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Recently, along with many other fans, I helped cheer on thousands of runners in the Chicago Marathon. Since supporting my husband in his first race in 2002, I've found marathon day to be one of the best days in Chicago. The spectators are so positive and supportive. The runners are not only fit, but determined - fighting with every step the temptation to just quit. Being fairly new to Chicago for that first marathon in 2002, I remember thinking - if only every day could be like this in the city. Where did all of this energy come from?



This year, I watched from mile 25 in the South Loop and I witnessed the good, the bad, and the ugly - although mostly the good. The good, as my neighbors and I called out to people we didn't even know - calling out the names of runners written on sweaty shirts, as well as the countries & organizations they represent. The good, as we watched thousands of runners pass by effortlessly - bringing months of training to the test. The bad, as several runners struggled to make it to the finish line. And the ugly - which really isn't worth writing about.

So you would think that watching all of these amazing athletes would inspire me to get off the sidelines and start running. Well, not quite (I have never been a runner!) but it did inspire me to look at my life and the things I am passionate about and start setting goals for the months ahead. It's a lot like that "back-to-school" time of year. You know - when summer is over and it's time to get back to business.

Similarly, for CWA, the summer is behind us, and we're back in full swing. October 14th was the annual Members Reception featuring women in leadership roles in the profession. Six successful women, from small firm owners to principals in large firms, shared their stories and filled us in on the secrets of their success, so to speak. In addition, we have other exciting programs in the works: the annual holiday party at Prairie Avenue Bookshop December 9th, featuring a presentation on the work of Eileen Grey by one of our members, Deirdre Colgan; an event focusing on mentorship in a 'speed-dating' format; the spring lecture series; happy hours; a retreat to Milwaukee on March 21st & 22nd; and the scholarship brunch in April. We are also launching a new look for the CWA website in November. We have many new faces on the board this year, as well as familiar faces, making all of these events happen and I encourage all members to get off the sidelines and hit the ground running with CWA this fall. Our monthly meetings are open to all - I hope to see you there!

Best,

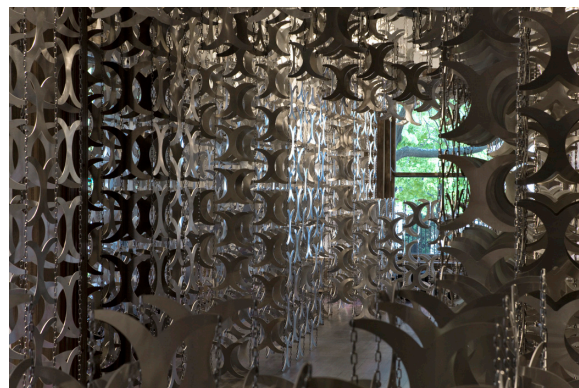
Rachel Branagan

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## Graham Foundation



As soon as you enter through the front door of the Graham Foundation, some of the recent activity taking place at the foundation becomes visible. Your eye catches its first view of our current exhibition, Cecil Balmond: Solid Void, as you spot the tops of two graceful towers peering above the horizon of the front marble staircase. The twin casions, composed of aluminum plates that gleam during the day from the play of interior lights and at night from reflections off the street, look to be suspended from the ceiling. At the top of the staircase, however, you get a new perspective and see that the plates are not hanging but are being held taut by rigid stainless steel chain. The installation, called *H\_edge*, is composed of over 6,000 aluminum plates and over 5,000 feet of rigid stainless steel chain. It weaves through the first floor galleries of the Graham Foundation and plays on an age-old Indian rope trick: the maze-like construction appears to hang from above, but in fact the chain is standing up and acting as spinal support.

*H\_edge* is one component of Cecil Balmond: Solid Void, which presents the work of Balmond and his London-based Advanced Geometry Unit (AGU) at the international, multi-disciplinary engineering firm ARUP. Solid Void is on view at the Graham Foundation's Madlener House galleries through February 14, 2009. We thank the CWA for inviting us to share news of this exhibition and other recent happenings at the Graham Foundation. The foundation, a corporate member of the CWA, was pleased to host the CWA's summer happy hour. Even though it was hot and humid that July day, we enjoyed socializing over refreshments in the architectural sculpture garden. It has been a busy summer for us at the foundation and we are looking forward to an exciting fall.

