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DESIGN BY DEBORAH BERKE

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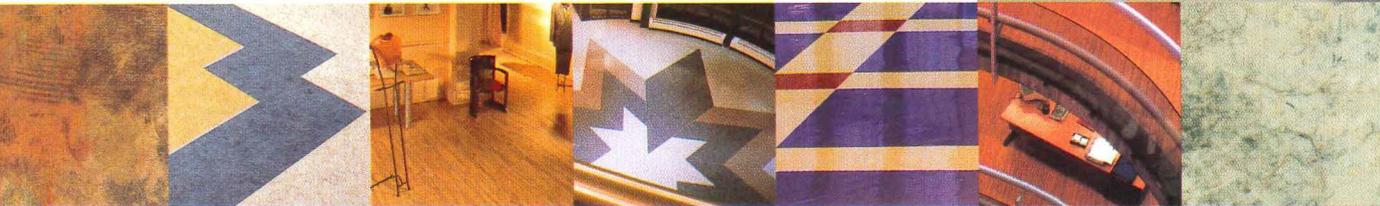
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# Architecture Needs More Critics. Trust Me.

By Reed Kroloff

Fourteen years ago, a talented young writer and scholar, Herbert Muschamp, was running an architectural criticism program at New York's Parsons School of Design. Muschamp's curriculum promised something revolutionary: a pool of graduates expressly trained to think and write critically about architecture. The hope was that many of them would go on to form a new generation of critics for newspapers and magazines across the country.

The revolution never came. Today, only a handful of people write critically about architecture in the popular press, and Muschamp's program is history.

That's a shame. Architecture is a public commodity, and as such invites public scrutiny. At its best, well-written popular criticism can help a broad audience comprehend what architecture may mean, why it is important to their lives, and how it can successfully take forms they might not expect. In other words, good criticism can make the public into better-informed clients.

As the number of critics has dwindled, the authority of those that remain has grown disproportionately. Take Herbert Muschamp for example. Far from disappearing with his Parsons program, Muschamp eventually joined the *New York Times* as its architecture critic. Given that the *Times* is the only national newspaper that writes regularly about architecture, and given that magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* no longer cover architecture at all (though they somehow manage to write about fine art nearly every week), that makes Muschamp the most important—and powerful—voice on architecture in the United States today. On Sundays alone, he reaches 1.6 million readers. For many, he is the only expert they ever hear from on the subject.

The only other person who might claim a regular national audience is also Manhattan-based: *New Yorker* critic Paul Goldberger. The *New Yorker's* circulation is less than half that of the *Times* however, and Muschamp writes much more often. There are other talented critics writing regularly in the popular media, including most notably Robert Campbell of the *Boston Globe* and Blair Kamin of the *Chicago Tribune*. But their reach is distinctly regional, leaving only Muschamp with a truly national audience.

So much authority vested in one person is unhealthy. Despite a strong record of promoting progressive design and urbanism, Muschamp of late has sequestered himself in a world of special interests and favored architects, most of which are tied to Manhattan. Criticism is naturally defined by a critic's proclivities, but as our index on page 64 indicates, Muschamp has narrowed that definition considerably.

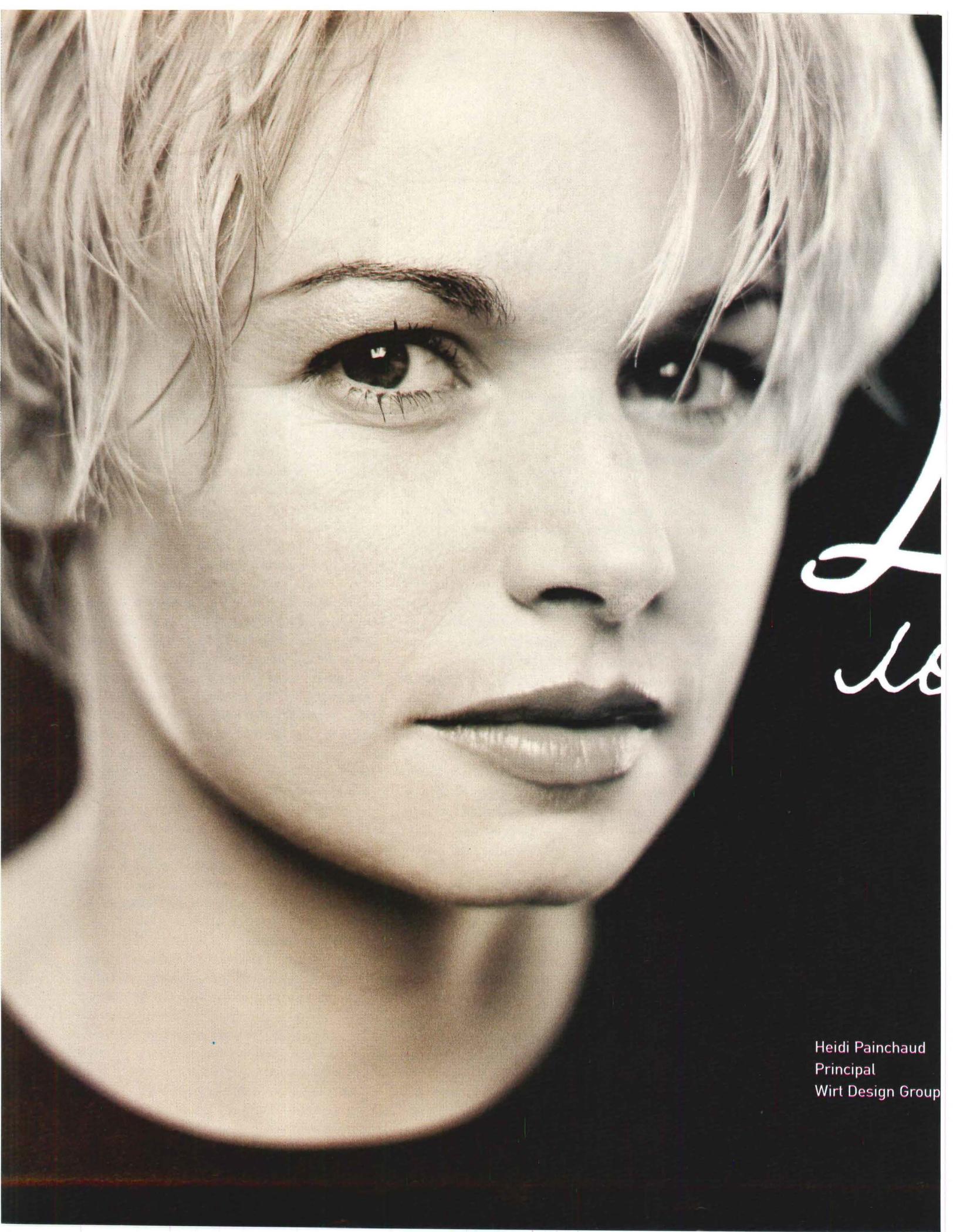
Given his unique position, should Muschamp work to strike a different balance in his writing? Perhaps, though as the *Times* critic, his New York-centricism is understandable: Muschamp is a national critic by default rather than by design.

A better answer is to broaden the dialogue by encouraging other publications to increase their critical coverage. That won't be easy. The current scarcity reflects the media's belief that architecture is not a compelling subject. They're wrong, of course. Architecture comes loaded with hot-button public issues, from the economy to the environment. But to get that message across, this profession's leadership must put pressure on the popular media—relentless, persistent pressure. My first job as a critic came only after Dean John Meunier at Arizona State University's school of architecture badgered the local paper into giving me a try. It worked in Phoenix. It can work elsewhere.

## New at Architecture

On page 129, we are pleased to premiere a new editorial section, Specifications, edited by Alan Brake. Each month, Specifications will offer readers deeper insight into the construction process of one of our featured buildings. The section also includes new products and an address for our convenient new Web-based product information service (page 121).

Also, the P/A Awards are returning to January, long their home. Please see our ad on page 29, and note that award submissions are due on August 27. Good luck. ■



*Heidi*

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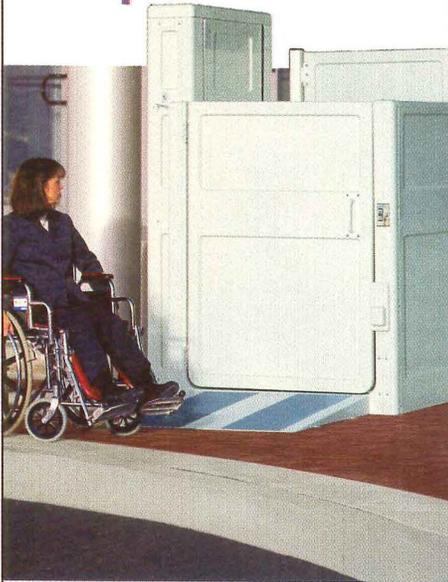
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## Hypnotic Hani

Hani Rashid should receive some special award or citation for his superior powers of persuasion (April 2001, page 108). I was amazed how easily he convinced every other juror to give an award to his own colleague's project after he initially abstained from voting due to an obvious conflict of interest, and after the other jurors had eliminated the project from contention. But then it is obvious to see why the Raybould House & Garden, designed by Kolatan/MacDonald Studio, won a prestigious P/A Award (one of only nine given) when you read such juror remarks as: Brad Cloepfil: "The planning is not that sophisticated. It's actually a relatively conventional house....There's no vision to it..."; Deborah Berke: "I think that this project is not good enough in its total execution to be an award.... If they (students of architecture) copy this house, we're really dead..."; Mark Robbins: "In the end it's going to be a big aluminum thing parked on some grass."

I guess it helps to have friends in high places, or at least on juries when the sheer globbiness of blob design is considered.

Paul N. Larson  
Orange, California

## Switched at Birth

Regarding your article "Mixed Parentage" (April 2001, page 57) on the authorship dispute over the Lake Superior Center between Holt Hinshaw Architects and Hammel, Green, and Abrahamson, I find it disturbing that you would elect to highlight this particular dispute between Holt Hinshaw and another firm while having previously

letters

neglected to mention Wes Jones's design of the San Jose Repertory Theater, which was featured in your February 1999 issue as a Holt Hinshaw project without any mention of the authorship dispute associated with it. Both projects were the children of divorce, since just as Holt Hinshaw oversaw the Lake Superior Center through design development before being fired from the job, so did Wes Jones carry the San Jose Repertory Theater through design development before moving on to form his own firm in 1993.

To those of us familiar with these two projects, such journalistic unevenness is particularly appalling, since Holt Hinshaw's usurpation of the design credit for the Repertory Theater was certainly no secret and would have required no effort to discover and set straight.

Doug Jackson  
Los Angeles

## Absentee Architect

Why wasn't the restoration architect mentioned in Bradford McKee's article about River Park ("Reynolds Wrap," April 2001, page 67)? It's bad enough when newspapers and other magazines ignore the architect but it's unconscionable that your magazine would follow suit.

Although the piece wasn't directed toward the restoration effort alone, there is a larger story that connects the restoration with the culture of the place which he failed to explore.

James W. Ritter  
Alexandria, Virginia

## CORRECTION

"Outside the Box" (March 2001, page 57) did not mention that the curators of the exhibition *On the Job* are Donald Albrecht and Chrysanthe Broikos, and should have listed its closing date as August 19. The article also quotes an essay from the catalogue, written not by Thomas Hines, but by Thomas Hine.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Send your letters to the editor to: *Architecture*, 770 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. Or fax to: 646/654-5817. Or e-mail us at: [info@architecturemag.com](mailto:info@architecturemag.com). Include your name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

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## SOM Taps Woman for Chair

**New Boss** This October, architect Marilyn Taylor will become the first female chairperson of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, a firm that has no other female partners in its ranks today. Taylor is a logical choice. "Marilyn will be a better chairman than I was," says current SOM chairman David Childs, who is stepping down to concentrate on designing. He has worked with Taylor for more than 25 years. "She's much more hands-on and she can do anything better than anyone. You don't make a woman a chairman just because she's a woman. She'll be a role model for everyone."

The 54-year-old has shaped more square-footage than most politicians, with sites across the globe: Malaysia, Kuwait, Manila, Singapore, Jakarta, Ottawa, Istanbul, Israel, and Egypt. She has also planned a small city in China. Her improvements to New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) cover more than 3 million square feet. "I often introduce myself as the only SOM partner who's never done a tall building," says Taylor. "I've always been fascinated by projects that are big horizontally, not vertically—city-forming, city-changing investments."

Taylor joined SOM's Washington office (the company holds office space in a half-dozen cities) in 1971, and made partner in New York 16



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years later. In three decades, Taylor has headed up a litany of public-realm, heavy-hitting projects. She guided the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, a \$2.2 billion federal effort, as well as international airport projects in Boston, the Philippines, Tel Aviv and Washington, D.C. She converted a 28-building mill complex into the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, laid out EuroDisney outside of Paris, and recently expanded JFK's Terminal 4, which opened in early May.

Engaged and engaging, Taylor believes she can change the world or at least design much of it. She synthesizes the geniality of her native small-town Iowa with the energy of rush-hour midtown Manhattan. Having moved to Washington, D.C., at the age of 11, she says, she "saw the phenomenon of the American city and wanted to be a part of it. I wanted

to make cities better." In 1996, Taylor ranked among *Crain's Business Report's* "75 Most Influential Women." She also has two children.

Richard T. Anderson, president of the New York Building Congress, a coalition of design, construction, and real estate groups, has known Taylor (who served as the congress's vice-chairperson) since the 1980s. "The thing Marilyn does," says Anderson, "is represent the profession of architecture in the New York area and around the country. She understands how design fits in with greater public policy issues."

Her mission is clear: "Every building [architects] do needs to be infused with functional qualities and meaning," says Taylor. "We need to continue to educate our clients in a world where things are being homogenized. That's what I want SOM to do." *Shonquis Moreno*

## Home Builder Heavyweights Go Online

**Web Venture** Austin, Texas-based BuilderHomesite.com, a burgeoning online collective of 30 high-volume, high-revenue U.S. home builders, is an affirmation of the fact that the Internet has changed the way people nest and builders do business. Members of the three-month-old consortium—Toll Brothers, American Heritage Homes, Centex, Medallion, and the Ryland Group, among others—are big players, altogether grossing more than \$37 billion and building about 175,000 homes in the past year. That's a lot of might in one Web site.

Launching in July, the Web site, as a separately owned technology company distinct from the construction business, will obviously not build homes. It will promote sales of the new homes built by its members. The site, according to a BuilderHomesite.com spokesperson, was created to expand the new home-buying market and establish neutral ground on which builders in the consortium use new technologies to hawk their wares.

With such high-powered members, BuilderHomesite.com may appear poised to consume market share, but that's not actually the case. The site faces competition for eyeballs from the likes of Realtor.com, Internet, and especially the family of National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)-endorsed sites which list more than 2 to 3 million available homes and apartments. Internet networking is key. BuilderHomesite.com has allied itself with Microsoft Network's HomeAdvisor.com, an online real estate guide, while NAHB's Homebuilder has partnered with the likes of AOL and Yahoo. Search online. Buy online. Build online. You might never have to leave the house again—not even to buy a new one. *S.M.*



Home builders like the one who built this house, Clark Wilson, understand the benefit of selling online, where they could get lots of "eyeballs."

## Buzz

The **American Academy in Rome** has announced this year's winners of the 2001–2002 Rome Prize: In architecture, **Alexander Kitchin** and **Evelyn Tickle** won the Mercedes T. Bass; **Kelly D. Powell** won the Rounders. In design arts, **William H. Fain, Jr.** of Johnson Fain won the Rolland; **Paul Shaw** won the Franklin D. Israel. In historic preservation and conservation, **Elizabeth Riorden** won the Samuel H. Kress; **Ellen Phillips Soroka** won the National Endowment for the Arts. In landscape architecture, **Andrew Than-Son Cao** won the Prince Charitable Trusts; **Peter Osler** won the Garden Club of America.

**Morris Architects** (Houston) has been selected by the Harris County–Houston Sports Authority to serve as architect for a new \$175 million multipurpose sports and entertainment facility in downtown Houston. **HOK Sport** is the sports consultant and **John S. Chase** serves as associate architect.

Five architects have been selected by the **Los Angeles County Museum of Art** to compete for the commission to design a \$200 million renovation and expansion that will include a new contemporary art building. The five finalists are: **Rem Koolhaas** (Rotterdam), **Daniel Libeskind** (Berlin), **Jean Nouvel** (Paris), **Steven Holl** (New York), and **Thom Mayne** (California).

Last month the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill that would permit the construction of the much-debated **World War II Memorial** on the National Mall, nixing any further deliberation. A federal review panel had earlier opened up the hot topic

# Beijing Will Transform Itself into a Western-Style Megalopolis



**Capitalism** The walls of communism are coming down and being replaced by a shiny new commercial center. Beijing, the capital of the most populated country in the world, will be leveling 1.5 square miles of downtown to make way for a new central business district. Government and local officials recently awarded first prize in a competition to plan the district to Johnson Fain Partners of Los Angeles.

Johnson Fain's proposal seeks to transform Beijing into a modern metropolis. The plan will involve 100 million square feet of mixed-use development adjacent to Tiananmen Square. The idea, according to Johnson Fain's plan, is to develop a dozen or so distinct districts, each with a specialized interest, such as art, theater, or sports. These areas would be at the perimeter of the city center and connected by parks and canals. The jewel in the plan is a 140-story skyscraper, which, if built, would claim the title of "world's tallest building."

"There's a lot of commercial development spread out in the city in a haphazard way," says William Fain, who is heading the project. "I think [the government] saw the danger in large-scale urban design without a master plan."

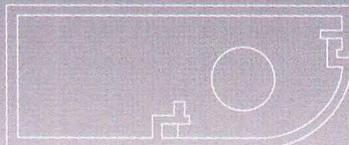
With Paris and Toronto making similar investments in urban improvements for the 2008 Olympics, the installment of infrastructure and cultural institutions is crucial to Beijing's bid. *Andrew Yang*  
Johnson Fain's plan for Beijing's commercial center includes a 140-story skyscraper.

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## Chicago Updates Zoning Ordinances After 44 Years

For most of the past 44 years, Chicago city planners have taken an if-it's-not-broken-don't-fix-it approach to its zoning ordinance. The guideline had yet to be overhauled—until now. Chicago's zoning ordinance, which determines how land is used and what buildings are built, is undergoing a monumental revision under Mayor Richard M. Daley.

To many, the zoning ordinance is a dinosaur left over from a different era, specifically from the late 1950s. Chicago is now in the midst of its biggest building and economic boom in nearly a century, and the ordinance does not appear to be accommodating of such growth.

"We are currently adding 400 to 500 amendments to the zoning law yearly," says John Schmidt, chairman of the mayor's zoning reform committee. "When that happens, you know that the current zoning law no longer fits the realities of the city."

Schmidt and his 21-member committee (plus various appointed subcommittees) are undergoing a year-long effort to develop this revision. Some of the main points include setting an aesthetic and practical design standard for new buildings, preserving the residential character of neighborhoods and encouraging the expansion of retail areas.

However, some warn of the possibility that such a vast initiative will prohibit different neighborhoods from adapting to change. "Those of us who believe in diversity believe in the city developing in a multiplicity of ways," says Dirk Denison, a Chicago architect. If the zoning ordinance isn't revised to be flexible, he says, the city may end up looking like a suburb.

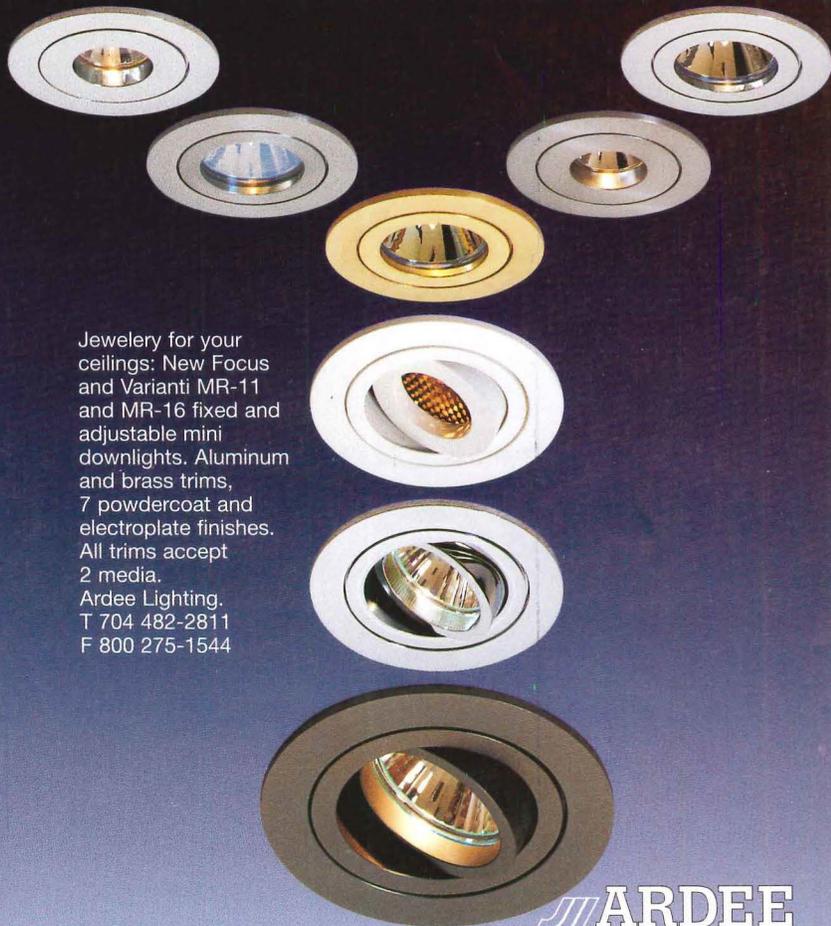
The zoning reform committee has held public meetings in various Chicago neighborhoods. The reform committee expects to finalize the ordinance this fall. *A. Y.*

for another round of debates. Its move was quickly trumped by the House's action. A quick passage in the Senate is expected this month. Opponents claim that the project, as proposed, would detract from the simple beauty of the placid Mall.

**Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum** (HOK) has received the Art Commission of the City of New York's 19th annual **Award for Excellence in Design** for the firm's rehabilitation of the St. George Intermodal Terminal on Staten Island.

Since **George Pataki** took over as governor of New York in 1995, his next-door neighbor, **James Copeland**, who runs **Hudson Design**, has won eight state contracts. Coincidence? Some think it's more than that. State Comptroller **H. Carl McCall**

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## Salt Lake City Debates Public vs. Private Space

### Politics

Salt Lake City is ground zero for an escalating debate on public space and private land ownership. The catalyst for the controversy is the recently completed Main Street plaza. The area, formerly a public street, was sold by the city to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for \$8.2 million in 1999. The church revitalized the area by closing the street and making significant physical improvements, resulting in the new park-like plaza called West Church Plaza.

While you can visit the park at any time of day, be careful what you do there. The church has placed specific restrictions against any activity it finds unacceptable. Covering a wide and sometimes unclear range of behaviors, from smoking to plain hanging out ("loitering"), the church's prohibitions allow, in effect, the church to act as a private law enforcement agent. The church, with a major administration building and personnel nearby, may request that a person be removed, excluded or even arrested for perceived violations as interpreted by the church.

The church's position, outlined in its official public response to the controversy on its Web site ([www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org)), is clear. Church leaders feel that since they bought the property outright, they reserve the legally protected right to direct its use.

But not everyone agrees—some think public space is indeed that. The American Civil Liberties Union, in partnership with the First Unitarian Church, the National Organization of Women, and Utahns for Fairness, is challenging the legality of the situation with two separate lawsuits. Both cases have been rejected in federal courts. The ACLU still plans on continuing the debate.  
*Darwin Harrison*

Private or public? Salt Lake City's West Church Plaza is under debate.

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# Feds Stiffen Seismic Guidelines

Though at least 30 steel-framed buildings in Northridge, California, wobbled when a Big One struck in 1994, they didn't fall down. Still, their shaking and quaking forced the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to start thinking about how to ensure that steel-framed buildings could be made safer and less susceptible to collapse. How to get steel-framed buildings to withstand even the Biggest One has been FEMA's \$12 million fixation these past six years: The agency has just released its new design and construction guidelines for quake-resistant steel-frame buildings.

The guidelines are recommendations, written in what Tim Sheckler of FEMA's national earthquake program office calls "guideline language." City officials across the country are encouraged by

FEMA to incorporate into their building codes FEMA's guidelines as they will be adopted by the worldwide building standard, the International Building Code (IBC). The guidelines, which call for better welding techniques among other things, are not compulsory, but highly recommended.

Sheckler says the guidelines are also applicable to all new and existing buildings across the nation. The Structural Engineers Association of Northern California has said that if implemented the guidelines could end up adding a bundle (about 2 to 3 percent) to the cost of a new building. Officials in Los Angeles' Building and Safety Department have voiced slight objections to some of the particulars of the guidelines. A main concern for L.A. has been that some FEMA-recommended welding connections have not been tested properly. *Anthony Mariani*

has ordered his auditors to review more than \$800,000 in contracts Hudson has received.

*Chicago Sun-Times* architecture critic **Lee Bey** has been appointed to chief of staff of Chicago Mayor **Richard M. Daley's** office.

For suburbanites who don't set aside time to exercise, their neighborhoods could be killing them. In Atlanta, scientists from three government agencies are beginning a three-year, \$4 million study of transportation patterns in the metro region. The theory they're testing is whether or not sprawl contributes to a sprawling waistline.

The **American Institute of Architects** acknowledges that its

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# Moore's Piazza d'Italia Gets Second Chance

**Renovation** Plans are being developed to restore the Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans, one of the late Charles W. Moore's best known and most influential works. Originally commissioned as a public gathering place for the New Orleans Italian community, the structure was completed in 1978 by Moore and the Urban Innovations Group, a teaching practice connected with the UCLA School of Architecture. The Piazza soon became known as one of Moore's most exuberant, startling, and controversial works, regarded by many as an icon of late postmodernism.

But no matter how well-loved it was at the outset, the landmarked Piazza was eventually forgotten about. Moore had also designed a hotel for an adjacent property, but when that was not built and other planned urban development in the area lagged, the Piazza languished and fell into what Moore lamented was "a perfectly Roman state of decline."

Now the Westin Hotel chain is finalizing details with the City of New Orleans on a 700-room project on the city block surrounding the site. As part of the deal, the developer Darryl Berger is restoring and maintain-



Charles W. Moore's Piazza d'Italia is in a state of disrepair.

ing the Piazza as a public pedestrian thoroughfare. Berger is working with a New Orleans-based design team composed of Sizeler Architects, Hewitt and Washington Architects, and Lyons & Hudson Architects. Ronald Filson and Allen Eskew (one of Moore's collaborators) will both consult on the restoration. *Kevin Keim*

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possibilities others  
are afraid of.

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# Oakland's Jerry Brown Resents Environmental Review

**Environment** Everybody's favorite progressive, Jerry Brown, looks to be taking a cue from Dubya on the environment. The charismatic mayor of Oakland, California, attracted a lot of fanfare four years ago with his campaign promise to eventually bring 10,000 new residents to downtown. But this spring, nearing the end of his first term and with development prospects dimming as the economy falters, the mayor applied to the state of California to make the downtown development zone he's recently created exempt from sections of the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA review.

The mayor claims that environmental reviews are time consuming. He wants to bring in developers—and new downtown residents—before the economy gets worse. Critics charge that campaign quotas are more likely the motivating factors for such haste, and that skirting regulations to speed up development could open up Oakland to bad growth.

"We want high-density development in Oakland," says Rachel Peterson, executive director of Urban Ecology, an environmental advocacy group. "But we want redevelopment to bring sustainable buildings and high-quality design. We're not certain these exemptions will help Oakland. As it now stands, the mayor's plan has a lot of loopholes in it."

Downtown infill may indeed be a good goal, but could seriously falter if design checkpoints are eliminated. Who wants to live in an ugly or poorly built building? "We don't want to just slap up high-rises," says Iris Starr, a former planner for the city who's skeptical of the Brown plan, "and call that revitalization." *Tess Taylor*

financial standing has been weakened by the failed Internet venture, **AEC Direct**, of which the institute held a majority share (February, 2001, page 25). AIA CEO **Norman Koonce** sent a letter to all AIA members last month detailing the institute's shaky financial situation.

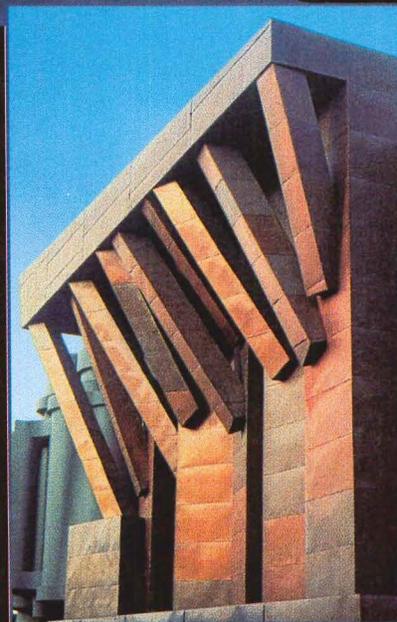
**Alexander C. Gorlin** has signed a contract with the Nehemiah Housing Development Company to design 500 low-income townhouses in Brooklyn, New York.

The **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art** has announced the winners of its inaugural SFMOMA experimental Design Award, which goes to up-and-coming Bay-area designers and architects: **Thom Faulders**, **Donald Fortescue**, and **Post Tool Design**.

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news

Insurance

# Warning: Insurance Rates Rising for Home Builders

Jeff Masters is trying to spread the word about rising insurance rates for home builders. Masters, a lawyer with Cox, Castle & Nicholson, a Los Angeles, California-based law firm, and who will be speaking in July at the Pacific Coast Builders Conference in San Francisco, is cautioning home builders to make certain that the homes and condos they build are defect free—an idea that sounds reasonable, except that a lot of home builders during the building boom of the 1980s were worried about getting structures up fast instead of getting structures up correctly. Their sins have come back to haunt them.

There's since been a rise in defect litigation, causing fear among insurers and, conversely, fear among home builders. Insurers understandably don't want to back a building that experience says may fall apart or possibly trigger a lawsuit. Home builders, especially in states where population and building growth has been exploding (California, Nevada, Arizona, and Colorado), are now faced with skyrocketing premiums.

The economics of defect litigation, according to Masters, prevents a smart solution. Claimants' lawyers are mostly paid on a contingency-fee basis. Some claimants and their lawyers are more interested in cashing in than remedying a defect.

Yet, after filing suit, a homeowner is left with the stigma of living in a legally broke-down palace, potentially making resale problematic. "The real loser," Masters says, "is the homeowner." *A.M.*

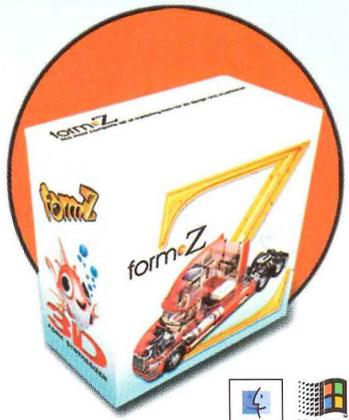
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Office building in Malibu, California, by Morphosis, Santa Monica, California.



