

# Iowa Architect

SUMMER ISSUE 1989 TWO/FIFTY

RESIDENTIAL DESIGNS





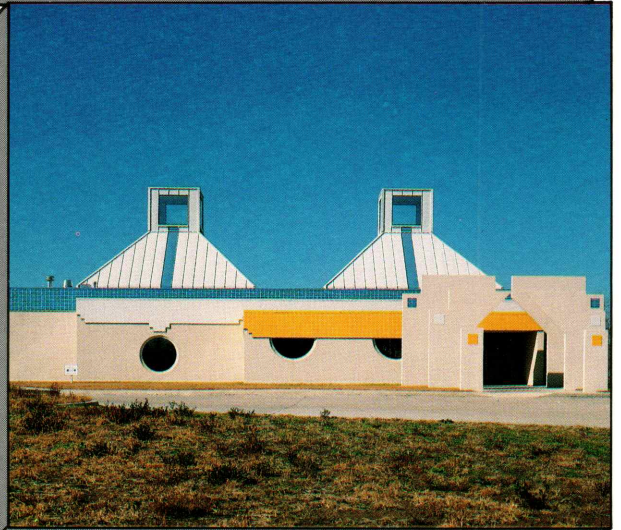
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Architect: Brown, Healey, Bock Architects P.C.  
Tile Contractor: Des Moines Marble and Mantel Co.  
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BOTTOM: Project: Midwest Federal, Southridge Mall, Des Moines  
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Coppola Residence

By Douglas A. Wells Architect P.C.

### Photographer

King Au

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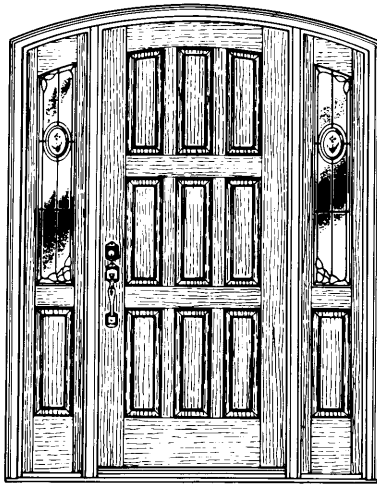
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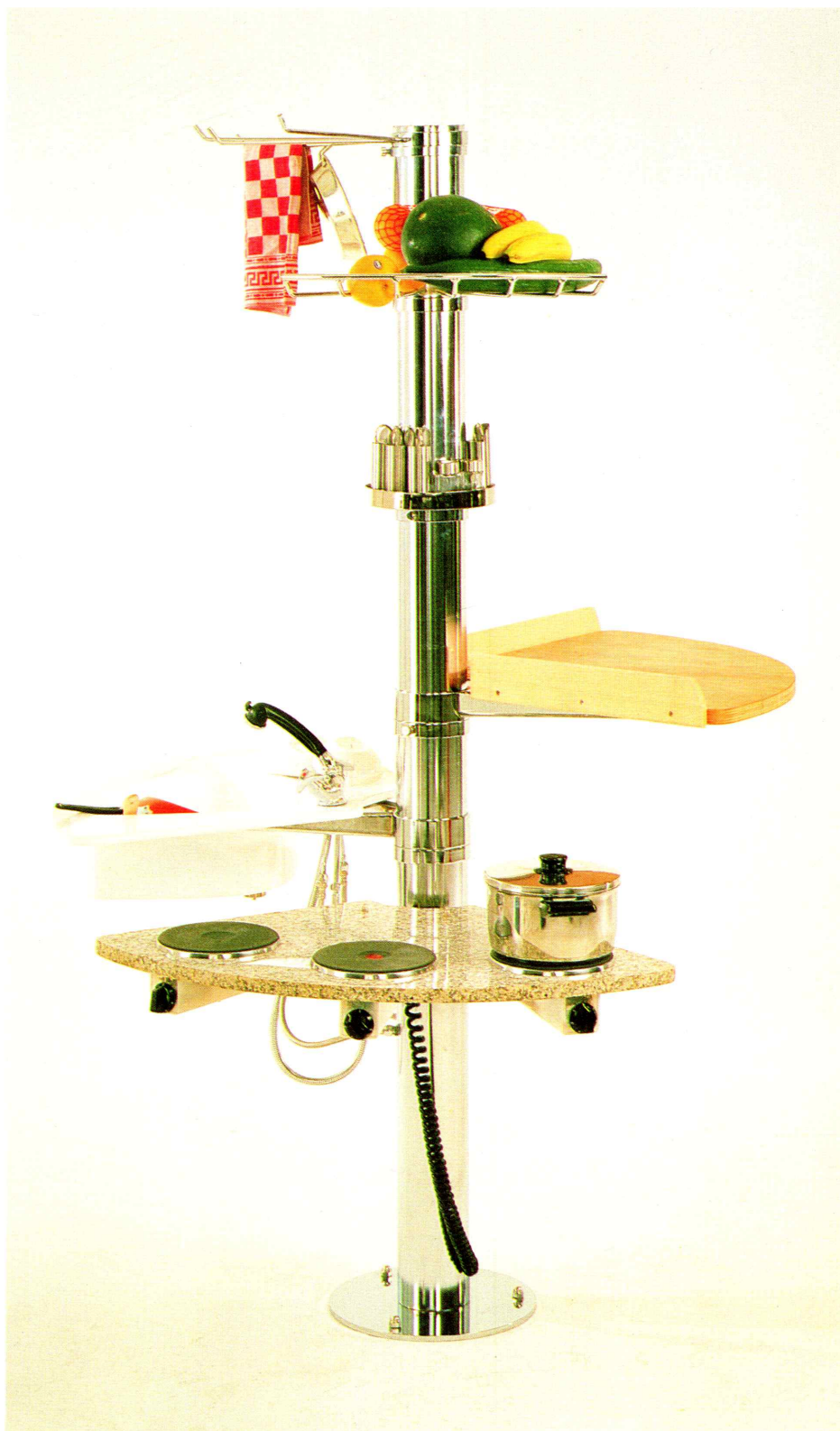
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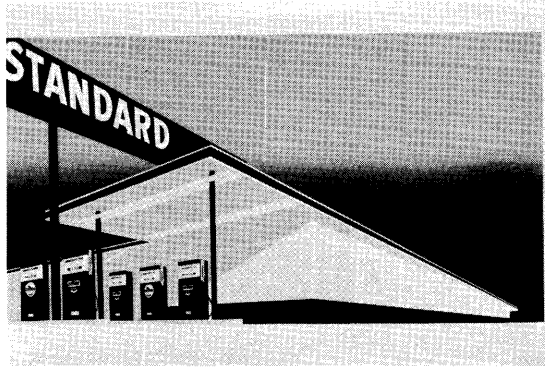
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*STEVE LOW*



## The Arts



Standard Station, 1966 by Edward Ruscha



Untitled, 1977 by Susan Rothenberg

### First Impressions

*First Impressions*, an exhibition focusing on the early graphic work of forty-six contemporary



*Ohne Titel* (Untitled), 1987-1988 by Anselm Kiefer

artists whose contributions to printmaking are widely known, premieres at Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, June 4 through September 20, 1989. On view will be the earliest prints and multiples by these painters and sculptors — works that reveal a wide variety of responses to the challenges posed by the medium and, at the same time, reflect the broadly expressive range of imagery found in the art of the past thirty years. As a group, these germinal images provide a fascinating overview of stylistic and technical approaches that have transformed the print medium in recent decades.



Canyon de Chelly, Arizona, 1983 by Lee Friedlander

### Lee Friedlander's Photographs at the High Museum

The most comprehensive retrospective of the work of Lee Friedlander, the first photographer to win the prestigious MacDowell award for lifetime achievement in the arts, will be shown June 27 through August 27, 1989 at the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. The large selection of works in "Like a One-Eyed Cat: Photographs by Lee Friedlander 1956-1987" shows his remarkable versatility and his innovative vision.

The exhibition features 150 black and white prints, including images from his well-known series — the "Self Portrait", "American Monuments", "Factory Valleys", "Portraits", and "Gardens" — as well as images that have not been published or exhibited before.

### Current Acquisition

The Des Moines Art Center has recently acquired a landmark work by the German artist Anselm Kiefer entitled *Ohne Titel* (Untitled), 1987-88.

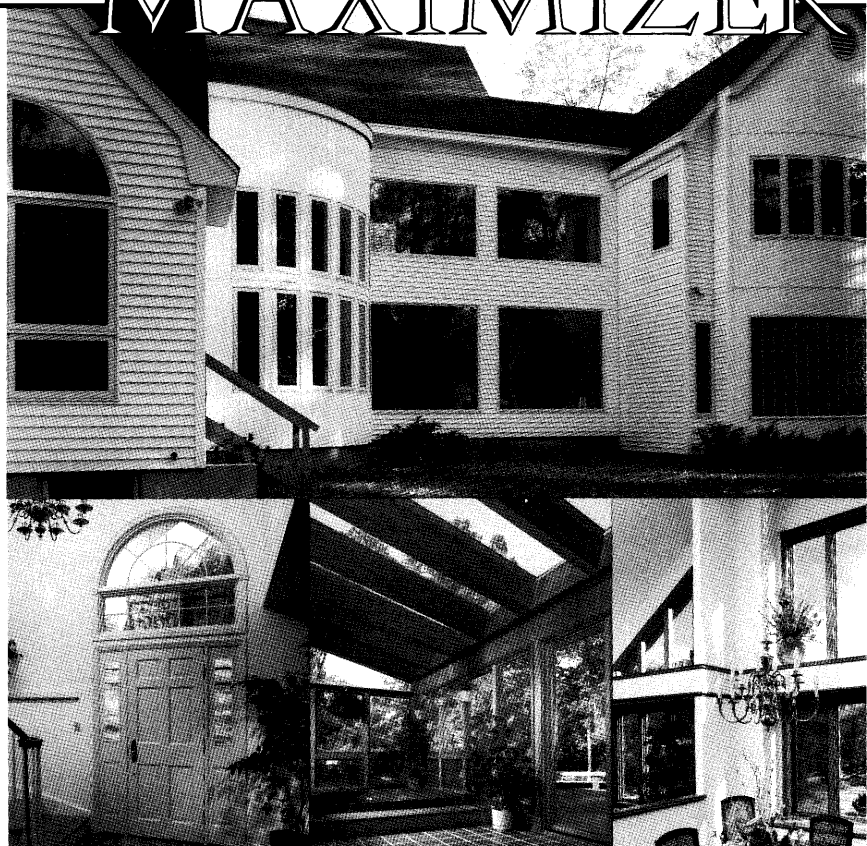
The painting is 13 x 9 feet (390 x 560 cm.) in size, and is composed of oil, acrylic, emulsion, and ash on canvas with attached lead objects. *Ohne Titel* is considered a pivotal work which brings together many elements from Kiefer's earlier paintings.

