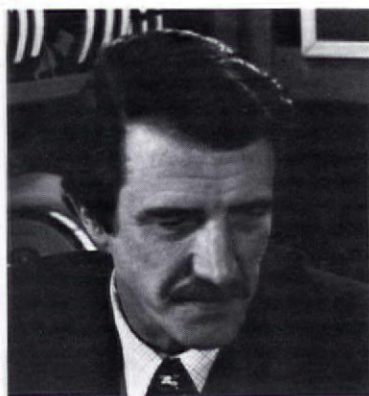
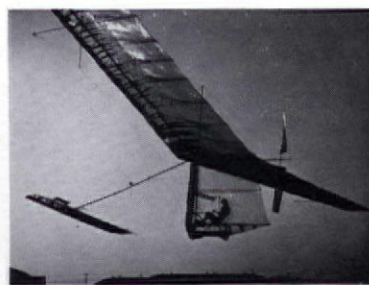


PETER LISSAMAN ON FEBRUARY 13



"Less is Best: The Gossamer Condor as an example of unusual design" is the title of a talk by Peter Lissaman, principal aerodynamicist-theoretician for the world-renowned Gossamer Condor, an aircraft flown solely by human power, at this month's SCC/AIA meeting on February 13. The lecture, illustrated with slides and motion pictures, will begin at 8 p.m. in the Bing Theater at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The program is free of charge and the public is cordially invited to attend.

Lissaman will discuss the genesis and design philosophy of the Gossamer Condor, tracing its development from the earliest stages, through flight testing of the various models, to the 1977 flight which won the coveted Kremer Prize, established in 1959 by the Royal Aeronautical Society in London for the first man-powered flight under rigorously defined test conditions. Last



The Gossamer Condor (photo: Aero Vironment, Inc.)

year, the aircraft was installed in the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

With a 96-foot wing span and a weight of only 70 pounds, the wire-braced, slow-flying craft can stay aloft in calm air using only one-third horsepower. The Gossamer Condor has been described as "beautiful, silent, doesn't pollute, is completely safe, and is fun to fly.... The development effort had an exciting, pioneering flavor.... And there is a special, wryly perverse charm in that human-power flight has no discernable practical application."

Lissaman has worked widely as a wing aerodynamicist and structural designer and has consulted on race car aerodynamics and marine design. In addition, he currently heads a research project in wind energy programs under a grant from ERDA and NSF. South Africa-born Lissaman holds degrees from Natal University, Cambridge University, and Cal Tech. He is vice-president of AeroVironment, Inc., in Pasadena.

AN ARCHITECTURAL PROFILE OF HOLLYWOOD BLVD.

Last year, an architectural and historical survey of Hollywood was launched, the first such effort in the City of Los Angeles. Barbara Giella, architectural historian and coordinator of the survey during 1978, files this report on one phase of the work program.

After many weeks of arduous research, the architectural and historical survey of Hollywood Boulevard, being conducted for the Hollywood Revitalization Committee, Inc. has unearthed much fascinating information. Part of the state-sponsored History Resources Inventory, the Boulevard survey targeted a number of buildings for research on the basis of their obvious architectural significance.

In the seventy-five years during which the Boulevard has developed from the late-Victorian Janes house (1903), a vestige of the pre-commercial phase, to the late modernist commercial high-rises, as much building and rebuilding activity has occurred as used to happen over thousands of years in the Ancient World.

For example, brick buildings from the 1910s designed in Mediterranean style were regularly remodeled in the '20s to Spanish Colonial Revival style, later in the '30s to either Art Deco or the Moderne or a combination of the two, and then finally, in the '60s or '70s to commercial vernaculars.

Another scenario might involve a 1910s two-story brick building remodeled in Art Deco style, to which was added an office tower and another two-story wing at different times, all designed to create a unified stylistic ensemble. This kind of situation or its opposite, one in which a single building appears to be a number of smaller ones, makes it extraordinarily difficult at times to determine where a structure began and ended.

Some of the most architecturally significant buildings in the business core were, in earlier incarnations, rather mundane. S. Charles Lee's Max Factor Make-Up Salon is the 1935 remodeling of a 1915 storage warehouse which itself is a remodeling of a still earlier structure. Today, the building, in its Art Deco form, is of great architectural significance.

Every major architect in Los Angeles worked on the Boulevard during the '20s and '30s, the main period of its



Max Factor Building (photo: Bob Barnett).

development. They include Parkinson and Parkinson; Walker and Eisen; Wurdeman and Becket; John C. Austin; Morgan, Walls and Clements; Pereira; Meyer and Holler; Alfred Lansburgh; and S. Charles Lee, the last three being major movie palace architects.

Even Schindler and Neutra made their contribution in Sardi's and the Carl Laemmle Building, both long since remodeled out of existence. Local architects such as Frank Meline and Gogerty and Weyl were responsible for major buildings near or on the Boulevard such as the Garden Court Apartments and the Brown Derby. Thus every architectural style represented in Los Angeles at large could be found in the microcosm which is Hollywood.

Historically the Boulevard is of enormous significance. In the early pastoral days Hollywood was

comparable to tight-laced, prosperous Pasadena. In the 1910s the city was utilized as a giant outdoor stage set by the recently arrived film makers, soon becoming the identified home of the motion picture industry. Immense pressure for commercial development led to the rezoning of the Boulevard. In the '20s and '30s Hollywood was a fashionable commercial center, second only to downtown Los Angeles. Movie stars and writers frequented Hollywood's many establishments; the Boulevard became known as the "Fifth Avenue of the West," and the area from Argyle to La Brea was called the "Skyscraper Mile." The rest is history.

Barbara Giella

SCHINDLER HOUSE GRANT AWARDED

The State Office of Historic Preservation has allocated a \$50,000 matching grant to the Friends of the Schindler House for the acquisition of the 1921 R.M. Schindler House in West Hollywood. The Schindler House [see L.A. ARCHITECT, September 1978] was among only sixteen properties in California selected for funding this year under the National Historic Preservation Grants Program for sites on the National Register of Historic Places. A campaign is being launched to raise money for the match.

The Friends of the Schindler House plan to own, restore and operate the building and gardens as an architectural center for the benefit of the public and the architectural community. Plans include public tours, residence for visiting faculty from local architectural schools, facilities for seminars and professional meetings, and a series of programs to focus on the architecture of R.M. Schindler and related topics.

The Friends anticipate that the House will begin operation by the spring of this year. Already underway are plans for a month-long lecture series in May on the architecture of R.M. Schindler. In June, a weekend house tour of Schindler-designed residences, predominantly in the Silver Lake area, is planned.

Information on Friends of the Schindler House membership may be obtained by writing to FOSH, 833 N. Kings Road, Los Angeles 90069.

Kathryn Smith

ARCHITECTURE IN THE NEW CHINA



Hall of Supreme Harmony, Palace Museum, Peking (photos: Sydney Brisker).

Sydney H. Brisker, AIA, recently spent three weeks in the People's Republic of China as one of a twenty-member delegation of American architects, engineers, and construction specialists who were invited by the Architectural Society of China to participate in a series of seminars and meetings covering a variety of design and construction topics. Brisker is on the faculty at SCI-ARC.

"Architecture obviously reflects what a society holds important... [In capitalist societies], buildings expressing the public realm receive the cutbacks. Buildings representing consumer values generate the investment. As Galbraith says of capitalism, it results in private wealth and public squalor."

Charles Jencks, in *The Language of Modern Architecture*

"With regard to advanced modern and traditional technique we have adopted the principle of 'making the past serve the present and foreign things serve China.'"

Ho Kuang-Tsien, Acting President, Architectural Society of China

The essence of contemporary architecture and planning in China is contained in both of the above statements. China is a socialist country, committed to the welfare of all its people. There is no private wealth in China, nor is there any public squalor. Top priority is given to housing, factories, and public works. From these contemporary social goals, combined with a heritage of four thousand years of continuous culture, Chinese architects take their lead.

A World View

The first thing an observer notes about the appearance of cities in China is their park-like quality; the streets, which are extremely clean, are usually lined with trees, sometimes so densely as to obscure the adjacent buildings.

Upon closer examination of the architecture — both old and new — as well as the street patterns, one is struck by their symmetrical aspects. The



Mao Memorial, T'ien An Men Square, Peking.

principle of symmetry, it turns out, is rooted in the ancient Chinese concept of the world itself. The Chinese word for China is "Zhonghua," or "middle country," the country located at the center of the entire world. The character for "Zhong" ("middle") is a square with a vertical stroke bisecting it exactly.

The traditional Chinese plan is the rectangular compound with buildings or walls defining the four sides of the quadrangle. The most notable example of this formal planning is the original plan of the city of Peking, completed in 1420 by the Ming emperor, and today still evidenced in the plan of the post-Liberation T'ien An Men Square.

To some Western architects, this formal symmetry might seem conservative, but this conservatism, to the Chinese, has a positive connotation: observing tradition while adapting to the present.

Traditional Elements

The traditional construction of palaces, temples, and other large structures of cultural significance consisted of wood columns and a very complex roof structure of beams, struts, purlins, and brackets which permitted greater clear spans than normally available with typical column and beam construction. There were no bearing walls in these structures, thereby permitting greater design flexibility. Color was used extensively, with the Chinese red of the temples and palaces, the colored roof tiles, and the multi-colored painted eaves, ceilings, and roof structures. Smaller buildings — tombs, pagodas, some temples, and houses — did use conventional brick or stone bearing wall construction.

The double-roof construction which identifies much of traditional Chinese palace architecture can be seen in the imperial palaces in the Palace Museum, as well as in the T'ien An Men (The Gate of Heavenly Peace) which appears on the national emblem of the new China.

(continued on next page)

SCC/AIA HOUSING CONFERENCE SET FOR MARCH 24

Final planning is underway for a Chapter-sponsored conference entitled "The Housing Crisis," to be held on Saturday, March 24. The purpose of the day-long conference is to take a comprehensive cross-sectional view of the state of housing in general with a focus on present and proposed solutions in Southern California.

Background

Proposed HUD budget cuts could reduce partially and fully subsidized public housing units by 13% for 1980. Due to disproportionately rising housing costs, less than 25% of the population can afford to purchase new housing in any form (down from 50% in 1970). The proportionally decreased housing stock contributes further to inflation in sales and rentals, which further exacerbates the shortage. These factors, plus the continuing shortage of land, are accelerating the trend toward higher density solutions to the ownership stock, such as townhouses and condominiums. The unsolved problems of housing for the disadvantaged groups, most of whom are also minorities, has been upstaged by questions of energy, inflation, and other national problems. Are adequate measures being taken to address our housing problems? What are some of the directions in the design, financing, and construction of housing that might be pursued?

The Conference

As presently planned, conference speakers and panelists will represent designers, users, and participants in the delivery systems of housing. The major addresses will be made by City, State, and HUD officials.

The morning session will feature ten-minute presentations by twelve California architects of projects representing prototypes in both private and public sector multi-family solutions by for-profit and non-profit developers.