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## Calendar

## Exhibitions

**Ann Arbor**

Albert Kahn: Inspiration for the Modern at the University of Michigan Museum of Art through October 21 (734) 764-0395

**Atlanta**

Michelangelo: Drawings and other Treasures from the Casa Buonarroti, Florence; Art of the Architect; and Paintings from the Age of Michelangelo in the Kress Collection all at the High Museum of Art through September 2 (404) 733-4437

**Baltimore**

Scott Ponemone's Baltimore: The Interplay of Art and Architecture at Evergreen House at Johns Hopkins University through September 30 [www.jhu.edu/~evrgreen/](http://www.jhu.edu/~evrgreen/) (410) 516-0341

**Cambridge**

Commencement Exhibition at the Harvard GSD through August 15 [www.gsd.harvard.edu/events](http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/events) (617) 495-4784

**Chicago**

2001: Building for Space Travel at the Art Institute of Chicago through October 21 (312) 443-3600

**Los Angeles**

American Modern, 1925–1940: Design for a New Age at the Orange County Museum of Art in Newport Beach through August 19 (949) 759-1122

James Welling: Photographs 1974–1999 at MOCA at California Plaza through August 26 [www.MOCA-LA.org](http://www.MOCA-LA.org) (213) 621-2766

**New York City**

Mies in Berlin at the Museum of Modern Art opens June 21 (212) 708-9400

Mies in America at the Whitney Museum of Art opens June 21 (212) 570-3676

Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan: The Architect's Other Passion at the Japan Society Gallery through July 15 [www.japansociety.com](http://www.japansociety.com) (212) 832-1155

Light Screens: The Leaded Glass of Frank Lloyd Wright at the American Craft Museum through September 2 (212) 956-3535

Frank O. Gehry Retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum through August 26 (212) 423-3500

Fresh Kills: The Photographs at the Municipal Art Society through July 21 (212) 935-3960

**Philadelphia**

Out of the Ordinary: The Architecture and Design of Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Associates at the Philadelphia Museum of Art through August 5 [www.philamuseum.org](http://www.philamuseum.org) (215) 684-7860

Kahn at 100: Silence and Light marking the centenary of Louis I. Kahn's birth, at the Kroiz Gallery in the Architectural Archives at the University of Pennsylvania through September 15 [www.upenn.edu/gsa/archives/archives/index.html](http://www.upenn.edu/gsa/archives/archives/index.html) (215) 898-8323

**San Francisco**

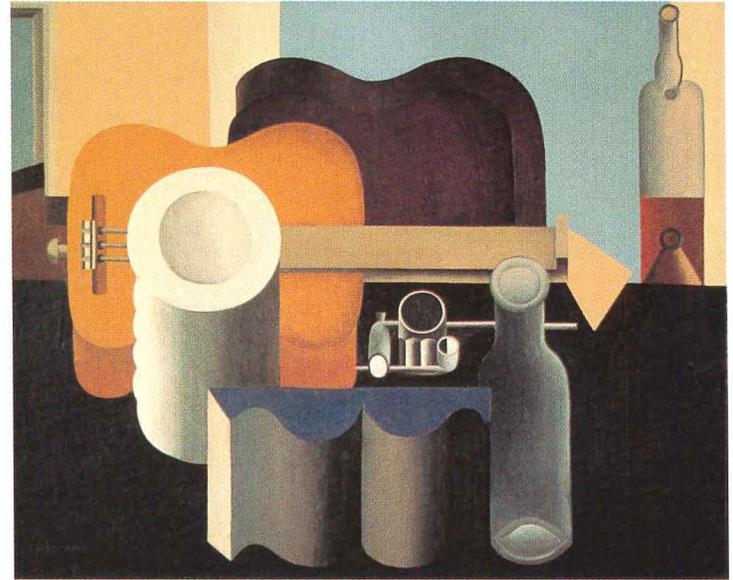
Martin Venezky: Selections from the Permanent Collection of Architecture and Design at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art through October 14 (415) 357-4000

**St. Louis**

Architectonic Fixations: Photographs from the Collection of Russell Sturgis at Washington University through July 31 <http://library.wustl.edu/units/spec/archives/guides/sturgis/html> (314) 935-5230

**Washington**

Federal Design Now! GSA 2000 Design Awards through July 8 and On the Job through August 19; both at the National Building Museum (202) 272-2448



In the years following World War I, a crop of Parisian thinkers and artists strove to make sense out of the machine age. Wedding industrial motifs with classical forms, artists like Le Corbusier, Fernand Léger, and Amédée Ozenfant ostensibly birthed a strain of modernism called purism. **L'Esprit Nouveau: Purism in Paris, 1918–1925**, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, honors these artists and the movement they nurtured by displaying rarely exhibited drawings and paintings (including Le Corbusier's *Still Life*, above) and reconstructing to scale the interior of Le Corbusier's *Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau* (1925). *L'Esprit Nouveau* runs through August 5. For more information, call (323) 857-6000.

## Conferences

ACEEE 2001 Summer Study: Increasing Productivity through Energy Efficiency in Tarrytown, New York; July 24–27; contact Rebecca Lunetta at (302) 292-3966

Urban Waterfronts at the New York Marriott; September 20–22 [www.waterfrontcenter.org](http://www.waterfrontcenter.org) (202) 337-0356

Mesh International Landscape Architecture Conference (EDGE VI) hosted by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University at Storey Hall in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia July 9–11 [meah@rmit.edu.au](mailto:meah@rmit.edu.au) +61 3 9925 3806

Ninth International Conference on Indoor Air Quality and Climate in Monterey, California; June 30 through July 5 [www.indoorair2002.org](http://www.indoorair2002.org)

## Competitions

Design 21 Award by UNESCO and Felissimo. Submission deadline is August 15 (212) 956-4438

Fresh Kills: Landfill to Landscape New York City and the Municipal Art Society of New York invite submissions via [www.nyc.gov/freshkills](http://www.nyc.gov/freshkills). Selection of teams completed by July, design submissions due in October

Mid-Career Grants by the James Marston Fitch Charitable Foundation. Submission deadline is September 1 (212) 691-3229

2001 Excellence on the Waterfront entries must be postmarked by July 13 [www.waterfrontcenter.org](http://www.waterfrontcenter.org) (202) 337-0356

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East elevation



West elevation

## On the Boards

**Herzog & de Meuron**  
**with Hammel, Green and Abrahamson**  
 Walker Art Center Expansion  
 Minneapolis, Minnesota

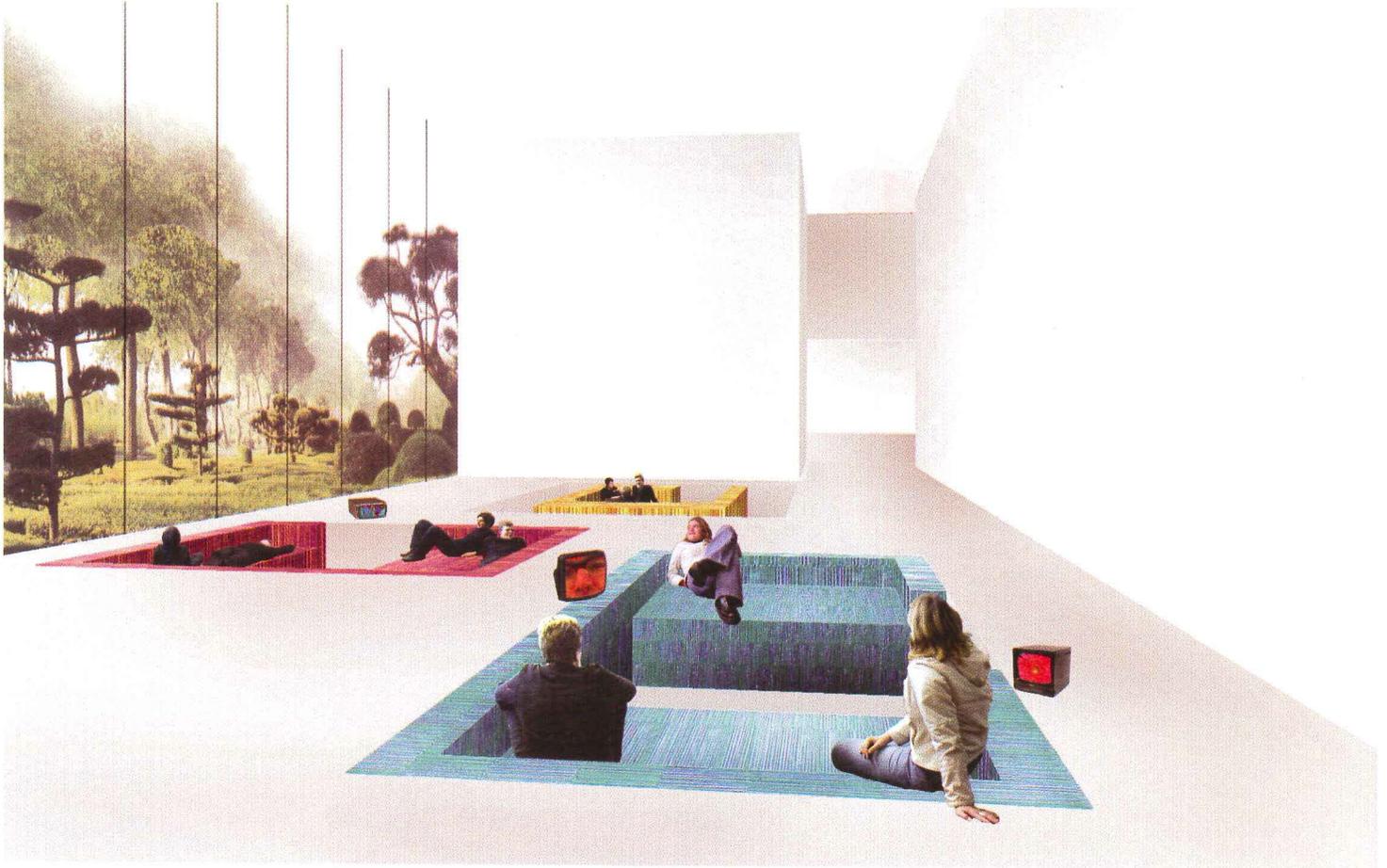
Pritzker Prize aside, Basel-based architects Herzog & de Meuron have not had an easy time of it in the United States, at least when it comes to museums. They resigned from their commission to design the University of Texas's Blanton Museum, and the de Young in San Francisco is mired in community approval processes. But with the commission for the \$90 million expansion of the Walker Art

Center in Minneapolis, it seems their luck has changed. Principal Christine Binswanger speaks enthusiastically about the Walker: "We don't know of any other institution like it, and we're fascinated with their programming. It is also so accessible: There are throngs of teenagers in the galleries and groups of 70-year-olds watching Matthew Barney's *Cremaster 4*"—an art film that takes its name from the muscle that controls the retraction of a man's testicles.

The things that make the Walker exciting to Binswanger—its programming and relationship to its public—seem to have also been the driving forces behind the firm's design for the expansion. The addition, which is scheduled to break ground in 2003, consists of a block that picks up on the height of the original 1971

Edward Larrabee Barnes building; a lower glazed rectangle links the two. Within the new block are a 300-seat performance studio and small galleries for video art, and the glazed enclosure contains galleries flanked by garden lounges. These lounges comprise a large and informal public space that is central to the Walker's goal of adding to its already impressive record of presenting the new (and potentially difficult) in an accessible way.

The façade also adopts this visitor-friendly approach, abandoning the brick reserve of the Barnes building. The folded skin of the performance studio is punctured here and there so that the lighting of the event underway leaks outside and animates the façade. A surprising sight? Not, apparently, for septuagenarian Matthew Barney fans. *Anne Guiney*

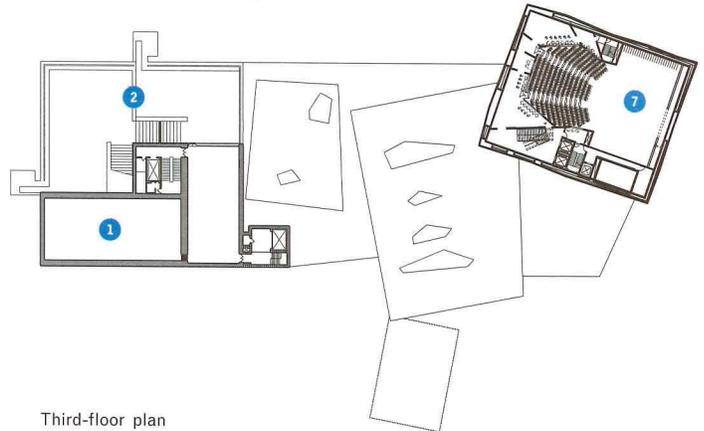


View of a lounge

- 1 existing gallery
- 2 outdoor terrace
- 3 new gallery
- 4 lounge
- 5 outdoor gallery
- 6 shop
- 7 performance studio
- 8 existing auditorium



First-floor plan | 48' <



Third-floor plan



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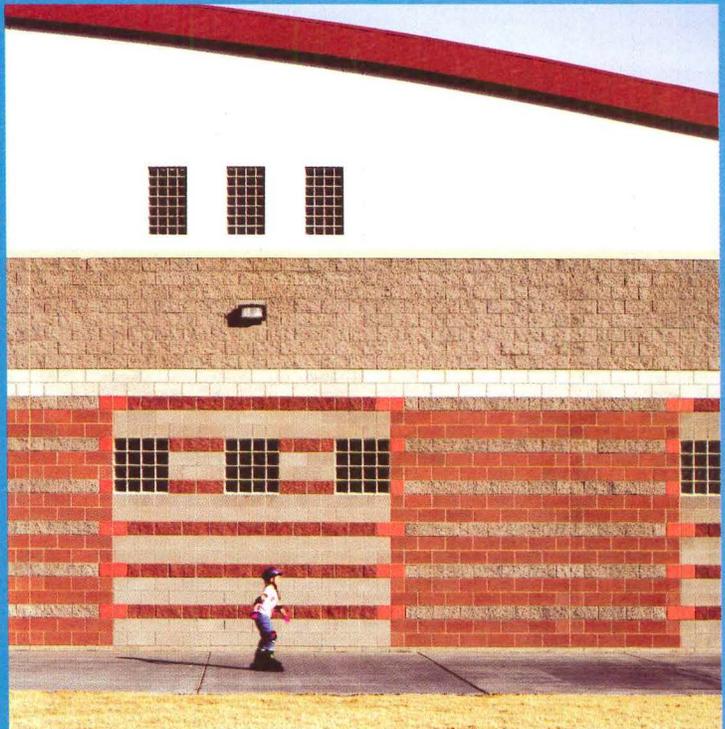
# practice

“Widely used in Europe, green roofs battle not only urban heat islands, but storm run-off...and smog as well.”

**Green, page 54**

“As Martin was finishing the working drawings, AK Steel approached him and his clients with a futuristic plan.”

**Technology, page 57**



## Quick, Build Us A School

With the child population growing, school boards everywhere are scrambling to build new facilities. **Bradford McKee** compares different approaches in Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

**Education** The term “fastest growing school district” (FGSD) has become a familiar trope across much of the U.S. Every other school district, it seems, bills itself as the FGSD of, say, Pennsylvania (Central Bucks School District), or the FGSD of the Spokane area (East Valley), or the FGSD of Monroe County, New York (Webster Central), or the “fourth-fastest growing” of nine school districts around El Paso (Clint Independent).

Beneath these superlative claims lies a real panic. There are more kids to teach than ever—47 million in public schools in 2000—and not enough schools in which to do it. School construction has ratcheted up

Façade of Foothill High School (above), based on a building prototype by Tate Snyder Kimsey, commissioned and widely replicated by the Clark County School District.

to a new historic peak, too: About \$21 billion worth of school projects wrapped up in 2000, according to *School Planning and Management* magazine, and another \$20 billion worth breaks ground this year.

"All these school districts are growing, but they all have different issues," explains Thomas Kube, executive director of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), in Scottsdale, Arizona. It's hard for school officials to decide what to do first: Should they expand the jam-packed grade schools, or get a head start in supplementing the high schools they'll eventually fill? With limited budgets, should they try to provide new learning media, or focus on traditional athletic programs, or both? Older communities are adding on to overcrowded buildings. Newer communities are having to assemble entire school districts from scratch.

Every growing school district needs a construction strategy if it hopes to satisfy demand for new classroom seats in a graceful fashion. Out of the 10 districts nationwide with the largest recent increases in enrollment, two—the Clark County School District in Las Vegas and the Los Angeles Unified School District—are taking extraordinary (and very different) measures to expand capacity.

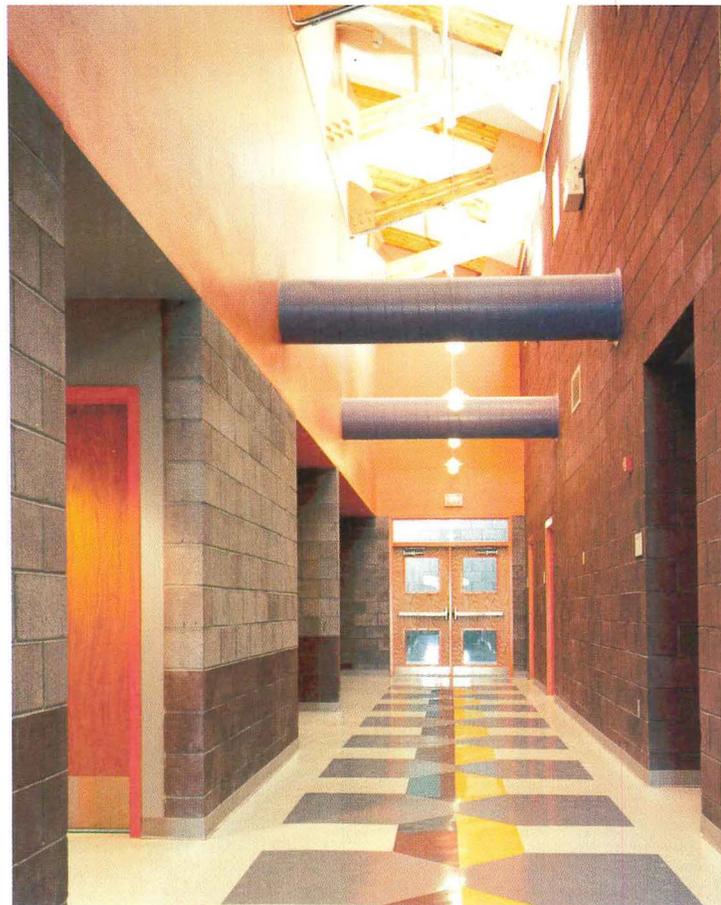
Clark County needs schools so badly that the district has adopted prototyping: It commissions a few local firms to develop standardized designs for elementary, middle, and high schools that can be built almost anywhere in the district's large area. The Los Angeles Unified School District, meanwhile, has begun an ambitious campaign to hire many of Southern California's top design firms to elevate the profile of its public school facilities. The aims—and budgetary constraints—of these two districts are similar, but their approaches differ in critical ways that will affect the architecture of the schools and, consequently, the lives of the students who attend them.

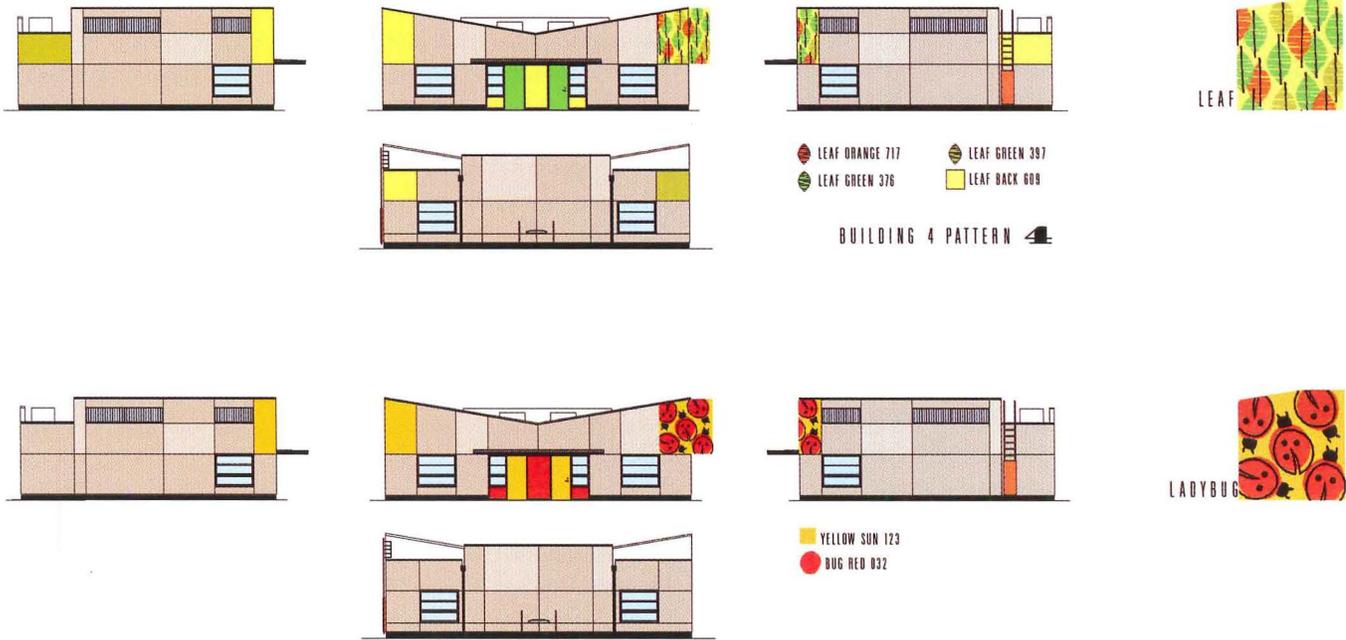
In the economic development department, Las Vegas has experienced too much of a good thing over the past decade, and, to paraphrase Mae West, it has not always been wonderful. Between 1990 and 2000, the enrollment population in Clark County schools has more than doubled (to 231,000) and this year the district will gain 1,300 students. Clark County has built 116 new schools since 1989, and will continue to open 12 schools a year for the next six years.

The funding for new schools comes from a series of bonds that will ultimately generate about \$4 billion. "The funding model is neat,"



**Clark County School District** The Tate Snyder Kimsey prototype incorporates a series of standardized conditions, such as the entrance to Foothill High School (below), Foothill's central courtyard (above), and daylit hallways, like the one at Horizon High School (right).





**Los Angeles Unified School District** Facing tight district deadlines and budgets in creating two kindergartens (the 3rd & Benton (above) and the 7th & Grandview Primary Centers), Rios Associates took what creative liberties they could with an otherwise bare-bones design. They created a graphic system that could be painted on the grounds and buildings of the compound to help clarify navigation for students.

says Fred Smith, construction manager for the Clark County School District. “If growth and higher valuations continue, it automatically generates money for new schools. If growth slows down, so does expansion of the schools.”

Every four years since 1988, the district’s planning staff gets a listing of every architect eligible to practice in Nevada from the state architecture board. (Nevada has no interstate reciprocity in architectural practice. Only firms registered with the state board may practice in the state.) The district invites those firms to participate in its screening process. Those that meet minimum requirements are granted interviews, and school officials decide what types of projects suit the architects, who are then assigned groups of designs to complete. Generally, the district planners revisit their choices every four years, but seem to prefer to work long-term with a few specific firms. There has been little variation among participating firms over the past decade.

The pool of firms currently working on Clark County schools is small. Tate Snyder Kimsey has designed the district’s high schools based on a prototype it first devised in 1989. Welles Pugsley Architects designs middle schools based on its prototype, and JMA Architecture Studios works on prototypical elementary schools, as does the firm of Domingo Cambeiro.

“I think there are difficulties with prototypes,” offers Tate Snyder Kimsey principal J. Windom Kimsey. “It’s monetarily prudent, but design-wise, it’s tough.” The standardized high school design, of which his firm has built 16 copies, he explains, doesn’t allow for a simpatico relationship to the neighborhood, or optimum orientation to daylight. And like Southwest Airlines, which flies only one type of aircraft to limit the number of spare parts the company needs for its fleets, the Clark County school officials have tried to standardize every possible element of its buildings—right down to paint colors.

“There are ex-Air Force guys on the facilities side, and, I can tell you, they are driven by efficiency and cost,” observes Kimsey. “Every time they come back to us, they just want to make it cheaper, and you can only get so much blood from a stone.” The school district sticks to a traditional design-bid-build methodology and tries to use the same contractor, having failed at experiments with others.

Kube, of the CEFPI, says that from his vantage point, the use of prototypes is “not terribly common” nationwide. But Clark County is right on track with a national trend toward multipurpose public school facilities: The buildings and grounds can be used after normal school hours, which makes space available for a variety of community purposes—from library research to shooting hoops—and gives taxpayers better value for their money. Tate Snyder Kimsey has completed six high school campuses that combine community-college program space for evening uses.

The designs of the elementary, middle, and high schools in Clark County all show the pressures of the budget. They tend to include token flourishes like gables and arches hurriedly executed to provide some semblance of “schoolness” in these mass-produced facilities.



### Technology

#### Unbreakable

As architects create increasingly organic shapes, perhaps it's natural that the construction material of the future may be a new form of the most fundamental building block of life: carbon, specifically, the microscopic threads known as carbon nanotubes.

When carbon atoms are linked in a hexagonal pattern like chicken wire, they form strong, flexible flakes of graphite. These flakes can be bonded with epoxy to make things like lightweight bicycles and hockey sticks. But that expensive composite is ultimately just glued together, and graphite sheets have a chemically reactive edge that can tear like frayed paper.

Dr. Richard Smalley is a Rice University chemist who shared the 1996 Nobel Prize for pioneering work in creating tiny spheres of carbon atoms nicknamed "Buckyballs," after geodesic

pioneer Buckminster Fuller. Smalley has since discovered a secret catalyst that forces those spheres to form edge-less tubes, consisting of a single molecule that can be grown to incredible, perhaps infinite lengths. The resulting carbon nanotube is a flexible material 100 times stronger by weight than steel. Smalley calls nanotubes "the strongest, meanest damn thing going."

Bulk manufacturing of nanotubes is a decade away according to Smalley, who founded Carbon Nanotechnologies in the hope that he'll be the first to master it. Meanwhile, Smalley dreams of various forms the molecules might take, like flat carbon wafers two atoms thick that could be stacked into ultrastrong beams and load-bearing walls. One wrinkle to work out: Nanotubes' structural integrity is compromised at 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. "Oxidation is the Achilles' heel of carbon," Smalley says.

Architect Antoine Predock, who designed Rice University's Center for Nanoscale Science and Technology, was inspired by Smalley's vision. Nanotubes could form "gossamer structures that open up spatial realms far beyond anything we could imagine," he says. "Blobs would seem heavy-handed by comparison. Nanoscale structures would be like clouds." *Erik Baard*

A second-generation high school prototype, Kimsey says, attempts to incorporate more ample daylighting, but the building would only be able to sit on an east-west axis, which limits site possibilities in an area where suitable 40-acre sites are scarce.

A shortage of available land is also forcing Welles-Pugsley to begin stacking its middle schools in two-story configurations. "Typical 20-acre sites are less available than they used to be," says project architect Wade Simpson. "Plus, we're built to the fringes in Las Vegas and need to do more infill, so we need to reduce the footprint [of the prototype]."

As unlovable as prototypes can be, Kimsey and other of Clark County's architects concede that it's hard to fault the district for wanting to deliver desperately needed facilities at the promised hour. "The community," says Kimsey, "jumps on the district hard if they don't get the schools open on time."

Compared with the cookie-cutter simplicity of the Clark County school-building strategy, officials of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), with more than 600,000 kids to serve, almost seem to be intentionally complicating matters for themselves. They are not sim-

**"Every time they come back to us, they just want to make it cheaper, and you can only get so much blood from a stone," says Kimsey.**

ply building each of 165 new projects from individually commissioned designs, but hiring design-conscious architects—Rios Associates, StudioWorks, Steven Ehrlich, and Perkins & Will among them—to supply something that surpasses the level of the merely functional. These architects must include certain standard elements—classrooms, lockers, etc.—but are given the freedom to configure each design differently.

"I'm so glad we got all these designers," says Kathi Littmann, director of school-building planning for the LAUSD and, as many call her, godmother of the district's design strategy. "When you see them one at a time, you think, this one's really good, that's awesome. But when you put together 90 of them in a room at once, it's overwhelming." Littmann previously worked as a project manager for Jones Lang LaSalle, a development firm. When she arrived at her new job with the school district a little less than two years ago, the district had \$2.4 billion in funding (the money comes variously from bond proceeds, state grants, and a special fund to reduce classroom crowding) but no sites.

Affordable land is extremely scarce in the Los Angeles region, especially in the denser neighborhoods where schools are most in demand. California's department of education prefers, for instance, that high schools sit on 40-acre sites, but the LAUSD has had to have those requirements waived in many cases, because it is lucky to find a 15-acre site that is available and cheap.

One solution to land and budget strictures has been to rethink the programmatic needs of each school, says *continued on page 112*

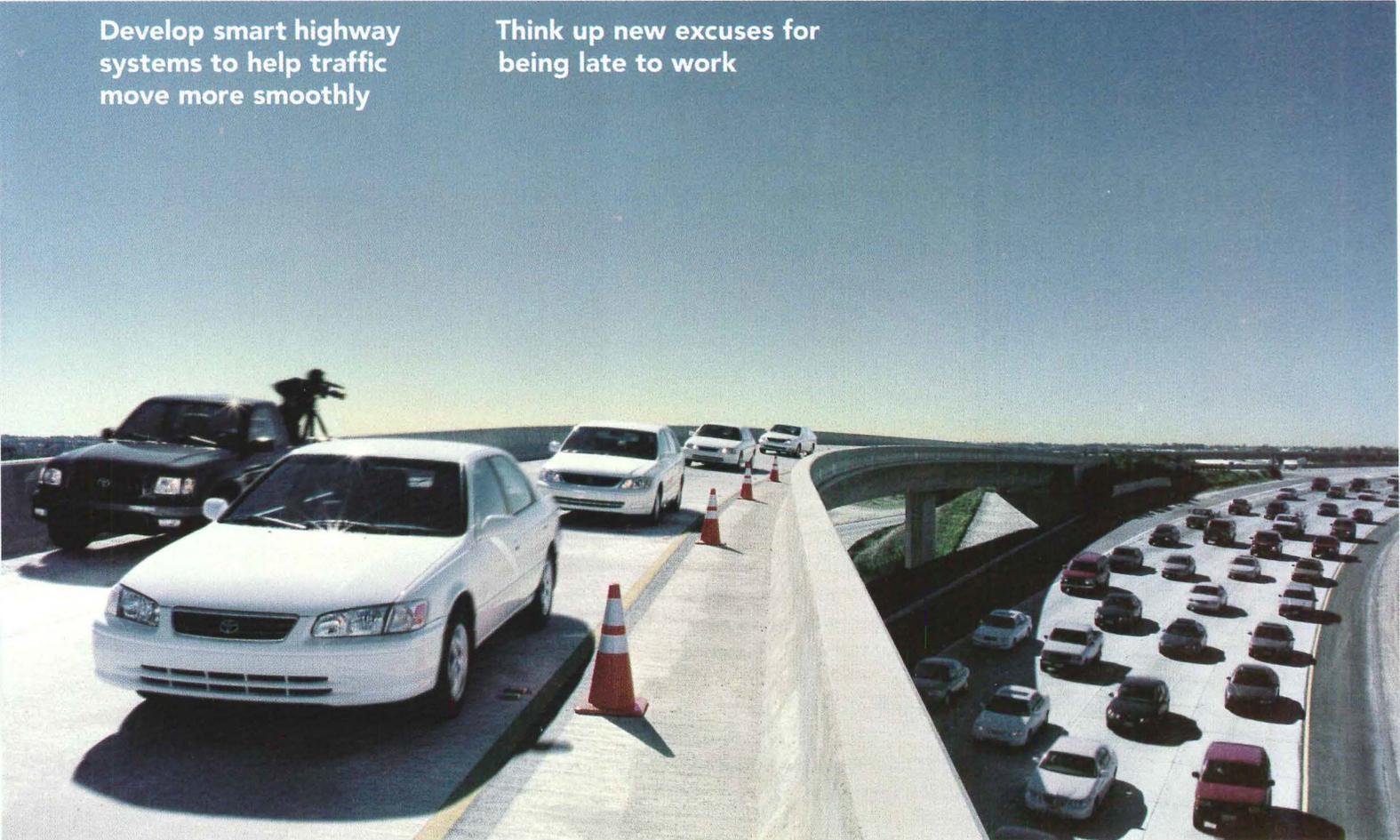
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# Rooftop Oasis

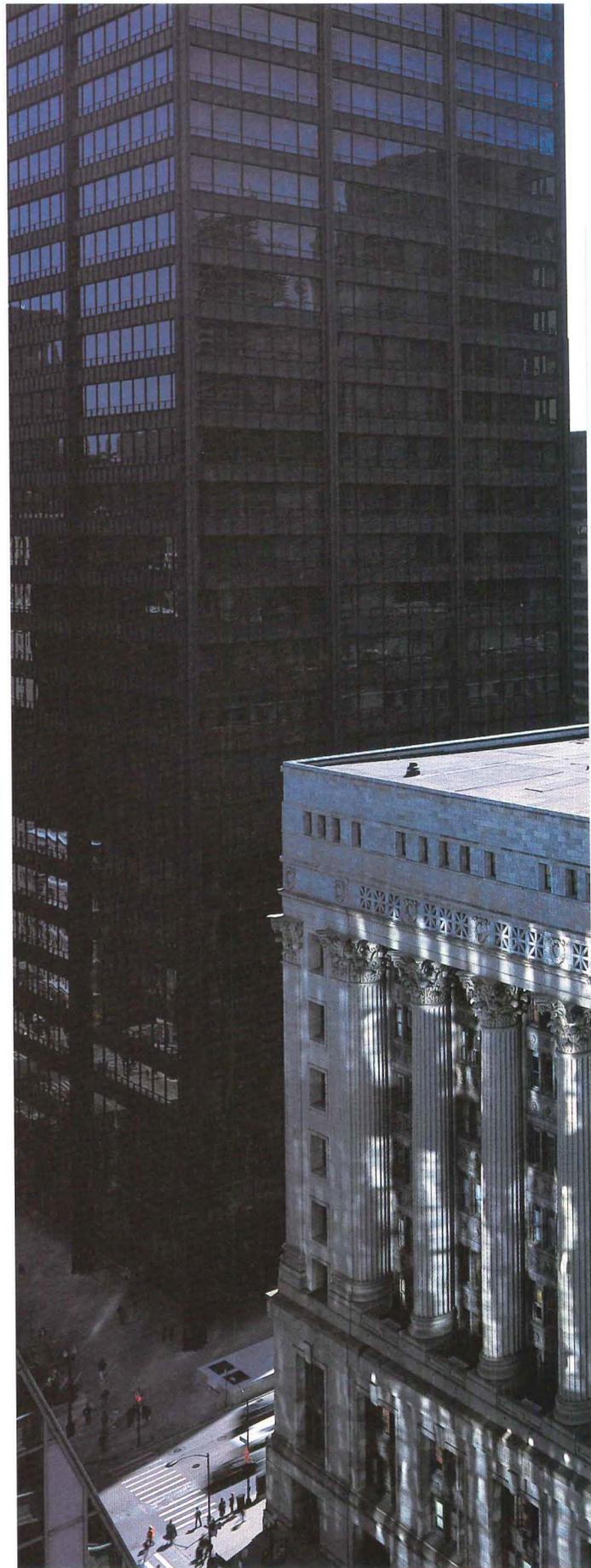
Green roofs can reduce pollution, lower temperatures, and make the urban landscape beautiful. **Alan G. Brake** finds them growing above the nation's cities.

