Architecture Faculty Oral History Project

Interview with Joanna Lombard
Professor
Coral Gables, FL, October 31, 2016

Interviewed by Gilda Santana
Recorded by Gilda Santana
Interview Length: 1:11:24

Summary:

Joint Appointment in Public Health Sciences at the Miller School of Medicine and the School of Architecture

Architecture, Landscape & Urbanism, Heath Care & Environment
Research, consulting and professional/community service in the area of health and the built environment informs teaching in architecture and the natural environment, core studios that focus on site planning and urbanism, advanced studios in the area of healthcare, electives in the areas of healthcare architecture and urbanism, and research and documentation classes that range from HABS to healthcare case studies. Analysis of the built environment from a health perspective extends from physical and mental well-being to cultural and ecological impacts.

Gilda Santana: Can you talk about your primary area of research?

Joanna Lombard: It's interesting that the research I do actually started when the School of Medicine applied for a Luce Professorship[1]. They were very highly ranked, but they didn't get it. And, then the School of Architecture applied. At that time, the Luce Foundation was funding five-year Fellowships to foster interdisciplinary studies in American universities. Provost Glaser convened Jose Szapocznik, who at that time was Director of the Center for Family Studies, at the School of Medicine, and Lizz (Elizabeth) Plater-Zyberk, our dean at the time, to work together on a joint proposal. After submission and review, UM was awarded the Luce Professorship and they formed a search committee to identify and interview candidates.

I had always been working in interstitial areas where architecture intersects with landscape and the environment, behavior, and all the multiple influences and impacts—basically a human-centered approach to architecture, which now is a tenet of "design thinking," in contrast to a more conventional, formalist method of studying architecture—the approach that I, and most architects who were in school from about 1970 through 2000. At that time, we were taught typology, we were taught to study formal geometries. Some schools taught the method through references to solely modernist precedents. Miami was unique in that we also looked at traditional and vernacular precedents. But, essentially, we're looking at form, talking about form, and diagramming formal organization as the key lesson. And the idea, the project, is thought to spring from an abstract idea that comes from the designer analyzing conditions and determining an appropriate form for the project.

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[1] The Henry R. Luce Professorship Program was established in 1968 to encourage academic experimentation and creativity. It was inspired by one of Mr. Luce's favorite concepts, which he called "the unity of truth," and designed to support the integration of knowledge through innovative, interdisciplinary teaching and learning. http://www.hluce.org/archives_retired.aspx?page=hrluceprofship

I was fortunate to be awarded an Arthur Wheelwright fellowship from Harvard early in my career, based on my proposal to study American Gardens and their European precedents, and the connections between gardens and town planning. That fellowship funded travel, and in the process of that year's study, I was being able to explore the intimate connections among buildings and landscapes with a people and a culture. That perspective had not yet permeated schools, but it influenced my own work and research interests, which is how I had expanded to looking into the interactive relationships among buildings, places and well-being.

This work aligned with the burgeoning field of New Urbanism and I had been working with one of the NU founders, Lizz Plater-Zyberk. This area turned out to be a productive area for collaboration for the two departments to work together on the new Luce Professorship, and Lizz invited me to join the Luce Professor Search Committee. She and José Szapocznik co-chaired the search with Carl Eisdorfer, then Chair of Psychiatry. Lizz, Frank Martinez, and I represented Architecture. We started looking around the country at people who would be interested in the areas connecting our fields. It turned out that there were people who were embedded in psychology, and there were people who were embedded in architecture, but it was difficult to identify someone with cross-disciplinary interests and skills.

Eventually, Samina Quraeshi was selected as the Henry R. Luce Professor of Family and Community at the University of Miami. Lizz had met her when Samina was the Design Director for the National Endowment for the Arts and leading the Oklahoma City Memorial workshop. Samina was more closely linked to the design arts and had a diverse career as a graphic designer, educator, and author. She brought great charisma and enthusiasm, but her ability to bring the two fields together was limited because, frankly, it's very hard to come into any university for a time-limited, in this case a five-year, engagement and become a change agent. That's just not going to happen very often. Generally, bringing people together for something that is outside typical academic responsibilities requires added funding, and the Luce Professorship only provided funding for the Professor, not for events or activities or opportunities. So Samina pivoted to advance her work with her husband, Richard Shephard, with whom she had established a graphic design and architecture studio, Shepard/Quraeshi Associates outside of Boston, as Co-Directors of the School of Architecture's Center for Community and Urban Design (CUCD) for the remainder of her Professorship.

Returning to the question about research though, in the process of Luce Search Committee meetings, José said, "We should really develop a research project together because we have this shared interest in how the built environment impacts life." So, we spent time exploring possibilities and eventually developed a proposal to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study the impact of the built environment on children in East Little Havana.

The award of that grant established what is now the University of Miami Built Environment Behavior and Health Research Group, and I have been working in this area ever since. José and Lizz were the Primary Investigators, Frank and I were Investigators and our task involved developing the assessments and managing the intensive and extensive process of documenting every property on the nearly three hundred blocks of East Little Havana. We developed an itemized survey to assess building and streetscape features and a user manual that was later the subject of a journal article.

At that time, a paper survey would have been about 30 pages, and we didn't want to carry what were than rather unwieldy laptops into the field, so Denis Hector advised us on what was then a new hand-held device, a Hewlett-Packard Jornada[2], that ran on a windows program, which we were able to re-program to do our survey. Craig Mason, our colleague from Psychology and Education reprogrammed the Jornadas and maintained the data base. So, we produced one of the first digital surveys.

On the children's side of the study, we looked at conduct grades in school, because conduct grades are associated with future delinquencies, sexually transmitted diseases, all kinds of negative outcomes. We found that, particularly boys, who lived on mixed use blocks had better outcomes in conduct grades in school than boys who lived on residential-only blocks. Our theory was that mixed use on the block—corner stores for example- provided more adults to watch over things. This work led to further brainstorming sessions. One day, Frank and I were standing out on the street in front of a house where there was an eighty-five-year-old gentleman who told us he was taking care of his wife in the house, and meanwhile he was in his front yard with neighborhood children dropping by. We wondered if the neighborhood could be somehow supportive of aging in a way that we didn't see in other areas that lacked sidewalks and infrastructure to support these kinds of interactions.

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[2] The Jornada was a line of personal digital assistants or PDAs manufacture by Hewlett-Packard. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jornada_(PDA)

So, we went back to José and shared our observations. The team met and we realized we had all the documentation of the physical environment at this point, and with an expanded data set, we could investigate the impact of the neighborhood on elders. We were awarded an NIH grant to study Hispanic elders, people seventy-five and older, over a five-year period. By this time, Scott Brown joined the team at the School of Medicine full-time which was a huge leap forward because Scott turned out to be a great team leader.

At the conclusion of the study, we found that elders who had socially supportive features on their buildings, such as balconies, stoops, and terraces, had better mental and physical functioning over the five years of the study than those that did not—lower depression rates, etc. What I love about this work is that it's not about an architect becoming a psychologist, or a statistician becoming a designer. It's about everyone bringing their best knowledge in their field to the table, and then listening, thinking and collaborating.

Today, we understand design thinking as a process of empathy where you imagine what it's like to be in a situation, you create narratives and stories, develop ideas about what kinds of things would make life better, develop prototypes of these ideas, then you run them through a matrix of impact and effort analysis and you see what comes out. That process of designing was what we were doing with our work and with our grants.

GS: A lot of these things were already happening, and, now it just seems the norm. It seems other people are just catching up to it now.

JL: It's true, and it's a good thing because you want people to catch up to it. There has never been a more exciting time to be in our field. We have so much access to knowledge. When I did the Harvard study, I had to get permission to go to *Villa I Tatti*, the Bernard Berenson estate in Florence, permission to go to the Dumbarton Oaks Library, permission to get into the rare book room. To go into that rare book room was like entering a *sanctum sanctorum*. I love that feeling, but what I also love is that you can now see this material online. There's nothing holding us back in the field of research, in history, in theory and in design. So, now that we have this vast knowledge readily accessible, we really can bring so much to the table, and, we have a constituency in the public that says life isn't so good for us now, we're suffering. Our neighborhoods are suffering. We're having to deal with climate change in ways that we don't understand; we are losing jobs in markets that seem to have disappeared. Architects have a knowledge base that can inform our efforts to help people and communities adapt to change at all scales, and there is evidence and experience to bring to bear on multiple conditions-- agricultural urbanism, lean urbanism, resilient structures. We can look to data to predict what can happen when we introduce mixed-use into a neighborhood, and add housing where there were previously only commercial buildings. We understand zoning mixes.

The U.S. Acting Surgeon General, Boris Lushniak spoke to the 2014 AIA Design + Health Summit and sent a message to all the architects in the country to tell us that we are all public health workers. What he didn't say, was whether we want to be, or not, we're either doing good, or, we're doing harm. Because once we build structures and cities, very few of them actually come down. In Miami, maybe more come down than in other places, but it takes money to take something down, and it's not necessarily the most resilient strategy. So, for better or worse, we shape places and peoples' lives. Look at our school. We are working in buildings that were designed for privacy. They were designed to give returning WWII veterans privacy to study, and raise their families, and make a new start in the world. The buildings don't look at each other, they face away from each other, which is why all the bathrooms and kitchens are on the courtyard. They did a good job. All the bearing walls are perpendicular, so if we want to open it up, if we want to create space for innovation in community, we're basically rebuilding the building. When you take a building that's built for privacy and you ask that building to now support community, it doesn't work. Then, when you try to create community in a building that's built for privacy, you're working against the architecture all the time. You have to bring enormous levels of personal energy, passion and enthusiasm because you have to be the antidote. Whereas, when you walk into a space that's designed for community and innovation, it just comes with the space. Then it's just a matter of bringing everyone along. But, the fact that we know this, what that then tells me is that we as designers know what to bring to people and to situations. We also have the perspective of history. We understand that these are one-off objects. Ultimately, buildings that are designed for their moment in time, are like a personal wardrobe item that's just high fashion at that moment. It has a singular moment, maybe even a singular purpose, and it can look ridiculous just a few months later. And, years later, what good does it do to point out all the different years of all the different buildings?

