



International Archive of Women in Architecture

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
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No. 12

New Acquisitions

Women Architects in Romania

Romania, a nation located in southeastern Europe, lies between Bulgaria, to the south, and the Ukraine and Moldavia to the north. Romanians speak a Latin tongue introduced in the time of the Roman Emperor Trajan, who conquered these lands, and made way for a large number of Roman immigrants to settle in the province, called Dacia. During the Middle Ages, modern-day Romania consisted of three principalities: Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania. From the 15th Century, the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia retained a measure of independence by paying heavy tribute to the Ottoman Empire; Transylvania, on the other hand, was absorbed by the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Wallachia and Moldavia, united as one principality, Romania, (1859), continued to be under Ottoman suzerainty. In 1877, Romania gained full independence only with the support of Russian troops. Transylvania joined the principality at the end of WWI. Romania allied with Germany in WWII and surrendered to Soviet troops in 1944. From 1944 until 1989, a communist-led government ruled the country, which had become a satellite of the Soviet Union.

Architectural education commenced in the early 1890's, after Romania gained its independence in a private school under the authority of



(1) Virginia Haret, *Prince Dimitrie Cantemir College* (1926), Bucharest.

the Romanian Architects' Society. It became a state institution within the School of Fine Arts of Bucharest in the late 1890's and an independent Higher School of Architecture in 1904. The name of the institution changed several times—from Architecture Academy in the 1930's, to Faculty of Architecture within the Polytechnic of Bucharest during the 1940's, to the present "Ion Mincu" Institute of Ar-



(2) Henriette Delavrancea-Gibory, *Cantuniar House* (1937), Bucharest.

chitecture in 1952. Although women achieved equal rights in the 1923 constitution (this granted them the right to vote in local elections only), few entered the architectural profession. One of the pioneers was Lucia Dumbrăveanu (b. 1898) who studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris in the early 1920's. In Paris, she met her countryman and future husband Horia Creangă (1892-1943) and in 1927, returned with him to Bucharest to start a busy practice. Although Lucia collaborated with her husband on such Bucharest landmarks as the ARO (Asigurarea Românească), a commission that they won by competition in 1929, her name was forgotten. Likewise, Virginia Maria Andreescu Haret (1894-1962) and Henriette Delavrancea-Gibory (1894-1987) made major contributions to the Modern movement in Romania although their names remain unknown today. Virginia Haret was the first woman to graduate (1919) from the School of Architecture in Bucharest. She continued her studies in Rome and returned to Romania for a long and flourishing practice (figure 1). Henriette Delavrancea-Gibory started her studies at the School of Architecture in 1913 (interrupted during WWI), and graduated in 1926 and, after a successful practice, devoted her time after WWII to historic preservation and renovation. Among her many private houses and villas is the

Cantuniar house in Bucharest (figure 2).

We are grateful to architect Irene Patrulius (b. 1935), who donated her research paper and several slides of the work of these women architects.

After WWII and until 1989, the Romanian government banned private practice and forced architects to work in state-controlled design organizations. Documents from this period have been neglected, or destroyed. A younger generation of architects, eager to develop their own private practices during the 1990's, have not protected this architectural legacy. Fortunately, four women recently donated samples of their work to the IAWA. All four graduated from "Ion Mincu" Institute of Architecture: Maria Militza Sion (b. 1938) in 1961; Doina Marilena Ciocânea (b. 1951) in 1976; Georgeta Gabrea (b. 1953) in 1978; and Ana Uncu (b. 1954) in 1979. They all began their professional careers in state organizations and established private offices in the 1990's.



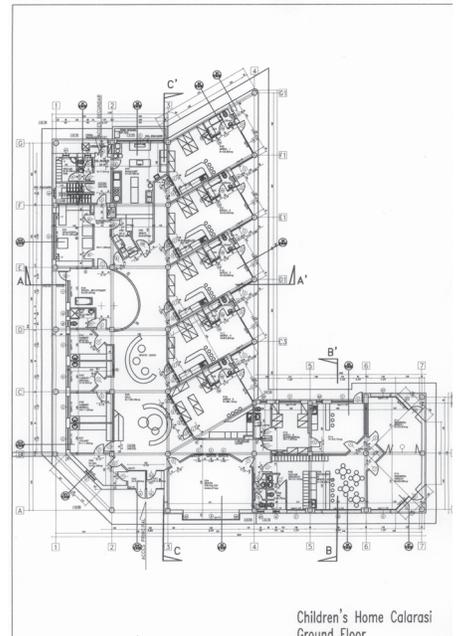
(3) Maria Militza Sion
Holiday Inn (1992-96), Sinaia

