

ARCADE

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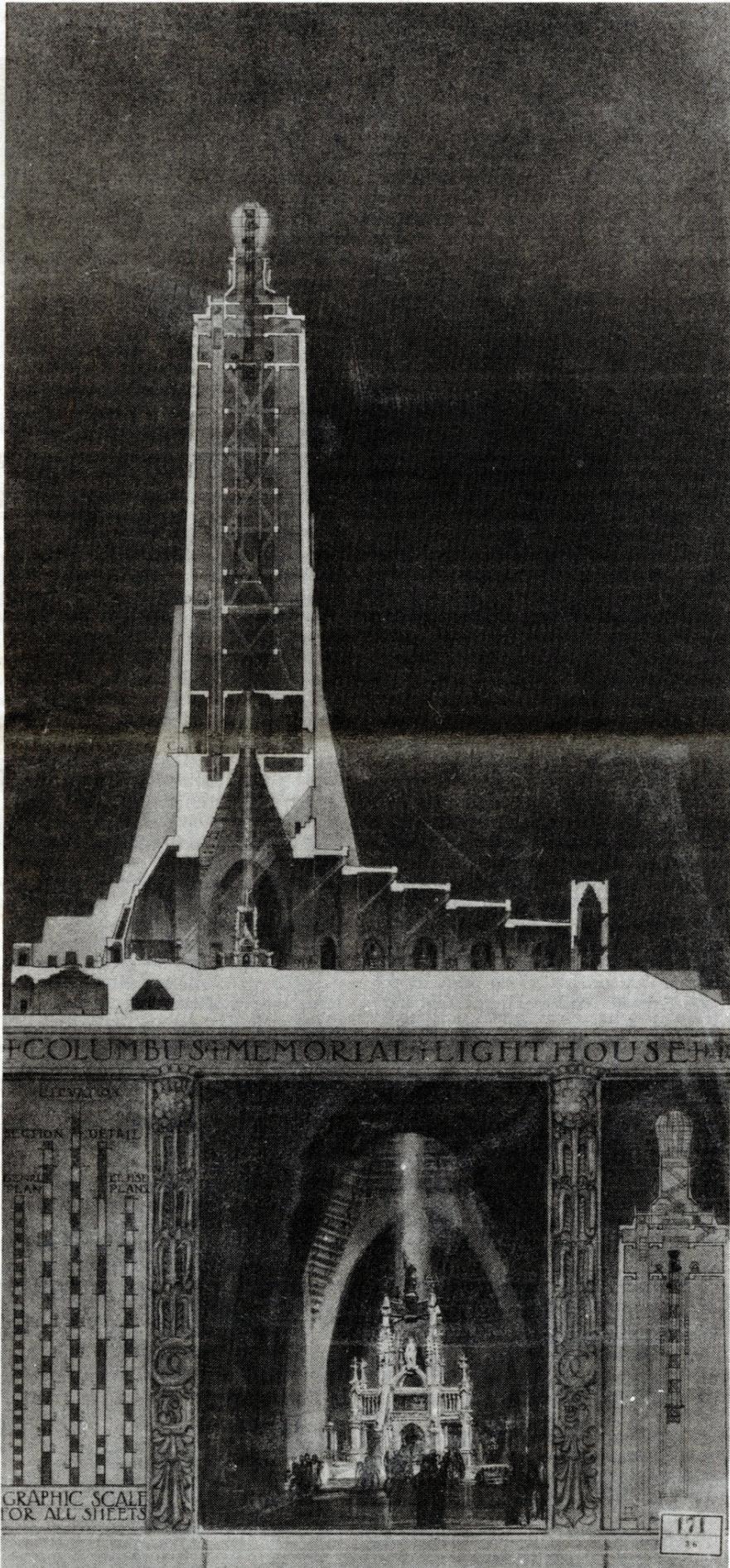
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Competition drawing by Lionel Pries in pencil and ink wash. One of the drawings in this series is eight feet long.

The inspiration from a great teacher may find built expression in the work of his students, and this, in turn, may stand as his best legacy. Lionel Pries profoundly influenced architecture students at the University of Washington for thirty years.

Introduction

This issue, with some thoughts on the education of architects, has been a long time coming. A series of roundtable discussions occurred in Seattle with the goal of examining educational philosophy at Northwest schools of architecture. The task proved enormous. Difficulties arose in deciding where to begin and what to compare. Soon it became clear that any discussion of the present must be prefaced by an understanding of what has come before.

One notion which came out of the roundtable discussions was a feeling that architectural education may have been better in the past. Certainly no

one felt that architectural education was on a better footing today. Most of the conversation centered on individuals, exceptional teachers whose personal influence made the difference. Many participants also felt that the education of architects has taken an unfortunately narrower path. A last observation was that schools may remain remarkably the same, even while appearances change drastically. The three historical pieces which follow are intended to stimulate discussion on architectural education and provoke further comment in ARCADE.

David Schraer

LIONEL H. PRIES: EDUCATOR OF ARCHITECTS

An act of inspiration is intangible and therefore seldom accounted for in architectural history. Yet the inspiration from a great teacher may find built expression in the work of his students, and this, in turn, may stand as his best legacy. Lionel Pries profoundly influenced architecture students at the University of Washington for thirty years. For many of the architects and educators who were his students, Pries was the school.

Pries' own architectural education was preceded by especially rich experience, and his predilection for design became apparent quite early. He was born of a cultured and international family, his mother Mexican and his father a German importer of art objects, and he accompanied them in his childhood on European travels. At the age of nine, he watched as the conflagration ensuing the great San Francisco earthquake destroyed his father's business. His father's spirit broken and health declining, he died in a few years. Young Pries contributed to the family's income by designing clothes for their well-to-do women friends.

For many students . . . Pries was the school.

After serving with the army in WW I, Pries attended the University of California at Berkeley as a student of John Galen Howard. Howard had worked for H.H. Richardson and was an enthusiast of the Beaux-Arts system of architectural education. The beautiful Beaux-Arts ink wash interpretations of the classical orders from Pries' freshman year have found their way to the University of Washington Library. He earned a baccalaureate of architecture in 1920 and that same year won a competition for a memorial bench at the University. His design was executed and still stands at the foot of Howard's Campanile at the University of California. It was also at Berkeley that Pries earned his nickname "Spike" because of his spindly stature. He related the story to his students that at Berkeley there was a requirement to swim the length of the pool before graduating. Concerned that he lacked sufficient body fat to remain afloat, he practiced holding his breath till he could walk across the bottom! The propensity for story-telling was characteristic of Mr. Pries.

In 1921 Pries completed a master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania. Pries was a member of Tau Sigma Delta architecture honorary and Tau Beta Pi engineering honorary. He was appointed assistant critic to his other great teacher in the Beaux-Arts tradition, also the teacher of Lou Kahn, Paul Phillippe Cret. Pries' first architectural work was with the Philadelphia Bureau of Sewers for which he designed several buildings, and he was associated with Bissell and Sinkler in the first design of Philadelphia's Sesqui-Centennial Exposition. At the University and afterwards, he won a number of awards, including the Arthur Sprayde Brook Gold Medal, the Birch Burnadette Long Prize, one second and three first medals from the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, and in 1921 he tied for first place for the American Academy of Rome competition. From 1921 to 1923 he was named a Le Brun Fellow and studied in Europe, including England, France, Italy, and Spain, and he visited Tunis in North Africa.

Pries then returned to the Bay Area and set up practice. There he did several large and some very innovative designs. The Abracadabra Clubhouse of 1926 is particularly interesting for the early use of exposed concrete-block walls. But for the most part, Pries did residential work, and his clientele mainly insisted on the Spanish Colonial Style. Pries designed well in the Spanish style and maintained a lifelong interest in it and things of Spanish derivation. However, as he complained to a visiting former classmate from Pennsylvania, William Bain, he found his Bay Area clients' singular preference for this style uncomfortably restrictive.

Bain had suggested that Pries relocate to Seattle and work with him. One evening in 1928, he received a phone call from Pries wanting to know how to get to his home. Thus began the Bain and Pries partnership with Pries as designer. A comparison of his last work in California and earliest in Seattle is striking and revealing. The Lee residence of 1927 is a large Spanish Colonial Style home of the sort Pries had become accustomed to designing, with clever manipulation of features typical of that style, including the arcaded, internal courtyard. The Youell residence of 1928, until recently owned by Bagley and Virginia Wright, has such elements of the Spanish style as tile roof, stucco, and the deeply recessed arched entrance. The lack of trim almost makes

. . . continued on page eight.

ARCADE

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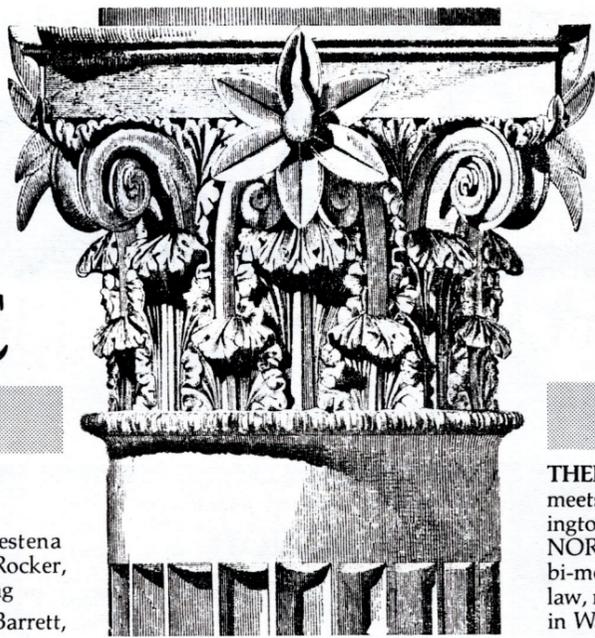
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Column of Many Orders

Rebecca Barnes

WITH A "1ST ANNUAL CALL FOR NEW WORK," jointly sponsored by ARCADE and BLUEPRINT: for Architecture, the Northwest architectural imagination will have an opportunity to go public. You, your child, and your best friend will be invited to submit expressions of architectural ideas in any medium. Entries will be available at Peter Miller Books for \$10. Submissions are due on 24 x 36" boards May 28-June 2. An exhibit and judging by six local luminaries of mixed disciplines will occur at the Seattle Art Museum in Volunteer Park, June 5, Tuesday, at 6 PM. Nearly simultaneously, the Design Concern Gallery will hold an unjuried exhibition and sale of architectural drawings and models, real, speculative, or make-believe, from June 15 to July 31 at 1427 Western. Membership in any organization is not required, nor are any established standards of practice, just the willingness to expose yourself.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE SHERburne Plan? Do you know what Harborfront means? Seattle's downtown waterfront has special meaning for you, you should know that the City of Seattle is beginning to plan improvements to the "Harborfront" by "scoping" an EIS on April 10, at 7:30 PM, 4th Floor, 400 Yesler. If you care about what kinds of open space developments occur on the Harborfront in the next 10 or so years, you can give the City planners the benefit of your ideas at that meeting, or write Joan Smith, DCD, 400 Yesler, Seattle 98104 by April 20. A project description is available; call 625-4511. The plan is currently in its most impressionable stage.

ASPIRING LICENSEES IN ARCHITECTURE and landscape architecture can improve their chances of passing the professional exams by enrolling in either a Mock Exam (for architects, given May 26, at U.W., sponsored by ARCADE and the Architectural Women's Gathering for about \$25, call Rebecca Barnes at 625-5781 or Pat Shelby at 624-5670 for details) or a Exam Review Seminar (offered for landscape architects over several weeks in May and June, including plant walks and lectures, for \$100, by Jestena Boughton at 523-1979 and Becca Hanson and the ASLA). This year's exams will be given at Seattle Center the week of June 18.

FIRST IT WAS A LEMON. THEN A bologna sandwich. (According to "The Weekly") the latest drawings of the proposed Washington State Trade and Convention Center suggest a resemblance to a cabbage patch. On March 26, the Center's Board of Directors, led down the site selection path by Freeway Park's miracle-maker Jim Ellis, formalized their choice of the over-the-freeway site in downtown Seattle. Viewed from the south, the building appears to be the Freeway Park Nursery, its glass walls incubating tender young veggies as well as sheltering up to 10,000 or so convention delegates.

THERE'S MORE TO LAND USE THAN meets the eye, enough in fact to fill Washington's newest professional journal, NORTHWEST LAND USE REVIEW, a bi-monthly guide to changes in land use law, regulation, planning and development in Washington and the Northwest. If you wonder why an architect would have any interest in such a field ask Bill Isley, Seattle architect, who is on the Board.

TWO TOTEM POLES, ONE INSPIRED by traditional northwest coast Haida designs, and one a tribute to the Market's farmers, have been at home in Market Park since March 11, completing the belvedere park designed by Seattleites Rich Haag and Victor Steinbrueck, and framing the views of the Sound, mountains, and colorful sunsets which help make this park such a special place. Cedar and fifty feet tall, the poles invite interpretation of their carved messages. Steinbrueck suggests that the Bear represents strength and power; the Killerwhale, good luck and abundance; the Human, prosperity; and the Raven, at the top, brings light and hope to Seattle, the Market, and to us all. The Hawk in the Bear's paw may signify vigilance, perhaps in relation to our own powers. A little Human Messenger, between the Whale's tail fins, suggests communication among people, and of people with Nature. Raven's spinning wheel may symbolize the work and art of local native Americans, especially the work of women.

