginia, has been appointed the NEA's Director of Design. In that position, Cox will supervise the panel selection and grant making process in design, oversee the Mayors' Institute on City Design, Governors' Institute on Community Design, and Your Town programs, and provide professional leadership to the field. He will assume his new responsibilities on October 2.

Mr. Cox arrives at the NEA at an exciting time. The Arts Endowment announces that the Edward W. Rose III Family Fund of The Dallas Foundation has given a generous gift of \$250,000 for the NEA's Mayors' Institute on City Design.

Maurice Cox as Director of Design

Of Maurice Cox's appointment, National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Dana Gioia said, "We are excited that Maurice Cox will join us to direct the Arts Endowment's design initiatives. His wide-ranging experience, from professional practice to academic instruction to civic leadership, fits well with the NEA's mission of promoting broad public access to artistic excellence. We know he will provide invaluable guidance for our programs."

Mr. Cox noted, "With the NEA's commitment to the arts as a way to enrich the lives of ordinary citizens and my own experience of design as a fundamentally democratic and public art, I am confident that together we can make design socially and culturally relevant to the everyday lives of Americans, in whichever community they live. Well-designed environments are not a luxury -- they are a public necessity."

Mr. Cox is an Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Virginia, School of Architecture and is a 2004-05 recipient of the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. He recently completed eight years on the Charlottesville (VA) City Council with the last two years as the city's mayor. As mayor, professor, and urbanist he was widely recognized as the principal urban designer of his city. During his mayoral term, Frommer's Cities Ranked and Rated selected Charlottesville as "Best Place to Live" out of 400 cities in the United States and Canada.

A native of New York City, he received his education at the Cooper Union School of Architecture under the guidance of Dean John Hejduk. In 2004, he was awarded the Cooper Union's highest alumni honor, the President's Citation for distinguished civic leadership to the architecture profession and, in 2006, the John Hejduk Award for



Joseph W. Robinson

PEOPLE MAKING NEWS

Architecture. He began his teaching career as an Assistant Professor of Architecture at Syracuse University's Italian Program in Florence, Italy, where his teaching career was accompanied by 10 years in architectural partnership with Giovanna Galfione, collaborating on buildings with architect Aldo Rossi.

He was founding partner of RBGC Architecture, Research and Urbanism from 1996–2006 in Charlottesville. The firm became nationally renowned for its work with communities traditionally underserved by the design field. His reputation as a design leader and innovator led to his being featured in *Fast Company*, as one of America's "20 Masters of Design;" on CBS news magazine "60 Minutes;" in the documentary film *This Black Soil*; and in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Architecture Magazine* -- all for his ground-breaking use of design as a catalyst for social change in the rural town of Bayview, Virginia.

Cox was a founding principal, with Ken Schwartz, of Community Planning and Design Workshop (CP+D Workshop) which is working on urban design strategies for the cities of Richmond, Virginia, and Moss Point, Mississippi. Cox has lectured widely on the topics of democratic design, civic engagement, and the designer's role as leader.

7. NOMA HONORS JW ROBINSON

NOMA Atlanta would like to congratulate Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., FAIA, NOMA for his outstanding and distinguished service of over fifty years to the profession of architecture and the community. On Saturday, September 15th during a special tribute dinner honoring him, with more than 600 people in attendance, he was given NOMA Atlanta's Lifetime Achievement Award.

"In honor and recognition of his perseverance, service, and contributions to the field of Architecture and the City of Atlanta. Even through the confines of segregation he has established a legacy through his work, mentorship, and leadership in education, design excellence and community service."

JW Robinson a graduate from Hampton University is a charter member of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) and the first African-American architect from Georgia to be inducted into The American Institute of Architects (AIA), College of Fellows (COF). Not allowing segregation to dampen his spirit of becoming an architect his career started as a teacher at Booker T. Washington High School (1953–1968) where he inspired many of his students to enter the field of architecture. Through his dedication and perseverance he developed a practice in residential architecture by designing over 200 homes.

After receiving his license he established his own firm in 1970, J.W. Robinson and Associates. The firm's achievements include many public projects including the swimming pool at Grant Park, community centers, educational facilities at both the K through 12 and higher education facilities, libraries, fire stations, projects at Hartsfield-

Jackson International Airport and Marta, the C.B. King Federal Courthouse in Albany, GA and private projects for corporations that include Bellsouth, Delta Airlines and the Atlanta Life Insurance Company. JW's leadership extends into the community as well where he has championed historic preservation of buildings and properties that represent the cultural life and accomplishments of African Americans including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthplace and other significant structures in the MLK and Sweet Auburn historic districts. His legacy continues while he works with his two sons in providing direction of the firm.

8. NOMA WINS AIA'S 2007 WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. AWARD

San Antonio, Texas was the site of the 2007 AIA Convention, where NOMA was awarded the prestigious Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award. As reported by Jeff Stein, architecture critic for *Banker & Tradesman*™, the award is given to "an architect or organization that exemplifies the profession's (architecture's) responsibility toward current social issues." The award served to affirm the important role that NOMA is playing in post-Katrina America, where the issue of race and architecture has been elevated by architects of all backgrounds. Majority firms attempting to create a safe environment for Black employees are reaching out to NOMA for guidance, while students of color attending majority institutions continue to bring issues of racism to NOMA for mediation. Various members of NOMA's Executive Board were in attendance to accept the award and to address a packed room with a discussion about the significance NOMA in 2007 and into the future.



PEOPLE MAKING NEWS



“his architectural practice focuses on assisting African-American communities to preserve and interpret their significant cultural resources and to utilize them to stimulate community development”

9. UVA SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE APPOINTS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CRAIG BARTON AS CHAIRMAN OF DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Aug. 16, 2007 -- The University of Virginia School of Architecture has named associate professor of architecture Craig Barton to serve as chairman of the Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. The three-year appointment, announced by Architecture School Dean Karen Van Lengen, will begin this fall. In addition to his role as chairman, Barton is director of the Urban Studies Program and is a Faculty Fellow at the University's Center of the Study of Local Knowledge. Through his practice, research, and teaching, Barton investigates issues of cultural and historical preservation and their interpretation through architectural and urban design. Much of his architectural practice focuses on assisting African-American communities to preserve and interpret their significant cultural resources and to utilize them to stimulate community development. He is the editor of the anthology, "Sites of Memory: Perspectives on Architecture and Race" (Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), and he has contributed essays and projects to a number of publications. Barton is a founding principal in the architectural firm RBGC Associates, whose recent projects include restoring and repurposing historic buildings historically occupied by African-Americans. Barton earned a master of architecture degree from Columbia University, a bachelor of fine arts degree from The School of Visual Arts and a bachelor's degree from Brown University. He has held academic posts at Columbia University, the City University of New York, and Harvard University, and joined U.Va.'s faculty in 1995.

10. DALLAS ARCHITECT, CLYDE PORTER, NOMA HONORED WITH AIA FELLOWSHIP

By R. Jenkins, NOMA (Dallas), AIA Associate

(Dallas) – Clyde Porter, associate vice chancellor of facilities management and planning/district architect for the Dallas County Community College District, has been elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects by its Jury of Fellows, based on his notable contributions to the profession of architecture. Clyde Porter, FAIA, was invested in the AIA College of Fellows during a special ceremony this past May during the organization's 2007 national convention and design expo in San Antonio.

Porter is the first African American in the Dallas AIA chapter to be selected as a Fellow.

The AIA College of Fellows, founded in 1952, comprises members of the institute who are elected as Fellows by a jury of their peers.



PEOPLE MAKING NEWS

Elevation to Fellowship – one of the highest honors that AIA can bestow on its members – recognizes the achievements of those architects and their contributions to the field of architecture and society. This year, 76 AIA members were named Fellows from among the organization’s 81,000 members.

AIA Fellows must be members of the organization for at least 10 years and must have made significant contributions, either by: promoting the aesthetic, scientific and practical efficiency of the profession; or advancing the science and art of planning and building by enhancing the standards of architectural education, training and practice; or coordinating the building industry and the profession of architecture through leadership in AIA or other related professional organizations; or advancing the living standards of people through and improved environment; or increasing the profession’s service to society.

Porter, who completed the direction of \$78 million in district-wide construction, renovation and expansion projects for DCCCD in 2004, currently is overseeing projects associated with the district’s long-range master plan – representing the \$450 million bond program that was approved by Dallas County voters three years ago. In 2003, Porter also was recognized for his professional accomplishments and contributions to the state by Gov. Rick Perry when he named the DCCCD architect an honorary admiral in the Texas Navy. That same year, Porter also was recognized by the Texas Society of Architects with a Certificate of Commendation and by U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, whose 30th Congressional District includes Dallas and DCCCD.

Honors from both groups – and the Texas House of Representative and the Texas Senate – followed Porter’s receipt of a Citation of Honor from the Dallas chapter of the AIA. The award honored him for “recognizing the value that each campus brings to our community and for its (the district’s) commitment to enhance education through good design.” (DCCCD comprises seven individually accredited colleges, plus several additional locations, serving more than 64,000 credit and 25,000 continuing education students each semester.)

Porter, as DCCCD’s architect, has overseen more than \$5 billion in design and construction projects during his professional career. He co-founded the Texas chapter of the National Association of Minority Architects, and he has raised minority participation in architectural and engineering projects by more than 50 percent.

Porter, former Chief Architect for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit transportation project, is active in the community. He lectures regularly at area high schools and middle schools, and he fosters a DCCCD college student intern program to assist minority and needy students so that they can become architects, interior designers and engineers. *(continued on next page)*



“first African American in the Dallas AIA chapter to be selected as a Fellow”



PEOPLE MAKING NEWS

A graduate of Prairie View A&M University, Porter is a registered professional architect and a registered professional interior designer in the state of Texas. He holds a National Council of Architectural Registration Board certificate. His previous employers include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the city of Corpus Christi and the Army and Air Force Exchange Service worldwide headquarters in Dallas.

Porter also has earned a number of awards, including the Outstanding Man of Minority Business Development, presented by DFW Minority Business News; an AAFES Excellence Award for improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of construction projects; and several military honors, such as the U.S. Army bronze star, air medal and commendation medal for heroism.



|| • FREELON WINS FRIENDLY COMPETITION

The Freelon Group Architects was recently selected as the design firm for The National Center for Rhythm and Blues, which will serve as the southern anchor of Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts, otherwise known as South Broad Street. Freelon emerged as the chosen firm from a field of some of NOMA's best and brightest architects, including Deveraux & Purnell, Davis Brody Bond, Stull & Lee, and Kelly Maiello Architects and Planners. The invited competition among African-American lead designers was the brainchild of Kenneth Gamble, Chairman of the Universal Companies. According to Universal, despite the enormous appeal and influence of Rhythm and Blues, there is no one place that tells the comprehensive story of this unique American music. A center for Rhythm and Blues that is national in scope would be the only one of its kind. Philadelphia's long musical history and its many contributions to the world of R&B make it the ideal location for a National Center of Rhythm and Blues. A one-of-a-kind anchor attraction in the heart of the South Street Entertainment District, the National Center will become a must-see destination that immerses visitors - Philadelphia residents, baby boomers from across the country, and international music aficionados -- in the heart, soul, sounds, and global impact of Rhythm and Blues.





REGIONAL UPDATES

NORTHEAST

BosNOMA

The Boston NOMA chapter recently hosted the NOMA Executive Board for their quarterly board meeting. Chapter President Andre Vega along with members and officers from the BACNOMAS (Boston Architectural College) chapter planned a weekend of events and were gracious hosts. The chapter is being considered as a host for a future NOMA conference.

DC NOMA

Conference co-chairmen, Meshella Johnson and Patrick Williams, are leading the charge to prepare for the 2008 NOMA Annual conference to be held in Washington, DC at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill. NOMA President, Carlton Smith, plans to meet with the 2008 planning committee in September to give advice and support the groups efforts.

NYCOBA NOMA

NYCOBA recently launched its new website www.nycoba.org and held a Web Launch party to celebrate. Upcoming events include...

PHILANOMA

There is renewed energy and activity coming from PhilaNOMA this summer. The schedule for upcoming general body meetings is Sept 12th, October 17th, and Nov 10th. Please contact PhilaNOMA.chapter@gmail.com for more information.

SOUTHEAST

Birmingham NOMA (BNOMA)

All BNOMA members were all awarded substantial contracts with the city of Birmingham School Building Program.

Nolanda Hatcher Bearden Group Architect is developing a mix-use project in downtown Birmingham that will include her office, condos and retail. More updates to follow in the next issue.

BNOMA will sponsor and award two scholarships to the ACE Mentoring Program headed up by BNOMA member James Wilson. The ACE Program goal is to Educate, Motivate, Challenge and Encourage high school students while helping to prepare them for opportunities on a college level. Birmingham ACE focus on giving inner city high school students a comprehensive view of the field of Architecture, Construction & Engineering (ACE), while providing friendships and networking opportunities.



REGIONAL UPDATES

The NOMA Board asks you to share in our prayers that Charles Lewis will continue on his road to recovery from several surgeries.



