Choice and the American Architecture Competition

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“Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide.”
Napoleon Bonaparte

An architecture competition is a process. It is a complex process that requires an interdependent, multivalent series of linear and lateral decisions that culminate in one final decision. Most often, a final choice reached by consensus amongst an appointed committee. ¹

How are these decisions arrived at and why? Who makes these choices? Who makes the decisions about who will make the decisions?

The investigation and analysis of choice is currently a popular topic in the U.S. Fascinating academic studies crossing multiple disciplines - mathematics, social science, behavioral science, economics and psychology - have examined how and why Americans make the decisions that they do at all scales: from choosing which type of chocolate to eat, which medical treatment to undergo to which individual life insurance plan to purchase. ²

I am not an expert in the formal study of choice. I am a practitioner in the field of architecture competitions and have therefore approached this contribution to the 5th International Conference on Competitions as a thought piece. This essay is intended as a reflection on how the construct of the American architecture competition, understood as a complex, multi-layered process might benefit from an understanding of the insights of contemporary scholarly research on how people make choices.

My focus on American architecture competitions is deliberate. Place is central to the way in which choice and decision-making can be understood. Architecture competitions do not exist in cultural or societal vacuums. The country within which an architecture competition takes place, be it a public or private venture, informs the rules, regulations, procedures, protocols, process, input and outcome of that competition. In fact, the act of making a decision, almost any decision, large or small, important or irrelevant is influenced by the cultural background and cultural context of the chooser. ³

The advantages and disadvantages of running architecture competitions has been a subject of discourse since the alleged first architecture contest for the Acropolis at Athens. The very nature of a competitive selection process, especially one for something as important as a building provokes a difference of opinions. While this paper does not address the arguments for or against architecture competitions, a speedy zip through the history of the American architecture competition reveals the evolution of the process has been driven in part by Americans waxing and waning enthusiasm for architecture, in part by the tendentious conversation surrounding the construct and in part by our cultural attitudes surrounding choice.
“Understand that the right to choose your own path is a sacred privilege. Use it. Dwell in possibility.”

Oprah Winfrey

For Americans, individual freedom of choice is considered a basic right that is written into the Declaration of Independence, our Constitution and The Bill of Rights. Freedom of choice is a part of our daily lives from early childhood on. Independence is a core American value. When faced with decisions, as individualists, Americans tend to privilege “I” over “we”. Collectivists, raised with a cultural emphasis on family, community or nation approach choice in the polar opposite fashion and tend to honor “we” over “I.”

Sheena Iyengar, Professor of Business at Columbia Business School, in her book “The Art of Choosing” explores how different cultures perceive choice and the desire for choice. Iyengar cites the work of social psychologist Geert Hofstede to support the belief that Americans are fiercely individualistic. Hofstede collected data from over 70 countries through IBM employees around the world establishing an expansive system for ranking a country’s level of individualism. According to this 1980 study, which has been periodically updated, the United States is indeed the most individualistic country in the world.

A telling experiment conducted by Iyengar that demonstrates this cultural difference in the desire for choice, compared 100 American and Japanese college students studying in Kyoto who were asked to list all the areas of their lives where they liked having choice on the front of a piece of paper and those aspects of life which they would prefer to be told what to do rather than have to make their own choice on the back of the same paper.

“The front sides of the Americans’ pages were often completely filled with answers such as “my job,” “where I live,” and “who I vote for.” In fact, many people’s lists were so long that they were forced to squeeze answers into the margins of the page. In contrast, the backs, without exception, were either completely blank or contained only a single item, most commonly “when I die” or “when my loved ones die.” The Americans, in other words, expressed a nearly limitless desire for choice in every dimension of their lives. The Japanese showed a very different pattern of results, with not a single one wishing to have choice all or nearly all of the time. Comparing responses between the two, Americans desired personal choice in four times as many domains of life as did the Japanese.” (Iyengar, 2010)

From the founding of America in 1776, the history and development of architecture competitions in the U.S. has been directly affected by our individualistic ideology and cultural attitudes towards freedom of choice. The second official architecture competition in America set the stage. Launched in 1792 at the request of Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, the broad terms of this national competition promised to: “award $500 and a city lot to whoever produced the “most approved plan” for the U.S. Capitol Building.” (Landau, 1994) Seventeen plans were submitted but none were awarded the commission. Long after the competition deadline had passed, the competition organizers, three government Commissioners, appointed by President George Washington reviewed plans authored by William Thornton. Thornton was a known quantity as the winner of America’s first recorded architecture competition, held in Philadelphia three years prior (1789) by the Philadelphia Library Company.

