



The National Building Museum will host ***Creating Community Through A Collaborative Process: A Conversation with David M. Schwarz*** (Founder and Principal, David M. Schwarz Architects), *Edward P. Bass* (Chairman, Performing Arts Fort Worth) and *Gary Hanson* (Executive Director, The Cleveland Orchestra) moderated by *Paul Goldberger* (Architecture Critic for *The New Yorker*). The event is open to the public and will take place on Friday, September 12th at 7:00pm at the National Building Museum (The Great Hall) 401 F Street Washington, DC 20001.



Edward P. Bass,
Chairman,
Performing Arts Fort Worth.



Gary Hanson,
Executive Director,
The Cleveland Orchestra.



Paul Goldberger,
Architecture Critic for
The New Yorker.

Participants in the National Building Museum's Conversation with David Schwarz.

CATCHING UP WITH DAVID SCHWARZ



David Schwarz talks with Building Committee Chairman, Steve Turner at the opening for the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville, TN.

Speaking with David Schwarz at 8:30pm on a Monday night, one has the impression that he packs more into a day than most people fit into a week. He's currently working on a roster of projects — each the kind of large-scale signature commission that most architects dream of having in a career. Except that David, being David, is currently doing a half-dozen at once, among them a new resort in Atlantic City, a performing arts center in Las Vegas, a boutique hotel in Washington, D.C., master plans in Houston and Flower Mound, and an exclusive private residence. More of the same tomorrow, I ask? "One of the great things and damnable things about this job is that every day is different. If each day was the same, I would be phenomenally bored," David responds.

With this array of projects on the drafting tables and others in various stages of construction, there seems no chance that David will be bored any time soon. And although he celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of his firm this year, it is the future of the practice that excites him most.

In honor of the anniversary, the firm will be releasing a new monograph with a preface penned by David. David will be participating in an architectural colloquium focused on client and architect collaboration, and the firm will be hosting a gala event at the National Building Museum. A virtual exhibition *For People and Places: The Work of David M. Schwarz Architects* curated by Dean Sakamoto also marks the anniversary. But most telling, David M. Schwarz / Architectural Services officially changed its name to David M. Schwarz Architects. Four principals now hold an equity stake in the business along with David.

"Our name change represents the change to our organizational structure and the change of the ownership of the firm. We've been talking about this for a while but we've

PROJECT UPDATES

The River Walk at Central Park

The Master Plan for the new central business district in Flower Mound, Texas was approved by the Town Council in a 5-0 vote on August 4th. Planned as Flower Mound's 21st century downtown, the River Walk at Central Park will integrate commercial and residential uses within a 158-acre development. Its design will allow and encourage people to work and live in close proximity and will provide a pedestrian oriented environment.



Master Plan for River Walk at Central Park in Flower Mound, Texas.



David Schwarz in his 11th Street office in the 1980s.

been busy being architects," David notes. "It's very important to me that those in the firm get the recognition they deserve and while I don't plan on retiring until I kick the bucket, we wanted to have a succession plan."

Of all places, David traces the beginnings of his firm and his architectural career to a dinner party. Bored by the conversation of adults, a six-year-old David excused himself and repaired to his host's yard. There he found terraces of white gravel and red gravel and took it upon himself to intermix the stone. His mother promptly stopped him and said he could not rearrange the stone because the architect had chosen this arrangement. She said if he wanted to change it, he would need to become an architect. David replied, "Fine, I'll be an architect."

From that point on, David's mother nurtured his enthusiasm for the built environment with books, building toys and excursions. His first trip to the Metropolitan Museum in New York at the age of eight left a lasting impression. "I remember being dumbstruck by the quality of the space. I remember the feeling it evoked. There were many moments like that in my life," David recalls.

After studying Philosophy at St. John's College in Annapolis, David went to Yale University to earn his Master's in Architecture. He was out of school for a mere two years when he began to think about and plan for setting up his own shop.

"I wanted more control of my life and my work than I was able to get working for someone else," David explains. "I wanted to make a wonderful place to work."

In 1978, David started his practice operating out of a townhouse in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood of Washington, D.C. The location also doubled as his home. His bedroom was on the third floor, his studio was on the second and the kitchen was on the ground floor. "Every time I went from my bedroom to the kitchen, I'd have to walk through the office. I would stop to take a look at something, to work something out. It was hard not to stop. It was hard not to care about the work all the time," notes David.

David describes the growth and evolution of his practice as organic. "There was no grand design. My goals were general and non-specific," says David. Focused more on the quality and caliber of the work and the service to clients, David set general benchmarks for the growth of the business and only occasionally assessed his progress along the way. He did, however, pay close attention to putting together the right team and establishing a creative and collaborative environment.

"I care very much about the corporate culture. It's easier to create the right culture from the start than to try to fix it later. We look to hire smart, kind and considerate people," David says. "We want to be a group of people working together for a common goal and purpose."

