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New York/Tri-State Newsletter ■ Summer 2006

Events

**IXth INTERNATIONAL
DOCOMOMO CONFERENCE
ISTANBUL/ANKARA, TURKEY**
September 26–October 1
Workshop: September 18–25

**BEST OF FRIENDS: R. BUCKMINSTER
FULLER AND ISAMU NOGUCHI**
through October 15
Noguchi Design Museum

**CRAFTING A MODERN WORLD:
THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
OF ANTONIN AND NOEMI RAYMOND**
through September 24
Meyerson Galleries
University of Pennsylvania

HOMEY AND HIP: KNOLL DESIGN
through October 31
Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, VT

Meetings & Events

For news about local DOCOMOMO meetings and events sign up for our email list at: www.docomomo-us.org (NY/Tri-State Chapter page) You'll get all the details delivered to your box.

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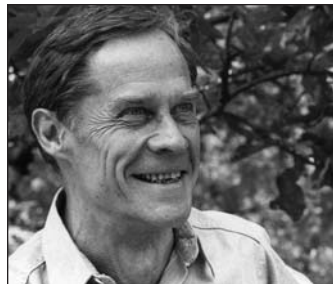
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"HARD-BOILED" ARCHITECTURE: THE NOYES HOUSE

Eliot Fette Noyes (1910–1977), a graduate of Harvard College, moved on to the Graduate School of Architecture in 1932, when it was still in the clutches of the Beaux-Arts. Despite possessing an aptitude for design, the young Noyes found the curriculum stultifying. After two and a half years, he took advantage of the draughting skills he had learned when he seized an opportunity to accompany an archaeological expedition as a watercolor renderer on a series of excavations at Persepolis. It was in Persia that he learned to fly gliders, which became a life-long fascination. He headed an experimental program in the Pentagon during World War II on glider technology, which was how he came to know the young bomber pilot Thomas J. Watson, Jr., future head of International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) and long-time friend and patron of Noyes.

Returning from Persia to Harvard in 1937, Noyes found the architectural program transformed. Walter Gropius had assumed control, bringing in his fellow former Bauhäusler Marcel Breuer to teach in the studios. Noyes, energized by the new approach and already a steady hand at the drafting board, was a star pupil. Upon graduating in 1938, Noyes worked briefly for Coolidge, Shelpley, Bulfinch and Abbot before being hired on by Gropius and Breuer. In the Gropius-Breuer office Noyes was immersed in the project of translating the formal innovations of European modernism into the context of New England. Gropius described their work as an attempt "to face the problem [of house design] in much the same way as the early

builders of the region had faced it when, with the best technical means at their disposal, they built unostentatious, clearly defined buildings that were able to withstand the rigors of the climate and that expressed the social attitude of their inhabitants." (*Scope of Total Architecture*, 1943, p 14.) Noyes took up this project himself, synthesizing New England Protestant tradition with a modern aesthetic absorbed from his teachers. The design of his first house, the Jackson House, in Dover, MA (1940–1941), clearly shows the dual nature of his architectural work of the period.



DERRY NOYES

Probably due to the spreading influence of Gropius Noyes was appointed as the first Curator of Industrial Design at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1940. His inaugural exhibition, *Organic Design in Home Furnishings*, was a landmark event in the history of industrial design, establishing the overwhelming winners—Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen—as internationally renowned designers, and making significant strides toward the mass production of technologically sophisticated modern furniture.



GEORGE SILK © TIME, INC., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

While under construction, the 1954 Noyes House (above) received a Progressive Architecture Annual Design Award. The jury—Victor Gruen, George Howe, Eero Saarinen and Fred Severud—were impressed by the "exceptional simplicity and refinement" of its "disarming" plan.

Widely known as one of the country's leading industrial designers, Eliot Noyes (left) was trained as an architect and always referred to himself as an architect.

At the end of World War II, Noyes returned briefly to MoMA before taking a position as Design Director in the office of the industrial designer Norman Bel Geddes in 1946. It was there that Noyes gained experience running a major industrial design firm; it was also his first engagement with IBM, when he redesigned the IBM 562 electric typewriter. When Bel Geddes died in 1947, Noyes established his own practice in industrial design, attaching it to Marcel Breuer's newly independent architectural practice. The partnership was brief, but Noyes and Breuer collaborated on the design of the Kniffin House

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Welcome

This Spring DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State took an exciting step forward when the chapter was granted 501c3 non-profit status. While we have been able to fund projects through DOCOMOMO US, our local chapter can now seek program and project funding independently including support for a part-time paid administrative position.

Documentation:

In March we launched a workshop to promote the International Registry and explain how to prepare the fiche forms from which the archive is built. Fiches document significant Modern movement architecture and are archived locally and at the Netherlands Architecture Institute. We encourage everyone to attend the next workshop and prepare a fiche for their favorite building. (p. 3)

Conservation:

Local news from the conservation and preservation front is mixed. This issue has positive reports on the Hodgson House, Wilde Building, Gores Pavilion, 900 Fifth and TWA Terminal (p. 3, 9, and 6) along with real and potential casualties: Rudolph's Riverview High School, 2CC and Bell Laboratories (p. 7, 10 and 8).

Modern:

Our focus remains raising awareness and appreciation of Modern Movement architecture and design in the Tri-State area. It's the most important work we can do.

Movement:

We hope this issue of the newsletter will inspire you to make a move: Author a fiche, plan a tour, sign up for email news, write an article, work on advocacy for an at-risk building, join DOCOMOMO US, financially support a program. The choices are many. Active participation is how we'll grow the movement.

—Nina Rappaport

PROGRESS AT JOHNSON'S GLASS HOUSE

We have long known that Philip Johnson's Glass House would be open to the public as a National Trust property after his death. What few of us realized is that this conversion would require years of research, negotiation, and painstaking preservation work.

A spring visit to the site with Martin Skrelunas, the property's Director of Preservation, showed work accelerating, with much yet to be done. Sandy Cross, a second professionally trained preservationist, had recently been added to the small on-site staff.

Groundskeeper Brendan Tobin painstakingly maintains the 45-acre site in line with Johnson's design objectives. In July, the Trust named Christy MacLear Director of the site.

This spring, one portion of the site was dotted with tubes inserted eight feet into the earth to

measure soil moisture under various climatic conditions, research needed to address longstanding moisture and mold problems in the Brick House (traditionally called the guest house, but Brick House is a good name for the multiple-use complement to the Glass House). Work completed at the Brick House includes cleaning and repair of plaster ceilings, cleaning of granite and marble surfaces, and refinishing of the once-shabby front door. Frames of the building's circular windows, long hidden behind interior fabric panels, are badly deteriorated and will need restoration. Research and decisions are required on fabric wall-coverings here, which are generally sound but somewhat discolored where they are in contact with wood frames. Scores of required tasks are listed for this one small building.

The Glass House itself requires repair of the roof, preceded by studies to determine what has caused stains on the sand-plastered ceiling. All or most of the glass will have to be replaced, because repairs will be needed at many points where steel framing has begun to corrode, and

such large sheets of glass can rarely be removed intact. In any case, glazing replacement over the years has produced a patchwork of original plate glass plus laminated and tempered sheets. There have been recent instances of wild turkeys flying through the glass, a hazard that has existed only in recent years as these birds have returned to the area.

