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## NEW YORK | TRI-STATE

2012 no. 1

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## ENGINEERING FORM: NERVI IN NEW YORK

Located in the Washington Heights neighborhood of upper Manhattan, the George Washington Bridge Bus Station is an architectural and structural gem designed and engineered by Pier Luigi Nervi (1891–1979) the celebrated Italian engineer-architect. Commissioned in 1960 and opened in 1963, the GWB Bus Station is recognized for intricately crafted reinforced concrete forms, a signature detail by the great master builder.

As one of Nervi's earliest projects in the United States (a distinction shared with the concurrent Field House project at Dartmouth University completed in 1962), the bus station was designed in collaboration with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's chief engineer John M. Kyle. It was part of a larger Port Authority project to improve and overhaul the George Washington Bridge. The ambitious project included the addition of a lower deck to the bridge and construction of a new transportation hub directly accessible from the bridge. Located just east of the bridge, the station straddles the Trans-Manhattan Expressway, and connects underground to the MTA's A/C subway line, providing a convenient transfer point.

The station is designed on three levels, with ticketing and services in the middle. It is at the uppermost floor that the commuter understands and embraces Nervi's vision. Here, sheltering queues of busses and riders, the architect's triangular trusses of exposed concrete are punctuated by large angular openings that frame views of the bridge's stunning steel towers and suspension system and the neighboring buildings of Washington Heights. The massive roof peaks are supported on a central row of sculptural concrete pillars designed to maximize clearance for easy vehicle and pedestrian movement. Fixed louvers cast into the trusses provide exhaust ventilation and help draw fresh air into the station. Geometrical forms appear limitless; the complex yet austere butterfly roof embodies a wingspan of 14 monumental wedge-like peaks, seven each at the north and south sides. Recognized at its completion with an award from the Concrete Industry Board, the station was celebrated not just for its expressionist forms, but for its beautifully

engineered design. Ada Louise Huxtable noted that, "For Nervi, engineering goes beyond structure to a kind of architectural morality." (*New York Times*, 1962)

Over the past summer the Port Authority unveiled plans for a \$183.2 million redevelopment and renovation project for the station, reviving a similar, but shelved proposal from 2008. This time the Port Authority has joined forces with Maryland-based George



K. RANDALL

**In Nervi's structural art, there are no superfluous moves.**

Ada Louise Huxtable, *Wall Street Journal*, June 2004

Washington Bridge Development Venture LLC, as developer, and with the previously commissioned architecture and engineering firm, STV. Scheduled for completion in 2013—the 50th anniversary of the station's opening—the project proposes quadrupling the retail space from the existing 30,000 square feet to 120,000 square feet. Retail leasing and management will be handled by SJM

*continued page 3*

# Welcome

The thinking in some circles is “ink on paper, how quaint.” We have a website but still think it’s important to keep this newsletter going. The format has gradually changed to emphasize articles that broaden our understanding of Modern architecture—both buildings and sites we know well and those we should know more about.

You won’t find information about upcoming events here. We’ve delegated that to the website where publishing schedules or the lack thereof don’t mess with timeliness.

Our truly proactive communication comes in the form of a monthly email newsletter that provides a roundup of events that anyone interested in Modern architecture might like. Know of events we should be sharing with others? Send them to [news@docomomo-nytri.org](mailto:news@docomomo-nytri.org) so we can include them in the “blast.” We also use the email news to keep you updated on advocacy. As much as we wish these building-at-risk issues never happen, they do.

If you’re reading this it suggests you recognize the importance of understanding and preserving Modern architecture. You are a current member of DOCOMOMO NY/Tri-State (thank you!) or at some point in time, maybe even long ago (like 1999) you were added to our mailing list. We haven’t yet had the impulse to take anyone off the list. If you’re in the second group please consider joining the first.

We hope you find this newsletter a nice mix of the useful and the unusual, however quaint it may be.  
—Kathleen Randall, editor

**do**ocumentation  
**co**nversation  
**mo**dern  
**mo**vement

## THOUGHTS ON KEVIN ROCHE AND MODERNISM

In remarks preceding a conversation with Kevin Roche at the Ford Foundation in October, Nicolai Ouroussoff commented that architecture students today are showing renewed interest in Roche because of the “heroic” character of his work—presumably referring to the dramatic, sometimes even audacious, forms of his buildings.

In a culture of “starchitects” who dominate the media with signature buildings that often appear to bear little relation to the functions within, Ouroussoff’s remark struck me as the wrong note. What seems to me most relevant about Kevin Roche in today’s architectural culture is the



*Union Carbide World Headquarters, Danbury, CT, 1982.*



*Federal Reserve Bank of NY, lower Manhattan, 1969, unbuilt.*

IMAGES COURTESY KRJDA, CAMDEN, CT

absence of formalism in his work. He is not committed to a particular formal vocabulary. In a sense, he is a throwback to early Modern movement architects, who advocated freedom from predefined forms—withstanding Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock’s subsequent efforts to canonize a limited formal vocabulary as the International Style.

Rather than formalism, Roche’s primary concerns, also shared with the early Modernists, have been functionalism and humanism. Roche’s building designs have consistently been derived from a thorough and logical analysis of the client’s program requirements, the nature of the site, legal and budgetary constraints and other dictates. The resultant designs are pragmatic resolutions of these factors, often expressed in a startlingly direct manner, as in the parking garage bridging over the arena at the New Haven Coliseum, the Federal Reserve Bank tower perched on 150-foot columns, or the multiplying strands of office modules agglomerated around a parking garage at Union Carbide headquarters, where the building, surrounded by forest, has no visible façade.

