# **Becket Firm to Be Honored**

Recognition Dinner Is December Program

Welton Becket Associates celebrates its 50th anniversary in 1983, and LA/AIA will honor the firm at its annual recognition dinner and holiday party on December 14.

The recognition dinner will be held at USC's Town & Gown, starting with a no-host reception and a model and photographic display of past and present Becket projects at 6:30 p.m. Dinner will follow at 7:30 and the program at 8:30.

Harry William Harmon, FAIA, executive vice-chancellor of the California State University System and secretary of the AIA National Board, will be the guest speaker. Featured will be MacDonald Becket, FAIA, chairman of the board of Welton Becket Associates, and Frederic P. Lyman, AIA, L.A. Chapter president, who will serve as master of ceremonies.

Cost of the dinner is \$20.00 per person. Admission to the dinner is by prepaid reservation only, and the reservation must be received in the Chapter office prior to December 10. For those who wish to attend the program only, an area will be provided for seating after 8:30 p.m.

## Late Break for Bev Hills Competition

The November LA ARCHITECT reported that the scheme for the Beverly Hills Civic Center Competition which was entered by Charles Moore and UIG had been unanimously selected as the winner by the jury. At printing time it was impossible to say whether the Beverly Hills City Council had followed the recommendation of the jury in granting the commission.

It can now be announced that on October 19 the City Council did accept the Moore/UIG scheme.
This decision was based on favorable reports by the staff of municipal departments, and on the significant difference in estimated cost between the Moore/UIG proposal and other entries.

The winning scheme organizes new uses around three arcaded, elliptical courts arranged on a diagonal axis through the site. The new buildings are styled in a sympathetic manner to the existing City Hall designed by William Gage.

In 1933, Welton Becket teamed up with University of Washington classmate Walter Wurdeman to found the firm which today bears his name. As Welton Becket Asso-

**History of the Becket Firm** 

his name. As Welton Becket Associates enters its 50th year, it looks back on a history which ranges from its inception designing homes for Hollywood stars to is present-day status as an international architecture/engineering firm.

Appropriately, the project which launched the firm's success is the focus this year of a restoration effort aimed at insuring its survival as an architectural landmark. In 1941 Becket and Wurdeman's design for Los Angeles' Pan Pacific Auditorium won an international design competition. The \$5,000 fee and the ensuing publicity established both the reputation and commercial viability of the firm.

For the next several years,
Becket and Wurdeman made a living designing homes for such
Hollywood luminaries as Robert
Montgomery, Cesar Romero and
James Cagney. Having designed
distinctive exteriors, the team
sought to design interiors to match,
setting the stage for the development of a philosophy which would
become the firm's calling card:
"Total Design."

After the war, on the basis of its reputation designing homes, Becket and Wurdeman were selected to design Bullock's first regional department store, Bullock's Pasadena. A year of research gave the young architects a firm foundation in retail design, a background which led to hundreds of retail projects, including 37 for Federated Department Stores which runs the Bullock's chain.

Repeat business is the important factor which contributed to Becket's success. His philosophy, that architecture should be for the client, not the architect, has attracted a solid core of clientele. On the basis of their performance for Bullock's, the two architects received their first two office projects, General Petroleum, and L.A.'s Prudential Insurance Building. From that point, they were firmly entrenched in the field of commercial design.

After Wurdeman's death in 1949, Becket assumed sole leadership of the firm. The 50s and 60s



Colorado Place, Becket's new corporate headquarters.

were a period of steady expansion. Becket branched out into large, complex work, such as the master plan for UCLA and the design of over 40 of its facilities, principally the Health Science Center. Other local projects included Capitol Record's headquarters, the world's first circular office building, the Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena and the Los Angeles Music Center. On a national level, Becket continued to do work for corporate clients, including Kaiser Center in Oakland, and offices for Gulf Life, Xerox, Ford, Humble Oil and Hartford Bank.

As the firm expanded, Becket developed an architectural approach which stressed supplying full design services for each project—programming, design, engineering, production and interior design—down to the smallest details to produce a complete building in every aspect. This concept of "Total Design" is still an integral part of the firm's philosophy today.

After Welton Becket's death in 1969, leadership of the firm passed to his nephew, MacDonald Becket. MacDonald Becket had first established himself with a project which he is still identified, the master planning of 260-acre Century City, widely recognized as one of the most successful private development ventures in the nation.

Under his leadership today, the firm has three offices in Los Angeles, New York and Chicago, 350 employees worldwide, and projects more diversified than ever. The breadth of the firm's accomplishments can perhaps best be expressed in its appreciation of the

old and the new; from its futuristic design of the much-honored Hyatt Regency in Dallas to the restoration of the century-old California State Capitol. The local prestige of the firm is reflected in projects such as the design for the new terminal addition at L.A. International Airport, which Becket helped masterplan, and the O'Melveney and Meyers office building now under construction at 400 South Hope Street.

On a national level, Becket has continued working with its corporate clientele, including many Fortune 500 firms such as Exxon, Ford and General Electric. U.S. Steel's Dravo Building is under construction in Pittsburgh. In the nation's capital, work is nearly completed on the Becket-designed Washington Convention Center.

Worldwide, the firm's list of accomplishments includes the Moscow World Trade Center, China's 1000-room international Great Wall Hotel in Beijing, and numerous projects in Korea and the Middle East.

The completion of Becket's new corporate headquarters in Santa Monica, Colorado Place, will appropriately coincide with its 50th anniversary. The 15-acre, multi-function development reflects a new treatment of mixed-use complexes. Its horizontal configuration addresses the important trends of the 80s towards human proportions, accessibility and energy consciousness.

After 50 years, few architectural firms can display such a diverse portfolio.

## **Chapter Programs:**

December 14: LA/AIA Recognition
Dinner to honor Welton Becket
Associates, reception at 6:30 p.m.,
dinner 7:30, program 8:30, Town
& Gown, USC. Dinner: \$20 per person, received in Chapter office by
December 10. Call 659-2282.
December 17: WAL Holiday Party,
Ennis Brown House, Los Angeles.
Call 784-3757.

## Courses:

December 2–4: Marketing Your Architectural Services, workshops sponsored by AIA Professional Development Programs, Le Parc Hotel, Los Angeles. Call (202) 626-7355.

January 4—March 15: Computer Applications in Environmental Design, with William Mitchell of UCLA and architects Charles Reeder and Jeff Hamer, UCLA. Fee: \$200. Call 825-9061.

January 4—March 22: Construction Administration, with Stephen Wexler of Wexco Interna-

tional, Downtown Center, Los
Angeles. Fee: \$210. Call 825-4100.
January 4—March 22: Legal
Aspects of Construction
Projects and Contract Writing,
with attorney David Friedland,
UCLA. Fee: \$175. Call UCLA Extension at 825-4100.
January 5—March 23: Construction Safety, with John Witte of
Witte, Inc., Downtown Center, Los

Angeles. Fee: \$210. Call UCLA

Extension at 825-4100.

