

**SA + P**



## Dean's Newsletter 1.8

12.23.2020

Dear friends,

Let me offer my congratulations for our collective effort to function effectively through the Fall 2020 semester, while we also remained safely apart. As a result of this effort, we have expanded our understanding of how we are able to teach and learn. Even in the face of these challenges, we explored new ways and reinvigorated existing ways to share our mission within the SA+P and beyond.



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We want to express our hearty Congratulations to this year's graduates. You can view this year's graduation video [here](#).

[Bachelor of Arts in Architecture](#)

[Summer 2020](#)

**Jordan Barretto**

**Raquel Pacheco**

**Ryan Kieffer**

[Bachelor of Arts in Architecture](#)

[Fall 2020](#)

**Daniel Bustos**

**Dean Estrada**

**Garrett Harder**

Surprisingly, within our new digital agoras, we benefited from the immediacy of the on-line platform, with its shortened distances and new person-to-person interactive modalities. This digital reach has allowed us to benefit from a broader engagement with educators and community members. Externally, we relied ever more on social media platforms and new ways to maintain a healthy dialogue. This newsletter, for example, has been one of the ways I have been able to initiate and sustain a connection with students, alumni, and communities of supporters and educators locally and across the country.

Under these circumstances, studio work has required our students to step-up their on-line communication skills. As they process complex information, they had to work within condensed graphic formats and industriously develop new skill sets. As one of our last guest speakers, **Keller Easterling**, reminded us, these are "dress rehearsals" for how our students will engage in problem-setting, -processing, -solving, and ultimately, a complete design presentation. I believe they performed beautifully!

Yet, as I (virtually) popped into a few of our Final Reviews, the recent words of one of my doctoral studies colleagues, Professor **Arijit Sen**, came to mind, a critique of studio culture, which has been circulating in the academy. In McGill University's *Race|Space* Blog, Dr. Sen observes:

**"Safely ensconced in studios, we repeatedly feed a cult of ocular-centrism by producing jargony visuals and maps.**

Erick Rodriguez-Guzman

Kaleb Bourne

Jose Vizcarra

Bachelor of Arts in Environmental  
Planning and Design, Fall 2020

Hamza Awais

Aveann Bousek

Kailani Gorman

Mikayla Ortega-Speight

Jahro Parrish

Alessandra Rossi

Jacob Uffer

Master of Science in Architecture  
Summer 2020

Jessica Carr

Master of Architecture, Fall 2020

Kirsten Bailey

Alexandre M. Gomes de Abreu

Cheyenne Gurule

Aashish Sanjay Khandelwal

Gabriel Martins Moura

Michelle Soave

Master of Community and Regional  
Planning, Summer 2020

Latasha James

Emily Watson

Master of Community and Regional  
Planning, Fall 2020

Muhammad Hussain

Christopher Rivera

Seth Tinkle

Master of Landscape Architecture  
Summer 2020

Diana Couto Vieira

Pei Li

Historic and Regionalism Graduate  
Certificate, Summer 2020

Emily Watson

Historic and Regionalism Graduate  
Certificate, Fall 2020

John Boydston

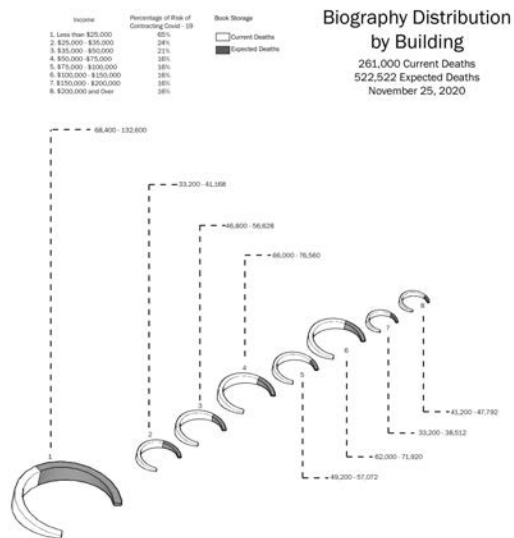
Kelly Davis

### Announcements

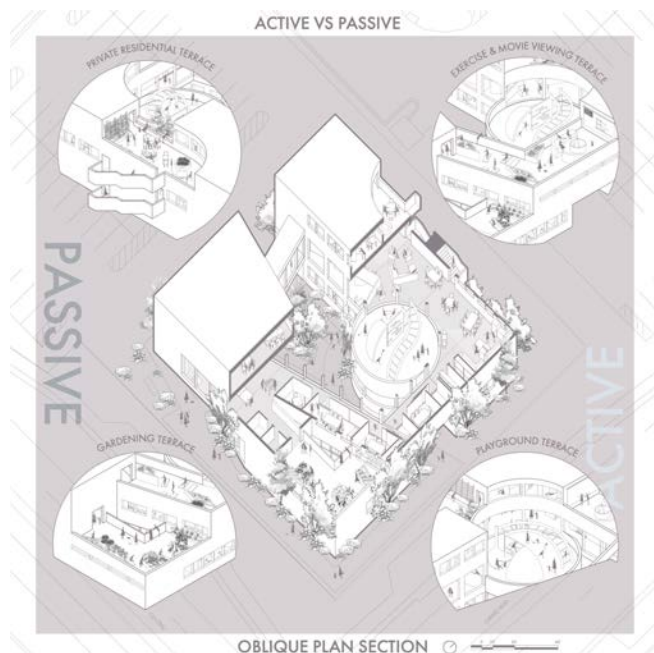
We want to congratulate **Chelsey D. Begay**, Program Coordinator for the

**We create esoteric drawings that most people outside our narrow circle cannot comprehend. We work on crafting formal objects or designing forms popularized by elite theorists, often divorced from the realities of the social and physical world around us.”**

While I was not able to attend all our reviews, I can say that, guided by SA+P professors, our students' final projects convey their engagement with ever-pressing societal needs, as well as a balanced concern with the practical, professionally-oriented aspects of our disciplines, and the importance of communicating both internally *and* externally. Most importantly—back to Easterling's words—the students' projects indicate that they also seize on the moments where they can be experimental, innovative, inventive, and passionately indulgent in their creative work.



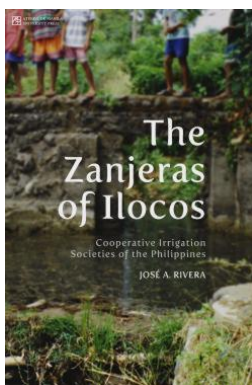
ARCH 401: National COVID-19 Memorial Library, Richard Handel /  
Principal Lecturer III Karen J. King



Indigenous Design + Planning Institute, who was selected for the UNM Staff Council Star Award. The Award recognizes individuals who have excelled in their role as Council Representative and/or Committee member.

## Research

We are excited to share that Professor Emeritus of Community and Regional Planning, **José Rivera**, has published a book that has long been in the works. His book, *The Zanjeras of Ilocos: Cooperative Irrigation Societies of the Philippines*, explores the Zanjeras, which are the resource management institutions in the Ilocos region of northern Luzon.



*The Zanjeras of Ilocos: Cooperative Irrigation Societies of the Philippines* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2020)

Assistant Professor **Lani Tsinnajinnie** was recently featured in the UNM Newsroom article: “Turning the Tide: Addressing Water Rights in Indigenous Communities. [Read more...](#)”

## Design

Visiting Assistant Professor **Stephen Mora** and Associate Professor **Tim Castillo**, along with graduate student **Jaziel Cervantes-Carreón**, were recently featured on the front page of the *Silver City Daily Press*. The article, “Concepts for New Bataan Memorial Wow Commission,” features the conceptual designs for a new

ARCH 301: Alternative Response Unit, Brooke Lynn Williams / Assistant Professor Cesar Adrian Lopez



ARCH 301: Alternative Response Unit, Halle DelMargo / Assistant Professor Cesar Adrian Lopez

