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ARCADE

ARCHITECTURE / DESIGN IN THE NORTHWEST

Guest Editor - Don Fels

City of Ideas

22.4



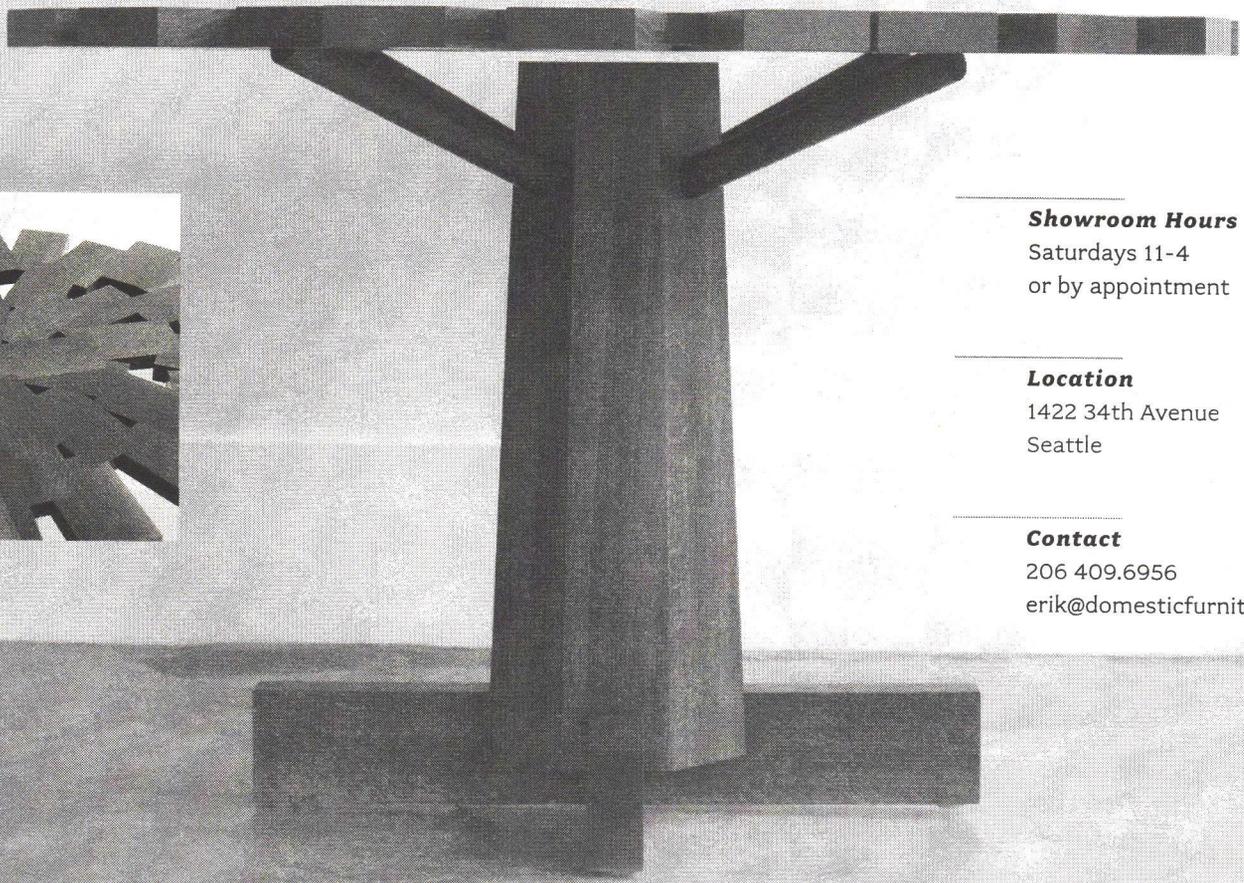
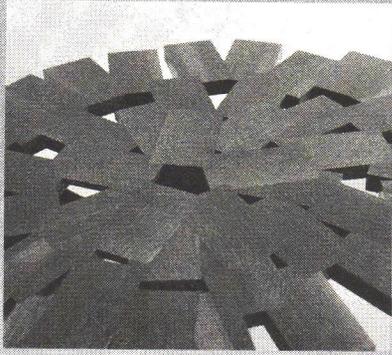
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PRACTICE
Atelier 5: Swiss Housing
and Practice
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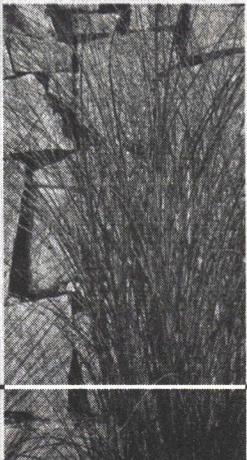
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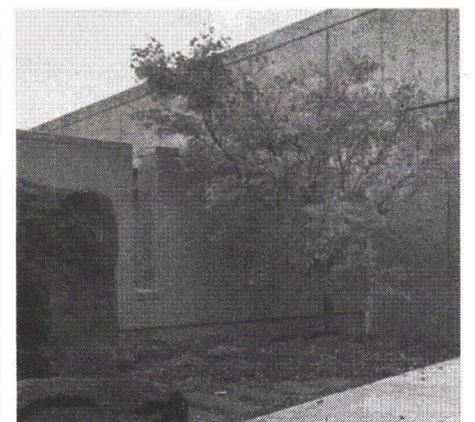
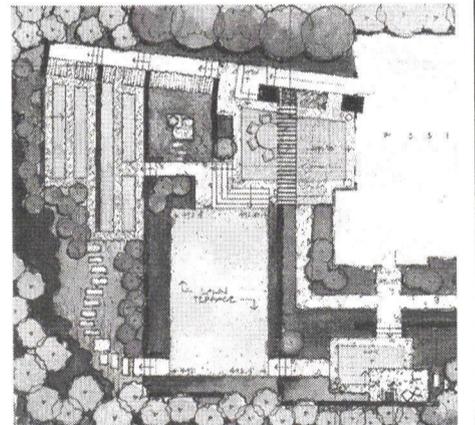
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landscape is one of those things...

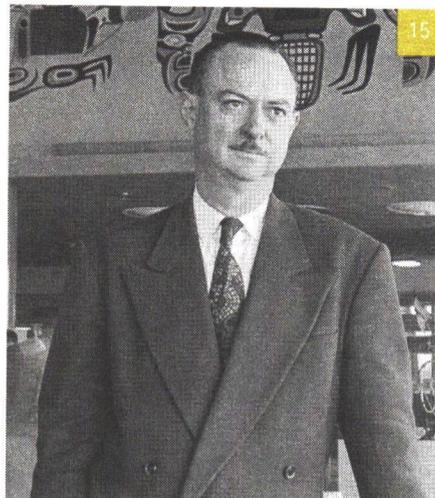
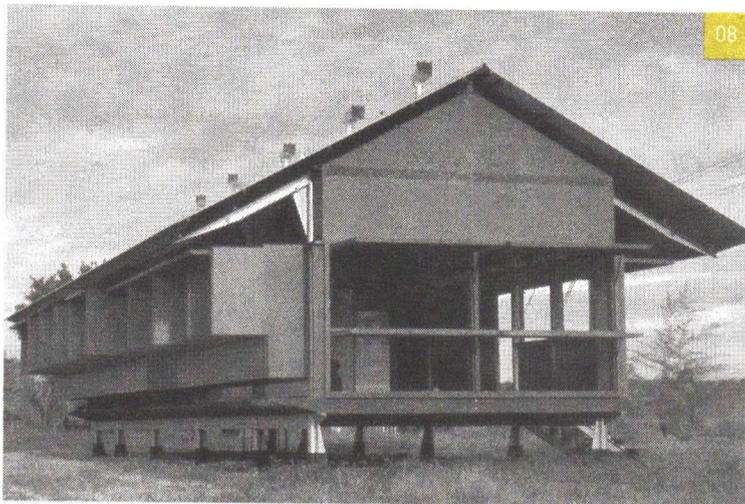
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Ideas for articles may be sent to info@arcadejournal.com. We also invite news, calendar entries of interest to the design community, and suggestions for New Work — all of which may be sent to the editors listed here.

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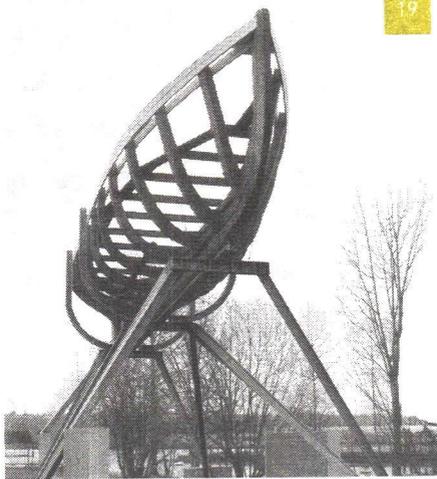


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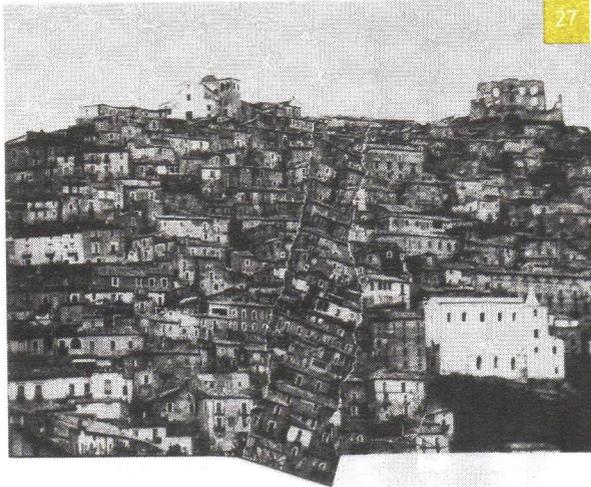


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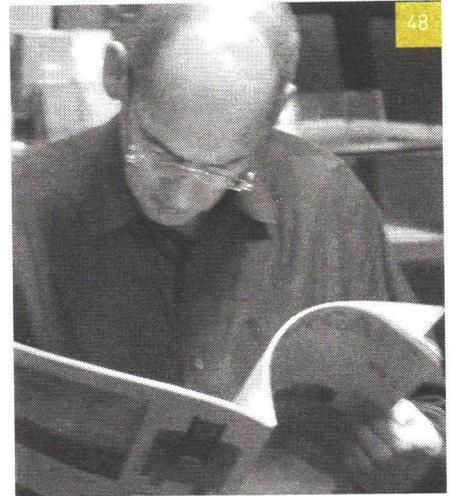
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Benjamin Fels

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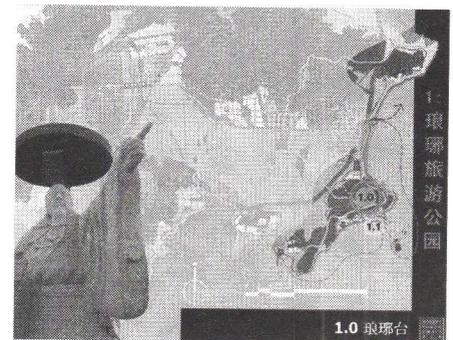
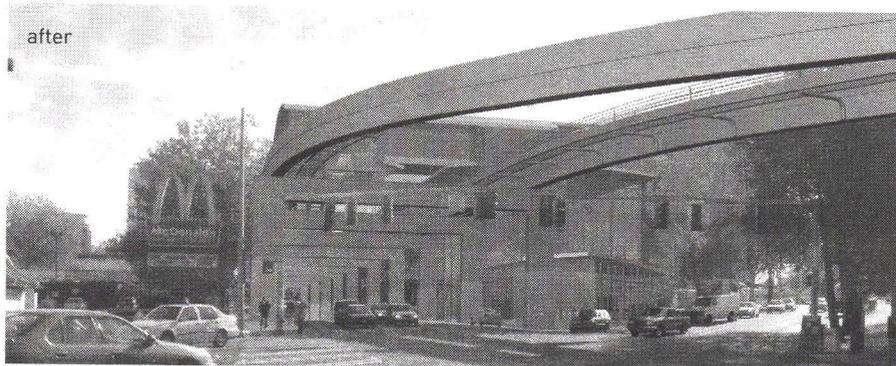
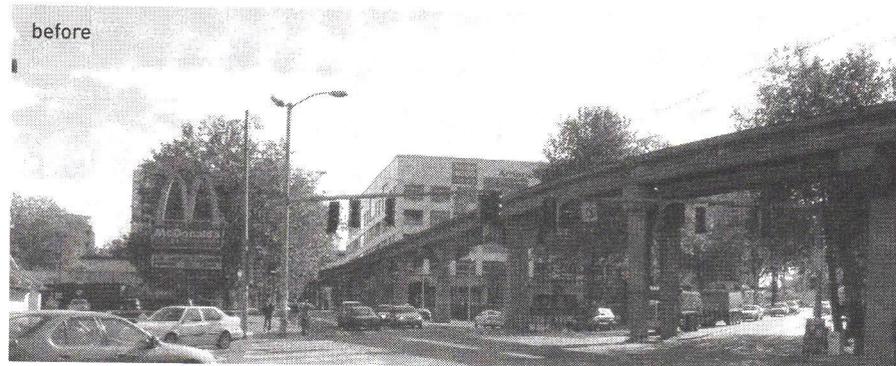
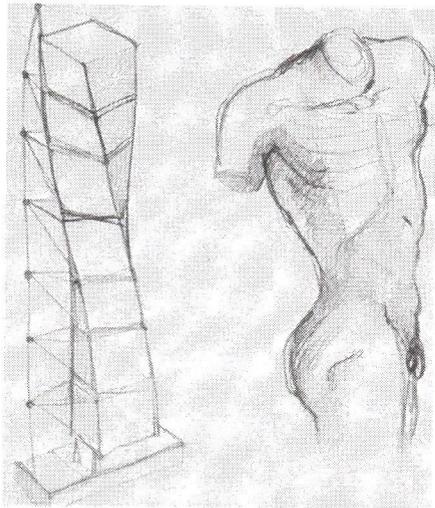
LOOK WHO'S READING ARCADE

Nearly three decades ago, San Francisco Bay Area native Linda Farris moved to Seattle and forever changed the face of the local art scene.

Malmö High Rise Apartment
Malmö, Sweden. 1999 — 2004
Image: Santiago Calatrava S.A.

If you like this... you're going to love this.
Images: Elevated.org

Lang Ya city master plan with
Qin Emperor.
Image: Robert Edson Swain, inc.



Santiago Calatrava:
The Architect's Studio
Henry Art Gallery – North Galleries
16 July – 10 October, 2004

There has been so much emotion, so much wheeler-dealing, so much flummery, so much disappointment, surrounding the rebuilding of Ground Zero in New York. Now, at last, a bespectacled celebrity architect has come up with a design for a building there that everyone applauds. It is not Daniel Libeskind, winner of the original competition. It is the scholarly-looking Spaniard Santiago Calatrava.
—Hugh Pearlman

The Henry Art Gallery, with guest curator Kirsten Kiser, presents *Santiago Calatrava: The Architect's Studio*, a survey of major building projects by this celebrated Spanish-born architect, engineer and artist. Santiago Calatrava has been in the news lately as the architect chosen to design the World Trade Center PATH terminal which will sit astride a network of passageways linking commuter trains, ferry boats, 14 subway lines and perhaps even an AirTrain station. As David Dunlap noted in the New York Times, "Although the PATH terminal is the third major element of the trade center development project - in many ways, quite literally its heart - the design almost burst on the civic consciousness, since work has proceeded quietly, with none of the discordant prelude that accompanied Freedom Tower and the memorial, 'Reflecting Absence.'"

In contrast to other exhibitions of Santiago Calatrava's work that emphasized static groups of models and photographs, *Santiago Calatrava: The Architect's Studio* emphasizes movement. An interactive sense of physically moving in and through Calatrava's built works is simulated through extensive use of video projection. For example, the virtual experience of walking on Hoofdvart Bridge or through the TGV Station in Liege via video "tours" brings the models and sketches of those projects to life. The exhibition also emphasizes the dynamic process in the milieu of the architect's studio, and will allow viewers to navigate working materials, sketches, and the ephemera associated with works-in-progress. This exhibition affords audiences a unique and dynamic first-hand view of the architect's working method as well as an experiential perspective on his built projects.

Santiago Calatrava: The Architect's Studio is organized for the Henry Art Gallery by independent curator Kirsten Kiser with Curatorial Coordinator Jordan Howland. Support for this exhibition has been provided by the Henry Art Gallery Contemporary Art Fund with in-kind support from the Grand Hyatt Seattle. www.henryart.org.

The monorail — what's it going to look like?

This is a question on many Seattleites' minds. To help answer it, Phil Beck and some likeminded architects, urban designers, builders and landscape architects have created a web site, whatdoesitlooklike.com, showing images of the monorail-near-you. Check it out. Several other web sites offer images of the monorail:

Seattle Monorail Project <http://www.elevated.org/project/feis/sr/downtown/>, Save Seattle Center saveSeattlecenter.org, OnTrack monorailontrack.org, and Monorailrecall.com.

Bob Swain and EDGE

Congratulations to Bob Swain and EDGE, a Seattle-based firm, for being selected by Qingdao Planning Bureau from an international field of 487 firms, to be the designers for a strategic master plan for a new coastal city called Lang Ya. Qingdao is hosting the aquatic events for the 2008 Olympics and hopes to use the economic influx from that event to establish a new city, supported to a great extent in the future by the rapidly growing coastal

tourism industry. Swain, who's been involved with urban planning projects from Athens to Costa Rica, became familiar with business in China while serving as a board member of the Seattle firm Rhodes Architectural Stone, which has a manufacturing business there.

The vision for this 122 acre site (the size of Vancouver, B.C.) is based on ecological balance and the acknowledgment of its significant physical and historic heritage, including wind farms and bicycle paths, along with fiber optic cable and light rail. Excited by the effort and cooperation he's experienced at every level, Swain says, "this form and style of green and sustainable planning is new to China and we're proud to have made an impact." Sometimes in China they say that the natural entrepreneurialism surfaces in unexpected areas not always precisely aligned with the mission statement. This exciting 15-year project will be interesting to watch.

Seattle Art Museum Talks With Linda Farris — Gallerist, Curator, and Community Art Supporter

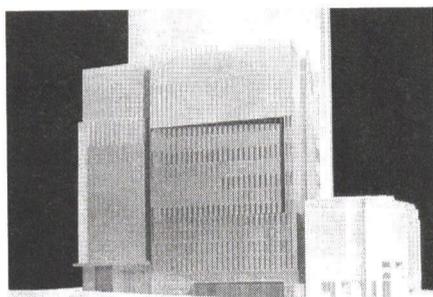
On April 22 the Seattle Art Museum and special community guests celebrated Linda Farris and the enormous influence she's had on the Seattle art arena. Farris is a beloved pillar of the Seattle community who has had a major impact on artists, collectors, and institutions alike. In a lively question and answer session moderated by SAM curator Lisa Corrin, Linda reflected on the evolution of the Seattle art scene and her thirty-year involvement with the international art scene.

Linda Farris
Photo: Koryn Rolstad

Rendering of the
Seattle Art Museum addition.
Image: Allied Works

Rendering of Museum of Arts & Design
at Columbus Circle.
Image: Allied Works

Marika-Alderton House, Yirrkala Community, Eastern Arnhem
Land, Northern Territory, 1991-1994.
Photo: Glenn Murcutt



Nearly three decades ago, San Francisco Bay Area native Linda Farris moved to Seattle and forever changed the face of the local art scene. For 25 years the Linda Farris Gallery, in Seattle's Pioneer Square, represented local artists and brought internationally acclaimed contemporary art to the region. The gallery was known for its provocative exhibitions and precedent-setting education programs. The gallery's records are archived at the Smithsonian Institution.

Farris continued her pioneering work as a curator, founding an innovative venture called the ContemporaryArtProject. She devised CAP to raise awareness in the Northwest about exciting new work from major world markets. CAP involved a group of local arts patrons who collectively purchased and then displayed works of art in their homes with the understanding that they would eventually be donated to a museum. Farris traveled in the U.S. and abroad, discovering emerging artists and acquiring stellar work for the project. The entire CAP collection was donated to the Seattle Art Museum in April of 2002.

Known for her good eye and keen instincts, Farris's personal collection generates national interest from museums, artists, and collectors.

Allied Works

When the Seattle Art Museum, whose joint project with Washington Mutual is underway at the corner of Union and First Avenue, began its selection of an architect for the 36,000 square foot addition to the Robert Venturi designed museum, they were inclined to hire a "local" architect, possibly in response to previous experience. They chose Brad Cloepfil, principal of Allied Works. Look what has happened! Allied Works went national. Last September they completed the Contemporary Art Museum in St Louis, and last November they were chosen to redesign the Museum of Art and Design (formerly the American Craft Museum) in New York: a makeover for Edward Durrell Stone's white marble "die-cut Venetian palazzo on lollipops" (as Ada Louise Huxtable nicknamed it) at 2 Columbus Circle. For that commission they beat out Zaha Hadid, the current Pritzker Prize Laureate. Equally prestigious, Allied Works was invited to take part in an exhibit at the Max Protetch Gallery in New York — an invitation limited to of fifty architects from all over — to show their ideas for the World Trade Center site. So much for local. You know things have changed when you're told all requests for

press images go through the office on Reade Street; that would be New York City.

Allied Works' projects in the Northwest — or recommend to a visiting friend — include their award winning Weiden + Kennedy building in Portland, and the 2281 NW Glisan Building that received Portland's Mayor's Award for Design Excellence. On the subject of visiting, if you are out and about you might want to visit Lionel Preis's Willcox House in Seabeck, which is operated as a bed and breakfast (willcoxhouse.com). This fine example of Preis's work (see Searching for Lionel Preis in this issue) is for sale, so the opportunity to tour it may be short lived.

Glenn Murcutt

Glenn Murcutt, 2002 Pritzker Laureate, was in Seattle this spring as the Callison Distinguished Lecturer at the University of Washington's Praxis lecture series. He also taught a weeklong studio at the UW thanks to the efforts of Callison, Dean Mugerauer, Chairman Prakash, and Kathryn Rogers Merlino (two great architectural discussions in our city). The lecture sold out. It was a whirlwind experience; the studio must have been amazing! For an hour and a half the audience received, in a rapid fire delivery, exposure to Murcutt's ample vocabulary of resolutions for ventilation, light control, circulation, and siting, for his projects that are set in what he vividly describes

as an environment of wind, fire, rain, flood, and mosquitoes: Australia. (Australia, by the way — Murcutt pointed out on superimposed maps — is nearly as big as the United States; do we detect a bit of post-Pritzker push back?) Running through his narrative of an imposing environment engaged with a personal dogged pursuit of right design (despite planning departments' many evils), there remains the harmonizing Aboriginal mantra to "touch this earth lightly," which is part of most descriptions of Murcutt. But, some narratives about Murcutt also mention Mies's Farnsworth House, which is not often cited in the canon of sustainability. Where does that fit? (Does up on pilotis translate to "touch this earth lightly?") After listening to the dazzling footwork of slots for reflected light, vent panels on windows, opening and closing walls, and tanks of water for fire, what also made itself present, and remained after the lecture, was a quality of stillness and clarity embodied in these projects; you realized that what you had just seen is a lot more than just how to build buildings without air conditioning and to tame the winds of New South Wales. A description Murcutt offered at the close of his lecture was "style of thought appropriate to the culture, time and place, not some appropriated style of expression."

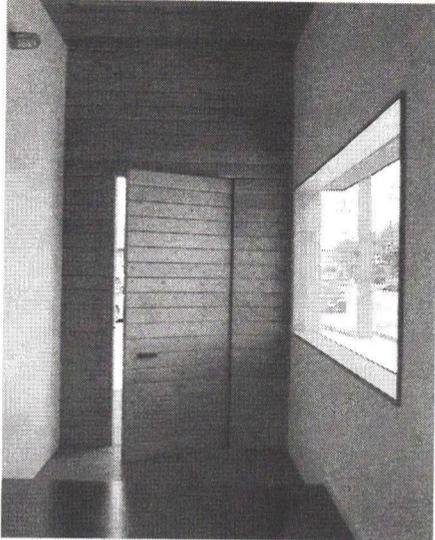
Short Takes by Victoria Reed.

What first catches your eye with the Bellan building is the color: rusty orange. It's all rusty orange corten steel, 14 gauge flush panels, blank, unadorned, one might even say boring, banal.

Tongue and Groove fir covers the door, wall and ceiling, very pure, very raw, very minimal.

The fir ceiling extends over the steel bar joist structure.

The exterior finish of the remodel is rusty corten steel, one rectangular shape, one orange color, one door, four punched rectangular windows.



Bellan Construction: the rusty building

John Fleming

Photos: John Fleming

There is a lot going on right now in architecture in the Northwest. We have world famous architects bringing attention our way with big signature buildings — Rem Koolhaas, Frank Gehry, Steven Holl, Antoine Predock. We have local celebrities as well, people who have been around awhile, architects who get the projects “to die for.” Tom Kundig, Bob Hull and David Miller, George Suyama. But there is also a lot happening in the small, new, young category. Architects and designers fresh out of school, some coming from well known firms, all exploring, looking at architecture first, asking about money later on; some would *almost* do the project for free if given the chance.

So, with these new architects and this new, little architecture, what matters? What is most important? What is the big idea? Is it the form or the shape of the thing? Is it the color and texture? Is this architecture about aesthetics? “What will

this building look like?” Is the form, color, texture and arrangement of the parts simply derivative of the building types and how we use them? Is the architecture an illustration of the construction process?

What first catches your eye with the Bellan building is the color: rusty orange. It's all rusty orange corten steel, 14 gauge flush panels, blank, unadorned, one might even say boring, banal.

What is beautiful anyway? Is this building beautiful? Sublime can shift to austere to banal in the wink of an eye. It's a state of mind, subjective.

Dave Lopez finished graduate school at the University of Washington thinking that working in construction might strengthen his ideas on architecture. Real experience, that's what he wanted. Bellan Construction was a good place. High end residential construction. Learn how things really work, not just on paper, not just on computer. Mike Bellan had ideas as well. Build a construction company that expressed an interest in architecture and art. Build a building that can allow space for art and architecture to happen

in addition to the office and cabinet shop. This seemed to be the right place at the right time.

What mattered to Bellan and Lopez was rusty orange corten steel. That was the big idea. The steel skin, the surface. It acts as a rain screen for the building. The steel is attached to sleepers over a breathable Gore-Tex-like membrane. Every inch of the exterior is clad with these 14-gauge, butt jointed, surface fastened, flush panels. At the window heads and the entrance canopy the panels are simply bent out at a 90 degree angle. There is literally no other articulation. It is all color and material.

The big idea is a simple idea. At first glance everything about the Bellan building is simple: one rectangular shape, one orange color, one door, four punched rectangular windows. Very pure, very raw, very minimal. It's an amazing transformation considering it's simply a remodel. The original footprint has not changed. The parapet height of the exterior walls is nearly the same as the original building. What's new? Color, texture, finish, and a

slightly rearranged interior.

The same minimal approach is taken with the materials inside. The fir tongue and groove finish on the front door flows the hall, and over the new exposed steel bar joists. Windows, sill, head and jamb are lined with marine-grade fir plywood with their edge veneers exposed. The entrance hall acts as gallery and exhibit space, guiding you into the larger open office. A stark bathroom pulls free from the other walls and ceiling. Its position shows total disregard for the exterior by slicing through one of the four windows.

This little rusty building shows us that you don't have to be a big well established architecture firm to produce architecture that matters. You don't even need to be an architecture firm. You don't need a lavish budget. Even a remodel will do. What matters is a clear simple idea...like rusty steel.

John Fleming is a partner with rbf ARCHITECTURE in Seattle.

bark (n.)

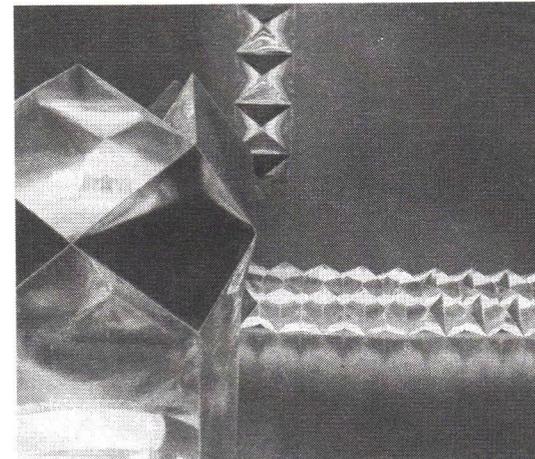
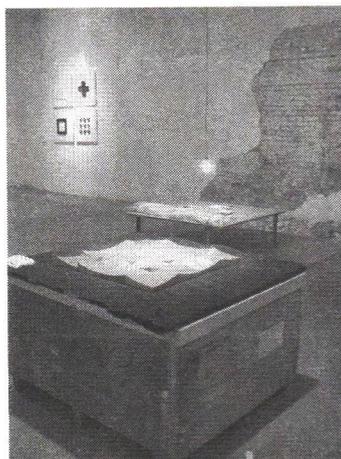
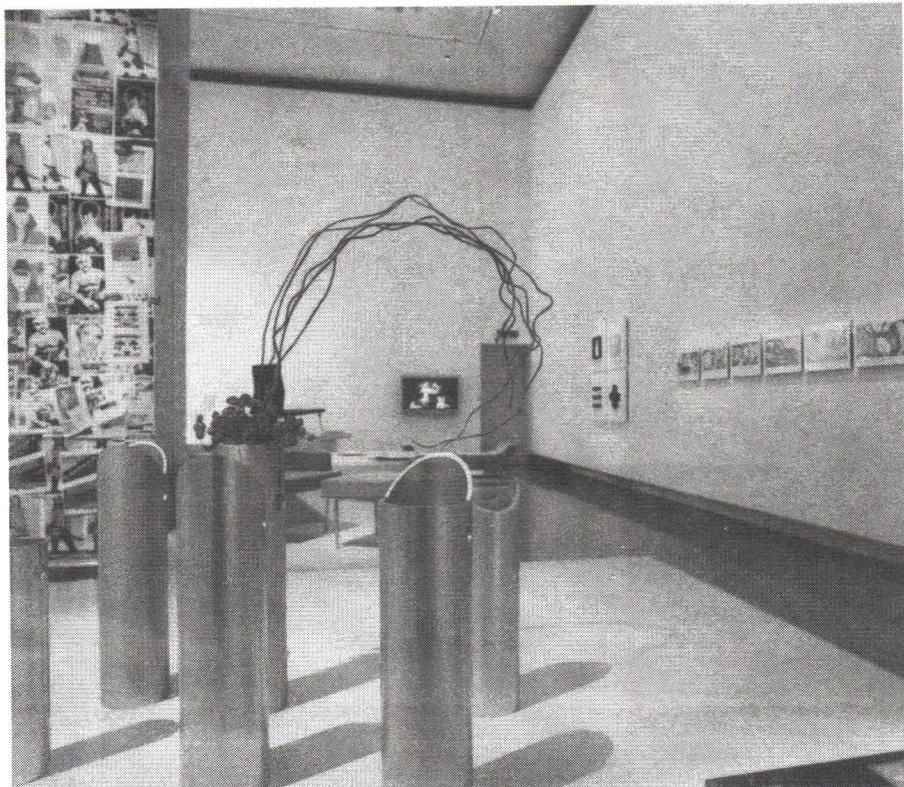
1. a sharp greeting not to be ignored, or to promote one's ware audibly
2. a small sailing vessel capable of great distance (also barque)
3. protective covering (i.e. for a tree)

No Apologies Necessary, a show of Canadian Design for Tokyo's Design Week.

