

Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



ASSYRIAN BRONZE

NOVEMBER, 1956

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William Roger Greeley, FAIA

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Carlos Contreras, HON. FAIA

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Louis La Beaume, FAIA

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Meyer Berger

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Robert W. Schmertz

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James M. Hunter

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John Stewart Detlie

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# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING  
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE  
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

NOVEMBER, 1956

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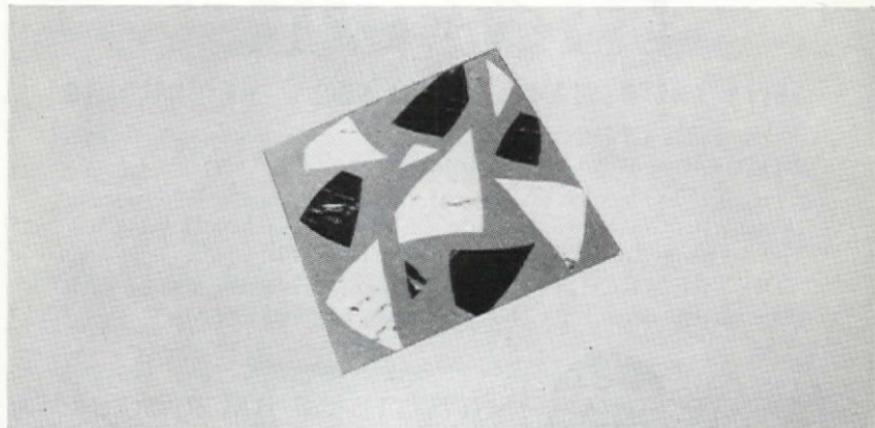
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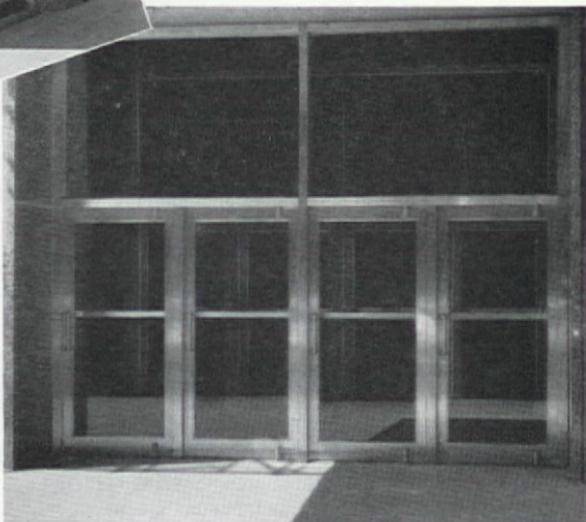


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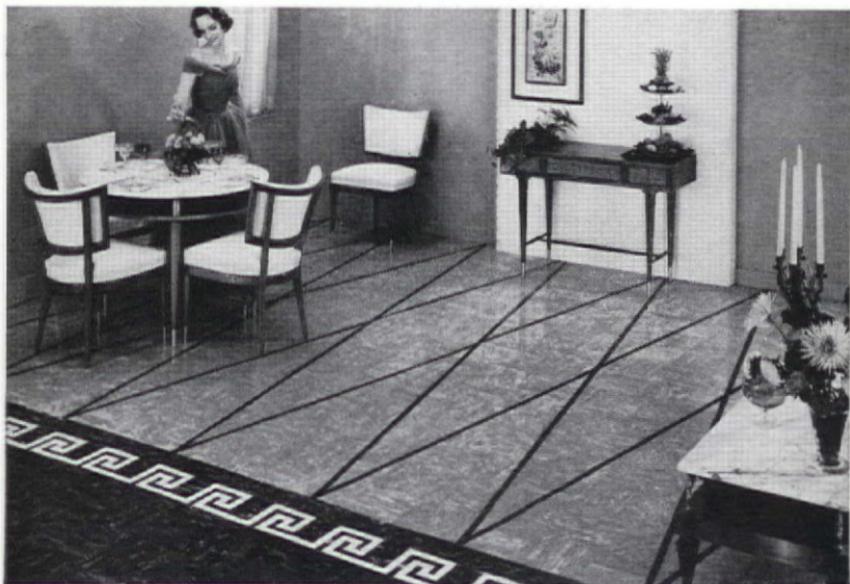
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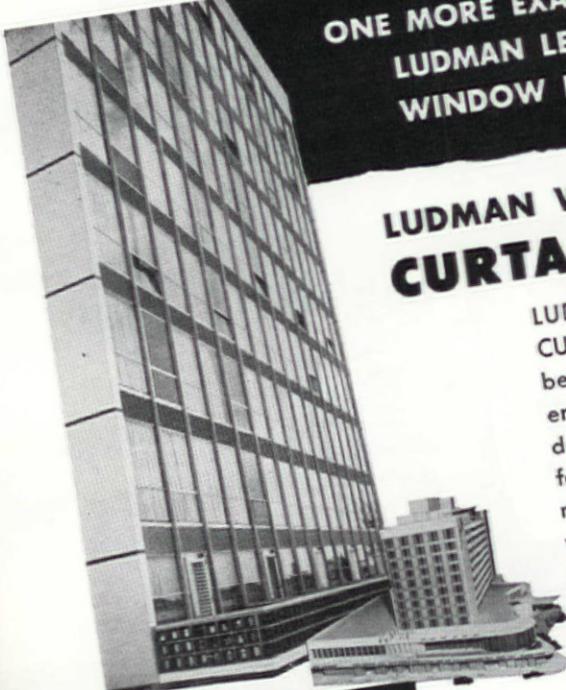
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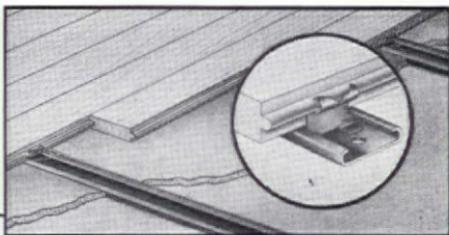
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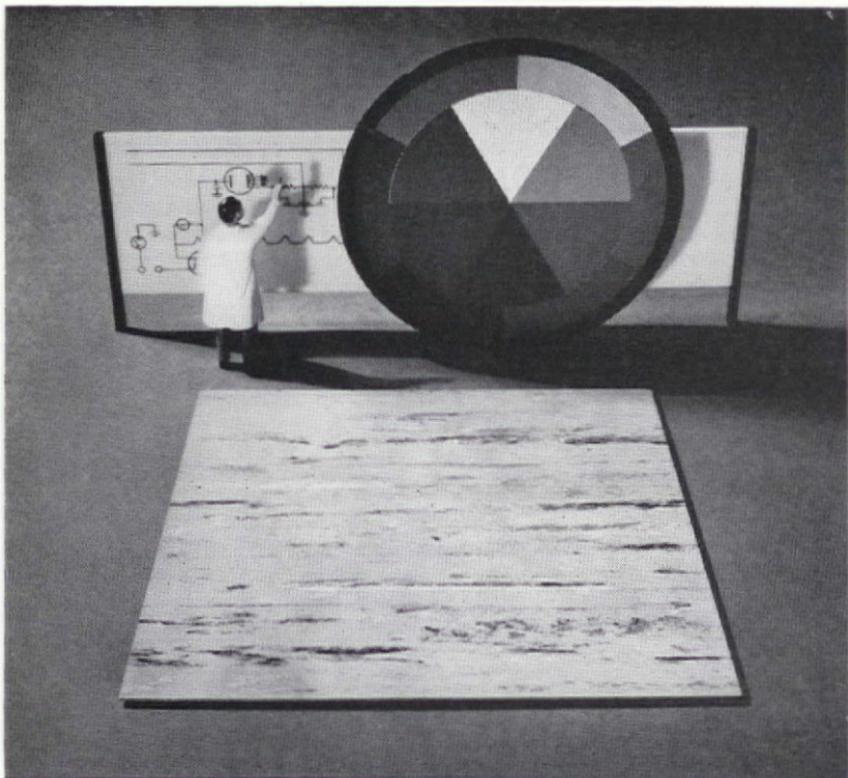
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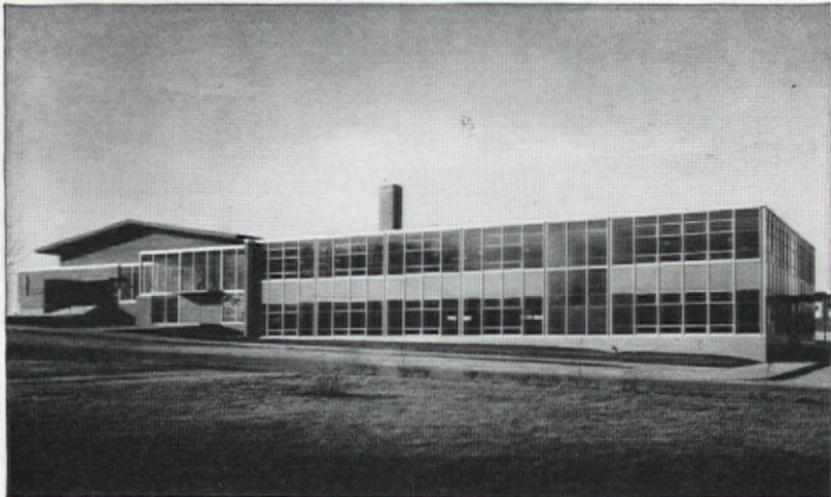
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## Cheaper Schools, Please!

By *William Roger Greeley*, FAIA

SCHOOL BUILDING COSTS have risen to a point where the public press finds occasion to give generous space to the discussion of the need for economy, the demand for simpler plans and specifications, and the savings due to prefabrication. There are four factors in construction costs to which greater attention should be given.

First, public schools are paid for out of taxes. It wasn't long ago that each community paid for its own schools; but now the community calls upon the state to pay a part and the nation a part to supplement the local appropriation. The reason given for this more elaborate system is to make it possible for each town and city to have better schools than it can afford by itself alone.

It is well to observe, however, that the money which seems to come as a "grant" from the state and the nation, doesn't pop out of a hat, like a magician's rabbit; and

it doesn't get voted into existence by the Merlin-like magic of a miracle-passing Congress. Its origin is much more prosaic. It is obtained through a system in which the citizens of each town and city in the nation, not wishing to have local taxes too high, vote to have themselves taxed in three separate blood-lettings. This, we have all been convinced, makes the burden easier to bear. After the operation performed by the local tax-collector, we come back to consciousness ready to be tapped by the Commissioner of Taxation of our state. Then, when we pull out of this successfully, we place ourselves on a third operating-table to be bled by a Federal leech.

By this clever and far-sighted procedure we have put our wealth into the hands of three political outfits with the naïve conviction that they will make it buy more than we ourselves could buy with it direct.

