

Preserving Modern Religious Buildings

As increased attention has been brought to mid-century design in America's auction houses, museum exhibitions and design magazines, the typical focus has been on domestic, commercial and industrial design, leaving other building types—particularly churches and synagogues from that era—largely overlooked, despite the fact that most of the leading architects of the day designed important sacred places. Thus, the public is only beginning to appreciate sacred places from the 1920s through the 1960s, although there are signs

that this will change as major landmarks are recognized and carefully preserved.

So what is so special about modern religious buildings? They have some things in common with other building types from the era, but these factors often find a very different expression. Starting in the 1930s, sacred places were increasingly spare in their use of ornamentation. The elaborate program of sculpture, mural-painting, stenciled wall treatments and elaborate plasterwork that was characteristic of religious buildings in the 19th and early 20th

centuries was reduced or eliminated by the 1950s. The one exception was sanctuary windows, which continued to be filled with stained glass telling stories from a congregation's faith tradition. Natural and artificial light were both used in new and exciting ways in

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First Presbyterian Church, Stamford, CT.

(photo: Jennifer Ko)

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Welcome

Because regional and local advocacy is so much more effectively conducted by the ever growing number of chapters, DOCOMOMO US has sought in its recent newsletters to place the preservation of modern architecture in a broader context. Reflected in our recent issues, which have addressed in the last two years particular architects, i.e. Louis Kahn and Paul Rudolph, or a particular building type, upcoming themes are planned for such topics as landscape and open space and technology. This newsletter looks at religious buildings built in the postwar period. Across the country changes in our culture and demographics along with ever increasing real estate pressures and opportunities are threatening many of these buildings. Often designed by prominent architects, their preservation can be complicated by the legal issues surrounding religious related properties as well as the changing needs of religious communities; however this does not make them any less worthy of saving.

While establishing the broader preservation context, DOCOMOMO US will lead the advocacy for nationally and internationally significant projects while continuing to support the regional efforts by the chapters. On a practical level our register continues to grow as a listing of significant modern architecture in the US and various administrative and communication features are added shortly to our website. In addition, DOCOMOMO US is planning a Technology Seminar in the spring of 2008 for which more information will be available soon. Finally, the Xth International DOCOMOMO conference will take place in September of next year, 2008, largely in the restored Van Nelle Factory in Rotterdam.

—Theodore Prudon
President
DOCOMOMO US

Eliel Saarinen's Christ Church Lutheran, Minneapolis, MN

"I asked him if it were possible in a materialistic age like ours to do something truly spiritual. He soon showed me." This is Pastor William A. Buege's recollection of his conversation with Eliel Saarinen regarding the new sanctuary Saarinen designed for Christ Church Lutheran, a modest congregation in south Minneapolis, completed in 1949, shortly before the architect's death. An attached education wing, sensitively designed by his son Eero Saarinen, was added in 1962.

The completed church is an unassuming brick and stone rectangle that respects the size and scale of the neighboring vernacular houses, but also quietly stands out. The front facade has the most detail—stone panels and sculpture depicting faith, hope, charity, and education of children. A free-standing bell tower is linked to the building by windows that are the full height of the church. The interior is also simply adorned with white pine and white oak furnishings that blend in with the rose-colored brick. The real story of the interior is the light. The building has no stained-glass



View of side façade, Second Christ Church.
(photo: Pete Sieger)

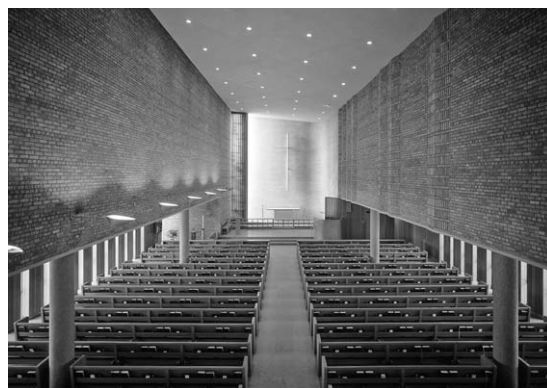
windows. Instead, windows on the south, north, and east facades allow natural light into the sanctuary. The play of light and shadow throughout the nave sets a contemplative mood. A curving, white-washed wall at the front of the church draws attention to the altar and cross, which are lit by a full-length window on the south wall.

At the time of its construction, the sanctuary was nationally recognized for its modern design and heralded as a forerunner of twentieth-century religious architecture. It received numerous honors, including the American Institute of Architects' Twenty-Five Year Award in 1977. Saarinen designed the building to be honest. At its dedication he noted, "If a building is honest, the architecture is religious... Architecture becomes churchly by providing an atmosphere of meditation, which is achieved largely through color and proportion."

Saarinen's honest design has been preserved by the congregation as part of its stewardship program. However, large projects, like the repointing



Exterior view of Second Christ Church, Minneapolis, MN.
(photo: Pete Sieger)



Interior view looking towards altar, Second Christ Church.
(photo: Pete Sieger)

of the brick on the church and bell tower, loom on the horizon. The church has a preservation committee, founded in 1999 to promote the church's cultural and architectural history. The group encouraged the building's 2001 listing in the National Register of Historic Places and is currently pursuing National Historic Landmark status. The church also participated in a recent study with Partners for Sacred Places that led to a facility assessment report by SMSQ Architects in Minnesota.

Another goal of the preservation committee is to raise awareness of the church outside of the congregation. There is discussion about creating a new organization, the Friends of Christ Church Lutheran, to help fundraise for the building's maintenance. As part of the upcoming National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference, to be held in the Twin Cities in early October 2007, two tours and an affinity event (co-sponsored by DOCOMOMO-US) will highlight the church and the congregation's preservation efforts. The church, located at 3244 Thirty-fourth Avenue South in south Minneapolis, is open to visitors.

—Elizabeth Gales

Chapter News

CHICAGO MIDWEST

"Mingling with the Great Ones on Dearborn Street" was an apt name for Chicago's National Tour Day experience led by noted preservationist and art historian Rolf Achilles (current Chairman of Landmarks Illinois). Dearborn Street is home to Mies' Federal Center of 1964-1974 and the 1965 Daley Center by C. F. Murphy Associates as well as SOM's Inland Steel of 1956-57. But along the way you'll also walk past landmark buildings that led the way for these modern movement masterpieces, including the Monadnock Block of 1889-91 and 1891-93 by Burnham & Root and Holabird & Roche, as well as the Marquette Building of 1895 by Holabird & Roche.