Raw Potential exhibit in Vancouver's Gastown.

Hololuma lighting by Robert Studer & Khan Lee.

Opening night for *Raw Potential: Design in Vancouver, B.C.*



BARKing about Canadian Design

Helena Grdadolnik

The BARK Design Collective was formed by six like-minded Vancouver designers with a mandate to elevate the profile of contemporary Canadian design at home and abroad. They were fighting against a lack of support, identity and dialogue in the West Coast design scene, but that didn't stop them. Their slogan is "good things happen to those who try." And try they do. Since forming in 2003 they have put on shows in Tokyo and Vancouver and are now set to spread their word to Toronto and London.

BARK began with, *No Apologies Necessary: Design in Canada*, an exhibit held in the Canadian Embassy during Tokyo's Design Week last October. Curated by BARK, the exhibition was the result of a nation wide call for design submissions. 35 designs from architecture to graphics and furnishings to fashion were selected. The show received much-deserved accolades from the Japanese press. It was rated seventh out of 100 exhibits by the Japanese magazine *Casa Brutus*.

To quell the curiosity the press aroused on their return home, they decided to show the work in Vancouver in a show

called *Raw Potential*. BARK began with six people, but when a "call for energy" went out only weeks before their second exhibit was set to open, the six grew to nearly 36. The collective is beginning to have a critical mass of local designers that barks more loudly their message about the quality of design in Canada.

With *Raw Potential*, BARK wanted to bring design down a notch. The purpose was not to de-value design, but to make it more accessible to the public by removing it from glass cases. To this end they located the exhibit in a derelict space in the middle of Vancouver's Gastown. The intention was not to transform the building into a white-walled museum, but to work with its raw aesthetic and to salvage anything left by the previous occupants.

Luge trays by This Is It were thrown in amongst a pile of weathered two by fours with Steve Suchy's One Minute Chair tossed like a cherry on top. Display cabinets for tourist knickknacks were recycled to display Paprika's Canadiana kitsch greeting cards. Even years of accumulated dust did not go unused – swept as it was into a perfectly circular mound under Rob Studer and Khan Lee's Hololuma lighting.

The exhibit was an outstanding success, over seven hundred people

attended the opening night alone. In some cases they came across the event by chance, but the lion's share of visitors were there because the overwhelming local media coverage aroused their curiosity. This wasn't just the typical art and design crowd; along with designers and students there were business men, tourists and office types on their way home after work—many of whom stayed late into the evening.

The members of BARK are not resting on their laurels. The title of their latest venture is *CC: Cultural Currency*. They define "cultural currency" as the exchange of ideas within society — a commodity that surpasses monetary gain. Again, BARK is extending an invitation to all Canadians to join in the dialogue. The project has started as a chain letter of sorts sent via email to over 300 Canadian design professionals and those interested in design.

Participants are invited to contribute an idea, pass it on to someone else, and CC (carbon copy) Bark. BARK's theme for this show is improved living through the form of food, clothing, shelter, health, communication or orientation. BARK's job will be to map the course of the ideas and their evolution through ongoing permutations and perspectives.

BARK began their journey by traversing the Pacific; now they are set to sail with CC across the Atlantic to London's 100% Design in September and a stopover at the Design Exchange in Toronto along the way. With two shows in the works and a book out this summer, BARK is starting to see that, indeed, good things do happen to those who try.

CC: Cultural Currency will be at Toronto's Design Exchange July 29 to August 22, 2004 and at Canada House from September 23rd to 26th during London's 100% Design. BARK can be reached at info@barkbark.ca

Helena Grdadolnik, is the Vancouver correspondent for *Canadian Architect* magazine and a sessional instructor at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.

I stared at the water's edge, then had the twinge of a thrill when I saw what looked like a familiar seawall along its edge. When I recognized the familiar forms of the artificial bay, I couldn't contain my excitement.

Vancouver-style tall, thin condo towers on town-house bases wind along the shores of a canal filled with seawater outside Dubai, U.A.E.

Quayside: one of the neighborhoods at Concord Pacific Place on the north shore of False Creek in Downtown Vancouver.
Photo: Gordon Price



Very False Creek

Trevor Boddy

When Trevor Boddy stumbled onto a clone of Vancouver development in the Persian Gulf, he also found clues to his city's new global role as a "Portal City."

Dubai, United Arab Emirates: one of the world's fastest-growing cities, this commercial metropolis sprawls along the Persian Gulf, its newness making Phoenix or Calgary seem ancient in comparison. Daniel Hajjar, a young Canadian architect of Arab descent, was driving me out of the city along Sheikh Zayed Boulevard, a ten-lane artery not yet ten years old, lined with dozens of just-finished high-rise hotels and office towers. "The locals call this refrigerator row," he said as we headed to the barren fringe of the city, "because this line of towers reminds them of something they know: an appliance showroom."

We passed out of the city, past scraggly palm trees rising above the flat landscape, then stopped at the edge of an incongruous lake carved out of the Arabian desert where a half-dozen thin apartment towers rose 20 to 40 stories from a busy construction site, each

sprouting from a continuous row of town-houses. As we stood beside this hive of construction cranes, we were joined by Blair Hagkull and Robert Lee, former senior managers for Vancouver's Concord Pacific Developments.

"Take a good look at the shoreline, then tell me what it reminds you of" said Lee, then general manager of development for Dubai's EMAAR Properties. I stared at the water's edge, then had the twinge of a thrill when I saw what looked like a familiar seawall along its edge. When I recognized the familiar forms of the artificial bay, I couldn't contain my excitement. "I can't believe it! You have rebuilt False Creek, full-scale, out here in the middle of the Arabian desert." I turned to a laughing Hagkull and gave him my critical verdict: "It's Very False Creek!"

This all-too-real mirage on the desert is actually called Dubai Marina, but it's a virtual clone of Vancouver's own little inlet, created by carving away 120 acres of sand, lining the depression with stone, then filling it with 50 million gallons of diverted seawater. I soon learned that many more Vancouver-style condominium towers are planned for the site — a

squadron worth up to \$2 billion, much larger than the Concord Pacific development that inspired it. The only clue that this was Dubai and not Davie or Drake Street was the dome-like fins at the top of the condo towers. I would later learn that Islamic religious authorities had rejected more fully rounded earlier versions of these as too closely resembling the domes and minarets of mosques.

Dubai Marina is "Very False Creek" in both senses of the phrase: an intensification of the Vancouver original, but also surely very false-looking to anyone who knows and loves its source. In an era when all architectural history is plundered in Las Vegas's fantastic new constructions — even Dubai boasts a saturnine Planet Hollywood — it still seemed strange for me to find so perfect a copy of my city on the Persian Gulf. What is amazing is not just that the will of a Sheikh combined with Canadian expertise built a mirror image of Vancouver so far away, but what this act of borrowing says about my city's place in the world. Dubai Marina reveals the collision of our self-conception with how the world actually regards us.

The similarity of Dubai Marina to False

Creek is no accident. At the direction of UAE Crown Prince and developer Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Mohammed Al Abbar toured the world in 1999 looking for the right approach to the largest housing project ever undertaken in his country. After viewing a number of projects in Asia, Europe and the United States, he stopped in Vancouver on the last leg of his journey home to see Stanley Kwok. One of Al Abbar's closest advisors had worked in the late 1960s at Grosvenor International Property's Vancouver office with the Shanghai-trained architect who had just arrived from Hong Kong.

Kwok has since become the *éminence grise* of Vancouver's development scene and one of this city's ultimate power brokers, counting among his accomplishments the top job at stadium-building BC Place Corporation and years as master planner for Concord Pacific. He also played a key role in shaping the City of Vancouver's plans for Southeast False Creek, the east-of-Cambie locale of the 2010 Olympic village.

While strolling the False Creek seawall with Kwok and his then assistant Robert Lee, Al Abbar was struck by the notion

that Concord Pacific-style towers grouped around an artificial marina would be the best possible option for his immense Dubai housing project. Kwok was hired then and there to start working on the design. Within weeks of his visit and on the same architect's recommendation, Al Abbar lured away Concord Pacific marketer Lee, development manager Hagkull, and others.

In a recent interview about his role in the Dubai project, Stanley Kwok explains that his original concept for Vancouver's Concord Pacific development came out of 1970s tropical resorts, combined with the tall, thin towers of Hong Kong he knew well from working there. To these distant sources was added something already established in Vancouver's False Creek South: a commitment to mixing social classes and building community and wealth for all, in the provision of public amenities like parks, day-care centres and arts facilities. This social diversity is missing in the Dubai project, designed and built as it was by imperial fiat, not democratic process.

The will and financial wherewithal of Crown Prince Al Maktoum made Dubai Marina materialize with blinding speed: the company he controls functioned as developer, banker, marketer, city planning department and community, all rolled into one, and all rolled out instantly. Even the tiniest of Dubai Marina's details echo their Vancouver source. For example, the first building constructed there was a light-filled "Pre-Sales Center" for prospective buyers, a near-twin to Concord Pacific's slick Peter Busby-designed pavilion still standing on the shores of False Creek. It contains a similarly room-filling site model built by the very same Vancouver technicians.

The video theatre is a crucial stage in the sales sequence in both Vancouver and Dubai versions, and their walls ring with the same schmaltzy music and 'bold new tomorrow' narration—even if the actors in the Dubai clips wear dikhdashas and chadors and speak Arabic, instead of sporting Tilley hats and Gore-Tex anoraks and speaking English, Cantonese and Mandarin, as in the Vancouver videos. Vancouver prototypes are tracked with

ghostly precision in computer-graphic suite tours of Dubai Marina and digital simulations of apartment vistas over the desert and artificial bay, plus the hard sell of furnished mock-up suites and marketing brochures: Is it live, or is it Mahmoud-Ex?

I had a hunch that Dubai might prove a distant cousin to Vancouver even before I spent a few weeks teaching architecture at the American University Sharjah, just outside the city. But I discovered there are more profound lessons to be learned from this curious and diverting doubling between Gulf of Arabia and Gulf of Georgia.

Both Dubai and Vancouver are what I call "Portal Cities" — 21st-century entrepôts of business, ideas and, most of all, people. More than just ports, airports or even data-ports, portal cities are points of connection that trade in ideas, lifestyles and zones of refuge. Seattle is not a portal city, shaped and beholden to its Cold War aerospace and computer-related industries. Viewed positively, a portal city concentrates into its streets all the best in this post-industrial, post-national world. Viewed negatively, they are the balmy resorts where the rich, the connected and the corporate will increasingly find refuge from the dire problems swamping the rest of our planet—Grand Cayman or Monte Carlo re-conceived on a vast metropolitan scale.

The essential industry in portal cities is housing development, and the fire in their economic engines is an enhanced quality of life, strengthened through communities of moneyed others seeking the same sense of creative refuge. These cities are unpredictably inventive in cultural matters, as the now-tired metropolises of Northeastern North America and Europe once were — places where music and cuisine are fused artfully.

Miami is the portal city for all of Latin America, and Chileans, Brazilians and Colombians are now far more likely to meet there than any place on their own continent. Dubai has an analogous function as the shopping, business, cultural, even drug-and-sex-trade outlet for the ultra-conservative Islamic Kingdoms all around it.

And us? Vancouver is the portal city for a group changing the world more than all the Latins, Arabs and even Americans put together: the Chinese, and more specifically, the 50-million-strong diaspora of overseas Chinese, an entrepreneurial group now without rivals as the most electric force in reshaping global industry and commerce. Dubai Marina is a challenge to the emerging self-conception of Vancouver, an adolescent city that has only recently started coming to terms with who it is and how the world regards it.

A disturbing recent signal comes from Vancouver's planning department confirms what many of us have long dreaded: the planning and construction of new office buildings in downtown Vancouver has ground to a complete halt — the cranes one now sees are without exception building residential towers. As if to put salt in the wound of an amputated commercial class, Vancouver's most-lauded office tower of the 1970s — the cable supported former west coast transmission building — will be converted soon into condominium apartments. This is a signal event in the evaporation of office space in downtown Vancouver, and its transformation into a condo-resort. Many of Downtown Vancouver's condos are sold to a mobile golden class speculating globally and many more to Canadian baby boomers waiting to retire in our country's finest climate. Don't be distracted by the vital energy of younger renters temporarily occupying 'safe haven' condos these days, giving our downtown its temporary patina of diversity — this group will be kicked out just as soon as the arthritis kicks in.

Judging by what I discovered at Dubai Marina, the world regards Vancouver affectionately, though as a *jeune* resort, not a mature and serious metropolis. Anyone not desiring Vancouver's descent into permanent status as a "resort" needs to join the debate soon, because perceptions build realities even quicker for cities than for people. Dubai's thinking in this regard may be more advanced than ours, obsessed as we are for the moment with our condo boom, plus an Olympic building crest to come. The

January 4, 2004 edition of their daily English-language newspaper *Khaleej Times* drives home that point: "Dubai has to start thinking less about construction as a driver of growth, and more about qualitative improvements that can make assets more productive."

While in Dubai, I met many other members of an expatriate Canadian community that is larger than the American ones: Ismaili Muslims with families in North Vancouver, bankers from Calgary, building product salesmen from Kamloops, Simon Fraser University students starting in the hotel business, Québécoises out for adventure. "We were astonished to learn that there are now 4,000 Canadians resident in the Emirates," diplomat Christopher Thornley of Canada's U.A.E. Embassy told me, "which makes ours one of the largest Western business communities here — the only reason we know this figure is that they all chose to register with us in the weeks of worry after September 11."

Even though Canadians have the world's highest proportion of their economy dedicated to exports, we don't often think of ourselves as such. Because of our inundation with the cultural production of the United States, we seldom see how far and wide our ideas and innovations have already spread. We have been a nation of chameleons, but this may be changing.

Concord Pacific is proving — for good and for ill — to be the 'ur-urban resort' of them all, not just for Dubai, but also for projects currently under construction in San Diego, San Francisco, Bombay and even Tehran.

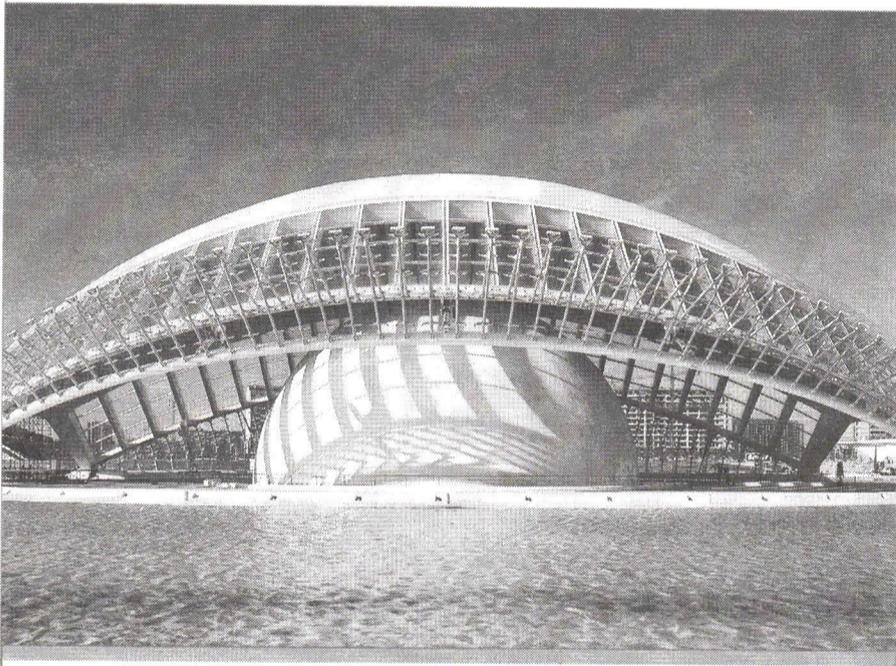
Personally, it took coming to Dubai to understand Vancouver's emerging role in a broad world flush with modernity, the churn of change.

Vancouver Sun architecture critic and civic columnist Trevor Boddy [trevboddy@hotmail.com] was the only North American journalist invited to Riyadh to cover the centenary celebrations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This article previously appeared in the *Vancouver Sun*.

"I don't know if an architect is
an artist, but I am convinced
that architecture can be an art."
- SANTIAGO CALATRAVA

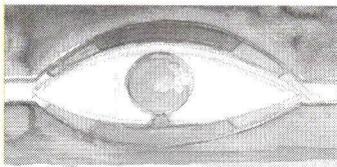
SANTIAGO CALATRAVA

: The Architect's Studio



City of Arts and Sciences, Planetarium, Valencia, Spain, 1991
Courtesy of Santiago Calatrava S.A. Photos: Oliver Schuh.

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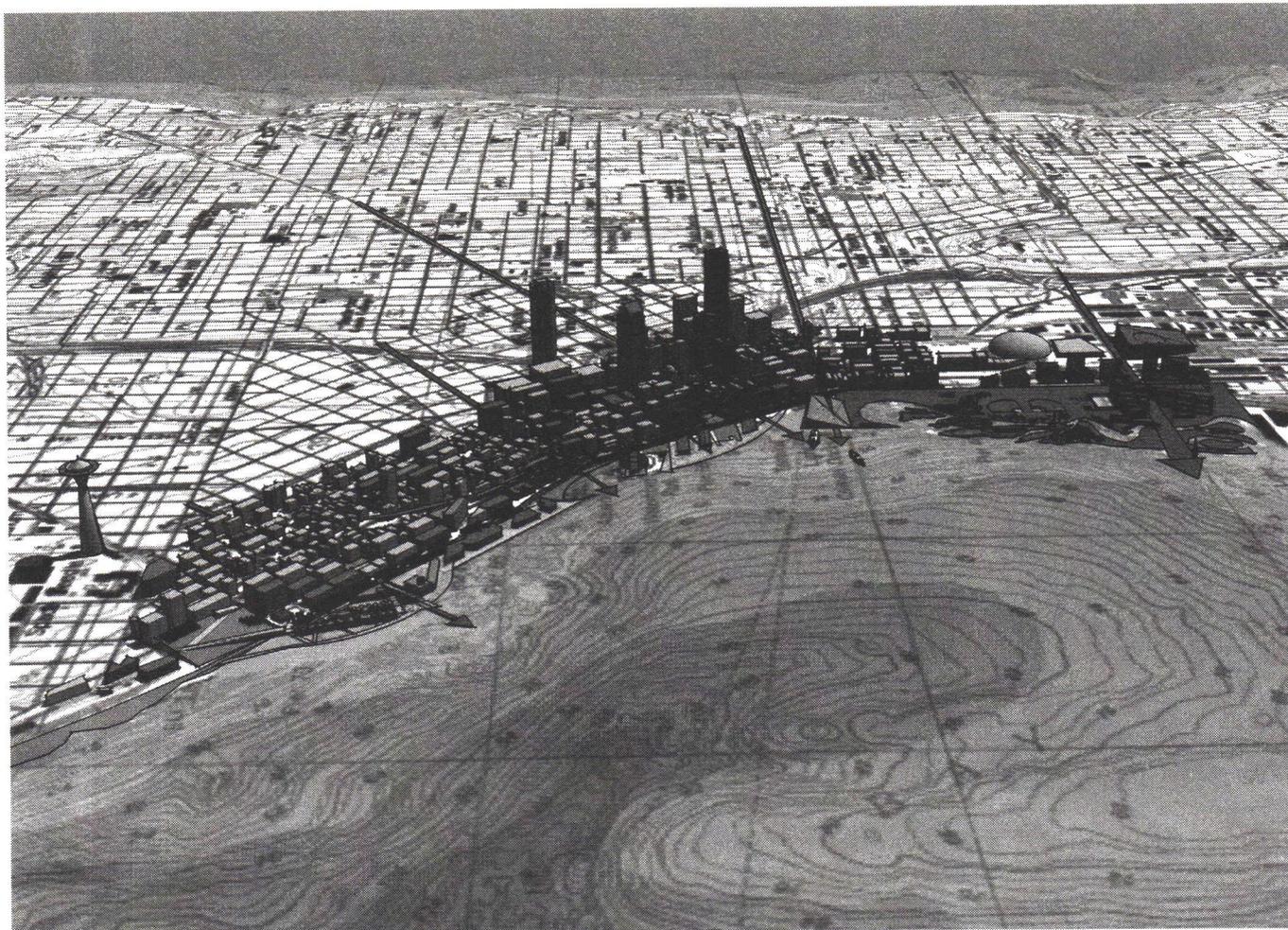
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Image courtesy of action: better city.



On the Waterfront... and on, and on, AND ON

David Spiker

The Seattle Waterfront saga continued with an extraordinary event in late February. A call from the City to participate in a waterfront planning charrette brought forth 300 of Seattle's most concerned architects, planners and urbanists, along with a smattering of Port types, a slue of dockworkers, and assorted reps of the transportation agencies, to participate in two days of focused discussion and intense design. This effort, the largest in Seattle's history, involved 22 teams who formed, plotted, planned, and finally drew their visions, thoughts, ideas, conjectures, ideologies, and pent-up expressions of desire for a comprehensive waterfront. In a display of design largess that Planning Director John Rahaim valued at \$1.3 million, the teams had at the essential question of what the waterfront should become. By way of disclosure, this author headed the Hybrid City team.

The results demonstrated a reluctance to engage in grand urban themes, a struggle to grapple with the key issues of

connectivity and finding new developable land, and an earnest attempt to graft the ideology of sustainability onto Seattle's edge.

The attenuated format of Seattle's waterfront offered the simplest explanation of why no big plans were proposed. There is simply little land available for a coherent urban diagram. The city is pressed against the water's edge and shoreline regulations prevent significant overwater construction. How to find the land to conceptually create a place?

The answers provided were both inventive and prosaic.

Schemes ranged from turning the waterfront into an ecopreserve to one I called Vancouver South. Many teams coveted Pier 46 as available land and used it to propose a new residential neighborhood with open space, often with a sustainable component. The dilemma here was to graft this new piece of city to downtown. The void below Pike Place Market attracted serious attention with proposals to link the Market to the waterfront, including an Italian hilltown and many buildings stepping down the slope. The unfortunate necessity of having the viaduct resurface

from the tunnel to bridge the railroad elicited buildings as highway camouflage and a greenway lid over the elevated section. Colman Dock was seen as an iconic symbol of Seattle's past to be resurrected and recreated as a mixed-use multi-modal place to attract uses beyond the ferry traffic. New land was created by forming green islands as mobile barges and by linking the piers with floating decks. The best title was Experience Water Project.

The theme of sustainability formed a substantial component of many schemes: salmon habitat, fish friendly features, bioswales, and ecologically protected coves. There was even a proposal to turn the Duwamish into a river delta to return it to its marshy origins. One clever idea was to recycle the viaduct as debris in the bay. But this focus on ecology presents fundamental challenges in realizing a vital waterfront. People don't inhabit or really use bioswales. The much-touted educational component of sustainable areas is limited by their fragility. Very few of the waterfronts we admire have a substantive sustainable environment. This writer remains skeptical of the genuine benefits to the city at large of converting

a major portion of the waterfront into an eco-preserve.

Proposing new buildings proved to be a necessary evil for many teams. The very real need to create an economic basis to fund waterfront development along with the strong desire to add housing along the city's edge led to suggestions for small towers to low contextual structures to generic loft buildings shaped to maintain porosity at the waterfront.

Finally, bringing the city to the water and the water to the city was a common concept. Teams struggled to break down the perceived rigidity and inaccessibility of the waterfront to promote a more experiential and usable condition.

Four fundamental conundrums emerged from the charrette:

1. How to create an economic basis for new development in the face of inchoate resistance to private initiative.
2. How to reconcile the Port's lease of Pier 46 with the obvious condition of it being the largest and most accessible land near downtown available for building.
3. How to balance the current enthusiasm for sustainable habitats with the basic need of the citizens of Seattle to have a usable waterfront.
4. How to get those citizens to actually use the waterfront, or, how to make it much more accessible.

Throw in the historic building issue, the 800-pound question of what to do with the Viaduct, add the endless ability of Seattleites to avoid any level of complexity that results in confrontation and you have the essence of the situation. How to bring about real change? We await the City's answer.

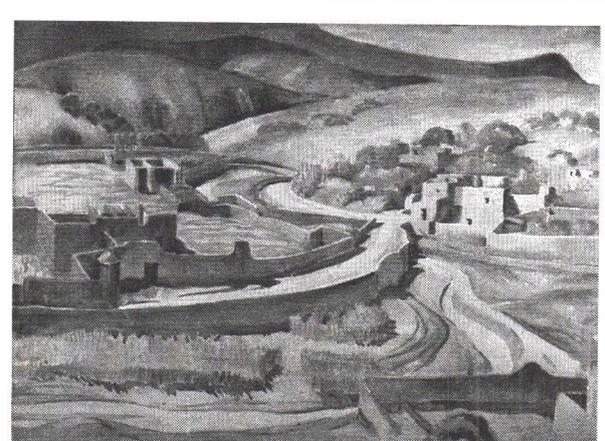
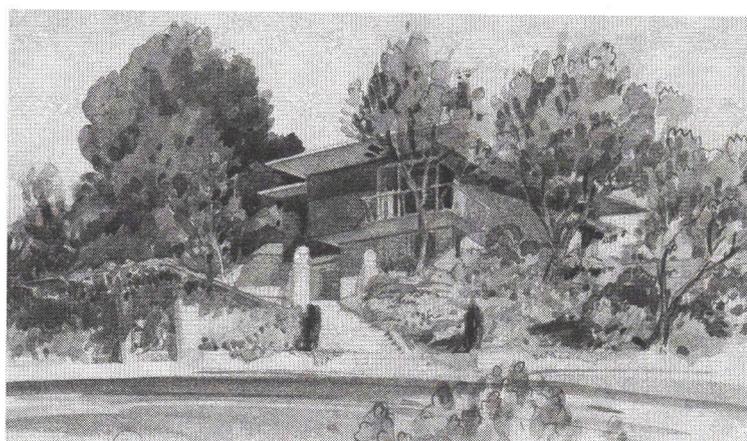
David Spiker is an architect and urban designer with Sienna Architectural Company and Chair of the Seattle Design Commission. Previous coverage of the waterfront can be found in *ARCADE* 22.1 (Sept. '03) and 22.3 (March '04).

The few drawings and watercolors that survive in the collection at UW libraries show an extraordinarily gifted delineator; once I saw these I was hooked.

Lionel Pries at the Legend Room Restaurant during construction at Northgate Shopping Center, Seattle. Northgate architects, John Graham & Company, hired Pries to develop the interior of the restaurant (1950-51, destroyed). Pries drew on Haida motifs for the decorative murals. Photo courtesy of DLR Group.

Lionel Pries residence, Seattle, 1947-48 (altered). Watercolor by Lionel Pries. In 1955, when the Pries residence was included in the Seattle Art Museum's annual architecture tour, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* called it "An Artist-Architect's Dream Home." Private collection.

Corn in the River — Guanajuato (27" x 38"). This large Lionel Pries watercolor dates from the 1930s and shows the ruined Hacienda da Rocca on the road out of Guanajuato. Courtesy of Robert Winskill. (Digital "restoration" by Stephen Rock, Rock's Studio, Seattle.)



My Search for "Spike" Pries

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner

Lionel H. ("Spike") Pries (1897-1968) holds an uncertain position in the pantheon of Seattle architects. He was revered by University of Washington architecture students from the late 1920s to World War II, but regarded as "old school" by many in the post-war generation of architecture students. The UW College of Architecture & Urban Planning has a teaching award named after Pries; it was created in 1985, yet those who created it knew little more than that Pries had been a legendary teacher. What they knew of his teaching they had heard from professors Victor Steinbrueck (a UW student of the 1930s) and Hermann Pundt. Pries's departure from the UW in October 1958 (four years short of retirement age) remained a mystery for over 40 years.

