

# NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM ANNUAL REPORT 2009



# Message from the Chair and the Executive Director



above: *The Places We Live* exhibition featured photographer Jonas Bendiksen's large-scale photographs of 20 different families living in four slums around the world. This photo depicts Asanah's house in Jakarta, Indonesia. Photo by Allan Sprecher.

bottom right: A visitor looks at a multimedia installation in the Museum's popular *Green Community* exhibition. Photo by Anne McDonough.

cover: Visitors explore the Museum's *Green Community* exhibition during the member opening. *Green Community* examined the complex process of creating and sustaining healthy communities. Photo by Anne McDonough.

Anyone reading the 2009 annual report of a nonprofit organization will expect to see some sobering data: declining revenue, programmatic cutbacks, and other symptoms of a struggling economy. Indeed, the past year has been a difficult one for the National Building Museum as it has been for most cultural organizations. And yet now, as we look back at the Museum's fiscal year 2009, we are more inclined to reflect on some very encouraging facts and figures: a 14% increase in the number of walk-in visitors over the previous year, a balanced budget achieved despite significant fiscal threats, and above all, a record of excellent exhibitions and programs in keeping with the high standards we have set in the past.

The increase in the Museum's visitorship really should not come as a surprise. As was the case following past crises, such as the terrorist attacks of 2001 and the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, certain aspects of the current economic morass have served to highlight the importance of the built environment. Citizens and their elected leaders have come to appreciate the value of sound infrastructure, affordable housing, and sustainable communities as essential elements of a healthy society. The National Building Museum remains a vital venue for thoughtful dissemination, discussion, and debate about these issues and other aspects of the world we build. Recession or boom, the Museum's mission is relevant to everyone.

## Engaging Exhibitions

Our flagship exhibition for fiscal year 2009, opening in October 2008, was *Green Community*, an unprecedented examination of the infrastructure and landscapes that serve as the connective tissue between buildings. It featured large and small communities around the world that offer lessons in environmentally responsible design and planning, from the conversion of disused industrial land into a residential neighborhood in Atlanta, to the creation of an entirely new, carbon-neutral city in the United Arab Emirates. The exhibition's interactive components received a Gold Award—the highest honor—for Interpretive Interactive Installations in the American Association of Museums' MUSE Awards program.

The exhibition was complemented by a major symposium titled *1909 – 2109: Sustaining the Lasting Value of American Planning*, which marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first National Planning Conference, considered the birth of planning in America. In addition, a complementary lecture series, *Sustainable Communities*, was supported by United Technologies. A companion book, also called *Green Community*, was published by the Museum and the American Planning Association (APA), the presenting sponsor of the exhibition.

Opening in January 2009, *Detour: Architecture and Design Along 18 National Tourist Routes in Norway* documented a group of extraordinary works of architecture and landscape architecture intended to enhance travelers' appreciation of Norway's stunning natural scenery. The initiative has been hailed as a potential model for other countries with networks of scenic roadways, including the





United States. The centerpiece of the exhibition was an elaborate video chamber that allowed visitors to view scenes—some serene and some exhilarating—of featured sites.

Beginning in the late spring of 2009, the Museum presented a series of photography-based shows. The first exhibition, *Architecture of Authority: Photographs by Richard Ross*, depicted a variety of architectural spaces that convey the notion of authority—whether intentionally or not. That was followed by *Storefront Churches: Photographs by Camilo José Vergara*. Vergara is one of the most important chroniclers of America's cities, and his images of impromptu religious facilities occupying structures built for other purposes reveal a vital thread of urban life. Opening in mid-summer was *Form and Movement: Photographs by Philip Trager*, which drew compositional connections between Trager's pictures of dancers and those of Palladian villas and other buildings. Rounding out the photography series was *The Places We Live*, a moving visual essay about living conditions in four of the world's most notorious slums.

Several long-term exhibitions continued during fiscal year 2009: *Cityscapes Revealed: Highlights from the Collection* includes a rotating display of two- and three-dimensional artifacts; *Washington: Symbol and City* describes the physical history of the capital; and the *Building Zone* gallery provides a structured learning environment for young children. Meanwhile, two traveling versions of the Museum's exhibition *The Green House: New Directions in Sustainable Architecture and Design* continued to circulate, appearing at institutions ranging from the Aurora History Museum, in Aurora, Colorado, to the Yale University Architecture Gallery.

