

>> NEWS FROM RICEDESIGNALLIANCE.ORG

The new Rice Design Alliance website features commentary and podcasts from RDA civic forums and lectures, a calendar of RDA events and events sponsored by other area organizations, travel journals from RDA city tours, and several resources, including a growing archive of past *Cite* issues and links to *OffCite.org*, the *Cite* blog.



FROM LEFT: Winka Dubbeldam with RDA member Luiza Maal; Marfa, Texas; and "The Rurban Horseshoe" from *Cite* 73.

> TEN YEARS OF INITIATIVES FOR HOUSTON

The Initiatives for Houston grants program supports projects that focus on Houston's built environment, its history, present condition, and future development. Jury members evaluate proposals in terms of their potential for making a significant contribution to our understanding of the city. An exhibition showcasing 10 years of winning proposals is planned for early 2010.

Past recipients have created an astonishing range of publications, plans, and built projects. For example, the green roof of the Burdette Keeland, Jr. Design Exploration Center at the University of Houston was funded in part by an Initiatives for Houston grant from the Rice Design Alliance.

The exhibition will run from January 7 to February 26, 2010 at the Architecture Center, Houston. The opening reception will be Thursday, January 7 from 6 to 10 pm.

> GETTING HIGH OR BAD TRIP

Winka Dubbeldam, with a wink, said she really liked the name of the Rice Design Alliance Fall lecture series, *Getting High: Towers in Architecture*. "Getting High, this is a really great title for a Dutch person," she said to laughter from the roughly 300-member audience. She was one of four speakers in the series, including Peter Buchanan, Ali Rahim, and Ross Wimer. Each brought stunning perspectives. Indeed, Buchanan began the series by slamming the majority of towers being built today as "rubbish" and endemic of the final throes of a dying way of thinking.

Visit ricedesignalliance.org if you missed the series for write-ups and video recordings.

> MARFA REFRIED: TRANS-PECOS X2

RDA will lead a second group to Marfa, Texas. Trip dates are February 11-14, 2010 and the cost is \$1,500 per person. It is an encore of a sold-out trip in February 2009. Travelers toured private homes by Houston's own Carlos Jiménez as well as Lake/Flato and Cameron Armstrong. Architectural historian Stephen Fox led a walking tour of downtown Marfa.

> FROM OFFCITE.ORG: CITE 73 NOW AVAILABLE FREE ONLINE

This issue, published in the winter of 2008, looked forward, looked back, and then forward again. It considered the reshaping of the University of St. Thomas and Texas Southern University. *The Rurban Horseshoe* examined historically black neighborhoods on the periphery of the city. Joel Warren Barna analyzed the debate over the Ashby Highrise.

> MEXICO CITY ARCHITECTURE LECTURE SERIES

The "City of Palaces" is what radio announcers used to call Mexico City in their daily broadcasts. As Richard Neutra pointed out in a 1952 essay, only Peru's cities can rival its Pre-Colombian and Colonial riches, but no other city in the Americas can boast of monuments from both eras, as well as an extraordinary body of modern architecture that keeps growing. During 2010, Mexico will celebrate the bicentennial of its independence, as well as the centennial of the Mexican Revolution. The Spring 2010 series will mark this celebration with a lecture series featuring a remarkable group of emerging architects who are making an impact on Mexico City.

See the calendar and visit ricedesignalliance.org for more details.



his deep gratitude to the eight \$10,000 Underwriters: D. E. Harvey Builders, Haynes Whaley Associates, Inc., Linbeck Group, SpawMaxwell Company, Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc., TDIndustries, Tellepsen, and Phoebe and Bobby Tudor.

