

Looking at Loos: Essays by Aldo Rossi and others

Japan Diary Part I;
Architect's Guide to Hotels,
Restaurants, and Apartment
Houses; Plus reviews of
books, lectures, and
buildings.

Adolf Loos. Kärntner Bar, Vienna (1907); portrait by Gustav Jagerspacher. (photo: Gerlach, Vienna)



Skyline

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To the Editor:

Your "Insider's Guide to Architecture Schools" could be a valuable asset, if you are really concerned with comparisons of pedagogical intention at various schools. It can, alternatively, be very dangerous if the intentions are not clear and the insiders who "guide" the reviewer are not counterbalanced, or the research is incomplete.

Your "Guide" to Columbia University G.S.A.P. was in general correct but in specific full of inaccuracies and ultimately revealed the intrigues and personalities but not the pedagogical experiments. It is unfortunate, for instance, that the first-year studio, which was of prime concern to Dean Polshek when he began in 1972 and was erroneously called Bauhaus "Spots and Pots" in your "Guide," escaped any real discussion in the centennial book or in your January issue. Eight years ago Klaus Herdeg initiated a program of very carefully sequenced studio problems and theory courses, which most graduates and students would acknowledge as being of profound importance to Columbia in the '70s. I have enthusiastically taught this course since 1973 and have in recent years directed a transformed version of it. I feel it struggles with critical notions of "teaching," and not "demonstrating" architecture. This course, along with Kenneth Frampton's, Richard Plunz's, Steven Peterson's, Max Bond's, et al.'s teaching, has made a new school. A review of these courses and intentions might have made a more useful "guide" to Columbia for those who seriously want to know how it compares to other schools.

Sincerely yours,

Jon Michael Schwarting

Apologies . . . to William Voelke for misspelling his name in the March issue (page 7) . . . the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency which has only 11.2 acres not 11.2 billion as slipped into the article by Joseph Giovannini in March (page 4) . . . and to Kallmann, McKinnell & Knowles, the firm that designed the Boston City Hall, since we unintentionally attributed the building to the subsequent firm of Kallmann, McKinnell & Wood (March, page 12).

Also to Sarah Krulwich of *The New York Times* who took the photo of Ada Louise Huxtable that graced our March cover . . . and to Jeff Finkel who should receive credit for the photo of Robert Stern, Gianfranco Monacelli, and Ulrich Franzen—the mystery men in the corner of the March Notes & Comments).

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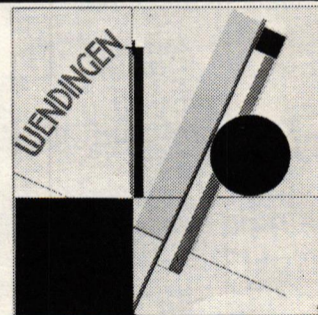
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Positions

On 22 East 71st Street

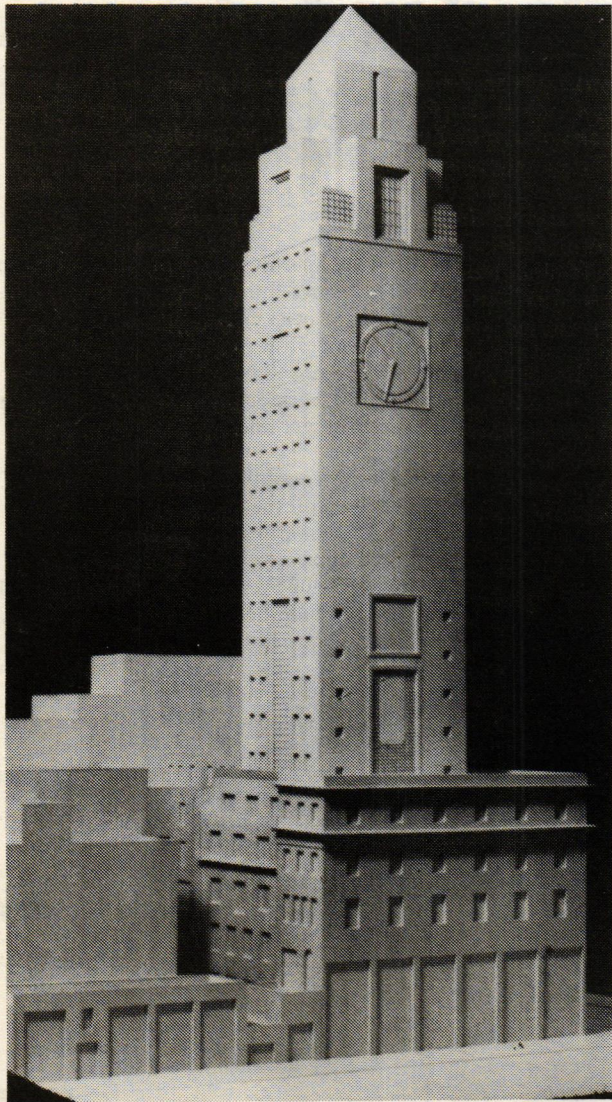
Aldo Rossi

As a rule I try not to get involved in polemics or take part in disputes of which, as an outsider, I cannot know the true nature, but the issues surrounding the tower by Mario Gandelsonas and Diana Agrest at 22 East 71st Street [*Skyline*, December, 1981] compel me to write. The proposal of this tower—or rather, the impossibility of building this tower—transcends personal and parochial questions and becomes, in fact, more like an “incident”—or, better, *une affaire*—that concerns not only modern architecture, but also the future of our cities.

I say “our” because New York—like Paris, Rome, Berlin, Venice, and many others—is an integral part of the culture of modern man. The repositories of both Man’s history and his future are affected by general decisions. How can it be possible to immobilize the historic center of New York when it has been impossible to do so in smaller European cities? Furthermore, what is the sense of having a museum-city that has lost the significance of its monuments? This loss of meaning becomes particularly apparent when confronted by an excellent project—a tower whose main virtue is that it interprets the history of the city. I feel that no more need be said about the form of the project, since my interest in and respect for the work of Agrest and Gandelsonas is well known.

However, in the decision of the Landmarks Preservation Commission—which I hope will be revised—there is a more general implication that pertains to our role as architects: What is the value of planning, of teaching or studying at universities, of writing books on the architecture of cities—as I have done—if this cannot be reflected in the cities we live in? In Europe this dichotomy between theory and practice has been the cause of many disasters. Only now, maybe too late, are we trying to do something about it. Today we are all aware that the “new” of the modernists and the “museum” of the conservatives are equally negative; we are looking for a culture of cities that can express itself through alternative projects.

I am familiar with American schools and I know how seriously both professors and students confront the problems of architecture. The design of this tower has its origins in this atmosphere of study and research. Whoever runs the cities must be accountable to these values and these results and allow for the realization of an authentic image of our culture.



Agrest and Gandelsonas. Project for 22 East 71st Street, New York; 1981. Model showing Madison Avenue elevation.

On the Portman Hotel

Roberta Gratz



Christopher Reeve at the rally to save the Morosco and Helen Hayes theaters. Behind him (left to right): Lauren Bacall, Jason Robards, José Quintero, Elizabeth Ashley, Ann Meara, Jerry Orbach, and Joseph Papp (photo: Martha Swope)

A sad drama is drawing to a close. But a tragedy underlies this drama that goes beyond the possible loss of two landmarks, two treasures of the American stage. The tragedy is that it never had to come to this: We can have a new hotel that is supposed to provide 2000 new jobs and a new environment for Broadway; we can also have two landmark theaters. Moreover, we could have had this winning combination at any moment during the past four years.

When John Portman unveiled his plan for this hotel for the first time in 1973, the city was in the deepest of trouble: only nine theaters were lit; doomsayers were forecasting the death of live theater; the real estate market was at the end of a boom and at the beginning of a bust; the city was only two years away from bankruptcy; urban designers thought only of new construction; and preserving landmarks was still an idea advanced by the passionate few. John Portman was the up-and-coming Boy Wonder of the architectural profession. He had invented a new design formula: splashy hotels with dramatic interiors; these were instant tourist attractions that created inside what thriving cities once had outside, and that dazzled the country.

But times have changed. Things are now quite different from the way they were when Portman first came to New York City in 1973; different even from the time he returned in 1978: the economy has undergone a transformation; Times Square real estate is hot; the redevelopment of 42nd Street is at hand; restored landmarks have proven their economic viability; and more people have been attending the theater and there now are more shows on Broadway than at any time since the 1920s. Recognition of the value of old theaters is nationwide; throughout the country, old theaters are being restored to their original splendor. Creative architects have learned the craft of incorporating the old and the new. And Portman projects have failed to accomplish what they promised for the cities in which they now stand: they don’t revitalize, they devitalize, they dehumanize, they isolate, they destroy. As if Detroit doesn’t have enough problems, according to a recent report in the press, Renaissance Center is \$100 million in the red after only four years.

It is true that times have really changed on many fronts, but these changes are visible—sad as it is—everywhere except in this project. Don’t forget that the Portman plan of 1973 died in 1975. During the city’s fiscal crisis, Portman withdrew his plan, which was then a completely privately financed project. In 1978 the Koch Administration went back to Portman and asked him to revive his project. This time the city offered Portman lucrative subsidies in the form of tax abatements and zoning bonuses, as well as offering to apply for a federal Urban Development Action Grant of \$21.5 million, the largest federal grant of its kind in the country. From there on in, the city kept giving to Portman.

“Implicit in the beginning was our willingness to accept demolition of the Helen Hayes and Morosco,” Kenneth Halpern, the city official in charge of the project stated two and a half years ago. “We were looking to do whatever was necessary to get the hotel built,” Halpern said. This statement was actually a terrible confession, although Halpern presented it as if it were a boast. Meanwhile, instead of demanding that Portman save the theaters, the city continued to give away more and more. Portman and the city could have had the best of both worlds; but the city gave Portman the sidewalk to encroach upon, and the Broadway Mall, which was clearly an additional bonanza for Portman. Furthermore, when people realized that the Mall would be a great new hangout for prostitutes and drug pushers, the city said it would consider putting a new police outpost on the site.

Many government officials have long recognized the folly of this project as it is now designed. But only in private will they admit that if this project were to begin today, it would happen the right way. Their holding onto the first deposition is all the more outrageous and unacceptable. Change must effect government as it does each of our lives. Bureaucratic intractability is driving the participants in this battle mad. The official bureaucratic excuse is that a commitment was made to a developer in 1973. That commitment, they say, cannot be changed. What about government’s commitment to the public to do the right thing? Shouldn’t the people of New York have more to say about what happens in their city than an architect/developer from Atlanta? It is not as if Portman had never made changes in his design: he had moved the theater and cafe. Therefore, when he responded to the proposal that he build over the Morosco and the Helen Hayes with the argument that his design could allow no changes, it was hard to take.

The public interest in seeing that this project is done right has been demonstrated over and over again in the past several years, although it has not been reported very well in the press. Lenore Loveman and Sandy Lundwald from Actors Equity Committee to Save the Theaters; Joan Davidson from the Save Our Broadway Committee; Barbara Handman and Fred Beckhardt from the local community board—all have been struggling to get the message across to City Hall, UDC, Albany, and the White House.

In the face of all of this, the city has remained, intractable, anaesthetized by its own irrational fixation. City leaders have chosen to listen to only a small element of the theater community, an element with a direct line to City Hall, and which is more interested in real estate than in good theater. That is a terrible mistake, as can be clearly seen. Nevertheless, City Hall still refuses to listen to the real theater community. The worst tragedy is that it never should have come to this.

New York City Report

Peter Freiberg

Studs Terkel and Jane Jacobs Together



Studs Terkel (photo: Joe Pineiro)

Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* is one of those books that can profitably be read over and over: first published twenty years ago, it has not lost its relevance to what is happening in New York and other cities today. Although Jacobs moved to Toronto in 1967, she has kept abreast of events here, and it was evidence of the wide interest her views command that several hundred students and others packed an Avery Hall auditorium recently when she participated in a discussion on "The City and Politics" at Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning.

The discussion, moderated by Victor Navasky, editor of *The Nation*, also featured Studs Terkel, the Chicago-based writer and radio host. Most of the questions, however, were directed at Jacobs, whose views—on the importance of neighborhoods and the need to "plan small"—have made her popular among students. Her message at Columbia was that the fight against large-scale projects that destroy peoples' lives as well as the street life, humane architecture, and vitality of cities continues to be difficult. At the same time, she noted that grassroots organizations have often defeated seemingly invincible economic and political interests; Jacobs drew a laugh from the audience when she said, "Whatever you see that's left in New York, it managed to elude Robert Moses. Believe me, an awful lot of the places that are left in New York have great fights behind them."



Jane Jacobs (photo: Joe Pineiro)

Jacobs expressed amazement that mayors of New York still espouse huge projects like the Cross-Bronx Expressway, the World Trade Center, "or every urban renewal project that ever was"—all of which involve "a lot of public money or a lot of eminent domain or a lot of suffering on the part of somebody. The more controversial they are, the more the reason is given that it is essential for the city's economy. You see where the city's economy is now. How can the mayors be so gullible? They still are. We have the Portman Hotel and we have Westway, with the same phony cost-benefit reasons."

Jacobs said the same cost-benefit arguments were being used by St. Bartholomew's Church to justify an office tower replacing its community house (see *Skyline*, November 1981, p. 6; December, p. 3; February 1982, p. 4; and March 1982, p. 5). "There are ways to raise money for the poor other than ruining irreplaceable things like that. My gut feeling is very much on the side of finding some other way that the congregation can raise money for the poor. If they put their mind to it, I bet they could."

Asked how to fight projects like St. Bart's, Jacobs said, "There are two good principles. Have a good time fighting it and do unexpected things. Don't let the other side lay the framework for what the argument is, or what the fight is. Surprise the enemy."

Air Rights Debate

A task force composed of city officials, community boards, and good-government groups is now deliberating on an issue that could have far-reaching implications for the city, especially for Manhattan. The issue is whether the city should sell air rights over its properties, and if so, what restrictions should be placed on such sales and what procedures should be followed.

The task force was set up last year after the Koch Administration proposed selling air rights over a firehouse at Eighth Avenue and 48th Street; the buyer, presumably, would then have been able to build over the firehouse itself or on an adjoining parcel. But when the proposal came before the Board of Estimate, a storm of protest arose: opponents said the action would set a precedent for the sale of air rights over other city properties, despite the fact that there was no policy establishing why such sales would be good for the city. Although the City Planning Commission, bowing to City Hall's wishes, had previously approved the sale, the Board of Estimate rejected it and ordered the Commission to devise a comprehensive policy.

The task force was then formed, and the J.M. Kaplan Fund, responding to the request of five Manhattan community boards, sponsored an examination of the issues involved by the Community Assistance Program of Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. The Harvard report did not make policy recommendations, but simply discussed the issues and raised questions. The report warned of "an essential conflict of interest. . . . When the city has the power to create or change densities, and at the same time convey air rights (or

density) for sale, there can truly arise a situation in which there is 'zoning for sale.'" The report also noted that there would be a tendency for sales to occur in the most attractive central business district locations—the very areas in which overbuilding is already creating problems.

The Koch Administration is clearly anxious to sell air rights over some structures in an effort to generate revenue. But selling air rights over city properties is fraught with danger. The zoning code, for example, was also devised with the idea that the city would never be built up to its maximum potential, in part because of the presence of low-rise city buildings; now, the city is considering changing the rules. While parks, streets, and sidewalks would currently be exempted from air rights sales, would they come up for consideration at a future time? If the city does decide on air rights sales, it should never simply sell the rights to the highest bidder—at the very least, it should specify what kind of development would be in the public interest. First, however, the city must demonstrate that there is a public interest—aside from temporary income-generation—in making any air rights sales.

Penn Yards Embattled

While virtually everyone agrees that much of Manhattan's waterfront is wasted, there is sharp disagreement over how it should be utilized. In recent years, two major proposals—Westway and the South Street Seaport development—have provoked major controversy. Now, another battle is emerging over plans to build a \$1-billion residential, commercial, and recreational complex along a 13-block stretch of the Hudson River between 59th and 72nd Streets in the Penn Central rail yards (see *Skyline*, October 1981, p. 3). This city-within-a-city would be the largest unsubsidized housing development ever built in New York.

On one side are the developers, Lincoln West Associates, a partnership of Observation Realty Corporation and the family of Abraham Hirschfeld, a builder and sometime politician. The developers have hired a politically influential team to help push the project through, including lawyer John Zuccotti, a former deputy mayor and city Planning Commission chairman under Mayor Beame; Judah Gribetz, a former top legal aide to Beame and Governor Carey; and James Capalino, a longtime advisor to Mayor Koch and until recently a city commissioner.

On the other side is the West Side's Community Board 7, one of the most respected local planning bodies in the city. In an extensive analysis issued after eight public hearings, Board 7 urged that the project as currently proposed be turned down. While the board, like many West Siders, is not necessarily opposed to some kind of housing development on the Penn yards, it argues that Lincoln West's scale and density are too great, that local services would be overwhelmed by the influx of an estimated 10,000 new residents, and that significant planning questions must be answered before any new development is approved.

The developers, who have retained The Gruzen Partnership and Rafael Vinoly Architects to prepare a master plan, say that Lincoln West would include 4850 apartments, mostly condominiums or co-ops, in seven high-rise buildings and several low- and mid-rise structures; a

Tudor City Threatened

The fate of the Tudor City apartment complex's two private parks, which form an attractive little oasis on the East Side, is still undecided. Efforts to swap city property with Harry Helmsley and the co-owners of the development, in exchange for their promise not to build on the parks, are stalemated. A new effort to work out a deal between the city and Helmsley is expected to get underway soon.

When Helmsley raised the possibility a few years ago of building luxury apartments on the park sites, Tudor City tenants and other East Siders protested vigorously. Last year the Koch Administration proposed exchanging a city playground on the east side of First Avenue at 42nd Street for the parks, which would then become city property. Mayor Koch dropped the plan, however, when local residents objected to losing a playground, and developer Donald Trump, a Helmsley rival, argued that the development value of the playground site was worth more than the parks. Subsequently the city discussed swapping property it owns at 51st Street and First Avenue, but again gave up the idea when it decided more money could be obtained by selling the property at auction.

Now, Helmsley is again threatening to build on the parks; he says he can do so "as of right," but tenants have won a temporary restraining order against him. While some believe Helmsley is bluffing, no one is sure. Community Board 6 has formed a committee to try to bring the city and Helmsley together, and other alternatives are being bandied about for swapping—including a sitting area on the west side of First Avenue between 41st and 42nd Streets.

The new zoning regulations for Midtown (*Skyline*, October 1981, pp. 5-7) were passed by the New York City Planning Commission March 16. The next hurdle is the Board of Estimate. More details next month.

500-room highrise hotel; an office building; a half-million s.f. of retail space; and 43 acres of open space, including a 20-acre park and waterfront promenade. According to the developers, Lincoln West would not only give the public access to the waterfront, but would generate jobs, at least \$45 million in new taxes annually, and another \$63.4 million in amenities that the builders promise they would provide to the community, including a new entrance to the IRT subway station at Broadway and 72nd Street.

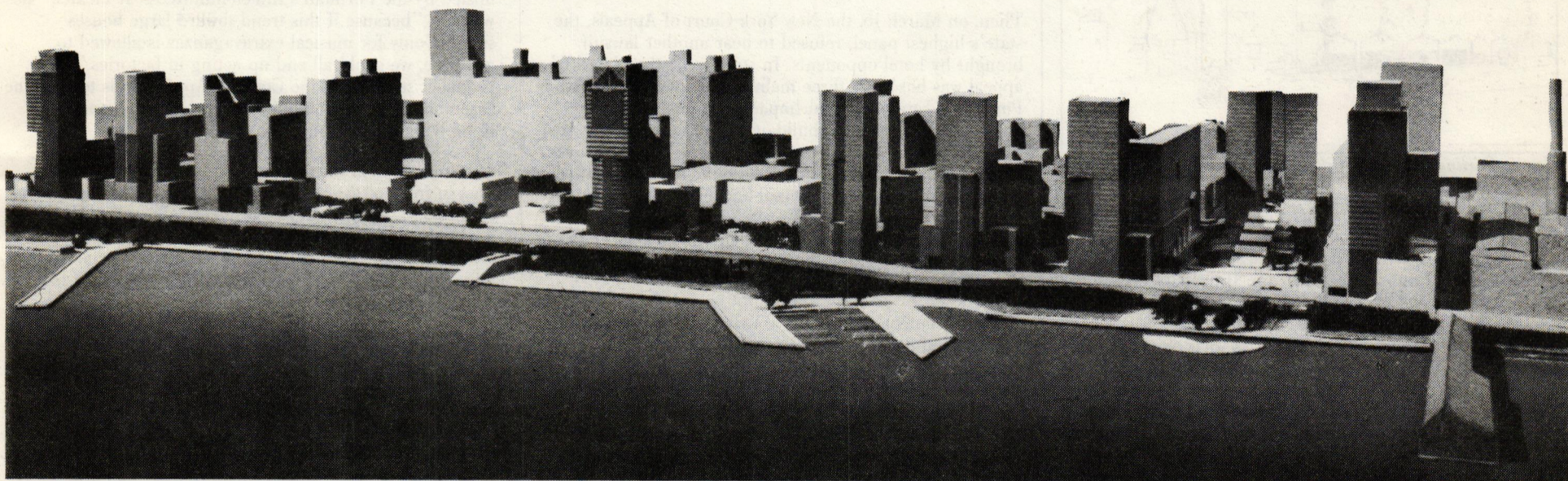
Board 7 recommended that the number of apartments be reduced to under 4000 and that the hotel be eliminated. Expressing fears over the project's impact on traffic congestion, mass transit, and the entire gamut of already overburdened city services, the board said the amenities promised by the developers were insufficient. Another often-voiced community concern is that as a residential

enclave for the wealthy, Lincoln West would cause "indirect displacement" of residents and businesses as it drives up property values in the surrounding areas.

West Side Councilwoman Ruth Messinger and other critics charge that the Koch Administration abdicated its role in planning for the Penn yards site. The city has made no decision on whether to rezone an adjoining 8-acre parcel owned by real estate tycoon Harry Helmsley; quite rightly, Board 7 says this parcel and the yards site should be planned jointly to avoid a second large-scale development. In addition, City Hall delayed making a decision on whether it wants a new modern rail terminal built on the Penn yards, a facility that many small manufacturers, unions, and local officials believe is necessary to prevent the loss of more manufacturing jobs because of high trucking costs in the city.

The developers say they may be able to scale down the project, but they're not at all sure whether they could accommodate a rail freight facility underneath. Unless the developers withdraw the proposal, it now goes to the City Planning Commission for approval, and ultimately to the Board of Estimate. Some believe the Koch Administration may seek to ram the project through. This would be bad for the West Side and for the entire city. Planning Commission Vice Chairman Martin Gallant says Board 7's report is "the best I have ever seen a community board do." Its recommendations deserve to be heeded. The coming weeks will tell us whether the Planning Commission will measure up to the standards set by the local planning board.

Rafael Vinoly Architects and The Gruzen Partnership.
Proposal for development on Penn Yards site as seen from the Hudson River. (photo: Louis Checkman)



Hope in the West Fifties



West 54th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, north side (photo: Landmarks Preservation Commission)

Within the next few weeks, the Board of Estimate is expected to approve new zoning for midtown. Despite numerous flaws in the plan (see *Skyline*, October 1981, p. 5), one feature has drawn virtually unanimous praise—down-zoning of a newly established "preservation area" on the 53rd-to-56th Street midblocks between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, the object being to preserve the low scale of landmark-quality buildings, townhouses, mid-rise apartments and hotels, shops and restaurants. There is, however, a catch: if a developer can "substantially complete" his foundation before the new zoning takes effect, he can build under the current regulations—and that is the crux of a battle now taking place on West 54th and 55th Streets. Lewfeld Associates, a Long Island firm, is seeking to demolish two small townhouses at 20-22 West 55th Street, as well as the rear of two landmarked buildings at 13-15 West 54th Street, to put up a 32-story tower. With good reason, the Committee to Preserve West 54th and 55th Streets calls the plan "monstrous": not only would the tower loom over the landmark buildings on 54th Street, but its entrance, set back in a 40-foot open plaza on 55th Street, would sharply break the street line on what is now a delightfully diverse block.

Because of the proposed tower's impact on landmark buildings, a hearing was held recently by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Lewfeld's lawyer, former city Planning Commission chairman Donald Elliott, was given permission to come back with a revised plan for the building, whose architect is Edward Durell Stone Associates. Even if the building manages to win a Certificate of Appropriateness from the landmarks agency,

it seems unlikely that Lewfeld can get state environmental quality permits—required because buildings on both West 54th and 55th Streets have been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places—before the midtown zoning is approved.

But Lewfeld has one other chance: the Board of Estimate could put a "grandfather clause" in the midtown zoning, allowing builders to proceed even without "substantially complete" foundations. Hopefully, the Board will reject the idea. As Joyce Schwartz, a West 54th Street activist put it, "This is a building of no character that is out of character in this community."

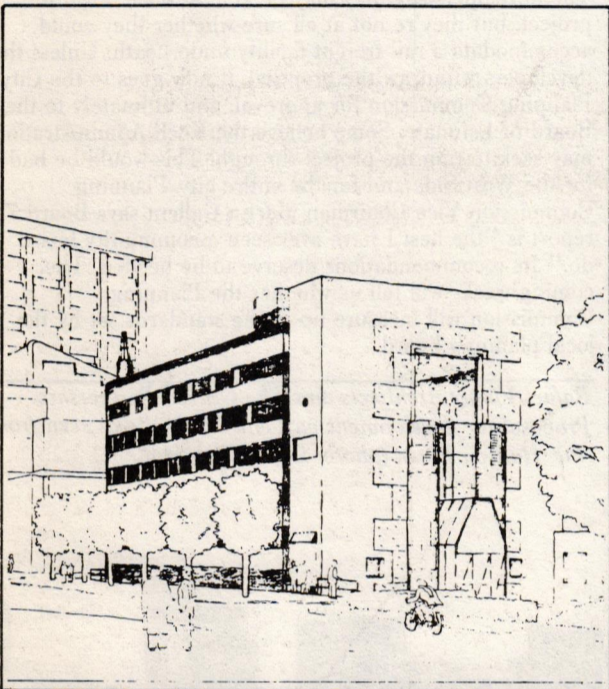


West 55th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, south side (photo: Landmarks Preservation Commission)

Controversies

Fogg On Again as Funds Raised

Eleni Constantine



James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, project for the Fogg Museum.

After a month and a half of suspense, Harvard University has decided that it will build British architects James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates' design for an addition to Harvard's Fogg Museum. University President Derek Bok and the University governing Corporation canceled the \$16.5-million project last February 1, citing concern about inadequate financing as their chief reason for the action (*Skyline*, March 1982, p. 5). However, the Fogg's fundraising drive had actually fallen only some \$3 million short of their \$24.8-million goal (the latter figure includes renovation and initial operating costs). Supporters of the fine arts and of the Fogg reacted vehemently to the last-minute cancellation, viewing it as financially and academically unsound. In addition, they were offended by the fact that it had been undertaken without consulting either Fogg officials or the Fogg Visiting Committee, the distinguished 35-member group of museum officials and benefactors who have been working on the project for three years.

Bok backed down. In an emergency meeting of the Visiting Committee on February 20, he agreed to recommend approval of the project to the Corporation if the Fogg could raise \$3.1 million by March 15 and commit itself to raising an additional \$3 million during the next three years. (Corporation approval pursuant to such a recommendation is essentially a formality.)

The Visiting Committee pulled off the fundraising stunt, raising the required \$3.1 million in three weeks. Some \$500,000 of this amount was raised in a photo-finish weekend drive culminating the night of Sunday, March 14.

Renegotiations for construction are now underway. A week prior to the March 15 deadline, Bok met to work out new contracts with Stirling and representatives of Perry, Dean, Stahl & Rogers, Associates, the Boston firm collaborating on the project. The former contractor, Turner Construction Company, has been asked to resubmit a bid at the same price as the bid that expired February 1: \$7.8 million.

The scenario sounds rather like the plot of a fairy tale: the prince must pass the test to win the hand of the beautiful princess from her despotic but benevolent father. The fundraising race appears to have been more of a device to save Bok and the Corporation from losing face than a prerequisite for construction. After all, Bok could have presented the Visiting Committee with the same ultimatum—raise money or lose the addition—when he first became doubtful as to the adequacy of the funding—but before canceling the project.

Given the abrupt and somewhat irrational nature of Harvard's decisions regarding the Fogg addition, the present green light constitutes grounds for only guarded optimism. As one member of Harvard's Fine Arts faculty said on learning of the conditional go-ahead, "I'm going to wait until I see a hole out there before I believe it."

Portman Gains Ground . . . The Rest Lose

Hugh Cosman

Lawsuits continued to frustrate the man Nelson Algren calls "the Liberace of architecture" and his efforts to build a gee-whiz arpeggio of a hotel on Broadway. As this issue of *Skyline* went to press, John Portman was still in court thanks to the dogged efforts of a group of concerned New Yorkers who seem more determined than ever to keep him from building the hotel according to his original plans.

In January of this year, Mr. Portman was able to start demolition on his site between 45th and 46th Streets. The Old Gaiety and the Bijou, two small theaters, are in ruins. On February 25, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit refused to hear the preservationists' appeal based on the questions surrounding the Morosco's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), issued last November by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (see February *Skyline*, page 5).

Then, on March 16, the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest panel, refused to hear another lawsuit brought by hotel opponents. In state court the plaintiffs' appeal was based on three main arguments: first, that the Portman's Environmental Impact Statement did not adequately consider the build-over alternative—proposed by architect Lee Pomeroy—which would save the Hayes and the Morosco; second, that the build-over received short shrift at the hands of municipal agencies legally responsible for approving the city's participation in the development; and third, that no "knowledgeable" city or state officials appeared to answer questions at a public hearing on the project held last July.

While the outcome in the New York Court of Appeals was a disappointment to build-over advocates, the temporary injunction issued by Judge Jacob D. Fuchsberg on March 5 to allow the court time to consider the appeal gave them two additional weeks in which to organize. And on Friday, March 19, they were to go back into State Supreme Court. The new lawsuit will tie the hotel to Broadway Plaza for the first time and bring into question certain building permits that have been given to Mr. Portman. The Broadway side of his hotel, for example, would cantilever a nine-story structure 23 feet out over the street. He will be allowed to do this under a "revocable" building permit, normally given to restaurants that install sidewalk cafes. The suit will question the use of a revocable permit that allows the construction of an *irrevocable* building.

The lawsuit will also question the city's reason for proceeding with the mall when its effect on midtown traffic has not yet been determined. Plaintiffs Alexander Cohen, Robert Redford, Barbara Handman, Frederick Beckhardt, and Councilwoman Carol Greitzer will ask the court to block any demolition on the Portman site until these questions are resolved.

Finally, U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall has indicated he will look into the matter of the undue pressure said to have been put on the Advisory Council to issue the Morosco's MOA last fall.

Things are, in short, changing very quickly. But much of this eleventh-hour maneuvering was made possible by the tremendous publicity generated by the build-over advocates through an all-night play read-in, organized by Alexander Cohen and Joseph Papp—Broadway's biggest producers—that began on the afternoon of March 4 and continued until Judge Fuchsberg issued his injunction at nine o'clock the following morning.

From a makeshift stage hastily erected on the sidewalk in front of the Morosco, some of the best-known members of the theater world read the seven Pulitzer Prize-winning plays that had premiered at the house just behind them. The stage was filled with such luminaries as Arthur Miller, Jason Robards, Betty Comden, Adolph Green, Lauren Bacall, Christopher Reeve, James Earl Jones, Liza Minnelli, and many others. The demonstration was enormously successful in focusing public attention on the interlocking questions of the venerable theaters, the Portman hotel, and the Broadway Plaza proposal. *The New York Times*, which has backed the hotel but scored the pedestrian mall, ran a front-page article on the effort.



Optimism was high. (left to right) Jason Robards, José Quintero, Jerry Orbach, and Lauren Bacall at the rally to save the Morosco and Helen Hayes theaters. (photo: Martha Swope)

Meanwhile, preservationists worry that the theaters could be torn down and that the Portman financing might then fall apart. They have urged Mayor Koch to make absolutely certain of the soundness of Mr. Portman's financing before allowing demolition. While Mr. Portman will admit to the difficulties that the preservationists' obstructions have caused him, the architect remains as intractable as ever on the subject of the build-over. He has indicated to the Urban Development Corporation that if forced to adopt it—as the projects' financiers, who include Manufacturers Hanover Trust, could if they so desired—as "far as he's concerned, that would be the end of it." His backers, however, seem to be quite far from packing it in. Manufacturers Hanover claims to have a commitment to this project, in spite of rumors to the contrary.

Joe Papp thinks differently: "The spirit of the city is under attack," he stated at the March rally. "Don't be misled by the Portman's fifteen-hundred-seat theater," he warned, "because if this trend toward large houses suitable only for musical extravaganzas is allowed to continue, we could all end up acting in factories." The producer said that if the Court of Appeals fails to hear the case and allows demolition to begin, he will be among those lying down in the path of the bulldozers.

Alexander Cohen warns that the plaza planned for the area in front of the hotel will inevitably become a hangout for junkies, whores, pimps, card sharks, derelicts, and other unsavory characters bad for business. Cohen cites as a prototype for the mall London's Leicester Square, which was partially malled in the 1970s, and where crime has risen sharply since its pedestrianization.

In a larger sense, we all could learn from the evolution of redevelopment plans for London's Piccadilly Circus, which presents a strikingly close parallel to our Times Square. Plans to redevelop Piccadilly Circus have been floated since the 1950s. By the early 70s, the London City Council had come up with a plan bearing more than a passing resemblance to the Plaza/Portman scheme: tall office blocks, extensive pedestrianization, and traffic segregation. It would have entailed the destruction of the London Pavilion, more a sentimental than an architectural landmark, and the public was outraged. After much acrimony, the city dropped its megaplan and adopted one that relies primarily on renovation, rehabilitation, new subway access, and a very limited amount of mall area. The London Pavilion will be rehabilitated as shown (to stretch the analogy, there's even a one-story build-over). No big buildings. No major traffic rerouting.

Grandiose plans requiring support from many diverse interests are fraught with problems and may never reach fruition. We must recognize the strength of emotions that surround a place which is cherished by millions for reasons of nostalgia as much as for its intrinsic physical quality. Above all, we must understand the importance of public opinion in influencing decisions. It was the very thorough public consultation in the early 1970s that broke the impasse at Piccadilly Circus. The results of that consultation demonstrated to all the interested parties that the only way forward was on principles that commanded public support.

Friday March 19: State Supreme Court refused to hear the case that would have tied the demolition on the Portman site to final approval of the Broadway Mall by the City Board of Estimate.

Monday March 22: The United States Supreme Court refused to hear the preservationists' case involving the Morosco's Memorandum of Agreement.

Complete details next month.

Hot Spots

Letter from Barcelona

Barbara Jakobson



Left to right: Beth Gallí, Cristian Cirici, Ricardo Bofill



Federico Correa (left) and Alfonso Milá (photos: Barbara Jakobson)

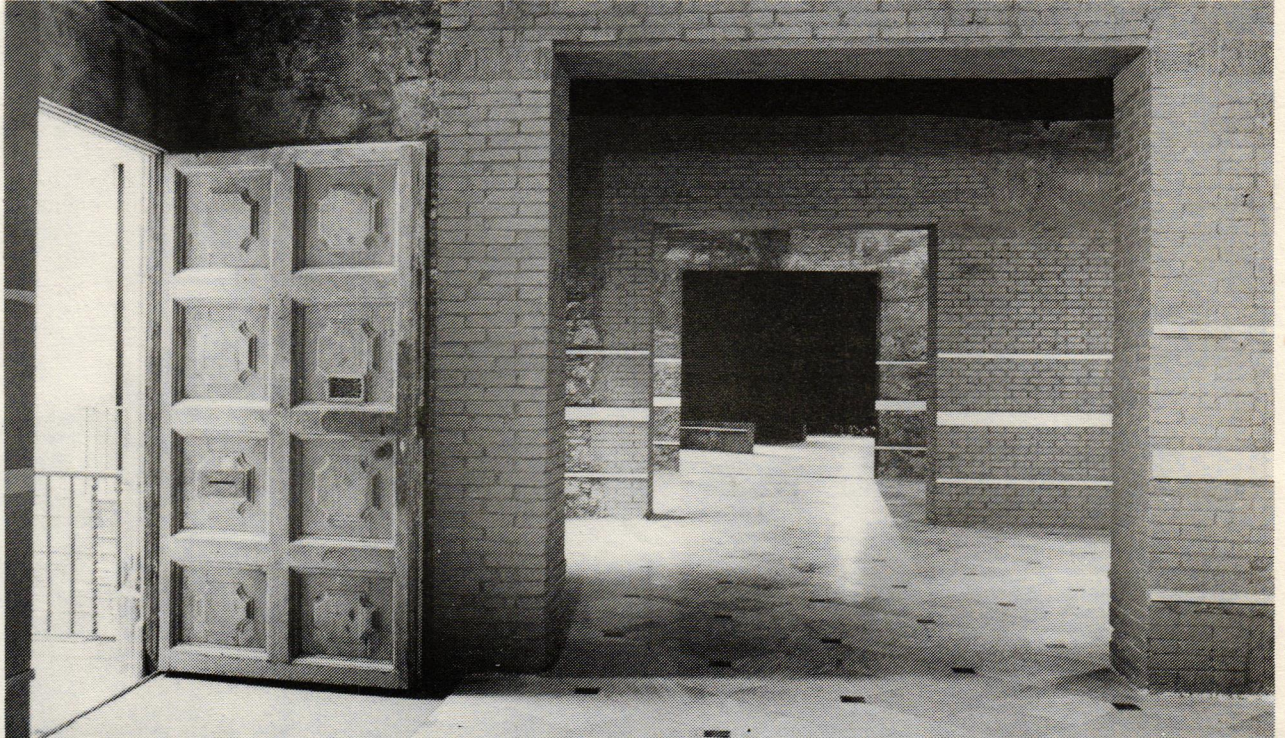
Don't look for Oriol Bohigas in the crowd at Federico Correa's "chocolate" party where everyone else in Barcelona's *mundo de arquitectura* gathered in Correa's spacious Grán Via flat on January 31. Oriol was off dining with Narcís Serra, the energetic young mayor—working, even on Sunday. The appointment of Bohigas as Delgado de Urbanismo—head of City Planning—a position from which he is effecting subtle but meaningful changes in the urban fabric of the city, make future visits to this marvelous town even more intriguing for *modernistos*.

Racing about for a few days, discovering these "interventions"—some complete, some in progress, and more about to happen—revealed the strength of the Barcelona axis, a group of architects of long association, whose theoretical concerns and critical positions are expounded intelligently in their publication, *Arquitecturas Bis*. Much is being accomplished in real terms through the use of public funds for several projects.