For those of you not familiar with us, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts was founded in 1956. Our mission is to make project-based grants to individuals and organizations and produce public programs to foster the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in the arts, culture, and society. The foundation was created by a bequest from Ernest R. Graham (1866–1936), a prominent Chicago architect who was a protégé of Daniel Burnham. Our earliest grantees include such legendary figures as Louis Kahn, Anne Tyng, Buckminster Fuller, Robert Venturi, and Reyner Banham. Today, we continue to support the work of individuals and organizations around the world.

Since 1963, the Graham Foundation has been located in the Madlener House, a 9,000 square foot Prairie-style mansion located in the historic Gold Coast neighborhood of Chicago. It is at the house that the Graham Foundation has presented an important program of exhibitions and lectures for over 50 years. Major figures such as Rem Koolhaas, Paul Rudolph, and James Stirling, among many others, have lectured at the Graham Foundation. In 1965, then Graham Foundation Director John

Entenza opened the first exhibition at the Madlener House: Architecture without Architects by Bernard Rudofsky, originally produced by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Our exhibition program has also included monographic exhibitions on Pritzker Prize winners such as Richard Meier, Richard Rogers, and Kenzo Tange.

Carrying on this tradition of public programming, we recently expanded our galleries by converting the first floor of the Madlener House—the original living room, music room, foyer, and dining room (which, since the 1960s, were used as offices and board room)—into exhibition space. We introduced the first floor gallery space with the winter 2008 exhibition The BIG Copenhagen Experiments: 7 New Architectural Species from the Danish Welfare State by Bjarke Ingels Group, which included a model made of 250,000 LEGO pieces.

The show Cecil Balmond: Solid Void, however, is the first site-specific installation commissioned for the Madlener House in the Graham Foundation's half century of programming history. Through several large-scale installations and a visual essay, the exhibit explores Balmond's investigations into spatial concepts in geometry, numbers, and patterns. His experimentation with these ideas and his collaborations with some of the most important artists and architects working today, such as Toyo Ito, Anish Kapoor, and Rem Koolhaas, have produced some of the most creative work in contemporary engineering and architecture, including the Maison à Bordeaux (1998); the office building Twist, London (2004); the Coimbra Footbridge, Mondego River, Portugal (2006); and the new CCTV tower under construction in Beijing (2009). Public programs related to the exhibition are planned, including a lecture by Cecil Balmond on November 11 at the Art Institute.

Through our public programs we bring exciting work from around the world to Chicago. Through our grant programs we have the opportunity to extend support to amazing work taking place around the world. In the 2008 fiscal year, the Graham Foundation awarded over 160 grants to individuals and organizations, totaling more than \$1.5 million. These projects represent an extremely diverse and exciting range of work being produced throughout the field. Our individual grantees include architects, artists, critics, curators, and scholars. Our organizational grantees range from vibrant, volunteer-based emerging non-profits such as publishers and galleries to established, large-scale institutions like universities and museums. Geographically, the pool of recent grantees spreads from Alaska to South Africa to Venice, where we recently supported the U.S. Pavilion at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale, Into the Open: Positioning Practice, on view until November 23, 2008. Closer to home, one Chicago-based project that you may want to watch for is the exhibition Jenny Holzer: Protect Protect, which opens at the MCA on October 25 and presents the work of this contemporary artist who uses language to challenge assumptions about space.

Finally, in the coming months, we will launch a new web site that will include grantee profiles, features from the Graham Foundation's rich archives, and more information on our public programs.

We hope to see you soon at the Madlener House!

"Cecil Balmond: Solid Void" on view through February 14, 2009 at the Graham Foundation, Madlener House, 4 West Burton Place. Gallery hours: Wednesday—Saturday 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Free admission. For more information: 312.787.4071 | info@grahamfoundation.org

Stephanie Whitlock  
Program Officer, Graham Foundation

## 2 Point Perspective, inc.

In an effort to focus her career attention on her two primary passions: modern design and sustainability, Lisa Richardson Elkins founded 2 Point Perspective in 2006. Having worked on multiple environmentally sustainable architectural projects and having obtained her LEED accreditation, she was prepared to approach a variety of project types in an eco-manner. In addition, the firm tackles a variety of project scales, from single pieces of custom furniture to interior design and architectural projects.

