



International Archive of Women in Architecture

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Fall 2005 No. 17

Gae Aulenti

In 2003 the College of Architecture & Urban Studies Summer Travel Abroad Program included a visit to the studio of architect Gae Aulenti in Milan, Italy. In June a group of architecture and interior design students met with Aulenti and an associate architect to discuss her current work and her musings on the architecture profession.

The June visit immediately followed the IAWA's acquisition of a set of Aulenti drawings associated with the conceptual designs for the new Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. These drawings (39 black and white, and color, computer-printed) reside in folders two and three of the IAWA Aulenti archive. Folder one contains biographical materials listing projects and awards, newspaper and magazine articles, and the published catalog, *Gae Aulenti e il Museo d'Orsay*, (Electa, 1987).

The focus of the discussion with the students was two-fold: the opening of the new Asian Art Museum, which had just occurred in March, and Aulenti's reflections on education and the current state of the design profession. As an opening, Aulenti reminded the students that she had been in practice for 50 years and was educated in Milan at the Polytechnic where she was the only female in architecture. She brought out plans and renderings of her current projects, which included the Museum of Catalan Art in Barcelona and a waste management facility south of Venice.

She made a number of remarks to the students when asked what wisdom she might impart. "You are a bank [an intellectual bank] of your education—the years in school comprise 25 percent of the bank." There were two parting comments to the students as the visit ended. "It is better to die for surprise, than to waste yourself on waiting," Aulenti said, and noted that the adage was better told in Italian. Finally she said to the students: "Always be contemporary."
--Mitzi Vernon



Gae Aulenti's office, Milan, Italy



Message from the Chair

Two significant events this year will strengthen and maintain the IAWA in perpetuity. First, the Library's renovation, redesign, and expansion of Special Collections, which houses the IAWA collection, is currently on track and should be complete in time for the 20th anniversary of the founding of the IAWA. We are grateful to Eileen Hitchingham, Dean of the University Libraries, for leading this extensive expansion of special collection's facilities. Secondly, our endowment will soon expand due to a major bequest from past advisor Sigrid Rupp. This will provide ongoing support to the Collection, Library, Research and Programs associated with the IAWA. Please visit our website for up-to-date information on both of these initiatives.



Annual Meeting in Toulouse, France

This year we coordinated our efforts with the Special Collections department of the University Library (which holds the documents) in order to clarify and revise our relationship and responsibilities related to the hiring of a full time archivist for the IAWA, funding the IAWA, and collection development. This was primarily due to our development of a Charter (based on our By-Laws) and identification of stakeholders (based on our Board of Advisors) to formalize the IAWA Center in the University's eyes. The By-laws and Charter are almost completed. Regarding funding, we expanded our current endowment for the annual Milka Bliznakov Prize due to an upsurge in donations. We also have been developing an agreement with the trustees of the Sigrid Rupp Trust for a bequest left to the IAWA by Sigrid Rupp, one of our past Advisors. The Library also received a bequest for an endowment to support the Library's preservation efforts. The IAWA Center assisted in establishing a research agenda within HABS (Historic American Building Survey) for the identification of women designers who worked for and in HABS and the NPS (National Park Service) as well as to identify women designed American buildings to be included in their records. This year they established a summer internship, awarded to Amy Gilly, Ph.D student in Virginia Tech's Ph.D. in Environmental Design and Planning stream in Architectural Representation.

Jennifer Meehan, IAWA Archivist, left Virginia Tech for the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. A search for an archivist is underway. Until then, Amy Shaffer, under the direction of Gail McMillan, head of Special Collections and acting IAWA archivist, processes and maintains the Collection until a permanent professional archivist is named. The Collection continues to expand. Recent acquisitions include the Sigrid Rupp Collection, acquired following Ms. Rupp's death. For complete acquisitions, see the Archivist's report elsewhere in this newsletter. The IAWA Board of Advisors continues to identify and assist in the acquisition of work for the Archive. These include work from

Greece, Mongolia, Pakistan, Canada (Montreal), the USA, Japan, Korea, Belgium, Denmark, Israel, Egypt, South America, and other locations. Advisors and Archivists also lectured both locally and abroad on the Collection, the programs of the IAWA, research utilizing the IAWA documents, designed and mounted exhibits about IAWA and its programs, and continued to raise funds to support the Collection and its use.

