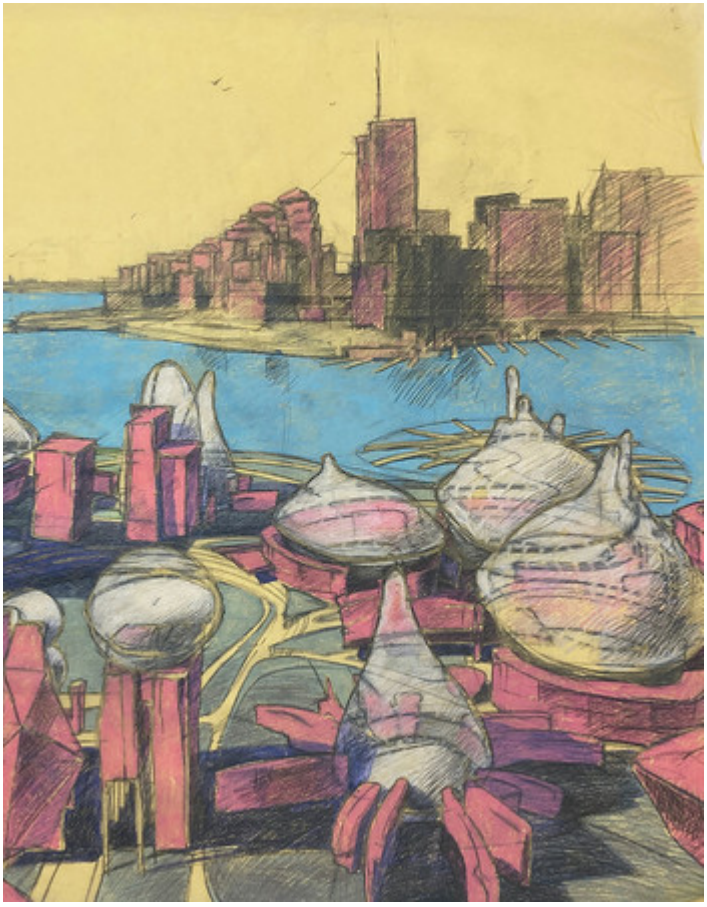
On Campus

Avery Library Acquires Papers of Architectural Critic Michael Sorkin

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Michael Sorkin and his studio’s concept for New York City’s Governors Island. (Michael Sorkin and Andrei Vovk, Courtesy of Avery Library)

Columbia’s Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library has acquired the personal archive of the late Michael Sorkin ’71GSAS, the prominent architecture critic, designer, and scholar of urbanism.



Courtesy of Avery Libraries

Sorkin, who earned a master's degree in English at Columbia, established his reputation as a writer at the *Village Voice* in the 1980s, penning witty critiques of what he regarded as the elitism and aesthetic excesses of contemporary architecture. He eventually opened his own design studio, creating plans for buildings and public spaces that would be more broadly accessible and welcoming. Few of his structures were built, but his ideas, which he advanced in numerous books, were broadly influential.

Sorkin's personal archive includes drafts of his writings; documents pertaining to exhibitions, lectures, and film projects; and over two thousand drawings.

"Among the cities he loved, it was New York that captured his heart and imagination." says Sorkin's wife, the philosopher Joan Copjec, who donated the collection. "I never considered any archive other than the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library for Michael's drawings and writings, knowing that he would consider it the proper place for his work."

Guide to school abbreviations