The next step after turning it

over to the tax-collectors is to vote it back to ourselves and call it a "grant." This pious naming of the child makes it seem to us like a gift from heaven, instead of our own flesh and blood. To be quite accurate, when it returns to us, it is not even the restoration of what we gave away, for it has been filtered through collectors, bureaus and fiscal agents, each of which has taken its cut; and the tax-attorney has had his bite of it. Now, like the prodigal son, it has come home wasted and depleted, each hundred dollars of it shrunk to eighty-two.

This is the tax angle of school-house construction. Each dollar of cost is worn out with much travel before its shrunken remains come home to be spent.

For the privilege of sending our money around the circuit, we raise the cost of our school-building by thousands of dollars. We kiss goodbye to a hundred thousand dollars and mail it to Washington in taxes, and then clap our hands with joy when Washington sends back \$82,000 of it as a "grant."

So much for the high cost of the money that we spend.

The second item is the site upon which the building is built. In the old days this piece of land used to

be a half-acre lot, just large enough to receive the building, with a small gravelly patch in front into which to expel the pupils at recess. The cost might be \$100 or \$200, and the cost of "development" was nothing—or, nothing plus a picket fence.

Today, on the contrary, the site must have an area of ten to thirty acres and must be developed with driveways, parking areas, paths, playgrounds, disposal fields, and elaborate surface drainage. This all requires money, and thoughtful citizens are convinced that it is money well spent.

To secure this site at anything but an exorbitant price, foresight would be required. There are few communities where such plots of land are lying around ready to be purchased; and yet the situation most frequently met with is one in which no foresight whatever is used, but in which the town or city, without previous thought, suddenly starts looking for a school site for a building already authorized! The result is that any site found to be available at all is either enormously expensive, because of houses already built upon it; or because of the fact that the community is forced to pay any price because there is no alterna-

tive site; or else it is ill-adapted to schoolhouse purposes, because no better parcel seems available. Sometimes it is regarded by the committee as a bargain, because of the low purchase price per acre. Recently, in a small city, such a "bargain" was acquired only to be followed by the expenditure of \$78,000 for blasting a ledge to make a suitable place for a building! The real cost of a site is the sum of the purchase price plus the cost of development. The land that costs the most to buy may nevertheless prove cheapest in the end.

Some communities are planning ahead and purchasing ample school sites in advance. These communities are really using some intelligence, and there is no better way to reduce costs than through the use of intelligence. Few believe this, so money continues to be lavishly squandered on school sites just through lack of foresight and of courage to face the future.

The third factor in schoolhouse costs is the kind of plans provided. These plans are usually worked out through the employment of an architect, who consults with the committee and tries to arrive at a competent solution of the problem. The cost of employing this pro-

fessional agent is stabilized by accepted rates published and adhered to by the members of The American Institute of Architects. Cut-rate architects, however, can always be found, just as cut-rate doctors and dentists and lawyers can.

A friend of mine received a bill for \$50 for a tooth extraction and when he next met the dentist, he remarked that he was holding back on the payment. "It took you only two minutes of your time," he said. "I am to blame," said the dentist. "I misjudged what you wanted. If I had known, I could have sent you to a man who would have taken an hour to get it out and charged only \$10."

The cut-rate architects have little to worry about. There are suckers on committees, as well as elsewhere. There are still those who are taken in by extravagant promises and smooth salesmanship. Yet, by and large, as the years go by, committees are more and more aware of these pitfalls, and this helps to keep the profession of architecture a profession rather than a racket. The design of a building is important and should be considered so when an architect is being selected. The competent and honest handling of the funds is

certainly equally important and calls for an architect of experience and proven integrity.

The fourth element of cost is the kind of market, which may be favorable or unfavorable. It pays to watch it and to fix the season, and even the day for bidding, as advantageously as possible. If bids for a \$250,000 schoolhouse are called for on the same evening as bids for a \$1,000,000 schoolhouse in the same area, the smaller job will suffer. If bids come when a steel strike is threatened, or after a hurricane or flood disaster, they will be higher than under normal conditions.

Planning ahead, so as to allow for taking advantage of a good market, is a measure of economy. 1) The cost of money, 2) the cost of the site, 3) the cost of good plans, and 4) the cost due to fluctuations in the market, are factors over which some control can be exercised. This is notably the case with 2, 3, and 4. Nevertheless, there are factors which are beyond control and which have to do with labor.

Labor, as it exists in the building trades, is the largest factor in the cost of a schoolhouse, and each year the laborer receives more money for less and poorer work.

This is not by any means the fault of the laborer. He finds himself so regimented and controlled by his union that it is extremely difficult for him to maintain standards that he would personally like to, either in the quantity or quality of his work, and even to be honest in his practices.

The uniform rate of wages, according to which skill and competence are not rewarded, has brought about the fulfillment of the prophecies of fifty years ago. It is not reasonable to expect skill where the least skilled are guaranteed the same wage as the most skilled.

The writer is interested in a building now under construction identical with and adjacent to an adjoining building, constructed in 1928. This provides an unusual chance for comparisons. In spite of all the improvements in grading and excavating machinery, faster truck deliveries, modernized factory equipment and up-to-the-minute telephone connections with all parties concerned, the 1956 building is taking one-half as long again to build as the earlier one. This costs money. The additional expense comes partly in the increased number of hours of labor paid for, and partly in the additional months

of overhead involving salaries of superintendent, foremen, time-keeper, office staff and rent.

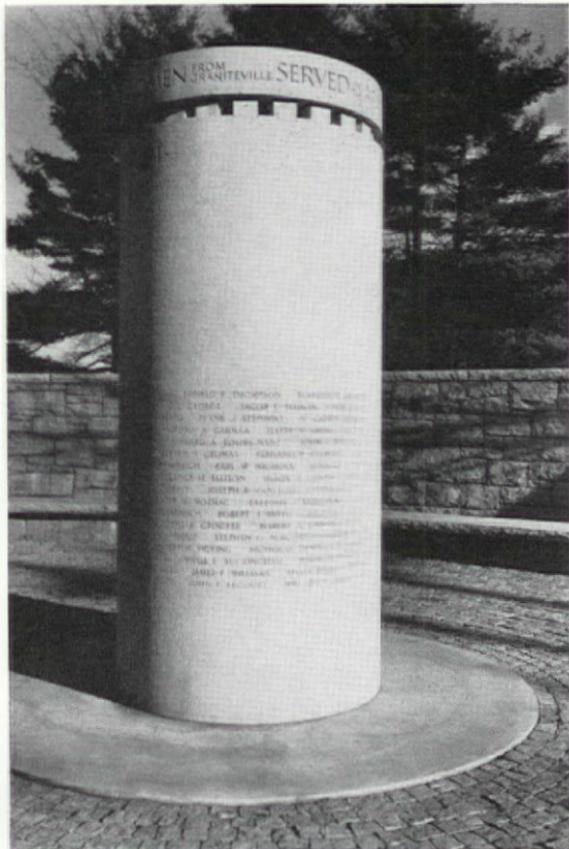
So, while we strive scientifically to save costs by using cheaper materials, we are constantly losing ground in the total expenditure due to shorter hours, reduced production per hour, and poorer workmanship. The present construction dollar spent on labor today is worth 14¢ of the dollar spent forty years ago, and the rate of decay is increasing. Under these conditions there is no miracle in technical engineering that can keep pace with the increasing unproductiveness, per dollar spent, of labor. It is not the rate per hour which is wrong in the employment of mechanics; it is the idleness and clumsiness per hour which hurt. In addition to this, no workman feels responsible for his own errors; he expects someone else to suffer. The contractor is constantly the victim of careless and slipshod workmen, and they expect him to pay the bill and like it. In fact, they resent any criticism of their work, even to the point of quitting the job at once. Any business-like contractor, in submitting a bid, must provide a generous item in his budget to pay for correction of poor work, and this cost is passed

on as part of the total cost to the owner.

The cost of schoolhouses at present is causing excitement everywhere. People are crying out that prices are too high. While there are little ineffective ways of reducing costs, there are also big ways. At the moment, we are inclined to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel—to omit a piece of blackboard here and a little waterproofing there, while we throw away money lavishly on fancy financing, eleventh-hour choice of sites, and complete surrender to exploitations that violate our American concepts of fair play and that should be bravely and patiently fought.

One last factor concerns our senses of values. In view of our deep-rooted pride in our public school system and the high value we place upon education, can we rationally get very much excited over the few dollars per year that a new schoolhouse costs each of us, individually, when at the same time our family budget is loaded down with gadgets and parties and trips and extras of a hundred kinds?

The answer, of course, cannot be "yes."



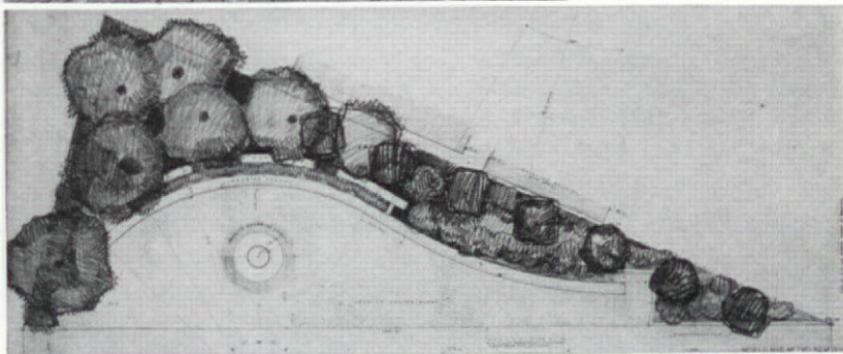
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# The Cultural Objectives of the Arts

By James M. Hunter

A paper delivered before the Southwestern College Art Conference, May 10, 1956. The text is slightly abbreviated.

**I**N AGREEING TO SPEAK to you, I was reassured by your Chairman that I need not indulge in artistic amenities, that I might even commit certain artistic heresies and that I need pull no punches in discussing spades.

It appears to me that there is need for some very blunt talk in art circles, about artistic objectives and about our contacts with the society we pretend to serve. I am very much disturbed by the meager contribution we artists are making to our culture, and even more about our contact with our society.

Mr. Wright expressed an idea, quite extemporaneously, at the 1950 Princeton Symposiums which has caused me considerable concern. He credited a French colleague, whose name he had forgotten, with the idea, but I am suspicious that it was a rhetorical device which Mr. Wright had invented to launch the thought. Perhaps I may be forgiven for phrasing it in my own words; the idea is the important thing: "We, as a people, have produced the only civilization the world has ever

seen which sprang from barbarianism, and progressed to decadence without ever having contributed a culture of its own."

If "civilization" and "culture" are accepted as synonyms, the idea makes little sense. If, however, you accept with me that "civilization" has to do with the advantage that man, the animal, has gained over nature and his physical environment, that "civilization" means our standard of living, and further, that "culture" means the amenities of a civilization—the values that makes a civilization meaningful and worthwhile—then it makes very good sense indeed, and it becomes provocative and challenging. Certainly it is our job, as artists, to create that culture, to provide those amenities, to give esthetic impact and meaning to the development we make as a society.

