

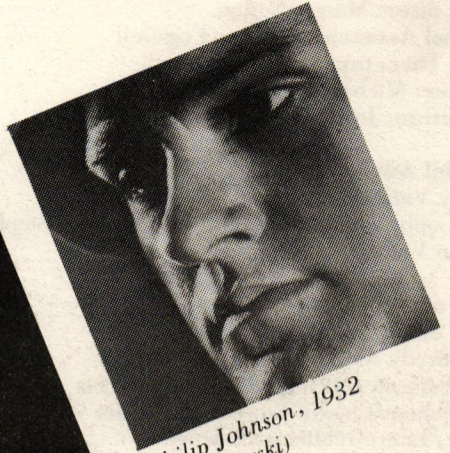
The Architecture and Design
Review
February 1982



Portrait of William Lescaze in his townhouse, 211 East 48th Street, NYC; 1933-34. (Arents Library, Syracuse University)

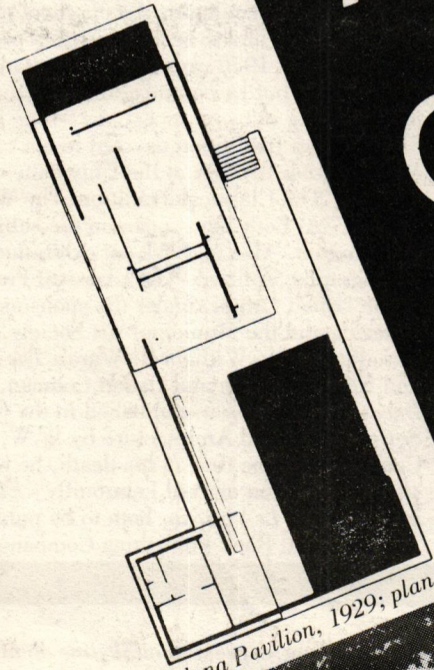
Skyline

Plus: The International Style
Goes Hollywood, Philip
Johnson Interviewed, and
Forster Reassesses Seagram

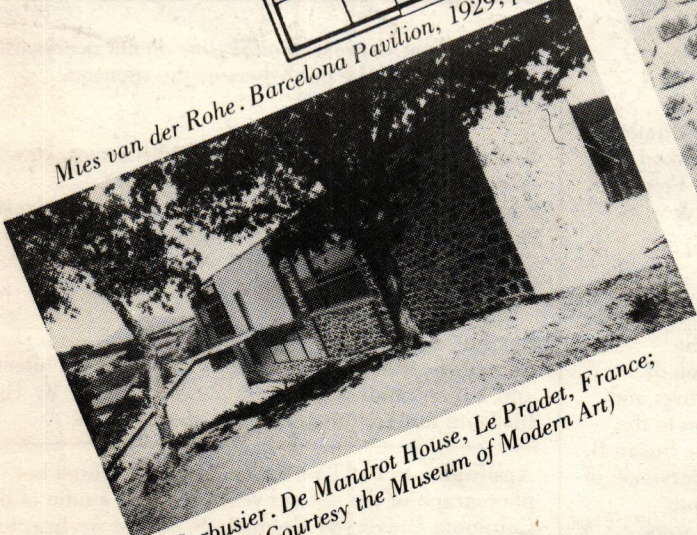


Philip Johnson, 1932
(photo: Lerski)

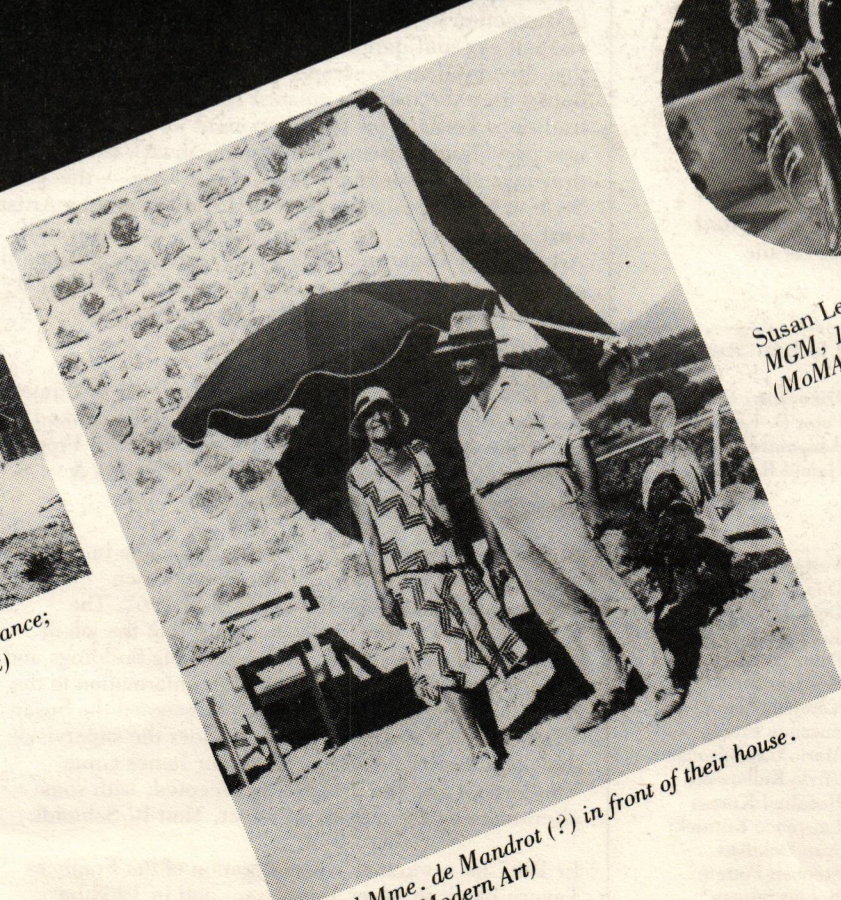
Celebrating "Modern Architecture" at 50



Mies van der Rohe. Barcelona Pavilion, 1929; plan.



Le Corbusier. De Mandrot House, Le Pradet, France; 1930-31. (Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art)



M. and Mme. de Mandrot (?) in front of their house.
(Museum of Modern Art)



Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise,
MGM, 1931; sets: Cedric Gibbons.
(MoMA|Film Stills Archives)

Skyline

Contents

- 3 New York City Reports
- 5 Notes & Comment
- 6 Other Settings: Venturi Installation, Hockney Sets
- 8 Galleries/Symposia
- 12 Projects 1982
- 13 I.S. in Los Angeles
- 14 Interview: Philip Johnson and Peter Eisenman
- 18 The International Style Turns 50
- 28 I.S. Goes Hollywood
- 30 Seagram Building Reconsidered

- 32 Books
- 34 Dateline

Editor: Suzanne Stephens
Managing Editor: Margot Jacqz
Copy Editor: Margot Norton
Editorial Assistant: Heather Cogswell
Design Director: Massimo Vignelli
Designer: Michael Bierut
Production: Jean Stevens

Editorial Advisory Board

Anthony Vidler, Chairman
 Henry Cobb, Gianfranco Monacelli, Suzanne Stephens,
 Massimo Vignelli

Board of Sponsors

Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall
 Davis/Brody Associates
 Philip Johnson and John Burgee Architects
 Paul Kennon/Caudill Rowlett Scott, Inc.
 Murphy/Jahn Architects/Engineers
 I.M. Pei and Partners
 Cesar Pelli Associates
 Kevin Roche, John Dinkeloo & Associates
 Paul Rudolph Architect
 Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
 Swanke Hayden & Connell

Skyline would also like to acknowledge the continued and generous support of the National Endowment for the Arts and thanks Gruzen & Partners for their support.

Notes on Contributors

Donald Albrecht, an architect living in New York, is writing a book on modern architecture in film.
Gerald Allen is an architect who also teaches and writes, most recently author of *Architectural Drawing: The Art and the Process* with Richard Oliver.
Barry Bergdoll is a doctoral candidate in architectural history at Columbia University, specializing in nineteenth-century France and Germany.
Eleni Constantine, a former associate editor of *Progressive Architecture* and *Architectural Record*, is now pursuing a degree in law and urban design at Harvard.
Robert Coombs is an architectural historian, writer, and filmmaker living in Los Angeles.
Hugh Cosmon is managing editor of *Urban Features Idea Exchange*, a periscope on worldwide urban affairs.
Peter L. Donhauser is a freelance writer on art and architecture.
Kurt Forster is a professor at Stanford University, specializing in the history of Renaissance art and architecture. He is also an editor of *Oppositions*.
Hal Foster is an associate editor of *Art in America*.
John M. Massengale is currently working on a book with Robert Stern and Gregory Gilmartin, *New York 1900*.
Hélène Lipstadt, trained as a social historian and anthropologist, writes frequently on architectural history.
Ross Miller writes frequently on architecture and design. He teaches English and American studies at the University of Connecticut.
Calvin Morgan is a visiting lecturer at the Banff School of Fine Arts. A stage designer, his most recent project was the set for *The Hero*, at the Juilliard School in New York, where he was director of the State Design Department and Resident Stage Designer.
Ligia Ravé, a French philosopher specializing in architecture and semiology, was recently associated with Friday Architects, where she worked on space programming and exhibitions.
David Slovic, a partner at Friday Architects in Philadelphia, is currently a Loeb Fellow at Harvard.
James Terry is editor of the newsletter for the Association for a Better New York.

The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies

Trustees
 Armand Bartos, Honorary Chairman
 A. Bruce Brackenridge, Chairman
 Charles Gwathmey, President
 Douglas H. Banker
 Richard F. Barter
 Colin G. Campbell
 Walter F. Chatham
 Peter D. Eisenman
 Ulrich Franzen
 Frank O. Gehry
 Gerald D. Hines
 Eli Jacobs
 Philip Johnson
 Paul Kennon
 Edward J. Logue
 Gerald M. McCue
 Robert M. Meltzer
 Amanda M. Ross
 Paul Rudolph
 Edward Saxe
 Carl E. Schorske
 Frederieke S. Taylor
 Massimo Vignelli
 John F. White
 Peter Wolf

Director
 Peter D. Eisenman
Associate Director
 Hamid R. Nouri

Fellows
 Diana Agrest
 Deborah Berke
 Julia Bloomfield
 Peter D. Eisenman
 William Ellis
 Kenneth Frampton
 Suzanne Frank
 Mario Gandelsonas
 Silvia Kolbowski
 Rosalind Krauss
 Lawrence Kutnicki
 Joan Ockman
 Stephen Potters
 Robert Silman
 Carla Skodinski
 Anthony Vidler
 Peter Wolf, Chairman

In Memoriam: John Barrington Bayley

John Barrington Bayley died on December 21, 1981, at the age of 67. Born in San Francisco, Bayley's early life was spent there, where his father, Guy Bayley, was chief engineer for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and in Japan, Rhode Island, New York, and Chicago, following Guy Bayley's engineering career.

The following is excerpted from a memorial pamphlet on John Bayley written by Henry Hope Reed, president of Classical America:

John went to Harvard College, graduating in 1937, and after a year in the architectural firm of Pennington, Lewis, Churchill & Mills, he became a student at the Harvard School of Design, class of 1942. The school at the time was in the vanguard of modern architecture with Walter Gropius in charge. Among John's fellow students were I.M. Pei, Edward Larrabee Barnes, Philip Johnson, and other lights of the Modern Movement. A year as construction superintendent in North Carolina for Sanderson & Porter followed. From 1943 to 1946 he was a sergeant in the United States Army Engineer Corps, stationed much of the time in Paris, working on the adaptation of civilian buildings to military uses.

George Lewis, executive director of the AIA New York Chapter, recalls John's laying-out a formal garden with axes, when axes were anathema for a modern house. In addition, he had gone on expeditions while at school to look at old towns and buildings along the eastern seaboard. Stationed later in Paris, not only had he rejected the modern, he had also begun acquiring his extraordinary knowledge of classical art. In 1946 he began work for Mrs. Archibald Manning Brown of McMillen, Inc., interior decorators. One of his projects was the decorating of the Opera Club in the old Metropolitan Opera House. A year later he was at the American Academy in Rome on the G.I. Bill, where he was to remain for four years. By then modern art was well behind him, and he was on his way to becoming the authority on the classical that was to distinguish him among the architects of our time.

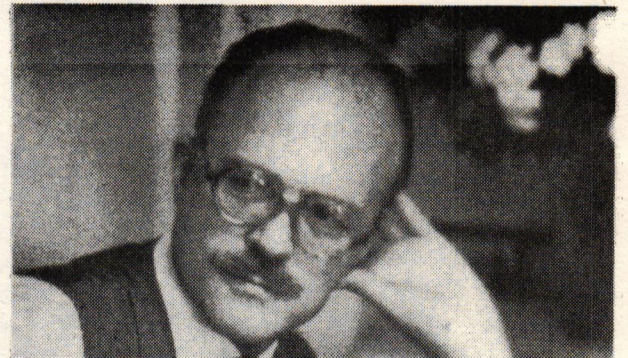
While in Rome he supplemented his income by working for George Howe on a new United States consulate for Naples, and undertook other work for the State Department.

On his return to the U.S. in 1951 he went to live in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was typical of him that his first reaction to his native land was to exclaim, "There are six-foot egg-and-dart moldings in New York!" He believed that the classical skyscraper and the classical apartment house were the nation's greatest contribution to the grand tradition. Perhaps his most important work at this time was providing a triumphal arch (on canvas), as well as drawings and photographs, for "Ars in Urbe—the Noble Style in Civic Design as Revealed and Created by Artists Past and Present," an exhibition at the Yale University Art Gallery. Organized in 1953 by Christopher Tunnard and Lamont Moore, it was the first strong pro-classical statement of the postwar years. (Of course, it was manhandled by the critics.)

In 1954 he moved to New York, and resided at Hunter's Point, Queens. From that year to 1958, John worked in the office of Hobart Upjohn & Thomas M. Bell. From 1959 to 1961 he worked in the office of Eggers & Higgins-Kahn & Jacobs-Alfred Easton Poor.

A most important change in his career came in 1963, when he went to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, where he remained until 1967. The Commission was new, with the result that the job of selecting, photographing, and describing buildings and historic districts and submitting this information to the commissioners fell to him. He also designed the Susan B. Wagner Wing of Gracie Mansion under the supervision of the Commission's director, Professor James Grote Vanderpool and the design was accepted, with some alterations by the official architect, Mott B. Schmidt.

In 1967 he worked on the restoration of the Fraunces Tavern block in lower Manhattan, and in 1968 he designed a country house to be built in Greenwich, Connecticut. Other activities at the time included restoration of Holy Trinity Church and Parish House on



John Barrington Bayley (Photo: Ty Bloch)

Brooklyn Heights. From 1970 to 1972 he again worked at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and in 1973 he designed and built a room for Chauncey D. Stillman at Amenia, New York.

His most important commission in these years was the new wing of the Frick Collection, completed in 1977. He was the designer, assisted by G. Frederick Poehler and Harry Van Dyke (the latter being the architect-of-record). Adhering closely to the French classical style of the original structure, he successfully incorporated the addition and the garden enclosure into the whole. It was the outstanding classical building built in recent decades. In 1976 and 1977 he worked for Cecil, Thompson & Paine, architects, and in 1977 and 1978 for DeWitt, Poor and Shelton, architects and consultants for the proposed new West Front of the National Capitol. It was to be his last and most important project.

In these years he had found time to join with several friends to organize Classical America, the society dedicated to encouraging the classical tradition in the arts of this nation, and to serve as its first president. His move to Newport in 1978 occasioned his giving up the presidency, but he continued to be active; notably, participating in two symposiums—one in 1980 at the Smithsonian Institution devoted to our classical heritage, and the other in 1981 at the University of Texas at Austin, "The Classical Tradition: The Wave of the Future." At both John spoke on the subject of classical Washington. Also in 1981, an exhibition of his New York photographs, entitled "The Classical Flourish," was held at the Urban Center, under the sponsorship of Classical America and the Municipal Art Society. He contributed introductions to William R. Ware's *The American Vignola* and Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman, Jr.'s *The Decoration of Houses*, published in the Classical America Series in Art and Architecture by W.W. Norton and Company. At the time of his death, he was working on a student's edition of Paul Letarouilly's *Edifices de Rome moderne* and *Le Vatican*, both to be published by the Architectural Book Publishing Company.

The opinions expressed in *Skyline* do not necessarily reflect those of the publishers or the sponsors.

Editorial offices: *Skyline*, 8 West 40th Street, New York, New York 10018 phone: (212) 398-9474
 Changes of address, subscription, sales, and advertising inquiries should be sent to: Rizzoli Communications, Inc., 712 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019

Skyline is published ten times a year by Rizzoli Communications, Inc. for the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies. ISSN 0612-6981 ©1982 by The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies

Apologies to Pat Tine for not having credited her photograph of the second year class and studio of the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture on page 24 of the January *Skyline*.

N.Y. Controversies

A legal battle keeps the Helen Hayes and the Morosco theaters from being demolished. The following story recounts the background.

No Lullaby of Broadway: Portman Opposition

Hugh Cosmon

The remarkable battle to save the Morosco and Helen Hayes theaters — landmarks that would be torn down to make way for John Portman's gigantic 50-story, 2020-room convention hotel — continues to be waged in Manhattan Federal Appeals Court. On January 6, a three-judge U.S. District Court of Appeals panel instructed Federal District Court Judge Kevin T. Duffy to hear charges that "undue influence" had been brought to bear on the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation by the developers. This influence resulted in a speedy approval of a plan to raze the theaters in a manner that precluded adequate consideration of alternatives. The court issued a preliminary injunction blocking demolition on the site until it has heard the arguments.

Although Portman and his associates have denied the charges, the court deemed them "sufficiently serious" to establish a "fair ground for litigation." Judge Duffy was told to expedite the matter, and a decision is expected in three weeks to a month.

Taking Sides

The movement to save the two theaters has been led by an Actor's Equity Committee and the Save Our Broadway Committee (J.M. Kaplan Fund), working in conjunction with lawyers from the Natural Resources Defense Council. They have always contended that they are not against the Portman project per se, but that it is possible to build a hotel on the site without destroying the two landmarks — by building the hotel over the theaters.

In August of 1981 the preservationists enlisted the help of architect Lee Pomeroy, who took a look at the "build-over" alternative. He came to the firm conclusion that it is structurally feasible to incorporate the Morosco and Helen Hayes into the Hotel's 45th Street and 46th Street sides, respectively (*Skyline*, November 1981, p.5).

In September the opponents to the existing Portman plan presented the Pomeroy build-over scheme and brought a number of legal actions to secure its adequate consideration. These actions resulted in the signing of a stipulation between the Committee plaintiffs and the Portman/N.Y. City defendants. This agreement required, among other things, that the U.S. Department of the Interior consider the National Register eligibility of the Morosco.

Winning the Feds for a Day

On Tuesday, November 17, Jerry L. Rogers, writing as delegate for Secretary of the Interior James Watt, declared the Morosco eligible. He concluded that the theater is an excellent example of theater design in terms of its scale, sightlines, and particularly notable acoustics.

But after 48 hours, Secretary Watt decided that he didn't agree with his delegate. On Thursday, November 19, he "recommended" (as the initial reports put it) that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation draw up a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Morosco. The next day the Council acceded.

White House Pressure

This is a procedure that usually takes weeks or even months. In his affidavit, an employee of the Council, Jack Goldstein, quoted the Council official in charge of cultural resource protection, Thomas King, as having told him that two Council members received phone calls from Lyn Nofziger, a top political aide to President Reagan. Nofziger was reported to have told the two members, Robert Garvey, the executive director, and Alexander Aldrich, the chairman, that "either the Council rolls over in this matter or it is out of business immediately."

Other affidavits state that Secretary Watt, through a representative, made a similar demand on the Council. The Council ruled that there is "no prudent alternative to demolition," and told the city to compile a history of the Morosco to serve as a kind of preservation.

The Helen Hayes came to a similar Historic Preservation fate when it was designated as eligible for listing back in 1978: The Helen Hayes, the Council said, could come down as soon as a set of detailed architectural drawings were made and submitted to the Historic American Buildings Service.

Too Late, Just Fate

The Portman forces — blessed with such long arms — argue that the preservationists have come in too late. The plans are all drawn up. The buildings — with the exception of the Picadilly Hotel, which occupies a portion of the 45th Street side of the site — are all bought and paid for. Glenn Isaacson, Portman's project director in New York, says that "from the start" they tried to find a way to incorporate the theaters into the scheme. "Believe me, we would save them if we could," he stated. Since Portman gets extra floor area under the city's existing zoning bonuses for including a new theater, one must wonder about their salvation efforts. Isaacson's comments must have come as news to James Hunter of the Urban Development Corporation, who told Actors Equity in the summer of last year that a build-over had never really been explored by Portman. It was at Hunter's behest that Equity got in touch with an architect. The City of New York, for its part, however, has been solidly in Portman's corner. Mayor Koch is known to be an ardent supporter of the project, called the "linchpin" of Times Square revival efforts. Through its Director of Midtown Planning, Kenneth Halpern, and others, the City fought landmarking of the theaters every step of the way. Four years ago Halpern dropped his objections over the Helen

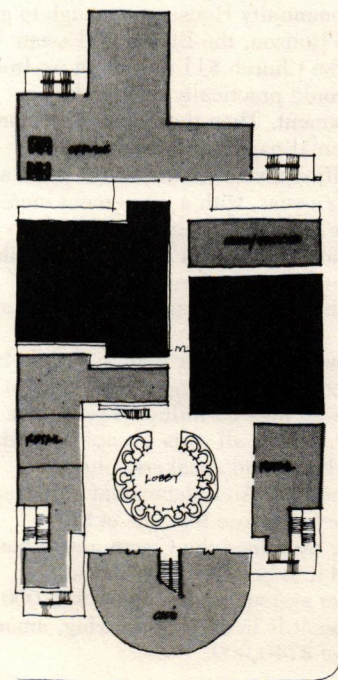
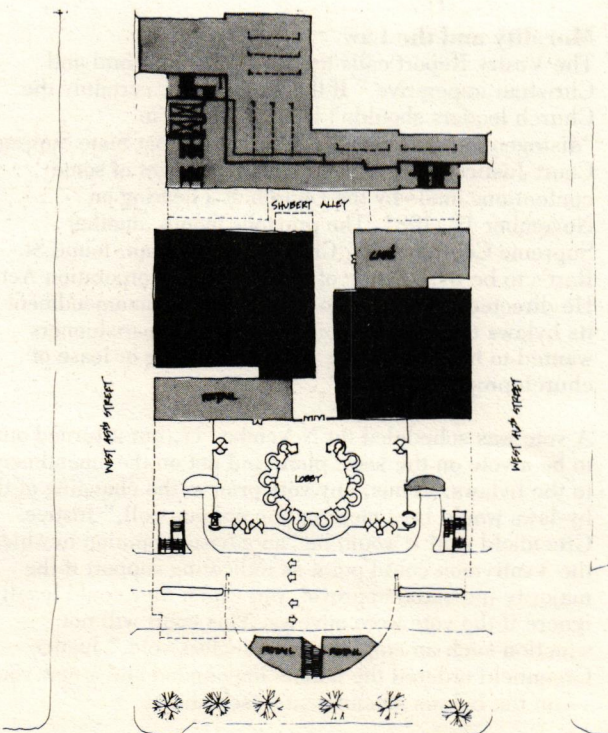
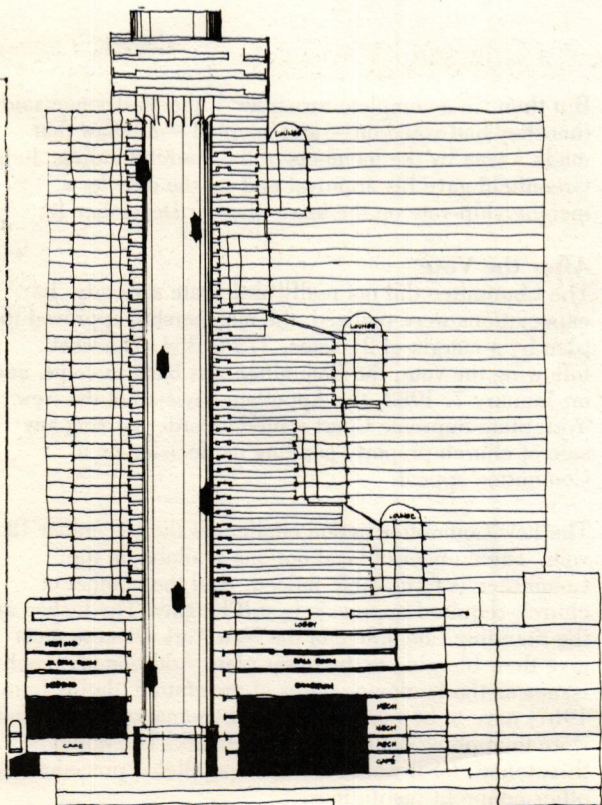
Hayes only after being given assurances that MOA would be drawn up with great dispatch. In the case of the Morosco, a city attorney seconded the MOA requests. The City's big worry is that much further delay might stop the Hotel from being constructed once and for all, thanks to inflation and potential unraveling of the financing package.

There's Always Tomorrow

It is curious that the Court finally agreed to hear the case on the grounds of accusations of political pressure on the Council. There are so many other questions: For example, how could the City have given the project final approval before its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was submitted? How could the project, similarly, qualify for an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) before completion of its EIS? There are also questions about the validity of the EIS — that it unfairly denigrates the existing theaters and the build-over alternative. There are questions about the legality of the Hotel's Broadway side, which has enclosed escalators running down onto the sidewalk from the third story. It also cantilevers a nine-story structure 23 feet out over the street, which may be in violation of the city Charter. Finally, there is the historic preservation question: the ruling on the Morosco materially affects the Helen Hayes MOA, now that there is another building of historic preservation quality on the site. The drawing, in theory, should no longer be enough. But theory and practice rarely seem joined when it comes to the Portman.

The Pomeroy study clearly indicates not only that it is possible to save the Helen Hayes and the Morosco, but that such a build-over course could make vast improvements in the functioning of the Hotel. Rotating the center portion of the Hotel and eliminating the 1500-seat theater over Broadway improves the building's relationship with the street, something that Portman is, apparently, oblivious to. In New York, unlike Atlanta, the streets are peopled at all hours of the day. Buildings in New York must relate well to pedestrian considerations and not simply automotive requirements. Within the Hotel, Pomeroy's study showed that some important pedestrian and service traffic problems could be ameliorated. The retail opportunities — something that has plagued Portman's more recent projects — are made much more attractive.

From an urban standpoint, from a design standpoint, and from a functional standpoint, the architectural possibilities are enormous when the new theater above Broadway is removed. All that is required is the will to do it.



Alternate proposal for the Portman Hotel, to include the Helen Hayes and Morosco theaters, submitted by Lee Harris Pomeroy, Pomeroy/Lebduska; 1981. Section, street level, and retail level plans.

New York Controversies

If the Broadway Mall, now before the Board of Estimate, is not approved, Portman must redesign his hotel, which juts out into the street.

Broadway Plaza's Mixed Reviews

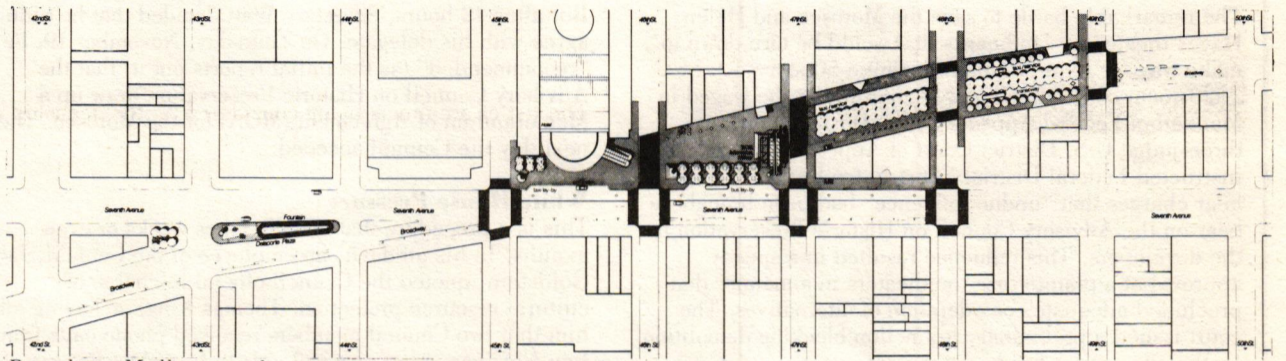
James Terry

The idea of creating a pedestrian plaza in the heart of Times Square was first proposed in the early 1970s. Last fall, fortified with \$3.5 million in federal grants, the city finally decided to go ahead with the \$7.5-million project, which was to be known as Broadway Plaza. City planners Tippetts Abnett McCarthy Stratton, and design consultant M. Paul Friedberg came up with a scheme to solve the problem of putting a public plaza at the "Crossroads of the World." As Friedberg explains his design, he chose not to compete with the "glitzy exuberance of the place," or to "sanitize" it, but instead to create a relatively anonymous receptacle, an empty bowl. "From the first I figured the less I did, the better the project would be," Friedberg says.

The plaza is now slated to occupy 41,000 s.f. of Broadway between 45th and 47th Streets. City planners see Broadway Plaza as a complement to John Portman's proposed Times Square hotel, which would front the plaza between 45th and 46th. To create the pedestrian space, vehicular traffic would be rerouted down Seventh and Ninth Avenues.

Friedberg's design is not entirely devoid of amenities. Under his plan, the monumental statues of George M. Cohan and Father Francis Duffy would be relocated from their present sites in Duffy Square and incorporated into the new plaza. The brick-paved, tree-lined space would also feature information kiosks and colorful banners. The existing "TKTS" booth, which distributes half-price theater tickets, would be demolished and rebuilt at the north end of the plaza. The new building, to be designed by the firm of Mayers & Schiff, would also house a tourist and theater information center.

One notable feature of Friedberg's design is the absence of benches, clearly intended to discourage "undesirables" from loitering in the plaza. Friedberg asserts that "you cannot solve special problems with civic design," but he believes that a sensitive design, in conjunction with good management, would prevent any increase in public nuisances and crime in the area.



Broadway Mall proposal, site plan; M. Paul Friedberg, design consultant.

Critics of the project are not so sure. Lee Silver, a spokesman for Broadway theater-owners, expresses some reservations about the design. Specifically, he points to the three-step, 1½-foot grade in front of the planned TKTS building. These steps, he says, would attract peddlers, pimps and prostitutes, derelicts, and three-card monte sharks. However, Friedberg insists that the steps are necessary, both aesthetically and functionally.

The proposal to divert traffic around the plaza has also stirred controversy. Ken Halpern, director of the Manhattan Borough Planning Office, says that the city's plan to widen Seventh Avenue from 30 to 60 feet and to adjust turn regulations and stoplights will minimize traffic disruption. But Richard Newhouse, traffic safety manager of the Auto Club of New York, claims that the city's Environmental Impact Study "grossly underestimated the capacity of the midtown cross streets to handle the increased traffic volumes which will be created by the plaza." He foresees Broadway Plaza turning already congested midtown into a rush-hour disaster area.

Despite all the doubts surrounding Broadway Plaza, at least one man is sure to be thoroughly pleased with the project. If the plaza is constructed as planned, Atlanta developer John Portman will have a publicly funded "front yard" for his Times Square hotel—paid for by the

city, state, and federal governments. Assuming Portman will win the legal battle now being waged by theater preservationists against the hotel, city planners foresee the plaza and hotel proceeding this spring.

The Board of Estimate has already granted Portman authorization to extend his hotel well past the property line. Current plans from the architect call for part of the 15-story, high-bowed facade of the hotel to encroach onto Broadway. In addition, the set of escalators, designed to connect the third and fourth floor retail spaces to the street, would project out even further (see plan). Once Portman builds out into the roadway, he will present Broadway Plaza's opponents with a *fait accompli*. Even if the plaza turns out to be a fiasco, it would be virtually impossible to return vehicular traffic to Broadway.

In an editorial this fall, *The New York Times* termed the plaza proposal "misguided." That was an excellent choice of words. Too many issues are being summarily dealt with because of the link to the Portman hotel. Only at the final hurdle has this connection been discussed for all its implications. However, now the mall is not being presented to the public as an option, but as a necessity, specifically because of the tie-in deal with the hotel. Whether the design is good, bad, or indifferent—the public has reason for complaint.

The Temptation of St. Barts, Second Verse

Hugh Cosmon

The figures associated with the proposed development on the site of St. Bart's Community House are enough to give anyone pause. Howard Ronson, the British real estate financier, has offered the Church \$11 million in up-front money, a sum which would practically double the church's present endowment. Then there would be more than \$500 million in rental payments over an initial 40-year lease—\$3 million a year for the first 3 years and after that \$9.25 million a year, with a 20-percent increase every 10 years to cover inflation. Then three 20-year leases would be negotiated, after which St. Bart's would become owner of the building. Construction costs are currently estimated at being "in excess" of \$110 million.

St. Bart's present endowment is larger than that of all but a few churches in the country; it's bigger than St. John the Divine's. It yields well over \$2 million a year. The Vestry report, however, claims all sorts of capital needs—like \$750,000 for new lights and speakers, plus a \$7.5-million repair schedule. An independent engineer, hired by the Committee to Oppose the Sale of St. Bartholomew's Church, examined the Community House, for example, and found it to be in excellent condition, needing only a sprinkler system costing about \$50,000. The Vestry Report states it is in need of rewiring, among other things, at a cost of \$740,000.

Morality and the Law

The Vestry Report calls the lease plan a "moral and Christian imperative." If that is the case, certainly the Church leaders shouldn't have to engage in "disingenuous" arguments, but that is what State Supreme Court Justice Edward J. Greenfield thought of some contentions made by the Church at a hearing on November 17, 1981. The previous month, another Supreme Court Justice, Charles S. Whitman, found St. Bart's to be in violation of the Religious Corporation Act. He directed the church to hold a vote on an amendment of its bylaws that would decide whether the parishioners wanted to have a binding voice in any sale or lease of church property.

A vote was scheduled for November 17, but it turned out to be a vote on the lease plan, and not on the amendment to the bylaws. "Thus, any vote prior to the changing of the by-laws would be a mere public opinion poll," Justice Greenfield said it would be "an advisory opinion to which the Vestrymen could point as indicating support if the majority indicated approval, but which they could legally ignore if the vote were adverse. This court will not sanction such an empty or meaningless vote." Justice Greenfield ordered the ballots impounded and a new vote—on the bylaws amendment—scheduled.

But then, in a complete turnaround, the Vestrymen said that they had voted on—and adopted—a bylaw that made a vote by the members of the church binding. Judge Greenfield gave his approval and set the date for a membership vote on the lease plan for December 18.

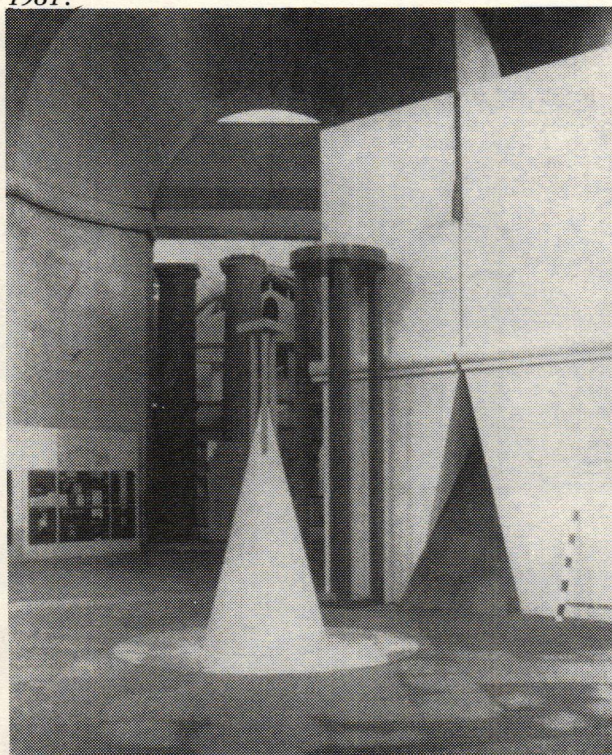
After the Vote

The Committee did not really anticipate a victory. Its expectations were realized: the membership approved the plan by a margin of 21 votes, 375 to 354. The week following the vote, the Committee was back in court, and on January 7, 1982, the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court issued an order barring any sale of church property pending its decision on a Committee appeal.

The new Committee action challenges the December 18 vote. The number of legal options available to the Committee is formidable indeed. And the number of church-required approvals is still lengthy. The bishop and the Standing Committee of the New York Diocese must give their blessing to the tower plan. Additionally, such issues as the landmark status of the church (dating from 1967) have to be resolved. If the Landmarks Commission were to approve the plan, the landmarks law would be threatened, for it would set an unparalleled precedent for other nonprofit institutions.

Notes & Comment

Christian de Portzamparc. Door for the exposition of the Venice Biennale at the Chapel of the Salpêtrière, Paris; 1981.



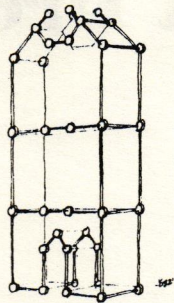
The Biennale in Paris

The architecture section of the 1980 Venice Biennale, which was directed by **Paolo Portoghesi**, has started to move west. The first stop—from October 15 through December 20, 1981—was the chapel of the Hôpital de la Salpêtrière in Paris, designed by Libéral Bruant in 1670. As a result, the French capital became the scene of one of the most virulent rhetorical battles since the controversy generated by the competition for Les Halles in 1978. Here the Venice Biennale presented itself as a paradigmatic statement of the post-modernist style.