Thornton won the commission for the U.S. Capitol, construction began in 1793 but in 1803, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, considered the first professional architect and engineer to work in America took over, tweaking the design and overseeing the buildings construction.

5th International Conference on Competitions 2014 Delft
The birth of the American architecture competition is discussed in depth in Sarah Bradford Landau’s essay, *Coming to Terms: Architecture Competitions in America and the Emerging Profession, 1789 to 1922*. Landau credits these first two architecture competitions as promoting an appreciation of design and architecture in the U.S. and remarks on how American ideology, here the notion of freedom of speech attributed to the development of competition practices.

“Lacking firm evidence, we can only surmise that Jefferson associated the competition procedure with the democratic ideals of the new Republic….By the same token, the constitutionally guaranteed right of free speech surely encouraged criticism of the process from its outset. Latrobe believed it “defeated its own end” by attracting only the worst element and keeping out “regularly educated” professionals “who understand their business too well not to know that a picture is not a design…” (Landau, 1994)  

Before and during America’s Civil War, architecture competitions proliferated despite dissolute rules and regulations. Often the buildings that resulted were of unsanctioned mixed authorship. All too frequently a winner would be selected for their conceptual design, given the commission and then be asked to blend elements from the less fortunate entries into the final edifice.

Following the Civil War “standards of fair practice” were instituted when in 1867 the American Institute of Architects, (the professional organization for licensed architects in the United States –founded in 1857 and hereto referred to as the AIA), issued guidelines for architecture competitions that included recommendations on what sort of program and site information should be provided to participants and what should be considered a sufficient time frame for submission preparation. The AIA also advocated for compensation for design work done in the course of the competition. A version of these recommendations was ratified by the AIA as Competition Code in 1900. Not much variation in competition process or competition administration occurred throughout the 20th century in the U.S. and I make no attempt to discuss the evolution of the practice here.

Over the last one hundred years, several prominent regional architecture competitions have received local celebrity, yet very few competitions have infiltrated our national consciousness – entering into typical household conversations across the nation and across socioeconomic divides. Architecture in the U.S. has historically been perceived as an elitist affair and it is the rare building that captures the American public’s attention.

One of the best known American architecture competitions was held in 1922, when the publishers of The Chicago Tribune, Robert R. McCormick and Joseph Patterson held an open and invited contest seeking; “the worlds most beautiful office building.” The Tribune staged an enormous marketing effort around the competition in order to demonstrate its dedication to “public education and enlightenment.” This publicity resulted in worldwide attention and the winning scheme, designed by Raymond Hood and John Mead Howells is now a beloved icon.

The two relatively recent American architecture competitions that captured the nations (and the world’s) full attention were not for buildings but for memorials: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, recognizing those that lost their lives serving in the U.S. military during the Vietnam War, and The World Trade Center Site Memorial that “remembers and honors all loss of life on September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993.”

It stands to reason that these competitions received so much attention as the program of a Memorial addresses emotional issues centered around patriotism, nationalism, bravery, grief and mourning. It is also no surprise that both competitions were surrounded by highly
publicized controversy and differing opinions about the “appropriateness” of the winning designs.

The 1981 competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was a national contest open to any U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older. A one-stage competition, the winning scheme, designed by Maya Lin, a 21-year old architecture student at the time, was chosen over 1,400 entries. At the time of the competition, Lin’s winning design, a monolithic black granite wall inscribed with the names of over 58,200 fallen soldiers, divided the nation in a bitter battle over its meaning and suitability. Prominently sited between the Lincoln and Washington monuments on the National Mall in Washington D.C., the abstract memorial kicked off America’s culture wars of the 1980’s. This is now difficult to imagine, as today the Memorial is a national treasure, known as “the greatest memorial of modern times – the most beautiful, the most heart-wrenching, the most subtle, and the most powerful.”(Goldberger, 2012)

Twenty-one years later, Maya Lin served as a juror for what was probably the most keenly observed architecture competition of all time, The World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition. In 2003, following closely upon the remarkably complex, politically loaded and emotionally charged architecture competition administered by The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) for a master plan for Ground Zero, was the international two-stage competition for the WTC Memorial. The largest response to an open architecture competition ever, 5,201 submissions from 63 countries and 49 states were received. The winning design by Michael Arad and Peter Walker bears a wonderful relationship to Lin’s precedent setting Memorial.