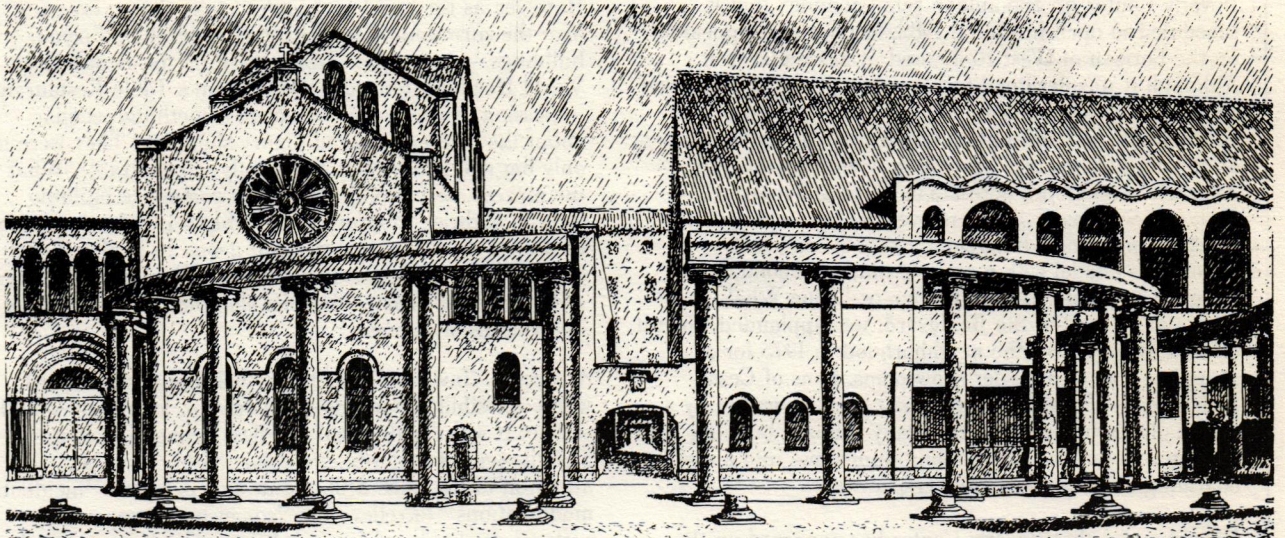
In the old city, near the Ramblas, on the Plaza de la Merced, Bohigas' simple act of razing a block of buildings that had fallen into disrepair left an open space paved in impacted earth, surrounded by a few benches. Thus a long perspective of the facade of the eighteenth-century Iglesia de la Merced, the patron saint of the city, is created, providing a new spatial delight in an otherwise dense area. This was managed over some screams of objection: Picasso was said to have lived in one of the houses torn down.

Federico Correa and Alfonso Milá, commissioned by the Ayuntamiento (City Council) of Barcelona, will achieve a similar transformation of perception in the splendid neoclassical Plaza Real. By lowering the ground level and eliminating flowerbeds, but leaving the towering palm trees that echo the vertical thrust of the facades behind, the original intended relationship of the Plaza to the surrounding buildings will be recovered.

Elsewhere in the old city, Oscar Tusquets and Luis Clotet are remodeling an entire quartier, and Mañuel de Solá-Morales, director of the urban planning department at the school of architecture, is executing a scheme that will change the circulation and organization of the Paseo Colón, a main thoroughfare fronting the harbor. To accommodate the Picasso cult, Jordi Garcés and Enric Soria have completed the first phase of a renovation of fifteenth-century buildings to be linked together on the narrow Calle de Montcada. The Picasso museum (Number 15 Calle de Montcada), which opened in 1963, attracts visitors in droves. Garcés and Soria's scheme plays with the possibilities of layering offered by interior courtyards, stairways, and walls to define and separate "old" buildings from "new" functions. The most venerable Catalan artists, Antonio Tapiès and Joan Miró, will be given new sites for major works. In the Paseo Picasso, Luis Domenech and Rosér Amadó will construct a glass house to be furnished



Jordi Garcés and Enric Soria. Picasso Museum, Barcelona. Top: Study Plan.

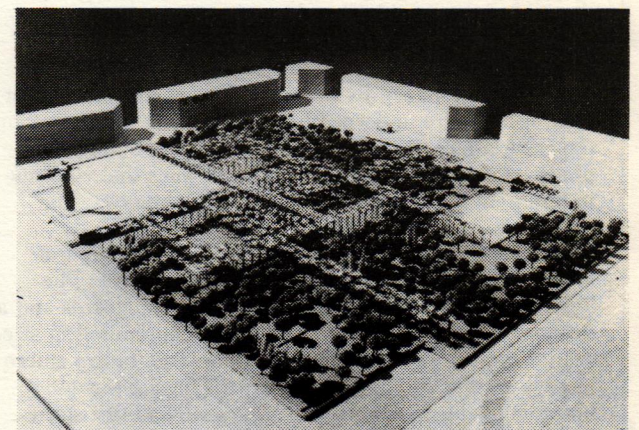
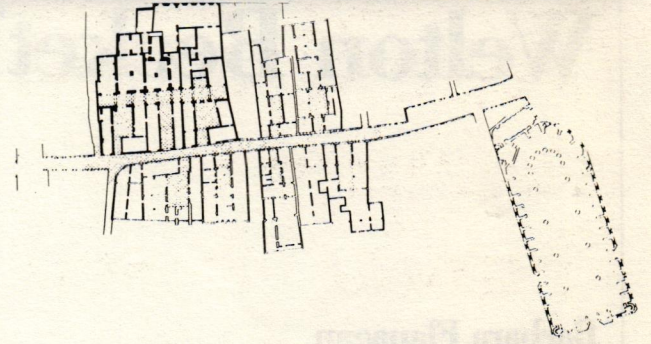


Luis Clotet, Oscar Tusquets. Project of remodeling the "Raval" sector of Barcelona; perspective of proposed plaza in front of the Church of the Casa de Caritat.

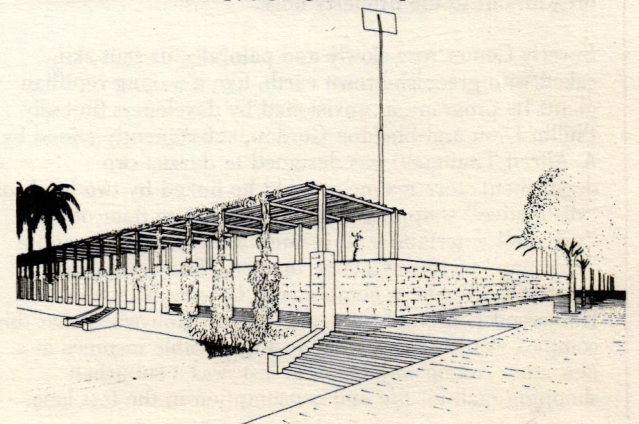
with a monumental sofa by Tapiès, and near the Plaza d' España at the entrance to the city, Beth Gallí heads a team creating a garden around the Miró, to encompass four city blocks.

Dinner at Jardinetto, a verdant indoor landscape created by Federico Correa, proved that restaurant architecture need not depend on nostalgia to provide the necessary "conditions" for pleasure. Perhaps the most exciting discovery of all, revealed by Bohigas as the dessert, is that Mies' Barcelona Pavilion is to be reconstructed on its original site. The work will commence in June 1982 under the supervision of Cristian Cirici, a partner in Studio PER and B.D. (B.D. Ediciones de Diseño, housed in Casa Thomas, a Domenèch i Montaner gem on the Calle Mallorca, is the epitome of reproductive brilliance, crafting classic furniture, lighting, and carpets by Antonio Gaudí, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Giuseppe Terragni, and Josef Hoffmann, to name but a few.) One somehow trusts that this other act of "reproduction" will be pulled off in the proper manner by the *Barcelonins*.

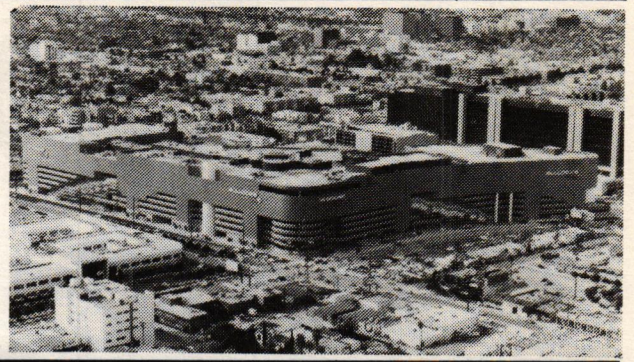
In *Homage to Catalonia*, George Orwell's vivid, haunting account of a year spent fighting with the P.O.U.M. in and around Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War—which is page after page of observed details—Orwell never once mentions a Gaudí building, or any other, for that matter. His ardor is focused on a spirit, a character or a temperament that is only Catalan. This temperament is again being celebrated by the architecture in Barcelona, an architecture which announces that spirit through its invention and reinvention—in a city where you can have chocolate with the Plan Cerdà.



Beth Gallí. Parc de L'Escorxador, Barcelona. Project model and rendering of pergola and plaza.



The L.A. Style



Welton Becket's Beverly Center

Barbara Flanagan



Welton Becket Associates. Beverly/La Cienega Center, Los Angeles; 1982. The corner at Beverly and La Cienega Blvds.

Beverly Center, an \$85-million retail complex that is scheduled to open in March 1982, has not only appeared on the horizon of West Hollywood, it has replaced it. Although it was designed by an architect—Welton Becket International—Beverly Center is, to some citizens, a nonbuilding in a noncontext which refuses to stem the tide of megacomplexes that have already entered the area. After all, its neighbor across San Vicente Boulevard, Cedars-Sinai Hospital, towers over the humbler ground-covering of Spanish bungalows like a feudal castle—a prestigious citadel with a scale to match its community image. The Pacific Design Center, or "Blue Whale," visible at the end of the Boulevard, was applauded when it cleared away part of the neighborhood in 1975 for a shopping mall of designer showrooms. Fans of Cesar Pelli's design felt that the area had been upgraded by a regionally useful and architecturally brilliant building that managed to put the surrounding bungalows into a more charming and contradictory perspective.

However, now that Beverly Center has appeared on the smoggy plain, Cedars and the Whale seem more like co-conspirators in a war of scale than innocent exceptions to the rule of the neighborhood.

In plan the B.C. is a behemoth, complete with head and legs, that was shaped by the conditions of the site—most notably, the mire underneath it. La Cienega Boulevard, on the eastern face, was named for the ancient swamp that predated the asphalt and the Chevron wells that continue to pump oil between Bullock's and The Broadway, the anchoring department stores. (The problem of underground sand and oil necessitated the addition of 40-foot foundation piers and four-hour fire walls.) The 8½-acre parcel surrounded by four busy boulevards and a strangely curved slice of oil land was compromised in size, shape, and composition. The resulting large brown stucco mass is an illustration of constraints. The site was too unstable for buried parking; consequently all five stories had to sit above grade, thus bumping the shopping mall height up to eight stories and pushing its width and breadth out to the property lines.

Beverly Center rose slowly and painfully, its taut skin caked with greenish-brown earth, like a waking reptilian giant. Its program, as envisioned by developers (initially Phillip Lyon and Sheldon Gordon, subsequently joined by A. Alfred Taubman) was designed to dazzle: two department store magnets would be linked by two levels of "distinctive" shopping mall, plus an entire floor of "urbane" entertainment, including 50 restaurants and a "cineplex" of 16 tiny movie theaters. The developers assured the Center's neighbors in Beverly Hills, the Hollywood Hills, and burgeoning West Hollywood that this complex would absorb their vast disposable incomes in a new and exciting way. Here, at last, was a suburban shopping mall for life and consumption in the fast lane.

However, as the building began to take shape, towering over the surrounding landscape of venerable, if small, buildings—the famous Tail-o'-the-Pup, the Rexall Drug World Headquarters, and the Captain's Table Restaurant—passing drivers began to notice something peculiar about the layers of alleged luxury shopping. They were not only big and brown, but apparently impenetrable. What the citizens were seeing was a new composite building form, a highrise shopping center that was *suburban* in its obeisance to the automobile, but *urban* in its dense and complex responses to expensive land. This building hybrid—the highrise urban suburban shopping mall—has few innovations of interest.

At Becket "invisible" was the actual design watchword; where invisibility could not be achieved, ambiguity would suffice. It was decided that needless delineation of uses and changes of material and color would only draw attention to the bulk. Still, the designers added "incidental modifications" to relieve the "somewhat anonymous" surface: two banks of 6-story, glass-enclosed, neon-edged, Beaubourg-like exterior escalators; occasional circulation cylinders that break away from the buildings; some pastel-painted parking railings, and several ground-level shops with transparent store windows. Unfortunately, the decorative proportions of these conceits are those of ankle bracelets on an elephant.

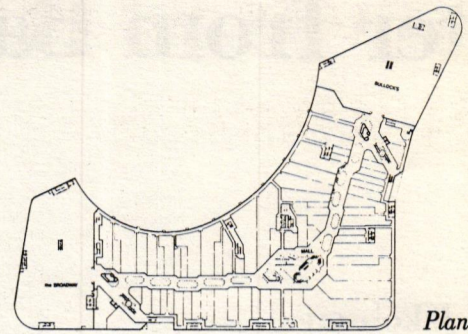
Smog Monster

A dark, nameless brown stucco covers all of the exterior with the exception of some white and pastel accents. This is one shade of stucco that has never been exploited by the world's architects, a shade as rare as the number of *large* painted buildings in the world. Although Beverly Center's color was chosen simply because it would blend with the enormous Cedars-Sinai Hospital next door, creating a "black hole" of color and scale for the passing motorist—the hue has already entered into uncanny environmental fusion with larger parts of the neighborhood. The building has appeared to dematerialize on very smoggy days.

Not that this isn't a stucco town. Most of the small-scale but internationally famous Architecture is stucco, and only the very large Paramount sound studios compare with Beverly Center for sheer uninterrupted quantity of stucco surface. But those anonymous warehouses are intriguing because we know that famous people spend millions of dollars making movies inside. Perhaps Beverly Center developers intended a similar contrast between their bleak exterior and the theatrical interior by the set designer Peter Wexler, working with Avner Nagar. But there is no theater left for the streets.

... Meets Godzilla

However, the real issue here is not the configuration, color, or substance of Beverly Center, but the size and the site



Plan of sixth level



Exposed escalators along Beverly Blvd. (photos: Bielenberg)

Project: Beverly Center
Location: bounded by Beverly Blvd., Third Street, La Cienega Blvd., and San Vicente Blvd—West Hollywood
Site: 8½ acres
Size: 2.4 million s.f. including two department stores and parking for 2,700 cars.
Materials: steel structure with concrete filled metal decking; stucco skin
Architects/Engineers: Welton Becket Associates
Landscape Architect: Donald Jung Associates
Clients/Developers: La Cienega Associates; Phillip Lyon, Gordon and Company and The Taubman Company

that eventually led to all the decisions that allowed it its present attitude—a denial of shape, color, and substance. The most insidious aspect of Beverly Center is that it has given a shape to part of the city that had not yet decided what shape it wanted to take. The original virtues of the area that drew people to move in with their families and their businesses are being erased and not replaced. West Hollywood has been thriving on good weather, exotic flora, and quaint architecture from the 1920s, '30s, and '40s and traditions of commercial art and decoration that make the area look more coherently appealing than most of Los Angeles. The newest businesses and higher real estate appraisals in the vicinity attest to its success.

The mall is there because it can attract the neighboring wealthy. The wealthy are in the neighborhood because it is picturesque, historical, and urban.

Shopping malls are by nature noncontextual, anti-urban things. When they are not functionally replacing cities and moving patrons out into the suburbs, they are physically "revitalizing" them by usurping Main streets. When developer Taubman, who was trained in architecture, was asked about his role in annihilating American downtowns with his malls, he replied that he felt proud to continue a valid urban tradition that began with the agora of ancient Greece. Thus Beverly Center is being sold as a vibrant public place in a city that never got around to making a real agora.

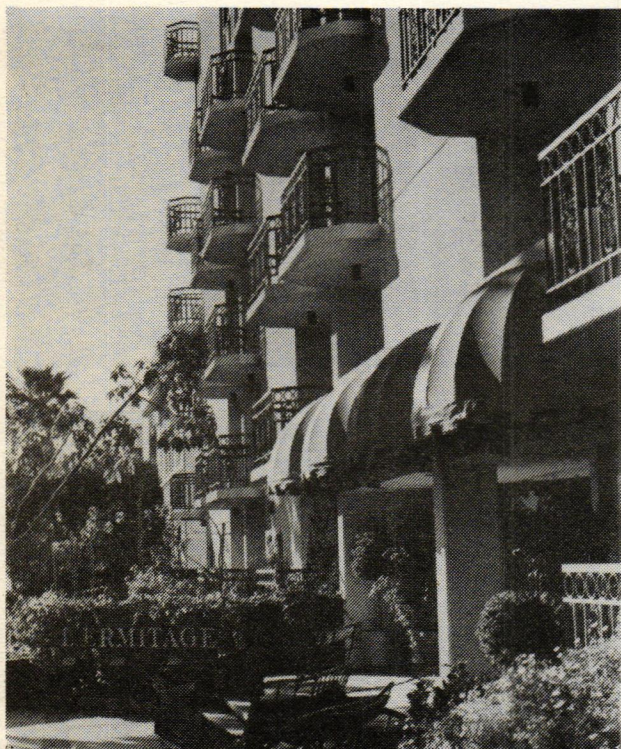
Just as Social Darwinism took over the business world in the 1920s with the popular theory that Nature intended the fittest to survive and prosper, Architectural Darwinism is overwhelming American cities with formulas that try to prove that the biggest, not the prettiest, survive. Beverly Center, like the fictional monsters of Japanese films, is an overblown, artificial construct that opposes its own territory, and even threatens to consume it. However noble the origin of the species might have been, the newest strains must be eliminated. Mutation is not progress.



A new shopping mall in L.A. is subjected to critical scrutiny; hotels and restaurants in the posher sections of town are rated according to architectural character and/or quality.

Architect's Guide to Hotels and Restaurants

Robert Coombs



L'Ermitage Hotel (photo: courtesy L'Ermitage)

Where the Rich and Powerful Play

Too often hotels and restaurants are reviewed only on the quality of their service or of their cuisine, with merely passing references made to "ambiance." For architects, or those with "architectural" sensibilities, who are easily depressed by loud decor, unglued by glitz, and sent into catatonia by claustrophobic colors, *Skyline* has come to your rescue. Before you make your next trip to the hotel or restaurant touted on the travel pages of *The New York Times* and *Town & Country*, read our own view of things. First we go to the most verdantly glittering of getaway spots, The Beverly Hills/Bel Air section of Los Angeles.

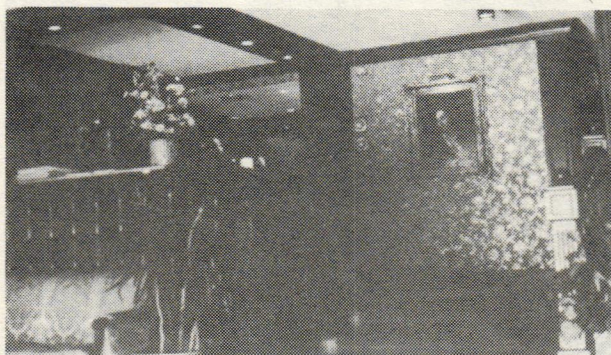
L'Ermitage, 9291 Burton Way, Beverly Hills; (213) 278-3344

Ah, what that name of this five-star hotel (Mobil AAA) conjures up: Imperial Russia, gold braid, sables, smoldering eyes, and Russian wolfhounds — just like those Wolfschmidt Vodka ads. Your anticipation runs wild as the limo pulls up to 9291 Burton Way in mythic Beverly Hills. You look out and . . . it's bland. It's almost impossible to tell L'Ermitage from any of the other stacked-stucco, motel-modern condos on Burton. It may be a bit taller, with little balconies bristling across its face, but the first impression still adds up to Holiday-Inn Right Bank.

Inside, the dark, miniscule lobby, with its fake black-walnut paneling and low ceiling, is lined with mediocre copies of old Dutch masters, the sort of thing art students in Paris used to crank out to hold body and soul together. The staff is dressed in dark uniforms that make them look like East European customs agents. And their demeanor continues the mood as they hand you your secret code — no keys are given out here — they might get lost or stolen. Then you are led to the dark elevator and a rendezvous with your suite, for there are no mere rooms here — only 117 suites. From the elevator you pass into the Stygian gloom of the corridor. Dark paneling closes in and small "antique" fixtures barely light the meandering hall, whose walls are adorned with repros of Impressionist paintings. Cul-de-sacs go off this way and that. You wonder if this isn't a Vincent Price set for an Ingmar Bergman film.

The bellboy opens the door to your suite with a flourish. It's sunny and bright, but definitely upgraded motel. The living room is sunk one step down from the "sleeping area," which is curtained off and bordered with a flimsy metal balustrade. You get your minibalcony, wet bar, pre-fab gas fireplace with chain-mesh screen, and (reasonably) luxurious bath — for the standard \$155- to \$215-a-night accommodation.

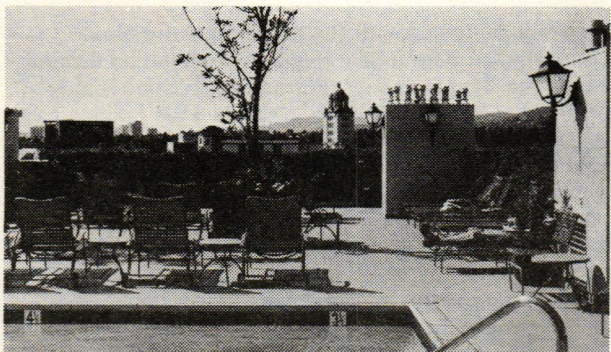
At the top of the hotel is the Café Russe, the L'Ermitage restaurant open only to hotel guests. The cafe's real Renoirs and Dufys and the absence of imitation walnut



L'Ermitage duplex suite



L'Ermitage duplex suite

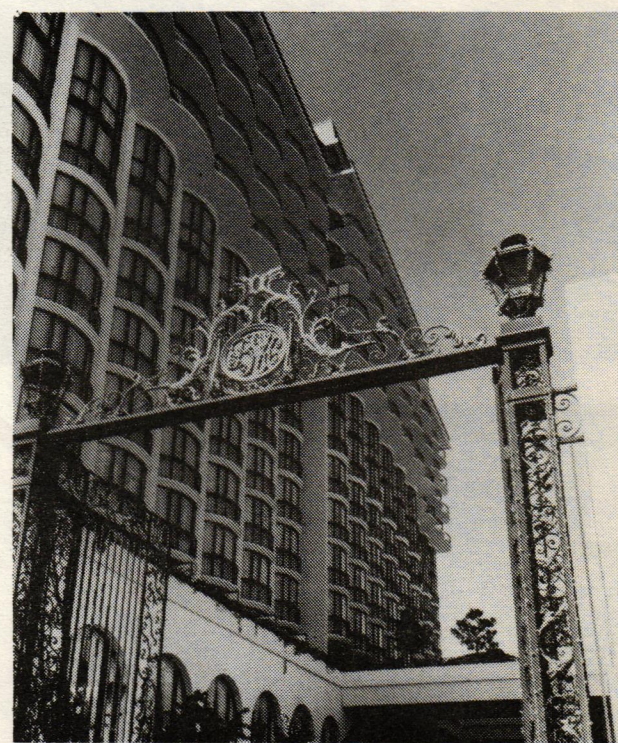


L'Ermitage, roof deck (photos: Robert Coombs)

paneling add a note of authenticity to the place. The roof terrace, with its mineral-water jacuzzi and swimming pool, almost compensates for the mole kingdom below, giving L'Ermitage the best panorama of any deluxe hotel in Beverly Hills. But put the money into a fifth of Wolfschmidt, for its a quicker and cheaper route to fantasyland.

The Beverly Wilshire, 9500 Wilshire Drive, Beverly Hills; (213) 275-4282

The Beverly Wilshire serves as a resplendent backdrop for the low-rise glitter and swank of the expensive shops on Rodeo Drive. The hotel is a noble old pile of Renaissance



The Beverly Wilshire, El Camino Real (photo: courtesy Beverly Wilshire)



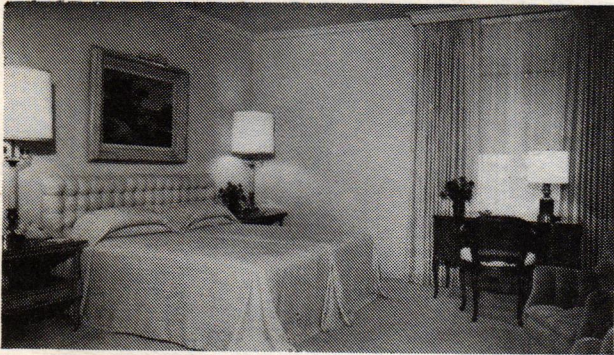
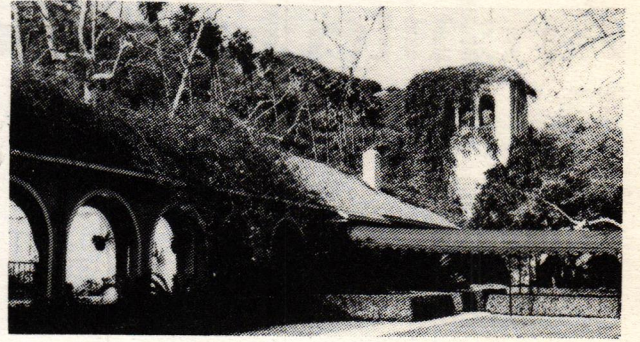
The Beverly Wilshire, deluxe room in the Beverly Wing (photo: Fritz Taggart)

pretention built in 1926 according to Walker & Eisen's designs. Its facade at ground level is a copy of the Villa Borghese in Rome or one of those in Frascati built for the numberless nephews of the popes. Behind the original building, Welton Becket has shoveled in a 12-story, reinforced concrete tower, which has been given a stucco-like finish. Bristling with balconies, the tower brings the total number of rooms up to 445.

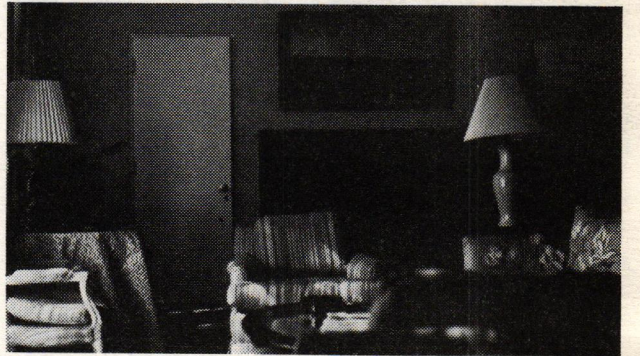
Sadly, the once rather dignified original lobby has been jammed with outlets of Parisian and Roman boutiques selling malachite toothbrushes and platinum Kleenex-holders. Furthermore, there is no direct visual link between



The Beverly Wilshire Hotel (photo: Robert Coombs)



Above and left: The Beverly Hills Hotel, lobby and typical room (photo: Robert Cleveland) Right: The Bel Air Hotel, garden court, lobby, and Princess Grace suite (photos: Robert Coombs)



the original lobby and the glazed courtyard and new wing of the hotel. You have to sashay past La Fontaine, the hotel's French-restaurant, which has blinding American-Beauty-red banquettes and enough roses to set all of Pasadena sneezing. Then the corridor pushes you toward Pedro's, an aggressively Mexican-style restaurant done up in cinch straps and horseshoes.

Robert Bennett, the interior designer in charge, has sensitively redone the rooms and suites of the old wing in muted colors and wallpaper panels. His choice of furniture maintains the classical character of the building. In one vast apartment on the eighth floor that includes a Soanesque corridor, Bennett has kept the crisp Georgian detailing and repeated it when necessary to divide the apartment into suites and rooms.

The lobby of the Welton Becket wing, awash with marble and dripping with crystal chandeliers, is more or less executed in Miami-Klassicism. Bennett has tried his best to cool down the rooms and suites; and the scale of the bathrooms is staggering if you are into that sort of thing: each bathroom has its own huge sink, tub, and bidet, and the floors are carpeted, which contrasts with the lavish use of marble on walls and fixtures. The Beverly Wilshire is still a good bet if you have to be smack in the heart of things. Prices for rooms start at \$115 and suites at \$190.

The Beverly Hills Hotel, 9641 Sunset Boulevard; (213) 276-2251

There is a hotel attached to the Polo Lounge, the watering hole seen in *American Gigolo*. Created by Elmer Gray in 1912, the Beverly Hills Hotel is a delightful old peach-colored, Mission-Style confection. Naturally, it got a not-too-handsome wing in the early 1950s and the hotel shows its growing pains here and there, with 315 rooms and 21 bungalows. But the Beverly Hills does have a "Sunkist-Grand-Hotel" atmosphere. The California high-style lobby is a cross between Salvador Dali-Baroque and late-30s Streamline Modern. White plaster pilasters making believe

they are palm trees set off the peach-colored walls, a perpetually burning fireplace, and the overstuffed furniture in Chiquita Banana fabrics. Fortunately, boutiques have been held at bay on the lower level. The Polo Lounge has kept its Don Loper decor done back in the late 1950s. Right next door is The Coterie, painted a warm, dusky champagne-color, an intimate room where banquettes belie a dinner seating capacity of 75. Its vaguely Baroque atmosphere, with a few French-Persian touches, is kept at a mellow level by Joseph Cabanillas, the live-in interior designer. The Coterie, which opened in November 1977, was designed by Leonard Stanley.

The suites and rooms have an old-fashioned, relaxed charm that is far less dramatic than *California Suite*, but more hospitable. They are done up in a selection of English and French eighteenth-century-style furniture—no glass and chrome. Gilt-framed copies and prints carry out the quiet mood, and every room is different. If you're really in a mood for rest and seclusion, reserve one of the pink stucco-and-tiled-roof bungalows tucked away in the immaculately tended twelve acres of greenery. They have been favorites of the movie colony since the 1920s, and well deserve their fame.

The staff of the Beverly Hills has a kind of world-weary, "I've-seen-it-all" sense of good humor, which is refreshing. Singles range from \$87 to \$158, with a few "minimums" at \$65 to \$77, and suites from \$182 to \$410. Bungalows with kitchens are from \$237 to \$1082, depending on the number of bedrooms.

The Bel Air Hotel, 701 Stone Canyon Road, Bel Air; (213) 472-1211

If you're in search of that hacienda tucked away in a canyon—the sort of place "the Duke" (John Wayne) went to after the fadeout of a John Ford Western—try the Bel Air. It's the embodiment of Spanish colonial architecture of old L.A. (Twentieth-Century Fox version, that is). Originally the stables of the Bell family, who owned Bel Air, it was enlarged by Alphonzo Bell, and given its final form by Joseph Drown. Drown turned the stables into a hotel just before World War II, and is still the owner of the hotel. Burton Schutt was the architect who planned most of the late-1940s alterations that brought the Bel Air to its present handsome state.

Like the great Spanish missions, the Bel Air is a series of 40 rooms and 28 suites arranged single-file along arcades opening onto small courtyards and the pool. Spaces continuously unfold to the sound of water cascading into fountains, and the artful planting adds to the sense of a century past. It's an extraordinary mixture of the picturesque and the understated, if such a thing is possible. For instance, the lobby is really an oversized, carefully appointed living room. There are no boutiques. Even the dining room and bar are located across the courtyard. And you don't have to go through the lobby to get your room or suite; you can enter the courtyard complex from several gateways. The accommodations are strictly Ethan Allen—nothing to get an aesthetic rush over, but standard reproductions of American antiques, done with assurance. True, the style is reminiscent of a Fairfield County socialite gone native: but Princess Grace of Monaco, Dame Edith Sitwell, and King Gustave Adolf of Sweden weren't wrong with this choice as their L.A. base.

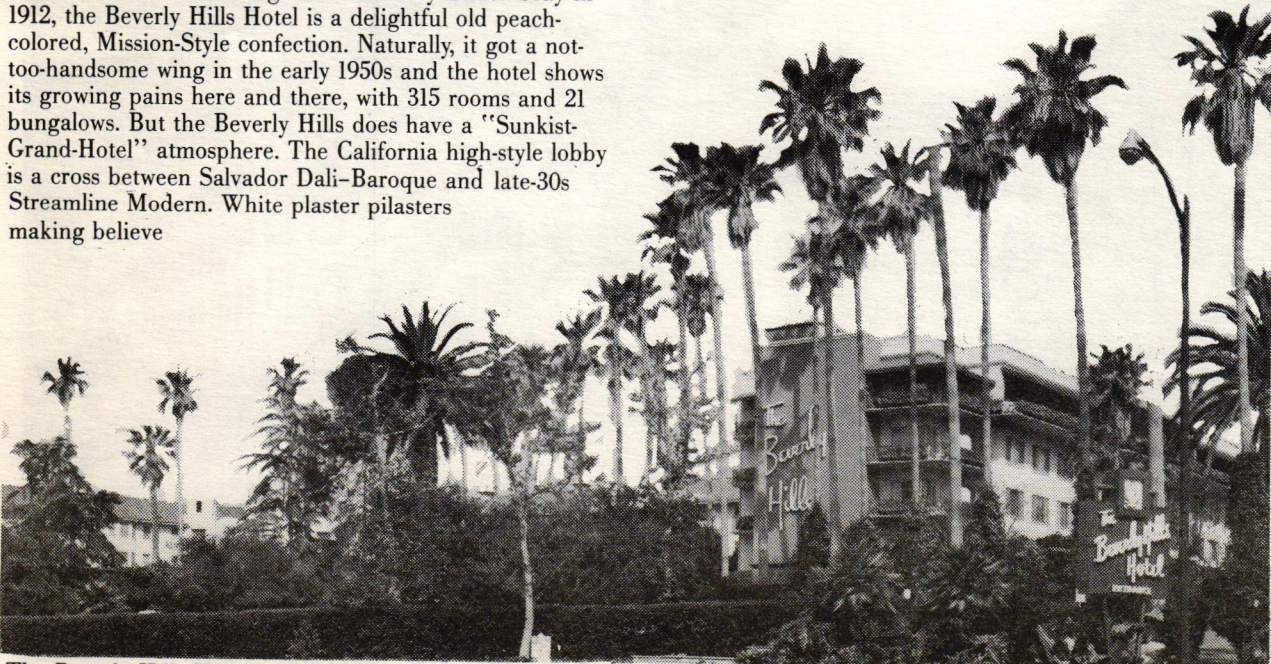
Rooms with twin beds go for \$80 and up; with sitting rooms, from \$85 to \$130, including some with patios. Full-scale suites are from \$175 to \$465, depending on the number of bedrooms.

Where the Chic Eat

Restaurants serving Beverly Hills, Bel Air, and The Industry line Melrose Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard, roughly a mile and a half east of Beverly Hills. Gastronomic activity, however, is making West L.A. the place for new eateries.

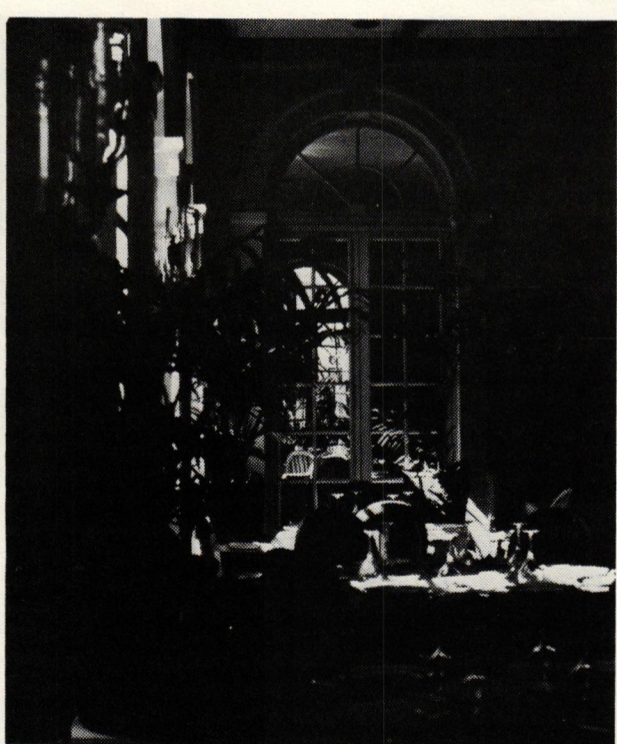
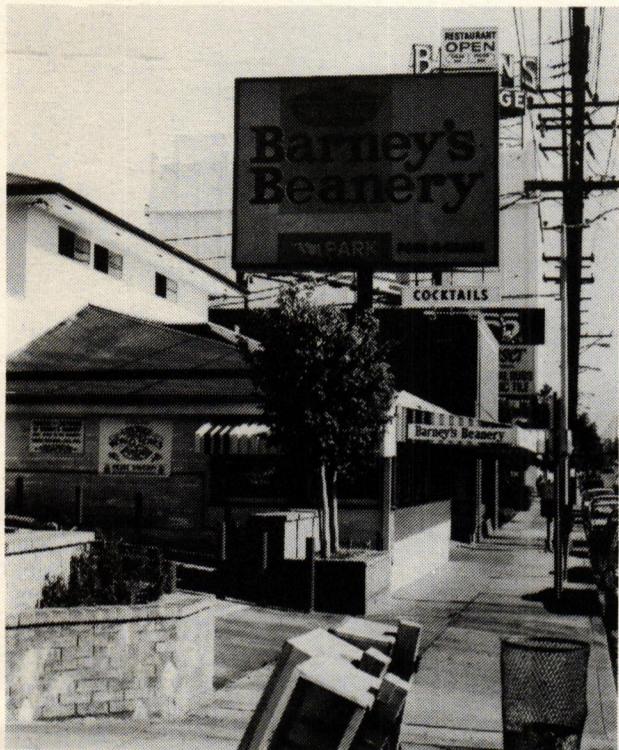
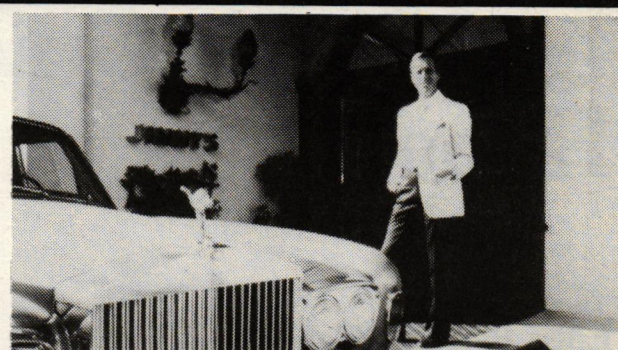
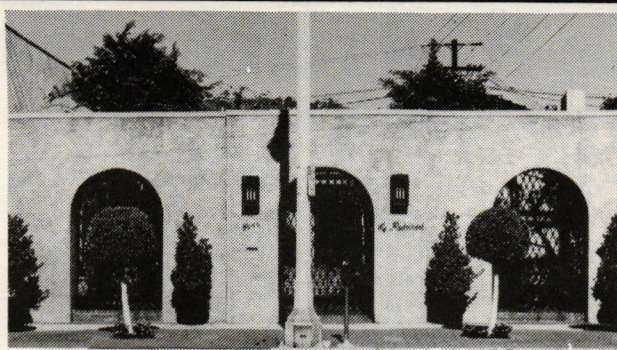
The China Club, 8338 West Third; (213) 658-6406

It is "punk" architecture—or what passes for it—on Decorators Row. From the outside, the restaurant-bar looks like the rest of the small-scale design and hardware shops in this area. Inside, the China Club is a fizzy take-off on all those debased Bauhaus-1920s and -30s cocktail shakers



The Beverly Hills Hotel (photo: Robert Cleveland)

“In front of Ma Maison is this thing made of plywood, plastic, and glass worthy of Frank Gehry on LSD. It claims to be a patio and has got to be one of the campiest entrées to haute cuisine in L.A.”



