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## *national news*

US

spring 2003

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### CONFERENCES

**Society of Architectural Historians,**  
56th Annual Meeting, Denver,  
Colorado, April 23-27

28th Annual **California Preservation  
Foundation** Conference, Santa  
Barbara, California, April 24-27

**AIA** 2003 National Convention and  
Exposition: "Design Matters,"  
San Diego, May 8-10

**APT International** Annual Conference:  
"21st Century Preservation—  
Conservation and Craftsmanship,"  
Portland, Maine, September 17-20.

### EXHIBITS

**Windshield: Richard Neutra's House  
for the John Nicholas Brown Family**  
Carnegie Museum of Art - The Heinz  
Architectural Center, Pittsburgh, PA  
March 1 to May 11

**In Our Time: Modernism in Litchfield  
1949-1970,** Litchfield, CT, April 11-  
November 30 (see article, p. 9)

### DOCOMOMO US

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## PUERTO RICO'S TROPICAL MODERNISM

The buildings and natural landscape of the University of Puerto Rico—Río Piedras, embody Hispanic tradition, the principle root of Puerto Rican culture. They are symbolic of the permanent presence of that tradition and of the constant struggle to preserve and extend it. The campus has been the cradle of ideas, initiatives, and plans of Puerto Rico's coming of age politically, socially and economically. Its architecture heralded the fusion of modernism with the tropical climate of the Island. With the general loss of many significant structures from the recent past, conserving the architecture and open spaces of the campus is of great importance.

Although founded in 1903, the first 20 years after the second World War saw the greatest physical growth of the campus, when the Hispanic Revival style was discarded in favor of a modern vision of Puerto Rico. The new architecture of this period was the product of an innovative architect, Henry Klumb, who worked on the master plan and many buildings between 1945-1965. Klumb arrived in Puerto Rico after emigrating to the United States and working with Frank Lloyd Wright. His campus master plan aligned new buildings orthogonally to the original quadrangle. Beyond this quadrangle Klumb generated a new rotated organizational grid more in keeping with the dictates of the hot, humid tropics.

The 26 buildings that Klumb designed, 19 of which were built, were radically distinct from the original campus build-



FACULTY CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, HENRY KLUMB, 1948.

ings. He created a tropical modernism for Puerto Rico using horizontality, spaciousness, and a fluidity of space, promoting natural ventilation and illumination. Klumb's buildings were the first to bring international attention to the campus, appearing in *Progressive Architecture*, *Architectural Forum*, *Interiors*, *AIA Journal*, and *Fortune Magazine*, among others.

The Student Center is his most significant work on campus. Designed in 1948, it is one of the ten best modern buildings in Puerto Rico. It embodies his design fundamentals: liberty of movement, continuity between interior and

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STUDENT CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, HENRY KLUMB, 1948.

# WELCOME

DOCOMOMO US was founded seven years ago at a time when interest in the preservation of modern architecture was limited. We have since grown to have members and chapters around the country providing advice, scholarship and action on both national and local preservation issues. Chapters are active in New England, Northern California and the New York tri-state region; Chicago, Seattle and Philadelphia. New chapters are starting in Dallas, Puerto Rico and the South East region.

DOCOMOMO US is unique as a preservation organization because it is interested not only in advocacy, but also in scholarship, preservation technology and design. Recognizing the responsibilities of a growing organization—and the need to maintain this unique character—the Board of DOCOMOMO US recently adopted a new strategic plan. One of our first endeavors is to bring out a national newsletter more regularly. Broadening our website is also a part of our plan.

DOCOMOMO US is one in a network of 45 national organizations that make up DOCOMOMO International. No other preservation organization brings together local, national and international membership. Linking to an international network serves two important purposes for the US group. It brings fresh perspective to the discussion of regional preservation issues and generates international attention to the preservation of internationally known buildings in the United States. This status, as a regional, national and international organization, will culminate in the VIIIth International DOCOMOMO Conference to be held in New York City in 2004. This is a very ambitious undertaking for what is still primarily a volunteer organization. (see p. 3).

We hope you will continue to support DOCOMOMO US while participating in local and regional activities as well as the 2004 International Conference.

—Theo Prudon  
President, DOCOMOMO US

## MODERN MINNEAPOLIS: ALWAYS NEW, NOW AT RISK

Throughout the twentieth century, Minneapolis took pride in always looking to the future, and always wanting what was newest. One unfortunate result was that early preservationists were regarded as Luddites, and met with little success. This mindset, however, produced some great modern buildings. Today, preserving ornamental buildings from the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is seen as progressive, while some Streamline Moderne designs are still scorned by the old guard and more recent structures are viewed with apathy.

The preservation battle over Ralph Rapson's 1963 Guthrie Theatre is an exception. The energetic group of musicians, architects, and other activists behind the Save the Guthrie organization have generated a stimulating debate about the merits of preserving the structure. Its listing on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Eleven Most Endangered List" put a national spotlight on the controversy. Theater advocates have hired AMS Planning and Research to conduct a reuse study to counter the reuse study produced by the Walker Art Center, which plans to demolish the Guthrie. Ultimately, the current eco-

### "A CENTRAL SECTION IS SUSPENDED BY A GIANT CATENARY ARCH DRAPED BETWEEN TWO TOWERS"

nomical downturn might prove to be the most potent preservation tool. The Guthrie Theatre organization has been planning a move to a new location, but is having difficulty raising needed funds—especially critical state bonds. With Minnesota's deficit pegged at well over \$4 billion, bonds to help the theater are not a high priority for many legislators. Fundraising for the Walker's expansion is also rumored to be slow. The status quo might be the only option. For the latest updates, visit [www.savetheguthrie.org](http://www.savetheguthrie.org).