Annual Meeting:

The Annual Meeting was convened on September 5, 2004 in Toulouse, France, to coincide with the 14th Congress of UIFA (International Union of Women in Architecture). It was attended by IAWA Founder and Emerita Advisor Milka Bliznakov as well as IAWA Advisors Lois Gottlieb (San Francisco, USA), Junko Matsukawa-Tsuchida (Tokyo, Japan), Ute Weström (Berlin, Germany), Solange d'Herbez de la Tour (Paris, France), Donna Dunay (Virginia Tech), and Marcia Feuerstein (Chair, IAWA). UIFA was founded and directed by Advisor Solange d'Herbez de la Tour. The IAWA exhibit at the Congress provided attendees with an overview of the IAWA collection and programs, including the Newsletters, Milka Bliznakov Prize, and student research. D'Herbez de la Tour led the Congress, and Weström, Matsukawa-Tsuchida, Gottlieb, and Bliznakov participated in sessions within the Congress, and Dunay and Feuerstein presented research and projects for the Congress.

Election results for advisors, emeritus advisors, and honorary advisors were as follows: Former advisor Inge Horton was elected IAWA Emerita Advisor. In conferring this status to Ms Horton, the Board of Advisors expressed deep appreciation for her contributions to the IAWA as well as her ongoing scholarly research and writings which bring to light the history of women's involvement in architecture. She has been and continues to be a potent voice for the IAWA and women in architecture.



Ameline Essesse, Lois Gottlieb, Marcia Feuerstein, and Milka Bliznakov at the IAWA exhibit



Heather Ball, the head of the Art and Architecture Library for Virginia Tech, was elected to the executive committee of the IAWA's Board of Advisors and appointed IAWA Secretary. Donna Dunay and Marcia Feuerstein were re-elected to the Board of Advisors. Professor Dunay will continue to lead the Milka Bliznakov Prize committee and Professor Feuerstein was re-elected to continue as Chair of the Board of Advisors.

Barbara Nadel, FAIA, was elected as an off-campus Advisor on Board. Ms. Nadel, an architect in Forest Hills, New York, is the editor and author of the award winning book *Building Security Handbook for Architectural Planning and Design*, for which she received a commendation from the Milka Bliznakov Prize. Nadel brings to us her extensive experience as an author and practitioner in the greater New York City area. A past president of the AIA New York City Chapter, she is perfectly situated to identify women who practiced in the New York metropolitan area and beyond. She is vibrant spokesperson throughout the architectural community who will give voice to the IAWA throughout the country. Off-campus advisor Gerriane Schaad, Archivist of the University of Texas at San Antonio, was also re-elected to another term on the Board of Advisors. Professor Schaad has been instrumental in the development of the IAWA collection development policy, which is still under review.

Despina Stratigakos, who retired from the Board this year, was elected Honorary Advisor to the IAWA. Dr. Stratigakos, teaches at Harvard University and specializes in modern European architecture and urban planning, women architects and designers in Europe and the United States, and theories of gender and design. She will continue to be active on the Milka Bliznakov Prize committee. Mitzi Vernon, on-campus advisor and secretary, retired from the Board in order to return to her research. We also recognize Jennifer Meehan, past IAWA Archivist. In addition to her careful archival knowledge and experience, she developed a number of grants to preserve and maintain the IAWA collection. These will be used as a template for future funding applications.



Ute Weström at 14th Annual UIFA in Toulouse, France

Recent applicants for both stages of the Milka Bliznakov Prize revealed a number of significant proposals for the annual Milka Bliznakov prize. While a prize was not awarded this year, two projects warranted special consideration and were awarded commendations by the jury: Dorita Hannah from Wellington, New Zealand (un-housing performance: The Heart of PQ, "an exhibition/event on the Senses in Performance," constructed at the Prague Quadrennial (PQ)) and Janet Stoyel from Sheldon, United Kingdom (Sonicloth c. , a new product and design). These are announced elsewhere in this Newsletter.

