ARTHUR GENSMLER
AIACC LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
JANUARY 19, 2016
ABOUT M. ARTHUR GENSLER, JR., FAIA, FIIDA, RIBA
FOUNDER, GENSLER

Art Gensler’s 60-year career as an architect is a remarkable story—distinguished by a commitment to advancing the profession of architecture, building a practice that has global impact, supporting design education and career advancement, championing the benefits of sustainable architecture, and making a difference in the communities where the firm works.

History of the Firm

In 1965, with two employees, Art launched a different kind of architectural practice. Adaptive, proactive, and client-centered, the firm treated professional service as a privilege. Teamwork, not individual accomplishment, would build the practice. Focused from the start on design’s impact on human experience, the firm has transformed over five decades from an interior architecture practice to a full-service design firm with more than 5,000 people and 47 locations across the Americas, Asia, and Europe. In 2015, the firm surpassed the $1 billion revenue milestone for the first time.

As a pioneer in the practice of interior architecture, Art Gensler has played a significant role in developing client understanding of the value of the profession. Early in his career, he recognized the need for a new architectural discipline that encompassed programming, space planning, interior design, tenant development, space management, and interior system development. From tenant space planning, beginning with the Alcoa Building in San Francisco, his group developed the programming procedures that have become the framework for interior architectural projects throughout the profession. Building on this, Gensler’s firm went on to develop techniques and procedures in project management, project staffing, fee control, budget control, general administration, and financial management that have become industry standards.

He also made the workplace a focal point for research, strongly influencing the evolution of the modern office building typology. Those first beginnings of research have evolved into the firm’s Workplace Performance Index, whose 190,000 respondents make it arguably the largest repository of knowledge on workplace effectiveness.

Of the architects of his generation, Art Gensler stands out as the outstanding firm-builder. Like his predecessors, Louis Skidmore and William Caudill, he founded and built a collaborative practice that has had wide influence on the profession. Beginning as workplace and retail designers, the firm gradually broadened to include consulting, brand design, planning, airports, tall buildings, and more. Today Gensler has 31 areas of practice within its studio structure, with offices in 16 countries. To date, this growth has taken the firm—and the architectural profession—into 123 countries worldwide.

This bench of wide-ranging talent, connected through the rare collaborative culture nurtured by Art Gensler, now comprises a firm capable of managing megaprojects such as CityCenter (Gensler served as Executive Architect of the 67-acre, 18 million-square-foot “city within a city” in Las Vegas), SFO Airport (beginning with the Central Terminal project in 1980 and continuing with comprehensive T2 and T3 renovations, and now embarking on T1 improvements), and Shanghai Tower (the 121-story mixed-use tower that is the new symbol of China’s re-emergence on the global stage).

A Benchmark for the Profession

The firm that Art Gensler founded and built up over five decades has consistently defined the profession’s standards for cultural and managerial best practices. His innovation was to make his clients—a cross-section of the U.S. and the developed world’s economy—his reference point, and to insist that architecture firms could and should compare favorably to them.

Working with Business Week and Architectural Record, Art helped found the “Good Design is Good Business Awards” in 1997. This program closely reflects his own philosophy, the hallmark of his career: Architecture not only contributes measurably to the communities and organizations it serves, but it has the power to transform everyday life. Gensler, the firm, was the recipient of the California Council AIA’s 1995 Architecture Firm of the Year award. In 2000, the firm received the American Institute of Architects’ national Architecture Firm Award. Institute President Michael Stanton noted at the time that Gensler is widely viewed by its peers as a model practice. In 2015, Interior Design magazine listed Gensler as “the most admired design firm” for the 35th year in a row.

Sustainability has long been a high priority for Art Gensler. In 2012, the U.S. Green Building Council awarded him the prestigious President’s Award, recognizing his pioneering vision for the green building industry. Art’s interest in the workplace led him to focus on energy conservation in the early 1970s and indoor air quality in the 1980s. He broadened that interest in the ’90s by embracing sustainable design and working tirelessly to promote its adoption by corporate and governmental clients. Beginning in 2000, he worked closely with the USGBC to reform the LEED Building Certification Program, and extend it into core-and-shell and building interiors. He helped make the Gensler firm an industry leader in sustainable practices, with nearly 1,200 LEED-accredited professionals currently on staff.
The Importance of Education
Outside of the firm, Art is strongly committed to supporting the education of design professionals—endowing, for example, a scholarship program at Cornell University, his alma mater. In addition, he currently serves on the Advisory Council of Cornell’s College of Architecture, Art and Planning and is a board member at the California College of the Arts. He has been a Visiting Professor both at Cornell and at the University of California, Berkeley, and has taught at the University of Arizona and Arizona State University.