The Biennale in Paris departed from the original Venice exhibition in two ways. First, the facades were placed in the space of the chapel, disregarding entirely the original idea of a street formed by the juxtaposition of facades designed by different architects. This new "spatial arrangement" enhanced the visual confusion and illegibility of the show. Second, the Paris show presented two additions to the set of facades that formed the original post-modern street—one by **Fernando Montes** and the other by **Christian de Portzamparc**. Montes' facade, very much "in line" with the propositions presented first in Venice, was a very individual and personal gesture, which, once placed within the variety of the exhibition, paradoxically became neutralized, and, in the end, appeared anonymous, as it did not force our gaze necessarily upon it. Portzamparc's "object" separated itself from the rest, and immediately attracted our otherwise drifting attention. Portzamparc refused to design "just one more doorway" and presented instead a fragment (from one of his projects, I suppose). This action did not mean that this work was entirely successful. Within the chaotic context of the exhibition, one would have expected a less ambiguous statement, a clearer sign of fragmentation understandable to any outsider to the French architectural scene.

Paul Chemetov led the reaction against the show and initiated a polemical attack, which developed through open letters, articles in important newspapers, and strong replies, accusing the promoters of cultural imperialism and the architects of playing artistic *bricolage* instead of concentrating on real problems, such as building for the masses.

Once more the post-modernist ideological constructs have helped to produce confusion and to regenerate old discussions—such as art versus building—that obscure the important issue underlying the superficial ideas on which the Biennale has been based: the question of the visual realm defined by architecture and its place in the modern city. — **I.M.**



Lists

The list of architects being considered for the deanship at Princeton University when **Robert Geddes** retires at the end of the school year is getting shorter. Right now the figure is at six for the number of candidates who were asked to lecture at the school and talk to the faculty: **Tom Beeby, Anthony Eardley, Kenneth Frampton, Fred Koetter, Donlyn Lyndon, and Robert Maxwell.**

Six architects are being considered for the office building to be erected by the Humana Corporation in Louisville, Kentucky: **Michael Graves, Ulrich Franzen, Richard Meier, Murphy/Jahn, Cesar Pelli, and Norman Foster.**

The Des Moines Arts Center's short list of possible architects for the design of a museum building to be added to existing Eliel Saarinen and I.M. Pei buildings includes (again) **Richard Meier, Michael Graves, plus Mitchell/Giurgola, and Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer.**

Speaking of lists, **Philip Johnson** is on this year's *Women's Wear Daily* (W) "In" list. **Harvard** and **Cornell** are on its "Out" list. (Does this apply to their architecture schools too?)



Jacqueline Onassis and unidentified friend enjoying the bidding at the MAS Benefit Auction. (photo: Christie's, New York)

Masses Gather in Support of MAS

Two-hundred-and-twenty-five of the best people turned out at Christie's auction house one blustery evening in January to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Municipal Arts Society. The highlight of the evening, which started with cocktails and supper, was a benefit auction of fifty-one items donated by architects, artists, manufacturers, and well-placed individuals of all sorts and conditions.

Auctioneers **Henry Wyndham** of Christie's and **Brendan Gill** of New York kept up a fast-talking routine throughout the evening. Matching witticism for witticism, they entertained all *and* gaveled down the collection at less than a minute an item. "Sold!" were about half-a-dozen classic chairs—two, by Aalto and Corbu, scooped up by Jack Lenor Larsen at wholesale prices—as well as drawings, etchings, photographs, sculptures, and promises for same. Tours-to-be-bought included St. John the Divine, New York Harbor—with a picnic on a tugboat—the Forbes' Fabergé Collection, or any part of New York you chose to see. There were meals for dozens, Rolls for a day, theater outings, books (signed, of course), and spaces-to-let. Perhaps the most special was the limited edition (one of one) of the Tinker Toy model of the AT&T Building—James Sanders, an architect with the Parks Council "designed" the skyscraper; each joint was initialed by Philip Johnson before the bidding. This was snapped up at \$600 by Lily Auchincloss.

Margot Wellington, director of the MAS, reported that the evening netted about \$35,000 for the Society.

No Bard Firsts

The Alfred S. Bard Awards for "excellence in architecture and urban design" completed in the previous calendar year have a history of being quite critical and often iconoclastic. On January 12 the City Club of New York, which established the Awards in 1963, announced that none of the projects considered for this year's Awards was deserving of a First Honor Award. "Nowhere in the submissions was there a single design we could point to as a model of excellence," explained Melvyn Kaufman, jury chairman. Mr. Kaufman reinforced the point with a vehement "For shame!"

The jury, composed of Eli Attia, Georgio Cavaglieri, Ezra Ehrenkrantz, Elinor Guggenheimer, Norman Rosenfeld, Bernard Rothzeit, and Mr. Kaufman, did however, designate two projects for Awards for Merit, and two for Awards. Awards for Merit were given to 560 Lexington Avenue by the **Eggers Group**, in recognition of a "sensitive" addition to a block occupied by the Cross & Cross General Electric Building and Goodhue's St. Bartholomew's Church, and to the Sylvan Terrace facade restoration by **Ferrara & Maruca** architects, sponsored by the N.Y.C. Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the N.Y.C. Landmarks Commission. Awards were given for the Scheuer house for the elderly in Bayside, Queens, by the **Gruzen Partnership**, and to the renovation of Garfield North in Park Slope, Brooklyn, by **Saltini/Ferrara Architects**, sponsored by Citicorp Community Development and Peter Saltini.

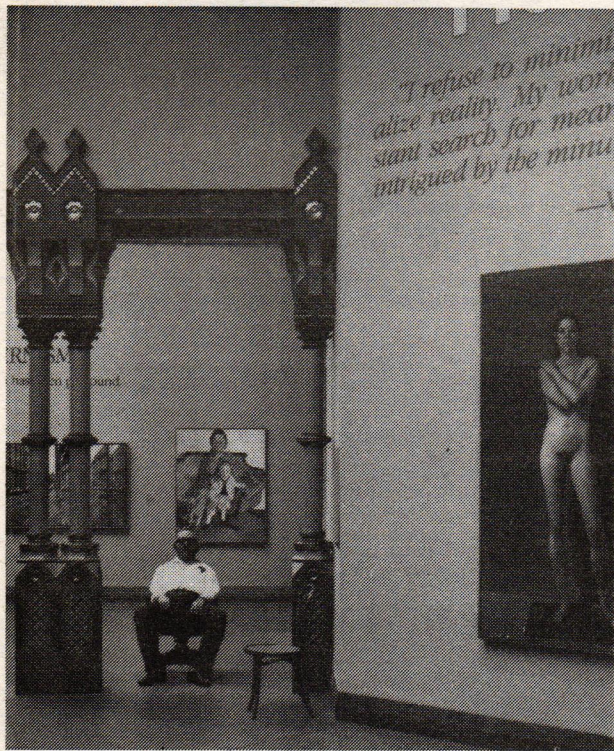
An indication of the difficulties facing the jury—who establish their own criteria each year—was given by Mr. Attia's filing a dissenting opinion on two of the designations: Garfield North and 560 Lexington. Of the latter he said, "A careful choice of exterior brick is not enough to constitute design excellence."

The framing of Philip Johnson and John Burgee's AT&T Headquarters on Madison Avenue was completed in January 1982.

Other Settings

Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown's Realist Approach

David Slovic and Ligia Ravé



"Contemporary American Realism Since 1960," presented at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, has been their most ambitious, widely discussed, and well-attended exhibition in recent memory. Curated by Frank H. Goodyear, Jr., and designed by the firm of Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown, under the direction of Steven Izenour and Christine Matheu, this show has had the gift of excellent timing. The present exhibition represents a synthesis of many shows of the recent past, during which time the movement has gained momentum. 152 pieces in the show represent the work of some 104 artists. All the pieces are included in the catch-all term "Contemporary American Realism."

Included in the exhibition are artworks as diverse in technique and method of representation as Sidney Goodman's evocative charcoal drawings, Jack Beal's mural-like scenes, and Richard Estes' coolly photographic depictions. As a major effort, a traveling exhibit of this dimension deserves serious consideration from many viewpoints. However, for the purposes of this review, only the installation for the show mounted in Philadelphia will be discussed, for it highlights crucial issues that curators and their installation designers face in presenting art to the public.

The setting for the Philadelphia show was Frank Furness' High Victorian Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, completed in 1876. Still retaining its sheen from a recent restoration, the building is an extraordinary example of inventive design. Furness' orchestration of the passage from public street, through the grand stairhall and on up to the second-level gallery floor is itself worth the trip to Philadelphia. The brightly lit, well-proportioned rooms, along with the character and colorful quality of the building provided an apt background against which the vitality of the Realist sensibility supposedly would emerge.

But the curatorial approach to the organization of the work on display was overly didactic, geared as it was to teaching the viewer, not merely engaging him or her. The rotunda at the top of the stairs formed the orientation point: from here one could walk into each of the four side galleries containing work classified according to distinct categories: "Still Life," "Landscape," "Figurative," and "Narrative." A painting from each category hung in the rotunda to identify the various classifications. Along with these paintings were a boldly designed room title and a quotation selected from several artists' commentaries. In addition, two mini-exhibits were juxtaposed within the side galleries, each announced by their own titles, "Realism and Tradition" and "Realism and Modernism." No single path threaded through the exhibit, nor was there a beginning or an end; visitors walked from room to room and back again, retracing earlier steps.

"Contemporary American Realism Since 1960," held at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts from September 18–December 13, 1981, was directed by Frank H. Goodyear, Jr.; the installation for the Pennsylvania Academy exhibition only was done by Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown.

The catalogue for the exhibition, of the same title, was written by Frank H. Goodyear, Jr., and published by the New York Graphic Society, Boston, Massachusetts, 1981; 255 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations; Soft-cover, \$15.00; hardcover, \$32.50.



Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown. Installation of "Contemporary American Realism" exhibition, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia; 1981. (photos: Thomas Bernard)

At the starting point in the rotunda one was greeted by the title/logo "American Realism" floating above an introductory panel set on the floor on a raised platform. This panel contained script lettering rendered with shadows and receding in perspective, which was similar to the opening sequence of *Star Wars*. This "American Realism" logo, conspicuously absent from the official publications, was the only element of the installation that caught the spirit of the art. The placement of Chuck Close's painting *Mark*—a singularly huge face on the far wall, terminating the axis opposite the grand stair—proved equally dramatic; but the rotunda, filled with simplistic instructions and artistic homilies, seemed like a public classroom.

From the introductory message, through the quotations on each category of work and the references to "Tradition" and "Modernism," the show was laden with a deadening didactic pall. The viewer was continually directed to read and understand the work from a primarily art historical or "formalist" vantage point rather than to address the art directly. A quote such as Neil Welliver's statement—"I want to make a natural painting as fluid as a de Kooning"—only serves to maintain art history's closed sense of intimacy. The didactic approach is inappropriate here: Realism's strong appeal is the accessibility of its imagery, which is available to the average viewer in a way that "abstract" art is not. Viewers of Realist work identify their own responses to recognizable scenes and ascribe meaning to figures and objects. In assessing this type of work, the spectator's interpretation becomes as valid as the private intention of either artist or curator. Even the categories proved forced at times: What criterion distinguishes John Baeder's *Yankee Clipper* diner as a "landscape" and Ralph Goings' *Amsterdam Diner* as a "still life"?

The architects for the installation—Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown—were brought in three years after the show's inception, and followed the direction established by the curatorial approach. While certain of their ideas proved effective, and their arrangement of the painting and sculpture was carried out with much finesse, generally the design suffered at the hands of the overall concept. At a time when the relationship between architecture and society is so confused, it is particularly difficult to evaluate the design of an art installation. Which decisions are the province of the curator and which are that of the architect/designer? Who has the real say? Among the varying considerations about the art, the institution, the public, and the spaces, who establishes the priorities?

The answer in this case was the Academy, and its attitudes toward presenting art to the public. The presentation was typically academic. It was rigid, cold, didactic, and severe, with four quotations, four colors, four categories, four rooms. The work was catalogued and displayed with no imagination or emotion, limiting the possible approaches at the level of the art itself. The paintings, meanwhile, were installed as if they were dinosaur bones.

The design of an installation has to allow for individual relationships between viewer and art, fostering a unique experiencing of art. The installation's purpose is to define an attitude toward the personal vision of a piece, while establishing an appropriate context for the whole exhibition. If the curator deals with the art, the designer deals with its context. The academic treatment of the energetic American Realist work at the Academy prevented the viewer from seeing it in its reality. The exhibit could have been direct and insightful, as is the best of the Realist work. Instead, it was ponderous in its instructional purpose; it showed the work, but it missed the point.

Architects are designing painting and sculpture exhibits; painters are doing stage sets—with revealing results.

Hockney's Painterly Set

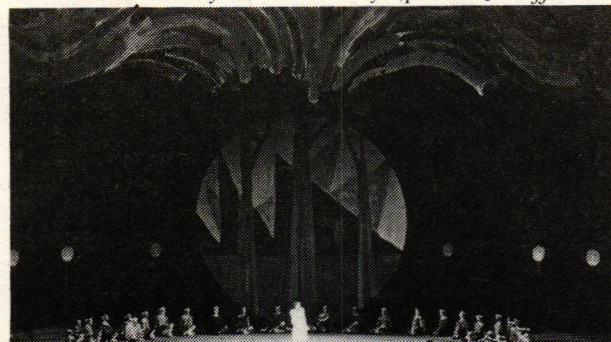
Calvin Morgan

The 1981 Metropolitan Opera Season made an innovative and courageous departure from the usual classical repertory by presenting a triple bill last spring that consisted of Eric Satie's short ballet *Parade* and two operas, *Les Mamelles de Tiresias* by Francis Poulenc, and *Les Enfants et les Sortilèges* by Maurice Ravel. All three were staged by John Dexter and designed by David Hockney, a collaboration hailed as a critical success both at the box office and in the press. Presumably to build on that success and coincidentally to celebrate the Stravinsky centennial, the Met announced a second triple bill this winter with Dexter and Hockney once again collaborators. The bill: Stravinsky's ballet *Le Sacre du Printemps*; *Le Rossignol*, a lyric tale; and *Oedipus Rex*, an opera oratorio. The evening, unified visually by the thematic use of masks and a Matisse-like show curtain, opened with the *Sacre du Printemps*. First conceived by Stravinsky in the spring of 1910, the early version of the ballet (1913) includes sets and costumes by the painter Nicholas Roerich, a friend of Stravinsky's who specialized in pagan images. Sergei Diaghilev was the producer of the ballet, and Leon Bakst proposed the French title. In his version, Hockney placed a flat, circular disc upstage center, painted in the style of Synthetic Cubism to depict trees and mountains. The full stage, curtained in black, held randomly placed primitive masks reminiscent of Matisse's drawing *Study for Sainte Veronique* for the Chapelle du Rosaire at Venice. This visual monotony was broken only by a partial-cut drop of painted clouds reminiscent of Hockney's Glyndebourne *Magic Flute*. Hockney has often said that he thinks of his sets as large pictures, but as the three-dimensional rather than the two-dimensional kind. The set for the Stravinsky ballet sadly lacks that third dimension.

The poetic *Rossignol*, originally written for the Moscow Free Theater, but never realized, was first presented by the Ballet Russes at the Paris Opera in 1914. Diaghilev engaged Alexander Benois, who had originally worked on the unrealized Free Theater production sets, to design the sumptuous decor. The first Russian performance in Petrograd at the Maryinsky Theater in 1918 was staged by Vsevolod Meyerhold and designed by Alexander Golovine. In his *Rossignol* set, Hockney further explores ideas first seen in his earlier works for the theater. His startling use of color, saturated blues with which he creates a parallel to the mood of the music, is almost more remarkable than the spatial sensation created by the linearly distorted perspective. The playfulness and spontaneity of *Le Rossignol* show a willingness to engage in games of style and technique and a sense of experiment evocative of the exhilarating eclecticism of his work of the early 1960s. The design has an air of constant surprise and discovery. Architecturally, the decor is strictly post-modern chinoiserie, with a touching homage (again) to Matisse. The reference, however, is not made for the sake of style, but grows out of a need to find the most



Oedipus Rex (top right), *Le Rossignol* (above), and *Le Sacre du Printemps* (left), at the Metropolitan Opera, New York; sets and costumes by David Hockney. (photos: J. Heffernan)



correct form in which to clothe the mood of the music. Matisse is well-served and so is Stravinsky.

Oedipus Rex, Stravinsky's Handelian oratorio, was first performed in 1927, but not actually staged until the 1928 Vienna production. Hockney was no doubt inspired by Stravinsky's statement that "Oracles and crossroads are not personal, but geometrical, and the geometry of tragedy, the inevitable intersection of lines, is what concerns me." The set, reflecting the current interest in Russian Constructivism and Suprematism, is created "geometrically" out of a strong vertically fluted gold column intersected by a massive horizontal dais. A semicircular red disc punctuated by two triangulated

openings was placed at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical planes. The red disc "spills" over the elevated plane on which the acting takes place, onto the backdrop, in front of which a male chorus is seated on a lower level. But architectural massing of this set, with its neoclassical proportions, results in a fascistic monumentalism. Hockney's white archaic character masks for the actors seem unrelated stylistically to the architectonic content of the set. While *Oedipus* demands both formalism and monumentalism, qualities so sensitively handled by Hockney in *Magic Flute*, one would have hoped for a more contemporary, less derivative mode.

While Hockney exhibits an intrinsic sense of style, in *Oedipus* he shows much less of a feeling for Constructivist architectonic ideas than he does the figurative, painterly mode in *Rossignol*, *Magic Flute*, and *Parade*. For this reason, his design for *Oedipus Rex* fails to show Hockney at his best. Like that of *Sacre du Printemps*, the *Oedipus* set came out ultimately as an unresolved attempt to adopt a vocabulary that had nothing to do with Hockney's personal aesthetic sensibilities.

Behind the Scrim at Satyagraha

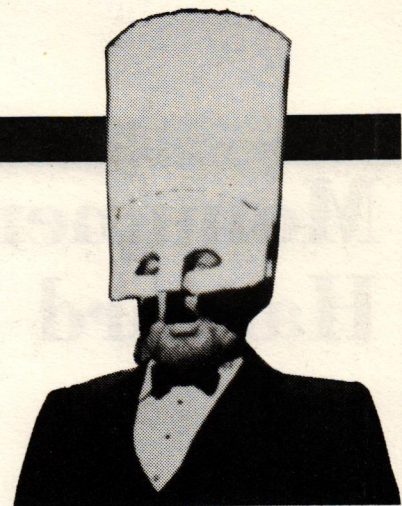
In his ambitious opera *Satyagraha*, produced last fall at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the composer Philip Glass, in collaboration with Constance De Jong, Robert Israel, Richard Riddell, and Hans Nieuwenhuis, explored the extremes of stylized action and staging.

Focusing on the theme of nonviolent resistance as developed by Gandhi during his years in South Africa, the opera presented a series of tableaux with performers in simple Eastern and Western dress, made of off-white and gray fabric. The costuming, along with the highly ritualized movement, minimized the sense of individuality, turning the characters into emblems of a highly abstract spiritual struggle.

The most significant element in this presentation was the use of a scrim dropped in front of the entire stage, dividing the actors from the audience. Its diaphanous character lent a fantastic aura to the performance, as if one were viewing events through the mist of memory, or experiencing a prophetic vision. At the same time, it transformed the stage into a two-dimensional picture plane, giving a static quality to the action—forcing us to see the opera as allegory—part history, part mythology, part of the eternal struggle between good and evil. Glass' music, full of cyclical patterning and repetition, underscored the hypnotic effect of the staging. Even the full orchestra performed under a net of black mesh. While too many parts of the production were slow—nearly deadening—the attempt to integrate plot, themes, music, and staging was bold and often rewarding. —H.C.



Satyagraha, at B.A.M.; sets and costumes by Robert Israel. (photo: Jaap Pieper)



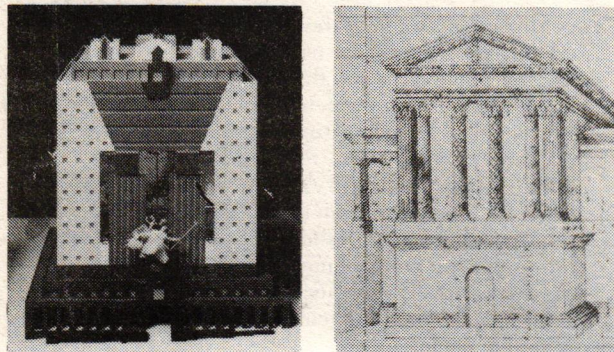
Symposia/Galleries

Monumentality Symposium at Harvard

Hélène Lipstadt

Pediments and columns proliferate, historicism is an issue to be faced in daily practice, and the war monument has reappeared as a competition program. Monumentality, however, still remains a subject that is infrequently discussed. Thus it is newsworthy that the theme "Monumentality and the City" was chosen for the conference and forthcoming fourth issue of the student-run *Harvard Architectural Review*. The subject, like the day, was very much the students'. They selected the speakers from the Graduate School of Design faculty. They also chose the panelists, including show-stoppers Romaldo Giurgola, Michael Graves, and Philip Johnson; as well as recognized scholars James Ackerman, George Collins, and John Jacobus; and Henry Cobb, chairman of the Department of Architecture at the GSD.

The morning's speakers represented two antithetical modes of historical interpretation. Val Warke, a young architect, chose to remain within the sacred precinct of the past, analyzing the uncomfortably joined Campidoglio and Monument to Victor Emmanuel. Using historians' tools, he furthered an architect's position: internal aesthetic coherence of the monument provides the meaning. And he implied that the monument, like the heart, has reasons that reason cannot know. His attack on scientific planning, which leaves nothing to poetry, and its architects was extremely well received.



The historian, William Curtis, known for his impatience with semiological interpretation—and thus with Warke's approach—courageously unveiled his nine-point program for establishing the authentic monument. The program included: understanding/relationship to the institution; use of the tradition of signs/symbols; emphasis on size; and use of abstraction. Curtis' program also stressed the treatment of space as a monument, the irrelevance of style in monumentality, and the possibility of monumentality in vernacular architecture. James Ackerman, speaking as a theorist, developed his opposition to monuments in our society, bereft as it is of culture and of an absolute certainty in its identity. He defended social relevance and a transactional process of design that includes the client. Michael Graves was not expected to be sympathetic, and, playing the much-abused poet who is attacked because he builds rooms, returned to his well-known defense of limitless invention. He argued that a mythic substratum exists that requires only personal expression. Graves had convinced at least Giurgola, who took up the cause of invention, but in a language so private that he illustrated too well Graves' statement that one must know the literature of architecture to understand architectural expression. Amused at filling their typecast roles, Ackerman and Graves managed to clear up some simple but fundamental points: they stated that the word "monumental" is not to be used in a pejorative or polemical sense; and that creation and reception cannot be divided.

The afternoon session pitted two opposed but mutually respectful speakers: Alfred Koetter of "Collage City" and Moshe Safdi of God's City (Jerusalem). Safdi's two proposed categories of monumentality—"Involved" and "Composed"—were unconvincing and illustrated by curiously chosen slides, like those comparing a domed building of his own design with one by Borromini. Many would dispute the claim that the Galleria in Houston and a Portman hotel were "public places worthy of the public life we want." Denouncing Graves' Portland building (currently under construction) as dark, repellent, and cruelly sacrificial of human life, his speech changed the

previously bemused exchanges into open battle. Safdi would not admit to any expression other than the "associational," and, in somewhat evangelistic terms, predicted the end of a society that puts temple fronts on mail-order houses.

Fred Koetter made a double-pronged point supporting the value of U.S. "monuments": first, the eclecticism of Main Street architecture is unique and exciting; second, the European office-building lobby is a mere "cigar store" when compared with contemporary American equivalents. Koetter's second patriotic assertion ignores important counter-examples, such as Behrens' I.G. Farben office building (1920-24); or, if the building must be "eclectic"—that is, not Modernist—the Paris office of the Crédit Lyonnais (north section, 1878-1907; William Bouwens van der Boijen, architect), with its Chambord-inspired, gigantic double-helix staircase. Koetter's approach demonstrates that architectural patriotism can promote so-called post-modernism just as it can attack it.

Philip Johnson's soliloquy made everything a monument and made it all simple—for the instinctive artist, that is. Monument-making, he claimed, is as natural as eating and sex, although it might be more fun than eating. Favoring Borromini over Safdi, Graves over Ackerman, and Koetter's type of Nolli-map-spatial transfiguration of

Only Henry Cobb could make sense of it all for the rest of us. Apparently troubled by Warke's analysis of the Campidoglio, which art historians declare a fragment, he could only conclude that its literally "fragmentary" nature is precisely the ingredient that renders it a conceptual whole. Thus the Victor Emmanuel monument remains a conceptual fragment due to its overwhelming "wholeness." Cobb extended the argument by a neat parallel, drawn between Koetter's remake of the "Pru" and the ancient example. Koetter's redesign will break up the whole into a literal "fragment," and thus achieve character as a place of the city. Cobb's elegant discussion of the effect of fragmentation on meaning and expression in architecture, including a suggestion of its impact on the city, is itself a fragment. Its substance becomes apparent when one compares his discussion with the conclusions of the "plain" historian, Reinhart Koselleck, who has studied the political significance of war monuments in several articles, most recently presented at the May 1980 Architectural Association Conference, "Architecture as a Symbol of Power."

War monuments, by their lacunae, by their lack of a specific reference to death, and despite a vocabulary that is remarkably similar from country to country, have come to symbolize victory. Since Canova's *Monument to Maria Christina* in Vienna (ca. 1800), the political function of the memorial has been to affect the living by glossing over the experience of death, by subjugating it to words and forms that extract sentiments from the survivor; not excluding a readiness for some future, similar death, equally unnamed. The monuments that evoke death by virtue of their form are rare, and these for the most part are fragments—such as the cement blocks laid in the manner of railroad ties, which represent Treblinka's siding, and where perspective provides the illusion of some future meeting point; a conclusion that is invisible, like the annihilation that lay waiting.

Upon reflection, it was clear that each architect and scholar had allowed us a glimpse of his practice, his modus operandi. Unfortunately, however, "Monumentality," in the end, was never adequately defined, and, more disappointing, the subject of the city was woefully neglected. Nevertheless, as the debate gave way to personal conflict, the apparently spontaneous conflagrations satisfied both audience and speakers. Members of the *Review* board proved themselves to be adroit arsonists and it will be interesting to see how they transform the heated passion into essay form for the forthcoming *Harvard Architectural Review* 4 devoted to the subject.



Romaldo Giurgola

the Prudential Center over Reality, Johnson declared himself ready to serve even Mammon, if there was a building in it. As tempers heated up, the art historians rushed to the defense of architecture as one of the arts, and the arguments wound down to the unresolvable oppositions of beauty and use; invention and function; expression and shelter—Graves: "Must we always say architecture is to live in?" . . . Cobb: "Yes."—all variants on the old Ruskinian dualism of architecture and building.



Michael Graves



James Ackerman

Photos by Lilian Kemp

The exhibition **The Strange Genius of William Burges: 'Art-Architect,' 1827-1881**, was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, from November 18, 1981 to January 17, 1982. Directed by J. Mordaunt Crook, the exhibition originated at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff, September-October, 1981.

William Burges: Designs for Cardiff Castle, was held at the Geffrye Museum, London, through January 17, 1982.

The catalogue **The Strange Genius of William Burges: 'Art-Architect,' 1827-1881**, for the exhibition of the same title, is by J. Mordaunt Crook, with entries by Mary Axon and Virginia Glenn; published by the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Illustrated. £3.50.

William Burges and the High Victorian Dream. By J. Mordaunt Crook. Published by the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1981; 632 pages, 272 illustrations, 11 in color; \$55.00.

Burges in London: Rediscovering the High Victorians

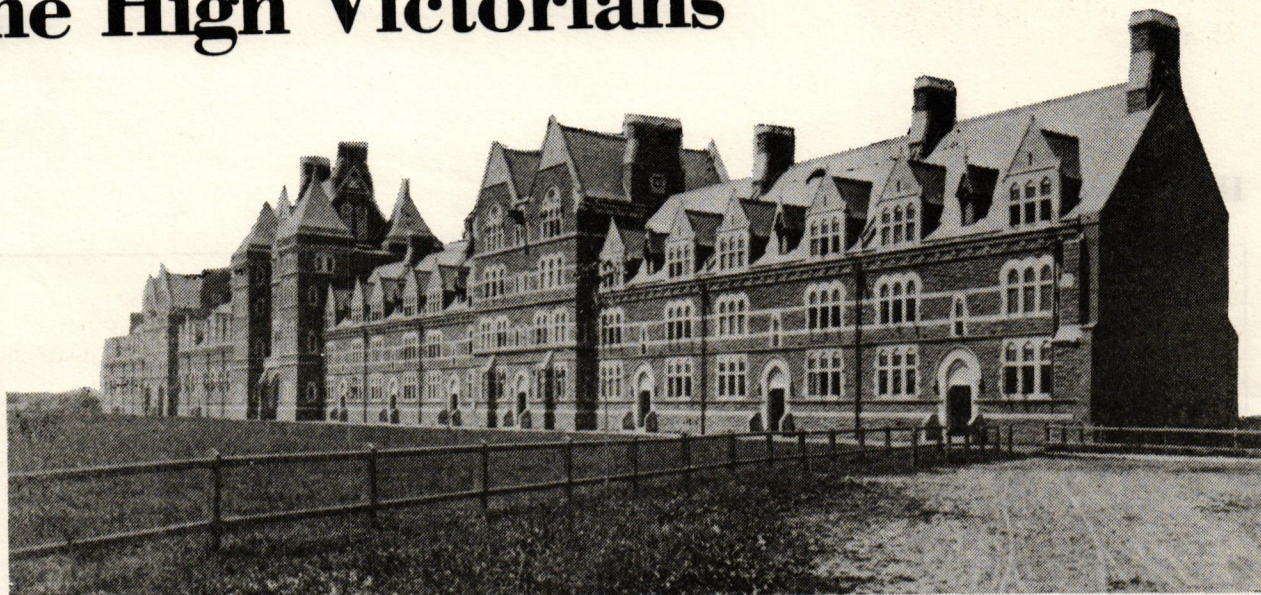
Barry Bergdoll

"Enjoying Burges—like enjoying Tennyson or Rossetti," J.M. Crook writes in his lavish new monograph on that jocular High Victorian Goth, "involves a willing suspension of disbelief. . . ." Indeed, in the overstuffed treasure trove of his architectural drawings, furniture, stained glass, and metalwork exhibited at the V & A, or in the illustrations of Crook's *William Burges and the High Victorian Dream* (University of Chicago Press, 1981), one is invited to enter a fantastic private universe of gargantuan-scaled and dazzlingly colored precious objects, the products of a creative genius given to an unquenchable passion for the Middle Ages. Burges' world was a muscular re-creation of the Middle Ages in Technicolor; ten times brighter, bolder, and more full-bodied than the original.

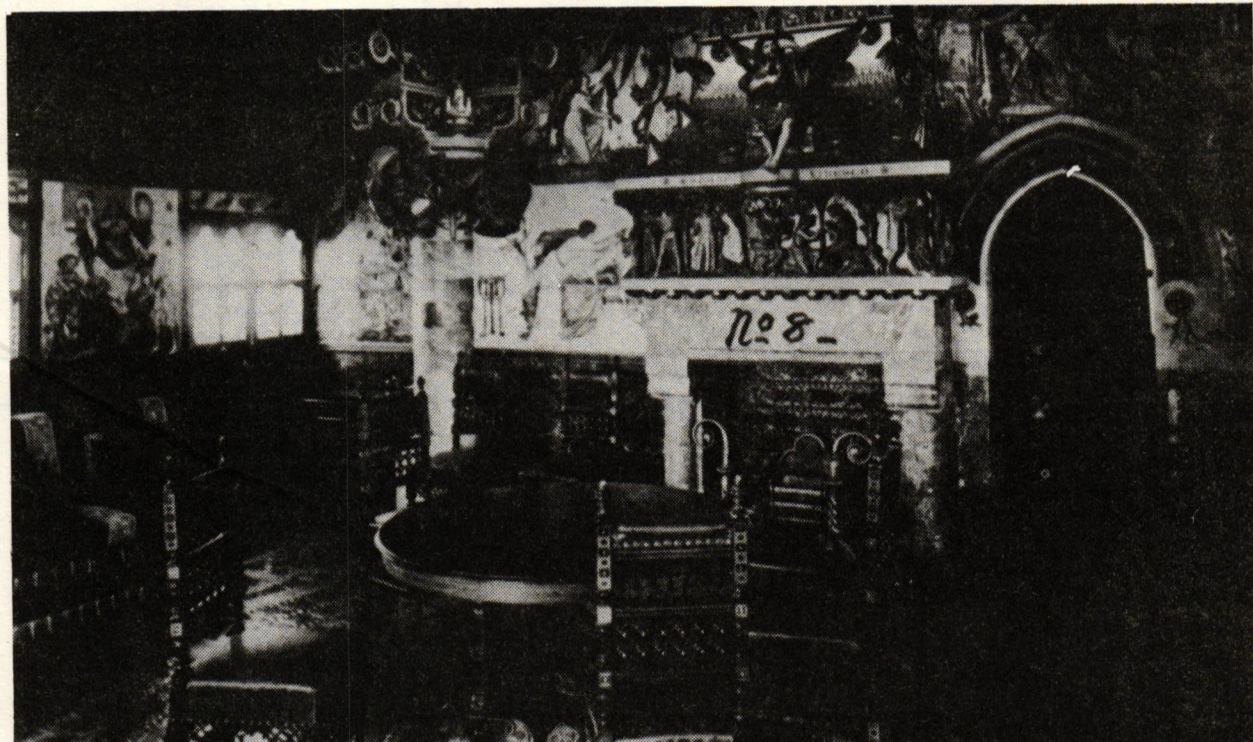
The Gothic Revival's usual high seriousness and archaeological historicism has rarely appealed to later generations of architects. In a London exhibition season dominated by Sir Edwin Lutyens' charm and wit (*Skyline*, January 1982), Lutyens' glorious swan song of the Arts and Crafts movement has overshadowed exhibitions celebrating the centenaries of two of that movement's most distinguished High Victorian "pioneers." Both George Edmund Street (1824-1881) and William Burges (1827-1881) were leaders of the High Victorian movement in the 1850s and 1860s and architects of international repute—continually favored in competitions and never without commissions. While the church architect G.E. Street (whose career was commemorated in a small but exemplary exhibition at Hull in November) typifies our view of the mid-Victorian practitioner—pious, earnest, and hardworking; an amateur historian and inveterate traveler—William Burges remains an intriguing paradox. The designer of two of the most robust and boldly scaled churches of the nineteenth century—at Studley Royal (1870-72) and Skelton (1870-76), both in Yorkshire—Burges was not a religious man. An amateur archaeologist and collector, he declared the Middle Ages to be his religion—"I was brought up in the 13th-century belief, and in that belief I intend to die"—yet he created some of the most startlingly original syntheses of medieval, Islamic, and Byzantine sources, all served up with a generous admixture of the bizarre. Chubby, jovial, chronically nearsighted, rambunctious—indeed, almost childlike—Burges broke nearly every convention of the Victorian architect. Crook has called him "the Lutyens of his own generation." Like Lutyens, Burges found in a handful of fabulously wealthy and delightfully eccentric clients that which few architects even dream: a trusting and appreciative carte blanche to realize some of the most expensive and lavish buildings of Victorian Britain.

In keeping with the V & A's established policy of gearing exhibitions to the marketplace, the visual appeal of Burges' sparkling watercolors and painted, mirror-encrusted furniture takes full precedence over historical presentation. Nearly every surviving piece of his furniture and a majority of his architectural drawings are included; yet the exhibition is overcrowded, poorly organized, and insufficiently documented in terms of textual explanation. As in one of the hermetic, jewel-box-like homes Burges created as retreats for the escapist aristocracy, all is calculated to overwhelm in its brightly colored abundance and opulence. There is little chance to detach oneself from the intoxication of this "most dazzling exponent of the High Victorian dream" in order to place Burges in his context, to consider the meaning of that "dream," or to understand his development from one of the most promising and engaged architects of the 1850s to the court architect and jester of the richest man in the realm. Lord Bute, for whom Burges created his most extravagant work, Cardiff Castle, is as much the hero of this view as Burges.

Yet this very juxtaposition of Burges' diverse creations serves to demonstrate the unity and distinct personality of his work and its claim to having inspired the architects of the Arts and Crafts movement. Whether creating a chalice for a high Anglican altar or a country seat for a Devonshire magnate, Burges commanded the same robust architectonic forms and assured sense of enormous scale. Aggressively composed and brilliantly painted, the furniture is the highlight of the show. Like miniature realizations of the architectural projects on the walls, it almost seems to muscle its way out from the confined



William Burges. Trinity College, Hartford, Ct., "The Long Walk"; completed ca. 1885.



William Burges. Cardiff Castle, Summer Smoking Room; 1871-74.

exhibition space. As in the buildings, the rich decoration—much of it created by Burges' Pre-Raphaelite friends—is a whimsical and often arcane comment on the function. The bright red washstand of 1865, for instance (which achieved subsequent renown for its menacing role in the novel by its owner, Evelyn Waugh, *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*), is decorated with the Narcissus legend around the mirror and features fish inlaid with gold and silver in the marble basin. Burges' architectural drawings partake of the same robust quality seen in his furniture and built work. Renouncing prettiness in all things, he emulated the simplicity and expressive awkwardness of Villard de Honnecourt's medieval drawings. Yet no style could better evoke the muscular strength of his buildings than these thick lines counterposed against luminous watercolor details. While the V & A show may leave us in the dark about the profile and meaning of Burges' career, it leaves no doubt about the unity of his vigorous personal language of form.