As an international archive dedicated to preserving the physical record of women's involvement in and contributions to architecture and related design fields, we thank you for your continued support of the IAWA mission, collection, and programs. The only such archive in the world, the IAWA has played a crucial role in collecting work that would otherwise be lost. The archive collects materials from the modern and contemporary periods, with an emphasis on the first generation of female practitioners (before WWII). As the collections have expanded, the archive has also become an important research and study center on gender and women in architecture. We welcome you to visit and use the Collection.

Marcia F. Feuerstein, Chair, IAWA Board of Advisors

News of Our Advisors

Solange d' Herbez de la Tour, distinguished member of the IAWA Board of Advisors, has been recognized by the French government. On April 5, 2005 she was awarded the prestigious title Commander de la Legion d' Honneur for her unique service to France and to the world. Solange founded the International Union of Women Architects in 1963; the organization has a membership representing over 80 countries. She also organized the fourteen congresses of this organization, each gathering concurrent with an international exhibition of recent works by women architects from around the world. These congresses took place in Paris, France (1963, 1978, 1983), Monte Carlo, Monaco (1969), Bucharest, Romania (1972), Ramsar, Iran (1976), Seattle, Washington and Washington, D.C. (1979, 1988), Berlin, Germany (1976, 1981, 1984), Copenhagen, Denmark (1991), Capetown, South Africa (1993), Budapest, Hungary (1996), Tokyo, Japan (1998), Vienna, Austria (2001), and Toulouse, France (2004). Each congress addressed a specific issue such as "Participation in the Shaping of New Towns," "The Humanization of Urban Space," "Housing and the Environment of Children," and "Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the National Architectural Heritage." Many participating women, in the exhibitions for these congresses, have donated their exhibit panels to the IAWA or have sent some of their work for inclusion in the Archive. All UIFA Congresses have created a friendly, stimulating and highly informative atmosphere. They have augmented the global vision of the profession, promoted international understanding and cooperation, and consolidated permanent friendships. Solange will be donating the prominent



archives of the UIFA collected during the past forty years to the IAWA. We join members of the UIFA around the world in congratulating Solange for this distinguished award and we wish her many more years of professional and personal successes.

Milka Bliznakov



Solange d' Herbez de la Tour, right, and Dana Smejkalova

2005 Archivist's Update

New Collections

Joyce Oron, Israel, Architecture and Town Planner, donated architectural plans and accompanying photos. Projects documented include schools, apartment buildings, and community buildings she has designed in the last 15 years.

Czesia Zielinska, Canada, donated documentary information about UCOPAN, a concrete building panel building system she and her husband invented used internationally to create quick, inexpensive, and stable housing. She also donated artwork from her Ford Foundation funded trips aboard.

Via Anna Sokolina, the IAWA received videotapes of television documentaries about Russian architects produced by **Irina Korobina**, the current director of The Center of Contemporary Architecture in Moscow. Sokolina also secured two handwritten manuscripts and a published work about Soviet architecture by the noted and recently deceased Moscow art historian Prof. **Vigdaria Khazanova**.

Milka Bliznakov returned from the **UIFA 14th Congress**, Toulouse, France, with the posters documenting projects by **Hiroko Inagaki**, **Dr. Yaeko Ishikawa**, **Kazuko Masamune** and **Junko Matsukawa-Tsuchida** of Japan, **Yifang Xu** of China, and **Alice Finnerup Moller** of Denmark. Virginia Tech alumni **Cathi and Stephen House** of House+House Architects gave a complete set of plans and finished-project photos of the

Jarvis residence in Oakland, California, along with their book, *Mediterranean Villages: An Architectural Journey*. **Dr. Marcia Feuerstein** donated some of her architectural plans, competitions, teaching papers, and biographical material.

