

IOWA ARCHITECT

May/June 1983



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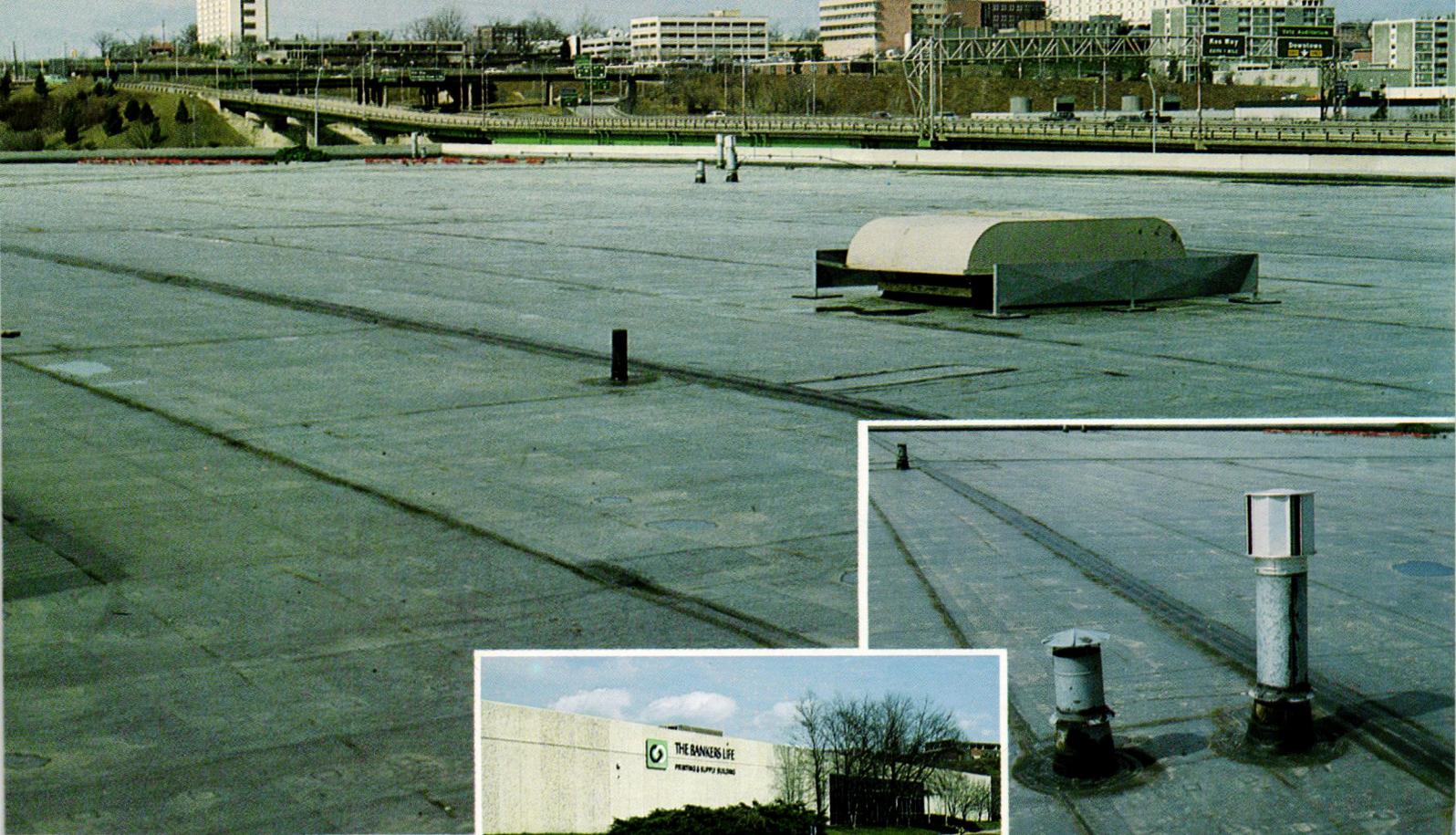
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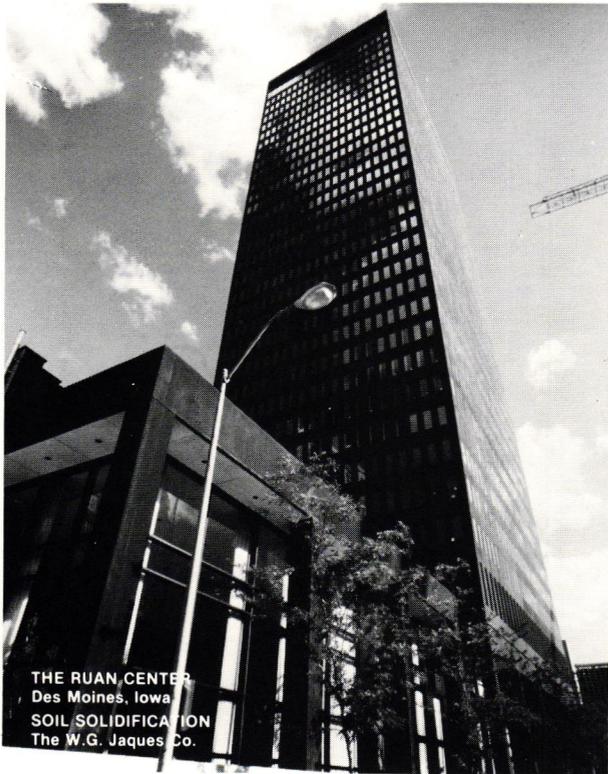
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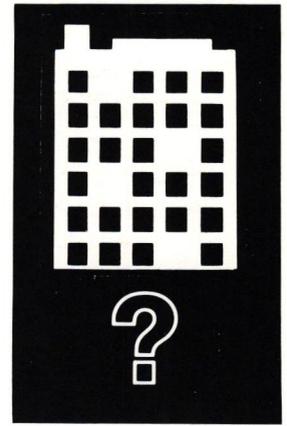
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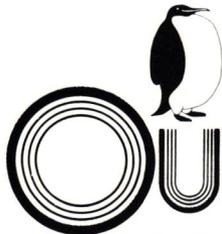
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	Max. roof span/no clips	24	16
1/2"	Sheathing—span index	32/16	24/16
	Max. roof span/no clips	28	24
5/8" ²	Sheathing—span index	40/20	NA
3/4" ²	Sheathing—span index	48/24	NA

1—Left-hand number is maximum recommended spacing of roof framing in inches. Right-hand number is maximum span between floor joists.