The show's emphasis is on the late fantasy world made possible by Lord Bute, whom Burges met in 1865 and in whom he found a kindred medieval spirit and admiring patron. From 1868 until his death in 1881, Burges worked at transforming Bute's properties Cardiff Castle and Castel Coch into exotic stage-sets in which the Butes could retreat from the grim reality they had created in modern Cardiff. (Indeed, Burges' patron's successor, the fourth Marquess of Bute, put this most succinctly in 1926 on the eve of the General Strike, when, retreating into Cardiff Castle, he ordered his porter to "raise the drawbridge!")

It is, however, all too easy to relegate Burges, like Bute, to the position of a fascinating but ultimately inconsequential eccentric, an architect whose own wealth and privileged sponsorship let him retreat into a private fantasy culminating in his own outlandish house in Kensington. This "strange genius" demands a more searching analysis and interpretation, something proffered in Crook's book, but sadly lacking in the exhibition. Burges, for all his seemingly lighthearted abandon, was

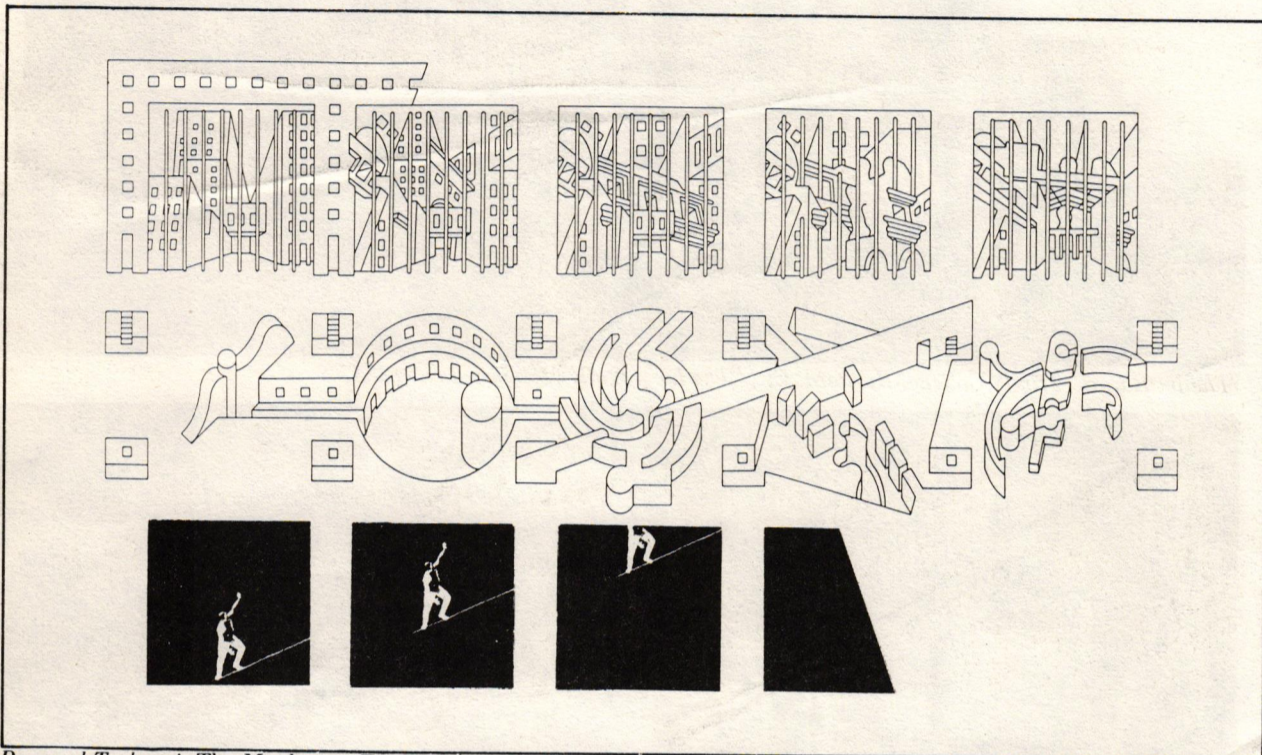
deeply perplexed by the dilemma of historicism. His rich personal mixture of medieval, Arab, and Byzantine sources was based on a belief in the possibility of eclectic synthesis as the generator of a modern architecture. Nor were his buildings impractical, however unrealistically ambitious in conception. Like Ruskin, Burges felt that architecture began where the functional problems of building ended, but he did not neglect accommodation of function for its expression. In many ways his rejected plan for the Law Courts Competition of 1867 was the most well considered, although the elevation would have turned the City of London into a bureaucratic Camelot centered on a 335-foot gothic record tower crowned by a recording angel. No less fantastic in scale was his project for Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut (1872), which was realized in a fragment and still forms the core of that college.

If "The Strange Genius of William Burges" offers little in the way of an assessment of Burges the architect, it establishes for the first time his key role in the development of modern furniture design as a link between the late furniture of his hero, A.W.N. Pugin, and the early painted furniture of William Morris and Richard Norman Shaw. If the elephantine forms, often derived from the manuals of Viollet-le-Duc, were rejected by the aesthetes of the 1880s, his painted furniture offered techniques and a model of cooperative craftsmanship emulated repeatedly by the creators of the "art furniture" of the next generation. An individualist and an eccentric no doubt, Burges was by no means a mere Victorian curiosity.

Architecture as Idea

Tschumi at Protetch

Hal Foster



Bernard Tschumi. The Manhattan Transcripts, "The Block"; 1981.

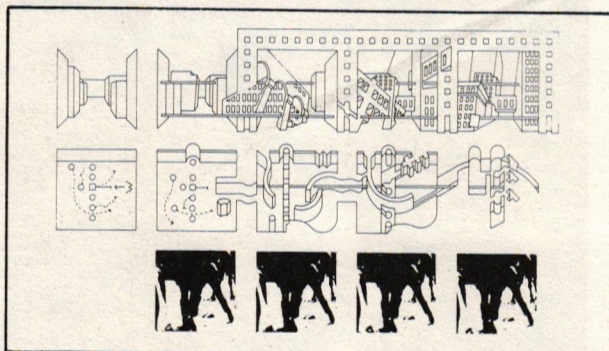
Bernard Tschumi addresses the present architectural discourse only obliquely: he does not argue for purity versus historicism; indeed, he regards both modernism and post-modernism as essentially formalist. His architecture is not another example of "style" in a history of "styles"; it is explicitly a manifesto, a call to rethink architecture not in terms of form but in terms of *transgression*—of architectural limits and social laws.

For Tschumi architecture embraces a paradox: it is both a conceptual space and a sensual experience. "To question the nature of space and at the same time make or experience a real space"—that is the impossibility that constitutes architecture. In recent essays in *Artforum* Tschumi has posed ideas about a "pleasure" and a "violence" of architecture—not to resolve the concept and the experience of architecture, but to conceive of a new form of architectural thought.

To begin the new, one must transgress the limits of the old. Architecture is commonly thought of in terms of structure, or a functional type, but for Tschumi "architecture" only occurs when structure and/or type are somehow exceeded. That is, a building only becomes "architectural" when its space is invaded by an event, or as its use changes in time. Such a concept of architecture has prompted him to inject bizarre narratives into his own designs and to value charges in historic ones. For example, in one of his *Advertisements for Architecture* (a series that uses ad devices "to trigger desire for architecture"), a photo of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye (ca. 1965—before its restoration and after it had been used as a barn) appears under this heading: "The most architectural thing about this building is the state of decay in which it is." Below the photograph one reads: "Architecture only survives where it negates the form that society expects of it. Where it negates itself by transgressing the limits that history has set for it." For Tschumi this moment of "eROTic" excess is the moment *extraordinaire* of architecture.

In the past he has addressed this in performance. Then, in 1977 in *Imports*, and in 1978 in *Screenplays*, he went so far as to suggest that narratives could actually direct spaces: in these works he proposed that fiction, not function—a story by Kafka, say, or a Frankenstein movie—be the pretext of architectural projects. This concern with event and limit has reached its most extreme form in *The Manhattan Transcripts*.

In his text Tschumi explains: "Three disjointed levels of 'reality' are presented simultaneously in the *Transcripts*: the world of objects, composed of buildings abstracted from maps, plans, photographs; the world of movements, which can be abstracted from choreography, sport, or other movement diagrams; the world of events, which is abstracted from news photographs." There are four



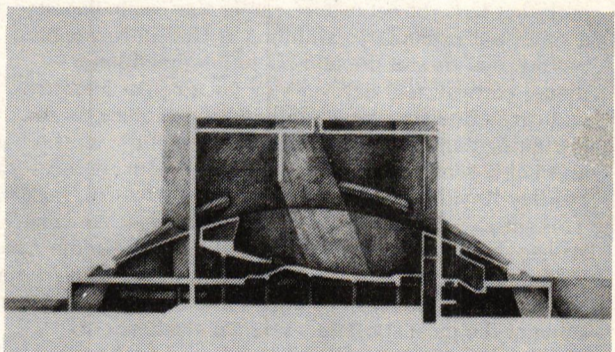
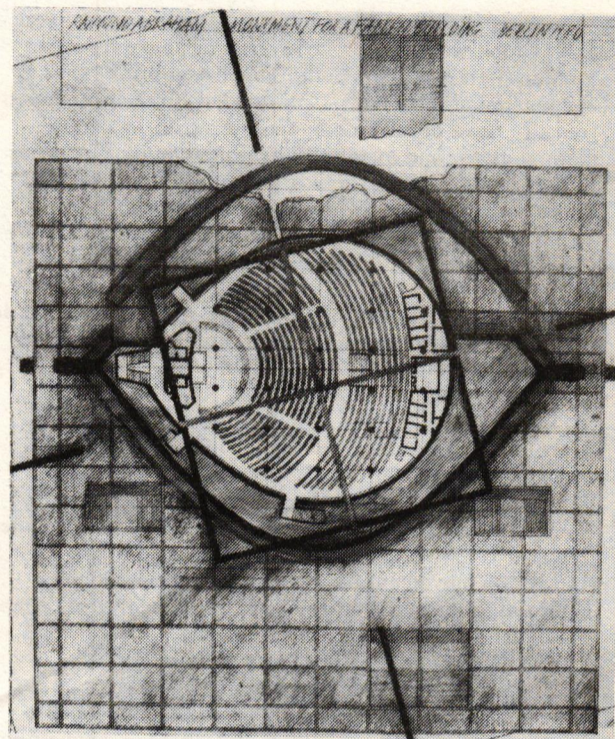
transcripts, each a broken series of episodes. The drawings of "The Park" juxtapose the plot of a murder with the architecture that witnesses it. "The Street" presents a rite of sorts—a passage across the social and architectural borders to be found on 42nd Street. "The Tower" transcribes the fall of an inmate through an institutional space—an event that affords a criticism of the programs and types of such spaces. Finally, as do the others, "The Block" presents a particular space (an urban courtyard) acted on/in by a strange cast of acrobats, soldiers, etc.; here, new movements invent new spaces.

As Tschumi writes, the transcripts are "neither real projects nor mere fantasies," but "frame-by-frame descriptions of an architectural inquest." In critical terms they exist somewhere between Antonioni's *Blow-Up* and Foucault's spatial critique *Discipline and Punish*. They may draw us in, as does the former, by a murder story, only to deliver us, as does the latter, into an analysis of social institutions. The critique takes as its subject all "humanist" architecture that restricts space to specific types and uses. The general tactic of the critique is simple: "To transcribe things normally removed from conventional architectural representation." The results are of enormous interest.

My one contention concerns the nature of the transcription. "The actions described," Tschumi writes, "are real actions." But this is not strictly so: like film scripts, the transcripts exist to be enacted. Just as they are based on fictions, not functions, they transcribe representations (maps, movie stills, etc.), not reality. These representations transgress reality and, again, for Tschumi this transgression is architecture. It demands a language that would describe space (with the help of a movie plot or a news story) as a situation. Ideally such architecture would allow rather than repress personal desire and public action. In *The Manhattan Transcripts* Tschumi has both espoused such an architecture and devised the method of its notation.

Abraham at Yale

Ross Miller



Raimund Abraham's drawings, models, and projects shown at Yale's Art and Architecture Gallery are provocative as autobiography—the development of an unyielding modernist—and as a comment on the current state of architecture. The show's portentous theme is "collisions," and there is an unmistakable urgency or violence in the work. Abraham's forms are never tentative, whether in metallic models or chalk drawings, where his pioneering use of color reinforces rather than decorates the line. Although the materials are sensuous, they are meant to be felt only after they are seen and understood. Here, there is none of the current mania to "entertain." Raimund Abraham, who teaches architecture at Cooper Union and Pratt, uses each piece to make an argument.

Seven Gates to Eden is the most extensive of these projects, and illustrates Abraham's method. In a series of seven models and eight drawings done for the 1976 Venice Biennale, the architect explores the idea of a "suburban alternative." As a European living in the United States, he is still intrigued by the suburb's unintended cultural iconography, without a Venturi-like celebration of it. Note that all the models maintain a head-on perspective with the family automobile out front. Abraham forces a serial decoding or demystification of forms, warning us at the end, with his blank piece of drawing paper, that at the end of all analysis there is silence.

This implicit warning against the rational deconstruction of architecture is also a part of Abraham's work, an architecture that is based on intellectual control, that appears to purge all nostalgic images. Only the family car, albeit truncated or swallowed by the maw of the garage, remains an object of purely human affection. His *In Memoriam Kongresshalle Berlin: Monument for a Fallen Building* maintains just this kind of tough-minded stance. Abraham begins with a rather witty impulse to memorialize a building that was built in 1957 only to collapse on May 21, 1980. He has drawn a hard cube around the delicate, Saarinen-like forms that could not

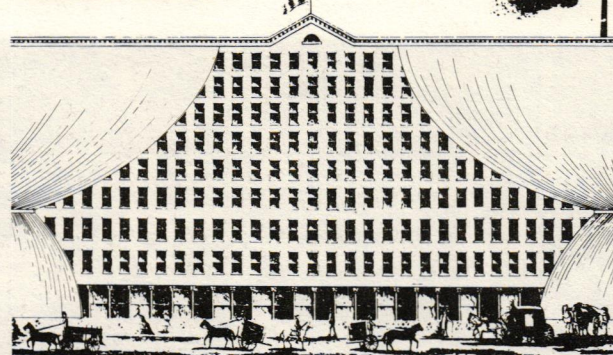
The Manhattan Transcripts by Bernard Tschumi was shown at the Max Protetch Gallery in New York from December 3, 1981 through January 2, 1982. A complete edition of the work has been published by Academy Editions, London, and distributed by St. Martin's Press, New York (1981). The text is 64 pages, including 54 black-and-white drawings; \$9.95, soft-cover.

The exhibition **Raimund Abraham: Collisions**, curated by George Ranalli, was shown at the Art and Architecture Gallery, Yale School of Architecture, New Haven, Connecticut, from October 26 to December 4, 1981. The accompanying catalogue, *Raimund Abraham: Collisions* (24 pages, black and white illustrations, soft-cover, \$3.00), includes an introduction by George Ranalli, an interview with Abraham by Kenneth Frampton, and an essay by P. Adams Sitney.

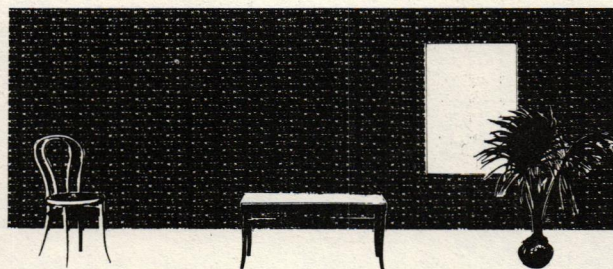
Window Room Furniture, organized by Tod Williams and Ricardo Scofidio; Houghton Gallery, Cooper Union, New York, December 4, 1981–January 22, 1982. The catalogue for the exhibition, of the same title, has an introduction by Tod Williams and Ricardo Scofidio; a foreword by Bill N. Lacy; and essays by Juan Pablo Bonta, David Shapiro and Lindsay Stamm; published by Rizzoli International Publications, New York, January 1982; 111 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations; \$19.95, soft-cover.

Everyone at Cooper Union

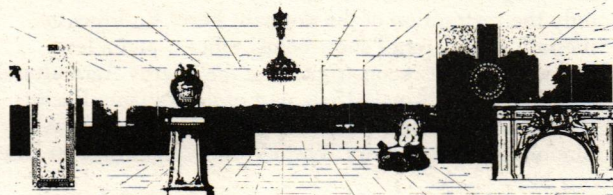
Gerald Allen



"The First Curtain Wall Building (New York, 1852)"



"The Handwriting on the Wallpaper"



"A Premonition: The New Post-Modern interior, or Philip redecorates"

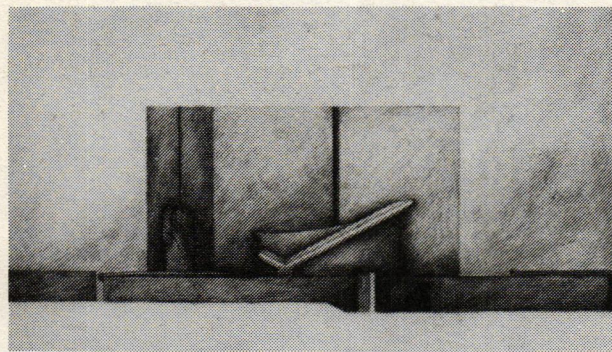
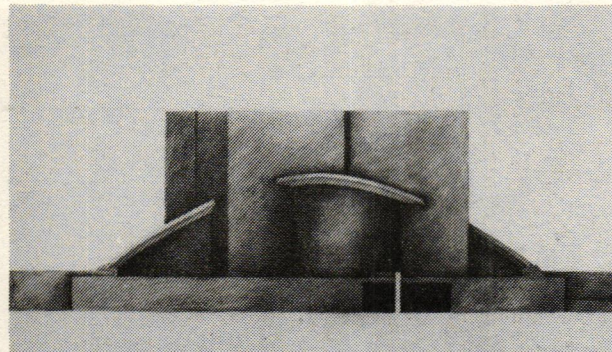
Martin Filler. Project for Window Room Furniture; 1981. (Execution by Tom Houtz)

Window Room Furniture is only one example, albeit a particularly admirable one, of the fad of assembling an amazingly diverse spectrum of architectural ideas under the rubric of a single theme. Tod Williams and Ricardo Scofidio, who organized the show, invited a group of architects, artists, and writers to render their responses to these three elements of architecture on one or more eight-by-eight-inch boards. Just over a hundred participants actually did, and all of their efforts were put on display, as well as being included in the handsomely designed catalogue published by Rizzoli—along with intriguing and tendentious commentaries and cryptic epigraphs. Photographs, bas-reliefs, words, and drawings of just about every conceivable kind make up the collection, and it is—as one always feels compelled to say about these things—rich.

Cresting a wave of current interest in their art, architects once again have the temerity to restate the case that architecture, like philosophy, is an enterprise with a broadly humanistic bias. Architecture is a "language" (to use one buzz word) in which "discourse" (another one) can be carried on—not just about buildings, but also about the nature of things in general, and the nature of our understanding of them.

This assertion is arguably dead-right, and it is, in any case, honored by centuries of well-informed opinion. But faced with a variety of utterances like those in *Window Room Furniture*, one is at first very hard-pressed to know whether all the talk actually makes any sense or whether it is just a lot of palaver.

One perfectly good way to find out is to apply the scientific method to these questions. And so, here is a hypothetical, fragmentary grammar—called the *Metaphysical Tenses of Contemporary Architecture*—which is offered in the manner of the little summaries in the front of phrase books for forbidding languages like Finnish and Vietnamese. To this linguistic hypothesis actual observations may be compared to confirm or deny its validity.



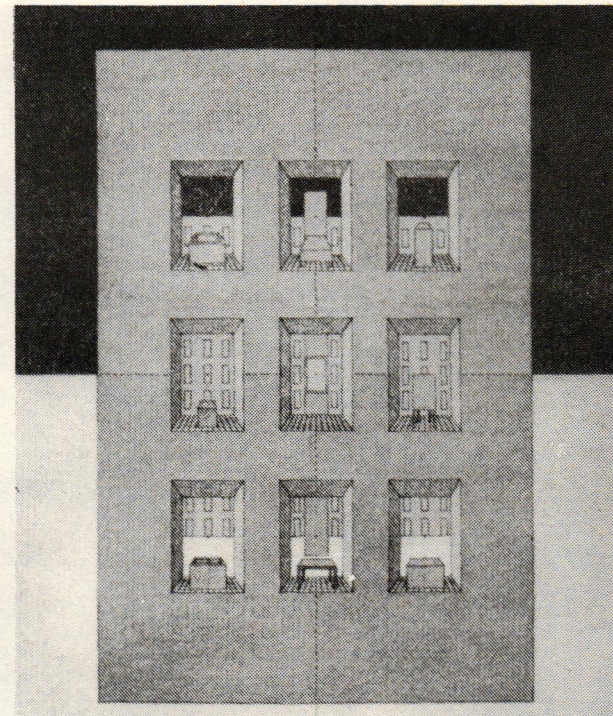
Raimund Abraham. "In Memoriam Kongresshalle Berlin: Monument for a Fallen Building," project; 1980. Plan, section, and elevations.

hold. Playing with opposites—solid with void, mass with lot, new with old—Abraham does not progress beyond a statement of these simple ironies. He proposes to replace something hopelessly naive—a building so free in design that it could not stand—with a ponderous tomb. As both a memorial to modernism (represented by that generation's building in the 1950s), and as an airless form of its own, the building creates an uneasy tension.

But is this tension enough? Abraham's work is always reactive. In his *Monument for the Absence of the Painting Guernica*, his own unrealized work is aggrandized by a great art work from the past. It is a misplaced gesture. Unlike suburbia, Picasso does not need the applied irony of another artist. The painting is a masterpiece because it contains its own critique.

In general, Raimund Abraham's work depends on greater work that predates him culturally for precisely that narrative he disdains. In an interview that appears in the catalogue, Abraham reiterates this claim without acknowledging its unintended irony. Abraham's architecture is unlike that of John Hejduk, of whom it reminds us, because it lacks Hejduk's dark romanticism and sensuousness; and unlike Peter Eisenman's, because it is less hermetic and too dependent upon an outside narrative.

However, on the whole, it is impossible not to appreciate the intellectual effort, skill of rendering, and the steadfast holding onto an idea that this show represents. Abraham's architecture is refreshing in its refusal to titillate and please in the manner of so much post-modern ephemera. In fact, Abraham might suffer too much in reaction and is often too insistent in his need to shock or assault. For example, a photo essay and *objet trouvé* depict a woman in a chair. The woman's legs and arms and the chair are splayed at the same angle in a progression of stills. The chair is also shown mounted on top of a split pedestal *sans femme* at one end of the gallery. What might have worked in a single image is simply vulgar in repetition; dehumanized and ugly. In a sense, Raimund Abraham's work has too much rigor. His terrible fear of sentimentality leads to a certain inappropriateness that is itself sentimental. The refusal to create a style, and often-grim self-consciousness are parts of a revealing exhibition. Raimund Abraham's "Collisions" says something about the architect, and is therefore autobiographical. It also says something about the current state of architecture, where talented men and women have, paradoxically, too much time to think and too little opportunity to build.



John Hejduk. Project for Window Room Furniture; 1981.

Past tense. Architects are working in the past metaphysical tense when their designs are based on things that already exist and are already known. Most obvious among the practitioners are the Radical Traditionalists, but eclectics, including the great ones, are also involved. So, unfortunately, are many of this turning globe's really second-rate designers, since the past also includes what happened only five minutes ago.

Present-active tense. This tense engages the immediate and the circumstantial, actively forging them into artistic artifice. The Inclusivists are heavily involved in it, and so are many of the really fine landscape architects.

Present-eternal tense. To design in the present-eternal tense is to involve oneself with the truly eternal, with properties present in all things and existing at all times at all sizes and scales—like the square and the circle. Platonists always work in this tense; Rationalists are also very well represented, as, again, are landscape architects. Inclusivists need not apply.

Future tense. To design in this tense one must abandon even the concept of preconceptions, whether they be eternal or from the circumstantial past or present. Many questions assumed vital by most well-adjusted people—like "What makes it stand up?"—are ignored as being the wrong questions to begin with.

In the *Window Room Furniture* exhibition, Jen Jenschel's photograph of two windows, a room, and some furniture is clearly talking in the present-active tense, as in Michael Sorkin's "project," which is nothing more than a store-bought sign that says "Furnished Apartment." John Hejduk's entry, by contrast, appears to be conversing away in the present-eternal. Other examples could be named: like thingumajig and what's-his-name.

One general advantage, however, of our proposed, elliptical grammar for the language of current architecture is that it manages, if not to obliterate, at least to arch over some of the tense distinctions between competing, often muddy, and often meaningless ideologies.

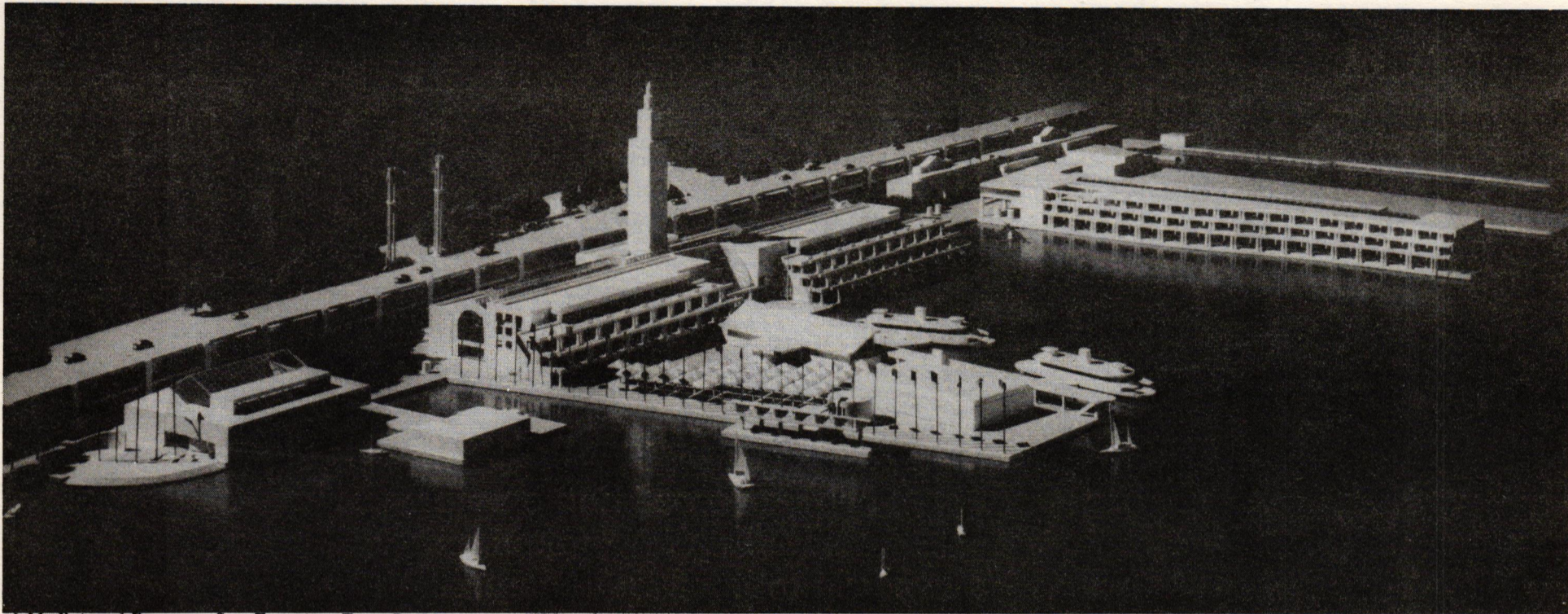
A second advantage—this one still in the oil-on-troubled-waters department—is that the linguistic analogy is soothing to the very idea of pluralism itself. It is one thing to think that "Neo-Rat" is great and "Rad-Trad" isn't and should be eliminated. But only the most cretinous of mortals would dare argue that discourse could be refined by abandoning the concept of tense.

Finally, a grammatical system, even one so modest as this, may merely be a help in trying to understand what other people are talking about. Try taking it with you the next time you go to look at an architectural exhibition based on pluralistic principles.

Projects 1982

Waterfront projects in two major cities— one by Cesar Pelli, the other by I.M. Pei — show two different ways of revitalizing the water's edge.

Waterfront—San Francisco Style

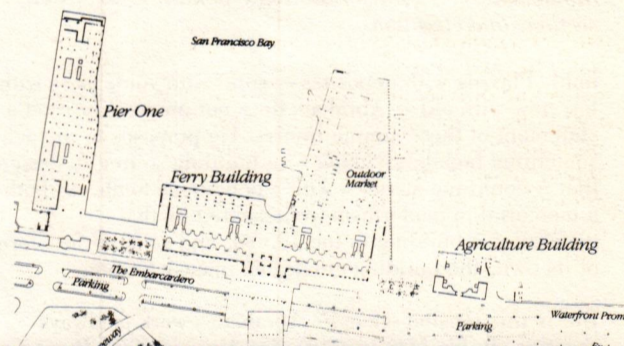


I.M. Pei and Partners. San Francisco Ferry Building, Agricultural Building, and World Trade Center; project, 1981. Model

Moving ahead in San Francisco is a low-rise waterfront project by I.M. Pei & Partners, for Continental Development Corporation, focusing on the renovation of the historic Ferry Building; associated architects will be Gensler Associates. Originally designed in 1892 by A. Page Brown, the Ferry Building—with its landmark tower modeled after the Giralda Bell Tower of the Seville Cathedral—sits at the foot of Market Street, at the heart of an area undergoing extensive revitalization.

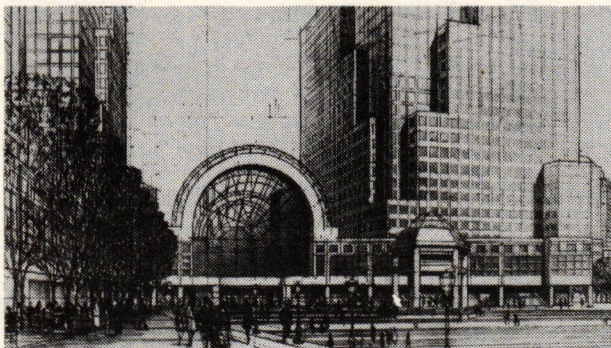
The program—a total of 600,000 s. f.—involves not only the restoration of the dormant Ferry Building to include shops, retail showrooms, offices, and a few restaurants, but reconstruction of the nearby Agricultural Building—built in 1915 as part of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition—for use as a Food Hall. Also planned is a three-story World Trade Center on Pier One.

Under the partner-in-charge, James Ingo Freed, the project has reached the final stages of preliminary design and awaits approval from various city agencies and community groups to proceed.

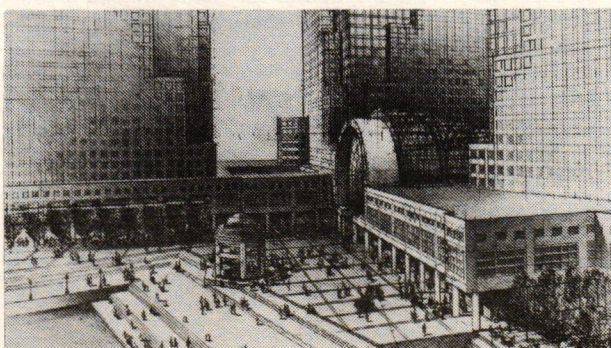


Waterfront—New York Version

In January, Olympia & York unveiled the most recent design developments by Cesar Pelli for the Battery Park City Commercial Center, the 14-acre core of the development on the 92-acre landfill along the Hudson River next to New York's World Trade Center. Pelli's design includes four 33-to-50-story office towers, two nine-story octagonal buildings, a winter garden, and a four-acre landscaped garden. The towers are sheathed in reflective glass and a Canadian granite known as "polychrome;" the designers are hoping that it will be possible to use copper for the distinctive geometrical shapes that crown the tall buildings, but they may be stainless steel or an industrial plastic. The Commercial Center provides six million s.f. of office space, retail, and recreational space. Olympia & York say that the first occupants will be able to move in 1983.



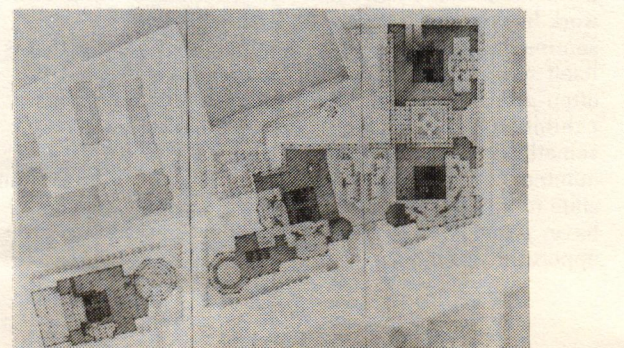
Plaza view looking east. (Rendering by Barry Zauss)



Plaza view looking north. (Rendering by Barry Zauss)



View from Hudson River



Ground-floor plan

Cesar Pelli & Associates. Battery Park City, Commercial Center, New York; project, 1981.

The I.S. in L.A.

Two International Style architects who migrated to L.A. in the early part of the century left extensive testimony of their influence. This report discusses current efforts to restore several important examples of their work.

Neutra and Schindler Live On

The Neutras and Schindler at Kings Road, ca. 1926.



Robert Coombs



R.M. Schindler. The Schindler House, Kings Road, Hollywood; 1921-22. (photo: Robert Coombs)

Hidden among Los Angeles' besmogged palms, macraméd hot tubs, and mock-Tudor condos is America's best collection of International Style architecture; and it is the real thing—not just nostalgic reruns. Precociously intimated by Irving Gill in the decade 1910-1920, the International Style was brought to fruition by Rudolph M. Schindler (1887-1953), Richard J. Neutra (1892-1970), and their followers in L.A., where it flourished until the early 1940s.

Though this superb collection is endangered by developers, major monuments are being saved and restored. For instance, the Schindler/Clyde Chase Double House at 833 North Kings Road in Hollywood (Schindler's own house, constructed 1921-22), is undergoing such a process, due to the efforts of the Friends of the Schindler House (FOSH). In this one-story, tilt-up, slab-and-redwood structure, Schindler introduced the primary feature of today's "California style" of living—a fluid relationship between indoors and out-of-doors. With distant echoes of Wright and "Japanesque" detailing, Schindler created a unique environment for his family and for the Chase family, who helped build this experiment in communal living. The two "L"-shaped living quarters are linked by a common kitchen, in which the semi-liberated wives alternated on KP duty. Only sliding canvas doors separate the large open interior spaces from the outdoor "living rooms" replete with fireplaces. Following current health theories, Schindler built year-round, canvas-colored "sleeping baskets" (porches) above the two corner entrances, which served as the only bedrooms for a number of years.

In 1980, Mark Schindler, the architect's son, needed money, but, like his mother, wanted to preserve this seminal building by his father. While a condo developer waved \$600,000 under Mark's nose, FOSH scrambled for funds, and finally landed a \$160,000 grant from the California Office of Historic Preservation. In addition, Mark Schindler got a good tax write-off. Thus the house was saved, but it sorely needs more work. In his enthusiasm to get it up, Rudolph Schindler had neglected to put a deep foundation around the perimeter, and today the slab is cracking. Poorly repaired fire and earthquake damage is prevalent, but Robert Sweeney, executive director of FOSH, is preparing exhibitions and other events to entice big corporations into contributing restoration funds for the house.

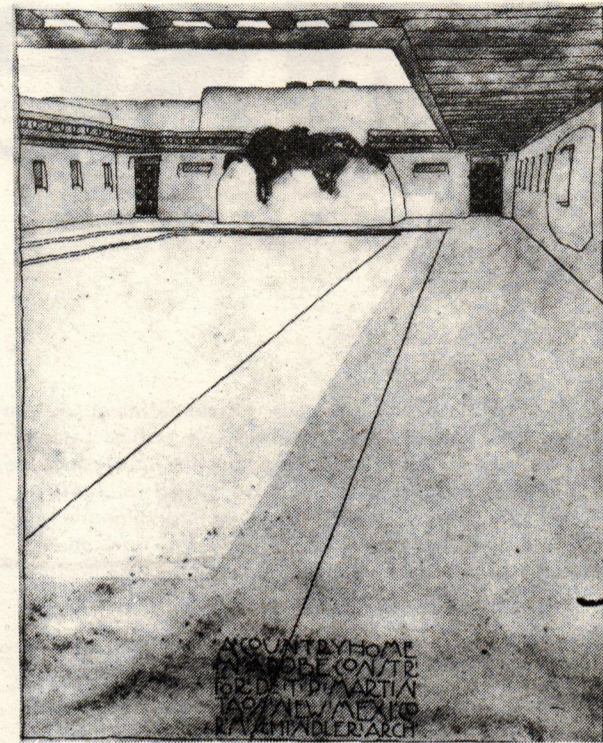
On view through January 1982 in the Kings Road house are presentation drawings from the Schindler archives at U.C. Santa Barbara. These drawings demonstrate that between 1914 and 1930 Schindler had a very painterly graphic style. A 1914 rendering for a *gemütlichkeit* Darmstadt-style summer house is executed in the manner of Japanese wood-block prints. But in a 1915 study for a large house at Taos, New Mexico (which was never built), Schindler used a calligraphic, linear style reminiscent of the techniques of American illustrators of the period. For commercial projects of the 1920s, Schindler employed tough, hard-edged graphics embellished with metallic gold and silver. However, renderings of his Kings Road house and the Pueblo Ribera housing complex (1923) are loving, impressionistic caresses of pastel. The same technique is combined, almost perversely, with de Stijl-like forms in renderings of his Wolfe Summer House on Catalina Island (1928) and of an unbuilt beach house in Venice. By the 1930s, Schindler had abandoned these painterly techniques for no-nonsense statements of what would be constructed.