The afternoon session will consist of three simultaneous panels, with presentations by for-profit and non-profit developers, user groups, market researchers, housing and redevelopment officials, and financiers. Moderated panel discussions will follow between the representatives of the delivery systems and the architects who participated in the morning presentations.

Conference details and schedules will appear in next month's L.A. ARCHITECT. The conference coordinating committee includes Marvin Berman, James Pulliam, Roger Sherwood, and Bernard Zimmerman.

John Fisher, AIA
Conference Coordinator

FEEDBACK

"...Architectural Archives of UCSB..."

We would be most appreciative if L.A. ARCHITECT could bring to the attention of its readers that the Architectural Archives of the University of California, Santa Barbara is actively selecting additions to its distinguished collections. The Archives were founded seventeen years ago, and since then over 100,000 drawings have been added to the collection.

Among the architects and architectural firms represented in the collection — from extensive to more fragmentary holdings — are: Gregory Ain, Bakewell & Brown, John Byers, Harvey P. Clark, Roland Coate, Sr., Myron H. Church (1905-1920), Stiles O. Clements (Morgan, Walls & Clements), James Osborne Craig (active 1916-1922), J.R. Davidson, Irving Gill, Louis Gill, Bertram G. Goodhue, Harwell Hamilton Harris, Hibbard & Gerity, Myron Hunt (Hunt & Grey; Hunt & Chambers), Reginald D. Johnson (Johnson, Kaufman & Coate), H. Roy Kelley, Paul Laszlo, Keith Lockhard (Lockhard & Sauter).

Also Eric Mendelsohn, Charles W. Moore (Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, Whitaker), Edla Muir, Wallace Neff, Richard J. Neutra, Thomas Nixon, R.H.

(continued on next page)

FEBRUARY 1979

Volume 5, Number 2

Inside:

Special L.A. ARCHITECT insert, Downtown L.A., Part 1, edited by Anne Luise Buerger.
The Total Energy House, by Marvin Malecha and Larry Loh.

Calendar:

February 13: Peter Lissaman, Chapter program, 8 p.m., Bing Theater, LACMA.

March 13: Downtown U.S.A., with Ari Sekora and Raquel Ramati, Chapter program.

March 24: All-day SCC/AIA Housing Conference.

DOWNTOWN L.A.



In looking at Los Angeles' downtown, through interviews and specially written and contributed articles by members of the architectural, planning, business and political professions, *L.A. ARCHITECT* hopes to promote dialogue about, and awareness and enjoyment of, a unique and contradictory city that some believe has no authentic center.

"Yes, there really is a downtown Los Angeles," advise Robert Winter and David Gebhard in their *Guide to the Architecture of Los Angeles and Southern California* (1977), "although we continue to this day to wonder why."

The classic downtown put-down is Reyner Banham's commentary in his 1971 *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* ("the city of unfocused ubiquity"): "In [no other city] does one have quite such a strong feeling that this is where the action cannot possibly be.... The new buildings are, frankly, a gutless-looking collection, but not gracious with it..."

A randomly interviewed celebrant at last October's Civic Center street fair would probably agree:

"How often do you come here?"

"As seldom as possible. It's depressing to me. The trash, the uncleanness.

It upsets my state of mind."

An investor interviewed in the Pershing Square area was more sanguine: "This place is taking off. The Biltmore is the keystone. Spring Street will be next. There's a shortage of office space and rents in the new buildings will be sky high. We're expecting a 24-hour downtown." What about the Los Angeles spirit that craves privacy, car and low-density living? "That's the first generation. The second generation can't take the freeways any more, and they'll be coming back here to live."

When planner Kevin Lynch analyzed perceptions of downtown Los Angeles in his *Image of the City* (1960), he found it "far from the visual chaos of Jersey City" but "difficult to organize and comprehend as a whole." Today, several highrises and hotels later, it is still without the identifiable image Lynch admires. Its pattern derives rather from contrasts, a play of conflicting political, social and economic influences and values in neighborhoods varying from affluent new west to decaying east sides [see Downtown Geography, back page]. Gebhard, Winter and others, have catalogued among the most beautiful old (vintage 1893-1929) interior spaces [see Guide

to Downtown Architecture], and critics have noted some of the most disastrous new streetscapes. There are other contrasts:

- 225,000 are employed downtown, the largest job concentration in L.A.
- Of a total population of 15,000 (excluding Chinatown), 20 per cent are elderly. 7,000 to 10,000 live in Skid Row.
- Since 1967, over 26 million square feet of offices have been built; 3 million are under way. There are 5,700 first-class hotel rooms.
- Rates quoted for new office space are up to \$16 per square foot per year, ranking with the highest in the city and Beverly Hills.
- The Civic Center employs 45,000, the largest public job center outside of Washington, D.C.
- Since 1970, seven major corporations have moved out.
- Two-thirds of downtown's surface area is given to cars.
- Crime rates are highest in the city.

This month architects and planners directly involved in the complex planning process view downtown redevelopment.

Anne Luise Buerger

COMING THIS SPRING Part 2: Downtown Issues

Architectural Quality

"The Bunker Hill experiment is a genetic restructuring which has produced for us our first urban clone."

— Ronald Altoon, AIA

Social Policy Planning

"There is a seeming contradiction: to lessen Skid Row and diminish its area, we must first recognize and support it."

— Susan Grinel, Community Redevelopment Agency.

Transportation

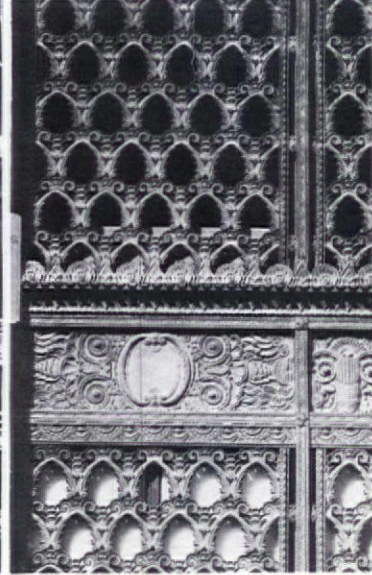
The people mover is "a glorified Toonerville Trolley" and will "severely impact" aesthetics downtown.

— L.A. City Councilman Ernani Bernardi.

Citizen Participation

"Elected officials say: 'This is participatory government; make yourself heard.' Most of them mean that only to the extent that you agree."

— Harold Katz, former Chairman, Citywide Citizens' Advisory Committee.



A PLANNING OVERVIEW

Traditionally, planning followed development downtown; real estate, protective zoning and freeways helped guide development. Bunker Hill redevelopment began in 1959 following passage of the Community Redevelopment Law in 1951. Although a citywide plan was published beginning in 1967, downtown had no comprehensive planning until downtown business and the city co-sponsored a community plan, the "Silver Book," published in 1972 and approved in 1974. The CRA was the effectuating agency of a companion redevelopment plan, including a procedure for annual work programs, approved after debate and citizen evaluation in 1976. After Proposition 13 eliminated "tax-increment financing" as CRA's main implementing tool in 1978, that agency has sought low-cost redevelopment strategies, and the Community Development Department, established by the city to control federal funds, is likely to increase its influence.

"Politics and development are the great spoilers," according to New York architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable. Has this been the case in Los Angeles? Prominent architects and planners involved in the planning department, Community Redevelopment Agency and private consulting discuss planning and redevelopment downtown.

ROBERT ALEXANDER: "Trees were bad for business": Recollections of Downtown

In 1946, the year after Mayor Bowron appointed me to the Planning Commission, Bill Davenport was running for Council and asked me for city planning ideas. Among other proposals, I suggested that Broadway, then the shopping center for the metropolitan area, should be plowed and planted (at that time, trees were "Bad for Business") and that property owners should pool their interests in shares in a corporation that would develop parking on Hill and Spring. After Davenport was elected, I found my proposal on the front page of the *Times* labeled by Davenport a Communist plot! (The actual reason for his blast was my outspoken opposition to a new and more beautiful Forest Lawn in the San Fernando Valley.)

A principal concern of the Planning

Department under Charlie Bennett and Milt Breivogel was the rejuvenation of downtown. Pictures were taken of miserable slums with the City Hall in the background. Studies of substandard housing and redevelopment of Bunker Hill were made. Planning Department studies were used in hearings on proposed redevelopment laws in Washington and Sacramento. Drayton Bryant and I wrote a book on redevelopment, the first volume of which was published. The second volume was not, as it apparently went "too far" in advocating a multiracial mixed-income community and a "new town in-town" in Chavez Ravine, to be coordinated with Bunker Hill redevelopment.

Ten years later I was still plugging for a more humane, beautiful downtown, as evidenced by a quotation from a *Herald Express* interview picked up by Cynthia Lindsay in the close of her book, *The Natives Are Restless*:

"In 1977 the pedestrian will be king in downtown Los Angeles. Many streets will be replaced by cool, green, landscaped plazas where fountains will play and pedestrians can move freely without facing the hazards of dense automobile traffic. The Central City will be an 'island' extending from the Harbor Freeway to the East Bypass, and from Santa Ana Freeway to the Olympic Freeway. Automobile parking garages will surround the island."

"This new city will not only be interconnected by freeways, but a monorail system will provide interurban transit, linking the widely separated centers."

In 1969, after a presentation of the seventy-fifth study of "Transportation of the Future" for Los Angeles, and hearing that it would take years of research and development and ten years to install, I wrote "Instant Transit" in protest. After months of presentation and hesitation, the Downtown Minibus emerged, more satisfying than completion of a building.

On other occasions when I have advocated dreams labeled "far-fetched" so long that I had lost faith in them, I have been shocked to find the public ahead of me, demanding what I had almost given up as a lost cause.

Although plans may contain the seeds of beneficial change, it takes both public support and the power of money to act creatively. Thus, while the "Silver Book" was outstanding (especially the residential South Park lakeview proposal), the failure of the private business community to effectuate the

plan is, not unexpectedly, disappointing. We are now fortunate in having in the Community Redevelopment Agency both the power to act and guidance in the best public interest.

CALVIN HAMILTON: "Downtown has not had leadership needed to coalesce it into action."

The city's general plan envisions 56 centers. What is downtown's role? The general plan reflects the principle on which the city has developed; unlike some Eastern cities, there are separate centers because of commuting distances, and special functions. But a focus is needed — a psychological expression of centrality and recognition of enormous public investment downtown. It is the most important center and a focus for the region.

What are downtown's greatest problems?

Skid row, inadequate transportation, lack of people living downtown, and fitting the Mexican-American community's needs with those of other cultural and income groups.

What about disunity?

Except for a short time, downtown has not had leadership to coalesce it into action. People in the Central Business District with power haven't exercised it. The *Los Angeles Times*, principal bankers, department stores and hotels have regional loyalties or absentee ownership. The *Times*, for example, is part of a very large conglomerate and owns industries and land elsewhere, as well as downtown. When it took a very active part it was accused of enhancing the value of its holdings and is sensitive to that. It has an influence. But leadership in the CBD is diffuse. Councilmen Bernardi and Lindsay probably have more influence than any two other people downtown.