No proposition can be accepted as totally black or totally white, but I feel sure that in *degree* the Frenchman's idea is worth our consideration. Certainly we are a people who have produced a tremendously high level of civiliza-

tion and, I fear, a very weak and meager culture.

In considering such an idea, can the converse be true? Can a people produce a low level of civilization, for example, coupled with a very high development in terms of culture? China might be taken as a case in point. Certainly, her civilization in no way can compare with ours, but I honestly believe that in no way can we compare our culture with hers as a full, indigenous and articulate expression of a society.

Indeed, it seems imperative to me that we as artists must seriously dedicate ourselves to a higher objective, and it seems apparent that our joint efforts so far have been meager to the point of failure.

In an all but forgotten freshman lecture at the University of Illinois—so long ago I refuse to name dates—Dean Rexford Newcomb expressed a fundamental truth about art which I am afraid is all too frequently in neglect; it is that “There can be no art if there is no contact, no communication between the artist who creates the work of art and the observer who experiences the work of art.”

It is rather like our old high-school debate in elementary physics regarding “sound”: does the me-

teor crashing into the arctic wastes, thousands of miles from any human ear, create a sound or a vibration. Without an ear to interpret the vibration it remains simply a vibration; it is only when it is interpreted as sound within the capacity of human hearing that it becomes a sound at all.

I am strongly suspicious that we as artists are making all too many *vibrations* and horribly little *sound*, insofar as the fellow members of our society are concerned. I am suspicious that, if we are saying anything at all it is beyond the esthetic perception of the rest of society, and consequently we are failing as artists because we seem to be incapable of creating an *artistic experience* for our fellow man.

Oh, I know the pat answer for that one, too. John Q. Public must be lifted to your level and mine to gain his esthetic experience; we cannot lower our standards to his. He must climb up to our pedestal if the frame of reference of his life is to be expanded.

Just for fun, let's rock our pedestal and see how secure it is. Let's see if it's really made of very stern stuff from John Q. Public's point of view.

So long as we architects insist

on building "erector set" buildings based on the box, and are hopeful that by some trick of administrative assignment the functions of society can be carried out in the cell block we create, I wonder what contact we have with John Q. Public.

So long as this box must be pristine pure with its articulate structure based on the calculus and relieved *only* with primary colors to preserve its austerity, I wonder what we are saying to John Q. Public.

So long as we architects insist on massing unrelated forms and copying structural clichés for the sake of their cuteness, venting our own personal egos by our structural cleverness, I wonder if John Q. Public can evaluate our vibrations.

So long as you sculptors insist on your "do-it-yourself-kit" sculpture made up of the bits and pieces, the debris of this civilization, I wonder how John "reads" you.

So long as you stay enamored of rusty iron, old bed springs and tarnished door-knobs assembled in curious ways, I wonder what contact you have with John Q. Public.

So long as you remain intrigued by the welding torch, fiddle with curious pieces of driftwood and in-

volve yourselves with the geometry of bent wire, I wonder if John Q. Public hears your vibrations.

So long as you pattycake and scratch clay and create whirligigs of the contents of pack-rat nests to give your egos a whee of a time, I wonder if the vibrations mean much to John Q. Public.

So long as you painters persist in ink-blot psychology test patterns and free-line doodling combined with the putty-knife smear, I wonder if John Q. Public hears you.

So long as the spontaneity of your painting must be preserved by the rank carelessness of your draftsmanship and your compositions salvaged by wide mats and heavy frames, I wonder if John Q. Public's perception has to do with the frame or its contents.

So long as you abstract the abstract form in abstractions to the third power, so that the subject becomes completely incoherent, I wonder if John Q. Public has your wave length.

Collectively we must be quite an enigma to John Q. Public. I am sure that he is generally confused and bewildered by our efforts. He reacts, as he is bound to, but his reaction is hardly an esthetic experience. His reaction, it seems to

me, takes on one of four particular patterns:

1. His reaction is one of derision, expressed in hilarious scoffing. You have been infuriated by his expressions of it, as have I. Perhaps he is really saying, "I don't understand this, or what you are trying to do, but there are other things that I think I do understand, and that I do prefer."

2. His reaction may be one of seeking esthetic security. An escape from the problem of having to evaluate, by confining his interests to art form expressions of by-gone days and the so-called historic styles.

3. The pseudo-sophisticated reactions of the pink-tea art-lovers, the "culture vultures," bother me, I think, most of all because there is danger to us if we accept their fawning seriously, listen to their stock repertoire of non-committal banalities about our work and perhaps permit ourselves the luxury of believing, and of dulling our own sense of critical analysis into a stupor which lets us rationalize mediocrity into merit.

4. There are also those whose reaction is one, I am sure, of sincere perplexity, they get lost in the forest of examples and efforts by attempting to read into a single

work far more than ever existed there. Perhaps clarification of our objectives will serve to assist their efforts to understand.

I conclude that we, as artists, should pay more attention to the reactions of John Q. Public, be big enough to compensate for the semantic difficulties that we know exist, evaluate his intellect and his capacity for emotion higher than we do, and be a little more self-critical about our own objectives.

Perhaps I have rocked the pedestal long enough. At this point, I realize that after fifteen solid minutes of thoroughly nasty remarks, anything that I try to say of a constructive nature is going to be quite suspect. I shall try.

T. E. Hulme insists that "Art cannot be understood by itself, but must be taken as one element in a general process of adjustment between man and the outside world."

We as artists have to do with his physical surroundings, "the outside world." It is our job, it seems to me, to make of those physical surroundings something esthetically worthwhile and meaningful for *him*, not for *us*. With such a purpose art must be more than the egotistical expression of an individual, regardless of his beliefs, personal objectives or philosophy.

We must not be guilty of confusing *esthetic values* with *philosophic values*. I cannot envision an artist working without a philosophy, and I am sure we all have one. We must learn to define between our own personal philosophic values and the esthetic values of the work of art, *per se*. John Dewey goes so far as to say, "An artist may, of course, *have* a philosophy and that philosophy *may* influence his artistic work." In another place he says, "The enemies of the esthetic are neither the practical nor the intellectual. They are the humdrums; slackness of loose ends; submission to convention in practice and intellectual procedure. Rigid abstinence, coerced submission, tightness on one side, and dissipation, incoherence and aimless indulgence on the other, are deviations in opposite directions from unity of an experience." And it was Aristotle who spoke of the "mean proportional" as the proper designation of what is distinctive of both virtue and the esthetic.

"The Ancient Mariner" as an esthetic experience needs no defense. The subject matter might well be the aimless yarn-spinning of fellow seafarers deep in their cups. Try telling yourself its story.

As poetry, it is technically good, nothing unusual, no tricks, no gimmicks. Its esthetic value is a thing apart that transcends the subject matter and technique and philosophy. Its esthetic value falls within the range of esthetic perception of John Q. Public.

I believe that this same sort of thing is true of all art, and that as a "Truth" it is big enough to permit room for all manner of philosophies, all sorts of approaches to our problems, so long as we keep in mind that the expression of the personal philosophy is not the total objective.

If these things are true of the individual work of art, the isolated piece, what then of the broader aspect as applied to "man's physical environment" which we hope to make meaningful to him, and in the correlation of all of the arts toward the creation of a "culture"?

I know that it cannot be accomplished so long as each of us remains committed to his own little bailiwick, hybridizing his own art form by inbreeding, and hoping for a "sport." It would seem to me that the crafts of the painter, the sculptor and the architect need to be welded into a unity of purpose in the creating of an esthetic environment for this society.

The technicological advances of this civilization must of necessity break down the "party lines" between the arts. Painting must not be committed to a frame nor sculpture to a pedestal, simply to preserve a party line. Except for a very brief period, in the over-all history of art, there were no picture-frames and no pedestals. Except for the "Late Renaissance" and since, painters and sculptors adorned buildings.

Do we accept the frame and the pedestal so seriously because of tradition, because of their commercial aspect, or because they seem a logical and necessary expedient of the movement of our possessions? May there not be need also in our society to go back to still earlier concepts, when painting and sculpture and building were one, when buildings were adorned with paint, with mosaics, with murals and pattern and color and stained glass; when buildings were carved and adorned with sculpture and bronze and wood grilles and all manner of lovely things, all rightly and honestly the jobs of the painters and the sculptors"?

Always through the ages technology advanced, always the media changed, always the true artists, regardless of party line, met the

challenge of the changing times.

Why are these crafts so divorced in our current society? Why aren't these things *of* the building instead of hung *on* the building?

I see many influences which have prevented these factors from melting into a culture. Prime among them is our youthfulness as a nation. We have been so busy growing up to a young adolescence that we have had little time, as a nation, to develop poise. We have been so confused with the tremendous advance in our technologies that we have had little time to think about expressing it. We have been so enamored of the bulging muscles of our civilization that we have thought little of the graciousness of our culture.

It would appear to me that we are becoming mature at last as a nation, and that with that maturity should come the desire and the time to develop a culture, a culture based on the democratic ideal, based on the dignity of man, and based on the technologies we have developed. As artists it is our problem, and as our problem, it deserves our most serious contemplation.

As architects, let us by all means experiment and try for new forms

and new expressions, but let's model our experiments, subject them to the most severe criticism and then destroy all of them except the mature and serious effort which deserves to be built.

As painters, let's sketch and cartoon and study in every conceivable media and under every conceivable philosophy, but let's have the courage to destroy the pile of trivia that belongs only in the waste basket, and frame only those that deserve it.

As sculptors, let's fiddle with form, technique and space, and experiment in all directions, and from them do the real thing in permanent and precious material and cart the experiments off to the city dump.

Maybe, while we are doing all

this, we can avoid beating the drums for the "isms," silence the "art hucksters" and calm our excitable egos. The elder Saarinen put it all very aptly in these words:

"The only reason for worry, perhaps, is the impatient haste with which this commercial age of ours is eager to settle things in the ever-growing competition for livelihood. Because of this competition, publicity has become an important issue, in that everyone is anxious to advertise his own goods. Thus, while the search for form goes on—in solitude and silence, at best—it oftentimes happens that a loud-speaker is employed to trumpet widely and effectively that the search really is going on—in solitude and silence.

"That's the reason for worry."

## Herodotus via Kendall

*By Meyer Berger*

Reprinted by permission from "About New York" in *The New York Times* for July 6, 1956

A NEW MEMORANDUM for tourists just put out by the Postmaster in New York discloses, among other things, that the inscription on the Post Office's Eighth Avenue facade isn't pure Herodotus, as most persons seem to think.

The late William Mitchell Kendall, senior architect for McKim, Mead & White, who designed the building just before the first World War, rewrote Herodotus. He was qualified for the task. His father had taught classical languages and young Kendall himself was no

ordinary scholar in Greek and in Latin. He got the idea for the inscription while reading Herodotus in Greek; he found it in Volume 8, Chapter 98. First he tackled all available English translations of the passage—Rawlinson's, Macauley's, Carey's—but thought they hadn't quite caught it.

