

# UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Seattle, Washington



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- 4** A Sentinel of Justice on the Skyline
- 10** Equality as a Formal Foundation
- 16** A Focus on Sustainability
- 21** Art in Architecture
- 35** General Facts about the Courthouse
- 40** Biographies: The Architect and the Artists
- 44** The Design and Construction Team
- 47** U.S. General Services Administration  
and the Design Excellence Program





**This special building comprises both strength and transparency. It represents our Federal government, and as such, has a great responsibility to express not only the government's strength and power but also our nation's commitment to an open and impartial judicial system.**

William Bain  
Architect, NBBJ

## A SENTINEL OF JUSTICE ON THE SKYLINE

Seattle has long represented Americans' best hopes for their urban centers. Built between two mountain ranges on an economy of timber, trade, and, more recently, high technology, this maritime center embraces the future even as it cherishes its natural assets and breathtaking landscapes. Throughout Seattle's many vibrant neighborhoods, a diverse array of cultures animates the city's rich commercial, artistic, and natural resources with a sense of progressive enterprise.

The new United States Courthouse in downtown Seattle exalts the city's unique character even as it embodies the broadest promises of the American justice system, gracefully reinterpreting the courthouse as a high-rise structure. At ground level, it responds to its context with a powerful sense of civitas. It helps bind the downtown to the adjacent Denny Triangle neighborhood, projecting the center-city's order on the outlying neighborhood and serving as a public linchpin for new commercial development. On the horizon, its iconic copper roof floats 390 feet over the city, and the building becomes a singular addition to the Seattle skyline.

Bounded by Seventh Avenue, Eighth Avenue, Stewart Street, and Virginia Street, the courthouse occupies about three-quarters of its one-block site. A generous one-acre plaza, landscaped with a grove of Himalayan birches, ferns, and evergreens, marks the main entrance to the southwest, an inviting transition between the sphere of the city and the realm of the judiciary. The plaza's landscape makes it a sheltered precinct with a rich diversity of experiences. A long concrete stair on the west recedes into the site's slope and softly accentuates the change in grade from the curb to the building's base. Behind the birch grove, the stairs gradually merge with the main courthouse procession, which terraces up the slope for the full width of the plaza to the portico. To the east, a set of sculptural pools nestled between the volumes of the lobby and a bar of offices cascade into a reflecting pool. Near the site's southern edge, an amphitheater-like space provides outdoor seating around the sculpture, *Pillar Arc*.

Architecturally, the massing and materials of the courthouse clarify functions. The tallest element—a roughly square tower—is, above the seventh floor, devoted to

courtrooms and judicial chambers. To the east, a much lower and gently curving office bar joins the tower across an atrium and embraces the plaza to the south. Its façade is boldly detailed with patinated copper cladding and strip windows, and it houses the U.S. Attorneys, the Bankruptcy Court, and the Clerk of the District Court.

A dark-gray rusticated granite base anchors the tower to the ground. Most of the shaft is clad in buff-colored precast concrete.

A lighter color of concrete on the courtroom tower signifies the purity of the judicial process. A pattern of delicate scorings traverses the concrete, forming a regular grid on the courtroom tower that, more dynamically, becomes both broader and narrower on the chambers volume. The flush strip glazing of the courtroom tower has horizontal fins, a visual counterpoint to the building's verticality. The fenestration of the chambers turns to deeply punched, aluminum-sash windows with transom lights, divided by thick precast brackets running vertically.

The façades offer other contrasts. Those on the east and west admit generous amounts

of daylight. On the north, the only window divisions are precast strips defining office bays. On the south and principal façade, which is essentially transparent, a curtain wall thrusts upward from the green-copper entrance canopy above the portico as if it were a massive bay window. Behind this glazing—a metaphor for the transparency of the judicial system—are the courtroom lobbies, open to public view between “bookends” of concrete.

Differences in height among components lend a vertical dynamism to the composition. Joining the principal façade, the triple-height public lobby frames the entrance with a copper canopy resting on seven columns to form a gracious portico. The office bar stands seven stories. The chambers volume rises alongside the main tower to the north for 17 stories and culminates in a terrace outside the judges' conference room. The tower's main shaft continues to 19 stories beneath the building's large copper roof, which denotes the tower's special significance on the skyline, ascending out of the ephemeral impulses of the city to represent the eternal values of justice.