## **Exhibitions:**



Halprin: Drawings/Film, Architecture Gallery, SCI-ARC. Call 829-3482.

Through December 10: Peter Cook—Student Themes from the Architectural Association, Architecture Building, UCLA. Call 825-5752.

Through December 10: Rome and Tokyo—Spring Study Abroad, student work, Architecture Building, UCLA. Call 825-5752. Through December 10: Skid Row LA—A View from the Street, Architecture Building, UCLA. Call

825-5752.

Through December 12: Santa Barbara: The Creation of a New Spain in America, history of urban design in the city, Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara. Call (805) 961-3013.





Through January 2: The California Condition—A Pregnant
Architecture, creative offering of
13 regional architects, Museum of
Contemporary Art, La Jolla. Call
(714) 454-3541.

Through January 2: Mies van der Rohe: Barcelona Pavilion and Furniture Designs, organized and sponsored by Knoll International, Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla. Call (714) 454-3541.

Through January 1: Architecture: Symbol and Myth, work by Jeanie Bellman, Diane Caughey, John Chase, and Roland Coate, The Art Store, Los Angeles. Call 933-9284.

Through January 23: **MOCA Builds,** drawings and models of Isozaki proposals, Schindler House, Los Angeles. Call 651-1510.

## Lectures:

December 1: Lecture by **Kenneth Frampton**, architect, writer and historian, 8 p.m. in Studio/Auditorium, SCI-ARC. Call 829-3482.

## Other Events:

and Architecture in Los Angeles, roundtable discussions sponsored by Gunlocke Company to salute Arts and Architecture, and preview of new showroom by Stanley Felderman, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles. Donation: \$8.50 one evening, \$15 two. Call 854-6307.

December 2, 3: The State of Arts

December 5: Society of Architectural Historians Christmas
Party, 3 p.m. in recently rehabilitated American Legion Building,
Culver City. RSVP at 681-6427.
December 9: Illegal Aliens and
Garment Workers in Southern
California, films on undocumented workers in LA, 5:30 p.m. in Architecture 1102, UCLA. Call
825-8957.



December 19: SCI-ARC Anniversary Dinner Dance, to celebrate tenth birthday of the school. Alumni, faculty, students and friends invited. 6 p.m. at Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles. Call 829-3482.

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## Space Available: Studio/Office

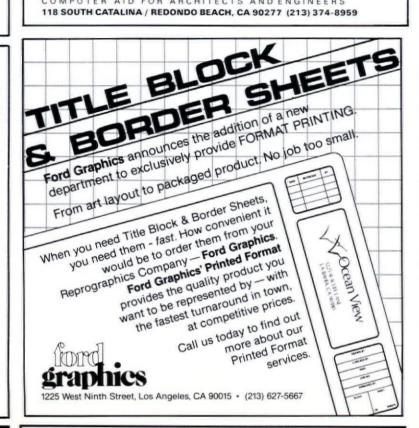
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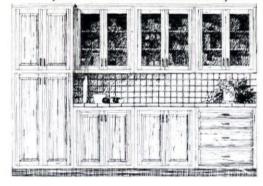
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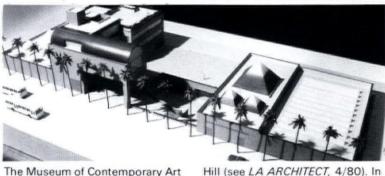
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HE GREAT URBAN SMINDLE @ CREMATORIA ASHIDH PROMINENT IMAGES DE HIGH AUTHORITY. MERD THE UNKHOWING IN GREAT RAMPS. MOPEFULLY "WITH PARKING" THE SUBJECTS THROUGH TUBES WILL ASCEND TO THE GRIM BETRAYAL OF THE HEAVENS. MOCA, Mixed Model of latest MOCA scheme.



(MOCA) architectural retrospective, MOCA Builds, now on exhibit at the Schindler House, offers local architects valuable insights into the design vocabulary of museum architect Arata Isozaki. Although the exhibit's shortcomings significantly limit its audience, the exhibit is still highly recommended for those who have been following the evolution of this project, which is now in a design-development/constructiondocument phase. However, a quick review of the museum's press coverage should precede every architect's visit if he or she is to get the most from the exhibit.

Consisting of several models and about twice as many drawings and sketches, the exhibit concentrates almost exclusively on form and completely sidesteps the controversy that has surrounded the project. Isozaki's mastery of such techniques as spiraling circulation patterns, idealized "golden section" proportions, and interplay of solids and voids speaks eloquently for itself. An explanatory flier provides background on each significant milestone represented in the exhibit and hints at some of the problems in the design process.

The exhibit's most conspicuous drawback is its failure to provide even a hint of the project's context, the billion-dollar California Center redevelopment project on Bunker

Hill (see LA ARCHITECT, 4/80). In fact, most of the museum's fundamental design modifications, such as entrance orientation, natural lighting considerations, and even the building footprint's size and position in the Bunker Hill project respond to context. According to exhibit curator Robert Sweeney, the original California Center model showing the immediate context (high-rise office and residential towers, a retail plaza, landscaped open spaces, dual-level street frontage, and other major factors) was considered for inclusion in the exhibit but would have overwhelmed the Isozaki models.

As a consequence, non-architects, in particular, are likely to emerge from the exhibit impressed with the models but completely in the dark as to what they representand will probably attribute their confusion to architects' characteristically obtuse communication

Its limitations notwithstanding, the exhibit is a real pleasure to visit, to the credit of all associated with the restoration and adaptive use of the historic Schindler House. The community should look forward to many such uses of this valuable design exhibit resource.

A. Jeffrey Skorneck

Skorneck is a planner with Gruen Associates and a member of the LA ARCHITECT Editorial Board.

## Letters to the Editor

Design Awards: Who's to Judge?

I am a new AIA member and for the first time I participated in the LA/ AIA Design Awards Program. I would like to share my observations of the awards presentation on October 16 at the Bonaventure Hotel.

A comment I heard several times was that we had judges from Cambridge, Santa Barbara and Berkeley judging "The LA Scene." With all due respect to the distinguished judges, shouldn't the architecture of LA be evaluated by LA architects?

I sensed disappointment around me when some of the awards were announced. There were expressions of concern that the selection of judges by an individual or a small group, as distinguished as they may be, results in the creation of an aesthetic not truly representing the values of the majority within the Chapter. I heard disturbing comments by LA architects: "You've got to design and present their way to win." That seems to be the main reason why many refrain from participation in design award programs.

