

**ART COMMISSION TWENTIETH ANNUAL AWARDS
FOR EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
THURSDAY, MAY 30TH, 2002**

SPEECH DELIVERED BY MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

THE NEW YORK CITY CHARTER-WHICH IS SOMETHING AKIN TO THE OWNER'S OPERATING MANUAL OF CITY GOVERNMENT-RUNS TO HUNDREDS OF PAGES OF GOVERNMENTALESE. I RECOMMEND IT HIGHLY AS BEDTIME READING FOR ANY INSOMNIACS HERE TODAY.

THE CHARTER PRESENTS THE DUTIES OF THE CITY ART COMMISSION IN TYPICALLY COLORLESS LANGUAGE: "TO REVIEW AND APPROVE DESIGN FOR ART, LANDSCAPING AND ARCHITECTURE TO BE BUILT ON OR ABOVE CITY-OWNED PROPERTY AND TO OVERSEE THE PRESERVATION OF THE CITY'S ART COLLECTION."

NOW TO PUT SOME LIFE INTO THAT DESCRIPTION, CONSIDER THIS:

THE CAPITAL BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK IN THE COMING FISCAL YEAR IS FIVE AND ONE-HALF BILLION DOLLARS-LARGER THAN 47 OF THE 50 STATES. THOSE CAPITAL EXPENDITURES WILL COVER THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECTS AS VARIED AS PLAYGROUNDS AND PUMPING STATIONS-HIGHWAYS AND HOSPITALS-LOADING DOCKS AND LIBRARIES, ALL SERVING A CITY OF MORE THAN EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE.

AND NOT JUST ANY EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE-EIGHT MILLION NEW YORKERS, CITIZENS OF THE WORLD'S MOST DIVERSE, DEMANDING AND OPINIONATED CITY.

AS NEW YORKERS, WE DEMAND THAT OUR PUBLIC SPACES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS BE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING; WE BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT, AS NEW YORKERS, WE HAVE RIGHT TO EXPECT BEAUTY IN OUR SURROUNDINGS. AND IN PUBLIC PROJECTS, WE ALSO EXPECT, NOW MORE THAN EVER, TO ACHIEVE THAT QUALITY DESIGN. THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT GOOD DESIGN DOES NOT COST MORE MONEY.

I.N. PHELPS STOKES, WHO PRESIDED OVER THE ART COMMISSION DURING THE LA GUARDIA YEARS, PUT THE PROBLEM IN THESE WORDS IN A COMMISSION REPORT DURING THE 1930S. (BY THE WAY, WE HAPPEN TO BE IN A BUILDING APPROVED BY THE ART COMMISSION WHEN IT WAS UNDER HIS DIRECTION.)

“THE PRODUCTION OF BEAUTY, ESPECIALLY BY SIMPLE AND INEXPENSIVE MEANS,” HE WROTE, “IS A VERY SUBTLE PROBLEM, AND CAN BE SOLVED SUCCESSFULLY ONLY BY A COMBINATION OF ABILITY, EXPERIENCE AND CARE.”

FORTUNATELY, NEW YORKERS ARE SERVED BY A SMALL BUT DEDICATED GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO COMBINE SUCH ABILITY, EXPERIENCE AND CARE: THE MEMBERS AND STAFF OF THE ART COMMISSION. THE COMMISSION MEMBERS IN PARTICULAR DESERVE RECOGNITION FOR GENEROUSLY DONATING MANY HOURS OF THEIR TIME AND TALENT TO REVIEW DESIGNS AND VISIT PROJECT SITES THROUGHOUT THE FIVE BOROUGHES.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN APPLAUDING PRESIDENT JEAN PARKER PHIFER AND THE OTHER COMMISSIONERS: THE COMMISSION’S VICE-PRESIDENT, MICHELE BOGART; ESTRELLITA BOGARD BRODSKY; BUD KONHEIM; JOYCE FRANK MENSCHEL; ABBY MILSTEIN; OTIS PRATT PEARSALL; JEAN RATHER; NANCY ROSEN; AND DONALD WALSH, AS WELL AS PREVIOUS MEMBERS OF THE ART COMMISSION WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE PAST.

JUST AS CITY GOVERNMENT IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE THE SERVICES OF THE ART COMMISSION, WE’RE ALSO LUCKY TO BE ABLE TO DRAW ON THE WORK OF THE GREATEST POOL OF DESIGN TALENT IN THE WORLD IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

TODAY, FOR THE 20TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, WE HONOR 10 PROJECT DESIGNS THAT THE ART COMMISSION BELIEVES HAVE SPECIAL MERIT.

