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NEWSLETTER



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JONES WHITSETT ARCHITECTS

WINTER
2022

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

LETTER FROM WMAIA PRESIDENT 2022

Happy New Year!

I look forward to serving as the President of WMAIA as we head into 2022, hoping our world can continue it's winding path toward normalcy (whatever that is), and maybe getting the chance to see everyone again.

Our Board, Executive Director Lorin Starr, and past President Kristian Whitsett, have done an amazing job of continuing the work of WMAIA over the past two years, and I thank them all for tirelessly keeping the group strong and relevant during that time. WMAIA continued to provide valuable programming, both virtually and in person, to provide learning and community for our members.

Over the past two years our industry has been fortunate to stay strong and busy, which has made the relevancy of WMAIA even more vital, and more challenging. As life moved on-line and work/life boundaries have been blurred, many of our members have had less time outside of work, and even less interest in yet another Zoom meeting. Despite those challenges, we continued to see robust involvement from our Members and Board, from great attendance at our virtual Annual Meetings to best yet attendance at our movie series.

As an organization, WMAIA will continue to adapt and bring meaningful programming and community to our members, and we look forward to participation and involvement from all of you, our members. WMAIA is here to support the diverse needs of Architects in our region, and we look strive to better understand how best to do that. We appreciate hearing any ideas you may have for programming or other types of involvement.

Our membership numbers continue to be strong, and our members are very active throughout our industry and communities. We are always looking to grow our presence on local, regional, and national boards and groups; if you have any interest in offering your time, experience and voice, please get in touch and let us know.



I look forward to helping support the important work of WMAIA over the next two years as President, and hope for plenty of chances to see you all as both tiny images on my well-worn screen, and real-live people.

Happy 2022!

Garth Schwellenbach, AIA

2021 WMAIA SCHOLARSHIP PROJECTS



This year, in conjunction with AIA National and with the support of Pella, we were able to offer two \$1000 scholarship to M.Arch students at UMass. Submissions were screened by the UMass faculty and then submitted to the WMAIA board for review. Judging criteria was design excellence and clarity of presentation. This year's winners were Molly Clark and Lincoln Nemetz-Carlson.

Molly's project was an Energy Transition Initiative Building.

Lincoln's project, the Gemini Complex, was a proposal for a museum, fountain and public park located at Mt. Pollux in Amherst Massachusetts.

Congratulations!



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COVER PHOTO: Jones Whitsett Architects: For more photos, see article pages 7 + 8

2021 ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

Almost 50 people attended WMAIA's December 16, 2021 Annual Meeting – held on Zoom. Thanks to our evening's sponsors Pella and Keiter! Here are some of the highlights of the evening:

The membership thanked Kristian Whitsett AIA for his two years of service at the chapter's president and welcomed Garth Schwellenbach AIA to the position. In addition, we thanked outgoing board member Chris Novelli AIA for his many years of service to the chapter. My-Ron Hatchett AIA will be joining the board in 2022. Marc Sternick AIA will join Ludmilla Pavlova-Gilham AIA and Dorrie Brooks AIA on the board of AIA Massachusetts.

The evening concluded with a presentation on the New Neilson Library at Smith College (Designer: Maya Lin Studio with William Bialosky, Architect; Executive Architect: Shepley Bulfinch; Landscape Design: Edwina von Gal + Co with Ryan Associates; Lighting Designer: Tillotson Design Associates). A video tour was followed by a panel discussion featuring Susan Fliss Ph.D., Dean of the Libraries, Smith College; Charlie Conant, Senior Project Manager, Smith College; and Janette Blackburn FAIA, Principal, Shepley Bulfinch. It was moderated by Smith alums Helen Fantini AIA and Martha Montgomery AIA.

WMAIA

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Celebrating the champions addressing climate change, Jonathan Wright's book, *Living Building Makers: Creating Sustainable Buildings That Renew Our World* is a handcrafted collection of stories about the remarkable people who bring the built environment to life.

Each chapter captures the insights, creativity, humor, and discoveries of the often-unsung individuals – builders, tradespeople, designers, engineers, educators, operators and owners – who rolled up their sleeves to play a pivotal role in creating two of the greenest buildings in the world on the campus of Massachusetts' renowned Hampshire College.