In addition to these gallery activities at Kings Road, *Arts & Architecture*, the reborn quarterly edited by Barbara Goldstein, has taken up residence in one of Schindler's "sleeping baskets." The space is tight, but at least the walls have been closed in against L.A.'s winter chill.

Another house that has been salvaged is the 1934 Buck House at 8th and Genessee Streets in the mid-Wilshire district. A fine example of Schindler's all-white planar interplays with transparencies, it was restored between 1976 and 1978 by Hirshen, Gammill & Trumbo, a Berkeley architectural firm. In this largish house with two courtyards on a corner lot, Schindler played his de Stijl game to perfection. However, his predilection for almost-daily changes of design during construction raised havoc with the structure. Floating headers butting a pane of glass may look pure and minimal, but they do present problems over the years. In spite of these Schindlerian *pentimenti*, the house was lovingly brought back to its original conception for its recent owner, collector Lew Hine. Sadly, he died recently, and the future of the Buck House is an open question.

As for Neutra's legacy, his elegant Lewin Beach House in Santa Monica is being restored by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates. Constructed in 1937, this stud-and-stucco house displays Neutra's customary precise, thin-plane approach to form, with, however, several unique features.

Curves rarely play much of a role in Neutra's designs; thus the semicircular floor-to-ceiling window/wall of the living room is startling. That motif is repeated in the main staircase, and, in a fun but quirky touch, as a flattened barrel vault in the corridor of the servants' wing.



R.M. Schindler. T.P. Martin House, Taos, New Mexico; project, 1915.

Mae West purchased the beach house in the 1940s, flouncing and chaise-longue-ing Neutra's cool, taut interior into something echoing her own baroque curves. For thirty years, she reigned there with ten spider monkeys. Recently the house was purchased by a filmmaker and collector, who commissioned Gwathmey Siegel to restore the house to Neutra's original design. Using Carde & Killefer Corporation, AIA, local architect-contractors, the New York firm added hidden lighting, some custom cabinetry, and beefed up an overhang into a balcony. True, Gwathmey Siegel could not resist slipping soft putty-gray onto the dining room walls and a fleshy pink cubistic fireplace in the upstairs study, but they have been remarkably faithful to Neutra's purist approach. In contrast to Schindler's, Neutra's structure is sounder, although not as rigorous as a Gwathmey Siegel design. In removing the patina Mae West and the monkeys left, the architects have tried to "rationalize" some of the spaces and interior wall relationships, as in the renovation of servants' quarters and kitchen areas and in painting the exterior walls one color and the interior walls another.

In his forthcoming *Richard Neutra—A Search for Modern Architecture: A Biography and History* (Oxford, 1982), UCLA's Thomas Hines touches all bases of the architect's career. Hines follows Neutra's extraordinary ability to be in the right place at the right time during the development of the Modern Movement. From the influences of Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos in Vienna, Neutra moved to the Dionysian Expressionism of Eric Mendelsohn in Berlin and to Wright at Taliesin before settling in L.A. Hines stresses the influence Neutra's teaching experience at the Bauhaus during the late 1920s had on his work of the 1930s. The Bauhaus experience gave Neutra's work a Continental sophistication unknown in America before the Silver Prince (Gropius) brought the Holy Grail to Harvard. However, by the 1940s Neutra had created a truly "California-International Style" aesthetic.

MoMA's Arthur Drexler and Thomas Hines are putting together a large retrospective of Neutra's work due to open at MoMA in mid-August 1982. This extravaganza of photographs and models will give Richard Neutra the kind of New York exposure that he has never received. Between the upcoming MoMA exhibition and the Hines book, 1982 looks as if it will be a Neutra *Jahr*.

Interview

As part of *Skyline's* ongoing series of interviews, Peter Eisenman talks to Philip Johnson about his work, his beliefs, and his role as director of the 1932 "Modern Architecture" show at MoMA.

Johnson and Eisenman

P.E.: This is my first interview with an architect. As you know, I have done a series of three with critics. I intend to do a series with three developers, with three educators, and with three architects. We have chosen you for two reasons: because it happens to be the fiftieth anniversary of the International Style exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art and because you represent the architectural leadership in this country.

We should begin with the International Style exhibition. What is never very clear, given your personal history, is what first attracted you to the International Style. Given your interest in Classical architecture—and there was certainly enough German neoclassical architecture around at the time—what attracted you about what was called "modern architecture"?

P.J.: Well, my interest was nonarchitectural. It is composed, as most things are, of hundreds of different threads; one thread with me has always been to go against the grain. If everyone else became a Communist, why, I would become a Nazi. I thought that was only natural. So, if everybody was doing watered-down Classical—the architecture of the post-office system under Roosevelt—naturally, I couldn't stand Classical. A Doric column or a Corinthian column would send me into paroxysms of rage. Then I ran across a book in which I found an article by Henry-Russell Hitchcock on J.J.P. Oud, who was my first passion. The look was so fresh, so *entirely* revolutionary, so different from anything I had ever seen, that I decided it was good. I went out and bought the latest book on modern architecture—the Platz book, *Baukunst der Neuesten Zeit*—and fell in love with another architect: Mies van der Rohe.

At the same time I met Alfred Barr. Within six months, I had met Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and Barr had asked me to do a show at the Museum of Modern Art, even though as an undergraduate I was not working in architecture—I was in Classics: Greek and Greek philosophy. So, I switched; day-to-night, just like that. I believe in immediate turnabouts as well as immediate revolutions.

Then I went around Europe with Hitchcock, researching a book that we had just in the back of our heads; it was entitled *The International Style* by Alfred Barr. Of course—this is something that most people don't realize—the International Style was almost over in 1932, but I was not conscious of that. History you can be conscious of, but you can't possibly know what you are doing as you go along.

P.E.: The original energy of modern architecture was gone by that time. Alfred Barr had already called it "post-functionalism." What he was interested in was something other than German positivism.

P.J.: That's right. That is why the last sentence in our book is the only important one—"We have an architecture *still*"—because the functionalists denied it. We wrote that book in a fury against the functionalist, German Social Democratic workers' approach to architecture as a part of social revolution. We thought that architecture was still an art; that it was something you could look at; that, therefore, architects should not be worried about the social implications, but about whether the work looked good or not. In that sense we had only three allies in the Modern Movement: Le Corbusier, Oud, and Mies. Talking to Gropius was a dead end because he would still mouth the Gfedianesque platitudes of social

discipline and revolution; that is, in Corbusier's phrase, "if you have enough glass walls, you become free."

P.E.: It seems to me that the whole notion of always jumping to the other side is not a political, but an intellectual attitude. That is the way you create a dialectic, if you want, or the way you subvert the way you move—by creating opposition. Certainly this is what you had in mind. Because what bored you, or must have bored you, was the absolute moral and ethical basis that had crept into modern architecture.

P.J.: We knew that in 1932 architecture was not a question of morals—especially not German political morals. We were anti-Social Democratic to the core, but we never made that into an overt intellectual position. It wasn't necessary, because, as Hitchcock and I have always said, it makes no difference what the architect believes. One of the very best of the intellectual architects was Hannes Meyer, who was also the best Communist, and we were *not* pro-Communist.

P.E.: Ada Louise Huxtable argued in *The New York Review of Books* that the International Style exhibition was, in fact, an ideological gesture. That is, it was against the social, and ultimately Marxist, implications of modern architecture; it was a conscious gesture. Given your ideological position at the time, do you think that was true?

P.J.: It certainly was *not* true. We were very careful to get Mumford to work on the catalogue with us because we realized that without reference to the social implications of the Modern Movement, we would be too outside *any* stream. We very much believed that the best architecture would be social housing. That was so much in the air. It is all very well for Barr to label me a "post-functionalism," but I wasn't.

P.E.: But don't you think that people misunderstand your recent movement away from modern architecture as being a kind of denial or rejection?

P.J.: I would like to make one thing clear: that it is *not* a rejection. To me architecture exists in time; certain buildings are valid at certain times for certain periods. The International Style lasted longer than the Renaissance—you do have to give it that. It was a very long period, if you talk about my glass house [1949] as being its total exhaustion. That's forty years.

P.E.: In 1932—even as late as 1955—when I was being educated, students and architects, people who were building, *believed* in what they were doing. Call it idealism, whether ideological or political, there was somehow a belief that what they were doing was *right*. One got up in the morning with the sense that there was a certain morality that animated one's activity. Certainly the International Style exhibition was part of this animating spirit. Do you think that there is a need for some kind of moral commitment in architecture? How do you think the International Style influenced that kind of commitment? and how and why has that changed today?

P.J.: Those questions are all mixed up. The sense of belief is gone; if you ask me why I answer, "Why?" There is no way of explaining why a series of beliefs disintegrates. You could not know the feeling of excitement in 1932. I know that thirty years later it was

still felt; think how much more intense it must have been when we wrote the book. That faith shows very clearly in the prose of the International Style book.

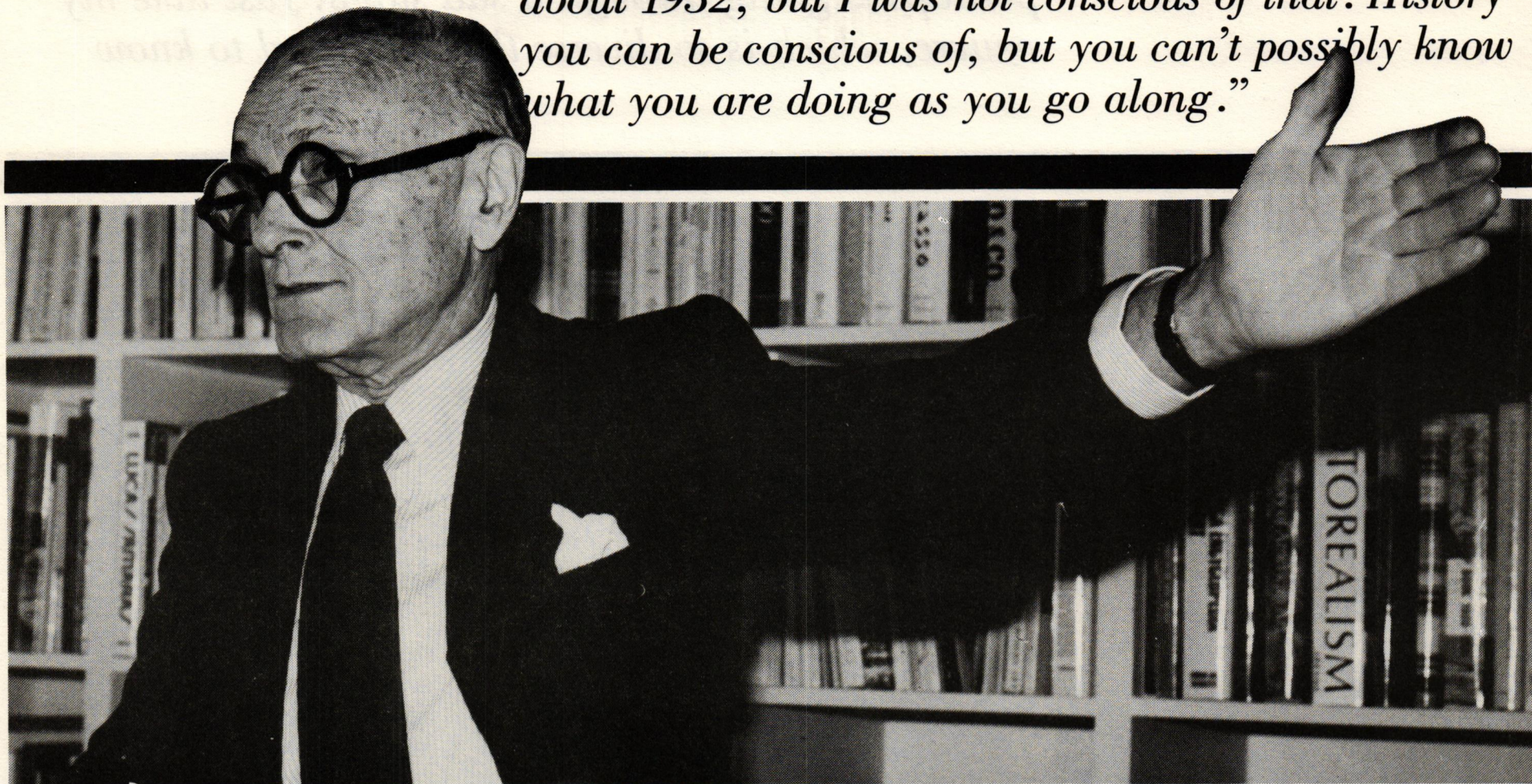
Also, you cannot discuss why people have faith. You might say we have lost it, but what caused that faith in the first place? In the nineteenth century there was no such faith. They were tossing ideas around—whether Pugin was right or the Classicists were right—and building buildings, and it was hit-or-miss, to say the best. Then the International Style came along—we shouldn't call it that for the purposes of this discussion, we should call it the Modern Movement, because it goes back to moralism, way back to the eighteenth century. It grew and grew until finally Le Corbusier could say you couldn't be a moral man, or live well, without being surrounded by glass walls. He may have believed it at that moment, but it created a whole generation with this faith in a goal that was mixed in its morality. All we stressed in our exhibition were the aesthetics, but it had a great deal more content than that. We believed—even Mumford believed, although he didn't like the International Style—that good architecture made good people and good people would make better architecture, and so on into a limitless future where the sun always shone. We never discussed it, because it was a common belief.

Now, this did not turn out to be the case. Progress did not progress. At that time you connected faith in architecture with faith in the culture. Who believes today that sitting around a green baize table at Versailles is going to help the world? In those days it did seem possible. You had the backlash in 1955. I had given up on modernism already, of course—as you can easily see by my speeches in 1955, the "you-cannot-not-know-history" business. In discussions today a lot of us see this historicism as a sign of total disintegration and total freedom, rather than a loss of faith and a nostalgia for a period when we wanted to be better. I don't see why students should feel that the search for certainty should overcome the search for individuality and chaos, but they do. People want rules. I have always taught rules; I would not know how to teach architecture today, when there are no rules.

I think I agree that the whole thing has disintegrated in the most alarming way. My own work illustrates the alarmingness of it; I can't say why one thing is better than another. I notice you had trouble with Paul Goldberger [*Skyline*, January 1982] trying to figure out what makes architecture "better." You try for a category, you interpret it semiotically—in the old days, functionally—and want to say it is better because it is easier to walk in the front door; Mr. Chermayeff, Senior, didn't like my glass house, because, he'd say, Imagine living in a house where you have to carry the garbage out the front door. In other words, he could use functionalism as a criterion for measuring the varying qualities of the architecture he was looking at. You could defend Le Corbusier on functional grounds if you wanted to. It is much better to do as Mr. Colquhoun does, however, saying he is a failed Classicist. Whatever it was, the faith was there that defined a series of pegs on which critical judgments could be hung. That is what Hitchcock and I were up to, in the most arbitrary way.

P.E.: Are you saying that faith allowed for critical judgments? If this is true, do you then mean that without critical judgment, the architect does not know what to do; that is, if you cannot make a critical commentary, the artist cannot perform? Is that what you mean?

“The International Style, of course—this is something most people don’t realize—was over about 1932, but I was not conscious of that. History you can be conscious of, but you can’t possibly know what you are doing as you go along.”



Philip Johnson Photograph by Dorothy Alexander

P.J.: I don't believe that at all.

P.E.: You just said that faith led to critical judgment, which then allowed for good architecture.

P.J.: No. You made the conclusion that that allowed for good architecture. I just said it allowed for critical judgment. It then depended on the critic—whether he could pick good architecture—but it gave him a series of standards on which to base discussion. Goldberger is lost today, as you are; as I am. Where are we going to find among our criteria one that says that one building is better than another?

It was terribly amusing to read which of my latest skyscrapers Goldberger focused on. He zeroed in on Transco, which is recognizably taken from Bertram Goodhue. Others zero in on PPG because it's urban; it has a Place Vendôme in front of it and it uses the latest materials; false, naturally, from a "moral" point of view.

P.E.: The false morality about materials in the Modern Movement would make Ruskin turn over in his grave. Le Corbusier tried to make buildings look like cardboard by building them out of stone and then plastering over them. The morality of materials, which is a nineteenth-century notion, was lost in the 1920s. The morality of function, which also came out of the nineteenth century, has also vanished.

There are several things to be said about this disintegration, this freedom, and the question of morality: A poet, for example, cannot write blank verse unless he knows what free verse is, unless he knows the sonnet form, unless he knows the structures of poetry. He has to have read poetry and have an ear for it. There is a discipline of poetry, as there is a discipline of the canvas which a painter can always refer to—what we would call the *rules*. In architecture, every building that goes up—as long as it stands up and provides shelter—is a building, but what makes it architecture?

It seems to me that without some sort of discipline—call it language or rules—but with, instead, a merely capricious freedom, you may never be able to know how to make architecture, because no one will be able to speak or write, and no one will be able to understand what is written. Therefore, we may have to find some way of defining architecture other than through absolute freedom. Many Classical buildings are bad buildings, despite the fact that there is a feeling in the air that all Classical buildings are good; a lot of glass buildings were good, despite the fact that people today believe they are all bad buildings. Without a discipline, how do you yourself know that you are making architecture?

P.J.: I don't. That is why I look back with great nostalgia to the days when you could take two buildings facing each other—like Lever House and Seagram—and point out the differences of approach, of proportion, the fact that that column at Lever House is off-center by four feet. That bothers me terribly as a believer in rhythm as one of the rules; you cannot have that rhythm and then make a hiccup in the middle of a row of columns. It has not bothered people since. Now there are no rules; you put the columns in afterward. Having that belief enabled me to analyze and use the rules at the time of building Seagram; but you could not have had the poetry of Seagram without Mies' final imaginative leap.

The rules, you could say, would only get you to a certain level. There are just as many bad International Style buildings as there are bad Classical buildings. How could you tell, then, why Le Corbusier was better than André Lurçat? As a matter of fact, there was a moment in Paris when one did not know that. I have a letter from Alfred Barr in which he said he did not know that the rue Mallet-Stevens was any worse than a Lurçat building, or a building by Le Corbusier. In other words, it takes a little time and distance. I do not know what we are going to use today for criteria, as practitioners, critics, teachers, or students.

P.E.: Going back to the question of belief for a moment—a poet who chooses to write blank verse, free verse, or a sonnet does not do it because he or she believes in that. There is no faith involved in the choice; but faith seems ultimately to be bound up with the rules of architecture precisely because the rules of the discipline are so imprecise. Without a belief in function, or in the orders, or a belief in certain systems of proportion. . . . Poets do not believe in rules, they just assume rules are given. Now why is there that difference between poetry and architecture? The problem with architecture is that it is a very imprecise discipline. It is very difficult to understand its language; what makes a building architecture. Because of this imprecision of language, faith may be a more important part of architecture than we think.

P.J.: In that case, is our generation doomed to not do good architecture? You see, none of us can believe that and be practicing artists. We have to believe we have a mission.

I have been trying to analyze our mission—all those different forms of skyscrapers that John Burgee and I do. What do we feel is the difference each time another form comes up? I do not know; it seems absolutely inevitable at the moment.

P.E.: I am not saying here that I hold the sword of truth. In one sense Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction* was basically a new moral position, an attempt to overturn an outworn morality—that is, modern architecture and a belief in function and progress—with another morality. Post-modernism, if you read Robert Stern very carefully, is a desperate attempt to create a discipline, a set of rules that one can believe in again; it is not for free play and the disintegration of rules. If anything, I might stand for such a disintegration; Stern is for the reclamation of morality. That is what is so marvelously *retardataire* and topsy-turvy about his position. For example, the contextualists attempt to find this morality by keeping the history of the city intact—by preserving the context. In other words, new form comes from within the existing fabric of the city. From your latest work, I would have to say that you are little interested in the morality of contextualism.

P.J.: I have talked about this on several different sides—because there are more than two sides to contextualism—and I do whatever is convenient. I applaud James Stirling's addition at Rice University—you can barely find it, because you just notice a few little oddments and a few little improvements on the Cram & Ferguson design—it is good; that is contextual. I also applaud Johnson/Burgee's Republic Bank—a Gothic thing; exactly the opposite of the pure modern, all-glass, monolithic Pennzoil building next door. Our first design for the Republic Bank was one that would accommodate that part of Houston, one that would be a good neighbor to

Pennzoil. The bank said, "We don't want to be a good neighbor; we've got to beat them." I said, "Well, isn't that as good a reason as any to do something different?" Then Stern gave it a name, which makes me feel better—he called it "the Manhattanization of Houston." Who's to say that we can't have battling styles clustered together on one grid?

P.E.: Then you are saying that context is not necessarily the context of the rationalist or neoclassical city. What you are talking about is the kind of context you find in a medieval city, where there is the cacaphony and romance of odd shapes and angles. Is that a valid context for the late twentieth century?

P.J.: That is a very sophisticated argument; I would not know what to say about it.

P.E.: Why is that a sophisticated argument? There is no question that when you fly over Manhattan and see Wall Street, that jumble of towers, it is a very exciting view, but it is not a neoclassical view of the city. It is an Italian hill town; or Mont-Saint-Michel.

P.J.: There is no sense in carrying that any further. The medieval town had a texture—a very strong one—much stronger than Lower Manhattan. I would never call Lower Manhattan medieval; I would call it twentieth-century. It is a twentieth-century type of jumble that is a context all its own. You can use the word "Manhattanization" as well as any other for putting it together.

Yet I will swear to heaven that other buildings I have done are very much contextual—by their height, windows, and size; by trying to keep the same sense of scale as you go from building to building.

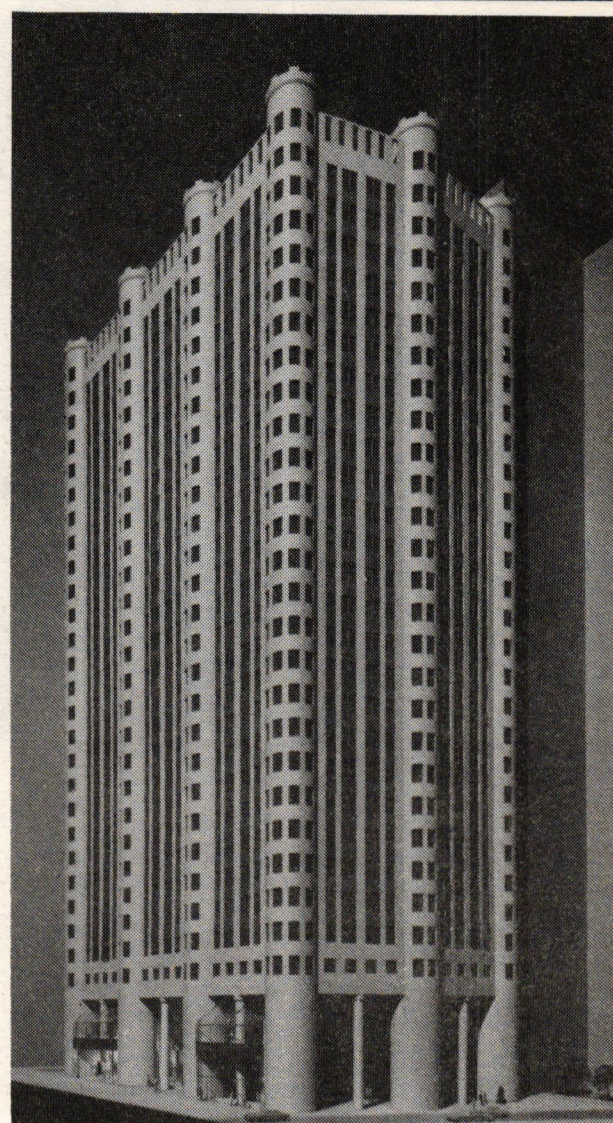
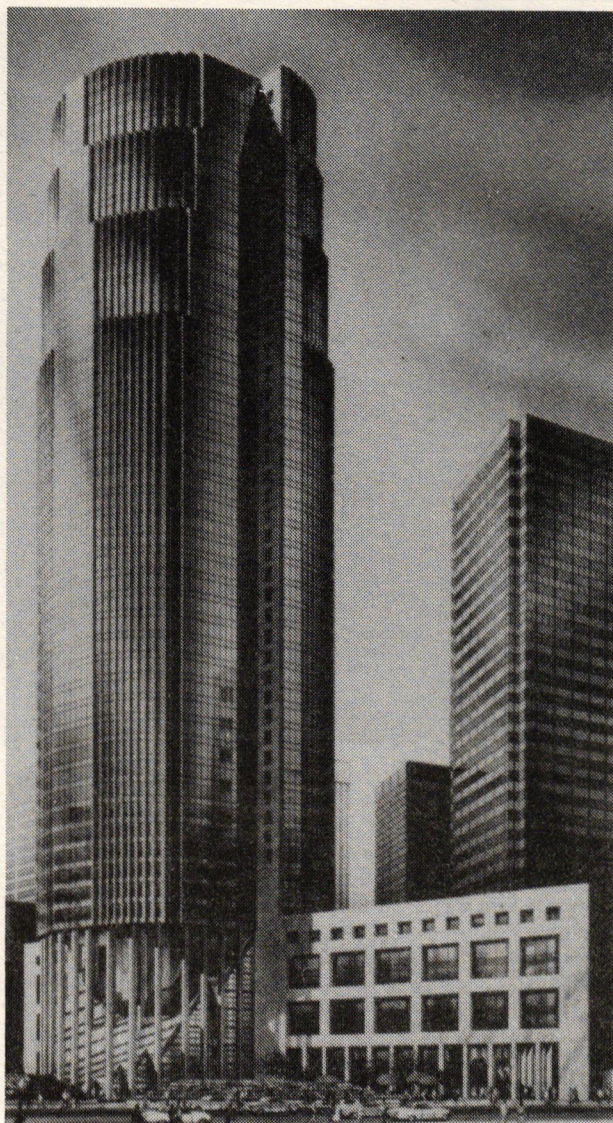
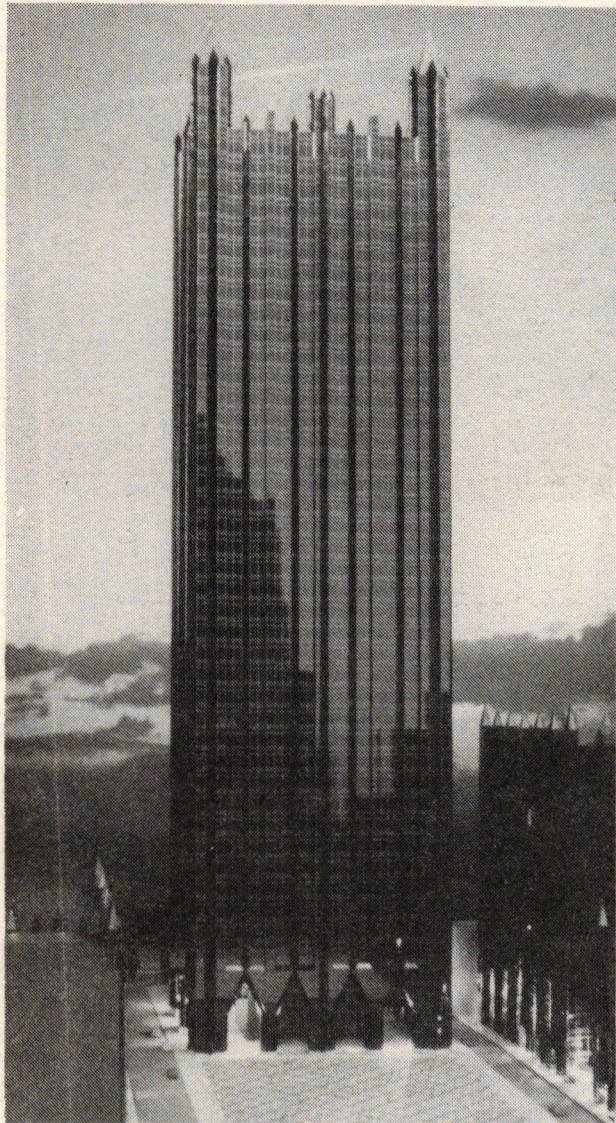
P.E.: But there is also the contextualism of the World Trade Center; it begins to form a new context. If you saw a series of twin towers placed around Manhattan Island, you would see a new context. That is contextualism. I would argue, however, that because it breaks the essential nature of Park Avenue—that is, its facade—the Seagram Building is not a contextual building. When a church or a public building breaks the existing context, that is one thing; but when a liquor company does it, it is quite another matter. Isn't that a question of morality?

P.J.: Seagram was elevated from a commercial building into a monument simply by being designed by a great architect who justifiably broke the line. We don't have the Church; we don't have that faith. A liquor company is just as good as any other company to break the line. We have broken it in the AT&T Building. We did not have as much chance as we would have liked, but we certainly broke the context of the all-glass buildings that surround it. That was another break we felt was justified by the hubris of the architects—or the fact that it is the largest company in the world.

P.E.: What follows from saying that because Mies was a great architect, he should be allowed to do Seagram and disrupt the context, is that some other architect thinks he is the great architect, and so on, until it gets right down to a student who says, "I can do anything." This leads you to a dead end, because then the student says, "Anything goes"; that whatever the teacher says does not matter because he does not know any more than the student. So, you are back at square one: the student pays his money

Interview: Johnson and Eisenman

"I have been through two periods: a period of faith and a period of nonfaith. I think architecture perhaps is going through a sad stage. Just take my oeuvre, which is so diverse that it is hard to know"



and not only is there nothing to teach him, but he does not really believe in being taught. So, what is he getting for his money? In an era where there are no rules and there is no belief, why not return to the atelier?

P.J.: The atelier may be the answer. We are not teaching a technique. You could have a school divided, as the Beaux Arts was, into a technical side and an atelier side. In the atelier is the "guru." How could you have learned anything at Pennsylvania if it weren't for Kahn's personality? I would like it if I had time to run an atelier. I think it would be very interesting to have students following the way I think and being free to leave at any time. Teaching becomes a personal thing—as all art always has been.

P.E.: This idea of doing something different, the "Me Generation," is symptomatic of the collapse of a kind of collective morality; a public order.

There is another, similar problem with the "Me Generation." It is what can be called "the architect's Oedipal complex." Harold Bloom talks about it in his book *The Anxiety of Influence*. What can be argued is that suddenly, because we are in a social and psychological culture, architects in particular are more aware of the influence of their "fathers." Schinkel did not worry too much about who went before; Palladio certainly did not worry about Bramante or Brunelleschi; Le Corbusier did not worry about anybody; nor did Mies van der Rohe. But certainly Philip Johnson worries; I.M. Pei must worry; Cesar Pelli, Robert Venturi, Robert Stern, Michael Graves, Richard Meier—even Peter Eisenman—all are worried about their "fathers." They all suffer from an Oedipal complex that has now been passed on to the next generation.

P.J.: I think it is one of your little ticks to worry about Oedipus. It never bothered me too much. On top of that, your history isn't very good. All those people you spoke of did indeed look at those who went before them. If you take Schinkel, you have to take Friedrich Gilly; if you take Gilly, you go right back to Boullée; and it is well known that Palladio changed his style completely when he first went to Rome. No, everybody has this feeling. My big switch was, of course, my revolt against Mies; nobody denies it. But is that so unusual?

P.E.: I am not talking about influence. I am talking about the anxiety of influence. Today, because of what you call an "Oedipal tick," everyone must do something new. I am talking about the fact that people do not want to follow. I think it is a pervasive problem, owing to the fact that we live in an era of psychological man. The consciousness of an Oedipal complex, of narcissism, and of repression did not exist before our present psychological culture.

P.J.: The words were brought to our consciousness, but nothing has actually changed. Freud was somebody I had never heard of until people like you tried to explain him to me. Today does not strike me as an anxiety situation at all. I would find it interesting if there were a "crisis," because I have been through two very interesting periods: a period of faith and a period of nonfaith. I think architecture perhaps is going through a sad stage. Just take my oeuvre, which is so diverse that it is hard to know that the same architect built that building who built that other building. This is a terrible accusation; it may be proof that the work is no good. If consistency is going to be one of the criteria, it would wreck everything.

P.E.: But Philip, you know history better than all of your colleagues and all of my colleagues. Therefore, you know how and when to turn history upside-down. You are always the first one to jump. You are a kind of Pied Piper figure who, just when everybody is following you down one path, jumps over the fence. You take things from the past as architectural relics, but without the faith that sustained their former existence. This is why I call you "anti-ideological." Once having been burned ideologically it is not possible for you to be ideological again. Once having lost faith, or having had faith taken away from you, there is no way for you to exist but to be antifaith.

P.J.: That is a very interesting analysis. You may be absolutely right, but I do not think it makes any difference. There were periods of architecture made of faith, like that made in fifth-century Athens, or the great Gothic in northern France; or there was the nineteenth century, when you had Pugin, Ruskin, and Lutyens all at once. It was just a complete mélange—as it is now. Either way, you can have better or worse architecture. Who is to say which?

You have to admit that it is not something you can easily pick up; nor do I know among my own works which ones are good. It is much easier in the case of Richard Meier. There is a man who has taken a deliberate stand on a particular period of the past and has commented with the greatest thought and with a bag of tricks that you can almost count on—the stairways, the railings—but he is developing the way he combines those and uses them. His latest building, the High Museum in Atlanta, is his best. His peculiar methods—which don't amuse me very much in most of his buildings—are beginning to gel and to make sense. His is a post-Corbusian imitation world—not one that I want, but I still think that a critic could look at Meier's works and come to some conclusions about which are better than others. You see, one can talk about other architects—whether they are better or less good—on their own terms. Aren't we making judgments, then? So there must be a basis for those judgments.

P.E.: I have always called you a "nonurban" architect, in the sense that you are interested in the individual building, in the individual architect. The trouble is that our cities are built largely by developers. If somebody does not educate them, the fabric of the cities will decay, in spite of the fact that we will have these individual monuments. Your arguments sound like something out of the eighteenth century, before the French Revolution. Unfortunately, we are in a situation today where it is not just the monuments and the great architects that matter.

P.J.: I think you have brought up something that is an entirely different subject—that is, the question of urbanism. I do not think there is a single architect who would not trade his whole practice for one little bit of urbanism. That is why I am so pleased to be able to work on a large enough scale in Pittsburgh. To do a part of a city, or a park, or a little bit of a palace like Versailles . . . For one of those jobs, you would throw everything else out the window; but that is not what has happened; we have followed the power line, if you will.

You talk often about "the power structure"—who is that? It is the developers. Now, that may be right or wrong; I can't imagine that it is a good way to build cities, but it is the way we do build them. A practicing architect has to work for the Devil himself if the Devil is the one around giving out the jobs.

P.E.: But the Devil is giving the jobs not to the creative geniuses, but to the ordinary architect.

