Baltimore Nesting Place

Adam Gross and Eric Moss had big ideas for an Oriole stadium.

WHEN THE BALTIMORE Orioles decided to build a new baseball stadium, architectural firms around the country went to work, each vying to design the multi-million-dollar project. Meanwhile, Eric Moss, a 1987 SU graduate who was then a senior in architecture, decided to design a new stadium as his thesis project.

An avid baseball fan and native of the Baltimore area, Moss chose a project that he knew would hold his interest all year long. It ended up landing him a job and plastering him throughout Baltimore newspapers.

An unusual feature of Moss’s design was that—unlike many of the national architecture firms that had submitted proposals—Moss retained a turn-of-the-century, eight-story warehouse building already located on the stadium site. He incorporated the Baltimore landmark for use as the stadium’s right field wall, club offices, and as a buffer to the surrounding neighborhood. It was this idea that caught people’s attention.

As luck would have it, Adam Gross, a partner in the Baltimore design firm Ayers Saint Gross, was one of the jury members at Moss’s final thesis presentation last spring. His firm was also competing for the $250-million project.

Gross says he stumbled across Moss’s project the night before the thesis jury, when walking around SU’s architecture studio. “Out of the corner of my eye,” he says, “I saw this huge model. I did a triple-take, and walked over to it and it was a model of downtown Baltimore. I looked more closely and it was the model of the stadium site which we were currently working on. I discovered it was the thesis project of this young guy Eric Moss. The next day he had a wonderful review. I made him an offer and he came down to join us.”

Although Ayers Saint Gross’s final stadium plan (co-designed with other national firms) was not selected, it came in a very close second and was the design the Orioles actually preferred (the Maryland Stadium Authority had the ultimate say). Nevertheless, Moss’s thesis project brought Ayers Saint Gross a lot of positive press, says Gross. Warfield’s magazine, Baltimore Sun, and the Baltimore Sun magazine, were among the publications that featured Moss’s stadium design.

Gross, an SU architecture graduate himself (1978), joined Ayers Saint as a partner in 1984. He worked first for Perry Dean Rogers, an architecture firm in Boston, for nearly seven years. He made the decision to move to Baltimore “because it represented a city where there was no strong architectural presence, except for one large firm”—something he says is rare today. Ayers Saint’s academic nature and concern with high-quality design also appealed to him.

Today Gross serves as partner-in-charge of design at the 42-member firm, overseeing five to 15 projects at any one time. He also plays an important role in marketing Ayers Saint Gross and attracting new clients.

According to Ed Guntz, architecture critic for the Baltimore Sun, Gross is part of a new wave of talent in Baltimore. Like other young architects, Gross has brought a new energy to the city, says Guntz. He’s created a healthy, competitive atmosphere for design firms and he’s made a name for himself. Guntz says Gross “tries to be contextual, to design buildings that fit in the context of where they are placed.” He conducts “exhaustive studies” of the areas around a project site before designing the project itself—a positive trait Guntz says is wearing off on other members of Gross’s firm and Baltimore’s design community.

Ayers Saint Gross, which has been in continuous practice since 1915, is best known for its institutional projects. The firm has designed numerous buildings for colleges and universities and is now working on a $35-million physics and astronomy building for Johns Hopkins University. But, says Gross, the firm is also branching out to other clients, including city and state agencies and private developers. “We’re also taking an active role in urban design projects,” he says.
Edith Lank '47

House Calls

According to Edith Handler Lank, there are only two sure-fire topics in the world today: sex and real estate. Lank, however, only writes about the latter.

"When I go to a party," says Lank, a syndicated real estate columnist, "I feel like a doctor. People just back me into a corner and start asking me questions. Everybody has a real estate question or problem."

Her weekly House Calls column is a question-and-answer feature distributed by the Los Angeles Times Syndicate. Over 100 newspapers carry the column, including the Chicago Sun Times, Miami Herald, Houston Post, Los Angeles Times, Minneapolis Star, Dallas Morning News, and the San Antonio Light.

A former real estate broker, Lank began writing the column in 1976 when her local newspaper in Rochester, New York, started a real estate section. "I had to practically invent being a syndicated columnist," she says, "because I couldn't find any guidance anywhere." Lank distributed the column herself for 10 years before the syndicate took over distribution.

Editors like short columns, she says, and 800 words is a common length. "It's a little bit like writing a sonnet, because a lot of these are legal questions and you can't answer them in one sentence without being misleading," says Lank. "It's a real challenge to get it in a short space and still keep it clear and lively."

