

The Livable City

July 1978 Number 5/2

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GRAND CENTRAL never was just a railroad station. Who has walked through its main concourse without sensing the majesty of the place.



Drawing, Susannah Kelly

GRAND CENTRAL — SAFE AT LAST

After four court battles over nine long years, Grand Central Terminal is safe. On June 26, 1978, the Supreme Court of the United States, in a 6-3 decision, affirmed rulings of the New York courts upholding the application of New York City's Landmark Law to bar the construction of an office tower above the Terminal. This is a victory for the thousands of members of the Committee to Save Grand Central, for all those New Yorkers who love the building and fought so hard to protect it, and for defenders of landmarks across the United States.

Kent Barwick, Chairman of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, called the Court's ruling "enormously encouraging and a watershed in the battle for civility in the city."

The Committee to Save Grand Central was founded in 1975, eight years after the Terminal was designated a City Landmark. In 1975 and 1977, the Committee sponsored noontime rallies in front of the Terminal to bring public attention to the danger to its landmark status, which was being challenged by its owner, Penn Central.

The battle to preserve landmark status passed from the City courts to the State courts, and eventually reached the Supreme Court. At that point the Committee to Save chartered an Amtrak train, named for one day (April 16, 1978) *The Landmark Express*, to go to Washington, D.C., with several hundred Grand Central supporters as an eleventh-hour media event to attract national attention to the importance of this case to all landmark designations.

The Grand Central case never was an ordinary landmark battle, but then Grand Central never was an ordinary

train station either. *What do you think this is, Grand Central?* — always referring to intense pedestrian traffic in all directions — became a national cliché, possible America's first urban cliché (as opposed to our tradition of pastoral clichés about grass being greener, eggs best not counted, and the rudeness in staring at horses' teeth).

For many people, important events in their lives have been connected with Grand Central — expectant arrivals, departures tinged with sadness, summer camp trips.

In the thirties, there appeared a drama series on radio in which a changing cast of characters met with and muddled through an array of crises; and the plots, whether joyful romances or tragic melodramas, ingeniously required that all the principal characters pass through the terminal. It was called "Grand Central Station," and its breathless introduction was, from 1937 to 1953, the most engaging opening on radio.

"Grand Central Station! As a bullet seeks its target, shining rails in every part of our great country are aimed at Grand Central Station, heart of the nation's greatest city. Drawn by the magnetic force of the fantastic metropolis, day and night, great trains rush toward the Hudson River, sweep down its eastern bank for one hundred and forty miles, flash briefly past the long red row of tenement houses south of 125th Street, dive with a roar into the two and one-half mile tunnel that burrows beneath the glitter and swank of Park Avenue . . . and then . . . GRAND CENTRAL STATION . . . crossroads of a million private lives, gigantic stage on which are played a thousand dramas daily!" — Virginia Dajani



Mitchell Rose and Martha Bowers rehearsing

Sarah Wells

ARTISTS ON THE PAYROLL

Along with the cherry trees on Park Avenue and the hydrangeas in Rockefeller Center, a bumper crop of 600 federally employed artists is blooming in the parks and on the streets of New York. They're CETA artists, involved in a \$4-million federal jobs program for unemployed artists in New York City. These are professional actors, painters, sculptors, poets, dancers, and photographers, and they're enhancing our city and our lives with free performances, public art, and community workshops. Their salaries come from the Comprehensive Education and Training Act (CETA), Title VI, of the New York City Department of Employment.

Three hundred of the artists are under contract to the Cultural Council Foundation (CCF), which, in turn, subcontracts the artists to six cultural organizations: the Association of Hispanic Arts, the Black Theater Alliance, the Brooklyn Philharmonia, the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, the Foundation for the Community of Artists, and Jazzmobile. Two hundred other artists are working under the auspices of La Mama Experimental Theater, Hospital Audiences, Inc. (HAI), Theater For The Forgotten (TFTF), and the American Jewish Congress. One hundred others have been put to work on smaller projects. All of them will earn \$10,000 this year, plus fringe benefits.

And what do the artists think of all this? Some are steaming with indignation. Forty members of HAI signed a grievance: they had been booked for 600 performances this year — "An outrageous schedule."

TFTF dancers, whose rehearsal hall is an abandoned warehouse-garage under the Queensboro Bridge, are complaining that their backs ache and that the concrete floors are crippling. "And we have no heat or hot water."

"All my creative energy is sapped on the subway going from one workshop in the Bronx to another in Sheepshead Bay."

"Assignments don't match our skills," says a poet. "Community centers use us as mommies, baby-sitters, or therapists rather than as professionals."

"Disorganized," says a potter. "Administration works hard, but between the cup and the kiln, there's a big abyss."

One Tuesday in April, on my way to the Stamford local on the lower level of Grand Central, I ran past a CETA event, a play. There were no signs, banners, or barkers, and the commuters seemed to

be unaware that a production was going on. The plot involved a blind person who was tied to a stake. It didn't look too good, but the music by a Black Jazz group called JUICE was great.

Much else is great, and some artists are bubbling. "I love the endless creative combinations," says a dancer. "I've had the opportunity to work in ensemble with the great poet Sandra Esteves, and with the fabulous Jazzmobile-CETA on station WBAI. We did a great show. We might even travel with it, take it to Cuba. I initiated my own dance program at a performing arts school."

And from an actor: "Working for La Mama-CETA is a total theatrical experience. None of the distraction of community workshops, just acting and stagecraft. The training program gets us into every aspect of theater."

"The most exciting thing that's happened to me," said Wayne Karnosky, public relations director of CCF. "Sure the program has a few kinks, but no program goes smoothly for at least five years."

I had hopes of getting a CETA photographer to illustrate this story, and it seemed like an ideal way to test the program. Mr. Karnosky was enthusiastic. He assured me he would find a photographer to spend a day with me shooting CETA events and works in progress. He suggested I call back later that day. I did, and was told, "Call back tomorrow. You'll have your photographer." The next day, a Thursday, he said to call on Friday. Friday's call led to a tentative date on Monday. On Monday I was told to call on Wednesday. On Thursday I pleaded urgency. I was told there were contact sheets from which I could choose any number of pictures. There was no further mention of a photographer.

Monday there was a phone call from CCF. "Terribly sorry, but we have only two photographs, both of sculpture in Battery Park. We'll call you back this afternoon."

Tuesday, another call. "We will have photographs on Wednesday. You can have as many as you want."

On Wednesday, I was shown five prints, one of which was too dark to reproduce. There was a polite apology. "We don't yet have what we need to function as a publicity office."

So there are a few kinks. But we're still out there cheering, from our free seats on the aisle. — **Doris Cylikowski** Ms. Cylikowski is a free-lance writer on the arts.