Far left, top: The China Club (photo: Jayme Odgers); center: Barney's Beanery (photo: Robert Coombs); bottom: Ma Maison (photo: Robert Coombs) Left, two top: Le Restaurant, exterior (photo: Robert Coombs) and one of the five dining rooms (photo: courtesy Le Restaurant); Left, two bottom: L'Orangerie (photos: Robert Coombs) Above: Jimmy's and Jimmy's garden room (photos: courtesy Jimmy's)

and cigarette lighters. Across the dining area is a chrome-and-glass bar on a sloped platform. Interiors, colors, and motifs are set off by denizens wearing 1950s Hawaiian shirts and rhinestone-rimmed glasses. Lest you miss this aesthetic slight-of-hand, the hostess' costume resembles that of a faded star of the USO Stage Door Canteen, and the busboys and waiters look like a cross between the Philip Morris bellhop and Darth Vader's evil minions. All this aesthetic hyperventilation can be laid at the door of designers Sampei Abe of Tokyo and Sy Chen and Norm Lazerine & Associates of L.A. Something tells me that somebody is getting even for World War II.

The food is good Chinese served with cute little Japanese decorations. However, the sound level is horrendous. Go just for a drink, unless you want your digestion punched out by the Sex Pistols. Dinner runs from about \$20 to \$25 a head.

Barney's Beanery, 8447 Santa Monica Boulevard; (213) 656-0433

Barney's Beanery and Ma Maison, a *grande classe* French restaurant, have one thing in common: they both look like house movers' mistakes—a couple of bungalows waiting on the asphalt for a lot to call their own.

Barney's is an old L.A. institution. In fact, Ed Kienholz has even done an homage to it in his sculpture *The Beanery*. If you like he-man chili in a number of variations, and about every good domestic and imported bean and ale on the market, plus pool tables, try the Beanery.

Ma Maison, 8368 Melrose Avenue; (213) 655-1991 [unlisted]

In front of Ma Maison is this thing made of plywood, plastic, and glass worthy of Frank Gehry on LSD. It claims to be a patio and inside are the *de rigueur* cute little tables covered in cute little pink tablecloths and lots of greenery. In spite of all the froufrou, it has got to be one of the campiest entrées to *haute cuisine* in L.A. The main part of the bungalow, galvanized into restaurant, is done up in banquettes and more green stuff. Though Ma

Maison likes to pretend it is a restaurant-bistro, it rivals the Polo Lounge in the complexity of its pecking order for seating. If you're boffo at the box office you will get excellent food and service. Otherwise, there is a certain chic in sitting near kitchen doors, and food isn't everything, if you've got all those beautiful people to watch. Dinner begins at about \$40 per, although there's a bistro special at \$14.95, if you've got the guts to ask for it.

Le Restaurant, 9475 Melrose Place; (213) 651-5553

Now, this is a name to be reckoned with. Again, it's your standard little stucco-and-tile L.A. house transformed into Bungalow Bastille. A massive, peach-colored stucco arcade with somber cast-iron grills has been set up in front of the bungalow. Any gastronomic paranoia you may have will be augmented at the front door, which has a second black grill. The strange funereal note is picked up in the black tiles of the roof. Inside, the mood lifts somewhat, and the food is excellent, not to mention the service. Le Restaurant is right up there battling to be first among the *hautes*.

L'Orangerie, 903 La Cienega; (213) 652-9770

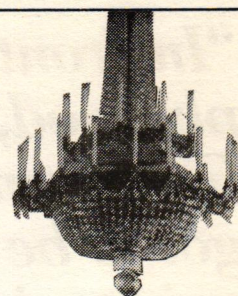
This restaurant is something of a shock. You're going along L.A.'s old restaurant row, and smack in the middle of the block is this slice of the Orangerie at Versailles. Even if it is stucco, it's correct seventeenth-century classicism. The bar and dining room focus on a small

inner courtyard, and are as carefully appointed in French mannerisms as the exterior. Only one thing breaks the *savoir-faire* of the interior—rather silly awning-striped covers for the chairs in the dining room. Valerian Rybar has set just the right Marie-Antoinette-*avant-la-Revolution* mood (not inappropriate, given the Reagan cuts) to indulge in fine cuisine. One caution—don't go into financial shock when you're handed the literally price-less menu. The maitre d' uses ESP to figure out who the host is (lucky fellow). Food and ambience are well worth the *à la carte* main courses' prices—around \$25 with veggies thrown in.

Jimmy's, 201 San Moreno Drive (off Santa Monica Boulevard); (213) 879-2393

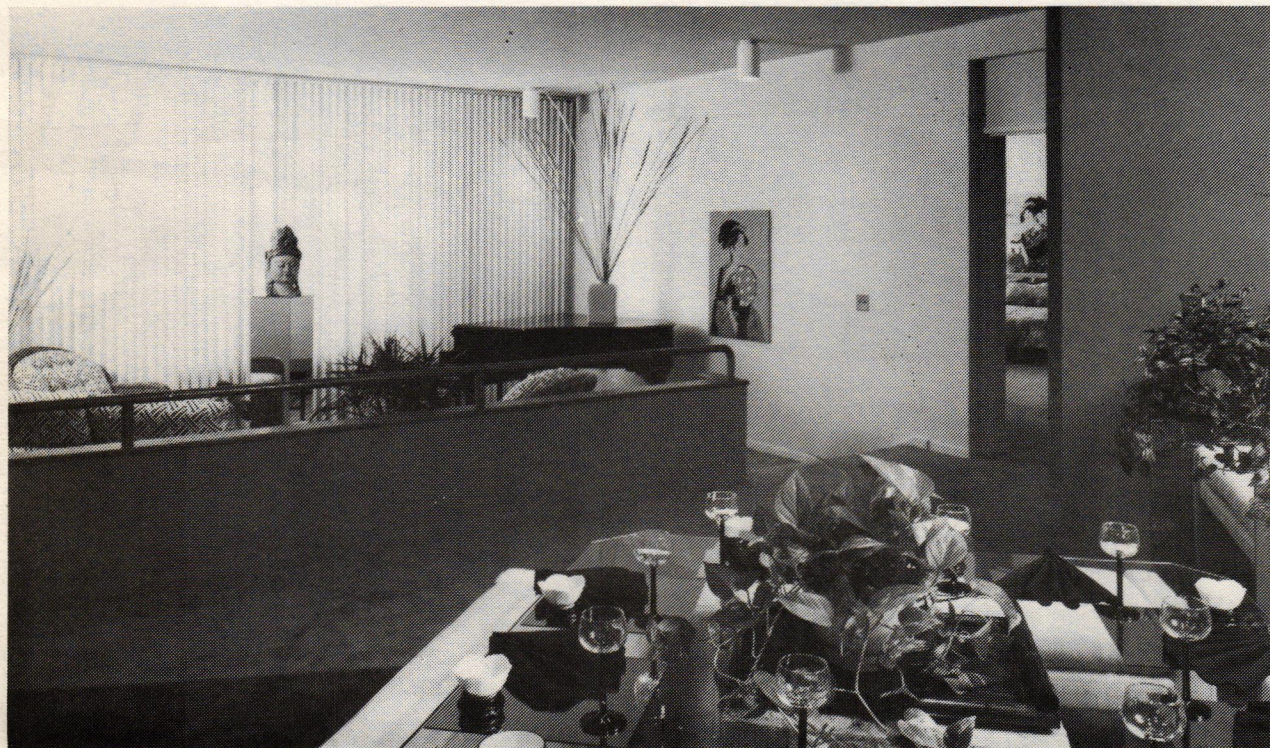
West of the La Cienega-Melrose enclave sits Jimmy's. Now, Jimmy's is a little schizy architecturally. Outside, a slinky curving wall of off-white stucco displays the restaurant's name in metal calligraphy—that's it. This restaurant has been slipped under one of the retardataire Miesian buildings with mosaics by Welton Becket. However, the front door does give you a moment's pause. It's rococo. That should clue you in that something's not dovetailing. Inside, haute Franco-Schrafft's. Soft, muted pastels for the walls; the standard "Let's-do-fancy-moldings" from the lumber store catalogue; those cute little French chairs; banquettes; and the oh-so-carefully-arranged flowers in urns—all combine to say "ain't we got chic." Somehow it just doesn't come off, even with the nice patio. One thing does give Jimmy's a certain something: The bar, off to your right after the raspberry-pink rococo vestibule, is wrapped in rolled and padded black leather—in what might be called "S & M Moderne." If you are into a place to "take a lunch," as the Industry parlance would have it, try Jimmy's. It ain't cheap.

New York Style



Architect's Guide to Apartment Houses

Ellen Perry Berkeley



Rothzeit, Kaiserman & Thomson. 525 East 80th Street. (photo: Rothschild)

Manhattan's newest apartment buildings are "talking" to us. Whispering, mumbling, bragging, flirting, signifying. Not through their architectural "elements" and "configurations," but through another medium entirely—their real estate ads and sales brochures. And the gap between the language of architectural criticism and the language of salesmanship is—if not big enough to drive a truck through—big enough to carve a dining alcove out of. It is hard to see these buildings *without* absorbing the verbiage. Indeed, the selling message may be as vivid as the architecture, to many apartment-hunters, and as much a part of the final decision as the architecture. Let us take these buildings at their word, then, and look at them through their carefully constructed myths.

That Quintessential Something

My nomination for Best Ad is a full-pager appearing in *New York* magazine and *The Times*. "There are those who live in the public eye, whose comings and goings are punctuated by flashbulbs." For them, a massive highrise, complete with crystal chandeliers and a uniformed entourage of footmen, bellmen, doormen, and valets may be a suitable home. "But for those of a somewhat more refined taste, home must be luxurious, but never loud. For them we offer 525 East 80th Street, the quintessential condominium." This splashes the word "quintessential" around like Catherine Deneuve using Chanel. But the headline claims restraint: "Elegance vs. Extravagance." Instead of "the showmanship so prevalent today," sniffs the ad, "great attention has been lavished upon the residences themselves."

On to the building itself. I expect a small lobby, too small for flashbulbs and uniformed entourage, but this lobby is barely two elevators wide. The apartments are ostensibly "of a very generous proportion and exceptionally creative design," and although we might quibble about the superlatives, the units are pleasant enough, each living room sunk a foot below dining level. One furnished model has risked a grand piano in its "very generous" space, which, predictably, seems not very generous.

A maximum of six apartments per floor. A total of 68 units. Walk-in closets in some. Marble floors and tub-surrounds in all baths—dreary-looking, somehow, like a poor relative wearing a cast-off ballgown. Protective systems to prevent all calamities. Intrusion alarms registering any disturbances on a board in the lobby. Fire alarms on each floor. Fire-alarm board in the lobby. Auxiliary emergency generator.

No whisper of the word "quintessential" in the brochure (an opportunity lost), but corridors are described as "elegant"; if the choice was between "elegant" and "extravagant," they picked the right one. In the packet are quarter-inch plans (very elegant, I must say), and a



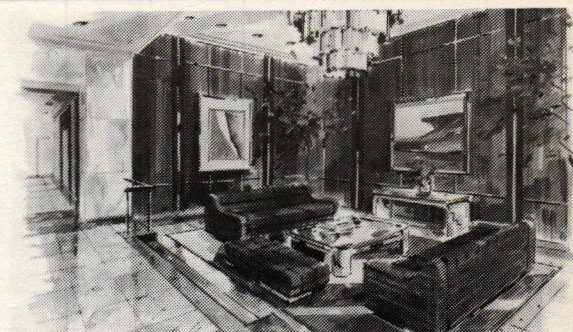
Rothzeit, Kaiserman & Thomson. 525 East 80th Street. (photo: Bill Rothschild)

tinted drawing of the street elevation. The 14-story building stretches taut, touching the sidewalk in front and almost touching the buildings on each side. Windows tell of the sunken living rooms behind the brickwork. A pleasant Old-Timey facade. But why an elevation? To avoid the dishonesty of the gaudy perspective? Hardly. This drawing spins its own sweet fantasies. The facade precisely fills the sheet: no extraneous "context." In words, a "lovely side street of the residential Upper East Side." In reality, the view blocked by an immense 29-story tower rising on 79th Street.

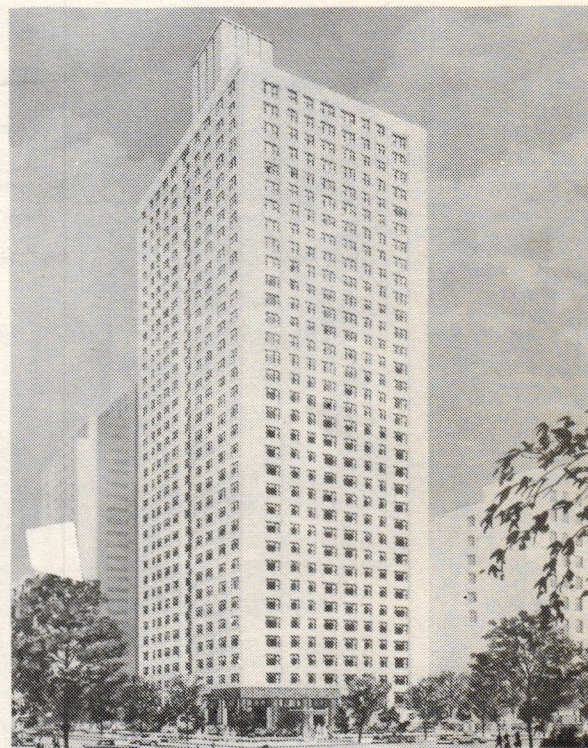
"Adjusted" prices: The 3BR penthouse down from \$900,000 to \$695,000, for instance. Get 'em while they're lukewarm. Nice enough place, but if you're looking for something quintessential, keep looking.

Nobody's Perfect

Do you want to see a gaudy perspective? Come to The Regent, at 60th and Columbus, "the perfect place to live in Manhattan." It's an undistinguished-looking rental building. Plain yellowish brick, 35 stories straight up, a bit of suburban greenery flanking the doorway. You could walk past the building absentmindedly, not realizing it is new.



The Regent lobby as rendered in brochure.



Philip Birnbaum. 45 West 60th Street, The Regent; rendering on brochure.

An oversized brochure breathes of perfection everywhere. About the lobby: "Perfection like this is never accidental. Always worth reaching for. Always worth attaining." The prose is excessive, but the gaudy drawing on this page—alas—accurate.

"Perfection in the ample proportions of the spacious rooms," says the glossy brochure, hoping we'll overlook the meanness of a 2BR without foyer, or the monotony of 8-foot, 3-inch ceilings throughout. I am told that an eat-in kitchen will "easily" accommodate some ice-cream chairs. (At \$2480 a month? *Ice-cream* chairs?)

No perfection is perfect: the parquet flooring ends at the closets, continuing in resilient flooring. Closet doors have a further whiff of the tacky, with cheaply incised lines to imitate paneling. But bathrooms have the extra inches that allow filling a tub without wrenching a back. Add to this a mail chute on every floor, a security guard at the service entrance, "high fidelity background music" in all public areas. With these comforts, you could get used to ice-cream chairs.

A Dubious Distinction

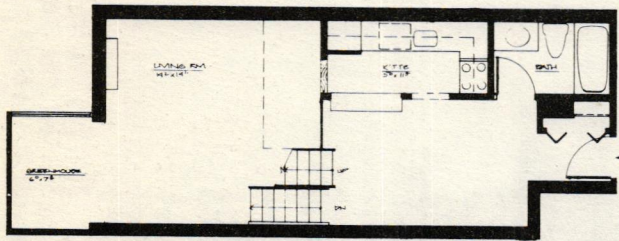
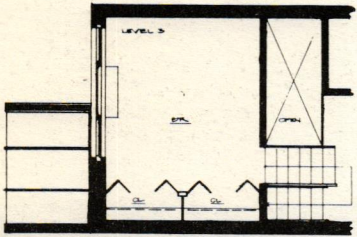
"New York's newest address of distinction" is 225 East 86th Street, with units starting at \$91,808. A post-modern palazzo in dark brick. A lot of Architecture for the money, at the cost of relatively skimpy rooms.

Most units have "wintergarden/greenhouses," glazed on three sides and "strategically placed to guarantee absolute privacy." Of course, you wouldn't actually *sit* in these "individual light-filled environments" unless the neighbors weren't sitting in theirs.

The 60 "townhomes" have 48 different plans! This variety "affords distinction in living in style," the brochure states bravely. "Instead of the monotony of repetitive floor plans found in so many cooperatives, Buckingham East's potpourri of ever-changing levels and living arrangements provides all the privacy and ambience associated with a secluded country residence." (I don't know too many secluded country residences where the only bathroom is a full flight of stairs from the only bedroom, as in several triplexes here.) This building seems like a student project where time ran out; at the jury, the student is still too exhausted to speak coherently. It's a good idea, one struggles for tact, but—uh—it isn't worked out. (Yes, it's a building of distinction: newer-than-new this year, but dated by this time next year.)

Oddly for an '80s building, the brochure is selling design—not services, not security. A 24-hour doorman will pace the foyer, which is basically a passageway hugging the mailboxes. No other services or "security systems" are mentioned.

New apartment towers have sprouted up in various parts of Manhattan in the last few months. Geared to a super-affluent clientele, the buildings increasingly offer a variety of services in return for space. The following guide will help direct you to the newest cubbyhole with access to a wine cellar.



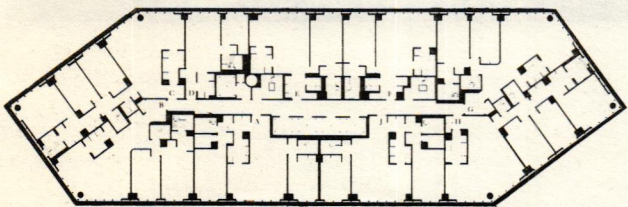
Buckingham East, apartment, eighth or eleventh floor

Minimalism

"A limited edition," states the flyer. An ornate frame surrounds a plan of the best apartment. In one corner, the ratio 1/34: The Residence on Madison has only 34 "luxurious new condominium apartments." Two per floor. No matter that this apartment, with split-level plan and living-room ceiling of 13 feet, 6 inches ("ideal for art collectors") is a limited edition itself. For the first eight floors, this split-level dovetails with 9-foot, 3-inch studios and 13-foot, 6-inch simplexes; for the next nine floors, in the setback tower, all ceilings are 9 feet, 6 inches.

The flyer has only three splendidly brief paragraphs. *The Building.* A few choice words, then: "Only a limited number of people will be fortunate enough to call 1080 home." *The Apartments.* Another great exit-line: "At 1080 the residents are known and treated with respect." *The Neighborhood.* "Glamorous neighborhood that sets the style for much of the world." A map has every respectable gallery and pâtisserie of the Known World (Fifth to Park, 68th to 90th).

Mentioned briefly: "sophisticated electronic security" (you need a key to get out of the elevator at your floor) and a 24-hour *conciierge*, if you please. Where do I sign? Did the flyer get me? Or is it the truly generous living room, 15 feet, 6 inches by 25 feet, 9 inches? Or the small scale of



River Tower, typical floor plan



Stephen B. Jacobs and Associates. 225 East 86th Street, *The Buckingham East.* (photo: Todd Henkels)

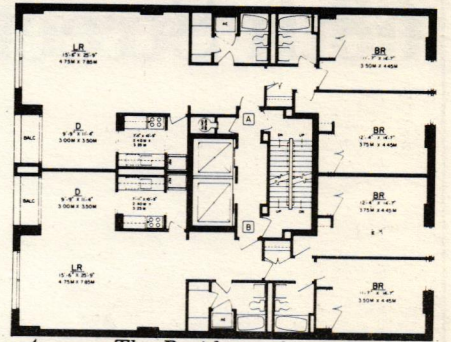
this "stately limestone" building: narrow, only two apartments wide, exactly right for Madison Avenue? Or the windows? In all my looking—at aluminum and more aluminum—was I waiting for just such a handsome, large, pivoting, mahogany window?

If I had a spare \$530,550, I'd grab that apartment. And I'd frame the flyer, which is a work of art. Its feeble drawing of an interior (viewed from a fictional point halfway across Madison) is furnished dowdily, as some of the best art collectors will do. A brilliant stroke. Or just a feeble drawing?

Dining Out

I've saved best for last—best brochure, that is. Classy. Large. On the front cover, only the words *River Tower.* On the back cover, only the address—424 East 54th. On the first page, only an aerial photograph, with this through-the-block behemoth as recognizable as the U.N. Most of the words, when you get to them, are about Sutton Place—and vicinity.

"Where else could one plan a day where one might breakfast at Tiffany's, browse through Bloomingdale's, lunch at the Plaza, look into the Museum of Modern Art, sip tea (or cocktails) at the Hotel Pierre, dine at Lutèce,



1080 Madison Avenue, *The Residence*, lower floor plan



Thierry W. Despont and Emil Steo. 1080 Madison Avenue under construction. (photo: Gaston Dubois)

and dance at Regine's . . . all within a ten-block radius of your apartment." After such a day, a person would need all the "special features" a building could provide. Canopied driveway, valet parking, wine cellar, Telex and copying machines, 24-hour limousine, and more. It is altogether a larger-than-life residence, strikingly diagonal to the gridiron. Between the building and the outside world is a DMZ of plazas (three of them), without a bench to sit on. Far back into the site is the lobby, possibly the tallest foyer east of the Hudson. The apartments? Interesting angled corners and huge bay windows, in the topmost units. But half-inch scale plans won't make dining areas or kitchens or bathrooms any bigger than they are in all units. Even those breakfasting at Tiffany's will want to bathe at home. The smallest 1BR (one of seven apartments per floor) has a miniaturized, 10-foot, 6-inch, by 9-foot, 4-inch bedroom. Unbelievable. But so are the views, and the prices: a 3BR rents for \$5800 a month; a 2BR for \$4200. "A very special place to live," in Brochurespeak.

Home Is Where the Doorman Is

The best apartments used to have the best space, materials, craftsmanship. The direction now is different. (Leave aside the \$3.5-million duplex penthouses at still-a-building St. James's Tower on East 54th: more terraces than bathrooms, more bathrooms than bedrooms, and one bathroom with six fixtures and a sauna! Clearly a blast from the past.)

No, the future belongs to the service department. To the "head doorkeepers" and "executive housekeepers," to the concierges and uniformed security officers, to the porters and hallmen, to the valet parking services, secretarial and maid services, limousine and catering services. Convenience and protection—electronic or in uniform—this is what sells.

Expect keen competition. Why settle for an apartment offering a "sep kit" when another may promise to stand in line for you at Zabar's? Expect the unexpected. In Sweden, eight years ago, I saw a remarkable *servicehus* (an apartment block with food and other services available), where a console in the lobby registered the flats where no toilets were recently flushed! For a person who has slipped on the rug and is out cold, this could be an important service. We're not ready for it yet, judging by the newest apartment buildings in Manhattan. Wait.

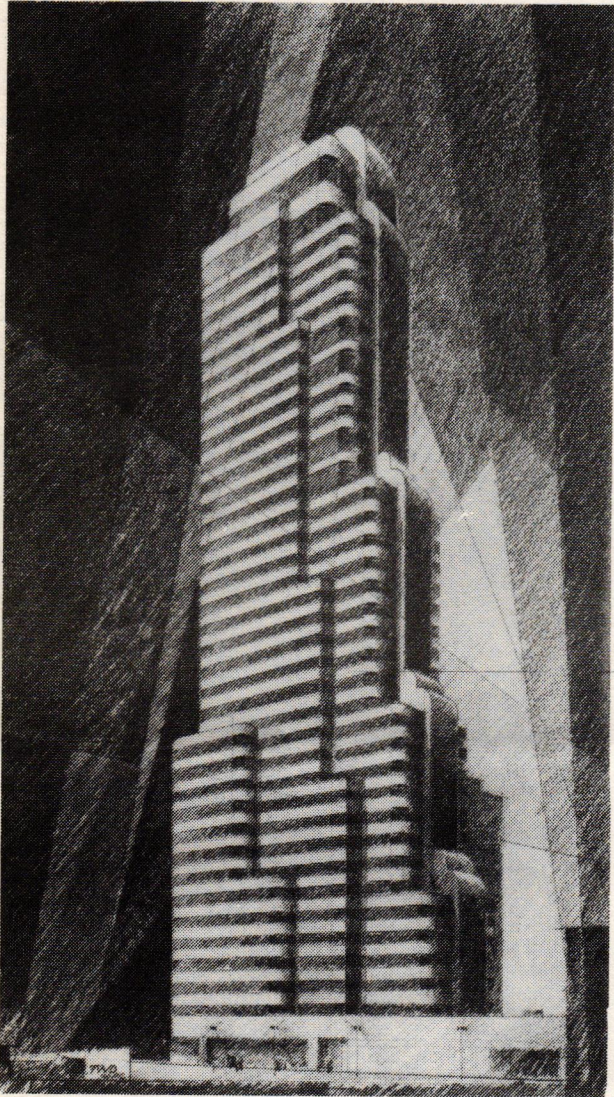
Peter Claman of Schuman Lichtenstein, Claman & Efron. 424 East 54th Street, *River Tower*, as seen from the East River. (photo: Herman Bernstein Associates)



Projects

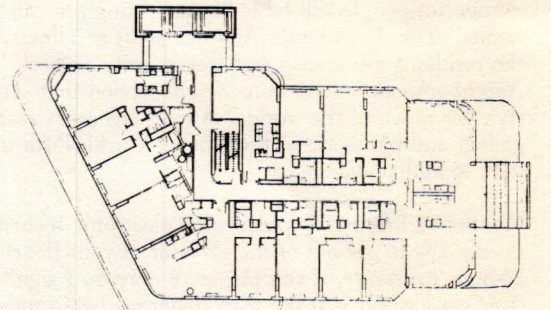
Two large apartment projects slated to go up on Broadway are part of the renaissance of the Upper West Side. They recall New York's better days of apartment design in the twenties and thirties.

68th Street and Broadway



Davis, Brody & Associates. Proposed apartment tower, 68th Street and Broadway. Photo-collage of model in context

For a site on 68th Street and Broadway, near Lincoln Center, David, Brody & Associates have designed a thirties-Moderne apartment tower, bringing a touch of style to a slightly unsightly area. The 38-story tower will be of concrete with a limestone-and-glass curtain-wall with aluminum trim at the joints. Wintergardens—forming a vertical glass strip literally cascading down the building's east face—and terraces at the corners will provide access to the morning sun and a view of nearby Central Park. The project, for developer William Zeckendorf, is awaiting expected approval from the City Planning Commission and the local Community Board before going into construction in the summer of 1982.

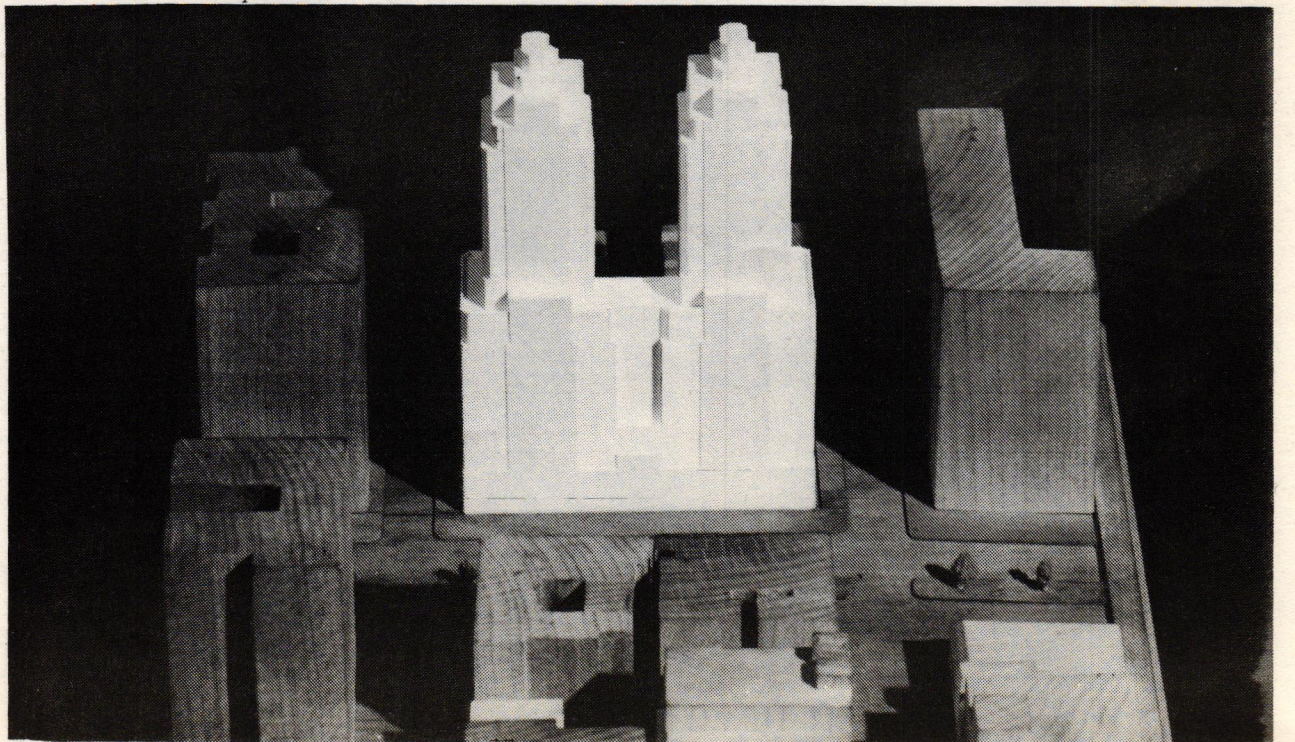


An upper floor plan

86th Street and Broadway

Meanwhile, further uptown, The Gruzen Partnership has borrowed a page from the great apartments of Central Park West—most noticeably the San Remo—for a 26-story, twin-towered apartment building at 86th Street and Broadway. The 182-unit building, which will occupy the entire block front, will have a concrete frame, and a brick skin, with touches of limestone trim. Construction is expected to start in late spring.

The Gruzen Partnership. Model.



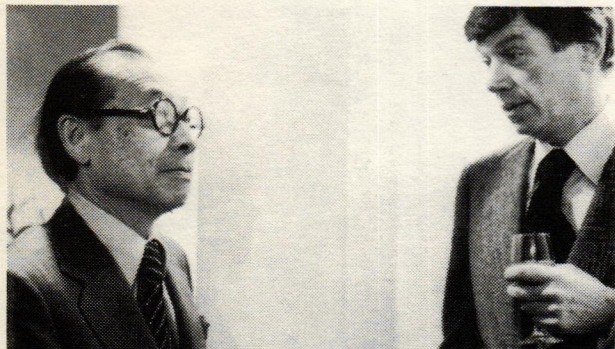
Notes & Comment

People and Projects

Robert Maxwell Named Dean at Princeton

Robert Maxwell, Professor of Architecture at the University College of the University of London (Bartlett School) and a partner of Douglas Stephen & Partners there, has been named Dean of the School of Architecture at Princeton University. Maxwell, who has been a visiting professor at Princeton in previous years, has published a number of articles on architecture and wrote *New British Architecture* (Thames and Hudson; Praeger, London, New York; 1972) in addition to teaching and designing. His firm is well known for its design of shopping centers, civic centers, and housing. Maxwell will replace Dean Robert Geddes in the fall. He has impressed certain members of the Princeton faculty with his "intellectual breadth" and his "openness to architectural discourse." States Maxwell about Princeton: "It seems to hold the balance between ancient wisdom and modern know-how, both of which I believe to be essential to the development of architecture in the coming generation." A graduate of Liverpool's School of Architecture, Maxwell is yet another addition to Princeton's growing cadre of British architects that currently includes Alan Colquhoun and Anthony Vidler.

Robert Maxwell



Beaumont Update

I.M. Pei bowed out of the renovation of the Vivian Beaumont Theater project, reportedly owing to design disagreements with acoustical consultant **Cyril Harris**. Harris is known for delivering a sound acoustical space, but naturally places acoustical demands first. He has worked successfully with **Johnson/Burgee** on Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, the Terrace Theater in the Kennedy Center, and the National Theater in Bombay. He is currently working with them on the renovation of the New York State Theater. And guess who Harris will most likely be working with on the Beaumont now that Pei is out of the picture?

People and Projects

Word has it that the furniture **Richard Meier** is designing for Knoll will be ready very soon; **Robert Venturi**'s line is expected in October.

Architectural drawings are doing well on the auction market—so well, in fact, that Christie's in London has appointed **Eileen Harris** as its consultant on acquisition and sale of drawings. A March sale specialized in 18th-century architectural drawings and watercolors.

Soon on your cable television sets you may be able to see more architecture: Already Hearst/ABC Video Service has taped a discussion for its Arts Productions with **Paul Goldberger**, **Charles Gwathmey**, and **Robert Stern**. Moderators for the show, "Nightcap," are **Studs Terkel** and **Calvin Trillin**. The architecture session is not scheduled to be run yet, but will be eventually seen on Channel 10 in Manhattan and other Warner Amex Nickelodeon stations nationwide.



Left: I.M. Pei and John Burgee
Right: Cyril Harris
(photos: Dorothy Alexander)

Arthur Rosenblatt, Vice President of Architecture and Planning at the Metropolitan Museum of Art is joining the New York Public Library as Assistant to the President for Architecture, Real Estate, and Planning. He will be "on loan" to the library while continuing in his present position. Mr. Rosenblatt will be advisor on all design and construction proposals at the Central Research Library on Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street. He will also oversee the implementation of the renovation of the Library being undertaken by **Davis Brody & Associates** and **Giorgio Cavaglieri**. . . . Apropos this project, Lewis Davis reports that they are very excited by the prospect but have nothing coherent to show yet. . . . Davis Brody is also working on a design for the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens. At the same time, **Roche/Dinkeloo** is working on a new design for the Central Park Zoo—to replace most of the outdated Robert Moses red brick "houses." (The seal pool is to be saved.)

Hans Hollein is doing a shop interior for a Munich retailer in the Trump Tower going up at 56th and Fifth. . . . **Richard Meier** did get the Des Moines Arts Center addition. . . . **Frank Gehry** and **Aldo Rossi** are included in the *Dokumenta 7* international exhibition to be held in Kassel, Germany, from June 19 to September 28; **Bernard Tschumi** will show his work in the "Dokumenta Urbana" section of the exhibition. Dutch Architect **Walter Nikkels** is redoing the exhibition space for *Dokumenta 7* at the Museum Fridericianum.

Quote of the Month:

"[It was] a small detail, and yet it killed more people than any other building failure in the United States. . . . If there is a lesson in it, it is that we must consider every detail." Dr. Edward Pfrang of the National Bureau of Standards, regarding the failure of the walkway structure in the Hyatt Regency in Kansas City, designed by **Patty, Berkebile & Nelson**; **Herbert Duncan**; and **Monroe & Lefebvre**. (*The New York Times*, February 26, 1982.)

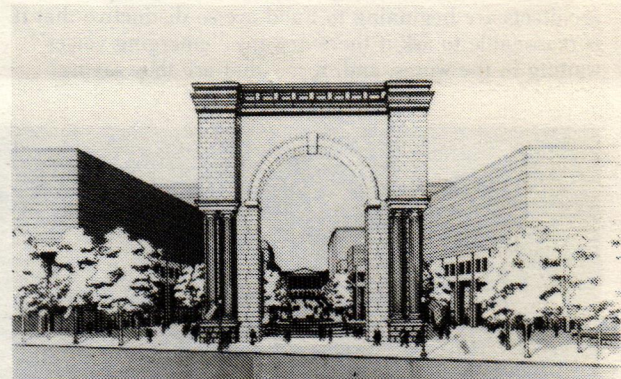
In the Works

Battery Park Moves Along

In New York rumor has it that signatures are coming soon on leases for the first of twelve parcels in the Battery Park City Phase II residential development. Although there is no official comment on the matter, we hear that architects expected to be signed up for the first two are **Davis/Brody** and **Moore, Grover, Harper**.

Another Memorial in D.C.

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts has given its approval to plans for a ten-story Navy Memorial Arch at Market Square on Pennsylvania Avenue between 7th and 9th Streets in Washington. The New York firm of **Conklin Rossant** is design consultant for the Navy Memorial. The 104-foot-high arch, the largest of its kind in the United States, will be designed as the centerpiece of a large plaza area including a fountain and seating for 1500: The arch itself will have panels that can be lowered to form a "shell" for outdoor concerts by the Navy band and other organizations. Stanley Bleifeld has been selected to do the sculpture for this memorial.



Proposal for the Navy Memorial Arch, Washington, D.C.

The Windy City visits the Big Apple

Two major Chicago firms have projects underway in New York: **Bruce Graham** of **SOM/Chicago** is awaiting imminent approval from the City on a multi-use complex to fill the entire block between 49th and 50th Streets, Eighth and Ninth Avenues. An early scheme has been described to us as having a large office tower (with atrium, natch) at the west end of the site; three other towers; and some smaller-scale buildings on the side streets—all on a plinth.

Meanwhile, **Murphy/Jahn** has signed up with Park Tower Realty (a.k.a. George Klein, who already has buildings by Philip Johnson and Edward Larrabee Barnes underway) for a building on a 38,000-s.-f. site directly west of the Colt Building on Park Avenue—a slot running through the block from 56th to 55th Streets. Project designer **James Goettsch** says they are "still fine-tuning" the design and that it will be at least a year before the start of construction.

In the Works

The Architectural Club of Chicago is planning a book to be published in conjunction with a show of work at the Art Institute of Chicago opening July 27th. Each of the 80 members of the club has been allocated two pages for a project—it must be one that has not been published previously—and there will be essays by **Stanley Tigerman**, **John Zukowsky**, and **Benjamin Marshall**. Comments on the projects by the trio jurving the exhibition in April (**Peter Eisenman**, **James Stirling**, and **Evans Woollen**) will also be included.

Emerging Voices

Taft and Friday at The Architectural League

Richard Oliver

Curiosity about new talent is a common enough state of mind in any field of endeavor, and so there need be little justification for a series like "Emerging Voices." It is also natural that such a series should be held in New York City, a place with an awesome capacity to identify and to consume the fashionable, the novel, and the new. Yet, this is, I think, an especially important moment to take a look at younger architects.