Mr. Kendall was a Harvard man. He asked Prof. George Herbert Palmer of the old school to work up a translation, and the professor came up with: "No snow, nor rain, day's heat, nor gloom hinders their speedily going on their appointed rounds." The reference in Herodotus, incidentally, was to Persian couriers who figured in the to-do between the Greeks and the Persians five cen-

turies before Christ. Anyway, not even the revered professor's translation suited Mr. Kendall.

He chewed his pencil a bit, night after night, before he worked out his own version:

NEITHER SNOW, NOR RAIN, NOR  
GLOOM OF NIGHT STAYS THESE  
COURIERS FROM THE SWIFT  
COMPLETION OF THEIR AP-  
POINTED ROUNDS

and boldly added the signature:  
HERODOTUS.

The quotation was approved by the Post Office and up it went. Mr. Kendall seemed to get a greater thrill out of his literary achievement, almost, than he did out of the over-all design. He chuckled over it right up until he died in 1941, aged 85.

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The closing quotation in Mr. La Beaume's tribute (October JOURNAL) to our late Past-President Russell has brought some question as to its source; it was the following, written in celebration of one of E. J.'s long-past birthdays.

## E. J. Russell

*By Louis La Beaume, FAIA*

A prompter child was never known  
He came right on the minute  
No sooner was his cradle shown  
Than he sank snugly in it

Without a fuss, without a tear, without a sign of bustle  
He took his place with easy grace within the House of Russell.

Right from the start this startling kid  
Was definite in all he did.  
Serene, composed, unhurried, calm  
He sucked his rubber nipple,  
And drew contentment from the balm  
Of his warm Lactic Tipple.

So wise he seemed, so purposeful—so almost grim—so steady  
His parents thought their darling child a little man already.

As his grave face they gazed upon  
They vowed they'd call him "Ernest John."

He blinked and let it go at that  
So duly he was christened.  
The parson spoke the words whereat  
The infant only listened.

His will, though still—for good or ill—no trifling force could throttle.  
The brand, as we now understand, was blown right in the bottle.

As John was very Ernest then  
He's been E. J.—to countless men.

Long years have passed and cities rise  
Where once were only prairies;  
Tall buildings pierce the azure skies  
Like lace work spun by fairies.

They aren't all tall—nor all so fair—nor even all are pretty,  
But just the kind of things we find in any modern city.

But fair or not, or tall or squat,  
T'was Ernest Johnny on the spot,  
Who made them safe to see and touch,  
Who made them firm and stable,  
Who filled them full of pipes and such  
And made them habitable.

While eager Laurie smoothly talked and clever Bill designed,  
E. J.—grown gray—had naught to say—he only used his mind.

When Phidias built the Parthenon  
He leaned on some Greek—Ernest John.



LINCOLN PARISH COURT HOUSE, RUSTON, LOUISIANA  
NEILD-SOMDAL-ASSOCIATES, ARCHITECTS

*Journal  
The AIA*

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Favorite Features of  
recently elected Fellows:  
DEWEY A. SOMDAL, FAIA

# Architecture for the Good Life

IN TWO PARTS—PART I

By *Carlos Contreras*, HON. FAIA

An address before the final session of the 88th Convention in  
Los Angeles, May 18, 1956.

“ARCHITECTURE FOR THE GOOD LIFE.” Whose life? The architects? The clients? The rich? The poor? Everybody’s good life? It occurred to me that I should make use of one of the rare qualities of the architect, his power of visualization; television in cinema scope, and run through, for a few minutes, 2,000-odd years and paint for you architecture and the good life blended in those days of a thousand-and-one nights. In the preparation of this paper it has been an ordeal to put down ideas and facts that may have any relation to the theme of this convention, *Architecture for the Good Life*. To establish the parallelism between these two subjects—the part that the architect has played and plays throughout the ages, throughout history in the life of man, in the scheme of humanity. It is hard to know where to begin. With man? When? Man and life go hand in hand from the beginning. He begins to live in caves, in forests, on rivers and lake fronts, and the human habitat gives rise

unknowingly to the birth of architecture; we link living conditions with our noble art and we find that, throughout history and for thousands of years, the architect has been working toward improving the living conditions and surroundings of man; that is, toward a better life—the good life.

Man, created after God’s image, becomes the architect of his own destiny.

His biological success as a free-roaming animal is due largely to his insatiable curiosity, to his desire for motion, his audacity in trying to conquer all means of communication through the machines of his invention: the airplane, the railway, the steamboat, the radar-controlled jet plane, and now the liberation and control of atomic energy.

Let me have a brief parenthesis on man’s span of life:

Dr. Besancon, in his book “The Days of Man,” says that a dog lives 15 years . . . a horse, 30. Change your habits, but you will not change your destiny. Man’s

life—the days of man are seventy years, according to the Psalms. The voice of the Church—the Holy Book—marks this figure as the peak of life. If illness does not cut the thread of life, the days of man are 140 years. Flourens said 100 years, five times the period necessary for the bones to solder. Buffon said 140 years, seven times the period of growth.

The proof of this is that in the rare countries where pneumonia and grippe do not present themselves, one finds patriarchs 120 and 140 years old. And have you not heard of the village in Ukania where, out of 2,000 inhabitants, there are 20 who are more than a century old. At La Paz in Bolivia, at an altitude of 12,000 feet, century-old men are counted by the dozen like eggs. Official documents from Ankara tell us that in 1937 there lived in Turkey nearly 7,000 persons who had passed the century mark. Attila, King of the Huns, was their ancestor, who died at the age of 124—the day after his wedding night.

Buffon, the French naturalist, wondered why bad boys lived as long as little saints or angels.

And you find that all those who have gone through the mill are certain to know to what habits they

owe their long existence. Looking for a hundred-year-old man who hasn't his unflinching method of reaching the century mark is like hunting for a white blackbird. One has lived because of fruits, another through smoking, or because of garlic, or drinking four quarts of wine a day.

Or, like a peasant of the Brie region in France, who added to his gourd a little wine of Beaujolais or of Burgundy—on Sundays, a little brandy to his coffee. Though a little gouty, at 96 he used to say that he was not afraid of a twenty-year-old fellow and much less of a twenty-year-old girl.

Greek culture understood nature and society as a unit. Their mottoes, "Know thyself," and "A sound mind in a sound body," gave them the elements for a pleasant, sober, esthetically balanced life close to permanent happiness, with beauty rising as their creative work in the Acropolis.

With the end of Greek civilization in sight, the Romans took over. During the three centuries before Christ, Rome had conquered all the lands around it, and the people of Central Italy were sturdy peasants with powerful swords in their hands. They were thrifty, abstemious, sensible men, close to the

ground that they cultivated. They planted trees, built aqueducts and sewers, arcades and colonnades, drained marshes, turned a Roman Camp into a city over night; and, in Imperial Rome, built the many Roman circuses and arches, the magnificent *thermae* where bathing was a rite, the longest road in the world, the highest lighthouses, the strongest bridge, the largest monuments. Very much as in democratic America: the largest and costliest freeways, the highest skyscrapers, the fastest and finest automobiles, and railways and steamboats and airplanes.

But Rome went to all excesses: fastuous banquets, the worship of Bacchus and Epicurus, the Vomitorium as an essential chamber in the houses of the rich. Everything in excess. The human scale had been lost—the result of the economic policy of abundance of the privileged superior classes.

The good life, carried beyond the proper limits, makes of a good life a bad one.

In times of Marcus Aurelius there were 155 days of the year dedicated to spectacles and public feasts, and, in the year 354 of our era, 175 days were dedicated to games out of 200 given to public festivals.

Mexico, too, loves the fiesta and there are authors who claim that we have a fiesta for every day of the year.

Christianity considered idleness as the mother of all vices, as a relative of sin and the greatest auxiliary of the Devil. But idleness when properly utilized is a blessing. It has led to many important discoveries: the principle of the displacement by a body of a volume of water equal to its own weight was discovered by Archimedes, leisurely, in a bathtub; Fulton, before a coffee pot, found the important strength of the power of steam which led to the steam machine and to the steam boat; Franklin, flying a kite, discovered the lightning-rod; Newton, lying on his back under an apple tree, discovered with the fall of an apple the law of gravity. To practise idleness—the difficult art of doing nothing—requires practice and great will power. Idleness protects him who respects her.

The full enjoyment of idleness is obtained when one has to do many things. However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the capitalistic countries, and especially in the United States, the place of work was exaggerated and not enough attention was given to the

need for leisure—recreation, sports and play—required in the interests of health and society.

This good life, where the term “good” for good’s sake has its fullest and clearest meaning throughout the ages, was expressed in religious architecture.

Man’s concern about his cleanliness and physical well-being is most interesting. The origin of the Turkish bath goes as far back as the Egyptian, Phoenician and Chaldean eras. The Greeks kept their bodies in perfect condition by means of fresh-air exercises, sports and athletics. The Romans, with their famous *thermae*, were in daily contact with air and water—hot and cold—and massage and marble tables and beds. Thousands of years ago man was concerned with his bodily health, and interested in culture that was both physical and spiritual.

The good life is not all materialistic or external. A part of our life must be internal, spiritual. The fulfillment of spiritual duty in our daily life is vital to our survival.

The satisfaction of physical needs is undoubtedly the condition previously thought indispensable for a satisfied existence but, in itself, it is not sufficient. To feel

happy, men must have the possibility for developing their intellectual and artistic faculties in accordance with their personal characteristics and capacities.

Four thousand years ago in the volcanic lava area of the Pedregal in Mexico City, where the new University City was born a few years ago, there existed a native civilization. All of this area was covered with lava from the Xitle volcano.

For nearly two thousand years, 2,000 B.C. to 100 B.C., we find the monumental work of the Mayan, Toltec and Aztec civilizations expressed in pyramids and monuments throughout the Republic of Mexico.

In the sixteenth century 500 churches and convents were built in Mexico.

During the nineteenth century we have the Neo-classicism, with an architect-sculptor of the eminence of Tolsa, whose equestrian statue of Charles IV in Mexico City is the finest of its kind in America.

With Villagrán we have the master and teacher of two generations in all fields of architecture, climaxing with University City and the asserting of a new Mexican architecture, with all of its

worth of tradition—the first university of the American continent, the first printing-press, the first school of medicine, the first school of engineering, the first school of architecture, the accomplishments of its new generation of architects. We have within our reach, if we so desire, the realization of a great undertaking, a worthy adventure—the continued renaissance of Mexico. The life of Mexico in the past 4,000 years is expressed in its architecture. Mexico has lived well. We have fought and strug-

gled and our problems are not solved; 20,000,000 of our people need better living quarters, but we have lived well. We enjoy life and we look forward to an optimistic future.

Our men of science are working in advanced phases of nuclear energy. Our doctors and surgeons are recognized internationally for their techniques and capacities. Our sculptors, painters, musicians and architects are world-renowned leaders in these arts.