Within the firm, Art has long insisted on a robust professional development program that encourages employees to explore new areas of interest and pushes them to expand their technical and leadership skills. This talent development network—ranging from the Gensler University Global Leaders program to its NextGen initiative—expands the horizons of the selected individuals and builds the firm’s capabilities to work successfully all over the world. Gensler’s talent development programs have been recognized with numerous national awards, including the AIA IDP Outstanding Firm Award.

Background and Professional Activities
An architect by profession, Art Gensler is a graduate of Cornell University, which named him “Cornell Entrepreneur of the Year” in 1995. In addition to his visiting professorships at the institutions named above, Art has been a Trustee and Vice Chairman of both the Buck Institute for Aging and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Currently he is a board member for SFMOMA, the Buck Institute for Aging, and the California College of the Arts.

Under Art’s leadership, the firm has committed to creating positive impact through socially conscious design and civic engagement. Art Gensler has set the example and provided the direction in creating a global network of designers and advocates working to help local communities through volunteerism, service, and pro bono work.

Most recently, through partnerships with like-minded organizations such as ACE Mentor Program of America, IIDA, and Project Color Corps, the firm has amplified its impact, supported underserved youth, developed design solutions, and mentored future generations. Over the years, Gensler’s impact has been felt most significantly through Art’s involvement in The San Francisco Committee on Jobs, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and the San Francisco Center for Economic Development.

An Emphasis on Community
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In 2015, Art shared his lessons learned in building a world-class professional services firm with publication of “Art’s Principles.” In the acclaimed book, he covers the essentials of leadership, talent acquisition, and operations, while outlining the creative strategies that propelled a small business into one of the largest and most admired firms in the industry.
# TIMELINE

**M. ARTHUR GENSLER, JR.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Arthur Gensler starts his own firm</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>United Airlines Ticket Office in SF wins Architectural Record Interior Design Award</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>M. Arthur Gensler Jr. scholarship fund established at Cornell University</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Arthur Gensler is inducted into Interior Design Magazine Hall of Fame</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Our London office opens with the award of the Goldman Sachs headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Gensler's projects span 48 states and 12 countries</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>AIA names Gensler Firm of the Year</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Arthur Gensler receives Lifetime Achievement Award from Ernst &amp; Young LLP at the firm's annual Northern California Entrepreneur of the Year® awards</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>gServe, Gensler's community service program debuts</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Interior Design names Gensler Top Architectural Firm in the U.S.</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>Gensler celebrates 50th Anniversary</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Interior Design names Gensler #1 Most Admired Firm</td>
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**#1 Building Design 2016 World Architecture 100**

**#1 Firm VMSD Top Retail Design Firms of 2015**

**#1 Interior Design 2015 Top 100 Giants**

**#1 2015 Architectural Record - Top 300 Architecture Firms**
COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

M. ARTHUR GENSLER, JR.

Art Gensler has been a strong advocate of education since the founding of the firm. Two scholarships were created under his leadership, including the Diversity Scholarship, a juried program that recognizes emerging talent among African-American college students enrolled in an accredited architectural program (winners receive an academic scholarship and an internship at Gensler’s New York office), and the Gensler Brinkmann Scholarship Fund, which was established in 1999 as a memorial to Donald G. Brinkmann, a gifted interior designer, inspirational leader and former partner at Gensler. The scholarship fund celebrates Brinkmann’s career-long commitment to nurturing new design talent by presenting outstanding interior design students with an internship and a financial award to be applied to their final year of school.

Art sees education as an opportunity to spark imagination and foster community development, and is committed to professional outreach and education. Art sits on the Board of Trustees and is Chairman of the Facilities Committee for CCA. As part of the firm’s goal to embrace next-generation educational pedagogy and programs, Gensler and CCA have collaborated to create a long-range plan that will serve as a guideline for shaping the future of education – including new technologies and a prioritization of long-range sustainability in all its forms – environmental, social and financial.

Cornell University named him “Cornell Entrepreneur of the Year” in 1995, and he currently serves on the Advisory Council of Cornell’s College of Architecture, Art and Planning.

“Education and Insight for Leaders of Professional Services Firms

Art’s Principles reveals the blueprint behind one of the most successful professional services firms, giving career-minded individuals the tools they need to excel in business. The book covers the essentials of leadership, talent acquisition and operations, while outlining the creative strategies that propelled a small business into one of the largest and most admired in its industry.

