

# LOUISIANA ARCHITECT

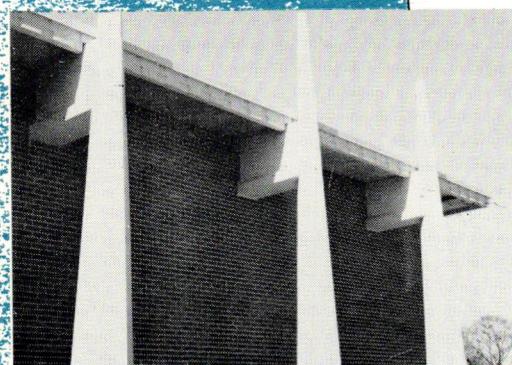
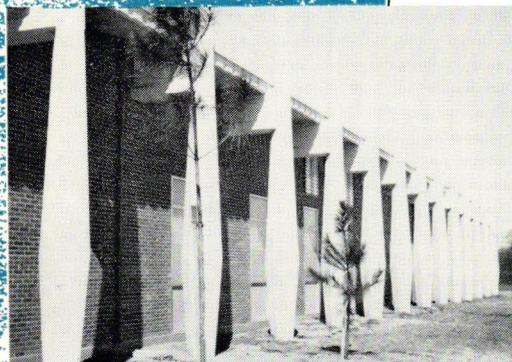
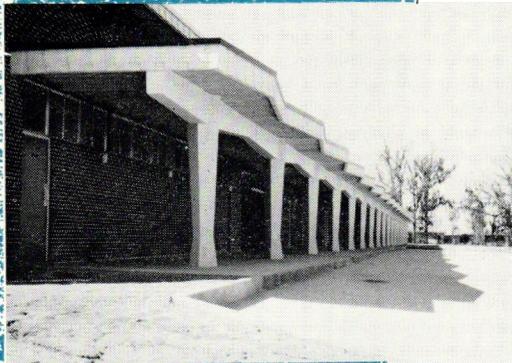
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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LOUISIANA ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION



Sharon Hills Elementary School,  
Baton Rouge, La. OWNER: East  
Baton Rouge Parish School Board.  
ARCHITECTS: LeBlanc & Deen.  
CONTRACTOR: Milton J. Womack.  
PRE-STRESSED CONCRETE  
by Louisiana Concrete Products,  
Inc. BASE BID, \$493,000.

## WHEN THE SCHOOL BELL RANG . . .

the workmen had long since departed from the scene. The job was done. Five separate buildings, including 18 classrooms, an administrative wing and a "cafetorium", supported by gracefully tapering pre-stressed concrete pillars and beams from Louisiana Concrete Products, Inc., stood as a tribute to architectural design and engineering. Complete date had been set at June, 1964. When the school bell rang, it was September, 1963! Louisiana Concrete is proud of the part it played in this exceptional time and money saving effort.

LOUISIANA CONCRETE PRODUCTS  
INC.

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5401 France Road  
2101 Common St.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Lake Charles, Louisiana

Exposed aggregate provides concrete surfaces of unusual beauty and variety. To emphasize the gleaming freshness, true colors and textures of the aggregate, architects, today, choose concrete made with white portland cement. It is also an excellent tinting base for mineral coloring pigments.

Reveal of precast concrete panels is largely determined by aggregate size. When panels are to be viewed relatively close, less reveal is needed. When panels are some distance from the main flow of pedestrian traffic, greater reveal is required for a rough textured look.

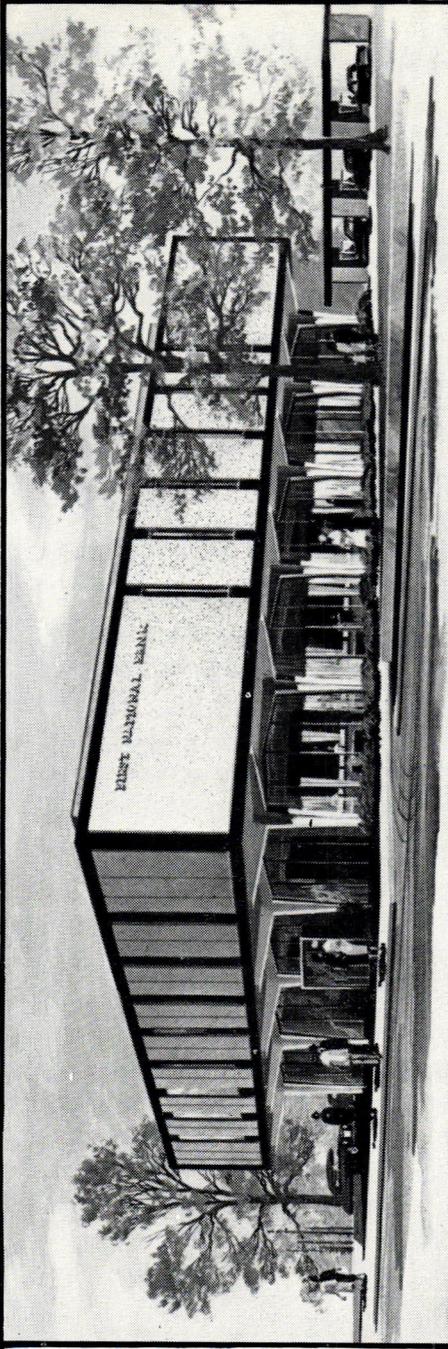
Polished panels of pastel colors tend to appear white when viewed from a distance due to the high reflectance of the surface.

Shown at right is a table which demonstrates the unlimited range of colors possible with commercial aggregates and white cement.

Write for additional free information (U.S. and Canada only.)