Charles Lewis, NOMA, AIA
Western Region Vice-President

MIDWEST

NOMA Detroit

September Meeting Agenda:

1. NOMA history in Detroit by Roger Margerum;
2. a presentation by U-M regarding Howard Sims gift to the Design Center (Craig Wilkins' mentorship program) and matching gift challenge to the African-American design community.
3. Upcoming lecture by Harvard GSD professor David Lee, FAIA, NOMA at University of Detroit Mercy

The NOMAS chapter at Detroit Mercy has been assisting Lawrence Tech in getting off the ground. The NOMAS chapter at Kansas State has been actively composing material for the NOMA magazine. They are also considering creating a newsletter for local purposes, but as a start, want to put together material for the NOMA magazine. The students are really, really active down there at KSU, not only in the school of Architecture, but campus-wide. Apparently, whenever a diversity program is being planned, the NOMAS group is usually called upon. They are also making inroads in the broader community, while doing things with stakeholders in the community.

INOMA

INOMA held a meeting at the USG Head quarters on 9/20/07 to discuss application for LEED Gold certification for commercial interiors and a tour of the building. They also co-sponsored the following program with AIA Chicago:

INOMA Architects in the Neighborhoods

Wednesday, September 5, 5:30 pm– 7:00 pm

Smith & Smith Associates, Brook Architecture Inc., and Johnson & Lee Ltd., all members of the Illinois Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects and of AIA, will present recent and current housing work that is a part of the transformation of Chicago's South and West Side neighborhoods. They will offer insights

into the challenges and attributes of working within neighborhoods with a strong historic and cultural context, and discuss how this informs their work.

On August 11th INOMA their annual Bud Biliken Picnic in Washington Park.

In October, INOMA will do a presentation at the offices on Urban League (Chicago Chapter)





REGIONAL UPDATES

November Elections for INOMA board positions to be held 11/15/2007.

December Holiday party and Election results TBD. This event is sponsored by Housing KC, INOMA
Learning units: 1.5 LU/HSW, Location: AIA Chicago

WESTERN

SFNOMA

The San Francisco Chapter of NOMA has been very busy since the last issue of the magazine. In effort to foster more communication and fellowship among local minorities in profession of design we have had two successful social activates. In March we had a very good turn out for a happy hour event at Swig in San Francisco which was organized by one of the newest SFNOMA members Tiana Robison, NOMA who is originally from the NYCOBA NOMA.

In August we had our 1st SFNOMA Bar-b-que at the beautiful resident of our local president Leo Ray Lynch, NOMA AIA. The home which is situated up in the mystic Oakland hills was a fantastic setting for the social. The chapters' executive board wanted to thank the chapter for their hard work over the last year for conference and for their continuing hard work in the name of SFNOMA. The event had around 20 people with a delectable array of food, beverages and deserts prepared by Leo, his wife and SFNOMA Vice President Prescott Reavis, NOMA. We are looking forward to making this an annual event.

While the East Coast was a hot bed for discussion on black architects in the profession; the California College of Arts (CCA) NOMAS chapter and SFNOMA put on Multiculturalism + Architecture Symposium "Social, Political and Cultural Change and its effect on the built environment. The event was held April 14 on the San Francisco campus of CCA. There was a very good turn out despite the severe down pours in the morning. We had five highly thoughtful presentations which expanded the dialogue and roles of designers and how they affect the public realm, be it positive or negative. After each group of presentations, an enlighten panel discussions helped to define the broad range of skills and issues any designer must be aware of when developing solutions for our clients. Several member of SFNOMA served as speakers and organizers of the event. Yim Lim, NOMA AIA served as the Mistress of Ceremonies, Michael Willis, NOMA FAIA and Liz Ogbu, NOMA served as presenters for the event. We especially would like to thank Amanda Bassiely President of the CCA NOMAS chapter for leading the event and the entire CCA NOAMS chapter for their hard work for putting this successful and important event together to enable designers and community members to share views and concerns about the future of its built environment. Followed by the presentation there was networking and fellowship among all with displays of work from the CCA NOMAS chapter members.



right to left :Karina Powell, Fred Powell, Carlton Smith National NOMA President, Sara McBarnette, SFNOMA Guest



right to left Amanda Bassiely President of the CCA NOMAS and Tyrone Marshall Parliamentarian of SFNOMA



EDITOR'S PAGE



“Wealth begins with your state of mind”

THE 3 W'S: WOMEN, WISDOM, AND WEALTH

By R. Steven Lewis, NOMA, AIA

The 3 W's: Women, Wisdom and Wealth have in common the need for careful nurturing and care in developing their potential; hence, the decision to take the time necessary since we last came to you to put together an outstanding issue of the NOMA Magazine.

W #1: Women

If last year's conference luncheon was any indication, the women of NOMA are poised to lead us forward to success and accomplishment in all areas of the profession. While it was pointed out to us in a recent issue of Architect Magazine that only 2% of American licensed architects are Black women, our sisters continue to distinguish themselves by their excellence across all spectra of the profession. Norma Sklarek, who has been a mentor for me and many of our colleagues, was recently honored on the floor of the California State Assembly; Alison Williams, Gabrielle Bullock and Diane Hoskins are but three of numerous other accomplished women of color whose effectiveness has led them to key leadership roles within the most prestigious of majority-owned firms; Yvette Henry, Brandy Brooks and Kimberly Dowdell are models of dedication to community service for architects and interns of all ages and backgrounds; and Sharon Sutton, Michaela Pride, Yolanda Daniels, Felicia Davis and Mabel Wilson play multiple critical roles as academics in advancing theories and ideas centered on cultural identity, while nurturing and developing students of color in what is still a very monochromatic educational environment. NOMA is proud to highlight the accomplishments of our women of color, whose contributions to the profession of architecture are vital and essential, and shall no longer go unheralded.

W #2: Wisdom

Wisdom has been defined as “the trait of utilizing knowledge and experience with common sense and insight.” One need not look far within the ranks of NOMA's membership to discover vast quantities of knowledge and wisdom embodied in the likes of Donald Stull, Norma Sklarek, James Washington, Sharon Sutton, Max Bond, Emanuel Kelly, Harry Robinson, Dr. William Harris and countless others. As readers of the NOMA Magazine, you are invited to glean various pearls of wisdom from some of our aforementioned colleagues. While those named above operate primarily in the practice and academic realms, there is another “space” in which some of our best and brightest reside: the public sector. As leaders in creating vision for our cities, towns and environments – both built and natural – public servants (past and present) like Toni Griffin, Maurice Cox, Lee Bey, Gene Norman, Harvey Gantt and Maxine Griffith are entrusted with the public good, and have served us well by applying their wisdom to complex and often controversial challenges.

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W #3: Wealth

If I had a nickel for every person, including our own (architects), who have echoed the chorus, “architects don’t make any money,” I would be well on the way to being a wealthy man. Wealth begins with your state of mind. Wealth can also be defined in different ways. There is, of course, monetary wealth, but also the wealth that comes in the form of gratification from service to community, family and the profession. As we noted above, there is also wealth to be mined from the wisdom held by our members, who are known to not be selfish when it comes to sharing experiences. In this issue of the NOMA Magazine, we will examine one architect’s transition from the practice into the world of real estate development as an avenue to wealth creation. Kirk A. Sykes, President & Managing Director of New Boston Real Estate’s Urban Strategy America Fund, has found a way to scale-up the impact he is able to make on improving conditions in underserved communities while simultaneously increasing his personal financial wealth. We also turn to Dr. William Harris, Professor of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT, for more “heady” insights into what wealth means to architects.

Taking stock of the women, wisdom and wealth that resides within the membership of NOMA, there is good cause to be optimistic about our ability to impact the profession in significant ways, while continuously improving the quality of our lives – both spiritually and financially. If there was ever an issue of the NOMA Magazine from which you, the reader, could take something useful away, we hope that this is it.

DESIGN FOR LIBERATION: A WEALTH OF WISDOM

*by William M. Harris, Sr., FAICP, PhD
Martin Luther King, Jr. Visiting Professor
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
School of Architecture and Planning
Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

You must act as if it were impossible to fail. Knowledge is like a baobab tree; no one can encompass it with their hands. Do not follow the path; go where there is no path to begin a trail.

GHANAIAN PROVERBS

VISION

The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) has a focus that is characterized as comprehensive, inclusive, and functional for minority architects. The professional organization incorporates the design, educational, and promotional contexts of the African American designer.* It is important to focus attention to the efforts of black designers as a function of their historic relationship to cultural, educational, and career barriers. Equally, it is critical to



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Ghanaian Proverb

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give special attention to the struggles by African American designers to overcome the artificial constraints brought by race, class, and institutional biases that limit the full development of the design profession.

Historian Vincent Harding posits that the most outstanding contribution of people of African descent has been the struggle against oppression. Building upon that posture, African American designers have served effectively in the struggle through culturally-sensitive art, creative design of spaces and places, preservation of artifacts, and projection of cities into the future. Especially important to our efforts have been the inclusion of the central importance of the human elements in most of our work. It is around these efforts that the theme of this discussion is centered.

Wisdom is determined by at least two factors. Intellectual ability that is triggered by competence to make rational, reasoned thinking is the first element. The other is experiential based; the ability to connect past situations and events to relationships that are consistent and reliable. Wisdom is the sum total of the two and make possible efficient, productive decision making. In the African American community, wisdom has always been essential to survival and progress. It is significant that human beings live to progress, not simply to survive. Our progress as a people out of human bondage and pervasive social, political, and economic oppression gives witness to the wisdom in our communities.

Wealth, fiscal and human, may be defined as the surplus of matter required to meet needs. However, it is more than simple standard of living, wealth is the accumulation of goods (material, emotional, institutional, and ecological) that transcend over a period of time and thus may be passed onto others in the future. The primary contributor to African American persistent poverty has been our inability to amass sufficient wealth in these critical areas.

PATHWAYS

We designers of African descent may take immediate routes to liberating our people and profession from oppressive barriers. There are three critical paths that are available to us. Our first path must be forging new trails. Given our experience of the past, we know external support will be at a minimum. Thus, the initiatives to induce purposeful social and professional change must be undertaken and directed by us. Of course, as Martin Luther King, Jr. offered, white people of goodwill know the value of this approach. They will welcome our leadership as the appropriate tactic for renewal and progress in a system that has been too often hostile to African Americans. In our taking the leadership roles, it will be our goals, objectives, and strategies that are determinant of outcomes.

Another positive side to our taking the role of calling the shots is the development of self reliance and mutual support among members of the design professions. As we trust ourselves individually to move with dispatch to excite positive change, we will experience the satisfaction of achievement and growth not always part of our past. Similarly, we will find the need to involve one another in all aspects of problem solving. This mutual cooperation will result in better products, more profits, and long term cooperative business. In so doing, we will become more competitive in the bidding processes, growing and expanding our practices, and increasing levels of trust in the community for ourselves and our work.

The second action that we must take is growing our own. Consider the failure of majority institutions of higher learning to produce African American design professionals in respectable numbers. For example, if the top five majority institutions of higher learning offering degrees in architecture were to have graduated one student a year for the past thirty years, our professional numbers would have nearly doubled. Consider if we had encouraged and financially supported our HBCUs over that same period of time how the numbers would be very impressive. Doing good business means developing legacies for the future. Architecture need not be the profession of only the sons of men of privilege.

Growing our own also means training interns, cultivating and motivating youths to enter the design professions, and establishing scholarships for educational support. Of course, we have done some of these things. I urge that we increase substantially our contributions over a sustained period of time. City planners need to bring young African American boys and girls into their offices and teach them to read maps, learn about zoning and land use regulatory devices, and observe public presentations. Historians need to greatly expand the knowledge of blacks about our contributions as designers, the difficulties experienced, and what the future holds. Landscape designers need to involve the black community in greening projects,

teach sustainability practices to inner city residents, and guide beautification projects in core city neighborhoods.

The third area of initiative-taking is to exercise more effectively and forcefully our political capacity. Contrary to what may have been taught in design school, our profession is political. Decisions are made within the framework of capitalist interests. The result of such action is deal-making around the interests of those who pay, who benefit, and who seek to control the next round of activity. It is impossible, therefore, to divorce oneself from the political arena of design implementation schemes. We are not without influence; perhaps we are not powerful, but neither were the brave men and women who founded this nation. The charge is to take courage and go beyond the marker set to limit our development as a people and profession.

Exploring and engaging new territory always afford a level of risk. Risk taking is an always common factor in our business. To dare to propose a new design, to offer fair land use regulations, and to be inclusive of those seen as expendable requires risk-taking. It is these risks that produce the difference between those who enter the race and those who win the race. Any able-bodied person can run the marathon, only the brave, risk-taking have any real chance of winning the long distance effort.

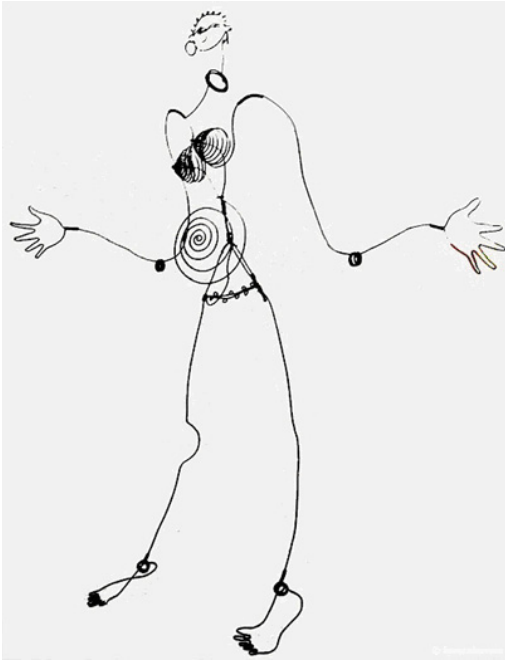
HOME COMING

As an academic and professional city planner, I am an optimist by nature, education, and training. However, I am equally cautious and conservative about making purposeful change in an environment that remains resistant. Still, our history has been one of meeting the myriad of challenges presented to us. Our struggles to overcome these barriers are clearly more successful than failed. That we are durable and persistent is evident in our individual and collective courage and professional achievements. Because we have been able to ride out the storms of racial oppression and professional limitations, we are best suited to continue the struggle and expand our army with new recruits who will surely help us win the war for social justice. It with this confidence in my sisters and brothers in the design professions that leads me to continue the efforts to make our social, political, economic, and physical environments improved quality of life spheres for all our people. We African American designers possess much wealth of wisdom; let us apply it in newly discovered ways to advance our individual, group, and professional aspirations.