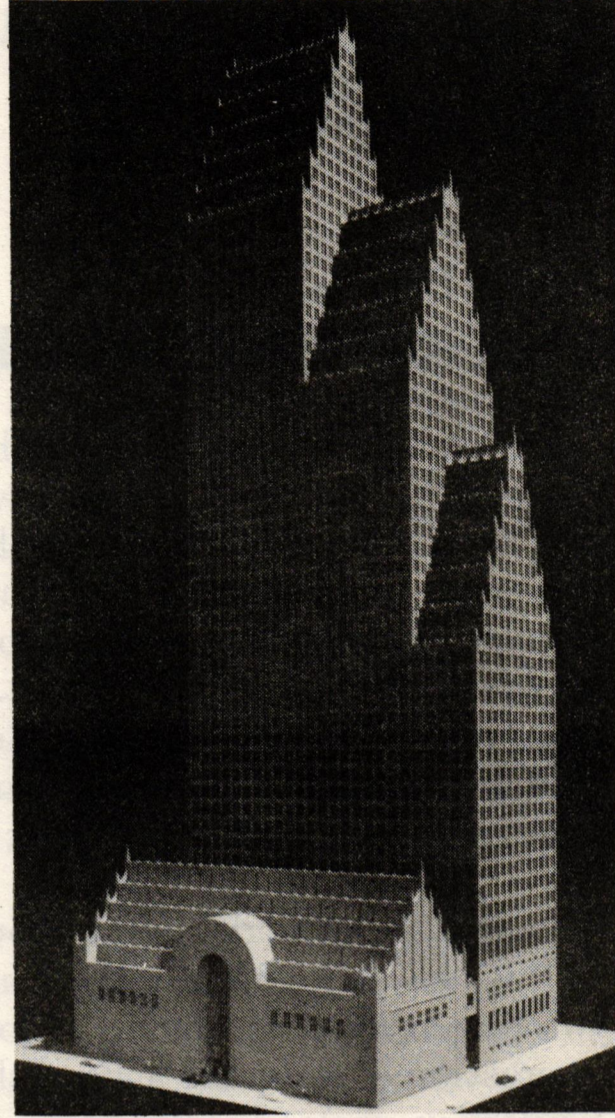
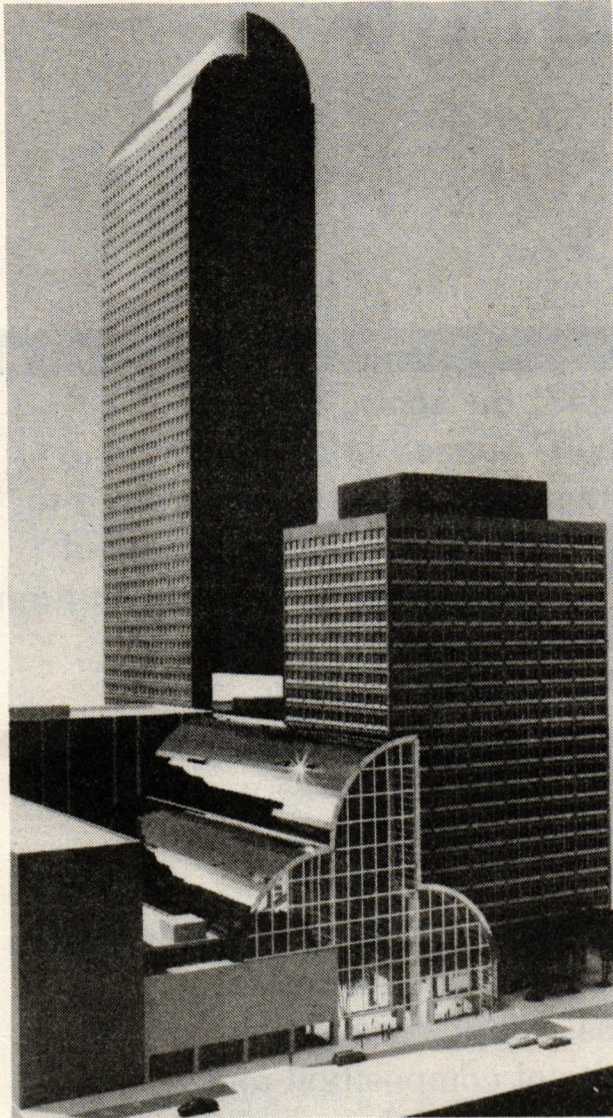
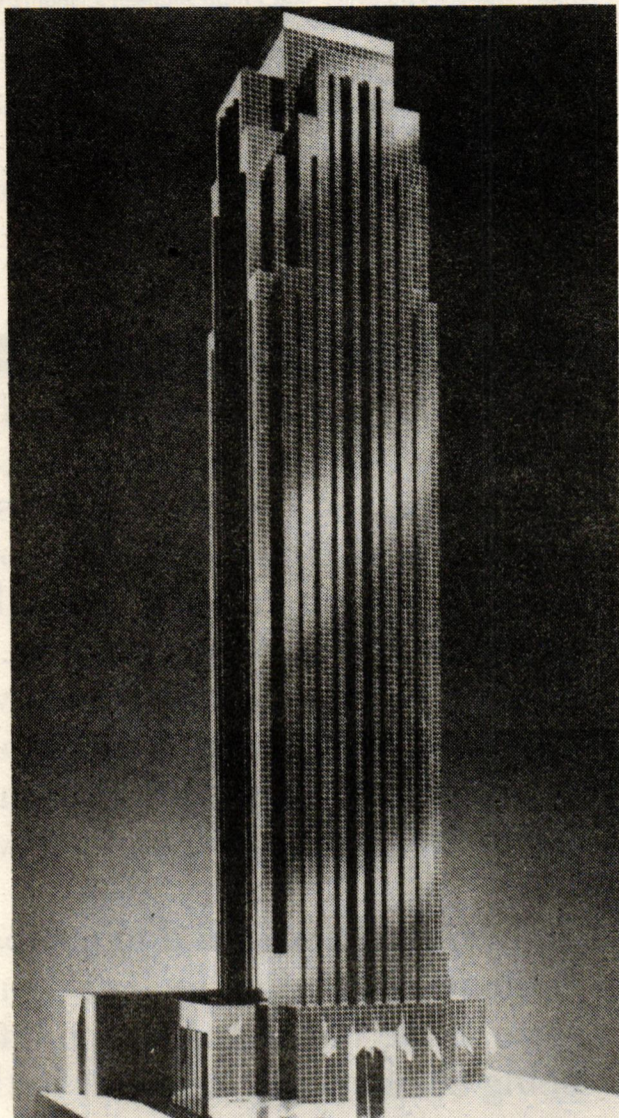
P.J.: Sometimes. Then sometimes you run into a Gerald Hines, who picks the very best architects; other developers will try to do the same thing.

P.E.: So, let us assume that the developers are building the cities. They are building for their own private economic gain. The question is, then, What about the public good? This brings us back to the question of morality. A developer works on a project-by-project basis. It seems to me that urbanism deals with programs and plans. What you are saying is that a collection of ad-hoc projects is just as good as beginning from a plan or program.

P.J.: You are using the word "good" again, which indicates a moral point of view. There is no "good" or "bad" about it. I just stick to the realm of the possible. If someone gives me a rather poor site, do I say, "I'm sorry. Go down the street and get another architect"?

that the same architect built that building who built that other building. This is a terrible accusation; it may be proof that the work is no good. If consistency is going to be one of the criteria, it would wreck everything.”

Johnson/Burgee Architects. Buildings under construction, 1982. Left to right: PPG Industries, Inc., Pittsburgh; 101 California Street, San Francisco; 33 Maiden Lane, New York City; Transco Tower, Houston; United Bank Center, Denver; Republic Bank Center, Houston



P.E.: Yes! You said you would not take the St. Bart's job if it were offered to you.

P.J.: That's right—you just brought me back into the realm of morality. You got me! I think perhaps there is more morality around than I give myself credit for. For me, it is saving architecture—which comes ahead of my own personal work. What I am saving is what's left of Park Avenue and one of Goodhue's better buildings. I don't think the ruination of open space is helping New York City.

P.E.: So you do have a morality about saving architecture—which for you is the saving of a culture, or the vestiges of a culture.

P.J.: That is why I protested in front of Pennsylvania Station—to save it, because it was as near to a great monument as we had in this country.

P.E.: So, ultimately you are trying to do “good” architecture—besides the narcissistic or individual pleasure of doing it—because you do have a faith in the culture and a belief in morality. But you can also turn the argument around again and say that the anxiety of students comes from the fact that they may not believe in the culture that you believe in. Rather than arguing that you do not have a morality, what they are probably confronting is the fact that they do not believe in your morality.

P.J.: The students do not believe that the urban context is something worth saving?

P.E.: They would probably take the church down.

P.J.: Take the church down and at least make a buck.

P.E.: That is what is interesting.

P.J.: It is hard for me to think that art isn't still the most important and that money just has to be secondary. Perhaps students no longer believe in art; it is perfectly possible. There are a lot of things I do not believe in, but I sure as hell believe in the necessity of art, whether it's architectural or graphic.

P.E.: We were presented with the a similar question. We were given a site at the Berlin Wall and told to build housing on it. You stand there and you feel like you are on the wrong side of a concentration camp, and you say, “Who wants to raise a child here?” Now, they need housing in Berlin, but what does one do? Does one put housing on that site? It is a big commission and you can argue that someone is going to do it and you feel you can

do it better than somebody else. That becomes a moral question. You could argue the same way on St. Bart's. If you felt that you could do it better, perhaps it would be a moral gesture on your part to take the job—because someone is going to do it.

P.J.: I think that is a specious argument—but I use it, of course: “You had better hire me because I can make a failure here more palatable than anyone else can.” The reason one can't use that argument for St. Bart's is that there is some chance that we can stop it from being built at all. If I thought it was going to be built, I should certainly take the job—I can certainly do it as well, as the architects they selected.

P.E.: That is an interesting comment, because now we have come full circle. You have brought ideology back into the discussion, but only in terms of individual quality. This ties in with something you said earlier that I cannot let you get away with: It is about the interchangeability of the terms “International Style” and “Modern Movement.” For me, this issue has always divided us. My argument is that the International Style is not the Modern Movement, but an attempt to drain its ideology; to reduce it from a belief to a fashion. For me, ideology does not carry the same political flags that it does for you. The Modern Movement was an ideological movement; it was a movement of the Left. The International Style attempted to eliminate the political content; to have aesthetics without ideology.

P.J.: That was the idea.

P.E.: There is no question about that! Then why do you continue to say the International Style and the Modern Movement are equivalent? Is it because you would like it to be that way?

P.J.: No. “The Modern Movement” is a much more inclusive term; that is why I wanted to use it—the fundamentals of the Modern movement go further back. The International Style is restricted to the aesthetics of 1922 to 1932, and that is about all. But if you want to talk about more important . . .

P.E.: No; ideological.

P.J.: That word, as you know, I feel is loaded.

P.E.: Okay; moral.

P.J.: Moral. Then you have to go back and find the roots, back before Ruskin; but the International Style was merely an appearance thing. Colquhoun can say it was an upside-down Classicism; Hannes Meyer would say it was just the result of functional activity.

P.E.: But, for me, Oedipus, anti-Oedipus, ideology, anti-ideology, morality, antimorality, are part of the same dialectical condition.

P.J.: Unfortunately, I don't understand the whole dialectic—any more than I understand semiology, or structuralism, or deconstruction. To me, there is a good building, and there is one that is not so good; if it has been influenced by so-and-so, or if you had taken another influence, would it have come out differently? It is the kind of analysis that I inherited from Hitchcock, of course, that interests me.

When it comes down to morality, it is not architectural—it is the morality of life in the city. I have just as much moral concern about workers' housing as the next man; I am as good as Albert Meyer if you start me off on my workers' housing soap box. That is, I feel that one can have a high morality about the state of the world, but as long as I am doing art, I leave all that behind. I think as did Mies: Give the workers more money, then we'll give them a Llewellyn Park suburb to live in. That's what Frank Lloyd Wright did. He was moral; he did Broadacre City, so help me God. I can separate the morality in my mind. When Gropius said that I do immoral architecture—that's what I don't like.

P.E.: A young architect, Gavin MacCrae-Gibson, is writing a book that has a chapter on the amoral architecture of Philip Johnson and Peter Eisenman. I have always felt that it was very difficult to find any connection, in the sense of architectural influence, between you and me. He calls us both “amoral.” While you would say—because of what you see as my “ideological” tendencies—that I am ultimately a moralist; I would say conversely that, because of your Anglo-Saxon belief in David Watkin's position in *Morality in Architecture*, it is you who are the moralist.

P.J.: No, I think you are just as amoral—that does not mean immoral—as I am. You have a strange idea of yourself. Of course, that comes from too much self-analysis; you know all these long words, and I don't. I am just a simple farm boy.

P.E.: Businessman!

P.J.: That is not a bad term. I never thought of it. The fact that I am successful is proof that I am not a bad businessman.

Looking back at "M

The International Style Turns 50

Suzanne Stephens

Fifty years ago, on February 10, 1932, the show "Modern Architecture: International Exhibition" opened at the Museum of Modern Art. Since then the show increasingly has been referred to as "The International Style Exhibit," which, considering some of the works in the show, is something of a misnomer. The substitution occurred chiefly because the book *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, (Norton, N. Y., 1932), written by the organizers of the show, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, appeared the same year. Many of the works in the MoMA show were included in the book; many were not.

The majority of works in the show, however, shared characteristics of this new style that employed an abstracted, planar, two-dimensional vocabulary of forms. Emphasized were the expression of materials and regularity of composition and proportion, instead of the mass, symmetry, and ornamentation of traditional architecture. Hitchcock and Johnson isolated and unified the manifestations of this architecture appearing in countries as diverse as Japan, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and the U.S. While they avowedly were attempting to establish a "framework of principles" loose enough to allow inclusion of a wide range of responses that could be considered part of this style, a process of condensation was inevitably underway with the organizers' classification. It is this condensation that is strikingly in evidence in the book *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, and that would soon emblemize "modernist" architecture itself—for this style was to provide the canon against which "modern" work would be measured. On the route from the show to the book, an ideology took shape that was to color later interpretation of the Modern Movement and of what constituted its essence.

The show, traveling throughout the United States for three years,

Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson's landmark "Modern Architecture" show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932 has occasioned several celebratory events: This month *Progressive Architecture* is running articles examining its impact; Harvard is sponsoring a symposium and exhibit on the show in April. *Skyline* attempts on these pages to summon up some of the specifics surrounding the exhibition's installation and reception by the critics.

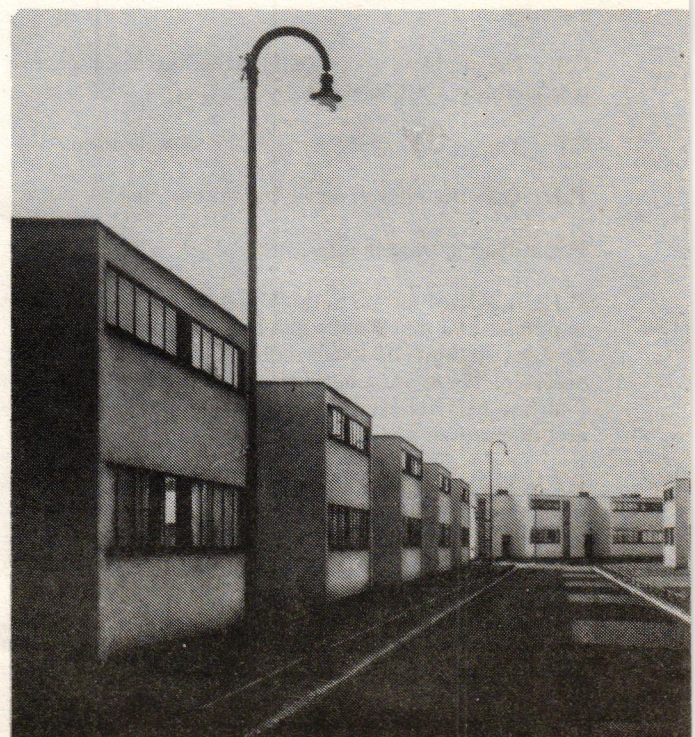
did display the achievements of Amos ... Hood and Howe & Lescaze, in addition as it presented the work of Mies, Gropius, Johnson and Hitchcock also took a ... hadn't built much, such as the Bow ... boldly displaying their projects. They ... be the only featured architects who ... dissolved their practice in 1936, and ... Nevertheless, their work presented ... distinctive and anticipatory of work ...

The exhibit, conceived to combat the "functionalist" doctrine, was quite ... spite of the fact that Johnson and Hi ... being aesthetically oriented in their ... attempted to demonstrate a strong so ... display of models, photos, and plans ... Europe, and the inclusion of Lewis ... the catalogue made the social compo ... Housing officials were given an adva ... effort to promote a housing scheme l ... and Forsyth Streets in New York Cit ...

Since the show, however, the proces ... Style a part of accessible architectur ... exhibition's heterogeneous aspects to ... easily retrieved, and copied—in oth ... the ideology of the International Sty ... mythic proportions. But going back ... of its featured works have become so ... are still many entries in the show th ... modernist effort. It was indeed ferti ...



Typical Block, Long Island, New York; ca. 1932. (Photo courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art)



Walter Gropius. Experimental Housing Development, Dessau-Tortona

Modern Architecture

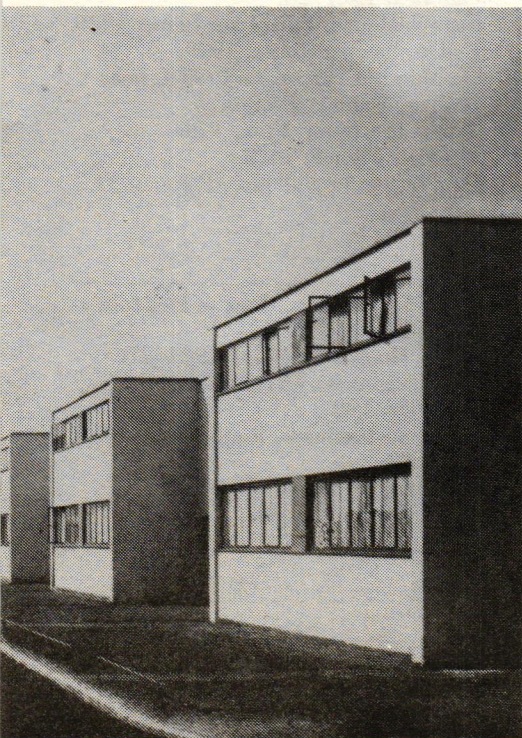
Far right: Alfred Barr, director of the Museum of Modern Art in 1932; right: Henry-Russell Hitchcock. (courtesy of the Architectural History Foundation, from its forthcoming *Henry-Russell Hitchcock Festschrift*, from the collection of Henry-Russell Hitchcock)



an architects like Raymond
to Wright, as emphatically
is, Le Corbusier, and Oud.
nce on young architects who
Brothers of Chicago, by
wman Brothers turned out to
appeared," for they
e moved to West Virginia.
e show remains remarkably
others to follow.

ductivism inherent in the
in its scope and diversity. In
cock have been accused of
ection, the show also
l concern. Its prominent
housing in the U.S. and in
nford's essay on housing in
at all the more noticeable.
e tour of the exhibit in an
Howe & Lescaze for Chrystie

f making the International
istory has itself reduced the
hat can be remembered,
words, its "look." Within
he exhibit itself took on
eview it again, when many
own, is instructive; for there
emonstrate a broad range of
ound.



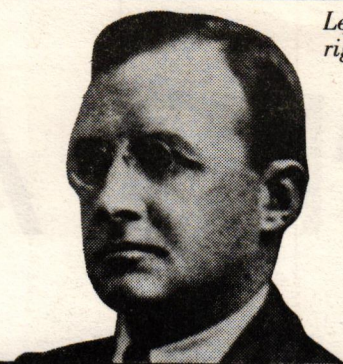
26-28. (MoMA)

Philip Johnson, 1932. (photo: Lerski)

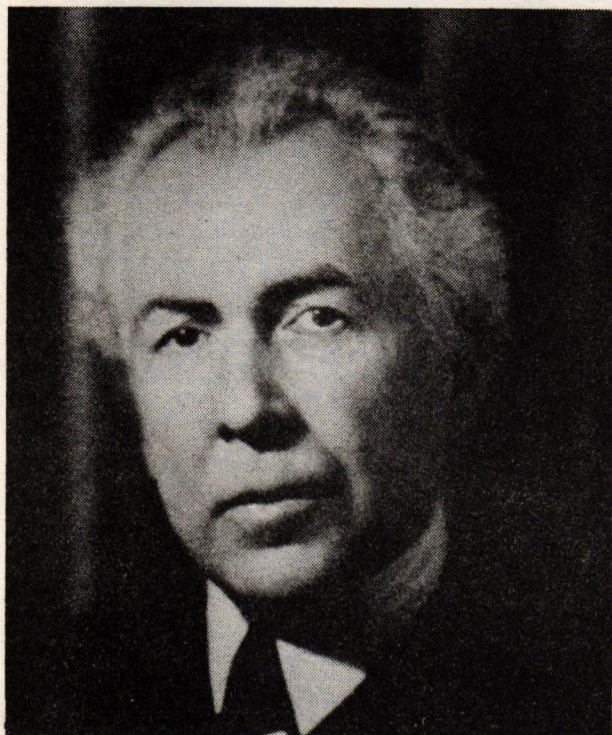
Looking Back at "Modern Architecture"

Nine architects or partnerships—Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, J.J.P. Oud, Mies van der Rohe, Raymond Hood, Howe & Lescaze, Richard Neutra, and the Bowman Brothers—were featured prominently in the 1932 MoMA show, through models, photos, and plans of several of their works. They were the only architects whose work was illustrated in the catalogue accompanying the show.

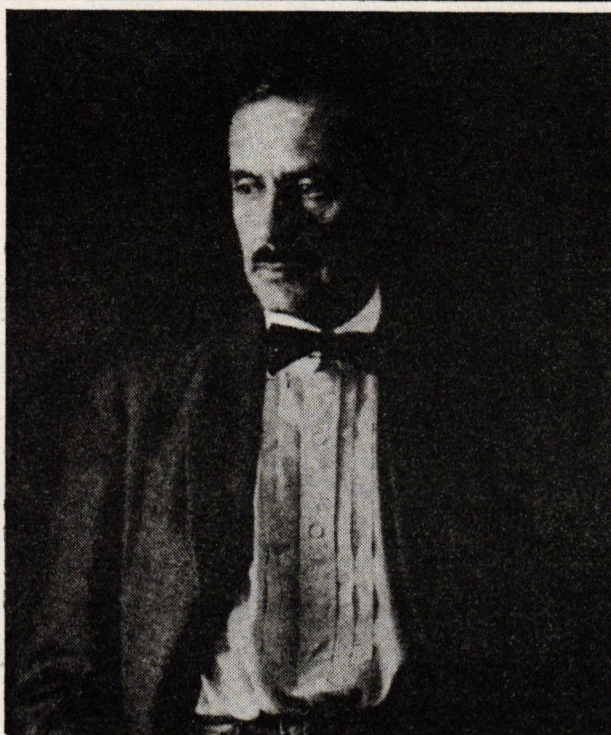
Comparing the works included in the "Modern Architecture" show of 1932 with the ones in the book *International Style: Architecture Since 1922* is instructive for those interested in how an ideology emerges from a diverse range of exploration. To clarify what was in the show we have formed a checklist compiled from several sources. These include: works listed in the exhibition catalogue; projects documented in the photographic files for "Exhibit 15" in MoMA's Rights and Reproductions Department; and a memo that Philip Johnson, director of the exhibition, wrote on February 19, 1932, listing the architects (but not always the project names).



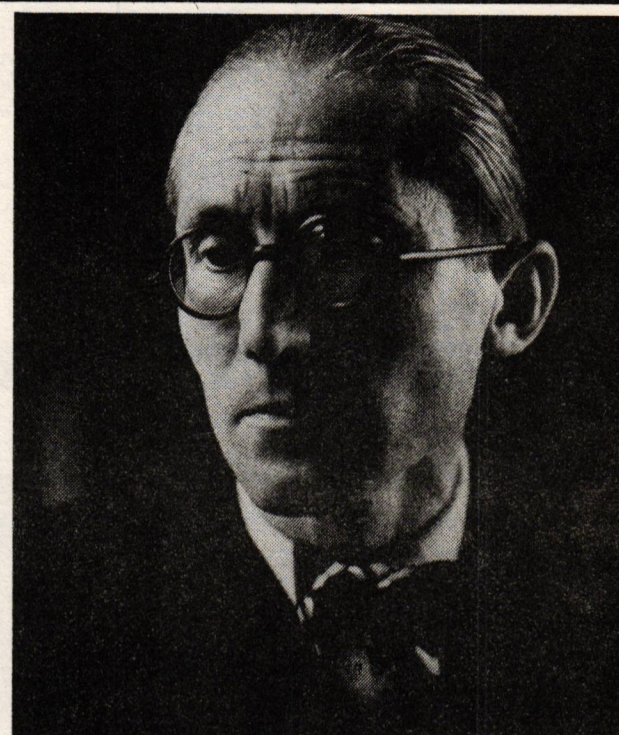
Left: George Howe;
right: William Lescaze



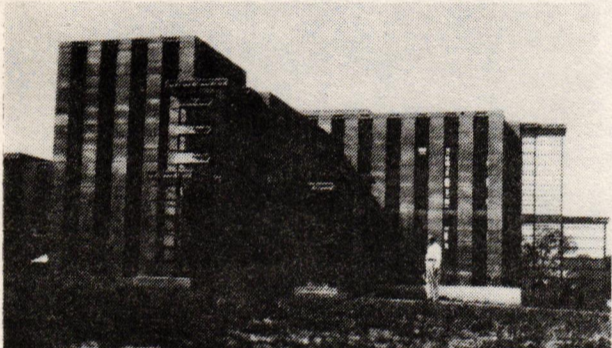
Frank Lloyd Wright



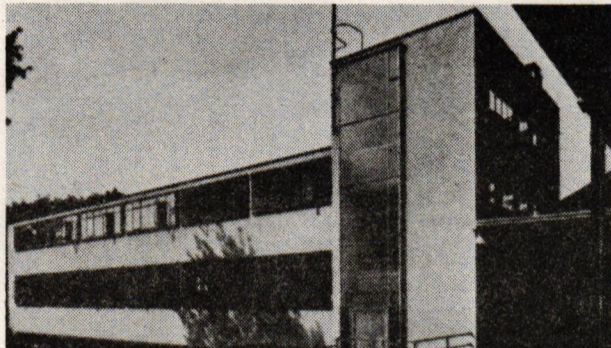
Walter Gropius



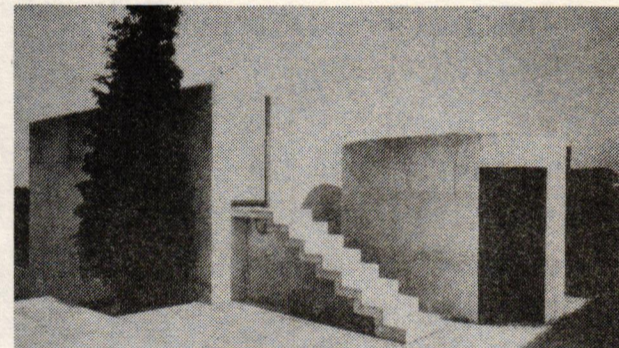
Le Corbusier



Wright. Richard Lloyd Jones House, Tulsa; 1926. (MoMA)



Gropius. City Employment Office, Dessau; 1928.



Le Corbusier. De Beistegui penthouse, Paris; 1930-31. (MoMA)

Frank Lloyd Wright

Exhibition

Project for a house on the mesa, Denver, Colo.; 1932.
Isabel Roberts House, River Forest, Ill.; 1907.
Robie House, Chicago; 1908-09.
Taliesin, Spring Green, Wisc.; 1911-25.
R.L. Jones House, Tulsa, Okla.; 1931.
Millard House, Pasadena, Calif.; 1921.
†W.H. Winslow House, Chicago; 1893.
†Ocatilla Camp, Chandler, Ariz.; 1928-29.

Catalogue

Project for an office building; 1894.
Administration Building, Larkin Soap Factory, Buffalo, N.Y.; 1904-05.
Robie House, Chicago; 1908-09.
Isabel Roberts House, River Forest, Ill.; 1907.
Millard House, Pasadena, Calif.; 1921.
R.L. Jones House, Tulsa, Okla.; 1931.
Project for a house on the mesa, Denver, Colo.; 1932.

Book

Walter Gropius

Fagus Factory, Alfeld, Germany; 1910-14.
The Bauhaus, director's house, Dessau, Germany; 1925-26.
Stores and apartment house, Dessau-Torten, Germany; 1926-28.
The Bauhaus, Dessau; 1926-27.
City Employment Office, Dessau; 1928.

Houses for workmen, Pomerania, Germany; 1906.
Fagus Factory, Alfeld, Germany; 1910-14.
Bauhaus School, Dessau, Germany; 1925-26.
Experimental housing development, Dessau-Torten, Germany; 1926-28.
City Employment Office, Dessau; 1928.
Lewin House, Berlin-Zehlendorf, Germany; 1928.

The Bauhaus, Dessau; 1926-27.
City Employment Office, Dessau; 1928.
Experimental housing development, Dessau-Torten, Germany; 1926-28.

Le Corbusier & Pierre Jeanneret

Savoye House, Poissy-sur-Seine, France; 1929-30.
Double house, Werkbund, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart, Germany; 1927.
Stein House, "Les Terrasses," Garches, France; 1928.
De Beistegui penthouse, Paris; 1931.
Swiss dormitory (under construction), Cité Universitaire, Paris; 1931-32.

Ozenfant House, Paris; 1923.
Lipchitz and Miestschaninoff House, Boulogne-sur-Seine; 1924.
Double house, Werkbund, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927.
Stein House, "Les Terrasses," Garches; 1927-28.
Savoye House, Poissy-sur-Seine; 1929-30.
De Mandrot House, Le Pradet, near Hyères; 1930-31.
De Beistegui penthouse, Paris; 1931.
Swiss dormitory (under construction), Cité Universitaire, Paris; 1931-32.

Single and double house, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927.
Stein House, "Les Terrasses," Garches; 1927-28.
Savoye House, Poissy-sur-Seine; 1929.
Lodge, Savoye House; 1929.
De Mandrot House, Le Pradet, near Hyères, France; 1930-31.
Annex to Church Villa, Ville d'Array, France; 1929.
De Beistegui penthouse, Paris; 1931.

J.J.P. Oud

Siedlung Kiefhoek, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
Siedlung Kiefhoek, shops, church Rotterdam; 1928-30.
Workers' housing, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
Shop, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
Row of houses, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927.
Project for a house at Pinehurst, N.C. (For mother of Philip Johnson); 1931.

House in Noordwijkerhout, Holland; 1917 (in collaboration with Theo van Doesburg).
Project for a row of seaside houses; 1917.
Spangen, Blocks I and V, workers' dwellings, Rotterdam; 1918.
Garden village, Oud-Mathenesse, Rotterdam; 1922.
Workers' housing, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
Siedlung Kiefhoek, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
Project for a house at Pinehurst, N.C.; 1931.

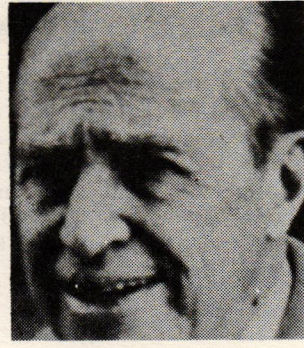
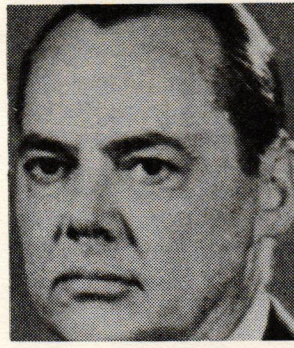
Workers' housing, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
Shop, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
Row of houses, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927.
Siedlung Kiefhoek, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
Siedlung Kiefhoek, church, Rotterdam; 1928-30.

*Included in list by the Director of the Exhibition, Philip Johnson, dated February 19, 1932 but not indicated in catalogue or "Exhibition 15" photographic files at MoMA.

†Included in "Exhibition 15" photographic files, but not listed elsewhere.



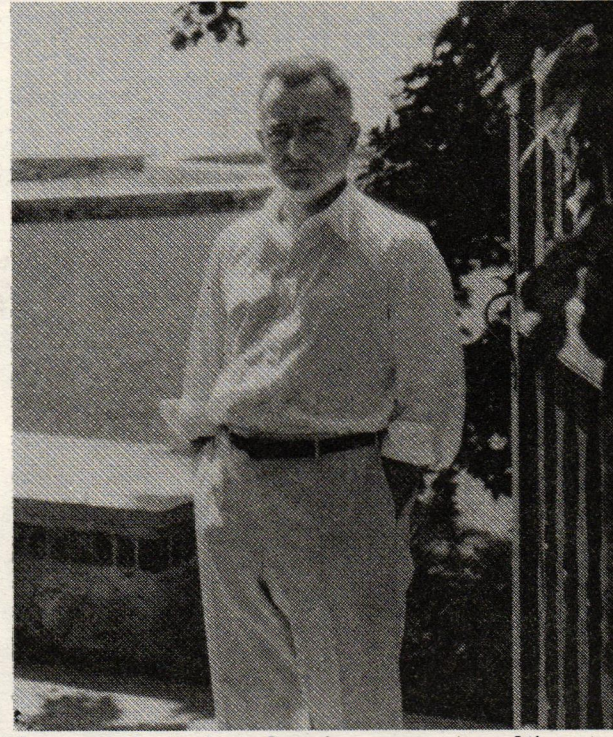
Left: Richard Neutra;
right: Irving Bowman;
far right: Monroe
Bowman



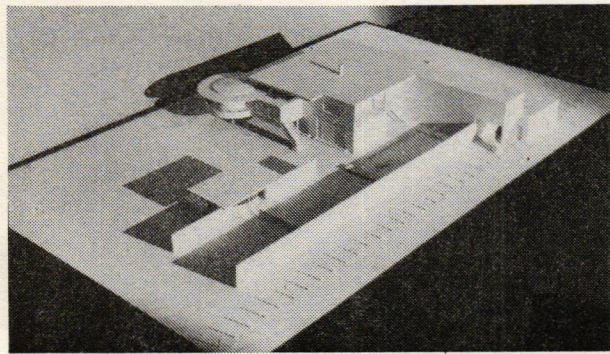
J.J.P. Oud



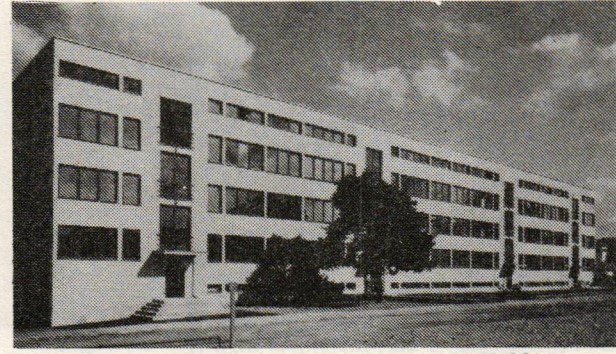
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe



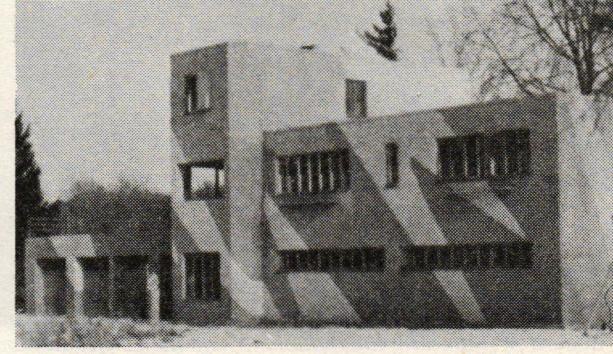
Raymond Hood (photo: Gottscho; courtesy Avery Library)



Oud. House project, Pinehurst, N.C.: 1931.



Mies. Wiessenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927. (MoMA)



Hood. Patterson House, garage, Ossining; 1930.

	Exhibition	Catalogue	Book
Mies van der Rohe	German Pavilion, The International Exposition, Barcelona; 1929. Tugendhat House, Brno, Czechoslovakia; 1930. Lange House, Krefeld, Germany; 1928. Apartment house, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927.	Project for the Kroller House, Holland; 1912. Project for a brick country house; 1922. Apartment house, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927. German Pavilion, The International Exposition, Barcelona; 1929. Tugendhat House, Brno, Czechoslovakia; 1930.	Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927. German Pavilion, The International Exposition, Barcelona; 1929. Lange House, Krefeld, Germany; 1928. Tugendhat House, Brno, Czechoslovakia; 1930. Apartment study, New York City; 1930.
Raymond Hood	Daily News Building, New York City; 1930. American Radiator Building, New York City; 1924. Project for apartment tower in the country; 1932.	3 East 84th Street, New York City; 1928. Beaux Arts Apartments, New York City; 1930. Daily News Building, New York City; 1930. Project for apartment tower in the country; 1932.	
Hood & Foulhoux	McGraw-Hill Building, New York City; 1931.	McGraw-Hill Building, New York City; 1931.	McGraw-Hill Building, New York City; 1931.
Hood & Howells	Patterson House, Ossining, N.Y.; 1930.		
George Howe		House of the Architect, Philadelphia; 1914.	
Howe & Lescaze	Oak Lane Country Day School, Philadelphia; 1929. Hessian Hills School, Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.; 1931. Translux Theater, New York City (interiors); 1930. Housing development project, Chrystie & Forsyth Streets, New York City; 1931-32. PSFS Building, Philadelphia; 1931-32. *Office for F.V. Storrs, New York City; 1932.	Oak Lane Country Day School, Philadelphia; 1929. Hessian Hills School, Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.; 1931. PSFS Building, Philadelphia; 1931-32. Housing development project, Chrystie & Forsyth Streets, New York; 1931-32.	PSFS Building, Philadelphia; 1931.
William Lescaze	†House of the Architect, New York City; 1932.	Capital Bus Terminal, New York; 1927.	
Richard Neutra	Garden apartments, Los Angeles, Calif.; 1927. Lovell House, Los Angeles; 1929. Project for ring plan school in "Rush City Reformed"; 1928-31. (Collaborators: Ain, Dovell, Wordlar.)	Four houses in Berlin-Zehlendorf; 1922. Garden apartments, Los Angeles, Calif.; 1927. Project for an ideal city: "Rush City Reformed"; 1927. Plan of Lovell House, Los Angeles; 1929. Project for ring plan school in "Rush City Reformed"; 1927.	Lovell House, Los Angeles; 1929.
Bowman Brothers	Lux Apartments, Evanston, Ill.; 1931. Project for a prefabricated house; 1930. Project for a business block (Billboard Restaurant); ca. 1931. Interior, Chicago; ca. 1931. Project for a house, Chicago; ca. 1931.	Project for a prefabricated small house; 1930. Project for the Lux Apartments, Evanston, Ill.; 1931.	

Looking Back at "Modern Architecture"

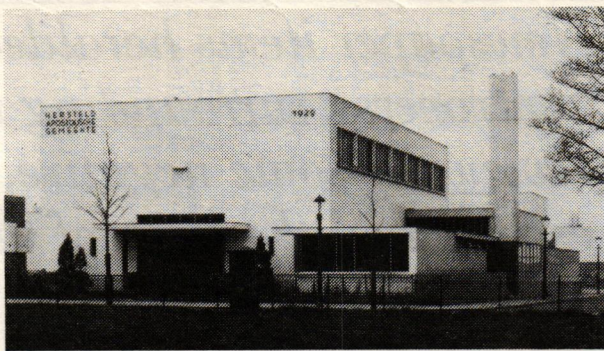
The "Modern Architecture" show was installed in five rooms at 730 Fifth Avenue, and made use of models, photos, plans, and drawings. The Bowman Brothers shared the first room with Walter Gropius; housing projects in Germany and America occupied the second room; Wright, Mies, Le Corbusier, and Oud, the third room; Hood and Neutra the fourth; and an international survey, the fifth room.

Works represented in the form of models in the exhibition included Otto Haesler's Rothenberg Housing at Kassel, Germany; Frank Lloyd Wright's "House on a mesa" project; Mies van der Rohe's Tugendhat House; Le Corbusier's Savoye House; J.J.P. Oud's "House at Pinehurst, N.C." project; Richard Neutra's "Ring plan school" project; Raymond Hood's "Apartment tower in the country" project; the Bowman Brothers' Lux Apartments project; Walter Gropius' Bauhaus; and Howe & Lescaze's Chrystie and Forsyth Streets housing project.