**Green** In cities, buildings and pavement trap and retain summer heat, creating an ugly problem with an ugly name: urban heat islands (January 1999, page 134). "The combined effects of global warming and the urban heat island effect are creating an unlivable city," says Leslie Hoffman, executive director of the Earth Pledge Foundation, a New York City-based nonprofit organization that promotes sustainable development. With increasingly hot summers and national energy rate hikes on the way, one weapon in the battle against the effect is the green roof, a layer of grasses or succulents grown over a root barrier and watertight membrane. Green roofs are sprouting up across the country. In probably the most high-profile project in the U.S., the city of Chicago is growing grass—and a couple of trees—on the roof of its City Hall (right).

Widely used in Europe, green roofs battle not only urban heat islands, but storm run-off (by retaining and slowly releasing rainwater) and smog as well. They also provide tremendous energy savings by retaining up to 25 percent of the building's heat in winter, and reducing heat absorption in summer by up to 50 percent.

Unlike traditional roof gardens, which require maintenance and structural support for heavy soil loads, many of these green roofs require as little as 2 inches of soil. Five inches of soil can eliminate the need for air-conditioning in some climates. When they retrofitted Chicago's City Hall, Charlottesville, Virginia-based architects McDonough + Partners analyzed the existing structure of the building, then placed trees over its structural columns and created hills and swells by building up the structural surface of the roof instead of making soil mounds. But initial costs are a factor. According to HOK Architects' green-roof expert Katrin Scholz-Barth, the novelty of green-roof technology in this country means materials and installation cost up to \$15 to \$20 per square foot. With wider application she believes costs could be brought down to \$8 to \$10.

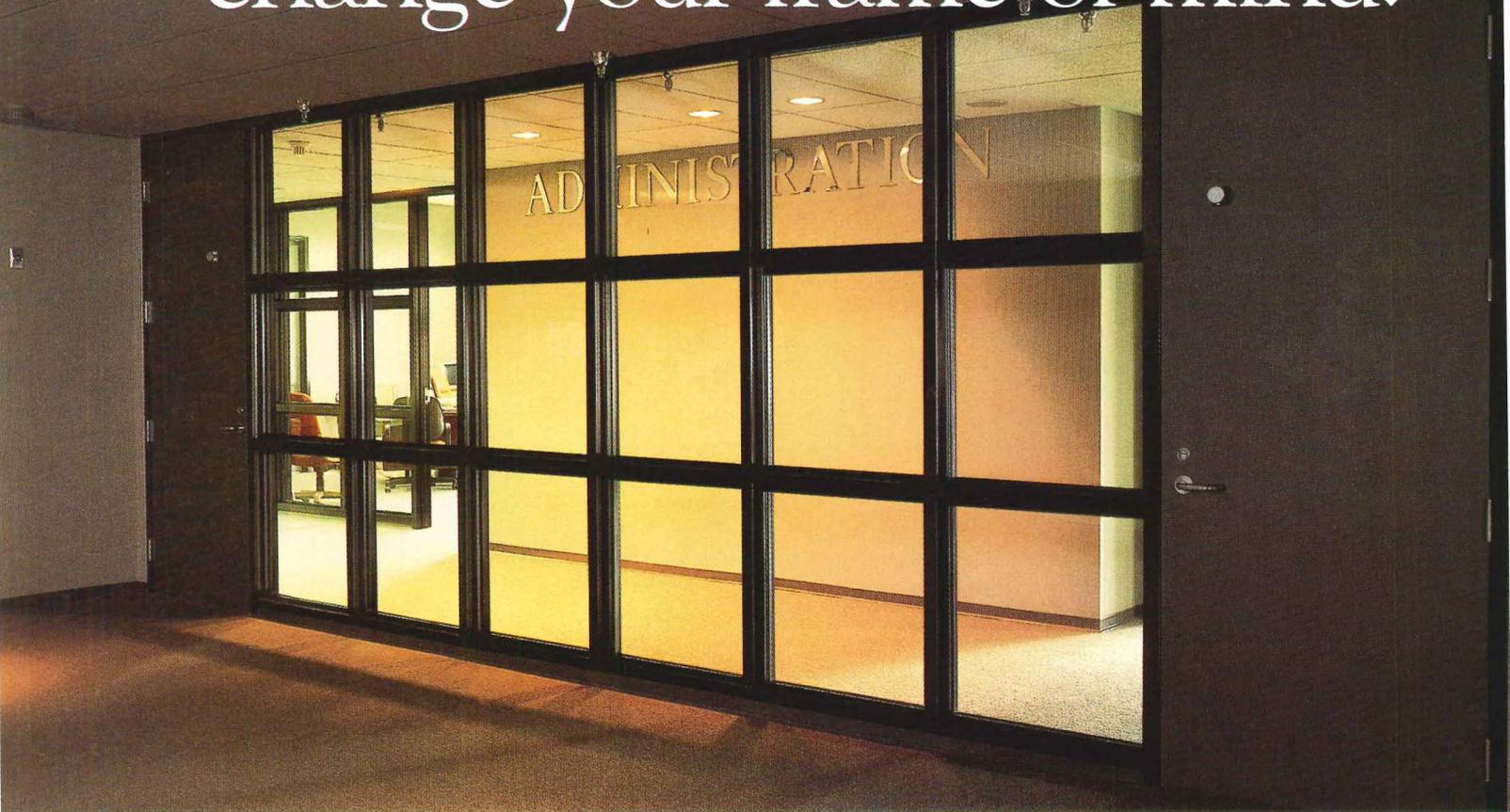
Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, after visiting Germany, "urged us to raise the profile of green roofs by putting one on City Hall," says Chicago Department of the Environment Commissioner William Abolt. As part of Chicago's "urban heat island initiative," the temperature of four more green-roofed buildings will be monitored by the EPA against that of neighboring conventionally roofed buildings. ■



Photograph: Douglas Fogelson



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# Steel This House

A steel manufacturer is turning a Los Angeles home into a living laboratory to test a new germ-fighting metal. **Purcell Carson** takes a look.

**Technology** The fantasy home of the future has always been clean. From the uncluttered lines of modernist utopias to science fiction's self-washing houses, visionary thinkers have routinely swept dirt into the past.

Now, we may be one step closer to tomorrow. A California mansion, currently under construction, promises to be the first antimicrobial home in the nation. Its particular brand of cleanliness owes credit not to a visionary designer, but rather to a corporate partnership between a giant steel manufacturer and a biotechnology firm.

The design for the house, Camino de Robles, began conventionally enough. Architect David Martin of AC Martin Partners, was hired by Edward Landry, a Los Angeles lawyer, and his wife Madeleine to create a grand hilltop residence on a site which surveys 130 acres of park land, 40 minutes from downtown Los Angeles.

As Martin was finishing the working drawings, however, Middletown, Ohio-based AK Steel, a manufacturer of carbon, stainless, and electrical steel products, approached him and his clients with a futuristic plan. They wanted to outfit parts of the house—the appliances, handrails, work surfaces, swimming pool, and HVAC system—with a high-tech, germ-fighting steel. If successful, Camino de Robles would not only rise above its natural surroundings, it would defeat nature's more pernicious flora: mold, mildew, and bacteria.

The steel's antimicrobial properties are due to a coating developed by AgION, a Boston-based biotechnology company. The coating is used to create a variety of bacteria-resistant objects, from surgical bandages to insoles for sweaty sneakers. When the coating encounters moisture, it releases silver ions that suppress more than 650 types of microbes.

AK Steel stumbled across David Martin's designs while looking for a prominent location to showcase its product, and noticed that Camino de Robles was not just glamorous, much of it was already metal. Martin initially specified conventional steel supports and a zinc roof for protection against fire and earthquakes. Furthermore, he says, his client was "a nut about the house being maintenance free," so Martin had proposed aluminum fixtures, metal trellises, and stainless appliances. Upgrading all these elements to the new steel was simple.

The California home will not only showcase a new use for the antimicrobial coating, it will be its proving ground as well. By monitoring the house, AgION and AK Steel hope to demonstrate that the coated steel



For their house, Camino de Robles, the Landrys requested that David Martin design a large kitchen that would be easy to clean. When AK Steel upgraded the materials, the couple found themselves with bacteria-fighting steel counter fronts, pot racks, window frames, door frames—even an antimicrobial ceiling.

produces a cleaner, safer environment with less required maintenance. They are particularly interested in the effect of an antimicrobial HVAC system on the building's air quality. Their findings, says Alan McCoy, vice president for public affairs at AK Steel, may prove significant in the construction of commercial high-rises, where the quality of air recirculated through ventilation systems is a great concern, and where any material which cuts cleaning costs can fetch a high price. While the company has not yet set prices, they anticipate that an antimicrobial HVAC system will cost 5 to 10 percent more than conventional systems. In the short term, the company is currently negotiating with other manufacturers to create a line of antimicrobial kitchen appliances. The steel's most marketable feature, oddly, is a cosmetic one: The brushed matte finish is resistant to fingerprints. ■

*Purcell Carson is a freelance writer living in New York.*

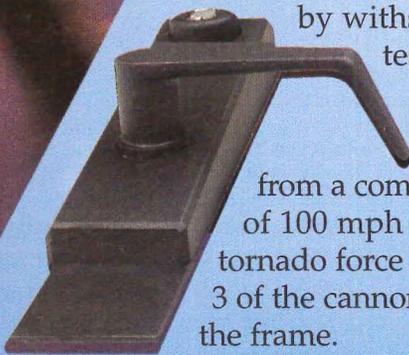
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# culture

**Lauren Wolfe**  
on *The Fat of the Land*  
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**Fred Bernstein**  
on Fresh Kills' Closing  
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**Michael Sorkin**  
on Muschamp's Record  
page 64



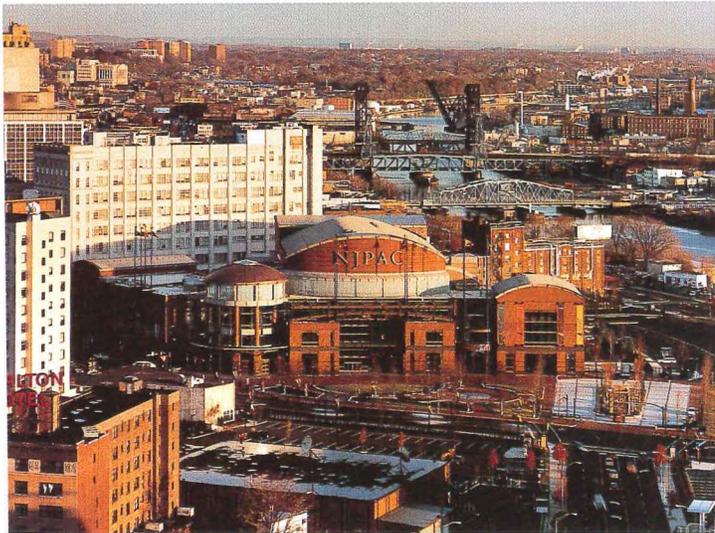
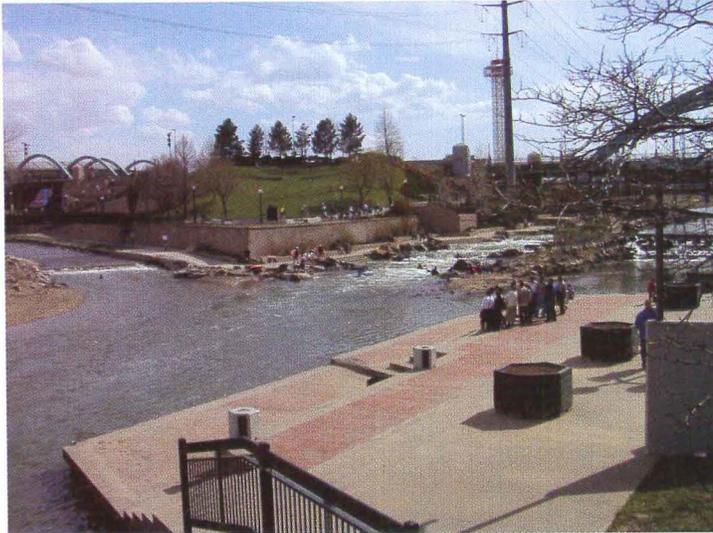
## Community Builders

A guardian angel of guardian angels, the Rudy Bruner Award honors projects that strengthen their communities. **Alex Krieger** reports.

**Kudos** The number of award programs in the architecture and design fields is impressive and growing—from the fabled Pritzker Prize, to the less publicized though hardly less prestigious Aga Kahn Awards, to the long-standing P/A Awards, to the layers and categories of chapter and national AIA awards. With few exceptions, the emphasis of most of these is to celebrate the creativity of individual talents, and to acknowledge the distinctive qualities of particular design projects.

Only infrequently do design awards highlight the processes that enable a project to come to fruition, salute the full array of its contributors, take note of the values underlying the effort, or commend the project's contributions to the community for which it was conceived. The biannual Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence is one exception. Since 1986, it has been honoring extraordinary places and place-making ventures rather than individual protagonists, assessing the impact of buildings, landscape designs, urban plans, and other public

The Village of Arts and Crafts revitalized a downtrodden neighborhood in northern Philadelphia. Community members transformed abandoned lots into sculpture gardens, such as the Guardian Angel Park (above).



interventions on their contexts. In the words of its architect-founder, Simeon Bruner, who named the award in memory of his father, its purpose is to “promote a dialogue about the nature of urban excellence.”

The 2001 Bruner gold medalist is a striking example of how grassroots efforts can be as effective as top-down, large-scale planning (if not more so) in sparking urban revitalization. The Village of Arts and Crafts grew out of an impoverished, predominantly black neighborhood in north Philadelphia—the type of neighborhood that city officials and even its own residents had long given up on. It began 15 years ago when artist Lily Yeh, armed with a \$2,500 grant, initiated a summer program to engage the local youth and turn an abandoned, junk-filled lot into a sculpture garden. Today, the Village is a vibrant nonprofit with several dozen employees and a million-dollar budget. The Village claims such accomplishments as the creation of 14 art parks built by the residents

Clockwise from top left: The South Platte River Greenway, a reclamation project that cleaned, greened, and opened up a formerly polluted stretch of Denver waterfront; Manhattan’s Lower East Side Tenement Museum, which reconstructs the immigrant experience; Swan’s Marketplace in Oakland, a blend of preservation, affordable housing, and commercial development; and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, which sparked Newark’s urban renewal.

of this 260-square-block area, the greening of over 100 vacant lots, and the renovation of six neighborhood buildings into housing and spaces for after-school programs, community festivals, and craft and music workshops. Members of the 10,000-person community decide for themselves what they need, targeting trouble spots and working together to create amenities that strengthen their bonds to one another.

The Village’s programs deftly transform deficits into resources, and are deeply responsive to immediate needs. For example, when Yeh began

working with the community's children, she learned that many of them were hungry, so she launched a vegetable garden. This led to educational workshops in agriculture, horticulture, as well as nutrition and cooking. Another of the Village's many landscape programs is a revenue-generating tree farm and plant nursery.

"This project shows it is possible to make a difference anywhere, and that sometimes smaller-scale projects can have an important impact," remarks Allan B. Jacobs, one of this year's jurors and professor of City and Regional Planning at UC Berkeley. Indeed, the program's modesty and scale—in relation to its effectiveness—are among the chief attributes that impressed the Bruner jury. (Other jurors this year were: Craig Evan Barton, architect and professor at the University of Virginia; Rosanne Haggerty, housing activist and founder of Common Ground; Gail Shibley, former assistant for Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of Labor and ex-state representative from Portland, Oregon; John F. Bok, a Boston attorney specializing in land use and historic preservation; and Wellington Webb, the mayor of Denver.)

Since its inception, the Bruner Award has explored how good urban places come into being and how they are sustained. "Good" in this context is used in its most ecumenical sense, encompassing well-founded values, sound economics, propitious collaborations, auspicious poli-

## The Bruner Award doggedly explores not only how good urban places come into being, but how they are sustained.

cies and planning, concern for context and quality of execution, and, yes, excellent architecture as well. Indeed, the Bruner Award seems determined to add "setting" and "society" to the Vitruvian trilogy of "firmness, commodity, and delight" as measures of "good" architecture. This may seem a bit ambitious, even pretentious, until one examines how the award is administered and the types of projects it has singled out over the years.

Under the careful guidance of executive director Emily Axelrod, the Bruner Award's premiating process is as distinctive as the work it honors. Bruner juries are always an admirable mix of architects, planners, community leaders, developers, plus a mayor of a major American city. After jurors narrow over a hundred entries down to five finalists, they spend several months making site visits to witness firsthand how the project actually functions—a far cry from the quick slide shows upon which most other awards are based. The prize money is comparable to that of the Pritzker, but its disbursement is also unique: \$50,000 goes to the gold medalist and \$10,000 to each of the finalists, with the proviso that the funds are somehow applied to the benefit of the project.

The Bruner Foundation gives cash awards to finalists because it considers them winners as well. Other 2001 finalists include: the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York, which is housed in a landmark five-story tenement where some 7,000 *continued on page 113*



### Bibliofile

**Fat of the Land: Garbage of New York**, by Benjamin Miller (Four Walls Eight Windows, 2001)

"It smells as horrible as if you'd lived in a dirty, old yard closet that the dirt hadn't been cleaned for a thousand years or more," a Bronx schoolgirl wrote to local health officers in 1894. It wasn't until the mid-19th century that city officials began to suspect that all those nasty smells might be the root of contagion. Back then—and ever since—New York City grappled with what to do with its trash. In *The Fat of the Land*, Benjamin Miller gives an amusing account of the battles waged over the city's sanitation strategies, revealing the intermingled histories of local politics, land use, environmentalism, urban planning, and public policy.

Various sanitation options, like reduction, land-filling, ocean dumping, and incineration, have won out for short periods of time only

to be substituted with another, for each was advantageous and contentious in its own way. For example, incineration lost its gleam with the discovery of dioxin, a man-made cancer-causing chemical, in ash; landfills elicit NIMBYism, and so on.

Every approach would have longstanding effects on the city. Miller traces the building of tunnels, a rail line, parkways, and ports as responses to waste management. There have been dubious side effects as well: The proliferation of landfills in Brooklyn and Queens was supposedly offset by the building of public amenities, like a golf course that Robert Moses believed had "all the pathetic beauty and frailty of a single rose in a dung heap."

Although a bit excessive with the loopy details of political squabbling, Miller effectively makes the point that we still don't have a solution to our solid waste problem.

Lauren Wolfe

*How the Metropolis Invites Disease and Epidemics, 1881 (above)*

# Talking Trash

At twice the size of Central Park, Fresh Kills is the nation's largest landfill. **Fred Bernstein** scans a show that marks its recent closing.

**City** In March, journalists showered the closing of Fresh Kills, the country's largest landfill and the resting place of Gotham garbage for 53 years, with elegiac prose. Now comes the hard part, in which New York City begins to lay the groundwork, literally and figuratively, for the conversion of the 2,200-acre Staten Island site into a park. One plank in the campaign to raise consciousness about the impending public project is a photo exhibition sponsored by the Municipal Art Society, currently on view at the Urban Center in Manhattan.

The tradition of making art from infrastructure is a long one—think of Margaret Bourke White at Hoover Dam and O. Winston Link at the Norfolk and Western Railroad. But Fresh Kills isn't quite ready for its close-up: "They don't want us showing too much garbage," is how Alexandra Brez, the exhibition's curator (and *Architecture's* photo editor), summarizes the society's approach to the show. But an estimated 108 million tons of Pampers, Evian bottles—and architecture magazines—isn't easy to ignore.

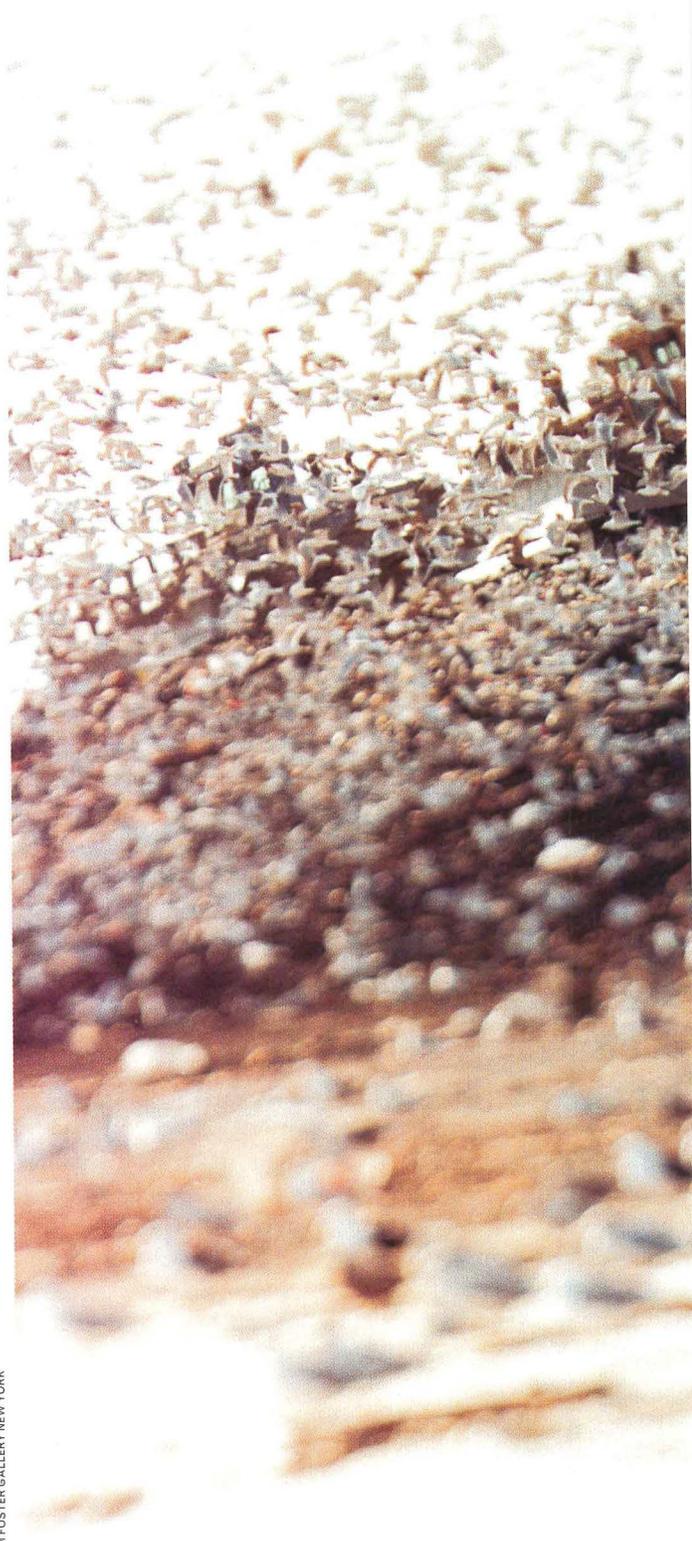
Larry Racioppo, an employee of the city's Department of Housing, Preservation, and Development and one of the five New York-based photographers selected by Brez, described a favorite shot that won't make it into the show: "It was the maw of one of those giant bulldozers, and it was oozing garbage. Really oozing." The show will instead include his touching portrait that captures the emotional content of a throwaway society: a Fresh Kills machine shop, which workers decorated with dolls they rescued from the dump. Meanwhile, Stanley Greenberg, whose series on New York City's underbelly resulted in his *Invisible New York: The Hidden Infrastructure of the City* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), photographed a ship's graveyard on the perimeter of the site.

Victoria Sambunaris, who frequently turns her lens to industrial landscapes, captured scenery that appears surprisingly unspoiled, belying the fact that garbage underlies the undulating meadows. Known for his vivid imagery of urban decay, Andrew Moore focused on the trucks and buildings peppering the site. And Susan Wides, who has been photographing Fresh Kills for years, went, Hitchcock-style, for the landfill's overstimulated birds.

Along with the exhibition, the society is sponsoring lectures, panel discussions, and a competition for proposals for Fresh Kills' future—which will hopefully yield insights into how to handle the thousands of other brownfield sites throughout the country. ■

*New York-based Fred Bernstein has degrees in law and architecture, and writes about both subjects.*

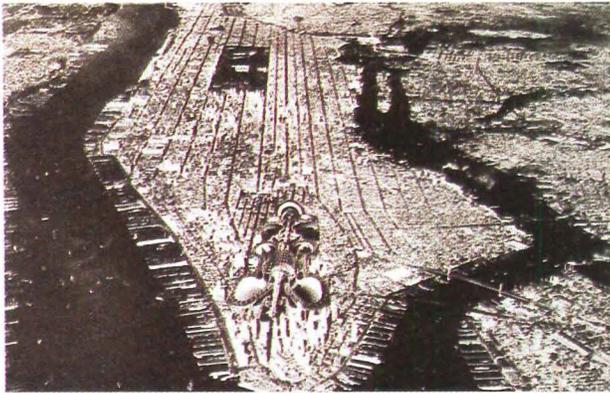
COURTESY KIM FOSTER GALLERY NEW YORK





*Fresh Kills 4* by Susan Wides, from her series *Mobile Views* (2000)

**Fresh Kills: The Photographs,**  
curated by Alexandra Brez,  
Urban Center, New York, through July 21



## Review

**Les Années Pop,** Centre Pompidou, Paris, through June 28. Catalogue through Editions du Centre Pompidou.

Open any magazine, browse through most design books, visit any exhibition, and you will find a celebration and rebirth of the 1960s. Why? Because after a period of minimalism, there is, at last, a return of the spirit of experimentation and innovation. The snowball effect has resulted in *Les Années Pop*, a major museum-wide exhibition at the Centre Pompidou—the supreme expression of the pop zeitgeist in architecture.

The exhibition, sponsored by Gucci, is one big pop party, showcasing the high-pop classics, like works by Richard Hamilton, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, and Roy Lichtenstein. The show also offers insights into the postwar context that gave rise to these works, including ephemera from popular consumer culture (such as film clips from the inane *Howdy*

*Doody Show*, and General Motors advertisements).

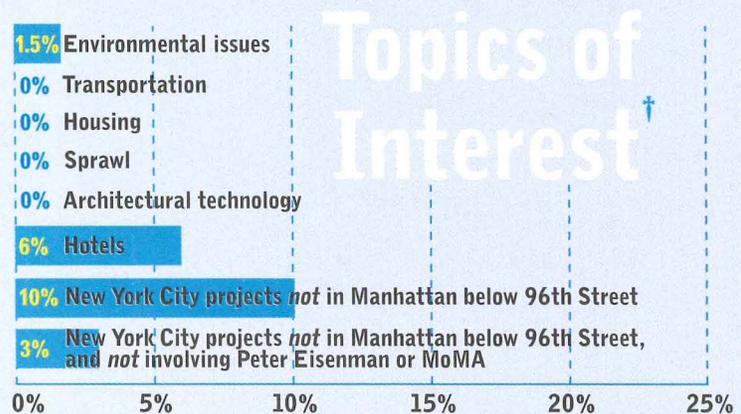
The scene-stealer is the architecture section. Curated by Chantal Béret, it shows work one would expect to see: by Archigram, Hans Hollein (above), Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Yona Friedman, the Metabolists, Cedric Price, Superstudio, Walter Pichler, Coop Himmelblau. It also manages to unearth some unknown material—a 1962 drawing by Hollein entitled *Beach House* that even he didn't remember making; a movie of Robert and Alison Smithson's 1956 *House of the Future*; and projects by the only major woman architect of the 1960s (now forgotten), the Viennese Angela Hareiter.

Pop design was about much more than euphoria and style, contrary to what its recent resurrections imply. Béret's catalogue essay provides an excellent cultural, social, and political overview of the period, stressing the restless milieu and critical component of pop. *Liane Lefavre*

## Trend-spotting

# Herb's Content

Does *The New York Times* architecture critic Herbert Muschamp keep writing about the same things? **Michael Sorkin** crunches the numbers.