Today American architecture is dominated by a group of practitioners who were born between 1925 and 1940; many, if not all of these were included in the Architectural League's 1966 exhibition "40 Under 40," curated by Robert A.M. Stern. This generation of architects, including Richard Meier, Charles Moore, and Robert Venturi, may be distinguished by a diversity of personal styles, but at the same time, they can be identified as a group by their historical relationship to the International Style. These architects have either enriched the forms of modernism, or suggested viable alternatives to those forms. In doing this, they have posed certain problems for themselves and have solved a number of difficult aesthetic questions, and the results have been applied to the full range of late twentieth-century building programs, from low-cost housing to museums. The buildings that this older group of architects are beginning to build are so distinctive that it is reasonable to ask if there *are* any "emerging voices" waiting in the wings, and, if so, what are they saying?

What aesthetic problems have they posed, and how are these different, if at all, from those posed by the older group today?

March 9, the first evening in the series, featured Taft Architects of Houston and Friday Architects/Planners of Philadelphia. Presenting the work of Taft were the three partners: John J. Casbarian, Danny Samuels, and Robert H. Timme. Friday partner David Šlovic showed the Philadelphia firm's work.

John Casbarian, in reviewing a chronology of Taft's work dating back to 1972, described the office structure as one of team effort by three designing partners, and stressed the use of models in the Taft design process. The firm's shadow box models are especially appealing visually and are distinctive enough to have given Taft a "presentation" technique as specific to their architectural identity as Michael Graves' drawings are to his. During the evening, the word used again and again to describe the essence of Taft's work was "order," a word that implied an abstract quality both in planning and in the hard-edged, planar character of the firm's completed buildings.

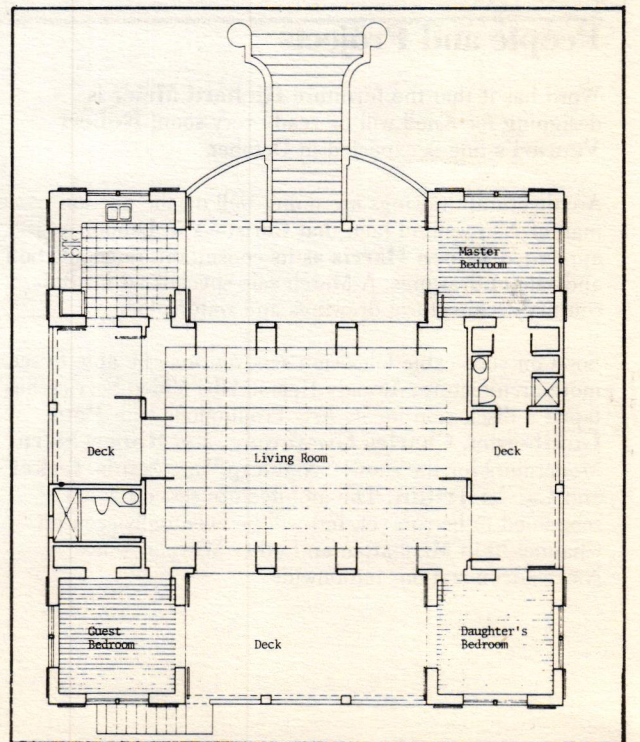
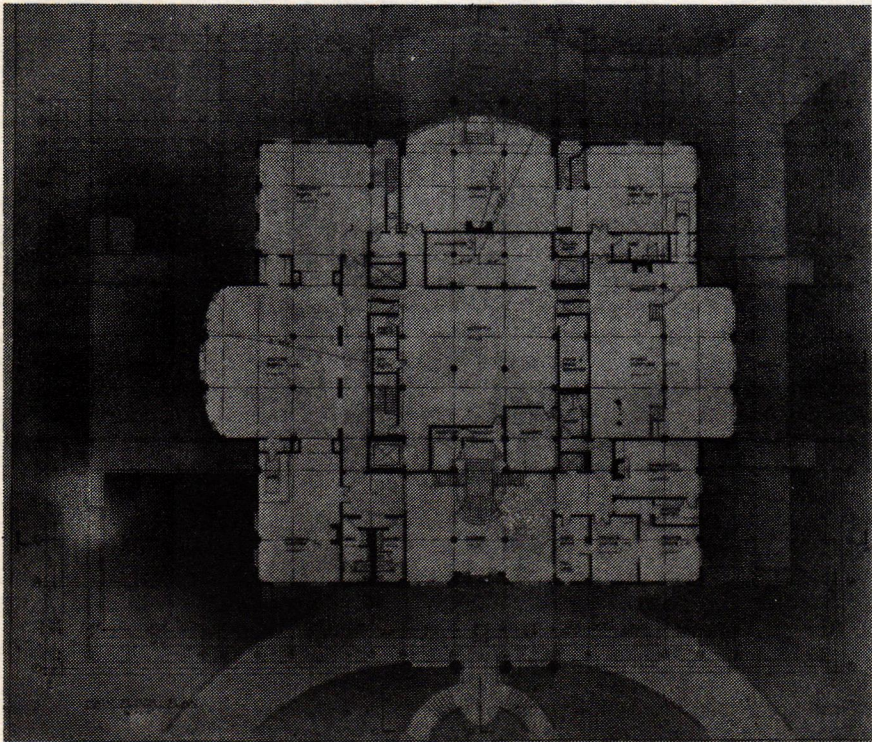
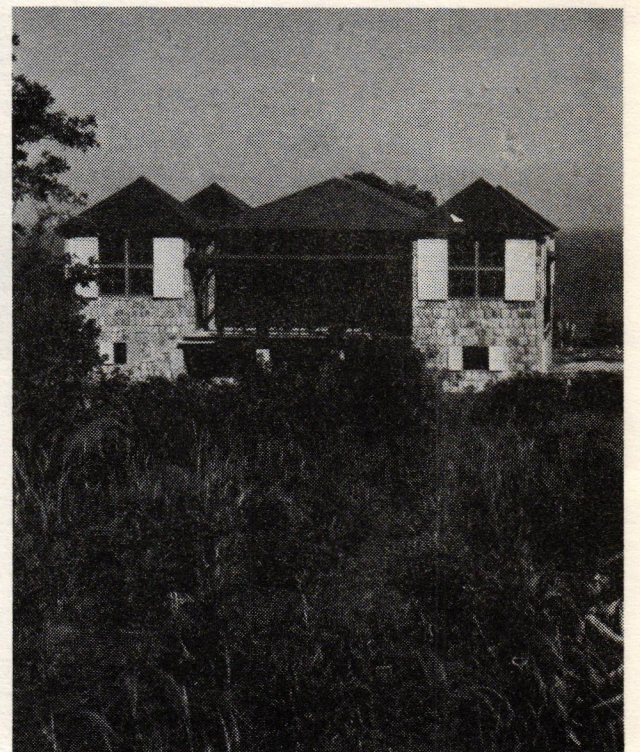
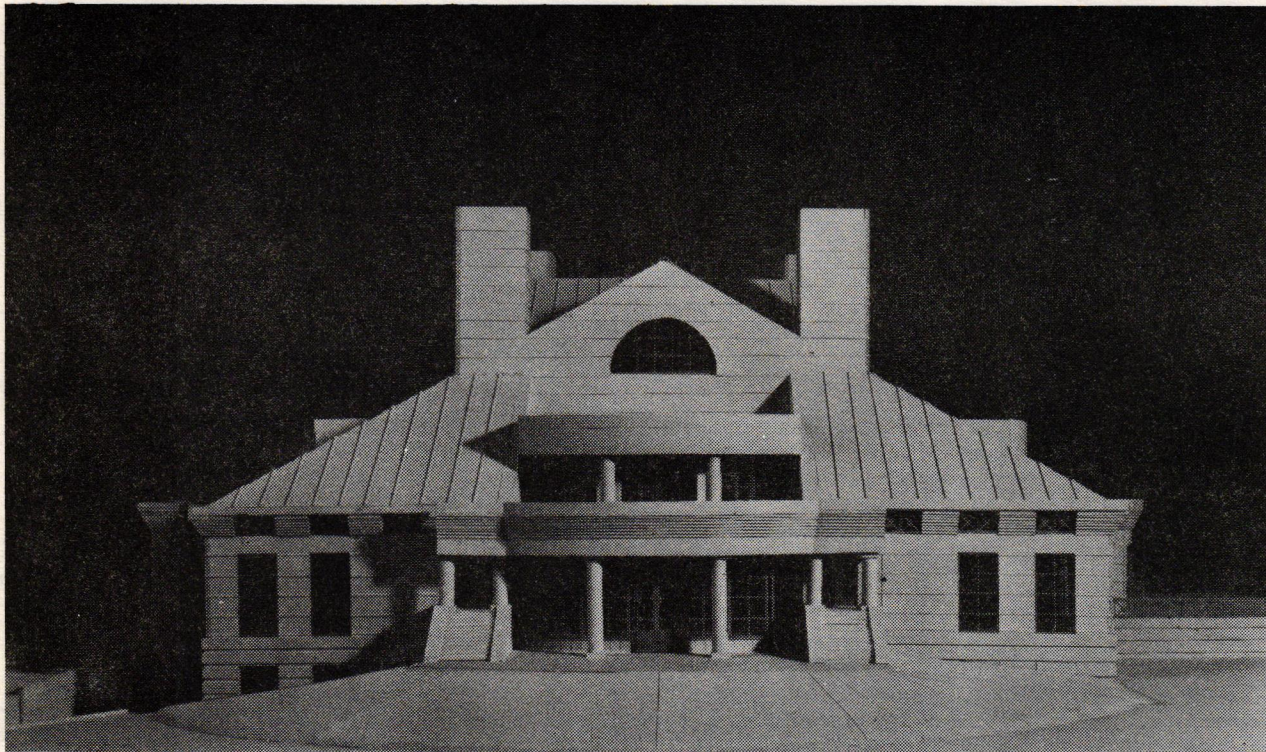
Danny Samuels showed slides of a series of recently completed buildings, beginning with the renovated Hendley Building in Galveston (completed in 1979), to which a gridded structural/service/stair "wall" was added,

The first of the Architectural League of New York's **Emerging Voices** series was held on March 9. Featured firms were Taft Architects of Houston and Friday Architects/Planners of Philadelphia.

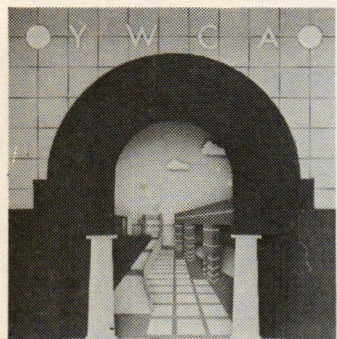
thereby extending the life of the nineteenth-century building. The principal feature of the small Municipal Control Building for the Quail Valley Utility District near Houston (completed in 1978) is its symmetrical facade, centered on a small but grandiosely formal arched doorway, which is balanced by the composition of the exterior skin of tile, stucco, and glass. These projects point up one strength of much of Taft's work to date: it can take an essentially utilitarian, low-budget project and make something expressive and "architectural" out of it.

A more important work is the newly completed Houston YWCA Building (completed in 1981). Its major facade, 350 feet long, is delineated as three "layered" planes in brown tile and cream and gray stucco. Ornament in the form of blue ceramic tile banding completes the composition. A long facade is always a daunting architectural problem and Taft has achieved impressive results with this one.

The third Taft partner, Robert Timme, presented the firm's most recent work, including projects still on the boards. In these, the presence of an important central element was evident, signaling a move away from Taft's earlier layered or linear compositions: a Catholic student center is composed around a square courtyard, and a country club for Fort Worth has a solid core of kitchens and massing that piles up to four central gables and corner piers. Of the central-plan schemes shown, a house



This spring, the Architectural League of New York has organized a series of seven lectures called "Emerging Voices," which is sponsored by Krueger, a furnishings manufacturer. Each week, a pair of young architects will present their work.



Taft Architects. "Shadow box" for the YWCA project, Houston; 1981.

on the island of Nevis (1981), composed of four stone corner turrets around a central wooden room, was perhaps the high point of Taft's presentation, and best demonstrated the direction of the firm's current work. The house has a rigorous, four-square plan, which yields a composition of clear volumes. But whereas the earlier work seemed to emphasize an abstract effect of pure volume, with surfaces treated as planes of color and ornament reduced merely to bands of color, the Nevis House displays a new attention to mass and to the craft of building: the stone corner pavilions are beautifully constructed; the roof framing artfully incorporates a local technique; and the use of sensuous color and stenciled ornament articulates the structure's surfaces.

In presenting their work, the Taft partners alluded to no antecedents, as though their work arose *tabula rasa*. This, of course, is the case neither with Taft nor with any other architecture firm, but what was appealing about the Taft presentation was its clear-eyed concentration on the work itself. These three architects have thought through their ideas, and this is evident both in their work and in the way they present it, without having to justify or explain it by referring to the work of others.

The second presentation of the evening was by David Slovic of Friday Architects/Planners. Although the work of Taft and Friday share certain elements, their respective

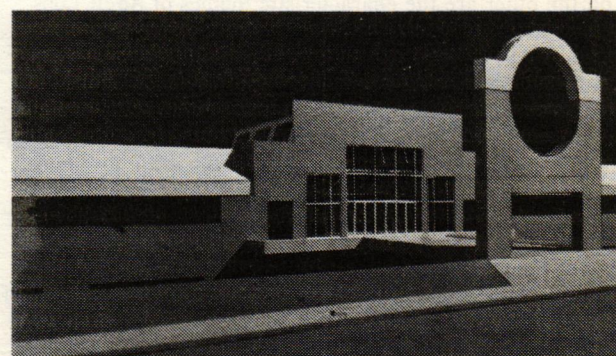
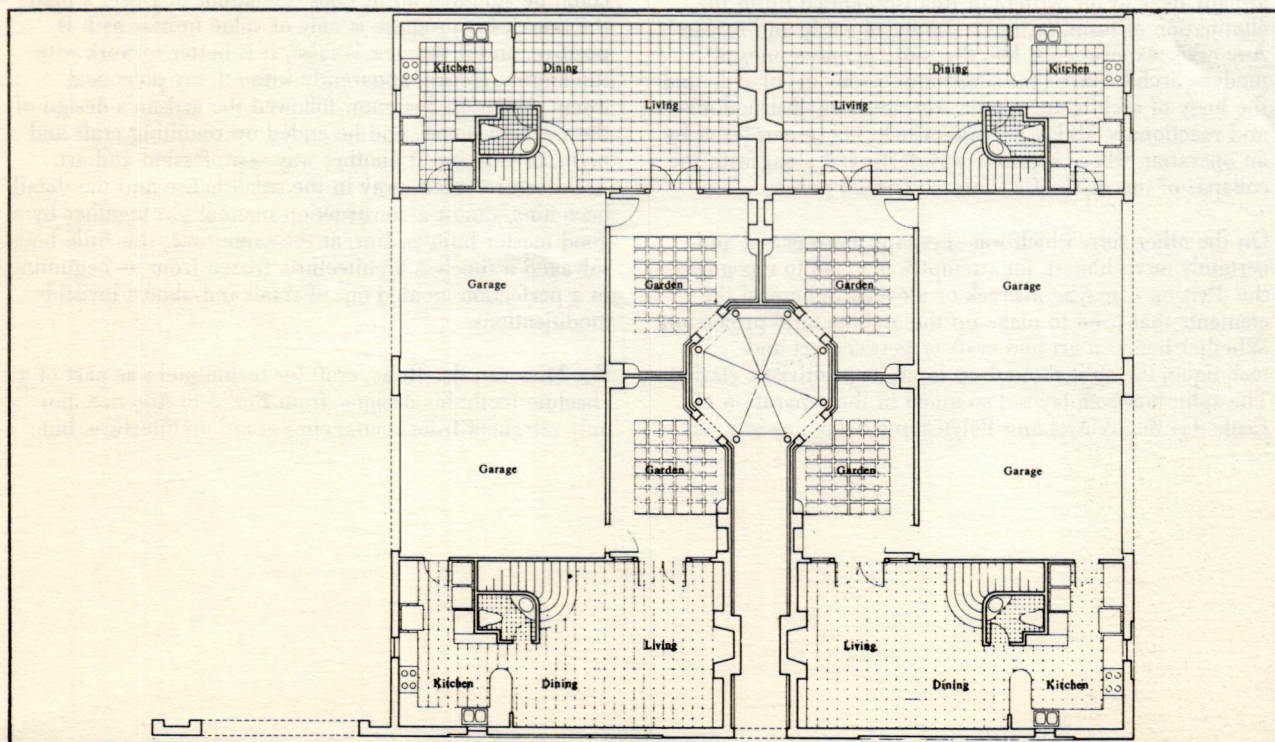
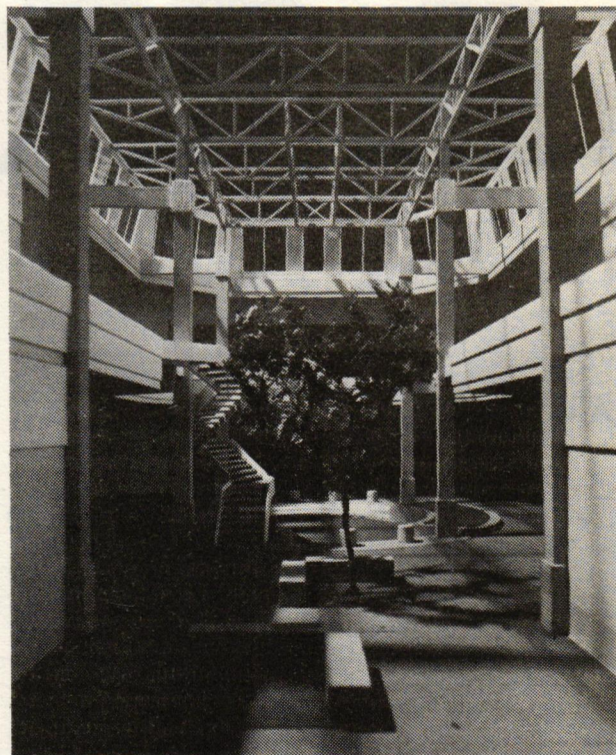
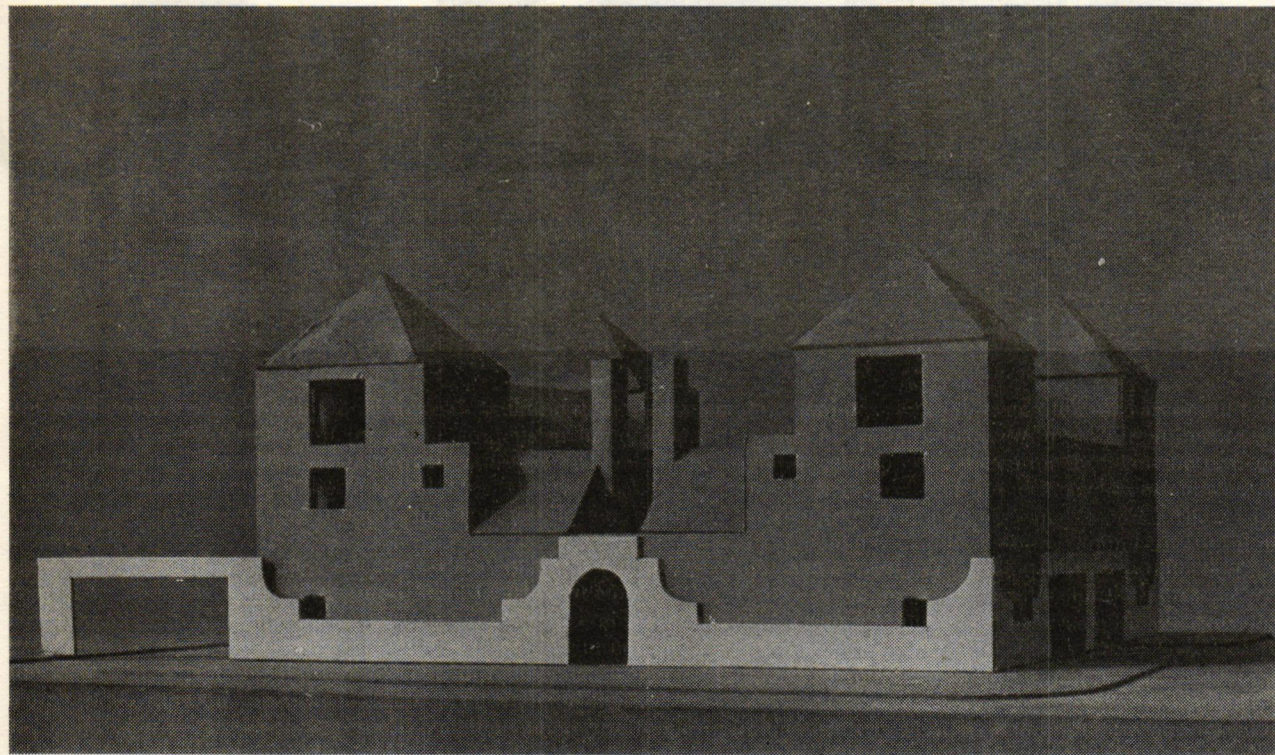
presentations could not have been more distinct. Whereas the Taft architects talked about only their own work, Slovic prefaced his slides with a diatribe on the failures of the Modern Movement and of post-modernism, chastising practically everyone in sight for being "formalists," and claiming that architecture should have a sociocultural base (the slap against Thomas Gordon Smith's "Etruscan" house in Texas, however, merely revealed Slovic's apparent lack of understanding of or sympathy for the venerable sociocultural tradition of classical architecture in America). Slovic's talk, particularly for this audience, was pretentious, and in the opinion of this observer, wrongheaded: Regardless of its aesthetic, cultural, social, and/or political implications, architecture *always* deals with form, since that is its primary medium; therefore, any architect who is concerned with the physical reality of a building is perforce a "formalist." Mr. Slovic's talk also had the side effect of creating a somewhat negative atmosphere in which to look at his firm's work, which was unfortunate, because much of it is interesting and even beautiful.

Mr. Slovic showed several of the firm's projects. The Old Pine Community Center (1974-77) combines the direct simplicity of a vernacular brick building with sophisticated patterned tile floors inside and iconographic tile medallions in the forecourt. In their projected design for University City Family Housing in Philadelphia,

scheduled to go into production this spring, Friday employed formal details found on local blue-collar housing in order to adapt the work to its context.

The last project shown was the firm's recent renovation of the student center at Temple University in Philadelphia (1979-81). The most striking aspect of the remodeled interiors is the use of ceramic tile to form bold patterns and to make iconographic plaques in the floors and on the walls, a technique that allows much richness, yet also maintains the planar effect of the surfaces.

The choice of Taft and Friday to begin the "Emerging Voices" series was fortuitous because, in contrasting ways, both firms directly address the physical and professional context in which they work. Taft, working in a city still taking shape, seems to regard the qualities of that physical context merely as a springboard to something new and personal. The firm seems to regard the broader professional context—that is, the work of its elders and peers—with a plucky sense of independence. Friday, on the other hand, working in a city burdened with a strong heritage, appears to view the qualities of that physical context as worthy of being reflected in the firm's own work. Friday apparently considers the professional context as something with which it must do battle. One suspects that, as the series unfolds this spring, most of the "emerging voices" will lean somewhat toward one or the other of these two positions.

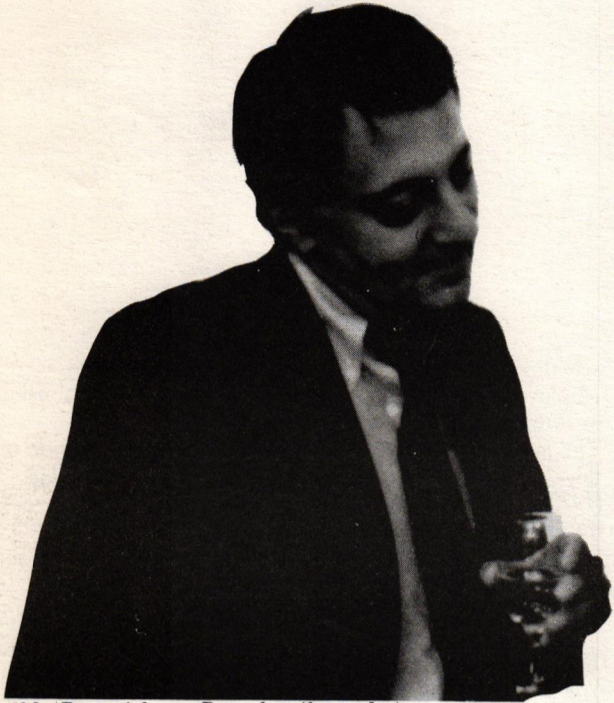


Page 16, left: Taft Architects. River Crest Country Club, Fort Worth; 1982. Model and main floor plan. Right: Taft Architects. Talbot House, Nevis, W.I.; 1982—main floor plan, below

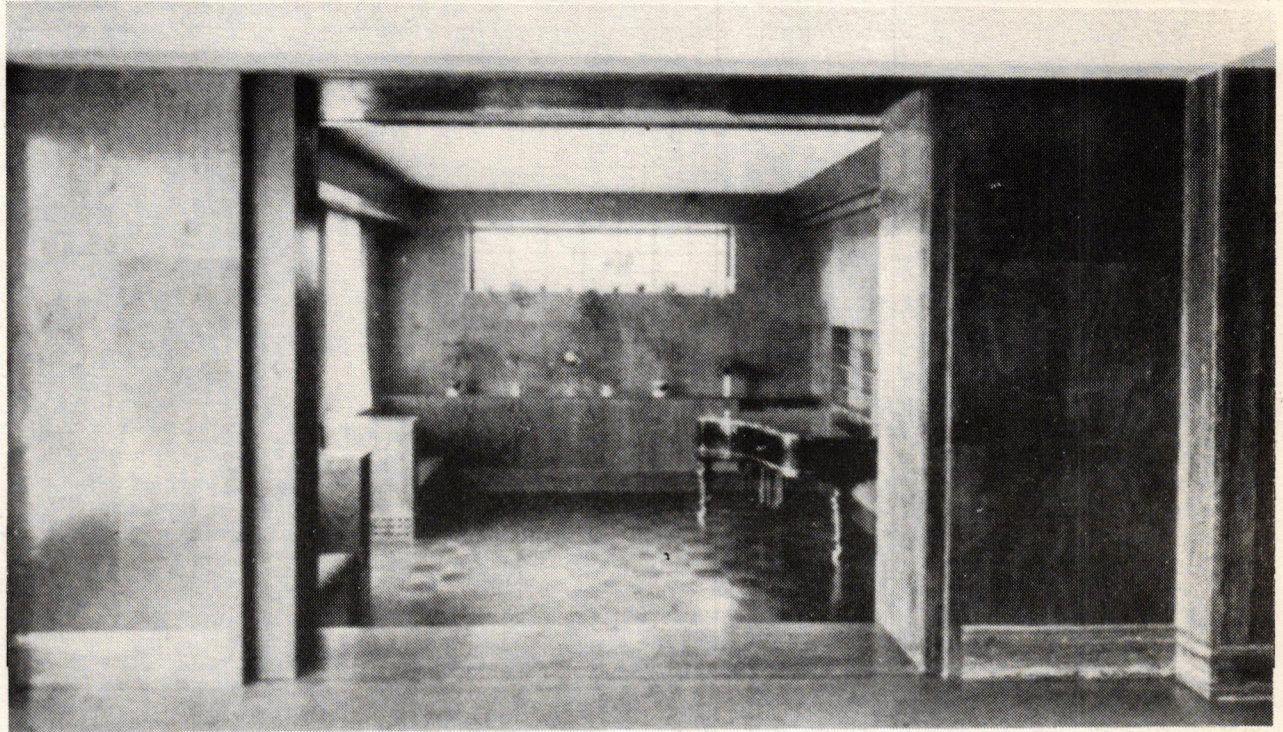
Page 17, left: Taft Architects. Commonwealth Townhouses, Houston; 1982. Project model and first floor plan.

Above: Friday Architects/Planners. Burlington Center, Burlington, NJ; 1982. Model, elevation, and interior of mall (photo: Robert Harris).

Modernism's Trajectory



Aldo Rossi (photo: Dorothy Alexander)



Moller House, Vienna; 1928

ROSSI

Aldo Rossi

There is no doubt that the most interesting thing about Adolf Loos is his architecture; or, rather, it is the dominant aspect of his work. The way in which he carried out this work is less certain; he loved to write, to draw, to travel, to argue, to build. He claimed that, like all thinkers and writers—at least ever since the Greeks—he was pursuing the truth. But, as is well known, the search for truth does not necessarily follow a straight path, and, above all, cannot be made into a profession.

So work and profession on the one hand and art and style on the other are the characteristic themes of Adolf Loos' ideas and of his architecture. As a result, a "formal" criticism of his work is split right from the start. His indifference toward the technique used perhaps was what set him apart most clearly from the architects of the Secession, who, having grown up in the same culture, and, in the last analysis, having dealt with the same problems, did not break with its stylistic schema or figurative mode of expression of technique.

Adolf Loos drew a distinction between architecture and handicraft: "Architecture is not an art: only a small part of architecture belongs to art." And so the concrete possibility was that of the profession: "I know that I am a craftsman who must serve the men of his time. And because of this I know that art really exists." The dilemma involved in the separation of art and craft, unknown to

artists until the eighteenth century (at least until the clocks of Piermarini and the multiform activities of Schinkel), was the principal problem facing modern architects.

On the more aggressive and cunning side, represented by the Bauhaus and the Secession, the old task of the craftsman became an unquestionable professional opportunity; furniture, graphics, carpeting, and domestic appliances formed the body of "industrial design." The logic of this design, which was overwhelming, was extended in turn to architecture. The debate over function, already dear to the writers of treatises, ended up in the elimination of form, or, more simply, of study and research. Any other experiments, like the more genuine ones of modern architecture that confronted problems of style and the body of architecture itself, were seen as obstructionist and reactionary. Today we cannot help being perplexed by an operation whose ideology was destroyed along with the collapse of the myth of welfare and social peace.

On the other side, which was perhaps more genial and certainly more honest, an attempt was made to recognize the division—maybe a wreck or a catastrophe—of the elements that used to make up the architectural profession. Whether between art and craft or between art and technique, the split showed up in all its positivistic clarity. The split, however, lay not so much in the separation of Ecole des Beaux Arts and Polytechnic School as in a no

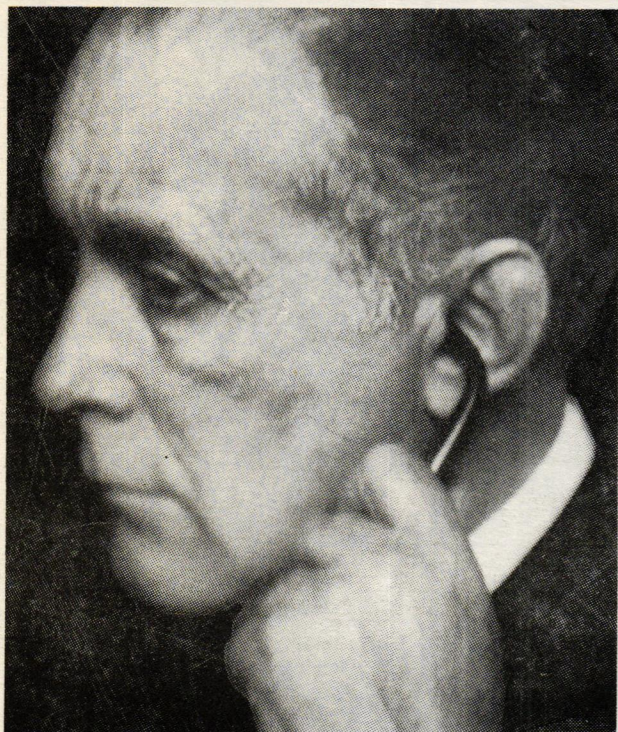
longer reconcilable division between art and profession.

If Adolf Loos showed himself to be the keenest supporter of this division, others—such as the Germans Heinrich Tessenow and Mies van der Rohe—were close behind him. Both these men, like the Viennese master, were familiar with the history of architecture. They knew that they were part of that history and judged it by the evolution of the present.

Tessenow's position was certainly the most consistent, and could be summed up in Loos' metaphor of Durer's plane: the search for progress is only of value insofar as it is positive, and if the new is false, it is better to work with the known. Hence, apparently without any polemical intent, Heinrich Tessenow followed the artisan's design of the German house, and he ended up reuniting craft and myth, or—to put it another way—profession and art. Architecture faded away in the small house and the detail, becoming almost a construction manual put together by a good master builder. But, at the same time, this little house salvaged a timeless architecture, frozen from its beginnings in a perfection created out of small and almost invisible modifications.

For Mies van der Rohe, craft (or technique) was part of an absolute truth; his designs, from Berlin to America, not only refrained from renouncing grand architecture, but

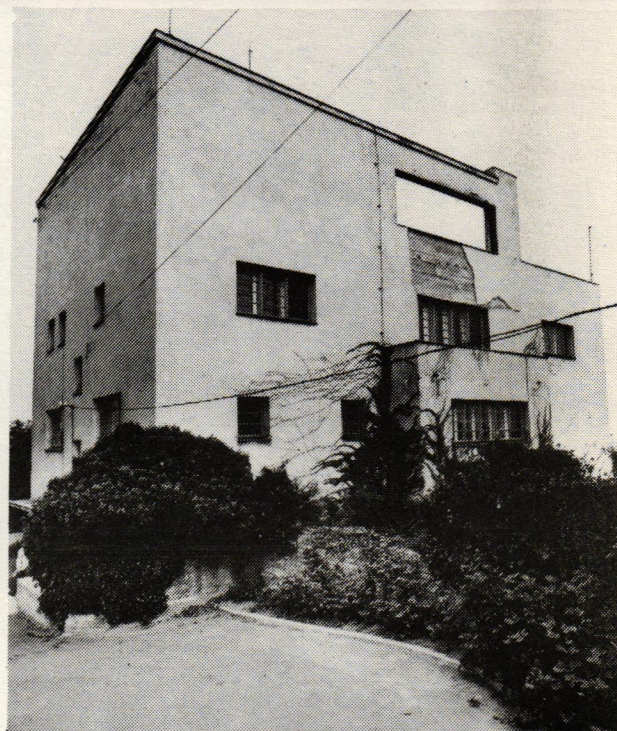
In keeping with the appearance in May of a compilation and assessment of Adolf Loos' oeuvre, *Skyline* publishes a series of articles focusing on his contribution and his persona. In the following article, Aldo Rossi places Loos' thoughts and architectural concerns in perspective.



Adolf Loos



House in Sauraugasse, Vienna; 1913



Müller House, Prague; 1930 (photo: Roberto Schezen)

The following article is excerpted from the forthcoming book *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works* (Essays by Benedetto Gravagnuolo with a preface by Aldo Rossi; photographs by Roberto Schezen; translated by C.H. Evans. Rizzoli International, New York, May 1982. 228 pages, 384 illustrations. \$50.00)

n LOOS

even set out to be "grand architecture." His architecture is born out of history, and harks back straight to Schinkel, but it seeks the essential. It is not a nihilistic nothing, but a void that is the form of truth. Uniquely, Mies van der Rohe defined architecture by quoting Saint Thomas Aquinas' definition of truth: "Adequatio intellectus et rei." ["The intellect coincides with its object."] Any division was therefore wiped out; architecture was perceived to be an aspect of culture and of its evolution, and was what gave culture form. Thus the chair and the skyscraper were brought together in the same design, where a high technology made use of the classical form; or, alternatively, the classical manner was made possible by the understanding of technique. By different routes, Tessenow and Mies seemed to continue architecture between Durer's plane and the great Aquinas, ignoring its crises and its commercial aspects alike, without separating knowing and doing.

Strangely, Adolf Loos had never been framed in this cultural world, to which he belonged. Hence he was somehow forced into controversy with the artists of the Secession. It was a sharp controversy, and one that was also congenial to his character, but did not identify his more general position in the context of modern architecture. As for Tessenow and Mies—whom I see, together with Loos, as a trio of masters—Loos made a radical denunciation of the terms that they reassembled: what made him unique is that he did not wish to reunite

art and technique. On the contrary, his declaration of their separation or conflict almost seemed to be a strategy for survival, just as his friend, the great poet Georg Trakl, could also write that "now all this is lost." Loos' finest essay, and his most fascinating title, "Ornament and Crime," is an apology for ornament, and therefore ends in an impossibility.

Speaking of ornament in architecture, it would have occurred to no one before him to think in terms of the savage's body and the tattoo, and of the tattoo as a form of degeneration applied to the modern body. The beauty of this ornament had disappeared; it was lost, and any revival of it was only decadence. Loos' contemporary and pupil in architecture, Ludwig Wittgenstein, would say later that "what is torn, torn must remain." This declaration of the separation of art and craft, or really that what is torn must stay torn, would not be so unusual if it had not been experienced by Adolf Loos in the first person. He experienced it as a worker in the most personal sense, since handicraft (certainly) and art (perhaps) were the well-springs of his work.

One of the readers of *Das Andere* ("The Other") asked him why he continued to be an architect, since he had such contempt for architects. He replied, "Because this job has provided me with my living." And, he specifically added, "Because it is the job I know. Just as in America I

made my living for some time by washing dishes." He said, "One could support oneself here in some other way, too." All this because his activity was not at all architectural, he claimed, in an era "in which every carpet designer calls himself an architect."

Thus an important aspect of the contradiction between art and profession emerged that the idealistic position had always failed to take into account: that of the artist's means of subsistence. In this, too, the Viennese master was like one of the great artists of the ancient world in terms of the way in which daily life, with its problems of money, sickness, and private matters, was frequently given a lot of space in his letters.

I believe Loos' position was the most critical stand taken against the moralism of the Modern Movement and its constantly redemptive attitude toward doing, as well as its optimism about how architecture could teach society how to live.

In total opposition to this viewpoint (and in an often irritating manner), Adolf Loos discouraged every aficionado of architecture. Everyone should live in his own house, according to his own personality, and the house should grow with him outside any style, and, in the last analysis, without any imposition of taste. But it might also

Rossi on Loos



be likely that someone would need advice on this or that solution, or, more simply, would be too busy to decorate his own house. Then, the architect, trying to do his job well, would advise him. That was all. That was the one job left.

In reality it was with this idea that Adolf Loos' architecture began. Having cleared the field, in which he had reconciled himself to living in a mercenary position, there remained for Loos the idea that "the architect is a mason who has studied Latin." In this definition, which is almost an epigraph, there is an attitude that was in conflict with those of Loos' contemporaries. This definition is no different from the definition of the poet that Umberto Saba [1883-1957] was obliged to give in opposition to the contemporary rhetoric. Saba knew that poetry did not circulate alone through the lanes of Trieste; it had ancient forebears. But its glory was academic and dusty and the poet had to walk around the city to find poetry in the boys who were playing ball, or in their sisters, who sadly sewed their cheerful banners. Adolf Loos, too, caught between Classicism and his attack on the Secession, wandered in the city and was entranced by old Viennese houses. Only a great architect could have written in those times: "... And this illusion [of having deep ties with the tradition of Viennese buildings] was further strengthened for me by what a modern artist and enemy of mine had to say of me: 'He wants to be a modern artist and he builds a house like the old Viennese houses.'" This love for the old face of the city struck one who had "... always had the illusion of having solved this problem in the manner of our old Viennese masters."