Rhoda Galyn



Park Avenue bridge over 42nd Street, looking east



THE VISIBLE STREETS PROJECT

Right in the heart of Manhattan, on Park Avenue at 42nd Street, restoration work will soon begin on the Park Avenue viaduct. This is the automobile bridge that leaps across 42nd Street in front of Grand Central Station and merges with Park Avenue at 40th Street. The main entrance to Grand Central Station itself is directly underneath it.

Right in the heart of Brooklyn on Fulton Street, a lively shopping strip running seven blocks, two storefronts will soon have bright new murals painted on their security gates. These two storefronts are like some 55 others along Fulton Street. When their galvanized steel gates come down at closing time, a booming chorus of middle-income shops are turned into rather forbidding blank walls on the street. The murals will begin to overcome the isolation of these shops in the evening.

Both these projects, at their different scales, have been generated by the Municipal Art Society, through its Visible Streets Project. Visible Streets was begun by the Society in November 1977, on the premise that selected public places in New York could be dramatically improved, with a little money and a lot of legwork.

The National Endowment for the Arts gave the Society a matching grant of \$10,000 to begin planning and design. This meant that an additional \$10,000 for planning and design had to be raised from private sources in the community. And all money for construction — actual restoration of the bridge or the painting of the murals — had to be raised from private sources too.

Now, all structural metalwork on the Park Avenue viaduct will be cleaned and repainted by late summer, according to Robert Jensen, an architect and director of the Visible Streets Project. This unforeseen success — the actual reclamation of a portion of the bridge this soon —

is a result of the project's happy timing. Independently, the New York City Department of Highways scheduled a normal-maintenance repainting of the bridge at about the time Visible Streets was beginning. "Our original intention was to generate as much interest as we could in the possibility of restoring the viaduct, among the corporate and financial community around Grand Central Station," said Mr. Jensen. "But we've been in the right place at the right time with this project. We've been able to convince the Department of Highways to do a better job of cleaning the bridge steel than is normal with straight maintenance, to change the color they were intending to paint it, and to not paint some bronze light fixtures and statuary that was scheduled for paint under their original contract. The Highways department is good at their work. They have been cooperative and we are now doing this together."

Promising discussions are underway

with two private developers of new buildings near the bridge to see if they will sponsor additional restoration work: cleaning and re-pointing the masonry, casting and installing original ornamental ironwork now missing, and relighting the bridge. Architects Hardy Holtzman Pfeiffer Associates have made drawings of the restored bridge, and an outline specification. The Mayor's Midtown Office and Office of Development have been helping to expedite the project.

The Park Avenue viaduct is a high-visibility public monument. It could (and should) be a major ornamental gateway to the city itself if it is released from the dirt and peeling paint that now force pedestrians and motorists to ignore it, that now make it almost invisible. If all goes well, the Grand Central neighborhood will have a newly painted bridge by September and a completely restored bridge within the next 18 months.

On Fulton Street in Brooklyn, community money and enthusiasm were

there from the start. The Fulton Mall Improvement Association was formed last year to administer the construction of a pedestrian mall along seven of the street's most active blocks. The Association is supported by the merchants themselves, and its Board of Directors saw the Visible Streets project as an immediate and effective way to make an impact on the street. They matched the NEA grant with \$4000 of their own.

Visible Streets sponsored a limited competition among six artists and graphic designers; they were asked to submit preliminary sketches for a three-panel mural to be painted on the security gates in front of two shops. J.J. West Men's Wear and The New Lynns were selected because they were adjacent to each other and in a prominent location, just off Albee Square. The six sketches are shown below, indicating the diversity of subject matter and style that might be possible along the whole seven blocks of Fulton Street.

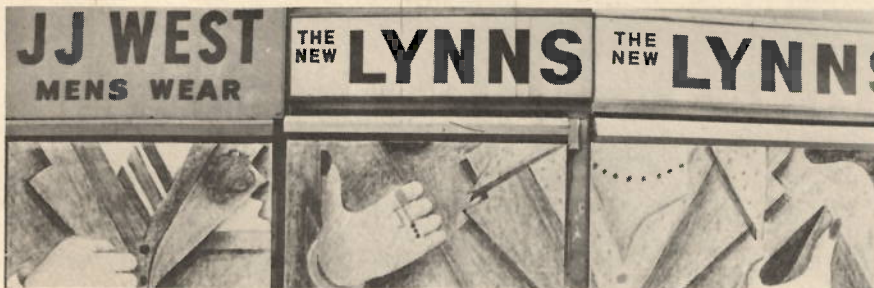
The sketch by Ken Carbone of Gottschalk + Ash has been selected as the winner. His mural will be painted on the doors by a professional sign-painting firm sometime this summer. It is hoped that this first mural on three doors will become a seed demonstration and that many others will follow, sponsored by the Fulton Mall Improvement Association and the merchants themselves.

"We selected the Park Avenue viaduct and the Fulton Street doors for their high-visibility and for their proximity to businesses that might be likely to support them financially," says Margot Wellington, Executive Director of the Society and the person who originally conceived the Visible Streets project. "Private initiatives against visual eyesores in New York can work, if you can focus the incredible energies that exist in almost any neighborhood. That's what we are doing."

The storefronts on Fulton Street, at present



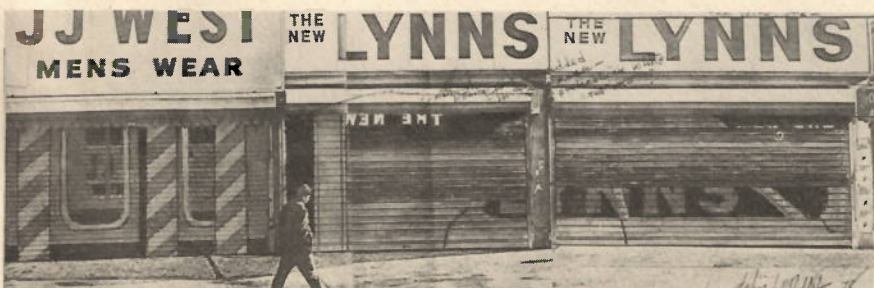
Ken Carbone of Gottschalk + Ash, Ltd.



