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In this Issue:

Regionalism in Architecture

Texas Regionalism 1925-1950

(Tall) Tales from the Borderland

The Regionalism of Henry Trost

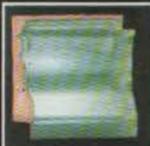
San Antonio Museum of Art

Texas Architect



FIRE

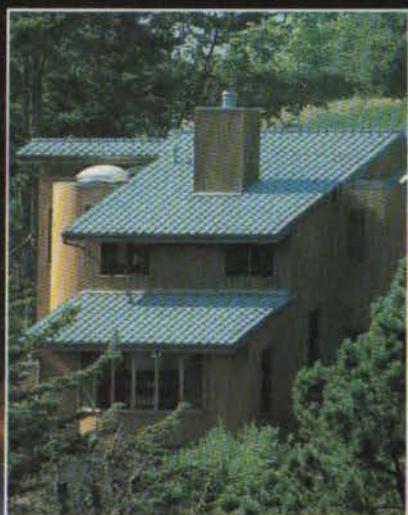
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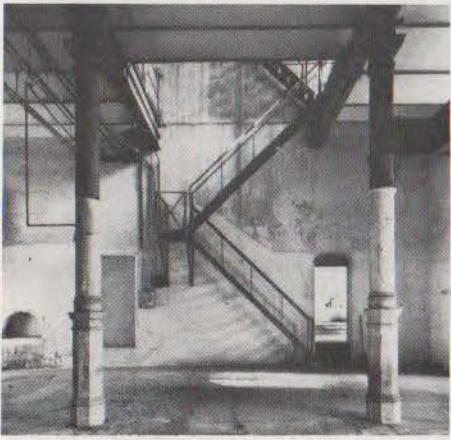
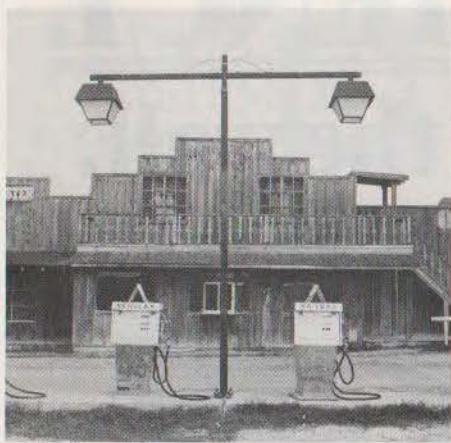
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Contents



On the Cover: This covered terrace at Fairway Plaza in Dallas, designed by The Oglesby Group, Inc., conveys a sense of shade and shelter which is so much a part of Regionalism in Texas architecture. Photo by Robt. Cook, Dallas.

In the News	17
About this Issue	31
Regionalism in Architecture	33
<i>An insightful essay by an astute observer of the American landscape, J. B. Jackson.</i>	
Texas Regionalism 1925-1950	36
<i>Architect, teacher and writer Peter Papademetriou discusses Regionalism's influence on Modernism in Texas architecture.</i>	
The Contemporary Regional Response	43
<i>A series of project descriptions illustrating a broad range of interpretation.</i>	
(Tall) Tales from the Borderland	59
<i>Writer and researcher Stephen Fox explores the Spanish Colonial Revival in Brownsville as a means of establishing a distinct identity for a region that was undergoing profound transformations.</i>	
The Regionalism of Henry Trost	71
<i>Author and critic John Pastier assesses the impact of this early 20th century architect, who practiced widely in West Texas, New Mexico and Arizona as both regionalist and unabashed eclectic.</i>	
The San Antonio Museum of Art	76
<i>TA contributor Michael Benedikt reviews the recently opened museum, housed in Cambridge Seven's renovation of the old Lone Star Brewery.</i>	
Andy, O'Neil, and You and Me	94
<i>Ruminations on Regionalism from architect/humorist David Braden.</i>	
Letters	99

Coming Up: The September/October issue of *Texas Architect* will take a look at the city of Corpus Christi in anticipation of the Texas Society of Architects' 42nd Annual Meeting, to be held there October 29-31. Also, continued discussions of Texas Regionalism.

Texas Architect is published by the Texas Society of Architects, Des Taylor, Executive Vice-President.
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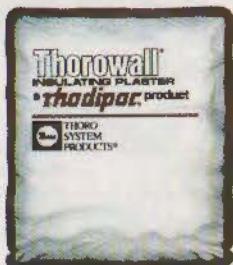
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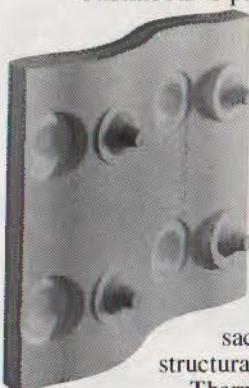
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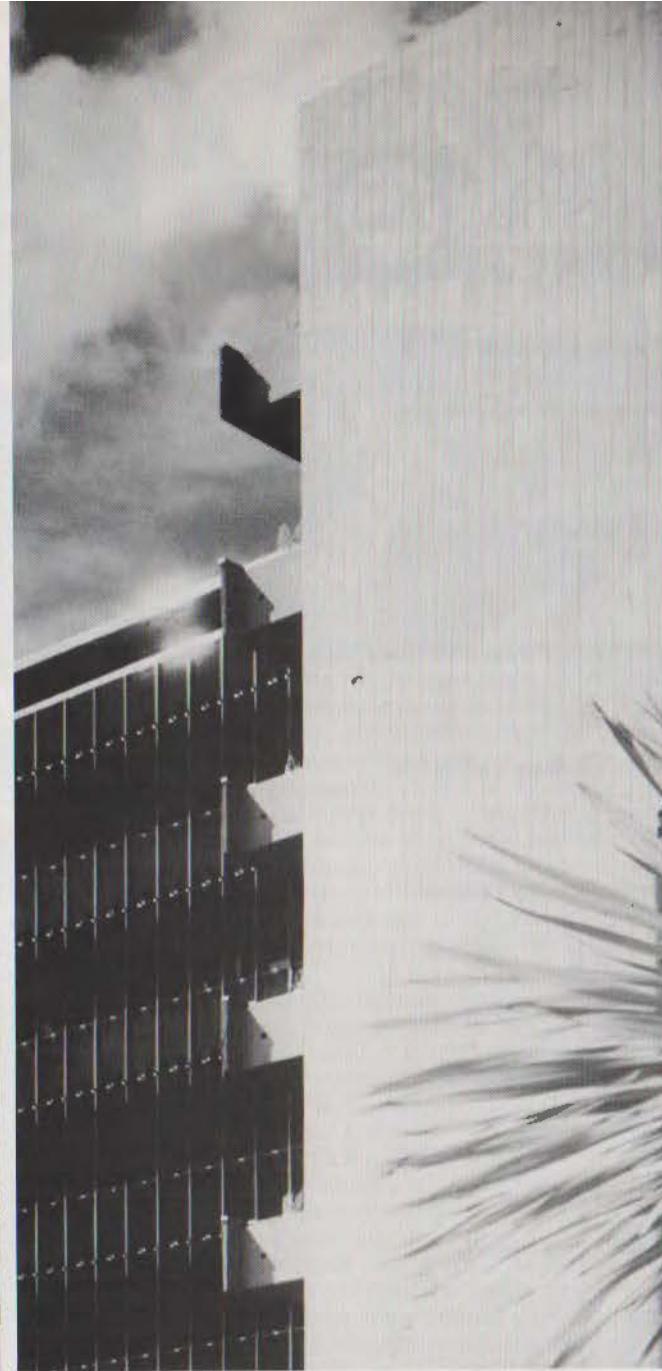


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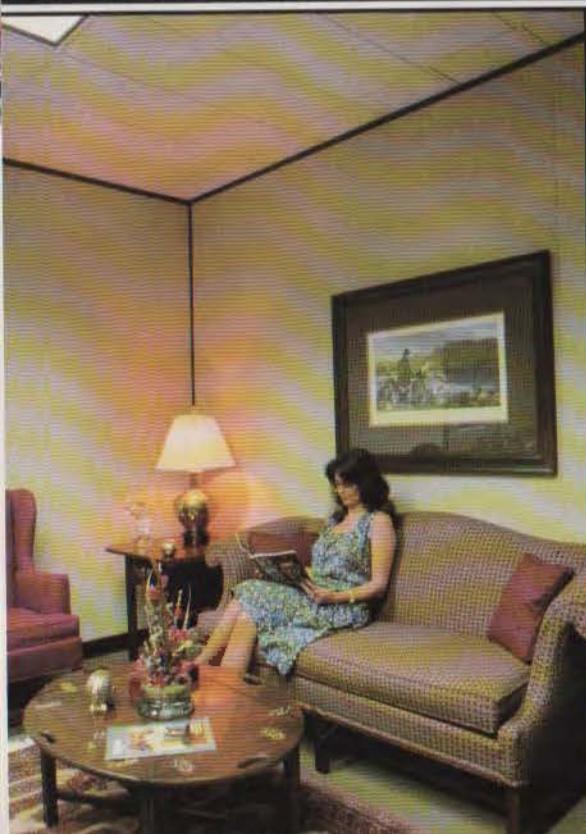
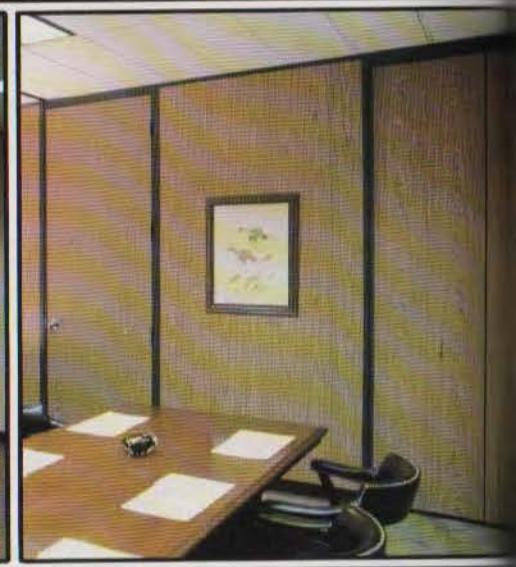
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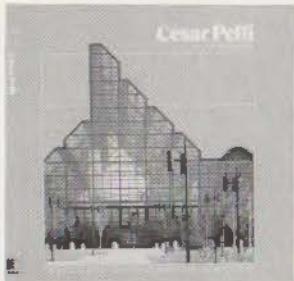
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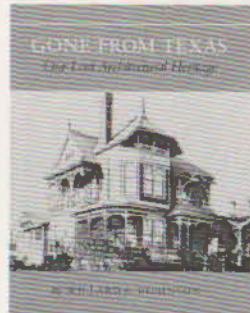


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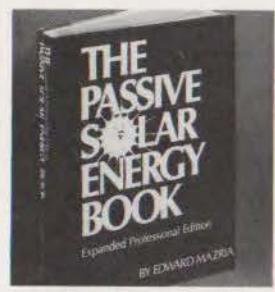


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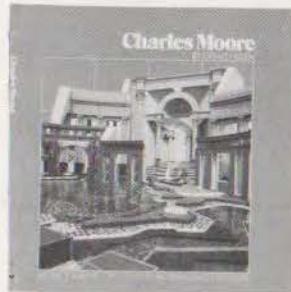
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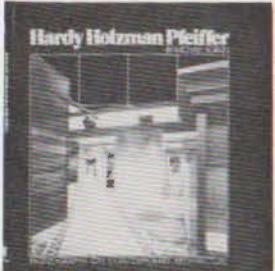


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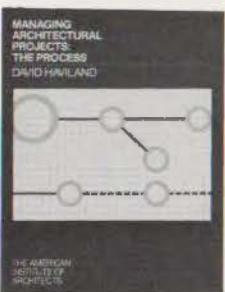


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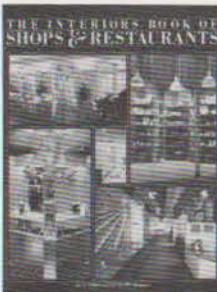


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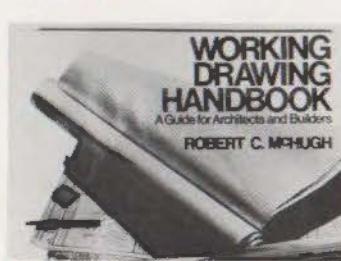
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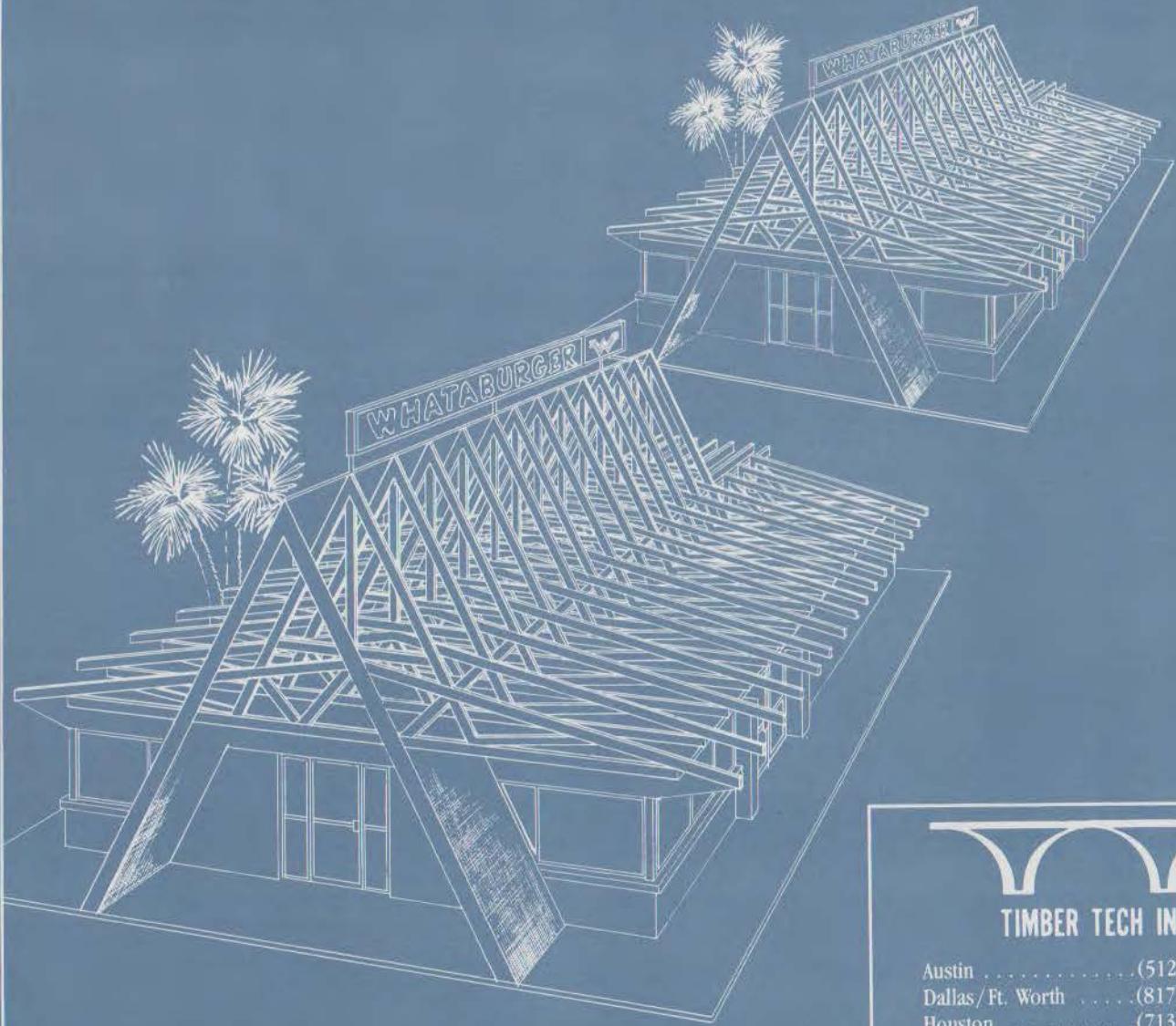
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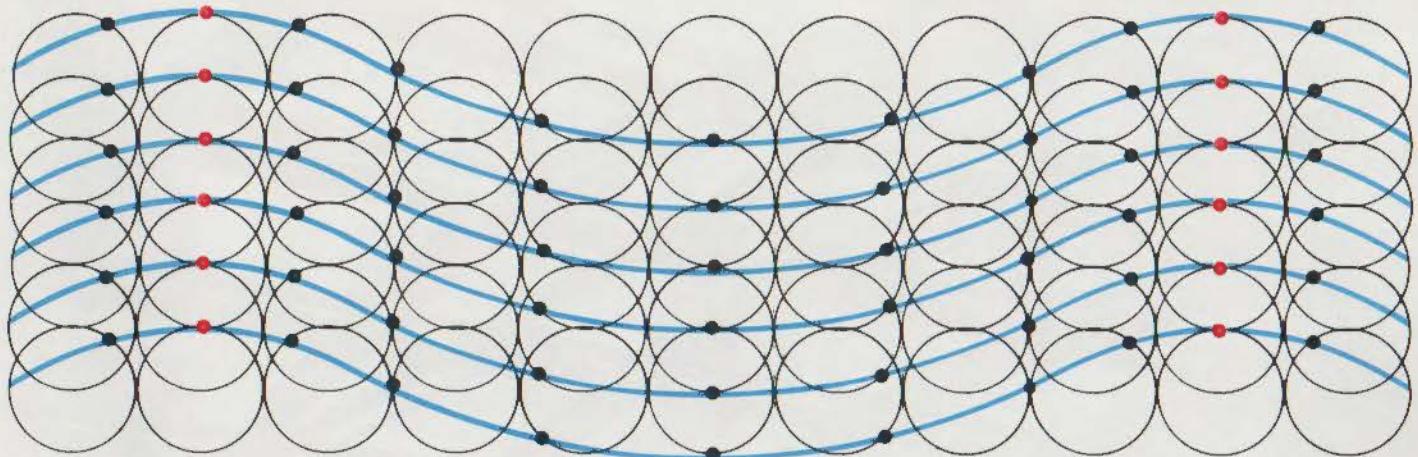
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Momentum is building now for WAVELENGTHS, the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Texas Society of Architects, set for Thursday, October 29, through Saturday, October 31, at the spectacular Bayfront Plaza Convention Center in Corpus Christi.

Don't miss the boat. Hear Keynote Speaker **Paul Goldberger**, the *New York Times* architecture critic, present his thoughts on the state of the art in Texas. Attend three of four possible mini-PDPs (on **Financial Management, Reprographics, Liability Insurance** and **Computers in Architecture**) as well as a special panel discussion on design led by Los Angeles author **John Pastier**. Help assess our progress (are we still on the right frequency?) in the wake of TSA's **TEXAS TOMORROW** goals program. And turn on to an electrifying agenda of social events, geared to the seaside setting.

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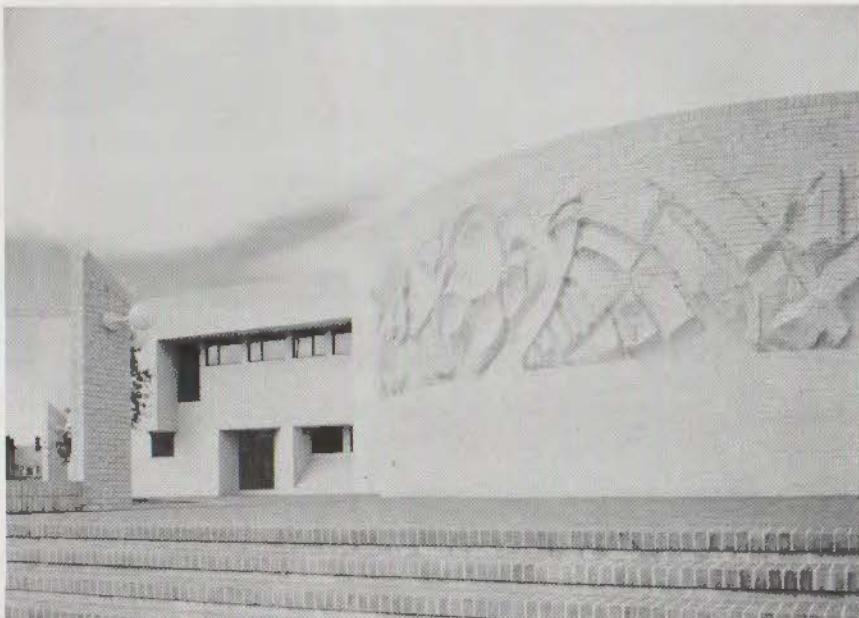
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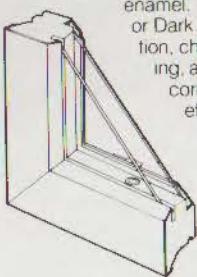
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They also reflect a lot of heat.

And here in Pueblo, Colorado, keeping cool is much more of a problem than keeping warm. That's why the architects chose the ages-old adobe form of construction for the School District 60 Administration Building. The 42,000 square foot, three-level building has load bearing walls of vertically reinforced oversize brick with insulated interior surfaces. The deep-set Pella Clad Windows with Solarcool® Bronze glazing admit an abundance of daylight, while shielding the interior from direct sunlight and glare.

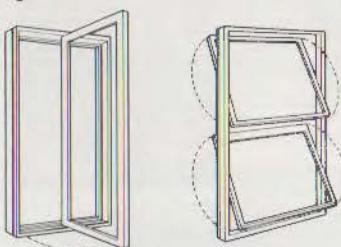
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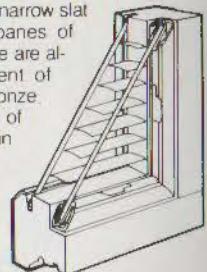


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In the News

People, Projects, Books, Schools, Events, Firms, Products

Edited by Michael McCullar



Hyder Joseph Brown, Jr., 1925-1981.

Editor's Note: The time-worn appellation "a gentleman and a scholar" took on a fresh meaning when Joe Brown wore it, which was all the time, along with his ever-present coat and tie. He had the bearing of a small-town Texas nobleman—gentle, gracious, distinguished, though without any trace of stiffness or condescension. Belying his aristocratic air, Joe Brown was warm and witty and always quick to smile and laugh, which put those around him continuously at ease, and made them glad to be continuously around him. He was a charmer. Joe Brown liked people and people liked him. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him, who are many, and who are certainly the better for it.

Hyder Joe Brown, Jr. Dead in Austin at 55

Austin architect Hyder Joe Brown, former *Texas Architect* editorial consultant, was found dead in his West Austin home June 14, apparently the victim of robbery and murder, according to police.

Neighbors reported smoke coming from his two-bedroom brick residence early Sunday morning. When firemen arrived, however, they discovered that Brown had been killed before the fire, which had been deliberately set in a bedroom closet, apparently to mislead investigators.

Friends, relatives and associates across the country were stunned by the death of the popular and prominent 55-year-old Brown, who was the director of professional affairs at the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture at the time of his death.

Hyder Joseph Brown, Jr., was born in Hillsboro on Oct. 16, 1925. Following graduation from Hillsboro High School in 1942 he briefly attended Hillsboro College, then joined the Navy, in which he served until 1946. After his discharge he enrolled in the University of Texas at Austin, where he received The Bachelor of Architecture Degree* in 1951.

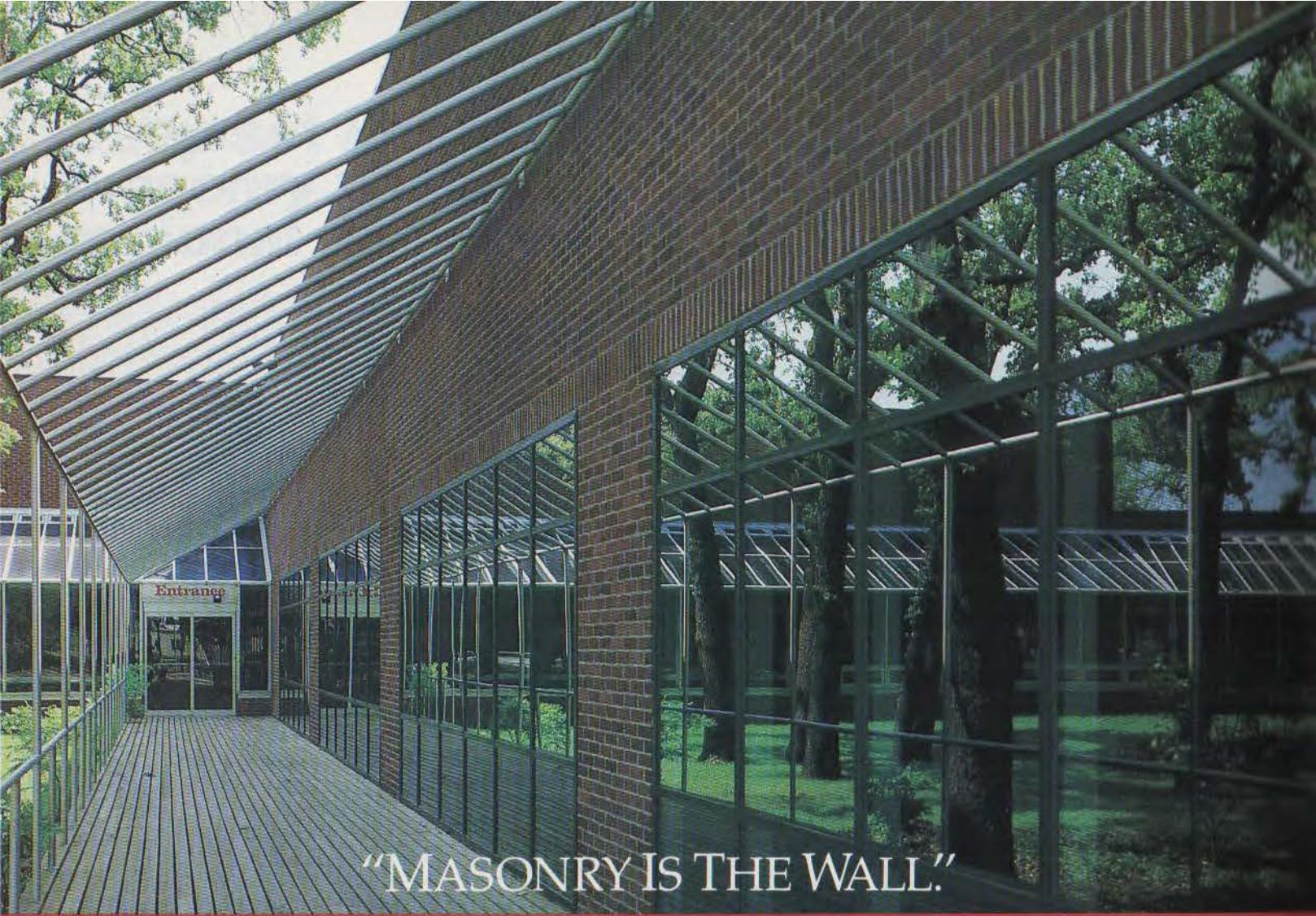
Following his graduation from college Brown served six years as a consultant in school architecture for the Texas Education Agency. Then from 1957 to 1967 he practiced architecture in San Diego and La Jolla, Calif., where he also was instrumental in producing the award-winning regional art and architecture magazine *Omniart*. He returned to Austin in 1967 and worked for two years with the firm Brooks, Barr, Graeber and White on the planning of the LBJ Library in Austin. From 1969 to 1978 he was senior associate and director of programming and development with the

Austin firm Jessen Associates. He had been director of professional affairs for the UT-Austin School of Architecture since 1979.

Long active in professional affairs, Brown served on TSA's Committee on Environmental Resources and Urban Planning and Editorial Policy Committee and as president of the Austin Chapter AIA. On the national level he served as a member of the AIA's National Judicial Committee.

