

PALLADIANA

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CENTER FOR
PALLADIAN STUDIES
IN AMERICA



Second annual Charleston symposium, tour

Vitruviana 2013 announces speakers to include Rybczynski, Beltramini, Loth

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► 18th century avant-garde



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► Ireland, Bremo, Vitruviana



News from the Center 1, 8

Witold Rybczynski, author of *The Perfect House*, and Guido Beltramini, director of the Andrea Palladio International Center for the Study of Architecture (CISA) in Vicenza, Italy, will anchor the stellar slate of speakers lined up for VITRUVIANA 2013, the second edition of CPSA's annual international symposium in Charleston, South Carolina.

The symposium on April 12, 2013, will be followed the next day by a bus tour of architectural treasures in the Carolina lowcountry south of Charleston, including Sheldon Church, the first American building based on a Roman temple, and the Walterboro courthouse designed by Robert Mills, architect of the Washington Monument in Washington, D. C.

Seating for both events is limited. Last year's tour was sold out, so early registration is recommended.

The symposium will be held in the City Council Chambers at Charleston City Hall, a building originally designed by Gabriel Manigault in 1800 for the Bank of the United States.

Distinguished speakers from five states will join Rybczynski and Beltramini on the program, including CPSA vice president Calder Loth, editor of *Virginia Landmarks Register*; Louis Nelson of the University of Virginia, author of *The Beauty of Holiness*; David L. Ames, director of the University of Delaware's Center for Historic Architecture and Design, author of *Design and Historic Preservation*; Robert Russell, director of the College of Charleston's Department of Art History, Max Hill, III, a private scholar, and John Hebble of Virginia Commonwealth University.

The VITRUVIANA series is designed to present program topics across the spectrum of early American architecture, but the venue in Charleston offers a remarkable opportunity to visit many important examples within blocks of the lecture hall.

Co-sponsoring VITRUVIANA 2013 with CPSA are Drayton Hall, an historic site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and historic preservation programs of Clemson University and the College of Charleston.

Complete registration details will be posted on the CPSA website (www.palladiancenter.org) and will be mailed to members in February 2013.

Online registration is available through Drayton Hall at http://draytonhall.org/visit/buy_tickets/ under the heading 'Special Event Ticketing.'

Plan Now for 2013 Events

2013

- Apr. 12 VITRUVIANA 2013
2nd Annual Symposium
'Charleston and the Development
of American Architecture'
Charleston, South Carolina
co-sponsored by CPSA
- Apr. 13 Tour: Carolina Lowcountry
Charleston, South Carolina
co-sponsored by CPSA
- Sept. 5 Fall issue, *Palladiana*
- Nov. 15 VCU 21st Annual
Architectural Symposium
Richmond, Virginia
co-sponsored by CPSA

More events are always in planning.
Stay up-to-date at www.palladiancenter.org

The rich history of Longfellow House masks its complex architectural roots

by John Hebble and Charles Brownell

For a house which connects Palladio, George Washington and Hiawatha, and which epitomizes an architectural style spanning at least four of the American colonies, Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts, now provokes surprisingly little discussion. FIG. 1

The house was built by John Vassall in 1759 and later passed to Andrew Craigie and then his widow before being acquired in 1843 by Harvard professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose iconic poems include 'The Song of Hiawatha' and 'Paul Revere's Ride.'

The façade of Longfellow House is highlighted by four giant-order Ionic pilasters with angled volutes, a motif it shares with certain Southern houses such as the lost Pinckney Mansion (c. 1745) [FIG. 2] in Charleston, South Carolina, and Virginia's Nanzatico Plantation (c. 1790). However, Longfellow House actually stands in sharp contrast to those more orthodox Southern examples, which feature a large pediment spanning all four of their equally spaced pilasters. At Longfellow House the Ionic pilasters at the left and right are set in from the corners of the house, while the two central pilasters are massed closer together and topped by a smaller pediment, forming a small portico. Because the pediment is supported only by the two central pilasters, the term *distyle* portico seems appropriate to distinguish it from the *tetrastyle* porticos at Pinckney Mansion and Nanzatico.

The *tetrastyle* portico, common in the South, exemplifies early American Palladian design. A careful look, however, confirms that Longfellow House is not orthodox Palladian, a point emphasized by the lunette window which punctuates the center of its pediment—a decidedly Baroque feature.