(Footnotes)

* Designer for the purpose of this discussion is inclusive of architects, architectural historians, landscape architects, and city planners. Although this discussion targets the black designer, there is no intent to exclude other people of color architects and planners.

“to dare to propose a new design, to offer fair land use regulations, and to be inclusive of those seen as expendable requires risk-taking”



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ARCHITECTURE AS ARTIFACT AND THE CURATION OF CITIES

HERITAGE, MEDIA AND CULTURE IN THE DESIGN OF NEW URBAN LANDSCAPES

DESIGNING CULTURALLY COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR AN ARCHITECTURALLY MONOTONOUS WORLD

Introduction to Book by Renee Kemp-Rotan/DRAFT

The Current Monotony of City Building

- Amidst the current monotony of city building, there is an increasing demand for built environments that promise unique cultural experiences. Many cities are resorting to heritage preservation, the invention of tradition, and the rewriting of history as forms of creating engines for destination tourism. Cities who feel their “power of place” in the world will generate a demand for historic monuments and symbolic buildings. Civilizations have done this for millennia. This is why we still are determined to visit the Seven Wonders of the World. Understanding both heritage preservation and tourism development requires a contextual grounding in history and political economy. What does this mean for the study of the built environment? Tourism development has consequently intensified, producing entire communities that cater to almost wholly to, or are even inhabited year-round by, the “other.” People will visit and promote cities and neighborhoods that are BEST at interpreting their history to themselves and others.

A New Body of Work

- In this story-board presentation of a book in process-- Kemp-Rotan shares decades of work where she has used her well-endowed architectural and historical powers to curate new culturally competitive environments with grand imagination for an architecturally monotonous world
- What If the Buildings Could Talk, Sweet Auburn, 1996 Olympic Projections, Atlanta Georgia
- What If the Tombstones Could Talk, Oakland and Segregated Cemeteries of the South, ATL. Ga
- What If the Fish Could Talk, World of Water Museum, Nile Exhibit Design, ATL Ga: The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition, Cairo Egypt: Visitor as Archaeologist
- Fort Worth and African Americana, Fort Worth Texas: The Big Black Cowboy



- The Railroad Reservation Park, Birmingham Alabama: The History of a City from Pre-History, Industrial Revolution to the New Technology

Architecture Can Be Used To Inform

While my work is a case of individuated imagination that has responded to many urgent urban needs to blend culture, heritage, economic development and media; it is important to note that the definition of culture and the survival of culture are directly attached to one's global/local view of the world. My professional view is that architecture is a medium that can be used to interpret urban environmental history and should in fact be responsible for speaking to the history of its time, circumstance and place.

Architecture as Cultural Artifact

Once while walking through a city district full of blight and I turned up my nose until someone held my hand and spoke to the "invisible" history of the area. Then I became convinced that architecture, too, could tell a story of community. Even those communities that had been 'redlined' had a story to tell. Those fragments of buildings left behind became less embarrassing than the stories of disinvestment that brought them into present derelict being—once the story was told—in situ. That began my own enchantment with the curatorial aspects of built environments in cities. Presently I am working on a book entitled Architecture as Artifact and the Curation of Cities, based on the last ten years of working and speaking on these matters always from a vantage point of urban design and the manipulation of "ensembles of buildings."

Form-Maker vs. Change-Maker

Recently as one of the key speakers at the International Sculpture Conference in Cincinnati I asked why did each sculptor introduce themselves by name and then add... "And I am a "form maker"...? Why, I asked, had not one sculptor introduced themselves by name and added ... "and I am a "change maker"...? And perhaps in this 'post-Mapplethorpe National Endowment for Arts world', allegiance to "good form" is less risky than an allegiance to "new thought" New thinking by definition leads to new interpretation which can lead to the greater inclusion of new ideas which can lead to the acceptance of change which can lead to the celebration of new ideas...OR are those with creative intelligence afraid to create? Are they afraid of what the "others" might think? Do they have any new thinking worthy of serious academic critique? What are the tests of architectural greatness? Quantity? Quality? Form? Content? Change? Peer Review? Post-Occupancy Review? Magazine Editors? Who is the jury, here?

Mirror/Mirror

When I decided on architecture as a profession— I began looking for a mirror—a visual mirror, an auditory rhythm, a kinesthetic feel that would help to recall the contribution of the my tribe, my ancestors and predict my future contribution to the profession. To broaden this mirror I studied architecture in the US, in Europe and in Africa. Though architecture in the west is understood to be a bourgeois profession: At Syracuse I was trained in the Bauhaus by recent immigrants. In Europe I was trained by the avant garde, media-tickled, Archigram Group (from the next and future galaxy). In Africa, I was in the bush, recording 1001 ways to build houses out of mud, courtesy of Paul Oliver. Thus my student-in-the-studio/field experiences were both global and hyphenated. Soon I discovered that as an "African-American" designer (as the hyphenated phrase suggests) I could use both multi-cultural if not multi-lingual 'tongue'—as frames of reference. As an African-American in design I could make a multi-lateral race, class, diasporic of the other AND I could make classical responses to most design questions, as well. So I have worn many hats; berets of "the other" and crowns of charm whenever needed to assimilate/integrate into most any cultural nuance or international symposium on design. Indeed I speak the language(S) of design But where is the legacy of new thought, new work, and new deed in any architecture that we as African-Americans create...? What does our much hyphenated or highly multiplicitous view enable us to see that one who does not share our story could ever hope to imagine...? My interest was not—is not in monotony—but in using architecture—the so called stuff of civilization—in a brand new way: To design clothing for the homeless that became their new home—Such as programming of a new Railroad Park in the South that would insist that all people come to this new central and public park to learn of the collective history of a once segregated city. To design a new museum in Cairo quite similar to an



“architecture is a medium that can be used to interpret urban environmental history and should in fact be responsible for speaking to the history of its time, circumstance and place”



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archaeological dig....Dig? To design the façade of a building in Atlanta that was an historic peel..To program an aquarium where the fish could talk...?

In What Voice Do We Speak?

Each designer has the opportunity to leave legacy—In fact—in architecture school, we only studied those architects who left legacy. Usually it was the study of Europeans who left legacy and to some degree the ancient yet lost civilizations that no longer exist. It early becomes evident that true legacy and respect for contribution develops from a sensitivity to historic inclusion and exclusion (There were no books on women as architects at that time...)-- which for me led directly to deliberate preference for architecture as cultural icon -- as ‘big’ idea—a big idea that this has the power to stir human souls. Education is most important in this discussion– Dick Dozier, Jack Travis and even the 1st National Conference On Black Women In Architecture that I developed and hosted showed to many the first time that the both men and women in Diaspora have the ability to speak culturally, architecturally and to document that voice...Did I hear more than one voice? Vox? Voxes...?

Who Will Write The History, Anyway?

Recently I attended my alumni weekend at Columbia University with 200 persons in attendance from the 1930’s to the present. I stood to ask one question: What was the School of Architecture /Planning now using as its historical reference to the history of architecture—Banister Fletcher was still named as the seminal reference to architectural history. If this is still the case where do we go to see what the range of black architects, designers, planners have produced? And of those who have produced great works—which ones have, insisted that their works be culturally deliberate? This in the name of cultural literacy and identify..... We have yet to create for ourselves a comprehensive exploration of our contribution to architecture–worldwide. Yet, the spectrum of our participation on built environment questions has been remarkable. (New Orleans, anyone?) Just one book about the questions we have asked along the way would be sufficient...? How much could you actually BUILD ON 40 ACRES AND WITH ONLY ONE MULE? Thus, a book on both built and unbuilt works would begin to show our influence, integrity and academic depth with unprecedented thoroughness and scope. From these diverse and even global perspectives we now can begin to challenge outdated assumptions that corporate architecture is all that matters.

Globally Speaking

Global reality number one: only 20% of the worlds’ architecture is designed by architects. Global reality number two: Of that, much less is monumental or corporate architecture. This gives those who practice architecture very good news—and at least an 80% chance of looking for

new opportunity, for new clients and for new architectural expression. As one who was trained at Ivy League schools and even internationally, global culture for the first time in my training was seriously and academically discussed when I attended the Architectural Association in London. In the U.S. we knew of Sir Bannister Fletcher and his *History of Architecture* tome. At the AA, I was further influenced by the work of Paul Oliver, the European expert on African Architecture and American Blues... According to Paul Oliver—the most politically conscious amongst us must go about the business of recalling the geo-politics of blood memory...or as Zora Neale Hurston would say—“remembering what we wish to forget...” Paul Oliver sent students to far corners of the earth to see what indeed other cultures had produced without trained architects. The victory was the production of *Encyclopedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World*, where I was one of 700 scholars who contributed to the Oliver life-work. It was this encyclopedia that recently received the Sir Bannister Fletcher History book award, bestowed upon it by the Royal Institute of British Architects. It was this encyclopedia that scientifically chronicled how built form decisions get made—tribe by tribe. Is it the climate, materials, building program, cost? Cultural geographers, such as Amos Rappaport presumed that it depends on who gives greatest credence to the manipulation of these variables..... For me—it was the number of variables that won out... Weights, measures and the manipulation of the architectural idea came in a close second....Choice and range of possibility worldwide? What could not we do...?

Stolen Legacy?

Additional influence regarding possibility and legacy comes from the book and discoveries of *Souls Grown Deep* where black music is acknowledged as American classical music—in his intro—and through academic and practical discussion with author Bill Arnette—it further is made plain that the real contribution of blacks to the visual arts and to the building arts has yet to reach the same level of “respectability/ authenticity” as has our music jazz—Yet the cubists surely understood our ability to manipulate visuals and sculptural environments. Looking at the quilts of Gee’s Bend, Alabama most immediately compare it to the work of Joseph Albers, Picasso, Matisse, Miro, Rietveld, Mondrian—all were studying the work of the African Diaspora particularly those works that were placed in French/Parisian repositories after the plunder of Africa by Napoleon at the turn of the last century. In fact via a recent international symposium of past imperialist countries, on Slavery as Public History—the French the British, the Belgians, etc. began to show the works that they found in these once ancient civilizations prior to enslavement of the African. The opposite of cultural identity is cultural ignorance: Syncopation, Scat, Hip-Hop, Rap

Our Range/Our Depth

The range of our work and the depth of our work is what needs documented. This so that our reflective view of our work is classified

and catalogued as are genres in music OR arranged in accordance with descriptors that AIA uses to name its national committees—architecture for culture, justice, education, health, environment, housing, planning, urban and regional design, minority, historic preservation. To suggest that architecture is only one thing is problematic—architecture is many things. And our ability to interpret these many things must be documented—not only on the covers of flashy magazines. As we have become more and more ‘empowered’ in the many decisions that affect architecture—First we must define what architecture really is...not just the narrow, heroic materialistic view of the subject. Second, we must define what we add to the profession by way of new thought on the subject. Third, we must by birth right bring to the table new interpretation of legacy in architecture as the artifact that it is...Fourth, we must be clear on the significance or insignificance of our contribution to the built environment.... (As in— nothing ventured—nothing gained...)

“I am an architect who happens to be black”

The phrase “I am an architect who happens to be black” will never be a major contributing chapter in the annals of architectural history—cultural apologia such as it is.... Birth certificates on the fill-in-the-blank subject of race, do not allow us to put the word “architect” in that space—thus it is our blood memory that comes first and it is this important ingredient that has opportunity to inform our choice of profession—The major breakthrough is whether or not we actually have something new to say....AND/OR have something new to leave behind....It is not lost on me that in a democracy—the majority rules.....but if the majority subscribes to total form-making assimilations perchance... what great legacy might be left behind as concerns the changing content and context of world architecture in this instance...? One cannot become a professor until one has something to profess....so what say the city and what say we....? This is a call for the question...

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METONYMIC ELABORATED DO'S (MED)- STREET-SPACE, IDENTITY, AND FEMININE ORTHOS 1

by Dr. William Taylor



The following commentary is an attempt to illuminate an everyday occurrence, the display of the fantastical, highly sculptural hair styles re-introduced into urban space most recently by African-American women. I will argue that the wearing of these metonymic² hairstyles comprises a form of public posturing that conjoins issues of public and private identity and inflects the distribution of power in urban spaces. Streets, the informal spaces that abut them and the discrete places that exist within them provide the basis of our experience of cities. The places in these systems of location, always understood with respect to larger physical, social, cultural, and historical frameworks, comprise centers of significance that define and bind local communities. These inherently un-stable spatial structures are always in the process of becoming, their perceptual boundaries and symbolic content under constant revision. None-the-less, these centers provide principle means by which local populations orient themselves spatially, organize their significant [identity shaping] memories, and attain the deeply defining connection to place characterized by geographer Edward Relph as “existential [place] insideness”.³

Seen in these terms, significant places are best understood not as autonomous physical constructs but as processes of accumulating spatial located significant memories – place as process. Thus, the health of communities registers most legibly in the small everyday dynamics where issues of individual and collective identity are negotiated through the assignment of meanings within systems of local spatial organization.