*(To be continued)*



## Thoughts on the Palace at Knossos

By *Robert W. Schmertz*

After reading "Gods, Graves and Scholars," by Kurt U. Marck  
(C. W. Cerain, pseud.)

As I was walking down the street,  
The ugly pavement at my feet,  
I wished a wish, entire, complete  
That one day I might go to Crete.

I wished a wish that one day I  
Might leave the traffic roaring by,  
The dull and stupid thoroughfares  
Where avid merchants flaunt their wares;

And step across old Minos' plinth  
And wander in the labyrinth;  
And there beneath an ancient star  
I'd gladly face the Minotaur.

JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.

# Community Collaboration in the Fine Arts

IN TWO PARTS—PART II

By *John Stewart Detlie*

An address delivered to the 88th Annual Convention, May 16, 1956

LET ME GIVE YOU the specific case history of the creation of an alliance of the arts, how it was done, the part the architects played, the results and the significance to our profession and the whole of society.

Over two years ago, on February 1, 1954, a committee of the Washington State Chapter of The American Institute of Architects began discussing the matter of co-ordination in the arts of architecture, painting, sculpture and landscape architecture. After thorough exploration a steering committee composed of the Chapter Committee as hosts with representatives of music, sculpture, drama, literature, graphic arts, painting and museums was formed. It was agreed to call a general meeting of representatives of every organization concerned with any of the arts. An invitational brochure was sent. Its introduction was as follows:

"Today there are literally hundreds of organizations in and about Seattle and the region of Western Washington engaged in the arts

and there are hundreds of people and organizations who are patrons of the arts.

"There must emerge from the many existing organizations fostering the arts a new sense of common interests, common direction and common will. With a newly found dedication to match the challenge of our region's potential as an art-music-drama-literature center of America, the strength to execute a thorough long-range program is at hand. And with that strength the mutual objectives of that program can be declared with such resonance that enlightened civic support will be awakened and secured.

"There remains first, the realization of mutual interests by all the organizations of the arts; second, the creation of an instrument of organization to which all can contribute their strength; and finally, the adoption of a broad program by all which will bring the arts to a position of prime importance in the affairs of the cities of the region."

Five principal objectives were proposed:

1. Establishment of a Municipal Art Commission.

2. Encourage the use of mural painting and sculpture and the other arts in civic architecture.

3. Use of the fine arts as an integral part of the architecture of public schools.

4. Creation of a civic arts center.

5. Establishment of a continuing organization of the arts.

One hundred representatives of all the existing organizations of the arts attended the general meeting in June. It was agreed that the objectives should be pursued and eventually enlarged into a Program of the Arts. A Congress of the Arts was called in October of the same year. By-Laws were passed and Allied Arts of Seattle was born.

An Executive Board was established to act at all times in the interest of all the arts and to report to the congresses which are called at least twice a year. The first act of the Board was to formulate, obtain the approval of the allied arts organizations and present to the City Council a proposed ordinance for the formation of a Municipal Art Commission.

As the organizations ratified the by-laws they were grouped into

fourteen categories of the arts: architecture, city planning, crafts, education, graphic arts, interior design, landscape architecture and gardening, literature, museums and galleries, music, opera, painting, sculpture, theater arts and dance. The strength of Allied Arts grew until by May 1955 there were sixty organizations, representing a combined membership of approximately 20,000 people concerned with the arts. By the end of May the City Council passed an ordinance creating Seattle's first Municipal Art Commission.

Meanwhile, during the spring each category of Allied Arts drafted its part of a Program of the Arts for Seattle. At the Second Congress those items of the Program acceptable to all were incorporated into a Comprehensive Program of the Arts for Seattle. Allied Arts requested the new Art Commission to act upon approximately a third of the items in the Program. The Art Commission acted on the request and on June 20, this year, in its first annual report, made a complete survey of the City and made 35 specific recommendations for the "Cultural and Artistic Development" of Seattle which were acclaimed whole-heartedly by all the City.

By coordinated action of all the cultural organizations, Seattle has been given a new course for its future.

What is this Program of the Arts for Seattle? It begins with a statement from an opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States written by Justice Douglas in the *Berman v. Parker* case some two years ago.

“. . . The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive. The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, esthetic as well as monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy, spacious as well as clean, well-balanced as well as carefully patrolled.”

In addition to the original five principal objectives, the Program of the Arts includes:

1. Establish a center of art information.
2. Present awards of merit for outstanding achievements in the arts.
3. Encourage the establishment of a citizens' planning council of representatives of Seattle's communities, bringing to the Planning Commission their desires as they relate to the development of Seattle.
4. Conserve scenic vistas, plan for new ones and develop a positive program of beautification along Seattle's thoroughfares, with appropriate landscape treatment, elimination of unsightly utility poles, establishing street tree planting, distinctive design of signs, light standards, bridges, viaducts, etc., and proper maintenance of these facilities.
5. Govern by ordinance the display of billboards adjacent to certain designated public thoroughfares, to preserve scenic views and to prevent the general unsightly results of unrestricted commercial sign concentration.
6. Establish a Puget Sound Festival of the Arts.
7. Encourage the establishment of similar allied arts organizations in other cities.
8. Support the sending of work of local artists to national and international exhibitions, as is done in sending local athletes to national and international contests.
9. Impress upon all students their opportunities and responsibilities as patrons of the arts.
10. Develop Seattle as a world center in the horticulture of rhododendrons.
11. Selection of architects for the design of important public

buildings by program competition under procedures established by The American Institute of Architects.

12. Construction of suitable monumental gateways on the proposed Freeway at the city limits, designed through program competition involving collaboration of architects, sculptors, painters and landscape architects.

13. Remove the city amusement tax on admissions to symphony concerts.

14. Establish a professional theater in Seattle.

15. Explore the possibility of a united cultural fund.

Allied Arts is engaged enthusiastically in forwarding all of these and many other projects through coordinated action.

The inherent challenge of a democracy is that it is the responsibility of the people for action and progress, and that it is the particular responsibility of the whole cultural segment of our society for

the state of our environment. It should be the specific responsibility of the architectural profession to see, understand and accept this challenge. Architects have the professional stature, the vision, and genius for organization and coordination of all the arts. Do they have the will to leadership?

What is the significance of this movement to bring the arts into a vital coordinated alliance? Can it be, unlike the past centuries in which the "enlightened" few treated cultural values as something to be brought down to the people, that here in our time America is accepting the challenge of building an environment by organizations of all the arts, working in concert to permit America's native cultural aspirations to flourish?

If in our time a great flowering of the arts comes to America, we of Allied Arts of Seattle believe that it will come through America's special genius for coordinated action. The architects belong at the very forefront of that action.

## News from the Educational Field

NORTH CAROLINA STATE COLLEGE'S School of Design announces the appointment of seven new full-time members of the faculty to fill vacancies resulting from a resigna-

tion, a retirement, a leave of absence, a termination of three temporary appointments, and the creation of a new position: Stefan Buzas, Visiting Associate Profes-

sor of Architecture; Guiseppè Guarnieri, Assistant Professor of Architecture; Enrique Montenegro, Assistant Professor of Design; Julian Beinart and Charles M. Sappenfield, Instructors in Architecture; George L. Bireline, Jr., and Herbert B. Simon, Instructors in Design.

PRATT INSTITUTE, Brooklyn, N. Y., announces the promotion of William McGuinness, Professor of Architecture, to the position of Chairman of the Department of Structural Design. Mr. McGuinness has been on the faculty of Pratt Institute since 1940, and in addition is a partner in the firm of McGuinness & Duncan, Engineers. He is co-author of "Mechanical and Electrical Equipment for Buildings" and author of the monthly page, "Mechanical Engineering Critique," for *Progressive Architecture*.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA announces a grant of \$54,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation to prepare in a three-year project the first world-wide history of city planning in English. Dr. E. A. Gutkind, of London, architect and city planner, will head the project

as Visiting Research Professor in City Planning. Six graduate research fellowships in city planning will be offered. Applicants may write to the Director, Institute for Urban Studies, School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 4, Pa.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN announces the appointment of Charles H. Sawyer, Dean of the Yale University School of Architecture and Design since 1947, as Director of Michigan's Museum of Art.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS Department of Architecture at Urbana announces the award of two traveling fellowships for European study: the Francis J. Plym Fellowship in Architecture to Harold C. Young, of Williamsport, Ind., who received his master's degree at the University of Illinois in 1953 and has been teaching in the department; the Edward L. Ryerson Fellowship in Architecture to Stanley Judson Routh, of Baton Rouge, La., who graduated with highest honors in June, 1956. Both fellowship holders will travel in Europe during the current academic year.



Outdoor Garden Reading Court  
Reading Room, looking out  
upon Outdoor Garden Reading  
Court

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ISIDOR RICHMOND  
& CARNEY GOLDBERG  
ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

*Photographs by  
Joseph W. Molitor*



Favorite Feature of  
recently elected Fellows:  
ISIDOR RICHMOND, FAIA

*Journal  
The AIA*

## Books & Bulletins

*The Institute Library asks us to call attention to the fact that Institute members have the privilege of borrowing books through the Library's mail service*

HUNGARIAN ARCHITECTURE 1945-1955 (MAGYAR ÉPÍTÉSZET). By Szendroi Jenő. 254 pp. of Illustrations (unnumbered). 9¼" x 12¾". Budapest: 1955: Képzőművészeti Alap Kiadóvállalata.

A preliminary issue of a sumptuously illustrated work, under the auspices of the Union of Hungarian Architects, and which, if there is a demand for it, may be issued in a multilingual edition.

FROM THE GROUND UP. By Lewis Mumford. 256 pp. 4¼" x 7¼". New York: 1956: Harvest Books, Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$1.25.

This stimulating little volume consists of twenty-six of Mumford's *New Yorker* essays never before published in book form, including the controversial series "The Roaring Traffic's Boom." Although the articles are written around the particular buildings and problems of New York City, the issues they raise are universal ones, and all thoughtful men, especially architects, must sooner or later face up to them. The archi-

tectural profession is fortunate indeed to have such a keen and well-informed lay critic, and all architects should read him.

STICKS AND STONES—A Study of American Architecture and Civilization. By Lewis Mumford. 246 pp. 5¼" x 8". New York: 1955: Dover Publications, Inc. \$3.00 cloth, \$1.50 paper.

This famous book was first published just over thirty years ago, and a new edition has been long overdue. Mr. Mumford has written a new preface and has added a paragraph to several chapters to bring them up to date. Twenty-one illustrations have also been included.

"Sticks and Stones" holds a unique place among studies of American culture and its architecture. It was the first history of American architecture as a whole; it was the first to present the New England village as an architectural entity; it was the first to bring H. H. Richardson into proper perspective and appreciation. It was a bold venture into a new field. Like all classics, it is as good today

as it was when it was written. Some evaluations would be modified today, as the author admits in his preface, and room would have to be made for many new names and trends, but "Sticks and Stones" is still on the required reading list for all architects and thoughtful men.

