

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Center for Architecture Announces the Recipients of the 2023 Stewardson Keefe LeBrun Travel Grant

Two architects were awarded a total of \$25,000 to pursue research and travels.

November 29, 2023, New York, NY – The Center for Architecture is proud to announce the 2023 recipients of the [Stewardson Keefe LeBrun Travel Grant](#):

- **Rose Mary Florian Rodriguez, Assoc. AIA, “Unearthed Structures: African Diaspora Contribution to the Caribbean Vernacular”**
- **Deborah Lynn Polzin-Rosenberg, “Birth, Culture + the Built Environment”**

The purpose of the LeBrun Grant is to further the personal and professional development of early- and mid-career architects through travel. The Center for Architecture awarded a total of \$25,000 during the 2023 grant cycle, distributed across two recipients, to allow them to complete their research and travels.

2023 LeBrun Recipients

Rose Mary Florian Rodriguez

Project: “Unearthed Structures: African Diaspora Contribution to the Caribbean Vernacular”

Award: \$10,000

The African diaspora's contributions to the Caribbean go beyond their food, music, and religious practices. Its presence—through the labor of enslaved Black people—in the cobblestones, wood, and masonry buildings preserves the colonial history. Even further, it's present in the morphology and housing architecture of their towns. Despite the growing contributions by noteworthy architects and archeologists, vernacular architecture by the African diaspora is not celebrated and recognized by Caribbeans. Florian's “Unearthed Structures: African Diaspora Contribution to the Caribbean Vernacular,” will pursue the opportunity to catalog and archive this ancestral knowledge—reimagining distinct ways of building in the Caribbean region.

Rose Mary Florian Rodriguez, Assoc. AIA, is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico, School of Architecture and holds a Master of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania School of Design as well as a Master of Architecture and Urban Design from Harvard University Graduate School of Design. She is an architect, urban designer, and artist based in New York City with six years of commercial and residential experience.

Deborah Lynn Polzin-Rosenberg

Project: “Birth, Culture + the Built Environment”

Award: \$15,000

Architecture shapes the experience of childbirth: supporting or impeding physiology, clinical care, and decision-making. While advances in practice standards have improved health outcomes in the developing world, too often birth environments have been neutralized by the export of the dominant Western model of obstetrics. Yet it is well-known that a familiar birth setting improves facility utilization, maternal outcomes, and satisfaction with childbirth. Polzin-Rosenberg aims to explore spatio-cultural traditions of childbirth in Botswana, Malawi, Ethiopia, and Senegal—providing insights into ways evidence-based design can promote optimal clinical care while incorporating cultural features fundamental to the local experience of birth.

Deborah Polzin-Rosenberg, RN, MArch, AIA began her career as a nurse graduating from the Oregon Health & Science University. She decided to tackle birth as a design problem and earned a Master of Architecture from the Rhode Island School of Design.



Polzin-Rosenberg is currently Associate Faculty at Ariadne Labs in Boston, Massachusetts and the Principal & Founder of Better Birth Design.

About Grants and Scholarships at the Center for Architecture

The Center for Architecture, in partnership with AIANY, awards scholarships and grant awards throughout the year for architectural students, architectural student journals, and practicing architects. Scholarships are open to New York city and grants are open to applicants nationwide. To find out more about our upcoming deadlines, please visit centerforarchitecture.org/scholarships-grants.

2023 grants and scholarships were awarded by the 2023 Scholarship Committee:

Nina Cooke-John, AIA, Studio Cooke John

Andrea Lamberti, AIA LEED AP BD+C, RAFAEL VIÑOLY ARCHITECTS

Sydney Maubert, Studio Maubert

Jennifer Sage, FAIA, LEED AP, Sage and Coombe Architects

Sharon E. Sutton, PhD, FAIA, University of Washington

Anthony Titus, Anthony Titus Studio

Allison Tomlinson, Esq. Gensler

Richard C. Yancey, AIA, LEED AP, Building Energy Exchange

Eunjeong Seong, LEED AP, Visible Weather / Bell-Seong Architecture

Peter Robinson, Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning, WorkUrban

About the Center for Architecture

The Center for Architecture is the premier cultural venue for architecture and the built environment in New York City, informed by the complexity of the City's urban fabric and in dialogue with the global community. The Center shares a home with the AIA New York Chapter and has the unique advantage of drawing upon the ideas and experiences of practicing architects to produce thought-provoking exhibitions, informative public programs, and quality design education experiences for K-12 students. It also leads New York City's annual month-long architecture and design festival, Archtober. The Center for Architecture's aim is to further public knowledge about New York City architecture and architects, foster exchange and collaboration among members of the design, development, building, scholarly, and policy sectors, and inspire new ideas about the role of design in communities by presenting contemporary and practical issues in architecture and urbanism to a general audience. centerforarchitecture.org