Maria Militza Sion

Maria Militza Sion worked for several design organizations including "Project Bucuresti" Design Institute. Her first job was in the provincial town Galati (1961-66), subsequently, she returned to Bucharest. Sion designed many apartment buildings in Bucharest and co-designed four cultural centers in provincial towns: Buzau (1970), in Sibiu (1972), Alba-Iulia (1974) and Calan (1975). For almost ten years (1978-86) Sion participated in the modernization and redevelopment of the city of Miercurea Ciuc in Transylvania. She designed apartment buildings, a hotel, and a large shopping area. She also co-designed the Romanian Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria (1985-88). Militza Sion received the 1972 award of the Union of Romanian Architects for her cultural center in Busau, and again in 1973 for the cultural center in Sibiu. In 1986, the Union recognized her housing neighborhood "1st May" in Bucharest and the following year, she received the award for her work in Miercurea Ciuc.

In 1992, Militza Sion opened a private office in partnership with Marina Neagu Sadoveanu (b. 1946). Their first large project was the Holiday Inn Resort in Sinaia, which Sion began in 1990 with a winning competition entry sponsored by a local travel agency. The subsequent program, however, required a much larger hotel with 4 star amenities including indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts, exhibition and meeting rooms, a conference hall, indoor and outdoor restaurants and bars, etc. Set in a private park, Sion has described the recently completed hotel as "integrated in the landscape-a mountain plateau in the Prahova valley." (Figure 3)

In 1997-98, Militza Sion designed and built an orphanage in



(4) Maria Militza Sion
Orphanage (1997-8), Calarasi. View from
courtyard (above) and plan (below)

Calarasi, Romania. Orphans and abandoned children are a serious social problem in Romania and many orphanages operate in dilapidated buildings ill-suited to their needs. In contrast, the orphanage in Calarasi offers a more sensitive programmatic response to this endemic problem. This facility, whose construction was sponsored by a humanitarian organization and financed by a Swiss banker, provides separate rooms for groups of 8 children, between 2 and 6 years old. Each room has areas for sleeping, eating, and playing and a bathroom. The play areas open to a covered terrace for outdoor games. The facility contains a kindergarten also open to neigh-

borhood children, which integrate the younger orphans into the social life of the community. The administration occupies the attic floor, leaving the entire ground floor to the children. (Figure 4)

The office of Militza Sion built another orphanage in Turnu Severin, Romania, private houses in Sinaia and Bucharest, and a number of office buildings and apartments. Sion is also an artist and received the 1976 annual award for graphic art as well as the 1981 special award of the Jury for Graphic Art. She donated some of her sketches to the IAWA, in addition to drawings and photos of her buildings. A number of her sketches are within the Archive.

Doina Marilena Ciocănea

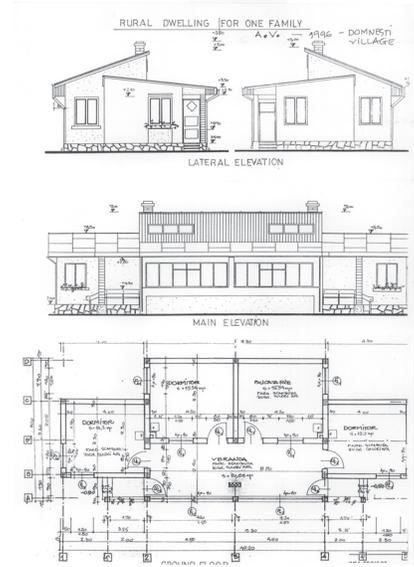
Doina Marilena Ciocănea worked for ten years (1976-87) in the Institute for Design and Construction of Agricultural and Food Production Industries. Her storage facilities for vegetables and fruits; factories for canning them; wineries; slaughterhouses for chickens and rabbits; flour mills and bakeries, were built in many towns and villages around the country. Subsequently, she became principle architect in the "Carpati", state-sponsored firm (1987-90) for the construction of the Romanian "House of the Republic," - later named the "People's House". Today, the Parliament shares this enormous building with an interna-

tional conference center, museums, etc. Ciocănea also designed administrative buildings and workers' housing for several provincial towns.