Rolf Achilles on the plaza of Mies' Federal Center, Chicago, IL.
(photo: Debbie Dodge)

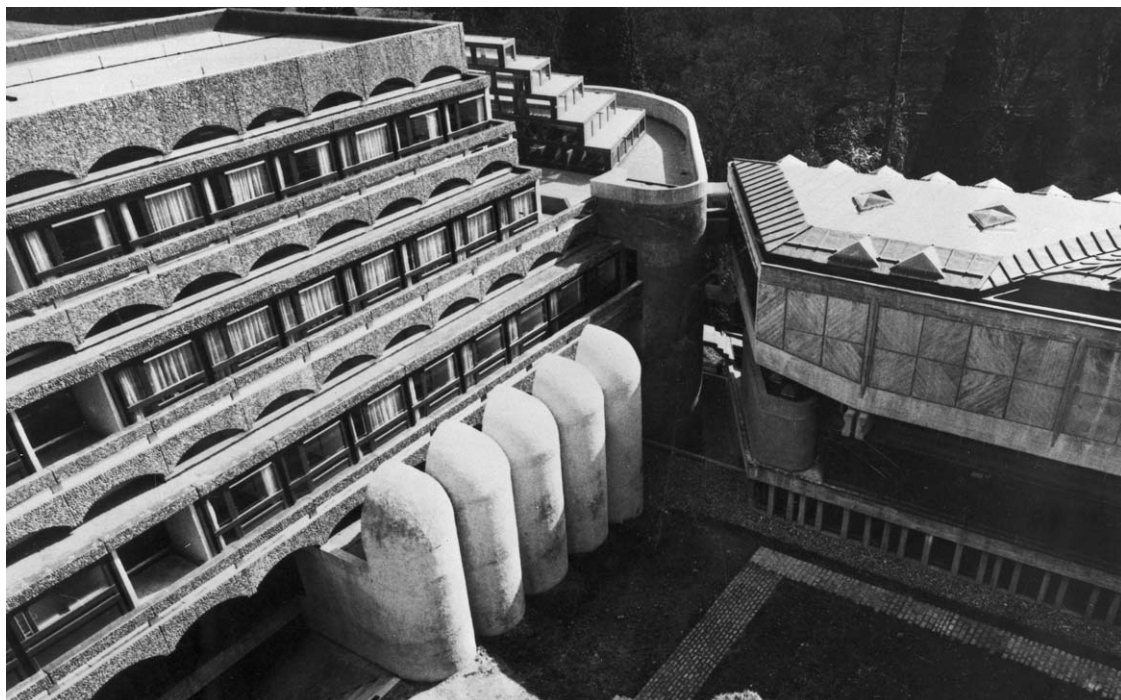
The Dearborn tour also gave the opportunity for Achilles, a long-time member of the Chicago Public Art Commission, to discuss the Calder, Chagall, Miro and Picasso creations at the Federal Center, First National Bank, Brunswick Building and Daley Center plazas, respectively. The tour ended at the corner of Dearborn and Wacker where participants could view Weese's Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist of 1968, Mies' IBM

Cardross Seminary: Modernity, Decay and Ruin

St. Peter's College, also known as Cardross Seminary, was the main Roman Catholic seminary for the training of priests in the west of Scotland in the 1960s & 70s. It is a bold work of late modernist architecture designed in 1959 by the architectural firm of Gillespie, Kidd & Coia, the foremost church designers in the post-war era in Scotland. Constructed between 1961 and 1968 on a steeply sloping and wooded site, the

formalistic postwar architectural works of GK&C.

In 1983 the church submitted its first of three applications for partial demolition—all were refused. At that time the modern complex was legally protected as being within the grounds of the Category B-listed 19th century house which it surrounded, but in 1992 the conservation protection for the seminary buildings was raised to Category A status by Historic Scotland, the national agency responsible for heritage manage-



Saint Peter's Seminary shortly after completion. Saint Peter's College, Cardross, Scotland.
(photo: Gillespie, Kidd & Coia)

complex of buildings was built cloister-like around the late-19th century Scottish Baronial Kilmahew House (1865-8, John Burnet, Sr.). The main accommodation block was of five stories, with bedrooms on the upper floors for 100 student priests and the communal spaces of refectory and chapel below. A projecting two story wing at one end of the chapel contained a sanctuary and crypt beneath. To the west of the main block, a common-room and classroom block dramatically jugged over the woodland, while on the north side of the existing house a small self-contained group of convent buildings were built. The award-winning seminary officially opened in 1966, but was closed in 1980 after only 14 years of use.

There are several interconnecting reasons for the seminary's relatively short life, foremost among which were the reforms brought about by the Second Vatican Council. Growing secularization, coupled with the reorientation of the priest's role towards community life, rendered the isolated seminary lifestyle reflected in Cardross' plan all but obsolete. By 1972, the seminary was operating at only half its residential capacity. To add to its woes, the technical performance of the seminary came under repeated attack; technical problems have consistently plagued the highly

ment, as the complex came under greater threat of demolition. Cardross, along with GK&C's Our Lady and St. Francis School in Glasgow, were in fact the first postwar buildings in Scotland to be listed Category A. Throughout 1993-4 there were a number of development proposals, including conversion of the seminary with development of an additional 60 houses within the 19th century walled garden and mothballing the ruin to enable development of 24 new houses—both refused. The last refusal was appealed in 1996 by the church-employed developers Classical House, but it found that the case for ensuring the future of the listed buildings was not sufficiently robust to justify a housing development in the designated green belt. In 1995 the 19th century house was gutted by a fire and demolished, leaving the seminary standing on its own. Yet another mothballing proposal was refused in 2000, although the local authority now approved this application in principle. Enabling development in the form of new housing—which was the developer's ultimate aim—could not be approved unless the listed building was to be 'restored' and re-used. Historic Scotland, and other voluntary amenity bodies,

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Building of 1971, and Goldberg's Marina City of 1959 in the distance.

Only two of the modern buildings on the tour are landmarked—Inland Steel and the Daley Center—a focus of concern for the event and the Chicago Midwest chapter of Docomomo. The tour gave rise to the idea that Dearborn Street would make a valuable historic district that provides a veritable history lesson in the development of architecture in the United States, from its earliest days to today. The tour included a cross-section of architecture and preservation professionals and enthusiasts from the area and one German tourist who read the Chicago Tribune's notice that morning.

—Debbie Dodge and
Lynette Stuhlmacher

Rediscovering Modern Synagogues Before it is Too Late

American Jewish congregations were among the first to embrace modern architecture for religious buildings. The demographic shift to the suburbs in the post-war period really began the embrace of modernism by mainstream American Judaism—a love affair that remains strong, even though the definition of what is “modern” is less clear. Thousands of new synagogues and Jewish



Temple Beth Emeth, Albany, NY.
(photo: Sam Gruber)

community centers were erected across America between 1945 and 1973. While many of these buildings are non-descript, hundreds of these are well-designed buildings and a smaller number rank among the best synagogues ever built. Designed by some of the best known architects of the day, these structures have greatly influenced the design of all types of religious and cultural buildings.

Recent demographic changes and shifts in taste have put many of these modern buildings at risk. Some, like Temple B'nai Jehudah in Kansas City (Kivett and Myers, 1967) have already been demolished. And others—including works by modern masters Erich Mendelsohn, Walter Gropius and Philip Johnson, have been drastically remodeled, either for entirely new purposes by new owners, or to accommodate new liturgical trends or aesthetic tastes.

Many post-war synagogues have not been documented, studied or published since they were first built, however it is often a race to rediscover them before they are altered or demolished by their congregations—removed by one or two generations from those who built them—or sold for new use to other religious or educational groups, often requiring drastic change to the architecture. Two recent examples are Temple Beth El in Syracuse (NY) and Congregation Oheb Zedeck in Pottsville (PA) who sold their large 1960s facilities to churches.

On the bright side, there has been a gradual shift in appreciation for many of these buildings by the younger generation. Many exemplary modern synagogues such as the Percival Goodman

designed Temple Beth Emeth (Albany, NY) and Congregation Shaarey Zedek (Southfield, Michigan), are well-loved by their congregations and receive good care, and in the case of Beth Emeth, a sensitive new addition in 2003. These bold designs have held up well aesthetically and functionally, though many congregations of similar buildings repeat a litany of complaint: energy inefficiency, leaky roofs, and from the liturgical view, a



Temple Beth Emeth, Sanctuary.
(photo: Sam Gruber)

larger (and now at 50 years, historic) sanctuary.

