

Every obstacle in life has a design solution.

March 2020, Volume 6, Issue 63

"Beware the Ides of March"

The Ides of March was a day in the Roman calendar that corresponds to the 15th of March. It was marked by several religious observances and was notable for the Romans as a deadline for settling debts. The Romans did not number days of a month from the first to the last day. Instead, they counted back from three fixed points of the month: the Nones, (the 5th or 7th, nine days *inclusive* before the Ides), the Ides (the 13th for most months, but the 15th in March, May, July, and October), and the Kalends (1st of the following month). Originally the Ides were supposed to be determined by the full moon, reflecting the lunar origin of the Roman calendar. In the earliest calendar, the Ides of March would have been the first full moon of the new year.

In modern times, the Ides of March is best known as the date on which Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BC. Caesar was stabbed to death at a meeting of the Senate. As many as 60 conspirators, led by Brutus and Cassius, were involved. According to Plutarch, a seer had warned that harm would come to Caesar no later than the Ides of March. On his way to the Theatre of Pompey (which is our Iconic Building of the Month), where he would be assassinated, Caesar passed the seer and joked, "The Ides of March are come", implying that the prophecy had not been fulfilled, to which the seer replied "Aye, Caesar; but not gone." This meeting is famously dramatized in William Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar*, when Caesar is warned by the soothsayer to "beware the Ides of March." The Roman biographer Suetonius identifies the "seer" as a haruspex named Spurinna.



artist: Vincent Camuccini

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Did You Know ?

We are the leading local provider of tools and resources for people planning on adding on to, renovating or building a home.

We have several consumer guilds to help you.

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Archi-fact.

The Theatre of Pompey was the first permanent stone theatre ever built in Rome. All previous theaters in Rome had been built in wood.

The theatre sat 40,000 people. Its stage was 300 feet wide and 50 feet deep. The acting area was 500 feet in diameter.

The theatre was completed in the ear 55 BC which was 2,065 years ago. This building took only seven (7) years to complete.

"Beware the Ides of March"

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Caesar's death was a closing event in the crisis of the Roman Republic and triggered the civil war that would result in the rise to sole power of his adopted heir Octavian (later known as Augustus). Writing under Augustus, Ovid portrays the murder as a sacrilege, since Caesar was also the Pontifex Maximus of Rome and a priest of Vesta. On the fourth anniversary of Caesar's death in 40 BC, after achieving a victory at the siege of Perugia, Octavian executed 300 senators and knights who had fought against him under Lucius Antonius, the brother of Mark Antony. The executions were one of a series of actions taken by Octavian to avenge Caesar's death. Suetonius and the historian Cassius Dio characterized the slaughter as a religious sacrifice, noting that it occurred on the Ides of March at the new altar to the deified Julius.

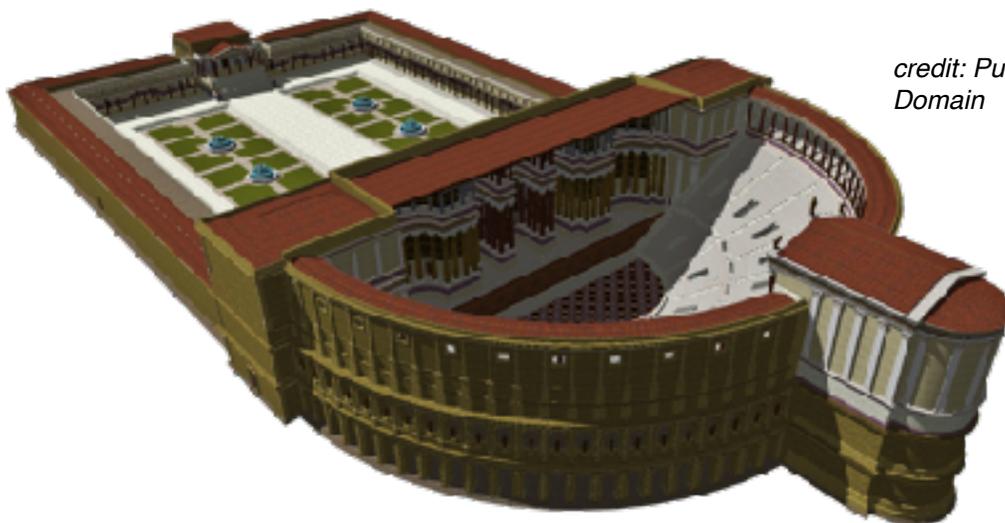
Iconic Building of the Month

Theatre of Pompey, Rome

The **Theatre of Pompey** was a structure in Ancient Rome built during the latter part of the Roman Republican era by Pompey the Great (Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus). Completed in 55 BC, it was the first permanent theatre to be built in Rome.

Enclosed by the large columned porticos was an expansive garden complex of fountains and statues. Along the stretch of the covered arcade were rooms dedicated to the exposition of art and other works collected by Pompey during his campaigns. On the opposite end of the garden complex was a council chamber for political meetings. The senate would often use this building along with a number of temples and halls that satisfied the requirements for their formal meetings. The curia is infamous as the place where Julius Caesar was assassinated by Brutus and Cassius during a session of the Senate on 15 March 44 BC.

