

Letters from the Chair

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner

November 10, 2000

Dear Alumni and Friends of the Department of Architecture:

New Department of Architecture Web Site

In early October the Department of Architecture's new web site went live. You can now "check out" the Department by visiting our web site at:

<http://depts.washington.edu/archdept/>.

Associate Professor Brian Johnson was responsible for creating the first Department of Architecture web site in the early 1990s. His was a truly pioneering effort, as tools for web site design and programming were then relatively primitive by today's standards. The original site served the Department well, but gradually became out-of-date. In 1998-99, the Department worked with Professor Chris Ozubko, head of the UW School of Art, who has his own graphic design practice, on the design of a new graduate Prospectus (information sent to prospective applicants to the graduate program) and, more recently, on new undergraduate program materials as well. The graphic system developed for those materials became the basis for the redesign of the web site; this design work was actually carried out by Nigel Heinsius, a web designer with UW Publications Services. The new web site not only includes information about our programs but also provides opportunities to highlight activities and achievements of faculty and students. Along with the new display system in the Gould Hall lobby, discussed in my last letter, the new web site is part of the Department's effort to do a better job communicating with a variety of audiences including alumni and friends, the College and University, local and regional professionals, potential applicants to our programs, and anyone else who may be interested in our activities.

The idea for the exhibit space was first proposed in Winter 1997 by an "ad hoc display committee" headed by Associate Professor Elaine LaTourelle. In 1997-98, Lecturer Jim Nicholls and graduate students Steve Brown and Ian Butcher developed a design for the modular display system. This was enthusiastically approved by the faculty and by the Department's Professionals Council in Spring 1998. A number of local firms, including Bumgardner, Cardwell/Thomas & Associates, LMN Architects, Mahlum Architects, Miller/Hull Partnership, Mithun Partners, NBBJ, Weinstein/Copeland Architects, and Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership (and some donors who chose to remain anonymous) contributed funding for materials, and this allowed us to go forward with fabrication/construction in early 1999. We invite alumni and friends to visit the Department and see how the lobby has truly been transformed.

Digital Design Initiatives

The new web site also highlights the Department's new teaching and research activities in digital design. The remodeling of basement spaces in Architecture Hall to create the digital design studio and the digital design research lab was substantially completed just in time for classes in Spring Quarter 1999. Assistant Professor Yi-Luen Ellen Do was the instructor of the first Digital Design Studio in the new space in Spring Quarter; this was a "vertical" studio, with twelve students, both undergrads and grads in their final studios. The students undertook to develop schemes for sites in downtown Seattle near Pike Place Market, near the Washington State Convention Center and in Pioneer Square, incorporating a variety of digital tools in their design and presentation processes. The final review included jurors from local architectural firms and also from several software companies. The students also produced a CD-ROM including all the studio projects. This year design studios will take place in the digital design space each quarter; Professor Do is leading the studio this quarter, and we anticipate Associate Professor Johnson and Professor Mark Gross will each lead a studio later in the year.

Professor Gross has also led the activities of the digital design research lab; the faculty and students working on digital design research are now called the Design Machine Group (DMG) and their explorations are proceeding in several directions, including improved design computing tools and environments, virtual worlds and cyberspace, and the design computing and collaborative design processes. More information can be obtained by visiting the DMG web site at: <http://depts.washington.edu/dmachine/>.

The Department is now focusing its efforts on the integration of computing into architecture design studios. In August/September 2000, the Department of Architecture received a grant of over \$300,000 from the University of Washington "Tools for Transformation" program (a University-wide program coordinated through the Provost's Office to provide support "to make programmatic transitions in response to new challenges") to provide "cat. 5" wiring to the design studios in Architecture Hall, to create an input/output center, and to enhance the capabilities of the advanced digital design studio. This funding marks a significant change from the previous investment by the Department and College in separate computer labs which required students to leave the studio environment to use computers. In the future, students will have the opportunity to have their own computers at their own studio desks and to use these to "plug & play" throughout their design processes. A faculty and student committee will oversee implementation of the improvements funded by the "Tools" grant. These improvements should be implemented within the next year.

