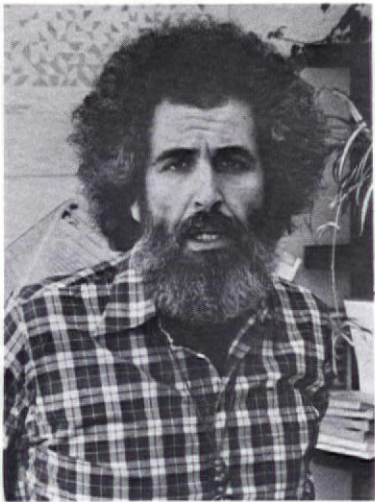


## STATE ARCHITECT WASSERMAN ON JULY 10



"Energy-Conscious Design" is the theme of the July Chapter meeting, which will feature a talk by California State Architect Barry L. Wasserman, AIA, and an exhibition of energy-conscious design. The program will be held on the evening of July 10 in the Sequoia Room of the Pacific Design Center.

Starting at 6 p.m., the exhibition of energy-conscious design will be on display. Organized by the SCC/AIA Energy Committee, chaired by John V. Mutlow, AIA, it will include displays of local projects of interest as well as several State energy-related projects. From 6-8 p.m., a reception honoring Wasserman will be held in the same location, at the cost of \$4.50 per person. RSVP to the Chapter office, at 624-6561, by July 6.

At 8 p.m., Wasserman will address the meeting on the issue of energy-conscious design as it is practiced in the Office of the State Architect which has played a pioneering role in this area — as in the 1977 statewide design competition of an energy-efficient State Office Building for Sacramento. Wasserman states that "The Office of the State Architect will continue to use new concepts in the design of State office buildings. These concepts must be responsive to at least five concerns: human, environmental, cost, social and community."

Wasserman became State Architect in September, 1978, after serving two years as Deputy State Architect under Sim Van der Ryn. Since 1976, he has been responsible for the Capitol Area Plan in Sacramento; the Art in Public Buildings Program; State office building construction, including the above-mentioned design competition; and handicapped code development, among many other programs.

Prior professional experience includes four years with Lawrence Halprin & Associates in San Francisco, where he was a principal with the firm from 1974-76. A graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Graduate School of Design, Wasserman has taught and lectured widely.

The exhibition and program are free of charge; the public is cordially invited to attend.

## WAL: SCC/AIA'S UNSUNG HEROINES

Mention the Women's Architectural League to most of the architectural community and reactions will probably range from "What?" or "Who?" to a disinterested, "Oh, yes." Yet this organization quietly has been acting as a support arm to the SCC/AIA for well over 25 years.

WAL's by-laws state: "The purpose of this corporation shall be to function as an auxiliary to the Southern California Chapter/AIA; to promote unification and advancement of the architectural profession, friendship and unity within the group, and to stimulate greater public interest in and understanding of the profession and its capacity to be of service to the community."

A comprehensive statement, to be sure, but one that, in every facet, is being implemented literally by WAL's volunteer membership.

"To promote unification and advancement of the architectural profession," WAL each year, though the proceeds of its annual Home Tour, contributes to the scholarship funds of no less than six architectural schools; it also sponsors "Rap Sessions" between students and practicing professionals.

"To promote friendship and unity within the group," WAL each year honors newly licensed architects at a reception to which are invited all SCC/AIA Board members as well as new members of the Chapter. Additionally, other social functions are held periodically, and the members act as hostesses at special SCC/AIA functions.

"To stimulate public interest and understanding..." WAL members

serve as judges and, as an organization, contribute to the Los Angeles Beautiful Home Improvement Award Program. WAL sponsors an Intern Scholarship to the Community Design Center and, through its major annual fund-raiser, the Home Tour, it provides public access to residences of architectural interest.

Who are these dedicated, hard-working, unsung heroines? There are four basic types of WAL membership: Corporate (Wives of SCC/AIA Corporate Members); Associate (eight classifications); Student (two classifications); and Honorary membership. The Board of Directors includes Executive Officers and Committee Chairpersons.

Carole Newlove, 1979 WAL President, in an article written for the May issue of the WAL Newsletter, discusses the relative worth of dollars contributed by other corporations to similar causes versus those garnered through WAL activities. While in no way denigrating the value and importance of large-scale monetary contributions, Newlove suggests that the efforts of WAL represent personal dedication to an idea by a small group of individuals who are motivated by an idealistic belief in the importance of the architectural profession to our society. The resultant dollars, though necessarily few in comparison, are "more precious for being weighted with feelings, laden with heart."

So, let's do mention WAL, mention it often, with pride and with recognition of its outstanding record of service to the architectural profession and to the public.

Janice Axon

## DESIGN AWARDS PROGRAM FOR 1979 LAUNCHED

The SCC/AIA has announced the requirements and schedule for the 1979 Design Awards which will culminate in the awards presentation and the public exhibition of the winning entries on October 9. (No announcements of the winners will be made prior to the awards presentation.)

A reception will be hosted from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. with the jury members in attendance. At 7:30 p.m. the awards program will begin. Slides of the winning entries will be shown with comments provided by the jury members. Immediately following will be a buffet honoring the winners.

Winning entries will be featured in the November issue of *L.A. ARCHITECT*. Eligibility, requirements and deadlines are as follows:

### Categories of entries:

- 1a. Work designed by registered architects (non-AIA and AIA) which has been constructed in Southern California (using San Luis Obispo as the dividing northern dividing line).
- b. Work designed by corporate members of the SCC/AIA which has been constructed anywhere.
2. Unbuilt projects designed by associates of the SCC/AIA.
3. Architectural drawings by students (including axonometrics, plans, sections, colored renderings, etc.)
4. Architectural drawings by registered architects and SCC/AIA associate members.

Any contracted work executed by a corporate member or registered architect meeting the above requirements is eligible. All constructed entries must have been completed since January 1, 1974, and cannot have previously received an award from the SCC/AIA.

### Requirements

Requirements for submittals by corporate members and registered architects of constructed work:

- One slide sheet of twenty 2x2 35mm color slides is to be provided by the entrant. For every submittal, the entrant is required to present a number of slides sufficient to illustrate the work. Minimum requirements are set forth below. Failure to meet these requirements will prevent consideration of the submittal.
- Slide of site plan.
- Slide of floor plan or plans.
- Slide of at least one section.
- Slides showing each exposed side of the building or improvement.
- Slide showing the immediate environs of the building or improvement.
- Slide of interior.
- Slide or slides of descriptive data.
- For remodeling and restoration work involving exterior alterations, one slide of each altered exposed side together with one slide of the same slide before the alteration (unless evidence is submitted as to the unavailability of the latter).
- At least one 8x10 black and white photo for possible press releases.

Requirements for associate project submittals:

- The entrant is required to submit a number of slides sufficient to illustrate the project. Insufficient documentation

## AUGUST CHAPTER MEETINGS SET

### August 14: Directions in Architecture

Exploring the theme of "Directions in Architecture" will be a panel of prominent Los Angeles design professionals who work closely with architects and thus occupy a special vantage point from which to comment on current architectural issues.

Program panelists are: Carlos Diniz, architectural delineator; John Follis, graphic designer; Gere Kavanaugh, interior designer; and Herb Rosenthal, graphic and industrial designer.

The August 14th program will begin at 8 p.m. in the Sequoia Room of the Pacific Design Center.

### August 28: Public Architecture

The many facets of architecture and government will be subject of a Chapter meeting scheduled for August 28. Sponsored jointly by Architects in

will prevent consideration of the project.

Requirements for submitting drawings:

- The entrant may submit either a slide(s) or an 8"x10" print(s). Winners will be required to submit original work for exhibition purposes at a later date.

### Descriptive Data and Concealed Identification

Please use the data sheets which will accompany the identification forms to be sent upon receipt of entry fee. Since the jury will have several hundred entries to study, it is required that this information be stated concisely. The descriptive data with the concealed identification shall be clipped to the slide sheet. All information requested on the identification form must be included, and when complete, placed in an opaque, sealed envelope.

### Closing Date and Fee

A registration fee of \$30 for each submittal of constructed work by a corporate member or registered architect must be paid by the entrant at the time entry slips are mailed. The entry slip (enclosed with this issue) and the fee must be postmarked no later than August 15, 1979. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the SCC/AIA.

No fee or declaration of intent to enter is required for students' drawings and associate members' projects. Data sheets for the submittal of drawings and associates' projects may be picked up at the Chapter office after August 15, 1979.

All entries must be in the Chapter office, Bradbury Building, Suite 510, 304 South Broadway, Los Angeles 90013 no later than September 15, 1979. No entry fees will be refunded for entries which do not materialize.

Anthony J. Lumsden, FAIA  
Chairman, SCC/AIA Awards  
Committee

## HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE FOR L.A. APPROVED

On May 9, the Los Angeles City Council approved an ordinance designed to create a Historic Preservation Zone as part of the Planning Zoning Code of the City of Los Angeles. Such special zones have been established in other cities, such as Santa Barbara and San Diego.

### Intent

The intent of a Historic Preservation Zone as public policy is to conserve historical structures, natural features, sites and areas for the cultural enrichment of the people on the basis that such enrichment is beneficial to the health, prosperity and general welfare. Preservation of an area establishes a sense of permanence and contributes to pride and interest in a community and to resident participation in it. Los Angeles has a number of historic areas such as Angelino Heights and West Adams that need the protection afforded by the designation as Historic Preservation Zoned-areas.

### Definition

A historic preservation zone specifies a geographical area including one or many structures, natural features and sites. Some, but not necessarily all of the structures, natural features or sites may be architecturally or historically distinctive.

### Functions of the Ordinance

The City Council establishes or adds land to a Preservation Zone under the terms of the ordinance. Structures, natural features or sites will be changed in occupancy, constructed, demolished, altered, removed or relocated only with approval called a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The ordinance will establish within each Preservation Zone a Historic Preservation Association composed of five members.

