

GEOFFREY WARNER RECEIVES FAIA FROM THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

FEBRUARY 23, 2021—Saint Paul, MN Geoffrey C. Warner has been recognized with the distinction of Fellow by The American Institute of Architects. AIA Fellows are recognized with the highest membership honor for their exceptional work and contributions to architecture and society. Nominees present their successes and efforts in: promoting the aesthetic, scientific, and practical efficiency of architecture; advancing the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education, training, and practice; coordinating the building industry, and the profession of architecture; ensuring the advancement of the living standards of people through their improved environment; and making the profession of ever-increasing service to society.

As noted in his submission, Geoffrey Warner embraces Big Thinking for Small Projects. His weeHouse® and related explorations leverage design systems and prefabrication with an emphasis on craft, restraint, efficiency, and a celebratory use of resources. Warner has crafted his studio, Alchemy as a forerunner for the future of architectural practice. Alchemy's uniquely integrated process—developed through years of experience and experimentation with manufacturers—embraces balanced aesthetics; practical production; and efficient cost, materials, and energy use. Alchemy paves a way for others that is both achievable and sustainable. Warner's impact on design is not in spite of small projects, but because of small projects.

A product of the Midwest, Warner promotes a building approach embracing the farmer's practical, hands-on sensibility, combining it with an admiration for the poetics of the industrial and agrarian landscape. S. Claire Conroy, Editor-in-Chief of *Residential Design Magazine*, wrote of Warner's work in 2020, "There are two powerful housing ideas that caught the imagination of the public during the early part of this millennium. The first was the modern modular movement, and the second was the tiny house crusade. At the forefront of both of those waves was Geoffrey Warner of Alchemy in St. Paul, Minnesota.... The weeHouse is a synthesis of modular and tiny house, with the dual goal of making architect-designed housing more affordable and accessible."

Warner was sponsored by Jeffrey A. Scherer, FAIA, a founding partner with Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle, Ltd., and mentor since Warner's studies at the University of Minnesota. Warner was honored with letters of recommendations by Dror Benschrit, Tom Fisher, Hon. AIA, Dale Mulfinger, FAIA, David Salmela, FAIA, BJ Siegel, AIA, Joe Tanney, FAIA, and Dennis Wedlick, FAIA.

Architects who have made significant contributions to the profession and society, and who exemplify architectural excellence can become a member of the AIA College of Fellows. Only 3 percent of the AIA members have this distinction. More about the Fellowship program can be viewed [here](#). 3 other architects from Minnesota were also elevated in 2020: Nancy Blankfard from HGA, Mohammed Lawal of LSE Architects, and Paul Mellblom of MSR Design.

The 2021 Jury of Fellows included: Nancy Rogo Trainer, FAIA, Chair, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, Mary Johnston, FAIA, Johnston Architects, LLC, Seattle, WA, Rebecca Lewis, FAIA, DSGW Architects, Duluth, MN, Steven Spurlock, FAIA, Quinn Evans Architects, Washington, DC, RK Stewart, FAIA, RK Stewart Consultants, Salt Lake City, UT, Allison Williams, FAIA, AGWms_studio, San Francisco, CA, and Anna Wu, FAIA, University of North Carolina, Durham, NC.

ABOUT weeHouse® 2022 will mark the 20th Anniversary of Warner’s original weeHouse, the contemporary prefabricated modular home first designed for a Minnesota Orchestra violinist in 2003. Since then, weeHouses have been celebrated as objects of architectural optimism and design efficiencies: “the greenest square foot is the one you don’t build”. Working with factories around the United States, Alchemy has delivered 50+ weeHouses from Oceanside, OR to Tremont, ME, Charlottesville, VA, to San Diego, CA, and Door County, WI to Albany, TX. The weeHouse presaged the current popular fascination around “tiny houses,” industrial tech, and sustainable living. Alchemy’s weeHouse program continues to illustrate progressive thinking about the luxury of less, an architecture of simplicity, and an efficient but celebratory use of materials. Two new designs being beta-tested are the barnHouse, a SIPs (structurally insulated panels) kit which combines “farm-tech” with modern design, and the lightHouse, an ADU (accessory dwelling unit) delivered via modular or panelized construction. Alchemy’s other projects include Bang Brewing, single-family homes, renovations, retail stores/façades, medical offices, commercial spaces, restaurants, and art installations including its LightHotel, a one-room mobile hotel.

ABOUT ALCHEMY (ALCHEMY LLC) Geoffrey C. Warner founded Alchemy in 1992 with a mission to make stimulating, engaging, and efficient design accessible and attainable for a wide audience. A distinct hands-on approach to architecture and design combines a playful design process, collaborative relationships with clients, and partnerships with builders and fabricators to create a harmonious blend of site, building, and community. With sustainable practices as a mainstay of its daily work, Alchemy utilizes recycling and reuse along with building strategies that reduce waste. The multidisciplinary team draws inspiration from art, literature, history, and leading creative thinkers to produce alternative and atypical project solutions. Alchemy’s innovative weeHouse system and “barn-tech” sensibility have gained international recognition and offer a new way to deliver design. www.alchemyarch.com

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