**The Seattle courthouse is composed of three basic elements. In descending order, they are the courtroom tower, the judicial chambers, and the administrative office bar. This hierarchical composition honors the judicial functions in the courtroom tower and clarifies the position of both the judicial chambers and the administrative office areas.**

William Bain  
Architect, NBBJ



## EQUALITY AS A FORMAL FOUNDATION

From their initial steps into the courthouse precinct, visitors will find it an embodiment of egalitarian principles. Seven slender columns support the portico's green-copper canopy. The odd number of columns, significantly, produces an even number of entrance doors—four—that carry equal visual weight to avoid any sense of formal or metaphorical hierarchy.

Upon entering the soaring space of the triple-height lobby, visitors find that the quartzite paving of the plaza continues through the entrance to the interior. A quiet reflecting pool lines the lobby's west side, adjoining the security entrance, which is deliberately placed off-center to give all who enter a sense of humble equality before the law. An information area lies behind the reflecting pool. Those who arrive for jury service may check in at this location and proceed to the jury lounge and assembly area, which includes an outdoor terrace. At the back of the lobby, there is a monumental mural, *Three Sets of Twelve*, which covers the full three-story height of the wall.

In the center of the courthouse, the elevator shafts are clad in black granite, a

motif seen through the glazed south façade as it runs the full height of the tower visually connecting floor to floor. Currently, the building houses 18 courtrooms—one special proceedings courtroom on Level 7, five Bankruptcy courtrooms on Levels 7 and 8, and 12 District courtrooms on Levels 12 through 17. The main library and a conference suite occupy Level 19. Other functions such as grand jury space as well as offices for the U.S. Attorneys, probation services, and the U.S. Marshals fill the remaining levels. Anticipating future needs, the ultimate number of courtrooms can be expanded to a total of 25. In addition, offices can be readily modified, and cabling options are practically limitless, given the raised-floor construction of each level.

If there is any intended hierarchy to the building, it is the placement of the courtrooms on the top seven public levels to signify the importance of their purpose. On each floor, two courtrooms sit side-by-side, one on the east and one on the west. Visitors exit elevators at the center of the south end of the building to lobbies that look outward over the plaza and downtown Seattle. To enter a courtroom, they proceed

into an alcove off the lobby, and then into a vestibule, and finally into the courtroom itself. In what is a classic configuration, the judge's bench sits at the center of the space with the witness stand off to the side nearest the jury. Each courtroom has an adjoining jury deliberation room and a suite of judge's chambers, the latter looking out to the city from the north.

Courtroom interiors emphasize openness and light, with gently vaulted ceilings joining wood-louvered clerestory windows. Slip-matched cherry wood panels rise three-quarters up the perimeter walls, scored by thin reveals to enhance the sense of human scale; above the wood, fabric wall panels continue to the ceilings. Behind the judge's bench, black granite lines the wall, amplifying the sense of depth. In each courtroom, the bench moves into the well to engage spectators as if to signal their enrollment in the judicial process.

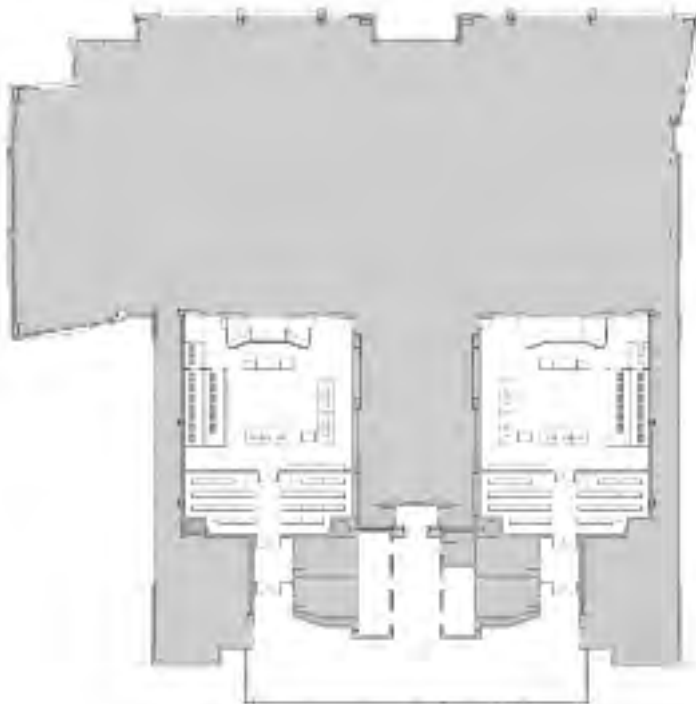
Perhaps the most distinctive spatial statement at this courthouse is the atrium connecting the courtroom tower and the lower-slung office bar to its east, space dedicated to the Bankruptcy Court, the

clerk of the District Court, and offices for the U.S. Attorneys and other Federal tenants. In the deep, relatively narrow space between the tower and office bar, the sweep of the latter's green copper wall creates the effect of a protective embrace, which culminates in the monumental whalebone trusswork vaulting majestically to the office tower. Like all great public spaces, the atrium creates a sense of awe and wonder that dignifies even the most bewildered visitor.