The Longfellow House's distyle portico owes much to the decades earlier Foster-Hutchison House (1690-1692), the grandest house in



Fig. 1. Longfellow House (1759) in Cambridge, Mass., blended Palladian elements with other architectural traditions in an amalgam popular throughout the colonies.

colonial Boston. FIG. 3. The façade incorporates a giant order—topped with angle-volute Ionic capitals—with one pilaster pulled in from each end and a pair of pilasters at the center. Just like the later Longfellow House, the Foster-Hutchinson House also includes a broken entablature, although it does not cap its distyle portico with a triangular pediment.

The Foster-Hutchinson House is an American example of a 17th-century British style known as Artisan Mannerism, which spread from the circle around Inigo Jones, the founder of British Palladianism. Eventually, the vernacular style came to the colonies.

Yet Longfellow House has distinguished roots in English Baroque as well. Springing from Sir Christopher Wren and his followers, English Baroque architecture enjoyed a relatively short lifespan in 17th and 18th-century Britain. Drawing from a vast span of styles, English Baroque incorporated some Palladian themes, but without Palladian orthodoxy.

England experienced a boom in construction between 1680 and 1730, and with it came an abundance of distyle porticos. Even after the initial explosion of the style, Provincial Baroque—and the distyle portico—remained popular outside of London. One of the finest architects to spring from England's country house boom was Nicholas Hawksmoor. Building a considerable architectural pedigree, he worked as a clerk under Sir Christopher Wren and later collaborated with Sir John Vanbrugh. His Northamptonshire country house, Easton Neston, is a supreme example of both Hawksmoor's work and English Baroque architecture in general. While the front and rear façades are impressive in their own right, the north and south façades both feature the same distinctive arrangement of pilasters—two at edges and two forming a distyle portico at the center—as the front façade of Longfellow House. The central portico is even capped with a broken triangular pediment.

Perhaps the most notable antecedent of Longfellow House, however, is Buckingham House (c. 1703), designed by William Talman and William Winde. FIG. 4. Buckingham House is the core—after much 19th-century enlargement and remodeling—of today's grand Buckingham Palace. As at Easton Neston, the distyle portico does not appear in the central façade. This time it is found in the wing structures, where it is recessed.

Longfellow House is not the earliest example of the distyle motif and English Baroque on the American side of the Atlantic. The King Hooper House (1754) in Danvers, Mass. (which was removed to Washington, D. C., in 1935 and renamed The Lindens) predated it by five years. FIG. 5. The similarities to the later Longfellow House are numerous and evident. The Lindens' variation on the distyle portico features two giant engaged three-quarter columns tightly flanking the central entrance. Topped by two Corinthian capitals, the orders support a triangular pediment highlighted by a centered window.

In the year after Longfellow House, Lady Mary Pepperell, widow of Sir William Pepperell, built a home in Kittery Point, Maine. Her late husband, who was a loyal English subject, left her with a sizable sum of money. Like Longfellow House, Lady Pepperell House features two monumental pilasters tightly flanking a central entrance to form a distyle portico. The pilasters are topped with angle-volute Ionic capitals. Resting atop the orders is a broken entablature and triangular pediment—this time accentuated with the date of construction rather than by a window.

Another house constructed by a loyal subject of the crown was the Apthorp House (1760), also in Cambridge, Mass. FIG. 6. Apthorp House is an extravagant residence built by the Rev. East Apthorp, a member of one of the wealthiest families in Massachusetts, one year after returning to the Colonies following his studies in Oxford. Once again, the entrance facade features four monumental pilasters—two pulled slightly in from the sides and two forming a central distyle portico. Furthermore, the pilasters are topped with angle-volute Ionic capitals which support a broken entablature and a triangular pediment. Later construction added an upper story, but the original form of the house is preserved in a 1761 drawing by the great academic and future president of Yale, Ezra Stiles.

Perhaps just as important as the physical links between the houses in the Longfellow group is the link between the patrons and builders. In these early examples, we are looking at the homes of loyal Englishmen. The builders of these houses, having strong ties to the Crown and considerable wealth, brought the best British traditions to the Colonies. Architecture was no exception. In his study of loyalism in Massachusetts, historian James Stark names Hutchinson, Apthorp, and Vassall as some of the colony's most prominent supporters of British rule.

Located some distance away in New York, the next member of the Longfellow type is also an Apthorp House. Built in 1764 by Charles Ward Apthorp, the older brother of Cambridge's East Apthorp, the house further illustrates the migration of the Longfellow facade-type. Like both of its Massachusetts relatives, the Apthorp House features two central pilasters, topped with Ionic capitals, which form a distyle portico. Resting atop the orders is a triangular pediment, this time with a solid entablature, punctured by a centered lunette window.