With privatization, Doina Ciocănea became the chief architect for "PREDA" (1990-94) and later in the firm "MACONZ International" Ltd., designing mostly private residences. After obtaining a master's degree and license in Urban Design and Planning from the Institute of Architecture (1995), she established her private practice. She continued her studies on environmental techniques at "Unesco-Cousteau" University in Bucharest and received a fellowship in 1996 to specialize in public policy and ecology in Madrid, Spain. Doina Ciocănea is presently involved in ecological studies for the town council of Bucharest and recently completed the "Study of Ecological Urban Design for the lakes' shores of the River Colentina in Bucharest" (1996-98). (Figures 5 & 6)

Georgeta Gabrea

Georgeta Gabrea graduated from the "Ion Mincu" Institute of Architecture in 1978. During her studies at "Ion Mincu", she focused on the history of Romanian architecture. In 1974, she studied the history of architecture at the International Center for Architectural Studies "Andrea Palladio" in Vicenza, Italy. She was co-author of several articles (1973-77) in the Romanian periodi-



(6) Doina Ciocănea, rural dwelling, 1996. (plan and elevations)

cal *Arhitectura*. Gabrea began her practice in the "Metroul" enterprise (1978-86), designing underground subway stations for the new metro system of Bucharest and several apartment buildings. Thereafter, she joined "Project Bucuresti" Design Institute (1986-94), collaborating with Venera Trisnevschi-Geta on such large projects as the Bucharest Municipal Library, the "Boema" Musical Theatre, and the sports complex at the Country Club. In 1992, Georgeta Gabrea and Venera Trisnevschi-Geta, with other architects and planners, formed "Capitel" Ltd., offering architectural and urban design, land development, and real-estate services. Under Gabrea's leadership, the company grew and, in 1996, expanded to include "Capitel's" own construction projects. For this purpose, "Capitel" spawned a sister joint-stock company called "Capitel Invest" with Gabrea as president. The company is involved in a wide range of projects, ranging from luxurious single family houses and apartment buildings to office buildings and shopping centers. In 1998, "Capitel" was awarded the Arch of Europe certificate for Excellence and Quality at the 23rd International Con-



(5) Doina Ciocănea, "Old and New", Bucharest, 1995 (ink sketch)

vention in Madrid, Spain.

Georgeta Gabrea donated drawings and photographs of her projects, including, the apartment building on 37 Polona Street, Bucharest (figure 7), an office building in Bucharest, as well as the combined gas station, shopping and restaurant she designed and built at several locations.

Prior to these donations, the archives contained the work of only one Romanian architect, Silvia Paun (b. 1923). Silvia Paun recently donated her publication "Romania: The Heavenly Signs", in which she examines the relationship between stars constellations and Romanian popular beliefs and customs, including lunar and solar ornaments in folk art and architecture.

Ana Uncu

Ana Uncu began her career in the Design Section of Tulcea County (1976-77) and then moved to the Design Studio for the town of Ploiesti (1977-79). She designed apartment buildings for Tulcea and Ploiesti, a public bath in Busteni, a zoological park in Bucov, and renovated schools and housing. In 1980, Uncu was appointed to the Research Institute for Metallurgy in Bucharest, where she designed industrial plants and upgraded existing smelting factories in Bucharest and provincial towns. As private practice became possible, she joined, in 1990, a studio headed by architect Constantin Mihalache, designing commercial facilities; discotecs, restaurants and fast-food places. In 1997, Uncu joined the Ministry of Public Works and Regional Planning and focuses on neighborhood preservation and zoning. Her main interest is in the preservation of folk architecture and villages. She is the author of legislative and legal requirements for sustainable development and a member of commissions for cooperation be-



(7) Georgeta Gabrea and Venera Trisnevschi-Geta, apartment building (1992-95), Bucharest

tween various state administrations. Uncu has served as a design juror, and organizer of exhibitions and symposiums. In 1997 she consulted in the design of bathroom layouts and kitchen furniture at "Sarmis" showroom and planned the "Domus" showroom, which promotes new construction materials.

In 1998, Ana Uncu completed post-graduate studies in historic preservation and restoration of historic monuments at the "Ion Mincu" Institute of Architecture. Uncu's thesis titled "Historical Research in archives and on the site for completing the General Urban Plan of the village Valea Calugareasca, Prahova county, and in view to develop a strategy to preserve the cultural and landscape treasures of this historic place, the hills of Dealu Mare", is currently in the Archive. We acknowledge the generosity and farsightedness of all these women for preserving their work for posterity.