While the Guthrie has elicited passionate support, the demolition of another mid-century landmark received nearly universal approval. Only a few brave preservationists dared suggest that the Minneapolis Public Library (McEnary and Krafft, 1958-1961) deserved a second look. The library and its plaza occupied a city block fronting a pedestrian and bus corridor in the heart of downtown

Minneapolis. The library complex featured a straightforward form-follows-function arrangement: a multistory cube for books, reading rooms and offices; a lower section with an auditorium and bookstore, and beneath a jewel-box dome, a planetarium. The wrecking crew was hard at work all winter. Photographs can be viewed at [www.mplib.org/ncl\\_demo.asp](http://www.mplib.org/ncl_demo.asp).

While the library finishes fundraising for its new building on the same site and awaits completion of plans by Cesar Pelli, limited library operations have moved to the "old" Federal

Sadly, though, floors have been filled in beneath the suspended central section, grounding the once graceful structure.

A few miles to the south, Michael Graves has reconsidered a kitschy addition to the 1974 wing of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts by Kenzo Tange. The wing is an elegant, minimalistic design added to the original McKim, Mead, and White museum. Graves has scaled back his proposal—commissioned by the Minneapolis Children's Theatre—covering less of the wing, and adopting more subtle coloration than his earlier



GUTHRIE THEATER, MINNEAPOLIS, RALPH RAPSON, 1963

Reserve Building. Ironically, this modern landmark designed by Gunnar Birkerts and built between 1968 and 1972 has recently received questionable modifications. The unique structure has a suspended central section supported by a giant catenary arch draped between two towers. A developer recently bought the building, and added a forty-foot-deep addition to the back. The addition adopted materials and massing that complement the original building, and its understated design keep it clearly subservient.

version. Sketches of the new design are on the theater's web site and give a glimpse of the Tange wing.

Threats to other Modern buildings appear on a regular basis. Even with the depressed economy, the rate of change in Minneapolis remains swift, and mid-twentieth-century buildings are usually swept aside with little thought. As the twenty-first century progresses, it will be interesting to see when citizens wake up to the importance of this period.

—Charlene Roise



FEDERAL RESERVE BUILDING WITH THE LOWER FLOORS FILLED IN, MINNEAPOLIS, GUNNAR BIRKERTS, 1972

# DOCOMOMO 2004 IN NYC

The theme of every past biennial DOCOMOMO International conference has taken inspiration from its venue. While the 2000 conference in Brasilia made the leap to a discussion about the modern city, New York City, the capital of global commerce, is an appropriate background for the VIIIth conference with its title "IMPORT/EXPORT: POSTWAR MODERNISM IN AN EXPANDING WORLD, c. 1945-1975." The conference, to be held on the campus of Columbia University in late September 2004, will be the first to be held in North America and the first ever to highlight exclusively the challenges and philosophical dilemmas raised by the world-wide need to preserve postwar architecture, planning, design and landscape.

The ubiquity of postwar modernism, with its reach to all continents, differentiates it from the more geographically limited interwar modernism. The sheer number of buildings, complexes and sites makes considering the conjunction of preservation with design an economic, social and technical necessity. In sessions, plenary speeches, and debates, the history of this internationalization and the kinds of interventions (from policy to technologies) appropriate to it will be considered. Both local and regional tours will be offered and will be organized by the local chapters of DOCOMOMO US in closely cooperation with the national organizing committee. The fund-raising necessary for both the conference's organization and for the partial support of conference participants from economically disadvantaged countries has started and will need the participation of all members.

The 2002 conference, held in Paris at Marcel Breuer's UNESCO building, attracted 500 attendees from 42 countries. A similar number of attendees can be expected in New York. A local organizing committee will work closely with the national committee to maintain the DOCOMOMO tradition of friendly exchange, passionate debate and a rousing final party in a magnificently modern setting.

The Program Committee will select the papers through a fair

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## DOCOMOMO/US CHAPTER UPDATES

### NEW ENGLAND

The New England Chapter is monitoring the status of a number of "invisible modernist" houses that have recently come on the market. This term describes pre-1938 works that were rendered "invisible" by Sigfried Giedion's claim that Gropius' design was the first realized modern house in New England. In October, DOCOMOMO/NE and the Cambridge Historical Society sponsored a very popular lecture and tour of modern houses in Cambridge. It included a number of little-known early modern houses in New England. A sequel is planned for next fall.

In December, the monthly chapter meeting took in a show at the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, where architecture students constructed models of a number of the "invisible modernist" houses. There are plans to find another venue for an expanded version of the show in the near future. At the February meeting, Gina Coyle, a Wellfleet residence, spoke about modernism on the Outer Cape. It has come to the chapter's attention that a number of summer houses from the early modern period are still extant, hardly documented and in deteriorating condition.

In cooperation with SPNEA and Gropius House Site Manager Marianne Zephir, a number of tours of regional Modern houses and neighborhoods are planned for this spring. These will include a trip to Western Massachusetts, as well as neighborhoods in Lexington, Belmont, and Lincoln. Members will also be given a tour of a Paul Rudolph House in Chestnut Hill in the spring, and a lecture on Rudolph's work at Wellesley is being cosponsored with the College. DOCOMOMO/NE participated in the conference on 20th-century architectural metals, at MIT in April. Chapter member David Fixler was featured on NPR's "The Connection" in November 2002. While the discussion was not only about modern movement preservation, the appearance prompted many positive responses, and hopefully promoted new awareness of DOCOMOMO. Work on behalf of modernist houses continues and has been noted in local press: members Gary Wolf and Hélène Lipstadt were written up in the *Boston Herald* and the entire group's efforts on behalf of the Field House was highlighted in MIT's *Technology Review*, October 2001.

—Brendan Moran

### NEW YORK TRI-STATE

Winter 2002 began with a book party in November to celebrate publication of Hubert-Jan Henket and Hilde Heyne's *Back from Utopia: The Challenge of the Modern Movement*. The event, organized by board member Nina Rappaport and Rudolph Foundation administrator, Christopher Northrup, was held at the Paul Rudolph-designed house on E. 58th St. in Manhattan. The townhouse, a white composition of varying planes echoing the Beekman Place residence, was built in the mid-1980s. It now houses the Paul Rudolph Foundation, launched last year by Ernest Wagner.

