

Skyline

November 1982
The Architecture and Design Review
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Milano 1930

Competition Results

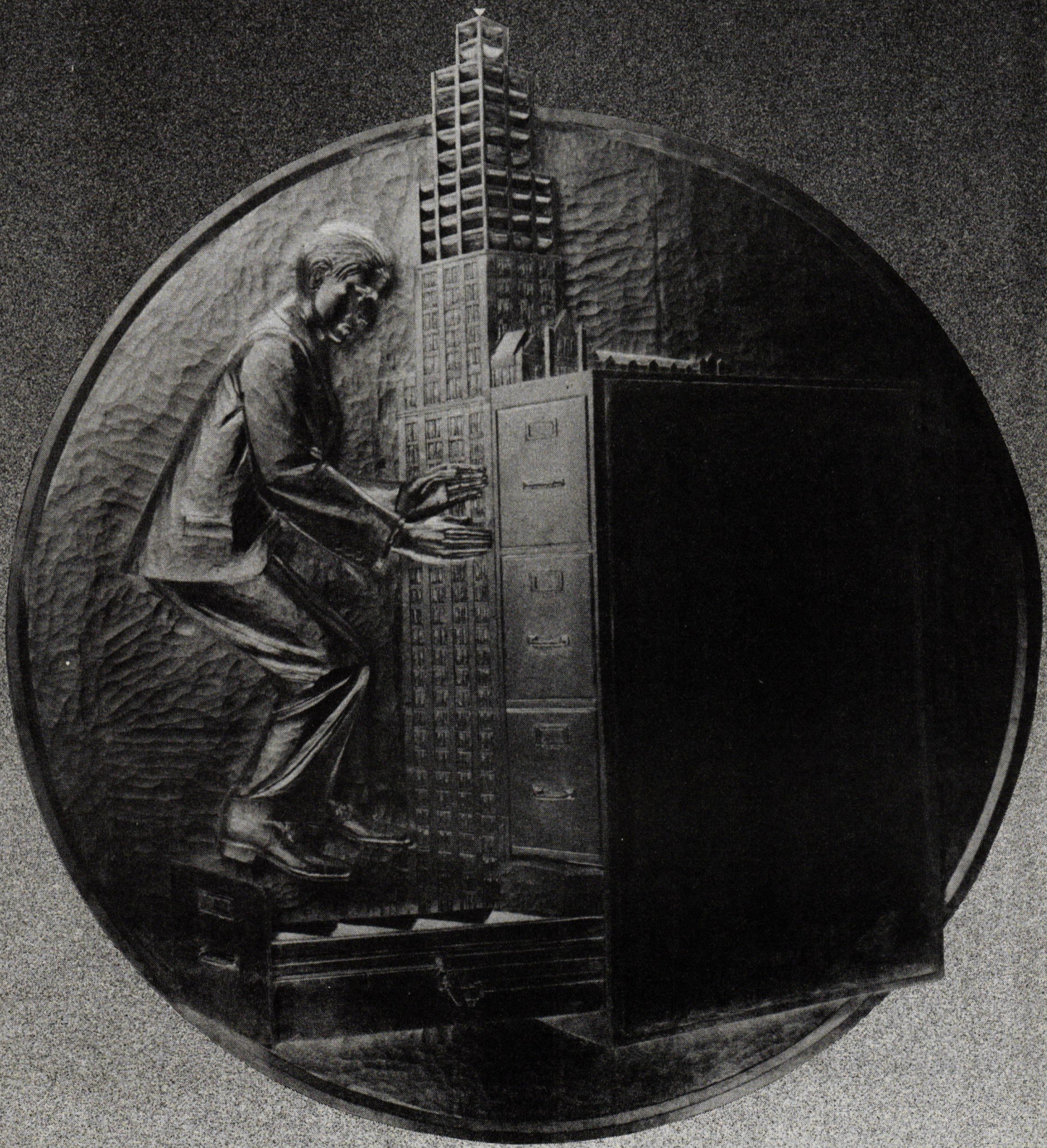
The latest on competitions from Los Angeles to London
Plus reviews of events, symposia, exhibits, books
And the Skyline list of best-selling architectural books



Palazzo Fidia building estate, Milan (1924-30); Aldo Andreani (photo: Gabriele Basilico)

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Contents

- 4 Competitions: Beverly Hills, London, Thibodaux, Ft. Lauderdale, Houston, Missassauga
- 12 Chicago/Houston Report
- 14 N.Y.C. Exhibits
- 16 N.Y. Area Events
- 17 In Memoriam: Giovanni Muzio
- 18 Milano 1920-1940

- 24 Literature of Cities: Fables by Emilio Ambasz and Review of *The Dean's December*
- 26 Project: Valle's Banca Commerciale
- 27 Notes & Comment
- 28 New York City Report
- 30 Preservation: Gracie Mansion
- 31 Books
- 32 Historical Perspectives: John Soane
- 34 Dateline: November '82

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Notes on Contributors

Janet Abrams is features writer for *Building Design* magazine in London.

Emilio Ambasz is an architect and industrial and graphic designer. He is currently President of The Architectural League of New York.

Daralice Boles is a former editor of *Crit*, and is currently a student at Columbia Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, and contributing editor of *Interiors*.

Stuart Cohen is a principal of Stuart Cohen/Anders Nereim in Chicago.

Deborah Dietsch is an architect and freelance writer based in New York City.

Richard Etlin is an architectural historian and Executive Editor of *Design Action*, the Mid-Atlantic Architecture and Design Review.

Stephen Fox is a fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas.

Joan Yanechewski Jackson was the managing editor and contributing writer for *Threshold* magazine and is currently working for Tigerman Fugman McCurry in Chicago.

Robert Maxwell is Dean of the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at Princeton University.

Ross Miller teaches English and American Studies at the University of Connecticut.

Lois Nesbitt, who also writes for *Archetype* magazine and *The New Boston Review*, is pursuing a Ph.D. in the history and theory of architecture at Princeton University.

Peter Papademetriou is Associate Professor of Architecture at Rice University and Executive Editor of the *Journal of Architectural Education*.

Editorial Offices: Skyline, 8 West 40th Street, New York, New York 10018; phone (212) 398-9474

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<p>NOV. 17 ROBERT JENSEN and PATRICIA CONWAY, <i>Ornamentalism</i>. Clarkson N. Potter, Inc. Lecture introduction by Richard Haas.</p>	<p>NOV. 24 JAMES WINES of SITE, <i>High rise of Homes: SITE</i>. Rizzoli International Publications. Lecture introduction by Pilar Vilades.</p>
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<p>DEC. 1 GALEN CRANZ, <i>The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America</i>. MIT Press. Lecture introduction by Thomas Bender.</p>	<p>DEC. 8 ROBERT A.M. STERN, <i>East Hampton's Heritage, an Illustrated Architectural Record</i>. W. W. Norton and Co., Inc. Lecture introduction by Joan Kaplan Davidson.</p>
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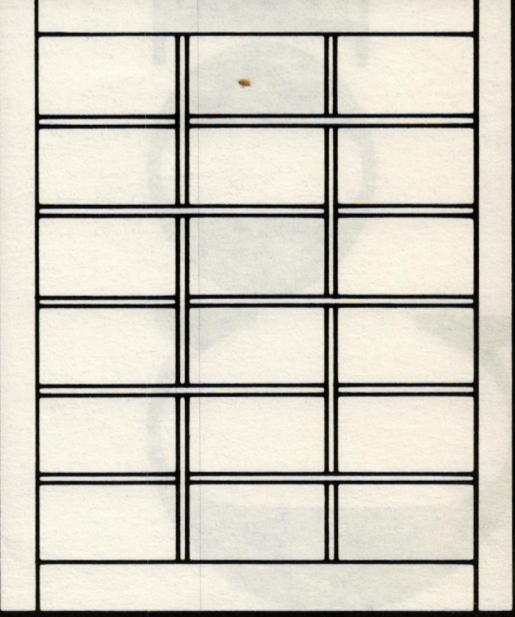
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IN COMPETITION

On the following pages are winners and final-round entries in competitions for civic and cultural centers, museums, and mixed-use complexes in the U.S., Canada, and England.

On October 19 the City Council of Beverly Hills unanimously voted to endorse a jury recommendation to award Charles Moore/Urban Innovations Group of Los Angeles the commission for the Beverly Hills Civic Center. In one of the most widely discussed competitions in recent years, six architectural firms had been invited to submit proposals for the design and planning of the ten-acre civic center site in Beverly Hills. The site, occupied by the Spanish Baroque-style City Hall designed by William Gage in 1932, also includes a police station, fire station, and library, all of which are in need of expansion, renovation, or reorganization of functions. A new cultural resources center and additional parking were also called for.

Landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg, architectural historian Esther McCoy, L.A. architect Anthony Lumsden of Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall, San Francisco architect Daniel Solomon, and L.A. architect Richard Saul Wurman formed the jury, with Donald Stastny of Stastny Graham Architects in Portland acting as professional advisor.

The City Council's support of the Charles Moore/Urban Innovations scheme was based not only on the jury's recommendations, but on staff reports and citizen comments, as well as cost estimates, projected maintenance costs, possible funding sources, and preliminary construction schedules. According to the competition organizers, the winning scheme seemed to pose the fewest problems with regard to production, disruption of utilities, and phasing of construction.

While the jury purportedly ranked the runners-up, their list has not been released. Nevertheless, the arrangement of entries on these pages happens to coincide with unofficial reports of that list. *Skyline* has also asked Philip Johnson and John Burgee, architects for numerous cultural and civic centers, to give their own separate and candid assessment. Due to lack of space, only general urban design and architectural issues could be addressed, and not all of Johnson and Burgee's comments could be printed in full.

Commentary by Philip Johnson and John Burgee

P.J.: Ninety percent of the work that went into the schemes cannot be discussed by us because it involves the agonies of how many square feet of parking are needed or how library functions should be organized, and so on.

J.B.: The work that went into all these schemes is staggering.

Charles Moore/Urban Innovations Group

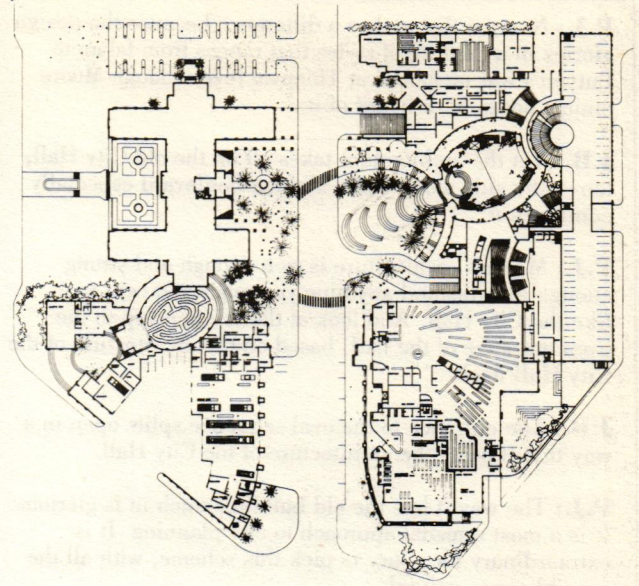
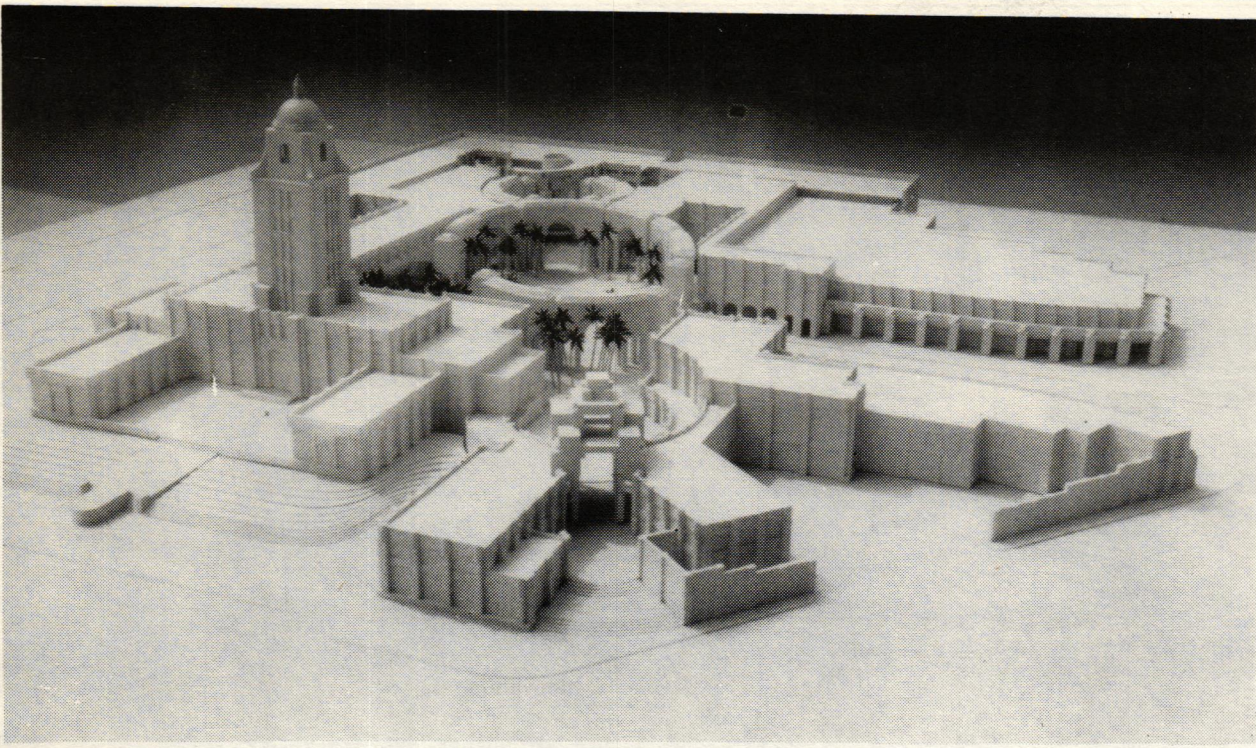
P.J.: Moore has not paid much attention to the separation of functions and clarity of planning that you see in others, like the Eisenman/Robertson scheme or Gwathmey/Siegel's. This scheme denies the axes already existing to set up an entirely new urbanistic axial *zimbo*. Moore even bends the ovals. So strong is his sequential procession of spaces through the oval that it pulls you all the way from one end to . . . what?

J.B.: To a garage. He takes a "lump" and makes it an architectural element. But the actual function doesn't matter; he uses that garage ramp like a piece of sculpture.

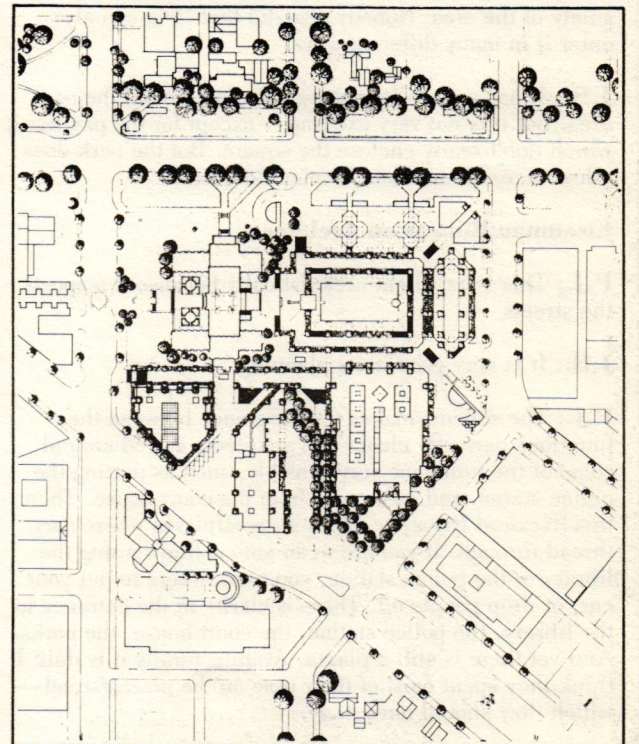
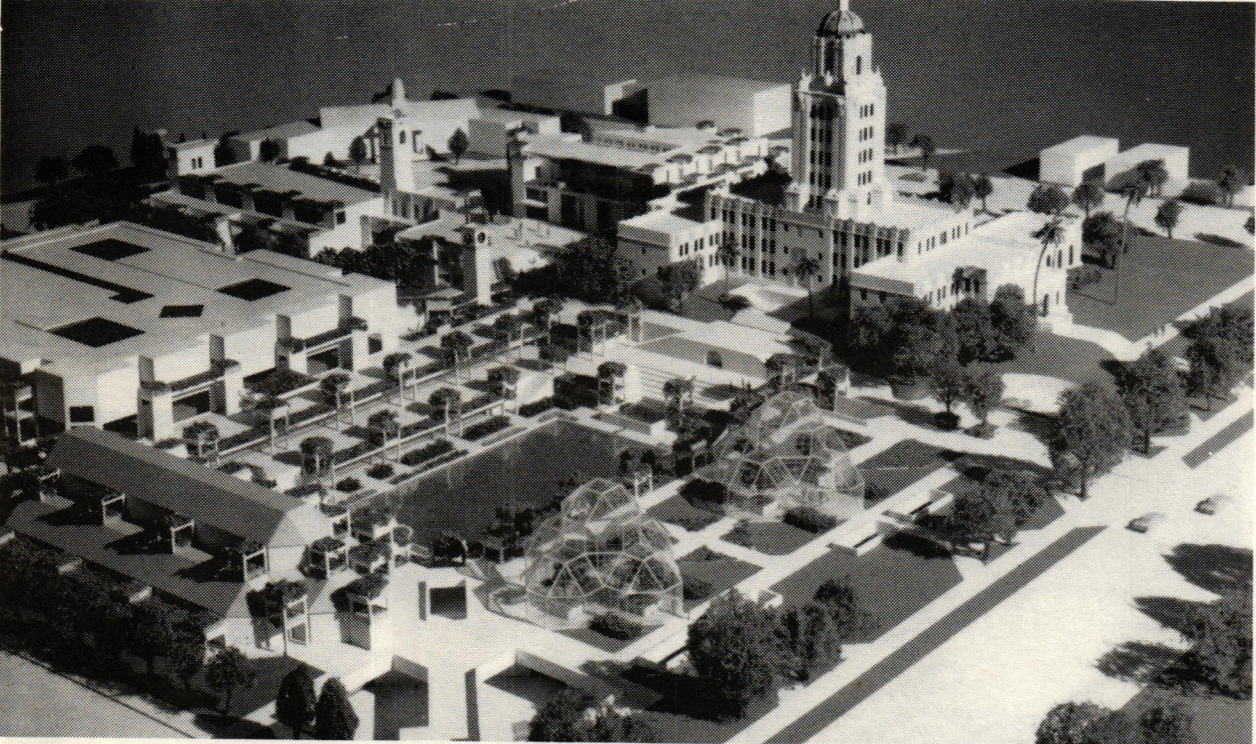
P.J.: Moore has made a totally new pedestrian city in the middle of the most un-pedestrian city in the world. He has created a pedestrian sequence of spaces that is all its own, adding something entirely new to the landscape. Hardly any other architect would dare do that. He doesn't mind cutting corners off buildings, adding corners to other buildings, or ending in an enormous access to the back of a garage ramp.

