A R C H I T E C T U R E
CALIFORNIA

Dedicated to Berenice Abbott 1898-1991
pioneer of modern American photography

Berenice Abbott, Flatiron Building, New York, c. 1934. Berenice Abbott/Commerce Graphics, Ltd., Inc. Architect, Daniel H. Burnham. A steel-framed skyscraper wedged into Manhattan in 1902, Flatiron became a focus for debate in twentieth-century architecture and photography.

ARCHITECTURE
CALIFORNIA

Architecture and Photography

From the Editor

Architecture California's 1990 mandate to drop ads and color images, and to use illustrations for the purpose of reference, marked a sharp departure for the journal. In its new format, and after two years of efforts to rethink its editorial relationship to discursive traditions as well as graphic mediums for 'depicting'—and thus disseminating—buildings, *Architecture California* here takes up the issue of photographic representation of the built environment. This special number of the journal addresses the *photographic framing* of architectural design and practice—but also the overarching process of *editorial framing* that so compellingly conditions our reception of the field. While illuminating the ways in which photography represents architecture, documents architectural practice, even teaches and sells architecture, yet ultimately—and ironically—*fails* to render the three-dimensional spatial character of buildings, this editorial selection proposes that architecture and photography are distinct cultural

Berenice Abbott, Shelter on the Water Front, Coenties Slip, Pier 5, East River, Manhattan, May 3, 1938. Berenice Abbott/Commerce Graphics Ltd.

practices—each in its own right, with its own particular aesthetic demands—and that only from a truly collaborative dialogue between the two can something *new* issue forth.

This number works like the aperture of the camera's lens, which, by varying the amount of admitted light, allows for variation in the nature of resultant images: Architects are acutely aware of the increasingly critical role photography plays in relation to building practice, and the multilateral debate offered here, giving voice to architects, photographers, and architectural historians, seeks to re-envision the conjunctions in their practice and to shed light on the relationship between architecture and photography.

Architecture and Photography was conceived in the space defined by a series of curiously related events: There was the death of Berenice Abbott on the 10th of December 1991. Abbott's project to photograph a *Changing New York* during the 1930s documented the social and urban life of a metropolis in the process of self-transformation—much as had Eugène Atget in his photographs of Paris from the previous century. Her contribution to the histories of photography and architecture included the launching of unforgettable new ways of seeing the city and its buildings. Then, in October of last year, there was the spectacular photo-advertising campaign waged by provocative imagineer Calvin Klein, which, only months before this number went to press, provoked a print-ad duel between Klein and another advertiser, Kenneth Cole, whose own deadpan ad soundly criticized photography's shifting relationship to its objects. The issue was sharpened with the appearance in April of an allusion to Julius Shulman's classic photograph of Pierre Koenig's Case Study House #22 in an ad which appropri-
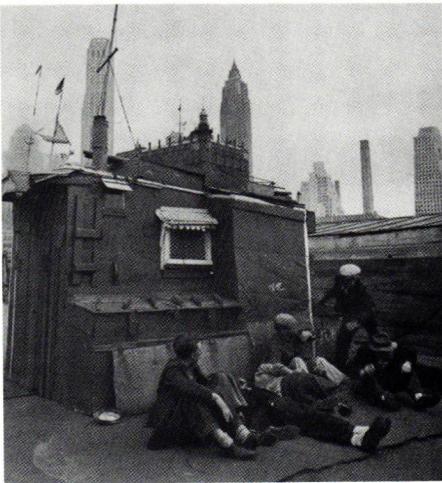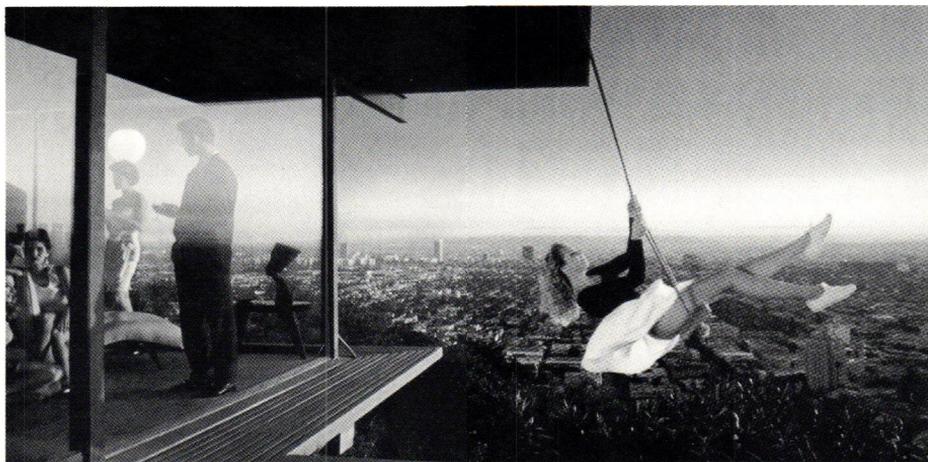
LA Gear advertisement. *Vogue*, 100th Anniversary Special, April 1992.

ated the unique combination in order to market swinging LA footwear.

These events established vantage points, perspectives on buildings and life in the city, that broaden our common reaction to the practices of representing architecture. And, as history would have it, *Architecture and Photography* was born in coincidence with yet another set of unprecedented events that thrust into the spotlight the question of the 'truth' promised by photographic images as they attend to our cities. Whereas on the one hand, the actual video documentation of the police abuse of Rodney King confirmed the life experience of African Americans, on the other hand, that supposedly incontrovertible evidence failed to prove to a jury in Simi Valley, California, that law enforcement officers had *themselves* broken the law. The subsequent—

selectively distorting—photojournalism that 'framed' international awareness of the resultant uprisings in South Central LA will now serve law enforcement agencies to 'frame' their prosecutions: The lens of racism blinkers itself in the face of such disparity.

As the aperture necessarily narrowed and widened in response to historic events, and as the exposure length was alternately shortened and extended, the multifaceted practice of photographing buildings has revealed shifting depths in a field open to reinterpretation. Representation, documentation, advertising, critical commentary, aesthetic practice: Ultimately we cannot draw lines *in practice* which accurately correspond to the distinctions we tend to make *in theory*. Their shared practice is the art of 'framing'.

With this number, *Architecture California* announces the advent of open subscription. The Editorial Board looks forward to broadening participation in the journal's publication, and the Editor welcomes the opportunity to see our forums grow in number. It was, after all, the expressed desire for more consideration of 'design' and the 'visual' that spurred this perhaps unexpected enactment of journal forum as aperture in motion.

LAPD officers beating Rodney King.

Lian Hurst Mann, AIA

Representing Architecture: The Drawing and the Photograph

Rosemarie Haag Bletter

Johann Wolfgang Goethe considered vision the noblest of the senses, and explored such perceptual effects as after-images in order to show that the physiology of vision is separable from the perception of objects in space. In the twentieth century, Gestalt psychology investigated conceptual ordering principles that presumably derive from mental structures, further dividing *perceptual* truth from *conceptual* truth. More recently, an increasing number of studies concerned with visuality deploy the question of vision as a critical device to distance us from the culture industry and from what seems to be an overwhelming emphasis on the visual in modern mass culture.[1] Such projects dismiss Gestalt psychology as too universalist, while regarding any perceptualist model as a *laissez-faire* response to the already visually over-determined environment.[2]

Behind these critical works on visuality is Walter Benjamin's 1936 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."[3] Benjamin's own rather ambiguous estimate of the loss of aura associated with the unique work of art is, however, typically overlooked or not understood. Even more central to the current consensus that visuality is oppressive has been Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.[4] For Foucault, Jeremy Bentham's 1791 proposal for a Panopticon—a circular prison in which all actions are observable from the supervisor's position at the center—is a paradigm for oppression through visual control.[5] Bentham's Panopticon was pro-posed as part of the prison reform movement, but it also became a model for other building types such as hospitals and schools. In Foucault, however, the Panopticon becomes a metaphor for rational Enlightenment ideals gone wrong. Choosing to see the Panopticon solely as an imprisoning form, Foucault downplays any progressive aspects of the Enlightenment and French Revolution, and instead singles out as his social model for the Modern Age the authoritarianism and irrationality of the Terror of 1793.[6]

Foucault uses the notion of *oversight*—the French title of his book was *Surveiller et punir*—in the Benthamite prison of the nineteenth century as a metaphor for modern bureaucratization and institutional control of society.[7] In a more literal vein, he asserts that the enclosing prison walls made punishment more inhumane in the end, insisting—without much proof—that the public executions of earlier periods were less ambiguous expressions of power. Foucault's notion of public versus institutional oversight is, however, itself full of contradictions.

A few of the studies on visuality that have adopted Foucault's paradigm of modern institutional repression through surveillance have even imposed this model on the invention and use of perspective as an example of a rational domination of space that, in this interpretation, becomes a signal aspect of Western colonization, a form of imprisonment in a web of measured space. Jonathan Crary further extends this notion of centralized surveil-

lance to the diorama, a form of popular entertainment from the 1820s onward.[8] Because the observer stood in the center to look at a constructed reality surrounding him, usually a painted battle scene or urban view, Crary suggests that the panorama prefigures the abstracting experience that photography would eventually impose. He believes that in separating the visual from other sensory perceptions, the circular format of the diorama forecasts the privileging of visuality in modern culture. One might interject that panoramas and dioramas were primarily displayed in large urban centers like London and Paris, and that they were probably not visited often enough—they were most comparable to the circus, in that admission was charged—to affect ways of seeing in any intrinsic manner as photography, film, and television would.

Because these recent works on visuality do not deal with visual representation as such, nor with its public reception, they are not grounded in social history, nor do they deal with the changing nature of the public. While complaining about the abstracting tendencies of the new visual media, visuality is dealt with selectively as a controlling power. No opposing views are introduced for discussion and the theory confirms itself. Going against such a reductive view of the power of visuality over all other senses, one might, for example, introduce the works of the utopian socialist Charles Fourier, one of the earliest critics of the shortcomings of the Enlightenment, who together with his proposals for economic reforms also insisted on an open, libertarian sensory enjoyment.[9] Similarly, Friedrich Froebel, the German reform educator and inventor of the *Kindergarten* stressed in his teaching the unity of sensory perceptions.[10] It could perhaps be argued that Fourier and Froebel wielded the influence they did in Europe and America in the nineteenth century because theirs was a corrective to the prevailing separation of the senses.[11] However, we do not encounter mention

of them in either Foucault or Crary. I would propose that changes in visuality can only be understood through studying the interchange between ways of seeing and methods of representation.

There is, of course, no doubt that visual representations have dominated the understanding of architecture since the Renaissance. Images of architecture have only become more iconic with the wide publication of photographic representations. For instance, the view of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater (1935-39) from below the falls, or the familiar oblique views of Gropius's Bauhaus at Dessau (1925-26) are images known to millions but few have actually been to these buildings. This separate reality of pictures of architecture on which we have been forced to rely in order to transmit a preliminary understanding of architecture is usually regarded as pernicious, as an interposing medium that keeps us from perceiving architecture as it really is.

The architect and historian James Marston Fitch, beginning with an article called "Single Point Perspective,"[12] has called for a more complete sensory record of architecture, one that would not always give precedence to vision. Somewhat later, in his essay entitled "Towards a Critical Regionalism," Kenneth Frampton complains about the priority given to sight,[13] while touch ought to be as important a dimension in the perception of built form. He uses the tactile richness of Alvar
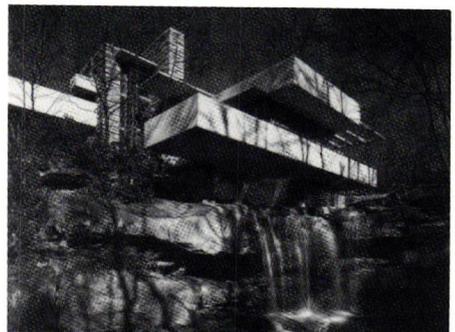
Fallingwater, Bear Run. Architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Photographer, Bill Hedrich, 1937.
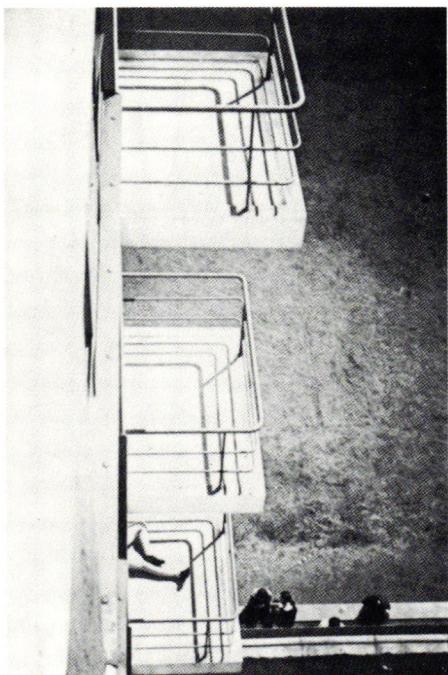
View from the Bauhaus studio building, known as the Prellerhaus, n.d. (Bauhaus photo).

Aalto's architecture as an instance where visual representations would always be inadequate. Although Frampton presents this point in a different context, his view is in fact part of an ongoing critique of technocentric Modernism through a demand for an existential and experiential emphasis on our understanding of architecture.

To come back to Fitch, his ideal record of architecture would include, in addition to visual images, typical sound and noise levels at the site, weather conditions, and other environmental factors. But he makes no concrete proposal as to how the other senses might be referenced, except in descriptive passages of an accompanying text. Concerning the visual record, he correctly warns against the reliance on a single photograph as a stand-in for a building. He presents a hypothetical situation in which a building is photographed from all possible angles, including aerial ones, and under all sorts of weather conditions, and he concludes that a pho-

tographer must select one "point in time-space" from among two trillion possibilities.[14] If we accept Fitch's somewhat facetious arithmetic, it would take several lifetimes to show a single building fully. In fact, even when we visit a building, we rarely see it from all possible angles or in all seasons. His suggestion is not merely impractical—it would be less costly and time-consuming to visit all buildings rather than to illustrate them to this degree—but it borders on verism, because he assumes that a complete visual record *could* be produced with enough images.

Two-dimensional representations of architecture, the photograph and especially the drawing, precisely because of their abstracting tendencies, can serve a useful and pedagogical function. While too few illustrations can indeed fragment and misrepresent a building, we must not lose sight of the revealing power an abstracted image can have: We all accept the abstract nature of working drawings such as plans and sections; and the split between the actual perception of a building and its false representation—so feared by Fitch—is anything but new with respect to photography. This dichotomy is as old as the use of two-dimensional images for three-dimensional objects. Nevertheless, such a split hardly mattered before the publication of drawings became possible. Before that, architectural drawings were seen by few people other than the architect and his client. However, with the introduction of book publications—particularly pattern books—the wide dissemination of images detached from built works became a powerful secondary, and sometimes even primary, reality.

Though there were some books on architecture that preceded Serlio's *Architecture*, first published in 1537-51, the earlier works were treatises in which text was emphasized over image. With the new pattern book of the sixteenth century, such as those of Serlio and Palladio, comes not only the assumption of practical application and wide distribution, but

also the primacy of pictorial representation.[15] In this respect, the notion of the pattern book is comparable in its impact to the modern use of photographs in books and periodicals. It seems that the mode of representation used in most early pattern books was intended to depict as general a situation as possible: The illustration is meant to function as a universal prototype. Since such designs could potentially be applied to the greatest variety of sites and specific conditions, it was actually advantageous to render the context fairly abstract in illustrations of architecture. Serlio's woodcuts, for instance, employ shading only occasionally, the site is not indicated at all, and the façade elevation is suspended in a blank setting. There is only a very limited use of point perspective. This was a very deliberate choice on

Sebastiano Serlio's Sixth Book *On Domestic Architecture*, Plate Number XLIX, G, House of a better-off artisan with an upper floor; H, House of a better-off artisan in the French manner; I, Dwelling of a rich artisan or good merchant or citizen; K, Dwelling of a rich artisan or good merchant or citizen in the French manner. Avery Library, Sixteenth-century manuscript of Book VI, Folio 2, 1919 Binding.

Serlio's part, as Book II of his *Architecture* deals with point perspective separately. This type of *timeless* representation of buildings can still be encountered in some nineteenth-century pattern books such as Jean Nicolas Louis Durand's *Précis et leçons d'architecture*,[16] or in John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture.*[17]

The preference for a deliberately abstracted approach to the representation of architecture was gradually replaced in the course of the eighteenth century, but did not achieve a wide acceptance until the nineteenth century. Piranesi's etchings and engravings of architectural subjects often show antique buildings overgrown with weeds. The passage of time, the ephemeral, and the experiential began to be foregrounded. With the publications of Claude Nicolas Ledoux and Karl Friedrich Schinkel, context and landscape settings are usually an integral element of the architectural design.[18] Especially in the case of Schinkel's representations, because of their very specificity in relating buildings to their surroundings, several views from various angles are provided.[19] This increasingly experiential quality in architectural representations is usually assumed to have culminated in photography.

The overwhelming use of photographs in publications in the twentieth century, in theory at least, should make it possible to produce a full record of any building. But new problems arise with the dominance of the photograph. In practice, there are limitations imposed by the medium itself, and there are always economic limitations on the number of illustrations that can be used in a book. More often than not, a work of architecture is illustrated—as Fitch feared—with single photographs. In this respect a photograph functions more as a reference point rather than as a full-fledged representation. While we usually expect a degree of abstraction from drawings, photographs may lull us into false security that we are encountering the *real*. They are not any
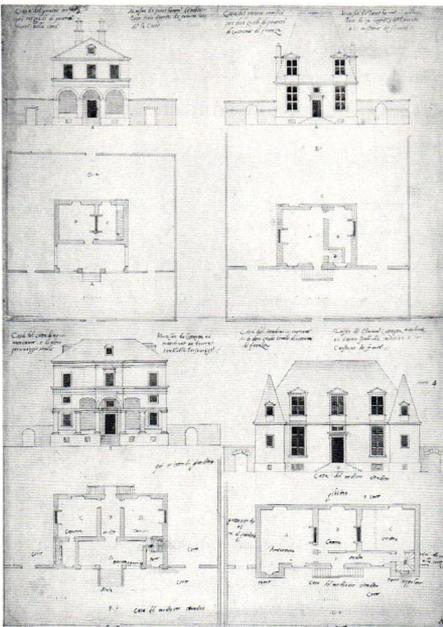
more truthful than renderings, though we may be less aware of the many editorial decisions that have gone into the photograph.

