

CITIZEN AND ARTIST

Architect and Educator Sidney Robinson Emphasizes How Architect and Community Work Together in Scholarship Award Criteria



Sidney Robinson

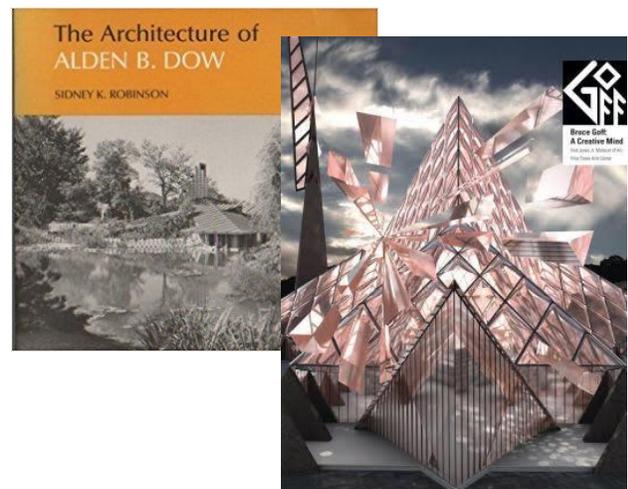
Architect and educator Sidney Robinson reminds us that the creativity of architects is based in the community in which they work. Awareness of that combination is the primary criterion for the Richard M. and Sidney K. Robinson scholarship for undergraduate architecture students at the University of Michigan. The Michigan Architectural Foundation (MAF) administers the scholarship fund, reviews applicants, and helps select the winner.

Sidney Robinson's recognition how architect and community work together is tribute to his father Richard's four-decade architectural practice in Ann Arbor. The emphasis on the dual role of citizen and artist directs the attention of aspiring young architects to the fact that their work will always take place in a context of community, economy, and culture. Their individual imagination, although seemingly isolated in the academic setting, will depend on other people to support, inform, and inspire their architecture.

Richard was a graduate of the College of Architecture at University of Michigan, and Sidney is a graduate of the Rackham School of Graduate Studies (ArchD) and Columbia University (BArch). After working as a junior designer at the office of architect Alden Dow in Midland, Sidney began his teaching career at Iowa State University, then taught at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. He has written books and articles on architects Wright, Dow, and Bruce Goff; on preservation; and on the English aesthetic The Picturesque.

Sidney has lived in Goff's Ford house (1949-50) since 1986 and cites his favorite example of architecture in Michigan to be Dow's home and studio. The relation of architecture and landscape he saw there was the stimulus to write on the Picturesque.

Right: Sidney Robinson has authored and co-authored several books on architecture and architects, including Alden B. Dow and Bruce Goff.



Robinson believes that the responsibility of the citizen begins in the immediate community where the architect strengthens and participates in the ideal of a civil society. That responsibility is also exercised in the larger society to which the University of Michigan's College of Architecture can claim significant contribution through the example of Raul Wallenberg. Wallenberg was an architectural classmate of Richard Robinson; Robinson visited Wallenberg's family in Stockholm in 1937. After World War II, Richard then returned to Ann Arbor where his professional career warranted the obituary characterization of "architect and humanitarian."

The Robinson Scholarship is intended to call students' attention to the challenge and reward of working creativity and citizenship together, as they pursue the many possible careers that their architectural education prepares them to contribute as citizens and artists.



Above: the home and studio Alden Dow designed for himself – Sidney Robinson's favorite Michigan architecture.



Richard Robinson

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