J.B.: By putting the garage on Alpine Drive and the pedestrian entrance at Santa Monica Boulevard, Moore has made it so that anybody coming here has to experience a processional sequence.

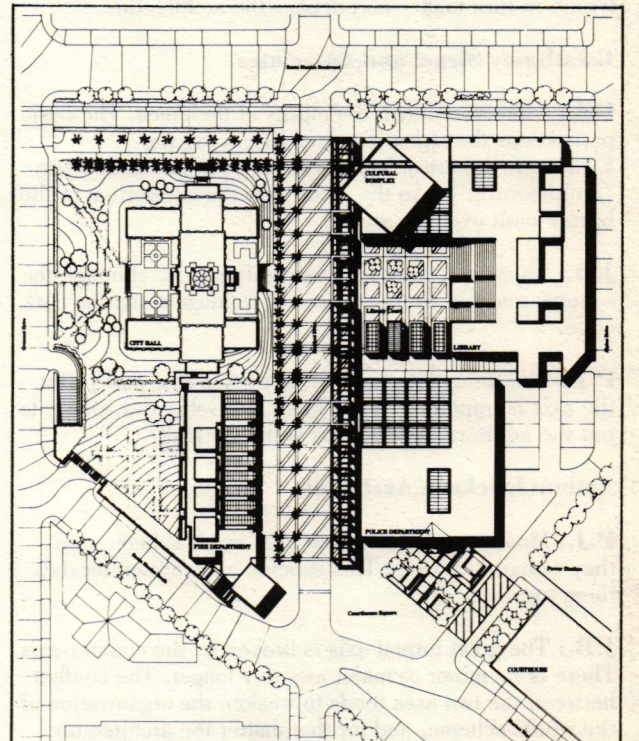
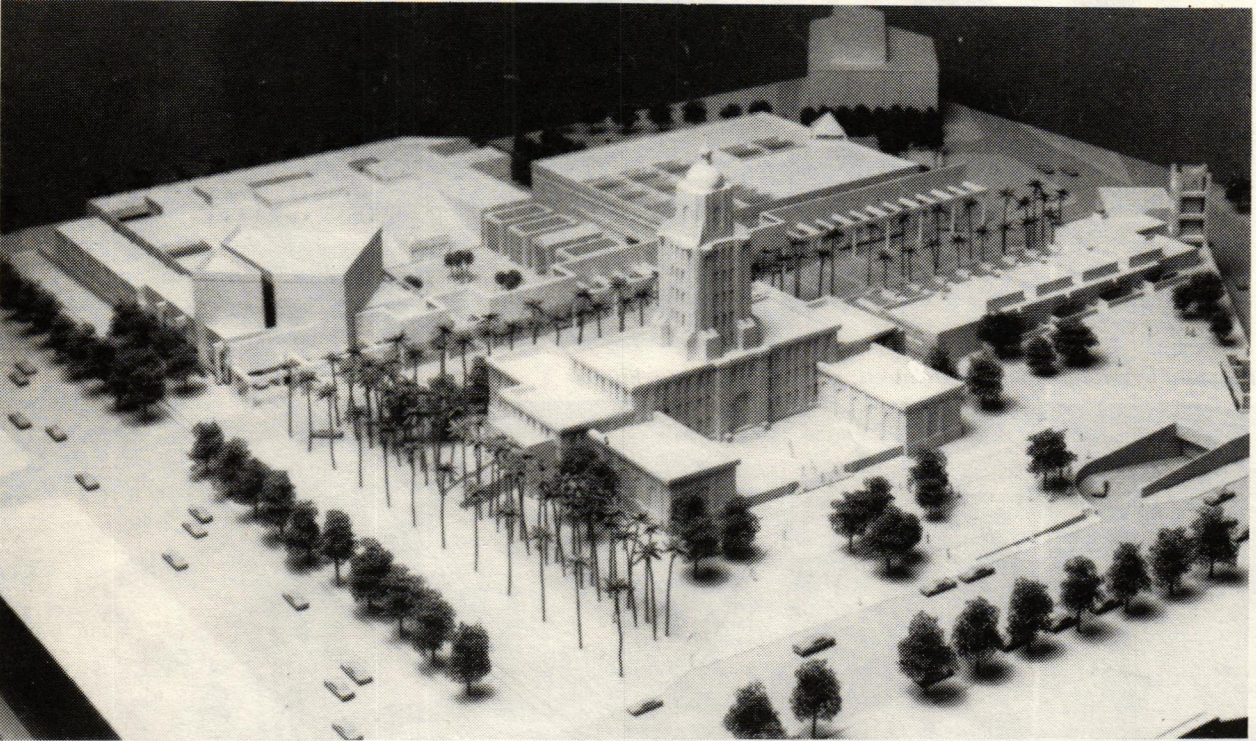
**Beverly Hills,
California
Civic Center**



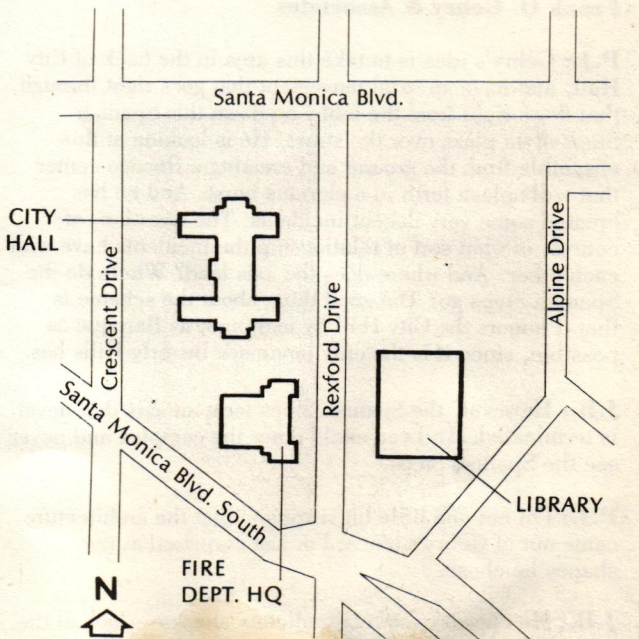
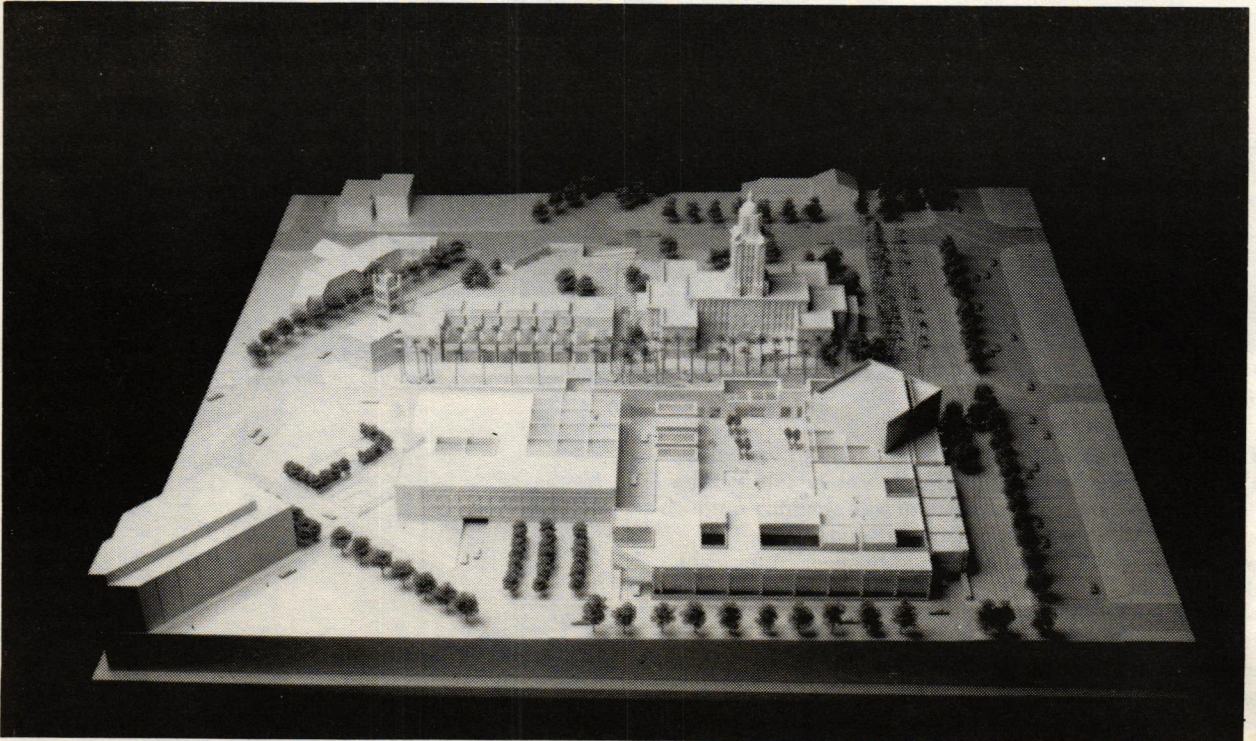
Winning scheme by Charles Moore/Urban Innovations Group (photo: Robert St. Francis) plan: Police dept. top right, library bottom right, fire dept. left



Proposal by Moshe Safdie and Associates (photo: © Peter Vanderwarker). Plan: Fire and police depts. bottom left, library bottom right



Above and below: proposal by Eisenman Robertson Architects (photo: courtesy architects) Plan. Fire dept. bottom left, police dept. bottom right, library and cultural complex top right



Existing site plan

P.J.: None of that makes a difference because the design glories in a mixture of styles that ranges from Islam to Lutyen's war memorial at Thiepval (even though Moore claims not to have heard of it).

J.B.: Yet the architecture takes off on the old City Hall, too—the side along Santa Monica Boulevard especially continues it.

P.J.: Moore's architecture is rich enough and strong enough to withstand anything you might put next to it, like the City Hall. And look at the relationship to the front entrance of the hall, based on the architecture of the City Hall itself.

J.B.: The entrance to the oval sequence splits open in a way that repeats the architecture of the City Hall.

P.J.: The way it lets the old building notch in is glorious. It is a most unusual approach to city planning. It is extraordinary for a jury to pick this scheme, with all the sensible ones around.

Moshe Safdie & Associates

P.J.: If I went by this side of the scheme (where the park is located), I would say "Hurray, look at those kiosks!" They emphasize the public character of the road, the fact that you drive down it; and those elements add to the gaiety of the area. Nobody else did that. You can also enter it in many different ways.

J.B.: It has a more formal organization around the pool area, but it is not very exciting—except for the pavilions, which don't really enclose the square. But the park does allow access from Santa Monica Boulevard.

Eisenman Robertson Architects

P.J.: This is excellent urbanistically because it respects the streets.

J.B.: It is very good in its planning.

P.J.: The scheme makes the difference between the functions perfectly clear. The architects moved around some of the functions very sensibly, such as putting the police station and jail across from the court house. Then this [Rexford Drive] becomes a street/piazza where cars thread through. If you are in an automobile visiting the library or the police station, you know where to put your car, or drop people off. There is clarity in the entrance to the library, the police station, the court house, the parks. And yet there is still a piazza. Architecturally it is dull: I think they spent most of their time on the piazza/street—which they should have done.

J.B.: The architecture is a backdrop to the inner street, which in turn makes and defines the architecture.

Gwathmey Siegel and Associates

P.J.: I like very much the clarity of the piece. The basic parti keeps the street [Rexford Drive] the way Eisenman/Robertson's did, but they put in a little more "architecture," as in the dome over the auditorium or the barrel vault over the arcade.

J.B.: There is a definite urban feeling to it, although the scheme needs a stronger sense of frontage along the park edge.

P.J.: The thing does leak out at the top [the park]. But the axis is important. They knew, as Gehry did, where to put the auditorium—on axis with City Hall.

Arthur Erickson Architects

P.J.: Moore emphasizes both axes in his scheme, but they remain two axes. This scheme by Erickson meshes them together.

J.B.: The great formal axis is broken by the counter-axis. There is no minor or major axis any longer. The conflict between the two axes tends to weaken the organization of the whole scheme, and for that matter the architecture does not relate well to the feeling of the City Hall—or to the architecture of Southern California.

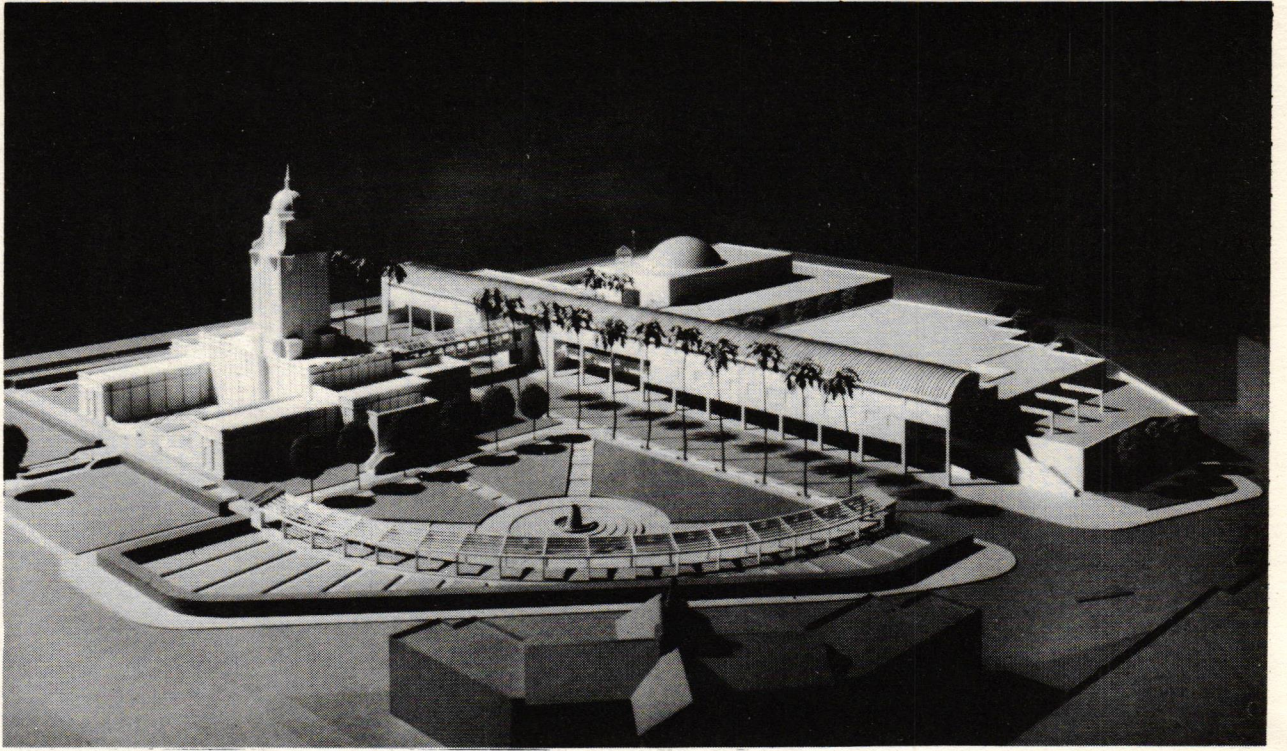
Frank O. Gehry & Associates

P.J.: Gehry's idea is to take this area in the back of City Hall, and have an axial movement that goes right through, that flows right from the lobby on down this Spanish Steps-style plaza over the street. He is looking at this ensemble from the ground and creating a Rococo center that will splash forth in a glorious burst. And he has created some very decent incidents. The question, of course, is what sort of relationship the incidents have with each other. And where does the axis lead? Where do the Spanish Steps go? The good thing about the scheme is that it honors the City Hall by making it as Baroque as possible, since it is the only landmark Beverly Hills has.

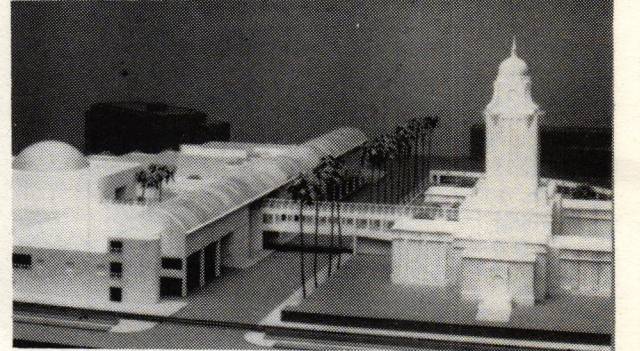
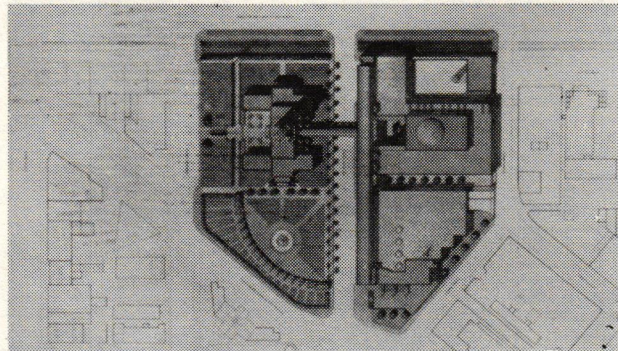
J.B.: However, the Spanish Steps form an axis that never is terminated. And you could enter the complex and never see the Spanish Steps.

P.J.: I'm not one little bit surprised that the architecture came out of Gehry's office; I'm just surprised at the shapes he chose.

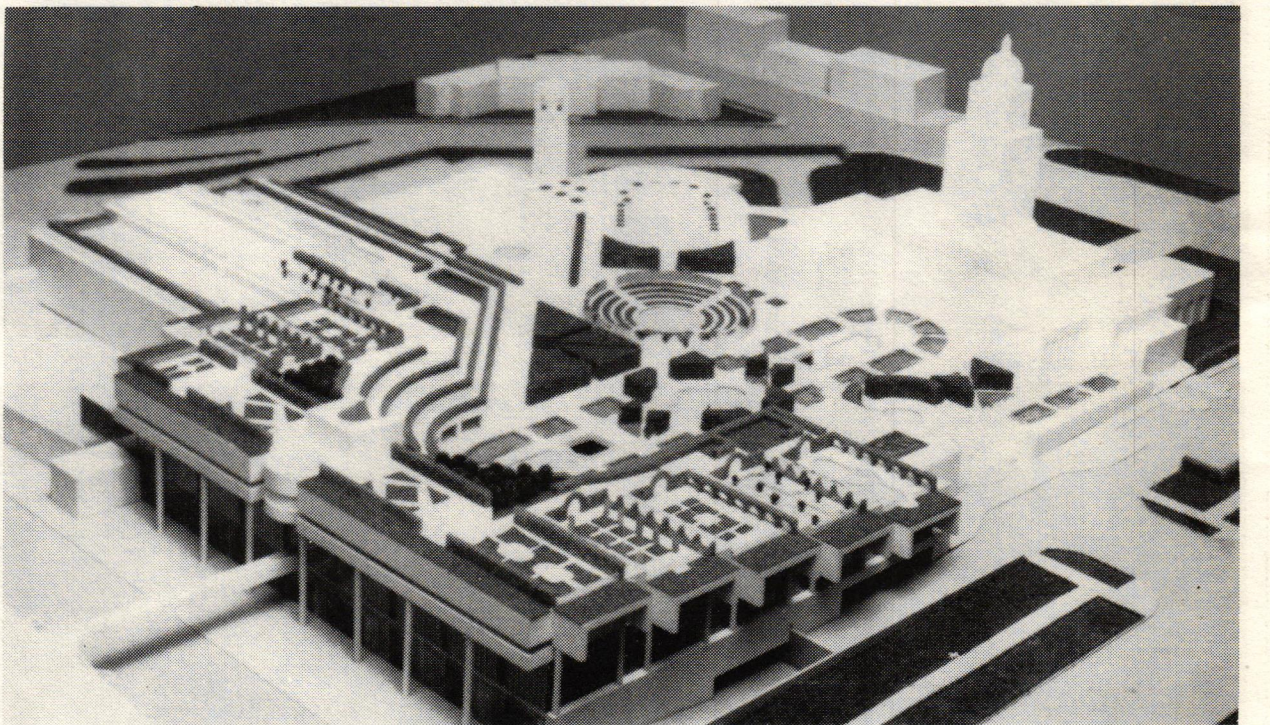
J.B.: He chooses very contradictory shapes—look at the cube of the museum in contrast to the curved auditorium.