A corollary to the mistaken belief that photographs are necessarily more revealing than drawings is the misconception that a *film* about architecture will bring us closer to a truthful pictorial account of a building because it captures movement through space. An architectural film may indeed come close to Fitch's demand for a complete descriptive record of a building; after all, it can comprise thousands of frames taken from hundreds of vantage points. Nevertheless, the illusion that we are experiencing a building three-dimensionally in film is even more difficult to dispel than the idea that photographs represent a form of 'unedited life'. Most importantly, films, like photographs, reduce three dimensions to two; films, like photographs, reduce or enhance actual scale; in films, as in photographs, we see only small fragments of the visual field; and, lastly, in films, as in photographs, we are not free to walk through a building. In films, the point of observation has always been preselected for us. As the camera moves through an interior, it is not clear to the viewer whether a thirty- or ninety-degree turn has been made. Films, like photographs, are indeed useful introductions to a work of architecture. However, the exact disposition of a series of rooms, for example, can be shown more precisely in a few diagrammatic representations, such as plans, sections, or axonometrics.

James Fitch has rightly complained that because of the large role illustrations have assumed in the transmission of architecture, our reaction is reduced to a visual one. Other sensory experiences are much more difficult to address. This condition affects not only historians and critics of architecture, but probably also the production of architecture. Even with an exceptional building like the house Charles Moore designed in 1976 for a blind client, which includes numerous features specifically geared to the sense of touch, the published photographs limit our experience to a single sensation: We have become blind to all sensory experience except the visual one.

Though perhaps less descriptive than picturesque renderings, photographs, or film, the abstracted line drawings of Serlio alert us to the fact that all two-dimensional images of architecture constitute an abstraction of one sort or another. Serlio's nonspecific representations work especially well when we are forced to use a single image to illustrate a building. For some types of architectural designs, a visit to the site may be no more helpful than photographs. In the case of an architect like Peter Eisenman, whose approach is exclusively conceptual, the formal design relationships cannot be experienced by walking around or through the building. They are revealed most clearly in diagrammatic representations, such as axonometric projections. That we regard the
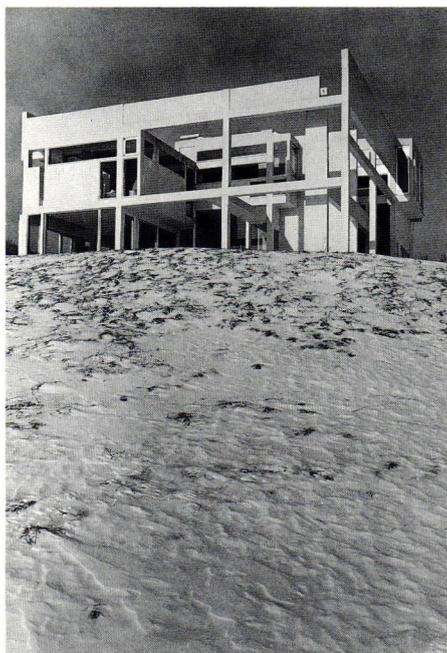
House II. Architect, Peter Eisenman, FAIA. Photographer, Norman McGrath.

axonometric view as a fairly abstracted representation is, however, directly related to its growing popularity in the 1920s, when its flattened, non-perspectival manner evoked the works of the contemporary avant-garde. The axonometric projection, however, was first used to show the accurate proportions of fortifications and machines, that is, its origins were entirely tied to the practical realm of image-making, making clear that our perception of the axonometric has changed dramatically since the nineteenth century.[20] The discrete, abstracted sensory event is not introduced with the panorama *or* with the photograph: The distinction between point perspective and the axonometric projection already points to the construction of separate perceptual and conceptual realities prior to the nineteenth century. This underscores, as does Serlio's *Architecture*, if in a slightly different sense, that several systems of representation could be—and often were—used at any given moment in time.

NOTES

1. Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), the essays in Hal Foster, *Vision and Visuality* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988), and particularly Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991).

2. Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1960) or Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1972).

3. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969).

4. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 1977 (New York: Vintage, 1979).

5. Jeremy Bentham, *Panopticon: or the Inspection-House*, 3 vols. (London: Payne, 1791).

7. Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1975).

8. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer.*

9. Jonathan Beecher, *Charles Fourier* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

10. Friedrich Froebel, *The Education of Man* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1892) and Robert B. Downs, *Friedrich Froebel* (Boston: Twayne, 1978).

11. Dolores Hayden's *Seven American Utopias* (Boston: The MIT Press, 1976) and her *The Grand Domestic Revolution* (Boston: The MIT Press, 1981) document Fourier's extensive influence in the United States and the three first essays ("*Form* Became *Feeling*: A New View of Froebel and Wright," Excerpt from Nina C. Vandewalker,*The Kindergarten in American Education*, and "Frank Lloyd Wright's Mementos of Childhood") in *Nine Commentaries on Frank Lloyd Wright*, ed. Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. (Boston: The Architectural History Foundation, The MIT Press, 1989) are all useful in understanding the adoption of Froebel's teaching. The illustrations in the last essay make clear that tactile experience was as much a part of the instruction as visual experience.

12. James Marston Fitch, "Single Point Perspective," *Architectural Forum* (March 1974).

13. Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism," in*The Anti-Aesthetic*, ed. Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983).

14. Fitch, "Single Point Perspective."

15. Sebastiano Serlio, *The Five Books of Architecture: An Unabridged Reprint of the English Edition of 1611* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1982); Andrea Palladio *The Four Books of Architecture* (1735; New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1965).

16. Jean Nicolas Louis Durand, *Precis des leçons d' architecture données à l' école polytechnique* (Paris: The Author, 1802-5).

17. John Claudius Loudon, *An Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1842).

18. Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture considéré sous le rapport de l'art, des moeurs et de la législation* (1847; Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1984); *Sammlung Architektonischer Entwürfe: Collection of Architectural Designs Including Designs Which Have Been Executed and Objects Whose Execution Was Intended by Karl Friedrich Schinkel* (1866; Chicago: Exedra, 1982).

19. Kurt W. Forster, "Schinkel's Panoramic Planning of Central Berlin," *Modulus 16* (1983): 63-77.

20. Yves-Alain Bois, "The Metamorphosis of Axonometry," in *Daidalos 5* (15 September 1981): 41-58.

The Imaging of Reality

Wolf Prix
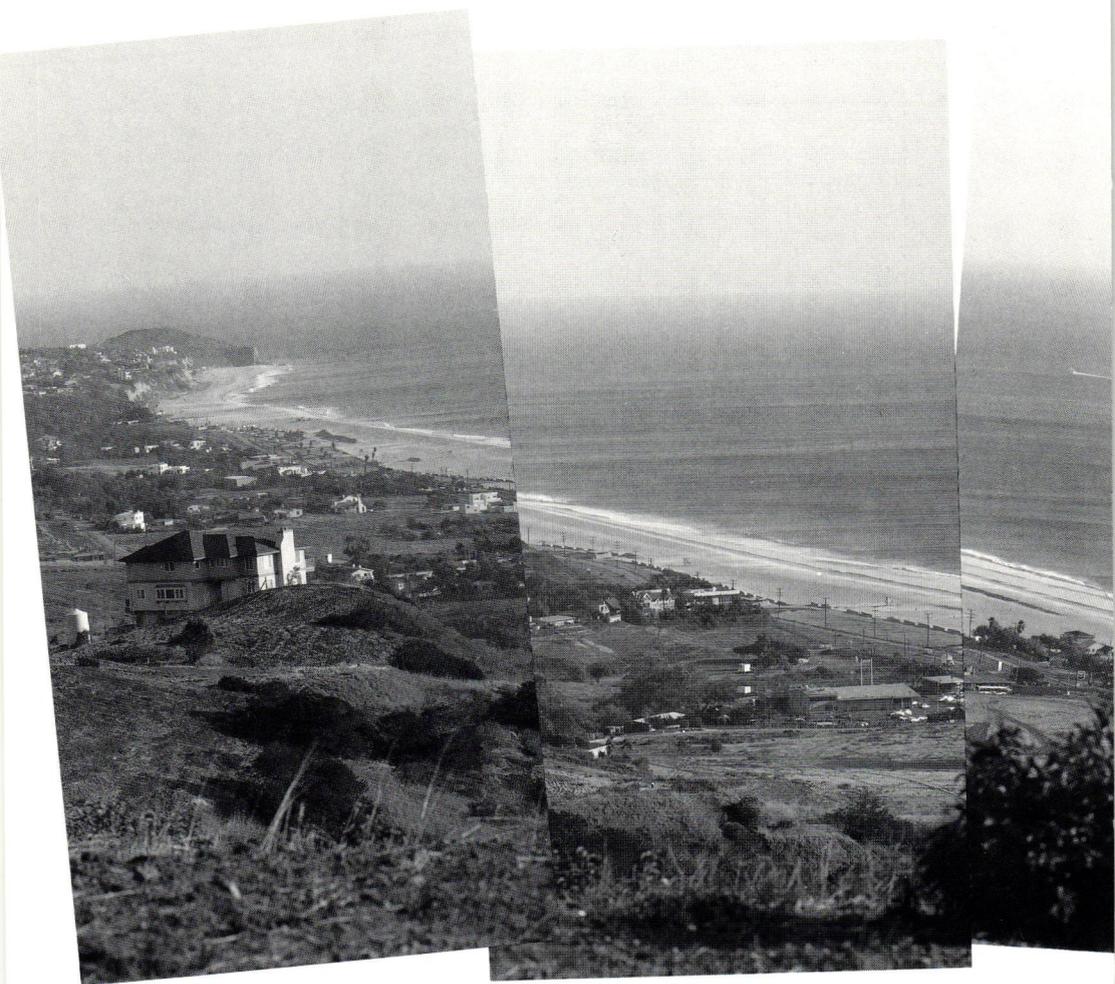
Photograph panels showing the panoramic view from the Open House. Coop Himmelblau.
Insert, Open House model. Photographer, Tom Bonner.
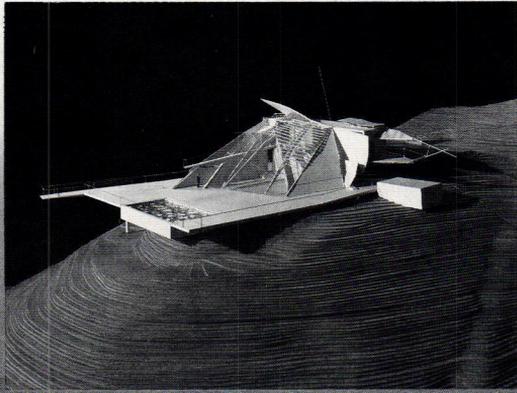
Europe only knows California through its *image*, and that image is transmitted exclusively by artifice, by two-dimensional photographs. We knew Frank Gehry in Vienna ten years ago, for instance, but only through *images*. *How* the photograph communicates the image is important. What the architect *chooses* to be published is important. Millions of people will see an image, but the real building will only be seen by perhaps 100,000 of them. Nonetheless, architects always suffer when a building can't be built, when it can't be experienced, when the image must stand in place of the building. But that is part of the game.

Our Open House was actually designed for a site in Austria, and we had already designed the building for that site when circumstances brought the project to California. The design was finished, and the client wanted it; but we had to look for a new site here that would fit the design. In the beginning, we didn't care about the site that much; the building was always more important. We were only concerned with finding and choosing a place that could accomodate the building. But we learned that the site was in fact more important than the building in terms of getting the building built. In our minds, we had to *design* another site for the building. Once a new site was found, we tried several times standing on the site with the client who couldn't imagine what it would look like. So we combined a simulated reality of the site and the model of the building. Only then could the client imagine it.

Once again, due to circumstance, the design—with its new site—was left without a client. As it turned out, the image of the site is actually more important than the real site. The model itself is very realistic, having been built from the finished working drawings. When we first saw the photographs Tom Bonner had done in combination with the panoramic view, we couldn't believe it. The model was combined with the view photographs for an installation at Art LA 1989, and when *a+u* published the view *through* the model, showing what it would look like from inside, people from other parts of the world began believing it was already built. People called to ask, "where is it?" They would say, "I looked, but I didn't see it."

I am convinced that a good image, made by a good photographer, is more important than thousands of plans and drawings. You can advance a project with the right images. There is no borderline between the *image of reality* and *reality* in architecture today. *Concept* has become more and more important, more important even than reality. The building itself doesn't communicate. I now *question* the way architecture should be communicated: It isn't about space anymore; it is about the image, the printed message. The image—not the space—is being communicated, and *this* is how architecture is now consumed.

We don't believe in *context* in the traditional sense. In reality the energy of the design is the context. The view from the inside looking out is the context. The problem with a photograph is that you can never see what is behind you. When you are standing in space, you can feel or hear what is behind you, and you can sense the dimensions of the space, the power of the space, its bigness and smallness. The photograph is only a 'quote'. It conveys, in a number of ways, not that original *feeling* but instead a quotation from the story, a slice of the brain. If you 'read' the quotes and assemble them, you will still be surprised when you are in the building itself.

The Open House remains unbuilt, but the photograph of the model with the view is so perfect that it would be impossible to differentiate between the image of the model and the image of reality. On the other hand, the thing about architecture is that you can never *absolutely* capture it in photographic images. The 'real thing', as Lautner said in a recent issue of *Architecture California*, is the architecture.
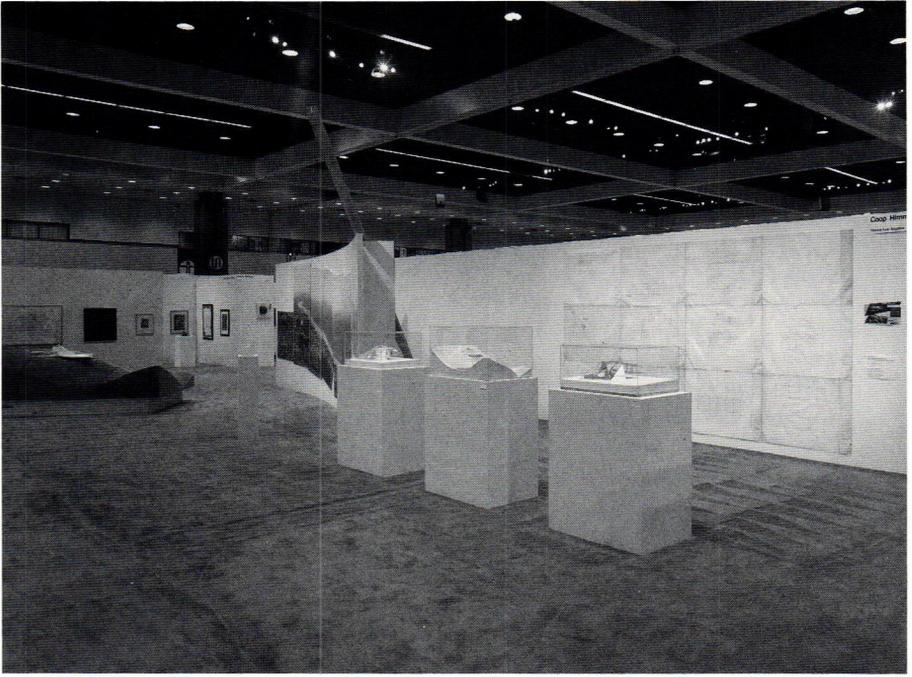
Open House installation, Art LA, 1989. Photograph, Tom Bonner.

Open House photographed with view through model. Photograph, Tom Bonner.

Tom Bonner

When I look at a building, I see right through it. The 'seeing through' is important, seeing the 'how', how the building has come together. I did a lot of construction during college, but also I talk a lot to the architects I shoot for. There is so much theory behind what they are trying to do, you can walk away after talking with them and feel like you have spent too much time in class. In that sense, the finished building is less the object of the photograph; the photograph needs to be a picture of a theory. The photograph can recover the actual concept of the building, which is clearest in the structure. As soon as you put down the carpet the humanizing aspects become dominant, which don't have as much to do with the theory, unless, of course, the architect was trying to make a design that is comfortable. There is definitely a sort of coupling with particular architects. I don't usually do soft frilly places. Therefore, in most of the buildings I am asked to shoot you can rip your clothes on the structural details as you walk by. They're not comfortable, they're almost belligerent, and the photograph is intended to capture this quality.

When I meet with architects at the site, they are often inspired and discouraged at the same time. They think "this is a really great space," but "they're putting signs up" or "they have this damn tree" or "all these cars are parked in the way" or "the only good shot is from the middle of the freeway." Half of the time they already have pages of slides they have taken. They have a perspective in mind given what they were trying to accomplish. Given the fact that they can create something so interesting that people all over the world want to see it, you have to give their eye a hell of a lot of credibility; you can't dismiss it. But the scouting shots are based on the limitations of amateur equipment and amateur thinking. The photographer has a different understanding of photographic technology and representation, what it can and cannot do. I have to go back to understand not what the architect wants in the photograph but what they were trying to do with the architecture.

There are three, four, five steps a photographer can take beyond what an architect usually imagines. The photographer realizes how everything will react in given light, time of day, positioning, perspective. If a piece was designed to be graphic, I can make it more graphic, with hard shadows, shortened perspective, or getting close in or going back and flattening out the perspective. If the photograph needs to show everything, it will exaggerate the depth and make some things look more splendid.