Couldn't future judges be selected by polling the LA/AIA membership? That would be democratic and the members would have a voice in their organization. There are several avenues for communication that can be utilized to such an end.

The Design Awards Program is a serious matter of great importance to every architect, the community at large, and especially to young architectural firms. Projects awarded by the AIA gain substantial credibility, and become symbols of what the AIA considers to be excellence in design.

I would welcome a discussion on this subject in LA ARCHITECT. I learned a great deal by participating in the Program and look forward to participating in the future.

Bouje Bernkopf, AIA Bernkopf Designs

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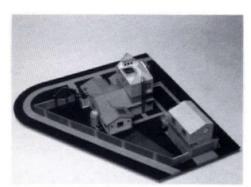
In "LA/AIA Design Awards" (LA ARCHITECT 10/82) David Gebhard was mistakenly identified as the director of the Art Galleries at UCSB. Although Gebhard did in the past hold this position, it is now occupied by David Farmer, and the name of the institution is correctly the University Art Museum.

## The California Condition

Stanley Tigerman with model of house by San Diego architect Tom Grondona.

## Exhibition at La Jolla MOCA **Features** Recent Work by Regional **Architects**

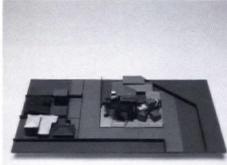
## Interview with **Co-Curator** Stanley **Tigerman**



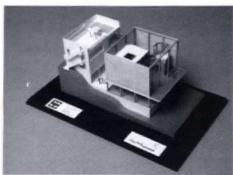
Petal House, Eric Owen Moss.



Upas project, Ted Smith.



Jeager House, Rob Wellington Quigley.



Naegele Residence, William Turnbull, Jr.



California Aerospace Museum, Frank O.

On November 12, a major exhibition of California architecture opened at the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art. Organized by architect Stanley **Tigerman and critic Susan Grant** Lewin, the show is entitled "The California Condition-A Pregnant Architecture."

The architects represented include Tom Grondona, Rob Wellington Quigley and Ted Smith, from San Diego; William Turnbull, Jr., Daniel Solomon/Barbara Stauffacher, and Thomas Gordon Smith, from San Francisco; Frank Israel, Eric Owen Moss, Frank O. Gehry, the firm of Moore Rubel and Yudell, Michael Franklin Ross, Anthony J. Lumsden, and Morphosis, from Los Angeles.

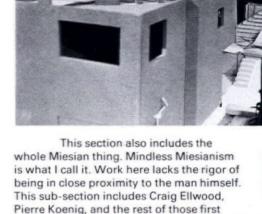
Each architect, team or firm has submitted work in the form of drawings, sketches, models and photographs related to two or three new projects undertaken principally during 1981 and 1982. A total of 31 models and approximately 40 drawings and sketches are included in the exhibition, which is accompanied by a 64page catalogue with essays by co-curators Tigerman and Lewin. The catalogue is dedicated to John Entenza, former editor of Arts and Architecture. "The California Condition-A Pregnant Architecture" continues in La Jolla until January 2.

Stanley, you are responsible for the exhibition The California Condition, and one of the catalogue essays which accompanies it. Tell me a little bit about it.

The California Condition is a big pluralistic show; and lots of people who are not exhibited are included in my essay. My essay goes all the way back to Maybeck; and it also includes lots of contemporary architects-San Diego firms like Batter Kay and Martinez Wong, and architects like Fred Fisher and Coy Howard who will be represented at the upcoming exhibition at the San Francisco Art Institute

The essay breaks the work into tegories. One is historicist-regional ism with two sub-sections. The first is theater, and includes Bernard Maybeck, Charles Moore and Thomas Gordon Smith. The second is vernacular wood architecture and includes William Wurster, George Howe, William Turnbull and Donlyn Lyndon. That section is the most historical and encompasses the early precedents of Spanish Colonial and Mission Style architecture.

I think California has a problem. It's called the lack of rigor, maybe from too much sun. The second section of my essay discusses this and is called Manipulative Modernism. It breaks into three sub-sections. One of them is predominantly Corbuoriented, and includes the architecture of Schindler who was concerned with the manipulation of solids and masses. This section includes Frank Gehry's studio for



Rudolph, was just doing sticks out of steel. Even canonical Miesians aren't as rigorous here, like Gene Summers, who comes to California, and starts producing 'reverie': tilt up panels a la Irving Gill in Newport Beach. Whereas in Chicago, he was into this heavy proportion stuff. It's true. This is a very critical essay.

generation guys. Even Ed Killingsworth, who

was obviously more interested in Paul

The third sub-section is the logical extension of modernism, the pragmatic and undistinguished California multi-family housing, which is at once a higher standard than the housing anywhere else in the country, but it is never brilliant. There are lots and lots of examples, including Pulliam Matthews and Bernard Zimmerman, Fisher Friedman, and even William Turnbull.

The third large essay classification is about Hollywood, the frantic, frenetic agonizing making of forms: Eric Owen Moss, Michael Franklin Ross. There's another subsection which includes Tim Vreeland, Coy Howard, and Gene Kupper, the kind of people who just torture things in certain ways, the new California architecture.

The fourth and final category is what I call the dematerialized disappearing cutting edge. As opposed to these materialized guys, who produce tortured forms, there's another category of work. These architects are into dematerialization, reductive thought. This breaks into two obvious groups. One of them comes from the Veneto, and includes architects like Morphosis, but predominantly Northern California architects like Batey and Mack and Stanley Saitowitz, who use reductive forms and move away from the more materialized form of other California work. The other group is the straight avante-garde with Daddy Frank as the main man, and it includes people who draw like Fred Fisher and Coy Howard.

## BG:

It's a pretty common accusation that California's architects are predominantly distinguished as stylists, people who take the external trappings of ideas that originated in other places and used them to create an image. Don't you think it's important to distinguish the difference between the architect who are originating ideas and those who are copying the ideas of others? Some of the categories you identified are areas in which architects are clearly acting as stylists, Craig Ellwood and Eugene Kupper, for example. But there are other areas where California architects are concerned with synthesis of a very original kind. The latter two categories that you identified are areas where California architects are not always acting as stylists, but as originators. Is that a distinction which you make?

Yes, but there is one thing that California architects don't do often. Most California architects are more involved in semantic reverie than in syntactic investigation. They are less involved in the study of architecture for itself, the way that Peter Eisenman is, for example.

Is that architecture?



Well, intrinsic studies of architecture with a big A, exploring parts for their own sake is not necessarily architecture, but these investigations don't go on here.

I think there's a lot of original work being produced in California, but it is in the area of semantic, symbolic reverie, romantically inclined. I think that Charles Moore has had a big impact, for example.