Proposal by Gwathmey Siegel and Associates (photo: courtesy architects)



Plan by Gwathmey/Siegel. Police and fire depts. and auditorium top, library bottom right

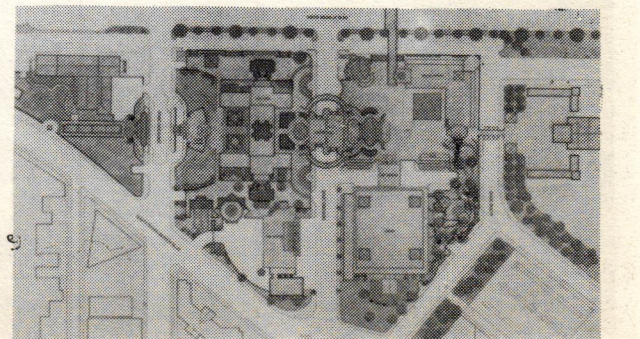


Proposal by Arthur Erickson Architects; plan withheld by architects



Proposal by Frank O. Gehry and Associates. View showing auditorium center, museum center left, library left, and police dept. right.

P.J.: It is a transitional space, as he himself has said. I'm being a psycho-historian, but I think he felt that the "aw, shucks" approach of chicken wire wouldn't quite do and therefore he jumped into the historical bath. He wanted to show, "I, too, believe in Rococo." You might question the way it is all combined. The elements are not woven into the fabric—in the total design—as they are in Moore's scheme. He has relied on the axis—the enormous stair—to carry everything, and he could never get over that. This is the most interesting of the lot, however, because it is so unexpected.



Plan by Gehry

(According to an announcement made in late October, the assessors of the competition have recommended to the Secretary of State a short list of architects to take the scheme to another stage of design development before the final winner is announced. The three architects on this new list are: Arup Associates, Ahrends Burton & Koralek, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. —Ed)

Rarely does the London architectural scene ignite into such a frenzy of debate as that provoked by the recent competition for an extension to the National Gallery. The scheme by Richard Rogers and Partners will be remembered, not only for its intrinsic outlandishness, but also for the brouhaha that erupted when the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Owen Luder, gave it his outspoken support.

Rogers' design was one of seven architect-developer entries shortlisted from a field of 79 in the government's Property Services Agency competition for an extension on the vacant site in Trafalgar Square's northwest corner. The financial deal is such that the successful developer gets a 125-year lease on the site at peppercorn rent (after which it reverts to the Crown). The developer also has planning permission to build 70,000 sq. ft. of prime office space in return for providing a daylight gallery floor of 20,000 sq. ft. to house the National's 230-odd Renaissance picture collection. The estimated value of the gallery extension is £15 million.

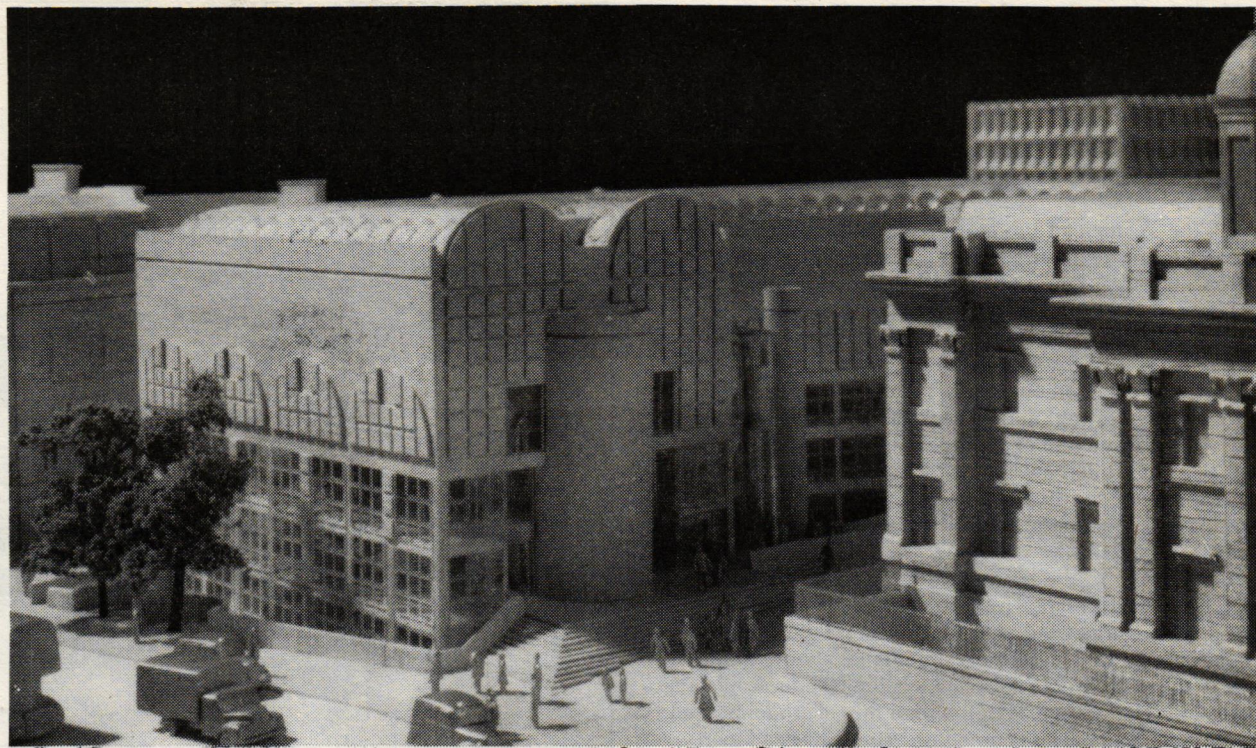
An exhibition of the shortlisted schemes was held at the National Gallery from August 24 until September 12. In the first two weeks 60,000 visitors had scrutinized the models and drawings, and 8,000 had filled in ballot papers of their first three and least favorite. The jurors — including Sir Hugh Casson (President of the Royal Academy), Lord Annan (Chairman of the Gallery trustees), and Sir Michael Levey (its Director) — took this poll into account before making their recommendation to the Secretary of State for the Environment.

Of the seven schemes presented, three were so dreary as to be safely dismissed, at least on architectural grounds. A rhomboid of cantilevered overhangs (Sheppard Robson), a monolith crushing a bronze-tinted atrium (Spratley and Cullearn), and a sandcastle-in-the-square (Covell Matthews Wheatley) were more mausoleums than museums, and disinterred ideas that should have been laid to rest long ago.

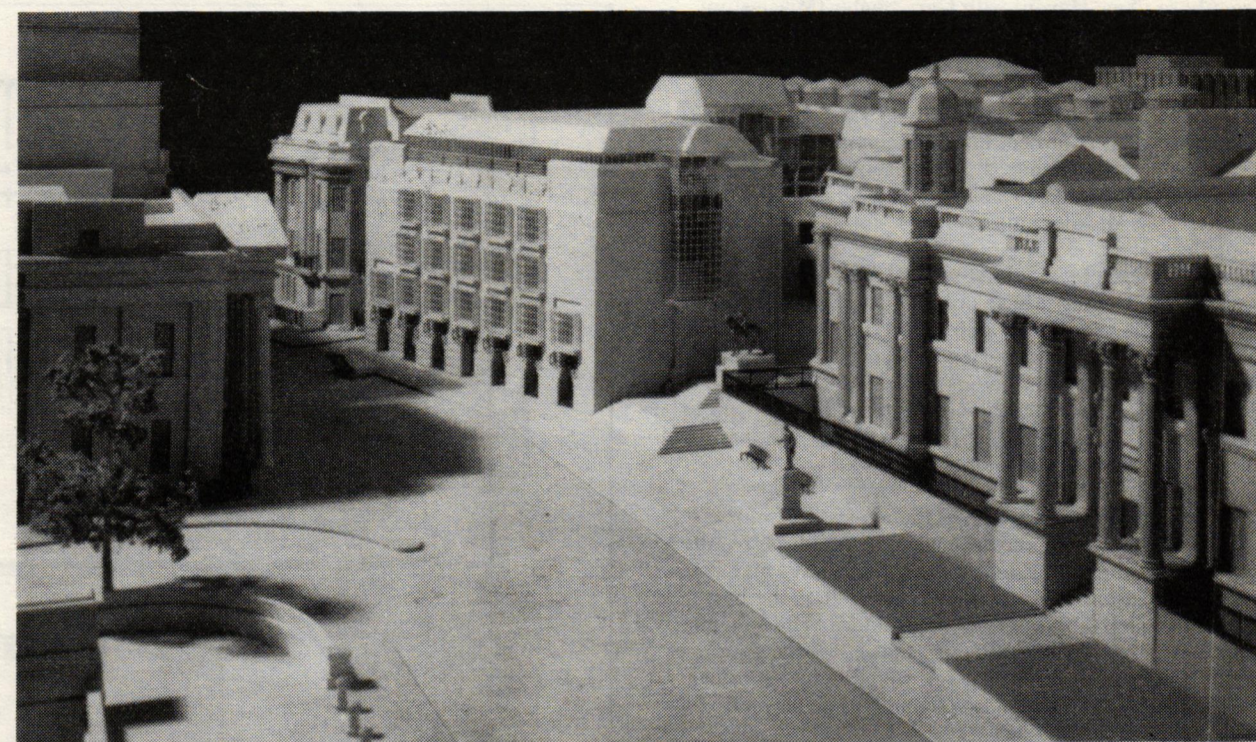
The serious contenders, aside from Rogers, were Ahrends Burton & Koralek, Arup Associates, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. ABK offered a barrel-vaulted gallery in a three-quarter drum around a sunken courtyard with heavy-handed post-modern facade modelling and obvious references to Stirling, Wright, and Isozaki. Arup Associates' design was derived from a Florentine palazzo, with projecting gridded windows, rusticated base, steps, stonework and statues. Influences here include Michaelangelo and Mackintosh. SOM's stony-faced post-modern classicism was so self-effacing as to hide its own ground floor, and half its elder neighbor's with a public thicket of trees.

Any of these three would satisfy the faction that cherishes, above all, the proverbial "harmony with surroundings" and inconspicuous completion of the square. Brash, audacious, and uncompromising in its modernity, Rogers' was the only proposal to challenge the existing architecture. Faced with this design, critics were torn between a sentimental reverence for the square as a sacred civic landmark, and the recognition that it is actually a vehicular vortex surrounded by rather mediocre public buildings (the existing National Gallery has been described as William Wilkins' worst work).

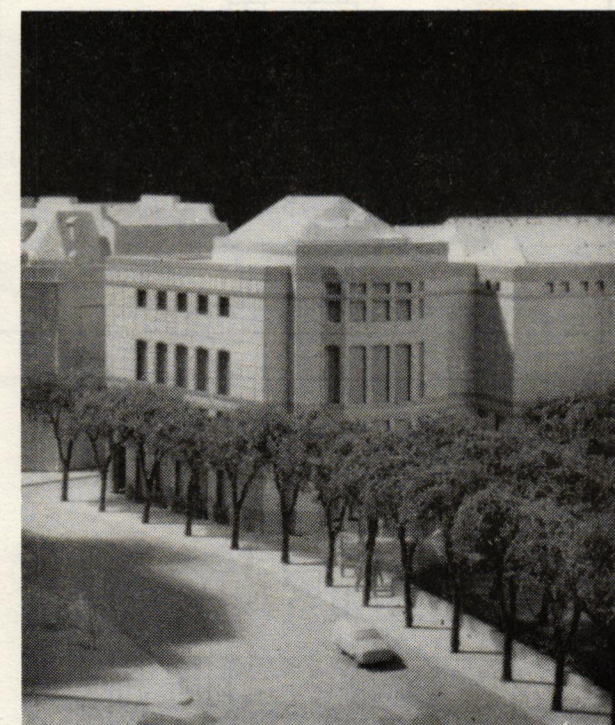
Presented in two stunning models, Rogers' building initially appeared a rather disjointed kit of parts, owing as much to Centre Pompidou and the Lloyds headquarters in Leadenhall Street (under construction) as to Fritz Lang. It was called "brilliantly ugly" by London's evening paper. Although "futuristic" was an adjective commonly applied, it is only quaintly so, inspiring more a nostalgia for that heady faith in the future which is now out of fashion.



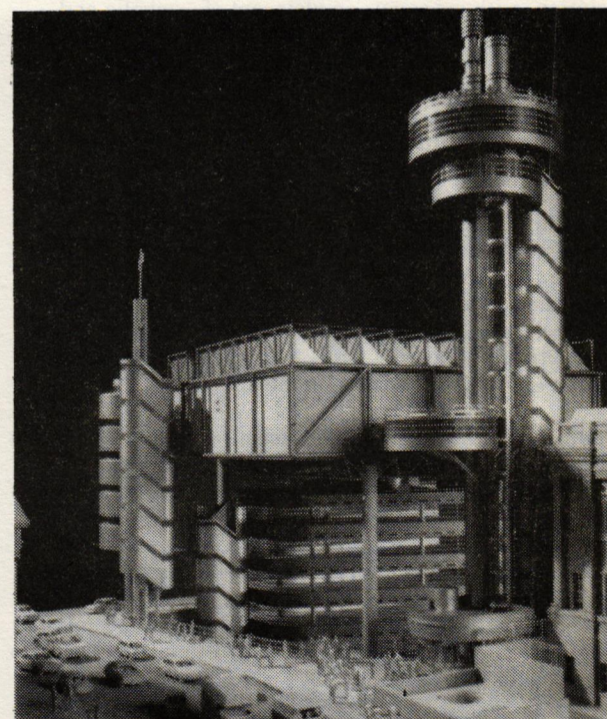
Entry by Ahrends, Burton & Koralek



Entry by Arup Associates



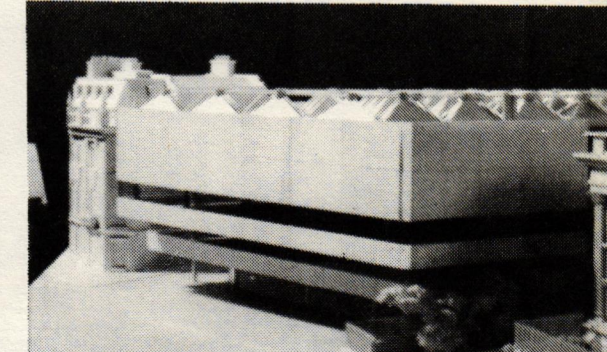
Entry by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill



Entry by Richard Rogers and Partners



Entry by Covell Matthews Wheatley



Entry by Sheppard Robson



Entry by Spratley & Cullearn

London, England National Gallery Extension

Janet Abrams

Halfway between Baton Rouge and New Orleans is the small town of Thibodaux with a population of some sixteen thousand people. Although Nicholls State University lends it an air of urbanity, it is a definitely Southern small town, where several varieties of alligator are observed on local menus, along with omnipresent white bread and Dixie beer.

While the Women's Club of Thibodaux has taken an active role in raising funds for expanded and improved library facilities, not until Merrill Utley, a private donor, arranged to donate funds according to his recently deceased wife's wishes, did the program begin to take shape. An existing 200-by-50 foot warehouse was found on a two-acre site on one of the main streets near the bayou. The building, dating back to 1900, has a gabled roof with a heavy timber interior structure and brick load-bearing walls. It was programmed to house 28,000 sq. ft. of space for the library, plus a theater, community meeting room, art gallery, craft center, and tea room.