The best photographs require *tenacity*—the persistance it takes to get a difficult picture. One of the reasons I get hired is that I 'push it' to do whatever is necessary to get the photograph, whether it means pulling a car out of the shot, tying a tree down with sandbags and extension cords so that it's not in the frame, climbing the roof of a nearby garage to get the right perspective, or stopping at the side of the freeway to grab a shot with the camera set up inside the van.

When comparing my view with the architect's view, it is pretty good. People are usually excited with what I do with the photograph. It extends what they were trying to do with the architecture. When I find something that the architect didn't see, and they enjoy what I come up with, that's my favorite part. This experience occurs because of the unique perspective a photographer can bring to architecture.

Tom Bonner, Kate Mantelini, Beverly Hills. Architect, Morphosis.
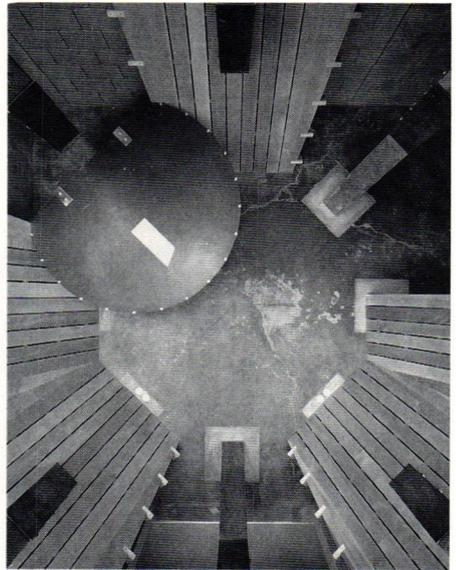
Tom Bonner, The Gary Group, Culver City. Architect, Eric Moss, FAIA.
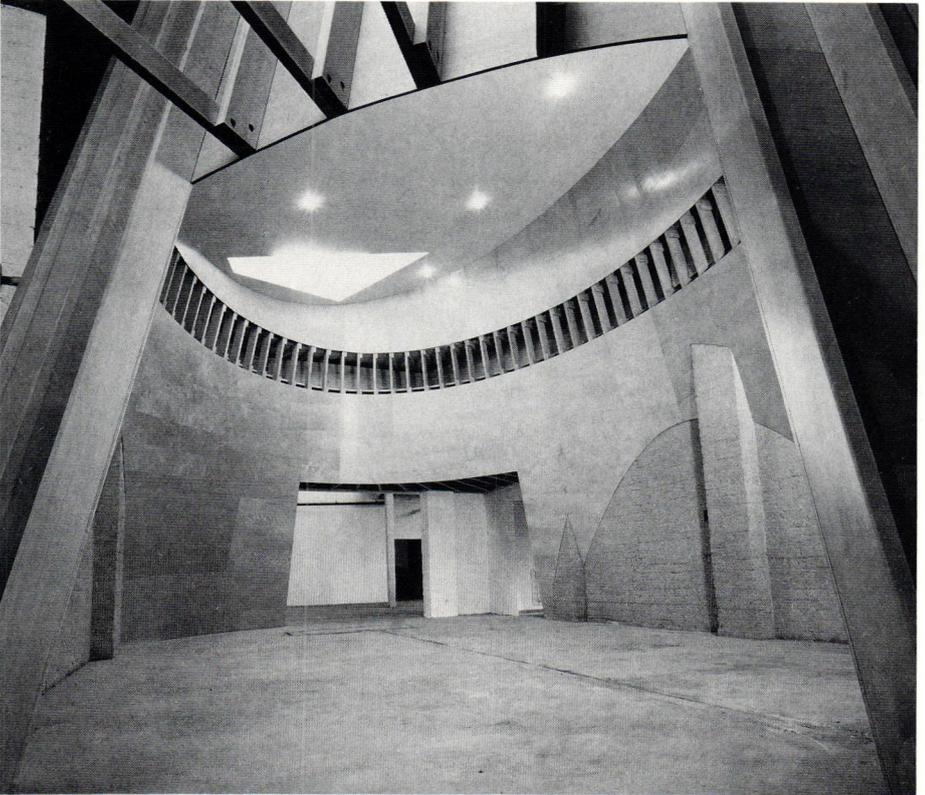
Tom Bonner, 8522 National Boulevard, Culver City. Architect, Eric Moss, FAIA.

Media Crossovers

Sigrid Miller Pollin, AIA

Juan Rulfo, Element 8 of 86, *Inframundo: The Mexico of Juan Rulfo.*

Back at La Andromeda you could at least pass the time watching things being born: the clouds, the birds, the moss. Do you remember?
        Juan Rulfo, Pedro Páramo

Juan Rulfo is a Mexican photographer. Many of his photographs frame fragments of draught-ridden Jalisco landscapes marked with proud, eroding adobe structures. Sad beauty streams into Rulfo's photographs as he bares the soul of his native Mexican turf. In the photograph Element 8 of the book *Inframundo*, nature in the shape of a pregnant cloud imitates architecture—a desiccated ruin.[1]
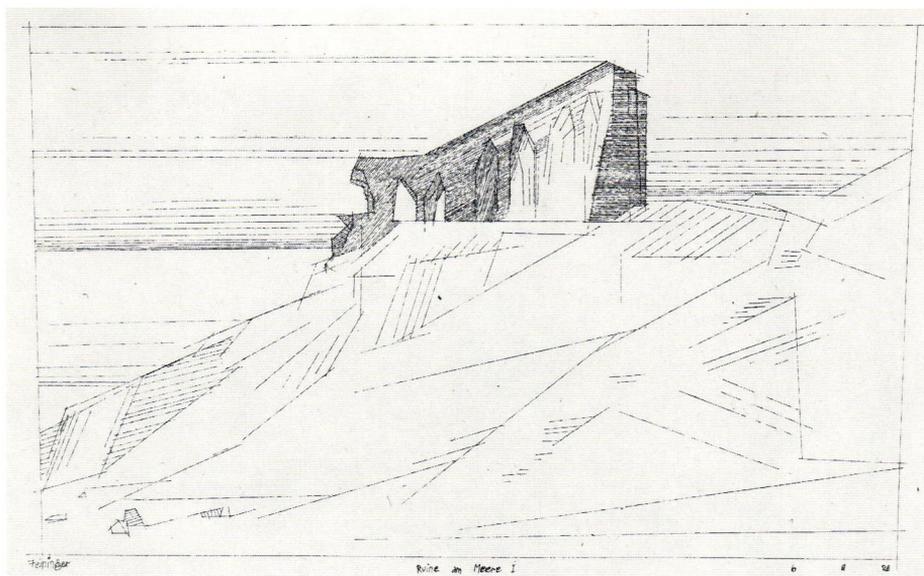
Lyonel Feininger, Ruin by the Sea, I. August 6, 1928. Pen and ink. Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Mrs. Julia Feininger.

Rulfo is also a novelist of high craft. His novel *Pedro Páramo* fuses the fantastic and the real in one man's journey to resurrect the community of lovers and detractors of his dead father.[2] To paraphrase Octavio Paz, Rulfo is unique in that he opens a world through the novel and enlarges it with the photograph.[3]

As an architect involved in building in the hilly, rocky terrain of southern California, I have made the subject of ruins in the landscape an excuse to spend time absorbed in someone else's medium. This is how I became interested in Juan Rulfo's photography and the obscure pamphlet by the Blau Reiter painter Lyonel Feininger entitled *The Ruin by the Sea*.[4] In this series, which centers around media transformations between interrelated sketches, photographs, and paintings, Feininger studies the hilltop ruin of a stone church on the Baltic Sea. He draws the same framed view of the landscape twenty-one times, gradually bringing his particular vision into focus.

The ponderous ruins in the works of both Rulfo and Feininger serve as seductive examples of natural form and archi-
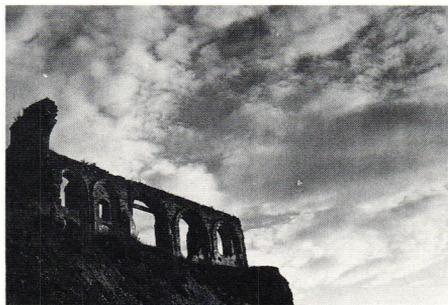
Andreas Feininger, Ruin on the Baltic coast at Deep, Pomerania, 1932. Print courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

tectural form welded by similarity. While these artists see similarities, they avoid mimicry. Frank Lloyd Wright once said that Japanese landscape prints show "natural forms transformed through love and knowledge into another medium without being killed through imitation."[5]

In his drawings Feininger also develops a drafting dialogue between landscape elements and built form. Built form and forms in nature are fused by means of common technique of representation. The landscape is rendered as geometry. The building becomes rock-like. The photo-
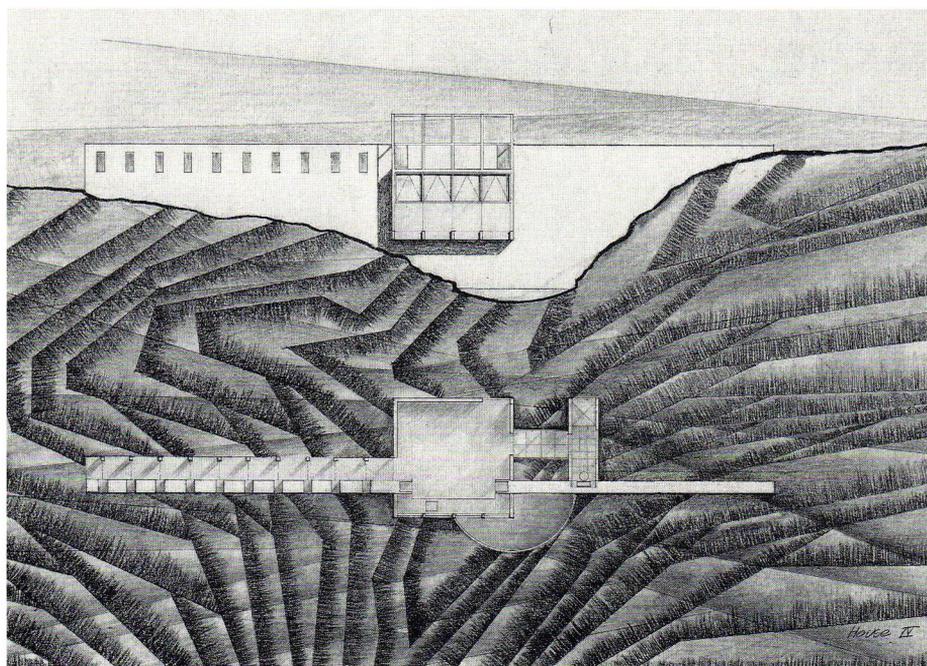
Miller Pollin AIA Architecture, drawing of guest house.

graph frames the particular view. And the medium of drawing transforms the texture of the photographed view.

In the architectural development of a small guest house within a quiet, rocky ravine, both the distinction between architecture and nature and their fusion served as critical points of departure. A site photograph was used as a tool to depict the elements—wind and fire. The Santa Ana winds, for example, were drawn onto a copy of the photograph as sharp, geometric elements. The photograph became a medium for melding what exists on the landscape with what would be placed there. In the photo-sketch, the rock formations merged with a protective concrete wall. By drawing the natural landscape as built form, the sketches became a visual method for embedding the plan in the contours of the topography and continuing the horizon line of the wall into the horizon of the terrain.

Additionally, photographs of powerful rock formations inspired architectural interpretations. They became an interpre-

Miller Pollin AIA Architecture, photo-sketch.

tive point of departure for the conceptual development of the hillside house. Like the ruins of Rulfo and Feininger, the resultant form of the house is embedded

Rock formation in Riverside, California.

Hillside house. Miller Pollin AIA Architecture.

in the hill while simultaneously it emerges from it.

In the process of developing architectural ideas, the photograph—serving as both inspiration and process mechanism—can be as suggestive as the landscape itself to the eye that seeks to join the places we find with the places we make.

Notes

1. *Inframundo: The Mexico of Juan Rulfo*, trans. Frank Janney (Ediciones del Norte, 1983).

2. Juan Rulfo, *Pedro Páramo* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1959).

3. See *Inframundo*.

4. Lyonel Feininger, *The Ruin by the Sea* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968).

5. Quoted by Mark Girouard in his "Introduction" to Edgar Kaufman, Jr., *Fallingwater: A Frank Lloyd Wright Country House* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986).

Framing Memory

Morley Baer

Out of uniform and in California: It was 1946, and life seemed brand new and absolutely exhilerating. The few years of learning—those beginnings in camera-work before the war and during it—had given me only a glimpse of what was to be offered by a new life's work in photography. I had watched and listened in a busy Michigan Avenue studio in Chicago. I had learned the craft. Now the skills alone could no longer satisfy the desire for a wider, longer, richer experience. I wanted out into a world where comprehension and understanding led to significance, where history and permanence were considered parts of photographic purpose.

In my mind the very word and its material example—'architecture'—cried out for exposition. I could remember vividly how gratifying it was to be sprung from the studio to photograph a new house, to breathe in the new dimensions of space, to sense keenly how light revealed various aspects of a form. It was in the suburbs of Chicago that I first questioned why a particular building was situated, fixed, formed, and constructed exactly as it was. Even without training in it, I had long considered architecture intriguing and therefore challenging for a photographer, perhaps because order was established previously by someone else. I was enticed to probe it, to recognize and analyze its parts, and finally to resolve its elements into a new level of understanding. The choice of site, materials, occupants' needs, relationship of spaces, and the glue that held such disparate parts together—all now seemed a worthy engagement of my interests, first to explain it to myself and then, through the photograph, to explain it to others.

I had made tepid advances in this direction for a few young Chicago archi-
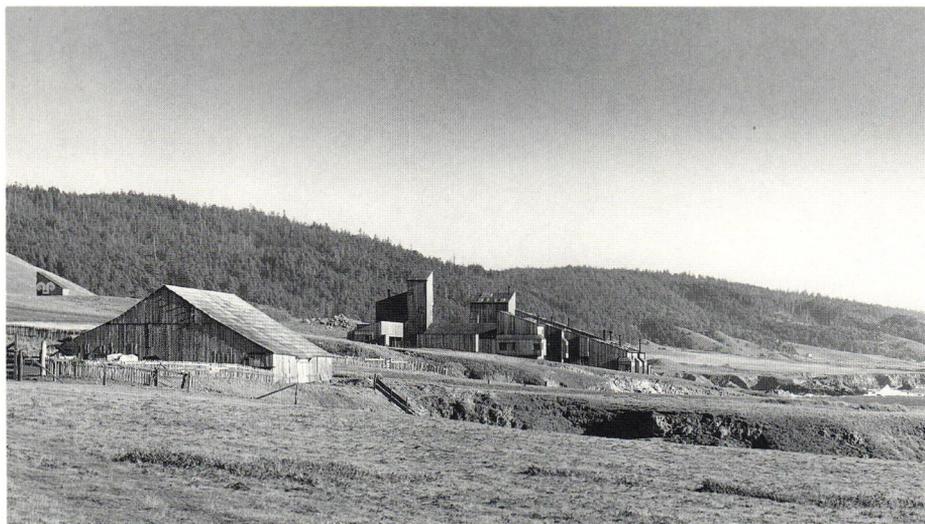
Morley Baer, Sea Ranch Condo I. Architect, MLTW. © Morley Baer.

Morley Baer, Mathewson House, Berkeley. Architect, Bernard Maybeck. © Morley Baer.

tects. Now in this new wonderland, this great expansive California where endless open country was attracting endless numbers of new occupants, there was opportunity: California was the place to photograph what man put on the land and made integral with it. This was to be a grand and exuberant choice. I might not know precisely how a building was designed and constructed. I was in the dark with those journalistic labels of 'modernism', 'internationalism', 'organic architecture', but I knew how to speak photographically.

If those architects in the Bay Area who first gave me assignments had known how little I knew, they would surely have turned to another photographer. But the collected naiveté became an advantage. I found it extremely important in elemental ways to listen carefully when architects talked about their work. It was always more than mere pleasure to walk around a building with its designer and to listen not only to the words but to the feelings,

to the designer's tone of voice, sometimes to the rapture. I felt tied to the job by the designer's explanation, emotionally committed by the designer's problems and solutions. I began to make photographs that would speak of more than mere appearances. Involved were no guarantees, but consistent efforts toward a worthy goal.

Siting always seemed important because I was overwhelmed with this new land, this warm and vibrant California. I had to know why in a vast, untrammeled area this building was set in a particular way, facing a particular direction, illuminated by a particular light. Interior and outdoor spaces also melted together in new and fascinating relationships. I had to know why, why, why, before I could speak of this in photographs.

As all such elements invaded my thinking, I came to realize that an occasional job for an architect was no answer; what was needed was a lengthy relationship, a necessity of becoming the
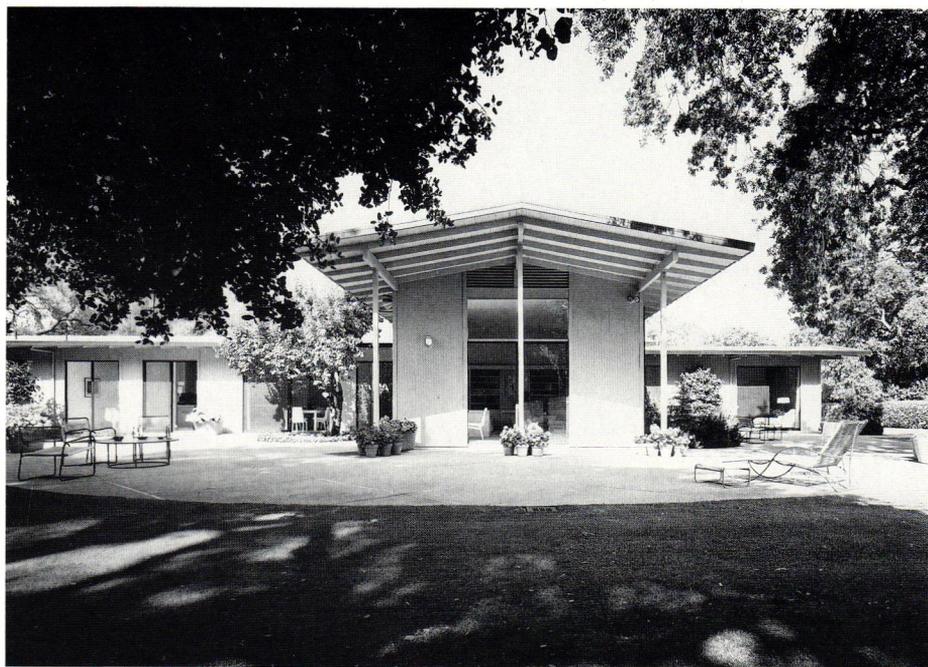
Morley Baer, Ritter House, Atherton. Architect, Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons. © Morley Baer.