Government and Public Architecture Committees, the program will feature speakers from a cross-section of public agencies.

Topics will include an overview of upcoming projects, an explanation of the selection process and assistance in submitting qualifications for consulting work. After the initial presentations there will be ample opportunities for questions as well as discussion of broader issues: the problems and pitfalls of negotiating with public agencies, strategies for a more open selection process and ways of improving the quality of public architecture.

The meeting will be held in the Sequoia Room of the Design Center at 8 p.m., preceded by a cheese and wine buffet at 7 p.m., at \$3.50 per person. RSVP to the Chapter office.

Confirm locations and times of both August meetings with Chapter office, 624-6561.

### Initiating a Preservation Zone

The City Council, the Planning Commission or the Cultural Heritage Board or any owner or renter located or residing within the Zone may initiate the proceedings to establish, change boundaries or repeal a Preservation Zone.

For further information, contact the Code Studies Section, Planning Department, Room 512, City Hall, Los Angeles 90012, 485-3508.

## ARCHITECTS AT THE LEGISLATURE

On two balmy spring days, May 15 and 16, a group of architects convened in Sacramento under the auspices of CCAIA to discuss legislation and issues affecting architects, such as building codes, school financing, handicapped regulations, energy problems and, probably the hottest issue, the challenge to architectural registration. The speakers, both architectural and political, were to the point and a great deal of information was quickly and clearly disseminated.

An additional purpose of the conference was to enable architects to understand how legislation is initiated and how we may influence proposed bills that affect us directly as architects, or peripherally, as participants in the building industry.

Senator John Schmitz gave an amusing and cynical, or what might be termed "realistic," talk on how the political process works. Primarily, politicians wish to be elected and, secondarily, they wish to be re-elected. However, these two activities cost a great deal of money and hence, those who are the largest campaign contributors will certainly have the politician's ear, although, we were assured, not necessarily his vote.

A series of appointments had been set up between the architects and their elected representatives; in most cases, however, the meeting was conducted with the legislator's aides. Nevertheless, architects were able to present their views regarding current issues, to establish face-to-face contact, and thus became highly visible as an organized group to the legislators. This is the kind of activity that may begin to establish clout for architects.

It was interesting to note that the political side seemed to have only the vaguest idea of what architects do, what the design process consists of, and what contributions architects can make to society. This, of course, was rather surprising, since most architects have a very clear picture of their value in the social scheme.

CCAIA should be complimented on a very well-run program and encouraged to keep this kind of legislative contact going on a regular basis.

Kenneth Dillon, AIA

## JULY 1979

### Volume 5, Number 7

#### Inside:

Lutah Maria Riggs, FAIA, by Esther McCoy

Eugene Kupper interviewed by Tim Vreeland, AIA

Community Design Center by Tony McNamara

Gill in Torrance by Roger Hatheway

"Planning and Designing and Non-Sexist Society": Conference Overview

Calendar:

July 10: State Architect Barry Wasserman, Pacific Design Center, 8 p.m.; reception/exhibition, 6 p.m.

August 14: "Directions in Architecture," with Diniz, Follis, Kavanaugh and Rosenthal, Pacific Design Center, 8 p.m.

August 28: "Public Architecture," Pacific Design Center, 8 p.m.; reception, 7 p.m.



# ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES TO THE MASSES: A Progress Report from the Los Angeles Community Design Center



Now in its eleventh year of operation, the Los Angeles Community Design Center continues to provide environmental design services to low-income community groups. The Design Center has grown from a part-time, all-volunteer endeavor, to a full-time practice with a staff of 25, including both professionals and interns from the CETA and VISTA programs. Projects vary from the community-generated to the government-contracted, from the room addition plans to long-range studies. Incorporated in 1972, the Design Center is governed by a Board of Directors that includes professional, academic, and community representatives. The Design Center is located at 541 S. Spring St., #800, Los Angeles 90013.

What follows is an overview of the projects and issues with which the Design Center is currently involved.

## Community Care

In 1973, the State of California enacted a Care Facilities Act aimed at changing the practice of institutionalizing dependent children, youthful offenders, drug addicts, alcoholics, and the mentally disabled. The 1973 Act called for publicly funded and supervised but privately owned and operated facilities in "homelike and community settings." Half a decade after the Act went into effect, 24,093 state- and 7,339 county-approved facilities are operating in Los Angeles County.

Because state and county authorities do not consider local zoning and building codes, community care providers may find their licensed facilities in conflict with local authorities. Often, they have leased or purchased an older building which must be modified for new uses. When an architect assists a community care provider in conforming with local regulations, he or she shares the client's frustration with the bureaucratic complications.

Margot Siegel, AIA, tells of one client, a drug rehabilitation center, for whom she had designed structural changes. The Los Angeles Building and Safety department, enforcing local

ordinance, and the Fire Department, interpreting the regulations of the State Fire Marshal, could not agree whether the modified facility would be technically one building or two. Either way, one department would consider the facility non-conforming. After Siegel requested a ruling from the City Attorney, the Fire Department agreed to overlook the "violation" and the Building Department granted a certificate of occupancy.

Clients such as Siegel's are the lucky ones, as they have the technical services that only a professional can offer. The Los Angeles Fire Department estimates that 75% of community care providers seeking to comply with its regulations do not have the services of an architect.

Among such facilities are the potential clientele of the Los Angeles Community Design Center. Even before the enactment of the Care Facilities Act, Siegel had shown her concern for other types of community clients, many of whom could not afford to pay for professional services, by volunteering her services to the Design Center.

In 1968, under the leadership of SCC/AIA President Carl Maston, FAIA, the Chapter had joined the USC School of Architecture and Fine Arts in establishing the Los Angeles Community Design Center to provide architectural and other environmental design services to those low-income groups unable to pay for them. Siegel served as the first president of the newly incorporated Design Center from 1972 through 1974 and was responsible for establishing the first full-time staff and obtaining the requisite funding. She remains the SCC/AIA representative to the Design Center Board of Directors.

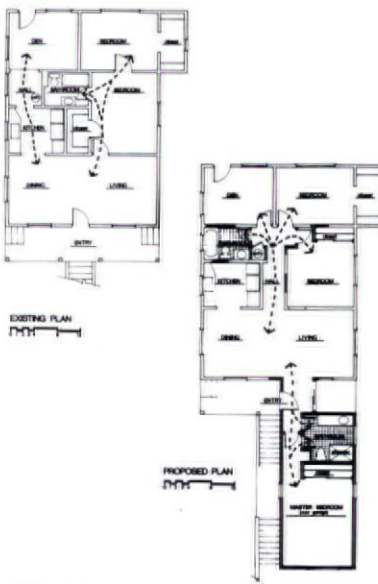
About half of the Design Center's clients are community care providers. In addition to offering services in this single-client mode, the Design Center has expanded its approach to servicing community care providers.

During the month of May, community care workshops were held in Los Angeles and Inglewood to assist providers in selecting buildings appropriate for renovation. Those attending the workshops received and learned to use two manuals prepared by the Design Center: *The Community Care Bible*, a guide to building requirements for licensing, and *The Community Care Workbook*, a systematic approach to the evaluation of buildings. John Lanterman, who authored both manuals, notes that they are also for architects and other professionals. He adds that the Los Angeles City Fire

Department has already decided to use both manuals to assist its staff in dealing with community care providers.

## HOME Program

In addition to providing services directly to community groups, the Design Center began in 1975 to accept contracts from public agencies for selected community-oriented projects. In doing so, the Design Center has not sought to compete with established design and planning firms. Rather, it has attempted



HOME Program, Covarrubia House, Highland Park. Plans, before and after rehabilitation. Photo, under construction.

to develop new roles for the design professional, so that Design Center contracts will eventually generate work for practicing architects. The second important consideration in accepting a contract has been the willingness of the public agency to work with the particular community, not just in it.

One program area satisfying both considerations is federally funded housing rehabilitation administered by local municipalities. Under such programs, qualifying home owners receive construction consultation and subsidized loans for rehabilitating their residential property. Many of these programs do not provide for design services, so despite intent, some "improvements"

are of dubious value. One municipality recently arranged financing for a contractor-designed house addition that included two bedrooms situated "railroad" fashion — that is, the back bedroom's only interior access was through the front one.

In the City of Los Angeles, however, homeowners in ten different target areas of the Homeowners Opportunity Maintenance Effort (HOME) receive Design Center services as well as the usual construction contract supervision and financing provided by the city. In the Harvard Park rehabilitation area in South Central Los Angeles, the city has contracted with the Design Center one step further — to manage the entire program.

According to Design Center Rehabilitation Coordinator, Craig Scott, "These neighborhoods and residences rehabilitated by the HOME program are important housing resources. Only the sensitivities of the design professional can insure that the homeowner receives what he or she wants and needs." Many of the residences in HOME target areas, although small and not up to code, are irreplaceable examples of a vanished era in California vernacular architecture, and the Design Center strives to protect the aesthetic integrity of each residence as it is expanded and renovated.

By demonstrating to the city's Community Development Department that homeowners appreciate and benefit from professional design services, the Design Center has developed a role for the architects in subsidized housing rehabilitation. Now the Community Development Department is inviting other architectural firms to provide services to homeowners in its program areas.

## Design Center Publications

One way in which the Design Center has sought to share its developed expertise has been through publications.

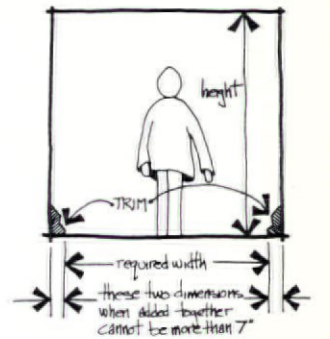
*Recycling for Housing* (1977) documents a Design Center proposal for conversion of near-empty Spring Street office buildings. Although the report's specific suggestions for senior citizen housing on Spring Street have not been implemented, the Design Center's documentation of conversion feasibility has stimulated new interest in Spring Street among public and private investors.