A 1984 issue of *ARCADE*, "Lionel H. Pries: Educator of Architects," by UW graduate student Andrew Rocker, discussed Pries's teaching career, and Rocker followed this with an essay on Pries's life and career in *Shaping Seattle Architecture* (1994), but many aspects of Pries's life seem little known. Pries's influence is cited in recent monographs on A. Q. Jones and Roland Terry, and Pries was the only UW faculty member named by Minoru Yamasaki in his autobiography, but Pries has remained a puzzle.

My search for Lionel Pries began in 1994 following the completion of *Shaping Seattle Architecture*. He seemed such a curious figure — an architect who had

been educated in, and taught in, the traditional pedagogy of the pre-World War II period yet apparently so influential on architects like Minoru Yamasaki, A.Q. Jones, Roland Terry, Paul Kirk, Victor Steinbrueck, Fred Bassetti, Perry Johanson, Royal McClure, Wendell Lovett, Keith Kolb, George ("Pete") Wimberley, and others. How was this possible? The few drawings and watercolors that survive in the collection at UW libraries show an extraordinarily gifted delineator; once I saw these I was hooked. So over the past decade I have pursued Lionel Pries and hope to publish a Pries biography.

His story is an extraordinary one — not only as an educator and an architect, but also as an artist and a collector. In the early 1930s he was Director of the Art Institute of Seattle (predecessor to today's Seattle Art Museum). He exhibited watercolors and oils frequently from the late 1920s to the late 1940s. In the early 1930s he was close to Guy Anderson and Morris Graves. He was also a noted collector, with significant collections of Pre-Columbian textiles, Northwest Native American artifacts, Mexican folk art, and Asian antiquities. In the 1920s and 1930s, Pries regularly held soirées at his home just north of campus — students of the period remember evenings of classical music, beautiful objects and tales of Pries's summers in Mexico. These evenings continued after Pries moved in 1948 to the house he designed in Laurelhurst, but they were less frequent — many students in the post-war period

saw Pries as a figure "out of the past." While some enjoyed and appreciated his house and his collections, others, in an era of technological modernism, found it did not fit their ideas for an architecture of the time.

There were parts of Pries's life his students only occasionally suspected and of which only a few of his university colleagues were aware. Pries was a gay man in a period when homosexuality was widely misunderstood and not generally accepted. This was the basis for the tragedy of his last years. In summer 1958, while visiting Los Angeles, Pries was picked up in a vice sting — today we would consider this a clear case of entrapment. Although it was a minor incident, the LA police sent a report to the UW administration; they in turn forced Pries's resignation from the faculty. After 30 years devoted to the UW, Pries lost everything. He found employment with Durham, Anderson & Freed, headed by his former student Bob Durham. In 1960 Pries moved to John Graham & Associates, where he worked for three years until he qualified for Social Security. From 1963 to 1968 he lived quietly, enjoying his home and garden, and occasionally taking on design commissions.

UW Professor Grant Hildebrand, who arrived in the region in the mid-1960s, never met Lionel Pries, but as he came to know Seattle architecture Hildebrand increasingly perceived Pries's influence. In 1978 Hildebrand wrote about this influence in the *Seattle Times*: "He [Pries] taught in an era when, because of the

Depression and the post-war fight for modernism, architecture was in an austere and barren period. By contrast, he presented a message about the potential fullness of architectural experience. He presented a dramatic contrast to the trends of his time with an impact beyond his time and beyond the classroom. The smaller-scale architecture of the Seattle area, which is in considerable degree the architecture of his students, has been a richer, fuller architecture than can be found in most other regions of the country."

As part of my research for a proposed illustrated biography of Lionel Pries, I am searching for original Pries artworks now in private hands. Could anyone who is aware of the location of any original drawings or paintings (oils or watercolors) by Lionel Pries please contact me? I can be reached at: jochsner@u.washington.edu; 206-685-8454; Professor Jeffrey Ochsner, Department of Architecture, University of Washington, Box 355720, Seattle WA 98195-5720.

The remodel featured the use of recycled denim insulation, recycled glass tiles, AFM low toxic paints, and reclaimed and FSC certified hardwoods.

Traugott Terrace:

Designed by Environmental Works, Traugott Terrace apartment building is expected to be the first LEED(tm) certified affordable housing project in the country. The new 6-story structure built over the existing Matt Talbot Center in the Belltown neighborhood of Seattle.

Photo by Greg Krogstad.

Insulation:

The post industrial recycled denim insulation by Bonded Logic is so safe to use that even your children can handle the material.

Image: Environmental Home Center.



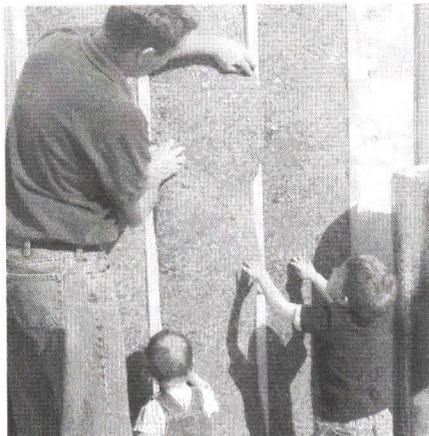
Congressman Stirs Call to Action in Green Building

Ellen Southerd

On January 15, 2004, Congressman Jim McDermott joined Environmental Home Center (EHC) on an afternoon tour of two green projects in Seattle. First stop on the tour was the EHC showroom where the Congressman learned about advances in sustainable building products, then on to the home of Leslie Shapiro and Heather Harmon who recently remodeled their home using sustainable materials. The couple worked with Velocipede Architects, Christian Kicinski, Project Manager, and Blue Marlin Construction, contractors, all of whom were on hand to answer questions. Leslie and Heather were quick to point

out the many reasons they chose to implement a "green" remodel: environmental responsibility, durability of finishes, and most importantly, a healthy living environment. The remodel featured the use of recycled denim insulation, recycled glass tiles, AFM low toxic paints, and reclaimed and FSC certified hardwoods. In the master bath they installed a dual flush toilet that reduces water consumption by 50%.

The afternoon also included a visit to the new Miller | Hull offices. Miller | Hull's project manager, Amy DeDominicis, and partner Craig Curtis, led the tour of the newly remodeled office space in the Polson Building. The finishes included AFM low toxic paints, FSC certified vertical grain pine for flooring with OS hard wax oil, Forbo linoleum, and con-



A Real Energy Future

Congressman Jim McDermott

In my view, dramatic environmental conservation, the kind that can reduce America's addiction to fossil fuels, is within our grasp. There are three interlocking steps to make an energy difference: philosophy, practical, political. As people, as nation, as government leaders, we must have a philosophy that makes conservation the top priority across America, from homes, to schools, to factories, to cars. It's that simple.

ference tables fabricated with recycled Kari hardwood from Australia. Both projects featured EHC products. The day ended back at EHC where a group that included members of the AIA, Russell Foundation, IIDA, COTE, Built Green, Washington State Toxics Coalition, and the City of Seattle Department of Planning & Development, participated in a rigorous dialogue with the Congressman.

McDermott has long been an advocate for energy conservation and sustainable technology. He is particularly interested in the issue of fossil fuels consumption. He strongly encouraged the exchange of ideas from his constituency and called on the group to form a task force to advise him and his staff on green building practices. He was quick to point out that our representatives are very approachable and encourage feedback from their communities. His interest in the tour and his desire to know more about progress that is being implemented in his district was motivated by a simple question. Last November at a local coffee shop, Patti Southard of EHC tapped him on the back and asked, "Do you know that your district is leading the way for green building practices across the country?" Representatives from EHC will continue their discussions with Congressman McDermott's office and will organize a group to forward research, and potentially dialogue, for legislation and federal initiatives.

Ellen Southerd is a principal with Swenson Say Faget Engineers. She has been a public relations and marketing professional in the A/E/C industry for 15 years.

In touring the Environmental Home Center, I saw one very practical step. It's nothing less than environmental leadership on display. The Northwest is clearly leading the nation in its efforts for sustainable building practices. There are other remarkable applications that need wider attention, including: the Robert Redford Building in Santa Monica (yes, named for the Hollywood legend who remains a vocal advocate for environmental conservation); Traugott Terrace in downtown Seattle; The Seminar II Building at Evergreen State College; and the Broadway Housing Project on the campus of Portland State University. These projects are going to achieve LEED status. Everyone in the environmental community knows LEED status is as good as it gets. We need more projects implemented this way. That means educating architects, local government, and the people controlling the budgets.

That brings me to the third step: political. In Congress I've been a strong and vocal advocate for the Energy Star Program, which provides federal funds to implement real conservation, in projects and homes across America. We need more funds and we keep pressuring the Administration to stop thinking oil, and start thinking energy conservation. It has as much to do with America's security as it does with America's future. Let your voices be heard in government at all levels.

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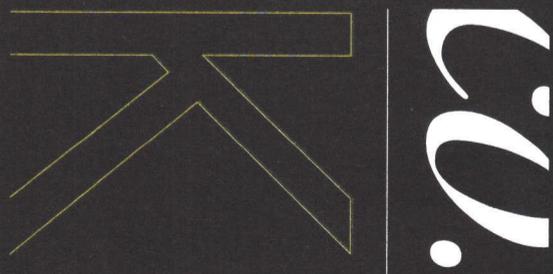


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Wasserhaus is situated near the grounds of the Catholic seminary of St. Arbogast in Vorarlberg, the western most state of Austria.

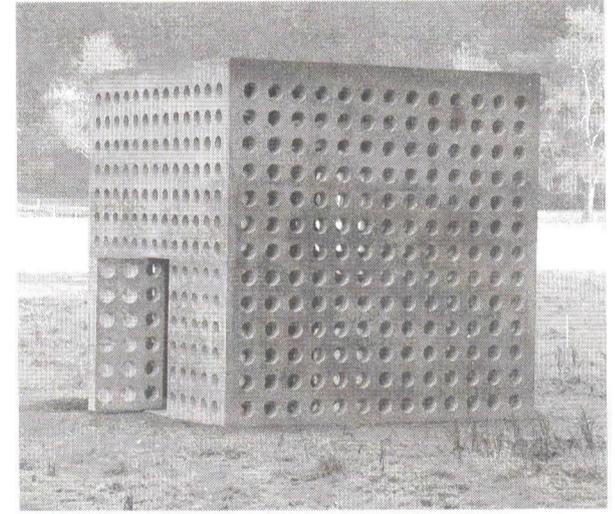
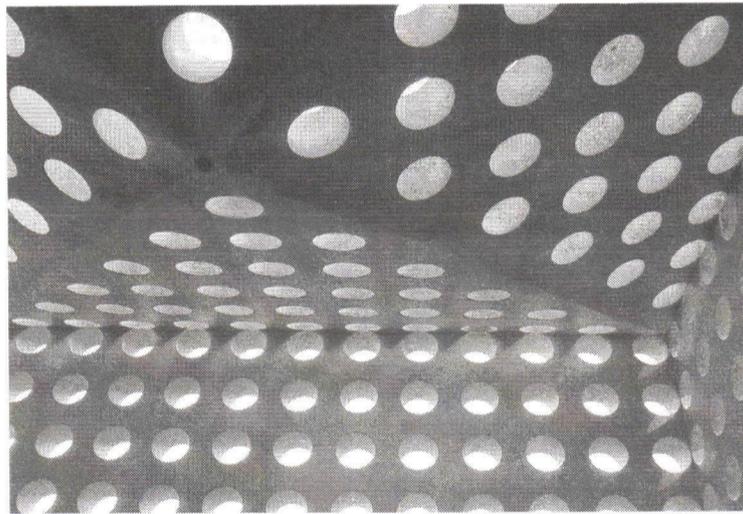
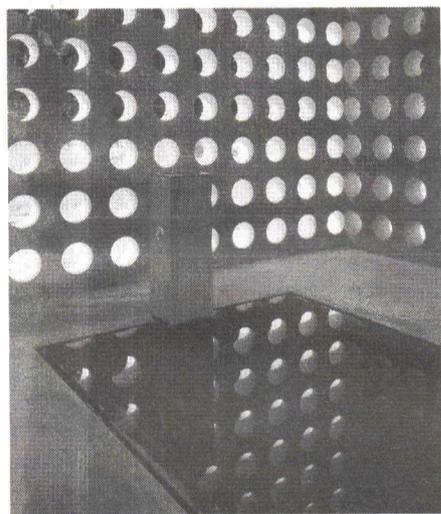
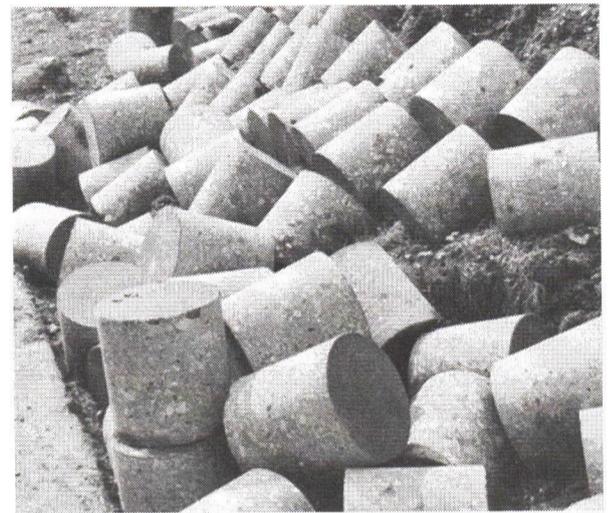
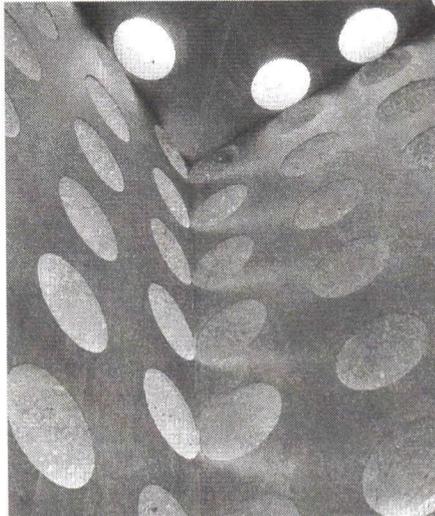
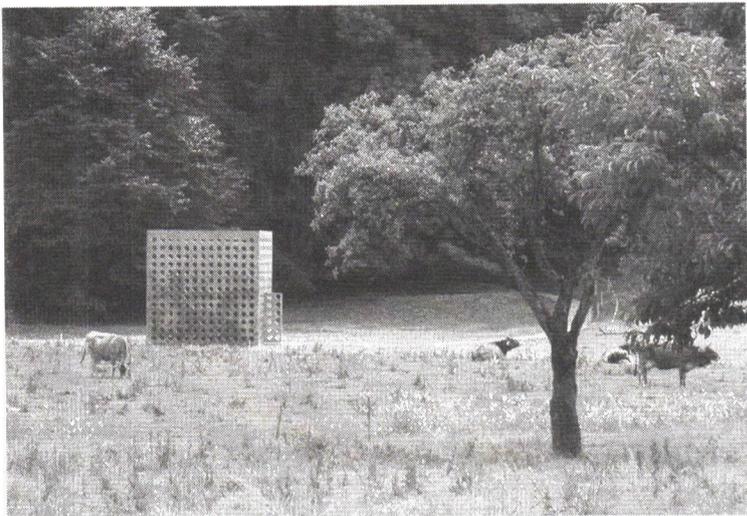
Pastoral provocation.
Photo: Christof Marte

Porescapes.
Photo: Fridolin Welte

Core samples.
Photo: Josef Kittinger

Wasserhaus.
Photo: Arno Gisinger

Concrete chapel.
Photo: Arno Gisinger



Bohring in Vorarlberg St. Arbogast, Austria

Kai-Uwe Bergmann

Resting in a shallow valley among rolling foothills, a perforated cube forms an abstract punctuation mark to this serene and alpine setting. Its concreteness speaks of weight and mass while the 820 bohrings through its envelope resonate a porousness through which light and the elements cascade. In the words of the project artist, Fridolin Welte, this porescape serves to “act not as shelter but as a synthesizing *werkzeug*, or tool, that allows the visitor to feel, smell, and hear their surroundings filtered through its surfaces.”

Entitled Wasserhaus by the formmaker, the work is situated near the grounds of the Catholic seminary of St. Arbogast in Vorarlberg, the western most state of Austria defined by the Alps and Lake Constance. It alludes to the importance of water as sustenance — typified by a

drinking well — and here becomes the backdrop for the qualities of a light rain-shower dripping into its interior pool, a summer’s breeze piercing its apertures, or the sound of cattle grazing nearby. Set in the midst of a meadow and along a brook, the Wasserhaus is accessible by a tiny path. At first glance, the 5m x 5m (16.4’ x 16.4’) structure appears to be a compact solid. Inside, the ceiling, an inverted pyramid, seems to compress the space further. But, once the eyes adjust, the surrounding sky and landscape appear like a brilliant silk screen matrix as each aperture isolates a different hue of color, paring each away as if it were a precious commodity. The colors, the sounds, and smells, are there but untouchable.

Like the empiricist Donald Judd, Welte seeks out the challenges and scale of architecture that serve his sculptural intentions. The artist also understands that a work such as the Wasserhaus is dependent on the collaboration of many

specialists and laborers such as engineers, architects, and concrete experts. He is not interested in connecting his art to himself as an individual artist; he designs his pieces and then works with skilled craftsmen and precision minded builders to realize their form. Unlike Judd, however, Welte is not a minimalist and the Wasserhaus is not a conceptual work. Rather, it’s a perceptual design, isolating the senses, giving them form, depth and mass.

The reductive nature of the bohrings in turn lead to the central question of how much material can be removed without losing the essential character of the work. When does one lose the sense of enclosure and at what point do the walls dissolve in light. When does stone turn to nothing, water breed life, or a thought turn into being?

An artist and educator currently residing in Vienna, Welte returned to his roots and undertook an eight year odyssey with the help of countless individuals to realize

this work. The Wasserhaus has been embraced as a meditative environment for students, visitors, and pilgrims alike. Few regions rival Vorarlberg with a similar density and intensity of architectural and artistic exploits of which the Wasserhaus is a prime example. This perforated cube demands participation and should be a must-see for any architect visiting the region.

Kai-Uwe Bergmann, a Seattle architect currently residing in Vorarlberg, seeks to continually bridge his two homes.
www.kaiuwebergmann.com

Donald Fels created *Paragon* for the Public Access site at Terminal 107 along the Duwamish Waterway. The 60' long sculpture establishes an enclosed public space open to movement and discourse. Constructed at 3/5 scale, the boat frame is modeled after that of a 1923 halibut schooner, a unique type of workboat once built along Seattle's waterfronts. Inside the sculpture's base, etched fiberglass panels discuss the site's working past, and the communities that once thrived along the Duwamish. The sculpture can be reached by taking the West Seattle Bridge to the Delridge Exit and going south on West Marginal Way.



City of Ideas

As an artist who makes 'public' work, I am by desire and necessity out on the street pushing the exchange of ideas. Invited to be a guest editor of *ARCADE*, I thought it would be interesting to investigate ways that ideas surface in the city.

Guest Editor - Donald Fels

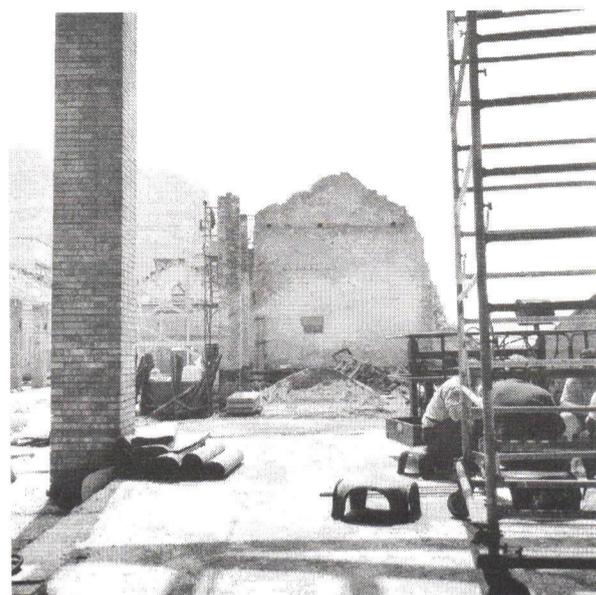
As things get made, bought, sold, and moved around, so do the ideas that attach themselves to the stuff of our lives. Port cities have always been places that import and export ideas—like rats, ideas stowaway in the holds of ships. Some cities have a long history of production and culture of ideas themselves. Other places, Seattle among them, began life trading in goods and materials. People here might have been open to new ideas, but the business of business wasn't ideas, it was logs, fish, woolen jackets, and airplanes. Things have changed over the past 150 years and today Seattle employs thousands in the knowledge sector. There is big business here in the exchange of formulas, images and ideas. Retailers are selling goods wrapped in ideas. Local giants REI, Starbucks, and Microsoft all offer us lifestyles: ideas about being in the world.

As an artist who makes 'public' work, I am by desire and necessity out on the street pushing the exchange of ideas. Invited to be a guest editor of *ARCADE*, I thought it would be interesting to investigate ways that ideas surface in the city. I asked some people I respect to consider ideas in cities, and this issue is the result. J.I. Kleinberg begins by considering the city as a place of pure idea: she imagines cities in detail, but they are places she has never seen. Lee Schipper looks at an updated old idea for public transport. Having worked

with transportation systems worldwide he well understands that buses are large vehicles, not figments of the imagination. He has concluded that the success of an urban transport system is dependent on its willingness to build on ideas that work.

Patricia Tusa looks at an ancient building form, the arcade, a popular urban amenity around the world but not here. The arcade came into being to provide protection for people and their exchange of ideas, and she wonders why in a rainy place like Seattle we haven't incorporated the arcade in our neighborhoods. Ron Sher is the founder of Third Place Books, establishments where people feel free to interact and exchange ideas with friends and strangers. He examines the ingredients that support such an open environment. Most of all, he says, people need to feel safe. Anthropologist Setha Low has spent time in several of the gated (and 'faux gated') communities that are being built increasingly along the West Coast. She has found that safety also motivates people to move to these communities. But she reports that living there increases fear of others.

Benjamin Thelonious Fels brings us the work of Neapolitan photographer Mimmo Jodice, who for the past 50 years has cultivated a complex relationship with his native city. Naples' portraitist, his idea of his city has come to represent it. The city's forms have become his. As Italy's foremost photographer he has carried the idea of his city out into the world; there have been over 30



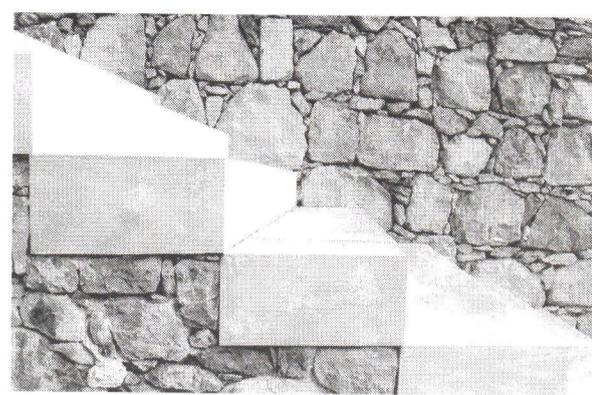
monographs devoted to his photographs. People see his work and think of Naples.

Barbara Goldstein and Lisa Richmond look at ARTS UP, an experimental program that treats Seattle as a laboratory. Participating artists are engaging communities through projects that may or may not involve the built environment. Remarkably free of physical and commercial constraints, and building on relationships, the art is able to function as a conduit of energy and fresh ideas.

As a city matures, it circles back on itself, adding layers and richness. Seattle began as a center of resource extraction. And we are still harvesting ideas, not nurturing them. The city's greatest resource now is undoubtedly its mix of people and their creative energies. For the city to truly benefit from the confluence of ideas that people bring to their city, there have to be places, spaces, and opportunities other than those offered by businesses, where ideas can be exchanged. Seattle needs to address, as a city, how it can foster the culture of ideas. The word *idea* comes from the same root as the word to see. In nineteenth century Seattle, looking had no more status or currency than thinking. Today views are valued, cherished, even occasionally protected. We need to get to a similar place with ideas.

Seattle may be ready for more active engagement with its intellectuals. With support from Seattle City Councilor Nick Licata, I am organizing a forum of thinkers as 'idea incubators' to address city issues. Participants will bring their facility in creative thinking to bear on specific urban problems. The forum will provide a venue for informed yet idiosyncratic knowledge and experience, in the hopes that new approaches, novel points of view and useful ideas will be let loose on the city.

Donald Fels is a visual artist. Current projects include working with billboard painters in India and cancer researchers in Los Angeles, with weather instruments at the new Ballard Library, semaphores signaling Richard Hugo's poetry for the Duwamish Waterway, and a hillclimb with an orchard and 'periscope tree' for South Seattle. He has just completed *Water's Edge*, a book about his experience at the decommissioned steel plant at Bagnoli, Italy, pictured above.



Imaginable Possibilities

J. I. Kleinberg
Photos: Don Fels

In a few hours one could cover that incalculable distance, from the winter country and homely neighbors, to the city where the air trembled like a tuning-fork with unimaginable possibilities.
– Willa Cather, *Lucy Gayheart* (1935)

I have all the genetic markers for adventure: my grandmother piloted a small plane, my mother climbed Kilimanjaro and Denali, and my brother has surfed most of the world's great breaks. But somehow the urge for goggles, crampons, and wetsuits has escaped me entirely: I love cities.

What could be better than stepping out at 5:00 AM for a fast walk along the roadways of Hong Kong? From the harbor a pair of disembodied voices calls back and forth, faint and unintelligible. A slosh of water hits the sidewalk, followed by the rhythmic sweep of a broom. In a dim alleyway, a hunched and ancient woman huddles over a brazier. High overhead, lights wink on in offices, their glow dull and diffused as you tilt your head back and back to gaze upward at the buildings reaching into the predawn sky.

You can keep your bungee jumping, mountain biking, and Class V rapids. Give me the shop-lined Ponte Vecchio, Auckland's rude Sky Tower, or the vast trove of Trinity College's Old Library in Dublin any time.

Wait. Stop the tape.

I don't have a brother. My grandmother was a country rabbi's wife and the tallest thing my mother ever climbed was the flight of steps between the house and the back patio. What's more, I've never set foot in Hong Kong,

Italy, New Zealand, or Ireland.

I lie for a living. The friendlier, more socially acceptable name for this kind of work is *fiction*. But I'm not a fiction writer; I'm a copy writer, a hack, a writer for hire. Your product, my imagination; your life, my words. This occupation is a license to learn, and more particularly, it has become a license to travel, unfettered by airport security, flight delays, or missed connections.

The world of tourism floats on a vast ocean of promotional seduction – glossy brochures, ad-heavy magazines, and alluring websites. One of my biggest clients is a travel marketing company that creates these enticing products.

They need articles on Spain, Ecuador, and South Africa? No problem. They want a first-person travelogue on a multi-generational trip to Paris? Why should my lack of spouse, in-laws, or children be an impediment?

Whether they're strictly descriptive or imagined recollections, these pieces start with research. I consult guidebooks (written by people who have really been there!) and wander the vast universe of the Web, looking for credible details, and, more importantly, photographs. It's through pictures that, for me, these places come alive. Show me a street scene from Bahia's Salvador and I can hear the Afro-Brazilian drums and the cathedral bells, and taste the spicy tang of *moqueca*.

If wise travelers cull their photos to capture the distilled essence of their journeys, many people who post their pictures on the Web do not. But in their 144 shots of historic Cobh or the 372 thumbnails of their gondola ride through Venice, I can discern a panorama of detail that can be translated into words. Like a character in a Woody Allen movie, I step out of my world into theirs.

On returning from their travels, my friends get quizzed, their descriptions of Namibian tents, Parisian

pieds-à-terre, and Afghan rug merchants filed away for future use. Dipping into the literary pantheon, I hunt for delicious, site-specific quotes. And of course I explore the scrapbook and slide show of my own imagination, the sense memory of places I've actually been, and the dense imagery of the collective unconscious.

Ultimately, all of these notions line themselves up in orderly sentences and paragraphs, find their way down my arms, through my tapping fingers, and onto the electronic page. The result is something of no benefit to humanity – a marketing brochure, article, or direct mail piece that might possibly tempt someone to leave the comfort of *their* armchair for the place I've imagined from mine.

Does it disrupt my moral balance to create these illusions, to profess the companionship of a husband and daughter who don't exist and familiarity with a locale I've never visited? Absolutely not. The words are crafted to evoke the place; they don't pretend to advise, nor could they be mistaken for guidebooks or travel reviews, which most certainly require firsthand experience.

But in imagining this destination, in spinning this little deception, I have, for some moments, removed myself from the familiar and the ordinary and succumbed to the magic of place as surely as if I had flown there on a 747. I have visited a fictitious geography that, for those moments, is every bit as substantial and alive as the place itself, though without the trash, the diesel fumes, the polluted water, the pickpockets, and the jet lag.

On those rare occasions when I have visited in body the places I have visited in mind, I experience a dizzying *déjà vu*. Standing in a froth of mist and rainbows on the pedestrian walkway below the head of the falls in Iguazú – the very camera angle that had been my window – I felt certain that if I looked over my shoulder I would see my bookshelf, file cabinets, and bulletin board. In these strangely familiar places, streetcars and taxicabs are slower and noisier than the effortless glide of my imagination. Birdsong surprises me. And the people are wondrous, a stunning palette of color, texture and sound.

