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AIA New York Welcomes 2025 Leadership, Introduces 2025 Presidential Theme “See You IRL: Designing for Public Life”

Incoming AIANY President Benjamin Gilmartin, AIA, will explore how design can revitalize New York City’s public spaces and our shared social, cultural, and civic lives.

New York City, December 19, 2024 – On Wednesday, December 18, 2024, AIA New York welcomed its 2025 Board of Directors at the annual Board Inaugural. Executive Director **Jesse Lazar, Assoc. AIA**, and 2024 President **Gregory Switzer, AIA, NOMA, NCARB**, began the evening by reflecting on and celebrating this year’s achievements. Following the passing of the gavel, incoming 2025 President **Benjamin Gilmartin, AIA**, shared thoughts on his presidential theme, [See You IRL: Designing for Public Life](#).

2025 PRESIDENTIAL THEME – SEE YOU IRL: DESIGNING FOR PUBLIC LIFE

Gilmartin’s 2025 AIANY presidential theme, “**See You IRL: Designing for Public Life**,” centers on the importance of our shared physical spaces in New York City. At a time when digital connections often overshadow face-to-face interactions, this year’s theme emphasizes the power of public spaces—our streets, parks, plazas, and more—as vital arenas for social connection, creativity, and civic engagement. Through thoughtful and collaborative design, architects and urban planners can foster inclusive, vibrant spaces that address present-day challenges including affordability, climate resilience, and equity. Gilmartin’s year-long initiative will spotlight the role of architects in creating environments that promote joy, collaboration, and a sense of belonging, strengthening the urban fabric of our life.

Throughout the year, in collaboration with AIANY’s committees, he will organize programs that critically examine the process of designing for our contemporary public life. In the fall, the Center for Architecture will host an exhibition showcasing projects around New York City that exemplify new design approaches to large-scale civic and social spaces, as well as speculative ideas that interrogate the very nature of our public sphere. Together, Gilmartin seeks to re-envision a city that responds to the converging crises of access, affordability, and resiliency.

CHAPTER RECOGNITION



The inaugural also served as an opportunity to recognize members and projects of the architecture and design community for their contributions. AIANY's Vice Presidents recognized the Chapter's program committees with Vice Presidential Citations for contributions in each of the organization's mission areas: design excellence, public outreach, and professional development.

AIANY Vice Presidential Citations

AIANY Citation for Design Excellence: AIA New York recognizes *The Future of Public Space and Art Series*, organized by Ann Marie Baranowski, FAIA, LEED AP and the Cultural Facilities Committee.

AIANY Citation for Professional Development: AIA New York recognizes *The Design Sprint Series*, organized by the Emerging New York Architects Committee

AIANY Citation for Public Outreach: AIA New York recognizes the *Reimagining Justice Film Festival*, organized by the Architecture for Justice Committee

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**individuals with a new position on the Board*

***individuals joining the Board for their first term*

About Benjamin Gilmartin, AIA

Benjamin Gilmartin is a partner at Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R) with 25 years of experience in architecture. He has been an instrumental design collaborator with Elizabeth Diller, Ricardo Scofidio, and Charles Renfro since joining the studio in 2004, and has helped lead the growth of the practice from a small studio staff of 12 to an international practice of 120. He was named a partner in 2015, having led the design of some of DS+R's major works including the redesign of Alice Tully Hall, multiple public spaces within the Lincoln Center for Performing Arts Campus, and the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive at the University of California, Berkeley. He was a key contributor on projects such as The Broad in Los Angeles, the Roy and Diana Vagelos Education Center at Columbia University, the expansion of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), and The Shed in New York. Most recently, Gilmartin was Partner-in-Charge for The Tide, a public space network at London's Greenwich Peninsula that opened in 2019, and the



United States Olympic and Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado, scheduled to open in the summer of this year. In addition to co-leading the design of the Centre for Music in London, he is currently leading the adaptive reuse of the Metropolitan Storage Warehouse into a new home for MIT's School of Architecture and Planning in Cambridge, a confidential technology headquarters in the Pacific Northwest, and the New Health Precinct building at the University of Sydney in Australia.

Formerly Chair of the AIANY Global Dialogues Committee, Gilmartin is an active member of the AIA and has organized panel discussions and events at the Center for Architecture since 2017. In addition, he has spoken in AIA conferences nationally, including giving the keynote address and serving as Honor Awards Jury Chair for the AIA Colorado and Western Mountain Region Practice and Design Conference (2015), giving the keynote address for the AIA Wisconsin Convention and Expo in Madison (2015), and lecturing and serving on the Honor Awards Jury for AIA Minnesota in Minneapolis (2013).

Gilmartin has taught at Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art, and Planning and has lectured widely at schools of architecture. He was a longtime contributor to the independent architecture journal *Praxis*, alongside his fellow DS+R partners. He received the 2017 *Wall Street Journal Magazine's* Architecture Innovator of the Year Award and the 2018 American Federation of Arts Cultural Leadership Award.

Gilmartin received a Master of Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and a Bachelor of Arts in both Architecture and English from the University of California Berkeley. He is a registered Architect in New York.

About AIA New York

Founded in 1857, AIA New York is the oldest and largest chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The Chapter's members include 5,500 practicing architects, allied professionals, students, and public members interested in architecture and design. AIA New York is dedicated to three goals: design excellence, public outreach, and professional development. aiany.org