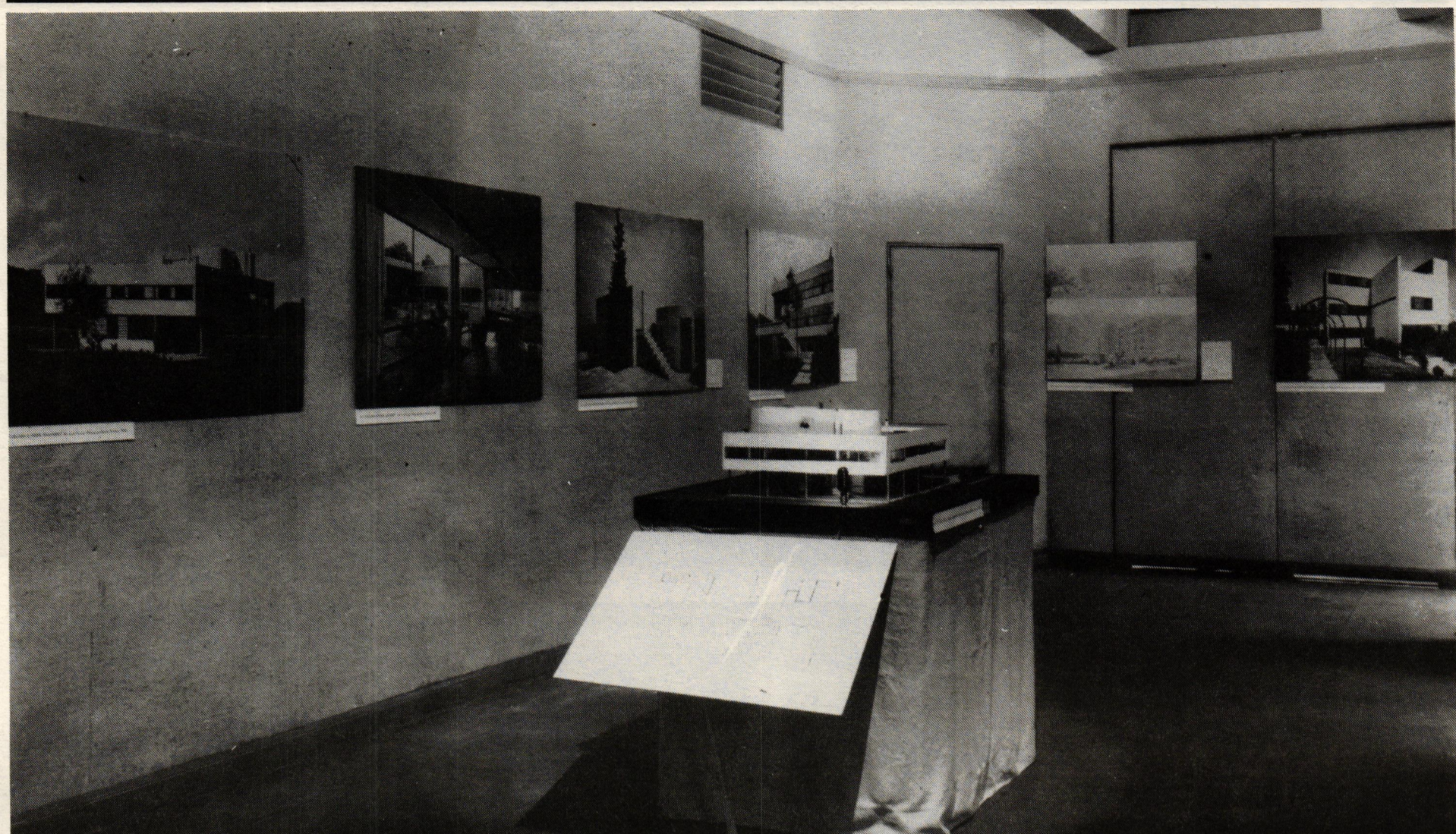


"Modern Architecture: International Exhibition," installation, 730 Fifth Avenue; 1932. Room B. (MoMA)

Housing Section		Exhibition	Catalogue
Clarence Stein and Henry Wright		Sunnyside Gardens, Long Island, N.Y.; 1926.	Plan of Radburn, New Jersey; 1927-29.
J.J.P. Oud		Siedlung Kiefhoek, Rotterdam. Plan; 1928-30.	Siedlung Kiefhoek, Rotterdam. Plan; 1928-30.
Otto Haesler		Rothenberg Housing Development, Kassel, Germany; 1930-32.	Rothenberg Housing Development, Kassel, Germany; 1930-32.
Ernst May & Associates		Romerstadt Housing Development, Frankfurt-on-Main; 1928.	Romerstadt Housing Development, Frankfurt-on-Main; 1928.
Housing		Typical block, Long Island, New York. Slum improvement, New York: The Amalgamated Grand Street Apartments. New York slums, Lower East Side. New York super slums, Park Avenue.	
		Exhibition	Book
Austria	Lois Welzenbacher	Apartment house, Innsbruck; 1930.	Schulz House, Westphalia, Germany; 1928. Apartment house, Innsbruck; 1930.
Belgium	H.L. de Koninck	Lenglet House, Uccle, near Brussels; 1926.	Lenglet House, Uccle, near Brussels; 1926.
Czechoslovakia	Otto Eisler	House for two brothers, Brno; 1931.	House for two brothers, Brno; 1931.
	Bohuslav Fuchs	Students' clubhouse, Brno; 1931.	Pavilion of City of Brno, Brno Exposition; 1928.
	Josef Kranz		Café Era, Brno; 1925.
	Ludvik Kysela	Bata Shoe Store, Prague; 1929.	Bata Shoe Store, Prague; 1929.
England	Aymas Connell	House, Amersham, Buckinghamshire; 1931.	
	J. Emburton	Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, Burnham-on-Crouch; 1931.	Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, Burnham-on-Crouch; 1931.
Finland	Alvar Aalto	Turun Sanomat Building, Abo; 1930.	Turun Sanomat Building, Abo; 1930.
	Erik Bryggman		Finnish Pavilion, Antwerp Exposition; 1930.
France	Robert Mallet-Stevens	De Noailles Villa, Hyères; 1925.	
	G. Guevrekian	Heim House, Neuilly-sur-Seine; 1928.	
	Paul Nelson	Pharmacy, Paris; 1931.	
	André Lurçat	Bonsel House, Versailles; 1925. Hotel Nord-Sud, Calvi, Corsica; 1931. Froriep de Salis House at Boulogne-sur-Seine; 1927.	Hotel Nord-Sud, Calvi, Corsica; 1931.
Germany	Joseph Albers		Living room, Berlin Exposition; 1931.
	Hans Borkowsky		Dapolin filling station, Kassel; 1930.
	Marcel Breuer		Apartment bedroom, Berlin; 1931.
	Eisenlohr & Pfennig		Breuninger Department Store, Stuttgart; 1931.
	Otto Haesler		Kurzag warehouse and offices, Brunswick; 1930. Rothenberg Housing Development, Kassel; 1930.
	Haesler & Volker	Old people's home, Kassel; 1931.	Old peoples' home, Kassel; 1931.
	J.W. Lehr		Volksstimme, Frankfurt; 1929.
	Luckhardt & Anker	Scholeronerallee 12, Berlin; 1929-30.	
	Erich Mendelsohn	Schocken Department Store, Chemnitz; 1928-30. House of the Architect, Berlin; 1929-30.	Schocken Department Store, Chemnitz; 1928-30.
	Mendelsohn & Reichel		German Metal Workers' Union Building, Berlin; 1929-30.
	Theodor Merrill		Konigsbrube Mine Works, Bochum, Germany; 1930.



Left to right: Lewis Mumford (photo: Eric Schaal). Haessler; Rothenberg, Kassel; 1930-32. (MoMA) Oud. Church at Kiefhoek, Rotterdam; 1928. (MoMA)

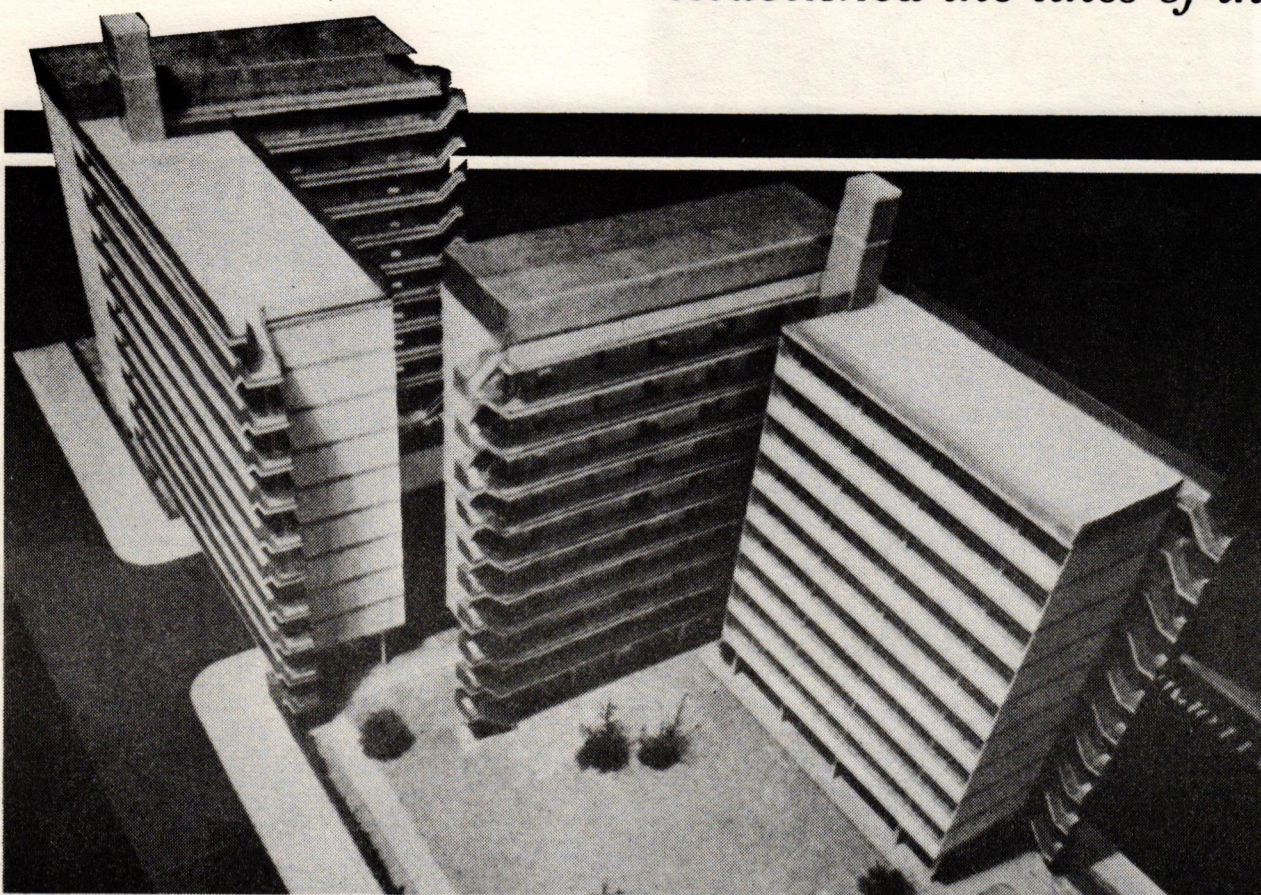


"Modern Architecture: International Exhibition," installation, 730 Fifth Avenue; 1932. Room C. (MoMA)

	Exhibition	Book
Germany	Lilly Reich	Bedroom, Berlin Exhibition; 1931.
	Jan Ruhtenberg	Apartment living room, Berlin; 1930.
	Hans Scharoun	Breslau School; 1930.
	Karl Schneider	Kunstverein, Hamburg; 1930.
	Stam and Moser	Budge Home for the Aged, Frankfurt; 1929-30.
Office of City Architect:	Essen	Children's clinic; 1930.
	Frankfurt (Ernst May)	Friedrich Ebert School, Frankfurt-on-Main; 1931.
	Kassel (Jobst)	Savings bank; 1931.
	Mannheim (Zizler & Muller)	Exposition building; 1930.
Architect of Postal Administration:	Stuttgart	Automatic post office; 1931.
Holland	Brinkman & Van der Vlugt	Van Nelle Factory, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
	W.J. Duiker	Open air school, Amsterdam; 1931.
	Gerrit Rietveld	House, Utrecht; 1924.
Italy	L. Figini & G. Pollini	Electrical house at the Monza Exposition; 1930.
Japan	Isaburo Ueno	Star Bar, Kyoto; 1931.
	Mamoru Yamada	Electrical laboratory, Tokyo; 1930.
Norway	Eindride Slaatto	†Three-family house, Oslo; ca.1930.
Spain	Labayen & Aizpurua	Clubhouse for San Sebastien; 1930.
Sweden	Uno Ahren	Flamman Soundfilm Theater, Stockholm; 1929.
	E.G. Asplund	Pavilion, Stockholm Exposition; 1930.
	Markelius & Ahren	Students' clubhouse, Stockholm; 1930.
	Eskil Sundahl	Siedlung, Swedish Cooperative Society, Stockholm; 1930.
	Artaria & Schmidt	Residence for professional women, Basel; 1930.
Switzerland	Max Ernst Haefeli	Apartment house, Zurich; 1929.
	Kellermüller & Hofmann	Jakob Kolb Soap Factory, Zurich; 1930.
	Steger & Egender	Bathhouse of the Beach Kusnacht, near Zurich; 1928.
	Carl Weidemeyer	House in Lago Maggiore; 1929.
	Clauss & Daub	Filling station for Standard Oil of Ohio, Cleveland; 1931.
USA	R.G. Cory, W.M. Cory	Starrett-Lehigh Building, New York City; 1931.
	F. Kiesler	Film Guild Cinema, New York City; ca. 1928.
	Kocher & Frey	Harrison House, Syosset, Long Island; 1931.
	Thompson & Churchill	Office building, Lexington & 57th, New York City; 1931.
	Tucker & Howell (Oscar Stonorov, associate)	Biological Laboratory of Highlands Museum, N.C.; 1931.
	El Lissitsky	†Niedersächsische Landesgalerie, Hanover, Germany; 1927.
	Government Architects (Nicolaiiev & Fissenko)	Electrico-Technical Institute, Lefortovo, Moscow; 1927.

Looking Back at "Modern Architecture"

Newspaper items heralded the events and controversy surrounding the MoMA show. The reviews—some negative, others positive—established the lines of the debate.



Howe & Lescaze. Project for Chrystie and Forsyth Streets housing, New York City; 1932.

The New York Times, January 30, 1932, p. 19, col. 1.

Housing on Stilts is Shown in Model

Apartments, 14 Feet Off Ground, With Play Space Beneath, Suggested for East Side

Part of Modern Art Show

Radical Plans Seen at Preview by Group Seeking Improved Living Conditions in City

German Effort Pictured

Kassel Community of Long Rows of Flats, Two Rooms Wide, Presented in Miniature at Museum

The adaptation of modern architecture to the housing problem of persons of moderate means was illustrated in two models shown privately yesterday at the Museum of Modern Art, 730 Fifth Avenue, to a group interested in better city living conditions. This was a preview of a part of the architectural exhibition that the museum will open next month.

One model shows in miniature a community of 550 dwellings already built in Kassel, Germany. The other, made from plans by Howe & Lescaze, New York and Philadelphia, Architects, is a suggested housing development at Chrystie and Forsyth Streets, to occupy the now vacant area formerly covered by tenements. The plan suggested in the model calls for twenty-four buildings arranged in a somewhat U-like formation. These would accommodate 8000 to 10,000 persons.

The buildings would have no basements or ground floors. They would be of steel skeleton construction standing fourteen feet above ground on their columns, leaving all the space beneath for covered playgrounds for rainy weather. This space would be available in addition to large open areas between the buildings.



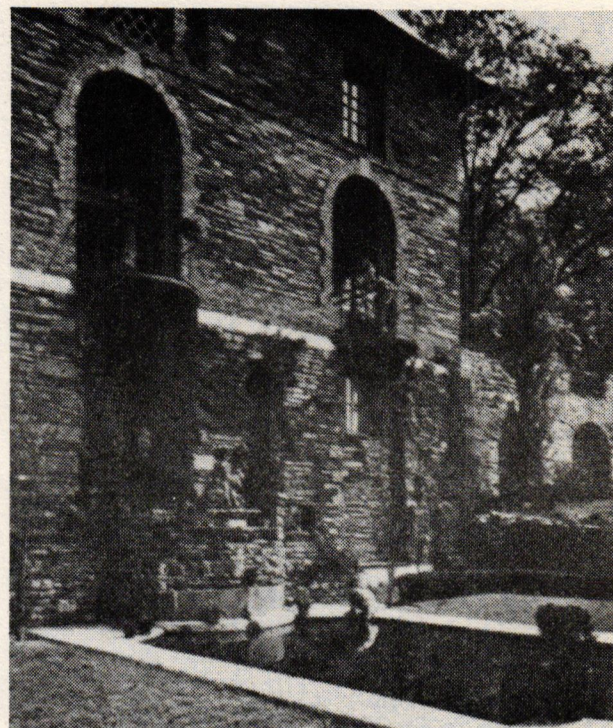
Raymond Hood. Project for "Apartment tower in country"; 1932. (MoMA)

Modern Architecture Comes to Front in Three Simultaneous Exhibits

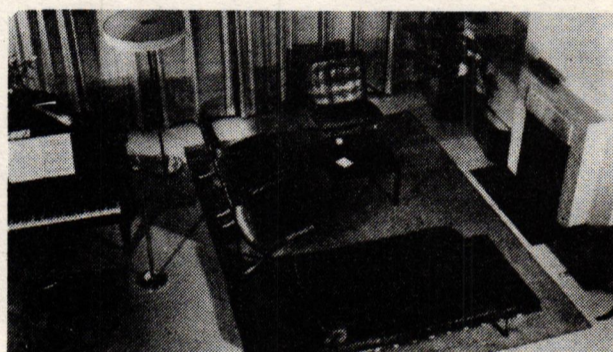
(The Art Digest, February 15, 1932, p. 7.)

More than ever before the art world is giving heed to contemporary architecture, which, as one authority has pointed out, is the first really original movement in art since the Gothic. Three important architectural exhibitions are now claiming attention in New York. At the Roerich Museum, the designs of Hugh Ferriss for the "City of the Future" are on view. The Museum of Modern Art is holding a large international exhibition of models and designs by prominent architects of Europe and America. At the Architectural League headquarters, Joseph Urban is being given a one-man showing, the receipts from which will go to aid the 1,700 unemployed draftsmen registered with the Architects Emergency Committee.

Regarding the MoMA show: A feature which is sure to cause great reaction is Raymond M. Hood's new plan for country homes—a skyscraper out of town. Ten isolated towers of more than twenty floors, each spaced 1,000 feet apart, are Mr. Hood's suggestion for rural development. Each tower would be surrounded by community gardens, garages, swimming pools and tennis courts. According to Mr. Hood this plan would preserve the natural beauty of the site, so that hundreds of small houses would not cut off one another's light, air and view. "Although," says Mr. Hood, "the majority of people have a sense of proprietorship that only the individual house on its own plot of ground can satisfy, there is a rapidly increasing class of people to whom the scheme of the country tower will appeal."



George Howe. House of the Architect, Philadelphia; 1914.



Philip Johnson. Turtle Bay Apartment, New York; 1930. (MoMA)

Present Trends In Architecture In Fine Exhibit

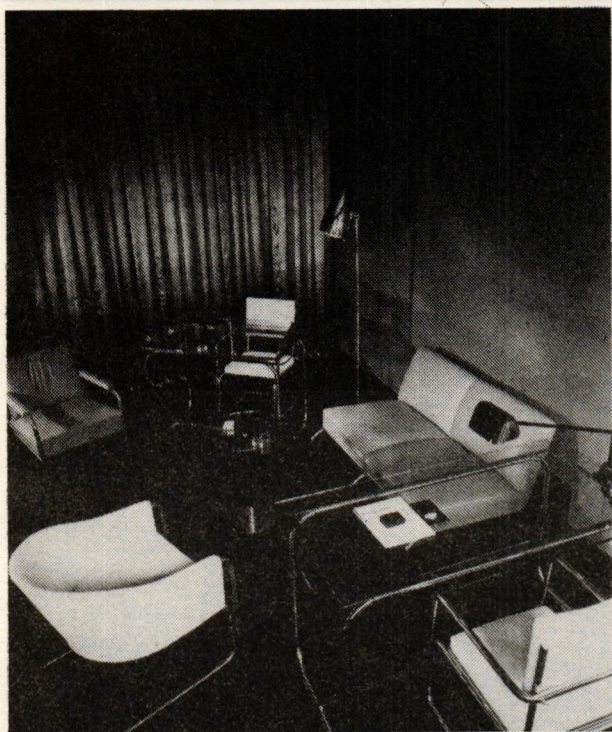
Ralph Flint

(The Art News, February 13, 1932, p. 5.)

Just at the time when the town's attention is more than usually attracted toward architectural problems, owing to the impending Radio City and its multiple innovations and attractions, this searching commentary on modern architecture is most welcome. . . . This exhibition of the International Style, under the special leadership of such men as Le Corbusier of France, Gropius and Mies van der Rohe of Germany and Oud of Holland should serve as a sort of aesthetic eye-wash to a period immersed in a vast and increasing confusion of architectural and decorative tendencies. In it is set forth with clarity and brevity the principles involved and the work of the men most concerned in its development.

No matter how monotonous or repetitious or otherwise uninspiring the new style may appear to be in its lesser manifestations—there can be no doubt about its magnificent simplicities and structural logic for large-scale work—it is probably the most powerful lever in getting us away from our jumbled aesthetic inheritances that could have been devised. After continued contemplation of the new modes, even the work of such moderns as Frank Lloyd Wright begins to look overloaded and fussy, and we begin to eye our surroundings with a fresh severity.

The single example of an earlier piece of American design, shown in the section of the catalogue devoted to work by George Howe, of Howe and Lescaze, must have slipped in unawares, so contrary is it to the general severity of appearance that the new men are stressing. And yet it serves its purpose in illustrating the tremendous departure from the cozy, comfortable or compromising *milieus* that we of this 20th century are so prone to carve out for ourselves. This International Style show at the Museum of Modern Art raises the question of just how ready and willing we are to take up our newly fabricated elements of constructional design and work out our salvation according to the plan that is being shown to us today.



Bowman Brothers. Interior, Chicago; ca. 1931. (MoMA)

The New York Times, February 28, 1932, p. 1, col. 4.

Architects' Show Bars Two Moderns

Howe and Lescaze Quit League to "Fight Alone" Rather Than Compromise With "Crowd"

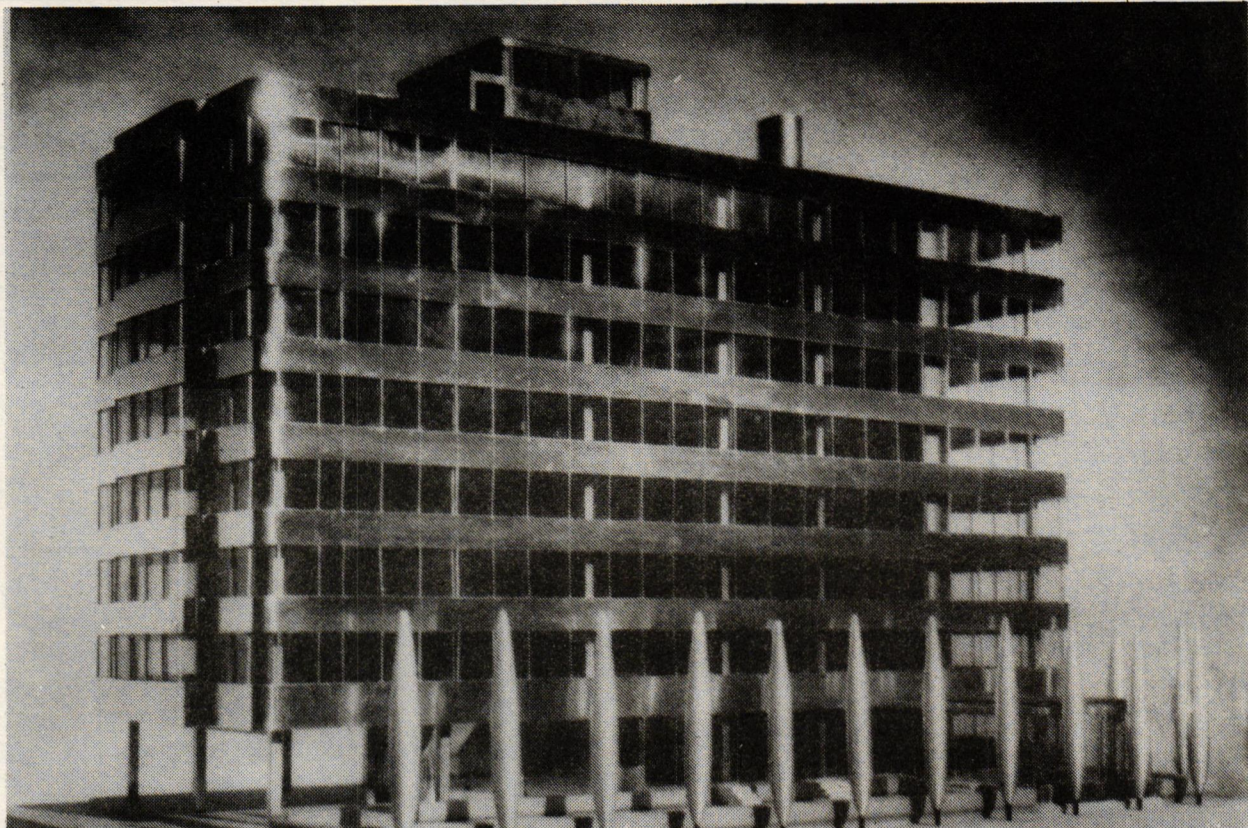
Hailed at Exhibit Nearby

Museum of Modern Art Lists Their Work as Pointing Way for Better Design

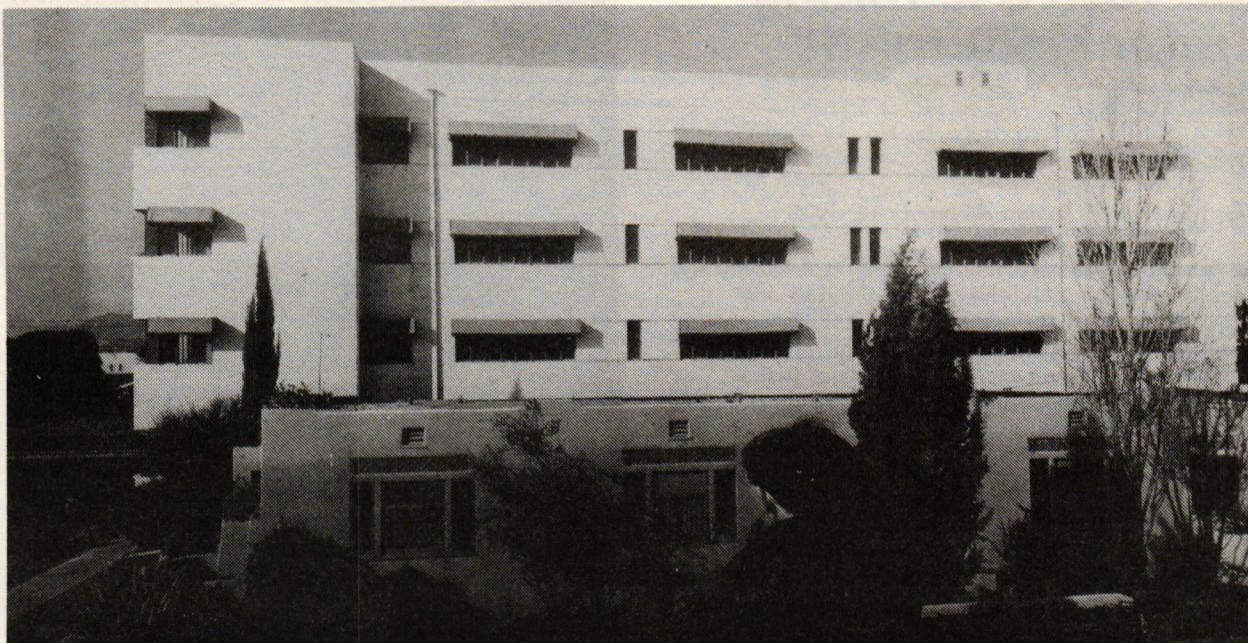
However insignificant a distance of two blocks may be to the pedestrian, it constitutes a wide gulf in the world of architecture, it seemed here yesterday, when it became known that the work of two architects of advanced modern ideas who were featured in the current exhibition of architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, 730 Fifth Avenue, had been rejected at the Architectural League's annual show at 215 West Fifty-seventh Street.

As a consequence of their rejection, George Howe and William Lescaze have sent in their resignations to the Architectural League, Mr. Lescaze said last night. He expressed the opinion that the refusal of the League to show their work in its annual exhibition, which was opened to the public yesterday, was based on objection to the modern character of their designs.

"We stand for clarification of architectural principle," said Mr. Lescaze. "We are perfectly willing to fight alone rather than make compromises to be with the crowd. The issue is too serious to be treated lightly. An architect must be able to practice his profession according to his individual convictions rather than the convictions of the group."



Bowman Brothers. Lux Apartments project, Evanston, Ill.; 1931. (MoMA)



Richard Neutra. Garden apartments, Los Angeles, southwest side; 1927. (MoMA)

Exhibition of Modern Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art

Catherine K. Bauer

(Creative Art, March 1932, pp. 201-206.)

This exhibition has style . . . And the proof of it is (1) that the exhibition makes sense when considered as a whole, and (2) that some of the least successful designs achieve a degree of sense merely by being related to the rest of the show. Which is to say that, whether one likes it or not, here is legitimate material for exhibition—and more intrinsic matter for judgment than any league or other hodge-podge has presented to American eyes.

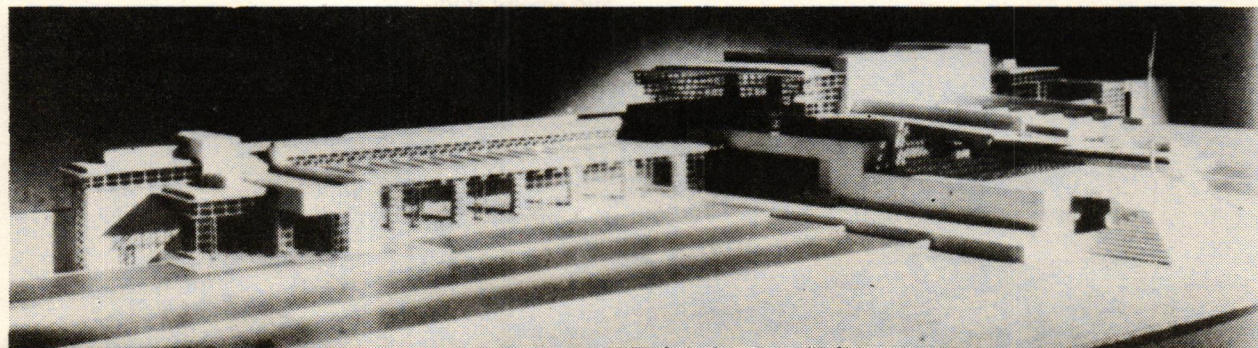
Style in this sense implies the common acceptance, conscious or unconscious, of a basic norm of design. It predicates common beliefs and common purposes in a large number of contemporary people. But more than that, it defines architecture, first and last, as the *social art*—as the expression of those forces that keep people together

and not those that separate and individualize. Architecture is not a medium for expressing individual personality.

...
If we have nothing to lose, then surely style—such style as may be seen in this exhibition—is desirable. We ought to accept it. But a question remains: *Can* we accept it? For we can only achieve good architecture if we have something ourselves to begin with—a desire for the qualities implicit in style, for order, harmony, a clear statement of reality.

...
The most important people of all who are here are the town-planners, the housing experts, the socially-minded scientists, the scientifically-minded socialists, the men who have revolutionized the possibilities and actualities of low-cost dwellings—from Stockholm to New Jersey; from Russia to Frankfurt to the Lower East Side.

For any free-standing modern mansion, however handsome, however luxurious, however cunningly planned, is somewhat outside the most important practice of modern architecture. Building has become seven-eighths planning. And the very qualities that produce Style in this exhibition—the economic and aesthetic use of modern materials and mass-production processes, the elimination of surface ornament, the emphasis on simple forms, clean lines, human living requirements, the substitution of an ideal of direct, simple affirmation for the old one of picturesque variety—are the qualities that create a new possibility for architecture in large-scale housing and community planning . . . and therefore, for new cities and a whole new background for our civilization.



Frank Lloyd Wright. Project for a "House on the mesa"; 1931.

Looking Back at "Modern Architecture"

The exhibition emphasized the American contribution to modern architecture. However, it contained numerous examples of the International Style.



W.J. Duiker. Open air school, Amsterdam; 1931.

Architecture The Turn It Is Taking Under Modernistic Hands

Royal Cortissoz

(*New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1932.)

The exhibition just opened at the Museum of Modern Art is one of the most useful thus far organized by that institution. It is truly educational in that it gives a comprehensive view of so-called "modern" architecture, the architecture that abandons verticality as well as ornament and that both here and abroad is supposed to be ushering in a new heaven and a new earth. This promised land, to be sure, may turn out to be nothing more than a rather dubious suburb, but at least this exhibition shows what it is designed to be by certain European and American practitioners. The richly illustrated catalogue is also an aid, if not in propaganda, at any rate in its biographies and general documentation. In short, every aspect of the subject is made available in the show, and the inquirer may learn all the essentials of it.

A Simple Revelation

There is nothing obscure about them. The matter is greatly simplified, to begin with, by the disappearance of one of the most important factors in the usual exhibition of works of art. That is, individuality in respect to style. Amongst a lot of paintings or sculpture one recognizes personality at once. The original strain is unmistakable. This modern architecture marks the abdication of the architect as artist and his subjection to a mode of international standardization

[Many] look very much alike—and very depressing. These architects are evidently unaware that architecture is a thing to contemplate as well as to use, and what is ordinarily meant by "beauty" is mysteriously absent from their productions. Even Mr. Wright's Jones House has for us very much the air of a penitentiary. Nor does functionalism, we gather, include the definition of a building's purpose in its facade. J.J.P. Oud exhibits a church in Rotterdam which might, from its appearance, be a cinema. But the grimmest reflection evoked by the new architecture has to do with its fitness for the daily use of human beings. Now and then, as in the German workshops and schoolrooms of Walter Gropius, we can appreciate the virtue of their abundant supply of light. But more often, as we survey the various schemes in metal and stucco with their positive acreage of glass, we wonder how much comfort they would leave to the inhabitant, exposed to the glare and the heat of our pitiless summer sun. These are bleak-looking buildings, and the problem of temperature that they raise is one of the bleakest things about them. Somehow, taking into consideration both the practical and aesthetic issues, we do not envision modern architecture as getting a very lasting foothold in the United States.



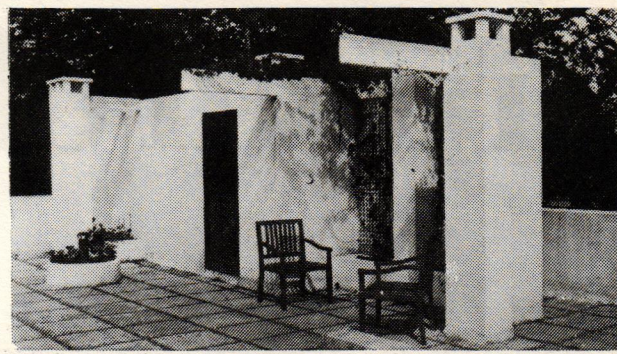
Paul Nelson. Pharmacy, Paris; 1931. (MoMA)

In the Realm of Art: Important Current Shows—Architecture, International Style, at Museum of Modern Art

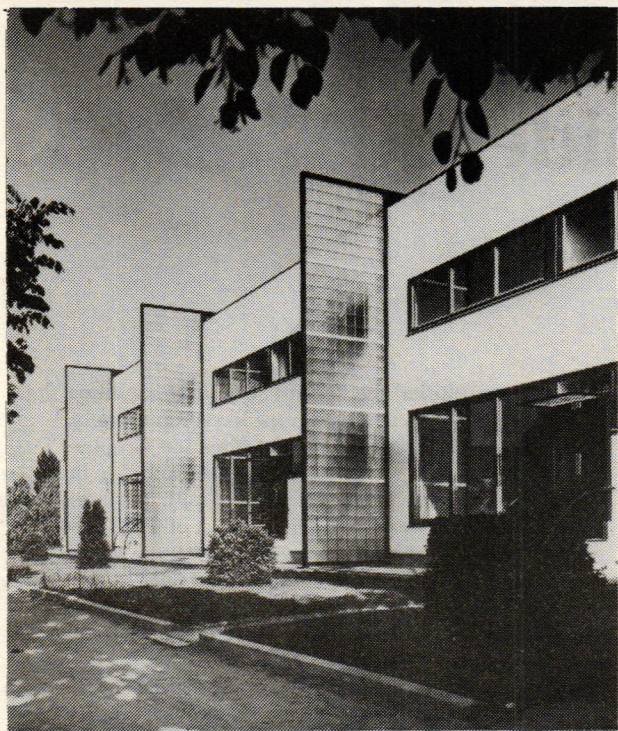
Edward Alden Jewell

(*The New York Times*, February 14, 1932.)