Many other important modern synagogues are now receiving the deferred maintenance they need, just as the lifetime (30-50 years) of their structures are in need of intensive and sometimes expensive care. Recognizing the significance of their modern buildings, the following are examples of what synagogue boards can do to help preserve them. For instance, the small congregation of Brith Shalom in Cortland (New York) has taken a renewed interest in their small synagogue, carefully designed by the late Werner Seligmann, who was a member of the congregation. A free-standing exterior wall near the entrance that is an important formal design element has been carefully rebuilt, and the congregation is considering nominating the building for the National Register of Historic Places as the work of a recognized master. Goodman's Beth El in Providence, Rhode Island was recently listed, and last year Beth Shalom in Elkins Park (Pennsylvania), designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, was designated a National Historic Landmark.

A resource for synagogues is the International Survey of Jewish Monuments, which recognizes the need to document modern American synagogues and is establishing a “rescue fund” to allow for high quality documentation of endangered buildings on very short notice. ISJM was able to fully document the great Art Deco Temple Emanuel in Paterson, New Jersey this way, and to have it listed subsequently on the New Jewish Preservation Endangered list. There is hope that the building will be sold to a sympathetic buyer. Meanwhile, ISJM seeks support from photographers, architects and funders to carry out a systematic documentary effort of post-war synagogues.

—Samuel D. Gruber,
President of the International Survey of
Jewish Monuments.

Chapter News

WESTERN WASHINGTON

Freeway Park: Exploring the Continuing Legacy of Seattle's Modernist Masterwork

A small but enthusiastic group enjoyed a beautiful evening stroll through the hanging gardens of Seattle's Freeway Park on a June 14th tour sponsored by Docomomo WEWA. Led by Brice Maryman, ASLA, the tour explored the legacy of Lawrence Halprin and Angela Danadjieva's groundbreaking modernist masterwork—a 5.5 acre park built over Interstate 5 in the middle of downtown Seattle. Our unannounced special guest was Angela herself, who was in town for the opening of a new plaza in the park. The bonus of having the original manager of the park's design present on our tour added a layer of richness and depth to the evening.

Brice discussed how the development of the park fit into the national and regional context of the time. Opened in 1976 (with subsequent additions), Freeway Park was a response to the impact of the construction of I-5 through the city in the early 1960s. The intent was to scale down the impact of the freeway for both driver and



The tour group in Seattle's Freeway Park, Seattle, WA
(photo: Eugenia Wool)

Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta: The Context for its Design and Impending Loss



First Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta.
(photo: Thomas Little)

Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta, was a late commission of New York-born Atlanta architect Joseph Amisano, who established his reputation with designs for the original Lenox Square Regional Mall (1955-57) and the Memorial Arts Center (1965-68), both since remodeled and expanded. His 31-story Peachtree Summit Building (1975-8) prompted fellow architects to consider Amisano to be one of the city's foremost architectural form givers.

The comparatively smaller-scaled project in 1984-6 for the Second Church congregation of Christian Scientists included an unadorned and modest concrete edifice for religious services and an adjacent detached and even more diminutive building housing the Reading Room. Built after a generation of so-called Brutalist architects had developed a more tectonic phase of modernism, Second Church displays its modern material of raw concrete with a forthrightness which brings power and honesty to the structures, buildings which otherwise are unpretentious in their size and placement on the landscape. Indeed, among the noteworthy features of Second Church is its more pedestrian scale, and the preservation of open space is noteworthy along the busy promenade of Atlanta's most prestigious street, "Peachtree."

As its name discloses, Second Church of Christ, Scientist, was the second congregation of Christian Scientists to form a church in Atlanta. Its predecessor, First Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta, was one of the earliest congregations of the religious movement founded by Mary Baker Eddy in the late nineteenth century. The Pantheon-inspired sanctuary, designed in 1914 by Edward Daugherty and Arthur Robinson, survives today as one of the best Beaux-Arts Classical buildings in the city.

Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta, however, did not begin with such an exemplary architectural expression when the congregation formed in 1920. Church members met in rented spaces in downtown Atlanta before purchasing a new church site in 1925 on Juniper Street in

Midtown. Three years later, Francis Palmer Smith, one of the city's most noted architects of the day, designed a simple, 200-seat, wood-framed Colonial Revival church (not extant). Throughout the next two decades, as Second Church stayed in midtown, automobile suburbs were extending the city northward toward Buckhead, and so, after World War II, the Second Church membership moved to the Peachtree Road site of Amisano's future church. At first, the church occupied a 1907 house remodeled in 1946 by Gregson & Ellis Architects to serve church services. Less than twenty years later, this edifice was replaced by Amisano's buildings of 1984-6. The peripatetic church members occupied the Amisano buildings for only another twenty years before selling the property in 2006 to developers.

This section of Buckhead, once residential, has increasingly been transformed by multi-stories office buildings, skyscraper condos, and luxury hotels, overshadowing the now tiny religious complex still standing in a streetscape of explosive growth and development. Amisano's last major Atlanta work is located just south of his first,



Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta.
(photo: Thomas Little)

Atlanta's most prestigious shopping mall, the since redesigned Lenox Square; ironically the expansion of the mall, including growth at its perimeter and along the axis of Peachtree Road extending north to the mall and beyond, has resulted in Amisano's church now being overwhelmed by development pressures.

Moreover, raw concrete with board formed surfaces [beton brut] are features of Brutalist architecture to which the general public, especially in the conservative South, has not especially warmed. In contrast to the abstract volumetric character of Early Modernism, Brutalist concrete dramatizes formal and tectonic values. At Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta, Joseph Amisano created an intimate complex of two buildings, modern in form and materials, but destined soon to be only a memory in a city which appears to be obsessed with its campaign, of recent years, to eliminate the work of a whole generation of Atlanta Modernists.

—Robert M. Craig

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The tour group in Seattle's Freeway Park, Seattle, WA

(photo: Eugenia Woo)

pedestrian. The park is defined by a series of linked plazas at varying levels that are enclosed by board-formed concrete planting containers and walls. Connection between these spaces is developed through a shared materials palette of concrete, broadleaf evergreen plantings and site furnishings. Water features in each of the three major plazas create distinct moods in each space.

The group also discussed on going efforts to revitalize and preserve the park which are continuing challenges due to perceived public safety issues and budget limitations for improvements and maintenance. For detailed information on Freeway Park, go to the website of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, <http://www.tclf.org/features/freeway/index.htm>.

—Eugenia Woo

Frank Lloyd Wright's Beth Shalom Synagogue



Beth Shalom Synagogue, Philadelphia, PA. (photo: Partners for Sacred Places)

A glazed pyramid rises from the suburbs of Philadelphia, a gleaming beacon to modern architecture enthusiasts. This arresting Frank Lloyd Wright structure, his only synagogue, is the single project where he shared design credit and his last commission. It is also one of this country's newest National Historic Landmarks, designated during the spring of 2007. Located in suburban Philadelphia, it is one of only four synagogues with NHL status, and the only one representing the modern movement.

Following the great surge in architect-designed synagogues following WWII, Beth Shalom was commissioned in 1953 with the design collaborator, Rabbi Mortimer Cohen, suggesting that the building be a metaphor for the biblical tent and the mountain. Completed in 1959, Wright's design was a modern Mt. Sinai constructed of aluminum and glass atop reinforced concrete and steel, replete with Jewish symbols and references.

The building design surprises many Wright fans more familiar with the signature Prairie-style lines of his best-known religious structure: Oak Park, Illinois' Unity Temple (1906-9). However, the congregation's current president, Harvey Friedrich, states, "most people are surprised and impressed by the space and how it works. There is a phenomenon that occurs 99 out of 100 times, when people reach the top of the stairway and make the turn into the sanctuary, they utter the same word: 'wow!'" The interior features Wright-designed seating, furnishings and lighting, including an ornate chandelier, candelabra, and bimah, (the platform from which scripture is read). Notes Friedrich: "The sanctuary appears much larger from the inside than from the outside... it's 110 feet high from the bimah to the roof."