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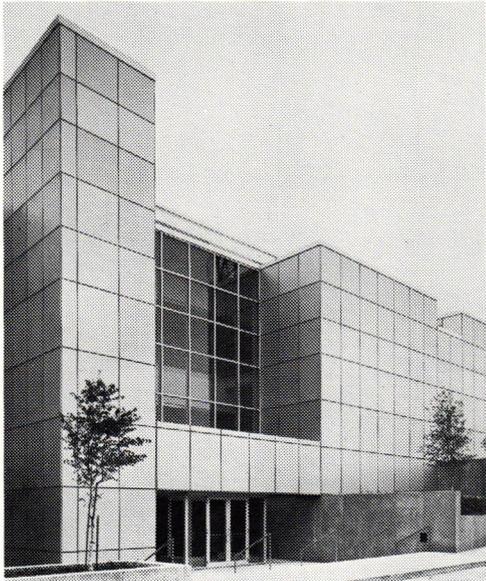
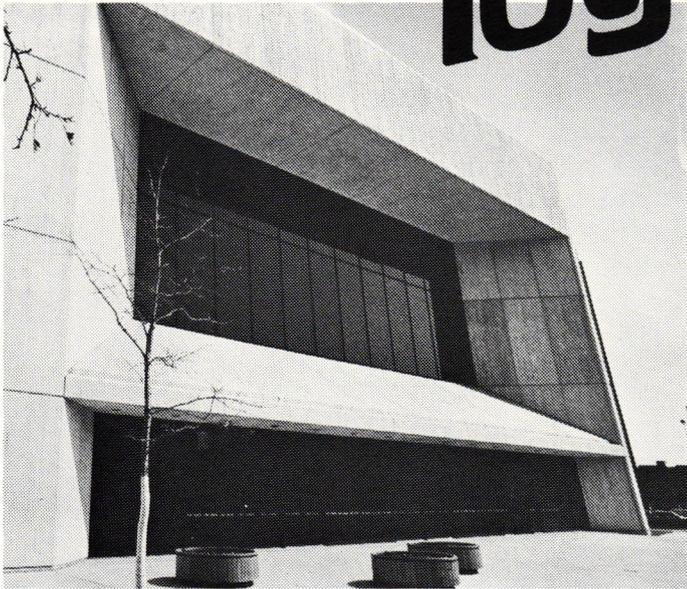
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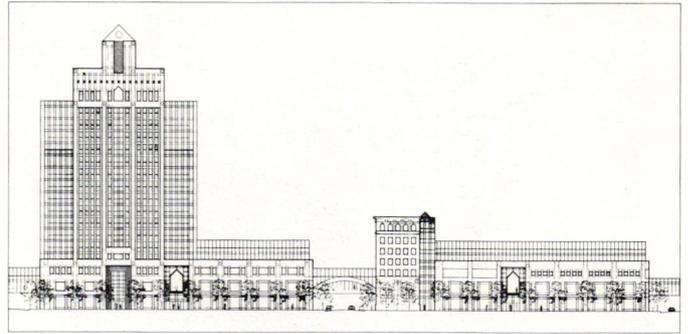
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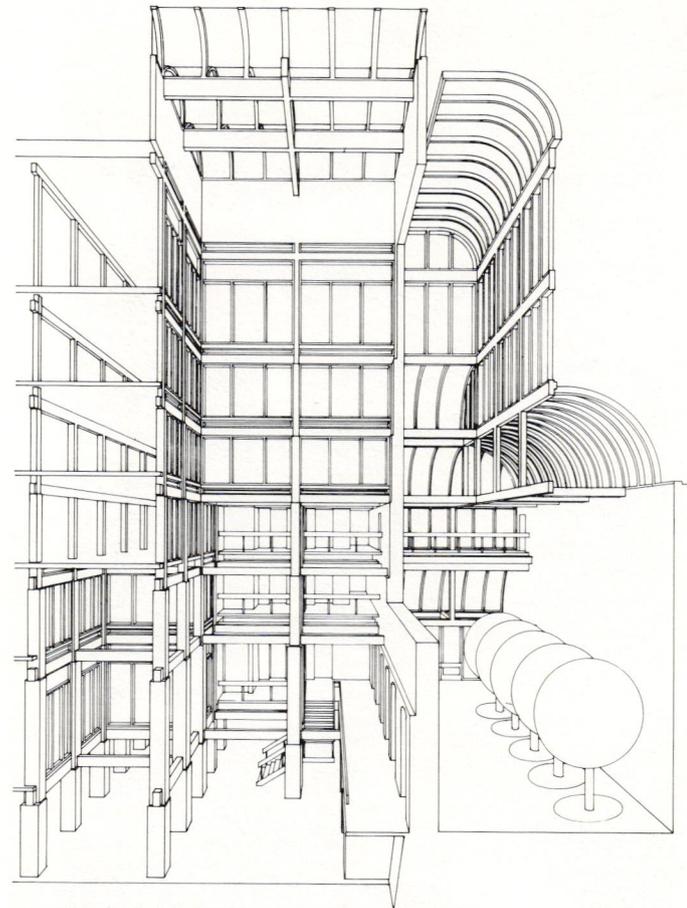
IN PROGRESS

establishes a place for people and a food court on the east block, and a 17 story office tower on the west block. A future tower is planned for the east block. A skylit atrium and shopping bridge will tie the project together, creating a link and focus for the downtown skywalk system. 250,000 square feet of office space and 165,000 square ft. of retail is included.



Homestead Building Restored

The former Martin Hotel in Des Moines will be restored and house offices, retail stores and a "first class" restaurant in a development designed by Bussard/Dikis Architects. The building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was built in two phases, in 1893 and 1905. Until 1916 it was known as the Homestead Building, where James M. Pierce and Henry Wallace built their agricultural publishing empire. Plans call for restoring the exterior of the building to its turn-of-the-century character under the guidelines of the State Historical Preservation Office, but for gutting the interior and replacing it with contemporary construction. The building's top three floors provide 20,000 square feet of office space.



Kurtz Warehouse Converted

Brooks Borg and Skiles, Architects-Engineers, of Des Moines have completed the preliminary design for the restoration and conversion of the handsome turn-of-the-century Kurtz Warehouse into an 84,000 SF office building. Designed about 1900 by Proudfoot and Bird, Brooks Borg and Skiles' parent firm, the converted structure will be part of Des Moines' Court Avenue Historic District. The project is planned to include a major restaurant on the main building's ground floor, skylit atrium, glass enclosed entry court, and a 78,000 SF parking structure designed to compliment the abbreviated Richardsonian style of the older building. Project developers Levy Malone and Company of Des Moines plan to begin construction in the fall.

Urban Mall

Preliminary design work continues on another vital element in the downtown restructuring in Des Moines. Charles Herbert and Associates, in alliance with the Hubbell Development Corporation, have presented schematics for two levels of retail space extending a full two blocks along Walnut Street. Linking Younkers with Penneys and the Capital Square project, the design



Ezra Stoller, 1963
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery
University of Nebraska
Philip Johnson, Architect

ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

A PORTFOLIO



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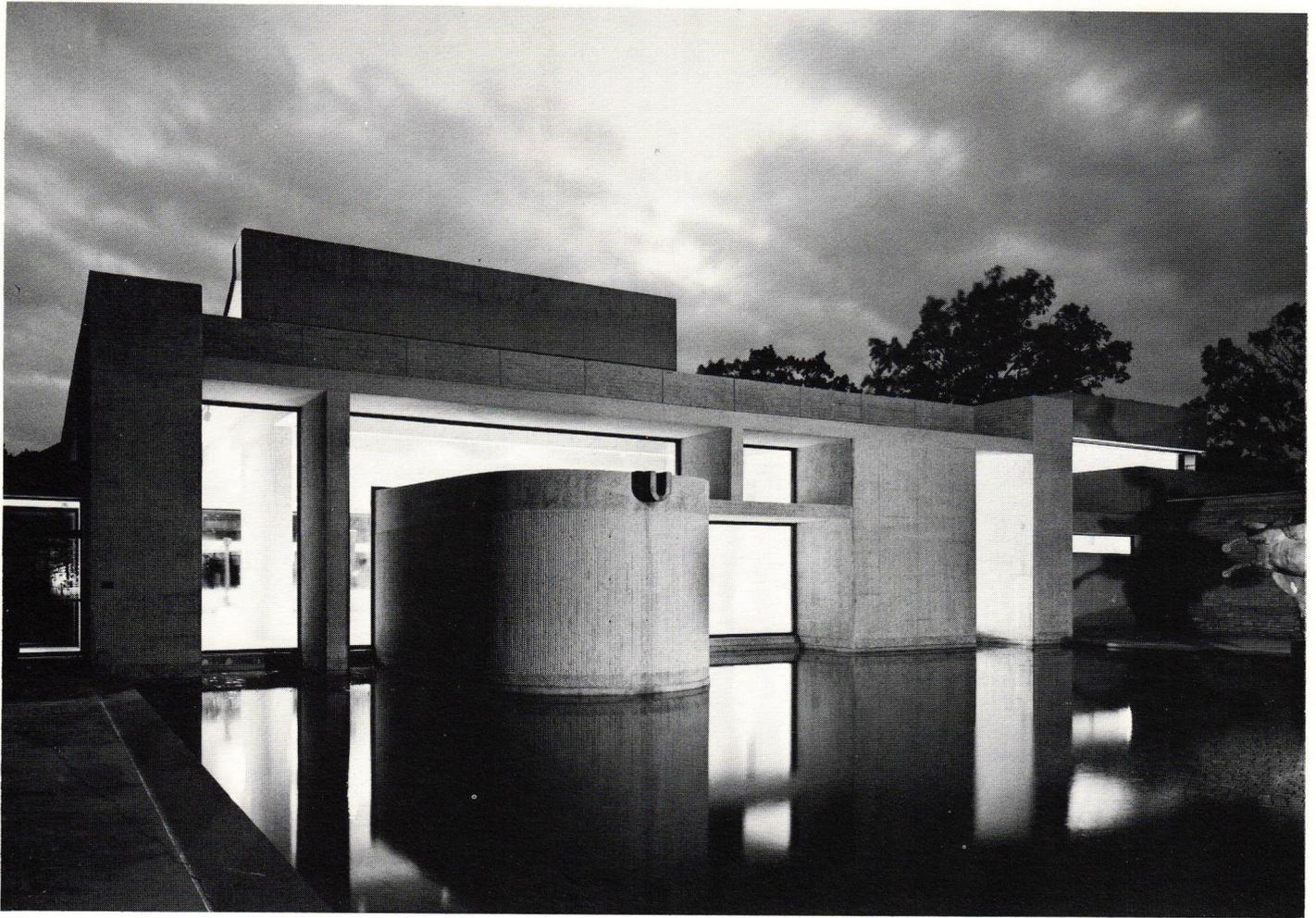
*Ezra Stoller, 1968
Des Moines Art Center Addition
Des Moines, Iowa
I.M. Pei and Associates*

Paul Goldberger, architecture critic of the New York Times, has argued that fine architectural photography does more than document. It communicates the essence of structures and makes powerful esthetic statements itself. Yet, even with the recognition and respect architects and photographers are willing to bestow on one another's best efforts, the ambitious alliance implied in Goldberger's observation is all too rarely realized.

Indeed, the shortcoming is partly one of expectations. Much architectural photography, of course, does not make any such statement, does not show emotion, sentiment or individuality. It is not expected to. Or not able to. Investing a building with emotion that has none requires much more than technical virtuosity of the photographer. And often architects ask much less.