What are your views on future development?

As largely expressed in the "Silver Book" downtown should be a 24-hour area, with the variety of uses appropriate to a regional center of 10 million. To have an economic and social mix, massive housing development is needed. 30-40,000 people of varied economic levels should be able to live there. The pedestrian should be on the second level, core-area surface parking eliminated, environment for different cultural groups enhanced.

Why wasn't downtown Los Angeles planned?

None of the city was planned. Until I was brought in there was no general plan. Planning came after zoning — but this is not unique to Los Angeles. There was little effective planning until after the '30s, when federal grants and urban expansion demanded more than zoning. There was excellent public works planning, but effective land-use and environmental planning and a concern for social consequences was left out. Elected officials in Los Angeles were unwilling to stand up to private development. Except for a few architects and environmentalists, everybody felt, until very recently, that the bigger the private development the better, and the greater the city's benefit.

Now there is a tremendous change. The public demands better planning, and citizens are organized.

To see results will take another ten to twenty years. If you look at Los Angeles in 1978 and 1958, you see new buildings, but not a significant difference. It will take until 1998 to see the results of planning today.

ALBERT MARTIN: "The private sector is the downtown."

What has been your firm's involvement in the evolution of Downtown?

Albert C. Martin, Sr. had a great deal to do with the downtown area. His office was at Second and Main in the Higgins Building, which he designed in 1909. Several evolutions saw downtown heading south and west, and this had much to do with design of the Civic Center, on an east-west axis. Several others happenings had a great impact, perhaps the most important, the Music Center, which made downtown a socially acceptable place.

Following location of the Harbor Freeway on the west side, there was a strong movement of the business community from Spring Street west. The Atlantic Richfield Company anchored the west side with a major improvement that is now the number-one address in the city. The banks soon followed.

What about the future?

There is a strong need for the redevelopment of the retail shopping facilities on Seventh Street. With Broadway having great economic strength, and with the demise of Spring Street, one realizes that lack of adequate access is

fundamentally the cause of the continued weakness of the east side.

What can influence east-side revitalization?

If the proposed People Mover, planned to go down Figueroa, were to loop around back up Broadway or Spring Street, we would have a renewal of the entire east side. Although the forces that determine investment by the private sector on the west side are not such as to force a loop, this does not mean that west side investors aren't anxious for a strong east side — they are. Action at the city planning level is the needed link. The CRA is attempting this, but is handicapped by lack of total comprehension by the private sector that a complete, well-balanced CBD is essential. Education is needed.

On the west side, by contrast, the development of plazas has created many acres of beautiful parks, always open, by law to the public — and maintained by the private sector. This private sector/government accomplishment has never happened before.

Would the private sector have achieved this alone?

No. Without the Bunker Hill plan, individual parcels would have been developed and, beautiful as they may be, would not be part of an urban system.

What about preservation?

I find there is stagnancy in the thinking process related to the urban design of major cities. The urban scene is constantly on the move. The demands of modern-day business creates more rapid obsolescence than before, so the sanctity of some buildings as masses is a fallacy (I am not referring to great design). Preservation is essential, but the judgment as to what should be preserved can be abused.

What is the role of private business downtown?

Nothing will happen without the private sector making it happen, because the private sector is the downtown. It is the entity in our system with the ability to build, to move, to complement the process of urban living — expenditure of funds and creation of jobs and a social system. Government can help plan, but the people through government set the rules. The decisions are made by the people, not the planners.

(continued on insert page 4)

L.A. ARCHITECT February 1979

COME BACK, MEAN STREETS: ALL IS FORGIVEN

Toward the end of *The Long Goodbye*, Elliot Gould (or some other interchangeable portion of thinking-woman's *macho*) runs out into the street shouting after the departing automobile of Nina Van Pallandt (or some other standard-format vacuum-formed *blonde-fatale*) to come back, or get lost, or something. It is night, the street is well lit, the black-top is shiny, and so are the blandly doorless and windowless walls that flank the sidewalks. That's because they are the podia that support the office towers above, and the whole ensemble — neutral value-free, uninviting, uninformative — could be almost anywhere: Houston, Minneapolis, London, the townscape of the air-conditioned nightmare.

And then it hits you: *This is L.A.* / This is what has replaced those Mean Streets Down which A Man (usually the irreplaceable Humphrey Bogart) Must Walk. Whereas the Hollywood private eyes of the '40s acted out their (and our) fantasies of laconic sadism against the background of a unique and unmistakable setting which could *only* be the territory between Broadway and Bunker Hill, their current counterparts grimace their spasms of decorous alienation against a background as interchangeable and featureless as themselves.

The rebuilt western blocks of downtown Los Angeles, of which so many Angelenos (even some who are not on the payroll of the *Times*) seem so proud, and of which they apparently have high hopes for the revivification of the area, are just a look-alike replica of rebuilt downtowns everywhere. The only discernible virtue in them is that they make it possible to see where downtown is, but when you get there, you might equally well be at La Defense in Paris, or in Alphaville.

In themselves, some of them are decent enough dull buildings — I'm thinking of the Richfield twins — and some are incredibly ill-designed in detail — obviously I'm thinking of that abominably awkward entrance to the Broadway's parking ramp — and all are cheerful real estate rip-offs, though not all are quite as cheerful as the following conversation overheard in one of the external elevators of the Bonaventure (9:48 a.m., November 4, 1978) might suggest:

- Great view!
- Greatest in town; you can see our site...
- You're not kidding...that empty square next to the parking structure?
- That's it.
- Be great to see some structural steel going up after all this time. Really neat....
- Tell you what's even neater. That's a public parking garage and because it's right next to our site, we don't have to build one single square foot of parking space!
- Love it, Fred. I really love it!

At which point the elevator dropped through the sloping plane of the glass roof, decelerated past the empty floors of unrented stores and readied itself for splash-down in the lily-pools of the Bonaventure's foyer...

The Bonaventure...that just about sums up what has gone wrong. Firstly it's a street killer. It sucks into itself — as do the Broadway, the Arco Plaza and all the rest — all those facilities like stores and newsstands and restaurants that generated the human comings and goings that used to be the life of the streets. Deprived of that they are simply automobile conduits in which a Man Might Run Mad Unobserved (except by the Second Unit Director and the Location Camera Unit, of course).

All this stuff was known long ago, back in the early '60s when Jane Jacobs was writing *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* and the emasculation of downtown Minneapolis was proving her right. Why has Los Angeles given up its proud tradition of pioneering its own mistakes and gone over to imitating other people's?

And why such second-rate mistakes? The Bonaventure is not an all-out insult to civic sense and the human eye, like John Portman's Renaissance Center in Detroit, nor is it a minor triumph of urbanity like his Hyatt in San Francisco. It's an average middle-of-the-road Portman, and that's exactly what's wrong with it, because the middle of the road has never been where it's at in L.A., the capital city of Out-Front Extremity.

Fortunately there is still plenty of Out-Front Extremity available over the other side of downtown, on Broadway. Sure it's old, and rundown, and socially questionable, and ripe for renewal, and almost certainly under threat from concerned groups of liberals from Pacific Palisades and South Pasadena who want to clean it up a bit and preserve the Bradbury Building. Not that there is

anything wrong with preserving the Bradbury, especially if you compare its glazed court with that of the Bonaventure, but if you stand outside on the sidewalk with your back to its rather dull facade, and look across the street, you'll see what is really at stake on Broadway — the Million Dollar Theater and Hispanic Pharmacy, a facade of joky poor-man's rococco (by Albert C. Martin, no less) with a giant yellow million-dollar band-aid slapped across its baroque mouth.

Broadway is the high street of honky-tonk — even Oakland can't better it — and its almost continuous facades of randomly discontinuous architectural styles painted every "wrong" color under the slightly smoggy sun, are completely in tune with its bustling, hustling, hassling sidewalk life (which is already becoming a tourist attraction, to judge by the accents one can hear).

Like Rue Sainte Catherine in Montreal, Broadway could be "one of the great awful streets of the world," and it starts with (or retains) two major advantages that St. Cat' doesn't have. First, its architecture is more varied, more highly colored and more profoundly weird than anything in Montreal; secondly it has not been punched open and sterilized by public buildings and their attendant municipal landscaping (sic).

Miraculously, long stretches are without parking lots (it's the miracle of Chicano poverty, you know...) but what's uncertain is how long they can remain so once the inevitable processes of commercial revitalization set in. That might not necessarily be a bad thing, unless the necessary demolitions to make parking space are allowed to destroy the illusion of the continuity of the street facades. And that illusion is necessary to the survival of Broadway, because once the gaps become too wide and/or too numerous, pedestrians become unwilling to pass across them, and the commercially viable shopping street begins to break up into less-viable fragments (confronted almost daily with the ruination of Main Street in Buffalo, N.Y., I know what all this is about).

Fortunately, help is at hand. It's called Post-Modern Architecture. After all, L.A. is not only the capital of Out-Front Extremity; it is also the city where Post-Modernism's proper priest, Charles Jencks, discovered Up-Front Ersatz. Gap-filling along Broadway, stretching skin-deep facades across the parking lots should be a natural for most Post-Modernists, who are not very interested in the insides of buildings (nor very good at them either). Furthermore it would exercise their professed beliefs in contextualism to the limit, and enable them to apply their stylistic erudition to the making of semiotically legible pronouncements in the public realm (instead of making closet jokes in faculty clubs), and the designs could be hurriedly re-done to keep up with the first signals of stylistic *volte-faces* over in Peter-Eisenman-Land.

They'd be a kind of super-scale street murals — and that raises an interesting possibility for ameliorating the corpse-like tidiness around Flower Street and Fifth. Why not paint artificial storefronts and penny arcades and transient hotels and porno moviehouses and art galleries and health food restaurants all over those numb podia. Then they could get some winos and muggers and dope-pushers from Central Casting, and the tourists could go outside and be photographed instead of always having to use that fountain in the Portman as a back-ground. Surely the City of Illusions could contrive an illusion of downtown, perhaps even the illusion of

Downtown L.A.?