However, the synagogue shares a trait infamous in other Wright-designed structures, and many other mid-century religious buildings—the need for constant and creative maintenance, especially in its roofing systems. Beth Shalom has evidence of water leakage in the dome dating back to 1960. "Taliesin designed supplemental internal drains, but many are now clogged with

debris or difficult to locate" says Friedrich.

The synagogue partnered with Partners for Sacred Places in 2006 for assistance, and is interviewing architects to develop a master plan for the property. They have also re-connected with one of the original contractors who worked on the building in the 1950s to help solve the roof problems. "Sometimes you need to rediscover the past to fix the future," notes Friedrich.

The restoration of religious buildings often requires a delicate balance of satisfying



Beth Shalom Synagogue, Door, Philadelphia, PA.

(photo: Partners for Sacred Places)



Beth Shalom Synagogue, Roof, Philadelphia, PA.

(photo: Partners for Sacred Places)

congregation members and preservationists, as in Beth Shalom, where any work must remain true to the original materials, colors, and design. "There was some concern among the congregants that being listed as a National Historic Landmark would place further restrictions on what could be done with the building," Friedrich admits, "but there was a recognition that we've been living with this since we signed our agreement with Frank Lloyd Wright."

The congregation is helping to strike the balance between members and architecture buffs by educating both groups on the symbolism, history, and architecture of the building. In this regard, Beth Shalom represents a still small, but growing, group of congregations that understand, embrace, and promote their modern buildings—despite the cost and difficulty in maintaining them. To further this mission, the congregation is in the process of greatly enhancing its visitor programs. "We are training a new group of docents; we will have regular, posted visiting hours and always have docents available during that time," says Friedrich. "We are stewards of a building that is a national treasure. We have a responsibility beyond our own parochial interests."

—Robert Jaeger,
Executive Director of Partners for
Sacred Places, Philadelphia, PA

Chapter News

NEW YORK/TRI-STATE

New Jersey Modern Tour

DOCOMOMO New York/Tri-State joined in the DOCOMOMO US 2007 National Tour Day festivities with a day-long bus tour of highlights of Modernism in the Garden State on Saturday, June 9th, attended by 35 Modern enthusiasts.



Interior of Eero Saarinen's Bell Labs, Holmdel, NJ.

(photo: John Arbuckle)

Beginning at Eero Saarinen's Bell Labs research center in Holmdel (1957-62) with a tour of the complex led by Lucent archivist Ed Eckert, Jayne Merkel, author of a recent monograph on Saarinen, shared insight on how this project related to Saarinen's oeuvre. The Bell Labs complex will be sold later this year to a developer and its future is still very much in jeopardy.

Next visit was the Jewish Community Center in Ewing (1954-59), also known as the Trenton Bath House, designed by Louis Kahn, perhaps the

Update: Cabrini Church Demolished

In the early days of June 2007, the 1963 Saint Frances Cabrini Church was demolished. After a year-long preservation battle to save the flood-damaged church, all that remains are the stained glass, baptistery and altar salvaged before demolition.

After

Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the church suffered from wind damage and flood waters. Although it was one of the few churches in New Orleans with flood insurance, the archdiocese decided to demolish the church and its adjoining two high schools and sell the site to Holy Cross School, who were seeking a new campus for their school that had been destroyed by flooding in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Due to the use of federal money and FEMA involvement, the church's demolition triggered a Section 106 review and national attention. One of the few examples of mid-century modern



View of Saint Frances Cabrini Church, Interior, New Orleans, LA.

(photo: Hamilton Frederick, courtesy of Georgianne Frederick Brochstein)



Remains of the demolition of Cabrini Church, New Orleans, LA.

(photo: Toni DiMaggio)

architecture in the city of New Orleans, the church was declared eligible for the National Register. However, the desire to revitalize the Gentilly neighborhood in which the church was located with a new school campus resulted in the loss of the church in June, save for the salvaged elements and the original drawings. The Holy Cross School is expected to be completed in January 2009.

—Deirdre Gould

IBM Building 25 Update



IBM Building 25, San Jose, CA, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, 1957.

(photo: Preservation Action Council of San Jose)

The saga of San Jose's highly significant mid-century treasure, Building 25, continues and reports of its demolition are, thankfully, premature. Threatened with demolition to make way for a Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse, the Building has been the focus of a heated and protracted legal battle that isn't finished. While it is

true that the San Jose City Council voted this summer to allow the Lowe's project to move forward, they did so against the advice of the City's own Historic Landmarks Commission, Planning Commission and staff who all made the case that there are feasible alternatives to demolition of this important historic resource. California's tough environmental law, CEQA, states that if feasible alternatives are found to exist, then the project cannot be approved as is. While the Preservation Action Council (PAC) has not filed new litigation, the issue will again go before the lower court judge for his review to determine if the City sufficiently remedied the deficiency that led to the City losing the lawsuit in the first place.

PAC continues to work with the hope that a solution can be reached that would allow both the Lowe's and Building 25 to co-exist. Meanwhile, out on the campus, Building 25 sits vacant awaiting an uncertain future.

—Megan Bellue,
Executive Director of Preservation Action
Council of San Jose

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most famous Modern building in New Jersey. This early work of Kahn, displaying his signature elemental geometries, was recently saved through the efforts of dedicated preservationists. Donna Lewis, Director of the Mercer County Planning Division, and architect Michael J. Mills, FAIA, guided the group.

On the campus of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, lunch was in the tranquil birch grove courtyard designed by Robert Zion. Robert Geddes, FAIA, founding partner of Geddes, Brecher, Qualls, Cunningham, spoke to the group and guided them through his Dining Hall and West Building (1968-71), followed by a visit to the Historical Studies-Social Science Library (1962-65), designed by Wallace K. Harrison, and the Members Housing (1954-57) by Marcel Breuer.

During a walk around the Princeton University campus led by University Architect Jon Hlafter, the group toured the highlights of its Modern-era architecture, including works by Minoru Yamasaki, Gwathmey Siegel and I.M. Pei. Outside Princeton, the final stop was in Hightstown at PA Technologies (1981), the only building in the United States designed by Richard Rogers.

—John Arbuckle

Relighting Marcel Breuer's Masterpiece

Forty-six years ago, Marcel Breuer was asked to design a new worship space for St. Francis de Sales community in Muskegon, Michigan. Learning from and developing his earlier designs of St. John's Abbey and University Church, Collegeville, MN, St. Francis de Sales was completed and the first Mass celebrated in 1966. It is one of the first churches where the hyperbolic paraboloid was employed.



Saint Francis de Sales, view into sanctuary from balcony. (photo: Viggo B. Rambusch)

Serious financial problems developed during construction resulted in cheapening many parts of Breuer's original design, including the proposed lighting system. As a result, the compromised lighting system was replaced at a later date with a harsh arrangement of open, industrial, warehouse-style units.

In 2007, a new lighting system for the church was undertaken with the mission to find and preserve Breuer's original intent. After conducting an initial survey, a series of discussions were held with the pastor of St. Francis de Sales and the architects who had worked with Marcel Breuer's office when the church was extended in 1988. The result was a new lighting system that illuminated the important interior architectural spaces in a manner that would complement and reveal the character while supporting the building's functions.