## Compelling Programs

Many of the Museum's adult education programs for fiscal year 2009 reflected our ongoing commitment to sustainable design and planning. In addition to the symposium and lectures related to the *Green Community* exhibition, the Museum continued its *For the Greener Good* series, supported by The Home Depot Foundation. One highlight of this series was a program with panelists John Podesta and Ed Mazria titled "A Green World is a Safer One." Meanwhile, the *Community in the Aftermath* series, co-presented with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, continued with programs addressing post-disaster housing and recovery.

Other education programs included the venerable *Spotlight on Design* lecture series, sponsored by Lafarge and The American Institute of Architects, which featured African-British architect David Adjaye, the landscape architecture firm OLIN, New York architect and educator Deborah Berke, and others. The annual *L'Enfant Lecture on City Planning and Design*, co-presented with APA, was given by Paul Goldberger, the Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic for *The New Yorker*. This past year's *Women of Architecture* program, presented in collaboration with the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation, featured Chicago architect Jeanne Gang.



top left: This presentation device in the exhibition *Detour* was modeled after old-fashioned stereoscopes, which were used to simulate three-dimensionality in photographs and films. Visitors could use this device to view moving images of the Norwegian landscape. Photo by Allan Sprecher.

top: Tenth *Vincent Scully Prize* recipient Robert A.M. Stern participated in a discussion with Ned Cramer, editor-in-chief of *Architect* magazine, about the state of design education. Photo by Paul Morigi.

above: Adolfo Carrión, Jr., director, White House Office of Urban Affairs, speaks during the 1909-2109: *Sustaining the Lasting Value of American Planning* symposium at the National Building Museum. The symposium, organized in partnership with the American Planning Association, looked at the past, present, and future of planning. Photo by Museum staff.

below: Young visitors enjoy hands-on activities at the 2009 National Cherry Blossom Family Day and Opening Ceremony. Photo by Ron Engle.

It was a banner year for the Museum's popular family festivals, with the *National Cherry Blossom Festival Family Day and Opening Ceremony* in March smashing previous one-day attendance records: approximately 12,000 people came to the Museum that day for hands-on design activities and performances. Other family-oriented events included the *Discover Engineering Family Day*, which drew some 10,000 participants, the annual *Festival of the Building Arts*, sponsored by The Associated General Contractors of America, and the *Careers in Construction Expo*, supported by the Associated Builders and Contractors.



The Museum is widely respected for its youth education programs, ranging from *Be a Green Builder* school program, which gives young children the chance to construct a small house in the Great Hall, to teen outreach programs such as *Investigating Where We Live*, in which participants use photography to analyze neighborhoods and consider how they can be improved. In fiscal year 2009, the Museum expanded distribution of the popular *Bridge Basics Program Kit* to schools in D.C., with the support of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Planning, and in Philadelphia, thanks to the support of the Turner Construction Company.



top: "Bridge to the Future" project by Joseph C. Ferguson Elementary School enrichment students, as presented at their end-of-year celebration in June 2009. © Kelly & Massa Photography, courtesy of National Building Museum.

above: The 2009 National Building Museum *Honor Award* recipients, *Visionaries in Sustainability*, were recognized for their transformative contributions and ongoing commitment to the creation of a more sustainable world at a gala award ceremony held at the Museum on June 4, 2009. Photo by Paul Morigi, courtesy National Building Museum.

top right: Participants in the first annual meeting of the new *Industry Council for the Built Environment* listen to the Honorable Tommy Wells, DC Councilmember, Ward 6, discuss the role of cultural and educational institutions during a tour of the exhibition *Green Community*. Photo by Anne McDonough.



## Institutional Development

Over the past year, the Museum made a variety of enhancements to its online presence. Building on the recent redesign of the web site, the Museum is now taking fuller advantage of the site's true capacity by incorporating more multi-media presentations. The *Great Green Places* video series, for instance, has opened up opportunities for the public to share observations about successful open spaces in their communities.