Art, cabinetwork, and furniture in the Glass House also need attention. The Poussin painting and Nadelman sculpture that are prominent fixtures of the interior need major restora-



"Brick House" as seen from the Glass House

he and his companion, David Whitney (who has since died), focused on a campaign to remake much of the landscape that is visible from the Glass House, removing underbrush from acres of woods to transform it into a kind of Arcadian park landscape. They could observe the progress of this alteration without having workers, with their equipment and solvents, in the house.

The issue of the property's relation to the community outside is being painstakingly and diplomatically addressed. Visitors are expected



Broken brick and other deterioration

tion. While the furniture is in sound condition, a decision must be made whether to replace chairs with replicas that visitors could sit on to experience the house more realistically.

Out on the grounds, with its several follies and galleries, research and decisions are needed on accessibility and safety. Some of these destinations are reachable only by crossing fields. A swimming pool that is an essential part of the site's architecture is not fenced in. Conforming to codes—and satisfying insurance providers—will require negotiation and dependable management policies. At some historical sites, for instance, unfenced pools have been allowed where groups of visitors are limited in number and supervised by trained docents.

Visiting the Glass House, one inevitably wonders why some obvious maintenance problems were not addressed during Johnson's life.

Skrelunas, who began his curatorship there several years before Johnson died, explains that Johnson apparently wanted to minimize disruptions during his last years, when he spent increasing proportions of his time here. During those final years,

to park and attend an orientation program at a remote location, divide into groups no larger than nine, and travel to the site by van. Some adjacent properties have been protected against the plague of McMansions that has seized New Canaan. The Hodgson House just across the road, designed by Johnson with Landis Gores, has recently been covered by visual easements that will be binding on future owners. (pg. 3) A 1735 house, also across the road, was stripped of its later wings and restored by David Whitney, who bequeathed it, along with his extensive art library, to the Trust. It is likely to become a base for visiting scholars.

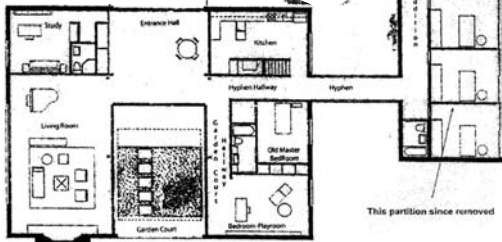
Skrelunas observes that the work on the property is benefiting from decades of increasing sophistication and education not only in the material sciences end of the preservation field, but in more subjective areas such as liability, administrative staffing, and community relations. The likely date for opening the property to the public is now projected for spring of 2007.

—John Morris Dixon

PRISTINE MODERN: HODGSON HOUSE LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER

For over 50 years the Hodgson House in New Canaan, CT has existed in the shadow of its neighbor across the street, the Glass House. Unaltered and still true to the original design, the house is now getting the recognition it deserves as well as protections needed to keep it intact for years to come. In fall 2005 the Hodgson House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Hodgson family secured protective easements held by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The house is currently on the market, but thanks to the forethought and generosity of the family, it is not at risk. Today only three of New Canaan's important Modern Movement houses are on the National Register: the Hodgson House, the Gores House (Landis Gores, 1948) and the Glass House complex.

The Hodgson House, designed by Philip Johnson* and completed in 1951, is textbook Miesian modern—single-story, heavy on glass, absolutely unadorned—but with a twist from Johnson, a U-shaped plan surrounding a central courtyard. The National Register nomination narrative states



as a matter of unusual trivia "Nowhere in the house are there actual windows, simply glass walls that include glass doors." The house was designed for Richard and Geraldine Hodgson. Unlike the typical Modern house owner of the time—an architect building his own house



Entry and courtyard, with view to glass hall connecting bedroom wing. Completed in 1951, the Hodgson House received an AIA Honor Award in 1956.

or a wealthy enthusiast of Modern art—the Hodgsons were a young professional couple with small children. The original design included plans for a bedroom wing connected to the main house by a glass-walled corridor that was not built until five years after the main house was completed. Johnson could not have asked for better



Hodgson House, north elevation and entry

PHOTOS: ALEC MARSHALL

clients or neighbors. The Hodgsons lived in the house from the time it was completed until their deaths, caring for the house with something close to a curator's tenacity.

The 4,600-sq. ft. house is sited on a knoll on five acres combining partly wooded areas, open fields and lawns. The structure is brick bearing wall construction with interior steel H-columns. Walls are 10 feet high and finish in a flush steel fascia. The masonry portions of the perimeter wall are finished on both the exterior and interior with a light gray speckle-tone glazed brick laid in Flemish bond pattern. Ceilings and interior walls are plaster with a narrow black frame on all edges and the slab floor with radiant heating is covered in four-inch glazed tile in a dark charcoal color.

In the open area of the U-plan Johnson designed a formal courtyard surrounded by glass walls on three sides. He also included one of his signature landscape features, a serene rectangular pool crossed by slightly elevated rectangular stepping stones. Think MoMA sculpture garden in miniature. In this early work Johnson also employed a principle he later referred to as the "processional element," essence being, that the house can only be fully appreciated when it is perceived by moving through it. On its long approach, the house is partially hidden behind the solid wall of the bedroom wing. Upon arrival, a pair of glass doors allows views into the house before entering. Inside, the eye travels through the courtyard to the open side of the house and to the landscape beyond. Similarly, walking through the principal spaces, the glass walls open views room to room and to the outdoors.

As the sorting out of Johnson's career progresses, the strength and conviction of early works such as the Hodgson House will be one of the benchmarks by which the later "careers" are compared. For its place in the historical record of Modern Movement architecture and for what many would agree is an instance of simple architectural beauty, the house is deserving of its place on the Register. The defining characteristics and overall high quality of the Hodgson House will hopefully also attract an appreciative new owner.

—Kathleen Randall

*Officially, the house was designed by Philip C. Johnson Associates, an early partnership between Philip Johnson and Landis Gores. The architects opened private practices shortly after completing the House and parted on terms that gave Johnson design credit.

Fiche Training



In April the New York/Tri-State chapter presented DOCOMOMO's first ever Register training session. Hosted by Knoll Inc., at its New York showroom amidst quintessential Modern furniture by Saarinen, Mies, Aalto, Bertoia and Eames, members and newcomers learned about modern architecture documentation, fiche forms and the soon-to-be launched online Register.

Hansel Hernandez-Navarro, the Register Committee chair, gave the presentation which was designed as a simple "how to" session using PowerPoint visuals tailored to a local audience by showcasing Tri-State buildings and including local resources. Screen images of the Register web site prepared by the National Register Committee showed what's to come.

The DOCOMOMO Register is an open list of significant Modern Movement architectural heritage. It is comprised of documentation forms known as fiches in "full" or "minimum" format and is part of the overall effort by DOCOMOMO International and regional working groups to fulfill DOCOMOMO's documentation goals.

Another training session is planned for fall—watch the DOCOMOMO email news for date and details. In the meantime, if you would like information about how to prepare a fiche or want to sign up to document a particular building, contact the Register Committee chair via nytri@docomomo-us.org.