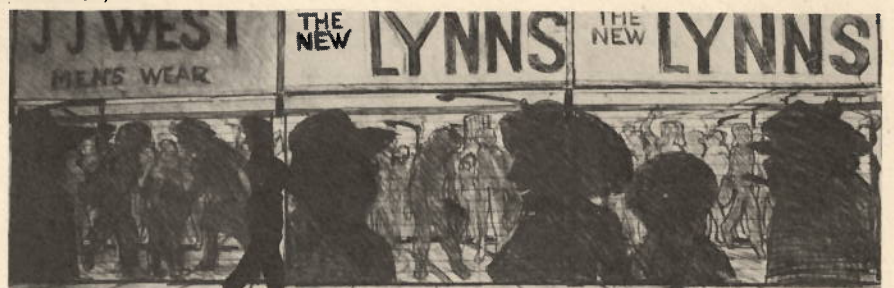
Richard Haas



John Loring



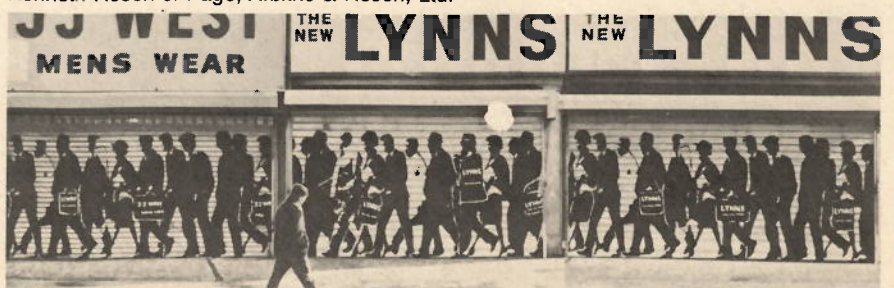
Ken Rush, Jr.



Tracy Turner



Kenneth Resen of Page, Arbitrio & Resen, Ltd.



MA BELL BUILDS HER DREAM HOUSE

Last spring, the *New York Times* ran a drawing of the AT&T tower to be built on Madison Avenue at 55th Street in Manhattan. Architects' press releases rarely make the front page of the *Times*, but there were two reasons why this one was big news: one, it came from Philip Johnson and John Burgee, and two, the building's design was about to turn the architectural world upside down.

For many years, the name of Philip Johnson has been associated with sleek architecture (Seagram's Building, New York State Theater); he is the dean of American architecture, the very leader of the Modern movement in the U.S. Now comes AT&T — with enormous arches and pillars and a top that can keep a conversation going all evening.

We asked a number of people, both architects and laymen, for a one-sentence reaction to the design. (Some of them couldn't do it in one sentence.) Other quotes were taken from articles in newspapers and magazines.

This is architecture of derring do, with a statement to make on the otherwise blandly noncommittal corporate skyline. The building is beautifully detailed, its design elements answering one another. Of course he's a cultural prankster — an aerialist; he is wickedly mischievous and at the same time enormously generous. He is in his glittering hour. — Ann Holmes *Houston Chronicle*

It's mongrel architecture. A prime candidate for the frontispiece of *Unbuilt America Vol. II*. — Jan C.K. Anderson *Director RESTORE*

It is either a joke or Johnson has total disregard for his client. — Anonymous *Houston architect*

An ironic comment on Post-Modernism — Suzanne Stephens *Senior Editor, Progressive Architecture*

What it needs is a clock somewhere — about 250 feet across. — Eliot R. Brown *Draftsman/photographer/actor*

*Honi soit qui mal y pense.** — Cervin Robinson *Architectural photographer*

The base is good and strong. The top is kinky and strong. But for me, Johnson and Burgee's new vocabulary is not yet convincing for the typical floors. Perhaps plain old Modernism was best after all in its treatment of repetitive features. — Stanley Abercrombie *Editor, Contract Interiors*

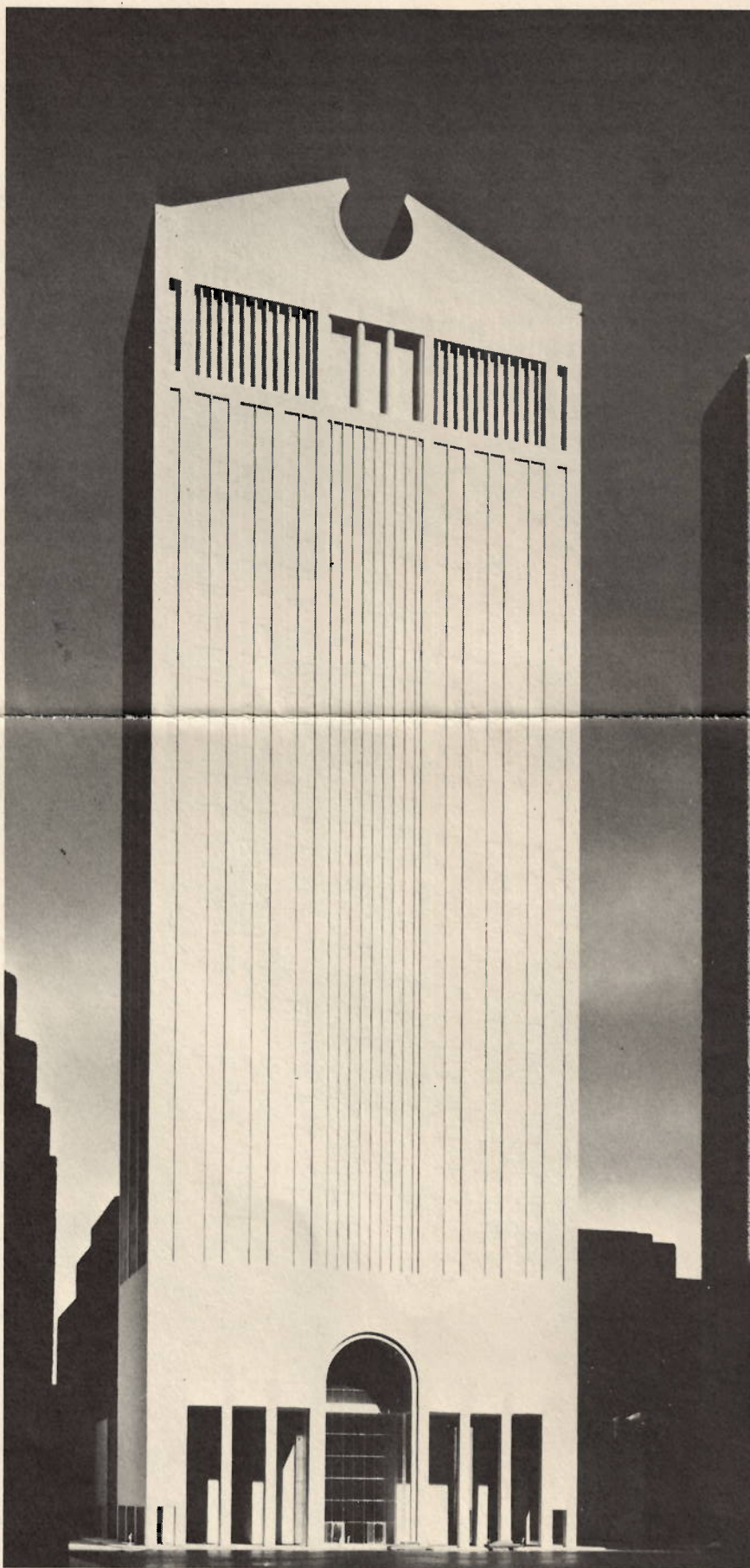
It looks friendly. — Derek Miller *Free-lance writer*