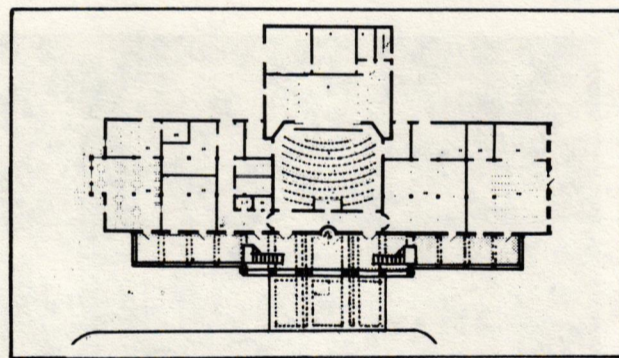
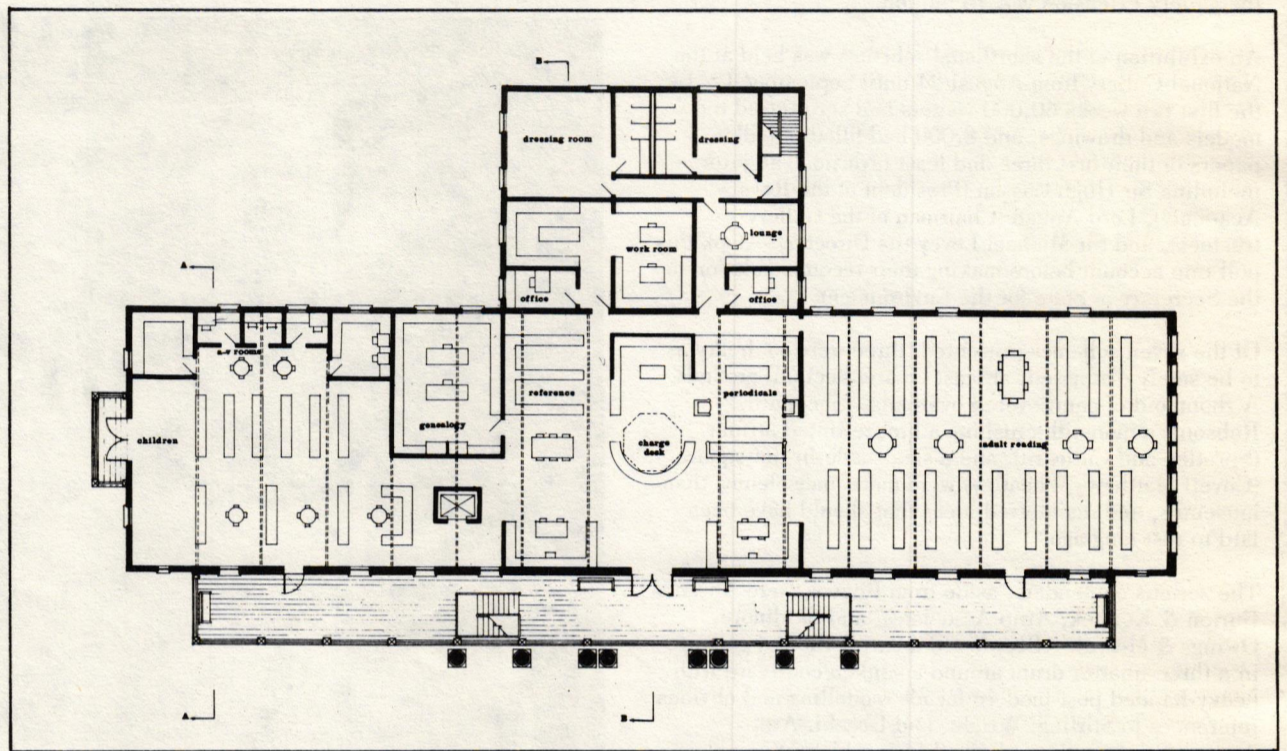
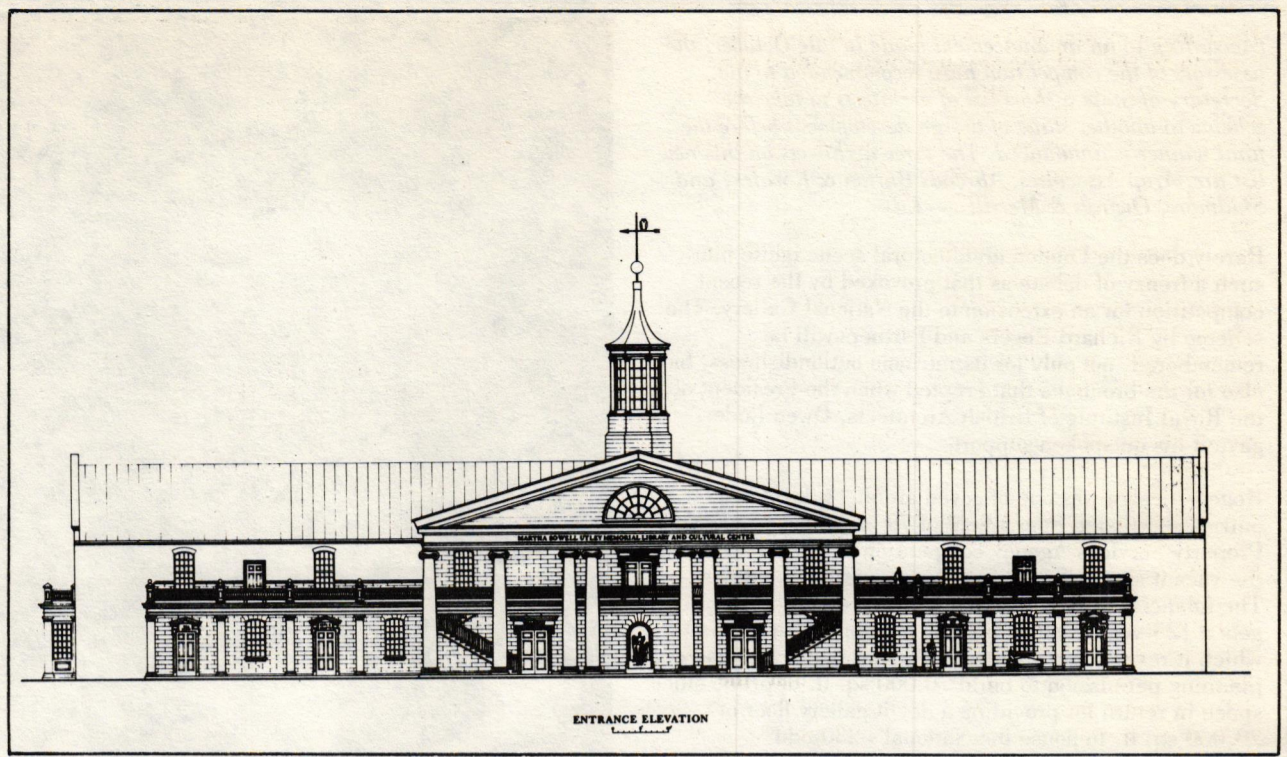
A competition for the project, which Ron Filson, Dean of Architecture at Tulane University in New Orleans, helped develop, was organized charrette-style: Each of three teams was led by an architect of national stature and a faculty member from a regional school (Tulane, Louisiana State, and Mississippi State), with a mix of students from the three schools. The competitors were Charles Moore (Los Angeles) with Bruce Goodwin (Tulane), Allan Greenberg (New Haven) with Gary Shafer (Mississippi State), and Alan Chimacoff (Princeton) with Kevin Harris (Louisiana State). Over Labor Day weekend the teams worked on site in the warehouse, spending evenings in further discussion with community groups. Each team then presented its project to a jury composed of Jim Barker and Chris Risher, Jr. (Mississippi), Charles Colbert and Peters Oppermann (Louisiana), Ron Filson and E. Ean McNaughton (Tulane), and Merrill Utley, Jr.

Charles Moore's team added several new vernacular-style sheds to the Center. These outlying support structures were to house the small theater, meeting room, and tea room, leaving the art gallery and branch library inside the renovated warehouse. The ensemble was connected by open arcades. Moore's scheme was ultimately judged as ill-defined, especially since it presented no site plan, and required extensive new foundation work.

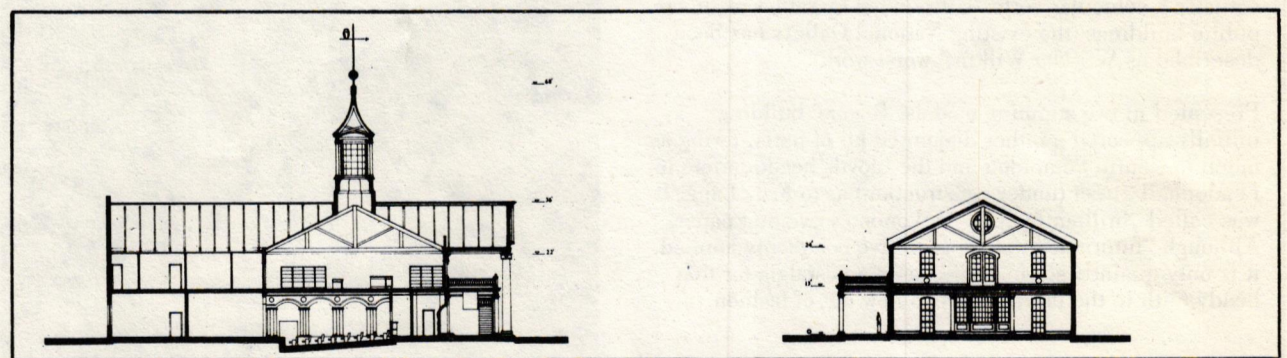
The Chimacoff team developed the central bay of the warehouse into a cross-axial composition, which resulted in a broad interior transept at the ground level and emphasized what Chimacoff characterized as the basilican order of the existing timber pier structure. The scheme, however, presented a confusing choice of three entrances to the transept space, thus using valuable interior floor area for access to various functions, and necessitating a large addition to the rear.

Allan Greenberg and his team offered a clearly classical solution, with conscious employment of symbolic and traditional elements predicated on a conception of "civic building." His team's proposal was the most pragmatic of the series, for no serious changes were made to the existing structure, and only a simple block-like appendage was attached to the rear. A porch-"veranda" was clipped onto the old lateral facade, and each function had a separate, clearly marked entry. The library was raised to the second level, with public access from an open veranda in part sheltered by a two-story portico. This, in turn, related to the rear section, and was integrated into the scheme as a cross-axial gable that involved little reworking of the roof structure. The simple symmetries and axes of Greenberg's scheme created clear formal groupings of spaces on the site itself.

The winner was the Greenberg team's solution. But due to internal conflicts among jurors and the vagaries of architectural taste, as yet there has been no formal acknowledgement of Greenberg's winning design by the competition's sponsors; nor has there been any initiative for definitive follow-up. The winner is clearly practical and buildable; moreover, it embodies a synthesis that might be called "cultural resonance." Greenberg's design would be most likely to fulfill Merrill Utley, Jr.'s desire to "build a famous building."

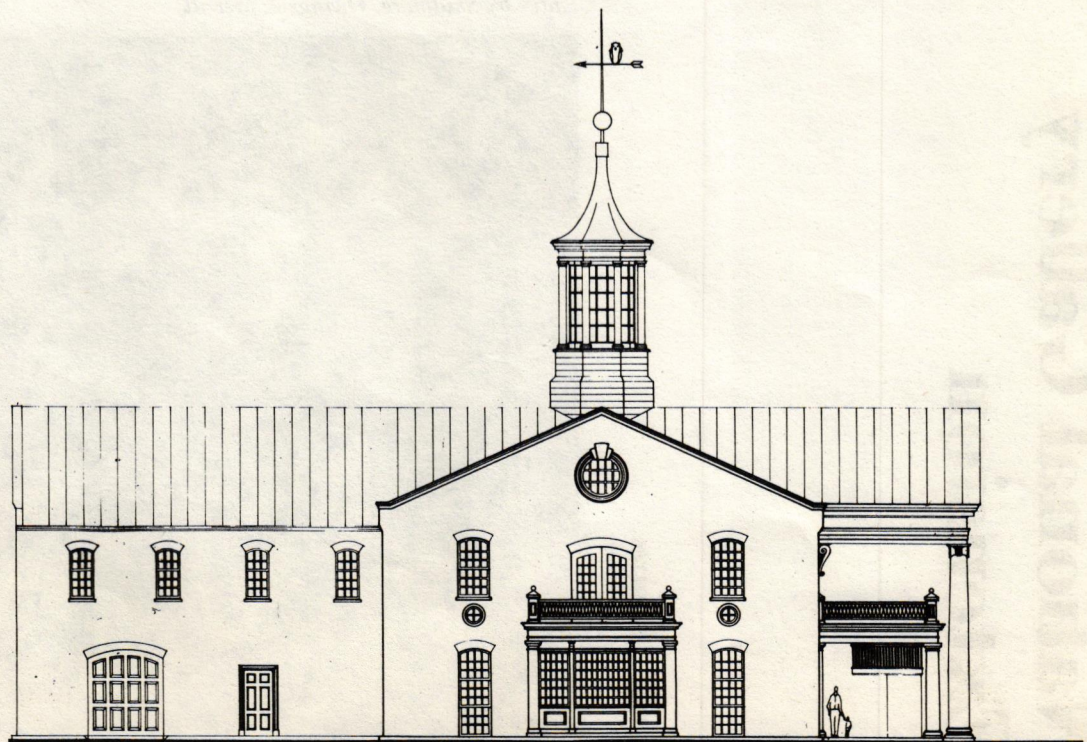


Thibodaux City Hall Competition. Winning scheme by Allan Greenberg. Top: entrance elevation. Above: plan of second floor with library. Left: first floor plan. Below: sections. Bottom: bayou elevation



Thibodaux, Louisiana Library and Cultural Center

Peter Papademetriou



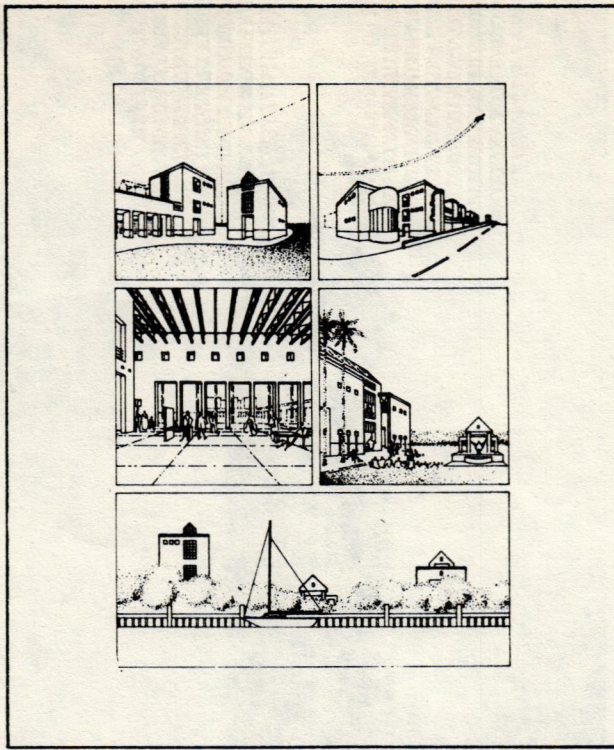
The Fort Lauderdale Riverfront Plaza Design Competition came to an end with the announcement of three quite divergent schemes by young, not-too-well-known architects as prize winners. The competition, sponsored by the Downtown Development Authority, was for a multi-use complex on an irregularly shaped site between the New River and a major urban thoroughfare that would include not only a plaza but also an outdoor stage, open seating, and "an architectural feature or environmental sculpture"; a bazaar; and commercial space—a 4,000-s.f. restaurant, a food court and bar, and 8,000 s.f. of office space. The plaza forms the core of the DDA's plans for the revitalization of the downtown area, and a new art museum is planned for a site across the road. 195 projects were submitted; winners were selected by the jury of Mario Botta, James Stewart Polshek, and William Turnbull.

The first-place project by Aragon Associated Architects of Coral Gables—with John Ames Steffian and Armando Montero as principals and Jorge L. Trelles, Rafael Portuondo, Rolando Llanes, and Luis Trelles on the design team—is composed of elements on a terrace surrounding a lawn open to the river; a colonnade marks the edge facing the city. Turnbull asserted that "the strength of this project is the simple bold stroke of dealing with urban space as an extension of an urban park and the riverfront park itself as the beginning of a riverfront walkway." He remarked, on the other hand, that more opportunities for "people to pause, sit, and enjoy" ought to be provided. Botta, while praising its function as a "filter," criticized the project for its formal arrangement. In this he was joined by Polshek, who noted particularly that the ends of the west building could be strengthened in relation to the riverwalk and the portal arcade. He continued that although he was impressed by the variety of architectural expression, "the unity of the material is not enough to compensate for the excesses of the massing." The jurors obviously felt, however, that these problems could be overcome, and Polshek concluded: "This scheme is probably going to have problems with the budget [\$1.7 million]. I can only view that as positive. The constraints of the real world will force the architects to reconsider the excesses of the architecture."

A more than startling contrast to the first-place proposal was the second-place scheme—by B. Mack Scogin, Jr., president of Heery & Heery, Architects & Engineers of Atlanta. The jury commented on this proposal as "clearly the most provocative and intelligent" concept they had seen, but felt that the forms would lose power in the execution. The essence of the scheme is the use of a number of unusual elements in the plaza: The programmed space is enclosed by a series of buildings along two borders of the site; several small bleacher-theater—"sandcastles" line the edge between the plaza and the river; and topiaries in all imaginable forms and configurations are central in creating what the architects termed "a potpourri of places." Botta felt that the proposal was exceptional because it "chose to define definite episodes, ultimately to define the urban problem."

The jury's choice for third—by Thomas K. Davis and Marleen Kay Davis, of Cortland, N.Y.—is very different from the others. A formal plaza is enclosed within a more solid frame. All the jurors concurred on this project's essentially urban quality with Botta calling it an "intervention" and Turnbull reflecting that "it is a miniaturization of an urban square." However, he continued, opportunities were missed in both its landscaping and the definition of inside and outside spaces. Polshek summarized the feelings of the jury in saying that "it is an elegant scheme, predictable in its perpetual ambitions, but one whose architecture is in no way reflective of the nature of Fort Lauderdale. It is an architecture that is without regionality."

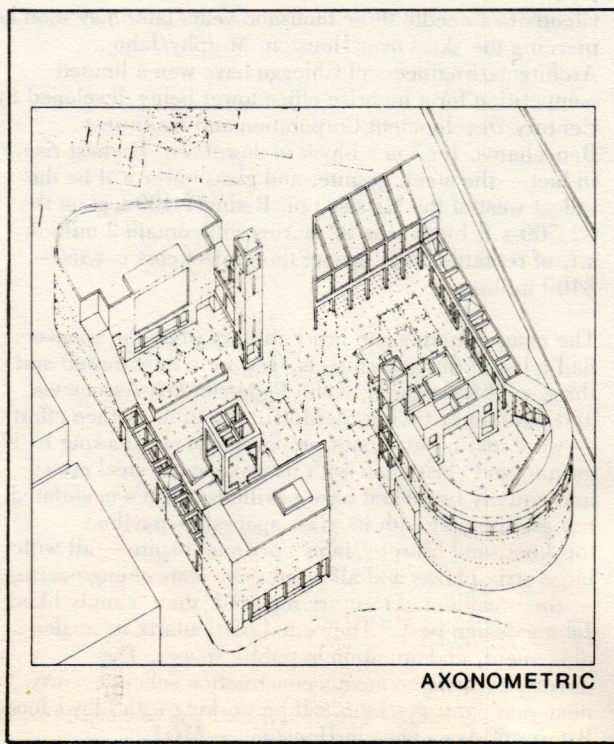
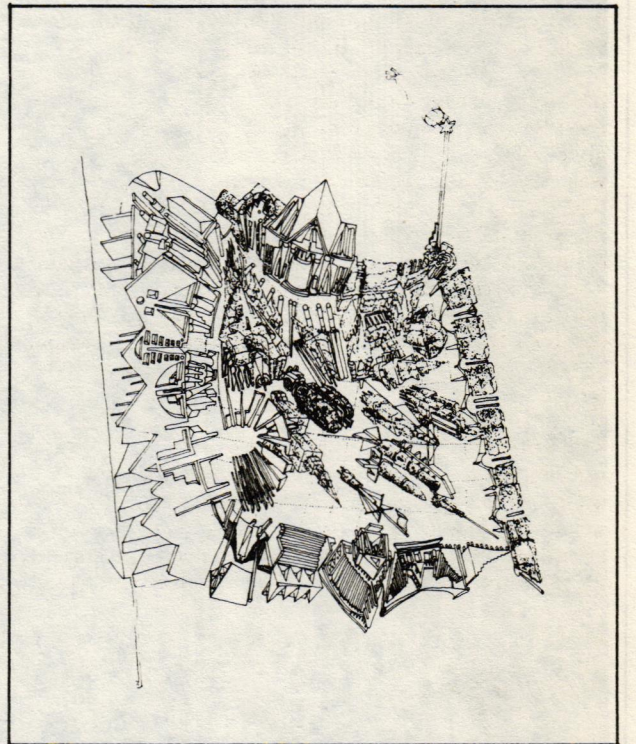
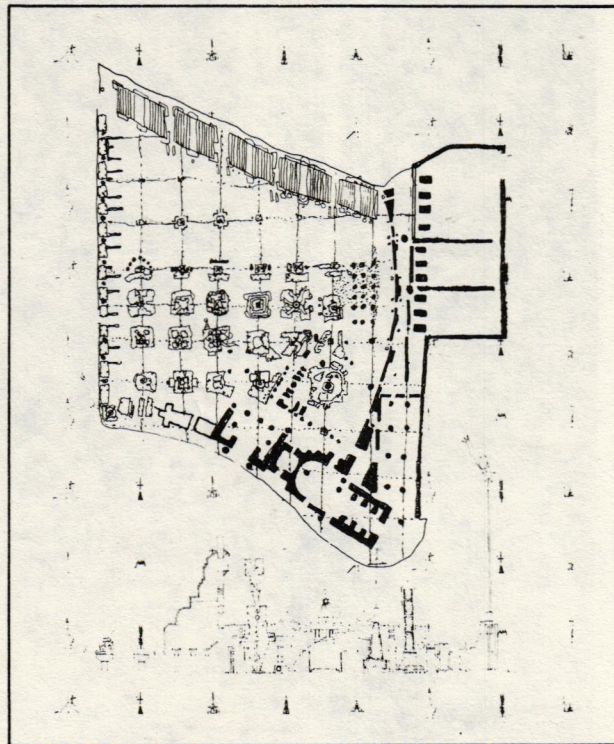
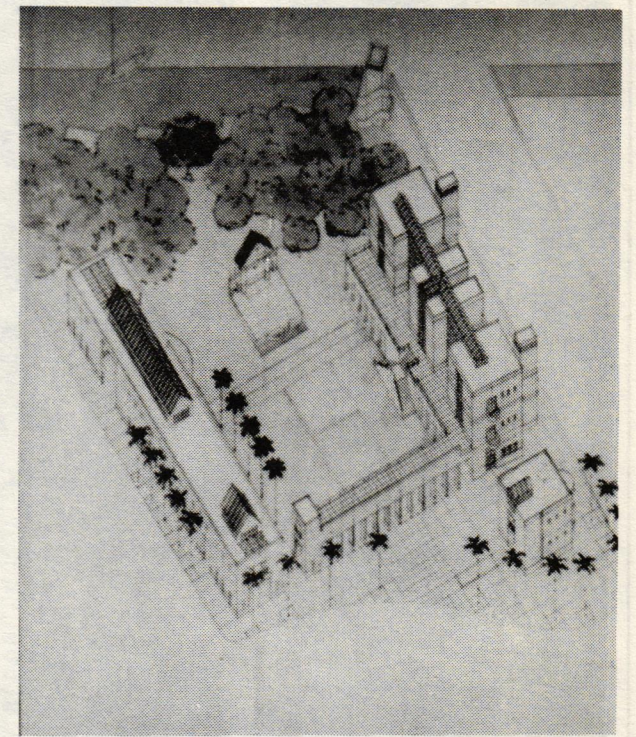
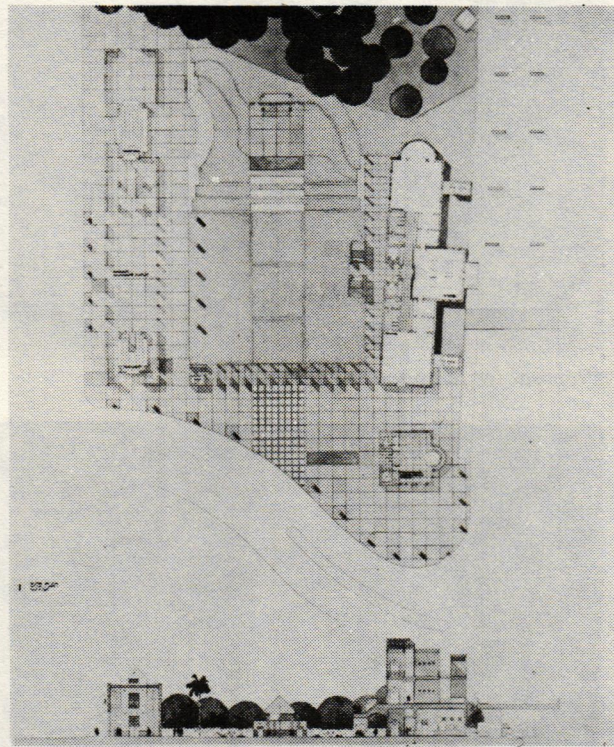
The winners will receive \$10,000, \$6,000, and \$4,000 respectively. In addition, the first-place firm has been commissioned to proceed with design development while the DDA proceeds with funding; the plaza is expected to be under construction within the year. —MGJ