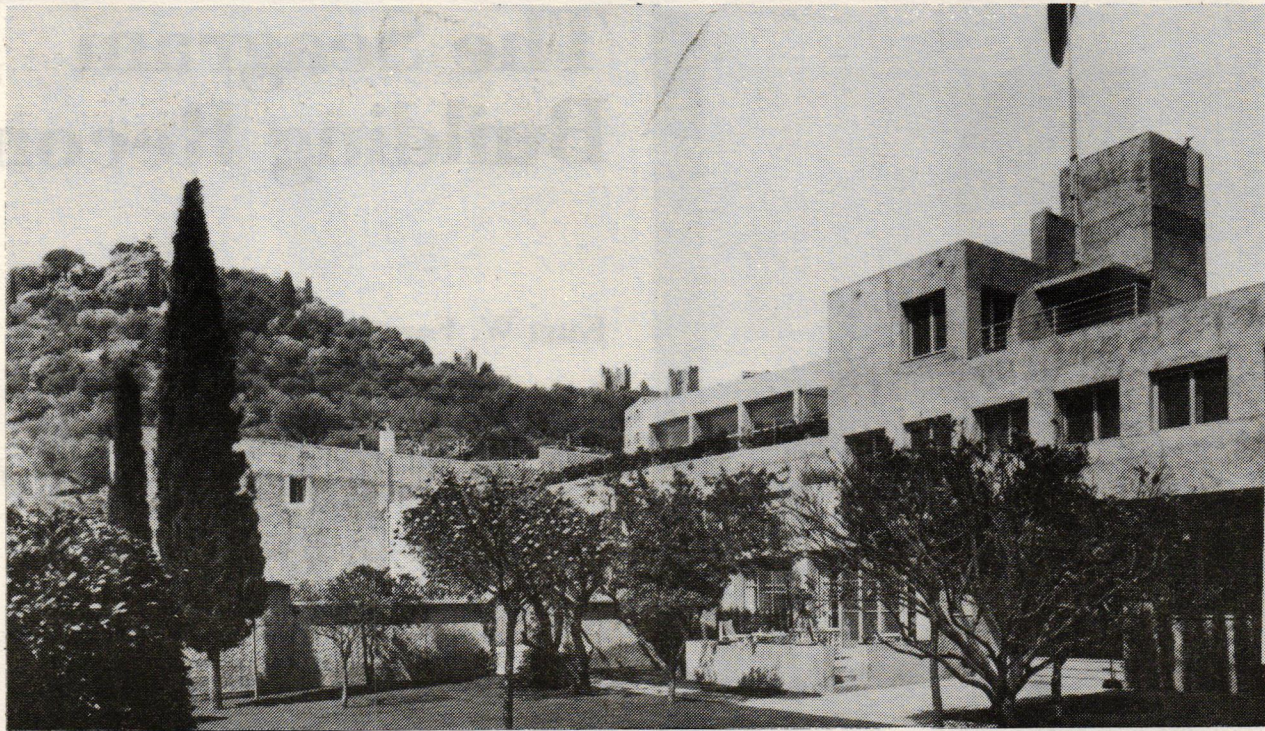
A few years ago much enlightened procedure was spoken of as functionalism. The International Style men like to refer to their projects as "post-functional," and since it is so easy to get into fruitless quibbling when it comes to definitions of this sort, we may as well accept whatever terms they choose to offer. The post-functional proofs now assembled for your inspection at the Museum of Modern Art under the aegis of Philip Johnson, who is the exhibition's director, are so altogether convincing that by any other name they would rival the rose of the proverb In the space at our disposal we cannot venture upon detailed analysis of the beautiful models and photographs, which deserve on the part of the public long and careful study.



André Lurçat. *Bonsel House, Versailles; 1925. (MoMA)*



Lueckhardt & Anker. *Scholenerallee 12, Berlin; 1930. (MoMA)*



Robert Mallet-Stevens. *De Noailles Villa, Hyeres; 1925 (MoMA)*

International Architectural Style

Harold Sterner

(*Architecture Chronicle, Hound & Horn*, Vol. 5, No. 1, April-June, 1932, pp. 452-460.)

It matters not what the architecture of the future looks like. It may well choose to dress itself in more conventional clothing and search once more in the past for methods of adornment, so that by comparison the rudimentary examples which at present constitute the only evidence of the International Style may seem almost grotesque. But whatever happens, the break has been made. It will be impossible for architects of the future, whatever stupidities they achieve, to commit the errors of the nineteenth century, and this purging will have been largely due to the men whose work is on view at the Museum of Modern Art.

It is good architecture to the extent that it has cast off many of the evils of its precursors, but it is not yet good architecture if that term implies an unerring eye for fine proportions and the degree of assurance which enables the great artist to appreciate the authority of an understatement.

The first great architect of the International Style will be one who is worldly enough to take the modern idiom for granted and show that the style can be made practical. For it is on the practical side, strangely enough, that most of the work shown in the exhibition appears weakest.

The architecture of Mies van der Rohe is the most distinguished in the exhibition. It is marked by a restraint and beauty of proportions that are lacking in the work of most of his contemporaries. He is the least prone to caricature or to advertising the technical methods by which he obtains his results; he has accepted the modern idiom more calmly, as though he understood that radicalism per se offers scanty nourishment to the artist, however excellent it may be as a stimulant.

When Le Corbusier writes, he is the master of his ideas; when he designs, they master him. The Ozenfant House, the Houses at Boulogne-sur-Seine, and the Double House at the Werkbund Housing Exposition are all ungainly in one sense or another. The cantilevering in this latter house results in a particularly disagreeable sense of insecurity and equally unfortunate proportions. In the Stein House at Garches, there is more repose, but the slanting marquise with its concrete tension members is difficult to forgive either as engineering or aesthetics. The plan of the Savoye House is in many ways highly impractical. All kitchen supplies must be carried through the main hall on both floors to arrive at their destination, while the bedrooms are so arranged that the utmost publicity is given to their occupants when they are washing or carrying out even more intimate physical duties. The garage is planned so that even the most proficient of New York taxi drivers would have difficulty getting a car into it, let alone out of it, and this diagonal placing of the garage has so distorted the plan of an adjacent guest room as to make it absurd. It is difficult to discern in many of these ugly and impractical features anything but the affectations of a propagandist.



Isaburo Ueno. *Star Bar, Kyoto; 1931. (MoMA)*

Let us turn to the American work that is exhibited. The inclusion of Frank Lloyd Wright is best explained on the grounds of courtesy. The courtesy due any brave man—free and independent enough to face almost alone—through a whole lifetime—an opposing army of architectural styles and ideas that seemed to him (and he was not much mistaken) vicious and meaningless. Small wonder that the present leaders in Europe's architectural revolution have nearly all paid homage to him. As an artist and as a technician, he belongs to his own generation, a generation unwilling to admit that man could get along quite nicely for a while without the handicrafts; he has never submitted to a strict intellectual discipline as have Mies or Oud, and accordingly his work is set apart from the rest of the exhibition. The House on the Mesa is certainly tangential to the International Style if not within it, but the other examples of his work that are shown bear almost no relation to it. The scale of both the Millard House at Pasadena and the R.L. Jones House at Tulsa is extraordinary, although in the former, the elaborate surface pattern acts as a disguise.... It is almost impossible to believe that the house is twenty feet high. At first glance it looks eighty.

The Empire State Building is the only modern skyscraper in New York. The proselytizers of the International Style have taken such alarm at the "Modernistic" mooring tower and a few irrelevant dabs of ornament that they have completely overlooked the virtues of this building, and, in so doing, left out of the exhibition the first structurally new skyscraper that has been built in twenty-five years. It has been called "theatric" and "false"; compared to it, the *Daily News Building* is stage scenery.

One of the rooms in the exhibition is devoted to the subject of housing. Mr. Mumford's comparison of Lower East Side Slums and Park Avenue Super-Slums is in no way exaggerated and the European Housing Developments of J.J.P. Oud, Ernst May, and Otto Haesler help to expose the barbaric conditions prevailing in America.

Book Review of *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922.*

(Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., and Philip Johnson. New York: W.W. Norton. 1932. \$5.)

Henry C. Churchill

(*Creative Art*, June 1932, pp. 489-90.)

One is inclined to give this book more serious consideration than it deserves, because it deals with a phase of architecture which is unquestionably important. A book of sound criticism and analysis of the movement headed by Le Corbusier, Gropius, Oud, and Van der Rohe is sorely needed. Unfortunately, *The International Style* is just another volume of propaganda; and considering that the authors are the self-appointed high-priests of the "Style," not very good propaganda.

Of Wright it is sadly said that "Instead of developing some one of the manners which he has initiated, he has begun again and again with a different material or different problem and arrived at quite a new manner." It does not occur to the authors apparently that different materials require quite different uses, or different problems different solutions. And while the essentially organic character of Wright's growth is thus misapprehended, Mr. Hood, who has never initiated anything, but has played along with the fashions, is commended for the very lack of architectural principle that is so roundly condemned in other American architects who give their clients what they want—even though this giving the client his wants is later referred to as an important function much neglected by European "functionalists." But Hood evidently has accepted the "discipline" and is now a monkey in good international standing.

The principles underlying the work of the major European (and some American) architects are exceedingly important and of great influence in shaping the future of the art. It would be well if architects and laymen were given a reasoned explanation and evaluation of them. But nothing except harm to architectural progress can come from such superficial and misleading dogma as is contained in the volume under discussion. The attempt to lift a current phase, interesting and valuable as Cubism was interesting and valuable, to the level of a great formed style, should be combatted by all who have the future of architecture at heart. What is vital in its ideas will survive and grow; but a great new architecture can never reach maturity by fixing it in the infantile mold of *The International Style*.

The photographs are most excellent.

(This Henry Churchill is not to be confused with Henry S. Churchill of Thompson & Churchill who designed the office building at 57th Street and Lexington Avenue that was exhibited in the MoMA 1932 show, (see *Skyline* January 1982 p. 30)—Ed.)

Crown of the City

The Seagram Building Reconsidered

Kurt W. Forster

Tarnished it may be, and aloof it always was; but even pawned, the Seagram Building would still remain New York City's crown jewel.¹ It is a dream come true: the sudden reality of a vision first formulated after World War I in Bruno Taut's *Stadtkrone* ("crown of the city"), which secularized the Gothic cathedral as a new symbol of collective identity, and was conceived in technical terms by Mies van der Rohe for his Friedrichstrasse towers in Berlin. If this vision could foresee tall shafts of glass towering over the grimy city, only structural and economic ingenuity would bring about their realization. There is more than irony to the gap between plans of the 1920s and buildings of the 1950s: the immaterial fabric of an Expressionist vision acquired the skeletal frame from the tall buildings of Mies' first American hometown—Chicago—and the utopian community took the shape of a business corporation. Taut's declaration—"the Gothic cathedral is the prelude to the [modern] architecture of glass"²—yielded to Mies' technical definition of modern buildings as structures of "skin and bones."³

Skyscraper Revealed

Mies prefaced the publication of his skyscraper projects of 1919–21 with the observation that "skyscrapers reveal their bold concept only during construction, when they overwhelm by the sight of their towering steel frame. This impression is completely destroyed by the addition of walls; the constructive idea which is the necessary basis for artistic creation is disfigured by a medley of meaningless and trivial forms."⁴ According to Mies, the new buildings should show precisely that which formerly had remained hidden within them. Since the introduction of the structural steel frame, the skeleton separated itself from the face and fill of the building. Mies wanted to avoid the simple side-by-side juxtaposition of traditional and novel building materials that could be seen everywhere in Berlin at the turn of the century, especially in the large department stores' new use of glass.⁵ However, the purpose of these commercial buildings was not to bare their architectural structure, but to exhibit consumer goods temptingly lit and close at hand. These new examples could still only accent the conflict between the modern materials of steel and glass and the traditional idea of an internally and externally multilayered, ornate architecture.

Moreover, it was less a question of the gradual exposure of their inner structure than of the inclusion of purely functional buildings among the higher categories of "Architecture." While the new reality of building techniques could be acknowledged in the construction of commercial buildings, it was adamantly rejected for the more exalted categories of institutional and residential ones. Walter Benjamin detected the psychological hurdles inherent in this process when he stated that "construction assumes the role of the subconscious."⁶ The power of the modernizing world—one might say its "libido"—sprang from industry, which provided not only raw materials but also ready models for the new.

When Mies entered the office of Peter Behrens in Berlin the principal projects for the AEG factories were being developed.⁷ In the Small Motor Factory, for which the plans were completed in the summer of 1910, Behrens achieved a significant refinement of the construction of the earlier transformer factory in carrying the glazing along the Voltastrasse through the full height of the facade, framing it only by unbroken steel mullions. In structural terms, the carrying framework had now been fully separated from the wall-envelope, allowing complete glazing of each bay. The condition later called "skin and bones architecture" by Mies had been realized; however, the structural framework of the building appeared on the exterior in the form of massive pillars as an expression of its monumentality.⁸

Prototypes

Gropius and Le Corbusier had direct knowledge of these developments and both carried them an important step further: Gropius let the windows of his Fagus Works come forward as a glass curtain-wall, yet he inclined the supports inward from the plane of the facade. Le Corbusier moved all the posts back from the facade plane and in 1915 conceived his Dom-ino model as an architecture of *pilotis* and slabs. After the gradual opening up of the facades by extensive glazing, the Dom-ino

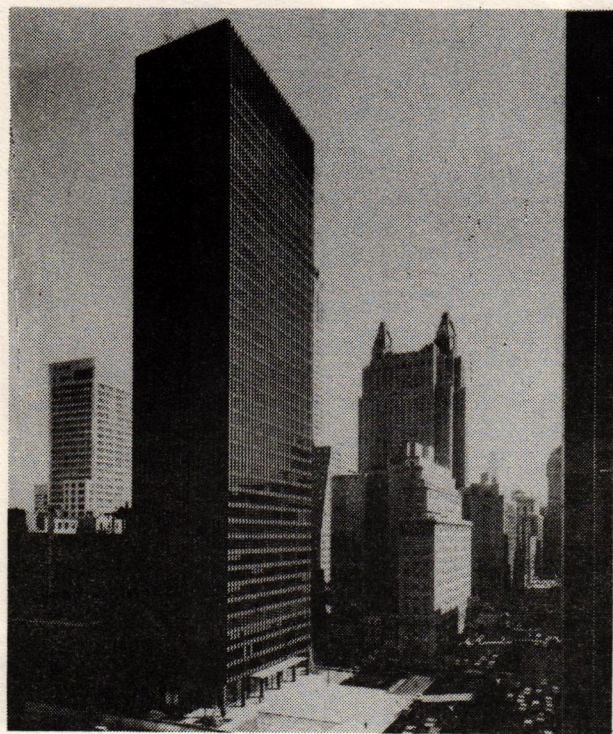
system now fulfilled the second structural condition that would enable Mies to develop his skyscraper plans. However, in the 1920s it was not Mies but Gropius, Dutch architects, and Le Corbusier who actually built the first complete glass facade or curtain-wall. In the Bauhaus book *Glass in Modern Architecture . . .* of 1929, Mies' projects stand at the beginning of the volume as *incunabula* of a new architecture—but only in the form of models. The images of completely glazed skyscrapers of 1919 and 1921 that rise above surrounding houses as crystalline towers especially make clear the "new constructive principle." Far beyond practical justification, the glass prisms reflect—thanks to their shape and placement—the light from all directions and betray how strongly Mies was connected to Taut's ideas. Five years after Taut's *Stadtkrone*,⁹ Mies published an essay in the *Querschnitt* entitled "Architecture and the Will of Our Times,"¹⁰ in which he called attention to the epochal roles of the Greek temple, Roman basilica, and medieval cathedral as models for a new architecture. At the same time, he conceded that the modern age is secular and therefore must be fulfilled in functional buildings of advanced construction.

The residential block and the office building, not the cathedral, belong to those tasks of our time. With his twin residential towers on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, designed in 1948 and completed in 1951, Mies erected the first canonic example of the skyscraper in the age of industrialized building. That this occurred in Chicago gave a meaning even to coincidence: the first tall buildings with a steel framework were raised here; and even before the turn of the century, the height of commercial buildings was expressed in the dominance of their facade pillars over the horizontal division of their stories.

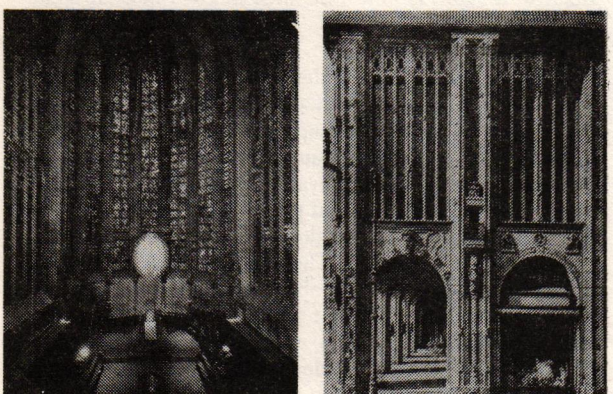
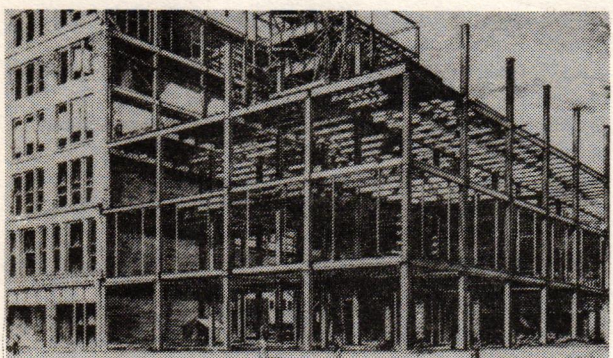
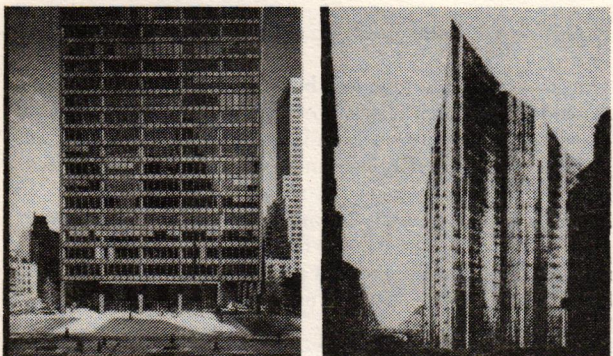
The Paradigm

Only at the age of 68 in 1954 did Mies take on his first office building and gain his first client from the ranks of Big Business. The Seagram Building project, completed in 1958, not only demanded a rethinking of modern skyscraper construction, but its location in central Manhattan also dictated the nature of its relationship to the city. Special circumstances and the ambition of the client permitted Mies to accent the building's urban aspect by elevating a platform over the sloping terrain. That the visitor first ascends three steps above the sidewalk before gaining the plaza and traverses it some 30 meters to reach the pillared porticus lends the building a truly palatial aspect. Symmetrically arranged pools and granite slabs over the whole plaza, from the sidewalk to the elevator doors inside, create a "privileged" area on a socle for the high building rather than putting it on the same level as the rest of the city. The classic materials of monumental architecture—granite and travertine—are complemented by bronzed metal and tinted glass. The select materials and the unusual care in their treatment represent once again what the architecture, both simple and refined, already implies.

With the Seagram Building, Mies achieved the classic solution to a problem that had concerned him since his years in Berlin: what shape must a building take which, like the skyscrapers on the Friedrichstrasse, rises freely on pillars and is composed of uniform stories? Obviously the supports gain a primary role, and the facade must be defined in its dual function as both transparent membrane and solid envelope of the building. From the openly protruding slabs of his first Berlin projects, Mies soon turned to the closed cubic block, in which pillars rise either through or directly behind the facade. At the Seagram Building, the pillars stand free only in the porticus; for the rest of the height of the facade they are enclosed by the window wall. At the corners the facade is not simply wrapped around the pillars—in the less rigorous fashion of the nearby Lever House—but appears as a thin plate. The outside edges of the corner pillars come forth and there—but *only* there and nowhere else—is the the building's structural framework disclosed.¹¹ The window wall was, as in the residential skyscrapers in

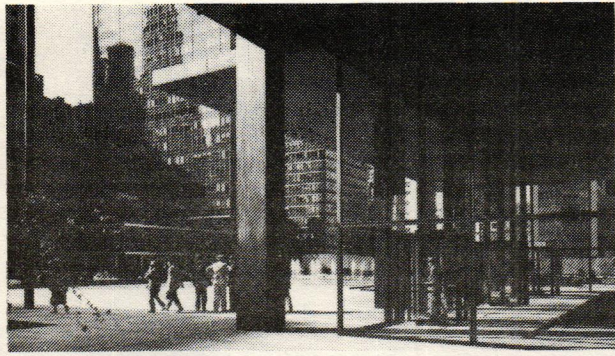


Top to bottom, left to right: Mies van der Rohe, Seagram Building, New York; 1958. (©Ezra Stoller/ESTO). Seagram Building (©Ezra Stoller/ESTO). Mies, Friedrichstrasse project, Berlin; 1921. William L. Jenney, Fair Store under construction, Chicago; 1890. Late Gothic Choir of the Cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle (birthplace of Mies); 14 c. (photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv) Alfred Messel, Wertheim Department Store, Berlin; 1896. Peter Behrens, AEG, Berlin; 1910.

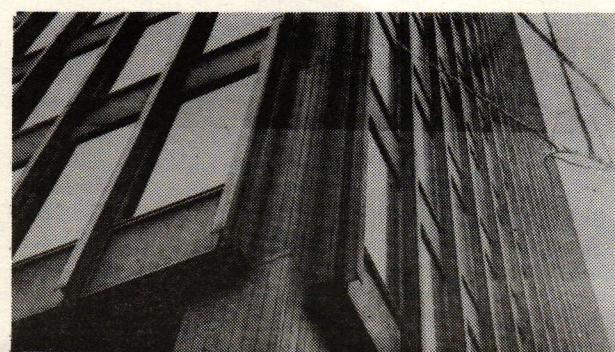
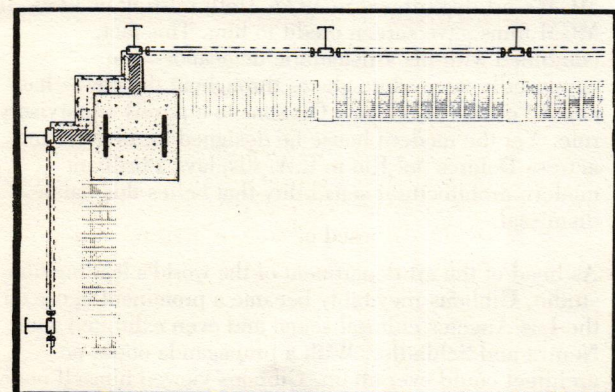
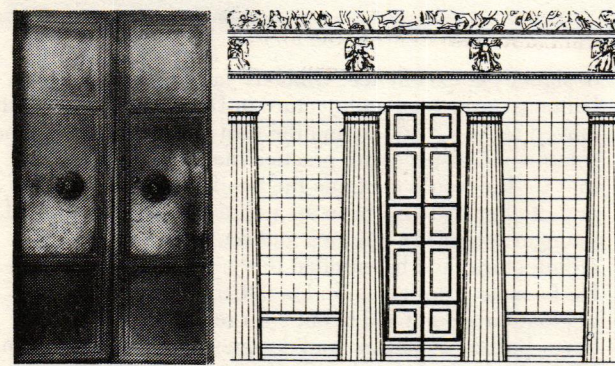
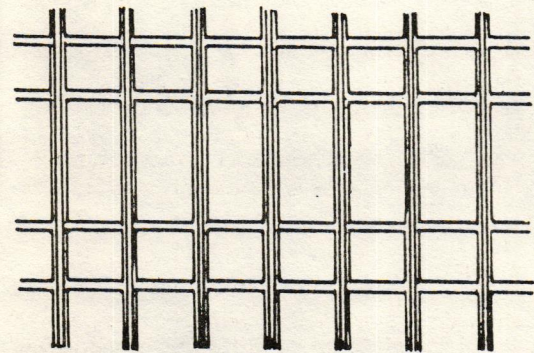


The Seagram Building is generally considered to be an exemplary masterpiece of the Modern Movement and a refinement of principles underlying the International Style. This analysis yields further insights.

This article is translated and rewritten from an article that appeared in the "Die Nutzlichen Kunste" catalogue (Berlin, 1981), which accompanied an exhibit on art, industry, and technology.



Top to bottom, left to right: Seagram Building lobby/plaza/porticus (©Ezra Stoller/ESTO). Window paneling diagram indicating "door leaf" motif. Carolingian bronze doors of the Chapel of St. Hubert at Aix-la-Chapelle; 9 c. Schinkel, elevation of the New Guardhouse, Berlin; 1816. Horizontal section through the corner post of the Seagram Building. Corner solution of the Seagram Building.



Chicago, assembled at the construction site from manufactured segments, which were divided into six equal window bands per bay with no consideration for the pillars behind it. The posts behind the windows appear as blurred stripes, shifting and refracted according to lighting and reflection. The glass skin of the building thereby reflects not only its surroundings but also its interior, achieving fully the ideal of transparency and layering.

I-Beam Tracery

For the facade skin Mies chose the I-beams already tried in Chicago. These beams run through the entire height of the glass facade. On a small scale they reiterate as autonomous elements the steel beams that are placed inside each pillar. In America Mies developed a more-than-formal use of I-beams: where they constitute the supporting framework, they had to be encased in a cement shaft because of fire ordinances. On the face, I-section profiles appear at a fine scale as a kind of tracery. "Skin and bones" are thereby represented once again in their identity and difference. The vertical profiles are determined entirely by their relation to the height of the building; yet in their function as window frames they also relate in scale to the height of individual stories and the thickness of the floors. Mies could not avoid this double relationship although it restated in technical terms the conflict between Gothic and classical modes as he knew them from Schinkel's work.

The alternation of opaque horizontal spandrel panels—hiding the floorslabs—and transparent bands for fenestration can also be read, light by light, as the traditional motif of the *door leaf*. The irrational proportions between the narrow and wide horizontal bands recall the classic problem of proportional balance, such as the Golden Mean, and with it, the problem of human proportions in general. Le Corbusier was not alone in relating the height of the story to the proportions of a fully grown human. The vertical division of the facade is additive in its purely arithmetic relation of $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 . . .$, but the horizontal subdivision follows a classic measure. Gothic tracery and classic framing interpenetrate in the facade of the Seagram Building to achieve a synthesis that had hardly ever been reached in the nineteenth century. In the office building on Park Avenue the connection between towering height and individual stories was conditioned in an eminently practical way: it is precisely the need for uniform office space in the center of town that both requires the height of the skyscraper and its additive internal division.

Gothic and Classical Synthesis

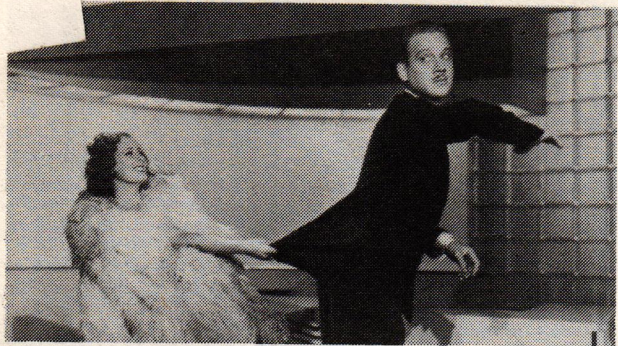
Since his days as a schoolboy at the Cathedral School in Aix-la-Chapelle, Mies had been familiar with a sterling example of late Gothic cathedral choirs in Germany. It is not surprising that the classic paneling of the Carolingian bronze door in the chapel of St. Hubert should apparently provide a model for the Seagram window panels. Stacked, and sharing a small panel between the lower and upper leaf, the classic motif of the paneled door had been prominently displayed in Schinkel's new Guardhouse, built in Berlin in 1816, a building Mies knew intimately, as he was invited to submit a project for its conversion into a memorial in 1930. The five centuries connecting the classic formula of the door leaf to its twentieth-century conjugation as a facade grid are foreshortened into the Miesian synthesis of Gothic height and classic balance. But the solution is anything but an historicizing or eclectic one. On the contrary, the systematic application of industrial building materials made possible both the extreme reduction of supports and the replacement of the wall by glass. The anonymity sought by Mies for his architecture represents what became possible—and necessary—only with modern planning and means.

With his standard solution for the office skyscraper Mies did not simply react to the industrialization of building—rather, one could maintain that he had deliberately furthered it—but he also sought to make use of those of its results that are relevant for the more distant future of architecture. Nevertheless, the Seagram Building is not a piece of architectural confection. It is a paradox: a building that simultaneously reduces itself completely to a type and yet remains monumentally unique. "Less is more"; and this "little" is unforgettable.

The significance of the Seagram Building cannot be separated from its urban site, whose singularity bears the stamp of Miesian ideas as much as the skyscraper itself. The Seagram works beautifully with McKim, Mead, & White's Racquet Club across the street—providing the Renaissance square the palazzo form never had, and responding to the Racquet Club's rather hackneyed grandeur with the true article—much more successfully than complacent contextualists would ever imagine.

If the complete glazing of buildings was originally intended to better illuminate the interior and to make its structure transparent, Mies also realized a complementary idea: the lighting of the Seagram Building was installed in such a way that at twilight it begins to shine.¹² As the unveiling of the building finally discloses its own emptiness, its nocturnal illumination lights up nothing but itself. The two pools reflect infinity in the shallowness of a wading pool; the office building, vacant at night, radiates its own emptiness. With involuntary logic the Seagram Building becomes the high industrial realization of the utopian "city crown." As a cathedral of commerce—in which the mere building materials acquire a bare monumentality—it is also a *Merzbau* of industry.¹³

1. The most important publications on Mies van der Rohe include: Philip C. Johnson, *Mies van der Rohe* (New York, 1947, and several reprints), this volume also contains significant texts by Mies in mostly clumsy translations; L.H. Hilberseimer, *M.v.d.R.* (Chicago, 1956); P. Blake, *The Master Builders* (New York, 1960); A. Drexler, *L.M.v.d.R.* (New York, 1960); W. Blaser, *M.v.d.R., The Art of Structure* (New York, 1965); Exhibition catalogue *M.v.d.R.*, ed. by A.J. Speyer and F. Koeper (Chicago, The Art Institute, 1968); W.H. Jordy devoted an entire chapter of his *American Buildings and Their Architects* (New York, 1972), pp. 251–77, to the Seagram Building; P. Carter, *M.v.d.R. at Work* (New York and Washington, 1974); W. Blaser, *After Mies . . .* (New York, 1977); further bibliographies in the above.
2. Bruno Taut, *Glashaus—Werkbund Ausstellung Cöln 1914* (Berlin, 1914). See also Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream—Expressionist Architecture and the History of the Crystal Metaphor," *Journal of the Soc. of Architectural Historians*, 40:1 (1981), pp. 20–43.
3. Mies, "Arbeitsbesen," *G*, 1 (1923).
4. Mies, in *Frühlicht*, reprinted in Ullstein Bauwelt Fundamente (Berlin, 1963), p. 213. This, and all subsequent translations are my own unless otherwise credited.
5. See Alfred Winer, "Das Warenhaus," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Werkbundes* (1913), p. 50, and especially the informative chapters on department stores and factory buildings in Julius Posener, *Berlin auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Architektur, Das Zeitalter Wilhelms II* (Munich, 1979).
6. Walter Benjamin, "Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century," trans. by E. Jephcott, *Reflections* (New York, 1979), ed. by Peter Demetz, p. 147. For a discussion of Benjamin's thoughts on architecture see: K.W. Forster, "Residues of a Dream World," *Architectural Design*, 51: 6/7 (1981), pp. 68–71.
7. See Tilmann Buddensieg and H. Rogge, *Industriekultur, Peter Behrens und die AEG, 1907–1914* (Berlin, 1979).
8. Later, the pillared front of Behrens' Small Motor Factory greatly impressed Philip Johnson, who adopted its facade—including the very color of its brick facing—with some modifications for his Kline Science Buildings at Yale.
9. Bruno Taut, *Die Stadtkrone* (Jena, 1919), p. 61.
10. Mies, "Baukunst und Zeitwille," *Der Querschnitt*, 4 (1924), p. 31f.
11. In an architecture of post and lintel, the "corner solution" is crucial and ought to be discussed in coherent fashion from Brunelleschi to Mies.
12. For the use of internal and external illumination in the service of ideological transfiguration of buildings, see C. Robinson and R. Haag Bletter, *Skyscraper Style* (New York, 1975), p. 58f.
13. Given the nature of Miesian architecture, it is perhaps ironic that Mies appreciated above all the paintings and collages of Paul Klee and Kurt Schwitters. Collages by Schwitters relieved the sparseness of his Chicago apartment. What *bricolage* (from the debris of the modern world) was to Schwitters' unruly imagination, industrial manufacture (of a synthetic new world) was to Miesian rigor.



The I.S. Goes Hollywood

Donald Albrecht



Dodsworth, Goldwyn Studios, 1936; sets: Richard Day (Kobal Collection)

The general conviction among architects that the Museum of Modern Art sold the International Style to the American public in 1932 places too much credit on the power and influence of (high) cultural institutions. By overlooking American "talkies," contemporary architects fail to see that by 1931 Hollywood, in its own inimitable way, had already introduced modernist designs by some of the architects who were to be featured at the MoMA exhibition. For example, in *Paid* (1930), MGM borrowed heavily from Otto Haesler's school in Celle, Germany; and in the musical comedy *Palmy Days* (1931), Goldwyn Studios adapted for its set America's first International Style skyscraper, the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society Building by Howe and Lescaze. *Palmy Days* also satirized the health-conscious fervor of the new architecture by having its protagonist, a progressive industrialist, insist that his employees exercise in the building's rooftop steel-and-glass gymnasium. Such anticipations of modern architectural trends were to characterize Hollywood designs for the next two decades.

These film designs were based on the perceptions of the International Style held by Hollywood studios attempting to keep in step with the expectations of their vast audience. Many film producers, from the same working-class and middle-class origins as the majority of their audience, previously had backgrounds in fashion: Sam Goldwyn was a glove salesman; Paramount's Adolph Zukor, a furrier; and David O. Selznick's father, himself also an early film producer, became a jeweler. As Robert Sklar notes in *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* (Random House, 1975), this background taught Hollywood's moguls the financial value of design packaging. Modern design gave their films "class"; it permeated every facet of Hollywood's output—from advertising layouts to moviehouse designs. And Hollywood's initial success at influencing fashion through its costuming was a major factor in movie studios' attempts to set architectural trends.

Spurred by an audience eager to see alternate lifestyles, the studios used the International Style as an emblem of

their audience's—and perhaps their own—upwardly mobile aspirations. The new architecture portrayed the milieu of the wealthy who were living outside the poverty of the Depression. After the 1929 Crash, for instance, many films recast the freewheeling flappers of the "Jazz Age" as secretaries, fashion models, or "kept" women. These female character types were always preyed upon by lecherous executives, typified by Adolph Menjou, in ultramodern offices and penthouses. More positive connotations of "modern" design, latent at that time, became prevalent by the mid-1930s. Well before the International Style reached its cinematic apotheosis in *The Fountainhead* (1949), modern architecture was aligned with the progressive businessman—like Walter Huston in *Dodsworth* (1936)—or free spirits such as Myrna Loy and William Powell in *The Thin Man* series (for example, in *After the Thin Man*, 1936) or Irene Dunne in *Theodora Goes Wild* (1936).

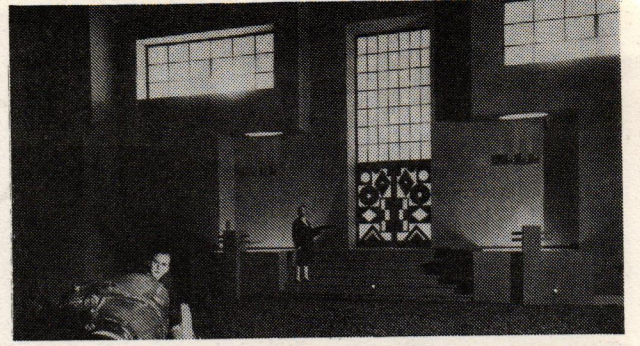
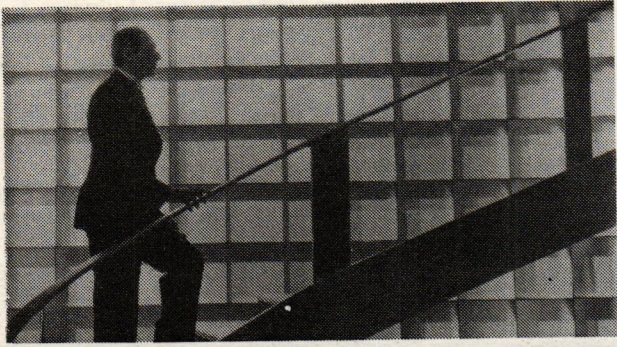
The studio system and its widespread filmic use of modern design beginning in the mid-1920s required staffs of full-time designers who had been nurtured from birth, as it were, within the studio's fortress walls. These designers were a blend of artist, craftsman, technician, and businessman assigned the task of creating the distinct "look" of MGM Modern versus RKO, Paramount, or Goldwyn Modern. Whereas established designers created most of Hollywood's Art Nouveau or Art Deco designs until the mid-1920s, the International Style came from movie designers who were often not architects and were never partisans of the Modern Movement. They usually absorbed the style's repertoire second-hand, through reproductions in books, magazines, and exhibitions; the Modern Movement's more iconoclastic or radical elements that were not communicable through these media were left behind. Certainly the uninhibited climate of Los Angeles in the 1920s shaped these designers' bold inventiveness, as it did the architecture of Richard Neutra and R.M. Schindler.

