

Ripepi Funeral Home

RICHARD J. FLEISCHMAN

(November 27, 1928 - June 20, 2020)

RICHARD J. FLEISCHMAN, FAIA



Renowned architect and lifelong Clevelander, Richard J. Fleischman, born Nov. 27, 1928, passed away June 20, 2020. A man who was larger than life, he left an indelible mark on Cleveland, the region, and every person he met. He led his own architectural firm for 57 years, starting in partnership with Bill Conrad as Conrad and Fleischman Architects in 1961. During his illustrious career, Richard completed nearly 500 projects and earned 280 awards, including the Cleveland Arts Prize (1974). Equally important to him were the proposals he advanced that have not yet been realized, such as the Ohio Riviera, which truly appreciates the value of Ohio's lakefront as a natural resource to be nurtured and developed as a continuous urban beachfront that incorporates robust living, learning, working, and educational opportunities.

Richard was a Fellow and fervent advocate of the American Institute of Architects and received AIA Gold Medals both as an individual (2001) and as the head of Richard Fleischman + Partners Architects (1988). He credited his success to his uncle who encouraged him to study architecture at a young age, the Ursuline Sisters of Holy Trinity School who taught him to think, and his teachers at East Tech High School who enabled him to earn a prestigious college scholarship.

After obtaining a bachelor's degree in architecture from Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University), Richard attained a master's degree in architecture at Columbia University and completed a one-year fellowship studying iconic sites in Italy, Spain, and Greece. There, he conceived his philosophy of architecture as "the beauty of emptiness." Richard's signature style is characterized by clean geometric lines, vast expanses of glass, and light-filled open spaces. It is evident in the numerous schools, university buildings, libraries, churches, and other spaces he created. Most notable are the Ohio Aerospace Institute (winner of the 1994 MDO Award as one of the top 50 buildings worldwide), the Goodyear Polymer Center at The University of Akron, the Breezy Bluff community of eight custom-designed homes in Bratenahl, and St. Paschal Baylon Church in Highland Heights (Richard's

most-cherished project). Due to his innovative work on 73 churches, Richard was called the Master Church Designer. He also worked on the initial Gateway Master Plan for downtown Cleveland, created sophisticated office furniture for Saporiti Italia, and designed an award-winning abstract outdoor metal sculpture, The Dancers, for the Putnam Collection at Case Western Reserve University.

An accomplished professional and ardent supporter of the arts, education, and all things Cleveland -- Richard was well known, passionately involved, and highly respected. He served on the boards of the Cleveland State University Foundation, Ohio Ballet, and Carnegie Mellon Distinguished Alumni; spent 20 years on the Cleveland Fine Arts Committee; graduated Leadership Cleveland; and was active with the Union Club, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Orchestra, Cleveland Arts Association (carta), English-Speaking Union, Print Club of Cleveland, Rowfant Club, and St. Elizabeth's Hungarian Church, among many other organizations. In 2019, he was inducted into the Cleveland International Hall of Fame, representing his Hungarian roots.

Richard is survived by his three daughters, Gayle Montalto of Cuyahoga Falls, Kimberly Fleischman (Paul Herold) of Akron, and Ann Fleischman Doles (Mark) of Lovettsville, Va., as well as four grandchildren, Taylor Gray (Gene Fielden) of San Diego, Dylan Gray of Minneapolis, Nathan Montalto (Mitchell Arnovitz) of New York City, and Samantha Montalto (Matthew Dagne) of Columbus, Oh. Richard was preceded in death by his brother Lawrence G. Fleischman, his former wife, and mother of their children, Marlene Fleischman Porath (nee DeMore), and his wife of 26 years Helen F. Moss (nee Smith).

Calling hours will be Friday, June 26, 2020 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at St. Paschal Baylon Church, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Highland Heights. Funeral Mass at St. Paschal will be Saturday, June 27, at 1 p.m. with viewing starting at noon (with social distancing and face masks). The interment will be private. Flowers may be sent care of Ripepi Funeral Home, 5762 Pearl Rd., Parma. Memorial contributions may be made to Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture or the Cleveland Museum of Art.