

SKYLINE

The Architecture and Design Review

January 1982

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Columbia Architecture at 100!

A look at its centennial exhibit,
its historical context and architectural
efforts . . . and an Insider's Guide

Plus: An interview with Paul Goldberger;
recommended landmarking for 1982; galleries and
symposia; books; and projects

Skyline

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Other Views

To the Editor:

Without entering the forum of the Vidler-Jencks debate, permit me a comment or two.

Both men seem wholly unaware of what the classical is. May I offer the definition proposed by Classical America, the society founded to promote the classical tradition in the arts of the United States? It accepts the classical in art as being a generalized and idealized interpretation of nature, which, as the main artistic current of Western civilization, began with the Greeks and Romans and continued and developed in the Renaissance. In architecture the tradition accepts ornament as an essential ingredient, even to making use of the human figure. And its empire extends over all the arts from painting to woodcarving. In its best examples, painting and sculpture are in honor. I should add that the acanthus leaf is its symbol much as the chrysanthemum is in Japanese art.

For a detailed examination, I can only recommend the several titles in the Classical America Series in Art and Architecture, of which the latest is Albert E. Richardson's *Monumental Classical Architecture in Great Britain and Ireland*.

My name, by the way, is misspelled in the Jencks letter (*Skyline*, November, 1981).

Truly yours,
Henry Hope Reed
 President, Classical America

To the Editor:

In reading Barbara Miller Lane's "assessment" of Albert Speer that appeared in the December issue of *Skyline*, I wondered if the fact that he was a "mediocre" architect of "selective vision" was, for the readership of *Skyline*, particularly revealing or even, at this point in time, especially relevant.

It is apparent, not only in her article, but elsewhere as well, that it is still difficult for the historian to come to terms with the Third Reich, despite the passage of close to half a century since its inception. Yet, despite the pain that never seems to subside completely, it is time to face certain issues squarely and without embarrassment: to avoid them is to abnegate historical responsibility.

First of all, it must be remembered that Hitler—for all his excesses and foolishness—was initially and broadly perceived as the only viable political leader capable of lifting Germany out of the harrowing threat of anarchy and political chaos, memories of which were all too vivid in the minds of those who had lived through the postwar years. Given such widespread support and doubts as to the regime's longevity, as well as the desperate economic circumstances of the early thirties that effectively precluded private commissions, it is not surprising to discover that many of Germany's most renowned architects, including such famed Modernists as Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, would have been only too happy to receive commissions from the regime, which they pointedly kept separate from their country.

When we "condemn" Speer for his participation in such an unholy enterprise, we must recognize that, but for a quirk of fate (i.e., the depth of Hitler's penchant for architecture), we "condemn" those architects we most respect as well. Ultimately, Speer's "crime" seems to be his mediocrity.

Secondly, it is difficult to evaluate Speer the architect, as he built *nothing* prior to his involvement with the Nazi party. Although he never swayed in his assertion that he was *d'accord* with Hitler's view of architecture, Hitler's habit of total involvement in all major governmental commissions precludes any valid assessment of Speer's architectural talents. Nothing the young architect ever did was devoid of Hitler's input.

Thirdly, Hitler's complaint about Modernism—apart from the public rhetoric about "cultural bolshevism"—most notably, his contention that it was inappropriate for all types of construction, especially public buildings of state—is eerily similar to the current review of Modernism.

Hitler was surely not unique in his opposition to the claims of "universality" heralded by the Modernists, then or now. In fact, Hitler appreciated, even expected, use of the "Modernist" style in factory construction, which, thanks to the priorities of such construction, far exceeded in numbers the more publicized "official" buildings in the so-called Nazi style. While I am certain that Tom Wolfe, Charles Jencks, and other critics of Modernism would be uncomfortable at the thought of their repugnant bedfellow, recognition should nonetheless be properly accorded.

The fascination and historical significance of Albert Speer lies in the very normalcy of his person, his architecture, and his "crime." It seems to me that any "assessment" of Speer at this point in history should go beyond merely proclaiming the "mediocrity" of his architecture and the "selectivity" of his vision—all of which is hardly unknown—and ask the questions that should be asked, no matter how embarrassing or difficult they may be to answer.

Sincerely yours,
Elaine Hochman

To the Editor:

I don't understand why you told us where we can buy the left-wing Italian intellectual loden coat and not where we can buy the Late Capitalist-Marxist IAUS navy cashmere overcoat? This is an egregious omission.

Ellsworth Tuohy

We omitted this tip-off because we found out that the these coats were purchased at Bloomingdale's and we were afraid that the news would seriously undermine the IAUS image.—Ed.

To the Editor:

Aha! You forgot to list where Charlie Gwathmey buys his workout gear, where Michael Graves gets sweaters to match his specially-mixed architectural colors, or where Richard Meier gets shirts even whiter than his porcelain paneled buildings.

Babs Beistegui

We have had so many requests for this information, we suggest that readers write the architects directly.—Ed.

In the Ooops-we-missed-it Department: apologies to John Andrews, responsible for Gund Hall at Harvard, who was mis-referred to as "Anderson" in Peter Papademetriou's article on the opening at Rice (December, page 17); and to all for a reversal of captions on the work of Eleanor Raymond (December, page 15): the top photo is of the Rachel Raymond House; the bottom of the TZE Society House.

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City Reports: Los Angeles

Finding a Downtown

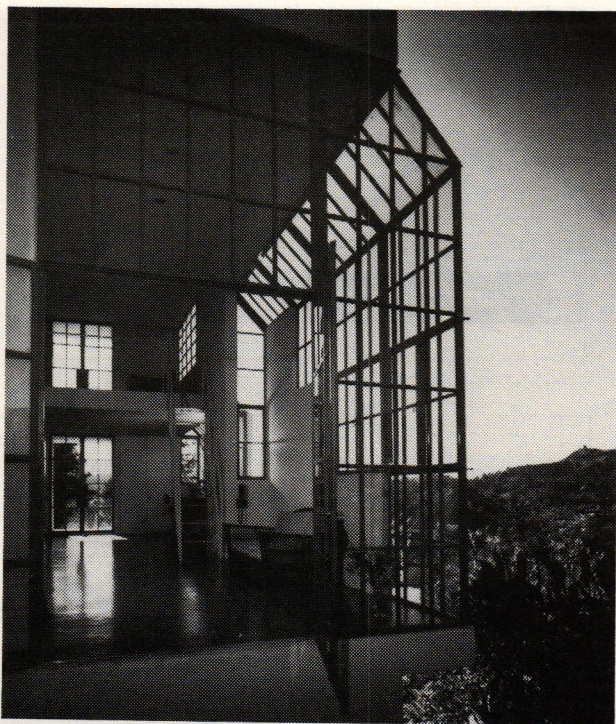
Joseph Giovannini



Urban Forms/Steve Andre. Sun Tech Townhouses, Santa Monica. Photograph © Glen Allison.

The best way to visit L.A. is simply to "Rent-a-Wreck," to cruise it as a state of mind rather than as a place: *sushi* on the Pacific Coast Highway; the show-biz billboards along Sunset; the skybound interchange south, from the Santa Monica Freeway to the San Diego; the tunnels of the Pasadena Freeway, driven to the sounds of KRLA.

But segments of this movement are being *sedentarized*. The current building boom has taken on surprisingly traditional, carless urban patterns. Currently, 3.9 million s.f. of highrise office space are under construction downtown on Bunker Hill; another 3.2 million s.f. are planned in the mega-project being done by Arthur Erickson. On Wilshire Boulevard, on the fringes of Beverly Hills, a two-mile Gold Coast of condominiums forms one of L.A.'s few highrise canyons, bringing a sense of visual urbanity to the city. At the airport, Mayor Tom Bradley recently launched the asphalt detour road that marks \$750,000,000 worth of LAX renovation/expansion. A new city of hotels, parking structures, and office buildings next to the airport creates an urban gateway for new arrivals. L.A. still sprawls, and the infrastructure nourishing sprawl continues to exist, but now more intensive development has coalesced separate parts of the city. Old myths die hard. Los Angeles was founded on the orange, and Angelenos have always thought of their town as a garden city. Apartment houses were not street-oriented walk-ups, but garden apartments, where you skirted rows of calla lilies to reach your entry. Even recent redevelopment downtown features rooftop gardens, as though Angelenos could have their orange and eat it too. But the quality of architecture in the new redevelopment is disappointing: the airport buildings are little more than hard-lined diagrams; the glitzy condos have address and price, but only occasional architectural value; nothing much has been ventured — except capital — and little gained in the downtown corporate highrise. But it all looks urban. L.A.'s proverbial 40 suburbs in search of a city are at last finding the "city," and more of a physical focus.



Stephen Ehrlich. Kalkus Studio, Los Angeles. Photograph by Julius Shulman.

There is also greater cultural focus, and architecture is its instrument. Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates is adaptively restoring the erstwhile Immaculate Heart campus for use by the ex-Beverly Hills American Film Institute. Designs for L.A.'s two new museums of modern/contemporary art are now underway. Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer (also) is designing the modern-art extension for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and will present the scheme to the museum in mid-December. Arata Isozaki is designing the building for the L.A. Museum of Contemporary Art, which will be situated on Bunker Hill in the Erickson complex. Developers for Bunker Hill, Cadillac Fairview of Canada, signed the basic disposition and development agreement with the L.A. Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in October. Construction of Phase One of the near-billion-dollar project, which includes the 100,000-s.f. museum, will start in September, 1982. Given negotiation delays so far, the 1984 Olympic target date for museum completion seems iffy.

As buildings, the two modern art museums make a symbolic announcement that Architecture has arrived in Los Angeles, and is a subject of public interest. The deputy director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Richard Koshalek (former director of the Hudson River Museum) has also already initiated development of an extensive show of Louis Kahn's drawings, which will tour internationally, probably opening in New York in 1983 and arriving, finally, at MoCA in 1986. (Max Protetch's Kahn show opened in late October at L.A.'s Otis-Parsons Art Institute; the opening coincided with the first day of the four-day conference of the California Council of the American Institute of Architects convention.)

The Museum of Contemporary Art itself promises to have some architecture/design components in its regular museum programming. Not only do Koshalek and Director Pontus Hulten seem predisposed to it, but architects and designers have joined together into an advisory group, recognized by MoCA's Board of Directors, to lobby for architecture-design shows. The Architecture and Design Support Group for MoCA (ADSG), on its own initiative, has already (co)sponsored a major Michael Graves show and an Arata Isozaki lecture, and has discussed starting an architecture and design endowment with its Board of Directors. Hulten, who does not want to departmentalize MoCA, rejects the idea of a separate architecture-design department within the museum, but the ADSG feels that

it needs some way of committing the museum of architecture and design, and that its contribution should come in the form of a specified fund attached to architecture and design. The group elegantly launched its fundraising drive in the J. Paul Getty Museum in November, at a reception honoring directors Hulten and Koshalek. ADSG's own fundraising scenario has yet to be determined, and the museum community is waiting to see whether or not architecture and design have the charisma to attract the major donations that "fine" arts apparently command in L.A.

The MoCA building is being financed by a CRA-required art fund (1½ percent of construction costs). Inspired, no doubt, by CRA's idea of getting a free building at the developer's expense, Los Angeles City Librarian Wyman Jones proposes leveraging city-owned real estate to finance the construction of a new city-owned building by turning over the downtown library site to private development, in return for a 400,000-s.-f. new library building. Unfortunately, the distinguished Bertram Goodhue library building, built in the late '30s, would have to be destroyed to create a land base sufficient for the development necessary to carry the costs of a new library. Boston's Arthur D. Little and Co., retained by an unlikely but powerful coalition of downtown businessmen and preservationists, has researched the library as a system, and has recommended the library system be updated and reorganized, without the demolition of the building. The library building has been defended, against the money-changers in the temple, as the "Gutenberg Bible" of L.A. buildings. The city has only three other civic buildings of comparable stature: City Hall itself, Union Station, and the Griffith Observatory.

If Los Angeles is beginning to appear more urban, and if cultural institutions such as its museums have a stronger presence tying L.A. together, there is also a new publication that may give Los Angeles, and the western United States, much more cohesiveness as an image: *Arts and Architecture*. The magazine, long a leading voice in the west under the editorships of John Entenza and David Travers, and featuring such writers as Esther McCoy, ceased publication in 1967. Barbara Goldstein, editor of *L.A. Architect*, and a L.A. correspondent for *Progressive Architecture*, has produced a very credible comeback issue — a bit thin on editorial message, but certainly full of promise, and a voice necessary for arts and architecture in what has been for too long the laryngitic West. The subscriber and advertiser responses have been enthusiastic.

This fall, the Los Angeles chapter of the American Institute of Architects held its annual design awards competition, and what turned out to be a remarkably nonpartisan jury — Barton Myers of Toronto and Los Angeles, Norman Pfeiffer of HHP, and Robert S. Harris, Dean of the USC School of Architecture — chose ten winners, to which few attending architects objected. The jurors negotiated their way through a mine-field of pluralism by looking for a high degree of resolution in mainstream projects, while forgiving those buildings that broke new ground for not being fully or elegantly resolved. The jurors also isolated a building category — the house/studio — for the first time here: three of the winners were suburban infill projects involving living-working spaces of less than 1000 s.f., built on already developed property. The jurors cited the following projects:

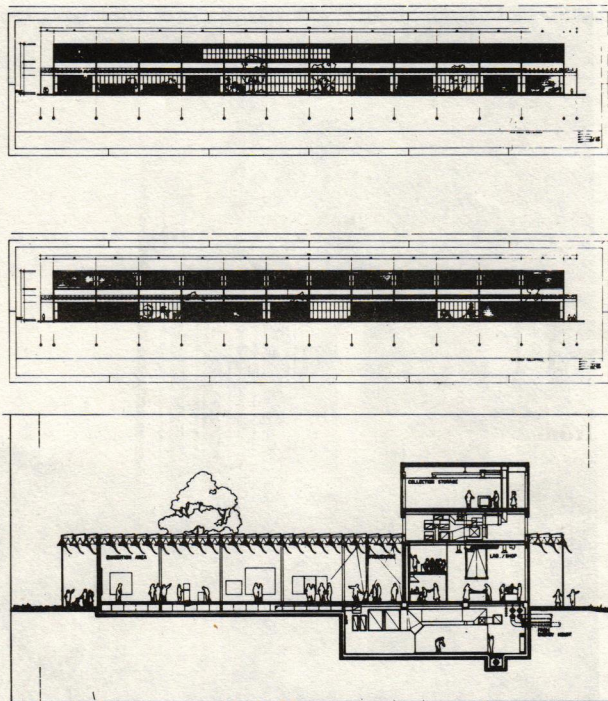
Frank O. Gehry and Associates: Indiana Avenue Studios, Venice and Santa Monica Place, Santa Monica;
 Stephen D. Ehrlich: the Kalkus Studio, Los Angeles;
 Morphosis: the Sedlak House Addition, Venice;
 Bissell Associates: Peter's Landing, Huntington Harbour;
 Rob Wellington Quigley: the QBM Theme Building, Palos Verdes;
 Charles Kober Associates: Northrop Corporation's Flight Simulator Lab, Hawthorn;
 John Carl Warnecke and Associates: Harbor Department Administration Building, San Pedro;
 Urban Forms/Steve Andre: Sun Tech Townhomes, Santa Monica;
 Charles Moore/Urban Innovations Group and Bobrow/Thomas: Kings Road Housing, Los Angeles.

Projects

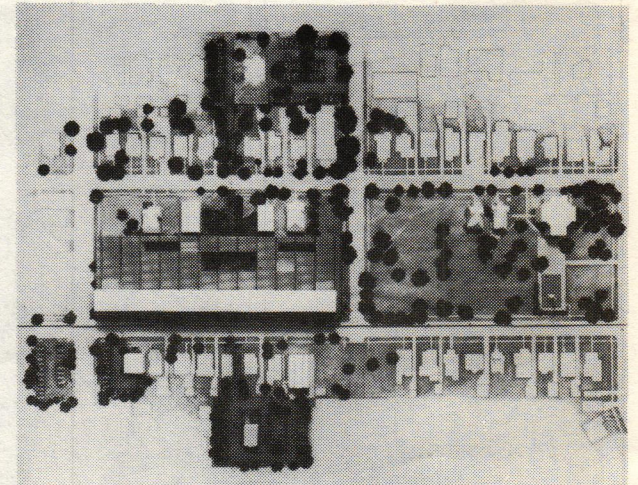
New museum projects by Renzo Piano in Houston and Richard Meier in Atlanta illustrate different approaches toward cultural institutions today.

Piano in Houston

Renzo Piano, the Italian architect who worked with Richard Rogers on the design for Centre George Pompidou in Paris (1977), has just released his design for the Menil Collection Museum in Houston. The 70,000 s.f. museum, planned to house the collection assembled by Dominique de Menil and her late husband John de Menil, will make use of an intricate natural daylighting method for its gallery spaces. The system is based on a lightweight truss integral with a ferro-cement curved beam section that acts as a light-diffuser. It also is designed with boomerang-shaped mounts to hold various kinds of incandescent lighting. The rest of the modular building, with steel-framed bays, will accommodate a number of museum functions. Special facilities are to be located nearby in houses owned by the Menil Foundation. The museum, on the same site as the Rothko Chapel, is expected to open in 1984. Associated architects are Richard Fitzgerald & Partners in Houston.



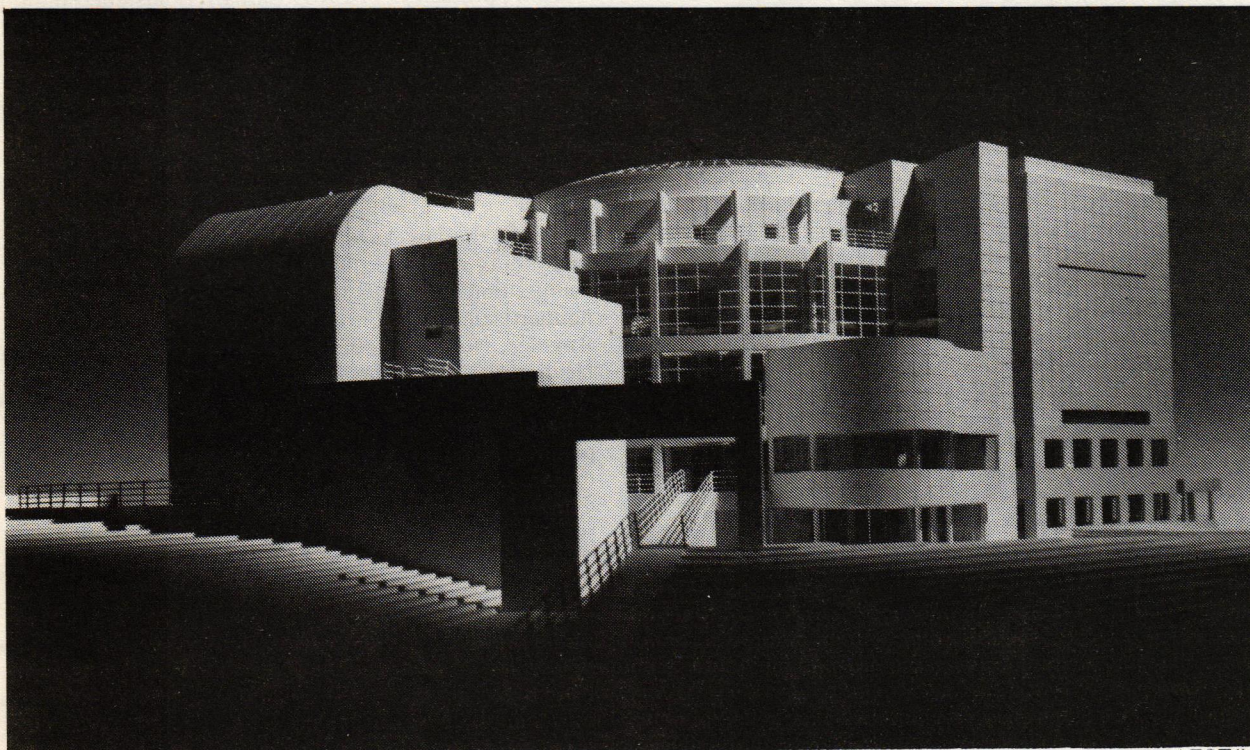
Renzo Piano



Piano & Fitzgerald. Menil Collection Museum, Houston; 1981. Rendering of site.

North elevation
South elevation
Transverse section

Meier in Atlanta

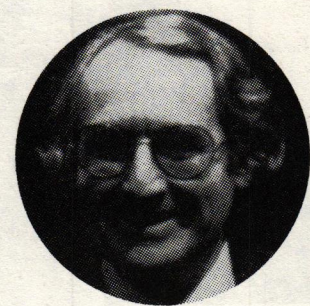


Richard Meier. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; 1981. Entrance elevation. Photographs © Ezra Stoller/ESTO.

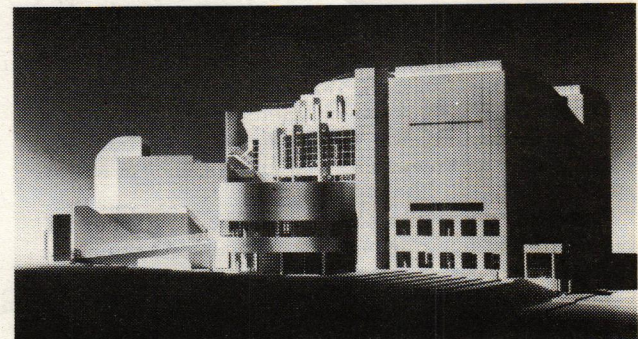
In Atlanta, the High Museum of Art unveiled last month a model for their new Richard Meier-designed building, now under construction. Located at Peachtree and 16th Streets, the site is adjacent to the Atlanta Memorial Arts Center, which currently houses the museum's collection. The Meier design, of enameled steel and glass with a concrete frame, is six levels — the same height as the Arts Center. Its 135,000 s.f. will provide ample space for the permanent collection of European and American art, photographs, prints, and decorative arts objects, as well as gallery space for special exhibitions; also included are

the expected support facilities: auditorium, educational and office spaces, a café. The museum expects to be open in the new building during the fall of 1983.

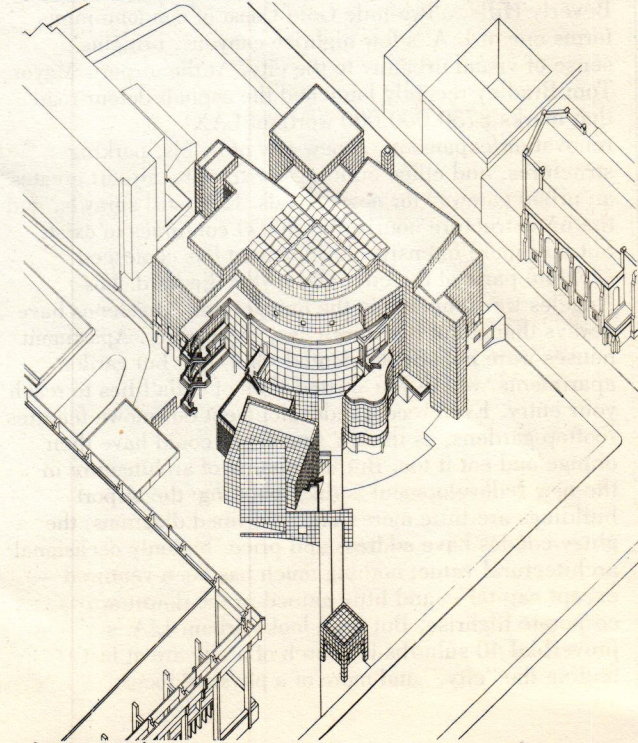
In the new building, a semi-detached auditorium establishes its own functional identity, while acting as a portico to the museum proper. There spaces are curved around an atrium, with a ramp system providing both circulation and visual connections between layers.



Richard Meier



Elevation looking from the corner of Peachtree and 16th Streets.



Axonometric.

Notes & Comment

Projects & People

Columbia projects

The Physical Chemistry building known as Chandler North and designed by **James Stirling** is still under wraps. All Dean James Polshek will say is that it is "large and dramatic" and an "extremely radical mixture of the old and the new." The nine-story building is expected to cost about \$25-to-\$40 million. Funds are currently being raised for the project . . . The Computer Science Department for Columbia University being designed by **Robert Kliment** and **Frances Halsband** has gotten the go-ahead. The addition will be constructed on the Engineering Terrace north of the Schermerhorn extension, and east of Fairchild Hall, overlooking Amsterdam Avenue.

Columbia notes

Michael I. Sovern, president of **Columbia University**, has just announced the creation of **The Paul Milstein Professorship** in American Architecture and Urban Design. The chair is part of the new **Center for the Study of American Architecture**, now being developed, and scheduled to open in 1982. The Center's administrative director is Catha Rambusch; its Board of Advisors is composed of Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Ada

Louise Huxtable, Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., Phillis Lambert, I.M. Pei, Adolf Placzek, James Stewart Polshek, and Vincent Scully.

Odds

Taft Associates of Houston won the commission for an elementary school in Columbus, Indiana, plus additions to two other schools. The school, designed for the Flat Rock School Corporation, is part of the renowned Columbus, Indiana, architectural program whereby The Cummins Foundation pays for architectural fees . . . Nearing completion in Columbus is another elementary school by **Richard Meier**, of white tile and gray concrete block, which is scheduled to open this fall. **Romaldo Giurgola** of the firm Mitchell/Giurgola will receive the AIA Gold Medal at this year's convention. **Gwathmey/Siegel** is the **AIA Firm of the Year**. **Emilio Ambasz** and **Giancarlo Piretti** were awarded the Compasso d'Oro for 1981 for their Vertebra chair. The prestigious design prize is sponsored by the Association of Industrial Designers in Milan. **Patrick Hodgkinson** is now in practice in Bath as well as London, where he is teaching architecture at Bath University.

In Memoriam

Wallace K. Harrison 1895-1981

Wallace Kirkman Harrison died on December 2, 1981, at the age of 86.

Harrison, who never received a formal degree in architecture, was one of the few architects of the period immediately before and after World War I who received most of his training by actually working in architectural firms. He studied in the atelier of Harvey Wiley Corbett (1916-17), later becoming a partner in the firm of Corbett, MacMurray/Harrison (1929-34); and in Bertram Goodhue's office (1920-21). He also worked in the office of McKim, Mead & White as a draftsman (1916-17; 1919), studied in the Paris atelier of Gustave Umdenstock (1919-20), and at the École des Beaux-Arts (1923-24).

Harrison taught at the Columbia School of Architecture (1926-27), where he staunchly supported the architecture of the Modern Movement, and at Yale (1939-41). As a member of the Rockefeller Center team of architects, which included Corbett, Raymond Hood, William H. MacMurray, and André Fouilhoux (with whom Harrison was in partnership from 1935 to 1941), Harrison met Nelson A. Rockefeller, who was assigned to work with the center's planning team by his father, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The Rockefeller-Harrison association brought about numerous Harrison commissions, including the Rockefeller Apartments at 17 West 54th Street (with André Fouilhoux, 1936), an early example of the "romantic Harrison"; and Empire State Plaza in Albany (1962-78, now known as Nelson A. Rockefeller Plaza), criticized for its overblown monumentality.

Harrison formed a partnership in 1946 with Max Abramovitz, with whom he designed Lincoln Center: Abramovitz designed Philharmonic Hall, later known as Avery Fisher Hall; Harrison designed the Metropolitan Opera, which opened in 1966. Harrison retired from the firm in 1976, and from that time until his death worked alone in his Rockefeller Center office.

In recent years, Wallace Harrison's reputation became somewhat tarnished as the public grew disenchanted with his megalithic brand of modernism. Rem Koolhaas, however, a Dutch architect who wrote the book (more like a screenplay) *Delirious New York* (Oxford, 1978), has slowly begun to focus attention on Harrison's accomplishments as a modern architect of a certain (surreal) bent. In the book, Koolhaas muses "Harrison's oeuvre is a secret — and perhaps even agonized — dialectic between the rectangle and the kidney shape, between rigidity and freedom." This "curvilinear antithesis to the rigidity of Manhattan" was seen in the "City of Light," the Con Edison Pavilion for the 1939 World's Fair, and in the lobby of the International Building at 630 Fifth Avenue, which Koolhaas called a "truly Harrisonian space."

An exhibition of Harrison's work was held at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, in December and January of 1980. Entitled "Wallace K. Harrison: New York Architect," the show was the first retrospective of Harrison's architecture, and was directed by Koolhaas.

M.N.

Richard Llewelyn-Davies 1912-1981

Lord Llewelyn-Davies, British city planner and architect, died on October 26, 1981 at the age of 68. Richard Llewelyn-Davies, who held degrees from Trinity College, Cambridge, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and the Architectural Association, London, headed the firm of Llewelyn-Davies Weeks Forestier-Walker & Bor, an architectural and planning firm that also served as consultant and research organization on economic, social, strategic, and environmental issues. His works included numerous hospitals and medical buildings in Britain and throughout the world, plus the controversial 1963 extension of the Tate Gallery, London; housing at Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire; and the famed 1975-78 project of Shahestan Pahlevi.

Short Takes

Drawing on the Classical Heritage

According to members of Classical America, the classical style continues to be the most appropriate for architecture in the Western world and America in particular. The society, founded in 1968 by Henry Hope Reed, supports publications, exhibits, classes, and symposia to encourage the tradition. Enthusiasts ready to carry the torch may take advantage of two drawing classes beginning this January in Philadelphia and New York. [For information call (215) 963-0747 or (212) 753-4376.]

"Classical Drawing: Instruction in Composition and Perspective" is taught by Pierce Rice, whose approach emphasizes the integration of all the arts, with architecture as the ideal summation. Appropriately enough, Mr. Rice is working with Ulrich Franzen Architects in designing a medallion for the new Phillip Morris building on 42nd Street and Park.

Alvin Holm, Jr., AIA, who has himself recently proposed a handsome amphitheatre on axis with the entrance to the Philadelphia Museum of Art is taking charge of "Drafting the Orders and Classical Ornament." Equipped with William Ware's text, *The American Vignola* (a recent reissue by Classical America and W.W. Norton), students may be found executing quoins, nosings and winders. Considering the current revival of classical vocabulary and the renewed effort at a synthesis of art and architecture, Classical America is a society who's time has come.

H.C.

Jewish Museum and its Tower

The Felix Warburg Mansion in which the Jewish Museum is housed in New York was designated a landmark by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission last month. The Francois I-style chateau, faced in Indiana limestone, was designed by Charles P.H. Gilbert in 1906. Its landmark designation will have some effect on pending

plans by the owners, the Jewish Theological Seminary, who want to build an apartment tower immediately adjacent to the mansion. The tower, designed by The Gruzen Partnership, is planned to be about 23 stories tall, or approximately 280 feet in height. The architects are proceeding on an as-of-right basis with the New York City Planning Department so the building will qualify under both present zoning and the revised zoning (see *Skyline*, December 1981, p. 6). Since the tower does involve a cantilever of about 8 feet in length at the 12th floor, the New York City Landmarks Commission will be looking very closely at the scheme.

Feeling Poor

When the *Wall Street Journal* published its profile on Perkins & Will on December 7, 1981, some gruesome facts once again came to light, just to remind architects how they rate in the economic picture. The *Journal*, using AIA statistics, reported that the starting salary for architects, even those holding a master's, is about \$12,500 a year, as compared with the \$22,500 that graduate engineers make. This salary is lower than starting pay of most bachelor's degree-holders. Principals make less than \$37,000, on the average.

Ornament and Safety

Because of the well-publicized danger to the public from ornamental parts and pieces dropping off of older buildings, a law is to take effect on February 1, 1982, in New York City. **Local Law 10** will require that all decorative elements be proved structurally sound within a two-year inspection period. Preservationists and architects, however, are seriously worried that the effort will encourage building owners to strip trim and shaky cornices off of nonlandmark buildings rather than replacing them. Recently a group from the New York Chapter of the AIA approached the Buildings Department with its concerns.

Interview

Peter Eisenman talks with Paul Goldberger about his role as a journalist and architecture critic, and his recent book, *The Skyscraper* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1981; 165 pages, 217 illustrations; \$25.00).

P.E.: This is the third in a series of interviews with architectural journalists and critics. As in the

others, I would like to begin with a discussion of the role of the journalist and of criticism, and then discuss your book. You are credited as the architecture critic of *The New York Times* and you often do write criticism, as well as merely reporting. Could you define for me

the difference, as you see it, between criticism and reporting? Is there a difference between reporting, criticism, and editorializing?

P.G.: Criticism and reporting are not really fully separate functions or fully separate kinds of journalism. In general, editorials are the opinion of the newspaper at large, generally on significant issues of public policy. Criticism is the individual opinion of one of those writers at *The New York Times* who has been designated a "critic"—who is entitled, indeed required, to express his opinion on a particular event of cultural importance. With film, theater, literature, or music, there is really no ambiguity; events of cultural importance and public policy tend not to intersect.

P.E.: But a theater critic can close a show down. This certainly affects economic policy.

P.G.: It affects not broad economic policy, but the economics of that particular show, which is quite a different thing. Architecture criticism has no such specific effect; people do not tear down buildings that have gotten negative reviews from me. But, more important than that kind of raw power is the fact that architecture criticism does have a more distant kind of authority, especially in the pages of *The Times*. And often this authority can come into play in the shaping of public policy. So here we return to the problem I mentioned a moment ago—the fact that architecture is different from other fields of criticism, because it so clearly involves the public realm. This was true in the case of St. Bartholomew's; we also saw it with the 22 East 71st Street tower by Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas. It is an overlap that is never going to disappear. At *The Times* we generally resolve it by trying to make sure that any piece is still clearly perceived by the reader as architecture

criticism, and not a directive of public policy. For example, I could say that building X, which is being considered by the Landmarks Commission at this time, is a building of unusual or special distinction, or that building Y is not a building of special distinction. The editorial page might go one step further and say that the Commission should designate building X, or should not designate building Y. It is a fine distinction—you might argue, in fact, that it is more a semantic one than a real one—yet it is one that we feel we have to hold on to. The alternative—if we allow the distinction to grow bigger—would be to require the architecture critic to remain silent on public issues because it would be too close to editorializing. I think this would be irresponsible. How can you have a newspaper like this, in a town like this, at a time like this, in which the architecture critic does not take a position on St. Bart's?