Like the city itself, these monuments to its people are the work of many unseen minds and hands. Haag and Steinbrueck proposed the poles as part of their park plan. Trees in Skagit National Forest were selected and roughed out by Marvin Oliver, a Quinalt-Isleta Pueblo Indian. Jim Bender developed the design of both poles and carved them. The Seattle Arts Commission reviewed the designs; the Seattle Department of Community Development managed the project. Victor Steinbrueck consulted with Bender on the concept and design of the Farmers' pole. Ratti-Fossatti Associates, consulting engineers, were represented by Jim Robertson. Artech, with supervision by Jack Mackie, installed the poles. Behind the poles, six-foot tall green wrought iron screens, wrought by Roman Torres of Mexican Iron and Brass Works from designs by Steinbrueck, provide a whimsical backdrop for the poles and a practical separation between the park and the busy traffic on the Viaduct beyond. The total cost of the artwork was about \$50,000.

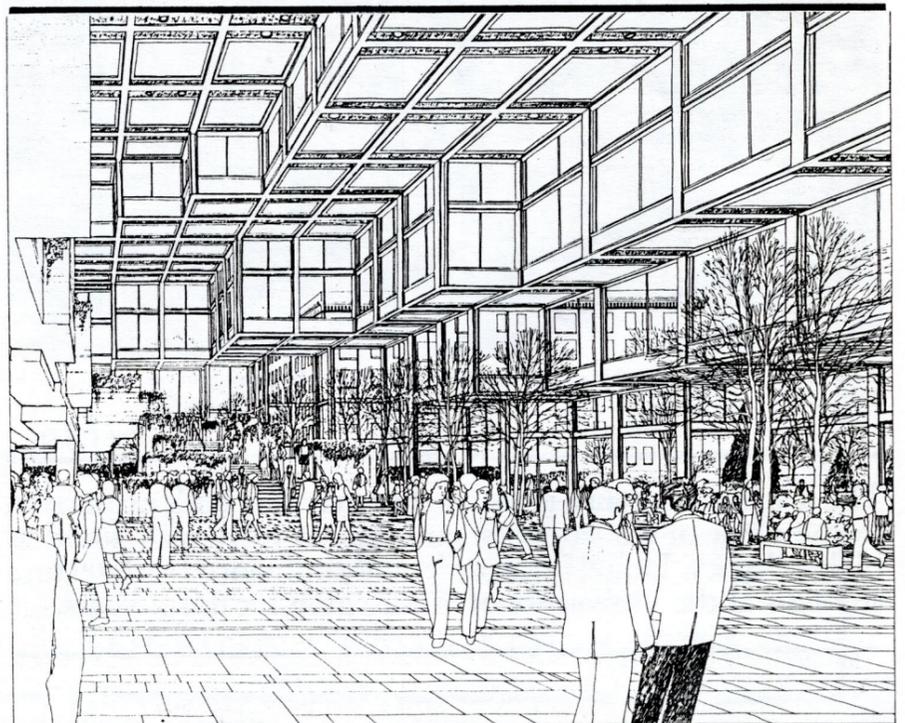
APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS



WITH THIS SOLUTION TO THE AGE-old problem of new-meets-old, the 6th & Pike Building turns another awkward corner in architectural history. Perhaps the building's more familiar nickname, "6th & Pike Building" refers to the structural device used to allow the new building to hang over the old one. (Our apologies: we do not make, merely report, popular culture.)

ARCHITECTS USE WORDS TO CONVINCE audiences and clients of the rightness of their work when images should speak for them. "One must trust one's eye much more than one trusts one's ear when dealing with architects." Thus Brent Brolin, author of *Architecture in Context*, warned non-architects at "Urban Design: Theory and Practice," a conference in Hartford, Connecticut, March 13-14.

Few other controversial statements were made during the two days of experience-based presentations of specific projects, until the wrap-up speaker defined "The Emerging Design Imperative." Looking like Ringo Starr with a perm in a 3-piece suit, Michael Pittas, Director of the Design Arts Program at the National Endowment for the Arts, provided the equivalent of the coach's half-time pep talk. According to Pittas, now — not yesterday and not tomorrow — is the time for architects and urban designers to recapture the power they once held. How? "Start thinking cosmically, not cosmetically." He attributed the visionary void of the past 30 to 40 years to "the 20th century's curse: visions for the first time could be built," and they didn't measure up. The stage has been set by post-modernism's "stock-taking" and the recent increased interest in design competitions. Why? "Visionary statement is of value in and of itself as a measure of society's expectations." Thus, even the grant-writers in the audience (potentially a much larger number than any other group in attendance) received some practical advice.



Drawing by Seth Seabloom.

DRAWING IN FRENCH:

THE ECOLE DES BEAUX ARTS AND AMERICAN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

Before 1865 in the United States, there were no architectural schools. In that year W.R. Ware founded a department at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Ware, and many other American educators in the last years of the 19th century, looked to Europe for educational models. They found three types: the English system of tutelage, the rather technically oriented training offered by German universities, and the example of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Each of these educational models found a place in 19th century American architectural curricula. By the first decade of the 20th century, however, the French system became preeminent. Its residue is still with us: we look for a *parti* and go *en charrette*. This piece will discuss the influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on American architectural education.

Part One: At the Ecole

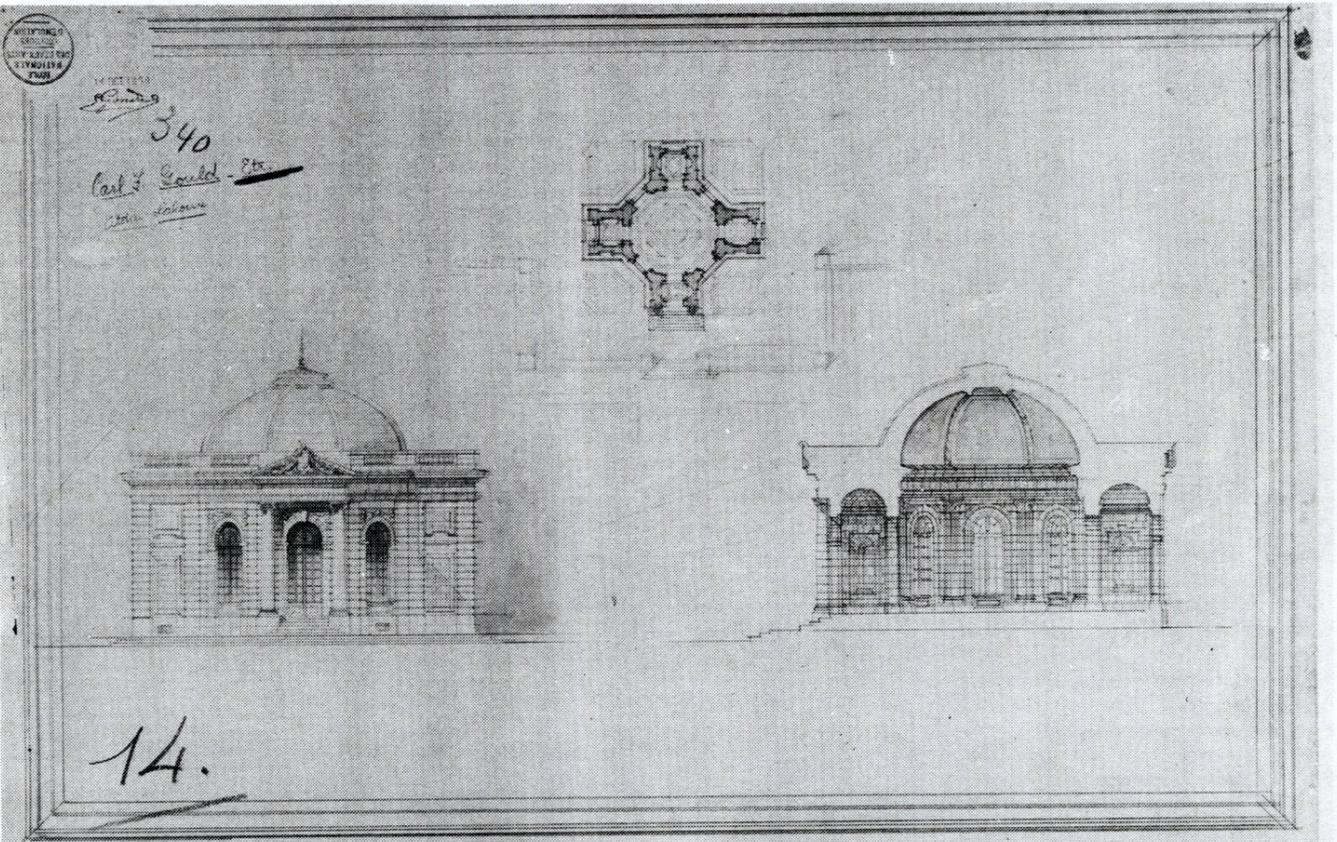
The Ecole des Beaux-Arts was a national school with departments of architecture, painting, and sculpture. Architectural education at the Ecole was free to any male between the ages of 15 and 30 capable of passing the entrance exams. The implicit goal of all Ecole students was to win the Grand Prix, to be sent to Rome at government expense for 4 or 5 years' study, and to return to France after that time and take up a government commission. From its founding in 1819 until the mid-1880s when the diploma first offered in 1867 became an acceptable alternative to preemption, all students knew that only one person each year would succeed. Unsuccessful candidates either left the school or stayed to compete again. Few students won the Grand Prix with their first submission. Many made five attempts before carrying away the prize; some made eight.

A student progressed toward the final competition through three levels. He began by selecting an atelier (studio) in which to work and enrolling on the school's list of "aspirants." The student was then allowed to use the facilities of the school and attend lectures. At the atelier, away from the school itself, time was spent in learning through doing. Newcomers helped more advanced students complete projects or worked with Ecole-issued programs on their own projects.

Atelier work, as well as outside study of diverse subjects including mathematics, history, descriptive geometry, drawing, and architectural design, was undertaken with the express goal of passing the Ecole entrance exams. In his *Autobiography of an Idea*, Louis Sullivan gives an account of both his preparation and examination. Frenchmen commonly spent two years in preparation before passing these exams.

A passing aspirant gained admission to the second class. He could then participate in second class *concours* — competitions. These were of two types: short 12-hour sketch problems, *equisses*; and longer *projets rendus*, rendered projects of two months' duration. Programs of the longer projects were typically for a small building, perhaps an assembly hall or school. Sketch problem programs included parts of buildings. Point values, *valeurs*, awarded to competition projects in closed jury, determined progress through the second class toward the first. In addition to doing *concours* in architectural design, the second class student had to demonstrate technical proficiency in one or more construction *concours* and pass numerous technical examinations. Although some students passed to the first class in only one year, a typical stay in the second class lasted two to four years.

Moving to the first class, the student found a situation similar to that of the second. Architectural design did, however,



Drawing inscribed Carl F. Gould, Etr., Atelier Laloux. Stamped with a date, 14 October 1899, and the source, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Concours d'emulation. Photo courtesy University of Washington Libraries, Pacific Northwest Collection.

receive an increased proportion of attention. Programs for large buildings were offered as *projets rendus*, and sketch problem programs included small buildings or parts of large buildings. For the first class six sketch and six *rendu* programs were issued each year. Students had to participate in but one or two per year to remain in good standing. Passage out of the first class occurred via Rome or "by the backdoor"; those not winning the Grand Prix by their 30th birthday, up until the institution of the diploma, simply left the school to practice architecture.

... all students knew that only one person each year would succeed.

The Rome prize contest was a series of three competitions, a 12-hour sketch, a 24-hour sketch, and the final five-month project for, usually, a monumental public building. Richard Chaffee describes the details of the competition in "The Teaching of Architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts." Each year a winner was sent to the French Academy in Rome to study.

Students undertaking a *projet rendu* of either the first or second class, and those successfully passing to the third stage of the Rome prize competition, upon receiving the program retired to produce in a limited amount of time, usually 12 hours, a spatial-conceptual diagram for their proposed building, a "*parti*." This was known as going *en loge*. Using, for the most part, a set of received compositional rules, building elements, and spatial concepts, the students combined and recombined pieces, testing possibilities, until a suitable *parti* was produced. In the first class six *rendu* programs were issued each year. Students of that class could go *en loge* at each issue. By submitting a studied *parti*, one entered the *concours*. A copy of the *parti* was presented to the school at the end of the allotted time, and this was retained for comparison with the final project. Correspondence between initial and final intentions was required. Projects not like their generating *partis* were disqualified and received no

valeurs. Going *en loge* provided much practice in rapid analytical thinking about building design, but did not oblige the student to compete in the *concours*.

Students often prepared independently for exams. Lectures at the Ecole were not required, although passage of exams and *concours* addressing lecture materials were. Chaffee writes that only construction lectures were well-attended.

Most learning took place in the ateliers, the place of studio work. There were many ateliers, and aspirants were free to choose among them. Ateliers were not organized by the Ecole. Rather, they were formed by a group of students requesting the services of a "patron" a desired architect who dispensed architectural criticism in exchange for a small fee. Admission to an atelier required the permission of one's chosen patron. Ateliers were usually found in cheap, unattractive quarters near the Ecole. All that was required was enough space to draw, and a modicum of heat, light and air. In any given atelier was found a range of students, "aspirants" through "anciens," competing for the Grand Prix. According to Chaffee, a typical patron would visit the studio two or three times per week. J.P. Carlihan reports one two-hour visit per week as being typical.