The Design Center's 1977 California Redevelopment Workshop proceedings were documented in a report, *California Redevelopment Policy: Does it Enhance or Diminish Community in the Los Angeles Region?*, which has become a standard reference work on redevelopment issues.

Publication of studies for the Catholic Workers' Hospitality Kitchen, entitled *Skid Row: Recommendations to the*

*Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Central Business District Plan for the City of Los Angeles*, led to a new approach to Skid Row planning by the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency.

Vic Regnier, who represents the USC School of Architecture and Fine Arts on the Design Center Board of Directors, recently suggested that a revolving publication fund be established so that



Sample diagram from The Community Care Bible.

more project work could be published. A local foundation has indicated interest in helping to fund such a project, but it will not establish such a fund unilaterally and suggests that design professional societies put up half the money.

## The Funding Challenge

The search for publications funding underscores the difficulty in raising funds for worthwhile causes within the architectural profession itself. While the public perceives architects as affluent, architects picture themselves as underpaid. Design Center Executive Director James Bonar, AIA, comments: "The architectural profession should ask itself, 'What are we capable of doing?' Architects are often solicited by everyone — their clients, the politicians and charities we come in contact with. But, it seems to me that we are hesitant to ask our friends in other professions and businesses to reciprocate by helping worthy causes related to our own field."

The Design Center has sometimes received small donations from professional organizations and interested individuals, but in the last five years these have not amounted to even five percent of the operating budget. At one time, the Design Center received non-categorical funds from public agencies, but more recently its public funding has come from contracts which pay only for themselves.

So it remains a challenge to fund community-originated projects or special services like a publications fund. But it is this very challenge that motivates the Design Center as it continues to help low-income communities help themselves.

Tony McNamara

# IRVING GILL, TORRANCE, AND THE INDUSTRIAL DREAM

Irving Gill is one of Southern California's most interesting, yet enigmatic, architects. Recent discoveries of previously unidentified Gill buildings in the city of Torrance provide information pertaining to several significant aspects of his career. The relationship of Gill's design philosophy to early 20th-century industrial city planning is clearly stated



El Roi Tan Hotel, 1912 (photos: Roger Hatheway).

in his Torrance work, and the structural features of several "new" Gill buildings add another dimension to his already well-known architectural technology.

## Background

In 1911, real estate promoter Jared Sydney Torrance purchased a large tract of land from the pioneer Dominguez family. Torrance then joined into a partnership with several other Los Angeles businessmen, forming the Dominguez Land Company. In order to better promote their real estate venture, the investors decided to establish a progressive industrial city. They named the new city Torrance.

Initially, the investors engaged the services of John C. and Frederick Law Olmsted, landscape architects from Brookline, Massachusetts. The formal contract between the Olmsted Brothers and the Dominguez Land Company was signed on January 5, 1912. Later in the same month, five Southern California architects, R.D. Farquhar, Elmer Grey, Sumner P. Hunt and Parker Wright, all of Los Angeles, and Irving Gill of San

Diego, were invited to submit designs for several types of buildings for the new city.

Gill was officially appointed chief architect of Torrance in June of 1912. He assumed responsibility for the design of each building erected by the Dominguez Land Company, and for the implementation of the Olmsted Plan.

The Torrance plan itself was based upon the shape of a "Y". Industry was located on the outside of the area bounded by the figure, while commercial and residential structures were located within the open area formed at the top of the "Y". The plan was oriented so that prevailing westerly winds blew industrial smoke away from the commercial and residential areas. Trees were planted to shield the factories from view. And a transportation network was incorporated as part of the overall plan. "Real city planning."



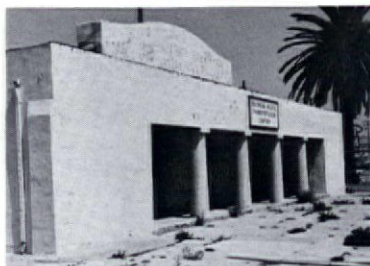
Workers' cottages, showing zero-lot-line placement, 1913.

declared Frederick Law Olmsted, "is concerned with every line of development which affects the physical conditions under which the people of today and the people of years to come must live and work."

Gill enthusiastically adopted the physical and philosophical elements of the Olmsted Plan, for the ideals were remarkably similar to his own. Since 1908, Gill had increasingly devoted himself to a utilitarian, low-cost and socially conscious form of architecture, exemplified by his 1910 Lewis Courts in

## Sierra Madre.

As a result of the combined Olmsted-Gill effort, Torrance was at its inception one of the more thoughtfully planned industrial cities in the country. Despite the fact that the city's growth would



Pacific Electric Depot, 1912.

soon exceed the limitations of the plan, Torrance is a tribute to the progressive, industrial idea of the early 20th century.

## Gill's Torrance Work

The range of Gill's Torrance work is impressive. Commercial, public, residential and industrial structures were designed as part of the investment and planning scheme. Today they provide a detailed record of a brief but highly productive period of Gill's career. Although Gill only served as chief architect in Torrance for approximately one year, 1912-1913, nearly every structure that he designed during this period was built. In recent years several of his buildings have been demolished, but at least 18 remain.

Although each structure employs cement or concrete, the materials with which Gill is most closely identified, the majority of the Torrance buildings do not use them as primary construction materials. The Pacific Electric station is built of hollow tile with a cement-plastered exterior. Gill's worker cottages are wood-frame structures with a cement-plastered exterior layered up over lath and wire mesh. The Brighton and Colonial Hotels are composed of concrete, brick and steel. Constructed of brick with slab floors, the El Roi Tan and Murray Hotels have only a cement-plastered exterior. With the exception of the Southern Pacific Bridge, the main building of the Hendrie

Rubber Company is the only known Gill building in Torrance having monolithic concrete construction.

The variety of construction techniques suggests that Gill was still formulating a consistent technical methodology. As well as furnishing easily manipulated, relatively inexpensive durable and waterproof surfaces, concrete and cement provided Gill with a plastic design material. By smoothing over serrated lines of brick work, hollow tile, and irregular wood-frame joinery, Gill achieved a simple yet powerful form. Gill's use of concrete and cement constituted both the ideal working solution to technical problems, and a means by which to best approximate his own aesthetic goals.

The design of individual structures reflects the underlying theme of the Olmsted Plan — responsive to the needs of people in their living and working environments. Gill's residential cottages are, for example, built to the extreme side of each piece of property. The advantages offered by zero-lot line placement are obvious, since more continuous yard space is created for gardens or recreational activity. Gill's industrial and commercial buildings are carefully designed so as to allow for a maximum of interior lighting and ventilation. Remarkably, the Hendrie Rubber



Rubbercraft (Hendrie Rubber Co.), 1913.

Company (now called Rubbercraft) is still a fully operational industrial facility, 65 years after its construction.

## A Formative Period

Torrance was undoubtedly an important and formative period for Gill. His work there provides a unique opportunity to assess his architecture because it occurs at a critical developmental point

in his career, prior to the mature style that would later characterize the Banning and Dodge Houses of Los Angeles.

Through an examination of his Torrance buildings, one can observe Gill as he formulates a cohesive design



Colonial Hotel, 1912.

philosophy and experiments with technological innovation. It is a comprehensive statement, and an example of Gill's creative versatility.

Roger Hatheway

Architectural historian Roger Hatheway recently completed work on an architectural survey for the City of Torrance.

## GILL'S TORRANCE BUILDINGS

1. Bridge, near corner of Torrance Blvd. and Western Ave.
2. Pacific Electric Depot, 1200 Cabrillo.
3. El Roi Tan Hotel, 1211 El Prado.
4. Murray Hotel, 1210 El Prado.
5. Colonial Hotel, 1601-1605 Cabrillo.
6. Brighton Hotel, 1639 Cabrillo.
7. Salm Manufacturing, 1805 Abalone.
8. Rubbercraft, 1800 W. 220th St.
9. Bungalow, 1815 Gramercy.
10. Bungalow, 1819 Gramercy.
11. Bungalow, 1903 Gramercy.
12. Bungalow, 1904 Gramercy.
13. Bungalow, 1907 Gramercy.
14. Bungalow, 1916 Gramercy.
15. Bungalow, 1919 Gramercy.
16. Bungalow, 1920 Gramercy.
17. Casa Del Amo Apartments, 1860 Torrance Blvd.
18. Shop/Apartments, 1610-1612 Cabrillo.



# A WALK WITH LUTAH RIGGS

Sixty years ago Lulah Maria Riggs, FAIA, received a degree in architecture from UC Berkeley, and 1979 marks her sixtieth year in the continuous practice of architecture. Now at age 83, with two draftsmen, her office still hums.

She was wounded to read in Susana Torre's 1977 book, *Women in American Architecture*, that she had "moved west during the war to work as a stage designer in Hollywood" and "out of these connections came her commission to design the Vedanta Temple." As this misinformation subsequently appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* and may take on the cloak of truth, let it be known that Lulah Riggs entered architecture by the front door, not by way of the entertainment industry.

## Beginnings

She was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1896, and after graduation from high school came with her mother to Santa Barbara where she attended junior college. (She met Martha Graham in the library.) Then on to Berkeley on a scholarship. Why architecture? Why not, she replies. No, she was not the first woman to have a degree in architecture from "the Ark" — several women graduated before her, and in her class of 1919 were Rose Luis, Irene McFall of Pasadena, and Elah Hale, who married one of their professors, William Hayes.

Her first job came through a specific request to John Galen Howard, head of the Ark, for a woman draftsman; Ralph D. Taylor, a Susansville architect who was designing a school, preferred a woman because there was no place for a draftsman to live except in his house with his wife and daughters. She spent four months completing the drawings,

leaving before the first heavy snows by the last train out.