Regardless of my own bias, which is important for an architectural vision, the syntactic study of the language of architecture itself is not done very much in California. That's what is missing in the work of the Mindless Miesians, the guys who were more interested in wood. But I don't think that they were just stylists, I think they were pragmatists. I think the reason Konrad Wachsmann succeeded here, and all the rest of those old architects in the Case Study Program succeeded, is because they were all quite pragmatic.

## BG:

But Wachsmann didn't succeed as an architect, he succeeded as a teacher.

Yes, but other people were able to transform his ideas into money-Ray Kappe, Bernard Zimmerman, Jim Pulliam. They took the Mies sensibility and made money out of it in housing

## BG:

They used the Mies image, they didn't use his ideals, that's why they could be identified as stylists. They created an architecture which people could look at and say, "That looks modern." It didn't necessarily embody the principles.

But, the principles of modern architecture are the study of architecture itself. Those architects weren't involved in modern architecture or in syntactic architectural study, they were involved with the semantics connected with the symbolic extension of Miesian rigor. That's why when you see the work of Pafford Clay or Gene Summers in California, it has changed.

Do you identify any of the younger architects in the show as having an influence on a wider group? For example, if you look at some of the contemporary commercial architecture in Los Angeles, you can trace it directly to the work of Eric Moss and Frank Gehry. I think it's very important to make a distinction between the architects who originated the idea and those who popularized it.

I do some of it; my essay mostly looks at a whole different kind of influence. Take the case of the "Extruders," for example. I tie them to the alienated heroine in Joan Didion's Play It As It Lays. I think that part of what the late sixties precipitated was not just the burning of Watts, but alienation, detachment, the mirror glass buildings of Southern California.

In any case, California is not just a place where architects synthesize, or regurgitate. There are other things being done, but the one thing that isn't done here is the hermetic investigation of architecture in and of itself.

# LA/AIA Design Awards: Winning Projects

Members of the Jury:

Norman Fletcher, FAIA David Gebhard Donn Logan, FAIA

Chairman of the
Design Awards Committee:

Marvin Malecha, AIA

### **Jury Statement**

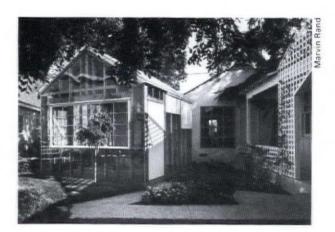
This jury has had the opportunity, through 143 entries, to experience the architecture of Los Angeles, as well as that produced elsewhere by Los Angeles architects. Through this process of submission to an official awards program, one could sense what these professionals have felt was most important in their practices. While everyone involved would agree that this approach may present only a fragment of the local architectural scene, still it is a fragment which is highly revealing, both of the projects and of the profession itself.

We have been told that Los Angeles is a world unto itself, in its constructed environment of buildings, gardens and public spaces. In a way this still is true, though not to the degree we have been taught to believe. In studying the entries, the jury was continually impressed as to how closely they maneuvered themselves into one of the mainstream approaches practiced in the United States.

As is true of their counterparts elsewhere in the country, the larger, established firms in Los Angeles are producing sophisticated, well-detailed buildings, a number of which continue to explore the image of high technology. As is also true elsewhere, many seem very willing to explore a number of divergent approaches to design,

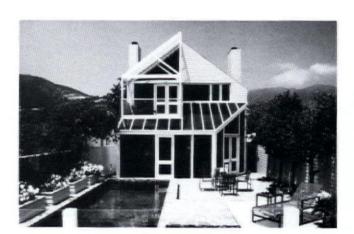
all seemingly at the same moment. At the other end of the spectrum, the city's smaller firms and younger designers range the full gamut from stucco-box condominiums to the symbolism of Buck Rogers-type technology, to comments of one sort or another on historicism.

What then can be said to be individual and special in Los Angeles? In part it has to do with conditions that are close to unique for the city: the multi-use condominium with a narrow interior lot; the Malibu beach house on a 25' x 135' parcel, pressed on its sides by adjoining houses and the adjacent roadway; the predilection for stucco and wood on metal frame; the magic of instant horticulture and landscape design. Perhaps the final quality which still sets the city apart from New York or Chicago is that, with the fewest of exceptions, the architects of Los Angeles carry on a long-standing regional tradition of asserting their views through built architecture, rather than using a building as a minor caption to a written text or an expressive drawing. This overriding insistence upon reality, coupled with specific responses to regional approaches and problems, does then impart a certain character to the buildings of Los Angeles, which to a considerable extent is reflected in the awards and citations of this jury.



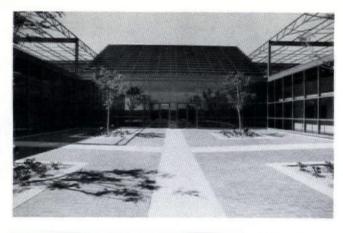
Category:	Commercial
Project:	Conference Room
Address:	1638 19th Street, Santa Monica, CA
Architect:	Carde/Killefer Corporation

Jury Comments: It's neat, it's cute; it's cheap. It's praiseworthy for its directness, simplicity, and cheeky charm.



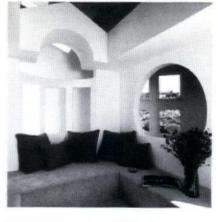
Category:	Single Family
Project:	Beachfront House
Address:	23758 Malibu Rd., Malibu, CA
Architect:	Ron Goldman, AIA

Jury Comments: A very poetic house on a long, narrow lot, built by the architect for speculation. Glazed gable forms, lanai detailing, and landscaping are combined in a sensitive way; the design of the interior is consistently excellent.



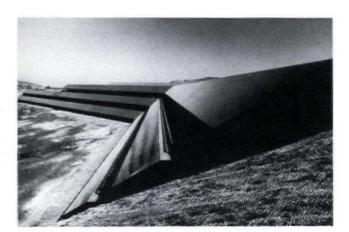
Category:	Commercial
Project:	Summa Office Building
Address:	3260 Industrial Rd., Las Vegas, NV
Architect:	Archisystems International

Jury Comments: This project seemed an excellent example of the strength and liveliness that can emerge from the language of high technology. The use of color is important; the project would not be as exciting without its blue and green tones.



Category:	Single Family
Project:	Chase House
Address:	21500 Saddle Peak Rd., Topanga, CA
Architect:	William Adams, AIA

Jury Comments: An unusual house, whose plan from the entrance seems rectangular, but is actually based on a polygon. In response to the client's desires the architect created soaring interior spaces, which are combined in three separate structures within the shell of the house.



Category:	Commercial
Project:	Western Home Office, Prudential Insurance Company of America
Address:	Westlake Village, CA
Architect:	Albert C. Martin and Associates, with Gensler and Associates as interior designer

Jury Comments: The jury considered this the best office building entered. The project is a striking response to the setting, a powerful environment for the user, and an extraordinary artifact on the landscape.