In any case, it is agreed that the younger students were frequently taught by more experienced *anciens* rather than by the patron. The *anciens* had often been studying for nearly ten years and thus were well-suited to the task. In turn, the young students helped older students with their drawings. The ateliers were the site of the intense work of the *charrette*, the long days and nights of effort prior to the submission of any *projet rendu*, especially a Grand Prix submission. In addition to hard work, they fostered a fair amount of jocularly and a remarkable *esprit de corps*. Walter D. Blair writes in *The Brick Builder* (March 1909):

The ateliers . . . occupy quarters in old buildings where cheapness and dirt keep company. A crowd of students is not a desirable neighbor: they sing much, often through the night. The walls are decorated with caricatures and pictures until a dark somber tone is attained that accords well with the dirt, dishevelment, and confusion of the place. The lighting is by

candle, each man furnishing his one or two candles that are stuck to the board on which he is working. The air of the room is close, for there is no ventilation. Silence never prevails. Jokes fly back and forth, snatches of songs, excerpts from operas, at times even a mass may be sung, yet amid the confusion and the babble — strange as it may seem — work proceeds.

Part Two: America Learns to Draw

The influence of Beaux-Arts educational methods in America has several aspects. With Richard Morris Hunt in 1845, Americans began traveling to Paris to enroll at the Ecole. Returning home, they often took prominent places in a young profession. The value of French study became evident in built fact. An increasing number of substantial public buildings were built by the Beaux-Arts-trained in the last 25 years of the 19th century. These included Hunt's Lenox Library, Carrere and Hasting's New York Public Library, and McKim, Mead, and White's Boston Public Library. H.H. Richardson's work must be included as well. As late as 1893, the grounds and buildings of the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition continued to popularize architecture of Beaux-Arts inspiration. Indeed, one can conclude that the larger part of monumental American architecture between 1880 and 1920 was based on French theory and practice learned at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. (Daniel Burnham is an exception to this rule, as is Frank Lloyd Wright. Still, Beaux-Arts compositional methods appear in the larger projects of both men; i.e., Burnham's Chicago plan of 1909 and Wright's Wolf Lake Amusement Park.) This being the case, it is no surprise that aspiring would-be architects traveled to France for training and that American schools were eventually created emulating the successful French model.

Both Noffsinger and Whitehead agree on a chronology marking the ascent and decline of the Beaux-Arts influence on formal architectural education in America. Simply, they identify a period of growing influence beginning with the founding of the department at MIT and lasting until

... continued on page four.

ECOLE . . .

continued from page three . . .



A sophomore analytique by Victor Steinbrueck.

the late 1890s; a period of flourishing Ecole influence in the first 20 years of this century; and a subsequent period of decline. A description of a few important schools in each of these periods will follow.

After operating a private atelier for one year, William R. Ware founded the department of architecture at MIT in 1865. He later established a school at Columbia in 1881. Ware was not trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Instead of going to Paris, he studied and worked with R.M. Hunt, a veteran of nine years at the Ecole. It was in that context that he became familiar with French theory and practice. In addition, he met Henry Van Brunt, an Ecole-trained architect and later his partner, in Hunt's office. Before formulating the MIT program, Ware visited several European schools, among them the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, for the purpose of surveying educational methods and soliciting advice. Of the early school Shillaber, in *MIT School of Architecture and Planning 1861-1961* states:

William Ware's association with Hunt, a successful product of French training, inevitably led him to turn to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in developing a system of architectural education at MIT. The resulting scheme showed the influence of the Ecole together with some considerable modifications. The atelier could not be copied in its French form, as American architects did not view their responsibilities toward education as idealistically as did their counterparts in France, who freely devoted time to criticism of Ecole work. However, certain elements of the French system did prevail. For example, the importance of design based on historical styles was emphasized, competition was introduced through exhibition of student presentations, and judgement, when possible, was by juries composed of members of the staff who had not been previously concerned with the assigned problems. At MIT the education in architecture differed from the Ecole chiefly in a planned curriculum with scheduled classes, including courses in construction, and in Ware's insistence on the need for a broad and general background not only of history of architecture but of the entire realm of fine arts.

Design received much less emphasis than it did in France. Although Ware desired a four-year design curriculum, his department, subject to the requirements of the engineering school to which it belonged, could offer only four semesters of design. These were undertaken at the school and were taught by MIT instructors. Other required coursework was diverse and time-consuming. Construction courses were modeled after English precedent. Scientific and technical requirements, as well as knowledge of a foreign language, were part of the curriculum rather than prerequisite to it, as at the Ecole. Passage through the course toward a degree was not, under

Ware, subject to the accumulation of valeurs. Though Ware did not bring MIT into conformity with the French model, he did hire, in 1872, Eugene Letang, a French architect and graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Letang was in charge of design until 1890. Additional Ecole-trained staff of this period included F.W. Chandler and D. Despradelle. Without question, Ware brought to formal American architectural education French ideas of how to make buildings.

Other architectural schools founded before 1898 included Cornell, the University of Illinois, Columbia University, Syracuse University, the University of Pennsylvania, George Washington University, the Armour Institute of Technology, and Harvard University. These schools, in varying degrees, were influenced by the practices of the Ecole. Before the arrival of J.V. Van Pelt, an Ecole-trained American, at Cornell in 1896, the curriculum was principally technical. French-schooled Albert Brockway brought Ecole methods to Syracuse University's twenty-year-old program in 1893. Instruction at Illinois followed a technically-oriented German model. Design consisted of learning to produce working drawings and occupied only three semesters of the four-year curriculum.

In 1881 Ware left MIT to establish an architectural school at Columbia University. In 1882 A.D.F. Hamlin, who had studied at MIT under Ware and at the Ecole, joined Columbia's faculty. Ware's Columbia curriculum was not competitive as at the Ecole, and there were no final juries. As at MIT, design coursework was confined to the final two years of the curriculum, but studies did include both sketches and rendered projects as at the Ecole. Whether or not there was an en-loge procedure at this early date is unknown. There were no ateliers, and design was taught by instructors at the school, not patrons. In 1902, with the retirement of Ware, Columbia began more actively to imitate the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

A department of architecture was opened at the University of Pennsylvania in 1890, and its methods were "patterned . . . as far as possible, after those of the Ecole." Drawing and design were taught in each of the four years of training.

In 1895 Harvard established a four-year course in architecture. The course there is reported to have been "relatively free from the influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts."

By 1896-8 there were no architectural schools in the nation mimicking the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in all aspects. Courses were of limited duration: four years were typically required to progress through any American curriculum. This is a period of time far shorter than that needed for most to climb the pyramidal Ecole structure. Progress toward an American degree was not dependent upon winning values in competition with other students. All course work was taken at the school. There were no patrons or ateliers. Programs varied but none seems to have emphasized design as much as that of the Ecole. Nevertheless, French designers did come to teach French design method and composition. One can assume that their techniques approximated those of the Ecole.

In the first decade of the 20th century, architectural education in the manner of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts was ascendant. Most of the schools previously mentioned transformed their programs in this period to closely resemble those of the Ecole. In addition, Beaux-Arts-trained Americans founded the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects in 1893 and began offering an Ecole-like structure of classes and competition programs, as well as prizes, to both individuals and institutions. Perhaps the successes of Beaux-Arts-trained Americans were the most compelling stimuli for change. In their practices they offered proof of the efficacy

of Ecole study. In his *History of Collegiate Education in Architecture in the U.S.*, A.C. Whitehead notes that graduates of schools not offering maximum design exposure, Columbia and MIT for example, were not often great designers. Shifts toward Ecole techniques surely were intended to remedy this situation.

Beaux-Arts-trained architects were familiar with monumental design problems from their school days. American demand for monumental buildings, according to J.P. Carlihan, was high in the early years of the 20th century. Twenty-four state capitols were built between 1886 and 1936. Cultural and economic development in cities

"American architects did not view their responsibilities toward education as idealistically as did their counterparts in France."

both old and new called for the erection of museums, churches, courthouses, and railroad stations. Carlihan suggests that the availability of such work and the example of those undertaking it encouraged students to pursue French training. It might well have encouraged American schools to become more like the Ecole.

Of MIT between 1900 and 1925 Whitehead writes:

The department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was thoroughly representative of the more conservative ideals of the period. It was entirely eclectic in its approach to architecture and dominated by the spirit of its great French teachers; yet there was no attempt to adopt in its entirety the Ecole system. It was always in close contact with engineering, but design and drawing were stressed. There was a strong emphasis upon the cultural subjects as these were presented in the best universities in the country. With an American architect at its head and a French school man in charge of its major subject, it was in a very real sense a typical American school of the time.

The appointment of John V. Van Pelt to Cornell brought to that school a close

approximation of French training. A number of Ecole-trained Frenchmen were brought to the school to teach design in those years; i.e., M.J. Prevot, J. Hebrand, G. Mauxion, and later S. Stevens, E.J. Kahn, and E.V. Meeks.

After Ware's departure from Columbia in 1902, a number of significant program changes were made. The four year curriculum and its class divisions were abolished. Design and drawing were taught in each of what for most students was four years of architectural training. Advancement was based on points awarded in competition rather than time invested. Ateliers were established as well: one at the school, two others in downtown New York. These last two had as patrons Charles McKim and Thomas Hastings. Additionally, the architecture school secured its own release from the burden of liberal education by instituting entrance requirements which included two years of college liberal arts training. Columbia, being in New York, the home of the greatest proportion of French-trained American architects, became the American school most like the Ecole.

The school most like the Ecole before the turn of the century, the University of Pennsylvania, became even more like the French school in the early 1900s. At Penn in 1906, as at Columbia, the class structure of the curriculum was abolished; advancement became dependent on points won in competition. Studios, however, remained at the school. The number of French-trained staff members grew to include Paul Cret, whom Whitehead states was a "brilliant designer with a record of unusual distinction from the Ecole and doubtless the ablest teacher of design America has ever possessed," as well as Thomas Nolan and Charles Everett.

Not all schools changed. The University of Illinois did not adopt any Beaux-Arts methods.

In the first 20 years of the century, several architectural schools were founded. Whitehead suggests that, generally, those in the South tended to follow the example of MIT and Columbia under Ware; those in the Midwest, the example of the Univer-

1928
Le Corbusier Grand Confort Petit

The Classics at **CURRENT** 815 E. Thomas.
325-2995

That European monumental architecture could supply material appropriate to an American context seemed doubtful to some observers.

sity of Illinois. The school at Berkeley, founded in 1904 by John Galen Howard who had studied under Ware at MIT and in Paris, immediately joined the group of schools imitating the Beaux-Arts.

In "The Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Architectural Profession in the U.S.: the Case of John Galen Howard," Draper states:

Howard attempted to introduce an integrated course of design instruction which was not arbitrarily broken up by the unit, grade and year categories imposed by the university. It was this component of the curriculum — design — which was most strongly influenced by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

Design instructors at Berkeley tended to be Americans trained in France rather than Frenchmen. Progress through the program was measured in points before years. The complete curriculum typically included two years of liberal arts study and four years of architecture.

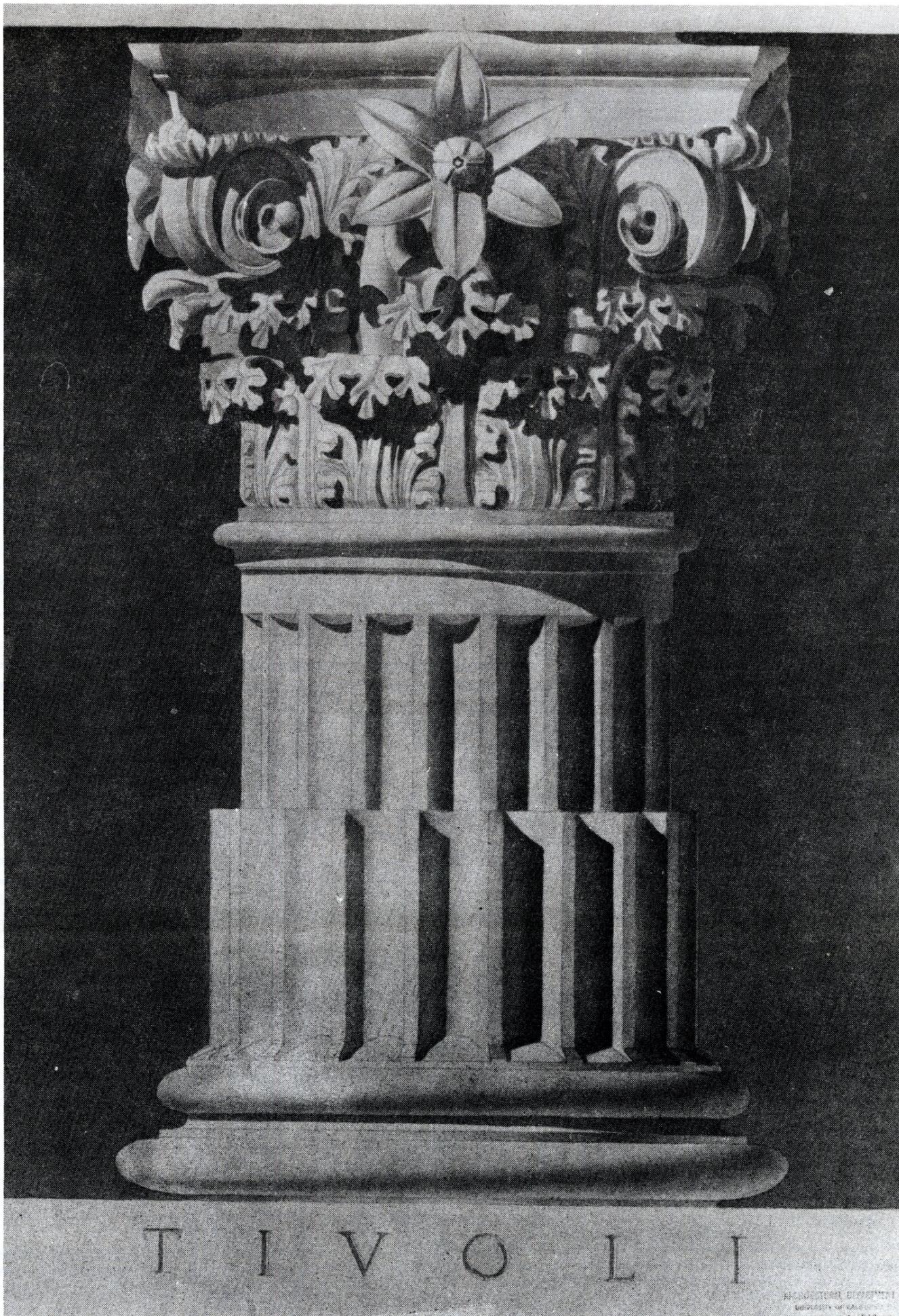
The Society of Beaux-Arts Architects (SBAA) was founded in 1893 by a group of Ecole alumni in New York City. Its purpose was to offer an Ecole-like program in architectural design to those in and out of formal schools. With the payment of a small subscription fee, anyone could become a student of the Society and embark upon its program of design education through competitions. Participating students were assigned to classes and, as at the Ecole, advancement was based upon the accumulation of points awarded by closed jury. Programs for both sketched and rendered projects were frequently issued. En loge procedures were required for the large problems. As in Paris, final rendered projects had to resemble early parti sketches. In 1894 the Society for the first time offered the Paris Prize in competition. The winner of that contest was sent to Paris for 2½ years to study at the Ecole. There, he or she was immediately admitted to the first class. SBAA students were allowed and encouraged to form ateliers. Some Society members acted as patrons to these groups. In 1916 the SBAA, by way of a corporate restructuring, became the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design. In that year it began to offer classes in its own quarters. Universities as well as individuals received BAID programs. In *Architecture* (May 1918) Hastings states:

The Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, through its widespread influence, has brought together in competition, in the realm of design to which it limits its activities, practically all universities, colleges, and schools of learning where architecture is taught in this country.

By 1912 there were 102 SBAA ateliers in the U.S. containing some 994 students. By the 1929-30 season, the number of students had increased to 2,466.

In the 1920s, the influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on American architectural schools began to fade. Criticism of Ecole methods came from several quarters. Beaux-Arts buildings were called structurally dishonest and meaningless copies of history. That European monumental architecture could supply material appropriate to an American context seemed doubtful to some observers. J. Stewart Barney, who had studied at the Ecole, in *Architectural Record* of November 1908, criticizes Ecole-style teaching technique as being more concerned with precedent than principle, caring more about appearance than function. Further, he questions the emphasis on visually-seductive rendered drawings in plan, section, and elevation, and the omission from presentations of perspective drawings that present images of buildings as they are experienced. Even A.D.F. Hamlin, himself an Ecole alumnus and Ecole-style educator, lamented the lack of a principled use of Beaux-Arts compositional methods in *Architectural Record* (April 1903):

Now if the hosts of returning Ecole men had been always able to distinguish between what is fundamental and what is superficial in their Parisian experiences, there would be less question of the value of their training as a preparation for American practice. But it would seem that many of them have been dazzled with a false glamour, or bewitched by the artistic jargon and cant of the ateliers, into glorifying the superficial and the external, and forgetting the eternal and fundamental principles which give whatever is valuable to their foreign training. . . . "Cartouche architecture" has become a byword in New York.



Ink wash interpretation of the corinthian order executed by Pries as a freshman student at Berkeley in 1918.

Whitehead and others cite an increasing American awareness of avant-garde movements in Europe as a factor causing increased doubt about the applicability to modern problems of Beaux-Arts style buildings and teachings. In the 1920s the old eclecticism began to seem ill-suited to the economics of mass production and distribution, and wasteful of materials and effort.

By 1925 Ecole-trained architects in search of a modern style began to abandon their dated eclecticism.

Certainly it was neither the architecture of everyman, as German and Dutch housing tried to be, nor was it imbued with the lyricism some interpreters found in the machine. It increasingly ceased to engage either the spirit or material conditions of its times, or the interest of students and practitioners. Indeed, Esherick suggests that at Penn in the early 1930s, students were responsible for bringing an awareness of modern architecture to the school. By 1925 Ecole-trained architects in search of a modern style began to abandon their dated

eclecticism; Ely Jacques Kahn did so. Paul Cret's building at the Chicago Fair of 1933, too, was hardly a typical example of the Beaux-Arts style.

Education at Columbia University can serve as an example of the move away from French methods. At the school, criticism of Ecole training techniques was eventually manifest as curriculum changes. A committee of Ecole men recommended abandonment of the French methods. The school retrenched toward a position more like that established by Ware years earlier. Under acting Dean Joseph Hudnut (1933-35), economic, social, and technical factors entered into design problems as they rarely did previously. Building programs were tailored to fit student needs; the program was noncompetitive. Professors of design were known as studio masters, a term probably deriving from Bauhaus usage.

It would be difficult to end without mentioning the arrival in this country in the late 1930s of Gropius, Breuer, Albers, Mies, Peterhans, Hilbersheimer, and Moholy-Nagy, and the positions they took in the field of architectural education — Gropius and Breuer at Harvard; Albers at Black Mountain College; Aalto at MIT; Mies,

Peterhans, and Hilbersheimer at IIT; and Moholy-Nagy at the New Bauhaus. It is, I suspect, their arrival that marks the end of any serious pursuit of Ecole philosophy and technique at American architecture schools.

This piece is condensed from a longer paper. The first portion of the work draws heavily on Richard Chaffee, *Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, "The Teaching of Architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts," ed. by Drexler, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977. The second portion depends on J.P. Noffsinger, *The Influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on the Architects of the United States*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press of America, 1955; and A.C. Whitehead, *History of Collegiate Education in Architecture in the U.S.*, Los Angeles, 1941 (Doctoral Dissertation).

Gene Sparling

Gene Sparling, who is from Seattle, now lives and works in New York City.

Unless otherwise attributed, all photographs illustrating this article are from the Historical Architecture Collection, University of Washington Libraries.

sunday

monday

tuesday

april

Paintings by Guy Anderson, J. Meron, and Ed Kamuda now at the Francine Seders Gallery through 4/8.
Photographs by New York artist Larry Clark now at the Equivalents Gallery through 4/8.
Photographs by Jay Dusard, "North American Cowboys and Southwest Landscapes" now at the Silver Image Gallery through 4/28.

1

Continuation of exhibit, "Vessels," an invitational group show at the Cerulean Blue Gallery. Textile works by Janet Boguch, Dina Barzel, Mary Hanson-Spofford, and Karin Van Derpool. Show runs through 5/19.
Works on paper by Doug Semivan and Joseph Therian at Davidson Gallery through 4/18.
Functional works by Salley Jaffee now at the Clay Occasion Gallery, Stewart House, Pike Place Market, through 4/18.

2

Buster Simpson: "Market Art" at the Virginia Inn.
Photographs by Sylvia Plachy at Yuen Lui Studio and Gallery through 4/30.
"Constructions," by Kathy Glowen and Hugh Webb. Currently at Whatcom Museum of History and Art, through 4/22.

3

Collage paintings by Mary He through 4/30.
"On Common Threads" Textile Gallery through 4/17.
Winston Smith began keeping 1984.

Grant Hildebrand speaks on the work of Albert Kahn tonight at U of Oregon's Lawrence Hall, Rm 177, at 7:30.
Gamelan Pacifica performs tonight at Cornish Institute South Theater, 8 pm. Call 323-1400 for info.

Afro-American Abstraction, an exhibit at the Bellevue Art Museum, features works by 2 prominent Afro-American painters and sculptors, and runs through 4/22.

8

Faculty recital: Paul Taub and Bun-Ching Lamb perform works for flute and piano at Cornish Institute South Theater, 8 pm. Free.

"Downtown Boom: Jobs for Whom?" a symposium at Madrona Community Center, 7:30 pm. Sponsored by Seattle Community Council Federation, Church Council of Greater Seattle, and Madrona Community Center.

Floss your teeth instead - it's Oscar Night.

9

"My Approach," a lecture by architect Edward Larrabee Barnes, tonight at 8 pm at Volunteer Park. The second in a six-lecture series by contemporary architects at the Seattle Art Museum.

A four-part series of lectures on the influence of Alfred Steiglitz on Tuesdays through 5/8 begins tonight at SAM Volunteer Park.

Noon Seminar at University of Washington: "The Home Experience" Gould Hall 208 J. 12-1:00.

Tonight at U of Oregon's Lawrence Hall, Rm 177, Edward Dean speaks on Swedish housing systems. 7:30 pm.

Perla Korosec-Serfaty lectures on "Image and Sociability of Urban Squares" tonight at 8:00 at UW, 207 Architecture Hall.

Cornish Dance Theater at the B on 4/13 and 2 and 8 pm on 4/14. Info.

"Designs for Parks and Gardens" recently showing at the Phillippe Bonnafant San Francisco. Through 4/24.

"Repetition, Superstition," a drawing and "Seminal Forces," by Debra Com Museum of History and Art.

Entry Deadline, New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial Competition. Contact New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission, 110 Church St., Suite 1700a, NY, NY 10007. (212) 608-5800.

Entry Deadline, Second Annual Wilsonart Design Competition. Contact 1984 ASID Wilsonart Design Competition, c/o McKone and Co., Inc., 2700 Stemmons Tower, Suite 800, Dallas, Texas 75207. (800) 433-3222.

"Planners and the People: Beyond High-Tech" is the title of a lecture to be given by Robert T. Goodman tonight at UW in Kane Hall, 8 pm.

Edward Larrabee Barnes born, 1922.

15

Don't miss "Death and Taxes," an installation by Michael Murphy in the window of D'Art, 105 Stewart St.

Havana Nice Day? You might be if you were signed up for this summer's Portland State University Cultural tour of Cuba. Deposits are due no later than 5/15; for more info contact Mel Katz, Art Dept., P.S.U., PO Box 751, Portland, Ore. 97207. (503) 229-3545.

Photos by Lisa Kanemoto are on display at Yuen Lui Gallery, now through 5/5.

16

Marc Schiff, AIA speaks on "Solar Energy" tonight at 7:30 pm, Lawrence Hall, University of Oregon, Rm 177.

Ceramics by Patricia Detzler at the Whatcom Museum, Bellingham, now through 4/30.

"Seattle Poster and Packaging Design Show" Works by Seattle area graphic designers, artists, and photographers at Design Concern through 5/16.

17

Color panoramic photograph by Jim Dow. Color night photograph recent color work by Kathy Fridste 5/13.

Wendy Brawer's window installation



At SAM Volunteer Park: Lecture by Bill Talley and Duane Pentilla on "Nurture of the Olmsted Landscape," 7:30 tonight. (4/24)

John Russell Pope, American Neoclassicist architect, born 1878.

24

Architectural Drawings and Sketches exhibited at the Phillippe Bonnafant San Francisco, now through 5/26.

Allied Arts Last Friday luncheon discussions over lunch on arts and architecture, closely involved with the issues of this month's meeting.

may

Paintings and works on paper by Lucinda Parker at Hodges/Banks Gallery.

Tivoli Gardens opens today and stays open all summer through September 15.

1

Alice Wingwall, sculptor and painter at UW in a co-sponsored lecture on Architecture." 207 Architecture Hall through 5/30.

Photographs by David Armstrong through 5/30.

"Praise Poems: the Katherine Wright" currently at SAM, Seattle Center P through 5/15.

Contemporary Italian Film Series at the UW: 3:30 and 7:30 Tuesdays through 6/5, 130 Kane Hall. Series tickets \$12 and \$14. Call 543-2350 for details.

Group show of wood artisanry, furniture, and sculpture by Northwest designer/craftsmen at the Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking through 5/30.

Black and white photographs by Seattle artist Bill O'Donnel at the Silver Image Gallery through 6/12.

8

"Down Garden Paths": an exhibit of 56 turn-of-the-century American ceramics at the Henry Art Gallery, UW.

Window installation by Dan Mitchell through 5/26.

This Week is Historic Preservation Week: Dedications, celebrations, orations, and more. Call Allied Arts 624-0432 for a rundown on planned events.

Self-Portraits by Joe Reno, Curated by Matthew Kangas, through 5/29.

13

"Second Saturday Cinema" film series at the Focal Point Media Center. Featured tonight, four fictional documentaries: "Aqui se lo halla" (Here You Will Find It) by Lee Sokol, "The Man Who Could Not See Far Enough" by Peter Rose, "Daughter Rite" by Michele Citron, and "Sea Space" by William Farley. Showtime is 8 pm. Tickets cost \$3.00 at the door or \$2.50 for Focal Point Members.

Mary Shelley finished writing Frankenstein, 1817.

14

Entry Deadline, National Student Design Competition on Metal Building Systems. Contact Butler Architectural Design Competition, PO Box 32314, Washington, DC 20007.

"Computers in the Design Process": a lecture by Murray Milne, tonight at U of Oregon, 177 Lawrence Hall, 7:30.

Allied Arts Board Meeting tonight at 7:30. Call 624-0432 for details.

15

Show of recent acquisitions at 5/31.

Bike tour of Olmsted Parks and boulevards, beginning at Evans Pool at Greenlake and continuing to Seward Park. Bring your lunch. 10:30 am.