The old Viennese masters were, like the saddler and the shoemaker, the craftsmen of their articles, the people with whom Loos sympathized, and from whom he learned; they were at the same time the great masters, like Fischer von Erlach. In the expression "the old masters," there is something that is both affectionate and limiting. The old masters were not "the ancients," and it is also probable that they had not studied Latin. But it was perhaps in this context that the old houses of the city made their first appearance in the urban landscape. These old houses—

destined to disappear through building speculation, and through the stupidity of the administration; or to be, in what is perhaps a worse fate, preserved or embalmed—presented to Loos a singularly modern taste and an architecture that had returned to a condition of life.

So Wittgenstein's thought that "what is torn, torn must remain" could describe Adolf Loos' detachment from architecture, but it did not describe Loos' entire position. Torn, destroyed, or abandoned things were not unique to Viennese culture; they formed part of the ancient world, toward which Loos was inclined. In all of the Viennese master's architecture there is the tendency to translate the monument into something ordinary, where what is merely old is mingled with the antique. The "old houses" that we have spoken of got mixed up with the works of Fischer von Erlach. The Latin of the architect barely punctuated the vernacular of the observed world; the far-from-scandalous distortion of the original model allowed the possibility of the existence of the model itself. So Adolf Loos, who loved the Classicism of Greece and Rome (shifting his position between these two poles) and admired the perfection of Fischer von Erlach, was perhaps the first architect, intellectual, or mason to be excited by the American monuments.

I have always felt both admiration for and annoyance with this almost certainly deep-felt recognition: because his admiration was neither literary nor sentimental, but clearly technical. He understood that the leap in scale, the unheard-of proportions, the distortion, and the repetition, all showed a respect for the Classical laws. During this period he was examining Rome, and not Greece, which he would come back to in the last years of his life. The Classical world, seen through the Roman constructions, showed Loos the union of technique and art, of engineering and architecture.

"Roman architecture" signified here the grand construction, the possibility of a way of building that was not tied to personality; the architects applied scientific principles and let no sign of public or personal crises

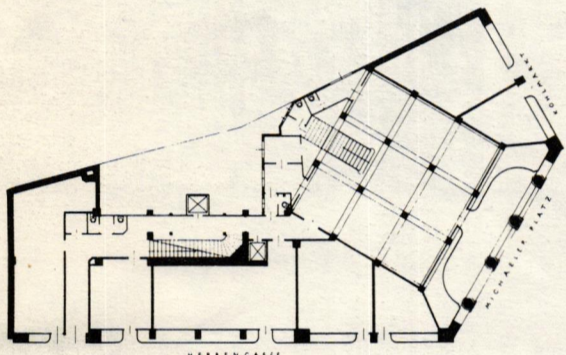
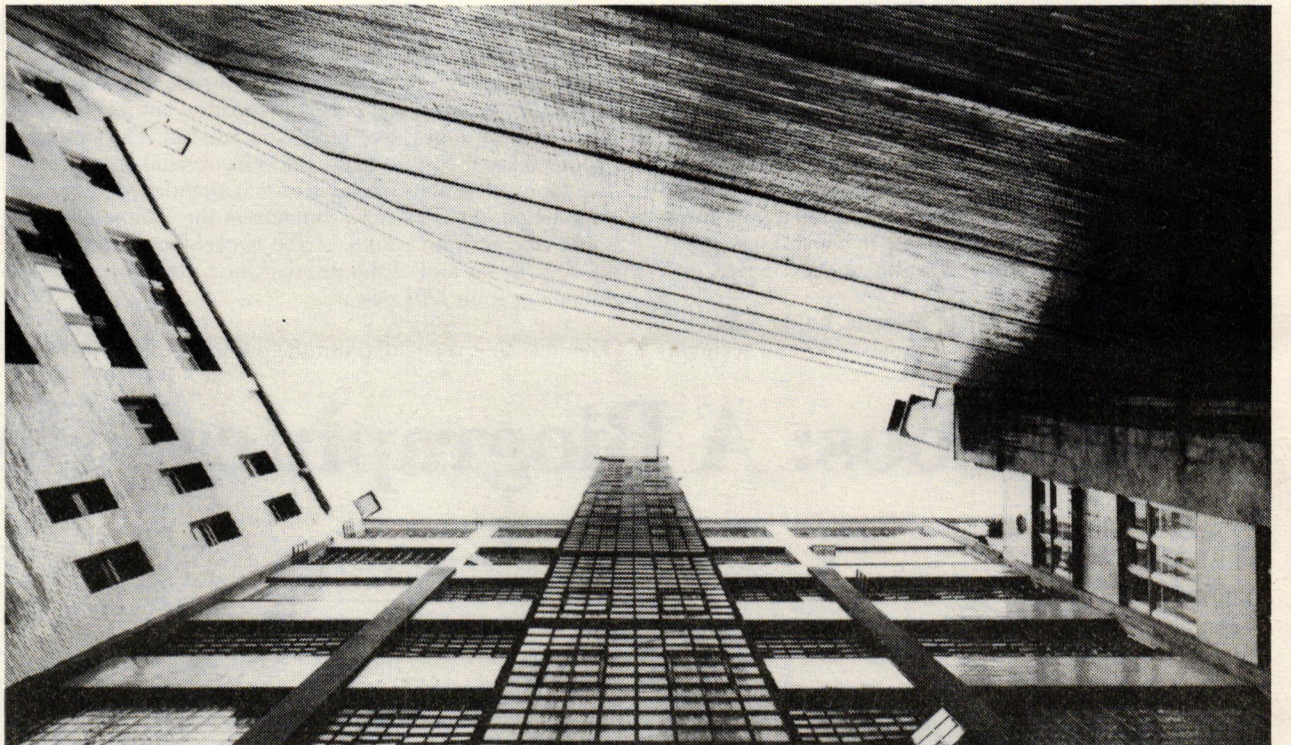
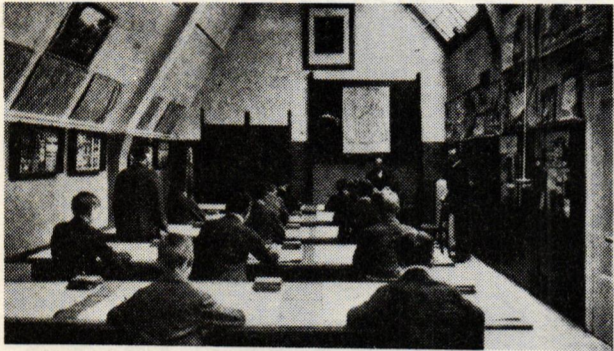
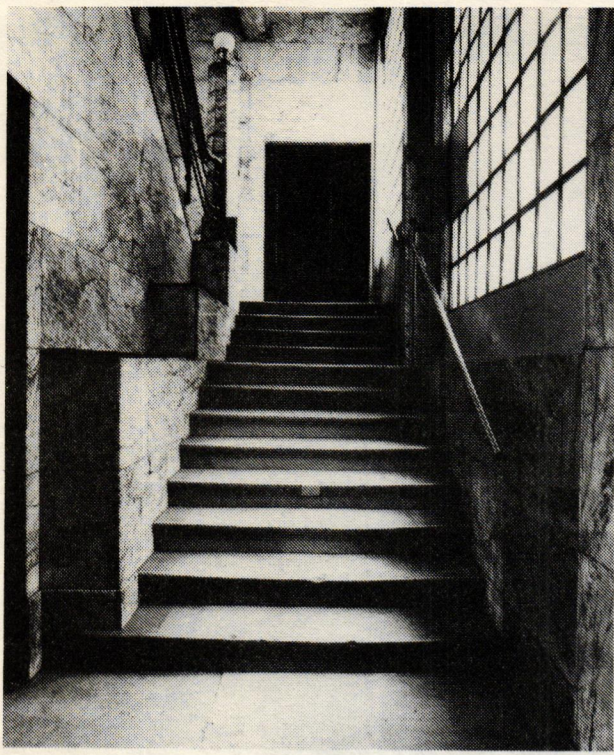
appear. Loos' attitude toward Classicism would be different in the big project for the *Chicago Tribune*; here the Doric column re-proposed not so much the civilization as the myth of Greece. And in fact Loos' statement that "... no graphic drawing is capable of describing the effect of these columns" sounds like a renunciation of architecture or of the capacity to practice it as a profession. The *Chicago Tribune* column was a sign of the silence to which Adolf Loos would come and was perhaps his last great project.

What is left to say?

Only three years before the *Tribune* project Loos had designed the model for the funerary monument to Max Dvorjak [1920]: a cube of stone surmounted by steps. Almost nothing. There is little left to say about the cycle of works that drew to a close between 1930 and 1931, when Adolf Loos seemed to accept his limits as a program. Adolf Loos thought of a progress in things that did not depend on the individual, but only on great changes in history. Technique had a strong influence over customs and on the way of life, and overwhelmed the personality of the individual, who ended up as an instrument of these events and definitely not a protagonist.

What is left for the architect and for any civilized person? All that is left for any civilized person is to work from day to day, perhaps on small things. As in the spiritual exercises of Saint Ignatius, where the most important thing for "fallen man" was everyday behavior—the rules of living, the honest attitude—this was not just a defense, it was a concrete possibility on which to build. It was as this kind of artist that Adolf Loos lived. But above all this is the kind of artist he prefigured—an artist who finds morality again in the infinite complexity of the possibilities of life, "... an ascending path of intelligence and its creations that rises in a more or less straight line, despite doubts, through the changes of history."

For this "basic human condition" is finally nothing but the quality and greatness of Adolf Loos the architect. It is very easy to compare him with his contemporaries,



Looshaus at Michaelerplatz, Vienna; 1909-11. Left and top: stair details; right top: Michaelerplatz facade; right below: back facade. (photos: Roberto Schezen) Above middle: the schoolroom; below: ground level plan.

whether architects of the Secession or of the Modern Movement, in order to emphasize his stature. He too loved to do this in a polemical, aggressive, and amused fashion in his youth, or with detachment in the last years, when he saw that his truth had encountered a new style, and that the white walls of functionalism were no different from the pastel colors of the Secession.

For Loos the definition drew back in the presence of the thing itself: Technique was seen as an aspect of ethics. It too grew materially and was made up of multiple experiences; it too was fantasy. It was identified with style and this gave rise to the indifference toward style on which I commented at the beginning. The master grasped all the possibilities of the repertory of style. The most modern master of this approach was Schinkel. The extraordinary city that he envisioned, he then built fragments of in Berlin, Munich, Karlsruhe, where styles and materials are united with the climate, the customs, the atmosphere, and with everything that we can call "culture."

So the artist took no notice of where he wanted to get to; if nothing could change, he could make things wonderfully more intense. He encountered the immutability of Time in everyday time. He fled from the ephemeral, but also from what was corroded. His personal time constructed a place that was consoling, since he recognized that — if not for him, at least for others — art was consolatory. Architecture above all, which — full of contradiction, achieved this consolatory appearance. The house in which the dog would not move away from the warmth of the stove was the very place one lived in the basic human condition: the Karma House on Lake Geneva, the Steiner House, the Moller House, the house for Tristan Tzara, the Muller House, the Spanner House, the Khuner House; along with these, the clothing stores and the Karntner Bar, the grand and unbuilt projects.

Between the luxurious Karma House at Clarens, near Montreux, and the study for the Heuberg Estate, the change in conditions and the course of time did not alter the rules of construction. If this had not been so, the very

significance of Loos' teachings would have been lost; the architect, the artist, or the technician can only change a few things, and these are nonessential. There is no doubt that they also depend on his inclinations, for example, inclinations toward what we can call "style." There are obvious differences in this style, or different inclinations toward "style," between the Steiner House, the Tzara House, and the Khuner House. If we wish to resort to formal definitions, we can see a purist accentuation in the first, a sort of terrorism of image in the second, and a near return to the Alpine tradition in the last.

But it is important to repeat here what was said at the beginning; Adolf Loos used *architectonic* style (and I find no definition that is more appropriate in its general applicability) in the same way that he used different techniques. Neither identifying style with ethics, nor seeing technique as a restrictive condition, he was free to make use of all the variations that different situations permit. Precisely because he had one sole idea of architecture — "I build in the same way as the Roman would have built" — precisely because only a few technical innovations really change man's life, the architect uses the tools available to him with logic and feeling. This attitude is one of the essential aspects of Adolf Loos' modernity; ornament is crime, *not* for reasons of abstract moralism, but where it presents itself as a form of foolishness, degeneration, or of useless repetition. On the contrary, form, which is no longer geometry or simple function — as in the paradigmatic case of the Doric column — is used as an element of composition. Thus the pedestal and the columns, the technique and the space in Mies' Berlin Museum are of a timeless Classicism. There is no doubt that Loos' and Mies' immediate master was Schinkel, but so was all eighteenth-century architecture, where the design of the city and the houses — "the old houses," as Loos liked to call them — is no different from that of the monument. The reference to Palladians all over the world is obvious.

But Adolf Loos, like all modern artists, knew that a linear continuity is not simple and is indeed not possible; the

Berlin Museum and the Charlottenburg Villa do not exist on the same operative and mental plane. And even the nearly contemporary quotation of the Gothic and of the Greek presents the same difficulties. This is why all the extremists of the avant-garde (and I use the term "extremists" with admiration) seem to be in the right; artists for whom, to echo Wittgenstein, "what is torn, torn must remain." Adolf Loos, like Robert Musil's Ulrich, believed in an ascending path of intelligence and its creations that rises in a more or less straight line, despite doubts, through the changes of history. And now, after so much irony and spite has been directed at architecture (which we have learned from Loos as from the masters of the past), we can say something in its defense. The architect, because of his ambiguous mode of being — between engineer and poet, between craftsman and painter — is familiar with all the doubts that these professions bring with them.

How different Loos' America is from that of modern architectural historiography! He was enthusiastic about the Chicago Exposition (and one regrets he did not see the great buildings, which were almost modern ruins, of the San Francisco Exposition) and loved the marriage and superimposition of styles and materials, of engineering and history. All this would have an influence on the significant great Doric column for the *Chicago Tribune*. This artist, who was so personally and certainly deeply rooted in central European culture, though destined to rise above it in the course of his life, also understood, through his experience of America, that the great work of art was becoming collective once again. The meaning of monuments, from the Pantheon to the Empire State Building, is to be found in the common understanding.

We may also think that in the end the gulf between art and profession, building trade and monument, was bridged in the life of Adolf Loos, as in those of all great artists, through the search for the basic human condition, without a pretense of interest in anything else — even in aesthetics. And that at the end of this search, even art seems to us a hindrance, or a secondary question.

Adolf Loos was not an architect who drew, and he built little; but he has left a strong impression on the hearts of those who knew him.

"Knowing him was not without its drawbacks for a young architect, should any right-minded elder come to know of it. I recall at least one professor at the Technical Institute who used his public lecture to rant and rave against the corruptor of youth to whom, scandalously, the municipal council of Vienna had not offered hemlock. . . . But if Loos did not enjoy much favor among professors and government officials he was very popular with ordinary, but intelligent and active men. . . . He showed his humanity above all in winning the hearts of women, without ever playing the Don Juan, and was constantly surrounded by the most seductive girls in Vienna. He married them too, one after another, and I don't recall anyone, not even in Hollywood, who had such happy divorces, meaning that they were concluded without any feeling of resentment towards him. . . . To my amazement his marriages in no way hindered many girls and especially, I remember, two or three very beautiful ones, from following Loos and passing the small hours with him in the cafés and haunts of Vienna. . . ."

"Among the young people that this Viennese Socrates 'corrupted,' apart from myself, were many admirers, not all of them sincere and unreserved. Some of the most gifted, such as Sigmund Freud's son, or Rudolf Schindler. . . . Among the most devoted on the other hand, was Giuseppe De Finetti, a very young devotee of Viennese night life. . . . Another great admirer and pupil of his was Heinrich Kulka."¹

Here Richard Neutra makes a brief sketch of the personality of Adolf Loos—a really extraordinary personality judging by the fascination it exerted over those who knew him most intimately. And the best men of great Vienna, cultural capital of *Mitteleuropa*, were among his friends. One thinks of writers like Karl Kraus and Peter Altenberg, of composers like Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern and Alban Berg, of philosophers like Ludwig Wittgenstein, of artists like Oskar Kokoschka to whom we owe one of the best portraits of Loos, and of poets like Georg Trakl who dedicated one of his most beautiful lyrics to Loos: *Sebastian im Traum*. These are the people who gave life to that group of intransigent, severe and controversial intellectuals, which Marcel Ray called the "other" Austria to underline their common passion for a radical transformation of the culture in a modern direction—in ostentatious and irrepressible opposition to the tired decadence which also existed in the Vienna of Franz Josef. This is the wholly exceptional climate in which Loos grew up and which shaped his most significant experiences.

He was born in Brno (Brunn), in Moravia, on the 10th December 1870. His father was a stone-cutter and sculptor.

and Chicago—in the very year that the famous Columbian Exposition was held. America, or rather the mythical transfiguration of the New World, would have a profound influence on Loos' cultural development, but it would always remain a two-faced reality. Images of the functional universe, of the achievement of modernity, and those of the promised land for the rebirth of classicism alternate and are superimposed in his reminiscences.

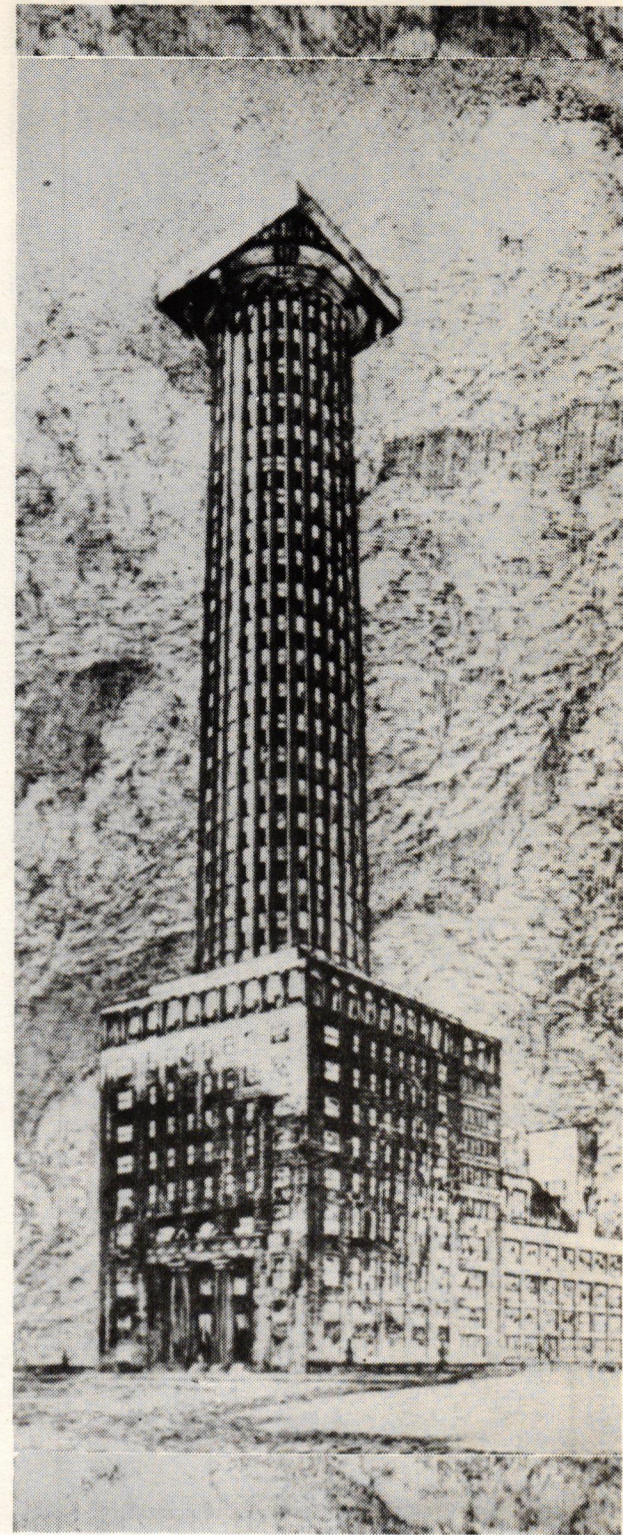
In 1896 he settled in Vienna to devote himself to the profession of architect. He was twenty-six and began as an assistant in the building firm of Carl Mayreder, the husband of Rosa Mayreder. The latter was a pioneer of the Austrian movement for female emancipation (she was the author of, among other works, the text of Hugo Wolf's opera: *Der Corregidor*, 1896). It is not impossible that this acquaintance influenced his growing interest in what were then called "social questions."

The fact remains that, from 1897 onwards, Loos began to write numerous controversial essays almost all of which were published in the "Neue Freie Presse" of Vienna, assailing a wide range of problems that summed up to a certain extent all the motives behind the struggle of those years for the transformation of "everyday life," of custom, and of the "cultivation of manners." Only rarely does he speak of architecture in a strict sense.

An exception which proves the rule is the essay *Die potemkinsche stadt* (The Potemkin City), published in July 1898 in the pages of the review *Ver Sacrum*, the organ of the *Wiener Secession*. This essay, because of its unmistakably sarcastic allusions, marked the beginning of a long and obstinate theoretical opposition to the then triumphant taste of *art nouveau*, developed in Vienna by the pupils of Otto Wagner, most prominent among these Josef Hoffmann and Josef Maria Olbrich. A further, and perhaps more significant step in this direction was the construction in the following year of the Cafe Museum (1899), where the elimination of the superfluous had reached such an extreme that the work became known as the "Café Nihilismus", as Loos himself recalls with evident satisfaction.

In 1903 he founded the review *Das andere, Ein blatt zur einfuhrung abendlandischer kultur in Osterreich* (The Other, a periodical dedicated to the introduction of western culture to Austria). The paper was written entirely by Loos and only two issues were published, in 1903. The subtitle alone makes it easy to guess the controversial content of the paper, close in some ways to that singular literary production, the *feuilleton*, common in the Vienna of that time. One need only think of *Die Fackel* founded in 1899 by Karl Kraus and of the review *Kunst*, edited by Peter Altenberg from 1903 onwards.

The following years, up until the outbreak of World War I,



Adolf Loos: A Biographical Profile

Benedetto Gravagnuolo

An attempt has been made to connect his love for materials (stone, marble, wood, the mirror. . .) to his childhood spent in the workshops of his father. But here we are in the realm of pure psychological supposition.

Few traces remain of his family life. There is an effective portrayal of his mother in the biography of a sort (*Adolf Loos, der Mensch*) written by Elsie Altman-Loos, one of his four wives. Some autobiographical hints of the years of his adolescence, of the family house and objects, of his sisters Hermine and Irma. . . can be read between the lines of his essay *Die interieurs in der rotunde* written in 1898.

He attended elementary and high school in the town of his birth, completing his high school studies at the Imperial Lycaum run by the Benedictines at Melk in South Austria. At the age of seventeen he moved to Reichenberg in Bohemia to attend the State Technical School, where the course required an obligatory period of practical construction work, carried out during the summer vacations of 1887 at the firm of Czapka and Neusser in Brno.

It is highly likely that he did a year of voluntary military service in 1889, as a photograph of him in the uniform of an Austrian lieutenant seems to attest.

From 1890 to 1893 he studied at the Dresden Polytechnic, where an echo still survived of the teaching of Gottfried Semper (who taught at the Polytechnic from 1834 to 1848). Semper was an architect and theoretician to whose thought Loos would acknowledge not a few cultural debts. Other recognized teachers of ideas were the classicist Schinkel and above all Vitruvius, whose treatise on architecture—according to O. Kokoschka—represented a veritable "Bible" for Loos.

At the age of twenty-three he left for the United States where his uncle Benjamin worked as a watchmaker in Philadelphia. He stayed there for three years and did many different kinds of work, from dish-washer to journalist. He visited New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis

are the years in which he made a name for himself professionally and brought his theories to maturity.

In 1908 he published the essay *Ornament und verbrechen* (Ornament and Crime) which came to represent a sort of manifesto of his art as a consequence of its wide circulation, reprinting and translation. But his 1910 essay *Architektur* is better fitted to serve this end and has a more solid theoretical basis.

In the same year, work began on the construction of the House in the Michaelerplatz, set in the heart of old Vienna opposite the imperial palace of the Hofburg. The simplicity and modernity of the work stirred up such a hornet's nest of controversy, followed by a municipal order to suspend work, that Loos considered it necessary to make a public response to the attacks and insinuations at a packed meeting held at the *Sophiensaal* on the 11th December 1911. It is perhaps worth recalling that Loos was backed up in this "cultural battle" not only by his friends Karl Kraus, Georg Trakl and Peter Altenberg but also by such an authoritative academic as Otto Wagner.

In 1912 he founded his *Bauschule* (school of architecture) where he held regular courses that were suspended after a short time as a result of the outbreak of war. Little evidence remains of this experience but there are, for example, some graphic works signed by Paul Engelmann (one of Loos' best pupils, who was to be the "official" architect of the house built in Vienna in 1926 by Ludwig Wittgenstein for his sister Margarethe) and an essay of 1913, with the express title *Meine bauschule*, in which Loos states the fundamental principles of his teaching.

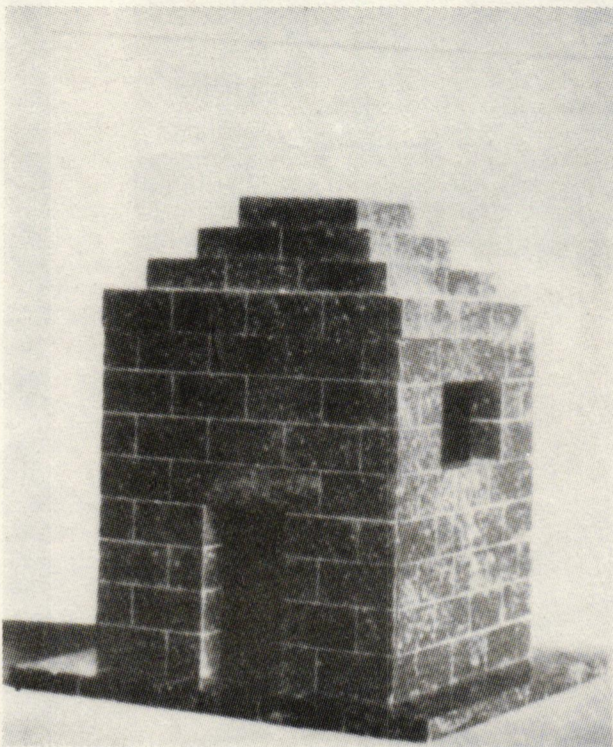
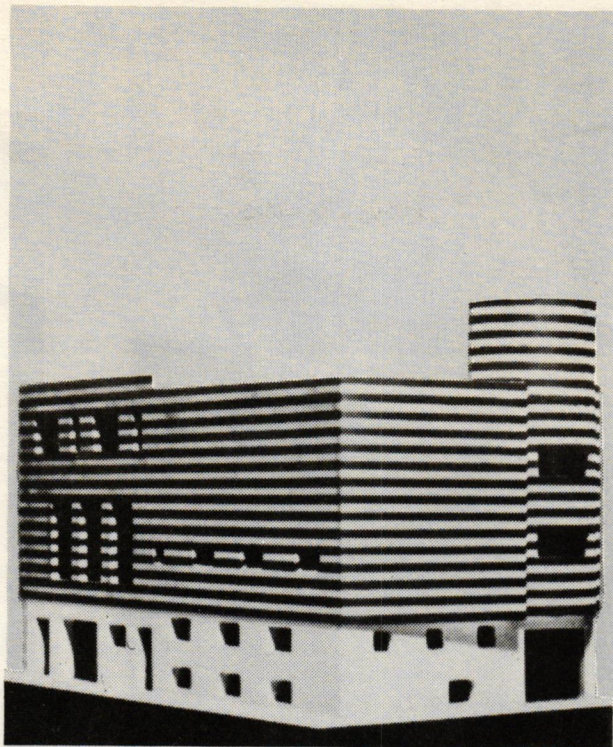
"During World War I, called up as an officer of the reserve, he nearly ended up in front of a court-martial for having presented himself in a uniform specially designed for him by 'Goldman & Salatsch,' with an open collar instead of the usual rigid one, and leggings instead of heavy boots. The Germans lost the war because of these heavy boots: the army had sweaty feet. Loos had his own ideas." This is one of the many anecdotes with which the

story of his life is studded, related by O. Kokoschka.²

Loos lost no sleep over the break-up of the Hapsburg Empire as a result of the defeat. On the contrary—after the proclamation of the Republic of Austria on the 12th November 1918—Loos entered into a phase of enthusiastic involvement with questions of cultural policy. In 1919 he put forward a proposal for the foundation of a Ministry of the Arts (in collaboration with his friends, Schoenberg, K. Kraus, M. Ermers, L. Munz and others). The *Richtlinien fur ein Kunstamt* (Guidelines for a Ministry of the Arts) were published in *Der Friede* no. 62, 1919. Only Schoenberg's contribution is signed, but Loos was responsible for the essay *Der staat und die kunst* (Art and the State).³

Two significant and contrasting testimonies of those years have come down to us. The first is from Ludwig Wittgenstein, who declares in a letter to Paul Engelmann that he had felt "horror and disgust" for the "stand of intellectual snob" adopted by Loos during that period.⁴ We owe the second to Alban Berg who, while describing the festivities held to celebrate A. Schoenberg's 45th birthday at Modling on the 13th September 1919, wrote to his wife as follows: "Over the course of the afternoon greetings and telegrams arrived. It has been very pleasant. Loos especially has been in great form. I tell you, his appearance is getting finer and finer. He looks older, but his features are taking on all the signs of greatness and well-being. He talked for hours almost completely by himself, but wonderfully, on politics and culture in the easy, gracious manner of a great story-teller, almost anecdotal but with great profundity. It's a pity that you weren't there to hear him."⁵

Between 1920 and 1922 he held the post of *Chefarchitekt des Siedlungsamtes der Gemeinde Wien* (Chief Architect of the Housing Department of the Commune of Vienna). The importance of this experience speaks for itself, if one takes into account that it occurred at the beginning of the delicate and complex attempt at a "socialist" administration of "Red Vienna" (1920-1934). It was in



In the following article, reprinted in its entirety from *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works* (Rizzoli International, N.Y. 1982), author Benedetto Gravagnuolo recounts some interesting facets of Loos' life.

1920, in fact, that the Austrian Social-Democratic party (S.D.A.P.) gained a clear majority in the Viennese municipal elections. Yet Loos' employment in this specific planning sector should not be mistaken for an adherence to the ideology of Austrian Marxism. His substantial distance from this current of political thought is made clear by Loos himself at the conference *Die moderne siedlungen* held at Stuttgart on the 12th November 1926. Because of irreconcilable differences over the best ways in which to make alterations to the fabric of the city, Loos resigned as chief architect in 1922.

He then moved to France (1922-1927), dividing his time between Paris and the Riviera, but making frequent journeys to Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Many events bear witness to the esteem in which he was held in French intellectual and avant-garde circles, including the republication in 1920 of a translation of his essay *Ornament und verbrechen* in the pages of *Espirit Nouveau* (the review edited by Ozenfant, Le Corbusier and Paul Dermée), his acceptance by the Parisian circle of Tristan Tzara, for whom Loos would build the house on the Avenue Junot in 1926), as well as his admission as an honorary member of the *Salon d'Automne*, where he also put on an exhibition in 1923. During this period he ran numerous conferences, among which the one held at Graz in November 1927, *Der soziale mensch und seine architektur*, is worth mentioning along with the one at Stuttgart which has already been referred to.

He returned to Vienna in 1928, though he broke his stay in Austria with trips to Paris and the Riviera in France and to Prague and Pilsen in Czechoslovakia. In the latter country especially, many of his works were built during those years. Some of his most significant works belong to this last phase, such as Villa Moller (1928) in Vienna, Villa Müller (1930) and Villa Winternitz (1931-32) in Prague and the Khuner House at Payerbach in Lower Austria, works which propose a return to the monolithic nature of the architectural object in deliberate contrast to the transparency of the glass architecture which dominated rationalist styles in the twenties. Once again Loos

continues an uncompromising expansion of certain constant postulates of his architectural thought, in contentious indifference to "fluctuations in taste."

In 1930, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, Loos received an important recognition of his standing as a master of architecture. On the initiative of the president of the Czechoslovakian Republic, Thomas G. Masaryk, the town of his birth, Brno, bestowed an annual honorific income on him in the form of a regular stipend. In the same year a weighty volume of testimonies edited by Richard Lanyi (*Adolf Loos, Zum 60. Geburtstag am 10. Dezember 1930*) and the monograph by Heinrich Kulka (*Adolf Loos, Das Werk des Architekten*) were published. The following year his collected essays were sent to press.

In 1931 a venereal disease that he had contracted as far back as 1911 grew worse, forcing him to enter the Rosenhugel Hospital in Vienna for treatment. Troubles with his hearing, from which he had suffered since adolescence, worsened too, leaving him almost completely deaf.

In the autumn of 1932 a further worsening in his condition forced him to give up working and to enter the same hospital at first and later the Schwarzmänn clinic in Kalksburg, where he died on the 23rd August 1933.

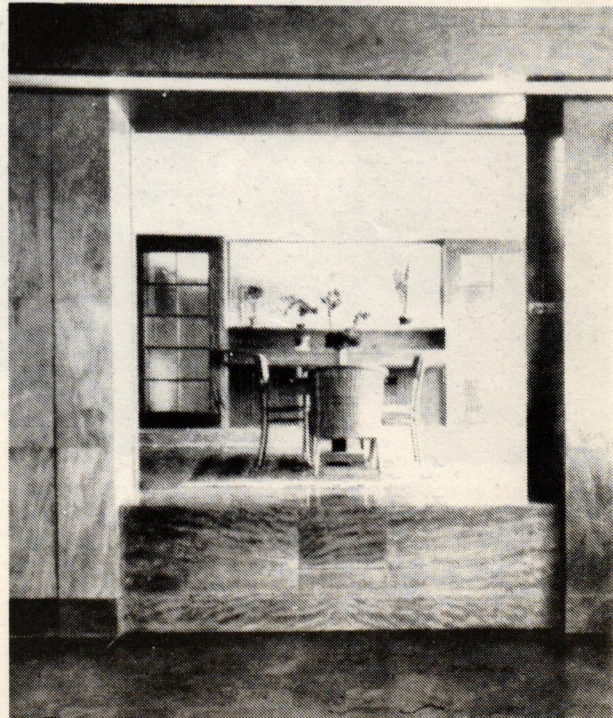
He was buried in the Kalksburg cemetery on the 25th August. In October of the following year his body was shifted to the main cemetery of Vienna, section 32 C of the graves of honor, where he lies buried beneath a simple tombstone — an elementary cube of granite — put up in 1956 by the municipal council of Vienna on the lines of a drawing by Loos himself.