It looks as if Philip has mixed his metaphors this time. After Pennzoil Plaza, he's entitled to at least eight of those, if he needs them. — George Nelson *Writer/designer/teacher*

I love it! — Suzanne Slesin *Senior Editor, Esquire*

The only interesting aspect of the design is its authorship. — Ralph Caplan *Writer*

*Hors de concours.*** — Henry Smith-Miller *Architect*



It's very hard, when you're an architect, to know whether it's good or bad when you're being made fun of. I know a lot of this stuff looks very peculiar; I knew it would as we were designing it. But I believe we are standing at the edge of a mighty watershed between the past half-century of modern architecture and a new uncertain, unclear but clearly fascinating future. — Philip Johnson

What Philip and I are doing is looking for a fundamentally different esthetic. We started to get into this direction because of the restrictions on the use of glass boxes brought on by the energy crisis — it seemed wrong to continue to do the International style here. — John Burgee

Philip is still the aristocrat of architecture in the United States today. He is scholarly, witty, brilliant, eloquent, and — as the French say, *insupportable*. He infuriates his critics, because he knows so much more than they do about history and criticism; he infuriates some of his fellow professionals, because he is always (roughly) one quantum leap ahead of them; and he infuriates some of the younger generation, because he is so much younger in spirit than they are. — Peter Blake *Chairman, Boston Architectural Center*

I think it's a conscious effort to join the latest fad or create one if there isn't one. — Preston Stephens, Jr. *Architect, Atlanta*

IT'S UNIMPORTANT TO ME!!!! — Tod Williams *Architect*

From Master Mies to Mickey Mouse. — Sean Scully *Architect*

I love the top and I hate the bottom. — Peter Wilson *Architect*

There is a trend developing to add more detail to architecture — to have it not appear as cold and foreboding as before. — Ed Menefee *Architect, Atlanta*

There has got to be a better way of bringing back romance to the New York skyline and getting away from the flat-top box. — Roberta Brandes Gratz *Journalist*

It's totally inappropriate and can't possibly succeed. No one has found a way yet to reverse history. It's destined to go nowhere. Architects can't rely on designs of another era to meet today's needs. — John Portman *Architect*

So many people hate it, there must be something good about it. — Dorothy Alexander *Architect*

I think it's a gimmick. One can be forgiven for a gimmick if it's fairly small, if you can drive a block and not see it. But not on this scale. I wonder if we'll live to regret his emancipation. I'm surprised at his attitude which seems to be "I'm bored with good taste; I'm bored with International Style." It's especially surprising coming from Philip Johnson who has always been such a bastion of good taste. Mies van der Rohe said, "One does not have to invent a new architecture every Monday." It strikes me that Johnson is saying, "Well, it's Monday — time to invent a new architecture." An awful lot of people are already doing things that are slightly shocking, mostly younger architects. Johnson seems to be saying, "I'm an older architect; I can shock any of you younger whippersnappers." — Henri Jova *Architect, Atlanta*

It is an extremely significant building. Its totally surprising architecture is significant mainly because of who the architect is. There is some humor involved. The new building is a signal to broaden our views and not feel so bound by the traditions of the International Style and Modern architecture. — George Heery *Architect, Atlanta*

Philip Johnson has precipitated a design crisis. He and his associates propose to give us the biggest and boldest example of Post-Modernism to date. . . . Johnson's calm and courtliness in the face of all the hubbub is simply magnificent. He has no aspirations to be a Post-Modernist, much less lead the movement; he remains just a liberated Modernist, doing what comes naturally. — John Morris Dixon *Editor, Progressive Architecture*

Idiosyncratic. Self-indulgent. Frivolous. With its bottom from the Pazzi Chapel and its lid from a Chippendale break-front, this preposterous design is perhaps a logical dénouement for decades of increasingly mannered formalism. But for Ma Bell — with her carefully nurtured image of rational cheese-paring efficiency, it makes a very odd logotype indeed! — James Marston Fitch *Founder, Historic Preservation Program, Columbia Univ.*

The whole thing is turned in one stroke from a serious building of quality to a bad joke. — Judith Wolin *Professor of architecture, R.I. School of Design*

If he's doing it as a joke, then that's all right. But if he's doing this as a serious answer to today's skyscrapers, it's a tragedy. Either way he has a responsibility to make his intent clear. — Frank Beckum *Professor of architectural history and design, Georgia Tech*

I don't like it at all. I have a thing about broken pediments; they collect dust. — Lorna Nowvé *Municipal Art Society*

Philip Johnson's mistakes have many times proven to be better indicators of future trends than other architects' successes. He is so far ahead of the architectural profession that we should wait for the finished building before attempting to pass judgement. — Bronson Binger *Architect*

It brings a Mona Lisa smile to my face. — Doris Freedman *President Public Arts Council*

Philip is thumbing his nose at New York architecture. — Pat Jones *Executive Director, Cultural Assistance Center*

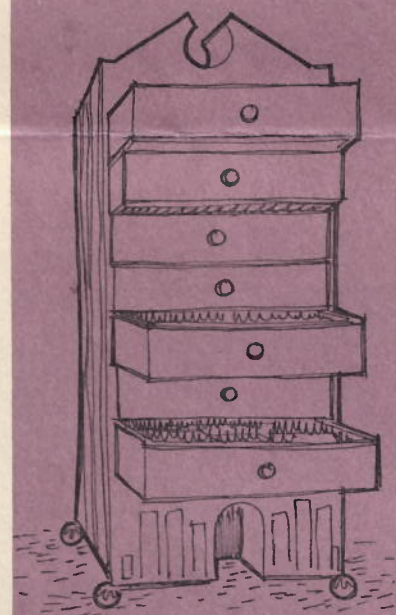
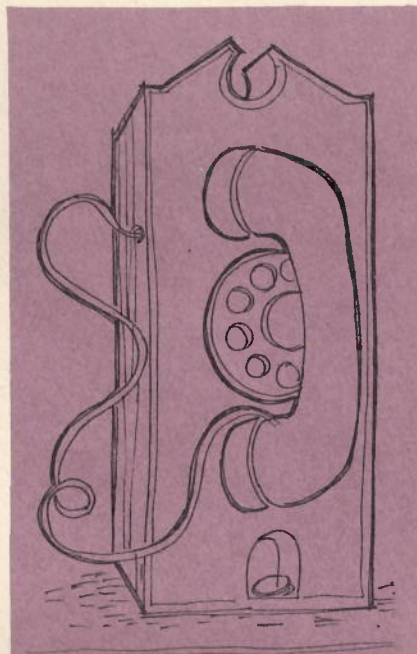
I didn't know Venturi was getting these kinds of commissions. — Tim Prentice *Architect/sculptor*