20

Peter Calthorpe speaks on "Sustainable Communities" tonight in Rm 177, Lawrence Hall, U of Oregon, 7:30.

21

Richard Wagner born, 1813.

22

Pike Place Market Street Fair is today and tomorrow.

27

C.F.A. Voysey, leading architect of the Arts and Crafts Movement, born today, 1857.

Carl Larsson born today, 1853.

28

ISDA design tour of Japan departs from Seattle 8/8/84. This 16-day tour will visit some of Japan's most prestigious industrial design facilities. For info: ISDA Japan Tour, 6802 Poplar Place, McLean, VA 22101.

29

wednesday

thursday

friday

saturday

ner at Hodges/Banks Gallery
oup show at Jackson Street Gal-
his diary today in Orwell's
4

The Films of Francois Truffaut, a series of Thursday evening shows, starts tonight at SAM Volunteer Park. Series tickets: \$18 members, \$20 nonmembers 7:30 pm.
Peter Bosselmann, Curator of the Environmental Simulation Laboratory at UC Berkeley, will present "Works in Progress: 1) Solar Access to Downtown Public Open Spaces, and 2) Marin County - Alternative Patterns for Increasing Suburban Densities" at 8, 207 Architecture Hall, UW.
"The 1984 House: lived in or looked at?" a Thursday evening course at Bellevue Community College, consists of lectures by some of Seattle's best-known architects and interior designers, and begins tonight at 7:00. \$35 fee. Call 641-2263 to register.

Works in acrylic on fiberglass by Gail McCall at the Virginia Inn through 5/3.
Deadline is April 25 for Pratt Institute's "Aalto + the Bauhaus" tour of Finland and Germany, 5/17-6/7. For more info write or call: Michael Trencher, Professor, School of Architecture, Pratt Inst., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205-3897. (212) 636-3453.
Color photographs by Steve Davis at Donnally/Hayes Books through 5/1.
6

Watch for COCA's next exhibition in 4 windows of the old J.C. Penney's building on 2nd Avenue beginning April 7.
Group exhibit of Seattle area artists at Linda Farris Gallery through 4/30.
Heinrich Tessenow born, 1876.
7

adway Performance Hall 8 pm
ickets \$2.50/\$5. Call 587-4166 for
y Patricia Johanson, is cur-
font Gallery, 2200 Mason St.,
it installation by Laura Sindell,
erwood, currently at the What-
rough 4/22.
11

"Nightide: Drawings of Transformation from Theatre, Literature, and Dance" by Lee Mueller, will be on exhibit today through 5/21 at the Women's Information Center Gallery, Imogen Cunningham Hall, UW.
The Return of the Natives: Rome Program Dinner and Auction tonight, 5:30 on in Gould Court, UW. If the Bersaglieri haven't sold you a ticket by now, you can still pick one up at the door.
Society of Architectural Administrators' Annual Meeting. Location to be announced. Call Jeanne Olson at 823-2244 for details.
Imogen Cunningham born, 1883.
12

"Photogravures of Asahel Curtis 1874-1941" at Carolyn Staley Gallery. Opening preview 4/12, 5:30 to 8. At the preview, Robert D. Monroe, consultant in Washington photographic history and resources, will present discussion of the works of Asahel Curtis. Show runs through 5/15.
International ceramics show, also prints by Thomas Johnston at the Francine Seders Gallery through 4/22.
"Cabinets: More than Drawers," group show by member designer/craftsman, Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking through 4/29.
13

Friends of the Seattle Olmsted Parks sponsors a tour of the Volunteer Park Conservatory led by historian Dan Peterson at 10:30 this morning. Also an exhibit of early Olmsted drawings for Seattle Parks.
"Clay: 1984, A National Survey Exhibition" at Traver Sutton Gallery shows works by 70 artists of national reputation.
Amendments to the Seattle Energy Code become effective today.
Peter Behrens born, 1868.
14

of sports stadia by Boston artist
of Seattle by John Jermain, and
at Equivalents Gallery through
on is at D'Art through 5/5.
18

Prof. Akira Wanda of Tokyo Kogyo Daigaku lectures tonight at UW Architecture Hall 207, 8 pm.
"Morris Graves: Vision of the Inner Eye," a retrospective exhibition of paintings opens 4/19 and runs through 7/8 at SAM Volunteer Park.
BLUEPRINT holds its biweekly meeting at the Soho Restaurant on 2nd, 5:45 pm.
The first American Car was successfully tested by its inventor, Charles Duryea, 1892.
19

Dr. Wolfgang Max Faust discusses contemporary German painting in a lecture at SAM Volunteer Park. Tonight at 7:30. Tickets at the door, \$3 members, \$5 nonmembers.
"American Indian Ceramics Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow" at the Sacred Circle Gallery through 5/26.
"Triptych and Diptych Paintings," recent work by Phillip Lewis at Studio/Gallery 75. Show runs until 4/28.
20

Prints and mixed media works by Dan Allison and Lawry Gold at the Stone Press Gallery.
Sculpture by local artist Loren Grossman at the Clay Occasion Gallery through 5/12.
21

ches by Mario Botta will be
t Gallery, 2200 Mason St., San
discussion series features discus-
an design issues with people
mselves. Call 624-0432 for info
25

David T. Yeomans, Professor of Architecture at University of Liverpool, speaks on "Geology and English Vernacular Building" 8:00 tonight at UW Architecture Hall 207. (4/26)
Lecture by Gunnar Birkerts at U of Idaho, Moscow, 7:30 pm, UCC Rm 101.
26



Entries in the Northwest Watercolor Society Competition will be exhibited at the Bellevue Art Museum today through 6/10.
Architects for Social Responsibility and others participate in the first Plowshares Conference at UW's Gould Hall. Call 622-0250 for info. 4/28,29.
Sculpture by Tom Yodi and drawings by John Keppelman at the Francine Seders Gallery through 5/20.
28

ographer, speaks tonight at
titled "Juxtapositions: Art and
8 pm.
at Yuen Lui Studio and Gallery
"Collection of African Art"
tion, through 5/27.
2

The syllabically symmetrical Donlyn Lyndon speaks tonight at Architecture Hall 207, UW Campus, at 8:00.
Paintings and drawings by Morris Graves and commission work by John Marshall open tonight in an exhibition at Foster/White Gallery. Show runs through 6/3.
BLUEPRINT'S biweekly affair at the Mark Tobey, Post Alley at Madison, 5:45 pm.
3

Group show: works on paper by gallery artists at Traver Sutton Gallery through 5/26.
"New Paintings by Ronnie Landfield" at Linda Farris Gallery through 5/11.
Paintings by Seattle artist Mike Hascall at Donnally/Hayes Books through 5/29.
5

of outdoor floral paintings by
sts, running now through 5/27
ndorf at D'Art, 105 Spring St.,
9

Coenraad Van der Wal, Dutch Urban planner, speaks tonight at UW on "Planning the New Towns in the IJsselmeer Polders," 207 Architecture Hall, 8 pm.
Society of Architectural Administrators National Convention report and installation of Seattle Chapter officers. Call Terry Bolender at 682-1571 for info.
Exhibition of local preservation/rehabilitation projects at UW's Gould Hall this week. Opening reception 5/14. Anyone interested in exhibiting related work, contact David Rogan, 329-8592, or Grant Hildebrand at UW Dept. of Architecture, 5/14-5/18.
10

Paintings by Terry L. Johnson at the Whatcom Museum, Bellingham, through 7/29.
Allied Arts' Art a la Carte II Studio Tour is this afternoon from 1-5:30 pm. Admission of \$15 (\$25/couple) allows you to see the artists in their studios watching you. Reception follows. For more info, call 624-0432.
"Fine American and European Paintings, 1850-1950" at Davidson Gallery through 6/12.
12

Carolyn Staley Gallery through
16

BLUEPRINT meets at the Elliott Bay Bookstore Cafe, 5:45 pm.
Mary McCleod speaks tonight at UW 207 Architecture Hall, 8 pm.
17

University of Washington and Western Washington State Student industrial Design Exhibit at Design Concern through 6/8.
Works by Kathryn Berd at the Clay Occasion Gallery.
Recent etchings by Scott Smith at Davidson Gallery through 5/9.
19

23

"Matters of Life and Death for the Planning Profession," a lecture by Paul Niebanck, tonight at 8 pm, 207 Architecture Hall, UW.
24

Paintings from the 1950s and 1960s featuring Walter Isaacs with Mark Tobey, Dennis Callahan, Wendell Brazeau, and other American and European artists at the Francine Seders Gallery through 6/17.
Folklife Festival at Seattle Center, today through 5/28.
25

26

30

Nobuhiro Suzuki speaks on "Design of Water Space" tonight at 8 pm in Rm 322 Gould, UW.
Paintings and prints by Navajo artist David Johns at the Sacred Circle Gallery opens today.
31





SPIKE ♦ ♦ ♦

continued from front page . . .

the windows appear cut out of the stucco. The plainness is relieved by rustication at the entrance and the corners, also by a window with a small balcony and wrought iron railing between stories over the front door. Restraint and careful use of scale features became characteristic of Pries' work. The Spanish style in California was forced to be literal, while in Seattle he could design contemporary architecture according to his own sensibility. It was in this unfettered atmosphere that Pries and others such as Andrew Willatsen, R.C. Reamer, and Ellsworth Storey contributed to the distinctly high quality of Seattle residential architecture at that time.

Pries had begun teaching architecture part-time at the University of Washington the year he moved to Seattle. He was director of the Seattle Art Museum in 1930 and 1931. In 1932 the partnership was dissolved by mutual consent, and Pries began the full-time teaching career for which he is most remembered.

The University operated under a Beaux-Arts system typical at the time in the U.S. The freshman year at the school was the sophomore year at the University, and it was devoted to the fundamentals: graphic techniques and the classical orders. As a sophomore, the student of architecture was introduced to the esquis, or sketch problem, and the analytique, a quarter-semester-long development of a design parti. Usually assignments had to do with character and appropriate symbolism as well as introduction to historical or eclectic styles. An esquis would be assigned weekly at noon, and the

student was to complete the design and render it in watercolor by ten o'clock. One esquis problem posed by Pries was titled "The Sepulchre: A wealthy Burmese potentate wishes to build a sepulchre for his deceased consort." Humor aside, problems of this nature demanded from the students great leaps of imagination and freed them from the constraints of their own culture.

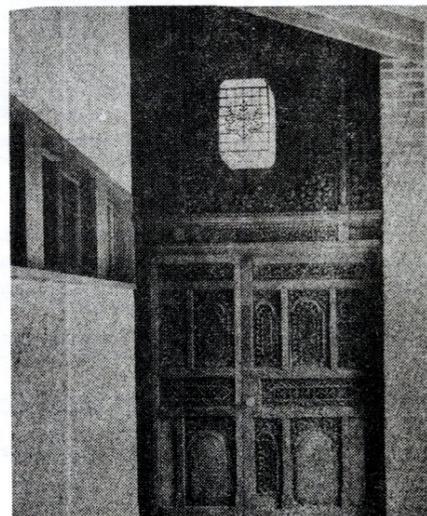
The scope of initial analytiques was small, perhaps simply "an Arabesque design." Assignments then focused on an important fragment of a building, such as "an entrance to a principle museum of art," in which the student might be required to render in detail at least three elements, which he might choose to be the cornice, doors, and a statue. Eventually the student was assigned the design of an entire building. My favorite is "A Middle Western cheese corporation wishes to beautify the entrance to their grotto used in the curing of roquefort type cheese, the entrance being on a river bluff one hundred feet high." Senior analytiques were correspondingly more ambitious in scale. An assignment of Pries read: "With the successful consummation of Italian imperialistic objectives, a spacious new capitol is to be built in Rome. With this capitol is to be included an imposing monument to machismo."

The character of the assignments reflected that of the professor, and in the Beaux-Arts system the professor's hand was quite evident in the design and renderings of his students. Pries' watercolor technique was distinctive for dark, dark shadows, "repoussoirs" (foreground objects), and especially skillful representation of plant matter.

It was not difficult to distinguish Pries' students' projects because the college of architecture had only fifty or so students,

and the faculty, in addition to Pries, consisted of two members, Arthur Herman and Lance Gowen. They were augmented by structures, drawing, and painting professors borrowed from other schools in the University. Herman possessed substantial design skills but also the personality most suited to administration. He devoted his fine oratory skills to teaching the "Appreciation of Architecture" series available at entry level to students throughout the University. Pries taught the more advanced history series. Gowen was not especially talented at expressing himself verbally, but his watercolors were every bit the equal of Pries', though with a hardness and clarity of line not in Pries' renderings. Pries was the romantic.

Pries began teaching as Beaux-Arts influence on education began to fade. Change was hastened in the late 1930s with the arrival in this country of such notable northern European architects and teachers as Mies van der Rohe and Walter Gropius. The University of Washington ceased to confine student work to historical styles. A 1937 student proposal for "a horticulture building to dominate a World's Fair" is streamlined and thoroughly contemporary. Pries continued to do occasional residential designs during his teaching career, and though he made eclectic reference to decoration, his work was quite modern. The Col. Wilcox residence of 1940 combines Indian totem poles and carvings with hexagonal cement asbestos shingles. The college allowed for modernism as a style, yet retained the Beaux-Arts approach for instruction. In 1940 at the peak of Pries' influence upon the students, a Prof. Alderman was brought from MIT to introduce Bauhaus methodology. He left in frustration after a year.