Category:	Single Family
Project:	Hacker Residence
Address:	333 E. Rustic Rd., Los Angeles, CA
Architect:	Robert Taylor, AIA, of Mayer/Taylor Architects

Jury Comments: Located next to a flood channel, the original house has been remodeled; the result is a remarkably attractive environment within a very small footprint.



Category: Education

Project: Fritz B. Burns Building,
Loyola Law School

Address: 1441 W. Olympic Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA

Architect: Frank O. Gehry and
Associates, with Brooks/
Collier as associate
architect

Jury Comments: This is basically a simple, rectangular building providing classroom and office space. The drama in the economical scheme is produced by arranging sculptural elements in a hollow at the center of the building. Another factor in this jury's decision was the master plan, which calls for additional buildings to accommodate mock trials and other activities.



Category: Government, Restoration
Project: California State Capitol
Architect: Welton Becket Associates

Jury Comments: The jury applauds the care, patience and thoroughness of this project.

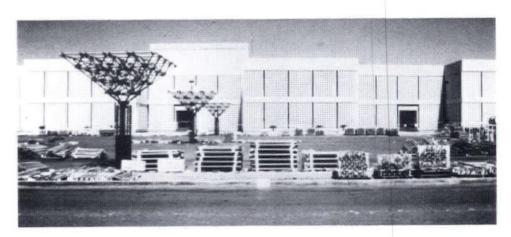


Category: Multiple Family
Project: Pacific Condominiums

Address: 116 Pacific St.,
Santa Monica, CA

Architect: Rebecca L. Binder, AIA,
of Stafford/Binder

Jury Comments: This is a vigorous and unusual design by an architect acting as developer. The vocabulary includes carefully detailed industrial motives used with strong color. The result of this mix is a look the jury has seldom before seen.



Category: Government

Project: Solar Photovoltaic
Space Frame Auto Shade
Structure, King Abdul
Aziz International Airport

Address: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Architect: Richard Schoen, AIA, of
RSA Architects, Inc.

Jury Comments: This project could not be any finer. What is more natural than to use the large expanse of a huge carport for a solar energy installation? The structure is beautiful, too.



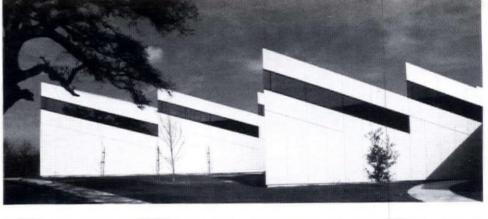
Category: Multiple Family,
Restoration

Project: Ronda Apartments

Address: 1412 Havenhurst Dr.,
Los Angeles, CA

Architect: Martin B. Gelber, AIA
and Associates

Jury Comments: The jury would love to live in this restoration of a Spanish-style structure. The project has so much appeal that one wonders why we are not still building this way.



Category: Government

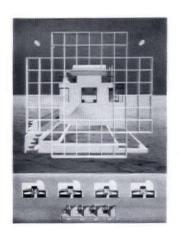
Project: Thousand Oaks
Public Library

Address: 1401 Janss Road,
Thousand Oaks, CA

Architect: Albert C. Martin and

Associates

Jury Comments: The integration of energy-conscious ideas with a formal concept, the relationship to the site, and stunning interiors set this project apart from all other public buildings entered.



Category: Drawings and Fantasies
Project: Architectural Drawing
Architect: James Stafford

Jury Comments: This is a beautiful drawing.



Category: Drawings and Fantasies
Project: The Neon Cake
Architect: Zimmerman Architects
and Planners

Jury Comments: The jury didn't like this project at first, but the students who helped us insisted they would fail Bernard Zimmerman's design studio if he didn't receive a prize. (Just kidding, Bernard; it's terrific.)

# LA/AIA Design Awards: Citations



Category:	Commercial
Project:	Bellevue Square
Address:	Bellevue, WA
Architect:	Charles Kober Associates

Jury Comments: It is hard to give awards to shopping centers, but this one surpasses expectations. The structural concept and interior fixtures provide a new experience of this otherwise tired building type.



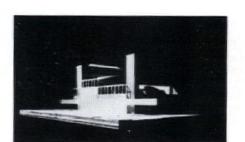
Category:	Education
Project:	Business Education Vocational Building, Santa Monica College
Address:	1900 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, CA
Architect:	Daniel, Mann, Johnson and Mendenhall

Jury Comments: This is a straightforward classroom building connected to a college, with a small courtyard and a very interesting and carefully detailed metal skin.



Category:	Multiple Family
Project:	Larrabee Condominiums
Address:	1201 Larrabee St., Los Angeles, CA
Architect:	John Siebel Associates Architects

Jury Comments: This example of a local building type fits eight units on a narrow lot and does it very well. The basic forms, through harking back to an earlier version of modern architecture, are well proportioned. The balconies are carefully detailed. The units are ingeniously planned with a diagonal thrust and arranged around an attractive open court.



Category:	<b>Drawings and Fantasies</b>
Project:	Design for an Artist's Center
Address: Santa Monica, CA	
Architect:	Panos Koulermos

Jury Comments: This unbuilt scheme has a unique raised plaza that captures the romance of an ocean view and responds to the context of the urban fabric.



Category:	Urban Design
Project:	The Promenade
Address:	121 S. Hope St., Los Angeles, CA
Architect:	Kamnitzer Cotton Vreeland

Jury Comments: Few entries addressed urban design issues; this one, however, makes an important statement by showing how a humane and pleasant residential environment can exist in downtown Los Angeles. As the area's master plan shows, this project may be the beginning of a series of such medium-density residential squares.



Category:	Commercial
Project:	Hertz Vehicle Mainte- nance Turnaround Facility
Address:	9000 and 9029 Airport Blvd., Los Angeles, CA
Architect:	Daniel, Mann, Johnson and Mendenhall

Jury Comments: If there has to be such a thing as a "vehicle turnaround facility," it is better for the sure-footed proficiency displayed in this project. The esthetic is not only appropriate, but beautiful in its own right.



Category:	Education
Project:	School for the Blind
Address:	500 Walnut Ave., Fremont, CA
Architect:	Daniel L. Dworsky, FAIA, and Associates

Jury Comments: This is a school for handicapped children, 10 to 16 years old. The site plan is designed to achieve a village-like character. There is great variety in the exterior elevations and much color to stimulate the students. The interior is especially lively.



Category:	Government
Project:	Brea Civic and Cultural Center
Address:	One Civic Center Way, Brea, CA
Architect:	Daniel L. Dworsky, FAIA, and Associates, and John Carl Warnecke and Associates
	NAME OF THE PARTY

Jury Comments: What the jury appreciated about this project was the liveliness of the formal scheme, as well as the proficiency displayed in the execution of the work.