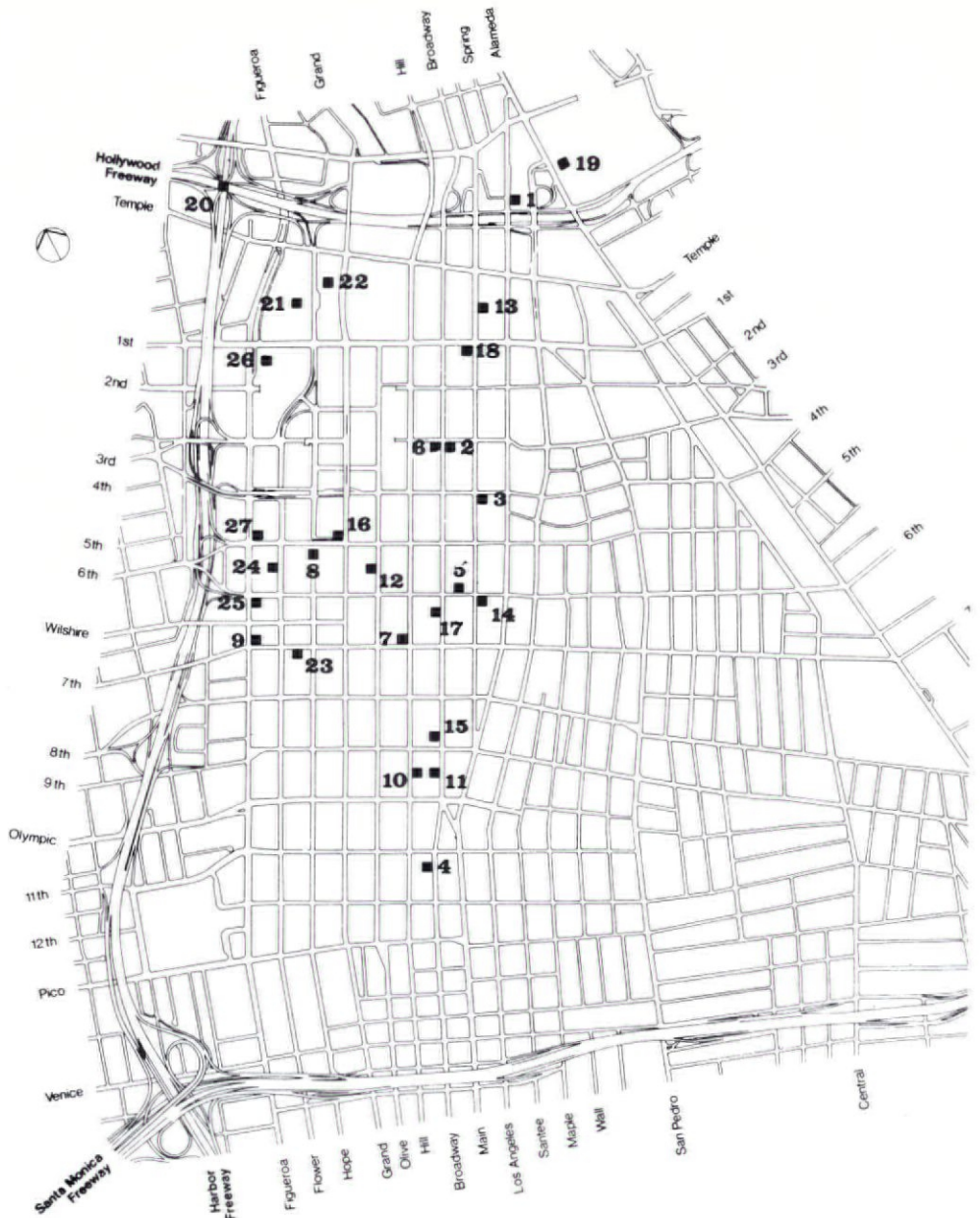
Reyner Banham

CREDITS

Page 1, left to right: Million Dollar Theater, 3rd Street facade. Bonaventure Hotel, interior. Mayan Theater, facade detail. 717 S. Spring Street, detail. Story Building, facade detail. 717 S. Spring Street, door detail.

All page 1 photos courtesy of Bruce Boehner, AIA, except Bonaventure Hotel, courtesy of Larry Logan.

Guide and Capsule History references: *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California*, David Gebhard and Robert Winter, 1977; *Would You Believe L.A.? A Walking Tour of Downtown L.A.*, The Los Angeles Conservancy, 1978; *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*, Reyner Banham, 1971; *Yesterday's Los Angeles*, Norman Dash, 1976; *Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch, 1960; other information from Tom Owen, L.A. Public Library and publications of: L.A. Community Redevelopment Agency, L.A. County Museum of Natural History, L.A. Cultural Heritage Board, Urban Land Institute, Community Design Center; *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*; *Los Angeles Times*.
Text: Anne Luise Burger.
Guide photographs courtesy of: Bruce Boehner, AIA (10, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10-17, 26); Julius Shulman (2, 20-22); Barbara Fillet, *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* (4); Paul Bielenberg (50); John W. Price (9); *Los Angeles Times* (18); Cultural Heritage Board/Santa Fe (19); Balhazar Korab (23); and Wayne Thom (24, 25, 27).
Base map courtesy of Community Redevelopment Agency.
Graphic design: Lester Wertheimer, AIA



DOWNTOWN L.A.

CAPSULE HISTORY

Downtown reacted to Los Angeles' history of boom and bust, dispersive growth patterns set by real estate development, railways and freeways, farming, oil, aviation, entertainment and tourist industries, and unique privacy-and-sun-loving life styles. Commercial largely displaced residential by 1920. Though Hollywood, Wilshire Corridor, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills and other urban and suburban centers eclipsed downtown's primacy in retailing, theater and hotels by the late '20s, it has shared commercial office and industrial importance, and remained the government and financial center of Southern California. As Los Angeles' leap-frog development spread over 465 annexed square miles, downtown's own development moved south and west, from the original Pueblo, to Main/Spring/Broadway and Seventh, to the currently new and vital Flower/Figueroa Streets and Bunker Hill, supplanting residences and smaller buildings (often of great architectural merit) and leaving inner-city decay and "Skid Row" in its eastern wake. Meanwhile, ethnic immigration, Chinese, Japanese and, especially Latino, brought new, unplanned life to old areas; social/economic interest in inner-city living and aesthetic/economic interest in rehabilitation of old architecture seem to be signs of a resurgence in all of downtown, complementing the prosperity of downtown's new west side.

1781-90 Pueblo founded as Spanish farm colony adjacent to Los Angeles River.

1815-1840s Pueblo moves to present site (1815).

1847-Civil War Following Mexican War, Los Angeles becomes U.S. city (1850). Lt. Ord surveys low ranglands and lays present downtown street grid (1850).

1868-1875 Following Civil War, subdividers begin first major land boom. Downtown to San Pedro Railroad begins regional network; Southern Pacific completes four lines (1875) radiating from business center, outlining city form, later duplicated by freeway routes.

1880-1888 Santa Fe competes with Southern Pacific in rate war as great migration opens up downtown to the nation. Amid cheap subdivisions and fortunes, Victorian downtown thrives

with stately buildings, paved streets. **1890s** Electric lines reach Hollywood, Santa Monica and Ocean Park, tracing a dispersed settlement pattern.

1903-World War I Downtown experiences third building boom; style is Classical Beaux Arts. Spring Street's Brady Block is L.A.'s tallest building, Alexandria Hotel (1906) its most exclusive hotel. Orpheum and Pantages Theaters (1911) establish L.A.'s theater district on Broadway, already Southern California's great retail thoroughfare. Zoning ordinances protect property values beginning 1909; city approves 150-foot height limit in 1911; Max Factor opens store on 3rd and Hill in 1912; City Beautiful Movement begins plans for Civic Center Mall.

World War I-1925 Boom resumes with postwar prosperity. City population hits 600,000 by 1920, few residences remain downtown as land values rise; 7th and Broadway is key retail corner; Spring Street is the major financial center of the West; large Mexican population centers on Macy and Alameda Streets.

Late 1920s Downtown's fourth major building boom is from Broadway west to Flower. Style is Monumental Moderne, with Beaux Arts continuing to reflect speculative opulence. Downtown has "highrise" canyons, auto-filled streets impatient of street cars. First reinforced masonry buildings appear; 1928 landmark black and gold Zig-zag Moderne Richfield Building signals west-side prosperity. High-density, terraced Bunker Hill becomes residential nuisance to commercial boom; C.C. Bigelow proposes leveling it in 1928. A modified Beaux-Arts plan is adopted for Civic Center; Hollywood has eclipsed Broadway theater district by 1929, and Wilshire, its retail.

Early to mid-1930s Depression is bad for private building, but causes WPA public building boom downtown. Style is Classical (or PWA "Stripped Fascist") Moderne. Downtown business, fearing competition, fails to prevent Wilshire Boulevard's eastward expansion through Westlake Park. Figueroa Street grade separation tries to accommodate autos, prefigures Pasadena Freeway, begun 1934.

Late 1930s-World War II War years set stage for sprawl and continued downtown decline; first L.A. basin regional plan adopts unique centrifugal city planning concept that sanctions autos, freeways, private homes, and suburban life (1941).

Post-World War II In postwar tract-house building boom Southern California becomes a megalopolis, with L.A.'s population reaching 4 million by 1950; downtown's decaying housing dwindles to 34,000 units.

1954-59 Stage is set for 1960s-1970s west-side downtown development as Hollywood-Harbor Freeway interchange is built (1954); revised building code lifts 150-foot height limit (1956) and Bunker Hill Redevelopment Project is initiated under CRA (1959).

1960-1969 Declining Bunker Hill, with high incidence of crime, fire, picturesque Victorian houses, and 5000 elderly, is bought up and leveled by redevelopment (1960-69); Music Center locates there (1964-69); last interurban railway terminates (1964) as auto congestion increases; Planning Department begins citizen participation program (1965) and citywide plan affirms satellite "centers" concept. Banks, seeking big, glassy status image, flee Spring Street, obsolete buildings and Skid Row. 16,000 mostly substandard housing units remain downtown.

1969-1976 Massive Bunker Hill project, commercial office shortage, and Bank of America's move from Spring Street to Arco Towers signal downtown's fifth major commercial building boom, coinciding with Century City's rise, and east side's continued decline. The "Silver Book" appears in 1972, a response to CBD crisis by city and businessmen. Bradley is elected mayor promising mass transit by 1974; county voters reject starter line that year. Downtown office construction peaks (1974). FAR lowered from 1:13 to 1:6 (1975) assuring 62-story UCB tops skyline. Redevelopment Plan is adopted in 1974, and reaffirmed by Council following debate, moratorium, and citizen review in 1976.

1977-79 \$4 million Biltmore Hotel renovation is completed, nearby Central Library is temporarily saved; Broadway-Spring Streets are nominated as historic districts. Proposition 13 cuts tax-increment financing to one-third. Preservation goals and lack of money reinforce rehabilitation planning theory and outmode classic bulldozer approach; CRA work programs stress housing and Skid Row; proposals for subway starter line and Downtown People Mover are publicized and at least 10 major new hotels, offices and low-and high-income residential projects are underway by the start of 1979.



GUIDE TO ARCHITECTURE

1. Pico House 430 N. Main Ezra F. Kysor, 1868

First three-story masonry building in Los Angeles and its finest hotel, former Mexican Governor Pio Pico built the Italianate-style Pico House in the Plaza area to honor Mexican past. Adjacent are Italianate Theater Mercedes (1869) and Masonic Temple (1858).