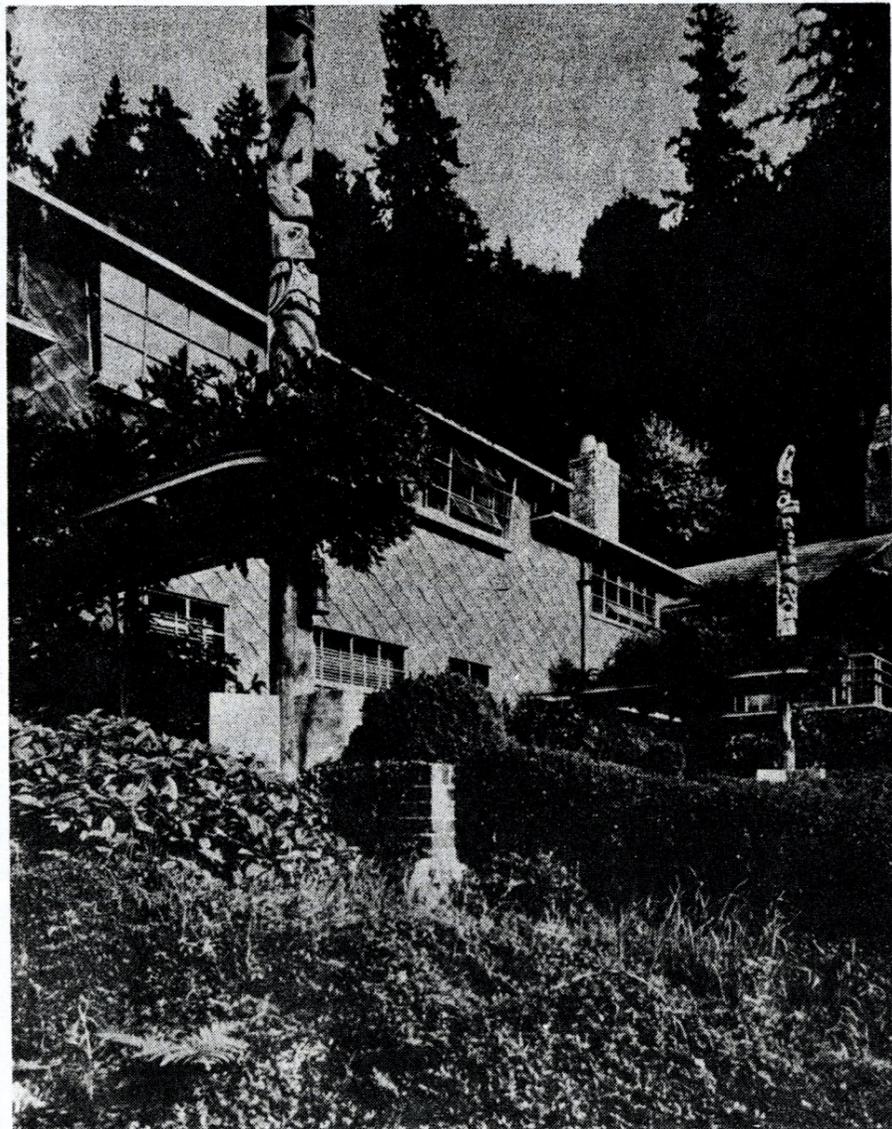
Pries' 1956 Dick Lea home illustrates his conviction to incorporate the fine arts in his work even during an era known for decorative sterility.

Still, the younger faculty had different expectations of the students than did Pries. To do what one said was to invite criticism from the other. The conflict was exacerbated by the practice of teaching in teams. One quarter, Pries wrote a program similar to that for Arthur Erickson's present-day U.B.C. Anthropological Museum for studios shared with Wendell Lovett. The students were to design a shelter in Seward Park to house totem poles and petroglyphs. To Pries it was a question of imagination and romance, and his students' projects were strong on composition. For Lovett it was an opportunity to explore technological issues. His students produced extremely innovative structures. Lovett exemplified the naive insistence of the correctness of modern architecture by young proponents of the period. Pries remained true to his own principles. Only Keith Kolb, having a personal relationship with Gropius and a measured view of the modern movement, would defend Pries.

Pries was thought dated by his "functionalist" colleagues for the breadth of his interests and considerations. Yet it was precisely this breadth that made him so influential to students. To young provincial Washingtonians he provided an introduction to a larger world. In addition to conveying ideas about architectural merit, he exposed them to the worlds of drama, theory, art history, and sculpture. In hindsight, his students wonder if he did not speak beyond his experience in some of these areas, but at the time they were spellbound.

Pries' teaching vocabulary was enhanced by knowledge and expertise in crafts. With characteristic detail he designed the Karl Krueger residence of 1928, including a large chandelier and stained glass, and he painted decoration on inset panels of the living room ceiling. This connection of fine art with architecture was unexpected by the students, gave them a new vision of the importance of architecture, and added a certain freedom to imagination. Students developed an appreciation for the extra dimensions of elegance, detail, and an awareness of regional style.

Pries was a swashbuckling teacher, a magician, florid and effeminate in manner, and the most cultured of the faculty. A tremendous presence, he captured the attention of the students. He was also very idiosyncratic. Lancelot, his Cocker Spaniel, accompanied him to class. He disliked soft drinks and music in studio and is said to have thrown a student's radio out the window without forewarning. Having set the highest educational standards for himself, he was most comfortable with the brightest and most talented students. Pries didn't talk down to students; either they grasped enough of what he was saying to follow and learn from him or they were left behind. He had no patience with plodders,



The Colonel Wilcox residence near Holly, Wa. Eclectic use of materials in a decorative manner is a Pries trademark.

“. . . a spacious new capitol is to be built in Rome. With this capitol is to be included an imposing monument to Machismo.”

Pries was a Director of Camouflage Instruction during WW II. Afterwards the G.I. Bill caused a watershed for the college. The incoming class of 1946 was twice the size of the entire previous student body. A number of new faculty were hired, many of them Pries' former students but with graduate training from MIT and Harvard by Bauhaus methods. Three such former students were Victor Steinbrueck, Wendell Lovett, and Keith Kolb. Steinbrueck was put in charge of design and set about to "break the back of the Beaux-Arts system." The study of color, formerly an adjunct to Pries' ornament class, became its own class. Wire and string were used to teach the articulation of space, not form, as the object of design. Design programs were no longer so abstract, being related to real situations and the community, but methods of teaching design were more so. Lovett returned to become the "enfant terrible" of the faculty and the particular nemesis of Pries. Pries and Gowen, the senior design faculty, found themselves in a position of having to adapt to changed circumstances.

The influx of students after WW II was different from previous classes not only in magnitude, but in temperament as well. They had gained a sense of expediency with military experience that made the subtlety and nuance of the fine art of architecture difficult to teach, and a savvy that made them impossible to overwhelm. They wanted to learn fast and start making a living. Their interests were economy and function. All in all, they were more acclimated to the ideas of the younger faculty. Pries must have breathed a sigh of relief as they graduated.

He disliked soft drinks and music in the studio . . .

gave a wide spread of grades, and occasionally could become quite insulting. The degree to which he would draw for a student depended upon how much he liked the student's design. One student, Minoru Yamasaki, felt wounded and complained that Pries didn't draw on his work, to which Pries explained (to Yamasaki's complete satisfaction) that he simply didn't need the help! By the same token, Pries developed a reputation for erasing or sponging out work he didn't like, and was feared by underclassmen. The strictest teacher with the highest standards, Pries' reputation always preceded him.

Among Pries' greatest gifts was his ability as a desk critic. He was so highly skilled as to be able to visualize architecture very easily and to express it quickly with his extraordinary graphic proficiency. He helped give form to the nebulous ideas of his students, opening doors to reveal true potential. Sometimes students have a large sense of proprietorship about their designs, and the professor must take care at the drawing board not to appear intrusive. Rather than engage in force of will, Pries took an approach of encouragement. He set about to illustrate how beautiful the students' ideas could be, and in the end, they wanted to do it his way.

Pries was further characterized by his devotion to and emotional involvement with his profession. Perhaps because he had no family, he developed a sensitivity to the needs of certain students and was especially encouraging to them. He provided accommodation for several favorite students in his home. Frequently he gave parties at which he usually wound up showing students his possessions. He had accumulated several collections of importance, including pre-Columbian textiles, Baroque Central American image vestments and sculpture, Northwest native art, and various minor Chinese collections. His architectural library outdistanced that of the University for many years. In fact, the University acquired its Piranesi collection from Pries for a token fee and in a roundabout manner; there was a policy against making purchases from professors, and in such cases the University Bookstore acted as middleman. In addition to European travels, he spent fourteen summers in Mexico accompanied by students, during which time he produced drawings for a never-published book on Spanish Colonial architecture.

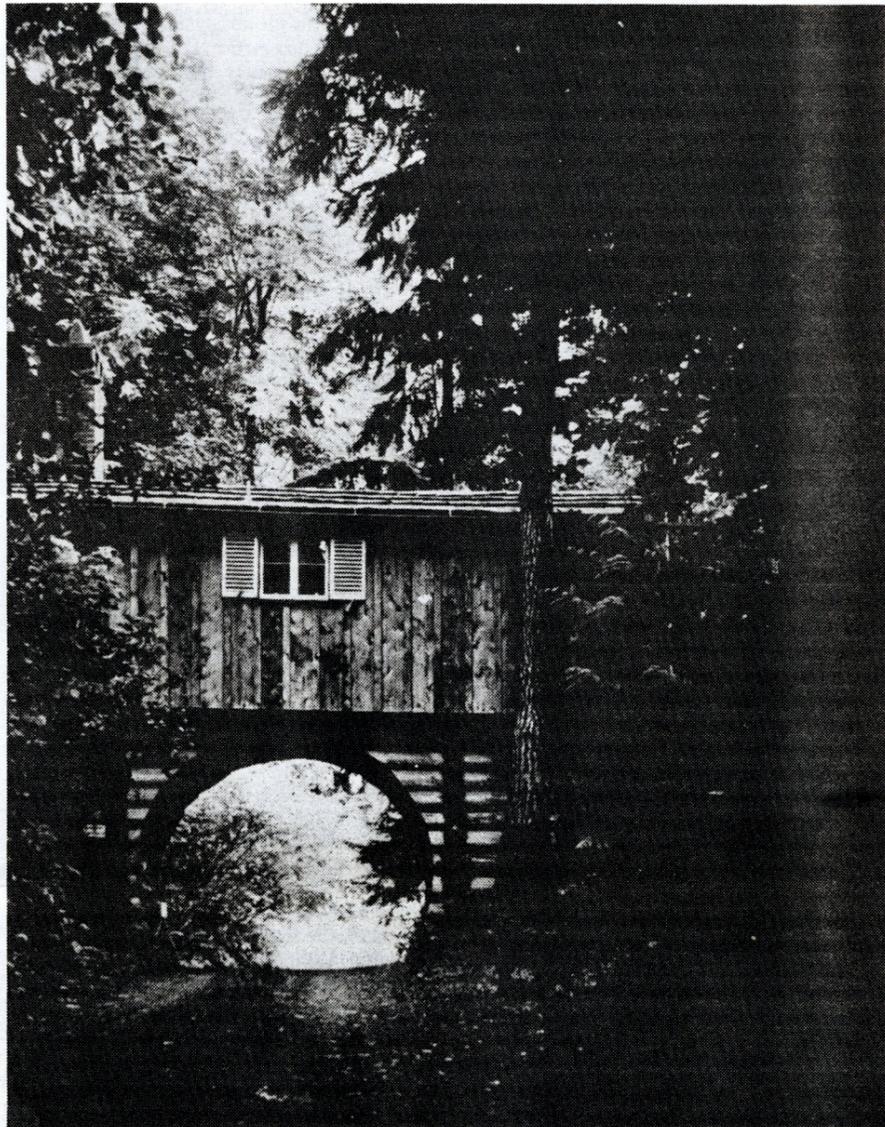
In 1958, Pries abruptly and angrily left the teaching position he loved. Friends sensed a large injustice, but neither Pries nor the University were willing to discuss the sudden end to a long and distinguished career. To this day, the circumstances of Pries' departure remain clouded by specu-

lation and accusation, and colleagues from the time are reluctant to be quoted. Nearing retirement age, Pries never received a full pension from the University despite many years of service and was left without the means to support himself. Pries never forgave the University for the mysterious activities which led to his departure.

The final decade of Pries' life was in some respect a denouement. He worked for his former student Bob Durham at Durham, Anderson and Freed in 1959 and 1960, and for John Graham and Company from 1961 to 1963. He added to their work a sparkle, exemplified by the crucifix he designed and made for Faith Lutheran Church in Bellingham. However, Pries no longer enjoyed the same command of the design process. The occasional clientele who had approached him while teaching were gentry, cultured and cultivated people who built in part from a sense of responsibility. A Pries home was a representation of their values and, in that sense, a contribution to the community. They wanted it done his way. The 1956 home of Dick Lea is very modern, yet retains the attention to detail that was always Pries' signature. A student of Pries can even recognize the lettering of the address as his. There was no compromise. His final project was the Robert Winskill residence in Mill Valley, California, designed in the year of his death, 1968, and executed some time after. Pries left his architectural library to the University of Puget Sound and his other artistic and architectural possessions to Winskill.

Lovett returned to become the "enfant terrible" . . .

