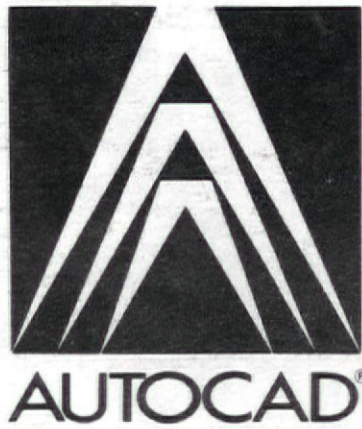


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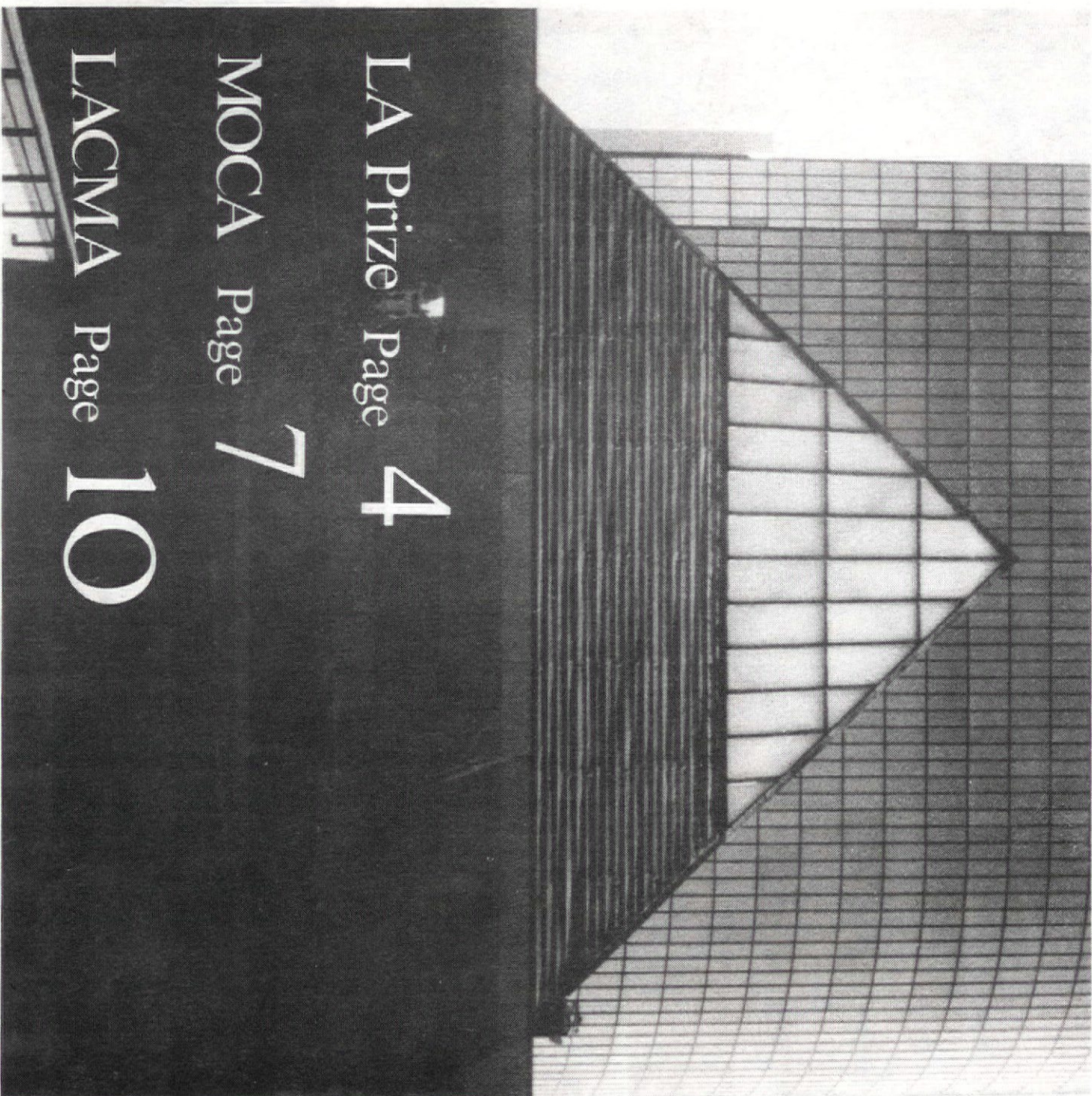
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December 1986

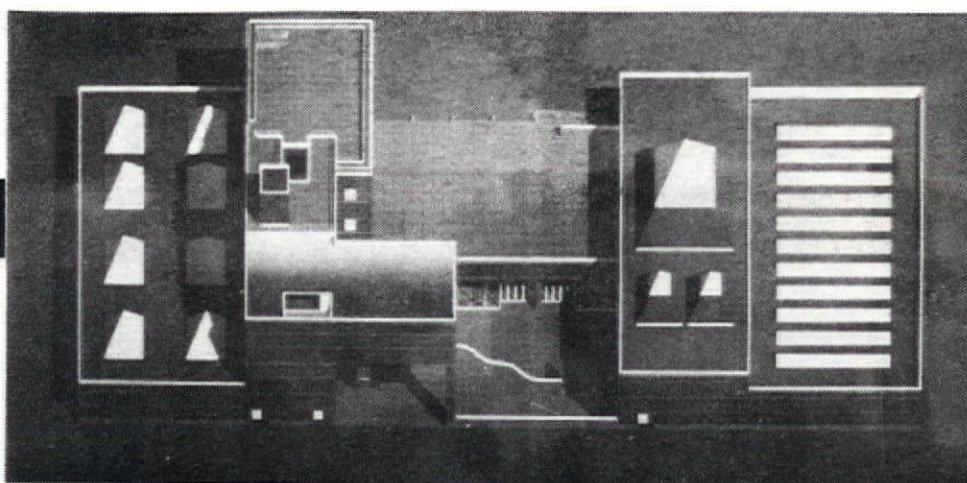
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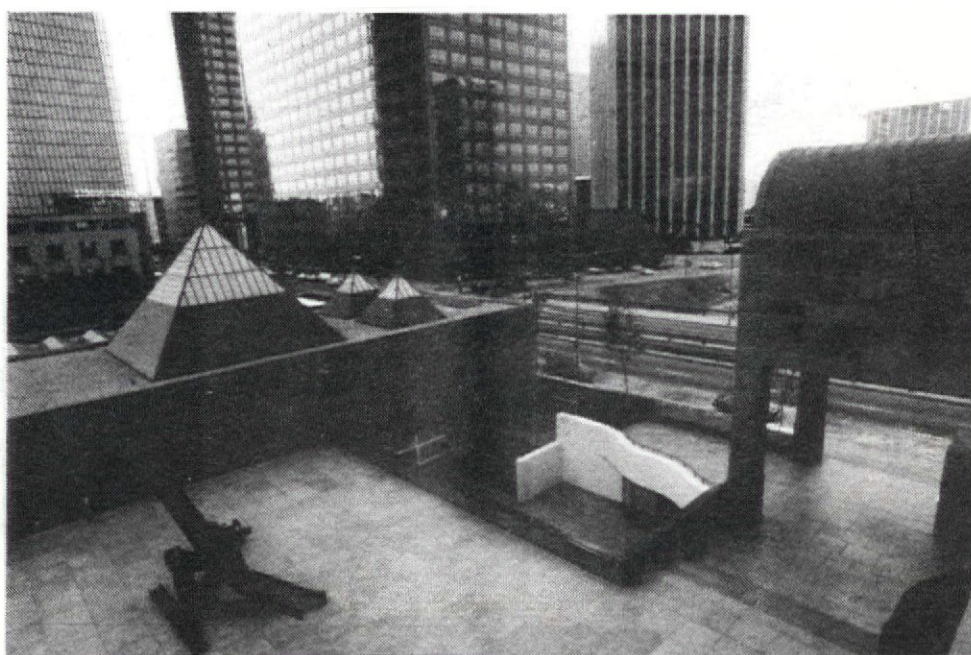
LA Prize Page 4

MOCA Page 7

LACMA Page 10



Silkscreen of MOCA at night, bird's eye view.



View of museum court from above.

vironment that is very neutral," Palevsky stated in an interview. The fifth scheme was unenthusiastically presented by Isozaki in March 1982. He did not consider it to be his best work, but a solution forced upon him by the committee. "The architecture should disappear," stated Palevsky, as it obviously did with this scheme.

In the controversy that followed, Isozaki threatened to resign his position now that his integrity had been violated. The architecture committee fired Isozaki April 7, but he was reinstated after then-director Pontus Hulten and deputy-director Richard Koshalek threatened to resign. In the end, the architecture and design committee was dismembered and replaced by a new building committee composed of Pontus Hulten, represented by Richard Koshalek, Max Palevsky, and headed by developer/lawyer/art collector Fredrick Nicholas.

The sixth scheme was presented in July 1982 and approved by a 15-3 vote of the trustees.

The 98,000 sq. ft. museum is like a small village made up of the platonic fragments: the pyramids, a vault resting on a cubical mass, various cubical volumes and a diagonal grid system. These elements rest on two masses clothed in roughcut Indian sandstone separated by a large entry/sculpture courtyard.

Patrons enter the east and west side of the museum through a red granite courtyard. It acts as the center of the various museum functions which occur at the plaza level. The north mass contains the administration wing, the bookstore, and office lobby. The south mass contains an

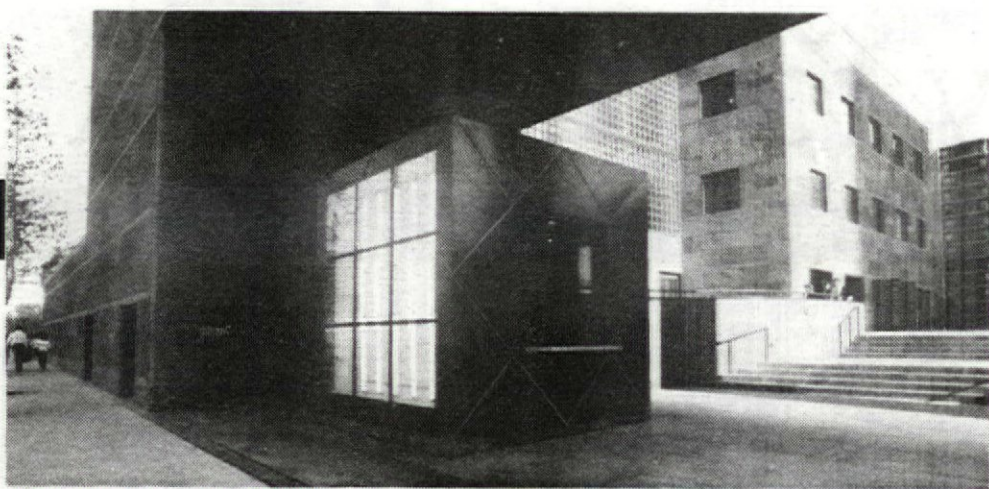
entry for groups and the handicapped. The entry to the galleries below is indicated by a reclining "Marilyn Monroe curve" made of crystallized glass. This curve guides visitors down from the courtyard into the museum lobby onto a clockwise direction, generated by another voluptuous curve, to the pristine galleries and auditorium. Dramatic as the entry to the courtyard is, it is unfortunate the handicapped access into the plaza level was not treated with the same enthusiasm. Access on the east side is provided by a ramp perpendicular to the south volume. This provides good access onto the plaza and to the elevators at the group entry. The access to Grand Avenue is interrupted by the stairs leading visitors up from Grand Avenue. Handicapped access from the west entry is provided by a small lift tucked behind the museum ticket booth. This access should be integrated into the main circulation paths as it was done at the Temporary Contemporary or at the radial courtyard of California Plaza so that all visitors could share the same experience.

Isozaki believes "the outside has to have some specific character, a symbolic character. The building has to be a small object that attracts peoples' attention not with its volume but with its materials and forms." The prevalent exterior element is the roughcut sandstone which Isozaki first came across 25 years ago while visiting historic sites in India. "I imagined using the material from the beginning as the exterior of the MOCA building," commented Isozaki. "I used the unpolished, natural surface of the

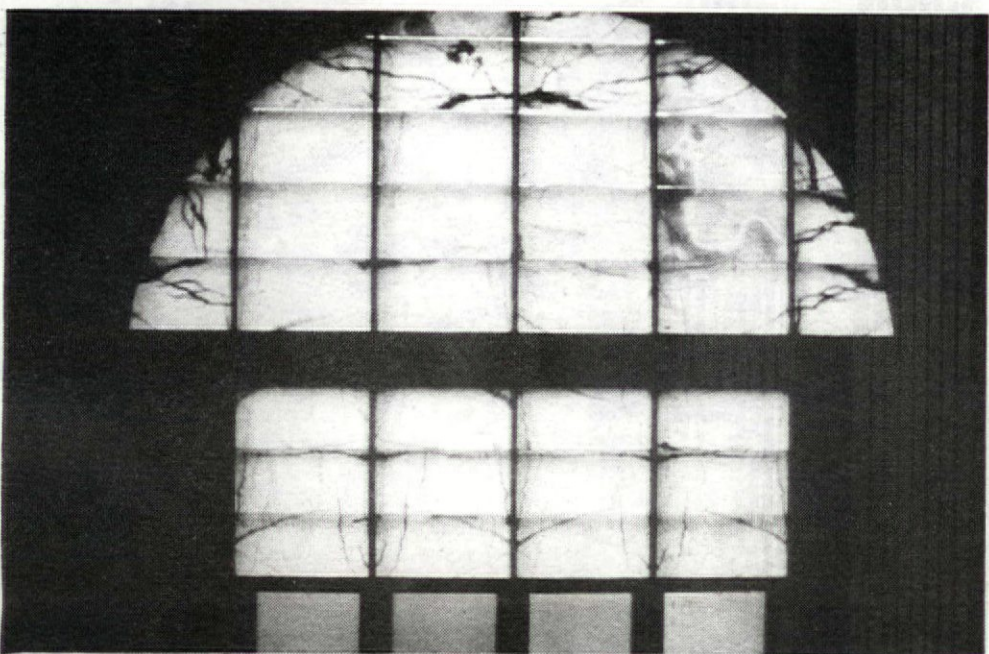
stone. When split, the surface has shadows and also some depth and is therefore a very strong material." Other blocks of the sandstone were laser polished into eight-to-ten bands which alternate with the natural unfinished stone and help to frame to square punched-out windows, the large plane of glass block and also create a module for the various wall heights of the museum exterior.