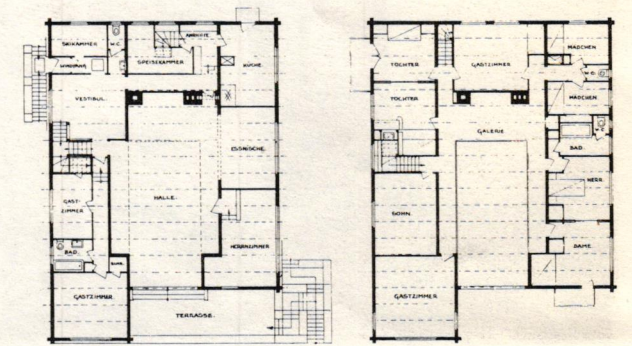
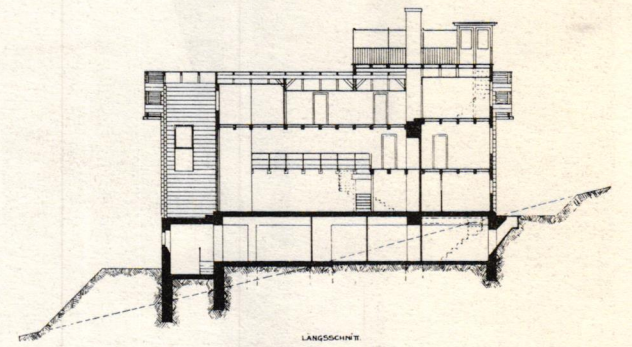
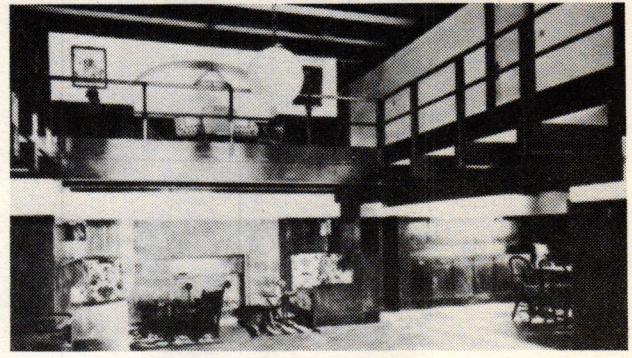
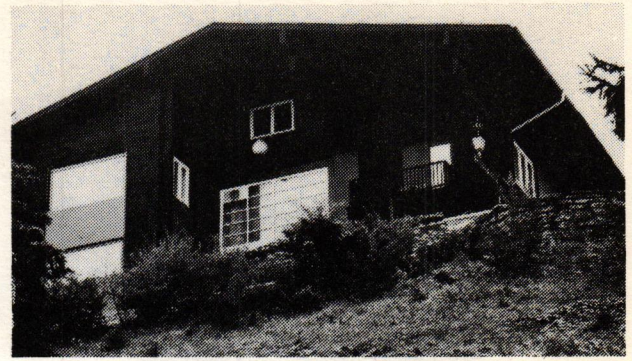
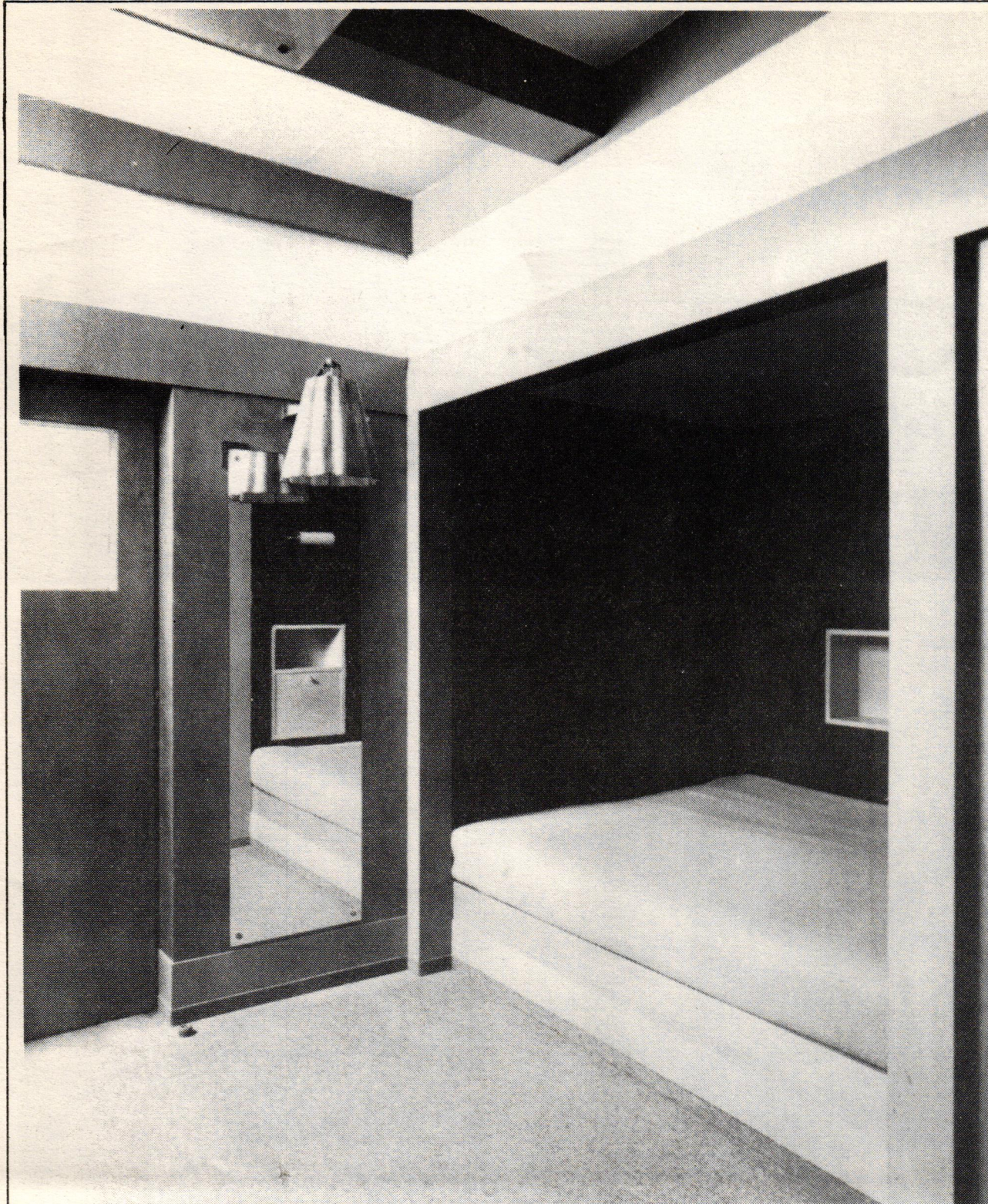
Page 22: Loos' entry to the Chicago Tribune Competition, 1922. Left: Josephine Baker, 1920s Berlin (from *Naked at the Feast: A Biography of Josephine Baker* by Lynn Haney; Dodd Mead, NYC, 1981). (photo: George Hoyningen-Huene © Horst) Center top: Josephine Baker House project; 1928. (photo: Gerlach, Vienna) Center below: Tomb for Max Dvořák; 1920. Above: Steiner House, Vienna; 1910. (photos: Reiffenstein)

Footnotes

1. R. Neutra, *Ricordo di Loos*, in *Casabella* n. 233, Nov. 1959, pp. 45-46.
2. O. Kokoschka, *Mein Leben—Erinnerungen an Adolf Loos*, in *Alte und moderne kunst* n. 113, Nov. Dic. 1970, p. 5
3. *Der staat und die kunst*, in *Der Friede*, 1919, n. 62, pp. 352-354.
4. Cfr. *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, Oxford 1970.
5. A. Berg, *Briefe an seine Frau*, Munchen-Wein, 1965.

Moller House, Vienna; 1928





Los vom Ornament: An Employee's Reminiscences of Adolf Loos

Alfred Katz as told to Richard Rose



Alfred Katz as a student

Studying architecture in Vienna in the late 1920s had its drawbacks because the economy was so poor. At this time, Austria was a socialist country and was suffering due to its transformation from an empire into a small country of seven million people. The State was doing some building, but the city of Vienna was in fact the only major builder at the time, and this was because of its housing program. There was very little private construction.

Having grown up in Vienna, I was aware of the works of the famous architects of that time. Otto Wagner and Josef Hoffmann were better known than Adolf Loos: Wagner had done more public buildings than had Loos, I think, and Hoffmann had done more private houses. However, Loos' buildings and writings were well known. He was greatly admired by architects and students as well as by the intellectual community. He was particularly respected by the architects for his idea of the *Raumplan*—for designing in three dimensions.

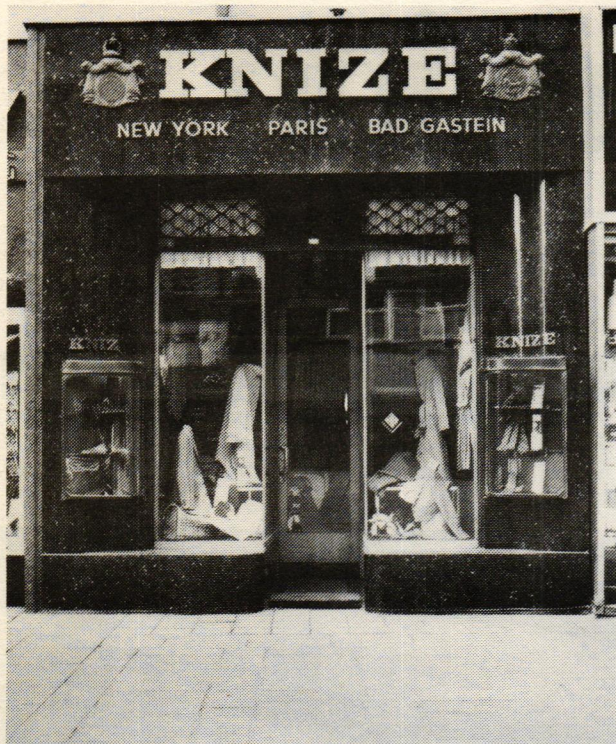
Loos was considered to be a bit eccentric, since his work and ideas differed from the usual Beaux-Arts tradition. I knew of him when I was still in high school—even my parents knew of him. The Goldman and Salatsch Building he designed on the Michaelerplatz in 1910 had become the center of a scandal. There was no other building like it anywhere in the city. In the eyes of the Viennese, it was stark naked. It was being built without the flower boxes now seen on the facade, but Loos was forced to put them on by Emperor Kaiser Franz Josef I. The story goes that when the Emperor looked out of his own nearby Baroque palace built by J.B. Fischer von Erlach, and saw Loos' building, he wanted to have it torn down. Finally he insisted that at least Loos add the ornamental flower boxes.

That event happened shortly after the 1908 appearance of Loos' best-known article, "Ornament and Crime." Perhaps these two occurrences prompted the pun on Loos' name that was still popular when I was a student, "Los vom Ornament," or "Free from Ornament." Loos wrote another essay, also very well known, called "Ins Leere Gesprochen," or "Spoken into the Void," since he felt his ideas were not followed enough.

After leaving his position as chief architect with the Vienna Housing Department in 1922, Loos opened his Paris office. Contrary to what some people believe, Loos kept his office in Vienna during those years in collaboration with Heinrich Kulka.

I had entered the Vienna Technical University in 1926, and in 1929 obtained a summer position from Loos. Loos' office was located in a residential building at Kaiserstrasse 33 in Vienna's VIIth District. He was still busy in Paris at this time working, if I remember correctly, on the Tristan Tzara House [1926]. His assistant, Heinrich Kulka, ran the Vienna office, located in an ordinary apartment with some furniture designed by Loos. Loos and Kulka each had his own room. Kulka's wife, also an architect, worked there on interiors and color selection. The three students, myself included, completed the staff that summer. I think that the Paris office was small as well because Loos didn't have any large projects at this time.

Kulka was in charge of the office, but it was Loos' office. Kulka was much younger than Loos—he was in his early thirties, while Loos was in his late fifties—and of course he was 100 percent under the influence of Loos. He knew exactly what Loos wanted. All of us knew Loos' ideas and what he wanted. Kulka's claim to have collaborated on the Khuner House [1930] with Loos is correct; it was the Khuner House that I spent much of that summer working on. The drawings were not done in as much detail as we do them here. Almost no detailing was done in the working drawings; only once the construction had started. Sometimes I received information about the house from



The following article, a personal account of Loos by one-time employee Alfred Katz (as told to Richard Rose) provides another perspective to the preceding articles taken from *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works* (Rizzoli International, 1982).

Loos, but I was never in direct contact with him. Even though he was still in Paris at this time, he looked into everything, keeping in touch by telephone [B33-4-20] and by mail. Kulka and Loos spoke to each other at least twice a week even though it took them a very long time to make the connection. Loos would make comments on the work, and drawings were sent through the mail to show each other their ideas. Loos was always in control of the work, in spite of his not being in Vienna that summer.

The Khuner House, near Payerbach—approximately a one-and-a-half-hour train ride from Vienna—was a country house designed for the owner of the largest margarine factory in Austria at that time. I went once with Kulka to see the house under construction. There was no general contractor, since it was the custom for the architect to give the work to several contractors, and each would do a specific part of the work. Because most of the detailing was not done until construction had started, there was no lump-sum price. Loos and Kulka usually made many changes during construction. They would walk around, look at the building, and say, "I don't like this wall here. I don't like the ceiling height. Take it out. Change it!" Loos' idea of the *Raumplan* made it difficult to finalize a scheme until construction allowed visualization of the space as it actually was.

Each room in the Khuner House was designed according to its use, and you can see in Loos' work that there were always stairs from one room to the other. In order to depart from straight planes all on one level, he continued to adjust the work throughout construction. Of course, it was very expensive. Only people who could afford this process hired Loos. Sometimes the client asked for an estimate, but with Adolf Loos, they must have known it would cost them more. The changes were for the good of the work, of course, but not everybody could accept the resulting costs. He was so famous, however, that most of his work came from well-known clients who could afford him. I don't think he had any money of his own; he lived only on the commissions.

I also worked that summer on the design for the Josephine Baker House, which was never built. I executed loose ink drawings of the elevations for the black-and-white marble building. It was very different in appearance from Loos' other houses—almost totally enclosed from the outside, with very few openings.

I was poorly paid since I was still a student and because so many others were trying to get into Loos' office. The office was run informally for that time and we were all very proud to be working for such a well-known architect. We started the day at 8:00 a.m. and worked until noon, and then took a two-hour lunch period, during which we usually went home. We then worked from 2:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., with little overtime work required. On my first day at work, I studied Loos' work in the office, but I soon had to sit down and start drawing. In the beginning of a project, we would draw with Koh-I-Noor wood pencils. We did not use mechanical pencils. All the drawings that were submitted to the building authority had to be drawn with ruling pens on blue linen, while the architect and client kept the prints. Any changes required redrawing. We worked with Pelikan ink and cleaned our pens on the sleeves of our white, knee-length smocks which we wore every day. We only owned one or two, and we had to wash them ourselves. All of the offices were like this; only the bosses sometimes went without a smock.

Loos was hard of hearing and it was difficult to converse with him. This is probably why he was considered to be a bit of a loner. When I worked for him in 1929, there was no talk of any illness. We did hear a few years later that he was ill. He died in 1933 at the age of 63.

Page 24, Khuner House, Payerbach; 1930. Left: bedroom. Right, top to bottom: exterior (photo: Roberto Schezen), living room (photo: Gerlach, Vienna), section, and plans. Page 25: Knize Shop, Graben 13, Vienna; 1909-1913 (photos: Roberto Schezen) and, bottom right: Knize Shop, 146 Champs Elysées, Paris: 1927.

When I graduated from the University in 1931, I worked for another architect in Vienna, and after that I went on my own. In 1938 I left for Istanbul, and in 1941 I moved to Israel. In 1951 I came to New York. Through a series of coincidences in New York I met the son of the famous Viennese tailor, Knize, for whom Adolf Loos had designed the best tailor shop in Vienna, and later one in Paris. The son had also known Loos. His father had made a tuxedo with tails for Marlene Dietrich. There was a picture of her wearing it hanging in the old New York Knize shop on East 56th Street. The second shop, which I was commissioned to design with a friend, opened in 1974 on Fifth Avenue in the General Motors Plaza. But in 1978, the son gave up the shop because it was too expensive. I still have a sport jacket and a tie from the shop with the label: KNIZE-VIENNA-PARIS-NEW YORK.

Modernism's Diffusion

Japan Diary: Summer '81

Kenneth Frampton

Saturday, June 20: Arrival in Tokyo

Immediately struck at Tokyo airport by the Teutonic precision of the detailing and by the immaculate immigration officials and customs officers, by the white gloves and the white antimacassars lining the seats of taxis and private cars. We are met by Hiromi Fujii, Toyokazu Watanabe, and Makoto Uyeda. The seventy-minute ride to the center of Tokyo takes us along a rather narrow freeway through dense, small-scaled forest growth on either side of the road, which already looks like miniaturized nature. The entire highway from the airport to the center of town is lined with a sound-dampening barrier—an unexpected detail. Everywhere are sporadic paddy fields, bridges, rivers, industrial plants, baseball fields, and—as far as the eye can see—two- to three-story houses with small pitched roofs covered in tiles of ceramic or enameled metal: red, gray, green, and dark ultramarine. As one approaches the center of Tokyo, eight- to ten-story speculative office buildings and hotels stud the horizon. We arrive at the Hotel Okura, where we are met for dinner by Arata Isozaki, Aiko Miyawaki, and two friends of theirs from Los Angeles.

Sunday, June 21: Tokyo

We meet Arata and Aiko at the hotel and then go to Ueno Park for a quick visit to Le Corbusier's National Museum of Western Art, which, although it is hardly a work with a great reputation, was quite disappointing both inside and out; to some extent because of the banalization of the Corbusian syntax at the hands of his Japanese collaborators (Kunio Maekawa and Junzo Sakakura), but more seriously because of the unduly restricted proportions adopted for what was initially a much more generous prototype—the "Musée à croissance illimitée" of 1930. We take in Maekawa's Cultural Center in passing and Aiko informs us that Masato Otaka was closely involved with this building.

Ueno Park is permeated by a strange atmosphere and a soft, misty light. Its avenues and causeways are flooded with groups of school children—dressed in almost identical uniforms, mostly white and black—and dotted here and there with *sushi* carts.

On the causeway between Le Corbusier's Museum and the Cultural Center are positioned two men in military uniforms of the Second World War. The first is seated and plays a mouth organ; the second kneels and supports part of his forebody on a metal arm. The first plays a soldier's lament from the war, the second adopts a posture of permanent pleading.

We visit the National Museum, a massive, stone-faced structure built in 1937 to the designs of Makasa Watanabe, the same architect who designed the Dai-ichi Insurance Building of approximately the same date; both buildings are finished in granite. The National Museum has a spectacular entrance enriched by brilliantly ornate, sandblasted metal doors. Within, a broad stone staircase flanked by pseudo-Art Deco lights leads to the galleries above. These hexagonal pylon lights in white glass terminate granite balustrades at the bottom of the stair.

Monday, June 22: Tokyo

A mandatory visit to the Shinjuku shopping center and the famous Yodobashi Camera Store. Astonished by the beautifully detailed and well-maintained subway, most of which has been constructed after the war and is still being extended. The scale of the platforms, entrances, and stairways are both massive—presumably because of the antiseismic requirements—and curiously diminutive—because of the Japanese stature. There is remarkably detailing at the platform edge: at first, a yellow braille band, provided to alert the blind, then nonslip tile strips, and, finally, gridded tiles; in fact, one sees three sets of visual and tactile indicators as one progresses toward the edge. The cars themselves are long, clean, and fully glazed, affording ample vision in all directions. One becomes aware at once of a curious mixture of nineteenth- and twentieth-century technologies. The transparent lamp fittings in the train, for instance, are made of cut glass—a technique that, as far as I know, is a survivor from the nineteenth century.

At a party that takes place in the afternoon at Isozaki's office, Toyokazu Watanabe tells me that the prime

difficulty in translating Japanese into English is the necessity to first eliminate all inflections indicating class and sexual differences, which are an integral part of the language. Clearly these inflections assume the age-old Japanese discipline and the acceptance of a normative social hierarchy.

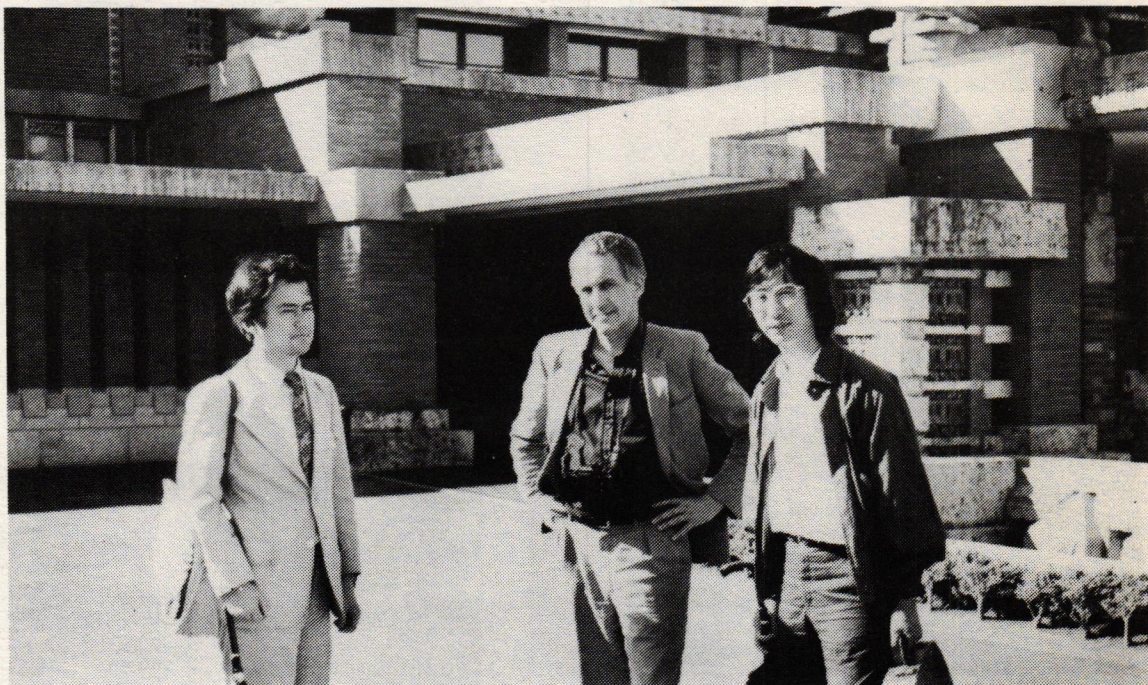
I remark that I am surprised by the lack of evident aggressiveness in the streets of Tokyo, both in terms of traffic and pedestrian movement. The streets do not seem nearly as crowded as those of midtown Manhattan, not even on a weekday. We talk about the different significance of bodily contact in the two cultures; of how the streets of Tokyo are somehow European or even Parisian—all this obtaining in a dense urban fabric covering an area comparable to that of Los Angeles. What Tokyo shares with Los Angeles is its dispersal; what it shares with London is its intimate village structure dividing a vast region into neighborhoods of quite different character. This pattern applies, of course, in some way to Manhattan, but not with the same continuous density of occupation. There seem to be very few holes in the Tokyo fabric compared with that of New York, or even London. There is evidently a tradition of using every square inch, similar to the density of use and cultivation that one encounters in a Greek mountain village, or in certain parts of Switzerland. The threshold, or the space between the facade of the house and the sidewalk edge, forms a compressed domain of layered elements, extending back from the sidewalk in the following sequence: fence, narrow yard, metal grill, sun blind, and, finally, the *shoji* [screens]. I was struck in particular by the walls built of concrete block with straight joints that invariably function as protective screens, and which are set no more than one or two feet away from the external wall of the house. These create a compressed "garden-court." In this microspace are plants, and, beyond the plants, shutters, all in advance of the window, but still sheltered by the eaves. This layering is never the same on all four sides, and naturally variations occur at corners and entrances. In the afternoon we go to Yukio Futagawa's studio in the Shibuya district of Tokyo. A very beautiful area, which reminds me somehow of Auteuil, Passy, or Neuilly. On the taxi ride here, two images from prewar Japan arrest my attention: a low-rise, high-density housing project from the prewar period adjacent to the Omoto-Sando Avenue leading to Kenzo Tange's Olympic buildings; and a right-wing, semimilitary manifestation—a small, khaki-colored van blaring ultrapatriotic songs from the Second World War.

Then to Arata's office in the Rapongi district; this was previously the office of Junzo Sakakura. Of reinforced concrete construction with a stucco finish, the office is elevated one floor above the street and planned around a terrace and a kind of atrium entrance. The party gradually assembles; first a hurried Fumihiko Maki arrives en route to Hokaido; then others, among them David Stewart, Hiromi Fujii, and Toshio Nakamura. A gentleman named K. Aharai informs me of his theory that the roots of Le Corbusier's Dom-ino system lie in the work of Heinrich Tessenow, but he is unwilling or unable to explain exactly how.

Tuesday, June 23: Tokyo—Nagoya

A two-and-a-half-hour journey by train to Nagoya with Toyo Ito and Yasuta Matsunaga. As soon as the train leaves Tokyo an informal "seminar" begins. Ito speaks of his aspiration to design and build houses that would be a

Kenneth Frampton with Yasuta Matsunaga (left) and Toyo Ito in front of The Imperial Hotel (F.L. Wright) reconstructed at the Meiji village (photo: Silvia Kolbowski)



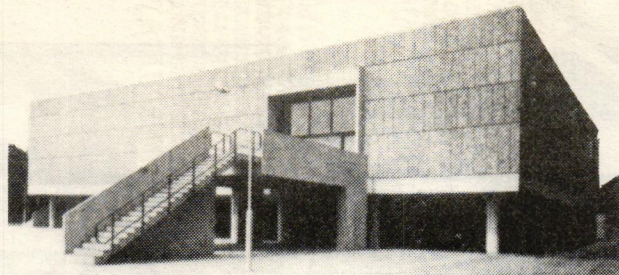
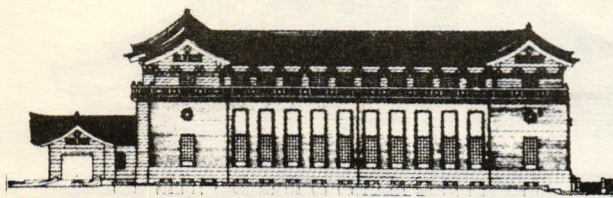
twentieth-century equivalent of the nineteenth-century Japanese woodcut. What Ito has in mind is close to the "product" art of Andy Warhol (as in his House at Koganei; 1978). As far as he is concerned, a certain dimension of artistic hazard has to be present today in order to avoid preciousness. Through Ito and Matsunaga I become aware of the work of Kazuo Shinohara. For Ito, Shinohara and Isozaki are the only significant architects of the "older" generation working in Japan today.

Ito's own work is changing—on the one hand becoming freer, on the other more rigid. Ito regards his latest houses, structured around standard steel frames, as being similar to the Dom-ino system. Matsunaga shows me his most recent article on Shinohara, written for *Kenchiku Bunka*, entitled "The Absence of Architecture." He talks of the influence of Maurice Blanchot while he shows me a small house that he has designed and built in Tskuba. Meanwhile the train rushes forward over a storm-scudded landscape, endless paddy fields, and the brilliant silver arc of a bow-string tubular steel bridge spanning dark, wide riverbeds.

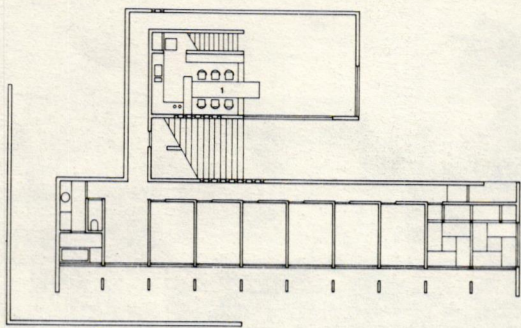
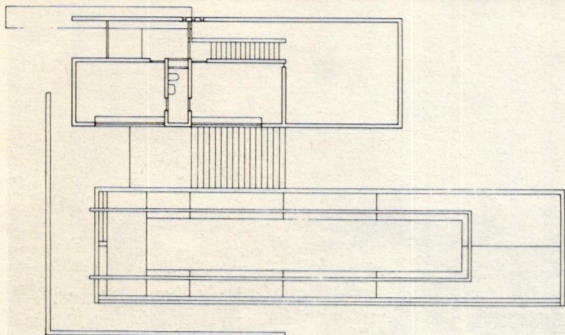
Ito's PMT Building in Nagoya (1978) is as delicate, glistening, and pristine as it appears in the photos. One is forcibly affected by the play with symmetry on the facade since the "skin front" is structured around two symmetrical systems. Inside, the space is high, light, and cool. This is the work of a conceptual architect, inspired by the plasticity of both Shinohara and Isozaki. At the same time the graphic, cutout lightness of the European Art Nouveau is also present; hence the reference to Charles Rennie Mackintosh in the furnishings. The exhibition space betrays its debt to Le Corbusier through a Purist brown and blue interior together with a large curved wall. The upper stair landing is fragmented and broken by the incisive sculptural thrust of a balustrade faced in thin marble, which terminates in sharp triangular points at both the top and the bottom. This combination produces a fragile but solid plane in contrast to the sensuous, thin curve of the wall. Such differences are heightened by the top of the landing balustrade made out of thin, taut steel, which reminds one of Anthony Caro's sculpture. There is a relation between such linear detailing and Ito's representation of the building as an ideogram. The generally unexpected appearance and direction of the interior light is at its most dramatic on the second floor, which is illuminated by a hidden light well. By this device, walls "conceptually" disappear. Similar perceptual disorienting devices appear in the stair soffit, which, being stepped underneath, as in Giuseppe Terragni's Casa del Fascio implies an inversion. Ito is evidently inspired by Adolf Loos, particularly in his first design for the Churinkan House, which is an obvious parody in part of Loos's Notharhasse/Sauraugasse house, and in part of his Josephine Baker project.

After a Japanese-style lunch we leave for the Meiji Village. A seemingly endless bus journey from Nagoya brings us eventually to an immaculate, dismembered ghost town in the midst of luxuriant verdure overlooking a lake. This "reconstruction," in process from 1976 to the present, is the fruit of Yoshiro Taniguchi's consuming passion at the end of his career as an architect. In this encapsulated, architectural Disney World, one may experience a ten-minute miniature rail journey from a mythical Nagoya to

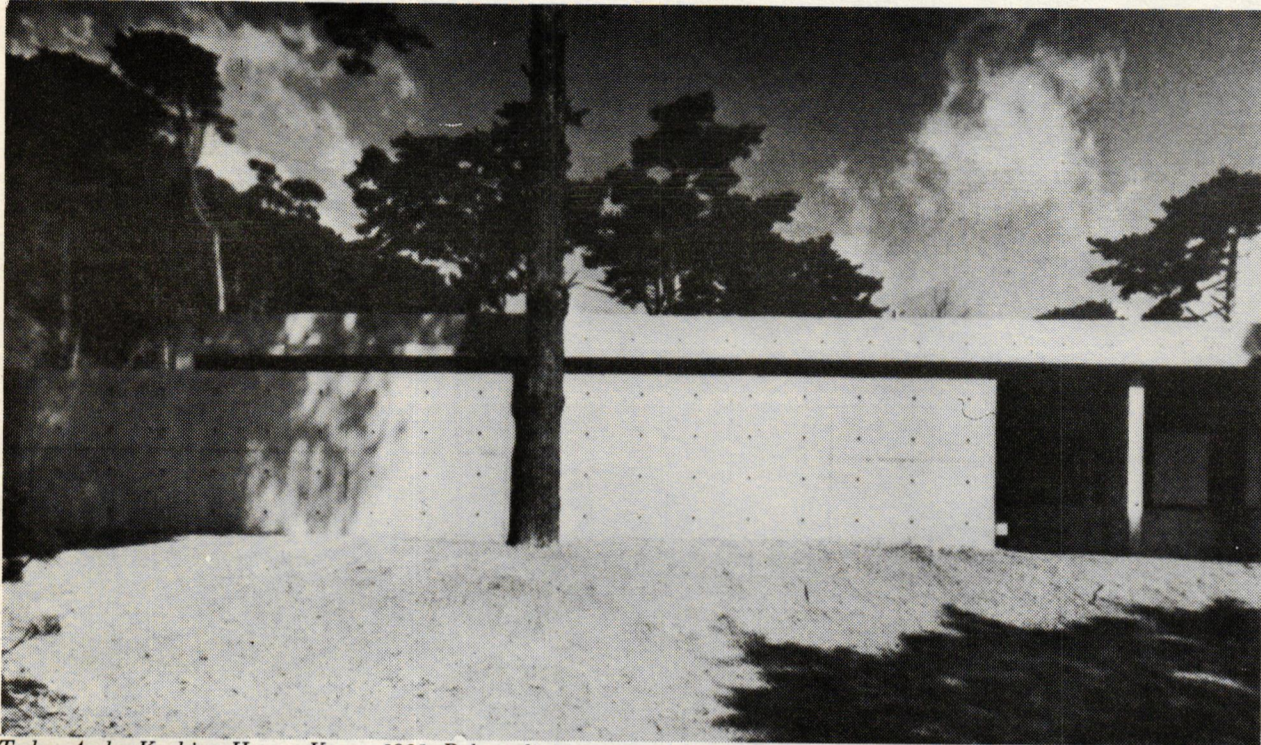
A trip to Japan provided by the Committee for the Year 2000 occasioned the following account of new and old architecture. This will be the first of a series of excerpts from the journals of Kenneth Frampton.



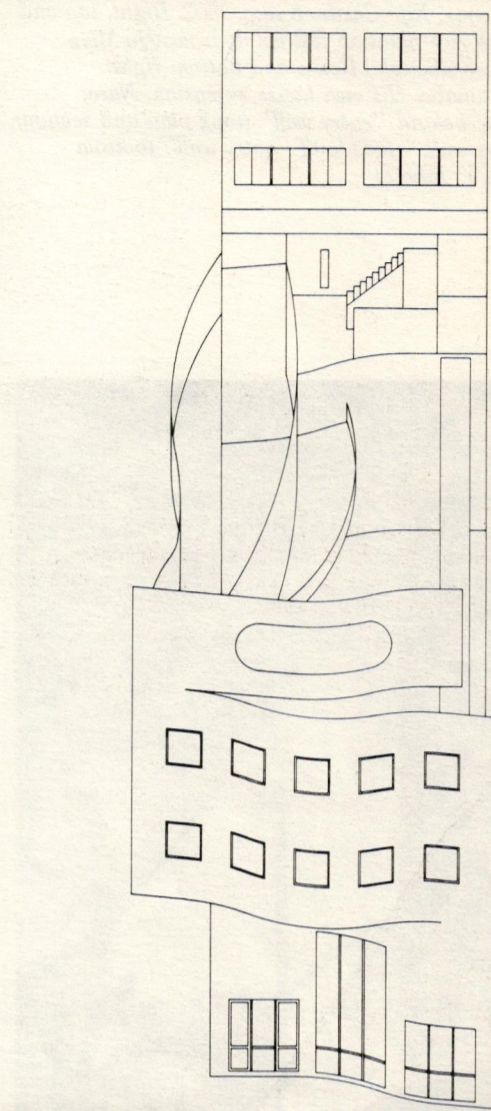
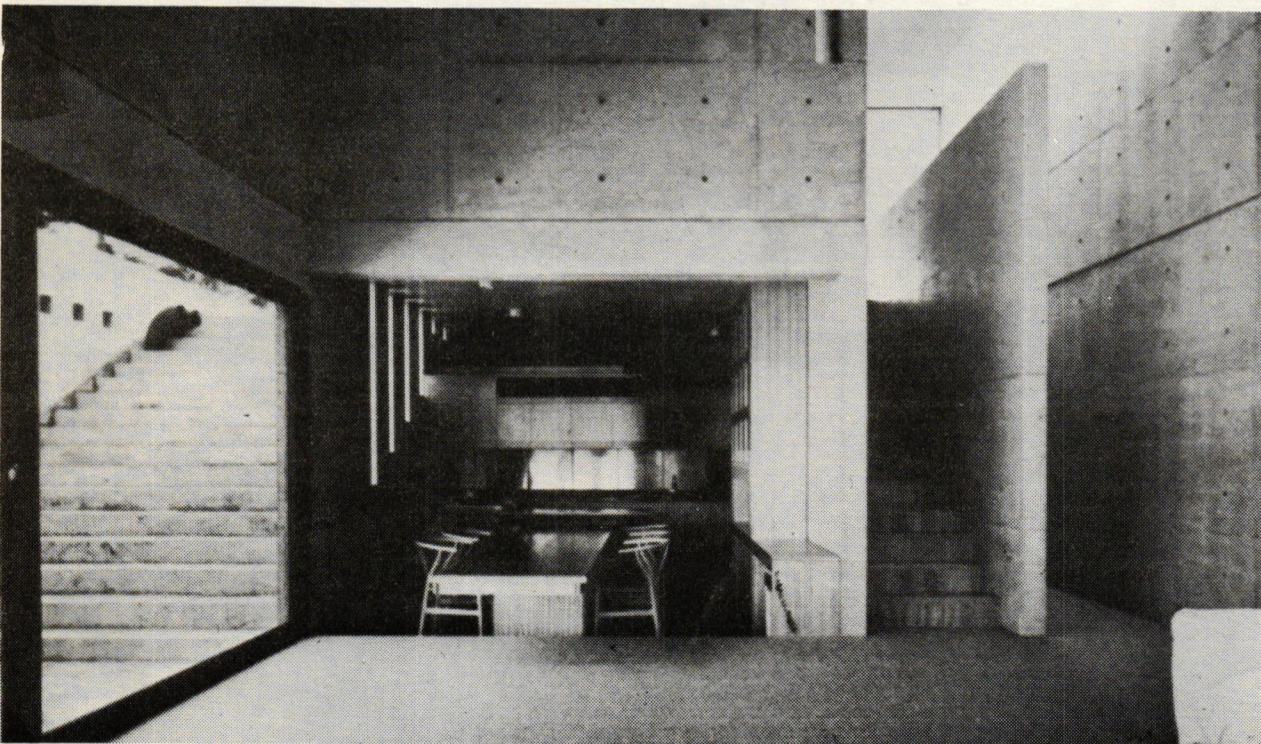
Left: Makasa Watanabe. National Museum, Tokyo; 1937. Right: Le Corbusier. Museum of Western Art, Tokyo; 1957.



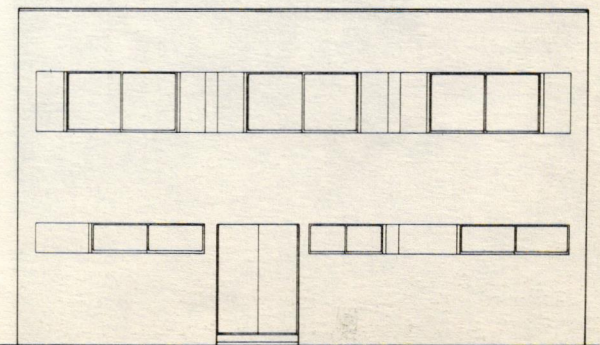
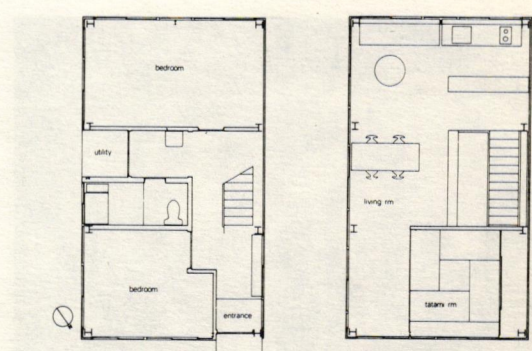
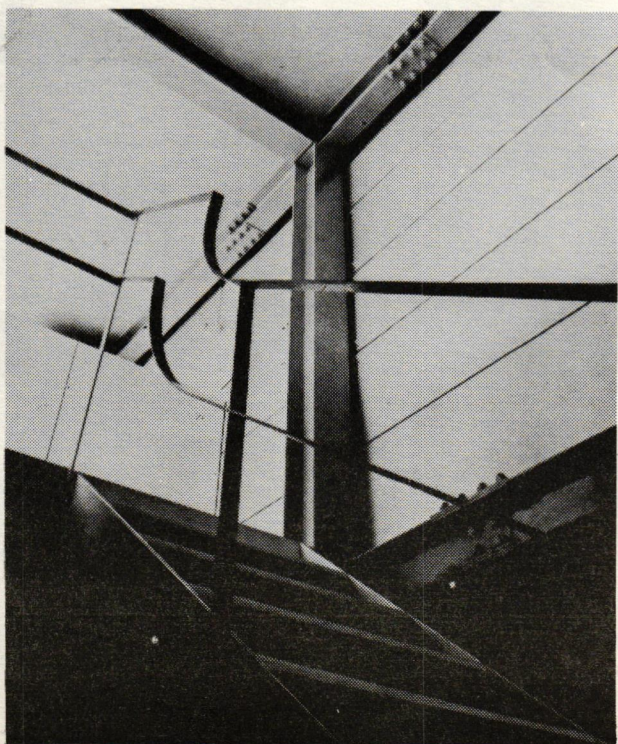
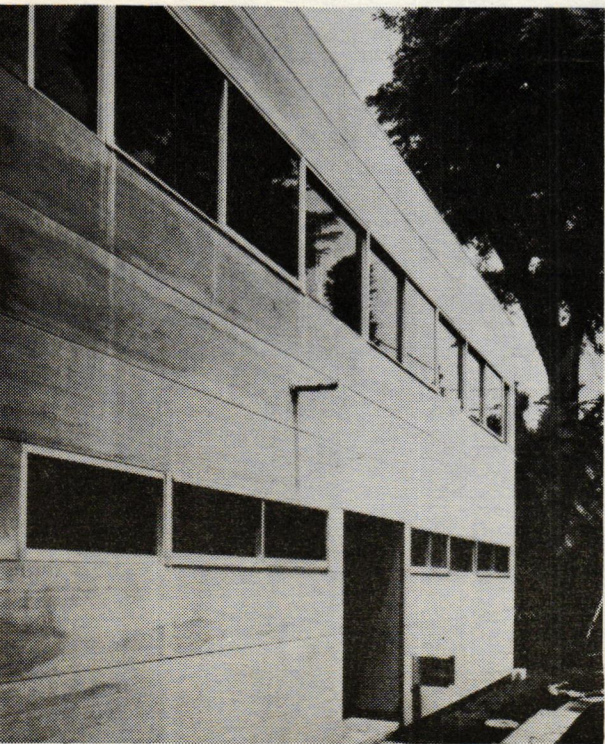
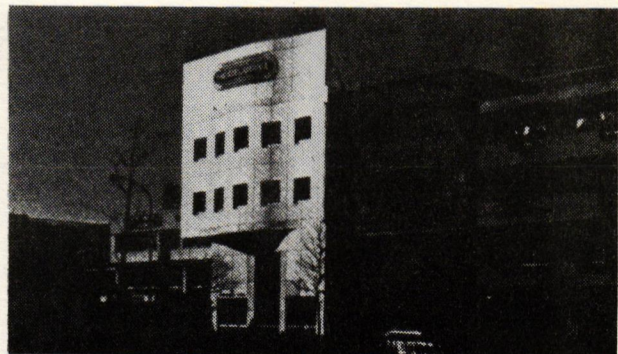
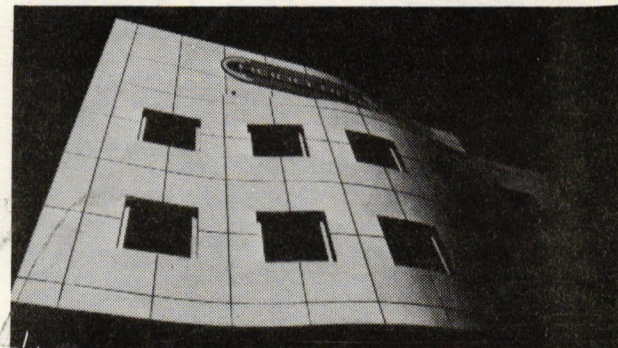
Koshino House, first (left) and second-floor plans



Tadao Ando. Koshino House, Kyoto; 1981. Below: dining room. (photos: Tadao Ando)

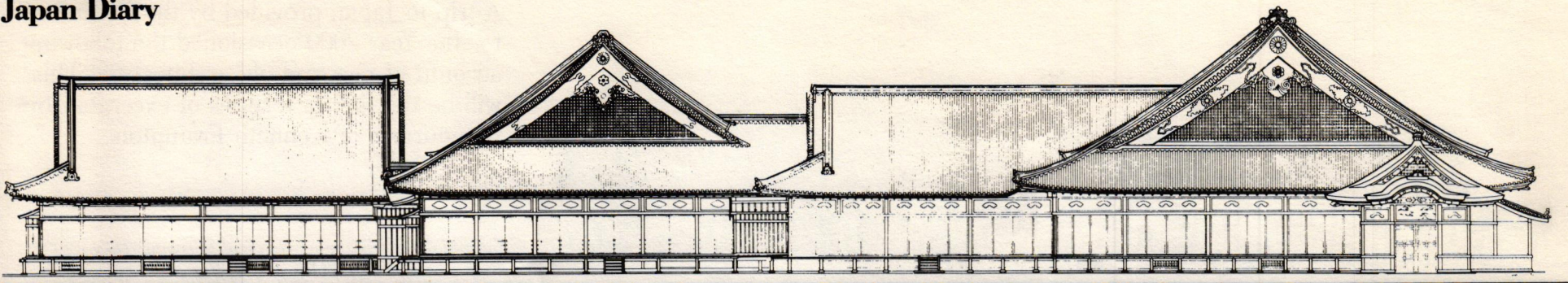


Toyo Ito. PMT Building, Tokyo; 1978. Conceptual projection, facade detail, and view from the main street.