The most striking feature of the New York Apthorp House is also the most dissimilar to Longfellow House. The central entrance is sunken into the facade with a Palladian window over the doorway. This recessed treatment of the distyle portico belongs to the line of descent from Buckingham House. Both buildings are capped by a central triangular pediment flanked by dormer windows. These elements, being part of English Baroque vernacular, come from the fashions of wealthy English patrons.

Continued on the following page



Fig. 2. Pinckney Mansion (c. 1747, burned 1861)



Fig. 3. Foster-Hutchinson House (1690-1692), Boston, Mass.

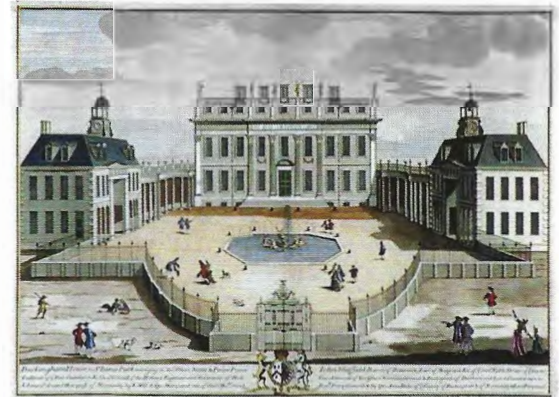


Fig. 4. Buckingham House (c. 1703, expanded 1700s), London, England, had recessed distyle porticos in the two wings.



Fig. 5. King Hooper House (1754), Danvers, Mass., was removed to Washington, D. C., in 1935 and renamed The Lindens.

Continued from the previous page

As these four examples show, the façade type exemplified by Longfellow House can be found widely in colonial and post-colonial New England. One state in particular, though, has a very special history and relationship with the style. Connecticut contains numerous early 19th century derivations and cousins to Longfellow House. The style has even taken on a new life in the state, becoming a colloquial archetype.



Fig. 6. Ezra Stiles, drawing (1761, detail) East Apthorp House (1760), Cambridge, Mass.



Fig. 7. Prudence Crandall House, Canterbury, Conn. (1805)



Fig. 8. Greenhouse, George Washington's Mount Vernon (1787, burned 1835, rebuilt 1951). The wings were added in 1791 and 1792.

The small town of Canterbury in eastern Connecticut, contains some of the most striking examples of the Longfellow House style. Because of its prevalence in the town, the Longfellow House derivatives have earned the moniker 'Canterbury Style.' In recent years, the town has become an award-winning architectural travel destination. Despite its acclaim, the Canterbury Style has not received serious scholarly attention, and has not been linked to Longfellow House.

The Captain John Clark House (1802) is the first of two Canterbury examples. It features the same flanking order motif found on Longfellow House. The central Doric three-quarter engaged columns form a distyle portico. Resting atop the orders is a broken entablature and triangular pediment, accented by a centered window.

The second Canterbury example is the Prudence Crandall House (c. 1805) [FIG. 7], presumably designed by the same unknown architect as Captain John Clark House. Prudence Crandall House features a distyle portico in which two pilasters support a triangular pediment with a centered lunette window.

Longfellow House and its contemporaries, together with the Canterbury houses, demonstrate the spread and transformation of a basic façade-type within New England. The style is not limited to the Northeast, however. In Virginia, one can find an example of the distyle portico built by one of the most famous inhabitants of Longfellow House. An exercise in elegance and reduction, two central pilasters extend from simple bases and are topped by Doric capitals. The pilasters support a triangular pediment with a broken entablature and Baroque window. Clearly a cousin to Longfellow House, this brick example was designed by none other than General George Washington. Washington used the Cambridge house as his headquarters during the siege of Boston. His interpretation, the Greenhouse at Mount Vernon [FIG. 8], was completed 1787, and clearly shows the migration of the distyle portico.

Longfellow House and its contemporaries were built by some of the most prominent loyalist families in the American Colonies. The occupation of Longfellow House by General Washington, however, transformed the facade-type into a symbol of American patriotism. Less than a century later, the house would become central to the Colonial Revival movement. Around the United States Centennial celebrations in 1876, Longfellow House re-emerged as an icon of the American Revolution and inspired numerous derivations and interpretations.