The work that stayed with me included explorations in principal lecturer III **Karen J. King's** studio, in which students were asked to design a living memorial for those lost to COVID-19. Cleverly titled “A National Library of Bibliography,” the students were asked to address “times of catastrophe, [when] the individual disappears into the anonymity of the aggregate.” The provocative question asked in the brief was: *How do you design a memorial to remember people who have died, remembering them alongside those who will die in the future?* One student presentation in particular opened our eyes to architecture’s capacity to host multiple conversations: **Richard Handel** organized sections of his memorial to reflect different economic categories of COVID-19 victims, allowing the memorial site to present a commentary on life and the struggles people face across the socio-economic spectrum. The studio led by professor **Michaele Pride**, assistant professor **Cesar Adrian Lopez**, and lecturer II **Alaa Quraishi** addressed the grave societal dilemma of how to evolve police stations into alternative response units that provide safety and resources to marginalized groups; the final presentations for this studio included a mapping of food costs in the vicinity of various refugee center sites.

Having completed my first semester as Dean and having gained a sense of our School’s inner workings, and its relationship with various communities both locally and regionally, I am now asking for a collective, deeper examination of our School’s curricula. I believe Dr. Sen’s words are particularly instructive at this moment:

**“We can no longer hide under the position that the ambit of curriculum and the content of the syllabus remain a professor’s prerogative. It might be so, under normal circumstances. Yet, just as patriarchal actions and systems might normally be the prerogative of men with power, our current goal is to question the “normal.” So, we should challenge, change, transform, and experiment**

Bataan Park veterans memorial, which they presented to Grant County officials. [Read more...](#)



Undergraduate student of Architecture, **Luis Diego Rigales**, received an award in the recent, university-wide Innovation Academy Pitch Competition for his proposed *Beans and Rice Magazine*, a digital platform for artists and designers to connect and create dialogues around creative processes, social justice, inspirations, etc. The digital magazine, which was co-founded with Seattle University design student **Shelby Bransford**, launches this Spring. Rigales previously won the 2019 Rainforest Pitch Competition for a teaming device.



**with our curriculum...We need to involve community members, scholars from other disciplines, and most importantly, our students in experimenting with our syllabi, course content, evaluation criteria, and aesthetic benchmarks.”**

During the Fall, we hired two students to join our staff. I want to welcome **Nicolas Romero**, student recruiter, and **Gerardo Ruiz**, facility assistant II. We also want to express our immense gratitude to two staff members who recently left the School, **Ellie Kerbleski** and **Mary Woodruff**, who I thank for all they have done to make the SA+P a better place. We appreciate your contributions and wish you many successes in your future endeavors.

This newsletter includes a special feature on Visiting Associate Professor, **Janet Abrams**, who just published two books. One is included in a list entitled “[20 Architecture and Design Books Dazzle in 2020](#),” by the American Institute of Architects. We are thrilled that Dr. Janet Abrams has joined us this year.

Despite—or perhaps because of—the immense challenges and losses of 2020, the SA+P will enter 2021 with a stronger sense of community and a renewed love for our friends, colleagues, and families. We have become more vigilant about our surroundings, more appreciative of our daily resources, and we have learned how to spend quality time with ourselves and with members of our “bubble.”

I’m excited to see what we can become, together, in the next chapter at the School of Architecture + Planning. Stay safe out there. I wish everyone good health and prosperity in the coming year!

My very best,

Robert Alexander González  
Dean and Professor

 [@Gonzalez\\_UNM](#)



**Janet Abrams: Doubling Down in New Roles**

Janet Abrams lives a double life. The new Visiting Associate Professor in the Architecture Department identifies as an artist—a ceramicist and sculptor to be precise. However, that identity shares equal billing with her other life as a busy writer, editor, and critic of design, communications, and all things architectural. With an MFA in ceramics from Cranbrook and a doctorate in architectural history from Princeton, she is educated for both careers.

Hired shortly before the fall term to teach at SA+P and to direct the University's architecture and design camp for high school students, Abrams will teach a spring seminar called "Design, Play and Learning." "The goal is to introduce architecture students, who are in a very serious program most of the time, to think about play as an essential strategy in everyday interaction and the design of healthy, enjoyable places," she notes. "And to let them know it's okay to interject some levity into your work."