P.E.: You have defined "editorial," but you have not yet defined "criticism." How does architecture criticism differ from film criticism, or literary criticism?

P.G.: All criticism is partly educational; I tend to think that the ratio of education to judgment in architecture criticism is a little bit higher than in film or literature. In criticism of the theater, film, books, whatever—I am talking about extended essays—the role of the critic is, at least in part, to tell me, the general lay reader, whether this new show is worth a visit or not; whether this movie is worth five dollars and my time.

P.E.: Really? I thought it was to tell you about the movie.

P.G.: Sure it is. But why do I want to know about that movie? I want to know two things: how that movie fits into the larger trend of what cinema is doing right now; and, do I want to see it. A good critic is not a *People* guide to thumbs-up or thumbs-down, but that is a part of his job.

P.E.: You don't really believe that? It is too simple. Vincent Canby will review a film for commercial distribution, in a certain way, and then when he goes to the New York Film Festival he writes differently.

P.G.: Doesn't that bear out what I am saying?

P.E.: No. He is writing for the same audience in either case.

P.G.: But the Film Festival is an unusual situation. Generally his daily criticism, when a commercial film opens, is to assist the lay reader in making, first, an intellectual judgment, and then, a secondary consumer judgment.

P.E.: I would argue that you make the same distinction.

P.G.: I probably do, but the meaning of those judgments is very different in architecture. Let's take Citicorp as an example—to stay away from the brand-new. Although people will go to shop and eat there, it is not a building that the average reader will enter into a consumer relationship with. On the other hand, it will affect his life in a gradual and subtle way. Therefore, I think that the obligation is there for the critic to explain a little more and to point out precisely how this building will or will not affect the life of the average reader; what it means and what it suggests about the nature of the physical environment; what it suggests for architecture in general; and so forth. The relationship of a building to the average reader is a more subtle one than the relationship of a film to the average reader.

P.E.: If you were doing a general critical essay, like the two Ada Louise Huxtable has done in *The New York Review of Books*, would you feel your role to be different, even though you are still addressing a lay audience?

P.G.: Sure, although it would not change as it might if I were writing for an architectural publication: I would be writing for a smaller subsection of the lay world. *The New York Review of Books* has a much more educated, scholarly readership, which is interested fundamentally in the history of ideas and their application to present-day events. While the readership of *The New York Times* is better educated and more intellectually disposed than that of any other general newspaper, it is not a readership that can be described in those terms.

P.E.: What would be the difference in the way you would write? Are you saying it would be less educational?

P.G.: I am not sure that the judgments would be any different, but I think that I would deal in a more extended form with ideas.

P.E.: If you had an opportunity to be a critic for some other journal, say, *Time*, or *The New Yorker*, would you still prefer to be at *The New York Times*?

P.G.: There are two separate issues here, and I want to say something about both: First, *The New York Times'* influence is vastly greater than that of *Time* in New York. There may be two or three million more readers of *Time*, but they are all in Nebraska. *New York* means a lot to me, so I am willing to trade certain numbers for greater

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influence. Second, the nature of the demographics of *Time* is such that it is not that easy to use it as a vehicle for much impact anywhere. Robert Hughes is the only critic in the visual arts to have made a substantial national reputation through a news magazine. He remains an anomaly. It seems to me as though the balance somehow works out better at *The New York Times*. The "authority," to repeat a word I used a moment ago, is both established and potent there—criticism can have an impact.

P.E.: Say you were asked to take over Lewis Mumford's role at *The New Yorker*—why might you say yes?

P.G.: If I were to say yes, it would be because the chance to write extended essays in a reasonably leisurely format would be very tempting. Although I do not admire everything that Mumford has done throughout his career by any means, his essays for *The New Yorker* and the "Skyline" column were super. They may be the best things he ever did.

P.E.: If I were to compare the last chapter of your book with the article in *The New York Times Sunday Magazine* [November 8, "The New American Skyscraper"]—one, an essay written with more time, at a greater distance; the other, a piece of journalism written without that leisure—what would I see as the difference?

P.G.: I don't think that there are substantial differences. It is not really a fair comparison, because the essay in *The Times Magazine* was essentially taken from the last chapter of the book, fiddled with to lighten it up slightly.

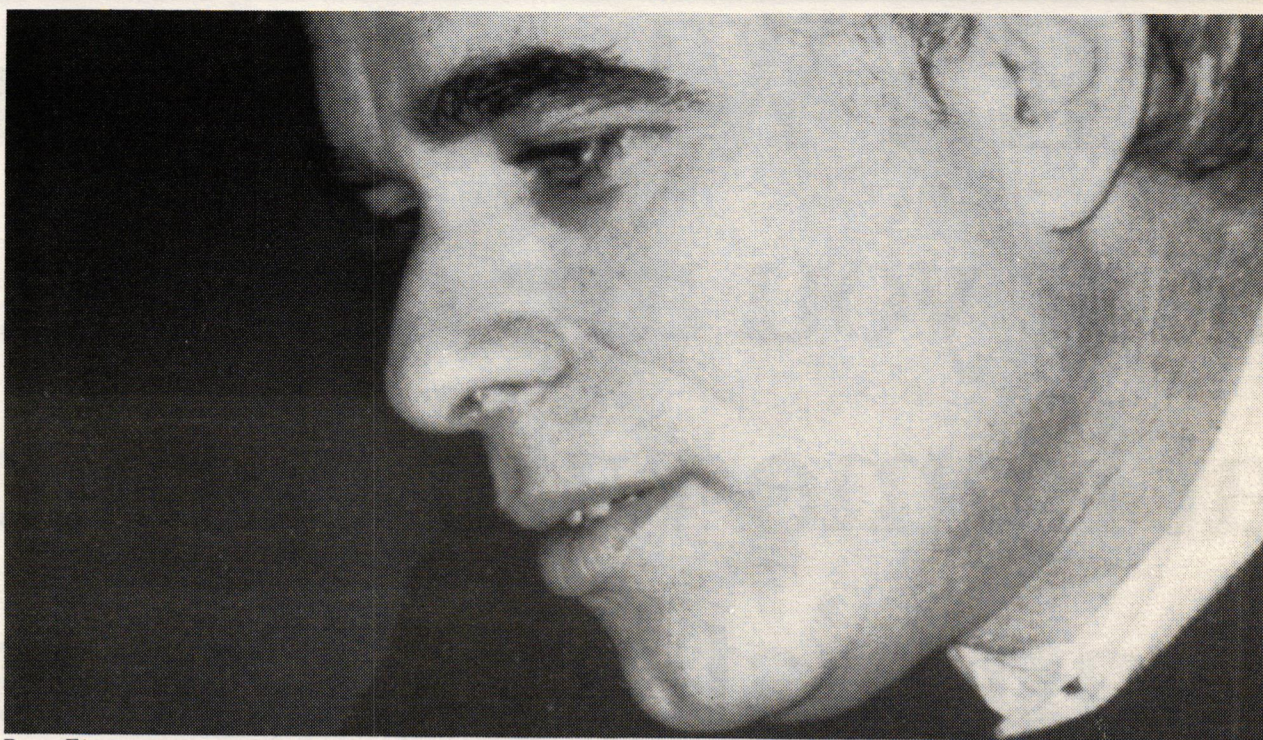
P.E.: So, that is not a good comparison. But you are saying that you would like, or potentially like, the distance and the time that writing for *The New Yorker* makes possible. I have always thought that that is exactly what critics needed—time and distance—because that is what I thought criticism was. You have said so far that criticism is three things, admittedly within a context: opinion, cultural judgment, and education. In fact, in another context, I believe you have said that the role of criticism is to educate the taste of the public in terms of how to see. That does not sound like distance to me.

If we were to accept a definition of criticism for this argument, it might involve the idea of distance. That is, regardless of personal culture, tastes, and preferences, criticism requires a distance, both positive and negative, from the object under discussion. You may not have been given the time to develop such a distance, given the exigencies of your career; nevertheless, there is not much distance in most of your articles or in your book. In addition, you have not yet established your own critical position. If you were to state beforehand, "I like romantic buildings, I like amiability, I like stone better than glass; these are my preferences," then any judgment you made about a glass building could be understood in that context. My problem is that you have never set out to define that context or your position. The baggage that you bring with you is masked in a laconic style, pretending to be criticism.

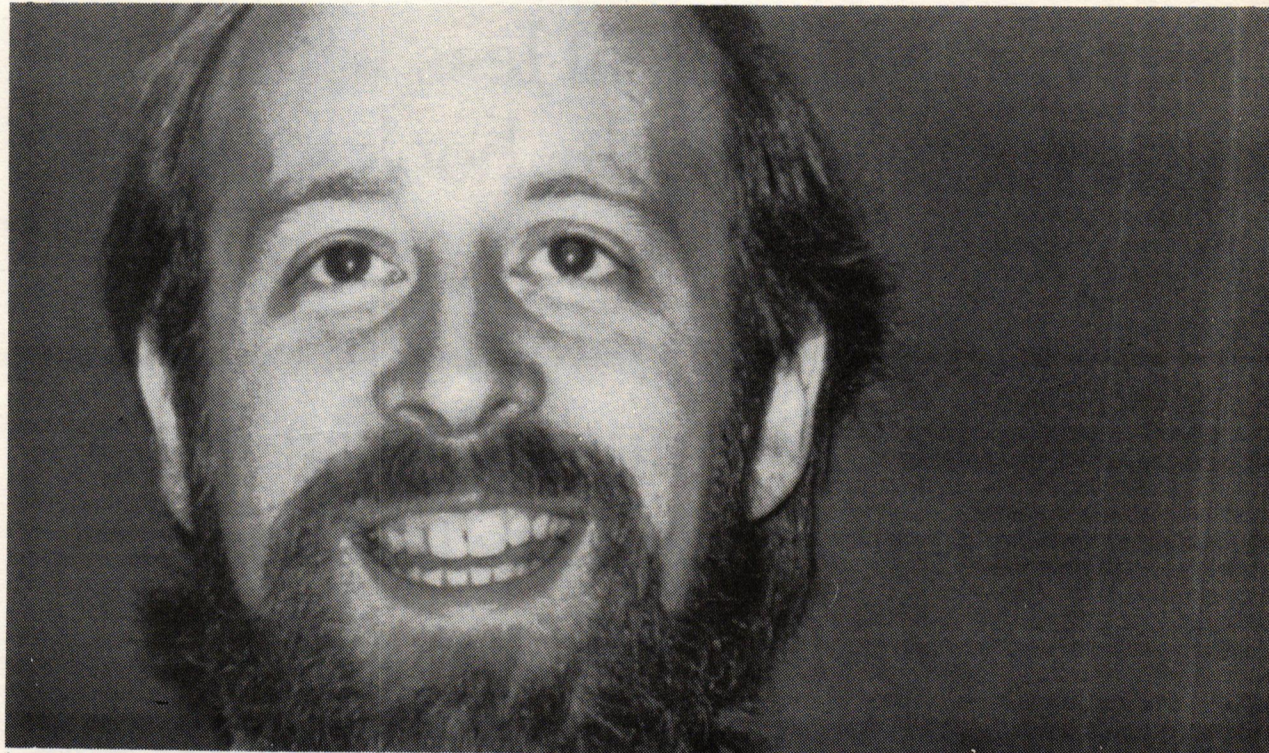
P.G.: Is it generally preferable for criticism to emerge out of dogma or ideology? I don't think things come in such neat ideological packages—the world does not work that way. But, you have just summarized a number of positions that I generally do hold. If my critical values emerge out of the work rather than having been presented a priori, as a neat little package, why is that less preferable?

P.E.: It is not a question of "preferable"; it is a question of integrity. If people knew where you were coming from, then when you criticize someone, it would be understood in a context. When someone gets hit for being a modernist as opposed to being a post-modernist, your reader would understand that it was not necessarily because the building was good or bad, but that you happen to prefer post-modernism. You often disguise your own position and say it is criticism. It is much better to have your critical position clear than to make it seem that a building is deficient because it happens to be sheathed in glass. For me, your book and your day-to-day writing do not have the distance necessary to develop such a position. Equally, I do not believe your position is clear enough to allow you to have that distance.

P.G.: I think that the position is clear, and to talk of a lack of integrity is ridiculous, and, frankly, not a little patronizing. I do not see myself as a member of a club, but we are talking about architecture and not about sports teams. But of course I have a critical position. I am far more a post-modernist than a modernist. On the other hand, I am neither an exclusive post-modernist, nor at the vanguard of post-modernism. The general principles that underlie post-modernism are ones that I am more



Peter Eisenman



Paul Goldberger. Photographs by Dorothy Alexander

comfortable with than those underlying modernism. My criticism does, in fact, reflect this. I do not think that one has to wear it on one's sleeve, however.

P.E.: Absolutely not. I would like to argue, however, that you are trapped by the power of *The Times*, and are therefore unable to be critical of your own principles; to deal with post-modernism critically. Because of the situation of power, you have got to either support or reject something rather than keep your distance and look at it objectively. For example, the Agrest/Gandelsonas building: your comments on their project did not come from or define a position. The issue in that particular case is what preservation means in a Landmark District, rather than the merits of a particular building.

P.G.: Absolutely.

P.E.: I do not think your column addressed that issue sufficiently. Rather, it talked about the specific building in such a way that the reader was able to understand your personal aesthetic, as opposed to political bias, in the context of the issue.

P.G.: Once again you are wrong. I think that a position came through clearly in that story: that you can build judiciously, intelligently, and respectfully. A Landmark District is not frozen in time. That is my position. I think the fact that architects and preservationists were squared off against one another was clearly stated in that piece.

In this particular case, I think—by giving so much attention to the issue of context—my bias, which is in favor of contextual architecture, did come through. Once again, we are dealing with the physical limitations of daily journalism. Considering that what was available was somewhere in the vicinity of one thousand words, these issues were dealt with more than they might have been. This is a good example of some of the differences between publications: *The Times* dealt with it rapidly and forthrightly, if too briefly; in *The New Yorker*, I think there would have been great interest in serious discussion of the

very issues we have been talking about—which certainly could bear more extended discussion; *Time* would probably not want a piece on the building under any circumstances, believing it to be too specific, and too local.

P.E.: My hope is that *Skyline* will be able to cover that kind of issue in a critical context. My anxiety about the future of *Skyline* is that while there needs to be a balance between news and criticism, it is just this in-depth kind of criticism that is not being done in your newspaper, or in other professional journals. With particular reference to the Agrest/Gandelsonas controversy, we are talking about an issue that is fascinating, and one that needs more than the one thousand words that *The New York Times* can give to it.

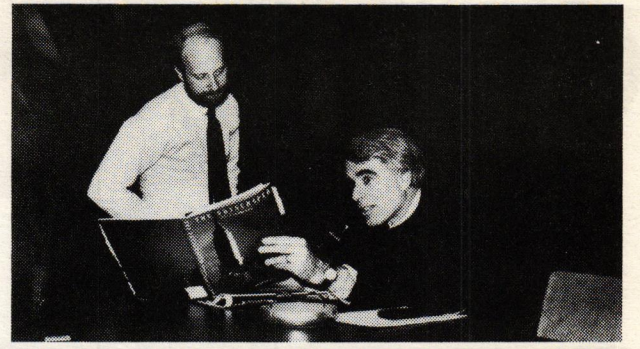
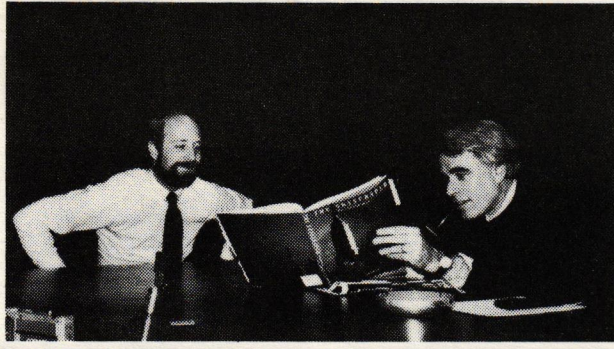
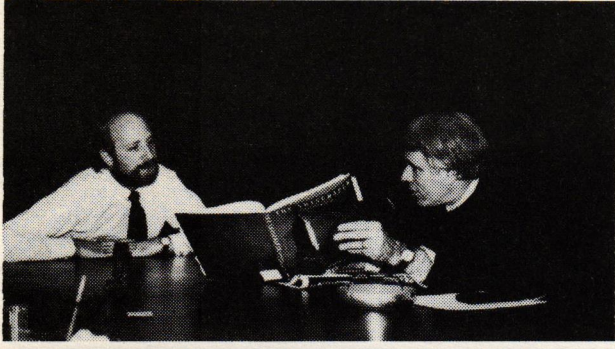
P.G.: I think that *Skyline* is still very much finding its way. Getting back to *The Times*, it is possible within the context of one of our Sunday Arts and Leisure columns to go into somewhat more detail because that column, by its very format, seems to suggest a little more distance. Also, if one could write one daily column that was very specific, and then follow with a Sunday column that had a little bit more distance, the two together might constitute something appropriate.

P.E.: Turning to your book rather than your newspaper articles, I find that it does reveal a more distinct position.

P.G.: It is not stated explicitly. There is no question, however, that it is there. Sure.

P.E.: Tell me what your intention was in writing the book.

P.G.: What was asked of me was a text of roughly fifty thousand words that would be, in effect, a history and commentary on the skyscraper. As the preface says, it "is a history and commentary . . . but it is commentary more than it is history."



P.E.: What is interesting is that you are obviously more at home with commentary than history. The later

chapters, which deal less with history, are where the book gets stronger.

P.G.: I think consistent with this was the slightly unusual twist in the decision not to organize the book chronologically, but to start with the issue of the skyscraper as an

urban problem, to set out a kind of urban theme that is returned to later. In fact, if the book makes any kind of contribution beyond the sheer act of assemblage—itsself important, given the surprising absence of a book like this—it is in the relationship of the theme of urbanism to the continuing evolution of the skyscraper form.

P.E.: One major fault I find is that there is not a plan in the entire book.

P.G.: With the exception of ground floors and elevator-bank layouts, I am not sure that the plan of a skyscraper teaches us very much. If plans of skyscrapers meant as much to an understanding of these buildings as they do to houses, of course they would have been included.

P.E.: You say in your introduction to the book that your concerns are primarily aesthetic, and that the subject of planning cannot be fully separated from the aesthetics of skyscrapers. I would like to take exception with you on this issue. You talk about skyscrapers, both in the book and in *The Times*, as project-oriented, as opposed to planning-oriented. That is, they derive not so much from planning, but from whatever aesthetic purpose is necessary to make them commercially viable.

P.G.: There is no conflict here. That the origin of the design of individual skyscrapers has not been in the realm of planning does not contradict the fact that the shape of the city overall is clearly the result of planning legislation, at least as much as anything else.

P.E.: If you do profess a concern for planning and a concern for context, why do you not talk about one of the criticisms that can be leveled at the Seagram Building: that it broke the vertical face of the idea of the avenue—and a specific and glorious avenue at that? In the past, only churches or public buildings would have been allowed by the society to make such a break with the structure of the city. Here private commerce takes advantage, because of zoning, of the public well-being. No matter how great Seagram is in comparison with Lever

House, it opened up a crucial issue of private versus public well-being.

P.G.: Of course it did.

P.E.: But you do not even talk about it.

P.G.: Untrue. There is a line in the book that says: "Seagram, although a great work of art, was a poor model" (p. 113), and then goes on to discuss its effects in the next chapter. So, I am not ignorant of that point or indifferent to it.

P.E.: For me, that is like saying, "Oh, well, yes, it did break the face of the avenue, but it is such a marvelous aesthetic object that it is worth it."

P.G.: Well, Seagram may well indeed have been worth it; as the Guggenheim Museum is worth it.

P.E.: But the Guggenheim is a public building.

P.G.: But, while Seagram is not a public building, it broke the rules for essentially public purposes—the provision of public space—as well as for its own glorification and narcissism. It has, in fact, turned out to have considerable public benefits.

P.E.: I introduced this argument because you argue for context, or whatever post-modernism means to you—whether in the form of historicism, or romanticism. . . .

P.G.: Historicism and romanticism are other things.

P.E.: Historicism, first of all, is a modernist notion. Modern architecture, even though it was supposedly ahistorical, used the propelling force of history as one of its ideological vehicles. I am always interested in post-modernists who would like to forget that modernism ever existed, but who use the same historicist imperative—only it is a different kind of history that we must now follow. Second—and this is where I would like some

clarification—you said recently that you were against too much theorizing, architects saying too much about what they are doing.

P.G.: No, I am not against theorizing. I am against glib phraseology. I said that in response to an offensive argument that suggested the proposed tower for St. Bartholomew's was a contextual building.

P.E.: But modern architecture, and modernism, were against speaking buildings. They were for buildings being mute objects—they were against having meaning ascribed to them. What I find so interesting is that the critics who are arguing on the one hand for less talking, meaning, and theory are the same critics—i.e., Paul Goldberger—who would argue against the muteness of buildings. So, I do not know where you stand.

P.G.: By "muteness of buildings," do you mean absence of semiotics?

P.E.: I mean buildings that talk about architecture and not about society.

P.G.: That is a different matter. I was saying that a building should be permitted to speak for itself, and not come in a rhetorical box that we have to take all the ribbons off of before we can get to the building. That does not mean that the building cannot be abstract, or representational, or romantic, or what have you, once you get to it. I don't see that one has anything to do with the other. I am also not at all against theory in general. You are right in the sense that there is something very pleasing about the early modern period, when there was a great deal of serious writing and theorizing of a general sort not directly connected to specific buildings.

The question of whether buildings themselves should be abstract or should not be abstract is another issue altogether, because you can surround any building with rhetoric. Let the abstraction speak for itself. A narrative building that works well will not require a libretto.

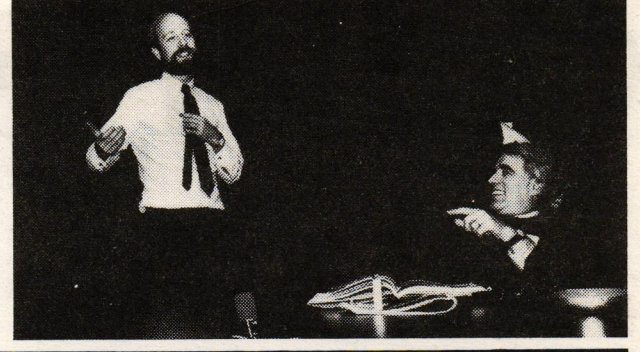
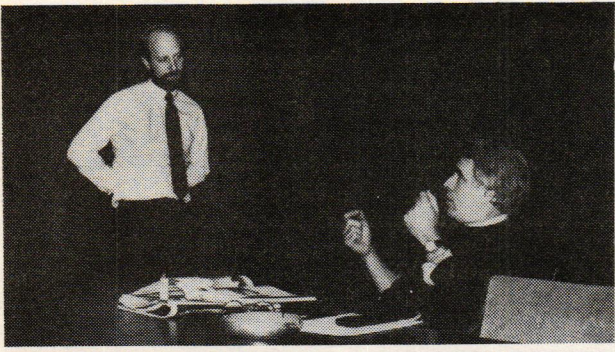
P.E.: On another subject, the buildings of Roche and Dinkeloo seem significant. You say that a weakness common to their contemporaries—you do not cite them necessarily, but one can infer from your text—is that their buildings need to stand alone, that they are not contextual buildings. I would argue that the buildings you praise later are hardly examples of good contextual buildings, but because they are so full of romantic energy you would allow them to ignore the context.

P.G.: Not quite. I do feel that the United Nations Plaza by Roche and Dinkeloo does not relate to context in traditional ways at street level. But the form and color of the tower do relate strongly to the UN Secretariat Building, so it is contextualism at a large scale.

P.E.: On the one hand, you will criticize a building because it needs to stand alone—that is, it is not contextual, nor does it lend itself to context—and on the other hand, you will praise buildings that equally need to be standing alone, because they are so ebullient in some other way. Are you saying that there are different kinds of context?

P.G.: Certainly.

P.E.: I would argue that Yamasaki's World Trade Center is a contextual building. It is about a different context for



New York, however. It is about a framing of a series of existing romantic skyscrapers. You could argue that it is a very imposing model for a way of looking at New York.

P.G.: In fact, I have said that it is provocative, and rather successful, as a minimalist sculpture; the way that the two towers play off against each other is very good. Thank God there were two of them and not one.

P.E.: But minimalist sculpture has an ideology. It is not narrative. It is not romantic, yet you are treating it as a romantic, and as such you are turning it against itself; you are consuming it.

P.G.: That is right. But what happens if I like both of them? It is possible to admire certain things that are not consistent with one another at all. I agree with you about the Trade Center, although I find that the arguments against it and the failures of the buildings are so powerful as to overwhelm its successes.

P.E.: But they are aesthetic failures, not contextual failures.

P.G.: No, I think they are contextual. You are taking "context" to mean respect for the notion that there is some sort of larger picture beyond the borders of this building. I believe that this must imply within it respect for what preexists within that physical context. In fact, the Trade Center succeeds on the first and fails on the second. Therefore, while you are right in one sense, suggesting that this building is not contextually ignorant, it is nonetheless contextually a failure in spite of the fact that it may be informed by some contextual impulse; that impulse is so grotesque and unresponsive that ultimately it does not have much meaning. The profile of lower Manhattan, which the World Trade Center shattered, was something of quality that did call for a response to context.

P.E.: But it was not conceived of as contextual; it only happened to be that way.

P.G.: It should have been seen as a context, though. That the lower Manhattan skyline happened by accident makes respect for it no less urgent.

P.E.: No, you are getting into ideological issues. For example, King's College Chapel and James Gibbs' Fellows Building at Cambridge are juxtaposed in a Victorian background that makes the whole ensemble better than any of its parts. If Mr. Gibbs had been a contextualist, he would have built a Gothic building rather than a neo-Palladian one.

P.G.: If you buy the Brent Brolin or Allan Greenberg view of contextualism, yes. Mine is not so narrow.

P.E.: If I wanted to put up a twelve-story building on the Ludwigstrasse in Munich, a great street that derives its greatness from the fact that all buildings are the same six-story height, have the same scale opening, have the same material—that is, its context—you would say, "It depends if it's a good building"?

P.G.: That is exactly what I would say.

P.E.: But that is not a contextual criticism. It is said that modern architecture destroyed context, that it had no real interest in history, that it saw context as a *tabula rasa*. You purport to be against that position, yet your argument for the "good skyscraper" on the Ludwigstrasse certainly sounds like modern architecture.

P.G.: I have increasingly come to believe that the essential problem of modern architecture was not that. It was its inability to create a workable, humane, and visually pleasing vernacular. But modernism's ability to create good buildings, whether they violated context or not, I have never held in question.

P.E.: My question would be, "What about SOM?" They do very good buildings as background buildings. Every building you have chosen for the last chapters of your book is a foreground building. To me, a city full of foreground buildings would have no context at all.

P.G.: In fact, that is one of the things that the last chapter deals with: the problems of everyone trying to do foreground buildings.

P.E.: But you do not really come out and say that the question of foreground buildings is problematic.

P.G.: We have a desperate need for some kind of balance. We are beginning to achieve, in some cases, a middle ground. The aesthetic of the strip window being put into a flush facade, *à la* Citicorp, or 535 Madison, is beginning to establish a certain kind of background for this time. I react against particularly extreme positions and I react against the extremity of universal

contextualism above all; just as I react against its natural and obvious opposite. You make a city out of some kind of civilized middle.

P.E.: I would have thought that the projects of John Portman could define an anticontextual position, yet you are not critical of them in the book.

P.G.: John Portman is barely mentioned in the book. In *The New York Times*, I have criticized his lack of contextualism, however. I violently attacked the Renaissance Center on just those grounds. I decided, in doing the book, as I looked back on that decade, that the Portman buildings had less of an impact than one might have thought some years before; therefore, I gave them relatively little attention. They bespeak an artificial, interior urbanism—which is not the same as real urbanism.

P.E.: Again, about context, you talk about AT&T. . .

P.G.: The discussion in the book of the AT&T Building is that it is, by any conventional measure, a violator of context. Johnson has been somewhat disingenuous in presenting it as a contextual building. It may be "contextual" in the loosest sense of responding to the traditional aesthetic of the Manhattan skyline, but it is hardly responsive to its immediate context. It is a kind of "conceptual contextualism," if I may invent a phrase I hope is never repeated, and as such, it is not particularly contextual at all.

P.E.: When you really get down to it, the importance of that building is going to be the internal street-level arcade.

P.G.: I believe I say so: *The bottom may well appear noble. Its scale and details suggest the possibility of a kind of civic grandeur seen in no private commercial building in half a century.* (p. 153).

P.E.: If we did not have that arcade, Madison Avenue would be intolerable.

P.G.: Yes. I can only direct you to the preface, which ends: . . . *whatever the serious architectural intent of any new construction, in New York and elsewhere, it may not matter very much if the insistence upon forcing one fifty-story tower next to another continues much longer.*

P.E.: In spite of this I believe because of the power of *The Times*, you are in a situation where often you pull your punches. It keeps you from saying certain things. Now, whether I agree with what you say or not is not at issue. I agree with your right to say these things and I sometimes feel that you do not.

P.G.: I don't agree. As an example, look at St. Bartholomew's. We certainly didn't pull back there: "the wrong building in the wrong place, at the wrong time" is what I said on the front page of *The Times* [October 30, 1981].

P.E.: Although if it were a different architect. . .

P.G.: If it were another architect and precisely that design, I cannot conceive of saying anything different.

P.E.: In the book, you say of the Johnson/Burgee Maiden Lane building that "the romanticism is too easy, too sentimental." In fact, you say that about the PPG Building, and add that the same may be said about Maiden Lane: *But as much as the recognition behind both of these designs that skyscrapers belong to the art of composition and the art of symbol making is welcome . . . The romanticism is too sentimental, too easy—architecture made by Tchaikovsky.* (p. 154).

P.G.: That says that the impulse is welcome, but its specific manifestation at PPG is a little too weak and a little too glib. The fact of romanticism is not the problem. The problem is whether the romanticism is any good or not. The issue is that you have got to do this well, the way you have got to do everything else well.

P.E.: All through this discussion there seems to be an allusion to absolute standards. What do you mean by "well"? By what standards are you judging?

P.G.: I do not think you can offer a set of standards in a vacuum any more than you can say what makes a good painting. Standards in a vacuum tend to take on a kind of vacuous air.

P.E.: You could say it has internal consistency.

P.G.: Any work of art must have internal consistency. I think these two particular buildings do have internal consistency. On the other hand, they are also more sentimental than buildings should be. Sentimentality is really what is being talked about—an overly easy, glib

appeal to the emotions. In any work of art, any work of architecture, there is a balance between the intellectual and emotional response evoked. When that balance goes out of kilter, there is something wrong.

P.E.: It is more likely to go out of kilter in romantic movements.

P.G.: Which is why that warning is there in that very paragraph.

P.E.: But you would agree, by and large, that the romanticism of the later work intrigues you. Do you believe that there is a new zeitgeist, or even a bourgeois avant-garde? Do you think they represent a last gasp of Western society trying to restore order to a chaotic world, a world that has no certainty, no hierarchy, no value system, or do you truly feel that we can put the world back together the way it was in "the good old days"?

P.G.: A lot of those movies are movies about movies. A lot of this is architecture about architecture.

P.E.: But architecture about architecture is not a romantic view. In one sense, you are quite distant from that.

P.G.: I do not think that the romanticism I am responding to is itself an indication of any particular moral stance. Indeed, it is in many ways self-indulgent. And it certainly is sensual—it is advocating a kind of accessible, sensual pleasure that modernism was unwilling to provide. Now, how to provide such a sensual architecture without falling into the trap of Johnson and Burgee at PPG, of becoming too sentimental—this is the dilemma.

P.E.: Is it not a romanticism about the ideal that the modernists had? Has it nothing to do with ideal worlds?

P.G.: Not at all.

P.E.: It could be considered amoral.

P.G.: That is right, up to a point. I respond to a great deal of romantic and post-modern work on purely formal terms. But of course the decision to emphasize certain formal values is itself not without moral implications. It would be naive to suggest that a "sensual architecture," to use my term of a moment ago, did not imply a certain set of values. But I certainly do not hold the view that the movement toward romanticism in architecture is in any way connected to a desperate striving for moral values in our culture, or to a pure order for a disordered world. To the extent that it emerges from a recognition that historical architecture is more visually pleasing, more sensual than modernist forms. The romanticism we see today does yearn for the past. But that does not mean that it is simply a cry for order.

P.E.: Does it have anything to do with urbanism or is it anti-urban?

P.G.: If anything, it is a pro-urban movement. First, because of its commitment to the idea that the city is visually interesting, and second—and these must go hand-in-hand even though most practitioners do not put them together—because of its commitment to the idea of the city as a social presence.

P.E.: If there seems to be one deficiency in your criticism it would be a lack of social concern.

P.G.: Absolutely not. In fact, the *Magazine* article, and the book to some extent, deal of the skyscraper as a social entity. The reason I consider Citicorp important is that it attempted to integrate the notion of minimalist sculpture and the abstract skyscraper with the idea of the large-scaled skyscraper as a social presence. That this is not what the social critics of two decades ago thought we were getting into goes without saying. It is one of the ironies of modern American culture that the large corporate state can co-opt anything it wishes to; in fact, it has co-opted Jane Jacobs. The irony of Rouse's celebrated debate with Jane Jacobs in Boston a year or two ago is profound. Everything Rouse is doing is essentially what would naturally happen if you crossbred Jane Jacobs and a modern, marketing-oriented corporation.