VISIBILITY SCALE

aggregate size	distance at which texture is visible
1/4" - 1/2"	20 - 30 feet
1/2" - 1"	30 - 75 feet
1" - 2"	75 - 125 feet
2" - 3"	125 - 175 feet



First National Bank, San Angelo, Texas. Architects: Abel B. Pierce and George Pierce, A.I.A., Architect & Planning Consultants, Houston. Structural Engineer: Walter P. Moore, Houston. Contractor: Templeton & Cannon, San Angelo

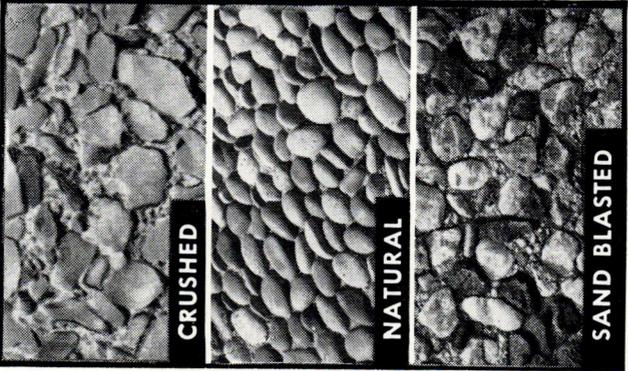


TABLE OF COMMON COMMERCIAL AGGREGATES

GLASS*	ARTIFICIAL	SIZE	USES	SOURCE**	COLOR RANGE
CERAMIC		1/4" - 1 1/2"	stained glass, walls, panels	Mich., N.J., Texas	brilliant and almost unlimited ranges
		1/4" - 1 1/2"	curtain wall panels, ornamental work	Ark., Ariz., Mich.	any color
SAND		fine to coarse	plain or sculptured panels	all areas	white-buff-yellow
PEBBLES		1/4" - 6"	tilt-up walls, panels, walkways	west & southeast	white-red-orange-buff-black
MARBLE		1/2" - 2"	curtain wall panels	all areas	white-red-buff-yellow-black
GRANITE	MINERALS	3/4" - 2 1/2"	tilt-up walls, panels, walkways	midwest & west	red-gray-buff-dark blue-black
QUARTZ		1/2" - 2"	curtain wall panels	east, west, south & midwest	white-pink-gray-clear

\*Reactivity: some glasses may react with alkalis in the cement to cause expansion. Consult glass manufacturer to determine if glass is reactive.

\*\*List of manufacturers available.

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# EXPERIENCING ARCHITECTURE --

## At the LSU Union Building

"There is only one true program of public relations (for the profession of architecture): better design and leadership by every architect in the vital affairs of his own community." So says William Lyman, AIA, in the current issue of the Journal of the American Institute of Architects. We wish to add our loud AMEN!

Not being an architect, this editor has traditionally refrained from passing judgment on architecture. However, public reaction to a Baton Rouge project, the LSU Student Union Building, merits some comment.

Not counting students, the new Union Building has been toured by an estimated 10,000 citizens as of this writing. The January crowds were so large, 45 overworked students served as guides to entice lingering, curious, appreciative crowds through the building in orderly fashion.

The structure was quite a boost to the Regional Architect-Press Seminar held at LSU in mid-January as reporters unbelievably watched the public parade through this piece of architecture. The interests of architecture are being served well by this practically unheard of phenomenon. All too infrequently does Mr. John Q. Public consciously experience architecture although he lives, works, plays, and worships in it.

I watched the crowds . . . they were impressed, entertained, and envious of the students who could hardly conceal their relish for their Union Building. The only negative criticism I could extract came from an architect who felt it was "too country clubbish." And may this layman ask, "Why not?"

We hope that presentation of this project in Louisiana Architect (see page 8) will make our 1,500 non-architect readers conscious of other interesting buildings around them. But more than that, we hope every LAA member will remember Mr. Lyman's provocative words. Certainly the Union Building proves him right . . . for how can the public ever relate with architecture if it doesn't notice it . . . if it doesn't experience it?—By MYRON TASSIN

