Perspecta 37 "famous": The Yale Architectural Journal

This issue of Perspecta discusses whether fame empowers architecture by giving architects leverage to produce ambitious projects or undermines architecture by diluting the quality and neglecting the values it must serve. Does fame empower architecture or undermine it? Does the star power or cult status of an architect enhance the art or dilute it? This issue of Perspecta—the oldest and most distinguished student-edited, universitybased American architecture journal—examines the inner workings of fame as it relates to architecture though media and culture. It looks at how the commodification of architecture affects the design process—whether fame emphasizes all the wrong aspects of architecture or provides the only way an architect can produce truly ambitious projects. How does architecture generate fame? And how does fame generate architecture? Celebrity permeates all levels of contemporary society; architecture, academia, the architectural press, and the mainstream media all play a role in promoting the mystique of the designer genius. The tradition of learning through apprenticeship and the struggle to have projects commissioned and built perpetuate the importance of the famous architect. Does this serve architecture or only the architectural star? The contributors to Perspecta examine both sides of the argument: Architecture moves forward through a process of innovation; fame provides the architect with the leverage needed to accomplish innovation. Or is it that fame, because of its relationship to the media and popular tastes, inevitably dilutes the quality of the architecture? Does "famous" architecture glorify only itself and neglect the people, the values, and the functions that it must serve?



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