Marcia Feuerstein
and
Milka Bliznakov

News from the Archive

Donations

From April 1999 through March 2000, the IAWA received nine new collections. Donations came from Elizabeth-Charlotte Harling, Jana Vulchanova, Nadya Stamatova, Radka Pavlova, Ana Uncu, Maria Militza Sion, Georgeta Gabrea, Karin Rühle, and Doina Marilena Ciocănea, mostly due to the collecting efforts of Milka Bliznakov during a recent trip to Europe this past summer. Additions to prior donations came from Maria Aubock, Silvia Paun, Inge Horton Sigrid Rupp, Dina Stancheva, and Lilia Gramatikova.

Gerianne Schaad

Newman Library Hosts

IAWA Exhibition

Each year on the occasion of the annual board meeting, an exhibit dedicated to the IAWA opens in Newman Library. A goal of this annual exhibit is to bring a greater awareness of the International Archive of Women in Architecture and of the design work accomplished by women. Two architecture students from the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, Jaime Lawson and C. Scott Patterson, designed the fall 1999 exhibition. "At a time when the number of females practicing in architecture is greatly increasing, there is a need for an organization devoted to female architects and their work," noted Ms. Lawson. The exhibit featured work by Jean Linden Young, M. Rosaria Piomelli, Judith Edelman, Elisaveta (Elka) Rachova Ribarova, Susana Torre, Zelma Wilson, Lois Davidson Gottlieb, and Virginia Currie. Their work was chosen for the quality and aspects in their designs demonstrating a working knowledge of architecture and clearly shared ideas on

First IAWA Research Prize in honor of Milka Bliznakov awarded to Claire Bonney, Ph.D.

The First International Archive of Women in Architecture Research Prize in honor of Milka Bliznakov has been awarded to Claire Bonney, Ph.D., of Basel, Switzerland, for her original research on architect Adrienne Gorska (1899-1969). For the first stage of the prize, applicants outlined proposed projects. Three finalists from this initial stage, Cordula Mohr (Hamburg, Germany), Kweku Quansah (Blacksburg, VA) and Dr. Bonney, submitted proposals that possessed unusual merit. All three were invited to continue their work which was resubmitted for a second stage of judging. The prize, named in honor of Dr. Milka Bliznakov, founder of the IAWA and Professor of Architecture at VPI (Virginia Tech), was established in 1998 by the Board of Advisors of the IAWA with a cash award of \$1,000.00. The intent of the prize is to use IAWA files as the basis for additional research, or to further enrich the collection through original research in the area of design. Dr. Bonney's research on Gorska will become a part of the permanent collection of the IAWA once her project is complete. Jeanette Bowker, Marcia Feuerstein and Tony Wrenn

paper and in various other forms of media. This wide range of media, including pencil and ink drawings, watercolors, photographs, competition drawings, models, and literature, indicated the extent of the collection.

Special Collections staff are designing a Web site to view the exhibitions, and to reveal more about the IAWA collection. It will be available from the IAWA homepage at <http://spec.lib.vt.edu/iawa/>.

*From Your Care To Ours:
Donations to the IAWA*

The International Archive of Women in Architecture is supported by two units at Virginia Tech. The College of Architecture and Urban Studies (CAUS) at Virginia Tech promotes the IAWA and women in architecture through lectures by noted architects, exhibitions, and publishing this newsletter. The actual materials belong to the Archive — conceptual design and working drawings, artwork, photographs, office and research files, correspondence, and other materials are located and maintained in the Digital Library and Archives, Newman Library, Virginia Tech. This archival collection currently holds the papers of 180 architects, landscape architects, interior designers, architecture associations, and other women work-

ing in the built environment. These materials are used for historical research by architectural and design students, historians and scholars.

Collections make their way to the archive by different routes. In some cases women contact the archivist directly, while in other cases, the Board of Advisors actively seek new collections from colleagues. In the case of the Alberta Pfeiffer Architectural Papers, Pfeiffer introduced herself to the archivist in 1988. She wanted to retain her papers and drawings while she was alive, but deeded them to the Archive in her will. The collection was added to the Archive after her death in 1994. The Han Schroeder Architectural Papers were donated to the Archive when Schroeder was solicited by IAWA founder Milka Bliznakov, who encouraged her, as she has so many others, to see the Archive as a place where the materials will be preserved and made available to researchers.

