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***The Havre de Grace Arts Collective proudly presents
Two Joint Exhibits & Presentations during October & November 2018 on
Trailblazing Women of Architecture in Maryland***

The Havre de Grace Arts Collective will feature two exhibits during Architecture Month in October and continuing through November 2018:

- **EXHIBIT: Early Women of Architecture in Maryland**
at the *Cultural Center at the Opera House* (121 N. Union Avenue, Havre de Grace, MD 21078) and
- **EXHIBIT: Poldi Hirsch, AIA - The Artistic Vision of an Early Modern Architect**
at *Concord Point Coffee* (217 N. Washington St, Havre de Grace, MD 21078).

The Early Women of Architecture in Maryland exhibit delves into the history of 12 women who contributed their design talent to the built environment in Maryland at a time when few women were in the profession. Many of the women practiced through the lean years of the Depression and World War II, designing buildings in Maryland and across the country, serving as a story of perseverance and determination.

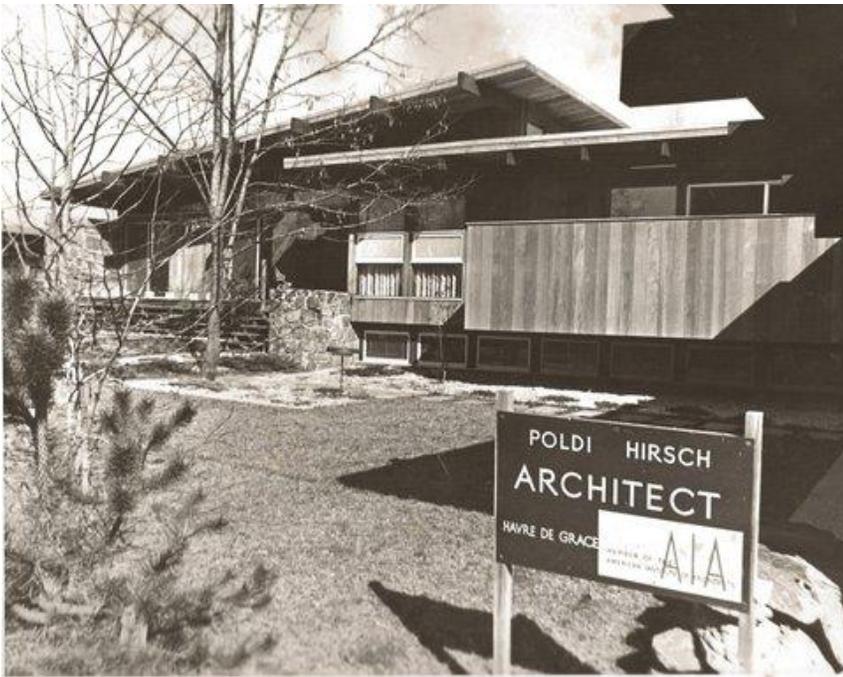
One of the women featured in the traveling exhibit is Poldi Hirsch, AIA, a resident of Havre de Grace and the first woman corporate firm owner of the American Institute of Architects, Baltimore Chapter (AIA Baltimore). A special exhibit of her artwork and architectural drawings will highlight her pioneering legacy and breadth of talent - Poldi Hirsch, AIA - The Artistic Vision of an Early Modern Architect - to be showcased at Concord Point Coffee.

In collaboration with these exhibits, there will be two special presentations free to the public on Thursday, October 11 & Saturday, November 3, 2018 (see second page).

The travelling exhibit was sponsored by the Baltimore Architecture Foundation with a starter grant from Maryland Humanities and developed by members of the Women in Architecture (now EQUITY) Committee of the AIA Baltimore with research assistance from architecture students at Morgan State University. It has been showcased in multiple jurisdictions across Maryland, in Washington D.C. and Philadelphia, and this is the first time traveling to the northeast region of our state.