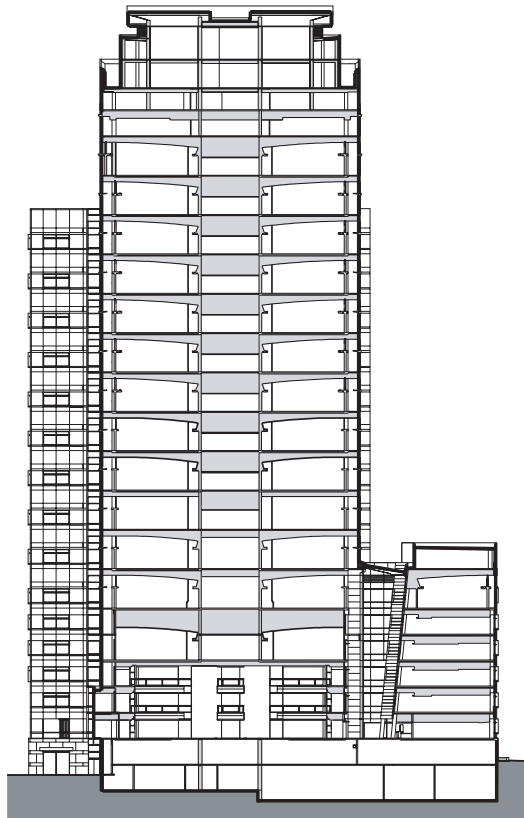








**Typical Courtroom Plan**



Section



## A FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

As the courthouse was designed, an important priority was energy conservation. In this arena, the building is actually a demonstration project since several of the strategies are not common in the private sector. Foremost among these is long-term programming. By designing for flexibility, office space on Levels 5, 10, and 11, for instance, can be reconfigured into courtrooms in a process that obviates the need for a new facility literally for generations.

The design also minimizes the building's footprint, leaving a full acre of open space in the plaza, which is landscaped with drought-tolerant plants. Further, the building's southern orientation brings in natural light, reduces energy consumption and the dependence on artificial lighting, and maximizes the ability to take advantage of solar heating. The artificial lighting itself incorporates energy-efficient lamps, occupancy sensors, and a comprehensive management system that dims or turns off lights when they are not being used.

In open office areas, lower partitions allow for better air circulation while they decrease the requirements for air supply and return

ducts. The mechanical systems are zoned, with air volume correlated to expected occupancy. Variable-volume air-handling units reduce fan speeds as cooling and heating loads are satisfied, and displacement air ventilation saves energy by relying, in large part, on passive convection to move air.

In comparison with buildings of a similar type and scale, these measures are expected to save the government \$300,000 annually, moving toward the goal of cutting energy use by half that needed for conventional technologies. Such planning represents good stewardship of both public funds and vital natural resources.











**Because art can lift our spirits and provide such strong connections with the public, collaborating artists were selected early in our design process. Their work thus became a true collaboration, and their art an integral part of the building.**

William Bain  
Architect, NBBJ

## ART IN ARCHITECTURE

Art has always been an important feature of great architecture. Several works have been created specifically for the United States Courthouse in Seattle, Washington.

### **Pillar Arc**

Cast Aluminum

27 Feet 6 Inches Tall

*Courthouse Plaza*

Ming Fay

Ming Fay's artwork is a continual exploration of nature and its relationship to mankind. He is particularly interested in botanical forms and their roles as specimens, food sources, cultural symbols, and emblems for historical anecdotes. He believes humans have an affinity and perpetual longing for nature, and that in modern, urban environments the need for a reminder of the natural world is especially significant and necessary. In this context, Fay strives to demonstrate the wonder of even the humblest natural forms, giving the viewer a new appreciation of the ordinary. Exemplifying this philosophy, the inspiration for *Pillar Arc* came from a single kernel of a cedar cone balanced on one point. Fay selected the cedar cone because of its spiritual

connections to the Northwest. The size of the cedar kernel was enlarged to the monumental stature of a tree, an exaggeration that emphasizes the inherent beauty, nuance, and poetry of the form.