THIS IS THE FIRST YEAR THAT I HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN THIS CEREMONY. BUT EVEN AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN, I TOOK A STRONG INTEREST IN OUR CITY’S COLLECTION OF PUBLIC ART AND ARCHITECTURE. AS A MEMBER OF BOARD OF THE RANDALLS ISLAND SPORTS FOUNDATION, I ADOPTED THE “DISCUS THROWER” STATUE ON RANDALLS ISLAND, AND SPONSORED ITS RESTORATION. IT’S NOW THE FIRST THING THAT VISITORS COMING ONTO THE ISLAND SEE; I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT VISITORS TO THE ISLAND GET A SENSE OF CIVIC PRIDE AND CIVIC GRANDEUR THAT ONLY GREAT PUBLIC ART CAN INSPIRE.

EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC DESIGN WILL BE ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF MY ADMINISTRATION. IT WILL BE A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN CITY PROJECTS RANGING FROM THE RECONSTRUCTION OF LOWER MANHATTAN... TO THE RECLAMATION OF THE CITY’S WATERFRONT FOR PUBLIC USE AND ENJOYMENT... TO THE ECONOMIC

REVITALIZATION OF COMMUNITIES IN ALL FIVE BOROUGHES. REALIZING THOSE PROJECTS WILL REQUIRE TIME, PATIENCE, INSIGHT AND MORE THAN JUST A SPARK OF GENIUS. IT WILL DEMAND THE BEST COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF DEVELOPERS, ENGINEERS, PLANNERS, BUILDERS, CIVIC GROUPS, ARTISTS AND ARCHITECTS.

TODAY WE SALUTE 10 WIDELY VARIED PROJECTS FROM THROUGHOUT OUR CITY. FROM FERRYBOATS TO A FIREHOUSE-A LIBRARY TO A PUMP STATION-A RENOVATED MUSEUM TO A MURAL.

WHAT CONNECTS THEM IS A COMMON COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE. I.N. STOKES PHELPS WOULD BE GLAD TO KNOW THAT NEW YORK CAN INDEED BE FILLED WITH THE “PRODUCTION OF BEAUTY” AS LONG AS WE APPLY OUR UNMATCHED “ABILITY, EXPERIENCE AND CARE.”

LET’S SHOW THESE PROJECTS.

THE FIRST IS THE DESIGN OF A COMBINED FIREHOUSE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATION ON STATEN ISLAND. EFFICIENCY WAS THE GOAL OF THE MERGER OF THE EMS AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. AND THE SIMPLE, ECONOMICAL AND DIGNIFIED DESIGN OF THIS PROJECT IS A BEAUTIFUL DEMONSTRATION OF FORM FOLLOWING FUNCTION. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS DESIGN ARE:

ROLF OHLHAUSEN AND DEBORAH FANTERA OF OHLHAUSEN DUBOIS ARCHITECTS; LEN FRANCO OF WASA ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS; DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSIONER KEN HOLDEN; AND FDNY COMMISSIONER NICHOLAS SCOPPETTA.

NINETEEN MILLION PEOPLE RIDE THE FERRIES TO AND FROM STATEN ISLAND EACH YEAR. OUR NEXT AWARD-WINNING PROJECT WILL BE A WHIMSICAL MULTI-MEDIA REMINDER THAT WHILE THEY MAY THINK THEY ARE MERELY COMMUTING, THEY ACTUALLY ARE ON A 20-MINUTE OCEAN VOYAGE. ACCEPTING THE AWARDS FOR NEW YORK CITY’S FIRST SEA-FARING PERCENT FOR ART PROJECT ARE:

ARTISTS WERNER KLOTZ AND JOHN ROLOFF; DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER IRIS WEINSHALL AND DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ROBERT GROTELL; AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER KATE LEVIN; AND CATHIE BEHREND THE PERCENT FOR ART PROGRAM.

RECOVERY OF ART IS JUST AS VALUABLE AS THE CREATION OF ART- AND A LOST NEW YORK CITY ART TREASURE, THE WPA MURAL ABSTRACTION, WAS RECOVERED THROUGH THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY’S ADOPT-A-MURAL PROGRAM. THE MURAL COVERS THE

WALLS OF A CIRCULAR SOLARIUM AT COLER-GOLDWATER HOSPITAL, PROVIDING A VISUALLY APPEALING SOURCE OF STIMULATION TO THE LONG-TERM CARE PATIENTS THERE. ACCEPTING THE AWARD ARE:

LUCA BONETTI, CONSERVATOR; FRANK SANCHIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY AND PHYLLIS COHEN, PROGRAM DIRECTOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY; SAMUEL LEHREFELD, DIRECTOR OF COLER-GOLDWATER HOSPITAL; AND GREG MINK OF THE HEALTH AND HOSPITALS CORPORATION.