**Longest consecutive run of a single name:**

**Rem Koolhaas, 9 out of 11 articles**

**Most mentions of a single name in an article about a subject other than the person mentioned: 6, Rem Koolhaas**

**Most Hollywood references in a single article: 12**

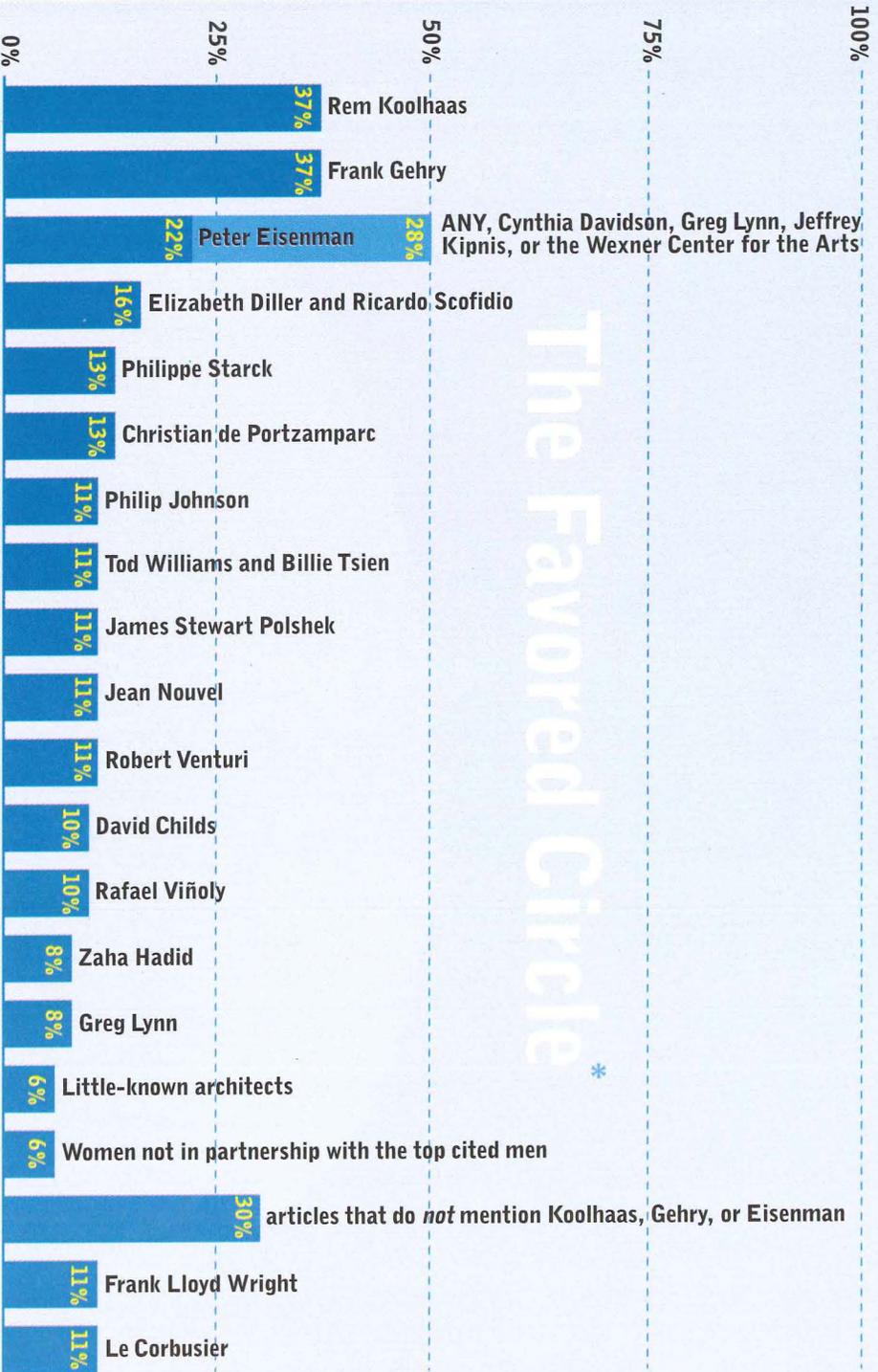
(Chateau Marmont, Pedro Almodovar, King Pleasure, Alfred Hitchcock, *That Touch of Mink*, *The Best of Everything*, *Rear Window*, *West Side Story*, Grace Kelly, Jimmy Stewart, film sprockets, and film noir; in a story about a hotel by Jean Nouvel)

**Number of paragraphs required to deploy the above references: 5**

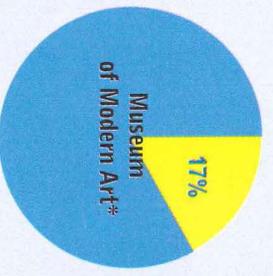
**Favorite non-American architectural nationality: French**

**Second-favorite non-American architectural nationality: Dutch**

*Michael Sorkin is a New York-based architect, educator, and critic.*



# The Favored Circle \*



# Recurring Themes

\*Percentage of articles that mention subject at least once †Percentage of articles about subject  
Data calculated from articles written by Herbert Muschamp for *The New York Times* from January 2, 2000 to April 11, 2001, totaling 63 (including news items and obituaries)

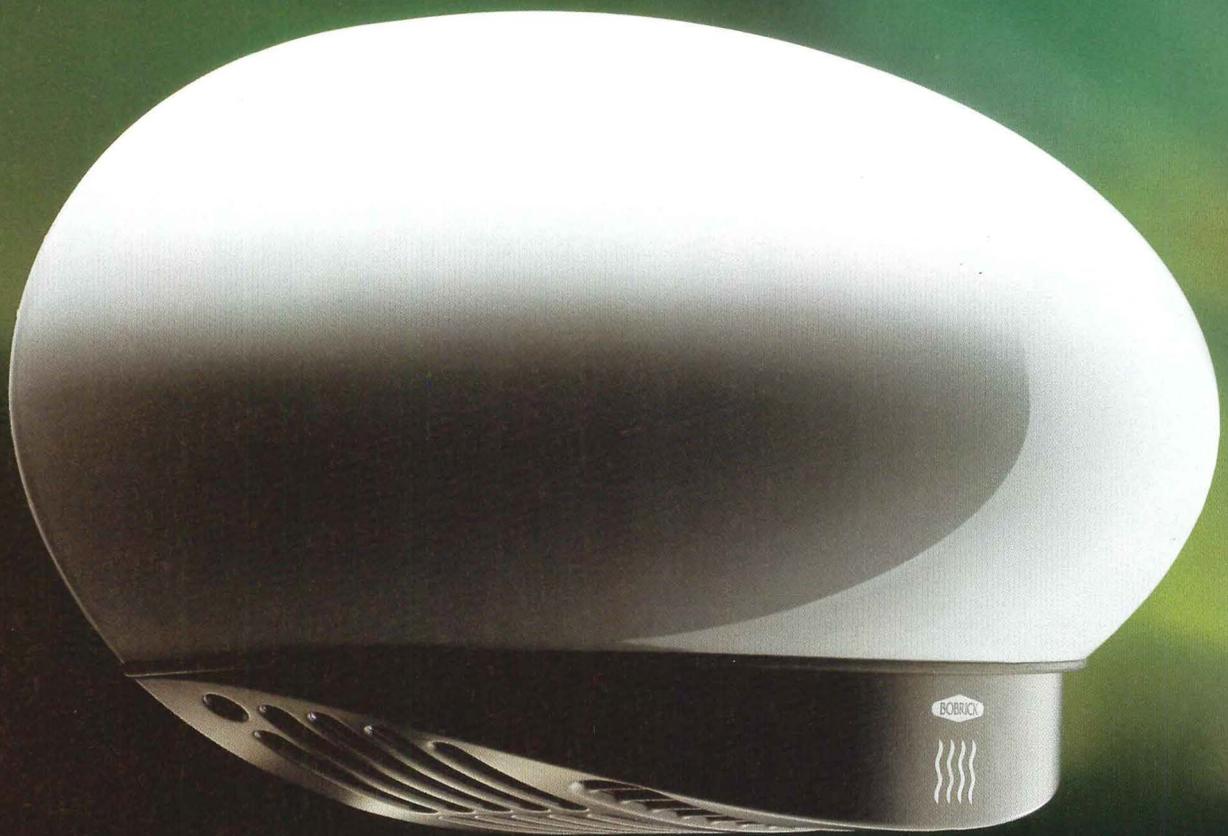
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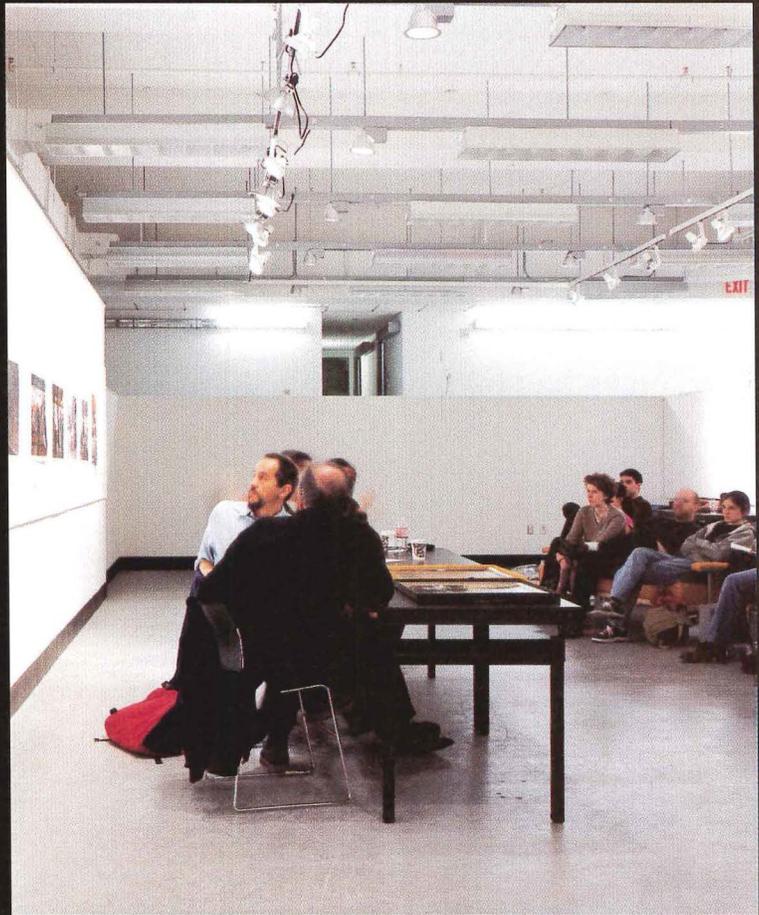
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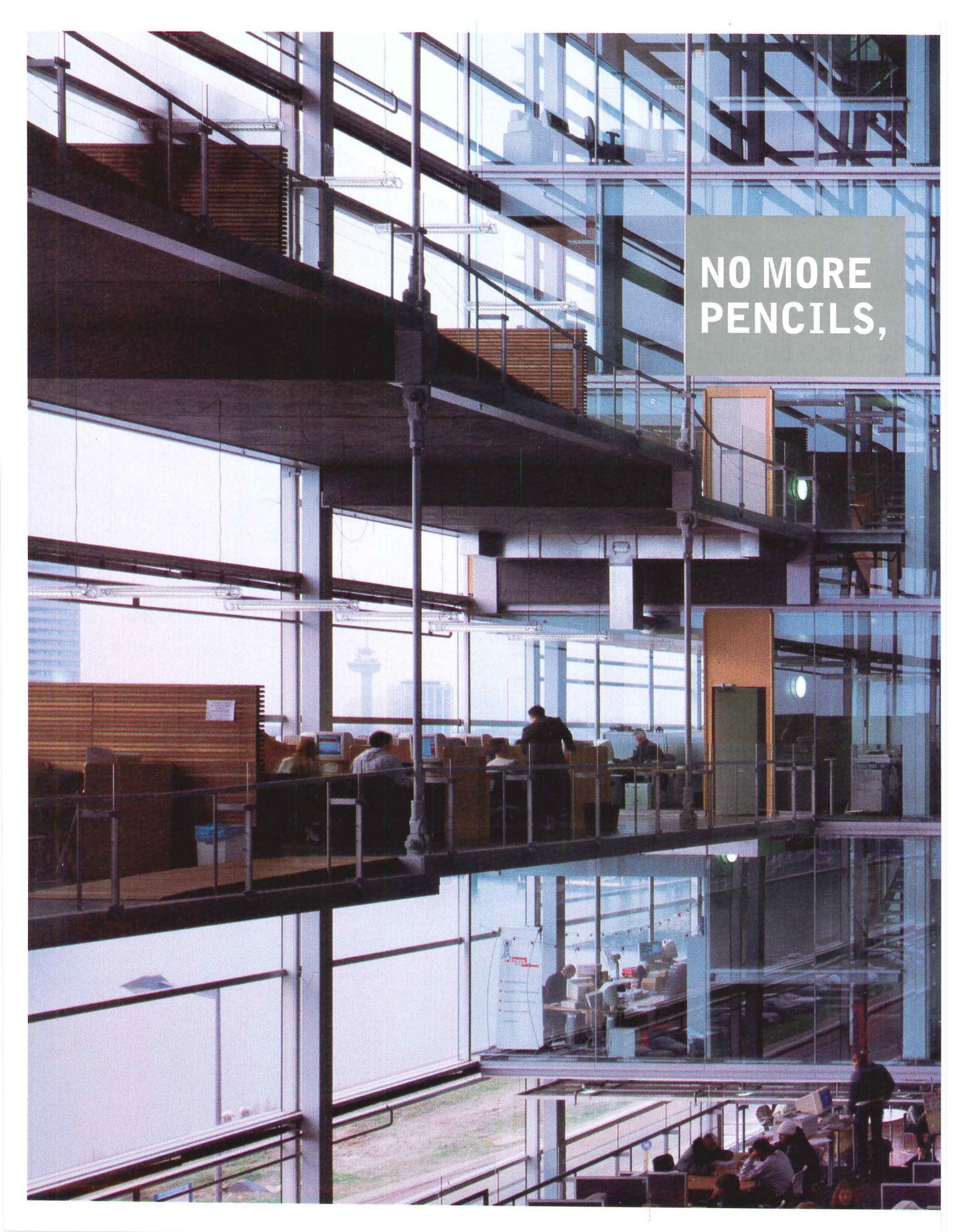
## You call this architecture?

If every new building looked like the ones in *Architecture*, then the built world would consist almost exclusively of glass, steel, and concrete buildings, some boxy, others curvy, and all of them smart and modern in style. Erick van Egeraat's Ichthus College in Rotterdam (page 68) is a good example of the type; so is Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's International Terminal at the San Francisco airport (page 74).

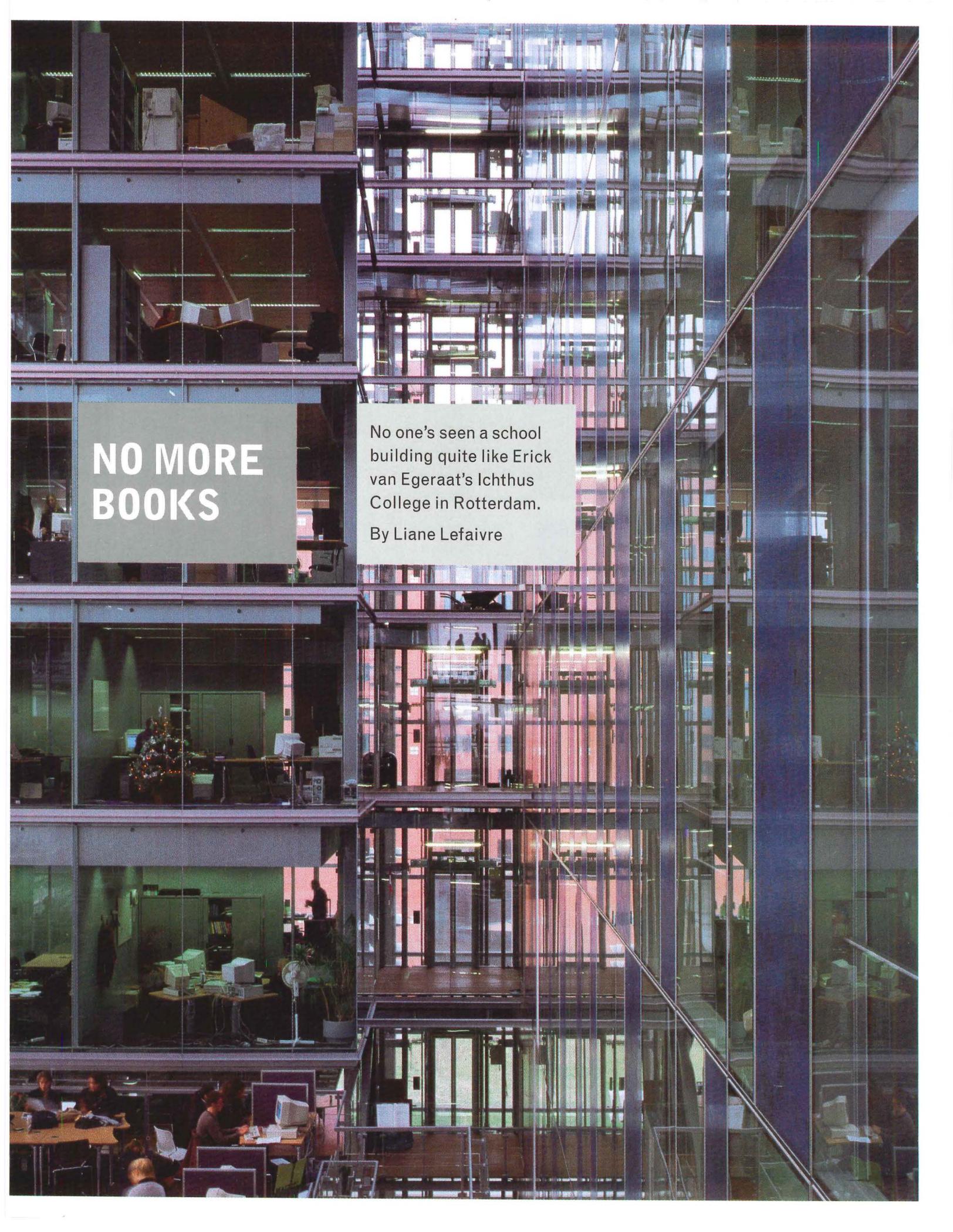
Of course, architecture comes in all shapes and sizes, and in the past 15 months the *Architecture* staff has composed a succession of themed issues—like our January 2001 review of the General Services Administration's Design Excellence Program—intended to more accurately demonstrate the stylistic eclecticism of our time as well as the political, cultural, and social systems that determine how buildings get made. With this issue, *Architecture* departs from monthly themes (they're not going away entirely, but will appear periodically during the course of the year) in favor of an unrelated, but considered, mix of stories. The magazine's commitment to a more complex and, dare we say, contradictory understanding of architecture remains unchanged.

Our cover story this month is therefore especially appropriate: Deborah Berke, the architect of the Yale University School of Art and New Theater, challenges the very image architects have of themselves—the *Fountainhead* fantasy of aesthetic rectitude. She designed the project with an intentional formal reticence that some architects may not recognize as architecture. But then that's exactly Berke's point: Architecture doesn't have to be heroic. Not everyone will agree with her, and that's our point. The debate itself is as valuable as the outcome.

Yale photography faculty review student projects in Deborah Berke's School of Art and New Theater, in a plainspoken meeting room (above) formed out of a former indoor pool.

A photograph of a modern, multi-level office building with a glass facade. The building features several floors with balconies and walkways, some with wooden slat railings. People are visible working at desks on different levels. A prominent tower is visible in the background through the glass. The text "NO MORE PENCILS," is overlaid in a white box on the right side of the image.

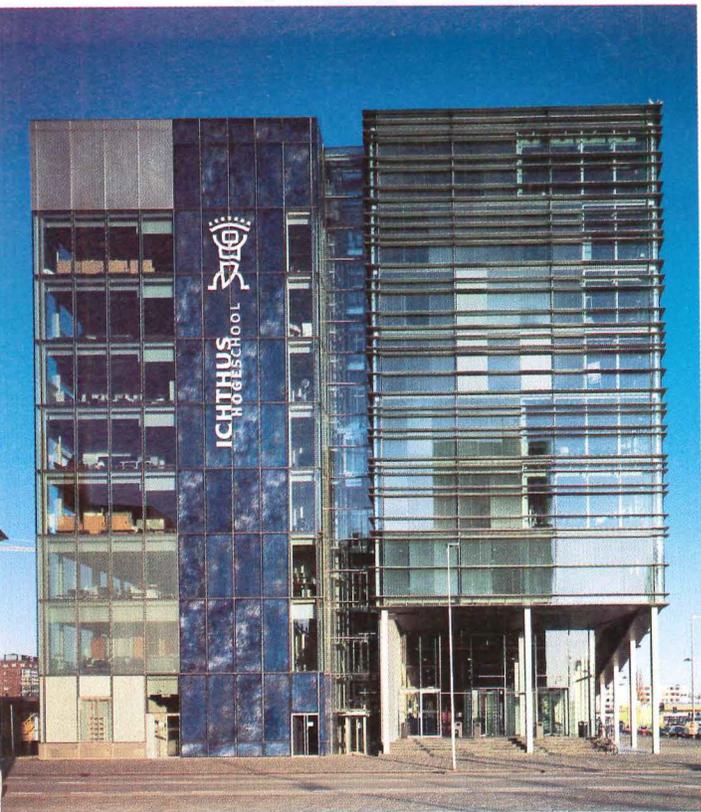
**NO MORE  
PENCILS,**



# NO MORE BOOKS

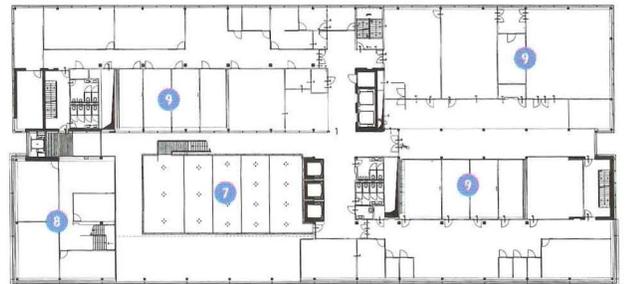
No one's seen a school building quite like Erick van Egeraat's Ichthus College in Rotterdam.

By Liane Lefaiivre

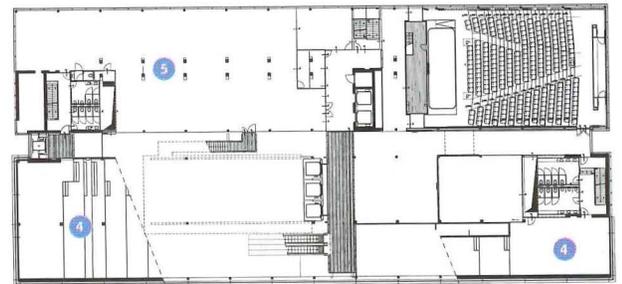


The heart of Erick van Egeraat's new Ichthus College in Rotterdam (preceding spread) is a glassy atrium lined with informal work spaces, offices, and classrooms. A glazed corridor splits the building in two (top), separating administrative offices and larger classrooms at the rear of the building from the more public spaces along the glazed façade facing the harbor (above). The aluminum fins that cover the glass façade are primarily decorative, increasing in density over smaller office spaces and decreasing as they pass over the central atrium. The curved underbelly along the front façade (facing page) accommodates small stepped seating areas for a restaurant.

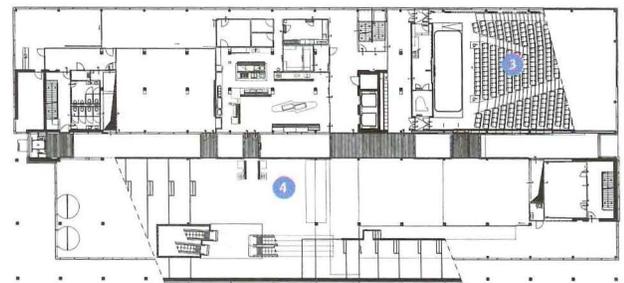
- 1 entrance hall
- 2 retail
- 3 auditorium
- 4 restaurant
- 5 multimedia center
- 6 support rooms
- 7 study area
- 8 administration
- 9 classrooms



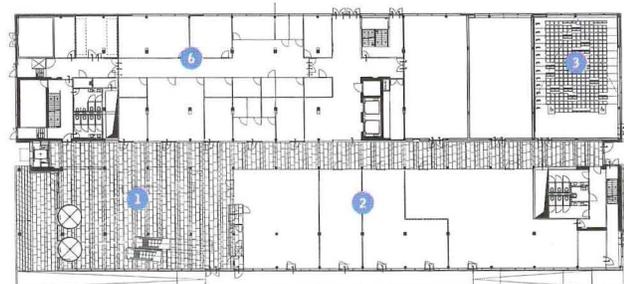
Fourth-floor plan



Third-floor plan



Second-floor plan



Ground-floor plan 131' N

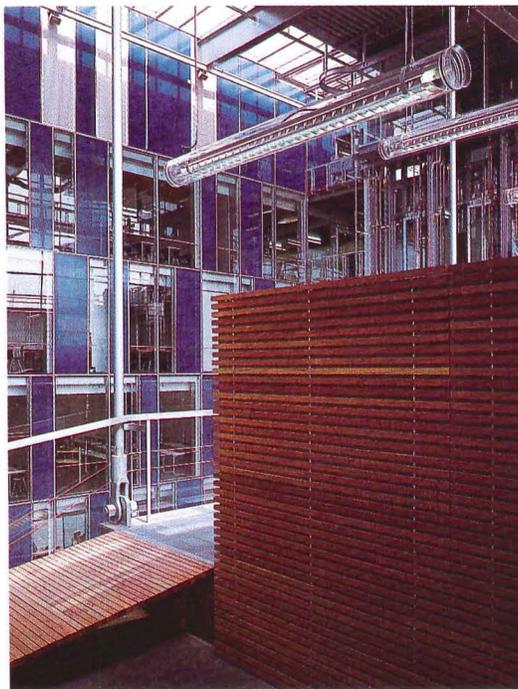


The 19th-century harbor of Rotterdam is among the most historically charged, romantic, and paleo-technic landscapes of Europe, covered with massive derelict warehouses and rusting hulks of transatlantic cargo ships. In the past decade, the once-decayed area has been the subject of an urban renewal scheme. A handful of large-scale projects has gone up recently: one by Renzo Piano, one by Norman Foster, and many nondescript buildings as well. Whatever their particular qualities, what they share is an obliviousness to their waterfront context; they turn their backs to the view.

In sharp contrast to these neighbors stands the Ichthus College, a new business-oriented

high school designed by Erick van Egeraat Associated Architects (EEA). In its dirty realist way, the building just can't seem to get enough of the harbor. The firm has made the school into a gigantic viewing machine—a big glazed box full of mini-glazed boxes that serve as offices and classrooms—with a huge atrium in the center. No matter where you are in the 215,000-square-foot building, you have a commanding view of the harbor, and there is plenty of natural light everywhere. This also means that people outside see what's going on in every nook and cranny inside; it's the centuries-old Dutch cult of transparency blown up to industrial scale.

While it may not look like a typical school, Ichthus fits the progressive brief of the Ministry of Education. The ministry wanted a building for a business school with an innovative curriculum, one that would encourage collaborative projects through the formation of groups of students, or “companies,” that have to compete with others in a simulated marketplace. EEA translated this concept into a plan that accommodates both traditional classrooms and a proliferation of meeting places. Most activities are centered in these less formal spaces, where students congregate around computer stations in mini-offices of sorts. Three large



## ICHTHUS COLLEGE

ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

**CLIENT:** Ichthus Hogeschool, Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
**ARCHITECT:** (EEA) Erick van Egeraat Associated Architects, Rotterdam, The Netherlands—Erick van Egeraat, Monica Adams, Maartje Lammers (architects); Luc Reyn, Cock Peterse, Jeroen ter Haar, Kerstin Hahn, Paul Blonk, Colette Niemeijer, Nienke Booy, Aude de Broissia, Ezra Buenrostro-Hoogwater, Ard Buijsen, Joep van Eiten, Pavel Fomenko, Matthias Frei, Bas de Haan, Folkert van Hagen, Sara Hampe, Julia Hausmann, Sabrina Kers, Perry Klootwijk, Ramon Knoester, Harry Kurzhals, Paul-Martin Lied, Mika Lundberg, Lisette Magis, Jos Overmars, Karolien de Pauw, Claudia Radinger, Stefanie Schleich, Ole Schmidt, Ronald Ubels, Rowan van Wely, Boris Zeisser (project team); Folkert van Hagen, Peter Heavens (renderings)  
**ENGINEERS:** ABT, Delft (structural, mechanical, electrical, HVAC)  
**CONSULTANTS:** Peutz & Associates, Mook (interiors, acoustical); ABT, Delft (lighting, audiovisuals)  
**GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Giesbers Bouw, Wijchen  
**COST:** \$18.2 million  
**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Christian Richters

A central tenet of Ichthus College's pedagogical approach is to encourage students to form small "companies" that compete against one another, and the new school building provides spaces that allow them to work together: Three concrete ramps (which are suspended from the ceiling by 6-inch steel cable) run along the glazed façade creating study spaces with views of Rotterdam harbor (facing page). Slatted wooden partitions (above right) divide the ramps into smaller spaces and absorb some of the noise rising from the workspaces at the base of the atrium (above left).

- 1 entrance hall
- 2 restaurant
- 3 study area
- 4 offices and work spaces
- 5 administration
- 6 school shops/retail
- 7 parking



East-west section | 24'

ramps overlooking the atrium serve to both bridge the spacious expanse and provide more work space for these "business meetings."

Because the building is so experimental, the Ministry of Education was not sure it would work. One safeguard built into the brief by the eminently practical ministry (which is always ready to combine the private and public sectors in new ways) was a demand for extreme flexibility. In case the school was not a success, the building had to be planned in such a way that a part of it could be isolated from the rest and rented out to private companies. EEA accordingly conceived of the

building as two distinct sections separated by the atrium. They can be connected or disconnected at will, at the drop of a few glazed dividing walls. As it turns out, the school is such a success in terms of enrollment that this kind of division has proved to be unnecessary.

While the Ministry of Education wanted to experiment, albeit cautiously, the Municipality of Rotterdam was thinking along more traditional lines and wanted to use brick as a building material. Somehow, EEA managed to convince them that the glassy proposal for Ichthus fit their bill. And indeed at the start, they planned to incorporate blue glazed bricks

in one of the walls overlooking the atrium. This was quite a poetic touch actually: There was an extremely cheap brick called a *blauw klinker* used traditionally for roads in the port of Rotterdam. After EEA got the commission, however, the brick was replaced by a cobalt-blue silk-screened glass surface so that the entire building would be glazed.

At \$18.2 million, this is a no-frills, low-budget building that performs better internally and responds more felicitously in context than its more upmarket neighbors. It goes to show that a building doesn't have to mimic a place in order to enhance appreciation of its site. ■



The making of  
San Francisco Airport's  
International Terminal.  
By Jacob Ward

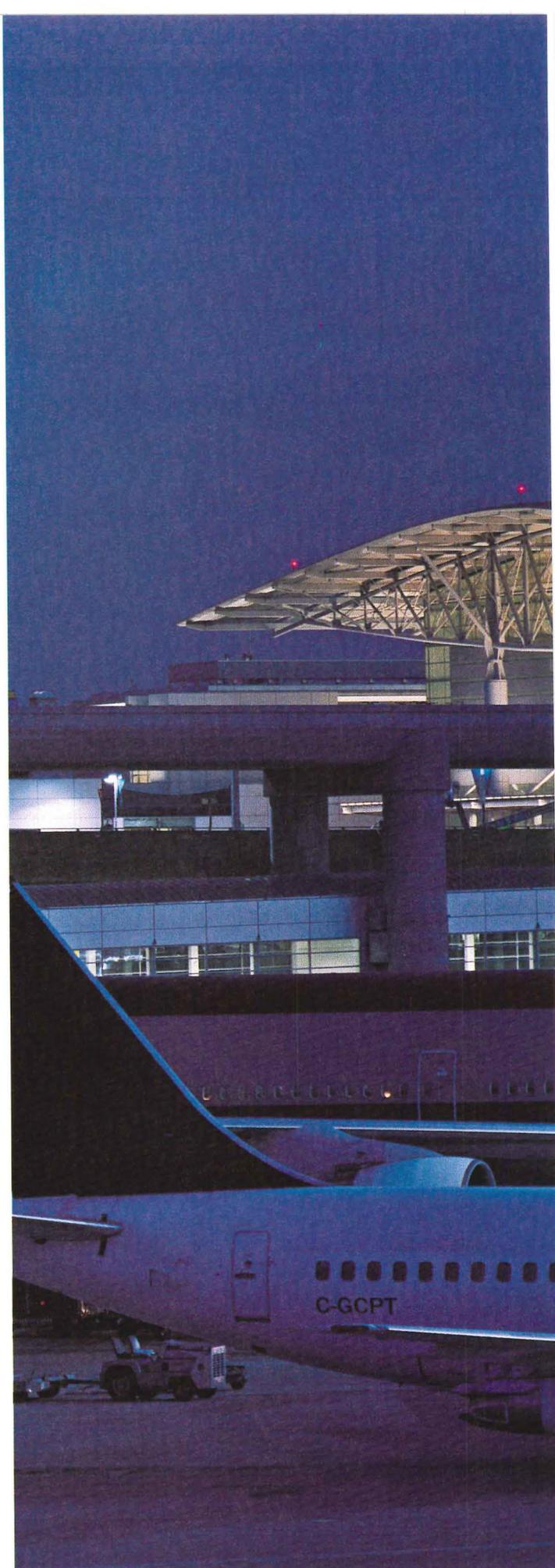
# Air Traffic Control

At 7:00 a.m. on a recent Monday morning, the International Terminal of the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) sits empty of passengers. Sunlight washes in through translucent glass along its eastern side, and the building's ceilings, so high as to be celestial, make all human activity below seem tiny and isolated. A ticket agent yawns as she tidies her work station and starts up her computer. A maintenance person leads a mop and bucket in a slow waltz toward the metal detector, and the drowsy security team waves her through. At a café at the south end of the terminal a half-dozen police officers quietly gossip at one set of tables, and a dozen construction workers suddenly guffaw nearby.