The proportions of MOCA respond beautifully to the overall context. The wall facing Grand Avenue, which stretches 340 feet in length, varies from a height of 54 feet to a height of 14 feet. The massing is broken by the void creating the entry gateway, emphasized by the barrel vault above, and the stepping of walls. Isozaki manipulated the facades to create an intelligent, unthreatening, calm feeling. The wall facing the radial courtyard of California Plaza is bold, but subtle. Isozaki's comment on the effect of texture has can best be experienced as the shadows play with the hours. The facade of MOCA facing east to the linear fountains of California Plaza is far less complex than the Grand Avenue facade. The museum wall steps down to avoid intimidating the pleasant outdoor space. Unforgivably the wall is interrupted by some unattractive service doors framing two display cases for museum information. MOCA's north-facing facade is most visible to approaching vehicles. The composition of small pyramids and Indian sandstone is contrasted by deep green aluminum panels incised with a pink diagonal grid.

The barrel vault parallel to Grand Avenue defines the entry to



Museum entrance court and ticket booth.



The onyx library window is like a contemporary rice paper screen.

the plaza. It has become one of Isozaki's strongest images derived from his use of "tectonic" and sculptural elements. His use of the vault is a trademark, symbolizing the concept of house. This is appropriate to the new home for contemporary art and intellectual activity nurtured below the barrel vault in the museum library and board room.

Commentators have proposed many interpretations for Isozaki's pyramids. Isozaki states, "the pyramid, a characteristic exterior shape, was not quoted from the Egyptian pyramids but was based essentially on pure geometry and was used as a skylight system. So, while it evokes an association with the Egyptian pyramid it also has a relation to pure, abstract form. It always has this double meaning." Isozaki feels the use of traditional forms copied directly from history would be a dead end; somewhat like a craft revival. Instead, he is interested in the interplay between the metaphoric association with history and the creation of pure abstraction.

White pristine galleries filled with sweet daylight await visitors descending from the activities of the plaza level. "I think the main room in the museum is the gallery. If a museum cannot get good galleries, it is a very bad building. I think all the galleries here are quite successful," comments Isozaki. Where the geometric volumes of the exterior become the mass, the galleries are the void. The entry gallery is the absolute example of a pure essential void expressing the principles of emptiness and nothingness. The feeling of infinity inflicted by this soaring pyramid recalls Doug

Wheeler's installation at the Temporary Contemporary's "The First Show" in 1983. There is no existing mass in this space. The only mass, according to Isozaki, is the space between the people.

Each gallery was created as a backdrop to the art; therefore all use of ornamentation was avoided. Beyond the large pyramid are two other galleries, one utilizing the pyramidal void as its source of daylighting, the other a large multifunctional gallery with high ceilings illuminated by a series of linear skylights. The north gallery is a generous multifunctional space; however, a standard grid ceiling has been placed below the pyramids to diffuse the daylight entering the gallery. This is very disappointing as the conclusion to the exhibit areas.

Below the galleries is a 162-seat auditorium preceded by a 1400 square foot lobby. The lobby is intended to exhibit an ongoing series of film and video installations related to the auditorium programs. Patrons will be able to indulge themselves with the 16 monitors capable of multiple programming sequences. Past the media blitz is the multi-use auditorium dressed in concrete contrasted by smooth, punctuated aluminum acoustical panels. For a facility of such major importance to new and experimental mediums the auditorium seems very small.

The administration wing of the museum is on the fourth through seventh floors on the north side of the building. The fifth and sixth levels hold offices defined by the large plane of glass block and generous square windows on the courtyard facade. The sixth level is highlighted

by the museum library with its 23-foot high barrel-vaulted ceiling. Thin onyx sheets, like a contemporary interpretation of Japanese rice paper, screen the library window. The seventh floor board room also sits below the vault. Both rooms express similar interiors as those found in the auditorium.

MOCA will open its doors to the public December 10, 1986 with "Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945-1986." "It's a banner event," states Director Richard Koshalek. "In keeping with this museum's sense of contemporary art as a continuing experience, and in contrast to the trend of short-term blockbuster shows, we decided on the year-long exhibition schedule so that people can get to know the works, can live with them and integrate them through repeated visits. This exhibition is about ideas, and ideas require time." 428 works representing 77 artists, 23 of them Californians, will be available for viewing until January 10, 1988.

First impressions of the Museum of Contemporary Art indicate Isozaki has solved all the material problems of architecture. But beyond that, he has realized the spiritual needs of people by taking the opportunity to create magical places expressing serenity. Isozaki's architecture has once again completed its spiritual mission. It would be commendable if this small jewel could be the catalyst for downtown's future.

Miguel Baltierra

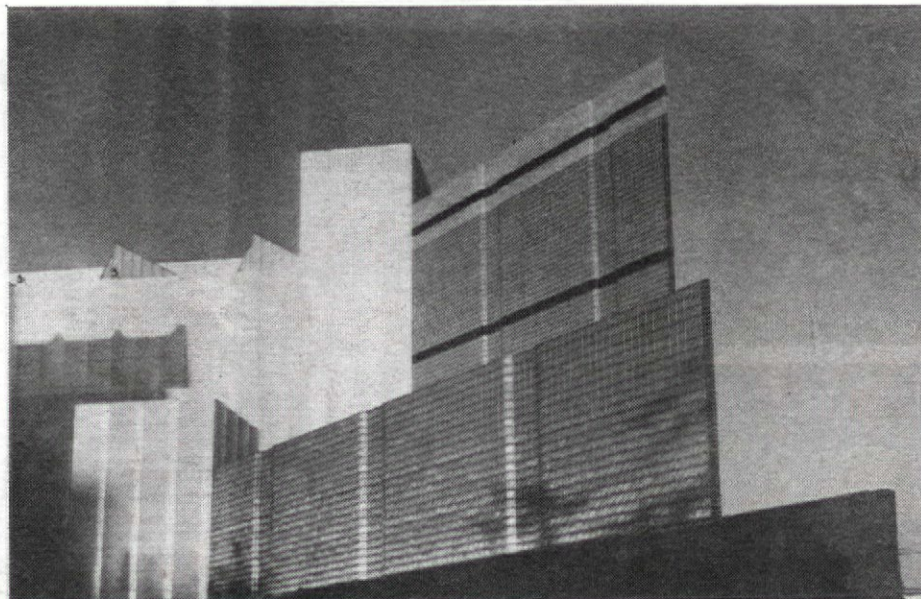
Mr. Baltierra works in the office of Arthur Erickson Architects.

New Identity for LACMA

Review



The Robert O. Anderson Gallery for 20th Century art creates a monumental gateway to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



Enameled steel panels, limestone and glass block create a collage of materials when seen from the Central Court.

The November opening of the Robert O. Anderson Building and the Times Mirror Central Court at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art signalled the completion of a major component of the Museum's long-range master plan for development and construction. Designed by the New York firm of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, under the direction of Norman Pfeiffer, the 115,000 square foot gallery reflects the total reorganization and expansion of all museum functions, from staffing to collection development. Director Earl A. Powell III states that it is a "collections-driven master plan" with four interrelated goals: to enable the museum to show more of the collection by increasing gallery space; to streamline and clarify museum administration through reorganization of staff offices; to give the existing museum complex a new visual presence and "front door" on Wilshire Boulevard; and to simplify the experience of coming to the museum.

Under the new master plan, the Anderson Building will contain 50,000 square feet of exhibition space on three levels, devoted to 20th century collections and special exhibitions. The Hammer Building will continue to present travelling exhibits, and the Ahmanson Building will now be able to present a

much larger portion of the historical collections in a chronological order in newly-enlarged and renovated galleries. The restaurant and lecture hall will remain in the Bing Building, while the entire ground level of all four buildings will now be used for museum administration. The complex will be complete when Bruce Goff's Shin'enkan Pavilion for Japanese Art opens in 1988. It will then function as a village of museums connected by plazas and gardens.

The museum has been in need of reorganization for many years. Shortly after the opening of the original three-building complex in 1965, it became clear that the spaces were functionally inadequate for the needs of a rapidly expanding museum, both in numbers of staff and the extent and quality of collections. This was partially due to the wishes of three original major donors who each wanted a separate building, rather than one structure with wings. The requirement for three functionally different buildings resulted in a static formal relationship of classically-inspired buildings around a central court, similar to Lincoln Center in New York. Only 25% of the total floor area was devoted to galleries. The new galleries increase the exhibit area to 50% of the total square footage. For the first time, the museum will be able to display the

quality and depth of the collections.

The Anderson Building creates a front door for the museum complex and brings the museum to the street with an urban edge. Sheathed with tan limestone, glass block, and enameled steel panels, the gallery is sited directly on Wilshire Boulevard in the area formerly occupied by a lower level entry plaza, fountains and sculpture garden. A bold triumphal arch announces the entry to the museum complex, a grand stairway then proceeds along the Anderson Building, past a four-tiered fountain and a granite wall inscribed with the names of major donors, into the Times Mirror Central Court. The three-story court is intended visually and symbolically to unite the new Anderson Building with the three existing buildings designed by William L. Pereira in 1964. The partially roofed, 40,000 square foot court will serve as the public focus and orientation point for the entire museum complex.

The original complex was criticized for being confusing and pompous. The finicky monumentality of the early 60's seemed inappropriate for Los Angeles even then. The forecourt and plaza were the most exciting and potentially valuable parts of the original complex, but never functioned properly due to inadequate landscaping and

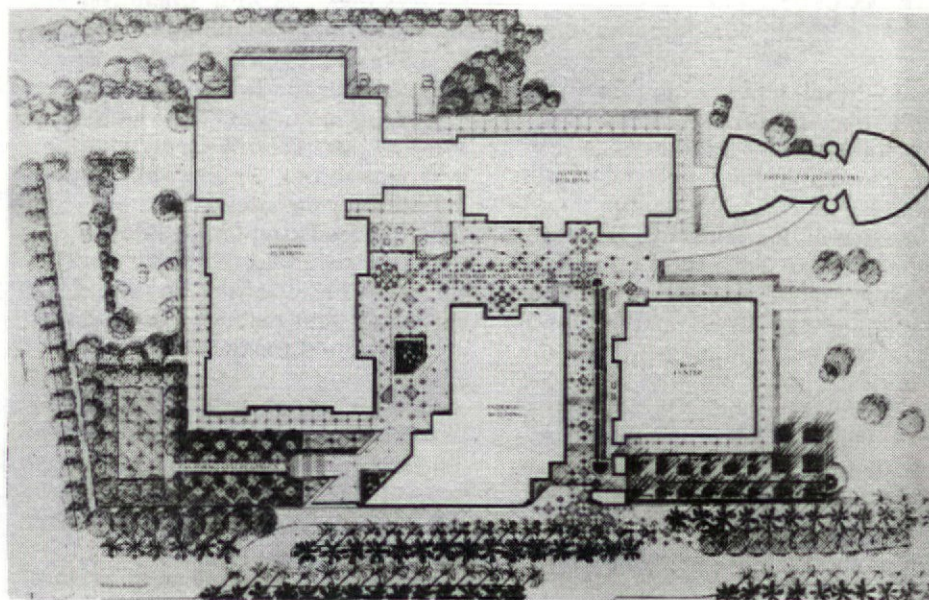
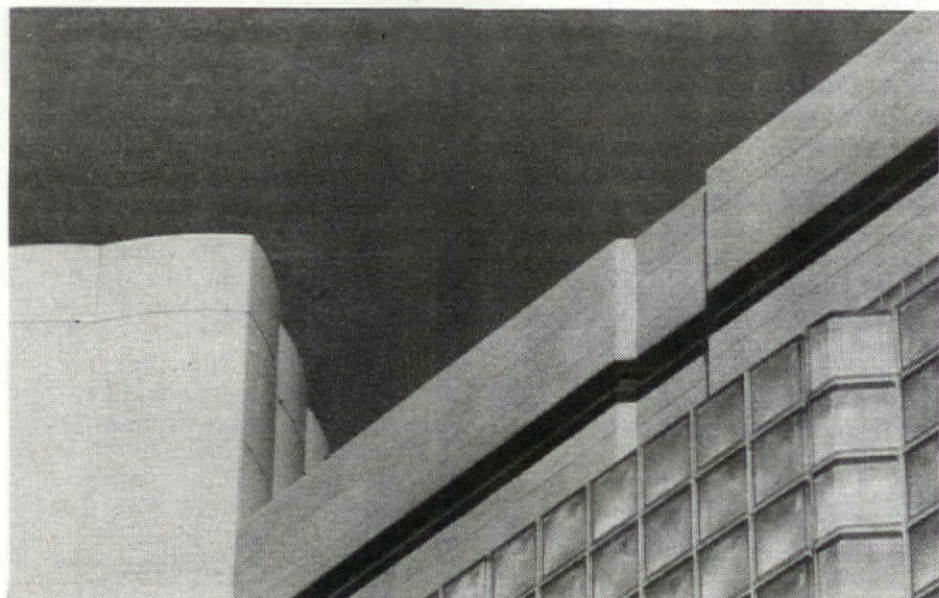
seating. They soon had the aspect of a deChirico painting emptied of its emotional and psychological content.

The Anderson Building now fills the forecourt along Wilshire Boulevard. This reuse of the space is more urban, perhaps offering a glimpse of the future Los Angeles. It is massive and formal, and offers a totally new identity for the complex.

The new building creates a street wall and provides a degree of closure not present in the original plan. It forms the fourth edge to the new public plaza and transforms this formerly-static renaissance composition into a denser medieval piazza of continuous space as the connective tissue between buildings. Camillo Sitte, the 19th century architectural theorist, urged that monuments be built into the urban fabric, and the Anderson Building attempts to do precisely that. It provides the asymmetry and complexity which are the main features of Sitte's spatial model. This is emphasized by the collision of materials: tan limestone, green glazed terra cotta-clad columns, glass block and pink enameled-steel panels, which create an appealing collage of colors and reflected light. A new outdoor room has been created with limited vistas, yet with a sense of continuous space which avoids the former feeling of vacuousness.



CHARLES S. CORDERO



The Anderson Gallery on Wilshire Boulevard and the Shin'enkan addition behind establish a museum village surrounding a central piazza for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The central court has the potential of an involving public place. Compared to the vibrancy of the new gallery, the Ahmanson now looks forlorn, isolated from the gaiety and density of the canopy-covered eastern edge of the plaza. The plastic bubble-awning that linked the three original buildings has been removed from the Bing and Hammer Buildings. Never sufficient in scale to unite the complex, the remaining portion on the Ahmanson will be removed and a new entry created in a later phase of the master plan. The patterned concrete floor of the plaza pulls the Ahmanson into the gallery orbit through its bold diagonal pattern that aligns with the new terra cotta columns, which in turn align with the columns of the original complex. The pattern will help shrink the space and pull the gallery closer. The four buildings will then work as an ensemble; the goal to create a legible space will have been achieved.