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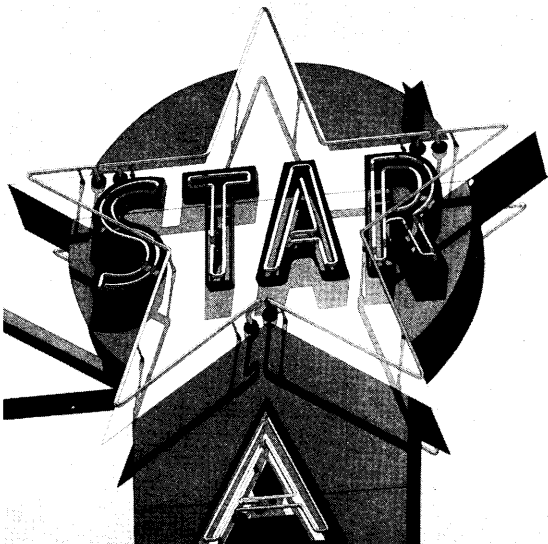
**If You Don't Have EAGLE, You've Settled For Less.**



**Urban Images**

The Madison Art Center will present two complementary exhibitions focusing on the urban landscape June 14 through August 7, 1989. "Urban Images" includes prints, paintings, and photographs by contemporary

artists documenting photorealism as well as graffiti art. In addition, "Deep Station", a photorealist installation of a section of New York subway at reduced scale by New York artist Donna Dennis, will be on view.



Star, 1977 by Robert Cottingham

**Andy Warhol**

**A Retrospective**

The first comprehensive retrospective devoted to the work of American Pop artist Andy Warhol (1928-1987) will be on view at the Art Institute of Chicago June 3 through August 13, 1989.

"Andy Warhol: A Retrospective" examines the issues of pictorial representation and art as environment which Warhol presents in his direct, colorful, and deceptively simple oeuvre. At a time when Warhol is being widely re-examined, the exhibition presents the full breadth of the artist's extraordinarily rich and prolific career.



Mao, 1973 by Andy Warhol courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago

**Really Big Prints**

An exhibition of 10 large etchings, lithographs, woodcuts, and screen prints by contemporary artists will be on display at the Milwaukee Art Museum May 4 through September 17, 1989.

"Really Big Prints" includes works by Robert Rauschenberg, James Rosenquist, Chuck Close, John Buck, Robert Longo, and Jorg Immendorff.

PAUL MANKINS

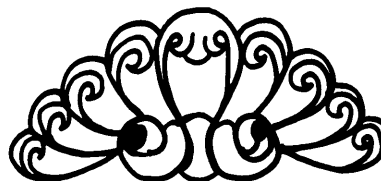


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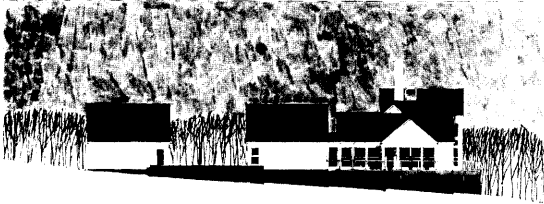
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## Portfolio

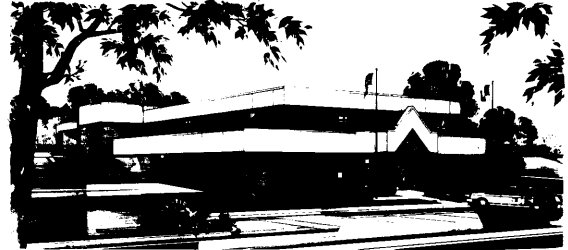


### Private Residence

Construction has begun on a 4,500 square foot private residence in West Des Moines. Designed by Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture, the two-story home presents a contemporary interpretation of traditional residential idioms.

Principal living areas are located on the upper level, and feature a two-story vaulted family room. Guest accommodations and a game room occupy the lower floor. An attached greenhouse has been specified, reflecting the client's avid interest in gardening.

Exterior materials include painted lap board siding, brick, and composition shingles. A December completion is anticipated.



### State Employees Credit Union

Construction has started on the split level State Employees Credit Union on East Seventh and Lyon Streets. The building is orientated on the site to give a two story view of the State Capitol.

The building, designed by Savage-Ver Ploeg & Associates, Inc., will have a stone floor that leads the public through the vaulted vestibule to the teller line

located in the two story lobby. The remainder of the main level will be modular office furniture accommodating loan officers, conference areas, bookkeeping and reception. The upper level overlooking the lobby will provide space for auto tellers, computer terminals, boardroom/employee lounge and CEO office. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 1989.

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**Village at Duxbury  
Duxbury, Massachusetts**

Engelbrecht and Griffin Architects have just completed design development for the Village of Duxbury, a senior adult community located in Duxbury, Massachusetts. Proportional studies and detailing proposals have been put forth with great respect for the rich architectural precedence existing in this historic area.

Nestled in an extensive forest of conifers, the project offers a serene setting for 203 dwelling units supported by a wellness center, formal dining rooms, recreational facilities, and a commons for shopping, clubs, library, and creative arts.



**Rental Apartments  
Schaumburg, Illinois**

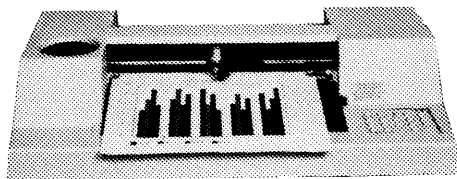
In response to the constant demand for moderately sized apartments in rapidly growing Schaumburg, Bloodgood Architects and Planners, Inc. are preparing construction documents for stacked flat apartments as one facet of a larger development scheme.

This larger scheme will comprise a total of 1000 plus units. Included are garden

apartments, flats on flats for rental, and patio homes and townhouses for sale. The 120 acre development will include two major club facilities.

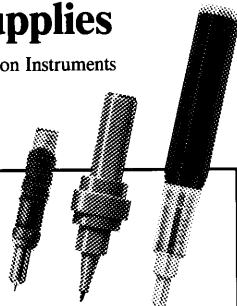
The appeal of community living for singles and young couples will be an attraction for this apartment design, which calls for 460 units, ranging in size from 700 to 1100 square feet and includes a conveniently located recreational facility with a pool, clubhouse, tennis courts and fitness trail.

PHILIP HODGIN & BRIAN LUBBEN



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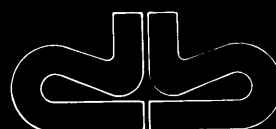


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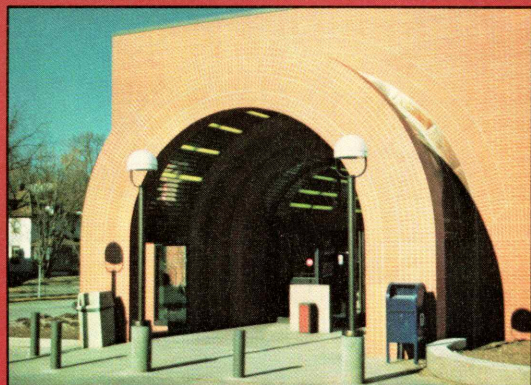
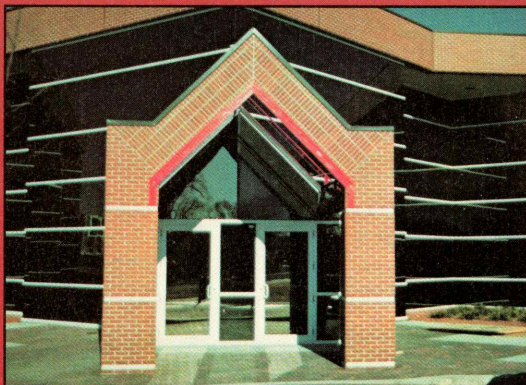
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residential design is the most challenging,  
our most interesting form of architecture.

William Anderson



## Conyers Residence

# Something Traditional

**This post-modern residence incorporates elements from turn-of-the-century Eastcoast Shingle Style — it's a gracious newcomer to a traditional South of Grand neighborhood. The home's creation was a happy collaboration between architect and owner-decorators who knew what they wanted.**

Very few couples contemplating the design of a new home are fortunate enough to have an architect son-in-law. For Bill and Sue Conyers that happy circumstance meant there was no need to spend time getting acquainted. Tom Baldwin of Frey Baldwin Clause well understood their tastes, and the lifestyle they wished to accommodate.

The interior of the home, he knew, must include areas suitable for formal entertaining, as well as small, cozy settings for quiet evenings alone. The exterior would have to blend graciously with the venerable South of Grand neighborhood.

The lot on John Lynde Road presented difficulties. The sloping terrain had been filled for landscaping purposes to the edge of a small creek running through the heavily wooded area. Drillings revealed too much organic material, so the lot was refilled to a depth of 16 feet.

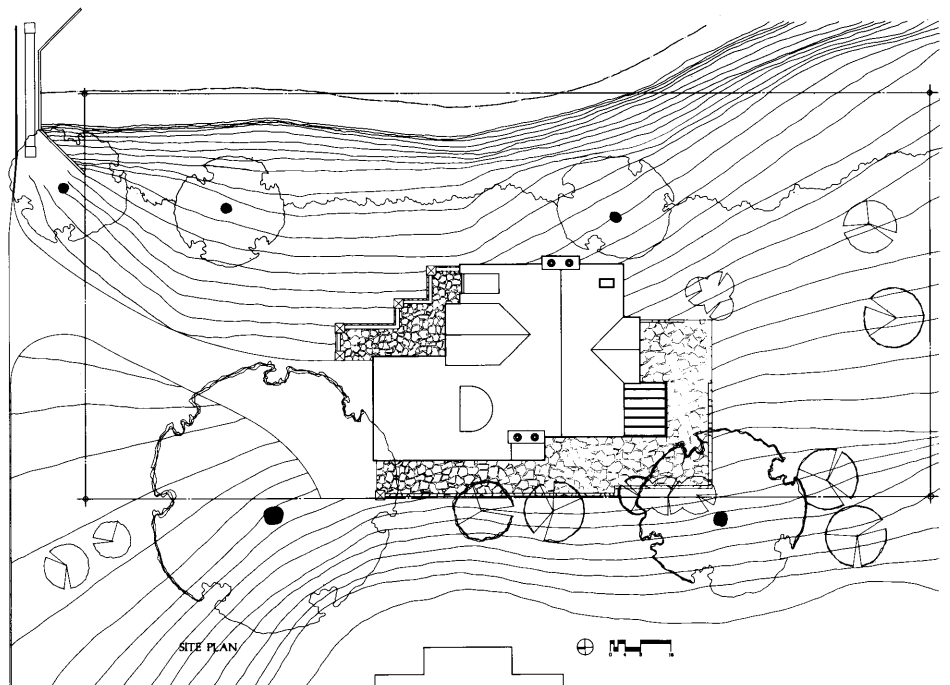
Before settling on an appropriate style, Tom Baldwin studied reference material on traditional residences. His clients wanted "something traditional" to harmonize with adjoining houses whose vintages range from 1900 to 1920. They also expressed a fondness for the seaside Shingle Style of New England. The architect con-

sidered his possible influences, especially the work of H.H. Richardson, a noted exponent of the Shingle Style.

