

American Academy of Arts and Letters

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NEWS RELEASE

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THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND LETTERS ANNOUNCES 2011 ARCHITECTURE AWARD WINNERS

New York, March 16, 2011 — The American Academy of Arts and Letters announced today the recipients of its 2011 architecture awards. The Academy's architecture awards program began in 1955 with the inauguration of the annual Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture, which is awarded to a preeminent architect from any country who has made a significant contribution to architecture as an art. In 1991, the Academy began giving Arts and Letters Awards (formerly called Academy Awards) to honor American architects whose work is characterized by a strong personal direction. An additional award category was created in 2003 to honor an American from any field who has contributed to ideas in architecture through any medium of expression.

The **Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture** of \$5000 recognizes an architect of any nationality who has made a significant contribution to architecture as an art.

Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam
Atlanta, Georgia

Two **Arts and Letters Awards** of \$7500 each recognize American architects whose work is characterized by a strong personal direction.

William E. Massie
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Julie Vandenberg Snow
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Two **Arts and Letters Awards** of \$7500 each recognize Americans who explore ideas in architecture through any medium of expression.

Sylvia Lavin
Los Angeles, California

Anthony Vidler
New York, New York

The winners were chosen from a group of 30 architects nominated by the members of the Academy. The members of this year's selection committee were: Henry N. Cobb, Peter Eisenman, Hugh Hardy, Richard Meier, James Polshek, Billie Tsien (chair), and Tod Williams. All five awards will be presented in New York City in May at the Academy's annual Ceremonial. Work by the winners will be featured in the upcoming *Exhibition of Work by Newly Elected Members and Recipients of Honors and Awards*, which will be on view in the Academy's galleries on Audubon Terrace.

EXHIBITION OF WORK BY NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS AND RECIPIENTS OF HONORS AND AWARDS

Admission Free

Thursday, May 19 to Sunday, June 12, 2011

Thursdays through Sundays, 1 - 4 p.m.

Closed Memorial Day Weekend, May 28 - 30

Audubon Terrace, New York City
Broadway between 155 and 156 Streets
#1 Train to Broadway and 157 Street

Mack Scogin and **Merrill Elam**: “Partners in work and life for over 25 years, Scogin and Elam have created buildings that are optimistic and joyous. Teachers and practioners, they have worked throughout the United States on diverse project types, the structure, form, and texture of which is always site specific and inventive. Simultaneously humane and bold, this work respects and also challenges our expectations: the result is an architecture that astonishes and delights,” said Tod Williams. Scogin and Elam’s work includes the Knowlton School of Architecture at Ohio State University, the Jean Hargrove Music Library at the University of California at Berkeley, and the United States Federal Court House in Austin, Texas. Scogin and Elam graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology, and have had their own practice in Atlanta, Georgia since 1984.

William E. Massie is currently the architect in residence at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. For the past twenty years he has used technology to develop innovative fabrication and building methods that have advanced the art and science of architecture. “Massie is a free-spirited constructivist inventor who has expanded the architectural canvas,” said James Polshek. His work includes the Big Belt and Big Sky houses, both in rural Montana; Playa Urbana, P.S.1 Courtyard, Queens, New York; and the American House ’08, in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Julie Vandenberg Snow has led a studio-based practice in Minneapolis, Minnesota since 1989. Her projects include two US land ports of entry in Minnesota and Maine; the School of Business at the University of South Dakota; Weekend House on Lake Superior, Minnesota; Minneapolis Fifth Precinct Police Department, Minnesota; and Great Plains Software, North Dakota. “The architecture of Julie Vandenberg Snow might be characterized as invention within convention. That is not to say that her work is conventional but to recognize that within a rigorous underpinning, she and her studio make the marvelous happen,” said Billie Tsien.

Sylvia Lavin is a professor of architectural history and theory in the UCLA Department of Architecture and Urban Design in Los Angeles, California. She has received the Vincent Scully Award and the AIA Excellence Award in Education. She is the author of several books, including the forthcoming *Kissing Architecture* (Princeton University Press, 2011), and *Form Follows Libido: Architecture and Richard Neutra in a Psychoanalytic Culture* (MIT Press, 2005). “Throughout her career as teacher, scholar, and critic, Sylvia Lavin has mobilized her passion, energy, and intelligence in a battle with mediocrity,” said Peter Eisenman.

Anthony Vidler is an historian and critic of modern and contemporary architecture, and is the dean of the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture at Cooper Union in New York City. He is the author of *Histories of the Immediate Present* (MIT Press, 2008), *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (MIT Press, 2000), and *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (MIT Press, 1992). “Vidler has long been recognized by his extraordinary contributions to the academic and architectural community through his teaching and writings. His work has always been exemplary,” said Richard Meier.

American Academy of Arts and Letters

The American Academy of Arts and Letters was established in 1898 to “foster, assist, and sustain an interest in literature, music, and the fine arts.” Election to the Academy is considered the highest formal recognition of artistic merit in this country. The Academy is currently comprised of 250 of America’s leading voices in the fields of Art, Architecture, Literature, and Music. The Academy presents exhibitions of art, architecture, and manuscripts, and readings and performances of new musicals throughout the year. It is located in three landmark buildings designed by McKim, Mead & White, Cass Gilbert, and Charles Pratt Huntington, on Audubon Terrace at 155 Street and Broadway, New York City.