The Anderson Building, however, has a split personality. On the plaza it bumps and nudges the existing complex and tries to be accommodating, while on Wilshire Boulevard it forms a monumental wall which overwhelms the original buildings. No structure nearby so aggressively confronts the street, an ironic allusion to an urban context

which does not exist. Yet this frontal piece has its appeal. It brings a vital urban energy to Los Angeles, but like its neighbor, the May Company at Fairfax and Wilshire, the new gallery is essentially a sign. The power and imagery are put up front to tempt the visitor or shopper inside. The golden May Company tower signals the beginning of the Miracle Mile, while the urbane Anderson advertises "high art."

From the forecourt, the change to monumental scale is further reinforced by a change in materials. Enamelled steel gives way to horizontal limestone and glass block bands highlighted by green terra cotta trim. The limestone bands appear to float amid the glass block and create a disturbing tension. The limestone has been reduced to a purely graphic application that belies its association as a load-bearing material.

The boldness of the exterior facades is, however, in sharp contrast to the exhibit spaces within. Few galleries feature the glass block facade as a design element. The most potentially dynamic space is a triangular gallery on the second and third levels of the glass-walled wedge; however, the opportunity to display an extraordinary sculpture in an exciting two-story volume is lost to an ill-placed stairway.

The galleries are well-propor-

tioned and gracious, and will not compete with the art for the viewer's attention. Some have hardwood floors while others are carpeted. The third floor galleries as well as those along the south wall have filtered natural light from either windows or skylights. The south light is filtered through the glass block of the facade and then directed to the ceiling with louvers. Unfortunately the aquatic green of the glass block is reinforced by the cool grey walls, appearing to give a green cast to the paintings, distorting their true colors.

Detailing was clearly of secondary importance to the overall scheme. The Anderson Building employs the ten-foot grid of the existing complex, expressed on the south facade; the same grid at 45 degrees generates the plaza-paving geometry. However, joints are sometimes clumsy, as at the juncture of the pearly pink "pillows" with the Hammer Gallery entrance, and where the canopy columns plunge into the sculpted forms of the Bing. An ambiguity of materials similar to the facade occurs on the staff level, where glass block is used merely as a surface material along an intrusive diagonal wall echoing the angled outer face. The result is a dark geometry imposed on staff offices. Few offices enjoy the garden views featured in the original buildings. Even

the Director has given up his airy corner office, with its glass walls facing landscaped gardens.

The scope and complexity of the project is such that some details could perhaps not have been anticipated until construction was well underway. They may ultimately prove to be of minor importance as the public uses and appreciates the building and the entire museum village. When the master plan has been realized, the four-fold goals will have been met. The village composition will be further enhanced with the addition of the Shin'enkan Gallery. The Anderson Building may prove either to be a stroke of genius with minor faults, or a monumental gaffe with a few gracious amenities; that it will provoke strong reactions is a certainty.

William H. Fain, Jr., Katherine W. Rinne, Mark R. Gershen

Mr. Fain is Chairman of the LA/AIA Urban Design Committee and Executive Vice President at Pereira Associates. Ms. Rinne is an independent architectural consultant. Mr. Gershen is a planner at Pereira Associates.

News and Notes

Minutes

The following text is a summary of the October 1986 LA/AIA Board of Directors meeting minutes. The full text is available through the Chapter office.

Discussion on the initiative: Janice Axon stated that the ratio remains the same. Two more ballots came in, one for and one against, so at present it stands at 104 against and 53 in favor of it.

Don Axon said that, whether for or against, 75% of the responses indicated that the Chapter should go on the record on the issue. Axon asked if the Board wanted to call a press conference to announce the Chapter's position.

Cyril Chern suggested that there be a press release and that the Chapter should take a strong stand, based on the membership responses. **Moved Widom/Second Mutlow, the following:** that the Board take a position on Proposition "U" and that a Position Paper be issued in the form of a press release. **Motion carried.**

Los Angeles Conference: Janice Axon reported that there were approximately 248 registrants for the Chapter's very first conference, an excellent attendance. The conference was very well received by the people who did attend. Until all costs are in, a financial report is unavailable.

Chet Widom stated that he felt that it was important to have a really critical evaluation of the conference to decide whether it will take place next year or not. One of the main problems Widom felt needed to be addressed was publicity. It did not get across properly to the membership. For instance, it was not really apparent that there were workshops and seminars that one could attend for an hour or for a half-day, rather than attend the entire event. Another problem Widom saw was that volunteers do not have that amount of time to spend. If we are going to do it again next year, we need to have someone on a part-time basis to put this thing together.

The third thing Widom felt was needed was that there were not enough social events.

Janice Axon stated that there were two or three social events but they occurred at night. Widom said that he was talking about events that could take place during the day, like a lunch.

Janice Axon stated that the conference was to have been a culmination of the committees' annual work. That was its actual purpose. The problem was that not all of the committees participated. Those few that participated did a terrific job without a secretary and with a minimum of staff help. Janice stated that she did agree that someone was needed to pull the thing together; however, either the com-

mittees make a commitment to it, or we cannot have a conference.

President Axon stated that he believed that the Board should make a decision, now, that "yes" we are going to have the LA Conference next year so that we can start working on it immediately.

Los Angeles Prize: Guest Bouje Bernkopf reviewed the history of his efforts on behalf of the Los Angeles Prize and went through a long list of items required for the Oct. 25th event.

President Axon requested that Bernkopf provide the Chapter with a written list of what was needed, when it was needed, the number of personnel required and the dates and times they should be available.

Progress Report—Museum of Science and Industry: Barton Phelps reported that he had received a telephone call from the museum inquiring as to what we intend to do with that space. Phelps said that the Samuel Yellen exhibit is available in 1987 but he was not sure for exactly what dates. It will cost \$3,500 for 6 weeks.

Phelps stated that he felt the Board should consider—do we want to do this; and, can we get it organized well enough in advance. Axon said that we need to have some kind of fund to get these things going; when we discuss the budget, there should be something to cover this kind of expense.

Bob Harris suggested that someone look into obtaining grants to help finance the museum exhibits and at the same time develop some strategy on how to pick up funds for it. We might be able to raise a fair amount of money from other sources.

After further discussion it was agreed that Barton Phelps would pursue the availability of the Yellen Exhibit.

President's Report: President Axon reported that Willie Brown is chairing a panel to discuss insurance problems at the Museum of Science and Industry on the 14th of October. The panel will also meet in Sacramento and San Francisco.

Axon presented the new Chapter brochure which was prepared by Richard and Julie Appel; everyone agreed it was excellent and that the Appels should be commended.

There will be an LA area Grass Roots meeting on the 28th of October to discuss the Section/Chapter issue.

Associates' Report: R.D. McDonnell reported that they are putting together the nominations for their Board positions. They now have enough members so that they can actually hold elections. They are also working on their budget for next year.

WAL: Wal will provide the table decorations, as usual, for the Chapter Installation on January 17th; there will be a Home Tour in 1987.

LA/AIA Conference Report

This September marked the first of what we hope is an annual event: The LA/AIA Conference. The idea for a conference was introduced at last November's committee retreat. Ernie Marjoram, Seth Sakamoto, Ron Takaki and I proposed establishing a forum, a three-day conference that would give the 32 AIA committees a chance to present programs, seminars and exhibits to the entire membership and affiliates.

We also saw the Conference as a time to meet noted designers, hold fun events and receptions, and showcase the annual design awards. We wanted the Conference to be a concentration of many activities within a limited time so attendees would only have to take one or two days off and get the most from a small time investment. We hoped this would be an easier way for members to become involved in Chapter activities than the traditional monthly evening meetings. We also hoped that firms might give employees the day off to attend the Conference as part of their professional development.

Finally, we believed the cost should be minimized to ensure that it was an affordable event. We felt membership dues could be concentrated to provide easy access to all committee work, provide professional development on a personal level, and a place to develop friendships and professional acquaintances.

The response from the committees was enthusiastic, and we defined a new organization to put the Conference together. We pulled together the Public Relations, Programs, Exhibits and Graphics Committees. By creating this support group the other committees could focus on the programs they wished to present without being concerned with logistics and publicity.

On September 25-27 the Conference became a reality. Held at the Pacific Design Center, it focused on professional practice. The seminars were well-attended and assisted members in various areas such as marketing, making quick and effective presentations, improving personal image, and managing an office. Several programs introduced government agencies. In these programs, members heard how agencies evaluate architects for defense and public contracts. Many people came to attend one seminar, stayed the whole day and returned on Saturday.

Several larger seminars were planned to be held at the West Hollywood Auditorium but had to be rescheduled when the auditorium's ceiling collapsed.

All-in-all the Conference ran smoothly. Jim Goodwin, director of Marketing/Communication of the PDC, observed that it was a well-organized event and titled it a "West Weekend for Architects."

In the future, along with the professional development seminars, we hope to introduce more public issues to the Conference. Those who deserve special recognition for the year's Conference: Adrian Cohen, chair, Professional Practice Committee; James McGlothlin, chair, Professional Development; Ernie Marjoram, chair, Conference Committee; Ron Takaki and Seth

Sakamoto, Conference Committee; George Pressler, chair, Architects for Health; Janice Axon, Executive Director and the entire staff.

Back to Birthing

Women's services have become "big business" for health care providers today. Coupled with increased competition between providers, changes in reimbursement policy, the women's movement, and the fact the women make as many as 80% of the decisions regarding health care for themselves and their families, health care providers today are focusing delivery of services heavily on the expectations and demands of this market segment.

In particular, the delivery of birthing services are undergoing conceptual and design changes to meet the needs and expectations of contemporary society. Today's consumers of birthing facilities are seeking out and expect a family-centered, home-like environment in which to experience the natural process of childbirth. These contemporary concepts in birthing facility design are increasingly recognized as essential to the hospitals' ability to draw this specialized market segment into their facility.

This was the opening commentary presented by George Pressler, AIA, Chairman of the Committee on Architecture for Health, and Associate at Medical Planning Associates, and the content of one of several programs sponsored by the LA AIA Conference held at Pacific Design Center on September 26th.

The program was entitled "Perinatal Services: Concepts and Planning Issues," and was geared toward providing architects and design consultants with key philosophic concepts, operational elements, and program planning considerations driving contemporary design in women's health care services. The program consisted of a panel presentation by 3 leading authorities of the key elements leading contemporary perinatal facility design. In addition, the Borning Corporation and Kentec Medical provided an exhibit of current equipment utilized in these units, and architectural and planning firms displayed boards of projects utilizing these current design concepts.

Panel members included: Dr. Celeste Phillips, nationally recognized authority and author on women's services, and current Director of Professional Relations for the Borning Corporation; Carolyn Turner, MSN, Director of the Women's Center at Saddleback Community Hospital, Laguna Hills; and Mary Lynch, RN, Advisor and Consultant to architects and hospital administrators for Medical Planning Associates.

The panel provided those attending with the full spectrum of issues and concepts driving the design components necessary for today's women's services, including: presentation of the philosophic socio-cultural framework; ramifications of current health care legislation on services and design; market research initiatives and program design; functional programming, space planning, and equipping today's birthing facilities.

For more information on this

program or committee activities, contact George Pressler, Chairperson of the LA/AIA Committee on Architecture for Health: (213) 456-2084.

Members

AIA. Ko Kiyohara, *EDC Inc. & Partners*; Douglas J. Gardner, *Archiplan*; Newton S. Leichter, *Newton S. Leichter and Associates*; John A. Echlin, *Urban Innovations Group*; Jeffrey D. Rhoads, *Newhall Land & Farming Co.*

AIA Advance from Associate. Andrew John Venuti, *Andrew John Venuti and Associates*.

AIA Transfers In. Richard C. Keating, *FAIA, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, from Houston*; Aurel S. Velculescu, *Architect, from Ventura*; James L. Harman, *from Washington, DC*.

AIA Reinstate. Kristina Andreson, Barsoum Barsoum, Ronald C. Cannan, Peter T. Creamer, Barbara Kaplan, Sven Linde, Eduardo Schamesohn.

AIA Transfers Out. Charles W. Moore, *to Texas*; Mark R. Johnson, *The Callison Partnership, to Seattle*. **Associates.** Chrisman T. McGeissey, *Design Concepts Unlimited*; Rosalie R. Gladwin, *Design Collaborative Inc.*; Brian Kent Algeo, *Pickard Architects*; Raouf R. Iskander, *Moore, Iskander, Chiu*; Garry J. Attridge, *HMC Architects Inc.*; David R. Mihaljevich, *Carl G. Harkins Jr., DMJM*; Margarita Chichowolski, *EDC, Inc.*

Transfers In: James R. Kaentje, *Kitchell Cem, from Central Valley*; Pam Kinzie, *Southern California Institute of Architecture, from Central Valley*.

Reinstated. Daniel Tsutmidia, David Tirman.

Professional Affiliate. Mary F. Wou, *Ross/Wou and Associates*.

Student. Atta Hassoon Al-Saleh, *SCI-ARC*.

Solar Access in Santa Barbara

The Community Development Department of the City of Santa Barbara announces that the City Council has recently adopted Ordinance No. 4426, the Solar Access Ordinance. The ordinance is designed to promote the present and future use of solar energy by protecting, to a certain extent, access to sunlight in residential zones. The ordinance establishes height limitations on all structures or portions of structures constructed in residential zones after January 5, 1987. However, the ordinance is not intended to protect every solar collector, since adjacent structures will always create a certain amount of shade. Questions regarding the requirements of the ordinance or the extent of protection should be addressed to Bill Ferguson, Energy Programs Coordinator, (805) 936-1663.

The staff of the City's Energy Office has been directed to work closely with architects, building designers, and property owners in an effort to accomplish a smooth implementation of the ordinance. As has been the City's policy in the past,

modifications of the ordinance requirements will be the exception rather than the rule. The building industry and property owners are urged to contact Mr. Ferguson at the City Energy Office as a first step in the design of structures and additions planned for residential zones. While such early attention to the requirements of the ordinance can help designers avoid significant impact, failure to do so can lead to substantial extra costs for redesign.

The Community Development Department will be issuing a fact sheet explaining in more detail the content and requirements of the ordinance. Comments and suggestions from the building industry are welcomed and should also be directed to the City Energy Office.