A 1947 SU graduate in journalism and English, Lank has written three books, including Modern Real Estate Practice in New York, the best-selling textbook on the topic in the state. She also teaches at St. John Fisher College and discusses real estate regularly on local and national radio and television programs. She has written numerous articles, in addition, for such publications as Time, The New Yorker, McCall's, Modern Maturity, and Real Estate Today.

And, says Lank "I did all of this after I turned 50. I had no idea that this career was waiting for me out there. I had not planned it at all."

Lisa Levy '70

Winning Idea

When Lisa Levy won $83,000 in a national advertising competition last October, her co-workers celebrated by throwing her a wine and salami party. Yes, wine and salami. After all, the ad she designed was for Hebrew National, a company that takes pride in its extra-lean cold-cuts.

Levy, a 31-year-old art director at the New York advertising agency Biederman and Company, saw the competition advertised in the New York Times Magazine. She came up with the idea for her ad by putting together some facts she already knew—that Hebrew prided itself on the low fat content of its salami (approximately 17 percent) and that the fat content of the average woman was slightly higher, between 20 to 25 percent.

Levy's award-winning ad features a sleek female model with the slogan "There's more fat on her than on our salami," in bold letters—right across the model's flat stomach. Levy compared a 79 percent fat-free woman to the salami, which Hebrew claims is 83 percent fat free. Her ad idea was one of 12,500 submitted by contestants last spring.

Levy, an avid health magazine subscriber, says she knew about the fat content of the average woman from reading her magazines. When she shared her ad idea with her co-workers, it was greeted with enthusiasm so she decided to submit it to the contest.

A 1978 graduate of SU's visual communication program, Levy has been working at Biederman for nearly six years. The 35-member firm handles $25 million in billings a year. Levy specializes in trade campaigns although her company does prepare advertising campaigns for commercial use. Before she joined the agency, Levy designed sheet music covers at Warner Brothers Music Publishing Company in New York City.

Since winning the competition, and the accompanying $83,000 in prize money, Levy says she has received more attention "than one human being ever deserves." But she hasn't let any of it go to her head. "I didn't go crazy with the money," she says. "Having it basically means peace of mind."

Roger Berkowitz '74

Legal and Fresh

New Englanders who leave the region rarely lose their appetite for fresh seafood, asserts Roger Berkowitz, and he should know. As co-owner and operations director of Legal Sea Foods Inc., Berkowitz operates six of the best seafood restaurants in Boston and the New England area.

Nearly 10 years ago, former customers who had moved away began asking Berkowitz to send them seafood. So Legal Sea Foods, a restaurant, became Legal Sea Foods, a mail-order company, too. That's right, they mail seafood and guarantee its freshness.

"It's become so regular," says Berkowitz, "that today we service all 50 states and numerous corporations with our mail order business."

Legal Sea Foods, which Berkowitz's grandfather started as a grocery store in 1904, now employs some 1,100 people. The company consists of six restaurants in the greater Boston area, a French vineyard, a fish processing and distribution center, and the mail order company.

The Today Show has called Legal Sea Foods the best seafood in America. It has won consecutive Travel/Holiday, Boston Globe, and Boston Magazine awards. Its wine list is noted as one of the country's top 100. In 1985 Legal Sea Foods was one of five restaurants in the nation selected to participate in the presidential inaugural festivity.

https://surface.syr.edu/sumagazine/v04/i03/12
ties. The awards go on and on.

Berkowitz, a 1974 graduate of SU’s Newhouse School of Public Communications, also works regularly as a TV and radio broadcaster in Boston and throughout the country. When seafood became so popular in the late seventies, Berkowitz was one of the few experts who also had broadcasting experience.

NBC, PBS, The Today Show, The New York Times, and the Julia Child Show are just a few of the forums where Berkowitz has combined his knowledge of broadcasting with the family seafood business. Now he serves as a “dining-out” talk-show host for WRKO radio in Boston.

As for the future of Legal Sea Foods, Berkowitz expects expansion in other parts of New England. No matter how large the company grows, however, Berkowitz stands by his words: “If it isn’t fresh, it isn’t Legal.”

The Future of Options

When Americans think Chicago Merc, they think soybeans, pork bellies, and chicken feed, but others know better.

According to William Brodsky, chief executive officer, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) is better understood outside the country than it is in the United States. In this country, he says, people tend to be less global-oriented; they think of the CME in its traditional role as a commodities exchange.

“Historically,” he says, “we were a market for pork bellies and cattle futures, but now 90 percent of our business is financial futures.”

Today the CME is the largest financial futures and options exchange in the world—trading in six major foreign currencies, including the Japanese yen, the British pound, and the deutsche mark. It also trades futures and options on Eurodollars, treasury bills, Standard and Poor’s 500 stock index, and various agricultural contracts.