Today, in 2014, the U.S. does not have enforceable regulations for architecture competitions. This is due in part to the Federal Trade Commission’s concern that regulation of design competitions would cause a “restraint of trade.” Professional guidelines for competition organization and execution do exist. With no legal standing and framed as recommendations, The Handbook of Architectural Design Competitions, first published in 1988 was comprehensively revised in 2010. This rewrite was deemed necessary due to the various different “models and structural systems” (AIA, 2010) for architecture competitions that have cropped up in the last ten years.

The Handbook Preface states: “While not wholly outdated, that document (previous edition) needed to be revised in view of the proliferation of the new varieties of competition types and because competitions have become more visible and common.” (AIA, 2010)

The Handbook identifies nine competition formats:

One And Two Stage Competitions
Developer/Architect Competitions
Design/Build Competitions
RFQ Competition
Interviews With Design Concepts
International Union Of Architects (UIA) Competition
Hypothetical
Competition Limited To Students

These formats may be combined with three categories of eligibility: open, limited and invited.

Alternative formats exist such as “hybrid” competitions that hark back to competitions of the early 20th century, combining an invited shortlist with an open call. A relatively recent example was held in upstate New York in 2009, titled From the Ground Up: Innovative Green Homes. Run by Syracuse University School of Architecture, the two-stage competition sought designs for inexpensive, sustainable and small single-family homes through an open call.
call for three teams to compete with four pre-selected firms.  

Multiple site competitions are increasing in popularity, such as the National Mall Design Competition held in Washington D.C., September 2011 through May 2012. Sponsored by the Trust for the National Mall, this was a three-stage competition to select a design team(s) to redesign three different sites included within the National Mall Plan. The competition format as described on the Trust for the National Mall website states: “The process includes (1) portfolio evaluations to select up to eight potential lead designers for each site, (2) team interviews to select up to five potential design teams for each site, and (3) a design competition to select a design for each site.”

Rebuild by Design: Hurricane Sandy Regional Planning and Design Competition launched June 2013 by the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force is a multiple-stage, multiple-site, multiple-aspiration competition.

“The goal of the competition is two-fold: to promote innovation by developing regionally-scalable but locally contextual solutions that increase resilience in the region, and to implement selected proposals with both public and private funding dedicated to the effort. Design Solutions are expected to range in scope and scale—from large-scale urban and multi-functional green infrastructure, to small-scale distributed flood protection measures and resilient residential structures, for example. The competition process will also strengthen our understanding of regional interdependencies, fostering coordination and resilience both at the local level and across the United States.”

The competition, eligible to teams that include a minimum of professionals in at least three of the following disciplines: infrastructure engineering, landscape design, urban design, architecture, land-use planning, industrial design, community engagement and communications design, Rebuild by Design is a four-stage competition that includes a comprehensive planning phase and community/partner engagement.

In addition to the independent competitions described above, the General Services Administration (GSA), a federal agency and America’s biggest landlord and developer runs its own architect selection/procurement program. Known as the Design Excellence Program, the format follows a Request For Qualifications followed by a design concept competition. Recently, The U.S. Bureau of Overseas Buildings and Operations (OBO) instituted a similar Design Excellence Program under the auspices of Secretary of State Hilary Clinton. These programs have influenced other civic procurement methodologies. Most notably, the City of New York Design + Construction Excellence instituted in 2006 under the leadership of Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s administration centers on “Quality-Based Selection” of architects through an RFQ process that selects a pool of firms to be considered for a diverse array of projects.

The goals and objectives of an architecture competition are different from the goals of a building project. There may be a myriad number of layered, sometimes conflicting goals, objectives and agendas for running an architecture competition.