One highlight of fiscal year 2009 was the launch of the *Industry Council for the Built Environment*, which brings together corporate, association, and government leaders to advise and inform the Museum on a range of issues, and facilitates collaboration across disciplines. The council's membership comprises corporations and associations that make gifts of \$15,000 or more per year to the Museum. The group's inaugural conference, held in June, included highly informative presentations by business leaders and senior officials from Congress, the Center for American Progress, and the City of Chicago, along with a roundtable discussion among council members.

Although the past year was unquestionably a challenging one for just about everybody, it was nonetheless a busy and fruitful time for the National Building Museum. We remain deeply grateful to all of the individuals, corporations, associations, foundations, and government agencies that have lent their support to the Museum, and look forward to a brighter year ahead.

## Honoring Leaders in the Design and Building Industry

The Museum's 2009 *Honor Award* gala, held in June, recognized four "Visionaries in Sustainability": S. Richard Fedrizzi and the U.S. Green Building Council; Mayor Richard M. Daley and the City of Chicago; Majora Carter; and Louis R. Chênevert and United Technologies. The gala attracted nearly 600 guests and raised critical funds for the Museum's exhibitions and programs.

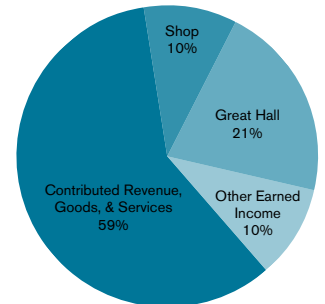
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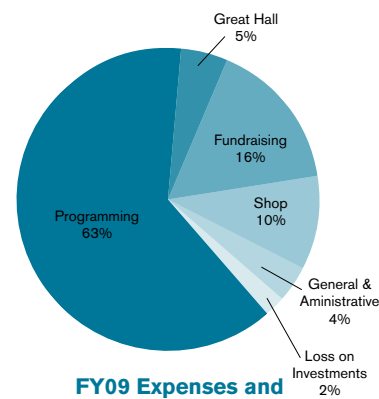
# 2009 Statement of Financial Activities

Year ended September 30, 2009

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	2009 Total	2008 Total
<b>Revenue, gains, and other support</b>					
Contributions and grants	1,721,672	1,676,358	-	3,398,030	4,241,470
Great Hall events	1,711,315	-	-	1,711,315	1,940,992
Contributed Goods & Services	1,129,881	-	-	1,129,881	1,064,627
Museum Shop sales	797,413	-	-	797,413	1,109,209
Other	312,660	-	-	312,660	324,069
Investment income	87,018	163,119	-	250,137	208,811
Membership	222,330	-	-	222,330	267,785
Education program and Museum Tour fees	199,594	-	-	199,594	241,540
Event Income	68,559	-	-	68,559	63,825
Contribution box	40,953	-	-	40,953	57,334
Net assets released from restrictions	1,929,560	(1,929,560)	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>8,220,955</b>	<b>(90,083)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,130,872</b>	<b>9,519,662</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
<b>Program services</b>					
Exhibitions	1,921,393	-	-	1,921,393	2,563,025
Education and public programs	1,745,810	-	-	1,745,810	2,080,604
Marketing & Publications	1,165,842	-	-	1,165,842	1,042,009
Museum Shop	847,231	-	-	847,231	1,015,961
Great Hall events	417,978	-	-	417,978	500,868
Collections	106,077	-	-	106,077	251,213
<b>Total program services</b>	<b>6,204,331</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,204,331</b>	<b>7,453,680</b>
<b>Supporting services</b>					
Fundraising	1,282,016	-	-	1,282,016	1,226,391
General and administrative	343,425	-	-	343,425	376,407
Membership	118,288	-	-	118,288	122,358
<b>Total supporting services</b>	<b>1,743,729</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,743,729</b>	<b>1,725,156</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>7,948,060</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,948,060</b>	<b>9,178,836</b>
<b>Loss on investments</b>	<b>39,652</b>	<b>133,771</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>173,423</b>	<b>776,237</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES AND LOSSES</b>	<b>7,987,712</b>	<b>133,771</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,121,483</b>	<b>9,955,073</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>\$233,243</b>	<b>\$(223,854)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$9,389</b>	<b>\$(435,411)</b>



**FY09 Sources of Support and Revenue**



**FY09 Expenses and Loss on Investments**

The National Building Museum is a nonprofit, educational institution designated under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This financial report is based on an independently audited financial statement. For a copy of the complete financial statement please write to: Accounting Department, National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001, or call 202.272.2448.