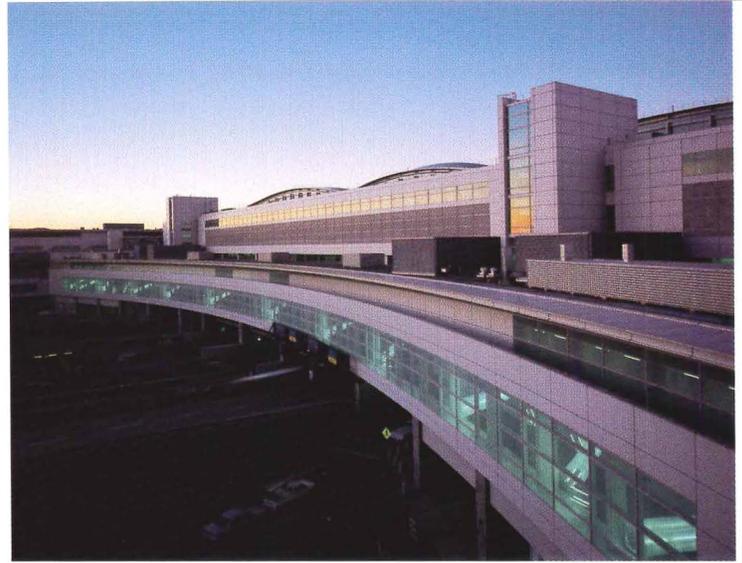
A well-dressed and exhausted-looking figure arrives. Craig Hartman was Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's (SOM) partner in charge of designing the city's new international airport terminal, a joint venture between SOM, Michael Willis & Associates, and the office of Del Campo & Maru. It consumed seven years of Hartman's life, putting him through fierce battles over budget, space, and seismic safety. Hartman is visibly weary. He introduces himself while ordering coffee, and by 11 a.m., after three-and-a-half hours of wandering the facility and discussing its design and history, he has consumed four cups.

The creation of this calm and beautiful setting was a raging war, full of disastrous setbacks and close calls. The International Terminal opened to passenger traffic on December 9, 2000. The building worked, and it is a

**The new San Francisco International Terminal's formal simplicity belies both the incredible complexity of its program and function, and the chaotic process of getting it built.**







**Envelope** On the terminal's west façade, panes of fritted glass filter sunlight into the building, and interior lights serve as a beacon at night, outlining the terminal's sign (above left). The panes hang from a steel frame, so that during a seismic event they will ripple together like a curtain, instead of shattering in place. The entire building sits over an active roadway to maximize available space on the airport's limited site; SOM planned an open-air garden at the east end of the terminal (above right) which could be converted to retail space later, but the airport decided it needed the retail income immediately.

## The creation of this calm and beautiful setting was a raging war, full of disastrous setbacks and near escapes.

magnificent piece of design, built for 15 years of continued growth. It continues to take withering fire from the local press, however, for breaking its budget and schedule promises—an exposé on the project in the local *SF Weekly* was titled “San Francisco International Airpork.”

Cost overruns were enormous and frequent. For instance, the airport commission initially asked the architects to provide space at the east end of the International Terminal for future retail expansion. Hartman planned to create an open roof garden that would easily convert to retail space. But midway through the terminal's construction, the commission decided it needed the retail revenue immediately, and ordered up plans.

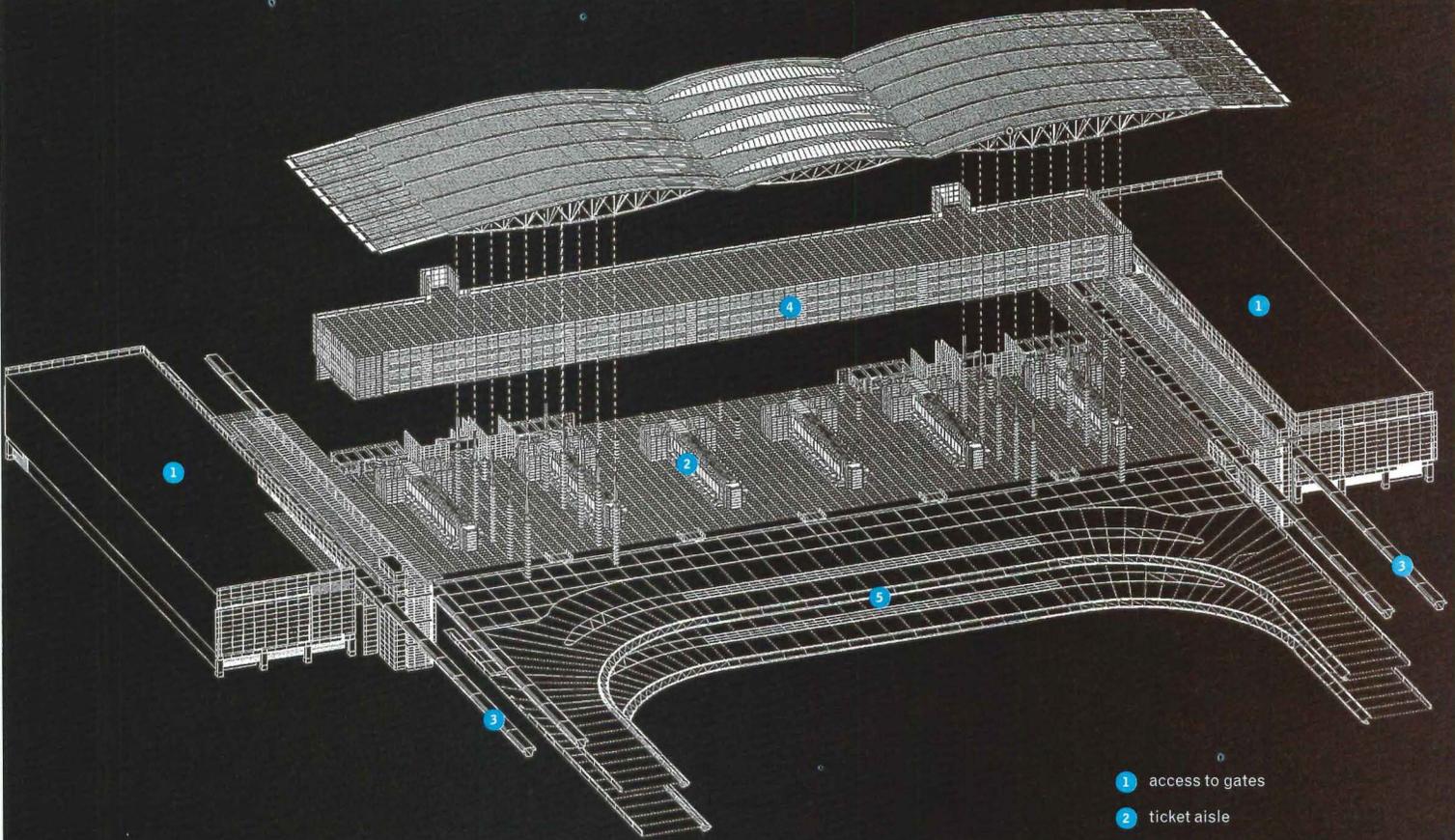
The contractors pounced, and a slew of change orders arrived in the commission's office, dashing any hopes of finishing on time and under budget. The airport's November 1999 internal cost report forecast a \$1.9 billion budget for the master plan to overhaul SFO. That cost has since risen, according to airport director John Martin, to \$2.4 billion, and when one figures in financing costs, a new Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station, and interest, he concedes the number may be closer to \$3.5 billion. Tutor-Saliba Corporation, the largest contractor involved, billed roughly \$850 million alone.

Even though the International Terminal is finished, the saga of the construction process hasn't ended. The Bay Area tends to give its public contracts to firms that have majority partnerships with minority businesses. Tutor-Saliba is accused by minority contractors of creating shell alliances to win more of the work under affirmative action laws, and then jettisoning the partnerships when the contracts were granted. (The Los

Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority is currently investigating similar accusations against the firm.) And the airport is still trying to sort out the change orders from its 10 contractors, some of whom are suspected of egregiously padding their billings with dinners, limousine service, even the time and paperwork required to hit the airport with the inflated billings—Tutor-Saliba filed more than 400 change orders, to the tune of \$250 million.

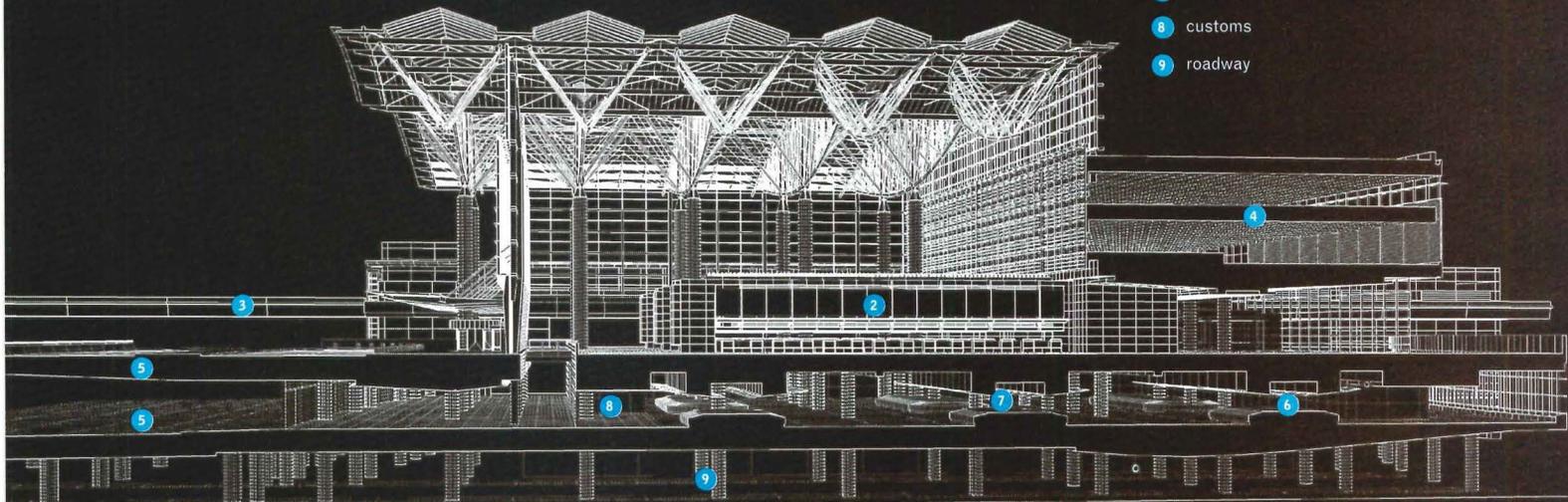
The airport commission feels it was all worth it, however. The International Terminal is the final piece of an airport commission master plan, created in 1992, to provide the Bay Area with a world-class air facility. The region has become associated with the riches of technology and, more recently, with its economic pitfalls (in an airport newsstand, a *New York Times* headline reads “With New Economy Chilling, San Francisco's Party Fizzles”). At the time the airport plan was created, however, the Internet was still the purview of graduate students and military personnel, and the Bay Area was in a deep economic downturn.

Airports are considered tremendously important in upgrading the economy of their host cities—the resulting passengers and cargo create thousands of jobs. But until recently, airports were not themselves considered businesses. Typically, airport directors were expected to break even, little more. In recent years, however, business travel to and from international destinations has become increasingly profitable, and SFO has had great success in that area. When the airport's former director, Louis Turpen, drew up a master plan for the airport in 1992, Asian business travel was rapidly expanding, in spite of the recession. “Our inter-



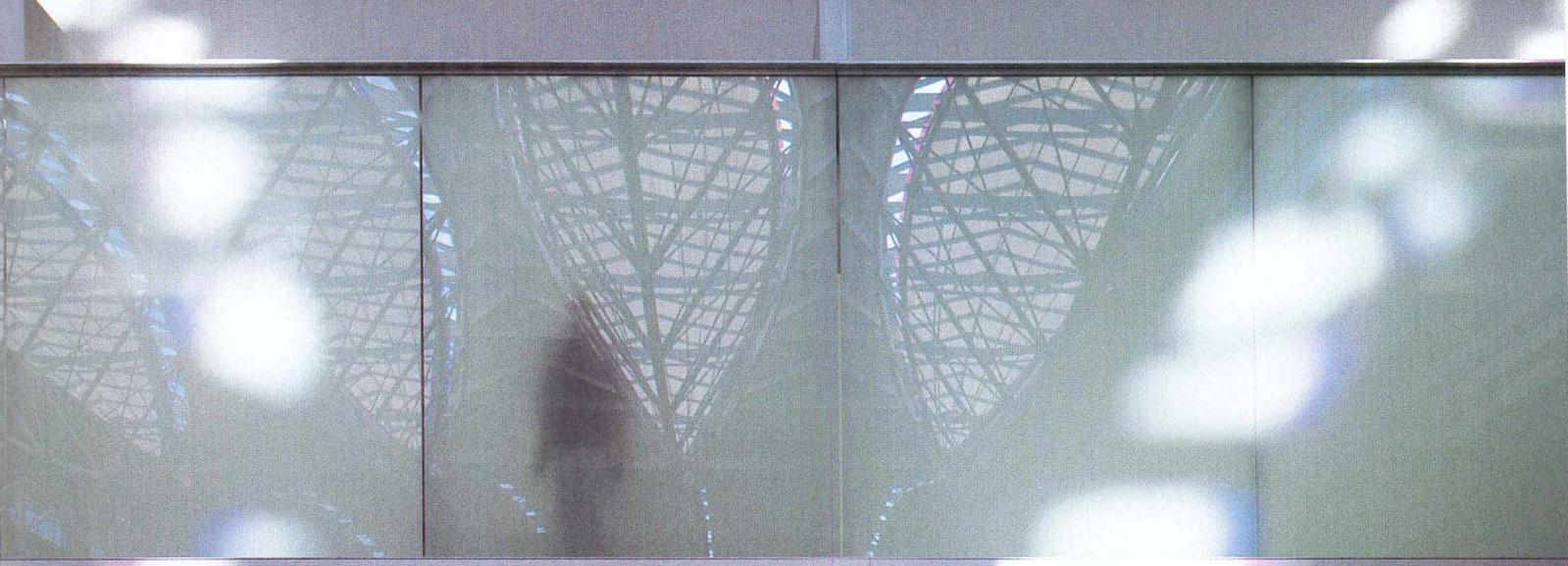
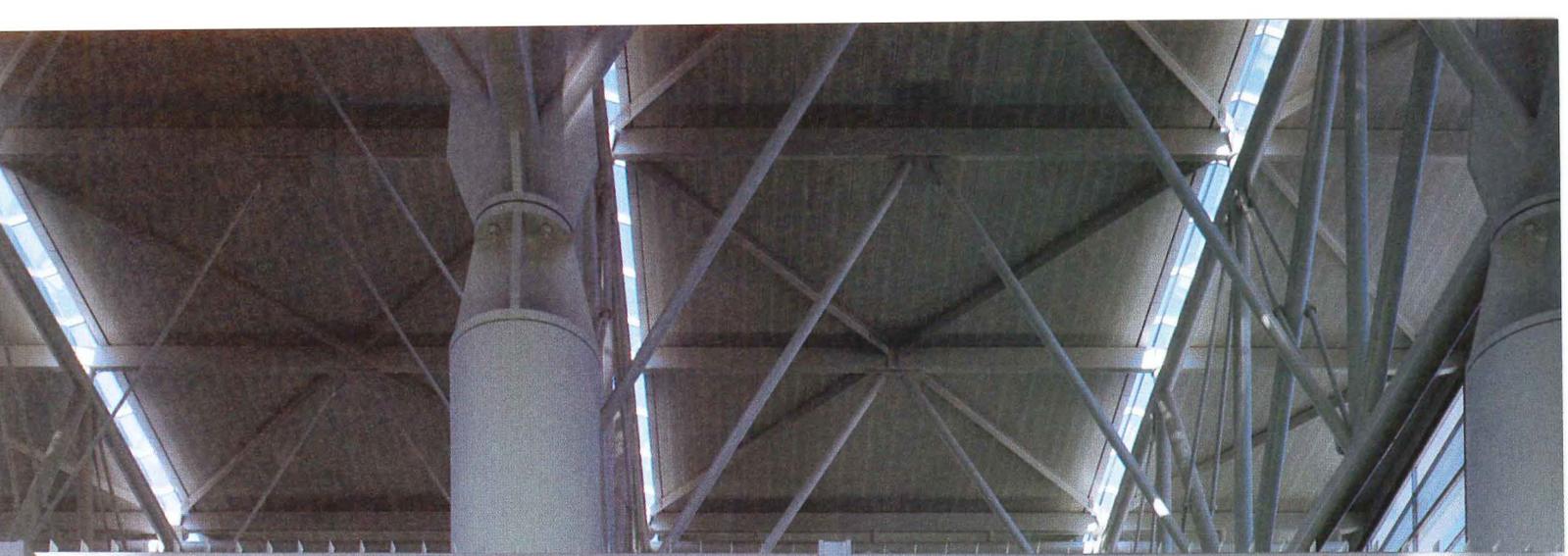
Exploded section | 53'

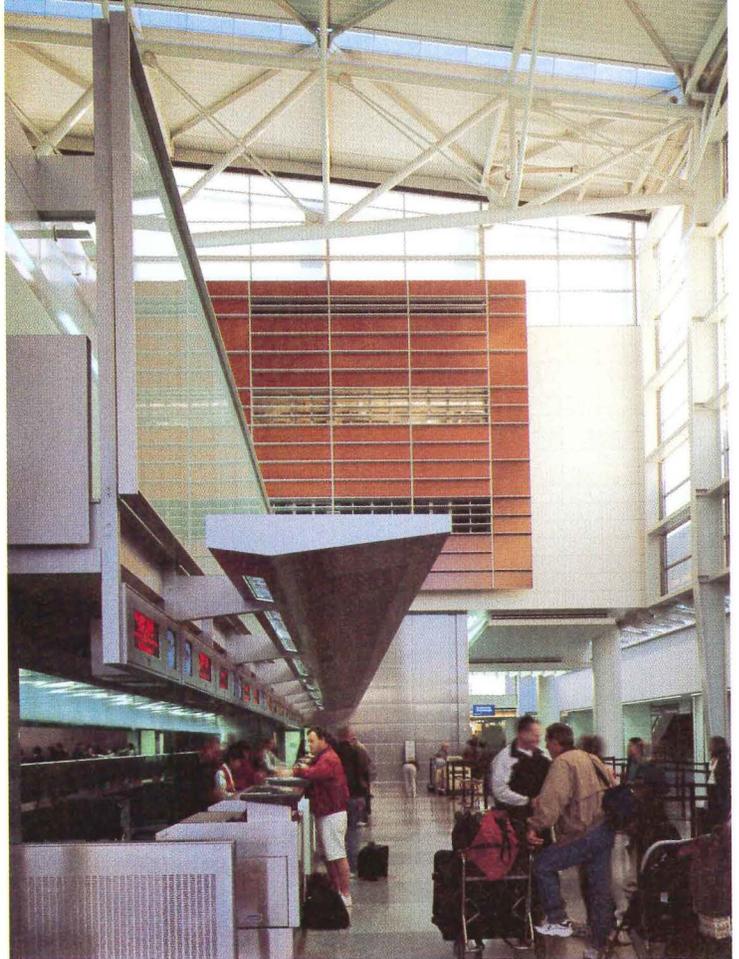
- 1 access to gates
- 2 ticket aisle
- 3 light rail
- 4 administrative offices
- 5 vehicular access to arrivals/departures
- 6 immigration
- 7 baggage claim
- 8 customs
- 9 roadway



Perspectival section | 18'

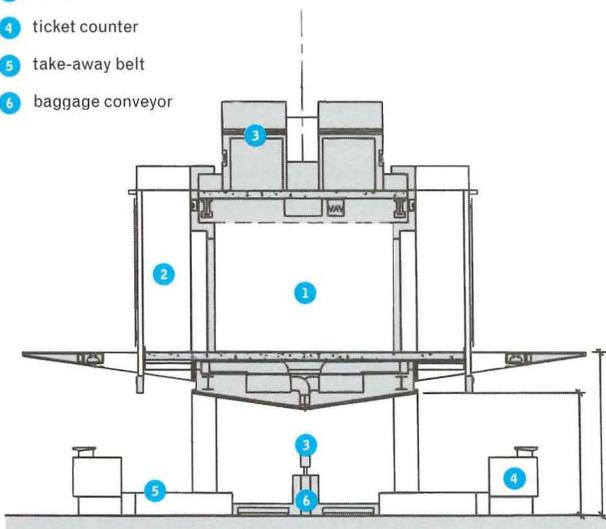
**Systems** San Francisco's International Terminal is perhaps the nation's first midrise terminal—five levels from roadway to fourth- and fifth-floor administrative offices. Although the clarity of the roof structure and the basic box shape of the building make it seem straightforward, the design of the terminal was complicated by several factors: the overhead clearance required by the active roadway beneath, the need to keep the floor level of the main hall reasonably close to the standing height of a 747, and the need to stack the building's elements vertically to remain within the limits of the site. In addition, the program demands four separate circulation patterns—airline and federal employees, both arriving and departing passengers, and their baggage.





**Departures** SOM preserved a sense of expansiveness in the terminal's main hall (above left) by creating common-use ticket aisles (facing page) which are left open on their first level and contain airline offices on their second level (the frosted glass provides both privacy to employees inside, and a sense of depth to passengers outside). The aisles connect through to administrative offices beyond a cherry-wood wall to the east (above right). In addition to accommodating ticket agents and distributing baggage, the aisles free the roof structure by incorporating all mechanical and electrical systems of the building. Filtered air moves along their length, speakers line their midsections, and fluorescent bulbs along their spines bounce light off the ceiling (diagram, below).

- 1 office space
- 2 corridor
- 3 uplight
- 4 ticket counter
- 5 take-away belt
- 6 baggage conveyor

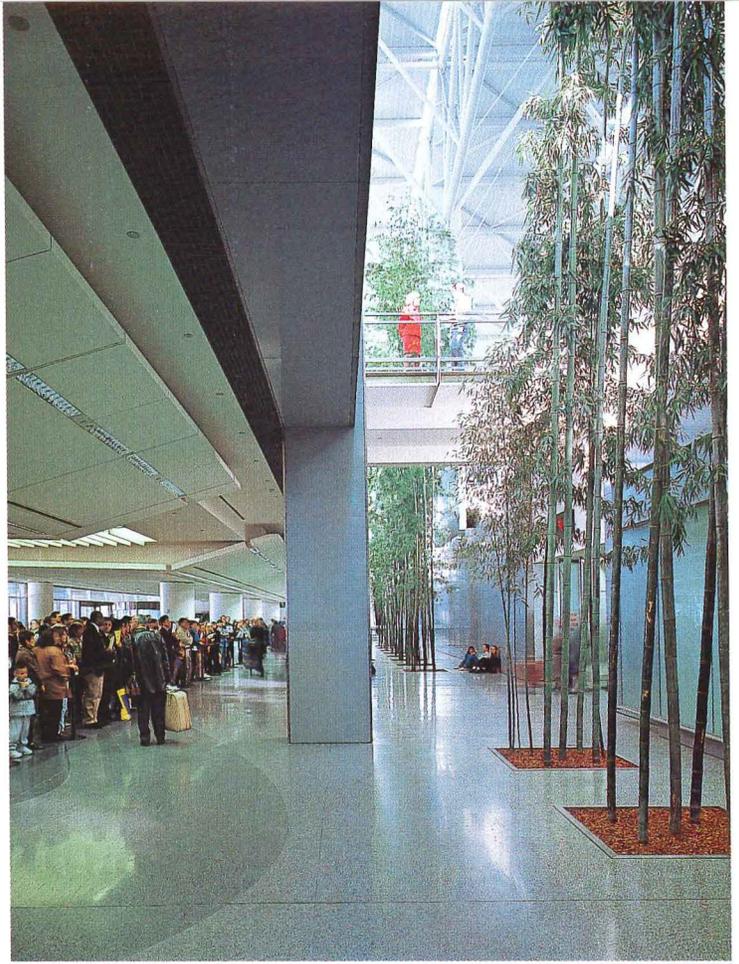


Typical section through ticket aisle | 5'

national market grows 10 percent annually," says Martin, "compared to 3 percent growth in our domestic market." SFO's master plan is intended to take advantage of this growth.

The airport is a development on the scale of a small city. Thirty-four thousand people work at SFO. More than 771,930 metric tons of cargo and 40 million travelers move through its facilities each year. In 1998, six million of those travelers were international passengers. That number is estimated to double by 2006. The airport commission is owner and landlord at SFO, and the airlines, concession operators, and other service companies are all tenants, paying enormous scheduled fees to use the space. These tenants are what make or break an airport's profit plan, so their satisfaction is a big priority. "We make \$75 million on parking each year, \$45 million on rental cars, and \$26 million on duty-free sales," Martin explains.

SFO sits on a very limited site south of the city—jutting out into the bay, the site is 85 percent landfill. All of the buildable land area had been consumed before the expansion, so the only option was to build up. Turpen's master stroke was to place the International Terminal over the roadway which leads into and out of the circle of existing terminals. This maximized space, but it created an extraordinary planning challenge—how to build the damn thing without disturbing the traffic below. The construction crews had to reroute active traffic each day, and the terminal's bridge-like baseplate had to be able to support not just the building, but also the heavy machinery required to put it up. Between this complicated construction process and the dizzying programmatic requirements—



**Arrival** The Federal Inspection Service requires that passengers remain “sterile,” or out of touch with the outside world, until they pass through immigration (above left) and customs. When they emerge through a row of bamboo trees, passengers are given a brief glimpse of the entrance hall above through a long gap in the ceiling (above right). Sandwiched between the roadway clearance below and the conveyor systems in the ceiling above, the baggage claim (facing page) is the most cramped part of the building.

baggage, arriving and departing international passengers, the work of a variety of federal agencies, airline offices, their employees, and facilities for everything from security personnel to airport management—it is amazing how well the building turned out.

Hartman begins his tour on the west side of the main terminal. He seems nervous at first, but slowly gains momentum as he looks around. “I believe we are moving toward democracy all over the world, and that the right to travel is a basic tenet of that movement,” he says. “This building tries to embody that notion architecturally.”

Arriving at the curb, one enters the airport at its western edge, through revolving doors in an enormous glass curtain wall. The structural elements of the terminal are simple and elegant: two rows of wing-like trusses atop four sets of steel columns, with a third, smaller set of trusses suspended between them. Take everything else away and these elements would stand firm—a 700-foot-long, 200-foot-deep steel pavilion with the bay wind whistling through.

On either side as one walks east, the tops of a row of bamboo trees, planted one level below and stretching upward through the open section, move gently in the interior breeze. Seeking boundaries, the eye is immediately drawn upward to the ceiling, 83 feet above. The exposed steel trusses have steel ribs, and the central group is spanned by a scrim to reflect and refract light down through the building during the day. Long two-story ticket counters stretch away to the east, and beyond stands a cherry-wood wall, ticked with a series of rectangular metal louvers that obscure windows within. These louvers, and others set into the other

three walls, are filled with sound-absorbing materials to keep the cavernous space from ringing with the reflected sound of announcements and foot traffic.

Hartman and his team worked to make the navigation of the building as simple as possible, and its glass envelope helps make that navigation legible by keeping visitors oriented—from almost anywhere in the terminal, one can see the light rail stations at either end of the building, and the tarmac to the east. When all transportation systems are finished, passengers will enter either from the interterminal light rail trains on the fourth level, the BART station on the third level, or the curb. They will then go to the ticket counter, and walk beyond to the back wall, where they will be given their only directional choice of the design: left or right to their plane. Either decision will lead them past large glass display cases, shops, and restaurants, through security, and into one of two 12-gate terminals, designed, respectively, by Gerson/Overstreet Architects and Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum with Robin Chiang & Co.

Hartman cringes as a police officer zips past on his bicycle, visibly enjoying the sensation of riding through the vast space. “Oh god,” the architect says, as the cop cuts a sharp circle, etching the shining floors with a parenthetical line of rubber.

Many things were out of Hartman’s control; this errant bicyclist is only the latest. Consider the interests of the airlines. Because their passengers are the lifeblood of the airport’s business, airlines wield a special bargaining power. In addition to rent on the gates, airlines pay a landing fee to the airport commission for the wear and tear their planes inflict on

The process of arrival says more about America's efforts to control its borders than it does about the grand promise of democracy.



the runways and facilities. Currently, San Francisco's landing fees are some of the lowest among the nation's top airports, and the airlines are desperate to keep it that way. As the architects laid out their plans, representatives from the airlines began to grumble, and, eventually, shriek.

Architect Michael Willis recalls fierce battles between the airport commission and its prime tenants. "The airlines kept saying, 'We just want a stucco box—we don't care about anything else,'" he says. "They just wanted capacity."

"For the airlines, efficiency of operation is numero uno. That's their main concern, no matter what," says Hartman. "They consider any aesthetically driven decisions to be an extraneous cost. It's terribly debilitating to hear your work described that way."

Many airports farm out construction costs to their tenant airlines, who then have exclusive control over the facilities and their design—the United terminal in Chicago is an example. But SFO raised bonds and financed the entire project themselves, without any state or federal funding, and Hartman therefore had a line of defense between himself and the demands of the cost-conscious airlines. Both airport directors—Turpen, and Martin after him—defended the need for a grand public building, and also forced the carriers to share facilities.

The result is a spectacular open space, a common-use style of airport rarely seen in the United States. Most airlines choose a dedicated row of ticket counters with offices behind. At SFO, long, thin ticket aisles extend from the east edge of the main space, and are adaptable to the day's flight schedule. Although United has rented the greatest number of gates, each ticket counter and digital overhead placard can be used by any airline, so their agents expand up and down the aisles as needed.

The ticket aisles are two stories tall. The lower level is an open, double-loaded floor area where agents work with passengers on both sides. Airlines need their agents to have ready access to supervisors, however, so Hartman created a second story of small offices above the ticket counters. This second story is sheathed in frosted glass, and during the day murky figures can be seen walking within. At night, the lights from inside back-light workers dramatically, and the glow is designed to draw passengers instinctively to the counters. Agents can climb a set of stairs at one end of each aisle, and, if necessary, walk through to the larger administrative offices behind the cherry-wood wall. These aisles are the most complicated and essential part of the building. The roof, for all its

formal beauty, has little function beyond shelter and structure. Every major mechanical and electrical system of the airport comes together within the aisles: HVAC, baggage handling, and lighting, to name a few.

Unfortunately, only half of the travelers who use the terminal experience its soaring democratic symbolism. This is not necessarily the fault of the architects—it's a symptom of Federal Inspection Service (FIS) regulations, which require that arriving passengers remain "sterile" and out of contact with anyone until they have passed through customs. FIS regulations are an incredible roadblock. "It doesn't matter how many times they've already reviewed the regulations," sighs C. Keith Boswell, SOM's senior technical director. "They can and will change them again the next day."

At SFO, these arriving passengers are relegated to low ceilings and a bleary search for their bags until they emerge from customs. The architects made every effort to give them some sense of the building's soaring heights. Travelers emerge from customs through a milky glass wall and walk toward their families through the linear grove of bamboo. The trees reach up through the building's open section, and for a brief moment travelers catch a glimpse of the trusses glowing high above the entrance hall, before the experience becomes all hugs, handshakes, and taxicabs. Up to that point, however, the process of arrival says more about America's efforts to control its borders than it does about the grand promise of democracy.

But for those who get to see the terminal's entrance hall, no matter how quickly, the experience makes a lasting impression: a bright, vaulting room where for a moment travelers can forget the crushing stress of travel and breathe free. As the sun begins to shine directly down through the scrim above, Hartman glances at his watch. He shakes hands, says goodbye, and darts past the bamboo and through the west wall. A tourist family emerges from a taxicab and brushes past him. As they enter the terminal for the first time, they glance up and around them for a few moments, and then their eyes fix forward: In front of them is a mannequin wearing a costume from a local musical production. A long ball gown rises to meet an enormous wig, which contains various miniaturized San Francisco monuments. The family surveys sequined replicas of the Golden Gate Bridge, Coit Tower, and, at the front, the International Terminal in which they stand. They regard the wig a moment, then they lug their bags toward the ticket aisles and begin their long journey home. ■

#### INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SAN FRANCISCO

**CLIENT:** Airport Commission, City and County of San Francisco; Bureau of Design & Construction—John Martin (airport director); Tom Kardos, Peter Bittenbender **ARCHITECT:** Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, San Francisco, in joint venture with Del Campo & Maru and Michael Willis & Associates—Carolina Woo, Martin Del Campo, Michael Willis (executive committee); Craig Hartman (partner in charge of design); Gene Schnair (managing partner); John Kriken (urban planning partner); Keith

Boswell (senior technical director); Michael Duncan, Steven Weindel, Allison Williams (senior designers); Ed McCrary, German Cediell, Marc Arnold (project managers); Steven Townsend, (urban planning director); Tom McMillan, Steve Winkel, Russel Carlisle, Tamara Dinsmore, Lonny Israel (architecture, interiors, and graphics team leaders); Chris Olsen, David Frey, Kirit Sedani, Howard McAlpine (construction administrators); Lillian Asperin, Steve Baronian, Sandy Chan, Derek Chang, Amy Coburn, Leo Chow, Jim Degener, Ana Maria Dueñas, Michael Fukutome, Bill Hansell, Gary Hitesman, Betty Ho, Katharine Huber, Michael Jacobs, Phil Kaefer, Mark

Lawton, Brian Lee, Peter Little, Tom McMillan, Anoop Mokha, Beth Olson, Erin O'Reilly, Neil O'Shea, Jeremy Regenbogen, Jessica Rothschild, Leslie Sung, Hector Rubio, Edwin Schlemmon, Andre Tchikovani, Benjamin Ward, Raj Yadav, Henry Vlanin (SOM project team); Arthur Alden, William Arney, Omer Baltan, Kenyettia Brewer, Joe Monteadora, Lindsay Davidson, J. Kyle Kotchou, Robert Forscutt, Milan Gill, Stehen Glaudemans, Janet Glasgow, Duncan Grant, Michelle Haka, David A. Hruska, Mashaharu Ishikawa, Troy Kashanipour, Gene Lebel, Theodor Meeder, Joe Monteadora, John Patrick Ng, Christian Oakes, Janet O'Brien, Edward Pineda,



**Site** The tangled web of overpasses, light rail and BART tracks, and two parking garages in the foreground are the work of separate firms working under only the loosest design supervision. The airport has now filled every meter of available land, and the International Terminal closes the diagrammatic circle of existing terminals to complete the master plan.