MEDs and Feminine Orthos

The term street-space, as used here, designates the public spaces that become meaningful primarily through the informal activities carried on by private individuals. These activities tend to occur in spaces that remain after more powerfully spatial appetites have been satiated. The symbolic contents of these interstitial spaces are more malleable and subject to revision by the “weak”⁴ forces of informal activities such as the intentionally divergent sculpturally expressive hair treatments considered here. These weak forces are believed to articulate spatial forms of sufficiently symbolic force as to create authentic, if temporary, identity shaping places within which individual and collective attitudes and expectations are sensed, critiqued, and sustained.

Normative space appears to host conditions that conform, more or less, to dominate communal standards. Activities that artfully deviate from normative expectations can fascinate, even beguile and place the activity in arresting relief against more conventional spatial contents. When individuals display such forms of posturing activity they not

only define space, they claim it. The more un-expected the posture the more effectively the private precinct is carved out of the public domain and more clearly its spatial boundaries are articulated. When encountered these space announce a clear, if momentary, sovereignty that differentiates, and reinforce the identity of the initiator who is the exclusive insider with respect to this proprietary place. All the rest of us reside inside surrounding territories with their more conventional symbolic contents.

Accordingly, the boundaries between deviant and conventional space mediate between binaries of private versus public intention. These binary relationships with their implicit structures of resistance and submission revise the patterned relationships between normalcy and deviance that over-lay systems of spatial localization.

The meanings assigned to these spaces by both initiators and observers reflect attitudes, understandings, and agreements that are private and public – individual and shared. Thus, the posturing activities that create these spaces and conjure their meanings can reinforce, critique, or undermine structures of individual and collective identity. The expressive intensity of the MED and its ability to capture and activate space indexes the extent to which it exceeds “normalcy”. The closer it comes to a disquieting divergence from the norm the greater its power to capture the space it activates.

In *Daring Do's: A History of Extraordinary Hair*, Mary Trasco presents a history of extreme hair styling in the social evolution of Western women from ancient Greece to the present. Indeed, the elaborate hair do's affected nowadays pale in comparison to the physical scale and decorative elaboration of hairdo's worn in past times and places. However, there is a particular aspect of this form of public posturing that has remained relatively constant over the span of time and geographic location.

Historically, in western cultures, the public display of highly elaborated hair do's was accompanied by circumstances commensurate with the special qualities of in hairstyles themselves. Clothes, make-up, mode of transportation, attendants, time of day, year, etc., taken together comprised a coherent set of signs that could be interpreted by anyone familiar with the manners and morays of her place and time.

The women's complete “posture” could be de-coded not just by her social peers, but by members of the general public regardless of social standing. Her “daring” expenditure of excess personal resources broadcasted her social-cultural-political position and the concomitant values, attitudes, and conditions existing at centers of power, privilege, and dominance with which she was associated. Thus, her individual place-identity was cast in-situ in the spatial, cultural, economic systems of localization of the community. Her daring do comprised part of a revelatory personal sign.



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Contemporary African-American women have creatively and subtly revised the significations in the MED. The posturing form still articulates space in ways that declare momentary private local spatial sovereignties. The un-likely-ness of the hairstyles conveys an extraordinarily urgent individual intention sometimes balancing on the very edge of structural-hair-gel collapse. With all this, the accompanying body posture stance may also assert its own dignified and elegance. Indeed, preserving these baroque hair-forms can convey an arresting, inwardly focused concentration and easy elegant grace.

All together MEDs can present such low probabilities of conformance to normative expectations that they exceed hair-style and become hair-forms⁵⁶. At this point, they acquire the visual presence and formal autonomy usually reserved for pieces of abstract sculpture. In addition, MEDs have a special capacity to differentiate the woman who affects it.

One of the most remarkable aspects of these extra-ordinary hair styles is their frequent public juxtaposition with the truly mundane – shopping for groceries, mall crawling, waiting for the bus, or simply hanging about the street. These are sweat suits and jeans situations above which the MED floats as oil above water, disdainful of the common world of optimistic home permanents and desperate hot comb quick fixes. This discontinuity, when it occurs, a powerful sub-text emerges; that is, the defining aspects of the woman's life are not represented in her otherwise ordinary present condition but in some special, celebratory event commensurate with the allocation of resources required to create and maintain her hairdo. The absent event is inaccessible to the observer. It exists in the exclusive space of the bearer's memory, a space to which no one else has direct access. That the memory may be fictive – a product of her internal longing is irrelevant. What is crucial is the observer's sense that the wearer is imagining some invisible involvement with respect to which perceptual reality is mere waiting.

Ironically, the most powerful symbolizations in this expression are lodged in what is absence – the MED becomes a formal text, but one that obviates normal object-symbol significations. Only the wearer and [perhaps] some un-identified co-participants in the un-designated, un-located special event can be insiders to the absent space, all the rest of us are other.

These are "I don't care what you think about this" hair styles that declare personal independence as effectively as the three foot high jewel encrusted MED of the eighteenth century French Lady in Waiting. However, the historic significations in the MED have been inverted to serve the less than privileged and in doing so have come to participate in other forms of posturing affected by the disaffected. The MED's of African American women typically resist de-coding except when connected to prescribed conditions of dress on specified occasions such as church meetings, special holidays, etc. They camouflage as much or more than they reveal.

So – What Does All This Mean to Architecture?

The significance of posturing is in its power to transmute local spatial distributions and in so doing offer many small opportunities for negotiating and maintaining the reasonable distances between private and public intentions that characterize civil civic space. The critical examination of this and other forms of posturing confirm that the residual urban spaces we often see only as potential extensions of exiting powerfully place spatial hegemonies are often not really empty but already dense with human implication though they be deeply camouflaged in the mundane. Of this Henri Lefebvre, in his commentaries on “everydayness” declares:

The concept of everydayness does not therefore designate a system, but rather a denominator common to existing systems including judicial, contractual, pedagogical, fiscal, and police systems. Banality? Why should the study of the banal itself be banal? Are not the surreal, the extraordinary, the surprising, even the magical, also part of the real? Why wouldn't the concept of everydayness reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary?

It seems to me that architecture's intellectual terrain is increasingly dominated by discourses that connect only indirectly to the daily reality of most people's lives. It seems reasonable to add to these more abstract often metaphorical commentaries the examination of how people construct their own discourses within the phenomenology of everyday experience. It seems prudent to examine the “forms, functions and structures” of Lefebvre's preoccupation, to look at the fine grain of local behaviors and practices, and to include in the weighing of our concerns the extraordinary implication of small things that keep on happening. Street-spaces in all their myriad forms are important not because they are large but because they are small and fine grained. They demand our attention not because of what they proclaim but because of what they whisper – because they reveal the vital role of seemingly small issues and practices in constructing the frequently extraordinary nature of common occurrence.

(Endnotes)

¹ For a history of the role of extreme hair styling in the social evolution Western women from ancient Greece to the present see: Trasko, Mary. 1994. Daring Do's, A History of Extraordinary Hair. Paris: Flammarion

² Metonymic, from the Greek word “metonymy” refers to the rhetorical device which substitute's one word for another in a manner that transmutes the meaning of the original word. In this usage the metonymic object [the hairdo] changes the meaning of the wearer without, as in rhetoric, changing the wearer herself. For a discussion of metonymy as ritualized transmutation of the meaning a Athenian women's bodies see: Sennett, Richard. 1996. Flesh and Stone. The Body and the City in Western Civilization. New York: W.W. Norton & Company

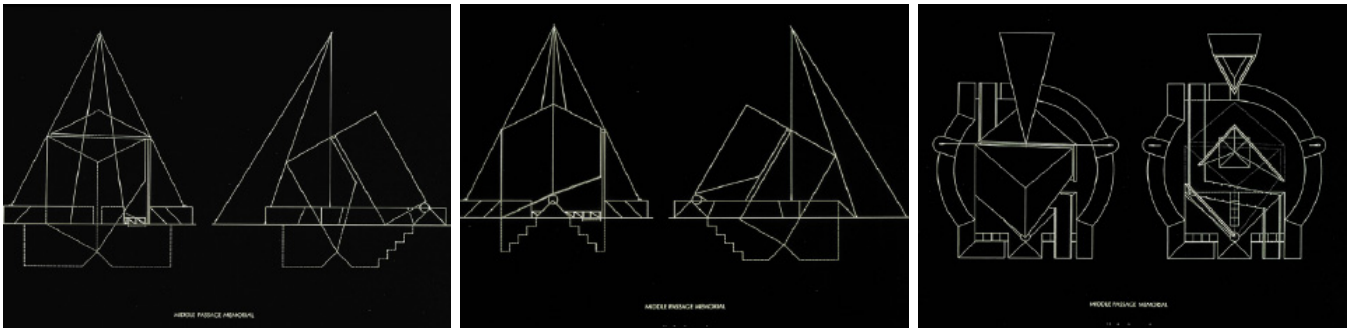
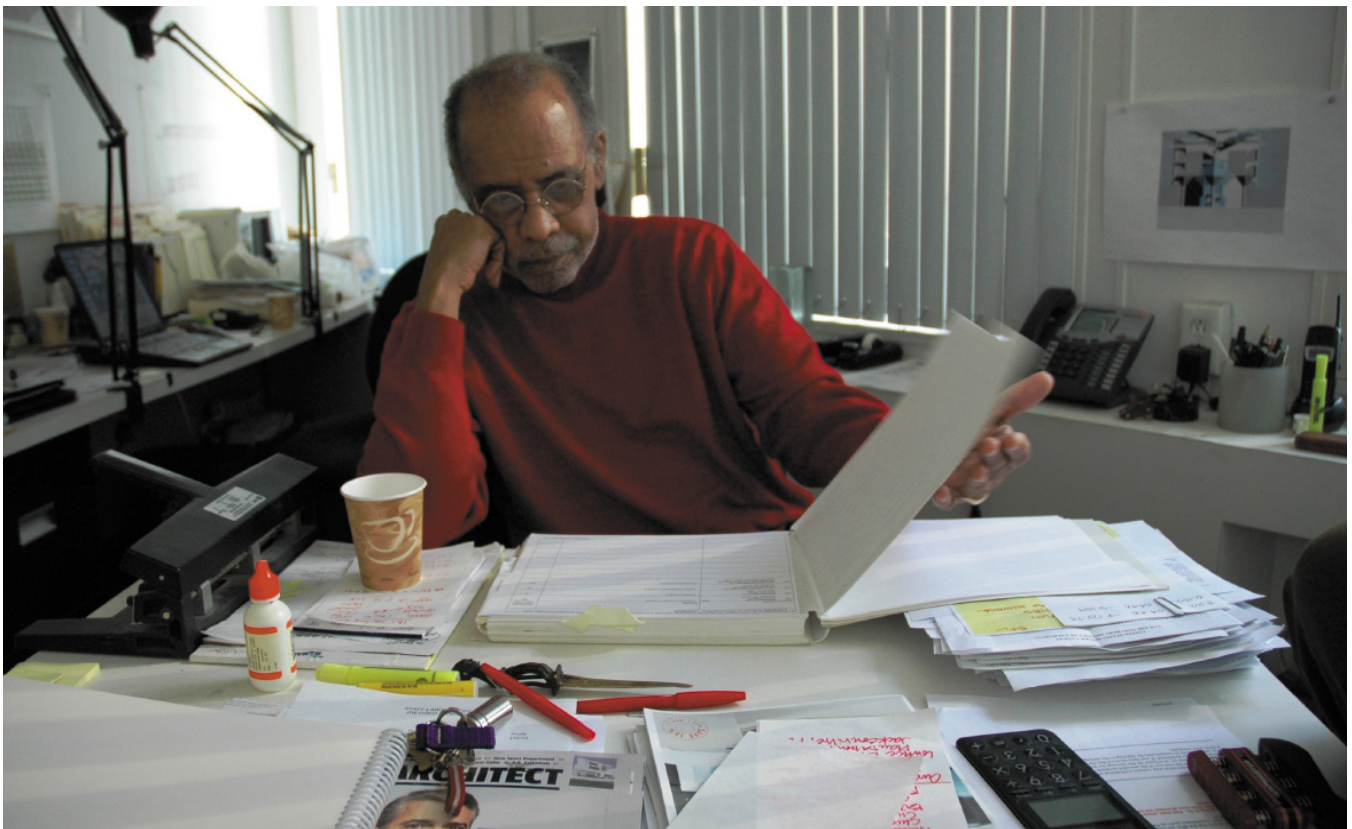
³ See Relph, Edward. 1976. Place and Placelessness. London: Pion Limited. Relph begins his descriptions of place with the operational definition: place [corporeal or imagined] is that condition where mind where significant memory is located within “differentiated space” – space that has somehow been separated out from all other spaces, perceptual or imagined

⁴ Ignasi de SoLa Morales's discusses the concept of weak formal expression as it specifically relates to architecture. Simply stated weak forms are those that serve primarily to recover memories about things other than themselves. See: de Sola Morales, Ignasi. 1996. Differences. Topographies of Contemporary Architecture. Boston: The MIT Press Massachusetts Institute of Technology

⁵ This notion of style make reference to the operational definition of style offered by Christen Norberg-Schulz in his book Intentions in Architecture where he states that style, normally seen as the current fashionable, is more usefully understood as the degree of probability that a thing will conform to normative expectation.