Morley Baer, Sur Coast House, Monterey County. Architect, William Wurster. © Morley Baer.

Morley Baer, Ludekens House, Belvedere. Architect, Jack Hilmer. © Morley Baer.

architect's photographer, a constant sub-
mission of my character to that of the
designer's, bringing my understanding
into the service of the design. This was to
result in no quick and easy interpretation.
Growing out of an intense interest and a
thorough commitment, a group of related
photographs could make a significant
statement. I could translate another per-
son's work. I could project the major
elements that distinguished one piece of
architecture from another. With a photo-
grapher's understanding, each photograph
could ring with a 'truth'.

The photography of architecture
meant a serious dedication, a constant de-
votion to the content as well as the means.
For me, the very act of making a photo-
graph was intended to emphasize and to

clarify. Within my 8x10 frame, a visually
dominating force of material and spirit
could become memorable.

In thirty-some years of photograph-
ing for some of the most prestigious archi-
tectural firms in the San Francisco Bay
Area, I have attempted to keep my sights
on fidelity—fidelity to the intent and
accomplishments of the architect.

Alice Wingwall

The panoramic format not only allows us to see more landscape but also lets us understand the narrative unfolding of buildings and people upon its stage.

Looking at buildings: twice, five times, ten times. Not only do I like such looking, I am obsessed with haunting the premises. I photograph the buildings' relationships to each other; I photograph the way people use them or pass them by. I ask what secrets their windows conceal, reveal, or reflect. I wonder where their openings lead. Which buildings attract each other? Which buildings hug each other, the street, or the landscape? My camera clarifies my thoughts about buildings and records my designs on their existence.

Yes, designs on their existence. The photographic image is a special, perhaps mysterious, surrogate for the building itself, the place itself. We may no longer

Alice Wingwall, January's Child: The Farm on Walker Road III, 1991, Petaluma, California.

know whether the building is here, with us, or there, from us. All the photographs we have ever seen, or taken, begin to form a collective memory. In our search for a certain building we may stop at a photographic image. In other words, photographs breed photographs.

A photograph is the design of a dream. That dream may be a composite of many visits and memories. How many times did I actually walk the long path to the Flavian Ampitheatre? On what day was the monument stark against the sky? On what other days was it hidden in scaffolding from the intensity of my gaze and the lens of my camera. The dream, the photographic image, is designed to collect and house all the layers of memory.

The farm on Walker Road is a total obsession for me. I have photographed it over and over. Elsewhere, barns are let go to fall and decay, light seen first through slits, then big holes, then vertical slanting pieces, then just piles on the ground and clear sky. This house and these barns are important as they stay there, partly old memories still standing.

Photographs support a collective memory of buldings as special places, places that will restimulate our imaginations through the obsessive and possessive medium of photography.

Tim Street-Porter

Though I was trained in architecture, my interest in interiors began very early, with a newspaper photograph I saw as a child in England during the war: The front wall of a multistory apartment house had been blown away by an exploding bomb, revealing a number of identically shaped living rooms, all miraculously intact. It was like looking into a doll's house. Each space could be seen to contain a complete set of furniture, a fireplace, pictures, wallpaper, etc. I liked the way each room was different, and that what was revealed so surrealistically was not meant to be seen at all. Probably as a result of seeing this picture, I used to find myself mentally stripping away the fronts of houses as I walked past them, trying to picture the interiors using clues I could glimpse through the windows. My voyeuristic enthusiasm for new and unusual interiors has been quite undiminished over the years.

I once photographed twelve identical spaces in a high-tech high-rise building project—each one from an identical angle, showing how entirely different interiors resulted from the distinct way each occupant lived: Some respected the modern architecture, creating very minimalist interiors, while others filled the spaces with huge antiques; a number of them

Tim Street-Porter, Finch Residence, Essex, England, 1974.

were complete fantasies. In a photograph of Zsa Zsa's dressing room, on the other hand, I imagined that the decor was like a physical extension of her brain, a brain lined exactly like her dressing room with all sorts of fluffy things—no gray cells, all bright pink. It is easy to imagine that looking into residential interiors is like looking into people's minds.

But the way dwellers actually *live* is entirely different from the *order* demanded by a photograph of an architectural interior. On assignment for architecture magazines, photographs must be 'styled', usually by stripping the space of the signs of life. All of the inhabitants' possessions must be edited away, piled up just outside of the camera's line of sight. When I was photographing the Lovell Beach House, a house filled with the detritus of family life, I found myself thinking, 'what if I had a *wider* angle camera?' You would have seen a V-shaped area of order surrounded by natural disarray.

The photography of architecture can be divided into two categories: art photographers who create their own programs, and commercial photographers who are commissioned by architecture magazines. The former are free to do whatever they want or feel. The latter, for various reasons, show relatively little individuality in the work they produce, however technically excellent and graphically pleasing it may be. For instance, if the ten or so leading architectural photographers were commissioned to photograph the same building, and the results were placed on a light table, I doubt if anyone could tell who had taken which. By contrast, give ten top fashion photographers a set of clothes and the same model, and the experienced eye could identify most, if not all, of the resulting images. Why is this?

First, architecture imposes its own constraints on individual expression. It is fixed, immovable. There are adjacent buildings, trees, traffic, etc., which limit viewpoints. Clothes, by contrast, can be pushed into a suitcase and taken to a studio, or to Miami Beach. Second, the architecture media demands a comprehensive visual record of buildings, depicting them in flattering terms and with the utmost clarity of delineation. Fashion magazines require only that the dress is recognizable—a higher priority is that the photographs must be as creatively distinctive as possible. Also, because the only effective equipment for documenting architecture with satisfactory clarity and lack of distortion is the '4 by 5' camera, everyone uses similar equipment. In addition, all the leading practitioners share a similar visual sophistication, as if they all went to the same college. This is admirable, but it is also predictable: the results become generic. Finally, *Progressive Architecture*, *Architectural Record*, and *Architecture* are all eternally content with straightforward documentation, in contrast to the fashion magazines (particularly the European ones), which demand constant innovation.

The only innovative architectural photography I have seen recently has appeared on the pages of *HG* magazine, whose creative director Charles Gandee—formerly of *Architectural Record*—has been coming to grips in his own way with the very real problems of presenting architecture in a consumer magazine to a reluctant audience of advertisers and readers. A recent *HG* cover story art-directed in characteristic style by Gandee features a house by Rem Koolhaas in Paris: a girl poised ready to dive into a rooftop pool, with a male figure standing in the background, and behind him on the nocturnal horizon, the Eiffel Tower. Other images reveal that it was a rainy shoot. A woman, for instance, is depicted walking away from the camera in the rain, holding a bright blue umbrella like a figure in a Japanese print, with the side elevation of the building completing the composition. Instead of waiting for better weather (and stacking up expensive hotel bills), Gandee turned adverse conditions to advantage and produced innovative images without

Tim Street-Porter, Living room of artist Tony Duquette's residence, Beverly Hills.
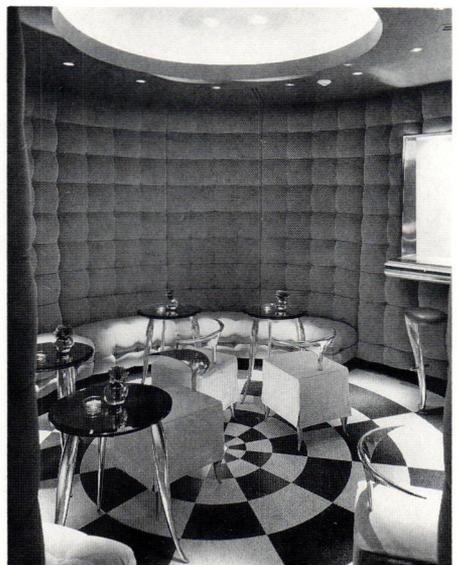
Tim Street-Porter, Royalton Hotel cocktail bar, New York. Architect, Philippe Starck.

in any way compromising the subject. Ideas of this kind are not unusual in French, Italian, or American *Vogue*: fashion photographers are more willing to venture beyond the beautiful, generic images than are their architectural counterparts.

Perhaps architectural photography can best be described as an interpretive art, like a violinist interpreting a violin concerto. As photographers, we interpret the architect's composition. One can, hopefully, be very creative with that interpretation. I personally always attempt to show the true spirit of a building and of a space. Often the physical constraints mentioned above can be turned to advantage (traffic can be made to blur attractively in the foreground—a single cyclist, perhaps—or an umbrella can be produced in the Parisian rain), but our work has more to do with virtuosity than creating something out of nothing.
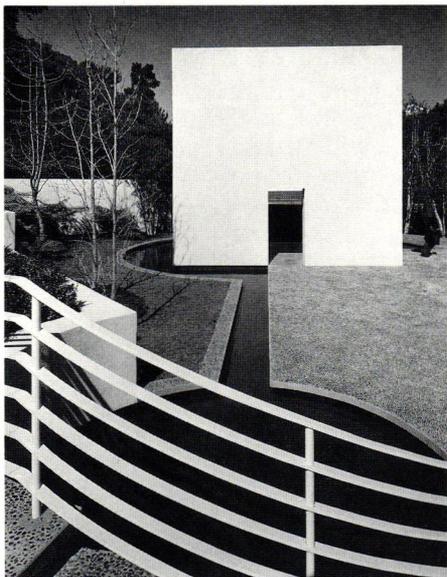
Tim Street-Porter, James Turrell's 'Second Meeting', Garden of Einstein Residence. Ron Goldman, AIA.

Tim Street-Porter, Sculpture by artist Pat Patterson, situated on a private ranch in Colorado.

Domestic Fidelity

Julius Shulman

'Domestic fidelity' is a very important issue in photographing architecture: how do we represent human habitation? I have always used people in my photographs. It is not just a matter of scale; it is a matter of bringing life to a scene. Over the years questions about the use of people in photographs and the 'styling' of photographs have been central to the photography of residential architecture in particular.

I made a series of photographs of a 1950s house for an Esther McCoy article in *Living for Young Homemakers*. When we found the house, it was pleasant, lived in, but not photographic. You wouldn't dare show a house the way it was lived in, with the usual every day clutter of objects and disarray of draperies, cushions, magazines, and the things that could not possibly appear 'decent' in a carefully composed photograph. Also, perhaps today considered as trivia, editors insisted that all product identifications on condiment bottles, or packaged food, be turned away to conceal labels. I ordered the house; as I used to say, "it was styled by Uncle Julius." This house had his and her workshops, all the accoutrements of 1950 living. In one photograph, the woman is all dressed up making jewelry. Near her is her little boy riding his tricycle. Behind her, in another photograph, is her hus-

Julius Shulman, Greenfield Residence. Architect, Arthur Swab, AIA Emeritus.

Julius Shulman, Greenfield Residence. Architect, Arthur Swab, AIA Emeritus.
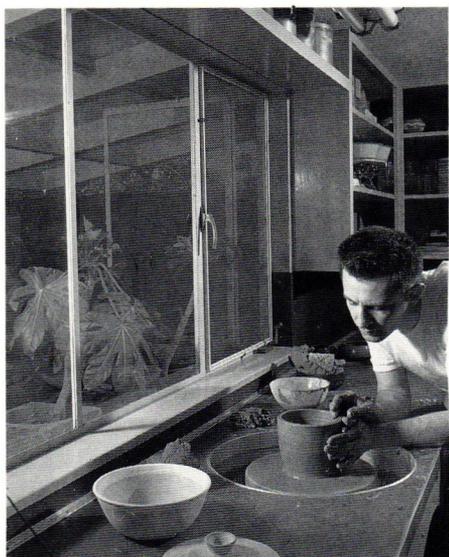
Julius Shulman, Tyson Residence, La Jolla. Architect, Robert Mosher, AIA Emeritus.

band throwing a pot. The photographs were intended to show the 'orderliness' of modern living, with the architecture as the key to a new life style. People who live in a house can experience it, but the photographs show them, as well as others, how to 'see' it.

Once I photographed a house in Palm Springs for Frank Sinatra. There were beautiful etchings on the fireplace wall. I said "You can't photograph the wall with all these things on it." So my assistant and I proceeded to unwind the wires and remove all the etchings. A few weeks later I got a note from the decorator, saying, "Thank you for the fine photographs you did of the Frank Sinatra house. I especially want to thank you for the beautiful way you handled the fireplace wall in the bedroom." In retrospect I kick myself. Look at my own fireplace wall. It is covered with many important documents from my life.

I photographed a house in Newport Beach with Richard Neutra. The moment the door closed—the owners left for the day—Neutra shouted, "Take down the drapes." The crew stripped the house of its furniture as well. They brought in a

couple of Neutra chairs, and that was it. Come 5:00 p.m., the owners came in; they immediately turned around and left. They had postponed the shooting for weeks until W&J Sloane had finished 'doing the house right', obviously beyond Neutra's vernacular.

There are many such stories. Mrs. Maslon was a devotee of contemporary art, with one of the most sought after art collections. She fought Neutra because he didn't want to give her any walls suitable for hanging choice originals. When it came to photographing his buildings, Neutra would attempt to cover up, change, improve, hide certain elements that were not done according to his design intent. Also, Neutra's concept of a house is an empty one. So when we photographed the Maslon house, he took out all the art work and most of the furniture. Never before had I been so offended! Mrs. Maslon granted my request, and two weeks later I went back and photographed the house the way she lived in it. It was published in Connaissance des Artes—cover and eight pages, but Neutra never commented about the publication. He never realized that I had rephotographed the house.

Julius Shulman, Raymond Loewy Residence, Palm Springs. Architect, Albert Frey, FAIA Emeritus .

Julius Shulman, Music room of the Lipetz House, Los Angeles, 1936. Architect, Raphael Soriano.

Julius Shulman, Case Study House #22, Los
Angeles, 1959. Architect, Pierre Koenig.

pictures they produce in the architecture
magazines are fantastically beautiful, as
photography, but all the emphasis on the
quality of photography makes the pictures
so perfect, so slick, that the architecture
almost becomes confused—even tricky!
Architecture magazines are in danger of
becoming photography magazines. These
precious pictures are causing us to lose
sight of the architecture. How is it that in
my more than fifty years of experience I
have never used so-called filter-packs, and
all architecture magazines throughout the
world have been publishing my pictures
since the early days?

I believe in accuracy and in conveying
basic design statements. Every picture I
have ever taken is based on discipline of
design. 'Without the camera' is my initial
edict during seminars and workshops
conducted for architects and photogra-
phers. I feel firmly that a first pursuit of
photography must include the grasping of
design rather than concentration on a
photographic composition. This is the
essence of my lifework's success.

Every millimeter of my film must
contain the selected image to the very
edges of the four sides of the frame, either
the 35mm or 4x5's ground glass. And the
responsibility of the photographer is to
assemble pertinent elements within that
'frame'. Tremendous patience is required;
this is not to be a 'grabbing a shot' lack of
perception! The design of the architecture
is very concise, concise applying to the
structure. A photographic composition
must identify and reflect it. If you are
conscious of design, rather than the pho-
tography composition, you can frame the
right photograph. I have tried to make
clear that nothing is accidental. It is the
conciseness of the thought. With this
conciseness of thought it is possible to
photograph architecture in the context
of life.

In my photography I have worked to
bring the architecture into context, so that
it doesn't dominate the life style of the
residents. This alternate way of seeing is
very important throughout my work. This
is why I have worked with people in my
photographs, and also why I have often
photographed the landscape of the site or
the view as the critical context for the
architecture.

A photograph needs clarity and sim-
plicity, of composition and technique. One
of my earliest pictures was of the Sixth
Street Bridge over the LA River. I submit-
ted this to a *PIC Magazine* competition in
New York in 1933 when Margaret
Bourke-White was on the jury. I won first
prize with that picture, which I took with
a vest-pocket Kodak camera; and my
work has maintained this simplicity of
technique ever since.

There are many clichés regarding
technique in architecture photography.
The photographers who make statements
about the need for complex multiple expo-
sures and changing of filters are purists.
They are being carried away by having
everything exactly right. It is true that the

The Important House

Esther McCoy

In the breakfast room of the new house, Mrs. Blakeley picked up the phone that was plugged in there and called a Beverly Hills number. After a pause, the operator said, "I am sorry, but all my Crestview circuits are busy." Mrs. Blakeley banged the phone down in exasperation. Her husband came through a sliding glass door from the paved terrace and walked across the pale flax carpeting as if he were stepping over eggs.

"Can't you forget it, Irene?" he asked.

"How can I forget it?" Mrs. Blakeley asked. "Wentzell's took the couch a month ago and they said it would take only two weeks to make the slipcovers."

* * *

"No use getting upset," Blakeley said. "Call the photographer and postpone."

"Should I?"

"Why not? Everything else about the house has waited."