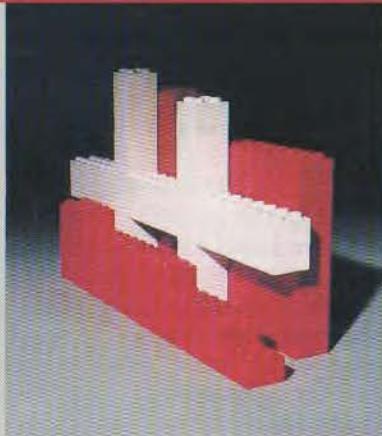
Memorial Services were held June 17 at St. David's Episcopal Church in Austin and June 18 at Marshall and Marshall Funeral Home in Hillsboro. The family has requested that, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be made to the O'Neil Ford Endowment Fund in Architecture at UT-Austin, a project to establish an O'Neil Ford Chair in Architecture in which Brown had most recently been involved. Checks should be made payable to The School of Architecture, UT-Austin, with the designation "Hyder Joe Brown O'Neil Ford Memorial," and mailed to Hal Box, FAIA, Dean, School of Architecture, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin 78712.

* Throughout his tenure as *Texas Architect*'s editorial consultant, whose role it is to monitor each issue for technical accuracy, Brown tried time and again to get the editors to refer to academic degrees in a more formal fashion. Ink from his green felt tip would invariably be scrawled in the galley margins, changing the more conversational "bachelor's degree in architecture" to the more dignified "The Bachelor of Architecture Degree," as it was his nature to be so dignified. For three years the editors overruled him on this matter, which was a rather rare occurrence, since his guidance was always keen, artful and invaluable. We can't bring ourselves to overrule him on this one. We think he may even have had something there.



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Austin Chapter AIA Lends Qualified Support To Alternate Avenue Plan

The Austin Chapter AIA has given its qualified blessings to a Congress Avenue beautification plan prepared by a special city task force in an effort to make all of the people happy at last.

A plan already approved and funded was scrapped by the city council last February after downtown merchants succeeded in gathering enough signatures on a petition to halt the project, which would have reduced the Avenue from six lanes to four and increased the width of the sidewalks to 19½ feet. (See *Texas Architect*, May/June 1981.)

The \$3 million task force alternative calls for the Avenue to retain its six lanes, according to task force chairman Robert Barnstone, but about 40 percent of existing head-in parking from Third Street to 11th Street would be replaced by concrete parking "peninsulas," which would extend the existing sidewalks 20 feet. These peninsulas would be designed to accommodate sidewalk cafes, kiosks, newsstands and public seating as well as angled parking. Texas red oaks would be planted every 42 feet.

Austin architect Allen McCree, a member of Austin AIA's executive committee, says the chapter is willing to endorse the plan if the following conditions are met:

- no trees are lost through "attrition," i.e., if no budgetary or political snags exclude any trees from the plan at the last minute;
- more trees are planted so that more shade is provided along the sidewalks; and
- the unity of the project is insured by employing only "design professionals" (architects and landscape architects) to control project design and cost.

The architects also want the trees to be placed symmetrically on both sides of the street to be compatible with the Beaux-Arts formality of the Capitol and other buildings along the Avenue.

If the conditions are not met, McCree says, Austin architects will present an alternative to the alternative, which they have designed to be simpler and to feature more trees.

Emphasizing the Avenue's importance as the "Main Street of Texas," McCree says local architects want to be able to support the plan 100 percent and to see more support come from across the state.

"What we're talking about," he says, "is a 200-year legacy, not the effects six months from now."



Grove Court townhouses, Houston.

Taft Architects Wins Design Award in Homes For Better Living Program

The Houston firm Taft Architects has won an award in the 1981 Homes for Better Living Program for its design of the Grove Court townhouse complex in Houston.

The residential design competition is sponsored by AIA in cooperation with *Housing*, a McGraw-Hill business publication for the housing and light construction industry.

Grove Court also was a winning project in the sixth annual residential design awards program sponsored by the Houston Chapter AIA and *Houston Home Garden* magazine. (See *Texas Architect*, May/June 1981.)

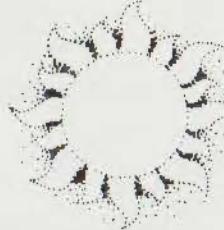
The winning projects in the Homes for Better Living competition are being published in *Housing*, beginning with the May 1981 issue.

Lubbock Chapter AIA Takes Part in Third Annual Lubbock Arts Festival

The first three days in May saw thousands of West Texans filling the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center for the third annual Lubbock Arts Festival. As a symphony orchestra and ballet as well as square dancers performed, some 175 artists and craftsmen sold more than \$100,000 of their wares to the milling crowds.

Among 25 other local non-profit organizations displaying their particular interest in the community was the Lubbock Chapter AIA, which exhibited scale models, color renderings and paintings by area architects in a booth labeled "Architecture is Art."

—Tom Davis



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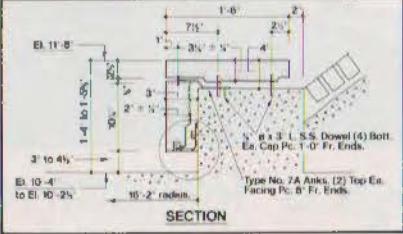
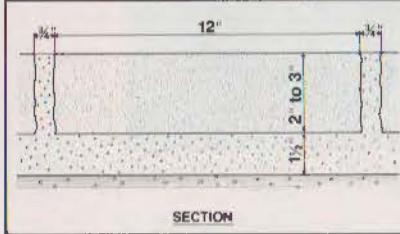
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West Texas Chapter AIA Presents '81 Design Awards

The West Texas Chapter AIA cited nine projects for design excellence in its 1981 Design Awards Program during a dinner May 12 at the Midland Country Club.



Davenport residence, Midland.



O'Donnell residence, Dallas.

Winning top honors in the program was the Midland firm Frank Welch Associates, which received Honor Awards for its Robert Davenport residence in Midland and the Peter O'Donnell residence in Dallas.

Other awards in the general category went to Frank Welch Associates and Ford, Powell & Carson of San Antonio for their Midland Center in Midland; Ford Powell & Carson and Frank Welch Associates for the Midland Community Theater; Sellers, McSpadden, Gober of San Angelo for the Bobby Joe Davis residence in Throckmorton; Frank Welch Associates for a pool and pool house for Mr. and Mrs. Faye Sarofim in Houston; and Kilgore, Barbutti & Schmidt of San Angelo for the Service Office Building for General Telephone of the Southwest in Kilgore.

An award for excellence in interior design went to Midland architect Lawrence H. Connolly for his Winter House in Midland.

Midland architect Walter Pate received the program's award for design excellence in an unfinished project for the Williams Company office building in Fort Stockton.

Jurors for this year's program were Professor Walter Calvert, AIA, of Texas



Tech University in Lubbock; Austin architect Chartier Newton, AIA; and Downing Thomas, AIA, of Dallas.

Texas Projects And Architects Cited In APA Competition

An Austin residence by an Iowa architect and designs by two Houston architects were recently cited in two 1981 national design awards programs sponsored by the American Plywood Association.

Des Moines architect Tom Clause received a \$1,000 First Award in the tenth annual Plywood Design Awards Program, cosponsored by *Professional Builder & Apartment Business* magazine, for his de-



Clause residence, Lago Vista.

sign of the Clause residence in Lago Vista near Austin.

"The house gains a great deal of exciting space through the use of volume and a large amount of glazing," the jury said of the project. "The simplicity of the fireplace and the interior spaces is very elegant."

Jurors for the Plywood Design Awards program were John D. Bloodgood, AIA, president of John D. Bloodgood Architects in Des Moines; J. Donald Bowman, AIA, of Mithun Associates in Bellevue, Wash.; and Edward A. Schmitt, AIA, of Bob Schmitt Homes in Strongsville, Ohio.

In the American Plywood Association's 1981 Innovations in Housing design competition, Houston architect John Cox, a designer with the Houston firm Caudill Rowlett Scott, won a citation of merit for his entry, described by judges as "a skillful expression, simple and unique."

And two-time Innovations in Housing award winner Peter Zweig, a professor of architecture at the University of Houston, received a citation of merit for his entry, which jurors judged to be "a thoughtful, flexible design."

Jurors for this year's competition were James I. Nagle, FAIA, principal in the Chicago firm Nagle, Hartray & Associ-



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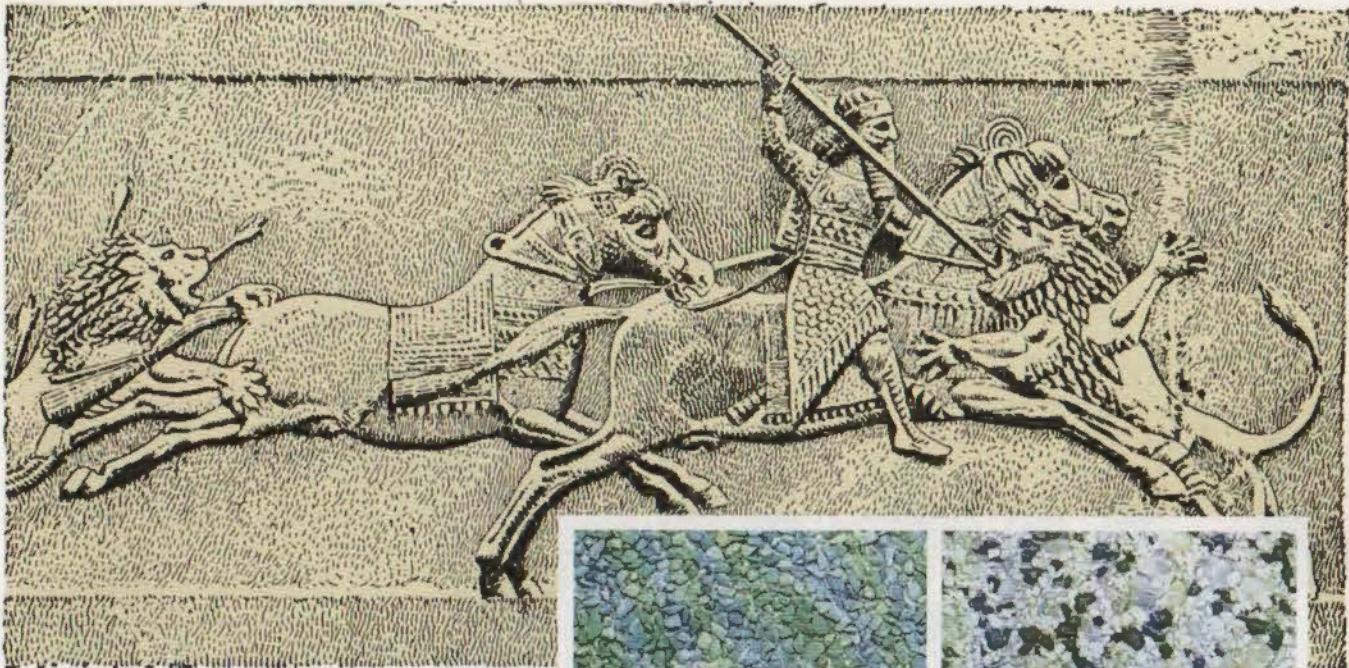
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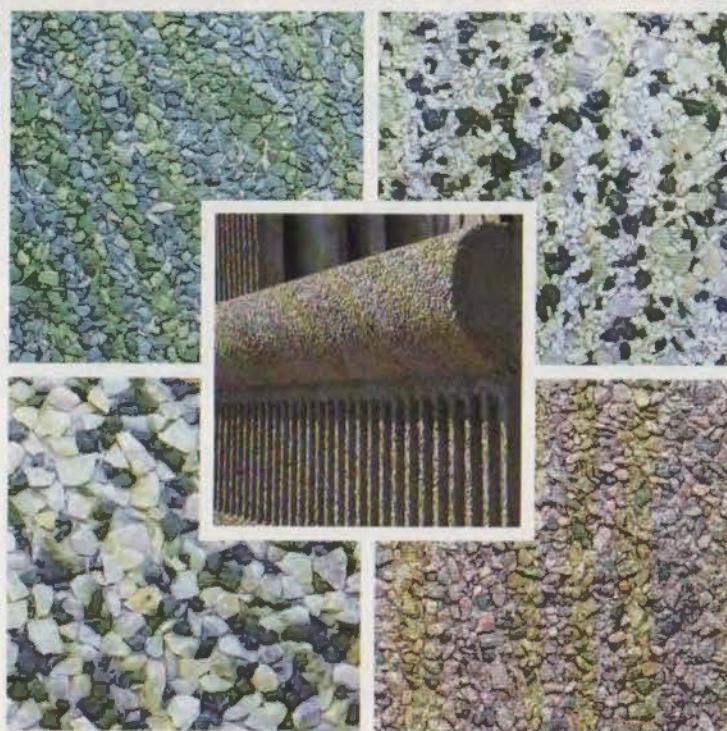
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ates; James A. Murphy, executive editor of *Progressive Architecture* magazine; Frank Anton, editor of *Builder* magazine; Randall W. Lewis, with Lewis Homes in Upland, Calif.; and David Haupert, building and remodelling editor of *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine.

Credit Omitted

We regret the inadvertent omission of the photo credit for Gunnar Birkerts' IBM Information Systems Center in Sterling Forest, N.Y., on page 63 of the May/June issue. Credit for this stunning image goes to Balthazar Korab.

Projects in Progress



First National Bank Towers, Dallas.

Plans Announced For Two 70-Story Towers in Dallas

Plans have been announced for construction of two 70- to 75-story office towers for First National Bank on a four-block site in downtown Dallas once slated as an expansion area for One Main Place.

According to project architects Jarvis Putty Jarvis of Dallas, the master plan for the \$400 million development also calls for a 600-room luxury hotel, a 3,000-car parking structure and an underground pedestrianway, complete with restaurants and shops, which will link all the buildings in the complex.

Architect Don Jarvis says they hope to begin "serious construction" on the first office tower sometime in late 1981 or

Continued on page 82.

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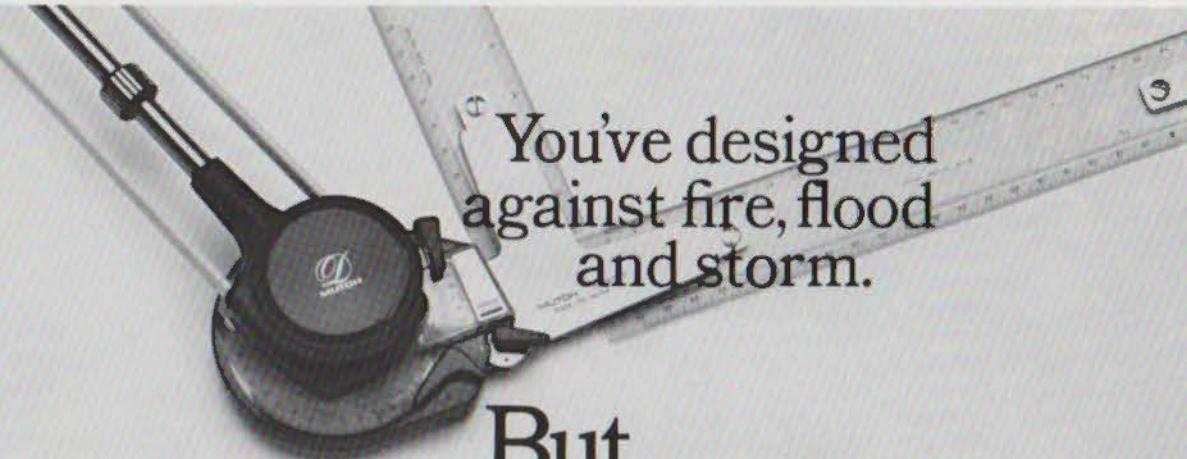
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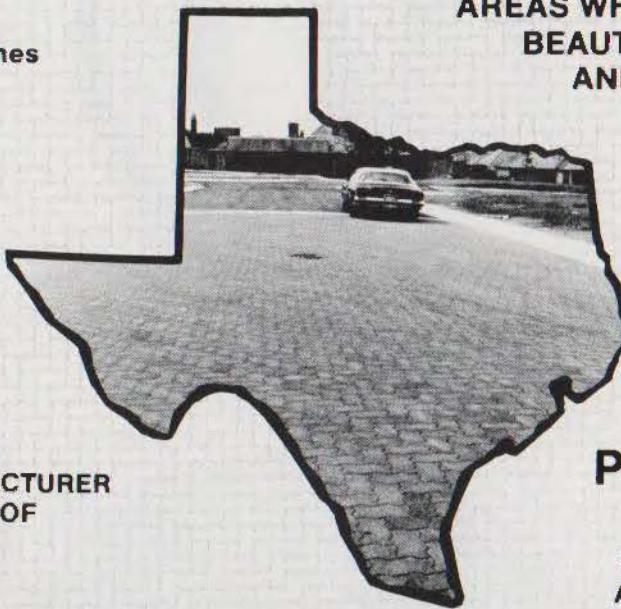
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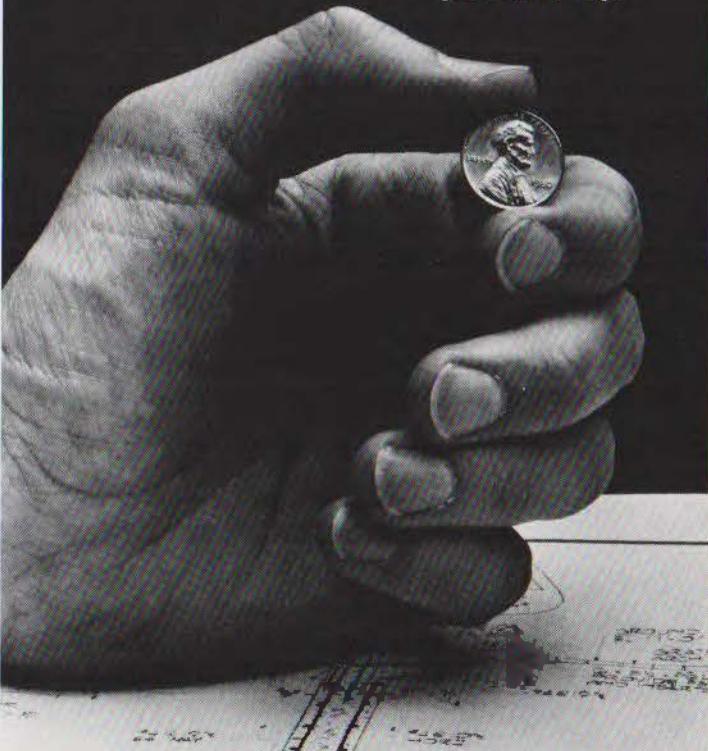


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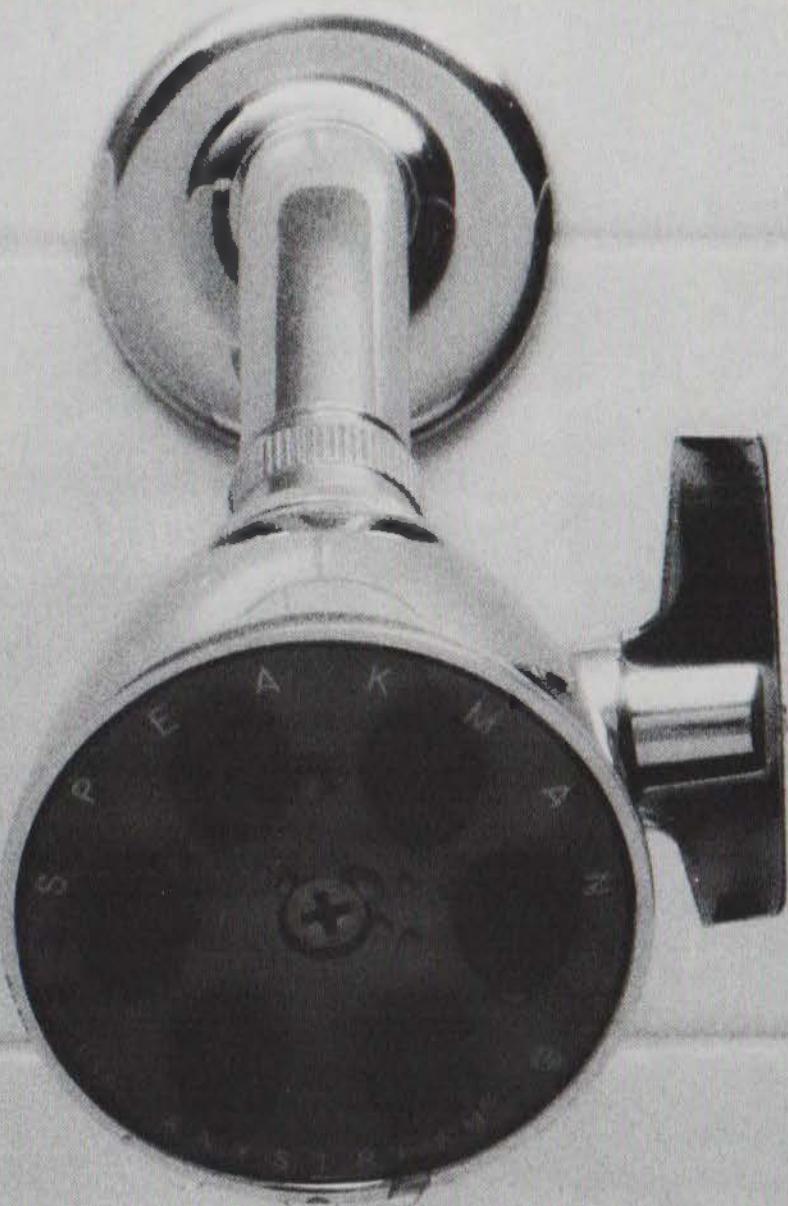
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About this Issue

The resurgence of Regionalism in architecture as a topic of some import can be ascribed to a number of related conditions. On a general level, the regional design approach—in its reverence for the past and its respect for local tradition—is merely one manifestation of a pervasive cultural phenomenon: the hearkening back of America to its roots. On a more basic level, Regionalism enjoys renewed respectability now that the days of cheap energy are over and climatological responsiveness—one of its hallmarks—is obligatory once again. Furthermore, during this time of ideological transition and re-appraisal within the realm of architecture, Regionalism holds some promise for those who seek a kind of bedrock philosophy—a set of immutable values—to which they can cling.

We do not set out within these pages to treat such a complex subject definitively; Regionalism is a topic which warrants periodic attention and focus. (Indeed, this discussion will continue in our very next issue with articles on pragmatic design and design for climate). Our approach herein has been to minimize the now-familiar historical account of early Texas architecture as a fusion of regional conditions and diverse ethnic influences. Accepting these antecedents as given, our primary attempt has been to address the question of their relevance for today. One authority on Texas Regionalism, UT-Austin School of Architecture Dean Hal Box, FAIA, has stated the regionalist hypothesis as follows: "There are qualities of the architecture of a region—evolved over a period of time through formative cultural and natural forces—which produce an architecture of intrinsic value and appropriateness to that region. The architecture so derived is distinguished from international, personal and individualistic styles and theories by the responses that architecture makes through design to the region's own particular cultural and natural forces." The articles which follow can be seen as a collection of direct and indirect responses to that hypotheses. It is hoped that, taken as a whole, these responses will serve as an amplification of Regionalism—that architectural movement, that form-giving philosophy, that elusive sensibility.

—Larry Paul Fuller



*Brooks/Drake House, Fayetteville,
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The editors wish to thank Contributing Editor Peter Papademetriou for his assistance in planning this issue on Regionalism.



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Regionalism in Architecture

An Essay

By J. B. Jackson

The question reads like one of those multiple choice items we run across in exams designed for computerized scoring: "What have the following places in common: New England, the Ozarks, the West Coast, the Southwest, Central Texas?"

The answer is easy: they are all regions of the United States. There are others, of course: Cajun Louisiana, Tidewater Virginia, the Berkshires; and if we included places only locally recognized as regions, such as the Flint Hills of Kansas or the Finger Lakes in Upper New York State, we could enumerate at least fifty distinct regions in this supposedly homogenized country.

Who says so? Certainly not the geographers. There was a time in the past when they too thought in terms of such regions and went to great pains to define them as areas which were somehow unique—scenically, historically, or perhaps according to kinds of agriculture. But they have long since given up the effort. They point out, quite correctly, that Maine is very different from Connecticut, and that Tidewater Virginia belongs to Metropolitan Washington and none of them agree as to where the Southwest ends and begins. Does it include Oklahoma? Does it actually include all of New Mexico and Arizona?

The explanation for this rejection of the old-fashioned concept of the region is simple: regions (according to geographers and economists) are best understood in terms of centers and markets and the distribution of population; so we have regions based on important cities or the location of certain industries. Some geographers now identify half a hundred new-type regions, but at least one influential geographer divides the United States into two, and no more than two, regions—one East of the Mississippi, the other to the West.

Nevertheless, we laymen persist in defining regions in our own way. We admit that the regions we like to visit have no precise boundaries. Yet we recognize them, and agree among ourselves as to where they are. We recognize them in a very unscientific but very satisfactory way: by the impression they make on our senses.

That is to say, a region is a place, small or large, ugly or beautiful, which has its own sounds, its own smells, its own tastes, its own shape and color and feel. If this seems a hopelessly subjective approach, we should bear in mind that we identify a countryside or a city we are exploring as tourists by its special kind of food, by the accent we hear on the street, by the smells which greet us, to say nothing of the kind of weather, the quality of light at certain times of day.

All of these sensory impressions add up to a special atmosphere, a special experience—usually agreeable because it is new. And no doubt the strongest of these regional impressions comes from the forms we see.

By that I mean the man-made forms, the towns and streets and houses and gardens which we look at with a special kind of interest because we like to compare the setting of everyday existence in a strange region with the setting familiar to us when we are home. Here the sensory response is particularly direct and strong: how different the appearance of dwellings and churches and public buildings! How different the layout of the streets! How to account for these differences? Are they a matter of history or climate or building technology, or merely a matter of fashion? Architecture, in other words, is probably the most visual aspect—at least for the tourist—of regional uniqueness. It is at once the most superficial and the most cherished sign of a strictly regional way of

life; and often the simpler the specimen the better: its use of a local building material—adobe or stone, the pitch of its roof, its relation to street or garden or field, its primitive or old-fashioned construction, even its attempts at ornamentation and "style"—all make the regional house attractive and mystifying. They suggest hitherto unsuspected ways of living and working and adjusting to environmental factors; they suggest another age and another part of the world, and that is what we travel to see.

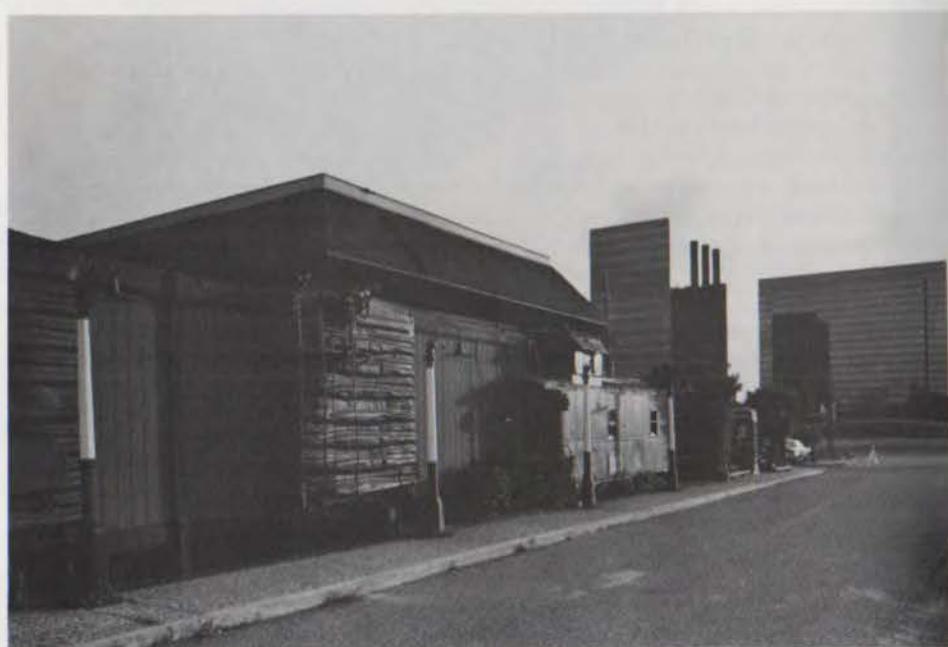
The irony of regional architecture in the United States is of course that the social and economic forces which once produced it have ceased almost everywhere to operate. We do not have to be reminded of how the diffusion of new and inexpensive building materials and techniques and new ways of living and working have largely done away with local dwelling types in all parts of the country—among the Navajo as well as among New Englanders, in cities as well as in remote villages. No matter how valiantly we try to save or restore the remnants of Colonial or 19th century regional design, the stock is fast disappearing, or what is perhaps even more regrettable, is being refurbished and gentrified and turned into "museums." In regions of unusual prosperity and historic self-consciousness, whole streets—even whole towns—have been embalmed, as it were, and robbed of all vitality.

