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FX FOWLE ARCHITECTS
ENLIVENING LANDSCAPES

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Enlivening Landscapes

By Shelley Seyler

The skyline of Manhattan is perhaps one of the most recognizable in the world. It is a marvel to think of the many architects and construction workers who have, for centuries past, contributed to this vibrant and pulsing landscape. One of those firms, FXFOWLE Architects, continues to change the face of New York City, its home for over 30 years.

From its office in this dynamic city, FXFOWLE is a privately held architectural firm serving the commercial, residential, cultural, educational, corporate, and government sectors around the country and in international locations. In addition to its New York office, the company works from an office in Dubai and is in the process of opening a new office in Washington, DC.



Founded in 1978, the firm operates with 160 employees and annual revenue of approximately \$40 million. “Our diverse portfolio of projects includes work of all types and scales across the globe, and is based on our core commitment to enriching the built environment by creating projects with social, environmental, and aesthetic integrity,” explains Guy Geier, Managing Partner of FXFOWLE.

Inside the Engine

FXFOWLE is committed to what Eliel Saarinen called the “next larger context” and what the firm calls “bigger, linked thinking.” This philosophy has enriched and enlivened the firm’s work for years. Such thinking encourages connections



among scales and disciplines, supports the integration of new technologies, and ultimately links form-making strategies, urban design, and sustainability.

FXFOWLE runs with no formal efficiency programs but does continuously evaluate its productivity and puts new technology into practice that helps the company run faster and smoother. One of the most recent additions is the use of Building Information Modeling software, more simply known as BIM. This program allows for 3-D, real-time, dynamic building modeling.

“We are beginning to use BIM on all projects. It has huge productivity improvement potential because it changes the

process and we can go through faster development sooner,” explains Geier. “It is improving productivity in the office and throughout the overall process because contractors can go right into fabrication...it takes some training but for the younger generation it is easier.”

As the culture of FXFOWLE has evolved over the years, there has been a continuing spirit of learning and sharing. Firm leaders and staff members share a commitment to educate each other and ensure meaningful professional and personal development for everyone. FXFOWLE’s reputation, educational culture and work process makes it an ideal environment for architectural students and recent

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graduates. With FXFOWLE's partners having come from different architecture schools, UVA, Columbia, Cornell, and Syracuse, among them, the firm holds relationships with all of these universities to recruit new staff. FXFOWLE also has what it calls its Intern Development Program to assist the young architects who are working toward their licensing exams.

"We have internal training on many levels such as regular lunch seminars where vendors come in and talk about some of the most recent innovations as well as other outside speakers such as lighting consultants," says Geier. All of these methods equal a high employee retention rate, including the company's good compensation.

FXFOWLE is also very involved with the local, state and national chapters of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Geier himself is a Fellow and sits on the board of the New York City component. FXFOWLE benefits greatly from this membership, from its marketing opportunities to its representation at both the local and national government levels. "The AIA is a great resource for market research and trends in the profession. The AIA also takes a stance on key issues that could affect the industry, and makes statements on behalf of projects that benefit the city and the region... and that's just scratching the surface," boasts Geier.



From New York City to Dubai

Throughout history, architecture has defined our skylines and these icons become the recognizable symbols for cities and countries around the world. With an impressive portfolio of diverse projects, many of FXFOWLE's landmark buildings grace the skyline of cities across the globe; each finding ways to connect the environment, context, and culture.

From its Dubai location, FXFOWLE has expanded its footprint into Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Africa, and India. These projects generally entail large commercial corporate offices, residential, mixed-use, and multi-building complexes.

Elevating the importance of sustainable design and construction is something that FXFOWLE embraces wholeheartedly. The firm designed the new headquarters for the National Audubon Society, one of the nation's oldest and best-known wildlife conservation groups. Audubon's New York City office was awarded a LEED Platinum rating from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), and earned 48 points for the design, making it the highest scoring commercial interior project in the world.

FXFOWLE's contributions to the technological and ideological advancement of the profession are most evident in the firm's work for SAP America Headquarters expansion in suburban Philadelphia. Designed from the beginning to



All of us at Advanced GeoServices join in congratulating Guy Geier, F.X. Fowle, and the entire project team for outstanding teamwork to design and construct the SAP Headquarters Building.



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be LEED Platinum, this project includes some of the most innovative green practices available on the market today. The building has an under floor air system that pushes air throughout the structure; and the new technologies don't stop there. One of the most impressive takes advantage of the fact that electricity bills are higher during the day. Rather than run an air conditioning system day-long, the building has an ice storage system that freezes water at night when electrical rates are lower and then is allowed to melt during the day. This cold water is then pushed through the air conditioning system to cool the offices.

Additional sustainable features include internal lights that automatically dim when sufficient daylight filters through the windows. These sensors are also tied to automatic shading devices on the windows that draw the shades to keep some of the heat from entering the space, allowing for additional savings in air conditioning.

The external features of this project were also not overlooked. FXFOWLE installed a green roof that allows for better insulation and absorbs the heat. Vegetated roofs also allow for slower run off of rain water from the building to avoid on-site retention ponds.

FXFOWLE is currently working on Eleven Times Square, a new 1.2 million-square-foot projected LEED Gold-rated commercial office tower in New York City; a new projected LEED Gold-rated Center for Global Conservation for the Wildlife Conservation Society at the Bronx Zoo in New York; a new office for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund on the Upper West side of Manhattan; the renovation and rehabilitation of the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center; a new 22-story projected LEED Gold-rated office tower in Arlington, Virginia; several mixed-use buildings in the King Abdullah Financial District in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and Dubai's Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed, the tallest and longest spanning arch bridge in the world.

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~Geier





A Great Performance

FXFOWLE is more than an industry leader. The firm is positioned to respond to a future in which very little is certain. By staying true to shared values, celebrating diverse ideas and approaches, and remaining flexible, FXFOWLE will continue to contribute positively and responsibly to enhance the quality of the built environment toward a more livable and sustainable society. ■

COMPANY AT A GLANCE

Established : 1978

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