After several tries, she got the photographer. She told him about the couch and said, "And so, of course, we must postpone the pictures until next week." Then she listened for some time, and said, "Oh, I see," and "Oh, of course," and "No, I won't." After saying, "All right, goodbye," she hung up the phone.

"What did he say?" Blakeley asked.

"He said it was an important house," she told her husband, "and that if the pictures aren't taken today, they will miss the competition. They're to go in the *House & Garden* competition."

"They are? An important house, eh?"

Blakeley thought this over and found it pleasant. So did Mrs. Blakeley; she almost forgot about the couch.

Then the doorbell rang, and Blakeley found a man from Wentzell's standing there, and a moving van in the driveway.

"Hey," he called. "It's the couch."

Mrs. Blakeley stood at the door and watched it being unloaded. Blakeley stood beside her. "It's lovely!" she cried. They watched the men set the couch along the living-room wall where the built-in one would go when the cabinetmaker and the weaver got it ready. "Looks fine," said Blakeley, kissing his wife on the cheek.

* * *

Something moved on the other side of the glass doors, and Mrs. Blakeley looked up and saw a man with an armful of branches leaning over and sticking them in the bare ground near the house. It was Mr. Aidan, the architect. The branches were cuttings from the eugenia hedge of her neighbors, the Whitmans. She had seen them stacked at the curb the night before and had wondered when the trashman would take them away.

She slid open a glass panel and went out to speak to Mr. Aidan. He seemed preoccupied but smiled at her warmly and

muttered something about "background." His eyes were sharp blue and hooded, like a bird's. He was tall, thin, and bald, with a fringe of reddish hair and a thatch of sandy eyebrows. Mrs. Blakeley heard a scraping sound behind her. She turned and saw the photographer. He was leveling off a shelf of ground on the terrace on the far side of the oval lawn. With his boot, he scraped away some newly rooted trailing lantana, and a pungent odor, not unlike juniper, rose in the morning air. He jabbed the tripod into the cultivated earth, adjusted the camera, and looked into it.

Mr. Aidan stopped planting the eugenia branches and walked thoughtfully along the blank wall of the bedroom wing, which angled off from the living-room wing. He stopped and said, "Cut it here."

"That wall's pretty bare," the photographer said, coming out from behind the camera.

"Wait," Mr. Aidan said. He asked Mrs. Blakeley for a kitchen knife, and when she brought him one, he walked down the slope planted with ivy and began cutting long strands.

"That isn't ours," Mrs. Blakeley said.

"It grows better if it's trimmed," Mr. Aidan replied.

After Mr. Aidan had cut a great deal of ivy, he began sticking it on the bare wall with Scotch Tape. Then he stood on a chair and hung some more ivy from the trellis over the paved terrace. As he worked, the photographer was moving the garden furniture. First, he picked up some new metal chairs and carried them around to the enclosed drying yard. Blakeley had put their old garden stuff in the drying yard to get it out of sight. The photographer came back carrying two old canvas chairs.

"What's wrong with the new chairs?"
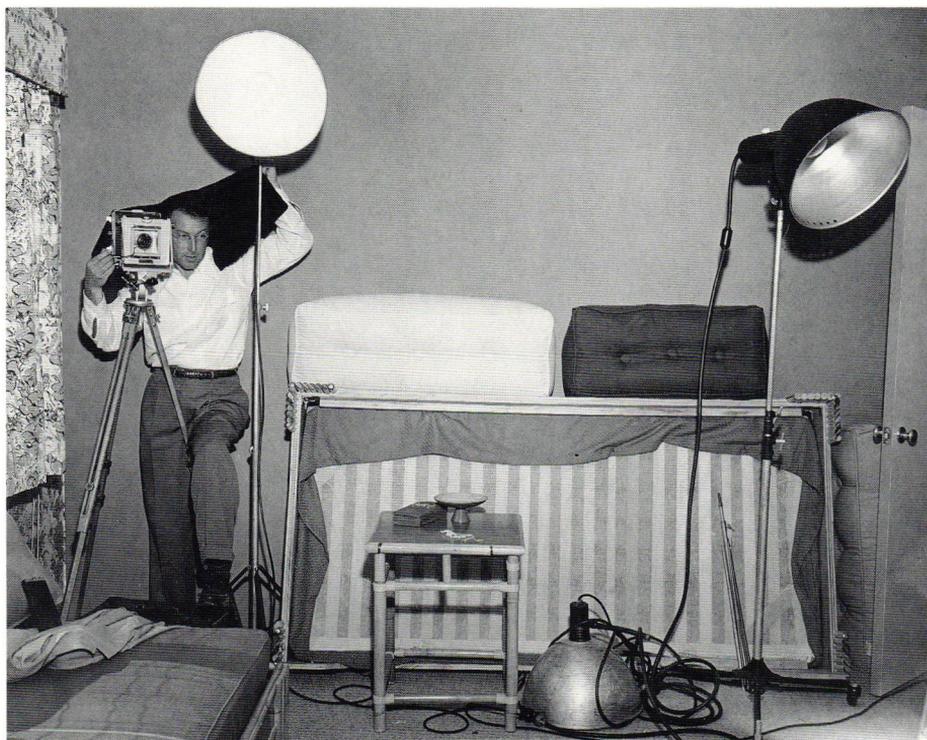
Julius Shulman behind the camera, with the furniture backed up into a corner outside the camera's view, an image that would inspire Esther McCoy's article, "The Important House."

"They were a little high," the photographer answered.

* * *

Mrs. Blakeley opened her mouth and started to say something more but was interrupted by a call from the photographer, who was staring out into the garden. It seemed that the sun was moving. They would have to hurry. Mr. Aidan, using a broom handle, pushed the top curtain into even folds, then leaned over and fluttered the hems, so they would fall gracefully. Mrs. Blakeley turned to go. Noticing a two-year old copy of *Fortune* on the table, she started to pick it up to take it back to her husband's study, where it belonged. Then she found that it was stuck to the table with Scotch Tape. It was apparently meant to be in the photograph, and they had fixed it so the wind wouldn't flutter the pages.

She thumped the magazine and called to the architect. "Do you want this?"

"Yes. It is an excellent blue. It will make a nice spot in the color shot."

"Won't show up," the photographer said. He put his head behind his camera and watched while Mr. Aidan unstuck the old copy of *Fortune* and moved it from one spot to another. "No good," he called. "No good."

"Try it here, then," Mr. Aidan said, and put the magazine on the garden table, beside the ashtray.

The photographer peered into his camera again. "That's fine. It'll show up as *Fortune*, too."

"Now, let's get another shape on the table," Mr. Aidan said. He looked around and noticed Mrs. Blakeley. "Do you have some bowls?" he asked. She showed him her aunt's old silver on the coffee table. He looked at her with what seemed to be embarrassment, then asked, "May I?" and disappeared into the kitchen. He came out a minute later with two pieces of kitchenware—a brick-colored jug and a round, clay-colored bowl, into which he had put several oranges and a banana. He set them down on the borrowed garden table.

Mrs. Blakeley watched for a minute, then looked back at the old silver her aunt had given her. She had loved it since her childhood. "For the new house," her aunt had written. Irene had been overjoyed when she unwrapped it. Now she began to look critically at the claw feet of the sugar bowl. They seemed, somehow, deformed.

The room, with the drapes pushed back, was alive with sun. Her eyes hurt. She went into the study, the only shadowy room in the house, closed the door after her, and rested her eyes for a quarter of an hour. When she came out again, the living room had been changed some more. The lamp that her husband had found and bought all by himself had been set on the flagstone floor in the hall. Beside it were piled ashtrays and cigarette boxes, most of them house-warming presents from friends. There were also the pewter lamp, the magazine rack, and the ottoman. On the coffee table, where she had set out her aunt's silver, were now only a piece of laboratory glass that her husband used for an outdoor ashtray, and a flat Lucite kitchen tray filled with marguerites. Then she noticed with a shudder that the couch was missing. In its place was a cot from the sun deck, just a metal-tube frame with a gray canvas mattress. The Whitman's raspberry-colored sun cushions were now piled on top of it.

"Where is the couch?" she asked unsteadily.

"Oh, it's safe," Mr. Aidan said. He pointed to the flagstone terrace. "It's out there."

"What's the matter with it?"

"It seemed a little strong for this corner," Mr. Aidan said. His voice was gentle. His eyes were warm and soft and hooded. The photographer motioned to her to get out of the way. For a minute, she thought of putting a sheet or something over the couch so the sun wouldn't fade its cover. Then she felt that she didn't care whether the couch cover faded or not. She went back into the dim study and closed the door.

Picturing the City

Donald Preziosi

In what sense can a city be pictured? Are there forms of picturing cities that provide more powerful, pertinent, or characteristic information? Or ways of 'reading' cities (or built environments more generally) that render them more fully 'legible' for particular purposes? Almost from the time of the historical appearance of what we would recognize today as complex settlements or urban formations, built forms have been subject to representation of one kind or another: plans, diagrams, elevations of various types, and views representing built formations at a particular moment or under specific historical circumstances. In order to understand something of what is fundamentally at stake today in speaking of the relationships between architecture and photography, it is necessary to understand something of the most basic characteristics and qualities of built environments in human history. The following is an attempt to articulate several of the most fundamental aspects of this phenomenon in a manner which, given the space available here, can only be provisional and suggestive.

In the most basic sense, the built environment of any human society exists *so as to render the human environment*

legible. Built forms establish concerted distributions of individuals and groups in such a manner that their arrangements both produce *and* reflect the multiple relationships in which individuals are caught up. Cities and their parts act as instruments to track, stabilize, control, and predict behavior over space and time, and in this sense may be said to demarcate and define behavior as such.

It is in this regard that built environments are instruments of power, functioning by means of the orchestration and manipulation of desire. There is no city, nor any component part of a city, that is not a utopic fiction, working to simultaneously display and mask social contradictions and individual differences. As spatio-temporal artifacts, cities invariably exhibit a *propositional* character with

Eugène Atget, Street, Paris, n.d.

Eugène Atget, Flower-Boy, Paris, n.d.

respect to potential behavior, and in this regard operate as grids of expectation, networks of predictabilities.

In short, we build *in order to* think, act, and interact. It may thus be misleading to speak of built environments as literally 'representing' social behavior: a city is not itself simply a 'picture' of anything, even a set of diagrams of ideal collective behaviors (although it may be generically 'read' as such). A city is much more than a representation: it is something to be *reckoned with*, in both senses of that term—something to be coped with *and* something to be thought with. On the one hand, in order to use, occupy, or enact a city, the individual subject must subject himself or herself to a city's prefabricated behavioral propositions. On the other hand, we use built environments to *think with*: Along with verbal language, using the built environment is one of the two primary pan-human modes of thought. The notion of 'reckoning', then, more accurately describes the nature of the interaction of built environments and social groups. Cities are not three-dimensional texts or pictures. They are in fact

Eugène Atget, "Au Tambour," 63 quai de la Tournelle, Paris, n.d.

the most complex product of the human mind, and our distinctness as a species is marked by our fundamentally symbiotic relationship with them.

Building upon such seemingly self-evident truisms (or rather, taking them quite seriously), it will be evident that our relationship to the built environment is anything but simple or straightforward. And, the extraordinarily complex epistemological nature of even the simplest architectonic demarcation of space suggests that our identities and desires are inextricably bound up with the topologies of ways we reckon with the built environment. 'Picturing' a city or a built form thus entails a mode of cognitive activity that is anything but passive or reflective, or representational in the ordinary sense of the term: It must be, in short, a highly dynamic and active process, a behavior which involves an interactive reckoning with the world at every moment.

In light of this, we return to the initial questions of this essay, and it will be evident that we need to ask several questions: What would the legibility of the built environment —as a 'representation'—consist of? Do built formations intrinsically *suggest* points of significant legibility? And finally, if a city itself is not, strictly speaking, a 'picture' of something, then what would a picture of it be a representation, or picture, *of*?

We might begin to address these questions by expanding upon one of our

Eugène Atget, Street Scene, Paris, n.d.

first observations above, that in some sense, built environments work to render social behavior, interaction, and identity visible and legible. In other words, it may well be the case that one of the primary functions *of* cities is precisely *to* engender and replicate 'images' of themselves, thereby, it would seem, providing individuals and groups with the means to fabricate and sustain identity, and perpetuating the desires upon which relations of power are played out. One of the principal strategies of the city as an apparatus for generating and maintaining power relations is that when viewed from the right distance and the proper 'perspective', there emerges a striking visibility, a legibility, to everything.

It is in this regard that the entire body of architectural literature dealing with the power of *place*, or of what was traditionally termed *genius loci* by not a few architectural historians and theorists, may be seen, in hindsight, as insightful in some (usually roughly articulated) way. If cities not only perpetually generate images of themselves, but also perpetually generate and replicate images of themselves within themselves (which purport to stand for some desirable self-image), then it is clear that we are dealing with an extraordinarily complex phenomenon, a process of fabricating *signs* that operate on multiple levels of perception. A city is thus not a 'text'—or a 'picture'—that is readable in a simple, linear fashion.

It will also be evident that any attempt to deal with the properties of interactions between individual subjects and architectonic objects must *begin* with an attempt to account for behaviors where strict delineations between 'subject' and 'object' are problematic at best. At the same time, it would be necessary to treat both individual and collective behavior with respect to built environments as performative and actualizing: a situation, so to speak, in which the users are in some sense inseparable *from* an architectonic 'text'.
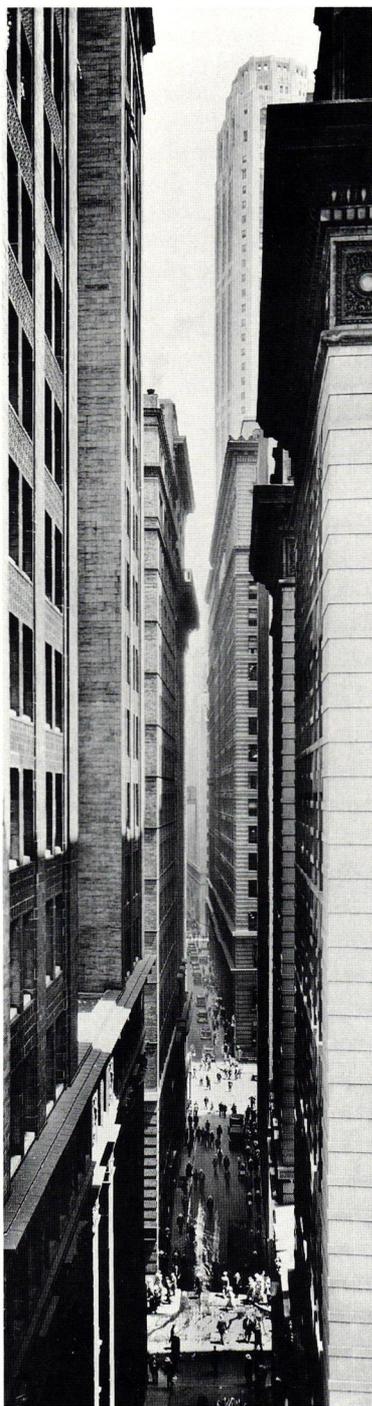
Berenice Abbott, Exchange Place from Broadway, New York, c. 1934. Berenice Abbott/Commerce Graphics Ltd., Inc.

If to 'picture' a city is in fact to use it, then (we must ask again), what would a 'picture' (in the literal sense) be a picture *of*?

With respect to that which, in the present issue, would be termed the relationships between architecture and photography, it should be apparent that the qualities that are said to make up a successful picture would be those that 'capture' intrinsic or essential properties of built form(s): those that, in effect, represent or express those qualities that the 'forms themselves', as more than one generation of designers would have had it, 'want to say'.

Yet consider what an extraordinary thing this actually is. Such a picture would in effect be a portrait of the desires of certain objects. And in addition, such an artifact (the picture) is at the same time an artifact that is part of the built environment itself. Not only does such a representation, once it is made, become a component of what it pictures, and in that sense operates in what rhetorically would be termed a *synecdochal* (part-to-whole) relationship to that which it represents, but it also is in fact a portion of the built environment representing itself.

Any picture of a built formation, then, would be a kind of anamorphic object, not unlike the section of certain paintings of the baroque period that appears to be a blur when viewed head-on, and is only resolvable into clear perspective from some oblique position. In anamorphic painting, the embodiment of ideology and relations of power were frequently made legible from particular, and often rather surprisingly oblique, perspectives. Related in a sense to the phenomenon of *trompe-l'oeil*, or to the cueing of subjects toward specific points within an urban fabric from which a portion or the totality of that fabric suddenly appears in a telling and narrative order, anamorphism is perhaps one of the most familiar of urban structuring devices. It achieves its power and poignancy

through the orchestration of tensions set up between ambiguity or disorder and clarity of structural relationships, which is grounded in the organization of human perceptual systems that operate actively to resolve ambiguity and order apparent disorder.

In this respect, a picture of a built formation will always in some sense be an instrument in the orchestration of desire and the fabrication of meaning from a 'perspective' which is invariably in some sense grounded in particular social and cultural conventions. A picture, in short, is an ideological instrument that masks as much as it reveals. At the same time, it is evident that it will always be one among many such potential viewpoints, each related to a particular—and often strikingly distinct—ideological position.

'Picturing the city' (or any part of the built environment) is thus rather more than an innocent discovery of a point of view (literally and metaphorically) which 'expresses' what a formation 'itself' purports to be 'saying'. In a fundamental sense, it entails a reckoning with the propositional character of formations, negotiating with what are already negotiations, propositions, hypotheses—none of which are innocent or value-neutral, and all of which bear implications for individual and collective behavior. The question of the relationship between architecture and photography has characteristically been asked within the framework of (usually implicit) metaphors for architecture that portray 'picturing' as representing the 'answers' built forms purportedly might have to questions of how to orchestrate behavior. If we were to see the built environment as a set of propositions and *questions posed*, questions that might project multiple solutions (in other words, within a framework which problematizes the ideology of form 'following' function (or vice versa), then we might come closer to appreciating just how extraordinary a phenomenon the built environment is: the supreme human fiction.