In her book Deciding About Design Quality; Value Judgements And Decision Making In The Selection Of Architects By Public Clients Under European Tendering Regulations Professor Leentje Volker points out:

“The selection of an architect is merely one of the several purposes of design competitions. Competitions can have educational purposes, (e.g. educating students, challenging ‘conventional wisdom’), political reasons (e.g. enlarging support, marketing a project,
running architecture politics, coordinating different fields of interests), cultural aims, (e.g. creating a dialogue on design, contributing to the cultural dimension of the built environment, expanding the boundaries of design), and economical reasons (e.g. increasing competition, gaining insight in competences or assuring quality through jury assessment).” (Volker, 2010)

Why run an architecture competition at all? What is the client motivation or incentive for sponsoring a competition? What will be the added value?

In the course of my research for this paper, I frequently came across discussion of what is considered a seminal breakthrough in the analysis of choice, an experiment known as the “Jam Study” conducted by psychologists Sheena Iyengar and Mark Lepper. In short, the experiment compared two sets of shoppers in a high-end supermarket who were invited to receive a $1 coupon off any gourmet jam in the store if they took a taste of jam samples that were laid out on display. The first set of shoppers were given a choice of twenty-four different jams to sample, while the second set of shoppers were given a choice of only six jam varieties to taste-test. While the larger display of jam attracted more testers, the researchers were surprised to learn that those who had been offered twenty-four choices were one-tenth less likely to purchase any jam as those who had been offered six sample choices.

The ramifications of this study and subsequent work have established that more options do not always guarantee a better outcome. The understanding that offering fewer, clearer choices will result in more chances of a purchase has led to dramatic changes to the way many industries now do business. The notion of less is more is an important one but what is equally elucidating about the “Jam Study” is how it establishes the clear power of the experiment’s curators to influence the buyer.

These curators are described as “choice architects,” by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein in their hugely influential bestseller, “Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness.” Choice architects are defined as the persons with “the responsibility for organizing the context in which people make decisions.” Choice architects create choice architecture - the space within which outcomes can be influenced by the way in which possibilities and choices are presented.

For instance, the order in which we encounter options has the power to affect how and what we choose. “We tend to better remember the first and last options in a group, so rather than focus on the merits of each alternative, we may be influenced primarily by the position in which it appeared.” (Iyengar, 2010)

Frequently choice architects are not visible or even tangible to those for whom they have structured a decision-making process. The design of voting ballots may bias which candidates get the most votes, map design has the power to steer us towards a particular direction or travel route and menu design can manipulate us into choosing the more expensive items on offer at a restaurant.

The food industry and its stakeholders in particular spend enormous resources on studying how environments can be designed to influence people’s choices. In America’s fight against obesity, much research has been done on how to get children in a lunchroom to choose healthier options, salads and fruit over potato chips and cake. Some interior design solutions that have been remarkably successful seem quite obvious, such as relocating vending machines with unhealthy snacks away from the cafeteria or manipulating cafeteria traffic patterns in order to force students to move past a salad bar or fruit stand to get to the cash wrap.

People have their own inherent, internal systems for making decisions. These decision-making capabilities are aligned with individual biases, habits, experience and the complexity
of the choice. “People adopt different strategies for making choices depending on the size and complexity of the available options.”

The frequency that one is faced with making particular decisions affects the decision-making process as does the reaction or response once the decision has been made. These two tenets go hand in hand as the more often a particular type of decision has to be made; the more opportunity there is to gather feedback. Our understanding of the features or elements of complex options directly affects the quantity of choice that we can handle. People have the ability to hone in on specific elements of an option, thereby creating a grouping of options that exhibit that particular element. This allows the elimination of the options lacking that characteristic.