Category:	Single Family, Restoration
Project:	Lewin Residence Renovation: 1938 Neutra House
Address:	Pacific Coast Highway, Santa Monica, CA
Architect:	Gwathmey Siegel and Associates, Architects

Jury Comments: A very sensitive remodeling, in keeping with Neutra's spirit, but which adds a new color scheme and furnishings to the interior. Minor changes have been made to the garden front and land-scaping has been added to the pool area; both have enhanced the building.



Category:	Commercial
Project:	William Morris Agency Expansion
Address:	151 El Camino Dr., Beverly Hills, CA
Architect:	Maxwell Starkman, AIA, Associates

Jury Comments: Among the other office buildings entered, this one stands out for its clear relationship to the street, with a thoughtful and interesting court entry; also for the technical excellence displayed in the carefully executed glass skin riding above a brick base.



Category:	Education
Project:	Theatre Workshop, Ahmadu Bello University
Address:	Zaria, Nigeria
Architect:	Steven D. Ehrlich, AIA

Jury Comments: This remarkable project combines indigenous forms, methods of construction, and decorative details, with an imaginative site plan. Inside the walled compound, a flexible theatre space has been created between round huts used for drama instruction.

## **Museum Review:** The Architecture of Richard Neutra

"The Architecture of Richard Neutra: From International Style to California Modern," an exhibition assembled by Arthur Drexler, Director of Design at the Museum of Modern Art, and Thomas Hines, Professor of History at UCLA, was at the Museum of Modern Art in New York until October 12. The catalog to the show was written by Drexler and Hines (Museum of Modern Art, \$10.00), and the July opening coincided with publication of Hines' Richard Neutra and The Search for Modern Architecture, (Oxford University Press, \$29.95). Together with the catalog, the book seems to be a necessary companion to the exhibition, and will be reviewed in a future issue of LA ARCHITECT.

The idea for a show on Richard Neutra came to Arthur Drexler as a result of the enthusiastic interest shown in the museum's new Lovell House model, part of the 1979 "Art of the Twenties" show. Philip Johnson, in turn, suggested a collaboration between the museum and Thomas Hines, who was independently involved in research for a book on Neutra. UCLA's Neutra Archive lent 35 mostly unpublished drawings; Julius Shulman photographs were already in MOMA's collection, and the museum commissioned a new model of the Landfair Apartments. Thus did MOMA inadvertently mark the fiftieth anniversary of its 1932 International Style show, whose book by Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson had included Neutra's Lovell House

Re-evaluation of Neutra's work, it is frequently observed, coincides with a general reassessment of modernism. The best qualities of early International Style are rediscovered in Neutra's early Los Angeles work, and the perceived bankruptcy of late modernism is confirmed in his late work. Neutra's architecture ironically achieved a modernist ideal: replicability; after the 40s it "lacked any fundamental rethinking of possibilities," according to Drexler.

Thinking it appropriate to concentrate the show on the formal aspects of Neutra's best work, however, Hines and Drexler elected to omit all of his drawings since 1935, all non-residential work after the Laemmle Universal-International Building of 1932-33 except the Neutra/Alexander Palos Verdes High School of 1961, and all residential work since the Singleton House of 1959. The show is composed of three rather undefined parts: the early drawings, the Lovell House experiment, and the Shulman photographs (plus the Landfair model).



"Neutra's talent far exceeded mere draftsmanship. Like Le Corbusier he might have pursued a separate career as an artist," wrote Drexler of Neutra's delicate and soulful travel watercolors and charcoal portraits, done from 1915 to 1920. Charcoal landscapes of 1918 have the expressionist diagonals and brooding chiaroscuro that reap-

peared in his forced perspective of a small worker's house designed when working for Eric Mendelsohn (Berlin, 1923) and later reemerged in Julius Shulman's great, dramatic photographs. At worst, notes Drexler, "facility overcomes observation . . . replacing authentic feeling with a predetermined method for capturing effects."

The Lovell House is the peak experience of the show, as it was of Neutra's career. If, according to Reyner Banham, Schindler's Lovell Beach House was a "California dream come true," Neutra's Lovell House was a "European dream come true." A compelling, photographic print of the steel frame in construction is itself an icon of the machine esthetic. Exploratory draw-

Indeed, taken as things in themselves, these photographs are strangely beautiful. They emphasize the heroic aspect of Neutra's architecture, rather than its intimate, warm, sunfilled qualities. What we see, usually, are houses on hillsides or in deserts, commanding yet mysteriously in touch with wild nature or human settlement.

However, despite their haunting beauty, these photographs, taken alone, are a deceit. It is unlikely that many museum-goers will read either catalog or book to complete their understanding of Neutra's architecture. In their frozen perfection, the photographs falsify the life of the buildings, and collude with the architect to present an ideal that never did exist.



Lovell House, Los Angeles, 1927-29.

ings of three versions of the design, huge photographs, and Neutra's original working drawings are arranged around the model to permit, with some trotting back and forth, an existential appreciation of Neutra's genius.

Most of the rest of the show consists of black and white photographs, two-dimensional and overblown, including unnecessarily large and much-published prints of VDL Research, Beard, von Sternberg, Koblick, Nesbitt, Tremaine. Kaufmann and other houses seen at their most abstract. One has some sense of the Existenz of the earlier Neutra in his drawings: his energy and drive, sensitivity, egotism, and probing intelligence. But here is too little sense of the dynamic of the architect and the life of the architecture, no probing and sincere drawings that might bring the frozen photographs to life. One wants an insight into the process of the architecture: Neutra's thought processes visualized, and those of his office. There is no indication of how these houses were appreciated and lived in. And of course there is no explication of the troubling complexities and problematic nature of the architect himself.

There are several reasons for Hines and Drexler's decision to include only black and white photographs of the later work. First, the show was intended by the curators to be a formal presentation, to be appreciated in conjunction with both catalog and book which supply the rich cultural, social and psychological background. Second, according to Drexler, after the Lovell House, Neutra's best work was masterly refinement; his drawings were omitted because they are merely facile.

Finally, Neutra's ideals best lent themselves to expression in photography. "The abstracting eye," as Susan Sontag called it, was the ideal medium of the Modern Movement's reductionist machine aesthetic. Neutra's medium, moreover, was black and white, Hines points out. Silver-gray, whether paint or print, suggests industrial production. The photograph can make stucco smooth and dematerialize glass.