Most Shingle houses date from 1880 to 1910. They typically feature a number of derivative elements — classical columns borrowed from the Colonial Revival, asymmetrical shapes of the contemporaneous Queen Anne, and the massive stone walls of Richardsonian Romanesque. The unifying element, as the label implies, was the use of wood shingles to enclose the irregular outline within a smooth surface. Variations are attributed to the fact that it remained a high-fashion architect's style and was never subject to vernacular standardization of elements.

Having looked up the antecedents, Tom Baldwin put away his references and embarked upon his own unique interpretation. The resulting design features a side-gabled roofline balanced with a tall limestone chimney at each end. The front elevation's predominant feature is a cross-gable flanked by unfluted doric columns. A deep opening to a half-round window above three panels of antique stained glass achieves the effect of the Palladian window common to the Shingle Style. Another arched window to the right is reminiscent of an eyebrow dormer.

**Project:**  
Conyers Residence  
**Location:**  
Des Moines, Iowa  
**Owner:**  
W.O. and Suzanne Conyers  
**Architect:**  
Frey Baldwin Clause Architects, P.C.  
Des Moines, Iowa  
**Design Team:**  
Thomas Baldwin, AIA, Designer  
Daniel Sloan, Associate Designer  
**Contractor:**  
Dean Paulsen & Sons  
Des Moines, Iowa  
**Photographer:**  
Farshid Assassi  
Santa Barbara, CA



The open foyer displays traditional banisters and columns, antique closet doors, and a preview of eclectic furnishings.



Cedar shake walls are stained to a weathered appearance and contrasted with a gridded band of white-painted trim that encircles the house. The grid is carried through on the wall of the garage as well as in porch rails and their limestone abutments.

The one clear departure from a traditional look is the 3-car garage that extends toward the street, yet Shingle Style houses often included sprawling lean-to additions. In any case, the 120-foot wide lot made other placings of the garage impractical. In fact, the outline of the house was well considered — it very logically fits the sloping lot.

A thorough appreciation of the home's handsomely proportioned exterior in no way prepares the visitor for the many surprising spaces inside. The entryway sets the tone for a formal reception and begins the display of the home's many fine furnishings. There are more smooth round columns, and the first glimpse of the unifying grid motif in the black ceramic floor tile and lattice-work end wall.

The living room is the most formal of the home's rooms, and the most traditional. Pella casement windows were placed on top of each other to extend from the floor most of the way to a 10-foot ceiling. The continuing grid is evident in the windows' mutton bars and the crossed-beams above.

Traditional decor includes a grand piano and antique burl-elm secretary, but there's a bit of rattan, a few oriental pieces, and many modern objects as well. A large-leafed potted tree makes good use of the room's ample daylight. Sofas flank the large marble fireplace, while another faces it from the recessed book-lined library, a more intimate space with lowered ceiling. One

might have expected to see naturally finished woodwork, but the off-white paint scheme is no less traditional.

The dining area's formal appointments contrast with antique room doors that serve as china cupboard enclosures. Modern prints on the walls complete the elegant but friendly atmosphere, which the architect describes as "incidentally eclectic."

The combined kitchen and den area is very unusual, a personal expression of the owners' taste. Counters are placed at a 45-degree angle to the perimeter of the room. Ceilings, walls, and cabinets are clothed in white-washed rough-cut cedar which contributes a rustic, country-home flavor. A thinned coating of white was applied to the natural-wood floor as well.

Next to the half wall enclosing the kitchen is a sofa facing a limestone fireplace and a TV screen set into the wall. This is the couple's favorite lounging spot. In fact, the space was their own creation — the architect's plan accommodated their intended use. Tom Baldwin points to this area as an example of the "service aspect" of his labors, of the close collaboration between a professional and his inventive clients.

Exiting the kitchen/den, the visitor is back in the foyer, having completed a circle. The openness of the first floor's plan achieves the desired ease of movement from one area to another. The rooms' various personalities, or "program elements" as the architect describes them, are well integrated.

Other requests made of the architect were fulfilled on the home's second level. The large master bedroom was designed to include a vast number of mirrored closet doors and a private sitting area. The owners wished for a glimpse

of treetops. The architect provided an expanse of glass in the wall below the peaked ceiling.

The front elevation's eyebrow dormer is part of the barrel-vaulted jacuzzi. An artist was commissioned to provide a ceiling painting of white clouds on a sky of blue, a strikingly playful element amidst luxurious appointments. This feature again illustrates the difficulty one has in drawing clear distinctions between the architecture of the home and its interior decoration. In fact, these two disciplines were merged by the architect and the owner-decorators who, it is obvious, collaborated very successfully.

In a custom-designed home, because it is above all a personal belonging, the final measure of achievement is the pleasure a client derives from its form and function. This then, is a winner, for it is obvious that Bill and Sue Conyers love living here. ■

---

*William Plymat is president of The Message Shop, Inc., an advertising agency/video production company.*



▲ The living room is designed for formal entertaining. Traditional elements include a beamed ceiling and mutton-barred windows.

► Windows and more windows afford bright interior spaces. Shingled walls and wood trim are links to an historic tradition.

◀ The cross-gable Palladian window treatment is a vintage element. Extensive use of limestone is reminiscent of seaside cottage ancestors.





Pella-Rolscreen House  
 Dallas, Texas  
 Bloodgood Architects and  
 Planners

## A House For 50,000 Visitors

In this age of planned obsolescence and disposable lifestyles, this building might have wound up in the scrap yard after the carnival ended.

When the client commissioned Bloodgood Architects to design their new home, they were expecting 50,000 guests in the first five days after completion. What sounds like a hostess's nightmare was actually an Iowa window manufacturer's bold marketing endeavor to showcase their products to builders in a totally unique way.

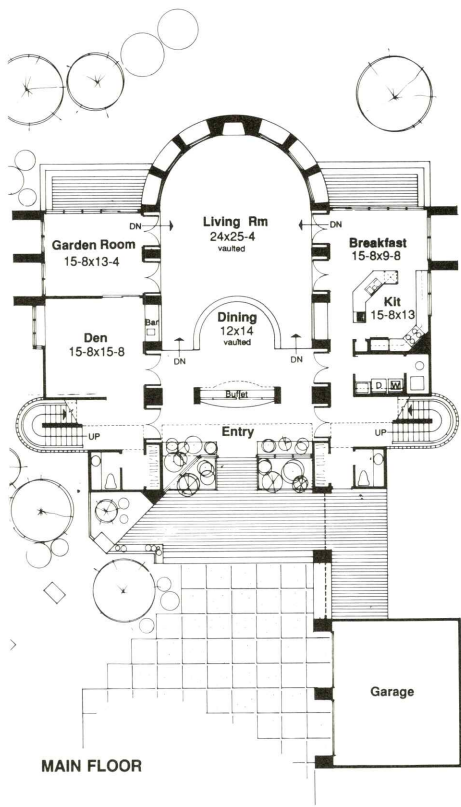
After a 20-year absence from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) annual convention and exposition, the Rolscreen Company, maker of Pella windows, planned a triumphant return in 1988. Rather than the typical product display booth under the roof of the Dallas Convention Center, Rolscreen decided to build a freestanding "Idea House" in the parking lot adjacent to the main entrance. The resulting 4,600 square foot, two story structure, was much more than an exhibit, but a complete house designed to show windows as a primary design element rather than a secondary theme or resultant afterthought.

To incorporate Pella's theme of "windowscaping," Project Architect, Jerry Messman started with the central U-shaped wall of windows that stretched from floor to ceiling and focused visitors on the main entry. The window wall divides the house into three living areas. The entry, great

room, and dining room make up the central area, with the adult wing (the den, garden room, master bedroom, and bath) to one side and the family wing (kitchen, breakfast nook and children's bedrooms) to the other.

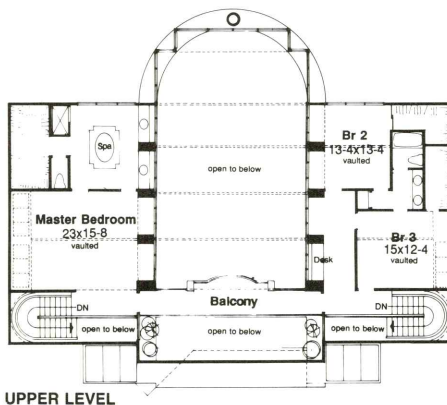
The house becomes an amalgam of window, skylight, and door concepts. Interior windows and french doors interconnect spaces and create an open, airy feeling, while skylights and expansive windows allow the natural light outside to wash the home's interior. The two story great room uses traditional french doors, and slim-shade windows instead of solid drywall partitions. When closed, the doors and windows provide privacy and separation, but when open they bring all the central rooms together. Large double-hung windows surround the great room and provide a view into the fully landscaped yard, or in this case, the impressive skyline of downtown Dallas. Neon accents bring a unique ambiance to evening activities. The home's upper levels are accessed by curved stairwells each encased in glass block to exemplify another daylighting alternative.

In addition to unique daylighting ideas, the architect made use of the home's volumetric potential to enhance its airy, open feel. A balcony



From the front, entrance gables clearly define three living zones; adult wing, central family wing, and children's wing.

Custom windows and sloped glazing units transform the living room into a great room.







