



Explorations: The Architecture of John Ronan (New Voices in Architecture)

John Ronan

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In Chicago, there is a long history of celebrating architecture as a building art—not merely a graphic one—where lofty rhetoric takes a back seat to clear-headed pragmatism. John Ronan is a leading figure of a new generation of architects that are not only steeped in the grounded, rigorous, and self-critical Chicago tradition, but are also focused on design innovation. Ronan's decade-old practice has garnered critical praise and awards in recognition of its subtle integration of sustainable technology, spatial composition, and material detail. His beautifully simple spaces convey a recurring theme of adaptability and flexibility across multiple functions that, when activated by a specific use, do not deter from a holistic architectural intent. *Explorations* features twelve projects ranging in scale from private residences and adaptive renovations to large public buildings.

John Ronan Architects' award-winning Gary Comer Youth Center was designed specifically to support the activities of Chicago's South Shore Drill Team; however, during the design process, the function of the space continued to evolve along with the client's goals, resulting in an architectural program that grew from a simple gym into a multifunctional space supporting a range of community and educational services. *Explorations* also features fully documented design processes for the recently completed Poetry Foundation in Chicago; the transformation of Washington, D.C.'s historic Yale Steam Laundry building into condominiums; the Urban Model High School, a new prototype school developed for the Public Building Commission of Chicago; and Precast Chapel, an economical concrete chapel for promoting interfaith dialogue and religious understanding. *Explorations* features a foreword by architect Toshiko Mori; an essay by highly respected Chicago-based architect Brad Lynch; and an interview with John Ronan conducted by architectural historian Robert McAnulty.

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