Antonio Robles, Judy Roper, Kirit Sedani, Gregg Schulze, Jyoti Shah, Audrey Stratton, Kathleen Swope, Michael Wong, Colette Young (Del Campo & Maru project team); Anthony Allen, David Bacon, Dan Gill, Michael Gough, Loren Kroeger, Vivian Lee, Chuck Leoni, Kelle Lord, Jeff McGraw, Susannah Meek, Kyle Miller, Tracy Moore, Kristi Waldron, Steve Winkel, Michael Wright (Michael Willis & Associates project team) **ENGINEERS:** Skidmore, Owings & Merrill—Navin Amin (senior structural engineer); Peter Lee, Anoop Mokha, Peter Yu (structural engineering team leaders); Olmm

Structural Design, Faye Bernstein **CONSULTANTS:** Ajmani & Pamidi, Tommy Siu (mechanical); Breier Neidle Patrone Associates (baggage); F.W. Associates, David K. Low (electrical); AGS (civil); Claude Engle (lighting); Edgett/Williams (elevators/escalators); Patricia O'Brien (landscape architecture); Wilson/Ihrig (acoustical/audiovisual); A.R. Sanchez-Corea (code compliance/fire, life safety) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Tutor-Saliba Corporation in joint venture with Perini Corporation and Buckley & Co. **BUDGET:** \$840 million **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Timothy Hursley

# The Outer Light Artist James Turrell collaborates with Houston architect Leslie Elkins on a new Quaker meeting house. By Ned Cramer

Houston, the urban embodiment of the free-market economy, might not seem a like good place to find salvation. But the world-weary and culturally inclined can always retreat to the Rothko Chapel, a small octagonal pavilion in the city's leafy midtown museum district. The soulfully dark suite of canvases within, which abstract expressionist Mark Rothko completed shortly before his suicide in 1970, make the chapel a profoundly affecting place—a place, in the words of the late Houston patron Dominique de Menil, “where art and religion commingle, where art leads the mind from the visible to the invisible.”

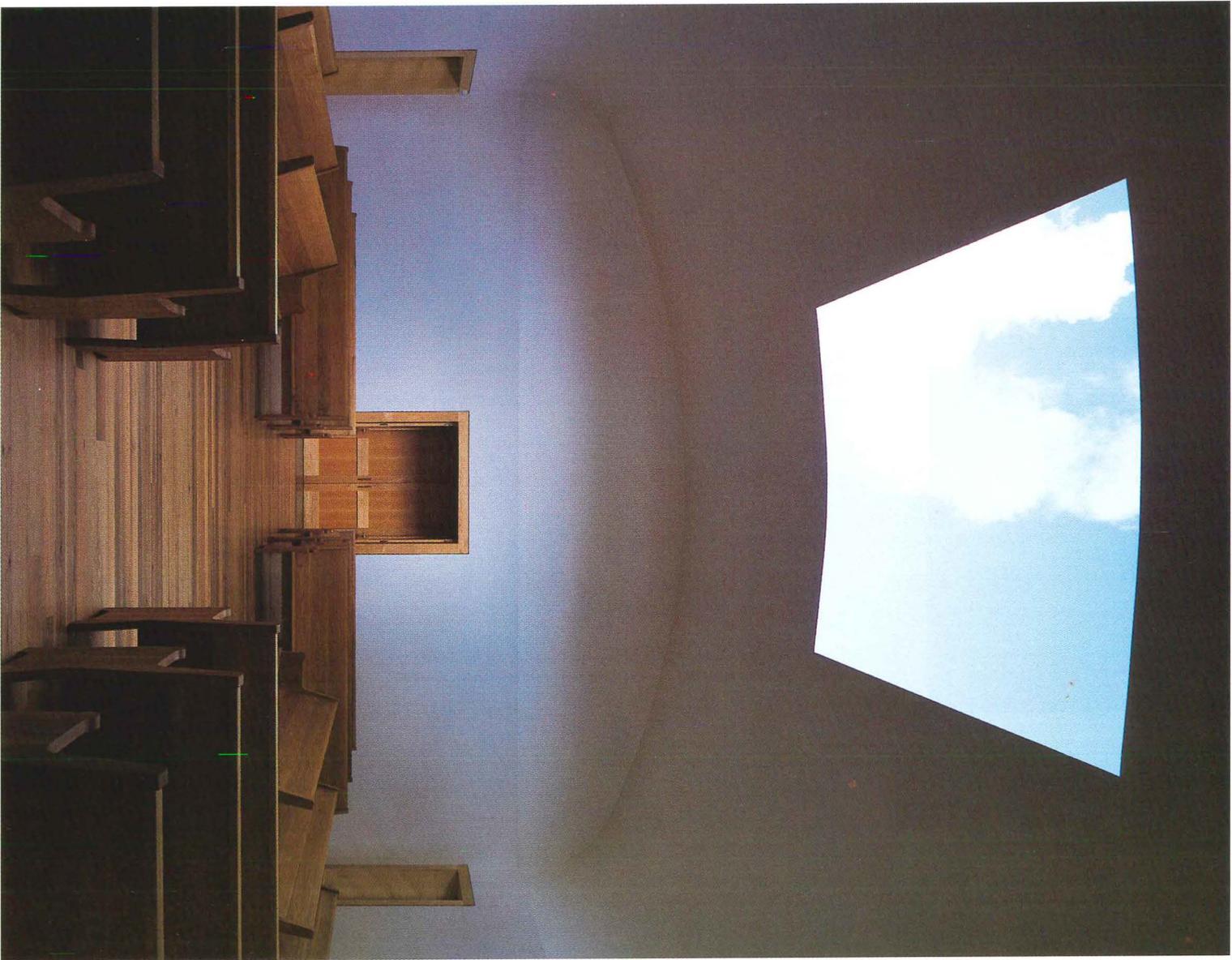
The same might be said of the Live Oak Friends Meeting House in the scrappy Houston inner suburb of Shady Oaks. The building is partly the brainchild of Arizona artist James Turrell, a Quaker, who donated the concept for one of his “skyspace” light installations to Houston’s roughly 75-person Friends community after attending a meeting in its rather inappropriate previous location. “They were sitting on folding chairs in a dance hall,” says Leslie Elkins, the new building’s architect. “There was a disco ball hanging in the middle of the room.” Prominent Houston art dealer Hiram Butler introduced Turrell to Elkins, who had worked in the past with artist and composer Robert Wilson; he also brought on a fund-raiser who used the promise of Turrell’s involvement to help meet the project’s \$1.2 million budget.

The meeting house was completed in February and is now open to the public on Friday evenings, when the

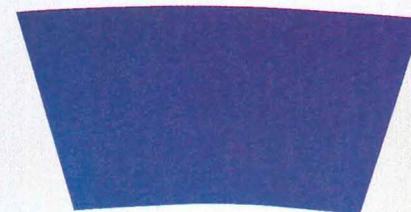
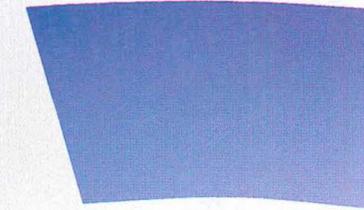
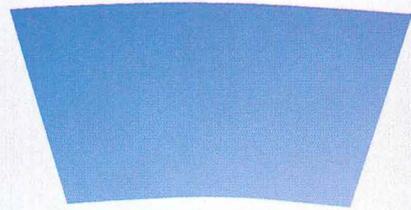
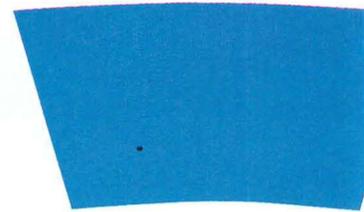
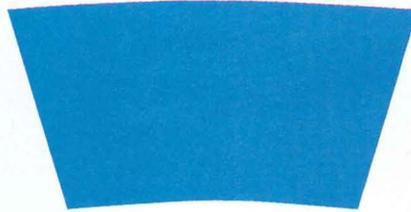
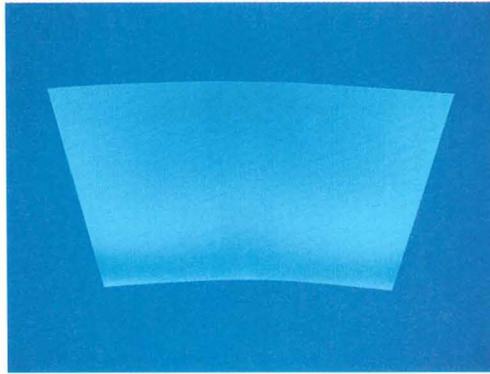
city’s art community has taken to gathering there en masse. Instead of a disco ball, the center of the vaulted plaster ceiling is given over to Turrell’s untitled artwork: a rimless 12-foot-square opening that mirrors a typical Quaker seating arrangement around an unoccupied central floor space. (A retractable roof can cover the hole in the ceiling when necessary, and in this position glows with blue artificial light from a hidden source—a second Turrell piece).

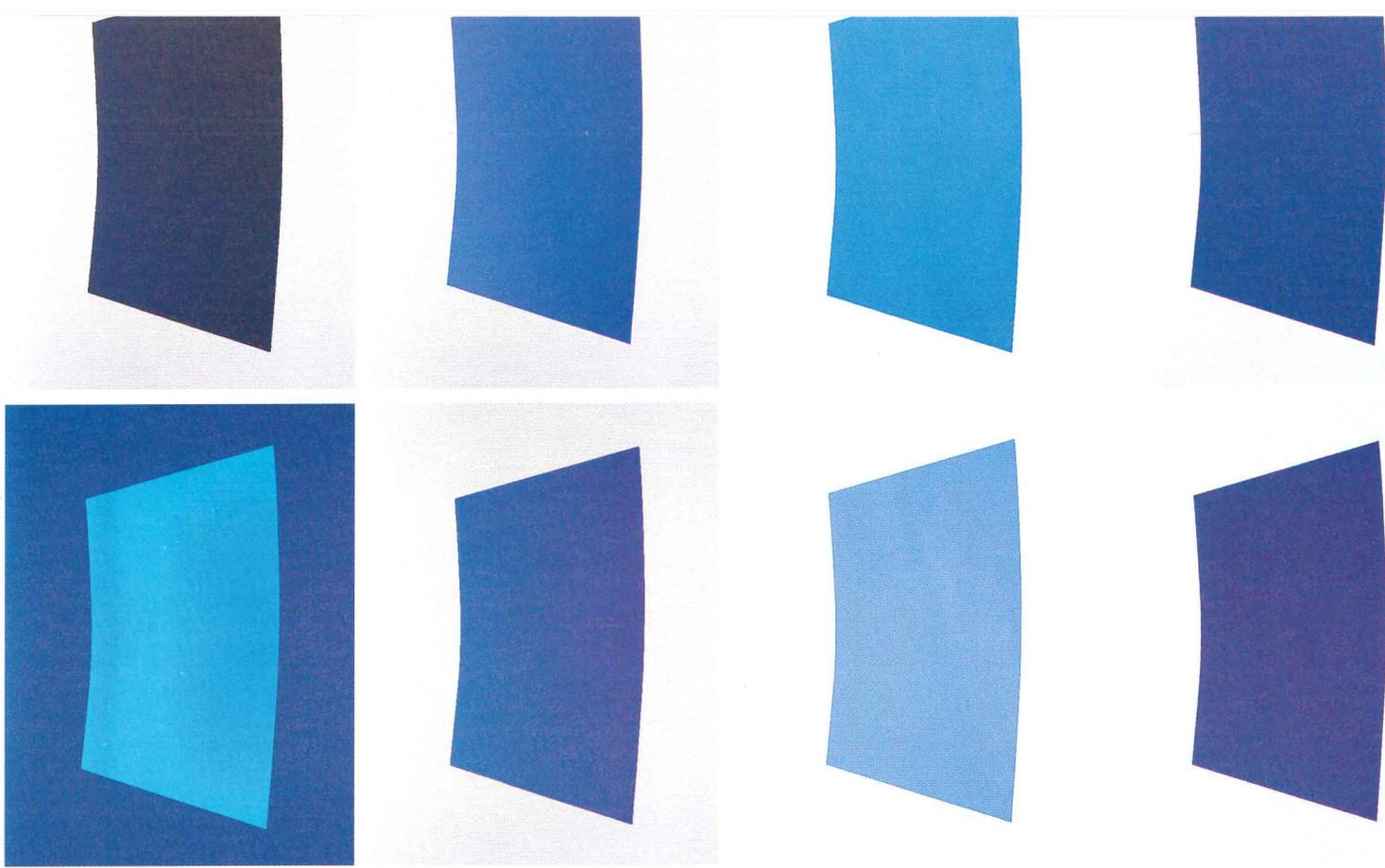
When uncovered, the perfectly framed opening seems depthless, like a field of vivid blue paint, the most abstract of expressions, until a bird or cloud or airplane spectacularly disrupts the illusion and betrays the square’s immateriality. As day draws to a close, slowly at first, and then more rapidly, the illuminated ceiling (its constant level of artificial light dictated by the artist) appears brighter and more washed out, while the square of sky grows darker and more prominent, as if miraculously untethered from the firmament beyond.

Quietly supported by Elkins’ straightforward, symmetrical architecture, the “skyspace” is awesome in its simplicity—an outward expression of the godly “inner light” that Quakers seek in their meetings. It is also, ironically, a representation of divinity in a faith that has little use for religious art. When assembled, the Live Oak Friends typically sit silent, with their eyes closed. As pure abstraction, however, Turrell’s artwork comes one step closer to God. ■

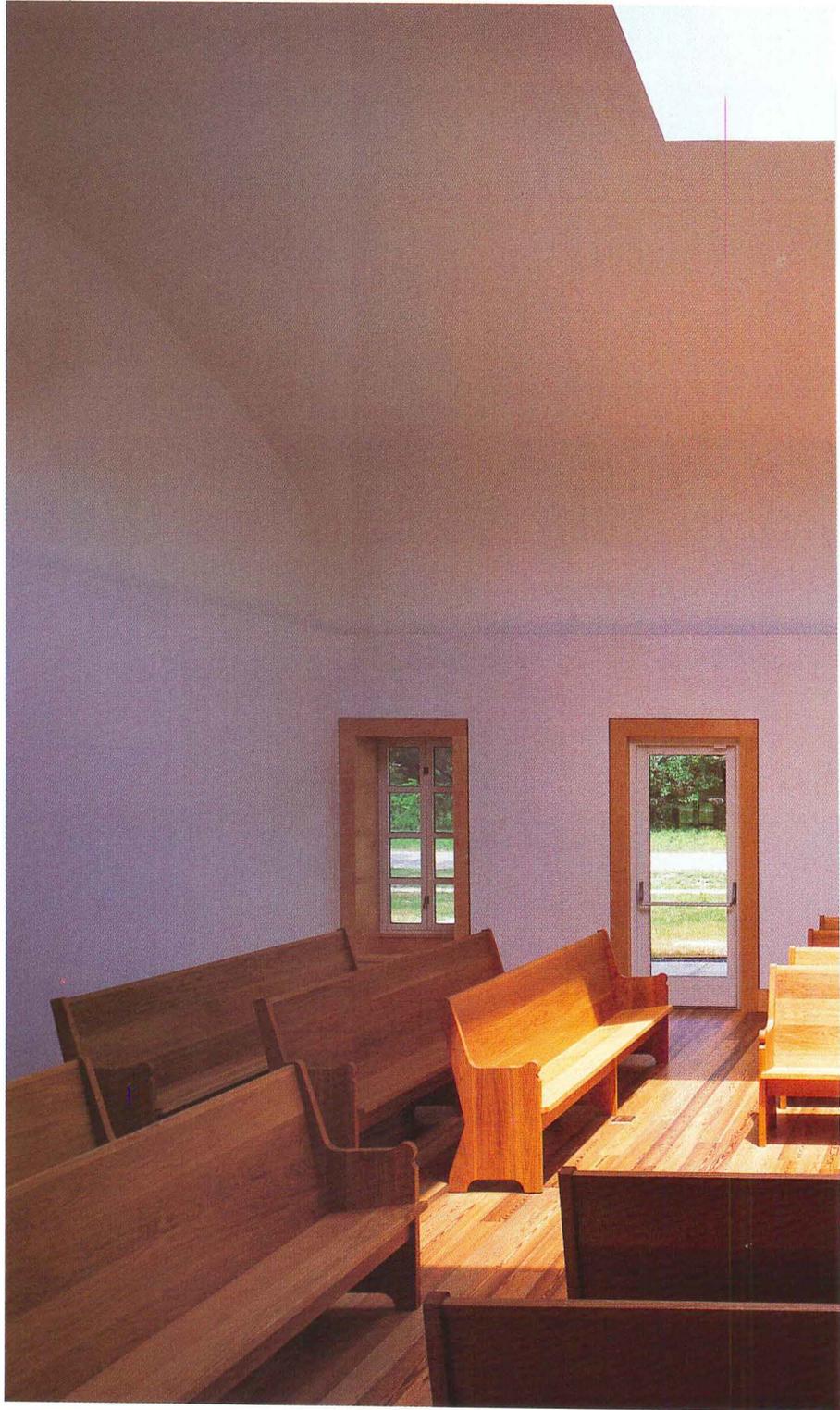
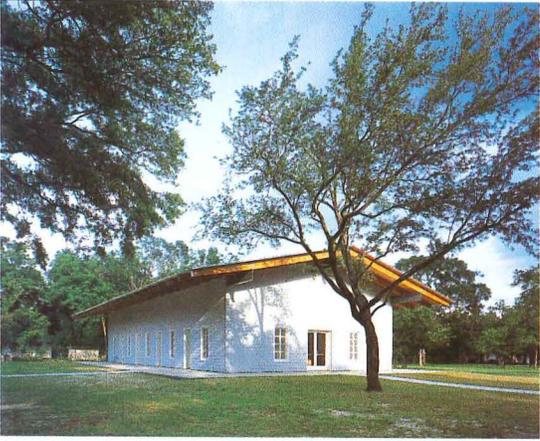


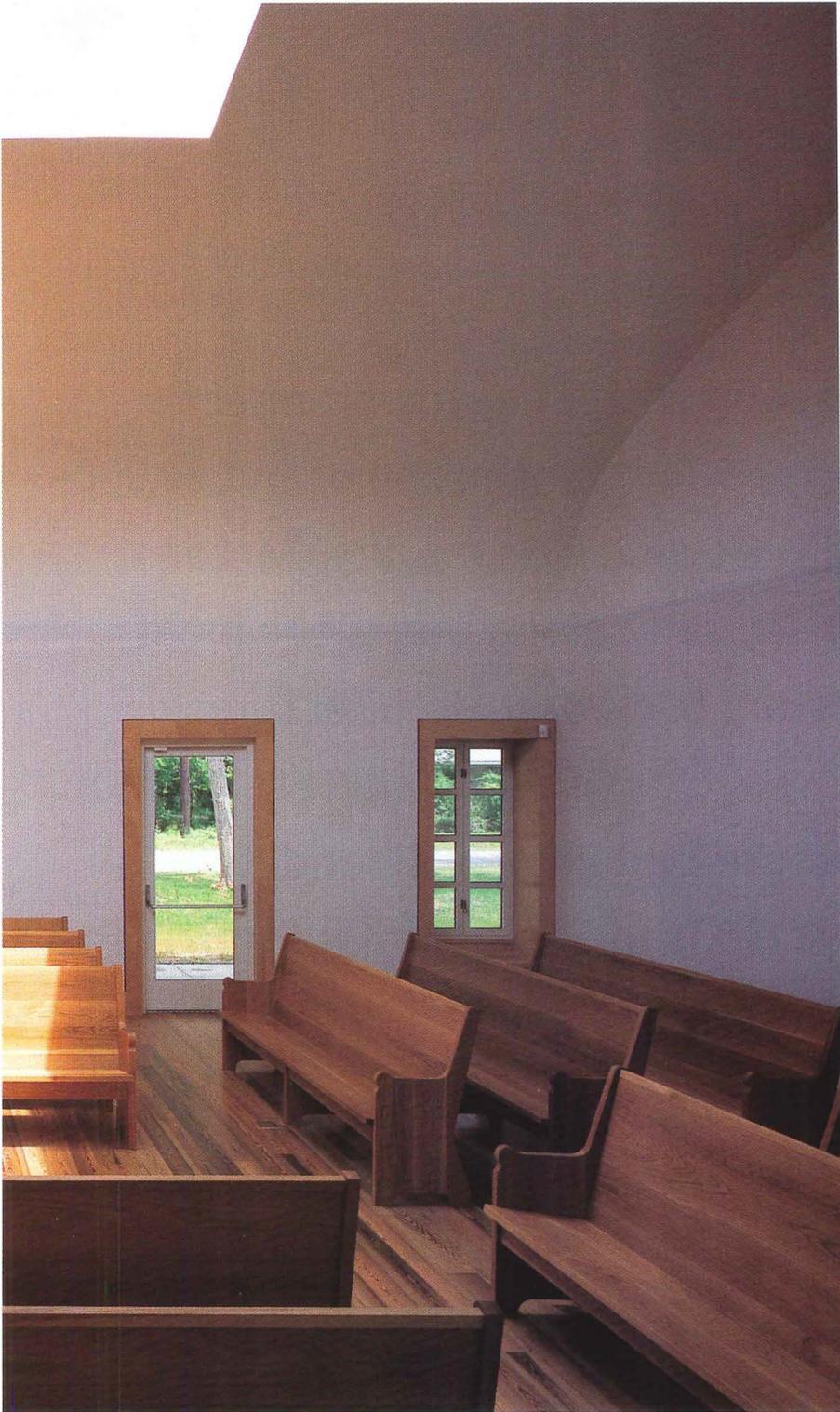
Leslie Elkins' 3,200-square-foot Quaker meeting house has only three rooms. A vestibule and small conference room flank the main chamber (left), which houses James Turrell's untitled "skyspace" artwork—a rimless 12-by-12-foot opening in the vaulted ceiling.





Turrell's "skyspace" is most dramatic when outside light levels are changing rapidly, as during sunrise (top two rows across) and sunset (third and fourth rows). In the evening, as the outside light dims, the artificially lit ceiling seems to grow brighter and whiter (though the level in fact remains constant) and the darkening square of sky becomes more visually prominent—it almost seems to float. Once night has fallen, a retractable segment of roof covers the opening in the ceiling, and blue neon light emanates from a hidden source (upper left and lower right), an effect that Turrell intends as a second artwork distinct from the "skyspace."

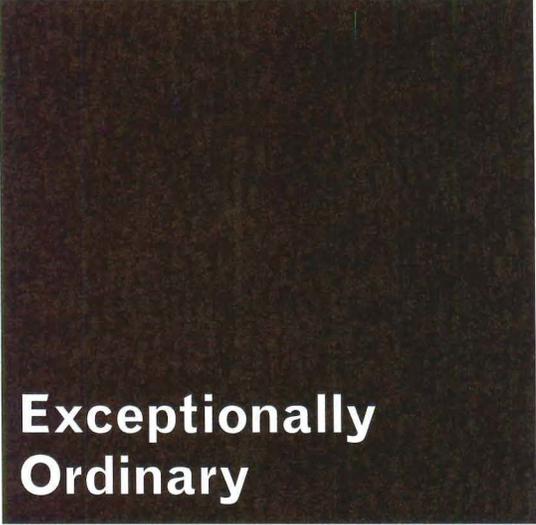




George Law, the 17th-century founder of the Society of Friends, advocated a life—and aesthetics—of restraint and simplicity. Throughout much of the religion's history, some Quakers wore only brown- and gray-colored clothes. Elkins' design for the meeting house is accordingly modest and symmetrical (facing page, top and bottom): a shed-like form with a gently pitched metal roof, gray-painted exterior siding, and white-painted trim. On the interior (left), neatly plastered walls, unornamented wood floors, benches, and door and window surrounds defer to the quiet play of light.

**LIVE OAK FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, HOUSTON**

**CLIENT:** Live Oak Friends Meeting, Houston—Donna Dzierlenga **ARCHITECT:** Leslie Elkins Architecture, Houston—Leslie Elkins, Ben Thorne, Lenja Gould (project team) **ENGINEERS:** James Austin Engineers (structural); Day Brown Rice (mechanical, electrical, plumbing); Karen Rose Engineers (civil) **CONSULTANTS:** James Turrell (artist); Psychedelic Neon **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** W. S. Bellows Contractors **COST:** Withheld at owner's request **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Hester + Hardaway



## Exceptionally Ordinary

The new Yale School of Art and New Theater, architect Deborah Berke's 80,000-square-foot renovation of and 30,000-square-foot annex to a 1950s Jewish Community Center designed in part by Louis Kahn, sits along one of the most important streets in the history of modern architecture: Chapel Street, the New Haven, Connecticut, address of Paul Rudolph's Art and Architecture Building (1963) and Kahn's Yale University Art Gallery (1953) and Yale Center for British Art (1973). Far from cowering from such weighty neighbors, Berke has built what amounts to a formal and theoretical rebuke, the first significant demonstration of her philosophy of everyday architecture. Taking Berke's 1999 essay "Thoughts on the Everyday" as a starting point, *Architecture* asked three noted critics—K. Michael Hays, Julie V. Lovine, and Gwendolyn Wright—to give their opinions of this plainspoken project, and the ideas behind it.



## Deborah Berke

We exist in a culture where heroes have been replaced by celebrities, and 15 minutes of fame are valued over a lifetime of patient work. In this climate the architect must become a celebrity in order to gain the opportunity to build (or else must loudly proclaim a refusal to build in order to become established as a critical force). Those who do build tend to produce signature buildings designed to attract the attention of the media and sustain the public's focus, for under these rules architecture can only emanate from the hand of the name-brand architect. The built environment is strewn with these high-profile celebrity products—heroic gestures neither made nor commissioned by heroes.

What should architects do instead? A simple and direct response: acknowledge the needs of the many rather than the few; address diversity of class, race, culture, and gender; design without allegiance to a priori architectural styles or formulas, and with concern for program and construction.

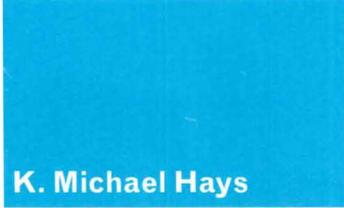
We may call the result an architecture of the everyday, though an architecture of the everyday resists strict definition; any rigorous attempt at a concise delimitation will inevitably lead to contradictions. Nonetheless, here are some points that may be related to it.



## Gwendolyn Wright

New Haven's Chapel Street reveals the problems and potentials of an urban college campus. A pleasant hodgepodge of small stores, coffeehouses, and campus facilities lines one side of this permeable boundary between Yale University and the surrounding city, capturing the fruitful interaction of town-and-gown, culture and commerce, old and new, ordinary and extraordinary. Louis Kahn's Yale University Art Gallery and Yale Center for British Art take these cosmopolitan admixtures to the realm of inspired art. The Brutalist concrete walls of Paul Rudolph's A+A Building, on the other hand, uncannily contribute to the ongoing drama of suspicion and fear that suffuses this and other streets in a city with a high incidence of crime. Perhaps as an antidote, the intrusion of corporate culture within the university has lately become palpable.

The effort to address the creolized nature of Chapel Street is legible throughout Deborah Berke's new School of Art and New Theater. For Berke, ordinary industrial materials, a synthesis of renovation and new building, and mundane repetitive patterns, are all elements of an "everyday" world that she believes architects ought to engage—not disdain. Berke's texts on the subject acknowledge that the term "everyday" can mean many things.



## K. Michael Hays

Deborah Berke's prescriptions for an "architecture of the everyday"—that it be ordinary, common, rough-and-ready, domestic, functional and, above all, built—are remarkably uncontroversial except insofar as she directs them against both contemporary architecture theory (or, at least theory's dominant strands) and the increasingly consumerist, name-brand-driven architectural economy. Berke's renovation and annex for Yale's School of Art and New Theater claims to be framed by that same discourse and can be evaluated as a specific instance of a more general intellectual position.

Berke's rhetoric of the everyday is one symptom of developing concerns (primarily among academically based architects like Berke, who teaches at Yale) about architecture's place in a culture of total commodification, and about the perceived misalignments of academic architecture theory and professional practice. Theory tends to be analytic and critical, taking apart standard assumptions in order to reveal new possibilities, while the professional service of building requires a synthesis of many conflicting demands and a certain normalization. One recently offered "solution" different from Berke's is simply to stop the hand-wringing, abandon criticism and theory, and embrace the techno-managerial,

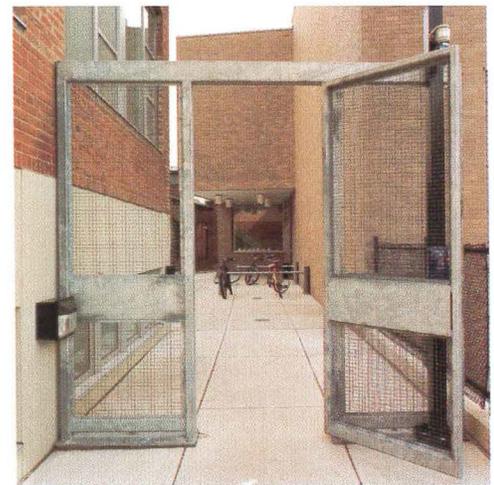
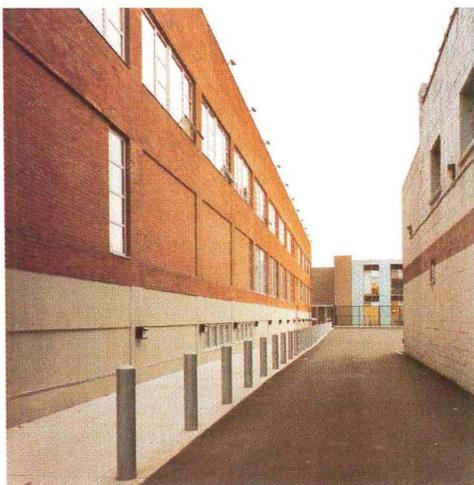


## Julie V. Iovine

What's more dangerous to the built environment: dull architecture or false heroics? It is obviously a question that preoccupies Deborah Berke. In a distinguished career that has combined teaching and building, Berke has applied an elegant restraint so that students and spaces can be free to assert their own personalities.

Berke's theory of everyday architecture reads more like an antidote than a manifesto. It proposes the generic to fend off the ubiquitously name-brand; the "rough-and-ready" to counteract the bloodlessly refined. But one can be sure that she is a far from unsophisticated advocate of the unaffected. As an architect who has worked on the image for Calvin Klein's CK boutiques, she knows better than most how labor intensive it can be to achieve the nondescript.

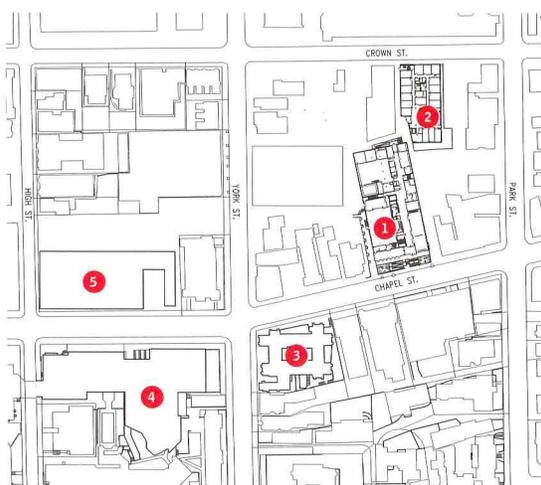
The Jewish Community Center in New Haven was never aggressively banal or pretentious. Modestly midcentury, its façade of white marble, glass, and gold-plated stainless-steel mullions was for years too dingy to make any impression at all. A long porch overlooking Chapel Street and stairs leading straight down to a soup kitchen were all that set it apart on a street of Tudor storefronts and carpenter Gothic apartments. Few remembered that the façade had apparently been designed by Louis Kahn.