**COVER:** A section of a drawing of the LSU Union Building which is featured in this issue.

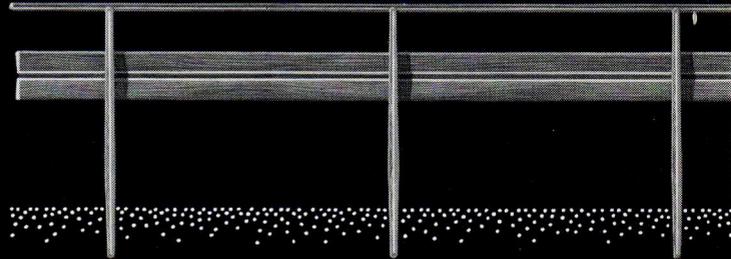
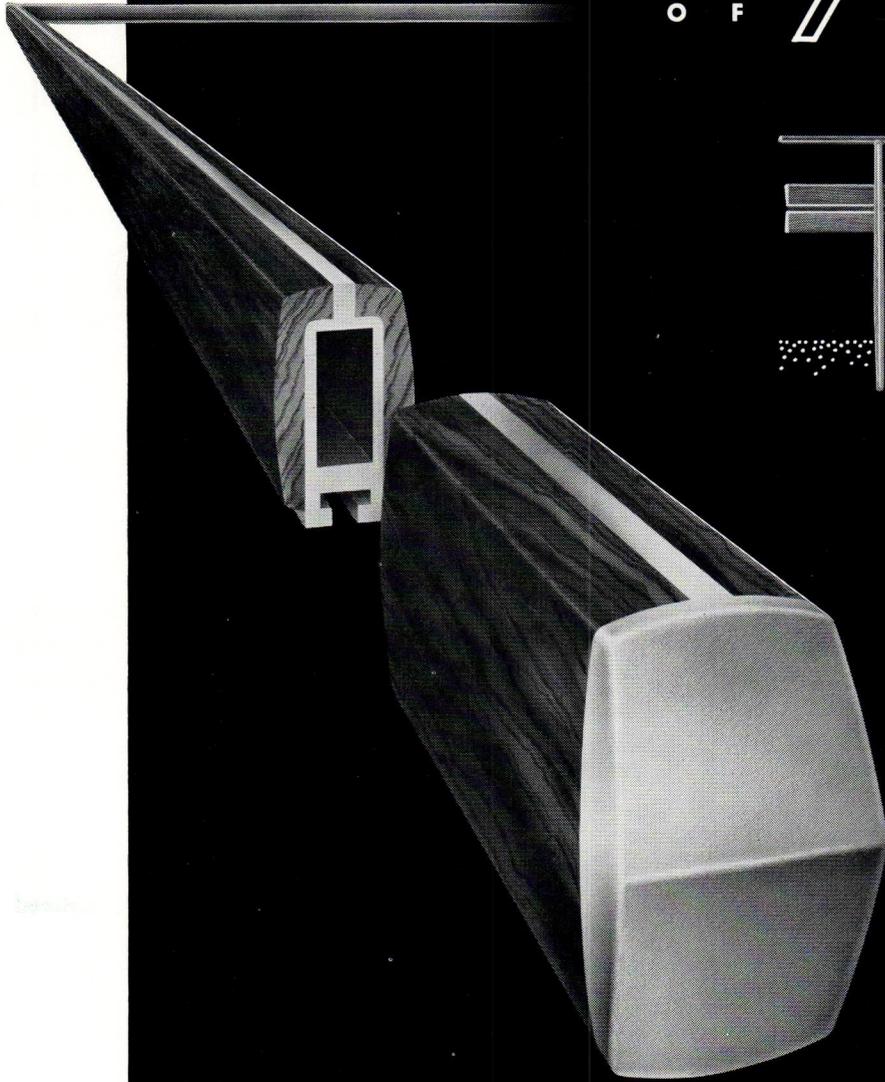
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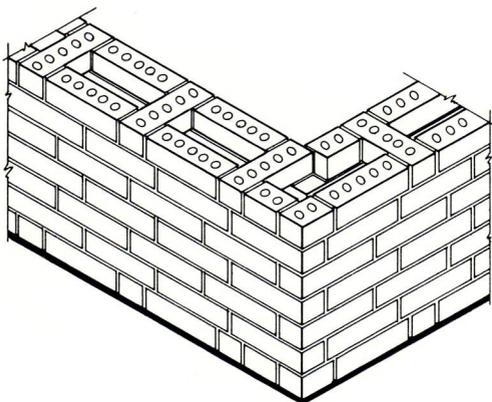
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## AT THE LAA LEGISLATIVE SCHEDULE

*As your chapter president has probably reported to you, the Association's legislative program will be divided into several bills this year. You will recall that the 1963 program was all in one bill. When the Governor vetoed the measure because he expressed disapproval of one point, the entire package died. With that sad memory yet very much alive, the LAA Board of Governors has voted unanimously to introduce the legislation via several bills.*

*By the time this reaches your desk, the State Board of Examiners will have conferred with LAA representatives to offer comments. The final draft will be in your hands as soon as feasible.*

*Immediately thereafter, begin discussing the program with every legislator in your chapter area. The veterans have forgotten most of the points contained therein while the large number of newcomers are completely unfamiliar with the content.*

*Begin lining up authors. Make sure your chapter names an active reliable legislative committee. Make up your mind NOW that only chapter effort can nourish this legislation into law.*

*Out of 35 Senators, 16 are newly elected. The House has 61 new Representatives.*

*Of the 30 Senators who voted for our bill in 1962, 12 are not returning. Of the four opposing our legislation, two are returning.*

*In the House, 33 of the 57 Representatives who supported H325, were not re-elected or chose not to run. Of the 35 opposing our bill, 12 are returning.*

*Wouldn't you agree that our work is cut out for us?—MYRON TASSIN*



LSU UNION BUILDING

The commission to design the LSU UNION was awarded in 1959, by the LSU Board of Supervisors, to three associated firms. The firms were Mathes and Bergman of New Orleans, Wilson & Sandifer of Shreveport, and John Desmond of Hammond.

The Board, through the Union Committee, made it clear that this was a most important building for LSU and that they wanted it to be the finest work of architecture of which the architects were capable, within the limitations of the budget and site. The architects stated their conviction that the building should be contemporary. In return the Board asked that it be allowed to critically review the conceptual sketches of each firm and participate in the design direction. This assignment and depth of interest was unique, particularly among state bodies in Louisiana, and was a continuous upgrading factor during the design state.

This was a very important commission, not only to LSU and to the architects but to the relationship of contemporary architecture to LSU. There were both contemporary and eclectic buildings still being built on the campus. This building, because of its size and prominence, could weight the balance one way or the other.

Of course the building was designed first and justified later, as most are. But in reviewing the designs we constantly asked ourselves what is a "good work of architecture." The qualities which seemed necessary and against which we criticized the design are listed below.

First, a good work of architecture must be FUNCTIONAL. FUNCTIONALISM, the basic stepstone of the modern movement in architecture is not enough in itself. But in our search for the additional values, functionalism should not be denied or compromised. In the case of the Union, perhaps the most important design step toward assuring this quality was in the organization of spaces, vertically and horizontally. Eventually this fell into a simple pattern with service areas on the first floor level, and secondary public access areas at mezzanine level. This further allowed the major spaces to look directly out toward the important views from the advantageous position of a raised platform—traditional to Louisiana.

The comprehensive program written by consultant Porter Butts and the exhaustive, frustrating critical reviews of all plans by Mr. Butts and Director Carl Maddox were no doubt the most important single factor assuring the quality of functionalism.