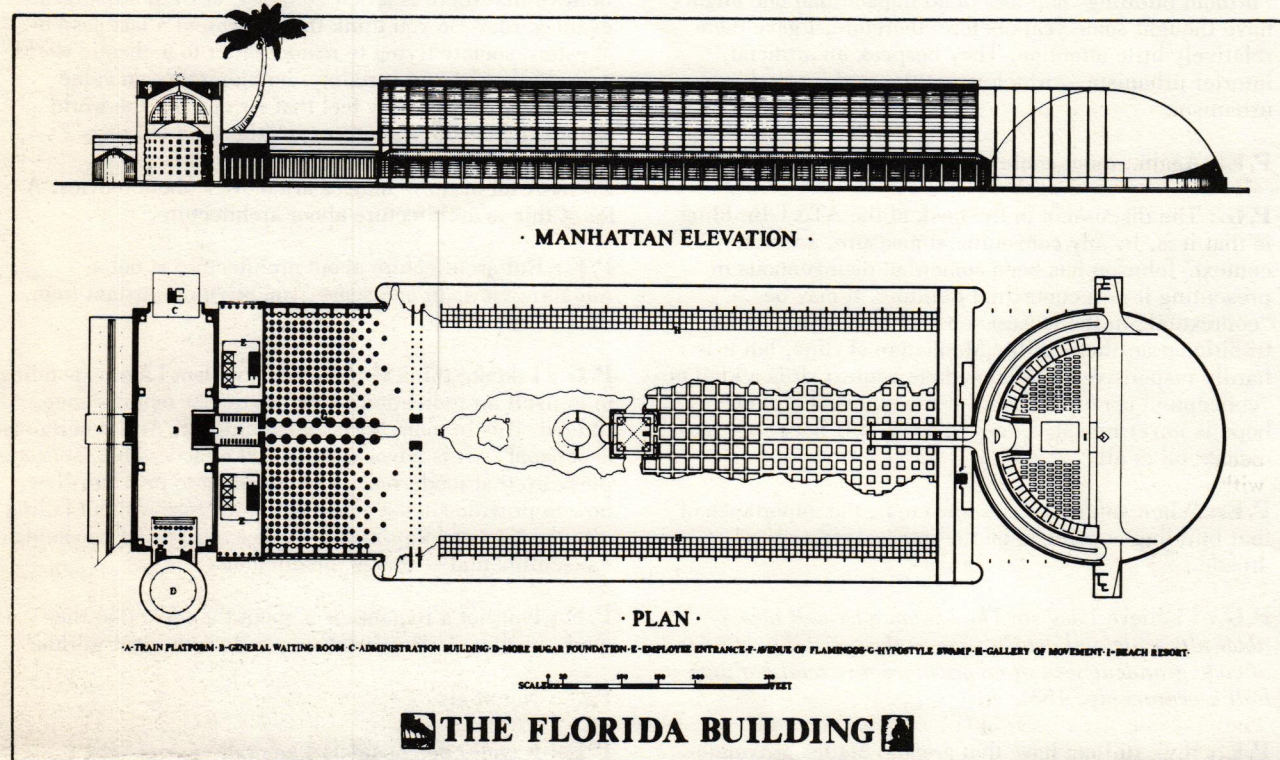
P.E.: But you seem to be saying that it is precisely because of marketing that these developers have turned to a more romantic view, and that as long as this marketing is done with a certain aesthetic sensibility, it is acceptable to you. I would argue that your book is not about aesthetics, it is about marketing, and consumerism.

P.G.: Nonsense. It is about architecture. What it is about, in fact, is what interests me most of all about twentieth-century architecture: the process by which serious design and public taste intersect and influence one another.

Galleries/Symposia

Cracks in the Dwelling

Christian Hubert



THE FLORIDA BUILDING

Mark Schimmenti. "The Florida Building."

Early this spring the Young Architects' Exhibition Committee, consisting of Hillary Brown, Thomas Markunas, Robert Seitz, Roy Strickland, and Kim Weller, sent out a letter to young architects around New York soliciting work for an exhibition to be held at the Architectural League, entitled "Responses to the City." About 125 people responded with entries. A jury consisting of Emilio Ambasz (the League's president), Max Bond, Lewis Davis, Malcolm Holzman, Nory Miller, and two members of the Young Architects' Committee convened to select the exhibitors. After being instructed to pick only those projects that "they really liked," the jury's selection proved severe. Only seven projects were chosen. Not enough, according to the committee, who subsequently added seven more projects, including one by a member of their own group. After compromising its own selection process, the committee could not really carry out its original plans, and so three evenings of presentations were held this fall (October 13, 20, and 27), entitled "Dwelling in the Cracks: Responses to the City."

The first of the three evenings ("Recommendations and Suppositions"), which showed only work originally chosen, was the most consistent and interesting. The aim of most of the projects seemed to be to apply and possibly domesticate the arguments associated with Aldo Rossi and the School of Venice, which consider the city as a dialectic between building types and urban form. In a project for Artists and Writers Housing in Rye, England, Ralph Lerner and Richard Reid explored an abstracted image of the traditional row house with a projecting central bay, localizing the iconic elements of the architecture in the facade, and leaving a relatively open, box-like interior. Both as an evocation of collective memory and as a strategy for urban infill, the project seemed successful and unassuming. Stephen Forman presented a project for the Cannaregio Sector of Venice: an even texture of block and slab elements of housing is traversed by an "architectural promenade," a reverie on the villa and the wall, presented in a series of frontal views. A collage was formed by attaching fragments of the 15th-century De Barbari plan onto these exquisitely rendered colored pencil drawings. The luminous effects of light and water that are ultimately the main concern of the project seemed even more resonant in slide form.

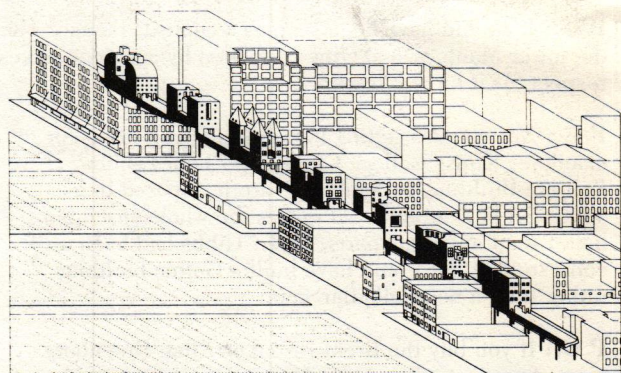
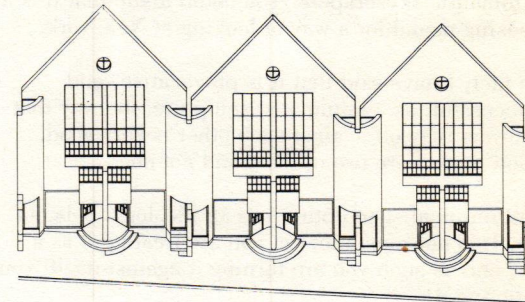
Steven Holl's two projects were quite removed from Forman's elegiac exercise in architectural sightseeing. "Alphabet City," a study published as a pamphlet, is a typological study of commercial buildings in the American Grid City and a subtle commentary on architectural "legibility." In Holl's analysis, building types are reduced to the forms of capital letters: I, B, L, etc. Seeing them in a grid is somewhat like looking at sentences in a Cyrillic alphabet. One assumes that they make sense, but one doesn't know what they mean or

how. In his project for a "Bridge of Houses," Holl proposes an intermediate "urban fact" to keep these letters in line. A bridge aligns with the courtyard houses, which occur as a sequence *en filade*. Adapted to Manhattan, the houses are situated on abandoned elevated railroad tracks on the West Side.

The last project presented that evening was entitled "Bessie Smith Memorial Dance Hall," by Donna Robertson. This was the only project whose intent was solely monumental—a memorial to the black blues singer. The structure itself was highly ambiguous in scale, with an exterior made to resemble a Southern wooden church. Located "somewhere in Harlem," this project raised questions as to the appropriation of its imagery and character. The post-modern manipulation of cliché, which may well suit the pretensions of the nouveau riche, struck some members of the audience as excessively cynical when applied to black culture. Equally disturbing was the "non-place" aspect of its location, which relegated the concrete experience of Harlem to the realm of myth rather than to that of the streets.

The second evening of the series ("Constructions") was devoted to built work, generally of small scale. It proved to be less interesting than the preceding one, and unconvincing as "responses to the city," raising rather than resolving issues of reference, imagery, and the "figurative" use of materials. Robert Grzywacz, the first speaker, took on the difficult task of creating a structure to act as a background to the altar of a neo-Gothic church in Connecticut. The piece of scenography that emerged combined layering, lighting, changes of scale, and de Stijl-ized religious iconography to create a rather fantastic, if somewhat overwrought construction. Roy Strickland and James Sanders sought to gentrify a "pushers' pesthole" by putting bookstalls and an open-air café made of Brunelleschoid bent metal tubing in Bryant Park. David Spiker, in his "American Honda Government Relations Office, Washington, D.C.," put a "high-tech" architectural look to the service of corporate lobbying. While many of the elements of this design were powerful and finely articulated, their total effect, particularly when painted, raised questions as to the scale and number of gestures possible when "dwelling in the cracks."

Architecture and other games were the theme of the third evening ("Fragments and Figments"). Dodie Acklie presented costumes for an architectural costume ball, modeled after the 1931 Beaux-Arts Ball. Perspective views of buildings transformed them into bulging pants and bodices, whose claims to allure gently mocked the pretensions of the well-dressed skyscraper. In his "Soccer



Top: Ralph Lerner and Richard Reid. Artists and Writers Housing, Rye, England. Front elevation. Center: Robert Grzywacz. St. Mary of Czestchowa Church, altar screen; 1979. Bottom: Steven Holl. "Bridge of Houses."

Court," David Cagle attempted to find a container that would make soccer available—like the squash court or covered tennis court—to well-heeled New Yorkers. His 10-foot-wide court ran 110 feet in length.

Mark Schimmenti's "Florida Building" afforded even more extreme possibilities of escape. Influenced, of course, by Rem Koolhaas, as well as by the initiatory *parcours* of Ledoux' Enlightenment projects, Schimmenti's gigantic distraction machine on Roosevelt Island would transport its travelers from a brief bit of nostalgia for lost New York, through a delirious history of Florida's development (and that of architecture), from the hypostyle swamp through the Vehicle Assembly building. While the Temple of Solomon and the Tower of Babel are familiar visions, Alexander Gorlin's attempt to reconstruct "Ezekiel's Vision of the City and its Transformation by Site and Program: Jerusalem and Union Square" is far more cabalistic an undertaking, as it was only supposed to have existed in the prophet's imagination. Gorlin's vision is of a square sacred precinct traversed by slots of space that are defined by the four gates marking its entries. Juxtaposed on the "impure" site of Union Square, the precinct becomes a subway entrance, leading down rather than up, rotated in relation to the Manhattan grid, and slightly eroded at the edges.

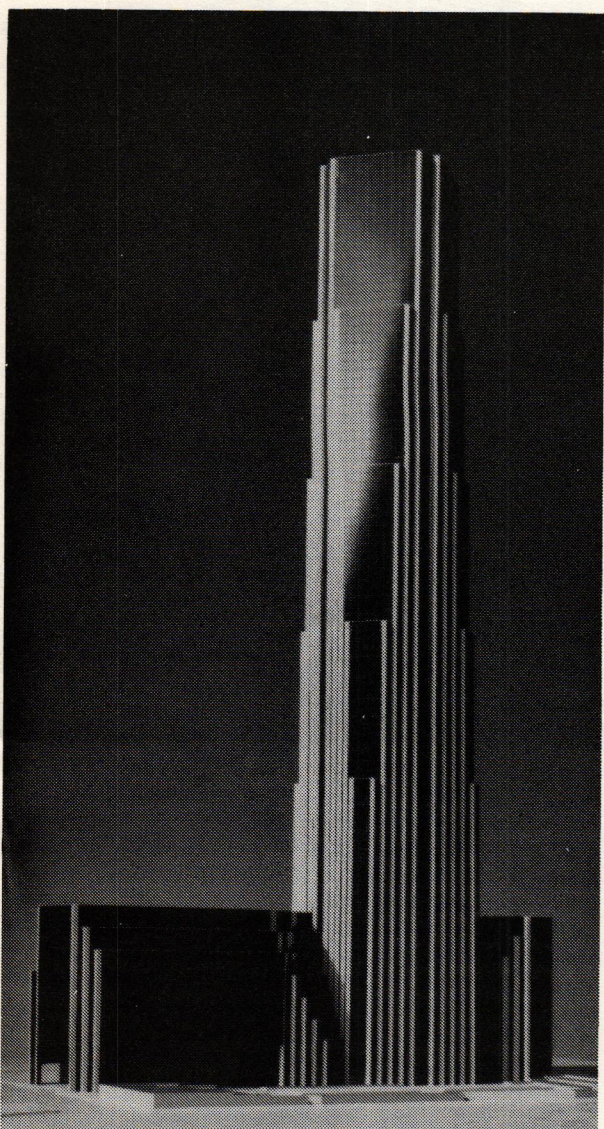
The complicated relations between a "pure" concept and the labyrinth of its execution were the theme of the final presentation. Michael McDonough unraveled a twisted tale of his dealings with his client, the city agencies, and other knotty problems that tied up the construction of his "Rope Building," a grid of ropes laid upon the exterior of an apartment building in Greenwich Village.

"Dwelling in the Cracks" may have been a difficult assignment, but it should not have opened up even wider gaps between aspiration and achievement; between evocation and rhetoric.

A series of six lectures on "Tall Buildings" was held from September 30 to November 4 at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. Sponsored by the Rice Design Alliance, speakers included: Paul Goldberger, Helmut Jahn, Fazlur Khan, Henry Cobb, Cesar Pelli, and Anthony Lumsden.

Tall Tales

Peter Papademetriou



DMJM. Raffles Place office building, Singapore. Project.



I.M. Pei & Partners. Parque Urbano, Torre Real, Madrid, Spain.

It began as an event in conjunction with ceremonies surrounding the dedication of the School of Architecture at Rice University in Houston (see *Skyline*, October, November, December), with Paul Goldberger kicking off the lecture series "Tall Buildings." Sponsored by the Rice Design Alliance, a public-awareness group actively involved in promoting environment/design issues, the series reviewed the current scene, in a resurgence of interest in the design of towers. The series was presented, after Mr. Goldberger's intro, by some of the leading practitioners involved in the shape of things.

And *shape* is definitely what's happening in tall buildings. Houston, among the great metropolitan centers evidencing some of the more significant manifestations of this trend, was also an appropriate setting for a series on the subject because of the continued iconic power the type exerts within its urban landscape. In other words, 600-square-mile Houston, spread endlessly across the Texas prairie, is a case in point that our society has tall buildings to fulfill cultural purposes.

Mr. Goldberger's remarks have subsequently appeared as the cover article of *The New York Times Sunday Magazine* (November 8). Two points of his appeared quite true as reasons for architects' giving way to reformation of the "box"—that the victory of Modernism was broad, but not deep; and, furthermore, that rejection of the International Style was no longer rebellious, but another form of conformity. There appeared to Goldberger to be three basic genres: the "social skyscraper," creating deliberate public spaces as part of the built form (atria, galleries, etc.); the "computer esthetic" of the abstract, but often highly sculpted skin, a thing almost extruded, or made of one material evoking a "noiseless" quality; and, finally, the historicist/pictorial—exercises reviewing and reinterpreting the history of skyscraper form. The diverse shapes appeared to Mr. Goldberger as a period of transition, akin to the "flowering" of the Baroque, and naturally involved with intricate tricks and self-indulgence; as he characterized it, "excess with a degree of promise."

Helmut Jahn, partner in the Chicago firm Murphy/Jahn, emphasized the constant struggle between art and technology as well as the abundance of form with the tall building type, pointing to a range of architecture still subject to diverse interventions. The urban impact was perceived by Jahn, as by others, as essentially symbolic, although that old Chicago-School integrity was clearly there as he remarked, "We do not construct decoration, but try to decorate construction." With a deference to the works of the 1920s, evidenced by the Northwestern Terminal or Board of Trade addition, Jahn's work was to be seen as a "temporary settlement of the spiritual and technological."

Fazlur Khan, the engineering genius behind SOM, added a sound theoretical dimension by relating social issues to technological and construction innovation. Khan stated that society has brought on the need for the concentration of people, and that in general the phenomenon of tall buildings was isolated to a few metropolitan areas. Critical to Khan's view were the relationships between tallness and building configuration from construction process, and between height and weight of steel relative to floor area. Evolution in the work of SOM addressed dynamic movement and lightening of the material ratio through increased rigidity and stiffness. The framed tube, tube in tube, truss tube, and ultimately "bundled" tubes led to the Sears Tower and One Magnificent Mile. If the shapes of Mr. Jahn appear boundless, Mr. Khan suggested they might well all become accessible.

Henry Cobb, of I.M. Pei & Partners, described the paradox between the tall building and its program, compared to the high degree of impact it makes on the urban context. The intrusion on the public realm results



Cesar Pelli & Associates. Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, Ohio.

from its relative inaccessibility as a private building type. However, the "poverty of program" provides a neutral milieu with which to work, one whose muteness supports a range of symbols. The unbuilt Parque Urbano/Torre Real, Madrid, in a sense was the richest exercise in a diversity of plan form, whose 30/60 geometry was rotational on a double square. Geometry, however, was meant not only to enrich form, but also to elaborate a relationship to urban fabric; to be a "good neighbor rather than unwelcome intruder," and thereby to be a key to a resolution of the inherent paradox of the type.

Cesar Pelli suggested that designers of tall buildings have wrestled with an appropriate formal solution with no precedent for the type. From the inversion of value resulting from the Otis elevator, the evolution of form has gone from palazzo to campanile, through the image of pure height, from Ferris to the public icons of the 1920s and 1930s. Mies abstracted form in the ideology of a platonic ideal, but restated the armature enclosure of the steel cage—Pelli feels that the newer changes in construction and technique of surface have led him to a change in formal system. This includes lightweight aesthetics, continuity, silhouette, and surface, with development of "two-dimensional decoration." His Cleveland Clinic, rich in silhouette, also exhibits the interplay of glass and stone as cladding material, consistent in Pelli's eyes with the nature of today's technology.

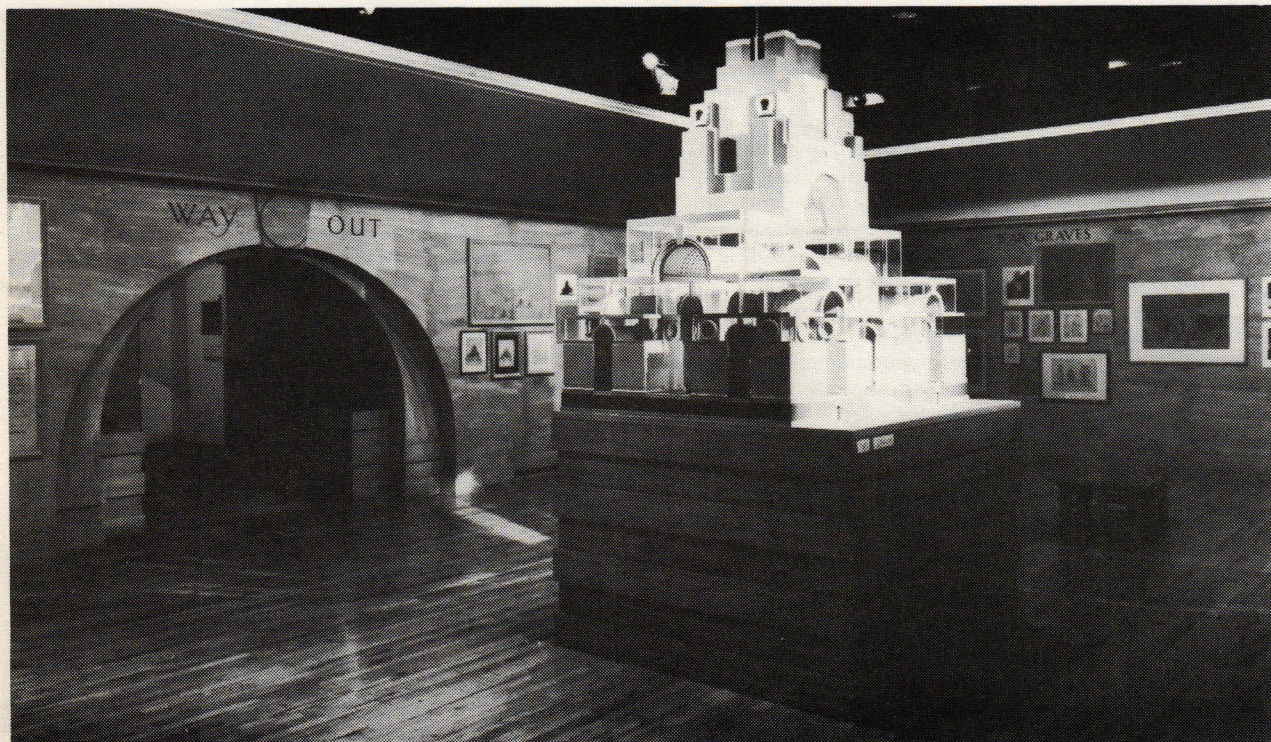
Anthony Lumsden, of Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall (DMJM) of Los Angeles, and a former colleague of Pelli's, similarly shared a sympathy to surface. His concepts centered, as Jahn's had, on the question of representation in the art of architecture, and the question of a conflict between the "arty" and the logical, rational, and "real." The formal attributes should be a closer fit, he stated, and a narrowing between process and intention should occur. His tower at Raffles Place, Singapore, combines a modeled but clear shape in the tradition of a skin aesthetic, where form and surface are one.

The elaborate rationalizations and diverse production presented in the series demonstrated that the question of an appropriate definition of a tall building aesthetic is still an open one, and that the formal possibilities—symbolic content and technological means—require a tighter theoretical articulation. Clearly, however, as shown by six weeks of sell-out audiences for the Rice Design Alliance series—in Houston, at least—the reality of tall buildings as a feature of the urban landscape creates a keen interest even as the phenomenon continues to emerge.

"The modes of life that Lutyens enshrined in lake country seats and mock castles is still a little problematic for puritan British tastes."

Lutyens' Empire

David Dunster



Lutyens exhibition installation, Hayward Gallery, London, 1981. Part of room showing Liverpool Cathedral, War Memorials, and New Delhi. Photographs by Morley van Sternberg.

Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens has been hauled into place as the apogee of quality in twentieth-century English architecture. The architect, who lived from 1869 to 1944, stands for a set of values assumed to represent something akin to eternal verities. And while this exhibition is about him and his work, it would be a mistake to assume that he does not represent a larger group of architects. It would be difficult to actually mount a propagandistic show for heating up the dying embers of Victorian and Edwardian architectural eclecticism. That would make the "objective" historical standing of some of his fans rather too committed. So instead we find a show that mixes plans, working drawings, room reconstructions, and current photographs. It is a regular potpourri that needs the dominant binder Piers Gough, of Campbell, Zogolovitch, Wilkinson, Gough, has put into remodeling the Hayward Gallery, where the Lutyens show is on view.

In truth it was not the English who "rediscovered" Lutyens, but two Americans: Robert Venturi (*Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*; 1966), and Allen Greenberg ("Lutyens' Architecture Restudied," *Perspecta* v. 12; 1969). At that time, it could hardly have been otherwise. English magazines and architectural discussions were too concerned with problems of urban planning, of housing layout, and with the introduction of industrialized building processes to take note of Lutyens' work. It must be admitted, even by his staunchest supporters, that he could bring little of immediate use to these particular problems; his town planning schemes are too Beaux-Arts, with no real handling of the demands of the car. His housing layouts do not describe a world in which mothers can supervise their toddlers at play; and he knew more about a craft-based building industry than the techniques of the production line.

Venturi and Greenberg, however, saw Lutyens as a sophisticated planner, an architect who understood spatial sequence and questions of scale, and someone whose handling of surface was perhaps more akin to American practice. They never suggested that he could do no wrong, nor that the path that he trod should be speedily returned to. But the Americans could learn from Lutyens because of the distance they enjoyed. The modes of life that Lutyens enshrined in lake country seats and mock castles is still a little problematic for puritan British taste.

The Americans could point to the skill and ingenuity of the problems he set for himself and sometimes solved. They could show how he advanced techniques of planning that are possibly the single substantial basis for any theoretical approach to architecture. Indeed, the historical categorization of Lutyens' career taken up by the Lutyens Exhibition Committee at the Hayward is hardly to be found in either Venturi or Greenberg's writings.

To turn at last to the exhibition: the catalogue is divided into twenty-nine sections, but the work is displayed in about ten spaces. Gough, the designer, has created a walk around these spaces that follows Lutyens' life, with each particular space in some way designed to parallel the prevailing concerns of the architect at that point. Entry is made via a vestibule with a statue of Lutyens to one side, and a panel bearing the words "Architecture, with its love and passion, begins where function is achieved." From here, the visitor continues into a larger room that is crowded by a garden seat set on a stone plinth. To one corner is a replica of the fireplace of Munstead Wood, and on the walls, the story of a quiet childhood and early training. A ramp forms the long wall of this room and has been sheathed in plasterboard, for it is that Le Corbusian ramp of many sketches, and now it appears like the entrance to a movie theater seen from the side. At the foot of the ramp, however, the sides are covered with a delicate trompe l'oeil of a garden by landscape architect Gertrude Jekyll, with whom Lutyens worked at the beginning of his career. At the top of the ramp is a replica of Lutyens' bedroom, behind which a rather dull collection of furniture lurks. To the right, the first large room of the show opens up as an overscaled stable court, whose walls are pasted with photos, drawings, and pithy texts describing the great houses. There is bound to be a revelation or two here for all but the most ardent buff—for me it was the marvelous pictures of the house at Varengeville, taken by André Goulancourt, and the remodeling of The Pleasaunce, which Lutyens apparently disliked. Ultimately this is both the browsing room and the heart of the exhibition.

From here the visitor passes by a large, triangular red case commemorating the long association between Lutyens and *Country Life*. As part of this structure, a tiny case that extends back against the gallery wall was made by Gough; in this is exhibited the miniature copy of that magazine made for the Queen's Doll's House. This neat touch hardly prepares the visitor for the shock of descending the staircase and being confronted by the magnificent photograph of Lanbay (1905) taken, it would appear, from the roof. The vertiginous reaction almost takes one's attention away from the geometrically laid brickwork in the room that zigzags to the right, where Gough has successfully evoked the atmosphere of Lutyens' "Castles." From here (mind the slope), one is catapulted into a sequence of rooms devoted to the later years, and the architect's "Wrenaissance."

The exhibition "The Work of the English Architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, 1869–1944" opened at the Hayward Gallery, London, on November 18, 1981, and will be on view until January 31, 1982. The exhibition was directed by Colin Amery. The exhibition catalogue, of the same title, was also written by Colin Amery (The Arts Council of Great Britain, London, 1981; approx. 240 pages, many black-and-white and color illustrations; \$16.00).



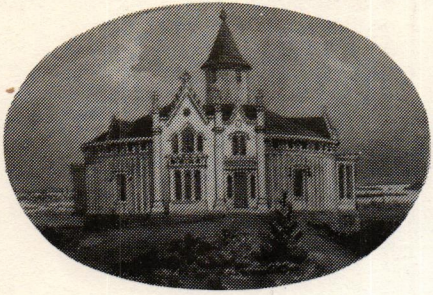
View of Viceroy's Lodge, New Delhi, as termination of final sequence of rooms.

One large room is equipped with Lutyens' deep Indian cove, white above a pink wall, and streaked with red to simulate the stone of Delhi. Two models occupy the center: that of Liverpool Cathedral, and a fine interpretive model of the Thiepval arch (*War Memorial and Cemetery to the Missing at the Battle of the Somme*; 1923–30), in which the vaults are revealed. The Cathedral is the subject of the best essay in the catalogue, a skillful and rich description by Sir John Summerson. The model, however, looks not a little like the rest of a slump test carried out with the components of a Fröebel toy set. As in Delhi, it is almost impossible to apprehend the images.

The work that sticks in the craw is this last period of classicism. He called it a "high game," and one hopes that he was fully aware of all the ambiguities of that phrase—that when game, like hare or pheasant, is high, it is just one stage away from inedible putrefaction. The classicism of Lutyens' bank buildings is weak, and he could not break away from it, as his Chicago contemporaries had already done. The mode of construction was out of control, and all the geometric proportions in the world could not enliven the flatness of his elevations of repetitive windows. Neither was mass housing his forte: Page Street is grotesque nonsense—the plans lacking amenity, the courts too tight, and his spirit only barely perceivable in the gatehouses, which could have been cribbed from any "great house" project. Lutyens knew how to build when he was dealing with craftsmen who also understood what they were doing. Lutyens' talent consisted of taking normal expectations, and then manipulating them. On a smallish scale the craftsman could understand what this was about. But those overblown public buildings of his later life suggest not that he had come to his senses, but that his inventive powers had left him. Delhi, in another country and another culture, is an exception. To be a true "classicist" is, however, to forsake a process of inversion, to search for an archetype. Lutyens was more concerned with inversion than that search.

Having said all that, the exhibition as a piece of design, a mise-en-scène, is parallel to some aspects of Lutyens' working method, and presents twice—both through his work and Gough's—the fun that Lutyens had. In this respect, whatever reservations one may have about the work exhibited, the public nature of this show is well timed. The search for style could appear to be the motive behind this exhibition, but the designer and organizer have taken it too seriously to simply let it blow away like that particular puff of wind. One can only hope that this will be but the first of many exhibitions that reveal what architects have and have not been able to do.

Alexander Jackson Davis. A single-family home, Llewellyn Park, West Orange, N.J.; ca. 1860.



American Arcadia

Christopher Wilk



Grosvenor Atterbury. Greenway Terrace, Forest Hills Gardens, N.Y.; 1912. Photo by Marta Gutman.



Grosvenor Atterbury. Cul-de-sac homes, Forest Hills Gardens, N.Y.; 1912-1914.

"Suburbs" is a modest but extremely interesting exhibition on view through January 24 in the basement gallery of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. Assembled by guest-curators Robert Stern and John Massengale, the exhibition includes well over 100 site plans, architectural drawings, photographs, and assorted publicity materials relating to the development of the American planned suburb between 1850 and 1940. As visitors to the exhibit will discover, the subject is one from which architects should find much to learn.

The typical American planned suburb—a bedroom community of free-standing houses in a planned country setting and located within commuting distance of a town or city—developed largely as a consequence of nineteenth-century industrialization. With the rise of a middle class, an increase in wealth, the expansion of railroads, and the negative social and domestic consequences of industrialization, Americans looked to a better way of life. For over 100 years, many found that way of life in the planned suburban community. Well-known architects were involved in suburban design from the end of the 19th century until the 1930s. From that point on, with a few notable exceptions, and owing largely to the influence of the International Style's focus on city planning, the design of planned suburbs became almost exclusively the domain of the real estate developer.

Stern and Massengale very correctly point to the importance of the suburb in the history of America's cities, arguing that it is "perhaps our most characteristic form of American urbanism, and yet its physical patterns remain the least charted manifestation of our society and culture." We are asked to consider not only the architecture of these communities (in fact, architectural form takes a back seat in this show), but also the imagery of the American suburb.

While the show's organizers have clearly pointed to a topic that should be of interest to architectural historians, their interests as practicing architects run deeper. The impressive array of visual material unearthed for this



Arthur Cotton Moore/Associates. Foxhall Crescents, Washington, D.C.; 1979.

exhibition challenges us to consider to what extent the spurning of the suburb as a design type by so-called "progressive" architects has narrowed the ability of an important segment of the profession to come to grips with contemporary problems of design and planning. Stern's lengthy essay, "La Ville Bourgeoise," in the companion issue of *A.D.* that serves as a catalogue, reminds us of the problems in the "modernist" view of city planning and its rejection of the possibilities inherent in designing the suburb. Stern urges architects again to look to the suburb, which "may well hold the key to the solution of urban problems that were hitherto deemed insoluble." In particular, he advocates the use of planned suburbs within blighted urban areas, where large open spaces, as well as easy access to rapid transit, exist.

The exhibit, while avoiding virtually any extended definition of the term "suburb," does clearly point out the different origins and types of American suburbs. Railroad suburbs, streetcar and subway suburbs, industrial villages, resort suburbs, and automobile suburbs are all included. The architecture of these suburbs ranges from what might be called the garden apartments of Bridgeport to the elegant free-standing houses of Tuxedo Park. The crucial issue in the formation of the suburb, also deserving of further study, is the development of the railroad. In "La Ville Bourgeoise," Stern points to the village of Harlaem (where Harlem stands today) as an example of a suburb earlier than Llewellyn Park in West Orange, traditionally described as the first American suburb. Llewellyn Park (founded in 1853 by Llewellyn Haskell, who hired architect Alexander Jackson Davis) was, however, the first romantic suburb, offering "country homes for city people." The quality of its asymmetrical, picturesque houses (represented in the show by lovely watercolors and hand-tinted engravings) was matched by the beauty of the landscape. For many, Llewellyn Park, as well as the writings of its architect, best exemplified the suburban ideal. As Davis well knew, and as Stern explains, "Though it is clearly a planning type, the suburb is perhaps most importantly a state of mind based on imagery and symbolism." Although some later developers and architects eschewed Davis' style of architecture and his picturesque approach, there arose in the nineteenth century a symbolism of lawns, curving roads, and traditional houses that all spoke, as Stern writes, "of communities that value the tradition of family, pride of ownership and rural life."