Yet Roche understands function in a broader, more holistic sense, which includes a building’s relation to its surrounding environment and its impact on the people who inhabit it. Roche’s designs for suburban office buildings that minimize or eliminate surface parking lots and put occupants in close proximity to the surrounding natural environment exemplify those concerns, as do projects like his Central Park Zoo renovation, Jewish Museum addition and 60 Wall Street skyscraper, all of which incorporate forms that enable them to fit into their surrounding contexts more comfortably. And Roche’s constant concern for the well being of a building’s occupants is clearly evident in office buildings like the Ford Foundation, John Deere annex and Union Carbide headquarters.

Throughout the diversity of formal expression in his substantial body of work—a diversity that recalls, and was perhaps inspired by, his mentor Eero Saarinen—Roche has consistently maintained a Modernist attitude toward process (functionalism/pragmatism) and principle (social concern/humanism). He is a reminder of a time when Modern architecture was concerned with service to society and form was a means to that end.

—Kyle Johnson

### Kevin Roche: Architecture as Environment September 27, 2011–February 5, 2012

The exhibition “Kevin Roche: Architecture as Environment,” which originated at the Yale School of Architecture, was adapted and locally tailored for its recent presentation at the Museum of the City of New York by the museum’s chief curator Sarah Henry and guest curator Kyle Johnson.



*Kevin Roche: Architecture as Environment* (Yale University Press, 2011) serves as both a catalog for this now traveling exhibition and as the most current monograph of the work of Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates. The primary text by Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, curator of the original Yale exhibition, provides an excellent summary of Roche’s career and architectural thinking. Notably, Pelkonen does not shy from discussing the Postmodern phase of the architect’s oeuvre. Three supplementary essays focus on particular thematic aspects of Roche’s work: museums (particularly the Oakland Museum and Metropolitan Museum of Art), workplaces, and greenhouses and gardens.

The book is copiously illustrated, and includes a lengthy catalog of the firm’s projects, bringing up to date records presented in Francesco Dal Co’s 1985 monograph and the special issue of *A + U* devoted to Roche in 1987.

After reading this book and viewing the exhibition, it is hard not to see Kevin Roche as one of the most significant yet undersung architects of the late 20th century.

**The exhibition opens at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC June 16 and runs through December 2.**

## NERVI CONTINUED

Partners and Slayton Equities under a 99-year lease from the Port Authority. Now vacant commercial spaces that once housed among other things a barber, a credit union and newsstands, will be filled with everything from a Marshalls to a fitness club, some of which will be built on the existing parking lot.

In addition, a refurbished waiting area and 21 new bus gates will replace the existing 17. Renderings on the STV website show a “modernized” facelift of the nearly 50-year-old building at street level, including the ribbon of blue panels along Broadway. Plans are being developed as spaces are leased and the final design has not been approved by the Port Authority.



COURTESY PORT AUTHORITY OF NY/NJ

*The station's roof comprises 26 poured-in-place concrete triangular sections, 14 sloping upward from a row of sculptural pillars in the center of the structure and 12 placed horizontally between the peaks. Each triangular 92-by-66-foot roof section is made of 25 concrete elements. The sides of the raised roof sections and the perimeter walls of the loading platform below are exposed concrete structural members that echo the steel cross-bracing of the bridge towers.*

Both the STV and Port Authority websites note that bus operations will be consolidated at the uppermost historic rooftop truss levels, suggesting that the most significant portions of Nervi's design will be retained. Keeping the concrete appears to be a goal that all parties involved endorse.

On February 1, Community Board 12's Land Use Committee held a meeting at which the developer presented the project and addressed questions from the community. Nina Rappaport represented DOCOMOMO New York/Tri-State at the meeting, adding comments that spoke to the station's significance and the need for project review. The full community board is working on a resolution in conjunction with its committees and may vote in late February. There is general support within the community for a project that brings new life to this long neglected complex. While a good scrubbing and overall upgrading will reinvigorate this Modern landmark (albeit not “Landmarked”) DOCOMOMO NY/Tri-State will continue to advocate for preserving Nervi's dynamic structural form and his design intentions.

—Michelle Taylor

## dear friends,

2011 was an active year for DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State filled with programs, tours and advocacy work. Our mission to keep Modern architecture—the innovative, architecture of the twentieth century—a visible and vital part of our region is timely. Modern buildings are symbols of progress, the avant-garde and innovative design; they continue to inspire us both for their social and creative mission. However, many buildings' futures remain uncertain, and the demise of our Modern landscape erases history.

Public education is a priority and this past year we launched our Modern Conversations Series at Knoll with four programs—five are planned for the coming year. We organized several architectural tours and gallery visits, participated in Open House NY for the third year, worked to bring awareness to significance buildings under threat in our region including Manufacturers Trust/510 Fifth Avenue, Bell Laboratories, Terminal 6 at JFK, Orange County Government Center and others. With the help of interns we continued the New Jersey and Connecticut surveys.

In the digital world we have established our website as a platform for information, participation and advocacy on issues of Modern architecture. There you can see the chapter's projects, learn the history of some Modern buildings in our region, and keep up with activities related to Modern architecture through our events calendar.

**YOU REALLY SHOULD SIGN UP FOR OUR MONTHLY EMAIL NEWS IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY.**

DOCOMOMO US NY/Tri-State relies on the generous contributions of our members and friends. As an all-volunteer organization learning the capacity limitations of that model, we need your support to fund special projects—and the project-specific, part-time assistants to make these new projects happen. Your tax-deductible contribution will make possible our ongoing programs and the new projects we are anxious to launch.

**OUR WORK GOES ON, ALL YEAR LONG  
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR.**

**GIVE FOR 2012**

2012 brings increased advocacy work with local agencies, surveys, new online features, as well as our popular tours and events in exciting, often exclusive Modern places and spaces. We appreciate your considering our organization for your support and hope you will join us in our efforts to keep Modern architecture in everyone's view.