Axon Elected

Donald C. Axon, AIA, 1986 LA/AIA President, was elected for a three-year term to represent California on the National AIA Board of Directors at the California Council/AIA Board Meeting in Monterey on November 6. California is one of 18 regions, nationally, and is represented on the AIA Board by four Regional Directors.

Axon won one of the two open positions for that office from a slate of five candidates. Also elected was Warren Thompson, AIA, Fresno, current CCAIA President. The two other Regional Directors from California are Harry Jacobs, FAIA, Oakland, and Frederic P. Lyman, AIA, Los Angeles.

Briefly Noted

A new support group to be known as the Architecture and Design Council, has been formed at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA.) The Council will be an advisory resource to the museum on design matters, drawing on the considerable expertise of its membership. Many council members are design professionals in various disciplines. The council will serve the greater community by assisting the museum to be a center for the exchange of ideas on architecture and design, within the framework of the museum's objectives.

Starting in February 1987, a primary goal of the council will be to assist the museum with the current capital campaign. In the context of the greater campaign, funds raised by the council will be used to endow a permanent curatorial chair for architecture and design. "We see the Architecture and Design Council as playing an important role in the future growth and development of the museum," stated MOCA Director Koshalek.

The Council was formerly an independent non-profit organization. The Architecture and Design Support Group, founded in 1980 at MOCA's inception. The ADSG publicized and supported the new museum through its public activities, some especially directed toward the design community. The ADSG promoted exhibitions and increased public awareness of architecture and design. Like the ADSG, the Council will be a self-supporting organization, deriving its operating budget from Council dues. William Fain, AIA, is the current president of the council.

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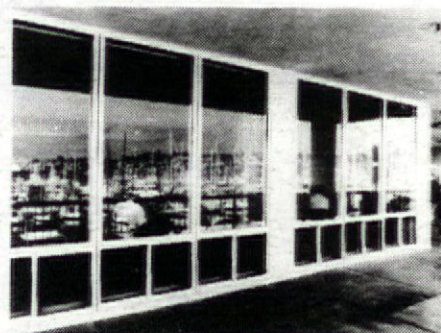


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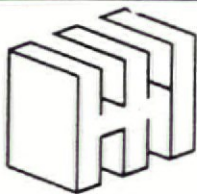
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Architectural Evolution

Books

Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science

Alberto Perez-Gomez, *The MIT Press*
(Cambridge, 1983, 1984)
\$30.00 hardback, \$10.95 paperback.

Architecture has been designed in recent memory under the rubric of post-modern, romantic-modern, and late-modern, to rational, regional, contextual, revival neo-historic, etc. In short, reflecting the confusion of these ambiguous times, architecture is pluralistic. But if architecture is plural; if, to put it crudely, "anything goes," is not architecture necessarily condemned in its plethora of babblings to semantic incoherence? Many writers on architecture have deplored the symptoms of this vicious cycle of neo-fashionism (while offering yet another fashionable solution). Yet few have attempted to study critically the historical roots of architectural relativism, its profound effect on current architectural practice, while showing how architecture can begin to recover its desired symbolic and existential role.

In *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science*, Alberto Perez-Gomez explores the sources of current architectural confusion in the transformation of the use of number and geometry from the 17th century to the early 19th century. The author relates changes in architectural intentions to the shifting philosophical concepts of this era. By tracing developments in astronomy, natural science, and mathematics, and their relations to philosophy, Perez-Gomez convincingly demonstrates that much of the present chaos in architectural intentions is due to the profound intellectual changes ushered in by the pre-industrial scientific revolution. A fascinating and labyrinthine narrative emerges describing architecture's fall from grace.

The first chapters of the book cover the architectural implications of Galileo's scientific discoveries which questioned the traditional view of the cosmos. Architecture before the advent of the industrial revolution was not simply a set of customary signs handed down over generations from the ancient authority of Vitruvius, but was thought to literally reveal the workings of the universe and its inherent divinity. The author shows Claude Perrault, the architect of the eastern facade of the Louvre and participant in the Royal Academy of Science, as one of the first architects to question actively the traditional architecture. He declared that proportion depended not on heavenly grace but on the vagaries of fashion. Perrault's precocious and almost rational theories were rejected by Blondel, the first professor of architecture at the French Royal Academy, who understood theory only as a transcendental justification of architecture. This latter concept (not peculiar to Blondel)

was the standard means by which scientists/philosophers and architects interpreted the world of the eighteenth century.

Perez-Gomez constantly attributes the work and ideas of this period to the gradual erosion of this now-lost ideal. Newtonian natural science, he maintains, only ushered in the age of modern empiricism and reinterpreted metaphysical reality of the world. The author, in a chapter devoted to the work of Claude-Nicholas Ledoux and Etienne-Louis Boullée, describes how the metaphysical dimension of natural science became the basis of the pure geometry seen in their architectural projects. He takes another look at their "revolutionary" architecture of ornamentally severe and pure geometrical forms.

Perez-Gomez rejects the notion that this work is a precursor of the reductivist modernism of twentieth century praxis. Rather he sees it as a late and somewhat desperate attempt to reconcile the metaphysical dimension inherent in the Newtonian world view with an architecture that is rapidly losing its ability to evoke existential intentions.

The reasons for this loss are made abundantly clear in chapters on mensuration, education, and finally the birth of the modern concepts of statics and the strength of materials. As professional practice became increasingly dominated by instrumental as opposed to transcendental beliefs, traditional architectural intentions naturally came into question. Positivist progress and man-directed technology overpowered the ancient belief in a hierarchical world ordered by the hand of God.

In the final chapter of the book Perez-Gomez shows the architect Jacques-Nicholas-Louis Durand, disciple of Boullée rejecting his master's search for a symbolic architecture in exchange for a functional practice. For Durand, architecture was based simply on two principles, "love of well-being and aversion to pain." For the author, this concept of pleasure versus pain becomes the basis of most current architectural production and explains both the banality of our built environment. This preconception must be put aside, he insists, in favor of meaningful architecture. For the enquiring mind, Perez-Gomez only offers hints.

Meaningful architecture is best created, he says, through the "sphere of perception." "There is no meaningful logic, he insists, without acknowledging the intersubjective world, best revealed in dreams and myths." Perez-Gomez' book proves the historical truth of this statement.

John Kaliski

Mr. Kaliski is an architect at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

Architect's Calendar

December 1986

MONDAY 1

Otis/Parsons Exhibit
Two Concurrent exhibitions. Palcoscenico e Spazio Scenico: Italian stage Design and Milton Komisar: computer controlled light sculptures through December 13. Exhibition Center, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (213) 251-0555.
Chamber Music in Historic Sights
Musica Antiqua Köln performs works by Vivaldi, Scarlatti, Castello and Legrenzi at 818 W. Seventh St. 8 p.m., \$20. Call (213) 747-9085.

TUESDAY 2

LA/AIA Board of Directors
Chapter boardroom, Suite M-62, Pacific Design Center, 4 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.
Design Center
First Tuesday, showrooms open, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Call (213) 625-1100.
UCLA Exhibition
Moving through New Town: An Experiential Approach through December 5. Call (213) 825-3791.

WEDNESDAY 3

Housing Committee
Chapter boardroom, Suite M-62, Pacific Design Center, 4 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.
Marketing Your Architectural Services
AIA Seminars through Friday December 5, Miramar Sheraton Hotel, L.A., Call (213) 659-2282.
Wed. Noon Films at the Crocker Center
Jackson Pollack: Portrait, Crocker Center, Plaza Level, 12:10 p.m., \$2.50. Call (213) 874-4107.

THURSDAY 4

Public Relations Committee, 5 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.

FRIDAY 5

WEEKEND

Sunday, December 7, Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility
are hosting their annual Holiday Event at the Otis/Parsons Exhibition Center with the exhibit, Palcoscenico e Spazio Scenico and Refreshments, 3-6 p.m., \$25. Call (213) 654-4360.
Sunday, December 7, Art Benefit for the Central American Refugee Center
Oranges/Sardines Gallery, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call (213) 381-5666.

MONDAY 8

Acoustical Society of America
Call (213) 659-2282

TUESDAY 9

WEDNESDAY 10

Associate's Board Meeting
Chapter Boardroom, M-62, Pacific Design Center, 6:30 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.
Wed. Noon Films at the Crocker Center
On the Road with Duke Ellington, Crocker Center, Plaza Level, 12:10 p.m., \$2.50. Call (213) 874-4107.

THURSDAY 11

Architecture for Health Committee
Pacific Design Center, Suite 259, 3:30 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.
Pro-Practice Committee
Pacific Design Center, Suite 259, 5:30 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.
USC Lecture Series
Lecture by Rodolfo Machado. Interiors and monuments. Architecture Building 1102, 8 p.m. Call (213) 825-3791.

FRIDAY 12

Seminars
Marriott Hotel, Anaheim (213) 659-2282.

WEEKEND

Saturday, December 13, LA/AIA Associates
are invited to join with the Association of Women in Architecture for a Silent Auction Christmas party to raise funds for Architecture Scholarships at the home of Dion Neutra's house on Silverlake Blvd. 7 p.m. look for invitations in the mail. Call (213) 659-2282.
Sunday, December 14, WAL Christmas Party
Call (213) 659-2282.

MONDAY 15

TUESDAY 16

LA/AIA Annual Recognition Dinner
Town & Gown, USC, 6 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282.
LA County Museum of Art Exhibit
Renaissance Master Bronzes from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna through March 1, 1987. Call (213) 857-6111.

WEDNESDAY 17

Wed. Noon Films at the Crocker Center
A Good time to be West, features 12 California sculptors, Crocker Center, Plaza Level, 12:10 p.m., free. Call (213) 874-4107.

THURSDAY 18

LA/AIA Executive Committee, 5:30 p.m. Call (213) 659-2282

FRIDAY 19

WEEKEND

Sunday, December 21, Chamber Music in Historic Sights
New York Ensemble for Early Music perform English carols from the 13th-17th centuries at the St. John's Episcopal Church, 7 p.m., \$20. Call (213) 747-9085.

MONDAY 22

TUESDAY 23

WEDNESDAY 24

THURSDAY 25

FRIDAY 26

WEEKEND

MONDAY 29

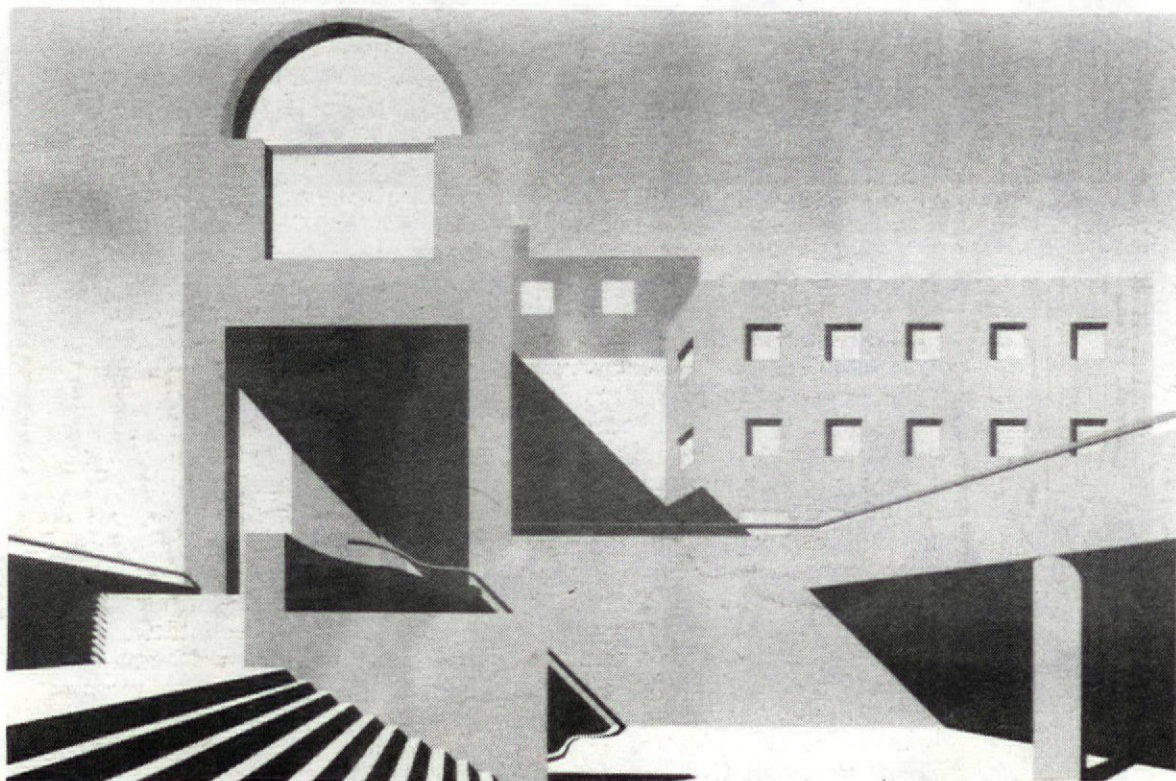
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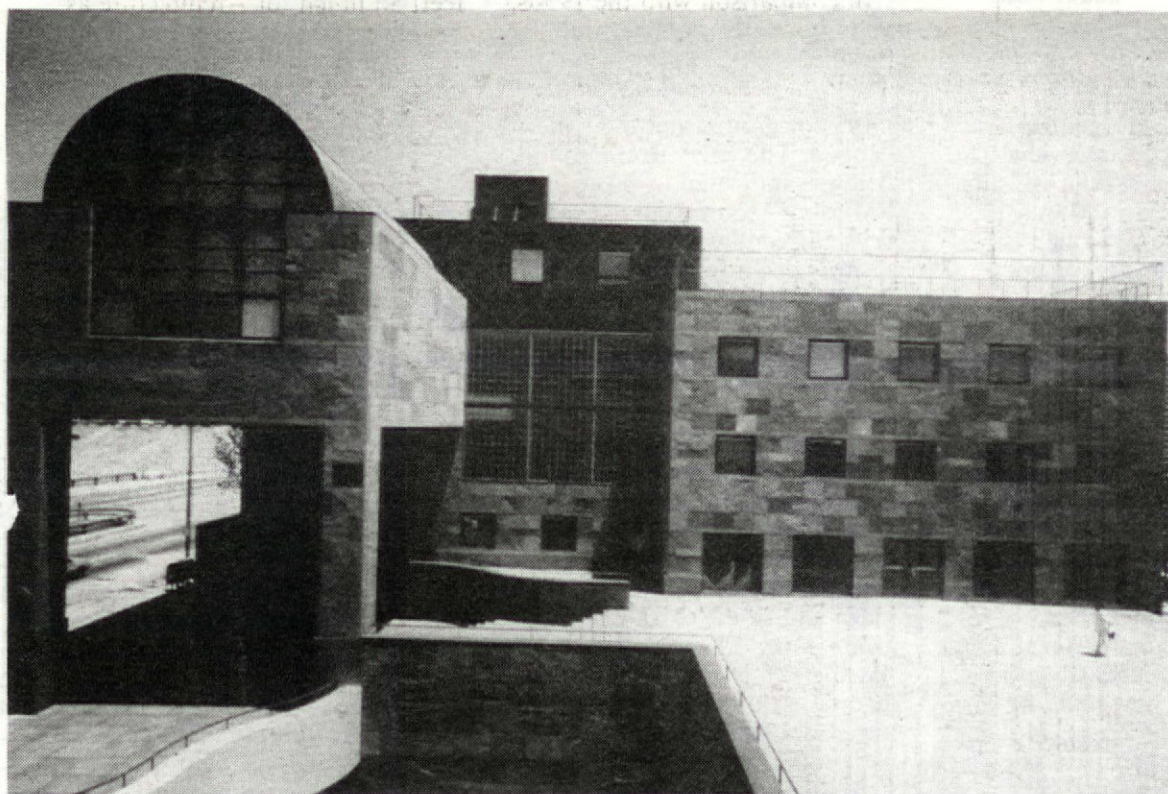
WEEKEND

MOCA Materializes

Review



Silk screen of MOCA by Arata Isozaki.



