

CONSTRUCTION CHIC REIGNS AT RDA GALA,

"SHEETROCK AROUND THE CLOCK"

The Rice Design Alliance's eighth annual fundraising gala, "Sheetrock Around the Clock," was held on Friday, 11 November, at the First City National Bank Building. The gala, chaired by Jory Alexander and Carolyn Walne, drew more than 700 RDA supporters, who gathered to recognize Houston's construction industry for its contribution to the city's remarkable architecture.

The RDA Award for Design Excellence was presented to Warren S. Bellows, Jr., chairman of the board of W. S. Bellows Construction Corporation.

Bellows Construction, founded in 1914 by Warren S. Bellows, began building in Houston in 1924. Since that time, Bellows has built many of Houston's landmark buildings, including the San Jacinto Monument (Alfred C. Finn, 1936), the Houston Club (Alfred C. Finn, 1940), the Bank of the Southwest Building (Kenneth Franzheim, 1956), the First City National Bank Building (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1960), the Tenneco Building (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1963), One Shell Plaza (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill with Wilson, Morris, Crain & Anderson, 1971), and the Wortham Theater Center (Morris Aubry, 1987), as well as the restoration of Bayou Bend (Graham B. Luhn and Kirksey-Meyers Architects, 1993). RDA president Barrie Scardino presented the award, a Steuben Illusion glass bowl donated by Neiman Marcus, to Warren S. Bellows, Jr.

Environment chairman Jay Baker specified a stage constructed of bright orange scaffolding and used orange construction fencing, yellow-and-black caution tape, blinking lights, barricades, and construction signage to carry out the theme. Baker & Botts donated 180 bright-yellow-and-white Mighty Tonka construction toys, including cranes, dump trucks, loaders, backhoes, and mixers, that decorations chairman Adele Howell Bentsen selected to place on the black-draped tables. (Following the party, Baker & Botts donated the toys to children at Scott Elementary School, the firm's Business/School Partner through the Houston Independent School District's Adopt-a-School Program.) Guests received yellow hard hats and carpenter's aprons at their places as favors, an effort chaired by

Sharon Tyler. Truffles & Flourishes prepared the stunning buffet and the fabulous Sheetrock Cake, garnished with sheets of white chocolate and silver Sheetrock nails made of dark chocolate. Music was provided by the Harry Sheppard Trio and Brave Combo. The crowd was entertained by a stylish silent auction organized by designers Cathie Johnson and Priscilla Blohm. During dinner, guests were treated to a slide presentation prepared by RDA



Left to right: Gala chair Carolyn Walne, RDA president Barrie Scardino, honoree, Warren S. Bellows, Jr., gala chair Jory Alexander, and Thomas F. Bellows.

president Barrie Scardino that documented some of the most significant Houston buildings constructed by the ten Houston construction firms that were recognized that evening: W. S. Bellows Construction Corporation; Tellepsen Corporation; Fretz Construction Company; Marshall Construction Company, Inc.; Meyerson Builders, Inc.; Schneider Construction Company, Inc.; Linbeck Corporation; The Miner-Dederick Companies; D. E. Harvey Builders; and The Lott Group, Inc.

The net gala proceeds of \$135,000 will help fund RDA educational programs and *Cite* magazine. The Rice Design Alliance would like to thank gala chairs Jory Alexander and Carolyn Walne, underwriting chair Paul Chapman, graphics chair Deborah Brochstein, student chairs Lonnie Hoogeboom and Christopher Hight, and all other committee chairs and volunteers who helped make the evening possible. RDA also thanks the following generous contributors.

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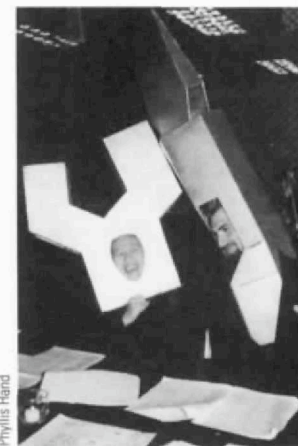
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Several guests opted for "tool belts" rather than tuxes. Left: Rice students Vi Tran (wrench) and Christopher Hight (screwdriver). Below, left to right: Chris Brown, Elaine Neyland, Sylvia Crispin, Kirk Wilhelmus, and Andre Crispin. Bottom, left to right: Rice students Lonnie Hoogeboom, Brett Terpeluk, and Ben Thorne as Miss Makita.



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RDA SPRING ARCHITECTURE EVENTS

The Rice Design Alliance has organized a series of events for spring 1995 to assess the impact of modernism on Houston, explore the controversial issue of preservation of modern landmarks, and study the work of practicing architects from around the world who continue to work in the modern idiom.

Symposium

25 January – *Modern Preservation: Back to the Future*

This symposium will focus attention on endangered modern landmarks, and panelists will discuss the imminent redirection of preservation efforts in this country from prewar to postwar buildings and sites. Participants include Diane Wray, founder and executive director of the Modern Architecture Preservation League in Denver, Colorado; Ellen Beasley, author and preservation consultant; and Richard Longstreth, an architectural historian and director of the graduate program in historical preservation at George Washington University. Rafael Longoria, assistant professor of architecture at the University of Houston, will serve as moderator. 7:30 p.m., Jones Auditorium, University of St. Thomas.

Spring Lecture Series - *Still Modern*

This lecture series presents the work of four architects from different parts of the world who continue the search for modernity. The series will be introduced by Thomas Fisher, editorial director of *Progressive Architecture*, whose cover article, "Escape From Style" (September 1994), examines the current debate between style and philosophy in architecture.

22 February – Thomas Fisher, editorial director of *Progressive Architecture*.

1 March – Glenn Murcutt, Glenn Murcutt & Associates Pty Limited, Mosman, Australia.

8 March – Françoise-Hélène Jourda, Jourda & Perraudin Architectes, Lyon, France.

15 March – Mark Mack, Mack Architects, Los Angeles, California.

29 March – Markku Komonen, Heikkinen-Komonen, Helsinki, Finland.

All lectures will be given at the Brown Auditorium, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, at 8 p.m. This series is made possible by support from the Corporate Members of the Rice Design Alliance and the Cultural Arts Council of Houston and Harris County.

RDA Architecture Tour and Lecture

18 April – *Texas Modernism*. A lecture by Stephen Fox, architectural historian and fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas. 8 p.m., Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

22–23 April – *Modern Landmarks*. The RDA's annual architecture tour will feature modern residential architecture in Houston.

For tickets and information about the symposium, lecture series, and tour, please call the Rice Design Alliance at (713)524-6297.



Howard Barnstone and Partners, architect, Maher House, 1964.



Heikkinen-Komonen, architects, Finnish Chancery, Washington, D.C., 1994.

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The Rice Design Alliance, established in 1973, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of architecture, urban design, and the built environment in the Houston region through educational programs; the publication of *Cite*, a biannual review of architecture and design; and active programs to initiate physical improvements. Membership in the RDA is open to the general public.

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