CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE

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AIA New York and the Center for Architecture's Annual Common Bond Gala Honors Community Leaders, Supports its Future

The Center for Architecture's largest fundraiser supports education and the year-round work advancing architecture and its impact on our communities.

New York, NY, October 26, 2026 — On Thursday, October 22, over 750 professionals from the architecture, design, engineering, construction, and real estate industries gathered at Chelsea Piers, Pier 60 for Common Bond: The Center for Architecture Gala. Since the 1980s, AIA New York and the Center for Architecture have gathered our community each fall to celebrate design excellence in New York City and recognize its leaders and visionaries.

Common Bond serves as the single largest fundraising initiative for the Center for Architecture, providing critical funding to help the organization and its partner, AIA New York, support our

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steadfast mission of advancing the value and practice of architecture in service of just and sustainable communities. While offering an unparalleled opportunity for forging professional connections, the event provides critical funding for the Center for Architecture's exhibitions, programs, scholarships and other activities, including our popular Learning and Engagement programs. This year, through the incredibly generous support of our investors, benefactors, patrons, sponsors, and attendees, we were able to raise over $1.19 million to support our work, including in-classroom residences at New York City public schools at low-income Title I schools, family programs, and workshops for teens.

This year, Common Bond celebrated the people and organizations whose ideas, leadership, and creativity are helping shape the future of architecture, design, and culture in New York City. Each honoree brings a distinct perspective and a remarkable contribution to our shared built environment. Please join us in congratulating: **BIG–Bjarke Ingels Group**, **Sciame Construction**, **Sally Gilliland**, and the **Studio Museum in Harlem.**

"These honorees remind us that shaping a city is a collective endeavor—one that brings together bold ideas, skilled hands, cultural vision, and a commitment to the public good," said **Jesse Lazar, Assoc. AIA,** Executive Director, AIANY and the Center for Architecture. "Tonight, we celebrate what they have accomplished and the possibilities their work opens up for the future."

"Since the early days, we have always been welcomed and embraced by clients, peers, and collaborators, even when we just arrived. So we want to give a really heartwarming thank you to the community and for your inspiring openness to people, to new ideas, and to new opportunities. Lastly, I want to thank the people on this stage, with whom we have grown from a satellite in Copenhagen to the office that we are today... This collaboration that has not only defined BIG in New York but also our other offices abroad," said **Thomas Christofferson**, Partner, BIG – Bjarke Ingels Group, who accepted the award on stage alongside **Kai-Uwe Bergmann, FAIA,** Partner, and 18 other members of the firm.

"Over the past 50 years, we've been lucky to build quite a few exciting and iconic buildings, designed by many of you here tonight. You have changed the built environment. I applaud, and I appreciate your talent, your creativity, and your friendship," said **Frank Sciame,** CEO and Chairman of Sciame Construction, who accepted their award alongside President and COO **Joseph Mizzi**.

"I believe that our collective goal, our common bond, should be to make the best buildings and neighborhoods. so that people can live healthy, productive, and happy lives. We should make our world better through the craft that we know. We can do that by trying our hardest to do what we know is right. and to be open to new solutions and approach our work with humility and humor," said **Sally Gilliland**, Principal and COO, The Hudson Companies.

"Betsy and I are here as proxies for all those whose craftsmanship, creativity, and determination form the pillars on which our museum was built… Above all, we honor J. Max Bond, Jr. who

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designed the vessel that carried our mission for more than 35 years and challenged us to envision an even bigger and bolder destiny," said **Debra White**, General Counsel and Chief Operating Officer, the Studio Museum in Harlem, who accepted the award alongside Director of Capital Projects **Betsy McClelland.**

Additionally, each year at Common Bond, the center for Architecture, awards scholarships to outstanding architecture students chosen by area schools that have in turn been selected by our honorees. The scholarships offer critical support to our industry's brightest students while they are still studying, seeking to help offset the growing financial burden placed on graduates. This year, in honor of the late Marvin Mass, the Mass Family funded scholarships for **Christian Aguilar**, **Michaela Han**, and **Nora Kelly**.

ABOUT THE HONOREES

BIG–Bjarke Ingels Group

BIG–Bjarke Ingels Group is a Copenhagen, New York, London, Barcelona, Shanghai, Los Angeles, and Zurich-based group of architects, designers, urbanists, landscape professionals, interior and product designers, researchers, and inventors. Led by Bjarke Ingels, BIG is currently involved in projects throughout Europe, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East, including the Athletics Ballpark in Las Vegas, the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, CityWave Milan, and the East Side Coastal Resiliency project in New York.

From the figure-eight loop of 8 House in Copenhagen, to the hybrid pyramid-courtyard of VIA 57 West in Manhattan, to the skiable waste-to-energy plant CopenHill, BIG's work proposes that sustainable cities can not only be better for the environment, but also more enjoyable to live in. The studio believes that by hitting the fertile overlap between pragmatic and utopia, architects can find the freedom to change the surface of our planet to better fit contemporary life forms. BIG's body of work from the past 25 years is celebrated in *BIG Atlas*, a new monograph by Phaidon published earlier this year.

Sciame Construction

Sciame Construction is a New York City-based construction management firm recognized throughout the Tri-State Area as the builder of choice for highly designed, technically sophisticated, and architecturally significant projects. The firm's philosophy, "Where Building is an Art," reflects its commitment to craftsmanship, innovation, and preserving design intent throughout every phase of construction. Sciame's diverse and dedicated staff continually develop creative construction solutions that uphold the architect's vision while delivering the highest standards of quality, safety, and workmanship.