I think that the people who taught my generation of teachers, as well as almost anyone who was educated through the 1990s, came of age during the post-war period. After the devastation of the cities and the war, they just wanted a clean slate, and modernism really provided that clean slate of beautiful, pristine objects. I can feel that myself. I like clean surfaces. So, you can imagine there must have been this unbelievable liberation from all the stuff and the details. But then, the legacy they left us was an education bereft of the knowledge of how to do details, how to make articulated roof tops, how to make cities, because our teachers were taught to make isolated, pristine objects. So, their students—the teachers of today—generally went into one of two directions. One group started learning the traditional and classical language of architecture and urbanism, which is what many people here did, while a much larger group began to unleash the pristine objects into deconstructed parts. We can see this today in parametric design and the return of the elements of the glass box, while Italian rationalism established a language of forms that could look to the past but only through abstraction. Obviously, I'm reducing it to one-liners, but essentially, it's still all formalism. But now we know that there is much more to architecture and urbanism than formalism.

I remember one of our faculty who had lived through the period of the oil crisis in the 70s, during which interest in solar energy surged, and then after the crisis, waned. So, when people started to talk about climate change and needing to adjust our buildings and our thinking toward greater environmental responsibility, he discounted it as just a fad that would go away. He had reason to think that, because that's what happened in his lifetime. But now, we have the benefit of seeing the whole 20th century in terms of what was temporary, what was real, what continues, what is science, what is art. I think that makes this a really exciting time. It also calls for genuine self-reflection- to be able to look back and recognize that we understand things differently now from the way we understood them then.

I also think that our field is fairly conservative. I was in LA giving a talk on community advocacy. I was talking to them about being able to bring quantitative research to their arguments. Green space, for example. There are a number of studies that show that children in the public-school system, from primary through high school, who have views of trees, shrubs, gardens, and greens, have better math scores, better English scores, better attentiveness, and less disruptive behavior. In Michigan, there's a great study of around 900 public high schools which show higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in 4-year colleges for students with access and views of tree-canopy from their classrooms and public spaces. One of the audience members told me afterward, that we need to change building regulations for schools. We need to set, as a mandate, that in all school designs, all classrooms, and habitable spaces, and gathering spaces, children should have natural daylight and access to nature views. Many children don't have this. In the 1960s in South Florida many schools were built on this sort of wing pattern, in which classrooms backed up onto each other and there was a corridor down the middle. So, the only light came from the exit door at the end of the corridor, and none of the classrooms have windows. We should never do that again. That's where I think that we can play an important role in community advocacy. People want this knowledge from us, they want us to share the studies with them, and then translate those studies into actionable designs. Juan Mullerat, one of our alumni, was looking at *Calle Ocho* with his team and said that one of the problems for life on the street is that traffic on one-way streets is accelerated. We know that business opportunities are diminished. We know that safety for pedestrians is diminished. These are things that we know, so why do we still have these streets? He and his team developed a plan to re-establish two-way traffic on *Calle Ocho*. Jason Roberts in Texas, founder of Better Block, is really passionate about just going in and trying it. Tony Garcia is a local advocate of Tactical Urbanism and he produces what are essentially full scale mock-ups to test ideas. We have the tools, especially with 3D and virtual reality, to create things for people to experience.

All of the understanding that we have now, the knowledge base, the actual research, come from collaboration across disciplines. And this is the kind of collaboration that UM has always encouraged. The recent study that Scott Brown and I worked on with Lizz for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development looked at 250,000 Medicare beneficiaries throughout Miami Dade County. We found that those who live on blocks with higher levels of greenery, as measured by satellite imagery, had lower blood pressure, lower incidence of diabetes, cholesterol, and depression. The first three that I mentioned, we described in a paper that came out in the July 2016 *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, and now we're working on the paper describing the results on depression paper. This is important because if the built environment is not contributing to the crisis in mental health, it's also not necessarily alleviating conditions, and we have study after study showing that spaces that encourage social interaction, spaces that allow people to have respite, spaces that have greenery, spaces that have daylight all benefit on our psychological well-being.

GS: Can you speak about your involvement with evidence-based design?

JL: Evidence-based design really came out of Texas A&M's healthcare design program, now the Center for Health Systems and Design, which was started by an amazing group of people. Roger Ulrich was there in the 1980s and he did one of the first articles by an architect to be published in *Science*. It's a seminal paper on beneficial impacts of views of nature through hospital windows.