The second quality which we thought important was that it should be of its own time—contemporary is the word. There should be no doubt that the building was frankly and honestly of the middle 20th century. This second basic principle of modern architecture is of critical importance particularly on college campuses where the core is of the eclectic buildings of the early part of this century because of the lingering doubt in many minds. The question is still and was asked "what style." The long history of architecture never fails to display the folly of building buildings which attempt to reproduce those of another age—big brothers to the "modern antique." In designing the Union, it was decided to construct the building of reinforced concrete fully exposed—to attempt to make this structure in itself handsome enough so that it need not be covered and to make it the dominant element of the building. The concrete structure then with its three basic platforms and the space enclosing screens around them became the basic architectural design.

The third quality which seemed necessary was that the building be of its own place. This reawakening quality seemed to be the one most often neglected during the architecture of the past 20 years and probably its neglect most responsible for the sameness of modern architecture and for most of its failures functionally and aesthetically. The comprehensive word, as far as I know, has not been coined yet, but this meant to us that the LSU Union should be not only of Louisiana, but of the LSU campus and in particular uniquely of this special site. The site is

bounded by a beautiful grove of memorial live oak trees which were to be preserved. The general traditional concept of placing major rooms on a platform looking through these trees to further views has been mentioned. Special attention was given to see that the building formed a definite boundary of proper scale to the south side of the parade ground, the most important outdoor space on the campus.

This boundary, however, was to be not wall-like, but one which invited traffic in—was easy of access. Here again the relationship was traditional—repeating the easy traffic flow between house and garden of the typical Louisiana country house. Stairs to all levels at all sides and a generous pedestrian front door were provided.

Continuity between this building and the existing campus buildings was important. The platform level and balustrade of the administration buildings around the campanile were repeated as well as the cornice level of these buildings to continue this as a definitive line around the parade ground. The basic stucco color of the surrounding buildings was carried through the Union for compatibility and continuity with the older buildings. Here, however, factory assembled panels with an epoxy binder were used with LSU aggregate in lieu of the troublesome stucco.

The traditional and sensible manner of placing the wall line well back of the roof edge was re-used for practical climatic reasons. This probably accounts as much as anything for what has been called a "Louisiana" look.

The fourth and most elusive quality which the building should have was an appeal beyond the above practical and intellectual considerations through the intellect to the spirit of its users—in this case to heighten and lift the spirit—a sense of exhilaration. This was to be a place for student recreation—but still an educational building. Space and structure were the tools at hand. Color was left almost altogether to the furnishings and the outdoor backdrop.

Openness and freedom of space are used to create a feeling of exhilaration. Vertical movement is invited by the large open staircases. The concrete structure itself and the flared concrete columns continue this feeling of freedom and exhilarated movement. While they are an honest expression of a valid structural system, this system was chosen from others considered because it helped contribute the desired qualities to the building.

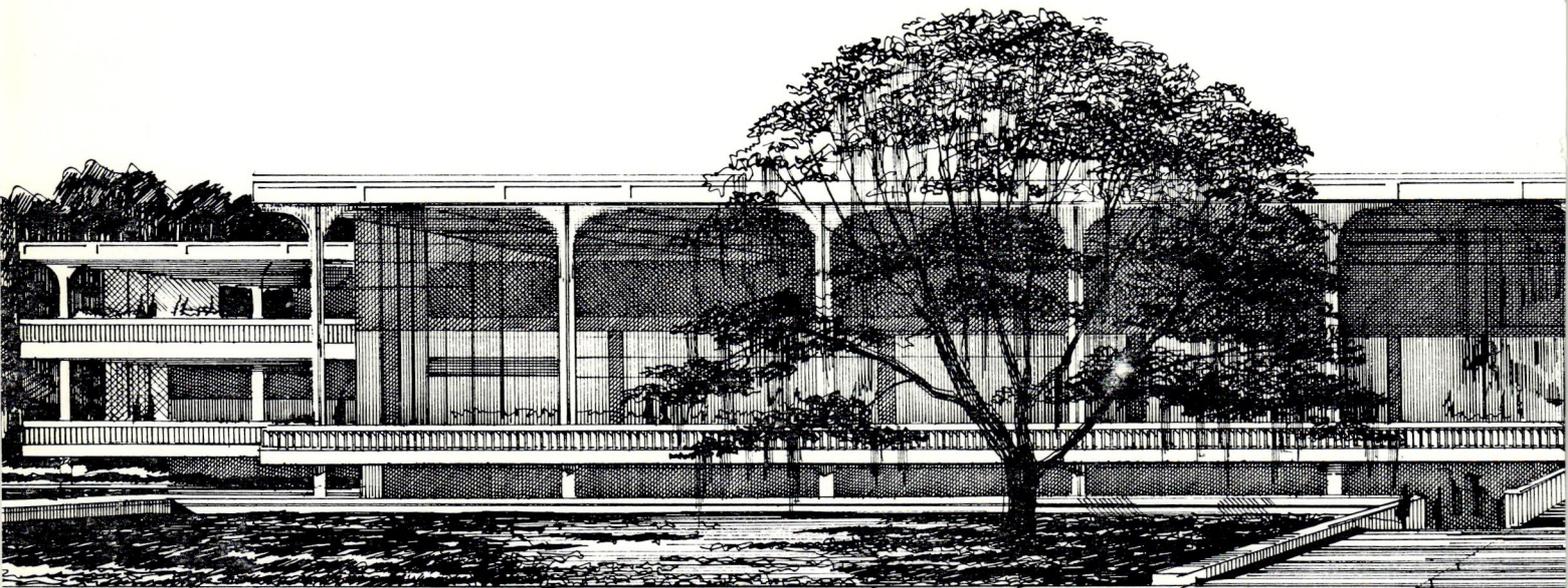
The architects were fortunate in having receptive, capable structural engineers—Alfred G. Rayner and his associates—to work with in developing this system, and a capable construction superintendent to build it—Mr. Kurt Knudsen of R. P. Farnsworth & Company, Inc.