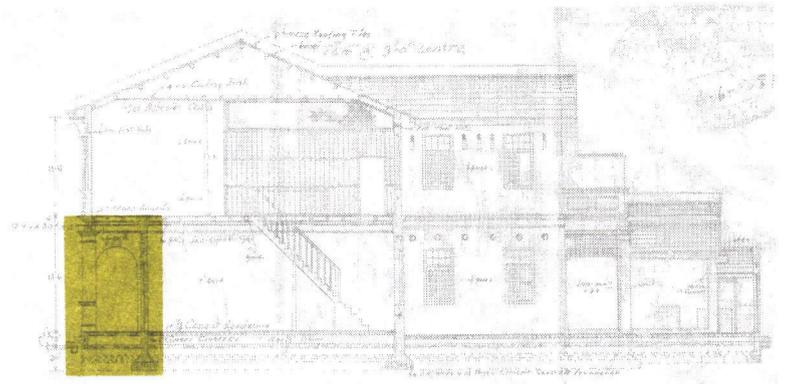
I want to stop them, one by one, and look deep into their eyes to discover the places that inhabit their imagination.

Traveling is so complicated. There are so many people everywhere. I make my best journeys on my couch.

– Coco Chanel, in Marcel Haedrich, *Coco Chanel: Her Life, Her Secrets* (1972)

J. I. Kleinberg is a California-based freelance writer. She has recently ghostwritten *Fat Stupid Ugly: One Woman's Courage to Survive*, due September 2004 from Health Communications, Inc.

Shophouse plan, 1931,
Penang Municipal Archives.



Walking the Arcade

Patricia Tusa

It seems to me that the pleasantest and most profitable side of city life is social and human intercourse, and that the city with arcades is truly a city where these are most found.

– Libanius, 360 AD

Perfect for quick chats, long slow-moving reflections, and endless viewing of fellow citizens, the arcade knits a city together. Arcades are covered walkways, abutting the street, and attached to a building with or without shops. Most have columns, many have domed, arched ceilings, but the essence of this horizontal architecture is open, directional and continuous space. An arcade is a connector, creating a sense of passage. The beauty of this linear form that modulates shade and sun, inside and out, cannot be matched by the modern shopping mall. The mall creates an interior illusory space whose only function is merchandising. The portico is a part of the public realm: publicly owned, maintained, and open to the street. Under the portico a walker meets, greets, and sees people who are not only shopping, but *journeying* to school, appointments, a meeting at a café, or just getting some fresh air.

Arcades have been built for over 2000 years. Offering protection from the rain and a respite from the sun, the arcade was bound to be attractive. The ancient portico nurtured a public dialogue that, it could be said, led to the beginning of democratic institutions and to advances in our civilization. The ongoing conversation led to new ideas, to an awareness of a civic life. There was the daily salute, exchanges with neighbors, comment on the weather and discussion on politics both local and national. Unselfconsciously, boundaries of education, wealth, race and religion are crossed, and a commonality of concerns and ideas understood. In Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, porticoes are an urban tradition.

Bologna, home to Europe's oldest university, has twenty miles of *portici* in its historic center. Professors and students, engaged in thought and discussion, stroll the arcades. Statutes on size and extent of porticos have been on the books since 1250. The result is a streetscape that is a work of art, and a city that continues to use and build *portici* in the 21st century. Thousands of miles away, Chinese immigrants in Malaysia followed a similar pattern. Wanting to provide shelter from sun and rain and encourage trade, they began building *verandahways*. Based on their hometown arcades and the local Malay porch, these covered walkways became an integral part of the 19th century Malaysian city. In a typical city block twenty to thirty shophouses are joined by an uninterrupted verandahway. In the 1970s, Portuguese architect Alvaro Siza designed the 66 acre Malagueira housing compound. Siza created a contemporary covered walkway along shopping streets by expanding the raised aqueducts carrying water and electricity.

Considering the big block/big building development of

downtown Seattle, the task of creating human-scaled colonnades seems daunting. But the canopies at the Bon Marché give a clue to the possibilities of uniting a block. The new Seattle City Hall tempts with its 5th Avenue façade. A well-proportioned porch stretches across the building, but at the South end, a wall appears. The walker loses connection to the next streets or the rest of the city. There are no extensions around the south and north sides of the building. Citizens could have approached their city hall without rain or wind whipping at their heads. The designers forgot that the portico was born to connect. On a porticoed street, the portico is the sidewalk. The full width of the sidewalk becomes a public gathering place.

The neighborhood centers of Seattle offer more fertile ground for the arcade. Here, housing and business mix, along with a scale conducive to daily walking. Through walking, we achieve a bodily experience of urban space. In America, walking has become an exercise activity, not a workout for the senses and the intellect, nor an indispensable urban activity. Thinking is making connections. Thinking out loud involves dialogue with your fellow city-

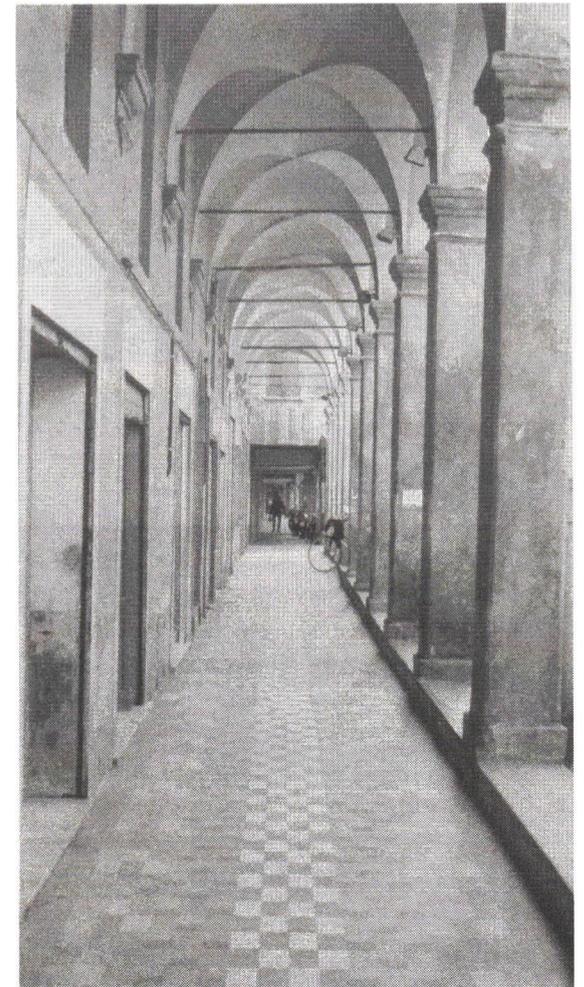
zens. The merchants of Broadway, Wallingford, University Avenue, Ballard and West Seattle could follow the centuries-old experience of merchants who have found that arcades are good for people and good for business. To assist them, City planners should revisit their arcane restrictions on overhead projections. Asian and European cities allow property owners to build over the city sidewalks, creating living quarters above the public arcades.

Walking around Seattle on a typical drizzly day the pedestrian finds few covered spaces. All, (like the new City Hall) are set back from the main sidewalk, and lack connections between buildings. The only examples of long, continuous colonnades are those under the free-ways and bridges. In our city we now build the grand spaces for the measure of the car, not the human body. Rediscovering and building arcades would give citizens a human-scaled place for walking and interacting, and maybe even for a public conversation.

Patricia Tusa is an architect who likes to walk in cities.



Verandahway, Penang, Malaysia.
Photo: Patricia Tusa



Portici, Bologna, Italy.
Photo: Patricia Tusa

Ideas That Go Around Come Around

Lee Schipper

Transportation brings people and goods to people, returning enormous benefits to economies. But transportation also brings significant undesirable side effects: pollution, congestion, and noise into urban areas and greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. Efforts to tackle the transport problem have been limited because of the inherent complexity and the costs, disruptions and long lead times involved – all of which have kept politicians from initiating substantive interventions.

Transport, which makes cities viable, also threatens their viability. Transport, which allows cities to grow outward spatially, threatens to break down in the spatial dimension. Changes to the patterns of transport require cities to impose profound changes in the rules for location (i.e., land-use planning), as well as the costs of moving around. These changes might be acceptable, but their results will not be seen for many years, which means that those implementing the policies could see their work reversed if the population becomes impatient. Thus little political action is undertaken, and cities' transportation systems get worse. The problem needs new thinking. Arriving at viable new transport solutions means reassessing 'old' ideas. Policy makers are often afraid that by implementing a 'no-brainer' system like *buses*, they will appear uncreative, even retrograde. As a result, cities often opt for new systems that cost much more, but do much less.

Nowhere are the problems of transport more strangling than in the large cities of the developing world. Growing incomes lead to more vehicles that add to these problems. Traditional non-motorized forms of transportation, such as walking and bicycling, give way to motorized transport: first buses, but as incomes grow, increasingly cars, and, especially in Asia, motorized two-wheelers. Today's pollution levels in Delhi, Manila, Bangkok, Mexico City, Cairo, and other third world cities are truly sickening. In large enough numbers, even newer cars make air pollution and congestion overwhelming. Getting people out of smaller vehicles and back into larger ones is the only solution.

In most developing cities, a large share of all urban passenger transportation activity already is borne by large vehicles: buses. Given the inherently economical (and space-efficient) nature of bus travel, strong efforts to keep it viable and increase its share of trips are warranted, and beginning to occur.

This works if bus systems are reformed and modernized. A growing number of cities have managed in recent years to significantly increase the share of travel carried by buses. In Curitiba, Brazil, perhaps the best-known example, a large scale bus-system that grew over three decades with the city continues to carry a large share of

all traffic; citizens of this relatively wealthy city simply use their cars less than other Brazilians of similar income and situation. Several other cities, particularly in South America (such as Bogota, Colombia and Quito, Ecuador), are following Curitiba's example and developing strong "bus rapid transit" systems. Whereas Curitiba built itself around a bus system, most places have the challenge of growing the bus system around the city.

Bus systems take road space and contribute to local air pollution. But they add flexibility at very low cost (in dollars per unit of capacity (people/hour), or passengers carried per year). They can be built and improved quickly. Further, while a well designed rail system can carry a larger number of passengers along a corridor quickly, removing travelers from the roadway network, this often takes many passengers off of existing bus systems, freeing road space for...more cars. Certainly there is room in most transport systems for contributions from more than one transit mode, but buses appear to be an appropriate "backbone" for the transit systems in most cities.

These systems have come to be called "Bus rapid transit," or BRT. BRT can mean anything from priority, bus-only lanes, to giving buses priority to control green lights and cross traffic, to reserved and protected lanes, such as those in Bogota Columbia, Ottawa Canada, Brisbane Australia, and many of the lanes in Curitiba Brasil.

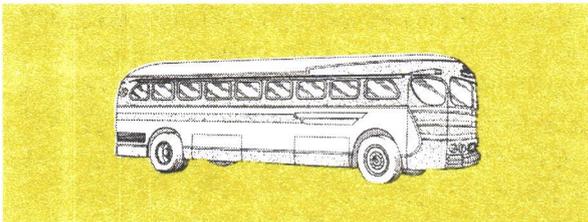
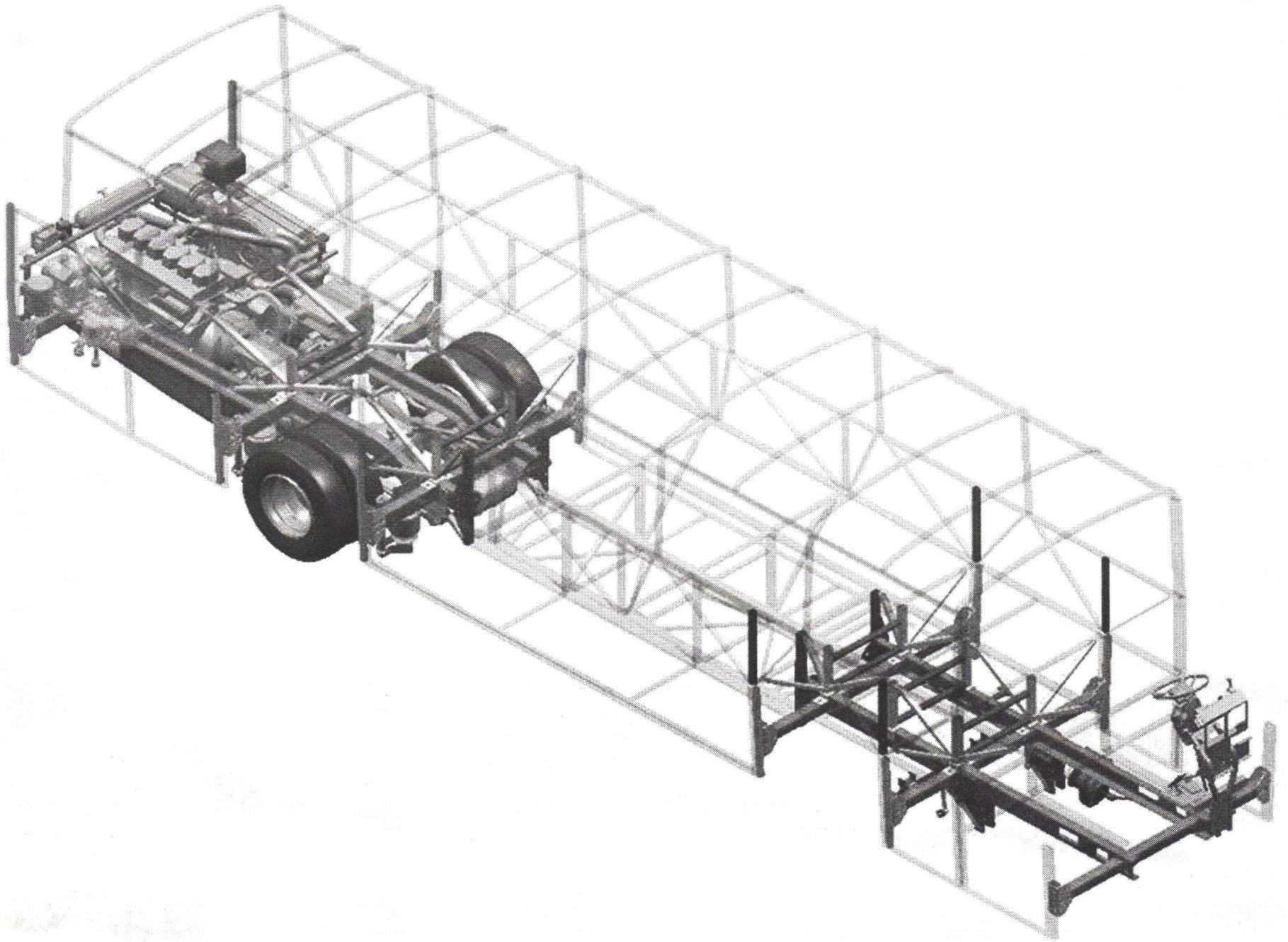
Mexico City is infamous for congestion and air pollution. Its Metro, serving more than 4 million riders per day, once the most exciting of such systems in the world, has lost riders in the last dozen years. The system of large city buses collapsed during the past three decades. Increased numbers of wide boulevards and freeways became filled with cars and minibuses almost as quickly as they were created. Around 30,000 private, scantily-regulated mini-buses called "colectivos," carry more than half of all daily trips and nearly four times the Metro and small public bus systems. Between these small vehicles and the more than two million cars in the region, traffic rarely moves well.

After years of decay, Mexico City's bus system is about to be revived and revitalized. A series of initiatives under-

taken by *EMBARQ*, the World Bank/Global Environmental Facility, Mexico City and State of Mexico authorities, aided by demonstration vehicles provided by bus manufacturers, will lead a demonstration of BRT corridors, procurement of clean, new buses, and development of a long-term BRT master plan. Authorities have studied the arguments and developments summarized above and concluded that the region cannot afford not to bring back buses in a healthy form.

The turnabout conceived for Mexico City is not without precedent. Bogota looked hopeless only 5 years ago, yet its Transmilenio system now moves nearly 800,000 people/day in modern buses, principally in a dedicated two to four lane busway in the middle of the city. Behind the success of Bogota lay important negotiations between the city, the drivers of the *colectivos*, and the existing city bus system. The secret to Bogota's success was institutional, political, and financial. Bus speed is the secret to both attracting riders in comfort and providing enough revenue to the operators.

The challenges to authorities in Mexico City are conceptual: neither technical nor even financial. Mexico, like many middle-income countries, has a well-trained workforce and many highly qualified engineers. Its vehicle industry, with names like GM, Ford, Volvo, Mercedes, and International, is one of the largest in the world. Its national oil company PEMEX is one of the leaders among state-run national oil companies. In short, what is required for Mexico City – and for many other Third World and First World Cities – is a new way of thinking about "public" transport. Embracing environmental sustainability means building on clean technology. Building on social sustainability provides safe, reliable, and clean transport for both rich and poor alike, a goal the Bogota system embraced and met early on. Most importantly, the new system has to build on new ideas: an economically sustainable arrangement between authorities, bus owners/operators, and passengers. The fares cannot continue to be so low that no one can make any money, yet cannot be so high that the poor and even the middle class moves to other modes.



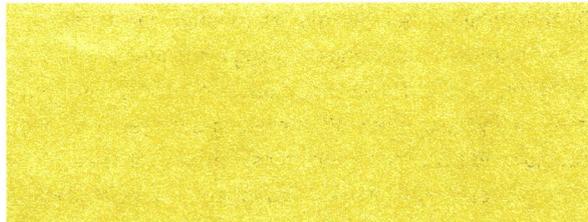
The experience so far in Mexico City, as well as my own work in a half dozen other cities that led to the foundation of *EMBARQ*, suggests several key lessons important for facing the challenges of sustainable transport, not only in the developing world but in developed cities as well.

Cities must take a long-range, systematic approach, including strengthening transport system governance.

Any urban transport initiative plan must be part of a comprehensive plan in order to succeed. The plan must include a long-range vision of where the region and its transportation system are headed, and how that direction might be changed, when it becomes necessary.

Focusing only on technology without paying attention to other aspects of transportation represents a narrow approach.

Technologies gain strength in the battle against pollution and congestion as other systems that reinforce them are also strengthened. People are adept at exploiting the weaknesses – and strengths – of technological systems. Policies must erase incentives for



people to drive, pollute, and congest more. Empty state-of-the-art buses, light rail, and metro systems do little to relieve a large city of its transport and air pollution problems. Political leaders must fight the seductive lure of expensive bus and metro systems and deal with the tougher institutional/political problems that have weakened public transport in the first place.

Focusing on behavior and management without careful attention to technology is an equally narrow approach.

Policies and management strategies must be in tune with technological innovation and technologies that support the policy goals, and recognize technologies as part of the landscape.

The private sector must be involved. Vehicles and fuels are made largely by the private sector. Bringing in the private sector to develop, produce, and sell the technologies needed for clean transport is a key step towards sustainable transport. Getting these actors to move ahead on their own with enthusiasm, however, is not so easy.

Political sustainability needs strengthening.

Regardless of the present attractiveness of policies or technologies, a path must be developed that is relatively robust to changes in the political winds for the party governing a city, or indeed acceptable to more than one party should there be divided political responsibilities. The private sector will not act with full strength if it believes that rules will be changed once the next politicians take over.

Willingness to appear more sensible and less sexy.

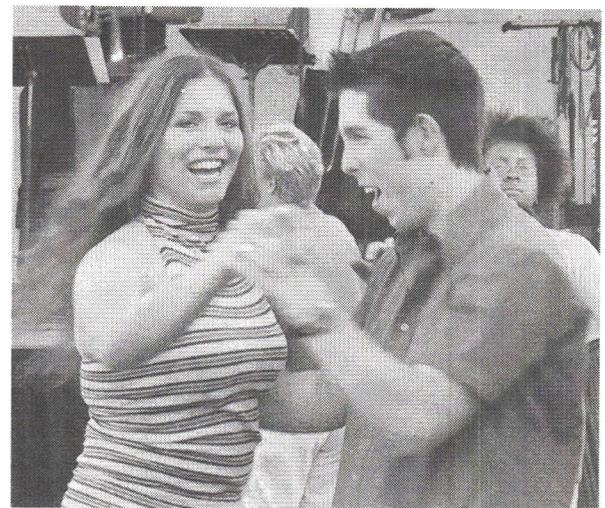
Buses make real sense because they are free from a physical grid, adding a level of flexibility and cost efficiency into the transport system unattainable with other solutions. Buses appear to be old technology. Everyone everywhere wants to appear hi-tech and cutting edge, but buses were and still are a fine idea. Giving new ideas a bus ride has created remarkably productive partnerships between manufacturers and municipalities. Demanding innovation from bus makers and fuel producers pushes the envelope and renews an old idea, creating real sustainability. What goes around, comes around.

Lee Schipper is Director of Research *EMBARQ*, World Resources Institute. *EMBARQ* acts as a catalyst for socially, financially, and environmentally sound solutions to the problems of urban transport in developing countries

" Being in public promotes significant conversation with other human beings. Conversation reinforces involvement with others and provides opportunities for the receipt and transmission of information."

Public Life in Urban Places, Lennard and Lennard.

Open



Ron Sher
Photos: Karen True

How can a city go beyond the development of housing and business and further stimulate the production of ideas? Ideas can develop any time and any place, but in a particularly conducive environment they are more likely to be generated; the environment may even influence what type of ideas generate. Although we may not all agree on what type of ideas should develop, most of us want the ability to have a free exchange. I feel that with the free exchange of ideas people will naturally come up with ideas that will improve the overall quality of life in the community.

In the community gathering places I've been developing at Third Place Books in Washington, we try to create an environment that will lead to the generation of positive ideas, relationships, and interactions. To achieve a civil mutually supportive, interested and involved community takes planning and work. You can of course be lucky and just get it right. It does happen, but studying people in action is very instructive. With some thoughtful orchestration, and some programming, you have a much better chance of making it happen. The interactions that

take place are neither totally random, nor can they be entirely controlled. But there is very much that can be put in place that will impact the interactions, community involvement, and mutual support. For positive community participation to take place in neighborhoods it's critical to have safety and civility.

The first thing I look for is the right place, and a place where the neighborhood wants us to be. This is very important. Does it have a view, great spots to sit, especially if it's such that you might be drawn into conversation with another? There are obvious considerations like if it is out of the wind and has shade and sunshine. Is it easily accessible? It should be intimate without being private or confined. I've learned that poetry readings don't work at our store at Crossroads because its not intimate enough, but they are great at Ravenna. The place should be open, but not stark. It should be configured so people can choose to be on the periphery as spectators, or more in the midst of things, for those who wish to be involved. There should be things to do. Watch a view, observe others, or participate in the activities. Design and location are only two of the factors.

No one can feel unsafe or be allowed to be uncivil. This is essential to create an environment where interactions will take place and people can lose their feeling of isolation. Sometimes the control involved raises the ire of civil libertarians. Lenny Bruce would not have been welcome, but hopefully there would be another place in town for his monologue. Personal freedoms should be respected, but uncivil behavior is not going to create a civil, interested, involved community. We are talking of a public space where everyone is welcome and all types of diversity are encouraged. How, without civility and safety, can we hope to generate the exchanges and discussions that contribute to the personality of a community? Isolation helps develop stereotypes, and safe civil third places help break them down.

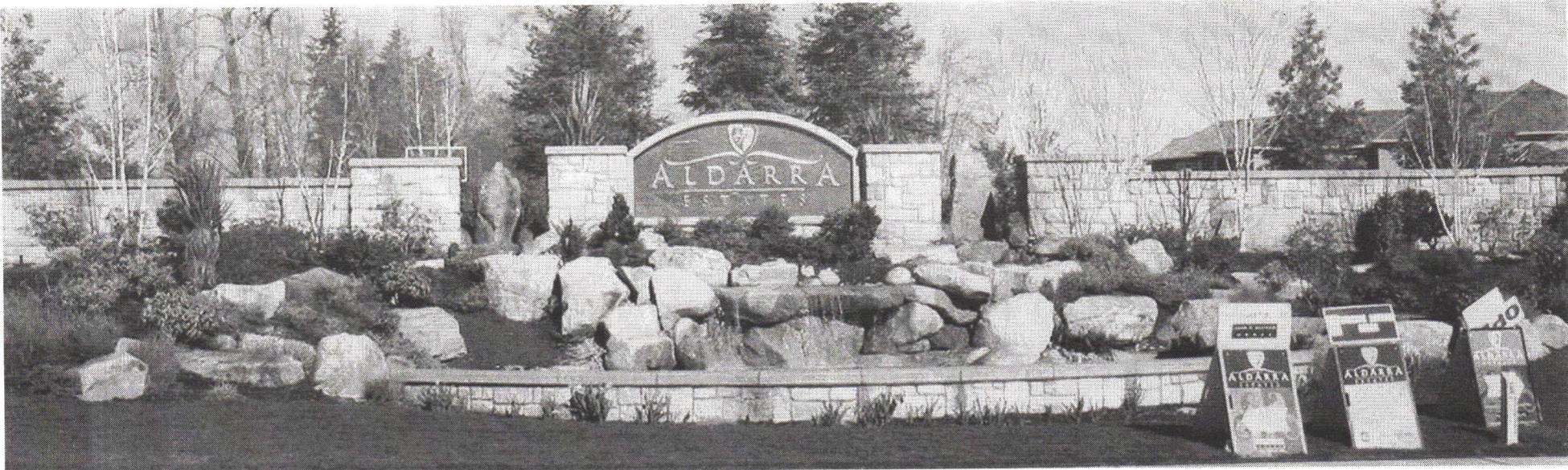
Being inclusive and respectful is only slightly less important than being safe and civil. Bikers, punks, conservatives, liberals, Muslims, Jesus freaks are all welcome. But we don't want domination by any groups.

The place needs to be managed so exclusive behavior doesn't happen. There has to be coordination of public events, forums, concerts, playing of music, and other types of activities that are attractive to the general public and yet not too particular to any one group. Activities that can stimulate interactions like the giant chess sets that we have in several of our projects are helpful. We have free Internet access because it encourages people to gather.

A retail/commercial component is very important because it attracts people, pays the bills and keeps the lights on. Most of my failures have been due to the costs of trying to make the right things happen at a place. You only have so much paid and volunteer time and yet you want as much going on at the place as possible. Conviviality happens around food and drink; the availability of sustenance always helps. The gathering of people at these establishments may itself turn a neighborhood, even a downtown, into a more encompassing place. Soon the surrounding area may have a library, a senior center, a city hall, retail springing up like coffee shops, bookstores, craft shops etc. People are gathering and lingering, ideas are being exchanged.

Create a place. Work it. Manage it. Don't let it get away from you.

Ron Sher is the founder of Third Place Books and the managing partner of Crossroads Shopping Center in Bellevue, Washington.



Closed

Setha Low

Gated communities are transforming the Western United States.

One third of all houses built in the greater Los Angeles area are now in secured-access developments. The metropolitan area alone has over one million walled residential units. Even as gated communities spread rapidly throughout the United States — over seven million households according to the American Housing Survey of 2001 — the largest number, 11%, are located in the West. Southern California gated communities have become American icons with their southwestern architecture and their locale names exported throughout the world. Their symbolism is so popular that there are now faux gated communities called “neighborhood entry identities” with all the visible signs of gating, but no locked gates or guards.

Gated residential communities in the United States first originated for year round living on family estates and in wealthy communities such as Llewellyn Park in Eagle Ridge, and New Jersey in the 1850s; and resorts exemplified by New York’s Tuxedo Park, developed in 1886, as hunting and fishing retreats with a barbed wire fence eight feet high and 24 miles long. Planned retirement communities such as Leisure World built in the 1960s and 1970s, however, were the first places where middle class Americans walled themselves off. Gates then spread to resort and country club developments, and finally, to suburban subdivisions. In the 1980s, real estate speculation accelerated the building of gated communities around golf courses designed for exclusivity and prestige. By 2000, of the 219 gated enclaves identified in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, only half were located in the wealthiest areas, a third were in middle income white suburbs, and another fifth were in

middle and low income Hispanic or Asian neighborhoods. Gated communities have become a version of the American dream of owning your own suburban home — with gates and guards added to the open green spaces.

During eight years of ethnographic research in these communities, I interviewed residents in restricted-access enclaves. I found that the nationwide drop in crime notwithstanding, people were moving because of a desire for safety and security as well as for community and a nice place to live. These desires are often expressed as a wish to live near people like themselves because of a fear of “others.” However, there is little evidence that gated communities are any safer than the surrounding suburban communities where they are built, nor that they encourage community. Residents often told me that they felt safer and more secure, but then they themselves added that it was a “false sense of security” and they worried about the construction workers, domestics, and private guards that enter every day.

Most people who move to gated communities are not aware of what they lose in this quest for safety and privacy. Growing up with an implicit fortress mentality, many children may experience more, not less, fear of people outside the gates. Gated communities have homeowners’ associations and strict covenants, contracts, and deed restrictions (CC&R’s) that regulate most aspects of their houses and environment. And while homeowners associations can assure residents that the physical environment will be well maintained, many people find the restrictions that entails difficult to live with.