It displays his marvelous faculty for illustrating current architectural theory in an actual building. — Paul Byard *Architect/lawyer*

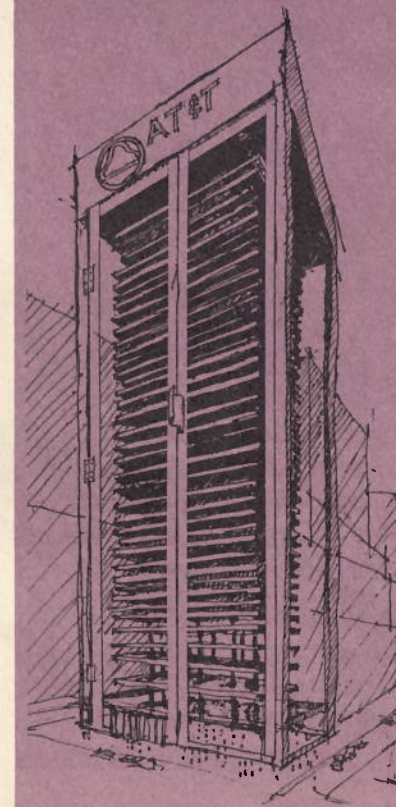
Ah, what perverse imagination to have embroiled circumspect, conservative Ma Bell in such a raging controversy! — Elliot Willensky *Co-author, AIA Guide to NYC*

Is Philip Johnson outfitting the sleek Manhattan skyline with an architectural Nehru jacket? — Bob Dart *Atlanta Constitution*

Can't make a serious comment about the building. Does Philip Johnson go home at night and giggle? — Norval White *Co-author, AIA Guide to NYC*



Arthur Rosenblatt *Vice President, Architecture and Planning, Metropolitan Museum of Art*



Stan Stark *Architect*

If Mies van der Rohe were alive today, he would regard this design with nothing less than loathing, because it is the antithesis of everything he believed in. Some designers are privately furious because they see it as an impediment to the orderly development of a "Post-Modern" architecture. — Paul Gapp *Chicago Tribune*

If this is an expression of Post-Modernism, as it is said to be, then all the other practitioners have gone slightly astray. — Denis Hadfield *Designer, Herman Miller*
P.S. I like the steam coming out of the top.

For the sake of being original, why did he have to design a building which looks like a piece of furniture? — George Cserna *Architectural photographer*

Philip Johnson is the last of the elitist architects — wealthy men with wealthy clients who travel along the path of good taste. I see Johnson preoccupied with the superficial elements of the building. If architecture is led by people like him, the profession will go to hell fast. — Paul Muldawer *Architect, Atlanta*

It's certainly nice to see highrises taking new forms, but does the reference have to be furniture? — Charles Hoyt *Associate Editor, Architectural Record*

It's hard to rip off Post-Modern architecture when you don't have the slightest idea what that is. — Robert Jensen *Writer/architect*

Not since LeCorbusier surprised them with his chapel at Ronchamp have Modern architects been so upset. — Wolf Von Eckardt *Washington Post*

It is appalling that anyone would talk Ma Bell into doing this, and to doing it to New York! Second-rate Kitsch! Raymond J. Wisniewski *Architect, Connecticut*

It's the Municipal Building with an extra added fillip.*** — John Goberman *Producer, Live from Lincoln Center*

Mother knows best. An employee AT&T

Finally, a modern office building with a beginning, a middle, and an end — in that order. — Elliot Beckelman *Public Relations*

The outcry may well be because both the knowing and the naive suspect an architectural rabbit punch. — Ada Louise Huxtable *New York Times*

In 30 years, a child of nine or ten will see this building and decide to become an architect. — James Sanders *Critic*

***"Dishonored be he who thinks ill of it," motto of the British Government's Most Noble Order of the Garter, taken from Elvin's Mottoes, 14th century.

***"Out of the running," term used in architectural competitions of the Beaux-Arts era, usually reserved for those schemes which were truly excellent.

***Something tending to arouse or excite.

RESTORE

Rainwater is an aggressive agent. The acidity of rainwater is partially attributable to atmospheric pollutants, such as sulphur dioxide in areas of heavy industrial activity. The SO₂ reacts with ozone to form sulphur trioxide which dissolves in rainwater to give sulphuric acid.

Chemistry 409? No. This bit of shop talk was part of a lecture by Norman Weiss on deterioration of stone. Mr. Weiss, assistant professor of architectural conservation at Columbia, delivered this information to the 24 journeymen masons, contractors, stonemasons and engineers of RESTORE, a training program for restoration skills.

RESTORE is a special project of the Municipal Art Society. After 52 classroom hours and 12 field demonstrations, the first graduation ceremony was held at the Harvard Club June 14, 1978. With justified immodesty the director, Jan C.K. Anderson, declares, "It worked, despite the naysayers. The original proposal was to pitch the program to unskilled young people who 'want to work with their hands and do something good for humanity.' However, there was already in place an industry engaged in the cleaning, repair, and rehabilitation of masonry structures. Since this segment of the construction industry has an abundance of skilled and experienced workmen, and since the economic realities dictated that the major jobs would go to the established cleaning and waterproofing contractors, I felt we would have much greater impact on the way restoration and rehabilitation work is done if we oriented our program to the existing industry."

The headless hand

The movement of the construction industry over the last 75 years has been toward the elimination of labor, particularly thinking labor. When Thomas Jefferson designed a building, he gave his master brickmason only a rough sketch, no working drawings, no specs. The brickmason was responsible for selecting materials, working out the mechanics of piers, arches and doorway frames, and designing much of the masonry detail. If a mason working on an office building today insisted on making, or even participating in such decisions, he'd be fired on the spot.

Things are not much better in the preservation world. The conventional thinking has been that the decision-making aspect of the preservation process is the private preserve of those holding degrees in architecture and architectural conservation, and that the artisan's role was one of implementation — a headless hand.