Veteran Western Mass builder Jonathan A. Wright's storied first-hand accounts share how these dedicated professionals transformed their corner of the world by the way they leaned into their work. In the process, the nature of their own work is changed forever.

Now available for purchase!

Visit the book store at Living Building Challenge | Living-Future.org

MA HOUSE DOCTOR LITE PROGRAM

CW RCAT is seeking architects/firms who are interested in working work on public housing projects. These projects would be implemented at Housing Authorities located in 73 Towns in the CW RCAT Region (Worcester, Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin and Berkshire Counties).

The CW RCAT (RCAT Region 1), hosted by the Worcester Housing Authority (the Host Housing Authority, or HHA), is located at 630 Plantation Street in Worcester Mass.

The projects focus on a range of maintenance and repair issues (roofs, windows, doors, interior repairs, as well as MEP, Structural/Civil). Very few projects involve new construction.

The CW RCAT will explain and guide the firms with respect to Massachusetts standards for public housing work, including the procurement processes. Interested parties should go to www.mass.gov/service-details/regional-capital-assistance-team-rcat-program to follow links for the following:

- + An explanation of the RCAT Program
- + Information on the process for project implementation (for projects up to \$50,000).
- + A sample of a generic Scope of Services (SOS) document
- + A list of designers (Architects and Engineers) based on an earlier procurement by DHCD

New firms to the MA DHCD House Doctor (HD) process would perform work under the House Doctor Lite Program. Fees shall not exceed \$10,000 and projects would be under \$100,000. Designers would, on a project-by-project basis, be requested to submit a fee proposal in response to a written Scope of Services (SOS) document.

Interested firms should submit copies of their professional license(s) and insurance coverage, as well as a list of 3-5 recent contactable references.

If you have any questions, please contact Phaldie Taliep at the numbers / email noted below. Note that assignments are subject to project funding.

KERRY DIETZ AIA ELECTED AS BBRS CHAIR FOR 2022

At their January 2022 meeting, the members of the Board of Buildings Regulations and Standards (BBRS) voted to elect Kerry Dietz AIA as their chair.

The BBRS is responsible for promulgation of the Massachusetts building codes. The Board also oversees the licensing of construction supervisors, the licensing of concrete testing labs and technicians, approves manufactured buildings and related inspection procedures, approves native lumber producers, and certifies municipal building inspectors.



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2022 SMALL HOME HERO AWARD CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



Do you know someone (organization or person) in Hampshire or Franklin Counties that is making small homes happen in a big or creative way? A town that passed great zoning for small affordable homes? Are you (or do you know) an Architect or Builder who is creating out-of-the-box, creative, affordable, small homes? A local advocate or designer who is getting traction on ideas that are disrupting the status quo around small, affordable housing?

NOMINATE THEM FOR THE 2022 SMALL HOME HERO AWARD! NOMINATIONS ARE DUE BY 2/4/22.

Please nominate an individual, business, or community organization for the Small Home Hero Award. The following questions are provided to help highlight the nominee's work and/or advocacy efforts in any of the areas which the nominee helps support in Hampshire & Franklin Counties in Massachusetts.

Seven tools and strategies for innovation were identified through research conducted as part of the Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity's Big Enough Project, helping to make small affordable home ownership a reality for more community members throughout Western Massachusetts and beyond. They are as follows:

- Smaller building footprints
- Lower sales pricing to increase access to affordable home ownership
- Innovative financing options for affordable home purchase
- Small lot zoning in community or surrounding region
- Alternative land ownership structures
- Zero net energy possible home construction
- Modular construction as a means of building smaller more affordable homes

In addition to these seven tools and strategies for innovation, Habitat identified four key "areas of inquiry" that seem to impact access to affordable small home ownership, which are as follows:

- social and cultural issues (such as certain societal values around home size)
- design and construction issues (such as design "norms" in construction)
- financing issues (such as awareness of and access to more unique financing opportunities),
- zoning and building code issues (such of policies that create or restrict access to more diverse housing development options).

