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Grady Clay, Rob Krier to receive Athena Awards at CNU 17

Medal recognizes those who have laid the foundation for New Urbanism

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The Congress for the New Urbanism is pleased to announce Grady Clay and Rob Krier as this year's recipients of the Athena Medal. They join a list of others honored with the award for their work in laying the foundation for the New Urbanism movement.

Grady Clay's passion for journalism and lifetime attention to the impact of growth on the urban landscape has spanned generations. He was editor of *Landscape Architecture* magazine from 1960 through 1985 and also worked as urban affairs editor for the *Louisville Courier-Post*. Among new urbanist insiders, he is best known for a prescient 1959 [article in *Horizon Magazine*](#), *Metropolis Regained*, that critiqued the hollow, highway-connected, Futurama-inspired contemporary vision of the city and described an inchoate rediscovery (primarily among journalists and critics) of the timeless traditional view of the city. In words described as "eerily similar" to the Charter of the New Urbanism, which followed more than 35 years later, Clay defined the principles of a group he identified as New Urbanists. "We believe in the city, they would say, not in tearing it down. We like open space, but hold that too much of it is just as bad as too little. We want that multiplicity of choice that the city has always offered, but is now in danger of losing," wrote Clay. "I can only say that all great movements start in murmurs and that I can hear murmurs."

In addition to his contributions as a journalist, Clay was consulted on several occasions for his expertise in the emerging problems associated with suburban sprawl, including appointments to two Presidential task forces by Lyndon B. Johnson. He has served as president of both the American Society of Planning Officials (now APA) and the National Association of Real Estate Editors.

According to Katz, many of the issues discussed by Clay still resonate today, as interstate highways are still being built and suburbia is flourishing. "We can still learn from Grady Clay, and put his ideas into action. Indeed, that is the debt we owe him as New Urbanists, for the name he coined and the movement he envisioned more than 30 years before our founding as a Congress."

Rob Krier has greatly advanced both the discourse and design of urbanism throughout his academic and professional career. A native of Luxembourg, Krier graduated from the Technical University of Munich in 1964 with a degree in architecture. Following his studies, he worked with architects Oswald Mathias Ungers and Frei Otto before becoming an assistant at the University of Stuttgart's school of architecture. In 1976 Krier started two new endeavors: lecturing architecture at the Technical University Vienna (a job that he held until 1998) and opening his own professional firm. His work as an architect and urban designer has focused on livening the civic realm and building communities that achieve a human scale. It has always consulted the successful design of the past including the building of small blocks, which, according to Krier, "enables the creation of many different spatial configurations of squares and street sequences that give the individual places their indelible character..."

CNU Board Member Dhiru Thadani praised Krier for his use of traditional architecture that pays respect to the history of a town. "His work can be seen as anti-modernist, yet innovative. He freely incorporates human proportion into his architecture to create normative buildings and houses. He believes in the downscaling of architecture while focusing on animating portions of the city that unify different facets of social life."

More recently, Krier has partnered a firm with Christoph Kohl in Berlin, which is regarded as a leader in traditional urban design across Europe. He joins brother Léon Krier as a fellow recipient of the Athena Medal.

Both Grady Clay and Rob Krier will accept their awards at CNU 17, which will be held June 10-14 in Denver, Colorado. Previous Athena Award winners can be seen [here](#).

Check out Grady Clay's 1959 article in full [here](#). (Note: Because the file is large, it may take a minute to download. Acrobat Reader required.)

