JURY comments: 
At a moment when many architects are interested in history, this is a rare house to hit a note of authenticity and not simply stylistic revival. The architect knows the traditional language of architecture and deploys it quite well, and also knows when to slow down. This is a small house; its scale of detail is in proportion to its size. The interiors are restrained and quite successful. The lighted newel post acts as a beacon in the house to measure its comings and goings.
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1997 Design Awards

SoNo Revitalization, South Norwalk, CT
Beinfield Wagner Architects, South Norwalk, CT

Jury comments: This is a portrait of the artist as urban catalyst: reinventing downtown as downtown rather than as an ersatz mall. The architects were involved at many levels – developing, political, leasing and find tenants. There were not a lot of resources used here, except for the imagination. The idea of the plan is to make an appearance of improvement, as if the downtown never looked so good. All of its parts sing in harmony; there isn’t an institutional look to it. Its idea is to rebuild the city.
1997 Design Awards

Pool House, West Hartford, CT
David Kriegel, bnk Architects, PLLC, New York, NY

Jury comments: This pool house is deceptively simple, with references to Aalto, Wright and others. It proves Leonardo’s dictum: “large spaces are for small minds.” The house is both simple and complex at the same time. Each of its primary materials is appropriate to its specific functional use and structure.
Jury comments: This addition to a modest house is modest in scale; yet lyrical in its blending of wood structure, natural light and function. Unlike most additions, it succeeds by divorcing itself from the existing structure spatially by the use of a circulation corridor. A great transformation.
Jury comments: A true project of the 21st century where architectural innovation must and will address the built environment. The use of the large green areas separating heavy-duty industrial facilities from the road is good. The new bifurcated circulation spine bisects the site longitudinally, providing a single loaded vehicle corridor serving the two separate site levels. Most architecture is of building things. This is a subtraction, a removal of the unnecessary to create a park.
Jury comments: Very well sited, the law school anchors the campus at its outermost edge. The successful creation of an enclosed public space of this type is rare. It has a kind of delightful English eccentricity in character. The tower is quite handsome.
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1997 Design Awards

Molinoff Residence, Weston, CT
Ferris Architects, Westport, CT

Photographer: Michael Moran

Jury comments: The jury appreciated the lyrical and free form assemblage and underlying strength of organization and structure of the house. It is rare to see such a livable floor plan married to a controlled composition: one piece holds together all the various geometries. It all works together beautifully; all its shapes make sense.
Jury comments: What is noteworthy, after a day of looking at large, self conscious projects, is that this project, which takes the oldest cliché in the world, the seafood restaurant, turns everything on its side. It evokes this wonderful idea of an old-fashioned seafood restaurant, with none of its clichés. It has a beautiful use of color. This is what architects really do; this is the built environment, reconstituted. Architecture can be fun and does not always have to be profound.
Jury comments: At a time when architects seem to have little to contribute to the reinvention of downtown America, the Aronoff Center helps rebuild the fabric and life of the city. A plainly Midwestern building, it is not embarrassed to be downtown. When lit up at night, the theater just spills out into the street, but also draws the street in. The lobby is transparent. All its activities can be seen; there is a nice progression between the multi-height lobby and theater.
Jury comments: This is an excruciatingly complex site problem, well solved, clustering the vertical core services, as back up to open office plates arcing at the edge of the new plaza. It is skillfully articulated by the curtain wall. The enormous tower is unquestionably visible, but is tamed and made almost friendly by landscape elements. The wall of the plaza is really lovely. The wood veneer of the interior wall is seen through the glazing, is warm and humanizes the interior space.
Jury comments: The architect was called on to pull together many different and sometimes conflicting goals, and he did so successfully. The chapel is nicely done. This is a serious piece of architecture and an admirable urban intervention.
Jury comments: Simple materials are deployed here creatively to humanize a facility for troubled youth between the ages of twelve and fourteen. It is well planned and graciously supportive of the institution’s mission.
Jury Comments: The stable is a beautifully simple volume of space, well proportioned and conscientiously executed. This small project is an example of how it is possible to carry something through completely when one is allowed a free hand. For its small size, it possesses a monumental dignity, with beautiful use of woods on both interior and exterior. A great two-horse garage!