Back in Berkeley, Riggs began studying toward a master's degree, but stopped at the end of the first semester to take a job with an architect who often hired bright students and paid them well — 75 cents an hour. He was Theodore Spencer, who later designed Vacation Village in San Diego. The office was working on designs for houses for a developer, and Spencer so admired her design that he brought in a famous man to have a look at it. The Spencer office was at the corner of Telegraph Avenue and Dwight Way where Bernard Maybeck waited each morning for the trolley to his San Francisco office, so one day Spencer pulled him in off the street and took him to Riggs' board. It was quite a moment for her — until Maybeck spoke. "Young lady, this would be fine for the Black Forest of Germany but not for the Berkeley Hills." She recalls, "He was like a kind father with a child. I have always loved him for it."

## Years with G.W. Smith

What drew Riggs back to Santa Barbara was a story on a house she had seen in *Architectural Record* while at Taylor's offices in Susansville. She felt so attuned to the house that she decided she would one day ask the architect for a job — he was George Washington Smith of Santa Barbara. What appealed to her were the simple white planes of the walls, the deep reveals, the plan organized around a patio, and the way minor Andalusian architecture had been adjusted to the mores of Santa Barbara.

There were six or seven other draftsmen in the office when she started in

1921. After a few years she was chief designer and contributed importantly to the designs of the Lobero Theater and a number of Smith houses. At the age of 30 she designed her own house, and today her office is in a detached structure off the motor court. After Smith's death in 1930 she finished up the work in progress and opened her own office.

## Her Own Practice

Riggs was influenced by Smith's restrained work, by the lack of ornament in a period when it had become popular, by his fine proportions and his use of light and shadow. But her design was distinguishable from his, often by her personal attitude toward scale. She was more assertive and venturesome, and a certain pragmatism in her floor planning translated three-dimensionally into forms less pictorial than Smith's. However, her own house of 1926 was closer to Smith in its compact massing and the high, narrow ecclesiastical space of the living room.

Her 1938 Von Romberg house is clearly out of another sensibility. The facade is an enormous blank rectangular plaster wall stepping down midway on the same plane to a smaller rectangle in which the entrance door is recessed. I visited the house with her and Joe Knowles, her chief draftsman, and as I looked at it with astonishment (and with some memory of the Lobero Theater) someone came to tell her that the gardener felt that the large silent wall "needed a tree as an accent." What kind would she suggest? None at all. She said she had worked hard to achieve that particular wall, and it was its own accent.

In the high oval entrance hall, she

recalled, "This was what I had to solve first of all. Everything gave off this hall." She waved her frail hand from the french doors to the terrace, to the curved stair, to the doors leading to living and other rooms. She stopped as she noticed a recently cut door to a breakfast room. "Too bad."

There were a number of surprises in the Von Romberg house, one of them a studio room on the third level that was a little essay in Art Deco. More surprises in the 1960 office wing to her 1942 library at the Botanic Garden. A linear ranchhouse-style office is tucked under live oaks, and the covered porch is a passage to the more formal library which is placed on axis. The leap from one scale to another has the same justification as some of the strange juxtapositions of the plant materials.

Riggs' best known work is the Vedanta Temple (1956), so small as to be dwarfed by many of her houses. You come upon this intensely calm and poetic building at a bend of a road, not by a long attention-demanding approach. It appears suddenly in its full size. A heavy, brooding hipped roof, surmounted by a small gable, leads the eye to the mountains beyond. The roof overhangs a deep porch supported on peeled fir poles, and the dark values of the low-riser steps, extending the full width of the building, contrast with the white plastered wall in which is a deeply-inset dark double door. The total effect is that of a preliminary altar.

The 1973 Ludington house is emphatically wall architecture — three attached cube forms of different height have flat roofs above a ghost of a cornice. The only relief to the play of

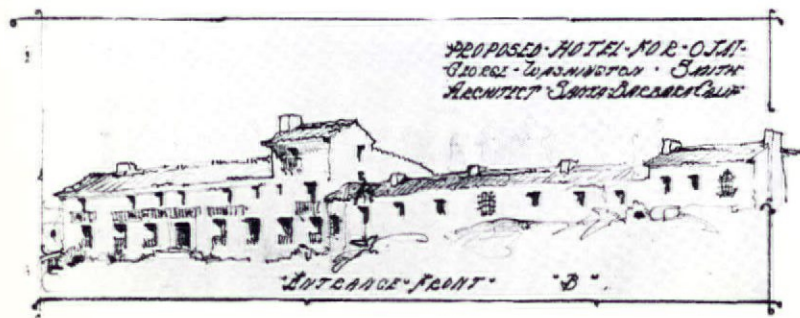
white cubes are the *canales* (out-spouts), the starkly sculptural chimney, and the black diagonal line where the broad entrance steps slash across the largest of the white cubes.

Lulah Riggs wanted me to walk into all her kitchens, but we saw only the Ludington, and that through windows on a porch. Looking beyond the precisely laid out equipment I saw an oddly formal little breakfast space; it was developed in an area borrowed from the hall to the living room, and a large portrait on the wall was a transition from utility to easy elegance. It occurred to me that wars, inflation, depressions, changes in life styles had kept intact a certain characteristic of all her buildings — good manners.

This tiny woman just out of the hospital, still wearing the plastic identification band on her wrist, hunched into a voluminous coat for warmth, her face grown to double its strength by its thinness, was alight with sharp intelligence as she recalled her reasons for each design decision. We had spent many hours together once before when we were jurors in the 1967 San Diego AIA Awards Program. She was the kindest of jurors, she wanted nothing thrown out, she wanted still another look. Still, at the final showdown, immersed in panels, she ticked off in her gentle voice what went wrong with each of the designs.

Esther McCoy

Esther McCoy has recently been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for a study of second-generation California modernists.



Drawing by Lulah Maria Riggs, Ojai Hotel Project, 1924, G.W. Smith, architect (UCSB Art Museum Archives).



Portrait, May 1978



Von Romberg Res., Santa Barbara, 1938 (photo: Hurrell).



Ludington Residence, Santa Barbara, 1973 (photo McCall).



Vedanta Temple, Santa Barbara, 1956 (photo: McCoy).



Riggs Residence, Santa Barbara, 1926 (photo: McCall).



Riggs Kitchen (photo: J.T. Beals).



Botanic Garden Library, 1942, and 1960 Office, Santa Barbara (McCoy).

## The Source for: TAPESTRIES

...all kinds of woven Tapestries in the manner of Gobelines, Aubusson, Flanders, etc. ...along with contemporary designs made in Aubusson, France

### • Art For Ever •

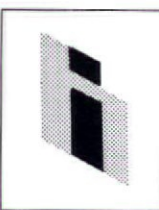
8573 Melrose Ave., L.A. 90046

(213) 652-7707

Mon.-Fri. 10 to 6, Sat. 10 to 1

In West Hollywood, just east of the Pacific Design Center

BOOKS on ARCHITECTURE • DESIGN • PLANNING  
new • out-of-print • imported / hardcover & paperback  
extensive stock / special values at reduced prices



WE ALSO BUY BOOKS

## Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc.

Art & Architecture Bookstore

— NEW ADDRESS —

10814 Pico Boulevard

Los Angeles 90064 473-0380

## Can you afford not to use minimax?

(USERS CLAIM SAVINGS OF AS MUCH AS 30%)

The MINIMAX Pin Register Overlay Drafting System:

- Eliminates all repetitive drafting.
- Makes design changes easier and faster.
- Allows quick, accurate checking of disciplines against each other.
- Provides finished composite working drawings that are clean, sharp, accurate and permanent.
- Is backed by a nationwide network of 42 top reproduction houses whose cameras have a common alignment to permit creation of composite drawings from overlays created in several locations.

For a demonstration or additional information on the

minimax System

Call Century City Blueprint Co.

553-0500

ENERGY ANALYSIS • CDM STANDARD DESIGN  
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL  
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS • TYPE V  
JOB COST CONTROL

## math/tec

COMPUTER AID FOR ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

118 SOUTH CATALINA / REDONDO BEACH, CA 90277 (213) 374-8959

## LUMBER ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

We have available to you:

Design information

Technical assistance

Literature including

Timber Construction Manual

Grading rule books

Western Wood Use Book

National Design Specifications

Span tables



WOOD — The only renewable natural resource

If we can be of help to you, call or come by

1915 Beverly Blvd. Ste. 202 Los Angeles, Ca. 90057  
213-483-6450

Paul Bielenberg Photography

2447 Lantana Terrace Los Angeles, Ca 90039 (213) 652-357



FOUR POST PEDESTAL BASE

ADJUSTABLE DRAFTING HORSES  
BOARDS PLAIN OR LINOLEUM  
MANUFACTURER  
FACTORY DIRECT LOW  
PRICES

655-1656

Pierce Table Top Co.  
8344 W. 3RD L.A.



# CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

The 2,157th meeting of the SCC/AIA Board of Directors, May 1, 1979:

- **Harry Newman** proposed the preparation of a brochure to encourage Professional Affiliate membership; **Norma Sklarek** and **Jim Stevens** will develop this.
- Treasurer **Bernard Zimmerman** reported on the 1979 budget, which totals \$169,500, with a reserve fund of \$25,700; the Board voted approval.
- **Joel Breitbart** (Architects in Government Committee) discussed plans to sponsor a seminar to introduce members to various agencies. This will be coordinated with plans being developed by **Lorenzo Tedesco** (Public Architecture Committee) for an August Chapter meeting.
- **Peter Creamer** (Compensation Committee) reported on plans to prepare a pamphlet on the subject of compensation to architects.
- **Norma Sklarek** (Legislative Liaison Committee) noted that, while she monitors the City Council agenda daily, the Committee is not an active one and can respond only to emergencies.
- **Stanley Smith** encouraged attendance at the CCAIA Architects at the Legislature meeting in May. He also proposed establishment of a Chapter committee to establish policy and procedures on Chapter public relations. The Board approved.