Lewis Baltz, Piazza Sigmund Freud, Milan, 1989. Element 2 of 3. (Original photograph in color.)
Courtesy of Theresa Luisotti/RAM, Los Angeles and Tokyo.

It is no accident that the portrait was the focal point of early photography. The cult of remembrance of loved ones, absent or dead, offers a last refuge for the cult value of the picture. For the last time the aura emanates from the early photographs in the fleeting expression of a human face. This is what constitutes their melancholy, incomparable beauty. But as man withdraws from the photographic image, the exhibition value for the first time shows its superiority to the ritual value. To have pinpointed this new stage constitutes the incomparable significance of Atget, who, around 1900, took photographs of deserted Paris streets. It has quite justly been said of him that he photographed them like scenes of crime. The scene of a crime, too, is deserted; it is photographed for the purpose of establishing evidence.

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 1936
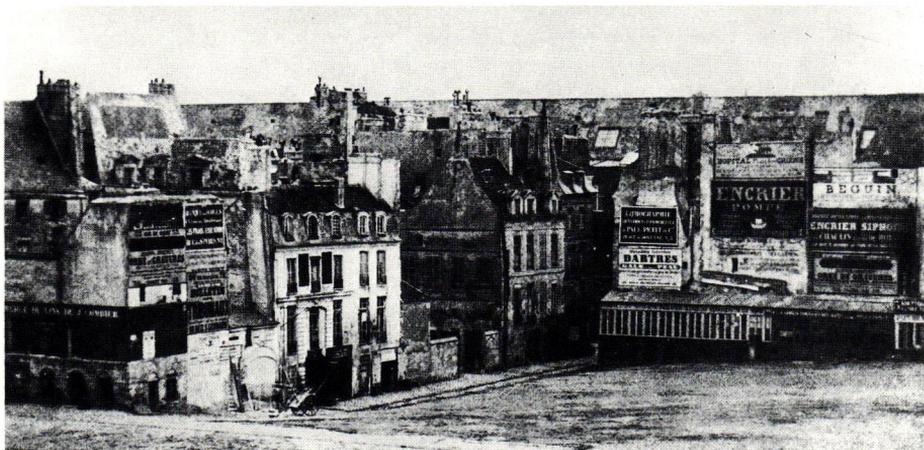
William Henry Fox Talbot, Place de la Carousel, Paris, 1843. Science Museum Collection, London.

The Victim and the Hangman: The Tragedy of the Humanist Eye

Mark Jarzombek

An eye is born aloft by wings over the enigmatic words *QUID TUM* (What Next?).[1] Matteo de' Pasti's famous design for Leon Battista Alberti's medallion has been interpreted as a symbol of Alberti's humanism, and of his role as founding father of a prototypical Enlightenment philosophy that supposedly "taught us how it feels to...exercise our rational powers...in accordance with an ideal harmony."[2] Yet the medallion taken together with Alberti's writings, particularly the stories from his relatively obscure *Intercoenales* (*Dinner Pieces*),[3] written in the 1440s, reveals a highly personal and complex meaning that suggests anything but an orderly progression toward Enlightenment ideals. In each of the numerous stories that make up the *Intercoenales* Alberti portrays facets of a society so crippled by its own root evil that it could not even begin to comprehend the benefit of high moral actions. But he neither rejects society in a wholesale manner nor opts for bucolic escape. Rather, he approaches it with a critical ambivalence in the form of a psycho-pathological analysis of social life. The extraordinarily rich visual images that are the building blocks of this analysis, along with the colorful characters of his stories, strike chords that resonate across time and culture, in particular with the photography of Margaret Bourke-White, Herbert Bayer, and Helen Levitt, among others.

The *Intercoenales* is grounded in a sinister and unpromising assessment of humanity. Mankind, in an endless cycle of regressions, displacements, and dissimulations, fails to create an orderly society for

it cannot repress its "rapacious, envious, spiteful, and destructive" nature. Society, long since alienated from its divine origins, has degenerated "into a tyranny of

evil...a spectacle of frenzy, and a vision of horror, stupification, and monstrosity"; it is based on one principle alone: *varieta e varieta*.[4] Humans in their restlessness are worse than animals.

Animals are happy with the food their nature requires....Only man is constantly investigating new things and hurting himself in the process. Not satisfied with the space he has on earth, he wants to cross the sea, venturing I believe out of this world. He wants to rummage about beneath the waters and the earth, inside the mountains, and he even tries to get above the clouds....We like nothing except that which nature denies us, and we are delighted only when we make efforts to displace nature in many ways....In fact, we so dislike

things that are natural and free that we turn ourselves into servants.[5]

In the most utopian of *Intercoenales*, entitled *Anuli (Little Rings)*, Alberti outlines a schema for society's redemption: the main character is a diligent and pious writer, who, after much suffering and many trials, is finally recognized by the gods for his tremendous insight and knowledge. In a reversal of the Moses myth, he is admitted into the heavens to rule as the savior of mankind. "His fluency of speech, ease of manner, talent, versatility, and intelligence will be accepted and adapted to the ears and minds of men."[6] This saintly humanist will walk among humans guiding them toward understanding and justice. To help him rule, the gods commission him to fashion twelve images to be placed on rings so

Berenice Abbott, Nightview, New York, 1932. Berenice Abbott/Commerce Graphics Ltd., Inc.

Outside the studio of Margaret Bourke-White, Chrysler Building. Photograph, Oscar Graubner. Estate of Margaret Bourke-White. © 1975, Erskine Caldwell (Syracuse University).

Fates, who had given him so much grief in his early days, promise to be propitious. But as the story closes, one of the gods admits tantalizingly: "I do not wish to contaminate the happy omens of this man with a sad prediction."

In another story, *Pupillus (Orphan)*, Alberti sets utopia in contrast with reality. Instead of honoring the humanist, the inhabitants of the city attack him as an enemy and drive him into exile. "Expelled from his native land...robbed by his relatives, rejected by his friends and on the verge of starvation," the would-be hero has no recourse but to become a mendicant beggar.[8] The healing of society from its ills is a futile fantasy given its essential compulsion toward self-mutilation. Instead of the humanist purifying the world of its insanity, society cleanses itself from the troublesome humanist so as to focus all the more insistently on its own evil.

> Fate has determined that from the time I first saw the light of day, not even the smallest thing has turned out the way I expect. If I sow friends with service and kindness, I reap enemies. If I seek approval through liberal studies, envy is my repayment. If I strive to conduct myself peaceably and humbly by harming no one, I come upon detractors, accusers, secret enemies, and the most worthless traitors who disrupt all my plans and intentions.[9]

The theme of society's suppression of its divine potential is carried over into *Defunctus (Death)*.[10] A man who has recently died is on his way to Hades; but before he enters into its gloomy darkness, he is allowed for a short while to assume the form of a bird so that he may observe the events following his death. Flying over the earth, he perches on the top of the chimney of his home where he waits to see what will happen. Having been a good person, noble, upright, thoughtful, and rational, he expects to see the example of his good character honored by friends and relatives. He is shocked when his wife

that he will always be able to visualize his purpose and aim. One image, of a sailor on a ship, indicates the young hero's ability to maintain the equilibrium of wisdom despite the flood of events; another, an elephant ear in a net, represents the ability to hear everything but filters through the net of reason. The first and most important image, however, is the winged eye:

> Nothing is more powerful than the eye, quicker, nothing more noble....The eye is, in a sense, the foremost of the organs, outstanding, the king and, as it were, the god. Is it not surely what the ancients interpreted as god, since like an eye, god scans all things, reckoning each and everything? This is the reason why we are urged to accord praise to god.[7]

The omniscient humanist-savior, aspiring to rule not only the world but "to govern the affairs even of Jove, the greatest and the best," marries the goddess Minerva to consummate the newly created link between heaven and earth. Even the

betrays him on the very day of his funeral, when his friends speak badly of him, and when his relatives squander their inheritance and destroy his library, including the books he himself wrote. When he sees his books being ripped apart page by page— his relatives are making packing paper to wrap up some perfume they have found— he realizes that not even as a literary talent will his name go into posterity. Their desire to save the perfume and not the texts parallels their search, on the one hand, for the transitory and not the permanent, and, on the other hand, for masks and not truth. *Defunctus* ends with the sobering proposition of the humanist able to see the true face of mankind, but succumbing to the eternal darkness of Hades, where, as victim of his own blindness, the vivid images of his brief sojourn on earth will torment him forever. In life, he underestimated the truly irrepressible evil of mankind, but now, in death, he is powerless. Alberti shows that instead of the temporal world being mutable, and the spiritual world permanent, the temporal is in reality immutable, and the spiritual ephemeral and endangered.

This story, written at the same time as his treatise on perspective, stands at the center of Alberti's philosophy. From it issue forth profound and difficult questions about what one really sees in life, as well as about the consequences of seeing too much. The tragic hero, reduced to the level of passive spectator, looks down from his lofty perch, with a growing sense of despair *and* understanding. Death was the gate that enabled him to pass from a blind existence, based innocently on humanist principles of kindness and generosity, into one that recognizes that good is corrupted by evil, and evil in turn is all too easily masked by goodness. Having gained the understanding of life, the humanist is helplessly marginalized by death and evil. Death becomes a metaphor for the erasure of humanism from society.

From here, it is a short distance to cynicism, a topic about which Alberti

Herbert Bayer, The Lonely Metropolitan, 1932. Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin.

wrote several short stories, the most important of which is *Somnium* (*Dream*), a dialogue between a cynic and a young, still innocent, friend.[11] The cynic describes a trip he made to the underworld, where he saw the River of Life filled with ugly, contorted, and bloated corpses. "The incredible thing was the sight of countless human faces rolling along in its waters. Some were pale visages of unhappy invalids, some were emaciated and wrinkled, or else fat and swollen, while others had very prominent or deformed eyes, noses, mouths, teeth, hair, or chins." After he crossed the river, he came to a series of strange landscapes, the last of which, representing human vanity, was a field of hair infested with lice. Having seen once and for all the truth about human existence, he escaped only by climbing back up to the familiar city street through a stinky sewer hole.

This story continues the theme of *Defunctus*, which ended when the hero could see the chaos of life only when he was condemned to eternal darkness and silence. In *Defunctus*, the humanist returns to the everyday world, and thus there seems the possibility that society could

finally profit from the humanist's insight. But truth has transformed the humanist into a biting and caustic *provocateur* who attempts, with little gratitude from society, to rip off the masks worn by people to obscure their true visage. His curse is that he is rendered incapacitated by his own cynicism. The society he returns to no longer makes sense. Where he once saw order he now sees chaos. He realizes that friends are a waste of time and his ambition for literary posterity futile. "He keeps his writings under lock and key." It might protect them from destruction by his relatives; but the literary effort is equally wasted, for now, no one has access to his books. A sign of the cynic's alienation and his own inner transformation is the sewer stench, which hangs from his clothes and sets him apart from his literary companions.

As Bertold Brecht put it in a magnificent line, society's "mansion is built of dog shit."[12] And it is this that the Albertian cynic has discovered. At the end of the story, one of his still-innocent friends, revolted by the stench, pleads with him to take a bath. But the cynic

Eugène Atget, Rue Mouffetard, Paris, n.d.

does not wish to clean himself; the smell of shit is, for him, a sign of his honest, and ironically, uncontaminated nature. In desperation the friend asks: *Quid tum?*[13] It is an important moment in the conversation as the friend is slowly coming to realize that knowledge of truth has exerted a disastrous toll on his former friend. Instead of elevating him into a higher realm of goodness and spirituality, it has plunged him into an inescapable and emasculating bitterness that can only expose and critique "mankind's disease-ridden life," but cannot propose an alternative. *Quid tum* is a pessimistic recognition that society has neither a future nor past; it only perpetuates its ongoing anguish in the form of temporal history.

If the winged eye points to Alberti's protagonist, the humanist saint who is society's unwanted savior, *Quid tum* points to the ostracized cynic, society's unwanted conscience. The two figures are very much alike, for both the gentle humanist and the caustic cynic have been victimized and rejected by society: the humanist is attacked like a foreigner and driven out of the city, the cynic is no longer invited into fine homes as he had been before his transformation. He becomes—in another of Alberti's stories—a lonely vagabond, a smelly street bum, who sleeps in public places and theaters. Passers-by are not sympathetic: "He accuses everyone but represents nothing himself." But the street bum possesses his own wisdom, knowing that nothing in society appears as it claims, for "anyone, by the use of clever masks, can simulate those who are believed to be good and noble." Rejected and ignored by a society that will accept neither the savior's divine law nor the cynic's conscience, the vagabond-humanist inhabits the blind spot in society and finds there, ironically but predictably, the peace that humanists had sought all along. He can speak and laugh as he wishes in a realm of solitary silence surrounded by the bustle of city life. Unlike the savior, who can only lament the
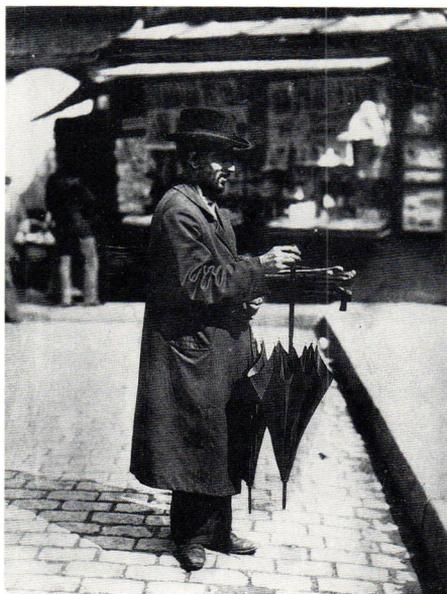
fate of exclusion and exile, the vagabond-humanist discovers freedom.

> One who practices the art of vagabonding...can laugh, accuse, rebuke at will all according to his individual talents, without any evil consequences. He can do what he wants without having his words and actions censured.[14]

The images of the medallion combine prophetic and adversarial forces, simultaneously inspiring and critiquing. The medallion does not stand for rational, autonomous, and enlightened seeing, but for the humanist struggle to hold out the possibility of hope and salvation, while nonetheless revealing society's innate corruption. Alberti is not positing a humanist utopia in opposition to the real world, but rather describing the ongoing historical confrontation of utopia trapped, so-to-speak, by society. This confrontation can never be resolved, because neither good nor evil can totally suppress the other. The humanist-savior cannot guide society toward redemption, nor can society totally exorcise the cynic, who even though scorned and ignored "continues to live in the shadows of the fortress."

Should one want to avoid being contaminated with the spirit of human rapaciousness, one has to be willing, like the savior in *Anuli*, to sacrifice personal peace and quiet. But, the only way to achieve peace and quiet is to make oneself unwanted, like the embittered cynic, who inhabits the very center of society, but is deprived of all pretensions of power. Alberti holds the two possibilities in critical suspension. Neither the savior nor the cynic can stand alone, as each is an inversion of the other. The saint hopes to orient society to his radiance, only to discover that he is peripheral to society; the cynic actually inhabits the center of society, but no one watches him. It is a center without radius as he is spectator disconnected from everything around him.

Alberti thus points to the simultaneity of utopian vision and cultural critique, the positive and the negative, the hope and the despair. This circularity assumes that the divine is not outside of time and society and can therefore exert no lever-

Helen Levitt, Children with masks, New York, 1939. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

age. The humanist, who attempts to liberate evil from society, can therefore never resolve his position *vis à vis* society; overwhelmed by society's lust for flux, change, and mutability, he struggles to articulate the principles of divine justice and hope, in the process of which, however, awakened to the immense scope of his alienation, he attempts an equally fruitless journey through the estranged reality of life itself. The contradictory nature of how to act in society embraces an essentially modern intellectual problem, eloquently restated in 1840 by Charles Baudelaire:

> I say "Long live the revolution!" as I would say "Long live destruction! Long live death!" I would be happy not only as a victim; it would not displease me to play hangman as well—so as to feel the revolution from both sides![15]

In post-Enlightenment philosophy, the question 'how does one improve the society' is answered by pointing to the need for government, history, and religion, all based on the possibilities ostensibly inherent in universal reason and in the laws of nature. Baudelaire accepts none of these principles. His hero follows a peripatetic existence in hotel rooms, with a minimum of books, moving like an unseen ghost through the crowd, with no access to the means of ideological production. Alberti's hero is not unsimilar as he is both fascinated and disgusted by society, fascinated by what it could be, disgusted by what it is. If there is to be any improvement it will come only through the ongoing exchange between the humanist-saint and the caustic cynic, between the victim and the hangman.

Notes

1. The circumstances surrounding the commissioning of the medallion are not known, nor is its precise date. For discussion and an alternate interpretation, see Renée Watkins, "L. B. Alberti's Emblem, the Winged Eye, and His Name Leo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, vol. 9, Hft. 3/4 (November 1960): 256-258.

2. Joan Gadol, *Leon Battista Alberti: The Universal Man of the Early Renaissance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), 242-243.

3. The work, dispersed perhaps already in the fifteenth century, has been published in various groupings. Some of the stories can be found in H. Mancini, *Opera inedita et pauca separatim impressa di Leon Battista Alberti* (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1890), 122-224; others are in Eugenio Garin, "Intercenali Inedite," *Rinascimento* 12 (1965). Some of the dialogues have been published separately, like Giovanni Farris, *De commodis litterarum atque incommodis e Defunctus* (Milan: Marzorati, 1971). For an entire translation see David Marsh, *Leon Battista Alberti Dinner Pieces* (Binghamton: Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1987). I discuss the work in more detail in *On Leon Baptista Alberti, His Literary and Aesthetic Theories* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989).