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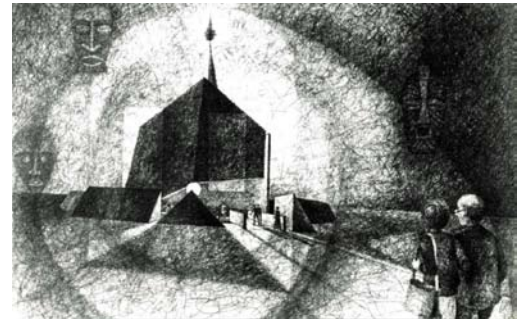
RESURRECTING THE MIDDLE PASSAGE MONUMENT:
A WORK BY MASTER ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER
DONALD L. STULL, FAIA, NOMA



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Not long after receiving the news that I had been selected as a member of the 2006–07 class of Loeb Fellows at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, it dawned on me that I would be in the company of one of my mentors, David Lee, Professor of Urban Design and partner with the firm of Stull and Lee Architects and Planners. As the first few months of my year at Harvard passed too quickly, it was apparent that while I had seen David regularly, my view was typically of the back of his head exiting a studio or classroom at hyper-speed, in a constant race en route to his next commitment. While it brought back recent memories of my time as principal and co-owner of RAW International – memories that allowed me to understand his stealthy behavior based upon my own life experiences – I was nonetheless worried that I might miss my opportunity to get to know David better. As we greeted each other time after time, always with the affection known to and expected by brothers of each other, a point was reached when I think we both understood the ridiculousness of our charade. At that moment, we drew our respective calendars as if they were weapons, and resolved to meet for lunch down at Stull and Lee's office. When the day of March 1st arrived, I ran out of class and jumped on the "T" headed for the Downtown Crossing stop, a short block from the office. I entered to find no one manning the reception desk, and so made my way deeper into the inner sanctum where I discovered David's office door open with him dashing about from shelf to desk to phone, all in a blur. Without missing a beat, he glanced up at me and said, "hey man, you're early." I realized that he was right and offered to occupy myself for as much time as he needed by looking around the office. But David offered an alternative. He grabbed me and together we walked to the adjoining office where he knocked, entered and proceeded to present me to his partner – a legendary figure who had thus far eluded my pursuit – one Donald L. Stull. I emerged two hours later a believer of this man's wisdom, brilliance, and undaunted passion for justice for architects of color. I knew immediately that I wanted to open a window into the mind of Don for our readers, and arranged with him to feature a project that perhaps reflects all of his aforementioned qualities better than any other – The Middle Passage Memorial. Our decision to feature a project that was authored nearly 20 years ago is intended to emphasize the timelessness of great design. Becoming aware of this work was like finding buried treasure.

After reviewing a considerable amount of material sent by the firm, I came across a letter written by Don to Mr. Paul Goodnight (Goodnight is an African American artist of ever growing international importance, and a personal friend of Don's. His work is found in private and museum collections and those of celebrities' and is prominently feature in two of Don's buildings. He was the "Artist in Residence" for the Atlanta Olympic Games and replicas of his work was seen on walls of Bill Cosby's Television sitcom) explaining in heartfelt candor Don's conception of the project. I decided to use the letter as the substantive content of my introduction of one of our Masters – a true renaissance man, Donald L. Stull, FAIA, NOMA.



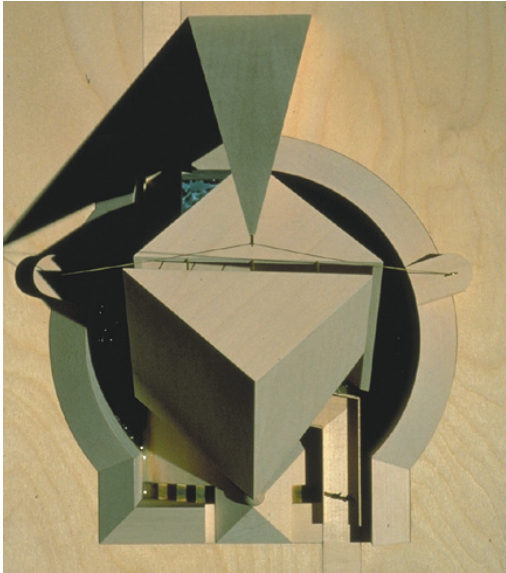


Photo by Peter Vanderwarker

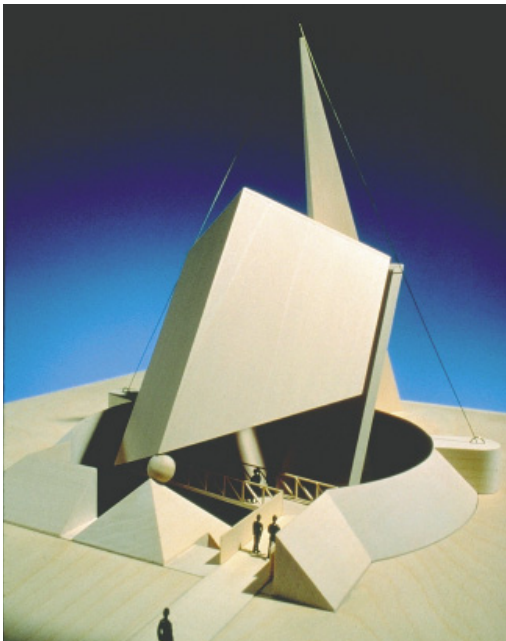
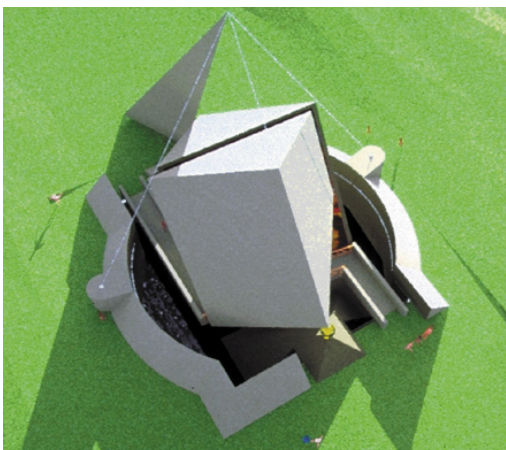


Photo by Peter Vanderwarker



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The Letter:

4 December 89

Paul Goodnight
791 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02116

Re: The Middle Passage Memorial

Paul:

Per our recent telephone talk, enclosed you will please find sketches of my initial views regarding the architectural nature of the Middle Passage Memorial. In considering these sketches, I ask that you recall John Biggers' comments concerning the universal nature of geometric form and pattern.

For reference, I am repeating here some of the ideas we discussed, and then will try to "talk" you through the sketches . . . relating images and ideas.

First, I would like to recollect our talk the day you picked up my vitae. Then, I said that there are good buildings, and that there are those that go beyond good to become important in some special way. That the good ones work well, efficiently satisfying their intent without being visually offensive. That the important ones do what the good ones do, then go on to address a single or a set of important spiritual values.

I referred to the latter as being shaped by a "guiding framework", informed by functional use requirements, but expressed in a more universal and timeless way. Such a framework should overlay functional use, and all design should be made to answer to it.

A recent personal experience is an excellent illustration: Monday morning, Thanksgiving week, my daughter birthed a baby in the maternity section of a midtown Manhattan hospital. When we went to visit her, I saw an efficient state-of-the-art facility which seemed to satisfy the use intended. This was, of course reassuring, but I also saw something more . . . new mothers, with family and with friends awkwardly assembled and uncomfortably acting.

Missing was the spiritual celebration of the universal miracle of birth. An "overriding framework" had not been seen, understood nor overlaid to shape an environment in celebration of the miracle. An efficient baby factory had been put in place without having been made accountable to higher spiritual values.

At the Workshop, I said that the creative process in architecture

transforms thought into graphic images which imagine physical form and human environments... that these images ultimately become the printed patterns used by builders to build our thoughts.

I also enthusiastically agreed with John Biggers... that two and three dimensional geometries are universal, and are particularly apparent in the patterns found in African Art and African American quilts.

I talked about monuments as visual stimulants, standing free in space and viewed by moving about them . . . and about monuments as things to enter and experience from within. I said, for me, the most interesting possibility is a bit of both, making the outside view provocative, pulling the viewer irresistibly, promising delights within . . . and that architects are more likely to induce desired motional response if we can capture our audience in controlled space, than we are in the vastness of outdoor environments.

I think I said something about human scale... that there is a size in all things and spaces that enhances comfort... that intentionally abstracting or distorting this scale can create physical and psychological distress as well as awe and wonder.

I may have also mentioned the universal nature of our natural world... sun, wind, water, growing things... how these elements can be deliberately employed by designers to focus awareness in a determined way.

Finally, I described examples in support of these views... a Scandinavian burial chapel... a pilgrimage chapel in the south of France... the mystical magic of theater set design... the "gestalt" of seeing something other than what we are looking at.

Now, about joining the sketches and the ideas. Enclosed you will first find a page of thumbnails illustrating the whole idea. Then there are three pages diagramming the geometry of the idea... followed by several pages intended to amplify it all.

The thought begins with a simple cube, then rotates and tilts it in a precarious and disturbing way. The cube seems to defy balance, while appearing balanced... supported at a corner point resting on the point of a pyramid, not yet seen... it appears to rest on a glowing globe incapable of bearing weight... while a soaring triangular shaft suggests stability and symbolizes strength.

In daylight, the shaft is the first provocative promise seen in the long view to the Monument. An eternal flame at the apex of the shaft is intended to do the same in night light. Taken together, this is the first promise on the path to The Memorial.

The cube is set in a circular "sea"... agitated by waters tumbling down



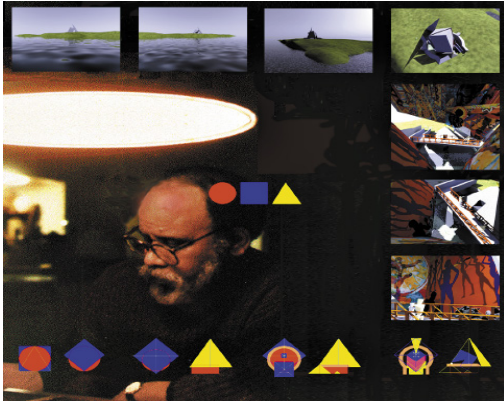
three sets of steps in a pyramid supporting the glowing globe. In daylight, this agitation reflects on the inside walls of the Monument, quilted with the work of the artists.

In night light, the interior of the cube is brightly lit from unseen sources, maintaining the shimmering mystical beckoning effect. Both are intended to draw the viewer in... The second promise on the path to "The Quilt".

This second provocation is achieved by allowing glimpses to the inside. By removing the bottom plane of the cube in its tilted position, and by cutting away a vertical edge and a triangular opening in the entrance plans of it, a tantalizing view of the interior is now possible.

The next provocation is not visual but sound. One now begins to hear the cascading water, louder and louder, urging you on... while the cube visually displays more and more of the promised place. At the threshold of entering... the Narthex before the Holy Place... the intent is to create a kind of bittersweet, near fearful wonder and anticipation... bombarding several senses at once.

At this point, having approached The Memorial on solid ground, our visitor is suddenly suspended on a bridge over "troubled waters"... agitated by cascading waterfalls (sound) and reflecting disorienting and moving patterns of light and shadow on the, still not fully exposed, walls of "The Quilt".



For the first time, though not yet totally inside, the cube now presents itself as not a cube at all, but as a soaring vertical space... defying human scale... enhancing the awe and wonder of the viewer. This happens because the cut away entrance allows, for the first time, an internal view of the actual, distorted height of the cube... made all the more apparent by its rotation and tilting away from the viewer and true vertical alignment... thus magnifying the visual cue of vanishing lines termed perspective.

This is unexpected because tilting the cube foreshortened the long view from the approach path, causing it to seem a cube... "what we see is not always what we are looking at." From this vantage point on the bridge, unseen sources in the roof plane of the cube send shafts of natural light into the "Holy Place," joining with dancing water reflections to make "The Quilt" a quivering, but yet to be fully exposed, mysterious thing... the last promise approaching "The Quilt".

Both entrance and exit bridges have solid side rails. On arriving by way of the entrance bridge, the approach path for the first time changes direction from dead straight ahead to traverse the Memorial in a diagonal course. In this rotation, the solid side walls of the bridge become an open lattice work of iron triangles, symbolizing strength and allowing direct views to the turbulent waters below. I think of this location as the Viewing Bridge, and the viewer on it is now totally wrapped in "The Quilt". Hence, Arriving Bridge, Viewing Bridge and Leaving Bridge... each with its own dynamic... each satisfying its preset role in the "guiding framework" for the Monument.

The Arriving Bridge is charged with excitement and promise... sound growing louder, alluring glimpses. The Viewing Bridge is "The Crossing" of turbulent waters... roaring and echoing sound, dancing reflections, moving shafts of light. The Leaving Bridge must, therefore, bring our viewer down from the excited state that we

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induced... without losing the lessons learned during the experience we so carefully crafted in approaching and encountering "The Quilt". Shaping the mindset leaving the monument is as critical as approaching and being at its center. I'll come back to leaving later in the letter.

Inside, the cut away edge slot of the cube, first seen in the long view promising the "Place", is now exposed as a thin crack... fracturing the solidity of the cube into two triangular shafts of enclosed space. This is a break that curiously binds... repairing the intentional rupture with a magnetic visual tension between the separated parts... much like an electrical current jumping the gap between positive and negative poles. This is "Statement and Contradiction"... to make a statement and simultaneously contradict the statement being made. Success at this is capable of generating enormous emotional response.

