

Making Houston Modern

The Life and Architecture of Howard Barnstone

The Forum's Panel Discussion

October 14, 2021

Thursday, 6:30 pm Central

The Dallas Architecture Forum will present a free Panel Discussion focused on the life of Houston Modernist architect Howard Barnstone as chronicled in the recently published monograph ***Making Houston Modern***, a collection of essays which examines his life and legacy. His modernist designs and pioneering writings reshaped perceptions of the architecture of Texas. Barnstone worked closely with Philip Johnson on many of his Texas projects and was instrumental in the design of the Rothko Chapel. This important contribution and the perspective of Barnstone's work is edited by "three renowned voices in the architecture world, (and) situates Barnstone within the contexts of American architecture, modernism, and Jewish culture to unravel the legacy of a charismatic personality whose imaginative work as an architect, author, teacher, and civic commentator helped redefine architecture in Texas." Panel participants will include Moderator Kate Holliday, Michelangelo Sabatino, Robert Barnstone and Jeffery Lieber.

Moderator:

Kathryn (Kate) Holliday, Hon. AIA Fort Worth and Hon. AIA Dallas, is an architectural historian whose research and teaching focus on the built environment in American cities. She studied architecture, art history, and environmental studies at Williams College and the University of Texas at Austin. She is the author of two monographs on New York architects, *Leopold Eidlitz: Architecture and Idealism in the Gilded Age* and *Ralph Walker: Architect of the Century* (Rizzoli, 2012). She is currently at work on several projects, including the book manuscript for *Telephone City*, which explores the history of telephone buildings and telecommunications infrastructure.

As director of the David Dillon Center for Texas Architecture, she also engages with the Dallas-Fort Worth architecture and historic preservation community. She serves on the board of directors of Historic Fort Worth, served for six years on the State Board of Review of the Texas Historical Commission, and has also contributed chapters to books on Texas architects O'Neil Ford and Howard Barnstone. She is part of a team of landscape architects and architects working to support the Joppa/Joppee community in southern Dallas as it advocates for a voice in shaping its future. The team's project is called "Reclaiming Black Settlements: A Design Playbook for Historic Communities in the Shadow of Sprawl". In 2020, the Texas Society of Architects awarded her the Flowers Award for Excellence in Promotion of Architecture through the Media, and the Texas Historical Commission awarded her its Media Achievement Award for *The Open-Ended City: David Dillon on Texas Architecture*.

Panelists:

Robert Barnstone is an architect with a background in architectural design, art, and academia. His recent scholarly research and publications are centered on architecture technologies and material science. In both architecture and sculpture, he has experimented with new applications in envelope design, framing techniques, and material uses. He teaches at the University of Sydney with a focus on culture that gives rise to the art of architecture with craft. He has worked toward sustainable material solutions with several institutions, on cardboard structures, and research in chemically bonded phosphate cement, and stress skin panels. Parallel to his involvement in sustainable material development, Mr. Barnstone has been using the design studio as a platform for civic action. This work combines his interest in hands-on learning with artistic intent and the challenges of real-world problems. His collaborative design projects range from transitional housing to vocational training schools for Haiti and Rwanda, a food invention center, and design/build projects like park weather shelters and horse barns. He complements his design work as an architect with an active career as both painter and sculptor. In painting and sculpture, Barnstone explores ways of making; working with new materials, new construction methods and framing techniques; and new approaches to the depth of space, light, and texture.

Jeffrey Lieber is Associate Professor of Art History at Texas State University and author of *Flintstone Modernism or the Crisis in Postwar American Culture*. His essays and reviews have appeared in *Architectural Histories*, *Texas Architect*, *Harvard Design Magazine*, and *Design and Culture*. Lieber's 2018 *New York Times* op-ed, "What Do We Lose When the Union Carbide Buildings Falls?" galvanized debates about the meaning of mid-20th century architecture in the U.S. His wide-ranging interests in the field have been supported through research grants, including a Delmas Foundation Grant for Independent Research in Venice, and are reflected in his curation of notable film series at the Harvard Film Archive and The New School. He received his AB from Vassar College and his PhD in art history from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Michelangelo Sabatino is a Professor at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) leading the PhD program in Architecture and is the inaugural John Vinci Distinguished Research Fellow. He is trained as an architect, preservationist, and historian. Sabatino taught history and theory of architecture at Yale University and the University of Houston before his appointment to IIT. Throughout his career Sabatino has focused new light on larger patterns of architectural discourse and production during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: his book *Pride in Modesty: Modernist Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy* (2011) was translated into Italian and won critical acclaim and multiple awards, including the Society of Architectural Historians' Alice Davis Hitchcock Award. His recent and forthcoming books include *Canada: Modern Architectures in History*, *Avant-Garde in the Cornfields: Architecture, Landscape, and Preservation in New Harmony*, *Making Houston Modern: The Life and Architecture of Howard Barnstone*, *Modern in the Middle: Chicago Houses 1929–1975* and *Carlo Mollino: Architect and Storyteller*.