The first component, a series of dimmable fixtures, were designed and engineered to provide reading and congregational light. Nave light-levels were developed from twelve to twenty-four foot candles, maintained in service with dimmers at 92% of full voltage. Six types of lighting fixtures were placed in the skylights, the existing lighting through the altar canopy and under balcony recesses, etc. Some of these were positions from which Marcel Breuer originally generated light. The units were zoned for flexible use so that different environments could be created to support diverse events such as a small daily Mass, private meditation, a full church on Sunday morning and major feast days, weddings and concerts.

The second lighting component was the architectural, ambient lighting system also tied into the dimmer system and zoned. Here, certain architectural forms were illuminated to reveal the great power that Marcel Breuer designed into them—specifically, the wall behind the sanctuary, the

ceiling and the rear wall. This interior space is 80' high, 110' long and 98' wide.

The third lighting component was the accent lighting, or "lighting for emphasis" as English lighting professionals say. These units light the vertical surface of the person, object or action being viewed by the congregation. A series of significant objects or positions were identified, including the pulpit, the front of the main aisle and the celebrant or wedding couple in front of the



View of wall behind sanctuary with partial view of ceiling from front of main aisle. (photo: Viggo B. Rambusch)



View of "floating" balcony and rear wall taken from sanctuary. (photo: Viggo B. Rambusch)

altar. When called on, light beams are directed down on these positions from the right and left at an angle.

The wiring for the lighting fixtures runs to the dimmer with the circuits gathered into approximately twenty-two channels with the zones grouped into the three main components: reading/congregational light, architectural/ambient light, and accent/vertical surface light. There are fourteen pre-set scenes, which call up the pre-arranged lighting environments and two manual settings that are available for special events.

For the first time, the spirit of the great interior or worship space of St. Francis de Sales Church has been captured and manifested by the new lighting. There have been great advances made over the last forty years in lamps, fixture construction and lighting design and all of these have been incorporated in the new system.

—Viggo Rambusch,
Honorary Chairman and Senior Project Manager,
The Rambusch Company

Chapter News

NORTHERN TEXAS

DOCOMOMO.NTX Tour

On June 9th, about 20 aficionados of modern architecture made the trip 40 miles north of Dallas and Fort Worth to Denton, Texas to tour a little known but significant complex of three buildings by O'Neil Ford—the Denton Municipal Building (1967), the Denton Civic Center (1966), and his addition to the Emily Fowler Library (1969). Afterwards, optional self-guided tours were offered of Ford's First Christian Church (1959) and his (with Arch Swank) Little Chapel in the Woods (1939) on the campus of Texas Woman's University.

O'Neil Ford is widely considered the "grandfather" of modern Texas architecture. Ford started his career in Dallas in the 1930s with noted regionalist David Williams, and practiced



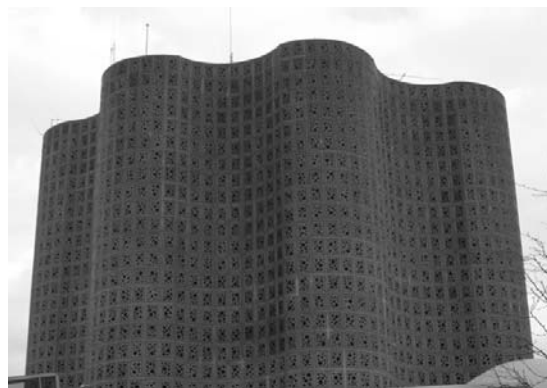
Denton Municipal Building courtyard, O'Neil Ford (1967).
(photo: Greg Ibanez AIA)



DOCOMOMO NTXers and others enjoy the shady courtyard for a pre-tour overview of Ford's Denton work.
(photo: Greg Ibanez AIA)

Dalle de Verre: Stained Glass in Modern Architecture

In many modern religious structures, a particular form of colored glass has a prominent if not integral role in the building fabric. Alternatively called Dalle de Verre, slab glass or faceted glass, this type of stained glass is unremarkable from the outside but on the inside the colors are rich and bold, the designs distinctive in the use of negative and positive spaces of the glass. Often simply referred to as stained glass, Dalle de Verre uses 1-inch thick pieces of colored glass held in a concrete or epoxy matrix and chipped or faceted on the glass surface to enhance the color and light refraction—in place of quarter-inch pieces of



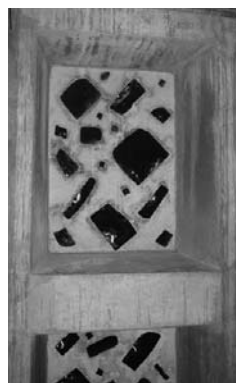
New York Hall of Science, Flushing Meadows, NY.
(photo: Flora Chou)



Manhattan Church of Christ, New York, NY.
(photo: Flora Chou)

glass held in place by thin lead comes typical of traditional stained glass—and is the most common form of colored glass found in modern religious structures.

The initial technique of placing chunks of glass in concrete was one of many experiments with glass to emerge from the 1920's, but it was not until after World War II, when rebuilding in Europe was paramount and when concrete was one of the few materials abundantly available and skilled labor in short supply, that the glass became used widely in modern buildings, particularly religious buildings. Since the chunks of glass and the concrete matrix lack the delicacy and ability to render fine details, it was best suited to bold abstract or geometric designs that often complemented the



Hall of Science detail, Flushing Meadows, NY.
(photo: Flora Chou)

modern buildings in which they were placed. Also, because the concrete and glass were self-supporting, Dalle de Verre panes could be used in large-scale installations that resulted in some stunning floor-to-ceiling displays.

In the United States, Dalle de Verre did not appear until the 1950s when Wallace Harrison used the technique at the First Presbyterian Church in Stamford, Connecticut. Exposed to Dalle de Verre during a trip to Europe,

Harrison worked with one of the premier fabricators in France, Gabriel Loire, to craft the abstract scenes of the nave walls. As the panes were delivered from France, they were placed into the voids of large triangular precast concrete panels that became the building's skin and structural system. From the success of this church and with the domestic stained glassmakers' growing skill at fabrication, faceted glass soon became the stained glass of choice for the hundreds, if not thousands, of religious structures being constructed in the 1950s and 1960s as part of the postwar development boom. In fact, it was the American stained glass manufacturers who solved the water infiltration and cracked glass problems of European Dalle de Verre caused by the differential thermal expansion of glass and concrete by experimenting with various mixes of the relatively new material epoxy. Through trial and error, the American manufacturers developed epoxy that had a thermal expansion complementary to the thick slabs of glass and reduced the likelihood of leaks. The new method quickly overtook concrete as the material to use in the United States and by the early 1960's, almost all of the faceted glass panes in the U.S. were epoxy panes with aggregate added to the surface to mimic concrete while the Europeans continued to fabricate panes in concrete.

In the last 40 years, faceted glass has fallen out of favor but some of the original manufactur-

(cont'd on pg. 15)

Chapter News

there through the 1930s with Arch Swank. However, Ford is primarily known as a San Antonio architect where he practiced with the firm of Ford, Powell and Carson until his death in 1982. Many currently practicing Texas architects can trace their architectural lineage back to their time under his tutelage, including Ted Flato and David Lake of Lake/Flato.

Visitors on the DOCOMO-MO.NTX tour particularly enjoyed the Denton Municipal Building, a U-shaped courtyard structure clearly inspired by Alvar Aalto's Saynatsalo Town Hall (1952). However, Ford's subtle reinterpretation of Aalto's typology and his use of regionally inspired colors, textures, fenestration, and shading devices created a uniquely "Texas" structure that featured the clean lines of modernism softened by a tradition of craft and artisanship. Recognizing the great value of their architectural heritage, the City of Denton has renamed the entire complex the O'Neil Ford Civic Complex.