Today history seems to be saying the best possible about Pries. This is largely through the efforts of Victor Steinbrueck with the support of his former classmates, who in 1978 began the Lionel H. Pries Distinguished Lecture tradition at the University. (A third in the series is planned for May 3rd.) Receiving an honor as an alumnus in 1956, Yamasaki very courteously credited Pries for sensitizing him to the skyline, yet Pries practically disowned him. Pries objected to the implication about hero architects that they knew "the" way to design, that their principles were "the" principles. Such confines were inadequate to him. That was why he left California, and perhaps that was the underlying cause for his departure from the University of Washington. The Beaux-Arts era of education had been more generous in its acceptance of style and the greater complexity in design Pries loved. In later years, the imagination and romance with which he taught his students was atypical. His influence seems all the more interesting for the diversity of work among his former students. In some cases, like those of Yamasaki and



Gatehouse of the Colonel Wilcox residence of 1940. All photographs this article courtesy of University of Washington Department of Architecture slide library.

Steinbrueck, there are radically different points of view. Ironically, to my eye the designs of Pries' student which most resemble Pries' own are the houses of Wendell Lovett.

Andrew Rucker

Andrew Rucker is a graduate student at the University of Washington and is preparing a thesis on Lionel Pries. Individuals with knowledge of Pries and his work should contact him through the Dept. of Architecture at the University of Washington.

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W.R.B. WILLCOX

THE OREGON MODEL FOR EDUCATING ARCHITECTS



W.R.B. Willcox in his hat. Photo courtesy of the University of Oregon Library, Special Collections, and AVENU.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared under the title "Annals of Oregon: W.R.B. Willcox" in The Call Number, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Fall 1968), 18-24. The Call Number was a journal published by the University of Oregon Library which gave its kind permission for this reprint in ARCADE. The U of O Library is the principle repository for Willcox's extensive collection of letters, papers, and drawings.

Walter Ross Baumes Willcox, who died 37 years ago, is still a figure to reckon with in the School of Architecture and Allied Arts at the University of Oregon. In the court outside the school, his bust a proud-nosed, balding likeness, cantilevered from a basalt shaft, keeps watch on the students, most of whom are unaware that his passionate concern for their education was largely responsible for the development of the present method of teaching architecture at Oregon. As the head of the Department of Architecture for 25 years, he cared desperately about students, about architecture, and the relation of both to a better world.

In his address at the opening of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts in 1914, Willcox touched on the lack of communication between architects and the general public, saying that it "seems to be the heaviest indictment against our profession today, that our own people are out of sympathy with what we are doing, are frankly contemptuous of our efforts, or are frankly ignorant of what we call architecture. . . . We should always be aware that we are studying, as it were, a foreign language, a language with which the people of our own day are unacquainted, that we are studying it to discover wherein lies the secret of style, not with the purpose of attempting to speak it to our own people."

Individual architects in the United States had tried, and for the most part failed, to find acceptance for a suitable alternative to eclecticism, and develop a distinctively American style. Most of them were among the group later known as the "Chicago school," whose work was regarded by established architects in the East as "barbaric" or "vulgar." What Willcox proposed was that schools of architecture join the Chicago revolt, and transform the architect from an exquisite draftsman who spoke a language of another time and place, to a builder of buildings firmly rooted in the present, buildings that could be recognized and understood.

Willcox's friend, and Dean of the new school, Ellis Lawrence, was in full agreement with him, and in 1922 persuaded him to head the Department of Architecture. Together, they developed the first school in the United States that broke away

from the traditional system based on the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. They evolved a model for a new method of teaching architecture.

A description of the Beaux Arts method appears in a letter to Willcox from a former student, Clothiel Woodard:

I'll have a problem in design every four weeks, a 30,000-word illustrated thesis, which must be grammatically and foot-noted perfectly, or out I go, and it must be a regular history starting from clear back to "Hell and gone." And it is supposed to be done by a complete card-filing system. . . . For composition we are going through all the Prix de Rome drawings from 1850 and so on up. Tell the bunch that they have more opportunity to learn some real architecture than they realize, how stupid all this jealous competition is. Tell the students that they have men who are more intelligent, real teachers, and above all—friendly—and if they think they can learn more at a more formal place, they are all wrong. It is as "Beaux-Artsy" as I can imagine—and an "esquisse-esquisse" is done in nine hours or one is flunked, and there is a series of little cells where one is supposed to "hole in" for the allotted time. . . . There are never any public criticisms—except when the boys climb into the ventilating shaft, and unbeknownst to the "high-ups," find out how really meaningless their judgments are.

To Miss Woodard, the enemy was obvious: It was authoritarianism. It was meaningless projects and meaningless judgments. It was eclecticism and lack of human contact, all personified in the Beaux-Arts system. The students were ready to battle against this enemy, and they joyfully rallied around Willcox, the leader of their cause.

What Willcox brought to the Department of Architecture at Oregon in 1922, began for him in Chicago in 1893. Then 24 years old, he was working as advertising copy writer for an electrical supply firm. His family assumed he had found his occupation, and would spend his life writing copy. But the Chicago of that time was seething with ideas. It was a new city, rebuilt after the fire of 1871, and the rebuilding had been guided by local architects, the "barbarians" who sought to build in a new and indigenous idiom. Led by Louis Sullivan and John Root, the new ideas had taken hold by 1893, and Willcox, who spent his spare hours watching the progress of buildings under construction, fell under the spell of the Chicago school. He concluded that he would be much happier as an architect than as a copy writer. He had met Louis Sullivan, who gave him an encouraging letter.

Willcox left the copy writing business, and went to Boston, worked in an architect's office, and attended classes, informally, at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. There he addressed himself to learning the rudiments of architecture. He discovered that the standards and curriculum imposed by the school had very little to do with the design of real buildings. He spent the next year at the University of Pennsylvania, but became ill, and left school. He returned to his home town, Burlington, Vt., and commenced an architectural practice. He designed a few public buildings, commercial structures, and residences, and could probably have spent the rest of his life in Burlington, unspectacularly successful.

But Willcox had been too deeply stirred by what he had seen in Chicago. He found that "enthusiasm has been oozing away these last years, and that must be stopped, at least until I have added more years to my life. I want to get where larger things are doing, and take a chance at getting my share. I may fall down completely, but if I do, I will have made a fight, and that is something worthwhile."

He moved to Seattle in 1907, but there was a business slump in that city, and he had few clients. Too, he found that in the

West, as in the East, clients went to architects who would design comfortable, recognizable "architecture." "I have tried to free myself from the old forms," he wrote his mother, "but the public has been led to believe that 'Architecture' is an art of the past which modern practitioners copy in present day buildings. If they want architecture they go to an architect, but if they want a simple structure they think they can do away with architecture, and don't patronize him. It's the architect's fault."

A shortage of private practice left Willcox plenty of time to serve on Seattle's Municipal Planning Board. Here he could develop the ideas closest to his heart. He identified with the man on the street, rejecting the

Willcox proposed that schools of architecture join the Chicago revolt.

pompous pedantry of architects and others who felt that they alone had the secret of "art." Politically, he supported the reforms of the Progressives, and the policies of Theodore Roosevelt. He sympathized with the aims of the Industrial Workers of the World, and the Socialists.

His interest in social, economic, and political reforms, and their relation to architecture, became militant when the comprehensive plan for the city of Seattle, to which he had given passionate support, was defeated by property owners in 1914. In a mood of discouragement, he wrote his mother, "It is almost impossible to get anywhere with real city planning in this country. The papers are full of the subject—it is popular—but there is little that is actually accomplished for the amount of noise over it. It all comes about from our placing the

splitting his own firewood, and raising fighting cocks. He also had serious doubts about his qualifications as a teacher, and a distaste for the pedagogical image. As he wrote to a former associate, "The professorship has its advantages. I can with entire appropriateness take on spectacles as a permanent adornment." But he added, "I have for a long time realized that our schools needed men who were a little more than steeped in tradition. I am free to admit the need of a little Chicago seasoning in our architectural pie."

It was the "Chicago seasoning" that he brought to Eugene in the fall of 1922. His first act as department head was to eliminate the competitive device of the Beaux Arts school, with its emphasis on medals, mentions, and awards. Believing that the process of learning was more important than the final product, he obliged students, on their own initiative, to find the substance of architecture rather than simply memorize the forms. "I have faith to experiment with the souls of the youths," he wrote, "because I believe nothing can be more deadening to the spiritual and mental development than the present method of injecting what we call education into them. The joy of life is nearly squeezed out today, because power and authority is resorted to to impose fixed regimens on people, instead of giving them opportunity to exercise their individual judgments, instead of trusting to the exhilarating and expanding atmosphere of freedom, and teaching them the responsibilities of true freedom."

Willcox allowed no books in the drafting room; architectural styles were never mentioned. He simply stated the problem, and left students to find the solution in their own time and in their own way. If they lacked the initiative to develop a



Willcox (right) and Lawrence offering criticism at the University of Oregon. Photo courtesy of the University of Oregon Library, Special Collections, and AVENU.

highest values upon 'property' instead of folks. People are cheap."

His experience in Seattle focused Willcox's attention on the question of private land ownership. Henry George became his social idol, and the free use of land central to all his subsequent social, political, and architectural ideas. The free use of the products of nature, and the concept of rent for social services appealed to him as the Natural Law, and became the central tenet of his personal religion.

Despite his frustrations on the Seattle Planning Board, and his struggle to remain solvent, Willcox loved Seattle, and resisted the invitations of Dean Ellis Lawrence to head the Department of Architecture at the University of Oregon. He did not want to leave his pleasant home on Mercer Island, where he enjoyed clearing the land,

solution, then ". . . they are not likely to be of the stuff of which architects should be made."

Many an unhappy sophomore would complain, "But I don't know anything about that kind of building. How am I to find out what goes into it?" The reply invariably was, "How should I know? You are the architect." Completed drawings were placed on the walls of the exhibition room to remain there for several weeks, subject to criticism from staff and students alike. This system eliminated the formal judgments, juries, and the pressures of the old method. The charrette (time allotted for a given problem) was abandoned; a student could take all the time he needed to solve a problem. The purpose was ". . . to have the student determine for himself his aptitude for the work of an architect." As a result

many students quickly decided they had no aptitude, and left the school; others stayed, finding themselves after a year or two; still others hung on year after year, hoping, in vain, that they would find security in accepted styles and rigid criteria.

None of this appealed very much to the examining boards of the American Institute of Architects, who regarded the new method as "... an unusually interesting experiment which would require the experience of some years to thoroughly justify." But, as one examiner wrote Willcox, "There seems to be a general wholesomeness of spirit in the air that was very noticeable, and that is one of those subtle qualities which is very difficult to attain and certainly cannot be had on short notice."

"... the student [should] determine for himself his aptitude for the work of an architect."

It was this "wholesomeness of spirit" that Willcox had hoped to attain. If the AIA had its doubts, the students were delighted. They idolized their teacher, and paid him the compliment of adopting part of his costume, a soft, black hat, a symbol of their allegiance.

Dean Ellis Lawrence had founded the school at Oregon on the Carnegie Institute model. That is, he allied architecture with the fine and applied arts, not engineering. He and Willcox made use of the alliance in projects on which students from the various disciplines within the school worked together to design buildings that were actually built. The most notable example of such collaboration was the design of the entrance to the architecture building itself. The architects detailed the motives, painters designed stained glass panels for the doors, sculptors created a bas relief, and the class in applied design made tile insets. Esthetically it may not have been major work, but as a means of engaging the enthusiasm of the students it was a huge success.

To encourage breadth of education and experience, the school added a fifth year to the regular four-year curriculum. This arrangement permitted a student to devote part of his first two years to courses in the humanities and social sciences. Letter grades were eliminated, and a "pass-no-pass" system devised, much to Willcox's satisfaction.

Strictly speaking, Willcox had no "method." When he was criticized for not articulating his system, he replied, "Ye Gods! Men have been 'educated'—and in architecture—under all kinds of systems. Systems don't make for education. I doubt if I could set forth my notions in forms that would mean much, or possibly be understood to readers. It goes a darn sight deeper—or farther—or is it only into the fog more."

For Willcox, systems, methods, curricula, were at best temporary expedients, to be discarded when they were no longer applicable to a given situation. When a system or a method became fixed, it became, to him, "unnatural," because it was no longer organic. His central concern was the individual student. "But what if we try to find out what the human being in the shape of the student is actually like, and fit our plans of development to him? Every student is an individual problem, and should be treated as such, which means to hang with curricula, restrictions, limitations, fixed methodology, and measure, if one must, by the quality of the eventual product." So Willcox wrote to Dean Lawrence.

This is not to suggest that the new method, or lack of it, was uniformly successful. Some students failed to respond, and one

particular group was characterized as "The darndest bunch of misfits I ever saw. There were a few sparks at the beginning, but they fizzled in the surrounding humidity."

But Willcox believed that by freeing the individual, responsibility and social consciousness would follow automatically, and that the architect would go forth to take his proper role as interpreter of civilization and leader of a just social order. He carried his 19th century romantic faith in the perfectibility of the individual through freedom into his teaching of architecture. His ideas met with enthusiastic response, if not by all of the establishment, at least by the students. He wanted to turn out "not only draftsmen and delineators, but architects; not only technicians, but artists, alive to their obligation to the state and society."

The Willcox method is illustrated by his approach to design. His method changed with each class, and students sometimes wished he would clarify the difference between the "style" of a building (something he deplored) and its "character" (which he insisted upon). The "style" of a building he dismissed as a subject for an archeologist rather than an architect. But of his character: "It is something comparable to character in people. It is manifest in the bearing or manners of a building, if such terms may be used in this connection. Buildings are dignified or flippant, joyous or sorrowful, honest or deceitful, gentle or rough, quiet or noisy, some are actually garrulous, they shriek at one continuously. They all, as we say, 'have an air about them.' Buildings, as people, can be differentiated by the air they have about them."