4. Garin, "Intercenali Inedite," 26.

5. L. B. Alberti, *Theogenius*, in Cecil Grayson, *Opere Volgari*, vol. 2, 93-94.

6. From Mancini, *Opera inedita*, 224-365.

7. Since classical antiquity, when philosophers mostly saw the eye as the container of the divine sparks of life, or as the essence of reason itself, the eye has been interpreted as the sensory organ most closely tied to divinity.

8. Mancini, *Opera inedita*, 126.

9. From *Corolle*, the continuation of the *Pupillus*, Garin, "Intercenali Inedite," 33.

10. Farris, *De commodis*.

11. Mancini, *Opera inedita*, 125.

12. Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: the Seabury Press, 1979), 366.

13. Garin, "Intercenali Inedite," 27.

14. E. Martini, *Momus*, 72.

15. In Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. Harry Zohn (London: NLB, 1973), 14.

Jane Lidz

Before photographing a building, it is important for me to understand the architect's concepts so that the images will represent the architect's intentions. Photography is the completion of a project's design cycle, and I appreciate the challenge of being the final member of the team. Photographing buildings for architects incorporates skills I learned and taught while getting my Master of Arts degree in architecture. Before photographing the completed project, it is very important for me to understand the architectural concepts. Often the finished project does not fully reflect the architect's vision because of budget cuts, client taste, and code restrictions, but, by reviewing the plans and goals, I bring the strength of the original concept into focus and minimize other elements.

Like a portrait artist, I want to show my subject in the best light and from the best angle. In order to accomplish this, a considerable amount of care, thought, and preparation goes into the composition of each photograph. I enjoy capturing the spirit and emotion of a place, which I look for in the changing color of light and the interplay of shadows.

Ansel Adams told me that there are

Jane Lidz, Roller Coaster, Belmont Park, San Diego, California.

two types of assignments: 'outer' assignments portraying the ideas of others and 'inner' assignments of personal artistic expression. My design team approach to architecture photography is an 'outer' assignment. This approach shows the life of the space and the architect's vision in one 'transparent' portrait. For my 'inner' assignments I photograph architecture from a different perspective. I create abstract compositions of color, form, and light, using architectural elements. These photographs often involve ironic juxtapositions or fleeting shadows, becoming statements of subtle humor or ephemeral beauty. In my books I combine 'outer' and 'inner' assignments, presenting both the designer's ideas and my poetic interpretation in the same image. In all my photographs I want to convey both information and inspiration.
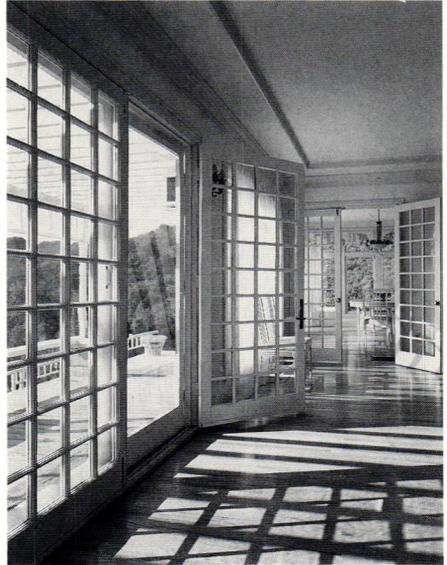
Jane Lidz, Cupertino Residence. Restoration by Steinberg & Associates.

Richard Barnes

In its current state, architectural photography suffers from a slavish desire to sew up all the loose ends in order to 'package' a building in a way that contradicts the experience of moving through architectural space. Even if we acknowledge the difficulties of trying to depict three-dimensional space in a medium of two dimensions, we still accept the photographic record as 'proof positive' of photography's ability to narrate the story of a building through a series of static images. Perhaps a video or filmic record would be nearer to the actual experience of a building. Be that as it may, most people will experience a given building through the static image of a photograph in a magazine.

It is the relationship between the two mediums that needs to be examined, their similarities and differences, and how they affect one another. Photography and architecture share many of the same formal concerns for light and shadow, composition, scale, etc. They differ in that the architect is concerned with creating space, while the photographer is concerned with depicting it. Before photography, the experience of architecture in two dimensions was gleaned from the reading of plans and drawings to scale. This provided the viewer with the possibility to mentally 'walk' through the structure and comprehend it in its totality. Photography, on the other hand, fragments space. Spatial relationships that can be demonstrated in plans, become mere vignettes, extracted from the whole. This is viewed by many to be an inherent limitation of the medium.

Photography, however, is capable of evoking the spirit of a building in ways that a plan cannot. The photograph may function as a record; but more importantly, through a well-conceived and developed series of images of a building and site, it can also transcend the status of document and assume a power to augment its subject. Photographs of architecture are strongest when they seek to show the evolution of a structure, not only in the process of its construction, but also in its conceptual plan and its intended utility. This potential of photography is contradicted by the technically competent, vacant images that are seen in the magazines.

It may be argued that the architecture magazines and journals have set the standard for what constitutes a properly conceived and rendered photograph of a building. Perhaps the photographer and the architect have entered into tacit agreement without exploring other ways of working. It is the prevalence of an uninspired architecture press that insists on sending the photographer in after the building has been scrubbed, sealed, and made safe for photography that needs to be reexamined. Possibly architects have still to be convinced of the merits of photography beyond simple documentation as a vehicle for marketing their work.

As a way of addressing these concerns that seeks to establish a dialogue between myself and the architect, I have sought to engage in working relationships of a more collaborative nature. I deliberately seek out and propose longer-term projects that will pave the way for an interaction between myself and the architect. This allows for the development of a mutual understanding, a reciprocal relationship where each party takes more than a cursory interest in the other's discipline. In the course of this interaction, the photographer and the architect will come to know and understand each other's work and respect the other's point of view. With this as a basis of working, they will establish themselves as professional peers.

Richard Barnes, Oceanside Water Pollution Control Plant. Simon, Martin-Vegue, Winkelstein, Morris.

Grant Mudford

As a photographer, I try to do two distinctly different things, which makes for a difficult existence: First, I try to spend as much time as possible doing my own photographs. I have chosen mostly buildings as subjects, because I have a great interest in them; but also, more recently, there are portraits of people, people looking sort of like buildings. In this work, essentially, I am more concerned about the formal aspects of picture making than about the subject matter per se. Then, there are assignments to photograph architecture for publications. There I have a very different set of requirements to satisfy. Whereas I try to make the photographs as interesting as I can, the bottom line is that the photographs have to describe the buildings and not necessarily make photographic 'statements'. I make a real distinction between the two types of work.

For the most part, what the assignment photographs have to do is describe something to people who may never actually experience the building first hand. That is problematic. I think of photography as being a very prejudiced way of looking at things. There is no objectivity with photography. It is a medium—particularly in the case of black and white photography—that is not very competent in giving actual information, which is what many architects think it should do. On the contrary, it is a medium that is
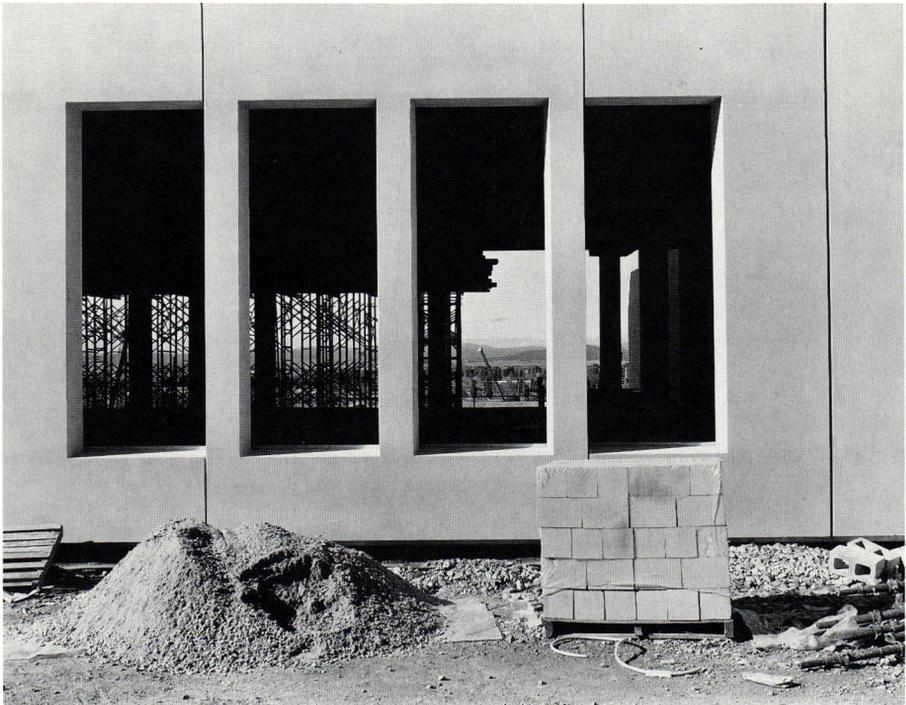
Grant Mudford, The Lewis Commission, 1985. Architect, Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp.
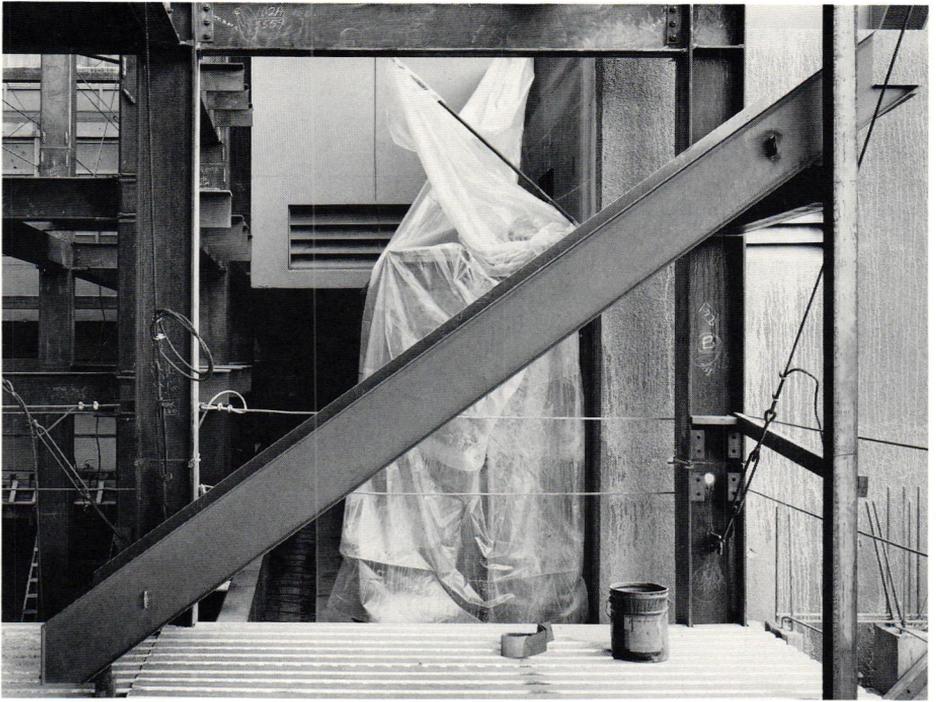
Grant Mudford, The Salick Commission #1, Los Angeles, 1987-88. Architect, Morphosis.

capable of giving much false information. The very act of putting a frame around something eliminates any possibility of objectivity. On that level alone it is a questionable mode of portraying something factually. For me, for example, the frame is extremely critical: I am more interested in what goes on at the extremities of the picture than in what is central. The isolation of a subject within the frame of the camera's lense is a very active gesture. It is more a matter of what you leave out than what is included in the picture; more a matter of what is suggested at the margins than what is actually shown.

Philosophically, I have a very conservative view of what architecture is. As Louis Kahn said, architecture is the making of meaningful spaces. Essentially, architecture is a spatial medium that has very little to do with what it is later filled-up with. It will look its best with nothing in it. I do exactly the opposite of what magazines do with styling: I empty the building out in order to photograph it. I

also have great respect for buildings, and in a sense, I don't see the pressing need to make great pictures out of them. If a building works as a piece of architecture, it has importance in itself; it doesn't need me to try to make art out of it.

The extraordinary nature of photography lies in its ability to transform things. The medium can transform seemingly unpromising subject matter into something that has considerably more interest than the thing itself. Most of the buildings I have photographed by my own choice aren't of much interest to me outside of what they can become as photographs. It is not just that photography converts architecture into a graphic composition: the building actually becomes another entity; it becomes iconic; it becomes important.

My commercial assignments and my own work have become connected in commissioned projects. I like to photograph buildings under construction, and I have sometimes been lucky enough to have people commission me to do it. But these

commissions have been strictly for purposes of art-making, such as the project to photograph the Comprehensive Cancer Center by Morphosis. In such a case the client makes a commitment to buy something that doesn't already exist. I also photographed the building as a finished piece, by the way, but that was for a magazine assignment.

If I were asked to photograph a finished building as an artistic commission, I would run some very high risks. If I were to be honest, there is a high probability that I would eventually have to go to the architect and say that the only thing I found interesting photographically was the back door, or the loading dock. I don't think many architects would be prepared to have their work represented like that. They would want the full rendition. It would take a lot of courage on the part of the architect, and would essentially have to be more a collaboration than a commission. I would love to be able to collaborate with an architect, but it would have to be approached with absolute freedom, with neither strings nor guarantees. The commissioned collaboration organized by Richard Koshalek and Julie Lazar for "Available Light" at MOCA/TC in 1983 was an example of

how a collaboration can work, but even in that case, there were certain constraints. It wasn't a true collaboration.

Because I have been making portraits, the subject of *people* in pictures has been on my mind: In photographing buildings, people are a bit of a problem. I shoot with very long exposures. People tend to move. They are not like buildings. The only important reason to have people in photographs is for a scale reference. Otherwise, they are uncontrollable elements: If you let them move around and do what they want, they can really make a mess, big blurs. If you make them freeze, it always looks like you did. In ten or twenty years their clothing will probably look foolish, whereas a good building never will.

The darkroom is where the alchemy really is. Essentially, I'm a printmaker. My own photographs are executed very simply, in terms of technique. They are done very well, but very simply, mostly with a 35mm camera, one lens, no tripod. My assignment work calls for a large format camera and fifteen or twenty lenses. In the end, I would be much happier—when I'm dead and gone—to be remembered simply as a photographer rather than as an architectural photographer. Can you put that on my epitaph?
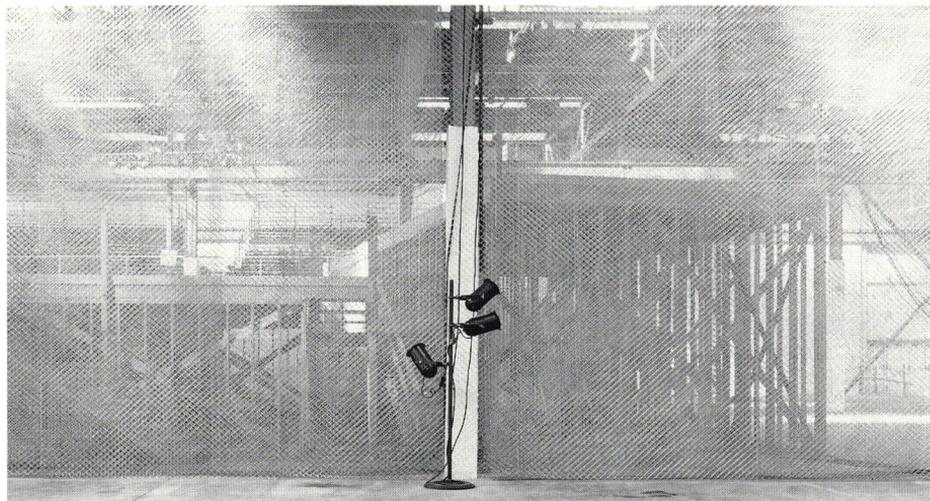
Grant Mudford, Available Light, MOCA/TC, Los Angeles, 1983. Architect, Frank Gehry, FAIA.

Heretical Remarks on Architecture and Photography

Craig Hodgetts

There is a narrative attached to every architectural photograph. It may be buried and need decoding, but it *is* there. I think of the architectural photographer as a *balladeer*, like Annie Liebewitz, the chronicler of Rock and Roll, and I strongly disagree with the notion that the photograph must simply *record* the design concept. I am much more attracted to Piranesi's approach to depicting architecture, a more romantic, contextual approach that suggests all the uses, abuses, and realities that the structure has endured with the passage of time. The demands of 'image' and 'visualization' have the same effect on buildings that they do on film stars: They are only allowed to be photographed in light that eliminates all their wrinkles, to such an extent that all evidence of the passage of time is erased, the image becomes an abstract conception, untainted by time, and the building (or star) is pushed toward a purely *cosmetic* reality.

Essentially, architectural photography runs a gamut of intentions from flattering, to exposing, to depicting, to penetrating, but architectural photographers are seldom 'free agents'. All of their operations are strongly oriented toward meeting the objectives of clients—architects or editors. There is also the issue of empathy: The photographer must empathize sufficiently with the architect's intentions so that the pictures resonate with it rather than with a personal photographic style. Inevitably, there are architects who want to deal with their buildings as immaculate objects. I think that it has to do with the fact that

architects haven't been able to define what they do as a *collaborative* art.

Such operations are in league with the social notion of protected and defensible space: I see the depiction of buildings according to such exclusive principles as an intensely political—and especially capitalistic—practice, one that extends beyond the photograph itself to the right-wing side of the barricade. Some architectural photography is clearly self-referential, and then one must respect the photographer's intentions. But as a *medium for transmitting a message* about buildings, or cities, or the body, I consider photography to be highly questionable.