As Eero Saarinen has pointed out, architecture has passed from a period of structural expression to one of expressive structure. Since the structure of a building will always be the main architectural element, the choice of the structure should, it seemed, be an important architectural decision.

Perhaps the most satisfying factor in the construction of the Union was the inclusion of the theater. While this unit had originally been in the program, it apparently fell outside the limits of the budget. The working program then called for its provision as a future unit. Both Mr. Butts and Mr. Maddox were convinced that with the theater and its cultural attractions the Union could indeed become a positive educational building by upgrading the students' concept of leisure. The building was budgeted at a figure of \$20/s.f., the average for various buildings throughout the country. It became apparent that there was a possibility of holding the unit cost below this enabling the theater to be built. Permission was received to give this a try. When bids were received the cost per square foot averaged \$16.00 which enabled the construction of the theater.

From a design point of view, the functional requirements became paramount in this unit. It is treated as a separate unit with the lobby acting as bridge to the Union.

JOHN DESMOND

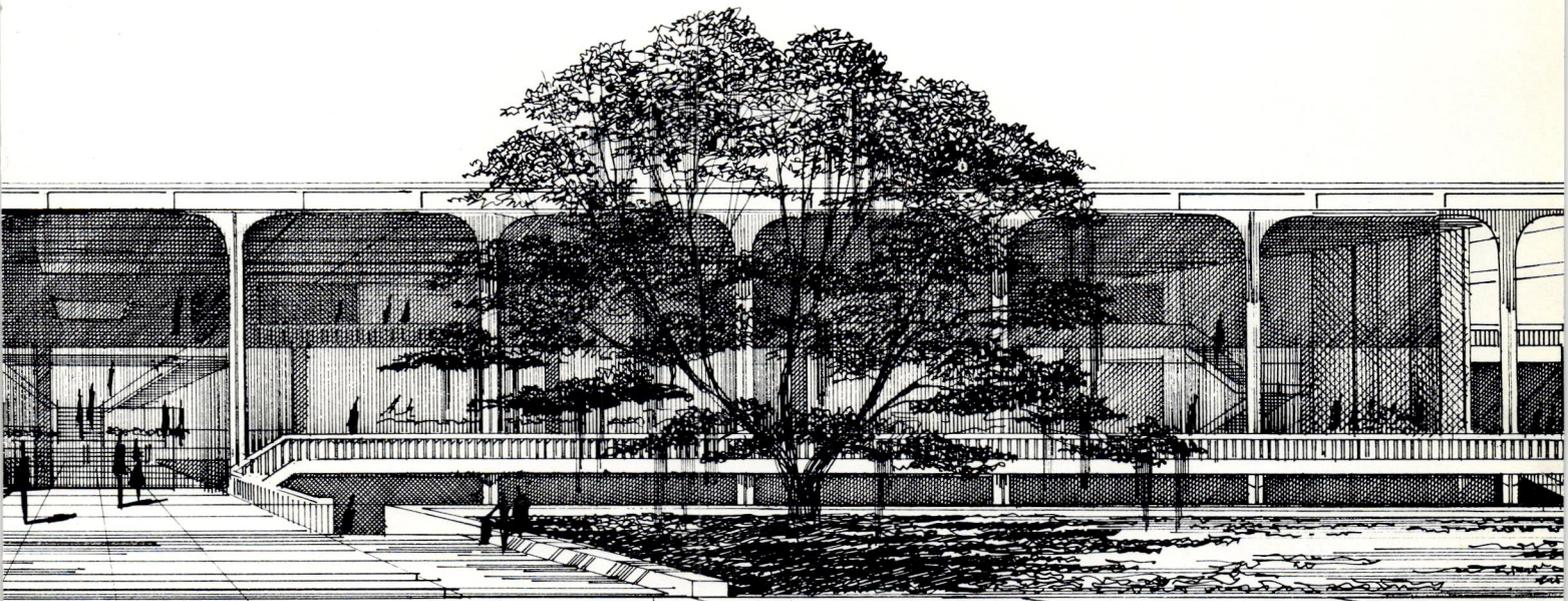


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LS

Mathes & Bergman, Wilson

Photo by Frank Lotz Miller  
Drawings by John Desmond



## UNION BUILDING

& Sandifer, Desmond & Miremont

ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS

● Porter Butts Planning Consultant

● Al Rayner Structural Engineer

● Chesson, Forrest & Holland Mechanical and Electrical Engineers

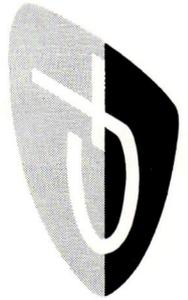
● Bolt, Beranek & Newman Acoustical Consultant



A VIEW OF THE THEATER . . .

STUDENT UNION BUILDING, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Architects: Mathes Bergman & Associates; Wilson and Sandifer; John J. Desmond. Contractor: R. P. Farnsworth. Photo by Dave Gleason.