Future DOCOMOMO.NTX plans include a fall 2007 tour of mid-century modern religious structures by noted regional modernists including George Dahl, Howard Meyer, and Harwell Hamilton Harris. These churches and temples, some of the most refined and creative architecture in Dallas, are often overlooked despite their importance as significant icons of mid-century modernism.

—Robert Meckfessel

Small Changes in Intimate Spaces: The Michael Graves Chapel at the Newark Archdiocese



View of Chapel exterior, Newark Archdiocese Building, Newark, NJ. (photo: Deirdre Gould)

by Michael Graves in his building for the Archdiocese in Newark, New Jersey.

Located on Clifton and Park Avenues in the city of Newark, the postmodern structure sits across from the neo-gothic Sacred Heart Cathedral creating a visual and historical contrast of religious architecture. Constructed of metal and glass, the 1989 Graves building holds both the headquarters and offices of the Archdiocese, as well as other amenities such as conference rooms and cafeteria. On the first floor is the small chapel designed for intimate services and blessings.

A circular room, no more than 500 square feet, the chapel interior was originally painted a baby blue color with light wood furnishing specifically designed by Graves for the intimate space that was intended for reflection and contemplation. Recently, a small renovation altered the walls to a sandy tan color and the center altar was removed and replaced with a darker wood version that contrasted with the light cedar Graves selected for the circular pews. Two of the stained glass



Interior of chapel. (photo: Deirdre Gould)

What is the effect of seemingly small changes in intimate spaces? In such places, minor decisions can have a rather significant effect on the space. While intended to be subtle and nondescript, if not properly analyzed, even the most subtle change can cause obvious difference. The result is a radical alteration in both the interpretation and experience of a space.

Particularly in small scale spaces, each decision of the original designer is more likely thought out and placement of furniture and fixtures are more intentional. When working in these parameters it is very important to analyze the proposed changes on a larger scale and in a sense the bigger picture of how the alteration will affect the design. Such an example is the chapel designed

windows were also boarded up and a standard catalogue chair placed in the chapel. The effect was a completely different reading of the once simple and serene space.

The experience of the Newark chapel is the realization of the emphasis designers place on careful choices in modern designed spaces. Due to the streamlined and minimalist nature of the design it is imperative to weigh the effect such changes have on the reading of the place. What were seemingly innocent choices are now vastly contrasting changes which have affected the integrity of the whole space—compromising both the original design intent and experience intended by the architect.

—Deirdre Gould

Chapter News

FLORIDA

The Sheraton Bal Harbour (Hotel Americana 1956), Designed by Morris Lapidus

Another loss to the architectural heritage of South Florida will happen this fall. The remarkable hotel resort by Morris Lapidus from 1956, one that has perhaps defined the concept of the resort-hotel in Florida, has been approved by the Village of Bal Harbour to be demolished in a few months due to a project developed by Related Group. These same developers were recognized for the development and contribution to the community of South Florida at the National Building Museum in June.



**Exterior of the Sheraton Bal Harbour,
Bal Harbour, FL.**
(photo: Enrique Madia)

The site is currently a St. Regis Resorts and Residences. Although the Sheraton is listed as a landmark on the official website of Bal Harbour, designation was not enough to save this expression of the modern movement in Florida and the architectural history of the

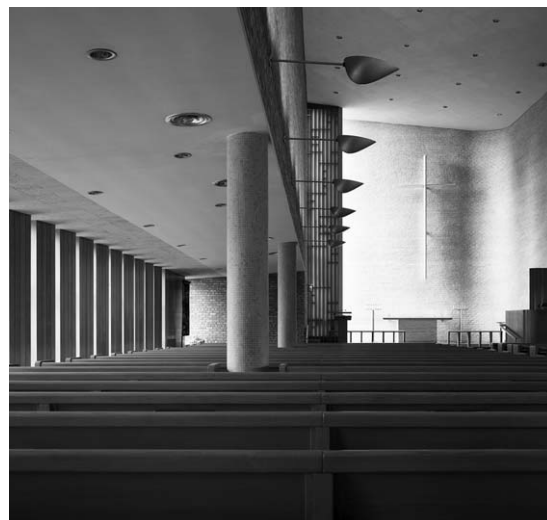
Preserving Modern Religious Buildings *(cont'd from page 1)*



**Interior of the Dalle de Verre stained glass
First Presbyterian Church, Stamford, CT.**
(photo: Jennifer Ko)

which architects creatively used light to highlight focal areas in the worship space—especially the altar or bimah. This can be seen in Mies van der Rohe's design for the chapel at the Illinois Institute of Technology, Eliel Saarinen's Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis and Frank Lloyd Wright's Beth Shalom in suburban Philadelphia.

Also innovative at the time was the experimentation with newer materials. The rush to use new, avant-garde materials in this period was unprecedented, with architects embracing aluminum, stainless steel, structural glass, laminated wood, epoxy and concrete (most manufactured, not hand crafted). Another innovation was Dalle de Verre stained glass, which used thick, hand-faceted glass set in matrices of concrete or epoxy. The expression of traditional functions—worship, religious education, social outreach—was altered in dramatic new ways, experimenting with new liturgical arrangements, seating plans, and classroom layouts inside the building. As early as the 1920s, an innovative centralized plan for worship—with the altar at the center of the space, surrounded by circles of pews—was used at the Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan. Architects also found new ways to mass the building and bring drama to the site, often setting buildings away from the sidewalk. Consequently, sacred places took on new, untraditional forms; in 1958, for example, Wallace Harrison used the ancient fish symbol for the floor plan of First Presbyterian Church in Stamford,



Interior of Second Christ Church, Minneapolis, MN.
(photo: Pete Sieger)

Connecticut. In Minneapolis, the neighbors of Eliel Saarinen's Christ Church Lutheran said it looked more like a factory building than a church!

All this experimentation with form, material and construction techniques has led, predictably, to a series of repair and maintenance problems, many new and unfamiliar to architects and contractors today. However, since these buildings are of recent vintage, repair problems may not have festered for long enough to endanger a building's integrity. Stewards of modern churches or synagogues may have one great advantage over older buildings: sometimes original materials are still made today, and original contractors may still be active.

Organizations such as Partners for Sacred Places can serve as resources for congregations facing these issues by maintaining a network of preservation architects and a professional alliance of preservation experts, from roofing contractors to engineers to stained glass studios. With training programs such as New Dollars/New Partners for Your Sacred Place, congregations are given the practical tools they need to articulate the special character and importance of their modern buildings, and use that story to broaden and diversify their circles of donors.

Because many congregations worship in remarkable buildings designed by lesser-known architects, they will need to work harder to first appreciate, and then to communicate the cultural value of their sacred places to the community. However, given the public's growing interest in design and architecture from this period, congregations have an enormous opportunity to engage the wider public in their efforts to keep their modern buildings active and in good repair.

—Robert Jaeger,
Executive Director of Partners for
Sacred Places, Philadelphia, Pa.

American hotel resort. A battle of local preservationists for the past two years, sadly it is now time to have this landmark be included as another memory from South Florida.