One suburb that avoided the irregular, romantic design of Llewellyn Park was Forest Hills Gardens, developed in 1912 by the Russell Sage Foundation, with Grosvenor Atterbury as architect, and the Olmsted Brothers as landscape architects. The contrast in approach was spelled out from the start, in a prospectus of 1911: "Fantastically crooked layouts have been abandoned for the cozy, domestic character of local streets, not perfectly

Coinciding with the exhibition "Suburbs," held at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum from November 10, 1981, to January 24, 1982, guest-curated by Robert A.M. Stern and John Massengale, was the publication of *A.D. Special Issue Profile #31: The Anglo-American Suburb*; also guest-edited by Robert Stern and John Massengale; published by Academy Editions, London, and distributed by St. Martin's Press, New York, 1981; 96 pages, illustrated with photographs and drawings; \$9.95, soft-cover

straight for long stretches, but gently curving to avoid monotony."

Forest Hills, described in the exhibit as "the most English of American planned suburbs," was originally intended as low-income housing; instead it became the upper-middle-class suburb that, to a large extent, it remains today. And although it is no longer the fifteen-minute rail trip it once was, the IND subway does make it quite accessible.

Although the exhibit focuses on fourteen suburbs—some famous, others not so well known—there are a small number of projects represented only by one or two items. As an appendage, nine recent suburban projects have been included, although the brief introductory text offers no explanation of why they are in the show. One assumes the nine contemporary projects are supposed to reflect some lessons from the old suburbs. Among these is Arthur Cotton Moore's 1979 Foxhall Crescents, derived from the crescents at Bath. Oddly enough, its references to classicism, the proximity of one house to the next, and the use of unusually large amounts of masonry, make it seem almost urban. In photographs, at least, it has an eerie, other-world feeling that one hopes does not bother its occupants.

The exhibition is, unfortunately, tucked away in the Cooper-Hewitt's cramped basement gallery. And although the arrangement of the visual material on the gallery walls works well, the space makes the show appear smaller, and perhaps less significant than it really is.

The *A.D.* companion issue to the show, entitled *The Anglo-American Suburb*, is far wider in scope than the exhibition, although it does not include illustrations of many of the most interesting drawings in the "Suburbs" show. (Much of that material was discovered after the "catalogue" had been edited and sent to press). What the accompanying issue of *A.D.* does have to offer are color photographs of suburbs that are still extant and descriptions of a much larger number of projects. The inclusion of British examples is particularly appropriate, since the origins of the suburb can be traced back to English antecedents. The main shortcoming of the "catalogue" is the generally muddy quality of the black-and-white reproductions. One might also note that a reproduction of a colored drawing of one of Mr. Stern's projects included in the show somewhat immodestly adorns the cover of *The Anglo-American Suburb*.

The suburb is an eminently appropriate subject for an exhibition and even more worthy of a long and thorough book. The Cooper-Hewitt exhibition has provided an excellent beginning, reminding us of the need to look at the suburb, a way of life favored by millions, but too long ignored by good architects.

Culture of Cities

Between Civic Culture and the Academy: New York and Columbia in the 19th Century

Thomas Bender



McKim, Mead & White. Low Library, Columbia University, Morningside Heights Campus, 1897.

We are all reasonably familiar, I suppose, with the tendency over the past quarter-century for more and more of our writers — and, for that matter, our painters and performers — to find a home in the university. This phenomenon represents the end of a particular kind of literary life characteristic of great cities since the middle of the nineteenth century. The universities, with aid from the media, Saul Bellow pointed out in *Salmagundi*, have “annihilated” the “literary life this country.” “The universities were flushed . . . , they had it all . . . ,” and this left “no extrainstitutional and independent environment for writers.”

When American writers first began moving into the universities, Stephen Spender, writing in *The Nation* in 1949, astutely suggested that the most damaging consequence of this movement is the transcendence of the issue of commercial success and failure. What the university does, what it was organized to do, is to protect scholars and writers from market failure, and, perhaps, market success. While some such hedges against the market are no doubt essential to the integrity of a culture, if the great mass of serious intellectual work is freed from the market, it is also in danger of becoming hermetic: writers writing for fellow writers, scholars writing only for scholars.

Writers represent a special case, but I mention them here for two reasons: First of all, no one doubts that great literature was written before writers were absorbed by the academy, yet it is often assumed, erroneously, that the natural and historic home of scholarship has been the university. Secondly, I think that the difference — which refers to the superior capacity of writers (as opposed to scholars) to live off their writing — can be exaggerated. Not all writers have succeeded in the market, and not all scholars have failed. Of course, it has been helpful historically for writers and scholars to have a patron, personal wealth, or an occupation, particularly one of the traditional learned professions, which allowed time for the pursuit of a serious intellectual avocation. But it is also true that the century following the publication of Dickens' *Sketches by Boz* (1836) witnessed the development of authorship as an independent profession, and the opportunities provided by this commercialization of the written word were not restricted to writers of fiction. While the commercial prospects for novelists have been better than those for the scholar, one can easily think of American scholarship of significance published by men who supported themselves with their pens: Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station*, *The Patriotic Gore*, and *Axel's Castle*; Lewis Mumford's *Culture of Cities*, *Technics and Civilization*, and *The Brown Decades*.

It is possible, then, to take seriously the possibility not only of writers but of scholars outside of the academy. In

fact, the identification of the advancement and cultivation of knowledge with the university in the United States is fairly recent. We must understand the conditions of intellectual life before the advent of the research university one hundred years ago if we are to understand the transformations in the conditions of urban intellectual life wrought by the university.

Outside the Academy

Where, then, was the home of intellect during the first century of our national existence? Primarily, though not exclusively, it was sustained by a network of local learned societies, a rather dense complex of urban cultural institutions founded to sustain and advance learning. The milieu for scholarship, investigation, and learning in New York included Columbia College, but the college was only one of a matrix of institutions nourishing the city's intellectual culture. There also were the Lyceum of Natural History, later to become the New York Academy of Science; the Academy of Fine Arts; the National Academy of Design; the Academy of Medicine; the Century Club; Astor Library; the New-York Historical Society; and the American Museum of Natural History.

These learned associations were held together — and gained their cultural legitimacy — by their identification

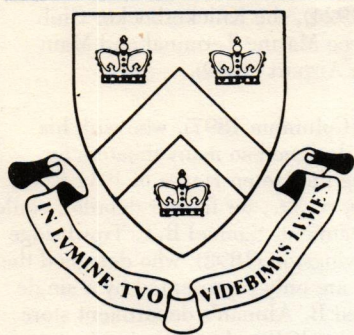
with “Society,” the group with the financial means to pursue scholarship and to sponsor scholars of promise. Urban culture was unified through the personal associations of this elite; its intellectual scope reflected its general concerns; and its authority derived from its power in the community.

Membership in these learned associations was inclusive rather than exclusive. Some members were devoted almost entirely to research and the creation of new knowledge; a larger number were more routine practitioners. Finally, there was a group of members we might call “cultivators” or “amateurs.” These were men of broad culture who endeavored to keep involved in the world of learning through direct participation. This last group includes men like Seth Low, president of Columbia University from 1889 to 1901. Low was a different kind of university president. He had no advanced training after graduating first in his class at Columbia in 1870, and was formed instead by the culture of New York City. Merchant, politician, writer, he exemplified civic culture — not unlike the civic humanism identified with the patriciate of Renaissance Florence.

It is this group that has been excluded from the twentieth-century academy, an exclusion with consequences for the life of the mind and for the city, for it was those amateurs who provided the link between the world of advanced scholarship and the public culture of the city; they in fact constituted the public culture of the city. We are so accustomed to a situation in which the university has become the locale for the production and consumption of nearly all serious discourse that we may be tempted to trivialize this other world of learning and to refer to it simply as an example of the provincial or underdeveloped circumstance of intellectual life in nineteenth-century America. But to make the university the index of cultural development would be a mistake. Except for the special case of Germany, where Hegel and Kant, for example, were academics even at the onset of the nineteenth century, a very large proportion of those nineteenth-century European ideas that we still consider important were the work of men outside of the university. Five names should be sufficient to make my point: Darwin, Freud, Marx, Mill, and Tocqueville.

Is it an accident that the first great research universities emerged in Germany and became central to German intellectual life, while in France, where there was a strong metropolitan culture, the university never assumed a comparable role? One cannot help but speculate that New York's failure in the second half of the nineteenth century to serve adequately as a metropolis made the German solution — the research university — especially attractive to American intellectuals.

“Low sought to make the university continuous with the civic culture of the American metropolis, as it was in his own experience. But the task was a difficult one, and for good reason.”



Excerpted from a lecture given in the fall of 1980 at a conference entitled "The City, the University, and Culture" at Columbia University.

Metropolitanism and Civic Institutions

The civic culture of New York had never matched the accomplishment of its models: eighteenth-century London and Edinburgh. And by the middle of the nineteenth century, the multidimensional processes that transformed New York into a modern city had eroded the social foundations of the civic culture that had been developed.

Simple numbers tell part of the story. Manhattan had a population of 33,000 in the first census of 1790; by 1870 it was edging toward the one-million mark. These

Arts and Letters, an offshoot of the American Social Science Association, and the Scientific Alliance in the 1890s were some of the more exemplary organizations. None of these organizations was "academic" in a sense we would recognize. None was exclusively or even primarily academic in membership. None was prototypical of the specialized, university-oriented disciplinary associations that began to proliferate after the MLA was founded at Johns Hopkins in 1883. The aim of these civic institutions was the coordination and concentration of the elements of an urban culture.

"Seth Low strove to unify the university internally and to integrate the institutions of learning in the city under the aegis of Columbia"

numbers represent a new order of scale and diversity in urban life. In addition, the midcentury legacy of the Jacksonian era was an egalitarian ideology that undermined intellectual authority based on class. There was no longer an elite able to unify the political, economic, social, and cultural strands of the city's life.

In the third quarter of the nineteenth century, we enter a new world of the city. It is the New York of Fernando Wood and Boss Tweed; of the bohemia described by Melville in *Pierre* and lived by Whitman at Charlie Pfaff's on Lower Broadway; of Edith Wharton's *Age of Innocence*, where the tight and mannered world of "Society" is divorced from economic affairs, from politics, and, as she put it, "men who write." Lacking the traditional authority of society, culture in the age of Barnum was an intellectual free-for-all, with a premium on self-promotion.

The economy of the age was one of unregulated capitalism: let the market decide, the philosophers said. Yet when they considered their own circumstances as intellectuals, many of them began to worry that the wide-open culture of the city made it too difficult for the public to find and purchase real intellect and sound opinion in the midst of fakery and charlatanism. Elite cultural reformers of this generation looked to new kinds of formal organizations that might confer the intellectual authority that had come to earlier elites as a matter of course. Bemoaning what he called the "disintegration of opinion," E.L. Godkin called for a "greater concentration of instructed opinion," which, he pointed out, "is just what professional associations supply." A.J. Bloor, the secretary of the newly-formed American Institute of Architects, put it differently, but to the same effect: professional association provides, he said, "our special platform [from] which to train the public." Between 1870 and 1900, 245 national professional associations were organized in the United States.

While actively participating in this national movement, many New York intellectuals tried to reform the city's intellectual culture. They devised plans for several umbrella organizations that would, in the words of one such proposal from the 1850s, "collect together all that is now scattered and isolated" and establish a "learned class" in the city. Another proposal envisioned an institute in New York that would be similar in function to the Institut de France; Godkin, writing in *The Nation*, observed that it might overcome the "spirit of mob" by "infusing . . . discipline and order" into American intellectual life. The American Social Science Association, founded in 1865, the National Institute of

Columbia and Civic Culture

These efforts — it is perhaps needless to say — failed to reform urban culture, and intellectuals directed their attention increasingly toward the university as the vehicle of cultural reform. Beginning in 1883, Godkin started running a series of articles in *The Nation* asking Columbia to transform itself into a real university and to become the intellectual center needed by New York. The selection of Seth Low to be president in 1889 was immediately and correctly perceived as a decision by the Trustees to make Columbia far more visible in the life of the city. Ironically, the transformation of Columbia was so successful that it eclipsed rather than reformed the civic culture Godkin and others had hoped to revitalize.

The chaos of intellectual discourse in the city was clarified by the university's equation of credentials with accomplishment. Certified achievement, judgment by recognized peers brought order to discourse and offered a foundation for authority more democratic than social class. Academics, organized in highly specialized disciplines, were provided with a secure and uncluttered avenue to an appreciative audience. In regulating competition, the university did for intellectual life what the trusts were at the same time doing for economic life. But in the process of restructuring the organization of discourse, one important thing was lost: I am referring here to the "cultivators" who had served to transform specialized research into the substance of general culture.

It can be said, I think, that two men transformed Columbia into a university. One was Seth Low; the other was a German-trained academic, John W. Burgess, who had established the Faculty of Political Science in 1880. Low and Burgess, however, had different visions of the university. Low wanted Columbia University to be *of* as well as *in* New York, while Burgess remained always distant from the city. Burgess wanted to create a discipline, a tradition of scholarship, and he appreciated Low's ability to provide the means for achieving this, later attributing Low's success at Columbia to his nonacademic background. Low, according to Burgess, recognized his academic limitations and did not interfere in "educational matters"; he allowed each professor autonomy in managing the "affairs of his department."

Low situated the university differently. He strove to unify the university internally and to integrate the various institutions of learning in the city under the aegis of Columbia.

On the occasion of Columbia School of Architecture and Urban Planning's 100th anniversary, *Skyline* examines the school in the larger context of the University, its history, and its relationship to the city.

For him the university was an essential part of the city, and the city was an essential part of the university he hoped to build. In dedicating the Morningside Heights campus in 1896, he stated, "A university that is set on a hill cannot be hid. I count it of no little moment that here, in its new home, Columbia cannot escape the observation of the city, nor the city escape from it."

Low sought to make the developing university continuous with the civic culture of the American metropolis, as it was in his own experience. But the task was a difficult one, and for good reason. The university is, in a sense, "placeless," while a metropolitan city, if it works at all, gives culture a place. A metropolis is a centripetal force in a culture; it concentrates ideas and acts in a single place and thus gives them significance. The professionalized disciplines that constitute the university system, by contrast, are centrifugal, and, as one sociologist has recently observed, they represent community without place. Without forgetting the national and international context of disciplinary scholarship, Low set out to forge links between Columbia and several collateral institutions in a way that would strengthen both particular disciplines and the public culture of New York City. He established affiliations with the Cooper Union, the American Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Union Theological Seminary, Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Bronx Botanical Gardens.

Low had not accomplished his aims when he resigned the Columbia presidency in 1901 to become Mayor of New York. And his vision for the university and the city faded rather quickly. It was in a sense an archaic vision. With his essentially eighteenth-century faith in the organic unity of society and culture, he failed to anticipate that what the city and the university would share in the twentieth century was a common tendency toward the fragmentation of experience.

Just as the spatial reorganization of urban life in the 1880s and 1890s produced specialized land-use patterns and segregated residential areas, so the shared cultural space of intellectual life a century earlier was abandoned for more specialized communities of intellectual discourse. The eighteenth-century city of inclusive diversity was replaced by the twentieth-century city of closed social cells. As the urban experience became more partial, fragmented, dislocated, and largely self-referring, so did the world of learning. The university nourished the proliferation of separate communities — each with its own language and vocabulary of motives, each striving for internal coherence, conceptual closure, and autonomy.

The growth of professionalized disciplinary communities under the aegis of the university removed serious thinkers from the swirl of amateurs and irresponsibles in the general culture. Yet in their largely successful quest for order, purity, and institutionalized authority, academics isolated themselves from serious engagement with that class of "cultivators" of knowledge who sustain the public culture that makes civic intelligence possible.

By concentrating serious discourse overwhelmingly in specialized and certified communities of discourse, Americans created powerful instruments for discovering new knowledge. In the process Americans greatly strengthened their skill in evaluating technical expertise, but they paid a price in the weakening of their capacity for judging general ideas. Such specialization, as George Lukacs has written, "leads to the destruction of every image of the whole." And without an image of the whole, knowledge becomes inert, without moral or political consequence, save in those cases where it is reactionary.

I am not suggesting that the university toss aside the disciplinary organization of knowledge that has been so productive over the past century; rather I am suggesting that those of us in the university recall what Seth Low knew: however important the university is, it represents only one element in the formation of a public culture. Wisdom — that blend of knowledge, purpose, practical experience, and sense of proportion — is not the product of the academy alone.

Columbia Architecture at 100!

Review of "The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981: Columbia University in the City of New York"

"The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981: Columbia University in the City of New York," is on view at the National Academy of Design in New York from December 9, 1981, through January 31, 1982. The exhibition was curated by Richard Oliver, who also edited the book by the same title celebrating the 100th anniversary of

Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning (Rizzoli, New York, December, 1981) introduction by James Stewart Polshek; contributions by Rosemarie Bletter, James Marston Fitch, Kenneth Frampton, Robert A.M. Stern, and others; 272 pages, 200 illustrations, 24 in color; \$30.00.

Suzanne Stephens

Its 100th anniversary finds Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning right at the top of the heap. The architecture department receives 600 applications each year, and can only accept about 60. In the fall of 1981 it ended up with a surfeit of 10 or so first-year students because so few who had been accepted went elsewhere. Supplementing these numbers are 100 students in preservation, 20 in urban design, and 24 in a new one-year master's program, just to name a few (see "Insider's Guide" to Columbia for more details.) Its faculty is both young and well-respected, combining a strong theoretical interest with a commitment to practice. As diverse as its different orientations and emphases are, what emerges from the faculty is an absorption with the art of architecture, as well as a concern with its social ramifications and its urban impact. The architecture school's image is highly visible in New York, and the faculty itself is fairly busy leaving its physical imprint on the city and on the campus.

Much of the credit for the school's ascendancy from a long hiatus educationally must go to James Stewart Polshek, who became dean in 1972. Polshek not only has pulled together an energetic and engaged faculty, but has actively influenced the addition of high-quality architectural design to the McKim, Mead & White-planned campus through his capacity as architecture advisor to the university. Thus the school had much to celebrate last month with the opening of the exhibit "The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981: Columbia University in the City of New York" at the National Academy of Design, and the publication of a book by the same title. Curator of the show and editor of the book was Richard Oliver, an architect, author, and former architecture curator of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, who managed to bring the double-barreled effort off with polish.

Neither endeavor replicates the other, while both indeed indicate a richness—and a degree certainly of mediocrity—in Columbia's achievements. Columbia's past educational doldrums, glossed over in the show, are rightly discussed in this book. Nevertheless, there are some problems of emphasis in both show and book that weaken the way the school is presenting itself to the public.

The Exhibition

The exhibition, installed by Oliver (with Polshek's active participation and with Heidi Humphrey as graphic designer), emphasizes the "survey" approach to exhibiting architecture. Quantity, diversity—the full gamut of architectural output—are dominant characteristics of the show. "The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981" is divided into roughly three sections: the students' work over the last 100 years, usually in the form of original drawings organized according to levels of the design process; alumni work, and faculty work, both of which are represented by drawings and photographs plus publications.

In spite of the handsome installation, the reasonable organization, and the range of materials presented, the exhibit would have been stronger with a more "traditional" installation approach. To begin with, more student work of the past, and even the present, would have been instructive, although original student work proved hard to come by—especially from the 1930s and 1940s. Still, organizing this output according to a chronological sequence rather than only according to stages or elements of the design process would have allowed one to see the progression from Columbia's affinity to the Beaux-Arts tradition manifested at the turn of the century, to its modernist conversion in the 1930s and 40s, to its social and preservationist bent in the 60s, to the formalist-historicist-urbanist leanings today. If material were lacking in some areas, the lay public would probably understand the use of another form of presentation. Sorely missed too was a small, high-quality selection of *present* student work—examples of which can be seen in the current issue of *Precis* (see p. 25). There are some current student drawings in the exhibit, to be sure, but they are not shown in the full studio "problem" format that frames the presentation in *Precis*.

The display of alumni work, showing buildings and projects executed after the student has entered the real world, caused the gravest frustrations for this observer. Instead of the one-pic-per-alum format, this selection could have benefitted by being pared down to a limited number of in-depth presentations by certain alumni over the last hundred years. John Russell Pope (Columbia, 1894) is nicely represented with drawings (but not photographs) of the National Gallery in Washington (1941). Other illustrious alumni, whom the knowing or unknowing public may not associate with the school, could also have been featured as thoroughly, if not by original drawings, than by slides and photographs.

Admittedly many of these architects date to the Beaux-Arts days, but a centennial show should be allowed to look back. More importantly, these architects have left definite imprints on New York (and elsewhere) as it developed into "The Capital of the Twentieth Century." Many of their buildings and works have given New York its symbolic weight. Work by the following architects would have lent itself to *amplified* presentation: Henry Hornbostel (Columbia 1891), who designed the Queensborough Bridge (1909), as well as Hell Gate Bridge (1914), and the College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh (1912-15); Grosvenor Atterbury (1892), planner and architect for Forest Hills Gardens in Queens (1912); William Delano (1899), and Chester Aldrich (1893), who designed clubs

like the Colony Club (1924), the Knickerbocker Club (1914), plus the Art Deco Marine Terminal and Main Building at La Guardia Airport (1939).

Certainly Henry Herts (Columbia 1897), who with his partner, Hugh Tallant, designed so many theaters for Times Square, including the Helen Hayes of 1911 (see December 1981 *Skyline*, p. 32., for further details), could have been given full treatment. Samuel B.T. Trowbridge (1886) and Goodhue Livingston (1892), who designed the St. Regis Hotel (1904), are only represented by a single photo; they also designed B. Altman's department store (1906) and Banker's Trust (1912). Also missing is presentation of the work of Ely Jacques Kahn (1907), such as his Art Deco office tower at 2 Park Avenue, or the Bergdorf Building (1927).

It would have been interesting too to see more of Morris Lapidus' work (Columbia 1931) or Alden Dow (1931) and his Wrightean designs; and more on young Romaldo Giurgola (1951), who is both an alumnus and faculty member.

These suggestions are not intended to make short shrift of the more recent alumni (Laurinda Spear's work for *Arquitectonica* in Miami deserves extensive coverage); but to cause the public to associate certain buildings it sees frequently with Columbia.

With regard to the faculty sections, the emphasis on a broad display of current and recent faculty work solves diplomatic problems and gives an idea of the variety of architectural orientations prevalent in this school. Here the two-pics-per-prof formula obviously makes sense. Nevertheless, it would have been desirable to see certain juxtapositions—for example, seeing the design for the immigration buildings at Ellis Island of 1901 by William Boring (1887; dean 1915-1933) adjacent to Susana Torre's exhibited current proposal to renovate Boring & Tilton's buildings and turn the island into an immigration museum and park.

The show does include Harvey Wiley Corbett's design of a skyscraper shaped by the 1916 zoning law as rendered by Hugh Ferriss. But a special installation devoted to the urban design and planning work of other past and present faculty would have given a clearer sense of Columbia's contribution in this area. For example, Henry Wright, who advanced the notion of regional planning and clustered housing in New York, and worked with Clarence Stein on Sunnyside, New York, and Radburn, New Jersey, was on the faculty in the 1930s. Sir Raymond Unwin also brought his garden-city theories approach to Columbia during that period. Examples of work by former faculty, juxtaposed with current urban design work of faculty members, such as Stan Ekstut and Alex Cooper (Battery Park City) would have been enlightening. In addition, a special section on the preservation program would have highlighted its importance.

It would have clarified matters to show work of the visiting luminaries like Le Corbusier and Alvar Aalto in the faculty section, rather than in the room where student work is displayed. Then you wouldn't hear comments like "I didn't know Aalto went to Columbia." Also confusing is the installation in a small, but grand room of work from other schools. While the intent is to show shared architectural affinities, the result paradoxically weakens Columbia's efforts. Here the selection is quite spare; the drawings in particular lavish and stunning. Princeton, MIT, Yale look very good, then and now.

Many of these comments are carping, since the planning time and space allowed the exhibit were minimal. The Columbia show's approach does expose a diversity and continuity of certain themes and interests that manifest themselves over and over again during the last 100 years. However, it is still hard to come away from "The Making of an Architect, 1881-1981" with a clear idea of Columbia's particular evolution. *That* result would have required the more didactically presented exhibit.

The Book

If the effect of the exhibit is to illustrate visually the diversity and continuity of Columbia's educational heritage and the extent of its influence on the environment, the book provides a substantial in-depth documentation of that history. The handsomely designed and produced publication deals with the school's relationship to the city and to the architectural and educational milieu of which it has been a vital part for the last 100 years. It documents its own internal history as well, and analyzes the particular contributions of deans and well-known faculty members.

Rosemarie Bletter's essay "Modernism Rears Its Head—the Twenties and Thirties" is exemplary in depicting the educational and architectural climate of thought existing at the time when Columbia was questioning the Beaux-Arts method for its shortcomings, and turning to modern architecture. Kenneth Frampton's essay on Talbot Hamlin, architect, critic, Avery Librarian from 1934 to 1946, and Columbia architectural history professor, presents a cogent analysis of Hamlin's own criticism. Frampton dissects Hamlin's criteria as Hamlin looks (hesitantly) toward Modernism and as he looks (fondly) back to the American Greek Revival.

The book's strengths are many, but there is an overloading of the historical platter. You get more than you might ever want to know about certain subjects, especially information culled from files. More personal reminiscences could have further enriched the exploration of the past. At any rate, the excessiveness of information about certain subjects does not allow certain important

issues, such as changing educational philosophy, contributions of Columbia vis-à-vis the city to stand out enough in bold relief. There is too much overlap—not just duplication, but triplication. The chapter by Marta Gutman and Richard Plunz, "Anatomy of Insurrection," discusses social concerns of the school during the 1960s, as well as other decades. But it does cover ground documented in at least two or three other essays. This chapter in particular could have been much meaner had it been a lot leaner.

Sometimes there is not enough coordination between the authors of similar topics. For example, New York City's 1904 and 1907 planning report, inspired by "City Beautiful" ideals, is characterized as "the first comprehensive survey of New York's present and long-range improvement needs" in the Robert Stern and Gregory Gilmartin essay ("Apropos 1900: New York and the Metropolitan Ideal"). Yet it is not mentioned in Christine Boyer's "In Search of an Order to the American City, 1893-1945," where she does discuss in some depth New York's famous 1916 zoning legislation.

While both articles cite planner George B. Ford's early advocacy of socially oriented, not just aesthetically-based planning goals, neither spells out precisely Ford's affiliation with Columbia. Boyer mentions he was (along with Carol Aronovici, Henry Wright, and Carl Feiss) associated with Columbia between 1912 and 1945. There is unfortunately no index to guide the reader in retrieving more precise information.

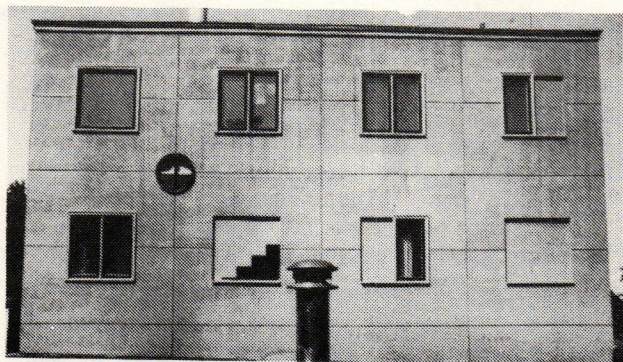
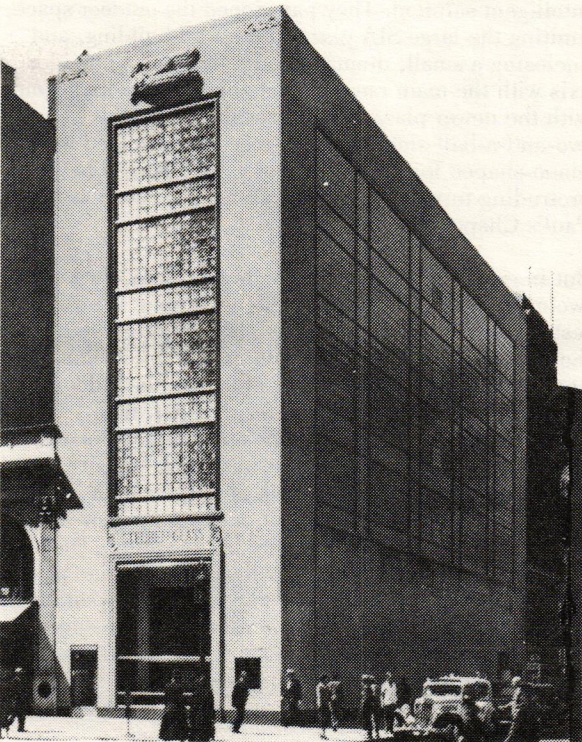
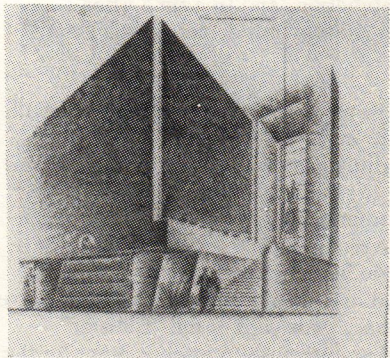
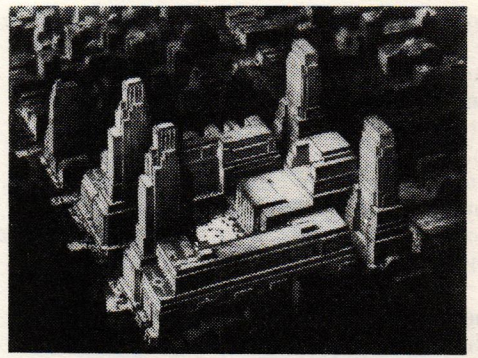
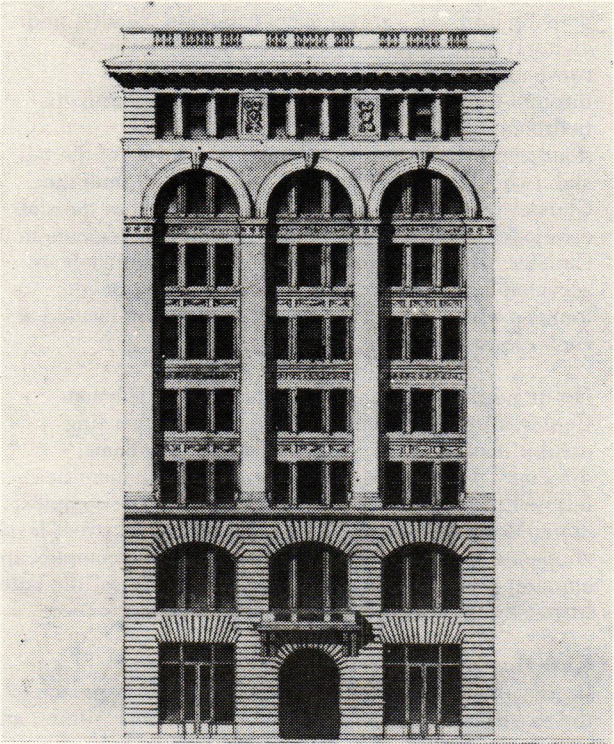
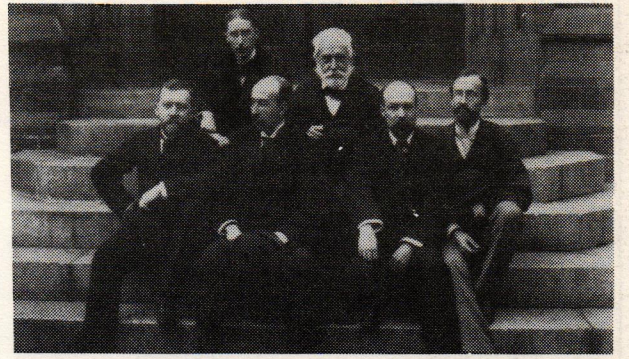
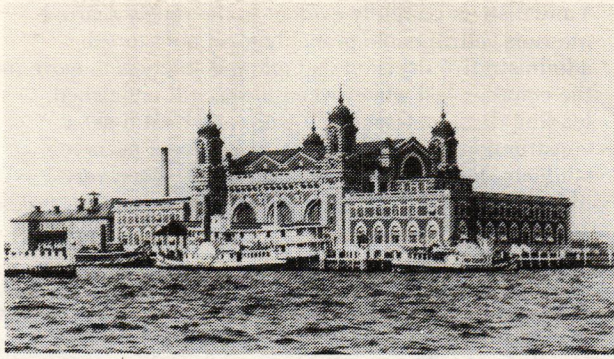
Stern and Gilmartin give a substantial picture of New York developing a brand of "metropolitanism" at the turn of the century—as it evolved into an urban form that was to emblemize American modernity. They nicely document Columbia's own participation in this development. But a few more connections would have helped. For example, they mention that Seth Low, as mayor of New York in 1901, pushed for a city plan of a civic import, which prompted the 1907 report. They also acknowledge Low's own contribution to New York's cosmopolitan image. Why not clarify, then, that Low had been president of Columbia University from 1889 to 1901, where he was very instrumental in fostering the connection between academic life and city life (see Thomas Bender's article on the subject, p. 14)?

These points are brought up only to mention some of the wished-for cross-overs that might have occurred in this undertaking. However, it must be said that the scope and depth of the endeavor are impressive. An essay by David DeLong on William Ware, who founded the architecture department, and an essay by James M. Fitch on the historic preservation department, which he founded in 1963—the first of its kind in the U.S.—cover ground. So do the chapters telling the straight history of Columbia, written by Stephen Bedford, Susan Strauss, Judith Oberlander, Diane Boas, and Richard Oliver. In these chapters, numerous facts of interest come to the surface, for example: Columbia's architecture school began as a course in the School of Mines; originally it was to be called "Architecture and Sanitary Engineering." William Ware made sure that the course was not absorbed by the curricula of mining and engineering. Ware ran into trouble with Charles McKim, who was then planning the Morningside campus and very influential at the school, and considered Ware's approach too historically based. Although McKim obviously had a strong Beaux-Arts orientation, he thought Ware too dependent on its methods: students were expected to leave the Columbia undergraduate course to apprentice with an architect or go to the Paris Ecole. McKim wanted the course to be more professionally based and to replace the Ecole. One learns too about Joseph Hudnut's introduction of a modernist orientation in housing, city planning, and architecture to the curriculum in the 1930s. Certain issues about the educational goals continually recur: should design problems be more real, more technical, more design-oriented, less historical; should the courses emphasize drawing, design, professional practice, social concerns, urban planning, etc.

