9/29 DRAFT
Landmarks Preservation Commission
October 28, 2008, Designation List
LP-2300

University Village
100 and 110 Bleecker Street (aka Silver Towers I & II, 96-122 Bleecker Street and 26-58 West Houston Street) and 505 LaGuardia Place (aka 487-507 LaGuardia Place and 64-86 West Houston Street). Built 1964-67; I. M. Pei & Associates, architect; James Ingo Freed, chief designer.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 524, Lot 1 and Lot 66, in part, beginning at the northwest corner of the lot and extending easterly along the northern property line to the west edge of the sidewalk that runs along the eastern property line, southerly along the west edge of the sidewalk to the southern property line, then westerly along the southern property line to the western property line, and northerly along the western property line to the point of beginning.

Testimony

On June 24, 2008 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of University Village and the proposed designation of the related Landmark site. The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with law. Twenty-seven people spoke in favor of designation including Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer and Councilman Alan Jay Gerson, as well as representatives of United States Congressman Jerrold Nadler, New York State Senator Thomas K. Duane, New York State Assemblywoman Deborah J. Glick, 505 LaGuardia Place Board of Directors, Community Board No. 2, American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects, DoCoMoMo US/New York Tri-State, the Historic Districts Council, Landmarks Conservancy, Modern Architecture Working Group, Municipal Art Society, the Society for the Preservation of Greenwich Village, and the West Village Task Force. Numerous letters in support of designation have also been received. New York University testified in support of designation and discussed potential future plans for additional development on the site.

Summary

University Village is one of the finest examples of a mid-20th century residential complex in New York City. Designed by architect James Ingo Freed of I. M. Pei & Associates for New York University, construction began in 1964 and was completed by 1967. Occupying a five-acre "superblock" in Greenwich Village, between West Houston and Bleecker Streets, the site was originally part of a much larger urban renewal scheme conceived by Robert Moses, chairman of the Mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance, in 1953. As part of NYU's agreement with the city to take over the site in 1960, the school agreed to set aside one-third of the planned units for middle-income residents. The complex includes three identical free-standing 30-story towers executed in reinforced concrete that are positioned at the center of the site in a pin-wheel configuration around a 100-by-100 foot lawn. The west tower, at 505 LaGuardia Place, is a privately-owned cooperative residence, and the east towers serve as faculty housing. Covering approximately 25 per cent of the property, the buildings were thoughtfully arranged to maximize views and privacy, as well as to increase general visual interest. Cast in place, on site, using fiberglass molds, these buff-colored towers fall into the general stylistic category known as "Brutalism" and reflect the influence of the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, whom Pei admired. The three buildings display twin sets of smooth gridded facades that project from a central core. Each floor has four or eight deeply-recessed horizontal window bays, as well as a 22-foot-wide sheer wall, creating strong contrasts of light and shadow. Near the center of the complex stands a large sandblasted concrete sculpture, an enlargement of a 1954 cubistic work by Pablo Picasso. Executed in 1968 by the French artist's frequent collaborator, the Norwegian sculptor Carl Nesjar, the off-center placement of the 36-foot tall bust echoes and enhances the project's dynamic plan. University Village was a critical success and received awards from the American Institute of Architects, the City Club of New York, and the Concrete Industry Board. It was also selected as one of "Ten Buildings That Climax An Era" by *Fortune* Magazine in 1966. Both Pei and Freed have received significant recognition for their contributions to this project; when Pei was honored with the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1983 University Village was cited as one of his most notable works and at the time of Freed's death in 2005 Museum of Modern Art architecture curator Terence Riley counted the complex as among "the most refined examples of modern architecture in Manhattan."

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

South of Washington Square

University Village contains three apartment towers designed by I. M. Pei & Associates. Located two blocks south of Washington Square, between Mercer Street and LaGuardia Place, the buildings to the east are owned by New York University (NYU) and serve as faculty housing; the west building is a privately-owned cooperative apartment house. Conceived during the early 1950s as part an ambitious "superblock" plan to improve a nine-block section of Greenwich Village, these striking structures were skillfully sited to create a distinct sense of place and to contrast with the surrounding blocks of late nineteenth-century tenement and loft buildings.

Washington Square first became a public park in 1827. Many fine homes were erected in the vicinity, as well as the original Gothic Revival-style building housing New York University (Town, Davis & Daikin, 1833-37).[1] Following the end of the Civil War, however, the neighborhood's character began to change. Affluent residents were gradually replaced by French, Italian and Irish immigrants, and the blocks to the south and east of the square became an important wholesale district. Under Chancellor Henry MacCracken, NYU was reorganized and the undergraduate arts and science division moved to University Heights in the Bronx where a Beaux-Arts-style campus (partially a designated New York City Landmark), designed by the prominent architects McKim, Mead & White, opened in 1894. Unlike Washington Square, the suburban campus provided dormitories, making NYU less of a commuter school and more of a residential college. The school's original building was then demolished, but for financial reasons the trustees retained ownership of the site and constructed a revenue-producing loft building (later called Main Building, now Silver Center) at 100 Washington Square East.[2] Completed in 1895, the upper floors were planned as classrooms, allowing NYU to remain, in a small way, associated with Washington Square. NYU began to plan its return to Greenwich Village in 1915. With the Bronx campus only partially executed, the school leased space in the building where the Triangle shirtwaist fire had recently occurred at 23-29 Washington Place (a designated New York City Landmark) and it also began to fully occupy the structure it owned at 100 Washington Square East.[3]

Following the Second World War, NYU developed ambitious plans to increase its presence in Greenwich Village. Whereas the University Heights campus occupied a large site

with considerable potential for expansion, here the school grew block by block, acquiring large and small parcels for present and future needs. These transactions frequently caused controversy and strong community opposition, especially projects requiring government approval or financing.[4] Despite criticism, Chancellor Harry Woodburn Chase alleged in 1949: "Far from regarding Washington Square as its campus, New York University regards it as a national landmark of which it is glad to be a part and its devotion to which it has repeatedly manifested over the years."[5] Over the next decade or so, the school would practice a somewhat traditional approach to design, adopting contextual aesthetic strategies that blended new buildings with old. Most of the structures were faced with red brick, including Vanderbilt Hall (Egger & Higgins, 1951) at 40 Washington Square South, Hayden Hall (c. 1957) at 33 Washington Square West, the Loeb Student Center (Harrison & Abramowitz, 1957-59, demolished), and Weinstein Hall (Harrison & Abramowitz, early 1960s) at 11 University Place. Even Philip Johnson and Richard Foster's divisive master plan of 1964 attempted to respect the school's historic context by proposing to clad new and existing structures with complementary red sandstone.

Robert Moses, Title I and Urban Renewal

During the 1950s, a nine-block area bordered by Houston Street, West Broadway (renamed LaGuardia Place in 1967), Mercer Street and Washington Square, was targeted for slum clearance. Under President Harry Truman, the National Housing Act was passed in 1949 to provide Federal funds to local municipalities to acquire property in blighted urban areas for resale to developers. This program had an extraordinary impact on New York, which received more aid than any American city. Under Robert Moses, chairman of the mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance, sixteen sites were identified, including thirteen in Manhattan. Such projects, public officials believed, would stabilize the middle class, support higher education, and elevate the city's reputation. The blocks where University Village would ultimately be located, called Washington Square Southeast, was the 14th project proposed by Moses. The initial prospectus, prepared by Egger & Higgins in August 1953, called for the demolition of 191 buildings, of which only 16 were residential. Most displaced tenants, consequently, were businesses, requiring no compensation under the 1949 law. Covering almost eighteen acres, the plan included 2,184 apartments in nine 14-story structures.[6]

NYU was initially asked to play a small role and only the three adjoining blocks to the north – bordered by West Broadway, West 3rd Street, Mercer Street, and West 4th Street – were set aside for school facilities. Four academic buildings would eventually be constructed on the site, including the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library (Philip Johnson and Richard Foster, 1968-72). The blocks to the south, however, were for residential use and were sold to the Washington Square Corporation, a syndicate headed by developers Paul Tishman and Martin S. Wolfe. They named the complex Washington Square Village and intended to build three apartment houses on two adjoining superblocks separated by Bleecker Street.[7] Covering about a third of the site, the ground floors were laid out to maintain the existing street pattern and allow north-south access along Greene and Wooster Streets.

A third building, as well as an underground parking lot, was originally planned for the south block, between Bleecker and Houston Streets, but was canceled by 1960. Some sources claim the developer experienced difficulty leasing units in the second building, while others contend they abandoned the project for economic reasons, asserting that the Federal government refused to allow a taller third structure without increasing payment for the land. NYU was quick to act and in January 1960 declared its interest in buying the three-block site and erect housing "for its faculty members and married students and an experimental school for student teachers."[8] Despite considerable opposition from critics who asserted private builders "would be glad to pay more than the $10.50 a square foot that NYU would pay for the land" and that this transaction would cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost tax revenue, the Board of Estimate approved the sale in September 1960.[9] As part of the agreement, NYU was required to develop one third of the site as middle-income housing, with priority given to people who lived or worked in the area. A limited-equity cooperative apartment building was proposed, financed with subsidized low-interest mortgage loans as part of the Limited Profit Housing Companies Act of 1955, commonly called the Mitchell-Lama Housing Program.[10] Since the housing complex would occupy the undeveloped southern half of Washington Square Village, the school's governing board decided to name the development "University Village."[11]

I. M. Pei and James Ingo Freed, Architects

University Village was designed by I. M. Pei & Associates. More than twenty-five architects were reportedly interviewed for the job. Pei did not attend the firm's interview and correspondence with NYU was handled by Eason H. Leonard, who wrote:

> The experience we have had in the sensitive design problems relating to housing of all types gives us confidence that we are well-equipped to develop for you a project of significant quality. Our recent work in Urban Renewal has assured us that within the limits of very low construction budgets, much can be done to improve standards of urban apartment living.[12]

Pei's firm was currently working on four residential developments, including Society Hill in Philadelphia (1957-63) and Kips Bay Plaza (1957-64) in New York City. Both were constructed with exposed reinforced concrete and the *New York Times* praised the technique for yielding "fresh design."[13]

Born in Canton, China, in 1907, Ieoh Ming Pei immigrated to the United States in 1937 and studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1940, hereafter MIT) and the Harvard Graduate School of Design (1946). In 1948 he moved to New York City and became the first director of architecture at Webb & Knapp, Inc., a major real estate development company. Founded under the name 385 Madison Avenue in 1922 by W. Seward Webb, Jr. and Robert C. Knapp, as well as the noted architects Eliot Cross and John Walter Cross, the firm was purchased by businessman William Zeckendorf in 1949. Pei remembered that his boss "wanted to remake the city. We had a shared passion for large scale undertakings."[14] In recognition of his expertise with residential design, Pei served on the Federal Housing Administration's Multi-Family Housing Committee during the late 1950s, as well as the design committee for the Mitchell-Lama Housing Program.[15]

In 1960 – the same year Pei received the NYU commission – he resigned from Webb & Knapp and formed his own architectural practice. Though Zeckendorf's financial difficulties played a part in the architect's decision to leave, he later recalled:

> I knew that if I stayed within the envelope of the company, I would never get the kinds of jobs I really wanted . . . My growth as a designer was stunted; I should have reached my maturity much earlier.[16]

Success and notoriety, however, came quickly to Pei. He received the prestigious Arnold Brunner Prize for excellence in architecture from the National Institute of Arts and Letters in March 1961, followed by the Medal of Honor from the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in September 1963. Major works credited to Pei include: the National Gallery of Art, East Building (1968-78) in Washington, D. C., the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (1966-79) in Boston, the Bank of China Tower (1982-89) in Hong Kong, and the Grand Louvre (1988-93) in Paris. In New York City, he also designed the National Airlines Terminal (1962-70) at Kennedy International Airport and the Guggenheim Pavilion (1983-92) at Mount Sinai Medical Center. In 1983 he was honored as the fifth recipient of the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize. Though Pei retired from his firm in 1990, he continues to work as an architect and is associated with Pei Partnership Architects, based in New York City.

Pei selected James Ingo Freed (1930-2005) to head the University Village design team. Born in Germany, Freed moved to Chicago at the age of nine. A graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) in 1953, he studied under the architecture school's chairman Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and worked briefly with the architect on the Seagram Building (1955-58, a designated New York Landmark and Interior). Hired by Pei in 1956, Freed participated in the design and construction of Court House Square, including the Denver Hilton Hotel (1954-60), with colleague Araldo A. Cossuta, and later, served as lead designer on Kips Bay Plaza. During the mid-1960s, he collaborated with Pei on the design of fifty air traffic control towers for the Federal Aeronautics Administration. Planned during the administration of President John F. Kennedy, like University Village, these slender structures were formed using cast-in-place concrete. Freed received many honors during his career and from 1975 to 1978 was dean of the School of Architecture at IIT. He later returned to New York and was promoted to full partner in 1980. At the time, the firm was renamed Pei Cobb Freed & Partners. Manhattan buildings designed by Freed include: a 32-story office building at 88 Pine Street (1968-73), a 27-story office building at 499 Park Avenue (1977-81), and the Jacob Javits Convention Center (1979-

88). His best-known work is arguably the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., dedicated in 1993.

The Scheme

Freed began to plan University Village in late 1960 or early 1961. In Pei's office, he worked closely with architects Theodore A. Amberg and A. Preston Moore (1919-2007).[17] The design went through several distinct stages and more than three years passed before construction of the first building, 505 LaGuardia Place, began in April 1964.

NYU's preliminary plan contained three buildings that were "comparable in design" to Washington Square Village, as well as an elementary school facing Houston Street. Separated by Greene and Wooster Streets, these rectangular structures were arranged in a single row, from east to west, across the center of the site. By December 1960, however, NYU had completely changed course; it informed the Housing and Redevelopment Board (successor to the Committee on Slum Clearance) that Pei had a "tentative plan in which he hopes to achieve some sort of community atmosphere with fairly low buildings interspersed with one or two tall structures."[18] Freed's earliest scheme was loosely modeled on Society Hill, juxtaposing structures of different height and materials, including a 16-story cooperative apartment house, a 29-story apartment tower for faculty members facing a plaza, and a "serpentine building of six stories . . . modeled to some extent, on the typical New York City brownstone."[19] The latter building's footprint was quite large, turning at right angles, starting at Houston Street and ending on Bleecker Street. In late 1962, this design was greatly simplified, laying the groundwork for the final scheme which included twin slab-like towers flanking Wooster Street and a seven-story brick residential building, distinguished an L-shaped footprint, facing the intersection of Houston and Mercer Streets. This approach appears to have remained under consideration until December 1963 when NYU announced the purchase of Washington Square Village. This acquisition allowed the school to re-evaluate its housing needs and the low-rise building was abandoned and replaced by a third tower. Not only would three identical towers reduce construction costs and streamline the design process, but Freed said this type of plan would leave as "large and flexible a land area as possible set aside for future use."[20]

The addition of the third tower dramatically altered the character of University Village. Not only did aesthetic uniformity result, but it sharpened the contrast between the complex and

the neighborhood like such earlier "tower in the park" schemes as Parkchester (completed 1940) in the Bronx, the Clinton Hill Houses (c. 1943, part of the Clinton Hill Historic District), and Stuyvesant Town (1943-49) in Manhattan. No longer would mirror image towers flank the former route of Wooster Street but three identical towers would be carefully arranged around a central lawn, with the east section of the superblock, between Mercer and Wooster Streets, free for later development. This block-long parcel is now occupied by the Jerome S. Coles Sports Center, completed in 1982.

In the final scheme, the towers turn away from Houston Street, a busy cross-town artery. They cover about 25 percent of the five-acre site and rise from a slightly elevated man-made platform that levels much of the site and hides two parking garages. Wide strips of city-owned land, as well as landscaping, shield the towers from activity along Bleecker Street and LaGuardia Place, and enhance the project's floating pinwheel arrangement. This is particularly clear in aerial views and may reflect the firm's earlier use of Zeckendorf's private jet to evaluate development sites from above.[21]

In contrast to Washington Square Village, where the two buildings stand parallel to each other, the buildings in University Village are oriented in different directions, with two towers facing north toward Bleecker Street, and the other, west toward LaGuardia Place. This type of arrangement was pioneered in two earlier Pei projects, first at Kips Bay Plaza, where the two 21-story apartment buildings slide in opposite directions toward the east and west, and more closely at Society Hill, where three 31-story towers rise tightly around a plaza. Whereas most Manhattan buildings fit snugly into the grid and address the street directly in a conventional way, at University Village each building seems independent of the other and was deliberately positioned in an asymmetrical manner around the 100-by-100-foot plaza to maximize views, increase privacy, and create general visual interest. In addition, these open spaces act as corridors to frame distant views of each tower. Pei later remarked:

> A city, so far from being a cluster of buildings, is actually a sequence of spaces enclosed and defined by buildings. This may sound strange but it is the essence of urban design.[22]

Unlike many "tower in the park" schemes located in New York City, Freed created a deliberate tension between the buildings and the space they occupy – not unlike the celebrated mid-20th century sculptor Alberto Giacometti's *City Square* (1948) in which "four men stride across a wide plaza, each moving toward the center, yet none apparently directed toward an encounter with one another."[23] University Village similarly avoids a single axis or orientation, and thus also recalls the spatial experiments of the De Stijl School in Holland during the 1920s, as well as early residential projects designed by Mies.[24] Such innovative modernist ideas were essential to the firm's final scheme, shaping not only the site plan but also the design of the three towers.

Towers of Concrete

Pei favored reinforced concrete over all other building materials during the early 1960s. His work was typically crisp and elegant and this material defines the character of his mid-career production. A great admirer of the Swiss-born architect Le Corbusier (1887-1965), Pei claimed that in Shanghai before 1944: "There were no teachers to teach us the new architecture . . . so we turned to Corbu's books, and these were responsible for half of our education."[25] Titled the *Oeuvre Complete*, this self-published series of eight volumes documented Le Corbusier's development as an architect and his frequent use of concrete construction to create a formal language of abstract sculptural forms. This was particularly evident in his late design for the Unité d'Habitation (1947-53) at Marseilles, which features a 12-story horizontal grid of deeply-recessed cells. During the late 1940s, this project received international attention and the play of large and small openings on the building's facade may have influenced Pei's subsequent work in concrete, especially his apartment buildings.[26]

University Village makes extremely sophisticated use of concrete. It falls under the general stylistic category known as "Brutalism" for its straightforward use of exposed concrete but in contrast to many examples, particularly the late work of Le Corbusier and Breuer, as well as Paul Rudolph, the exterior is noticeably smooth and elegant. Pei developed this technique between 1957 and 1960, while employed by Zeckendorf. He later recalled: "I had a wonderful client . . . who was willing to gamble with me on using concrete and not brick."[27] Edward L. Friedman headed the firm's research, publishing a thorough article on the subject in October 1960, just before NYU awarded Pei the commission. Though initial studies seemed to support the continued use of pre-cast concrete (which Freed used for the Denver Hilton), cast-in-place

concrete was substituted to trim costs and conform to building codes that encouraged "structural continuity." Many challenges were overcome, such as how to control the consistency of the color and difficulties with shrinkage and cracking. Friedman described the nearly-complete Kips Bay Plaza as a "prototype," while the firm's soon-to-be built scheme for three towers at Society Hill was termed a "refinement."[28]

As construction of University Village neared completion, architect Araldo A. Cossuta, published "From Precast Concrete to Integral Architecture" in October 1966. He, too, was part of Pei's office and his essay celebrated the firm's recent accomplishments, paying particular attention to the Earth Sciences Center at MIT (1959-64) where, as at University Village, load-bearing walls were poured on site to create column-free interiors. He specifically criticized conventional skin construction and how architects sometimes disguise the handiwork of engineers. The goal, Cossuta argued, was to create "real walls" – not curtain walls – through the integration of structure and skin. He maintained that this technique would result in a "return to classical simplicity" and that such plastic forms can express an "external-internal continuum" whereby architects take "possession of shadows rather than diluting them by reflection."[29]

A warm, buff-colored concrete was selected for University Village, comparable, depending on the light, to sandstone or limestone. At Chatham Towers (Kelly & Gruzen, with Mario J. Romanach, 1965-66) in Chinatown, architects used plywood boards to form the exposed concrete, producing a rough and yet interesting patterned surface. At University Village, however, fiberglass molds were employed. According to Friedman, this material was chosen for various reasons: not only was the quality of the results high but fiberglass is easy to assemble, strip, and re-use. Furthermore, various concrete coatings, release agents, and even scaffoldings were evaluated. In terms of cost and quality, he claimed that such research returned handsome dividends. Each section took approximately four-to-eight weeks to dry completely, and overall, construction took six-to-eight weeks less than conventional brick facings.[30]

The three towers at University Village contain twin sets of gridded facades projecting from a central core. Each floor has four or eight horizontal window openings and a 22-foot-wide sheer wall, separated by a thin slot of flat windows. Located at either end, these smooth windowless walls contrast with the deeply-recessed window openings and reflect light. Each opening is formed by a pair of T-shaped columns that meet over the center of the bay. They narrow toward the exterior, creating a wedge-shaped profile. Between floors, horizontal and

vertical joints are visible. These gaps indicate each stage of casting and allow for thermal movement throughout the year. Deep reveals were fashioned to conceal troweled joints.

At the base, the T-shaped columns are considerably taller – more than twice the height of the residential floors. On the front facade these columns form a continuous arcade, similar to Kips Bay Plaza. Shaped like elongated diamonds, they enclose a deep gallery with tan brick walls that flank the glazed outer walls of the lobby. In terms of color and rhythm they exhibit a vaguely classical spirit, suggesting an ancient Greek or Roman temple.[31]

Construction

A ceremonial ground breaking for the first building – Washington Square South East, later known as 505 West Broadway (now LaGuardia Place) – was held on August 12, 1964, following approval of plans by the Housing and Redevelopment Board and the Building Department.[32] In attendance was NYU President James W. Hester who described the project as "a successful example of community cooperation."[33] Later that year, in November 1964, the Board of Estimate endorsed the larger scheme, along with various criteria to determine residency in the cooperative apartments. Tenants who had been forced to move were given first priority, followed by people dislocated by similar projects in Greenwich Village.[34] At this time, the Board of Estimate also approved the closing of Greene and Wooster Streets.

Construction started in late August 1964. The Tishman Construction Company served as contractor and Farkas & Barron was engineer.[35] Amberg, from Pei's office, served as site architect, overseeing day-to-day operations. The first step was the pouring of the foundations – a four-foot-thick concrete pad covering each building's footprint. More complicated than conventional concrete footings, it required continuous pouring and the delivery process was characterized by the *New York Times* as having the "precision of a military campaign."[36] It was a relatively efficient process and, according to Amberg, the towers rose simultaneously on a "three day cycle." On the first day, the fiberglass forms were erected incorporating the steel, followed by a day for pouring, and a day for removing the formwork. Construction progressed on a "staggered" schedule, meaning that the contractor performed one of three tasks on each tower during a given day. The first building was "topped out" in December 1964 and by late 1966 the three towers were nearly complete.

Modern Architecture and New York University

Prior to the 1930s, most American universities commissioned buildings inspired by European and Jeffersonian models, including neo-Classical and neo-Gothic structures that recalled Oxford, Cambridge, Charlottesville, as well as other historic centers of learning. After World War I, European architects began to challenge this approach, arguing that traditional forms were no longer desirable or appropriate. These ideas attracted considerable support in the United States. The New School for School Research (a designated New York City Interior Landmark, part of the Greenwich Village Historic District) was one of the first buildings in New York City and one of the first college buildings in the United States to exhibit characteristics of the so-called International Style. Designed by Joseph Urban in 1930-31, the clean-lined glass and brick facade stood in sharp juxtaposition to its nineteenth-century neighbors. By decade's end, several modern-style campuses had begun construction, including Florida Southern University (Frank Lloyd Wright, 1938-55), IIT (Mies van der Rohe, 1938-56), and Hunter College (Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, Harrison & Fouilhoux, 1938-41). After World War II, this trend accelerated, transforming the campuses of Harvard University, Yale University, and MIT.

New York University embarked on a major building campaign during the late 1940s. To help guide the school's expansion, a Buildings and Grounds Committee of the Board of Trustees was formed in 1952. George F. Baughman, the school's vice president and treasurer, praised their vision:

> Without their willingness to take risks, we could do nothing. As an example, because of their enthusiastic aid, we have been able to employ some of the most exciting architects now practicing . . . a cross section of talent representing the best of contemporary American architecture.[37]

Many exceptional firms participated, including Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Harrison & Abramowitz, and Marcel Breuer. Among them, SOM was responsible for the school's first structure designed in the International Style – the Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Located near 34th Street, on the east side of First Avenue, it was part of the NYU-Bellevue Medical Center. Construction began in 1949 and the first four SOM buildings were completed by 1956. To provide housing for the school's staff, a plan for NYU-Bellevue Title I

(later called Kips Bay Plaza) was issued in 1953. When the developer failed to obtain financing, Robert Moses invited William Zeckendorf to take over the project and he replaced S. J. Kessler & Sons with his own architect, I. M. Pei, in 1957. Located in full sight of the medical center, on the west side of First Avenue, this well-designed complex positioned Pei as a leading candidate to design University Village.[38]

By 1959 NYU had seven new buildings under construction. The *Architectural Record* enthusiastically reported: "New York University – largest in the nation – is matching its size with a building program that calls for thirty-five million dollars worth of construction in one year!"[39] Included were structures designed by Marcel Breuer, Harrison & Abramowitz, SOM, and Warner Burns, Toan & Lund. Harrison & Abramowitz were the architects responsible for designing the Loeb Student Center. This building's windowless north façade, facing Washington Square, would display a large aluminum relief by sculptor Rueben Nakian, donated by Allan D. and Kate S. Emile, future patrons of the *Bust of Sylvette* at University Village.[40]

Bust of Sylvette

At the center of University Village, near the southeast corner of the center plaza, stands Pablo Picasso's *Bust of Sylvette*. Thirty-six feet tall and purportedly weighing sixty tons, this colossal cubistic sculpture served a dual purpose – to decorate the lawn and to enhance the scheme's pinwheel character.

Outdoor sculpture has played an important role in New York City since the mid-nineteenth century. Most early examples were financed by private groups to embellish public squares and parks. Some, like bronze portraits of George Washington (Henry Kirke Brown, 1853-55) and Abraham Lincoln (Henry Kirke Brown, 1868) at Union Square, were intended to express patriotism and recall historic events, while others, including Central Park's *Angel of the Waters* (Emma Stebbins, 1868, also known as the Bethesda Fountain) served a symbolic purpose, representing common ideas and shared beliefs. Gradually war monuments and memorials began to dominate the public realm, particularly to honor the 25th anniversary of the end of the Civil War. Most were executed in a realistic style, with handsome stone pedestals, echoing the classical statuary of ancient Greece and Rome.

The *Bust of Sylvette*, however, belongs to a different tradition, one inspired by French modernism and the Art Deco style. At Rockefeller Center, a gilded statue of the Greek god

Prometheus (Paul Manship, 1934) was commissioned to adorn the sunken plaza. Located on axis with the promenade (called Channel Gardens) that connects with Fifth Avenue, it was conceived to draw people toward the lower shopping concourse and serve as a gleaming focal point or "eye catcher" within the limestone complex.[41] Other works at Rockefeller Center were notable for employing the modern materials, such as glass block, stainless steel, and aluminum.

This trend intensified after the Second World War, especially during the period when modern architectural aesthetics became part of the mainstream. Industrial materials transformed the appearance of new buildings and new planning concepts would open up Manhattan's grid with privately-owned plazas. Two pioneering examples, Lever House (SOM, 1950-52) and the Seagram Building (Mies, 1955-58), were planned to incorporate contemporary sculpture.[42] Though neither commission was executed, major pieces were included at One Chase Manhattan Plaza (SOM, 1956-60) in Lower Manhattan: a sunken circular garden by Noguchi (1961-64) and a *Group of Four Trees* (1972), a 42-foot-tall work by Jean Dubuffet.

Pei first developed an interest in modern art during the 1940s. He collected works by Abstract Expressionist painters, as well as sculptures by Dubuffet and Henry Moore. During a 1958 visit to Paris he met the Norwegian sculptor Carl Nesjar (b. 1920), who was returning home from the south of France where he recently introduced Picasso (1881-1973) to the technique called "naturebetong" or nature concrete.[43] Also known as "Betrograve," this sandblasting process was developed by architect Erling Viksjö (1910-71) and engineer Svere Jystad during the mid-1950s. Picasso commented: "I am intrigued with your concrete and want to do something with it."[44] Initially, he made four large drawings that were executed on the walls of the government building in Oslo, followed by a 1961 frieze in Barcelona. Pei told Nesjar:

> I have long thought about monumental sculpture in scale with modern architecture, and I recognize the possibilities of concrete technique. Here and now I am beginning a one-man crusade to have a monumental Picasso work for one of my projects.[45]

Pei wanted to install a Picasso, possibly from the Sylvette series, in the courtyard of Kips Bay Plaza but his client, Zeckendorf, was not convinced it was essential to the program. He reportedly told the architect: "I can give you fifty saplings or this piece of sculpture."[46] Pei ultimately chose trees. In Philadelphia, however, the city's Percent for Art Ordinance,

established in 1959, required that developers incorporate art into their projects. Early renderings for Society Hill illustrate two pieces: an equestrian statue set on a raised pedestal in the central plaza, and what appears to be Sylvette, on a lawn behind the apartment towers. Though neither would be executed, Pei reportedly had a $400,000 budget and instead commissioned bronze sculptures by Gaston Lachaise and Leonard Baskin.[47]

Sylvette David (b. 1934, later Lydia Corbett) was nineteen years old when she met Picasso in spring 1953. Approximately forty portraits of her in various media resulted, including the group of five busts that Nesjar viewed at the artist's Valluris studio, La Galliose, in 1962.[48] Fabricated with folded sheet metal and then painted, each piece was approximately two feet tall. In consultation with Nesjar, Picasso selected which would be most appropriate for enlargement and then produced a photo collage representing the view from Houston Street. Dated April 4, 1967 and October 17, 1967, the artist wrote: "I agree that Nesjar reproduce this sculpture."[49] A close examination of the collage, however, reveals that during the period between the two dates the sculpture's location was changed from the west side of the lawn, where it would have been visible from the intersection of Houston and Mercer Streets, to a more central location, opposite the entrance to 110 Bleecker Street.

In November 1967, while a retrospective devoted to Picasso's sculpture was being held at the Museum of Modern Art, NYU formally announced the commission. The model for Sylvette was part of the exhibition and Pei persuaded one of the museum's patrons, Allan D. and Kate S. Emil, to finance it.[50] Articles appeared in the *New York Times* and *Time* magazine which described the projected sculpture as "half as high and twice as sexy as the Great Sphinx of Egypt."[51] Alfred Barr, former MoMA director, forecast that it would be the "grandest sculpture in Manhattan . . . not to mention the tallest pony-tail hairdo in the whole world."[52] It would be the second monumental Picasso sculpture in the United States – the first being an untitled fifty-foot-tall work executed in Cor-Ten steel for the Chicago Civic Center (1964-66, now Daley Plaza).[53]

Nesjar's team worked on Sylvette for five months, from January to June 1968, taking twice the time estimated. He was assisted by two Norwegians, the carpenter Sigurd Fragure and the artist-writer Eric Hesselberg, who served on the crew of the Kon-Tiki expedition in 1947. The New York firm Wieskopf and Pickworth assisted with the structural engineering. It was Nesjar's twelfth collaboration with the Picasso. Nesjar commented:

> This is a collaboration or if you prefer, a translation . . . I'm like a conductor of an orchestra. The composer gives me a piece of music and then it's up to me to see what I can do with it.[54]

It was a unique relationship and Picasso's only criticism of Nesjar was that results were frequently "too perfect."[55]

Freed and Amberg coordinated the project and, according to Pei, spent nearly a year bringing it to fruition. Amberg briefly lived in University Village and worked closely with Nesjar. To prepare the site, a beam and slab foundation was formed, supported by steel beams that rise from the garage. On top of the base, one side of the plywood formwork was assembled, followed by the steel skeleton, consisting of reinforcement bars. The skeleton was then enclosed with a second set of boards to create a water-tight form that would be filled with crushed black basalt pebbles imported from Norway, as well as Hudson Valley traprock.[56] Next, the rock was gently vibrated to achieve maximum density. According to Amberg, Nesjar's team then drilled numerous ports that were used to inject the form with liquid concrete. This process was repeated several times until the concrete reached the top. After approximately six days, the boards were removed, revealing a smooth, joint-free surface. In the final stage, Nesjar marked the concrete with charcoal and wax crayon, making minor adjustments to the artist's original vision for reasons of scale or point of view. He remarked: "I must be the only person in the world who has corrected a Picasso."[57] Nesjar then used a sandblast nozzle to expose the dark rock beneath the surface, making her face, hair, and shoulders permanently visible.[58]

The *Bust of Sylvette* was dedicated at NYU's Tishman Auditorium on December 9, 1968. Neither Allan nor Kate Emil had attended NYU as students but during his speech he described their shared admiration for the school and the "work it does today." He also observed:

> Picasso is one of the most important artists of our time, and New York should have a major example of his work in this medium. I can't think of a better location for it than New York University, where it can serve education, art, and the public at large.[59]

Reception

University Village attracted considerable attention from the local media but only a few articles in national magazines. Initially, most writers focused on Pei's innovative use of exposed concrete. The *New York Herald Tribune* reported in April 1964 that the preliminary design would "yield architectural distinction rarely associated with even more costly buildings." As the project neared completion, the *New York Times* took a more neutral position; the complex was called "controversial," with detailed descriptions of the exoskeleton and the interior layouts. *Architectural Forum* published the most thoughtful and detailed essay in December 1966. Written by critic and photographer Cerwin Robinson, he examined the complex in terms of plan, technique, tenant amenities and neighborhood context. He concluded: "The three towers are among the least costly Pei has done. They are also among his best. New York has gained not only a triad of landmarks but clear proof that inexpensive housing can be distinguished architecture."[60] In *Fortune* magazine, Douglass Haskell featured the complex on a list of the ten best buildings of 1966, placing it under the category where architects engage in a "back-and-forth play between a showy sculptural architecture on the one hand and on the other the concept of a reserved grid."

University Village was honored with three professional awards. Under the category of residential work, it received a prize from the Concrete Industry Board of New York in December 1966, a Bard Award for excellence in design from the City Club of New York and a national honor award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA), both during May 1967.[61] And when the first *AIA Guide to NY* debuted in 1967, the complex was strongly praised:

> Of these three, nearly identical towers, the one closest to West Broadway is Mitchell-Lama middle income housing – undoubtedly the finest in the city, and much better than Pei's Kips Bay Plaza ... the result is exceptional for high-rise housing where one can, for a change, grasp the size of the individual apartments . . . from the north they appear as *the* logical and elegant termination of the progression of recently built, structures.[62]

The nearly complete towers, along with NYU's Weaver Hall, were likewise part of the AIA's 1967 exhibition of "outstanding architecture of the last 100 years" built in New York City.

A decade later, in 1977, *New York Times* architecture critic Paul Goldberger described the three towers as "dignified and sophisticated . . . In a city with hardly more than a handful of decent postwar apartment houses, these stand out. Pei's ability to bring rhythm and texture to a facade that is just a grid of concrete is absolutely superb."[63] Critic-cartographer John Taurnac commented in *Essential New York* (1979) that the towers were "Crisply designed [with an] attention to massing and detailing that many "luxury" houses ignore. The tenants get their money's worth, as do the passing pedestrians."[64] Architect-historian Robert A. M. Stern later praised the complex in his book *New York 1960*, calling it "animated, sculpturally vigorous yet human-scaled design." And in *Manhattan Skyscrapers*, a 1999 book devoted to mostly office buildings, Eric P. Nash praised University Village for exhibiting an "elegant synthesis of many strains of modernist design." Calling the complex a "fine composition," he observed that it displays a "kinetic sense of energy" in which "the flow of space is almost palpable."[65]

When Freed died in 2005, many writers paid tribute to his career, particularly Terence Riley, curator of architecture at the Museum of Modern Art. Among the various buildings he called out in the obituary in the *International Herald Tribune*, University Village was cited as being one of "the most refined examples of modern design in all of Manhattan."[66]

Subsequent history

University Village looks much as it did when NYU faculty began to occupy the school's two buildings during late 1966. Most of the cooperative apartments were sold by October 1965 and the owner-tenants began to occupy the third building in April 1967.[67] Both NYU buildings were renamed in 1974 to honor a major donor to the school, Julius Silver, class of 1922. Trained as a lawyer at Columbia University, for many years he advised Edwin Land of the Polaroid Corporation.[68] A free-standing metal plaque installed on the north side of the plaza acknowledges his substantial gifts to the school, as well as horizontal metal plaques attached the walls inside each building's arcade. Steel and chain-link fences have been added in various places to protect the lawns and keep pedestrians outside specific areas. The diagonal path, connecting the central plaza to Bleecker Street, is not original and probably was added during the 1970s or 1980s. Many of the free-standing lighting fixtures, except those near 505 LaGuardia

Place, date from the 1980s or later. Overall, the concrete exteriors are in a remarkably good state of repair. Some patching, however, is visible, particularly on the north facade of 505 LaGuardia Place.

Description

University Village is located in the southeast section of Greenwich Village on two lots bordered, in part, by LaGuardia Place, Bleecker Street, and Houston Street. The south half of the site has been raised to create a level platform for the three buildings. Beneath the buildings are two parking garages, reached by separate concrete entrance ramps on the north side of Houston Street. The east ramp, serving both NYU buildings, is located close to Greene Street. Painted steel tubular railings (likely from the 1980s) are attached to the top of the walls that flank the ramp. Along the top of the west wall is steel fencing. The west ramp, located between Wooster Street and LaGuardia Place, serves the 505 LaGuardia Place garage. Steel fencing is attached to the upper walls that enclose the west garage entrance. On the east side of the ramp is a sidewalk, railing, and single door for pedestrians.

Wooster Street, though closed to traffic, links Houston and Bleecker Streets. From Houston Street, a granite block paved road separates 110 Bleecker Street and 505 LaGuardia Place. This road turns east, passing the entrance of 110 Bleecker Street, and then north, passing 100 Bleecker Street, and then east again, bordering the **central plaza**. Planted with a grass, the level plaza is square in shape, with rounded corners. Adjoining the corners are arrow-shaped metal drains set into concrete. At the southeast corner of the lawn is the *Bust of Sylvette*, as well as a small brass plaque identifying the artist and donor. Concrete curbs curl into the granite road bed. Concrete bollards, mostly in good condition, are scattered around the sidewalk that adjoins the road. Along the north road bed and sidewalk is a low concrete bench with a slight cantilever on both sides that extends from the northwest corner of 100 Bleecker Street to the east side of the Wooster Street road bed. Toward the west end is a pair of flagpoles. The **north lawn** parallels Bleecker Street and extends east from the driveway to the eastern edge of the site. The closely-planted trees are likely to date from the time of construction. A diagonal concrete path, starting near the northwest corner of Silver Tower I, extends northeast through the north lawn, ending near the Bleecker Street sidewalk. This narrow path is flanked by non-historic chain-link fences. The **east lawn**, adjoining 100 Bleecker Street, extends south to a concrete path, from the site's

east boundary to the central plaza. Between this path and Houston Street is a **seating area** enclosed by a chain link fence featuring a broken spiral of concrete benches. At the southeast corner of the site, between the seating area and east garage ramp on Houston Street, is a **playground** enclosed with original concrete walls, featuring a concrete bench, ramp, and circular sandbox set into the ground. The **south central lawn**, adjoining 110 Bleecker Street, is bordered by concrete paths on the east and west, and to the south, on Houston Street.

South of 505 LaGuardia Place is a lush private garden, enclosed by a non-historic high steel fence. This garden, as well as the building's rear façade, is visible through the fence. Proceeding north from Houston Street, along the shaded path between the private garden and the "Time Landscape" (not part of this designation), there is wide **concrete staircase** with three metal railings that ascend east into a mews or passageway, passing 505 LaGuardia Place on the right (south). This passage has the only historic lighting fixtures in the complex – a pair of dark bronze poles with four glass globes. The rest of the lighting fixtures were probably installed during the 1980s. All feature slender steel poles with U-shaped supports that hold covered square-shaped down lights. Where there is grass, they are set on concrete cubes, the rest are bolted to the sidewalk. Along the north side of this passage is a low concrete bench that encloses a planting bed. Directly north of the stairs, the west end of the bench becomes the top of a concrete wall. Here, the raised historic metal numbers "505" are attached to the concrete wall. At the east end, the bench curves and meets a rectangular base on which a steel fence has been installed. From this bench, a sidewalk extends north along the west side of the former route of Wooster Street. Here, non-historic lighting fixtures and trees alternate. A high steel fence separates the sidewalk from the grass and a second row of trees, as well as a low concrete wall that separates the complex from the space used as the supermarket driveway. A chain-link fence is installed on top of this wall.

Adjoining the central plaza, to the east, south and west are **three 30-story apartment buildings**. Located near the center of the site, this trio rises in isolation and stands taller than the older buildings that immediately surround the site. Each tower is defined by grids of deeply-recessed windows executed with exposed concrete. Wider than deep, each projecting façade has four or eight windows, flanked on one side by a row of narrow windows, as well as a sheer wall of concrete divided into vertical panels. Each bay consists of two sections: the upper one incorporates a pair of sliding aluminum windows, and the smaller lower section, a ventilation

grille. At the ground story, the primary facades have deep arcades that lead to lobbies, and the secondary facades have large windows set above raised bases.

The exterior wall of the lobby of **505 LaGuardia Place** faces north and is set behind an arcade. There is a short step within each bay, except at the east end, which has been converted to a ramp. The cement pavement within the arcade is divided into squares. The lines that separate the squares are aligned with the columns. The step inside the two center bays has been painted bright yellow. The east and west walls of the arcade are faced with tan brick. On the west wall is the number "505" in raised digits. The ceiling incorporates a row of original recessed lighting fixtures, each aligned with the center of each bay. Enclosed with plate glass, the lobby is framed with brown-colored aluminum moldings. The two glass doors open inward and are located in a projecting pavilion flanked by concrete pillars with recessed plate glass windows on either side. A non-historic security camera is installed at the east end of the arcade on the upper wall.

The exterior wall of the lobbies of **100 and 110 Bleecker Street** are similar to 505 LaGuardia but are not identical, with larger sheets of plate glass to either side of the entrance pavilion. Horizontal metal strips have been added in various locations near the ground to protect the glass. To the right of the entrance, toward the south and west ends, the walls are faced with tan brick. Attached to these walls are the original raised numerals that indicate the building's address "100" and "110," as well as a circa 1970s metal plaque indicating "SILVER TOWERS, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY." The shallow ramps that enter through the arcade are not original and probably replaced a single step. Most of the lighting fixtures in these arcades are not original, as are the low granite benches on either end. Both buildings have non-historic emergency lights, aluminum tubes, and signs attached to the various secondary facades.

Report researched and written by
Matthew A. Postal
Research Department

[1] Thomas J. Frusciano and Marilyn H. Petit, *New York University and the City: An Illustrated History* (Rutgers University Press, 1997). Based on English medieval precedents, the building contained a three-story chapel, as well as classrooms and spaces leased to outside tenants. Also see "University Village: Historical Background Report," prepared by Higgins Quaesbarth & Partners, LLC for New York University, 2007, as well as "New York University's University Village: Preservation and Regeneration," submitted to New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, prepared for New York University by Grimshaw in association with Toshiko Mori Architect and the Olin Partnership, c. 2008.

[2] 100 Washington Square East was, initially, was mostly leased to the American Book Company.

[3] In 1928-29, a building for the School of Education was erected at the northwest corner of Greene and 4th Streets. Designed by the prominent architect James Gamble Rogers, it was hoped that the 12-story neo-Gothic structure would "set a standard for the University's architecture at Washington Square." See "NYU Authorizes 12-Story Building," *New York Times*, August 2, 1928, 8.

[4] NYU acquired several sites on or close to Washington Square, including property leased from Sailors' Snug Harbor and "Genius Row," a group of low-rise structures along Washington Square South that was subsequently demolished. Last viewed at http://www.nyu.edu/library/bobst/research/arch/175/pages/snug.htm.

[5] NYU Seeks to Add a Wide Area Northeast of Washington Square, *New York Times*, January 11, 1949, 1.

[6] "Title 1 Developments: Washington Square South Title 1 and Washington Square Southeast Title 1,"in *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*, edited by Hilary Balon and Kenneth T. Jackson, (W. W. Norton, 2007), 244-249, also see Ballon, "Robert Moses and Urban Renewal: The Title 1 Program," 94-115.

[7] Designed by architect and planner Paul Lester Weiner (1895-1968), in association with S. J. Kessler & Sons, the first buildings were completed in 1959 and 1960. Faced in multi-colored glazed brick, both 600-foot-long structures recall the Unité d'Habitation in Marseilles, as well as other works by Le Corbusier, who Weiner collaborated with as a member of the Town Planning Associates in Latin America during the 1940s.

[8] "NYU Ask to Buy Village Project," *New York Times*, January 22, 1960, 1.

[9] "NYU Gets Part of Village Site," *New York Times*, September 16, 1960, 63.C

[10] The design of this building would need to be approved by the Housing and Redevelopment Board, successor to the Committee on Slum Clearance in 1960. There are currently 101 examples of this type of residence in New York City. Last viewed at http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/apartment/mitchell-lama.shtml.

[11] Memo from George Baughman, September 27, 1960, Roberto Collection, NYU Archives, box 18.

[12] Letter from Leonard to Baughman, November 4, 1960, NYU Archives, box.

[13] "Façade of Building Forms Structural Support for High-Rise Apartments," *New York Times*, April 23, 1961, 449.

[14] Carter Wiseman, *The Architecture of I. M. Pei* (Thames & Hudson, 1990), 53.

[15] Letters, Roberto Collection, NYU Archives, February 23, 1961 and December 21, 1960.

[16] Wiseman, 69.

[17] Moore graduated from Harvard in 1949 and worked for Pei most of his career. For a brief period, he was associated with the Italian architect and designer Gio Ponti. In 1968 he received the Bard Award for consulting on Paley Park. John A. Pruyn served as the project's associate architect.

[18] Minutes of Meeting with Housing & Redevelopment Board, December 22, 1960.

[19] Minutes of Meeting, January 9, 1961.

[20] Freed letter to Hopkins, March 13, 1964, Pei Cobb Freed Archive.

[21] Wiseman, 53.

[22] Pei, quoted in "He Loves Beautiful Things," *New York Times*, ?

[23] Last viewed at http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/artist_work_md_51_3.html. It should be noted that during 1958-62 Giacometti was working on an unexecuted sculpture for Chase Manhattan Plaza in New York. In addition, a large exhibition of the sculptor's work was presented at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D. C. during 1963.

[24] In 2000, Pei said that he learned "a lot" about how to make housing "exciting and affordable" from Mies. See Gero Van Boehm, *Conversations with I. M. Pei* (2000).

[25] Eric P. Nash, *Manhattan Skyscrapers* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), 119.

[26] American architects and engineers first began to recognize the value of reinforced concrete in the early twentieth century. Not only were these structures fireproof but they could be erected quickly and at a lower cost than conventional buildings. Consequently, most early examples were warehouses and factories, followed by public housing. In such instances, the concrete was rarely exposed, covered by brick facing or paint. Significant examples are found in Brooklyn's DUMBO Historic District, which has an important collection of early reinforced concrete warehouses, as well as in the Williamburgh Houses (1934-36, a designated New York City Landmark), a publicly-sponsored housing project, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1956-59, a designated New York City Landmark and Interior).

[27] Robert Ivy interview with I.M. Pei, 2004, last viewed at http://archrecord.construction.com.

[28] Edward L. Friedman, "Cast-in-Place Technique Restudied," *Progressive Architecture* (April 1960), 160.

[29] Aldo Cossutta,"From Precast Concrete to Integral Architecture," *Progressive Architecture* (April 1966), 196.

[30] Friedman, 165.

[31] They also resemble the individual arcades that open onto the main plaza of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (various architects, 1962-66). Exposed cast-in-place concrete fell from favor during the 1970s. Though some architects like Paul Rudolph at Tracy Towers (1972) in Bronx continued to explore the material's structural and aesthetic potential, visible surface deterioration in older buildings and rising costs encouraged contractors to employ traditional curtain wall techniques, enclosing buildings with precast concrete panels, but more often brick, stone and glass.

[32] NB-33/64, New York City Department of Buildings, approved March 22, 1967.

[33] *NYU and the City*, 212.

[34] "Approval for University Village," *The Villager*, November 12, 1964.

[35] Tishman was the contractor for all three buildings though it did not sign the $6.7 million contract with the New York State Dormitory Authority to erect the NYU apartments until December 1964. See "Housing Contract Let For State University," *New York Times*, December 16, 1964, 74.

[36] "Precision is Key to Concrete Pad," *New York Times*, August 30, 1964, R6.

[37] "A University Builds," *NYU Notebook*, vol. 5, no 1 (September 1961), 2.

[38] During the next decade, Pei's firm worked for many American universities, including the University of Hawaii (1963), MIT (1959-64), and the State University of New York at Fredonia (1962-68).

39. "College Buildings: NYU, Nation's Largest University Constructing Seven Buildings," *Architectural Record* (September 1959), 186.

[40] Margot Gayle and Michele Cohen, *Art Commission and Municipal Art Society Guide to Manhattan's Outdoor Sculpture* (Prentice Hall, 1988), 77.

[41] Penelope Curtis, "The Modern eye-catcher: Mies van der Rohe and Sculpture" in *Architectural Research Quarterly* (2003), 7, 361-70.

[42] SOM architect Gordon Bunshaft asked Isamu Noguchi to design a raised sculpture garden for Lever's interior courtyard but due to budget constraints and personal issues, none of the works were realized. At the Seagram Building, Mies hoped to install a large sculpture in the deep plaza, but even offers from such prominent artists as Picasso and Constantin Brancusi were not carried out.

[43] Nesjar was quite familiar with New York City. During his teenage years he lived in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn and Staten Island. He briefly studied at the Pratt Institute (1936-38), as well as at Columbia University (1946-48). See http://askart.com and Sally Fairweather, *Picasso's Concrete Sculptures* (Hudson Hills Press, 1982), 63.

[44] Fairweather, 27.

[45] Fairweather, 111.

[46] Wiseman

[47] "One Percent for Art," *Time*, July 13, 1962, last viewed online at http://time.com.

[48] Sylvette has never visited New York to view the sculpture. In 2008, she wrote: "Although I have not yet seen the sculpture myself, I have several photographs of my daughter standing at its foot, and it is clearly a remarkable structure in a unique setting." See "A Picasso Muse Wants to Protect Pei Towers," viewed at http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com on June 24, 2008.

[49] "A Picasso Will Rise 36 Feet Above Bleecker Street," *New York Times,* November 17, 1967, 49.

[50] Fairweather, 112. The Emils donated a major Picasso, Three Women at the Spring (1921), to the museum in 1952. Most, if not all, of Picasso's large concrete sculptures should also be considered a gift of the artist. As was the case in Chicago, he donated the image and concept and a third party was responsible for covering the expense of execution. Though most sources identify the Emils as the donor, in a 1976 article devoted to public sculpture NYU professor Howard Conant rightfully credits the artist who allowed Pei and NYU to use his work See Howard Conant, "High Art or Cultural Shrubbery?," *Leonardo*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Winter 1976), 33-35.

[51] "Sylvette at NYU," *Time*, November 24, 1967, viewed online at http://time.com.

[52] Barr, letter to Emil, November 19, 1967, Allan D. and Kate S. Emil papers, 1967-1977, Archives of American Art, viewed on microfilm.

[53] Financed by three private foundations, the Picasso sculpture in Chicago was dedicated in August 1967, several months before the NYU announcement. See "Chicago Picasso," last viewed at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_Picasso.

[54] "Picasso Trusts His Right Arm," *New York Times*, January 30, 1968, 37.

[55] "A Prestressed, Post-Tensioned Picasso," *Concrete Construction Magazine*, October 1, 1969, viewed online.

[56] Fairweather, 115.

[57] "A 60-Ton Concrete Picasso Is Dedicated at N.Y.U.," *New York Times*, December 10, 1968, 49.

[58] Ted Amberg, e-mail to author, August 11, 2008.

[59] "NYU Receives Giant Picasso; Work to Rise on Outdoor Site, *New York University Alumni News*, December 1967, 1.

[60] Architectural Review

[61] Awards

[62] AIA Guide to New York City

[63] Paul Goldberger, The City Observed

[64] John Tauranac, *Essential New York: Guide to the History and Architecture of Manhattan's Important Buildings, Parks and Bridges* (Holt Rinehart & Wilson, 1979).

[65] Stern, *New York 1960.* Nash, *Manhattan Skyscrapers.*

[66] "Obituary: James Ingo Freed," *International Herald Tribune,* December 19, 2005, last viewed online at iht.com.

[67] "Washington Square Co-op Begins Receiving Tenants," *New York Times*, April 16, 1967, R18.

[68] "NYU Gets $150 Million Gift to Help Lure Top Professors," *New York Times*, February 5, 2005.