—Enrique Madia

Miami's Marine Stadium

Beginning in the 1930s in Europe and Latin America, a series of sport facilities were built in which the plastic aesthetic qualities of poured-in-place concrete were exploited for visual effect. Pier Luigi Nervi's (1891-1979) Florence stadium (1929-32) and Palazzo dello Sport (1958-59) in Rome pioneered concrete shell construction. Following in the footsteps of Nervi's Florence Stadium is the Miami Marine Stadium, designed by the firm Pancoast, Ferendino Spillis + Candela, now Spillis Candela DMJM. Led by Felix Candela, a young Cuban architect educated at Georgia Tech, the 6,566-seat grandstand made concrete a genuine expression of modern Latin American architecture, whose sensuality and plasticity contrasted with the rationalist canons of the International Style.

Named for Coconut Grove pioneer and boating enthusiast Ralph Munroe, the stadium was completed in 1964. Poured entirely in concrete, with a hyperbolic paraboloid roof structure, it consisted of a dramatically cantilevered folded plate roof supported by eight big slanted columns anchored in the ground through the grandstand.

The stadium was damaged in

Announcements

Morris Mechanic Theater



Morris Mechanic Theater, Baltimore, MD.
(photo: Olivia Klose)

Located in downtown Baltimore, the Morris A. Mechanic Theater is both an architectural and historical landmark that contributes greatly to the fabric of Baltimore as a city. However, the theater has been acquired recently after sitting empty for three years. Although no firm plans have been announced, various commercial and residential developments have been mentioned and the theater's interiors have been partially demolished. With these recent activities and as part of a move by the Baltimore Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation to recognize the significance of historic buildings before they are under threat of imminent demolition, the commission is considering the theater for landmark status.

Designed by John M. Johansen in 1967, one of the leading modern architects of the twentieth century and known as one of the "Harvard Five," the Morris A. Mechanic Theater is an excellent example of postwar urban performing arts architecture. Known for his innovative designs, among which are the U.S. Embassy in Dublin, Ireland and the Oklahoma Theater Center, Johansen has described the Mechanic Theater as an example of "functional expressionism," where the interior composition of balcony sections, stage tower, and air vents is revealed on the outside, expressing the theater's function on its exterior.

Created as part of one of the many urban renewal projects taking place across the country at the time, the 1967 theater was part of the first city-center renewal project with legitimate theater as its centerpiece and serves as a testament to the urban planning ideals and initiatives of postwar America. With contemporaries such as the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, which was recently demolished, the preservation of the Mechanic Theater has become all too important in recognizing the role of the arts and regional cultural centers in postwar urban renewal and downtown revival projects.

On August 14th CHAP held a public hearing at the Baltimore Department of City Planning,

recommending the theater for historical landmark status. The theater was approved but is still waiting to be heard and approved by City Planning and City Council.

—Deirdre Gould

Breuer's Cleveland Tower to be Demolished

The Cleveland Brutalist building designed by Marcel Breuer, which made national news with its threat of demolition, has been voted to be demolished by the Cleveland Planning Commission. In a 5-2 vote, the tower is planned to be replaced by a government office building to be opened in 2011. The new building is planned to be a mid-rise structure, as compared to the 29-story tower, which was Marcel Breuer's only skyscraper.

The tower was built in 1971, and its concrete Brutalist design caused a divided opinion on its visual contribution to the city. However, its threat of demolition brought attention to not only the Brutalist aesthetic of the building but to its fame as the only tower in Cleveland built by the modern master Marcel Breuer. It also raised arguments of the cost of preserving the building versus demolishing and building a new one.

—Deirdre Gould

Phillip Johnson Glass House Opens Spring 2007

The Philip Johnson Glass House, one of the most celebrated examples of modernist architecture in the world and a National Trust Historic Site, opened to the public for the first time in its 50-plus year history this spring. A civic opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony with state and local civic leaders and the National Trust was held at the Glass House on June 21, and the Inaugural Gala Picnic on June 23 inaugurated the Glass House's full-capacity operation.



Phillip Johnson's Glass House, New Canaan, CT.
(photo: Paul Warchol)

1992 by Hurricane Andrew; however, engineering reports have since proven that the structure was sound but needed repairs. Unfortunately, the stadium has remained closed since then.

The Marine Stadium is perhaps the first recognized landmark structure done by the Cuban architects after their exile in Miami. With the new Master Plan for Virginia Key, this magnificent architectural sample of the Modern Movement and an important piece of Miami heritage and history is in danger of being demolished, despite the Mayor of Miami's promise a few years ago to refurbish the structure.

—Jean-Francois Lejeune and
Enrique Madia

Announcements



Entrance to the painting gallery, The Glass House.
(photo: Paul Warchol)



Sculpture Gallery, The Glass House.
(photo: Paul Warchol)

Designed by Philip Johnson (1906-2005) as his private residence, the Glass House sits on a 47-acre site that features fourteen structures, a collection of contemporary art, and a Modern American landscape. The Glass House serves as an architectural survey of the second half of the twentieth century, showcasing innovations in the field of modern architecture from each decade of Johnson's storied career. Johnson donated the Glass House to the National Trust in 1986, retaining a life estate. Before his death in 2005, David Whitney, a renowned art collector, curator, art advisor, and Johnson's long-time partner, directed his estate to support the National Trust's preservation and programming of the Glass House.

"We are deeply indebted to Philip Johnson for donating his masterpiece to the National Trust and to David Whitney, whose generous bequest has secured a vibrant future for the Glass House," said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "The National Trust's stewardship of the Glass House will honor the wishes of these two men by ensuring that it remains an innovative center for people interested

in modern architecture, and a central place for people who care about art, design, landscape and preservation."

In its inaugural year, the Glass House will introduce innovative programming, in addition to guided tours of the site, including: Glass House Conversations, an invitation-only program to convene influential thought leaders across the world to explore new ideas relevant to architecture, landscape, art, and design, (beginning 2008); Glass House Residential Fellowships for talented young people in the fields of architecture, art, landscape, and preservation (beginning 2008); and Preserve the Modern, an initiative that will place the Glass House as a center point in the field of preservation of modern architecture and landscape for the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

—Amy Grabowski

New Canaan Modern Home Survey

The New Canaan Modern Home Survey, a comprehensive survey of 90-plus architect-designed mid-century modern residences, outbuildings, and landscapes in New Canaan, CT is underway with the collective efforts of the Philip Johnson Glass House, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, the Northeast Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the New Canaan Historical Society.

The research collected and information gathered for this survey will lead to a thematic registry and preservation of New Canaan's Modern homes, and ultimately provide a model and framework for the assessment of other modern communities across the country. The goal of this survey will be to work toward a thematic National Register nomination for Modern homes that communities across the country may utilize to document and protect important Modern architecture.

"One of the challenges of saving modern homes is determining what is or what is not significant. As these homes are just turning 50, a marker for traditional landmark designations, we have to look at towns in the US who have enough moderns to help define that criteria. New Canaan is one of those very special places," said Christy MacLear, Executive Director of the Philip Johnson Glass House.