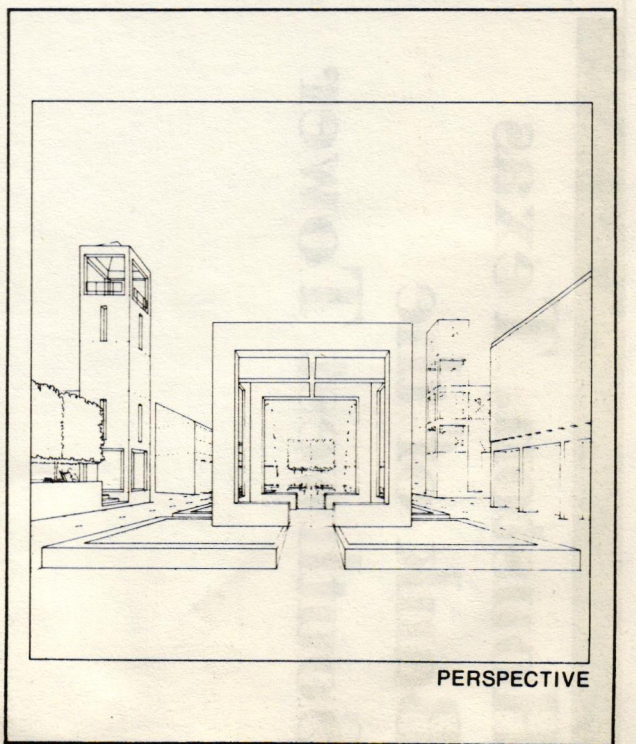
Fort Lauderdale Riverfront Plaza Design Competition. Winning scheme by Aragon Associated Architects. Left: Perspectives. Right top: section looking east. Left below: site plan. Right below: axonometric.

Row second from bottom: second place design by B. Mack Scogin, Jr. Site plan and axonometric.

Bottom row: third place design by Thomas K. Davis and Marleen Kay Davis. Axonometric and perspective

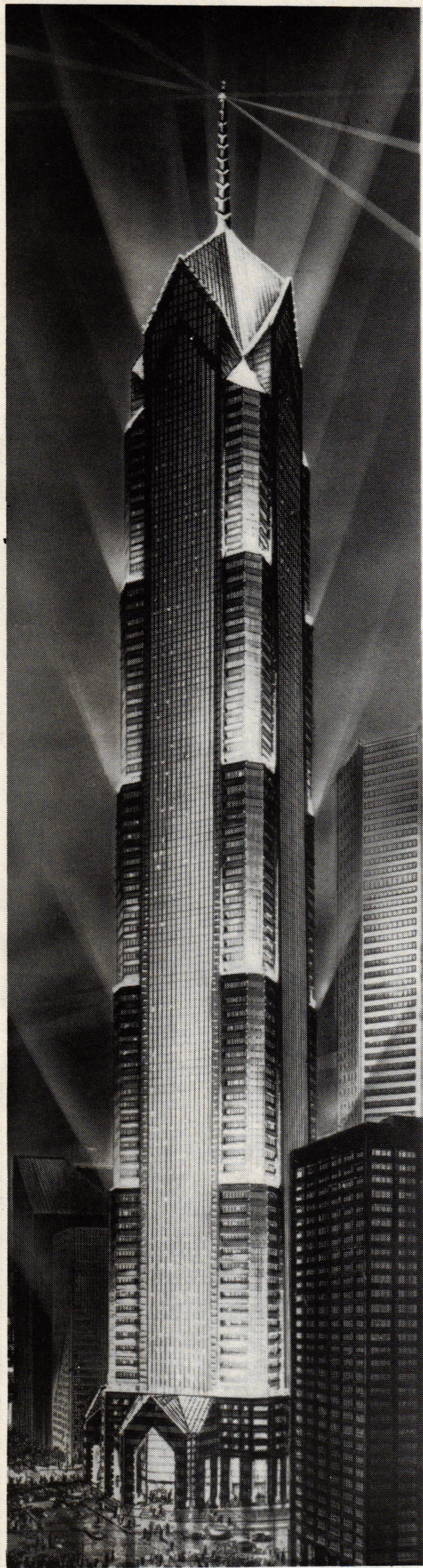


AXONOMETRIC



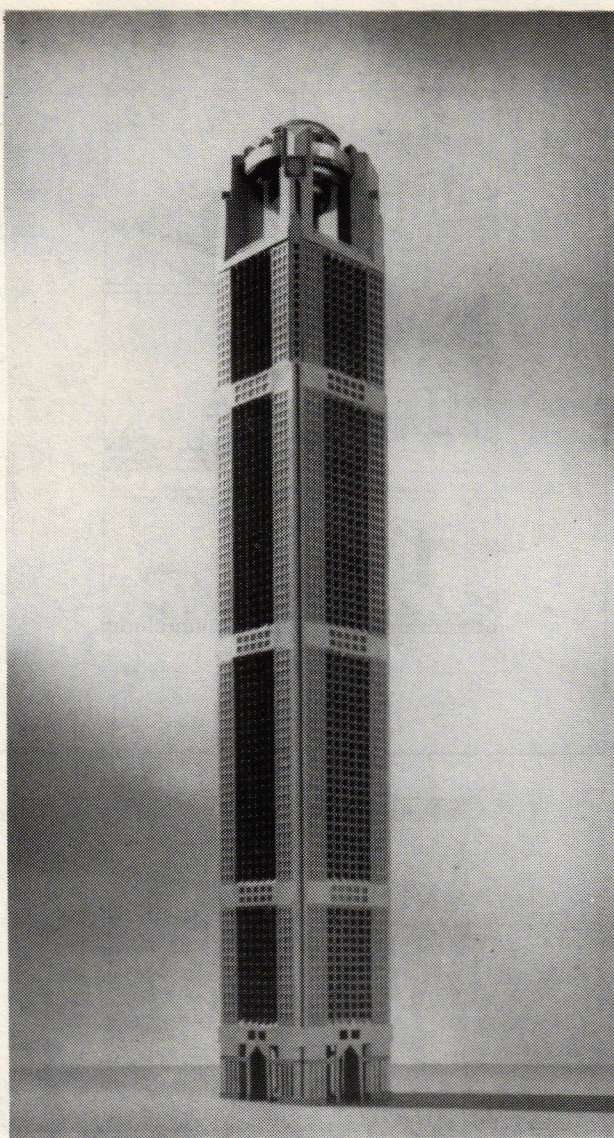
PERSPECTIVE

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida Riverfront Plaza

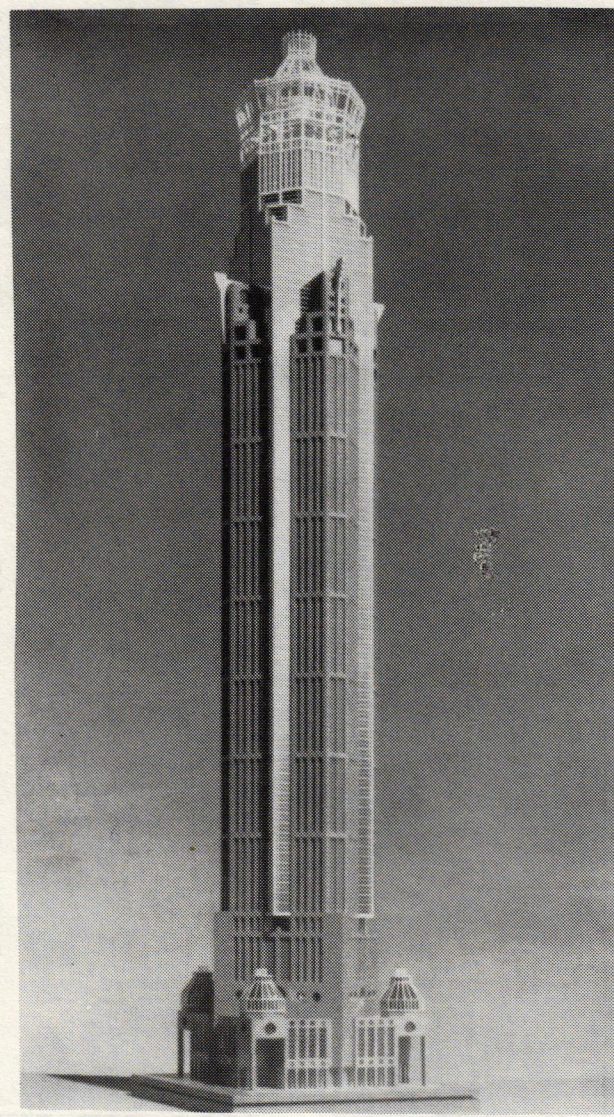


Proposal by Helmut Jahn of Murphy/Jahn

Houston, Texas Bank of the Southwest Tower



Proposal by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill



Proposal by Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates

Cleopatra's needle three thousand years later may soon be piercing the skies over Houston. Murphy/Jahn Architects/Engineers of Chicago have won a limited competition for a highrise office tower being developed by Century Development Corporation and Southwest Bancshares, Inc. on a block in downtown. Highest rise, in fact — the steel, granite, and glass tower will be the tallest west of the Mississippi. Rising 1,400 feet on the 62,500-s.f. block, the 82 stories will contain 2 million s.f. of rentable office space; the project cost is \$350 — \$400 million.

The competition began last February when the sponsors had a list of thirty architects. Ten were interviewed and three — Murphy/Jahn, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (in an interoffice effort) — were invited to submit proposals. In considering KPF's granite and glass shaft with its ornamental steel crown and equally bedecked base pavilions, SOM's modulated red granite pier with its glass spaceship-pavilion top-knot, and Murphy/Jahn's prismatic spire — all with large atria-plazas and all impressive feats of engineering — the president of Century reported they "simply liked Jahn's design best." They cited particularly its angled placement, and attention to public spaces. The developers hope to have a construction schedule early next year. Murphy/Jahn will be working with Lloyd Jones Brewer & Associates in Houston. —MGJ

The competition for a new City Hall and Civic Square to be built in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga has been won by the firm of J. Michael Kirkland, Architects, of Toronto. The design was by Kirkland in collaboration with English architect Edward Jones. The project was selected from 246 entries by a jury of James Stirling, Phyllis Lambert, Jerome Mackson, Russell Edmunds, and Douglas Kilner; George Baird was the professional advisor and chaired the jury, but did not vote. Second place was awarded to Toronto architect Barton Myers Associates while third place went to The Thom Partnership in association with Harvey Cowan, also from Toronto.

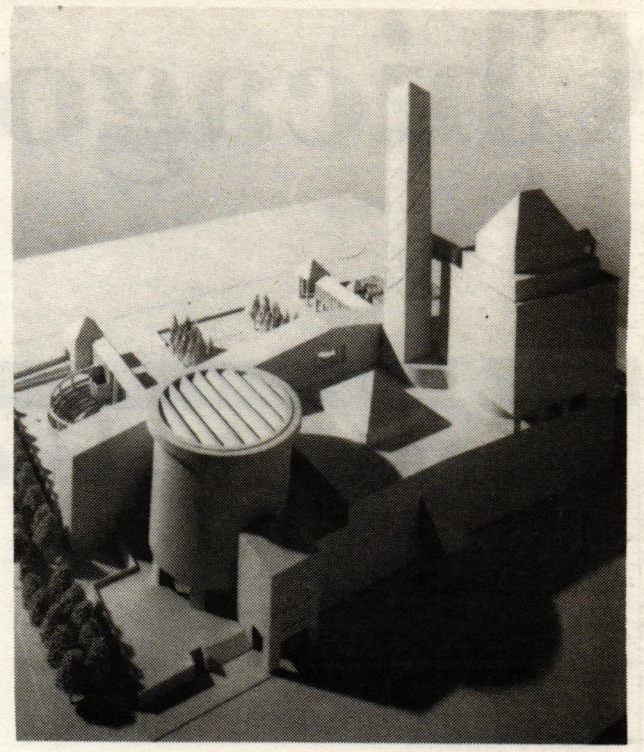
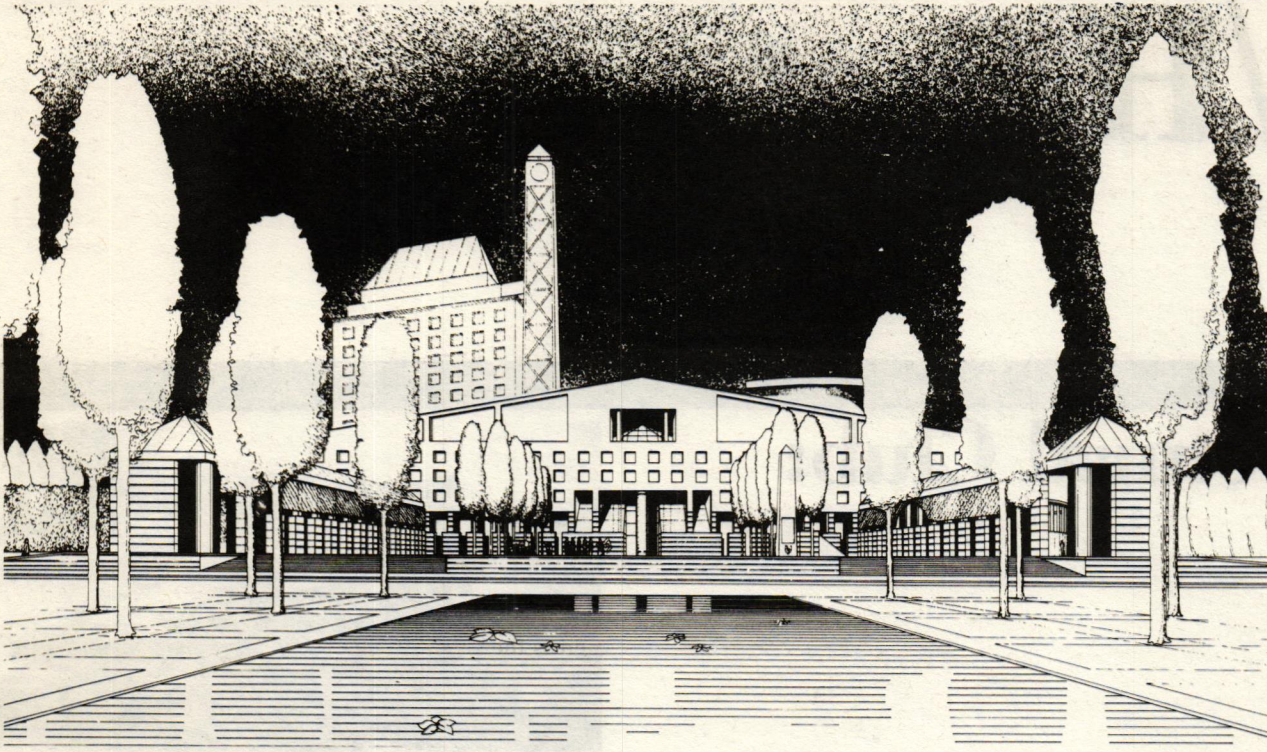
The Jones/Kirkland design, which the jury termed "superior by a significant margin to any other entry," was one that Stirling felt merited international renown. It consists of a masonry-clad, concrete frame structure on the north half of the 19,500-square-meter site and public space on the south — facing a block designated for future development in plans for a City Center. The composition of volumetric parts reflects the traditional idioms of both symbolic civic buildings and the vernacular farm clusters of the surrounding area. The connective element of the scheme is a low, narrow, sloped-roof structure stretched across the site. Behind this symmetrically organized facade with its ceremonial entrance several distinct volumes make up the 32,000-square-meter complex. A twelve-story tower block rises on the northwest corner of the site. Next to it stands a still taller clocktower, providing an identifiable reference point for the complex when seen from a distance. The Council Chambers are located in a semi-attached cylindrical form placed on a plinth in the other corner. A large court/lobby directly behind the main entry forms the central volume — an interior counterpart to the Square. On either side of the formal plaza, with its trees and reflecting pool, are a less rigorously composed walled garden and an amphitheater. Organizational coherence is provided by an arcade that borders the Square; it is also intended to connect with a future pedestrian network. Proposed materials are granite — for rustication of the main sections — and possibly brick or stucco; the campanile and canopies are to be steel and glass and pitched roofs will be copper. The proposal has not yet been approved by the City Council because of the November elections, but the architects hope to be able to start design development early next year. The projected cost is about \$57 million (Canadian).