How valuable these examples of "historic preservation" are remains a matter of opinion. But at the same time a new kind of regional architecture appears to be spreading throughout the country. It is a kind of commercial or tourist-oriented regionalism that many educated Americans like to ridicule: the "Colonial" motel, the "authentic" Williamsburg brick gas station, the adobe shopping center, the Texas Hill Country gift

shop, its parking lot enclosed by a snake fence. Reconditioned brick, weatherbeaten slab, shingles and fragments of Victorian scrollwork conceal the cement blocks and steel beams of thousands of new commercial buildings all across the nation. In size, in function, even in location, more often than not they are totally unsuited to the small, domestic-scale architectural idiom they seek to imitate.

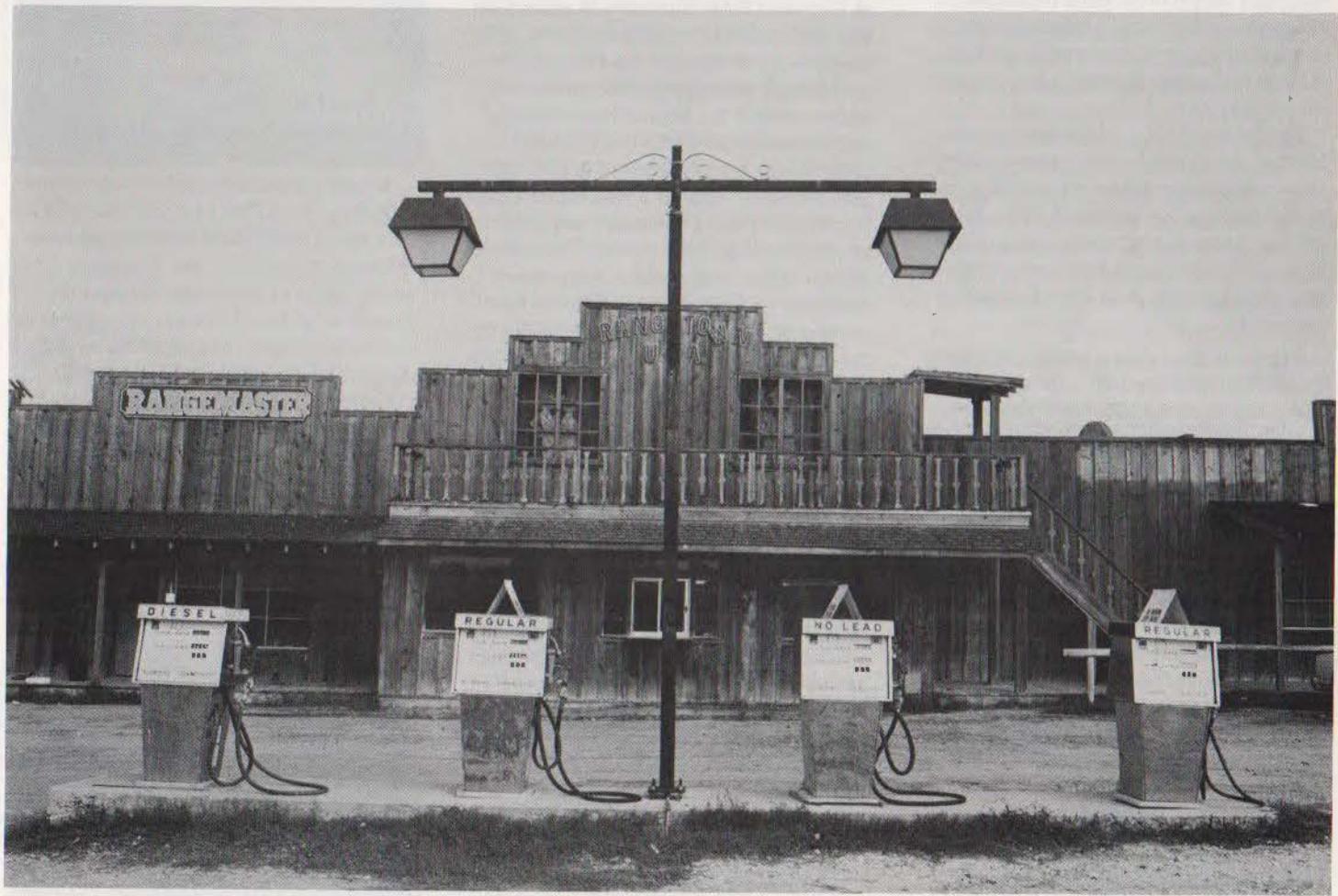
Is anybody fooled by this kind of architectural regionalism? I doubt it; but the response of some architectural critics amounts at times to a kind of self-deception: insofar as they deign to comment on a motel disguised (for instance) as a Southern plantation, they denounce the inappropriateness of the treatment, its vulgarity, and dismiss it as "pop-culture." The same authorities who devote many thousands of wise words to an analysis of Philip Johnson's flirting with Neo-Classical forms—is it or is it not true Post-Modernism?—will dismiss the new and subdued rusticism of McDonald's or any other roadside establishment as a shrewd attempt to woo the family trade or to devise "a new image."

Commercial neo-regionalism—if that is the right term—deserves a better press. It would be a mistake, certainly, to take it seriously as architecture, but what it does represent, it seems to me, is a new and awkward approach to the symbolic features of architecture. It represents, perhaps quite unconsciously, an attempt to re-introduce some of the sensual appeal, along with the historic appeal, which traditional architecture usually possessed. The motel or the bank or the fast food outlet is not by itself an ingratiating architectural form. It is natural for it to want to appeal to the public. We should, however, be thankful that the day is past when such establishments sought to suggest luxury and ostentation. We all grow tired of imitation textures, imitation antiques, imitation rusticity and small-town regionalism. But in time commercial neo-regionalism will also grow tired of them, and devise a style of its own. In the meantime, it is not unreasonable to interpret this attempt to appeal to the senses—and to historic sentiment—as a potential enrichment of all kinds of architecture. Regionalism, architecturally speaking, is not much helped by these inept adaptations, but the American scene is brighter—and I cannot help believing a little more human—as a consequence of these efforts to make architecture speak to us and please us.



John Brinckerhoff Jackson, of Santa Fe, was editor and publisher of Landscape Magazine from 1951 to 1968. He has written several books on forces affecting the American landscape and has been a popular lecturer on the subject at Harvard, Berkeley and UT-Austin.





Photographer Paul Hester drew upon examples of "commercial neo-regionalism" in and around Houston to produce this portfolio.

Texas Regionalism 1925–1950

An Elusive Sensibility

By Peter C. Papademetriou, AIA

Regionalism as a concept and a sensibility has provoked a continuing interest during the Modern period. It remains as a constant theme, reappearing at intervals as a kind of mediating force, or even a potential point of synthesis. Our moment in history is another time in which the notion of regionalism seeks definition, although the historical evidence seems to suggest that with each reappraisal the definition changes slightly, and perhaps will remain ever-elusive.

By the late 1950s, second-generation Modern architects already were open in their acknowledgment of regionalism as an influence on architectural form. James Stirling wrote of the reassessment of indigenous building and traditional methods and materials. And Paul Rudolph observed:

The great architectural movements of the past have been precisely formulated in a given area, been adopted and spread to other regions, suiting themselves more or less to the particular way of life of the new area. . . . *Regionalism is one way toward that richness in Architecture which other movements enjoyed and which is so lacking today. . . .*

In 1948, the Museum of Modern Art held a symposium on "What is Happening to Modern Architecture?" at which it was observed that the early effects of regionalism on the International Style were being felt in England as the "New Empiricism" and in America as the "Bay Region Style." Henry-Russell Hitchcock, a participant in the MOMA symposium, could observe over a decade later:

Certainly it is time, however, that the extreme insistence on a sort of modernism in architecture that should be in its every aspect as different as possible from earlier architectures has diminished. Architects today are less afraid of continuity and partial identity in theory, in materials and in emotional content with buildings of the past than in the twenties. But it chiefly creates confusion, I believe, to call these tendencies "post-modern," "anti-modern"

or "neo-traditional," however badly some generic name for them has evidently come to be needed.

It further should be noted that a degree of precision in our use of terms is necessary. One glibly speaks of "mannerism" in architecture, but the specific phenomenon of Mannerism is limited to the period of the mid-1500s. Similarly, Regionalism was an actual historical movement, from the mid-1920s through the early 1930s. In Texas, it was this specific movement which created the sensibility remaining with us and is particularly key to an understanding of the transition of architecture into an altered Modernism. Texas Regionalism was a necessary historical bridge between late Revivalist Eclecticism and the Modernist esthetic represented initially by the International Style, which underwent its own transformation during the same period. Regionalism was at once a conservative formal tradition (in the true meaning of "conservation") and a sensibility in which the visual leap to a Modern building was not great.

Ideological Conservatism

The architectural vanguard in Texas generally has been ideologically conservative, reflecting a pragmatic tendency which has recognized the phenomenon of architecture-as-style. In the absence of a didactic tradition, seemingly opposing attitudes have been allowed to coexist. An obvious example is the practice of El Paso's Henry C. Trost. His catholicity in architectural form was such that, as Lloyd Engelbrecht observed:

During the years in which Trost designed buildings which show an awareness and appreciation of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan, he also turned out a number of designs in what would have been described by many at the time, disapprovingly, as the "historic styles."

One may also turn to two houses of 1940 belonging to the two principal partners of the Houston firm MacKie and

Kamrath to illustrate the continuity of a conservative tradition in consort, or at least parallel, with progressive formalism. MacKie's own house is a traditional, almost classic, box while Kamrath's represents the obvious reflection of Frank Lloyd Wright as well as a regional sensibility, particularly in its configuration and orientation. These two aspects—the willingness to acknowledge tradition and the generally conservative stance towards *avant-garde* ideologies—were conditions to which the ideas of Regionalism could attach themselves.

By the 1920s, during the isolationism following World War I, there emerged the concept of what Nancy Heller and Julia Williams termed ". . . an 'American Art,' an art that was not based on imported European styles, that was not centered in one or two major cities, and that was accessible and understandable to *all* Americans." This concept centered around Regionalism, which serviced as an understood catchall for the issues at hand, yet presented the difficulty of not being a comprehensive or intellectualized body of theory. As William Jordy observes, ". . . regionalism is a changing conception, assuming different meanings in different contexts." During this post-war period, significant social change was reflected in the arts; Regionalism is associated with a return to realism and may be viewed in part as the manifestation of the struggle to come to terms with a new cultural order.

David Williams, O'Neil Ford

It is not surprising to learn, as Jordy notes, that those who identified the closest with the regionalist idea had ". . . themselves grown up on farms or had some intimate boyhood contact with . . . the indigenous world." Texas Regionalism centers around two such individuals, David R. Williams and O'Neil Ford. Both came from a rural background and de-

Mackie House: classic box.



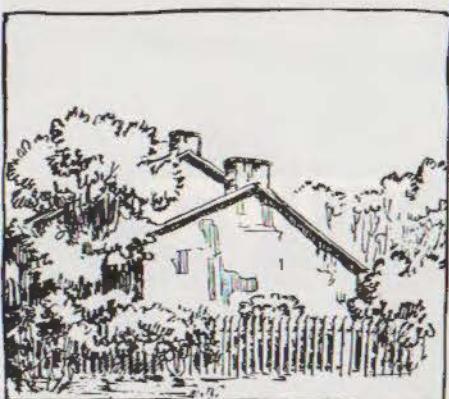
Kamrath House: Wrightian/regional.



UT-Austin architecture archives



House in Castroville photographed by David Williams.



O'Neil Ford's sketch of same house as above.

UT-Austin architecture archives



National Youth Administration photo (1940) of Joseph Carle House in Castroville. Reminiscent of Elbert Williams House in Dallas (page 39).

veloped their unique attitudes in architecture outside established patterns. Partially because of the personalities involved, the vicissitudes of careers and personal indifference to accurate documentation, it is often difficult to separate the mutual influences between Williams and Ford. However, there is no doubt of their close collaboration, or of the extent to which their intense interest in Texas vernacular architecture contributed to their association.

David Williams was born in a dugout near Childress in 1890, took an International Correspondence School course in drafting while working for the Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad and in 1912 enrolled at the University of Texas. In 1916 he left before graduating and went to work as a civil engineer in Tampico, Mexico. In 1922, he had married and went first to Fontainebleau and then the American Academy in Rome, returning to Dallas in 1924. In the decade after his return, Williams began to visit and document the architecture of early Texas buildings, which led to both written and design formulations of Regionalist architecture.

O'Neil Ford, born in Pink Hill in 1905, was the son of a railroad engineer whose death left Ford the head of his family at age 11. A bond of crafts talent held the family together. His mother was a weaver, as is his sister; his younger brother Lynn was a craftsman whose wood carvings have always been a part of Ford's work. Ford likewise had taken an International Correspondence School course in drafting and briefly attended the Normal School (now North Texas State University) in Denton, but left after less than two years and sought out David Williams in 1926.

The architectural issue in Texas Regionalism was to respond to contemporary functional requirements with what

Stephen Fox has labeled "Regional cultural authenticity." As Williams himself observed, ". . . there is full proof that some of our grandfathers and most of our great-grandfathers possessed the refined taste and culture for which we have been searching abroad." These qualities were synthesized and given imagery through the surveys of Pioneer Texas buildings undertaken by Williams and Ford in a focus of some intensity from 1924 to 1928. Although both were talented draftsmen, Williams favored the camera and Ford the sketchpad. The images contained in Williams' photograph collections indicate less of a pure historicism than a process of observation which could lead to a more generalized borrowing. The photos often were worked over, with notes written directly on them; it is likely that they functioned as working sources. The images may also be seen as recurring themes, aspects looked at time and again. The translation from original sources to working model, not to mention the process of interaction between the two architects, may be observed in the fact that photographs by Williams bear sketches by Ford directly on the back, some Williams photographs were sketched by Ford, and once again translated by Williams into pen and ink.

The examples looked at centered around Fredericksburg and Castroville, as well as other towns such as Salado or Quili. What is relevant is that their visual attributes reflect what we might call a modern affinity toward simplicity —direct use of materials and a certain degree of abstraction in form. As Williams wrote in "An Indigenous Architecture," in 1928:

Their forebears have left for them an architectural art as beautiful in its purpose as anything that has yet been built . . . beautiful because they were simple and natural. It is better to throw away our habit of supposing everything beautiful in

Williams' drawing of his McKie House in Corsicana, 1929.



Texas had a foreign origin, and to admit that these little houses are not French or Spanish or even English at all, but are natural, native Texas art suited to our climate and indigenous to our soil.

In a later article Williams declared:

We are discovering our traditions, our legends, our folk songs—and our native architecture. . . . Their style is modern, for it satisfies all the requirements of modern design and construction. It can be developed in perfect harmony with what is being done in modern architecture. . . .

The first phase of giving form to this sensibility might be called *Formal Regionalism*. That is, a direct heuristic connection was made with the Pioneer precedents, in an equation which also gave the early Regionalist designs an instantaneous pedigree. This use of direct borrowing was also appropriate in a conservative esthetic climate, representing as it did a reappraisal of form rather than its wholesale abandonment. Jerry Bywaters, a regional painter and personal friend of Williams and Ford (who designed two houses for Bywaters), observed, ". . . architecture, like language, is a continuous development, and . . . to advocate an architecture entirely cut off from the past is equivalent to advocating that we abandon English for Esperanto."

Williams' McKie House in Corsicana (1929) embodies a certain classic refinement with both modern and Pioneer references—standing seam copper roof, screened porches, shutters, dormers and a modern emphasis of horizontality in projecting brick courses. The Warner Clark house in Dallas (1930) also combined old and new themes, particularly in its collection of details and handling of materials, while arcades facilitated cross ventilation. But it is with the Elbert Williams House in Dallas (1932) that Williams achieves the highest level of Formal Regionalism. Its visual antecedents are many, but the basic reference is Castroville, with the stone mass anchored by an opposing set of chimneys on the gable ends, specifically as in the Carle and Vance Houses. These are not simple quotations, but skilled reinterpretation to fit the specifics of a client. The Elbert Williams house also suggests an aspect of planning and orientation supportive of what might be called *Regionalist Functionalism*, as its dominant L-shape is oriented to catch the southeastern breezes and sited to pull these off the adjacent creek as a means of cooling.

Williams went to Washington after 1932 to join the Library of Congress Committee on the Historic American

Buildings Survey and over the next dozen years served in a variety of roles, being the director in 1936 of the Works Projects Division of the National Youth Administration. He remained in contact with O'Neil Ford, who after 1930 had his own practice. As an NYA director, Williams systematically revisited the sites of central Texas and had his beloved buildings documented. Fifty-five years old at the end of World War II, and slightly crippled from a war injury, Williams never resumed active practice, retiring to Louisiana.

It is in the work of his younger colleague, O'Neil Ford, that both the formal and functional aspects of Regionalism were developed, and because Ford was what Bywaters termed a "purist designer with modern inclinations," an eventual merging with modernism was made possible. The Stephen Kahn House in Dallas (1932) shows functional distinctions of orientation in squared-off massing to the north and sheltering eaves over an open balcony on the South.

John Staub

In passing, it should be noted that even the work of essentially eclectic architects such as Houston's John Staub recognized that history and historical style were implicit in an analysis of the architectural problem. David Williams had given Staub a collection of his photographs, as well as a personally inscribed reprint copy of his article "Toward a Southwestern Architecture." Staub himself had written:

Is it not wiser for us to seek inspiration in the architecture developed in our own climate with materials at hand and adjust it to the tastes and requirements of our day, rather than to force the adaptation of types derived in foreign environments under different climatic conditions? This interpretation illustrated that Texas should have no single architectural character, for the humid Gulf Coast suggested a form Staub called "Latin Colonial," derived from Louisiana sources and exemplified in Houston by his Junior League (now Brennan's Restaurant) building (1929) and the Bayou Club (1940), both of which also exhibit attributes of Regionalist Functionalism.

O'Neil Ford by the late 1930s had changed in his use of historical borrowing. When he was appointed project architect for the restoration of San Antonio La Villita in 1939, one of the first historic preservation projects in the United States, he wanted to avoid a sterile reconstruction and essentially failed to see the problem as one of historicism. In fact, Ford began to speak of

Williams' drawing of his Clark House in Dallas, 1930.

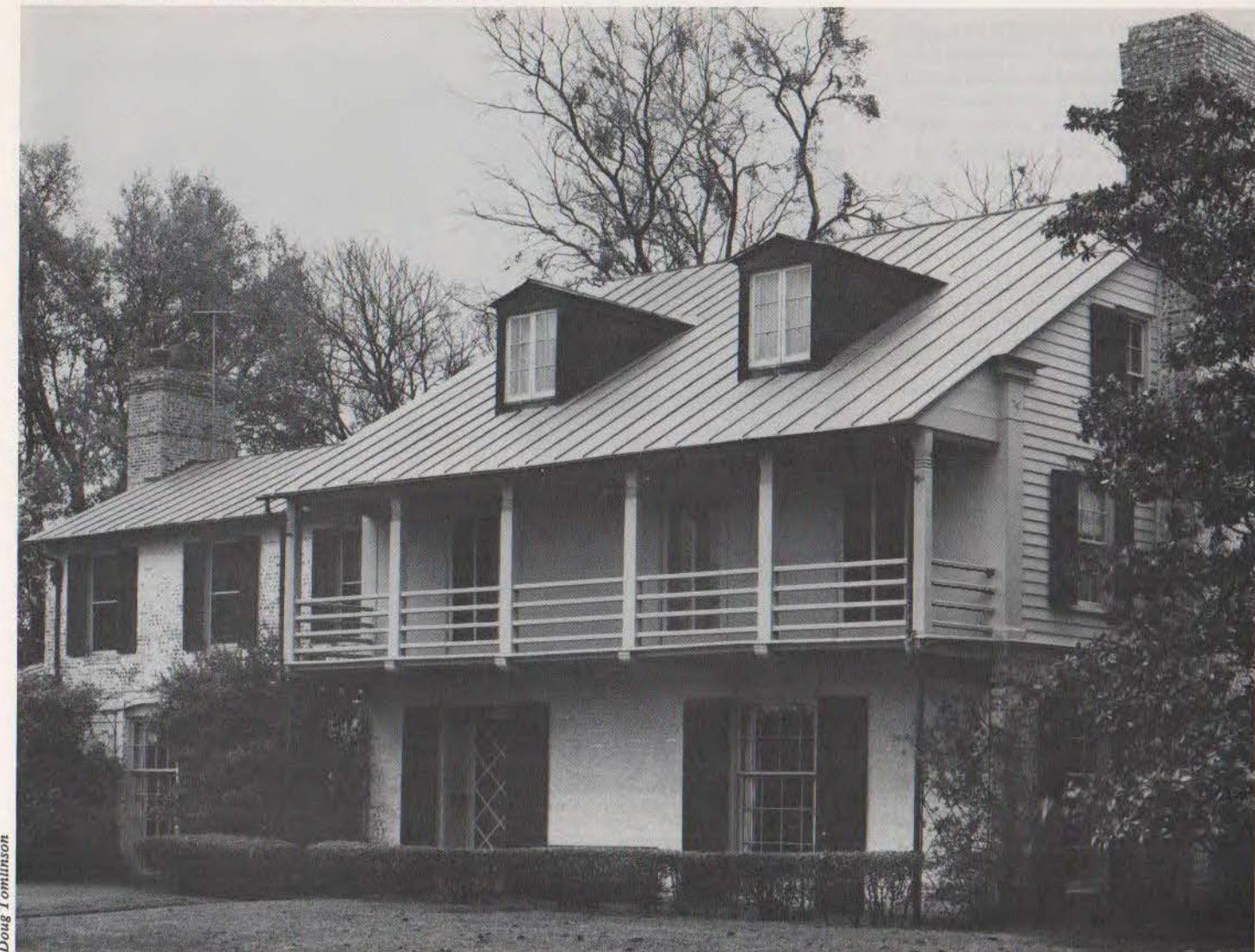


Detail, Clark House.



Courtesy of Mrs. David R. Williams

Elbert Williams House, Dallas, 1932, by David Williams.

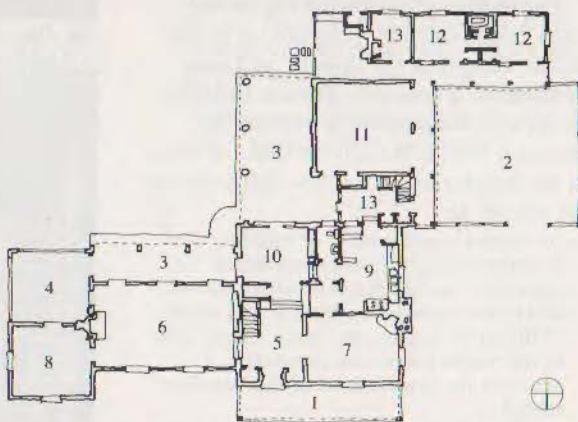


Doug Tomlinson



Bill Cox

Rear view, Elbert Williams House. L-shape catches breezes from adjacent creek.



Key to First Floor Plan: 1. Entry Terrace, 2. Motor Court, 3. Covered Porch, 4. Screen Porch, 5. Hall, 6. Living, 7. Dining, 8. Den, 9. Kitchen, 10. Breakfast, 11. Garage, 12. Servants' Rooms, 13. Utility, Laundry.

Note: Sketches and drawings by O'Neil Ford and Dave Williams courtesy of SMU Press (Southwest Review), which next year will publish a Williams biography by Muriel Quest McCarthy.

a new indigenous architecture.

The problem inherent in Formal Regionalism was observed by others as well. Buford Pickens of Tulane warned of "superficiality on the one hand, or sentimental fascination with archaeological forms on the other," maintaining that the architectural problem is "a contemporary and continuous one." Roscoe DeWitt of Dallas wrote in 1931:

But it is possible that the very principles which made this native architecture sound and suitable now threaten its capacity to endure. New conditions have intervened . . . imagine an office-building in early Texas.

O'Neil Ford himself contended:

The functionalist ideal is building that serves basic human purposes permanently . . . this is what we wanted to show Texans—that these houses were as modern when they were built as a skyscraper is today, as purposeful as a piston in a motor—machines to live in. . . . A new style will be formulated by meeting the needs of today with the scientific developments of today.

By the end of the 1930s, Ford was moving his version of Regionalism away from the allusions of earlier work to a synthesis with modern architecture through Regionalist Functionalism. The Frank Murchison House in San Antonio of 1937 reflects such considerations as single-room-depth plans, orientation, control of openings, sun control and prevailing breezes. However, the use of lattices and triple-hung windows, and the handling of the entry door, are details in the manner of a Fredericksburg precedent of the 1850s.

The extent of borrowing was sometimes conditioned by program, as in the "Little Chapel in the Woods" at Texas Woman's University in Denton (1939), which was designed to be built by the National Youth Administration. A critic in the *Southwestern Review* characterized the chapel as:

an original, native style of building that is sometimes a little self-consciously "indigenous," an architecture which indeed takes into account the history and mode of life in the region, but owes a great deal to the modern stress on function . . . avoiding the mannerisms of the "modern" school.

San Jose Ranch on St. Joseph Island (1938) was designed as a low-lying box because of hurricanes and therefore exhibits closer affinities to the International Style. Lynn Ford actually constructed the house and was responsible for many of its details, such as louver screens—allowing through-ventilation of the bedrooms—reputed to be fabricated from driftwood found at the site.



Stephen Kahn House, Dallas, 1932, by O'Neil Ford and Joe Linz. Shaded porch and balcony on south elevation.



Frank Murchison House, San Antonio, 1937, by O'Neil Ford.



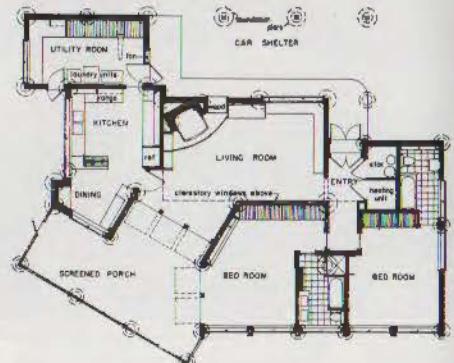
San Jose Ranch, St. Joseph Island, 1938, by O'Neil Ford.



Louvered walk in corridor of bedroom-wing, San Jose Ranch.



