

8 FUN ABQ THINGS TO DO UNDER \$8

Albuquerque

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The Magazine

EXCLUSIVE

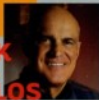
TOP DOCS

THE ABQ PHYSICIANS CHOSEN BY FELLOW DOCS AS THE BEST IN THEIR SPECIALTIES

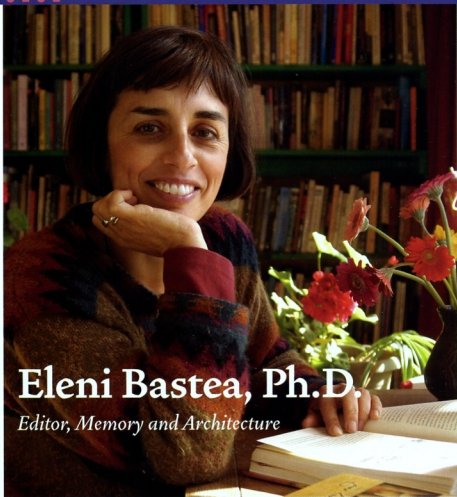
PLUS: EVERY DOC WHO RECEIVED AT LEAST ONE VOTE

+ **ABQ HQ**
LOCAL COMPANIES
WITH GLOBAL REACH

+
A LOOK BACK
WITH UNM'S
RUDY DAVALOS



FROM THE VINE: CHECK OUT ATM'S NEW FOOD & WINE COLUMN!



Eleni Bastea, Ph.D.

Editor, Memory and Architecture

What role do the houses we grew up in and our favorite restaurants play in our memories? Eleni Bastea, associate professor of architecture and planning at the University of New Mexico, explores that with architects—and architecture—from all over the world in her newest book.

ATM: What inspired you to study the relationship of architecture to memory?

Bastea: When I started graduate school at Berkeley in architecture, our first assignment was to design a house for a family. I grew up in Greece, and never lived in a house—only apartments. So I didn't have that vocabulary, that basic building block of what a house looked like. But I didn't want to tell anyone that I didn't know about houses, so instead I remembered a house in Philadelphia, where I had spent the previous summer. I transferred the experience into my design and incorporated the elements of that house—three stories, a windowsill upstairs, and so on, because that's all I knew about houses. That's how it got started.

ATM: So there's some sort of physicality to memory?

Bastea: If you were asked about a childhood memory, you might remember visiting your grandmother in her house, sitting at her kitchen table and eating cookies. When we think back, our memories are situated in the place they happen. Put in a harsher way, people remember details about a crime when brought back to the scene of where it all happened. I'm not a psychologist, but there is definitely something about physical surroundings that trigger memory.

ATM: In architecture, you often design based on what a client wants. How does an architect's own memory play into that?

Bastea: That's the central question in this book—how does memory affect the way we teach, understand, and design architecture? If you grew up in Albuquerque and visited a friend's house, you have a certain context for that visit. But if my mother, who's lived in Greece her whole life, saw that friend's house, she would probably think, 'this is such a huge

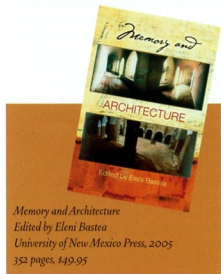
house!' Because her context would be that only wealthy people live in large houses. Basically, we have knowledge of architecture colors the way we experience new architecture. This book is the beginning of a dialogue regarding the influence of memory on the experience of architecture.

ATM: Does the architecture of Albuquerque remind you of Greece?

Bastea: I've found Albuquerque and Greece to be more alike than you might think. Pueblo buildings are reminiscent of vernacular island houses in Greece—the shapes and forms are similar. The commitment to community and family is very similar, as is the weather and the nature. I hope that Albuquerque doesn't become as touristic as Athens, in which shops in tourist areas stay open sometimes until midnight—it's too much.

ATM: How do you think people will remember the new architecture building at UNM, which has already broken ground?

Bastea: Right now I have a wonderful view of the Sandias from my current office and I'm already thinking I won't have as good a view in the new building! Seriously, I think walking into a new building is exciting. We're all looking forward to the building because it will help define us as a unified school on campus. Right now we're divided among three buildings. This new building will literally be the face of architecture, landscape and planning. And someday maybe we'll reminisce about our days in those three little buildings, but in a couple of cycles of students, there will be entirely new memories made.



Memory and Architecture
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