He looked at gall bladder surgery patients in a suburban hospital in Pennsylvania; one set of patients had a view of trees, the other, a blank, brick wall. He found that the patients with views of trees used fewer pain meds, had shorter hospital stays, fewer negative comments by nurses, and fewer post-surgery complications. This opened peoples' eyes. Texas A&M Professor Kirk Hamilton, started the *Health Environments Research and Design Journal* (HERD) and led the field of evidence-based design studies. Then in 1999, the Institute of Medicine issued its report, "To Err is Human," attributing 44,000 to 98,000 deaths to medical errors. This reinforced the importance of bringing together the research world and the design world with a focus on healthcare. I became interested because that's what we were doing in the design of cities and neighborhoods, and buildings, and it was a natural move to apply this work in the field of healthcare when a healthcare organization CEO asked me to advise on their campus design. The neighbors were not happy with the hospital campus edges; it was a sprawling hospital at the center, surrounded by surface parking lots.

The DPZ charrette method provides a strong foundation for community-based and participatory planning which is a great method for work in healthcare. We gather all possible constituents, share background research, and develop ideas as a team. In this case, the team, which consisted of everybody responsible for physical planning decisions—the architect, facilities manager, interior designer, landscape architect, building and grounds manager—came up with the idea that the hospital, because it was situated within a very green neighborhood in Kentucky, could host a health walk for the neighborhood and reconfigure its campus access in the process. Low hedges would conceal cars, while preserving line-of-sight for personal safety, and people could actually get to the hospital without having to walk along all the parked cars. It's a simple strategy, but it was transformative. The neighborhood liked it so much that they asked the CEO to add lights so that they could walk that path at night, and it became an active neighborhood health walk.

Based on this work I was invited to assess plans for a new hospital that was literally just coming out of the ground. The foundation was poured and the steel had gone in. People who aren't architects often have a sense that something is not right with what they see, but it's not in their area of expertise to identify what isn't right about it. In this case, one of the problems was that the main entry would occur through the back-parking lot. That's not a very auspicious entrance. So, after gathering all of the local team for a workshop, we re-worked the main entrance into a boulevard that would lead to a plaza at the heart of the hospital. The parking lots, which hadn't gone in yet, could be changed from large swaths swirling around the hospital into what could one day become habitable blocks, with the formerly planned driveways turned into tree-lined streets with sidewalks. At one point in the process, one of the architects asked me, "Do you really think that someone is going to get out of their car in this parking lot, walk out to the sidewalk, and then walk up to the hospital? Everyone takes the path of least resistance." I said, "Well, they do take the path of least resistance unless it's winding through parked cars. I think that when you give people something that feels like a real place, they will walk there." And, of course, we have studies that show higher levels of pedestrian activity on tree-lined sidewalks, but we paused as a group to ask what harm could come from the change. How could it hurt? It looks better. It's not costing anymore. It's not changing the architect's original building design at all. So, the team pressed forward.

After the building was complete and the site work was finished, the CEO hired a van to take the workshop team on a tour of the new hospital and grounds—I hadn't seen it yet. We drove up the tree-lined boulevard that resulted from the workshop and into one of the parking blocks, and at the same time, another car pulled into the parking lot across the boulevard. Sure enough, a man and woman parked, and walked directly to the sidewalk that led to the hospital. I think it was an “aha” moment for everyone, because the evidence held true.

The project also included public space specifically designed to support social interaction, with a bell tower marking the entry plaza. The hospital now hosts celebrations and community events there and along the boulevard. In a process like this, the design develops through various studies and consultations, beginning with some clarity about the desired outcomes—in this case a welcoming, navigable and reassuring approach to a hospital that could eventually grow into a town center—and the elements necessary to assure that result. That is a form of evidence-based design. Because the term, evidence-based design is associated with healthcare, designers may not realize that it’s really what we do all the time. One of the things you find with experienced architects, is that they bring the evidence of their practice. They’re saying, “Well, I’ve done eighteen of these types of projects and I think this approach will work here.” We as professionals are accustomed to building this body of evidence in our own offices, our own fields, our own areas. Where the breakout occurs is when all of that kind of knowledge is available broadly and widely. I think that is where we are in the field right now, and that students are hungry for this knowledge. And, firms are hungry for it too.

After the LA talk, two architects came up to talk to me, and asked if I knew of any Southern California schools where the students are learning some of the things that I’d talked to them about because they wanted someone like that in their office. What they really wanted was to see was this method of drawing on facts associated with outcomes—evidence-- translated into a studio process.

GS: I was very impressed with the healthcare studio you set up at the hospital downtown. Can you talk about how that transpired?