The jurors were impressed by the Jones/Kirkland design's response to the conditions of the program in the ordering of its internal elements, by the integrated relationship set up between the City Hall building and the Civic Square, and by the rich variety of spaces offered. They also felt that it set a "masterful" precedent for future planning.

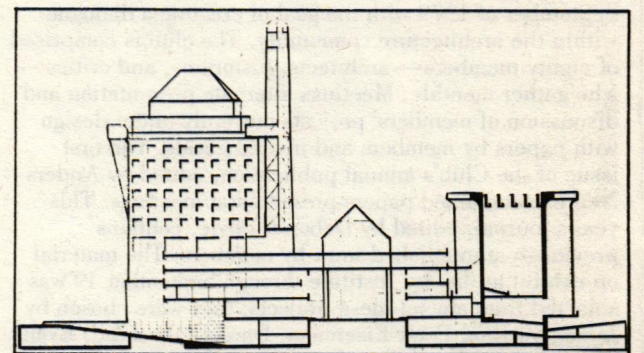
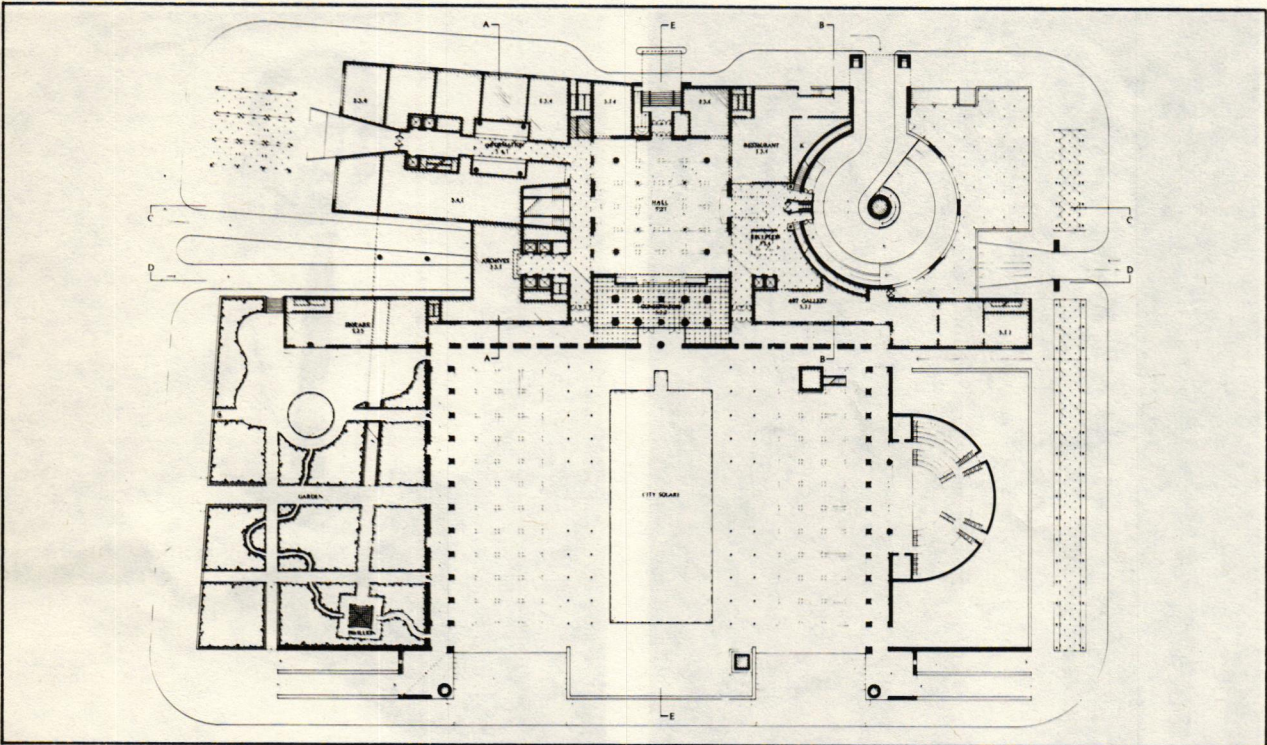
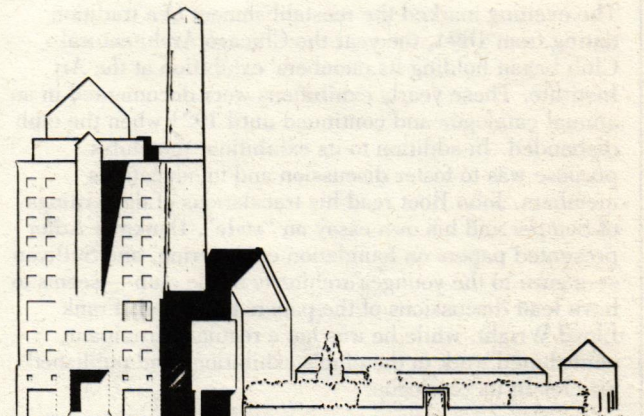
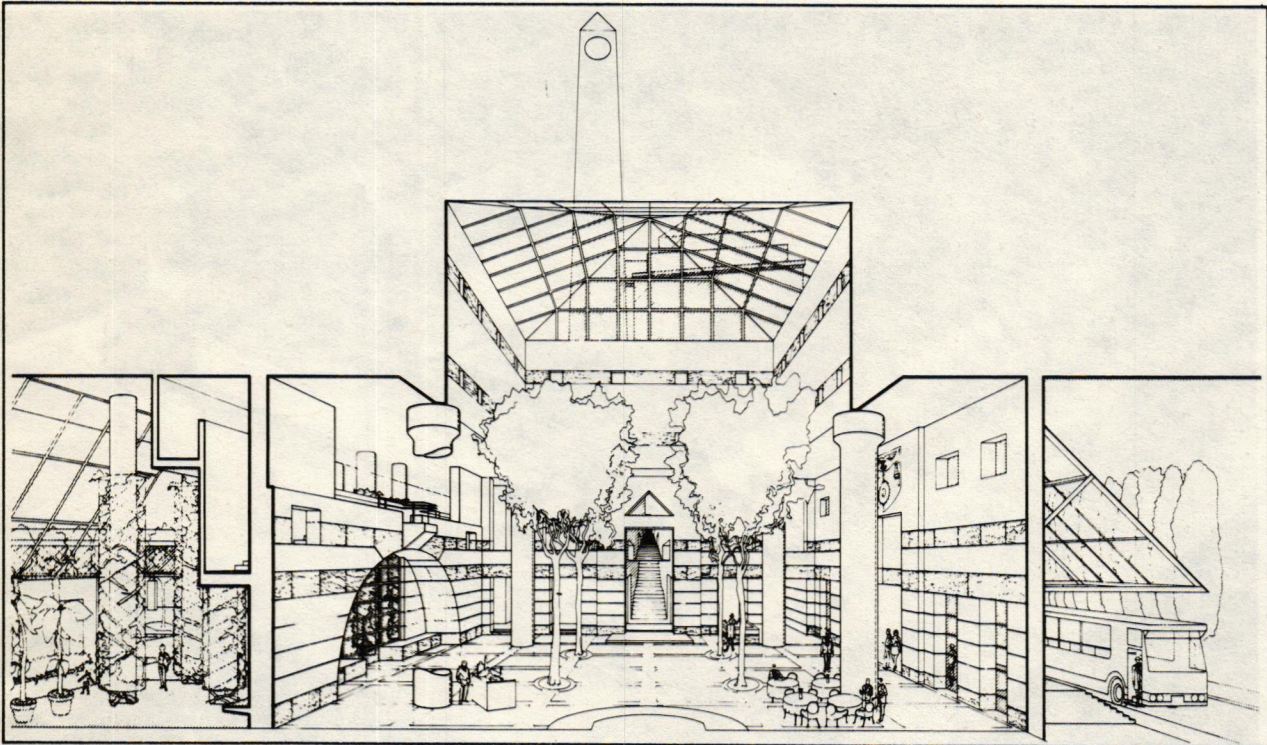
The proposal by Barton Myers, with Bruce Kuwabara as associate in charge, gained the attention of the jury because of a strong sense of presence manifested in the scheme, like that of the winner, despite a very different parti. In this project the offices are located in a horseshoe of curved buildings whose inner edge takes on an octagonal line as it intersects with the "commons" spaces that border the Square. The circle is interrupted not only by the opening on the south side of the square, but also by a rectangular volume jutting through into the plaza and holding a smaller circular one. These pieces contain the major public spaces and the meeting rooms for the Council. While the jury applauded the assertiveness of the architecture, they did have reservations about the spread-out nature of the plan and its ability to meet cost and energy conservation requirements.

The scheme by Ronald Thom and Harvey Cowan in a sense inverted the Myers scheme by placing a circle within a square. The block of three office buildings, also a U open to the south, is curved at the north end to accommodate the circular arcade and plaza. As in the winning scheme, a clocktower was chosen to provide the necessary symbolic element. In addition, the Council Chamber is distinguished as a cube partially attached to the office block and suspended over the arcade and reflecting pool. While this project is similar to the one by Myers, the jury still found it less well developed formally. —MGJ

Mississauga, Canada City Hall and Civic Square

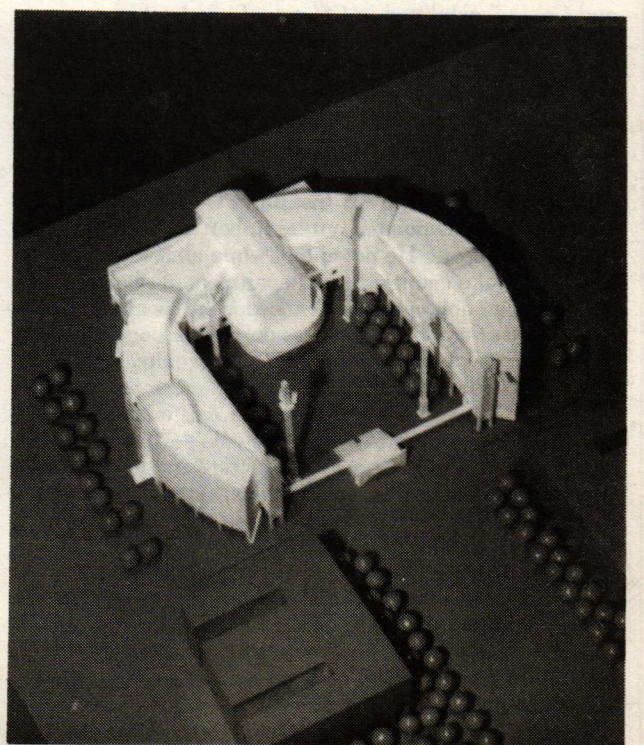
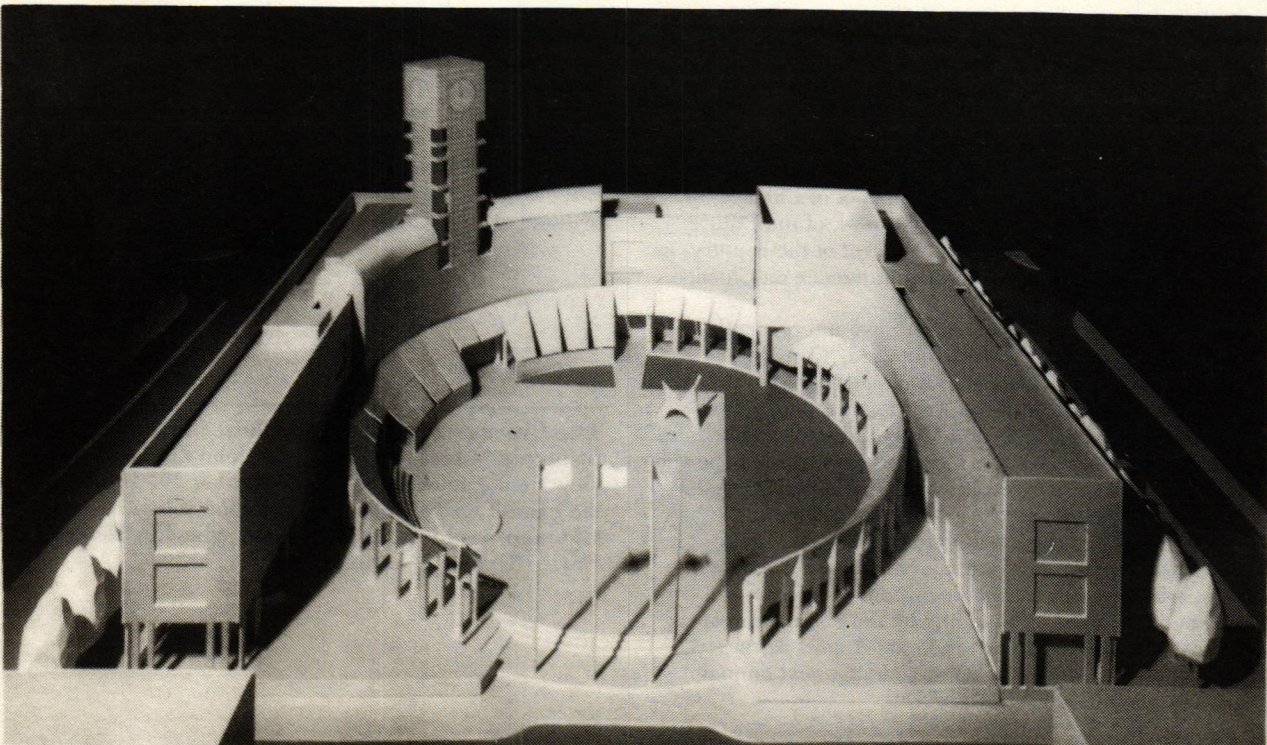


Competition for a City Hall and Civic Square, Mississauga, Canada. Winning scheme by J. Michael Kirkland, Architects, designed by Edward Jones and J. Michael Kirkland. Above left: perspective of square and main entrance. Above: model from northeast. Left: section perspective of hall. Below: west elevation



J. Michael Kirkland, Architects, designed by Edward Jones and J. Michael Kirkland. Left: ground floor plan. Above: section through Council Chamber, looking north

Below left: third-place scheme by Harvey Cowan in association with The Thom Partnership; model from south. Below: second-place scheme by Barton Myers Associates; model from southwest



Chicago/Houston

Chicago Architectural Club: The Event

Stuart Cohen

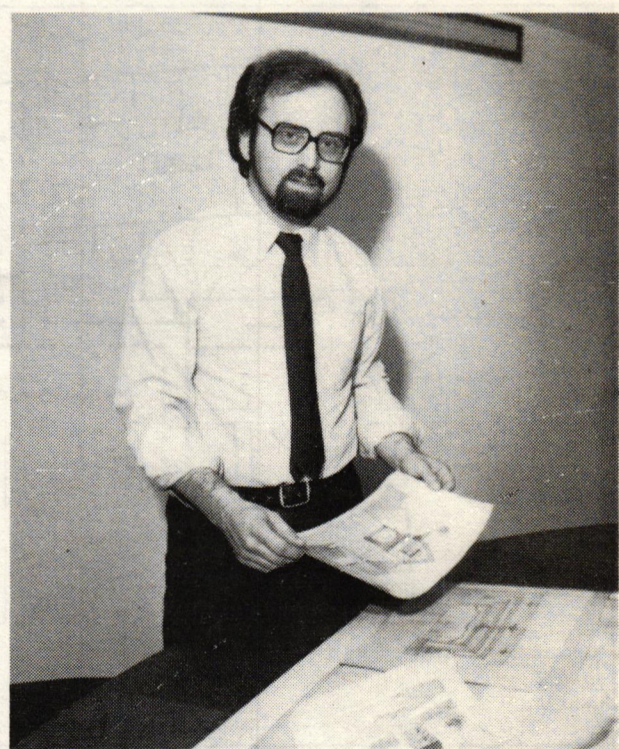
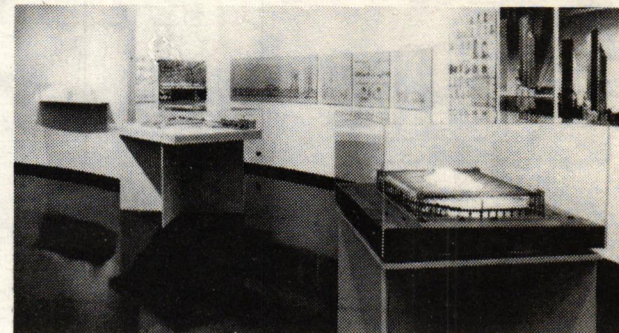
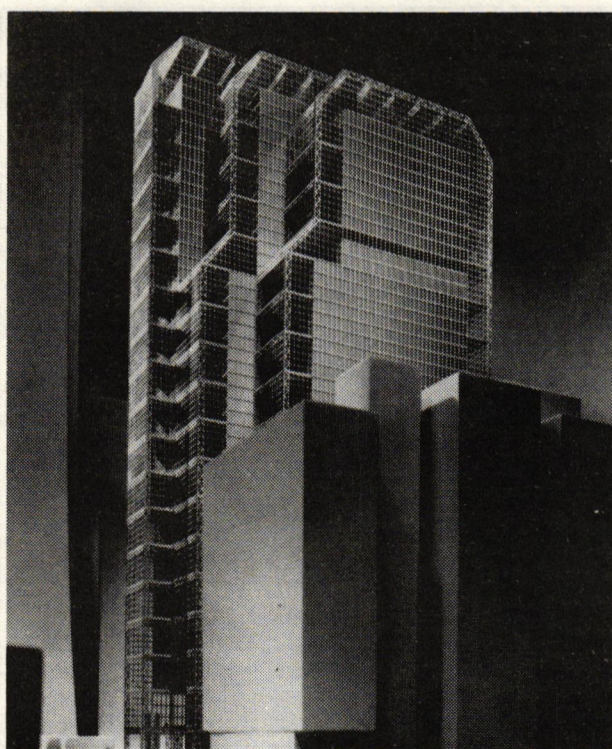
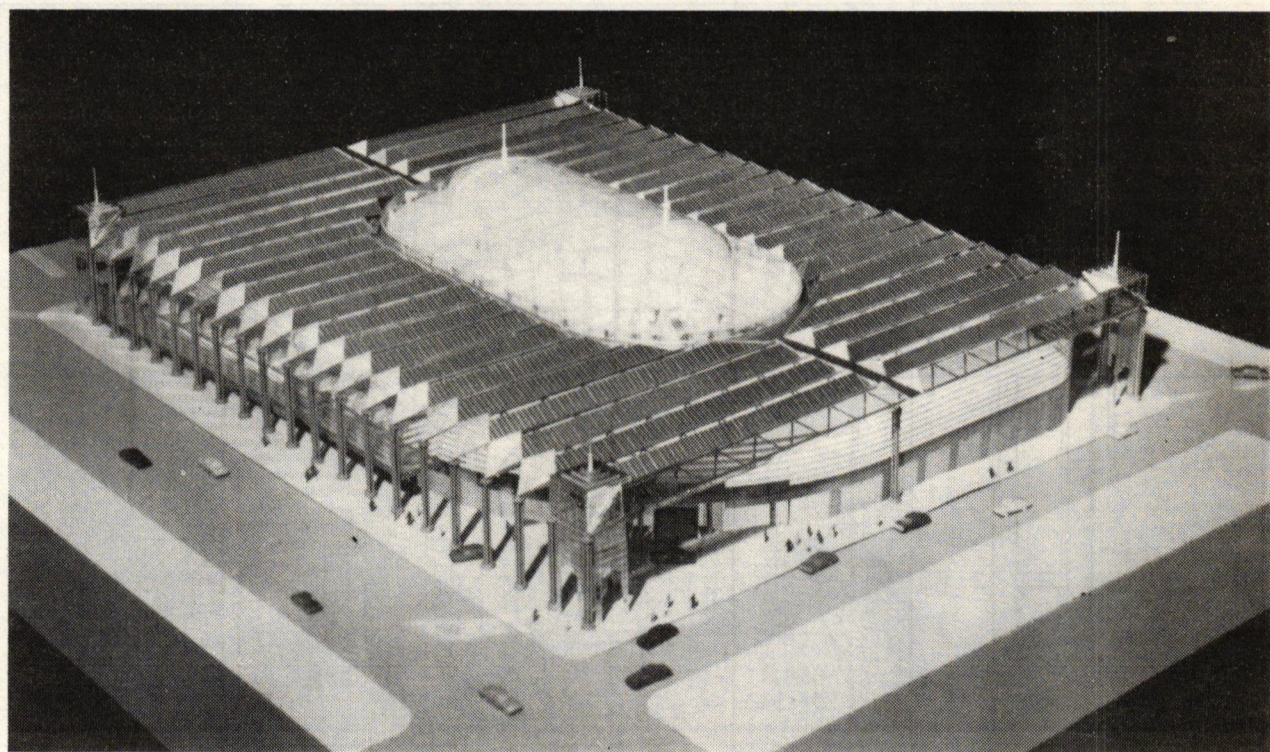
On August 3 Chicago's architecture community turned out at the Art Institute. They came to celebrate architectural culture: to attend the opening of an exhibition of work by members of the Chicago Architectural Club; to inaugurate the museum's newly founded Department of Architecture; to hear a lecture by Robert Stern; and to preview two new Chicago publications just off the presses—the second volume of the *Chicago Architectural Journal* and the first *Threshold*, a new student publication of the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois at Chicago (both published by Rizzoli, \$15.00 each).

