



UNFOLDED

How Architecture Saved My Life

By Alastair Gordon

“There’s a secret trapdoor, a kind of magic key into every project,” says Bartholomew Voorsanger, whose life and work are chronicled in *UNFOLDED: How Architecture Saved My Life*. The book, by award-winning author Alastair Gordon, reads more like a memoir than a conventional monograph, tracing as it does the architect’s personal journey from an orphanage in the Bronx to the establishment of his own practice in 1978. Some of his work suggests a pilgrimage across space, a sequence of opening and closing, as with a series of pavilions he designed for the World War II Museum in New Orleans. Undulating trajectories of work and life intersect throughout Voorsanger’s story as his architectural practice came to represent an emotional anchor. “I don’t give a damn about myself, but I care deeply about my work,” he says, acknowledging the number of times that his art has rescued him from a state of existential despair. “Architecture saved my life”.

About the Contributors:

Alastair Gordon is an award-winning critic and author who has written regularly about the built environment for the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. His critically acclaimed books include *Naked Airport*, *Weekend Utopia*, and *Spaced Out*. He teaches critical writing at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design, and is Editorial Director of Gordon de Vries Studio, an imprint that publishes books about the human environment.



Foreword: Dell Upton is a prominent architectural historian and Chair of the Department of Art History at the University of California, Los Angeles. Among other titles, he is the author of *Architecture in the United States* (Oxford University Press, 1998), and *Another City: Urban Life*, and *Urban Spaces in the New American Republic* (Yale, 2008)

Bartholomew Voorsanger received a BA with Honors from Princeton, a Masters from Harvard and from 1964-1967 became an associate with the Montreal urban planner Vincent Ponte. In 1968 he joined I.M.Pei before launching his own firm in 1978. The firm quickly gained recognition for projects published around the world and received numerous design awards. Commissions range from small interiors to multi-million dollar residences and large-scale institutional buildings such as the World War II Museum in New Orleans. Voorsanger became a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1985 and is currently Chair of the Architectural Foundation in New York.

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