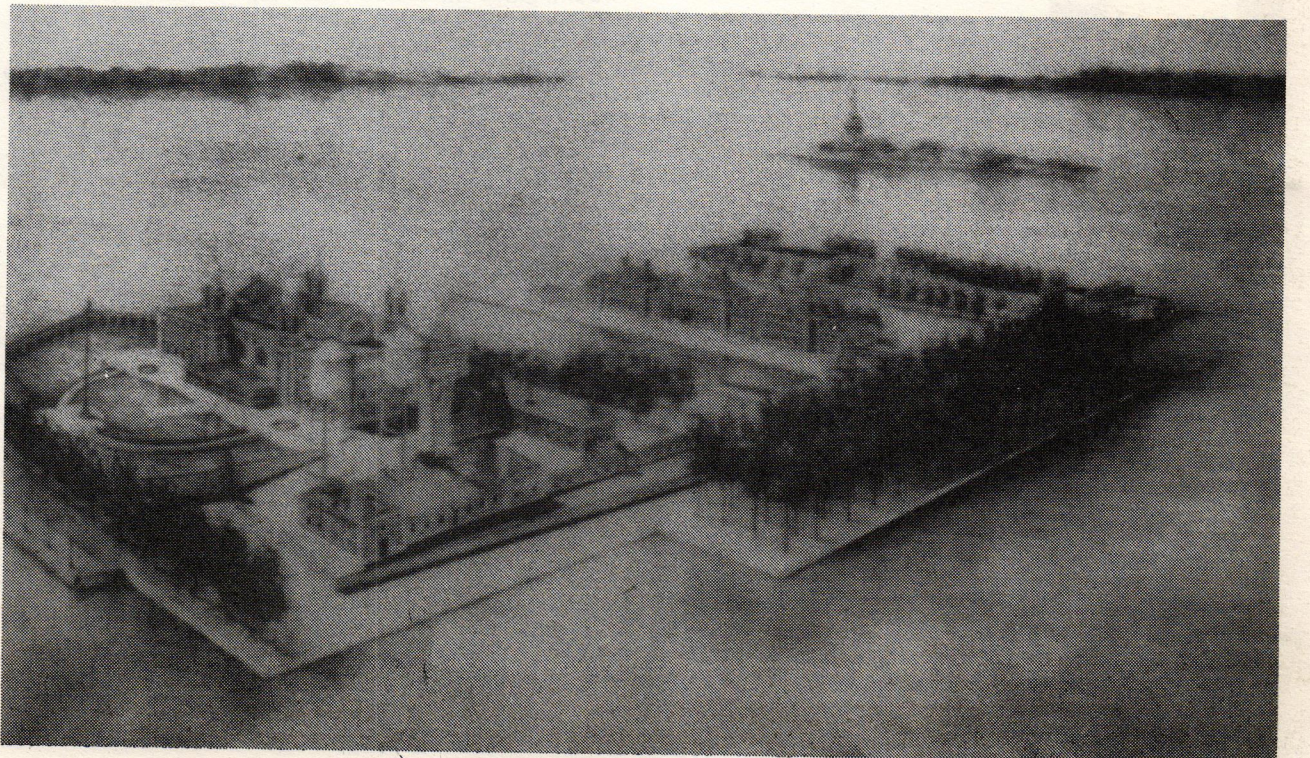
The history concludes with a chapter on the last nine years of Columbia's architecture school under the deanship of James Stewart Polshek. Polshek's actions in reshaping a then flabby curriculum into its current form are spelled out with a candor usually reserved for moments when all the parties involved are dead. The "behind-the-scenes" information related by Susan Strauss comes from open files. Dean Polshek, known for his easygoing affability, emerges as an astute diplomat who smiles as he wields the ax to clean out the dead (and not-so-dead) wood in the groves of academe.

Nevertheless, Polshek's trimming the architecture program to a three-year graduate course (M. Arch.), his dropping the evening program, and introducing an undergraduate major in architecture into Columbia College are all significant accomplishments. Polshek also convinced the university that he should be a special advisor to the president on architecture and design, a post that has allowed him to control the nature of new architectural modifications of the campus.

But all is not over, nor is it peaceful. Changes are being made in the planning division. Renovation of the program within the school is being undertaken to integrate it more closely with the preservation and architecture departments. Six contracts are being debated regarding renewal; some will not be renewed. Meanwhile other programs are in the offing: a student may now get a master's in architecture in one year; and by 1982, it is hoped there will be a Center for American Architectural Studies created at Avery. Columbia is still moving, but from a position of strength.



Left, top to bottom: Boring (class of 1887) and Tilton, Ellis Island main building, 1898-1900; George Tremaine Morse (1896), design for an office building; William A. Platt (1923) and Geoffrey Platt (1930), the Corning Building, New York, 1937; Ricardo Scofidio (1960) with Elizabeth Diller, Kinney Residence, Westchester, N.Y., 1979; Susana Torre, Ellis Island proposal, view toward Statue of Liberty, 1980. Above, top to bottom: Faculty of the Columbia School of Architecture, 1894; Benjamin Wister Morris (1894), scheme for a "Metropolitan Square," 1929; Filippo Rovigo (1937), design project, 1937-38. Below: "Heeere's . . . Jimmy!" James Stewart Polshek Drawing by Michael Mostoller.



Charles Gwathmey and Robert Siegel were offered an opportunity and a formidable challenge in the design of Columbia University's East Campus. The result is both polished and flawed. The opportunity, of course, was to create a large building—with student, faculty, and guest housing, and a small humanities center—on an urban site in a major American city, a good commission for a young firm best known for smaller projects in nonurban settings. The challenge was no less than to atone for the sins of recent history and to measure up to the glories of the more distant past, to paraphrase Columbia architecture Dean James Stewart Polshek, architecture advisor to the university. The glories include a campus whose master plan was designed and in part carried out by McKim, Mead & White, balancing the themes of classical monumentality and intimacy, and incorporating several fine buildings. The sins were those of omission—the failure to build many of the inner buildings of the McKim plan, thereby foregoing some of the intimate spaces. More recently there have been severe sins of commission, including the creation of the dismal plaza bridging Amsterdam Avenue east of the original campus, graced by overmuscular buildings of the 1960s, and extending toward Morningside Drive—the site, in fact, of the Gwathmey Siegel project.

Added to these historically based challenges were basic programmatic ones—to provide housing for about 700 people, housing that would attract students in this age of dwindling college population, and in a time when students reject regimentation and demand choice and independence.

Gwathmey Siegel have met most of those challenges with ingenuity, distinction, and even brilliance. They have restored reasonable dimensions and definition to a plaza that was threatening to stretch on and on, grimly. They have provided an extremely clever variety of dwelling units, with which the residents are delighted. They have designed a small-scale humanities center responsive to the client's functional and spiritual needs. And they have created an extraordinary courtyard—the "Cloister"—that must become an architectural reference point for the future, for its scale and its unforgettable imagery.

While the achievements of the Complex far outweigh its shortcomings, these cannot be ignored. The brilliant Cloister nestles between two slabs, one low and the other tall. Both—especially the latter—are "downright ugly" (this observer's sentiments, and those of some students) because of ill-proportioned windows in a poorly defined skin. This is all the more jarring as the taller slab looms from its promontory, blocking the otherwise broad and breathtaking expanse of sky. Furthermore, the slabs provide views and access to Morningside Park that are too skimpy even to be called "intriguing."

Vandalism is painfully evident in the rudely scarred interiors, attributable probably to an unfortunate administrative decision that allowed students to move into the complex last winter when it was still unfinished, leading them to associate it with (and treat it as) a construction site. In any case, the present users—students, fellows, and directors alike—seem very pleased with the accommodations—no mean feat.

The Basic Part

At the eastern end of Columbia's School of International Affairs (SIA) plaza, the East Campus Complex, completed in 1981, forms its own compound entered through a guarded gate. Two parallel slabs run north-south, parallel to Morningside Drive and the Park beyond, providing housing units for various users (students, faculty, and visitors) in various configurations (single rooms, two-bedroom units, four-bedroom, two-story through-units, and split-level "townhouses" with six bedrooms). The townhouses in the low slab (four-and-a-half stories) and the lower levels of the tall slab (which is 22 stories in all) are reached from the Cloister through individual stairs, some within the slab envelope, and some pulled out as rounded elements in the Cloister. The upper fourteen levels of the tall slab are serviced by skip-stop elevators, and double-height lounges with panoramic views of the city are located at each elevator landing.

On its north, the cloister is framed by the Heyman Center, three stories above Cloister level, housing exhibition space, conference and seminar rooms, directors' offices, and study rooms for the humanities fellowship program. At the lowest level of the complex, along Morningside Drive, student offices and street-level shops are provided. Underground within the complex are storage, parking, and student activity facilities, the latter lit by skylights in the Cloister stairtowers.

Exterior Spaces

Rather than follow the "objects-in-a-plaza" approach of the existing Schools of Law and International Affairs, and create a plaza stretching its windswept way to Morningside Drive, Gwathmey Siegel chose a more intelligent solution. They partitioned the outdoor space, limiting the large SIA plaza with a wall building, and enclosing a small, dramatic court. They also provided, on axis with the main ramp connecting the principal campus with the newer plaza, a boldly scaled, two-and-a-half-story entrance recess, modulated with a piano-shaped form in its shadows, and defined by a protruding turret, a fragile (too fragile) memory of the St. Paul's Chapel apse behind.

But in creating this termination to the plaza, they made two mistakes. First, understandably aiming at providing a restrained foil for the overactive buildings on the plaza, they produced a tile and aluminum-windowed slab of unmitigated bleakness, a slab which will be hidden, it is hoped, by a planned row of trees. Second, the double-height recess cries to be opened to views and generous access to the park. It was unfair to leave merely a slot between the Faculty Club and the smooth unresponsive tile wall beside it, a slot fully viewed only if one detours to a small belvedere in the corner. The slot is equally unsatisfying as a place though which one passes, since the stairs downward are narrow and low-ceilinged, and easily missed from the lower level. As the major access between the plaza, the street below, and the park beyond, the passage is not tantalizing.

The slabs

The complex is clad in Gaile Tile over concrete block walls. Windows are aluminum-framed; glass block is used for punctuation at special intervals.

The choice of tile as an exterior material in this northern climate is questionable. Falling tiles at Mitchell-Giurgola's Life Sciences Building have provided a warning for James Stirling: Columbia has asked him to avoid any system of exterior tile on the Chemistry building he is planning for the campus. Fortunately, the East Campus Complex application is more stable than the Life Science's panel system.

The aesthetic value of tile walls must also be analyzed. Gwathmey Siegel has used two tile colors; clay red and warm gray. The red tile, finishing the walls of the Cloister, the low slab, and the base of the tall slab, is intended to represent the brick color of the older Columbia buildings. The gray tiles are meant to simulate the campus' limestone. The intention, however, is based on faulty assumptions. The old limestone, richly carved, is enlivened by its varying surface shadows, and is used either for the campus' monuments, such as Low Library, or to elaborate, in bases and trim, the workaday buildings. In the East Campus Complex the gray "limestone" rises flat and bleak into the sky, as if the architects wished that the change in color would cause everything to disappear above the four-story cloister enclosure (the height, too, of the neighboring buildings on the street side). The use of tile to blend into its environment remains a vain hope.

Altogether, the slabs' walls lack character: they are neither a taut membrane, for the aluminum frame/tile wall relationship is not sufficiently refined, nor do they have the punch of depth that Gwathmey, in hindsight, wishes he had created by recessing the windows. Within the ambivalent skin, the overactive window pattern, differentiating between living rooms and bedrooms, is disturbing, especially on the tall slab's west elevation. The top ends too abruptly, and the aluminum panels between living-room windows seem cheap and blind.

Base-ness

Furthermore, the slabs suffer from an undefined expression of their bases. They sink without distinction into the ground. On the campus plaza side they make the gesture of a change in tile color; but on the Morningside Drive edge, the color changes are made only to define the wished-for height. Even the street-level storefronts are slipped in with no emphasis. This gesture is especially surprising in a context that traditionally makes a point of expressing the base: the early Columbia buildings are poorer neighbors in terms of physical access (this building opens its street level to the community), but they provide better formal lessons in meeting the ground proudly.

Interiors

The student apartments are simple, pleasant, and spacious by Columbia dormitory standards, and the students are delighted with them. Corridors are long, low, and narrow, but are relieved by natural light at either end, notably at the elevator landings, where double-height lounges have spectacular views southward. Apartment entrances are grouped and recessed around columns, but the regular ceiling lighting along the corridor mitigates the effect of repetitive hollows. Except for some oak cabinetry in the units, the interiors are gray-and-white "drywall city."

Heyman Center is planned with true dexterity. A second-story curved corridor inflects to a two-storied mezzanined lounge overlooking the Cloister, which from this vantage point is truly lyrical in feeling. Interior detailing, however, is uninteresting.

The Cloister

The Cloister is the heart of the complex, its formal *raison d'être*. Here, one experiences the intimate spatial relationships intended by the McKim campus plan, the small scale of the Avery/Fayerweather courtyard, but executed in a tightened and linear progression. It is hardened, brilliant, gleaming. It bombards you with its rounded, repeated stairtowers, yet the rhythmic repetition is also soothing, and the deep perimeter overhangs sheltering. Its grouped entrances draw away behind round columns, into rounded hollows, up slightly raised landings; yet they reach out, at the same time, with curved convex steps.

With all its eloquence of beckoning and restraint, hardness of materials and softness of forms, hollows and protrusions, the cloister has less intriguing ambiguities unsuccessfully resolved. Its linear direction ends at the north side with the Heyman Center, whose flat tile grayness seems meant to disappear, like the upper part of the tall slab, and its rounded forms seem intended to proceed into infinity. The north termination needs either greater presence to stop the complex, or a dark smoothness to shift the line of movement vertically upward.

The expressed stairtowers are clever as planning devices and brilliant as stage sets in the Cloister, but their use of nontransparent glass block ignores the experience of the student residents. The tight opaqueness of the staircases would be exciting if it were released into an explosion of space, as in Gwathmey Siegel's lavish houses; here, however, it leads to tight interior halls and stairwells. The translucent block in the rounded forms creates a glittering courtyard, but the student inhabitants might have preferred a view to the outside on the long trip down.

Still, Gwathmey Siegel have taken a form that has become their signature, the rounded expressed staircase, and by cladding it in vertical, brittle, equal rectangles of glass block and tile, and repeating it relentlessly along a tight courtyard, they have transformed it into an element more mystical and compelling than any in their earlier work. They reach depths of psychological exploration untapped by them before. The Cloister is as powerful an image as that of the industrial Siemens design by Stirling. It is, in the architect's words, surreal, and Rossi-esque.

And if this sounds like discomforting imagery for housing, the reality dispels that notion. For the scale is so human, and the shadowy recesses so sheltering, that it is indeed a "cloister": it encloses, and it inspires contemplation. As students pour from their individual doors at class time, it seems the very prototype of community and privacy. If it provokes complex feelings and thoughts, surely then it is worthy of an institute of higher learning.

Project: East Campus Complex, Columbia University, New York.

Site: Eastern extension of Columbia's main campus, adjacent to Morningside Drive.

Architects: Gwathmey Siegel & Associates, Architects; Emery Roth & Sons, Associate Architects.

Size: 360,000 s.f. in 4-story and 22-story slabs; 4-story humanities center.

Program: Housing complex for 750 students; hotel service for visiting faculty and guests; humanities center for study and research; student/faculty lounge; student activities space; student office space; neighborhood storefront facilities; service garage.

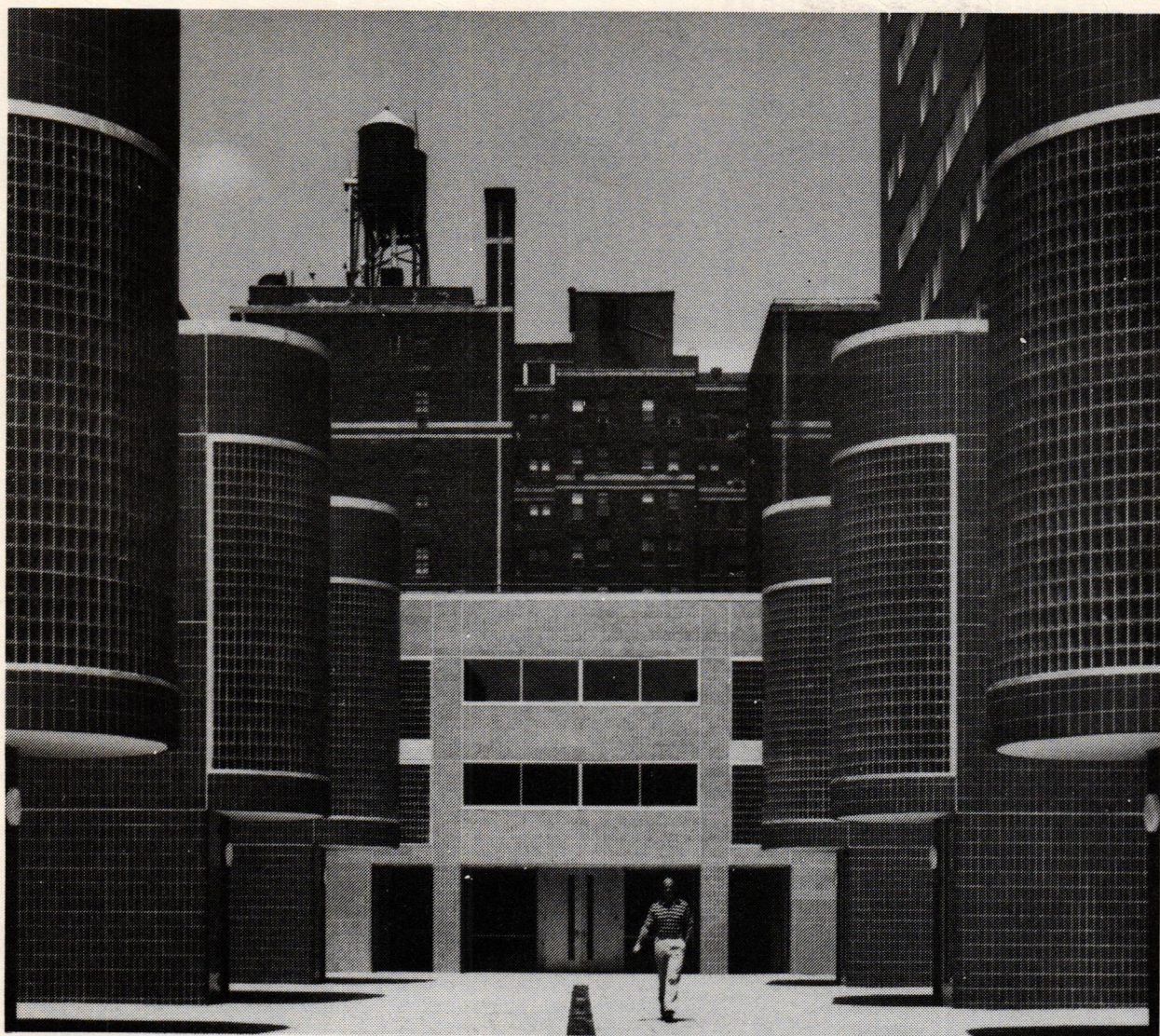
Structure: Reinforced concrete frame; concrete block walls.

Materials: Gaile Tile on exterior; glass block; aluminum windows and transoms. Interiors: gypsum board, carpet, vinyl tile, and oak cabinet work.

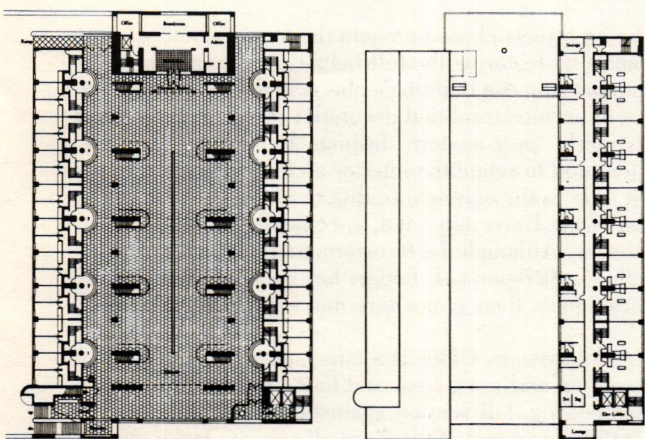
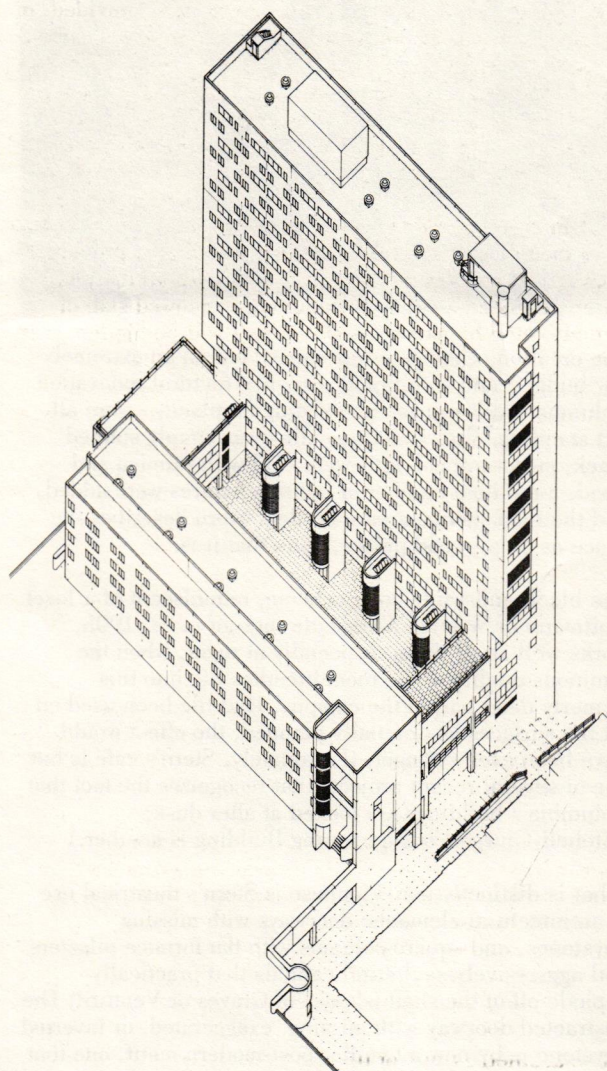
Completion date: Occupied in early 1981; details yet to be completed.

Gwathmey Siegel: East Campus Complex

Susan Doubilet



Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects. East Campus Complex, Columbia University, New York; 1981. Above: View of the cloister looking north. Below, left to right: Plans of the entry/cloister level and typical highrise flats/duplexes; axonometric. Bottom, left: East elevation facing Morningside Park; right: The southwest corner of the complex. Photographs © Richard Payne, AIA.



Those who visited or studied at Columbia University during the 1960s or '70s probably remember the majority of interior spaces as—to put it bluntly—shabby. Despite the grandeur of the campus plan and the quality of many of the buildings, the interiors of the University buildings made one think more of the Broadway IRT than of the unique, well-planned, traffic-free oasis that Columbia was, and is. In most of the buildings, layers of sheetrock and unattractive paint, the inevitable hanging fluorescent light fixtures, and a sense that everything was gradually falling apart easily led students to believe that perhaps University officials did not realize how depressing life was becoming within Columbia's hallowed halls. As the renovations on these pages show, however, things are indeed looking up.

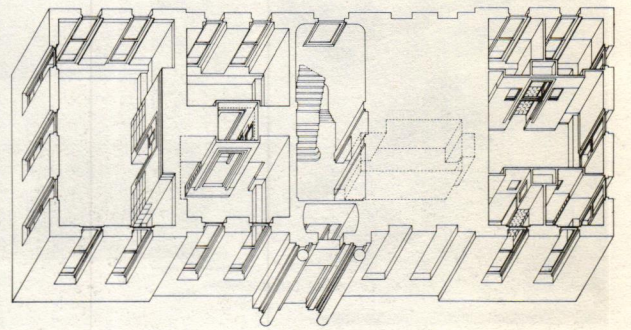
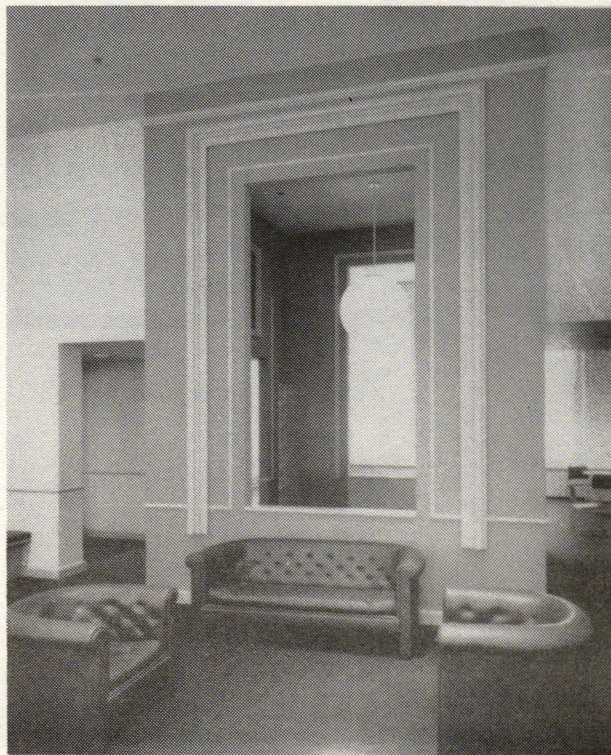
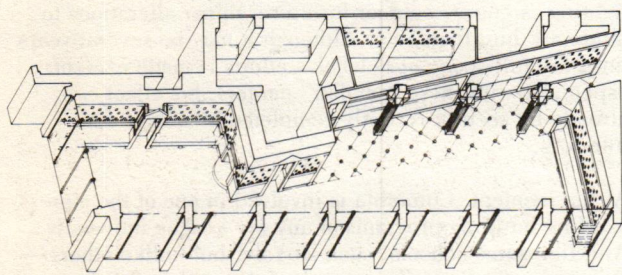
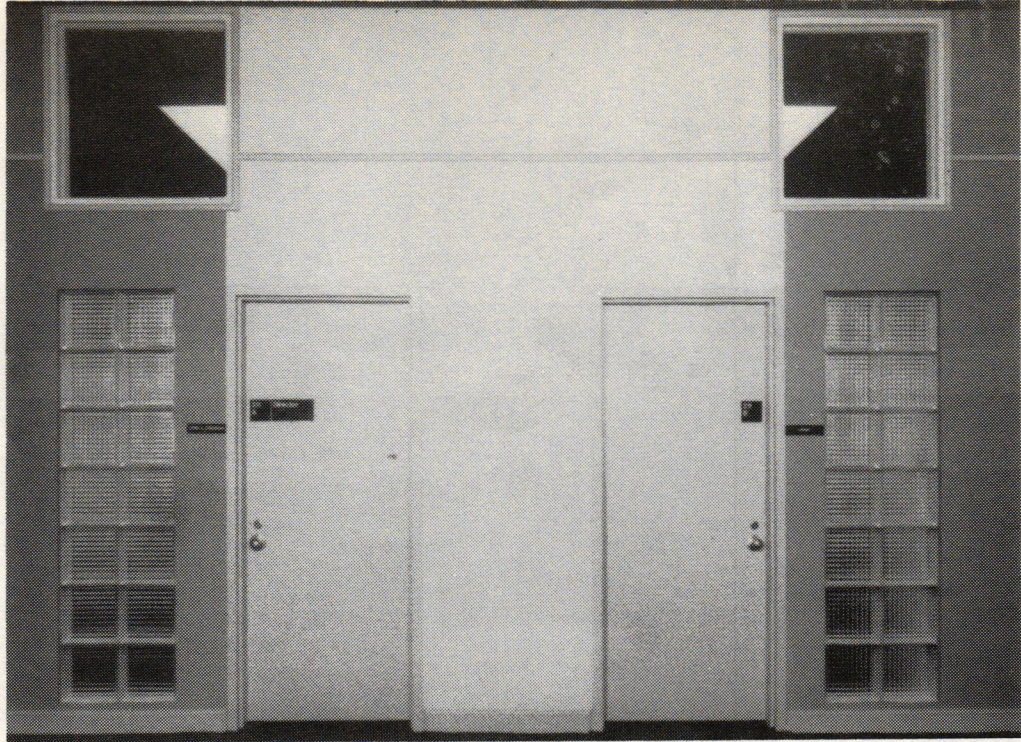
Since the early 1970s, and thanks largely to the efforts of James Polshek, dean of the School of Architecture, and to the support he has received from Columbia's presidents, a consistent effort has been made to improve the overall quality of design at the University. As special advisor to the president on planning and design, as a member of the high-level Space Planning Committee, and as an informal advisor to the various deans and to the Buildings and Grounds Department, Polshek has assumed unprecedented responsibilities involving all aspects of the physical fabric of the campus. Not only does he offer advice and expertise when it comes to new construction or renovation, but he has also sought to involve himself in the smaller, though no less important matters of the state of the campus in general; for example, in improving lighting, signage, outdoor furniture, minor alterations to landmark buildings, etc. Although it may be several years until the full scope of Polshek's efforts is made evident, especially with those "smaller" matters, his effect can already be seen in recently completed buildings and interiors.

At the moment, Columbia is involved in one of the more exciting building programs of any Ivy League university. And like some schools, such as Yale, but unlike others—Princeton, for example—much of the work is being undertaken by current or former Columbia faculty. In addition to the four renovations shown in this portfolio, plans are on the drawing board for a new chemistry building by James Stirling, a new computer center by Kliment & Halsband (part renovation, part new building); a new rare book library by Cain, Farrell & Bell; renovation of the general counsel's office by Mostoller & Wood; and, more tentatively, the renovation of several floors in Schermerhorn Hall belonging to the art history department.

Any efforts toward revitalizing the built fabric of Columbia, of course, involve stringent restrictions on money; decisions on the part of University administrators concerning priorities in spending—especially in this new era of diminished government support—will affect the

Renovating Columbia Interiors

Christopher Wilk



Robert A.M. Stern. Café, Ferris Booth Hall, Columbia University; 1981. Bottom: early axonometric. Photo: Ed Stoecklein

Mostoller & Wood. Renovation for the School of General Studies, Lewisohn Hall, Columbia University; 1981. Top left: Entrance to director's office and library; right: Lounge area. Bottom: Axonometric. Photo: Langdon Clay

extent of any building programs. But from an architectural point of view, the current revival of interest in classicism, and in the work of McKim, Mead & White, as well as the celebration of the centennial of Columbia's School of Architecture, should result in the completion of interesting and sensitive projects.

Those who are not familiar with the Morningside Heights campus, and especially those who know Columbia but have not been up to 116th Street in recent years, would do well to have a look. And the University itself might even consider publishing some sort of small brochure pointing out not only the historical sites on campus, but many of the fine renovations recently completed.

Robert A.M. Stern: Ferris Booth Hall

Ferris Booth Hall, on the southwesternmost corner of Columbia's campus, was completed in 1959 as a dormitory and student building. It surely represents the nadir of architecture at Columbia. One would be hard pressed to find any other building (the Business School?) that is so poor in quality yet also snubs its nose so emphatically at the original campus plan. Robert A.M. Stern's original scheme (see plan) called for the renovation of the entire ground floor of "FBH" (as it is known to students). What was actually carried out was the conversion of a perennially unsuccessful "collegiate" lounge into a café, and the creation of a new lounge area and several meeting rooms. The most important and successful part of the job is the café, located along the east side of the building's raking north facade. Since the remodeling of the middle section of the ground floor was not carried out, the lounge and meeting rooms, located along the western wall of the building, have an incomplete and isolated character. One hopes that the rest of the project will be completed eventually so that the various parts of the building (all of which make use of the same colors and architectural and decorative elements) can be considered together. (The chances of this happening appear to be unlikely, since Stern's modest exercise in post-modernism is said to have shocked some university officials.)

The café is open all day, to all members of the University community and guests. It is therefore one of those rare restaurant spaces that has to be appropriate both for breakfast and late-night use; not an easy task for the designers, but one that the architect has carried off rather well. Even those who find many of Stern's projects to be overly concerned with the latest in architectural fashion will have to admit the success and appropriateness of his scheme for the FBH café.

The creation of the café was carried out on an extremely low budget, and with practically no structural renovation. Columns, walls—even an existing fireplace—were all left standing. Brown wall paneling was simply stained black, structural columns were clad with formica and wood, a minimal number of lighting fixtures were added, and the food service area was tiled. Stern describes the space as "a plywood palace," and that it is.

The black-and-white color scheme, reminiscent of a Josef Hoffmann or Wiener Werkstätte interior of ca. 1905, works well at all times, especially at night, when the luminous quality of the room breathes life into this formerly dead part of the campus. Had tile been used on all the surfaces as originally planned, the effect would have been even stronger. (Fortunately, Stern's café is but one of several recent projects that recognizes the fact that Columbia's buildings are looked at after dusk; Mitchell-Giurgola's Engineering Building is another.)

What is distinctly non-Viennese is Stern's theatrical use of architectural elements: doorways with missing keystones, and square columns with flat formica pilasters and aggressively sculptural capitals that practically explode off of the shaft (shades of Graves or Venturi!) The abstracted doorway with missing, exaggerated, or inverted keystone is, by now a familiar post-modern motif, one that serves here to attract even further attention to the bright, white doorways. The columns are even more self-conscious, but not without humor; all the more so since, according to the architect, their large size and the extreme angle at which they rise from the column are calculated to enclose lighting fixtures. (Black-and-white photographs have a tendency to make these individual elements even more prominent than they are in person, as is the case with many post-modern projects.)