SCC/AIA Membership Report, June:

New Corporate Members: **Carlo F. Ippolito** (Theodore Barry & Associates); **Donald I. King** (Housing Authority, City Of Los Angeles); **George I. Zaima** (Ross/Zaima, Inc.); **Howard J. Rosenfeld** (Froehlich & Kow); **Robert MacDonald** (Leo A. Daly Co.).

New Associate Members: **Salvador Jimenez** (Don Pablo Inc.); **Douglas Greene** (William L. Pereira Associates); **Thomas J. Masterson** (W. Haas Associates); **William C. Meredith** (Adrian Wilson Associates); **Aric D. Gless** (Selje, Bond, Stewart & Romberger).

New Student Affiliates: **Mark Casavantes** (East Los Angeles College).  
New Professional Affiliates: **Melvin Bilow** (Mechanical design consultant for Mel Bilow & Associates); **John R. Hollingsworth** (Illustrator for John Hollingsworth); **Judy Grubbs** (Hospital consultant & health facility planner for Bobrow/Thomas and Associates); **David Agbonmoba** (Planner for Planning Research Associates); **Craig B. Kelford** (Building designer for Conceptual Engineering, Ltd.); **Herbert Tiras** (Manufacturing engineer for OMNICO).

SUBSCRIBE TO L.A. ARCHITECT!

**BILL HERSEY**  
DRAWINGS for  
ARCHITECTS  
415:654-1434

Architectural  
and  
Aerial Photography  
**Yahei Komatsu**  
(213) 731-1484

landscape architecture  
environmental planning

**dna** *Don Napolitano*

don napolitano and associates  
408 s. park ave., montebello, california 90640 (213) 721-8780

*Castle  
Tapestries*



Recent installations:

- Four Seasons Clift Hotel, San Francisco, California — 5 tapestries for designer Armin Trattmann of Los Angeles.
- La Mansion del Norte, San Antonio, Texas — 6 tapestries selected by Selje, Bond, Stewart & Romberger of Pasadena, California.
- Three savings and loan facilities — 2 tapestries each for the Earl Interiors Systems division of The O.K. Earl Corp. of Pasadena, California.

Castle Newell

(213)

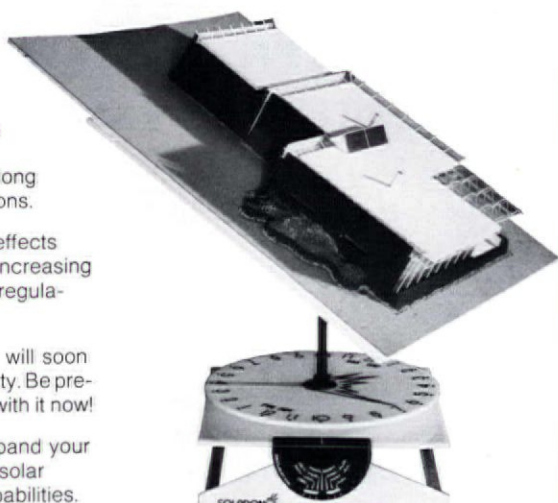
246-0290

We are direct importers of Europe's finest woven and hand-printed tapestry wall-hangings. We bring them to you!

ARCHITECTS  
ENGINEERS-DESIGNERS

**SOLVE COMPLEX  
SOLAR PROBLEMS**

- Save hundreds of man hours now spent on long hand calculations.
- Analyze solar effects as required by increasing governmental regulations.
- Solar air rights will soon become a reality. Be prepared to deal with it now!
- Develop or expand your own in house solar consulting capabilities.



**PRESENTING: the SOLADON™ SYSTEM**  
The culmination of precision engineering and sculptural design!

**CALL NOW!** or write: © **1978 SOLADON CO.**  
(213) 353-5701 **2152 Stoneyvale Road**  
**Tujunga, California 91042**

Chapter members note: Please complete the SCC/AIA Student Intern Questionnaire enclosed with this L.A. ARCHITECT mailing and return it as soon as possible to the Chapter office.

**Obituary:** The Chapter extends its sympathies to **James Pulliam, FAIA**, on the death of his mother, **Mary Pulliam**, of Pasadena.

As is customary, L.A. ARCHITECT will not publish in August. Copy deadline for the September issue is August 1.

## L.A. ARCHITECT

Published monthly (except August) by the Southern California Chapter American Institute of Architects  
Suite 510, Bradbury Building,  
304 South Broadway  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
(213) 624-6561  
One-year mail subscriptions: \$6.00  
Advertising rates are available from the Chapter office.

Editorial contributions and correspondence are invited. The opinions stated are those of the authors only, and do not reflect the official position of the AIA or the Southern California Chapter, except where noted.

Appearance of names and pictures of products and services in either editorial or advertising does not constitute an endorsement of same by the AIA or the Southern California Chapter.

**James Pulliam, FAIA**  
President  
**Stanley M. Smith, AIA**  
Vice President  
**Bernard Zimmerman, FAIA**  
Treasurer  
**Lester Wertheimer, AIA**  
Secretary

**Directors:**  
**Richard Conklin, AIA**  
**David Crompton, AIA**  
**Jerrold Lomax, AIA**  
**Louis Naidorf, FAIA**  
**Harry D. Newman, AIA**  
**Clyde L. Smith, AIA**

**President, San Fernando Valley Section**  
**Carol (Mrs. Victor M.) Newlove**  
President, Women's Architectural League  
**Fran Offenhausen**  
President, Associates

**Thomas R. Vreeland, Jr., AIA**  
Chairman of the Editorial Board  
**Janice Axon**  
Treasurer  
**Lester Wertheimer, AIA**  
Graphic Designer

**Editorial Board:**  
**Anne Luise Buerger**  
**Peggy Cochran, AIA**  
**Kenneth Dillon, AIA**  
**Thomas S. Hines**  
**Panos Koulermos**  
**Frederic P. Lyman, AIA**  
**Charles W. Moore, FAIA**  
**Stefanos Polyzoides**  
**Michael F. Ross, AIA**  
**A. Jeffrey Skorneck**  
**Richard Saul Wurman, FAIA**

**Margaret Bach**  
Editor  
**Ken S. Evans**  
Advertising Director

**Southwest Energy  
Management of  
Los Angeles, Inc.**  
2379 GLENDALE BLVD  
L.A., CA 90039  
(213) 666-0609

Services for architects:

- **TITLE 24 COMPLIANCE**
- **SOLAR HEATING & COOLING** - active and passive
- **ENERGY PLANNING & growth management issues**
- **SEMINARS & EDUCATIONAL services**
- **MULTIPLE SOLAR SYSTEMS** for condos and apartments



Presentation Acrylic Architectural Models with fully illuminated capability

Topographical Models

Acrylic Massing and Study Models

Professional plastic fabrication featuring Acrylic forming and vacuum metallizing. Special Low-intensity neon illumination.

**LEONARD A. STERN**  
(213) 650-0739

Production Facility:  
3225 Lacy Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90031  
(213) 223-4141

DIMENSIONAL PRESENTATIONS Architectural Scale Models

Awards:

**Sarah Dennison**, a June graduate from the USC School of Architecture, has been awarded an AIA Medal, the highest award for scholarship. **Alison Ishimaru** received an AIA runner-up certificate.

WAL/Southern California Chapter scholarship awards were presented to USC students **David Wallace**, **Maureen Sullivan**, and **Anthony Moretti**.

**For the Record:** The Chapter wishes to thank the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency for its assistance in funding the special Downtown issues of L.A. ARCHITECT in February and June.

## ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

Exp. Arch. Secy. & Office Mgr. will set up any phase of office. Financial procedures. Call **Louise Goglia (213) 394-6203**

## ARCHITECTURAL MANAGERS

Architects needed for management team directing development of community of over 300,000 in Saudi Arabia. Salaries, benefits & assignments are attractive.

Positions offer a unique opportunity for professionals with experience in a full range of community related activities.

Qualified applicants will have experience in the management and administration of large architectural projects. Degree or equivalent experience and registration desired.

Submit resume to **Janette M. Gross, Bechtel, Employment Department, P.O. Box 3965, San Francisco, California 94119**. Equal Opportunity Employer, M/F.

## ARCHITECTS — DESIGNERS BUILDERS — DEVELOPERS

**SELL** your subdivision, condo's, income property or other REAL ESTATE on a DEFINITE DATE for the HIGHEST PRICE even in a WEAK MARKET.

**PUBLIC SALE** is a unique, innovative, marketing technique.

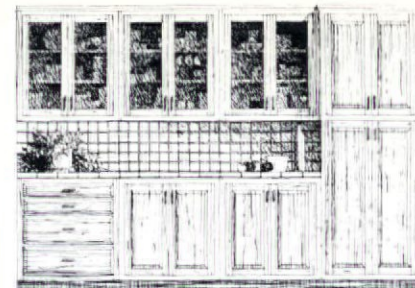
- Maximum Exposure • Eliminates Negotiations
- Competitive Bidding • Saves Carrying Costs

We Specialize in REAL ESTATE. We set up and coordinate all phases of a complete AUCTION marketing program for you, and the total fees normally will not exceed the usual brokers commission. For FREE information call or write **Milo Marchetti, Jr.**

counselor at law

1221 W. Coast Highway  
Newport beach, CA 92663  
(714) 631-2505, 645-5000

P.S. We also have PRIME RESORT PROPERTIES for development in Mexico.



**MUTSCHLER**

More than simply the best in cabinetry.

8738 West Third Street, Los Angeles 213/272-0731

**JOLYPATE**

**NEW WALL FINISHING  
MATERIAL  
EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR**

### 1 Durability and strength

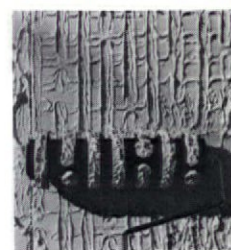
Once it dries, provides excellent hardness and strength but still looks soft.