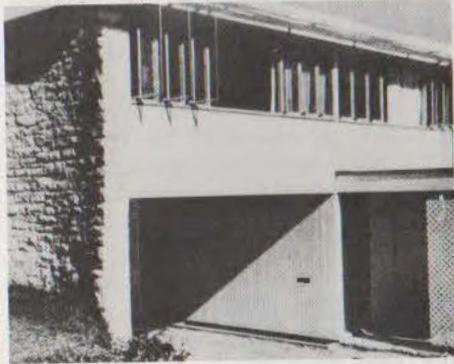
Little Chapel in the Woods, Denton, 1939, by O'Neil Ford and Arch Swank.



Plan, McNeil House, San Antonio, 1946, by Ford and Rogers.



ABOVE AND BELOW: Chester Nagel House, Austin, 1941, by Chester Nagel.



With the merging of the allusions of Formal Regionalism into the pragmatics of Regionalist Functionalism, the path to a modified International Style was all but complete. The International Style itself was undergoing change after 1930, characterized by William Jordy as an "... adaptation of the Style to normative needs and desires rather than the forging of an *avant-garde* image. . ." He observes that historical values and traditions endowed modern architectural form with "denser meanings," recognizing the importance of traditional materials and regional traditions, but also warns of "... those who would 'humanize' modern architecture by redwood and barbecue pits." Regionalism could become a reversion to nostalgia which would "... denigrate a heroic tradition." Therefore he calls for a sensibility "... not edged with residual prettiness and sentimentality" but derived from a "tougher vision."

Chester Nagel

The narrow gap between Regionalism and a transformed Modernism may be seen in the design of Chester Nagel, a student of Gropius, for his own house in Austin (1941), which evidences both the principles of his teacher and the degree to which they already had been altered in the American context. The house is organized on its site and in plan according to the best sensibilities of Regionalist Functionalism; overhangs dominate the

southern orientation, while the north face is rendered as a clipped-off box. Its detail expression includes both the shapes of the International Style and references to the Texas vernacular. By 1941, however, this seemed a logical synthesis and Nagel evidenced this philosophical integration when he wrote, "Beauty was sought in its true and natural forms, not borrowed, not imposed."

O'Neil Ford spent World War II in the United States Army Air Force, but resumed practice upon his return. A work of 1946, the William D. McNeel House in San Antonio by Ford and Rogers, represents the extent to which Ford's design work had adopted Modern trends while translating these in the sensibility of Regionalist Functionalism. Like Williams, Ford recalled "the old German towns near San Antonio" but maintained that "few architects have made any effort to move toward a comparably progressive architecture of and for today. . . . Instead, there has arisen a new tradition that is generally characterized by 'peanut-brittle rockwork.' . ." To this end, a trivialization of Regionalism may have been a contributing factor.

Reversion to nostalgia, misinterpretation through trivialization and reduction to the *kitsch* object were inherent problems with Formal Regionalism. The principles of Regionalist Functionalism, moreover, were often more elusive to codification and recognition as new type solutions. The use of obvious references was unable to sustain itself, and Regionalism became a transitional phase of formal evolution whose issues remain as yet to be successfully reconciled. The period of Texas Regionalism from 1925 to 1945 was inevitably backward-looking and somewhat reactionary, reflecting, according to Jordy, "... the confrontation between a dying rurality of the individual family farm and the small isolated village and emergent technological and institutional change. . ." In the best work, however, the historic borrowings of Regionalism served as a decisive element, through an interest in "first principles," which provided the necessary cultural resonance and ideological conservatism to facilitate Modern Architecture's ultimate acceptance in the Texas context. It is both this appeal and this dilemma which remain with us.

Peter Papademetriou teaches at the Rice University School of Architecture and is a contributor to *Progressive Architecture* and *Texas Architect*.

Selected Sources

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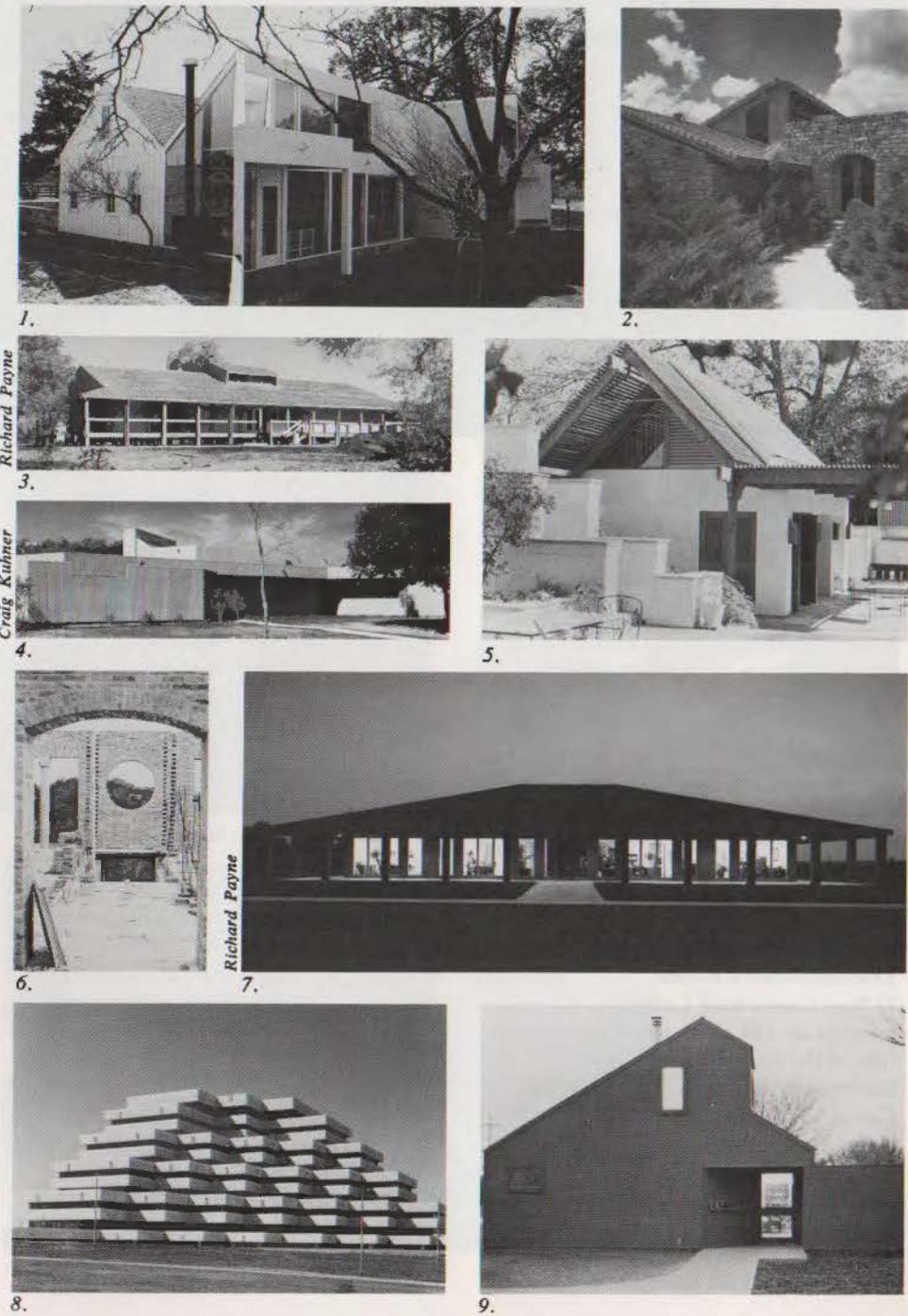
The Contemporary Regional Response

Assorted Manifestations

Regionalism, like Post-Modernism or Inclusivism or Formalism, is one of the popular "isms" currently being tossed about within architectural circles. Yet it is a somewhat ambiguous term which deserves examination within the context of Texas architecture.

Certain criteria are commonly associated with the label: sensitivity to climate, use of indigenous materials and building techniques, allusion to historic form and local tradition, comfortable scale and clarity of structure. But regional architecture meets these criteria to varying degrees. And its form varies widely. It is helpful, then, to think of Regionalism not as a style, but as a sensibility. What are its contemporary manifestations? They include but go far beyond the custom ranch house of limestone and cedar, with sloping roof and screened-in porch. That is the point of the adjacent collage, and of the following series of articles.

KEY: 1. McCormick Country House, by W. Irving Phillips, Jr., Houston; 2. Pro Shop, Horseshoe Bay Resort, by The Architects Partnership, Dallas; 3. Armand Bayou Interpretive Building, Houston, by The Office of Pierce Goodwin Alexander, Houston; 4. House One, Lost Creek Development, Fort Worth, by William S. Austin and R. B. Ferrier, Arlington; 5. Residence on Mandala, San Antonio, by Morris & McDonald, San Antonio; 6. house under construction in Austin, by Hal Box, FAIA, Austin; 7. Richards Drilling Company Office Building, Bay City, by John Perry Associates, Houston; 8. San Antonio Savings Association, San Antonio, by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Dallas; 9. Patterson Residence, Midland, by Patterson/Yowell, Midland.



Two Campuses, El Paso and San Antonio

Photography by Balthazar Korab



Any serious consideration of Regionalism eventually leads to the realization that there is broad latitude within that guiding philosophy we have labeled the "regional sensibility." In other words, Regional architecture in Texas doesn't all look alike. A basic reason is that, even within "the Texas region," stimuli vary drastically within different locales. But another variable affecting architectural form is the process of assimilating, filtering and interpreting regional influences. As in any art, some architectural interpretations are more literal than others. Two Texas campuses—one in El Paso, the other in San Antonio—serve as instructive examples.

Transmountain Campus,

El Paso Community College

Located on 144 acres of raw desert at the foot of the Franklin Mountains, El Paso Community College's Transmountain Campus is the product of a patently regional design approach—a direct response to geography, climate, culture and immediate context.

Architects Fouts Langford Gomez Moore (now Fouts Gomez Moore) of El Paso addressed the college's need to be in

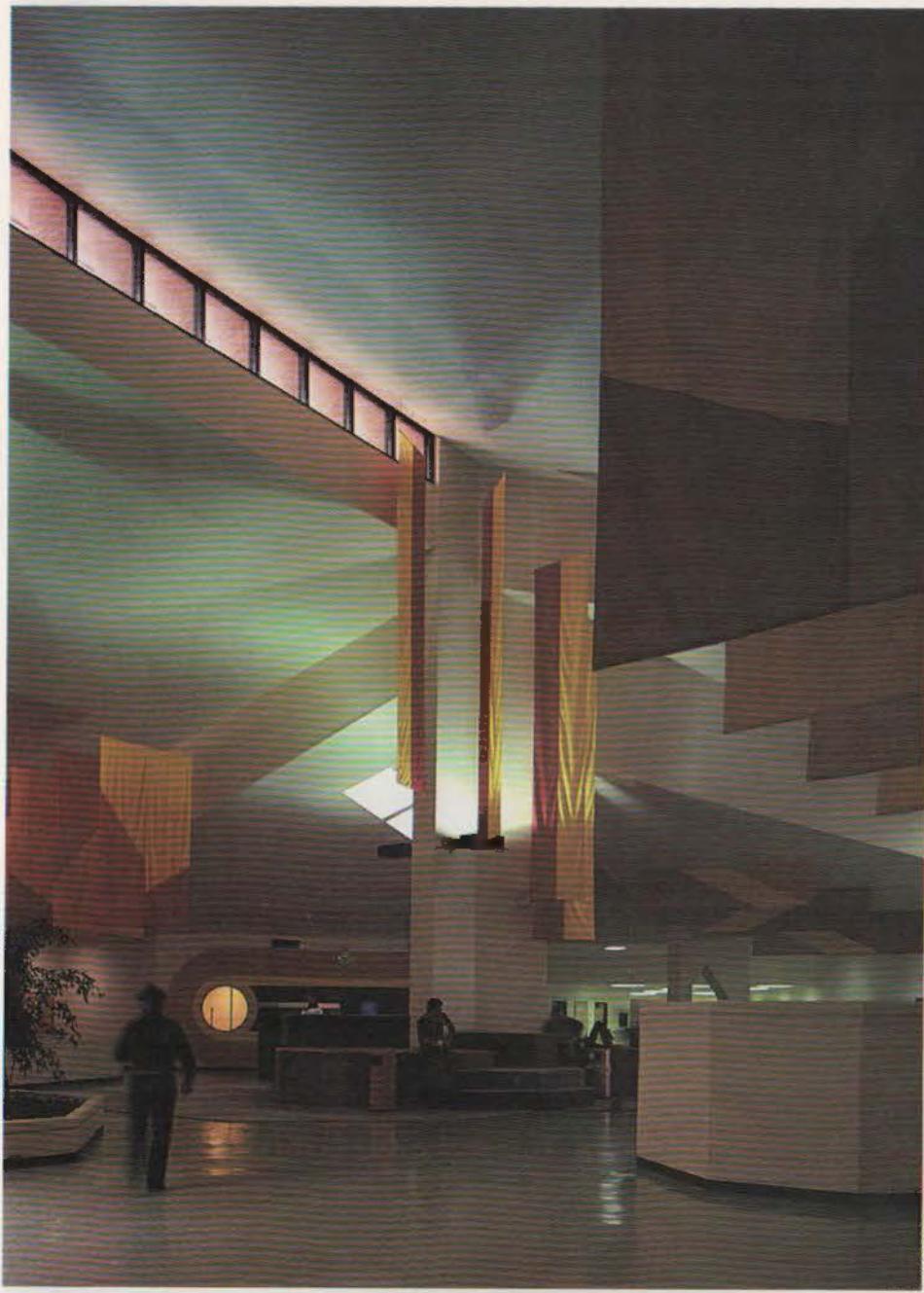
operation quickly by moving a phase-one grouping of portable buildings on site before the main facility was under way. Some 14 portable classrooms were placed in a casually arranged cluster for immediate use and were provided the same red metal roofing and stucco finish as specified for the primary campus building. The informality and small scale of this village-like cluster have made it a popular area of the campus; indeed, there was even some initial student resentment toward the large facility going up around it.

The form of the main campus building is an obvious allusion to the mountain range in whose shadow it rests. A site-hugging, winding spine—the Student Central—shifts with the terrain and serves as the circulation artery for the several instructional, administrative and service facility clusters grafted on at each end and along either side. Dramatically sloping and angular roof forms echo the jagged peaks nearby.

Inside, the regional Mexican influence is reflected in the use of bright colors for wall graphics and banners which, combined with a prevailing sense of free

movement and interaction, create an air reminiscent of the Mexican *mercado*. The rough-textured stucco exterior is compatible with the rugged surrounds and, topped with red metal roofs, the complex conforms convincingly to the familiar adobe and clay tile imagery of Southwestern architecture.

Orientation and fenestration throughout the campus are sensitive both to views and climate control. Windows are operable for natural ventilation under optimum conditions. Vertical fins for reduction of heat loads, as well as a proliferation of trellises and sheltered outdoor courts, further acknowledge the climatic conditions of the desert setting. Careful cultivation of existing and newly installed native plant life has helped soften the buildings' intrusion on the natural terrain. And the use of rocks from the site for berms and retaining walls goes one step further toward helping the campus meet what is perhaps the most basic criterion of regional architecture—it looks as if it belongs.

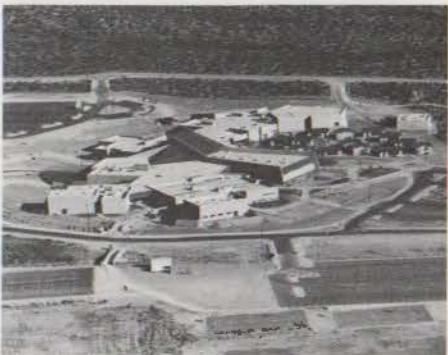


Architects: Fouts Langford Gomez Moore, El Paso

Consultants: John Morrison (structural), Allison Engineering, Albuquerque (mechanical), Robert Borunda (electrical), Robert Anderson (interiors), Tito Garcia (landscaping), Ray Laird (food services), Tadlock Associates (educational).

Contractor: Wally Sheid, Inc.; Urban General Contractors, Inc.; John R. Lavis.

LEFT: Brightly colored graphics and banners reflect the local Mexican influence.



Aerial view shows cluster of portables at right.



Vertical fins and deep recesses reduce heat load.



Berms and walls utilize rocks from the site.

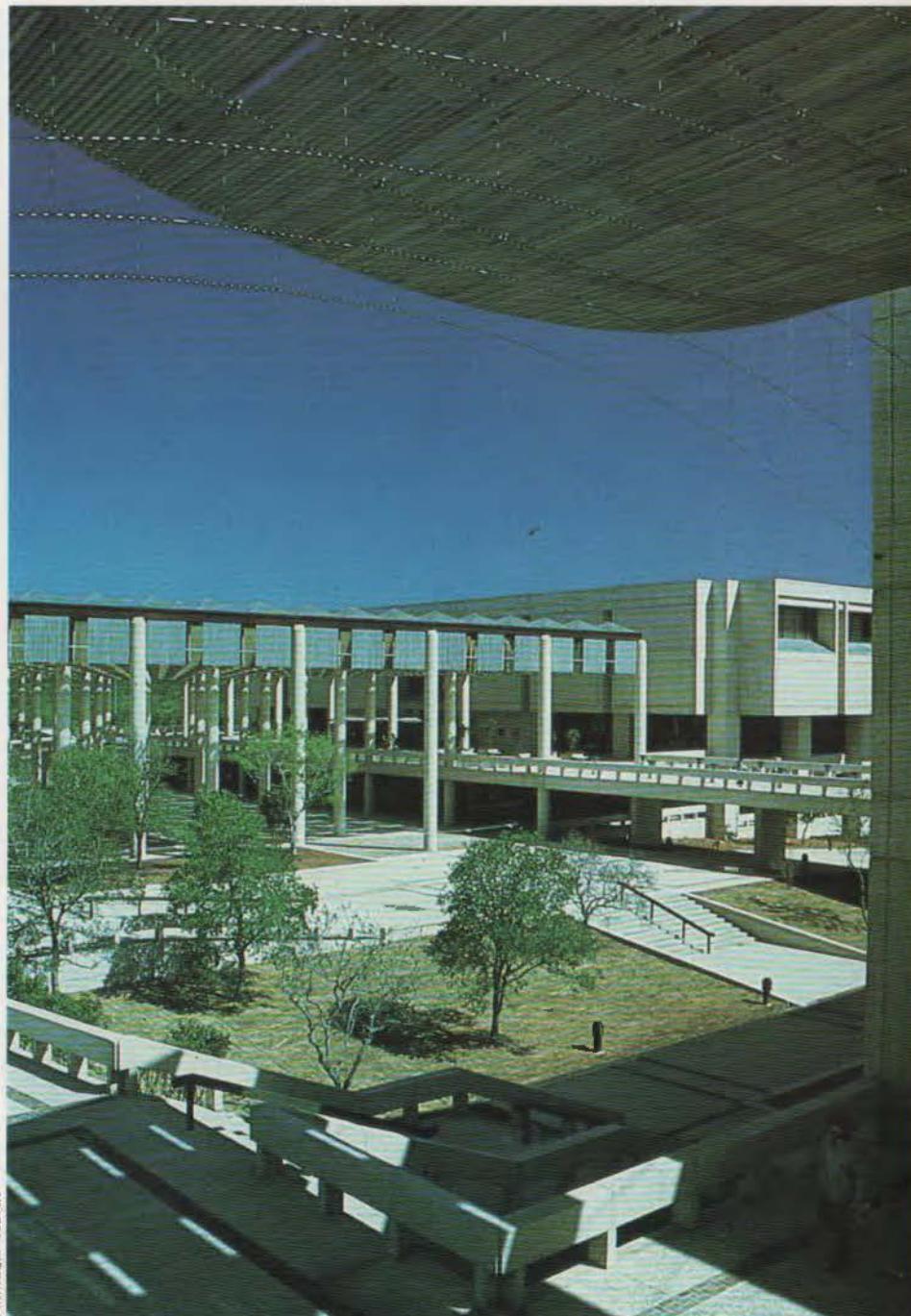
New Campus, University of Texas at San Antonio

In terms of basic form, the new campus of the University of Texas at San Antonio is a collection of rather plain, boxy buildings drawn straightway from amidst the strongest currents of mainstream American architecture. But through pervasive manifestations of a regional sensibility, the campus has been humanized and enriched, the commonplace transcended—all without a trace of quaintness or sentimentality.

Once one has penetrated the main campus complex, the regional cues begin to assert themselves. The architects, a joint venture of Ford Powell & Carson and Bartlett Cocke & Associates (now Chumney, Jones and Kell), addressed sun control through deeply recessed fenestration and a system of cable-hung cedar trellises which shade pedestrianways. The central plaza around which the individual buildings are organized is shaded by the "sombrilla," a large grid of hanging wood "sticks" which moderates the harsh light from 40 feet overhead. As for materials, warmth is provided through the use of wood on various walls and ceilings. Large (custom-scaled) brick pavers are used for interior walking surfaces and for patterns within outdoor open areas. The dominant material is a warm-tone cement specially fired to achieve a color acknowledging the limestone escarpment from which the campus rises. Other regional manifestations include the prevalence of shaded courts and native plants, the insertion of a fountain and pool within the plaza, and the use of handcrafted light fixtures within skylit circulation corridors.

It is important to observe, however, that such regional "cues" can fail to be convincing—can become mere accents—unless they are derived from a larger concept or underlying idea. In the case of the UTSA campus, the regional "touches" are all pieces of one campus fabric. The overall concept—an interconnected complex of similar buildings arranged around a square—was influenced by a centuries-old Spanish edict, the Laws of the Indies. Issued in 1573 by Philip II, the Laws established uniform standards and procedures for the planning of new towns and consequently influenced the form of many Spanish and Mexican settlements in North America. True to the spirit of the Laws, the campus scheme avoids individual monuments, making all structures somewhat

View to plaza from shaded vantage point.



Balthazar Korab

uniform in deference to the beauty of the whole and in stark contrast to the traditional practice of providing each academic discipline its own isolated sanctuary on a sumptuous mall. Also drawn from the Laws is the counter-clockwise shift of the campus axis away from a true north-south orientation so as to ensure that, in winter, each elevation receives sunlight for at least part of the day—preventing perpetual "darkness" for certain walls and courtyards.

The fact that the campus plan represents the appropriation of a relatively

obscure cultural tradition has little significance, in and of itself, except as a footnote. But it is important as the reflection of an attitude—a sensibility—which holds that certain values are timeless, and that the past can be drawn upon as a vast source of enrichment for today.

—Larry Paul Fuller

Rick Gardner



Skylit galleria with hand-crafted fixtures.

Rick Gardner



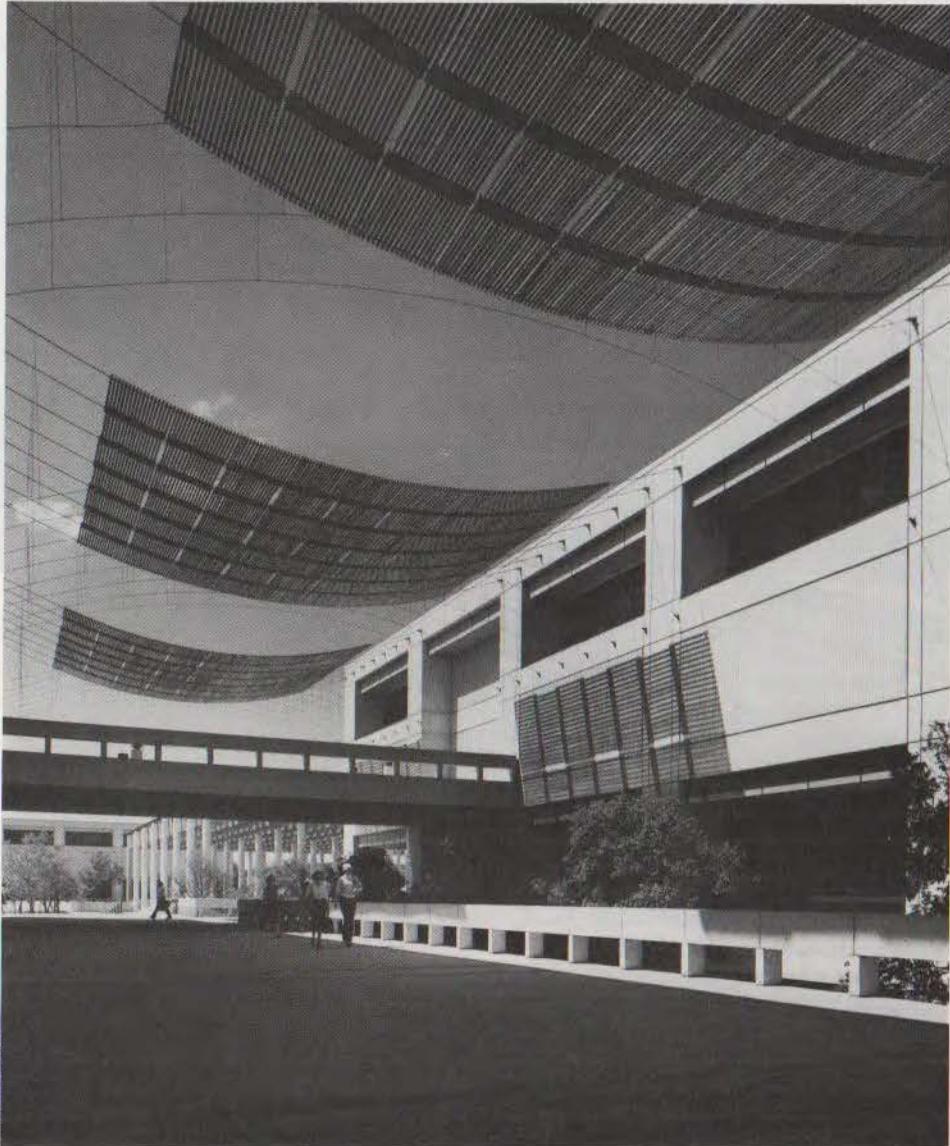
Sombrilla moderates light falling on plaza.

Rick Gardner

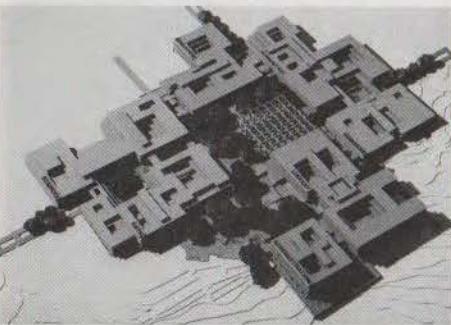


Courts provide shade, admit light into buildings.

Cable-hung wood trellises shade pedestrianways.



Rick Gardner



*Architects: Ford Powell & Carson and Bartlett Cocke & Associates
Consultants: Feigenspan & Pinnell (structural), K. M. Ng & Associates, Inc. (site work engineers), William E. Wallis & Associates (mechanical), Buckley & Associates (electrical).
Contractor: T. C. Bateson, Inc., Dallas*

Fairway Plaza, Dallas



View from trellis-covered terrace.



Project architect Max Levy and firm principal Bud Oglesby, of The Oglesby Group in Dallas, strolled around the building site four years ago with owner and developer Ben Carpenter. "I like these trees," Carpenter told them, waving a hand out toward a stand of mesquite on the west and south sides of the site, "and I want you to save them."

Architects attempted to do more than that with Fairway Plaza, two speculative office buildings next to a golf course at the Las Colinas "planned community" near Dallas (see *Texas Architect*, Nov./Dec. 1980). Levy says the mesquite became the "enlivening design resource" for a project that just wanted to be, as most spec office buildings do, "just another box." Instead of clearcutting the mesquite, architects "embroidered" it into the design scheme, picking up on the tree's distinctively delicate branches and leaves with cedar trellises, which project not only delicate shadow patterns but also a certain imagery which Levy feels is at the heart of contemporary regional design.

"Once Regionalism was very tangible," Levy says, "when your survival depended on it. Now it is more of an abstract issue, almost ephemeral."

