

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

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News:

Firms in Focus

The New York edition of the Architecture & Design Film Festival will show the people behind the projects, October 18–21.

By Dante A. Ciampaglia
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Kathy Brew and Roberto Guerra's *Design Is One: Lella and Massimo Vignelli* will premiere at the Architecture & Design Film Festival. **View the full schedule of screenings and discussions here (http://adfilmfest.com/portal/films_ny2012).**

When architect Kyle Bergman organized a small festival of design films at Yestermorrow Design/Build School in 2008, he was surprised when more than 1,000 people made the trip to the tiny Vermont institution to attend screenings. Four years later, the Architecture & Design Film Festival is now held annually at Tribeca Cinemas in New York City and has expanded to include a program in Chicago, with another in Los Angeles debuting in 2013. But despite the event's growth, the goal, Bergman says, remains the same: to present films that show design in creative and challenging ways to as broad an audience as possible.

The 2012 New York edition runs October 18–21, with more than 25 films grouped into some 12 programs of features and shorts, as well as five related panel discussions. [View a full schedule (http://adfilmfest.com/portal/films_ny2012).] The selection includes the formally inventive *Architect: A Chamber Opera*, with a score that samples ambient sound recorded at Louis I. Kahn projects. Other films take on the political side of design. *Mission Statements: The Architecture of Dutch Diplomacy* examines how culture is exported through architecture by focusing on the construction of four Dutch embassies, while *16 Acres* documents the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site. (The 2012 festival is the latter film's U.S. premiere.) Other highlights on the festival schedule profile a single design practice.

The event opens with the world premiere of *Design Is One: Lella and Massimo Vignelli*, an intimate documentary about the legendary designers who have visualized everything from watches to iconic corporate branding (American Airlines, Bloomingdale's, Ford) to a New York City transit-system map lauded for its clarity but criticized for its abstraction when it was in use during the 1970s (the map has recently been reintroduced to show weekend service changes). "Every time we take the subway in New York, we're in Vignelli land," Paola Antonelli, senior curator of architecture and design at New York's Museum of Modern Art, says in the film.

Another standout on the schedule is *Diller Scofidio + Renfro: Reimagining Lincoln Center and the High Line*. At a lean 54 minutes, it's more straightforward than intimate. But its biographical sketch of, primarily, Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio has a surprising amount of depth as it charts their evolution from a firm known for imaginative art installations to in-demand architects. The film also probes what Scofidio calls

the blurring of “boundaries between what is public and what is private” by focusing specifically (but not exclusively) on the work that went into New York’s High Line park and the redevelopment of the city’s Lincoln Center. Both projects—and the greater issue of public versus private spaces—promise to provoke discussion at a panel organized around the film.

"The conversations that happen between the films are really one of the most important parts of the festival" Bergman says. We're trying to raise the level of design dialogue, not just among pros, but among engineers and lawyers and pediatricians and people who make pizza. As an architect, that's something that I think is really good for the profession.

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