Ted W. Hall,
Director Emeritus
McKinsey & Company
In 2007 Gensler created a program called “gServe” to clarify, strengthen, and expand the reach of current community outreach activities and socially conscious design efforts throughout the firm. Following in Art’s footsteps, people at Gensler are passionate about serving the community. The firm’s commitment to employees includes empowering them to pursue opportunities that challenge and inspire. By establishing a strong network, gServe amplifies the outcome of existing efforts and creates new opportunities to foster relationships with like-minded partners and clients.
Dear Jury Chair and Directors,

I am pleased to support the nomination of Art Gensler for the AIACC Lifetime Achievement Award. I have known Art professionally since the mid-1980s. I met him first when I was the Chief Executive of the AIA in Washington DC and we continue to collaborate through the Design Futures Council and the World Design Forum. I have learned a great deal from Art and his leadership success and his vision. From many vantage points he richly deserves this honor.

First and foremost, he is a powerful and resilient leader. He is world-renowned as an architect who has forged strong relationships. He is one of the most insightful and motivating personalities to work with, in part due to the multiple ways he articulates value propositions of design.

It has been impressive to watch Art’s evolution as a professional and the morphing currency of his vision for the future. He possesses a rare combination of business and design genius. Moreover, he possesses a genuine self-awareness of his role as a professional. He is a role model who puts conceptual ideas into action models. These make the world and the profession better. He has navigated the storms in the global economy and each time his firm has come out stronger and better.

Art is one of the world’s foremost experts at helping clients see the value of good design. He has a recipe for the expanding role of the architect in the 21st Century. His contributions to the entire AEC Industry have been awesome.

I can think of no other person more deserving of your honor. I recommend him without reservation.

Sincerely,

James P. Cramer, Hon AIA
Chairman/Founding Principal, Greenway Group
Chairman/Design Futures Council
Former Chief Executive Officer, The American Institute of Architects

“Art is one of the world’s foremost experts at helping clients see the value of good design.”

James P. Cramer, Hon AIA
Chairman/Founding Principal, Greenway Group
Chairman/Design Futures Council
Former Chief Executive Officer, The American Institute of Architects
January 6, 2016

Dear AIACC Lifetime Achievement Award Council:

It is a pleasure and distinct honor to write on behalf of Art Gensler’s candidacy for an AIACC Lifetime Achievement for Distinguished Service Award. I have known Art for the eight years of my deanship at Cornell University’s College of Architecture, Art, and Planning. He is an alumnus of our architecture program, an ardent supporter of our academic mission, a trusted member of the Dean’s Advisory Council, an occasional guest lecturer, a frequent mentor to our students, and an advisor of invaluable insights into the needs and future of the profession.

Art attributes a significant measure of his remarkable success to his education, and this has led to a life of interest in the academy and the training of future generations of architects. At Cornell, he has endowed a Visiting Critic position that allows us to invite practitioners from around the world to campus to teach and lecture. He has used his considerable knowledge of contemporary global practice to bring important exhibitions to campus, and during his regular visits to Ithaca he never fails to make time to meet with students clamoring to learn from his experience. His generosity of spirit is legend. His forthright personality and inclusive style disarm upon contact. Most importantly, he embodies a collaborative mode of leadership that serves as a model for the next generation of architects.

When asked to write on Art’s behalf, I had to double check the AIACC website to be sure that it was not a mistake. Surely, if anyone had already earned a lifetime achievement award for service to the profession, it is Art Gensler. I wholeheartedly encourage you to honor this giant of the profession for his lasting and profound contributions.

Sincerely,

Kent Kleinman
Gale and Ira Drukier Dean

“Art attributes a significant measure of his remarkable success to his education, and this has led to a lifelong interest in the academy and the training of future generations of architects.”

Kent Kleinman
Gale and Ira Drukier Dean, Cornell University
January 19, 2016

Re: AIA California Council’s Lifetime Achievement Awards

I am writing in support of the effort to recognize Arthur Gensler with a Lifetime Achievement Award from AIA’s California Council. As the founder of Gensler, the largest architecture firm in the world, Art is renowned for his tremendous impact on the field. His experience building a successful, client-focused, design-centric, international firm is an inspiration for architects, designers, entrepreneurs, and business leaders, as well as students.

In addition to being a leader in his field, Art has shown a lifelong commitment to education. For decades he has supported scholarships, provided students with internships, and nurtured the careers of thousands of young architects and designers. The impact of this generosity is immeasurable.