To learn more about these areas of innovation and inquiry and the Big Enough Project as you consider a nominee for our award, please visit <https://www.pvhabitat.org/big-enough/>

Self-nominations are allowed. Previous awardees may not win twice, but previous nominees may be nominated again. Members of Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity staff, board and the award selection committee are prohibited from nominating or being nominated.

The "Big Enough" project aims to revolutionize how we think about homeownership in Hampshire and Franklin County by focusing on small, simple homes built with community support. Be a part of changing, celebrating, and testing how regulations, financing, social and cultural expectations, design, and construction influence the ability for individuals to access small homes!

BEFORE + AFTER : C&H ARCHITECTS

WASHBURN HOUSE AT SMITH COLLEGE



WAY BEFORE



WAY BEFORE



BEFORE



AFTER



AFTER



Constructed in 1878, near the center of Smith College, Washburn House is the second oldest residence house built by the college. The building has undergone various modernizations over its lifetime, and has still retained much of its historic character.

At the exterior, our work involved replacing the historic porch with a new accessible entry. The interior work included new lounges and kitchen. Bathrooms were upgraded and made accessible and lighting was upgraded in corridors and lounges.

The college is currently in the process of converting the entire campus from steam heating to renewable electric heating. In line with this campaign, Washburn House received a full mechanical system upgrade – featuring a ground-source heat pump (GSHP) and a pair of super-efficient energy recovery ventilators (ERVs). C&H worked with Smith College’s faculty and the school’s carbon accounting process to determine the carbon impact of various design alternatives. This provided a more holistic and inclusive determination of project cost, which ultimately helped direct the project scope. A final blower door test showed effective air-sealing measures, bringing the air changes per hour at 50 pascals (ACH50) down from 9 to 5.6.



PROJECT TEAM:
Architect: C&H Architects
Contractor: Allegrone Construction
Mechanical Engineer: Hallam ICS

Structural Engineer: GNCB
Landscape Architect: WOLA
Interior Design: Lorin Starr Interiors
Infiltration Diagnostics: Center for EcoTechnology (CET)

Photos: Jim Gipe Photo / Pivot Media

The Coach House | Northampton, MA | Built in 1900



Historical Renovation | Completed in 2019



Design by Juster Pope Frazier Architects
Photo by CHODOS, Inc.

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MARGO P. JONES FAIA RETIRES

Margo P. Jones FAIA retired from architectural practice in January of 2022. In 1984 she founded Margo Jones, Architects, and in 2014 transitioned the firm into the partnership of Jones Whitsett Architects. JWA will continue under the able leadership of firm partners Kristian Whitsett AIA, and Dorrie Brooks AIA.

Margo received her B.A. from the University of Chicago, and her Masters of Architecture from M.I.T. She was elevated to Fellow of the AIA in 2016 for her professional leadership. She is a longstanding member of the WMAIA, and served as a board member and president. With other female FAIA members she founded WMAIA's Women in Architecture Committee. She served on the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Architects, and was an officer of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. She is an officer of Landmark Trust of the USA, and a member of the Greenfield Historical Commission.

We thank Margo for taking time to talk with the WMAIA newsletter about her impressive career.

How did your approach to your own practice change over the years?

I came to understand the importance of “many hands”, and assembling the best possible professionals to work together. I may have been somewhat headstrong in the beginning; I guess I had to prove myself.

What changes have you seen in the architectural profession as a whole, and in the Valley as a design environment?

When I started in this profession, folks drew with pencils on vellum, we erased and played on trace paper, made cardboard models. It was a fairly linear process. Doing it all on computer--in 3D models--has made everything much more detailed and interactive. You can see what the design is doing, and bring the many disciplines together. The valley is a great place for practicing architecture! There is a general commitment to the natural world, to the environment, and to being inclusive. It's been a privilege to practice here.

Can you tell us about being an early advocate for sustainability and human-centered design?

I went to an architecture school that championed vernacular architecture and human scale. It's an engaging philosophy, and I have tried over the years to be true to that mindset. Making buildings that conserve energy and use local materials is a function of having clients that are close to the land, often with fairly limited budgets.

In your fight for diversity in the architectural field, how did you move ahead, and what doors do you think you helped open?

