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**New Fleet Library at Rhode Island School of Design Earns  
2007 AIA/ALA Library Building Award**

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**American Institute of Architects (AIA)  
and the American Library Association (ALA)  
honor the Fleet Library at RISD  
as one of the finest examples of library design in 2007**

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PROVIDENCE, RI , April 17, 2007 – Rhode Island School of Design’s Fleet Library has been awarded one of nine 2007 AIA/ALA Library Building Awards, bestowed biennially to celebrate the finest examples of library design by architects licensed in the U.S. The winning projects for 2007 range from a public elementary school library to a presidential library, all sharing the successful resolution of their patrons’ needs into harmonious and beautiful designs.

Designed by the Boston architecture firm Office dA, the Fleet Library at RISD occupies the first two floors of the former bank and office building at 15 Westminster Street in Providence. The project required the design team, led by principals Nader Tehrani (RISD ‘86) and Monica Ponce de León, to preserve the grandeur of the historic 1917 interior of the first-floor banking hall while dramatically increasing the useable square footage and accommodating current standards for accessibility and safety. The architects were further challenged to emphasize environmentally sustainable materials and work within a tight budget.

With great sensitivity to adaptive reuse, the architects transformed the historic beaux arts banking hall into a welcoming, full-service art and design library. The facility occupies the first two floors of a 12-story building that was recently renovated to house 500 RISD students (approx. 22% of its student population) on the upper floors. In order to preserve the integrity of the existing historic room and fulfill the new program, the architects designed two freestanding pavilions at either end of the room, providing study spaces, a reading room with a “living room” lounge area, and a circulation island. The library also features several dedicated reading rooms, special viewing rooms for video and other media collections, a reading balcony and a new café across the foyer.

AIA/ALA Library Building Award jury members said, “This restrained architectural intervention into an historic structure is skillfully done while maintaining distinctive contemporary strivings all its own. Beautifully detailed and crafted, its stepped platform, like the Spanish Steps of Rome, adds a welcome sociability lacking in so many other libraries. Beneath it, the private, recessed computer alcoves and work stations have their own allure.”

A key component of RISD’s recently concluded Future by Design capital campaign, the Fleet Library at RISD offers nearly three times the space of its predecessor on Benefit Street, with seating for more than 200 in the main reading room and open stacks for 90 percent of RISD’s collection. RISD was thrilled to have the “opportunity to revitalize one of downtown Providence’s most beautiful buildings as our new library,” said President Roger Mandle.

The 2007 jury consisted of Jury Chair Jefferson B. Riley, FAIA, of Centerbrook Architects and Planners, LLC; Edward Dean, AIA of Chong Partners Architecture; Anne M. Larsen of Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners; Wendy Pautz, AIA of LMN Architects; Elizabeth A. Titus, Ph.D. of New Mexico State University Library; and Ken S. Weil of South Huntington Library. The recipients will be recognized at the 2007 ALA conference in Washington, D.C. June 22-26, 2007.

Other winners include: Robin Hood Foundation Library for P.S. 192, New York City, by Gluckman Mayner Architects; Desert Broom Branch Library for the City of Phoenix, by richard + bauer architecture; Shunde Library for the City Construction and Development Center of Shunde District, Foshan, China, by P&T Architects and Engineers Ltd; Ballard Library and Neighborhood Service Center for the Seattle Public Library, Seattle, by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson ; Santa Monica College Library Expansion & Renovation, Santa Monica, CA, by CO Architects; David Bishop Skillman Library for Lafayette College, Easton, PA, by Ann Beha Architects; William J. Clinton Presidential Center, Little Rock, AR, by Polshek Partnership Architects, LLP; and La Grande Bibliothèque, for the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, Montreal, by Patkau / Croft-Pelletier / Menkes Shooner Dagenais Architectes Associés.

RISD’s Fleet Library was also recently selected to receive a Providence Preservation Society Award for the “creative adaptation of a historic building for new use.” For more information and a video on the Fleet Library at RISD, go to [www.risd.edu/](http://www.risd.edu/) [www.risd.edu/campus\\_initiatives\\_library.htm](http://www.risd.edu/campus_initiatives_library.htm). To download high-resolution images of the library, go to [www.risd.edu/press](http://www.risd.edu/press).

**About RISD**

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has earned a worldwide reputation as the preeminent art and design college in the country. Today, with more than 17,000 alumni, the college enrolls roughly 1,900 undergraduates and 375 graduate students from the United States and almost 50 countries, offering degree programs in the fine arts, architecture, and design disciplines, and art education. Academic programs include research and design initiatives, the exploration of art criticism and contemporary cultural concerns, as well as international exchange programs. Each year, RISD hosts prominent and accomplished artists, critics, and authors to its campus. Included within the college is The RISD Museum of Art, which houses a world-class collection of art objects from Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome and art of all periods from Asia, Europe and the Americas, as well as the latest in contemporary art. For more information go to [www.risd.edu](http://www.risd.edu).

**About The American Institute of Architects**

For 150 years, members of The American Institute of Architects have worked with each other and their communities to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings and cityscapes. AIA members have access to the right people, knowledge, and tools to create better design, and through such resources and access, they help clients and communities make their visions real. [www.aia.org](http://www.aia.org).

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