

Society of Architectural Historians NEWS

OBITUARIES

George Ehrlich, Professor Emeritus of Art History at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, died November 28, 2009, at St. Luke's Hospital at the age of 84. He was born in Chicago on January 28, 1925, the son of Joseph and Mathilda Kohn Ehrlich, and received his academic degrees from the University of Illinois. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and the Air Force during the Korean War from 1954 to 1992.

Dr. Ehrlich taught art history at University of Missouri-Kansas City, chairing his department from 1964 to 1975. As author and photographer of *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990* and co-author (with David H. Sachs) of *Guide to Kansas Architecture*, he was one of the Midwest's leading advocates of historic preservation. His book on Kansas City architecture is featured on "The Community Bookshelf" covering the Kansas City Central Public Library garage. In his later years, he was working on a book on Asa Beebe Cross, pioneer architect of Kansas City.

Dr. Ehrlich was a longtime active member of the Society of Architectural Historians, the Kansas City Landmarks Commission, and the Advisory Preservation Committee for the Restoration of Union Station. He also was an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects. In 2003 the Kansas City Architectural Foundation presented him with a Legends Award. The Historic Kansas City Foundation offers an annual Achievement in Preservation Award in his name, and UMKC offers a George Ehrlich Scholarship for art history majors. Dr. Ehrlich was a featured commentator on KCPT's series *Uniquely Kansas City: A History of the Arts*, and he wrote guest articles on architecture and historic preservation for the *Kansas City Star*. He was active with the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art and the Rockhill Ridge and 49/63 neighborhood organizations.

Dr. Ehrlich leaves his wife of 53 years, Mila Jean Smith Ehrlich; his son Paul Stephen Ehrlich, employed by the University of Washington Medical Center; and his son Matthew Carleton Ehrlich, Professor of Journalism at the University of Illinois. The family suggests memorial donations be made to the George Ehrlich Scholarship Fund or Western Historical Manuscripts Collection-Kansas City, both through the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Republished courtesy of the *Kansas City Star*.

Terry Rossi Kirk died unexpectedly on October 17, 2009, in Castel del Monte, Italy. A resident of Rome since 1987, he was a passionate interpreter of the architecture of his adoptive city. Born on August 30, 1961, in Elgin, Florida, Kirk spent his teenage years in Europe, earning his high school diploma in 1979 from the Ecole Internationale in Geneva, Switzerland, followed in the next two years by language certificates from the Université de Genève, Universität, Wien, and the Università per Stranieri in Perugia. He returned to the United States in 1980 to pursue his Bachelor's degree in Art History at Yale University, where he wrote his senior thesis under the tutelage of Vincent Scully. He continued his studies in Art History at Columbia University, earning his M.A. in 1986 and his M.Phil. in 1987, focusing on 19th & 20th-Century European & American Art & Architecture. For his dissertation, Kirk ventured into the relatively unexplored territory (at least by non-Italians) of late 19th-century Rome, completing his Ph.D. with a dissertation on the "Church, State & Architecture, The Palazzo di Giustizia of 19th-century Rome" in 1997 supervised by Robin Middleton.

In 1988, Kirk began his longstanding commitment to sharing his knowledge about Rome and Italy with American students (eventually hundreds each year), teaching in the Department of Arts & Humanities at the American University at Rome up until his death. His dramatic, even theatrical, lecturing style earned him rave reviews wherever he taught. He served as a guest lecturer at numerous prestigious institutions across the United States and Europe and as a visiting professor for three summers at the Savannah College of Art and Design between 1997 and 2001.

Modern Italian architecture and urbanism remained the focus of Kirk's research throughout his career, leading to a number of articles and book chapters. He was keenly interested in the relationship between built form and politics, particularly in Rome, and the formation of Italian national identity. He also explored how large-scale urban interventions altered conceptions of the city, such as his 2006 article in *The Art Bulletin* examining the impact the Via della Conciliazione had on perceptions of St. Peter's. Other publications examined a broad range of topics relating to modern Italian cities, including the influence of Piranesi on Italian modernists, the relationship between archeological science and its reception by a broader public, and the challenges of reconciling cultural heritage with Fascist rationalism in Florence. Kirk is best known as the author of the two-volume book on *The Architecture of Modern Italy* (2005). It was the first comprehensive survey of the

continuities of Italian architecture across the last two and a half centuries, from Piranesi to Renzo Piano, accentuating the continuous and coherent nature of architectural production in Italy especially as it served the emerging political state. At the time of his death, Kirk was embarking on a book project in collaboration with this author on the urban transformation of Rome during the late 19th century and the new perceptions of the city as the capital of the nation.

Kirk is survived by his parents and siblings and his partner, Marcello Barbanera.

Robin B. Williams, Savannah College of Art and Design