There were students who wished that their teacher would define precisely what that "air" might be. But most of them seemed to need no such precision of definition. They knew intuitively what he meant. It was these students who formed the nucleus of the Willcox *mystique* that dominated the school. They were the students to whom Willcox wrote long and personal letters after they had left. He kept them informed about classmates, advised them freely, though circumspectly, about their love affairs, encouraged them when they were jobless. To one student who planned an architectural tour of the East he wrote a ten-page biography of his personal hero, H.H. Richardson, with a guide to Richardson's buildings. These were the students who had true empathy. Willcox had shown them the Truth, and it was their mission to spread the Word.

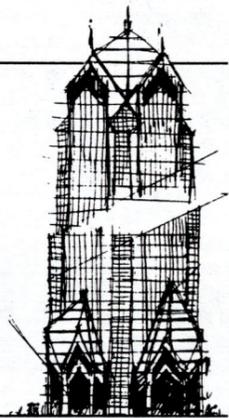
Willcox carried his nonconformity beyond the classroom. He objected to the obligatory appearance of the faculty in full regalia at commencement and, when he appeared, looked as casual as possible. Such snubbing of authority endeared him to his students, and to make them welcome he formed "The Club," an informal meeting at his home each Wednesday night. "If you have something to say, come there to say it," read his bulletin board invitation. "If you are minded to listen, come to hear what others may have to say."

The Club would meet and talk on into the night on any subject that came to mind, Willcox sitting in his Morris chair, smoking a pipe. Sometimes the talk was of architecture, now and then sports, and on one occasion the guests simply pitched cards into a hat. In the early 1930s, as the economic depression deepened, the talk would most likely be the condition of society—and Henry George. "Read George," Willcox admonished, "then read him again—and again—till you grasp his all-enveloping philosophy; he will make the world look different to you, from anything you ever conceived before. He ... clears away the rot and ruin of those [foundations] society has built upon, and starts fresh."

... continued on page twelve.

COMPETITIONS

From RIZZOLI INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.



SOUTHWEST CENTER

Essay by Paul Goldberger, 120 pages, 6¼" x 9½", 230 illustrations, 80 pages in color. Paper: \$14.95

The book documents the proposals for the Houston skyscraper submitted by Murphy/Jahn; Kohn, Pederson and Fox; and SOM. It highlights the winning design by Helmut Jahn.

A CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

The Ohio State University Competition

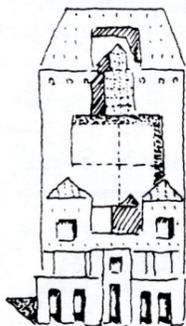
Edited by Peter Arnell and Ted Bickford, Essays by Alan Colquhoun and Kurt W. Forster, Postscript by Douglas Davis, 152 pages, 6¾" x 9½", 204 illustrations, including 100 in color, \$17.50

This volume documents the competition for the design of a visual arts center at Ohio State University. Five architectural teams submitted designs: Dalton, VanDijk, Johnson & Partners and Cesar Pelli Associates; Feinknopf, Macjoce & Schappa and Arthur Erickson Architects; Lorenz and Williams Inc. and Michael Graves, Architect; Nitschke Associates and Kallman, McKinnell & Wood and Lyndon/Buchanan Associates; and Trott and Bean Architects and Eisenman/Robertson Architects, the winning architects.

A TOWER FOR LOUISVILLE

Foreword by Paul Goldberger, Comments by Vincent Scully, 120 pages, 6¾" x 9½", 128 illustrations, 76 pages in color. Paper: \$14.95

The Humana Corporation in Louisville, Kentucky, invited five architects to participate in a competition for their new corporate headquarters: Norman Foster, Ulrich Franzen, Michael Graves, Helmut Jahn and Cesar Pelli. The winning entry by Graves is highlighted along with the other projects.



MISSISSAUGA CITY HALL

Postscript by Trevor Body, 120 pages, 6¾" x 9½", 378 illustrations, 16 pages in color. Paper: \$14.95

The national competition for a new city hall complex was sponsored by the City of Mississauga, Canada. This comprehensive book briefly covers all the entrants' work, with special focus on the winning entry by J. Michael Kirkland and Edward Jones.

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WILLCOX . . .

continued from page eleven . . .



Sewer Viaduct and Footbridge in Washington Park, Seattle. Photo: Elisabeth Walton Potter.

Willcox was sure he knew what was wrong with society: institutions, arbitrary authority, administrations, Hoover, FDR, aristocrats, England, labor unions, and taxes. But these were only the outward manifestations of a deeper evil. At the root of it all was the landlord and the private ownership of land. He scorned the economists who believed that Adam Smith and Herbert Spencer were out-of-date. He believed that economic activity was divinely regulated. "What an unconsciously irreverent, blasphemous, conceited lot we are," he wrote to his close friend Arthur Loveless, "professing to believe in God omniscient, omnipotent, except in Economics, and presuming to think we must help Him out when it comes to social life!"

He was certain that so long as people owned property, a Natural Law was being violated . . .

At the same time, Willcox was willing to help Him out by spreading the Word: private land ownership and taxes should be abolished; the government, acting as an agent of the people, should collect rent in return for those services that society renders collectively to the individual. To Willcox, these ideas, stemming from Henry George, were as natural as the law of gravity. He incorporated them into his city planning lectures, and into systematic investigations by his students of what makes a city function. These investigations, in which Willcox collaborated, produced a manuscript, "A Telesis in City Planning," the preliminary draft of a book, never published, "The City: a Business Enterprise." Many of the ideas in the book appeared in a smaller volume, *Taxation Turmoil*, published privately in 1938, and republished the same year as *The Curse of Modern Taxation* by Fortuny's, New York.

"All the troubles which seem obvious today," wrote Willcox to Loveless in 1946, "emanate from the childish practice of attempting to mend one difficulty by applying a local and temporary poultice to sore after sore as each appears." He was certain that so long as people owned property, a Natural Law was being violated, and society would have to pay the consequences. It was useless, he felt, to attempt any surface remedies until the fundamental error was corrected.

To see that the fundamental error was corrected, he wrote to congressmen, the president, newspaper publishers, commentators, columnists, friends, and strangers. He wanted to enlighten the ignorant. Though most of the ignorant remained unconvinced, Willcox never lost patience, never permitted discussion to degenerate into argument. He wrote dozens of articles and pamphlets, talked with filling station attendants, paper boys, waitresses, anyone who came into his path, leaving with each a fistful of literature. Persons who disagreed

with him thought he was a harmless crockpot; a few thought he was a dangerous radical. His disciples—and there were many—joined him in the cause.

After coming to Oregon, Willcox designed only a few buildings, among them the Congregational Church in Eugene, a sorority house, and the College Side Inn, a bookstore and coffee shop in which his office was located. When Frank Lloyd Wright lectured at Oregon in 1931, he observed that the sorority house was "rotten," but that the College Side Inn was "the best thing" Willcox had ever done. After lecturing at Oregon, Wright went to the University of Washington, where he paid Willcox the kind of compliment a teacher lives for, "If you can't hear me, it's because I used my voice up with the children at the best school of architecture I know of."

By the 1930s architecture and architectural teaching were undergoing major changes. The work of the once-rejected Chicago School, appreciated in Europe, was rediscovered in the United States. As the new ideas gained momentum, the traditional Beaux Arts schools cast about for alternatives adequate for the new demands. The School of Architecture at Oregon had, since 1930, been holding summer sessions supported by the Carnegie Foundation, and Willcox was usually in charge. His enthusiastic summer students returned to their schools and offices in the East with glowing reports of the summer's work. In the summer of 1934, O. Grant LaFarge, New York architect, visited Oregon as chairman of a committee from Columbia University. He returned in 1936 as an agent of Carnegie Institute, and when he went back to New York described the School of Architecture and Allied Arts as the outstanding school in the country, "I shall say that of all I have seen, it is the liveliest, the happiest, and the most significant."

When Columbia University, in 1935, and Harvard, in 1936, reorganized their schools of architecture, both used the Willcox "method" as their model. Other major schools followed suit, some with innovations of their own, and the "non-competitive system," as opposed to the Beaux-Arts method, was well established.

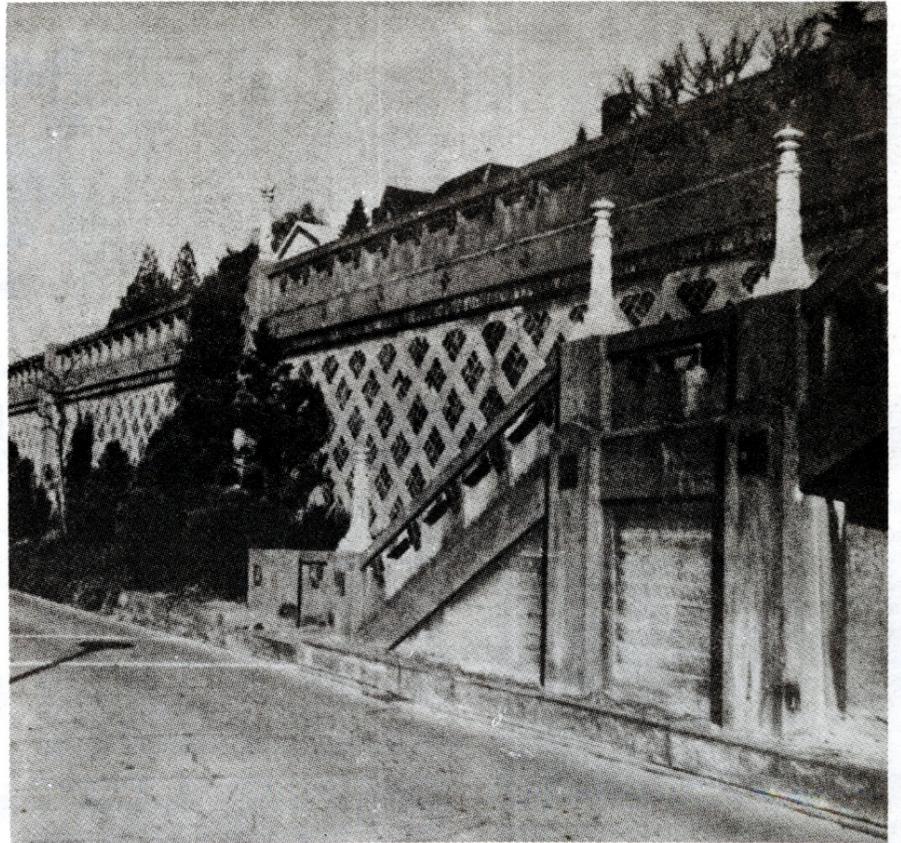
Willcox was Emeritus Professor in 1940, but continued to teach until shortly before his death in 1947. When he died, the personality that invested the substance of his teaching died with him. The vitality of his method was ephemeral, depending as it did on his presence and his personal concern for each student. He left a structure, but, in his own terms, the "character" was missing. As one of his students mourned, "I feel sad for those who will never have known him."

Nancy K. Smith

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Queen Anne Boulevard retaining walls, Seattle. Willcox also belonged to the Commission which presented Virgil Bogue's City Plan denied by voters in 1911. Photo: Elisabeth Walton Potter.

Seattle Area Projects by W.R.B. Willcox

The following list of Willcox projects is drawn from "W.R.B. Willcox: A Note on the Seattle Years" by Elisabeth Walton Potter, an essay in a 1978 publication by the Northern Pacific Coast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, *Festschrift*. This essay contains a much longer list of projects, a valuable bibliography, and much interesting information on Willcox, especially his early years.

Wiley, C.S., Residence (1909-1910), 3731 East Prospect Street, Seattle. Extant.
Richardson, Dr. J. Warren, Residence (1909-1910), 702 23rd Avenue East, Seattle. Extant.
Firmin Michel Roast Beef Corporation Casino (1909), Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. Temporary.
Keystone Congregational Church, 5019 Keystone Place North, Seattle.
Beacon Hill Tower, Seattle.
Hotel Reynolds (1909-1910), fronting City Hall Park, or "Dilling Park," 405-410 4th Avenue, Seattle.
Lewis, L.D., Residence (1912-1913), The Highlands. See *Pacific Building and Engineer*, Vol. 16, No. 20 (July 19, 1913), 33. Illustration only. Also: *The Architectural League of the Pacific Coast and Portland Architectural Club Yearbook*, 1913.

North Trunk Sewer Viaduct and Footbridge (1910-1911), Lake Washington Boulevard East, Washington Park, (Seattle). Extant.
Winslow Arcade (1913), 4301 Woodland Park Avenue North, Seattle. No longer extant. See *Pacific Building and Engineer*, Vol. 16, No. 12 (September 20, 1913), 169-170. Illustrated.
Queen Anne Boulevard Retaining Walls (1913), 8th Avenue West, between West Highland Drive and West Blaine Street; 7th Avenue West, between West Howe Street and West Crockett Street, Seattle. Extant.
North Trunk Sewer Shaft House (1913), Lake Washington District, Seattle.
Hotel and Apartment Building for Edward Lincoln Smith (1915-1916), S.W. corner 4th Avenue and Marion Street, Seattle. Recently demolished.
Windsor Hotel, 6th Avenue and Union, Seattle.
Currin-Greene Shoe Manufacturing Company Building.
Japanese Baptist Day School (ca. 1921).
Moran School (Lakeside Day School) Community House.
Burnison, Capt., Water Tank Tower, Mercer Island.
Smith, Edward Lincoln, Residence, Cascadia Avenue, Mt. Baker District, Seattle.

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