

# Honor Awards: Six New Buildings, Four Recyclings and Mies

Ten buildings have been chosen to receive 1976 AIA honor awards, one more than last year. Included are four old buildings put to new uses, more renovations than in any previous year. Also for the first time, a separate jury was appointed to make selections in the "extended use" category. The winners—old and new—are shown on the following pages.

The 25-year award, given each year to a building of "enduring significance," went to Mies van der Rohe's twin apartment towers at 860-880 Lakeshore Drive, in Chicago. Welding vertical I-beam rails in a pattern of closely spaced vertical strips, Mies here for the first time used steel (a structural element) as applied ornament—horrifying the functionalists, and making the towers "the most vertical-looking skyscrapers ever built," or so architectural critic Peter Blake, FAIA, wrote in 1960. He called the structures the "strongest, purest and most deceptively simple statement" of Mies' ideas.

The 1976 extended use jury commented: "Through the restrained simplicity of its massing, the evident clarity of its materials, the honesty of expression of its materials, the refined precision of its detailing, this elegant group of structures set a standard of achievement in the design of highrise apartment buildings that many successors strove to emulate, few equalled and almost none ever surpassed."

In choosing among the extended use entries, this jury "sought to reward those projects which were imaginative in their approach, creative in their solution and skillful in their execution."

The overall report of the jury on new buildings stated: "As the jury met this year to review the nearly 500 entrants, it became more and more apparent that architecture has reached a point of divergence. The old formulas are no longer valid. In fact, it would seem that some architects set out to violate as many conventions as possible. Walls become opaque while roofs are transparent; mechanical equipment becomes decoration while structural systems are hidden. The glass box has been broken. Sculptural shapes abound. Form follows function, as long as it has a form; or function follows form, it doesn't seem to make much difference.

Is it exciting or confusing, or exciting confusion, or perhaps, confusing excitement? We are in a searching period; a questioning of the rules; purposeful breaking from convention. There is no direction that is right and there is no direction that is wrong.

"How then do we go about judging those projects deserving of the honor award? Yet, in all the projects reviewed there are those that stand out—not locked to convention, not lost in clichés, but solid in the basic understanding of architecture—answering the program, relating to the site, respecting their environment, understanding the building process.

"The six buildings chosen represent several different directions. Some derivative, some boldly revolutionary, yet all adding to the enrichment of the building art. Many projects exhibited great competence and some showed great inventiveness, perhaps even forecasting things to come. The award winners, in the opinion of the jury, represent the highest standard of where we are today."

On the jury for new buildings were John Burgee, AIA (New York City); Francis P. Gassner, FAIA (Memphis); Gerald M. McCue, FAIA (Berkeley, Calif.); Harold E. Nash (Boston Architectural Center) and Peter Tarapata, FAIA (Bloomfield Hills, Mich.).

The extended use jury was comprised of Jean Paul Carlhian, FAIA (Boston); Giorgio Cavaglieri, FAIA (New York City); J. Everette Fauber, FAIA (Richmond, Va.); John Graves (University of California, Berkeley) and Ralph Youngren, FAIA (Chicago).

A full six of the 10 winners (five new and one renovation) also received the Bartlett award, which honors buildings that show a conscious effort to eliminate barriers to the handicapped. The buildings chosen were the dormitory, dining and student union facility; the Center for Creative Studies; Waterside; R. Crosby Kemper Memorial Arena; Columbus Occupational Health Center, and Butler Square. The Bartlett awards jury was comprised of William Baltzer Fox, AIA; Richard Downing, AIA, and Edward H. Noakes, AIA, all of the Potomac Valley chapter. *Andrea O. Dean*