**Leaf**

Aluminum, Stainless Steel, Dichroic Glass,  
and Stone

42 Feet 8 Inches High

49 Feet 2 Inches Long

26 Feet 3 Inches Wide

*Atrium between the Tower and Office Wing*

Ed Carpenter

With Oanh Tran and Grant Davis

In the Pacific Northwest, alder trees are the first to emerge after a landslide, forest fire, or clearcut. They help resist erosion, nitrogenate the soil, and provide shade for the slower growing conifers, playing a central role in the renewal and regeneration of the forest. For these reasons, Carpenter has used the alder leaf as a symbol of renewal. At times of day when the sun aligns with the skylight, its rays fall on the sculpture and are projected and reflected around the atrium by the dichroic glass elements emanating from the leaf, suggesting the regenerative process of photosynthesis and enlivening the atrium with slowly moving patterns of color cast on the walls and floor. Architecturally, the sculpture's form composes well within the unusually tall and narrow atrium space,

helping mediate its height, and offering an intriguing spatial filigree of colorful views from every level. Carpenter and his team use the network of cables tying the leaf to the building's walls not only for structural reasons, but also to convey graphically the inter-connectedness among various departments of the courts system.



**Reflection Fountain**

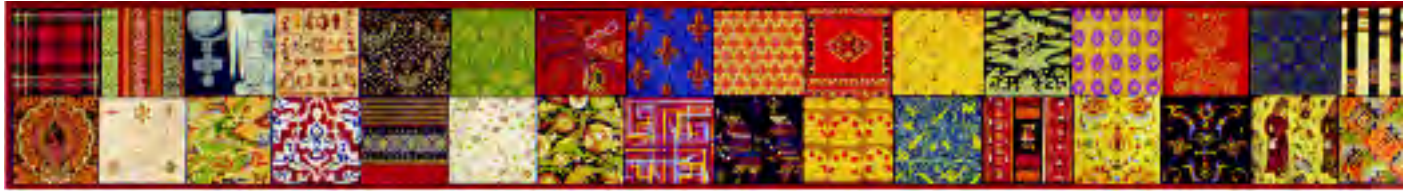
*Courthouse Lobby*

Paul Marioni and Ann Troutner

The artists' underlying concept for *Reflection Fountain* is to create a welcoming and calming element for visitors as they enter the courthouse, a setting that is perceived as a solemn experience. There is a contrast between the dark, seemingly deep and still reflecting pool and the long, low curving waterfall with its active textural surface. The gentle curve of the waterfall subliminally references the scales of justice. The artists chose the pale turquoise color of the glass to emphasize the water and to match the color of the two outside pools.







### **Quiltroad**

Acrylic on canvas

20-3/8 Inches by 204-3/8 Inches

*Public Viewing Room adjacent to the Atrium*

Sung-Ho Choi

Sung-Ho Choi's work addresses critical issues in society, specifically his interest in the interactions between different cultures and traditions. *Quiltroad* is one variation of this artistic endeavor in which Choi uses unique design patterns from different cultural traditions to create a mural that resembles a large quilt. The artist did extensive research to select forty-two sample patterns from traditional textile designs of the world. He then combined these into a woven checkerboard pattern to create a colorful and harmonious overall composition. Choi focused on textiles because they are a rich and complex art form deeply embedded in local cultures and histories, and because they were once one of the major trade items that connected different parts of the world. Extending the idea of connectedness, Choi created *Quiltroad* as a symbolic patchwork of the hope for a peaceful world.



**Three Sets of Twelve**

Acrylic on Panel

Mural in Three Sections,

Each 9 Feet 6 Inches by 79 Feet 6 Inches

*Galleries of Courthouse Lobby*

Michael Fajans

*Three Sets of Twelve* is a work in three parts for the lobby of the courthouse. The vertical division of the site played a defining role in the artist's representation of the cross-sectional ideal of people who serve as jurors. On the first floor, twelve individuals work while seated in the chairs they need for their occupations. Their attention is on their respective tasks, and they exist in a space that does not include the viewer. In the gallery above, Fajans depicts a wheelchair and eleven versions of the chair that can be found in the courtroom jury boxes. The chairs are rendered in a variety of different ways to suggest that each juror comes to the courthouse with a unique set of life experiences. Arrayed in an orderly row across the topmost gallery is the deliberating jury, the same individuals Fajans shows at work in the first floor mural. Here, painted in grisaille, the jurors are life size, with their gaze directed at the viewer.