Looking back, I believe I was able to “pass” as a token female because I was nice and it appeared that I wouldn't cause trouble. But once in place, I did cause some trouble, and proud of it! I didn't open doors, the women who have come after me did, but maybe I encouraged their progression. I'm so pleased that tokenism is much less prevalent now, but we have a long way to go to diversify this profession and include all the talents that are out there.

What do you want people to know about you, that they may not know?

I play bridge.

What will you be doing in the next few years?

I feel that it's time to put the younger folks in charge, and I'm going “out to pasture” with a smile on my face. I've signed up for a historic preservation board (Landmark Trust of USA), I'm on the Greenfield Historic Commission, and an active volunteer on the Greenfield Tree Committee. But most of all, I intend to enjoy family (especially grandchildren!), travel, and having fun with my partner, Philip.



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MARGO JONES FAIA RETIRES

If you could illustrate the 43-year arc of Margo Jones Architects to Jones-Whitsett Architects, which projects would you choose? 4

- 1. Newton St. School, Greenfield, MA:** The big break into public school construction that launched the MJA/JWA specialty.
- 2. Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival: Ted Shawn Theatre, Becket, MA:** Addition/renovation & other campus projects. An incredibly creative client -- Liz Thompson could read plans in a glance, and pushed us to evolve the design.
- 3. Whately Elementary School, Whately, MA:** Our second big break -- for an all-new public school. The Building Committee was terrific. Laura Fitch was the main designer for the project--in an ever-developing partnership with key staff.
- 4. Many fun projects at The Bement School, Deerfield, MA,** including while working at Pierre Belhumeur's office (before I opened my own office).
- 5. My office at 308 Main St., Greenfield, MA:** A historic tax credit project that taught me a lot about historic renovations, and gave us a new home lasting many decades. Big windows, special masonry, and a terrific downtown location.



- 6. Fadiman-Colt house, Whately, MA:** Historic preservation/addition renovation. Residential projects help keep our eye on details and human dimensions. This client, two renowned authors, was especially culturally interesting.



- 7. Williamstown Elementary School, Williamstown, MA:** Ann McCallum was on the building committee; she convinced her fellow committee members that we offered the best design skills. Peter Turowski and I saw the project through. Really proud of its strong "parti" and masonry bearing wall construction, high performance envelope & even some solar.

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- 8. Crocker Farm School, Amherst, MA:** Addition/renovation. We were able to transform a solid, well built "factory" type design into a lively, daylight, diverse school. An awesome teaching staff!



- 9. Colegrove Park Elementary School, North Adams, MA:** Historic preservation on a solid building and a tight site. Dorrie Brooks shepherded this difficult project through. We saved an important North Adams edifice, despite many skeptics along the way.

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- 10. Gardner Elementary School, Gardner, MA:** New 1000 pupil school: a "school in the woods". A large team collaboration, with Kristian in the lead. A great building committee and stalwart design team.

Each project had special moments, growth opportunities, architectural highlights, and memorable client interaction. I've been so fortunate!



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The Green Giants Award Program was created in 2013 as a biennial awards program by Laura Fitch AIA, Lawson Wulsin AIA, and Aelan Tierney AIA of the West Branch USGBC Massachusetts to honor the work of trades people, educators, and owners/program directors who help build, teach about, envision and fund the green buildings in Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin, and Berkshire counties. The Western Massachusetts AIA COTE Committee is continuing this award program.

THE 2021 GREEN GIANTS ARE:



EDUCATOR:

Ben Weil, Extension Assistant Professor, Building & Construction Technology, UMass Amherst

Students in the UMass Clean Energy Corps work in teams to provide energy analysis and high-level energy audits to Massachusetts cities and towns. They collect and analyze municipal energy data, conduct walkthroughs and instrumented energy audits and provide guidance to help municipalities cut their energy consumption and transition to renewable energy. There is no better way to learn and deeply understand energy auditing and data analysis than to do it as part of a real project with real data in the service of a real client.

