



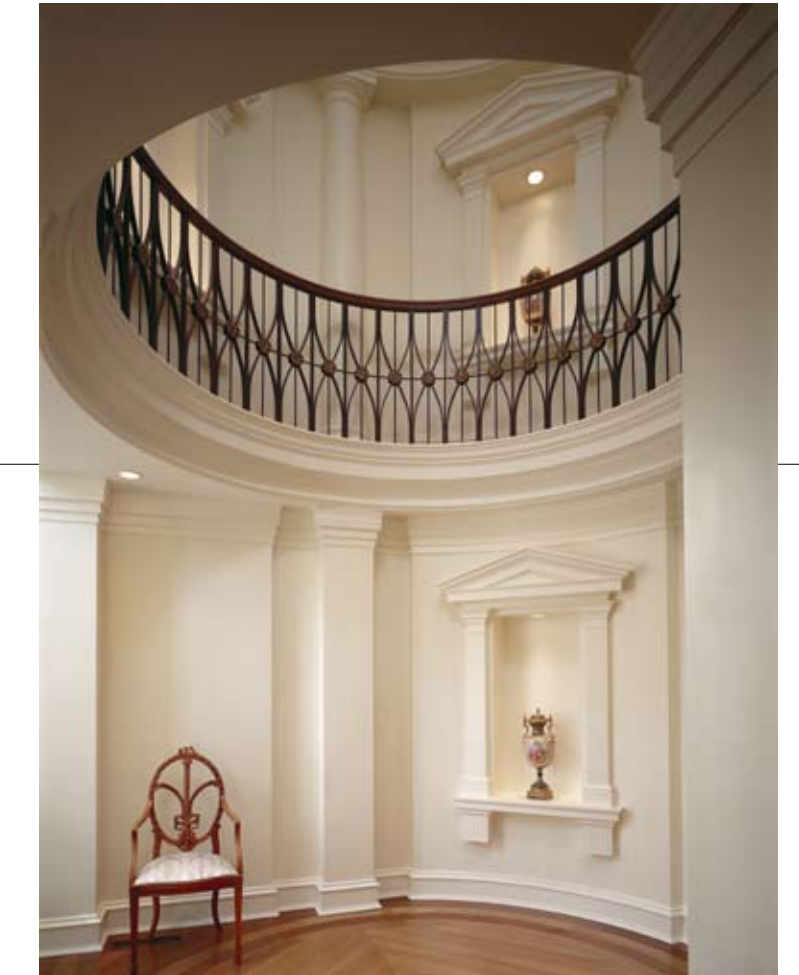
Richard Gibbons Scott Fortman

GIBBONS, FORTMAN & ASSOCIATES, LTD.

When a prospective international client called Gibbons, Fortman & Associates based on a magazine article she had seen nearly a decade prior—an article with words and images that resonated so profoundly with her enough that it made her “favorites file”—the architects were flattered to have made such an impression. Since its 1990 establishment, the firm has attracted a diverse clientele of families and business owners from Chicago and neighboring Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa to the coast of Georgia and as far away as South Africa.

Co-principals Richard Gibbons and Scott Fortman split their time fairly evenly between renovation and new construction undertakings, and while each carries a separate schedule of project, they continuously draw on one another’s expertise and the profusion of ideas contributed by their associates. Richard studied architecture at both the University of Notre Dame and the American Academy in Rome, where he spent two additional years on an archaeological excavation, putting together ancient city plans to determine where buildings once stood. Scott’s background is equally intriguing. After graduating from Iowa State University, he delved into his profession and, balancing personal and professional priorities, presented several AIA seminars over the years and aided in Habitat for Humanity’s efforts to revitalize Chicago’s west side. The complementary nature of the partners’ relationship is a source of delight for team members and clients alike.

Though the professionals of Gibbons, Fortman & Associates are adept at designing in vernaculars from Classical to Modern, their creations are bound by a universal commitment to well proportioned, properly detailed architecture that



ABOVE:
Residents and guests are welcomed to the Chicago residence by a graceful rotunda.
Photograph by Tony Soluri

FACING PAGE:
This Palladian-style guest house in suburban Chicago has an indoor pool.
Photograph by Tony Soluri





will unquestionably stand the test of time. Their methodology—listen to clients’ desires, take a step back to distill what they really want, prioritize functional elements and collaboratively grow the design—ensures that clients receive enduring works of architecture that are reflective of needs and penchants. Architecture is conceived three-dimensionally, via what the principals have termed a “pictorial approach,” meaning that they analyze not only space itself but how one would move through the space—the way in which areas open up and become more intimate to create unique spatial experiences.

This established yet malleable system of design allows the architects to please a wide range of patrons and tackle some quite daunting projects, like a large indoor pool with all sorts of moisture confinement challenges. To a penthouse with low, eight-foot ceilings, the architects responded with a forward-thinking solution—they dropped soffits in certain areas to turn the otherwise hovering plane into an exquisitely detailed ceiling. Technical quandaries are not the only type; sometimes couples have differing visions of home. They managed to blend a woman’s desire for sophisticated Asian design with her husband’s dreams of a causal, country, John Wayne type of house. By stripping back each parties’ wishes to their very essence, and looking to the Oriental sense of proportions and the rusticity of Japanese farmhouses, they created a new genre and a lasting impression on the residents.

Whether a project is challenging or relatively straightforward in nature, Richard, Scott and their associates take clients—from the earliest stages of conceptualization to the finishing details of custom millwork, built-ins and even freestanding furniture design—to a new level of creativity, to produce one-of-a-kind works of architecture.



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TOP LEFT:
Sculpted from statuary marble, the crisp master bath opens to the bedroom with sliding panels.
Photograph by Tony Soluri

TOP RIGHT:
This Chicago residence’s classical façade was influenced by the Italian Renaissance.
Photograph by Tony Soluri

FACING PAGE TOP:
Spectacular views are framed with clean lines in this Gold Coast penthouse.
Photograph by Tony Soluri

FACING PAGE BOTTOM:
Originally a perfume factory, the building was converted into a city home with internal courtyards.
Photograph by Kevin Mooney