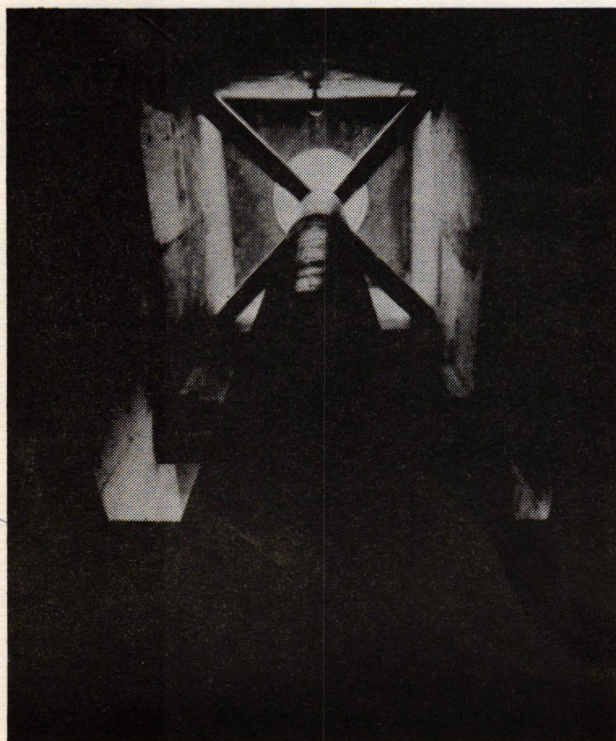
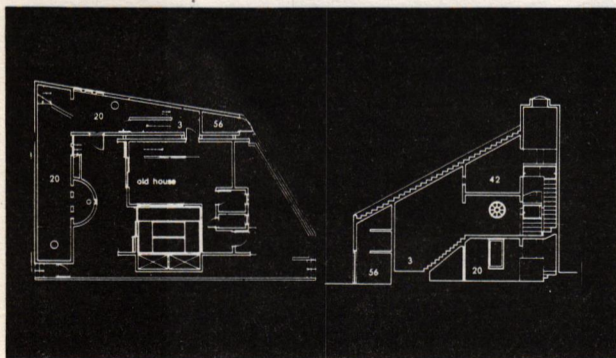
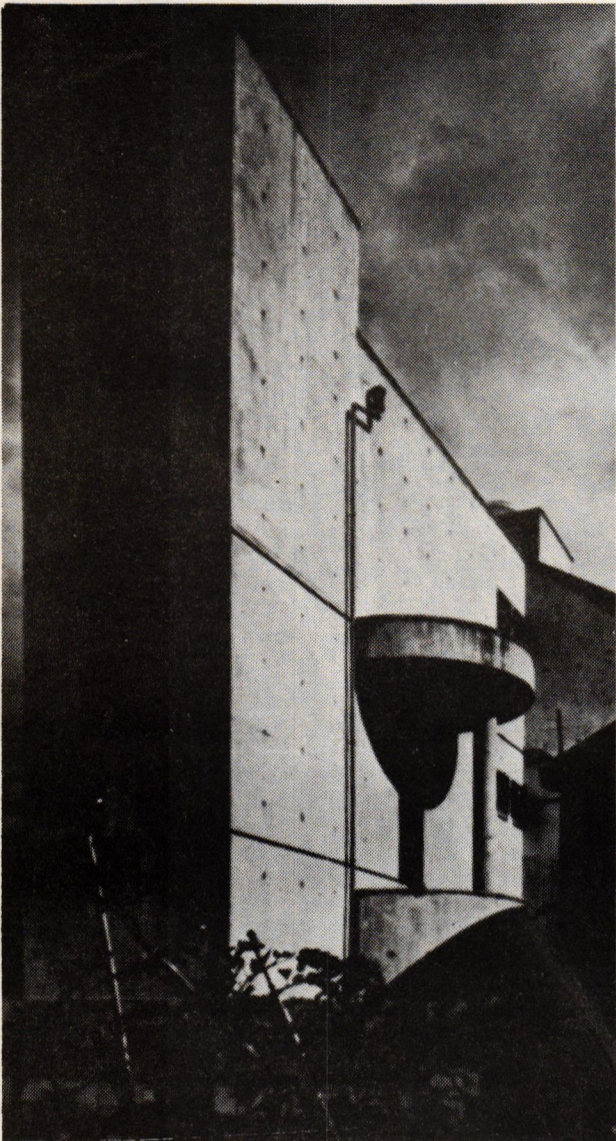
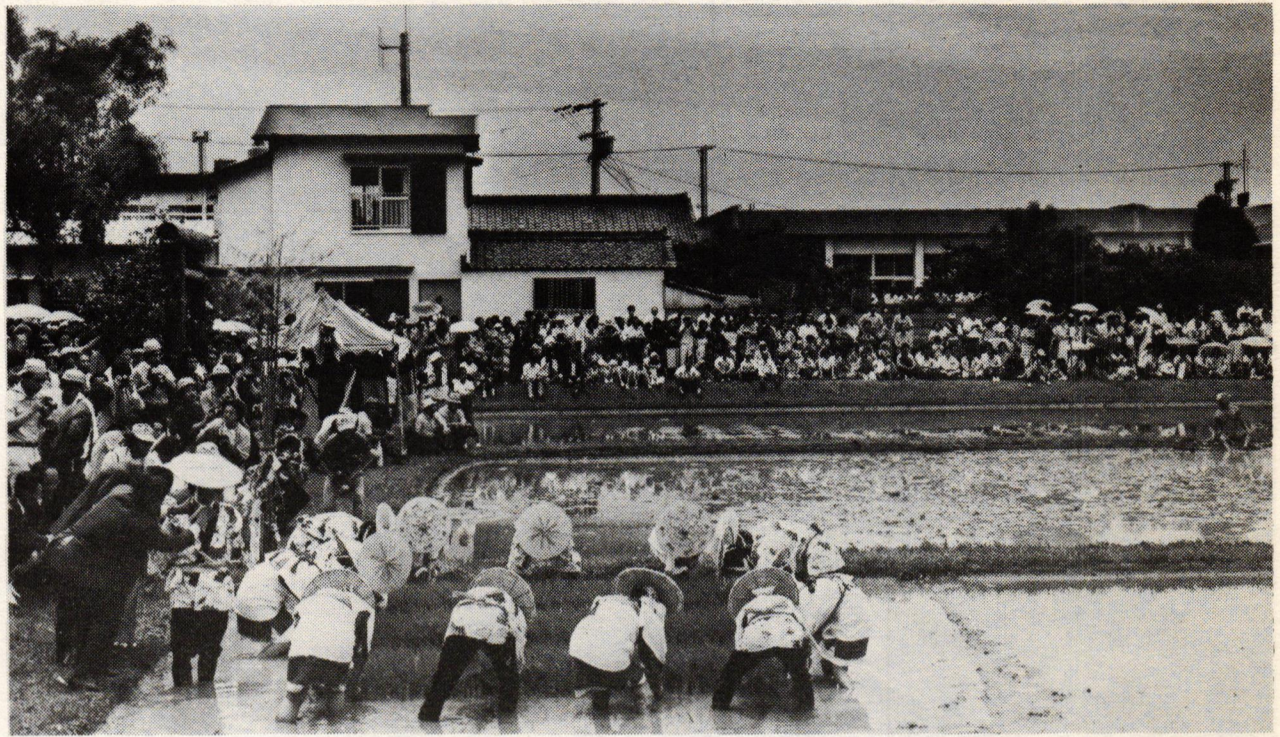


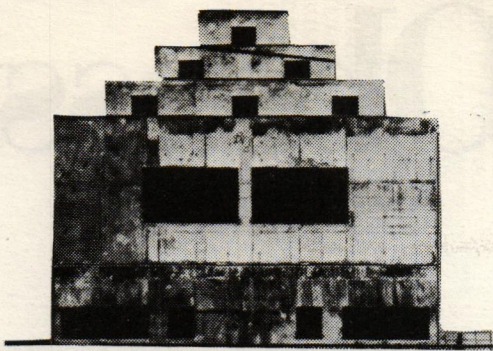
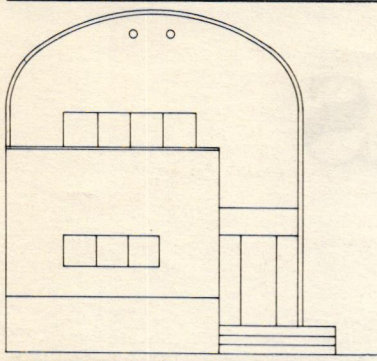
Toyo Ito. Koganei House, Tokyo; 1979. Main facade, stair detail, plans, and elevation

Japan Diary



Above: Elevations, Nijo Castle, Kyoto, 1602. Right, top and middle: Shinto rice planting festival at Izawa-Ho-Miya (photos: Silvia Kolbowski) Below and bottom right: Toyokazu Watanabe. His own house extension, Nara; 1976. Entrance behind "entry wall" (top); plan and section; shaft in "entry wall;" facade of "entry wall" (bottom right) (photos: Y. Takese)





Far left: Toyo Ito. Elevation of first project for the Chuorinkan House. Left: Toyokazu Watanabe. Nakano House, Hyogo, 1979.

an equally mythical Tokyo. By means of this short shuttle one is supposed to reexperience something of the aura of *fin-de-siècle* Japan, complete with asthmatic British locomotives dating back to 1900, and three carriages of approximately the same time. The ramshackle frugality of this rolling stock set against the fierce lushness of the vegetation and the isolated, pristine quality of these too-perfect restorations imparts to the whole environment a disturbing, Delvaux-like quality. Even Wright's still incompletely restored Imperial Hotel seems brand-new! The hotel foyer, carefully demounted in 1965, has yet to be completely reassembled. Clearly the Oya lava stone had deteriorated a good deal and had in places almost entirely eroded away.

The Meiji Village instructs one as to the nature of institutions in nineteenth-century Japan, for here one encounters a prison block together with its courthouse, a school, a prefectural office, and factory sheds—all built out of timber. It exhibits the traditional urban repertory of the period—a barber's shop, a post office, a Kabuki theater, large townhouses, and, in one instance, a house that is part of the mythology of the Meiji era: the diminutive dwelling of the Irish writer Laurence Hearne.

Wednesday, June 24: Kashikojima

Japanese-style breakfast—with large quantities of tea and rice—in Togo Murano's Shima Kanko Hotel in Kashikojima. Murano's hotel leaves one cold with its contrived play on the traditional single-story house piled up for eight floors and executed in reinforced concrete construction. Each mini-house retains a portion of its eaves, so to speak, and these project to form stringcourses, which articulate the vertical height of the hotel.

After a mandatory visit to the Mikimoto pearl museum, we take a taxi to the Ise Shrine and accidentally encounter en route the annual Shinto rice transplanting festival at Izawa-Ho-Miya. A fete-like street lined with booths leads to an open area where the ritual is in full swing. In two paddy fields, two separate enactments take place side by side. In one, men stripped to the waist battle each other in the mud; in the other, men and women in traditional peasant costumes perform a slow incantatory dance around young rice plants. On one side a battle is in progress for the final possession of the tall bamboo palm that separates the two fields; on the other there is a progressive encirclement of a square patch of plants, which will be eventually transplanted. At the appointed hour, when the large palm is released into the battlefield, the four reeds that mark the corners of the transplanting area are removed and the rite of transplantation commences. The large palm falls and the fishermen battle one another for possession of it. We visit the actual shrine, which is a miniature version of the larger Ise complex. It is constructed out of discarded timbers, which are left after each successive twenty-year cyclical rebuilding of the major site.

The monumentality of the Ise Naiku is completely unexpected, with its vast approach route and dramatic entry over the Isuzu River, the bed of which is lined near the bridge by a flat stone threshold that has the effect of calming the current on the upstream side of the bridge. The mirror-like surface of the water is regarded as a manifestation of the divinity. The way leads through a series of *torii* [wooden gates or arches] past a stepped stone esplanade leading down to the river's edge, where purification may be carried out—the *mitarashi*. The route then turns left and leads past the recently rebuilt center for sacred music, the *kaguraden*. There then follows a long drive, flanked by enormous cypresses, which finally leads to the entrance of the inaccessible main shrine, set on a small acropolis above the approach. The whole site is permeated by "presences": the elaborate tufted grass-and-stone edge of the route; groups of cockerels wandering within the grounds that mysteriously appear and disappear; attendant white-clad novices in black clogs and high black hats; the people arriving and clapping their hands before an imperceptible moving white veil, which signifies the presence of the spirit behind the multilayered fences.

Leaving the Ise site, we take a two-and-a-half-hour train journey to Kyoto, in a privately run train with hot towels, clean, well upholstered, high-speed traction, gliding smoothly against steel, as do the trains of France. At the Kyoto station, we notice an elderly intellectual in a blue pin-striped suit who is cooling himself with a white fan. His lapel is decorated with an imperial insignia. This is the Kansai region, which is noted for effete elegance and learning.

Thursday, June 25: Kyoto

In the morning to the Imperial Palace, built in 1855, and abandoned by the emperor in 1867 when he moved to Tokyo, after the decision of the Shogunate to restore power to the imperial line. We walk through the 360-year-old pond garden supposedly designed by the famous Enshu Kobori. We learn that the emperor possesses three treasures that are handed down from generation to

generation: a jewel, a sword, and a mirror. These objects are never seen. When displayed publicly they are always kept in their cases. Once again we see a sequence of ritualistic pavilions. I am struck by the constant rebuilding of Japanese structures, with the Ise Shrine as the primary object of ritualistic reconstruction. This changes my notion of historicism in Japan, for, in a sense Japanese culture is *synchronic* rather than *diachronic*. The observation suggests to me that a synchronic approach to culture (as with Louis Kahn) is the only hope for any significant architectural culture in the future.

We follow this with a visit to Nijo Castle, the Kyoto residence of the Shogun from 1603 to 1867. It is a heavily walled compound surrounded by a moat. Like every other person visiting this palace, one is duly impressed by the security device of the "nightingale floor": a boarded corridor that is designed to squeak when anyone approaches. Security is omnipresent within the interior of this structure, such as the positioning of bodyguards in relation to the Shogun's presence. No men were ever allowed near the Shogun when he was in his private chamber. The furnishing of the main rooms includes a writing desk, a *tokonoma* [niche or wall recess] and a *chigayama* [cupboard] concealing the bodyguards. The function of the inner island with its moat seems also to



Kenneth Frampton in front of the Shima Kanko Hotel, Kashikojima, by Togo Murano. (photo: Silvia Kolbowski)

have been one of security. Sliding screens on the outside of the structure permit the opening up and closing down of the dwelling in summer and winter. The gateway to Nijo is a typically ostentatious work of the Momoyama period, a style that Bruno Taut apparently hated because of its grotesque profiles and general vulgarity. After the collapse of the Weimar Republic, Taut evidently tried to escape to the utopian dream of his orientalized *Alpine Architektur* (1919); a dream of a highly spiritual culture firmly sequestered from the destructive influences of industrialization. To this end he practiced in Japan from 1933 to 1936 and lived in Turkey from 1936 until his death in 1938.

In the evening we return to the hotel and meet Tadao Ando and a friend of his, Masa Furuyama, who teaches urban design at Kyoto University. We talk of the Ise Shrine. I mention the work of Gunther Nitschke to Furuyama, particularly Nitschke's essay *Shim-me Nozawa* (Binding-un-binding). He says that he thinks that Nitschke's work on these Shinto rituals of building is perhaps a little too influenced by the Western tradition of Reason! What he doesn't like is Nitschke finding something at the root of all this, when, finally, as in all Shinto culture, there is simply nothing at bottom.

Friday, June 26: Journey from Kyoto to Osaka

Journey by rail to Osaka to meet Ando and Watanabe. We drive to one of Ando's latest houses high in the hills overlooking the city of Osaka. This is the Koshino House, which has only been completed this year. Designed for an Osaka fashion designer, the house, surprisingly enough, is built—as are all Ando's houses—entirely out of reinforced concrete. Nevertheless, Ando's houses are apparently inexpensive for the quality level achieved. Apart from the concrete, the only other materials are ash, used for all the floors, and *hinoki* (cypress), used in the veneer of the paneling in the small tatami room built for the parents of the owner. Perhaps one of the most unique features of the Koshino House is its long, built-in dining table, which by means of a sitting pit, can be used for both Western and Eastern dining postures, i.e., sitting and

squatting.

After seeing the Koshino House we walk down the hill to another of Ando's houses, known as the Ryoheki House. Here he used two different kinds of in-situ concrete—the external walls are struck from boarded formwork, while the inner shell is from plywood. The blank screen hall concealing the service entry on the long street facade is related to a similar device used at the threshold of the Shinto shrine. Ando has subsequently used such screens in the Horiuchi House (1979) and Matsumoto House (1980). In the rear court of the Ryoheki House we are impressed by the formality of the elevations and by the closely textured ivy and clover "garden," also designed by Ando.

In traveling through the urbanized area of Japan I cannot help noticing fundamentally different techniques that occur everywhere: the large golf practice nets built everywhere; newspapers vertically stacked in their stands; trees framed in gratings as in Paris, and protected by bracing cages; the propensity to miniaturize everything from gardens to bathrooms (Silvia and I visited "Crayons," a boutique in Kyoto where the actual marketing space measures no more than 8 by 10 feet. Even if you are Japanese, barely more than three people can occupy this sales area at one time.) I also noticed that in Kyoto different traditional workshops tended to occupy marketing space of the same size irrespective of whether they were carpenters, tin smiths, monumental masons, or tatami repairers. Other cultural mores that impressed me were the "hot towel" culture and the evidence of a highly safety-conscious society, such as the emergency torches provided by law in cars and hotel bedrooms, and the legal insistence on full-height protective screening around every building under construction. Apart from this, Japan is a *tactile* culture, particularly at the floor level; it is also an animistic culture: even traffic signals are electronically tuned (at least in Kyoto) to sound like birds. Unlike America, it is a train culture par excellence, where the private lines make money as much from related real estate development as from passenger revenues. In general, service labor seems uniquely well organized—from the alacrity with which private trains are cleaned *immediately* on their arrival, to the large numbers of elderly women in traditional garb weeding the public parks with sickle-like picks!

Saturday, June 27: Kyoto

We go to the Traditional Products Hall here designed by the Osaka architect Kiyoshi Kawasaki in 1976. It is a beautifully detailed structure faced in a warm golden stone highlighted with bright chrome fenestration.

Sunday, June 28: Nara

There is plenty of time for a difficult conversation with Akioshi Hirayama en route to Nara—more difficult for him than for me due to the use of English. I am, so to speak, "filled in" on his opinion of the general scene. He tells me of his close connection to both Monta Mozuna and to Chris Fawcett, who studied in Kyoto University for three years. He informs me that years ago when Ando, Toyokazu Watanabe, and Mozuna were teaching at Kobe, they were known as the "three strange architects." Fawcett has apparently classified the work of the Japanese New Wave in terms of it being "absurd" or "ritualist," classifying Ito as ritualist. I don't know who else would be considered "ritualist." It is clear that Hirayama is sympathetic to Mozuna and Watanabe and alien to Ito, and, I imagine, to Isozaki, although he doesn't say so. He also distances himself from the work of Takefumi Aida, which he finds too fashionable and changeable. Meanwhile the endless "strip" of Nara passes us by; identical to the typical American strip except for the graphics.

We finally arrive at Toyokazu Watanabe's house, the interior of which appears to me like some Dostoevskian film set. Aside from the schoolroom, where Mrs. Watanabe is in the process of giving private lessons to diligent children, an aggressive domestic chaos reigns everywhere. Watanabe is clearly not an obsessive about detail, and takes his "anti-designer" aesthetic to the point of some kind of visual masochism. In the midst of this chaos, over tea and chain-smoked cigarettes, we look at his work in the *GA* issue entitled *The Ontology of the House*.

Once more we are on the road after a brief *benta* lunch (Japanese boxed lunch). Finally, just before 5:00 p.m., we come to the Yakushiji Temple. Its courtyard, now radiant with failing light, accommodates two tall pagodas on either side of the main temple. One of these pagodas was rebuilt two years ago—or should one say "built," as there hasn't been a pagoda on this spot since ancient times. Two years before that the main temple itself was rebuilt, and both are now gleaming orange, red, white, green, and gold. To the right of the main axis, facing the main temple and opposite the new pagoda, is a 1200-year-old pagoda of almost identical pattern and height. The very concept of historicism loses all conviction in such a society.

The author would like to express his gratitude to Arata Isozaki and The Committee for the Year 2000 for having invited him to Japan.

American Obsessions

No Place of Grace by T. J. Jackson Lears

Ross Miller

What is the meaning of a Palladian facade on a card shop in a modern shopping center, or a procession of Doric columns in a Chelsea loft? A broken pediment on Madison Avenue? Are these loving duplications of classical forms, slavish devotion to the orders, or sly manipulations of a standard grammar? Jackson Lears' *No Place of Grace*, a thoughtful and suggestive examination of American culture from 1880 to 1920, argues that the specific meaning of any revivalist act is, more often than not, less important than the gesture itself. The fashionable term for this architectural "gesture" has been "post-modernism," although, in fact, it is more accurately *anti-modernism*, and very much a part or continuation of late nineteenth-century reaction to what Nietzsche called the "weightlessness" of everyday life.

Lears understands that the uneasiness with modern life extended beyond the ugly protest of nativists, know-nothings, and anti-intellectuals. The nativists were originally middle-class Brahmins who attacked immigrants to the U.S., but later—when, for example, the Irish immigrants who came to the States in the 1850s attacked the Italian immigrants of the 1870s—the nativists came to include all anti-immigrants. The know-nothings were the lower-class bigots who hated all "foreigners," particularly blacks.

Lears concentrates upon figures from the emerging or traditional elite, including Henry Adams, Ralph Adams Cram, and Charles Eliot Norton, who joined in the nativist criticism of immigrants and newly emancipated blacks—the labor base for an expanding industrial democracy—but whose dissatisfactions with contemporary society were broader than their distrust of a growing underclass. As a result, anti-modernism tended to be less personal than a more abstract and general withdrawal from the increasingly routinized urban culture: an instinctive attack on the "weightless" times without anything of substance to substitute for them. Characteristically, when the anti-modernist was not ardently searching for something more meaningful or weighty, he suffered from neurasthenia, or nervous collapse. This disease of inaction, fashionable in the late nineteenth century, has parallels in contemporary life. The nineteenth-century anti-modernists' response is replaced by today's genteel acceptance of the new and expensive consumer objects as long as they are never modern or "vulgar." The contemporary anti-modernist, like his predecessors, has it both ways: he is both critic and consumer of a secular order that he professes to abhor, but is essentially comfortable in his protest.

It is understandable that social protest of this type has been ostensibly apolitical or passively reactionary. Take the case of William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926), whose father and grandfather were prominent Boston physicians. Although Bigelow studied medicine and obediently became a doctor, he found the active life of Boston too demanding. He became enamored of Japanese society, finding the Orient much more congenial to contemplation. Bigelow, like many of the figures Lears discusses (Percival Lowell, George Cabot Lodge, G. Stanley Hall), had all the prerequisites to effectively protest modern society. He was well-educated, rich, and independent. But his protest extended no further than withdrawing to the family's country retreat, Tuckernuck, and establishing a Buddhist meditation practice. Therefore, Bigelow's anti-modernism became no more than a personal complaint.

Lears explains this making a potentially political act into a private gesture as the oddly "circular" nature of American social criticism. What begins as an anti-materialist critique of a desiccated secular order is inevitably stillborn. The individual stoically accepts his pain as his own or familial intellectual burden. Lears is especially good in sketching this problem as being part of the *incomplete* evolution from a theological—God-centered—world view in the early part of the century, to a therapeutic or self-centered view at the century's end. A "weightless" world without God or any other spiritual justification was a proper climate for upper-class neurasthenics who were more than likely free of the Darwinian imperative of competition that motivated the middle class into action. Men like Adams, Lodge, and Lowell did not require a simple material response to their need. Yet because their anti-modern protest was essentially incomplete and often inarticulate, their spiritual hunger was fed by a market economy that encouraged the



John Handley Imperial Design Center, Sherman Oaks, CA; 1980.

neurasthenic—the intuitive rebel—to sleep off his discontent in luxury. The publication around this time of the Russian novelist Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov*—the tale of a decidedly déclassé neurasthenic who spends his days in bed languishing and unable to take any action—signaled in the U.S. the advent of the Victorian version of Proust's delicate "invalid" sensibility: Neurasthenia, definitely the characteristic nineteenth-century disease, allowed people to loll in bed and to refuse to protest against current institutions and injustices.

Furthermore, on the social level there was an increasing variety of palliatives to discourage even the most refined psychological or literary rebellion. One was encouraged to view one's own discomfort as a *sui generis* maladjustment. In this way, the anti-modernist impulse was never focused or made more general so as to include a particular class; one was encouraged to view it as a debilitating malaise rather than as a spur to future action.

Lears sees the interest in mind-control, Anglo-Catholicism, and various aesthetic diversions as basically evasions or escapes from a society perceived to be devoid of significance. The Emersonian vision of individuals both active within the world and spiritually alive, which Emerson described in his first book, *Nature* (1836), and in *The American Scholar* (1837), was an alternative to the dominant attitude of the era, which was a kind of materialist sloth. The Emersonian alternative, although conceived in the 1830s, was still a possibility for those of the 1880s and 1890s, and the atmosphere of passivity that it originally attempted to combat prevailed. Emerson's views, however, were fractured by an increasingly complex market economy. In addition, nearly twenty years of serial economic depressions and recessions (1873–1893) had dulled any naive optimist's buoyant spirit. Philosophical positions rooted in diverse movements like the Arts and Crafts revival, and patterned after Ruskin and Morris lacked a biting political component. They were more often retreats from paralyzing dullness of thought than revolutionary programs. An especially American accommodation to the "inevitability of progress" can be seen in the work of Oscar Lovell Triggs, who founded Chicago's Industrial Art League in 1899 as well as its Morris Society in 1903. Note Triggs' essentially literary response to the implacable growth of industrial society, no more dramatically demonstrated than in the universal expansion of Chicago's own "commercial style" in the development of the skyscraper. "We want machinery," he said, and continued:

We want more and ever more of it. But when machinery has done its work, when all common and primitive needs are satisfied by quantitative production, when everything that is really mechanical in conduct is mechanized, then we escape into a transcendental sphere where the will is free, where conduct is vital every moment.

Triggs' feelings are emblematic of a certain kind of fin-de-

siècle anti-modernism that Lears has located. The "literary" aspect of the sensibility creates an illusion of control over the intractable grind of everyday life. By willing a retreat into a "transcendental sphere"—which can never be named because it does not exist except in words—the author effectively short-circuits productive social criticism. The anti-modernist did not feel compelled to make such a place real because it functioned for him as a secular afterlife. He was, like the earlier Transcendentalists, positing "a world elsewhere," except that the anti-modernist accepted no responsibility for helping anyone get there.

This kind of static vicariousness extended to a rather passive celebration of martial virtues, raised ultimately through the myth of Teddy Roosevelt and Rudyard Kipling's tales. Whether seen from a distance or read at rest, this celebration was just another aspect of the duality inherent in anti-modernism. Lears sees the roots of this paradox—the inactive love of action—in the wearing-away of republican values. The active Jeffersonian yeoman—independent, self-sufficient, moral—had been replaced in the urban world by a grasping liberal Protestant who saw godliness in economic hegemony and the Messiah in material progress. Simply put, at the end of the nineteenth century it was difficult to associate good with any of the possible modes of the active life because a predatory market capitalism appeared to overwhelm the original community-based guild economy of Federalist America. But as Lears points out, it was doubly difficult for the late nineteenth-century gentleman to level his moral criticism, when he, in fact, profited materially from the same godless prosperity. So anti-modernism remained literary—cut off from the possibilities of significant change—because it was by nature "circular." The fashionable disease of inaction, neurasthenia, provides us with a poignant image of the anti-modernist: a rebellious spirit guarding the fortress of his bed.

This expression of anti-modernism, then, is part of a larger dissatisfaction with a society that lacks the cohesive union of a God or the "cultural authority" of enduring institutions. *No Place of Grace* probes the deep duality of democracy, which promises great freedom in an inverse relation to the amount of hierarchical authority. In essence, one is most free in America when, at the same time, one is compelled to confront the scary absence of cultural authority. For example, as great nineteenth-century figures like Emerson, Hawthorne, Whitman, and Adams struggled against the obsessional nature of Puritanism and were successful in liberalizing the church, there was a corresponding loss of spiritual awe and wonder. Naturally, since divinity became more and more located in self (a process that culminates in Thoreau's *Walden*), there was a growing sense of personal responsibility. The entropic relationship between responsibility and freedom inevitably results in the "circular" protest of anti-modernism, which

Dreams and fantasies intrinsic to the American consciousness determine its architecture. Several books deal in various ways with the manifestations of direct and indirect influences.



An advertisement ca. 1928.

No Place of Grace. T. J. Jackson Lears. Pantheon Books, New York, 1981. 375 pages. \$18.50.



The first U.S. cast-in-place concrete "castle," in Port Chester, NY; 1872.

both luxuriates in freedom and mourns the loss of a guiding authority. Think only of Henry Adams, in *The Education of Henry Adams* (1918) suspended between the Virgin (maternal spirituality) and the Dynamo (manly action), unable to choose.

In fact, Adams came to understand, in an essay on the social applications of the Second Law of Thermodynamics (entropy), that modern man was to be forever in conflict about his need for action and thwarted by his spiritual shallowness. In a democracy, this tension is particularly dramatic.

Jackson Lears' *No Place of Grace* allows us to see anti-modernism as more than a historical phenomenon set in four decades of the past, and as a more enduring habit of mind. What was represented in the nineteenth century as a nostalgic medievalism—where an industrialist was likely to build his dream-house as a castle and pattern his board room out of Camelot—today is celebrated by a set of neoclassic columns, perhaps out of gypsum board, leading to a ceremonial arch in a highrise office.

We have become a society suspicious of passion and disquieted by any prospect of pain. It is as much a disservice to view the past as a place of sanctuary, as it was once destructive to await Utopia. It is the present that is always problematic, but it is in the present that life and art are made. Anti-modernism, rooted in a narcissistic contemplation of self—apolitical and essentially anti-social—tends toward self-hatred and bad art. Because the nineteenth century is known through its great *modernists*, such as Sullivan, Cézanne, Chekhov, and the twentieth through its *modernists*—Corbu, Picasso, Joyce—we must remind the medievalist and the post-modernist that Dante and Palladio were also the modern artists of their day. Anti-modernism is that understandable failure of will that accompanies the wake of our heroes—the fear of going it alone.

Gwendolyn Wright's *Building the Dream*

Diane Ghirardo

An analysis of the social history of housing in the United States is long overdue. In her book *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*, Gwendolyn Wright attempts to fill this lacuna not through "a scholarly treatment of any period," but by presenting an "interpretive essay that attempts to raise certain issues about American housing" (xvi). Her discussion centers largely upon middle-income American families from the seventeenth century to the present, and in particular examines the relationship between individualized housing and the impulse toward larger agglomerations.

Building the Dream is divided chronologically into five sections: an introductory section on Puritan communities; a section on the early national row houses, slave quarters, factory towns, and rural cottages; a survey of suburbs, urban tenements, and apartments in the second half of the nineteenth century; a section on bungalows, company towns, and planned residential communities in the first two decades of the twentieth century; and finally, a survey of the period from 1930 to the present, which examines public housing, suburban expansion, and the housing problems of the 1980s. In each case, Wright offers a coherent summary of some of the literature in the field, which means that there is virtually nothing new in the material, nor is there anything new in the interpretation. Consequently, for the scholar, Wright's book is of limited value. *Building the Dream* will probably be useful to the general public, however, because on the whole the summaries are intelligently presented and make interesting reading.

It is on scholarly and interpretive grounds, however, that *Building the Dream* must be assessed, and it is on the grounds that I have a number of objections. One general criticism is that Wright demonstrates a tendency in this study to allow some of her sources to shape her questions in particular ways. For instance, her portrait of New England Puritan communities describes a quaint, God-fearing, and static society. But a perusal of the most recent literature (which Wright even cites) yields a very different picture of Puritan towns. Whatever their aspirations, these litigious and often quarrelsome early residents of New England lived in communities that were far more dynamic, diverse, and fraught with tension than Wright suggests.

Although she provides elegant descriptions of some Puritan houses and communities, and despite her avowed interest in planning, Wright tells us nothing about landholding patterns. For example, did each farmer own one large plot of land, or a number of strips dispersed over a wide area? Did these two landholding patterns influence the shapes of towns? Early settlers in New England brought many of their ideas on what communities should be with them from England: what were these ideas? What did houses and communities look like in their homeland; how did they operate; what modifications or variations did settlers introduce in New England? Did the Puritans live as single or extended families? What happened in new communities as landless sons moved west? Because this short section ignores these questions, it provides a flawed picture of early New England.

One hundred and fifty years of colonial history—the period between the early Puritan settlements and the development of row houses—pass unremarked, a singular leap for which no explanation is given. And yet this period of explosive immigration and westward expansion set the tone for much of what was to follow. Wright talks in the first section about row houses—but what was the source of this housing type? Was it that early Dutch immigrants to New York replicated the housing types of Amsterdam? We know that taxation in Amsterdam was based upon street frontage, hence the typical two-bay facades and the characteristically narrow and deep dwellings behind them. Were taxes computed according to the same principle in the colonies, or did the housing type persist for other reasons? Did the row houses change when they were transplanted to America, and, if so, how and why?

Although the chapter on slave housing in the antebellum South is full of little-known information presented in a highly readable fashion, it seems cruel and somewhat ludicrous to include slave quarters in a study of "dream" housing. It is clear that the shacks set aside for plantation blacks reveal the illusions of white masters about the

Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America. Pantheon Books, New York, 1981. 329 pages, 81 illustrations. \$18.50.

capacity of their charges—they reveal the white owners' dreams, not those of their inhabitants. And, although the chapter is entitled "The 'Big House' and the Slave Quarters," Wright does not discuss the plantation house at all, a curious omission.

The discussions of land use, covenants, zoning, and planned communities in the second half of the book are more interesting and informative, but there are problems here too, especially in the section on the New Deal. Although the Roosevelt Administration broke decisively with tradition by engaging the government in many kinds of housing schemes, Wright limits the discussion to urban public housing. She dismisses the potentially far more interesting and instructive subsistence homestead programs with just a few paragraphs, although the design and operation of such settlements are rich with evidence on how the United States government envisioned future living patterns. What was the theoretical framework behind these communities? What was the government trying to accomplish with the part-time industrial settlements? Wright leaves us with the impression that the part-time farming/industrial programs were successful, but they were not. Why not? She also offers misleading information about camps for migrant workers—most were not wood-frame constructions, but canvas or metal-roofed mobile units that followed the crops along with the laborers. The answers to these questions would make absorbing reading, but Wright does not broach them.

This brings me, finally, to my most serious reservations about *Building the Dream*. It has many of the virtues of a textbook survey: it is readable, wide-ranging, informative, and it also collects in one volume a good deal of material published in books that architectural historians and architects are unlikely to read. For these features Wright is to be commended, and her study is certainly no small achievement. But, like other American historians and art historians, Wright succumbs to the fatal temptation of viewing the history of the United States as a discrete reality that is only marginally influenced by events elsewhere in the world. We know that this is not so simply by looking at the houses of the earliest New Englanders, at the early row houses, at the settlements of German immigrants in Missouri, and, yes, even at New Deal housing programs. If we are to understand the history of housing in this country, we must first understand what is distinct about it; this cannot happen if it is seen only in the context of American history.