2. Bradbury Building 304 S. Broadway George H. Wyman, 1893

Behind its austere Chicago-commercial brick facade, a Sullivan-esque, light-filled fantasy by a mystic draftsman. With its five-story, skylit central space, cast-iron tracery, balconies and open elevator shafts, terra cotta decor and marble stairs, it is, according to Reyner Banham, "one of the most magnificent relics of nineteenth-century commercial architecture anywhere in the world."

3. Brady Block Spring and 4th John Parkinson, 1903

Considered to be Los Angeles' first skyscraper, this 12-story Beaux-Arts office building has an elaborate attic with Corinthian columns, arched windows.

4. Los Angeles Examiner Building 1111 S. Broadway Julia Morgan, 1912

Completed seven years before San Simeon began and still housing operations of the Herald Examiner, its interior reflects Hearst's desire for Spanish Renaissance, its exterior, Morgan's own Maybeck-influenced Mission Revival style. Designed as an "immense factory" where "production of a newspaper is the primary thought," it was said to be the only building in the country built entirely of reinforced concrete. A richly decorated public lobby illustrates Califa, Queen of the Amazons.

5. Finney's Cafeteria 217 W. 6th Plummer & Feil, 1914

Formerly a confectionery shop, it is now a cafeteria frequented by senior citizens and art connoisseurs. Designed with a Holland motif, its interior vaults are covered with beautiful Craftsman tiles by Pasadena's Ernest Batchelder.

6. Million Dollar Theater 307 S. Broadway Albert C. Martin; William L. Woollett (interior), 1918

Grauman's first theater in Los Angeles, predating Egyptian (1922) and Chinese (1927). It was one of many early mixed-

use theater/offices downtown, with Water District offices in now-vacant upper floors. Symbolic water deities, cattle horns and mythological grotesqueries embellish its lavish Spanish Revival Churrigueresque facade

7. Pantages Downtown Theater Hill and 7th B. Marcus Priteca, 1920

A Beaux-Arts Baroque theater/office complex. Theater's new use as a major jewelry center wholesale/retail floor befits lavishly ornamented, domed auditorium space.

8. Los Angeles Central Library Hope and 5th Bertram Goodhue and Carleton Winslow, 1926

This masterpiece of downtown urban design is "the strongest architectural statement in Southern California," according to Robert Alexander, FAIA. Style combines modern and Beaux-Arts elements with Egyptian and Byzantine motifs. Lee Lawrie sculptures integrate with architectural forms and manifest the building's theme of "Light and Learning." Rotunda crowning central space has murals by Dean Cornwell.

9. Global Marine Building 811 W. 7th Walker & Eisen, 1925

Reflecting opulence of the time, its elaborate terra cotta Italian Romanesque facade discloses to curious passerby a magnificent three-story lobby evoking a Renaissance patio graced with Batchelder tile.

10. Mayan Theater 1040 S. Hill Morgan, Walls & Clements, 1927

"Seven 'Mayan' warrior-priests look down on you as you enter the theater, and within you are in a Hollywood film which recreates a pre-Columbian world as it should have existed..." (Gebhard and Winter).

11. United Artists Building 929 S. Broadway Walker & Eisen, 1927

Another office/theater complex. Its unusual Spanish Gothic highrise facade exploits the entertainment value of delicate terra cotta and cast stone. The vaulted, frescoed lobby copies a church nave.

12. Biltmore Hotel Olive and 5th Schultz & Weaver, (1923); Earl Heitschmidt (1928)

Designed by architects of Waldorf Astoria and Biltmore chain, it opened as the largest hotel west of Chicago. Renovation by Phyllis Lambert and Gene Summers, FAIA, has made it

again one of the city's most elegant hotels and key to the renewal of faded Pershing Square. Sumptuous public spaces include Spanish-Italian Renaissance entrance lobby and great French-Italian galleria with lavish Giovanni Smeraldi decor. SCC/AIA Honor Award winner in 1978.

13. City Hall 200 S. Spring John C. Austin, John Parkinson, Albert C. Martin, Austin Whittlesey, 1928

City Hall was for 30 years Los Angeles' only building allowed to break a 150-foot height limit. Goodhue's, with a 28-story high tower offering a 1920s' interpretation of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, City Hall is the centerpiece of the Civic Center Mall.

14. Pacific Coast Stock Exchange 648 S. Spring Samuel E. Lunden, John and Donald Parkinson, 1929

"Monumental Moderne" according to Gebhard and Winter, its massive granite, fluted pillars and bronze door must have impressed on stately, golden Spring Street. Panels on facade symbolize Research, Production and Finance. The Art Deco interior has colored marble walls, zig-zag ceilings, floors and geometric lamps.

15. Eastern Building 849 S. Broadway Claude Beelman, 1929

"Now that the black and gold Richfield building is gone," note Gebhard and Winter, the light-green and dark-blue terra cotta faced Eastern Building "assumes the mantle of being the major statement in L.A. of the '20s Moderne."

16. Southern California Edison Bldg. Grand and 5th Allison & Allison, 1931

Stepped corner entrance of this Classical Moderne include relief panels, "Hydroelectric Energy, Light and Power" by Merrill Gage. Stately elevator lobby has painted decor by Einar Petersen and mural, "Apotheosis of Power," by Hugo Ballin.

17. Los Angeles Theater 615 S. Broadway S. Charles Lee, 1931

"The last of the great motion picture palaces built downtown and the most opulent in all the West," according to the Los Angeles Conservancy. Curiously outmoded in both location and style when built, it is "French Renaissance with a fervor," with lobby decor a "split-level version of the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles."

18. Los Angeles Times Building Spring and 1st Gordon B. Kaufmann, 1935

"Whenever possible, American urban newspapers have a fondness for assuming official governmental garb and also for locating themselves so as to imply that they and the government are one. The L.A. Times Building fulfills this image very well," observe Gebhard and Winter, and indeed Times-Mirror has located in the area since its incorporation in 1883. The original building style is Monumental Moderne.

19. Union Station 800 N. Alameda Donald and John Parkinson, 1939

Believed to be the last U.S. railroad station in a monumental scale, and the last major one in Spanish Colonial Revival style, Union Station has great public lobbies with Art Deco/Spanish detailing, including decorated beamed ceilings, geometric-patterned marble, red quarry tile and contrastingly intimately scaled courtyards. The first major station with integral landscape design, it was intended to relate to the old Pueblo. Construction uprooted downtown's original Chinatown.

20. Hollywood/Harbor Freeway Interchange Chester H. Gish, 1954

Famous four-level interchange, a ceremonial, kinetic portal to downtown, the "Stack" was a magnet for westside downtown development.

21. Department of Water and Power Hope and 1st Albert C. Martin & Associates, 1964

"The kind of monument that architects can relevantly offer to this city founded precisely on water and power and transportation," according to Banham; the "gleaming cube" is most effectively viewed from the freeway at night or as termination of the Civic Center, on axis with City Hall.

22. Music Center Hope and Grand at 1st Welton Becket & Associates, 1969

Persuasive affirmation by Times-Mirror's Dorothy Chandler, the Music Center has probably done more than any other planning to spur downtown revitalization. Still remote from existing activity patterns and copying many of Lincoln Center's mistakes, the cultural acropolis does not make a successful urban space except at intermission time. Of the three opulent marble-vener candyboxes, the Mark Taper Forum works well, but the chandelied Dorothy Chandler Pavilion is the best; its acoustics are excellent, and the

interior, an elegantly ceremonial procession of space.

23. Broadway Plaza 7th at Flower and Hope Charles Luckman Associates, 1973

One of four interior shopping malls downtown, a cheerfully sterile galleria is anchored by hotel, 32-story office building and department store. Pleasingly open to Seventh Street, Broadway Plaza's blank walls are hostile to pedestrians on the other three streets.

24. Atlantic Richfield (Arco) Plaza Flower at 5th and 6th Albert C. Martin & Associates, 1972

Two are twice as good as one; these twin 52-story dark glass landmarks on the downtown skyline are "formal, dignified and reticent," according to Gebhard and Winter. Catalyst for westside development, the towers mark the site of the earlier landmark Richfield Building they replaced.

25. Linder Plaza 888 W. 6th Honnold, Reibsam & Rex, 1974

A sleek office building designed to reinforce the urban fabric at the corner and provide visual interest at midblock with a recessed entry court and two-level landscaped roof terraces, Linder Plaza received a 1975 SCC/AIA Honor Award.

26. Bunker Hill Towers and Pedways Robert E. Alexander (towers) and Daniel, Mann, Johnson and Mendenhall (pedways), 1977 1st, 3rd, Figueroa and Hope

Bunker Hill Towers successfully reintroduced high-density living downtown, since rents are sky-high and residents no longer apologize for their life-style. The pedways, master-planned elevated freeways for pedestrians, connect (to date) the Towers to World Trade Center, Security Pacific Bank, and Bonaventure Hotel.

27. Bonaventure Hotel Figueroa and 5th John Portman, 1977

Portman's space-age tribute to Los Angeles, the slick Bonaventure is brilliant from the freeway, dead from the sidewalk. Curvy, silvery exterior belies a confusing interior space, filled, however, with all the sculptural curves, glitter, illusion and gimmickry that make it, to many, seem just right for L.A.

DONALD BRACKENBUSH:
"Most cities have pursued
downtown revitalization as
an unquestioned goal."

The objective of the 1972 "Silver Book" and ensuing redevelopment plans for central Los Angeles was to direct private investment to accomplish public goals. Several planned changes and improvements are underway [see article by Kurt Meyer].

A lot of things haven't happened, though: the voters turned down mass transit; Skid Row continues to be a pall upon the east side and is spreading west; the business leadership which began the downtown revitalization movement has disbanded.

Several cities have had more success in renewing their central business districts — Atlanta, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Pittsburgh and San Francisco, to name a few. Common characteristics probably played key roles in bringing about change:

- A crisis — moveouts, increased crime, physical deterioration in slow-growing or declining regions.
- A common view that something ought to be done.
- Joint public/private commitment to improvement.
- The ability of the city to focus on a limited set of problems.

Let us consider these ingredients with respect to Los Angeles:

What's the crisis? Many cities that have gone through a renaissance are in economically depressed regions and have approached the effort in a life-or-death struggle. That certainly is not the case in Los Angeles. The region is growing, as are most portions of the city.

The 1972 plan foresaw the downtown building boom of the late '60s (primarily headquarter bank buildings) would cease; and it did. We said new amenities should be added to make downtown as attractive for commercial growth as Irvine and Westlake. Mass rapid transit would have to be part of the picture, as would market-rate housing, to achieve a 24-hour downtown.

The crisis is that Angelenos haven't recognized that they compete directly with surrounding counties. Numerous companies have left the older parts of Los Angeles as they have elsewhere.

Should something be done? Most cities achieving urban development success have had only one downtown and have pursued downtown revitalization as an unquestioned goal.