**Project:**  
Pella Rolscreen House  
**Location:**  
Dallas, Texas  
**Completion Date:**  
August 1987  
**Owner:**  
Pella Rolscreen Company  
Pella, Iowa  
**Architect:**  
Bloodgood Architects and Planners, Inc.  
Des Moines, Iowa  
**Interior Design:**  
Steve Mead Associates  
Des Moines, Iowa  
**Contractor:**  
Heritage Display Company  
Dallas, Texas  
**Photographer:**  
Hedrich-Blessing  
Chicago, Illinois

▲ A two-story U-shaped window wall segments the house with a dazzling array of indoor/outdoor window and door concepts.

▶ This model Home offered visitors to the Home Builders Conventions a different view of exhibitor's wares.

connecting the second floor wings stretches across the front of the house under sloped glass and overlooks the great room. The ceilings in all three bedrooms are skylit and vaulted to create delightful, spacial experiences. The garage, used during the NAHB exposition as an information area, is connected by a 20-foot long breezeway from the "kitchen." Its mass completes the home's composition by forming an entry court.

The Pella Window Display House was touted as a rousing success by Ray Juracek, Advertising/Sales Promotion Manager, of the Rolscreen Company. The exciting exterior forms, with three playful gable elements were an eye catcher to arriving convention attendees. (The front row center parking lot location itself was called a marketing coup by Rolscreen's competitors.) The sun-drenched interior volumes, accented with colorful interior furnishings by Steve Mead Associates, carried the exterior dramatics inside the front door. The plan layout was carefully designed to accommodate the 10,000 visitors each day during the show, absorbing the tour lines while avoiding the appearance of crowd control.

Since the NAHB Convention, Rolscreen has had several opportunities to sell and relocate the home, but chose to donate it to the Dallas Police Athletic League. It is currently used as a memorial to slain Dallas police officers, as well as a special athletic facility for juveniles in the Dallas area.

How many uses may any one building successfully serve? In its short life, the Pella-Rolscreen House has served as residential prototype for the design potential of windows or "windowscaping," as an exhibition and party space, and most recently as a memorial hall with offices and conference areas.

Is this a revolution or simply evolution? In this age of planned obsolescence and disposable lifestyles, this building might have wound up in the scrap yard after the carnival ended. Yet it seems to have survived even after making way for this year's model. Of all the uses this home has served, a thread of celebration runs through in the comfortable accommodation of large groups of people. Flexibility in construction and in its purposefulness is a primary ingredient much to the credit of the designers. ■

*Mark Mickunas is a photo journalist and has an associate degree in architecture.*



Kirk Von Blunck, AIA

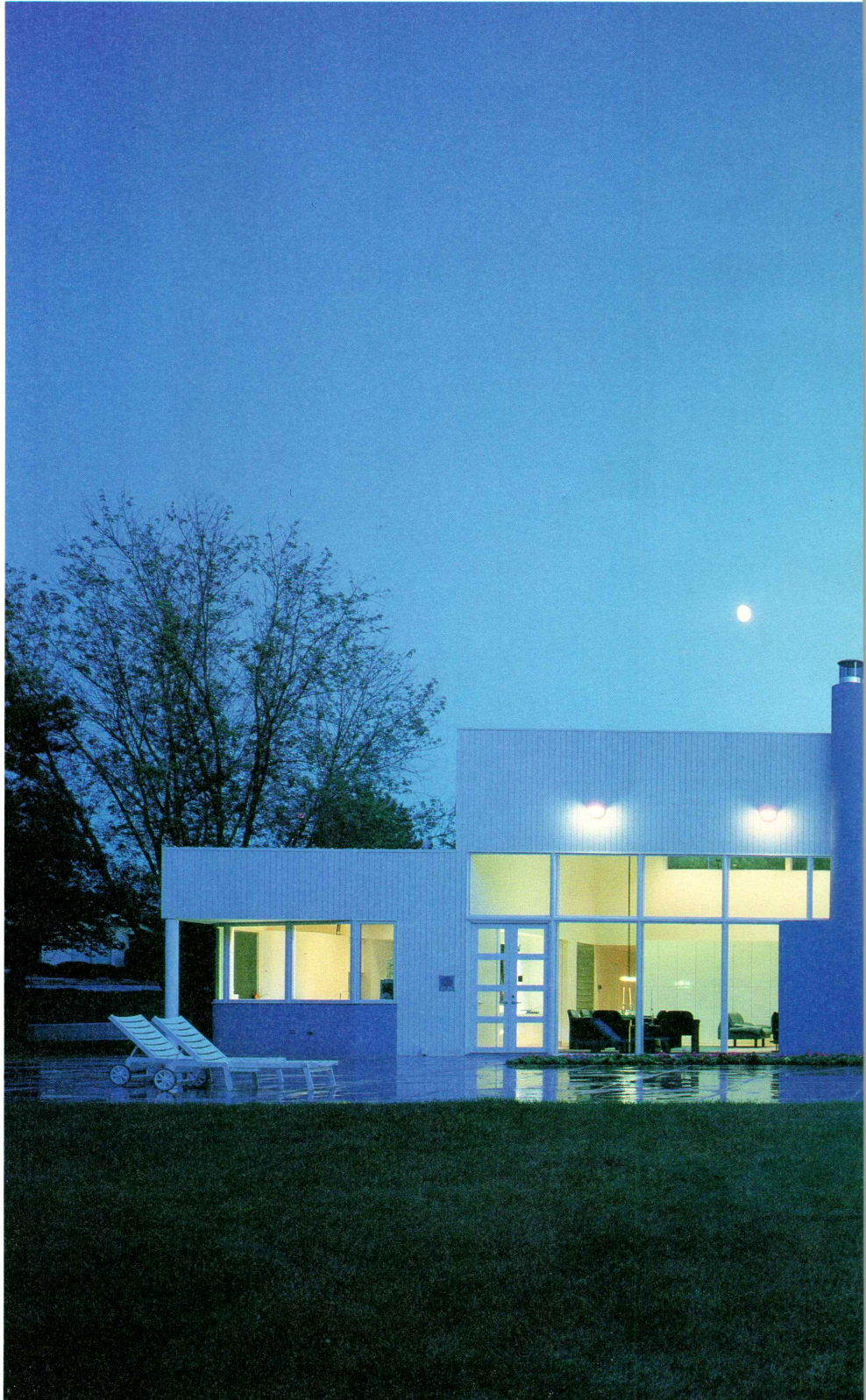
Coppola Residence  
Des Moines, Iowa

## Ideas Brought To Life

The Coppola house, posed from the onset as one contemporary in manner and form, is also a collection of many good small ideas that reflect both the owner's spirit of living and the architect's design sensibilities.

**Project:**  
Coppola Residence  
**Location:**  
Des Moines, Iowa  
**Completion Date:**  
April 1988  
**Owner:**  
Michael and Julie Coppola, Des Moines, Iowa  
**Architect:**  
Douglas A. Wells Architect, P.C.  
**Contractor:**  
Dave Cox Construction Co., Des Moines, Iowa  
**Photographer:**  
King Au, Ames, Iowa

The private facades to the north and east fully embrace the outdoor terrace and look in to the wooded fringe beyond.





Assembling one's own house, particularly one's first house, can be an agonizing and frustrating endeavor because it requires both the crystallization and critical editing of ideas, influences, and personal associations accumulated over a lifetime. It also demands ample and equal doses of talent and tolerance as client and architect attempt to mold the most personal of requirements with professional and aesthetic judgments. In this residence owners Michael and Julie Coppola and architect Douglas Wells have achieved just that; an elegantly proportioned and detailed structure within Wells' repertoire that consistently responds to the Coppola's repeated assertion that the result be "something just for us, something of our own."

Nestled far down and away from the residential drive that curves along to the south, the house presents a more subdued posture than most of its more conventional neighbors. It at first seems a siting gesture dictated only by the limitations of site and terrain. Yet the significant benefits to internal views and the privacy of spaces within gradually unfold as one enters and moves about this light filled retreat.

The entry foyer, edged by the gentle white arch of the living room wall, is at once a sun-drenched gallery and the "central hall" of Wells' design scheme. It emulates the effect, if not substance, of the traditional reception hall, even though the stair to the upper level thrusts outside the south facade rather than consumes precious interior volume. It is a gracious arena for the entrances and exits, the greetings and farewells that make a place a family home.

Beyond the wall, the great room reaches the full height of the house and shares its spatial volume with the master bedroom on the upper level. The broad expanse of north glass all along its length frames a level graded terrace outdoors and lets this space visually reach out to the thicket of woods along the property edge.

It is a room formal in composition, but unpretentious in character; a room intended not as an off-limit showpiece but a place for the Coppolas and their two young daughters to sprawl and relax. It is also convincing evidence of their intention to avoid the superficially decorative and concentrate instead on ample spaces infused by natural light.

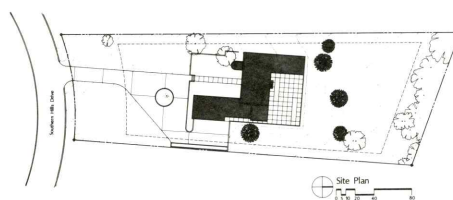
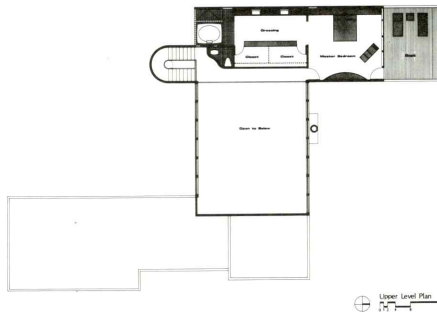
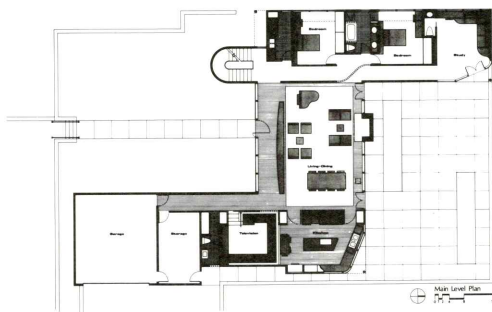


At one end of this great room lies the kitchen, a space connected by two full height openings that can be quickly closed off when formal entertaining is required. Windows reaching dramatically from counter edge to the ceiling wrap around two sides. A third side overlooks a family room a few steps below, permitting mom to keep a watchful eye over her children and keeping the cook connected during evening meal preparation. It is one more room that revels in light and views to nature, not a neighbor's fence.