"No picture (should be) taken where the workmanship deficiencies are played up by side light and when they appear buckly," wrote Neutra to Shulman of the Tremaine House in 1947. "These pictures are not to be taken to prove the fault of the contractor. Neatness and clarity were our design intentions." Indeed, the suspected complicity of the print media and the modernist architect is caricatured in Neutra's much-criticized dependence on public image and photographed effect. According to Drexler: "Wright's houses were designed to be lived in, Neutra's to be photographed," and "Photographed from a distance, the Lovell House looks as trim and precise as its abstract composition requires, but in reality its stucco surfaces are rough,

lumpy and soft. . . Neutra's architecture, starting with the Nesbitt House, became warmer in color and texture. His earlier houses and apartments were in many respects neutral, and depended for their "warmth" on subjective response. But the photographs are almost always cold in spirit. "Aesthetic distance seems built into the very experience of looking at photographs," according to Susan Sontag. "Surrealism lies at the heart of the photographic enterprise: in the very creation of a duplicate world, of a reality in the second degree. . . . " Photographs accomplish a sort of "theatricalization of the real."

Despite inadequacies, the formalist photographic presentation would doubtlessly have pleased Neutra himself. Of great importance to Neutra seems to have been a professed ideal, or at least the image of that ideal, despite the real goals and actual facts. "Illusion is the only possible mode of redemption," said one of Neutra's philosophical heroes, Friedrich Neitzsche. Like messy stucco and bad buildings these realities are eliminated in the wonderful purgatory of distancing, and the heroic and deceitful illusion remains.

Anne Luise Buerger, a former member of the Editorial Board of LA ARCHITECT and of LA/AIA, is an associate in the office of Richard Meier & Partners, New York.

## **Book Review:** The Total Designer

Peter Behrens: Architect and Designer

Alan Windsor, Whitney Library of Design/Watson Guptill Publications,



The revival of the tenets of early modernism is not only manifested in the work of contemporary architects but also in the restoration of long-neglected monuments of the period such as the Fagus Shoe Factory (1911-1913) and the Villa Savoie at Poissy (1929-1931), and in the study of lesser-known figures of early modernism. Peter Behrens, who is an acknowledged leader in the early years of twentieth-century architecture, is most known for his designs of industrial buildings for the AEG (Allgemeine Elektricitäts-Gesellschaft) prior to World War I, and for the fact that Gropius, Mies and Le Corbusier worked in his office at the beginning of their respective careers. His career was actually much more diverse, and Alan Windsor's biography of Behrens is a helpful survey of his work. The book is, the author says, the first complete review of Behrens' career in English.

Peter Behrens was trained as a painter and had achieved a position as a well-known designer by 1907 when he became "artistic advisor" for AEG. His early painting was in the mainstream of German academic art, but he participated in the first Secession exhibit in 1893; he developed an interest in graphic art and "industrial design," in the most general sense, developing designs for glassware and porcelain plates which were manufactured by Villeroy-Boch. He exhibited with artists in Darmstadt and became a member of their colony where he designed his own house in 1901. By 1907 he had designed several temporary exhibit buildings, and small architectural projects in addition to his continued involvement with furniture, graphic and product design. He also directed theater projects while at Darmstadt.



Behren's House, Darmstadt, 1901.

Before he was involved with large-scale architectural projects for AEG, Behrens designed arc lamps and exhibits. The architectural work began in 1908 and the well known Turbinenhalle was designed in 1909, but he also designed workers housing for AEG and other large projects in a private practice, including the German embassy in St. Petersburg and the Gas Works for Frankfurt which Reyner Banham has described as the "most formally inventive industrial buildings of his pre-War career."

After World War I he continued to be active, completing buildings for the Hoechst Dye Works (1920-1924), the Good Hope Company



New Ways, Northampton, 1923-25.

Buildings in Oberhausen (1921-1925), and several private residences including New Ways in Northampton, England (1923-1925); in 1927 he participated in the Werkbund exhibition Die Wohnung under the direction of Mies van der Rohe. He was appointed professor at the Master School of Architecture in Vienna after the death of Otto Wagner, and later appointed head of the Akademie der Kunste in Berlin. In spite of criticism by the National Socialists, Behrens was the architect for the new AEG headquarters located along the North-South Axis of Berlin designed by Albert Speer. He died in 1940 at the age of 72.

Alan Windsor remains stubbornly loyal to his goal to survey the "whole career of Peter Behrens." On the one hand, it is good to read this survey which describes the diversity of Behrens' work; on the other, the facts of his life tend to read as isolated incidents. We want not only to know "what" about Behrens' diverse design interests but also "why." The interior of his house was flowery and busy in the best art nouveau manner: the dining room was paneled in white wood, matching "japanned" white furniture; the walls were painted wine red and the chandeliers were crystal and silver. Several years later he was designing arc lamps for AEG which would appeal to the most demanding "hitech" purist of 1982. The evolving process is not explored; the evolution is of interest, not just the intervening events. Finally, we want to know more about the relationship with Behrens' "most famous assistants." When the author goes beyond the fact that Gropius, Mies and Le Corbusier worked in the office he usually deals with their disputes: he quotes Le Corbusier as describing Behrens as "tragic and unstable." But what was the attraction of the Behrens atelier in the first place? Gropius, for example, started to work by the end of 1907 before Behrens was involved with architectural projects for AEG. His reasons for joining the office would contribute to a better understanding of Behrens' career or at the very least give some indication of Behrens' stature as a designer.

The scope of the book necessarily depends upon illustrations to help clarify the many projects described and, unfortunately, they are often badly reproduced. More often that not plan, elevation and section drawings are unreadable because they have been reproduced at such a small scale; photographs are often too dark to read. As a result, the illustrations add little if any information to the projects being discussed in the text.

The book, in spite of its faults, does provide a more complete picture of an architect who is most known for his work on a few buildings and because of his associates. And it does suggest the diversity and complexity of ideas which served as sources for the developments in architecture which led to "modernism."

**Charles Wheatley** 

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## **Chapter News and Notes**

LA/AIA Board of Directors meeting 2199, Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, October 5, 1982.

◆ President's Report: Lyman reported on an article in Sunday's paper which mentioned a building which contained some stained glass windows believed to have been designed by Tiffany. The building was torn down over a weekend before it could be designated an Historic Landmark. Not even the windows were saved. A discussion was had as to whether the AIA should take action against those responsible. It was decided to turn the matter over to Barton Phelps and our Cultural Heritage Committee.

Lyman has received a call from George Notter, President Elect of National. Notter is planning on getting together groups around the country for their input. Lyman indicated that he had asked Harry Hallenback to put together a group of 8-10 persons for the afternoon of November 12, 1982. Ken Newman, Chet Widom, Cyril Chern, Bill Landworth, Ron Takaki, Philip Yankey, and Mark Hall volunteered to be a part of the group. Lyman said that there will also be some representatives from the San Diego and Orange County Chapters so it was not certain that everyone who volunteered would be able to attend. Axon will coordinate the effort with Lyman and Hallenback.