View of MOCA from museum courtyard.

It appears as one drives south on Grand Avenue away from the Music Center: a green facade, gridded in pink, floating above eight small skylights attached to a red sandstone mass. Isozaki's vision of the small piece of jewelry surrounded by a forest in the center of an invisible city has been realized.

The jewel is The Museum of Contemporary Art, a project that has been seven years in the making. It began in 1979, when a group of private citizens led by contemporary art collector Marcia Weisman joined forces with Mayor Tom Bradley to fill the need for such a museum. The dream became a probability in 1981 with the advent of California Plaza, a 1.2 billion dollar mixed-use development coordinated by Arthur Erickson Architects. As was required

by the city's Community Redevelopment Agency, 1.5% of the total development budget, 23 million 1986 dollars, was set aside for the purchase of public art. This was quickly transformed into the construction budget for MOCA through the inventive efforts of Mayor Bradley and the CRA.

Isozaki received the MOCA commission in January of 1981 after being selected by the museum's architecture and design committee, headed by industrialist and film producer Max Palevsky. It was Isozaki's flexibility, interest in refined detail, and rejection of preconceived notions that most impressed the committee. The romance between the architecture and design committee was soon to turn into a physically and intellectually trying

18-month period, requiring Isozaki to present 36 variations based on six schemes before any final accord was reached.

One after the other, the schemes were rejected on the grounds of prohibitive costs, failing to resolve the site restrictions, the use of columns in the middle of exhibition spaces, the placement of multiple doors on primary exhibition walls, and improper skylight design. "Ironically the sort of space we wanted was very much like the Temporary Contemporary. The difference between the found space and the designed space like the new museum is the architect's ego. The danger is that an architect wants the building to exhibit him, not serve as a background for exhibiting art. You want the architect to provide an en-

L.A. Prize

Commentary

The failure of a celebrity design jury to choose a single winner for the recent Los Angeles Prize symposiumized deep problems in the competition for an "Architecture of the 21st Century."

One of the problems was the proliferation of vastly dissimilar designs from the 500 competitors—a

problem that was inevitable, due to the slackness in the formulation of the design problem: To create an architecture of the future, with the sole caveat that the proposed structures building should be "feasible."

"The most important thing we accomplished," said Bouje Bernkopf, Chairman of the prize committee,

"is that we got a lot of people thinking. A lot of today's preoccupation (in architecture) is with style. However urban problems are becoming greater while there are no new urban models."

However, the vagary of the contest was in itself a recipe for disappointment: without a specific program, the LA Prize lacked a sense of purpose. The excitement of design competitions, after all, results from the viewing of many different solutions to a single problem. (The classic Chicago Tribune contest is the first example that comes to mind.)

With a lack of a specific program, however, contestants submitted anything and everything. Some raided their baskets of abandoned designs and unrealized projects (every architect has at least a drawerful of them). Some even submitted designs from previous contests, including one architect who recycled his losing entry in the recent Pershing Square competition.

A deeper problem with the contest, however, lay with the entries themselves: many submittals evidenced a mood of anxiety about the future. Perhaps a contest about the wonderful buildings of the future is an anachronism in an age when the future itself is uncertain.

Our visions of the future, of course, have always acted as a mirror for our feelings about the present time. Futurism is merely a translation of our deeper, subliminal feelings about ourselves, our society and our environment.

"In comparison with the 1950s, we don't appear very optimistic," said Bernkopf, "The submissions were much more sober. Some were pessimistic."

Even the future, alas, is subject to fads.

In the techno-optimist spirit of the 1939 World's Fair, the creators of Buck Rogers offered a rhinestone-studded, gadget-packed future as a promise of a better life after the Great Depression. During the 1960s, confidence ran high in both government and corporate America. While the smug, pajama-clad crew of the Starship Enterprise roared through the New Frontier of space, architects dreamt of megastructures—a highly centralized architecture of self-contained, high-tech cities wrapped up in individual machine-buildings.

In the 1980s, however, nuclear anxiety and environmental catastrophe seem to dominate our imagination, and the great expectations for the 25th Century have been replaced by the Megastructure slum in "Blade Runner."

In the LA Prize competition, the anxiety of the present-day America expressed itself in survival-oriented designs. At least two projects propose novel ways of blasting nuclear waste into outer space, while another tries to prevent further damage to the ozone layer by launching rockets from a space port instead of Cape Canaveral. One architect proposed a monumental suture intended to clamp together the two sides of the San Andreas fault.

Projects for home design include such forward-looking ideas as a house with a skylight but no windows, as a response to urban crime. Another architect proposed a house to be built within a steel cargo container.

One of the winning entries, the "Hulk" building system devised by

British architect Peter Cook—an ex-member of Archigram, a young group of London architects who were the Monty Python of English architecture in the 1960s—offered one of the least utopian, if one of the most practical, visions of the 21st century. In contrast to the Buck Rogers Thousand-Year Reich of the future, the "hulk" building system is a symbol of planned obsolescence and cultural transience, an empty shell to stuff full of the ephemeral trappings of civilization. In appearance, it resembles a monumental parking garage—Le Corbusier's "Maison Domino" without stairs. Depending on its location, the giant shelves of the Hulk could be filled with urban office structures or suburban houses. While the Hulk is permanent, the buildings that sit on its shelves can be trashed and rebuilt, as society or economy demands.

Technology wears a more cheerful face with the second winner, an environment for living and working in a zero-gravity space station, designed by a faculty-student team from NASA-funded Institute of Future Studies at the Southern California Institute of Future Studies at the SCI-ARC. Envisioned for an orbiting space station to be launched in 1993, the SCI-ARC project is a set of cylindrical rooms outfitted with soft furniture and hand-hooks. If life in zero gravity sounds like fun, the architecture planned for it looks as constrictive as a tenement apartment: Each cylinder is depressingly if realistically small—14 feet by 44 feet. So much for Architecture as Space.

Science fiction gamely reappears in the third winner, the "PEP" construction system submitted by three Mexican architects—Jose Sanchez Martin, Pedro Hoyos Ortega and Erich Herrmann Martinez. The PEP system incorporates three infant technologies: sub-atomic mapping, lasers and holograms. According to the architects, the plan of the building would be stored at an atomic level in digital form, conveyed to some point in distant space by a laser, then assembled instantaneously into solid form by a hologram. The scheme is entertaining but also suggests an architecture with neither builders or inhabitants. Perhaps it is intended as a satire of the increasing distance of architects from actual construction.

Overall, the greatest benefit of the first Los Angeles Prize competition is the enhancement of the international reputation of Los Angeles as a design community. The greatest shortfall, however, of the present competition is its failure to generate a design consensus that could trickle down to developers, city planners, and design students.

Morris Newman

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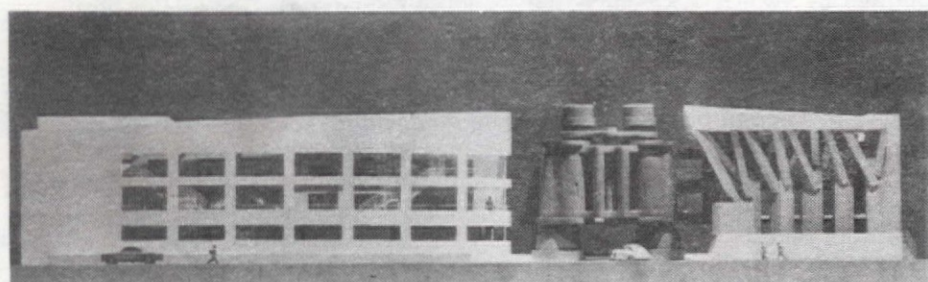
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L.A. ARCHITECT

Gehry to be Honored at Chapter Recognition Dinner



Model of new headquarters for Chiat-Day Advertising on Main Street in Santa Monica, Frank O. Gehry Associates.

Frank O. Gehry, FAIA, winner of 27 AIA awards over a career that has spanned more than two and a half decades, will be honored by the LA Chapter at its annual Recognition Dinner and holiday party on Tuesday, December 16 at the Town and Gown at the University of Southern California. A no-host reception will begin at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and the program. Cost for the evening is \$33 per person; reservations are required at the LA Chapter office by Monday, December 8.

Richard Weinstein, Dean of the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UCLA, will introduce Gehry and discuss his background and projects.

Gehry is principal of Frank O. Gehry and Associates Inc., Venice, a firm he established in 1962. He has a bachelor of architecture degree from USC and completed graduate study in urban planning at Harvard. Internationally-recognized and the winner of numerous design awards, Gehry has had his work published extensively in art, architecture and other publications. His drawings, models and furniture have been exhibited in museums in the U.S. and Europe and are currently on display in a travelling exhibition which originated at the Walker Art Center.

Most recently, his work has included the California Aerospace Museum in Exposition Park, Los Angeles; Loyola Law School, Los Angeles; Frances Howard Goldwyn Hollywood Regional Branch Library; Santa Monica Place; and the temporary quarters for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Gehry has won 27 AIA awards since 1967, including honor awards this year from the National AIA for the Loyola Law School (Phase II) and from the LA Chapter for the Goldwyn Library and University Research Center, University of California at Irvine. Other AIA awards—both local and national—were given to Gehry for the Merriweather Post Pavilion of Music, Columbia, Md.; Joseph Magnin Store, Costa Mesa; Concord Pavilion (two awards); Cochiti Recreation Center; Ron Davis Studio/Residence

(two awards); Rouse Headquarters Building; Westinghouse Distribution Services Office Building; UCLA Placement and Career Planning Center; Gehry Residence; Mid-Atlantic Toyota Office Interiors; Avant-Garde of Russia Exhibit Installation at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Gehry Residence (second award); Santa Monica Place; Indiana Avenue Project, Venice (two awards); Fritz B. Burns Building at Loyola Law School; Spiller House; Museum of Contemporary Art, Temporary Quarters; California Aerospace Museum; Loyola Law School (Phase II) (first award), the Norton Residence, and the Wosk Residence.

Gehry, who lectures extensively in the US and abroad, is the recipient of the Eliot Noyes Chair, Harvard (1984); the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (1983); the Charlotte Davenport Professorship in Architecture, Yale (1982); and the William Bishop Chair, Yale School of Architecture (1979). He was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1974.

Errata

LA Architect contained two errors in the interview which appeared last month. We misspelled Mark Pisano's first name with a c instead of a k; and we omitted Diana Kanner's biographical note. Ms. Kanner is a freelance writer for newspapers and magazines. Her article on Cliff May appeared in the April issue of *San Diego Home/Garden*. She is currently researching a book on the life and work of Wallace Neff for a graduate degree at USC, and would appreciate any information *LA Architect* readers may have about Mr. Neff. Replies to *LA Architect*.

In the book review, the photo credit was left off the illustration. The photographer was Patricia Layman. The exhibition of architecture at UC Santa Cruz was curated by Virginia Jansen.

The First Los Angeles Prize

The Los Angeles Prize, one of the most ambitious programs of the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, culminated October 25 with the inaugural ceremonies and announcement of the winners at the California Museum of Science and Industry.

In his opening address, LA/AIA President Donald Axon announced that over 500 designers from 29 different nations participated in the program.

A distinguished international jury made the selection of the winners. The jurors were Arthur Erickson, Canada; Richard Meier, USA; Richard Rodgers, Great Britain; Ray Bradbury, USA; and Paolo Soleri, USA.

The jury did not single out one project, but divided the Los Angeles Prize among three projects. The prize winners included:

A faculty/student design team from the Institute for Future Studies at SCI-ARC, Santa Monica, California. The team designed an international space station module for NASA due for construction in earth orbit beginning in 1993. It deals with life-size modules to accommodate an 8-person crew and extensive on-board storage. The team applied zero gravity and anthropomorphic body geometry in determining the character and function of the interior architecture with person-machine interfaces.

Jose Sanchez Martin, Pedro Hoyos Ortega, and Erich Herrmann Martinez—all architects, Ensenada, Mexico. The team created the PEP Construction system—a theoretical model which incorporates three technologies: sub-atomic mapping, lasers and holograms. This new construction system uses computerized sub-atomic mapping of a prototype module, from which the computer forms a hologram, whose protons hold in digital form all the essential information to rearrange energy and transform it into specific materials over distances using laser/hologram transport.

Peter Cook, Architect, London, England. Cook developed the so-called "Hulk" building system, a system which can be used to house a variety of uses by adding, rearranging and changing elements to fit new needs and appearances. The framework itself is permanent, but as social needs and personalities change, the exterior and interior configurations and surfaces can also change.

The jury also named three other projects for honor awards. The recipients are:

Jerry Exline, Archonics, a division of HNTB, Indianapolis, Indiana. Exline developed a bank of images

of urban environments for the near future. Designers can draw and reflect upon these images as points of reference, since images of the future influence the way places get built.