With the addition of Lisa's husband, Ron Elkins, who joined the firm in 2007, 2 point began a cycle of steady growth. It is currently a five person office with the intention of remaining a boutique firm.

The firm's name, '2 Point Perspective', was selected to acknowledge that the best design happens when multiple viewpoints are considered during the creative process. True to the studio's name, frequent design discussions and debates are vital to the development of every project. In addition, the traditional architectural 'two point perspective' drawing is a reference that creative people are often familiar with. When selecting the firm's name, it was important to the Elkinses that the name be unique and have a distinct identity that would remain appropriate throughout the years, even as team members are added or move on. The '2' in 2 Point is particularly symbolic as the firm is full of dualities. In addition to continually balancing design and sustainability, the firm's focus on furniture design as well as architecture requires that the owners balance two varying business plans. In addition to these challenges, ultimately the most important duality is balancing myriad client desires with a unified and elegant architectural solution.

Lisa's years of architectural and furniture design experience were intermingled with a rigorous academic agenda. Lisa received her Master of Architectural Design degree from The University of London's Bartlett School of Architecture under the direction of Archigram co-founder Peter Cook. She had received her Bachelor of Architecture and Bachelor of Science in Environmental Design from Ball State University. Additional educational pursuits included coursework in a variety of related fields, such as Architectural Lighting Design, Graphic Design, Furniture Design, and Oil Painting. In addition to formal education, Lisa and Ron Elkins have consistently pursued an ambitious travel agenda to augment their cultural exposure. Their travels have taken them through Europe, Australia, India, Asia, and the Middle East. Lisa and Ron Elkins are both licensed architects, and Ron is also a City of Chicago Registered Energy Professional. Much of their architectural experience comes from their years in San Francisco, where their experience included a variety of project types from commercial and ecclesiastical to residential and restaurant design.

While having a strong architectural education background was essential upon entering the field of architecture, the additional business courses that Lisa made time for during her undergraduate studies proved invaluable when she decided to start her practice. Having experience in firms of varying sizes was also beneficial. During 2 Point's formative years, Lisa maintained her faculty position in the University of Illinois at Chicago's architectural program, and also made time to write architectural text for Global Publishing in Sydney, Australia.

On the furniture side of the business, all of 2 Point's furniture pieces are eco-friendly and are named after Chicago neighborhoods. Pieces are made from sustainably harvested wood, reclaimed wood, or bamboo, with occasional

accents of metal, glass and natural stone. All finishes are non-toxic, and 2 Point purchases carbon offsets to balance the impact of transportation. 2 Point's furniture is now sold at the eco-focused "Green Home Chicago" showroom in Chicago's West Loop neighborhood. Select pieces are also available from "Healthy Green Goods" in Evanston. One recent piece, the 'Hyde Park Coffee Table', is made primarily of Reclaimed Walnut, and is currently on display in the Museum of Science and Industry's 'Smart Home'.

The architectural side of the practice began by focusing on residential work, but has already expanded to take on projects which include restaurants, showrooms, and offices. Residential work includes remodeling projects, additions, and new construction. In an effort to validate their eco-friendly approach, multiple projects are pursuing Chicago Green Home, LEED, or Energy Star certification.

2 Point has recently been selected as one of three finalists in a design competition initiated by the Village of Oak Park to create sustainable homes in the Barrie Park neighborhood. 2 Point's entry proposes a Zero Energy home which will pursue LEED Platinum certification. Current commercial projects include the design of the Evergreen Oak lighting showroom and the Shared Office, both located in the Green Exchange. This exciting facility has been labeled by the media as the 'Green Merchandise Mart' for its role in showcasing green businesses and products. Standards for designing in the building are high, and the Green Exchange is expected to open in spring of 2009.

To date, 2 Point has been featured in select print publications, including a listing as 'the buzz' in Chicago Home Magazine and being listed in CS Magazine's 'hot list for 2008'. An interview with Lisa was recently featured in the national magazine 'Complete Woman'. As the Elkinses remodeled their own home, the Discovery Channel's 'Planet Green' sent a film crew out to capture the eco-friendly remodel on their show "Renovation Nation".

In the future, 2 Point Perspective has the goal of obtaining new projects which are more extensive in scope, while maintaining the personalized design approach and strong client relationships that have been an integral part of their process. Recognizing this element has been critical in helping the firm grow in the right direction... *Perspective* is Priceless.

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