• Treasurer's Report: Landworth reviewed the report. The income to date is \$240,506.00; expenses to date have been \$191,407.00. The balance in the bank as of September 30, 1982 was \$58,432.00. The anticipated deficit for 1982 is now only \$1,568.00.

Lyman said that he felt that the Treasurer and Executive Director should be complimented for their efforts to balance the budget.

- Executive's Report: Axon reminded everyone of the list of calendar events attached to the Minutes.
- Associate's Report: Takaki complimented WAL on the Home Tour.
   He also announced a tour of the Braille Institute in December.

Takaki presented a rough draft of the Associates' Membership card for approval. It was suggested that space for the Chapter President's signature be included.

Takaki discussed the conflict in schedule due to the Chapter Design Awards and the Voyage Design Conference both taking place on October 16. After much discussion it was suggested that the chairman of the "Voyage" event get together with the Award's Dinner Committee chairman and see what can be worked out in regard to the Associates' bringing their guests to the Awards Dinner.

Moved Widom/Second Hall, the following: that the Board allocate \$250.00 to the Associates to supplement their costs if they choose to come to the Design Awards Dinner with the guests. Carried.

 WAL Report: Sutnar thanked everyone on the Board for their help on the tour. She said that she particularly wanted to thank the ASA and Kathy Schoen for their help. She also said that the tour was very successful but not as well attended as last year.

 CCAIA Board Meeting Report: Newman reported that the main issue was next year's budget. Newman said that he had received a call from Bill Patnaude that he had given the Planning and Finance Committee directions to freeze spending as much as possible for the rest of the year; provide a separate budget for programs; direct the Finance Committee to eliminate or reduce the Professional Development program for next year so that the dues could remain at \$121.00. He has asked all the delegates to reconvene with this information and be prepared for the November meeting.

Finally Patnaude has asked the Committee to approve a voluntary assessment to build up the Reserve Fund and Government Relations Fund. The Associate Committee was

established later in the day and the positions on the ballot were put over until next month. There was no discussion yet made on having an Associate Member on CCAIA Ex-

Rick Conklin, CCAIA Vice-President, said that he had gone to Sacramento in order to work with the Public Awareness budget for next year. It was decided that there be a proportionate reduction across the board.

Wertheimer stated that he was on a Jury for CCAIA Awards and was amazed and disappointed that this Chapter did not submit any nominations for the Awards. Chet Widom stated that we now have a Chair and methodology and, therefore, this will not happen again.

• New Members: Moved Worts

New Members: Moved Wertheimer/Second Chern, the following: that the proposed list of applicants for Chapter Membership, be approved. Carried.

New Business: Cyril Chern presented a proposal from the Engineers Credit Union to include AIA architects in their union, which then could be re-named Engineers & Architects Credit Union. After a discussion it was decided that this might be advantageous and could also be offered to Associates and perhaps to the students.

Moved Widom/Second Landworth, the following: that investigation of our affiliation with the Engineers Federal Credit Union be pursued. Carried.

Tyler said that he wanted to report that the Corps of Architects' Task Force had submitted an extensive environmental report on the Garden Court Apartments in Hollywood.

WAL annual Holiday
Party will be held Friday,
December 17, at the Ennis-Brown
House designed by Frank Lloyd
Wright, in Los Feliz. Invitations with
more details will be sent to WAL
members. For information call
Marcia Pollak at 477-1226.

## New Format for Chapter/State Dues Invoice

Up until now, Chapter and California Council (State) dues have been combined in a single invoice for AIA Members and Associate Members. (National sent out its own, separate invoice.) The format for this combined invoice has been changed, as follows.

- · The invoice will be 81/2 x 11 in size.
- The first section will print and total Chapter and CCAIA basic dues, plus mandatory Chapter or Council assessments, if any.
- The second section relates only to ARCPAC voluntary contributions.
- · The third section is assigned specifically to each Chapter for computation of Chapter Supplemental Dues and/or any other required information. Members should add to the printed "basic dues" total on the invoice any voluntary contributions and/or supplemental dues obligation, to arrive at the total sum to be paid
- Additional information:

  Membership in the Institute is contingent upon payment of dues, including any supplemental dues obligations and such mandatory assessments as may be levied, to all three entities: National, State and Chapter. (The category of Professional Affiliate membership is restricted to the individual chapters and, therefore, not liable for either State or National dues.)
- Chapter AIA Members are requested to carefully review and respond to the Supplemental Dues section of their invoice.
- Associate Members are requested to complete the information in the third section of their invoice.
- Chapter By-Laws state that if a member is in default as of March 1, membership in the Institute is subject to recommendation for termination

Should you need clarification or assistance, please contact the Executive Director, Janice Axon, in the Chapter Office, at 659-2282.

## Cornerstones

Betram Berenson has stepped down from his position as dean of University of Cincinnati School of Design, Architecture, Arts and Planning, and has taken a leave of absence to teach in the architecture program at Cal Poly Pomona.

Michael Bobrow, AIA, has been selected by the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture as one of 50 alumni included in its history, The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981. Bobrow, founder and chairman of Bobrow/Thomas and Associates, was recognized for the design of Daniel Freeman Hospital Rehabilitation Center in Inglewood. The project was featured in the book as one of the distinguished national and international works in the school's 100-year history.

Alan Rosen, AIA, was presented the Spirit of Life award by the Construction Industries Alliance for the City of Hope. Rosen, the first architect to be so honored by the hospital's support group, was recognized for contributions to his profession and community. Rosen is a senior vice-president of Welton Becket in Los Angeles, and a member of LA/AIA Board of Directors.

LA/AIA Membership, November, 1982.

New Members, AIA: Chris Short, Chris Short, Architect; Bill Nakagawa, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; Irvin Fuller, Jr., Rochlin & Baran Associates, Inc.; Alfredo Javier, A. Fred Javier & Associates; Hamid E. Gabbay, Vito Cetta & Associates; Shamil Kubba, The Kubba Corporation; Janet Bower Takamune, Janet B. Takamune, Architect; Ajit Narayan Dighe, The Practice; Vincent Dyer, Bruce Becket & Associates; Kenneth Kai Chang, Sam Chang Architect & Associates, Inc.; M. Stan Sharp, Inter-Arch; Miron Hunt, Miron Hunt & Associates; J. Timothy Felchlin, Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners; David Ben Powyszynski, R. Duell & Associates; Chai Ve Lee, Bank of America; Donald M. Johnson, National Medical Enterprises, Inc. New Associates, AIA: Edward L. G. Ng, Black, O'Dowd & Associates; Alex Maxim, Environmental Planning & Research; Eudes Nasci-

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tural Interior Design.

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## LA Architect

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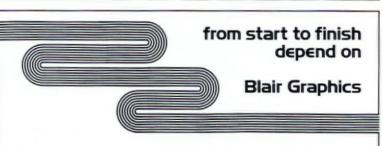
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