PERSONALIZED PANELS FOR A VERY 'PARTICULAR PROJECT'

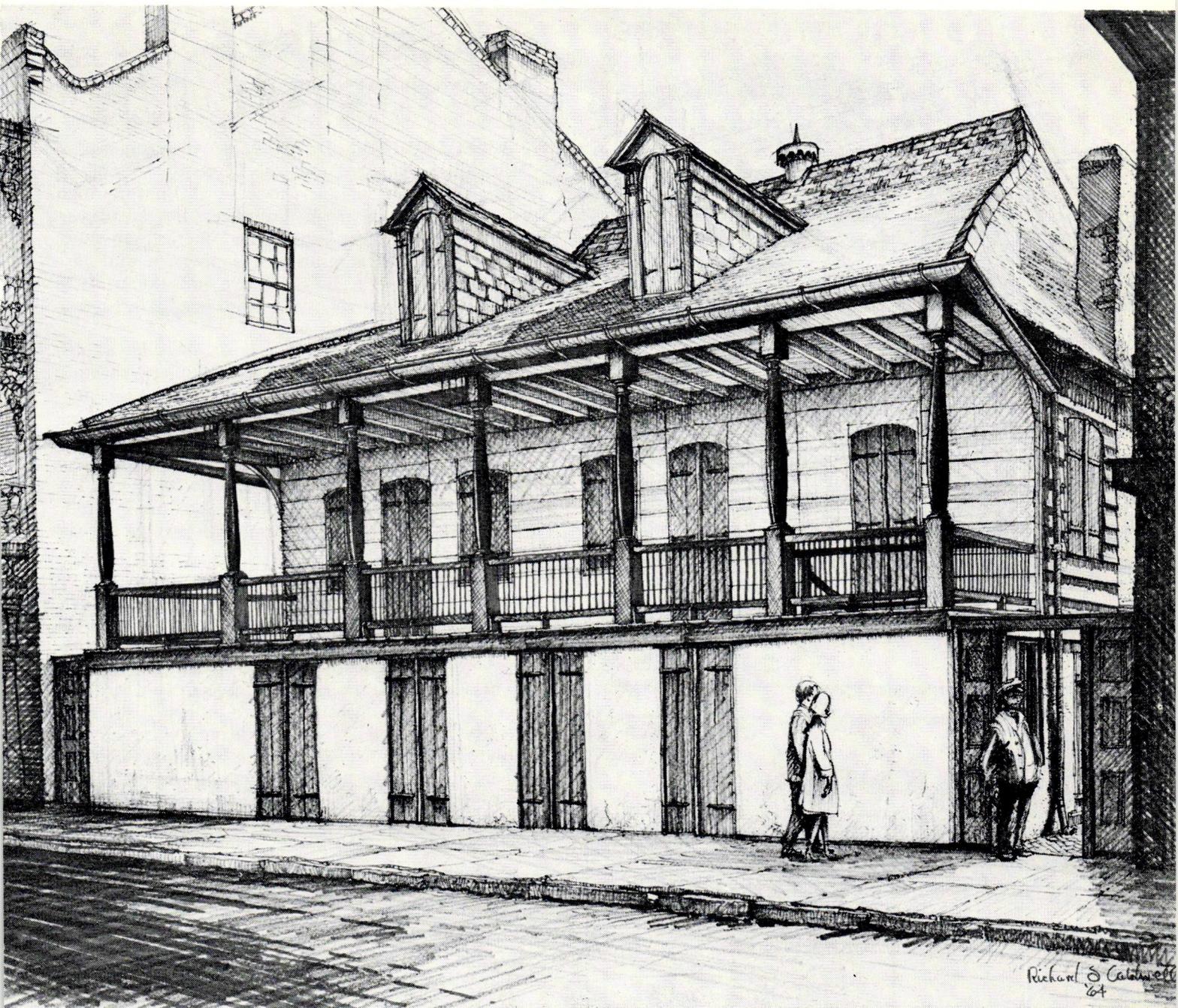


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MADAME JOHN'S LEGACY—600 Block of Dumaine Street in the French Quarter. The history of this colonial house dates back to 1728; but the house probably took its final form in 1788 after a fire which destroyed much of the French Quarter.

Houses of this period usually had an open gallery above and on the ground. But here the ground floor was completely enclosed and rented as warehouse space. . . . sometimes to smugglers.

Madame John's is a typical example of Louisiana architecture. It is raised one story off the ground by a brick foundation. Above there is wood frame construction with brick infilling called Briquette-Entre-Poteaux. The roof form is typical of the French Colonial houses.

This sketch by Richard S. Caldwell, a 1962 LSU architectural graduate, is the first of a 12-part series to be featured in Louisiana Architect. The drawings are part of a large collection to be presented in a forthcoming book illustrating the basic form of Louisiana architecture.

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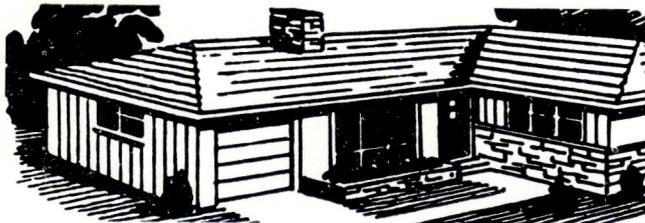
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## PEACE CORPS ARCHITECTS!

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The Government of Tunisia has requested that the Peace Corps send 40 architects and city planners to assist in Tunisia's high priority housing program. Volunteers for the project will enter training in June. The American Institute of Architects will administer the program and provide "on the spot" technical advice and support. The AIA also will assist the Volunteers in obtaining professional credit for their work.

Volunteer architects and city planners have been serving in Tunisia since the fall of 1962 and they are scheduled to return to the United States in the summer. Their significant contributions to the housing program caused the new request.

Proper housing is regarded by the Government of Tunisia as essential for national development. For this reason, one-quarter of Tunisia's total public investment over the next ten years has been earmarked for housing.

Tunisia's public housing program is carried out on three broad fronts. Eleven thousand low-cost units are scheduled for construction in 1964 under an urban and rural renewal program. Over one thousand additional units are scheduled for construction which the low-income wage earner will be able to buy on long-term, low-interest financing. Five hundred dwellings are also scheduled for middle-income wage earners. Public buildings, schools, markets and parks also are scheduled for construction. The new architects will be assigned to the Housing Section of the Secretariat of State for Public Works and Housing. They will be under the general supervision of Tunisian officials and Italian city planners under contract to the Tunisian government. If assigned to one of the six field districts, they will be either directly responsible to the Principal Engineer, who is the senior Secretariat official of the district, or an Italian city planner employed to direct the overall planning of the district.