Levy believes that a certain imagery of the Texas region—slanted shed roofs, the play of harsh sunlight through filtering foliage, the front porch comfort of shade and breeze—engenders an association in the user's mind with how things are supposed to look and feel rather than how they are supposed to work. In spite of a necessary move away from total reliance on mechanical systems, Levy says, architects still remain free to design buildings that can be built and used anywhere. Architecture becomes regional, according to Levy, when it reflects the imagery of its place.

In the case of Fairway Plaza, Levy says, the shed roofs read "shelter," the recessed windows "shade," the trellises "shadow" and "breeze." "All these things give life and locality to a building that may begin only as an economic equation."

Which was essentially how Fairway Plaza was conceived. Both buildings began as little more than long boxes, together providing a total of 80,000 square feet of lease space. The primary design intent was to maximize lease space and floor-area efficiency. But the buildings soon became more than mere economic equations with the addition of

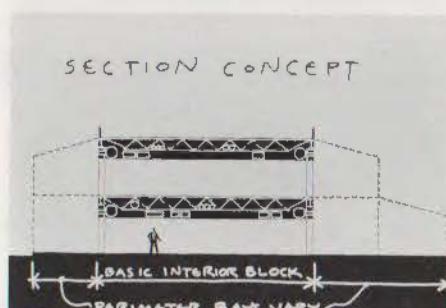


perimeter bays hung like saddlebags from each side of the box. Their sloping shed roofs are of standing-seam metal, with cedar trellises over glass areas where the glazing extends from floor to ceiling. The sloping roof motif is repeated on the flat roof of the box by "sheds" covering the conventional mechanical equipment, to shade as well as hide it when a high-rise goes up nearby. Recessed windows are of tinted glass, and the exterior finish is stucco.

Levy says the project's primary feature, however, is the "lazer-like" quality of the shadow patterns cast by the mesquite trees, the trellises and the perimeter bay overhangs. Playing off the mesquite's delicate, mobile features, Fairway Plaza is designed to evoke the image of a "shady, breezy refuge" on an otherwise indelicate prairie panorama.

"Regionalism is now more a matter of pleasure than of survival," Levy says. "a matter of the mind and the heart and the eye. Those are the issues that people have clung to throughout history, and I think they're still worth clinging to, without denying the existence of technology. It's all that abstract, invisible stuff that's so fascinating. It's a tiny piece of that abstract imagery that we tried to layer onto Fairway Plaza, over the box."

—Michael McCullar

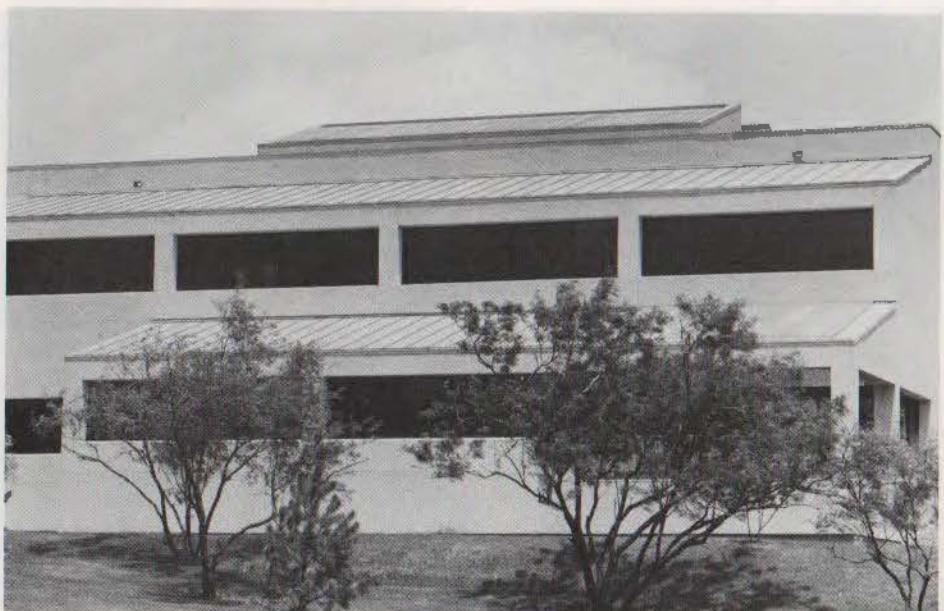


Architects: The Oglesby Group, Dallas

Consultants: Datum Engineers, Dallas (structural); PMI, Dallas (mechanical, electrical, plumbing)

General Contractor: Crockett Construction Company, Dallas

Owner: Southland Investment Properties, Dallas



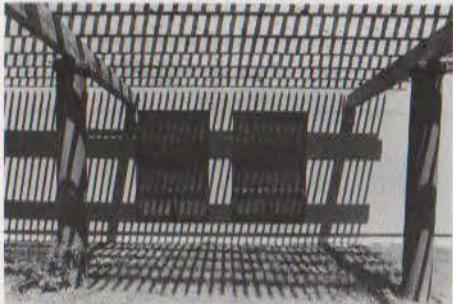
View of Fairway building from golf course showing rooftop "sheds."

South Austin Multipurpose Center, Austin

Photography by Rick Patrick



Main entry arcade of multipurpose building on east side of creek.



Light and shadow on northeast wall.



Southeast corner of east building.



Central mall space.

The South Austin Multipurpose Center is not Spanish Colonial Revival by design, says Austin architect Sinclair Black, who worked with the Austin firms Villalva-Cotera and Chartier Newton on the project. The red tile roof is actually more Japanese than Mexican, he says, and the tile sewer-pipe columns, wood frame and stucco finish were chosen more for low cost and low maintenance than stylistic expression.

As far as Black is concerned, if there is anything regional about this two-building complex, nestled in a liveoak grove along East Bouldin Creek, it's the buildings' direct and fundamental response to sun, site, context and program. "You don't begin with style," Black says, "you end with style." It is the inevitable result of the successful coming together of form, materials, scale, and color in response to a particular setting and function, he says. "When you talk about Regionalism in terms of style, you inevitably get into an eighth-generation regurgitation of somebody's myth, and it has nothing to do with the original basis for why things were that way to begin with."

The South Austin Multipurpose Center, says Black, is the way it is not because of any preconceived notion of regional style but because of its given premises, which include a site bisected by a tree-

covered creek in hot-humid Austin; a neighborhood setting consisting mainly of small houses and Mexican-American residents; and a program calling for providing such community services as day care, health care and arts and crafts.

The center consists of two buildings on either side of the creek, connected by a pedestrian bridge. The larger 12,000-square-foot building on the east side, heavily shaded by liveoaks, features a baffle system on the west wall to shade floor-to-ceiling glass from the western sun. Windows are actually sliding glass doors, operable for ventilation. (Site restrictions forced the buildings to be oriented east and west, rather than the optimum north and south.) Trellises over entryways spatter a latticework of light and shadow onto stucco walls and concrete walkways.

The building form is designed to be "large and sheltering," high in the center to accommodate a central mall space inside and low at the edges to afford human scale. Soffits and ceilings of exposed yellow pine highlight the arcade, portico, kiosk and reading room, and barrel vault skylights illuminate the interior mall during the day.

Black says he made no attempt to evoke associations in the user's mind through architectural allusion. To do so is to create little more than "an exterior stage set," he says. What counts to Black is clarity of expression and function, and steering clear of what he calls "Nouveau Regionalism," which is "simply a matter of doing what so-in-so in Maine did when he was copying what's-his-name in California when he was trying to do a Texas barn, without any understanding of where that barn came from. Or, worse than that, without even caring where it came from."

—Michael McCullar

Architects: Villalva-Cotera, Architects, Austin; Sinclair Black, Austin; Chartier Newton, Architect, Austin

Consultants: Jose I. Guerra, Austin (structural engineering); George Maxwell, Austin (mechanical engineering)

General Contractor: Ricks Construction Company, Austin

Owner: City of Austin



Beneath trellis looking west toward clinic across pedestrian bridge.

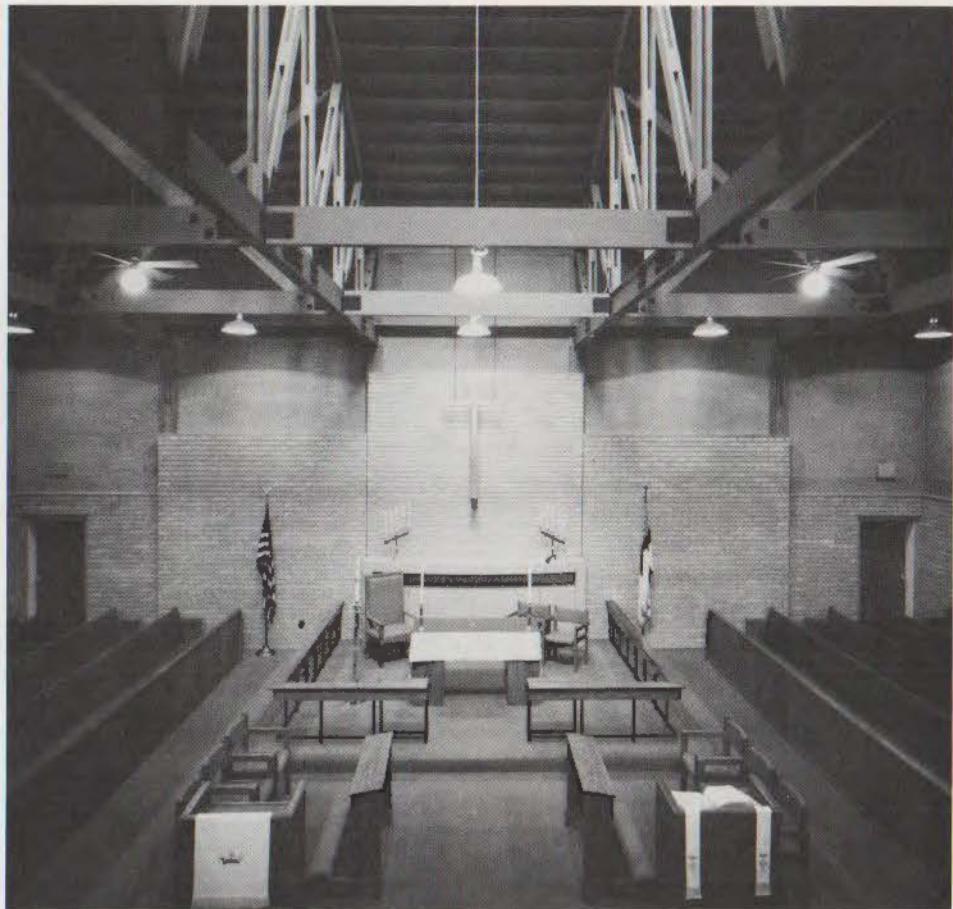
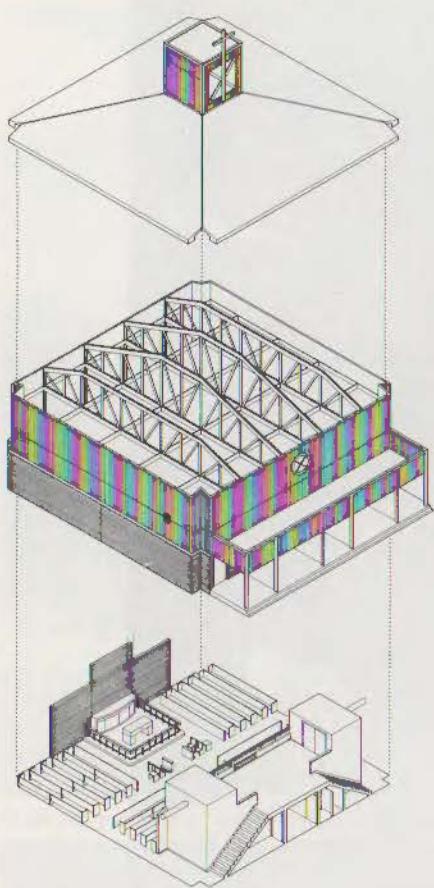


Portico on west side clinic.



East building from pedestrian bridge.

Church of the Good Shepherd, Friendswood

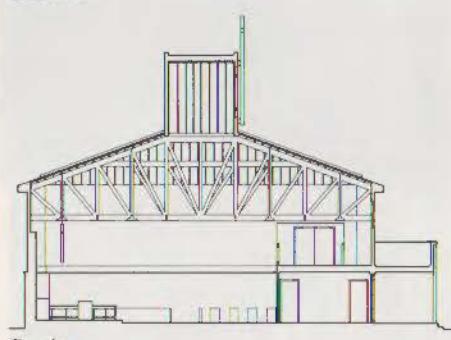


In a green field at the edge of Friendswood, near Houston, the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd stands in persuasive opposition to gilded lavishness and vainglorious monumentality. Of modest scale and countenance, the church is an exercise in straightforward simplicity. Yet, like most of the work of Houston architect William T. Cannady, the building has been enriched by metaphor, allusion and multiple meaning. It is at once a response to its suburban setting, to Texas' rural heritage, and to the classicism that long has been revered in religious architecture.

In a sense, the church conveys a distinct "feel" of the suburbs, derived not from its form so much as from its scale and the components from which it was built. The small structure—actually a new sanctuary added to an existing church complex—seems at home in its neighborhood of single-family dwellings. In fact, it is easy to imagine that, during construction, building supply trucks delivered the same materials for the church as for tract houses going up nearby—composition shingles, cedar siding, and brick for a nine-foot high veneer inside and out.

The prevailing associations evoked by

Section.



Section.



the building's form, however, are more broadly regional. Simple geometry and massing creates images of agricultural buildings and of early Texas meeting halls. This is the village gathering place, where a sense of community and "familyness" can be felt and reinforced. Inside, the seating plan enhances the feeling of



intimacy by placing the worshipers on three sides and the liturgical activities at the center. Above the nine-foot high band of brick, the walls are of lightly stained plywood, creating a certain warmth that sheetrock would not provide. Overhead, a straightforward system of exposed wood trusses complements the regional flavor and allows one to experience the total interior volume, which is penetrated by natural light from the light well atop the roof. So as to contain all functions within one expressive form, a kind of building-within-a-building was created just inside the main entrance to accommodate sacristy and choir and to house restrooms and mechanical systems.

Endowing the pristine box with a covered "porch" can be viewed as a regional touch. Similarly, a walkway connecting the new sanctuary to the existing complex was covered to provide shade and shelter. The former sanctuary was shorn of its soaring steeple and the whole existing complex was "painted out" to become a backdrop for the new meeting place.

On yet another level, Cannady's design can be appreciated for its integration of classical elements drawn from religious

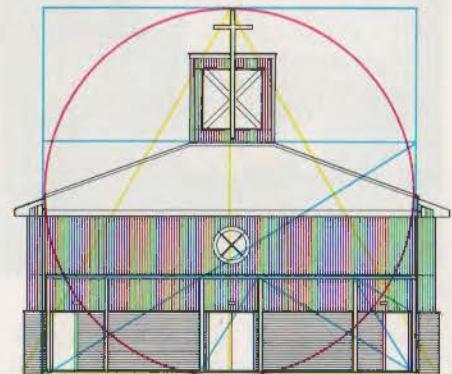
tradition. In plan, the "box" actually takes the symbolic form of a shortened Greek cross. Another symbolic gesture occurs as the brick lining the interior walls shifts in configuration so as to form a kind of triptych behind the altar. And the front facade has proportions and rhythms derived from Renaissance churches. Indeed, minor adjustments were made during the schematic design phase to reflect classical proportion in the form of the circle, the square and the golden triangle. The A-B-A spacing of the front loggia replaced an earlier even spacing of bays and the cross was shortened six inches so that the distance from ground to tip of cross would equal the width of each projecting facade. Such gestures toward the classical, though subtle in visual impact, constitute an acknowledgement of religious tradition which—quite appropriately—imbues the building with higher meaning.

—Larry Paul Fuller

Architect: Wm. T. Cannady & Associates,
Houston

Consultants: Intefield Engineers

General Contractor: Tell-Kirk
Construction Co.

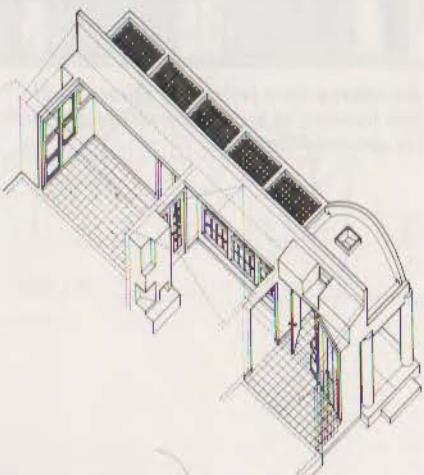


Regulating lines reflect the square, circle and triangle, as well as a series of diminishing golden triangles.

Photography by Paul Hester



Original front facade.



Closest unit in entry serves somewhat like a freestanding piece of furniture. Mail falls on its own special ledge at left. Light is admitted through clerestory above and through glass block wall.



View from den through living room to entry. Lighting soffit unifies the three spaces.

Davis House Addition, Houston

Through a process of what architect Peter Papademetriou has termed a "modest intervention in suburbia," a post-1950 Houston "ranchburger" has been endowed with a fresh image and a new level of livability. Labeled by the owners as the ugliest house on the block, the original structure was fronted by a three-window living room with a visually weak gable and two earlier additions—an ill-proportioned screened porch and an inadequate entry. Roof drainage problems associated with the earlier additions required solving, and the owners also desired better accessibility and more usable space, as well as an upgraded residential image. A major constraint was that no interior space could extend forward of the face of the existing living room.

The solution responds to the fact that, in contrast to the heavily trafficked street and irregularly shaped lot at the rear, the front yard is quiet and faces a small park formed by the conjunction of two streets in opposing grids. Utilizing existing slabs, the entry and screened porch were enclosed, and a semi-open space—permissible under the building code—was extended across the front facade in the form of a continuous verandah/arbor which serves as a kind of outdoor room for Houston's semi-tropical climate. A series of overscaled columns establishes an orderly sequence of exterior bays, which is broken by the special treatment of the entrance. The newly formed sequence of three interior rooms—entry space, living room, and den—is given continuity by a lighting soffit which extends through each space. A prevailing range of colors including cream, peach and plum is derived from the Saltillo tile selected for floors of the entry and den.

Although the appellation "Post-Modern" perhaps seems more apt, it is not unreasonable to examine this project in the context of Regionalism. The Spanish motif is deliberately overstated—a candid exploration of images which are conventionally understood. Yet these formal allusions have a sound functional basis as well. The arbor provides a sheltered socializing space as well as a much-needed source of relief from summer heat loads on the front (south) exposure; inside, the sombrero effect ameliorates the glare, enhancing both the view to the outside and the overall ambience of the rooms. The one-foot-four-inch exterior columns are not overscaled simply for visual impact; they are *huggable*, and their heft also provides a greater sense of



View from driveway shows owner's usual approach.



FAR LEFT: View through verandah toward entry. LEFT: Oculus highlights entry at night. Niche displays plants and art objects.

enclosure.

The vaulted, skylit entry porch not only celebrates the rite of entry, but keeps rain from overhead and admits light through a clerestory window above the front door. The flared oculus, a form descended from the San Antonio missions, reflects a ring of light denoting the entry at night. And the side elevation of the verandah has its own formal portal, which acknowledges the *real* way the house is normally entered—from the family car parked in the driveway.

Other seemingly mundane, real-life considerations have been elevated into larger ideas. The trellis provides a place to hang pot plants. The cat has its own

ledge above the door. The mail no longer falls on the floor but onto a special shelf beneath the slot. And that favored piece of sculpture from Philadelphia now has its own niche. The architecture does not suffer from the fact that people use it, which is just as it should be with any modest intervention.—Larry Paul Fuller

Architects: Lonnecker + Papademetriou
Construction: Danny Kirkpatrick
Note: the remodelling of the Davis residence was one of four winning projects cited in the 1981 residential design awards program of the Houston Chapter AIA and Houston Home/Garden Magazine.

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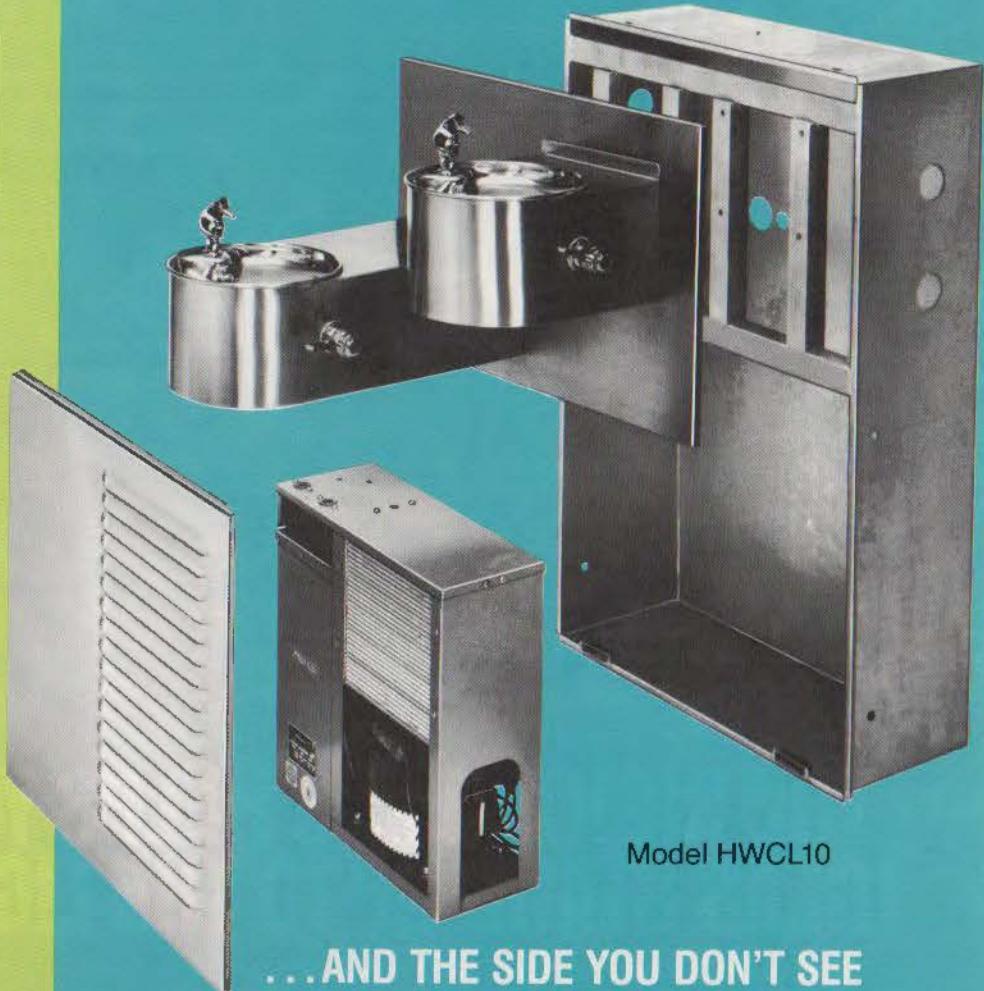
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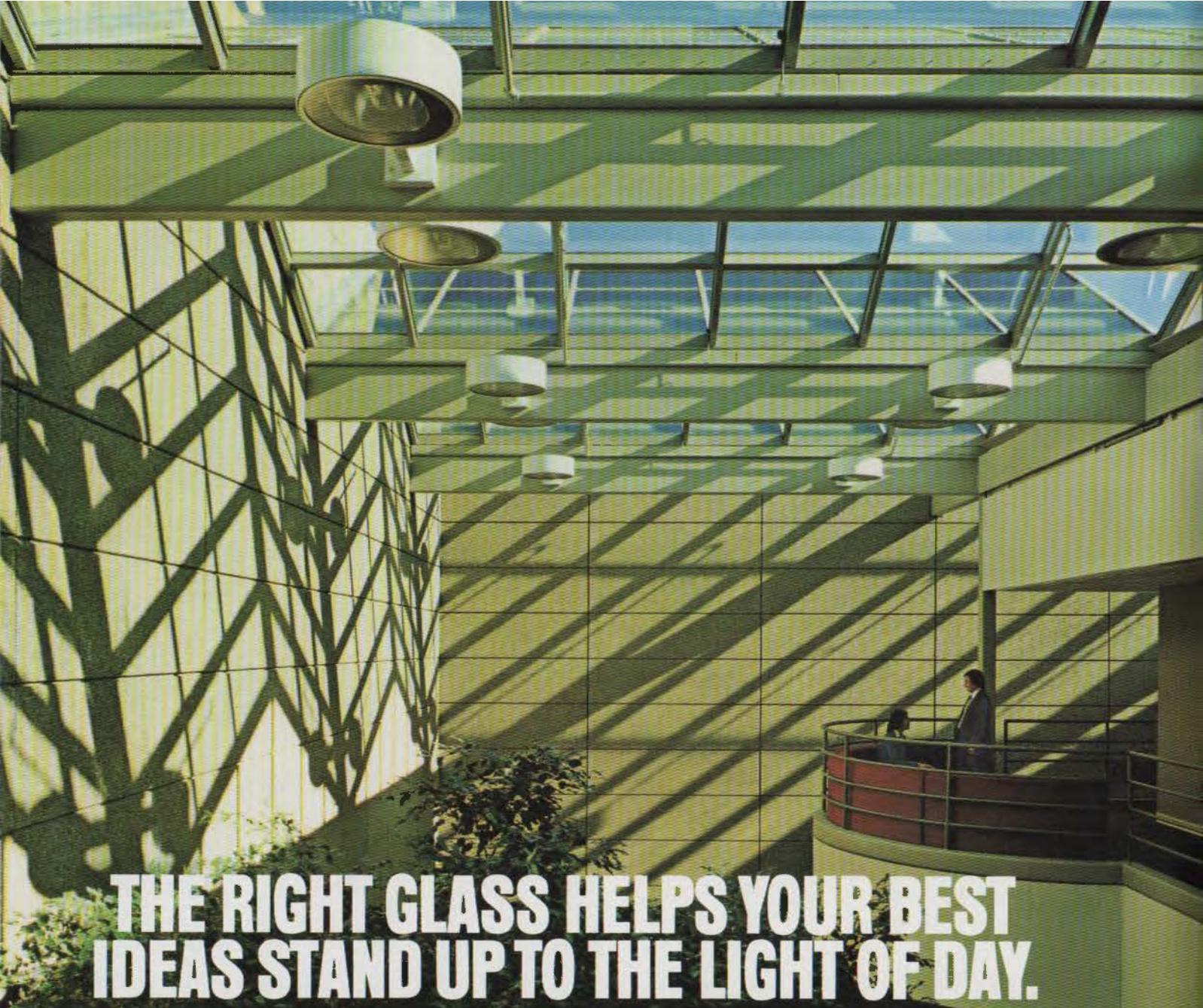
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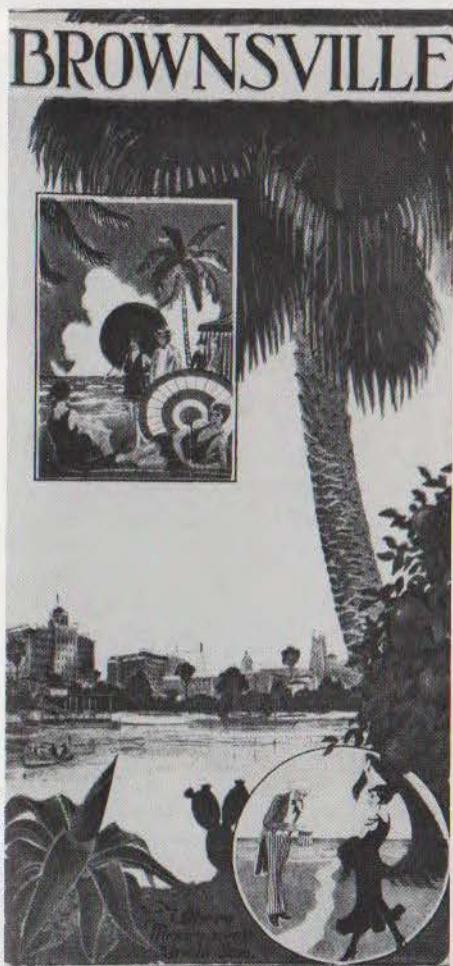


Atrium and west face of Jeppesen Sanderson headquarters, Denver, Colorado.
Johnson•Hopson & Partners Architects.

