

Learning from George Post

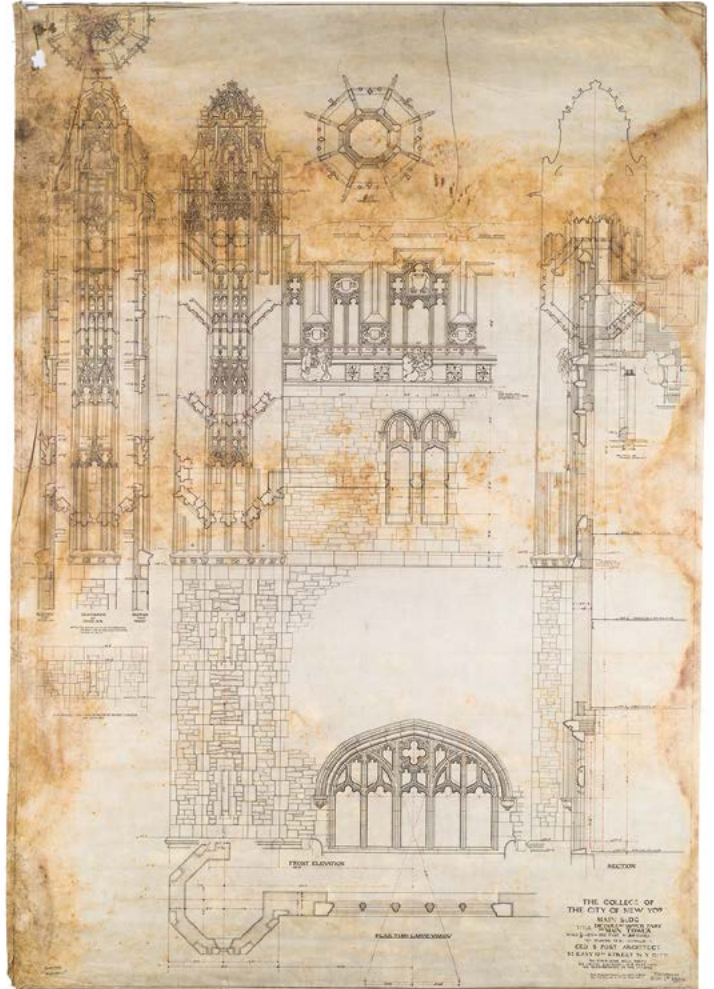
SINCE GEORGE B. POST (1837-1913) built a picturesque community for academic learning atop St. Nicholas Park in 1907, City College's campus has continued to evolve and expand. Our campus has since spread beyond Post's North Quad to the south, a process that continues today, as the CUNY Advanced Science Research Center nears completion. Shepard Hall, the centerpiece of Post's vision, has also undergone significant transformations: its main entrance has been reoriented toward the quad; concrete has replaced Post's original, if less durable, terra-cotta moldings as part of the building's substantial restoration campaigns; and the departments and offices housed within have been reshuffled on numerous occasions. And yet, Post's Collegiate Gothic buildings—with rough walls of dark Manhattan schist hewn from the site's bedrock and outlined with snow-white finials and whimsical grotesques—continue to provide a lasting physical nucleus and collective symbol for an evolving campus and its diverse community over a century after their completion.

The exhibition *Building the Modern Gothic: George Post at City College*, on view in the SSA Atrium Gallery from 3 February to 9 May, celebrates the enduring legacy of Post's pivotal contribution to our campus. Organized and curated by Dean **George Ranalli**, the exhibition brings together a

stunning group of forty-five of Post's drawings and renderings housed in the collection of the New York Historical Society. As the original drawings were too fragile to be displayed, they were instead digitally reproduced at scale, including their weathering and tears, expressly for the exhibition. Historical photographs from City College's archives compliment Post's drawings to illustrate the site context, construction process, and the social life of the buildings. Among the exhibition's other rich materials, fourteen original plaster studies of the more than 600 terra-cotta grotesques designed by Post are on display, a last-minute addition thanks to William Barry Thomson who lent the precious artifacts from his own private collection upon reading about plans for the exhibition in the *New York Times*.