“Ben has worked for years with teams of students to assist towns around the valley with energy efficiency projects. His students get hands on experience doing studies and developing consulting proposals for building clients. The program also provides practical assistance to towns with few resources for this kind of consulting experience - technical evaluation, new ideas”



TRADES:

Energia, LLC, Holyoke, MA

Energia is a 100% Worker Owned Cooperative located in Holyoke that provides energy efficiency upgrades for residential and commercial properties. Energia has partnered with local non-profits like Nuestras Raices and Nueva Esperanza to develop green jobs training programs for traditionally disadvantaged young men and women of color. Their Roots Up training program was a combined GED and Green jobs program. Additionally, once these young men and women completed their training program they were given job opportunities at Energia and other partner organizations (like Stiebel Eltron and National Fiber) to allow them to start their new careers. This focus on job placement sets the Roots Up training program apart from other green jobs programs.

A SPECIAL 2021 GREEN GIANTS LIFETIME HONOR AWARD WAS PRESENTED POSTHUMOUSLY TO:

Mark Ledwell, Wright Builders, Northampton, MA

Mark Ledwell’s work over the past twenty five years was exemplary of the current practice of sustainable construction. He worked with numerous architects and tradespeople over that time and was an eager collaborator. Mark was always learning and advancing what was possible. There were hundreds of people at a time working under his leadership at Wright Builders.

Mark’s portfolio included numerous net zero homes as well as the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, the 23rd Certified Living Building in the world and the 4th in Massachusetts.



“If you knew him, you know what he accomplished and how he did so with a smile.”

Thanks to our jury from AIA Maine’s COTE Committee:

Harry W Hephurn IV, AIA, Briburn architecture for life, Portland, ME
Ryan Kanteres AIA, Simons Architects, Portland ME
Timothy Lock AIA, OPAL Architecture/Research/Design Belfast, ME

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MASS MoCA

Glenn Kaino: In the Light of a Shadow is inspired by the connection between protests across the globe, specifically those in response to the tragic events known as “Bloody Sunday” from Selma, Alabama and Derry, Northern Ireland. The exhibition spans the entirety of MASS MoCA’s signature football-field sized Building 5 gallery with an immersive installation that explores the power of collective action in forging a more just world.

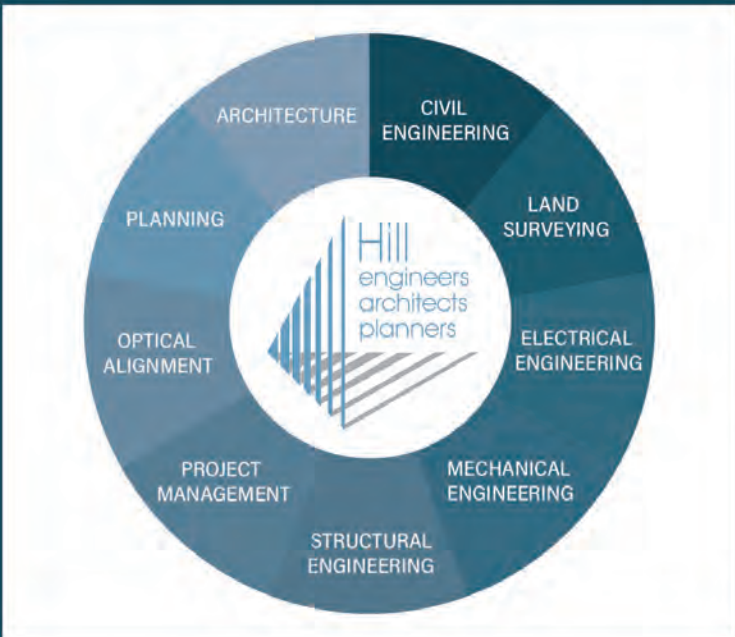
The installation takes the form of a galaxy inside of which viewers will be immersed and surrounded by moving shadows and evocative soundscape. Ultimately, Kaino’s *In the Light of a Shadow* is about remembering the past and forging a hopeful path forward. On view now.



Taryn Simon’s large-scale outdoor sculpture The Pipes is on long-term view on the MASS MoCA campus. What began as an oversized concrete instrument for a cacophony of global mourning in Simon’s work *An Occupation of Loss* (The Armory, 2016) will be populated by the sounds, collective call and response, and movements of a living public. The 11 structures that make up the installation – which Simon designed in collaboration with Shohei Shigematsu of architecture firm OMA – are an immersive experience, offered to the public as a sacred space for reflection, impromptu performance, and stargazing. On view now.