Paul, beyond the use of geometry, this is the most important notion about the architectural nature of The Monument. It's the idea intended to lift the mathematical perfection of geometry to that higher spiritual place... that place we all talked about together at the Workshop, and you and I have discussed during talks about The Memorial and our work.

The enclosed sketches and everything written here are about little more than accomplishing this. The stable cube made unstable... the solid cube tilted to expose a glowing internal void... the structure of the cube fractured into triangular shafts of space, held together by a visual tension that recreates the cube... an apparent cube that is not a cube at all. All deliberately joined to serve the "framework" I feel for "The Quilt".

Three other supporting notions are at work here and worthy of note:

The first is "lead light", and taken from theater set design. It's about drawing an audience in by a mix of progressively more enticing sensory provocations.

The second is about the universal nature of natural phenomena... sunlight, shadow, water, sound, reflections.

The last relates directly to the reason for "The Quilt" and is about metaphor, symbolism and myth... the water, separating continents and cultures... "The Crossing," a cruel and inhuman event (bridge over water)... the separation and reuniting of a people (fracturing and reconnecting the cube).

Back now to the experience leaving "The Quilt". In this, the universal gift of nature is again employed... more softly this time... not seeking to enhance bittersweet anxiety, but wanting to bring the viewer "down" in a good and soothing way.

I see the long view from the Leaving Bridge terminating in a delightful garden of growing things... a canopy of regional trees, presenting veritable colors of Fall leaves and Spring flowering. Close in, this terminal place would present a comforting array of regional plant life, with appropriate elements for sitting and contemplation.

Paul, if I can accomplish these architectural objectives I will have satisfied my understanding of your invitation to join all of you in this emotionally moving effort... to make a worthy world for the work of the artists and to prepare the viewer to view and forever remember "The Quilt".

Finally, to further clarify my views in these matters, I feel a need to note several general notions that drive my thinking.

I'm convinced that human behavior is inclined to chaos and fearful of phenomena not readily understood. All of the many structuring devices defined to rationalize and bring order to the chaos of our visual world are rooted in the geometries... plane and solid, two and three dimensional.

Regarding our fear of fearful phenomena, we have countered with a recorded legacy of myth and ritual rooted in the nature of our natural world... assigning fears and expectations to deities, idols, cults, religions, ancestral spirits... freeing the human spirit from fear for those who simply believe without abundant evidence.

Our quilts, as two-dimensional objects abide geometric order... the best of them weave patterns seen in three dimensions. A few do both and then go on to make us feel the bittersweet excitement of something close but not yet settled. This is, for me the fundamental nature of creative process... always pushing against the edge... the unknown limits... while the edge, pushing back remains, provocatively beyond our human reach.

The Australian Aborigine has a run for rain ritual, played out on the high dry plains of their traditional habitat. Seeing sheets of rain on the horizon, they run to embrace it only to find it beckoning on a new horizon, leaving them attempting to hug the mist. But they will run again and again and again to chase the rain. Why do they do it?... because they are Aborigine and it's their nature to run for rain. The excited anticipation of the run is the ritual... getting ever closer, feeling the mist, smelling the rain.

Sometime during the late 18th or early 19th century, Lord Byron, an English poet, saw a clay pot from Greece in Rome and wrote an "ODE TO A GRECIAN URN". The images on the pot were of a shepherd, frozen for all time but a breath away from the kiss of a lovely maiden. Byron noted that while the shepherd would never know the wonder of the kiss, the maiden could never fade, and the shepherd would forever enjoy the bittersweet anticipation of the kiss.

The Papua of New Guinea carve geometrically perfect totems, then deface the final image for fear of offending the perfection of their Gods. The Japanese did this too, in the patterns put on temple walls, inverting the last icons in the pattern to symbolize human imperfection and honor the ongoing ritual of reaching. From the Eskimo to the Incas... to the Ibo and Ashanti... to the amazing culture of 15th century Zimbabwe... it has all been the same. Pushing against the unknown edge, somehow knowing that it can never be embraced... taking joy, without rational reason from the ritual of "running for the rain".

The human spirit seems invigorated by the "run" (the quest) to exponential greatness... it seems equally numbed to useless dullness by overwhelming conquest. So I run and reach and pray to always be held that "breath" away from the kiss of provocative maidens.

These, then are my views regarding how I see my role and contribution in the creation of The Middle Passage Memorial... to put in place an environment that prepares the viewer to view the work of the artists... leaving the viewer emotionally whole, but forever mindful of what happened to his head.

Paul, I began this intending a brief note... I really did. You and the others must please feel free to critically appraise my views and make you thoughts known to me.

With best wishes for the Holiday Season...

Sincerely yours,

Donald L. Stull

Images accompanying this article are property of Stull and Lee

15 OUTSTANDING NOMA WOMEN



FIFTEEN OUTSTANDING NOMA WOMEN

by Kimberly N. Dowdell

In alignment with our current theme of Women, Wisdom and Wealth, it seems appropriate to highlight a representative sample of NOMA's Outstanding Women, the wisdom that they grace us with and the wealth of knowledge and expertise that they bring to our esteemed membership. The following fifteen women have served as an inspiration to me on many different levels and will continue to motivate future generations of young designers for years to come. While the list of honorees is not exhaustive, neither is the professional information provided about each individual. As such, I would urge you to research these and other great design role models in greater depth to learn more. The women whose career snapshots have been featured here, serve as trailblazers for their successors and have effectively opened doors that at one time seemed inaccessible to their predecessors. They deserve to be commended for their tremendous efforts, skills, talents, leadership and lifelong achievements. It is my hope that their work and accomplishments will resonate with you in some way and encourage you to follow your own unique career aspirations. I now proudly present to you, Fifteen of NOMA's Outstanding Women and the wealth of wisdom that they each represent.



FEATURES



1. GABRIELLE BULLOCK

Professional Title & Firm

Managing Director
Perkins + Will
Los Angeles Office

Experience

Recognized for her leadership skills and ability to manage large and complex projects, she specializes in facilitating built projects in health, science, and academia, from the conceptual and planning phases through construction.

Education

Rhode Island School of Design B. Architecture B. Fine Arts



2. FELEGIA DAVIS

Professional Title & Firm

Principal
F.A.D. Studio, LLC
Long Island City/Ithaca, New York

Experience

Architectural Educator and Critic
She is a Partner at Colab Architecture in Ithaca, NY while teaching at Cornell University. She has earned numerous design awards, fellowships and grants, while also writing, researching and lecturing extensively throughout the U.S.

Education

Tufts University B.S. Engineering
Architectural Association 3 terms (London)
Princeton University M. Architecture



3. KATHY DIXON

Professional Title & Firm

Senior Associate
Arel Architects, Inc.
Clinton, Maryland
Northeast Regional VP – NOMA

Experience

Areas of expertise include educational, commercial, and government projects. Her experience comprises all stages of the construction and project management processes. She has served the NOMA National Board as regional VP for 4 years.

Education

Howard University B. Architecture
UCLA M.A. Urban Planning

4. ROBYN FLEMING

Professional Title & Firm

Principal
RMF Bryant Architects
Brooklyn, NY

Experience

She leads a full service architectural and planning firm, specializing in master planning, feasibility studies and a wide range of design services. She currently serves as President of NYCOBA-NOMA.

Education

Howard University B. Architecture Cum Laude



5. TONI GRIFFIN

Professional Title & Firm/Institution

Director of Community Development
City of Newark, New Jersey
Visiting Critic, Harvard Graduate School of Design

Experience

She has experience in both the public and private sectors, combining the practice of architecture and urban design with the execution of innovative, large-scale, mixed-use urban redevelopment projects and citywide and neighborhood planning strategies.

Education

University of Notre Dame B. Architecture
Harvard GSD Loeb Fellowship



6. DIANE HOSKINS

Professional Title & Firm

Executive Director
Gensler
Washington D.C.

Experience

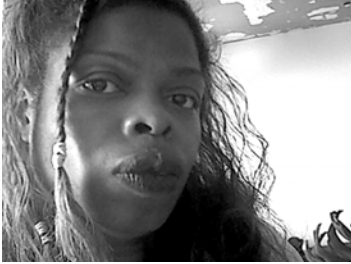
She has collaborated on a range of significant design projects as leader of the Gensler Southeast Region practice. She also serves on Gensler's Board of Directors, and heads firm-wide strategic management efforts.

Education

M.I.T. B.S. Architecture
UCLA Master of Business Administration



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7. RENEE KEMP-ROTAN

Professional Title & Firm
Director of Capital Projects
City of Birmingham, Alabama

Experience

She is an internationally respected designer, who came to the south to help prepare for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. Her teaching and work involves using “design as a method of inquiry”.

Education

Syracuse University B. Architecture – Cum Laude
Columbia University M.S. Urban Planning
RIBA II – Architectural Association (London)



8. BARBARA LAURIE

Professional Title & Firm/Institution
Associate/Project Manager
Devroux & Purnell Architects
Washington, D.C.

Assistant Professor, Howard University

Experience

She is president–elect of the D.C. chapter of the AIA while she is also a founding member of the Organization of Black Designers. As a dedicated mentor to students and interns, she draws inspiration from “the young ones” while pushing them to realize their potential.

Education

Howard University B. Architecture



9. IVENUE LOVE-STANLEY

Professional Title & Firm
President and Managing Partner
Stanley, Love–Stanley, P.C.
Atlanta, Georgia

Experience

Specialty in interiors, planning, program management, zoning, historic preservation, transit, aviation, ecclesiastical, K–12, higher education, high technology and healthcare. Elevated to the AIA College of Fellows in 2001 (2nd woman in the State of GA)

Education

Millsaps College BS – Mathematics
Georgia Institute of Technology B. Architecture*

*1st Af–Am. female graduate of the program

10. DERYL MCKISSACK

Professional Title & Firm

President and CEO
McKissack & McKissack
Washington, D.C.

Experience

As an outgrowth of her historic family business, she founded her practice to create the accomplished architectural, environmental engineering and program management firm that exists today.

Education

Howard University B.S. Engineering Study of Architecture



11. HEATHER PHILLIP-O'NEIL

Professional Title & Firm

Design Principal
Terrence O'Neal Architect LLC. (TONA) New York, NY
Treasurer - NOMA

Experience

Past President of NYCOBA-NOMA, and the 2006-2007 Director of Educational Affairs for the AIA New York Chapter. Served as the NOMA liaison for the NY Chapter of the NAACP - ACTSO Program for High School students. Formerly taught at CUNY NYC Technical College.

Education

Pratt Institute B. Architecture - Honors
Columbia University M.S. Real Estate Development



12. SHARON SUTTON

Professional Title & Institution

Professor of Architecture
University of Washington
Graduate and Undergraduate studios and seminars in Architecture, Urban Design and Planning

Experience

Her lifelong research, practice and teaching asserts the notion that the physical environment can serve as a catalyst for enhancing learning and civic participation, while also yielding more humane urban environments. Elevated to the AIA College of Fellows in 1995.

Education

University of Hartford Bachelor of Music
Columbia University M. Architecture
City University of NY M.A. / Ph.D. Psychology M. Philosophy



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13. ROBERTA WASHINGTON

Professional Title & Firm

Founder & Principal
Roberta Washington Architects
New York, NY

Professional Affiliation

Past President - NOMA

Experience

Oversees a wide range of restoration and new construction projects. Specialty in hospital and health care facility design. Frequently serves as a juror and lecturer at major university schools of design.

Education

Howard University B. Architecture
Columbia University M.S. Architecture



14. ALLISON WILLIAMS

Professional Title & Firm

Design Director
Principal-in-Charge
Perkins + Will
San Francisco Office
Harvard Design Magazine Board

Experience

She sets the design strategy for her office's major projects including corporate headquarter facilities, cultural institutions, and urban, high-rise and civic mixed-use developments. Elevated to the AIA College of Fellows in 1997.

Education

UC - Berkeley B.A. Practice of Art
UC - Berkeley M. Architecture
Harvard GSD Loeb Fellowship



15. MABEL WILSON

Professional Title & Institution

Associate Professor
Columbia University GSAPP
Director, Advance Architectural Research Program
Columbia University GSAPP

Experience

Cultural critic and scholar on history of black culture and built realm; Designer of exhibitions, residential and public projects. She is also a Designer for the Wilson Studio, New York and serves as the Director of Space/Time Interface Lab (STiL) - GSAPP

Education

University of Virginia B.S. Architecture
Columbia University M. Architecture
New York University Ph.d - American Studies

ARCHITECTURE, WEALTH, AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

by Katherine Williams

Since the end of World War II, when a housing shortage brought on by millions of soldiers returning to the US and needing places to live, home ownership has become the dream sought after by many Americans. It is seen as the way to wealth for the majority of Americans. In the middle of the 20th century, when new suburban communities were springing up, non-white citizens could not easily achieve the dream. If home ownership was available, non-whites were relegated to certain neighborhoods because of discriminatory covenants on property and rules set by the Federal Housing Administration. The practices were outlawed during the Civil Right Era, but the systems and perceptions set in place still continue. Larry Adelman makes the case in an article that because of generations of preferential treatment, even if a black man makes the same salary as him, Adelman is still exponentially ahead in wealth because of the opportunities granted to him, his parents, and grandparents because they are white.¹

I recently worked on predevelopment for a housing project as part of my role as a Rose Fellow at a Community Development Corporation. Our team looked at the neighborhood surrounding the site – public housing across the street, single-family residences surrounding the site, two low-income tax-credit developments within four blocks and two others within a half-mile of the site. We concluded that the best approach for this project was an affordable home ownership model. This would fill the gap for moderate-income residents who are currently not being served by market rate developers, building high-end condos, and who do not qualify for low-income housing for low and very low-income residents.