Yours Sincerely,



Nina Rappaport  
Chairperson, DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State

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EZRA STOLLER @ESTO

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■ **John Kriskiewicz** is an architectural historian, assistant professor and chronicler of the under-appreciated mid-century modern vernacular of NYC. ■ **Leslie Monsky** enjoys viewing and writing about Modern art and architecture. When not visiting museums or serving as a DOCOMOMO board member, Leslie writes for *decorativethings.com*, her online store. ■ **Marlana Moore** interns for DOCOMOMO NY/Tri State, working with Dr. Bzdak on New Jersey modernism. She is an undergraduate art history major at Rutgers University.

■ **Kathleen Randall**, an architectural historian by training, has been working on these newsletters since 1999.

■ **Nina Rappaport** is an architectural historian, critic, curator and educator. She is the publications director at Yale School of Architecture, and author of *Support and Resist, Structural Engineers and Design Innovation*. ■ **Michelle Taylor** is in the Historic Preservation program at Columbia University. Previously a practicing architectural historian in San Francisco, she is writing her thesis on Nervi's GWB Bus Station.

■ **Ryan Witte** has been writing on the subjects of architectural and design history and theory for over a decade. He is currently a resident expert on art, architecture and acoustics at Lincoln Center.

## ROOSEVELT ISLAND: MODERN MODEL COMMUNITY

Roosevelt Island was the site of New York/Tri-State's October 9th observance of DOCOMOMO US Tour Day. Previously known as Welfare Island, this city-owned sliver of land in New York's East River has always been a geographic oddity—about two miles long and 800 feet at its widest point. Since the early 1800s it had been the site of institutions the city wanted to isolate: workhouses, prisons, insane asylums, and hospitals for the chronically ill.

As the razing of city neighborhoods for the urban renewal of the 1950s and 1960s encountered increasing resistance, the island offered an appealing development location, occupied largely by abandoned and obsolescent facilities. In 1969, smartly renamed Roosevelt Island, it was identified as the location for an unprecedented “new town in town,” the most ambitious effort of the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC).

A master plan by the firm of Philip Johnson and John Burgee proposed a community of 5,000 dwelling units, plus office space, a hotel, a retail arcade, and a variety of recreational facilities. All were placed along a central Main Street, laid out with bends to avoid an endless vista. (Incidentally, Roosevelt Island is the only place you can have a Main Street address and a Manhattan zip code.) The first phase of construction, from 1971 to 1976, yielded some 2,100 residential units, housing about 5,000 people, with supporting retail, athletic, day care, and public school facilities. In 1975, UDC's financial difficulties and restrictions on its mission prevented further development. It was over a decade before construction resumed, with sharp departures from the original plan.

The mid-1970s development embodied several forward-looking concepts. The entire community was—and is—handicapped accessible. And it was to be car-free, except for necessary deliveries. Residents' cars were to be deposited in a prominent concrete-framed garage designed by Kallman & McKinnell (1974), at the end of its sole vehicular bridge, which connects to Queens. Internal circulation was provided by free electric buses that still operate, but with a 25-cent fare. (Private cars are now allowed, but traffic isn't heavy.) Another unprecedented feature is the pneumatic trash collection system, which delivers refuse to a central collection station with no need for garbage trucks.

Access to Manhattan was provided by an aerial tramway opened in 1976, the first one to become part of an urban transportation system. Significantly upgraded in a 2010 restoration, the tram offers an exciting three-minute link to a station at Second Avenue and East 59th Street—all for the price of a subway fare. Period ads for island housing offered “the peace and quiet of island living, only 10 minutes from Bloomingdales.” Stations at both ends were designed by Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen,



Island-side tram station, Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen, 1976. The entire tram system was recently renovated.

who also designed the island's sports complex.

The state's Mitchell-Lama housing programs required a mix of incomes, so the island's residents were—and still are—quite diverse racially and economically. Unlike standard mixed-income strategies today, each complex was designed for a specific economic group and the buildings remain economically segregated. The island's public school was originally dispersed in purpose-

designed spaces at the bases of residential buildings, but has since been consolidated in one school building (Michael Fieldman & Partners, 1992).

In its urban form, the original residential development follows the pattern established by Johnson Burgee, a kind of hybrid between Early Modern tower-in-the-park principles and 1960s emphasis on active streets and defined open spaces. The residential buildings hug Main Street, rising to over 20 stories along this spine and stepping down toward the waterfront on either side, the lower portions forming wings that embrace landscaped courts, which include many pre-development trees.

The two residential structures designed by Sert Jackson & Associates—Westview (1975) and Roosevelt Landings/Eastwood (1976)—total 1,403 units and include retail arcades along Main Street and a skip-stop internal arrangement, with corridors every third floor serving walk-up and walk-down units that extend through the



“Motorgate,” the parking garage at the terminus of the bridge connecting the island with Queens, Kallman & McKinnell, 1974.

building to yield two exposures. The two complexes by Johansen & Bhavnani—Rivercross and Island House (1975, with a total of 775 units)—have mostly flats, with some duplexes, and have terraced courtyards featuring Johansen signature elements such as gangplank-like ramps and brightly painted ventilation funnels. All four structures included an indoor swimming pool, but only the one in Rivercross, the market-rate coop, is still in use.

A central plaza flanking Main Street, designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin with Johansen & Bhavnani, surrounds the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, a Gothic Revival landmark built in 1889 to serve inmates of the island's institutions. It was restored for use as a community meeting place in 1975 by architect Giorgio Cavaglieri, noted for his pioneering adaptive reuse projects. He also restored the Blackwell House (1796-1804), originally a farmhouse, for community use (now closed, awaiting a second restoration.)