(Tall) Tales from the Borderland

Brownsville and the Spanish Colonial Revival

By Stephen Fox



Houston Public Library

Promotional brochure published by the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, circa 1925.

One of the last frontiers to be settled in Texas was the Lower Río Grande Valley. For it was not until 1904-1905 that the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway entered the Valley to link Brownsville with Corpus Christi and Houston. But political unrest connected with the Mexican Revolution and the capital investment required to transform arid chaparral into rich farmland hindered efforts at developing this unpopulated territory. Then, during the 1920s, the situation dramatically reversed. One consequence of this reversal was a building boom which began in 1925 and continued steadily until 1930.

The most visually striking effect of this construction activity was the sheer number of buildings which conformed to an identifiable architectural genre, the Spanish Colonial Revival. This architectural manner had its genesis in southern California and, in a more broadly Mediterranean version, earlier had dominated the post-war building scene in Florida. Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was built throughout Texas during the height of its popularity in the 1920s. It was therefore not unique to the Valley. But the proliferation of what contemporary newspaper real estate reports customarily designated Spanish-type architecture suggests that in an era noted for its eclecticism this architectural manner exercised a persuasive fascination. Because of the geographic proximity to Mexico the source of such a fascination may seem self-evident. In fact, however, the appeal of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture depended neither upon cultural tradition, climatic congruence, nor the use of indigenous building materials or construction techniques. Instead, a conscious choice, and a collective one, was made to appropriate a popular architectural genre and use it to give mean-

ingful form to current building activity.

Attractions

What did the Spanish Colonial Revival offer that proved so compelling? To begin with, its ostensible historic derivation reminded the viewer that this region had once been a part of Spain's colonial empire and suggested that the architecture reflected a culture based on historically rooted, widely shared traditions, implying a stable way of life. Its actual derivation, in a more subtle fashion, posited a connection with Southern California. Newspaper descriptions of the period frequently stressed the Southern California-like attributes of the Lower Río Grande Valley: the distant Spanish heritage, a temperate climate and an abundance of fertile agricultural land. Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was perceived as capable of embodying these assertions or, more precisely, of conveying them by implicit analogy. Combined with the lush vegetation which Valley soil—once watered—made possible, and the many species of palm trees which were planted with abandon, the Spanish Colonial Revival completed the image of a tropical paradise, an association which all parties interested in stimulating investment in the Valley sought to impress on farmers from Kansas, Nebraska and Minnesota, newspaper reporters from Houston and Dallas, and the travelling public.

In Brownsville, the largest town in the Valley, and also the oldest, all these tendencies seemed to converge at the lower end of Levee Street. Concentrated on two blocks along the old Santa Cruz ferry boardwalk were the Missouri Pacific Passenger Station (1925-1927), the Hotel El Jardín (1925-1927), and the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce (1926-1927), all designed by Robert B. Kelly of San Antonio, a principal in the Kelwood Company, an architectural



and contracting firm. These three buildings demonstrated the versatility of the Spanish Colonial Revival. Each was quite different in size, composition and detail. But the repetition of a single element—the round arch—and the use of buff-colored stucco with sandstone-colored cast concrete trim and red roof tiles caused the eight-story hotel, the attenuated passenger station and the compact chamber building to cohere visually. This tendency was reinforced by the use of uniform graphics, generous setbacks from the curbline which permitted ample off-street parking, and consistently “tropical” landscaping. Two elements might have seemed to compromise the purity of this vision: the twin, sixty-feet high radio masts atop the hotel. But these instruments of technological communication, broadcasting the inducements of Radio KWWG (“Kum to the World’s Winter Garden”) to the Middle West, are reminders that in the 1920s the Spanish Colonial Revival was not only romantic and evocative but, paradoxically, modern and up-to-date.

Local Identity

There was in all this, however, an ambiguous multiplicity of messages. Unlike the programmatic revivals of the 19th century, especially the Gothic revival in England, the eclectic revivals of the early 20th century were not intended to represent a specific set of ideals so much as to evoke an aura of belonging, to be taken as an expression of local identity. Like the tropical vegetation, the Spanish Colonial Revival was to be perceived as growing naturally in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (just as it also did in southern California).

The work of the Kelwood Company provided only one of several architec-

tural gateways to Brownsville constructed during the 1920s. In each instance modern building types acquired Spanish Colonial countenances, reiterating the allusion of a broadly shared cultural tradition strong enough to affect even the most modern institutions. In 1926 the Southern Pacific Lines won the right to enter the Río Grande Valley with a road running through Hidalgo County into Cameron County. At the terminus of the line in Brownsville, a large passenger station was erected in 1928-1929. Designed in the Houston office of the Southern Pacific’s chief engineer, Ray W. Barnes, the Southern Pacific Passenger Station was a scenographic concoction in which elements of Spanish Renaissance classicism, the Spanish Baroque and the missions of Spanish America were confidently combined. Following the construction of the Gateway Bridge between Brownsville and the adjacent Mexican city of H. Matamoros, Tamaulipas, the Gateway Bridge Company retained Will D. Van Siclen, a Brownsville architect, to design a building for the U.S. Border Services (1928-1929). Relying upon examples of minor Spanish architecture, Van Siclen produced a long, two-story, stucco-surfaced building prefaced by an arched portal. This was much simpler than either of the railroad stations. So was the building designed by Ben V. Proctor during his tenure as City Architect of Brownsville for the city’s fourth new gateway, the Brownsville International Airport terminal (1928-1929). Proctor’s essay appeared to be of vaguely North African character and it was not convincing. As was the case with the radio masts at the Hotel El Jardín, a clash between the paradoxical attributes of quaintness and modernity threatened to



COUNTER CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
RIGHT: Southern Pacific passenger station, 1929, R. W. Barnes, chief engineer; three projects by the Kelwood Company: Missouri Pacific passenger station, 1927, demolished, Hotel El Jardín, 1927, and Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, 1927, demolished.



Detail, Southern Pacific passenger station.



ABOVE: Entrance, Southern Pacific passenger station.

ABOVE RIGHT: U. S. Border Services Building, 1929, W. D. Van Siclen, demolished. ABOVE MIDDLE: Brownsville International Airport Terminal, 1929, Ben V. Proctor, altered. RIGHT: Borderland Hardware Company Building, 1927, Stanley W. Bliss, altered.

Houston Public Library



The Aircraft Yearbook, 1930.



disrupt the apparent "charm" of the airport terminal.

By 1929 in fact, *au courant* eclectic architects would more likely have resorted to Art Déco as the appropriate means of characterizing an architecture of air transport. But the tenacity with which Spanish Colonial imagery was applied in Brownsville, even in so non-traditional a building type as this, reinforces the conclusion that it exerted a powerful influence on the collective imagination of progressive-minded Valley people. Yet a problem remains, for the Brownsville International Airport calls into question the plausibility of the Spanish Colonial Revival. What made the architecture of the airport appear slightly absurd was its mediocrity. Through a failure of taste and talent, of selection and composition, mediocrity exposed the made-up nature of the Spanish Colonial Revival. It was not after all a "natural" indigenous vernacular, but a genre which strove for plausibility through adherence to certain conventions. By failing to make the architecture believable, mediocrity betrayed its conventional nature.

Commercial Possibilities

This limitation was also evident in downtown Brownsville where the commercial possibilities of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture were displayed in a number of retail buildings constructed during the boom of the 1920s. One of the largest of these, the Borderland Hardware Company building (1926-1927), was designed by Stanley W. Bliss, a young architect from Little Rock who had recently established a practice in the neighboring town of Harlingen. Bliss's handling of the Borderland building's elevations was very assured. He abstracted key elements of the Spanish Colonial

*BELOW: Aziz Brothers Building, 1927,
Page Brothers. RIGHT: McDermott Motor
Company Building, 1927, Harvey P. Smith.*



Revival and adroitly manipulated them to achieve an illusion of Spanishness in a design which provided extensive glazing for natural illumination and product display. In contrast, the Aziz Brothers building, designed at the same time by the Brownsville office of Page Brothers, an Austin architectural firm, illustrates just how uninspiring the adaptation of Hispanic detail could be. A surer hand was visible in the McDermott Motor Company showroom (1926-1927), one of the many Valley buildings designed by Harvey P. Smith of San Antonio during this period. There, another advantage of the Spanish Colonial Revival became evident. Historically derived architectural ornament was used to bestow a heightened prestige upon (perhaps even sanction) the introduction of an auto showroom into what theretofore had been the most fashionable residential district in Brownsville.

The most sensitively designed Spanish Colonial Revival building in Brownsville is the Church of the Advent (1926-1927). The architect was Thomas MacLaren of Colorado Springs, a Scottish-born, English-trained architect who had immigrated to Colorado around the turn of the century. MacLaren initially proposed a neo-Gothic scheme for the parish group. Why a Spanish Colonial Revival design was implemented instead is not recorded. Possibly it was a question of expense. But it is also possible that the parishioners of the Church of the Advent desired that MacLaren employ the Spanish Colonial Revival to underscore the parish's 75-year association with the borderland. This was not of course because the style had any intrinsic connection with the Río Grande Valley's actual past or with the mid-19th century missionary efforts of the Epis-



Detail, McDermott Motor Company



ABOVE: Palm Boulevard looking northeast from the Elizabeth Street intersection. The boulevard recently lost its ornamental shrubbery and most of its central esplanade to a street-widening operation. ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT: Church of the Advent, 1927, Thomas MacLaren, Stanley Bliss (associate).



BELOW: Rockwell House, 1931, R. Newell Waters.



copal Church. Rather it was because in 1926 the Spanish Colonial Revival popularly denoted tradition. It was understood that it would be interpreted as a sign of long-standing identification with the locale. That these architecturally transmitted inferences were true in the case of the Church of the Advent was a fortuitous coincidence.

Surprisingly, use of the Spanish Colonial Revival was not as widespread in institutional architecture in Brownsville as in other Valley towns. The only school building constructed during the height of the building boom, Brownsville High School and Junior College (1926-1928), by the San Antonio firms of Phelps and Dewees and Atlee B. Ayres and Robert M. Ayres, had to fit in between two existing buildings, both of which were finished in brick. So it got a low-budget, Lombard Romanesque countenance instead. But the harmoniza-

tion of color and material and the binding together of all three school buildings were treated by the associated architects as being of paramount concern. This was because these schools constituted an important civic node at the point where the main thoroughfare, Elizabeth Street, intersected Palm Boulevard.

Tropical Image

Palm Boulevard was Brownsville's one gesture of civic planning in the City Beautiful tradition. It was comparatively modest: two double carriage-ways separated by a central esplanade. But staggered rows of Washingtonia palms and the cultivation of bougainvillea produced the desired effect: an image of tropical verdure. As on Levee Street, suburban improvements were pressed into advertising Brownsville's newly devised regional ambience. And so did the Spanish-style Valley View Apart-

LEFT: Valley View Apartments, 1929, W. D. Van Siclen. BELOW: Quartors House, circa 1930. The Quartors and Rockwell Houses are two of approximately 35 Spanish-style houses constructed in the Los Ebanos subdivision in the late 1920s and early 1930s.



ments (1928-1929). This was built in two phases to the designs of W. D. Van Siclen. The first phase of the Valley View comprised a compact symmetrical block. But when called upon for the second phase, Van Siclen accorded it a completely different treatment: a picturesque, stepped-back plan configuration, a high parapet with tile coping, and a flamboyantly articulated external stairway, lending Palm Boulevard exactly the sort of romantic architectural aspect which its name and landscaping seemed to anticipate.

As was customary with City Beautiful boulevards, Palm Boulevard led directly from the older precincts of the town to the most ambitious garden suburb planned in Brownsville in the 1920s, Los Ebanos Addition. That the Spanish Colonial Revival prevailed in the earliest phase of its development was to be expected. Like other eclectic manners favored in the 1920s, the style was especially suited to domestic projects. Its vernacular origins made it amenable to picturesque composition, and the relatively few elements needed to characterize a building as Spanish meant that even modest dwellings were susceptible to Hispanicization. The finest Spanish Colonial Revival house in Los Ebanos was designed and built by the Brownsville architect Edward G. Holliday between 1929 and 1931 for Fausto Yturria, an attorney and rancher. The Yturria house is an extraordinarily evocative composition. It is one and two stories in height, and is configured around an internal patio garden. An array of roof forms lends the house a varied silhouette. Tile work, iron grillwork and *cigarillas* are combined with differently shaped arches to invest the house with a multitude of romantic allusions. Embowered

RIGHT: Yturria House, 1931, E. G. Holliday. BELOW RIGHT: Goodrich House, 1927, Stanley W. Bliss.



in lush foliage, the Yturria house presents in a highly concentrated form the Spanish Colonial genre at its most exotic, far removed from mean little stucco-slathered bungalows, and yet still related.

Suburban real estate promoters in Brownsville sought to capitalize upon the Mediterranean exoticism latent in Spanish Colonial Revival architecture to attract public response. Along Old Alice Road, north of Brownsville, E. K. Goodrich, an attorney and landowner, had Stanley W. Bliss design a Venetian tower-house in 1927 in his not especially successful attempt to develop a country estate section at Media Luna. Surrounded by suburban ranch houses of the 1970s, the Goodrich house now presents an anomalous spectacle. The (sub)-architectural conventions of a half century later have alienated it from its setting, causing it no longer to seem natural. A certain pathos adheres to this condition since it was the quality of naturalness which Valley architects and their clients, by appropriating the forms of the Spanish Colonial Revival in the 1920s, sought to induce.

Utopia

As a mechanism for making any form of architecture seem appropriate, the affect of naturalness figures in several recently published essays by the architect Jorge Silvetti. Silvetti discusses naturalness in conjunction with the phenomenon of mythification: "Mythification naturalizes historical contingencies, by borrowing uncritically to establish an iconography that [can] symbolize a utopia." One can argue that the utopia which the Spanish Colonial Revival projected in the Lower Rio Grande Valley was a kitsch utopia, a transparent if occasionally ingratiating deception proffered to beguile popular consumption. As a

general condemnation of eclecticism in 20th century architecture, the terms of this argument are familiar. But is this argument misplaced?

An examination of Brownsville's Spanish Colonial Revival buildings discloses that the impulse to endow them with attributes of the past was not archaic or merely cynical. Rather it was an attempt to establish a distinct identity for a region undergoing profound transformations, its own indigenous types—clogged with memories of isolation and poverty—neither applicable nor desired. Spanish Colonial architecture allowed the Rio Grande Valley to portray itself as a place which was progressive yet maintained a reverence for shared traditions. In the realm of imagery, conflicting tendencies were synthesized. This project was utopian: in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the Spanish Colonial Revival was a myth that worked.

But only for a while. For the Spanish Colonial Revival, as well as the other eclectic styles of the period, the end of the 1920s brought crisis. Bad architecture was the *agent provocateur*. As scathingly as criticism from outside the eclectic ranks, this type of what Silvetti calls "criticism from within" functioned to undermine the power of the Spanish Colonial Revival myth. Through inappropriate and indiscriminate replication of the genre's characteristic elements, mediocrity exhausted the appeal of its formal products.

Countermythology

The result was the generation of a countermythology of the Spanish Colonial Revival. Bad taste, bad conscience, inappropriateness (it had more to do with California than anything else) and philistine excess were constituent elements of this new myth. But it required 20



years to become naturalized. In the interim, the style maintained a residual appeal, as was evident in 1948-49 when Ellis F. Albaugh and Associates added to and altered the century-old Brownsville City Hall and Market House in Market Square. Since then, circumstances have from time to time made Spanish architecture seem an appropriate medium, notably at the Stillman Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament at Immaculate Conception Cathedral, dedicated in 1959. Built as a memorial to one of the founders of Brownsville, the chapel contains a magnificent Spanish Baroque altarpiece, designed by Joseph Sanford Shanley of New York to complement the Murillo painting which it frames. But this was an exceptional project.

Alternative Myths

By the later 1930s, alternative myths had begun to be formulated. The most persuasive of these also made use of stucco finishes, picturesque outlines, and perhaps most importantly, the imprimatur of southern California. In 1937, George W. Kraigher, a Brownsville importer, built a small, two-story country house on Paredes Line Road. This was designed by the Los Angeles architect Richard J. Neutra and was the first example of the architecture of the Mod-



FAR LEFT: Alterations and additions to Brownsville City Hall and Market House, 1949, Ellis F. Albaugh and Associates. LEFT: Kraigher House, 1937, Richard J. Neutra, Frank W. Godwin (associate).



Detail of altar and reredoes, Stillman Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, Immaculate Conception Cathedral, 1959, Joseph Sanford Shanley, W. Knight Sturges (associate).

ern Movement to appear in Texas. After World War II the Lower Río Grande Valley was to experience another outburst of architectural production comparable to that of the late 1920s. Guided principally by two inventive Harlingen architects, John G. York and Alan Y. Taniguchi, this architecture sought to project a new utopia through lyrical demonstrations of constructional technique, industrially fabricated building components and minimal enclosure. And it drew upon a number of the constituents of the old Spanish Colonial Revival myth to formulate an appeal. Tropicality was once again subsumed, modernity of course was of the essence, and after a fashion even the past was invoked—not through the replication of historic detail but by citing the asperity of the border's 19th century vernacular brick style as precedent for the economies inherent in the constructional ethos pursued in the Valley during the 1950s. As they had with the Spanish Colonial Revival, these mythic elements functioned to naturalize modern architecture in the borderland as an appropriate expression of regional conditions and preferences.



Stephen Fox has conducted research on a number of topics relating to 19th and 20th century Texas architecture. He wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the following in the preparation of this article: D. Turner and J. K. Ochsner, Rice University; B. Scardino, D. Glasser and C. Bean, Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library; Y. González, City-College Library, Brownsville; and K. Camarillo, Brownsville Historical Association.

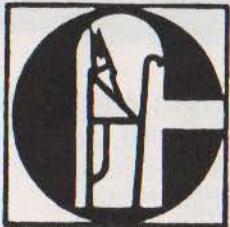
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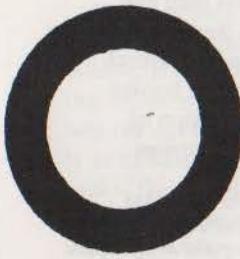
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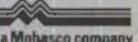
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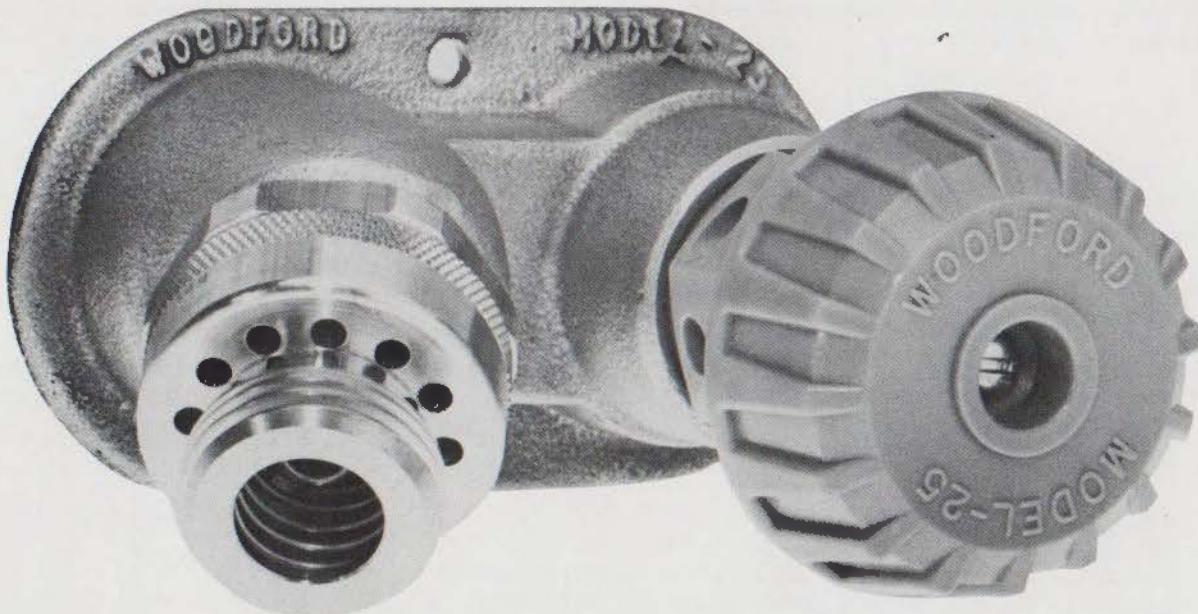
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The Regionalism of Henry Trost

A Legacy for Arid America

By John Pastier

Perhaps because we have packaged it in a single word, the issue of regionalism in architecture can easily be equated with a single, clear-cut approach to design. The phrase conjures up visions of buildings whose form grows logically out of their physical and cultural geography, buildings that are responsive to site, climate, and local materials, and which reflect the deep-rooted human patterns peculiar to a given setting.

Yet regionalism can also be willed into existence, as it was in Chicago and Oak Park at the turn of the century, where a collective exploration of the tall office building and Frank Lloyd Wright's experiments in residential form were so convincing that they quickly inspired offspring and later came to stand for the essence of a time and place. This second phenomenon could be called *de facto* regionalism, where the sheer prevalence of a style or system of design, coupled with its architectural merit, causes us to include it under the definition of authentic local tradition.

Related to this second form of regionalism is a third, in which the prevalent building forms do not originate locally but arrive from outside. The courthouse square, that grand archetype of Texas urban form, is thought to have originated in Tennessee, and many of the characteristic house types of eastern Texas came out of the coastal and inland regions of the Old South.

These ruminations about the varieties of regionalism are prompted by the career of Henry C. Trost (1860-1933), a talented midwesterner who initially defined the architecture of a large part of west Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Some of that definition was the result of a conscious response to the geography and traditions of what he called "arid America," but at least as much was due



Henry C. Trost, 1860-1933.

to the simple fact that he arrived on the scene early, seized opportunity, and delivered a good product consistently, although in an amazing variety of styles. Trost was an unabashed eclectic as well as a regionalist, and seemed to be able to play either role with equal ease. In the mature phase of his career, practicing in Tucson from 1899 to 1903 and then in El Paso for the next 30 years, he worked in such diverse idioms as Mission Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival, Beaux-Arts Classicism, Sullivan-esque and Prairie School, a simplified poured concrete commercial vernacular, Bhutanese, Pueblo Style, Art Deco setback skyscraper, and Venetian Gothic, to cite the more easily named examples. European-derived modernism was one style conspicuously absent from his repertoire, and its ascendancy was a major reason that Trost's fame did not survive his own death.

Now that modernism seems on the wane, the architectural profession is more inclined to appreciate the accomplishments of a skilled and sometimes inspired eclectic such as Henry Trost. With fortuitous timing, a book-length first study of his work has just appeared

after fifteen years of work by Lloyd C. and June-Marie Englebrecht. *Henry C. Trost, Architect of the Southwest* (El Paso Public Library Assn., 154 pp., \$27) is, as its subtitle implies, an examination of the architect's career that attempts to emphasize place as well as subject.

What emerges from the text is an incomplete portrait* of a talented and restless man moving from this place to that and from one style to another. Born in Toledo, Ohio, Trost changed his residence and workplace so often at the beginning of his career that the authors cannot establish a definitive chronology or a clear rationale for many of his migrations. Between 1880 and 1888 he worked as either an artist or an architect in Toledo, Denver, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Dallas, Fort Worth, Galveston (in the office of Nicholas J. Clayton), New Orleans, Topeka, Dodge City, and finally Chicago, where he stayed for the next eight years.

At the time, of course, the midwestern metropolis was the American center of progressive architecture, and there Trost came into contact with such figures as Sullivan, Root, Jenney, and possibly Elmslie and Wright. His principal activity in Chicago was designing ornamental metal, working deftly in a florid idiom that could be classified as both Art Nouveau and Sullivan-esque. Louis Sullivan was possibly the strongest single influence on Trost, but it wasn't until he left Chicago that this influence would

*The authors describe their book as "essentially a progress report detailing some of what we have learned about the work of Trost . . ." Although belied by the volume's impressive physical format, this self-assessment is accurate; an adequate presentation and analysis of Trost's architecture still remains to be undertaken.



Trost residence, El Paso: triumph of fashion over geography.



Carnegie Library, Tucson: Beaux-Arts classicism hovering between monumentalism and intimacy.

be manifest in complete buildings rather than confined to architectural details.

The next stop after Chicago was Colorado, but the three years Trost spent there are a virtual blank in the record of his life and work. Only with his arrival in Tucson in 1899 does he emerge as a clear architectural figure. There, he built in several styles: The two Owls Club buildings are hybrids of Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival overlaid with Sullivan-esque ornament rather than Churrigueresque decoration. The Carnegie Library's Beaux-Arts classicism hovers tantalizingly between monumentalism and comfortable intimacy, and the Donau House would not appear out of place in Chicago—its massing pays

homage to Wright and its decoration to Sullivan.

Four years after arriving in Arizona, he once again moved, this time to Texas and this time to stay. Perhaps fittingly for such a gypsy, he settled in El Paso, at the edge of another country and a scant three miles from another state. He came to join a brother 16 years younger who had come a year earlier to practice architecture. Eventually, another brother and a nephew arrived to join the firm of Trost & Trost, which soon virtually monopolized the architectural scene of far west Texas and which had significant presence in much of Arizona, New Mexico, and northern Mexico as well. In an irony of regionalism, the



Owl's Club II, Tucson: a hybrid of Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival styles with Sullivan-esque rather than Churrigueresque ornament.

task of initiating and defining the modern architecture of a Southwestern land of mountains and deserts fell largely to a clan born and raised on the level green shores of Lake Erie.

That process of regional definition was not always conscious nor always pursued in a direct or consistent way. Trost's buildings were most clearly regionalist when they followed colonialistic styles or were adaptations of native building forms. Texas examples of the former include the El Paso Country Club, the Williams and Wingo houses in the same city, and most notably the La Tuna Federal Correction Institution at Anthony. The latter approach is epitomized by the Pueblo Style Franciscan Hotel in Albuquerque, whose spatial complexity and brooding Expressionist overtones mark that work as Trost's most original and arguably his finest. In pursuing the native and colonial styles of the Southwest, the architect was aware of both their practical advantages in a hot, dry climate and their visual suitability to the desert light and landscape.

Use of native materials is another hallmark of regionalism, and, under a liberal definition, concrete became a native material in El Paso when cement began to be produced locally in 1910. Just before that, Trost had built two multistory office blocks in poured and partially exposed concrete. Soon after, he built three more, two mainly exposed and one entirely so. All five were simple and relatively free of ornament, but none displayed the sort of reductionism that a modern European might have attempted. The fifth and finest of these, the somewhat Sullivan-esque 12-story Mills Building, was also claimed by Trost to be "the tallest all-concrete building in the world." Unfortunately, its design quality and



Bassett Tower, El Paso: proof of Trost's mastery of the tall building as well as the "low firm masses" particularly appropriate to the region.

technological accomplishment, and its designer's role in Texas architecture, were not enough to save the building from a recent insensitive "facelift" of mirrored glass.

