



ArchitectureBoston Magazine
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The summer 2017 issue of *ArchitectureBoston* magazine, [TASTE](#), investigates how designers apply the notion of taste to the built environment, and how culture influences what both designers and the public find beautiful.

[TASTE](#), the SUMMER 2017 issue of *ArchitectureBoston* magazine, is an examination of the knotty matter of defining quality in architecture and design when many of the usual arbiters are in question. What is beauty? Who decides? "It's not 'educating' the public that's needed but a sincere curiosity and openness to opinions on both sides of the aesthetic divide," says editor Renée Loth. "Saint Augustine said that beauty 'is a plank against the waves of the sea.' Respectful conversation is the life raft we need today."

Articles in TASTE include:

"In an extraordinary space"

An examination of beauty through the single lens of the Harleston Parker Medal. How does a jury apply an ideal of beauty to concrete examples in the built environment? How does the era and its cultural values influence the selection of the winner? *By Christina E. Crawford*

"Upon the rising stairs"

The idea that beauty was once a single idea based on objective criteria (proportion, balance, symmetry) is vastly different from the fragmenting in audiences today. Tracing the history of thought and movements about beauty. *By Michael R. Spicher*

"An idyll to the King"

"I first visited Graceland, Elvis Presley's famed estate in Memphis, for the reason I suspect many people go to NASCAR events and hockey games and probably Graceland itself: I wanted carnage. His mansion, said to be a gaudy masterpiece, had become a kind of shorthand for bad taste." He came to Graceland a rubbernecker and left a convert. *By Henry Scollard AIA*

"Beauty is a beast"

Mark Pasnik AIA speaks with Elaine Scarry, author of *On Beauty and Being Just*, about why the word beauty was "evicted" from discourse in the 1980s and 1990s, the ways in which beauty calls us to compassion and care, and the upside to "a plurality of beauty."

"Informed sources"

In this digital age, when the principal measure of journalistic value is popularity, architectural criticism has to reckon with new technologies and new obligations. *By Mark Lamster*

"Eye of the beholder"

In 2011 the author surveyed 26 nonarchitects, asking them to name their favorite and least favorite buildings in Greater Boston and rate nine local award-winning buildings. It was hardly scientific, but the disconnect between architects and laypeople was revealing. *By David Huang*

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About *ArchitectureBoston*

ArchitectureBoston, a quarterly publication of the Boston Society of Architects/AIA, explores the ways in which architecture influences and is influenced by our environment and our society. A benefit of membership in the BSA, *ArchitectureBoston* is also distributed to AIA members throughout New England as well as to allied professionals (engineers, landscape architects, interior designers, and lawyers), members of the construction industry, community and business leaders, politicians and policymakers, design schools, public libraries, media representatives, and subscribers. It can also be purchased at select independent bookstores in Boston. For more information, [visit architects.org/architectureboston](http://architects.org/architectureboston).

About the Boston Society of Architects

The Boston Society of Architects/AIA is committed to professional development for its members, advocacy on behalf of great design, and sharing an appreciation for the built environment with the public at large. Established in 1867, the BSA today consists of nearly 4,000 members and produces a diverse array of programs and publications, including ArchitectureBoston Expo and *ArchitectureBoston* magazine. A chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the BSA is a nonprofit, professional-service organization. Its partner organization, the BSA Foundation, supports the civic and public outreach of the architectural community. For more information, visit architects.org or architects.org/foundation.

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