RAKATANSKY, IRA

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Rhode Island's pioneering Modern architect, passed away on March 4, 2014. Born in 1919, the son of Benjamin and Martha (Bornstein) Rakatansky, Ira received his undergraduate Diploma in Architecture from RISD in 1942, and his B. Arch and M. Arch from Harvard University in 1945-6. Opening his own practice in 1949, Ira was a primary leader in bringing contemporary life to the local built environment, developing some of the most innovative Modern residences and institutions in Rhode Island and greater New England. His achievements were celebrated in Ira Rakatansky: As Modern as Tomorrow, published in 2010 in the Rhode Island School of Design Architecture Series by William Stout Publishers, and by the acquisition of his archive into the Special Collections Library of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design the following year. His drive to champion new forms of creative engagement in the space and life of buildings extended to his deep belief in liberal and humanitarian engagement throughout contemporary society.

He is survived by his wife Lenore Gray Rakatansky, daughter Lynn Rakatansky and son Mark Rakatansky and his wife Catherine Ingraham, grandson Max Ingraham-Rakatansky, and sister Charlotte Primack. He was the brother of the late Shirley Halsband and Eleanor O'Brien. Service will be held in the Herman L. Bennett Chapel on Tuesday, March 11 at 11am at Temple Beth-El (70 Orchard Avenue) in Providence. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made in his memory to the American Civil Liberties Union. Shiva will be held at the home of Dr. Herbert and Barbara Rakatansky, Tuesday 7-9PM. For information and condolences, SugarmanSinai.com