Design/Build, International Programs, Annual Charrette

At the same time, the Department continues to address our Northwest regional heritage of craft, fine detailing, and attention to how architecture is actually made. In Winter 2000 the sixth Design/Build.Mexico studio, under the direction of Associate Professor Sergio Palleroni and Professor Steve Badanes, with 25 students from the

Departments of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Construction Management, constructed the first wing of another elementary school, similar to the one built by our students in 1996 and 1997. In Winter 2001, the Design/Build.Mexico program will include a small design/build project in Cuba, and construction of the library addition to the elementary school begun last year. In Spring 2000, supported by a City of Seattle grant, Professor Badanes led the H. S. Wright Design/Build Studio, with architecture and construction management students in design and construction of the second phase of facilities at Bradner Gardens Park, near 29th Avenue South and South Grand Street in Beacon Hill, Seattle. And, in Summer 2000, Professor Palleroni and Associate Professor David Riley of the Department of Construction Management (adjunct in Architecture), again supported by Red Feather Development, a Bellevue-based non-profit, led a design/build studio that designed and constructed a straw bale house on the Sioux Indian Reservation in North Dakota. (Although Professor Riley will move to Penn State University in January 2001, he and Professor Palleroni hope to continue to work together on their joint effort addressing both sustainable building technologies and the housing crisis facing economically distressed Native American communities.)

The Department of Architecture has also continued to support international education as a response to the continued globalization of architectural practice and as a way to introduce cultural issues in architecture. In addition to the Mexico Program, in Summer 2000, Professor Astra Zarina again led the Italian Hilltowns Program in Civita. Currently, 24 of our students are at the UW Rome Center participating in the Architecture in Rome Program, this year under the direction of Professors David Miller, Frank Ching, and Thomas Bosworth. We also anticipate that there will be an interdisciplinary program in Rome in Spring 2001, involving students from the UW Comparative History of Ideas (CHID) program as well as architecture, led jointly by Lecturer Jennifer Dee and CHID Professor Raimonda Modiano.

Spring 2000 brought significant changes to the Annual Design Charrette. In December 1999, Professor Sharon Sutton received a "Tools for Transformation" grant to support changing the charrette to focus on educational facilities in support of the UW initiative to link to K-12 education in Washington. Under Professor Sutton's leadership, the Spring 2000 Charrette was titled "Sites of Learning in Tukwila" and addressed enhancing the learning environments for elementary school children in the suburban community of Tukwila. In coordination with the Tukwila School District, four teams of architecture, landscape architecture, planning, art, and industrial design students developed design ideas for sites in Tukwila and presented them to the Tukwila community on Friday 31 March. A highlight of the program was the visit by about 60 Tukwila fifth graders to Gould Hall to present their design ideas and to meet with the charrette teams. For more on the charrette visit: <http://ceeds.caup.washington.edu/%23Activity.htm>.

Student and Faculty Awards

UW students continue to produce outstanding work and win recognition. In summer 2000, UW Master of Architecture student Jason Cooper was chosen as one of six finalists in the international competition to design a memorial for the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., on a four-acre site on the National Mall in Washington D.C. Cooper's scheme for the King Memorial was selected from a pool of 871 submissions from 35 countries. Cooper had begun working on the King Memorial project in a Winter 2000 studio. In early summer he learned that his scheme was one of six selected for further development; in late summer he submitted his developed design for final review. On 13 September, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Foundation announced that ROMA Design Group in San Francisco had won. Although Cooper did not win, the fact that he was a finalist, competing primarily against professional firms, is a tribute to his design abilities.

Faculty have also recently won notable recognition. Vikramaditya Prakash has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Professor Grant Hildebrand's book *Origins of Architectural Pleasure* (University of California Press, 1999), won a Governor's Writers Award; the ten books chosen for the award are considered the ten best books published by Washington State authors in the previous year. Professor Michael Pyatok won the 2000 Louis Mumford Award given by Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility for his high quality design work in service of low income communities. Professor Pyatok's firm, Pyatok Associates, received the 2000 Grand Prize, Best in American Living Award for Best Conversion/Rehabilitation, for the Swan's Market mixed-use development in downtown Oakland, from the National Association of Home Builders and Professional Builder magazine.

Professor Robert Mugerauer becomes CAUP Dean

This year the Department and College are continuing to see significant personnel changes. On 1 September 2000, the College and Department welcomed our new Dean, Professor Robert Mugerauer, Ph.D. Selected in June 2000 by UW President McCormick after a year-long search, Dean Mugerauer came to UW from the University of Texas where he held the Sid Richardson Centennial Chair. Dean Mugerauer received a B.A. in liberal studies from the University of Notre Dame in 1967 and a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Texas in 1973. He held administrative positions at St. Edward's University from 1980 to 1984 and joined the faculty at the University of Texas in 1985. His research has addressed the built and natural environments in three areas: sustainability and the impact of technology; values and social and political factors in design; and theory and current research methods. His base department of appointment at UW is the Department of Urban Design & Planning, though in June the faculty of Architecture voted a joint appointment for Dean Mugerauer, making him a full member of our Department as well.