The National Building Museum makes all financial records available to its outside auditors and attests to their accuracy and completeness. Additionally, the Museum attests that it maintains adequate internal accounting controls and uses sound accounting policies.

*Chase W. Rynd*

Chase W. Rynd  
President and Executive Director

## Statement of Changes in Net Assets

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
<b>Net Assets</b> , September 30, 2007	<b>\$719,722</b>	<b>\$2,378,862</b>	<b>\$665,530</b>	<b>\$3,764,114</b>
<b>Transfer of Net Assets</b>	-	500,000	(500,000)	-
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	(132,921)	(302,490)	-	(435,411)
<b>Net Assets</b> , September 30, 2008	<b>\$586,801</b>	<b>\$2,576,372</b>	<b>\$165,530</b>	<b>\$3,328,703</b>
<b>Transfer of Net Assets</b>	-	125,530	(125,530)	-
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	233,243	(223,854)	-	9,389
<b>Net Assets</b> , September 30, 2009	<b>\$820,044</b>	<b>\$2,478,048</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$3,338,092</b>

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right: The Museum's members enjoy special events throughout the year such as the *Family Membership Pajama Party in the Great Hall!*  
Photo by Museum Staff.



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Barbara Thomson  
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Loren Miller  
Nicholas Sackos  
Eric Schwass

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Former staff members who served during the fiscal year 2009 are noted in italics

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# Industry Partners

*Industry Partners* are the leading institutional partners of the National Building Museum. Comprising the foremost corporations and associations involved in the built environment, this group provides programmatic support (of \$15,000+ annually) and engages with the Museum in dialogue about all aspects of the world we build. In 2009, the group convened for the inaugural meeting of the *Industry Council for the Built Environment* in Washington, D.C.

*Industry Partners* for fiscal year 2009  
(October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009)

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American Society of Landscape Architects  
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As a private, nonprofit institution, the National Building Museum relies on the generous support of corporations, individuals, associations, foundations, and government entities to fund its innovative exhibitions and award-winning educational programs. This support is given in a variety of ways: from grants and memberships, to volunteer hours and visitor donations. In fiscal year 2009, the Museum raised \$8,130,871 in cash for unrestricted and restricted programs. The combined total of cash, pledges, and contributed income was \$4,791,194. The Board of Trustees and the Museum's staff are grateful to all who provided the financial support that enables the Museum to raise awareness of and appreciation for the built environment.

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right: Guests at the 2009 Honor Award: Visionaries in Sustainability enjoy a cocktail reception in the Museum's majestic Great Hall. Photo by Paul Morigi.



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Photo by Anne McDonough.



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**THE CORNERSTONE SOCIETY** includes friends of the Museum who leave a lasting legacy through a bequest, charitable gift annuity, trust arrangement, or other estate-plan provision. Gifts from the society are an investment in the Museum's future and ensure the institution's ability to advance the quality of the built environment by educating the public about its impact on people's lives. By becoming a member of *The Cornerstone Society*, you can help inspire the future stewards of the built environment and provide an enduring source of financial stability for generations to come.

This year in celebration of its 30th anniversary, the National Building Museum will officially launch *The Cornerstone Society*, and make public a listing of society members for the first time.

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## **FISCAL YEAR 2009 AT-A-GLANCE**

**(October 2008 through September 2009)**

**Total Attendance: 436,315**

**Web Site Hits: 1,747,907**

**Public Program Attendance: 10,354**

**Family Program Attendance: 28,932**

**School Program Attendance: 19,964**

**Estimated Media Impressions\*: 736,155,666**

**Total Revenue: \$8,130,871**

**Total Contributed Income: \$4,791,194**

**Total Number and Value of Volunteer Hours: 11,231 hours; estimated value \$227,428\*\***

\*Media impressions are calculated based on a publication's circulation rates and indicate the potential readership for any given news article.

\*\*Source: The Independent Sector