Moreover, over the last two hundred years, the house in the United States has increasingly become a container for the installation of equipment—from faucets, plugs, and dishwashers to furnaces. The regulations governing the placement of these technical features have prejudiced housing design and completely transformed the architecture; I find Wright's omission of any systematic treatment of this to be inexplicable.

One example of a book that evaluates the history of housing more successfully is David Handlin's *The American Home: Architecture and Society, 1815-1915* (New York, 1979). Although this work also covers a relatively long period of time, Handlin's discussion probes many topics with extraordinary thoroughness. One important issue that he considers is the way housing design was influenced by broad social and economic changes, such as the loss of the house's role as a factory—a trend that Wright ignores. Most important is Handlin's sensitivity to the precise ways in which housing in this country differed from housing in Europe. The absence of this awareness is the single largest shortcoming of Wright's book, in my view. In all fairness to her, however, the same malady afflicts most American historians and virtually every historian of American art. Our perception of the story of housing in the United States will be quite different when historians shed their cultural blinders. Until then, *Building the Dream* will be a useful survey of the current understanding of housing in this country.

Dateline: April '82

Exhibits

Boston/Cambridge

The International Style in Perspective: 1932-1982

April 5-18 In conjunction with the GSD conference marking the 50th anniversary of the International Style exhibit at MoMA. The show is divided into three sections: work of nine architects represented in the original show; impressions of the exhibit as it traveled around the country; and examples of the dispersion of the International Style. Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Gund Hall, 48 Quincy Street; (617) 495-5864

Landscape Architecture

April 20-May 7 An invitational juried exhibition of outstanding built landscape design in cooperation with the Boston Society of Landscape Architects. Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Gund Hall, 48 Quincy Street; (617) 495-5864

Buffalo

Buffalo Architecture

May 7-June 27 In conjunction with the publication of *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*—a show of plans, photos, and artifacts relating to Buffalo architecture. The film *A Fair Place To Build in: The Architecture of the Empire State* will be shown on **May 7**. **May 8th** A symposium with Brendan Gill, Robert Campbell, Michael Brill, and Robert Trayham Coles. Albright Knox Gallery, 1285 Elmwood Avenue; (716) 882-8700

Chicago

Chicago Construction

May 11-Aug. 14 Canadian artist/architect Melvin Charney will create a "new facade" for the Museum of Contemporary Art. Drawings for this project and others will be on display. Museum of Contemporary Art, 237 East Ontario Street (312) 280-2660

Edward H. Bennett, Architect and City Planner

Through July 4 Architectural drawings, documents, and sculptures by this architect associated with the City Beautiful Movement. Art Institute of Chicago, Michigan Avenue at Adams Street; (312) 443-3625

College Park, Maryland

Washington Architects: A New Generation

Through April 21 Work by young Washington architects, including Martin & Jones; Kress Cox, Cass & Pinnell; Stephen Muse; Mark McInturff. The exhibit is organized by Caroline Constant, Assistant Professor, School of Architecture, U. of Maryland; (301) 454-3427

Lexington, Ky.

Fragments of Invention

Through April 6 A selection of sketches by Le Corbusier from 1914-64, organized by William Curtis of the Carpenter Center at Harvard to accompany the publication of the 4-volume *Le Corbusier Sketchbooks* by the Architectural History Foundation and the MIT Press. Rusdall Gallery, Student Center, University of Kentucky; (606) 258-8867

Los Angeles

SCI-ARC

April 7-18 Work by Rob Wellington Quigley, Raymond Kappe, and Glen Small. SCI-ARC Gallery, 3021 Olympic Boulevard; (213) 829-3482

San Juan Capistrano Public Library Competition

Through June 20 Schemes submitted by Michael Graves, Moore Ruble Yudell, and Robert A.M. Stern. The Schindler House, 835 North Kings Road; (213) 651-1510

Miami

The End of the Road

April 6-May 20 Color photographs of vanishing highway architecture in America taken by John Margolies. Bass Museum of Art, 2100 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach; (305) 673-7530

New Haven

James Gamble Rogers' Drawings for Yale, 1913-1935

Through April 28 70 Drawings by the architect who did the most to give Yale its neo-Gothic look. Yale University Art Gallery, 1111 Chapel Street, (203) 436-8062

New York City

OMA 1972-1982 at Protetch

Through April 3 Projects by the Office for Metropolitan Architecture—Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis—including *Renovation of a Panopticon*, two structures for Rotterdam, several projects in Greece, and two projects for the IBA. Max Protetch Gallery, 37 West 57th Street; (212) 838-7436

Robert Adam and His Style

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

Preservation in Progress: The Seaport District

Through April 18 An exhibit illustrating the philosophy and technology of the architectural preservation underway at the South Street Seaport. South Street Seaport Gallery, 215 Water Street; (212) 766-9020

Vienna Workshop Fabrics

Through April 30 Textiles, embroidery designs and graphics from the *Wiener Werkstätte*, a creative source of Art Nouveau and Art Deco founded by architects Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser. Austrian Institute, 11 East 52nd Street; (212) PL9-5165

St. Bartholomew's: An Update

Through May 7 Documentation including photographs, illustrating the background and the latest on the St. Bart's struggle. Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 742-6732

Architectural Fantasy and Reality

Through May 9 80 drawings from the late 17th to mid-18th centuries, made as entries for the annual architectural competition at the National Academy of St. Luke in Rome. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6858

OMA Exhibit at IAUS

Through May 28 Models, sketches, and photomontages of four European housing projects by the Office for Metropolitan Architecture. Projects by Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis include two for the Internationale Bauausstellung in Berlin, as well as one each for Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 8 West 40th Street; (212) 398-9474

Landmark Decisions

April 1-17 Information on buildings being considered for Landmark status by the Landmarks Commission. Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison; (212) 980-1297

Giorgio de Chirico

April 3-June 29 100 Paintings and drawings executed between 1909 and 1935. Museum of Modern Art, 18 West 54; (212) 956-7501

Women and the Environment

April 5-16 Columbia Alumnae exhibit their work. 100 level, Avery Hall, Columbia University; (212) 280-3414

Refractions

April 5-May 4 60 photographs of buildings by Peter Fink. Gallery at Rizzoli International Booksellers, 712 Fifth Avenue; (212) 397-3700

From the Familiar to the Fantastic

April 5-May 4 "Architectural Drawings & Dioramas" by Charles Moore. Gallery, Rizzoli International Booksellers, 712 Fifth Avenue; (212) 397-3700

The Right Light

April 15-June 15 Architectural photographs by Roberto Schezen of Adalberto Libera's Villa Malaparte, Adolf Loos' Villa Karma, and Aldo Rossi's Gallaratesa. The Lobby, 369 Lexington Avenue (at 41st)

Buildings in Progress III

April 26-May 15 A sampling of Manhattan's new residential structures. Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

Moshe Safdie

April 26-June 7 An exhibit of his recent work co-sponsored by the N.Y. Institute for the Humanities and Hebrew Union College. Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, Brookdale Center, 1 West 4th Street; (212) 598-2874

New Art Museums in America

June 24-October 10 Plans, renderings, and models of new museums and museum extensions: Dallas Museum of Fine Arts/Edward Larrabee Barnes; High Museum, Atlanta/Richard Meier; Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College/Charles W. Moore; Museum of Contemporary Art, L.A./Arata Isozaki; Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.C./Cesar Pelli; Joseph Price Collection, Bartlesville, Ok./Bruce Goff; Portland Museum of Art/Henry Cobb of I.M. Pei & Partners; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts/Malcolm Holzman of HHPA. Helen Searing, Professor of Art History at Smith College, is the guest-curator. Whitney Museum, Madison Avenue at 75th Street; (212) 570-3633

Purchase

Robert A.M. Stern: Tradition of the New

Through June 20 Drawings and models emphasizing the incorporation of classical and vernacular traditions into an architectural vocabulary for the present. Neuberger Museum, SUNY, College at Purchase; (914) 253-5575

Mies van der Rohe

May 16-Aug 22 Barcelona Pavilion and furniture designs. Made possible through the support of Knoll International. Neuberger Museum, SUNY, College at Purchase; (914) 253-5087

St. Paul

Prairie School in Minnesota, Iowa & Wisconsin

Through April 10 Photographs, drawings, furniture, stained glass, and decorative objects designed by Louis Sullivan, Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahoney, Percy Dwight Bentley, and Frank Lloyd Wright. Minnesota Museum of Art, Landmark Center, 75 West 5th Street; (612) 224-7431

San Francisco/Bay Area

Facets of the Collection: Urban America

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

Drawings by 14 California Architects

Through April 17 Work by: Lars Lerup, Mark Mack, Charles Moore, Stanley Saitowitz, William Stout, Bruce Tomb, Keith Wilson, Thomas Aidala, Roger Bailey, Christopher Grubbs, Laura Hartman, William Hersey, Jim Jennings, John Kriken. Philippe Bonnafont Gallery, 2200 Mason Street (at Chestnut); (415) 781-8896

Neil Levine continues his Mathews Lectures on Gothic Revival in France at Columbia April 6, April 13, April 20 . . . Robert Venturi delivers the Gropius Lecture at Harvard April 15 . . . David Handlin, Kurt Forster, Robert Stern, Rosemarie Bletter, Anthony Vidler, and Neil Levine present papers at Harvard's "International Style in Perspective," April 16 and 17. Hitchcock and Johnson to comment . . . Vincent Scully, David van Zanten, Thomas S. Hines, and Joseph Rykwert will be talking on assorted topics at SAH Conference, Yale, April 21-25

Events

Seattle

James Turrell

Through July 28 Light environments in carefully controlled architectural space. Lippy Building, 108 First Avenue South; (206) 624-6394

Washington, D.C.

P.B. Wight

Through May 2 46 drawings from the Art Institute of Chicago by the architect who helped establish the High Victorian Style in America. AIA, The Octagon, 1799 New York Avenue N.W.; (202) 638-3105

De Stijl, 1917-1931: Visions of Utopia

April 20-June 27 Paintings, drawings, architectural models, furniture, and graphic designs by the De Stijl artists. Hirshhorn Museum, 8th and Independence Avenue S.W.; (202) 357-1300

Amsterdam

'60-'80 Attitudes/Concepts/Images

April 9-July 11 Innovations in the visual arts 1960-1980, 125 artists including Laurie Anderson, Carl Andre, Joseph Beuys, John Cage, Christo, Hans Haacke, Joan Jonas, and James Turrell. Stedelijk Museum. Paulus Pollerstraat 13, Amsterdam; (020) 732166, ext 237

Toronto

George Baird/Barry Sampson: Drawings

Through April 17 Recent work. Ballenford Architectural Books, 98 Scollard Street; (416) 960-0055

Coming

To San Francisco's Fort Mason, May 20-July 25, The 1980 Venice Biennale: "The Presence of the Past." Eight California architects and architecture firms have been invited to participate. They are: William Turnbull, Daniel Solomon, SOM, Joseph Esherick, Batey & Mack, Frank Israel, Coy Howard, and Hodgetts/Mangurian. Still another San Francisco addition to the exhibit will be a new facade on Pier 2 featuring the Chippendale-like pediment of the A.T.&T Building in New York designed by Philip Johnson.

To the Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, from June 19-September 28, *Dokumenta 7*, an international exhibition of artwork done between 1980 and '82 by over 100 artists. Architects are also included—Frank Gehry, Aldo Rossi; Bernard Tschumi will show work in the *Dokumenta Urbana* section of the exhibition. The exhibit design and graphics will be handled by Walter Nikkels. The show is directed by Rudi Fuchs, Director of the Van Abbe Museum in Eindhoven.

To New York, May 27 through October 3, at the New York Historical Society, "Grand Central Terminal: City Within the City," an exhibit of photographs, drawings, slides, sculpture, and vintage film clips exploring the development of Grand Central Terminal and its influence on the physical, economic, and social life of New York. The exhibit is curated by Deborah Nevins and designed by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer. A 110-page catalogue with a preface by Jacqueline Onassis will be available.

Baltimore

Spring Lectures

April 1 Kenneth Frampton **April 15** Hugh Hardy. 7:30 pm. Baltimore Museum of Art, Museum Drive; (301) 467-8050

Boston/Cambridge

Walter Gropius Lecture, Harvard

April 15 Robert Venturi, "Current Work and Thoughts." 5:30 pm. Sanders Theater, corner of Quincy and Cambridge Streets; (617) 495-5864

The International Style in Perspective: 1932-1982

April 16, 17 A Harvard symposium marking the 50th anniversary of the show at MoMA. Papers will be presented by David Handlin, Kurt Forster, Robert Stern, Rosemarie Bletter, Anthony Vidler, and Neil Levine. There will also be panel discussions and an exhibit based on the 1932 show. Admission \$75. Room 506, Gund Hall, 48 Quincy Street; (617) 495-2578

Harvard Lectures

April 20 Dolores Hayden **May 4** John de Monchaux. 5:30 pm. Harvard University Graduate School of Design, 48 Quincy Street; (617) 495-5864.

Charlottesville

University of Virginia Lectures

April 1 Charles Jencks **April 12** Vincent Scully **April 20** Robert Venturi **April 26** Henry Cobb **May 3** Frank Gehry **May 6** John Burgee. 8:15 pm. Campbell Hall, Room 153 Department of Architecture, U.Va.; (804) 924-0311.

Chicago

Graham Foundation Lectures

April 22 James Stirling **April 27** Christian Norberg-Schulz **May 5** Neil Levine **May 12** C. Douglas Lewis **May 19** John Maxton-Graham. The Graham Foundation, 4 West Burton Place; (312) SU7-4071

College Park, Maryland

Environmental Design Research Association Conference

April 17-20 The Annual Conference will be held at the University of Maryland. For information contact EDRA 13 Conference Organizing Committee, Room 1401, Marie Mount Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; (301) 454-2144

Houston

Rice University Lectures

April 5 Diana Agrest. 1 pm. Sewell Hall, Rice University; (713) 527-4864

Rice Design Alliance Lectures

Series on Landscape Architecture and Urban America. **April 7** Ian McHarg **April 14** Robert L. Zion **April 21** Dan Kiley **April 28** M. Paul Friedberg. 8 pm. Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts; (713) 527-4876

Ithaca

Preston H. Thomas Memorial Lecture Series

Colin Rowe, "The Architecture of Good Intentions" **April 6, 13, 20, 27**, 8 pm at 120 Ives Hall **April 8, 15, 22, 29**, 8 pm at Uris Hall. Cornell University; (607) 256-4206

Cornell Lectures

April 16 James Stirling **April 23** Julian de la Fuente. Exact times and locations to be arranged. School of Architecture, Cornell University; (607) 256-5236

Los Angeles

SCI-ARC

April 7 Raymond Kappe **April 14** Glen Small. 8 pm. Studio Auditorium, S. California Institute of Architecture; (213) 829-3482

UCLA School of Architecture Lectures

April 15 Rudolf Schilling **April 22** Anthony Machado **April 22** Gwendolyn Wright **April 29** Panos Koulermos **May 6** Waldo Fernandez **May 13** Nicholas Adams **May 18** Francesco Dal Co **May 20** Michael and Leslie Harris. Department of Architecture, UCLA. For time and location call (213) 825-5752

Miami

Architecture Club of Miami

April 23 Anthony Vidler. 6:30 pm. Douglas Entrance, Coral Gables; (305) 858-8081

Minneapolis

Visions of the Future

Artists, writers and intellectuals speculate on the future of art and culture. **April 5** Anthony Vidler **April 12** Richard Foreman **April 19** Jorge Luis Borges **April 26** Christopher Lasch **May 3** to be announced **May 10** Herbert Schiller **May 17** to be announced. 8 pm. Walker Art Center, Vineland Place; (612) 375-7600

New Haven

Yale Center for British Art Lecture

April 3 Gary Wihl, "Neither a palace nor of crystal": Ruskin and the Architecture of the Great Exhibition." 1 pm. Lecture Hall, First Floor, Yale Center for British Art, 1080 Chapel Street; (203) 432-4594

Department of Architecture Lectures at Yale

April 6 Gerhard Kallmann **April 13** Giuseppe Zamboni. 6:00 pm. Department of Architecture, Hastings Hall, 180 York Street; (203) 436-0853

Benefit for City Hall

April 16-May 1 An exhibition and silent auction of drawings by architects to benefit the proposed reconstruction of New Haven's historic City Hall. Drawings by Charles Gwathmey, John Hejduk, Helmut Jahn, Charles Moore, Cesar Pelli, Aldo Rossi, James Stirling, and Stanley Tigerman, among others. Catalogue may be obtained from Artworks, 44 High Street; or from CSCB, Box 5201, New Haven, CT. 06520. British Arts Center, 44 High Street; (203) 245-1767

35th Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians

April 21-25 Forty papers will be given under 13 subject headings including "Vernacular Architecture," "Architectural Theory," "Urban Landscape," "The American Home," and "Military Architecture of the Italian Renaissance." Tours and exhibits. \$40 for nonmembers, \$12.50 for students. SAH, 1700 Walnut Street, Philadelphia; (215) 735-0224 for information

Film and Tour

April 24 A showing of *Louis I. Kahn*, narrated by Vincent Scully. 11 am. Lecture Hall, first floor, followed by a discussion/tour of the Yale Center for British Art at 11:30 am, beginning in the entrance court. Yale Center for British Art, 1080 Chapel Street; (203) 432-4594

New Orleans

Tulane University Lectures

April 6 William Brumfield, "St. Basil's and Other Curiosities; Planning and Preservation in Moscow" **April 20** Joseph Rykwert (topic to be announced) **April 26** Rodolfo Machado, "Architecture and Furniture" **April 27** Jorge Silvetti, "The work of Machado/Silvetti: Urban Design." 8 pm. Richardson Memorial Amphitheater, Tulane University; (504) 865-5389

Dateline

Bks.

More Events

New York City

Open Atelier of Design Spring Lectures

April 1 Jon Michael Schwarting, "The Lessons of Rome"
April 15 George Ranalli, "Cities of the Dead"
April 22 Gerald Allen, "The Design of Central Park in New York"
April 29 Gianni Longo, "Streets and Urban Animation" 6:45 pm. Open Atelier of Design, 12 West 29th Street; (212) 686-8698

Rockefeller Center

April 1 5:30 **April 3** 2 pm. 50th Anniversary tour of Rockefeller Center given by Barry Lewis. Call (212) 935-3960 for information

Charles Jencks

April 5 A lecture by Charles Jencks entitled "Free Style Classicism: The New Rules" sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. Asia Society Auditorium, 725 Park Avenue; (212) 753-1722

Emerging Voices

Presentations by a cross-section of young, up-and-coming architects. **April 13** Arquitectonica, Jon Michael Schwarting **April 20** Paul Segal, Stuart Cohen. Architectural League, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 753-1722. Free to members. \$5 nonmembers

Mathews Lectures/Columbia

April 6, 13, 20 The last three lectures in a series on "The Gothic Revival in France" by Neil Levine, professor of fine arts, Harvard University. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University; (212) 280-3414

Wednesday Lecture

April 7 James Freed. 6 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University; (212) 280-3414

Forums on Form

April 7 Peter Wolf on *Land in America: Its Value, Use and Control* **April 14** James Marston Fitch on *Historical Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built World* **April 21** Michael Graves on *Michael Graves: 1966-1980* **April 29** Jonathan Barnett on *An Introduction to Urban Design*. Sponsored by Urban Center Books. Urban Center, 457 Madison; (212) 935-3595. Talks begin at 12:30 pm

Woman and the Environment Symposium

April 7 Panel discussion on "Redefining Space: The Impact of Feminism on Architecture" **April 17** Alumnae Symposium. For exact times and locations please call (212) 280-3414

Review of Reviews

April 12 A roundtable discussion by journalists of architectural events as reported in the press, moderated by Gerald Allen. 6:30. Architectural League, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 753-1722

Rockefeller Center: Prototype for the Future?

April 14 A panel discussion with William H. Whyte and Rick Rosan. Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)980-1297

Moshe Safdie

April 26 A lecture entitled "Context," in conjunction with an exhibit of Safdie's work at the Hebrew Union College through June 7. Co-sponsored by the New York Institute for the Humanities and Hebrew Union College, 6 pm. Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, Brookdale Center, 1 West 4th Street, (212) 674-5300

Philadelphia

Drexel/ Temple Architecture Lecture Series

April 5 Carl Condit, "Chicago and the Midwest," 7 pm
April 7 Peter Papademetriou, "Houston, Texas, and the Southwest," 11 am and 2 pm. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Broad and Cherry Streets; (215) 972-7608

University of Pennsylvania Lectures

April 7 Carol Johnson **April 12** Marc Treib **April 14** Jonathan Silver **April 21** Charles Correa. 6:30 pm. Alumni Hall, Towne Building, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania; (215) 243-5728

Princeton

Princeton Lectures

April 2 Fernando Montes, "The Impossible Two Modernities" **April 5** Gwendolyn Wright, "Public and Private Space in the United States." 4:30 pm. Betts Lecture Hall, Princeton University School of Architecture; (609) 452-3741

San Francisco/Bay Area

Berkeley Lectures

April 15 Judith Edelman, "Perspectives from a New York Practice" **April 19** Ada Louise Huxtable, "Tall Buildings Artistically Reconsidered: Beyond Style" **April 21** Ada Louise Huxtable, "Tall Buildings Artistically Reconsidered: Beyond Function" **April 28** P. Dhaemers, "Entrances to the Closes on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh" **May 5** Robert Mangurian, "Recent Works" **May 12** Sim Van der Ryn, "Architecture as though the Future Mattered" **May 19** Daniel Libeskind, "The Palace, the Chicken Coop, and the Mouse House." Lectures at 8 pm except for Ada Louise Huxtable on April 19 at 4 pm. Call for locations. Department of Architecture, U.C. Berkeley; (415) 642-4942

Urbana-Champaign

U. of Illinois lectures

April 14 Dr. Walter Creese, "Preserving our Cultural Heritage—The National Park Service Response" **April 19** Charles Moore **April 23** James Stirling **April 26** Christian Norberg-Schulz. Times and places vary. Department of Architecture, 106 Architecture Building; (217) 333-1330

Washington, D.C.

Modern Questions: Post-Modern Answers?

April 7 Alan Chimacoff **April 14** Charles Gwathmey **April 21** David Schwarz. 7:30 pm, Nursing Auditorium, Catholic University; (202) 535-5188

The Architecture of the American House

April 22-June 17 A lecture series with Martin Filler, E. Fay Jones, Arthur Cotton Moore, Bernardo Fort-Brescia, John Hejduk, Stanley Tigerman, Gwendolyn Wright, Romaldo Giurgola. Smithsonian Resident Associate Program; (202) 357-3030

Visions of Utopia: De Stijl, 1917-31

May 8 An all-day seminar in conjunction with the de Stijl show at the Hirshhorn. Seminar Participants are: Abram Lerner, Hans Jaffe, Nancy J. Troy, Joop Joosten, Kenneth Frampton, and Annette Michelson. Smithsonian Resident Associate Program; (202) 357-3030

Calgary

Perspectives on Architecture

April 7 James Wines, "Architecture as Communication" **May 5** Robert Stern on his work. 7:30 pm. Central Library Auditorium. For information call (403) 233-0668

Quebec

Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture

April 3-April 7 70th annual meeting. The theme will be "Architectural Education and the University" with a keynote address by Paul Goldberger. Contact The Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, 1735 New York Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; (202) 785-2324 for information.

New Arrivals

The Architecture of the City. Aldo Rossi. Introduction by Peter Eisenman. Translation by Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman. Published by the MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., for the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts and the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, 1982. 208 pages, 111 illustrations. \$30.00.

A Concise History of the Italian Renaissance. Edited by J.R. Hale. Oxford University Press, New York, March 1982. 360 pages, 240 illustrations. Hardcover, \$19.95; soft-cover, \$9.95

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

O.M. Ungers: Works in Progress 1976-1980. Preface by Kenneth Frampton. Introduction by Gerardo Brown-Manrique. Published by Rizzoli International Publications in cooperation with the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, 1982. 110 pages, 158 illustrations, 8 in color. \$17.50, soft-cover.

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.

Visions of Utopia: De Stijl, 1917-1931. Hans Jaffe and twelve Dutch, Canadian, and American scholars. Published by Abbeville Press, New York, late February 1982, in conjunction with the exhibition of the same title at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, from January 31 to March 28, 1982. 260 pages, 222 illustrations, 80 in full color. Hardcover, \$39.95; soft-cover, \$24.95.

Periodicals

Mimar: Architecture in Development, Volume 2, October-December 1981. Editor-in-Chief: Hasan-Uddin Khan. Published by Concept Media (Singapore) Pte. Ltd., Singapore. Thematic feature: Emerging professionals and professionals working in design in the Third World, including women architects Bo Bardi, Fawziah Kamal, Malene Bjorn, Pravina Metha, Yasmeen Lari. 76 pages, \$10.00.

Mimar: Architecture in Development, Volume 3, January-March 1982. Editor-in-Chief: Hasan-Uddin Khan. Published by Concept Media (Singapore) Pte. Ltd., Singapore. Thematic feature: Islamic and rural architecture in the north of the People's Republic of China: Includes special article on contemporary Arab architecture by Udo Kultermann. 88 pages, \$10.00.

Coming Out in April

The Necessity of Artifice. Joseph Rykwert. Rizzoli International Publications, 1982. 144 pages, 170 black-and-white illustrations. \$25.00

Rob Krier. Introduction by Kenneth Frampton. Essay by Deborah Berke. Published by Rizzoli International Publications in cooperation with the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, 1982. 120 pages, 200 illustrations, 8 pages in color. \$18.50, soft-cover.

Indian Summer: Lutyens, Baker, and Imperial Delhi. Robert Grant Irving. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1982. 415 pages, 180 black-and-white, 93 color illustrations. \$39.95.

The Palladians. John Harris. Rizzoli International Publications, New York, 1982. 112 pages, over 200 illustrations, 16 pages in color. \$19.95, soft-cover.

Lecture Notes

In case you missed some of the interesting lectures taking place in New York recently, *Skyline* gives you the following update.

The Other Night....

Peter L. Donhauser

At Columbia

Two lectures given as part of the "Women and the Environment" series at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning presented some compelling points about history and women's contribution to art and architecture.

On March 2, **Rosemarie Bletter**, in her lecture "Women and the Bauhaus," noted that less than one-fifth of the Bauhaus student body was female. An even smaller number of women completed the entire four-year program, and most of these students concentrated on weaving and industrial design workshops, rather than on architectural design. The reason, Bletter conjectured, had to do with the fact that architecture was traditionally male-dominated, and the other forms of design seemed more practical and immediately applicable.

Bletter did, however, argue that the designs by women were more functional than those by men, giving the example of Alma Buscher, who designed toy storage cabinets with flexible and interchangeable elements, in contrast to some designers who were designing triangular baby cradles.

Bletter also referred to the contribution of one of the best-known Bauhaus designers, Marianne Brandt, who led the metal workshop in 1928, and is still remembered for the beauty, simplicity, and practicality of her lamps, ashtrays, and other objects.

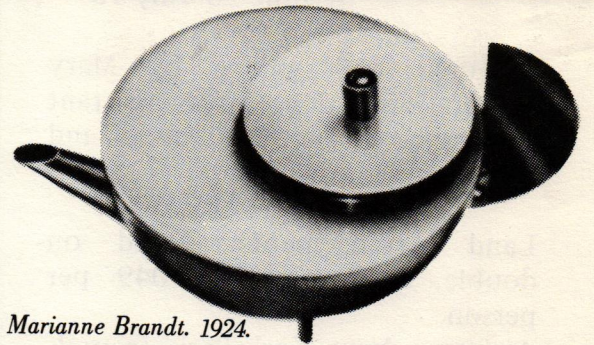
On March 8 **Linda Nochlin** discussed the iconographic and ideological themes concerning women and nineteenth-century art, elaborating on some of the major points from her forthcoming book on the subject. Nochlin observed that the social reality of male dominance influenced nineteenth-century depiction of the female nude. In the art of a society that adhered to strict moral codes, representation of the nude body was legitimized through stylistic and iconographic devices. For example, in Jean-Leon Gerome's *Slave Market* (ca. 1867), set in an exotic and distant culture, the explicit eroticism of the naked female form is legitimized by the artist's use of rational perspective and straightforward realism, which contribute to the apparent objectivity of the scene.

The "legitimate" role of nineteenth-century women — in the home — was also the subject of numerous paintings. Tranquil images of mothers caring for the family proliferated, while women outside of this milieu usually seemed to be presented as sexually available, dressed in tatters, or in whatever unfortunate role could be imagined. Not until the end of the nineteenth century did a woman artist, Käthe Kollwitz, establish an iconography free from the strictures of the earlier depictions.

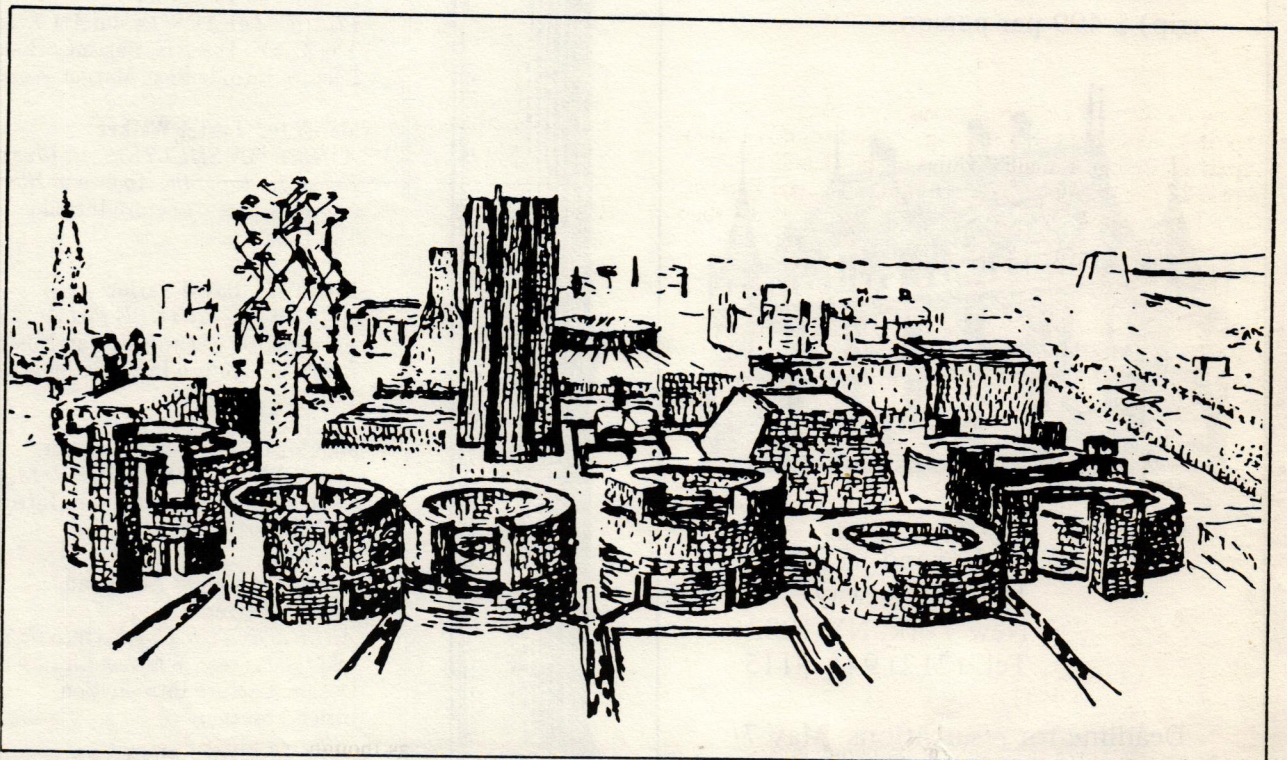
At Open Atelier

It has become common practice, — almost standard repertoire — for many commentators on architecture to discuss the social failures of Le Corbusier's urban and mass housing schemes. Beyond superficial criticism, however, a question central to this discussion is to determine the Swiss architect's motivation in creating what some have called "architectural facism." Tracing the development of Le Corbusier's political thinking in the 1930s and '40s, **Mary McLeod** gave a bold and enlightened talk on March 4 at the Open Atelier of Design in an attempt to answer this question.

McLeod began her lecture, entitled "The Politics of Le Corbusier," by making the important distinction between two of Le Corbusier's creative periods: the 1920s, when technology and the machine were seen as the social saviors, and, by extension, were for Le Corbusier the guiding force in architecture and urban planning; and the 1930s, when that faith in Modernity was shattered, partly due to the Depression. As a result of this failure, it seems, Le Corbusier began to devote much of his attention to periodicals that espoused a new political and economic order. Known as Syndicalism, this movement stressed the "organic" nature of social man. Race, or "tribes," as they were called, and geographical rather than political boundaries were projected for reshaping Europe.



Marianne Brandt. 1924.



Louis Kahn. Plan for Midtown Civic Center Forum, Philadelphia; 1956-57. Perspective sketch, north view

For Le Corbusier, the focus of this scheme was the city of Algiers, where he attempted to incorporate his political and social thinking into an urban area that was both colonial European and native African. The plan involved preserving the vernacular architecture of the old city, while at the same time creating various centers of collectivity (market, port, government, and so forth) at which converged a complex "movement system." The unifying factor would be that one important remnant of Modernity, the skyscraper.

The plan was, of course, rejected, but Le Corbusier presented similar plans. His last such plan, conceived in 1942 for Petain's Vichy regime (for which, incidentally, Le Corbusier had eagerly volunteered to act as an official planner) was the work of a man carried away by his politically naive visions. In this last plan, the old city was gone, the curvilinear structures mirroring the landscape had become rigidly angular, and Algiers itself was no longer the capital of a new apolitical social order, but the base for French Africa under the Petain regime.

On March 11, also at the Open Atelier of Design, **Kenneth Frampton** discussed the theoretical connections between the philosopher-writer Hannah Arendt and the architect Louis Kahn. Both Arendt and Kahn, Frampton posited, tried through their work to make the distinction between work and labor in the realm of human activity. Arendt elucidated her ideas in her powerful book *The Human Condition* of 1959; "labor," according to Arendt, is a biological process common to all stages of human life; "work," on the other hand, is unnatural in this sense, and ultimately conditions what we call "culture" or "worldliness." Drawing an analogy between this concept and architecture, Frampton classified the head section of a railroad station as "work" because it is permanent and public, and the train shed as "labor" because it is transient, private, and is the locus of continuous "biological" movement. Extending this analogy further, a modern airport, claimed Frampton, is completely "biological," since all processes (baggage checking, ticket taking, etc.) lead one in a continuous path to the airplane.

Arendt saw society's slide toward the "biological" realm as a sign of its degeneration. Kahn viewed the process similarly and perceived the automobile to be one of the instigators of this decline. Showing plans and various urban design projects for Philadelphia by Kahn, Frampton argued that Kahn tried to attack this degeneration by channeling and ultimately "draining" the city of the erratic automobile. One of Kahn's solutions was to centralize public ("work") activities in an area surrounded by huge parking silos into which flowed a hierarchical network of roads.

Although establishing a direct connection between the ideas and work of Arendt and Kahn may be a bit problematic (Kahn never met Arendt, nor was he likely to have read any of her works), Frampton's theoretical premise and development of this premise were nonetheless intriguing and informative.

Frampton's discussion of Arendt's philosophy and his ability to "translate" Arendt's ideas into an analysis of architecture opens new channels of interpretation of both ideology and building, offering a more complete view of architecture — within the context of society's institutions rather than in the realm of "art" alone.

At YMHA

On February 22, as part of the 92nd Street Y's "Critics on Criticism" series, **Paul Goldberger**, architecture critic of *The New York Times*, talked on various architecture and urban issues.

On the St. Bart's controversy, he remarked, "When Jesus urged his followers to cast off their possessions, I don't think he was thinking about a piece of land at the corner of 50th Street and Park Avenue."

On Tom Wolfe: "The problem is that he doesn't like architecture, but the sociological and social scene surrounding it."

On post-modernism: "Post-modernism for architecture is sort of like *nouvelle cuisine* for cooking."

On the Helmsley Palace Hotel: "It's hard to believe that something could be uglier than the Helmsley Palace."

On the River Walk Housing Project designed by Hooker-Siskind, a Florida firm, projected for 16th to 23rd Streets and the East River: "It's the wrong thing at the wrong place — inaccessible. The Mayor opted for a cliché."

On the most difficult aspect of his work: "Keeping a balance between being understood by the general public and not writing beneath the level of professional understanding."

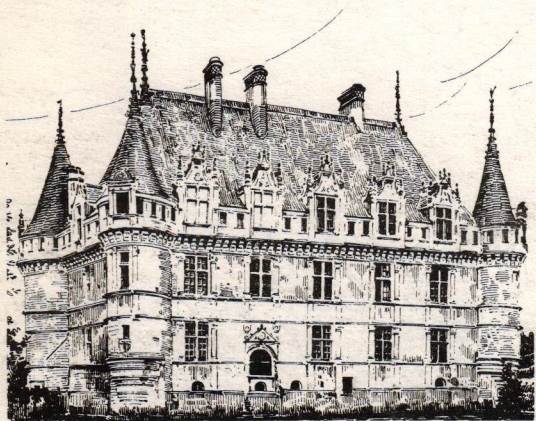
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March 3 Ronald Lee Fleming and Renata von Tscharner
PLACE MAKERS: Public Art That Tells You Where You Are, Hastings House. Lecture Introduction, Margot Wellington.

March 10 Lester Walker
AMERICAN SHELTER: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Home, Overlook Press. Lecture Introduction, Tim Prentice.

March 17 David Naylor
AMERICAN PICTURE PALACES: The Architecture of Fantasy, Van Nostrand Reinhold. Lecture Introduction, Dorothy Twining Globus.

March 24 Kenneth Frampton
MODERN ARCHITECTURE: 1845-1919, Global Architecture. Lecture Introduction, Robert Hughes.

March 31 Gerald Allen and Richard Oliver
ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING: The Art and the Process, Whitney Library of Design. Lecture Introduction, Ulrich Franzen.

April 7 Peter Wolf
LAND IN AMERICA: Its Value, Use, and Control, Pantheon Books. Lecture Introduction, Margot Wellington.

April 14 James Marston Fitch
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION: Curatorial Management of the Built World, McGraw Hill. Lecture Introduction, Kent Barwick.

April 21 Michael Graves
MICHAEL GRAVES: 1966-1980, Rizzoli. Lecture Introduction, Max Protetch.

April 28 Jonathan Barnett
AN INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN, Harper & Row. Lecture Introduction, Peter Eisenman.

All lectures begin at 12:30 pm

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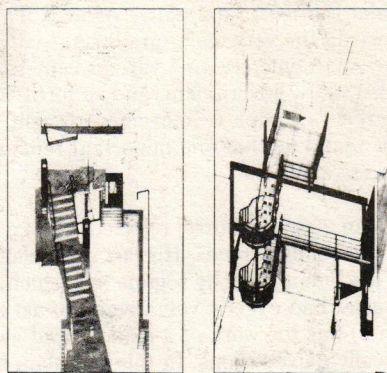
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