



New ways to see New York this summer

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As a native New Yorker and an architect of 30+ years, I'm proud of N.Y.C.'s architecture. And as president of the American Institute of Architects New York chapter, I'm thrilled that this summer, we'll be sharing a number of new ways to appreciate N.Y.C.'s built environment, both in its present, impressive state, and in its promising future.

On June 2, we're hosting the launch party for the new edition of the AIA Guide to N.Y.C.. It's been ten years since the last version guide was published, and to update from the fourth edition to the fifth was a huge undertaking, a reminder of just how much has changed, and how far we've come in the last decade. The launch party on June 2 starts at 6 p.m. with a short talk by Fran Leadon, AIA, the City University professor that, with the late Norval White, FAIA, carried out a tradition that dates back to 1968, when White and his colleague Elliot Willensky, FAIA, wrote the first definite guide to New York's architecture. Check out our website, www.aiany.org, to buy the book, with proceeds going to support the Center for Architecture.

If you'd prefer to get a guided tour of our fair city, what better way to see it this summer than from the water? The AIA New York chapter is setting sail with architectural boat tours. We've chartered boats for June 12 and 26, July 3, 17, 31, August 14 and 28, and September 4 for skyline tours of New York. The three-hour cruises go all the way around Manhattan, looking at new Westside gems, East River icons, and we will even go sailing by the Cloisters, at the north tip of Manhattan. It's a great chance for New Yorkers to get off the island for an afternoon, and a special treat for out-of-towners who want to see the city from a unique vantage. Advance tickets sales will be available on our website, as well.

Between the new Guide and our boat tours, we have some exciting new ways to show you New York's great architecture. But I'm just as excited to show you the FUTURE of N.Y.C.'s built environment with two very special shows opening this summer. First, on June 24, we'll be opening "Our Cities, Ourselves." Organized with the Institute for Transportation Development and Policy, "Our Cities, Ourselves" challenges the design community to come up with transportation solutions for their growing cities. Architects from around the globe tackled the challenging transportation hubs in ten cities—including where our own Brooklyn Bridge touches down in Lower Manhattan—and developed ideas for how to accommodate not only the current traffic, but build for a growing urban population. Our exhibition is kicking off an ambitious yearlong program for ITDP, so stay tuned to learn more about their program for the future of our streets.

We're also showing the future of N.Y.C. in another sense: seven of the top emerging firms in New York will be featured in our "New Practices New York 2010" exhibition. To qualify for the competition, firms had to be incorporated since 2004, and they had to be located in the five boroughs. Beyond that, the sky was the limit—practices focused on theoretical projects, specialized in imaginative installations, or were executing high-end retail design. A distinguished jury met just a

few weeks ago to select seven winners from 65 entrants, and the winners run the gamut of design, with the constant being true excitement for the potential of architecture and what it can do. This is the third iteration of our biennial competition, and we're proud to give exposure and support to promising young talent through this summer's exhibition (opening July 15) and related programming. We'll also give these young members of our architectural community international attention, sending the show to SÃ£o Paulo in 2011.

Finally, for another take on architecture in N.Y.C., I invite you to come see *The Bilbao Effect*, a new play by Oren Safdie. In the play, a world-renowned architect is accused of violating the AIA's code of ethics for a massive development he's building on Staten Island. New Yorkers will appreciate all the local characters, and the parallels to the real-life drama that unfolded in Brooklyn's Atlantic Yards, while design fans everywhere can appreciate a well-acted, heated debate about the role of architecture in our society. The play runs Wednesday-Saturday through June 5, and tickets are just \$18.

Since opening in 2003, the Center for Architecture has been a place for all to learn about architecture and N.Y.C.'s built environment. But I feel like this summer's offerings present a particular confluence of access and opportunity to learn about the city in which we live and the architecture that makes it so wonderful.

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