Touring in June

MODERN MIDTOWN LANDSCAPES:

Zion Breen & Richardson Walking Tour

Donald Richardson, FASLA, principal of Zion Breen & Richardson Associates (ZBR) led a DOCOMOMO US NY/Tri-State walking tour of iconic Modern Midtown landscapes on Sunday June 25. In the background below is Paley Park (1967), designed by Robert Zion in collaboration with architect Albert Preston Moore. The group of fifteen began at the Museum of Modern Art Sculpture Garden, originally designed by Philip Johnson (1953) and reconstructed by ZBR (2004) in conjunction with Yoshio Taniguchi's MoMA expansion. The tour concluded in ZBR's bamboo garden (1983) in the atrium of the former IBM World Headquarters by Edward Larrabee Barnes.

In addition to the ZBR sites, DOCOMOMO member Gail Addiss arranged access to the recently dedicated Philip Johnson Terrace, a private garden for residents of Museum Tower designed by Francois de Menil on the roof of the original Stone/Goodwin museum building.

Many thanks to Don Richardson, MoMA and Gail Addiss, and to John Arbuckle for arranging the tour.



Don Richardson at Paley Park

PHILIP JOHNSON EXAMINED

As much as we know about Philip Johnson, he remains a puzzle. On February 16 through 18, the Museum of Modern Art and the Yale School of Architecture collaborated on a symposium, during which 17 speakers and three responders, plus some vintage film footage, shed considerable light on his life and work. An overflow audience (spilling into a video hook-up space at Yale) listened attentively for a total of about 12 hours. And we were hardly ever bored.

Yet in the end there was no coherent picture of Johnson's career—because he didn't have a coherent career.

At the symposium's opening session at MoMA, Jeffrey Kipnis observed that we are generally allotted "one life per person." But during his 98 years Philip Johnson lived many: as a codifier and promoter of the "International Style" at age 24; as a pioneering design curator; as a supporter of the Nazis and other extremist forces; as a practicing architect following a parade of styles; as a major art collector and donor; as a promoter of many of today's famous architects.

So uneven is Johnson's large architectural output that, as Mark Wigley wisely observed, "We tend to view his good things as exceptions." Kipnis cited the University of Houston architecture school and the imitation of Eisenman's deconstructivism in Canada as two of the low points, but many of his works are simply forgettable, if less extreme. The issue of which Johnson buildings are worth preserving—beyond the holy ground of his Glass House estate—is bound to get controversial. One of his most widely praised works, the Museum of Modern Art garden, has just been reconstructed beautifully—but by no means accurately, since that would have been impossible.

Jeffrey Kipnis observed that we are generally allotted "one life per person." But during his 98 years Philip Johnson lived many...

Johnson himself dealt with his splotchy record through charming self-deprecation. Responding to Mies's assertion that it's better to be good than to be original, Johnson said he "wouldn't know how to be good." And there was, of course, his famous admission—meant to characterize architect/client relationships generally—"I'm a whore."

Emmanuel Petit correctly characterized Johnson as non-theoretical and non-meditative. Wigley said he was sensitive in several senses of the word: touchy, vulnerable, and quick to detect new stimuli.

Johnson's commitments to Nazism and anti-Semitism—too long and substantial to be dismissed as youthful folly—were discussed by many speakers. It was said that anti-Semitism was endemic in the WASP world of his upbringing, and that many Americans admired the stabilizing effect of Fascism and Nazism on a Depression-racked Europe, as others admired Leninism and Stalinism. But his apparent change of heart remains hard to pin down. Johnson did apologize and contributed his services to the design of a synagogue in Port Chester, NY, and a nuclear reactor in Israel. Jewish friends, colleagues, and clients apparently forgave him fully without requiring explanations. Among other evi-

dence of his inclusiveness, Joan Ockman pointed out that he prominently placed works by the Jewish sculptors Elie Nadelman, Jacques Lipshitz, and Ibram Lassaw on his own property and in some of his most notable buildings.

All was not so easily forgiven. At the architectural journals (where I worked) refugees from Hitler's wrath held some key positions. In a video shown by Beatriz Colomina, there was very skeptical commentary by Jan Rowan, editor of *Progressive Architecture* during the mid-1960s; he was a refugee from Poland, a fact that she

...Scully portrayed [Johnson] not as an innovator or leader, but as more of an opportunist and a cheerleader.

didn't mention and may not know. While Rowan looked askance at Johnson's capricious approach to design, I heard him observe that Johnson "rode into Warsaw with the German tanks" (actually in a press vehicle close behind). Peter Eisenman indicated that in his decades of close contact with Johnson, they never seriously discussed his Nazi sympathies, despite the fact that—as Eisenman revealed at this symposium—he vividly recalls the pain of anti-Semitism from his childhood.

Vincent Scully's talk was an event in itself, as is any talk since Scully retired from his Yale routine. Closer to Johnson's age than any other speaker, Scully portrayed him not as an innovator or leader, but as more of an opportunist and a cheerleader. And he covered Johnson's career so fully and perceptively that—as a later speaker noted—he left little territory to explore. One intriguing sidelight, for an event often focused on Johnson's Glass House, was that in the early 1950s Scully himself built a comparable house for his family, with no interior partitions (except around the bathroom). Since his family included kids, they had a harder time adapting to an undivided interior than Johnson did. And since he could afford only wood framing, not welded steel, the glass envelope had to be interrupted by areas of solid wall for bracing, their function indicated by diagonal cladding. The house was not an abject homage to Johnson's house or Mies's Farnsworth, but embodied an ideal widely shared among Modernists of the time.

The predominance of historians on the symposium program imposed certain limits on subjects discussed. All of the speakers on the program showed a university or museum affiliation, except for the historian/critic Charles Jencks. While some of the speakers, such as Phyllis Lambert (Canadian Centre for Architecture) and Terence Riley (MoMA) have practiced architecture, only one (Peter Eisenman) has a substantial body of built work. (Rem Koolhaas, also on the program, was a no-show—no explanation offered.) So here Johnson's architecture was discussed almost exclusively in terms of form and style.

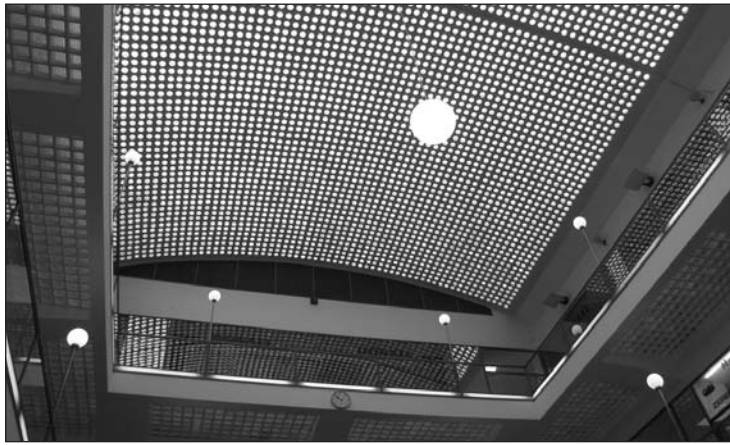
The single mention of a structural system in all those hours was by Johnson himself, in a TV excerpt. Recalling that Mies objected to the conventional wood roof construction on his visibly steel-framed Glass House, he made the typically flip—but totally honest—observation, "I don't care what's behind what you see." Johnson was in

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AIA CONFEREES STUDY EARLY CZECH MODERNISM

The semiannual conferences of the national AIA Committee on Design focus on no specific period, but last September's meeting in Prague offered exceptional insights into Early Modernism in the Czech Republic. While the 100 participants visited works created from Medieval years to 2005, most of the attention was on Czechoslovakia's "Golden Age of Modernism"—the interwar period 1919 to 1938—when Modernism was linked to the nation's newfound independence and democracy. After that, Modernism was ruthlessly suppressed, first under the Nazi occupation, then under Soviet ideologies, to emerge again strongly with the revival of democracy in 1989.