Versions of the Longfellow House were fixtures of the national stage in the 19th and early-20th centuries. Just as with the original colonial examples, however, details morphed as they were modified to suit individual tastes and needs. In 1893, Peabody & Stearns designed the Massachusetts State Pavilion for the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. Incorporating themes from Longfellow House—including a modified version of the distyle portico—the building is an amalgam of Massachusetts architectural highlights. Later, a more faithful recreation of Longfellow House was built at the 1895 Cotton States International Exposition in Atlanta. In 1898, a version with asymmetrical Victorian windows was designed by the Bangor, Maine, firm Crowell, Lancaster & Higgins, and a two-thirds replica appeared in Minnesota in 1906. Aberdeen, South Dakota, had a copy by 1910.

Spreading through the Northeast, South, and Midwest, the Longfellow House facade-type, with its distinctive distyle portico, has become a truly national style. Its notable owners and inhabitants have made the building an icon of America's colonial past—though it is not just a home for famous Americans. The Longfellow House is the key to unlocking a distinct, American facade-type. The house and its derivatives illustrate the dangers of simple classification, but also the innovative and unique ways in which a style can evolve and transform. After a century and a half, Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House is ready to be recognized as America's finest example of Colonial-Artisan-Mannerist-Baroque-Palladianism.

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18th century avant-garde

Charleston's second St. Philip's was a pioneer in church design

by David Gobel

Avant-garde in its design and lasting in its influence, the second St. Philip's Church built in Charleston, South Carolina, was a bold trailblazer in the history of church building in America. FIG. 1. In the opinion of the Rev. William Bull, writing in 1723, the building exceeded 'any that are in his Majesty's Dominions in America.' Edmund Burke proclaimed St. Philip's to be of 'very handsome taste, exceeding everything of that kind which we have in America.' Architect Robert Mills claimed in 1826 that it had 'more of design in its arrangement than any other of our ancient buildings.' Sadly, the second St. Philip's was destroyed by fire in 1835. The current structure—the *third* St. Philip's—was immediately rebuilt on the same site and retains the essential features of its predecessor, but differs in several noteworthy features, including its taller and more monumental steeple. FIG. 4.

The second St. Philip's Church was a remarkable structure which emerged from a period of intense interest in church construction and design. In 1711, just as St. Philip's was being conceived, Parliament passed the famous 'Commissioners' Act' to build fifty churches in greater London. Writing in the same year to a friend and colleague on the Commission for the Building of Fifty New City Churches, Sir Christopher Wren penned some remarkably apt advice on church architecture:

As to the Situation of the Churches, I should propose they be brought as forward as possible into the larger and more open Streets, not in obscure Lanes, nor where Coaches will be much obstructed in the Passage. . . . Such Fronts as happen to lie most open in View should be adorn'd with Porticos, both for beauty and Convenience; which, together with handsome Spires, or Lanterns, rising in good Proportion above the neighboring Houses . . . may be of sufficient Ornamentation to the Town. . . .

Few individual architects have had as great an influence on the history of church design as has Wren; he is surpassed, perhaps, only by Andrea Palladio in this regard. Few churches exemplify Wren's views on church building better than Charleston's second church of St. Philip, begun the same year he wrote this famous letter.

The *first* St. Philip's had been built around 1682-83 at the intersection of what are now Broad and Meeting streets, the site of the present St. Michael's. A rendering of 1711 shows that first church as a simple, box-like building with no tower or porch. Following acts to establish the Anglican Church as the state church of the colony, the congregation outgrew the capacity of the old church and, in response, the legislature passed in March 1711 'An Act



FIG. 1. West elevation, second St. Philip's Church, Charleston, S. C., published in *Gentleman's Magazine* (London, June 1735).

for the erecting of a new brick church in Charles Town to be the parish church of St. Philip's.' The church's minister, Gideon Johnston, led a committee charged with building a 'Church of Such Height, Dimensions and of Such Materials and in such Modoll and form as they shall think fitting.'

A new and larger site was selected on the highest ground in the city, near the northern wall. Construction was underway by the spring of 1713 when Johnston traveled to London to solicit funds for its completion. After a series of setbacks, including a destructive hurricane in 1714 and Johnston's untimely death in 1716, construction was reinvigorated by the arrival of Francis Nicholson as royal governor in 1721. Under his leadership and patronage the church was nearly complete in 1723 when services were begun, although the tower, according to Frederick Dalcho's 1820 account, was not completed until 1733.