JL: My particular approach is that we do all the research we possibly can about the location and the people who live there—their cultural history, their health profile, economic profile, the environmental issues that they're facing—and develop an understanding of the site in its entirety—its past, present and potential. Ideally, we go to the site and we do an immersion with as many people impacted by the project as possible. I've been doing studios that are reality based. We worked on a public health clinic in Liberty City. We met and talked to the people in the clinic. We met and talked with the architect, Alex Silva, who's one of our alumni. Alex talked with us about the process of designing the clinic and what he thought it needed next. We worked with the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department, and with the Florida Department of Public Health in Miami-Dade. And we conducted a charrette here at the school with all of those people. Veruska Vasconez and I are teaching an urban design studio with a focus defined by the Urban Design Program Director, Lizz Plater-Zyberk, to address the challenges of urban infill. We will be working in Grove Park, a historically African-American community in Atlanta. The *Atlanta BeltLine*[3] which was actually an idea that grew out of a Georgia Tech graduate student thesis, is starting to bring with it a level of gentrification. A community like this one, at one level, needs economic enhancement, but done in a way that doesn't displace the people who already live there. The neighborhood also connects to the MARTA[4] system's *Bankhead* station. The neighborhood transitions from a beautiful historic fabric to a higher density transit-oriented development. What does it do along the corridor? How does it intersect with the park? How does it affect the water and resilience issues related to the creek beds and ground water issues related to the watershed?

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[3] The Atlanta BeltLine is the most comprehensive revitalization effort undertaken in the City of Atlanta. It provides a network of public parks, multi-use trails and transit by re-using 22 miles of historic railroad corridors circling downtown and connecting 45 neighborhoods directly to each other. First conceived as a 1999 master's thesis by Georgia Tech student Ryan Gravel, the Atlanta BeltLine evolved from an idea, to a grassroots campaign of local citizens and civic leaders, into a robust new vision of an Atlanta dedicated to an integrated approach to transportation, land use, greenspace, and sustainable growth. https://beltline.org/about/the-atlanta-beltline-project/atlanta-beltline-overview/

Laura Heery, an architect and urban designer who is from Atlanta, and who has worked with the different groups there, is sponsoring the studio's workshop in Atlanta with the community leaders, and the people that represent specific perspectives. In Atlanta, we'll essentially do what you saw us do in Miami. Then we'll come back here and work on it and connect through online conferences and presentations. This is in itself an important skill set. On the professional projects that I do, there's usually some initial event where everyone is together, but then everyone disperses, because the team will have experts from all over. At that point, people are skyping, face-timing, web-conferencing, and looking at material online. I think it's really important for students to feel completely comfortable in that world of communication. It's also important for students to talk with people who are not architects, because architects are very rarely the clients of other architects. So, we need to know how to talk with the people who are hiring us. And almost no one enjoys being talked at. People want to be engaged, especially when it something that's really important and dear to them, such as something getting built in their neighborhood, and especially institutional buildings with longevity, like schools and hospitals. People have many reasons to care. In some of these cases it's life and death spaces, and in others, the value of thoughtfully planned quality of life space.

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[4] MARTA is the acronym for *Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority Act*, which was established in 1965. http://www.itsmarta.com/marta-history-vision.aspx

My friend and colleague Libby Burton [Elizabeth Burton was a professor of Sustainable Building Design and Wellbeing, and she held a joint appointment with Warwick Medical School and the School of Engineering], at Warwick [University of], did a lot of work with dementia patients. She and Lynn Mitchell did some really interesting studies that found that body memory lasts longer than mind memory. They found that if communities could be designed with really, strongly evident landmarks and pathways, the body just remembers to turn left at that bell tower, long after the mind has forgotten it. The more that we can allow people to have an independent life where they're walking on their own and interacting with people, the outcomes for self-sufficiency are better and longer.

Libby edited the book, Wellbeing: A Complete Reference Guide[5], in which Scott Brown and I did the chapter on *Social Interaction in Neighborhoods*. Early into that project, Libby discovered that she was dying of a Stage 4 cancer. She was determined to gather the group of designers and researchers from around the world who were working on the topic.

GS: What year was that?

JL: That would have been 2014. Libby's theory is this: To speak about health as simply the absence of disease is not a life-centric view of health. We should really talk about well-being, and how we as designers contribute to well-being. There is at least fifty years of research demonstrating that people with higher levels of social interaction live longer and are healthier.

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[5] Cooper, Rachel., Elizabeth. Burton, and Cooper, Cary L. *Wellbeing*. Hoboken: Wiley, 2014.

Then about 15 years ago, the body of research on physical activity as essential to health emerged. Meanwhile, the car-centric built environment of sprawl had left us with very little opportunity for social interaction and physical activity. We actually created a toxic mix in our environment that inhibits the capacity for well-being. Libby's view is that we as designers should be seeking to support well-being; we should do it with every tool that we have, and we should abandon our fixations about styles, ideologies and typologies, because we should bring whatever works to the situation.