**Winding Ribbon**

Cut Steel

9 Feet by 30 Feet

*Entry to the Law Library, 19th Level*

Deborah Mersky

Contrasting with the contemporary aesthetic of the courthouse, this work of art is rooted in the past. Mersky conceived of *Winding Ribbon* as a decorative piece with a deliberate historical subtext. She chose the patterned elements to reflect a moment in time when what is now Seattle began its sudden transformation from a sparsely populated coastal forest to a large city, trading tall trees for tall buildings. The background pattern is reminiscent of nineteenth-century fabric design, with a repetition of branch elements. The patterning is broken at several points to reveal large, realistic crab apple branches wound through with ribbon—an image of human presence winding its way inexorably through the natural world. Scattered among the pattern of background branches are a rich variety of native plants: cedar, vine maple, madrona, camas, salal, honeysuckle, ocean spray, current, and snowberry, among others. All plant

specimens in the artwork were collected by the British naturalist David Douglas during his Pacific Northwest sojourn, and by his predecessor, Archibald Menzies. Their work served to identify, catalogue, and disseminate local plant species worldwide, enriching scientific knowledge while inadvertently encouraging the depletion of resources. At various points in *Winding Ribbon*, Mersky overlays etched portions of writing from the 1854 Treaty of Medicine Creek, the Federal document that established reservation land for the local Indian people. Mersky found particularly poignant the signature pages marked with X after X.

**Untitled**

Stainless Steel

*Courtroom Gates*

Deborah Mersky

Each courtroom has a set of metal panels set into the gates that divide the spectators' area from the proceedings of the court. The panels are intricately cut stainless steel with an etched image on the surface. Mersky depicts various plants, including deerfoot, salal, Nootka rose, snowberry, cedar, horsetail, alder, and mock orange, that grew in the vicinity of the courthouse prior to Seattle's nineteenth century development. These plants played an important role in the daily life of the indigenous people of the Seattle area, a sampling of the vast pharmacopoeia essential to Indian life. Mersky designed the gates to remind viewers that the plants still exist and to allude to their original purposes. Today, some are cultivated and hybridized as landscape elements, and some are still found wild in local woods and open spaces.

**Art in Architecture Program**

GSA's Art in Architecture Program commissions artists, working in close consultation with project design teams, to create artwork that is appropriate to the diverse uses and architectural vocabularies of new Federal buildings. These permanent installations of contemporary art for the nation's civic buildings afford unique opportunities for promoting the integration of art and architecture and facilitate a meaningful cultural dialogue between the American people and their government. A panel composed of an art professional from GSA's National Register of Peer Professionals, an art professional from the city or region, the project's lead design architect, and individuals representing the Federal client, the community, and GSA provides guidance in selecting the best artist for each project.





## GENERAL FACTS ABOUT THE COURTHOUSE

The United States Courthouse in Seattle serves the Western District of Washington. It occupies the entire two-acre block bounded by Seventh Avenue, Eighth Avenue, Stewart Street, and Virginia Street near its intersection with Westlake Avenue North. It straddles the northern edge of downtown and the southern edge of the Denny Triangle neighborhood.

At 390 feet high, the building appears taller than its 23 floors (the four uppermost floors are for mechanical systems), owing to 22-foot floor-to-floor heights on Levels 7 through 18. A one-acre plaza encompasses the southwest corner of the site, providing a broad security apron from the street. Two levels of secure parking lie below the main lobby level, providing more than 100 spaces.

The courthouse has 18 courtrooms: 12 District courtrooms, five Bankruptcy courtrooms, and one special-proceedings courtroom. A 30-year expansion plan calls for seven new courtrooms, five for the District Court and two for the Bankruptcy Court. On the taller levels, the plans generally include two courtrooms per floor, each with an adjoining jury deliberation

room and judge's chambers. In between the chambers, courtroom floors are designed with an informal library space. The main law library lies on Level 19, opposite a conference suite.

Grand juries assemble on Level 3, and regional offices for several agencies are also consolidated in the building. The U.S. Attorneys occupy Levels 3 through 7. The U.S. Marshals Service and a central cellblock are located on Level 9. Probation offices and a fitness center are on Level 10. Level 11 is dedicated to U.S. Pretrial Services along with space for courtroom deputies. There are also offices for the U.S. Trustees and U.S. Probation Services.