Off the other end of the living room is the study, sliced from the hall to the children's bedrooms by a sensuous ribbon of glass block. It is in this private retreat that the full value of the early siting decision is evident. On the west, a wall to wall plane of horizontal glass opens into the lush green slope of the adjacent hillside; to the northeast a floor to ceiling wall of glass connects to the family's private terrace. Through clever use of site and building, and a judicious use of glass blocks, Wells has managed to create views virtually without distractions.

The Coppola house, posed from the onset as one contemporary in manner and form, is also a collection of many good small ideas that reflect both the owner's spirit of living and the architect's design sensibilities and thoughtfully conceived details. Built-in furniture, lighting, and storage elements have been afforded careful consideration. Compromises, where they do occur, have been made consciously to preserve fundamental notions of light and spaciousness. While the quest for architectural originality may also have been sacrificed somewhat, the real accomplishment is the number of very personal ideas that have been articulated and brought to life. This house was built, not to be different, but as an expression of many things well-liked. ■

*Kirk Von Blunck is former editor of The Iowa Architect and is now a contributing editor. He is a principal in the firm Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture.*



▲ The great room which combines living and dining areas, is a subtle composition of geometry and color. Coppola and Wells collaborated on the custom sewn carpet.

Set low off the residential drive to the south, the entry sequence is carefully choreographed to allow an uncluttered gracious point of arrival.

▶ The kitchen plays an important multi-purpose role in the Coppola household as a place for cooking and dining. The extra deep counters and center island are a cook's delight.





# The Park Residence

## The Iowa Villa

**The designers have tried to interpret the classic villa form within the context of an Iowa woodside. Borrowing cautiously from surrounding vernacular architecture, they have come up with this gracious form that is at once classical, agricultural, and industrial.**

Sitting discreetly at the loop end of a rather non-descript cul-de-sac is the Park residence designed by William Nowysz and Thomas Cowen. This is just one of many homes in and around Iowa City that Nowysz and Associates have designed over the last several years. On the outside it is characteristically dissimilar from any other Nowysz home. On the inside, however, one can see several ideas which have become a signature of their residential architecture. Unlike other prominent design firms who rely heavily on outgoing visual styles to express themselves, Nowysz and Associates speak through their rational interpretation of traditional living patterns. Nowysz houses do not look alike but they all seem to work in just the same way.

The Park residence is perched on the edge of an acutely steep, wooded slope. Indeed, this was an exceptionally difficult site but one with spectacular advantages. Having resolved some treacherous landscape problems, the site afforded not only magnificent wooded views of the Coralville Reservoir but also provided a tight, quiet valley for privacy and protection from harsh weather. The landscape design by Marcia Shaffer is one that uses sharp, solid terraces which break the home, pool, and tennis court into three distinct planes. The effect is such that from the

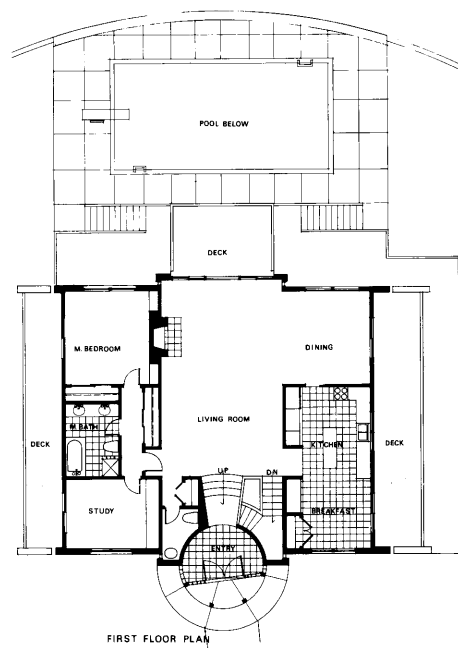
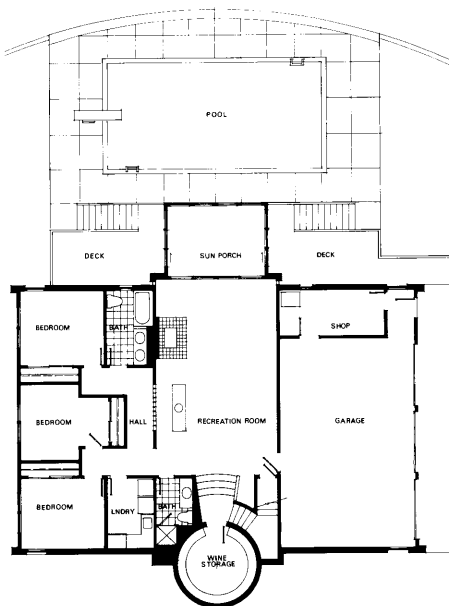
public side the home appears modest in size while from the lake, the home looks almost regal in scale.

The look of the home itself was influenced by a number of ideas. Nowysz and Cowen have tried to interpret the classic villa form within the context of an Iowa woodside. Borrowing cautiously from surrounding vernacular architecture, they have come up with this gracious form that is at once classical, agricultural, and industrial.

The understated front elevation reveals little of the character of the rest of the home. It does, however, introduce all of the important materials of this design; dark coarse brick fashioned in flat solid planes, green cedar siding, glass block, and classically inspired cross braced deck railing. It is upon entering the home that one begins to understand the subtle complexity of this design.

The entrance foyer is formed by a glass block cylinder. The door plane is slightly rotated away from the wall plane within this cylinder and presents a subtle and unusual detail. Inside the home, this cylinder and its skewed angle set off a number of irregular visual perspectives which the architects have gleefully played out to their advantage. This creative finesse is, as always, most evident in the stairway.

**Project:**  
Park Residence  
**Location:**  
Iowa City, Iowa  
**Completion Date:**  
November, 1987  
**Owners:**  
Dr. Joon Bu and Mrs. Bea Young Park  
**Architect:**  
William Nowysz and Associates, Architects  
**Design Team:**  
William Nowysz and Thomas Cowen  
**Contractor:**  
Lowell J. Leichty, Coralville, Iowa  
**Structural:**  
Jack C. Miller & Associates, Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
**Landscape Design:**  
Marcia Shaffer, Coralville, Iowa  
**Photographers:**  
King Au, Ames, Iowa; William Nowysz, Thomas Cowen  
**Area:**  
3,374 square feet



▶ The steep slope of the Park residence creates both spectacular views and a secure, private environment.



In fact, the single most consistent element of a Nowysz design is the stairway. Since the elevator, stairs have largely been treated as superfluous baggage. The stairway within a Nowysz design, however, is consistently at the heart of the composition. His stairways are sculptural, often centered and open within a space, and are always terribly enigmatic and warmly engaging. Instead of a hidden function, these stairways represent an almost ceremonial gesture; the celebration of a mundane transition. As much is true inside the Park residence. Here the stairway is not centrally located. Instead the stairs cascade back and forth along the drum of the cylinder creating intersections of line and

plane that are as fascinating as they are incomprehensible.

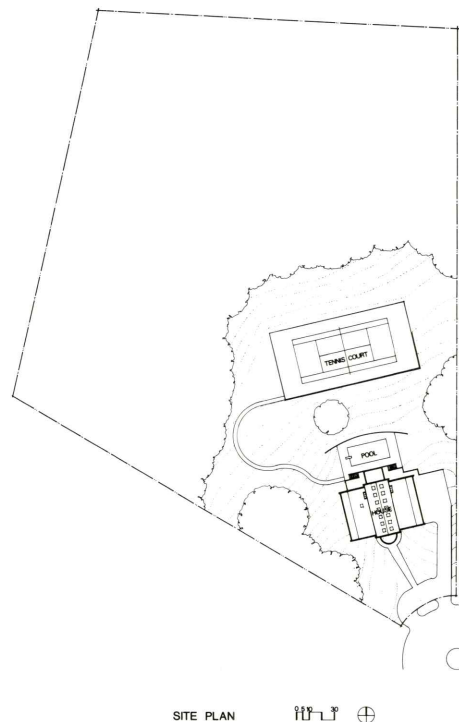
Such spaces and visual ideas have become a Nowysz staple. So has the way that these homes work. Rather than merely removing the physical barriers between rooms to create grand spaces that we have come to associate with formal living, Nowysz has removed the psychological barriers between formal and casual spaces. He has done this by physically separating sleeping, bathing, and study areas from the living, dining, and kitchen spaces. Generally the bedroom/study suites are small, simple, quite elegant and usually have access to a deck or patio of some kind. The architects have

characterized those spaces typically associated with entertaining and dining as the Great Room and have designed them to blend together but have also kept each room distinct. The result is that those private, casual spaces seem much more elegant and lively while the formal spaces feel relaxed and fluid.

Only the future can tell where the architects at Nowysz and Associates will take such ideas, but judging from the popularity of their work in eastern Iowa, they should have plenty of opportunity to continue developing. Regardless, the Park residence represents a high water mark among their growing legacy of work. ■

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*Robert Tibbetts is a frequent writer on art and architecture and lives in Iowa City.*



On the private side, decks, terraces, and sun porches create the illusion of majestic scale.

From the public side, this Iowa Villa shows its agricultural and industrial influence.

◀ Inside the "Great Room," skylights, glass block quoining and irregular wall planes combine to form a dramatic play of light and shadow.



## The Behrendt Residence

# An Enclave on the River

**Vast white walls, sloping plaster ceiling planes, and the vivid character of rugged Wisconsin Dolomite create a large open space which is at once exhilarating and sobering.**

Cleverly designed along the perimeter of a large, circular stone wall, the Behrendt residence in Iowa City combines straightforward symmetry together with simple geometric forms to create open sweeping spaces in its interior and the sturdy, broad presence of its exterior. This balance of rock hard strength and graceful fluid spaces gives the structure a perfect character for this setting in the low, flat woods along the Iowa River.

Designed by William Nowysz and Thomas Cowen, this home is an extremely rational response to its lovely yet difficult site. Located on the northwest edge of the city, the structure sits adjacent to a fairly busy riverside road. The extreme proximity of this street and the distant access of the river has dictated much of this composition as well as some of its compromise. For instance, the tripartite garage ensemble uncharacteristically dominates much of the public facade. The problem of such three and often four or more car garages that responsible architects struggle to solve is an issue that Nowysz has dealt with quite successfully in the past. Here, however, lending discretion, the garage would have jeopardized the quiet, privacy, and visual access of important living quarters. The

garage as it is, broken into three planes and fairly screened, is an amiable solution to a difficult problem.