The Peace Corps Volunteers will be provided with office space and all the necessary supplies, equipment and transportation needed for the job. They will be used on a wide range of projects: town and city planning and the design of all types of structures from development housing to multi-story public buildings.

Because of the amount and variety of the projects under way, individual assignments can be made with reference to the special training or experience that the Peace Corps Volunteer might have. The Chief Engineer of the Housing Section has stressed that in no case will an architect or city planner be assigned to a job for which he is not properly prepared. There is such a demand for a wide range of skills that useful employment is assured.

Training for Peace Corps Volunteers will include a technical refresher and courses in the language and culture of Tunisia.

# LSU Business Review Indicates

## Strong Gains in State Construction

### CONSTRUCTION

#### Building Permits

The value of building permits issued in the representative, reporting cities was up 70.3% in January, 1964, over the previous month. This is of particular significance in view of the fact that ordinarily a gain of only 17 or 18% is expected. The value for January, 1964, was \$18.8 million

Value of Building Permits

City	January 1964	December 1963	January 1963	Percent Change	
				Jan. 1964- Jan. 1963	Jan. 1964- Dec. 1963
Alexandria	\$ 969,875	\$ 234,500	\$ 424,550	+ 128.4	+ 313.6
Bastrop	14,500	66,500	15,900	- 8.8	- 78.2
Baton Rouge	2,839,449	2,262,151	2,815,708	+ 0.8	+ 25.5
Bogalusa	55,200	131,200	115,795	- 52.3	- 57.9
Bossier City	230,867	108,550	164,806	+ 40.1	+ 112.7
Bunkie	9,000	0	0	.....	.....
Covington	634,083	88,500	10,500	+ 5,938.9	+ 616.5
Crowley	112,250	477,542	64,380	+ 74.4	- 76.5
Denham Springs	15,550	24,350	48,225	- 67.8	- 36.1
Eunice	24,300	10,700	582,300	- 95.8	+ 127.1
Hammond	91,713	30,127	67,833	+ 35.2	+ 204.4
Houma	296,544	538,187	123,366	+ 140.4	- 44.9
Jennings	55,276	33,200	112,765	- 51.0	+ 66.5
Lafayette	1,010,488	27,500	2,279,581	- 55.7	+ 3,574.5
Lake Charles	1,978,625	431,537	283,397	+ 598.2	+ 358.5
Mansfield	0	0	49,000	- 100.0	.....
Monroe	458,920	409,423	2,071,150	- 77.8	+ 12.1
Natchitoches	188,811	11,310	80,415	+ 134.8	+ 1,569.4
New Iberia	131,475	163,250	53,600	+ 145.3	- 19.5
New Orleans	8,048,201	4,774,110	5,477,062	+ 46.9	+ 68.6
Oakdale	3,500	0	480	+ 629.2	.....
Opelousas	376,836	61,863	87,100	+ 332.6	+ 509.1
Pineville	25,000	8,600	19,044	+ 31.3	+ 190.7
Ruston	311,831	107,050	38,500	+ 710.0	+ 191.3
Shreveport	910,395	1,014,301	1,051,865	- 13.4	- 10.2
Thibodaux	3,300	17,000	84,450	- 96.1	- 80.6
Welsh	0	7,613	0	.....	- 100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,795,989</b>	<b>\$11,039,064</b>	<b>\$16,121,772</b>	<b>+ 16.6</b>	<b>+ 70.3</b>

Indexes of Value of Building Permits  
(average month 1957-59=100)

City	Jan. 1964	Dec. 1963	Nov. 1963	Oct. 1963	Jan. 1963	Dec. 1962
Alexandria	334.9	81.0	74.2	71.6	146.6	68.5
Baton Rouge	69.9	55.7	63.2	81.3	69.3	57.1
Houma	215.5	391.1	92.2	55.9	89.6	35.9
Lafayette	183.6	5.0	82.6	110.6	414.1	132.1
Lake Charles	133.4	29.1	15.7	48.6	19.1	26.3
Mansfield	0.0	0.0	73.0	401.5	255.5	0.0
Monroe	89.2	79.6	214.7	288.6	402.7	38.5
New Iberia	68.2	84.7	30.5	41.7	27.8	48.6
New Orleans	121.9	72.3	96.5	436.9	83.0	84.1
Shreveport	39.9	44.4	67.4	115.1	46.1	44.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>103.2</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>235.7</b>	<b>90.7</b>	<b>65.3</b>

which was 16.6% ahead of the \$16.1 million in January, 1963.

The index of value of building permits stood at 103.2 in January, 1964, compared with only 61.1 in the previous month, and 90.7 in January, 1963.

#### Construction Contracts

The total value of construction contracts awarded in Louisiana in December, 1963, was \$104.0 million. This was an increase of 125% over the \$46.2 million in the same month last year. The total for the year 1963 was 42.5% ahead of the previous year. It is interesting to note that the largest percentage gain for the month of December was in the nonresidential sector, while the largest gain for the year was in public works and utilities contracts.

Value of Construction Contracts Awarded in Louisiana  
(in thousands of dollars)

Source: Dodge Statistical Research Service

Type of Contract	December			January-December		
	1963	1962	Percent Change	1963	1962	Percent Change
Residential*	19,519	13,639	+ 43.1	344,422	271,162	+ 27.0
Nonresidential**	30,067	6,862	+ 338.2	216,579	192,929	+ 12.3
Public works and utilities	54,401	25,732	+ 111.4	377,909	194,836	+ 94.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>103,987</b>	<b>46,233</b>	<b>+ 124.9</b>	<b>938,910</b>	<b>658,927</b>	<b>+ 42.5</b>

\*Includes apartments, hotels, and dormitories; one- and two-family dwellings; and other residential buildings.