Also with the Rudolph Foundation, New York/Tri-State members visited the Goshen New York County Government Center (1963-1970) to meet county executives and show support for the preservation of the building. County officials say out-dated court rooms and offices, and HVAC problems make the building unusable.

On January 23 the chapter co-sponsored a lecture by

Mardges Bacon, professor of architectural history at Northeastern University, on "Le Corbusier in America" (the title of her 2002 book). The lecture was held in conjunction with the "Le Corbusier Before Le Corbusier" exhibition held this winter at the Bard Graduate Center.

The APT NE chapter held its 2003 Symposium and annual meeting in February at the Yale School of Architecture. Organized by DOCOMOMO member Kyle Normandin and the APT Northeast Chapter, the conference featured case studies by prominent preservation consultants on restoration work at Yale, from the Sterling Library to Modern monuments such as Gordon Bunshaft's Beinecke Library, Louis Kahn's British Art Center, and Eero Saarinen's Ingalls Hockey Rink. Yale Architecture Dean Robert A.M. Stern welcomed the crowd of 144 participants to the event, which brought attention to Modern preservation issues through illustrated talks and tours of campus restoration projects.

The chapter trying to raise awareness of Edward Durell Stone's 2 Columbus Circle and help build support for the building's survival at various city levels. Stone's former museum will likely become the Museum of Arts and Design. A redesign scheme that totally erases Stone's classic facade has just been presented by Allied Works Architecture of Portland, OR. Landmark West! is leading the efforts, watch for updates at [www.preserve.org/lmwest/2ccpanel.htm](http://www.preserve.org/lmwest/2ccpanel.htm)

DOCOMOMO New York/Tri-State is involved in advocacy for other Tri-State region endangered sites such as the 1939 Maxwell House coffee factory in Hoboken, NJ, designed by the architect/engineer H. K. Ferguson; Marcel Breuer's Pirelli building in New Haven, CT, (see p. 6); TWA Terminal (p. 7), and the Alvar Aalto Rooms at IIE. We are also continuing work on a comprehensive survey of Modernism in Midtown Manhattan.

—Nina Rappaport

### WESTERN WASHINGTON

In the Fall of 2002, DOCOMOMO.WeWa was awarded a King County Special Projects Grant to organize and present a lecture and self-guided tour of Modernism in Bellevue. Celebrating its 50th anniversary, this Seattle suburb presents a good example of the development of Northwest Modernism as well as the incorporation of car culture in the urban environment. DOCOMOMO members will continue with research and documentation through the summer and the tour will occur on Saturday, September 13th.

WeWa members are actively engaged in promoting the appropriate stewardship of Western Washington structures. The Washington State Library was relocated in 2002 and its original building, located on the State capitol campus in Olympia, is acting as a temporary facility while other buildings damaged in the recent earthquake are renovated. WeWa members are focusing attention on the future reuse designs of this important Paul Thiry designed building. The 1962 Seattle Monorail could still be threatened by a new ballot initiative despite recently receiving City Landmark status (see article, page 6).

DOCOMOMO.WeWa is co-sponsoring with the Washington State Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation the "Nifty from the Last Fifty" initiative. This state supported survey will identify and document the most important modern structures in Washington State of the last 50 years.

—Andrew Phillips

*Chapter News continued next page*

## CHAPTERS, CONTINUED

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



SAN FRANCISCO REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

REGISTER WORK IS ON-GOING, IDENTIFYING LESSER KNOWN PROJECTS SUCH AS COHEN AND LEVERSON'S 1962 RED ROCK HOUSING, SAN FRANCISCO.

NoCa continues to provide public programs on modern topics. Last fall the chapter hosted a screening of the independent documentary entitled "Eames in Hollywood." The film, by Steve Cabella and Ruth Freeman, documents the Eames's role in the film industry.

One of NoCa's goals for 2003 is to form better partnerships and alliances with existing state and local preservation organizations, in order to share resources and increase effectiveness. In February, the chapter sponsored a lecture with the San Francisco AIA by DOCOMOMO US Board member Paul Adamson. The lecture, entitled "Eichler: Modernism Builds the American Dream" was based on Paul's recently published book about Joseph Eichler, a Northern California developer of modern, middle-class houses.

Another important alliance is with the California State Historic Preservation Commission. Last fall, the commission decided to establish a committee on Modern Movement resources, and asked the Northern California Chapter to join. Chandler McCoy and Paul Adamson are representing DOCOMOMO. The committee's most pressing objective is to help the Office of Historic Preservation assess the state's modern resources, and to provide educational programs for the state.

NoCa continues research leading to a book on modernism in San Francisco. This research has resulted in the completion of 20 new fiches to add to NoCa's existing register.

-Chandler McCoy

## DALLAS HOTEL AND LIBRARY FACE UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Currently two significant landmarks of mid-century modern, both located in the city of Dallas Harwood Street Historic District, are under threat of demolition if new plans for a park in the area are realized.

The Statler Hilton, designed by New York architect William Tabler and completed in 1956, is an 18-story, 1001-room structure featuring a Y-shaped hotel tower that engages the street with a gently inflected facade. The tower, clad in a curtain wall of blue-green porcelain panels and clear glass in aluminum frames, floats above an assemblage of masonry and stone clad forms housing public functions of the hotel-lobby, retail, ballrooms, and restaurants. The hotel's structural system, engineered by Seelye, Stevenson, Valt & Knecht, was the first use of an innovative cantilevered flat-slab design. Tower floors extend eight feet beyond interior columns, providing a clean, crisp look behind the curtain wall. Reviews were published in 1954 in both *Architectural Record* and *Architectural Forum*.

The adjacent 1953 Dallas Public Library, designed by Dallas architect George Dahl, operated until the mid-80s, when a larger facility opened a few blocks away. The modest granite, marble and aluminum building, a handsome coun-

"MANY WOULD PREFER TO SEE SURFACE PARKING CONVERTED TO GREEN SPACE INSTEAD OF DEMOLISHING MODERN LANDMARKS...."

terpart to the adjacent hotel, contains airy, mezzanined interiors gently and effectively illuminated from above by screened clerestories.