Faculty Changes

In Spring 2000, Professor Grant Hildebrand and Professor Marietta Millet both announced their retirements. These are significant losses. Both taught design studios; Professor Hildebrand is nationally known for his work in architectural history and his theories of aesthetics and evolution, while Professor Millet led the Department's lighting certificate program. Fortunately, both are returning on the UW program that allows retired faculty to continue to teach for five years at 40% of their previous appointment. At the same time we are mounting a new national search. To replace Professor Hildebrand we are seeking a new faculty member who can teach architecture design studios, architectural history, and possibly historic preservation. Applications are due in mid-January and we hope to have a pool of excellent candidates. (The complete advertisement and position description may be found on our web site.) Unfortunately, due to budget uncertainties, we have not initiated a search to replace Professor Millet. The faculty voted to search in the area of architectural design and lighting and we hope to be able to do so in the future. However, in the next year we will seek to staff our lighting courses by appointing temporary instructors from the local professional community.

Sad News

We have also experienced some very sad and unexpected losses. On Friday 15 September, Professor Emeritus Hermann G. Pundt (1928-2000) died peacefully in Donauwoerth, Germany. On Saturday 30 September about 300 attended a memorial service in Architecture Hall in recognition of Professor Pundt. The memorial consisted primarily of an exchange of reminiscences of Professor Pundt; nearly 20 speakers, including faculty colleagues, former and present students, and personal friends told stories covering more than forty years of Professor Pundt's life and career. Professor Pundt, who joined the faculty in 1968, was remembered for his heartfelt presentations on architecture and preservation which inspired University of Washington students for more than thirty years. Among his faculty colleagues, he was also remembered as an advocate of the arts and humanities in the face of what he perceived as an increasing emphasis on science and technology. (A more complete summary of Professor Pundt's career may be found in the "News" section on our web site.) Although he had retired in 1996, Professor Pundt continued to teach in the UW 40% rehire program and was expected to teach in winter and spring 2001. Two of his courses, "Historic Preservation In the United States" (Arch. 581) and "Historic Preservation in Europe" (Arch. 583), were core courses in the architecture "stream" in the College Certificate in Historic Preservation. Finding a new instructor for these courses will be particularly difficult, as Professor Pundt drew extensively on his own experience in his teaching. Early next year a tree will be planted on the University of Washington campus in memory of Professor Pundt. Memorial gifts may be given to the Architecture Department to support student scholarships. (Please make checks out to the University of Washington Foundation and mail to the CAUP Development Office, 224 Gould, Box 355726, Seattle, WA 98195.)

We were also saddened to learn of the death on Tuesday 17 October of former UW Lecturer Valerie Sivinski (1951-2000); she was struck by a truck while photographing a historic building. Ms. Sivinski first came to the Northwest about 1988 to work on the restoration of Tacoma's Union Station. From 1991 to 1998, she taught "Technical Issues in Architectural Conservation" (Arch. 582) as a part-time lecturer in the Department of Architecture. In the late 1990s, she founded Artifacts Consulting, a preservation practice based in Tacoma, and the success of that firm and the resulting press of work (plus the increasing difficulty of driving from Tacoma to Seattle late in the day for an evening class) led her to resign from our faculty in 1998. Students from the 1990s will remember Lecturer Sivinski for her love of historic buildings and neighborhoods.

Facing the Future

In the coming year, the Department will face several more challenges. We are currently in the middle of a 10-year review as mandated by the State. The Department's "self-study" report was prepared and submitted in spring 2000; we will have a visit by internal and external reviewers later this year. Then, in spring 2001 we will begin the process for re-accreditation of our professional Master of Architecture degree. Our "Architecture Program Report" must be prepared and submitted to NAAB (National Architectural Accrediting Board, Inc.) by summer. We will be visited by an NAAB team early in 2002.

In September 2000, I began my fifth year as Chair of the Department. In the six letters (including this one) I have written to you since becoming Chair, I have tried to convey some of the activities of the Department. I hope you are as proud as I am of the achievements of the Department. Even in the face of sometimes limited resources, I think students and faculty are doing outstanding work. Although budgets will continue to be tight, we will persevere in maintaining and even enhancing the quality of our programs. With the continuing support of many individuals including you, our alumni and friends, we will continue to strive towards our goal of excellence in all that we do.

Best wishes for the coming holiday season,

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner FAIA, Chair