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Now in its 52nd year, Sciame Construction, led by Founder/CEO Frank Sciame and President/COO Joseph Mizzi, currently manages an active portfolio exceeding $4 billion and has completed numerous award-winning projects designed by some of the industry's most renowned architects. Projects include the Perelman Performing Arts Center, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the renovation and expansion of The Frick Collection, the Morgan Library & Museum, The Shed, Louis Vuitton and Dior 57th Street flagship stores, Donald Judd Home & Studio, Trinity Church Wall Street, FDR Four Freedoms Park, Grace Farms, Princeton University's Andlinger Center for Energy and Environment, the LeFrak Center at Lakeside Prospect Park, 22 Vanderbilt, 51 Astor Place, the Mark Hotel, the exterior restoration of the Guggenheim Museum, and the UJA-Federation of New York Headquarters.

Sally Gilliland

Sally Gilliland is the Chief Operating Officer of The Hudson Companies, a New York City residential developer, and the Chief of Broadway Builders, Hudson's affiliate general construction company, with a particular focus on overseeing the architecture and engineering process throughout the design and construction phases of her organization's projects. Gilliland joined Hudson in 2001 and became Principal in 2015. Prior to joining Hudson, Gilliland served as Project Architect at both Kohn Pedersen Fox and Beyhan Karahan Architects. She is an expert in housing design across many platforms, both market-rate and affordable, and brings her passion for the field and her vision for creating the best possible homes for all people. Throughout her career, a central tenet of Gilliland's work has always been improving the livability and architectural character of New York City.

Gilliland holds a Master of Architecture from Columbia University, a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Trinity College, and has also studied at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York City. She became a licensed architect in 1992, serves on the board of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council, and is a member of the AIA.

Studio Museum in Harlem

Founded in 1968, the **Studio Museum in Harlem** is internationally known for its catalytic role in promoting the work of artists of African descent. The Studio Museum's new home, situated on West 125th Street, opened to the public on November 15, 2025. Designed by Adjaye Associates with Cooper Robertson serving as executive architect, the building enables the Studio Museum to better serve a growing and diverse audience, provide additional educational opportunities, expand its program of world-renowned exhibitions, display its singular collection, and strengthen its Artist-in-Residence program.

Externally, the Studio Museum's new building is in dialogue with Harlem and its rich artistic and cultural landscape; the surrounding architecture is reflected in the façade of precast concrete and glass. Inside, the monumental Stoop creates a flexible public space in reverence to the

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cathedral-like interiors of local churches whilst simultaneously playing the role of Harlem's lively brownstone stoops. The gallery spaces are crafted to respond to contemporary artists' needs for exhibiting both two- and three-dimensional works; they are connected to the educational spaces to enable an organic intertwining of creativity, production, and learning. Finally, the Rooftop Terrace—featuring landscaping designed by Studio Zewde—offers striking views of Harlem and the city beyond.

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Christian Aguilar is a Bachelor of Architecture student in his fifth year at the New York Institute of Technology's School of Architecture and Design. As a first-generation college student, Christian deeply values his education and appreciates the opportunities NYIT has provided. He currently serves as both a teaching assistant and a research assistant, which has strengthened his appreciation for education and mentorship. After graduating, he plans to gain experience in architectural practice while creating an environment where others feel valued, supported, and confident that they belong in architecture.

Michaela Han is a fourth-year Architecture student at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Through her explorations in environmental technology and design, she developed an interest in how architecture can react to the environment and the way buildings can accommodate extreme weather conditions. Her work experience has also led to an interest in the digital tools used alongside environmental design. She hopes to expand her involvement in the software development and data analysis that guide sustainable design. In her free time, Michaela works as a Rhino Tutor in the Art, Architecture, Construction, and Engineering Lab, providing software assistance to students.

Nora Kelly is an architectural designer bridging networks of design theory, building technology, and social justice. At Columbia GSAPP, her academic work investigates the social implications of new materials, asks how climate risks inform what and where we build, and imagines architectures of repair that restore biodiversity to depleted landscapes. Her research is strongly influenced by a year of service in New Mexico with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, a program she continues to support as a member of the Local Formation Team for the JVC Harlem community. She received her Bachelor of Science in Architectural Design from Stanford University and has worked with firms in San Francisco, London, New York, and the Midwest across office, multifamily, and aviation projects.

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ABOUT OUR INVESTOR

“Design Everywhere for Everyone.” More than a mission statement, it is **Marvel**’s conviction that design has the power to shape culture, challenge conventions, and transform how people experience the world.

Working across architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, and interiors, Marvel pushes beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries to reimagine the possibilities of the built environment. From cultural landmarks and civic spaces to housing and urban infrastructure, the firm creates places that bring people together, spark dialogue, and expand the meaning of public life.

With offices in New York City, San Juan, Barcelona, Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Marvel embraces the energy, complexity, and contradictions of contemporary cities. Its work is driven by curiosity, experimentation, and a belief that the most meaningful architecture emerges not simply from designing for communities, but from imagining new possibilities with them.

For Marvel, architecture is more than the art of shaping places. It is the art of shaping what comes next.

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ABOUT THE CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE

The Center for Architecture, inaugurated in 2003 as one of the American Institute of Architects (AIA)'s first cultural institutions, engages local and international audiences with the value, impact, and wonder of architecture. Located in the heart of Greenwich Village, the Center for Architecture is also the home of the American Institute of Architects New York (AIANY), which cultivates an open, adept, and future-forward architectural community. Together, we advance the value and practice of architecture to promote just and sustainable communities.

Through exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and our Archtober festival and platform, the Center for Architecture brings together architects, designers, students, and the public to foster collaboration within the design community while creating accessible opportunities for the public to experience and learn about architecture. Whether you're an industry professional, a curious visitor, or a student exploring the field, the Center for Architecture offers a space for connection, creativity, and critical conversation—empowering everyone to engage with the transformative power of architecture.