### 2 Crack resistance and flexibility

Hard but provides exceptional flexibility.....crack resistant.

### 3 Adhesion resistance

Provides powerful adhesion to any base material, not overnice in choice, but a wide range of adaptability.....makes installation easy free from peeling problem.



### 4 Water resistance

Once dries, absolutely water resistant; therefore, most suitable for sanitary spaces, such as bath room.

### 5 Fire resistance

Provides higher fire resistance plus non-toxicity.....softens black, but non-combustible with no flames.

**CALL OR WRITE FOR FREE BROCHURE**

**AICA American Inc.**  
**15535 Minnesota Ave.**  
**Paramount, CA 90723**  
**Phone: (213) 634-1259**



## Conference Overview: PLANNING AND DESIGNING A NON- SEXIST SOCIETY

At an all-day conference on April 21 at UCLA's School of Architecture and Urban Planning, members of the design, university, arts, and political communities shared insights, commentary, and proposals directed to the conference theme, "Planning and Designing a Non-Sexist Society."

Excerpts from some of these talks follow:

### Defining a Constituency for Non-Sexist Planning/Design

...a program to achieve economic and environmental justice for women requires, by definition, a solution which overcomes the traditional divisions between the household and the market economy, the private dwelling and the workplace. One must transform the economic situation of the traditional homemaker whose skilled labor has been unpaid, but economically and socially necessary to society; one must also transform the domestic situation of the employed woman.

New economic and social roles demand new physical environments where housing, community services and jobs are not separated by half an hour's commuting time. Residential neighborhoods must be organized to recognize the economic value of household work performed by residents, and to provide the social services required by employed homemakers as well. The demand among American homemakers for reasonably priced housing, neighborhood day care, and well-paid, part-time work is already very high. There is no way to meet these needs other than the reorganization of neighborhoods to create a new paradigm about the nature of dwellings, services, and jobs.

Will the monopoly capitalist city I have criticized so heavily stand such a transformation? I don't know, but I believe that to attack the conventional division between public and private space on behalf of women, as the most exploited group of workers in the society, should become a feminist and socialist priority in the 1980s....

One environment which unites housing, services, and jobs will resolve many difficulties which the existing system of scattered services creates. By providing housing developments which create new jobs for homemakers at the same time as new services, it should be possible for federal and local government agencies to help these homemakers overcome many of the problems they face today. Yet the task is not limited to the construction of new housing alone.

..... When all homemakers recognize that they are struggling against both gender stereotypes and wage discrimination, when they see that social, economic, and environmental changes are necessary to overcome these conditions, they will no longer tolerate environments designed around the principles of another era which proclaim that "a woman's place is in the home."

**Dolores Hayden**  
School of Architecture and Urban  
Planning, UCLA

(This paper will be published in its entirety in a special forthcoming issue of Signs on "Women and the City.")

### The Public Environment: A Woman's Place is in the City

Women are a major impetus for the revitalization of North American cities. The dramatic increase in women's participation in the labor force in the '70s has created a new demand for urban housing and for services that can only be found in cities. At the same time, it removes the full-time services of women to "manage household consumption." Women are no longer available to be full-time home-managers, chauffeurs and neighborhood volunteers. As a result, suburbs of the '50s and '60s with their low density, single-family housing, and reliance on cars, have become increasingly dysfunctional for women of the '70s. As working women's circumstances have changed, there is a resultant demand for sweeping changes in urban land use patterns and for services to support women's new roles and responsibilities.

While the lives of women have changed radically, the urban environment in which they live has not. Cities are still planned by men for men. A good deal of urban development has shown a conventional bias favoring independent nuclear families....

As more women require an enriched neighborhood environment in order to participate in the labor force, women will add to the pressures against "exclusionary zoning" and homogeneous residential neighborhoods of single-family housing. A greater heterogeneity of family types in traditional two-parent residential areas will increase the demand for support services that are now absent: day care is the most notable, but also public transportation, local jobs and shopping, continuing education. This can only be accomplished by major zoning changes, increased densities and the construction of multi-family housing.

**Gerda Wekerle**  
Faculty of Environmental Studies  
York University, Canada

### The Private Sphere: Women, Men, Children and the Home

The efforts to assemble Americans, and particularly American women, around issues of home life have fallen short. But it is, all the same, worth mentioning several of them — if only to establish unequivocally that there have been many precedents for this in the mainstream of American life.

One notable and sizeable group were the "progressives" of the 1890s — and I notice, with interest, that this term is coming into use again for the present grass-roots political organizing in California and other parts of the country, particularly around housing issues like rent control and condominium conversion.

These early progressives recognized the symbolic importance of the home, as well as the very real disparities of access to good houses; they drew many women into political life and community action by posing the idea that "the city is your larger home."....

One of the problems of certain strands of American feminism as well as of the dominant culture is that there has been so little tolerance for the middle-class housewife or the future housewife, and especially the suburban mother, who chooses — for there is a choice here as well as a cultural expectation — to define a period of her life in other ways than by a full-time paid

career....

What we need, I believe, is not an absolute standard of feminist housing, but ways to involve more women and men — and children too — in appraising their homes and other people's, in understanding how those homes — whether in the city or suburbs — relate to work, to transportation, to public spaces, to energy policy, to the natural environment, and finally, with this awareness, in discovering ways to improve and vary the private sphere of their own lives.

**Gwendolyn Wright**  
School of Architecture  
UC Berkeley

### A Reexamination of Some Aspects of the Design Arts

The process by which forms are made, and the forms themselves, embody values and standards of behavior which affect large numbers of people and every aspect of our lives. It is this integral relationship between individual creativity and social responsibility that draws me to the design arts.

As I become more sensitive to those aspects of design which reinforce repressive attitudes and behavior, I increasingly question the desirability of simplicity and clarity....

Designers are most often taught to reduce ideas to their essence, but in fact that process too often results in the reduction of the ideas to only one of their parts. "Designed" has almost come to mean exclusive, universal, clear and simple, rather than inclusive, personal, ambiguous and complex.

**Sheila de Bretteville**  
The Women's Graphic Center  
The Woman's Building

### Affecting Legislation and Policy

More than 50 percent of today's women are in the labor force, not because they want to earn pocket money or luxury money, but because the rate of inflation and changing lifestyles have forced them there. And they must work in order to assure their families a decent lifestyle and education. Others are single, professional women, but society still treats the working woman like an oddity and provides few facilities to meet her needs....

Women still are asked to choose between having a family and a career. No one says it, but we know it is absolutely true. If it were not, we would not have such tremendous problems with finding decent child care facilities for our children.

Study after study has shown the need for day care programs for the children of working mothers. But in 1979, with half the working force made up of women, current estimates show that California, with state and federal grants, provides child care for fewer than 25 percent of the children and families who need it....

To conclude: there are many concerns facing women today. Some legislation is being developed around some of those concerns. But to develop a non-sexist society means changing the thinking of the American people. And that might be a bit difficult because, despite laws currently before the Legislature which deal with everything from rape to child custody, there are some things that perhaps cannot, and, indeed, should not be legislated.

**Maxine Waters**  
Assemblywoman, 48th District

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Form of Housing*, edited by Sam Davis, AIA, Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., N.Y., 1977, 282 pp., hardbound, \$24.50.

*Modern Housing Prototypes*, by Roger Sherwood, AIA, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1978, 167 pp., hardbound, \$25.00.

Two books present an interesting contrast in approach to housing history and housing problems. In *The Form of Housing*, Sam Davis assembles ten essays which explain the social, economic and emotional forces which have shaped housing design and housing in the United States. Roger Sherwood, in *Modern Housing Prototypes*, presents a series of descriptions of various buildings which he feels are prototypical for housing, mostly European examples with a sampling of buildings in the United States and Japan.

In his elegant foreword to *The Form of Housing*, Charles Moore points out: "In all of the chapters no panacea is being paddled, the future is seen as coming from the past, the new is building on (or even in) the old, based on images that actually mean something to the inhabitants"; that "diversity in housing forms is essential to the kind of world we want and that diversity's enemy is stereotype. But that also, stereotype's cousins, prototype and archetype are essential components of tradition" and it is clear from *The Form of Housing* that the major inhibitions are the absence of choice, rigidification of policy and the proliferation of restrictions on human activity and human imagination.

In his introduction, Davis recalls "a decent home for every American," the perennial call to arms by those concerned with housing. He then delineates the current controlling forces of social consciousness, energy and tradition and concludes "the more serious problems of housing are social and economic, not technical."

In the first essay, "The House vs. Housing," Davis defines the elements of the house, the present disappearance of the "ideal" of the single-family house, and the trend to increased density. In this context the market determines the program, which determines density, which determines form.

In the second essay, "Housing and Urbanism," Donn Logan traces housing from single-family to row house to super block, discusses the theory of large groupings and the more contemporary viewpoints of this necessity to reduce grain, and the recent problem of urbanization of suburbs.

Gerald Allen, in "A Conservative Approach, Housing the Past as We House Ourselves," pleads very strongly for reuse for practical and human reasons, and for conserving the whole neighborhood context.

In "High Density, Low-Rise Housing and Changes in American Housing Economy," Roger Montgomery traces two main trends: market housing, which serves the effective demand (people who can afford to buy housing), and non-market (serving the poor), which is subsidized housing.

In "Housing Struggles and Housing Form" Chester Hartman analyzes three case studies of struggles between residents and redevelopment agencies: Yerba Buena Center in San Francisco; The Goodman Building, San Francisco; and Cedar-Riverside in Minneapolis.

Clare Cooper-Marcus, in "User Needs Research in Housing," tackles the thorny problem of sociological and physiological research and how to make this research available to designers.

In "A Framework for Industrialization," Richard Bender and John Parman discuss the two basic systems of industrialization: (1) the clockwork approach, as exemplified in Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion House, where a repetitive product is produced without potential for change, and (2) the flexible system, as exemplified in Corbusier's Dom-ino Project, where the frame is provided and infill completed by the user.