I have had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Art as a trustee of California College of the Arts (CCA) since he was elected to the board in 2011. His life and work exemplify the core values of the college: collaboration, community engagement, innovation, and sustainability. I am grateful for his leadership and vision in helping us advance the mission of CCA to train the creative leaders of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Stephen Beal
President

“His life and work exemplify the core values of the college: collaboration, community engagement, innovation and sustainability.”

Stephen Beal
President, California College of the Arts
CASE STUDY
SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
“The finest traveler experience in an earth-friendly package ... T2 is modern, restful, and intuitive. It demonstrates how to simultaneously achieve sustainability and enhance the traveler experience.”

John L. Martin
Director, San Francisco Airport

San Francisco International Airport
San Francisco, CA

Gensler’s design work at SFO has set a new benchmark for contemporary air travel, highlighting the Bay Area’s distinct culture through its design, art and epicurean delights.

Art’s relationship with the airport dates back to the late 1980s, and continues today with the current renovation of Terminal 1. Along the way there have been many successful collaborative projects with the airport, including Terminal 2, the first LEED Gold certified terminal in the United States, Terminal 3 East and Terminal 3 Boarding Area E.

From their first day of operations these projects have been a spectacular success with travelers, the airport and the travel press. Expansive, naturally-illuminated spaces greet passengers, intuitively guiding them at key decision-making points, such as post-security, pre-baggage claim and the departure lounge. The natural daylight makes the terminal easier for travelers to navigate, and creates a more healthy environment in which to travel.
MGM Mirage City Center
Las Vegas, NV
Executive Architect

In 2004, MGM MIRAGE Design Group was given the assignment of assembling the team of leading architects, interior designers, and specialty consultants that would create CityCenter. After traveling around the world, conducting hundreds of interviews, MGM MIRAGE Design Group realized it would need to partner with a global design firm that could seamlessly reinforce and complement its in-house capabilities to orchestrate a project of unprecedented size and complexity, to meet a challenging, fast-track schedule. MGM MIRAGE asked Gensler to join the CityCenter design leadership team as its partner.

CityCenter is essentially an urban district, 67 acres (27.1 hectares) or about 12 Manhattan blocks in area. This made compact, high-density development possible. Connecting CityCenter by transit with the adjoining Bellagio and Monte Carlo properties, also owned by MGM MIRAGE, created an even larger setting that residents, guests, and visitors can experience on foot, without ever having to use cars or cabs to get to their destinations. This is part of what makes CityCenter a true “city within a city.”

It took strong design leadership to bring the initial plan and building program to a fully realized vision of an urbane and dynamic place, the heart of a new world city of entertainment.
CASE STUDY

SHANGHAI TOWER
Shanghai Tower
Pudong, Shanghai, China

Gensler’s design incorporates cutting-edge sustainable innovation, including a double-skin façade, wind turbines, and a spiraling parapet that serves as a rain collection system.

The new centerpiece of the Lujiazui commercial district, Shanghai Tower is the most forward-looking of the three towers symbolizing Shanghai’s past, present and future. Designed by a local team of Gensler architects to embody the city’s rich culture, the 632-meter high (2,073 feet) mixed-use building completes the super-highrise precinct planned in 1990. Taking inspiration from Shanghai’s tradition of small-scale courtyards and neighborhood parks the tower recasts them in high-density urban form.

The Tower’s taper and asymmetry combine to reduce wind load on the building by 24%, offering considerable savings in both building materials and construction costs.
M. Arthur Gensler, Jr.

**IN THE MEDIA**

**FAST COMPANY**

**Designer Art Gensler: “Design Work is Different than it was”**

November 28, 2016

By Fast Company Staff

Design veteran Art Gensler explains how design work is different than it was decades ago, how office design is about answering, “How do you get people to collaborate and interact?” and tells us how “the everything is working for it better.”

**Business Times**

**Gensler and Family Foundation donate $5 million to Buck Institute**

November 13, 2012

By Brian L. Weddington

Gensler and his wife, Drue, have donated $5 million to the Buck Institute for Research on Ageing.

**ARCHITECT**

**The Tower at PNC Plaza**

December 22, 2015

By Sarah Johnson

Read about The Tower at PNC Plaza on the GenslerOn blog.
IN THE MEDIA
M. ARTHUR GENSLER, JR.

INTERIOR DESIGN
designers on the rise
Gensler at the Top

INTERIOR DESIGN
GENSLER
Anatomy of a Giant
The Business of Design

INTERIOR DESIGN
Gensler 50

Art Gensler LA16-004 Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Service
IN THE MEDIA
M. ARTHUR GENSLER, JR.

HARVARD DESIGN MAGAZINE

AZURE

contract
IN THE MEDIA

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