Further development of the island community resumed only after the opening of its subway station in 1989. The first new buildings to be completed, in 1990, were the five apartment structures of Manhattan Park, designed by Gruzen Samton, set around a traditional urban square similar to those in the contemporaneous Battery Park City. This complex and more recent construction north and south of the original core have increased the island's population to about 12,000, making possible a greater range of shops and services for its residents.

Louis Kahn's 1974 proposal for a memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt is only now being constructed at the south tip of the island. In December, the New York City EDC announced that the extensive site of the island's still-operating Goldwater Memorial Hospital will become home to an applied sciences campus operated by the Cornell University-Technion-Israel Institute of Technology Consortium, scheduled to open by 2017.

Tour participants were briefed by four people closely involved with the island's development. Theodore Liebman, who was UDC's Chief of Architecture during the initial construction period reported firsthand on the community's development, pointing out that in the years 1968 to 1975 UDC completed a total of 33,000 housing units statewide, most by noted architects of the time. Lo-Yi Chan, architect of the tram stations and sports



K. RANDALL

*Roosevelt Landings (originally Eastwood), Sert Jackson & Associates, 1975*



RYAN WITTE

*View along Main Street. The master plan was done by Johnson Burgee in the early 1970s.*



K. RANDALL

*Courtyard, Rivercross coop, Johansen & Bhavnani, 1975.*

complex, offered insights on his work. At the Rivercross cooperative the group visited interior public spaces, the 19th floor landing and skybridge and the courtyard. Ashok Bhavnani shared recollections about the design and construction of his building and discussed its significant design features. Marianne Russem, a Rivercross coop board member, reviewed the experience of living there for decades, particularly the close ties to Manhattan, where she and her husband worked and their kids went to school. She also discussed design issues such as those involved in replacing over 1,000 windows and developing a garden on the concrete terrace over the pool.

At a time when the creation of diverse, affordable communities is the subject of increasing attention, Roosevelt Island—despite the effects of policy shifts and interrupted construction—demonstrates many enduring virtues of Modern architecture.

—John Morris Dixon

### Missed the Tour?

Stay tuned for future Docomomo Roosevelt Island tour opportunities when the FDR memorial park opens next year. Or just hop the tram and make your own walking tour of the "new town in town." Maps are available at the visitor center near the tram station (Thursday-Sunday, noon-5:00pm).

For color images and commentary on Roosevelt Island by tour participant Ryan Witte, see his blog post of 12/2 "Island in the Stream" at <http://rwarchitextures.blogspot.com>

# CELEBRATED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## THE MOST REFERENCED WORKS OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE ON NEW YORK/TRI-STATE TURF

Which of our region's examples of Modern Architecture have rated the most attention in reference sources of national or international scope? Among writers surveying American Modernism as a whole, is the TWA Terminal deemed more or less important than the Guggenheim? How are the buildings at the center of recent local preservation struggles ranked by those summarizing national design accomplishments? Are there works frequently included in these references that are insufficiently appreciated in their own region?

Before you look, a few ground rules .....

### A SURVEY BY JOHN MORRIS DIXON

- I consulted 12 reference sources (see Sources list) that show reliable judgment—all of them on my bookshelves—plus the Great Buildings Collection online database.
- Works counted are those that are illustrated or, in a few cases, not illustrated but the subjects of clearly labeled blocks of text. The number preceding each work is the number of such mentions.
- All reference sources had to be published no earlier than 1979 (except for one in 1976), for statistical fairness.
- All works had to be completed by 1979, for adequate historical perspective.
- Finally, all works must be Modern, as DOCOMOMO generally construes it. Oft-cited landmarks ruled out were the Empire State and the Chrysler Buildings, which may in any case be mentioned mainly for their visibility, rather than their design qualities. I've included separate counts on Rockefeller Center and other works of architectural distinction with no overt historical references, on the cusp of Modernism.
- Locally designated landmarks are shown in boldface type.

### THE TOP TEN – BUILDINGS MOST OFTEN INCLUDED IN THE REFERENCE SOURCES

13	<b>Seagram Building</b>	1958	Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson	
12	<b>Guggenheim Museum</b>	1944–1959	Frank Lloyd Wright	
11	<b>Lever House</b>	1952	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill	
10	<b>TWA Terminal</b> (JFK Intl Airport)	1958–1962	Eero Saarinen & Associates	
9	Glass House	1949	Philip Johnson	New Canaan, CT
9	United Nations Headquarters	1950–1953	Harrison, Le Corbusier, Niemeyer and others	
8	Yale University Art Gallery	1952	Louis I. Kahn	New Haven, CT
8	Yale School of Art and Architecture	1958–1964	Paul Rudolph	New Haven, CT
7	<b>Ford Foundation</b>	1967	Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates	
7	Ingalls Hockey Rink (Yale University)	1958	Eero Saarinen & Associates	New Haven, CT

Note the remarkable standing of the Yale campus buildings vs. rival institutions in the region.

### THE LIST CONTINUES – BUILDINGS IN SIX OR FEWER OF THE BOOKS

6	Museum of Modern Art	1939	Edward Durell Stone and Philip Goodwin	
	+ 2 for sculpture garden	1953 & 1964	Philip Johnson	
6	Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts	1962–1968	various architects	
	+ 1 for Beaumont Theater	1965	Eero Saarinen & Associates	
	+ 1 for New York State Theater	1965	Philip Johnson	
6	First Unitarian Church	1962	Louis I. Kahn	Rochester, NY
6	<b>Whitney Museum</b> (in historic district)	1966	Marcel Breuer and Hamilton Smith	
6	Larkin Building <small>Demolished</small>	1904	Frank Lloyd Wright	Buffalo, NY
6	World Trade Center <small>Lost</small>	1972–1976	Minoru Yamasaki & Assoc. and Emery Roth & Sons	
6	<b>Manufacturers Trust</b> /510 Fifth Ave	1954	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill	
5	Trenton Bath House	1955	Louis I. Kahn	Ewing, NJ
3	Orange County Government Center	1968–1970	Paul Rudolph	Goshen, NY
1	Gallery of Modern Art/2 Columbus Circle	1964–1965	Edward Durell Stone	
1	Bell Telephone Laboratories	1966	Eero Saarinen & Associates	Holmdel, NJ
1	<b>University Village</b> (aka Silver Towers)	1966	I.M. Pei & Partners	

Counting gets tricky for MoMA and Lincoln Center. Make your own call.