The imposing presence of the vertical columns is counterbalanced by the horizontal flow of the long, low room, as well as by the added white banding on the walls. It seems particularly appropriate as it wraps itself around the protruding fireplace, an existing element—not Robert A.M. Stern referring to Frank Lloyd Wright!—that the architect wanted to alter (see plan).

Stern's essentially decorative solution for the café is an exuberant and amusing one. Completely lacking in the condescending high-school atmosphere that so often afflicts this type of space, the café is, above all, an eminently enjoyable place for sitting.

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Left: Smotrich & Platt. Renovation of Hartley and Wallach Halls, Columbia University; 1981. Top: Tenth-floor room in Wallach Hall. Middle: Duplex dorm room, Hartley Hall. Bottom: Fifth-floor plan, Hartley Hall; eighth-floor similar. right: Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen. East Asian Library, Columbia University, New York; 1981. Photo: Ambrøse Cucinotta

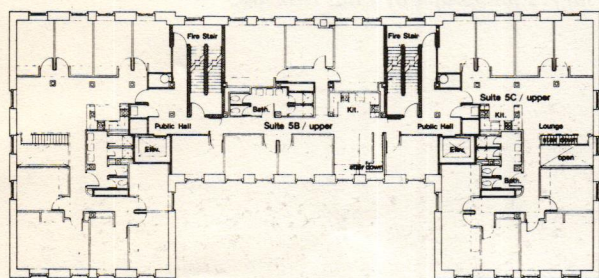
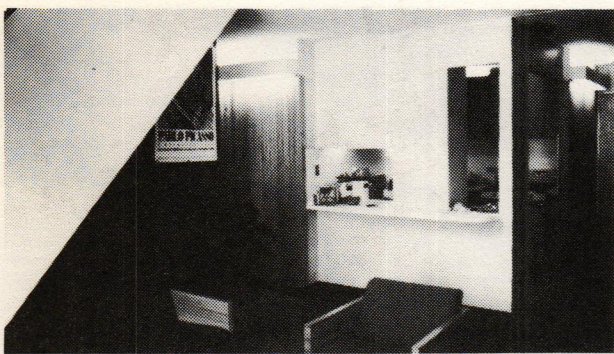
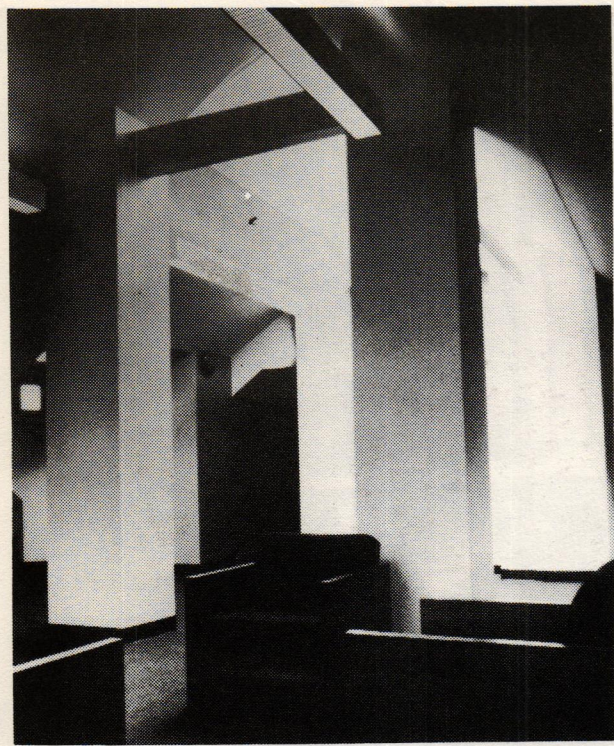
Mostoller & Wood: Lewisohn Hall

Michael Mostoller and Tim Wood's interior renovation for the School of General Studies in Lewisohn Hall is primarily on the main floor, and consists of the Admissions Office, a combined café and lounge area, and a study hall. The change from the existing remodeling of the early 1960s is striking. At that time most of the ceilings in the building were dropped, wooden partitions were erected, and orange carpet installed, in an attempt to give the rooms a warmer and more intimate feeling; a treatment that implicitly denied the value of the original 1905 Arnold Brunner design.

The architects chose to regain the former grandeur of the spaces by restoring the full-height ceilings and by emphasizing the building's classical design through the use of architectural and decorative details handled in a distinctly "post-modern" fashion. In their design, they attempted to relate the interior architecture of Lewisohn not only to the classical tradition, but to the plan of the rest of the University, and, specifically, to the building's exterior. Although the transformation of these spaces within a \$27-per-s.-f. budget has been nothing short of miraculous, their plans have met with mixed success.

The Admissions Office is a large space separated into a reception and work area, and four smaller offices. The high ceiling, tall window against the north wall, and careful placement of furniture all serve to make the reception room a singularly effective and monumental space. Although the use of applied moldings of varying shapes and sizes (in addition to glass brick and a hierarchical ordering of the new partitions) helps to divide the walls and give the room a sense of scale, there is something uncomfortable about the use of such details. Perhaps it just takes getting used to, but Mostoller and Wood's design highlights one of the greatest problems with much post-modern work: the lack of a sure handling of classical details, especially when applied to the very thin, cut-out walls that are often meant to be read as facades or portals. Somehow Stern's use of details in FBH is less problematic, since he is far less serious—or at least one hopes so—and because of the type of space he has designed. The exaggeration and campiness just do not matter as much in a restaurant. However, since Mostoller and Wood have set their sights higher and go about their work with seemingly loftier intentions, their design deserves greater scrutiny.

The study hall at the south end of the building is far simpler, that is, far less cluttered with self-conscious details; it works quite well. With its wide expanses of



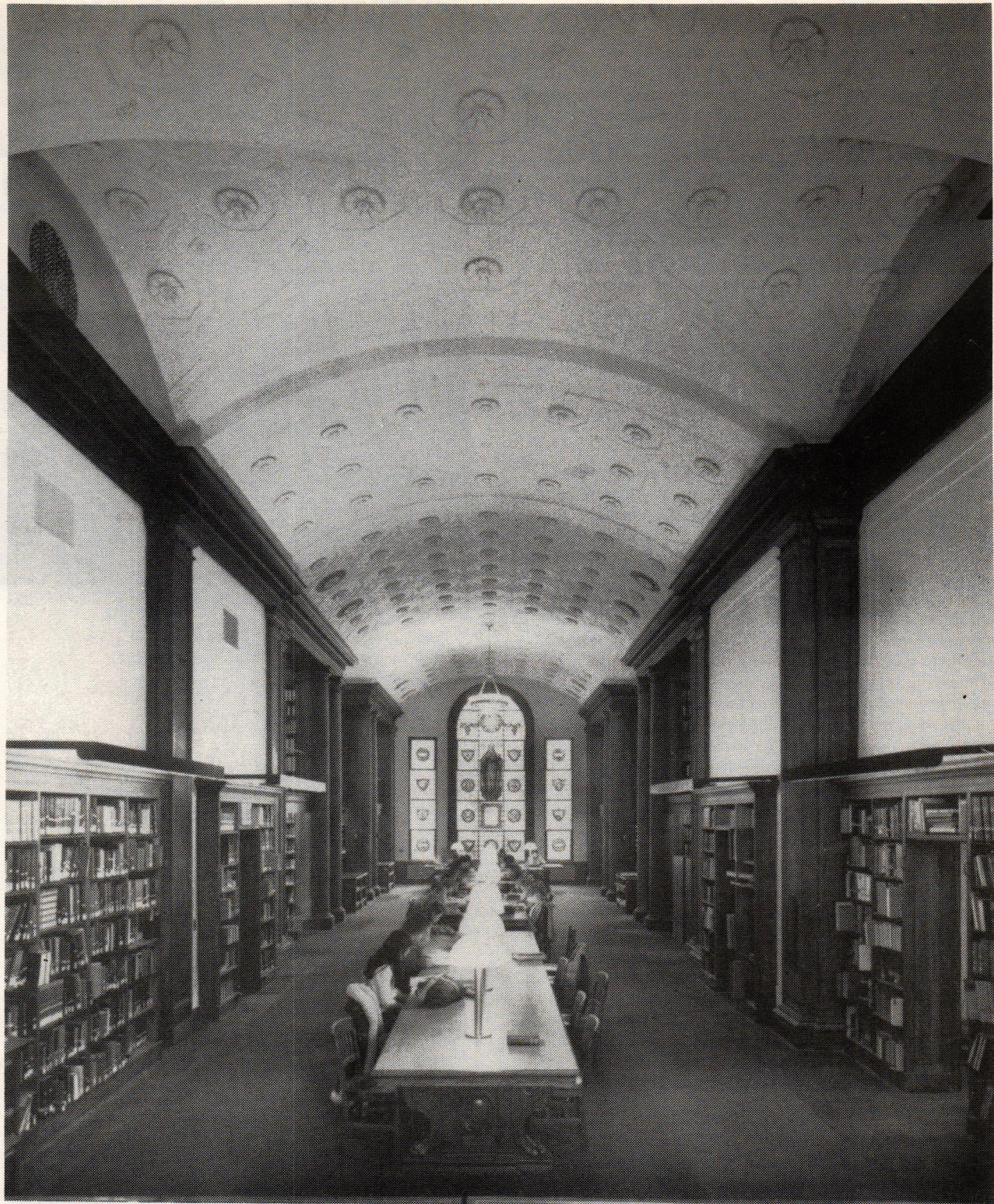
plain wall, interrupted only by the built-in benches, which we read as a base for the wall, it has a calmer tone, appropriate for a study hall. Even its north wall—though again, the moldings are a bit heavy-handed—has a nice detail in the “rusticated” built-in cabinets (actually masonite over steel doors) intended to store the study hall chairs and tables.

The most problematic part of the main floor is the café-lounge. Here the architects attempted to divide the room into two separate spaces that could be used as one for afternoon teas held for about 100 people. In addition, access had to be maintained to the study hall located to the south. The architects' solution to this problem was to create a structure within the room, a kind of secular baldachino that had enough architectural identity to separate the two rooms and provide built-in seating, while at the same time being open enough to allow the two (three?) spaces to be used as a single space. As an added bonus, pleasing sight lines were thought out between the actual windows and the internal windows or frames in the center structure. This is also characteristic of the Admissions Office, where cut-out rectangles in the walls not only read as hierarchical elements in a facade composition intended to mirror the exterior of the building, but also allow light to enter the large room.

Unfortunately, what sounds intriguing as an idea does not entirely work as an interior. The relationship of the two main spaces to each other, and especially to the baldachino, is uneasy. The architects have tried to have the best of both worlds: the scale is at once large and small; each part is open, yet closed; each space is independent, but part of a larger whole. In particular, the dropped ceilings to each side of the baldachino, and the oddly proportioned space of the baldachino itself do not quite work—at least, not together. Despite the thought and effort that went into this most difficult part of the project, the three spaces of the café-lounge do not coexist in perfect harmony.

Smotrich and Platt: Hartley and Wallach Halls

One of the larger renovation jobs at Columbia has been that of two adjacent dormitory buildings, nearly identical in plan: Hartley and Wallach (formerly Livingston) Halls, both designed by McKim, Mead & White in 1904. The firm of Smotrich & Platt was originally asked to prepare designs for only one dormitory, and work was to proceed floor by floor, so that disruption of student life and loss of all-too-scarce dormitory space would be kept to a minimum. The basic design problems were therefore approached in horizontal terms, one floor at a time. Both



the architects and the Residence Halls Office at the University eventually settled on a complete renovation of both dormitories. With that decision, the architects were able to begin thinking in vertical terms, a process that led to new and unusual dormitory spaces.

The program required replacing the traditional corridor scheme with a series of suites housing nine to twelve people in Wallach, and ten to fifteen in Hartley. By means of this approach, the University hoped to encourage greater interaction among students and to improve the quality of life in the dormitories. Even more novel for the school was the decision to allow Hartley to be designed as a series of interlocking duplex suites. The architects were naturally asked to fit as many students per floor as possible, as well as to provide amenities that had not previously existed. Each suite includes: bathrooms; a kitchen (with ovens, but without refrigerators, since students are expected to eat in University dining halls); communal living areas; and furniture. The design of the interiors is attractive, if uninspired. White walls predominate, with occasional areas of wood paneling; everything is simple and modern, attempting little in the way of architectural statement.

The one feature to which an objection might be raised here is the notion of completely dispensing with the corridor scheme. For, in choosing the suite system, at least in the present design, the University has destroyed any vestige of the open door/corridor life that prevails in so many college dormitories. In fact, when one exits by the staircase or elevator, one is faced with a tiny hall and the choice of entering two apartments. Ironically, it is actually conceivable that occupants of one suite might never see others on their own floor.

Nevertheless, the suites of rooms Smotrich & Platt have designed for both dormitories represent not only an improvement over the old dormitory rooms, but also workable, and even satisfying interiors that serve as a worthwhile comparison to the new (and less successful) East Campus dormitory. And although the concept of interlocking duplex units for dormitories is not a new one, it has been carried out here with proper attention to use and detail. Finally, an unscientific survey of students found that virtually all preferred the refurbished buildings to the original schemes.

Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen: The East Asian Library

Among the most urgent renovations required on the Columbia campus was that of the East Asian Library, housed in Kent Hall, designed by McKim, Mead & White in 1907. Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen, have taken one of the most cluttered interiors on the campus and, based on visits to the nearly completed library, transformed it into a far better organized and much more beautiful space. Columbia's East Asian Library is well known, housing nearly half-a-million volumes of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean materials. The library consists of a spacious, double-height reading room, with balconies for stacks and offices, and four levels of stacks below, a total of approximately 16,500 s.f. Although this large amount of space constituted a vast improvement over former quarters abandoned in 1962, the new library has been seriously overcrowded for several years.

The renovation involved several major improvements, the most visible of which is the main reading room. Until recently, the long, vaulted space was a jumble of stacks, card catalogues, staff, and very few study desks, made worse by the generally run-down condition of the building and the ever-present humming of ugly fluorescent fixtures hung from the ceiling. As the photograph shows, the architects have succeeded in opening up the large space as well as in reorganizing the library for easier staff and reader use. All of the woodwork (of which there is a great deal) has been nicely refinished, and a number of new bookcases and elegant lighting fixtures have been added. Bookshelves formerly blocking windows have been removed, thereby allowing for more light and better conservation of the collection.

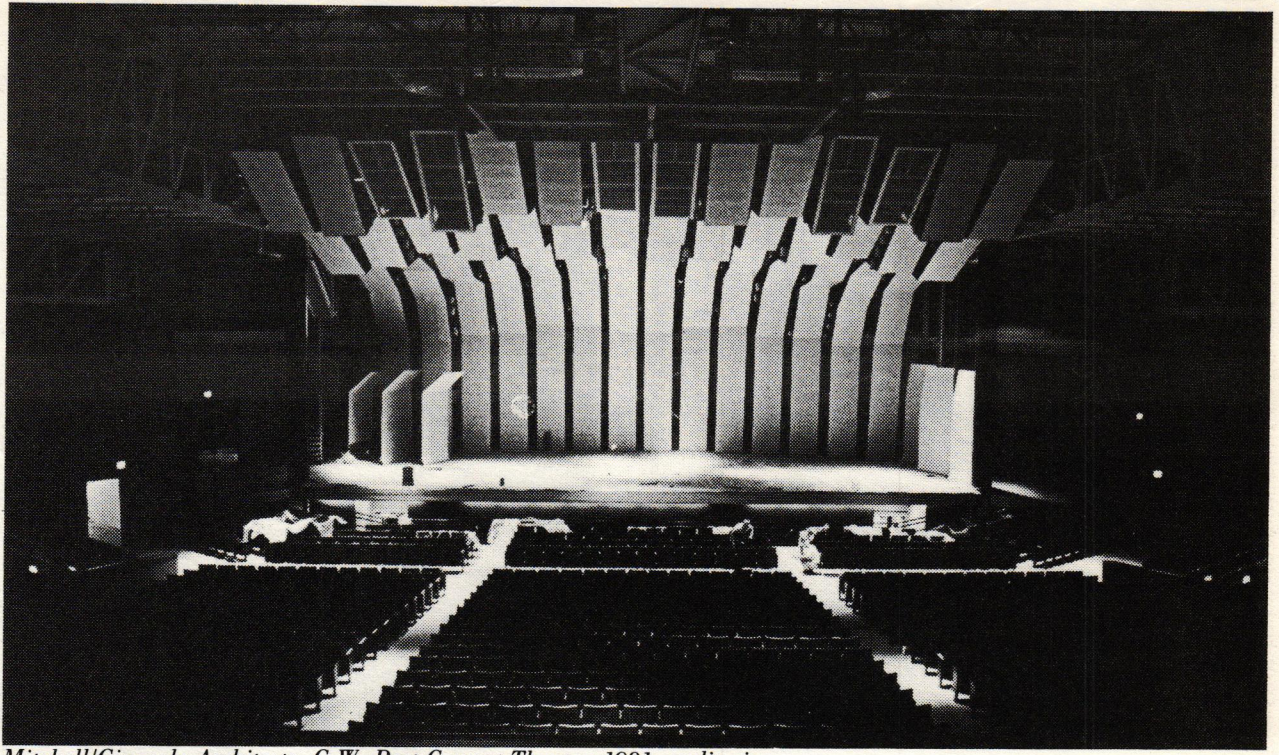
The second major aspect of the renovation has been the creation of a special facilities range on the lowest stack level. Until now, rooms for special collections, microfilm, or seminars were virtually nonexistent, and the overcrowding of books on stack levels had resulted in serious fire code violations. Additional space has been secured by using underground areas on the lowest level abandoned by the University. Special collections and seminar rooms are now located there, with appropriate facilities and controls for storing and using rare books. The design of these areas, with light wood paneling and a handsome wooden “canopy” running throughout the main corridors of the floor, is eminently successful. In sum, Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen's renovation of the East Asian Library is a fine and self-effacing one, bound to be appreciated most by those staff members and readers who use the library daily, rather than by visitors seeking architectural fireworks.

Given the difficulty architects today have in designing concert halls that are successful both acoustically and aesthetically, one might believe that in this century some ancient and arcane architectural wisdom has been permanently lost. It seems about as hard for contemporary architects to determine what makes a great music auditorium as it is for violin makers to unravel the mysterious interactions of form and material that resulted in the inimitable instruments of Antonio Stradivari.

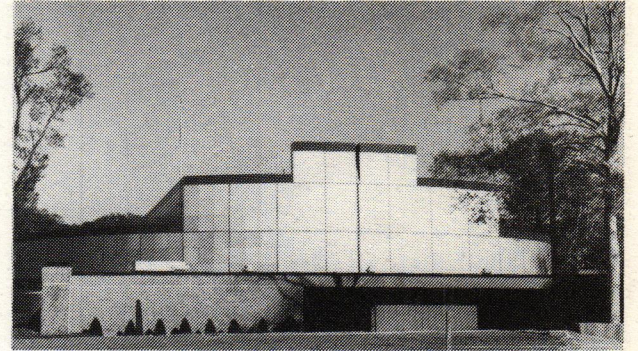
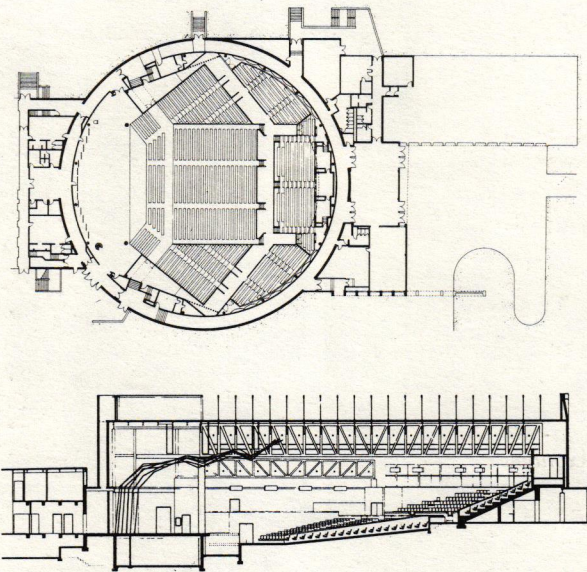
It's not that architects and sound engineers haven't been trying: for the past twenty years New Yorkers have witnessed the continuing saga of halls plagued by acoustical design failures. Many of those auditoriums suffer from what might be termed "the Sequin Syndrome" — the tendency to embellish basically modern structures with glittering but meaningless vestiges of a dimly-remembered Classicizing tradition, so as to signify, however superficially, the sense of great occasion which most Americans still associate with going to a concert or the opera.

But the twin considerations of the aural and the visual have been ably met, for the most part, in the newest auditorium in the New York metropolitan region: Mitchell/Giurgola Architects' Concert Theater at the C. W. Post Center of Long Island University in Brookville. The \$3.3-million circular structure enclosing a 2,250-seat hall replaces the Dome Auditorium, a 3,300-seat structure built in 1970 that collapsed under the weight of a heavy snowfall in February 1978. The overwhelming acoustic flaws of the unlamented Dome, with its unnerving, clattery reverberations, made the auditory experience of a concert there inevitably excruciating, no matter how accomplished the performing artists might have been. Visibility was no better: the unraked floor provided excellent sight lines of the backs of people's heads. The Dome Auditorium had about as much to recommend it as a concert hall as an airplane hangar, which, come to think of it, it rather closely resembled.

But the new Concert Theater is more than just an improvement over a poor situation. Because of budgetary limitations, the Mitchell/Giurgola team (under the direction of Project Architect Paul Broches; Romaldo Giurgola was recuperating from a heart attack during most of the design development) decided to retain the existing foundation of the Dome, the perimeter walls of which survived the cave-in of the ceiling. The exterior of the new building is very skillfully handled. The existing circular plan was cleverly de-emphasized by the clear definition of the front elevation as a curving, stepped



Mitchell/Giurgola Architects. C.W. Post Concert Theater; 1981, auditorium.



Center left: Plan. Left: Section. Above: West elevation, entry. Photograph by Paul Broches.

facade. The dull sheen of its aluminum-panel cladding is nicely set off by red joint lines and a blue entablature stripe. The general effect is much like that of an Art Deco industrial exhibition hall. Beyond Mitchell/Giurgola's control was the dismal approach to the Concert Theater through the several square miles of parking lots that surround it. And the seemingly interminable experience of getting out of them after a concert is enough to shatter the spell of even the most hypnotic musical evening.

Although it has over 1,000 fewer seats than the old Dome, the new Concert Theater is by no means small: its 2,250 seats make it more than twice as large as Alice Tully Hall, which has 1,096 seats, and it is only one-fifth smaller than Carnegie Hall, the 2,800-seat capacity of which is generally believed among acousticians to be the maximum advisable size for a music auditorium. But unlike Carnegie Hall, the space at C. W. Post is not arranged vertically in the traditional stacked horseshoe shape — shallow but steep. Rather, the Concert Theater's general configuration is a gently inclining fan shape inscribed within the circular external walls — deep but low. Thus the character of the sound at C. W. Post is more diffuse than at Carnegie Hall and Philadelphia's somewhat similarly arranged Academy of Music. There the cylindrical spatial volumes "deliver" the sound vertically rather than horizontally, in a palpably dynamic fashion, to even the most remote upper reaches of those two venerable halls. But the Concert Theater's sound is, on the whole, good. It is definitely better than that of Avery Fisher Hall — which is metallic, high-keyed, and lacking in bass — and is without the aurally threadbare patches to be found here and there in the Metropolitan Opera House. However, the C. W. Post hall is not at all with the warm resonance of Boston's Symphony Hall, America's most acoustically superb auditorium.

The performance of the New York Philharmonic conducted by Rafael Kubelik that this reviewer attended at the new Concert Theater serendipitously served as a remarkably complete demonstration of the hall's acoustic range. The program began with Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony*, its bright, soaring string lines as crisply defined as a steel engraving. The limpid woodwinds of Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*, the second offering of the evening, could be heard with all their subtle nuances intact. It was only in the first and final movements of Janacek's *Sinfonietta*, the concluding work of the concert, that any harshness was heard: but that piece's famous nine-part brass choir is one of the loudest passages in the standard repertoire. The primary sound-deflection device of the auditorium is an acoustic shell formed by 14 reflective ribbons that zig-zag out over the stage like extended strips of computer print-out paper. If the hall's sound, to this listener, does not seem quite so "live" as the acoustical consultant, Robert Hansen, has maintained, it is still a positive aural ambience in which to listen to music.

The interior design of the hall is more noteworthy for what it wisely avoids than for what it attempts. Pretentious surface treatments were eschewed in favor of a simple and dignified approach. Off-the-shelf, high-tech structural components were left unadorned: the wire-encased shipboard lights used on the auditorium's walls are vastly preferable to the New York State Theater's rhinestones as big as the Ritz. Some up-to-the-minute "post-modernist" decorating clichés have been employed. The two large structural columns that flank the stage are painted in the newly traditional Gravesian rose-mauve: it's hard to believe that they aren't really Sonotubes. The lower walls of the auditorium are painted two shades of purple, the upper walls a much more elegant gray; seats are upholstered in a dark brick red. No doubt the predominantly "p-m" palette will seem dated rather quickly, but as none of the Concert Theater's elements are expensively executed, they can (and no doubt will) be painted some other colors in a few years' time.

At a Carnegie Hall recital a few years ago, the irrepressible (and high-priced) soprano Birgit Nilsson prefaced her rendition of Wagner's "*Dich teure Halle*" by explaining to her audience the dual definition of the German adjective: "The words can mean either 'Thou dear hall,' or 'Thou expensive hall.'" The C. W. Post Concert Theater is clearly not in the second category; in due course its users might consign it to the first. It is a creditable work. Not only does the Concert Theater look good and sound good, but it cost less than some of the major acoustic retrofits carried out in recent years. In terms of Mitchell/Giurgola's intelligent allocation of its client's limited budget, that alone is worth the price of admission.

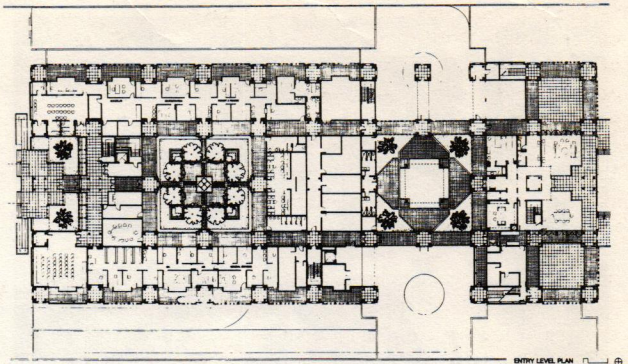
Project: Concert Theater, C. W. Post Center, Long Island University, Greenvale, New York.
Architects: Mitchell/Giurgola Architects; project architects: Paul Broches, Jack Cain; project team: Romaldo Giurgola, Richard Hocking, Leonard Salvato, Lynn Schneider, and Owen Richards.
Theatrical consultant: Jules Fischer Associates.
Acoustical consultant: Robert A. Hansen Associates.
Site: Existing fieldhouse/auditorium, which had collapsed — a circular plan, 190 ft. in diameter — on large suburban campus.
Size: 44,400 s.f.; seating capacity: 2,250.
Program: multipurpose performance hall with minimal support spaces.
Structure: Steel frame, concrete slab floors, and interior walls.
Exterior: Aluminum panels.
Cost: General construction, \$3.3 million; \$300,000 for theater and sound equipment.
Client: Long Island University.

Mitchell/Giurgola: C. W. Post Concert Theater

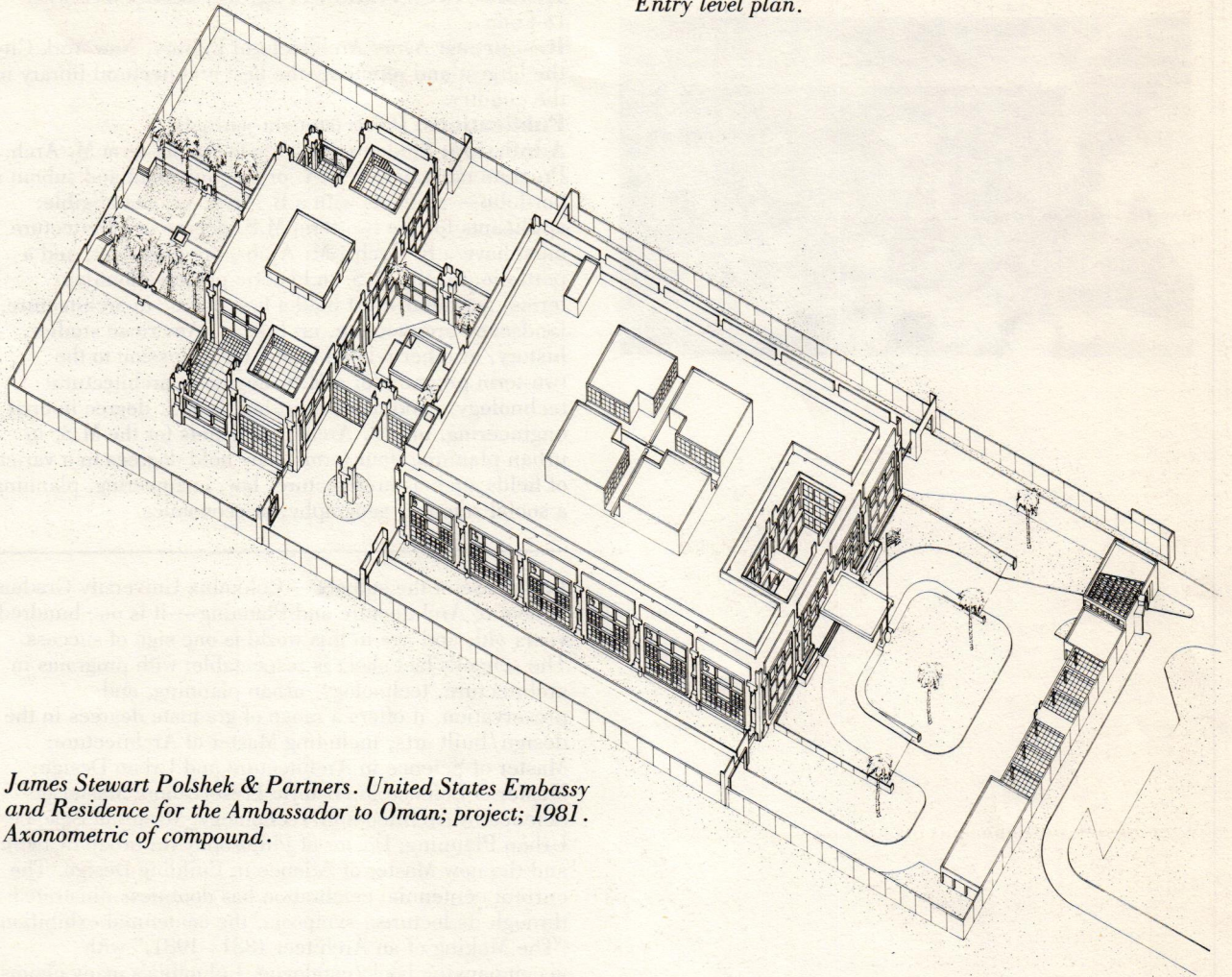
Martin Filler

Polshek: Oman Embassy

Construction is expected to start in the fall of 1982 on the United States Embassy and Residence of the ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, designed by James Stewart Polshek, dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at Columbia University. The building will be located in a newly planned diplomatic compound on the Bay of Oman, approximately 15 miles west of Muscat. Within the site rectangle, necessarily surrounded by a three-meter wall, are, first, the Chancery—and then, beyond an open court, the Residence. The building's cast-in-place concrete structure is enclosed by a double skin of precast concrete panels faced with ceramic tile on the outside and a combined masonry, metal, and glass curtain wall on the inner surface.

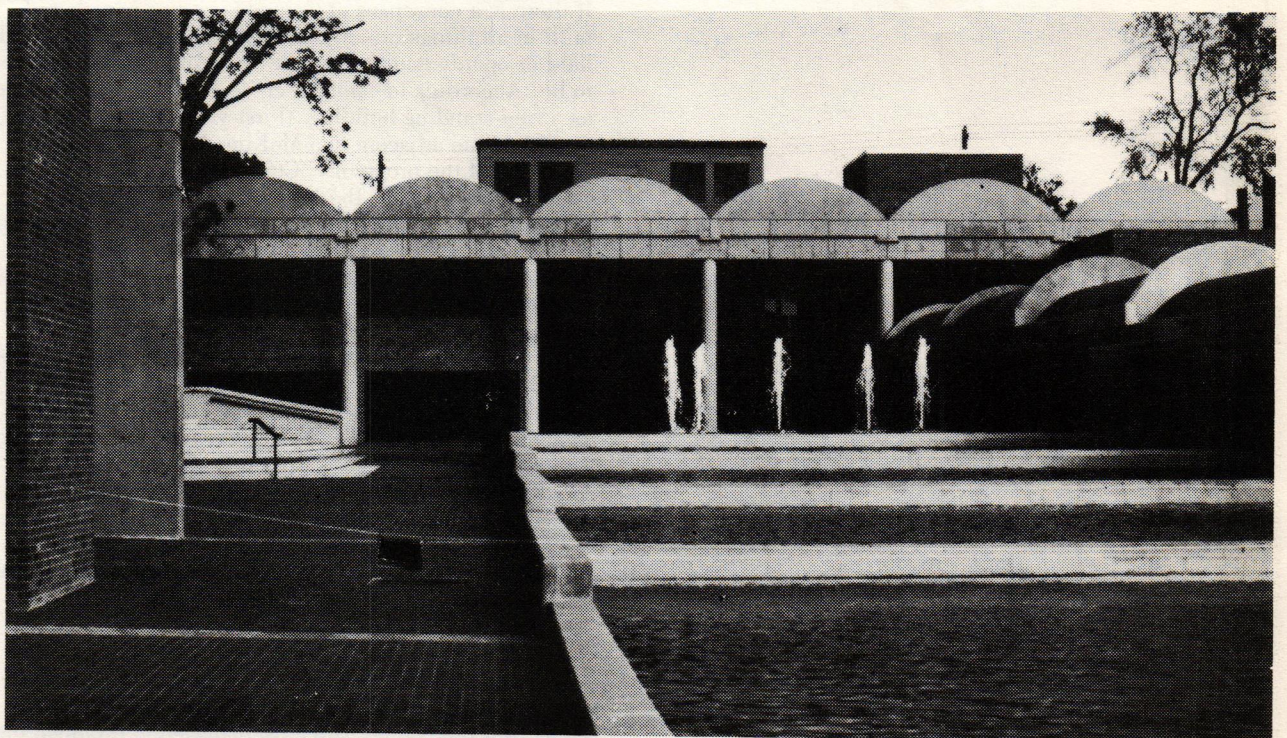


Entry level plan.