In "Interiors-Accommodating Diversity," Sam Davis and Cathy Simon discuss core concepts and how the core allows users to expand their homes.

A history of the mobile home — from the trailer of the '30s to the prefabricated house on wheels — is outlined in Sam Davis' essay, "Mobile Homes."

Richard Meier, in "Futures for Housing," states that "housing, like education and health services, is produced by a highly conservative set of institutions which continue to depend on the past for their inspiration as they face the future."

This book is a great help to understanding housing and housing design in the context of larger social, political and economic issues. The essays are clearly written, the illustrations crisp, and the diversity of factors, which produce the Gordian Knot of housing, are clearly brought to the fore.

Roger Sherwood's *Modern Housing Prototypes* uses a more classic historical development approach, selecting examples from the work of well-known architects, and using these as prototypes for modern housing — that is, projects that set the "standards and patterns of much that was and is to follow." Sherwood begins with the premise that there are really only two basic unit types: the "single orientation," which is open to light on one side, and the "double orientation," which is open to light on two opposite sides — usually at the narrow ends. Since only these dwelling types are plausible and can be assembled in a limited number of ways, multi-unit configurations are automatically created with little change from country to country. These groupings are then divided by "types": detached and semi-detached; row houses; party wall; block; slabs; tower.

Although these definitions may assist in classification, there seems to be a lack of critical viewpoint in the book. Does one type tend to produce better housing than another? Is one more appropriate in a certain context than another? We are left with the idea that they are somehow all equal, that one is as good as the next, that the selection of type was the architect's choice, except for the obvious examples of workers' housing. This is one of the book's weaknesses, since many of these architects themselves held very definite ideas as to what housing should be. Are their objectives reached in these examples?

Furthermore, we are asked to accept the premise that these buildings, as "prototypes," are of special importance in modern housing. Did they indeed set the standards and patterns for what was to follow?

The 32 case studies present a wide range of projects and carefully attempt to trace the development of each architect's own work and derivation from other sources. With examples drawn from the work of Wright, Schindler, Mies van der Rohe, Oud, Le Corbusier, Aalto and ranging in time from Auguste Perret's 25 bis Rue Franklin Apartments of 1903 to Sert, Jackson and Gourley's Peabody Terrace of 1964, and with architectural quality as a primary selection criteria, numerous plans and photographs illustrate the examples. Each example is accompanied by a beautifully drawn axonometric.

While the examples illustrate the author's statement: "My assumption is that there is no excuse for shoddy architecture: housing, like all buildings, must be soundly built, convenient to use and beautiful," there still remains the nagging question as to why so much poor housing has been built. Has it been caused by a lack of interest on the part of architects or inability to handle the project requirements; or are there other forces at work which are beyond the designers' control?

And with the book's European orientation, it seems a pity that no discussion covered the enormous housing developments required after the devastation of World War II: how did these prototypes influence the post-war developments?

**Kenneth Dillon, AIA**



## A SPECIFICATIONS SERVICE YOU CAN DEPEND ON... EVERY TIME!

The technical staff of the Plastering Information Bureau can provide you with performance data on every kind of plastering application. They can show you how to meet critical standards for sound control, fireproofing, and abrasion resistance with specifications that can be understood and followed by every contractor and journeyman in the industry.

Our experts can show you how to specify the more creative products of the plastering trades... coves, arches, molds and special designs.

The Plastering Information Bureau can show you how to specify the job so that it can be done exactly as you want... at the lowest possible price.

The Bureau is not associated with or operated by any manufacturer or group of manufacturers. It is wholly supported by the plastering contractors and journeymen who are the direct suppliers of your plastering needs.

Why not call us today? There is never a charge or obligation

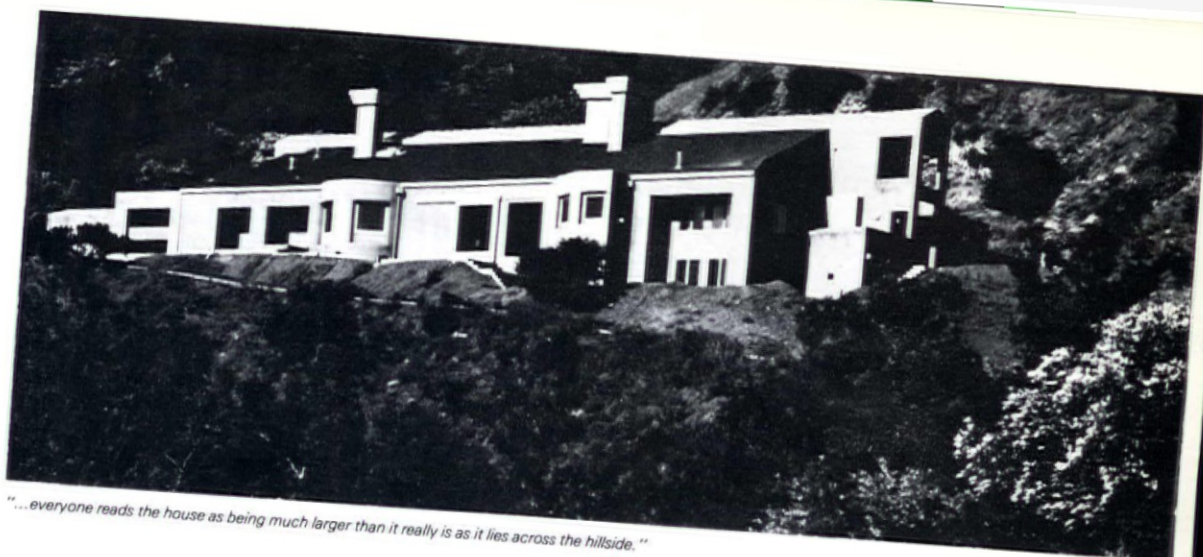
**Plastering information bureau**  
3127 Los Feliz Boulevard, Los Angeles,  
California 90039 • (213) 663-2213

## CONTINENTAL TELEPHONE CO. OF CALIFORNIA VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA

has an opening for person who has architectural experience with emphasis on building facility planning. Must be capable of planning building needs for office space, warehouses, parking facilities, etc. Must also understand economics as related to planning. Excellent company benefits. Good opportunity for qualified individual to live in the clear high desert area. Call or send resume to: Pat Hamblen, Continental Telephone, 16071 Mojave Dr., Victorville, CA 92392 — (714) 245-0684. M/F Equal Opportunity Employer.



# KUPPER ON ARCHITECTURE



Eugene Kupper is a Californian, currently practicing architecture in Los Angeles. He has recently completed a house in Bel-Air for Harry Nilsson, the popular song writer and singer. Tim Vreeland interviewed him at the site of the house and this became the occasion for some general reflections about architecture and some specific reflections about the house.

Three questions were posed: about the size of the house, for it gives an impression of great size; about its colors, which range from warm reds and yellows to cold gray; and whether the building had fulfilled his original intentions, and what they were.

This prompted the following replies:

## On the building's size

**Kupper:** The size question is principally one of scale and not size. The principal reason for the configuration of the building and its scaled appearance on the landscape is to adjust it and give it membership in a community of built forms and in a landscape that exists in Bel-Air.

The building is very much derived from its site. Not in any naturalistic way, but in the sense that there is an architectural culture here.

And there are certain dreams which get built. Some of those dreams have to do with frontality: how the public face of a building is organized; what its size is; and what its surface is like. Take the front elevation of this building: I was conscious of the overall facade not only in terms of its size, scale and the proportion of its openings but also as a sequence of size relationships which begin on the downhill side, because that's where the building is tallest. It creates not so much a perspective distortion but a perspective series as these openings beneath a continuous eave organize northward.

There is a drawing which looks just like this. Many of the things I treated as design sketches end up being very much the way they are in the final building. There really weren't very many surprises for me. The house has been built pretty much according to my expectations.

The question of size then also relates to the people who live here and the sort of romantic aspirations they have and some of the narrative that exists in Harry's *Son of Dracula* movie, which he made with Ringo — so that there is a whole sort of exaggerated play with a life style. You can see that throughout the house there are many dramatic flourishes and overtures on the one hand; and, on the other, there are subtle jokes, some of which refer to Harry's music and some of which are new jokes.

**Vreeland:** Does he appreciate this?  
**Kupper:** Oh, yes, very much.

Much of the building's size, particularly on the interior, involves exaggerations, to produce dramatic, sweeping, comically-strong gestures. But then again size is simply used to produce a primitive state of wonder: to create an enormous volume within a house, as Wright often did, that would provide a sense of landscape.

This is particularly true through the center of the building, because as we go through an analysis of how the building is organized, we could look for the things which are regular built form; those which are personally identified places that have to do with the occu-

pancy; and those which deal with more general metaphors of landscape or cityscape. It's true that not only 'large' is used, but 'small' is, too.

## On the use of color

**Kupper:** I should say I'm a lapsed painter. I assign a special function and role to architecture that I can't find for painting.

Architecture plays a special relationship to the culture in terms of its ability to be taken up or ignored by its users. This is not true of painting; it's not true of most of the other arts. Architecture is, I think, the unique art which intersects with common experience at a place where it can either be taken as art, taken as a philosophical or spiritual statement, or it can be simply absorbed into the everyday ordinary experience of living.

Now, color, then, is not simply something which is done to a building. It is something which every building has, and it is part of the physical medium of architecture. And since it is just as much a dimension of experience as material or form or sound or anything else, if that medium is not acknowledged and even exploited, then it is simply a reduction in the architectural language. And so I feel that just as it is certainly true that many architects have avoided the use of color, I think that many architects have avoided the use of architecture and its potential. I think we have seen a lot of that in the 20th century.