The commercial core of Prague is studded with Functionalist buildings (their term), including the elegantly Minimalist Black Rose Arcade (1929–1933, Oldrich Tyl; restored 1999), with its glass-block-studded shallow



Vaulted skylight of glass block, Black Rose Arcade, Prague, 1929–1930, Oldrich Tyl.

PHOTOS: JOHN MORRIS DIXON

Tugendhat House in Brno (Mies van der Rohe, 1930), a landmark looking almost as good as new, but about to be closed for an estimated three years to deal with the spalling concrete, corroding steel, and deteriorating systems discernible on close inspection. Visited as well in Brno was the Palicka house (Mart Stam,

that make him seem a precursor to Post-Modernism.

For further information on visits and lectures at this six-day event, see my full report on the AIA Committee on Design web site, www.aia.org/cod_crp_200509. —John Morris Dixon

Note:

Early Modernism in Lithuania and Estonia is the subject of a revealing article in the March 2006 issue of the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. Author S. A. Mansbach discusses how, as in Czechoslovakia, Modernism embodied the objectives of these newly independent and democratic nations, in distinctive local ways.



Atrium of Prague Sample Fair Building, 1924–1928. Restored 1986–1995 and now housing national Modern art collection.



Early portion of the Trade Fair complex in Brno, Czech Republic.

vault. Among the most ambitious Functionalist works is the Prague Sample Fair Building (1924–1928, Oldrich Tyl and Josef Fuchs), a city-block-sized structure with an airy eight-story atrium, on the surrounding balconies of which the Modern collection of the Czech National Gallery is now arrayed. The even more ambitious Trade Fair complex in the Czech city of Brno sprawls over a vast acreage, with structures dating from 1928 to recent years, all serving today as one of Europe's largest commercial exhibition centers.

Conferees also visited the

1932), a modest, severely Modernist structure, nicely restored, in a remarkably intact demonstration neighborhood of Functionalist houses.

Back in Prague, conferees examined the Villa Mueller (Adolf Loos, 1930), which represents an alternative Modernism to the more orthodox Functionalism, with an intricately divided interior and a rich palette of materials and colors. The several works of Jozse Plecnik that were seen and discussed—his monumental Church of the Sacred Heart (1932) and his various interventions at Prague Castle (1920–1934)—deviate farther from Modern orthodoxy, with quirky juxtapositions and allusions

AMPLIFICATION

For my article about Philip Johnson's Port Chester, NY synagogue in the Summer 2005 DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State newsletter I did not identify the artist who produced the abstract sculpture on the torah wall, but commented that it "could never have fit well into its Classically-inspired setting." While that opinion has not changed, I have since learned that the sculptor was Ibram Lassaw and that Johnson installed a similar but much smaller Lassaw in his own vaulted guest room, which is conceptually a small version of the synagogue sanctuary. The implication is that Johnson chose or commissioned Lassaw works for both rooms and that he considered them complementary to his architecture. —John Morris Dixon

Touring in July

THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN ALBANY

On Saturday, July 15, a group of around 40 experienced two of Albany's outstanding Modern campuses—the SUNY Albany campus (E.D. Stone, 1962–c. 1968) and Empire State Plaza (Wallace K. Harrison, 1962–1976). Favored with an unseasonably cool day, the tour provided a comprehensive view of each site along with interior visits to key buildings. Formal and informal presentations by knowledgeable persons too numerous to mention here added historical and technical background of the first order.

The group reenergized midday with a delicious lunch in Albany's oldest standing structure, the

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Strolling one of the monumental precast concrete colonnades at SUNY Albany



PHOTOS: K. RANDALL

Entering The Egg at Empire State Plaza

TWA UPDATE: JETBLUE MEETS SAARINEN

Pursuant to a federally mandated Section 106 process stemming from a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey two years ago, a group of designated Consulting Parties, consisting in part of the Municipal Art Society, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, DOCOMOMO US, The New York City Partnership and JetBlue have been meeting bimonthly with the Port Authority and the New York State Office of Historic Preservation to review and discuss the developing plans for the design of a new terminal for JetBlue behind the historic Eero Saarinen designed TWA Terminal at JFK airport. The terminal, commissioned in 1956 and completed in 1962, was designated a New York City Landmark in 1994. However, Landmarks Commission designations are non-binding on properties owned by the Port Authority.

The current design, by a team comprised of the architectural firm Gensler and the engineering firm ARUP, advances considerably upon the design initially envisioned in the year 2000, primarily through a reduction in scale. The original scheme was an enormous, semicircular terminal to be built behind the Saarinen "headhouse"—the most famous, gull-winged



Design for JetBlue's new terminal as shown in May—Saarinen's TWA terminal and two flight wings at left. The target opening date is December 2008.

portion of Saarinen's design—which was planned to be removed from airline use. The semicircular terminal behind the headhouse still remains, but is now much lower, so as not to overwhelm the headhouse. This is the result of the fact that it serves fewer airplanes, being dedicated only to JetBlue, rather than to JetBlue and United, as originally envisioned, and because of a real effort on the part of the designers to stay below the roofline of the headhouse's sweeping curves. The current scheme preserves Saarinen's connector tubes, but still requires the demolition of both flight wings, which are gone as of this writing. On the plus side, JetBlue will be using the headhouse for up to 10 percent of their departing passengers (meaning up to 1 million people per year). Additionally, the airline is investigating the preservation of a portion of the Saarinen designed Flight Wing 2—one of the "trumpets" that connected to the jetways—and is investigating a design that would graft it onto the end of the passenger concourse on their new terminal, for use as a waiting area.

Issues currently under discussion are the design of the new terminal, which is to be clad in metal sheeting and glass, the design of the receptors for the tubes where they connect to the new terminal, the design of a new parking garage to be built on the land side of the historic terminal and the layout of the new roads and paths surrounding the headhouse, to assure

that they allow for unimpeded access to the headhouse from the parking lot, the AirTrain and the JFK ring roads.

At the moment, the restoration of the headhouse is included as part of the RFP to be published within the year to seek lessees for the Saarinen building. In order to speed up the process and provide better control for this crucial work, it is hoped that the restoration can be undertaken directly by the Port Authority and removed from the RFP. In an ideal world, JetBlue would be the best lessee for the headhouse, but whether or not they are the successful bidder in the RFP process, their partial use of it is assured.

—Frank Sanchis

WHITE BRICK AT THE LPC: 900 FIFTH AVENUE

Continuing advocacy efforts, DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State advocacy group member Leslie Monsky delivered a statement at a hearing of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission on March 7th. The statement opposed the proposed recladding of 900 Fifth Avenue, a modern white glazed brick apartment building within Manhattan's Upper East Side Historic District. Completed in 1958, it was designed by architects Sylvan and Robert Bien, who were particularly known for their apartment buildings.

The co-op board sought to replace the original white glazed brick with a considerably darker gray brick, a change that would fundamentally alter the building's appearance. They also proposed to

further alter the original design by replacing the existing single story stone base with a two-story limestone base.