To record a structure's most powerful elevations, capture its finest details or explore the vagaries of light requires of the photographer clarity and objectivity. And, ultimately, it is the clarity of the photographer's work that sets apart the best of the Midwest's architectural image makers. At worst, (particularly as color work has progressed), there is an occasional mistrust of what the camera can achieve through its restricted focus. Yet this directed vision, by filtering out errant or distracting information, serves to strengthen and clarify an image. To understand a complex architecture through a single frame of the camera lens, distillation of image and intent is fundamentally important. Conciseness becomes a virtue.

Clearly, this same purification is part of all our visual perception, done continually if unconsciously. That it is



*Ezra Stoller, 1968
Des Moines Art Center Addition
Des Moines, Iowa
I.M. Pei and Associates*

done deliberately with a camera should make it no more “dishonest” or unfairly misleading. After all, showing a building’s failures is ultimately less important than showing what the architect was trying to do.

Photographers must be keenly aware that reduction of a three dimensional experience to a two dimensional surface is the severest form of editing. Time and those sequences of events that lead to experiencing architecture are irretrievably edited with the snap of the shutter. Given that good architecture remains a study of places, a study of light and shadow and their effect on our sense of place, the best photographs are left to interpret the mood of a particular moment and recapture that crucial element of time.

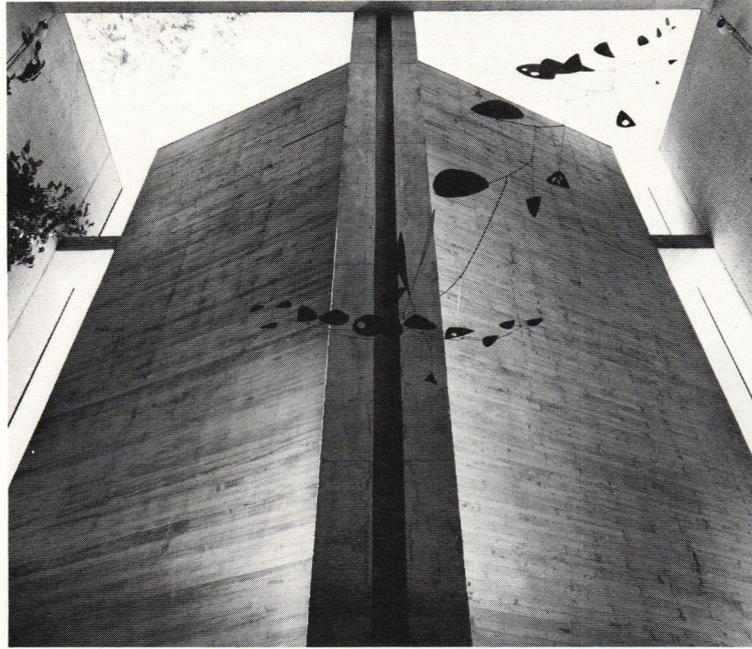
If the photographer’s responsibility, then, is to make buildings understandable through a photograph, he must first understand the architect’s intent. Ezra

Stoller has so observed. “It is important to first understand the building, to know it, to walk around it, to see how the spaces relate to each other. It is just as important to see how these spaces relate to their surroundings, how the building acts as an incident in the landscape or the city scape.”

The views expressed on the following pages are evidence of both a technical proficiency and architectural acuity. Representing work spanning twenty years, they present an interesting, but limited account of architects’ and photographers’ efforts in the Midwest. Still, they pose a question. As Paul Goldberger queried, “Could ever we truly see buildings had photography not been invented to document them for us?”

Kirk V. Blunck

"I have often been criticized for photographing spaces without people. I have been told, 'A space must have people, if it doesn't it doesn't mean anything.' This, I believe, is one of those journalistic biases that ignores the nature of photography. The photograph is not reality. The minute you put a person in a photograph, that person becomes the center of interest. If there is a graphic in a setting, that becomes the center of attraction — even though you might not pay it the slightest of attention if you were actually present in the scene captured in a photograph. Your eye might pass it by in preference for something more exciting, possibly the space itself. Space is the important ingredient."

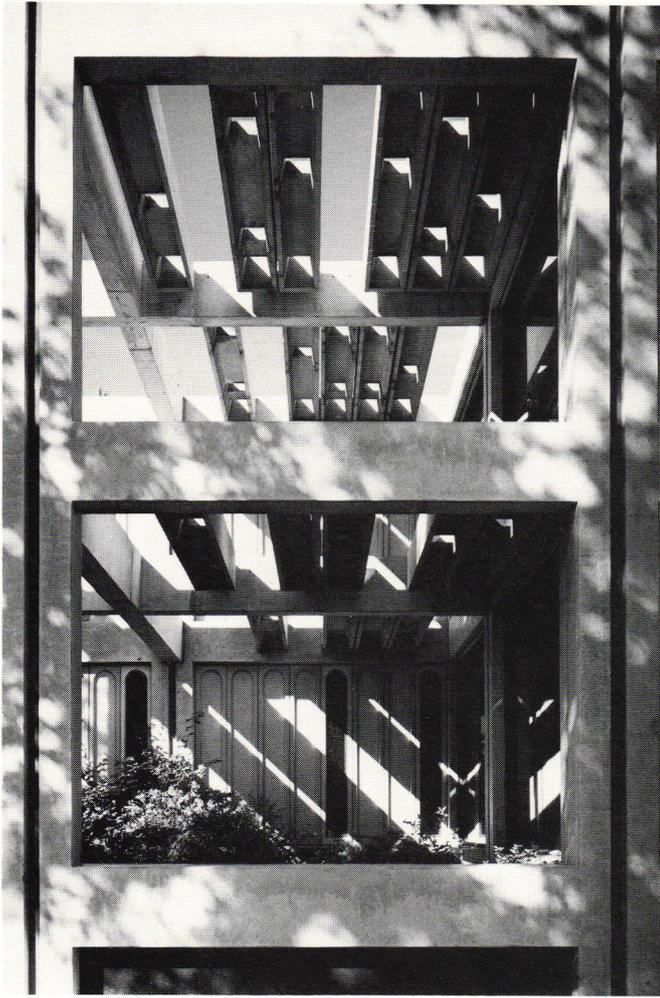


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*Ezra Stoller, 1968
Des Moines Art Center Addition
Des Moines, Iowa
I.M. Pei and Associates*



*Julius Shulman, ca. 1960
Church
Danville, Illinois
Crites and McConnell, Architects*



Julius Shulman, 1965
 McFarland Clinic
 Ames, Iowa
 Crites and McConnell, Architects

"I recall the early work I did with Crites & McConnell in the early 60s. From Cedar Rapids, on one particular trip when I covered several projects, I went directly to New York with proofs I had made in Cedar Rapids. I had arranged a meeting at the Architectural Forum offices -Douglas Haskell, and most of the staff at that time. They had expressed curiosity about what I was bringing from the land of "tall corn". What a surprise was in store, for when they reviewed all the prints which I had laid out on the conference table, all seven of the projects were accepted for publication!"

