

Alumni Focus

Lea Ciavarra G'95



After years of personal collaboration, Lubrano and Ciavarra formed their NYC architecture and design firm in 1999. A firm of seven architects, designers, and interns, their work includes all scales of residential, commercial, and institutional projects such as The New York Center for Autism Charter School, the Point Knitting Café in Greenwich Village, Greenpoint Condominiums in Brooklyn, and the Alcon Builders Group Building in NYC. They pride themselves in maintaining an open dialogue with their clients, contractors, and consultants. Collaboration and communication make the process as critical as the product. The outcome of such collaboration has been strong plan concepts that translate into clear and provocative spaces, such as their Phase One winning submission for the international "Chicago Public Schools: Big Shoulders Small Schools" design competition.

A busy, successful NYC architect at Lubrano Ciavarra Design LLC, **Lea Ciavarra** is no stranger to Syracuse Architecture. Serving on the faculty for two years after completion of her graduate studies in 1995, and currently sitting on the School's advisory board, Ciavarra returns to Syracuse during the spring 2008 semester as a visiting professor along with her co-principal, **Anne Marie Lubrano**. Together they teach *Renovation/Innovation*, a new professional elective course that gives students an opportunity to learn the art and technique of innovative house renovation through hands-on design and implementation.

Students are being guided through the assessment and redesign of several existing wood-frame houses in the economically distressed Near Westside neighborhood of Syracuse, and exploring ways to preserve historical assets while exploiting new possibilities in materials, design, and construction. Syracuse Architecture faculty members **Kevin Lair**, **Albert Marichal**, and **Katrina Stoll** contribute to course presentation, and experts from local firms and institutions affiliated with the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems are providing technical assistance in sustainable rehabilitation practices. It is intended that these renovations will be completed during summer and fall 2008 through a collaboration among the School of Architecture, Lubrano Ciavarra Design, North East Building Consulting, and Home Headquarters, Inc.

"Hooray for *Renovation/Innovation*! The foresight of Dean Robbins in bringing together a truly multi-disciplinary team to work as a sounding board for the students' design innovations has truly made this a remarkable class and challenges the previous conception of a 'professional practice' elective," said

Ciavarra and Lubrano. "We feel it is particularly significant in that the students are focusing on applying sustainable and 'eco-conscious' design to actual projects with very limited budgets. What a phenomenal opportunity for them to take on responsibilities that make an actual impact, to negotiate design within a team, and to gain the experience of

working in a satellite office right here on campus!"

Some students from the *Renovation/Innovation* course will be considered for paid summer internships with Lubrano Ciavarra Design to assist in completion of construction documents and construction administration.