During the Early Middle Ages, the marble covering of the theatre was used as a material to maintain other buildings. Being located near the Tiber, the building was also regularly flooded which caused further damage. Nevertheless, the concrete core of the building remained standing in the 9th century AD, as a pilgrim guidebook from that time still listed the site as a theatre. By the 12th century, buildings had started to encroach upon the remains; two churches, Santa Barbara and Santa Maria in Grotta Pinta were constructed on the site, with the latter probably having been built over one of the theatre's access corridors. However, the floor plan of the old theatre was still recognizable.



credit: Public Domain

Archi-Quote

The month's Archi-Quote was obviously not an architect, however for this month's article and life today entirely appropriate.

"If you must break the law, do it to seize power: in all other cases observe it"

Julius Caesar

Iconic Building of the Month

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Today, not much remains visible of the once majestic theatre, as the vestiges of the structure have entirely been enveloped by the structures that lie between the Campo de' Fiori and Largo di Torre Argentina. The largest intact sections of the theatre are found in the Palazzo della Cancelleria, which used much of the bone-colored travertine for its exterior from the theatre. The large red and grey columns used in its courtyard are from the porticoes of the theatre's upper covered seating; however, they were originally taken from the theatre to build the old Basilica of S. Lorenzo. And while the theatre itself is no longer discernible, the imprint of the building itself can still be detected; the structure's semicircular form can today be traced by walking east from the Campo de' Fiori through the Palazzo Orsini Pio Righetti. The path of the Via di Grotta Pinta, near the Via dei Chiavari, also roughly follows the outline of the theatre's original stage.



Plan Credit: Mark Miller

Archi-Speaks

Can you find these words?

EMPEROR LAW ASSASSINATION
THEATRE STAGE

V T B J P F O I K A U F N O N
O D E T B N Q W T U F E C S I
F G J Y A I C D N W M A I Y P
O I T M L O U F A T U E T V G
W D R H F S J G L C R J A W B
E N P K P Z C M A T J Q N F Z
B Z D R Z M Y S A K K L I R T
C O X N T Y F E T M N B S B V
A A S H N I H Q F A D Q S T D
P R N K E T U T F T G M A W R
E B O E M P E R O R I E S B Z
L L Z L Z C L F S H W D S P Q
A C X X D P S A K B O C A W Y
W M V F R M O D N B Q P L R X
U I Y O U M G J H H W U T E U

Ask M

In the James Bond books and movies the character "M" heads the Secret British Intelligence Service known as MI 6, of which James Bond is Agent 007. When contemplating adding on to your home or building, renovating or building a new home or building you should have someone like "M" on your side. Each month the "Ask M" column will answer a reader's question to place more information at your finger tips. **This month's question is...**

Last month you featured an artist's work. Does your firm help clients select art work for their project. ?

Alvin C.

Alvin,

The selection of art work for a project is available at an additional fee. Depending on the project and the execution of the design philosophy of the project, sometimes a work of art will be incorporated in the actual design of the project. However this is truly the exception and not the rule in architecture.

Email your questions to info@designMgroup.com, and in the subject line type in "Ask M". We look forward to hearing from you and hope we can answer the questions to everyone's satisfaction.

Want to speak with the Architect

Do you have questions but do not know where to start?

Do you know the legal consequences of starting a project without approvals?

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About

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President



photo credit: Jenna Glatzer

Marcus Marino, RA, AIA, NCARB is a leading architect in New York City. He received a Bachelors of Architecture from the prestigious Pratt Institute and a Masters in the Science of Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. He received his license to practice architecture in New York State in 1981 and is licensed in a number of other States. Marcus Marino has served on numerous Governmental Panels and serves as an expert consultant to other architectural firms and legal firms. He is the former Vice President of Public Advocacy of the New York State American Institute of Architects.

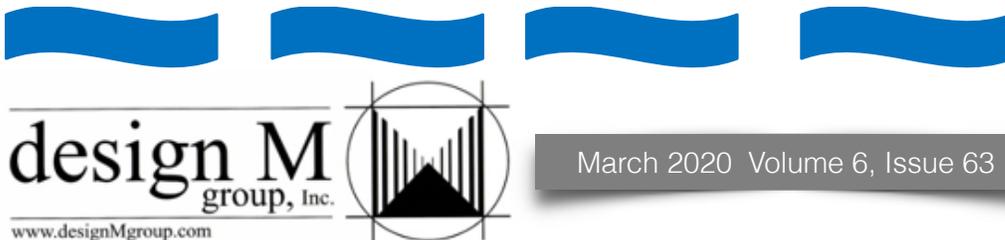
Our core beliefs are ...

Architects have a responsibility to our clients, community and the environment.

Architects should help provide information to our fellow world citizens about their homes, offices and the built environment in general.

Your Home should move you emotionally like your favorite song does.

Let Us Help You Build the Home You Knew Was Always There For You.



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