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Several written descriptions and a variety of drawings and paintings record the appearance of the second St. Philip's. Robert Mills, whose description is among the most thorough, tells us that the church was 'built of brick and stuccoed to resemble stone,' and that its plan presented 'the form of a cross, the foot of which, constituting the nave, is seventy-four feet long and sixty-two feet wide. The arms form the vestibule, tower, and porticoes at each end, projecting twelve feet beyond the sides, and surmounted by a pediment. The head of the cross is a portico of four massy square pillars.' The classically designed tower, he tells us, was 113 feet tall.

Mill's description validates much of what appeared in an engraved elevation of the west façade published in London's *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1753. A drawing of about 1760 by Charleston silversmith Thomas You and a painting by William Hall of 1820 further document the second church's exterior appearance. Mills also described the interior, which, he wrote,

... presents an elevation of a lofty double arcade supporting upon an entablature a vaulted ceiling in the middle. The piers are ornamented with fluted Corinthian pilasters rising to the top of the arches, the key stones of these arches are sculptured with cherubim in relief; over the centre arch, on the south side are some figures in heraldic form representing the infant colony imploring the protection of the king.

John Blake White's painting of the sanctuary, made soon after it was destroyed in the 1835 fire, depicts a stately space, sophisticated in its use of classical motifs, sumptuous in its decoration, and reflective of contemporary Anglican liturgical practices. The present church's sanctuary differs principally in its extended chancel and use of columns and impost blocks to support a nave arcade, rather than the more ponderous piers with pilasters and arches found in the second church.

The designer of the second St. Philip's is unknown. It is probable that Governor Nicholson, who was already well known for his work as an architectural and urban designer and his patronage of Anglican churches in the colonies, contributed directly to the design. Still, an 18th century writer claimed that St. Philip's 'was built from the Model of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp.' Even more similar, we should note, is the London church of *St Magnus the Martyr*, designed by Christopher Wren between 1668-87 (the steeple dates to 1706), but also inspired by the Jesuit church in Antwerp.

More generally, the second St. Philip's reflected design ideals prevalent in early 18th-century London when Parliament passed the Commissioners' Act to build fifty churches. The fourteen churches which resulted were the product of intense investigations by the Commissioners and the inventive genius of their designers, including Nicholas Hawksmoor, Thomas Archer and James Gibbs.



FIG. 2. Thomas You, drawing (c. 1760) south elevation, second St. Philip's Church, c. 1760.



FIG. 3. John Blake White, Interior, St. Philip's Church (c. 1835), oil on canvas.

St. Philip's itself should be seen as an indirect product of the Commissioners' Act. Supporting this view, Louis Nelson has offered compelling evidence that Gideon Johnston had direct contact with the commissioners during his stay in London. We are reminded as well, that St. Philip's possessed many features recommended by Wren in his comments to the commissioners.

St. Philip's was not the first American church to have a steeple. Classically designed towers with bells, clocks and spires begin to appear in European churches in the early 17th-century, especially in the Low Countries; they became definitive features of Wren's post-fire churches in London; and, beginning with the Brattle Street Meeting House in Boston in 1699, steeples rapidly became *de rigueur* in colonial American churches. The second St. Philip's modest clock-tower with a cupola was the first of many steeples in Charleston; so many that, by the mid-19th century, the town's spiky skyline prompted visitors to christen it 'The Holy City.'



FIG. 4. The present-day third St. Philip's Church (c. 1835), sits on the site of its predecessor, projecting boldly into Church Street.

The triple-portico on St. Philip's was unprecedented in the colonies. In fact, there is little evidence of porticos of any kind prior to its construction. Even in England projecting porches were rarely found on churches before the reign of Queen Anne, though they became standard equipment on the Commissioners' churches. Wren recommended that churches have 'porticoes for the fronts most in view.' John Vanbrugh advised that churches 'be adorned with porticoes (both useful and magnificent).' The introduction of the freestanding portico in England can be traced to Inigo Jones' Tuscan portico on St. Paul's Covent Garden in 1631 and to the monumental porch he added to Old St. Paul's cathedral two years later. It is noteworthy however, that Jones' porticoes drew inspiration, at least in part, from the work of Andrea Palladio.