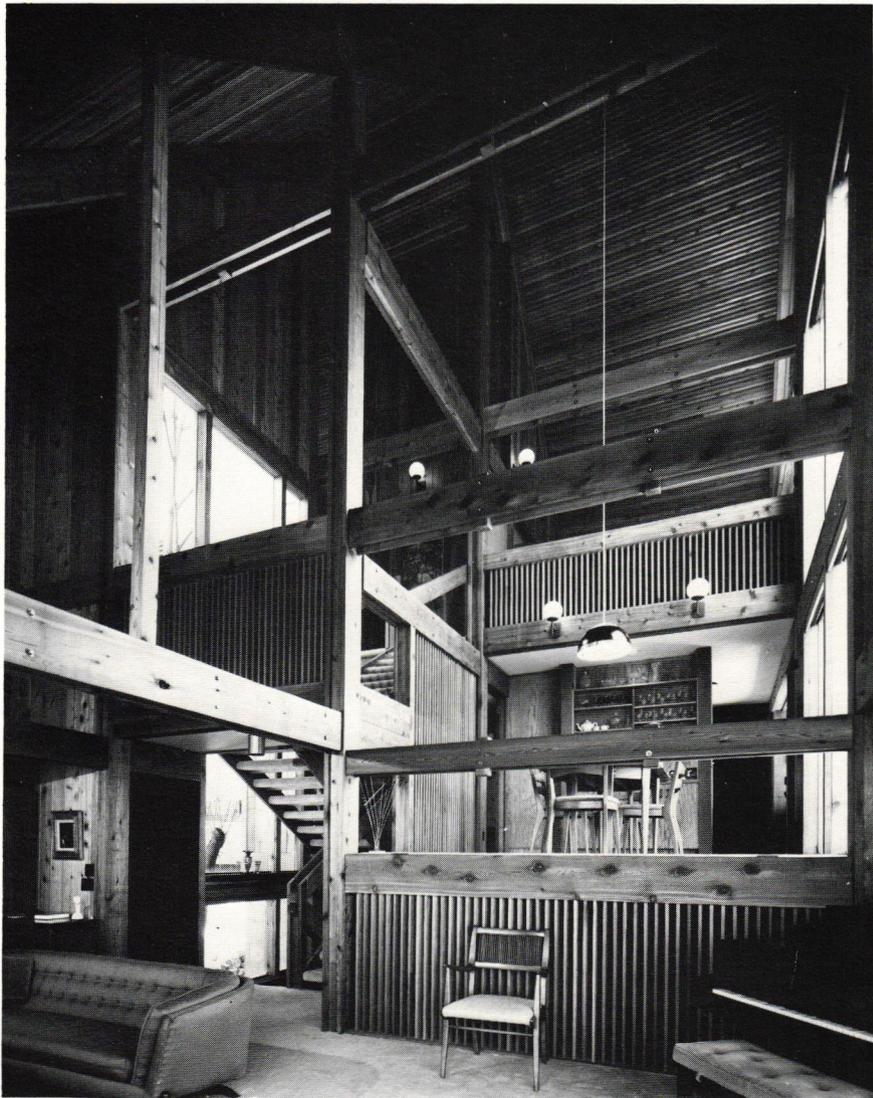


Julius Shulman, 1967
 Skeie Residence
 Ames, Iowa
 Architects Rudi/Lee/Dreyer

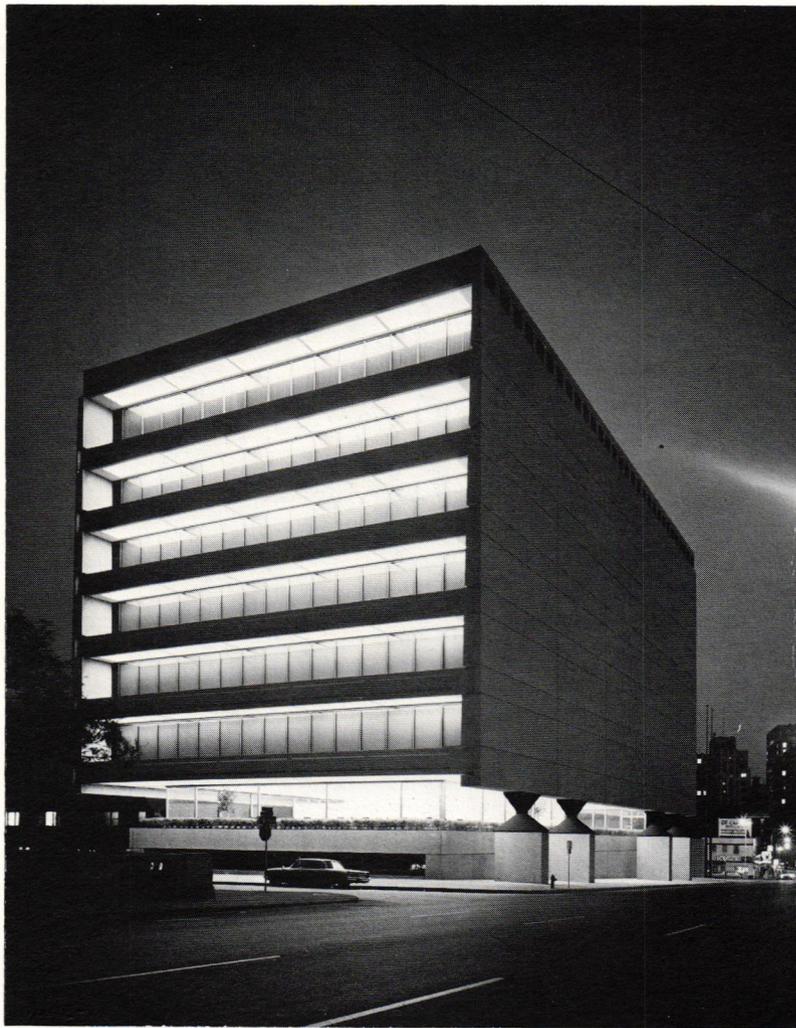


*Julius Shulman, 1965
Crites Residence
Huxley, Iowa
Ray Crites, Architect*





*Joel Strasser, 1964
Private Residence
Council Bluffs, Iowa
Astle/Ericson, Architects*



*Larry Day, 1965
American Republic Insurance Co.
Des Moines, Iowa
Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, Chicago*



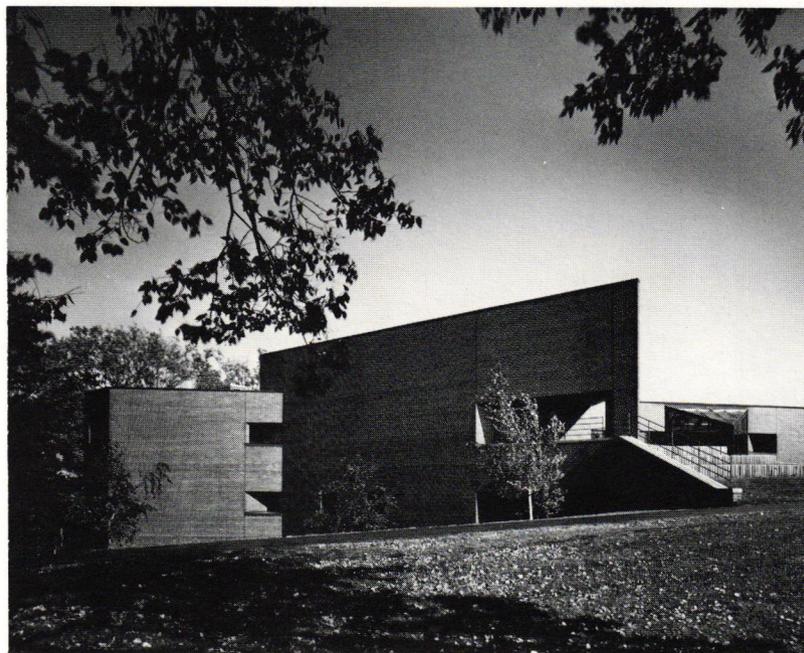
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*Christopher Lark, Hursley & Lark, 1981
Thorncrown Chapel
Eureka Springs, Arkansas
E. Fay Jones & Associates Architects*



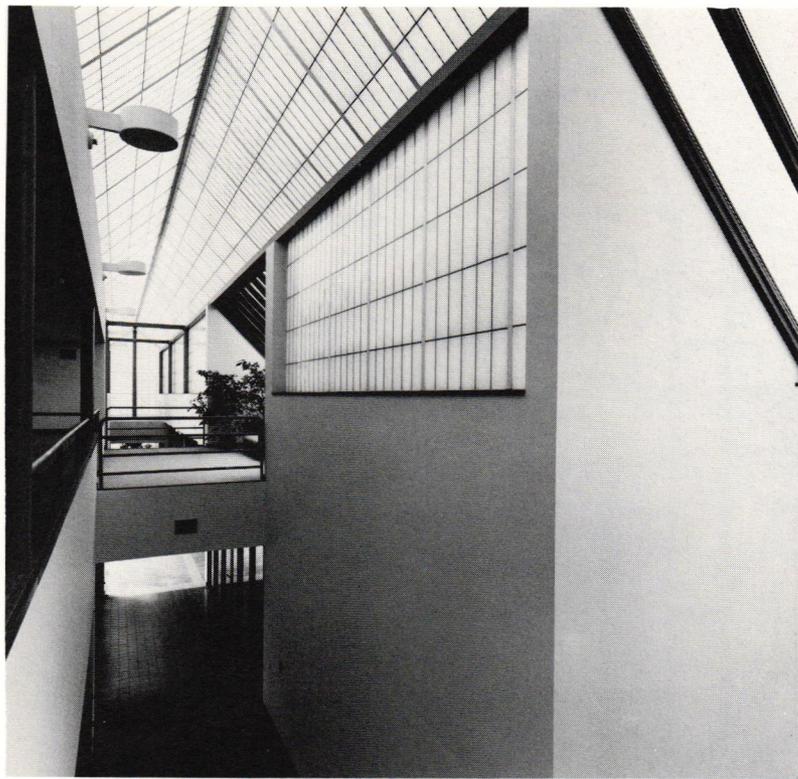
*Balthazar Korab, 1982
Iowa Public Service Building
Sioux City, Iowa
Foss, Englested, Heil Architects*

*Bradley & Jones, 1982
Donnelly Center
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Hansen, Lind, Meyer, P.C.*