She has had a remarkable career path, crisscrossing the worlds of architecture, art, journalism, and academia. If Rolodexes were still a thing, she'd be the person with three on her desk, stuffed with business cards and Post-it notes.

The good news for SA+P is that her dual skill set brings not only her wide-ranging network of professional and personal contacts, but also fresh perspectives. Best of all, Janet Abrams brings a good kick of inspiration to everyone to just follow your heart.

### **Bliss at the V&A**

Leading a double life started early for Abrams, the second of five daughters who grew up in far north London with their eye surgeon father and clinical psychologist mother. One after another, the sisters all attended a top-ranked all-female high school 23 Tube stops from home. "I spent my teenage years underground in the dark," she laughs.

In Britain, one's college major is effectively determined by the three subjects one chooses for the last two years in high school. For Abrams, that meant two years of slogging through pure and applied mathematics, physics, and chemistry.

Now she sees that her real education was taking place during her one free afternoon each week. On Wednesdays, she would get off the Tube at either Covent Garden to visit the Photographers Gallery or at South Kensington Station to explore the Victoria and Albert Museum. She roamed the museum's halls, absorbing centuries of paintings and sculptures along with photography, fashion, furniture and set design. Both systematically and randomly, Abrams taught herself about art and design.

While she considered majoring in art, she found what she imagined would be a compromise between art and science: architecture. She graduated in 1980 from University College

London with a Bachelor's degree in Architecture, Planning, Building and Environmental Science—and with absolutely no plans to become an architect.

**“I figured out within the first two years that designing buildings was not my forte,” she recalls. “What I *did* love was the social history of architecture.”**

So instead of a traditional design thesis, she spent her last semester writing tight, focused articles on self-assigned topics ranging from architecture to jewelry to advertising. After graduation, she honed her journalistic skills in a publisher's training program.

The next step: learning more about architecture so she could write better articles. By 1983, she was studying Architectural History, Theory and Criticism on a Fulbright Scholarship at Princeton.

### **Writing and Working**

In the States, she began writing in earnest about the field—and has never stopped. While she was still pursuing her Ph.D., the Royal Institute of British Architects named her Architectural Journalist of the Year two years in a row.

After earning her doctorate, she taught briefly at the Parsons School of Design and the Yale University School of Art. She continued to work on her nonfiction writing as a Fellow at the MacDowell Colony and wrote for periodicals on both sides of the Atlantic while living in a “shoebox” apartment in New York City. She also served as editor at the Netherlands Design Institute in Amsterdam, director of the Chicago Institute for Architecture and Urbanism, and associate director for research at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal.

From 2000 to 2008, Abrams was the first director of the University of Minnesota Design Institute in Minneapolis. While launching a first-rate research center, organizing a series of professional conferences, and managing a growing staff, she also coordinated the DI's summer Design Camp for up to 120 teens for six years. “I became used to taming multi-headed hydras,” she laughs.

Then her career pivoted dramatically. At a 2004 symposium at Haystack Mountain School of Craft in Maine, she rediscovered the joys of working with clay. Four years later she enrolled in the Cranbrook Academy of Art outside Detroit, earning her MFA in Ceramics in 2010. Since then her work has been featured in exhibits across the country and abroad.

### **Ceramics and Santa Fe**

After finishing a residency at the European Ceramic Work Centre in the Netherlands, she was ready for a change. In 2013, Abrams moved to Santa Fe for the “light and the landscape.”

“I had lived in enough cities that I knew I could not protect the

young shoots of my studio art practice if I tried to do that in a big city,” she says. “I came here to be in the least American city in the United States and from what I knew of Santa Fe, it had the reputation as a place for art.”

In Santa Fe she found “good people and one absolutely stellar institution for fine arts: the Santa Fe Community College” She studied sculpture and hands-on bronze casting at SFCC, taking her work to a new level. Her installations and projects, large and small, bring surprising ways to look at familiar things like airport terminal maps, remote controls, and jackfruit.