Buildings that have been the subject of recent or current preservation efforts ranged from single mentions to six.

5	Knights of Columbus Headquarters	1970	Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Assoc.	New Haven, CT
5	Citicorp Center	1971–1978	Hugh Stubbins & Associates	
4	<b>Chase Manhattan Building</b>	1960	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill	
4	<b>CBS Building</b>	1965	Eero Saarinen & Associates	
3	<b>Martin House</b>	1904	Frank Lloyd Wright	Buffalo, NY
3	First Presbyterian ("Fish") Church	1958	Wallace K. Harrison	Stamford, CT
3	Pan Am Building (now MetLife)	1960–1963	The Architects Collaborative with Pietro Belluschi and Emery Roth & Sons	
3	Stiles and Morse Colleges (Yale Univ)	1962	Eero Saarinen & Associates	New Haven, CT
3	Everson Museum of Art	1968	I.M. Pei & Partners	Syracuse, NY
3	Weinstein House	1969–1971	Richard Meier	Old Westbury, NY
3	Yale Center for British Art	1969–1974	Louis I. Kahn	New Haven, CT
3	One United Nations Plaza	1969–1976	Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Assoc.	
3	Veterans Memorial Coliseum <small>Demolished</small>	1972	Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Assoc.	New Haven, CT
2	Breuer House II	1947–1948	Marcel Breuer	New Canaan, CT
2	Usonia development	1947-1950	Frank Lloyd Wright and others	Pleasantville, NY
2	Kneses Tifereth Israel Synagogue	1956	Philip Johnson	Port Chester, NY
2	Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute	1960	Philip Johnson	Utica, NY
2	Albright Knox Art Gallery Addition	1962	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill	Buffalo, NY
2	Empire State Plaza	1962–1976	Harrison & Abramovitz	Albany, NY
2	Unitarian Meeting House	1964	Victor A. Lundy	Hartford, CT
2	Robert Gwathmey house and studio	1965–1967	Gwathmey and Henderson	Amagansett, NY
2	Smith House	1965–1967	Richard Meier	Darien, CT
2	Paley Park	1967	Zion & Breen Associates	
2	Marine Midland Building/140 Broadway	1968	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill	
2	<b>Metropolitan Museum of Art</b> additions	1970–	Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Assoc.	
2	World of Birds Building (Bronx Zoo)	1972	Morris Ketchum Jr. & Associates	
2	Johnson Museum of Art (Cornell Univ.)	1973	I.M. Pei & Partners	Ithaca, NY

12	<b>Rockefeller Center</b>	1931–1940	Hood & Fouilhoux; Reinhardt & Hofmeister; Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray	
5	<b>McGraw-Hill Building</b>	1930–1931	Raymond Hood, Godley & Fouilhoux	.....
4	<b>Prudential (Guaranty) Building</b>	1895	Louis H. Sullivan & Dankmar Adler	Buffalo, NY

These three works of not-quite-Modern architecture ranked high with the source book authors.

**All told, some 63 works got only one mention—too many to list here. Even some of those listed above are relatively unknown today among aficionados of Modernism. And there are many other worthy projects that none of these sources recognized at all—scattered over three states and even in New York and other cities, where local landmarks protection exists. Recording and protecting deserving examples is a daunting mission.**

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*American Buildings and Their Architects: The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, William Jordy, 1976

*Twentieth-Century American Architecture: The Buildings and Their Makers*. Carter Wiseman, 1998 and 2000.

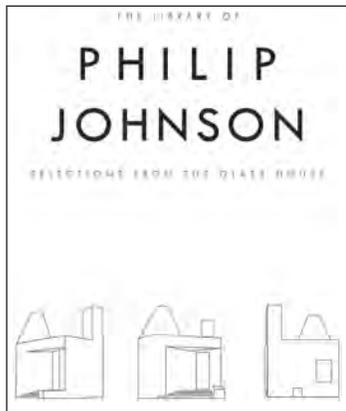
*American Architecture, 1607–1976*, Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, 1981

*Pride of Place: Building the American Dream*, Robert A.M. Stern, 1986

*20th Century American Architecture: A Traveler's Guide to 220 Key Buildings*, Sydney LeBlanc, 1996

*A Field Guide to Landmarks of Modern Architecture in the United States*, Miriam F. Stimpson, 1985

# The Modern Library



## The Library of Philip Johnson: Selections from the Glass House

Birch Cooper and Jordan Hruska  
forward by Robert A.M. Stern  
Birch Books, 2011  
310 pages, 400+ color and b/w illus.  
\$45 softcover

If the range of structures that comprise the Glass House campus chronicle the evolution of Philip Johnson as an architect and theorist, his library reveals Johnson's shifting role as historian, protégé, mentor and provocateur. In 1980 Johnson built the Postmodern study to house his library. A sloping grassy meadow separates it from his Glass House of 1949. I had the privilege of visiting the study in the 1990s when it was still his working library. *The Library of Philip Johnson: Selections from the Glass House* recalled the experience of standing over the work on Johnson's meticulously arranged desk, illuminated by the conical skylight overhead, contemplating the books thoughtfully chosen and clearly being used. The first full-page photograph in this handsomely conceived volume is from the vantage point where I stood years ago.