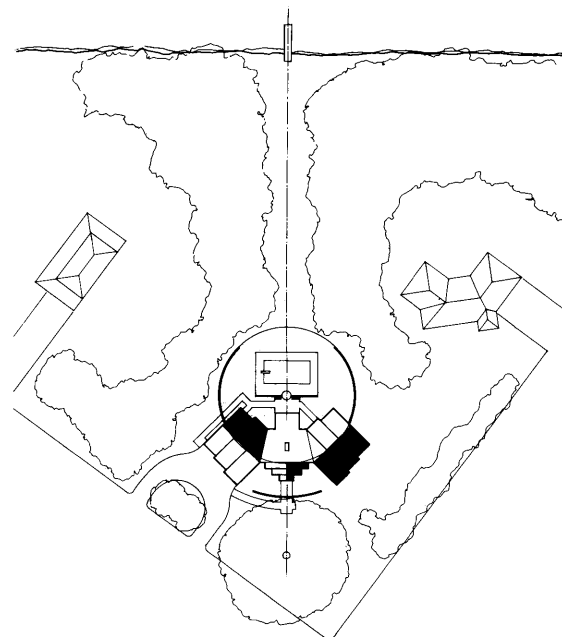
The rest of this site provides for far fewer problems and many more opportunities for an engaging design. An enormous oak tree, for instance, so thoroughly dominates the front entrance that the architects have used a number of devices which effectively embrace the huge canopy of this tree. In fact a line from the trunk of this tree runs perpendicular to the river and forms the axis of symmetry for the entire composition. In addition, the stepped pediments of the entrance vestibule and foyer are designed not only to allow southern exposure but also to provide a commanding view of the magnificent sculptural presence of this gnarled giant.

Inside, the home takes on a much more delicate and cerebral tone. Vast white walls, sloping plaster ceiling planes, and the vivid character of rugged Wisconsin Dolomite create a large open space which is at once exhilarating and sobering. It is also in this space that one begins to sense the immense personality of this masonry which is the bulwark of the home both structurally and aesthetically.

Compositionally, the wall brings continuity to

► The vast sweeping spaces of the kitchen, dining, and living areas have been appropriately dubbed the Great Room.

**Project:**  
Behrendt Residence  
**Location:**  
Iowa City, Iowa  
**Completion Date:**  
June, 1988  
**Owners:**  
Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Linda Behrendt  
**Architect:**  
William Nowysz and Associates, Architects  
**Design Team:**  
William Nowysz, AIA and Thomas Cowen, AIA  
**Contractor:**  
Frantz Construction Co., Inc., Iowa City, Iowa  
**Structural:**  
Jack C. Miller and Associates, Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
**Landscape Design:**  
Marcia Shaffer, Coralville, Iowa  
**Photographers:**  
King Au, Ames, Iowa; Thomas Cowen, William Nowysz  
**Area:**  
4,982 square feet



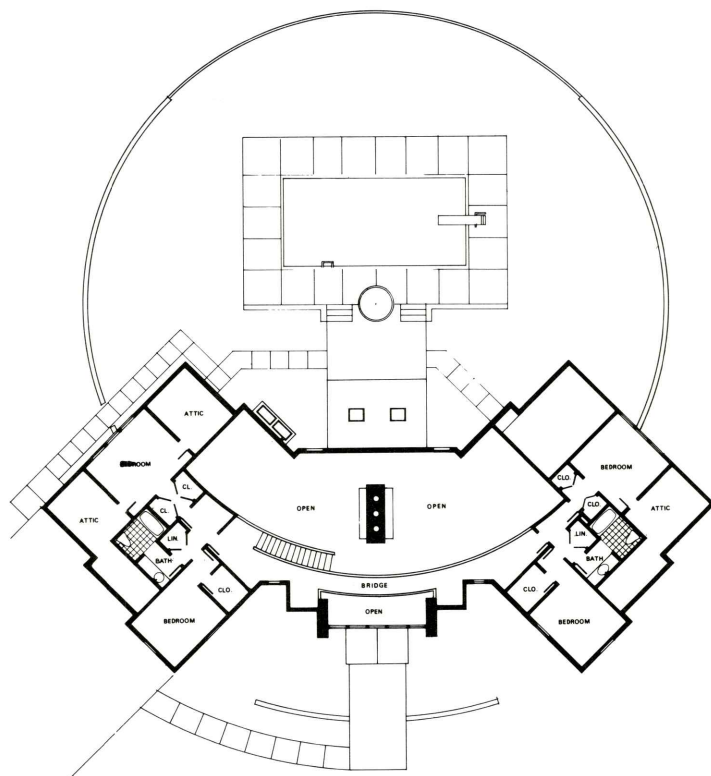
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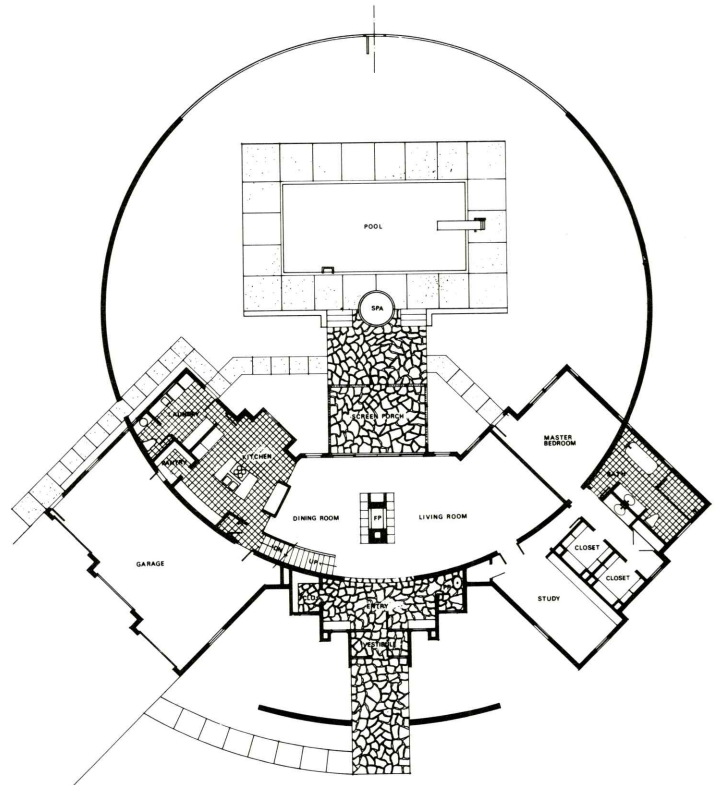


▲ Cascading down along its rugged stone wall, the Behrendt residence manages to create a secure living enclave while at the same time embracing its riverside setting.

▶ The stepped pediment of the entrance vestibule allows for richly filtered southern exposure and an important visual link to an enormous oak tree.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



what might otherwise have been disparate elements. The kitchen, dining, and living area which has been dubbed the "Great Room" because of the high vaulted ceilings and dramatic open spaces might have been incongruous to the intimate suites of bedrooms which are at either side of the house. But the consistent presence of this stone wall and its slightly curving form effectively joins both the grand gestures of the Great Room with the subtle detailing and serenity of the study and bedroom suites.

Local masons Larry Yoder and Rob Smith were given the task of creating the circular stone wall, chimney mass, and flagstone flooring of the entrance and patio. The architects chose a basically neutral stone here but one that contains

vivid red and yellow highlights and was inspired by the natural stone outcroppings of the river bank. The wall was originally intended to extend almost completely around the pool but was scaled back to improve visual access to the river and beyond. As it is, this wall presents an impressive if not fascinating dimension to the spaces of the home and provides a striking counterpoint to the precise symmetry of the composition.

As well as this wall works within the open spaces of the Great Room, its effect is even more appealing within the small and beautifully detailed rooms of the bedroom suites. Yoder and Smith laid the stone in a slightly different manor in these areas to illicit an appropriate atmos-

phere in each space. In the master bedroom, for instance, the pattern is consistent and the stone similar in size and shape. The rhythmic effect is an orderly and restful one. But just a few feet away is a small corridor that links the bathroom, master bedroom, and study. Here the stone is small and jagged. Individual stones jut out from the mortar several inches in places and create a most dissonant aspect of the wall. So rather than a sobering cadence here, the effect is stirring and provoking. The result is the most intriguing space of this deftly crafted home. ■

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*Robert Tibbetts is a frequent writer on art and architecture and lives in Iowa City.*



## Milliken Residence

# A Private Retreat on the Prairie

Located on a private game preserve, this lake front home provides its inhabitants with a unique environment for entertaining, hunting or just relaxing.

With their children grown and starting families of their own, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Milliken found that they had more time to themselves. Rather than give in to the pangs of the "empty nest" syndrome, they decided to build a new "nest" — and to feather it in the most comfortable way possible.

The result of that decision is a unique two-story lake front home designed by Bahr Vermeer & Haecker Architects.

This 3,000 square foot home is situated on a lake next to the Platte River in Fremont, Nebraska (some 35 miles outside of Omaha). The house is located on a private game reserve, which serves as a perfect backdrop for one of Mr. Milliken's hobbies — wild fowl shooting.

In order to provide a low maintenance exterior, a wood frame with redwood lap siding was used in conjunction with wood shingles and brick.

In keeping with the surrounding environment, all natural groundcover was used in landscaping. No grass was planted so there's no lawn to mow.

To take full advantage of the natural vistas, the house is orientated perpendicular to the lake on a wedge-shaped lot. All the views from the interior were specifically planned to allow only a natural panorama to be seen.

Above the two-car garage are two bedrooms and an adjoining bath. This area is affectionately

referred to as "the annex" or "the motel" by family and friends who stay there.

The main floor of the house is dedicated to entertaining. Because they enjoy gourmet cooking, a large, accessible kitchen, complete with custom made oak cabinets, granite counters, green slate floors, track lighting, and state-of-the-art appliances, was commissioned.

At the center of the house is the great room, which measures some 40 feet long and 15 feet wide. A large brick and slate fireplace is the room's focal point. Stained glass shutters and a granite counter separate the great room and the kitchen.