The library is a fascinating milestone in both the long career of George Dahl and the architectural development of Dallas. Less than two decades earlier Dahl was the chief architect for the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition at Fair Park, and oversaw the design of a number of fine Moderne structures organized along City Beautiful principals. Today this collection remains the largest collection of Moderne exposition architecture in the world. That this leading architect, and the city in which he practiced, could make the leap from Moderne to Modern in only 17 years (in spite of intervening war and depression) is testimony to the power modern architecture held in Dallas's postwar years.

In spite of their significance, both buildings are now threatened by recent events. The Statler Hilton, sold in the mid-90s to Hong Kong investors, was operated for several years as the Dallas Grand Hotel. Property taxes are now in arrears and there is a possibility the building will be auctioned for back taxes. Various studies, some disputed, indicate that renovation costs could run as high as \$80 million to return it to productive use as a hotel.



ROBERT MECKFESSEL

DALLAS MAIN LIBRARY, GEORGE DAHL, 1953.



ROBERT MECKFESSEL

STATLER HILTON, DALLAS, WILLIAM TABLER, 1956.

In addition, a privately funded planning effort for the revitalization of downtown has recently recommended construction of Commerce Gardens, a new two-block park, one block of which would occupy the current site of both buildings. While there is wide agreement in Dallas that additional green space is needed downtown, many architects, planners, civic leaders and preservationists would prefer to see some of the vast extents of surface parking (26% of the Downtown area) converted to green space instead of demolishing modern landmarks.

Fortunately, other studies are under way, including a Downtown Parks Master Plan, a Downtown Transportation Plan, and a DART study for a second downtown light rail line. It appears that any action towards implementing Commerce Gardens is on hold until the completion of those studies in 2004, and thus the immediate threat to the Statler Hilton and Dallas Library appears to have lessened. Preservation viewpoints will be well-represented during these planning processes (including members of the design teams), and it is hoped that more balanced alternatives to Commerce Gardens will be identified.

In the meantime, concerned professionals and citizens will be working hard to find a new champion for the hotel and the library with the vision and financial wherewithal to integrate them into the revitalization of downtown Dallas.

-Robert Meckfessel

# MOMO VOLUNTEERS

## NATIONAL NEWSLETTER:

This DOCOMOMO newsletter was made possible with the help of the following volunteers, who provided content and technical assistance:

Mark Atkinson	Chandler McCoy
Lana Berkovich	Robert Meckfessel
Rachel Carley	Jennifer Metz
Laura Culberson	Brendan Moran
Belmont Freeman	Andrew Phillips
Doug Gilbert	Theo Prudon
John Hertz	Kathleen Randall
Jeanne Lambin	Nina Rappaport
Hélène Lipstadt	Charlene Roise
Randall Mason	

Andrew Wolfram, Editor

## MOMO NOTES

Danish Architect **Jørn Utzon** wins the 2003 Pritzker Prize. Utzon, architect of the Sydney Opera House as well as works such as the Bagsvaerd Church, is admired for integrating a play of light with his use of sculptural forms.

British Architect **Peter Smithson** dies, March 3, 2003. Smithson and his wife Alison were known for their concern with the social aspects of modernism, as exemplified in their design of "streets in the air" for the Park Hill Housing in Sheffield England.

Mexican Architect **Abraham Zabludovsky** dies, April 9, 2003. Recipient of the Mexican National Arts Prize in 1982, Zabludovsky was best known for his design of the Rufino Tamayo Museum in Mexico City, an important modernist masterpiece.



FACULTY CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, HENRY KLUMB, 1948.

## DOCUMENTING THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN MARYLAND

In 2001 a team of professors and graduate students from the University of Maryland began a research project to understand, document and help preserve the Modern Movement in Maryland. Supported by Maryland Historical Trust and based in the University's Historic Preservation Program, the project is now in the second of three years. The project's goal is identifying the salient trends, resources, and places characterizing the Modern Movement's impact on the state—with an eye to how they could be preserved in the future.

In the first year of the project, data collection and research identified over a thousand Modern buildings and sites, as well as architects and planners associated with them. This was accomplished through archival and bibliographic research, windshield surveys, and interviews with some of the living pioneers of the Modern Movement in Maryland. Research focused on resources designed or built between 1930 and 1970, in all parts of the state. Of particular interest is the rich variety of modernist buildings in suburban Maryland, because suburbia is not generally considered a promising setting for architectural innovation. While there are many fine examples of architect-designed buildings in the state, the project is documenting vernacular resources as well.

A major result of this research is the statewide context study. Authored

by the project's primary researchers, Profs. Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies, the context essay characterizes the many manifestations of the Modern Movement in Maryland and details its arrival and evolution.

The other major result of the context research is a list of high-priority buildings and sites representing the most influential aspects of the Modern Movement in Maryland and retaining a high degree of integrity. The team is now in the midst of documenting particular buildings and places around the state, including:

- Washington County Public Schools, as leading examples of the Modernist public schools found on the outskirts

### "THE MODERN MOVEMENT SHAPED EVERYDAY LIFE IN MARYLAND..."

of most towns in the state, marking the enormous postwar baby boom;

- Greenbelt's post-New Deal heritage legacy;
- Goucher College campus, Towson, result of a national competition in 1938 and built out by a number of Modernist designers;
- Charles Center in Baltimore;
- Gibson Island, a private enclave of pioneering architect-built houses;
- architect-built houses (including their own) displaying the great inventiveness of the pioneering Modernists;
- a rich typology of residential subdivi-

sions by architect-developer teams in the Washington and Baltimore suburbs;

- Village of Wilde Lake development in Columbia;

- branch libraries of Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library;
- synagogues and churches, mostly in suburbs (including works by Percival Goodman, Walter Gropius, Gaudreau and Gaudreau, and Pietro Belluschi);
- recreational buildings such as the "Tepee" Girl's Scout Lodge in Annapolis by Rogers & Taliaferro; and
- suburban office buildings such as the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission building in Riverdale and the Comsat complex in Clarksburg.