Los Angeles has other centers — Hollywood, the airport, Long Beach, etc. Downtown, however, employs over 200,000 people, many times more than any other center in the region. It is

also at the center of the freeway system and has numerous important one-of-a-kind regional facilities including government, music, and banking centers, and the garment industry.

Furthermore, downtown is an important racial/ethnic seam between Anglos, Chicanos, Japanese, Chinese, and others. Downtown is far bigger and far more important than any other center and deserves more attention.

Public/private partnership. In most cities undergoing revitalization, a trust has been founded between the political/public sector and the private sector. This has not been the case in Los Angeles.

Under the City's present fifteen Councilmanic district system, it can be difficult to implement a program that, on the surface, is to the advantage of only one district. The Council's Planning Committee dragged the 1972 plan through twenty-four public hearings. (A record, I believe.) Not until Pat Russell took control of the Committee did the plan see daylight — over twenty-one months from the time it began.

Perhaps more important, strident cries continued that the downtown business people are trying to achieve a plan which will "feather their own nests." That is like accusing the Culver City Neighborhood Association of trying to protect their property values — of course they are!! If they don't, who will?

The ability to focus. Why has Los Angeles had such difficulty? Anaheim made Disneyland happen, organized itself and got the Angels, and now has brought in the Rams. Atlanta, Baltimore, Miami, and even Buffalo (do you believe?) are building or have regional mass transit systems under construction and/or funded.

The Anaheims, Green Bays, Irvines and Buffalos, of course, are small and able to act in a focused, organized way. Los Angeles, because of its size and varied constituency, probably will always ponder, over-analyze and behave indecisively on issues many cities find fairly obvious.

Will downtown ever be more than a place you go to get your passport renewed? My guess is yes, but not the way and not for the reasons you think.

The next round of energy crisis will be the necessary catalyst to build transit.

The city will recognize that it is engaged with the surrounding counties in a life-or-death struggle for investments, and will act to keep and attract business, as administrations struggle for post-Proposition 13 tax dollars. Downtown will play a role in that program.

The growing Latino population will play a substantially increased role downtown and add a needed richness.

And finally, the Olympics will renew the interest and make believable the public/private partnership that is fundamental to every successful downtown revitalization.

KURT MEYER:
How the City was Saved
from the Silver Book

When we discuss the issues of Los Angeles and the revitalization of its older parts, we are talking of super-complex problems that are not only financial, but political in nature as well: a Mayor; fifteen Councilmen, each representing a district; five Supervisors; and effective neighborhood organizations — which together create an interlocking fabric of decision-makers unique to this area.

During my years in public life as a member of the Community Redevelopment Agency Board, I often wondered how any decision is ratified and carried out when there are so many participants who set up so many screens through which a plan must pass. One often feels powerless. Yet, when we look back a short twenty years and try to gauge progress, we see that in some indefinable, intricate way progress has been made — that is, if we call "progress" that movement of our city on a course determined by the aggregate voice of its people.

This system is not our weakness, as suggested by David Wallace of WMRT in the September issue of The Practising Planner, when he says: "Weak political leadership has substantially eroded the growth management efforts for downtown Los Angeles." It is our strength. But how does this strength manifest itself, if not through "strong" (and often arrogant) political leadership?

For one thing, we have learned to work on a smaller, individually oriented scale by using a scalpel in the process of healing the city, rather than by using the meat ax; by employing economic market forces as our leverage, rather than grandiose, abstract plans; and by taking advantage of a combination of private investment and public subsidy in lieu of massive federal loan and grant programs. Thus, the development plan for downtown has been formulated by a combination of professionals and dedicated citizens who have given selflessly of their time to the study of downtown together with the downtown business community, the political leadership, and the staffs of various city departments.

Let us look at some examples of how this approach affects our city plan and its development:

1. The original "Silver Book" master plan proposed that the Central City East

(Skid Row) be redeveloped by clearing 38 acres of downtown land. What is the plan today? The citizens' participation process endorses a policy which recognizes that the very low-income residential community in the so-called Skid Row, with its particular service needs, cannot be wiped out through large-scale demolition and clearance. We estimate the development costs for the original clearance plan to be between \$250 and \$320 million based on 1978 values. Part of this cost includes the necessity to relocate and rebuild housing and life-support facilities for over 2,000 very low-income people who now live in the eastern part of downtown. By way of comparison, the annual budget for the Central City East development is currently less than \$1.5 million. A substantial portion of this amount is devoted to activities that deal with human reconstruction rather than with bricks and mortar.

2. The original plan called for the development of what has become known as an urban village. This clearance project would have required an area of 122 acres (the much maligned Bunker Hill Project area cleared only 86 acres). It would cost up to \$630 million to acquire the land, relocate the businesses, reconstruct the public streets, utilities, etc., and to pay the cost of administration, financing, contingencies, time lag, inflation, and the like. Over 2,500 to 3,000 housing units would have been eliminated and several thousand businesses would have been forced to relocate.

The reality? It has been difficult for us to identify even one-half million dollars of public funds to start this half-billion dollar project.

If we don't have the funds, where then does the vitality come from that will provide the impetus for the development of downtown?

The Hispanic population, which encircles downtown like a donut and whose disposable income is constantly on the rise. The central city, particularly Broadway, is the major shopping center and cultural meeting place for a large portion of the Latin population. The income to the store owners on Broadway is surpassed only by Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills.

The future of downtown greatly depends on how well we are able to deal with, encourage, and continuously upgrade the source of the great wealth — both monetary and cultural — which is ours in the Latin heritage of the central city.

The garment industry is a substantial mainstay of our city's economy.

The wholesale and flower markets, centered in the eastern part of downtown, are among the largest in the country. In private-public partnership,

these markets will be enlarged, modernized and anchored.

The jewelry industry ranks second only to New York and is growing.

The tourist business. The Biltmore Hotel has been rejuvenated, and new hotels are built, not because public funds are available, but because there is a crying need to create quality accommodations.

Housing. With obvious needs to provide housing in the central city area, we encourage a market-rate housing at rather substantial rent or purchase costs as well as Section 8 subsidized housing primarily targeted for the elderly. Currently, over a thousand subsidized elderly housing units are under construction and the first unit of a 700-unit market-rate housing development on Bunker Hill will be started this year.

Transportation. Slogans fly left and right, and yet how complex this problem is! CRA and the City are proposing a very small first step: the Downtown People Mover. Financed almost exclusively by the federal government, the DPM is designed to operate without subsidy. Might it not be pleasant and efficient to move people about urban centers as Walt Disney moves masses at Disneyland? A small step, yes, but the first step towards solving the traffic congestion mobility problem in our auto-saturated area.

What is the new grand plan for the central city? It is to encourage the natural market forces and the cultural diversity that are present in the central city. This is not really a plan per se, but a concept and a process. As part of this process, we intercede little and only with restraint: the overriding goal is to nurture the emergence of a "people city." In allocating limited regional financial resources, it is appropriate to balance carefully allocations between the important central city and its many equally needy surrounding neighborhoods.

What about work that is visible, has been completed, and is in use? Created by a different generation, built in another era, it stands there, reaching for the sky, commanding attention, and inviting comments from today's generation (who, of course, know so well how to do it better). Little do we remember now the accolades given I.M. Pei when he designed Bunker Hill or Wurster and Bernardi when they updated the plan only a short ten years ago.

I, for one, consider myself very much a part of this continuum: the living, ever-changing city, the product of our culture, the people who live in it and govern it, the mosaic of the good and the not-so-good that you, dear colleagues, and I are creating day in and day out.

It's the genius of our era and our city.



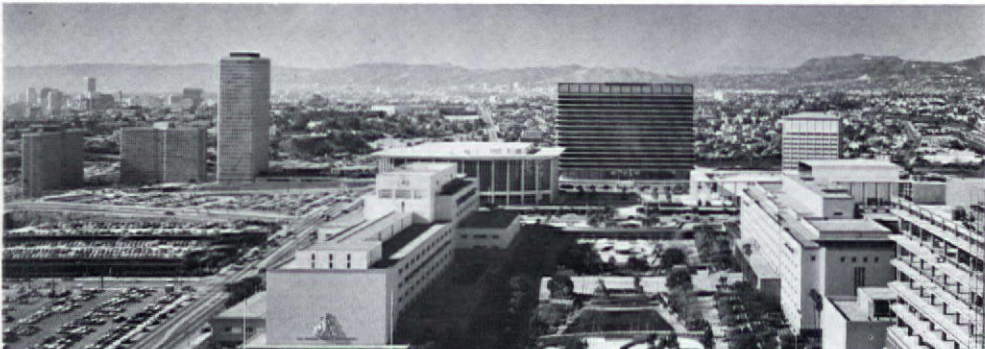
Bunker Hill and Flower/Figueroa financial district from Security Pacific Plaza. (photo: Bruce Boehner, AIA)



Spring Street, with 1923 Arcade Building at left. (photo: Community Design Center)



Rare view of deserted Broadway at 6 a.m., showing Grand Central Market and Million Dollar Theater. (photo: Bruce Boehner, AIA)



Civic Center, showing Music Center and Department of Water and Power on axis from City Hall. (photo: Julius Shulman)



A DOWNTOWN GEOGRAPHY

- A. Plaza/Olvera Street Much-restored historic center of Los Angeles, this isolated fragment of intense activity is a thriving pedestrian space rare in downtown.
- B. Civic Center The Beaux-Arts City-Beautiful layout is tiringly spacious and disunified. Bureaucratic Moderne boredom is relieved by majesty of City Hall, light show of the Department of Water and Power and musical show of the multicolored, singing Triforium (billed as a \$900,000 "white elephant" when built) at the 1975 Civic Center Mall.
- C. Bunker Hill Still unfinished massive renewal project imposes a pattern of vehicle separation, with pedestrian access to garden, park and pedway environment atop parking garages. Linked above, towers seem disconsolately unrelated along the street.
- D. Little Tokyo The 85-year-old cultural/business focus for largest Japanese-American community in the U.S. became a redevelopment project in 1970, now includes New Otani Hotel, cultural center, elderly housing.
- E. Figueroa/Flower Streets Site of prime office space exceeding Beverly Hills'

- and Century City's in rental rates, together with neighboring Bunker Hill, it is Southern California's new financial center.
- F. Pershing Square, Hill and Olive Streets Kevin Lynch found fading Pershing Square — noted for pigeons, orators, old ladies and "Googies" — a "floating landmark" in perceptions of downtown. With nondescript Hill Street the center of second major jewelry industry in the U.S., with Olive Street upgraded by \$6 million in renovation (including the Biltmore's) and with planned new jewelry center and elderly housing, the area could become lively east-west-side connecting place.
- G. Broadway Main shopping/entertainment center for L.A.'s 1.5 million Latinos, downtown's most successful street generates 7-day life, \$130 million annual sales with no planners' help. Architectural treasures are enhanced by higgledy-piddled signage: note the famous "Chicken Boy" over the 500 block.
- H. Spring Street Once-golden Spring Street, the abandoned financial center of the West has vacant Beaux-Arts and Art Deco wreckages salvageable when office shortages and other renovation incentives encourage new life.
- I. Skid Row