THE NEXT PROJECT, RENOVATION OF AN EXISTING PUMP STATION ON MANHATTAN'S LOWER EAST SIDE, UPGRADES A MUNDANE BUT ESSENTIAL CITY FACILITY. THE PROJECT COMBINES ATTRACTIVE DESIGN WITH ENGINEERING ADVANCES THAT PERMIT THE CITY TO MEET THE HIGHEST ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS PROJECT ARE:

MICHAEL STALLONE, LEAD ARCHITECT FOR HAZEN AND SAWYER; DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSIONER CHRIS WARD, D.E.P FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DIANA CHAPIN, EXECUTIVE PROJECT MANAGER JASMINE JAVAHERI AND DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES VINCENT DESANTIS.

BROOKLYN'S STARRETT CITY AT SPRING CREEK, HOME TO MORE THAN 20,000 RESIDENTS, IS A CITY WITHIN A CITY. THE PROJECT WE HONOR NEXT WILL TRANSFORM ITS MAIN STREET, PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, FROM A DRIVE-THROUGH THOROUGHFARE TO A SAFER, SHADIER AND COMMUNITY-FRIENDLY STREETScape. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS DESIGN ARE:

LEE WEINTRAUB, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE COMMUNITY DESIGN; ALYCE M. RUSSO; DAVE GOCKEL OF LANGAN ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES; TONY RUSSELL OF RUSSELL DESIGN ASSOCIATES; AND BRIAN LARSEN, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

LOTS OF PEOPLE TALK ABOUT "GREEN ARCHITECTURE"; OUR NEXT PROJECT, THE NEW KENSINGTON BRANCH LIBRARY IN BROOKLYN, PUTS THE PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND DESIGN INTO PRACTICE FOR A VITAL COMMUNITY RESOURCE. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS PROJECT ARE:

RASHMI AND ROBIN SEN, SEN ARCHITECTS; DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSIONER KEN HOLDEN; SIOBHAN REARDON, ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY;

AND ELIZABETH MARTIN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING OF THE BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY.

IN RECENT YEARS, HARLEM'S 125TH STREET HAS UNDERGONE A VIBRANT COMMERCIAL REVIVAL. THE REDESIGN OF THE FAÇADE FOR THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM WILL STRENGTHEN THE MUSEUM'S CONNECTION TO THE STREETScape, AND VISUALLY CONVEY THE MUSEUM'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING A PREMIER CULTURAL INSTITUTION IN HARLEM. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS DESIGN ARE:

JONATHAN MARVEL AND ROB ROGERS, ROGERS MARVEL ARCHITECTS; DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSIONER KEN HOLDEN; DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER KATE LEVIN; AND SANDRA JACKSON, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION OF THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM.

IT'S ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT THAT PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE MAKE A WELCOMING GESTURE AND GIVE BUILDINGS A HUMAN SCALE FOR THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING HELP AT TIMES OF GREAT PERSONAL STRESS. THE REDESIGN OF THE FAÇADE OF THE MANHATTAN FAMILY COURT ACHIEVES THAT GOAL. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS PROJECT ARE:

PAUL BROCHES, AND CAROL LOEWENSON OF MITCHELL/GIURGOLA ARCHITECTS; PHILIP PISCATELLA, DIRECTOR FOR THE NEW YORK STATE DORMITORY AUTHORITY; RON YOUNKINS OF THE STATE OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION; AND DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOE WAGNER.

SIX YEARS AGO, THE NEW YORK HALL OF SCIENCE OPENED A WILDLY SUCCESSFUL PLAYGROUND, WHERE THE PRINCIPLES OF PHYSICS BECAME, WELL, CHILD'S PLAY. THE NEXT PROJECT WE HONOR, A PRE-SCHOOL GARDEN OF SCIENCE, WILL BUILD ON THAT SUCCESS AND ENCOURAGE TODDLERS TO LEARN WHILE PLAYING. ACCEPTING THE AWARD FOR THIS PROJECT ARE:

JOAN KREVLIN, B.K.S.K ARCHITECTS; LEE WEINTRAUB, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE COMMUNITY DESIGN; DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSIONER KEN HOLDEN; DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER KATE LEVIN; AND HAROLD CHAPNICK, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE NEW YORK HALL OF SCIENCE.

FINALLY, WE HONOR THE MONUMENT CONSERVATION PROGRAM OF THE CITY PARKS FOUNDATION. BEGUN FIVE YEARS AGO, THE PROGRAM TRAINS ART STUDENTS IN CONSERVING OUR CITY'S

**OUTSTANDING AND IRREPLACEABLE PUBLIC ART COLLECTION IN
PARKS. ACCEPTING THIS AWARD ARE:**

**JONATHAN KUHN, DIRECTOR OF ART AND ANTIQUITIES FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION; MARK RABINOWITZ, CHIEF
CONSERVATOR; AND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
COMMISSIONER ADRIAN BENEPE.**

**THAT CONCLUDES TODAY'S AWARDS CEREMONY. THANK YOU FOR
COMING, AND PLEASE JOIN ME AND THE ART COMMISSION FOR A
RECEPTION IN THE GREAT HALL.**