



VICTORIA A. ROSPOND, AIA

(1961 – 2021)

It is with the greatest sadness that we announce the passing of Victoria Rospond, Principal at CDR Studio Architects, who succumbed on August 10, 2021, to a year-long battle with cancer. An award-winning architect with incredible talent, a mentor to young architects and a trailblazer for women in architecture, Victoria will be missed greatly by all who knew her.

A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) with bachelor's degrees in fine arts and architecture, Victoria loved architecture and truly believed that the built environment could and should make the world a better place. She saw design as a tool for complex problem-solving and believed collaboration with people of diverse backgrounds, ideologies and experiences was the key to success.

Victoria began her career at The Mack Company in New Jersey, detailing large-scale office buildings. She took her initial steps toward entrepreneurship in 1993, first as an independent architect, then by joining forces with Lea Cloud and Jonathan Dreyfous to form CDR Studio.

A passionate advocate for the talents of burgeoning architects, Victoria was a founding member of the Young Architects Group of the New York City Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). When starting CDR, the principals felt that a studio environment would be critical to the firm's inner workings — creating an atmosphere where all team members, from interns to seasoned professionals, participated in project discussions and would feel comfortable expressing ideas. With CDR's founding at a time when only 7% of AIA-registered firms were led by women, being a voice for women in architecture was a source of pride. Victoria built upon this through her role on the board of ArchiteXX, a 501c3 nonprofit organization that promotes gender equity in architecture and mentorship of women architects to be leaders in their profession.

Victoria was a resounding voice for sustainable architecture and responsible urban development. While living in Hoboken, NJ, in the early 1990s, she was an active member of the Coalition for a Better Waterfront, a local civic organization that defeated through public referendum a massive high-rise project planned for Hoboken's waterfront. A subsequent sister organization (Fund for a Better Waterfront, comprised of local architects, planners and other professionals) developed a plan to preserve the water's edge as a public waterfront park. Pier A Park, located at Hoboken's south waterfront, in 2006 was named one of the top 10 urban parks in the U.S. by the Urban Land Institute.

Victoria embraced sustainability in architecture through efficient use of materials, systems and resources. It was her goal to create long-lasting results without negatively affecting the environment, including leaving little or no trace when a structure's time is done. Particularly through the firm's work on the award-winning Governor's Cup Pavilion (constructed from 30,000 plastic cups diverted from New York City's waste stream) and lessons learned, Victoria made paramount her role as a steward of the environment.

Among Victoria's design credits are the Tea Box at Takashimaya (with S. Russell Groves), the Chinese Scholar's Garden at Snug Harbor — recently named a "hidden gem" of New York City (with Demetri Sarantitis), the Eileen Fisher Store in SoHo, the Discovery Room at the American Museum of Natural History, the Pier 62 Carousel Pavilion, the Marine Company 1 Firehouse and FDNY Hook and Ladder Co. 08 (the "Ghostbusters" firehouse).

In CDR's 14-year relationship with Audi of America, Victoria oversaw the firm's role in the nationwide Dealership Development Program. Under her guidance, the design and construction management processes were enhanced and refined as Audi changed as a company. Her rigorous attention to all aspects of design, management and client contact were a major asset to the program.

Victoria also worked passionately with residential clients, believing in the intimacy and delight of creating a home unique to each family. Many of these clients became part of the extended CDR family with whom life's joys and sorrows were shared.

Victoria is survived by her parents (Loretta and Felix Rospond); a brother (Vincent) and two sisters (Lia Magliacane and Kathryn Roberts) and their spouses (Margaret, Joseph and Sam); five nieces and nephews (Felix Brandon and his wife, Anna, Alexandra, Sofia, Jason and Eleanore), her great-nephew (Alexander Vincent); and her God daughter (Vera); as well as many loving cousins, aunts and uncles.