Robert Visser, AIA, Jewell, Visser & Visser Architects, P.C., Westhampton Beach, New York. Visser designed a theoretical model for an earthport-spaceport structure with its axis matching the earth's axis to handle nuclear waste disposal into the sun and to facilitate a safe connection between earth and space, which will not harm the ozone layer, unlike present launch systems.

Jose M. de Prada Poole (team director), Alicia Ozamiz Fertis and Roberto Goycoolea Prado—all architects, Madrid, Spain. The team designed a floating international sea colony for the development of basic biological resources which could be located in international waters anywhere in the world.

The City of Los Angeles shared the LA/AIA's enthusiasm for the Los Angeles Prize. Mayor Tom Bradley, proclaimed October 25, the day of our inaugural ceremony "Los Angeles Prize Day," commending the LA/AIA Chapter for its pioneering efforts to stimulate the creative design process internationally. Further, the Los Angeles City Council issued a resolution commending the LA/AIA Chapter for conceiving and implementing the Los Angeles Prize Competition.

The Los Angeles Prize in the magic light of the approaching millennium stirred the imagination of the designers from different societies, cultures and economies. The LA/AIA collected a very precious thing—a bank of projects expressing the thoughts, hopes and dreams of people from around the world.

Jan Pociel from Poland wrote us: "I am very glad I can take part in the Los Angeles Prize competition. It was your initiative that has encouraged me to sit down and think things over. Thank you very much."

Bouje Bernkopf, AIA
Chairman, Los Angeles Prize Committee

Continued on page four

Alvar Aalto's Secret and the Villa Mairea

Review

gree that it illuminates his giant figure as a role model for a philosophy of architecture; not of knee-jerk response to the flighty, insubstantial semantics of today's "styles," sentimental and nostalgic, but instead to the rhythms of biology pulsing in us all.

Paul Sterling Hoag, FAIA

The symposium's speakers traveled many miles, just to talk Aalto. All of them were openly charmed by his work, but who can blame them, knowing the charms: the forms, the spaces, the use of materials and light. Alvar Aalto was the attraction, and the speakers were lured to delve, lecture by lecture, into the secret of his allure.

They many times called upon the Villa Mairea. It was sensible to use this country house to explore Aalto's technique at making architecture, since the project was so exceptional even from the start: the clients gave him a site, a fat budget, and free reign to experiment. So Aalto was unleashed, and the result is a modern masterpiece—a house ranked as important as Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater or Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye.

One hundred miles northwest of Helsinki and not far from Finland's west coast, the Villa Mairea stands in a dense forest of fir on private grounds in Noormarkku. The house is L-shaped with a loggia stretching out forty feet or so to a separate Finnish steam bath/plunge near a large free-form swimming pool. The famous view is from the south, the entrance view with the strict jagged pattern of four upper-story windows, the balcony finished in board and batten, the spiral staircase tucked into a void, the flat entrance canopy of lapping curves supported by an informal assemblage of banded poles. The west elevation is also famous: the balcony wrapping around the corner, with a wood trellis above, exterior venetian blinds, the second story studio taking prominent form as a trapezoidal solid with rounded corners, bulging over the first floor, providing a canopy for the flower-arranging room below.

With all of the extensions into the landscape using balconies, canopies, and loggias, the Villa Mairea is a country house: a house *in* the country. Aalto wholeheartedly designed the house for its site, the fir forest of Noormarkku. But Michael Trencher made the point that Aalto's architecture was not only for the forest, but *of* the forest. His focus was space, how Aalto approached making and capturing it, and how such spaces differed from spaces cre-

ated previous to modernism. He called an Aalto space indeterminate, a space experienced layer by layer, and declared it the antithesis of a Euclidean container like the Pantheon. The Villa Mairea's entrance canopy provides an example. There is no reliance on the orders or strict geometry. Instead there is spontaneity; the pole supports are free of a grid, banded into a variety of columns and tripods, positioned irregularly. The experience of a forest is recalled by the whimsicality and texture of the poles; the canopy filters into the entrance yard and harsh boundaries are dissolved and eased. This breaking down of edges is of course a major spatial innovation first conceived by Frank Lloyd Wright. By his vision, the penchant for stasis was forgotten in favor of involvement: a building cradled as well as penetrated its natural setting, receiving in and reaching out to the features of the site.

Juhani Pallasmaa claimed the floor plan of the villa was inspired by Cubist paintings. He talked about how art was a staging of memory, how form was imbued with image, and how Aalto's forms related to universal images of shelter. His was a phenomenological viewpoint; and, though I found the lecture interesting and colorful, seeing the work of Aalto through the philosophy of Husserl seemed forced. Mr. Pallasmaa concluded his talk by showing a slide of a ceiling treatment in the Villa Mairea's loggia. Lines had been scored into the surface, and he believed they suggested the strings of a guitar, a favored image in Cubist painting.

Kennie Lupton's lecture was devoted entirely to the Villa Mairea. She showed slide after slide of the house, applying semiotics to every one. The house was presented as a collection of objects, one object communicating a message and then another object communicating a contrary message: the metal spiral stair signified industrial, the board and batten balcony announced rustic, and so on. The audience was made aware of every juxtaposed opposite under the sun: vernacular/universal, enclosed/open, angular/curved, architectonics/nature. The problem I had with the lecture was that it soon became a mind game—find the antipodes. Despite this, Ms. Lupton's lecture made me aware that Alvar Aalto's apt use of counterpoint was a reason for the richness in his architecture.

Overall, the symposium accomplished its aim: telling Alvar Aalto's secret of making great buildings, of lifting building to art. His spatial conceptions and sensuous forms, his sense of counterpoint, the animated use of light and the plentitude of textures delight and inspire.

Greg Kindy

Mr. Kindy works in the office of John Lautner, FAIA.

The difference between the European and the American point of view was evident at the Alvar Aalto symposium in October. The provocative sketches portrayed by the three Finnish speakers—Goran Schildt, Tide Huesser and Johani Pallasmaa—were enlightening. The Finns depicted the emotion of Aalto's work in cultural and personal terms. Huesser and Pallasmaa associated images in film, music, and paintings with Aalto's work. Pallasmaa used a phenomenological method of analysis to bring Aalto outside the realm of typology and formalism.

The American scholars flipped the coin, using a more literal and scientific form of analysis. Their presentations seemed repetitious and overintellectualized, although they showed some beautiful images of Aalto's interiors and exteriors. Michael Trencher was determined to show the audience all the places where Aalto used phenomenal and literal transparency. Kennie Lupton should have simply orchestrated some music to accompany her slides of the villa Mairea rather than describe to the audience every detail visible on the screen. Scott Poole showed the limited influence of Aalto's work in America as expressed in the work of Robert Venturi.

Tide Huesser of the Atelier Aalto spoke to the audience from direct experience of Aalto's intentions, inspirations and innovations. He discussed Aalto's use of historical forms, such as the Greek doric column fluted in his inverted fluted column supporting the main vestibule at the University of Jyväskylä; an Italian hilltop village in his Village Hall at Säynätsalo; the Greek theatre in his own office courtyard. Aalto was fascinated by "nature in opposition with tectonic," Huesser explained, and that inspired him to innovation.

Pallasmaa started out with an overview of architectural philosophy, showing images portraying the "deepest essence" of the architectural form. For example, *Rear Window*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, exhibits the back side of an apartment building whose windows open to the tenants' living and dining rooms. The elevation is "charged with mystery, expectation and fear" as the draperies are drawn and the lives of the tenants are exposed. *Birds*, by the same director, transforms a simple suburban neighborhood into cupboards of fear and streets of terror. In the movie, "space, place, time and scale", are lost and the deeper structure of the architecture takes over. Architecture can be understood, Pallasmaa said, as a manifestation of a child's memory or man's unconscious and his emotion, just as a painter's architecture reflects memory and emotion.

Pallasmaa showed Fra Angelico's *Last Judgement* as another

example. In the painting, hell is symbolized by a landscape overlooked by judges. Trap doors inscribed on the landscape are open, ajar or tightly shut, causing architecture to convey an attitude about hell. Then he showed the audience further examples of the way painters have historically used architecture to reinforce meaning.

Michael Trencher intellectualized Aalto's architecture by saying that in the context of space, the distinction between indeterminate and determinate was the difference between the Finnish vernacular farmhouse and classical typology. He developed the notions of transparency and layering as a modern evolution of space. The modern issue, Trencher said, is a non-Euclidean problem that Aalto represented in "dynamic motion," which evolved through three stages, evident in the development of the municipal library at Vipuri. The three stages included the 1927 submission of the library competition, design development of this project a few years later, and the final design as built in 1933. Trencher explored the development using the floor plan diagrams and later reinforced the notion of spatial dynamism showing other images of Aalto's interiors.

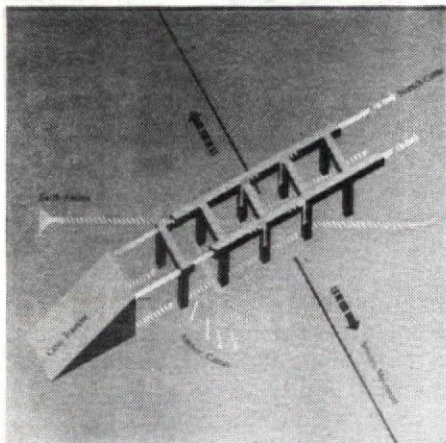
Scott Poole said that in America, Aalto's attitudes have been taken the most to heart by Robert Venturi. Poole gave a very scientific analysis of both Venturi's and Aalto's buildings. The two architects are similar, he said, because their work is relevant to their respective cultures; both created tension by using modern materials and methods to adapt architecture to contemporary culture.

For example, Poole suggested that the impermanence conveyed by Venturi's Franklin Court is due to the American attitude towards physical environment. Now that the American architect has grown to understand Aalto's architecture, he said, we can see Aalto's effect on Venturi. One example is the two-dimensional pattern applied to the elevation. The brickwork pattern on the fire station at Columbus, Indiana or Gordon Wu Hall at Princeton are influenced by the back elevation of Aalto's Town Hall in Säynätsalo. Another obvious adaptation and variation of Aalto's work by Venturi is the bent plywood chair.

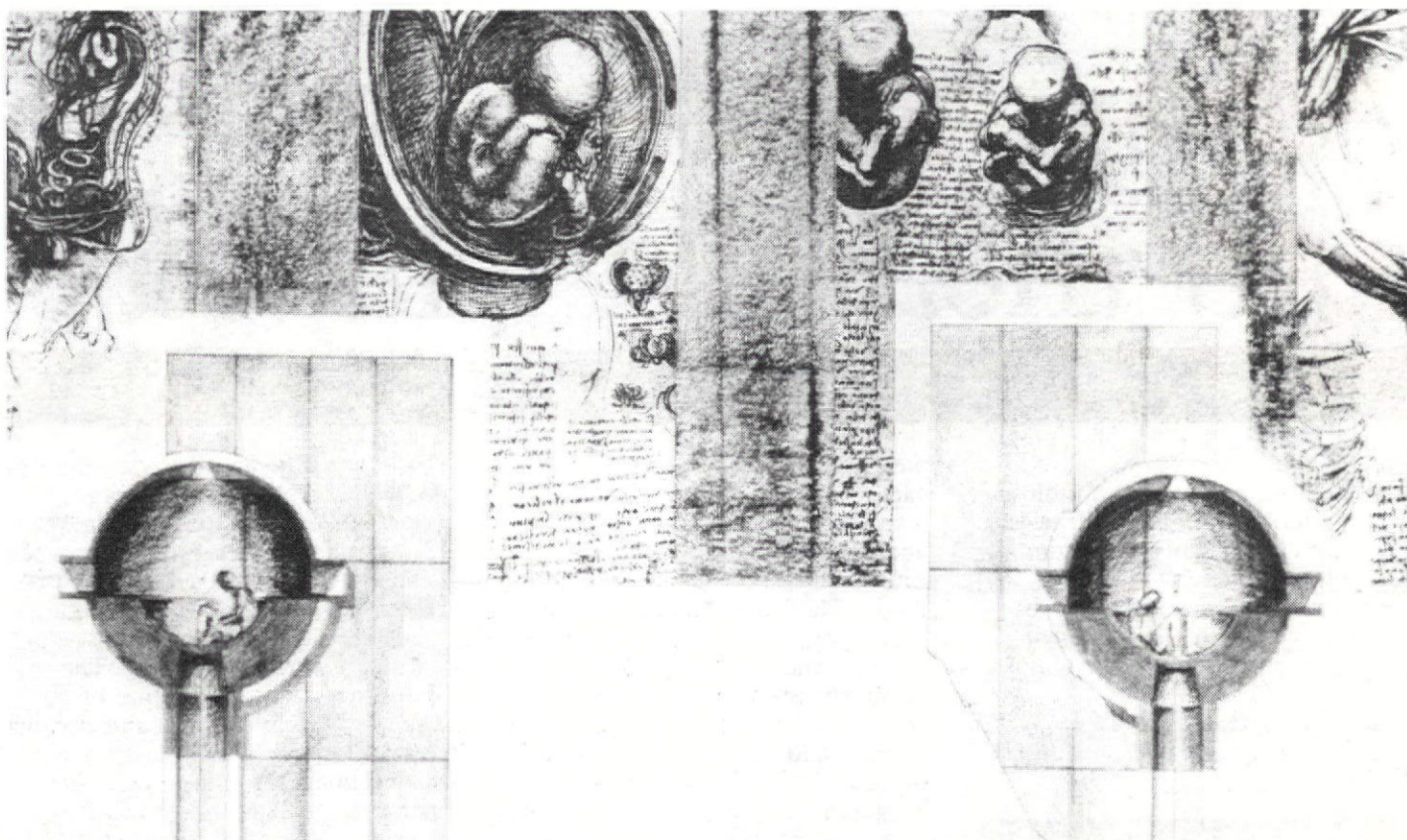
Architecture can be looked at and understood in non-scientific terms appealing to the unconscious, as was done by the Finnish architects, or it can be analyzed scientifically from a very objective stance, as did the American scholar 5000 miles from the source. Is one way better than another or are both necessary to receive a realistic picture of the entire architecture?

Christine Magar

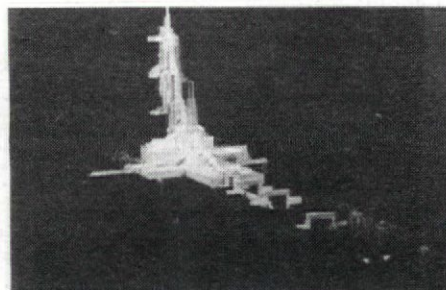
Ms. Magar works in the office of Anshen and Allen.