The buildings and places researched to date are just the tip of the iceberg. The Modern Movement shaped everyday life of Marylanders in myriad ways, and the watershed social changes of mid-century are beautifully reflected in schools, houses, commercial buildings, and places of worship. Preservation of these resources will become more urgent in coming decades. And research efforts in subsequent years will find fertile ground in looking more deeply at the many resources in the project database.

For more information about the project, contact the research team at: [rmason@umd.edu](mailto:rmason@umd.edu)  
—Randall Mason

## PUERTO RICO, CONTINUED

exterior, integration with the natural landscape, and the use of the structure as ornament. John Whelan, quoted in *La Arquitectura de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*, said at the building's inauguration, "This is a place for free minds. Nowhere is there confinement; nowhere is there the imposition of pedantic order. There are no public rooms with four walls, connected by corridors, entered through doors. These are simply not rooms in the ordinary sense. Areas are defined by levels and relative position and their use...The building is free space and free form."

Contemporaneous in design with, and situated on a site adjacent to the Student Center, the Faculty Center is quite distinct in program and character, and evolved in an independent

manner. This project is notable for its liberal use of an irregular geometry that follows a Wrightian logic of centrifugal organization. In contrast with the Student Center it is introverted in its relation to the site.

An effort to document and preserve the works of Klumb is being led by the School of Architecture at the University of Puerto Rico. A National Endowment for the Arts Preservation Grant was utilized to create a model preservation plan to recognize and conserve the built environment of the recent past, focusing on Klumb's work. The School has proposed the nomination of three Klumb buildings for the National Register of Historic Places. With the State Historic Preservation Office, it is working to increase the boundaries of the quadrangle's exist-

ing historic district to include all Klumb's work. The School's Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la UPR (Architecture and Construction Archives) will produce a book and exhibition on the work of Klumb for 2004. A restoration project will repaint the Colleges of Business Administration and Social Sciences in harmony with Klumb's original proposal.

Finally, the Faculty Center has been the subject of a proposal to restore it to its original function. This proposal by the School won a Certificate of Honor from the AIA-Puerto Rico Chapter and an Honor Award from the VII Bienal de Arquitectura de Puerto Rico.

—John Hertz

# MONORAIL ON TRACK

Built for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, the Monorail, along with the Space Needle, have come to symbolize the city of Seattle, and represent a time when future innovation appeared limitless. Fair organizers felt that a monorail fit the Fair's focus on modern technology and could also serve the region's transportation future. Seeking to promote the monorail as the ideal form of urban rapid transit, Alweg International of Germany constructed it as a speculative venture.

Since its construction, a number of proposals have been made for extending the Monorail. In 1997, a citizens' initiative passed directing the city to find the means to extend the Monorail as a citywide transportation system. In November 2002, after two additional ballot initiatives, Seattle residents approved the construction of the first new line in the system. The final legislation, however, calls for the original Monorail to be demolished, not extended.

The original rail route line extends a mile from the Fairgrounds to the downtown retail district. It consists of parallel, reinforced concrete beams that are elevated 25 feet above grade and are supported by T- and U-shaped, reinforced concrete pylons. The streamlined cars were promoted in 1962 as having "interior comfort and eye-catching design" with wide windows and contoured glass ceiling

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SEATTLE MONORAIL STATION, 1962.

## IKEA TAKES ON MARCEL BREUER'S PIRELLI BUILDING

New Haven, CT may not be on every architect's list of travel destinations, but as a result of patronage by Yale University and the 1960's administration of Mayor Richard Lee, the city possesses a substantial number of important works of Modern Architecture. Now its modernist heritage is under threat. While Louis Kahn's Yale Art Gallery is about to embark on its first major renovation, other buildings—Roche Dinkeloo's New Haven Coliseum and Paul Rudolph's Manor House—are threatened with demolition.

One endangered structure is Marcel Breuer's Armstrong-Pirelli Building. IKEA has just received City and State approval for a new 300,000 sq. ft. retail facility at the site of the Breuer building. The plan calls for a partial demolition of the building and the conversion of the 19-acre landscaped site into an on-grade parking lot. Barring any last-minute change of heart by the City or by IKEA, the project is to break ground this spring.

The Armstrong-Pirelli building, completed in 1969, is important for its architectural quality and for its siting. The tower is "hung" from a truss and the facade is highly articulated pre-cast concrete. Situated at the junction of I-91 and I-95, it signals one's arrival in New Haven and provides access to New Haven's Long Wharf—an industrial waterfront area that the city is starting to convert to recreational use.

Due to public pressure, IKEA backed away from its initial plan for complete demolition of the building. It has agreed to retain the tower portion, demolishing its two-story plinth and double-height warehouse facility. The company has no plans to re-use the tower building—its store will be housed in a separate metal-clad structure to the south.



MARCEL BREUER'S ARMSTRONG-PIRELLI BUILDING, NEW HAVEN, 1969.

Retaining a token piece of the building and surrounding it with parking compromises the architectural intent of the building, as well as the urbanistic potential of the site. The city, for its part, may also be jeopardizing its redevelopment of the waterfront by putting big-box retail right on the path from downtown to the harbor.

The Long Wharf Advocacy Group, a coalition of local architects, environmentalists and urban design advocates has spearheaded a publicity and lobbying effort to save the building, and to promote a long-term vision for the New Haven waterfront. Press coverage and contact information for IKEA and for New Haven officials are posted on its website: [www.breuernewhaven.org](http://www.breuernewhaven.org).

—Lana Berkovich

## RENOVATION OF MIES ICONS AT IIT CAMPUS

The Illinois Institute of Technology announced in November 2002 the formation of a task force to raise funds for the restoration of several buildings on the IIT campus designed by Mies van der Rohe. This task force, known as the Mies van der Rohe Society, will raise \$20 million for technological and physical improvements of several buildings located on the architecturally significant Chicago campus.