Cedric Gibbons, who supervised the art department at MGM for three decades, was the Hollywood studio

designer par excellence. Gibbons' father, Austin Patrick Gibbons, practiced architecture in Dublin until the family moved to New York around the turn of the century and he established a successful practice there. It was assumed that Cedric would continue the family business—his grandfather had also been an architect—but Cedric had a stronger interest in painting and sculpture than in architecture, and he enrolled in the Art Students League. He became a draftsman in his father's office after graduation around 1911, but soon resigned to work for Hugo Ballin, a muralist and designer for theater and film. Gibbons then relocated to California and rose to head of MGM's art department in 1924. Until retiring in 1956, all MGM films gave screen credit to him. This fact, combined with his aristocratic demeanor—he supposedly wore white gloves throughout the day—has caused critics to relegate Gibbons to a purely supervisory role. Yet the modern house he designed for himself and actress Dolores del Rio in L.A. displays a brilliant modern architectural sensibility that belies this harsh dismissal.

As head of the art department of the world's leading film studio, Gibbons inevitably became a prominent figure on the Los Angeles cultural scene and even exhibited with Neutra and Schindler. With a propaganda outlet no architect could ever attain, Gibbons viewed himself not as a slavish imitator of his more exalted brethren, but as an equal partner in the promulgation of modern architecture in the United States.

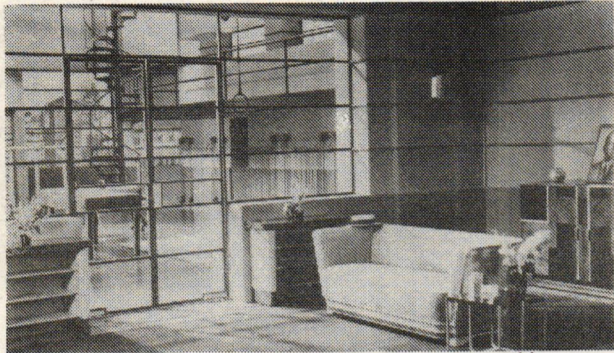
Under Gibbons, MGM's sets of the early 1930s combine the glass walls, flexible planning, and asymmetry of the International Style with the robust, cubistic massing of the de Stijl aesthetic. Interlocking solids and voids also suggest the movement of gears or pistons, a reference to the machine aesthetic of Art Deco that was scorned by the practitioners of the International Style. Unfortunately, within a few years Gibbons diluted this "ultra-modern" design with mannered reworkings of classical pediments and pilasters. More symmetrical planning returned, and the nontactile, machine-made materials were replaced by



How the Public Learned about Modern Architecture

Above, left to right: *Theodora Goes Wild*, Columbia, 1936; sets: Stephen Goosson. (MoMA/Film Stills Archive) *Easiest Way*, MGM, 1931; sets: Cedric Gibbons. (MoMA Film Stills Archive) *Artists and Models*, Paramount, 1937; sets: Hans Dreier. (Courtesy National Film Archives, London) *The Black Cat*, Universal, 1934; sets: Charles Hall. (National Film Archives, London) *What a Widow!*, Pathé Studios, 1930; sets: Paul Nelson. (Collection of Paul Nelson) *L'Inhumaine*, 1924; director: L'Herbier; villa design by Rob Mallet-Stevens. (Cinématique Française)

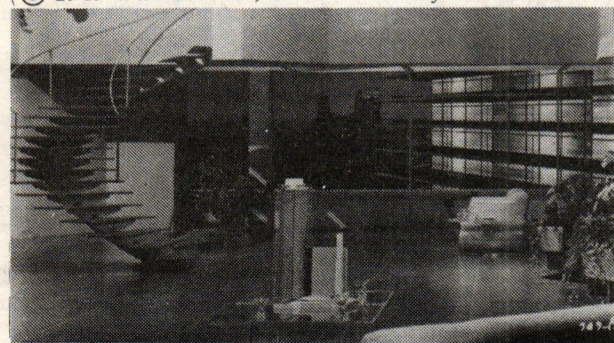
Palmy Days, Goldwyn, 1931; sets: R. Day and Willy Pogany. (Courtesy Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences)



After the Thin Man, MGM, 1936; sets: Cedric Gibbons. (Kobal Collection)



Fountainhead, Warner Bros., 1949; sets: Edward Carrere. (© 1949 Warner Bros., renewed 1976 by United Artists)



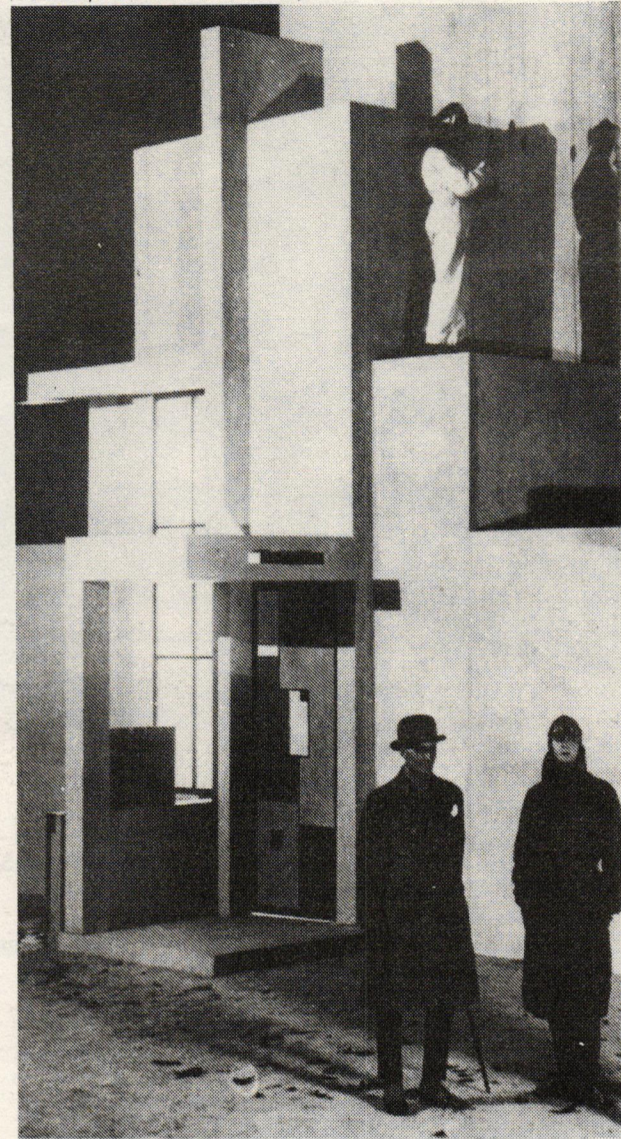
Television. All Rights Reserved)

wood and stone. Tubular furniture, banished to the kitchen, was replaced by upholstered "tuxedo" chairs and sofas in traditional fabrics. One can only speculate that these later sets by Gibbons were executed to respond to MGM's middle-class audience, for whom eclectic designs were meant to appear stylish, retaining a WASP-ish respectability.

In contrast to MGM under Gibbons, other Hollywood studios absorbed the styles of the German and Austrian designers flooding Hollywood in the 1920s and 1930s. These émigrés had as pervasive an influence on Hollywood's International Style design as Neutra, Gropius, Breuer, and Mies van der Rohe were to have on American architecture in the 1940s. The German influence was strongest at Paramount Studios under the direction of German-born architect Hans Dreier, who supervised a retinue of émigrés, including two Southern California modernists, Kem Weber and Jock Peters. In 1932 modern architecture gave a *grand luxe* luster to Lubitsch's scenes of upper-class Europeans in Paramount's *Trouble in Paradise* (1932)—an important element in the "Lubitsch touch."

By the late 1930s modern architecture, according to Drier, was appropriate for film versions of skyscrapers, broadcasting stations, steamships, factories, warehouses, and other structures of an industrial and impersonal nature, having few ties with the past. These designs have the unadorned surfaces, horizontality, and feeling of repose that are hallmarks of the International Style. Their most remarkable feature, however, is a diffused lighting that gives these Paramount sets an incomparable glow. This effect, created with the diaphanous, translucent "walls" of, say, *Artists and Models* (1937), is similar to that achieved in Pierre Chareau's *Maison de Verre* in Paris. Diffused lighting also characterizes the modern house in *The Black Cat* (1934), directed by German-born Edgar G. Ulmer. Ulmer, who deserves as much credit for

L'Inhumaine, 1924; laboratory by Fernand Léger. (MoMA/Film Stills Archives)



the film's design as its credited art director, Charles D. Hall, recently described the film as "very much out of my Bauhaus period." (From an interview with Peter Bogdanovich in 1970, published in *Film Culture* #58-60, 1974).

Whatever influence the movies exerted on modern architecture resulted largely from their having created an acceptance of the new architecture through its positive association with the great screen stars. For instance, Gibbons' interiors for Garbo were as closely associated with her glamorous persona as were her silver gowns created by Adrian, MGM's leading couturière. Some stars actively sought the aid of modern designers. Gloria Swanson, for instance, was no stranger to trend-setting or to modern design. A patron of Sonia Delaunay's clothing boutique in Paris, she was the Hollywood clotheshorse of the 1920s. To enhance her image of the sophisticated modern woman, she employed the architect Paul Nelson to design the sets for her film *What a Widow!* (1930). Nelson was an American-born Princeton graduate and alumnus of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Shunning the school's outmoded architectural principles, he advocated the modern art and architecture of his friend Le Corbusier and his mentor, Auguste Perret. (He was represented in the MoMA show by a design for a pharmacy in Paris.) When he arrived in California, Nelson attacked the film's design with the evangelical zeal of a true modernist convinced he was bringing modern architecture to the American screen. His designs for Swanson's Paris townhouse in *What a Widow!* incorporate the free-standing columns, flexible planning, roof terraces, and long horizontal windows of Le Corbusier's villas, in addition to displaying reproductions of the Cubist paintings of Braque and Picasso.

Hollywood Mode

Although Hollywood's designers didn't absorb the International Style until 1930, their subsequent adoption of its vocabulary is as masterful as that of the French film *L'Inhumaine* of 1924. Created under auspices more enlightened than even *What a Widow!*, *L'Inhumaine*, the

Le Vertige, 1926; sets: Rob Mallet-Stevens. (Cinématique Française)



cinema's first use of the International Style, was a conscious effort to promote modern French art and architecture two years before the "Exposition International des Arts Décoratifs" in Paris. It was conceived by its star, Gerorgette Leblanc, who thought that modern design would enhance the film's popularity. This intention accorded with the high-minded aspirations of its director, Marcel L'Herbier, who surpassed even Gibbons in *hauteur*. L'Herbier treated the screen as the painter would his canvas; he explored the cinema's formal possibilities through experimentation in modern decor and dazzling photographic techniques such as superimposition and soft-focus. *L'Inhumaine* represented a synthesis of L'Herbier's earlier efforts at modern decor in its assemblage of a renowned team of designers: the architect Robert Mallet-Stevens designed the exteriors; Fernand Léger, the laboratory interior; Alberto Cavalcanti and Claude Autant-Lara, the villa interiors, which have furniture by Pierre Chareau and Michel Dufet. Lalique, Puiforcat, and Jean Luce provided the decorative objects; Raymond Templier, the jewelry; and Paul Poiret, the gowns. Mallet-Stevens' designs for *L'Inhumaine* and those for *Le Vertige* (1926, another L'Herbier film) paraphrase his contemporary, cubist-inspired architecture. (He too was represented in the landmark MoMA show with a villa design in Hyères, France).

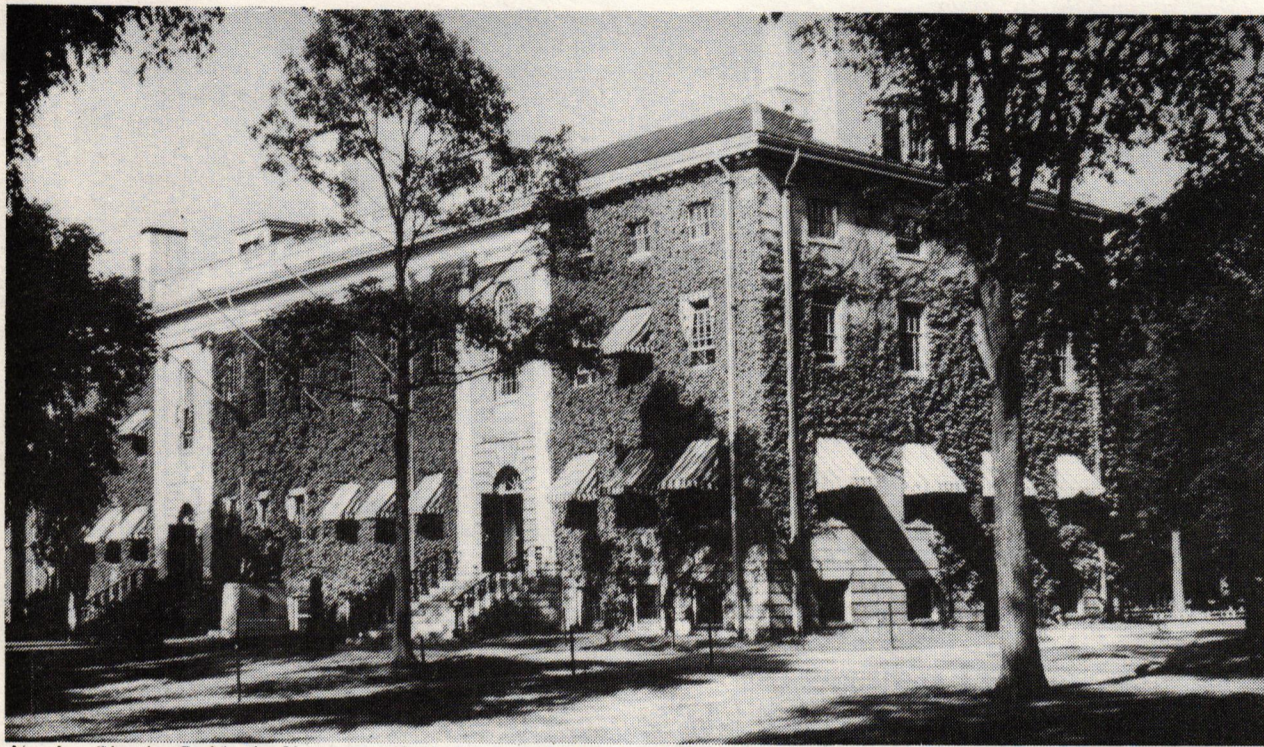
Contemporary modernists were members of the class audience for which *L'Inhumaine* was created. Scorning Hollywood and its mass audience, these modernists were blind to Hollywood's International Style designs, which are all the more remarkable considering that they were created under conditions vastly different from those of *L'Inhumaine*. Ironically, when *L'Inhumaine* had its American premiere under the aegis of The Film Associates, Inc., which included modernists like Sheldon Cheney and Friedrich Kiesler, it was promoted as "a moving picture holiday for those who are weary of Hollywood."

books

The Architecture of the United States, Volumes 1, 2, and 3. G.E. Kidder Smith in association with the Museum of Modern Art. Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, 1981. Hardcover, \$29.95, soft-cover, \$14.95. *Volume 1:* New England and the Mid-Atlantic States. Introduction by Albert Bush-Brown. 784 pages, 471 photographs, 16 maps. *Volume 2:* The South and Midwest. Introduction by Frederick D. Nichols and Frederick Koeper. 784 pages, 429 photographs, 17 maps. *Volume 3:* The Plains States and Far West. Intro. by David Gebhard. 848 pages, 492 photographs, 26 maps.

Going by Kidder Smith's Guides

John Montague Massengale



Not In: Charles Bulfinch. University Hall, Harvard University Cambridge, Mass.; 1813-1815 (photo: R.A.M. Stern)

The good American buildings that G.E. Kidder Smith doesn't like could fill a book. Unfortunately, the first published guide to the architecture of the United States includes only his personal and incomplete selections. Touted by its publisher as "an illustrated three-volume guide to American architecture of all regions and all periods [that] provides a panoramic view of architectural development in the United States," the guidebook should have been written by an historian instead of a modernist architect with a strong personal sense of the "right" and "wrong" principles of design. Smith's three volumes are no more a panorama of the architectural development of all periods than was Sigfried Giedion's polemical *Space, Time and Architecture*. At \$45.00 for the three paperbacks, or \$75.00 for the hardbound volumes, one deserves a more balanced survey.

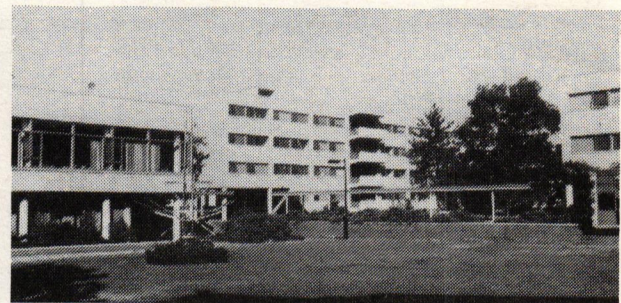
It does have major strengths, however. Smith drove 135,000 miles through all 50 states while preparing these books. He visited all 1386 buildings discussed, photographed each one, and researched them well. For every building listed, there is an informative appraisal written by Smith, as well as an entry supplying the name of the architect, date of completion, location, and visiting hours. Anyone going to a section of the country new to him/her can undoubtedly learn a lot from the guides.

On a recent trip to Vermont Smith's guide introduced me to two wonderful churches—the Congregationalist churches in Bennington (1804–05) and Middlebury (1806–09), both by a local architect named Lavius Fillmore—and told me how to get to Henry Hobson Richardson's (ex)library at the University of Vermont. Since I couldn't find any other architectural guide to Vermont, I would have missed all three without Smith's book. On the basis of Smith's overall selection for Vermont, however, I came away with the sense that the state had never progressed from its early Federal style architecture in the same way as its neighbor New Hampshire, with which I was more familiar. Doesn't Vermont have any ornate Federal buildings like the Pierce Mansion in Portsmouth, or the Portsmouth Athenaeum? Didn't the Greek Revival make it as far as Vermont? And what about all the Victorian buildings that we passed on the road?

When I turned to the chapter on New Hampshire, I found that it gave a similar impression of that state. Twenty-five entries were given for New Hampshire, but only two were for structures built between 1826 and 1967—one was for two very elementary covered bridges, the other for a simple nineteenth-century mill village too poor to be stylishly up-to-date. The high-style Federal buildings of Portsmouth were ignored, like the town's fine examples of Victorian Italianate, the U.S. Customs House and Post Office by Ammi Burnham Young (1857–60), and the City Hall (William Tucker, ca. 1858). The nearby Wentworth-by-the-Sea Hotel (1874–ca. 1881), the only

great Victorian summer hotel still standing on the New England coast north of Boston, was left out, as were its inland counterparts in Jackson—Wentworth Hall (1881–87), Gray's Inn (1885), and Eagle Mountain House (1915–16, 1928–29)—and near Mount Washington, the Mountain View House (1866–1922) and Mount Washington Hotel (1901–02). The omission of all the fine Richardson Romanesque churches, libraries, and train stations built by vacationing Bostonians was a serious oversight, as was the lack of any reference to the Gothic Revival and numerous Greek Revival buildings, or the later academic classicism. The only building Smith lists in Concord is the old Merrimack County Bank offices (1826), attributed, although not by Smith, to the local architect and contractor John Leach. The neoclassical State House, the oldest American state capitol in which the legislature meets in its original chambers (1816–19, 1864–66, 1910–11); Guy Lowell's neo-Grec New Hampshire Historical Society (1909–11); and the many Gothic Revival buildings at Saint Paul's School by Henry Vaughan, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Ralph Adams Cram, Russell Clipston Sturgis, and James Gamble Rogers are all outstanding examples of public buildings in Concord. But Smith probably objects to their eclecticism.

Smith's biases are less pronounced in his New York City selections, where a more balanced list includes some of Manhattan's great monuments, such as Trinity Church (Richard Upjohn, 1841–46); Grace Church (James Renwick, Jr., 1858); the Flatiron Building (D.H. Burnham, 1901–03); and Grand Central Station (Warren & Wetmore, Reed & Stem, 1903–13). However, twenty-one of Smith's fifty-two entries for New York were built between 1960 and 1980, and he seems remarkably kind to them, often giving summaries without any critical evaluation of what are, in effect, the architect's intentions. Smith calls I.M. Pei's University Plaza (1966) "one of the few civilized answers to urban living that one will encounter in New York," although many today would call the tower-in-the-park solution that Pei used antiurban. He goes on to say that the towers "rise above a neighborhood that could well stand more attention." Yet the neighborhood looked fine before Pei opened long vistas to small buildings that were never intended to be seen from a distance, leaving the row houses looking unwittingly denuded. The entry on Richard Meier's Bronx Developmental Center (1970–77) commends the appearance of the silver panels "perfected for airplanes and advanced engineering" without discussing whether or not the image is appropriate for a mental hospital intended to help patients move back into normal community life. Lincoln Center and the World of Birds Building at the Bronx Zoo are equally unusual choices for a limited list.



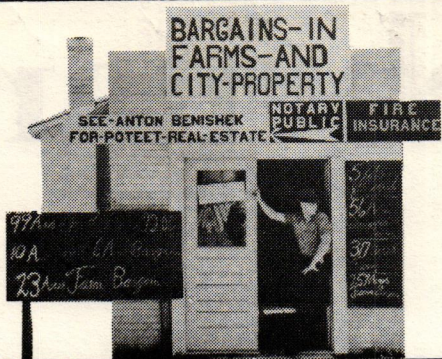
In: Walter Gropius (T.A.C.). Harvard Graduate Student Center; 1948 (photo: R.A.M. Stern)

Boston and Cambridge fare even worse. Over half the buildings chosen were built in the twenty years between 1960 and 1980, which hardly rank as the greatest decades of American architectural history. Only four buildings represent the MIT campus: one is Alvar Aalto's Baker House (1947–48), and two are by Eero Saarinen, built between 1953 and 1955: the MIT Chapel and Kresge Auditorium. Those three seem well chosen, but how can Smith include Eduardo Catalano's Stratton Student Center (1965) and not Welles Bosworth's Maclaurin Building (1913)? The Student Center is an aggressively scaleless monolith that makes the seemingly endless repetition of the main Maclaurin Building complex seem charming by comparison.

At Harvard University Smith praises the Victorian Gothic pile by Ware & Van Brunt that was finished in 1878, but it is the only Harvard building he includes earlier than Harvard Graduate Center by The Architects Collaborative (1949). The Graduate Center is historically interesting because it was designed primarily by Walter Gropius, but it is surpassed as a work of architecture by many Harvard buildings that Smith ignores. Smith particularly admires the exterior spaces of the Graduate Center. They have none of the charm of the Harvard Yard, where the earliest Harvard buildings stand, surrounded by halls built by Charles Bulfinch, Henry Hobson Richardson, Peabody & Stearns, McKim, Mead & White, and Horace Trumbauer. It is the Yard that gives Harvard its character, not the Graduate Center or the three complexes by Sert, Jackson & Gourley that Smith lists.

The guidebooks are weak on campuses in general. Smith doesn't mention any of the Old Campus buildings at Yale or the James Gamble Rogers neo-Gothic and neo-Colonial Colleges that form the heart of that university. He prefers instead modern buildings like the decidedly inferior Tuscan Primitive Stiles and Morse Colleges by Eero Saarinen (1958–1962). Few would argue with the choice of Mies van der Rohe's Illinois Institute of Technology campus in Chicago (1939–58), but the University of Illinois Chicago Circle campus by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (1965) is a truly depressing campus that never should have been included, particularly when the fine Gothic buildings by Henry Ives Cobb and Shepley, Ruten & Coolidge at the University of Chicago are not. The University of California at Berkeley is represented solely by its dramatic Art Museum (Mario J. Ciampi and Associates, 1968–70), although the campus, an eclectically designed combination of romantic, City Beautiful, and modern planning principles, is one of the most beautiful in the country.

The list could go on and on. All three volumes contain the same strengths and weaknesses. The younger states in the third book—*The Plains States and Far West*—naturally contain more nineteenth-century entries, yet the selection is still not balanced. Smith seemingly ignored David Gebhard's introduction to the volume, for he omits the majority of the works cited in the essay on the years from 1895 to 1941. Again the bias is for architecture from the years 1960 to 1980: almost half (42 percent) of the entries fall in those two decades. Would Smith argue that buildings were so much better in those twenty than in all preceding years? He seems to specialize in 1960s and 1970s civic centers and corporate headquarters, two building types that have had many more bad examples than good over the past twenty years (corporate headquarters often don't even fit Smith's criterion of being open to the public). *The Architecture of the United States* is the only guidebook we have to the entire country, but it does not do America justice.



Land in America: Its Value, Use and Control. Peter Wolf. Pantheon Books, New York, 1981. 592 pages, over 125 photographs, maps, and diagrams. \$20.00

Real Estate Office, Poteet, Texas; (photo 1939: Russell Lee)

New Arrivals

The Age of the Cathedrals: Art and Society, 980-1420. Georges Duby. Translated by Eleanor Levieux and Barbara Thompson. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, December 1981. 315 pages, 35 black-and-white photographs. \$22.50.

Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change. Alan Colquhoun. Introduction by Kenneth Frampton. An *Oppositions* book, published for the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies by the MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981. 224 pages, 170 illustrations. \$30.00

A Scientific Autobiography. Aldo Rossi. Afterword by Vincent Scully. Translated by Lawrence Venuti. An *Oppositions* book, published for the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies by the MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981. 128 pages, 36 illustrations. \$20.00.

Robert A.M. Stern 1965-1980: Towards a Modern Architecture After Modernism. Edited by Peter Arnell and Ted Bickford. Rizzoli International Publications, New York, 1982. 256 pages, 498 illustrations, 188 in color. Hardcover, \$45.00; soft-cover, \$29.95.

Wood and Garden. Gertrude Jekyll. Published by the Antique Collectors' Club, Suffolk, England, late 1981; reprint of the 1899 edition. 380 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations; \$29.50.

February Arrivals

After Modern Architecture. Paolo Portoghesi. Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., New York, February 1982. 168 pages, 226 illustrations, 30 in color. \$19.95, soft-cover.

Art Nouveau Style. Laurence Buffet-Challie. Rizzoli International Publications, New York, February 1982. 176 pages, 394 illustrations, 16 pages in color. \$19.95, soft-cover.

Raymond Hood. Introduction by Robert A.M. Stern. Rizzoli International Publications, New York, February 1982. 128 pages, 240 illustrations, 8 pages in color. \$18.50, soft-cover.

Rob Krier. Introduction by Kenneth Frampton; including an essay by Deborah Berke. Rizzoli International Publications, New York 1982. 120 pages, 200 illustrations, 8 pages in color. \$18.50, soft-cover.

Late Arrivals

Die Neubauggebiete Dokumente: Projekte. International Bauausstellung, Berlin 1984. First Projects: catalogue for 1981 exhibition. Preface by Paul Kleibues. Text in German and English. Published by Quadriga Verlag, Berlin, November 1981. Approx. 400 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations. \$25.00, soft-cover.

Rob Mallet-Stevens, Architect. Includes essay "The Demands of Architecture" by D. Deshoulières and H. Jeanneau. Published by Editions d'Architecture Moderne, Brussels, 1980. Text in English and French. Translated by Susan Day. 399 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations. \$32.95, soft-cover.

Yale School of Architecture Seminar Papers, Volume I. Coordinated by Cesar Pelli. Published by the Yale School of Architecture, New Haven, Conn., 1981. Contributions by Kenneth Frampton, Michael Graves, Charles Jencks, Robert A.M. Stern, Stanley Tigerman, Robert Venturi, and Richard Weinstein. 266 pages. \$20.00; soft-cover.

Looking at Land by Peter Wolf

Eleni Constantine

America's dreams and ideologies come in large part from her land. Historically, Americans have dreams of conquering the continent, pushing the frontier ever outward. Land was the essential basis of the Founders' Lockean notion of property; using the land confers the right to control its use and value.

These land-derived definitions of "conquering" and "owning" have shaped the course of American history. They lie at the root of some of our nation's greatest tragedies. The Civil War, the Dust Bowl, the burning of Watts can all be read as conflicts between those who bought the ideology of landed power and those who could not. These concepts pervade today's mundane reality as well. The suburban home, physical embodiment of the American dream of self-made independence and middle-class security, symbolically expresses field and frontier in its yards before and behind.

In *Land in America*, planner Peter Wolf contends that these powerful dreams and beliefs now blind the public eye to the real problems that they themselves have largely created. Specifically, Wolf argues that these outmoded myths have rendered the public sector and the average citizen unable to perceive and cope with the ways "big money" has found to manipulate the determination of land's use and value. Wise up, Wolf says.

Wolf feels that such eye-opening is particularly crucial today. His thesis runs as follows: For the first time in American history, public policy plays an equal, if not greater part in determining land value as do unregulated market forces. Yet the real effects of public regulatory action on the real estate market are largely unappreciated by the public sector and the public at large. Thus, regulations designed to control land's use and value end up producing unforeseen situations that often contravene the legislation's purpose. Developer John Portman funds a hotel complex that will demolish two landmark theaters with zoning bonuses enacted to preserve the Times Square theaters, simply by sticking a theater in on the third level of his project. Regulations and government decisions not directed visibly at land use or development have yet more distressing unforeseen consequences. Property taxes based on "best" use encourage precipitous profit-taking and discounting of future value. By thus allowing the use and value of land to be determined by haphazard government action and the profiteering motives of big money, Wolf argues, we are unpardonably squandering what may be our greatest national resource.

Land in America begins with the premise that the first step to a more informed public policy and process is a more informed public. So Wolf undertakes to explain to a lay audience the interaction of political, economic, and legal decisions affecting land's use and value.

The book opens with a tripartite survey of the economics, history, and law of American real estate. Specialists in these fields may find Wolf's big picture too broadly painted in parts, but these introductory overviews appear, initially, to offer a lucid, value-free, and comprehensive background for the nonspecialist reader.

Wolf establishes a rapport with the reader by assuming a shared perspective: that of the middle-class landowner, strongly oriented to individuals' rights and benefits, and strongly committed to unregulated enterprise. He views land-use regulation as government exercise of its "police power," which necessarily infringes on the "absolute" property rights of the individual landowner. And he repeatedly asserts that such "public regulation of private rights" will be the dominant factor in determining land values in the immediate future. Stripped of its caveats, this position presumes a "natural state," in which property rights are absolute, and land value is determined by supply and demand. Wolf sees public regulation as threatening this ideal state of nature.

In recent legal analysis, alternate views of land-use regulation have come to the fore, views that shed the positions of Locke and Adam Smith for one more cognizant of modern reality: Government's role in creating development rights and their value entitles—indeed, obligates—government to regulate that creation.

Wolf's chosen conservative viewpoint occasionally precludes cohesive analysis. For example, his view of land-use regulations as an attack by government on private property rights leads him to analyze the case banning development over landmarked Grand Central Station as establishing the policy that preservation may validate the exercise of "police power" with transferable development rights taken. In terms of legal theory, this makes no sense. A valid exercise of the police power is not a "taking" under the Fifth Amendment; therefore, no compensation is required (as Wolf himself points out elsewhere). One doesn't have to assume the Supreme Court forgot the terms of the Fifth Amendment to make sense of the Grand Central ruling. The doctrinal contradictions evaporate if one adopts the notion that development rights are a unique form of property largely created by, and thus regulatable by the government. (This view was clearly stated in the lower court's opinion and is referred to, and implicit in the Supreme Court holding.)

Wolf's views and concerns become more prominent and more problematic in the second part of the book, a series of essays, each exploring a specific issue of land-use and value—property taxes, zoning, historic preservation, environmental regulation, etc. In these essays Wolf reemphasizes his thesis as to the dominant, unintended, and adverse effects of public policy decisions on land value, and charts the past and future course of regulation in these areas in relation to middle-class concerns. For example, he sees state amendments cutting property taxes as the legitimate reaction of landowners to the reduction of their property rights by land-use regulations. He applauds "controlled growth regulation" as an "enlightened" move by the middle-class owners to boost their property values. Similarly, he approves of private land conservation as creating both tax shelters and wilderness recreation areas (for those who have the time and the money to enjoy them), and he upholds environmental regulation as raising the value of land in regulated areas.

History has already shown that government's use of its regulatory powers for the exclusive purpose of protecting property and profit interests unjustifiably exploits the disadvantaged for the benefit of the propertied. School systems and fire departments in Massachusetts crumble under "Prop 2." "Controlled growth" regulations have repeatedly been challenged in the courts as "exclusionary zoning," i.e., de facto discrimination; and the environment is seriously threatened by the profit-taking of the new Administration's EPA.

But it's hard to find any place in Wolf's calculus for those who do not own property. The inner-city renter, the migrant worker, the working-class tenant—all have an equal, and radically different, interest in the use and cost of real estate, as do those who already own a piece of the pie. Wolf ignores these interests. He devotes an essay to the policy issues of second homes, but gives no space to serious consideration of housing. In a long chapter on the special needs of farm-owners, he gives no thought to the needs of farm labor. In advocating the preservation of neighborhoods, he makes clear that he is talking about green "quiet places," not working-class districts near the workplace. In a chapter supporting conservation of open space, he dismisses in one sentence the need for open space near the city accessible by public transport.

The perspective Wolf presents here, however, seems to show to big business the most profitable manipulations of the present interaction of public regulations and private market forces. (Can he really be giving away all his tricks—or only those that don't pay off anymore?) Only his self-professed "reformer" stance makes Wolf's arguments at once seductive and dangerous. They are far from progressive. The "reform" Wolf advocates is designed to make the present system of getting and gaining in real estate run more profitably, but not more equitably.

Those who would rewrite the history of the selling of America or reform the rules by which this land is sold today might take as their text not the preachings of Wolf's book, but a small fact in the introduction: 3 percent of the population owns 90 percent of all privately owned land in America.

Subscribe!

One year—10 issues: \$20 (\$50 airmail overseas)
Two years—20 issues: \$35 (\$95 airmail overseas)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Zip: _____

Profession: _____

Subscriptions payable in advance, U.S. currency.
Send check or money order to: Rizzoli Communications
Inc., 712 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019
Customer service phone: (212) 397-3766

February, 1982

The Architectural League

457 Madison Avenue New York NY 10022

2

Tuesday, February 2nd at 6:30 P.M.
Review of Reviews, a monthly roundtable examining how architecture stories are covered in the press.
"St. Bart's: Victim of the Press?"
Moderator Michael Sorkin with Peter Capone, president of Edward Durrell Stone Associates.

16

Tuesday, February 16th at 6:30 P.M.
Jury of Juries: Progressive Architecture Design Awards
The first in a series of discussions examining the results of juries and competitions to see what they reveal about the state of architecture and future trends. Panel discussion with William Conklin, John Dixon, Ulrich Franzen, Frances Halsband and Jaquelin Robertson with Richard Oliver as moderator.

23

Tuesday, February 23 at 6:30 P.M.
Architectural Anagrams: The Symbolic Performance of the Skyscraper
A lecture by Diana Agrest

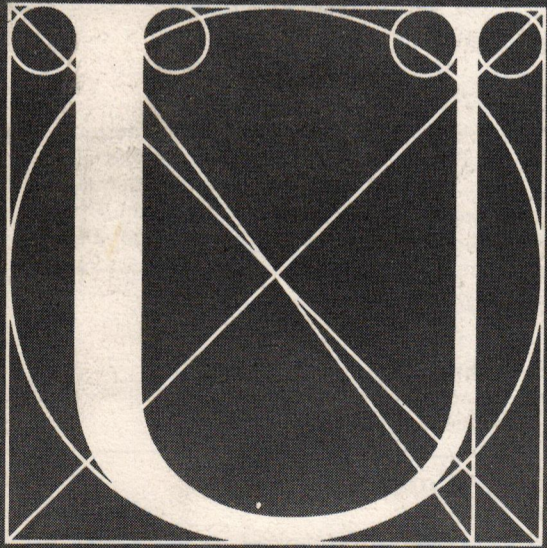
Washington's
Birthday Sale
Monday,
February 15

URBAN CENTER BOOKS

New York's only bookstore
concentrating on
the built-environment

Specializing in
Architecture, Design, Urban
Planning and Historic
Preservation

457 Madison Ave at 51st St
(212) 935-3595
Mon-Thurs 10-6:30
Fri 10-5; Sat 11-5



New Architecture Books from MIT

The Beaux-Arts and Nineteenth-Century French Architecture

edited by Robin Middleton

"This book goes beyond what is normally associated with the Ecole des Beaux-Arts to present what is possibly the best collection of essays on 19th-century architecture in France."—Henry A. Millon, Dean, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art
272 pp. 202 illus., 11 in color \$29.95

Experiments in Gothic Structure

by Robert Mark

Using computer models to apply the analytical techniques of structural mechanics to Gothic cathedrals, this book provides surprising answers to puzzles that have long confronted architectural historians. The author is a professor of architecture and civil engineering at Princeton and chairman of the Program of Architecture and Engineering.
232 pp. 78 illus., 4 in color \$15.00

The Art of Building in Yemen

by Fernando Varanda

"This thorough, carefully-wrought book is a comprehensive study of a complex, rich, and beautiful architectural style—so different from what most Americans or Westerners know."—Dr. Carl Brown, Director, Near Eastern Studies Program, Princeton University
296 pp. 800 illus., 16 pp. in color \$50.00

in paperback

London:

The Unique City
Revised Edition

by Steen Eiler Rasmussen

"Rarely has any planning work combined keen insight, comprehensive knowledge, good writing and sensitivity as effectively as does this classic. . . . Profusely illustrated with photographs, maps, and sketches, this is a book to be enjoyed not only on first reading but repeatedly." In print and updated since 1934.
512 pp. 32 illus. \$9.95

Buffalo Architecture: A Guide

by Reyner Banham, Charles Beveridge, Henry-Russell Hitchcock,
and the Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corporation

352 pp. 262 illus. \$9.95

28 Carleton Street
Cambridge MA 02142

THE MIT PRESS

The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies
8 West 40th Street, New York, New York 10018

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 520
BRIDGEPORT, CT.