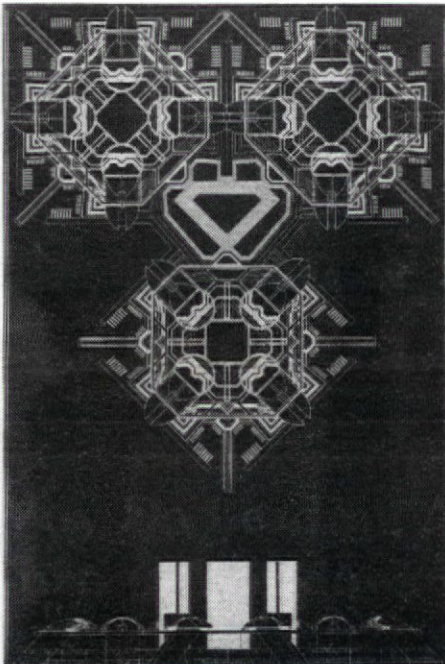
Seismic Clamp, Waldock, Streitner & Tsou, Architects, New York.



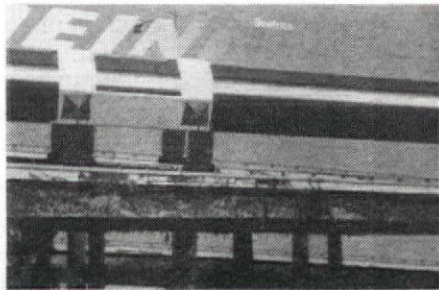
Tower dedicated to Life and Death, Gabrielle Graf von Bernstorff, New York.



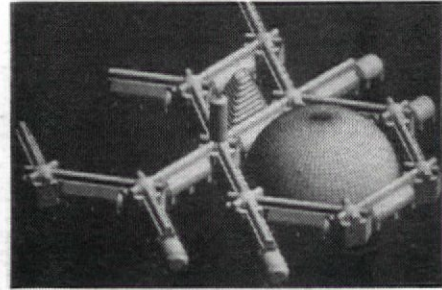
Waterfall Structure, Lori Lee Byrne, Fort Lauderdale.



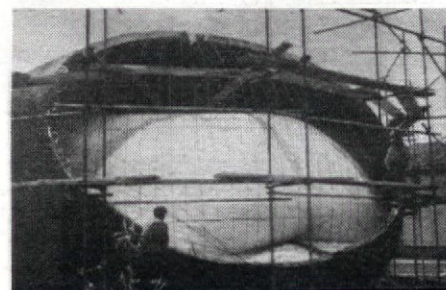
Permanent Olympic Complex, Thomas Harkins, Philadelphia.



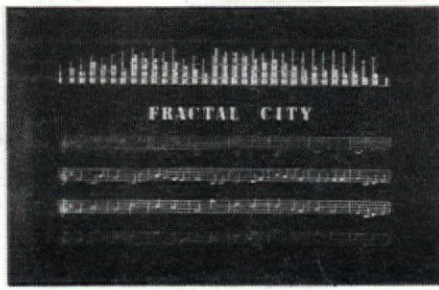
Electromagnetic Transport, Kevin Daly and Stephen Skinner, Los Angeles.



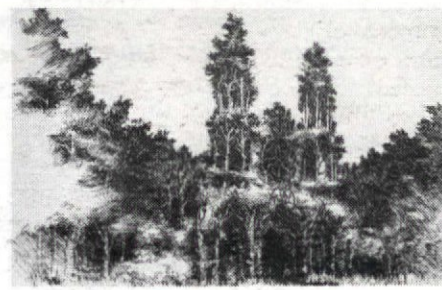
Lunar Colony, Jeff Brown, Francis Winisdoeffler, Sam Ximenis, Houston.



Inflatable Formwork, Haim Heifetz, Architect, Ramat Hasharon, Israel.



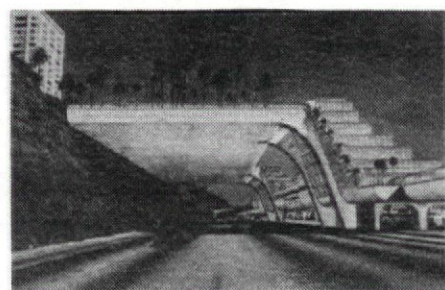
Fractal City, Akira Nakatani, Architect, Tokyo.



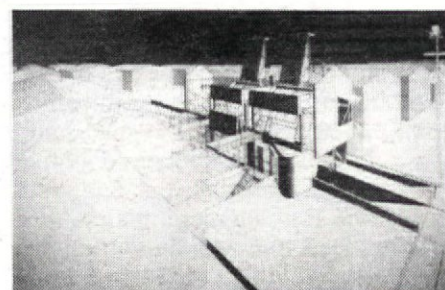
Forest Church, Konrad Chmielewski, Architect, Warsaw.



Fairytale Museum, Ulrich Hinrichsmeyer, Engineer, Dusseldorf, West Germany.



Park above Pacific Coast Highway, Skylar Brown, Malibu.



House Tract, Wesley Jones and team, San Francisco.

Conceived as an international competition, the Los Angeles Prize awarded excellence in innovation for works dealing with architectural concerns of international importance. The competition was unique in that it was open to the public for participation.

This year's projects were submitted from designers of all walks of life, all age groups and varied cultural backgrounds. Each expressed ideas differently; architects in general communicated graphically better than designers from other fields. About 65% of all projects submitted dealt with terrestrial design, 10% were extraterrestrial designs and about 25% were visionary projects dealing with the human condition in both terrestrial and extraterrestrial environments.

Although the jury found some similarity in the submitted designs for the future to those of the 60's, the jurors found the present attitudes to be much more sober and less optimistic.

Another direction contrasting the thinking of the 60's was the tendency toward urban decentralization, facilitated by computer/satellite communications.

The jury further commented that the subject matter and style of the various projects submitted from

around the world did not give a clear indication of the geographical origin of the design, nor did any represented vernacular indicate specific cultural influences.

Quite a few projects dealt with urban design for the Los Angeles basin, ranging from a revitalization plan for Venice by a Japanese designer to a project for the San Andreas fault by a New York designer. A designer from Arizona proposed a high tech symbol/monument for Los Angeles, another dealt with the utilization of the Los Angeles River basin.

There were projects dealing with subjects like a new civic center plan for Santa Monica; rapid transit proposals; utilization of the freeway space in LA; reconstruction for the port of Los Angeles; projects for utilization of the ocean; the Pacific Coast Highway; the creation of city forms with city lights; even a project proposing water canals in Westwood Village. Other planning projects addressed development needs in third world countries; new approaches to city planning on land, on water and in space.

In the building category there was great variety of subject matter. An entry from New York depicted a tower dedicated to life and death. With the present threat of world

Los Angeles Prize

A Look into the Future

wide annihilation and the ever-increasing tension in the urban centers of the world, the tower provides ritualized means for terminating or continuing existence on an individual basis. In an isolated sanctum depicting the biological and spiritual characteristics of life, a person can contemplate and afterwards choose death. Should the value of life be reaffirmed, the person can return to his previous life, or start a new life.

Other projects deal with building complexes for the performing arts, a new type of countryside, a millenium cathedral of light, buildings for inhabitants of different age groups, child-care camps, a fairy tale museum, a country club, a high-rise building for hydroponic farming and fish hatchery, an underwater complex for plankton production, international multi drive-through restaurants, prefab hotel units on the move, a permanent Olympic complex in international waters, an artists' studio complex, temple of memory, places of leisure under free-ways, large sports complexes on the surface of the ocean, a video cafe, and even a building utilizing in its design the scientific application of Feng Shui.

Despite such variety, the tendency in the submissions pointed to mixed-use buildings of high capacity for communication, utilizing prefabricated building components.

The urban house of the future received quite a bit of attention. One project depicted a skylit house with no windows, in response to increasing crime; another was a high-tech

tract house. There were projects for houses underground, in the air, and in the water; shipping container houses and housing proposals for the homeless. Reconstruction for the existing urban house was approached by some designers in a highly intellectual and stylistic manner, while others were involved with pneumatically-operated energy independent houses and houses with high capacity for communication reception and transmission.

A good share of the submitted projects dealt with "grand ideas," such as the longest bridge in the world; a seismic clamp holding together tectonic plates; space colonies in earth's orbit; even a proposal for the construction of a new world.

In the visionary-theoretical category many projects dealt with new design approaches. There was a proposal for utilization of new shapes for building components, design for a city utilizing fractal geometry and structure based on a musical composition, delightful approaches toward new aesthetics in buildings, iconographic cataloging of essential city and building elements, projects with titles like, "The American De Chirico," "The Bride Revealed By Her Shadows," "Order in the Face of Fear," "Communication of Consciousness," and "Chernobyl—The Global House." One project dealt with the "poetics of space" while others with "the old in a new context," and with the anticipated "territoriality of space."

There were several designs for space stations as resorts, manufactur-

ing, mining of asteroids and research. One project presented a pragmatic implementation for a moon colony; others presented a historic progression of architectural thinking, a comparison of the social spheres of western, Japanese, Chinese, Islamic and Hindu cultures as sources of architecture. Another project dealt with the loss of freedom due to technological dependance and many projects presented designs for buildings for specific uses and locations.

Bouje Bernkopf

Chairman, Los Angeles Prize Committee.

The Los Angeles Prize was conceived, organized and implemented by Bouje Bernkopf, AIA, Chairman of the Los Angeles Prize Committee. The program took two years to become a reality and over 60 individuals were involved in the process. Most of them were volunteers who donated talent and materials. Besides sponsorship by the LA/AIA Chapter, funding was obtained from the following sponsors, to whom we would like to express our gratitude.

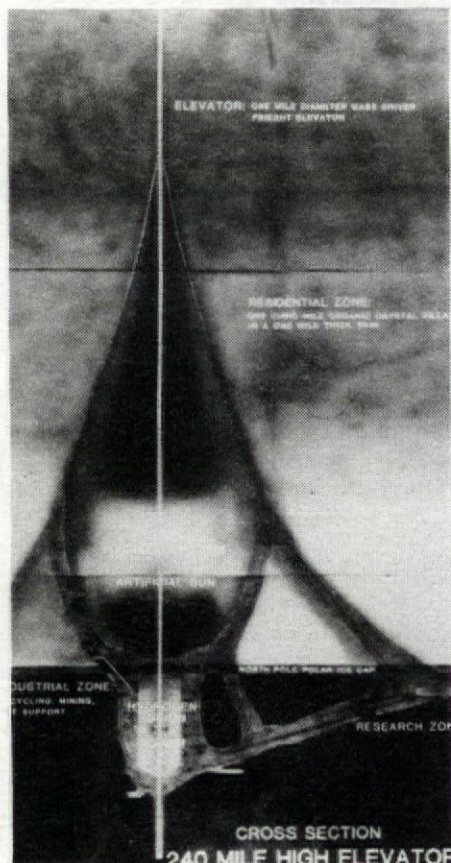
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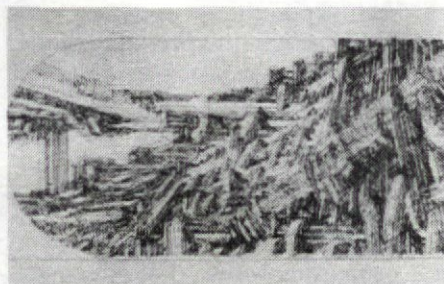
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and to the many members of our committee for their devotion and hard work.

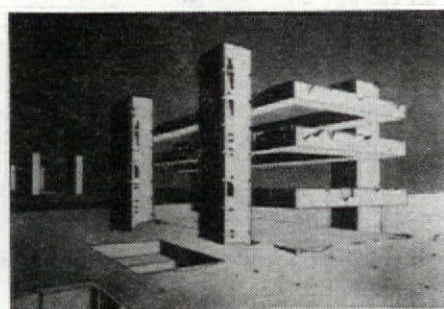
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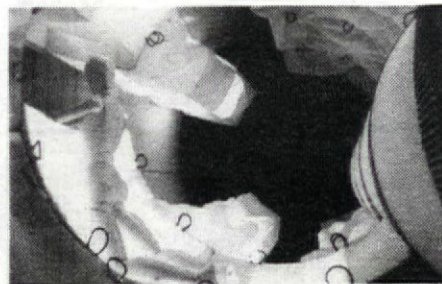
Honor Award Winner, Tower Structure; Robert Visser, AIA; Westhampton Beach, New York.



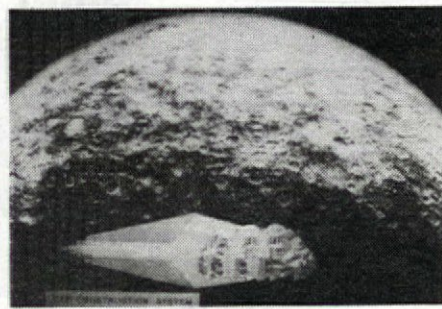
Honor Award Winner, Urban Images; Jerry Exline, Archonics; Indianapolis, Indiana.



First Prize Winner, Hulk Building System; Peter Cook; London, England.



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Aalto's Beasts

The Listener

"Looking for the light like an actual animal"—a phrase to sink one's teeth into. The speaker: Tide Huesser, architect, project designer for Atelier Aalto; the place: the Alvar Aalto symposium recently at UCLA; Huesser's title for his talk: "Living With the Beasts—Aalto's Buildings as Monsters." Heady stuff. Still, while not denying Aalto's brilliance, what are these "beasts" and "monsters"?

Aalto's design philosophy developed throughout his career with seemingly bewildering twists and turns: from a "classical" industrial pavilion of modular panels in 1923, through primordial doricism and romantic classicism in the late twenties, then an early and brilliant conversion to the doctrinaire International Style and, finally, rejecting this, slipping into the lyrical national romanticism of his later career.

Details and examples of his work from these strongly contrasting philosophies would suggest a man blown from here to there by the winds of change. But such a superficial interpretation would only obscure his extraordinary uniqueness: specifically, his overriding fascination with the relationship between biology and architecture.

Biology, you ask? Perhaps we meant to say "organic"? No. Scan architectural historians' appraisals of Aalto and a great array of adjectives pops off the pages, all related, surprisingly, to "biology": anti-mechanistic, organic, hierarchical, expressionistic. Then, in Aalto's own hand the word itself appears when in 1947 he wrote a brief essay he called "The Trout and the Mountain Stream." Kenneth Frampton calls it Aalto's idiosyncratic view of the process of architectural creation.