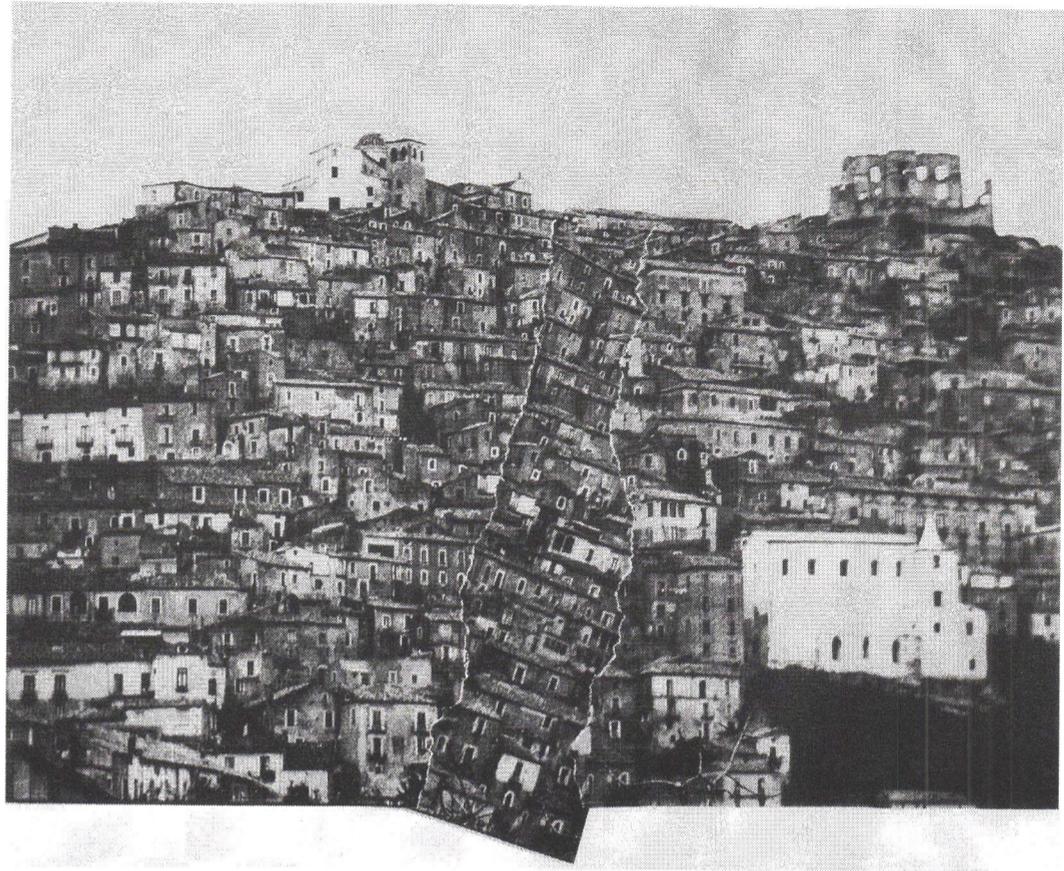
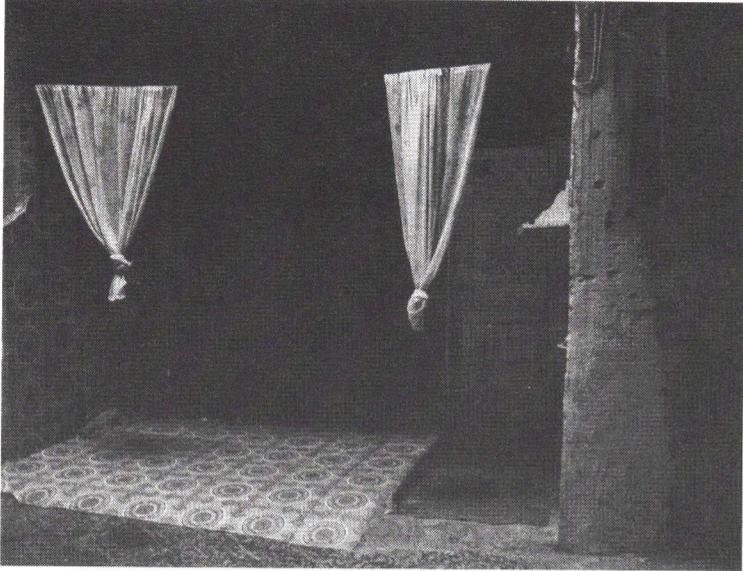
The unintended consequences of gating are even more serious for the wider community and region. Gated communities contribute to an overall shortage of public

space and generate a sense of exclusion and social segregation. They are frequently thought to reduce the fiscal responsibilities of municipalities in which they are located, but can actually increase municipal expenses, when failing gated communities cede their private streets and utilities, because they do not have funds to keep up with repairs. Gated communities lead to privatization of government responsibilities, removing all accountability from publicly elected officials. This dependence on the private sector for new residential development and governance further erodes locally elected government and the public sector.

One of the striking features of the world today is that large numbers of people feel increasingly insecure. Whether attributed to globalization and economic restructuring, or to the breakdown of traditional institutions of social control, it has become imperative that neighborhoods and governments respond with free exchange of ideas. Yet to date, the only solutions offered have been increased policing in the public sector, and gating, surveillance technology, and armed guards in the private sector, creating myriad landscapes of fear. Fear cuts us off from one another and from ideas that could ameliorate our problems. To change course, we must recognize that this fear is not simply about crime and “others,” but a reflection of the inherent insecurities of modern life. Gates close us off from a world of ideas that could actually make us feel more secure.

Setha Low is author of *Behind the Gates: Life, Security and the Pursuit of Happiness in Fortress America* (Routledge 2003), Professor of Environmental Psychology and Anthropology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.





The City as Self-Portrait: Naples and Mimmo Jodice

Benjamin Fels

Naples, Italy is a city in which the layers of time are remarkably visible and the modern rapidly disintegrates. An urban center for over two thousand years, traces of its many occupiers still remain. The cave of the pagan prophetess the Sibyl remains from pre-Greek colonization, ancient Rome villas are preserved on its outskirts in Pompeii; ostentatious Bourbon palaces dwarf Neapolitans in the heart of the city, and hideously huge apartment buildings built by the Mafia precariously occupy the periphery.

Naples radiates outwards from its historic center. The heart of the city is marked by its Medieval roots and a Byzantine series of narrow alleyways filled with the bustling theatricality of a population that publicly enacts the private. The most striking feature of this landscape are the *bassi* — roughly translated as the low spaces — the ground floor homes of the poor, nearly always adorned with a semicircular arch that casts dark shadows over the interior. Life in Naples is enacted on the street, but these dark ruptures in building façades rarely allow the passerby to look in.

In the Sanità district of the historic center, Naples' portraitist Mimmo Jodice was born and raised. In Jodice's work, Naples functions as a mirror onto which he reflects his beliefs about modernity and the past, fitting his ideas into urban space. The city that Jodice depicts is a space personal to the point of becoming an autobiographical skin.

Shadowy voids abound in Jodice's work, appearing in the open mouths of ecstatic worshipers and in the complexities of the built environment; he employs them as portals to the past. Jodice's darkened spaces depict temporal states that can't be captured by the camera.

The ravages of time cut away at the totality of objects, leaving statues without arms and buildings crumbled. By instilling the photograph (itself a trace of the light that has bathed the camera) with traces of the historical and the visible, Jodice urges us to imagine the intriguing fragment as a whole.

If Jodice's use of shadowy spaces can be traced to the architecture of his childhood, then his aversion to modernity is certainly rooted in the post-war Neapolitan landscape. The Neapolitan cityscape is littered with the remains of the postwar building boom, modernist skeletons that haunt the city.

In a 1980 untitled work by Jodice, a classical bust lies trapped behind a seemingly one-dimensional grill, violent in its minimalism. The metal grid fills in the rectangular space between two ionic columns. The grillwork imprisons the columns behind bars of metal that curve around the columns at their capitols. The grill is obviously a newer addition and shows up in shadowless blacks, while the stone and plaster of the building appear in the muted grays of the aged. The furthest external space has been bleached of detail by blinding sunlight, the harsh light of the present.

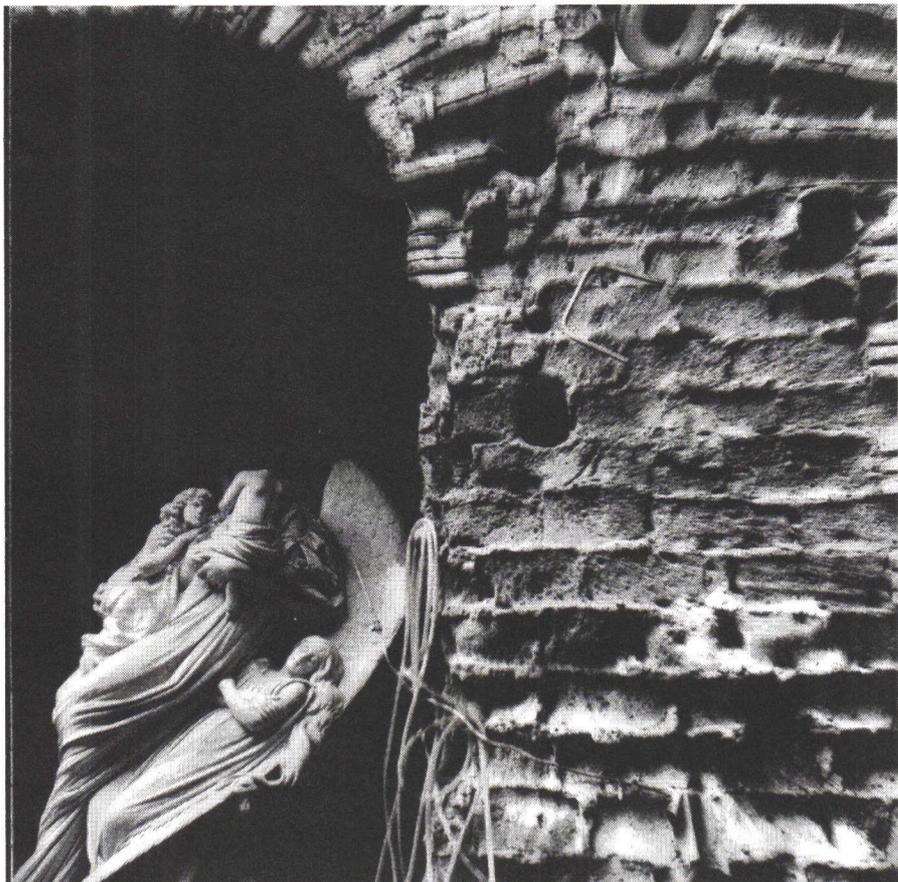
Jodice's images of layering upon the historical reflect the architectural landscape of the twentieth century Naples in which the faux-historical style was favored.

Despite the nostalgic nature of the majority of post-war Neapolitan architecture, the richly nuanced density of the real historical center was nearly all destroyed. The monumentally historical was copied over and over, while the living, breathing past was razed in order to relocate its inhabitants to the suburban wastelands.

The historical center of Naples is one of the densest parts of the densest city in Europe. The claustrophobic spaces close tightly around their inhabitants presenting a scene in which Neapolitans seem to meld with structure to create a dizzying fluidity of form. Movement transforms the seemingly disparate architectural and temporal layers of the city into a homogenous space.

In his 1970 *Paesaggio interrotto*, Jodice creates movement rather than to solely record it. The eye works to connect the corresponding images, discerning the differences and similarities as it rapidly oscillates between the fragment and the fragmented cityscape. Movement begets narrative, urging the viewer's imagination to follow the eyes in forging connections between these nearly identical horizontal slices of the built environment.

Paesaggio interrotto forces the viewer to work the fractured landscape into a coherent space. The photographed cityscape ceases to be a passive entity in the distance and becomes an immediate presence; *Paesaggio interrotto* moves as Naples moves. If movement renders Naples coherent, it can be difficult to understand why in the late 1970s, Jodice removed the human form from his explorations of the city.



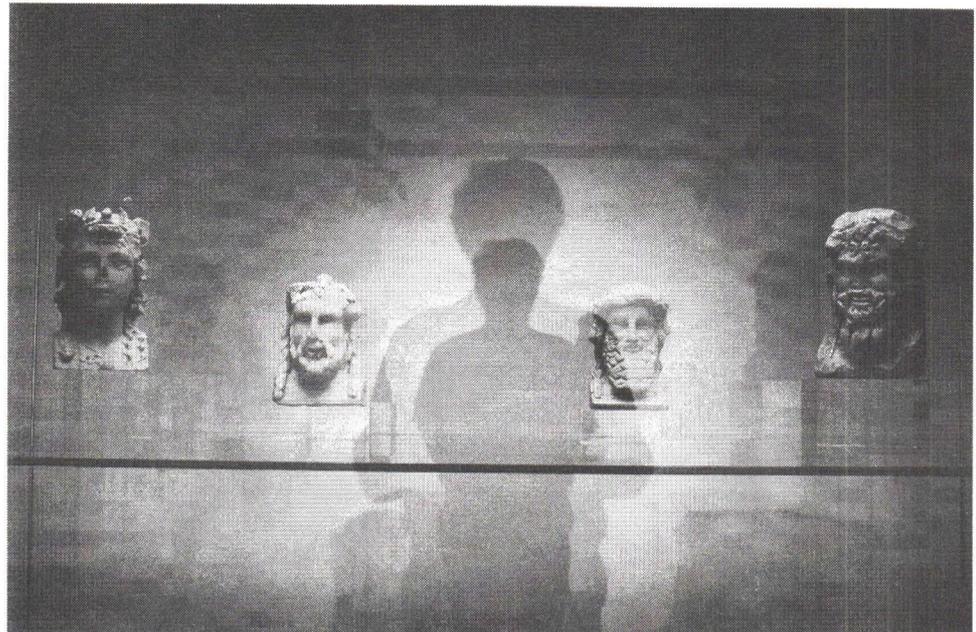
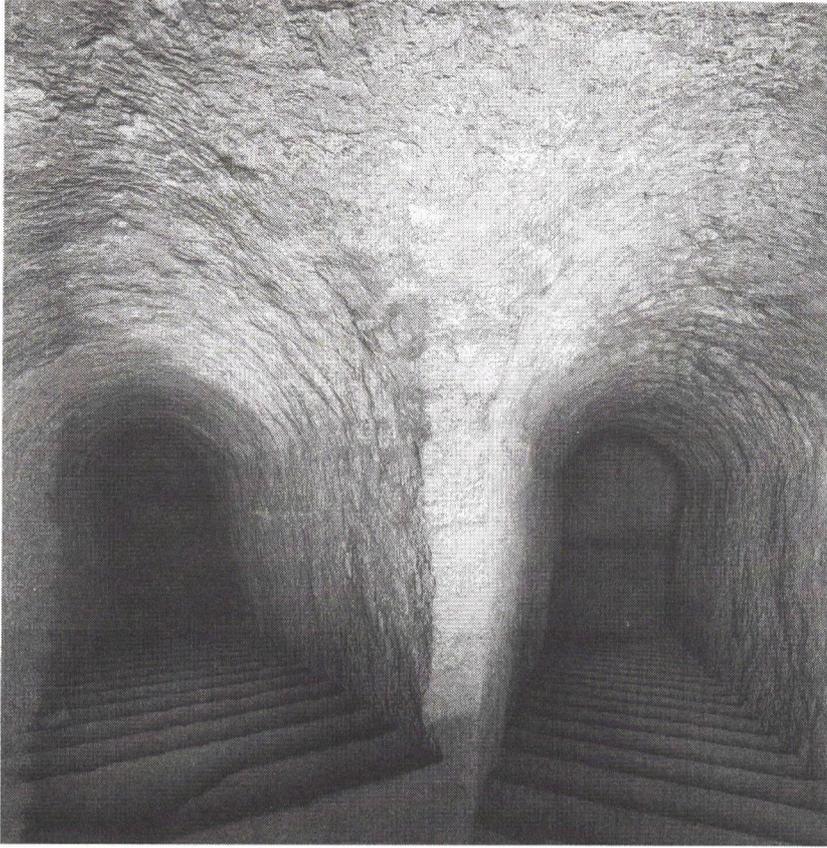
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Untitled.

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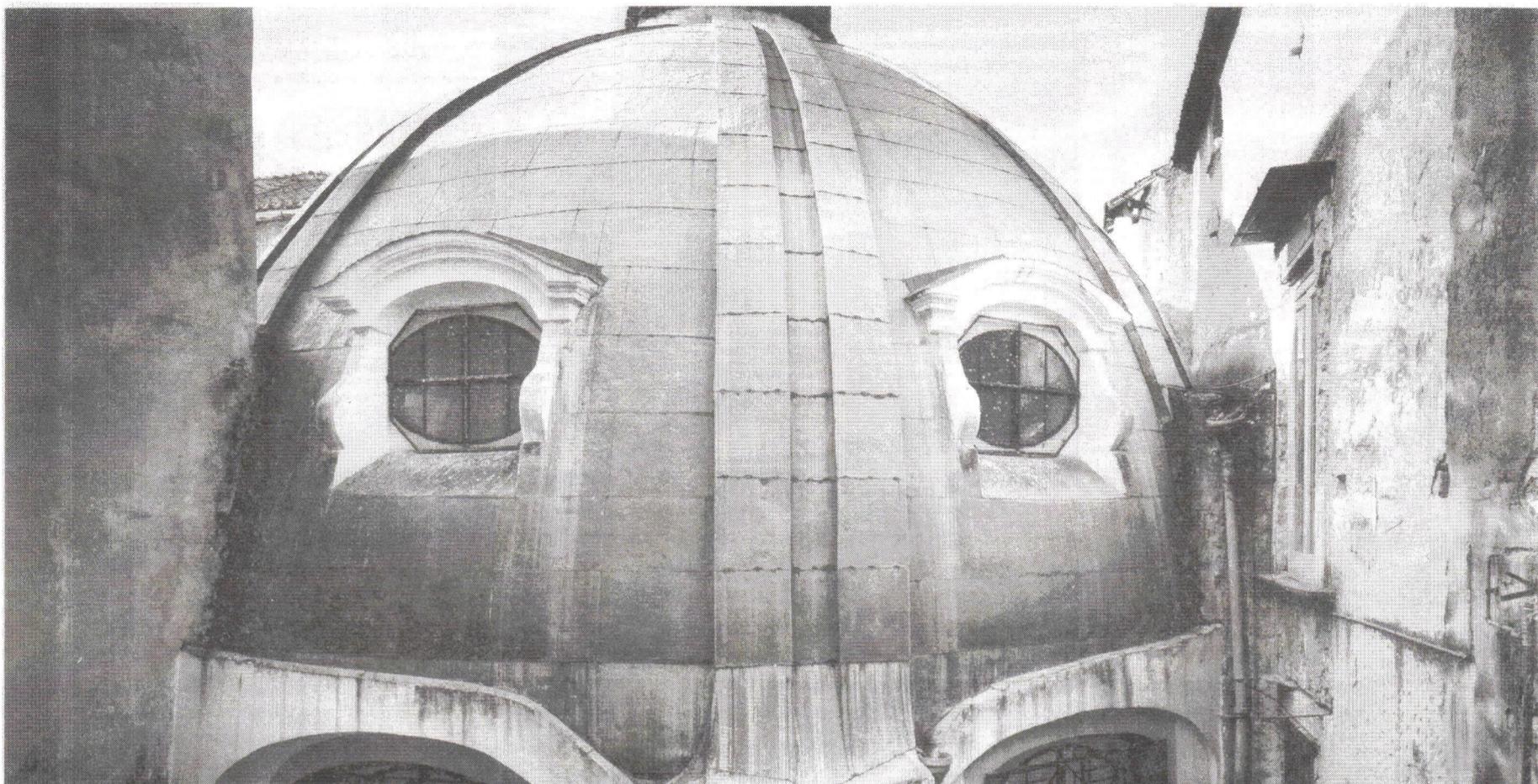
Napoli, Prigioni di Sant'Elmo.



Scala a Via Nilo.



By orienting his work in place, Jodice grants the viewer a space filled with evocative shadows that can be subsequently filled in, positioning the viewer inside the permeable boundaries of the image and the site.



In the 1970s, Jodice cleared his work of all but a few vestiges of contemporary life; his images began to be situated in an unidentifiable time. In the subsequent silence, the observer (whether that be Jodice himself behind the camera or the viewer of his work) is able to re-imagine the city into existence in a different age. In a 1999 interview, Jodice spoke about the process:

"Memory serves to isolate me from the present. If I had a time machine, I would use it for traveling into the past... With imagination, the temples, the streets and the statues themselves come to life again, time no longer exists, past and present become one thing." (Mauro, Alessandra, Ed. *Lo Sguardo da Sud* (Roma: l'ancora, 1999), p.26, author's translation).

Jodice prompts the viewer to grant life to his reconstruction of Naples through suggestive absences: the dark ruptures in facade and the disappearance of the city's inhabitants. Literary theorist Wolfgang Iser believes that gaps in prose prod the reader into using imagination to tell the missing part of the story, placing the reader in the text. Jodice uses absence to allow the viewer to tell part of the visual narrative; the viewer's imagination animates the depopulated city. Although Jodice removed the human figure from his work, he did not eliminate the human form; as he began to focus solely on the built-environment, it became increasingly anthropomorphized. In aged façades we find mouths and eyes gaping back at us, turning historical Naples into a living presence.

One of Jodice's rare exercises in explicit self-portraiture suggests that perhaps it is sometimes the artist himself who we find staring out from the cityscape. In his *Autoritratto*, Museo Archeologico di Barcellona, Musa Museu, La Virreina, Barcellona we see Jodice's mirrored reflection on a glass case containing a series of classical busts. Jodice makes very clear his affinities with the Greco-Roman past. Discussing his interactions with the classical sites he photographed for his monograph *Mediterranean*, Jodice said "I live in these places as though I were alive two thousand years ago." (Cited in Valtora, Roberta, "Mimmo Jodice: a story of Separation and Belonging," *Mimmo Jodice: Retrospettiva 1965-2000*

(Torino: Galleria civic d'arte moderna e contemporanea, 2001), p. 235.)

Appearing as a dark void in the self-portrait, Jodice situates his indistinct form amidst remnants of classical antiquity that gaze out on the viewer. By placing himself in the center of a spatial continuum, Jodice assumes a temporal affinity with his subjects. By entering their environment, he adopts their mode of seeing.

Having passed through the shadowy portal of his own reflected being, we see Jodice looking back from the other side. In Jodice's anthropomorphized Naples we can sense his empathetic looking as it takes the form of eyes staring out at us from the cityscape, moving Jodice from exterior to interior presence.

By orienting his work in place, Jodice grants the viewer a space filled with evocative shadows that can be subsequently filled in, positioning the viewer inside the permeable boundaries of the image and the site. If Jodice uses the viewer to grant ancient spaces a life in the present, he also uses spaces devoid of inhabitants to evoke the historical. As Jodice's vision expanded to include the Greco-Roman past of the Mediterranean bordering his city, his work began to operate on a time-scale that surpassed the human life-span. Jodice knows that bodies disintegrate and disappear, but photographs and buildings fade much slower.

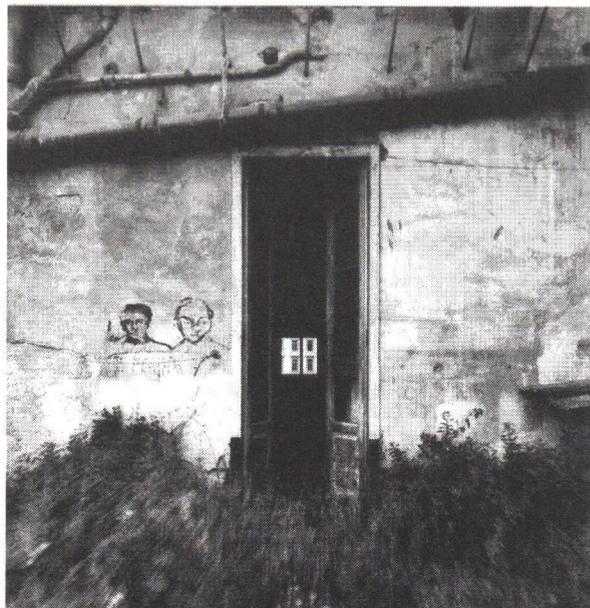
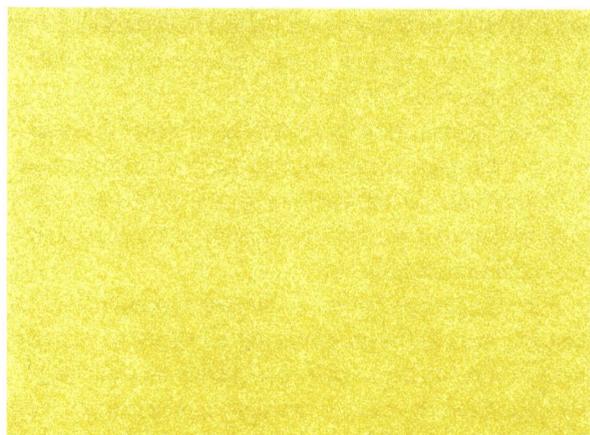
Cicero advised those desiring to train their memories to create mental images of things they wished to remember and attach those constructions to corresponding images of places. The ancient Greeks created mental maps to store information; based upon his life in Naples, Jodice has created an entire imaginary city onto which he attaches his ideas about modernity and the past.

By working urban space, Jodice joins with the users that have preceded him, becoming part of a narrative arc that extends far back in time. By granting the space to viewers to create their own representations of place, Jodice transforms the historical cityscape from passive to personal.

Jodice enlivens space by instilling movement again into the ancient; the movement of the trajectories of the

imagination and the vibrant shadows of those before him. Historian Pierre Nora writes that memory is housed in the movement of the body and ritual. Jodice's photographic mapping of the past constitutes a mnemonic ritual, conjuring up a time that lives again.

Benjamin Thelonious Fels is curating a traveling retrospective of the work of Mimmo Jodice that will open at the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago in the 2005/2006 season.



Untitled.

I learned that milk came to houses because Open Laboratory: the Artist as Civic Thinker Dan Fink told Thaddaeus and Thaddaeus told me.

Barbara Goldstein and Lisa Richmond

Exploring the role of artistic thinking in the urban context has always been at the core of the discipline called public art. Inserting the artist's creative thinking into a specific physical environment has led to design team projects and permanently sited work. But until recently the public art genre has limited itself largely to the physical, producing artworks that incorporate cultural icons and local history in their imagery without significantly engaging communities in their development.

In Seattle, the public art program has adopted as its mission "to actively engage artists in the civic dialogue". In Seattle, and in cities across the country, a recent move into the realm of the virtual – of ideas, of discourse, of community – has broadened public art's reach. The results are original and unexpected artistic encounters, and a new way to celebrate the power of art and ideas to transform communities.

The key has been to think of artists less as a generator of objects, and more as a source of new ideas within the urban context. This has led to public art programming that privileges process and engagement. Public artists are taking on new roles as cultural animator, as planner, or, as Rick Lowe of Houston's Project Row Houses calls it, the "passion ball" that can galvanize entire communities and inspire social change.

Often, the results of this type of art practice cross all sorts of discipline boundaries, so that their character as "art" may not even be readily apparent. Yet the artist's creative thinking, stamina, and aesthetic are absolutely essential to such projects.

Public support is critical to the development of this field of practice. The government framework must move beyond bureaucracy to be a champion of new thinking. Free from commercial constraints, the City can act as a bully pulpit to develop new models for thinking about public art and urban lived experience.

One such model is ARTS UP: Artist Residencies Transforming Seattle's Urban Places, a program of the City of Seattle's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs that pairs artists from around the country with Seattle communities to engage in arts-based civic dialogue. ARTS UP is founded on the idea that art plays a vital role in thinking about the city, that it can stimulate fresh ideas about old problems, give voice to citizens, and create a forum for group expression and action. Artists work together with communities to identify core issues and concerns, then develop an art project around them. ARTS UP is an act of faith in the creative process, and reinforces the notion that art can be at once community-based, challenging and articulate.

In its initial two years, the artworks and activities that have resulted from the program have been as mutable in

form as the participation it has attracted. Communities participating in ARTS UP have included such diverse groups as homeless youth, neighborhood groups, cancer patients, elderly Asians, and the parents of children with disabilities. The artworks that have emerged from the program have included media projects, publications, performative works, and permanently sited artwork, each bringing innovative ideas and insight into the issues and concerns of the community that helped create them.

The *Freemobile* developed out of a collaboration between Oakland artist Jon Rubin and residents of Hillman City, an extremely diverse neighborhood in Southeast Seattle that has struggled to find its own identity. In an atmosphere with little community cohesion, the critical task became simply getting folks outside and talking to each other. Rubin, and his community liaison Michelle Jones, enlisted a cadre of residents willing to share with their neighbors things they made or did. Then for eight weeks last summer, the *Freemobile*, an old ice cream truck with original painting and theme music, cruised the neighborhood, distributing free handmade items such as candles and services such as hair-braiding and bike repair. The project was so successful in creating community that Hillman City wants to repeat it in 2004; other city neighborhoods are looking to it as a model for inviting participation.

Endurance is a multi-media installation designed to give a strong local and national voice to homeless youth in Seattle. *Endurance*, created through a collaboration between artists Brad McCallum and Jacqueline Tarry and the kids of Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets, recorded the oral testimony of participants and their endurance performance on a Seattle sidewalk. The resulting work, which has been exhibited and published nationally, has created a powerful voice for the youth, as well as an encouragement to change. The *Endurance* exhibition was the site of a multi-disciplinary dialogue about homelessness, using the artwork as an entrée into the lives of street youth for civic leaders, legislators, service providers, funders, the police department and other issue stakeholders.

Becoming Citizens represents an interesting hybrid of art, medicine, social service, policy and visual anthropology. The work comprises a publication (University of Washington Press, 2005) and exhibition about the lives of families living with children with developmental disabilities. The artist, Susan Schwartzenberg, used interviews and visual materials developed through workshops with families of Seattle Family Network to place disabilities issues — such as institutionalization, the disability civil rights movement, and waning public support for families — into a broader social and political context. The work has found audiences in the scientific, art, and policy communities, and will be used as an advocacy tool.

Other ARTS UP projects point to a host of provocative ideas developed through the insertion of the artist into the civic environment. In his collaboration with the Courtland Place neighborhood, artist Don Fels generated an archaeological dig and research project for young people that looked at history as a way of defining community. In her work *Postcards in Time* with the elderly low-income Asian residents of Kawabe Memorial House, artist Rene Yung used a response system of postcards of residents' stories and images to invite dialogue with the world outside the walls of the institution.