As a professional practice, architectural photography is driven by a couple of things. One is tradition: In painting, 'portraits'—of people, dogs, horses, or even estate gardens—have historically functioned as the visual signs of the power of ownership. Architecture—when it was lucky enough to be depicted, which was very rare—could only be *painted* in such
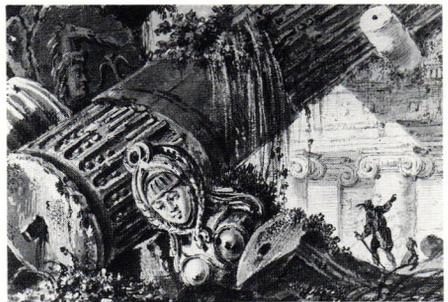
Giovanni Battista Piranesi, **Ruins of a splendid Roman building. Pen, ink, and wash drawing. Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna.**

Florence Henri, Rome, 1936. Gelatin-silver print.
Galleria Martini & Rochetti, Genoa.

of the role that photography can play in *foregrounding* buildings as opposed to relegating architecture to its proper place—behind the action.

Today, too much published architectural photography perpetuates the imperial tradition rather than advancing other tendencies that emerged in the nineteenth century. Early documentary photographers like Henri Cartier-Bresson established the fact that photography is an instantaneous art. What photography is most agile at, what it is uniquely capable of doing, is capturing the single moment.

Filmmaking provides the most suggestive model in this regard. In film, there is a symbiotic relationship between the framing of the scene, the action taking place within the picture, and each and every pictorial element that makes up the image you finally see. Each aspect has a creative destiny of its own—whether it be a weird postcard on the wall of a dark interior, a building in the background, or figures lurking at the margins of a scene. The 'prop' person who sets the scene has done so with empathy for the script, for the terms of the set design, and for the personalities of the actors—paying close attention, for example, to what would look good *in Laura Dern's hand* as opposed to randomly choosing something for her to hold. What you have is a kind of *creative mesh* at that moment when the camera rolls, something which the cam-

an extremely labor-intensive way that it fell victim to that imperial tradition of portraiture. With few exceptions—like Eduard Gaertner in the nineteenth century, or Edward Hopper in the twentieth century, both of whom aggressively confronted the vernacular and the ephemeral—painters haven't taken the trouble to render vernacular architecture as a foreground element. In photography, it is equally unusual to find building 'portraiture' that is *not* in the imperial tradition. I like Tim Street-Porter's attitude, for example, because he is highly conscious

Eduard Gaertner, The Atelier of the Gropius Brothers, Nationalgalerie, Berlin. Photo, Jörg P. Anders.

Edward Hopper, Approaching a City, 1946. Oil on canvas. The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

Henri Cartier-Bresson, Hyères, France, 1932.
Boston, New York Geographic Society, 1979.

eraman tries very hard to step back from and capture. One of the greatest cinematographers, who recently died, Nester Almendros, once said that cinematographers make very bad directors because they are best at just snapping images out of bus windows or on street corners with total spontaneity. An aesthetic energy is at work in the apprehension of such immediacy, one that defies all conventions of premeditation.

In architectural photography, props work like subtexts, like footnotes. They don't simply embellish; they supply an essential dimension of the final image and very often occupy a more prominent place than the architecture, because they are *things* with which one can have a direct empathetic relationship.

A vase of flowers, a negligée tossed over the back of a chair: those are *things* that we emotionally relate to on a different conceptual level than we relate to buildings. Props are like actors in a scene with no actors. Whereas in film, the prop person is a respected member of the larger team, in architectural photography there is a certain disdain for the 'stylist'. But photography has to be a passionate intervention in reality in order to make reality *read*. In the *Spirit of Saint Louis*, Jimmy Stewart gets into the plane and says "Oh, my God, I can't see how much fuel I have," and his girlfriend says, "Here, use the mirror in my compact." Suddenly he has a mirror but also a romantic talisman. The photographer must find the right

position on the emotional scale in order to deepen the response to whatever is being displayed, to set the stage for it. And very often the odd object can do that. Manipulations of scale—again, thinking of what Piranesi achieved—can also produce effects that have tangible emotional appeal.

This phenomenon of intersubjective appeal is brought home by the recent print ads for clothing by Calvin Klein and Kenneth Cole, where the suggestiveness of the expensive Klein campaign need only be *referenced* to have powerful effect in Cole's ironic retort. In the United States, the public depiction of subjectivity, the layers of implicit agreement in public discourse, the assumptions about the literacy of the audience, are absolutely staggering. The highest compliment you can pay your audience is to assume they are *quick*. With that you win a kind of intellectual battle; you make them yours. Rather than presenting an object for contemplation, you present the *aura* of the process but cut the process short before delivering anything, like selling the sizzle without the steak.

In this connection, there are important differences between photographing existing buildings or urban situations and photographing *new* architectural designs: With new buildings, you are dealing with a one-of-a-kind object that has had a lengthy gestation characterized by complex interactions of possibilities, constraints, and compromises, so that the completed but often compromised building is somewhat like a wounded soldier. The photographer is asked to resurrect the architect's vision, to somehow refresh and restore it—not from the abuses of use (because it hasn't had any yet), but from the scars of its birth. The unnerving thing about photographs of a new building is that they capture the moment of birth: they become the building's baby pictures.

The flurry of glossy magazines in the late 1970s corresponded to the façadism of the postmodern vocabulary, producing

a coincidence between architectural thought and static photography. The picture was all you got—even if you were physically standing in front of the building. Architecture that is more complex demands a series of representations in order to be understood. The most interesting buildings today don't have a preferred point of view. I don't know what the preferred point of view is at the Loyola Law School, or the Schnabel House, or even in some of our own work. There is no longer that one, archetypal, sum-it-all-up photograph. This heightens the need for key events in architectural representation—action or props, for instance. Architectural photography just isn't meaty enough for our minds any longer. In comparison to the mass of intellectual, conceptual, visual, sensual, and emotional information that bombards us on a daily basis, it feels like we have come to a full stop in our ability to refer to architecture. Stepping away from architecture, for example, in the new Subaru television ad campaign, the various dimensionalities of an automobile are rendered with layers of text moving over the image of the car.

Julius Shulman, The lath plant booths at the Hallawell Nursery and Garden Center, San Francisco, 1941-42. Architect, Raphael Soriano.

When you come upon a General Motors commercial, with the same old car going down the same old road, it's more like the typical architectural photograph: "well, here's your building, folks."

There are lots of things about photo-
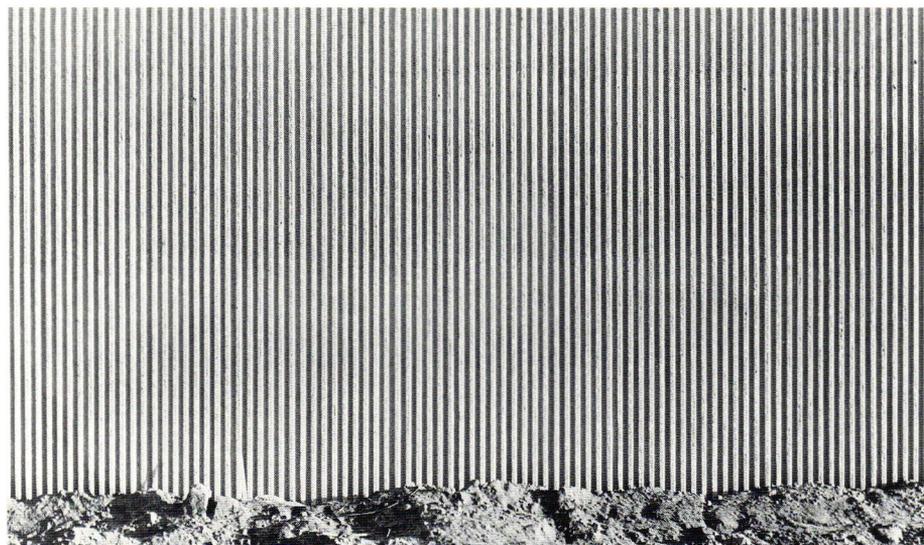
Lewis Baltz, West wall of unoccupied industrial structure at 20 Airway Drive, Costa Mesa, California. *The New Industrial Parks Near Irvine, California* (1974). Element 45 of 50. Gelatin-silver print. Courtesy of Theresa Luisotti/RAM.

Berenice Abbott , Amusement Park, Daytona Beach, Florida, 1954. Berenice Abbott/Commerce Graphics Ltd., Inc.

graphs that have very little to do with human visual perception: Most photographs are in focus throughout their whole frame, which is impossible for the human eye. And, the eye cannot compare, the way a photograph allows it to, the pinpoint resolution of a nut or bolt as a discrete element deployed on a flat field. One of the effects of such extensions of human capability is a kind of obsessive orientation to detail that is actually promulgated by photography. Photography suddenly competes with drawings as a tool for the teaching and learning of technics. The photograph reduces design elements to a point where one can appreciate relationships at a slightly more abstract level. It coheres all those things into one plane, so that even a vase of flowers is just another detail. The architectural photograph is an amazing tool, but in fact, it is *biased* toward technics, toward a kind of clinical scrutiny that gives it enormous pedagogical power. If, on the other hand, photographs become stand-ins for other forms of experience of buildings, the appreciation of architecture is driven further and further from consumer desire and back into the laboratory.

Artists working with photography of buildings are continually extending the parameters of the field. Barbara Kasten, for example, creates her pictorial abstractions from shards of buildings, often using intensely colored lights. Jamie Odgers uses

photography as a narrative vehicle for his own musings. In work like this, the photographer actually pays the architect the compliment of being inspired by the building and using it the way musicians have used musical compositions, like Ravel orchestrating Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. This approach doesn't compromise the building; it just gives the photograph new *autonomy* and delivers it from a hierarchical structure wherein the photography is the foot servant to the building. It grants the vision of the photographer its full license.

When the architect seeks to control every element of the image-making process, the overall creative energy is diminished and the playing field open to others is drastically limited. Again, it's like aging movie stars insisting on absolute control

T. Lux Feininger, The Building as Stage , c. 1926-1927. Gelatin-silver print. 6 1/2 x 3 1/4 inches. Collection, The J. Paul Getty Museum.

Garry Winogrand, Park Avenue, New York. 1959. Gelatin-silver print. Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of the photographer.
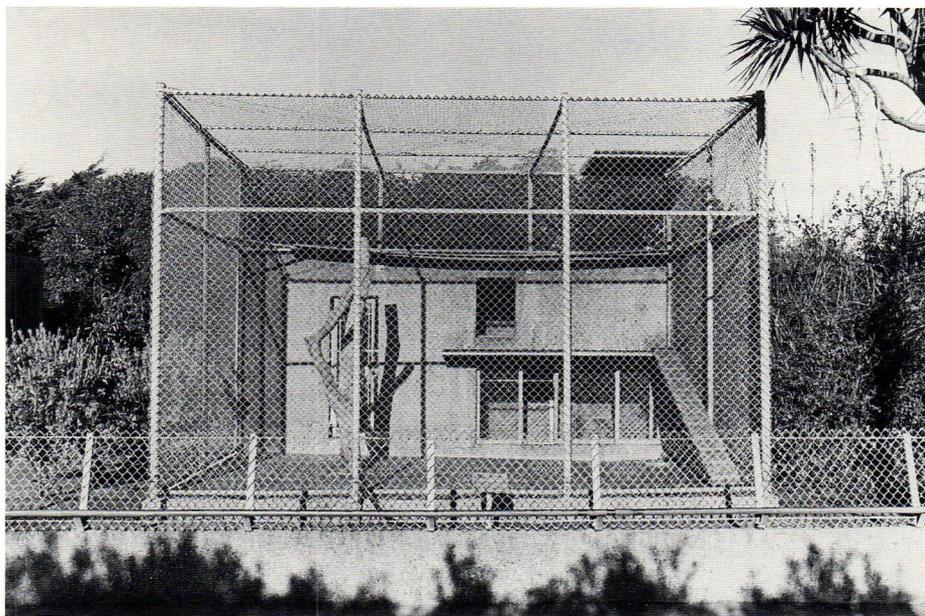
Henry Wessell, San Francisco, California, 1972. Gelatin-silver print. Courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco.

of every photograph of themselves, as compared to the actress who is confident enough to say "like it or not, this is what I'm doing, this is what I look like."

This may sound heretical, but I think architecture will start to improve only when photography starts to *move*. Based on my view of the vital role of architecture in life, taking into account the fairly low resolution of video or film compared to still photography, and also because without arresting the image, the eye cannot easily focus on details, I would propose that moving images would reduce the fixation upon *image*. Iconic images would give way to the realm of cities, medieval cities, for instance, where the buildings are the wallpaper around the urban space. They are not objectified; they are part of a continuum of urban fabric. For me this has more to do with the way people *use* space than does the current representational idiom.

The still photograph does reveal things to us that are inaccessible in any other medium, like the final arc of the basketball before it plunges through the net. Half a millennium ago, Leonardo went to unbelievable lengths to understand what happens when a wave breaks, watching it repeatedly, until he was finally able to make a sketch that made *visual* what he *thought* happened. Still photography now reveals even more subtle phenomena, only far more easily, but it has not succeeded in liberating architecture from its fixed nature. It merely chains it to a state lesser than itself. We can measure the changes brought about in sports by still photography and electronic instant playback technologies, which allowed high jumpers to jump higher, runners to run faster, javelin throwers to throw further: What experiential qualities of architecture could we unlock by applying the same technologies to the perception and study of the built world and by investigating how space operates *dynamically* as opposed to pictorially?

Allan Sekula

Excerpt from "Geography Lesson: Canadian Notes," 1986.

A style associated with commerce, but primarily with the state, is allowed to front for—while being swallowed up by—a style associated almost exclusively with commerce. It's as if a large corporate headquarters building had taken on the original Bank of Canada as a façade.... The building is both visible and invisible, exhibitionistic and unduly modest. I was allowed to photograph within some of the working areas of the bank, only to be accompanied by the bank's chief of security, a former senior officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who took an occasional peek through the viewfinder for framings that might disclose too much of the bank's inner workings. The building is both 'open' and 'closed' to nature, to human traffic, to the flow of commerce. Returning to the fundamental linkage between the old building and the new structure: the former stands as a 'vault' to the latter, which suggests a lobby, the quasi-public space of commerce. This schematization of the essential features of any bank disguises the fact that the 'real' vaults are underground, and invisible beneath the slate floor on the garden court. Thus the bank is both 'democratic' and respectful of the privacy of capital.
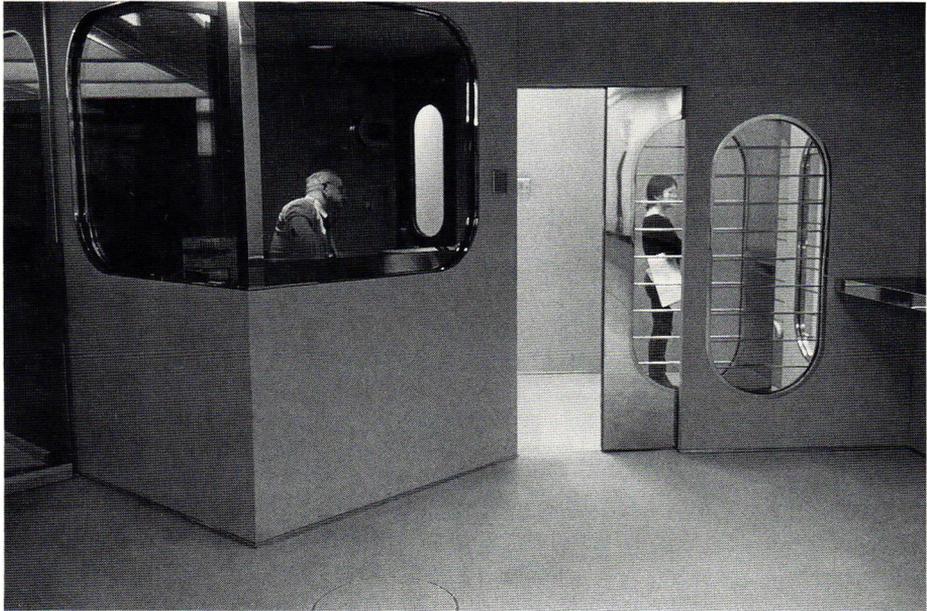
Allan Sekula, Worker passing through bandit trap, Bank of Canada, Ottawa, 1986. Architect, Arthur Erickson.

Letters

Dear Editor,

I would like to address a concern that several of our Board members had regarding the format of *Architecture California*. The Cabrillo Chapter membership includes architects with a diverse range of architectural practices. Recognizing that this range must not be peculiar to our chapter, we question the predominantly written content of *Architecture California*. We feel the editorial content is excellent. What we are suggesting, however, is that a more balanced selection of articles might serve the members, i.e. selections which include photographs, diagrams, sketches, visual elements to enhance and clarify the written material presented.

Sincerely,

James L. Fortunes, AIA
President, Cabrillo Chapter

Dear Editor,

Architecture California 13:3 contained informative and interesting articles. James Vitale's piece, "Reflections on the Practice of Architecture," contained insightful interest right up to the point where the term "brutal lessons" was applied to the Beverly Hills City Hall and the John Wayne Airport. As Project Manager for the Terminal Building portion of the John Wayne Airport, I can only guess to what Mr. Vitale refers.

Our office certainly was not contacted to ascertain any purported "lessons," most of which are commonly faced on all projects to some degree or another. The use of an apparently unresearched and alarmist statement is a disservice for the hard work performed on all complicated projects by architects, clients, and contractors alike.

Sincerely,

Philip Kroeze, AIA, CSI
Senior Principal, LPA, Inc., Irvine

FAX
Da Libreria Quattro Venti, Rome

My project at the American Academy in Rome is to analyze conceptions for depicting the 'urban image.' These sketches are simple notations to help me prepare for video filming. They mark different sequences of approach to the area of Santa Maria delle Pace.

Best wishes for the special issue,

Ming Fung
Hodgetts & Fung, Los Angeles

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Volume 14 Number 1 Architecture and Photography

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Forthcoming: Volume 14 Number 2 Changing California Landscapes