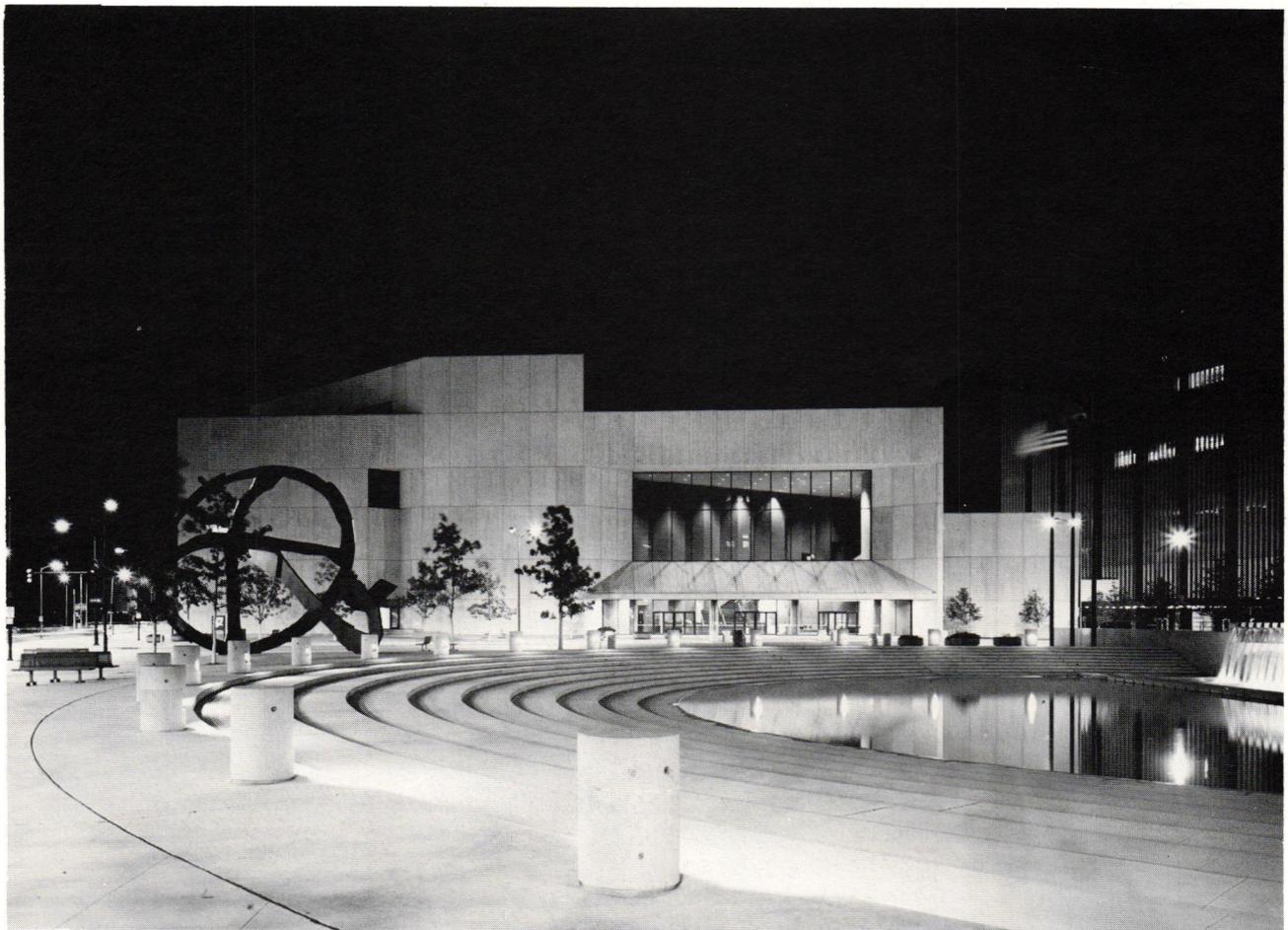


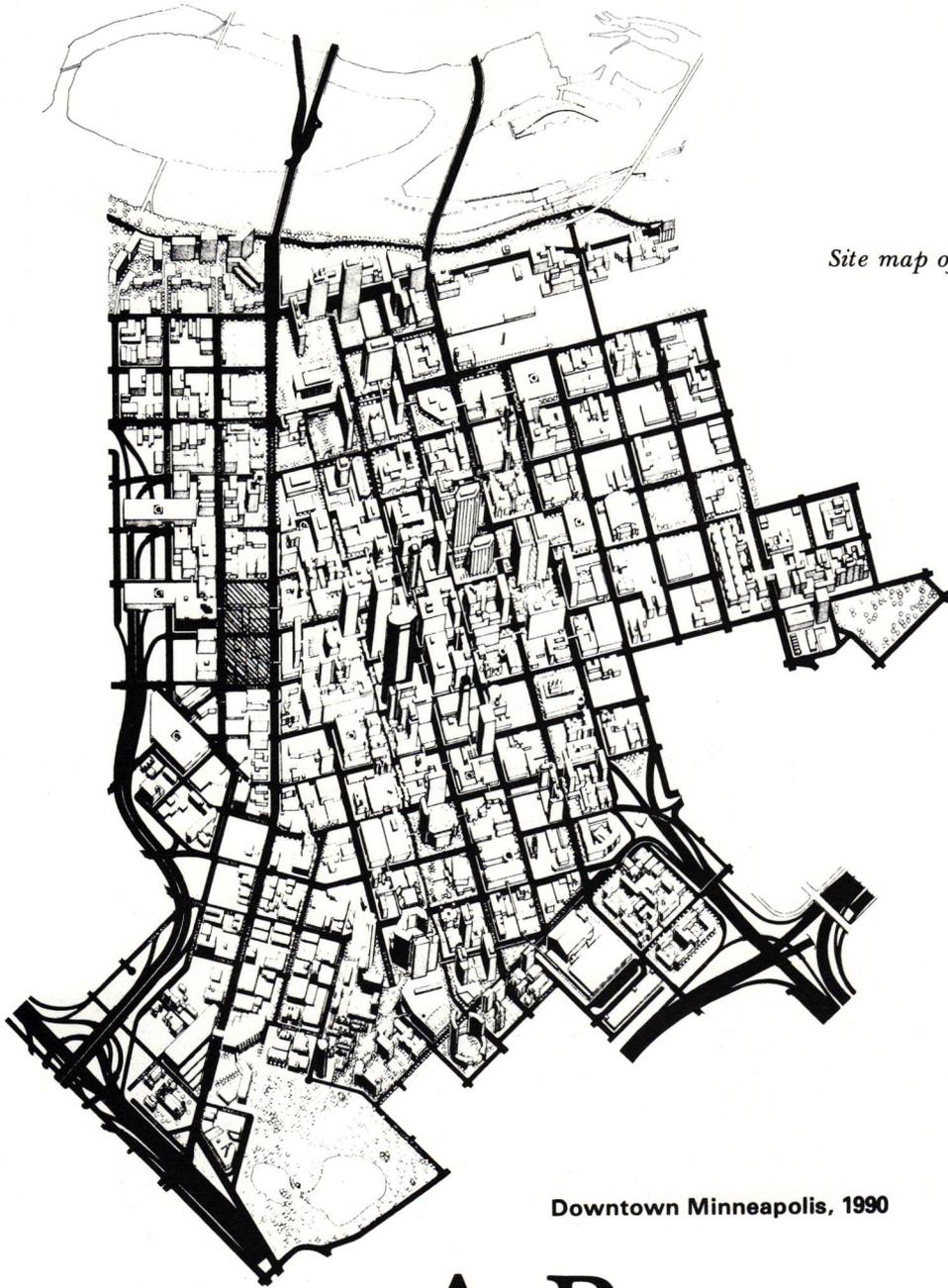
© Bradley & Jones

*Farshid Assassi, 1981
Pioneer Hi-Bred International Headquarters
Johnston, Iowa
Charles Herbert and Associates*



*Farshid Assassi, 1980
Civic Center
Des Moines, Iowa
Charles Herbert and Associates*