Yet for all these examples of indigenously responsive design, Trost seems to have been basically a stylistic jack-of-all-trades. This is not to say that he lacked mastery—far from it—but that the physical restlessness of his earlier years seems to have persisted in his preference for varied styles. His own hillside house in El Paso could safely be called Prairie School, and although it is very well executed it is nonetheless a triumph of fashion over geography. He worked equally well in the manifold other styles mentioned earlier, and through those styles imparted a cosmopolitan air to several Southwestern cities and towns, particularly El Paso and Albuquerque. For all his rhapsodizing about the "low firm masses" appropriate to the region, he proved himself a prolific and often masterful designer of tall buildings, best exemplified by El Paso's Bassett Tower and its near-twin, the Lubbs Tower in Phoenix.

Henry Trost was an eclectic *par excellence*. What held his work together was not any single approach to architecture, nor any consistent philosophical basis for design, but rather an extraordinarily sensitive eye and hand. Above all else, he



Franciscan Hotel, Albuquerque: perhaps his finest adaptation of native building forms.



La Tuna correctional facility, Anthony: following colonialistic styles.

practiced architecture as an expressive art, and when the profession became primarily concerned with other matters it forgot about his legacy. Now that architecture is once again interesting itself in formalism, ornament and history, and now that at least a fraction of his work has been put into book form, Trost should gain the wider recognition he has always deserved. His work paid homage to a unique region in two very different ways: it celebrated its geography and history in an almost mythic fashion, and it brought the most sophisticated American building styles to a locale that might otherwise have been fated to architectural provincialism and isolation.



John Pastier, former architecture and urban design critic for the Los Angeles Times, is currently living in Austin where he is writing a book for the Texas Society of Architects on the history of architecture in Texas and the Southwest. He is a 1966 graduate of Cooper Union in New York with a bachelor's degree in architecture and has taught architecture and urban design at Berkeley and been a visiting critic at Yale. He also is a contributing editor for New West magazine and Arts & Architecture.

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San Antonio Museum of Art

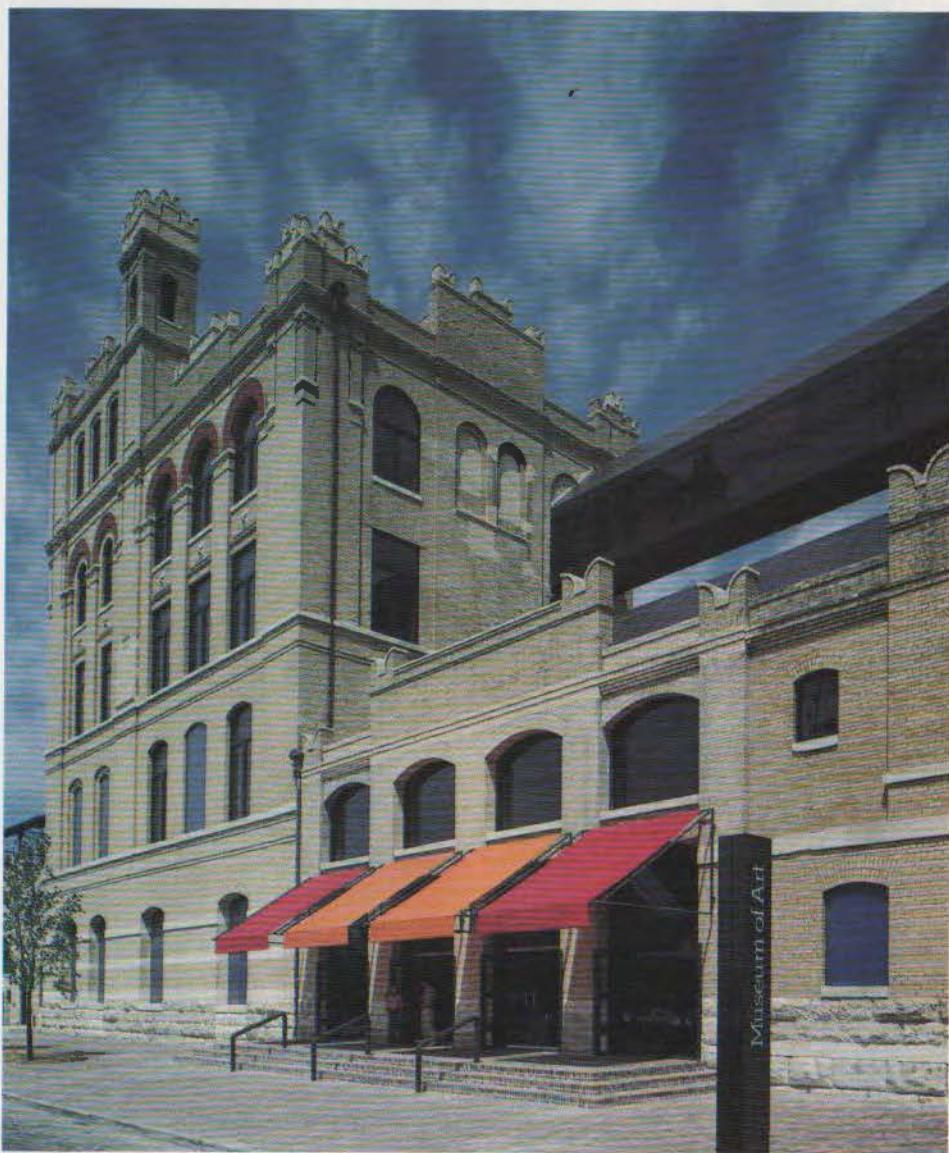
The Lone Star Brewery's Canny Conversion

By Michael Benedikt

Turning off Broadway onto West St. Johns, one comes across the San Antonio Museum of Art obliquely. The brick mass of the old Lone Star Brewery within which the Museum is housed seems small, even frail, with its arched openings, mottled color, and delicate castellation. The road is potholed and grooved with the rail tracks that once served the brewery as it leads past electrical and plumbing distributors, body shops and empty lots to the Museum parking lot across the street. From there the true width and scale of the building can be appreciated. Its organization is clear; its image, well, interesting.

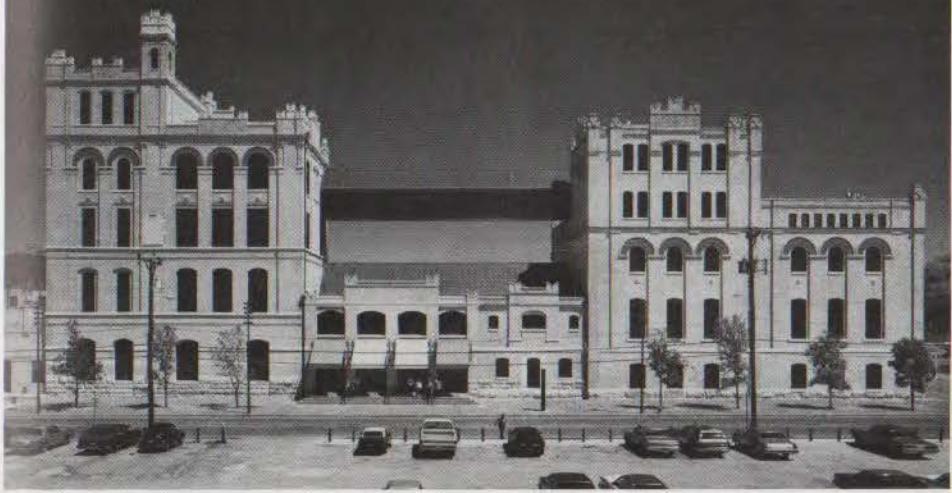
The Lone Star Brewery was built between 1895 and 1904 and designed by Anheuser Busch's plant architects, E. Jungerfeld and Co. of St. Louis. Its conversion began in early 1977, although planning and design had begun long before. In 1972, a University of Texas at Austin architecture class taught by Roy Graham had been asked by the San Antonio Museum Association (under the chairmanship of Jack McGregor, who had first seen the potential) to prepare a feasibility study. Encouraged, the Association sought and won entry for the building into the National Register of Historic Places, and hence brought about the possibility of federal funding. In 1973, Cambridge Seven Associates of Cambridge, Mass., were retained to execute the planning and design, which in 1979 won the firm a *Progressive Architecture* design award. The museum opened to capacity crowds in March 1981. For \$7.2 million, San Antonio had been given some 80,000 square feet of eminently usable gallery and museum space with restaurant and auditorium, as well as the momentum to continue transformation of the entire brewery complex into a significant stop in the national art circuit and—perhaps

Nick Wheeler



Entry and West Tower.

Architects: Cambridge Seven Associates, Inc., Boston; Peter Chermayeff, principal-in-charge; Richard Tuve, project architect. Edward C. Benner, designer. Associated architects: Chumney, Jones and Kell, San Antonio. Consultants: Le Messurier/SCI (structural); Galson & Galson Consulting Engineers (mechanical/electrical); Howard Brandston Lighting Design; Greyhound Designgroup (gallery exhibits). General Contractor: Guido Construction Co.; Roy McGinnis & Co. (phase one).



South facade.



View through west gallery to lobby.



Underside of elevator and mirror-clad pit; chrome springs and gear wheels.



Before: East Tower, first level.

more importantly—into a new physical and cultural growth focus for the city.

The project was executed in two phases. Phase 1, involving mainly the restoration of the exterior masonry, was done in association with San Antonio architects Martin & Ortega, who worked during the design stage with local officials and who also had produced extensive as-built measured drawings and a photographic survey of the brewery complex. Phase 2 completed the structural work and interiors, this under the supervision of local architects Churney, Jones and Kell.

Indeed, the museum seems to have been designed with these two phases in mind. Architectural manipulations to the exterior have been kept to a minimum—color accents, some windows filled in for light and energy control—while the interior has been lined and finished completely and crisply in gypsum wallboard, plaster, glass and metal. Two reminders of the old brewery inside are the handsome cast-iron columns and concrete “washboard” vaults of the ceiling, whose visibility was preserved by ducting the air conditioning in large vertical service volumes. These read as deep walls between the gallery spaces. Inside, other material evidence of the age and original function of the building is scant; we are not informed, for example, that the three octagonal beam patterns in the ceilings of the West Tower once permitted the tall brewing vats to penetrate between levels.

But if Cambridge Seven designers Peter Chermayeff and Richard Tuve drew back from preserving, say, parts of the brewery's brick interior—probably for fear of a predictable sentimentality *a la* San Francisco's Cannery—they have done a highly creditable job of orchestrating the given volumes into a coherent experience of art and architecture. The basic organization of the building is simple: a sky-lit central entrance space, East and West gallery towers joined at the top by a bridge, bookstore and auditorium on the first level off the entry space, restaurant atop the East Tower. For all this simplicity, however, the building abounds in sophisticated spatial delights. Instead of making the central space a tall atrium with elevators and bridges out to the flanking towers, as many architects would be tempted to do, Chermayeff and Tuve placed two elevators, one within each tower, made them from glass, enclosed them in a glass shaft, and celebrated the

exposed machinery in chrome. The effect is only mildly Portmanesque. Like moving sections of floor—and not unlike old open freight elevators—the configuration provides uninterrupted views across the modest-sized gallery spaces. The elevators also afford precisely what the philosopher John Dewey called for in his book *Art and Experience*—the valuable experiences of preview and summary and a constant sense of orientation with respect to the whole. And of course the pure visual novelty of these elevators should not be underestimated, nor should one discount the unreasoned smiles of all who travel in them.

In the West Tower, to take the stairs up or down a level one essentially steps outside the building. The glass enclosed landings place the visitor suddenly and serendipitously in the alley amongst the brick walls of the brewery's ancillary buildings. On the second level of the East Tower there is a place where, if one happens to look up, a skylight frames the far tower bridge, floating, and reflecting the sky. Later, on the bridge, one stops for an expansive view over San Antonio in two directions—a welcome, if over-warm (the air-conditioning is not up to the job here), relief from the strictly interior experience of the galleries between which one is traveling.

Though open only a few months, the museum seems to function quite well. Its collection is displayed with a minimum of fuss. A pleasant natural light is provided by the interior wooden louvres which slide back into the space between the old brick walls and the new stud and gypsum lining walls. The artificial lighting lacks flexibility in placement but nevertheless avoids creating the usual parabolas on the walls. The interior color scheme is subtle, picking out the old structure in slightly darker tones, while in the West Tower delicate green walls and honey pine floors (the wood recovered from the old roof of the East Tower) provide the appropriate ambiance for the museum's collection of 19th century paintings. In general, circulation flows smoothly, providing a pleasing sense of progress and revelation, though the space on the first level of the East Tower is somewhat tight, especially on busier days, and detracts from its function as a photography gallery.

If one is disposed to broader criticism of the architecture, however, it must center around the appropriateness of

Nineteenth century collection, West Gallery, second level. Octagonal beam pattern once accommodated brewing vats.



Nick Wheeler

Cambridge Seven's late-modern, fairly high-tech vocabulary in the context of a turn-of-the-century, quasi-romanesque industrial building. The contrast is stark but generally easy to accommodate due to the clear inside/outside new/old distinctions. Only when the two styles are seen side-by-side in equal mass—as on the roof terrace off the cafe atop the East Tower—is the potential for mismatch evident.

Inside, one misses trim and detail around the openings and in reveals. Outside, the banner-bright colors of the skylight baffles, the entry awnings and the window openings seem unnecessarily aquarium/airport-like.

The name of the building, instead of being inscribed on a chic little slab planted end-up in the sidewalk, might more appropriately have been rendered quite forthrightly on the face of the building in a manner befitting its bluff style. The absence, in fact, of name or sign, together with the empty-dark windows, slightly scarred brickwork and high-tech bridge, can somehow conspire to give the building's "visage" the curiously blank and worked-over mien of a bionic boxer.

Operationally, there are minor problems, some foreseeable, others not. Front access for the handicapped is not catered to; the auditorium turned out to be too small for the demand; and it is difficult to close off parts of the museum to change exhibits. The handling and placement of the reception desk makes strict control of access dif-

San Antonio Museum Association



Before: foyer.

Nick Wheeler



After: foyer.

ficult, and this situation is likely to intensify when the proposed river entry from the south side of the building becomes operational.

But in proportion to the building's successes, these design criticisms matter little. With economy and freshness, an old and useless building has indeed been transformed into something modern and useful and very much worth having. Such is the consensus of the many critics and journalists who gave the museum's arrival extended coverage and acclaim; such, apparently, is the consensus of the people of San Antonio. The care and pride with which Roy McGinnis and Co. and Guido Bros. Construction Co. built the museum is evident. The continued energy and entrepreneurship of the San Antonio Museum Association will benefit the development of the entire brewery complex. Plans are for the old Hops House to become a restaurant adjacent to a boat landing on the San Antonio River. The Boiler House beside the existing west galleries will become additional gallery space of more generous size. The Storage Building will be used for receiving, storage and for special exhibits while the Ice House will house the museum's administration. To the east will be a sculpture garden, the Carriage House an open pavilion overlooking it.

Property values on West St. Johns Avenue are certain to escalate. The body shops and paint suppliers and empty lots will likely give way to fashionable apparel stores and restaurants and dealers in *objets d'art*. This is urban renewal by culture.

Once, railroad cars rumbled past the brewery, steam billowed behind the castellated parapets, and the air hung with the smell of hops. Is it beside the point to call to mind such scenes? No. Part of the museum's identity is, and always will be, tied up with that of the brewery.

Hops House, Boiler House, Ice House—is it worth keeping the names?

Michael Benedikt teaches in the School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin.

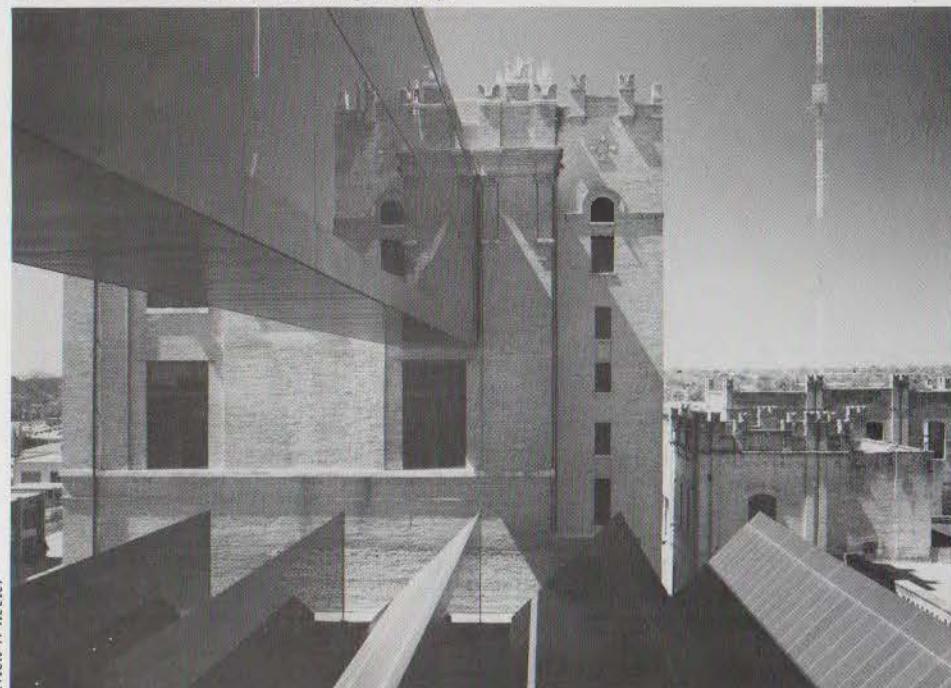
Note: The architectural community should be particularly interested in one of the Museum of Art's forthcoming exhibits—“The Drawings of Andrea Palladio,” a showing of 130 drawings now being exhibited at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., which will be in San Antonio from November 15 through December 31, 1981.



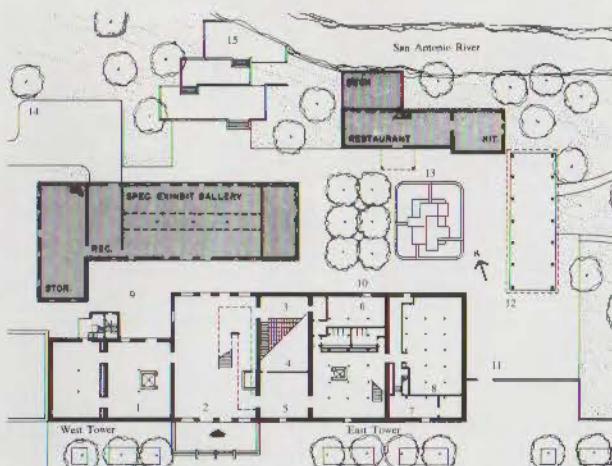
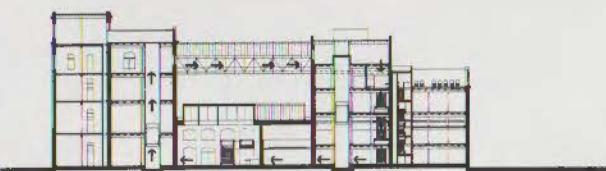
View from roof terrace to cafe and East Tower. Two styles in equal mass: a mismatch?

Michael Benedikt

Bridge meets West Tower above skylit lobby.



Nick Wheeler



LEFT: Section (top) and ground floor plan (bottom), also showing site features and plans for Storage Building and Hops House (shaded areas). Key: 1. Galleries, 2. Lobby, 3. Auditorium, 4. Storage, 5. Shop, 6. and 7. Mechanical, 8. Gallery, 9. Sculpture Court, 10. Main Courtyard, 11. Entry Courtyard, 12. Open Pavilion, 13. Fountain, 14. Service, 15. Future Boat Landing.

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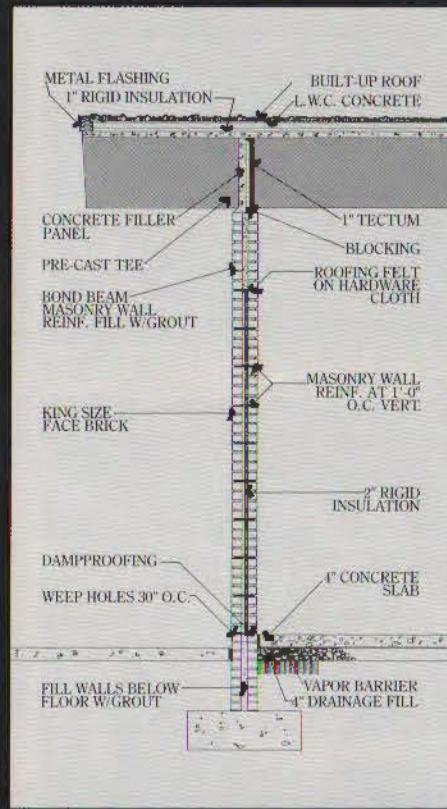
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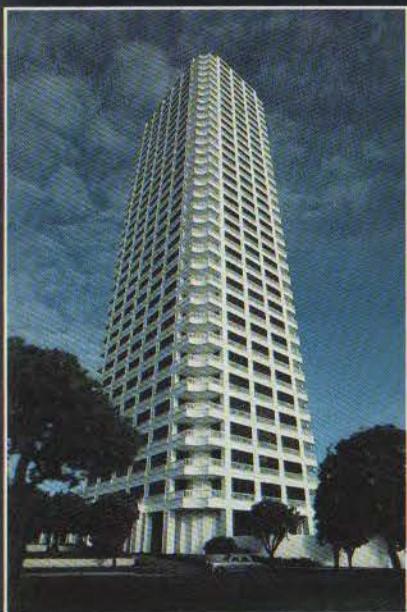
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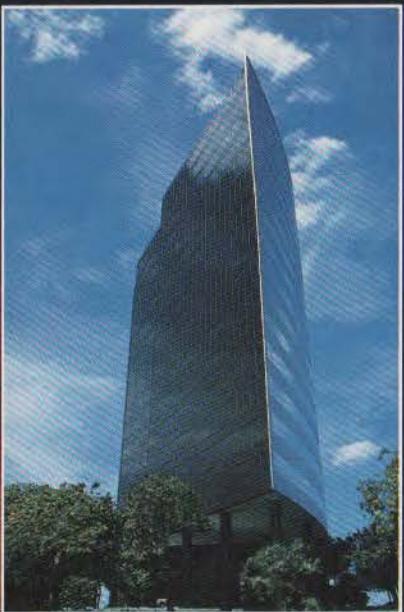
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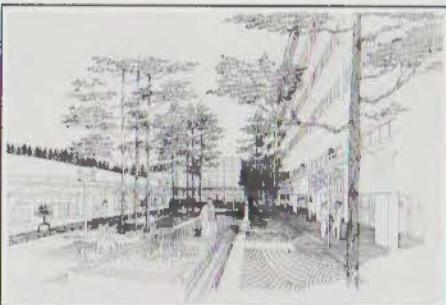


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In the News, continued.

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Kingwood Place West, near Houston.

Multi-use Development Planned for Kingwood

The Houston office of Helmuth Obata and Kassabaum has prepared a master plan for the development of Kingwood Place, a 1,500-acre mixed-use development in the Kingwood "total community" just north of Houston.

The plan calls for more than five million square feet of office space in low-to mid-rise buildings; one million square feet of retail and commercial space; some 2,000 apartments and townhouse units; motel, hotel and conference facilities; and one and a half million square feet of service distribution and showroom facilities. Separate phases of the development plan also include a hospital and medical center, a community college and research and development facilities.

Phase one of the development, now under way, includes site work and utility installation. Construction of the first buildings in the project is scheduled to begin in 1982.

Plans Announced For 28-Story Bank Tower In Downtown San Antonio

Construction of a 28-story bank tower is now under way on a two-acre city block in downtown San Antonio, designed to complement and blend subtly with the Gothic Revival architecture so prevalent in the area.

The \$50 million First International Tower by the Houston office of Skid-

more, Owings & Merrill will have an exterior of bronze tinted glass and dark red precast granite chip and will feature colonnades running the length of the building and three vaulted forms topping the building at staggered heights.

According to architects, historical allusion will be evident in the building's slender proportions and strong vertical expression. Also recalling the period, they say, will be the window wall configuration, detailing on the east and west elevations and the deeply shaded colonnades. The three vaulted forms are to suggest the characteristic towers of the Gothic style.

The building also is designed to represent the state of the art in energy efficiency. The building is oriented on its two-acre site so that its long sides face north and south, and its total glass area is kept to a minimum.

First International complex also will



First International Plaza, San Antonio.

include a 500-car parking garage and retail and restaurant services for office tenants and surrounding businesses. The focal point of the complex will be a landscaped public plaza featuring large scale sculpture.

Construction is scheduled to be completed in mid-1983.

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address the topic of neighborhood conservation. Trained at the Technion Haifa School of Architecture and Pratt Institute, she joined the Department of City Planning in New York when Mayor Lindsay first included the discipline of urban design in the function of government. Her experiences with the preservation and development of residential and business districts in that city, often pioneering the use of new legislative and incentive techniques, form the basis for this highly readable book. The importance of community involvement in the planning and design process, and the recognition that a public/private partnership is essential for effective action at this level, was demonstrated in the early 1970s when the proposed Lower Manhattan Expressway threatened Little Italy, one of the oldest ethnic enclaves in New York City. The history of the struggles against poverty and environmental disintegration in Little Italy is a familiar one, but Ms. Ramati uses this and two other New York case studies to develop a strategic plan that can assist any community, and its professional advisors, to develop programs that go beyond the traditional "urban facelift" and really attack the issues of economic and cultural revitalization. Like the Main Street Project, which is currently addressing similar issues in five Texas towns, *How to Save Your Own Street* is both practical and idealistic. Mr. Ramati "believes" in the community's ability to re-create, not as a museum, but as a living and working environment. The book is colorful, direct, realistic, useful, enthusiastic and encouraging.

—David Woodcock

Gone from Texas: Our Lost Architectural Heritage, by Willard B. Robinson. Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 296 pages, \$29.95.

The title is a play on the legendary inscription "G. T. T.", found on doors of vacant buildings throughout the South following the Civil War indicating that the former occupants had "Gone to Texas." It also reminds us of the irrevocable fact that much of Texas' most historically and architecturally significant structures no longer grace the state's towns and countryside. Mourning that loss, author Willard Robinson, a professor of architecture at Texas Tech, describes a cross-section of Texas architecture from Spanish Colonial to the early 20th century that is either no longer with us or in such a pitiful state that it would be well

to go ahead and put it out of its misery. Nevertheless, the book is not "intended merely to lament the destruction of historic structures," Robinson writes. It is also meant to provide a "history of the types and qualities of works that once were in Texas" and to encourage preservation of the significant structures that remain.

News of Schools

S.I. Morris Honored As 1981 Distinguished Rice Alumnus



S. I. Morris, FAIA, founding principal of the award-winning Houston firm Morris* Aubry Architects, was one of two Rice graduates honored as 1981 Distinguished Rice Alumni during a reception May 9 at Rice University in Houston.

The honor is one of the highest the University can bestow upon its alumni. Rice does not award honorary degrees.

Morris received his bachelor's degree from Rice in 1935. In 1938 he helped found the Houston firm Wilson and Morris, which became Wilson, Morris, Crain and Anderson in 1952. Morris established his own firm, S. I. Morris Associates (now Morris* Aubry), in 1972.

The firm has garnered numerous design awards for its projects, which have included the Alfred C. Glassell, Jr., School of Art, the Prudential Southwest Home Office Building and renovation of the Julia Ideson Building, all in Houston.

Morris has been actively involved in civic affairs in Houston. He is chairman of the Houston Cultural Arts Council, on the Board of Directors of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts and the Houston Chamber of Commerce and on Rice University's Board of Governors.