Running among its system of studied adjacencies, the building, like that of all modern federal courthouses, maintains separate circulation for the public, for judges, and for the incarcerated. There is also state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment in the courtrooms and a highly flexible cabling system throughout the courthouse and offices.

**Location**

A 2.08-acre parcel of land in downtown Seattle, bounded by Seventh Avenue, Eighth Avenue, Stewart Street, and Virginia Street near its intersection with Westlake Avenue North.

**Size**

615,000 Gross Square Feet  
390 Feet High  
23 Floors including the Main Entry Level and Mechanical Systems Floors above Level 19  
Two Floors below the Main Entry Level for Parking and Other Services

**Time Frame**

Design Awarded: 1998  
Construction Started: July 2001  
Occupancy: August 2004  
Dedication: September 2004

**Major Building Components**

U.S. Courts: 250,510 Square Feet  
Tenant Office Space: 120,105 Square Feet  
Total Rentable Area: 385,000 Square Feet

**Parking**

Two Levels of Secure Interior Spaces  
One Loading Dock

**Foundation**

Reinforced Concrete Drilled Shaft Piers  
Reinforced Concrete Grade Beams

**Structure**

**Floor Framing:** Reinforced concrete composite slab on metal deck and composite steel wide flange beams.

**Columns:** Wide flange steel columns and large concrete-filled steel pipe columns.

**Lateral System:** East wing uses steel special concentric braced frames. Tower supports consist of steel plate shear walls, steel special concentric braced frames, steel special moment resisting frame, and concrete-filled steel pipe columns. Below the plaza are perimeter concrete shear walls.

**Mechanical**

Two types of air-handling units serve the courthouse. The first incorporates single-duct, variable air volume components, including return air fans, supply air fans, 100-percent airside economizer components, 30 to 35 percent efficiency pre-filters, 80 to 85 percent efficiency final

filters, heating hot water coils, chilled water cooling coils, and variable speed motor controllers.

The second type of system utilizes indirect/direct evaporative cooling technology, which includes return air “scavenger air” fans, heating hot water coils, filtration, supply fans, and a booster chilled water coil. This system serves the tower’s public spaces and the main portico.

Displacement ventilation is incorporated into the main portico and the tower’s public spaces. Displacement ventilation registers are located near the floor and will deliver air at a very low velocity. Clean, cool air will collect in the lower six to seven feet of the space volume and rise in a convective flow to allow warmer air to displace to the upper reaches of the volume and be removed. Radiant floor heat is used near the perimeter glass.

A boiler plant ensures a reliable heating source. The plant consists of multiple boilers to ensure redundancy, energy efficiency, and light load performance.

Waterless urinals reduce water usage.

#### **Finishes**

**Exterior:** Black granite base; low-iron glazed curtain wall; clear glazed curtain wall and punched windows; acid-washed precast concrete; sandblasted precast concrete; pre-patina green-copper walls and roof.

**Main Entry Lobby:** Quartzite stone floor paving; cherry wood and black granite entrance security station; low-iron glass curtain wall; black Emerald Pearl granite elevator cladding; Venetian decorative plaster; and reflecting pool with cast art glass.

**Courtroom Public Lobbies:** Low-iron glass curtain wall; black Emerald Pearl granite elevator cladding; cherry wood wall paneling and wood louvers; Venetian decorative plaster; inset area rugs; terrazzo floor; and leather and stainless steel seat benches.

**Courtrooms:** Cherry wood wall paneling and wood louvers; fabric-wrapped acoustical wall panels; custom carpet tiles over access flooring; glass and cherry wood doors; black granite caps at bench, bar, and jury box; and special acoustical ceiling panels.

**Atrium:** Quartzite stone floor paving; cherry wood and black-granite clerk intake counter; Venetian decorative plaster; acid-washed precast concrete; and pre-patina green-copper wall.

**Elevator Lobbies:** Terrazzo floor; black Emerald Pearl granite elevator cladding; patterned stainless steel doors; and cherry wood paneling.





## BIOGRAPHIES: THE ARCHITECT AND ARTISTS

**William Bain, Jr.**, FAIA, RIBA, JIA, graduated from Cornell University where he won both the York Prize and the Charles Goodwin Sands Memorial Medal. After serving with the Army Corps of Engineers, he returned to Seattle and joined the firm of NBBJ.