James Stewart Polshek & Partners. United States Embassy and Residence for the Ambassador to Oman; project; 1981. Axonometric of compound.

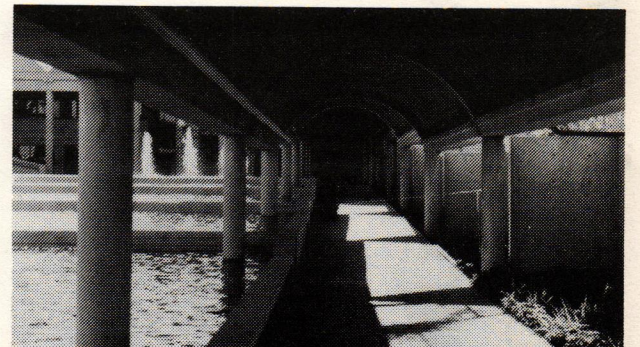
Bond Ryder: King Center



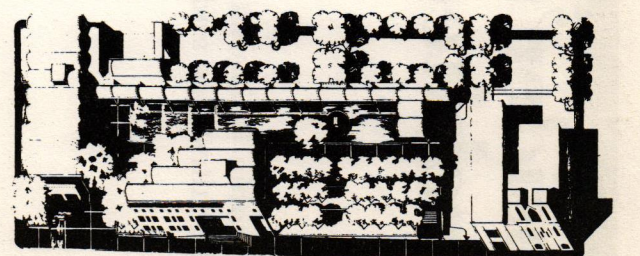
Bond Ryder Associates. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change, Atlanta, Georgia; 1981. Courtyard elevation of conference building with arcade at right.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was born on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, and now he rests there—in a classical tomb that is the quiet focal point of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change, designed by Max Bond of Bond Ryder Associates, and current chairman of the division of architecture at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning. The first phase of the center—the tomb, with its surrounding reflecting pool, vaulted arcade and tree-studded plaza, and small Interfaith Peace Chapel—was dedicated in January, 1977. January 15, 1982 will be the occasion for the dedication of the second phase.

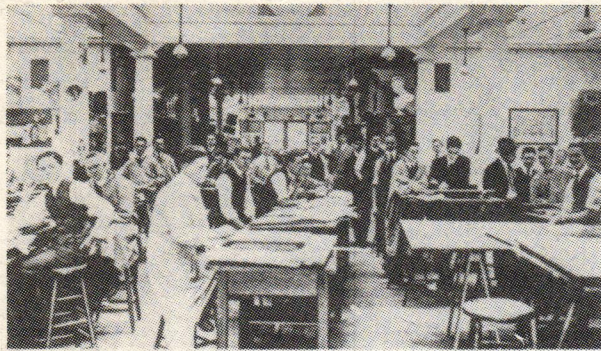
This phase of construction, finished in October, completes the complex with a two-story conference center at one end of the site, and a three-story archive along the avenue. A barrel-vaulted colonnade (that will have a series of reliefs memorializing historic scenes of the struggle for freedom) links the conference center with the chapel, the tomb, and, finally, the existing Ebenezer Baptist Church. The Center's brick and concrete barrel-vaulted structures, apparently influenced through Mr. Bond's work in Africa, and by the work of Louis Kahn, seem to provide an appropriate vocabulary for the site and program.



"Freedom Walkway" arcade leading from Peace Chapel to conference building.



Axonometric of Center complex.



Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning

Location: New York City

Dean: James Stewart Polshek

Assistant Dean for Administration: Arlene Jacobs.

(Responsible for office personnel, physical plant, security, publicity, development, and alumni relations)

Assistant Dean for Admissions, Financial Aid, and Student Affairs: Loes Schiller

Assistant Dean for Minority Affairs, Research, and Placement: Arverna Adams

Division of Architecture, Chairperson: Max Bond

Urban Design Program, Director: Stanton Eckstut

Historic Preservation Program, Director: David DeLong

Resources: Avery Architectural Library, New York City, the largest and reputedly the best architectural library in the country.

Publications: *Precis* (student journal).

Admission: Students applying to the six-term M. Arch. Program must have a B.A. or its equivalent and submit a portfolio—students with a B. Arch. are not eligible; applicants for the two-term M.S. degree in architecture must have a B. Arch., M. Arch., or equivalent, and a portfolio; for the M.S. in historic preservation (four terms), students must hold a first degree in architecture, landscape architecture, art history, American studies, history, or other related fields; for admission to the two-term program for a M.S. degree in architectural technology, candidates must hold a B.S. degree in civil engineering, or a B. Arch.; applicants for the M.S. in urban planning (four terms) may hold degrees in a variety of fields such as architecture, law, engineering, planning, a social science, geography, or economics.

In defense of the subject—Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning—it is one hundred years old, and age in this world is one sign of success. The school's fact sheet is respectable: with programs in architecture, technology, urban planning, and preservation, it offers a range of graduate degrees in the design/built arts, including Master of Architecture; Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design; Master of Science in Historic Preservation; Master of Science in Architectural Technology; Master of Science in Urban Planning; Doctor of Philosophy (in urban design); and the new Master of Science in Building Design. The current centennial celebration has doubtless illustrated through its lectures, symposia, the centennial exhibition "The Making of an Architect 1881–1981," with accompanying book/catalogue, Columbia's many claims to fame. To get the best sense of the school, attend a jury. The studios are central at Columbia, as in most graduate schools of design.

Philosophical Bases

If there is a consensus at Columbia, it lies in a shared faith in all things urban, and in the belief—be it secretly held or openly flaunted—that New York City is *the* place to be. According to common credo, there is no such thing as a free-standing building. (First-year students pretend to design one adjacent to a McKim, Mead & White rendition of the program.) "Contextualism" is key, as is "fabric" design (i.e., the urban fabric). A love-hate relationship with the omnipresent Manhattan grid and an occasional footnoted reference to East Hampton (with *hommage* to Edwin Lutyens, by extension) round out the picture.

Such consensus lies far beneath a turbulent surface. The school prides itself on a diverse faculty. Most easily spotted are the extremes, alternatively labeled "the Old School" and "the New"; "the Right" and "the Left"; "the I. Style" and "the P.-M.'s." Students hardly need the local tabloids to tell them that Robert A.M. Stern and Kenneth Frampton don't always get along. The vast majority of professors (associate professors, affiliate professors—the titles are deliberately confusing; all that counts is the titular head—the Tenured Professor) fall somewhere between Stern and Frampton.

Fame and fortune inevitably influence opinions, and Columbia students are very much aware of the Chosen Ones, the Big Names who have managed to establish their reputations in theory or practice. But all faculty are ultimately subject to the test of teaching, and it is to Columbia's credit that so many who have made their mark outside the school earn high marks within. To generalize on *personae* and the theories they espouse, various orientations and their exponents could be categorized as 1) Formalism: Robert A.M. Stern and Steven Peterson (one is eclectic and the other classicizing); 2) Social Concerns: Michael Mostoller (who teaches a studio on single-room occupancy housing that includes every type of occupant, from bag ladies to executive singles), Richard Plunz, and the Planning Department; 3) Marxism and Modernism: Kenneth Frampton; and 4) Synthesis (theory that is also built architecture): Susana Torre. The list is dreadfully incomplete and serves only to suggest the real spread of ideas and options explored within the ivory tower. Personalities are all-important, and courses or studios are chosen not for content as much as for character.

Studios are directly shaped by the individuals who teach them and generally reflect their specific areas of interest or expertise. Thus, Lauretta Vinciarelli's studio on "carpet" housing reflects her own concern with abstract architectural language and pattern-making, while Steven Peterson turns a branch library into a discourse on the molding of space through *poché*. Visiting faculty (Leonardo Benevolo last year and Helen Searing this past fall) enjoy the lure of the unfamiliar and are always in great demand—rightfully so.

Such is the field on philosophical grounds. There are all sorts of additional sliding scales that students use to evaluate their superiors, for example: those who do or those who don't (pick up a pencil and draw during a desk discussion); those who proselytize or those who, chameleon-like, change to suit whatever style they see emerging. There are those who teach technology and those who teach theory (more interesting, but only slightly better taught). Then there are those who will actually fail a student under the pass-fail system.

Technology and theory, along with visual studies and methods of practice, constitute the four categories of coursework. In the struggle against studio, however, courses inevitably lose. Design work is of primary concern: papers and even exams are trivial affairs when compared with the threat of a Final Review, an annual ordeal in which all work to date is reviewed by the Faculty, at which time permission to proceed to second year is either granted—or denied.

Students select their studio critics via lottery: individual preferences are listed from a field of three to five critics, and numbers then juggled to even out distribution between the popular favorites and the remainder. The ratio of faculty to students ranges from 1 to 8, to 1 to 12 (more often the latter). Studio projects are consistent across a studio, although individual faculty add their own inflections. Programs and projects run up the scale from Bauhaus "Spots and Dots" (first year's first problem) to urban design in the third year. A thesis option is now under consideration for next year.

If the faculty is all-important, so is the dean. It is almost impossible to imagine Columbia without its peerless Dean Polshek. By hook or by crook, he manages year by year to keep his motley crew together. A canny ability to avoid taking sides is shared by his sidekick Max Bond, whose famous Cheshire-cat smile made it into the pages of *The New Yorker* in an article last fall. Of greater concern is the composition of the student body. However diverse at the start, classes quickly congeal into the typical totem pole. The upper echelon (whose high position may or may not be deserved) rarely breaks ranks to admit a new member, while those below suffer the crushing load of comparison and the consequent crisis of confidence.

Common Gripes

Regardless of rank, all students side together against that common foe: the administration. Few schools can boast so archaic a system. The computer is still new to Columbia (this writer has yet to be billed for the fall semester, a fact gleefully admitted, but only among friends), and the rigors of registration are therefore the first of many trials a Columbia student will encounter. Rather than orchestrate a complex mixing of programs with courses in each of the three main departments of architecture, urban design, and preservation, the administration discourages overlap and interaction. After all—imagine the confusion of class-scheduling and cross-referenced credits!

Perplexed by the process of education and finance, students have little ammunition against the organized rank and file of facts and figures displayed to justify increased fees.

There are, of course, those students who actively and aggressively champion the rights of the downtrodden against these and other outrages, be they real or imagined. But the architectural school remains remarkably utopian. Ill-equipped to tackle the business of building, students study *à la* nineteenth-century Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Perhaps that is as it should be. "Pragmatics come with the real world" is the explanation. Practicalities are too specific to be taught. Besides, they're boring.

There is another issue that never fails to incur the wrath of students in all years and all programs: that of the Columbia Numbers Game. It's a racket, and the administration (the perpetual villain or scapegoat, depending on whose side you're on) always wins, but everyone plays anyway. The rules are simple: classes continue to grow as space shrinks, subdivided to supply new programs. Despite constant complaints of overcrowding from last year's firsts, this year brought *ten* extra admissions to the first-year class *over* and *above* last year's all-time high. (No wonder students wonder if their voices can be heard.) Preservation has a bigger problem—they lost their space to the new guys on the block in Building Design, a brand-new, second-professional-degree program. Sooner or later (we hope sooner) the school must expand or retrench.

Where does all this leave Columbia? Not in crisis . . . but certainly not in comfort either. The problems are *not* peculiar to Columbia; although some schools do seem to do better. Those students now in Columbia who went to Smith College as undergraduates speak of studios the likes of which the rest of us have never seen. Fully equipped desks, lights that work, enough stools for everyone. But that's in Northampton, Massachusetts. In the final analysis, Columbia has one great advantage that will survive, and that is—you guessed it—New York. That's full circle, dear reader. We're back where we began.

Insider's Guide to Architecture Schools:

Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning

Books & Periodicals

In Brief

Precis, Volume 3, 1981: Architecture in the Public Realm. Published for Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning by Rizzoli, New York, 1981. 96 pages; 250 drawings. \$12.00. The *Precis* issue "Architecture in the Public Realm," explores the creation of new vocabularies and types in a changing political, social, and historical context, both formally and pragmatically examining urbanism in its present amorphous state. The editors—Deborah Dietsch and Susanna Steenken—have arranged the multiple possibilities inherent in their subject within three sections: Public Life, e.g. neighborhood revitalization, parks, Long Island City, and a Battery Park City arena; Residential Environments: carpet and row housing, artists' housing, a consulate, a single-room occupancy hotel; and Places of Work and Study: libraries, museum additions, skyscrapers, marketplaces. Essays throughout (by both students and faculty) equally reflect a breadth of subject and concern; "Experiential Context of the Esthetic Process"; "Conservation of Bethesda Fountain"; and "The City of Towers" are only a few examples. The range of projects and essays on urban form and space, and particular urban issues, are skillfully orchestrated to convey the history, theory, and potential inherent in the general urban framework, giving some definition to an enormous diversity of issues that may often overlap.

New Arrivals

The George Costakis Collection: Russian Avant-Garde Art. Angelica Rudenstine, General Editor. Introduction by S. Frederick Starr. Harry N. Abrams Publishers, New York, December, 1981. 527 pages, over 1,201 illustrations, 632 in color. \$60.00.

Le Corbusier: Selected Drawings. Introduction by Michael Graves. Rizzoli, New York, January 1982. 144 pages, 240 illustrations, 24 in color. \$15.95, soft-cover.

Le Corbusier Sketchbooks, Volume II: 1950–1954. Edited by the Architectural History Foundation, with notes by Françoise de Francieu, in collaboration with the Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris. Architectural History Foundation, distributed by the MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., December, 1981. 541 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations. \$125.00.

Monumental Classic Architecture of Great Britain and Ireland. Albert E. Richardson. Classical America Edition, with introduction by H. Stafford Bryant, Jr. Classical America, distributed by W.W. Norton, Inc., New York, January, 1982. 124 pages, 176 black-and-white photographs and drawings. \$10.95, soft-cover; \$25.00, hardcover.

John Ruskin: The Passionate Moralizer. Joan Abse. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, November 1981. 368 pages, 8 pages of illustrations, \$17.95

Ruskin's Maze: Mastery and Madness in his Art. Jay Fellows. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., December, 1981. 375 pages, \$25.00.

Seven Stones: A Portrait of Arthur Erickson, Architect. Edith Iglauer. University of Washington Press, Seattle, Wash., November, 1981. 120 pages, 112 photographs, 40 in color. \$29.95.

Skylines: Understanding and Molding Urban Silhouettes. Wayne Attoe. John Wiley Publishers, New York, 1981. 128 pages, illustrated. \$36.95.

Window, Room, Furniture. Catalogue from Cooper Union Gallery exhibition, December 4, 1981—January 22, 1982. Introduction by Ricardo Scofidio and Tod Williams. Foreword by Bill N. Lacy. Designed by Stephen Doyle. Includes essays by Juan Pablo Bonta; David Shapiro and Lindsay Stamm. Rizzoli, New York, January, 1982. 111 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations. \$19.95, soft-cover.

Tarnished Tales on Tut

Ross Miller

The King Tut exhibition that traveled the world under the auspices of the Egyptian government was a special phenomenon. People who rarely find themselves in museums or concert halls were lining up with Ticketron stubs, waiting for hours, to view the long-dead Child King. After all his years of noble slumber the wake had recommenced. The "Today Show" was there; the news magazines ran features; Tut fashions were pulled off the rack at Bloomie's and Bendel's; a comedian in a white suit wrote a hit song about the handsome lad "buried in his 'jammies . . ." Had great art finally excited the mob? Had Emerson's call for a "domesticated culture" in America finally been heeded? A century and a half late?

It is at this strange union of art and commodity that Oscar Newman aims his novel. *Unmasking a King* concerns the cupidity of nations, institutions, and individuals; an interdependent web of influences is examined against the backdrop of a daring caper.

A group of well-trained pros, schooled in all manner of high-tech security equipment, plan to knock off the Tut exhibition when it visits New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art during the winter of 1979. Mr. Newman, presumably from his own experience as an architect and planning security consultant to the Met, gives a graphic picture of the security efforts of a large institution: microwave senders, pressure locks, ultrasound, etc. Pretty interesting stuff. This technical material—how security installations fit existing architecture—gives the novel a nice anchoring. In a workman-like way Mr. Newman gathers all the known materials of fiction and sets out to put them together. Unfortunately, books, like buildings, sometimes do not hold together even if they are built to code. Narrative—the foundation of fictions—must work from a sense of social and psychological

necessity. The logic of a character's action is internal, but should seem possible, and in the very best of novels appear inevitable. *Unmasking a King* fails to produce this essential logic; the joints do not hold.

Oscar Newman views the novel as a building site. The structure's elements are piled up at the site before construction begins. The characters are there: the Collector—he is never called by his proper name even by his intimates—is an oil executive with a keen eye for *objets d'art*. He is a former board member of the Met who has been forced out through an internal political feud. (Newman spends a good deal of time, outside the proper boundaries of the narrative, detailing various internecine quarrels at museums that are surely a part of the unsavory art biz but that rob the novel of some essential forward motion. As a result the narrative suffers too many stops and starts.) There is MacSweeney, the loyal and hard-boiled ex-N.Y. cop now in the security business; Bernie Stein, a genteelly poor curator at the Met brought in as the necessary "inside man"; and Elaine Ross, a brilliant and beautiful (smart-but-sexy) psychologist drawn into the plot for all the reasons brilliant and beautiful women find themselves in plots written by men.

There is a suitably serious and sinister background drawn from Egyptian and Israeli tensions, the imminence of the Camp David accords (1979), and oil and to yield a plot hinging on the unlikely premise that the Egyptians consent to have their own exhibition broken into and Tut's gold funeral mask stolen and copied in order to gain leverage on then-President Carter and win concessions from Israel concerning Sinai oil. How this all happens has a lot to do with the Collector's powers of persuasion: the greed of individuals—prompted here by passion and love of art—and institutions; and in a trick ending (true to the caper form), the ultimate stupidity of the authorities. Add to this a love triangle, the machinations of curators, experts, dealers, and two action-packed "incursions" at the Met, and Newman should have all the material required for a contemporary novel. Yet with all this material the structure will not stand.

Unmasking a King. Oscar Newman. Macmillan, New York, 1981. 292 pages, \$10.95.

There is an almost complete lack of integration of parts: actions appear unmotivated, passions seem strained or posed. For instance, after making love to the "Collector," an older man who wears the cologne of money and power, Elaine still calls him by his "handle." There is never any modulation of tone between private and public acts. People, in Mr. Newman's world, behave the same in the bedroom and the boardroom. Perhaps this is true, but the reader must feel the strain of identity, the difficulty of maintaining a pose. In *Unmasking a King* sex is viewed the same as the computer terminals in the the Met's basement, and because of this and other problems of tone there is no progressive revelation of character. Bernie gets involved in the heist because he is underpaid and has a sense of adventure. Elaine is interested for certain psychological reasons. She likes the money, too. However, there is never any dramatic tension in these characters after their decisions are made. Once they become outlaws—outlaws who, in the modern manner, never get caught—they never regret. There is too often in this book an on-off, binary portrayal of character.

Unmasking a King does not succeed as a thriller. Oscar Newman, like the architect eager to succeed with his first house, has tried to build too large a structure on too small a site.

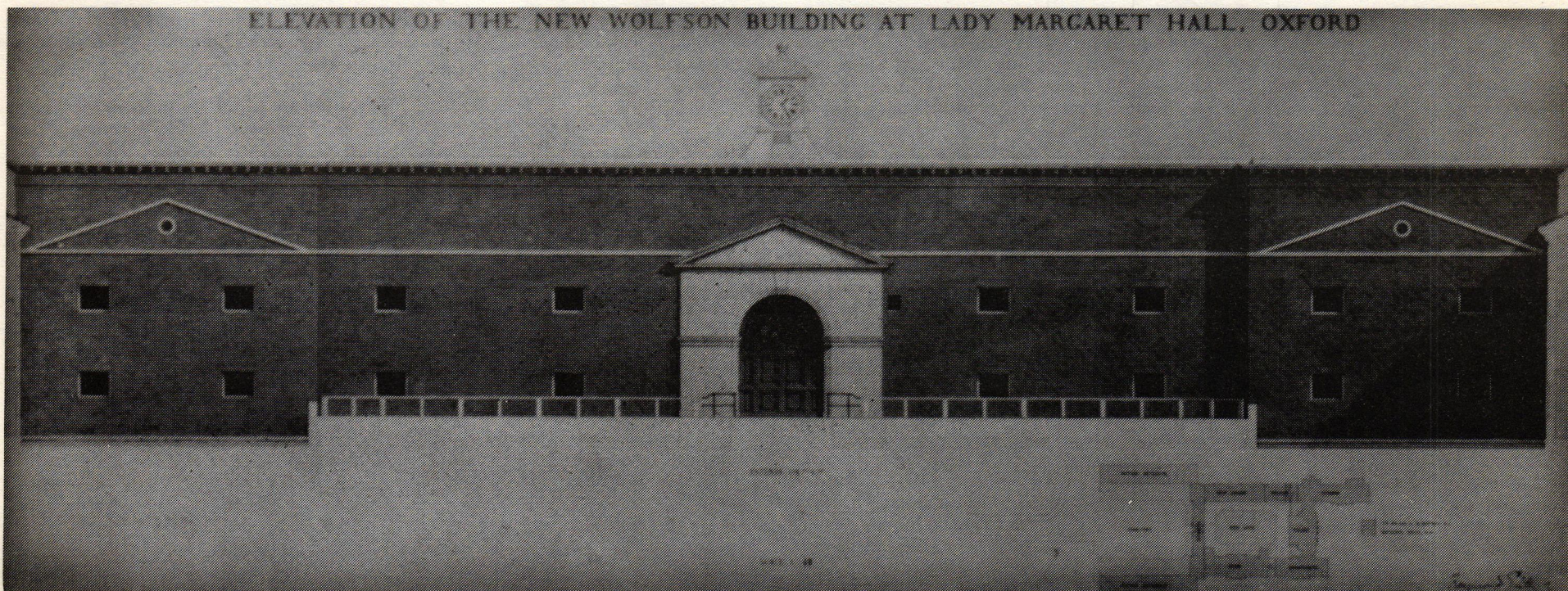
Books

The exhibition "Robert Stern," June 11–July 31, 1981, Leinster Gardens Gallery, London, sponsored by *A.D./Academy Editions*, was accompanied by *A.D. Special Profile: Robert Stern*, Architectural Design and Academy Editions, London, 1981; with introduction by Vincent Scully; 80 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations, \$14.95.

The exhibition "Quinlan Terry: An Exhibiton of Drawings," March 25–May 2, 1981, Leinster Gardens Gallery, London, sponsored by *A.D./Academy Editions*, was accompanied by *A.D. Special Profile: Quinlan Terry*; 48 pages, illustrated, \$9.95.

Classical Leanings

Hal Foster



Quinlan Terry. *New Wolfson Building*; 1967.

A new and old classicism is the subject of two recent architecture shows and catalogues. The exhibitions, one on English architect Quinlan Terry, the other on Robert A.M. (Anti-Modernism) Stern, were sponsored by *Architectural Design* magazine (*A.D.*) and installed in its Leinster Gardens gallery in London last spring and summer.

At one extreme, Terry holds onto a classical idiom so conservative as to be almost radical; at the other, Stern would reconnect post-modern architecture to pre-modern via classical allusion. But these extremes are only apparent: for example, the work of both architects tends to reduce architectural history to a series of monuments.

What precisely is the "new classicism"? Is it an ethical as well as typological discipline, as Terry attests? Or is it merely a matter of the rhetorical use of classical forms, as Stern writes? Here the relation of the classical to the post-modern is crucial, especially as it bears on the post-modern critique of modernism and the concept of *zeitgeist* in general.

Modernism? *zeitgeist*? Quinlan Terry is innocent, almost absolved, of these notions, committed as he is to classicism as a continuous tradition. In the publication that accompanies the show Terry claims that it is not new or even "neo-" to him: "I try to practice as a classical architect today," he writes. *As, not in the manner of:* to Terry, this is the only Architecture, handed down like the True Cross from the Renaissance, Palladio, Jones, and Wren, through Neoclassicism and the 19th-century revivals to 20th-century British Architect Raymond Erith, and, well, to Terry.

If this is the Tradition, what of the Individual Talent? Now at least it is silent, subsumed: no reform is allowed, for classicism is an absolute—indeed, Terry literally conflates it with religion. About the faith there is no argument; the architecture is another matter.

Instead of timely architecture, Terry does timeless architecture: a cricket house or a memorial column, a new "old" estate, or a museum of heraldry . . . all in the classical mode. By taste and by type this may be all Terry can do—though he insists this mode can meet contemporary needs. But how so? To Terry, "the classical grammar remains neutral, like the paint on the artist's palette." It is natural, without ideology (either original or accrued). Apparently the use of a classical architecture by authoritarian regimes is coincidental.

This is pure . . . what? Grace? ideology? Terry does seem willfully unaware. Note this insight: "There is after all no fundamental difference between the tradesman, the architect or his employers. They are all men in the image of God . . ." Such Biblical "communism" abets the

worst social conservatism, as we in America have recently had to relearn. It seems the social orders are as God-given to Terry as the classical orders.

Such architectural "purity" can be radical—Leon Krier's is an example. Terry's is unabashedly antiquarian. And one is left with two questions: Could there be a *serious* interest in Terry outside the post-modern milieu? Moreover, could there be a post-modern milieu apart from the conservative context of Western politics?

Post-modern ideologies are silent as to *this* context: they speak instead of freedom from the Modern Style (and so, in a way, are "guilty" of the self-reflexivity of which they accuse it.) But it is this context that I would like to address, for it seems to me that post-modern architecture has as much to do with "neoconservatism" as it does with "new classicism." And here we do well to turn to the work and the writing of Robert A.M. Stern.

In the October *Skyline* Stern slashed Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture: a Critical History* as a "book that sees architecture as built ideology." Obviously this is a sensitive point for Stern, for his architecture is precisely: built ideology. As an architect and as a writer, Stern is the principal ideologue of at least one type of architectural post-modernism.

The relation of the "new classicism" to post-modern architecture (and of both to neoconservatism) is perhaps clearest in Stern's work, but here it is as a post-modern proponent, not practitioner, that he concerns me.

In recent years Stern has written apologies for such architecture—not to the public (the post-modern mix of "pop" and "historical" plays to both public and patron)—but, against all odds, to intellectuals. Though many post-moderns are professors, its base here is weak (Charles Jencks notwithstanding).

In "The Doubles of Post-Modern" Stern notes two post-modern types: the "schismatic" (e.g. Peter Eisenman), who aligns with modernism against tradition, and the "traditional" (e.g. Robert Stern), who does the reverse. The tactic here is to quarantine modernism (luckily, post-modern architecture, not even Stern's, bears this out): it is seen as the grimly gray, mute monolith whose one end is the sterility of our lives. Ideologically, such modernism-phobia is to be expected. The problem is not the injury done it, but that done to "tradition." For Stern's "reintegration" homogenizes it: he opens "the modern" to include architecture from the Renaissance to today and so in effect de-defines the term. Criticism is not served thereby and I doubt that architecture is either.

The conservative bent here is explicit: the dismissal of *zeitgeist* as a concept and the portrayal of modernism as utopian and deterministic only confirm it. Stern lectures on the "public life of art": on "responsibility" and "reality." Such "contextualism" (as it is called) is problematic: can architecture be coherent and as heterogeneous as the American city?

Architecture's task may not be the renewal of society; it may, however, be the renewal of form. To me the post-modern program as seen by Stern does neither. It is not a Victory of the People, nor is it Architecture's Return to Itself. Such architecture, to Stern, is akin to the "moral fiction" of John Gardner and the cultural criticism of Daniel Bell: together they lead us to a "cultural resynthesis." But what is this "resynthesis" if not the espousal of neoconservatism? Must we submit to it?

In the Works

Susan Lewin, architecture editor of *House Beautiful*, is working on a book on American residential architecture from the mid-1960s to the present, dealing with houses by established as well as lesser-known firms. The book, which will be large-format, but not "coffee-table" in content, will be completed by summer of 1983, with the publisher to be determined. . . . The University of Chicago Press will publish *John Soane: The Making of an Architect*, by Pierre DuPrey, professor of art history at Queens University, Ontario, in May of 1982. The book, focusing on Soane's education and early career, will be approximately 352 pages, and will have 250 illustrations, both black-and-white and color, and will be priced at \$37.50. . . . Marc Treib is currently working on a book on mission churches of New Mexico, which he has dubbed *Sacred Mud*. The book is tentatively scheduled for 1983, with the publisher not definitely signed yet. He is concurrently writing a biography on Eliel Saarinen as planner, also with a 1983 publication date, and with the publisher to be decided.

October 20, Spring 1982, will include "Albert Speer: The Architect," based on an interview conducted in 1978 by Bernhard Leitner.



The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities. Dolores Hayden. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981. 384 pages, 123 illustrations. \$19.95

The Kitchen Garden Association's attempt to professionalize housework by teaching five-year-old girls to set the table and do the wash with miniature household equipment.

Domestic Shifts

Rosemarie Bletter

In millions of homes throughout America, stoves, microwave ovens, refrigerators, and food processors devour electricity in the preparation of food, while dishwashers, washing machines, and vacuums churn away to clean dishes, clothes, and floors. Most of these machines are serviced by women, who at the same time may have their young children "supervised" by the T.V. set. Compared with the 19th century, drudgery has been removed from housework only to be replaced by a high-keyed form of consumerism. Despite the mechanization of housework, however—according to recent time-budget studies—actual working hours have increased. As the old extended family has shrunk to nuclear size, and as society has become increasingly suburban, the extreme isolation of housework has worsened. In 1886, the suffragist Mary Livermore pinpointed this problem when she claimed that nine out of ten housewives in New York were "as isolated as prairie farmers' wives." Along with many other feminists, she proposed that "isolated housekeeping be merged into a cooperative housekeeping."

In her incisive new book, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities*, Dolores Hayden, also the author of *Seven American Utopias* (MIT Press, 1976), has uncovered a vast array of both utopian and pragmatic responses to this issue in America. "Material feminists," as Hayden calls them, were not always interested in women's suffrage, but, in true utilitarian fashion, tried to attack what they perceived as a pernicious social condition by redesigning the social setting. They rethought the physical configuration of cities and the workplace: the apartment house, the home, and the kitchen, and through this they hoped to bring about social change. Perhaps "utilitarian feminists" would have been a more descriptive appellation.

Though Hayden calls all of these suggestions "feminist," not all of them came from women. Such ideas were first raised in the circles of French and English utopian socialists in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. A critique of traditional domestic work sprang from these men's belief that architecture should express and encourage a more even-handed method of production and consumption. Robert Owen's settlement in New Harmony, Indiana, for instance, included community kitchens and a child-care center. Other Owenites went even further in demanding equal domestic work for men and women. The Fourierist "Social Palace" at Guise, France, begun in 1859, also had a number of communal features, including child-care facilities. The efforts of the communitarian socialists were followed closely in America, but, on the whole, these did not abandon role stereotyping. Women ran the communal kitchens and nurseries in most utopian groups.

Melusina Fay Pierce was among the first women to make a full economic critique of housework. She regarded domestic work by women as an "unnatural sacrifice," and demanded that they be paid for this labor. In articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1868 and 1869, she wrote that in colonial times women had played a larger economic role: they had been producers of cloth, soap, candles, etc., and they shared farm work. Pierce claimed that the Industrial Revolution had turned women either into poorly paid factory workers and servants, or "ladies" who were not allowed to work at all. As a solution to this dilemma, she proposed the establishment of "cooperative housekeeping" with groups of 12 to 50 women, who would carry out their domestic work collectively in a communal housekeeping center and charge their husbands for their work at rates equivalent to those of skilled male labor. The private home of the future would be without a kitchen. Pierce founded the Cambridge Cooperative Housekeeping Society, of which half of the male members were on the Harvard faculty. A cooperative laundry and bakery were started, and a kitchen and store were planned. The experiment eventually failed, probably because of the resistance of a number of the women's husbands. One husband let his wife pay her membership fee if she promised not to attend any of the Society's meetings; another was unhappy because he had to wait to have a button sewed on while his wife held a meeting in

their home; and one eminent Cambridge abolitionist exclaimed, "My wife 'cooperate' to make other men comfortable? No indeed!"

Other movements that had contributed to the polemic on cooperative housekeeping were ultimately kept from playing a larger political or economic role. The Free Lovers' Club of New York had maintained a "Unitary Household" as early as 1858. It was set up in an apartment house with private rooms, communal living and dining quarters, as well as day-care. *The New York Times* first acclaimed this enterprise as "Practical Socialism in New York," but later criticized it as "a positive triumph of lust." Victoria Woodhull, a free lover and suffragist, wrote eloquently in 1874: "Sexual freedom, then, means the abolition of prostitution both in and out of marriage; means the emancipation of women from sexual slavery and her coming in to ownership and control of her own body; means the end of her pecuniary dependence upon man. . . . Ultimately it means more than this even, it means the establishment of cooperative homes. . . . It means for our cities, the conversion of innumerable huts into immense hotels, as residences. . . ." Woodhull, together with her sister Tennessee Claflin, edited a political paper, *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*. After Woodhull's free-love group had joined the International Workingmen's Association (IWA), a part of the First International, the *Communist Manifesto* was first published in English in 1870 in *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*. In the end, although Woodhull's paper had become the official organ of the IWA, F.A. Sorge, the head of this organization, was as uncomfortable with feminist causes as was Marx. Sorge complained to the General Council in London: "The intention of politicians and others is now pretty clear—to identify the IWA in this country with the woman's suffrage, free love, and other movements, and we will have to struggle hard for clearing ourselves from these imputations." Subsequently Woodhull's group was expelled from the IWA.