The Havre de Grace Arts Collective is a 501(c)3 organization created to address the cultural and economic needs of Havre de Grace and the surrounding region, including oversight of the *Cultural Center at the Opera House*, Arts & Entertainment District, and the Arts by the Bay Gallery. It has worked in collaboration with the Baltimore Architecture Foundation to bring these special events to the town. In addition to the Havre de Grace Arts Collective and Concord Point Coffee, sponsors of the exhibit installation and receptions include: Safe Harbor Retirement Planners, Midway Discount Liquors, Mr. Andy & Mrs. Jayne Klein, Mr. Gary Getz, AIA & Dr. Elaine Hirsch, Mr. Stanley Bliden & Dr. Edna Hirsch, and Drs. Barry Wohl & Dahlia Hirsch.

The public can view the exhibits between October 1 - November 30, 2018. Hours of the *Concord Point Coffee* are Monday-Friday 8AM-7PM; Saturday 7AM-7PM; and Sunday 7AM-5PM. Hours of the *Cultural Center at the Opera House* are Monday-Friday 9:30AM-12PM & 1PM-4PM or during special events. Contact the *Opera House* (443)502-2005 for weekend and special hours. For more information, details, and updates please visit www.HdgArtsCollective.org and www.aiawam.com or email wia.maryland@yahoo.com.



Home Office on in Havre de Grace, 1973



Poldi Hirsch in Home Office, circa 1965

EXHIBIT RECEPTIONS & PRESENTATIONS – THURSDAY OCTOBER 11 & SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2018

- **The 6-8pm exhibit reception on Thursday, October 11 at the *Cultural Center at the Opera House* will feature a slide presentation highlighting research from the exhibit with a focus on Poldi Hirsch.**
- **Then on Saturday, Nov. 3 from 2:00-4:00pm, there will be a special reception at *Concord Point Coffee*, where Poldi Hirsch’s daughters will share their personal reflections on their mother’s life and legacy.**

Poldi Rothenberg Hirsch, AIA, was born in 1926 in Remscheid, Germany and studied architecture in Switzerland. She immigrated to the US with her daughter and husband in 1953. Only by chance did they settle in Havre de Grace when touring Maryland for a place to start her husband’s medical practice. Havre de Grace turned out to be a great community to raise a family, but a more difficult locale to establish an architecture practice, especially one that followed the tenets of modernism. Poldi’s architectural training was heavily influenced by Le Corbusier with a strong commitment to uniting form and function. Her core belief was that buildings should be “built well and organized” and that their design should be original and not mimic past styles.

Her first project was to design the office building of her husband’s medical practice. Other than the occasional house for friend or family member, it was difficult to find other architectural work, so she undertook the financing, design, and construction of numerous projects as an architect/builder. She developed townhouse duplexes with 2 or 3 bedrooms units around 1,500 square feet each, designed for constructability and built at minimal costs to serve starter families. Seventeen such buildings are scattered around Havre de Grace. Poldi took care to see that they were built well with special elements, such as porches and wood ceilings. She would develop them one after another so that she could keep the skilled laborers continually employed under her care.

By the mid-’60s, Poldi had opportunities to design much larger apartment complexes and office buildings. But likely her greatest work of art was her family residence, completed in 1970 (shown above). The design included an office for her architectural practice as well as an examination room and office for her husband’s work. Meticulous thought was put in the design, from the overall form, to the materials, furniture, and landscape.

Poldi had a firm affirmation for living life and loving design. From fashion, to art, to music, she brought beauty to everything she touched. In 1987, she passed away at age 61, after a prolific career as an architect, planner, and architect/builder of a wide variety of building types, including homes for average citizens, multi-family apartment buildings, office buildings, custom residences, medical facilities, and civic planning studies. In Harford County, over 25 modern structures still stand as a testament to her professional perseverance.

The October 11th presentation (worth 1.5 AIA CEU credits) will be given by Jillian Storms, AIA, who received BAF’s Roger Redden Award and Preservation Maryland’s George T. Harrison Volunteer Award in recognition of her extensive work in organizing the research effort and curating the *Early Women of Architecture in Maryland* traveling exhibit. She has a Master of Architecture from the University of Oregon and a Bachelor of Urban Studies & Planning from Goucher College. Professionally, she serves as a school facilities architect at the Maryland State Department of Education.