The goal of RESTORE is to enable the mason and, as the program expands, the carpenter and plasterer, to reassume responsibility for making quantitative and qualitative decisions. These artisans belong in the decision-making group. The craftsman, properly trained, who spends all day on a scaffold with his nose 18 inches from a building, knows something about how that building is put together and why it's coming apart. He knows what kind of penetration a particular sealant will achieve on Indiana limestone and how an epoxy patch will behave on a hot day in July.



RESTORE students on location

The architect or building conservator who doesn't draw on that knowledge is operating at a serious disadvantage.

The contractors

Three of the leading masonry maintenance contractors in the northeast (Munro Waterproofing, The Grenadier Corporation, and Brisk Waterproofing) have backed the program from its inception. All three have not only enrolled employees but have also been of enormous assistance in laying out the curriculum, evaluating the lecturers and setting up the field sessions.

The unions

"The unions have been equally supportive," says Ms. Anderson. "New York is a union town; we could not have attracted the students we wanted without the blessing of the union which has primary jurisdiction over masonry repair and maintenance.

"Two of the first people I talked to were Jim Toner and Jack London, officials of the Cleaners, Pointers and Caulkers, Local 66, of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen. They quickly recognized that RESTORE offered their men a leg-up on the competition, and they sponsored three students, through the Local's education fund. The International Masonry Apprenticeship Trust made a financial contribution, and its president, Thomas Murphy, came to New York to address one session."

The students

Student reaction to the program has been particularly gratifying. The reason for their enthusiasm is not difficult to understand — the growth in the rehabilitation and retrieval of existing buildings offers increased employment and, more importantly, employment on a higher plane."

Leo Henrichs, a RESTORE student and the general superintendent for The Grenadier Corporation says, "The more you know and can do, the more valuable you are to your employer. The more valuable you are to your employer, the more you make. I learned something new in every class."

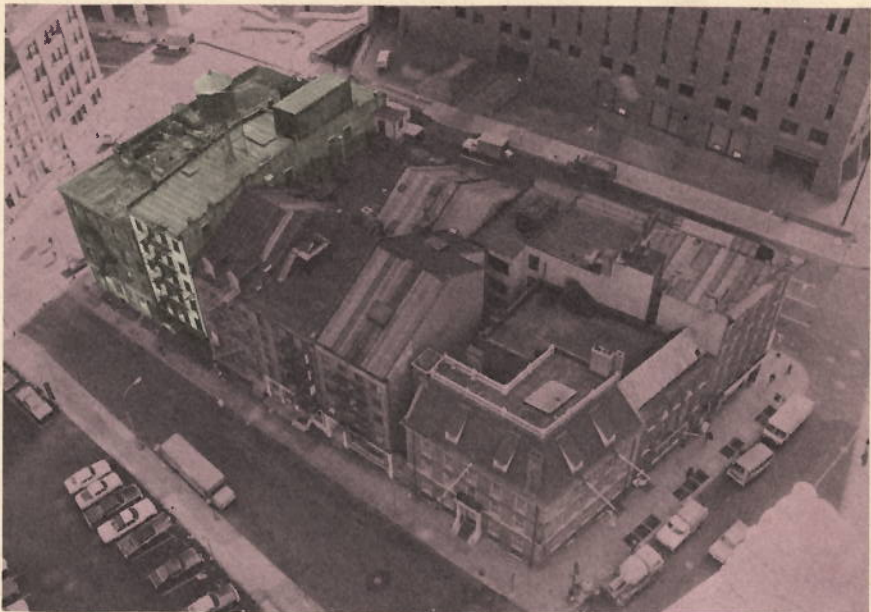
Richard Goldsborough, a young stonemason, has gotten several restoration jobs on the basis of information learned from the course. "I spent a year studying architectural stone-carving under an Italian master, and I'm a graduate of the School of Marble in Carrara. I'm a good stonemason, but my knowledge in some areas of restoration was pretty slim. The RESTORE classes had great dynamics."

A.K. Munro, president of Munro Waterproofing and a RESTORE graduate, has long been an enthusiastic advocate of practical but structured education programs for men in the masonry trades. As a Trustee and Chairman of Local 66's education fund, he has played a major role in establishing and shaping the Local's strong apprenticeship program. "I read everything on masonry cleaning and repair I can get hold of. It's still not enough, and in the industry as a whole very little is known about the technical developments of the last 15 years. There are a couple of firms that are relatively current with new procedures and materials, but by and large the state of the art is, 'It's an old building; better be careful.' As the volume of rehabilitation and restoration grows and more firms enter the field, this ignorance will result in more and more buildings being butchered. We want to do the job correctly; we have skilled workmen who can do good work if properly trained; what we need is information. RESTORE goes a long way toward meeting that need. The program will begin its second year in September.

RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION MARKET IN THE US

1975	1976	1977
\$1 billion	\$10 billion	\$14 billion

85% of this work is done by contractors working without an architectural preservation consultant. Conclusion: There is an urgent need for enlightened craftsmen specifically trained in restoration work.



Bernard Askienazy

FRAUNCES TAVERN BLOCK PARTY

One of New York City's more dramatic preservation battles has been won. Five buildings in the historic Fraunces Tavern block in Lower Manhattan, which have been in imminent danger of demolition for the last five years (LC, Mar '78), are now safe. The New York Landmarks Conservancy has acquired the five 19th-century buildings with the help of the previous owners themselves. The bad guys became the good guys in the end, and New York City, which needs more such endings, is the richer for it.

The Conservancy's acquisition of the properties was made possible with a grant of \$250,000 from the Vincent Astor Foundation, and with the assistance of Warner Communications, Inc. Warner Communications is the parent company of Kinney Systems Inc. and the Uris Buildings Corporation, the two previous owners of the property. It was Uris that began demolition of the five properties four years ago, and continued to own them under the umbrella of Kinney Systems until May 5, 1978, when they were sold to the Conservancy. On that date, in a special "sign and celebrate" ceremony at historical Fraunces Tavern (George Washington bid farewell to his troops there), Warner purchased the

properties at Kinney's asking price, then immediately resold the buildings to the Conservancy at a substantially reduced sum. Pens were literally flying over the contracts at this two-part transaction.

Brendan Gill, Chairman of the Board of the Conservancy, presided over a victory celebration of madeira and bisquits. Said Mrs. Astor, "By acquiring these properties, the Landmarks Conservancy will save a little piece of old New York. We feel that the city should retain a feeling of continuity, some of the quality that is older than its oldest inhabitant."

The Conservancy plans to lease the buildings for renovation to a private developer. There will be commercial spaces on the ground floor, and apartments above. The City has said it will close a wedge-shaped sidestreet, Coenties Slip, to street traffic, repave it, put in benches, and plant it with trees.

