

The Brian Lehrer Show: Slamming Part Deux

Wednesday, July 20, 2005

After the success of last week's commentary slam, Brian and columnist Errol Louis listen to and evaluate ninety second commentaries on any subject whatsoever.

Op-Ed Slam, Part 2

Errol Louis, Columnist for the Daily News

<http://www.wnyc.org/shows/bl/episodes/07202005>

(Begins 28:07)

Brian Lehrer: Michael in Harlem, you're on WNYC –

Michael Adams: Good morning. Let's make a deal. Who cares about the future of 2 Columbus Circle? Unexpectedly, 9/11 has given us all an expanded perspective, so even those who imagine that preserving old buildings is unimportant compared to building new sports arenas at least now better understand how preservationists feel. When you've lost some beloved familiar structure that so defines its time and space that it also comes to define us New Yorkers, and our best efforts collectively, the resulting void can seem intolerable; especially since it isn't terrorists, but selfish fellow New Yorkers, developers, and his honor, "let's make a deal" Michael Bloomberg, who are responsible, bit by bit, for allowing our architectural heritage to be so diminished. Notwithstanding the urgent pleas of the World Monument Fund, the Times and Tom Wolfe, Edward Durell Stone's iconic modern masterpiece, 2 Columbus Circle, will soon be lost irretrievably. This noble feat has taken the best combined efforts of Landmarks Commission Chair Robert Tierney and two of his predecessors, who now work for the museum that plans to deface and occupy the building. How logical it all is once you realize the mayor used to be a museum trustee. Let's face it. In recent times, in New York, and America, little by little we've lost a lot, but a good first step to taking our country back is to get rid of Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Chair Tierney. That's a hell of a good deal for all New Yorkers who care about preserving the best of the past as a gift to the future.

Brian Lehrer: Alright Michael. Errol –

Errol Louis: Wow, um, I didn't, I didn't quite catch the connection between the fate of this building and needing to get rid of the Mayor, but the part I liked which I think maybe you should have developed more was this notion of the "sell-out," you know, the part that we don't know. The, the sort of the information you're bringing to us for the first time, for a lot of us, that the, uh, trustees that are voting, uh, on this are actually tied to the new museum that is going to replace the old one – if I hear you correctly. That's something I didn't really realize, and I think that maybe should have been the strongest point, in, in the whole thing, um, that we are maybe seeing a bit of, um, of a sellout going on here.

Brian Lehrer: And I could have used to hear a, a little bit more about why we should care about 2 Columbus Circle.

Errol Louis: Yeah, I tend to think, I mean I pass by it like everybody else does, I've never set foot inside the place, and I, I just think of it, you know, as the kind, the ugly building with the holes in the middle of Columbus Circle – no offense. But, if there's, if there's more to it, you could, and should have made the case for that.

Brian Lehrer: Michael, thanks a lot.

(Ends 30:58)