Work by UTA Faculty Exhibited At Ohio State University

Drawings and paintings by three faculty members of the UT-Arlington School of Architecture were among works by Emilio Ambasz, Michael Graves and Richard Haas, among others, exhibited in "Artist as Architect/Architect as



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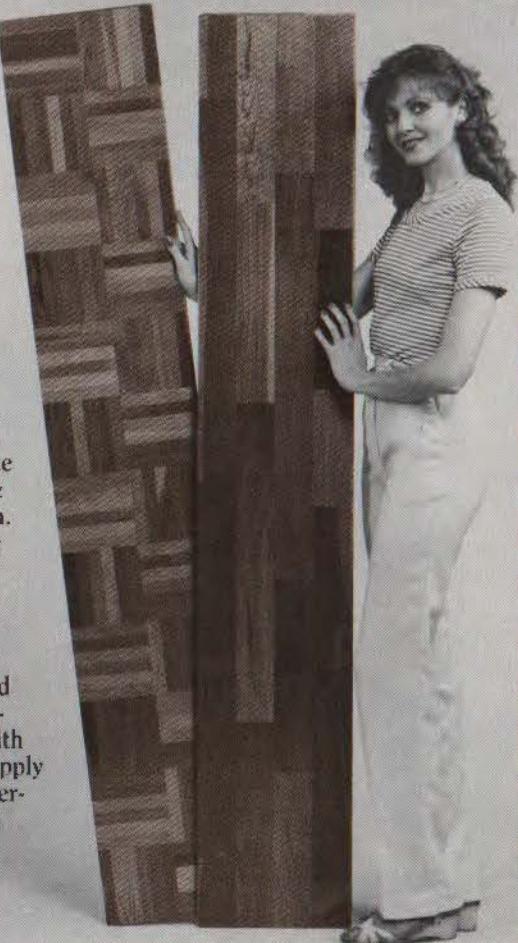
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"Artist" March 30 through April 17 at Ohio State University in Columbus.

The exhibition included "watercolor drawings" (watercolor and pencil) by UTA's assistant dean of architecture Richard Ferrier; poster designs by Fabio Fabiano, director of interior design; and photographic postcards by associate professor Craig Kuhner.

The show, sponsored by the Ohio State University Gallery of Fine Art, in cooperation with the School of Architecture and the Departments of Art and Industrial Design, included drawings, paintings, graphics, photographs, slide presentations and mixed media, works spanning a "wide spectrum of approaches and issues common to art and architecture."

David Woodcock Elected ACSA Regional Director



David G. Woodcock, professor of architecture at Texas A&M University and a contributing editor to *Texas Architect*, has been elected to a three-year term as re-

gional director of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, succeeding O. Jack Mitchell of Rice. The Southwest Region consists of Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas and has twelve accredited programs of architectural education. Woodcock, a native of Manchester, England, first came to Texas in 1962 on a Fulbright Teaching Grant. He returned to Texas A&M in 1970 and was head of the graduate program in architecture from 1973 to 1978.

MHMR Design Competition Announced for Students In Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana

Information packets are now being sent to schools of architecture in Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana announcing a 1981 student design competition sponsored by the Texas Society of Architects in cooperation with the Texas and American Hospital Associations.

The program, open to fourth- and fifth-year architecture students in the tri-state region, calls for the design of a "mental health and mental retardation facility in a community setting."

For more information, contact H. Ralph Hawkins, Chairman, Subcommittee on 1981 Student Design Competition,



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TSA Committee on Architecture for Health, Harwood K. Smith & Partners, 1111 Plaza of the Americas North, LB 307, Dallas 75201. Telephone: (214) 748-5261.

Coming Up

Aug. 7-8: Texas Society of Architects Board of Directors Meeting, San Antonio.

Aug. 28: Deadline for entries in the tenth annual Energy Conservation Awards Program, sponsored by Owens-Corning Fiberglas. Contact Mary G. Reinbolt, Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corp., Fiberglass Tower, Toledo, Ohio 43659. Telephone: (419) 248-8053.

Sept. 4: "Thermal Inertia in Architectural Walls," workshop sponsored by the UT-Austin School of Architecture with the support of the Division of Continuing Education, at the Joe C. Thompson Conference Center in Austin. Contact Lynn Cooksey, program development specialist for architecture, UT Division of Continuing Education, Main Building #2500, Austin 78712. Telephone: (512) 471-3123.

Sept. 10-11: Energy in Architecture Level

II Seminar, sponsored by the Dallas and Fort Worth Chapters AIA and the Texas Society of Architects, in Dallas. Contact Loretta Thomas, Dallas Chapter AIA, 2800 Routh, The Quadrangle, #141, Dallas 75201. Telephone: (214) 748-4264.

Sept. 12-Nov. 1: "Texas Space," exhibition featuring the works of 12 Texas artists and the unusual ways they deal with space, San Antonio Museum of Art. Contact Ruth Fawcett, San Antonio Museum of Art, 200 West Jones Ave., San Antonio 78215. Telephone: (512) 226-5544.

Oct. 2: "Classical Tradition: The Wave of the Future," symposium on classical tradition and its implications for today's art and architecture, sponsored by the UT-Austin School of Architecture with the support of the Division of Continuing Education, at Hogg Auditorium in Austin. Contact Lynn Cooksey, program development specialist for architecture, UT Division of Continuing Education, Main Building #2500, Austin 78712. Telephone: (512) 471-3123.

Oct. 3-6: "The Roles of the Private Sector," fourth Woodlands Conference on Sustainable Societies, in The Woodlands.

Contact Tony Lentini, Mitchell Energy Development Corp., P.O. Box 4000. The Woodlands 77380. Telephone: (713) 363-5654.

News of Firms

The Houston firm **Morris * Aubry Architects** has named Ben M. Hurst, H. Davis Mayfield III and Donald M. Palmer partners in the firm.

The Houston firm **Cavitt McKnight Weymouth** has promoted the following firm members to vice president: Madeline Chu, Jack Villagomez and Gordon Tong.

Kirk, Voich and Gist of Fort Worth has named Lynwood Jekel a partner in the firm and Paul Y. Creager an associate.

Dallas architect **James C. Noack** has moved his offices to 5327 North Central Expressway, Dallas 75205. Telephone: (214) 528-3130.

Bernard Johnson Incorporated in Houston has named Edward J. Davis senior vice president of the firm and announced that J. Carter Howald has joined the firm as manager of business development and architectural services.



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The Lubbock firm Whitaker Hall McQueen Jones has changed its name to **Whitaker McQueen Jones & Associates** and the interior design firm Whitaker and Hall Interiors is now **W M J Design Associates**. Both have relocated to new offices at 2517 74th Street, Lubbock 79423. Telephone: (806) 745-5485.

The Dallas firm Concept Consultants, Inc., has changed its name to **Interior Space Architects (INSPACE)**. Awaiting a move into an historic home on South Griffin, the firm is temporarily officed at 2911 Lemmon Ave., Dallas 75201. Telephone: (214) 526-4171.

The Houston firm **Lockwood, Andrews & Newman** has added Dan Stewart to the firm as a project manager in charge of the architecture-engineering-planning division.

Dallas-based **SHWC, Inc.**, has added Roger Brownlow to the firm's production department as a project architect and Cameron Duncan to the production department as graduate architect.

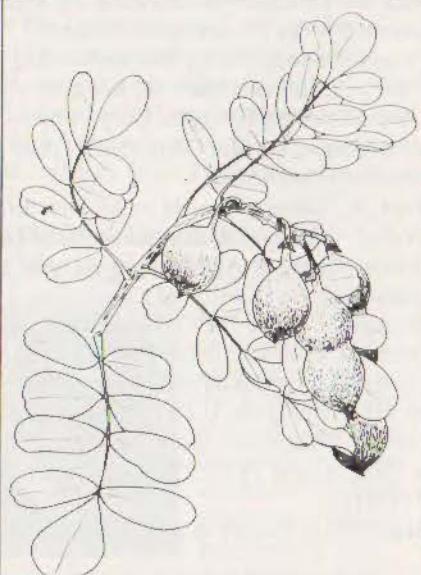
The Dallas firm **EDI/Cape Hopkins Clement** has announced that Pamella Jordan and Julie A. Wait have joined the firm's interior design and space-planning division.

The San Antonio firm **Phelps & Simons & Garza** has relocated its offices to 5545 Fredericksburg Road, Suite 100, San Antonio 78229. Telephone: (512) 349-7000.

The **Pierce Partnership** in Dallas has promoted Sid Trest to associate.

Industry News

Nancy McGowan, from Native & Naturalized Woody Plants of Austin & the Hill Country by Brother Daniel Lynch, C.S.C.



Texas mountain laurel.

Regional Flora: An Alternative to The 'FHA Approach'

If there is less of a natural imperative for architecture to be of its region than there used to be, there is still a strong obligation for plants. Flora indigenous to an area, as a rule, is that which is the most suitable to that area's climate and soil. Unlike buildings, plants will either grow well in a particular place or they won't.

Nevertheless, as Austin horticulturalist Jill Nokes has observed, native Texas trees, shrubs and cacti—growing in abundance statewide—traditionally have not been used in Texas landscaping. Nurseries have preferred to stock more exotic species in response to consumers' demand for "something different" in their yards.

That could be changing. Recognizing the many benefits of using locally grown flora for landscaping (low maintenance, for one)—as well as the potential demand as the popularity of the "natural look" gained momentum—Nokes started her own Texas Native Plants Nursery on 15 acres near Elgio in 1979. Since



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then she has been carefully nurturing a small inventory in hopes of establishing a good gene pool of drought-tolerant woody plants native to the Edwards Plateau and Transpecos regions for use by architects, landscape architects and interested homeowners.

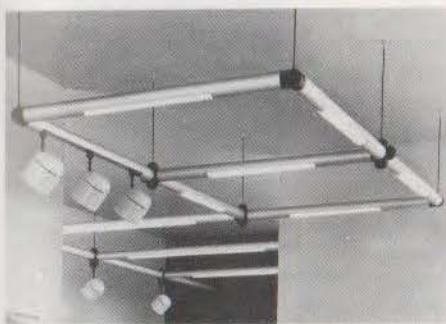
Some of the native trees and shrubs Nokes is propagating are Spanish red oak, guajillo, Texas mountain laurel, Texas pestachio, evergreen and flame-leaf sumac and the anacacho orchid tree. She scouts the rocky Hill Country around Austin to find just the right seeds from just the right trees—those that have, from all indications, adapted best to the region.

Nokes also works as a consultant with designers to identify hardy native plants already on a building site which can be artfully and economically incorporated into landscaping and passive solar design schemes. And drought-resistant plants help homeowners conserve water.

In the past, Nokes says, builders often took the "FHA approach" to landscaping, planting a handful of mulberry or Arizona ash trees on a lot because they're fast-growing, and in the process creating an environment that could be anywhere—Atlanta, Dallas or Los Angeles.

Texas Native Plants Nursery (business office), 3105 Lafayette, Austin 78722. Telephone: (512) 473-8718. Please call first; tours of the Elgin nursery by appointment only.

In Brief...



Tubular lighting system by Staff.

Staff Lighting in Highland, N.Y., has introduced a new "Tubular Lighting System" (TLS) designed so that an incandescent track section can be coupled directly with a fluorescent section of the same diameter and appearance. The system's basic module, a three-inch diameter tube, is available in various lengths and may be outfitted with a variety of connections. The system is designed to provide direct, indirect, spot or floodlighting

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Please call or have your agent contact Steve Sprowls or Tracey Flinn at Assurance Services for details.

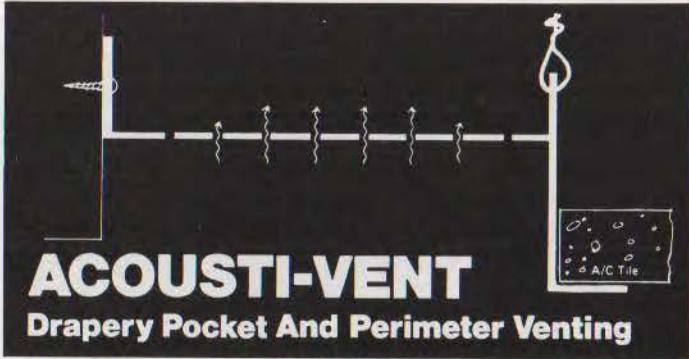


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Martin Industries in Fort Worth has appointed Mark W. McClendon manager of the company's precast concrete products division.

Barrett Industries in San Antonio recently named Jerry Jones vice president in charge of the company's advertising, marketing and package products division.

Naturalite, Inc., in Garland has introduced a new "thermalized" skylight designed to minimize heat loss as well as condensation on the inside of the skylight frame. The skylight is made of acrylic and aluminum with a polyurethane thermal break. According to Naturalite, installation of both types of thermalized skylights now available—L-frame and insulated curb—is virtually the same as the installation of more conventional units. Naturalite, Inc., P.O. Box 2267, Garland 75041. Telephone: (214) 278-1354.

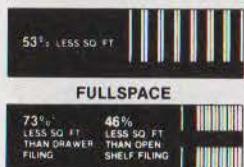
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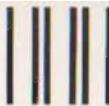
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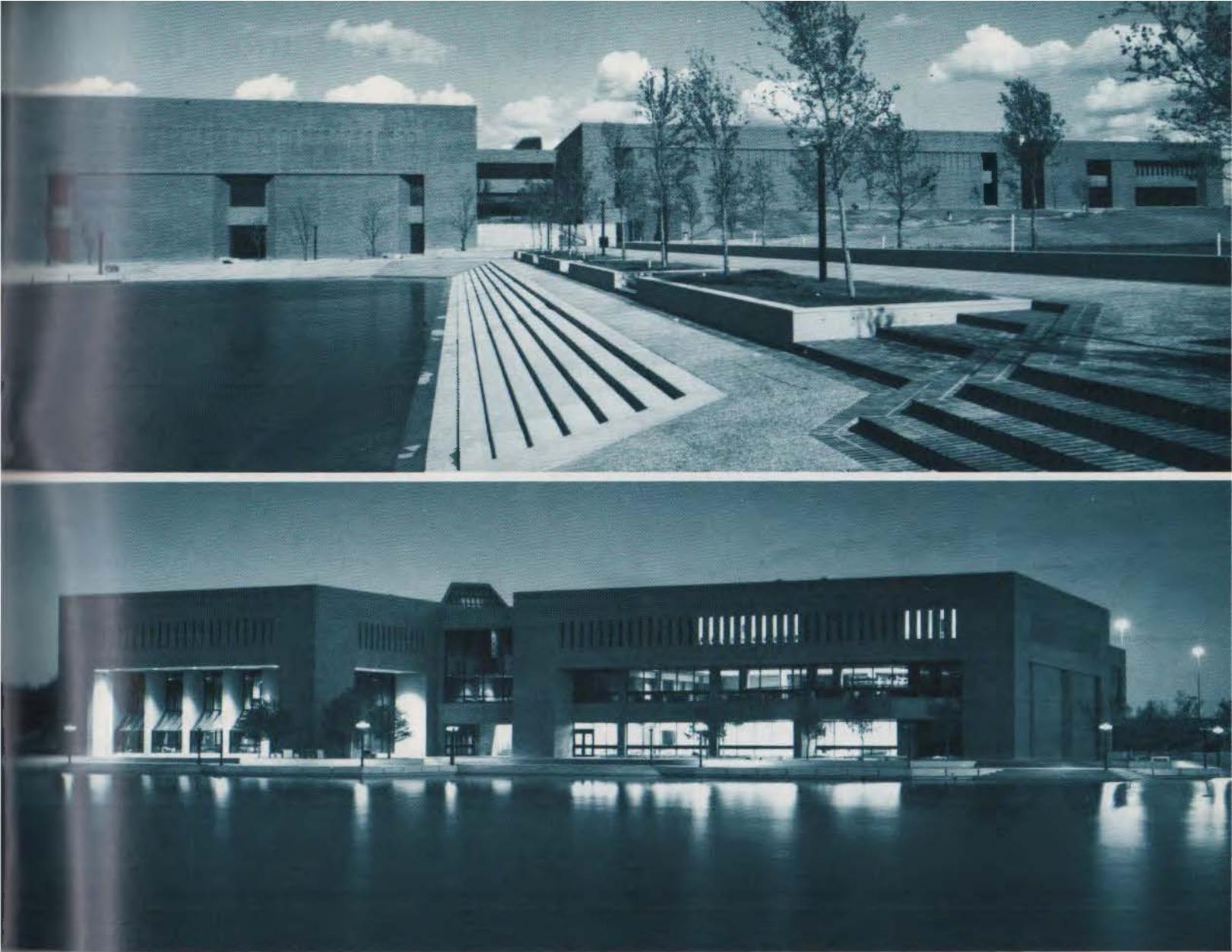
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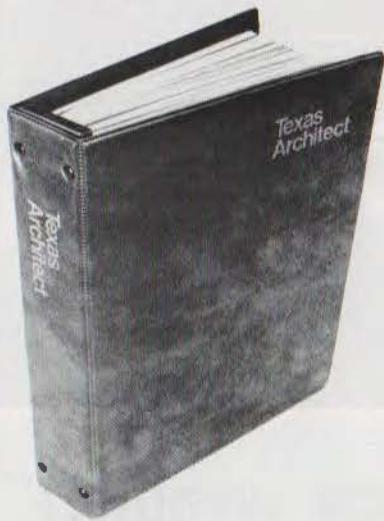
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Andy, O'Neil, and You and Me

Humor by Braden



Whenever I think of "Regionalism," I think of Andy Rooney. Please understand; I don't know Andy personally, but I watch him on CBS's "Sixty Minutes" every Sunday night and I read his writings in my daily paper.

To me, Andy personifies his turf, which—if you don't know—is the Big Apple. Having seen Andy on TV, I read his column and my imagination hears his words. I promise you Andy sounds just like a New Yorker is supposed to. I have every confidence that if Andy read me (I ain't in no dailies) he would say I sound just like a Texan. Of course, I am not on television (at least the New York stations don't carry me on a regular basis). Therefore, Andy has never heard me; but then, I have great faith in his sense of regional perspective.

I am jealous of Andy Rooney because he can write about anything he wants. The other day he described his pleasure with his morning shower. As I read, I could literally feel the warm soapy water trickling down my spine bone (architects are sooo sensitive, you know). Here was Rooney taking a New York shower, and I'm enjoying it in Texas. What a marvelous illustration of how one region can relate to another without either giving up that which is unique and personal.

For years I have had a line in my standard-issue, bired-out stump oratory wherein I explain to my audience (sometimes called the "great unwashed" and in better circles "the bourgeoisie") that "Regionalism" is an architectural term which means that some parts of the country are separate, and distinct, and unique from others because of their developed speech patterns, their topography, their climate, their cultural roots, their crops, their products, and ultimately (due to all of the above), their architecture. All of which is to say there are a lot of different flavors in the old U.S. of A.,

precious to their region, which should be retained. It is necessary to explain this because a lot of my audiences are so out of it they think Cadillac Fairview is a North Dallas car dealer.

Along with a lot of other cultural items of intrinsic value, we seem to have given up Regionalism in this country. Actually, the process has been gradual—it just sort of snuck up on us. As I look back over the years, I believe the conspiracy to stamp out Regionalism began when McDonalds pilfered the Golden Arch from St. Louis and adopted it as their corporate symbol. Thanks to that, we have two full generations who think the Big Mac was designed by Eero Saarinen. No longer is the arch a shining symbol of the gateway to the Golden West, but rather everybody's front door to heartburn.

I knew the decline in Regionalism had reached epidemic proportions when New Yorkers started wearing cowboy boots. That makes absolutely no sense. How could you ever run away from a mugger if you were wearing cowboy boots?

Nevertheless, Regionalism has been replaced in America by Faddism. Thanks to air conditioning, we can now create the same climate in Texas that Minnesota provides naturally. We have joined hands to take Dale Carnegie courses in order that we might speak, think, and dress alike. TV news anchors are interchangeable in our various regions just like fuses in a circuit breaker.

Interest rates are so high that our common man and his current "relationship" can now only reside in affordable "mobile" homes grouped in cloned communities, all of which resemble Peoria, Illinois, no matter where they are. This lack of Regionalism and individualism poses a threat to the continuity of the human race. Trailer parks will hasten the end of the world because everyone knows even God doesn't like mobile homes—

that's why he sends us tornados.

The earth's surface is slowly being covered by a stream of theme restaurants and the franchised architecture of Jack-in-the-Box, Burger King and Col. Sanders. Joe & Tillies Bar & Grill in Milwaukee and Sellers Cafeteria on the Sulphur Springs Square are disappearing into the sunset as Detroit designs a Monarch to look like a German Mercedes (and brags about it). Sixty-year-old executives don the uniform of youth as they shed the three piece suit and slip into designer jeans and Adidas jogging shoes.

We are so laid back and super cool that we just want to grab some gusto, tone our bodies, watch the tube, see a flick, lock our doors, get skinny, go skiing, ride a raft, get high, and be a pepper just like everybody else. Why worry about Regionalism and roots in our lives when we have issues like rampant inflation, computer technology, genetic engineering, and dull and dingy hair to cope with? Let's build the same boxes everywhere to house our fragile society. The world really doesn't have the time for regionalism in architecture.

There are those who are of the opinion that you should see your doctor if you feel a need to express Texas in your design. They have saved some old swine flu shots left over from a free clinic in Waukegan as a possible cure. The bad news expressed in that camp is that Regionalism is really a disease. The good news is that O'Neil Ford is a carrier.

This is to say "not to worry." Regionalism is alive, if not too well, and perhaps on a strong road to recovery in our state. Texas still possesses a few things nobody else will steal; i.e., the Legislature. Every once in a while a regional butterfly breaks from the cocoon, such as the wonderful art museum San Antonio has brewed from the old Lone Star Brewery.

There is that great hope on the horizon that perhaps *all* forms of communication will disintegrate to the level of the U. S. Postal Service, thus slowing down our lives to a pace which allows time for an occasional inward look. And in the end, there are still those who love their region, like Andy, O'Neil, and you and me!

Dave Braden is a partner in the Dallas firm Dahl/Braden/Chapman, Inc., and a Texas Architect contributing editor.



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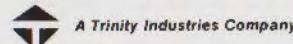
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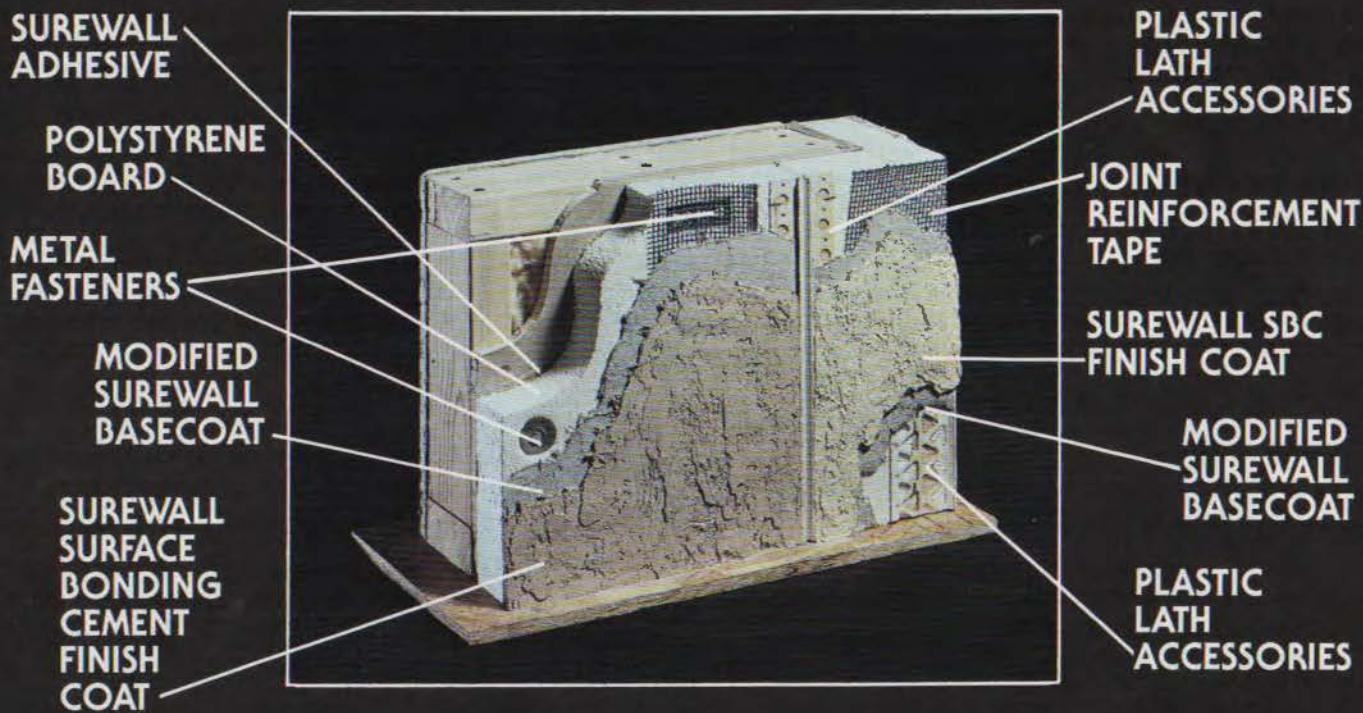
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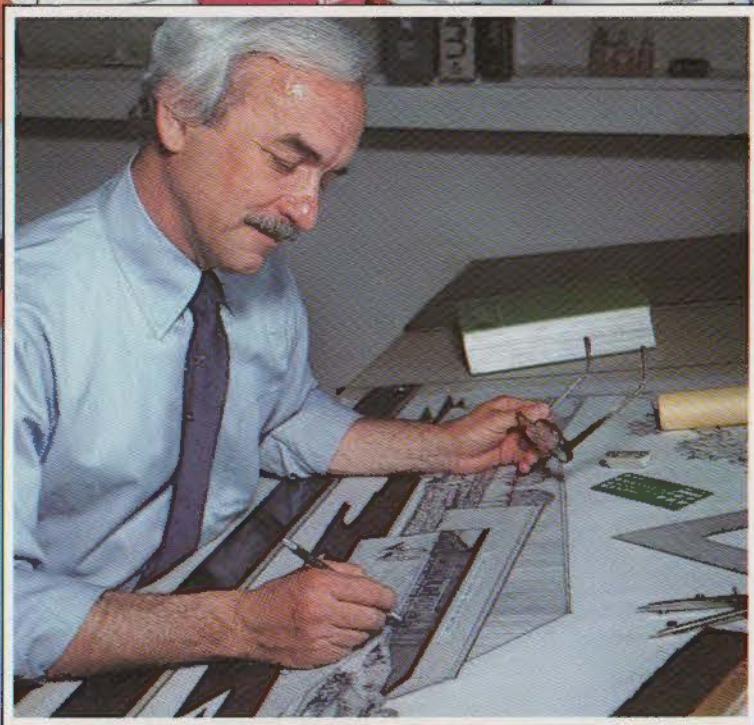
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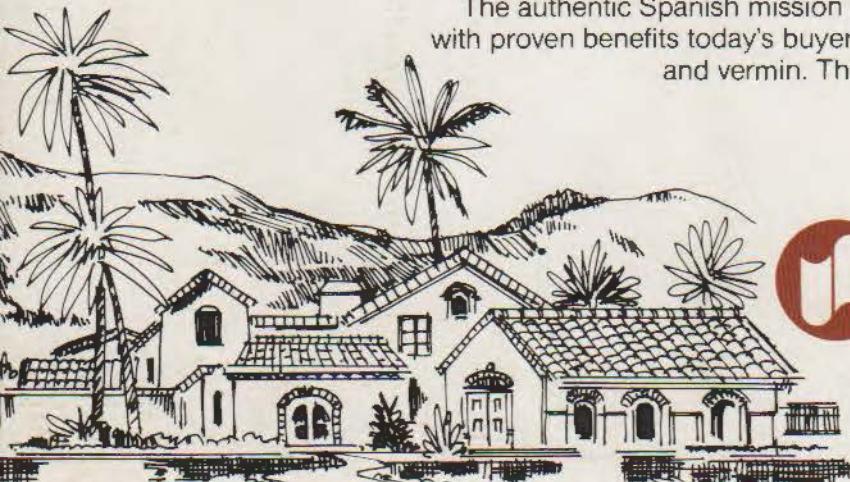


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