The laboratory for ARTS UP is Seattle, a city that has long embraced the innovative thinking of artists in an urban context, and is characterized by a history of activism and process among its citizenry. During the 1990s, the City engaged in extensive neighborhood planning efforts intended to promote and manage growth in a rational way. The plans were published, neighborhoods were funded to create pilot projects, and City departments built some of their development priorities around neighborhood plans. However, participation in planning often favored communities who were already predisposed to participation — generally middle-class, middle-aged, middle-income white residents — while newer communities, and communities that are defined outside of geographic boundaries (such as ethnic communities, or communities of interest), were not well represented. As an art program, ARTS UP deliberately set out to address those missing elements.

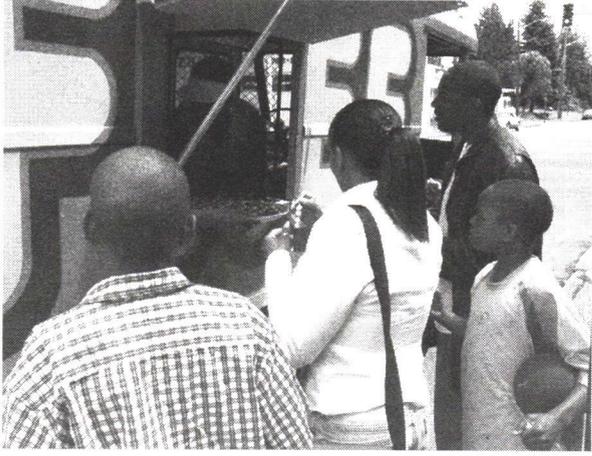
ARTS UP values risk-taking. The project has the faith and courage to inject new ways of thinking into a dynamic urban context and the patience to let ideas unfold as they will. Some of the projects will fail or flounder. But without giving artists the leeway to experiment, the program would lose its *raison d'être*, and its excitement.

Artists have always openly courted risks; some of the best and most enduring art has involved pushing comfort zones. But embracing risk is much more difficult territory for the City to underwrite. ARTS UP is working with a host of intangibles and unknowns. Communities come together and then people move on. Ideas change and so do the circumstances that surround them.

Despite the risks, ARTS UP has remained committed to open-ended process and has been willing to listen and learn. In today's social and economic climate this is a rare and brave stance. The possible pay off to the community is enormous. Artists and communities participating in the program are being trusted, their ideas valued. With that trust has come art that has managed to deliver even more than promised.

Barbara Goldstein and Lisa Richmond are public art managers for the City of Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs.

Freemobile.
John Rubin with residents of Hillman City.



Courtland Archeology Dig.
Carried out with students from John Muir Elementary, Burke Museum Archeologists, Rainier Valley Historical Society, and residents of Courtland Place.



Endurance: Billy, Bradley McCallum & Jacqueline Terry with Peace for the Streets by Kids for the Streets.

Match the following words:

peanut butter

wasabi

eggs

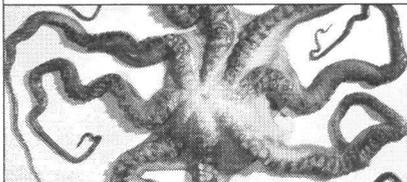
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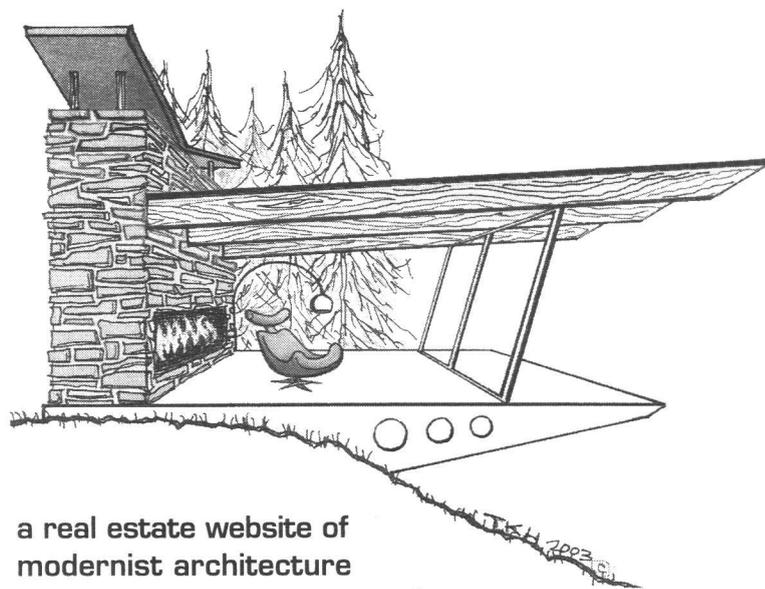


Some things are just meant to go together.



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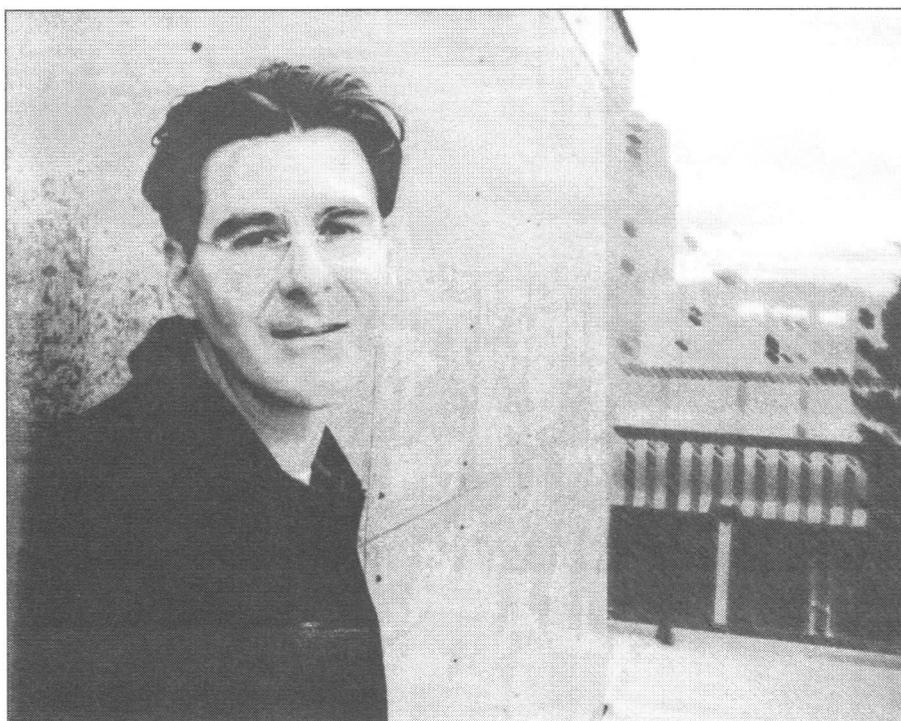
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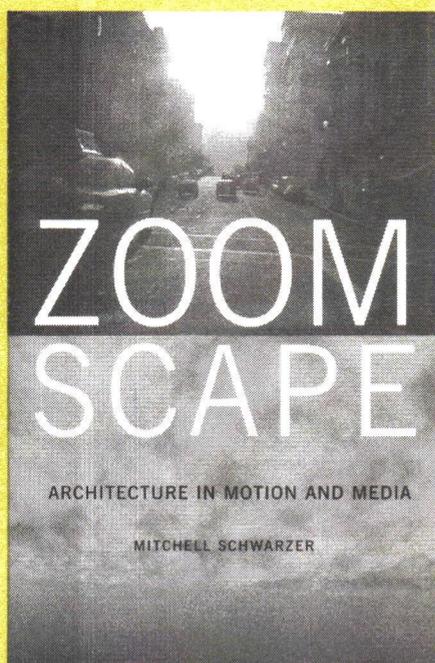
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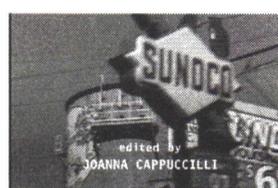


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Mitchell Schwarzer pursues this visual imaginary in reverse, tracing its emergence in contemporary media and literary imagery from HBO's *Sopranos* to Marcel Proust.

Captured images from the introductory sequence of HBO *Sopranos*.



Mitchell Schwarzer, *Zoomscape: Architecture in Motion and Media* (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).

Reviewed by Scott C. Wolf

Zoomscape challenges our visual reality and makes real a vision of speed that becomes a prelude to architecture. This book introduces a compelling new visual perception mediated by mechanical instruments such as trains, planes and automobiles or media technologies such as television. The perception of zoomscape is not simply here, it is everywhere we want to be, on the move, incessantly going somewhere, in search of freedom, pushing back that envelope.

Mitchell Schwarzer pursues this visual imaginary in reverse, tracing its emergence in contemporary media and literary imagery from HBO's *Sopranos* to Marcel Proust. He does not evoke a passive perception of a disinterested spectator but privileges the witnessing of extraordinary moments of life within everyday mediated reality, the same advertising space saturated with infomercials, weightloss programs and Viagra™ for women. This imaginary is familiar to us from dreams, fairytales and science fiction, or gleaned from our memory of novels and video games to challenge the traditional, rational means of seeing and experiencing the world. As a system, it overtly indulges in atmospheric effects, in the phantasmagoria of changing images, in transparent reflections and endless visual repetition to suggest a synchronous imagination. Schwarzer does not render a technical "machine vision," nor an optical imagery, but an imagination that completes itself

in the unexplored space between the viewer and architectural landscape. This constructed vision is consistent with our rapid-fire media world and its relentless global sprawl. It takes no prisoners and acknowledges no strict line "between the realms of reality and artifice." Here, architectural perception is less about the building as a whole, or its historical meaning and more about a disquieting event witnessed by a mobile observer in an expanded field of vision.

In the zoomscape, we thrive in an evanescent reality, a flash cognizance, where the machine in which we travel becomes a technological extension of vision. The result amalgamates rather than distinguishes while destroying traditional boundaries and definitions in search of the continuous spectacle of urban performance. It is a volatile perception in which successive scenes never coalesce but immerse the spectator while distancing the "real" material object and the city. The landscape becomes "bereft of the picturesque" and filled with the fanciful and the grotesque. Schwarzer does not suggest a psychological or phenomenal perception but delineates what is apparent yet unspoken, a surrealist strategy to make explicit what is concealed, a visual techné not of junk space but of the unnoticed moving spectacle.

Zoomscape accomplishes this by inverting our painterly definition of reality, by transforming the windshield of the car into the *mise en scène* (the theatrical scene, setting or fixed field of vision). In turn, the road and landscape become animate objects that move violently toward the inanimate frame of the windshield. In this new system of vision, we

invert the innocent anthropological gaze of the artist characterized by the desire to discover an object's shared cultural meaning. The self-conscious observer stands in the center of a universe where all things charge headlong towards him, revealing themselves only in his momentary fascination. "Speed was of essence, the joy of sitting in the car and hurtling himself through space. That became a good beyond all others, a hunger to be fed at any price. Nothing around him lasted for more than a moment, and as one moment followed another, it was as though he alone continued to exist. He was a fixed point in a whirl of changes, a body poised in utter stillness as the world rushed through him and disappeared."

There remains an unexplored postscript to *Zoomscape* in which the author acknowledges his lost faith in the capacity of architectural criticism and its existing systems of knowledge to reveal the character of perception. What proceeds from the demise of criticism is not its absence but a far more protean field of criticism's aesthetic production, a nascent criticism in the manner of poetry or literature. Here, visual criticism becomes the starting point of a "therapeutic journey," a romantic search whose outcome is judged only on its ability to expose unforeseen realities. This search will overcome the distance between the viewer and the instrument of vision to fashion a synthetic machine viewer, half man and half machine, whose combined intellect unleashes a new capacity for knowing architectural things and ourselves. This viewer brandishes a paradoxical logic (neither human nor machine) that frantically interprets the kinetic image.

In this disaffected visual landscape, we might question how the machine viewer enters perception without purpose or program and what it conceals in the process. *Zoomscape* would then force us to confront the fog of vision and the apotrophic order of things. What we see is not always true, and we are often deceived by perceptions since they reflect only what we choose to see. In the same manner, we do not discuss what is truly significant but use everyday objects as surrogates to describe what is not there or what we can not say. We must ask whether there is a hidden desire that precedes or anticipates the instrumental vision of the zoomscape, one fulfilled by the seduction of motion, by stunning visual performance and special effects. As a dominant system of our visual reality, zoomscape is never answerable to material conditions nor rational criteria of ethical judgement. It fulfills some hidden unspoken desire. And if there is a cause of this visual intellect, then zoomscape is not the beginning of a new field of aesthetic thought but the governing means of visual illusion that haunts the present. The author leaves the reader to discover this self-critical moment and thereby intellectually zoomscapes the zoomscape. He unleashes the illusion of the illusion so we might wander this dream-like image without recourse to the *mise en scène* of desire.

Scott C. Wolf is an instructor for modern history, contemporary criticism and suburban thought at Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-arc) in Los Angeles.

Kahn's office functioned (or malfunctioned, depending upon one's point of view) in a way that was much more like a school than a business; an architectural commission was a search for meaning, not a source of income.

Louis Kahn and Henry Wilcots.
Photo: Gary Moye



Our Architect: working with Louis Kahn
John Cava

Although Madonna-esque celebrity architects like Rem Koolhaas and Frank Gehry feed our insatiable celebrity appetites, architecture generally remains submerged in the great stream of American culture, surfacing only now and then in unpredictable and mysterious ways. The recent unexpected popularity of Nathaniel Kahn's film "My Architect" has momentarily brought Louis Kahn – both the man and his work – out of the shadows cast by big-screen buildings and architects. As everyone knows by now, Nathaniel Kahn's station point is that of a son trying to comprehend an elusive, charming, workaholic father who maintained three separate families as if it were nothing out

of the ordinary. Though rarely present for these children, Kahn did in fact care about them. A used book dealer in Philadelphia once told me that "Lou" (everyone called him that, whether they'd known him 15 minutes or 15 years) was a regular customer of his. Eager for the inside scoop on what the Great Man was reading, I asked what architecture tomes he'd purchased. "He doesn't buy architecture books" he said, "he buys illustrated children's books for his kids."

Most of Kahn's time was spent in two other roles: as a teacher (where I knew him) and as an architect, though he often said that he considered himself a teacher first. Certainly this was the only secure income he possessed, for Kahn's office functioned (or malfunctioned, depending upon one's point of view) in a way that

was much more like a school than a business; an architectural commission was a search for meaning, not a source of income. A partner of a large Pacific NW firm once told me, when I mentioned Kahn, that if they didn't get a building designed, documented and in the ground during the time that Kahn's office spent on preliminary design, they would soon be out of business.

From the late 1960s through the 1970s (Kahn died in 1974), several former members of Kahn's staff began practicing and teaching in the Pacific Northwest. I tracked down a few of them to find out what it was like working in Kahn's office, for the projects they brought to life, like Exeter Library and the Kimbell Museum, would alter the course of modern architecture like no other American had done

since Frank Lloyd Wright. These were buildings that did not focus on a personal style, but achieved, as Kenneth Frampton has observed, "a return to the tactility of the tectonic in all its aspects; to a meeting between the essence of things and the existence of beings..." buildings that, "...lying outside time, were at once both modern and antique." Just as Nathaniel Kahn has shown that his father was not your average father, it's also clear that his unpretentious space on Walnut Street in Philadelphia did not contain your average office.

Thomas Hacker (Portland, Oregon)

Worked with Kahn from 1965 – 1969
 Projects: Phillips Exeter Academy, Library and Dining Hall (Exeter, NH), Kimbell Art Museum (Fort Worth, TX), Memorial to the Six Million Jewish Martyrs (Battery Park, NY) and the National Assembly at Dhaka (Bangladesh).

How was Kahn's office structured?

There were always two distinctly separate groups in the office. There were these young people from Lou's Master Class at Penn — very talented students from all over the world. They were in the office during weekends and at all hours of the day and night — in part because it was easier to access Kahn during those times. They rarely stayed for more than a year or two; they returned home or simply had to make more money because we often didn't get paid for four or five weeks at a time.

Did other people do design work in the office?

Kahn did all the initial design, but I think the personalities of these young designers had a real impact on the projects. And then there was this smaller core group of older architects who ran the jobs — the dynamic between these groups really fueled the exploration of the work...without it I don't think the work would have gone where it did; I really doubt that Lou could have pulled it off all by himself.

So a lot of time was spent on the projects...

There was no real comprehension of what hours meant in terms of fees. It was about the search for meaning in the work much more than getting the right number of hours for the fee. The beauty of that is that the work would never have gotten to the level it did, had that not happened. But it's also something that you can't really emulate. I tried that in the early days of my own office, but it really didn't work. You have to pay the bills. So, the world is certainly blessed with Kahn's work, but it's a very rare thing.

Were people in the office aware that this was unusual and important work?

The office had this inevitable sense of destiny about it; we were all on a kind of mission with Lou. There was this sense of constant energy like being in a current of water — you could get out of it for a moment, but it was always there, wonderful and thrilling — the intensity of it was so great it was almost physical. And at the same time, it was intensely intellectual; we were trying to discover the meaning of things.

How were you ever able to complete a project?

Kahn's strength and his weakness was that he was always trying to push everything further and further and further; he was never really satisfied. I never once saw him act like the goal had been achieved. The final schemes were only somewhat better incomplete solutions than the previous ones. Of course this was a problem with money in the office, because he just kept pushing and pushing for better solutions, without regard for hours and fees; he even tried to change the work after it was built.

But of course the work is very powerful and timeless.

Yes. In the end, you have to realize that Lou had immense visual talent. The ability that he had to come over to your desk, look at something and then tweak it just a little bit...it was like tuning an instrument — all of a sudden the proportions would just click; he had an amazingly good eye. I don't know that people see that about his work today, because the buildings are so blunt upon first seeing them, but their proportions are very refined.

Pat Piccioni (Eugene, OR)

Worked with Kahn from 1956 to 1968
 Projects: Phillips Exeter Academy, Library and Dining Hall (Exeter, NH), National Assembly at Dhaka (Bangladesh), Alfred Newton Richards Medical Research Building and Biology Building (Philadelphia, PA), Washington University Library (St. Louis, MO), and First Unitarian Church (Rochester, NY).

You worked on Kahn's entry to the St. Louis Gateway Competition that Saarinen won?

Yes, actually Saarinen and Kahn became friends when they were on housing committees during the war. Lou was talking to Eero one day about arches having a sense of entry and welcoming about them — this was when Kahn was re-discovering Roman architecture. Our entry had to be postmarked by midnight, so we got it over to the main post office, just before midnight, went across the street to 30th Street Station to get something to eat, and then got back to the office a little after 1:00 am, which was just after midnight for Saarinen in Detroit. Just after we got in, the phone rang and Lou picked it up, listened for a moment and hung up. It was Saarinen, and all he'd said was, "Hello Lou...how big is your arch?"

You left and returned to the office several times, didn't you?

Yes, I started in 1956. I'd work for Kahn for a while and then decide to try something else, but then I'd get disgusted by what else was out there so I'd go back.

Did you just ask Kahn for a job when you graduated?

Oh no! A group of us from school decided to go downtown one Saturday and see a movie so we got off the streetcar at 20th & Walnut, near the movie house, and as it happened, right in front of Kahn's office. So we looked up to the second floor and there was Lou. He spotted us right away and started waving his hands, telling us to come on up. He told us he needed some help that day so we all started drawing. It turned into a week, and then a month and, for me, eight years!

What project did he need help with?

The competition for the Washington University Library. That first day, I was assigned the layout of this very complex perspective; it was really tough to do. He wanted the drawing to show all the detail of these circular coffers in the structural ceilings, that had light reflectors and ductwork and all kinds of things inside them. So I spent weeks and weeks and weeks on it. One Saturday morning after I'd just finished, I went in and Lou was sitting there with these crow quill pens and ink and a big roll of tracing paper.

The drawing was big — about 3 feet by 4 feet — and he was just slapping sheets of paper over my drawing one by one, just knocking out perspectives — one every ten minutes — these abstract sketchy things. As I watched him do this, I just got angrier and angrier, because when he was done with those sketches, that was the end of it as far as that perspective was concerned. I was pretty upset and talked about it to David Wisdom who just told me, "Get used to it."

Gary Moyer (Eugene, OR)

Worked with Kahn from 1968 – 1974
 Projects: Hill Middle School (New Haven, CT), Kansas City Office Tower (Kansas City, MO), Kimbell Art Museum (Fort Worth, TX), Mellon, National Assembly at Dhaka (Bangladesh), Palazzo dei Congressi (Venice, IT), Phillips Exeter Academy, Library and Dining Hall (Exeter, NH), Pocono Arts Center (Luzerne County, PA), Stern Residence (Washington D.C.), Yale Center for British Art (New Haven, CT).

You often speak of being in Kahn's office as a learning experience...

Yes, there was a core of extremely good people who were a big part of my architectural education. When I showed up, there were two ways you could participate in the office. One was to come in and sit around and wave your hands and speak poetically but not really get very far with the building's evolution. The other was to work with the group of people who really produced the work. I wanted to know how great designs were built, so I attached myself to THIS group which included Dave Wisdom, Henry Wilcots, Winton Scott, Marshall Meyers, and Gus Langford. They were very hard working; very thorough and as theoretical as anyone else, but interested in making sure what was being talked about could really be built. They were there for the long haul, balancing out the mass of people who came in, worked for the great man for a year, and then left. I still have real admiration for these people; it was pretty punishing to work there — you had to have a high degree of commitment, and often you didn't get paid for a long while.

One of the things that happened over and over in Lou's office was that the design often became ready to be built only after it went full circle. After a great many schemes, we'd wind up going back to something we started with – of course it was different and much more developed, but still... It was a unique way of working, what I like to call "process design"

What's your first memory of working with Kahn in the office?

When I first got there, I worked on the schematic design for the Fort Wayne Arts School. It was a kind of "T" shaped plan and in the joint of the "T" as it were, was a stair that was not really working so I was assigned to take a look at it. I was given a desk on the 5th floor, which was the same floor as Lou's office, but I had my back to his door. As I worked on the stair, one thing led to another, and in order to make the stair work, I adjusted the scheme a little this way and that...you know how it goes. And I was working along like this one day – using a stick of charcoal as we were all wont to do – and suddenly I felt this presence at my right shoulder. I looked up and there was Lou, looking down on me (which he could only do if I was sitting), and he said, "What are you doing?" I started to explain, and rose up out of my chair to the left, while at the same time Lou eased down into it from the right, kind of pushing me out of the way, and as he did so he looked up at me and said, "I just want you to know...I make the shapes here."

Did he say that with a kind of wink and a nod, or...

Oh no, in this particular case he was entirely serious. He wanted me to know I wasn't going to be doing my own work on his projects. It was a very clear message. Of course I wasn't there to do that, and he realized later that I was only trying to solve a problem. But he watched me for a while after that!

Anthony Pellecchia (Seattle, WA)

Worked with Kahn from 1968 – 1974
Projects: Baltimore Inner Harbor / Charles Center Inner Harbor (Baltimore, MD), Phillips Exeter Academy, Library and Dining Hall (Exeter, NH), Mikveh Israel Synagogue (Philadelphia, PA), Olivetti-Underwood Factory (Harrisburg, PA), and the Yale Center for British Art

(New Haven, CT — completed this project with Marshal Meyers after Kahn's death).

You mentioned that the design process in Kahn's office was unique – how so?

One of the things that happened over and over in Lou's office was that the design often became ready to be built only after it went full circle. After a great many schemes, we'd wind up going back to something we started with – of course it was different and much more developed, but still... It was a unique way of working, what I like to call "process design"; Lou didn't like the word "process" – he considered it something you used to make beer. Several of us were greatly influenced by this method, but later on found it difficult to function like that in today's world. In fact, looking back on it after all these years, I wonder how Kahn could have survived today.

I suppose part of the ability to do that was the long hours?

We all worked very hard in that office, but one of the things about it is that Lou worked with us. He wasn't one of these people who told us we needed to do certain things and then left and didn't work on the weekends or late at night. That was really very inspirational. He could get you to work even beyond where you thought your limit was, and when you weren't there even for a good reason, you still felt guilty for not being there! There was this very unusual and inspiring kind of leadership.

How was the office set up – what were the kinds of contributions you could make?

The project coordinators had a lot of independence and responsibility, but always with the "how," not "what." Sometimes we would even make presentations to clients when Lou wasn't there. I recall one time I had to make some drawings for a presentation that Lou couldn't

attend. So I did them, presented them to the client, and they went over fine. When Lou later saw the drawings, he was complimentary, but I remember him saying, "But it doesn't look like me."

It sounds like Kahn was fully engaged in all aspects of the design.

Yes, there was a night when we were working on Olivetti and Lou was trying to communicate a design for these struts that go around the building like a ribbon, supporting the walls from the foundations to the edge of the umbrella structures. And he made this gesture with his feet and his body like Charlie Chaplin – he kind of pointed his feet out to show how the struts would work. He could be very mannered and almost comical about how to arrive at solutions, but it was also very effective.

Richard Garfield (Portland, OR)

Worked with Kahn from 1967 – 1972
Projects: Olivetti-Underwood Factory (Harrisburg, PA), Kimbell Art Museum (Fort Worth, TX), Memorial to the Six Million Jewish Martyrs (Battery Park, NY), National Assembly at Dhaka (Bangladesh) — where he was Supervising Architect — Palazzo dei Congressi (Venice, Italy), and Yale Center for British Art (New Haven, CT).

I recall in Kahn's studio a man who would come in all dressed up in what looked like a tuxedo and he would launch into long diatribes about light and the nature of things and Lou just let him go on. Someone later told me he was from the office; who was he?

Oh, that was Gabor! No one really knew why he was in the office. He came over from Hungary and met Lou and somehow they got along, even though Gabor appeared at the time to have no marketable skills. Lou just liked talking with him about architecture so he put him on

the payroll and gave him a desk. Of course there were frequent complaints about this from the more pragmatic-minded members of the staff and one day, when pressed for the umpteenth time about why the office was spending money on him, Lou stood up and said, "Look – I pay the lights, I pay the heat, I pay the rent, I pay Gabor!" and the matter was never brought up again.

Kahn's office was kind of like a studio, wasn't it? I mean, the environment wasn't exactly pristine...

There is the famous story of Lou being interviewed by Jackie Onassis for the Kennedy library (I.M. Pei talks about this a little in the movie). Of course it was a big deal to have someone so well known come in, so on the day of the interview, Lou came into the office, looked around and said he had to do something about cleaning up the place. He went out for a half hour and returned with exactly three ashtrays.

The mythology has it that people worked all hours at the office, and that Lou had no sense of holidays...