With the drawings at the heart of the show, they provide a truly exceptional opportunity to learn from Post's labor-intensive design process for his five buildings, which are located just down the street from the exhibition. As Dean **Ranalli** underscores: "To appreciate the buildings, students need to understand how the plans relate to the finished product, much the way that classical musicians need to read and understand sheet music in order to produce a polished performance." ■

TOP RIGHT: Main Building, detail of upper part of main tower. George B. Post, 1904. BOTTOM: View from Amsterdam Avenue looking north of the Sub-Freshmen Building in the foreground.



EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Having superbly guided the SSA Newsletter since 2009, Prof. **June Williamson** has passed the torch and it is my pleasure to take the reins as its new editor. As a new faculty member, I welcome the opportunity to become better acquainted with our community and to help make known its remarkable accomplishments. I would like to thank Dean **George Ranalli** for this opportunity and Prof. **Williamson** for her guidance in the transition.

We note also the retirement of Prof. **Achva Benzinberg Stein**, who has been a professor at SSA since 2005. Although I did not get to know Prof. **Stein** personally, I have known her through her work, especially her masterful 2011 renovation of the Metropolitan Museum's galleries for the Arts of Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia. Prof. **Stein** probed the possibilities of architecture to provide a contextual solution for the objects on display, a solution that stressed the collection's connections to multiple cultures and their histories. Her vision has played a fundamental role in the education of students at our school for nearly a decade and our community will profoundly miss her. We wish her the best of luck in all of her future endeavors!

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STUDENT NEWS

Awards

3RD-YEAR B.Arch. student **Katherine Serrano** was awarded the AIA NY Chapter's annual Heritage Ball Scholarship of \$2,000. In October 2013, Dean **George Ranalli** was in attendance along side **Katherine** at the Heritage Ball at Chelsea Piers/Pier Sixty.

Milestones

In the fall 2013 semester, the Architecture Alumni Group, working with the CCNY Development Office, raised about \$120,000 in order to reinstall the Solar Roofpod at our school. The Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Cirio Foundation, and KPF provided major donations; along with a major gift from a year ago, contributions were also made by our school's community during the Indiegogo crowd-funding campaign. Prof. **Christian Volkmann**, who is overseeing the project, has filed for a building permit, which is currently at the zoning design review stage, in order to install

the Roofpod this spring.

This spring, third-year B.Arch. students have entered a collaboration with the Associated Brick Mason Contractors of Greater New York, Inc. and the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1, NY, culminating in the design of a meditation space based on brick construction. Four cash prizes, ranging from \$1,000-\$2,500, will be awarded to the finest student projects. The purpose of the initiative is to develop design skills that integrate advanced material thinking to achieve more accurate and beautiful designs in masonry.

The initiative included a four-hour training session at the International Masonry Institute in Long Island City where professional bricklayers and contractors taught our students how to properly lay brick, produce bond patterns, loadbearing structures, dimensional stone and screen walls, and build arches. The program is taught by Adjunct Profs. **Ali Höcek**, **Ivan Rosa**, **David Hotson**, and Prof. **Christian Volkmann**, who is also coordinating the studios.

Adjunct Prof. **Andrew Zientek** has worked with six MLA students, **Samuel Berkheiser**, **Kathleen Cholewka**, **Ivy Harrison**, **Andrew**



PHOTO: CHUCKY HUI
ABOVE: 2nd-year B.Arch. students with architect **Frank Prial** in Grand Central Terminal's glass walkway.

Joseph, Eli Sands, and Jerome Thomson, to produce an egg sculpture as an entry for the **Fabergé Big Egg Hunt** on display in New York City during the week of Easter and then auctioned off for charity.

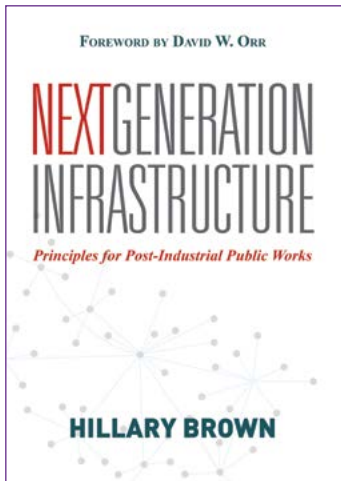
Prof. **Catherine Seavitt Nordenson's** Phase 1 Interim Report for the City College team of *Structures of Coastal Resilience*, a Rockefeller Foundation-funded grant examining Jamaica Bay, New York, will be published as part of the US Army Corps of Engineers' *North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study*. This study will be submitted by the Corps to the US Congress in January 2015. She and her City College-based research associates, **Kjirsten Alexander** (MLA 2012), **Danae Alessi** (MLA 2013), and second-year MLA student **Eli Sands**, presented their work to date at the Army Corps' Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) in Vicksburg, Mississippi in January 2014.