Today, the firm's organization is strongly collaborative and virtually all major design disciplines are included in the design process. Bain's work covers a range of building types including such projects as the United States Pavilion at Expo '74, Guam Judicial Center, Two Union Square, Cordiner Hall at Whitman College, the Design Disciplines Building and Physical Sciences Building at Washington State University, master planning and building design on the University of Washington South Campus and the Downtown Metropolitan Tract, seven separate projects for the Battelle Memorial Institute, Honolulu Municipal Office Building, demonstration housing in Saitama, Japan, Pacific Place, the centerpiece of downtown Seattle's retail revitalization, Unigard Insurance Company Corporate Headquarters, Bagley Wright Theater, Paramount Theater

restoration, Four Seasons Olympic Hotel restoration, and Market Place Tower, a mixed-use development. Recent work includes an office building, a hotel and condominium mixed-use development, and a research center for mind, brain, and learning.

Bain is a past president of both the Seattle Chapter and the Washington State Council of the American Institute of Architects. He has lectured or taught design at Cornell, NYU, Harvard, University of Washington, Washington State University, and the Technology Transfer Institute of Japan. He has served on a number of AIA and other design award juries. He has also been president of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, chairman of the Downtown Seattle Association and was recognized as a Most Distinguished Alumnus of the Lakeside School. He has received the AIA Seattle Chapter Medal, the highest honor the Chapter can bestow and was recently presented with the Filley Award for Excellence by the honorary land-economics society Lambda Alpha International. He has served for many years as an advisor to the College of Architecture, Art and Planning at Cornell.

**Ed Carpenter** was born in Los Angeles and now lives with his wife and children in the Coast Range mountains west of Portland, Oregon. He specializes in large-scale public installations ranging from architectural sculpture to infrastructure design. Carpenter has completed scores of public projects both in the United States and abroad, working collaboratively with a variety of expert consultants, sub-contractors, and studio assistants. Carpenter's use of cold bent tempered glass, encapsulated glass elements, programmed artificial lighting, and unusual tension structures has broken new ground in architecturally integrated sculpture. Carpenter's first GSA Art in Architecture commission was *Rotunda Art Glass*, completed in 1993 for the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building in Oakland, California.

**Sung-Ho Choi** was born in Seoul, Korea, and has lived and worked in New York City since 1981. He earned a BFA at Hong-Ik University in Seoul and his MFA at Pratt Institute in New York. His work has been exhibited at Columbia University's Macy Gallery, the Korean American Museum in Los Angeles, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco, the Tacoma Art Museum in Washington, the Queens Museum of Art in New York, the Augusta Savage Memorial Gallery at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, and many other venues. Choi was also co-organizer of the exhibition *Across the Pacific: Contemporary Korean and Korean-American Art* at the Queens Museum of Art in New York and the Kumho Museum of Art in Seoul.

**Michael Fajans** was born in Philadelphia, grew up in New York, and now lives in Seattle. His work has been exhibited at the Contemporary Museum in Baltimore, the Tacoma Art Museum, the Bellevue Art Museum, the Center on Contemporary Art in Seattle, the San Jose Museum of Art in California, the Henry Gallery at the University of Washington in Seattle, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria in British Columbia, the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, and many other venues. Fajans has also completed a number of public commissions, including those for the Seattle Tacoma International Airport and the Office of the Governor of the State of Washington. His work has been featured in publications such as *Artforum*, *The New York Times*, *The Seattle Times*, *The Village Voice*, and *Art in America*.

**Ming Fay** was born in Shanghai, raised in Hong Kong, and now resides in New York City. Fay received his BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and his MFA from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His exhibition record includes the Whitney Museum of American Art (at Phillip Morris) and the National Academy of Art in New York, the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia in Virginia Beach, the Atlanta College of Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, and the Lodz Biennial in Poland, among others. Recent public art commissions by Fay include projects for the Oregon Convention Center in Portland and a Metropolitan Transit Authority subway station in downtown New York City. Fay is a professor of sculpture at William Patterson University in New Jersey and a visiting artist at the Maryland Institute of Art's Rhinehart School of Sculpture.

**Paul Marioni** and **Ann Troutner** are a married artist team living in Seattle. They have completed numerous public commissions together. Marioni was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Troutner was born in Safford, Arizona. Their work has been exhibited at the Fairfield Art Museum in Connecticut, The Fresno Art Museum in California, the Holter Museum of Art in Montana, the American Craft Museum in New York, the Bellevue Art Museum in Washington, the Oakland Museum of Art in California, the Louisville Visual Arts Association in Kentucky, and many other places. Public collections that house examples of their work are the American Crafts Museum in New York, the National Museum of American Art in Washington, the Oakland Art Museum in California, the Glasmuseum Frauenau in Germany, and the Corning Glass Museum in New York.