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FEATURED ARTISAN

BOXCO STUDIO

How do you work on your craft within the Western Massachusetts community?

We are fairly new to the Western MA community, we moved our life and business out here in the beginning of 2020. But we have already really enjoyed making connections with builders, designers and artisans in this area, and are excited to make more. There's a lot of moving parts involved in building kitchens, so it's important to us to build a network of tradespeople and designers that we can rely on - and that can rely on us. I have also started using local crafts - such as pottery - in our kitchen photo shoots, which is really fun. One of the reasons we wanted to move to Western MA is because there is such a strong community of craftspeople here. We love this area so much.

How does sustainability play a role in your business?

This is a question we've been thinking about a lot. We do use formaldehyde-free plywood from sustainably managed forests for our kitchens. We work hard to reduce waste in our shop, something that computer-aided design and the CNC router is very helpful for, since we can be really efficient about how we cut out parts for our cabinets and furniture. We endeavor to create a really high quality product, one that will last for a very long time. We always encourage our clients to save their old kitchens and donate them to a ReStore, and we're working with some clients now to replace the fronts of their cabinets so that the boxes can be reused. Trying to figure out innovative ways to make our product and process more sustainable is a huge goal of ours moving forward. We have some ideas, but are also always open to suggestions. Hopefully our answer to this question will just keep getting better!

Is there a way in which you would like to work with local architects and designers that hasn't happened yet?

Up until this point we've primarily been brought into projects by residential clients, so we are really excited to have the opportunity to make more connections with local architects and designers in general. It's great to work with other creatives that can envision new and innovative applications for our products. I find that sometimes as a designer you can get stuck in a rut, which is one reason we love collaborating and being introduced to different points of view. We are really interested in exploring other applications for our CNC router as well. We love making custom furniture and built-ins, so we'd welcome collaborating on products and services beyond kitchens. The possibilities seem endless!

What's your favorite part of your creative process? Can you describe your process?

As kitchen designers first-and-foremost, we are really interested in both form and function - we want to create spaces that look beautiful but also work really well. I like when clients want to get into the nitty gritty of exactly where every pan will go, because it's clear that they really love food and cooking. That's exciting to us because we know how much a new, well-designed kitchen is going to transform their lives. We also really love to work with color, I'd say that's one of our passions. Color does so much to create a mood and a feeling. People sometimes think of modern or minimalist design as being cold, but by using materials with warmth, texture and color I think this conception can be changed. Especially these days, when people are spending so much time at home, it feels important to help create spaces that are joyful and inspiring.

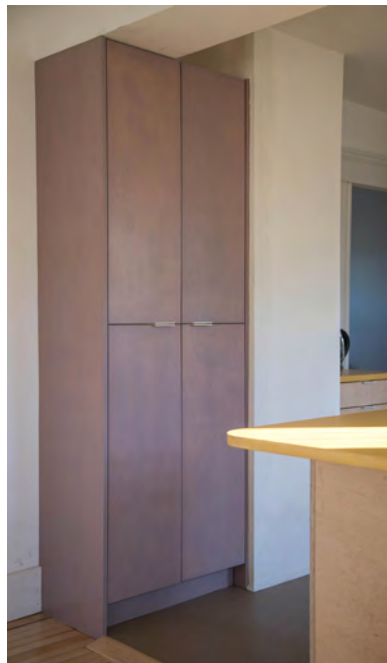


Boxco Studio is a small design and fabrication company specializing in custom cabinetry, kitchen design, concrete countertops and furniture. We are dedicated to creating functional modern spaces that are clean, inviting and inspiring.



FEATURED ARTISAN

GREENFIELD MA



WOULD YOU LIKE TO NOMINATE SOMEONE AS A FEATURED ARTISAN?
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WMAIA COMMUNITY
WINTER 2022

WMAIA Programs will resume in February.

All program information is sent through our enews.

Please be sure we have your current email address so that you receive all chapter information.

Contact director@wmaia.org to make any updates.

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