I feel that I've had so many great opportunities to study gardens, and integrate gardens in architecture, to work with Lizz and Andres in New Urbanism, to work in the world of healthcare and urbanism for the last 12 years, to be able to be part of this interdisciplinary team that I work with in medicine, to do workshops with groups that range from the AIA to the National Recreation & Parks Association. You would think that parks would naturally be at the forefront of wellness, but that is actually a new, fact-based approach to park planning and that's a method and message we are sharing. Here in Miami-Dade, Maria Nardi, an alumna of the school is the new Director of Miami-Dade Parks, and these processes are fundamental to her groundbreaking work on the Miami-Dade Parks and Open Space System Masterplan.

For the urban design students, this is such an exciting moment to be doing this work with Laura [Heery] in Atlanta, because the *Emerald Corridor Foundation* is there. *Purpose-Built Communities* is there. There are all these opportunities to come together and to be respectful of history and legacy, and at the same time to be transformative and support wellbeing. I understand that some people are going to have million-dollar houses, and other people are going to have very tiny units, but we all share the public realm. Children are going to school and these are public responsibilities for the future. If children are going to school in windowless rooms, and becoming disinterested, and inattentive, not graduating—we are just wasting so much human potential. If we as designers can participate in a way that nurtures the best of what people can become, I think it's a great opportunity.

I was talking with Michael Murphy of MASS Design Group when he was here. He is a passionate advocate of architecture for social action. I was connecting him with an archdiocese in Kenya that wanted some help with a hospital. I could see that the kind of help they needed required being in Kenya, and Michael already had people there. Being on the ground in places of great need is essential.

It's important to do projects that contribute to the community in Miami, but with the healthcare projects it's also great to go to places like Richmond, Atlanta, Chicago and Charleston. Those just happen to be places that had a healthcare system that was ready with a project when we were ready to study it. When the students go these places, they do amazing work, and are able to make connections and opportunities for future careers. They meet people who are interested in the same things that they're interested in. In addition to the knowledge areas, the implementation network of the project helps them build a foundation for the future.

GS: Do you think that this a growing area within the school?

JL: Well, I think that it's in the DNA of the school. I think that our physical layout, where we're all in separate little cubbies, means we need to work harder to connect with each other. One of the great things about our school has been that it's the kind of place where if you have an idea, and you have your own funding, you can run with it. There was never anyone to say "no, we don't want you to do that." We've never been that kind of school.

I think the University is very open to it. I love the people that I work with all around the University—the Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy, the Department of Public Health Sciences, the Schools of Business, Law, and Nursing. When I developed the initial outline for the Dean on the healthcare program, my first goal was to create an advisory board of the people from all the different schools. The class that I teach at the Law School in the Spring is an interdisciplinary class. Dean White from the Law School hosts it. We have students from Law, Medicine, Business, Architecture, and Nursing. It's about delivery systems and access in healthcare. The section that I do is with Steve Ullmann [Business], who looks at the history of healthcare from an economic perspective, and I look at it from a physical perspective. We engage in a case study and imagine how a particular condition could be improved. Last year, we developed a case study based on a rural hospital that I had been consulting on, which was trying to decide whether to join a regional system and helicopter tough cases into the city, or build up existing services. The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) [6] has identified substance abuse and mental health issues as leading problems for rural communities. We don't have enough mental health caregivers. Is there a model for this? Could the hospital be a change agent where it becomes the economic center for the town. Instead of farming out to Cisco and big laundry services, could they work local vendors? That's what I love, because it's design. We're designing the place, the buildings, the sidewalks...

GS: Why not design its economy as well?

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[6] https://www.ruralhealthweb.org/

JH: Yes, you are right, because we're actually doing it by default. If we design a big sprawling hospital that's based on an economic model of trucking everything in, well then, we've pretty much helped decimate the economy of that community. But, if we say, "Wait a minute—we want to turn you inside out. We want to bring a café to the street. We can host a community garden. We want to help grow the produce and demonstrate healthy eating." I was doing a study for an affordable housing project last night. Looking at the health profiles of the people from that community, something like 75% of the people in that community have fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables on their plate in a week. That means that there are days where there are no fruits or vegetables on their plate. We know that the vitamins that we need are not necessarily deliverable by supplements. A 2016 Johns Hopkins study looked at 10 years of nearly 3000 people and found that calcium supplements might actually raise the risk of plaque buildup in arteries and heart damage, while calcium-rich food may be protective. You might ask, "Why would an architect care about calcium in the veins?" I care about it because that tells me that we are providing a setting where people can grow, cook and serve healthy food, and come together to talk. Andres Duany always adds a commercial kitchen within the *ag-urbanism*[7] projects DPZ designs, because in most places in the U.S., people can't sell items made in a home kitchen in commercial markets. So, the commercial kitchen is not just an educational space, but an economic and social justice space. I think it's all connected.