The evening marked the reestablishment of a tradition dating from 1894, the year the Chicago Architectural Club began holding its members' exhibition at the Art Institute. These yearly exhibitions were documented in an annual catalogue and continued until 1921 when the club disbanded. In addition to its exhibition, the club's purpose was to foster discussion and to educate its members. John Root read his translations of the writings of Semper and his own essay on "style", Dankmar Adler presented papers on foundation engineering, and Sullivan—a guru to the younger architects in the club—seems to have lead discussions of the papers presented. Frank Lloyd Wright, while he was not a regular participant, contributed work to the club's exhibitions and published articles in its catalogue.

The Chicago Architectural Club was reorganized in September of 1979 with the goal of creating a dialogue within the architecture community. The club is comprised of eighty members—architects, historians, and critics—who gather monthly. Meetings alternate presentation and discussion of members' projects currently under design with papers by members and invited guests. The first issue of the Club's annual publication, edited by Anders Nereim, contained papers presented at meetings. This year's journal, edited by Deborah Doyle, contains previously unpublished work by members. The material on exhibit at the Art Institute through September 19 was selected from among these projects; they were chosen by James Stirling, Peter Eisenman, Daniel Libeskind, Evans Woollen, and Faruk Yorgancioglu.

The club's first exhibit was held at the Graham Foundation, the location of the club's monthly meetings; this year's exhibit was held at the Art Institute at the suggestion of John Zukowsky, the head of the Institute's new Department of Architecture. Zukowsky came to Chicago in 1978 to take over as the architectural archivist for the Art Institute's Burnham Library, which, along with the Avery and RIBA libraries, has one of the world's greatest collections of architectural materials. Zukowsky initiated a program to display selections from the library's holdings—some 40,000 drawings. Among the shows that resulted were "The Plan of Chicago," an extraordinary exhibit of the original Jules Guerin renderings of the Burnham Plan, and "P.B. Wight: Architect, Contractor, and Critic," exhibited in Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and at the National Academy of Design in New York. A measure of Zukowsky's success was Art Institute Director James Wood's positive response to an internal report recommending the establishment of a new curatorial department in architecture.

The uniqueness of the Art Institute's Department of Architecture was pointed out by Robert Stern in his August 3 address. He noted that while almost every museum in the country has a department of photography—a medium only recently acknowledged as an art form—the Art Institute of Chicago was only the second museum in the country to have a department of architecture. This, he speculated, was because architecture can not be collected like painting and sculpture, but must be exhibited in the form of representations—drawings or models. Thus the dilemma of collecting architectural representations: to what should the criteria of judgment be applied? Should one exhibit beautiful drawings of undistinguished buildings or fanciful drawings which do not represent actual architecture? Stern also raised the question of the relationship of an architecture department to an institution's overall objectives. He compared the highly focused, often proselytizing attitude of the Museum of Modern Art to the Art Institute's more broadly based and "synoptic" view. Contrary to his characterization of the Institute's intentions, however, he recommended that



the architecture department continue to build a concentrated collection of material from the Chicago area. He praised the exhibitions mounted thus far and jokingly cautioned Zukowsky against the meddling of architect-critic-curator types, only to admit that he had prepared a list of suggested exhibitions. He mentioned specifically a show assessing the impact of Chicago—Burnham's planning proposals, the work of the Prairie School—on the architecture of the rest of the country, as well as one examining New York's influence on Chicago.

Among the exhibits already scheduled and presently being prepared by the Art Institute are "Chicago Architects Design," a show of twentieth-century architecture drawings in the Art Institute's collection (October 21-April 10, 1983); "New Chicago Architecture" (May 9-August 7, 1983), a reorganized version of the show mounted at the Castelvecchio Museum in Verona last year; and "Chicago and New York: Architectural Interactions Over the Past Century" (February-June 1984), which, like several major art shows of recent years, will explore the reciprocal influences between two centers of culture. And judging by the enthusiasm of the Art Institute and the crowd there on August 3, the Institute's schedule will also include the next annual Chicago Architectural Club exhibit.

Top: installation of Murphy/Jahn projects at the Art Institute. Center: Helmut Jahn and Rainer Schildknecht of Murphy/Jahn, "Greyhound Terminal" project (photos: courtesy The Art Institute of Chicago). Bottom left: First Federal Plaza of Chicago (1982); Voy Madeyski, Perkins & Will (photo: Orlando Cabanban). Bottom right: John Zukowsky (photo: courtesy The Art Institute of Chicago)

The Chicago Architectural Club, an exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago organized by John Zukowsky, was on view from August 4 through September 19. The work in the exhibit also appears in the second volume of **The Chicago Architectural Journal**, edited by Deborah Doyle (Rizzoli, \$15.00).

Events and exhibits in the midwest have gained much attention in recent months. Here, three commentaries on people, places, and architecture.

The Exhibit

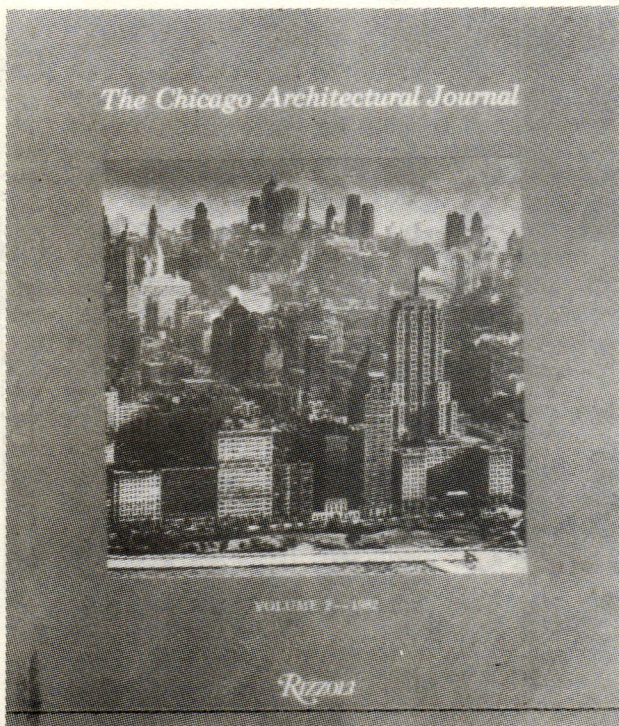
Joan Yanchewski Jackson

A recent exhibition entitled "The Chicago Architectural Club" was on view from August 4 to September 19 in Chicago at the Art Institute's new Department of Architecture; it was organized by John Zukowsky (see article by Stuart Cohen). Although the latest exhibit may have "displayed a great deal of common spirit" similar to that of the original Chicago Architectural Club, one is first overwhelmed by the diversity and plurality of the architecture scene in Chicago. Peter Eisenman observed, "I don't see a kind of eclecticism or a 'school of . . .'" Indeed, it was hard to draw any conclusions as one went from the intricate analysis of detail by Thomas Beeby and John Syvertsen, to the personal mythologies in the drawings of David Woodhouse, Michael Gelick, and Tannys Langdon, to the small-scale projects of Stuart Cohen and the many new young architects on the scene, to the slick models and drawings of large-scale projects by Helmut Jahn, to the madness of Walter Netsch's nightmarish field theory. It was difficult for the jury of outsiders to make judgments, except for the emphasis on "beautiful drawings," which indicated that many of the projects were chosen for the appearance of the drawings and not necessarily for the ideas behind them.

In most cases James Stirling's observation that the small-scale work was more attractive than the large-scale work held up. An interesting juxtaposition could be seen in the work of two very different Chicago firms: Murphy/Jahn, who produce a huge amount of highly crafted models and drawings, all held within a tightly controlled framework of ideas; and Hammond, Beeby and Babka, whose work exhibits a more personal and historically connective search. In any case, it was refreshing to see that many of the drawings chosen were from the younger architects whose work has not had a great deal of exposure.

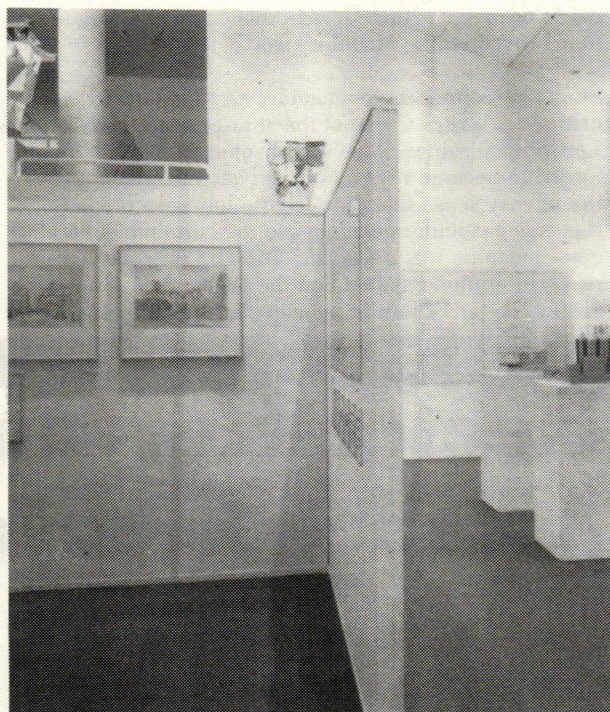
The variety of efforts exhibited in the show is well displayed in the yearbook-like second volume of *The Chicago Architectural Journal*, edited by Deborah Doyle. Each of the 80 members of the club was invited to submit one project, the only requirement being that the project had not been published elsewhere: "It could be a building, an object, a written piece, etc." The preponderance of buildings and the lack of written pieces further the common myth that Chicago architects, unlike architects in the East, don't theorize, but build. Also included in the journal were jury comments which, for the most part, were ambiguous because they were taken out of context.

The quality of the drawings shown in the journal and the exhibit is not as important as the nature of the dialogue. An important connection to the past is being made through the efforts of the Chicago Architectural Club and the Department of Architecture of the Art Institute.



Houston's Classicism Symposium

Stephen Fox



Installation of "New Classicism" at the School of Architecture, Rice University

"Speaking A New Classicism: American Architecture Now," the exhibition organized by Helen Searing and shown at Smith College in 1981, came to Houston on September 13. Circulated by the newly formed National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., the show was on view for five weeks at the Farish Gallery, in the School of Architecture at Rice University. In conjunction with the opening of the exhibition, a symposium, "The Future of Classicism," was held at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, on September 13. The participants were Peter C. Papademetriou, moderator, Robert A.M. Stern, Neil Levine and Allan Greenberg.

It was intended that the symposium consist of three brief presentations by Stern, Levine and Greenberg, followed by a summary discussion of the designated topic. Stern spoke first, on the tradition of Modern Classicism. He discussed a selection of buildings by McKim, Mead and White, Bernard R. Maybeck, Josef Hoffmann, J. M. Olbrich, H. Van Buren Magonigle, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Arthur Brown, Jr., Paul Philippe Cret and Eliel Saarinen, emphasizing the themes common to these architects' work. These included the investment of familiar, vernacular forms (both industrial and pre-industrial) with condensed images of classical order; the retention of "classicizing" planning and compositional techniques in non-classically detailed buildings; the search for an astylar, elemental classicism free of conventional classical ornament; and the cultivation of nature to provide a setting for classical fragments, suggesting a dialogue between the natural and ideal.

Neil Levine proposed that post-modernism first stirred in the architecture of Louis I. Kahn. Levine sought to demonstrate this provocative thesis with a series of juxtaposed images, intended to bear out his contention that it was architecture's own past that Kahn used as a source of formal determination rather than functional distribution or engineering, the typical determinants of modernism. Levine mentioned that Stern had already raised the issue critical to understanding Kahn's buildings as harbingers of post-modernism—the relationship between nature and history. Kahn's project for the Jewish Community Center at Trenton, New Jersey (1955–59), was compared to Mies's Crown Hall in Chicago (1955) (a comparison, Levine reminded the audience, that Colin Rowe had first pointed out). By this comparison he was able to show the similarities and differences between the vestigial classical composition of the Community Center and the latent classical articulation of its component parts, and the "classicizing" but in all other respects undeviating modernism of Crown Hall. Levine called the Community Center's Bath House, one of two components of Kahn's design that was actually built, an icon of post-modernism. He juxtaposed it with an illustration of

the Primitive Hut from the English edition of Laugier, the Harvard Graduate Center by TAC, Mies's 50 × 50 House project, Boullée's design for a Temple of Hercules, and Soufflot's Sainte-Geneviève. He used the example of these buildings to illustrate how the Bath House design deviated from the conventions of 1950s modern architecture: the primitive, abstracted, elemental forms of its composition; the internally focused, five-square, Greek cross plan configuration; the closed, opaque, archaic aspect of the exterior. Levine saw the Bath House as reconstituting a primordial classicism, typologically analogous to Soufflot's Parisian monument to neoclassical theory, and circumventing the development of modernism. To substantiate his thesis, Levine brought up the now familiar argument that Kahn's conception of the room as the basic unit of architecture was fundamentally classical. He then showed how the corollary importance of the facade in classical architecture was not carried through in Kahn's work. Kahn's renunciation, according to Levine, deprived the facades of his buildings of "representative power." Yet conversely they provided an opportunity for poetic expression because the exteriors were conceived as ruins. Comparing the Exeter Library (1967–72) to one of Piranesi's *Vedute di Roma*, Levine remarked that in both "history recedes to a state of nature." He concluded with three projects by Michael Graves—a gateway, a house and the Portland Public Services Building—in which the typological elements of the Trenton Bath House reappeared, insinuating a renewed relationship between architecture, history, and nature which, Levine stressed, was essential to classicism.

Allan Greenberg's presentation was more relaxed than either Stern's or Levine's. Speaking on the subject of Traditional Classicism, he commented on a Kahn drawing referred to by Levine. The drawing's inscription, "A society of rooms is a place good to live work learn," led Greenberg to remark that architecture is social in nature—a common undertaking—and consequently bears a responsibility to represent "the highest aspirations" of a society and its institutions. To do so effectively, however, architecture must be able to communicate meanings that can be comprehended in both a simple and a sophisticated manner. Classical architecture fulfills this obligation. Having established this point, Greenberg proceeded to demonstrate that classical architecture is American architecture; he did this with less jingoistic fervor than some of his colleagues in Classical America, but remained faithful to their version of architectural history.

Speaking of his own work, Greenberg expressed disillusionment with his earliest large-scale building, a respectfully submissive addition to Donn Barber's State Library and Supreme Court Building in Hartford. This disillusionment led to his involvement in the "conservative revolution" that constitutes the American tradition in architecture. Thus followed such works as the Manchester District Courthouse conversion, the country house at Greenwich modeled on Mount Vernon, and the Alexandria, Virginia, courthouse project. Greenberg also showed the design for a commission, won in competition the week before, for remodeling a warehouse in Thibodaux, Louisiana, into a colonnaded civic center and a proposed monument to the victims of the Holocaust at Battery Park, based on Lutyens's Monument to the Missing of the Somme at Thierval.

The exhibition was mounted by Drexel Turner, who added substantially to the items displayed at Smith College. Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown, Kliment and Halsband, Machado and Silvetti, Michael Graves, Allan Greenberg, and Charles Moore and Urban Innovations all contributed examples of still-newer classicism to the show. Drawings and models of Grave's Portland Public Services Building, Humana Corporation Building, and his proposal for the Texas Theater-RepublicBank San Antonio site were the centerpiece of the show. The structural columns that Stirling and Wilford left in the Farish Gallery to punctuate the new space and "remember" the old were crowned with full-scale mock-ups of column capitals from the Piazza d'Italia. The only Houston project represented in the show was a perspective drawing of Johnson/Burgee's SugarLand Office Park, a putatively Shinkelesque suburban office building that is now completed.

N.Y.C. Exhibits

The following represents only a brief sampling of the architecture exhibits in New York in October and the images that captivated the public.