That's true. One time we were all working on New Year's Eve and Lou appeared to have no idea of the holiday. Someone finally spoke up and said, Lou it's New Year's Eve, don't you think we should go celebrate? "Sure," he said, "let's all go out and have a drink – but then we have to come back to the office." **A**

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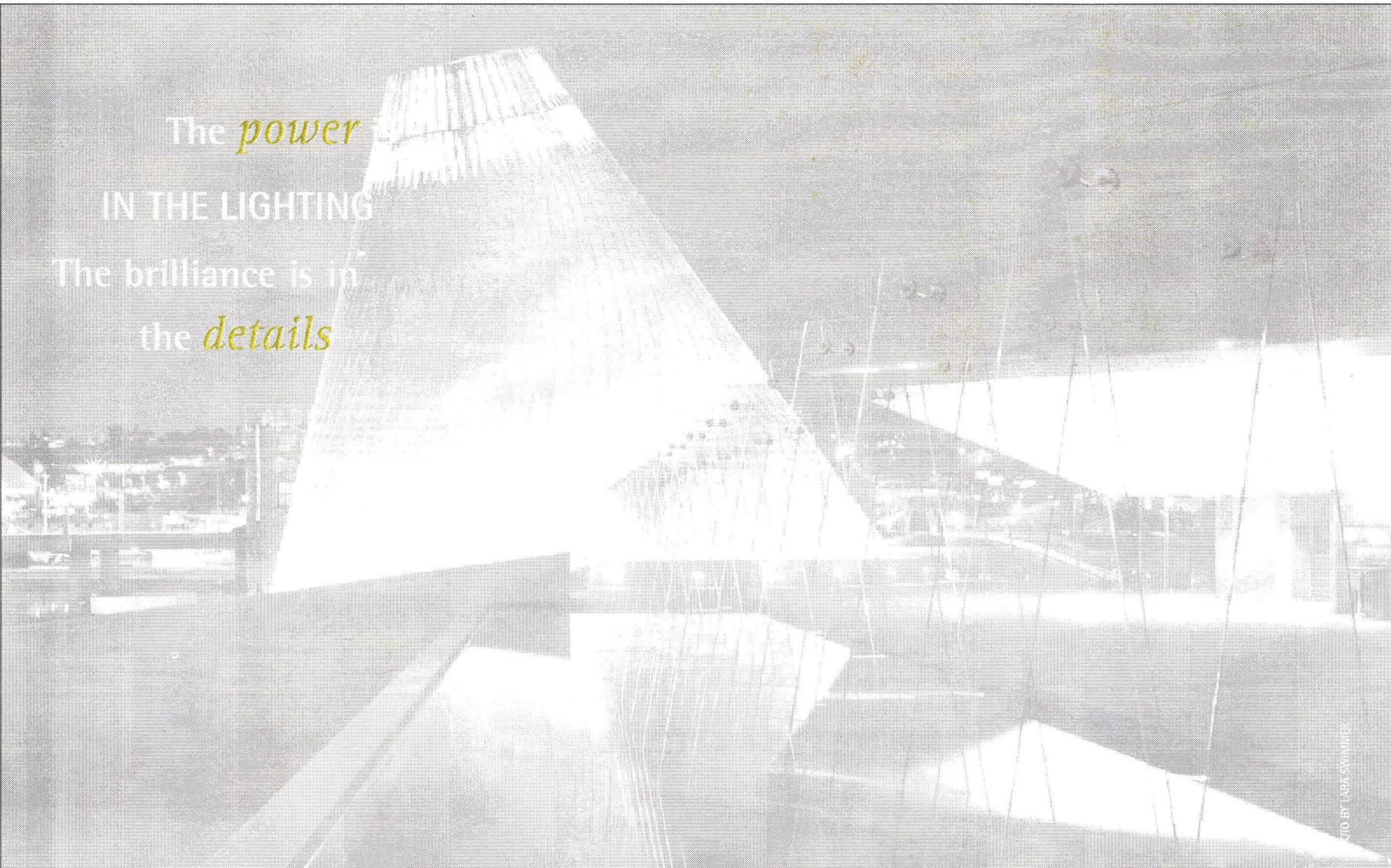
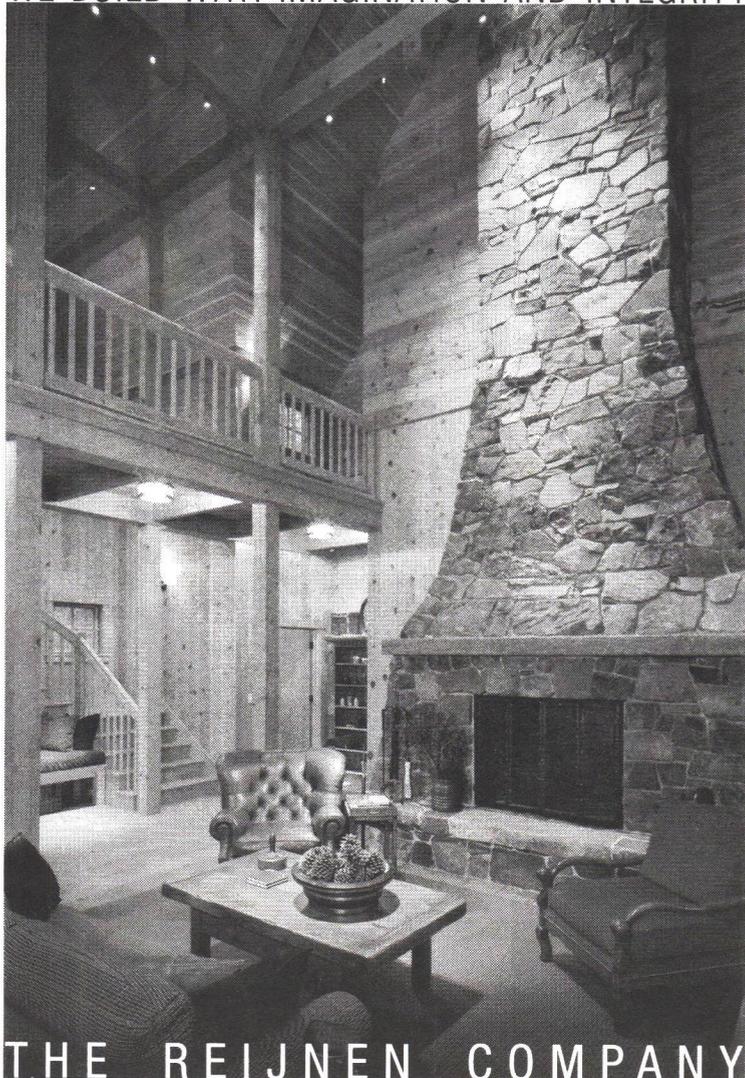


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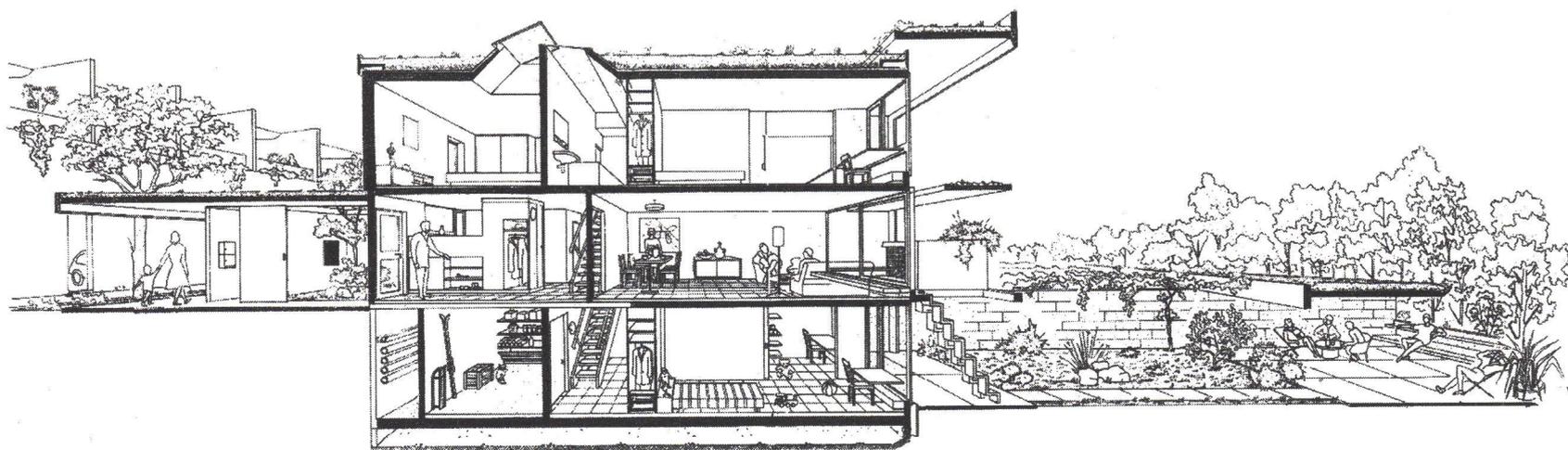
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The prolific housing work of the Swiss firm Atelier 5, spanning over forty-five years, demonstrates a compelling alternative that has often been critically neglected. Their continuous experimentation focused on the positive sociological aims of the modern movement has produced housing projects poetically articulating the realities of daily life.

Section perspective of typical Halen house.



Atelier 5: Swiss Housing and Practice

Chris Bixby

Images: Atelier 5 except where noted.

With the continued expansion of our metropolitan areas towards the rural landscape, there have been a countless number of missed opportunities in the realm of collective housing. The typical suburban housing development caters exclusively to automobiles, providing little transition from the car door to the entrance of one's house. Marginal relationships to neighbors and arbitrary connections to the immediate landscape create a collective housing experience lacking inspiration and sensitivity to the needs of the inhabitants. The prolific housing work of the Swiss firm Atelier 5, spanning over forty-five years, demonstrates a compelling alternative that has often been critically neglected. Their continuous experimentation focused on the positive sociological aims of the modern movement has produced housing projects poetically articulating the realities of daily life. An uncompromising belief that this effort is the societal role of the architect has been the philosophical backbone of the office originating with its first partners. Although the initial inspiration for the work of Atelier 5 had roots in the visionary schemes and tectonic logic of Le Corbusier, they have evolved their techniques and developed their language into an impressive body of work. The atelier still practices today. Building on

their research, they continue to produce compelling low-rise housing projects in Switzerland and Germany. Their collective housing work constitutes a "tour de force" exploring a numerous variety of types and scales of housing projects. With the exception of the Halen project, Atelier 5 has not received the kind of critical recognition that a body of work so rigorously executed would seem to deserve. They have referred to their work as "anonymous architecture" without an overriding aesthetic tendency. The lack of attention given to their work over the years may in part be due to this ethic that constitutes the working method of the office.

The Founders of Atelier 5

Atelier 5 began with friendships formed while working with the Bernese architect Hans Brechbuhler. Brechbuhler worked with Le Corbusier in the 1930s and the knowledge passed on from the master found its way into the initial philosophy of the partnership. A mutual understanding deferring to the language of Corbu's inventions allowed the discussions of design to remain focused. This defining rule within the Atelier, reducing the stylistic discussions of form or aesthetics, afforded the group the freedom to focus on the qualitative societal, technological, and ecological aspects of their projects without debate and frictions over form. The partnership was established with the shared vision to build a housing project called Halen.

The Housing Work of Atelier 5

The housing work of Atelier 5 has consistently engaged numerous issues including, serial repetition and variation, opportunity for public interaction or private retreat, and the incorporation of green spaces to name just a few. These finely crafted floor plans are more akin to habitable landscapes than buildings in the round and are generated from the unit cell outward. An agreed upon set of rules, a rigorous working method, and continuous research has focused their work on the experiential impact of architecture rather than its symbolic or linguistic tendencies.

Halen

When the Halen Housing Development was built in 1961 in a forest clearing on the outskirts of Bern, it proposed a radical new vision for the development of low-rise collective housing. Built during a time of intense debate in Switzerland about the future of the modern city, Halen demonstrated a densely organized "matt-building," incorporating the inevitable proliferation of the automobile. It immediately made the office famous, although no new work resulted for years to come. Halen accepts the automobile as a necessity of modern life and elegantly incorporates its functioning into the overall complex. Neatly concealed below the outdoor gardens of houses above, it detracts nothing from the organization of the plan.

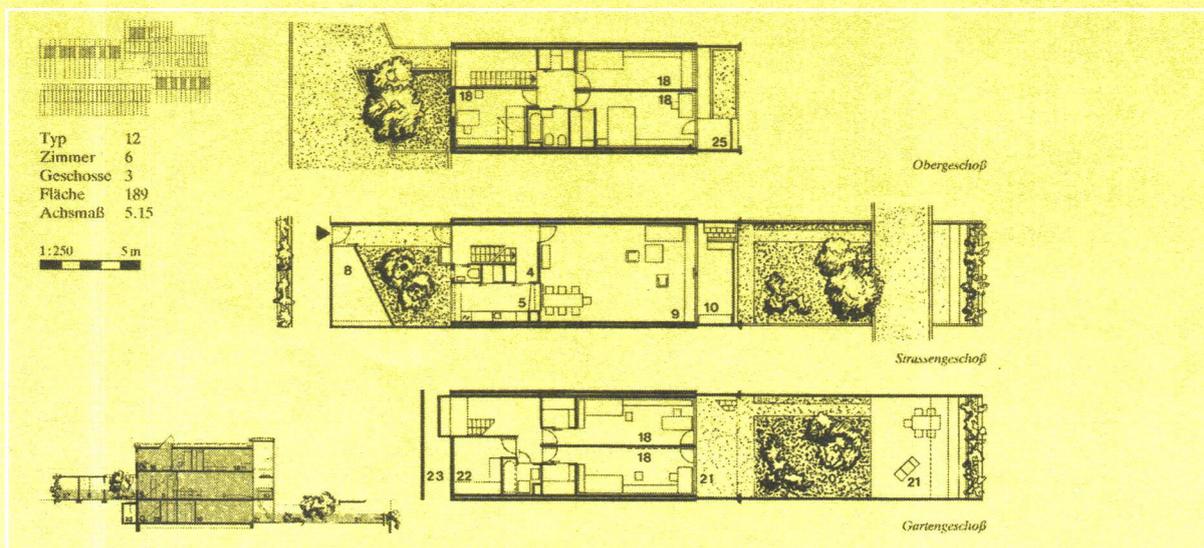
With seven-foot-tall garden walls separating private exterior spaces, Halen is at once socially inviting and intensely private. The greatest attention is taken to protect lines of sight while allowing the houses tremendous transparency through the section. Composed of seventy-nine row houses, some barely 14-foot-wide in serial arrangement and organized around a central public square, it has the first impression of a timeless urban enclave. It reminds one of the fundamental aspects of urban architecture. An abstraction of the patterns one might encounter in a small hill-town village.

Le Corbusier's Influence

Halen took its initial inspiration from an un-built project by Le Corbusier proposing a clustered arrangement of houses terraced into a hillside at Cape Martin. The Roq et Rob scheme of 1949 showed how a repetitive megaron house type could be situated on a terraced hillside to create a larger urban complex. Corbu's re-evaluation of the technological trajectory of the modern movement in favor of a more tactile, vernacular method would prove to be a major influence on the work of the Atelier 5 for years to come.

Bern as Urban Model

The parallels between the Halen project and the historic city of Bern are worth noting. It was not the intention of the designers of Halen to implement a foreign concept from heady formulations

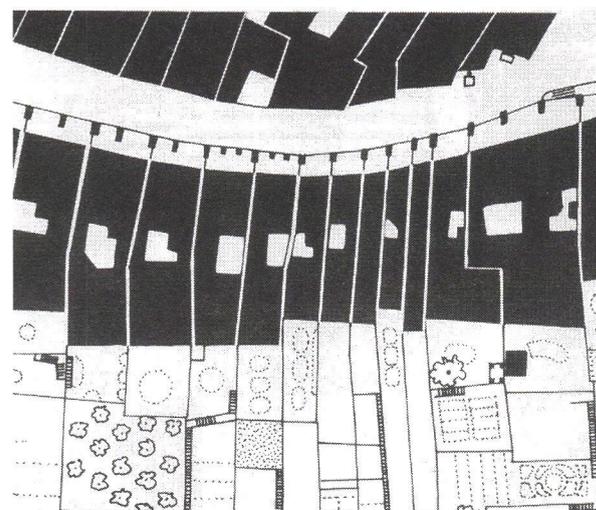
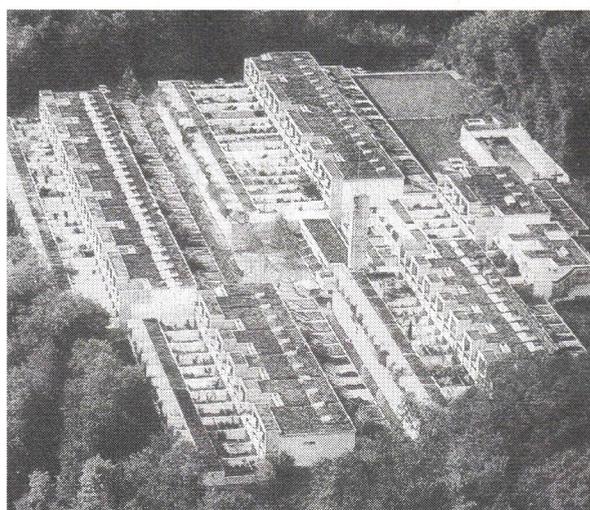


Row house type at Halen.
Photo: Chris Bixby

Aerial View of the Halen development

Plan of row house type at Halen

Plan of house types in Bern



of modern architectural theory, but to find those urban patterns that had meaning to the culture and express them with architectonic clarity provided by modern building techniques.

Bern was established on an elevated oxbow of the Aare River. Made of narrow three to four story limestone houses, it displays an urban homogeneity matched by few cities. Arcaded sidewalks line every street allowing the pedestrian continuous covered travel. At Halen, houses are accessed via long covered walkways where home owners stack firewood and park bicycles. A functional covered street recalls the historic city center. A dramatic slope from the edge of the Aare to the center of town results in houses in Bern with entrances at midlevel. Stairs leading to lower levels access outdoor terraced gardens at the edge of the city, while the upper levels accommodate more private functions. The cross section of the row houses at Halen exhibit this same characteristic. The sloping site allows entrance to occur mid-level where living spaces look out to a private garden below. Lower levels contain children's rooms while upper levels contain the master suite and offices. Halen can be thought of as a slice of Bern. Translated to an agricultural setting, it concentrates urban life to create shared social amenities while retaining the integrity of the natural setting around it. In this sense, it accurately demonstrates the ethics of what Kenneth Frampton calls "critical region-

alism." The ability for a project to combine the logic of modern production techniques with a space conception modified by local experience and urban morphology exemplifies this practice.

Summary and Experience

Unable to grasp the complex as a whole, a visitor finds their way to the central square via a modest service access street connecting the entire complex. Greenery projects over private garden walls and hangs over green roofs creating an intensely urban landscape fully integrated with nature. Parallel walls of concrete resonate with the lush foliage of plants and trees. The central square accommodates a small shop providing basic necessities for residents who gather in the evening. A shared multi-purpose room also faces the square and mechanical exhaust stacks form a large concrete tower marking the place of social life. An upper level provides a shared lawn and swimming pool. After 45 years, the weathered appearance of the concrete is at once archaic and modern, evoking the sense of a unique and timeless place.

Additional Housing Work

After Halen, numerous housing projects were produced. Thalmatt I and II in Herrenschwanden take a different approach than the rigorous cross-walled courtyard type exemplified at Halen. Thalmatt I consists of varied width two and three story houses organized along a

partially covered interior street; it has an even more archaic and labyrinthine quality than Halen. Green filtered light marks entrances and pools within interior living spaces. Each house is unique in size and configuration giving the overall complex a more idiosyncratic organic quality. Other, more recent projects, including Ried, built between 1983-1990, are more focused on urban type forms relative to larger city planning efforts. The number and variety of housing projects that Atelier 5 has produced over forty-five years are so complete that they constitute a discourse all their own.

Alternative Practice

Originating with the first members of the group, a desire to work collectively led to the establishment of certain rules for the design process. These rules helped maintain a collaborative atmosphere within the office and provide an objective guide for design at critical points. They made the conscious decision to conduct the work of the office in such a way that no single individual had the authority to influence the design of a project without the involvement of the entire office. The organizational and legal structure of their office provided a way for a group of architects to work together through dialogue rather than the dictates of a single designer. As they note:

"Almost without exception work is connected today with the notion of an author as the sole authority in the design process. Of course, everyone thinks for themselves here, too; but we assume that thinking and discovering for oneself can be complemented, heightened and transformed by that of the other, and that something new and with a new quality can thus be born of a dialogue."

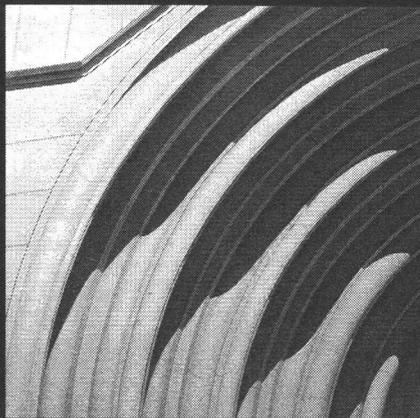
Atelier 5 presents a unique approach to the practice of architecture. Through their collaborative design process and a common architectural vocabulary, they offer an alternative to today's professional culture that rewards star architects and stylistic fads. Their continuous effort to carry on the fundamental sociological aims of modernism has created an enduring architectural practice — although one less glamorous than those filling the pages of the latest magazines. The fact that almost all of the partners have lived in their housing projects at one time suggests a bond between work and life. In no other architectural practice have I seen this connection expressed so completely.

Chris Bixby works with Allied Works Architecture in Portland, Oregon, and received the 2002 Ion Lewis Traveling Fellowship in Architecture from the University of Oregon to study the work of Atelier 5.

Joseph Guggino

ARCHITECTURAL PORTRAITS

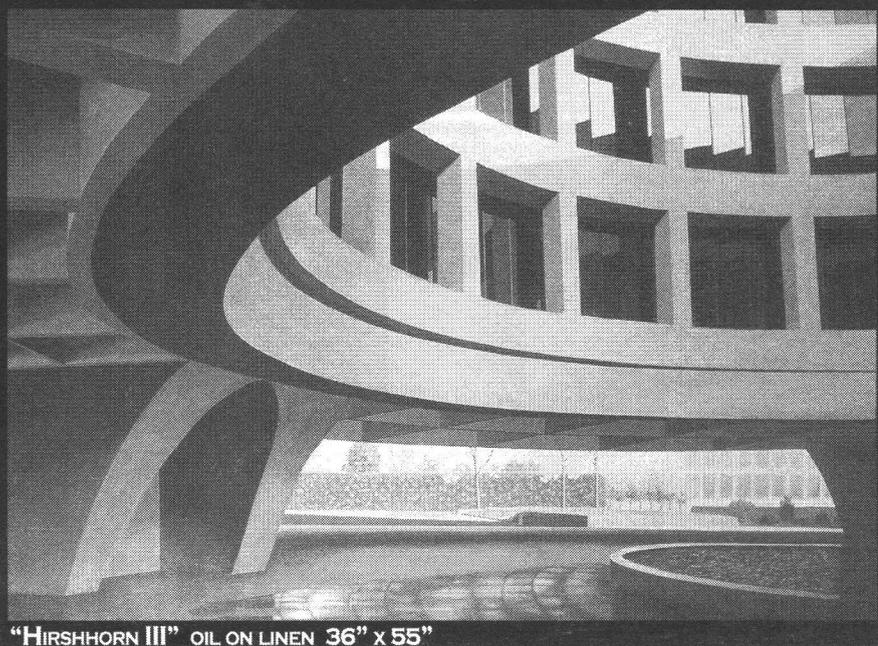
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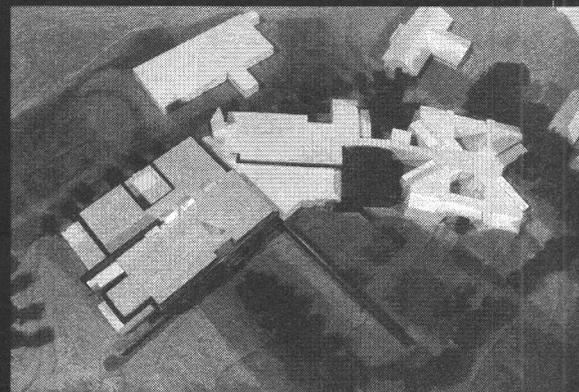


"WORLD BANK" OIL ON LINEN 51" x 51"

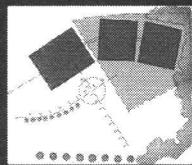


"HIRSHHORN III" OIL ON LINEN 36" x 55"

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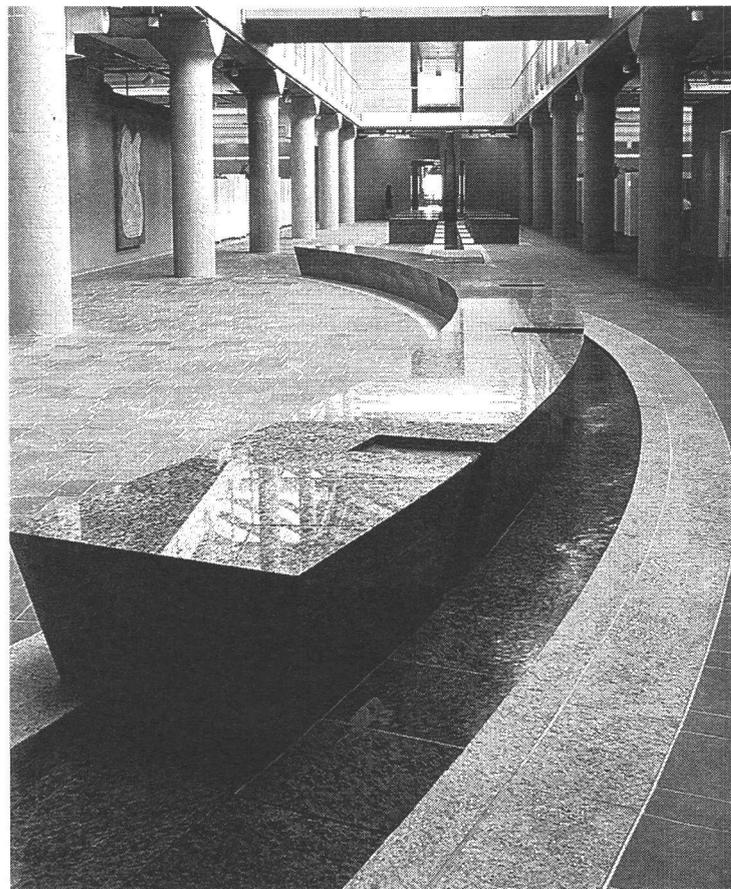


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According to Wrigley, the revised Juicy Fruit is part of their new focus on "Skippies" — school kids with income and purchasing power.

The old Juicy Fruit packaging.

The new Juicy Fruit packaging.



New and Improved

Karen Cheng

During my last trip to the supermarket, I noticed, with a stab of shock, the sad demise of the Juicy Fruit package. How could I have missed it before? I'm always interested in impulse buys at the register. I like to know what management thinks is the perfect last-minute item. Lotto? Tabloids? Carbohydrate-free chocolate? The selection reveals all the basic human desires: fame, fortune, and guilt-free sweets.

At any rate, the Juicy Fruit change must have flown under my usual design radar; I admit that I've been really distracted by the Martha Stewart scandal. Also, I guess I'm not a heavy user of Juicy Fruit. I like the flavor, but frankly, gum isn't a good accessory for women over thirty. Face it, you'd never see Martha chewing a big wad of gum.

Of course, the real problem with gum is messiness. A recent news story described a city gum removal project that cost taxpayers more than \$100K — workers used high-pressure water jets, steam and chemicals to remove gum from sidewalks and public furniture. This led to a vicious anti-gum campaign ("Gum should be banned, totally banned! Or at least taxed!" said councilmen). Naturally, the proposed tax was strongly opposed by Wrigley, the world's largest gum producer (and the manufacturer of Juicy Fruit.) According to Wrigley, gum isn't the problem; people are the problem. It's absolutely wrong to tax gum

— which has lots of health benefits — just because a few people improperly dispose of the product.

I was surprised to hear that gum is good for you. (To be honest, I was deeply suspicious.) But according to Wrigley, chewing gum improves concentration; chewing gum eases muscular tension; chewing gum is a low-calorie replacement for high-calorie snacks; and — obviously — chewing gum freshens breath and helps fight tooth decay. These benefits have been proven with genuine scientific studies (sponsored by Wrigley, of course.)

At any rate, in case you missed the latest change in Juicy Fruit, I can help. The previous package was bright yellow, with black sans-serif type and red arrow-like chevrons. (Arrows are always popular with modernists and corporations. So clean and geometric! Progressive yet neutral!) Unlike many items in the supermarket, the old Juicy Fruit was actually reasonably designed. The package did exactly what it was supposed to do: it communicated the essential nature of the product (fresh and citrusy) and made it distinctive (the only gum package that was yellow and graphic). It had good shelf presence (from strong visual contrasts) and implied quality manufacture (with legible and controlled type).

The new design replaces the sans serif black lettering with a blue and oddly bloated logotype. I suppose Wrigley liked this better because the type literally appears "juicy." But in reality, the effect is cheap and unconvincing — an obvious

Photoshop job that fails to communicate either freshness or quality. It's also misleading, since the new package now looks a lot like bubble gum. The curved underline is especially bad; it clutters the small front, reduces legibility, and gives the brand a patronizing smirk.

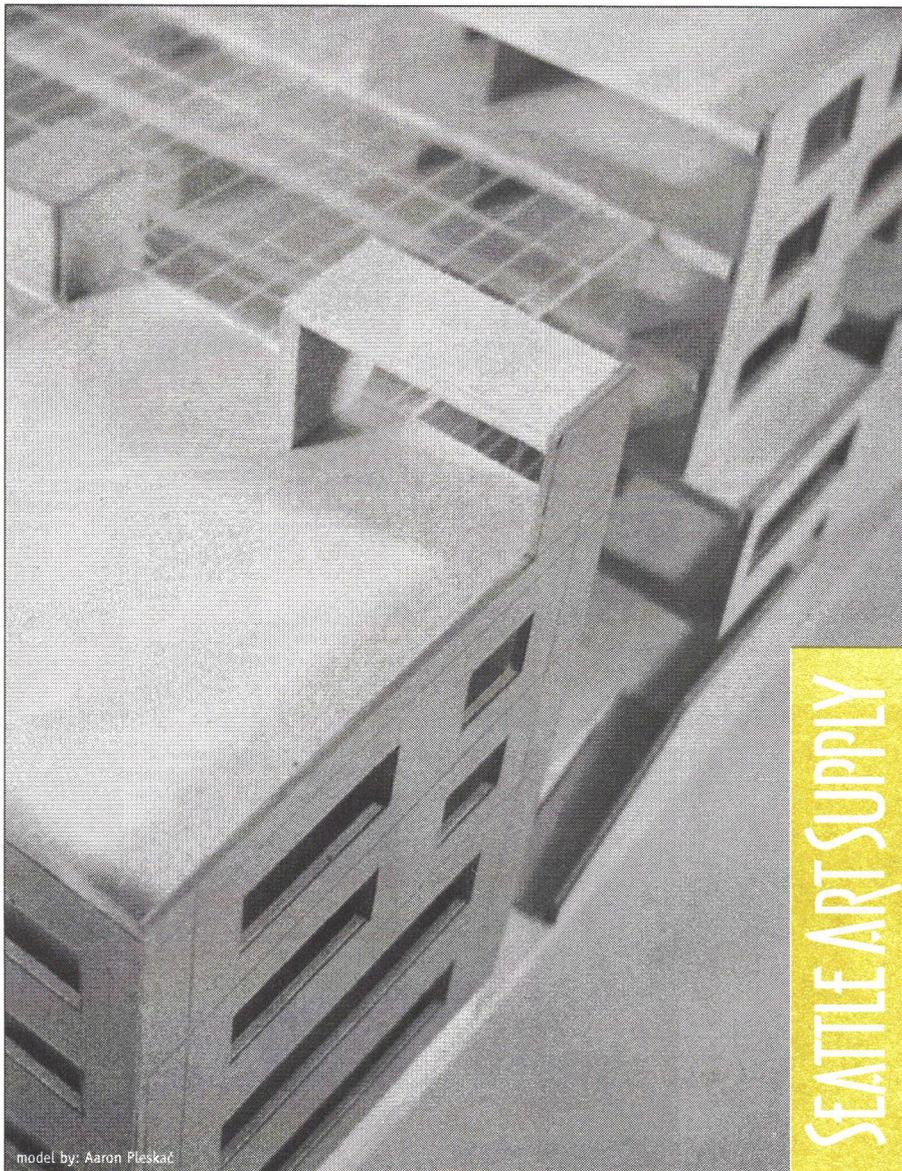
According to Wrigley, the revised Juicy Fruit is part of their new focus on "Skippies" — school kids with income and purchasing power. This segment has become increasingly attractive to businesses; American teens spent \$170 billion on personal products in 2002. (Note: the term "Skippies" was created by the consumer research firm that defined "yuppies" and "dinks" — double-income-no-kids, in case you were wondering. Isn't it nice to know that every generation — and every possible demographic subset — is being classified and exploited by professionals?)