There was a decision point for that Denis and I reached about UM. Denis Hector was at teaching at both Penn and Columbia, I had taught at Penn, and he had an apartment in New York. We could have chosen to be up there or here. My argument for being here was that those places were already well-formed and Miami was so open. Our friends at Penn and Columbia didn't really know very many people outside of the architecture departments. I felt that if we're only talking to ourselves—other architects-- we're not going to be changing too much of the world. Denis bought into the idea because he works at the intersection of architecture and engineering. He had done pioneering work in light-weight structures and was really interested in hazard mitigation, and how buildings should be able to support people both through a hazard and post-hazard. That has to do with how communities are laid out. He went with Andres to the massive post-Katrina charrette in Mississippi and then later studied the FEMA regulations. When you tell people that you need to build 15 feet above the ground, how does that form your urbanism? The questions and the architectural, engineering and urban solutions become essential matters.

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[7] see Duany, Garden Cities: theory and practice of agrarian urbanism, 2012...presents design strategies and management practices for comprehensively integrating food production into modern development across the transect, from small-scale rural farming to urban container gardening.

I think to the extent that UM offers all of that, it's great, but I've learned that it's also fragile because it's people-dependent. If leadership continues to support this, we advance; but if not, these things can shut down very easily. To work outside your discipline means you have to be more entrepreneurial. You have to be willing to go a different route. Sometimes your peers may be skeptical, not necessarily enthusiastic and supportive about what you're doing, so you have to build your own enthusiasm and support. When the institution provides the infrastructure to do that, it can work. When the infrastructure isn't there, then people do what they always do, which is retreat into their own discipline, their own office. That's a great loss for advancement in the profession and what we can offer our students. Our students spend nearly $80k in tuition and board a year to be here. For the B.Arch. students, that's an investment of almost $400k for this education by the time they leave. I think they should have something really wonderful and eminently marketable when they leave us.

GS: They should be able to more than design a pretty house.

JL: I think if you can reach beauty, that's a big step. But, it's one part of a big picture. Beauty is a wonderful and worthy goal, and we need the skill set to develop the ability to achieve beauty. The thing is that the profession is big and there's room for a range of skills working together. Every person is unique. Each student has their own skill set. There was time in architecture when there was a certain mold that you were supposed to fit into. I was at the Tulane reunion, where I saw the Taylor Center, which I totally covet. It's a great social entrepreneurship and innovation space. The tables are 2x2 movable, the chairs are movable. You can configure it like a studio or a classroom in two seconds. Many more exciting opportunities than a generation ago. When I studied architecture at Tulane, we had a class of sixty, and there were six women. Only two or three of us from that class became licensed architects, which is at most, a 50% rate. That hasn't changed much for women, and it might even be lower now.

GS: Wyn Bradley and I had a similar conversation. Once you get to the licensure stage, especially for women, there's a cliff and they just fall off.

JL: I think that we should be doing more to prepare all our students for the licensure path. At the Tulane reunion, one of the women who left the field asked me what I was working on, and I shared some of the projects I have in process, and the range of classes and projects of students I am working with. The student opportunities really caught her attention. She said to me," When I was in school there was one way to be an architect, and you and Jane fit the mold—you could draw, you could speak in front of faculty and not cry, you could present your projects. Basically, you had to be a star designer. I realized that just wasn't me. If I were going to school now, and I was in the class you described, I would become an architect. That's what I love. That is me."

I feel like our job is to help each student and figure out what their unique skill sets are. Some may not have already identified a passion, but they have areas where they naturally excel, and areas where they can develop skills. We're small enough as a community here that we should know each student individually and be able to offer that specialized guidance. Also, everyone should acknowledge that this a field that depends on collaboration.

The myth is the heroic figure-- Frank Gehry does those buildings all by himself. No. We know that there is a vast team of people, but by not crediting the entire team, by not being honest about what it takes to actually produce a building, by pretending that the "so-called" design architect did the whole thing out of their own head, we've really perpetrated an entire mythology that is false and destructive.

This is a national phenomenon. Fifteen-twenty years ago, people went to great regional schools. There were national brands and regional schools. They all charge the same. What has happened in universities with national branding is that this vast pool who might have spread themselves out at great regional schools, like the University of Miami, Georgia Tech, or Tulane, they're all headed in the same channels. Everyone wants to go to one of those "top 10" schools, or Ivy League schools because they know that when they graduate, having that name on the diploma will help them in their career. So, if you're not one of those schools, and you're charging the premium price, but you don't have the premium name, what do you have to offer? We have always offered something unique in the market. If we draw on the DNA of the school—that we have a diversity of interests, we have interconnectivity, and we're interdisciplinary, we can begin to do things with social action, create an assisted path to licensure, and we do a really good job of hands-on counseling as to the kind of professional that you want to be, it will get out there. What I'm hearing from conversations with faculty at other schools is that students are finding architecture less exciting than programs in landscape, in urban design, city planning and community advocacy. Architects can often present themselves as being cloistered in their studios creating models. There is a percentage of people that want to do that. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have that as a part of what we do. But if we need to present a strong public profile of who we are and what we offer that is really powerful, then maybe we need to share more about our alumni, because we have an incredibly connected network of accomplished and diverse alumni working in around the world who are very supportive of each other as well as current students. We have fabulous alumni in New York, Chicago, LA, DC, Berlin, and Paris. Those are just the ones that I'm thinking about now, because they send me emails. That kind of ongoing relationship over a longer career trajectory is something we offer. The 2008 recession resulted in a smaller group of people studying architecture. Now there is a significant need for architects, and especially those who can communicate across disciplines and navigate this complex world of amazing phenomena. We can be the people to help them succeed.