In the late 19th century, perhaps because of a general exclusion from political participation, there was a distinct shift away from the earlier communitarian, socialist experiments to a narrower, pragmatic approach. Later reformers tried to accommodate themselves more to the existing social structure. Instead of criticizing the subservient role of women, most theorists and practitioners now merely tried to make women's work more respectable by elevating it to a higher professional status. They attempted to make it more scientific and to mechanize it. This development had been prefigured in Catharine Beecher's immensely popular books on domestic economy. While she had tried to simplify and rationalize household tasks, she still strongly supported the Victorian quasi-religious notion of woman as the "minister" of the domestic sphere; as the martyr to the higher ideal of motherhood. She also had favored the idea of woman as consumer rather than as producer—even as a consumer of superfluous goods—because she thought it supported the general economy.

By the late 19th century, the typical reformers were home economists and nutrition experts. At MIT, Ellen Swallow Richards was an Instructor of Sanitary Chemistry. She had also been the school's first female faculty member. Kitchens now became scientific laboratories equipped with the latest technological inventions. Richards used a steam plant, a gas table, and the new slow-cooking Aladdin Oven. This novel equipment seems to have cast a powerful spell indeed, for it deluded her into believing that the Aladdin Oven would bring about "the ideal life of the twentieth century."

The turn of the century saw the establishment of public kitchens for the poor, the administration of which was well within the philanthropic realm of the conventional female role. During this period there were also a number of community dining clubs and cooked food services, but these were not readily accessible to the poor, or even the middle class. The same can be said of the increasingly popular apartment-hotels, which usually had communal dining facilities. In New York alone, plans for some 90 apartment-hotels had been approved in the space of two years. In 1903 the rapid expansion of this new type of housing led the editors of the *Architectural Record* to express their grave moral reservations: ". . . the adoption of apartment-hotel life by any considerable section of the

"The degree of emancipation of women is the natural measure of general emancipation. . . . The extension of the privileges of women is the fundamental cause of all social progress."

— Charles Fourier, *Théorie des quatre mouvements* (1808)

permanent population of New York could not but be regarded with grave misgivings by all observers of American morals and manners." They agreed that the apartment-hotel could reduce work, but felt that "It is the most dangerous enemy American domesticity has yet had to encounter."

Experiments in cooperative housekeeping by the early 20th century had become quite modest and largely nonpolitical. Nevertheless, during the Red Scare of 1919–1920, the War Department released the "spiderweb" chart, which accused such moderate women's groups as the Young Women's Christian Association and the American Association of University Women of being part of a "red web" that was out to destroy America. Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent* also published the spiderweb chart and several articles that attacked women labor organizers and their demands for maternity benefits for supposedly following the instructions of the USSR's Central Committee Secretariat. American industrialists, who feared that large numbers of women in the labor force might destroy the economy, set out to encourage male workers to purchase suburban homes, in which wives could be kept busy playing with their new household equipment. President Hoover's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership of 1931 was to put it more bluntly: "The first responsibility of an American to his country is no longer that of a citizen, but of a consumer. Consumption is a necessity."

This, in brief, is the sad history of the thwarted feminist domestic revolution Dolores Hayden tells in this most fascinating and informative book. She has brought to light a whole new range of housing design that is important not only for an understanding of feminist designs, but that caught the interest of such well-established figures as Ebenezer Howard, Lewis Mumford, Rudolph Schindler, and Le Corbusier. But is this really the whole story? Was the suburbanization of the 1920s instigated by industrialists who wanted to placate workers? Was this development not part of a larger, older dream of a rural ideal, a dream that increased to mythological proportions as the country became more and more industrialized? Here one wishes that Hayden had placed her history of feminist designs within a larger American context. We might also better understand the great popularity of Catharine Beecher's notion of a home ministry and the concomitant difficulties feminist designers were experiencing if Hayden had looked more closely at the simultaneous disenfranchisement of ministers and women in the 19th century and the resulting sentimentalization of women's roles so expertly described in Ann Douglas' *The Feminization of American Culture* (1977).

One also could wish for a more comparative approach. Hayden mentions the Russian experiments with communal housing in the late '20s, but dismisses them for aesthetic reasons. Compared with the stylistically more conventional American designs, these cooperative projects were indeed cold and gray in their revolutionary modernity. But, surprisingly, Hayden does not ask how the Soviet ventures fared on a social plane. This is important, since she concludes her book with the conviction that American feminists in the end had not been successful because their approach had been too narrow, too concerned with the reformation of woman's sphere, and did not generally include men in the consideration of domestic work. This, in turn, assured the continuance of male superiority. Consequently, if these utilitarian feminists had been more consistently political, and if they had demanded a more egalitarian approach to cooperative housekeeping, Hayden appears to suggest, they might have met with more success. Unfortunately, this may be wishful thinking. In the Soviet Union, where women's right to equality in work has had political support for more than half-a-century, and where this ideal has been made feasible through institutionalized day-care, if not always communal kitchens, the double standard of gender stereotyping still persists to this day. Women work outside the home for wages, but at home they still cook for nothing. Could it be that gender differentiation is a more intractable obstacle than we like to think, one that has not changed even in a politically sympathetic climate? Role stereotyping provides men with an instant advantage. It is not likely to change until men realize that maintaining women in a doll's house is not to their advantage in the long run.

History

A surprising number of buildings in New York have not been designated landmarks, or are just becoming eligible for designation.

They Should Be Landmarks

Christopher Gray



John Russell Pope. Reginald De Koven mansion; 1917. Photograph by Lilo Raymond

"You mean the _____ building's not a Landmark!?" This exclamation is heard repeatedly by any architectural historian from community groups, architects, journalists, and even property owners, and it is usually applied to one of the many buildings people assume are official Landmarks, but are not. There are several hundred nationally or regionally significant structures in New York that have not even been reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, let alone designated. Beyond that, there are thousands of other buildings that are equal or superior to other Commission designations, but that may never receive protection.

Nearly two years ago the Commission quietly announced that it was "winding down" the designation process — except for newer buildings as they pass the minimum 30-year age limit in the Landmarks law. Curtailing designations would certainly get the Commission out of the real estate battles it often finds uncomfortable, and it may only be wishful thinking on the part of those embattled civil servants. But it is still difficult to imagine that New York, still in the infancy of understanding and appreciating its architectural patrimony, is ready to leave thousands of buildings unprotected, of which a few well-known examples are presented here.

The most obvious group of undesignated buildings are those on which the Commission has held hearings, but not designated, often because of pressure from the individual property owners. Bergdorf Goodman at 57th Street (Buchman & Kahn, 1928) is one of these, a rare low-rise blockfront on Fifth Avenue, designed to look like separate but related individual townhouse-type stores. This site has been under scrutiny for development since *before* Bergdorf's was built (a hotel was proposed in 1925), and if St. Bart's is worth \$100 million, why should Bergdorf's bother to stay in retailing? The cavernous Tweed Courthouse interior (John Kellum & Leopold Edlitz, 1870s), a monument to Romanesque and Renaissance decoration, has also not been designated, and was only barely saved from the ravages of the ignorant Beame administration. On Madison, the last private house built

on the Avenue, Number 1020, between 78th and 79th Streets (S.E. Gage, 1912), was carefully excised from both the Metropolitan Museum Historic District (1977) and the recent East Side Historic District (1981), despite its intact exterior (the only one on the Avenue) and its signal importance to Madison, where the change from residential to commercial has been one of the cornerstones of East Side development.

Higher up on Madison, between 84th and 85th Streets, John H. Duncan designed an exquisite group of row houses and an apartment building (1892) with Renaissance and Roman detailing; three of the houses were included in the Metropolitan Museum Historic District, but the remaining identical row houses and the apartment building were carefully left out owing to pressure from a developer. Even though one house has been demolished, leaving a gaping hole, there is still no excuse for continuing to avoid designation of the rest — but the Commission declines to justify their boundary, in what is one of the current scandals of Landmarks preservation. Clearance of the site is imminent, and only a last-minute public outcry can save one of the best blocks on Madison Avenue.

Ernest Flagg's iron-and-glass Scribner storefront (1913) on Fifth Avenue between 48th and 49th Streets is also in limbo at this writing, although its papers have recently been reshuffled in the Commission's offices, and some action may be forthcoming.

There are also buildings which, although obviously of Landmark quality when considered, simply have been overlooked by previous Landmarks Commission surveys. The Frank Furness-like building at 21 West 26th Street (Thomas Stent, 1881) is unique in New York — one of those obscure gems that has managed to survive. The very wide, Jacobean revival, Reginald De Koven mansion at 1025 Park Avenue (85th–86th Streets; John Russell Pope, 1917) has so far been overlooked, as has the art-encrusted Gainsborough Studios at 222 Central Park South (Charles W. Buckham, 1908). The great,



John Mead Howells. Panhellenic Tower; 129. Photograph by Irving Underhill, courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York.

Dickensian Windemere Apartments at 300 West 57th Street (T.G. Smith, 1881) is apparently the oldest large apartment house in the city, and also worth saving.

Now that post-modernism is an actual style rather than a manifesto, the most interesting group of buildings to evaluate are the early modern buildings of the 1930s and 1940s that now look "antique" enough to designate. The Starrett-Lehigh building (Cory & Cory, Yasuo Matsui; 1931), Rockefeller Center (Reinhard & Hofmeister; Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray; Hood & Fouilhoux; 1931–40), and even Lever House (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; 1952) are the three most obvious buildings in this category. Other, slightly less prominent ones are the cubist, green marble Goelet Building at 608 Fifth Avenue (now the Swiss Center; E.H. Faile and Roy C. Morris, 1932); the stark, purist Tombs downtown (Harvey Wiley Corbett, 1939); the Egyptoid Tiffany building at 57th Street and Fifth (Cross & Cross, 1940); and the last good Emery Roth firm design, the *Look* Building at 488 Madison (1950).

Long famous, Mayer and Whittlesey's 240 Central Park South apartments (1941) are obviously of Landmark quality, and one of the best New York multiple dwellings of any period. In contrast, the Museum of Modern Art (Goodwin & Stone, 1939), now sadly without its original context of brownstones, has lost so much of its character that it might as well be demolished. Other comparable structures of the period include the semicircular bayed Rockefeller Apartments at 17 West 54th Street (Harrison & Fouilhoux, 1936) and the two-story "piggyback apartment" development on Third Avenue between 77th and 78th Streets (E.H. Faile, 1937), both articulate and moving syntheses of important 1930s attitudes toward massing and landscaping. Another apartment, at 25 East 83rd Street (Ackerman, Ramsey & Sleeper; 1938), is described by the *AIA Guide to New York City* as a "modern monument," but is suffering a growing patchwork of tenant changes. Finally and most urgently, an important, early International Style loft building at the northwest corner of 57th and Lexington (Thompson &

“The most interesting group of buildings to evaluate are the early modern buildings of the 1930s and 1940s that now look ‘antique’ enough to designate, like the Starrett-Lehigh.”



Sutton Place, 1936. Photograph by Berenice Abbot, courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York.



Thompson & Churchill. Loft building at 57th Street and Lexington Avenue; 1932. Photograph by Dorothy Alexander.

Churchill, 1932) is on an active assemblage site, and is in immediate danger. Remarkably, this fragile building (where Henry Churchill kept his studio for some years) has suffered comparatively minor alterations; although overpainted in parts, the original black, buff, and green terra-cotta and cantilever construction shine through.

There are a number of districts that need and deserve protection: Sutton Place from 56th to 58th (buildings by Rosario Candela, Mott Schmidt, Delano & Aldrich, Cross & Cross, William Lescaze, and others; 1920–1930) is important for its architecture and social history, as well as its planning, especially the core block of private houses on the East River at 57th Street. Despite the refined character of the area, one of the private houses saw a particularly gruesome alteration a few years ago. The controversial East Side Historic District, as tough as it may have been to get designated, simply *must* be extended to Lexington Avenue.

Similarly, several Murray Hill blocks, although discontinuous, represent an important collection of 19th-century residential architecture, with perhaps the longest era of home-building in one section in the city (1850s–1910s). And Tribeca has what is absolutely the best grouping of 19th-century masonry industrialist buildings in the region, let alone New York. Central Park



Cory & Cory; Yasou Matsui. Starrett-Lehigh building; 1931. Photograph by Dorothy Alexander.

West, the best “skyline street” in New York — and perhaps in the U.S. — also cries out for a district, or for at least extensive individual designations.

Finally, there is a wide range of prominent, significant buildings that have been proposed to the Commission on which no hearings have taken place, in some cases because of scheduling problems, but in others simply to avoid trouble for the moment. If you were Kent Barwick (Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission), would you want to tangle with, say, a Bergdorf-Goodman developer until absolutely necessary (and until a community might be agitated enough to vigorously support Landmark designation)?

Likewise, John Mead Howells’ very influential Panhellenic Tower at 49th and First (1929); Cross & Cross’ ethereal G.E. Building at 51st and Lexington (1931); and the Fuller Building at 57th Street and Madison (Walker & Gillette, 1929) are perhaps, in the Commission’s eyes, like sleeping dogs: as long as they’re lying down, why disturb them? There are a host of other such buildings of somewhat lesser quality: Henry T. Hardenbergh’s little Western Union Building on the southwest corner of 23rd and Fifth (1884); the triumphal, neoclassic Siegel-Cooper store at 620 Sixth Avenue (DeLemos & Cordes, 1895); the acclaimed,



Cross & Cross. G.E. Building; 1931. © Random Ashlar.

Eastlake-polychrome at 670 Broadway, formerly Brooks Brothers (George Harney, 1874); the St. Regis Hotel at 55th and Fifth (Trowbridge & Livingston, 1904); the Gotham, 56th and Fifth (Hiss & Weekes, 1905); the Downtown Athletic Club, 21 West Street — (a Rem Koolhaas favorite; Starrett & Van Vleck, 1926); the Barclay-Vesey New York Telephone Co. Building, 140 West Street (McKenzie, Voorhees & Gmelin, 1926); and six or eight City Hall area skyscrapers: Woolworth (Cass Gilbert, 1913); Times (George B. Post, 1889); Potter (N.G. Starkweather, 1883); and American Tract (R.H. Robertson, 1896); and others. All of these deserve individual designation. While the strategy of waiting until trouble begins — which probably describes Landmarks policy for most of these buildings — does pay off in the short term, in the long run it has consistently caused association of the term “Landmark” with the word “battle,” an association the Commission is trying to shun in its plan to curtail designations.

Do not be deceived that these or any building are “safe” by way of some peculiarity of size, siting, or ownership. The plan to reface the Empire State Building is only a decade old; the huge St. Moritz on Central Park South is often cited for demolition. More ominously the reintroduction of the sliver building, which was first seen in the 22-foot-wide Tower Building at 50 Broadway (Bradford L. Gilbert, 1889; demolished ca. 1923–24) — also the first steel skeleton building in New York City — jeopardizes even individual row houses on formerly unbuildable sites. In the same way, modernization, deterioration, or tenant changes have begun to compromise the Majestic, 115 Central Park West (Office of Irwin Chanin, 1930), the Gainsborough, 25 East 83rd Street, and many other buildings. Especially in a boom real estate market, any building can be subject to the same kind of jeopardy as Penn Station was. Just as the zoning laws have come under increased scrutiny, it is equally important that current Landmarks policies reflect steady improvement in our understanding of New York’s buildings. All too often, at the expense of the public interest, the Landmarks law has fallen behind.

Dateline: January '82

Exhibits

Boston/Cambridge

Drawings of Andrea Palladio

Jan. 15–Feb. 28: Over 100 drawings from the Royal Institute of British Architects and 15 other collections. The catalogue has an introduction and text by Douglas Lewis, curator of the exhibition. Fogg Museum, Harvard University; (617) 495-2397

Chicago

Walter Burley Griffin-Marion Mahoney Griffin

Through Jan. 31: Marion Griffin's renderings of her husband's architectural designs. Art Institute of Chicago, Michigan Avenue at Adams Street; (312) 443-3625

Houston

Marcel Breuer

Jan. 6–Feb. 3: An exhibition of furniture and interiors by the late architect. Farish Gallery, Anderson Hall, School of Architecture, Rice University; (713) 527-4876

Los Angeles

Schindler

Through Jan. 30: Drawings of residences, commercial structures, tall buildings, and large housing schemes, done by Schindler between 1914 and 1950. Schindler House, 833 North Kings Road; (213) 651-1510

Otis-Parsons Auction

Jan. 27–Feb. 28: An exhibit of drawings by designers, architects, and illustrators, including Leon Krier, Helmut Jahn, Frank Gehry, Cesar Pelli, Michael Graves, Milton Glaser, Ivan Chermayeff. Work will be auctioned on February 4 at the Biltmore Hotel and then returned to the Otis-Parsons Gallery for the exhibit. Otis-Parsons Gallery, 2401 Wilshire Boulevard; (213) 387-5288 ext. 205

Minneapolis

De Stijl, 1917–1931: Visions of Utopia

Jan. 31–March 28: Paintings, drawings, architectural models, furniture and graphic designs by de Stijl artists. A 260-page book with 12 essays by prominent scholars will be published to coincide with the exhibit. A concert, symposium, and film series are also planned. Walker Art Center, Vineland Place; (612) 375-7600

New York City

Berenice Abbott:

Through Jan. 10: Portraits and cityscapes from the 1920s and '30s. International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Avenue; (212) 860-1783

American Architectural Etchers

Through Jan. 15: Etchings depicting historic and architecturally significant buildings by early 20th-century artists. Fraunces Tavern, 54 Pearl Street; (212) 425-1778

The Architecture of Illusion

Through Jan. 15: An exhibit of photographs, drawings, and models by the trompe l'oeil muralist, Richard Haas. Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

Kitchen and Dining-Room Art

Through Jan. 21: Work by 60 artists and architects designed for the kitchen. BFM Gallery, 150 East 58th Street; (212) 755-1243

Kazuo Shinohara

Through Jan. 22: Photographs and models for 11 houses by this contemporary Japanese architect. Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 8 West 40th Street; (212) 398-9474

Window, Room, Furniture

Through Jan. 22: (closed from Dec. 21–Jan. 4) 108 responses to each of these elements by artists and architects including Arata Isozaki, Charles Jencks, Lucio Pozzi, Judith Turner, and Barbara Dreyer. The show was organized by Ricardo Scofidio and Tod Williams. A catalogue of the exhibition will be published by Cooper Union and Rizzoli International, and will include essays by Juan Pablo Bonta, David Shapiro and Lindsay Stamm Shapiro. Houghton Gallery, Cooper Union; (212) 254-6300

Suburbs Show

Through Jan. 24: Photographs, drawings, site plans, and models of early suburban prototypes, such as the industrial village and resort community; guest-curated by Robert A.M. Stern and John Massengale. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

Kyoto

Through Jan. 30th: Wood block prints of Kyoto by different artists. Spaced Gallery, 165 West 72nd Street, (212) 787-6350

The Making of an Architect, 1881–1981

Through Jan. 31: A show about architectural education, focusing on Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, to celebrate the school's centennial. National Academy of Design; 1083 Fifth Avenue; (212) 369-4880

75th Anniversary of the Morgan Library Building

Through Feb. 7: Sketches, plans, and elevations of the original Library designed by McKim, Mead & White. Morgan Library, 29 East 36th Street; (212) 685-0008

The European Garden

Through Feb. 7: Drawings, illustrations of 17th and 18th-century European landscape architecture including landscape designs of Fontainebleau and Versailles. Morgan Library, 29 East 36th Street; (212) 685-0008

Russian Avant-Garde & European Constructivist Art

Jan. 5–Feb. 5: Work by Puni, Rozanova, Goncharova, Popova, Suetin, and Roehl, among others. Carus Gallery, 872 Madison Avenue; (212) 879-4660

Ree Morton/Avant-Garde/Rare 20th-Century Books

Jan. 7–Feb. 6: Selected work of Ree Morton; avant-garde posters of the '20s and '30s, as well as rare 20th-century books on architecture and design. Max Protetch Gallery, 37 West 57th Street; (212) 838-7436

McKim, Mead & White's New York

Jan. 18–Feb. 12: Photographs, drawings, and models by this distinguished firm, sponsored by Classical America. Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

Robert Adam and His Style

Jan. 19–April 11: Drawings, furniture, and silver by this celebrated Scottish architect and his circle. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

Kandinsky in Munich 1869–1914

Jan. 22–March 21: 300 works by the artist, his teachers and contemporaries. The catalogue includes essays by Peg Weiss, Carl Schorske and Peter Jelavich. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue; (212) 860-1300

Philadelphia

P.B. Wight and the Gilded Age

Through Feb. 7: 46 architectural drawings from the Art Institute of Chicago, along with interpretive panels reviewing Wight's career as architect, contractor, and critic. The catalogue is by Sarah Bradford Landau. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Broad and Cherry Streets; (215) 972-7600

St. Paul

Joyce Lyon/Emmanuel Ginis

Jan. 15–Feb. 15: Exhibit of artwork and an architectural project. Robert Cohan Studio, 563 Laurel Ave; (612) 293-0042

San Francisco/Bay Area

Halprin/Cityscapes by Young Artists and Architects

Jan. 20–Feb. 27: Design sketches of new projects by Lawrence Halprin in conjunction with a book of his work just published by *Process Architecture*. Cityscapes by Christopher Grubbs, Kezin Martin, and Bruce Tomb. Philippe Bonnafont Gallery, 478 Green Street; (415) 781-8896

Facets of the Collection: Urban America

Jan. 15–April 11: 40 images capturing the evolution of the American city during the 20th century — Work by Walker Evans, Berenice Abbott, Lewis Baltz, among others. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Van Ness at McAllister; (415) 863-8800

Work on Paper by Recent Graduates

Jan. 18–Jan. 31: Work by students from Yale, Harvard, Cornell, Princeton, U.C.L.A., S.C.I.A., and U.C. Berkeley. School of Architecture, Berkeley

Washington, D.C.

New Projects by Contemporary Sculptors

Through Feb. 28: Sculptures creating visionary architecture and whole environments. Vito Acconci, Siah Armajani, Alice Aycock, Robert Morris, Dennis Oppenheim, and Lauren Ewing. Hirshhorn Museum, Independence Avenue at Eighth Street S.W. on the Mall; (202) 357-2700

125th Anniversary of the AIA

Jan. 14–Feb. 21: A recreation of architectural offices from 1857–1982 exhibited to celebrate the AIA's anniversary. The Octagon, 1799 New York Avenue, N.W.; (202) 638-3105

Florence

Richard Meier

Through Feb. 1: An exhibit of work from 1963–1981 by this New York architect. Sala dell'Accademia, Accademia delle Arti del Disegno, Piazza San Marco

Rome

Steven Holl

Through Jan. 20: "Bridges" — A show of projects and drawings by the architect; curated by Francesco Moschini and Paola Iacucci. Galleria Architettura Arte Moderna, 12 Via del Vantaggio

London

William Burges

Through Jan. 17: An exhibit of designs for Cardiff Castle. Geffrye Museum, Bethnal Green, London

Burges at the V & A

Through Jan. 17: "The Strange Genius of William Burges: Art-Architecture, 1827–1881." The catalogue is edited by J. Mordaunt Crook, with entries by Mary Axon and Virginia Glenn. Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.

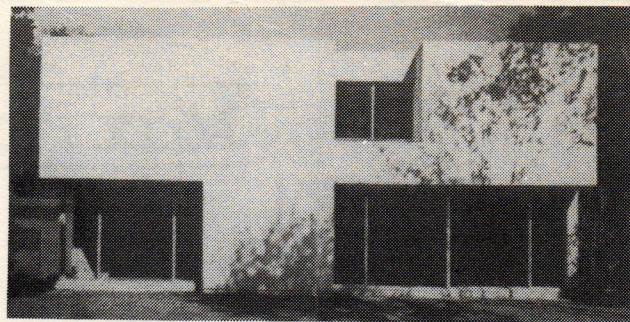
Sir Edwin Lutyens

Through Jan. 31: A major exhibit (reviewed in this issue!). Hayward Gallery, Belvedere Road, South Bank, London

Zurich

Richard Meier

Jan. 8–28: An exhibit of the architect's winning design for the Art and Crafts Museum in Frankfurt am Main, organized by the Institute for History and Theory of Architecture. Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich; (01) 377-4411

Kazuo Shinohara. *A Cubic Forest*; 1971.

Events

Boston/Cambridge

James Ackerman

Feb. 4, 9, 14: "Palladio Revisited," a lecture series in conjunction with the exhibition of Palladio drawings at the Fogg Museum (Jan. 15–Feb. 28). 5:30 p.m. Piper Auditorium, Gund Hall, Harvard; (617) 495-2591

Palladio the Architect and His Influence in America
Feb. 11: A showing of the film by James Ackerman. Piper Auditorium, Gund Hall, Harvard; (617) 495-2591

Continuing Education Classes

Mid-Feb.: Register now for classes, including **Architecture for Non-Architects**, **Energy Conservation**, and **Solar Design**. Department of Continuing Education, Gund Hall, Room 504, Harvard; (617) 495-2578

New York City

Overview of Olmsted Parks

Jan. 12: A lecture by Alexander Allport, executive director of the National Association of Olmsted Parks. Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

Robert Adam Symposium

Jan. 23: An architecture and design symposium organized by the Cooper-Hewitt and the Royal Oak Foundation and Christie's. Speakers include: Alan Tait, Colin Streeter, Charles Beyer, John Hardy, Damie Stillman, William Pierson. \$50 members, \$60 nonmembers, \$25 Students. 9:30–5 at Christie's, 502 Park Avenue. For information: (212) 860-6868

Classes at the Cooper-Hewitt

Robert Adam—Five Mondays at 6:15 beginning Jan. 25; **The Age of the Baroque: 17th-c. Roman Architecture**—Five Mondays at 8 pm beginning Jan 25;

For Sale

An auction to benefit the Municipal Art Society will be held Jan. 11, 7 p.m., at Christie's, with a preview of tangible prizes at the Urban Center, Jan. 4–9. The gala evening will include a buffet supper and the opportunity to bid on everything from a tugboat luncheon tour to an opening night on Broadway with Brendan Gill. Tickets are \$150 per person and should be purchased in advance. For further information, call (212) 935-3960.

On February 4th at the Crystal Ballroom of the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, there will be an auction to benefit Otis-Parsons. Drawings by Leon Krier, Helmut Jahn, Gary Trudeau, Milton Glaser, and Ivan Chermayeff will be on the block (among others); there will also be speeches by Paul Davis and Michael Graves. The cost of the evening (exclusive of bidding!) is \$25 per person. Those interested should call (213) 387-5288.

Coming

On February 23 in the Donnell Library auditorium, a rally to save St. Bart's, organized by the Victorian Society. Speakers to date are David Lowe, Giorgio Cavaglieri, and Ralph Menapace. . . . At the Cooper-Hewitt February 23rd, a panel discussion entitled "Directions in Architecture: The Museum Building Boom." Panelists include Emilio Ambasz, Hugh Hardy, and Cesar Pelli. Arthur Rosenblatt will moderate. . . . In the spring at Harvard, April 16 & 17, a symposium, "The International Style in Perspective 1932–1982," marking the 50th anniversary of the "Modern Architecture" show at MoMA. Papers will be delivered by David Handlin, Kurt Forster, Robert A.M. Stern, Rosemarie Bletter, Neil Levine, and Anthony Vidler.

English Cathedrals—Five Wednesdays at 8 pm beginning Jan. 27. Cooper-Hewitt, 2 East 91st Street; 860-6868

Luncheon Lectures

Feb. 1, March 1, April 5, May 3, and June 7: Talks on the English Country House by guest speakers. 12:30–2 pm. Cooper-Hewitt, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

Medieval Cathedrals

Feb. 2–April 6: A Tuesday lecture series by Alice Mary Hilton. 2:30 pm. \$48 for the series, \$5 per lecture. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue and 82nd Street; (212) 879-5500

Philadelphia

Preservation & Renovation: Philadelphia's Architecture in the Age of Frank Furness

Jan. 23: A symposium with the following participants: Sarah Landau, "P.B. Wight's Legacy to Frank Furness"; Constance Greiff, "From Classicism to Eclecticism in Philadelphia's 19th-century Architecture"; Hyman Myers, "Frank Furness—Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts"; James Marston Fitch, "P.B. Wight and the Twilight of Eclecticism"; Henry Magaziner, "Our Past Acclaims Our Future"; John Milner, "The Fairmont Waterworks—Past and Present"; John Dickey, "John Notman's Laurel Hill Cemetery Gatehouse"; Kenneth Kaiserman, "The Philadelphia Bourse"; George Thomas, "Preservation from Ruskin to Reagan," or "How I Learned to Love the Tax Act." \$8 general public, \$6 nonmembers, \$3 without lunch. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Broadway and Cherry; (215) 972-7600

San Francisco/Bay Area

Symposium on Art in Architecture

Jan. 9: Keynote speaker: Max Protetch. Panel members: Ann Kaiser, Louise Allrich, Lia Cook, Marc Goldstein, Cynthia Schira, John Steinbacker, Marc Treib, Mary Zlot. Oakland Museum, 1940 Benita Ave., Berkeley; (415) 548-6030

Berkeley Lectures

Jan. 13: David Littlejohn **Jan. 20:** Christopher Alexander **Jan. 26:** Jorge Silveti **Feb. 3:** Kurt Forster **Feb. 10:** Robert A.M. Stern. Location on campus to be confirmed. Lectures will continue through March. Architecture Department, U.C. Berkeley; (415) 642-4942

Washington

Lecture Series on Gothic Cathedrals

Jan. 26–March 16: Talks by Mary A. Dean, professor of art history, University of Maryland. Tuesdays at 8 pm. Smithsonian Resident Associate Program; (202) 357-3030

Calgary

Chandler Kennedy Lecture Series

Jan. 6: Peter Rose, "Back to Basics" **Feb. 18:** Reyner Banham, "The Grain Elevator Image" **Feb. 25:** Rem Koolhaas, "Architecture: The Other Profession" Central Library Auditorium; (except Reyner Banham: Palliser Hotel); (403) 233-0668 for information

Vancouver

Alcan Lectures

Jan. 13: Douglas Cardinal **Feb. 3:** Fred Koetter **Feb 24:** Rem Koolhaas. Robson Square Media Center; (604) 683-8588

Hong Kong

Lectures by Peter Hoppner

Feb. 1–11: Three evening lectures (precise time and dates to be arranged): "Tall Buildings in America"; "The Idea of Collage in Current Architecture"; "Grids." University of Hong Kong, School of Architecture

Now & Then

Shinohara at IAUS

Since his Kugayama House of 1954, Kazuo Shinohara has painstakingly developed his art in a manner that is as violently subversive as it is calm and methodical, starting with his quiet refusal to participate in the postwar rationalization of the international Modern Movement, and his turning toward the Japanese domestic tradition. He does this, however, not to enter into the security of a timeless domain, where little scope remains for the artist except to refine elements or to ring the changes within well-established rules. He does so rather as a way of establishing a bridgehead from which to engender ordinary objects with an ontological presence once again. . . . **Kenneth Frampton.**

Schinkel at Columbia

The first comprehensive exhibition of the drawings and paintings of Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781–1840), including a chronology of his life and work, was recently shown in the Exhibition Hall of Avery Library at Columbia University. Sponsored by the Goethe House of New York in conjunction with the Goethe Institute of Munich, the show consisted entirely of photographic reproductions of Schinkel's original work—some of which is no longer accessible in East Germany—and several large panels of text. The overall effect was not unlike stepping into a book. Yet despite this, the quality and elegance of both the drawings and paintings reproduced here became obvious, and, supplemented by the text, also quite informative.

Many of Schinkel's buildings still exist today in Berlin and elsewhere in Germany. But, of course, any show or exhibition on architecture tells us little in the end about actually experiencing the building. We are encouraged to deduce such feelings from plans, drawings, and other two-dimensional presentations. What an exhibition such as this one can do, which the experience of a single building cannot, is to provide a context in which we are able to understand the evolution of ideas from one man over a period of time. The Schinkel show succeeded exceedingly well in this respect.

It became apparent, for example, that Schinkel believed in design as an all-encompassing form of expression rather than simply an architectural one. Everything from stage designs, candelabras, and glass, to wall decoration and furniture designs were represented. Seeing this and the simplicity of his neoclassical architecture, one thinks of Thomas Jefferson: both conceived their buildings—if not all their designs—as the harmonious elements of some larger unit. Forms spoke of their function and their surroundings rather than for their own uniqueness. In turn, the most important of these forms looked to the models of classical Greece, for their inherent beauty as well as emblems of nationalism, enlightenment, and culture.

The drawings and paintings in the Columbia exhibition of Schinkel's buildings express both the political ideology they represented—monumentality and rationalism as symbols of the new Prussian rule of Friedrich Wilhelm III—and a romantic imagination. There was on the one hand, for example, the Altes Museum in Berlin with its central rotunda resembling the Pantheon in Rome, and its open-air colonnade and central stairway vestibule that literally open the building and the culture it houses to the city and its populace. On the other hand, there was Schinkel's painting of a strangely lit cathedral with rainbows arching overhead, and his drawing of the Babelsberg Palace near Berlin with its Gothic turrets and windows and an asymmetrical plan. Gothicism became for Schinkel a sort of secondary, less-controlled expression of nationalism more deeply rooted in German history and tradition. The contrast and complicity between the Gothic and Greek, between rationalism and romanticism, became a major theme in Schinkel's work. The show at Columbia made this message clear. **Peter Donhauser**

"The Work of Karl Friedrich Schinkel" was seen in the Exhibition Gallery, Avery Hall, Columbia University, New York; November 16–December 15, 1981.

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