This survey of Modern homes will surpass most normal survey criteria, and is intended to meet Connecticut's State Historic Preservation Office guidelines as well as National Register guidelines. The end-product of this project will include an historic context statement, architect biographies, a glossary specific to modernism, illustrations, and an analysis to establish New Canaan's modern heritage. Home-owners' privacy

Fall Exhibits and Events

Frank Lloyd Wright and the House Beautiful
Portland Museum of Art
Portland, ME,
Now to October 28, 2008

**Lost Vanguard:
Soviet Modernist
Architecture, 1922-32**
The Museum of Modern Art,
New York, NY,
July 18 to October 29, 2007

**The 2007 National
Preservation Conference**
The Saint Paul Hotel,
Saint Paul, MN
October 2 to October 6, 2007

**2007 AIANY Convention:
"The Past As Prologue"**
Grand Hyatt Hotel,
New York City, NY,
October 4 to October 6, 2007

**Marcel Breuer:
Design and Architecture**
National Building Museum,
Washington, DC,
November 3, 2007 to
February 17, 2008

**Eero Saarinen:
Shaping the Future**
Cranbrook Art Museum,
Bloomfield Hills, MI,
November 17, 2007 to
March 30, 2008/
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Minneapolis, MN,
September 14, 2008 to
January 4, 2009

**Cold War:
Modern Art & Design
in a Divided World,
1945-1975**
Victoria & Albert Museum,
London, UK
September 4, 2008 to
January 4, 2009

Subjects planned for the next two issues of the DOCOMOMO US Newsletter:
Winter 2007:
Open Spaces and Landscapes
Spring 2008:
Technology

Announcements

will be preserved through a blind labeling system. An advisory committee consists of John Johansen, John Black Lee, Toshiko Mori, Theodore H.M. Prudon and Robert A.M. Stern who will convene for review of the final material of the survey. The survey will begin this autumn.

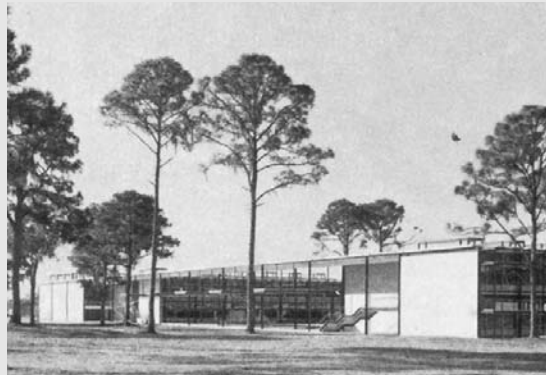
More than eighty homeowners have been identified and a cross-section of these owners have met with leaders from the National Trust and the New Canaan Historical Society for a full orientation. In addition to new survey work, this project will utilize material previously collected and archived by The New Canaan Historical Society, with input by DOCOMOMO. The New Canaan Modern Home Survey is being underwritten by a \$10,000 grant from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and a \$50,000 grant from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

—Amy Grabowski

Riverview Update

The battle to save the modern Paul Rudolph High School is not over yet. Although scheduled for demolition, the Sarasota Architectural Foundation issued a RFQ for a design and financial plan for alternative use of the school, calling for proposals from architect and developer teams of up to 5 finalists. The results will be announced September 17.

For more information please visit the Sarasota Architectural Foundation at www.sarasotaarchitecturalfoundation.org.



Riverview High School, Sarasota, FL.
(photo: Paul Rudolph Foundation)

Call for Papers

Deadline for abstracts:
October 15, 2007

For more information, please visit
www.docomomo-us.org

Sept. 13-20 2008

Van Nelle Ontwerpfabriek, Rotterdam, The Netherlands



10th International Docomomo Conference The Challenge of Change

Dealing with the Legacy of the Modern Movement

THEME: THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

The main theme of the 2008 International Docomomo Conference focuses on the manifold challenges and dilemmas of change and continuity of the architecture of the Modern Movement. This architecture was always future-oriented and had a firm and optimistic belief in the possibilities of progress. Although nowadays the achievements may still appeal to us, the buildings of the twentieth century in fact belong to the past and have become eligible for listing and preservation. This evolution has created the paradox of the modern monument and has raised questions of principle concerning the issues of conservation, renovation and transformation of modern buildings. It brings on revisiting the ideals and key concepts of the Modern Movement, which cannot always be matched with the acts of reconstruction that are an integral part of the practices of conservation, renovation and transformation.

The programme of the 2008 International Docomomo Conference includes paper, case study and poster presentations. In addition, it contains Round-table Sessions - interactive discussion and debate meetings in small groups - and hosts the second edition of the International Docomomo Student Workshop.

DOCOMOMO

Docomomo was founded in 1988 in response to the threats of undesirable alterations and demolitions of buildings and sites of the Modern Movement. Ever since, Docomomo has played an important role in the growth of a wide appreciation and recognition of the legacy of the Modern Movement. Docomomo established a large worldwide register of modern buildings, it has active chapters in more than 50 countries, and many buildings and ensembles of the Modern Movement have since been saved. The bi-annual international conference is one of the means to continue working on the aims of Docomomo.

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Cardross Seminary: Modernity, Decay and Ruin *(cont'd from page 3)*



View of the seminary in 1994. Saint Peters College, Cardross, Scotland.

(photo: RCAHMS)

wanted more than just the basic mothballing of the seminary buildings. In June 2004 a further application was made for mothballing and enabled development: all interested parties debated the proposals in the media arena, and behind closed doors. As a direct result Historic Scotland, the owners, and the local authority jointly commissioned a conservation plan in 2006 from the London-based architectural practice Avanti (led by the English postwar Modernism expert John Allan). It is hoped that the report, due for publication in October 2007, will address the key questions surrounding the proposed stabilization of the structure: will the developer meet the full cost? Who will maintain the ruin? Who will market the re-use? And what is the cost? The general consensus amongst the preservation campaigners is that the developer's stabilization proposal is insufficient in terms of cost analysis and that there should be a significant element of conservation work—ultimately in preparation for future re-building.

Twenty-seven years after its abandonment,

following numerous failed attempts to find a new use, and despite the formation of the high-profile and influential St Peter's Building Preservation Trust in 2004, Cardross stands a vandalized, gutted ruin, with increasing interest in the building as a contemporary ruin a backdrop to its current preservation campaign. A number of artists, photographers and film-makers have exploited Cardross as a subject—often with stunning effects. Isi Metzstein, one of the original architects, spoke briefly and somewhat reluctantly about the fate of the complex in 1993: 'I can certainly say that if they try to pull it down, I'll have the last laugh—the building would be almost as



The seminary in 1972 while it was still in use. Saint Peters College, Cardross, Scotland.

(photo: RCAHMS)

difficult to demolish as it was to build'. In his view the building might be suitable for conversion in some circumstances but equally he claimed he would 'rather enjoy the idea of everything being stripped away except the concrete itself—a purely romantic conception of the building as a beautiful ruin.'

—Diane M. Watters

Stained Glass in Modern Architecture *(cont'd from page 9)*

ers still fabricate panes for select projects. Overall, it appears that the epoxy panes, if originally designed and fabricated correctly, have weathered well. One example is the Hall of Science in Flushing, Queens that Wallace Harrison designed for the 1964 World's Fair. Here, Harrison used domestically fabricated faceted glass panes in a geometric design to enclose a large hall. Although some minor water infiltration has occurred (whether due to the connection between the glass and epoxy or the epoxy panes in the concrete structure is unknown) and some maintenance is needed, the faceted glass panes show few signs of deterioration. In contrast major water infiltration has been a problem at the First Presbyterian Church since its opening. Efforts to curb the problem through coating and protective

glazing of the sky-facing panes have helped, but in the early 1990s, the panes in the south- and east-facing walls, where most of the deterioration occurred, were removed and re-fabricated in epoxy; the north wall retains the original concrete panes. Replacement with epoxy panes seems to be the typical long-term solution to deteriorated concrete panes of faceted glass, though it raises questions about material authenticity, original design intent, experimental techniques and materials, and, ultimately the success of the buildings as functional structures, all questions that are difficult to reconcile. As for the longevity of the epoxy panes and the possible preservation issues that may arise, only time will tell.

—Flora Chou

International working party for
documentation and conservation
of building sites and neighborhoods of the
modern movement

P.O. Box 230977
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NATIONAL NEWS
fall 2007



**First Presbyterian Church,
Stamford, CT.**
(photo: Jennifer Ko)

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