You may experience this same intimacy as you read Robert A.M. Stern's personal recollections of the origins and evolution of the collection. This volume allows you to explore a selection of 100 books—a subset of Johnson's highly curated collection—divided into eight thematic chapters: Classical to Early

Twentieth-Century Architecture; Sites and Monuments of Interest; Landscape Architecture; Architecture in Suburban and Rural Environments; Exploring Urban Planning; Modern Architecture and Design; Follies, Pavilions, Eccentric Architecture and Interiors; and Postmodern Architecture. Each concise and insightful synopsis is illustrated by a color photograph of the cover and thoughtfully selected photographs of the book opened to reveal text, photographs, illustrations, plans and sometimes signs of age and even 'Post-it' notes. Almost as if you had pulled the book off the shelf and opened it on that desk, this volume creates a real sense of being in Johnson's study.

The Library of Philip Johnson is the inaugural anthology of what will be a series from Birch Books Conservation, a non-profit created to preserve libraries collected by seminal authors, architects, artists and other public figures. The project was launched by Birch Cooper to bring attention to the need for book conservation at institutions whose primary responsibility is preserving a site's architecture and landscape—not its printed matter. Sales of the book will benefit the conservation of Johnson's books and the preservation of the study.

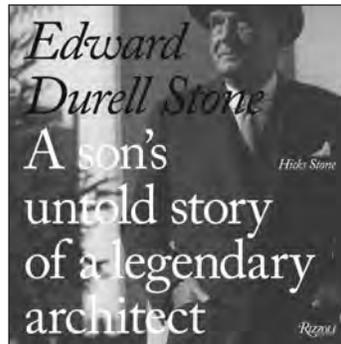
What does this "Hot One Hundred" reveal about the owner? From the variety of titles, it clearly shows a curious, restless mind. The publication dates range from 1866 through 1999, yet I was struck by the democratic nature of the collection. Few are rare first editions; many are in print and available to a wide audience.

Can this book list reveal something about us? How many would we choose? How many have we read? How many do we own unread? Is this purely an intellectual curiosity... or is there something of the voyeur in perusing the libraries of the famous?

I suggest that you just sit back and enjoy this well organized and handsomely designed book. Overlook the tiny photo captions printed in grey ink. The compilation

not only allows us access to a selection of noteworthy books from Philip Johnson's library, but perhaps an intriguing entry into the interior world of one of the 20th-century's more influential and controversial architects.

—John Kriskiewicz



## Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story of a Legendary Architect

Hicks Stone  
Rizzoli, October 2011  
304 pages, 250 color and b/w illus.  
\$85 hardcover

One of the most controversial buildings in New York City's recent history and one of the most famous in the nation's capital sprang from the mind of one man. They were Huntington Hartford's Gallery of Modern Art at 2 Columbus Circle (1964) and Kennedy Center (1971). The architect, of course, was Edward Durell Stone. *Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story of a Legendary Architect*, written by Stone's youngest son, Hicks Stone, tells the stories behind these and many other important projects of his father's fifty-year career.

The majority of the book is given over to text. The reader becomes familiarized with the personality of Edward Durell Stone and with those of family members, close friends, colleagues and critics—advocates and adversaries alike. Much of the narrative is (not unexpectedly) quite personal in tone. Valuably intimate anecdotes abound. Stone's problematic working relationship with Radio

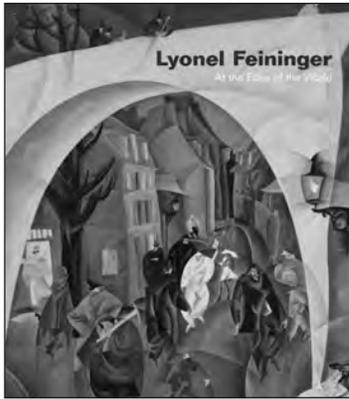
City Music Hall interior designer Donald Deskey is described in some detail. A rather bawdy poem written by Buckminster Fuller about Stone's drinking and womanizing was unearthed as well. Unusual for a Rizzoli title, drawings and floor plans are somewhat reduced in size, many not suitable for architectural analysis. The photographs are often similarly sized. However, culled from archival collections, they present a fascinating period perspective on the work that contemporary photography could not.

The biography provides a close look at Stone's stylistic sources, particularly their lineage and evolution; charting sources chronologically as they first appeared in projects and moved from one to the next. Discussion of works that inspired Stone augments close attention to the details of his own various projects. Elements of structures he encountered as a young man learning his trade and the work of his friend, Frank Lloyd Wright, for instance, continued to resurface and are noted honestly and with referential precision.

Despite the visibility of Stone's projects around the globe this is the first book about the life of the architect aside from his two autobiographies. Perhaps no architect of the past century has enjoyed as much acclaim and suffered equally as much derision as Ed Stone. Even the opinionated critic Ada Louise Huxtable and the outspoken Philip Johnson seemed to have been conflicted in their feelings toward Stone's work. The author does not gloss over these or other controversial aspects of his father's career, rather he cites them as a principal impetus for the book's publication. *Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story of a Legendary Architect* is an apt title. The man was as legendary as he was notorious. A book that describes his undeniable contribution to 20th-century architecture is long overdue.