Color is used with the same range of purposes that you would use the size of a window, the placement of a window, the material of a floor and so forth. So there is a range of color that exists in this house. Some of it is drawn from natural sources. It is very atmospheric; it has to do with the dynamic in which the spaces unfold; it has to do with, to use an old-fashioned word, mood; it places people in a state of repose, or in a state of contemplation around certain issues. At the same time a more vivacious or more brilliant color signals a change of state. It could be a change of going from a dining room to a child's room, or something like that. I don't want to deal with it only visually. It changes acoustically; it changes in terms of the light levels and so forth. Where the color becomes intense it is not meant to be an accent color, it is not supposed to call special attention to an element in the building. I don't use color as a coding device; many architects have used color that way. Beaubourg would be an example. It makes reference to the fact that pipes are painted that way for functional reasons in industrial architecture.

The exterior of the building is less dramatically colored — at least for the moment — than the inside. Although it has an overall quality of color, it doesn't read as a building which is automatically a consequence of its material. Stucco can be put on in a way that gives it a less reticent character; this was deliberately done in order to amplify its scale, in order to clarify some of the solid/void and chiaroscuro relationships, in order to deal with a kind of light-temperature quality. Because most of the building faces west and the afternoon light is warm, there's a desire to exaggerate the light quality as well.

## On white architecture

**Kupper:** I have always drawn the building as yellow, and Harry always saw the

building as white, on the inside and the outside. I always made drawings of the building that used bright color and used dramatic color relationships in my drawings. A lot of architects do that because they have a box of Prismacolors next to them; when they really get down to doing the building all those wonderful relationships that are in the drawing disappear.

However, one of the things that this building has in common with "white" architecture is that there are really a series of geometric explorations in the building. They are handled more loosely, less demanding than the White architects handle them. But, nonetheless, it is important to state that the design decisions are conscious — that the size, the shape, the position of a wall, where a door is placed, the massing of one thing against the other, are all studied relationships.

## On the architect's responsibility

**Kupper:** If you are going to call yourself an architect, you are talking about someone who takes on, for better or worse, the responsibility for working the medium in a self-conscious and explicit way. That is not to say that architects are the only ones who do architecture — most architects don't. It is that architecture is really building with a certain appeal to spirit and philosophy. It is also whether a culture has the ability to manifest its own architecture or whether it has to hand the job over to specialists.

And unfortunately, we live in a century where the job has been given to specialists, but that, also unfortunately, the specialists have not understood that that is a very sacred delegation, and instead have turned it into a business. If the architect would acknowledge his responsibility to know the architectural language, we might have fewer architects, and, as a result, a lot more architecture. The burden of doing architecture would be more strongly felt. And schools of architecture would start teaching architecture instead of design (which is basically a problem-solving activity). But there are some long-established habits we have picked up from pedagogy that are hard to break.

## On the use of history

**Vreeland:** Doesn't this largely come about because we don't have a tradition to rely on?

**Kupper:** Oh, there's a tradition alright, it's just been dormant for awhile. I don't think anyone is uncertain about the history of architecture.

That raises the question of historicism. Historicism, to me, is being insecure of history, by deliberately quoting sources and restricting your range of architectural options. Whereas one of the best things about the use of history in the Modern Movement was that history had to be rediscovered. I think that if we are going to talk about an architecture that uses history, we have to recognize that history supplies us with an extraordinary range of solutions to architectural questions. To have to go to one architect, or one movement of architects, and look for their responses as being appropriate quotations for your building, I feel, is to miss the point of studying history. What we really are looking for is how you put a door in a wall, how can a floor be configured, how can you roof a building, how a building can be oriented in order to make warm or dry places or cool and

moist places. History thus becomes a very rich resource to utilize. It no longer becomes something we quote from but rather something that becomes an active part of our method of understanding the medium.

That is why, in this building, you won't find quotations as such; but the building does have a very traditional quality to it. It has membership in an historical continuum. And it does that without irony. There is more a sense of play in this building. It is direct play about the size of a door rather than a play with "how Lutyens did it and how I didn't do it, but I did it almost like Lutyens." And if, and it is certainly possible, that there are resemblances between the solutions in this building and the solutions which are in some favorite architect's building, that is good. But it is not meant as quotation; it is meant as: "Yes, we were in fact involved in the same kind of rhetoric and involved in the same desire to solve problems in that way."

**Vreeland:** Did you feel you were conscious of, or in touch with, the time-honored solutions when you were designing this building?

**Kupper:** As conscious in as many ways as if I were writing a sonnet; I would know what sonnets were. And that one makes commentary on the sonnet structure when one writes a sonnet. One makes commentary on the architectural structure when one does architecture. That's to know the history of the medium.

You know when rectangular windows are used and when square windows are used, how many times you repeat something until it becomes something else. Those are things that you know simply by studying architecture. If you design a building and then, as a hobby, study history, you are missing the point of architecture. It is to not do architecture.

**Vreeland:** I am not conscious at all of historical allusions when I go through your building. They don't jump out at me so that I can say, "Oh, yes, I know where that comes from."

**Kupper:** I suppose it is just a little bit deliberate that the quotations, if they are there, are very subtle. They are really not meant to be seen as quotations. They mean to exist in a general world of architecture.

## On the architectural language

**Kupper:** Now it could be that this building is more on the vernacular side of architecture than the classical side. But then, the vernacular has always made use of the classical. Insofar as this building has repetition, certain scale relationships and certain expected patterns, it may be dealing with a classical language. But I don't feel an obligation directly to a classical language in this building — in another building, I might. In this particular building, I still felt that the nature of the region, the client, and the kind of architecture that I wanted to do didn't call for that kind of formalism.

**Vreeland:** I remember your concern about the site right from the beginning. You should explain the relation of the building to the larger site.

**Kupper:** One of the easiest things to point out is that the building is tall on the south end tapering to the north end. So what happens, in terms of the larger landscape, is that everyone reads the house as being much larger than it really

is as it lies across the hillside. In terms of the specific site response, there is first of all the carving of the pad, which is basically to try to build a building using earth. This is not particularly an earth-work building, but it does have a conscious and determined relationship to its ground plane. One desires a coherent vocabulary which develops out of manipulating the site and which has to do with all the other issues that make it play.

It should also be pointed out that the other side of the building is treated in a very different way. It is an assemblage of intentionally differently-scaled elements which bear no relationship to each other. They are never experienced as a continuous thing, nor are they experienced as a sequence or as a frontal occasion. Each space on the back of the house is very personal because one must distinguish between public decorum and private appetite. Things can get a lot kinkier, a lot crazier, a lot more personal on the back side of a building — and they do.

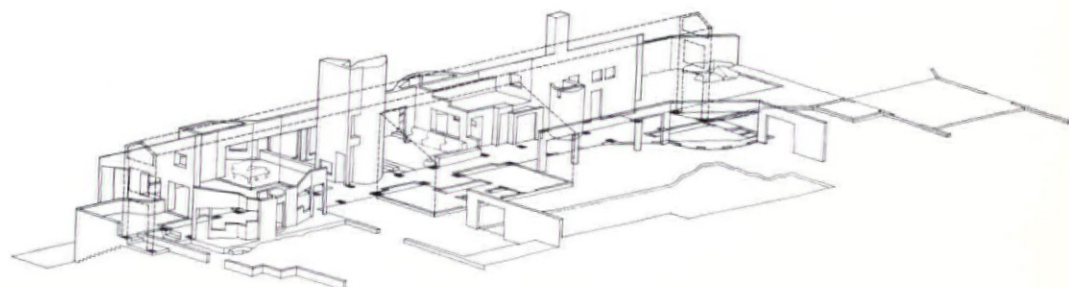
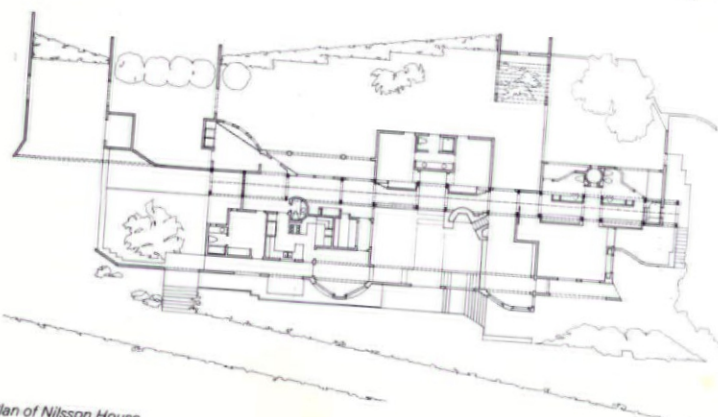
This also relates to how the building is organized; it is very long with a 130-foot gabled corridor along which are ranged on both sides the rooms of the house, each of which is given its special character by virtue of the sculptural form, the color, the materials treatment, the furnishings and so forth. What tends to happen is that on one side of the building are all the more informal aspects of the program such as laundries, children's rooms and bathing facilities and on the other are the public spaces. There is a formal/informal relationship to that long building. And the long building itself is meant as a kind of arcade, or colonnade, as a very general device for organizing a house at an almost urban scale. It is not read as any particular room; on the other hand it's not read as a kind of mechanical device or spine; it is not meant to carry that metaphor. It intends to be like a long building with other smaller buildings put up against it and entered from it.

## Architectural intentions

**Kupper:** To do architecture is to carry out a set of intentions. It doesn't necessarily have to be an intellectual exercise. But it does mean having a philosophical program.

It is easier to talk about the philosophy of this building than to see how that fits into an overall philosophy of architecture.

There really shouldn't be accidents in architecture, but there can be chance. John Cage talks about chance operations; he doesn't write accidental music. I think that in terms of satisfying one's intentions for a building, there has to be some experience in how to build and what the effect of decisions will be. But then there should always be room for chance. And I think you can set up the rules where chance operates in a way that is productive to the idea of the building. Every building has its own chance-derived configuration.



Plan of Nilsson House.