#### LAND USES IN AMERICAN CITIES.

By Harland Bartholomew. 198 pp. 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 10". Cambridge, Mass.: 1955: Harvard University Press. \$6.50.

Harland Bartholomew is chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission, as well as a nationally known city planner. Therefore this account of what has happened to safeguard land uses, since zoning was established in 1926 as a proper use of the police power, is highly authoritative.

THE MODERN BUILDING ENCYCLOPEDIA. Edited by N. W. Kay. 768 pp. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". New York: 1955: Philosophical Library. \$15.

Although much space has been given to encyclopedic treatment of building details such as "beam design"—4 pages—and "quantity surveying"—24 pages, with a comprehensive treatment of bricklaying tools, the architect will look in

vain for architectural terms so well known as "siding," "shop drawing," "rondelle," and "monitor." The word "ledger" will reveal much of how to keep account books, but without the definition of "ledger" or "ledger-board" as known to the architect.

#### LETTERS OF THE ARCHBISHOP-

ELECTOR JOSEPH CLEMENS OF COLOGNE TO ROBERT DE COTTE (1712-1720). Edited by John Finley Oglevee. 218 pp. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Bowling Green, Ohio: 1956: Bowling Green State University. (Private publication. Copies must be obtained from editor, c/o History Department, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio). \$5.

An interpretation of the French letters written in the early eighteenth century by a churchman to an architect for whom he had profound respect and not a little self-deprecation—a rare combination of client and architect.

ARCHITECTS' HOMES (DAS HAUS DES ARCHITEKTEN). By Robert Winkler. 224 pp. 9" x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". New York: 1956: Reinhold Publishing Corp. \$10.

Based on the premise that architecture reflects the ways of life of its day, this beautifully illus-

trated book presents a summary of trends in modern architecture, as exemplified in the homes of 44 architects in 13 different countries. A tri-lingual text — English, French, and German—facilitates this analysis. Seven architects from the United States are included.

THE ART OF HOME LANDSCAPING. By Garrett Eckbo. 288 pp. 6¾" x 10". New York: 1956: F. W. Dodge Corporation. \$5.95.

In this beautiful book, Mr. Eckbo does for the lay reader what he did for the professional reader in his "Landscape for Living." He

takes the layman gently by the hand and leads him gradually through the steps of programming, planning and construction. He particularly emphasizes the importance of planning, even for the simplest property; he explains local variations in climate and how to achieve climate control; he shows how to create spaces in the yard for different uses; and he illustrates the many types of pavements, screens and shelters. There are chapters on yard and garden equipment, and chapters on trees, shrubs and flowers. It is in every way a most readable and most usable book.

## Vive Cultural-Lag!

*By Hubertus Junius*

Since architecture's last rebirth  
Somewhere in North Chicago,  
I find the things I once was taught  
Restricted by embargo.

They call my houses quite passé  
And then pretend to gag,  
And everything I try to do  
They call a cultural-lag.

But every day new people come  
And, I find the fact is,  
Cultural-lag is quite a help  
In paying bills and taxes.

## They Say:

**Frank L. Whitney**

(In an article, "The Architect and the Engineers," June Architectural Record)

In today's technological race for survival, there has been a tendency, consciously or unconsciously, to make a semi-deity of the engineer. The application of engineering principles is looked to in our society to provide every solution to every problem. According to popular belief, the engineer appears as the well-rounded individual with professional training in all that is complex, the fount from which springs the solution to every technical problem.

But an engineer is a specialist. The nearer he approaches the zenith of his profession, the more specialized he becomes. The graduate mechanical engineer has a general mechanical knowledge when he begins his career. As he advances, his usual pattern is to concentrate his efforts on a more limited field: thus from his broad field in mechanical engineering, he becomes a designer of process piping systems. A next logical advancement is that he becomes a specialist in the design of instrumentation or controls. Always it should be remembered that the engineering profession is so con-

stituted, with its immense attention to minute detail, that the engineer who moves forward does so in a rather well defined and limited field.

**Sir Patrick Abercrombie, FRIBA**

(In awarding Architectural Association prizes, London, July 13, 1956)

It is very important to remember the value of good, ordinary, necessary architecture—what the French somewhat deprecatingly call *pompeii*. *Pompeii* really means pump water, water drawn from the pump, not a beautiful, sparkling source and spring, but something from a pipe. You can have good, clean, decent, sanitary pump water, and you can have dirty, bad pump water.

**Dr. Walter A. Gropius, FAIA**

(From "Presentation of the Royal Gold Medal to Dr. Walter Gropius at the R.I.B.A., 10 April 1956," in The Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, May, 1956)

This my team, The Architects' Collaborative, has now stood its test for over ten years. My strong inclination for team work has increased with time, but I find that our set-up has often been a conundrum to friends and to the Press, who do not know who is who or who does what. The English *Architects' Journal* even called me a few days ago an enigma. Small

wonder, for our society is still so obsessed with the idea of the individual genius, working in splendid isolation—a bequest of the last century—that we cannot conceive of cultural achievements in any other sense. Still, in the eighteenth century such exalted individualism was much less pronounced, and today I believe we are well on our way again to reclaim the individual talent to work as *primus inter pares* in a group of collaborators.

**Basil Spence**

*(Speaking of Le Corbusier's Ronchamp before the R.I.B.A., as reported in the Journal of the R.I.B.A., July, 1956)*

The rectangular patterns on the flat wall, I think, are masterly in their arrangement. And the hollow screen which clothes the column supporting that part of the roof is imaginative and strong and is very monumental and has got great scale. This is sheer sculpture, and, when seen in the clear light on top of the hill, with the distance spreading out like a great carpet, it is magnificent . . .

I do not think that Corbusier was much interested in the placing of his altar; it is pushed over to one side. There is great anti-climax here after that vibrating brilliance of his window wall. The altar looks uncared for and rather puny.

I felt the interior was not designed to the glory of God, but rather to the glory of man, and one man in particular.

**Changing Times, the Kiplinger Magazine**

*(September, 1956, issue)*

Sociologists deplore the fact that the man of the typical American family is deteriorating into a kind of fuddling comic-strip husband, manipulated with amused tolerance by his wife and children. If this is true, part of the blame must fall on the designers and builders of the "contemporary" house. Specifically, the old den, master's study, library or what you want to call it, where once upon a time a man could do a little knitting on the raveled sleeve of care and nurse his battered self-respect back to a semblance of health, is no more. Instead there is foisted off on him a kind of bastard room known as a "study-hyphen-something." There are study-guest rooms and study-TV rooms and study-family rooms.

**Max Frisch**

*(A Swiss architect and journalist, in his address at the Sixth International Design Conference, held in Aspen, Colorado, June 23-July 1, 1956)*

In Switzerland we are doing our own destruction. We are not mad enough simply to tear down our venerable old towns to make room

for modern cities. We are far madder; we widen one street after the other to make them safe for pedestrians because motor cars keep multiplying like rabbits—our public squares are only architectural at dawn; for the rest of the day they are mere parking lots—and then we erect multi-storeyed buildings which hold more people and so bring more traffic into the

medieval streets. Then we invent a labyrinth of one-way streets that make our life miserable; and even that is no use. In the end we have to remove the medieval fountains, widen the streets again—though even that will not do much good—and so on, until we have destroyed the town our forefathers left us without building the city for our future descendants.



Julian Clarence Levi, FAIA, invests Jean Maunoury, Architect in charge of Chartres Cathedral, with the insignia of Honorary Fellowship in the A.I.A. U. S. Ambassador Dillon's presence emphasizes the International significance of the occasion.

## A Ceremony in Paris



## Architects Read and Write

*Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative*



MISS M.

BY WILLIAM ADAMS DELANO, FAIA, New York

**F**ORTY YEARS AGO last month an attractive girl in her late 'teens applied for a position as stenographer in our office. While she frankly confessed she was not familiar with architectural terms, she felt sure she could master them quickly. We engaged her, one of the wisest decisions we ever made. She soon was able to interpret those strange hieroglyphics shorthand writers employ, translating them into well-typed specifications.

She had Irish blood in her veins and it sometimes came to a boiling-point when she felt an injustice was being done someone. She had learned well her three R's at a Rhode Island parochial school, and was a staunch Roman Catholic.

The men in the office came to rely on her sense of fair play and sought her advice. She kept in touch with many who had left our office to go elsewhere or start on their own. She made many friends among the contractors who were working on the buildings we had designed; with her they felt they

were dealing with the court of appeals.

In addition to her office work she found time to unravel my often illegible scribbles, and type, retype and often retype once more the articles, speeches and feeble attempts at verse that I wrote. I was always amazed at her interest, patience and desire for perfection.

I no longer have the effrontery to inflict these words of wisdom on the public, but Miss M. is now my line of communication with friends. She combines the information of the telephone directory, the club annuals and the Social Register; she is seldom at a loss to reach some friend I want to talk with on the telephone, and stands by while we speak. Many who have never seen her know her well-modulated voice. Since I have now passed the eighty-yard line, and sight and hearing have dimmed, it is a comfort to have her near to interpret what I cannot hear.

Doubtless many offices have had assistants as devoted and competent as our Miss M. but few, I feel

sure, have sailed with the same architectural ship through the often tempestuous waters of our profession for forty years.

As skipper of this vessel, formerly registered under the name D & A, I pay tribute to this devoted mariner.

#### WAGE RATES IN 1671

Mme. de Sévigné writing from Brittany in 1671 in a letter to her daughter, wife of the Governor of Provence. Translated by Eric Pawley

“ . . . I have ten or twelve carpenters in the air who are raising the frame [for my reconstruction of the Tour de Sévigné]. They run about on the rafters, stop at nothing and are at every moment on the point of breaking their necks—they give me a pain in the

back trying to ‘help’ them from below! “Just think what a fine thing it is that Providence does with the love of money. We can thank the Lord that there are men who for twelve cents are eager to do what others would not for a hundred thousand crowns . . .”

#### IT IS BETTER NOT TO TRY TO BUILD NEW CITIES

BY JOHN J. KLABER, Huntington, N. Y.

SINCE I WAS UNABLE to attend the 1956 Convention of the AIA, it was with great interest that I read Clarence Stein's paper on “Communities for the Good Life” when it appeared in print. Certainly the ideals he advocates will be endorsed by all architects. We have all been irked by the disorderly development of our cities, the failure of zoning to accomplish all that was hoped for when it was instituted, the congestion, dirt, noise, and lack of adequate open spaces in our existing com-

munities. The same ideals have already been put forward by others, though perhaps less fully developed, and we have always applauded them. But nobody, so far as I know, seems to have seriously considered how they might be accomplished.

To build whole new cities is no simple matter. Oak Ridge is the best recent example I know, but its construction was only possible because of a war emergency, requiring a very large installation in

which secret operations could be conducted. It was built by a governmental bureaucracy, in which the people who were to occupy it had no part. Radburn is scarcely more than a suburban development, and I have always understood that its cost was so great that it nearly bankrupted its builders. Greenbelt and Winfield are somewhat larger, but they, like Oak Ridge, were built by the government.