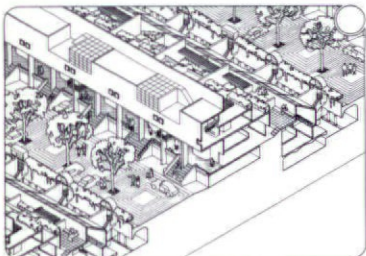
- A state of mind, business and health, the largest wino district west of Chicago severely depresses downtown's image. Postwar strategies caused its dispersal throughout L.A.; current planning stresses containment and rehab.
- J. Seventh Street Downtown's traditional shopping street today serves affluent clientele from new offices and hotels to the west, and poor Latinos to the east; divided, not linking, it exemplifies what is wrong with downtown.
- K. Produce Market Competition from other cities to draw it away has led to plans for a new facility, expected to be largest in the world.
- L. Garment Industry Second largest U.S. garment center, it employs 25,000, mostly Mexican laborers. Sweatshops occupy old structures around the California Mart.
- M. Convention Center Underused, 210,685-square-foot freeway landmark by Charles Luckman Associates is located amid blight. 1972 redevelopment plan for area, euphemistically called "South Park," includes residential, commercial and open space with a controversial lake.
- N. Chinatown An estimated 15,000, mostly immigrants, live in this

- "golden ghetto" of decayed housing, poverty, sweatshops — and land values higher than the wealthiest areas of L.A.
- CONTRIBUTORS Robert E. Alexander, FAIA's principal works downtown are the Hall of Records (with Richard Neutra) and Bunker Hill Towers. President of the Los Angeles Planning Commission from 1948-51, he is co-author of *Rebuilding the City* (1949).
- P. Reyner Banham, Celebrated British architectural historian and critic and author of *Los Angeles: Architecture of Four Ecologies*, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* and numerous other publications. Dr. Banham is currently Chairman, Design Studies at State University of New York at Buffalo.
- Donald H. Brackenbush, AIA, AIP is Western Regional Manager of Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd. He is co-author of the Downtown Los Angeles 1972/1990 Preliminary General Development Plan (the "Silver Book") and numerous other plans.
- Calvin Hamilton, Director of the City Planning Department, enlisted the planning advice of over 60,000 citizens in an innovative "Goals for Los Angeles" program (1965). "Concept Los Angeles" (1970) and "Citywide Plan" envisioned a city

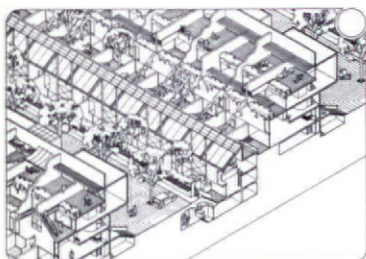
- composed of some 56 centers, including downtown.
- Albert C. Martin, FAIA is principal of an architectural and planning firm that has designed more square feet of building downtown than any other. Buildings include: City Hall, Department of Water and Power, Arco and Security Pacific Plazas, Union Bank, and the new Wells Fargo Bank (in progress). 1976 President of L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce, he is now Chairman, LA 200 Committee for Celebration of the Bicentennial.
- Kurt W. Meyer, FAIA, has been a Director of the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles since 1973 and served as its Chairman from 1976-1978.
- Anne Luise Buerger, AIA Associate and L.A. ARCHITECT Editorial Board member, served as editor and coordinator of this special Downtown L.A. issue.

HOUSING AS URBAN FRAGMENT

A project by James Tice, presented here, has been selected as one of eight first-place winners in the 1978 Shinkenchiku Competition sponsored by the Japan Architect. The international competition called for designing a townhouse neighborhood unit for six families on a site based on the dimensions of traditional Japanese townhouses, each measuring approximately 15' x 60'. Tice is assistant professor of architecture at USC. Assisting with the entry drawings were Jan Bielski, Ed Burian, Simon Piltzer and Stefanos Polyzoides.



Street gallery view.



Garden view.

The project is as much about the space between buildings as it is about the buildings themselves. The architectural group consists of a continuous wall of row housing alternating with the open space of the street, the sunken courtyard and the terraced gardens opposite. Urbanistically, only one side of the street is designed as building. The resulting ensemble of building and "park" reinterprets late 18th century English housing exemplified in the work of John Nash.

The open space can be thought of as theater, the street and its passages a stage. The little steps of the "stoops" and the bigger steps of the terraces become viewing platforms, bleachers or private boxes for viewing the activities below. The street itself is qualified by a boulevard of trees and a surface treatment which proclaim it as a place for performance. The automobile is an invited guest on the street, as part of the general display. By excluding through traffic, and by including pavement ridges and bollards, the car is accommodated into the neighborhood's pedestrian world.

The two different housing types on either side of the street have been designed in accordance with their urban role while still providing living amenities for the individual.

The Row House

The row house unit distinguishes between front and rear. The arched street side is public: it presents a polite, predictable facade to the park, its added height determined by the scale of the open space, opposite. In contrast, the rear gardens are private, informal and allow for a greater degree of choice and whimsy. This unit type adopts the conventional slotted row house as a model; however, its rear portion is transformed into a version of Swiss terrace housing in order to provide sunny terraces with a view.

In these units, the generous accommodations range up to four bedrooms and a studio. Living zones are conventionally organized with living and dining on the entry level, services and parking below with sleeping/private spaces above. All major living and sleeping areas have direct sunlight and through-ventilation. In addition, all levels open onto an exterior space or terrace.

The Sunken Courtyard

The entry to the atrium house is disguised as a garden gate. Its sunken

courtyard provides a focus for the various spaces surrounding it. This unit owes more to very old courtyard examples, Renaissance garden grottos and English green houses, than to the 20th-century *Siedlung*. Yet its modest size still allows for interesting living alternatives. For instance, it is possible to interpret the unit as three separate studios, each retaining a separate entry off the court. Or, these may become the separate domain of individual family members. Direct sunlight enters the court and is shared by the surrounding spaces. Solar collectors on the roof capture south light while the storage tanks are placed at the lowest level.

The project respects the street and therefore could be introduced, either in whole or part, as a fragment into an existing urban context. Of course it suggests application in new residential areas as well, for its passages and linkages provide continuity with complementary parts of the city.

James Tice
University of Southern California

BOOK REVIEW

Frank Lloyd Wright: An Annotated Bibliography (Art & Architecture Bibliographies 5) by Robert L. Sweeney, foreword by Adolf K. Plazcek, Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., publishers, Los Angeles, 1978, hardbound, 303 pp., \$29.95

As amazing as it seems, this new bibliography with over 2000 entries of the writings by and about Frank Lloyd Wright shows us that the state of knowledge about this prodigious genius is merely in its infancy. In fact, despite the thorough investigation Robert Sweeney has done in searching out contemporary accounts, magazine articles, and myriad biographies, it is even more remarkable how little we know about Wright, the architect and the man, after all that has been published about him.

This particular bibliography, the definitive one to date, was the result of a suggestion by the publisher to the author, who for some years had compiled an impressive personal collection of rare Wright books. Thinking that with this nucleus and some extensive research over a period of months a satisfactory document could be produced, the author set to work in his spare time. Of course, the task became a consuming avocation as the months stretched into years. To Sweeney's credit, it must be pointed out that the project was an overwhelming one, and, however it may have first appeared, almost endless in its scope.

Considering the length of Wright's career (over 70 years), the number of his projects and executed buildings (over 600) and the international range of interest in his work, the possibility of documenting, no less examining (which is what Sweeney did), every item ever written on this major figure is remote without major institutional support. This Sweeney did not have.

Unlike the previous bibliographies — Bernard Karpel's 1955 version published through *House Beautiful* and James Muggenberg's 1970 update done through the American Association of Architectural Bibliographers — Sweeney's was a personal effort. Limits had to be imposed and for this work they are logical ones — newspaper articles and sections in general architectural histories have been omitted. The author made an heroic effort to track down all Western items, but references to Japanese publications, especially during Wright's stay there in the 'teens and early '20s, are sketchy. To achieve a comprehensive listing would no doubt require a thorough knowledge of the language as well as a prolonged stay in Japan. So, unfortunately, this exotic episode in Wright's life still remains mysterious and virtually unknown.

As a document, the bibliography is well organized and eminently usable. It is thoughtfully designed with a dust jacket derived from a 1911 design by Wright. Twelve illustrations reproduce various rare and ephemeral graphic designs mainly from Wright-originated publications. I suppose we should be grateful for these; however, I long for

more plates, in faithful color instead of the black-and-white shadows which are presented. The entries are arranged chronologically, and each is numbered for easy reference. A good index has been included — even specific buildings and places are cited. These additions, the result of professional editing by Laurence McGilvery, make the book really usable.

Sweeney has introduced the documentation with an essay that gives some of the background information behind the entries themselves, although many contain capsule or one sentence annotations. The introduction is uneven. It reflects a well-informed but general knowledge of Wright's life and work. In some areas, Sweeney has gone beyond the legendary history and has researched details such as the firm of Beers, Clay and Dutton (where Wright had a brief tenure early in his Chicago days) and the background of Mamah Borthwick Cheney (Wright's mistress who was killed in the 1914 tragedy at Taliesin). Many will surely take issue with Sweeney's statement that "The greatness of Louis Sullivan lay more in his ability as a theoretician and teacher of architecture than as a designer of buildings..."

Sweeney is at his best when he discusses the area he knows best — the publication history of Wright's books. He has provided much valuable information and even some teasers such as a reference to a catalogue for the exhibition of Wright's work in Berlin in 1910. Information as to what was shown, where and when is not known, although along with the Wasmuth portfolio it served to change the direction of 20th-century design.

An Annotated Bibliography is a must for libraries and serious Wright scholars; and it is an interesting volume for all those — and they are legion — fascinated by his work. It has been said of Wright that he had so many creative designs within him that he could not draw fast enough to get them all down on paper in his lifetime. It will surely take decades, if not centuries, to comprehend this level of achievement.

Kathryn Smith

BOOK REVIEW



La Citta Capitalista: Los Angeles
By Giovanni Brino, Edizioni Medicea, Florence, 1978, softbound, 308 pp., (available, through special order, at Hennessey & Ingalls).

Much of the best writing about Los Angeles is by outsiders, since a certain detachment helps when analyzing this very special phenomenon. Perhaps only a Martian's-eye view would do it justice, although in a sense all of us outsiders who came to L.A. were Martians, so unprepared were we for what awaited us. How bizarre it all seemed at first, yet how quickly we found ourselves caught up in it, our critical faculties numbed and dazzled.