Site map of studio project area

Downtown Minneapolis, 1990

A Responsive Contextualism

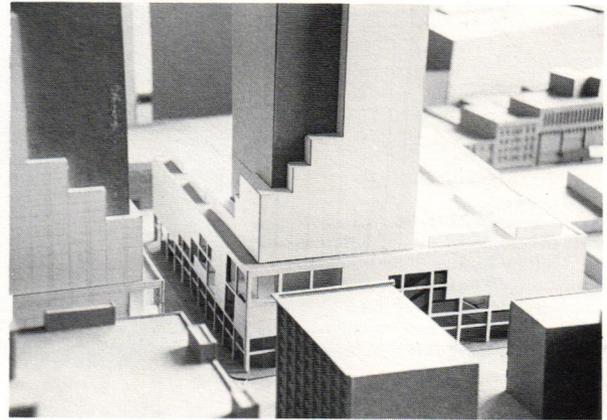
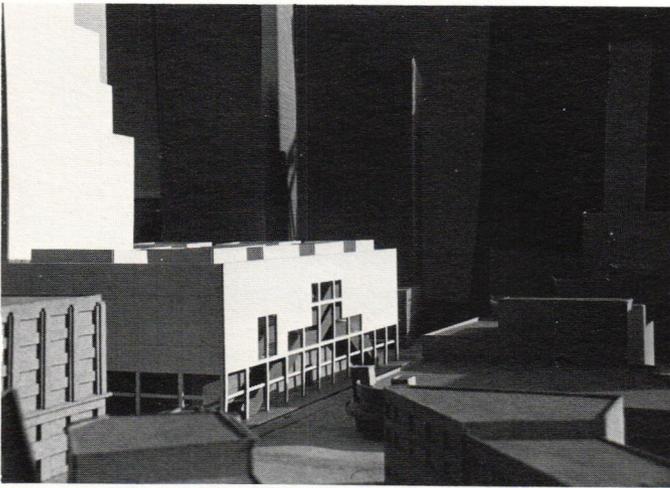
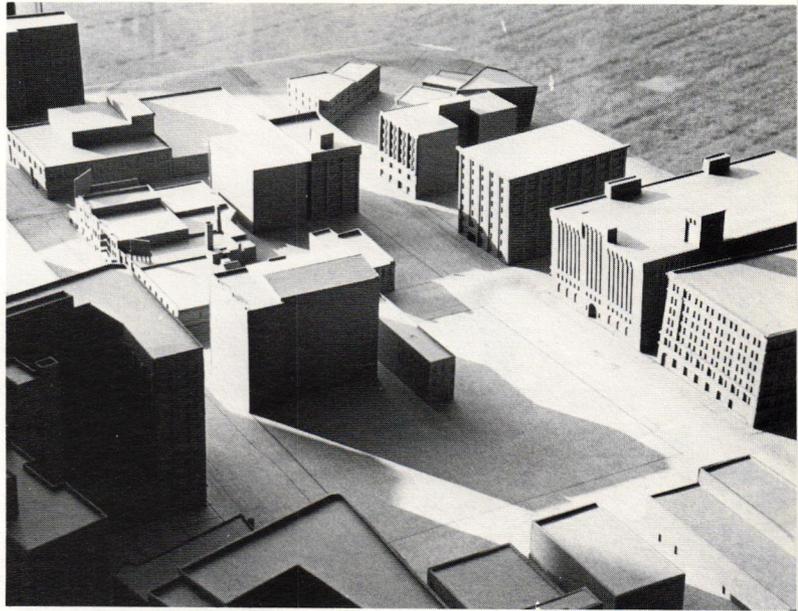
Robert A. Findlay
Associate Professor
Department of Architecture
Iowa State University

The last studio experience for the graduate student in architecture is both a culmination of at least six years of study and a transition into the realities of professional design practice. As the last studio, the student is expected to exhibit competent independence in producing comprehensive solutions to complex design problems consistent with personal design philosophies developed during the school years. In terms of the studio as a transition to practice, large scale projects are often chosen with urban concerns vital to contemporary practice and to urban centers.

The spring '83 studio organized by Associate Professor Robert A. Findlay at Iowa State University was concerned with this current trend toward large scale center city developments and some of their inherent

The project engaged by the Findlay Studio was a hotel and convention center for Central Minneapolis. The site was located between the new City Center project and Butler Square (shown at right in model). Students translated detailed background and program information into a site model to analyze urban design issues.

The relationship of the building to the street, a fundamental concern of good urban design, was explored in interesting ways. The variable grid in this student project establishes a zone for change by individual commercial occupants. While establishing a clear architectural order and a recognizable base for the tower above, this design still sought to facilitate incremental change over time.



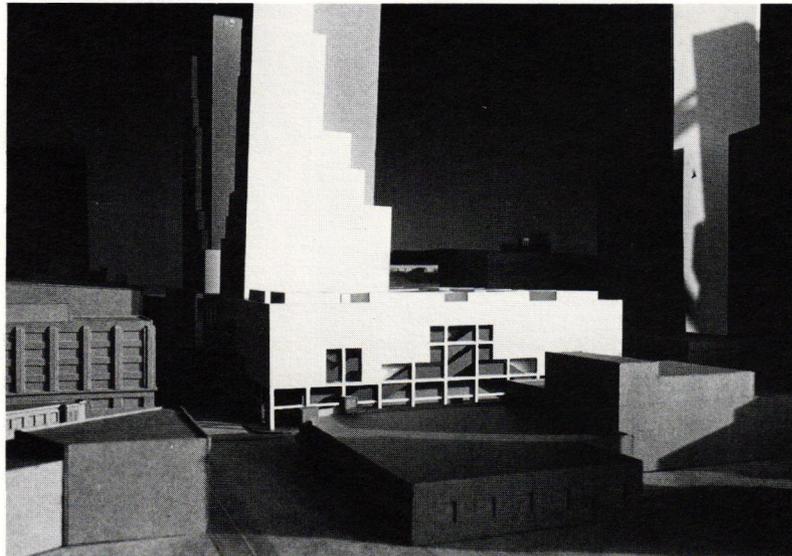
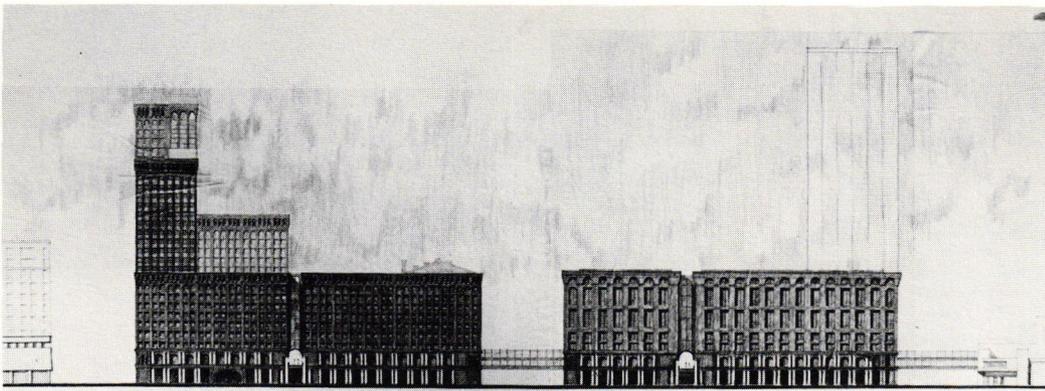
problems. As the scale of urban development increment has grown from parcel size to quarter blocks to full block development, detrimental effects have appeared in terms of building scale and pedestrian activity. Blank exterior walls and vehicular access to sites tend to break the continuity of pedestrian oriented commercial activity. Articulated ground floors of massive buildings, by single design sources speculating on the eventual uses of space, often become arbitrary variations on a theme. Second level walkway systems developing in many cities (Des Moines, Cedar Rapids), have caused grade level activity to deteriorate.

The specific project engaged by Findlay and his graduate students was a hotel and convention center for central Minneapolis. The site is between the new City Center project and Butler Square; the two blocks bounded by Fifth and Seventh Streets North, Hennipen and First Avenues North. Detailed background and program material was provided by a prospectus calling for development proposals issued by the City of Minneapolis in 1982.

Several analytic and synthetic approaches to solving these problems were employed in the Findlay studio. Most generally, the concept of contexturalism was utilized; the act of interweaving the new into the social and physical milieu.

Early analysis of site and planning documents sought to understand existing and proposed conditions such as the project location in the city. The motivation was to centralize and concentrate related activities with convention hotels clustered about the convention center in the traditional Hennipen Avenue entertainment district associated with convention activity.

Students early on discovered that the Minneapolis City study of a linear entertainment strip along Hennipen Avenue did not correspond with actual land use patterns in the area. The perhaps more respectable fern bar/boutique district which has developed in the revitalized warehouse area along First Avenue North suggested a field of entertainment activity northwest of Hennipen needing connection and completion through the site.



Solutions in the studio responded to both the horizontal layering of activity and vertical layering of architecture in the district. Several projects suggested the emergence of the new form within a layer of tradition currently so prominent in the work of Cesar Pelli and Helmut Jahn.

Considerable commuter pedestrian circulation was also projected to cross the site between peripheral parking ramps and the central city. This traffic is projected to occur both at street level and through expanded skyway connections through the convention site. Frequent and easily located interchanges between the two levels would be desirable to overcome the street level isolation often associated with the installation of second level walkways. The last population to consider was the large group of convention goers who need to have separate circulation paths and controls and occasional mingling with commuter and commercial movements on the site in order to optimize the relationship of the convention center with its location in the city.

An analysis of existing building footprints and building massing at the Minneapolis project site confirmed to studio participants the change in growth increment from parcel size to whole blocks or larger. A review of horizontal layers revealed below grade service and parking, retail and service activity at grade and skyway level and more homogeneous residential office or warehousing on upper floors. Buildings had dual identity and relationship needs at street level and as elements in the Minneapolis city skyline.