\*\*Includes commercial, manufacturing, educational, and other nonresidential buildings.

# LEGAL DIGEST

By ALVIN RUBIN

*LAA Legal Counsel*

Cases continue to reach the courts, in apparently increasing numbers, in which architects are sued by injured third persons who claim that their injury resulted from negligence of the architect in designing some component of a building. In *Montijo v. Swift*, 33 Cal. (1963), a passenger in a bus depot fell down on a staircase. She sued the bus company and the architect, contending that her fall was caused by the negligence of the architect in designing the stairway.

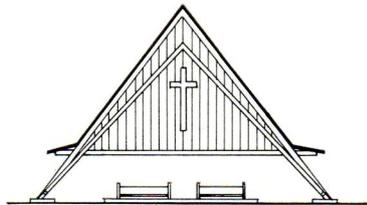
About two years before the accident, the architect had been en-

gaged to design a proposed renovation of the stairway. The existing stairs had handrails. The architect's plans called for the original handrails to be removed, the adjacent walls to be tiled, and stairs of a different material to be constructed. The original handrails were then reinstalled. They did not extend to the bottom of the stairs, but ended two steps from the bottom.

The plaintiff contended that the failure to extend the handrails to the edge of the bottom step and

the angle at which the wall tile had been set created a dangerous condition. She claimed that the end of the rail indicated the end of the stairs to the casual user and that this was a hazardous condition from which her fall resulted.

The court held that the evidence was sufficient to support a finding by a jury that the design of the staircase was faulty and that this caused the plaintiff's injury. Since the lower court had refused to hold the architect liable, the appellate court ordered a new trial.



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## Congratulations to Earl Mathes

Earl Mathes, secretary of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, and a member of the State Board of Architectural Examiners, has been elected president of

the State Board. Mr. D. Curtis Smith is stepping down as President of that body.

Mathes is a principal in the New Orleans firm of Mathes & Bergman.

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#### ATTENTION PLEASE

Using a felt-tipped pen, Richard Caldwell, a 1962 architectural graduate of LSU, is doing sketches for a book illustrating the basic form of Louisiana architecture. It is hoped that this book will preserve for posterity the excellence of true Louisiana residential form.

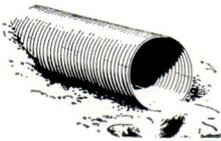
This magazine will present one of Caldwell's sketches every month for the next 12 issues.

Since wood is prominent in the old homes to be published, the Louisiana Wood Council is helping to make it possible for Caldwell to tour the state in his quest for good examples.

Caldwell's travels have taken him as far as Japan where he spent a summer sketching the intricate oriental architecture.

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# A REPORTER SPEAKS OUT

Editor's Note: Philip Morris, one of the reporters who attended the Regional Press Seminar at LSU in January, takes issue with Matthew Rockwell, who served as a panelist and speaker. Rockwell's address was presented in the February issue.

Dear (editor) Myron:

I was particularly happy to receive the LA edition with Matthew Rockwell's Ugliness is Necessary address in it since I had missed the presentation at the recent press-architect conference.

The point about the distinct need for lively, direct and even assuming criticism over and above urban objective reporting was an important one—possibly a lever, too.

But I believe Mr. Rockwell missed the point when, during the general discussion on relativity in ugliness, he said, "In our pluralistic society, for us to say Williamsburg taste is better than juke box taste is undemocratic and authoritarian—and could in the end be stultifying."

Certainly with that limited a choice—Williamsburg or juke box—the result would *have* to be stultifying! But it has been my impression from the architects I know that the choice they want the public to be making is not between *styles*, but between *forms* based upon specific need, material, environment and at most a sense (not a copy) of historical work.

Rockwell's major point against patent beauty is well taken, but to toss it up to utter subjectivity and to accuse formal artists and architects of *beaux arts* sensibilities, "looking for that kind of

beauty to which he has been educated and which he feels intuitively," is (at this time when the country is just on the verge of listening to her artists for the first time) a wanton statement.

I have just finished reading an essay on the eye by William James, and taking sensibility on the basic terms that Mr. Rockwell would like—senses first—James lays the foundation for formal art on the physical functioning of the eye itself.

"The nervous visual apparatus is easily fatigued. Usually we do not observe this because its restoration is also rapid, and in ordinary life our eyes, when open, are never at rest; we move them to and fro, so that parts of the retina receive light alternately from brighter and darker objects, and are *alternately excited and rested*." William James, *Psychology*.

James also mentions the effect of near and far sighted objects upon the eye muscle that operates focus, thus underlining (though his brother, not he, was the artist) that the classic principles of bulk-and-detail, light-and-dark, uniformity-and-contrast are not based on beaux arts prejudice but physical needs of man.

The upshot is that even if (as our collage artists show us) there is charm and vitality in concen-

trated proliferation, the bulk of the city must provide the emphatic background of simplicity that the gallery gives the collage art; and, like the frame, there must be some integrating factors in a city to contain the "charming confusion."

It is conspicuous in Mr. Rockwell's example of the filling station corner in the country that contrast alone gave him the perspective for his observation — he "came suddenly" to the place. No city commuter ever comes suddenly to anything except a stoplight, possibly. In James' explanation, his eye had been rested for the new focus, but the urban clutter we see daily is monofocus and its petty democratic variety provides, not exciting contrast, but a dull blur.

So while I agree with Mr. Rockwell that the biologic and sociologic needs of teen-agers must be met with drive-ins, I must insist that there are other Americans who sometimes tire of automobiles and who see, as well as eat.

And that there was once Jeffersonian democracy, before Jackson; we can educate, as well as emote, in the arts; we can be lively *and* civilized without palming off our stimulating murder-rate or chaotic cities as democratic virtue.

Thank you for your patience,

Phil Morris  
*The Daily Oklahoman*  
Oklahoma City

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