Iyengar posits that complex choices require expertise, whether acquired personally or sought from outside counsel. Deep knowledge of a particular topic allows options to be simplified, prioritized and categorized. Think of the different ways a car can be perceived depending on a person’s level of knowledge - in broad terms as “a car,” “a sports car,” or in specific detail as a “Ferrari Enzo with a V12 engine.” (Iyengar, 2010) “Developing expertise in a given domain is one remedy for coping with a multitude of choice. Expertise enables people to understand options on a more granular level, as the sum of their characteristics rather than as distinct and indivisible items.” (Iyengar, 2010)

Expertise allows for interpretation of options according to their attributes, which then translates into the capability to recognize patterns, classify categories and therefore grapple intelligently with a wider set of options. If expertise can be applied to a set of choices, the number of options can be reduced to a manageable size. (Iyengar, 2010)

The obvious question that follows this line of investigation is how do people make the best possible choice in an area they have no expertise? Iyengar advises taking advantage of those with the expertise. Thaler and Sunstein take this a step further and advocate for the creation of “choice architecture” that will assist people in making better choices about their lives – the thesis of their book Nudge.

The framework and process of the architecture competition is a choice architecture. There is of course the added caveat that the choice architecture must be equitable, objective and transparent. Kristian Kreiner, Professor at Copenhagen Business School, proposes that the architecture competition be understood as a social technology.

“It is a technology for picking a winner in a competition for primacy. The fact that we need a carefully designed ‘technology’ for accomplishing this task is an indication of its complexity. Not only must the technology ensure that there is something attractive to choose between; it must also ensure that the choice of the winner is legitimate and that the ‘transaction costs’ in terms of time and effort are not prohibitively high.” (Kreiner, 2010)

Architecture competitions are decipherable as a social technology. They are a social technology that utilizes a choice architecture. The more complex the competition, the more the choice architecture must be explicit. The choice architecture of an architecture competition is different from the choice architecture required to design a building. This is a critical distinction.

In the broadest possible sense, four major elements make a building: site, program, design, resources. Two of these four ingredients, site and program, are usually established in an American architecture competition, but not always. Competition sponsors (clients) may sometimes be looking for fresh program ideas, other clients might have a notion of the building program but an as yet to be determined site. A budget may also be provided in a competition brief, again not always. But the main element that is always absent, intentionally left out, is the buildings design – the architect’s act of invention.
The framework for the choice architecture driving a building’s design must be embedded in a competition brief as part of the architecture competition process, but the decisions to be made throughout an architecture competition do not mirror those to be confronted in a typical client/architect design process.

Coming full circle, the initial task of a competition’s choice architect in the U.S. begins with advising a sponsor (client) whether or not running a competition is desirable or advisable. In the States this is then followed by a decision about the format, structure, eligibility guidelines, timeline and content of the competition.

“We make our decisions, and then our decisions turn around and make us.”

F.W. Boreham

Why run an architecture competition at all? What is the client’s incentive? An incentive, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary is “a thing that motivates or encourages someone to do something.” In the study of economics, remunerative incentives, which involve financial reward, are the incentives most closely examined but there are many different kinds of incentive structures that impel people to make decisions in one direction or another. Conflicting incentives are called incentive conflicts and many choice architecture systems contain incentive conflicts. In order to properly understand a client’s incentives, Thaler and Sunstein suggest considering the following four questions when analyzing a particular choice architecture:


All pertinent queries, essential to the development of an architecture competition, particularly in light of the vast diversity of structures and formats available in the U S and the many, often conflicting incentives for running a competition.

Adding to the amalgamated aspirations of an architecture competition is the conceptual nature of the materials from which decisions must be made. Two dimensional drawings, three-dimensional renderings, physical models, digital animations while rich illustrations of future physicality are in fact only notations, visual narratives of an imaginary final product. Choices must be made without experiencing the actual physical environment.

This raises many issues about potential realities. What role do promise and possibility play in such instances, when the future product is not experiential? Multiple narratives of who we are, who we think we might be and who we will become are buried in the choices made during an architecture competition.

How do the goals and aspirations of the competition sponsor affect the decision-making process throughout the competition process? One can look at this at a macro-scale, the competition as a holistic subject, but through the journey of writing this essay, it seems that another avenue of analysis would be to look at the incremental stages that a competition process follows.

For instance, what latent role might semantics play in decision-making throughout an American architecture competition?

It is a long-standing tradition that entries in American architecture competitions, particularly those involving public space include project titles. Purely anecdotally, I have included the project titles from The World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition. Impossible and inadvisable to draw any conclusions after the fact, the argument can certainly be made that
the cogency of a winning project title, such as Reflecting Absence is in keeping with the eloquence of a winning architectural design.