Additions to Collections

A video of an interview with German architect **Hilde Weström** was added to her collection. **Lois Davidson Gottlieb**, California, sent additional architectural plans as well as some schoolwork and material about the production of a book and a movie. Information was added about **Gae Aulenti** and **Alessandra Muntoni** of Italy. Architectural plans were added to the collections of Bulgarian architect **Nevena Stoianova Kechedzhieva** and **Ilona Nánásy** of Hungary. **Laura Horstman Fisher**, FAIA, Chicago, added her College of Fellows nomination dossier. The Archive received 50 cu. ft. from the estate of **Sigrid Rupp**, containing materials from her Palo Alto, California, firm, SLR/Architects, including architectural plans, project files, and office records, as well as photographs, slides, and annotated photo albums documenting her projects and international travels.

Work in the Archives

Three architecture graduate students helped process seven collections, Vidya Subramanian, Madhulika Pise, and Kristin Maki, the latter funded by a grant from the Beverly Willis Architectural Foundation.

Work continues on the 350 cubic feet of the Eleanore Pettersen Architectural Archive. Former Manuscripts Archivist Jennifer Meehan processed 50 cubic feet of project files before moving to the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art in Washington, DC. Interim Manuscripts Archivist Amy Shaffer arrived in Oct. 2004 and has focused almost entirely on the IAWA. She has organized 30 cu.ft. of Pettersen's personal, office, and professional files as well as some photographs and slides. A collection as large as this would normally take two to three years to fully process with a full time manuscripts archivist. Shaffer, along with other DLA faculty, Eve Trager and Gail McMillan, submitted two grants proposals to support the IAWA, and the Pettersen collection in particular, to the National Endowment for the Humanities and to the National Historical Publications and Records Administration.

Amy Shaffer and Gail McMillan

Call for Proposals - 6th Annual Milka Bliznakov Prize

The Milka Bliznakov Prize, conferred in recognition of research that advances knowledge of women's contributions to architecture and related design fields, was created to encourage the use and growth of the International Archive of Women in Architecture (<http://spec.lib.vt.edu/iawa/>). The IAWA invites architects, scholars, and researchers to honor IAWA founder Milka Bliznakov through their research on women in architecture and related design fields. Their research, in concert with the preservation efforts of the IAWA, will help fill the current void in historical

knowledge about women's professional achievements. The archive encourages such research in addition to its goal of preserving archival materials related to the work of women who shaped the built and designed environments, thus preserving for posterity a record of their achievements. The Board of Advisors of the International Archive of Women in Architecture (IAWA) presents this annual prize of \$1000 following a two-stage process: In **Stage One**, applicants register their proposal, which outlines the work they plan to complete within the coming year. **Stage Two** occurs the following year, when applicants submit their completed projects. The winner of the prize is selected from among these projects.

STAGE ONE: REGISTRATION BY PROPOSAL

A 500-word proposal with curriculum vitae must be received or postmarked by November 1, 2005. The proposal must be forwarded in two forms — by electronic submission and hard copy by mail. Proposals may include an original project, research, or scholarly work, which contributes to and advances the recognition of women's contributions in design. The board encourages proposals that draw upon or expand the IAWA collections and reflect upon the broader context of women's contributions in the field of design. The product of the work should be specified in the initial proposal.

STAGE TWO

The IAWA jury awards the Bliznakov Prize for the completed project that best advances the recognition of women's contributions to architecture and related design fields while encouraging the use and growth of the International Archive of Women in Architecture. The final project must be received by November 1, 2006.