Giovanni Brino's book takes its place within the genre of outsiders' reports from the battlefield of capitalist modernity that is Los Angeles, and it has the added merit that its author did not stay long enough to be absorbed into the phenomenon he sought to

penetrate; his eye for the revealing contradiction remained undimmed by the glitter. A tireless and perceptive observer, Brino spent a year combing the megalopolis, isolating those aspects of everyday reality that the rest of us had long taken for granted, and recombining them in startling juxtapositions. As an architect, his primary aim was to examine and explain the strange, sometimes striking, often monotonous architecture of this city; the architecture of consumer capitalism at its most advanced. But, for this purpose, sociological investigation was needed as well, and some of his most illuminating comment deals with non-architectural subjects (Barbie, the L.A. Yellow Pages, Duckburg), used with telling effect to explain the peculiar nature of Los Angeles and its architecture.

The stridency of L.A.'s commercial architectural, Brino explains, results from high-pressure competition that turns each building into a pop manifesto; the drabness of so much residential architecture (a good chapter is on the ubiquitous "dingbat" apartment house) is the consequence of refined techniques of mass-production.

Sometimes, however, the outsider's perspective is inadequate, and a lack of inside knowledge can make one fall prisoner to the special mythology of L.A.: take the freeways, for instance. Brino's chapter on the freeways is perhaps the most personal in the book, for here, like so many other outsiders, he fell in love: analysis gives way to autobiography. This is the view of a visitor who does not have to commute to work each day, and for whom, consequently, the freeway can become a sort of private Indianapolis.

For the most part, however, it is Brino's vision as an outsider that gives the book its analytical cutting edge. For him, Los Angeles is the purest form of the capitalist city and the prototype for the future — like it or not. He defines its essential feature as extreme specialization, in land use, in employment, in demography; this leads to segregation and ghettoization, not only by race (the most familiar form), but by age, occupation, income, and that intangible quality so dear to the Angeleno, "life-style."

These characteristics make L.A., for Brino, the post-urban city — if we may be permitted the oxymoron — where traditional criteria of analysis, drawn from the cities of Europe or the eastern U.S.A., just do not apply: they in fact become an obstacle to understanding. Los Angeles is not the last, aberrant form of the old city, but the first, vigorous form of the new.

Geoffrey Symcox
University of California,
Los Angeles

A DISTANT RELATIVE

It was an interesting coincidence that Mr. Alexander happened to be at my board when he received a telephone call from Mrs. Johnson. She lived in Wisconsin. Her husband had a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, for which she apparently did not care. So they were looking for an architect in order to build a new house. Mr. Alexander explained to her that this was a commercial office, but that his partner, Richard Neutra, did residential work at a separate office, gave her that number, and said his goodbye.

"I think that was my aunt," I said. Actually, it was the wife of my first cousin once-removed.

"Well, call her up," said Mr. Alexander; he gave me the name of her hotel in Pasadena, and so I did.

Her husband, Herbert Johnson, answered the telephone.

"This is Fred Lyman. I think I'm related to you in some way," I said, expecting him to reply with great warmth, exuberance, and joy at the sound of my familiar name.

But instead he asked, "Oh yeah, how?"

Since I had not the slightest idea, I stammered for a few moments and then said, "Well, I'm working for Neutra and Alexander, and Mrs. Johnson called today," and then he did speak with great warmth, inquired after my mother, and invited me to take him with his wife on a tour of Mr. Neutra's houses the following Sunday, to which invitation, I, of course, agreed. But when I called that Sunday morning, he and his wife had already checked out of the hotel and left no message for me, nor, apparently, had they called Mr. Neutra.

My cousin, Tom Moore, shrugged at my account of the incident and said only, "Well, that's Hib."

So I had confirmed that Mr. Johnson's eccentric nature was worthy of note even within my family of eccentrics. But he was, nevertheless,

the patron of Frank Lloyd Wright, and I, so young, would have liked to have helped him to become the patron of Richard Neutra as well.

But such was not to be. Nor was I even to meet Mr. Johnson until almost twenty years later when I wrote to tell him that I was planning a vacation in Wisconsin and to ask if I might have the opportunity of meeting him then. A cordial reply returned, and a few weeks later I was ushered into his office in the S.C. Johnson & Son Administration Building where he was waiting with his son, Sam.

Mr. Johnson had suffered a stroke, and the fiery nature of his reputation had mellowed to leave his easy warmth. Even in his own office in the middle of the week he was relaxed and undisturbed and with evident relish told me tales of Frank Lloyd Wright.

"Hello, fella," was Mr. Wright's first greeting to him. That amused Mr. Johnson, and he repeated it several times imitating the old man's friendly irreverent gruffness.

"At the end of the job, he came to me and said, 'Hib, I've done a lot for you in designing this building, and now I'd like you to do something for me. I need an extra fifteen thousand.'"

"Well, what did you say?" I asked.

"I wrote him a check," Mr. Johnson replied. "I loved him."

Hanging on the office wall was a framed letter from Mr. Wright in which he attempted (successfully, as we all know) to convince Mr. Johnson to build a tower instead of a one-level research laboratory. "And God, Great Potentate," I remember as the title with which Mr. Wright addressed him, "you will be able to make speeches to your people from the top of this tower and even amuse them."

My quotations must be taken with some indulgence. These events happened a number of years ago, and I took no notes; but so I remember them.

Mr. Johnson invited my wife and me to have lunch with him. I was never to meet his wife, for she died a few days before our arrival. I hoped that we were not intruding, but he said no, that he needed cheering up.

He gave me two books. One was by the photographer Yukio Futagawa with text by Irata Isozaki on the Administration Building and Research Tower from the *Global Architecture* series. It pleased Mr. Johnson that Mr. Futagawa had said nothing of making a book, but merely came in one day and asked to take some pictures of the building. The other, called *OBJECTS: USA* by Lee Nordness, was a collection of photographs of American artists and their works which Mr. Nordness had been commissioned to acquire by the S.C. Johnson Co. and which included an article on the Los Angeles ceramicist John Mason of whose work I happen to be especially fond.

"Do you do any art work yourself?" I asked.

"No," Mr. Johnson said, "I can't, but I've always admired the ability to do those things."

There was a curious incident at this second meeting. A Cornell College class book lay on the coffee table. I saw that it was my father's class (or would have been had my father not been expelled), and I mentioned this fact to Mr. Johnson.

"Oh?" was his only reply. I thought it strange of him to say no more in as much as my father was not only apparently his classmate but his first cousin and was to become an architect. One would think that they would have had something in common.

"I don't think they got along," was my mother's only comment, which did not explain much, but in another way explained everything.

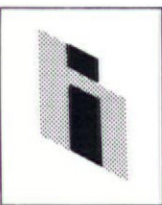
I wrote one letter to Mr. Johnson after our visit to thank him for his hospitality but otherwise had no further communication with him. Then one evening a few days before last Christmas while lying in a hotel room in Minneapolis, I read in the *Milestones of Time* magazine:

"DIED. Herbert Fisk Johnson, 79, longtime head of Johnson's Wax and art *aficionado*; of pneumonia; in Racine, Wis. Hib, who in 1922 began to work for the company founded by his grandfather, was a pioneer in providing employee benefits; he established a pension and hospitalization plan in 1934. In 1936 he commissioned from Architect Frank Lloyd Wright a now famous office building in Racine and in 1962 invested \$750,000 to buy U.S. art, which is now housed in the Smithsonian Institution."

Well, of course, there is a good deal more to the story than I have told, but Barry would ask what the rest has to do with architecture. All I am trying to say is that I had a distant relative, a business man, who understood, without suffering the chains of Jacob Marley, that mankind was his business and whom I would like to have known a little better.

Frederic P. Lyman, AIA

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CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

The 2,152nd meeting of the SCC/AIA Board of Directors, December 5, 1978: Treasurer **Robert Tyler** presented a tentative budget for 1979 with an estimated income of \$136,000, which does not reflect L.A. ARCHITECT income; **Peter Creamer** presented his three-point program and suggested that the Chapter present the program to the January Grassroots meeting, and the Board asked that Chapter delegates report back on any progress in this regard; **James Pulliam** recommended that some of the 1979 CCAIA Board delegates be recruited outside the SCC/AIA Board, and **Norma Sklarek** and **Frank Bernard** were nominated, and additional nominations to be forthcoming; **James Pulliam** reported on planning for Grassroots; **Frank Bernard** expressed his appreciation for the opportunity of serving on the 1978 Board; **Julius Shulman** and **Dione Neutra** were nominated to receive Honorary Memberships at the 1979 Installation.

Architectural Record magazine is conducting three seminars in Los Angeles in March as follows: "Preparing for the Solar Era in Building Design," March 12-13; "Proven Design Technologies for Energy-Efficient Building Envelopes, Lighting, HVAC," March 14-15; "Opportunities in the Billion-Dollar Waste Water Treatment Market," March 16. For registration information, contact **Charles E. Hamlin**, Architectural Record, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, N.Y., N.Y. 10020, 212/997-3088.

The winter lecture series sponsored by the Department of Architecture at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo continues with **Stanley Tigerman, FAIA**, on February 13; **William Caudill, FAIA**, on February 27; **Charles Jencks**, March 1; and **Charles Moore, FAIA**, March 5. All programs begin at 8 p.m. in the Old Power House. For information call 805/546-1316.

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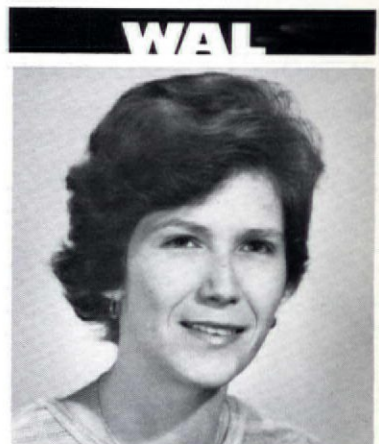
An exhibition of recent paintings by **Craig Ellwood** continues at the Anhalt-Barnes Gallery, 750 N. La Cienega Blvd., through February 10. The Southern California Chapter, Producers' Council, received the National Producers' Council Silver Bell Award in recognition of chapter excellence in the category of large PC chapters at the November national conference. Accepting the award for the chapter was **H.L. Hinman**, 1978 chapter president.

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Crombie Taylor, FAIA, has received a \$140,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to produce a multi-media series entitled "Foundations: Steel and Glass," on the history of early 19th-century iron and glass buildings in England and France and on the Chicago skyscrapers from the 1880s to the present. **Friends of Gill**, a citizens group dedicated to the on-site preservation and documentation of the work of Irving J. Gill, has recently organized and has published its first newsletter. Membership information may be obtained by writing Friends of Gill, P.O. Box 81931, San Diego, CA 92138.

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Carole Newlove [pictured above], newly installed SCCWAL president, is pleased to announce the election and installation of two additional Board members: **Martha (Mrs. Ralph) Bowerman**, vice-president; and **Maureen (Mrs. Richard) Dodson**, parliamentarian. Many thanks to **Marge and Bill Overpeck** for their hospitality at the WAL Christmas Party last month. The evening was made even more memorable by the delightful music of the unusually talented Freedom Bell Ringers.


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