The extension of this type of planning into general practice would, I fear, require a revolutionary change in our concept of government and its relations to the people. Such a city as Mr. Stein proposes could scarcely be built except by a benevolent dictatorship, under which the government would own everything, though it might later sell individual buildings or sites on which they could be erected.

And what would happen to the architects? How many of us have office organizations large enough to handle a project of this magnitude, involving not only the general city plan, but the details of roads, utilities, and the principal buildings of the community? If this procedure became generally accepted, would not most of us be compelled to abandon independent

practice and subordinate ourselves to vast bureaucratic organizations?

One may also ask, what would happen to our present cities? The investment in them is too great to allow their abandonment or their complete reconstruction. They have preempted the best sites, and vast amounts have been spent to provide them with utilities of all kinds. New cities, less advantageously located, and built at a time when construction costs are at their peak, could hardly compete with those existing except by charging most of their cost to the taxpayers. When this has been done in the past, on a much smaller scale, it has aroused widespread protest. To make it a national pattern would, in my opinion, be quite impossible.

No, I think we must go on trying to improve the cities we have, building a superblock here and a superhighway there, striving to achieve somewhat less congestion, better transit and sanitation, and greater general amenity. If we are content to limit ourselves to this, instead of aiming for too lofty an ideal, we can at least maintain ourselves as free citizens of a republic, instead of becoming the subjects of a dictatorial bureaucracy.

## PUBLICITY AND PERFORMANCE

BY E. TODD WHEELER, Wilmette, Ill.

THIS IS A WORD OF CAUTION about public relations.

We wander in the garden of fancy when we ascribe to our public relations program the power to lift our profession to a high level of acceptance. And the flowers of that garden are night blooms which wither in the hard light of adverse fact. Sometimes we talk professionally but fail to act so. This is admittedly a human failing, but unfortunately one poor performance will kill a dozen glowing public allegations of merit.

Let it appear that the architect has designed a building which is beautiful but impossible to operate economically, and the client's mind is quickly washed of all promotional accolades.

Let it happen that the beautiful and perhaps functional design costs 50% more than anyone guessed, and the friendliness of the client quickly turns to resentment, if not to scorn.

Let it turn out that the building which so satisfied the client at the outset is not adequately heated and ventilated, and the owner's blush of enthusiasm will deepen into a flush of irritation.

Let it develop that the rear door of the building becomes the front door in fact because of the location of the parking lot, while the main entrance, made monumental with tender loving care, is little used. The client will forget the architect's care in designing the entrance, but will remember his lack of foresight in planning the site.

On the other hand, let the architect design a wholly functional building, without sufficient thought for the intangibles of originality and beauty which he alone can add, and the client will miss these important attributes even if he does not realize exactly what is missing.

Let the small but important details be overlooked or subordinated to some favorite feature, and the client who has to walk a block from his office to the nearest rest room will soon forget the award of merit for architectural design.

Let the architect forget that the client pays the bills and likes to be the boss, and he may lose the client. But let him fail to take the lead when leadership is needed, and he will be taken to task for that, too.

These may not be rational or

just criticisms of our professional performances, but they happen and cannot be overcome by public relations alone. Consistently good performance is the real answer.



## International Competition

THE INSTITUTE has approved an international architectural com-

petition for the design of a Memorial Pavilion honoring Enrico Fermi, to be built in Chicago. Competition material was released October 1, 1956. Closing date is February 1, 1957. Full information may be had from Fermi Memorial Competition, c/o Mr. John O. Merrill, FAIA, Professional Advisor, 100 West Monroe St., Chicago 3, Ill.

## Calendar

*November 8-10:* Annual Convention of the Florida Association of Architects, Hotel Seville, Miami Beach, Fla.

*November 12-14:* Annual Convention of the Structural Clay Products Institute, Boca Raton, Fla.

*November 14-15:* Building Research Institute Conference on "Windows and Glass in the Exterior of Buildings," U. S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

*November 15-17:* Middle Atlantic District, AIA, Pennsylvania Society of Architects and Regional Council Meeting, Hershey, Pa.

*November 26:* First Interamerican Meeting of Technical Housing and Planning, Bogota, Colombia.

*November 26-30:* AIA Board of Directors Fall Meeting, Shamrock Hotel, Houston, Texas.

*January 20-24, 1957:* National Association of Home Builders 13th Annual Convention and Exposition, Chicago, Ill., at Hotels Conrad Hilton and Sherman, and the Chicago Coliseum.

*January 24-26:* Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians, in conjunction with the College Art Association, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Mich.

*February 25-March 1:* 13th International Heating and Air-Conditioning

Exposition. International Amphitheater, Chicago.

*April 4-6:* South Atlantic Regional Conference, Atlanta, Ga.

*April 20-27:* The 24th Annual Historic Garden Week. Details from The Garden Club of Virginia, Room 3 Mezzanine, Jefferson Hotel, Richmond 19, Va.

*May 14-17:* Centennial Celebration Convention of the AIA, Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D. C.

*June 27-28:* Annual meeting and convention of the Minnesota Society of Architects, Hotel Duluth, Duluth, Minn.

*July 10-13:* British Architects' Conference in 1957 at Oxford, at the invitation of the Berks, Barks and Oxon Architectural Association. The R.I.B.A. tells us that any AIA members in England at that time will be welcomed as delegates.

*September 5-7:* Western Mountain Regional Conference, Jackson Lake Lodge, Jackson Hole, Wyo.

*October 2-6:* California-Nevada-Hawaii Regional Conference, Coronado, Calif.

*October 12-14:* Second annual convention, California Council of Landscape Architects, Santa Barbara Biltmore Hotel, Santa Barbara, Calif.

## The Editor's Asides

IT IS PROCLAIMED by the public-relations staff of a new magazine, *Noise Control*, that it is "the only publication exclusively devoted to the problem of noise."

Is it possible that there is no periodical devoted solely to jazz?

THE EXHIBITION of German architecture, organized by the Bund Deutscher Architekten, and shown in The Octagon's galleries in October, is booked by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service to be seen in other places, among them: Department of Architecture, Pennsylvania State University; The J. B. Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Ky.; Department of Architecture, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.

IT IS SAID of the present-day architect that he has burned the books behind him. Possibly he will view with alarm 1955's record of more than 30,000 newly published books in England and the U.S.A. A lot of books! But the American Institute of Public Opinion has been surveying periodically the reading habits of our people, and at last report only 17% of all adults were reading books. Not much of a showing compared to

Canada's 31%, Australia's 34%, and England's 55%. In 1937 the figure comparable to our 17% was 29%. We seem to be approaching illiteracy fast. College graduates, separately questioned in a representative sampling, revealed that only 55% could name *any* recently published book. Dr. Graham DuShane, in an editorial in *Science*, says: "The statistics give evidence of a grave cultural inadequacy, and an even graver cultural decline. Books, both new and old, play an important part, possibly an indispensable part, in the transmission of the ideas that hold civilization together."

ACCORDING TO an architect handy with his slide rule, the average draftsman spends annually the equivalent of two weeks' working-time in the Coffee Break.

POOR PHILADELPHIA! Her interior traffic problem seems ever before her. There is now being offered her municipal and business leaders a series of conveyor belts carrying small passenger cars. "As envisioned by the designers, the system would operate through an arcade-like structure over the sidewalk from a series of stations, lo-

cated possibly in the second floors of stores, hotels, and office buildings. There were suggested two possible routes for the system between the city's new Independence Mall and 18th Street by way of Pennsylvania Boulevard, Market or Chestnut Streets. One two-and-a-quarter-mile system suggested would cost \$13,500,000. An alternate, and longer route, would cost approximately \$16,000,000."

Philadelphia might think seriously of joining the ranks of harassed communities which are barring vehicles from their business centers, and giving the streets back to the pedestrian.

ADD TO THE GROWING LIST of events that we should have preferred not to miss: The dinner on October 17 honoring Frank Lloyd Wright, with Robert Moses presiding, and the two uninhibited as to what each would say of the other.

WITH THE growing mechanization of construction activities on the site, it is comforting to learn that, since 1932, the quarter-century has witnessed, in the construction industry, the reduction of accident frequency by 75%, and the number of severe injuries by 50%.

What was formerly counted a rather hazardous occupation twenty-five years ago, with 58 accidents per million man-hours, has come in 1955 to show only 17 accidents per million man-hours. The continuing efforts in safety-training by management, insurance bodies, and allied groups have certainly borne fruit.

AS WE GO TO PRESS, word comes of the sudden death of Talbot Faulkner Hamlin, FAIA, unquestionably one of the great scholars of the architectural profession in our generation. En route to southern waters on his 33-foot cruiser, the *Aquarelle*, he suffered a stroke on October 8 from which he never regained consciousness.

Winner this year of the Pulitzer Prize in biography for his "Benjamin Henry Latrobe" and the Alice Davis Hitchcock Medallion of the Society of Architectural Historians for the same book, he was fortunate in knowing that his writings had attained national recognition.

It must be left to a later time and place in these pages for an adequate tribute to Talbot Hamlin. His passing leaves a broad and deep gap in architectural scholarship.



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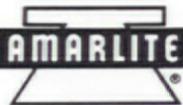
## THE LONG ROAD BACK