Travel & Trips

As part of the second-year B.Arch. studio, dedicated to the study of Grand Central Terminal, students toured the historic site with Associate Partner at Beyer Blinder Belle Architects, **Frank Prial**, and the Chief Architect of Metro North Railroad, **George Monasterio**. ■



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN VOLKMANN
LEFT: 3rd-year B.Arch. students at the International Masonry Institute in Long Island City.



LEFT: *Next-Generation Infrastructure: Principles for Post-Industrial Public Works* by Hillary Brown.

FACULTY NEWS

WE WELCOME back both **Karen Bausman** of **Bausman + Associates** and **Brian Healy** of **Perkins + Will** in Boston as Visiting Professors for the spring 2014 semester.

A house designed by Assistant Professor **Nandini Bagchee** and partner **Tim Furzer** was published in the book *Remodelista: A Manual for the Considered Home*. She presented a paper, “Counter Institution: The (un)Real Estate of ABC No Rio,” at the annual College Art Association Conference in Chicago.

Island Press has published Professor **Hillary Brown’s** book, *Next-Generation Infrastructure: Principles for Post-Industrial Public Works*. With a foreword by David W. Orr, the book highlights innovative and resilient design of infrastructural systems worldwide. By responding to ecological and social contexts, lowering CO2 emissions, and sharing resources across systems, these projects deliver substantive civic benefits.

As the 2014 president of the AIA NY Chapter, Professor **Lance Jay Brown**, FAIA, DPACSA has launched the exhibition *Considering the Quake: Seismic Design on the Edge* at the Center for Architecture. He co-chairs AIA NY’s Design for Risk and Reconstruction Committee, whose Post Sandy Initiative has received the AIA’s prestigious Collaborative Achievement Award. His

recent co-authored books include *The Legacy Project: New Housing New York* and the second edition of *Urban Design for an Urban Century: Shaping More Livable, Equitable, and Resilient Cities*. His *Beyond Zucotti Park: Freedom of Assembly and the Occupation of Public Space* received the 2013 APA Journalism Award.

Adjunct Professor **Alberto Foyo** was invited to an experimental workshop in Cuenca, Ecuador. The workshop intertwined architecture, permaculture, and agriculture strategies for a “sustained yield” development of high altitude environments. His 2011 restaurant BEEF in Kiev received the Best Ukrainian Restaurant Award.

Adjunct Lecturer **Antonio Furgiuele** gave a presentation, “Architecture of the Cloud: Virtualization Takes Command,”

at Pratt Institute’s *Histories of Data Landscapes* conference on 27 March. The following day, he participated in the Aggregate Group Symposium, *Resource Histories Workshop*.

Adjunct Lecturer **Domingo Gonzalez’s** firm received IES Awards of Merit for Dulles Airport APM Station, PS/IS 276, and MHJ International Terminal in Atlanta. The Sutphin Boulevard Overpass project won the IES Award of Merit and the GE Edison Lighting Award. NYS Capitol Skylights won a NYS Preservation League award. The MTA’s East 180th Street and 14 Penn Plaza Lobby projects received Lucy G. Moses Preservation awards.

Adjunct Lecturer **Daniel Hauben’s** recent exhibitions include *Daniel Hauben: Bronx Works* at the Office of the Bronx Borough President, *Daniel Hauben: Big Works* at the Andrew Freedman Home, and *Park Life: The Bronx* at Poe Park Visitor Center.

Oscar Riera Ojeda Publish-

ers released a monograph on the work of Dean **George Ranalli** in April 2014 entitled *In Situ: George Ranalli, Works and Projects* with contributions including an introduction by Distinguished Professor **Michael Sorkin**. Dean **Ranalli** gave a lecture, “In Situ: People, History, Place,” at the School of Architecture and Planning at the University at Buffalo in February.

Associate Professor **Elisabetta Terragni’s** project in Altavilla was featured in the book *Edifici per la Scuola*. Her project Gjiri i Panormes, an abandoned Cold War military base, was included in the exhibition *Erasmus Effect: Italian Architects Abroad* at the MAXXI Museum in Rome. She participated in the 2013 Bruner Loeb Forum on Legacy City Design with 5th-year B.Arch. student **Chrisoula Kapelonis**.