That this entire block will now be kept intact amid a forest of brave-new-world skyscrapers, in one of the highest cost per-sq.-ft. areas in the world, is a spectacular achievement. Something more than just a few very old buildings has been saved here — a streetscape at human scale has been preserved for the foreseeable future.

Elliott Meisel, Roger Smith, Mrs. Astor, Brendan Gill, Daniel Rose



Nancy Crampton

BOOK REVIEW

Architecture and You by William Wayne Caudill, William Merriweather Pena, and Paul Kennon. Whitney Library of Design. New York 1978. 176 pp. \$16.50

Nineteenth-century American economic "buccaneers" coined the words "enlightened self-interest" to describe their blend of modest public concern with profit. Caudill and friends (the CRS group) have published an office brochure disguised as a popular book introducing the issues of architecture to the laity: enlightened self-interest incarnate (particularly through the many handsome illustrations). Mind you, these fellows are at the head of the pack, first-class architects whose work well deserves both mention and honor, a team operation whose products sometimes equal those of I.M.Pei; sometimes Skidmore, Owings and Merrill; and sometimes only CRS itself at its best.

The advice given is simplistic (eat-

meal where eggs benedict might be more telling), but to a professional (this reviewer) boring. As a teacher of innocent aspiring (freshman) architects I boggle at these glib categories of architecture, and pervasive moralistic dicta: "A wood building should not look like stone. George Washington must have known that" (concerning Mount Vernon and its wood-quoined facade). Balderdash. GW knew exactly what he was up to in this new world: simulation of the old one as best one could with the materials at hand. In any event, *Architecture and You* is not one you'll pass to your cleaning lady, or to Philip Johnson, or to your mechanical engineer (who will file it), or to anyone I can think of save a loving wife, or that little old lady with tennis shoes around the corner. Some architects should stick to architecture. — **Norval C. White** Mr. White is an architect, teacher, author of *The Architecture Book*, co-author of *The AIA Guide to New York City*.

SUBWAY NOISE

The New York Transit Authority's subway noise abatement program (LC Dec. '77) is continuing, and so are its watchdogs and critics.

"In November of 1977 we had \$500,000 in noise abatement work actually completed," says Anthony Paolillo, environmental staff engineer for the Transit Authority. "Now we have \$4.4 million complete." Paolillo reports that the acoustic treatment being applied to five stations — one each in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx; two in Manhattan — is now 88% complete and that welded rail has now been installed in four other stations — at 57th St. and 7th Ave., 81st St. and Central Park West, 59th St. and Lexington Ave., and on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. Both acoustic treatment (sound absorbing blocks plus special walls) and welded rail significantly reduce noise in subway stations.

Carmine Santa Maria says that isn't enough. He is president of The Big Screechers, an organization founded to focus public attention against noise on elevated and subway lines. "Our first priority now is to insist that the TA install ring-damp wheels on all its trains. This wheel has been in use in London since the late 1930s: it cuts screech noise by about 29 decibels over ordinary wheels and it's relatively inexpensive to make and install. Yet the TA doesn't even list it as a necessary part of its program." Mr. Santa Maria's organization is particularly concerned about noise on elevated tracks in New York, where over 1 million people live within 75 yards of the track. The ring-damp wheel is reported to be especially effective against screech noise (one of four kinds of subway noise), the biggest problem on curving elevated track. A 29-decibel reduction would be significant: normal ambient sound is about 60 decibels, whereas at 79 decibels you have to shout or stop talking.

"The Southeast Pennsylvania Transit Authority is testing the ring-damp wheel now, under a Federal grant," says Anthony Paolillo. "I'm on the board of monitors and we are following this investigation very closely. It does look good, but we must wait for the test results."

"It's been tested for over 30 years in England," says Santa Maria. "Why weren't they aware of this available technology before? Meanwhile we suffer. Tony is doing the best job he can, but there is only he and three others on the whole environmental staff of the Transit Authority."

Mr. Santa Maria and Mr. Paolillo are charged with the same task by their separate constituencies — trying to reduce subway noise. They seem to have become respectful competitors.

The first national conference on urban design will be held in New York, October 18-21, 1978. Our next issue will feature articles on urban design in New York City. For conference details, call Conference Director Ann Ferebee, editor of Urban Design Magazine, (212) 682-0830.

THE STATION BEAUTIFUL

Can subway stations be attractive? The Municipal Art Society, in partnership with the MTA, is attempting to show that they can. In fact they can be downright friendly.

The impetus for this effort came from "Platforms for Design," a project sponsored by the Society and the Public Arts Council in which four stations were improved by the use of graphics, posters, and art (LC Aug '77). As a result of this program, the federal government's Urban Mass Transportation Authority authorized \$800,000 — to be matched dollar for dollar by private contributions

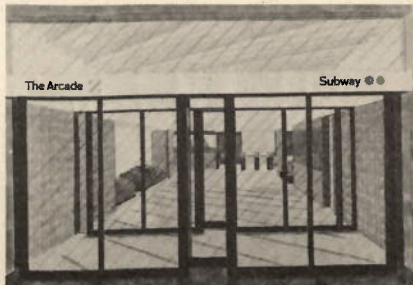
Clark Street arcade, before



— for station rehabilitation. The MTA is administering the funds and the Society, under an NEA grant, is working on specific stations. By the fall of 1979 four stations (possibly six) will be finished, proving that underground New York can be beautiful.

Alexia Lalli, the Society's consultant on the project, says "Our priority is to show that a station can be improved by attention not only to its function, but also to its design and lighting, communication systems (maps and signage), its relationship to the outside world, and the placement of art." The selection of and

Clark Street arcade, after

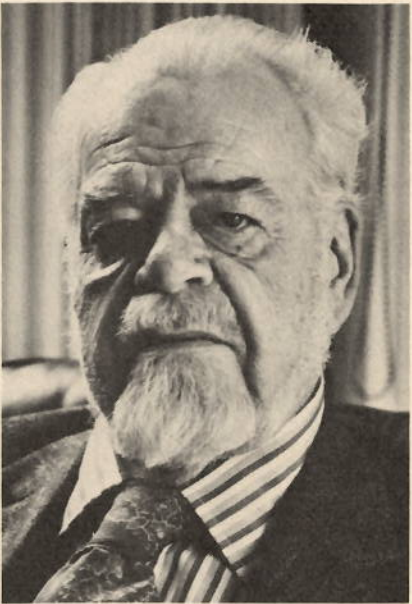


initial planning for the specific stations was done by Kent Barwick, now the City's Commissioner of Landmarks. The first two locations to be finished will be the Clark Street Station and Arcade in Brooklyn Heights, and the Wall Street Station on the Lexington Avenue line. Each station is a unique design problem, and the solutions vary accordingly. In both stations, the Mayor's Office of Development is assisting in the architectural and contractual plans. The design firm of Rudolph deHarak, Inc. is providing the essential elements of design and lighting (with Howard Brandston Lighting Design, Inc.). CETA artists (see page 2) may be used to supply art for the stations, in consultation with the community groups involved. The private sector funds for the Clark Street station will come from the developers of the St. George Hotel, above the station. The Greenwich Street Fund has provided the money for the Wall Street station, with the Chase Manhattan Bank contributing \$15,000 for the design and art elements.

