Accredited Schools of Architecture have a responsibility to educate new generations of architects and must provide a delicate balance of theoretical and practical information to their students. A healthy mix of academics and practitioners are therefore necessary in fusing the dual perspectives together.

In some schools, faculty, who have to meet the academic requirement of the institution to achieve tenure and promotion, can be effectively supplemented with highly skilled local practitioners who are dealing on a daily basis with design and construction issues. In some happy instances, there are individuals who can straddle the two worlds and bring a balanced view of design excellence.

Such an individual is Jim Shields. An excellent teacher, his classes and studios are models of clarity and insight, and are highly sought by his students. His undisputed role as one of the most talented architects in the Midwest, as evidenced by the rich array of work in this monograph, brings huge value to the school.

Last year, Jim was nationally recognized for his excellence by the American Institute of Architects where he was awarded Fellowship of the Institute in the area of Design Excellence. This well-deserved honor and distinction is celebrated in this monograph, the result of many years excellent practice informed by a distinguished career in teaching.

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