The IAWA has grown since its inception in 1985. Many potential donors of architectural and design materials, or their heirs, have contacted the Archive directly, inquiring about how to donate their collections. One of the first questions that is asked when a collection is offered is "what kind of stuff do you want?" In a perfect world where a person has saved all the products that result

from their activities, they should donate the entire collection. Everything is of scholarly interest, from the first inquiry from a client about designing a structure or space, the initial conceptual drawings, the correspondence and specs regarding the project, the project files, the drawings, the construction photographs, to the final photographs. All of these items tell the story of the thought process of the architect/designer and how these thoughts interacted with the client's desire, the available construction material, and the current trends, to achieve the end product, be it house, commercial building, landscape design, product or interior space.

In addition, if a woman has published papers or books, corresponded with others about architectural issues, issues related to working in a male dominated profession, or taught, these original writings and files are of interest to the Archive. Published material will generally be cataloged for the rare book section of the department. Presentations and notes from memberships in architectural and design associations or exhibits are also candidates for donation. Contacting the archivist for details about collections and their management is important.

If a woman did not save all of this type of material, then donating

what she does have is acceptable. Mylar drawings, the originals, are the preferred choice for the final drawings. Archivists suggest that architects use acid-free papers for sketches, but would rather have sketches made on other mediums, than no sketches. Electronic files are very dependent on software and hardware. Do you still have five-inch floppy computer disks? And do you have a computer that will read them? Print out CAD files or the correspondence that is in electronic formats. Specs tell how the structure should have been built and photographs can show future researchers what the structure looked like in its physical setting. Newspaper clippings and publicity materials can also tell historians how the structure was received and viewed at its initial opening and throughout its life.

The Archive discourages the donation of records, which include items that family members or the donor consider too personal for the world to view, or materials that they frequently use. Donors should consider the archive as a place for historical records and not as a records management facility. If the materials are in danger of being destroyed or coming to harm, terms can be negotiated.

Collections consisting of photocopies are also discouraged. Researchers are not satisfied with photocopies and will ask for the location of the originals. Also, if someone has donated a portion of their materials to one repository, all material should be given to the same repository. It is easier for researchers to gather information when they only need to visit one site.

The Archive seldom places restrictions on the collections and as a rule discourages donors from giving materials that may require complicated restrictions. Restrictions that would be allowed would be to

protect the privacy of an individual, and would have a time limit. Restrictions defeat the very purpose of the Archive, which is to make the materials available to researchers. A collection might not be accepted into the Archive if too many restrictions or conditions are placed on its use.

At the time of the donation, the donor will sign a deed of gift, which transfers ownership and copyright to the Archive. This enables the archivist to allow photocopying by researchers, the use of materials in teaching or presentations, and the display of select items in web exhibits. If the Archive does not receive this permission with the deed of gift, then the donor or heirs need to be contacted every time a researcher desires to use the materials. If contact cannot be made, then the material cannot be used, and the purpose of the creation of the IAWA is defeated. For further information about donating a collection please contact Gerriane Schaad at specref@vt.edu or 540-231-6308 or look at the collections development policy located on the IAWA web page - <http://spec.lib.vt.edu/iawa/>.

Gerri Schaad and Laura Smith

*Changing of the Guard:
Personnel Changes at the IAWA*
Gerriane Schaad:
IAWA Manuscripts Curator

Gerri Schaad is the new Curator of Historical Manuscripts and an assistant professor on the faculty of Virginia Tech's University Libraries. On January 10, 2000, she assumed responsibility for processing materials donated to the International Archives of Women in Architecture, among other responsibilities within Special Collections. She also answers reference questions, creates finding aids, and frequently fills in for the head of Special Collections,

Gail McMillan, the Archivist for IAWA and Director of the Digital Library and Archives.

Schaad is highly regarded and qualified, having worked at Smithsonian's National Anthropological Archives; Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks, the premier research center for the studies of Byzantium, Pre-Columbian Art, and landscape architecture; and Radcliffe's Schlesinger Library. She was also Curator of Manuscripts at the University of Texas at El Paso. Before moving to Blacksburg, Schaad supervised manuscript processing for the Special Collections Department at the Fondren Library, Rice University (Houston). While with Rice, she used digital imagery for world wide web exhibitions and developed a project to digitize architectural holdings within the collection. Schaad holds a Masters degree in Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida and certification from the Academy of Certified Archivists.

Schaad sees her move to Virginia Tech as an opportunity to aid researchers worldwide - whether they are in Blacksburg or Bulgaria. The IAWA is already benefiting from her wealth of experience in obtaining material from donors, arranging and describing collections, and preserving drawings, documents, and photographs while providing surrogate copies via the Web.

Gail McMillan

Federica Goffi Assists
with Collection Management

The Special Collections Department was fortunate to hire Frederica Goffi, a doctoral student in architecture, to process several architecture collections. Under the guidance of Tamara Kennelly, Goffi processed the Elizabeth-Charlotte Harling Papers. She has also processed and written a guide to the

papers of Jana Vulchanova and Radka Pavlova under the guidance of Gerriane Schaad. Goffi is a second semester student in the Environmental Design and Planning Doctoral Program, focusing on restoration, the same topic she studied in Italy where she received her degree in Architecture. Her experience includes 4 years at the Department of Architecture, University of Genoa, Italy working under Prof. Buti where she specialized in diagnostic study and structural assessment of "antique" timber structures. She has performed diagnostic studies on buildings dating from the 16th to 19th centuries.

Goffi applied for the internship to become "familiar with archives, archival methods and their organization. Having the chance to see materials more closely and to get knowledge about what is available could be useful for future research. ... It is interesting to see how much women have done in architecture, especially because not much is taught about them."

Gerriane Schaad

Laura Katz Smith:

Manuscripts Curator Extraordinaire

When Laura Katz arrived at Virginia Tech's University Libraries in 1987, she had just received her Masters in Library Science from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She found a small collection named the International Archive of Women in Architecture. Now, there are over 175 collections she has preserved.

Katz Smith has fond memories, including the acquisition of the Han Schroeder papers, the archive's first significant donation. She recalls when Schroeder, who was in Special Collections working on translations of the work from Dutch, helped Katz, the then novice manuscripts curator. She also recalled her correspondence with Alberta Pfeiffer of

Hadlyn, Connecticut, who was in her late 80s when Katz Smith first visited Pfeiffer's home. She saw an abundance of work stored in rusted cabinets. Although Pfeiffer was not yet ready to part with it at that time, the Katz-Pfeiffer correspondence continued for several years.

Early in her tenure at Virginia Tech, Katz Smith received a grant from the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA) to begin the *IAWA Newsletter*. Clara Cox edited the first issue published in the fall of 1989. By then, 98 women and organizations had donated materials.

Laura saw her connection to the IAWA principally in terms of preserving materials. She saw the IAWA grow to over 175 collections with a guide, inventories, and Internet access through her World Wide Web pages, still at <http://spec.lib.vt.edu>

Laura Katz Smith is currently Curator for Business, Railroad, Labor and Ethnic Heritage and Immigration Collections, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, 405 Babbidge Road, U-205, Storrs, CT, 06269-1205.

(From an interview at Virginia Tech, March 1999)

Gail McMillan

International and Other News

One of the first donations to the IAWA was made by Hilde Weström (b.1912), an architect in Berlin, Germany. She recently donated the rest of her work to the Berlin Gallery. This spring, the Verborgene Museum in Berlin mounted an exhibition of Weström's life-long achievements (March 25-April 30, 2000) curated by Prof. Dr. Kerstin Dörhöfer. Hundreds of people came to the exhibition to enjoy the beautiful display in the Berlin Pavilion. IAWA founder, Milka Bliznakov spoke at the opening and

contributed to the comprehensive catalogue. She also participated in a workshop (March 31-April 2) in Berlin for members of the International Union of Women Architects (UIFA) organized by Ute Weström, Hilde Weström's daughter. At the workshop, participants from many European countries discussed the future development of the International Archive of Women in Architecture and made commitments to donate their work to the IAWA.

Board of Advisors member Solange d'Herbez de la Tour is planning the next Congress of International Union of Women Architects (UIFA). It will take place in Vienna, Austria at the end of June/beginning of July.

Lois Gottlieb's Photographic Exhibit "A Way of Life: An Apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright, 1948-49" was at the Octagon in Washington DC this Spring 2000. The exhibition will be in Blacksburg (March 2001) to become part of the permanent collection of the IAWA.

A Note from the Chair

This IAWA received a unique form of material for the collection: a CD entitled *A History of Architecture Cybercore Project* authored by Melanie Luck von Claparede and Humberto Rodriguez-Camilloni with the assistance of Paul Tavernese. Designed as a companion piece for students of art and architecture from the Carolingian to the early Gothic Period, the CD contains case study modules with lectures, images, bibliography, glossary and a listing of museums where some of the original artifacts may be found. This wonderful interactive compilation in the CD format represents yet another possibility when considering archival material.

Donna Dunay



International Archive of Women in Architecture

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