As a way for ceramicists to keep in touch and gain exposure, last summer Abrams launched [Quartz Inversion](#), an online exhibit she co-curates of “pandemic ceramics” by distinguished and up-and-coming international ceramists. The second edition with 30 additional artists will be released in December 2020.

### Fall Books and Summer Fun

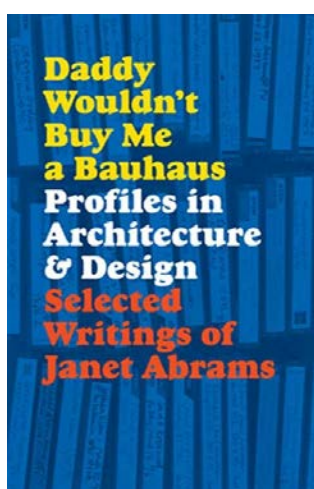
This past fall brought two new books for Abrams. In October, Princeton University Architectural Press published *Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Bauhaus: Profiles in Architecture and Design*, featuring 26 of her interviews with architects, designers, and arts patrons, including Frank Gehry, Michael Graves, Philip Johnson, Rem Koolhaas, Muriel Cooper, April Greiman, Michael Eisner, and Michael Bloomberg.

In November, ACTAR Publishers (Barcelona) released *WWW Drawing: Architectural Drawing from Pencil to Pixel*, which Abrams edited, based on a program she produced at Penn State's Stuckeman School of Architecture. The volume features essays from James Wines, Michael Webb, Mark West (the three Ws), and other speakers at a major symposium at New York City's Drawing Center.

The books were the latest in a career that includes hundreds of articles, more than two dozen essays for books and catalogs, and other edited books, including *Else/Where: Mapping—New Cartographies of Networks and Territories* (2006).

Next summer brings SA+P's 2021 High Desert Architecture and Design summer study program for 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-graders. With two weeks in Santa Fe and two weeks in Albuquerque, the new program will have sessions with action-oriented titles: Spacing, Scaping, Urbing, and Zerving—for architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and planning, and historic preservation.

Taught by UNM faculty and a handful of eminent figures in each field from out of town, with support from SA+P graduate students, the program aims to whet the teens' appetite to study one of those fields at UNM. Abrams envisions holding charrettes (final presentations) of the students' projects on the Rail Runner train between the two cities.



*Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Bauhaus: Profiles in Architecture & Design, Selected Writings of Janet Abrams* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2020).



*WWW Drawing: Architectural Drawing from Pencil to Pixel* (Actar, 2020)

**Janet Abrams may be leading a double life, but more and more**

these days, her parallel lines of creativity are getting closer. Sometimes they even intersect or weave together in a double helix. It is a sculptural form that fits.

Visiting Associate Professor Janet Abrams can be reached at [janetabrams@unm.edu](mailto:janetabrams@unm.edu)

[Dean's Newsletter 1.1](#)

**Feature:** Mark Childs / Fall 2020 Welcome / New Faculty

[Dean's Newsletter 1.2](#)

**Feature:** Michael Pride / New SA+P Org Chart / MakerLab / You Have My Ear / Associate Chairs & Special Asst's to the Dean

[Dean's Newsletter 1.3](#)

**Feature:** Ted Jojola / Land Acknowledgement / Jeff Harnar Award Student Competition / New Alumni Liaison / VAP Jeffrey S. Nesbit

[Dean's Newsletter 1.4](#)

**Feature:** Anne Taylor / On The Brinck Book Award / Asst. Prof. Cesar Lopez

[Dean's Newsletter 1.5](#)

**Feature:** SA+P Recruitment + Advocacy / Contesting Conversation Series / Student Experience Project

[Dean's Newsletter 1.6](#)

**Feature:** Alex Webb / New Online Certificate in Indigenous Planning / New MS Architecture Areas of Focus

[Dean's Newsletter 1.7](#)

**Feature:** Katya Crawford / Tau Sigma Delta Honor Society / AIA Architects' Roundtable / iD+Pi invitation to Venice





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