When my organization approached the city about this project to gain a sense of what city subsidies were available, we were surprised by the response. Moderate-income housing is not a priority for the city at this point in time, leaving us in the position of having to argue our position to get any subsidy. If we happened to have been doing a rental project, we almost certainly would have received a more favorable response. We learned that it is difficult for the City to justify providing subsidies to moderate-income earners; however, in a city where the median income for a family of four is over \$100,000 (http://www.sfgov.org/site/moh_page.asp?id=38605), the question of what options exist for moderate-income families seeking a path to housing comes clearly into focus. Many are forced to live outside the city, especially if they are chasing the American Dream of homeownership.

Most families believe that home ownership should be their goal. They have been fed the notion that the benefits outweigh the work



“If home ownership is the desirable goal for hard working citizens, then architects have to be willing to design the projects that make this a reality.”

that comes with ownership. Achieving the American Dream means that you can personalize your space, have something to pass down to your kids, and can gain wealth through owning an appreciating asset. This compensates for the tightening budget, the yard work, and the maintenance that comes along with ownership.

I must say, I too bought into the American Dream, but this was easy to do when I lived in a small, inexpensive suburb. I was able to afford a house and almost an acre of land less than a year after graduating from architecture school. Why rent when I have my own house? In hindsight, that decision allowed me to sell my house and have a little cushion when I moved to a much larger, much more expensive city on the other side of the country.

After living in a very expensive city for the last year, I have begun to see the problems associated with making home ownership the ideal American Dream that everyone should strive for. Many of the issues around this topic were discussed at a session this past spring at the Association for Community Design's annual conference. The session was titled "Reframing the American Dream." A group of architects, planners and community activists discussed the notion of the American Dream, and what alternatives might exist to it.

Some questions arise when one considers the assumptions surrounding home ownership and why it is considered an ideal. Is home ownership the only route to attain wealth creation for the average person? Is it the only method available to create responsible citizens? If not, then what alternative models might be considered? And of interest here, what role might architects play?

According to Washington Post columnist Michelle Singletary, home ownership is one of the best, but not the only way to wealth. According to Singletary, "if you are able to save (money) and invest aggressively, there's no need to feel like you're a fool

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for renting."² Tax deductions and the prospect of the golden pot of equity can make renters feel like they are missing an opportunity by not pursuing ownership. Many of the advantages for home owners are entrenched in the tax and banking systems but there are ways to achieve wealth beyond it.

There are alternatives to single family home ownership that create community ownership. In these scenarios, land and community facilities may be community property with shared ownership by all of the residents of a particular development. This reduces costs for individual buyers. Some examples are co-housing, cooperatives and land trusts.

The Cohousing Association of the United States defines cohousing as a type of collaborative housing in which residents actively participate in the design and operation of their own neighborhoods. The organization credits U.S. architects Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett with bringing the idea from Denmark in the early 1980s. They give six main characteristics: participatory design process, neighborhood design, common facilities, resident management, non-hierarchical structure and decision-making, and no shared community economy (the community is not a source of income for residents).³ Many promote cohousing as a way to increase community ownership of a neighborhood. The design usually includes single-family homes with a common area where residents share meals on a regular basis. Cohousing can be market rate or below market depending on the organization.

A second example of home ownership is the cooperative. According to National Association of Housing Cooperatives, "cooperative members own a share in a corporation that owns or controls the building(s) and/or property in which they live."⁴ There are many different types of cooperatives, including student, senior, special needs, and artist. Cooperative building types also range from multiple-occupancy single buildings to single-family houses. As with cohousing, cooperatives can be market rate or below-market to keep them affordable.

The Harold Washington Unity Cooperative in Humbolt Park area of Chicago is an example of a low-income cooperative. Here residents were looking to transform a blighted area of a neighborhood. The award-winning development turned 31 lots into 18 buildings for 87 family housing units.⁵ Through the co-op, residents will have control and ownership over their housing.

A third option is the community land trust (CLT). This model was developed in the 1960s "as a way to encourage affordable resident ownership of housing and local control of land and other resources."⁶ Typically a non-profit owns the land and tenants own the housing on the land and have a long term lease on the land. This offers a solution in growing communities where housing prices make ownership unattainable, or in blighted communities where residents want control

over their housing. The Institute for Community Economic identifies preservation of affordability as a key feature of CLTs.

Another example of residents seeing a need and fighting to meet it, is a building in San Francisco known as the Fong Building or 53 Columbus Avenue⁷. Here predominantly Chinese residents banded together when their building, where they rented apartments, was put up for sale. The San Francisco Community Land trust purchased the land and will sell the units to the tenants. Resale prices will remain limited to keep the units affordable.

All of these models provide a way for home ownership to be attainable to citizens who otherwise believed they could not own a house. They bring stability to communities and to households. These alternatives provide solutions.

Finally, what role do architects play in the question of wealth and home ownership? Architects can play many roles. They can become involved in alternative options to promote ownership in their own communities. There are certainly opportunities in expensive large metropolitan areas for these ideas to be explored. It takes architects who are willing to go out and look for needs that are not being met and finding ways to meet them.

If communities are expected to maintain their sense of community we must find a way for all residents to remain if they choose and invest in their neighborhood. This may require architects who are knowledgeable about more than just designing the buildings. I got that message from an architect who said there are four parties in this process: the architect, developer, builder, and agent. From his perspective, mastering two parts of the equation, construction and design, made the process easier, gave him a real sense of the cost of his design, and made him more valuable to his client and community. If home ownership is the desirable goal for hard working citizens, then architects have to be willing to design the projects that make this a reality. In some cases, they may have to bring alternative ownership ideas to communities, taking on more than just the design role, to help make those dreams reality.

As an architectural fellow within a community development corporation, I see families that are struggling to earn a decent living. If owning a home is the goal because that is the road to wealth creation for a community, then we must explore and establish ways to make that opportunity available for more of the population.

(Footnotes)

¹ Adelman, Larry. "REAL LIFE: Affirmative Action for Whites The houses that racism built." SFGate.com. 29 June 2003. 05 Sep 2007. <<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2003/06/29/IN309191.DTL>>.

² Singletary, Michelle. "Questioning Home Ownership." WashingtonPost.com. 09 Aug 2007. 03 Sept 2007. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/09/AR2007080900534_pf.html>.

³ Cohousing Association of the United States. 27 Aug 2007. <www.cohousing.org>.

⁴ National Association of Housing Cooperatives. 27 Aug 2007. <http://www.coophousing.org/about_nahc.shtml>.

⁵ Fannie Mae Foundation. 31 Aug 2007. <http://www.fanniemae.foundation.org/grants/2006_maxwell_bickerdike.pdf>.

⁶ Institute for Community Economics. 31 Aug 2007. <<http://www.iceclt.org/clt/cltmodel.html>>.

⁷ "53 Columbus Avenue." The Frederick P. Rose Architectural Fellowship. 31 Aug 2007. <<http://www.rosefellowship.org/work/byfellow/fernandomarti/53columbus/>>.



“let your advocacy drive your every day decisions and be an inspiration for your designs”

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DESIGNING WITH CONVICTION: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A CIVIC FOCUS IN A PROFIT-ORIENTED SOCIETY

by Charla Lemoine

Note: Charla Lemoine is a 1st year graduate student at the University of Washington. This essay was written in to fulfill an assignment for an undergraduate seminar lead by Dr. Sharon E. Sutton, FAIA, titled “Architects as Civic Leaders: 1860 to the present.”

John W. Gardner, renowned civic professional, is quoted as saying, “All too often, on the long road up, young leaders become ‘servants of what is rather than shapers of what might be.’ In the long process of learning how the system works, they are rewarded for playing within the intricate structure of existing rules. By the time they reach the top, they are likely to be trained prisoners of the structure (Sutton 291).” Would-be architects often choose to pursue architecture based upon their youthful idealism and the capacity to help others and incite change through conscientious design. The profession, however, lacks formal institutions for the development of civic professionals. After three to five years of studio instruction and 5600 hours of IDP internship, civic-minded architects have to seek their own mentors and make their own opportunities, because so few exist in this Eurocentric, patriarchal industry whose primary client base consists of large corporations and the wealthiest citizens.

I decided to become an architect because it seemed like a profession in which I could be content with the way I spent my days. A part of that contentment was to come, not only from the enjoyable nature of the work, but also from the knowledge that I was working to improve society. Civic responsibility, not necessarily leadership, was inherent in that choice. I have relished the opportunity to study architecture, and to be instructed and encouraged to find new ways to understand, to interpret and to imagine the world around me. The focus of the University of Washington faculty on materials, place, and appropriateness has helped me grow as a designer. However, I received a disturbing wake-up call earlier this year, in a studio taught by a local practicing architect, who told me, “Charla, you are very good at efficient space planning, but you are never going to be successful if you don’t figure out what rich people want.” He casually discounted my years of experience and understanding of what modest people need, because modest people are not our clients.

Varied and personal research

The purpose of this paper is to discuss architects and architectural professionals who have attempted to devote their careers to improving society with regards to research and design in the realm of affordable

housing and community design, and to explore their reasons for making the decision and the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. My goal has been to find people who work as architects and who are satisfied with the level of civic responsibility they have been able to maintain in their careers. I wanted to find out what kind of firms these people are working for, and what sorts of personal sacrifices they have made in order to get to do this work. Because of the short amount of time available to do the primary research for this paper, I decided to conduct an e-mail survey, and compiled a short list of local people I knew of to send it to. I also sent it to a few firms and educators who are well known for affordable housing and community design, including the office of the president of the Association for Community Design, from where it was forwarded to the mailing list of that organization. About half of the responses are from the local Seattle people that I knew of, and the other half are replies from the Community Design mailing or from contacts I was given by ACD members. I did not receive any replies to the direct mails to well-known architects and firms. The responses were split relatively evenly between people who currently practice as architects and people who have either quit practicing architecture or who are more peripherally involved in civic development. It is also interesting to note that while the number of minority architects in the United States is now approximately 16 percent, at least 40 percent of my respondents were minorities. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from these emails.

Different ways of contributing

During the Industrial Revolution, the building trades, (and most other professions,) began to specialize. Architecture began its evolution into what we know it as today: a specialized design field. The job of the traditional "master builder" was dispersed into ever smaller and more specialized fields such as structural engineering, construction management, real estate, and dozens of other consulting specializations. Architects' responsibilities have diminished and the perceived role of the architect has devolved into that of a tortured artist, or a draftsman.

About half of the respondents to my email questionnaire said that they left the profession to become involved in real estate, finance or administration in order to better fulfill their personal goals of community activism. Conversely, several architects who chose to remain designers have opted to take on more profitable, (less community oriented,) work in the wake of looming financial burdens such as children entering college or approaching retirement age.

Some architects turn to housing development in order to be a part of the earlier stages of community design decisions. Bill Huang (MArch, Harvard) is a licensed architect in the state of California, but he currently works as the Director of Housing Development and Preservation for the Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles. He told me, "I made a conscious choice towards real estate development because I felt the architect mainly

fulfilled the desires of the client even though the architect had better training or ideas." Leslie Morishita (MArch, University of Washington,) is the Community Housing Planner at Inter*Im Community Development Association in Seattle. She says that after working for an architecture firm during graduate school, she just "followed the path that felt right and it brought me here." Morishita did not become a registered architect, in part because she doesn't "see architecture as a field committed to community issues."

Pro-Bono Architecture

Mark Cameron, (MArch, University of Pennsylvania,) is a registered architect and landscape architect in the state of Maryland. Cameron is the Executive Director of the Neighborhood Design Center in Baltimore. He finds "that many architects, including young architects, are very interested in giving back to the community and becoming leaders in civic issues." In order to get the much needed work done, his organization facilitates multitudes of architects and designers who donate services pro-bono for the improvement of the local community. He maintains, "If I weren't heading up this organization I'd be volunteering here, as I did before I joined the staff (Hines 139)." Casius Pealer is an architect-turned-attorney who works in the affordable housing industry. He also advocates pro-bono services as a way for traditional architects to become involved in their communities. "This aspect of a truly professional practice has been neglected in architecture, but is far more robust (and institutionalized) in law and also medicine." Pealer referred me to Public Architecture, a non-profit organization whose many advocacy and outreach efforts include the 1% Solution, which challenges architecture firms to donate one percent of their billable time to pro-bono activity. According to Liz Ogbu, PA's designer and project manager, "The focus of my organization is to ensure access to professional design for all people through prototypical design project and a comprehensive pro bono initiative."

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One of the deciding moments of my personal choice to pursue a career in architecture was when I was given the chance to tour a Habitat for Humanity project in West Seattle. At that time I was a pizza delivery driver, and I was called to deliver a stack of pizzas to the volunteers on a Saturday afternoon. When I showed interest in the project, I was invited into one of the units and shown around by a man who told me that he was a designer on the project as well as a volunteer. He was brimming with excitement over the development, now known as Roxbury Estates. During early research for this paper, I found Roxbury Estates highlighted a 2004 issue of *Architecture* magazine. Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen, Callison, and NBBJ were all involved in the design of this project, and the work was completely pro-bono (Cheek 64). The article highlighted the efficiency and quality of space and light in the small three, four and five-bedroom homes, of which I had taken note. As an architecture student doing research into community design, however, the article reads as a public relations piece. Regarding this project, Rick Sundberg said, "It was a huge pleasure working for Habitat, but it had been many years since I had designed anything that approached affordable (K.S.)." On one hand, it is exciting to see well-known architects devoting their time to much-needed public work, but on the other, it is disappointing to hear them refer to it as something so out of the ordinary. Carlos Ovalle, who considers himself a 'social architect,' says, "I read with disdain and disgust about the famous architects delving into affordable housing or green architecture simply to add a "feel-good" notch to their careers. They get a lot of mileage out of that I'm sure, but that is not commitment."

