



WORLD ACCOMPLISHMENT

TEÓFILO VICTORIA

This is a bittersweet honor: to be presenting this final award, the World Accomplishment Award, to Teófilo Victoria - long admired, and now sorely missed.

There are many here tonight who knew Teófilo as a good friend, a colleague in the profession, teacher and mentor. He was also of course part of a talented family, some of whom are with us this evening - Maria de la Guardia, his wife and partner, and their sons Teó, Tasio, and Eugenio. We know you were his first priority. Your presence this evening cheers our remembrance of a friend who had a significant impact on the profession.

"Family, Architecture, Teaching, Learning, and Traveling", in that order, were Teófilo's passions according to Maria.

Teófilo's dedication to the profession and in particular to classical and traditional architecture had a varied provenance. His childhood in Cartagena, Colombia where military history and architecture mixed reflecting the profession's beginnings, set the stage for his fascination with the idea of the New World. The Rhode Island School of Design took him to Rome where he became friends with the Ancients. And his years with University of Miami students honed the endeavor of reconciling old and new in cities and architecture.

At the University, the young professor's extra-curricular late-night lessons about Rome gave way to the semester-in-Venice (and later Rome) program, and then to the more adventurous Open City Studio - leading students and faculty colleagues to reside and study design throughout Europe, among the ancient riches of Greece, to Central and South America, South Africa, China, Japan, and so on. Lessons in the embedded character of cultures and their visual identities became a theme that was documented in the book *Between Two Towers*, and that continues to resonate.

These experiences were filtered through a global perspective, in mind and spirit, inspiring the integration of historical experience in contemporary creation. The New World and the Old: the American house as the Renaissance Palazzo, the skyscraper - this Biltmore - playing the role of city monument like the Giralda in Sevilla. The magical reality of the New World, Colombia, Miami, Key West, and the Caribbean islands, with shared geography, climate, landscape, and construction methods - spawned a concept Teófilo often referenced - the Inaugural Moment, the first colonial response to the pre-settlement condition of a place.

Such was the condition he encountered as one of the Night Crew that planned Seaside - a return to traditional urbanism, and to traditional and classical architecture that became an international movement. Teófilo was the first Town Architect of that remote Panhandle outpost, guiding the design and construction of its early buildings and setting a standard for emulation.

Teófilo and Maria's work in South Florida and the Caribbean has been published, exhibited, and premiated prolifically, here and abroad: the Ziff House, Great Abaco's Schooner Bay houses and its Black Fly Lodge, and a roster of townhouses that inspired Coral Gables to add a new category to its zoning code. Exploring in practice as well as in academia the Mediterranean roots of Caribbean settlements, he gave us the insight that Florida is more part of the Caribbean than of the continental United States, a perspective that continues to influence the architects and designers of our region.

Beyond teaching and practice, civic life further enriched Teófilo's legacy. As a member of the Florida Chapter of the Institute for Classical Architecture and Art, he initiated the Chapter awards program. The Addison Mizner awards were first held in 2012, of course including recognition for pedagogy and student work! He was the Chapter's fourth president.

Other civic contributions include the documentation of its historic buildings for the City's record with many semesters-worth of students' field measured drawings. And to support a City Commissioner's concern for the diminishment of appreciation for the City's Mediterranean architecture, he worked with the Coral Gables Museum to establish a lecture series for public education.

Tonight, here in "the skyscraper beyond the jungle" as he once wrote, we are grateful for Teófilo Victoria's legacy and our memories of time together.

And in this tribute to Teófilo we honor also Maria de la Guardia his partner and wife, who shared, supported, and continues his dedication to truth, goodness, and beauty.

*Presented by Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk
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