



Searching for Definitions of Architectural Design Excellence in a Measuring World

Why, after so many years of excellent public and commercial architecture in Columbus, Indiana, are there almost no modern houses?

Why, when you drive north from Florida's South Beach passing miles and miles of waterfront houses, less than one percent are anything we would call architecture?

Why do Americans drive designer cars and drink designer coffee but live, most all of them, in a house or apartment that is pretending to be the home of some wealthy ancestors long deceased?

Are we determined as a profession to continue to define ourselves in ways that isolate us from the greater part of the society in which we practice?

Can we find some definitions of architectural excellence upon which we can agree and that we can explain successfully to the silent majority? Is it even something we want to do?

At the COD website, we have established a discussion forum called "Camels on the Heads of Pins" where people are sharing their opinions about the meaning of architectural design excellence.

April 12-15, we will visit Columbus, Indiana, and ask the architects of some of the landmarks there to explain their understanding of the excellences their work embodies.

In May in Washington, DC, Susan Szenasy, Jane Weinzapfel, Ed Feiner, Thomas Fisher and Will Bruder, having spent the year grappling with these questions, will help us all to discover our own answers.

And, finally, in Seville, in November, we will visit a place where two cultures collide and coexist. Architecture of two distinct traditions intermingle seemingly equally loved by all. And there is much new work we can use to hone our arguments and understandings.



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Columbus Indiana + Washington DC + Seville Spain