DOCOMOMO argued that "although it is of the Modern era, any proposed alterations that would materially change its character must receive the same scrutiny as applications to alter earlier buildings within this and other designated historic districts. Permitting major changes to a Modern building within a landmark district will set a dangerous precedent."

In response to testimony from DOCOMOMO and other preservation groups, the Commission postponed their decision on the matter and requested more evidence to substantiate the co-op's claim that replacing the white brick in kind was impractical. Subsequently, the advocacy group, with the valuable assistance of member Kyle Normandin, of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates Inc., assembled and submitted technical information documenting the fact that the material is widely available and that if properly manufactured, designed and installed it can last for decades. The diligence paid off. In the intervening months, the co-op board revised its plans and has applied to the Commission at staff level to replace the materials in-kind for both the white glazed brick and the polished granite base.

—John Arbuckle



JOHN ARBUCKLE

ELIOT NOYES, CONTINUED

(1949), and later worked together on two projects for IBM.

While working for Bel Geddes, Noyes moved his family to New Canaan, designing a house for the family in 1947 (altered by subsequent owners; demolished 2005). Seven years later Noyes designed a new house for his family of six. Its completion in 1954 marked Noyes's entry into the mature phase of his career, concretizing a number of attitudes about architecture and its relationship to both human beings and industrial objects that constitute Noyes's contribution to 20th-century design.

The house, which Noyes called "a very hard-boiled piece of architecture," is essentially a reformulation and distillation of the design logic of the binuclear house. The bifurcation of functions into separate wings—one for public and family activities, the other for privacy—remains, but Noyes compressed these volumes into a single volume defined by two massive and windowless fieldstone walls at the front and rear (pierced only by sliding barn doors which serve as entrances), two glazed walls at the sides, and a central courtyard open to the



Noyes House No. 2, Eliot Noyes, 1954, New Canaan, CT.

elements. As Noyes wrote in an essay for *Life* magazine on the house, the courtyard lent a quasi-monastic discipline to the whole: "this arrangement gives visual clarity to the house, strongly enough to dominate the family activities with their attendant clutter and paraphernalia, and so to give a kind of order to all the kinds of living that go on here...."

Rather than the splayed, sprawling volumes of the binuclear house, the Noyes house thus focuses attention, and the business of living in general, inwards. The views outward are hardly panoramic. On the private side, the grade rises several feet immediately outside the windows, and the forest screens views beyond. On the public side, no view of the stream and pond lying below is provided, nor of the outbuilding that Noyes added as a watercolor studio. Instead, the landscape presses itself up against the window-walls, forming a cozy but roomy sense of privacy and enclosure.

Noyes clearly did not possess—nor does it seem that he wished to possess—the heroic sculptural tendencies of his teacher Breuer. Noyes's only gesture in this direction was the fireplace, with its sheer, sand-finished plaster surface seeming to hover between fieldstone walls on either side. Rather than sculpt, Noyes seemed content instead to allow the house to serve as an armature for

sculptural objects. A Calder stabile sits in the courtyard guarding the entrance, and the almost austere living room was filled and softened (much like his friends and frequent collaborators the Eameses' house) with an ever-growing collection of *objets d'art* and lush plants.

The "order" and "visual clarity" that characterize his own house served as a kind of built manifesto for the domestic reordering that he helped to administer in the corporate world. In 1956, shortly after the house was completed, Noyes embarked officially on the first of his corporate design consultancies, at IBM. Rather than develop a house style for IBM, Noyes and his hand-picked fellow consultants—Paul Rand, Charles Eames, George Nelson, and Edgar Kaufmann, Jr.—aimed to create a design program that would emerge from what Noyes called the "character" of the corporation itself. As he reasoned in an interview of 1966, "...if you get to the very heart of the matter, what IBM really does is to help man extend his control over his environment...I think that's the meaning of the company." To express its own "character," IBM would have to control its own environment; to this end, Noyes, his fellow consultants, and a veritable army of designers and managers worked to redesign the material culture of IBM at every level, from graphics to products to buildings. As he put it, "A typewriter sits in a room in a building. There *must* be a sense of their relationship in each of these."

As a result of his successes at IBM, Noyes went on to several more similar projects for major American multinationals—Westinghouse, Mobil, Pan American Airlines and others. This work remains largely unknown today despite its ubiquity and influence. In part, this is because Noyes's aim in much of his corporate work was to provide corporations with the expertise to *design for themselves*. This self-effacing character, which is borne out by its aesthetic modesty, is particularly evident in the Noyes home.

—John Harwood

Editor's Note:

The Noyes House has been off the radar for house tours and local publicity for quite some time. Molly Noyes, Eliot Noyes's widow, grew weary of visitors after accommodating several decades of strangers appearing in the yard with camera in hand and unannounced knocks on the door. And like many mid-century Modern architects, scholarly work on Noyes was sparse. This will all change soon. John Harwood recently completed a dissertation on Noyes's architecture at Columbia University. The August issue of Metropolis magazine features an article on the Noyes House, and a biography of Eliot Noyes by Gordon Bruce will be published by Phaidon in October.

Mrs. Noyes and the four Noyes siblings are now planning for the future of the house with a goal of making sure it is not demolished for its six acre lot upon sale—an all too common occurrence in New Canaan. They are considering many options including a National Register listing and easements or possibly splitting the lot to accommodate an appropriately scaled new house that would architecturally compliment a conserved original house. In today's overheated real estate market, nothing of this nature is easy.

dateline

• **June 19** • Sarasota, FL, School Board voted unanimously to raze the internationally noted **Riverview High School** designed by *Paul Rudolph* in 1957. Intrepid local efforts to have even some of the freestanding buildings renovated and reused—and saved from replacement by the new school's parking lot—were unsuccessful. For more: <http://saveriverview.blogspot.com/>

• **June 9** • Harvard University begins a renovation of the **Woodberry Poetry Room** designed in 1949 by *Alvar Aalto*. The University claims it is carrying out "modest changes" faithful to the "spirit of Aalto's original design." Others who have seen the plans say it is more akin to vandalism of an intact Aalto design.

• **February 21** • Department of the Interior designates *Russel Wright's Manitoga* a National Historic Landmark. From 1942 to his death in 1976 Wright resculpted Manitoga's 75-arcos to create a dramatic landscape blurring the line between natural and man made. Near Garrison, NY, Manitoga also includes Wright's decidedly Modern house and studio.

• **November 22, 2005** • The NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission approved a Section 74-79 application for the transfer of floor area from the **Seagram Building** to a new building at 610 Lexington (YMCA Building site). The deal includes a protective facade easement for the Seagram Building as well as a commitment from its owner RFR Realty LLC (aka Modern architecture aficionado Aby Rosen) to a comprehensive maintenance plan for the landmark.

“Corporate Modern” Revisited

Corporate campuses everywhere are reaching transition points in their use and ownership and in the level of appreciation they are receiving from the architectural and academic community. The proposed demolition of Eero Saarinen's 1957 Bell Telephone Laboratories in Holmdel, NJ, is an alarming example of such transitions. Recalling the issues surrounding the redevelopment of Connecticut General's Bloomfield, CT site in 2000, and particularly the Wilde Building (1956, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill), Preferred Real Estate Investments, Inc, the new owner the property, believes that the building cannot be adapted to another use. Perhaps the company will find inspiration in CIGNA HealthCare's decision to renovate and continue to use the Wilde Building as part of its redevelopment efforts (see page 9).

Also promising, Cesar Pelli recently led a design charrette on the reuse of his groundbreaking COMSAT Building (1969) in Clarksburg, MD, and the 202-acre associated parcel. The event was organized by Montgomery Preservation, Inc. to encourage the County Council to support local historic designation of the building and to promote the reuse of the Pelli building as part of the parcel's redevelopment to commercial and residential uses. An example of a more streamlined approach to the mid-century corporate campus is the sensitive alterations being carried out on Saarinen's Thomas J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, NY. IBM is maintaining the Center's use as a laboratory, but is altering the type of research technologies used at the site. With these examples and others around the country, the corporate campus shows signs of not just aging gracefully but being easily adapted to contemporary needs.

—Nina Rappaport

EERO SAARINEN'S BELL LABS SLATED FOR DEMO

Bell Laboratories's two million-sq.ft. building in Holmdel, NJ may be Eero Saarinen's most influential work as the mirrored glass developed for its exterior became a ubiquitous construction material soon after the building was completed in 1962. In addition, because computerized and fiber-optic phone systems were developed in the building, as were a Nobel-prize-winning technique for trapping atoms and many other telecommunications related technologies, it has historic significance. At one time, as many as 5,600 employees worked in the six-story building, which was enlarged by Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo in 1964 and 1982.

The complex seemed secure after the breakup of AT&T, when Lucent Technologies became the successor to the division of the company that created communications equipment. But after a retrenchment following purchase by Alcatel, Lucent put the 472-acre property on the mar-



Bell Laboratories, Holmdel, NJ, Eero Saarinen, 1957–1962

On April 30, Preferred's CEO Michael O'Neill, told *Asbury Park Press* "I have walked through that building a dozen times. It is a crime that we can't figure out a way to reuse this building. There is just no way. It is just absolutely and utterly unusable." Only the building's free-standing water tower and lakes are likely to be salvaged.

O'Neill said the building's structural concrete walls and the hallways running along the outside of the building make it impossible to redevelop. He said, "It was built for a single purpose that no longer exists." Actually, the plan—with laboratories back-to-back, scientist's offices across the hall, and gathering spaces in larger corridors—was an innovation used both at Bell Labs and at the Thomas J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, NY. Watson, which is still being used, also has some reflective (though not fully mirrored) glass walls but otherwise bears no resemblance to Bell Labs. Like all of Saarinen's buildings, each was tailored to its specific site. Watson is invisible from the road and curves around a wooded hillside. Bell Labs was intended to "disappear" into the gently rolling open landscape, which is reflected in its 1,186-foot (originally only 700-foot) long façade. Its low-brightness reflective glass deflects 70 percent of the sun's heat while admitting 25 percent of its light. When the building opened, the manufacturer was not able to produce enough glass to cover the entire exterior, so it was used only on the rear. However the cladding system was so effective the company eventually replaced the rest of the glass with the new material and used it on subsequent additions. In addition Bell Labs had the first interior atrium in a corporate building (see back page).

At press time, DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State is participating in public meetings regarding the site and working to set up a meeting with the new owners to emphasize the significance of the building and its architects and to encourage the company to rethink and reuse corporate Modern rather than demolish.

—Jayne Merkel



A six-acre manmade lake and a 127-ft. tall water tower resembling a radar antenna are part of the Saarinen designed site.

ket last summer. On March 21, Lucent announced that its 1,052 Holmdel, NJ employees would begin moving to other offices in New Jersey this summer and that the building would be vacated by the end of August 2007.

Three days later, the *Asbury Park Press* reported that the property had been sold to Preferred Real Estate Investments Inc., a developer in Conshohocken, PA, that specializes in the conversion of obsolete corporate facilities. Preferred has a year to develop a plan before the sale will be final, but expects to close the deal soon.

At first there was hope that the building would be retrofitted. Holmdel Township officials and residents made it clear that they wanted to keep it on the tax rolls yet opposed residential or retail development on the property, which is in a sparsely settled area an hour south of New York City, near the Jersey shore. Bell Labs had selected the site almost 30 years earlier because it was free of the manmade static noise found in its more developed research locations, and housing was less expensive there.

PHOTOS: EZRA STOLLER © ESTO

ABOUT FACE: BUNSHAFT'S WILDE BUILDING WILL BE SAVED

After two years of deliberations, CIGNA HealthCare announced in May that it will renovate rather than demolish the Wilde Building, part of the original Connecticut General Life Insurance site. A classic example of the corporate campus in a suburban, park-like setting, the Wilde Building was designed in 1956 by Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill with interior design by Florence Knoll.

When the Connecticut General campus was threatened with demolition in 2001, Hartford architects Tyler Smith and Jared Edwards rallied to save the complex, bringing in Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State. The Yale School of Architecture held an exhibition and symposium, "Saving Corporate Modernism," where discussions began on to how to maintain the original office complex and key features of the campus while developing the 650-acre site in growing Bloomfield, CT. After numerous pleas and requests to save at least the Wilde Building, and the presentation of alternative plans by advocates for the building, CIGNA demolished the later Emhart, or North, Building in 2003 and built a golf course in what was the rolling landscape of the campus.

A sculpture grouping by Isamu Noguchi, who collaborated with Gordon Bunshaft on the building's four interior courtyards, was relocated on the site.

CIGNA heard pleas for preservation but also recognized the positive features of the Bunshaft designed building: large, open floor plates, courtyards, flexible infrastructure systems and employee amenities such as a bowling alley and a beautifully sited cafeteria. Updating the



EZRA STOLLER © ESTO

In 1957 the AIA named the Wilde Building "One of the 10 Buildings in America's Future." Later that year it bestowed a First Honor Award

Wilde Building has the potential to continue the model of light, flexible open offices—a model all the more relevant for a sustainable business today. As Tyler Smith commented, "Time confirmed the completeness of the composition of the buildings in their landscape and the quality of design and materials. Time also revealed the historic significance of this campus as a model workplace of the last half of the 20th century." —Nina Rappaport

ALBANY, CONTINUED

Quackenbush House (c. 1730). The day's events were the fruit of wide collaboration involving DOCOMOMO New York/Tri-State, The University at Albany/SUNY's Center for Humanities, Arts and Technosciences and its



Provost's Office and the Commission on the Restoration of the State Capitol. Special thanks go to the organizers in Albany, Karen Trivette Cannell and Mary Valentis, for pulling the pieces together so expertly.

On the elevated plaza of the Cultural Center building, Empire State Plaza

GORES PAVILION PLANS MOVING AHEAD IN NEW CANAAN

Friends of the Gores Pavilion, a local advocacy group spearheading efforts to see the Irwin Pool House (Landis Gores, 1960) restored as a cultural center in New Canaan's new Irwin Park, made very promising progress this spring. The group launched a fundraising campaign to cover costs of studying alternatives for the Pool House as well as securing pledges for restoration costs. Response to the campaign was strong and helped the project win initial approval from the town's Park and Recreation Commission.