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How important are words, titles and names to decision-making? Choice theorists have been looking at this question for some time now and it seems that names are quite potent. The (date) study, “A Rose by Any Other Name: Would it Smell as Sweet” disproving Shakespeare, looked at “whether presenting an odor with a positive, neutral, or negative name would influence how people perceive it. (Rosovsky, 2010)” Fifteen different odors ranging from unpleasant to neutral to pleasant were presented to subjects with positive, negative or neutral names such as “carrot juice, a numeral or “moldy vegetables.” No matter what the smell really was, if it was presented to the study subjects with a positive name it automatically was rated as more pleasant than when it was sniffed under the guises of a negative name. Heart rates went up when smelling a positively titled smell and people took notably more sniffs.

Obviously using olfactory skills as part of design analysis is not something jurors are typically asked to do when judging an architecture competition. I have referenced the rose name study here to illustrate the hidden context of choice, demonstrated by the power of titles. Social scientists, advertisers and marketers have been studying names for decades and apparently names really do matter.

This is evidenced by another seminal study by Iyengar, done at Columbia University that offered twenty undergraduates free manicures. The all female participants were given a choice of two almost identical pink nail lacquers. Half of the volunteers were told the names of the polish: Adore-A-Ball and Ballet Slippers while the other half were simply shown the polish bottles labeled A and B.

Seven out of ten women chose Ballet Slippers over Adore-A-Ball when choosing with knowledge of the polish names. Out of the ten remaining women, six preferred bottle A (Adore-A-Ball), two chose bottle B (Ballet Slippers) and the remaining participants were stumped, perceiving the two color choices as the same.

“The colors were practically indistinguishable, and yet, especially when they were given names, there was a difference. These women, more of whom chose the color Ballet Slippers when its name was visible, also unanimously preferred the name Ballet Slippers to the name Adore-A-Ball. This is unlikely to be mere coincidence. Rather, it seems that the name somehow made the color look better, or at least created a feeling of difference. Our choices are based as much on the identities they express as their possible outcomes.” (Iyengar, 2010)

Do the titles of submissions in an architecture competition affect juror choices? What incentive drives the selection of one competition structure selected over another? These two questions represent opposite scales of investigation – the macro and micro and are the tip of the iceberg in potential areas for further study.

While I have raised more questions than offered answers here, it is apparent that whether looking at the big picture of architecture competitions through the lens of decision-making theory or exploring one snapshot that dissects an incremental decision made at a critical
juncture of the competition process, every step of an architecture competition represents an abundantly loaded moment of choice,

The application of current decision-making theory to the construct of an architecture competition is analogous to the peeling of an onion – an onion of infinite proportions. There is layer upon layer upon layer of relevance ripe with complexities of time, place, personality, politics and culture.

ENDNOTES

1 Architecture competition is defined here as a formal contest that requires the prescriptive representation of a design concept envisioned for a specific project to compete with a group of other independently authored submissions that have followed the same guidelines and to be selected by a collective body typically known as a Jury.

2 For a concise overview of the history of decision-making theory, see Volker, L., Deciding About Design Quality: Value Judgments and Decision Making in the Selection of Architects by Public Clients Under European Tendering Regulations, Leiden, Sidestone Press, 2010, Chapter 3, 41-68

3 Culture and decision-making are mirrors of one another. “The effects of culture go beyond individuals own perceptions of choice and their desire to choose. They shape the way people actually choose (when they do choose), which in turn impacts society as a whole.” For a fascinating discussion of this see Iyengar, S. The Art of Choosing, Twelve, New York and Boston, 2010, Chapter 2, 59

4 Iyengar, S. The Art of Choosing, Twelve, New York and Boston, 2010

5 Hofstede, G. Culture’s Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values, Sage Publications (1980) Hofstede’s findings put the United States as the most individualistic country, this system rated Ecuador as the most collectivist country. Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Two, 34-35

6 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Two, 46-47

7 History of the U.S. Capitol at www.aoc.gov/history-us-capitol-building


10 Landau, 1994, 53

11 Landau, 1994, 57-58

12 Landau, 1994, 53

The quote “the world’s most beautiful building” is also referred to by architecture critic Blair Kamin in his piece titled “Tribune Tower Competition”, Chicago Tribune, June, 2013.

www.wtcsitememorial.org/about

Goldberger, P. “Reflected Grief”, Vanity Fair, April 2012. It is interesting to note that in an effort to appease those who felt Lin’s design was too abstract, a realistic bronze statue of three uniformed American soldiers by sculptor Frederick Hart was placed near the Memorial Wall in 1984.