PROJECT UPDATES

Tarrant County Jail

DMSAS will present its Schematic Design for the new jail facility to the Tarrant County Commissioners on September 9th. The new jail will be built on the site of the county's Muller Building on West Weatherford Street, across from the Tarrant County Corrections Center. A short tunnel under the street will connect the new jail to the existing jail and courts.



Rendering of the Tarrant County Jail.

We avoid office politics. We really want people in our firm to succeed by doing good work and not because they don't get along with someone."

His attention to corporate culture has created a place where people stick around and consider co-workers family. Principals Tom Greene, Craig Williams and Michael Swartz have all been with the firm twenty-five years or more. David's Executive Administrator Jerry Marshall celebrates twenty-two years with the firm this October. "I am shy. Getting to know people is difficult for me, so the fewer people I need to get to know the better. I would just as soon work with the same people than have to get to know new people," David jokes.

When David talks about the firm's body of work and its approach to design, you can hear the commitment in his voice: "We don't have a particular style. We believe style is one of the many tools available to an architect to make appropriate choices for the project considering its client, purpose, time and place. We are populist architects. We care about how people use and experience buildings. We care about how people react to our buildings emotionally, not intellectually. We build for people not critics and, at the end of the day, we know people take care of things they love," David explains.

Fostering community and notions of sustainability are also central to the firm's approach. "We want to create places where people feel comfortable. We are very interested in pedestrianism. We are very interested in being non-isolating. We are firmly committed to the notion that everyone's favorite pastime is people watching," David continues. During the design phase for one of the firm's sports facilities, David recalls a lengthy discussion with the client as to what was more interesting for the spectators: the game or the other spectators.

Lastly and most importantly, David explains you need to understand your client and their business. "If a building has a business purpose, you need to understand how that business makes money and design the building to accommodate it," notes David. Over the years, David has come to learn the business of baseball, performance arts venues, wineries and hospitals.



Yale Class of '54
Environmental Science Center
designed by David M. Schwarz Architects.

"In our practice we have the opportunity to study and get involved in diverse businesses. We are extremely interested in the intersection between human behavior and architecture," explains David. "The lessons of human behavior are cross disciplinary. The things you learn in one project can be applied to another project. Our office is a constant forum for learning."

David's enthusiasm for learning may explain why he is heading back to Yale this fall. In addition to his work at the firm, David will be teaching a graduate architecture studio course. Working with Chuck Atwood, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Harrah's Entertainment Corporation, the studio will respond to the post-suburban condition of Las Vegas' famed strip and see what lessons Vegas can learn from the architecture of the past forty years beyond the city. The students will work collaboratively with David M. Schwarz Architects on a master plan for a 350 acre site before focusing on a building design. "I am enormously interested in looking at bodies of work and seeing what lessons can be learned from them," notes David.

PROJECT UPDATES

Carnegie Building

The construction phase of the Carnegie Building project in Fort Worth is scheduled to conclude this month. A formal ribbon cutting for the building is being planned for December.

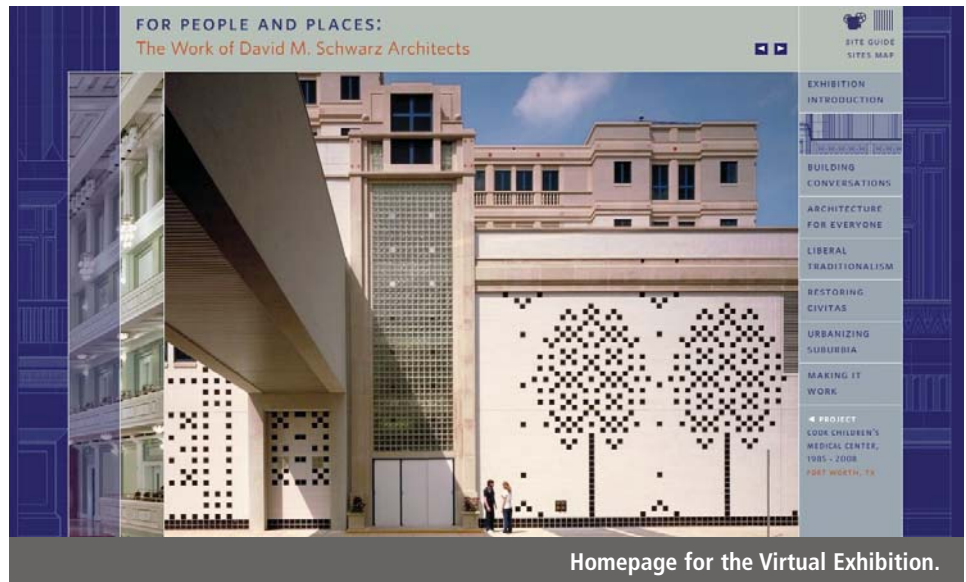
Spartanburg Business School

DMSAS has recently completed a new schematic design street elevation for the University of South Carolina Upstate — George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics. DMSAS is partnering on this project with McMillan Smith and Partners — the Architect of Record.