The temple-front portico comes readily to mind when we think of Palladio's villas, but it also appears on three of his church designs, including a project for the church of the Redentore in Venice in 1577; a project for San Petronio in Bologna in 1578; and his Pantheon-inspired Tempio in Maser of 1580. Although it is unlikely that any of these influenced the design of St. Philip's directly, interest and knowledge about Palladio was thick in the air in London and in Charleston as St. Philip's was being built. The arrangement of the porticos on St. Philip's is, of course, reminiscent of Palladio's La Rotonda, famous for its four identical porches. Interestingly, Wren had designed a four-sided church imitating Villa Rotonda for a site in Lincoln's Inn Fields around 1697. Louis Nelson offers yet another hypothesis about the source of St. Philip's triple portico, suggesting that it was influenced by reconstructions of the Temple of Jerusalem, which had become a subject of intense study by theologians and

architects alike in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Wren himself speculated that 'Herod built the Atrium Gentium. . . to be a triple portico [with] thick Pillars of the grosser Proportions.'

Whatever its source, the triple portico of St. Philip's is a powerful architectural statement.

The visual power of the triple portico is enhanced by the fact that it stands in the middle of the street. Why did the building committee interrupt the street grid with this monumental building? An obvious answer is that the church, with its south facing portico creates a visual terminus, an aesthetic effect that had gained great currency among architects and city planners in Britain and the continent during the Baroque era. A colonial American example of such 'Baroque' planning can be found in the church of St. Anne in Annapolis (1696-1704) on Church Circle in a town plan laid out by none other than Francis Nicholson.

Charleston's second St. Philip's led the way for other churches, and not just Anglican ones, to build steeples and porticoes and to impose themselves into the public urban spaces in such a way as to become both a witness to the institution of the church and an ornament to the city. The most immediate of its progeny is Charleston's own church of St. Michael's, built in 1752-62 on the former site of the city's *first* St. Philip's. FIG. 5. Often considered an imitation of Gibbs' hugely influential London church of St. Martin in the Fields, there can be no doubt that it also owes a tremendous debt to the second St. Philip's. Its steeple, classical portico and dramatic urban location derive from the mother church even as they amplify and refine these features. St. Michael's epitomizes a formula for church building that pervades the American landscape, but its innovative predecessor deserves to be recognized as the more intrepid trailblazer of American church building.



FIG. 5. St. Michael's Church (1752-1762), at the corner of Broad and Meeting Streets, was heavily influenced by nearby St. Philip's.

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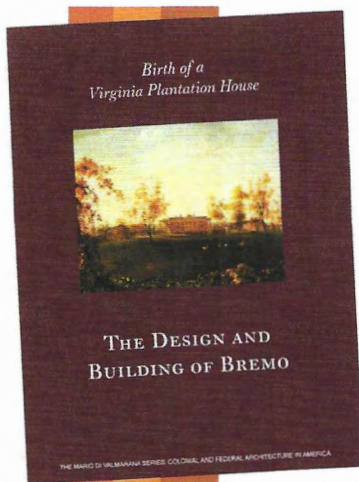
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CPSA launches *Birth of a Virginia Plantation House* book with gala reception and booksigning at Breemo Plantation



Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Johnston, Jr., hosted a gala reception at Breemo Plantation in November 2012 to celebrate CPSA's publication of *Birth of a Virginia Plantation House: The Design and Building of Breemo* by Peter Hodson, edited and with an essay by Calder Loth.

The book captures a unique moment in the evolution of American culture, when the new nation began to advance its own increasingly independent ideas about architecture and design.

This initial volume in the Mario di Valmarana Memorial Series is available to CPSA members at a discount at <http://www.palladiancenter.org/birthbook.html>. The edition is limited to 500 copies.

Fall tour to Ireland educated and delighted its participants

Eighteen contented tourists returned in September from the unique 8-day tour of Palladianism in Ireland organized by the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects in cooperation with CPSA.

The tour leader was Alistair Rowan, former Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford, president of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, and editor of Yale Press' *Buildings of Ireland* series.

Dr. Rowan's extensive network of contacts opened many special doors for the group, and his boundless knowledge of Irish architecture, history and culture was a daily source of amazement. (Shown page 1: *The Casino at Marino, c. 1760-1775.*)

CPSA has served U. S. Palladianism for 34 years

The Center for Palladian Studies in America, Inc., provides its members a vehicle for appreciating and learning more about Palladio and the architecture inspired by his work. A diverse program addresses members at all levels of knowledge and interest:

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In furtherance of its goals, the Center organizes symposia, lectures, and study tours on Palladian subjects, publishes books and periodicals, sponsors exhibitions, and makes grants to scholars and others.

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