YOU’RE THE PORTLAND SOCIETY FOR ARCHITECTURE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR ARCHITECTURE BACKGROUND.
I have no professional training in architecture, actually. I was fortunate to live in cities where it was impossible to escape good architecture. I’ve lived in Washington, D.C., Paris, New York, and Chicago. And I’ve had really good teachers and mentors in the design community.

WHAT’S THE FIRST PIECE OF ARCHITECTURE THAT YOU REMEMBER MEANING SOMETHING TO YOU?
When I was born, my parents were living in the Tudor City apartment complex, in the shadow of what would become the iconic United Nations headquarters. My father’s office was around the corner from the New York Public Library. I climbed those steps often as a kid. We always went to the Christmas show at Radio City Music Hall. It’s not so much the architecture that I remember, but the feeling of being in a space that was remarkable. It was my first encounter with Art Deco design, which remains one of my favorite periods. I love it down to the graphics. And I loved the Rockettes.

WHAT DID YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE ARCHITECTURE WHEN YOU FIRST CAME HERE?
Portland has an incredible historic fabric to it. I like seeing infill buildings and modern buildings like Hyatt Place mixed into that historic fabric. I love the buildings that are sort of dropped in within the context of the past. But it wasn’t architecture that drew me to Portland: I married a Mainer and that’s why I’m here. The roots of Mainers are deep.

TELL ME ABOUT THE PORTLAND SOCIETY FOR ARCHITECTURE.
The PSA was founded in 2006 by a group of Portland architects who saw the need to focus on city-specific issues of policy in the built environment here. We advocate and engage with public policy that often focuses on sustainability—for example, sea level rise.

WHAT PSA PROGRAMS CAN PEOPLE IN MAINE TAKE PART IN?
They can take advantage of the free 10 Minute Architect Design Clinic. They can also come to our conversation series, which is a very small, interactive group that discusses architectural projects in schematic and holds conversations with developers.

ARE THERE PIECES OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE HERE THAT YOU ADMIRE?
Well, I love Hyatt Place and the Portland Public Library, and the addition to the ferry terminal. Just seeing that happen, that makes my heart sing.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR ARCHITECTURALLY IN PORTLAND’S FUTURE?
I hope for an acceptance of the kind of spirit and energy that drives contemporary architecture. I keep beating that drum. People come because of the quality of place and because of the feel of Portland—and my hope is that as the city grows, there is room for the kind of work that people in my organization do. And for courageous developers.