GS: You have a great outlook on how architects and architecture can be change agents. What are your hopes and expectations for how the library can be an essentially relevant part of architecture education and/or changing to support architecture education?

JL: Well, I think that the way that you partnered with me when we did the landscape class. You came to the class and met the students. First of all, you took away the barrier. Then as they started to talk about their projects, you started thinking about resources that everyone could access.

You're on the alert if something comes up. A student can sit down with you and discuss which sources are legitimate, and which are not. For example, one of the students asked me, "Why do people think that architecture should be of its time?" That's a great question. Let's follow that idea back through time and see when it emerged as a concept, why it emerged, and what the recent conversation on it has been. That's something that the library is perfect for. I also think that access to rare materials is important. There's something transformative about holding on to a book from the 18th century and thinking about the people who held that book in their own hands across time, and what it meant to them. What does it mean to us today? There are studies that show that when we write things, we learn them and retain them more than when we type. The best combination for studying is to take hand notes, and then go back and type them. And, then, if you sleep on it, that's the trifecta. I think of the library as a companion to knowledge. You're already there. Some of the people I've worked with in libraries at other institutions—and I totally understand this—see themselves as kind of gatekeepers of rare and precious materials. Here though, you want students to have the pleasure and excitement of immersing in these materials. You've always looked for better ways of partnering with students and encouraged them to see the library as their own. The students are able to reserve this room and bring a group to sit around this table and hash out ideas. Understanding that research is your partner is really important, and the library is the best place to do that. At one point, we were the private school with the highest number of students who were the first person in their family to go to college. This was about ten years ago. That may be less true now. I think that there's an intimidation factor to asking a question. Nobody wants to be thought of as stupid. I think to the extent that the library can be as open and congenial a place as possible, that you continue to do what you've been doing, where you meet the students and they see you as a partner—I don't know what else can be done, other than more space. Rudy was telling me about the idea of putting the library in the Korach gallery. I thought it was a great idea.

GS: We decided that my office space will be like a panopticon up on the cat-walk.

JL: I would love to think that as we approach the redesign of the library that you'll be the voice of this, this space for collaboration, and space where people can see other people. The Krier buildings are opaque. You don't see what's inside of them, and you can't see through them. So, they create a wall. It would be great to cut windows into the Korach gallery below the lunettes so we could see each other throughout the whole compound. People do better when they run into each other. We do poorly when we are isolated. It's a deleterious environment. To be in an environment like this, of sprawling buildings without a central arrival or gathering space beyond the courtyard, we need to constantly make the connections ourselves- we need to always bring high energy, enthusiasm, and goodwill. On a good day that's all of us.

GS: I believe that it is critical to document all of the voices of the School of Architecture not only for the purpose of continuing a democratic dialogue, but also for the sake of creating a historic document of the school's pedagogy.

JL: Yes, what can happen in many places is that the loudest voice seems to be speaking for the school. This school has always been very diverse. When I came as a young faculty member, Ari Millas was doing research on the elders living in South Beach. Margaret Doyle was here as a historic preservationist working with her husband Andy Capitman, and her mother-in-law, Barbara

Capitman, on the designation of South Beach as a historic district. Lizz and Andres were starting New Urbanism. Jan Hochstim was looking at early Modernism. Paul Buisson was interested in an August Perret modernist take on classicism. Dick Langendorf was looking at urban planning from the policy point of view. Arthur Bowen, who was one of the leaders in EDRA (Environmental Design Research Association), was working on a tropical, environmental approach to building. It was like a hive. Everyone was piled into two floors of the McArthur Building, except for Ari, who had a very cool space in what are now the Art buildings. By the time we moved across the lake in these "temporary quarters," classicism and vernacular architecture emerged as areas of study. Today, Jake Brillhart is interested in Modern Regionalism, and Juhong Park is exploring the interface between technology, form, and life. I love the diversity, and academic vitality depends on it. But it is fragile, because we're hard-wired to want everyone to be like us, so we need to work to nurture diverse voices and explorations every day.

END OF INTERVIEW
Gilda Santana
04/29/2019 (transcribed)