Brodsky, a graduate of the Maxwell School (1965) and Law School (1968), has headed the CME for three years. He’s responsible for some 1,000 employees and he’s a key player in policy-making decisions at the exchange. Brodsky joined the Merc in 1982 as executive vice president and chief operating officer after eight years at the American Stock Exchange.

Although he’s based in Chicago, Brodsky’s territory is the world. When he’s not on the phone with exchanges in London, New York City, Paris, or Tokyo, he’s in Washington defending futures contracts and educating Congress about the market itself.

“Besides the fact that we trade millions of dollars worth of futures and options contracts all over the world during our normal business hours,” says Brodsky, “the market we’re involved with is a 24-hour market.” To accommodate round-the-clock trading, the CME recently established a computer link with the Singapore International Monetary Exchange. The link allows traders or investors in Asia and the United States to liquidate their positions even when their home markets are closed.

But, according to Brodsky, the Singapore link is just the tip of the iceberg. The CME, in conjunction with Reuters, a multinational communications vendor, is developing the hardware and software to enable 24-hour trading to take place worldwide—something Brodsky calls revolutionary.

Cheesecake Heaven

From Maine to Puerto Rico, people are eating Vermont Velvet cheesecakes and loving every last bite. Made with Vermont fresh ingredients, the smooth cakes come in
an array of delicious variations — black forest, chocolate marble, almond amaretto, and strawberry swirl — to name a few. Gourmet magazine calls them “a fluffy velvet-soft monument to American cream cheese.”

The dreamy desserts are the creation of Richard and Susan Callahan, former owners of New England Dairy Foods, a wholesale frozen food supply company based in Burlington, Vermont. The cheesecake recipe is an adaptation from Lindy’s — the famous cheesecake spot in New York City. “It was their all cream cheese, classic American cheesecake,” says Susan. “It’s the one without all the sour cream and ingredients people are adding today.”

The Callahans started their business venture 16 years ago when they moved from Wilmington, Delaware, (where Richard was employed as a chemical engineer) to open a cheese shop in Waitsfield, Vermont. There, Susan began baking two cheesecakes every night in her home oven and soon the idea caught on.

After four years, the couple decided to expand. “We were going to kill the world with cheesecake,” says Susan. They bought an old factory in Burlington, positioning themselves closer to important trucking routes. Slowly but surely, they turned their factory into a thriving business.

Nevertheless, says Susan, “nobody pays you in the food business for 30, 60, even 90 days.” To establish a cash flow, the Callahans set up a counter inside their factory and began selling overstocked fine cheeses at bargain prices.

They also developed another product with nationwide appeal. They introduced a product called Quiche Puffs. So popular are the little puffs that some 32,000 are sold each week to distributors and other food services.

“Instead of being a big pie that everybody makes kind of eggy and watery,” says Susan, “this is a little single serving quiche in its own pastry shell.” Hospitals, colleges, airlines, nursing homes, prisons, and cruiseship companies are among the many satisfied customers.

The Callahans, both 1965 SU graduates — Susan (nee Fraizer) in advertising and retailing and Richard in chemical engineering — sold their factory and it’s adjoining retail Cheese Outlet in August. Both, however, remain active in the business. Richard serves as a consultant to the new owners and Susan has stayed on as the buyer and operations manager at the Cheese Outlet.

Today, the Cheese Outlet is located next to the factory, where customers can find discount prices on a variety of cheeses, as well as wines, crackers, gourmet foods, and imported chocolates.

Gunnahuser says it isn’t always easy to come up with fresh ideas, especially since the show is going on its seventh season. He’s optimistic that Newhart will run another season, although he’s not sure what to expect after that. “It depends on what Bob wants to do,” he says, “and the ratings, of course.”

When their 14 weeks were up, the pair free-lanced for nearly two years before landing staff positions on Newhart. “When we finally did,” Gunzenhauser says, “I could barely open my mouth. The other writers had such fast minds; jokes were flying by us. Then magically, I found myself contributing as well.”

Each script, says Gunzenhauser, is written initially by one or two of the staff writers. Then all of the writers work together to refine the script. “We spend most of our time together in one room, coming up with jokes and reworking scripts. There is a wonderful camaraderie among us.”

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Newhart was ready to turn in his typewriter. But he and Tom Seeley — another out-of-work scriptwriter — decided to pair up and try one last time to sell a script. They wrote an episode of Cheers on spec — the episode where Diane discovers a coat left by a customer and imagines herself in love with its unknown owner. After an initial rejection, the script was bought.

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Soon after, the writing partners had an agent and a 14-week contract with an entertainment company in California.