



## **Making the Center a place for collaboration**

February 22, 2010 - Spotlights

The Center for Architecture's latest exhibition - *Modernism at Risk: Modern Solutions for Saving Our Modern Landmarks* - has opened. The show, which we organized with the World Monuments Fund, marks a watershed collaboration between the design community and preservationists. It was not long ago that some colleagues found it difficult to mention architecture and preservation in the same breath. But we've come a long way. With my predecessor, Sherida Paulsen, FAIA, having served as the chair of the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, and our president-elect, Margaret Castillo, AIA, having co-chaired our chapter's historic buildings committee, we've reached a point where our commitment to great architecture - whether it's the work of our past masters, or our own - is clear. We are eager to work with other groups to celebrate good design in all its manifestations, new and old.

We're also committed to "healthy" architecture. Last month, we hosted the launch of the city's active design guidelines. These recommendations came out of the results of five years of our "Fit City" program, co-sponsored with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The annual conversations spawned a collective effort that brought together AIANY, the NYC Departments of Design and Construction, Health and Mental Hygiene, Transportation, and City Planning. Likewise, the Office of Management and Budget, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, the Mayor's Office for Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, the Department of Buildings and Department of Parks & Recreation, the School Construction Authority, Housing Preservation and Development, the Department for the Aging, and academics from around the country all weighed in on the document. Talk about collaboration - five city commissioners came to the Center for Architecture to speak at the launch! For them, the Center proved to be a festive - and neutral - venue to celebrate an intricate working relationship. We've just renewed our contract with the Department of Health to host another five years of Fit City conferences, and we look forward to future partnerships with city agencies.

Of course, we are not only looking to nonprofits and government - we strive to make connections with industry professionals. As I mentioned last month, we are working with FJ Sciame Construction to build a curtain wall prototype in our exhibition space this fall. We have also co-sponsored programs with many corporate members, who come from related industries through New York and around the globe, and prove to be indispensable resources to our architect members. We are in the midst of a membership drive for 2010 corporate members, and I want to encourage representatives of the real estate community to join us. In terms of collaboration, there is no doubt in my mind that the relationship between real estate professionals and architects can, and should, be a mutually beneficial one. Good design sells - and rents, too! I urge you to visit [www.aiany.org/membership](http://www.aiany.org/membership) or contact [membership@aiany.org](mailto:membership@aiany.org) for more information.

Speaking of industry opportunities, one of our most valuable professional networking events of the

year is coming up - the 2010 Design Awards. Each spring, we sponsor a competition for New York architects and designers. The Design Awards are prestigious - we are the largest local AIA chapter in the country - and the exhibition of the winning designs always proves to be a popular show at the Center. Further, the design award winners are celebrated at an annual luncheon, which is always a great networking event for architects and related industry professionals. This year's celebration will take place at Cipriani Wall Street on April 14. More information on the event is in our ad on the opposite page, and additional information can be found online at [www.aiany.org/designawards](http://www.aiany.org/designawards). I hope to see many of you there.

Moreover, I hope to see many of you at the Center. Architecture does not exist in a bubble - we rely on real estate professionals, just as we collaborate with preservationists, inform city officials, and join forces with the construction industry, to get things done. I look forward to working with you.

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