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Contact: Maria Salvatierra, 617-391-4019 or msalvatierra@architects.org

In the Public Interest: Redefining the Architect's Role and Responsibility
(February 21 through April 21, 2019)

[Editor's note: High-resolution images and interviews with the curator are available upon request.]

In the Public Interest: Redefining the Architect's Role and Responsibility exhibition will showcase six innovative architectural practices reimaging the architect's contribution toward the public good. The selected projects will offer unique perspectives on the value of a community-engaged design process and the expanding nature of practice while presenting new methods for the profession to design with Boston's communities.

Public interest design is re-positioning the architectural profession to address the social, political, and environmental issues of the 21st century through community-engaged design. This shift in practice advances the notion that architecture is not only a built product, but a collective process that instills the tools, awareness, and imagination for individuals to improve their lives.

Expressed primarily as photo journalism, the exhibition is based on the 2017 winning proposal of AIA Seattle's Emerging Professionals Travel Scholarship, "Public Interest: Redefining the Architect's Role in and Responsibility to Society" by Garrett Nelli AIA. In 2017, Garrett traveled to Los Angeles, New Orleans, Alabama, Haiti, Spain, and Italy to catalog how design can be a catalyst for positive societal change.

The projects on display include:

1. Inner-City Arts, Arts Education, Michael Maltzan Architecture, Los Angeles, CA
Completed 2008
2. GHESKIO Cholera Treatment Center, Healthcare, MASS Design Group, Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, Completed 2015
3. St. Joseph Rebuild Center, Homeless Care & Support, Detroit Collaborative Design Center & Wayne Troyer Architects, New Orleans, LA, Completed 2007
4. Banca Popolare Etica Headquarters, Financial Institution, TAMassociati Studio, Padua, Italy, Completed 2011
5. Eco-Boulevards, Public Space, Ecosistema Urbano, Madrid, Spain, Completed 2007
6. 20K Homes Product Line, Low-Income Housing, Rural Studio - Auburn University, Newbern, AL, 2005 - Present

Garrett Nelli AIA explains:

“Contemporary architects stand on a moral and professional precipice to establish practices that are socially oriented, community focused, and impact-driven. The value in this shift is not only to expand their expertise and accessibility but to reassert a professional commitment to the public welfare. In the Public Interest nudges the profession, as part of a more significant movement, to make this courageous leap.”

Ted Touloukian AIA, chair of the BSA Foundation, adds:

“Travelling scholarships provide inspiring and stimulating opportunities at the outset of an architect’s career. It is a unique opportunity to nurture tomorrow’s design leaders.”

Additional media and programming will explore the outcomes of traveling scholarships such as AIA Seattle’s Emerging Professionals Travel Scholarship and The Rotch Travelling Scholarship, administered by the Rotch Trustees and the Boston Society of Architects/AIA.

The exhibition will also feature drone photography titled “Unequal Scenes” by Johnny Miller, an infographic representing the results of a survey asking Boston-area residents to identify their own community’s pressing need for public interest design, and a photographic roundup of public interest design projects in Boston, or elsewhere, if by Boston architects.

Public interest design projects featured in the exhibition were sourced from local designers, including: Albert, Righter, & Tittmann Architects Inc.; Boston Architectural College, School of Landscape Architecture; Payette; designLAB architects; Carolina Aragon; Gretchen Schneider Rabinkin; CBA Landscape Architects & Studioful; Stull and Lee, Inc.; Utile, Inc.; Abacus Architects + Planners; Stoss Landscape Urbanism; One Architecture + Urbanism; Nitsch Engineering; Gensler; Studio G Architects / SHED Studio; Perkins + Will; BR+A+CE; Touloukian Touloukian, Inc.; Halvorson Design Partnership, Inc.; HDR Inc.; Project for Public Spaces; CBT; studioMLA; Landing Studio; InnovatorsforPurpose in collaboration with Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, Boston Properties, VHB and Bluebird Graphic Solutions; RISD Architecture; and Rob Barella, RLA and Andrea Fossa.

The exhibition will be on display at BSA Space through April 21. Admission is free but \$5 donations are welcome.

Press preview

Media are invited to preview the exhibition on Thursday, February 21, 10:00 am -12:00 pm. The curator will give an exhibition tour to press at 11:00 am. RSVP to Maria Salvatierra at msalvatierra@architects.org.

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About BSA Space

BSA Space, Boston’s leading cultural institution for architecture and design, is home to the Boston Society of Architects/AIA (BSA/AIA) and the BSA Foundation. The BSA/AIA is one



BSA Space
290 Congress Street, Suite 200
Boston, MA 02210-1024

P: 617-391-4000
F: 617-951-0845
architects.org/bsaspace

of the oldest chapters of the American Institute of Architects. The BSA Foundation, a charitable organization, supports activities that illuminate the ways that design improves the quality of our lives. All exhibitions are free and open to the public with support from the BSA Foundation. BSA Space is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 am–6:00 pm, and on weekends and holidays from 10:00 am–5:00 pm. For more information visit, architects.org/bsaspace.

About Garrett Nelli AIA

Garrett Nelli's, AIA LEED AP BD+C, is a practicing architect in Seattle, WA, and the 2017 AIA Seattle Emerging Professional's Travel Scholarship recipient. He believes architects have the potential and responsibility to address the broader issues of a global society through thoughtful design solutions and active inquiry. This passion and core ethos have manifested in the designs of an Infant Rescue Center in Burkina Faso, in collaboration with Architects Without Borders – Seattle, as well as a design-build led by the University of Tennessee addressing the lack of clean drinking water in rural Appalachia. He is currently working with a team at NAC Architecture on the construction of Wing Luke Elementary, a new public bilingual center school that will serve a multicultural population located in the South Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle.