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REFERENCE

This article condenses conversat the author had with the award recipients.

The [National Associates Committ](#) is celebrating its 15th birthday thi year.

- › Christopher Coe, AIA, is a princ at [Gruen Associates](#), Los Angele: Prior to join Gruen, he was managing director and director of design at Arquitectonica.
- › Keith Moskow, AIA, is principal at [Moskow Architects](#), Boston.
- › George Thrush, FAIA, is the director of the [School of Architect at Northeastern University](#), Bosto

Ten Years Later: The Young Architects Award Recipients

Where are the 1996 recipients now?

by Tracy Ostroff

Summary: *AIArchitect* checked in with three practitioners who were among the first recipients of the Young Architects Award. Christopher Coe, AIA, of California; and Keith Moskow, AIA, and George Thrush, FAIA, both from Boston, advise today's young architects to define for themselves what it means to be an architect and revisit the passion that guided them to the profession in the beginning.



What were you doing when you received the award?

Coe: I helped open Richard Meier's Los Angeles office and worked on the Getty Commission all through the design phase. Then I started my own practice and got the award just as I was growing the practice. We had a house in *Architectural Digest* and were doing a lot of entertainment-related projects and some retail. You get to a certain point in your career and age when ownership is a great opportunity. [My work](#) is now a good balance of institutional/public and also private developer work.

Moskow: I won the first Sustainable Design Award from the Boston Society of Architects for the Conservation Law Foundation in Boston.

The intent was to do a sustainable project that did all the right things for the environment and pay itself back. That is something that we have followed through on because it is work that we truly believe in doing.

Thrush: I was working on [speculative urban design proposals](#), attempting to influence the city and the region in an era when there was not a whole lot of good quality planning being done. The national award confirmed for me that this was something I should continue to work on to bridge the space between the university and the practical world. What's changed in the last 10 years is that I am now much more interested in how to affect urban design



through private-sector operations.



What is the most exciting and challenging aspect of practice?

Coe: You have to have patience and know-how to create a building, literally, from a huge collaborative effort with lots of constraints: time, money, contextual issues. You have to learn how to be a conductor.

Moskow: Our current most exciting and challenging project is [the 9/11 memorial for Logan Airport](#). To expand as architects, we put together the Houses of Martha's Vineyard, a survey of 24 projects built over the last 20-plus years on the island. Now we're working on a book on the architecture of environmental organizations' headquarters, many of which practice what they preach.

Thrush: What has been helping to direct me in the last 10 years is precisely that this is a hard problem to solve: How do you create a network of public spaces that enhance the quality of life in the region and make the city more legible? The challenges—the things that impede that kind of thinking—often create the fodder for architectural innovation.

Identify what clearly means the most to you and just pursue that with absolutely unrelenting passion.



What advice do you have for young architects?

Coe: Be completely focused about what your interests are and seek out everybody and everything that can feed that interest. Identify clearly what means the most to you and pursue that with absolutely unrelenting passion. The return will come.

Moskow: Keep an open mind, keep thinking holistically, and know that there are going to be ups and downs. Keep thinking about why you went into architecture in the first place. Each year, we do at least one [theoretical project](#) outside of competitions. We feed what we learn from these projects back into our paid work.

Thrush: We're asked to be generalists so much that it is easy for a young person to postpone getting into greater depth in one particular area. The earlier you are called upon to articulate what you are about as an architect, and being able to defend that argument—even if you end up changing it later—is a good thing.