HENRY-RUSSELL HITCHCOCK

Among the recipients of Certificates of Merit at the annual meeting of the Municipal Art Society was Henry-Russell Hitchcock, one who this year celebrates his seventy-fifth birthday. Professor Hitchcock has been a world-famous architectural historian for so long that one imagines him as having leapt from the cradle with a stout volume of impeccable scholarship in either hand — literally, *incunabula*. It is certainly the case that the number of his printed works is so large and extends over so formidable a period of time that it becomes difficult to believe that any individual could have accomplished so much in a single lifetime. Indeed, it was suggested at a birthday party given this spring in honor of Professor Hitchcock that the ever-mysterious hyphen between Henry and Russell might perhaps be accounted for by assuming that there are, in fact, two

Hitchcocks and not one. Be that as it may, Professor Hitchcock is currently so busy teaching, researching, writing, and traveling that he is quite unable to keep track of his own bibliography: on at least one occasion, he has discovered to his chagrin that the copyright of a book of his has run out through his neglecting to renew it. How few scholars are prolific enough to enter the public domain and not even be aware that they are there! Only Sir Nikolaus Pevsner can be said to be Professor Hitchcock's peer in breadth of scholarship and world fame, and it amounts to a charming footnote to the as yet unwritten history of our times that these two superlatively gifted scholars happen to be not merely colleagues but the best of friends. — **Brendan Gill** Mr. Gill is a drama critic for *The New Yorker* and former chairman of the board of the Municipal Art Society.



Jan C. K. Anderson

The Municipal Art Society welcomes as members all who wish to join us in our commitment to make New York a more livable city. For more information about the Society's activities, call 586-4761. Or simply fill out this membership blank.

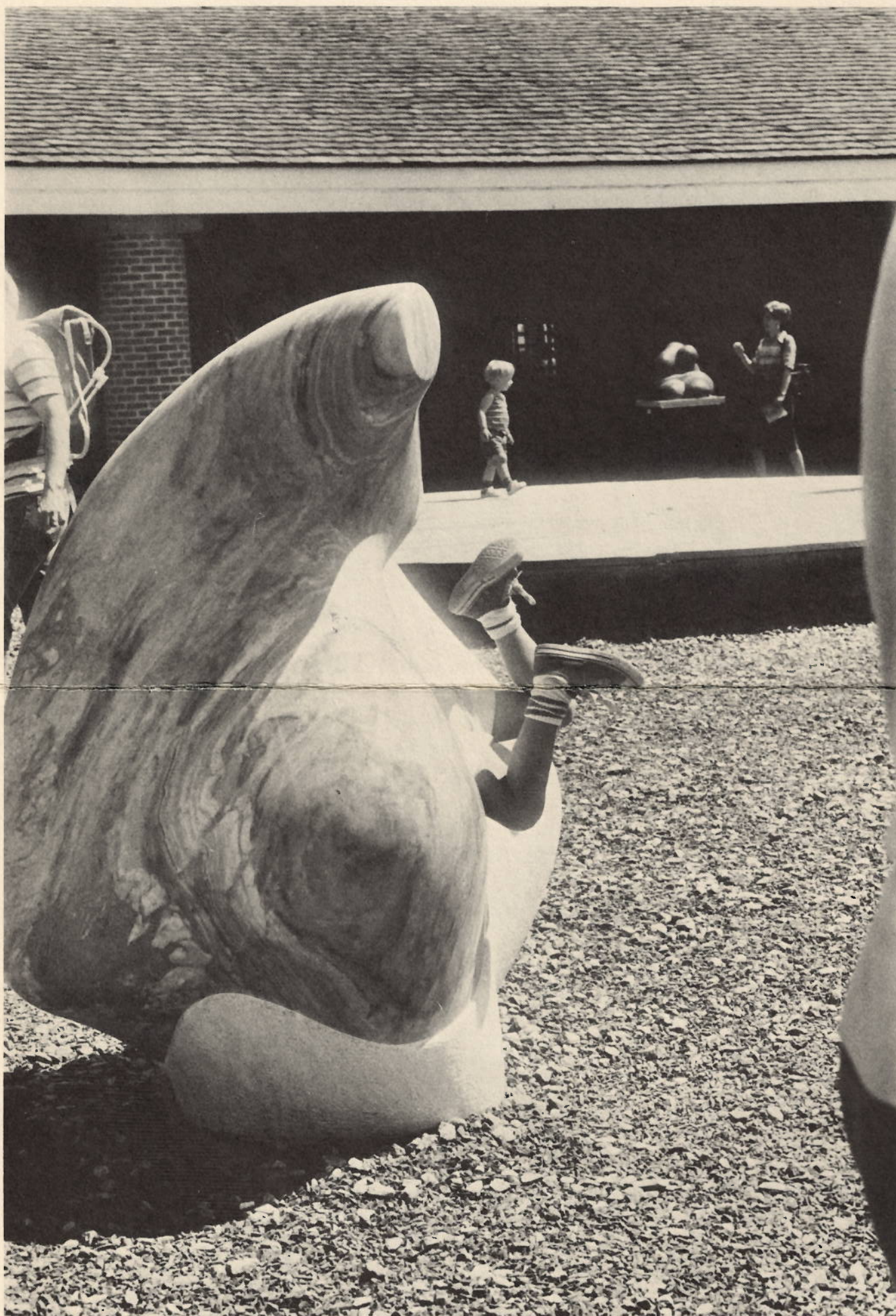
Enclosed is my check (payable to The Municipal Art Society, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10020) for membership as checked below. Dues are tax deductible.

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Rhoda Galyn

ONE OF THE NICE THINGS ABOUT NEW YORK is the proliferation of public sculpture around town. Most of them are known to be benign, but this one, innocently titled "Grey Marble," should be approached with extreme caution. The sculpture sits in front of the Castle Clinton National Monument in Battery Park in lower Manhattan. The sculptor is Arturo di Modica. We didn't get the child's name, alas.

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