—Ryan Witte

# LYONEL FEININGER: BAUHAUS MEETS MASTER PAINTER, PHOTOGRAPHER, COMPOSER



## Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World

Barbara Haskell, editor  
Yale University Press  
June 2011  
288 pages; \$65 hardcover

Exhibition June–October 2011  
Whitney Museum of American Art

An enlightening set of activities centered around the Modernist painter Lyonel Feininger took place in New York this fall. What makes Feininger most relevant to Modern architecture fans are his virtually unknown photographs of buildings at the Bauhaus in Dessau. Feininger was born in New York in 1871 to German parents who sent him to Germany to study at age sixteen. After his studies, Feininger stayed abroad and became a successful artist and one of the leading practitioners of German Expressionism. In 1919, he was the first person Walter Gropius hired to teach at the Bauhaus. Feininger was embedded at the Bauhaus for most of its duration and because he had a camera he was able to document the architecture of the Bauhaus with a lens as well as a paint brush. He returned to New York at the onset of World War II and enjoyed an equally successful career in the U.S. until his death in 1956.

Because Feininger is known primarily as a painter, his photography is not widely studied. However, he left behind a significant body of photographs, a small selection of which was included in the Whitney Museum's fall show, "Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World."

Curator Barbara Haskell's selection of Feininger's photographs of Bauhaus buildings put his paintings of fantasy colored street scenes—pink buildings, green bridges, blue and purple people—into context and made the show a Modern architecture lover's delight.

Early in his career Feininger distained photography. However, encouraged by his sons—two of whom became well known professional photographers—and the Bauhaus predilection for integrating art forms, he became an avid photographer. We know that Feininger had a camera by 1903, making him a relatively early adopter of modern photography. The architectural photographs in the Whitney show were taken in the late 1920s. According to Haskell's catalog essay, "Feininger's interest in photography resurged in 1928 at the Bauhaus in Dessau, when he created a series of works marked by a modernist ambition and formal prowess that rivals any other Bauhaus photography of the period."

Walter Gropius clearly valued Feininger's photography. He included two of the images in his 1930 *Bauhaus Buildings Dessau*. Because Feininger was painting during the day, many of his photographs were taken at night. Gropius used this to good advantage, juxtaposing Feininger's images with daytime images of the same subject by other Bauhaus photographers. In addition to this Whitney show catalog, an excellent catalog that accompanied a spring 2011 exhibition at Harvard's Busch-Reisinger Museum, *Lyonel Feininger Photographs, 1928–1939*, also makes the importance of Feininger's work clear. An essay in the Busch-Reisinger catalog begins: *One evening in the fall of 1928, in Dessau, Germany, the painter and Bauhaus master Lyonel Feininger stepped out into the cool damp air carrying a camera and tripod, and proceeded to photograph the neighborhood where the Bauhaus masters' houses stood.*

Feininger was probably not thinking about architectural documentation during his forays with a camera, but his photographs accomplish just



*Bauhaus [Dessau], Lyonel Feininger, Gelatin silver print, March 1929.*

that. They are invaluable primary source material for understanding destroyed Bauhaus buildings. Over 500 of Feininger's prints are at Harvard's Houghton Library, and many thousands of negatives and slides are housed at the Busch-Reisinger Museum (publicly accessible via an online database).

Feininger also wrote music, and this past fall the American Symphony Orchestra performed some of his fugues at Carnegie Hall in a concert called "Bauhaus Bach." The program notes included an essay by the Symphony's conductor Leon Botstein linking art, architecture and music: *Music and architecture have long been considered kindred art forms, particularly during the 19th century. Friedrich von Schelling famously dubbed architecture "petrified" or frozen music. However in no era would this be more evident, in practice as well as theory, than in the 20th century....Both architecture and music, in their formal realizations, deal directly with indispensable structural elements, variation and repetition.*

Botstein highlighted the relationship between music and the work of Bauhaus architects and artists in particular:

*The connection between 20th-century modernist movements in the visual arts—particularly (but*

*not exclusively) architecture and design—and music was most impressive in the Bauhaus....the Bauhaus was led, for most of its life by architects: first Walter Gropius (Alma Mahler's second husband) and then Mies Van der Rohe. The artists associated with the Bauhaus included Paul Klee, an avid musician with a passion for Bach; Oskar Schlemmer, who shared an interest in music and theater; Kandinsky, once a close friend of Schoenberg's who even tried his hand at composition and considered music a model for non-objective painting; and last but not least Lyonel Feininger."*

Kudos to the Whitney Museum and the American Symphony Orchestra for giving the Bauhaus new life this fall through the work of Lyonel Feininger.  
—Leslie Monsky

*Note: The Whitney exhibition closed in October, but reopened with additional material as "Lyonel Feininger: From Manhattan to the Bauhaus" at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts on January 21. It runs through May 13. Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World, recently out of stock, is again available.*

HARVARD ART MUSEUMS/BUSCH-REISINGER MUSEUM, GIFT OF T. LUY FEININGER, BRT12123 PHOTO: KATYA KALLSEN © PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE

# Mod Con

In early 2011 DOCOMOMO NY/Tri-State inaugurated its "Modern Conversations" series of informal presentations on topics related to Modern architecture and design. The series proved popular, drawing between 30 and 70 attendees per program, with lively conversation after the talks. We think the series is a great addition to our tours and exactly the type of exchange we aim to foster. That said, we have five talks in the works for 2012.

We would like to thank Knoll, Inc. for hosting "Modern Conversations" at its Modern architecture-centric showroom in Manhattan. The Knoll staff who are part of this effort are wonderfully helpful and supportive.

## Knoll

Below is a recap of the 2011 talks. If you have suggestions for future programs or would like to volunteer to help with organizing the programs please contact us at: [rsvp@docomomo-nytri.org](mailto:rsvp@docomomo-nytri.org).