**Deborah Mersky** was born in New Haven, Connecticut, and spent her childhood in Texas. She now lives in Seattle. Mersky earned a BA from Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, and her MFA in painting from the University of Washington in Seattle. Her many public commissions include projects in San Jose, California, Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, and several projects for the Seattle Arts Commission and King County Public Art Program. All of these projects are rooted in Mersky's devotion to a studio practice focused on drawing and printmaking, in which she explores her interest in "the decorative power of pattern, in transforming the mundane."

## THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TEAM

### **Owner**

U.S. General Services Administration  
Regional Office: Auburn, WA

### **Architect**

NBBJ  
Seattle, WA

### **Design Excellence National Peers**

Curt Fentress  
Fentress Bradburn Architects Ltd  
Denver, CO

Jim Olson  
Olson/Sundberg Architects  
Seattle, WA

Roger Lewis  
Architect  
Washington, DC

Barton Myers  
Barton Myers Associates, Inc.  
Los Angeles, CA

### **Artists**

Ed Carpenter  
Portland, OR

Sung-Ho Choi  
New York, NY

Michael Fajans  
Seattle, WA

Ming Fay  
New York, NY

Paul Marioni and Ann Troutner  
Seattle, WA

Deborah Mersky  
Seattle, WA

### **Art Peer**

Barbara Goldstein  
Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs  
Seattle, WA

### **Construction Management**

Art Anderson Associates  
Bremerton, WA

### **General Contractor**

JA Jones/Absher Construction Company  
Joint Venture  
Puyallup, WA

### **Civil and Structural Engineering**

Magnusson Klemencic Associates  
Seattle, WA

**Electrical**

Sparling Electrical Engineering  
Technology Consulting  
Seattle, WA

**HVAC and Plumbing**

CBG Consulting Engineers  
Bellevue, WA

**Landscape Architecture**

Peter Walker & Partners  
Landscape Architecture Inc.  
Berkeley, CA

**Exterior Cladding**

Curtainwall Design Consultants  
Dallas, TX

**Elevators**

Lerch Bates Associates  
Snohomish, WA

**Acoustical**

Bruck Richards Chaudiere  
Seattle, WA

**Geotechnical Engineer**

Shannon & Wilson, Inc  
Seattle, WA

**Water Feature**

Dan Euser Water Architecture  
Richmond Hill, ON, Canada

**Waterproofing**

Wetherholt & Associates  
Kirkland, WA

**Fire Safety**

Rolf Jensen Associates  
Walnut Creek, CA

**Blast Consultant**

Hinman Consulting Engineers  
San Francisco, CA

**Security**

Latta Technical Services  
Plano, TX

**Independent Testing/Inspection**

AMEC  
Kirkland, WA

**Cost Estimating, Lighting, and Signage**

NBBJ  
Seattle, WA





**U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
AND THE DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM**

*Public buildings are part of a nation's legacy. They are symbolic of what Government is about, not just places where public business is conducted.*

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is responsible for providing work environments and all the products and services necessary to make these environments healthy and productive for Federal employees and cost-effective for the American taxpayers. As builder for the Federal civilian Government and steward of many of our nation's most valued architectural treasures that house Federal employees, GSA is committed to preserving and adding to America's architectural and artistic legacy.

GSA established the Design Excellence Program in 1994 to change the course of public architecture in the Federal Government. Under this program, administered by the Office of the Chief Architect, GSA has engaged many of the finest architects, designers, engineers, and artists working in America today to design the future landmarks of our nation. Through collaborative partnerships, GSA is implementing the goals of the

1962 *Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture*: (1) producing facilities that reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the Federal Government, emphasizing designs that embody the finest contemporary architectural thought; (2) avoiding an official style; and (3) incorporating the work of living American artists in public buildings. In this effort, each building is to be both an individual expression of design excellence and part of a larger body of work representing the best that America's designers and artists can leave to later generations.

To find the best, most creative talent, the Design Excellence Program has simplified the way GSA selects architects and engineers for construction and major renovation projects and opened up opportunities for emerging talent, small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses. The Program recognizes and celebrates the creativity and diversity of the American people.

The United States Courthouse in Seattle, Washington, was designed and constructed under the GSA Design Excellence Program.