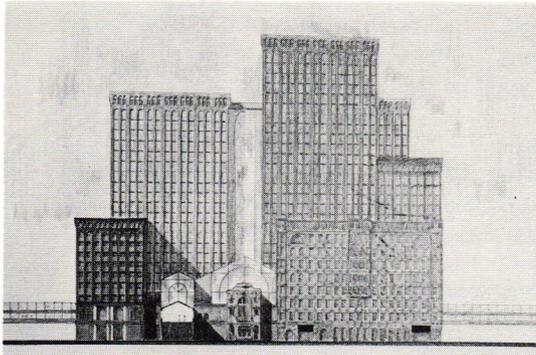
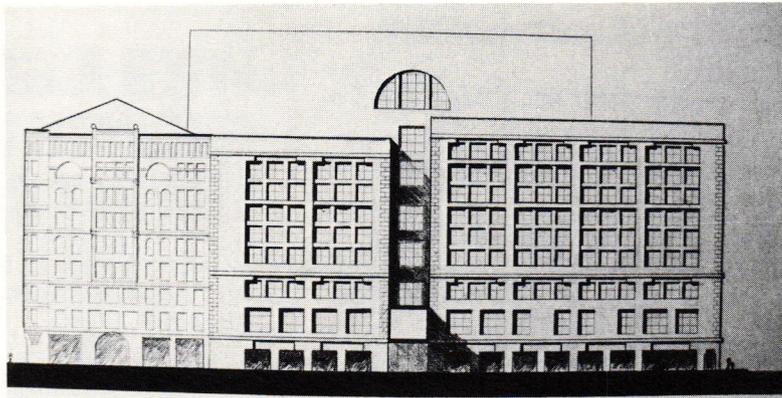
Site sections developed as part of the initial student study revealed that these blocks were bounded by thir-

ty to fifty story new developments to the southeast and the twelve story warehouse district to the northwest. The historic warehouse district was to remain and form a firm edge before the city dropped off to the freeway and railyards a block further away. The blocks immediately to the northeast and southwest of the site were likely to be redeveloped in the near future and would likely key off development on the project site.

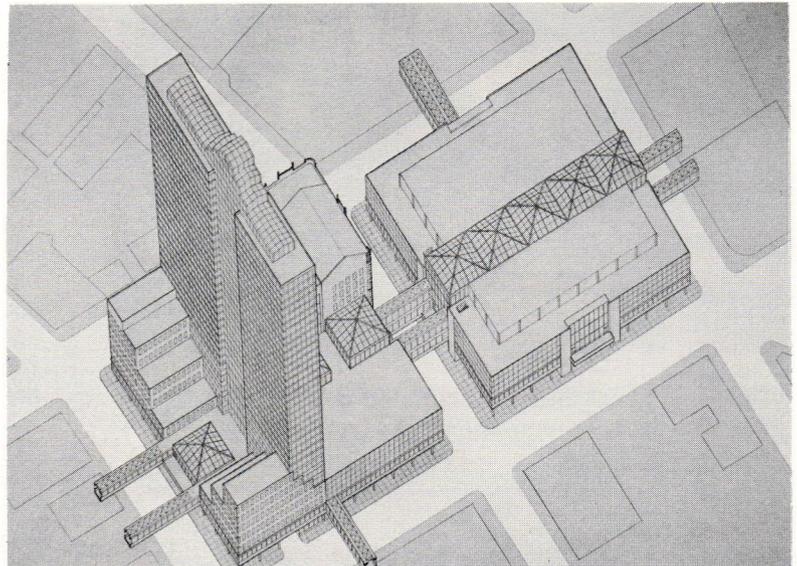
The analysis of styles and facade layers in the district indicated there were at least two contrasting expressions of corporate prosperity. To the southeast are the modern fifty story corporate headquarters towers. To the northwest are the brick and tile ornamented masses of the historic warehouses representing another successful period for the city.

The formal synthesis of solutions in the studio responded to the horizontal layering of activity prescribed in the project program. Three basic approaches emerged in the studio for relating the new construction to the existing city. Vertical layering of buildings, suggesting the emergence of the new form within a layer of tradition, as practiced by the offices of Cesar Pelli and Helmut Jahn was employed by several students. The assembly of building masses sympathetic to the extraordinary warehouse architecture and the quarter block growth increment was exhibited by others. A third approach utilized a grid shift

The response to buildings of historical interest on the site caused design problems not uncommon to professional practice. Students struggled with a tendency to set off these special buildings, giving them landmark status. An honest appraisal of the facades of many existing structures, however, often led to the realization they were intended to be an integral part of a larger block, not an isolated element.



The last studio experience for the graduate student in architecture is a culmination of six years of study. An intensive and complex studio experience has to be applauded for initiating students to the necessity of self imposed limits on one's design compass.



responding to the existing reorientation of streets along Hennipen Avenue. The latter approach introduced diagonal movement through the convention site which accommodated existing pedestrian patterns as well as adding visual interest to the formal composition of the structure.

The relationship of the project to the street and to the historic buildings on and near the site were of particular interest in evaluating these final designs. At grade, in traditional city building, is a zone which accommodates incremental change in the evolution of commercial activity. When designing whole blocks, meaningful differences are difficult to accomplish in speculative developments. Establishing a zone for change by individual commercial occupants allows a more honest expression of incremental change over time. Some architectural order and the establishment of a base for the mass above, short of monotony at pedestrian levels, are desirable.

The response to buildings of historical interest on the site caused other design problems not uncommon to the realities of every day professional practice. Students struggled with an initial tendency to set off these special buildings and to give them landmark positions. The appraisal of their exteriors, however, often suggests that they were intended to be an in-

tegrated part of a larger block, not an isolated element. The placement of new construction of sympathetic bulk and height and of comparable architectural integrity avoids the tendency to be intimidated by these quality buildings.

The careful recording and analysis of the urban social and physical traditions surrounding large new projects uncovers design determinants from our past which may lend meaningful continuity to our buildings and assure our new buildings a respected role in the evolving city. The Findlay studio sought this relationship by working in a manner and vocabulary that has meaning for contemporary society.

Admittedly, no studio can (or should) attempt to emulate in every way the realities of professional practice. Client restraints, political pressures and economic restraints, among many other forces, remain before the architectural graduate. Yet such an intensive and complex Studio experience must be applauded for initiating students to the necessity of self imposed limits on one's design compass. Within very real limits of time, the architect must define the scope of background study he will undertake, the issues he will address and the focus of his efforts. Clearly, this the students did learn. It is a crucial lesson as they move forward to professional practice.

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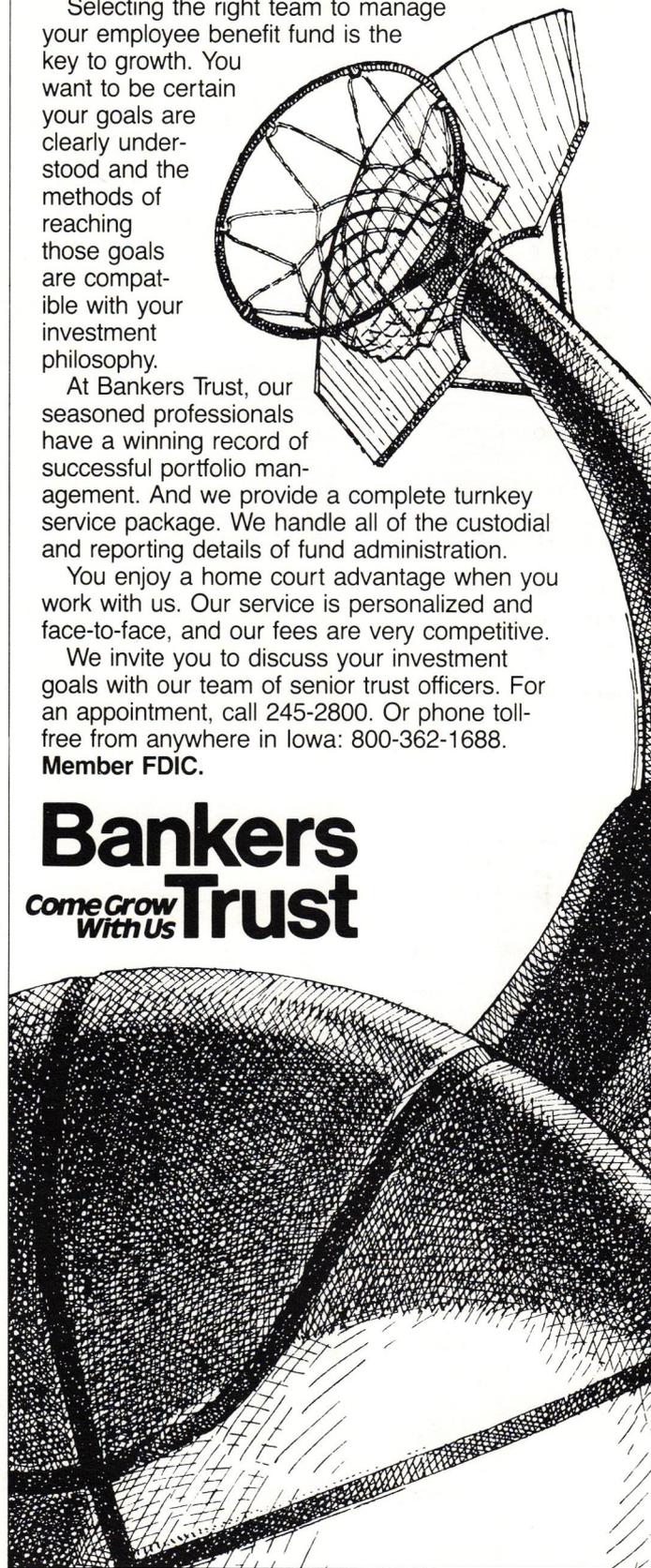
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IN REVIEW

Wright in Iowa

Cedar Rock, a home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for Agnes and Lowell Walter on the limestone bluff overlooking the Wapsipinicon River has opened as a visitor attraction. The home was completed in 1950. While not relying on impressive size, the design employs extensive glass walls to dramatically extend the interior space into the natural wooded setting. Perhaps as important, Wright designed the furnishings and selected the carpeting, draperies, accessories, crystal, china, silverware and cooking utensils. Given these design opportunities, the project represents one of the architect's most complete designs. Lowell Walter wanted his 'summer retreat' preserved and maintained without change. The property, along with money to maintain the property, was given in 1982 to the Iowa Conservation Commission. The home, near Quasqueton, Iowa (about 30 miles east of Waterloo) is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.