The prize money will be awarded following review of the second-stage submissions to the IAWA jury. For further information, please contact Donna Dunay, ddunay@vt.edu. Proposals for stage one of the IAWA Milka Bliznakov Prize should be sent to:

IAWA Executive Committee
ATTN: Donna Dunay, AIA
Chair, Milka Bliznakov Prize
202 COWGILL HALL (0205)
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

The Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation

The Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation was established in 2002 to promote research on women's contributions in the fields of architectural design, the building arts, urban planning, and architectural history and criticism. Ms. Willis's own career inspired the focus on historical inquiry. She was a successful architect and designer at a time in the 20th century when the profession was dominated by men. The Foundation funds a variety of fellowships and grants intended to support innovative projects that expand the knowledge about and recognition of women working in architecture and related professions in the

U.S. during the middle years of the twentieth century, and that lead to the dissemination of this knowledge to professional or public audiences. The Beverly Willis Prize, which will be awarded in 2007, is to be given to a woman for outstanding achievement in architectural design, the building arts or urban planning, who has also demonstrated leadership in her professional field as well as in the civic arena. BWAf also supports a variety of programs with similar goals, including the IAWA. Willis's own archive is in the IAWA collection.



Beverly Willis, self portrait from the IAWA collection

The Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation (**BWAf**) works to advance the scholarly study and public recognition of the contributions made by women to the architecture professions in the United States during the middle years of the twentieth century. To this end, **BWAf** supports a variety of programs geared to both professional and public audiences. By promoting research that focuses on the contributions of women practitioners in the fields of architectural design, the building arts, urban planning, as well as architectural history and criticism, **BWAf** hopes not only to reshape the discourse within the architecture profession as well as within the public realm, but also to ensure that it takes place within a culture of equality.

BWAf also announces a colloquium to take place in November of this year: **"Fabricating Identity."** Does one find an architecture identity—like finding or discovering one's racial, ethnic, sexual identity—or, is it a matter of production, fabrication—just like the production and fabrication of architecture itself? What are some of the conditions and criteria involved in the identity process? What kind of role does memory play in the identity process? It takes many participants to create one identity; how do the historian and critic contribute to this production? How can the historian and critic shape this identity, and how are their approaches different from that of the architect?

The **BWAf** Colloquium will explore some of the ways that architecture identity has been formed, produced, fabricated over the past fifty years, as well as speculate about how architecture legacies and historical imprints are (or could be) evaluated in the 21st century. The Colloquium will be moderated by Diane Favro, PhD, Professor of Architecture, UCLA, and immediate past President of the Society of Architectural Historians.

Friday, November 4, 2005, 6:00 - 8:00PM
Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place
New York, NY 10012

For more information, go to www.BWAf.org // (212) 577 1200



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Commendations: Fourth Milka Bliznakov Prize

The Milka Bliznakov Prize is conducted annually to recognize research that advances knowledge of women's contributions to architecture and related design fields. This year the Board of Advisors of the International Archive of Women in Architecture is pleased to announce the recognition of two finalist projects with Commendations; *un-housing performance*: *The Heart of PQ* by Dorrita Hannah of Wellington, New Zealand and Sonicloth© by Janet Stoyel of Sheldon, United Kingdom.

The Commendation recognized *un-housing performance*: *The Heart of PQ*, "an exhibition/event on the Senses in Performance," as an important project that extends the reach of women in architecture. The work challenges the notion of boundaries in architecture related to performance. Five main sections constructed as towers define a landscape for the senses with a tower devoted to each - taste, touch, sight, sound, and smell, and draw performance into relationship with the body, rituals, and constructed material. Constructed at the Prague Quadrennial (PQ), artists collaborated during two-weeks of construction followed by two weeks of performance inhabitation with 50 artists from around the world.

The Commendation recognized Sonicloth© as an important development for textiles in architecture with the development of this patented product. The Jury found special interest in the sustaining relationship of this material development and uses to enhance existing material manufacturing, since the research work involved constructing a design team with an old established family concern noted for precision weaving. Stoyel states

that, Sonicloth "challenges the perception of the textile medium." The product Sonicloth challenges the architectural profession to utilize wire textiles and broaden the scope of architecture and related design fields.

Donna Dunay, Chair, Milka Bliznakov Prize

We are grateful to the following individuals who generously donated funds to the IAWA:

Anonymous (CCA)

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Jane Hastings

Inge Horton

Eva Huebscher

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