Minority Action

As I said before, at least 40 percent of my respondents were racial minorities. The number is more like 60 percent if you still consider woman architects minorities, (and considering that women currently make up

25 percent of architectural staff members according to the AIA, we probably should.) Understanding the issues of the less advantaged comes naturally to people who do not come directly from privileged backgrounds.

Steven Lewis works in the Office of the Chief Architect of the U.S. General Services Administration; he also acts as the GSA's liaison to the National Organization of Minority Architects (Harvard University Gazette). As a Loeb Fellow at Harvard, he has spent the last year researching the history of people of color in architecture, and is dedicated to finding ways to increase their number in the future. In a telephone interview, he told me that advocacy has always been inherent in his architecture career. In his view, the skills of an architect, especially communication and problem solving are the same skills intrinsic to advocacy. "It's a whole process of how you view the world."

Carlos Ovalle went into architecture with the intention of being civic-minded. "As a minority architect," he says, "I felt obligated to give good architecture to the low income community from where I came." He worked on "social architecture" for the first 20 years of his career, but he is now taking that experience and his unique outlook as a socially conscious minority architect into a firm that specializes in market-rate housing. He maintains that his new work is rewarding, but he also supplements that job with pro-bono work for non-profits such as the Central American Resource Center and the ACLU.

The Educational System

In a speech given on the event of his 75th birthday, Walter Gropius explained, "Impatience with the ever-increasing complexity of our responsibilities has tempted too many to give in to a carry-all formula which is supposed to straighten out once and for all the whole field of contradictory demands (Gropius 16)." The disparity between the social goals of aspiring architects and the academic goals of the educational system is seen as a major issue among many civic-oriented design professionals. Christopher Palms, (MARCH, University of Michigan,) a designer at Seattle firm Tonkin/Hoyne/Lokan, which specializes in designing affordable housing for non-profit organizations, said, "My experience of the architectural education system was that it almost never addressed architecture's role in the greater community (professors like Jim Chaffers and Linda Groat were in the minority). The focus then, particularly in studio courses, was on grandiose (arrogant) personal gestures. Sustainability and community were quaint things to roll one's eyes at." Patrick Stewart, MAIBC, (MARCH, McGill University,) is the sole proprietor of a Canadian firm whose focus is Aboriginal Community Design. He agrees with Palms; "The architectural education system has a long way to go the meeting community needs. [There is] too much emphasis still on the star architect system." Mark Goldman of Onyx Construction/Design works with homeless teenagers in Taos,

New Mexico. He says, "In order to get our work done I pretty much have had to break all the rules that I was taught in architecture school."

Doing the work

A certain number of public projects get funded every year, thanks in part to our counterparts who have taken up civic development in exchange for architecture, and a few firms are able to specialize in that kind of work. But it turns out that there are numerous other ways to be a civic-oriented architect. The first thing to do is to choose your battles. Know what is important to you, and advocate for your issues whenever possible, be they minority or gender issues, sustainability issues, affordable housing for everyone, or shelter for the homeless. Everyone with whom I talked seemed to have one or two main concerns upon which they focused. It is exhausting to fight for everything all at once. Of course, it is also important to remember the big picture with regards to your work, and to support the others who are doing different, but equally important work in other areas. If possible, volunteer or do pro-bono work concerning what is important to you; join a group, such as the Association for Community Design, or the National Organization of Minority Architects and be aware of what is happening in that community; but most importantly, let your advocacy drive your every day decisions and be an inspiration for your designs.

KIRK SYKES: IDENTITY SHIFT FROM ARCHITECT TO DEVELOPER

by R. Steven Lewis, NOMA, AIA

If asked what two-word phrase might be most synonymous with the concept of wealth creation, nine out of ten people would respond, "real estate." With so many of us arriving at the same conclusion, it seemed obvious in addressing the theme of wealth to look to someone who came up in the traditional realm of architecture, but who now is a leader within the real estate industry for a dose of wisdom.

Kirk A. Sykes currently serves as President & Managing Director of Boston-based New Boston's Urban Strategy America Fund. A passionate and seasoned leader with 25 years of combined finance, development, architecture, and community-based experience, Kirk leads the partnership's equity placement, identifies investments and developments, and manages the day-to-day business operations of the Urban Strategy America Fund. With a bottom-line sensibility garnered during his experience as a member of FleetBank and Bank Boston's First Community Bank Advisory Board, Kirk is adept at bridging the competing concerns that sometimes hinder the progress of urban projects. He combines his professional training and hands-on experience to create customized responses to the complex issues of urban real estate development.



Crosstown Phase 1: Hampton Inn and Suites



Diverse group of stakeholders gathered for topping-out party



Kirk Sykes signing the ceremonial "I-Beam" at the topping-out party

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Formerly president of Primary Group, Developers & Architects, Kirk understands all aspects of real estate transactions. He has reviewed many of the largest development projects in Boston as a mayoral appointee to the Boston Civic Design Commission. Kirk received his bachelor's degree in architecture from Cornell University. His education also includes Harvard Business School, Owner and Presidents Management Program; MIT Center for Real Estate Development, Commercial Development Executive Program; and École Polytechnique, Paris, France.

I recently sat down with Kirk, with whom I have been friends for over twenty years, and asked him to share his thoughts and wisdom concerning the subject of wealth from the perspective of an architect turned real estate developer.

SL: How is it that you came upon architecture as a major in college and as your first profession?

KS: I arrived at architecture school with my own personal notion of how I might learn to shape and build communities, but my expectations turned out to be counter to the prevailing paradigm of Cornell's program at the time. As early as my first year, my attention was focused on solving the kind of problems that had resulted in communities of color being marginalized and disenfranchised within the context of broader society. While the schools pedagogy was clearly aimed at promoting a modernist sensibility toward the creation of "object" architecture, I preferred an intuitive approach to problem solving that had gotten me to where I had arrived thus far with success.

SL: After graduating, you wound-up working with Don Stull and David Lee. What did you learn from that experience that you carried forward into your own practice?

KS: Stull and Lee were known for taking projects that would make a difference in the communities where I had a keen interest. As a small to medium size, African-American-owned firm, Don and David were more than happy to give me more responsibility than I could have expected in most other firms. While I learned much about the craft of how to put buildings together, I found support and affirmation there for my sensibilities and values as an architect and community builder.

SL: How did you move from employee to firm owner?

KS: While working with Don and David, I began moonlighting projects, but with an expanded role beyond simply providing the architecture. I was able to expand my offerings to include finance and ultimately, taking equity positions in some of the deals. By representing the interests of my clients well, I in effect served my own interests. Soon, I had enough work to establish my own firm, a partnership called The Primary Group. We enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with Stull and Lee, and found it mutually beneficial to sublet space from them.

SL: How did you move from architecture to development?

KS: We were working the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative when my partner Tom Welch and I were able to secure a position as Development Consultant. Combined with the emersion into the finance area that I received through the MIT Real Estate Development Program, I reached a point where I could see how to make development work.

SL: What do you consider to be the pivotal point that put you on the successful trajectory that has carried you to where you stand today?

KS: I think clearly it was the Crosstown Center development, near Boston Medical Center that marked my entry into the realm of large project development. Tom and I realized the potential of identifying so-called "fringe sites" where some of the pieces of a successful project were present, but others were not. In the case of Crosstown, we found a Brownfield site that we were able to gain control over through a direct designation by the City of Boston. Working with the City, we proposed a project where community participation, job creation, traffic management and transportation systems were central, and allowed us to keep the majority equity partners in a subordinate position. We used issues such as relocation and remediation to leverage the will of the people to get the City to work with us.

SL: What was at the core of Crosstown's success?

KS: I believe in finding common ground among the various stakeholder interests in a project. That's what we were able to do at Crosstown. We recently celebrated the topping-out of steel for our Phase 2 office building, at which all of the stakeholders were present and accounted for. The community groups formed at the outset of Phase One - the Hampton Inn and Suites - continue to meet and to remain involved. They believe in the process and the project.

SL: Your firm espouses a "triple bottom-line" as a goal for development projects. Can you elaborate on ways in which that concept manifests itself in the communities where you are active?

KS: We internalize the project goals of first, financial performance, second, economic development, and third, environmental sustainability such that they are an implicit part of how we plan and execute our projects. We consider any trade-offs we might have to make as smart vs. big. In the end, we've been able to demonstrate that our vision of delivering benefit to the community as well as our investors proves that we have a workable model for development.

SL: Do you miss architecture at all?

KS: Its all art to me - the aesthetics and the deal.

SL: How would you define "wealth"? What does it mean to you personally?

KS: Wealth comes in various forms. For me, wealth involves a balance between financial independence and the wellbeing of my family, and also the knowledge that one is doing things that make a positive difference in the lives of others, particularly those who have been marginalized and disenfranchised. If we all adopt a philosophy of mutual benefit, the world will be a much better place for us and for our children.



Principal stakeholders signing the ceremonial "I-Beam" at the topping-out party



Pictured here with wife Karen, Sykes' admits his greatest wealth is his family



Crosstown Phase 2: Office Building

Associate Dean, Syracuse University School of Architecture

Reporting to the Dean of the School of Architecture, the Associate Dean is responsible for advancing the mission of the School by participating in the strategic planning processes of the School, together with the Dean, Chairpersons, and senior staff. The AD serves as a senior member of the Dean's cabinet and provides administrative leadership for the daily operation of the School. The AD represents the Dean to both internal and external audiences, including University functions and committees, admissions, development, alumni relations, communications, and public relations.

Specific areas of responsibility include the following:

- Develops a comprehensive mentoring and development program for non-tenured faculty in conjunction with the program chairs. Reviews untenured faculty annually and reports recommendations for support and faculty development to the Dean.
- Assists in the recruitment of full-time and part-time faculty and manages the hiring process, negotiating successful packages to secure desirable candidates. Manages the Visiting Critic program and coordinates Thesis Prize juries.
- Serves as liaison to all external programs including study abroad, pre-architecture, and continuing education. Assists the graduate chair with coordination of the Syracuse-based M. Arch. II program.
- Responsible for technology development for the School, including ex-officio membership on Technology Committee; works with the Center of Excellence and other University units to develop productive collaborations. Computing, wood-shop, and digital fabrication specialists report to the Associate Dean.
- Assists and develops special projects in consultation with the dean.

Requires an advanced degree in Architecture with significant experience in administration in architectural education or architectural practice. The successful candidate will have a documented record of distinguished accomplishment in practice and administration, and/or teaching and research. This position will be filled by a tenure-track faculty hire, a tenured faculty hire, or senior non-faculty administrator with the requisite experience.

Syracuse University is a major research institution that is experiencing renewed vigor under the dynamic leadership of Chancellor Nancy Cantor. The School of Architecture, one of the oldest programs in the country, has seen unprecedented growth in its existing B. Arch. and M. Arch. professional-degree programs and offers expanded opportunities for interdisciplinary and engaged scholarship. This includes support for sustainability and technological research through partners such as the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems. With the launch of the London program, in addition to its long-running Florence program, the School has broadened connections to current practice and discourse worldwide. In 2005, the School of Architecture established UPSTATE: A Center for Design, Research, and Real Estate to engage innovative design and development practices, and to address critical issues of urban revitalization.

Applicants should submit hard copies of their curriculum vitae; a statement of professional, pedagogical, and research interests and goals; a portfolio of creative work; and a list of at least three references. Applications submitted by Friday, November 30, 2007 will be given priority. Please send all materials to:

Chair, Associate Dean Search Committee
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Chicago, Illinois - **INOMA**

Dallas, Texas

Detroit, Michigan

Houston, Texas—**HNOMA**

Indianapolis, Indiana - **INDINOMA**

Los Angeles, California - **LANOMA**

Memphis, Tennessee

New Orleans, Louisiana - **LouisianaNOMA**

New York, New York - **NYCOBA/ NOMA**

North Carolina - **NCNOMA**

Ohio - Ohio Southwest NOMA Chapter

Orlando, Florida

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - **PhilaNOMA**

Phoenix, Arizona - **PhoeNOMA**

San Francisco, California - **SFNOMA**

St. Louis, Missouri

Washington, D.C. - **DC NOMA**

NOMAS Student Chapters

Ball State

Cape Technikon (South Africa)

Cornell University

Drury University

Florida A & M

Georgia Tech

Hampton University

Howard University

Illinois Institute of Technology

Kansas State

Kent State University

Louisiana State University

McGill (Canada)

Mississippi State University

Morgan State University

New Jersey Institute of Technology

North Carolina State

Ohio State

Prairie View

San Fran. State

Southern University

Southern Polytechnic State University

Tuskegee

University of Cincinnati

University of Florida

University of Houston

University of Kansas

University of Maryland

University of Michigan

University of Minnesota (Twin Cities)

University of Tennessee

University of Texas (Austin)

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University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

University of Illinois - Chicago

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University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Yale University