To receive invites to the 2012 Modern Conversations series be sure you are signed up for our monthly News + Events email list. Go to: [www.docomomo-nytri.org](http://www.docomomo-nytri.org)

### 2011:

#### March 15: Dietrich Neumann

The Structure of Light: Richard Kelly and the Illumination of Modern Architecture

#### May 24: Christopher Rawlins

Sketches in the Sand: The Beach Houses of Horace Gifford

#### September 20: Susan Solomon

Great Synagogue Architecture of the 1950s: Why the Past is not Perfect

#### November 15: Hicks Stone

Edward Durrell Stone: Story of a Legendary Architect

# AN INTERN'S PERSPECTIVE: LOOKING FOR MODERN IN ALL NJ PLACES

*Editor's note:*

*DOCOMOMO NY/Tri-State has been fortunate to have some very capable and motivated interns take on projects as part of their undergraduate and graduate degree programs at local universities. We started with Columbia University students working on our Midtown Modern survey in 2000. More recently we've had three students from Rutgers University tackle components of the New Jersey Modern survey. We invite them to write posts about their projects for DOCOMOMO NY/Tri-state's website or share their thoughts via this newsletter.*

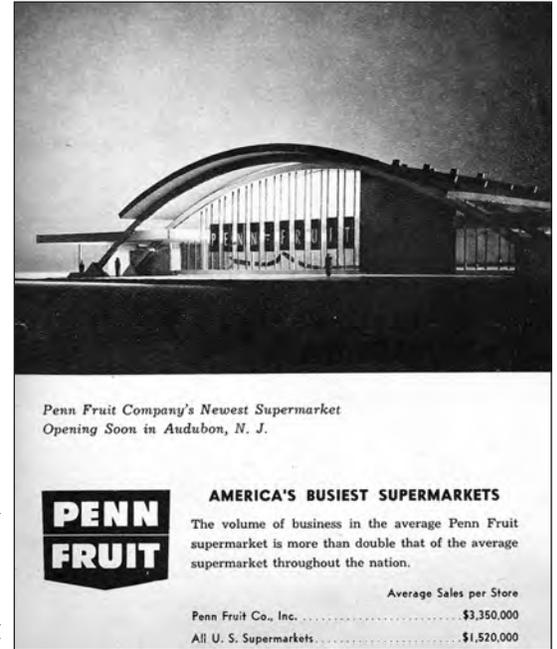
My internship for DOCOMOMO New York/Tri-State, now nearly at its midpoint, included surveying 25 years of *Progressive Architecture* in search of New Jersey Modernism. Sometimes it seems like looking for a needle in a haystack. When seeking Modern architecture, New Jersey doesn't intuitively rank high on anyone's list. I traced New Jersey's architecture from 1944 to 1970 and found a new way of looking at our history. New Jersey's architectural contributions from the 1940s are largely residential properties, offering new prototypes for suburban living. During the mid-century years the magazine featured the architecture of suburban sprawl more



*IRL Research Reactor, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, c. 1958, Plainsboro, NJ.*

frequently. I watched swim clubs, churches, schools, corporate campuses and malls spill out into the countryside. I watched as the New Jersey Turnpike was built to connect these new suburbs. A nuclear research reactor, its architecture by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, proudly came to stand on farmland near Plainsboro, dramatically advertising the influx of technology and research companies to the state. I also watched our cities try to rebuild through award-winning redevelopment plans proposed for Camden, Trenton and Newark. Seeing these cities today, I know that these plans may have been less successful than what was envisioned when they were announced in the architectural press.

This internship has also taught me to think critically about the architectural environment at every turn. When we study architectural history, we tend to think big and grand—about places like the Parthenon or Versailles. Yet, hardly any buildings in my survey are significant in this regard. In fact they are very ordinary. Have I ever considered the architectural significance of a swim club? Or the shopping center when I buy groceries? In 1956 *Progressive Architecture* thoughtfully considers and praises a supermarket designed by Victor Gruen that is located a few miles from where I grew up. I wondered, briefly, if I had ever been there. The store was noted as being a prototype for the chain of supermarkets—the first of a series of identical models to be built. I also wondered, will my future counterpart marvel at the homogeneity of these stores, a fact I take for granted?



*Ad for Penn Fruit supermarket in Audubon, NJ based on Victor Gruen prototype. The ad appeared in the 1955 issue of Delaware Valley U.S.A. published by the Philadelphia Inquirer.*

Or will these buildings, many already vacant on the sides of highways, quietly be demolished until only a few survive? As I continue with my internship and the search for New Jersey's Modern architecture I hope to continue to discover new ways to examine elements of the built environment that I have never considered critically before.

—Marlana Moore  
Rutgers University



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PAUL RUDOLPH



SOM

## World Monuments Fund WATCH 2012

Every two years the WMF releases a list of Watch sites to bring attention to cultural heritage sites around the world that are at risk from the forces of nature and the impact of social, political and economic change. The 2012 list includes 67 sites in 41 countries. Six of these are in the United States, four are located in New York state and *three of the four* are Modern. They are Russel Wright's Manitoga in Garrison, NY, SOM's Manufacturers Trust Company Building on Fifth Avenue and the Orange County Government Center in Goshen, NY, by Paul Rudolph. The WMF Committee selections confirm the all-too-real threats facing buildings of the recent past. For sites on this particular list, you don't celebrate, you advocate.



RUSSEL WRIGHT

**Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites  
and neighborhoods of the Modern Movement**

## NEWSLETTER 2012/No.1

The New York/Tri-State newsletter is made possible by generous financial support from Brent Harris and the volunteers below who contributed content and editing expertise for this issue.

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Comments, articles and news items are welcome for future issues.  
email: [info@docomomo-nytri.org](mailto:info@docomomo-nytri.org)

**Special thanks** to Knoll for hosting our Modern Conversations series and to Todd William Billie Tsien Architects and Hoffmann Architects for providing space for our board meetings.