Cynicism aside, I admit that the general idea of a redesign does make sense. The Juicy Fruit package was designed in 1946, and only slightly revised in 1987. Periodic updates help a brand evolve with its audience; even a good design becomes dated and less relevant over time. And, I suppose modernism was a bit 19th-century for the digitally savvy, cell-phone wielding Skippy. And honestly, modernism may not be the best choice for organic and natural subjects, like food. Case in point: remember "no frills" generic groceries? The entire line was packaged in white boxes with all-caps black Helvetica type. The effect was vaguely poetic (imagine the Jenny Holzer-

esque line-up of CORN FLAKES, TISSUES, PLASTIC WRAP, CHOCOLATE) but unfortunately, not appetizing. I assume it was a terrible commercial failure, unpopular with everyone but hard-core devotees of rational design. In fact, the only person I know who bought the products was my graduate school faculty advisor, a 60s alum of the Basel Design School.

All this basically amounts to saying that there are no easy answers in design. Graphic design often seems trivial — especially when it's being used for something as banal as gum. But the fact is, small-scale communication problems are just as difficult to solve as larger and more glamorous ones. Finding a good solution requires real insight into a product, its audience and its strategy — and careful synthesis of that information into a compelling visual work. It's harder than it looks and sadly, judging by this package, not well understood, especially by Wrigley.

Karen Cheng is a professor of Visual Communication Design at the University of Washington. She is also a practicing designer whose work has been recognized and published by the AIGA, *Communication Arts*, *Print*, *Critique*, *I.D. Magazine* and the American Center for Design.



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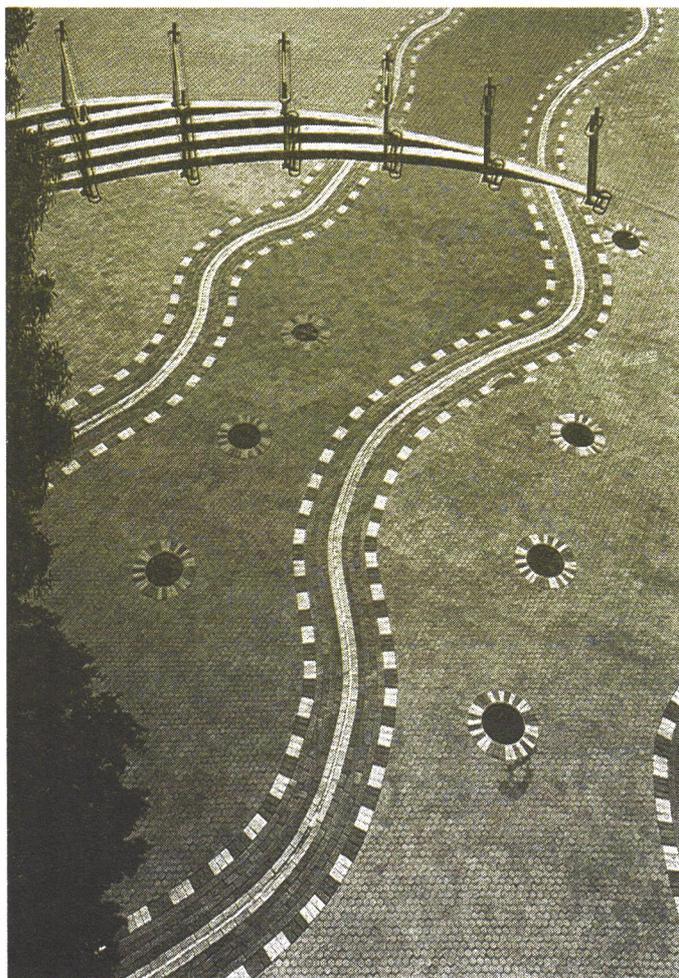
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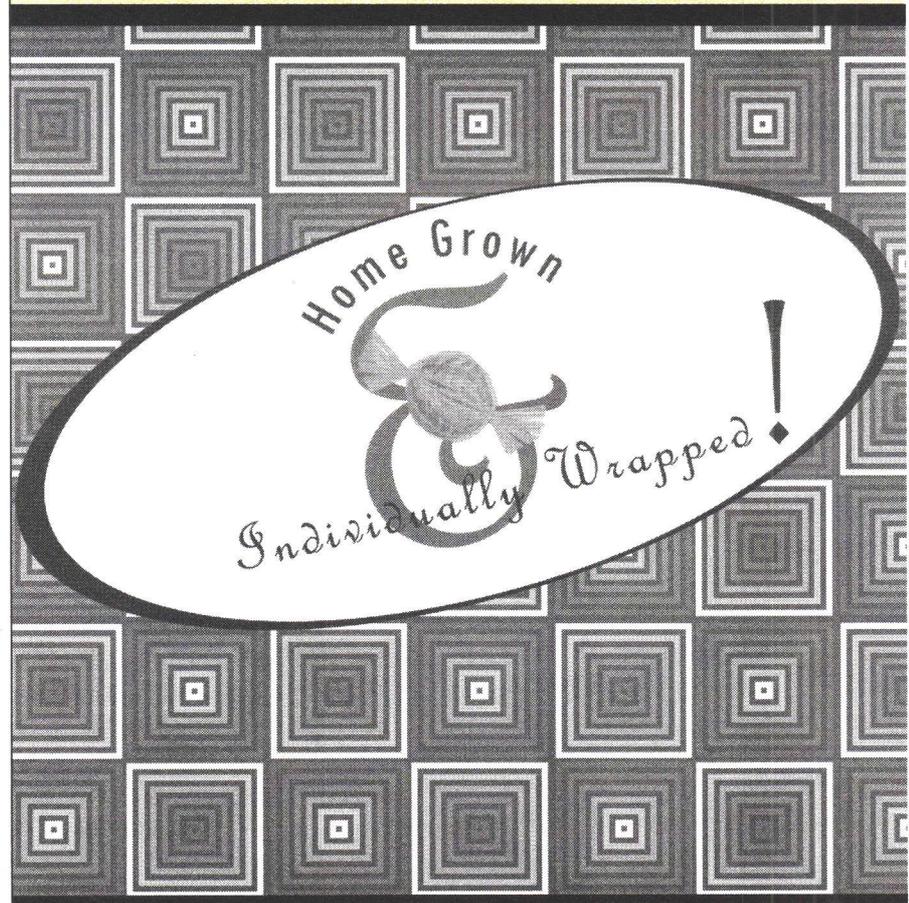


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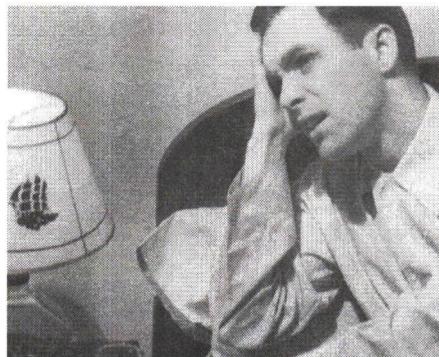


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Unlike most in her peculiar profession, she can be brutal to a designer or firm if she doesn't think their project is worthy of this great city.



I Had a Dream About Sheri Olson

Ron van der Veen

Many of you know Sheri Olson, the "take no prisoners" architecture critic for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. Unlike most in her peculiar profession, she can be brutal to a designer or firm if she doesn't think their project is worthy of this great city. I imagine many architects cringe when they learn she is featuring their work in the newspaper.

I will never forget the scathing critique she wrote last year on the 5th and Jackson building (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 14, 2003). As a matter of fact, I have had this recurring nightmare ever since then that I get a call from her telling me she wants to write an article about a building I have designed. Well, last week the dream became all too real...

Judith (our receptionist): Ron, you have a call from Ms. Sheri Olson on line 4.

Me: [Oh crap! Was my dream really a premonition? This can't be.] Can you tell her I'm not in?

Judith: I already told her you were in.

Me: I told you I never wanted to talk to Sheri Olson! Didn't I tell you about my recurring nightmare?

Judith: Get over it and take the call.

Me (with fake Germanic accent): Hello, dis es Rrrronald Yan fan de Fain (maybe this will intimidate her. It works for Rem).

Sheri: Ron, this is Sheri Olson, architecture critic for the *P-I* [I eat architects for breakfast]. I had the opportunity last week to tour the Plaza at the I-5 Building [not really, saw it in the DJC while going to the bathroom]. I was told [nobody else wants to take the blame] that you were the lead designer [using the word loosely] and I'd like to do an article on it.

Me: Wow, what an...honor [honorary dead meat]. But it's really not very newsworthy [didn't think she'd notice the bright pastel colors along I-5]. A person of your prominence must have more important buildings to write about [please get out of my life and write another book on Miller | Hull].

Sheri: It's newsworthy.

Me: Nah, there are plenty of other buildings to highlight [rip like a wet Japanese origami]. You don't need to write anything about the Plaza at the I-5 Building.

Sheri: Oh, yes I do.

Me: Oh, no you don't.

Sheri: Yes I do.

Me: No you don't.

Sheri: Yes.

Me (dropping my fake Germanic accent): No.

Sheri: Yes!

Me: No!

Sheri: Yes! Now shut up and answer my questions!

Me: Okay...

Sheri: Now first I'd like to talk about the unique proportions of the building [looks clumsy, like a pear on steroids].

Me: Oh, you really can't give me credit [I knew I should have built a model]. The massing was a product of the zoning code.

Sheri: Can you tell me a bit about the juxtaposition of materials [out of control clown]?

Me: Well, that was dictated by the neighborhood design review board [I really tried to make the vinyl look like stone].

Sheri: I find the building has such an individual aesthetic [as in beaver dung].

Me: Yeah, the client was interested in exploring a "Mediterranean Tudor" style for the Wallingford neighborhood [okay, I admit it, I'm an architectural whore].

Sheri: Well, it's going to make for a very engaging article this Sunday in the *P-I* [I'm going to fry you like a chipmunk on a skewer!]

Me: This...Sunday? [Holy kill my career, Batman!!! 500,000 architects will be sitting in lawn chairs all around the Northwest on Sunday drinking martinis under the sun and gleefully imagining Ron van der Veen as the new night manager at the 5th and Pine McDonalds!] This can't be. No. No! Noooooooo!!!

Wife: Ron, Ron, wake up honey...

Me: Huh? Wha? Wwwwwhat's the matter?

Wife: Wow, you must have had another one of those bad dreams. You were really flailing around in bed.

Me: Yeah, yeah, this is really getting to me...

(Later that day in the office...)

Judith: Ron, you have a call from an architecture critic of a newspaper on line 4.

Me (Oh crap, now this is real!!!): Can you tell the person I'm not in?

Judith: I already told the person you were in.

Me: I told you I never wanted to talk to any architecture critics? Didn't I tell you about my recurring nightmare?

Judith: Get over it and take the call.

Me (with fake Germanic accent): Hello Sheri, dis es Rrrronald Yan fan de Fain.

Critic: No Ron, this is Mark Hinshaw with the *Seattle Times* and I'd like to do a story about the Plaza at the I-5 Building [I love the way the blue awnings make the street feel friendly].

Me: MARK HINSHAW!!! You don't know what a relief it is to hear your voice. I thought you were...Never mind.

Ron van der Veen is an architect with Mithun who REALLY likes Sheri Olson and thinks she is the best architecture critic in Seattle (PLEASE like me Sheri!). No, really! If you have comments or suggestions for future side-yard articles please contact Ron at ronv@mithun.com.

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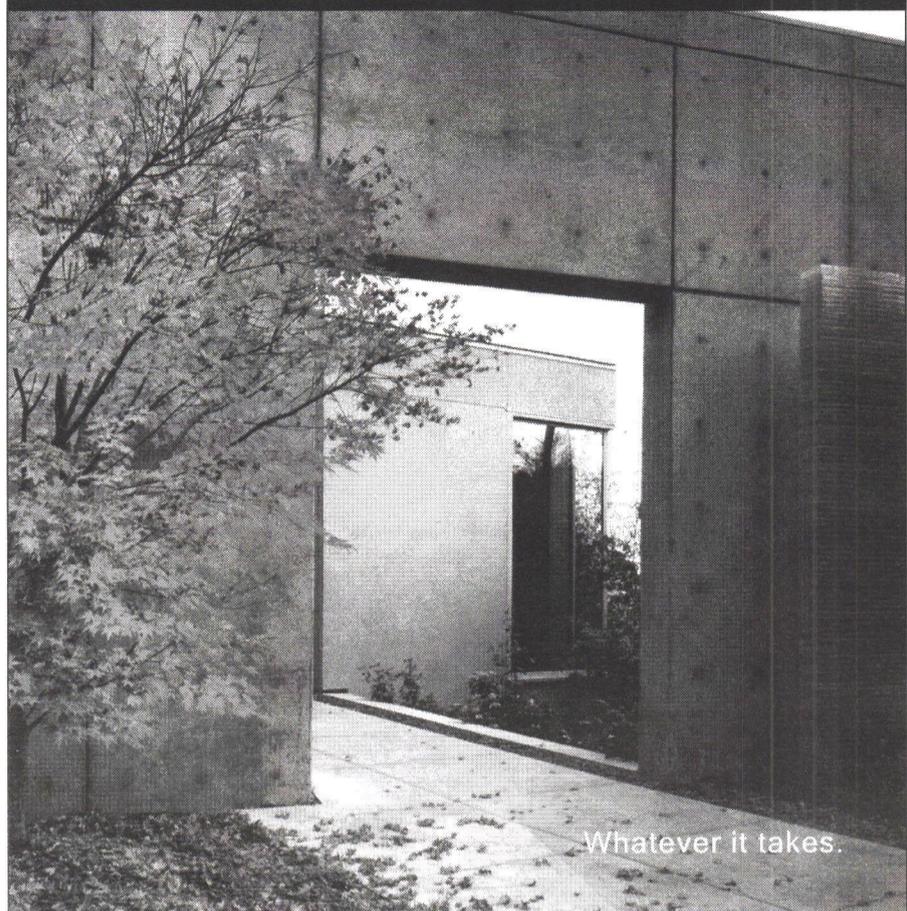
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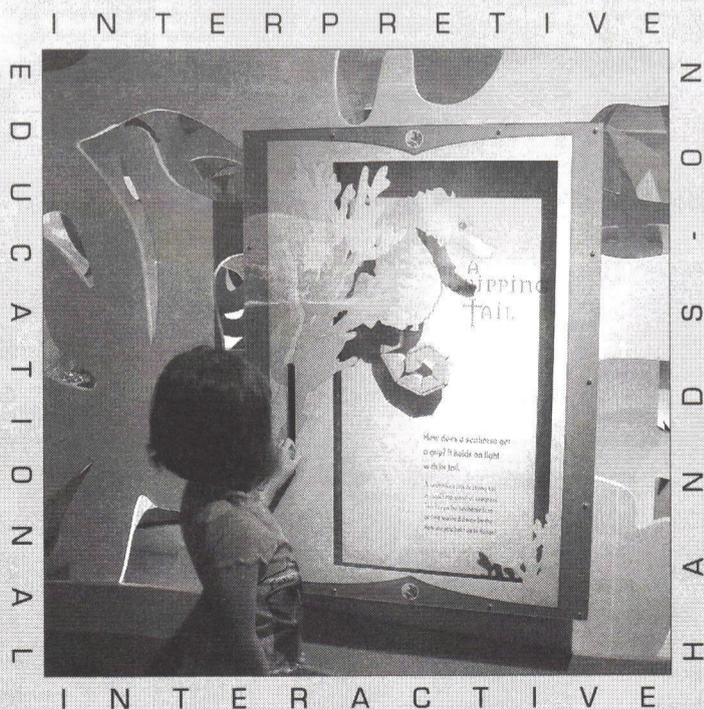


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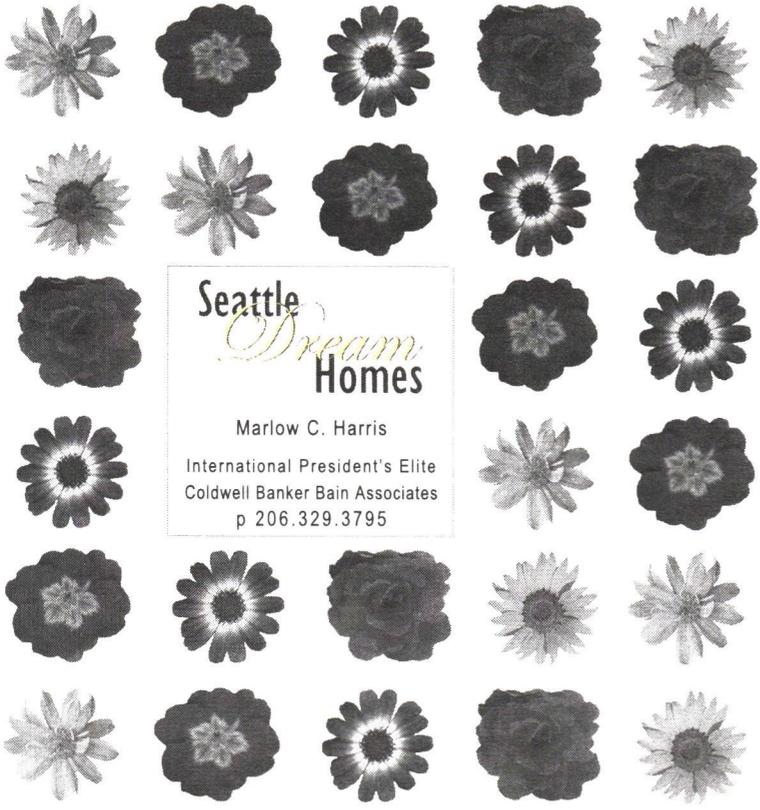
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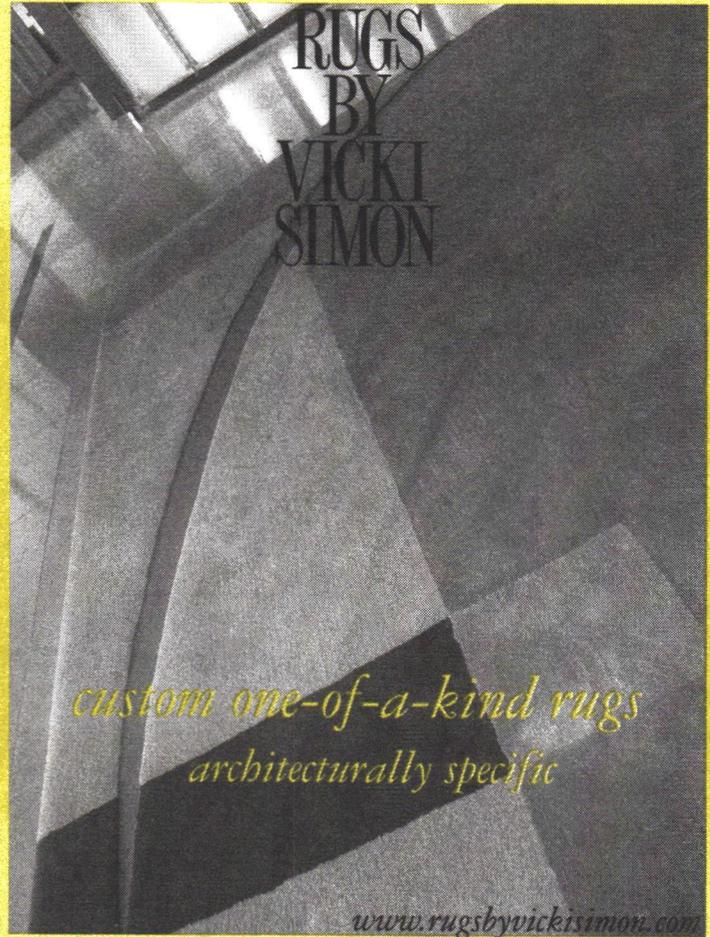


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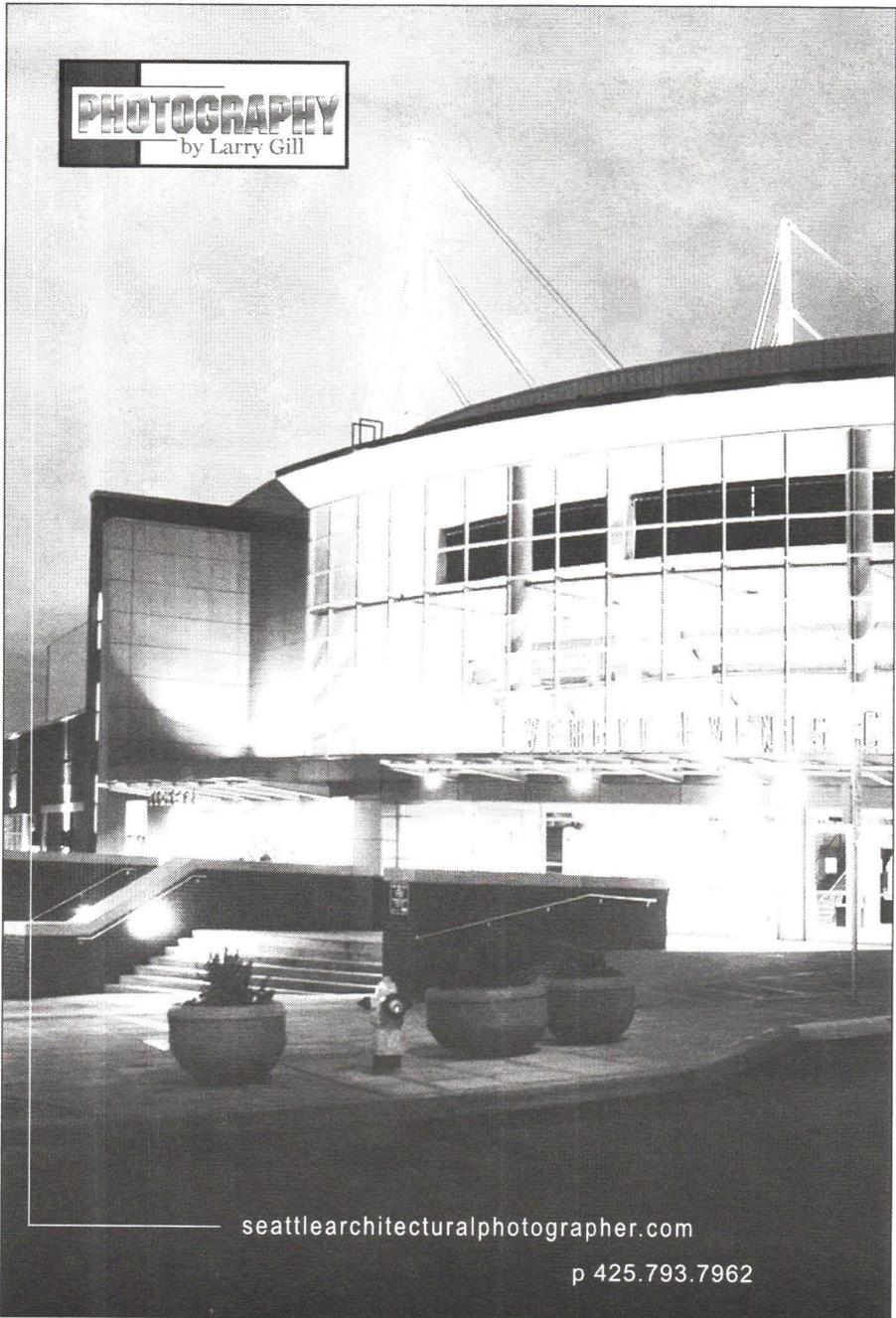
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More and more, so it seems to me,
light is the beautifier of the building.
- Frank Lloyd Wright

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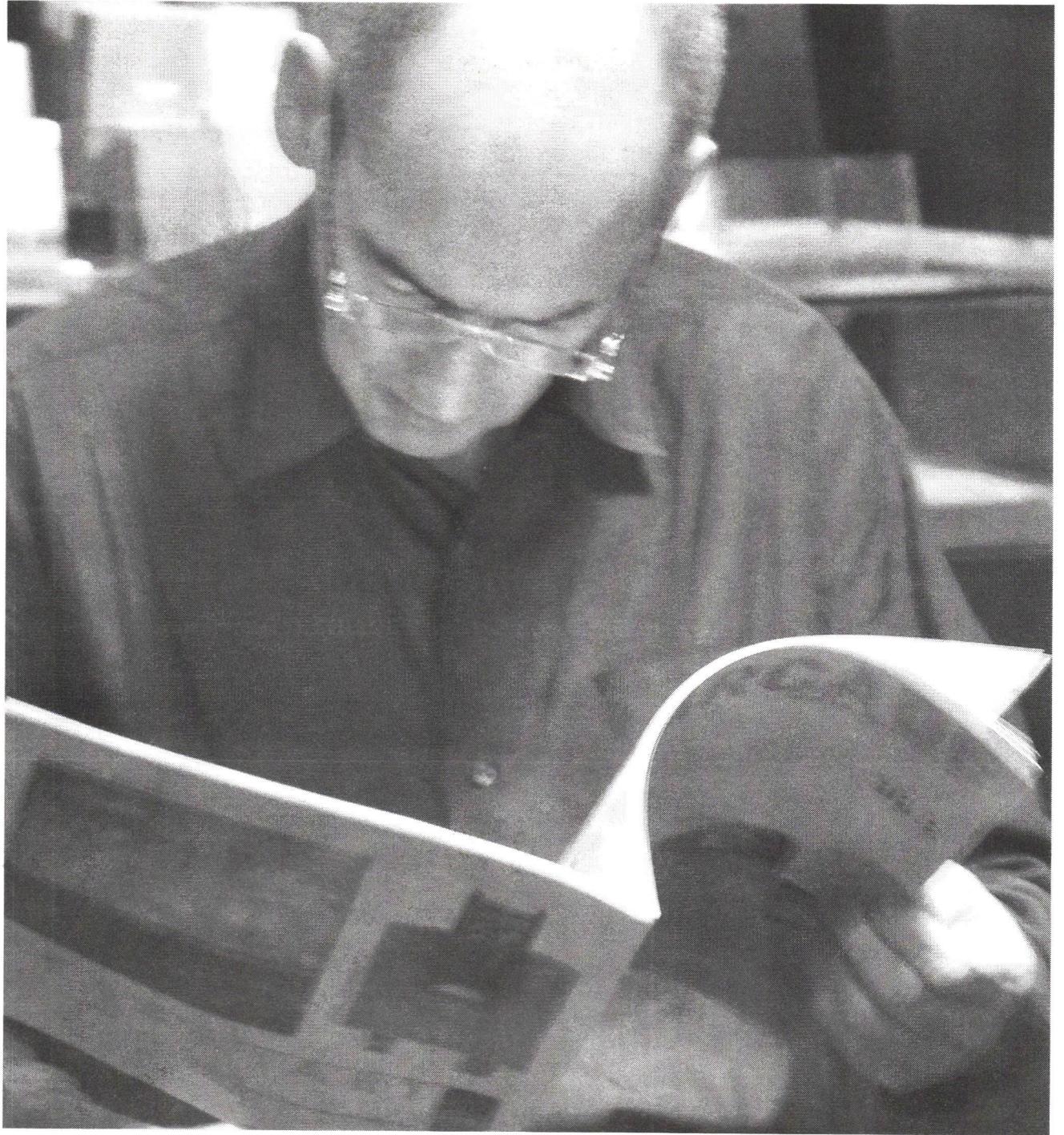


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Rem Koolhaas, architect of Seattle's new Central Library, was seen perusing the magazine during a recent visit to the city.

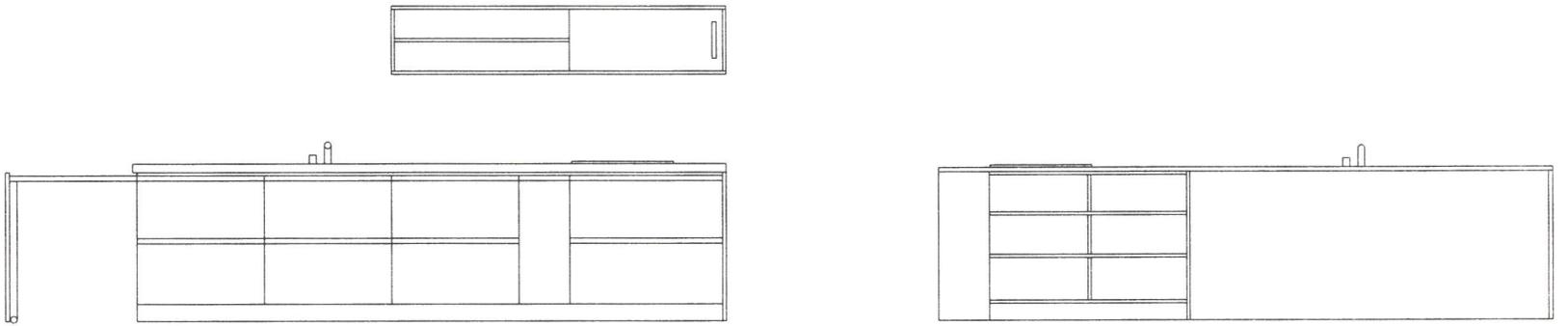


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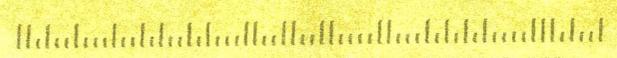
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