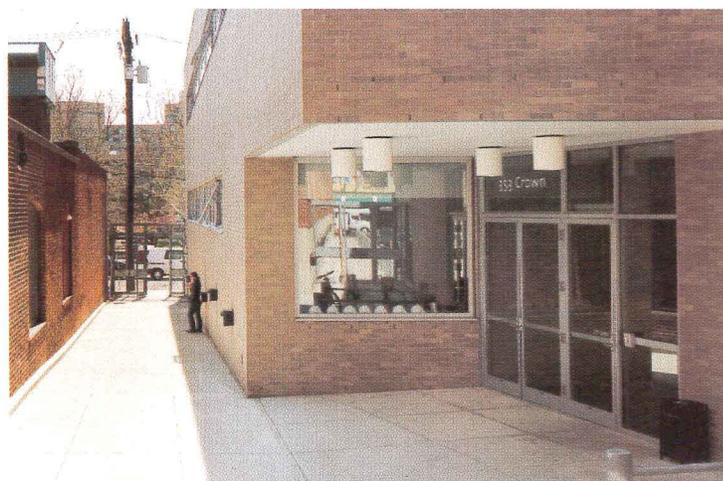
Deborah Berke's School of Art and New Theater project actually comprises two buildings, one old, one new. Berke renovated an existing Jewish community center, just down New Haven's famous Chapel Street from Paul Rudolph's Art and Architecture Building and Louis Kahn's Yale University Art Gallery and Yale Center for British Art. The renovated building's midcentury-modern Chapel Street façade (top) has recently been attributed to Kahn; the ramp and railings are Berke's. An alleyway along the building's west side leads to Berke's freestanding annex (above, left to right).



- 1 former Jewish Community Center
- 2 Deborah Berke's Annex
- 3 Paul Rudolph's A+A Building
- 4 Yale University Art Gallery
- 5 Yale Center for British Art



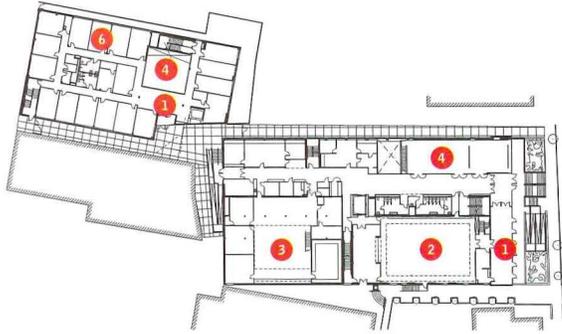
Site plan V



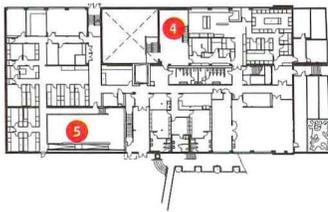
The north façade of Berke's annex (top) faces a midblock parking lot. Berke carved away a corner of the annex, which houses additional studio, office, and meeting space for the art school, to both mark its entrance and create a small courtyard (above right).



Second-floor plan

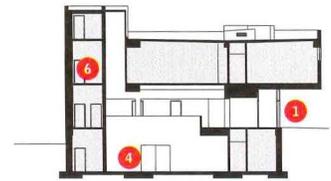


First-floor plan

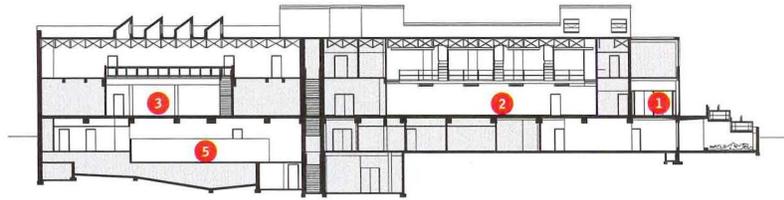


Upper-basement plan 54' >

- 1 entrance
- 2 theater
- 3 graphic design department
- 4 gallery
- 5 photography crit room
- 6 studios
- 7 print room
- 8 classrooms



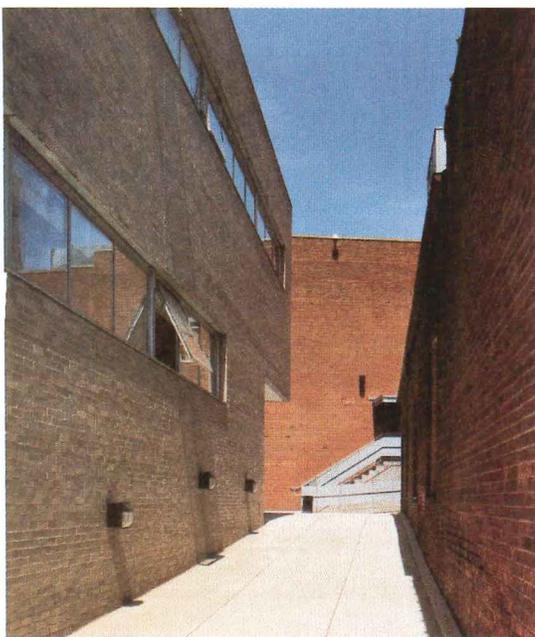
East-west section through annex



North-south section through former Jewish Community Center



North-south section through former Jewish Community Center 23'



**An architecture of the everyday may be generic and anonymous.**

Much like the package in the supermarket with the black letters on the white ground that does not carry a brand name—but is still a perfectly good container for its contents—the generic does not flaunt its maker. It is straightforward. Unostentatious, it can lurk, loiter, slip beneath the surface, and bypass the controls of institutionally regulated life.

**An architecture of the everyday may be banal or common.**

It does not seek distinction by trying to be extraordinary, which in any case usually results in a fake or substitute for the truly extraordinary. In its mute refusal to say “look at me,” it does not tell you what to think. It permits you to provide your own meaning.

At its best it offers a counterbalance to abstract theory, a connection to daily life grounded in the integrity of work well done and in the comfort of familiar places. At the opposite extreme the word’s negative connotations evoke dreary routines and mind-numbing surroundings. The idea of “everyday architecture” can remind us of the multiple pleasures, indeed the inventive possibilities that reality has to offer. Yet good intentions cannot so easily be rendered into compelling designs.

The commission to design an art school on New Haven’s Chapel Street, with its somewhat motley character, would seem the ideal opportunity to explore the potential of a concept like the everyday. At least since their



speed- and profit-driven business culture of global corporations. Though presumably Berke would reject such a recommendation, her quotidianism is but the other side of the same coin of such antitheoretical thinking. For while the main targets of her rhetoric are the architectural celebrities and commodities that are inevitably products of a market economy, her position is also marked by cynicism disguised as a newly cool factualism. It is a reaction against the very enthusiasm of a transformative architectural practice—against the speculative spirit and context-transcending power of critical thinking itself.

An architecture of the everyday will, by definition, have little to distinguish it. Correctly perhaps,

The building easily fell under the shadow of the corduroy-concrete turrets of Paul Rudolph's magnificently foreboding A + A Building, half a block away. And there's nothing quotidian about the A + A.

No wonder Berke proposed something calmer, more discrete for the Yale art school's new home. The Jewish Community Center presented an ideal opportunity for the architect's theories of the everyday. Though the community center's interiors were always pedestrian, they were blessed with expanses of floor-to-ceiling windows. In addition to beautifully rebuilding the façade (new materials, same proportions), Berke has revealed rather than redesigned the practical functionality of the original interiors. Thus the old handball courts



Berke employs a curtain wall on the façade facing quiet Crown Street (above), where diners and bungalows are more prevalent than museums and university buildings. A new ramp and stair (top) give access to the rear of the former community center. The stair is visible at the end of an alley (facing page) that leads from the small midblock courtyard to Crown Street.

**An architecture of the everyday may therefore be quite ordinary.**

It is blunt, direct, and unself-conscious. It celebrates the potential for inventiveness within the ordinary and is thereby genuinely “of its moment.” It may be influenced by market trends, but resists being defined or consumed by them.

**An architecture of the everyday may be crude.**

There is a freshness to things that are raw and unrefined. Buildings that are conceived without polish may be rough, but “rough-and-ready.”

**An architecture of the everyday may be sensual.**

The everyday world is sensual. It not only provokes sight but also touch, hearing, smell. The architecture of the everyday encompasses places known by their aroma, surfaces recognizable by their tactile qualities, positions established by echo and reverberation.

**An architecture of the everyday may also be vulgar and visceral.**

While vulgarity may seem the opposite of anonymity, both are often oblivious to external standards. This is not necessarily bad: Standards of taste serve to legislate an approved set of objects. The vulgar rejects good taste and the unthinking obedience it demands.

In architecture, standards of good taste seem to dictate that the presence of the body not be acknowledged in or by buildings. Architectural photographs rarely show people, and the true user is often ignored by the architect. The result is sterility. Visceral presence cannot be denied.

**An architecture of the everyday acknowledges domestic life.**

There is poetry and consolation in the repetition of familiar things. This is not to romanticize dreary and oppressive routine;

move into New York City’s SoHo in the 1960s, artists have frequently appropriated run-down urban buildings, putting them to new uses that highlight previously unappreciated qualities. This sort of alchemy does happen in Berke’s complex in the principal double-height work and exhibition space for the graphic design department. New plaster walls set off industrial windows and brick walls adroitly retained from the existing structure. With its complex interweaving of new and old ducts, trusses, skylights, and light canisters, the ceiling juxtaposes utility and playfulness. Natural light fills the space, augmented by the 24-hour-a-day energy that emanates from the students’ desks, located around a perimeter mezzanine. Reinforcing this sense of intense collective commitment, administrative offices and seminar rooms have been carefully sited around the periphery of the room at the ground level.

Berke complains that architects don’t value the experience of ordinary routines, or acknowledge the artistic potential in so doing. One might then consider in-between spaces such as hallways and staircases to be quintessential sites for showing these innate possibilities. Indeed, the rear façade of her new annex is particularly successful in drawing from the local brick vernacular and from Kahn’s serene industrial aesthetic. Unfortunately, however, her entrances on Chapel Street and at midblock seem cramped and uninviting. Once inside, the corridors seem as prosaic as those of a typical university or corporate office building. Granted, they are a little wider, better lit, and more subtly textured than the norm, but they hardly provide incentive for impromptu display and discussion, much less the events,

then, Berke’s annex for the School of Art recedes into a subaltern dumbness. The only manipulation of the rectangular volume is a chunk carved away to make the entry. The main façade on Crown Street is exactly the same as that facing the parking and loading area internal to the block. While the warm-gray brick and curtain wall seem to nod to Kahn’s Yale University Art Gallery, just visible down Chapel Street, the most salient motif—at the corner where the brick parapet stops to receive the insertion of the curtain wall—is a direct crib of Kahn’s Jewish Community Center, which Berke has renovated as the School of Art and New Theater. With this, the recidivism of Berke’s green glass panels, aluminum mullions, and gray brick comes into focus. Far from earlier modern uses of the anonymous and the generic (Hannes Meyer’s, for example) as an anti-aesthetic of shock and transgression, and far from the self-transcending irony of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown’s “ugly and ordinary,” Berke’s quotidianism isn’t rough enough. It neither discloses some formerly forbidden space of the city nor speculates about some possible future condition different from present empirical reality. Rather, it is all too consumably contextual—as easy to take as it is to ignore.

While I would not want to pass judgement on the larger position that Berke, Steven Harris, and others are trying to articulate, Berke’s quotidianism as we have it here in New Haven furnishes a prototype of nondialectical thought. While the building may indeed avoid celebrity, its extremely localized conception of context and its emphasis on the individual motif or material (at the expense of the network of relationships in which they are embedded) continue to encourage

have become galleries, the gymnasium has been turned over to the graphics department, and a swimming pool—with some markers still visible—is used for photography juries. Double-height spaces rising from below, and balconies surrounding rooms above, reinforce a subtle archeological theme of space layered in time.

And while it is both mystifying and intriguing to read a plaque over the renovated building’s entrance, dedicated to “the Jewish men and women of the community who gave their lives in service to our country,” it also comes across as a bit arbitrary. Evocations of an eventful past are enlisted to enrich a budget-driven present. But why?

Peculiarities of the program—the building is in fact home not only to the art school, but also to the Yale drama school’s experimental theater—are allowed to simply be, without the help of much explanation or signage. At first glance, a banner over the entrance, as well as a barely recognizable box office and the incongruous sight of rows and rows of temporary seating in the building’s Chapel Street vestibule, seem to be the only clues that there are inhabitants other than the artists in residence. The neutrality acts as an almost secret code: Those who know, know; the rest can just ask. Even the reception and administrative offices for the art school are located far from the entrance.

Detailing throughout the building may be systematic, but looks rather ad hoc. Concrete flooring is patched. Several different lighting systems—primarily industrial or marine in character—overlap, without much distinction. (In fact, in their cubicle studios, art students are lucky enough to get a choice between incandes-



A broad lobby (above) fronts Chapel Street and doubles as a foyer for a new black-box theater. Custom cabinets along the renovated building's main hallway (far left) incorporate cubbyholes for students and faculty. Berke specified old-fashioned wash basins and an irregular pattern of floor tiles in the restrooms (left).



The graphic design department occupies the mezzanine and main floor of the community center's former gymnasium (right); the photography department meets in what was once the community center's green-tile pool (above). Student project reviews and exhibitions occur in the principal public space of Berke's annex (below).





events need not be dictated and programmed by architects. An architecture of the everyday allows for personal rites but avoids prescribing rituals.

**An architecture of the everyday may take on collective and symbolic meaning but it is not necessarily monumental.**

Without denying the need for monuments, it questions whether every building need be one.

**An architecture of the everyday responds to program and is functional.**

It is a form of design in which program contributes meaning, and function is a requirement to satisfy rather than a style to emulate. It resists debasement into winsome reproductions of another time in the name of “the vernacular” or simplistic contextualism.

**An architecture of the everyday may change as quickly as fashion, but it is not always fashionable.**

If the idea of an architecture of the everyday currently seems both a little too fashionable and a little too much like fashion, note that the real architecture of the everyday is subject to different forces of change from those that drive fashion. The forms, materials, and images of innovation in everyday life are often unpredictable. The next everyday cannot be discovered through focus groups and market analysis.

**The architecture of the everyday is built.**

“Thoughts on the Everyday,” from *Architecture of the Everyday*, edited by Deborah Berke and Steven Harris (Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

whether spontaneous or carefully orchestrated, that should take place in the interstices of an art school. Everything is in its place, so nothing can surprise us.

The building seems to function well in many ways, which is surely commendable. Its studied casualness and reasonable restraint are like a pair of khakis. One longs for some panache, however, to offset Berke’s intentional unobtrusiveness. Quotidian life highlights the human ingenuity of making-do, as well as the exceptional moments that embellish familiar routines. Berke seems to fear that all “signature” architecture will be as aggressive as Paul Rudolph’s, when just as often, as in the hands of Louis Kahn, it can be incredibly sensitive and humane.

Gwendolyn Wright is a professor of architectural history at Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation.

submission to just what already is rather than what could be, discouraging us from making connections and pondering contradictions. Its common-sense epistemology—which would make theory more “suitable” for average practice rather than provide a challenge to both theory and practice—recommends an unreflexive, domesticated, and merely operational use of architecture. This seems to me antagonistic to any kind of upward intellectual or aesthetic impulse. We should be suspicious of it for the combination of mediocrity and respectability which makes it up.

K. Michael Hays is Professor of Architectural Theory at Harvard University and an adjunct curator at the Whitney Museum for American Art.

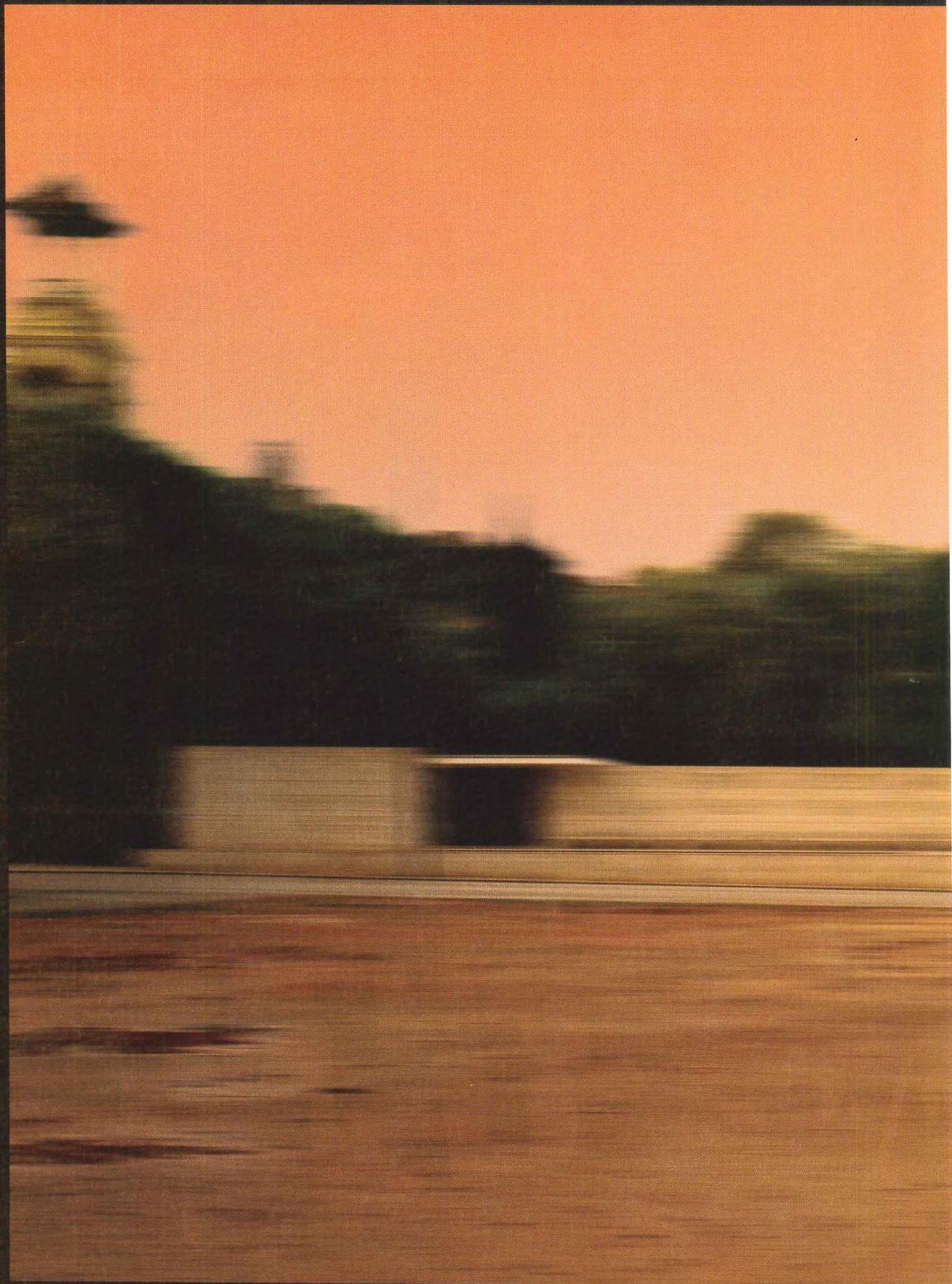
cent, fluorescent, and natural lighting). Even in the obviously careful selection of a textured ceiling panel from the 1960s, Berke seems determined to make sure that the architect’s hand is invisible. The addition’s interiors are even simpler than the main building. One sees how the everyday works when not bolstered by the intrigue factor that comes with preexisting conditions. That it will serve its users efficiently is without question, whether it will eventually have its own stories, time will tell. Berke has set the stage. The ultimate success of everyday architecture would seem to depend much on the integrity of what went before.

Julie V. Iovine is a senior design reporter at *The New York Times*.

In the annex, student artists have adapted Berke’s simple, day-lit studios to their own needs, in this case adding a television and guitar and laying carpet over the poured-concrete floor.

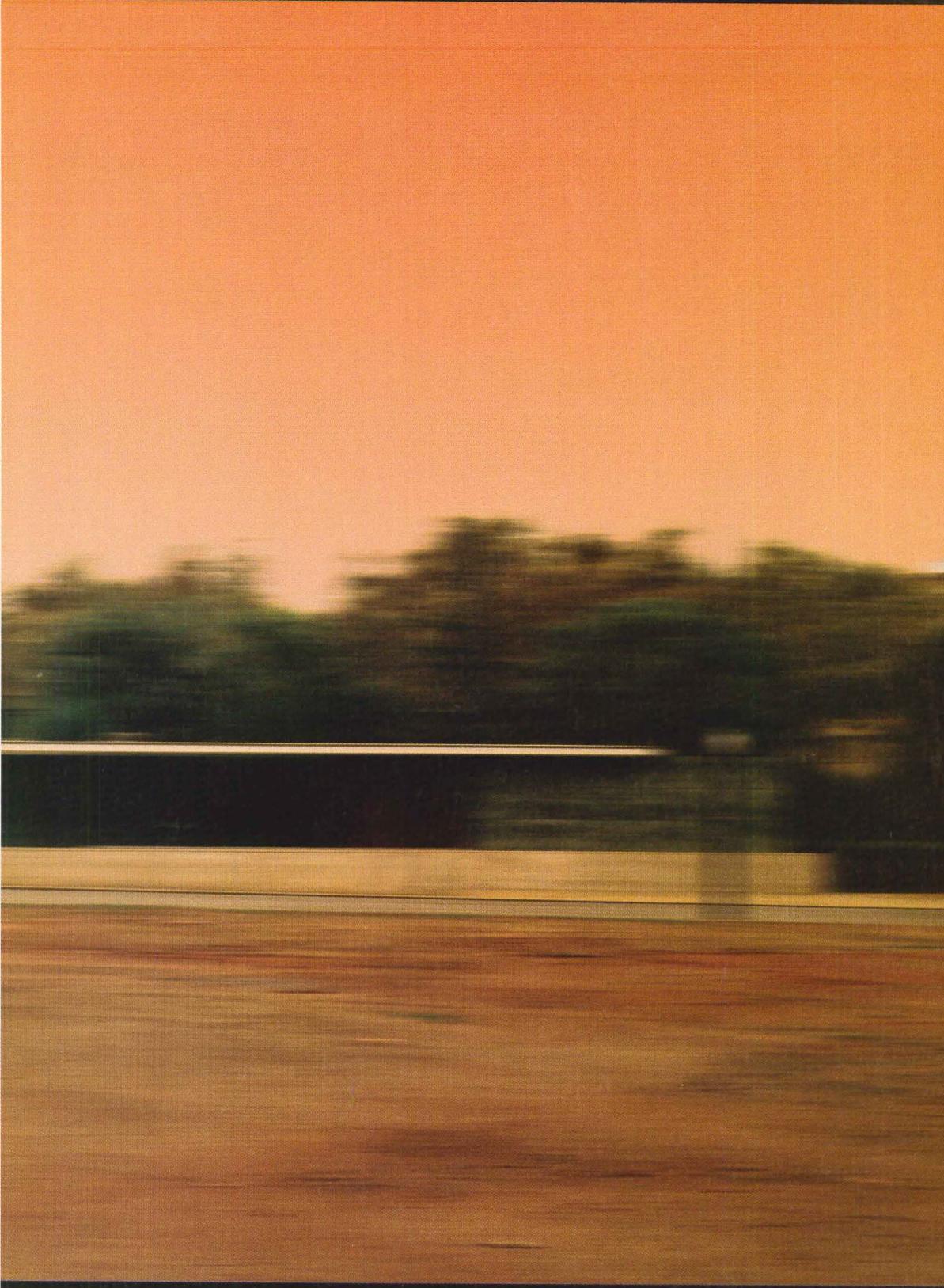
**HOLCOMBE T. GREENE JR. HALL, YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ART AND NEW THEATER, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT**  
**CLIENT:** Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut—Larry Regan (senior architect/project manager); Val Woods (senior architect/planning); Richard Benson (dean, School of Art); Stanley Wojewodski Jr. (dean, School of Drama) **ARCHITECT:** Deborah Berke Architect, New York—Deborah Berke (principal); Amy Lelyveld (project manager); Catherine Bird (project architect); Maitland Jones (project architect); Glenn Garrison, Stephanie Christoff, Jonathan Jones, Bill Agostinho, Faith Rose, Jean Jaminet, Tom Tulloch, Stéphane LeBlanc, Marc Leff, Robert Schultz, Karina Tengberg, Julie Eakin, Joey Demeo (project team) **ENGINEERS:** Robert Silman Associates (structural, consulting engineers); Flack + Kurtz (mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection); URS Corporation AES (civil) **CONSULTANTS:** Haley & Aldrich, Underground Engineering & Environmental Solutions (soils); Jaffe Holden Scarborough Acoustics (acoustical); Gary Gordon (lighting); R.A. Heintges Architects Consultants (curtain wall); Fisher Dachs Associates (theater); Strong Cohen (signage); VDA (vertical transportation); Accu Cost Construction Consultants (cost); Bruce Spiewak (consulting architect, code); Dimeo Construction Company (construction manager) **COST:** Withheld at owner’s request **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Victoria Sambunaris





## **MIES REVISITED**

Photographer Thomas Ruff takes on the canonical modernist image of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.



**d.p.b.02, 1999**

*German Pavilion,  
International Exposition,  
Barcelona, 1928–29,  
demolished 1930*

The original German Pavilion had a short life span: the nine-month duration of the 1929 Barcelona World's Fair. Until its reconstruction in 1986, the world knew Mies's early masterpiece only through a handful of quiet, highly staged black and white photographs. Ruff sees the building as anything but static:

**"For me, the Barcelona Pavilion is a kind of locomotive of modern architecture,"** he says to explain the intense blurring effect in his picture.

**h.t.b.06, 1999**

*Tugendhat House,  
Brno, Czech Federal  
Republic, 1930*

Ruff made several versions of this interior of the Tugendhat House, exaggerating the colors in one and blanching another. **"The idea was to imitate a photograph from the 1960s,"** says Ruff, who effectively made an icon of the avant-garde look like one of a thousand postwar knockoffs, as seen in the faded pages of a shelter magazine.





**h.l.b.01, 2000**

*Lemke House,  
Berlin-Hohenschönhausen,  
1932–33*

**h.r.p.01, 2001**

*Riehl House,  
Potsdam-Neuebabelsberg,  
1906–07*

Mies did not adhere to a documentary rule when photographing his buildings, and continually edited out anything he thought might distract from his point. Of the Lemke House (top), Riley explains, “**In the historic photos, the building on the left with the peaked roof is always removed.** The irony is that while Thomas has a reputation for manipulating images, he left that building in.” Ruff takes the opposite tack in the Riehl House (bottom), but to the same end, adding porch windows of a much later date on to the definitive canonical photograph from the 1930s.



## An interview with Thomas Ruff and the curators of the Museum of Modern Art's *Mies in Berlin* exhibition.

Because “Miesian” has become a catch-all for pretty much any building that is clean-lined, rectilinear, and glassy, it may be time to revisit what, exactly, we talk about when we talk about Mies. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montreal are doing just that, with concurrent retrospectives on the work of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. MoMA's *Mies in Berlin* covers the German-born architect's work prior to his departure for the United States in 1938, and the CCA's *Mies in America* the work done after. (Both shows open June 21 in New York City, the latter at the Whitney Museum of American Art.) As part of the process of looking afresh at Mies's early career, MoMA commissioned photographer Thomas Ruff to expand his ongoing series on buildings Mies designed before he left Europe. Using both new photography and digitally altered versions of archival images, Ruff manages to present Mies in an entirely new light: The stately Barcelona Pavilion is seen as through the window of a speeding car. *Architecture* asked Ruff and MoMA curators Terence Riley and Barry Bergdoll to talk about Mies, Ruff's pictures of Mies's buildings, and the tricky business of photographing architecture in general.

### ARCHITECTURE: **Why Mies? Why now?**

TERENCE RILEY: There hasn't been a show on Mies here at MoMA since 1986, at the height of the postmodern movement: Mies was given a fairly chilly reception. I think that architects have rediscovered him, and that we're actually behind the curve a little bit. We don't want this show to just confirm what people already think about Mies, and that is one of the reasons I found Thomas's photographs so exciting. So much of the work is familiar from a series of canonical photographs—especially of the Barcelona Pavilion, which, until it was recently rebuilt, only existed in black and white photographs. If there's going to be a new critical view of Mies, people are going to have to really use their eyes to reorient themselves to the work. And for me, Thomas Ruff's photographs are all about looking.

BARRY BERGDOLL: Thomas's photographs invite a defamiliarization of this very familiar architecture. We've seen the historical photographs so many times that now we think of them as merely being views of the building, rather than as framing those buildings in a particular way.

### **How will the pictures be hung in the exhibition? Next to the more familiar canonical photographs?**

RILEY: Well, my first instinct was to distribute them in groupings through the exhibition. And Thomas, I think rightly, really didn't want to segregate them as an art project. He really wanted them to be with the other material. That's what we're doing.

THOMAS RUFF: I thought that because it is not my exhibition—it's about Mies—we should use my photographs as an illustration of his work. Photography can be art, but there's always a link back to reality—the thing that was in front of the camera when the photograph was taken—even if the photograph is altered. I like the idea of having a model of a Mies building beside one of my photographs. It could be an interesting combination that helps people look at differently both at my work and Mies's work.

**You studied under Bernd and Hilla Becher, who are famous for making pictures of industrial buildings organized by building type. Is there a relationship between their work and your photographs of Mies's buildings?**

RUFF: One thing I learned from the Bechers is the value of working in a series. I think that with one photograph you have not proved that you're right or the image is right. One reason I work in a series is to prove to myself that yes, I did the right thing.

**How did you get interested in photographing architecture?**

RUFF: I tried to photograph a series of apartment buildings, office buildings, even some industrial buildings that were not high architecture—they were very average postwar German or European buildings, and quite ugly. But strangely enough, the photographs of the ugly buildings looked very beautiful. In 1991, Jacques Herzog of Herzog & de Meuron asked me if I could photograph one of their buildings, and we did our first collaboration.

RILEY: I was really interested in how you worked with Jacques on the Ricola Building.

RUFF: When he called me, I did not want to do the photograph. But because the façade of the building is so simple, I told him that he should commission somebody to take the photograph, and, if it's okay, I'd authorize it; if it's not okay, I could alter it with a computer. It was difficult to take one image of the building because it's so long, and you cannot go farther away to make it with one shot. So I told them, okay, you send me two shots and I'll make the montage on the computer. I made some changes in the background and then the image was perfect.

**That seems to up the ante on the architect's original vision for the building, presenting it in a way that people will never be able to perceive it in real life.**

RUFF: Yes, but I think that photography can be used as a prosthesis. If it's used in a scientific way, photography can show you things you cannot actually see: microcosms or stars.

RILEY: And actually, many of the photographs that Mies himself took are altered. His pictures of the Berlin Building House, for example: It sits inside of a big exhibition hall, and he eliminated the whole hall. All of a sudden, I realized that Thomas's instinct was correct. It's another way of looking, and it complements and contradicts at the same time.