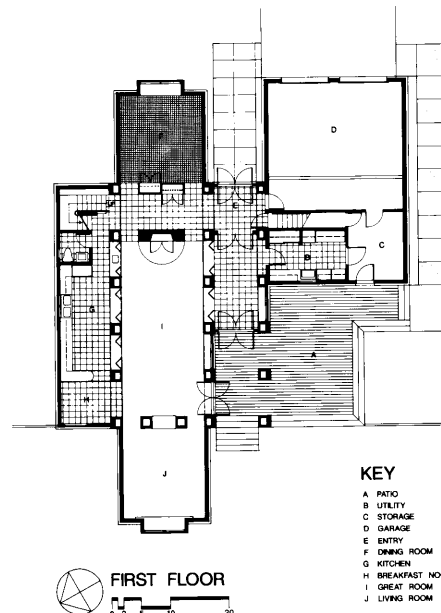
Wanting to accentuate the feeling of openness, the kitchen, living room, dining room, and deck may be viewed from the great room.

Between the great room and living room are brick columns, between which are benches that lift up to serve as storage area.

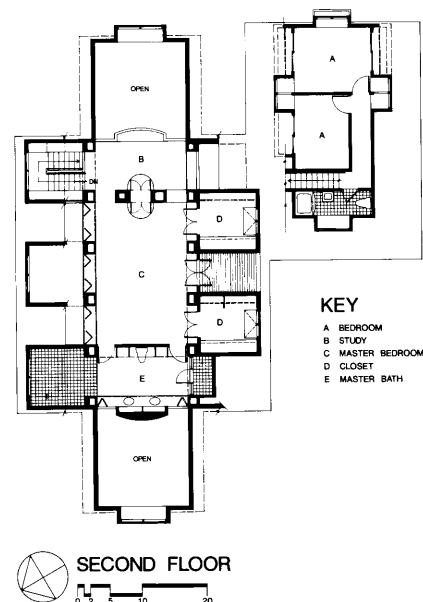
In the living room and dining room the ceilings reach 30 feet. Both rooms contain vertical windows that measures 20 feet in height, displaying views of the lake and the preserve. These two rooms flank the low-ceilinged great room, which makes for an intriguing visual juxtaposition.

The second floor contains the master bedroom, bath, and study. These spaces are open to one another with exterior glass allowing views

**Project:**  
Milliken Residence  
**Location:**  
Fremont, Nebraska  
**Completion Date:**  
February 1988  
**Owner:**  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Milliken, Fremont, Nebraska  
**Architect:**  
Bahr Vermeer & Haecker Architects, Omaha, Nebraska  
**Contractor:**  
Paul Gifford, Fremont, Nebraska  
**Photographer:**  
Pat Drickey, Drickey Photography, Omaha, Nebraska



▶ The lake can be well surveyed from this 20 foot vertical window in the living room. Both the living room and the dining room have 30 foot high ceilings.

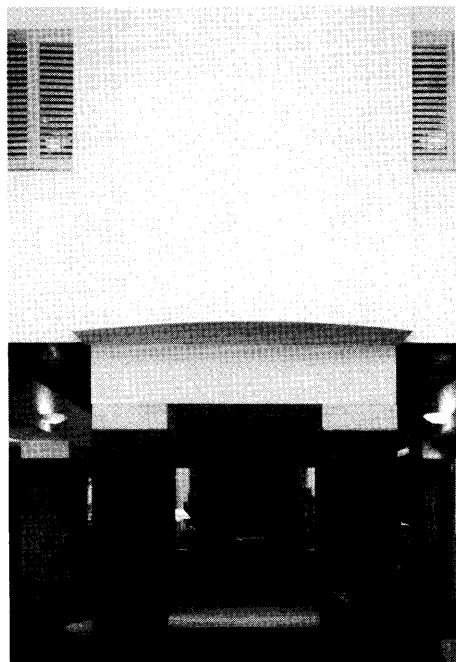






▲ A serene reflection is cast by the Milliken residence, which rests on the banks of a lake located a quarter of a mile from the Platte River.

▼ A cozy bench is tucked between brick columns in the great room. Storage space is located underneath the bench.



to other rooms and the outside. The study overlooks the dining room. Windows in the bedroom can be opened to look down into the kitchen.

The feeling of openness even extends into the master bathroom. Here stained glass windows may be opened to look into the living room and a large dormer window, by the sunken tub, brings a feeling of the great outdoors indoors.

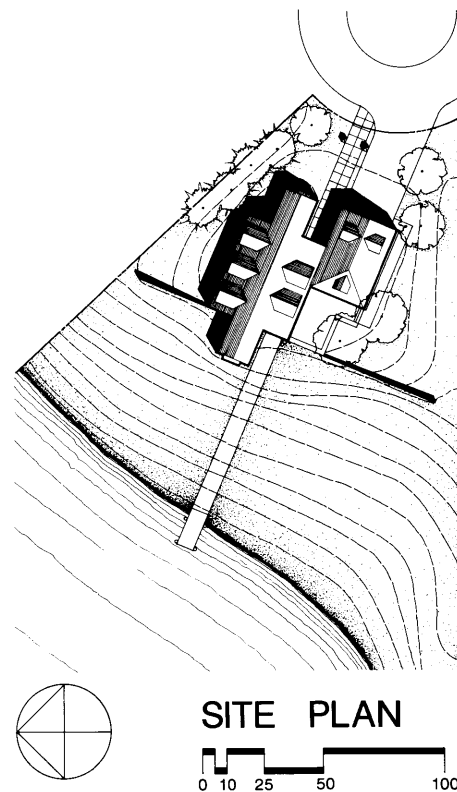
The bedroom contains two large custom-built walk-in closets, which are highlighted by large dormer windows.

Wanting to reflect the natural materials used in the exterior, brick, slate, granite, and wood are used throughout the house. All interior spaces have exposed wood rafters and beams.

The dining room is covered in parquet wood. The rest of the house is covered in an off-white, wool carpet. The interior walls are painted in soft, quiet shades of nature.

Seeking a home where they could enjoy their time together, as well as their time with visiting family and friends, the Millikens have found a special spot where they are content to watch the evening sun go down. ■

*Debra Kurtz holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. She has written extensively on film, entertainment, and the arts.*



► Granite counters, slate floors, custom made oak cabinets, and track lighting highlight the spacious kitchen, which abuts the great room and can be viewed from the second story bedroom.



## Jacobsen Monograph

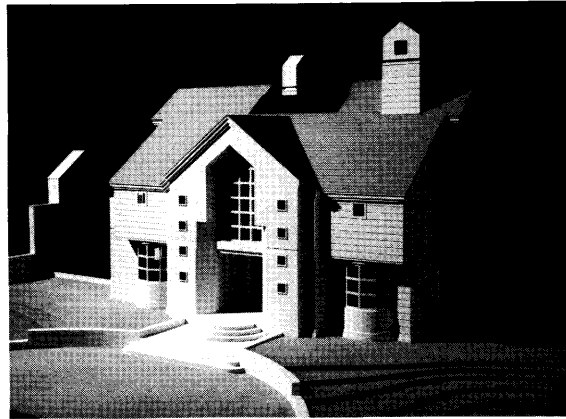
### Available

Hugh Newell Jacobsen, Architect, presents more than fifty of this architect's works through 400 photographs by Jacobsen's favorite lensman, Robert Lautman, and the graphic design of Massimo Vignelli. The book itself symbolizes Jacobsen's own commitment to "eloquence in the language of architecture as measured by how a building is put together."

Vincent Scully, Honorable AIA, writes in the forward, "His impressive array of well-tailored houses reflects the play of a

fastidious mind upon the architectural events and the work of the most influential architects of the past 30 years." Included are Bolton Square, the Renwick Gallery, Elliott House, the Arts and Industries Museum, Tidewater House, and Mendoza House — the National Honor award winners. Descriptions and renderings of six current projects are also featured.

Hugh Newell Jacobsen, Architect, is available at bookstores, or directly from the AIA Press, 1735 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, as a \$50.00 hardcover.



### House of Plastic

In a memorable scene from "The Graduate," Dustin Hoffman was asked to imagine his future, embodied within a single word: "plastic." Now, some twenty years later, the graduate can not only stake his future in plastic; he can live in it, as well.

This 3,000 square foot house, composed principally of plastic components is being constructed by GE Plastics near the company's technology center in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The architect for the project is Richardson-Nagy-Martin of Newport Beach, California.

Tagged the "Living Environments" Concept House, the structure will serve as a laboratory to investigate the use of advanced materials and methods of building construction.

"Our living environments program will demonstrate the full capabilities of engineering plastics in challenging the nature of wood, glass, stone, and steel..." says Wes Wascher, GE Vice President. "...what we will do is use our materials based on their strengths, in conjunction with natural materials, both on the house's interior and exterior...you won't see futuristic or far-out shapes. You'll see productive, affordable, well-designed living spaces."

As a living laboratory, the structure will be continually retrofitted and remodeled to explore new ideas, new materials, and new building processes. Future development proposals include wall and floor systems, roof panels, radiant heating systems, and advanced assembly methods.

For more information on the Living Environments Program, contact GE Plastics, One Plastics Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Hugh Newell Jacobsen, Architect

### Foundation Gift

The Sheet Metal Contractors of Iowa have presented a gift of \$500 to the Iowa Architectural Foundation. The presentation was made by Tom Wacker of the M.A. Mortenson Company; and Greg Roth, Waldinger Corporation at S.M.C.I.'s annual meeting in Des Moines, February 24.

The gift will help further the goals of the Iowa Architectural Foundation, created to advance the quality and practice of architecture within the state of Iowa.

# 8

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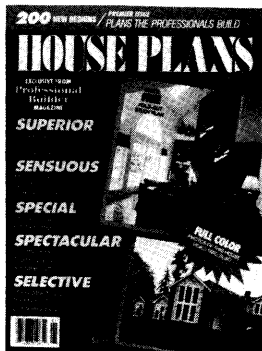
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**"House Plans" For Sale**

The Bloodgood Group, Des Moines, is among thirteen design firms contributing residential plans to a new quarterly magazine titled "House Plans." The magazine features a collection of home designs that have been successfully marketed by custom home builders nationwide.

"These plans are a great value because they represent the kind of exciting design Americans are seeking today," notes publisher David E. Link. "...this is the first time we've made these plans [by] the nation's best designers available to the general public."

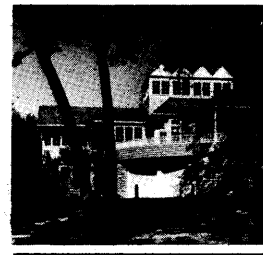
Mail order house plans, though long the bane of traditional architects, have historically been a primary source of new housing designs in this country. The publication of "House Plans" continues this tradition, illustrating both the endless variety of residential planning as well as the ongoing evolution of domestic taste in mainstream America. Regardless of their personal reservations, architects should find in "House Plans" valuable insight regarding the current state of the American dream.