Two of the buildings slated for renovation are Wishnick Hall and S.R. Crown Hall. Wishnick Hall (1945-46), with its expressed steel structure, yellow brick infill and aluminum windows, is typical of most of the buildings that Mies designed for the campus in the 1940s and 1950s. A revitalized Wishnick Hall will house the Digital Media Center.

Crown Hall, designed by Mies in 1954-56 to house the School of Architecture and Institute of Design, is synonymous with his ideas for universal space and a structural philosophy that he referred to as *beinahe nichts*, almost nothing. Although Mies envisioned the universal space to be flexible for many uses and generations, he could not have foreseen the technological revolution in architectural education that has made the single, open space somewhat inflexible for today's learning environment. The funding will adapt the space for technology, while preserving and restoring both the deteriorated exterior and the great hall.

Leading the Mies Society will be former Illinois Governor, James R. Thompson. During his administration in the 1980s, Governor Thompson was responsible for the state's acquisition and restoration of Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana-Thomas House in Springfield. Thompson also led recent efforts by

the state to acquire the Mies designed Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois.

In his address announcing the formation of the Mies Society, Thompson praised the architectural significance of the IIT campus and its Mies designed buildings and vowed to, "restore, where necessary, the buildings and landscape to the level Mies and his colleagues originally envisioned for their students." The campus, which had fallen on hard times since the mid-1970s, has recently seen a renaissance. A new Campus Center designed by Rem Koolhaas and student housing designed by Helmut Jahn are slated for completion this fall. Several other Mies designed campus buildings are in the process of renovation.

—Doug Gilbert



IIT'S CROWN HALL, CHICAGO, MIES VAN DER ROHE, 1956

# TWA IDLING

The postwar era's most recent architectural star is Eero Saarinen's 1962 TWA Terminal in the movie "Catch Me If You Can." The movie evokes the glamour of jet-age airline travel before the days of airport security and offers the only way at present to experience the interior of this magnificent building. The demise of TWA has left the building empty since the end of 2001.

In 2001 the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey prepared a master plan for the redevelopment of the site comprising TWA Terminal and the former National Airlines Terminal, (now Jet Blue) designed by I. M. Pei, and completed in 1971. The proposed new 750,000 sq. ft. terminal is semi-circular in shape and requires the demolition of the National Airlines Terminal and the flight wings of the TWA Terminal. The airside view of TWA would disappear and Saarinen's building would sit in the 'front yard' of the new mega terminal without any clear purpose. The master plan proposes no viable use and leaves that decision with the selected developer.

The draft Memorandum of Agreement between the Port Authority and the State Historic Preservation Office raised objections from many organizations to the proposed solutions. Subsequently a more intensive review and consultation process began which DOCOMOMO joined as a consulting party.

After this two-year review and comment process, DOCOMOMO Tri-State remains very concerned. It feels that the assumption that a developer will come in, create a viable use and generate enough income to financially justify the restoration of the building is highly optimistic. Since the completion of the master plan, airline travel and terminal functions have changed significantly, bringing into question the original assumptions. The language of the Memorandum leaves a great deal of latitude in the event that no user can be found willing to take the building on the present terms. The National Airlines Terminal is also a highly significant modern building and its preservation must enter the discussion

—Theo Prudon

## CUBA TURNS A CORNER AND PRESERVES ITS MODERN PAST

Cuba represents a unique example of a country in which architectural preservation constitutes a major component of the national economic development plan. Visitors to the island in the past decade have noted the steadily accelerating pace of renovation and reconstruction work that is transforming the face of Havana and spreading now to the secondary cities. Tourism has provided both the impetus and means for this remarkable preservation activity.

In Cuba, architectural preservation

### "THE BIGGEST PRESERVATION STORY IN CUBA IS THE RESCUE OF THE HAVANA ARTS SCHOOLS...."

is centrally planned and administered. In Havana the Office of the City Historian is invested with extraordinary powers to select, design and execute preservation projects and to pay for them with revenues generated by the government-controlled tourist related businesses. Up until now, investment in preservation has concentrated on Old Havana and its colonial architectural heritage. This exclusive focus on the pre-modern, however, has come at the expense of Havana's fine body of 20th-century architecture, which includes extraordinary examples of early modernism, art deco, and the alternately elegant and flamboyant work of the 1950s. Havana in the post-war era supported the most progressive architecture school in Latin America, the graduates and faculty of which adorned the cosmopolitan capital with work of consummate quality. Today, this heritage of modern architecture is falling apart.

The situation is changing. In Havana today one gets the sense that as the most prominent monuments of



HOTEL RIVIERA, MEYER LANSKY, HAVANA, 1956

the colonial period are stabilized, attention is turning to the city's 20th Century masterpieces. Preparatory research has been done by scholars such as Eduardo Luis Rodriguez, whose book *The Havana Guide: Modern Architecture 1925-1965* has acquainted a local and international audience with Cuban modern architecture. The greatest activity has been in the tourism sector, with the rehabilitation of infrastructure from the 1950s—the last great era of tourism in Cuba. The past decade has seen the restoration of the Hotel Habana Libre (former Havana Hilton; Welton Becket, 1958-1959), the Deauville (1949), and the Las Vegas-style Hotel Riviera, built by Meyer Lansky in 1956. Outside of the capital a number of modern hotels of architectural significance have also been rehabilitated. The post-revolutionary vacation complex Villa Megano (Humberto Alonso, 1959), a delightful essay in concrete shell technology in the Playas del Este, has recently been refurbished and reopened.



VILLA MEGANO, PLAYA DEL ESTES, HUMBERTO ALONSO, 1959.

The biggest modern preservation story in Cuba is the rescue of the Havana Arts Schools. Planned on the site of the Havana Country Club, the ambitious complex was intended by the young Castro regime to be the premier arts university for the third world. The architectural team of Ricardo Porro, Roberto Gottardi and Vittorio Garrati undertook in their designs an astounding experiment in a revolutionary "cubanismo" in architecture. Construction was begun with much enthusiasm in 1960, but by 1964 economic conditions had soured and official ideological attitudes toward design and construction had shifted away from the individualistic expression of the Art Schools in favor of an aesthetic of standardization. Only Porro's Schools of Plastic Arts and Modern Dance were completed, with Gottardi's School of Dramatic Arts and Garrati's School of Music finished only in part. Never occupied, the site swiftly became the most romantic of modern ruins. Today all of the school buildings are in urgent need of help. John Loomis's new book (*Revolution in Form, Havana's Forgotten Art Schools*, 1999) has attracted international attention to the plight of the Art Schools. Last year the Cuban government announced its intention to restore and complete the Schools, with the scope and character of the work yet to be determined. Recent conversations with the three architects illuminate strikingly different opinions as to whether the Schools should be restored, completed according to original plans, or reprogrammed entirely for contemporary needs.

—Belmont Freeman

## CONFERENCE, CONTINUED

process that will respect both the diversity of the membership, their disciplines, and geographical distribution. That very same diversity is reflected in the committee itself with its architects, scholars, preservationists and other practitioners from several disciplines, countries and regions. It includes representatives of France, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Nigeria and members of several chapters of DOCOMOMO US. The Call for Papers will be announced on April 25th, 2003 by DOCOMOMO International President Maristella Casciato, DOCOMOMO US President Theo Prudon, and Hélène Lipstadt, Co-Chair, with Casciato, of the Program Committee, at a DOCOMOMO affinity session at the annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians at Denver. The call will also be posted at [www.docomomo-us.org](http://www.docomomo-us.org). Mailings and publication in other journals will follow, with a deadline for paper submissions planned for September 2003. —Hélène Lipstadt and Theo Prudon

## MONORAIL, CONTINUED

windows providing panoramic views. Seattle's Monorail vehicles are the only Alweg-built trains still operating. However, it is these innovative and unique features that Monorail promoters cite as a hindrance to the progress of the new line. Proponents of the new system claim that current technology can produce cheaper, slimmer rails that can run cars at faster speeds. They claim that the original system is obsolete and propose creating a museum in one of the current stations for the original cars to be displayed. Opponents of demolishing the original line claim that the Monorail is a kinetic landmark that is crucial to interpreting Seattle's 1962 image.

This view eventually won over the City Landmarks Board. Susan Boyle and Andrew Phillips, both members of DOCOMOMO WeWa, prepared a landmark nomination and at a April 16th hearing the Board designated the entire Monorail system (pylons, rails, cars and both stations) a Seattle Historic Landmark. —Andrew Phillips

## SEISMIC SHAKE-UP IN SAN FRANCISCO

The Alcoa Building in San Francisco, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in 1967 and completed in 1971, was one of the finest modern buildings in California when built. Considered by some to be a prototype for SOM's John Hancock Tower in Chicago, its structural exoskeleton is made up of diagonal steel crossbracing, giving the building its aesthetic identity and taking the



THE ALCOA BUILDING BEFORE RENOVATION, SAN FRANCISCO, SOM, 1971

PHOTO: MARK TAKAHASHI, COURTESY OF SOM

place of any other compositional treatment.

The building's owner, Chicago-based Equity Office Properties, feels seismic upgrades to the building are necessary. They selected the Smith Group, a local firm, to design structural modifications. Like the rest of the design and preservation community, SOM was not consulted or alerted to the project, and discovered it only after the work had started. The modifications, currently underway, will significantly alter the building's distinctive appearance by adding horizontal steel banding at regular intervals to the exoskeleton and by locating W-shaped steel legs around the base. Because the building's design celebrated its structural system, changes of this nature are not insignificant. The new steel legs compromise the original design intent, in which the building is "floating" above the plaza level, supported by 5 massive vertical piers on each long elevation. Worse still, the new legs will be clad in the same material as the original, obscuring the distinction between the original and the new. The result is a clunky, inelegant solution that dilutes the original design.

The San Francisco office of SOM played (and continues to play) an important role in shaping modern San Francisco. There are only a handful of SOM skyscrapers from the 50s and 60s,

but these are defining works. The Northern California chapter of DOCOMOMO US included the Alcoa Building, along with the well-known Crown Zellerbach Building (1959) and the lesser-known Indemnity Insurance Building



W-SHAPED SEISMIC BRACING AROUND THE BASE WILL ALTER THE PERCEPTION OF THE ALCOA BUILDING FLOATING OVER THE OPEN PLAZA LEVEL.

PHOTO: MARK TAKAHASHI, COURTESY OF SOM

(also 1959) in its local modern register and in its 1998 guidebook. For several years, it has urged the local Landmark's Preservation Advisory Board to landmark Alcoa, but the Board has never acted. Unable to effect the outcome of the project, the chapter was nonetheless able to generate publicity about it. Press coverage in both the mainstream media and a local preservation publication has been sympathetic to DOCOMOMO's position, recognizing the importance of the building and the negative impact of the modifications. —Chandler McCoy

## LOS ANGELES REPORT: THE LEGACY OF WELTON BECKET

The Modern Committee of the Los Angeles Conservancy has been one of the pioneers in recognizing the importance of advocacy for the preservation of modern architecture in the LA area. Its most recent undertaking, the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Welton Becket's birth, was a great success and an indication of how perceptions about modern architecture are beginning to change.

The event focused attention on an unresolved dilemma, which is how to recognize and assess the significance of large and prolific commercial firms that contributed so greatly to the spread of modern architecture in America and the rest of the world. The work of Welton Becket, Edward Durrell Stone, Harrison and Abramowitz and other similar firms are examples. Their buildings are not all of equal merit in the same way that not all Victorian row

houses are good. The GSA has also recently begun to identify and evaluate buildings from the Great Society era with the desire to protect the most important examples. Here, the ubiquity and significance of 'middle of the road' modernism are issues to be addressed.