Assistant Professor **Sean Weiss** lectured on urban infrastructure at Rensselaer

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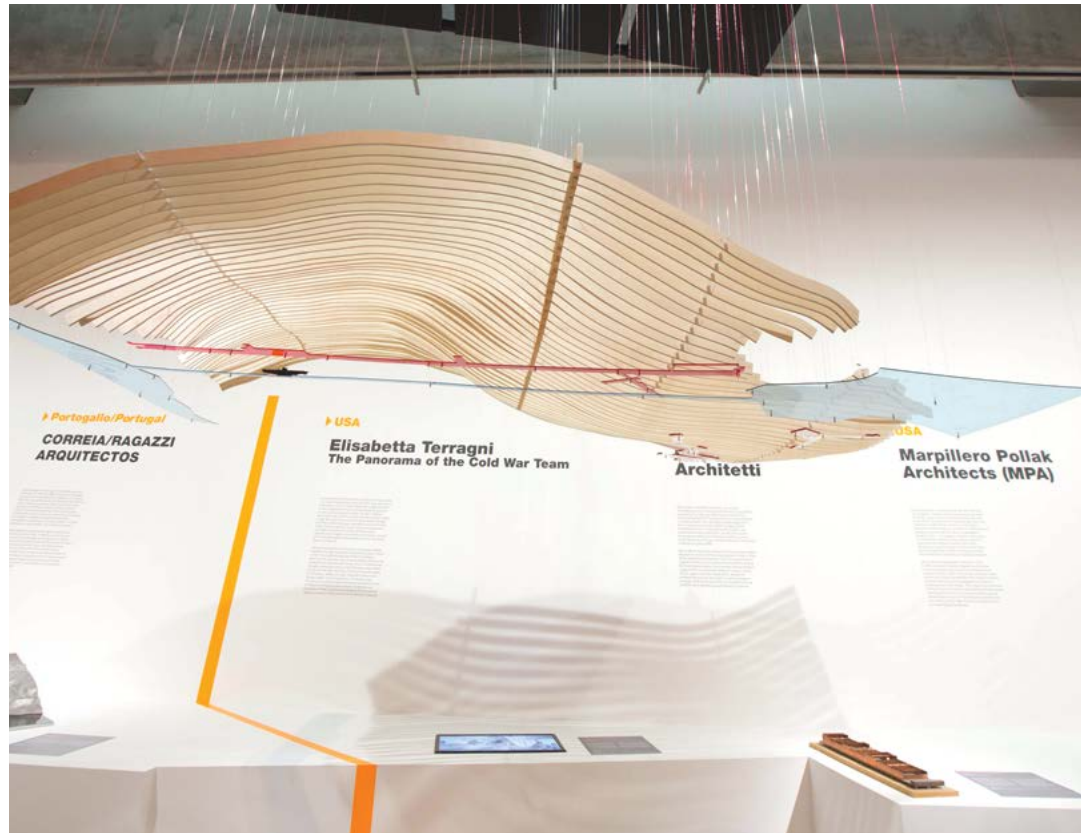


ABOVE: *In Situ: George Ranalli, Works and Projects* by Dean George Ranalli.

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 Polytechnic Institute and presented a paper on photographs of waterworks in Second Empire Paris at the American Comparative Literature Association's annual conference. He contributed five catalogue entries to *The Architect's Library: A Collection of Notable Books on Architecture at Vassar College*.

Associate Professor **June Williamson** organized the invited design challenge Build a Better Burb: **ParkingPLUS**. The resulting innovative parking structures, designed for Rockville Centre, Westbury, Patchogue and Ronkonkoma, on Long Island, were widely published.

Work by Adjunct Associate Professor **Suzan Wines'** firm I-Beam Design was featured in the books *Leftover/Rightunder* by Wes Janz and *The Rise of the Reluctant Innovator* with a foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. A spate of on-line articles about her firm's **Pallet House** has prompted the downloading of a staggering number of drawings of the project from I-Beam's website. 🏠



ABOVE: Gjiri i Panormes by Elisabetta Terragni in the *Erasmus Effect: Italian Architects Abroad* at the MAXXI National Museum of XXI Century Arts.

PHOTO: MUSACCHIO IANNIELLO. COURTESY: FONDAZIONE MAXXI.



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