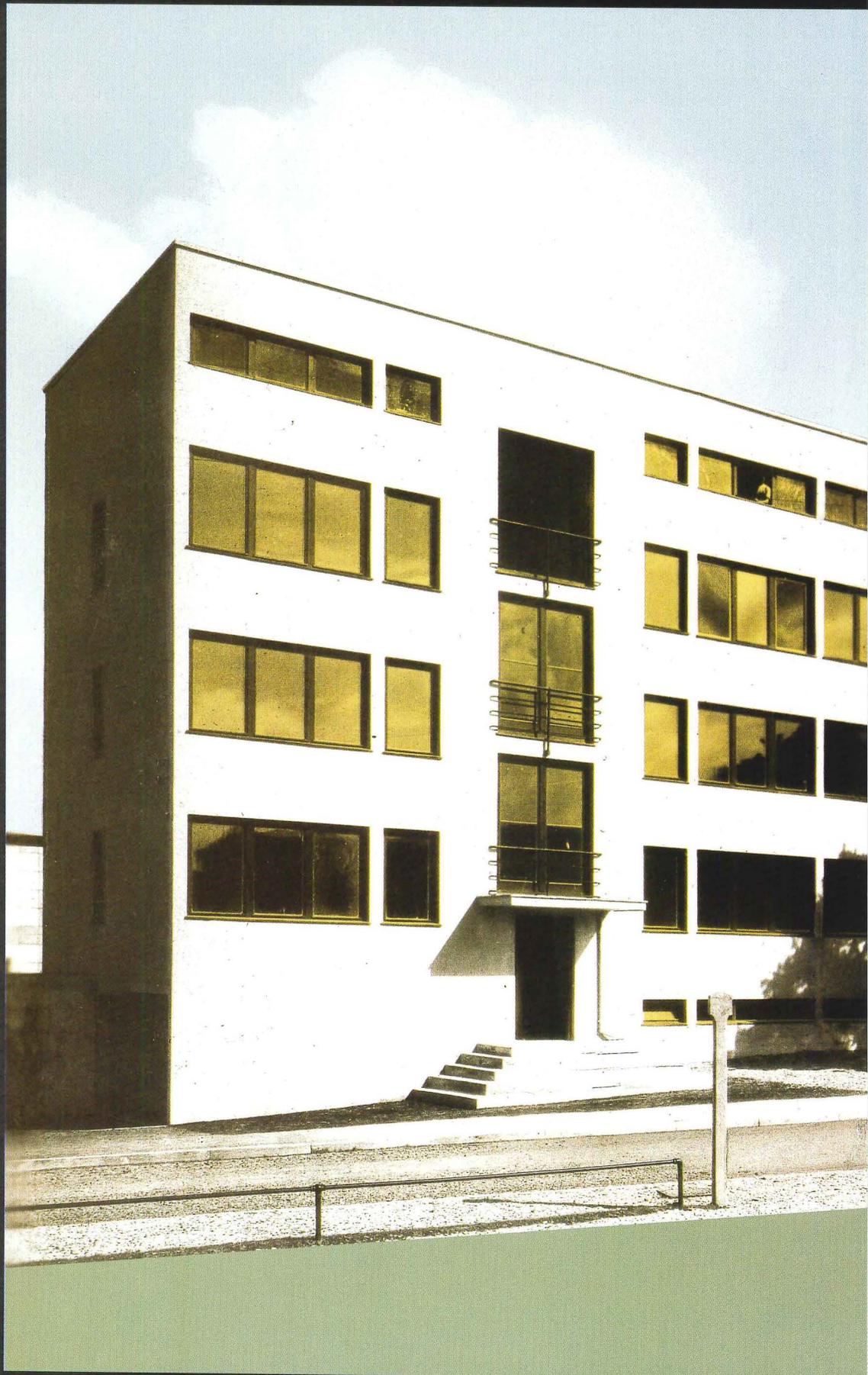
BERGDOLL: Another thing that is very interesting is that many of Mies's images, when they were first presented, were meant to be shocking, and they shocked. Now they've been hanging in the Museum of Modern Art for decades, and we love them as old modern masters. Juxtaposed with some of Thomas's manipulations, which on some level are shocking, the audacity of Mies's more avant-garde side comes back to life. ■



**d.p.b.03, 1999**

*German Pavilion,  
International Exposition,  
Barcelona, 1928–29,  
demolished 1930*

Ruff turned the drapes of the Barcelona Pavilion into the equivalent of a decorator's swatch-book, turning out variations in green, blue, black, and red. **"In photographs of all the buildings from the 1920s or 1930s the original exists only in black and white. Sometimes I miss the color, even if it makes the image a bit kitschy."**



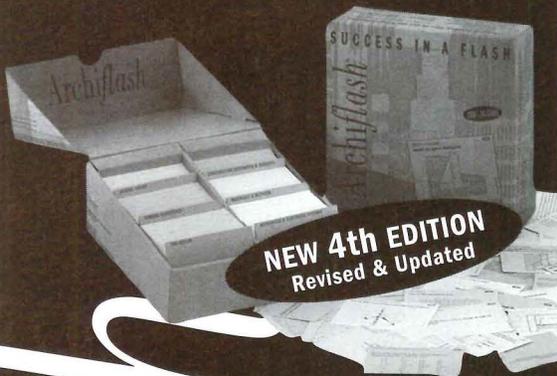


**w.h.s.02, 2000**

*Weissenhof Municipal  
Housing, Stuttgart,  
1925–27*

Riley on Ruff's picture of the Weissenhof Municipal Housing: "The building became whiter than white; it's perfect. The green became perfect green grass, the sky more blue. It's almost a socialist utopia. Only one thing questions this: The windows seem to be sampled from the orange-colored glass of the East German Parliament, which makes it a caution against complete utopian fantasy."

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## Quick, Build Us a School

*continued from page 52*

Jacqueline Barham, a former Los Angeles school principal who is now in charge of programming new projects. Not every high school, she says, needs a competition-ready athletic stadium. So one new school in a given area might have full-fledged facilities that would be shared by neighboring schools with smaller practice fields and courts. The land problem leads to unusual designs, such as three-story elementary schools and four-story high schools with subterranean parking and tennis courts atop the garages. "We're trying to get the most out of our land," she says. "These sites are very, very compact."

That doesn't mean there is no room for fun in the designs. To the contrary, says Mary-Ann Ray, principal, with Robert Mangurian, of StudioWorks, who is designing with the Jerde Partnership a \$39 million high school at the junction of Vermont

"Architects are charged to make creative solutions in really tight parameters," Rios adds. "They have to be very efficient."

The LAUSD has also had to work—and fight—to streamline approval processes with the state of California, which are fraught with delays in reviews and compliance checks. "The state's restrictions are biased toward a suburban development pattern," says architect and planner Martha Welborne, who also serves on the district's design advisory council. But in Los Angeles, "there aren't greenfield sites that you can build a school on," Welborne points out. "A high school is supposed to be 40 acres. That's the [size of the] Boston Common." It has taken a bit of informed flexibility to keep these projects on schedule. "The state has been great in understanding our limitations and helping us get our sites approved," says Barham.

It would be unfair to call the LAUSD's strategy "better" than that of Clark County—after all, they are both part of the nation's most beleaguered administrative group, hemmed in by low budgets and high

**"We tell the architects that we don't have the money to do everything, so do one thing well," says Marvin L. Taff, a design consultant to the LAUSD.**

Avenue and the I-10 Freeway that will conjure images of a shopping mall. "We want to be somewhat inventive, and so far the school district has been enthusiastic," Ray says. But, she adds, "the fee and budget are really unrealistic. [The district doesn't] barter an inch."

The officials running the construction effort say they are trying hard to be a good client in search of first-rate design while at the same time watching their money. "We tell the architects that we don't have the money to do everything, so do one thing well," says Marvin L. Taff, a design consultant to the LAUSD.

Once designs reach the schematic stage, they undergo review by one of several design advisors the district has retained to help keep the architecture interesting but realistic. The advisory panel "is meant to be a kind of support group," says architect Mark Rios, who both serves as a design advisor to the LAUSD and is designing two primary schools for the district.

expectations. Clark County officials are watching their jurisdiction fill up as fast as they can build it, whereas Los Angeles is a long-settled and experienced locality in which to build schools. Los Angeles has the luxury of institutional experience (and sometimes the curse of too much of it) that allows it to take a more complex approach to building new schools. Las Vegas students, at least, will not necessarily know the difference between their prototype schools and much of the rest of American school design these days, which is similarly manipulated to be predictable and dull.

The question is, are we creating schools simply to contain children, or to engage them? Prototype designs offer a cheap way to crank out new schools fast, but in deploying them, Las Vegas school district planners may be underestimating the ways in which space shapes the individuals who use them—something that Los Angeles students could come to appreciate. ■

## Community Builders

continued from page 61

people from 20 nations lived between the 1860s and 1935 (when the last residents were evicted and the building was boarded up); the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC) in Newark, which has become a catalyst for Newark's economic renewal; the South Platte River Greenway in Denver, a stretch of formerly polluted waterfront transformed into a public greensward, which, in turn, spurred an estimated \$1 billion of mixed-use development along the riverbanks; and Swan's Marketplace in Oakland, California, an adaptive reuse of an old downtown market by a local nonprofit developer, which accommodates 18 units of affordable

scope, Bruner winners are similar in one key characteristic: Social awareness and betterment is clearly their primary motivation. In 1997, the gold medal was conferred to Times Square—not the famous square, but a long-derelect hotel nearby for homeless, low-income, elderly, mentally ill, or HIV/AIDS-infected adults. In 1995, the winner was the Maya Angelou Community Initiative in Portland, which began as an African-American feminist consciousness-raising program among very poor mothers, but resulted in a modest building project (42 units of low-income housing for mostly female-headed households) which, in turn, became the impetus for the renewal of an entire troubled neighborhood.

The Bruner is arguably the first design award to deem such aspects as grass-

## The Bruner Award seems determined to add “setting” and “society” to the Vitruvian trilogy of “firmness, commodity, and delight” as measures of “good” architecture.

housing, 20 units of loft-style, market-rate cohousing, and 24 commercial and art-related establishments.

These five projects, as well as past winners, are notably diverse. For example, the Tenement Museum was founded by an individual, Ruth Abram, a neighborhood activist who was inspired to use an authentic piece of urban fabric to promote an understanding of the immigrant experience. It runs with a full-time staff of eight and a yearly budget of \$3 million raised through grants, corporate sponsorship, donations, membership, and school tours. By sharp contrast, the massive NJ PAC is a \$187 million complex that brings cultural amenities to a long underserved audience. Like the 1999 Bruner gold medalist, San Francisco's Yerba Buena Gardens, NJ PAC was the result of creative public and private financing that implemented a complex program of theaters, parks, and art spaces (plus, in the case of Yerba Buena, housing, offices, retail establishments) to reform a skid-row district.

Despite differences in scale and

roots entrepreneurship, creative financing, and social urgency as relevant criteria for premiation. It also gives deserved attention to a brand of design ingenuity that is considerably less celebrated in the more product-oriented and celebrity-centric media.

The Bruner Foundation publishes a book to accompany each cycle that explicates the selection process and describes each finalist in detail. Over the course of a generation and more, it will be these publications (along with the archives compiled at the foundation) that will substantially add to our knowledge of how to build cities, enhance places, and nurture society. Architects and clients, politicians and developers alike may gain insight from the legacy celebrated and encouraged by the Rudy Bruner Award. ■

*Alex Krieger is the chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Design at Harvard's GSD. He is a principal of Chan Krieger & Associates, an architecture and urban design firm, and a contributing editor to Architecture.*

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Typical ticket agent consoles at San Francisco's International Terminal

## Flights of Fancy Finishes

Record numbers of flights—and delays—have a lot of people spending a lot of time in airports. Most American airports offer little more than greasy burgers, Jackie Collins potboilers, and turquoise carpet, leaving many travelers frustrated and disaffected. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's new International Terminal at San Francisco Airport counters that trend, offering ticket consoles detailed like fine furniture, stands of whispering bamboo, and the possibility of viewing art from the world's finest collections.

SOM knew that thousands of hassled passengers would move through the terminal every day, so durability was a chief concern. This prompted some heavy horseplay during design development: To test the austere porcelain-enamel aluminum paneling by Alliance America (eventually used throughout the terminal), the architects repeatedly smashed luggage-laden baggage carts into the panels. "It was a free-for-all. Four hundred pounds of luggage on a smart-cart makes quite a battering ram," says senior project designer Michael Duncan. Eventually SOM specified panels in two gauges. The lower panels, in frustrated passenger range, are thicker gauge metal and removable, because "even the strongest materials get scratched eventually," says Duncan.

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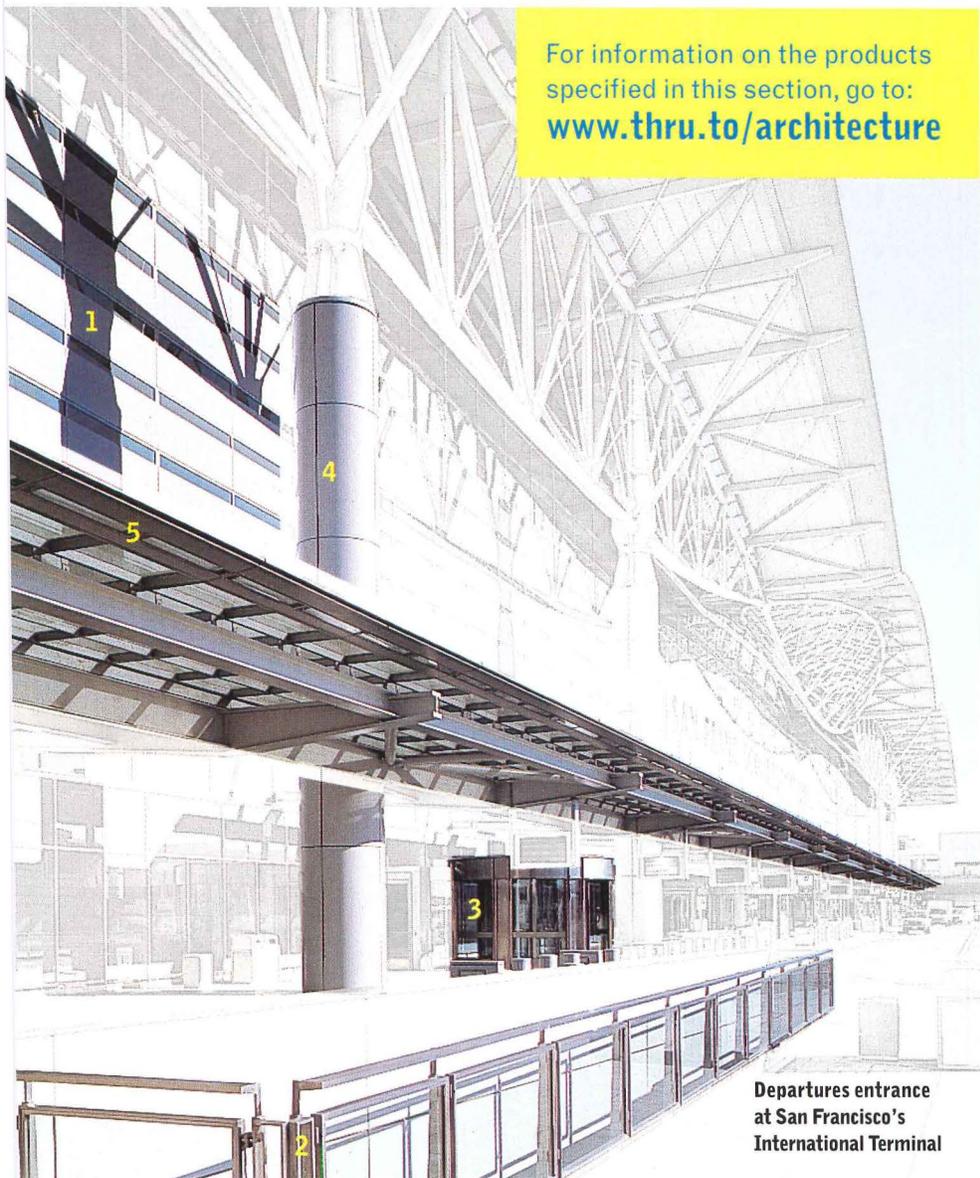
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Departures entrance  
at San Francisco's  
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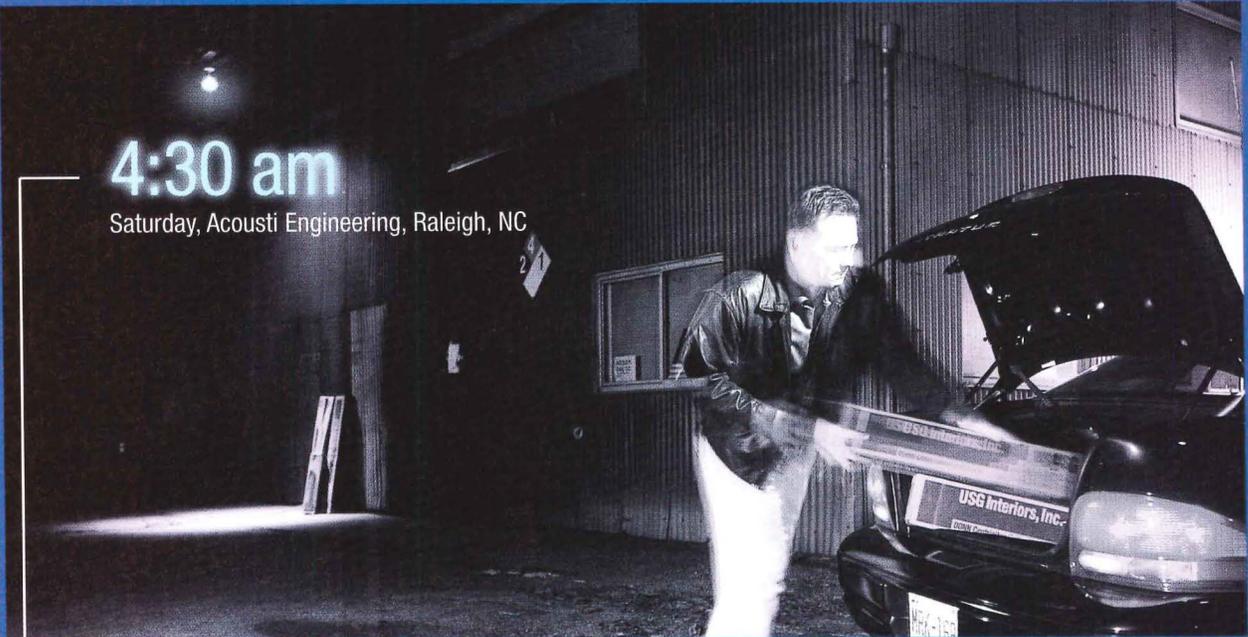
To further contain runaway rage, SOM designed the terminal interiors largely in a cool palette of whites and grays. Custom-designed ticket agent consoles, elevator cars, and display cases have common forms, detailing, and materials. “We didn’t want the space to feel sterile or cold,” notes Duncan, who clad the 30-by-700-foot upper portion of the terminal’s east wall in cherry-wood veneer panels manufactured by Vida. The selection of renewable cherry-wood earned SOM an award from the National Resources Defense Council. “People are especially sensitive to environmental issues in the Bay Area,” said Duncan. A linear grove of bamboo also helps soften the terminal’s edges, bringing a moment of Zen to the harrying experience of travel.

SOM’s attention to detail created an airport first—custom-designed display cases with climate controls that meet the curatorial standards of the Louvre or the National Gallery. Built by Columbia Fabricating, the cases can be adjusted to varying depths, allowing for the display of flat works, like paintings, closer to the glass, as well as larger three-dimensional pieces, like a recent exhibition of antique Japanese umbrellas.

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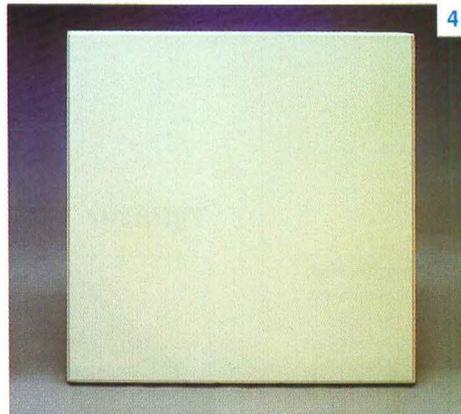
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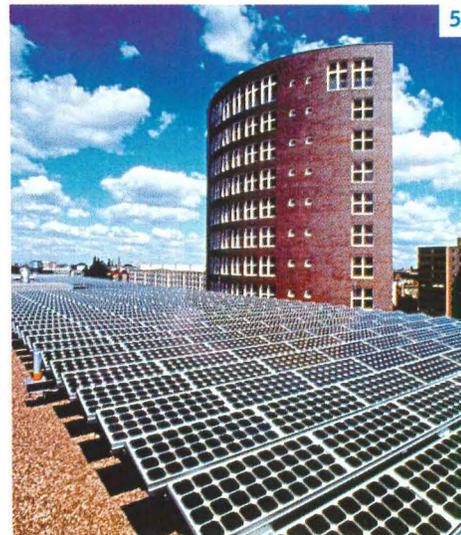
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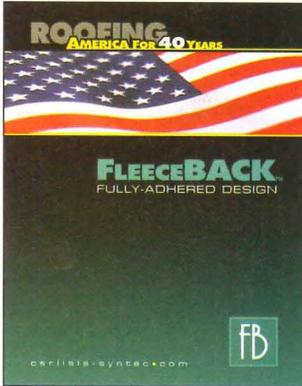
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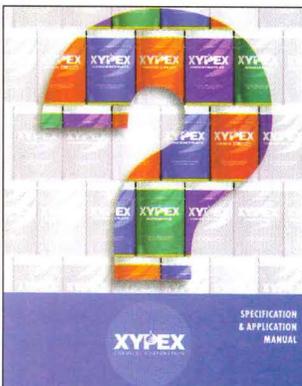
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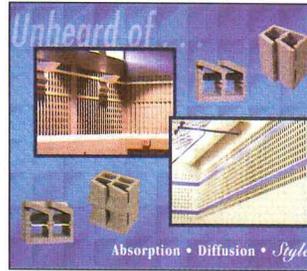
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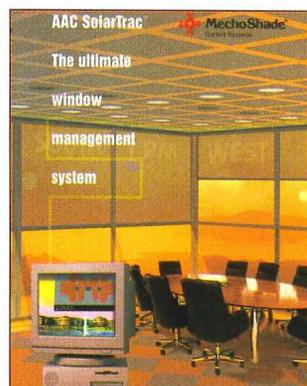
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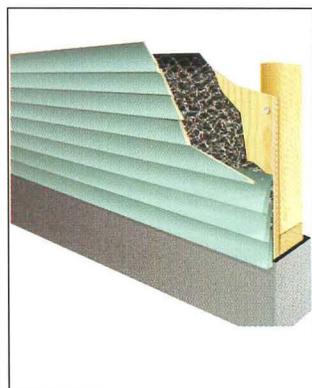
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# Space Hog

Not only will Brickell Bay Village obscure Miami's great Atlantis, **Beth Dunlop** says, it will compromise good architecture.

Arquitectonica's 1982 apartment building, the Atlantis, is a metaphor for modern Miami, the building's home. With its bold primary colors and daring, almost insouciant design, the Atlantis epitomizes the improbability of both the city and its architecture: An outsized blue-gridded brise-soleil seems to float in front of the building whose open sky-court houses a spiral stair, a hot tub, and a palm tree. The image is indelible. Think *Scarface*. Think *Miami Vice*.

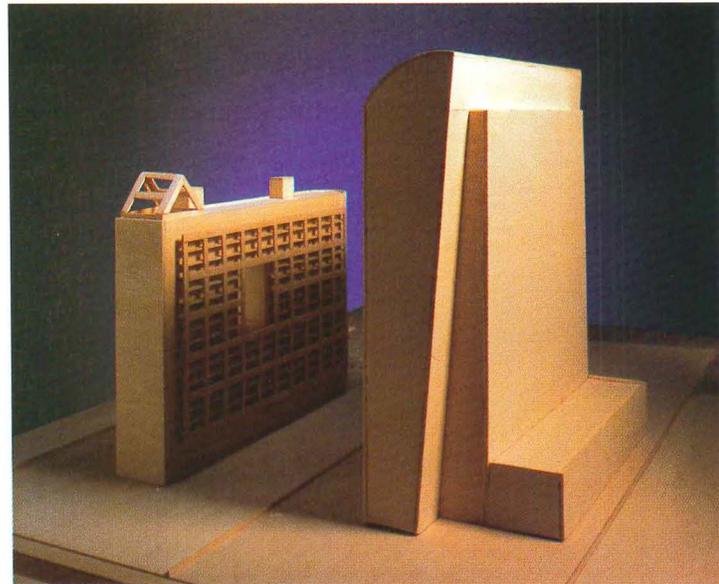
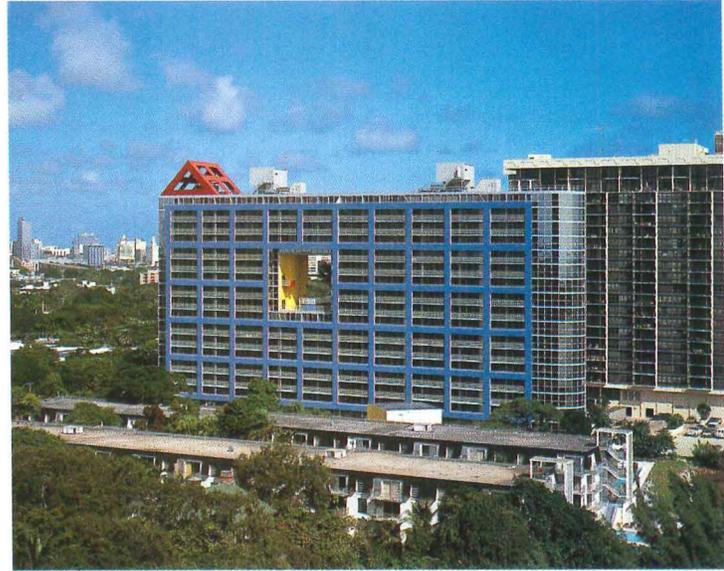
The Atlantis may be the city's most photographed structure, but soon its celebrated gridded façade may be obscured by a new building. The proposed structure is called Brickell Bay Village—though it's most unvillage-like, with 369 small rental units crammed into a 28-story building—and will be built directly south of the 18-story Atlantis. To make matters worse, the proposed design of this new behemoth is graceless, clumsy, and unimaginative.

The project, which is being developed by Michael Baumann, has been hotly contested, the subject of a half-dozen court, city commission, and planning board hearings. The design of Brickell Bay Village is the product of two local architecture firms, initially Wolfberg Alvarez and Partners and now Bermello, Ajamil & Partners. Opponents of this project—residents of the Atlantis and numerous others—contend that even under Miami's generous zoning allowance of 150 units to the acre, city planners have allowed Brickell Bay Village enormous latitude, figuring the floor area ratio (FAR) on a formula that counts land at the bottom of Biscayne Bay. This allows Baumann to build more on less actual land. Think banana republic. Think Carl Hiaasen.

The residents of the Atlantis are concerned, properly, that the city's zoning does not protect their rights when a proposed building literally leaves others in the dark, cutting off sunlight, breezes, views. And for Miami, the loss of the vista of the Atlantis is incalculable. Even the quick glimpse of it from I-95 has been, for almost two decades, a defining moment.

One wonders what compels an architect or a developer to blatantly obstruct a building that is so important to the city's identity. Indeed, Brickell Bay Village is way too big for its site and its neighborhood, but the issue is far greater than that.

Few laws safeguard important buildings of the recent past. We are dependent on sane zoning limits, the sensitivity of architects and

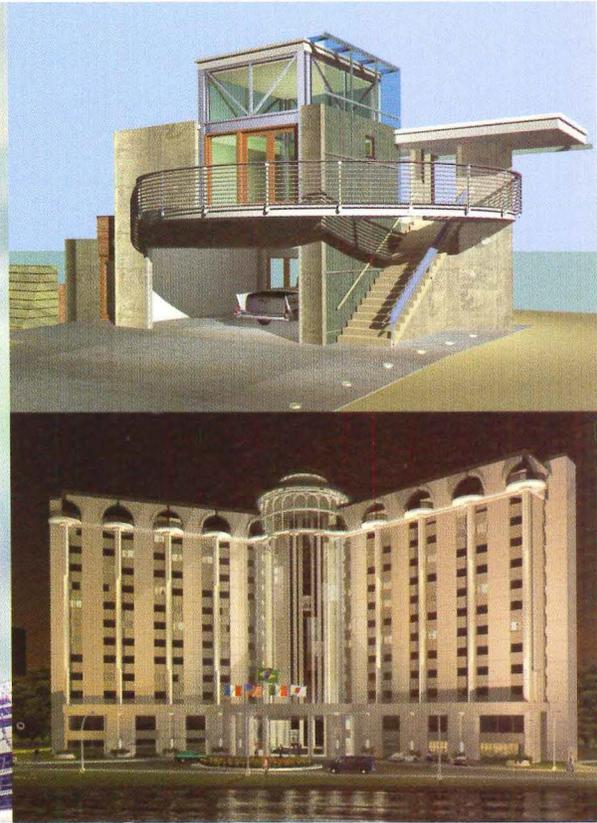


Arquitectonica's Atlantis (top) will be relegated to the shadows if the proposed model Brickell Bay Village (above, at right) becomes a reality.

developers, and the sensibility of politicians to protect these works. That's scary. Early in the 20th century (was the demolition of Pennsylvania Station the watershed?), we might have been able to rely on civic conscience. But this is a different era altogether. The threat the Atlantis now faces underscores the need to begin protecting important buildings of any age. ■

*Beth Dunlop is an architecture critic who lives in Miami beach. Her latest book is Beach Beauties.*

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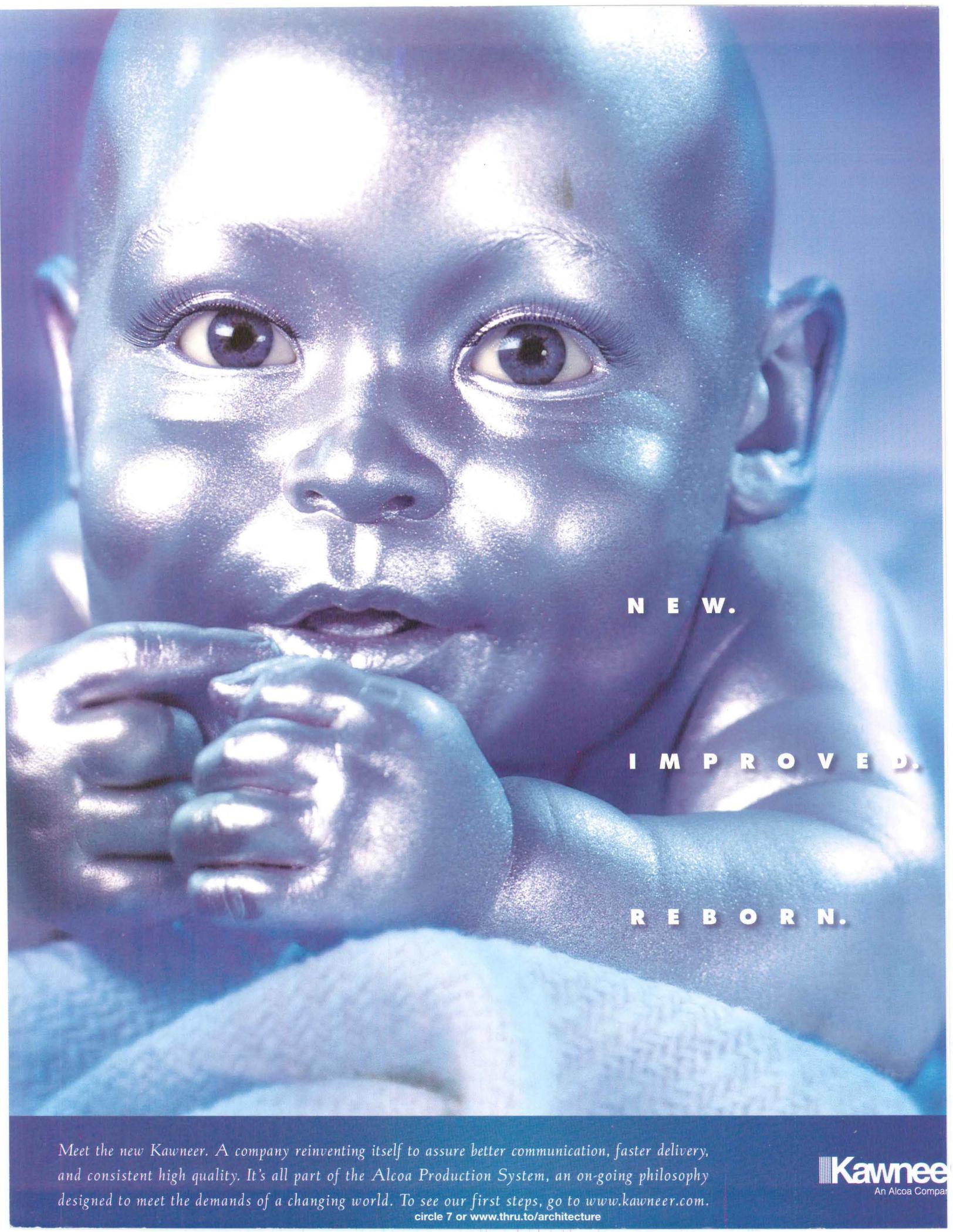
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