Aalto wrote, "Architecture and its details are connected in a way with biology. Salmon or trout are born hundreds of miles from their proper living environment where the rivers are but streams, small shining bodies of water between mountains, as far from their normal environment as man's spiritual life and instincts are from his daily work. As the fish egg's development to a mature organism requires time, so it also requires time for all that develops and crystallizes in our thoughts. Architecture needs this time to an even greater degree than any other creative work." A curious and at first puzzling parallel: a fish egg hatches in a place far from where it will live when mature. The journey from nursery to adult world is a difficult one requiring care and time. Similarly, man is born with ready-made instincts and spiritual life which, as he matures, must be intermeshed with the realities of daily physical life. Similarly, the creation and growth of a work of architecture springs from an intangible act of human creativity which must be sheltered from harm all the while it is growing and learning to provide both spiritual and

physical facilities to its users. This requires care and time from its creator. Thus architecture recapitulates biology.

At least nine years before Aalto wrote these lines he had materialized their philosophy in his Villa Mairea and later, most confidently, in his 1949 Säynätsalo Town Hall. Both buildings not only approximate the form of a fish partially but protectively encircling an egg but, far more significantly, demonstrate the essences that make the word "biology" meaningful when applied to architectural form. The essences:

Hierarchy: the head of the fish accommodates the most honorific element in both plans, the studio in the house and the council chamber in the town hall.

Egg element: in the house, the swimming pool—agent of regeneration and in the town hall, the library—repository of intellectual nourishment.

Transformation and duality: finishes and structure are coded in an internal landscape in what Frampton calls a "rite of passage" from the sophisticated techtonic of the head transforming to a native rusticity at the tail. Overcivilized urbanity is balanced as in a biological organism by a functionalism much broader than the merely technical one. Other buildings, fish-shaped or not, brilliantly demonstrate similar biological analogies without resorting to pictorialism.

Functionalism, he fervently believed, must include the satisfaction of a full range of psychological as well as physical needs. He is said to have once lamented, "the parallelepipeds of glass squares, the inhuman dandyism of the International Style!" Hard to ignore.

Aalto's persuasive presence, then, can readily explain Tide Huesser's expansion of "trout" into "beast," for such a transformation of words speaks powerfully of architecture's desperate need for humanizing qualities to counterbalance today's technology and mass culture.

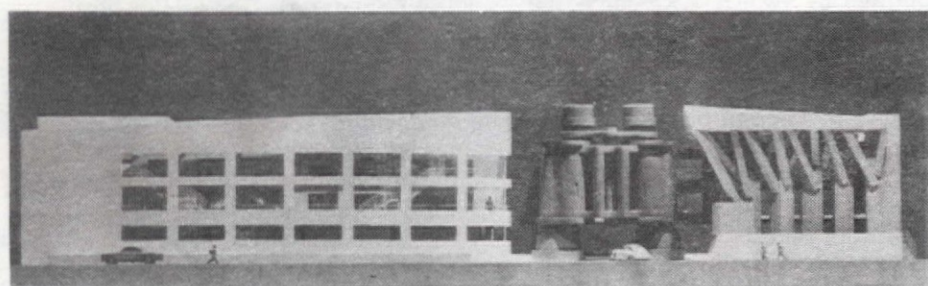
Other symposium speakers illuminated Aalto's work with words and phrases such as "indeterminate space," "spatial continuance," "transparency," "overlap," "segregated space," "layering"—all informative but none quite so memorable as trout, salmon and—monsters!

The significance of Aalto's careful exploration and then rejection of classicism first and, later, constructivist functionalism, has immense relevance when set against the spectacle of the last ten years during which a sizable body of the architectural profession has fled as senselessly as lemmings off the cliffs into the sea; fled the tyrannical strictures of the International Style, but, in fleeing, plunged into cloying, suffocating classical escapism.

The Aalto symposium will serve the profession well to the de-

L.A. ARCHITECT

Gehry to be Honored at Chapter Recognition Dinner



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Frank O. Gehry, FAIA, winner of 27 AIA awards over a career that has spanned more than two and a half decades, will be honored by the LA Chapter at its annual Recognition Dinner and holiday party on Tuesday, December 16 at the Town and Gown at the University of Southern California. A no-host reception will begin at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and the program. Cost for the evening is \$33 per person; reservations are required at the LA Chapter office by Monday, December 8.

Richard Weinstein, Dean of the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UCLA, will introduce Gehry and discuss his background and projects.

Gehry is principal of Frank O. Gehry and Associates Inc., Venice, a firm he established in 1962. He has a bachelor of architecture degree from USC and completed graduate study in urban planning at Harvard. Internationally-recognized and the winner of numerous design awards, Gehry has had his work published extensively in art, architecture and other publications. His drawings, models and furniture have been exhibited in museums in the U.S. and Europe and are currently on display in a travelling exhibition which originated at the Walker Art Center.

Most recently, his work has included the California Aerospace Museum in Exposition Park, Los Angeles; Loyola Law School, Los Angeles; Frances Howard Goldwyn Hollywood Regional Branch Library; Santa Monica Place; and the temporary quarters for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Gehry has won 27 AIA awards since 1967, including honor awards this year from the National AIA for the Loyola Law School (Phase II) and from the LA Chapter for the Goldwyn Library and University Research Center, University of California at Irvine. Other AIA awards—both local and national—were given to Gehry for the Merriweather Post Pavilion of Music, Columbia, Md.; Joseph Magnin Store, Costa Mesa; Concord Pavilion (two awards); Cochiti Recreation Center; Ron Davis Studio/Residence

(two awards); Rouse Headquarters Building; Westinghouse Distribution Services Office Building; UCLA Placement and Career Planning Center; Gehry Residence; Mid-Atlantic Toyota Office Interiors; Avant-Garde of Russia Exhibit Installation at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Gehry Residence (second award); Santa Monica Place; Indiana Avenue Project, Venice (two awards); Fritz B. Burns Building at Loyola Law School; Spiller House; Museum of Contemporary Art, Temporary Quarters; California Aerospace Museum; Loyola Law School (Phase II) (first award), the Norton Residence, and the Wosk Residence.

Gehry, who lectures extensively in the US and abroad, is the recipient of the Eliot Noyes Chair, Harvard (1984); the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (1983); the Charlotte Davenport Professorship in Architecture, Yale (1982); and the William Bishop Chair, Yale School of Architecture (1979). He was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1974.

Errata

LA Architect contained two errors in the interview which appeared last month. We misspelled Mark Pisano's first name with a c instead of a k; and we omitted Diana Kanner's biographical note. Ms. Kanner is a freelance writer for newspapers and magazines. Her article on Cliff May appeared in the April issue of *San Diego Home/Garden*. She is currently researching a book on the life and work of Wallace Neff for a graduate degree at USC, and would appreciate any information *LA Architect* readers may have about Mr. Neff. Replies to *LA Architect*.

In the book review, the photo credit was left off the illustration. The photographer was Patricia Layman. The exhibition of architecture at UC Santa Cruz was curated by Virginia Jansen.

The First Los Angeles Prize

The Los Angeles Prize, one of the most ambitious programs of the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, culminated October 25 with the inaugural ceremonies and announcement of the winners at the California Museum of Science and Industry.

In his opening address, LA/AIA President Donald Axon announced that over 500 designers from 29 different nations participated in the program.

A distinguished international jury made the selection of the winners. The jurors were Arthur Erickson, Canada; Richard Meier, USA; Richard Rodgers, Great Britain; Ray Bradbury, USA; and Paolo Soleri, USA.

The jury did not single out one project, but divided the Los Angeles Prize among three projects. The prize winners included:

A faculty/student design team from the Institute for Future Studies at SCI-ARC, Santa Monica, California. The team designed an international space station module for NASA due for construction in earth orbit beginning in 1993. It deals with life-size modules to accommodate an 8-person crew and extensive on-board storage. The team applied zero gravity and anthropomorphic body geometry in determining the character and function of the interior architecture with person-machine interfaces.

Jose Sanchez Martin, Pedro Hoyos Ortega, and Erich Herrmann Martinez—all architects, Ensenada, Mexico. The team created the PEP Construction system—a theoretical model which incorporates three technologies: sub-atomic mapping, lasers and holograms. This new construction system uses computerized sub-atomic mapping of a prototype module, from which the computer forms a hologram, whose protons hold in digital form all the essential information to rearrange energy and transform it into specific materials over distances using laser/hologram transport.

Peter Cook, Architect, London, England. Cook developed the so-called "Hulk" building system, a system which can be used to house a variety of uses by adding, rearranging and changing elements to fit new needs and appearances. The framework itself is permanent, but as social needs and personalities change, the exterior and interior configurations and surfaces can also change.

The jury also named three other projects for honor awards. The recipients are:

Jerry Exline, Archonics, a division of HNTB, Indianapolis, Indiana. Exline developed a bank of images

of urban environments for the near future. Designers can draw and reflect upon these images as points of reference, since images of the future influence the way places get built.

Robert Visser, AIA, Jewell, Visser & Visser Architects, P.C., Westhampton Beach, New York. Visser designed a theoretical model for an earthport-spaceport structure with its axis matching the earth's axis to handle nuclear waste disposal into the sun and to facilitate a safe connection between earth and space, which will not harm the ozone layer, unlike present launch systems.

Jose M. de Prada Poole (team director), Alicia Ozamiz Fertis and Roberto Goycoolea Prado—all architects, Madrid, Spain. The team designed a floating international sea colony for the development of basic biological resources which could be located in international waters anywhere in the world.

The City of Los Angeles shared the LA/AIA's enthusiasm for the Los Angeles Prize. Mayor Tom Bradley, proclaimed October 25, the day of our inaugural ceremony "Los Angeles Prize Day," commending the LA/AIA Chapter for its pioneering efforts to stimulate the creative design process internationally. Further, the Los Angeles City Council issued a resolution commending the LA/AIA Chapter for conceiving and implementing the Los Angeles Prize Competition.

The Los Angeles Prize in the magic light of the approaching millennium stirred the imagination of the designers from different societies, cultures and economies. The LA/AIA collected a very precious thing—a bank of projects expressing the thoughts, hopes and dreams of people from around the world.

Jan Pociel from Poland wrote us: "I am very glad I can take part in the Los Angeles Prize competition. It was your initiative that has encouraged me to sit down and think things over. Thank you very much."

Bouje Bernkopf, AIA
Chairman, Los Angeles Prize Committee

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Aalto's Beasts

The Listener

"Looking for the light like an actual animal"—a phrase to sink one's teeth into. The speaker: Tide Huesser, architect, project designer for Atelier Aalto; the place: the Alvar Aalto symposium recently at UCLA; Huesser's title for his talk: "Living With the Beasts—Aalto's Buildings as Monsters." Heady stuff. Still, while not denying Aalto's brilliance, what are these "beasts" and "monsters"?

Aalto's design philosophy developed throughout his career with seemingly bewildering twists and turns: from a "classical" industrial pavilion of modular panels in 1923, through primordial doricism and romantic classicism in the late twenties, then an early and brilliant conversion to the doctrinaire International Style and, finally, rejecting this, slipping into the lyrical national romanticism of his later career.

Details and examples of his work from these strongly contrasting philosophies would suggest a man blown from here to there by the winds of change. But such a superficial interpretation would only obscure his extraordinary uniqueness: specifically, his overriding fascination with the relationship between biology and architecture.

Biology, you ask? Perhaps we meant to say "organic"? No. Scan architectural historians' appraisals of Aalto and a great array of adjectives pops off the pages, all related, surprisingly, to "biology": anti-mechanistic, organic, hierarchical, expressionistic. Then, in Aalto's own hand the word itself appears when in 1947 he wrote a brief essay he called "The Trout and the Mountain Stream." Kenneth Frampton calls it Aalto's idiosyncratic view of the process of architectural creation.

Aalto wrote, "Architecture and its details are connected in a way with biology. Salmon or trout are born hundreds of miles from their proper living environment where the rivers are but streams, small shining bodies of water between mountains, as far from their normal environment as man's spiritual life and instincts are from his daily work. As the fish egg's development to a mature organism requires time, so it also requires time for all that develops and crystallizes in our thoughts. Architecture needs this time to an even greater degree than any other creative work." A curious and at first puzzling parallel: a fish egg hatches in a place far from where it will live when mature. The journey from nursery to adult world is a difficult one requiring care and time. Similarly, man is born with ready-made instincts and spiritual life which, as he matures, must be intermeshed with the realities of daily physical life. Similarly, the creation and growth of a work of architecture springs from an intangible act of human creativity which must be sheltered from harm all the while it is growing and learning to provide both spiritual and

physical facilities to its users. This requires care and time from its creator. Thus architecture recapitulates biology.

At least nine years before Aalto wrote these lines he had materialized their philosophy in his Villa Mairea and later, most confidently, in his 1949 Säynätsalo Town Hall. Both buildings not only approximate the form of a fish partially but protectively encircling an egg but, far more significantly, demonstrate the essences that make the word "biology" meaningful when applied to architectural form. The essences:

Hierarchy: the head of the fish accommodates the most honorific element in both plans, the studio in the house and the council chamber in the town hall.

Egg element: in the house, the swimming pool—agent of regeneration and in the town hall, the library—repository of intellectual nourishment.

Transformation and duality: finishes and structure are coded in an internal landscape in what Frampton calls a "rite of passage" from the sophisticated techtonic of the head transforming to a native rusticity at the tail. Overcivilized urbanity is balanced as in a biological organism by a functionalism much broader than the merely technical one. Other buildings, fish-shaped or not, brilliantly demonstrate similar biological analogies without resorting to pictorialism.

Functionalism, he fervently believed, must include the satisfaction of a full range of psychological as well as physical needs. He is said to have once lamented, "the parallelepipeds of glass squares, the inhuman dandyism of the International Style!" Hard to ignore.

Aalto's persuasive presence, then, can readily explain Tide Huesser's expansion of "trout" into "beast," for such a transformation of words speaks powerfully of architecture's desperate need for humanizing qualities to counterbalance today's technology and mass culture.

Other symposium speakers illuminated Aalto's work with words and phrases such as "indeterminate space," "spatial continuance," "transparency," "overlap," "segregated space," "layering"—all informative but none quite so memorable as trout, salmon and—monsters!

The significance of Aalto's careful exploration and then rejection of classicism first and, later, constructivist functionalism, has immense relevance when set against the spectacle of the last ten years during which a sizable body of the architectural profession has fled as senselessly as lemmings off the cliffs into the sea; fled the tyrannical strictures of the International Style, but, in fleeing, plunged into cloying, suffocating classical escapism.

The Aalto symposium will serve the profession well to the de-