The Commission held a public hearing on April 26. Bill Earls, a local architect and author of the forthcoming book *The Harvard Five in New Canaan*, presented preliminary renderings of how the Gores designed house could be restored and expanded for cultural activities and more important, serve as a permanent, public example of New Canaan's Modern movement. Janet Lindstrom, director of the New Canaan Historical Society, expressed the Society's support for the project and its willingness to play a role in the operations of the facility. Friends group members were present to help convince the Commission that many in the community would like to see Modern architecture acknowledged as part of New Canaan's cultural heritage. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the group's request to include the Gores Pavilion in the town plan for Irwin Park. This is a switch from last summer when the town was ready to begin demolition. The Commissioners also underscored the need for the Pavilion to represent the whole history of "the Moderns," not just the Harvard Five, and their desire for an educational component as well as space for small meetings.



Just a week earlier the Pool House was the subject of attention when three students from Arizona State University School of Architecture presented their studio project proposing reuse of the house as a cultural center. Titled "Of In-Tangible Heritage," the designs for restoring and expanding the current site started with the question of recovering intangible heritage—"the vacancy created by misinterpretation"—and preserving the "the ongoing exchange of ideas and customs specific to a place" that help define its intangible heritage. The student's final crit, held April 21 at the New Canaan Historical Society, attracted many attendees from the community and generated an insightful dialogue full of questions.

In June, the Park and Recreation Commission turned over the remaining original furniture from the pool house to the Historical Society so that it can be documented and refurbished. At the same time, the Summer Theatre of New Canaan began its production of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" with in Irwin Park, using the pavilion for administrative activities and costume changes—and cementing the hopes that the site could become a cultural locus within the park system. Those following the action in New Canaan believe that the Town Council has approved using the pavilion as a permanent home for a portion of the Historical Society's collection on the New Canaan Moderns. Tom Nissley and Douglas Marshall have been named co-chairs of Friends of the Gores Pavilion by the Historical Society and will manage relations between the town and the group as it moves forward on planning and phase two of the fundraising campaign.

—Kathleen Randall

To find out more or support the efforts visit: www.fotgpc.com

JOHNSON EXAMINED, CONTINUED

fact an expert on some construction issues—admittedly visible ones—such as masonry detailing. I have heard him advise fellow architects on mortar joints.

Other pragmatic issues of architectural design were also skipped over. More than one speaker made the obvious comparison between Johnson's Glass House and Mies's Farnsworth House, noting that Mies raised his several feet above the ground while Johnson placed his firmly on the earth—as if this were a matter of aesthetics. But whatever the aesthetic effect of Mies's hovering floor plane, Farnsworth had to be raised to deal with the site's periodic flooding. One speaker even showed Farnsworth prettily reflected in high water, without acknowledging this as a flood condition.

Almost nothing was said about Johnson's succession of professional partners, who shared credit for most of his buildings. One speaker showed a published full-spread photo of Johnson and his one-time partner John Burgee, without identifying Burgee. The fact is that these professional partners had a profound impact on Johnson's opportunities and what he produced. With early partner Richard Foster, Johnson did mainly institutional projects. With Burgee, his practice produced a prodigious number of office buildings—a new realm for him.

There was only slighting reference to developers such as Gerald Hines, who commissioned several of the office towers. Johnson was portrayed as a cultural force—which he surely was—but with hardly any reference to practical circumstances. A few thoughtful minutes were devoted to his long-time personal partner, the curator David Whitney, who apparently guided Johnson's extensive art collecting—and undoubtedly had a stabilizing effect on his inherent volatility.

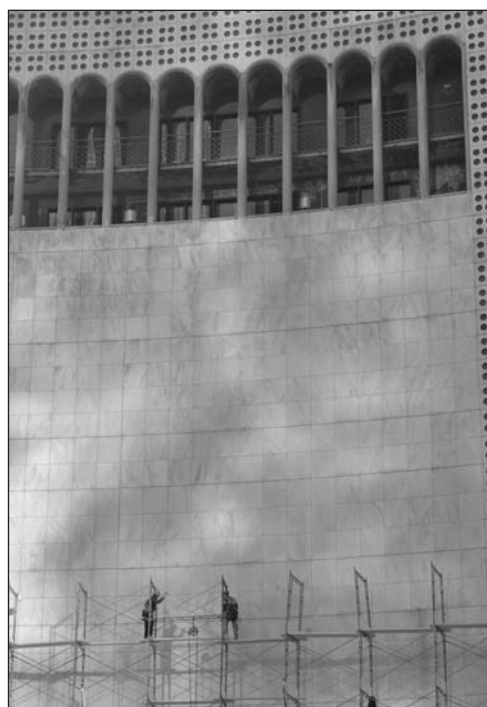
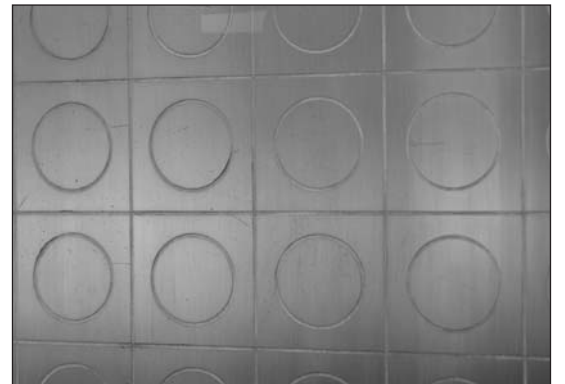
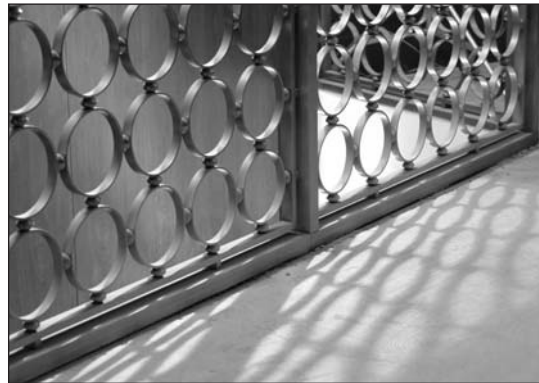
The overflow audience learned a lot, but some key aspects of Johnson's multiple lives remain mysterious, even when they are thoughtfully examined.

—John Morris Dixon

2 COLUMBUS CIRCLE: THE GOODBYE PHOTOS

Following complete lack of attention by the Landmarks Preservation Commission and a see-nothing, know-nothing, do-nothing stance by the City, and despite heroic efforts by numerous local preservation organizations, most notably Landmark West!, 2 Columbus Circle never had its day in "Landmarks court." Edward Durell Stone's 1964 Gallery of Modern Art was denied timely, contemporary debate on its cultural and architectural significance (a 1993 decision by a small group of Commission staff sealed its fate).

In December 2005 The Museum of Arts and Design began its transformation of the building by stripping the white Carrera marble from the façade. Shortly before the scaffolding went up DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State and the World Monuments Fund had a chance to make a final walk through. Our photographer Megan Wurth captured the final state of "2CC" with a large format digital camera. We present in "black and white" a sampling of what is lost.



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MOMO To Do List:

Crafting a Modern World: The Architecture and Design of Antonin and Noémi Raymond

*Meyerson Galleries of the University of Pennsylvania
Through September 24*

Of their 60-year careers in design, Antonin and Noémi Raymond spent 40 in Japan and 20 in the U.S. Through this dual grounding the Raymonds made connections with the traditions of Japan that widened the visual and non-visual possibilities of modern design. At the same time, the Raymonds played a reciprocal role in introducing Modern Western architecture to Japan.