Street Elevation for
Spartanburg Business School.

FOR PEOPLE & PLACES: A VIRTUAL EXHIBITION



The virtual exhibition curated by Dean Sakamoto / *For People and Places: The Work of David M. Schwarz Architects* launches this week at nbm.org and forpeopleandplaces.org. [Click here to view.](#)

The exhibition showcases thirty of the firm's projects that have significantly contributed to the American landscape over the past three decades. The exhibition includes analysis of the work, detailed renderings, photographs, explanation of planning and process, and personal interviews with clients, developers, influentials in the field of architecture and the principals of the firm.

"With this exhibition, I wanted to give an in-depth look into the firm's work and discern its underlying philosophies. This really begins with understanding David and his approach," explains curator Dean Sakamoto. "David M. Schwarz Architects' work is sincerely done for the people they design for and for the places they design at. Serving the client and being contextually appropriate are mandates the firm takes to heart. It resonates with you when you experience their work."

The virtual exhibition allows viewers to explore the firm's body of work through six distinctive themes: (1) Building Conversations (collaborative process with clients); (2) Architecture for Everyone (the populist nature of the firm's work); (3) Liberal Traditionalism (the firm's architectural style); (4) Restoring Civitas and

(5) Urbanizing Suburbia (both explore the firm's contextual design); and (6) Making it Work (the firm's design process).

"The first challenge was to figure out and further define what a virtual exhibition is. It's a fairly new format," Mr. Sakamoto notes. "Much like the work of the firm, the exhibition is democratic and thoughtful. The fact that it's virtual makes it more accessible. The navigational ability and how it works with the curatorial structure of the exhibit is impressive. With a conventional exhibit, if your body is not in a particular place and if you don't travel through the exhibit in a particular way, you can miss something. In this format, everything is at the click of your fingertips."

The exhibition is presented with the support of the National Building Museum, Washington, D.C., and the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America. The virtual exhibition's Web design was done by AH Design and KDN Films produced the video content.



FAMILY NEWS

The firm's second monograph *David M. Schwarz Architects 2002-2007* will officially go on sale on Friday, September 12th. A book signing will follow the architectural conversation with David Schwarz at the National Building Museum (noted above) and copies of the monograph will be sold at the museum gift shop.



On Saturday, September 13th from 12:00pm to 3:00pm, David M. Schwarz Architects will host an open house at their office located at 1707 L Street NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC 20036. Please feel free to stop by our office for a walk through our studio and a peek at what is on our drafting boards. Come talk with the David M. Schwarz Architects family and see our process and the memorable projects that have resulted. Maps for a walking tour of DC projects will also be available. The office is accessible via the Farragut North (Red Line) and Farragut West (Orange Line) Metro stations.

Best wishes to all in the David M. Schwarz Architects family celebrating a birthday in September and October: Ramsay Fairburn (Sept. 5th), Steve Payne (Sept. 7th), Jason Barrett (Sept. 19th), Rhiannon Porter (Sept. 27th), Monika Drew (Oct. 2nd), and Jordan Graves (Oct. 19th).

Congratulations to all in the David M. Schwarz Architects family celebrating anniversaries with the firm in September and October. Those with more than ten years of service include: David Schwarz (30 years) and Jerry Marshall (22 years).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,
We welcome your feedback and comments to our newsletters. Submissions can be sent to newsletter@dmsas.com for potential inclusion in our next edition!

Below are some of the notes we received in response to our last edition and the announcement of our new name.

Dear Editor,
I have enjoyed consulting with DMSAS for nearly half of your firm's tenure. I had the pleasure of first learning from David during the Kentland's second charrette, where he quickly mastered and taught me the complex issues of integrating the large format retailers into a walkable town center. Recently, I learned more from DMSAS in the Houston charrette. And while David may not admit it, there is a New Urbanist spirit deep inside of his sole. **Robert Gibbs, ASLA, Gibbs Planning Group**

Dear David,
My congratulations to you on your thirty years work and on to your new partners for their contributions to it. Your 12 September weekend is in my calendar and I look forward to the details. My best, **Robert A.M. Stern, Robert A.M. Stern Architects**

Dear David,
You have developed and maintained a distinguished and creative architectural practice over these last thirty years. And Dene and I were pleased to receive notice that you are now going to include Tom, Craig, Michael and Greg as shareholders in your corporation. They have been good friends and colleagues and merit the inclusion. But it is a mark of your generosity, for which we have always esteemed you, that you have recognized their contributions in the way that you have. Congratulations to all of you. Sincerely, **Melvin C. Garbow, Arnold & Porter**

Dear David,
New name, same great gig! ...
I send our best wishes.
Sincerely yours, **Albert B. Ratner, ForestCity Enterprises**