Collyer, 2004, 244

America Institute of Architects, Handbook of Architectural Design Competitions, American Institute of Architects (Washington D.C.), 2010, 4

AIA, 2010, 29-31

These nine different competition types can be described as below. One-stage and the two-stage competition are counted as two separate formats.

One and Two Stage Competitions
One-stage juried competitions select a winning design following upon one sequential design phase and one required submission. Two-stage juried competitions select a winning design after two culling phases: an initial submission leads to the selection of finalists who are requested and typically compensated to do further work. A winner is selected based upon their second submission.

Developer/Architect Competitions
An architect is required to team up with a developer in order to participate in the competition. These types of competitions are usually formatted as one or two stage competitions as outlined above. Submissions typically include a financial component addressing proposed land values and speculative development costs that are not included in design only competitions.

Design/Build Competitions
An architect is required to team up with a contractor in order to participate in the competition. These types of competitions are usually formatted as one or two stage competitions as outlined above. Submissions include a financial component addressing the streamlining of construction costs in greater detail than are typically included in pure design competitions.

RFQ Competition
This is a qualifications-based process to select an architect not a design. An architect is chosen on the basis of prior work and frequently an interview rather than the solicitation of a project specific design.
Interviews with Design Concepts
This format is a combination of a qualifications-based selection process that then leads to a one or two stage design competition.

International Union of Architects (UIA) competition
Follows the UIA guidelines as listed on www.uia-architectes.org/en

Hypothetical
This is a competitive process that solicits design concepts for a speculative project.

Competition Limited to Students

22 Here are definitions of the three major competition eligibility categories:

Open
This is a competition that casts as broad a net as possible, may or may not include students, interns or other design professionals. Prerequisites and required accreditations are up to the competition sponsor.

Limited
Restrictions on who can enter such a competition vary but typically revolve around geographical location, level of experience, office size or familiarity with a particular building typology.

Invited
For an architect to be an included in such a competition they need to be formally asked to participate by the competition sponsor.

23 soa.syr.edu/events/2008/greenhomes/index.php
“From the Ground Up is a two-stage competition. Up to three teams will be selected to compete through this open call, joining four pre-selected teams. “

24 design.nationalmall.org/design-competition

25 www.rebuildbydesign.org/

26 Collyer, 2004, 244 More information can also be found at www.gsa.gov

27 Volker, L., Deciding About Design Quality: Value Judgments and Decision Making in the Selection of Architects by Public Clients Under European Tendering Regulations, Leiden, Sidestone Press, 2010, Chapter 4, 79,

28 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Six, 177-179


30 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Four, 121 Iyengar points out some of the real ramifications of this observation: “This is why items displayed at either end of a store shelf sell more than those in the middle, and it’s also the reason an interviewer might unwittingly pay more attention to the first and last candidates in a job interview.”


33 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Six, 192 “When we learn, through study and practice, to simplify, prioritize, and categorize elements and to recognize patterns, we are able to create order in seeming chaos.”

34 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Six, 191-192

35 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Six, 193 “As we can see from the nature of expertise, when talking about choice it’s important to make a distinction between the number of options available and the number actually faced by the chooser.”

36


38 Thaler and Sunstein, 2009, Chapter Five, 100 give the current U.S. health care system (pre-Obama Care) as an example of a system rife with incentive conflicts. “The patient receives the health care services that are chosen by his physician and paid for by the insurance company, with everyone from equipment managers to drug companies to malpractice lawyers taking a piece of the action. Those with different prices have different incentives, and the results may not be ideal for either patients or doctors.”

39 Thaler and Sunstein, 2009, Chapter Five, 99


> “What’s in a name?  
That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet?”

41 Rosokvsky, I. “Was Shakespeare Wrong? - Would a Rose by Any Other Name Smell as Sweet?”, *Psychology Today,* 2010

42 Iyengar, 2010, Chapter Five, 140-142