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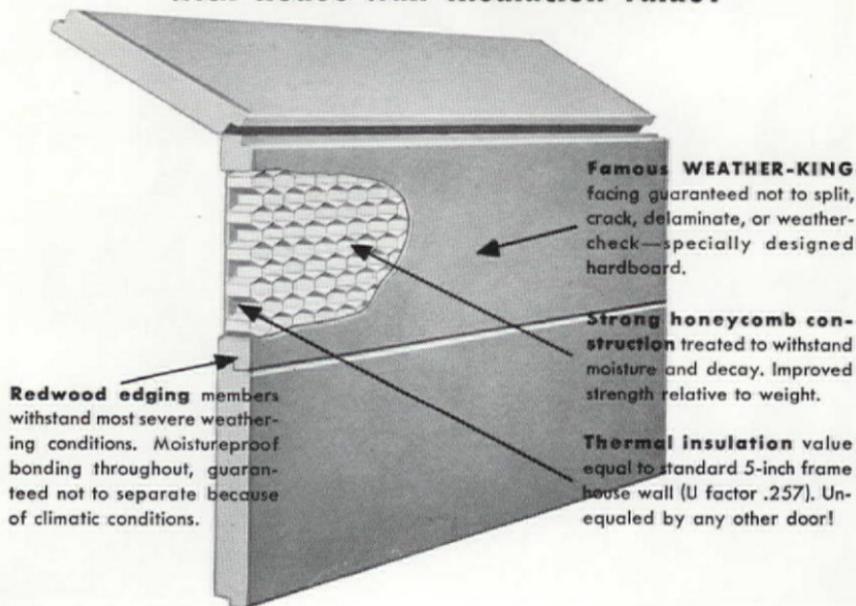
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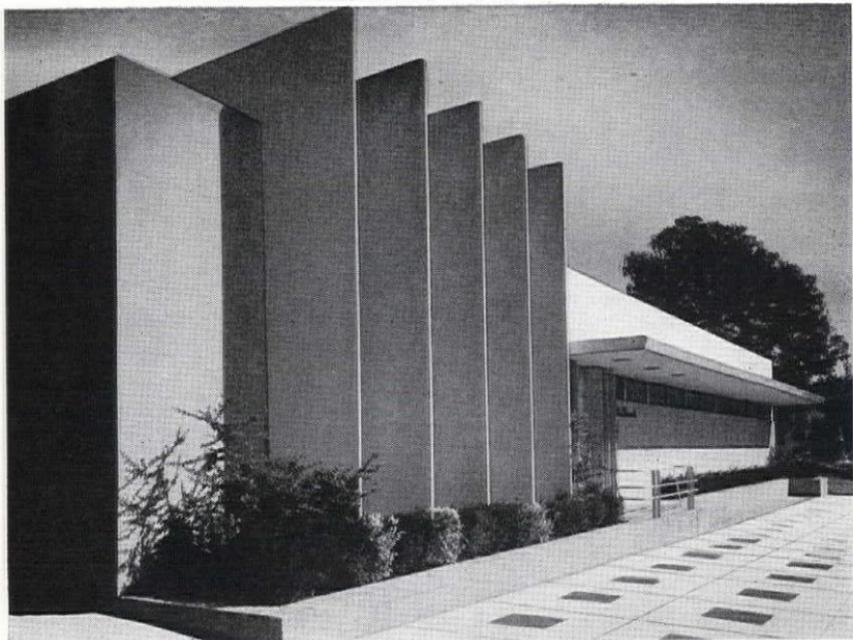
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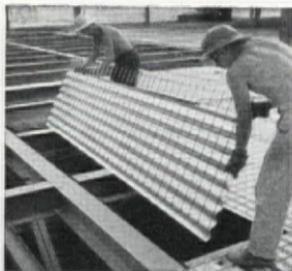
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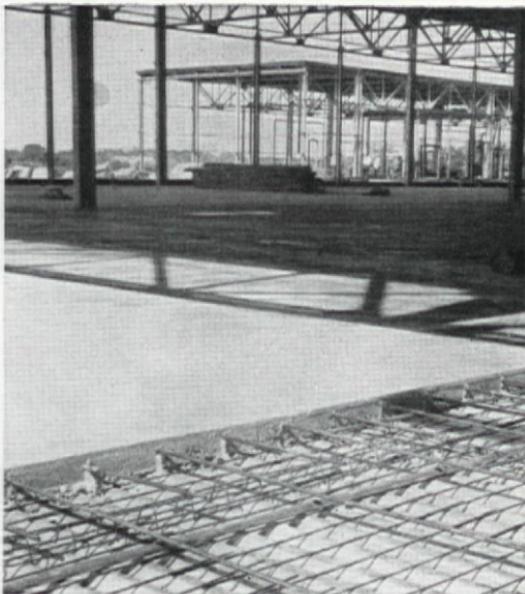
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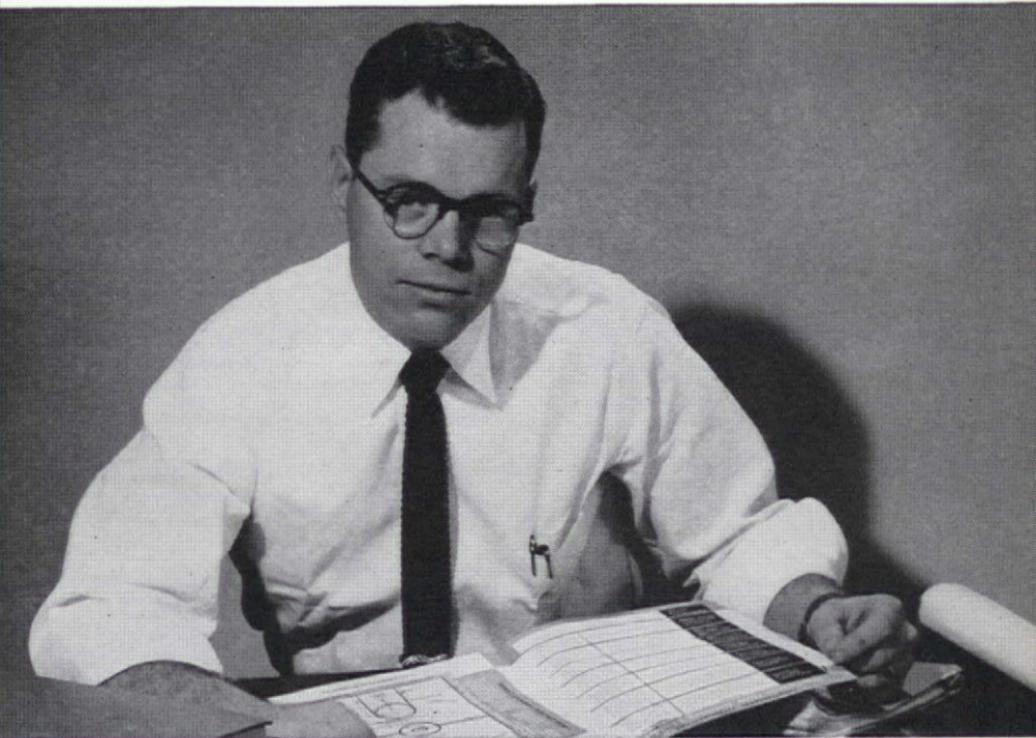
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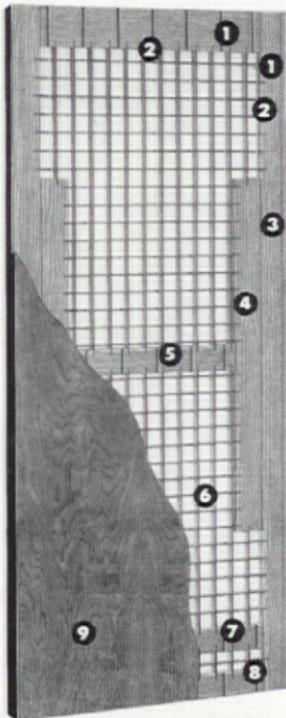


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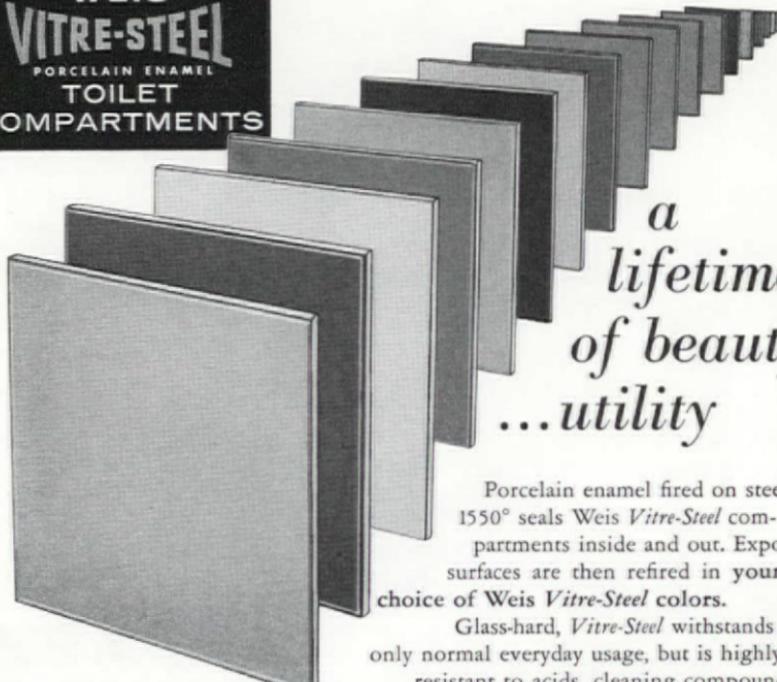
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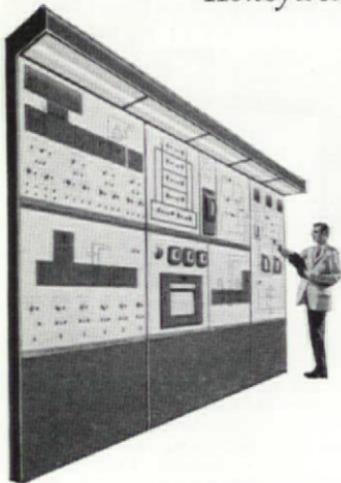


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# Current Color Trends

by Margaret Hutchinson, *Color Stylist*, The Martin-Senour Company



FALL AND WINTER, 1956-57

The Martin-Senour Custom Color System, for years the first choice of decorators, designers, stylists and architects throughout the country, is proving to be one of our best sources of information regarding changes in consumer color preference.

A careful record of sales, by color, has been kept and measured against the changing volume market for more than eleven years. This market study has proved its value to Martin-Senour and we are now sharing it with some of our friends in the industry.

The colors discussed here are interior flat wall finish colors and apply to usages in living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, etc.

While figures for the last six months show no sensational changes they do confirm some trends which were only indicated in the last survey period.

If the various hue groups in use today were to be lined up in order of importance, they would appear as follows:

1. **PINKS** are still leading the parade. However, for the first time since they came into favor there has been a slight percentage drop instead of a rise. The wanted Pinks are subtle—very light and very grayed.
2. **AQUAS** and **TURQUOISES** continue to rise. They are pale but clear—lacking the gray content seen today in Pink and Green.
3. **LIGHT BROWN** and **TAN** hold their own. Fawn, for a long time the top selling individual color, in this group, is topped this time by a lighter version which is almost Beige.
4. **GREENS** continue to drop off, altho a muted Celadon is still among the best sellers.
5. **CHALK WHITE** is probably more popular than our sales figures indicate because, unlike the other colors, it is sampled by every paint line.
6. The **LIGHT NEUTRALS**, still on the rise, are divided between the Yellow-Beige families and the Pink-Beige. The latter (Pink-Beige) is showing the greatest sales volume.
7. **YELLOW**s remain in the same spot they have held for some time, but continue to get paler.
8. **GRAYS** continue to drop off.
9. **BLUES** rose sensationally last survey period, but receded somewhat with this tabulation. They have also become lighter.
10. **NOMAD** and **GOLD** continue steadily at low volume but both colors are needed for a balanced home furnishings color story today. There is currently great consumer interest in the color Nomad (Custom Color No. 724) as a new and interesting neutral. We think it's on the rise.
11. **YELLOW-GREENS** are so widely diversified that it is hardly fair to list them as one color group. They range from Pale Lime to Moss. All of them, however, are subtle.

For your complimentary copy of the card showing colors referred to in this report write for the **COLOR TREND** to: Martin-Senour Paints, 2500 S. Senour Ave., Chicago 8, Ill.

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