**In the Realm of Ideas**

A two-year national tour which explores Frank Lloyd Wright's principle of organic architecture will open at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry on June 8 and be on view through September 4. A highlight of the exhibition will be a full-scale, 1,800 square foot Usonian Automatic House, which has been erected on the Museum's grounds.

In addition to the house, more than 160 works will be on view, including architectural drawings and renderings, photographic enlargements of details, and large scale models of seven of Wright's most important designs.

The exhibit and its tour have been made possible by grants from the Whirlpool Corporation, the Kohler Company, and the city of Scottsdale, Arizona.

**North Shore Residence Wins National Design Award**

The Morgenstern Residence in Highland Park has been honored with a Merit Award in the American Wood Council's 1988 Wood Design Award Program. Designed by Stuart Cohen and Anders Nereim Architects of Chicago, the home was among 12 buildings selected to receive awards from 419 national entries.

"Inventive, dynamic, lyrical interior spaces, and volume," commented the jury, adding "The living room evokes the grand halls of McKim, Mead, and White's seaside residences."

Jurors for this year's award program were Laurence G. Booth, FAIA; Cynthia Weese, AIA; Kurt Anderson; Peter Q. Bohlin, FAIA; and Heidi Richardson, AIA.

ROGER SPEARS

**The Healthy Home**

Of late, the debate over environmental issues has moved from the workplace into our homes, prompted in part by the unsettling discovery of significant levels of radon gas in many American houses. The Healthy Home (Rohale Press, 1989) by Linda Mason Hunter is a timely response to this growing concern for the safety of the places in which we live.

Hunter, a frequent contributor to the Iowa Architect, has

assembled a comprehensive analysis of the most alarming of these hazards: airborne pollutants, tainted water, chemical toxins, in addition to many less conspicuous, but equally worrisome dangers. Her thoroughly researched text presents a sobering picture of the typical American home. Even seemingly innocuous products, resin-impregnated particle board for example, can contribute to increased concentrations of pollutants within the home.

Hunter convincingly demonstrates that the materials and methods we use to construct our houses are in need of serious re-examination.

The Healthy Home is a valuable resource, one which skillfully defines the next frontier of environmental activism. Ms. Hunter is to be commended for her apt exploration of these issues, the significance of which we have only just begun to recognize.

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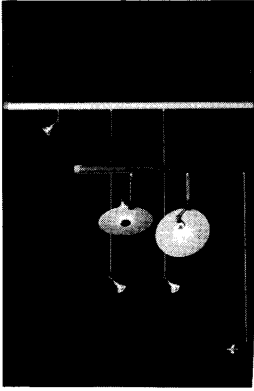
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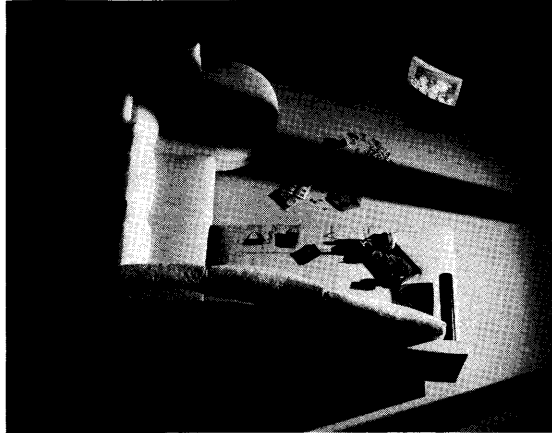


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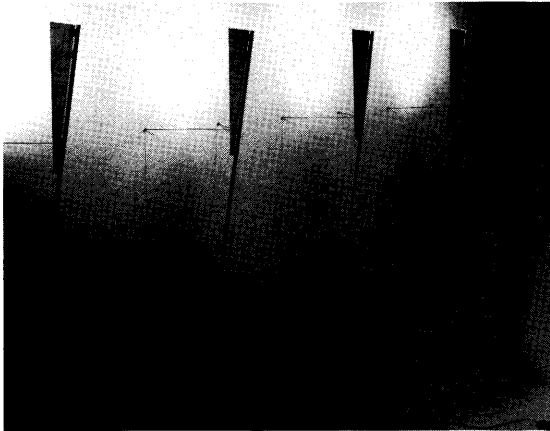
## Design Digest



Keep on track. Arteluce introduces the Expanded Line Network — a low-voltage track lighting system that uses a basic track with either 4 or 6 outlets for a variety of fixture heads. Tracks are cable suspended with power cords entering from one or both ends. Fixture heads shown (from left to right) are Lucy, Ra and Alma. All are U.L. listed. Tracks are 1.4 inch diameter with one or two 150 watt transformers. Finish options are white, red, blue or black.



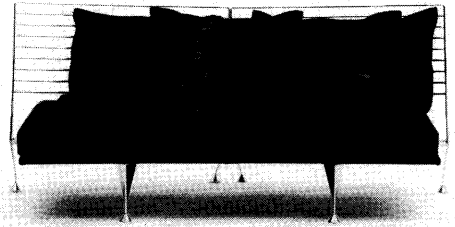
The Sity seating system is composed of a group of elements. At the heart of the system is a set of padded components to which other components, or end units, can be added. Another set of padded components can be grouped around this nucleus. A tremendous variety of shapes and arrangements are possible with the Sity seating system since components can be used singly or in groups. From B & B America through Herman Miller.



◀ The simplistic "Winged Victory" floor lamp series, designed by architect David Baird, is produced by the LaJolla, California firm Ziggurat. The black staff supports the metal housing for a dimmable 250 watt halogen bulb. Housing finish choices are untreated zinc, industrial lead over sheet steel, unacquered rusty steel (with varying levels of oxidation), and oxidized copper.

▼ Harmony between the iron and the feather. Paris designer, Pascal Mourgue has developed a series of award winning furniture for Vecta. Shown here, the Ikmisou sofa (1988 IBD bronze award), is composed of a curved open

framework of steel wire juxtaposed against the softness of seat cushions and loose pillows. Available in leather or customers own material with chrome, hammered pewter or thermoset frame.



## Iowa Architect

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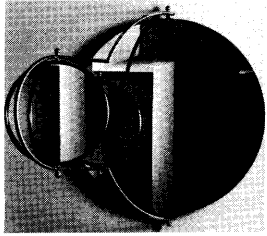
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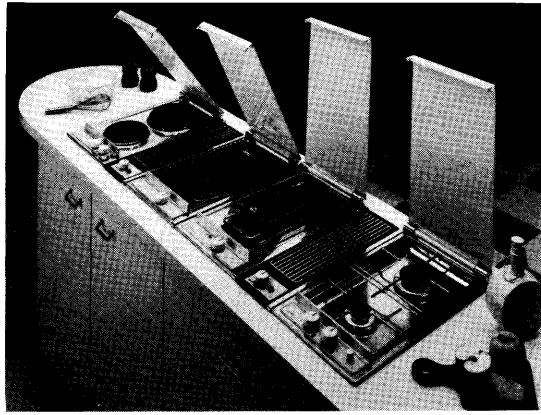
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▲ This classy wall mirror, designed by Rodney Kinsman, is composed of two circular elements. The double-sided, 11-inch diameter mirror has a magnifying glass on one side and may be rotated 360 degrees on its own axis or 180 degrees in relation to the 24 inch diameter fixed mirror. The tubular steel frame is offered by Bieffeplast in chrome, black or white.

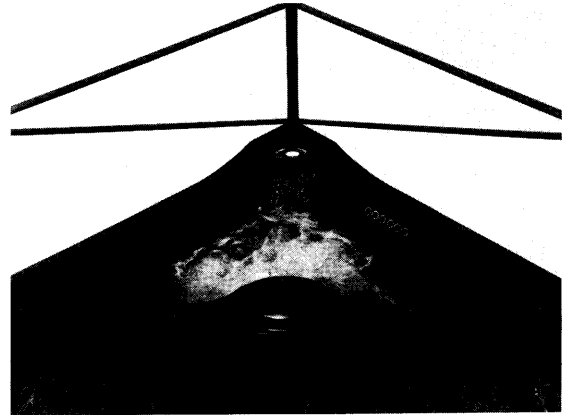
▼ Adia's functional utility can be modified in various ways by means of its backrest cushions, which can be arranged for resting, sleeping, recreational activity and also, in certain cases, for working. The various positions are obtained by the special system whereby the backrests (attached to cast-iron base supports) can be rotated 90 degrees and the back and headrests inclined. The service shelf is located on the top side and can also have an auxiliary, rotating shelf attached to the side of the bed. Upholstering is in leather or cloth slipcovers. From B & B America through Herman Miller.



◀ European design ethic abounds from Andi. Built of stainless steel, this modular cook top unit offers the choice of gas burners, electric hotplates, deep fryer, barbecue grill on a bed of volcanic rock, exhaust with filtered downdraft ventilators, and detachable covers. The Domino series units are available through most U.S. distributors and dealers.



▶ Watersports! The new fiore whirlpool from Jacuzzi is a contoured corner bath for two with cascading water, reflected lighting, and four fully adjustable jets. Options include dual fill spouts, lighted accessory area, hand-held shower, and vanity mirror. The front skirt panel is removable for servicing.



STEVE LOW

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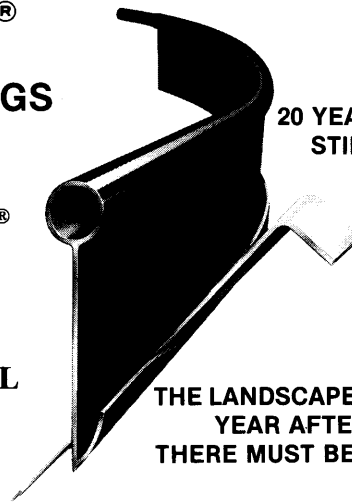
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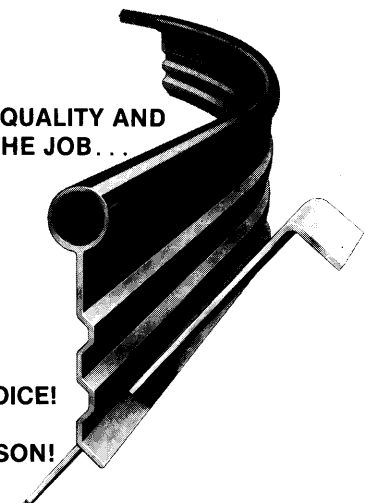
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