



AIA New York Chapter

The Founding Chapter of
The American Institute of Architects

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Today, the AIA New York Chapter and our Center for Architecture gallery is pleased to open the exhibition of the design by Allied Works Architecture for the Museum of Arts & Design to be located at Two Columbus Circle.

The AIA New York Chapter has taken a public position strongly endorsing the transfer of the Two Columbus Circle property to the Museum of Arts & Design, and delivered testimony to this effect, on behalf of our Board and our four thousand members, at the 2004 public hearing of the City Planning Commission and at the Landmark West! mock hearing of July 14th, 2005. We have testified in opposition to holding a Landmarks Preservation Commission public hearing on Two Columbus Circle, and in opposition to landmark designation of the existing structure.

The building, which has been vacant since 1998, has a chance to be resurrected by the Museum of Arts & Design, which will add life and vitality to Columbus Circle, now an increasingly exciting intersection of art, commerce and landscape. With the recent opening of the Columbus Circle landscape renewal project, the imminent completion of the Hearst Tower, and the renewed life and energy of Time-Warner and Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Museum of Arts & Design will complete the “lost arc” of the circle.

The new design is on public display at the two-year-old Center for Architecture for proponents and opponents alike to view and understand. Since it opened on October 6th, 2003, the Center for Architecture has held over two thousand public events, and hosted some 41 exhibitions of architecture, planning, and landscape architecture, all with the common themes of design excellence and urban transformation.

The Two Columbus Circle design by Brad Cloepfil of Allied Works Architecture is here to be evaluated and judged on its merits. It should be seen in the context of the renewed urban design of Columbus Circle and the needs of a forward-looking museum grounded in the wonderful juxtaposition of contemporary design and traditional materials.

This exhibition, Two Columbus Circle (plus): Museum of Arts & Design and Allied Works Architecture, showcases the proposed renovation and presents the first public opportunity for viewing the controversial project in the context of other museums being designed by Allied Works. It will be open to the public starting at 3:00 pm today, Thursday, October 6th, and remain on view through the end of December.

In regard to Columbus Circle, and many other projects, the Center for Architecture is here to open the doors to possibilities and dialogue.

Rick Bell, FAIA, Executive Director, AIA New York Chapter