The work of Welton Becket is synonymous with the development and face of modern Los Angeles. The Parker Center, or Police Administration Building, was completed in 1955. Named after the William Parker, the police chief, the building was intended to house an efficient and modern police department and also convey the new image of a facility that was open and accessible.

While the building survives largely intact and could be easily remodeled and upgraded, plans have been proposed for its replacement with an even more efficient and larger building. The



WELTON BECKET'S PARKER CENTER, LOS ANGELES, 1955.

proposal ignores the importance of Welton Becket, the 'clean' lines of the existing building, and the overall message that it represented. Buildings like the Parker Center deserve our attention and care. They can be retained and upgraded without losing the very qualities that made them important in their day; all it takes is courage and imagination.

—Theo Prudon

## IN OUR OWN TIME



STILMAN HOUSE NO. 1, MARCEL BREUER, 1950-1951

A surprising new exhibition exploring the hidden legacy of Modernism in Litchfield, Connecticut, opened at the Litchfield Historical Museum on April 11 and will run through November 30. "In Our Own Time: Modernism in Litchfield 1949-1970" focuses on a small but extraordinary movement of Modern design that involved some of



LIVING ROOM, STILMAN HOUSE NO. 1

the world's foremost architects of the period. Among the leading Modernists to work in the area were Marcel Breuer, Richard Neutra, John Johansen, Eliot Noyes, Edward Durrell Stone, and Edward Larrabee Barnes. All were drawn to Litchfield by a group of local patrons who embraced the Modern design philosophy that was emerging in America after World War II. "Litchfield's Modern movement is notable in that it occurred at all, let alone in a town that so many people consider to be Connecticut's quintessential Colonial village," says Catherine Keene Fields, director of the Litchfield Historical Society. "It is also an exciting story to tell because all of the buildings still stand, and because so many of the original clients are still here to share their memories."

## SOM AND CALDER ENSEMBLE THREATENED



GRAND RAPIDS CIVIC CENTER, SOM AND ALEXANDER CALDER, 1969

Developers are attempting to buy and demolish an elegant set of International-style buildings designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill that house the city and county offices of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The buildings, constructed in 1969, are part of Vandenberg Center, which also includes a Miesian-inspired plaza, a massive steel sculpture "La Grande Vitesse" designed for the plaza by Alexander Calder, as well as a rooftop painting on the county building designed and donated to the city by Calder.

The developer, Gallium Group, LLC, in association with the Los Angeles firm of Keating/Khang Architecture, wish to convince the city and the county to sell the buildings and relocate their offices to make way for the construction of a new hotel complex. In the proposal, "La Grand Vitesse," the Calder-designed outdoor sculpture and the symbol of the City of Grand Rapids, would become part of a private hotel complex, thereby losing its original context. The roof painting, "Calder on the Roof" (1974), would be destroyed.

The three-story county building

and ten-story city hall are clad in brown Canadian granite over steel framing, and are sited on a plaza juxtaposed against the massive orange-red Calder stabile. Calder designed the stabile to be seen against the backdrop of the SOM buildings. "La Grande Vitesse" was the first federally funded public art sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts in their Works

**"THE CALDER ROOF PAINTING WOULD BE DESTROYED..."**

of Art in Public Places program. The roof painting atop the shorter building can be viewed from the taller buildings nearby. The interiors boast terrazzo flooring, spectacular views of the city, and the elegance of high quality International Style design. The buildings retain a high degree of original fabric and are representative of the work of SOM during the firm's most influential period.

Ironically, these buildings replaced the former Grand Rapids City Hall (1888, Elijah Meyer), which was razed in

1969. The old city hall was demolished after an extended effort to save it, spawning the local historic preservation movement. This painful memory remains strong for those who witnessed that destruction and many local residents have mixed feelings about the SOM buildings. Despite their sad genesis, the SOM buildings and the Calder stabile truly represent the heart of the city. The Calder stabile image has appears on all city literature, vehicles, and signage. The plaza is the only large urban public space in the city and is utilized for numerous festivals in the spring, summer, and fall as well as for peaceful public protests.

The Grand Rapids City Commission approved a one-year option on the buildings and plaza presented by the developer in October 2002. The Modernism Committee of the non-profit Kent County Council for Historic Preservation has been formed to call attention to the negatives of this plan and work to educate the community about local modern design treasures and the crucial issue of preservation of the recent past.

—Jennifer Metz



GRAND RAPIDS CIVIC CENTER, SOM, 1969

## ILLINOIS SAYS MIES DOES NOT MEASURE UP TO WRIGHT

For many, Mies Van der Rohe's Farnsworth House, completed in 1951, is the quintessential modern house. The glass and steel house once again faces an uncertain future. In 2001, Lord Peter Palumbo, the house's owner, announced plans to sell the famous house. Preservationists feared that it would be closed to the public, moved or demolished. Advocates organized the Friends of the Farnsworth House, and after a massive letter writing campaign, claimed victory when then Governor George Ryan persuaded lawmakers to set aside \$7 million for

purchase of the house.

In February, preservationists were stunned when Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan blocked the plan to buy the Farnsworth House, saying that "Mies's biographer told me last week that '\$7 million is a heck of a lot for that house,' given its distant location, and Mies is not nearly as popular as Frank Lloyd Wright." The house is now unprotected, as it is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places; nor protected by any local landmark designation program, as Plano, Illinois does not have a designation program.

While it is unlikely that the house will be demolished, it could be moved, or incompatible structures could be built on the site. Saving the Farnsworth House without state support will be a challenge, but the bigger challenge will be to save it and keep it open to the public. To that end, DOCOMOMO, the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are all monitoring the situation closely and attempting to find a solution which will accomplish both goals.

—Jeanne Lambin

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## *national news/spring 2003*

STILMAN HOUSE 1, LITCHFIELD, CT. (PHOTO: LITCHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY)



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