Gala Chairs Mikki and David Harvey, Jr. recognized their gala co-chairs, David Andrews, Underwriting; Shelby Holman and Kim Kasse, Auction; and Bob Inaba and Randall Walker, Environment. Harvey introduced the Tudors, recognizing their leadership on a number of Houston's educational and cultural boards as well as raising and donating money for the Ideson project and for buildings at Rice University, where Bobby is co-chair of its Centennial

Campaign. Mikki Hebl noted Phoebe's successful efforts to save the historic Wiess House, now home to Rice President David Leebron and his family.

The Tudors were presented the Rice Design Alliance Award for Design Excellence, a Lalique China Mood bowl donated by Neiman Marcus. Phoebe spoke of the Julia Ideson Preservation Partners' efforts to restore the building and provide state-of-the-art archival storage and work areas for the collection. Noting the high humidity inside that evening, Phoebe pointed out how much the building needed the renovation.



NEWS

UNDERWRITING PARTY

DESPITE THREATENING SKIES, TORNADO warnings, and competing events, Gala contributors and their guests turned out to honor philanthropists Phoebe and Bobby Tudor at the annual RDA Gala Underwriting Party held on October 29 at the Julia Ideson building. The historic 1926 building was designed by Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram, architect of Rice University's original campus, and it is undergoing a renovation and expansion. Gala honoree Phoebe Tudor, chair of the Julia Ideson Preservation Partners, is heading up the effort to raise \$32 million for the project. Gensler is the architect, SpawMaxwell is the contractor, and Haynes Whaley is the structural engineer for the project.

Guests gathered in the soon-to-be-renovated, second-story Tudor Gallery where they enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and wine provided by Jackson and Company. Library docents were on hand in the venerable Texas Room where historical documents were on view, and architectural historian Stephen Fox answered questions about the historic building that was home to Houston's first city library. Mark Crippin with SpawMaxwell arranged for views into the new wing, which is due to open in early 2010. The collection then will be moved from the old building into the new wing, and renovation of the historic building will begin.

Rice Design Alliance President David Spaw thanked contributors for their support of the gala, *Hue: Celebrating a Vibrant Community*, and expressed



ABOVE LEFT: David Harvey, Phoebe Tudor, Mikki Hebl, and Bobby Tudor; CENTER: Rice School of Architecture Dean John Casbarian and Charles Maynard; BELOW RIGHT: Kimberly Hickson, David and Joni Calkins, and David and Joan Spaw.

LETTER

IN RESPONSE TO CITE 73, WINTER 2009

In rereading the Hindsight on the Ashby Highrise, the author [Joel Warren Barna] made an assumption and revealed his slanted opinion in the matter while feigning neutrality throughout the entire article till the very end. First "neighborhood cohesion as a positive force" is a wildly subjective litmus test for any city's growth. I may ask, who decides the criteria for what that cohesion is and how is it positive? Or better what are the positive attributes for any neighborhood in the vast long term? All too subjective for a single property to be determined by people in the adjacency. The author also clearly ends with emotional hyperbole on "Bissonnet Canyon." Landowners could only dream to be so lucky. As a student of architecture, it is obvious that the local institutions are only interested in keeping our profession as the "house-pets for the rich." I am for progress, not perfection.

Sincerely,
Anonymous
Student of architecture



LET US HEAR FROM YOU

Cite welcomes and encourages readers to send letters, including critical ones, to citemail@rice.edu.



CALENDAR

RDA LECTURES

MEXICO CITY ARCHITECTURE
Brown Auditorium
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
1001 Bissonnet
(Enter via the Main Street door)
7p.m.
713.348.4876
ricedesignalliance.org

JOSE CASTILLO
CO-FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL,
ARQUITECTURA 911SC
Wednesday, February 3

DEREK DELLEKAMP
FOUNDER, DELLEKAMP ARGITECTOS,
Tuesday, February 9

JAVIER SANCHEZ
PRINCIPAL, JS^A
Wednesday, February 17

FRIDA ESCOBEDO LOPEZ
PRINCIPAL, ESCOBEDO LOPEZ,
ARCHITECT
Wednesday, February 24