1.5 Million For Center Land

In continuing the enviable partnership forged between business leaders and city government, the Des Moines Development Corporation, a Chamber of Commerce

group, spent \$1.5 million to acquire property for the city's new downtown Convention Center. Although the city will actually build the \$13.8 million center, reports the May 14 Des Moines Register, the Chamber's development group had agreed to buy the half block site as part of its contribution to the effort. Originally, the development group had also agreed to cover any operating deficits for the Center for the first several years. With construction bids nearly \$1 million higher than hoped, a "last minute" agreement evolved requiring the development group to pay \$1.5 million of the costs. The City of Des Moines is left to finance any operating deficits.

Construction Cost Inflating Rate Drops To Lowest Level Since 1962

Buildings Design Journal (May '83) reports that the cost of constructing America's buildings rose by an average of only 2.8% in 1982, the smallest annual inflation rate of building costs since 1962, when they rose 2.3%. The high mark in the annual inflation rate reached 11.5% in 1979. Reports of subcontractors voluntarily resubmitting lower bids in an effort to get jobs moving again were not uncommon. High unemployment and the lack of any new major project coming on line held wage settlements to their lowest in years. The trend was to one

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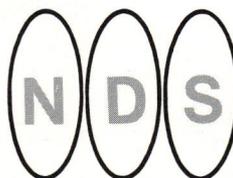


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year contracts instead of the normal multi-year pacts. Material costs remained weak during the year with all major components (redi-mix, steel, lumber and drywall) registering lower prices at year's end. The figures were released by Marshall and Swift Publication Company, a Los Angeles based firm that researches and distributes building cost information.

AIA's Broshar: Larger Client Is The Community

Responding to a wide format of questions, Bob Broshar FAIA, emphasized the nature of current architect-developer relationships, opportunities for design creativity in the coming years, challenges facing the contemporary architect and the designer's obligation to serve two masters in a *Buildings Design Journal* (May '83) interview. Agreeing that there is a fundamental tension for the architect that exists between pleasing his client's function and finding a way to integrate a building into the community, Broshar noted, "He, the architect, walks a tightrope. It depends so much upon the client, on the client's sensitivity to that environmental issue of the context of the community. I feel it's one of the most serious problems facing an architect or an architectural firm — that they have to serve two masters. They serve the client, and that's their primary responsibility. But,

really, their larger client is the user, the community, and they have to be very sensitive to that."

Vietnam Veterans Competition — A State Memorial

With the debate still fresh surrounding both the intent and impact of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington, D.C., Iowa has announced its own contest for a design of a memorial honoring Iowa Vietnam Vets. The monument is intended "to demonstrate our support and appreciation of their contribution to our country" noted Governor Terry Branstad in announcing the competition. A prospectus describing the specifics of the competition is available through the Iowa Arts Council and is also being mailed to veterans associations around Iowa. Designs, to be submitted in drawing form only until July 29, will be reviewed by the seven member Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission. A \$500 prize will be awarded the winner, to be publicly announced on Veteran's Day, November 11. Perhaps reacting to the continuing national discussion of Maya Lin's design in Washington, the prospectus specifies that "consideration will be given to designs which reflect a traditional style and theme". It is hoped the memorial, estimated to cost \$25,000, can be dedicated on Memorial Day 1984. One hundred fifty thousand Iowans served their country during the Vietnam conflict.

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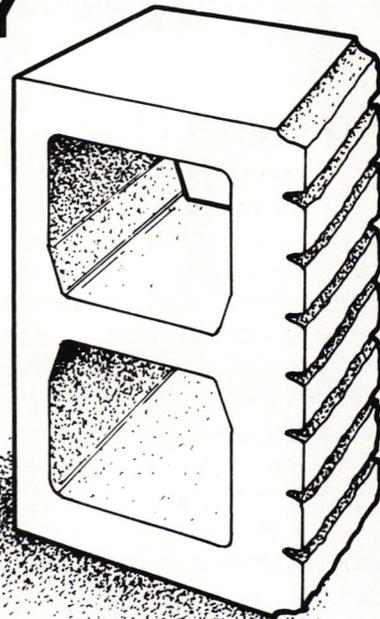
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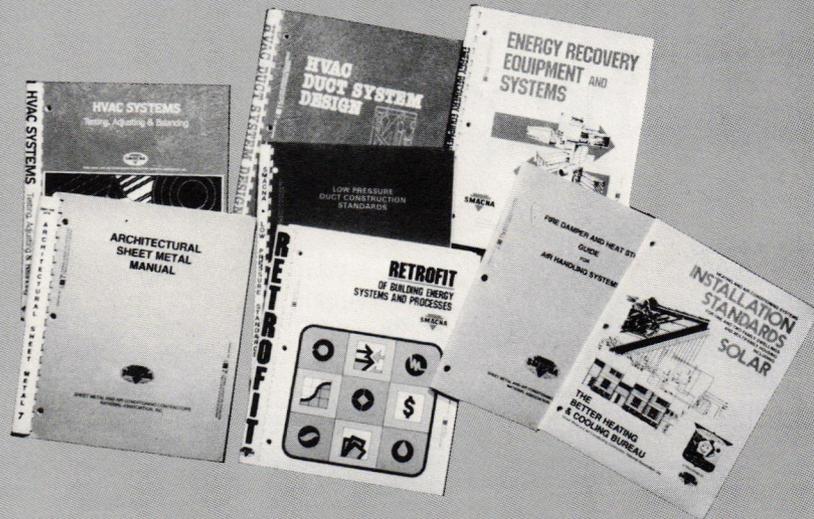
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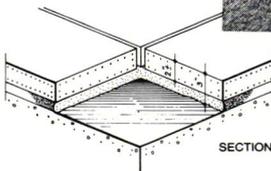
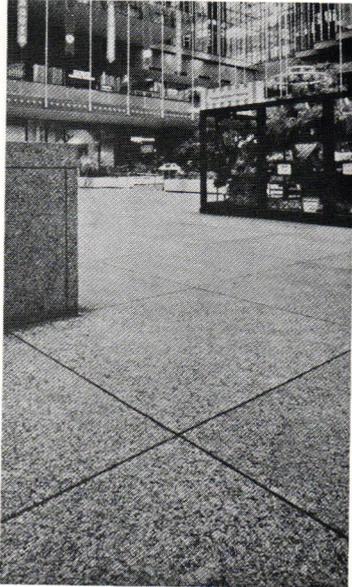
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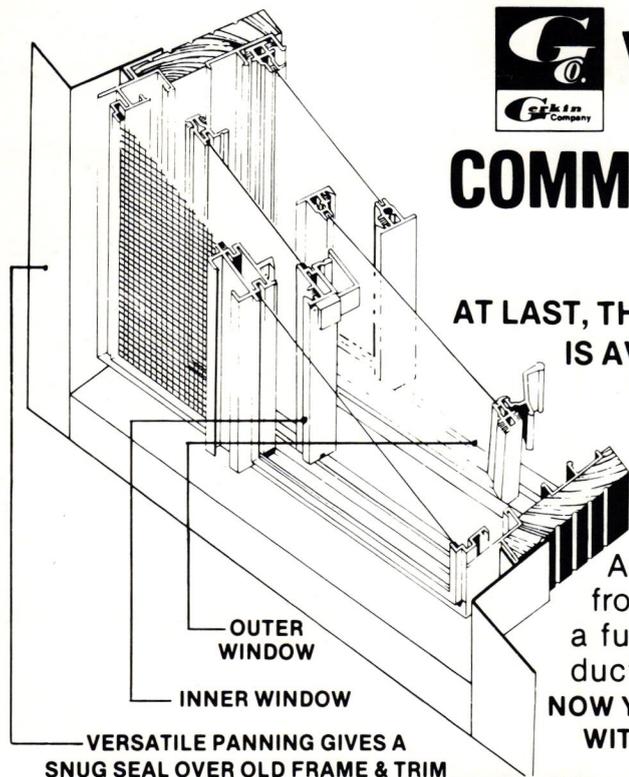
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