Movement architecture. His work was strongly International Style in the late 1920s and early 1930s before moving toward a less austere expression by the mid-1930s.

Noémi Raymond was a contributor to these projects through her textile, rug and furniture designs. Together they searched for a quiet elegance—"an atmosphere of calm and serenity, life and joy"—in their architecture. When not in Japan, their life and work was based in the Delaware Valley where they collaborated with Japanese-American artist/craftsmen George Nakashima and Junzo Yoshimura. The Raymond Farm in New Hope, PA is their signature work in the U.S.

"Crafting a Modern World: The Architecture and Design of Antonin and Noémi Raymond" is the first retrospective of their work and includes over 200 items—from videos to furniture—drawn from archival collections in Japan, Europe and the U.S. The exhibition is organized by the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania in collaboration with the University Art Museum,

University of California, Santa Barbara. The curatorial team includes: William Whitaker, Kurt G.F. Helfrich, Ken Tadashi Oshima, Mari Sakamoto Nakahara and Christine Vendredi-Auzanneau.

An accompanying monograph offers a retrospective of the Raymonds' careers and includes a series of critical essays, a portfolio of works, writings by the Raymonds and a forward by Kenneth Frampton. It will be available from Princeton Architectural Press in August.



Shell Service Station, Yokohama, 1931.



Reader's Digest Building, Tokyo, with L.L. Rado, 1948-1951. The building combined American materials and technical innovations with traditional Japanese wood construction.

Born in Bohemia, now Czech Republic, Antonin Raymond emigrated to the U.S. after graduating from the technical university in Prague. He was particularly lured by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and after working for Cass Gilbert in New York, he entered Wright's studio at Taliesin in 1916. In 1919 he went with Wright to Tokyo to work on the Imperial Hotel. Opening his own practice in Tokyo a year later, he soon moved away from the influences of Wright, embracing the cubic forms of early Modern

The High Style of Dorothy Draper

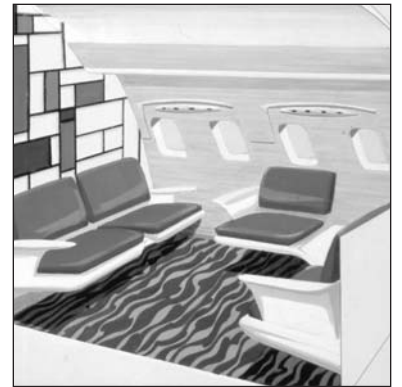
*Museum of the City of New York
Through September 10*

Although homemakers and hoteliers along with realtors and retailers billed Draper as "America's Most Fabulous Decorator," her interiors were not universally admired, particularly by Modernists. Frank Lloyd Wright called Draper an "inferior desecrator." In *New York 1960*, Robert A.M. Stern labels her "publicity obsessed" and "a master of spectacular overkill." When the Draper designed Roman Court at the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened in 1954, the *Washington Post* wrote, "The kindest thing that can be said is that it looks like a bad Joan Crawford movie." Draper (1889-1969) might well be viewed as the Martha Stewart of her day—as favorable or not—everyone had an opinion about her. In his book, *In the Pink*, Draper's successor and biographer Carlton Varney cites a 1960 study that found Draper more familiar to American housewives than modern designers Russel Wright, Paul McCobb and George Nelson.

Draper started her career in 1925 by creating "Architectural Clearing House," a firm that matched designers with her society friends. In 1929, she changed the firm's name to Dorothy Draper, Inc., launching a long and successful practice. She was sought after for her "merchandising viewpoint" to generate publicity—and profits—for her commercial clients: The Carlyle (1930), The Hampshire House (1937), The Drake Hotel, Chicago (1941), The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, WV (1948), the International Hotel at Idlewood Airport (1958), and many others. Draper's designs were not only for the rich and famous. Her publishing efforts included a monthly column for *Good Housekeeping* and a syndicated newspaper column, "Ask Dorothy Draper" that appeared in over 70 newspapers.

The MCNY's "The High Style of Dorothy Draper" show includes a tape of Edward R. Murrow's 1957 interview with Draper for the CBS program "Person to Person." Although taped at her apartment at The Carlyle before the advent of color TV, Draper's intrepid use of color is made fabulously clear. She tells Murrow, "Here in my drawing room, the walls are black but they are not really all black, they are almost purple-black. They are enlivened by the fact that the mantelpiece is dead white and the frame around the portrait is gold with a red curtain. That's the kind of thing that gives sparkle to a room, which is the goal. Then the four chairs in bright red scarlet; and the little chairs are covered in green; and the rest of the upholstered furniture is covered in sky blue and a white bear rug."

In addition to photographs and home furnishings illustrating Draper's trademark style, the show includes drawings of her strictly modern designs for the Convair 880 jet airplane interior (1956), shown above, and Idlewild Airport Hotel (1958). According to Varney, "In the 1950s...the look that made her famous had become passé, so she experimented with more streamlined design to great acclaim." For 35 years Dorothy Draper was a stylemaker. While not officially of the Modern crowd, she helped bring interior design into the popular view. At the end of her career she embraced a mix of Modern and high style and merchandising magic that placed her in the same camp as Morris Lapidus. "Never look back, except for an occasional glance," Draper said in 1959, "Look ahead and plan for the future."
—Leslie Monsky



Draper's philosophy in a nutshell: Serve your purpose, get the scale right, use the most lively color you can possibly invent, and then, add some very smart accessories that will make people talk. (paraphrased from 1957 Murrow interview)

NEWSLETTER: 2006/No.1

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John Arbuckle Leslie Monsky
John Morris Dixon Nina Rappaport
John Harwood Rich Ray
Hansel Hernandez Frank Sanchis
Jayne Merkel

Kathleen Randall, Editor/coordinator

Comments, articles and news items are welcome for future issues.
email: nytri@docomomo-us.org

Special Thanks:

To Knoll, Inc. for inviting us to its New York showroom for the Register training event and for providing the reception following the program.

Coming this fall:

IXTH DOCOMOMO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

DOCOMOMO Turkey will host the upcoming international conference "Other Modernisms," which will take place in Istanbul and Ankara September 25–October 1.

The choice of Ankara as the venue will provide the opportunity to discuss different and distant modernisms in a setting that is one of the rare and earliest attempts to plan and construct a "modern" city at the edge of Europe.

Preceding the conference September 18–25, will be a workshop combining theory and practice: Preserving a Housing Utopia, Case Study: Ataköy, Istanbul. Extensive tours of modern sites in Istanbul will also precede the conference, and tours of Ankara sites will follow September 30 & October 1.

www.docomomo.org.tr



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(go to the New York/Tri-State Chapter page)

Join now.

Again, too much news and no room for a membership form. Please don't let this discourage you from joining or renewing your membership. DOCOMOMO is an all-volunteer organization with a small, dedicated base of members. DOCOMOMO needs the resources to do more and do it more effectively—and that means more paying members.

A membership form is available in PDF format on the DOCOMOMO US web site:

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documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the modern movement
New York/Tri-State Chapter, P.O. Box 250532, New York, NY 10025

New York/Tri-State Newsletter ■ Summer 2006



"...absolutely and utterly unusable." Really?

Bell Laboratories, Eero Saarinen, 1962, p.8