

AIA GUIDE

NORVAL WHITE &
ELLIOT WILLENSKY
WITH FRAN LEADON


TO

NEW

YORK

CITY

FIFTH
EDITION

 [H50] 26-28 Wooster Street, SE cor. Grand St., also known as 71 Grand St. Wooster St. brick façade, 1879. Grand St. cast-iron façade, 1888. Both, *Mortimer C. Merritt*.

Two wonderful façades in different materials, at a different time, but by the same architect.

[H51] **The Drawing Center**, 35 Wooster St., bet. Broome and Grand Sts. W side. Gallery open: Tu-Fr 10-6; Sa 11-6. 212-219-2166. www.drawingcenter.org

The contents here, not the 1860s building, are the pearl in the oyster, although there are some lovely Corinthians, and atop, a broken pediment, with *Lvall* inscribed. *Inigo Jones* "complete architectural drawings" were once displayed here. You can't beat that.

[H52] **2 Wooster Street**, NE cor. Canal St. 1872. *W. H. Gaylor*.

Monumental. A phoenix of restoration and maintenance since 2000.

Canal Street becomes a Casbah between the Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Avenue to everyone) and Centre Street. Here shops spill into the street; their wares—"bargains" real or apparent—abound: cameras, batteries, fake Louis Vuitton bags, watches, sheet metal, plastic— you name it. A great place for the browsing gad-geteer, do-it-yourselfer, or the serious bargain hunter familiar with his or her needs. Rumor has it that secret escape tunnels connect some of the shops to each other, in case of a police raid.



H50



H52




H56a

Broome Street from Broadway to West Broadway:

Four blocks of SoHo at its most idiosyncratic and hectic, a mixture of delightful cast-iron façades, previously decayed, now restored to glory. Traffic-choked. Walk it on an early Sunday morning.

[H53] **448 Broome Street**, bet. Broadway and Mercer St. 1871-1872. *Vaux & Withers*.

Eccentric and laden with fire escapes: nevertheless, the bas-reliefs within the pilasters, emboldening friezes, window enframements and the underbelly of the cornice are extraordinary. But, of course, *Vaux* passed by here.

 [H54a] **40 Mercer Street**, NE cor. Grand St., through the block to Broadway. 2006. *Jean Nouvel and SLCE*.

Shimmering apartments above, and offices below, all adhering strictly to the **Nouvel grid!** Full of meticulously detailed steel connections, it is the rare contemporary building that actually

looks better up close than from afar. Usually, these days, it's the opposite: the image is the most important thing, the actual construction an afterthought. This one is well built and has weight.

[H54b] **44 Mercer Street Apartments**, bet. Broome and Grand Sts. 2009. *TRA Studio*.

A shy little brother to **Nouvel's Big Grid** next door, it's clad in trendy panels of stainless steel (see *Gwathmey Siegel's SoHo Mews*, p.122, for comparison). The façade's bowed glass "shield" is a fussy, unnecessary detail.

[H54c] **47-49 Mercer Street** (lofts), bet. Broome and Grand Sts. W side. 1873. *Joseph M. Dunn*.

Crisp and lusty white cast-iron **Roman Tuscans**. These Tuscans have ribbed bands below the echinus. (That which supports the weight: look it up.) Keep your eye out for Tuscan variations.


[H54d] **72 Mercer Street/501 Broadway**, bet. Broome and Spring Sts. 2008. *TRA Studio*.

A cast-iron stalwart, consumed by fire in the 1960s, gave *TRA* this opening. Hooray for a **simple new building** with nice details, fitting into the background in this historic district. Façades face both Mercer and Broadway.

[H55] **Broome Street**, bet. Mercer and Greene Sts. [a] Originally **Hitchcock Silk Building**, 453-455 Broome St. 1873. *Griffith Thomas*. Corinthian, with a **wow** of a cornice, supported by pairs of console brackets.

[b] **461 Broome St.** 1871. *Griffith Thomas*. Another decorated **Tuscan**.

[c] **467 Broome St.** 1873. *Isaac F. Duckworth*. Decorated **Tuscan** encore.

 [H56] **Broome Street**, bet. Greene and Wooster Sts. [a] **The Gunther Building**, 469 Broome St., SW cor. Greene St. 1873. *Griffith Thomas*. Rich **Corinthian** foliage and the elegant curved glass corner.

[b] **477-479 Broome St.** 1885. *Elisha Sniffern*. **Corinthian** below, plain pilasters above.

[c] **476-478 Broome St.** 1873. *Griffith Thomas*. They were green-painted **Corinthian**.

[d] **480 Broome St.** 1885. *Richard Berger*. Composite **Ionic** columns.