Le Corbusier Sketchbooks on Display

Daralice Boles

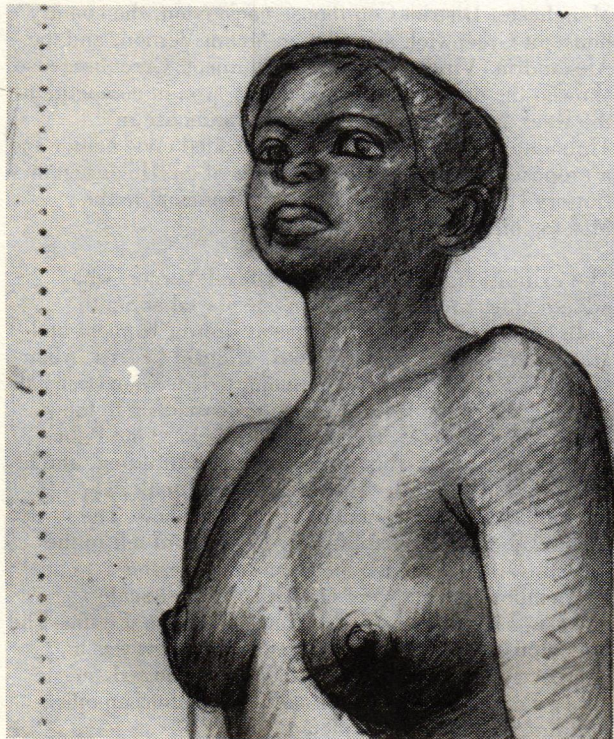
Le Corbusier used his sketchbooks as travelogue, diary, doodle-pad, and alter ego. For over fifty years the architect carried the small, spiral-bound cardboard-back volumes, recording his ideas and impressions in rough pen sketches occasionally colored with crayons. The publication of these sketches in four volumes and their display at the National Academy of Design (through November 14) in an abbreviated exhibition entitled "Fragments of Invention: The Sketchbooks of Le Corbusier" together offer rare insight into the workings of this undisputed genius of twentieth-century architecture.

While the four volumes (to be reviewed in December *Skyline*) are comprehensive and chronological, the exhibition as curated by William J.R. Curtis includes selected material organized thematically in an effort to make it accessible to a more general public. The sections on early work illustrate the origins of ideas that became cornerstones of Le Corbusier's architectural philosophy: the city of towers (beginning in 1922), the Dom-ino system (1915), and the Algiers "urban aqueduct" (1930) all appear as flashes of almost eerily instantaneous inspiration. Travel sketches from this early period are often reportorial in nature, recording the architect's impressions of cultures and places visited from 1929 to 1935.

Other drawings document the development of an idea from its impressionistic "birth" through its resolution into architectural form, as in the case of the Chandigarh collection. Still another sequence of casual doodles studies the metamorphosis of form, the literal sleight of hand that transforms a tree into the figure of a woman or an upturned parasol into the famous image of an open hand.

Just as he recorded and analyzed the vernacular architecture of other nations, so Le Corbusier would return to his own works, sketching his completed buildings repeatedly. In one sketch he compares the United Nations complex (1947-53) with his project for the Palace of the Soviets (1931). In another, the architect

Pages from the sketchbooks of Le Corbusier (photos: courtesy Fondation Le Corbusier)



adds an autobiographical note to a sketch of the familiar modular man, writing "It is in this cabin of a cargo-ship that I invented the Modulor sign."

Such self-conscious commentary earns curatorial criticism. Writes Curtis of the strange death-bed sketches Le Corbusier drew of his wife Yvonne in 1957: "We are forced to become voyeurs of a private moment but have the uneasy sense that the scenario has been prepared, that this particular peep beyond the curtain of an artist's consciousness was intended." Did Le Corbusier have posterity in mind as he filled the pages? And if he did—does it matter? There is some evidence that the master

Fragments of Invention: The Sketchbooks of Le Corbusier will be at the National Academy of Design through November 14. Sponsored by the Architectural History Foundation, the show includes material from the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris.

edited his own efforts; mysterious gaps appear for the years 1919-29 and 1936-45, and contradictory dates suggest an attempt to rewrite the course of history.

But these are curatorial questions only, and the mysteries do not diminish the power of the whole. The sketches remain extraordinary witnesses to the instinctive workings of imagination, testifying to the creative process at work. Le Corbusier himself celebrated these imaginative powers of the mind: "One day," he wrote in 1964, "out of a spontaneous initiative of the inner being, the click is produced. One takes up a pencil; a piece of charcoal, a colored crayon and one gives birth on the paper."

Hector Horeau at the Alliance Française

The Drawings of Hector Horeau is on exhibit at the Alliance Française through November 27.

The Director of Cultural Activities at the Alliance Française, J. Chambord, liked the French publication of Hector Horeau's drawings so much that she decided this heretofore obscure architect needed exposure in this country and in English.

Horeau's dramatic drawings are exhibited at the Alliance through November 27, and will be one of the few chances this fall to see nineteenth-century drawings on display. Horeau's importance, however, has less to do with his century than with the imagination his schemes show with regard to transportation, sewage control, and public monuments in Paris and London.

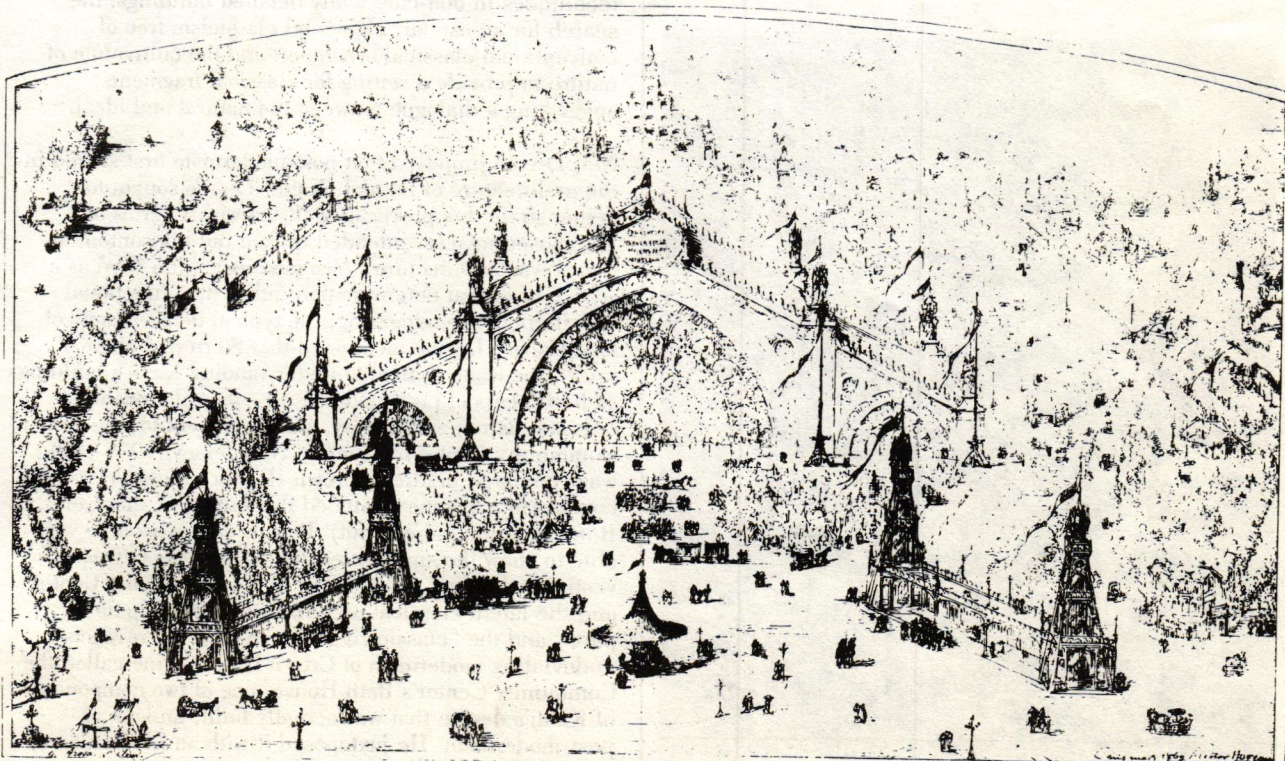
Hector Horeau (1801-1872) was an idealistic French architect, a self-proclaimed "professor of existence." His projects for connecting Paris and London by a 21-mile-long underwater railway, proposed in 1851, and for a sewer system for the Thames, proposed in 1858, were part of his grand view of the role of architecture in "combating the plagues of ignorance and poverty" which would bring about the "degeneration of mankind."

Like many architects of his period, he was swept into the golden age of Victorian Europe, with its taste for colossal monuments and new inventions and materials. Horeau claims to have had his design for the 1851 London

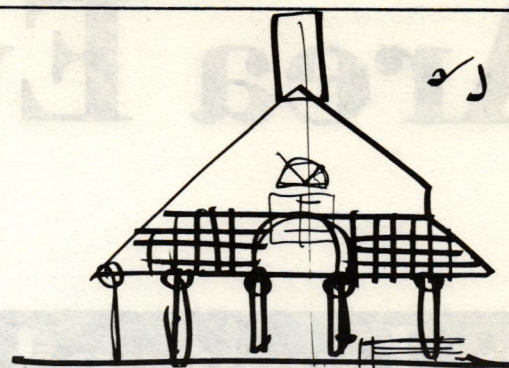
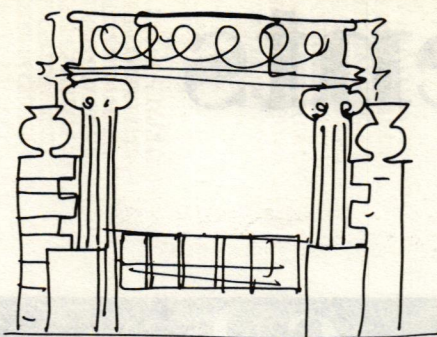
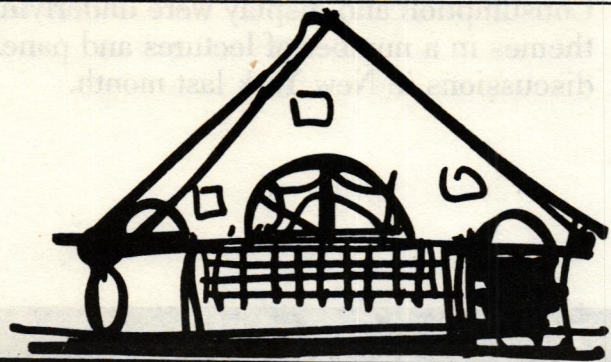
Exposition's renowned Crystal Palace stolen by Sir Joseph Paxton, who won the commission in spite of the fact that Horeau won first prize among 233 competitors.

Horeau's interest in monumental projects seems to have come about as a result of a similar incident from ten years previously, in which he claimed someone stole his designs for a marketplace and chapel at Versailles. He came back from a supposedly calming trip to the Nile to propose a monument to Napoleon, 98 feet high and built out of a single slab of granite, in the manner of the Colossi at Rhodes. Although this project was not accepted, he continued to submit proposals to Baron Haussmann for the redesign of Paris. Occasionally, Horeau would work without a site in mind, but in an effort to crystallize his urbanistic theories. His Universal Exposition Hall (1869) brings out his use of iron and glass for grandiose effects of circulation and display.

During the last year of his life, with Haussmann's work largely complete, and with many of his books burned in a hotel fire in 1870, Horeau executed one final ink drawing of the plan of Paris, consisting of buildings he admired as well as of a collection of most of his project proposals made since 1835 and a few of his actual realizations. His ambitions lie in his drawings, for none of Horeau's work exists today. — Peter Rossbach



Universal Exposition Hall (1869), Hector Horeau (photo: Atelier Dubuse)



Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown at Protetch

Buildings and Drawings by Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown was on view at the Max Protetch Gallery from September 20 to October 16.

Robert Maxwell

Some 114 drawings of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown are on view at the Max Protetch Gallery in New York. They have been hung above and below a thin red line that stretches all around the space of the gallery, the larger ones fixed below the line, where the eye can go in close to inspect the detail. The layout works as a visual arrangement, but there is no systematic relation between raw sketches and finished drawings. There are a few interesting comparisons of the raw and the cooked, but these are almost fortuitous. This is no didactic exposition of the firm's philosophy, but a fairly random sampling of its stock-in-trade, which includes unsigned drawings made in the office as well as the sketches that bear Venturi's own signature or that are unmistakably from his hand.

There is an intriguing imbalance about the selection: Some drawings are already well known and a scatter of familiar projects extends back to 1960. But the great majority of the sketches come from the years 1977, 1978, and 1981. That these richer vintages reflect an inner progress is doubtful; but the quickening pace over the five years since 1977 seems almost to point to Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown jumping on the post-modern wagon. Robert Venturi's own scandalous inventions go back at least to 1966, but 1977 was, coincidentally, the date of Charles Jencks' book *Post-Modern Architecture*.

As always with the production of this office, the projects in the show divide sharply into mannerist and populist categories. The broad split follows the different emphases of the two books, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* by Robert Venturi (MoMA, 1966) and *Learning from Las Vegas* by Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour (MIT, 1972). In the populist schemes, the image is a sign that a child can read (such as the dinosaur on the Charlotte, NC, Science Museum of 1978).

In the more recondite schemes, the image is an emblem of a lost architecture (such as the flattened silhouettes of

Above, left to right: House in Delaware (1978). House in Absecon, N.J. (1977). House on Long Island (1981). Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown

Ionic capitals). Like a latter-day Liberace, Robert Venturi sometimes leans back and hits a musical set in full octave chords; he seems at his most characteristic, though, when investigating at close range the juxtaposition of figures in fine counterpoint.

The passages that reveal this more intensive mode of work are the best corners of the exhibition. Behind the easy graphic gesture we sense a difficult search. The sketches best conveying this *intentness* are the series for the houses in Absecon, NJ (1977), Delaware (1978), and Long Island (1981). All show a preoccupation with mannerist composition à la Porta Pia, with classical motifs reduced to flat cut-outs and applied in vernacular timber construction. All are bold, incisive, commanding—both as manual gesture and as exploration of the reality of simple peaked-roof structures. It is fascinating to glimpse a process by which graphic arrogance is countered by constructional acumen.

In the offices for County Federal at Stratford (project) and at Fairfield (1977) these motifs are developed at a slightly larger scale. At this scale a question begins to form as to the degree of liberty that can be taken with classical propriety before it turns into scenic make-believe. What seems witty allusion in a small private house now begins to suggest a game of market manipulation. The "Serlio" panel at Butler College in Princeton (1981) is an example: A building that on the whole is made to savor its ordinariness is suddenly found wearing a paper mask, as if undergraduates had had a go at brightening things up.

These are strictures on Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown's architecture, but they are bound up with our response to the drawings as drawings. In the case of the house based on Mount Vernon, a remarkable unity is evident—a loose but firm line in the general silhouette and coursework extends effortlessly to take in the classical detail. It is a technique that establishes a unity of *concept*, at least at the level of drawing: Whether the classical details would appear integral in the built work is another question. In the same way, the boldly delineated ground floor columns in the sketch of the Long Island House are graphically

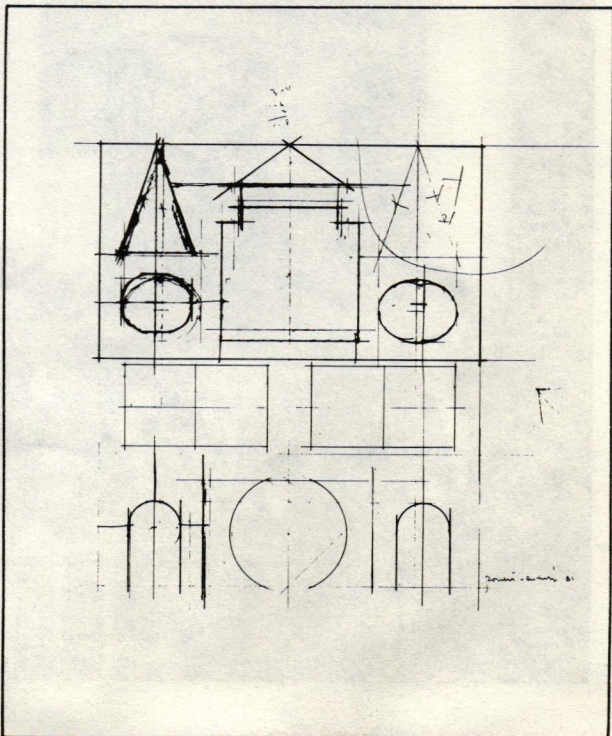
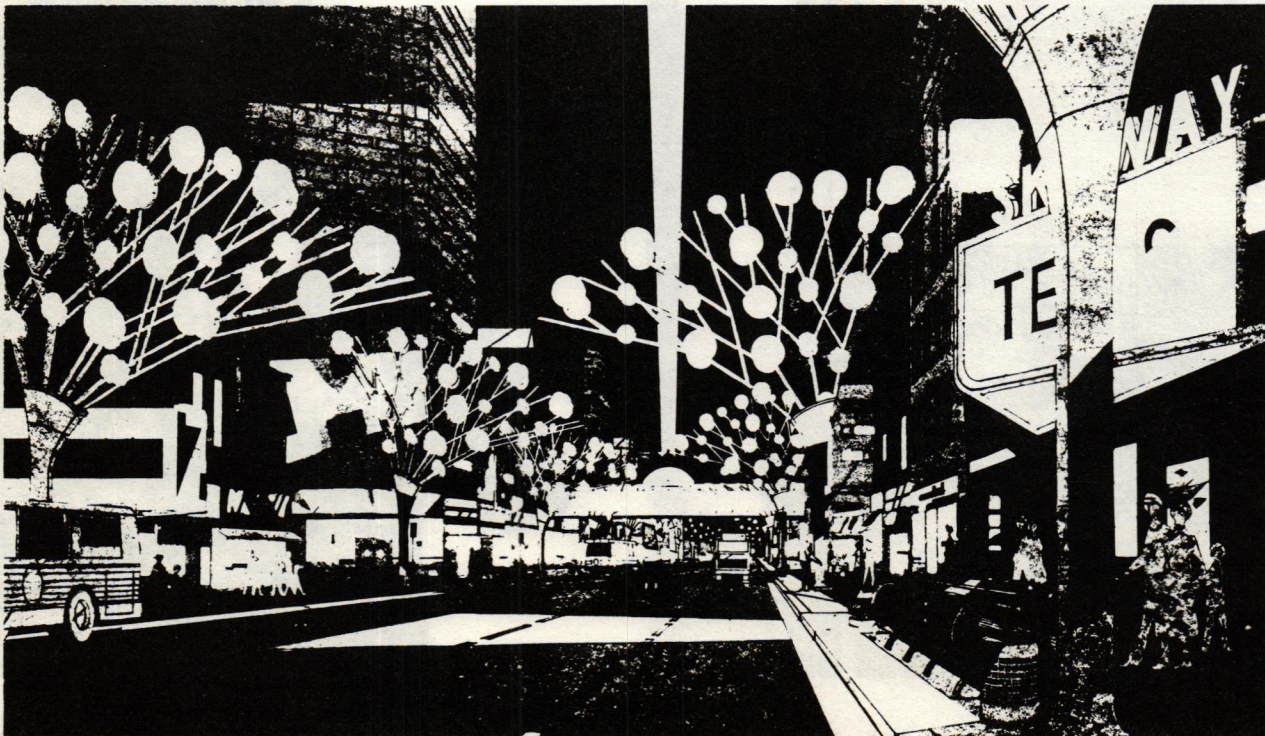
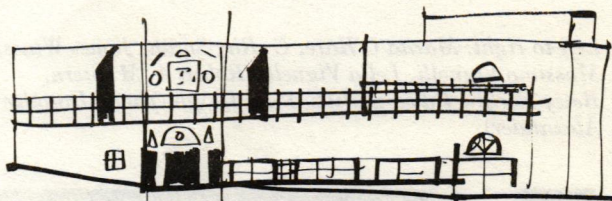
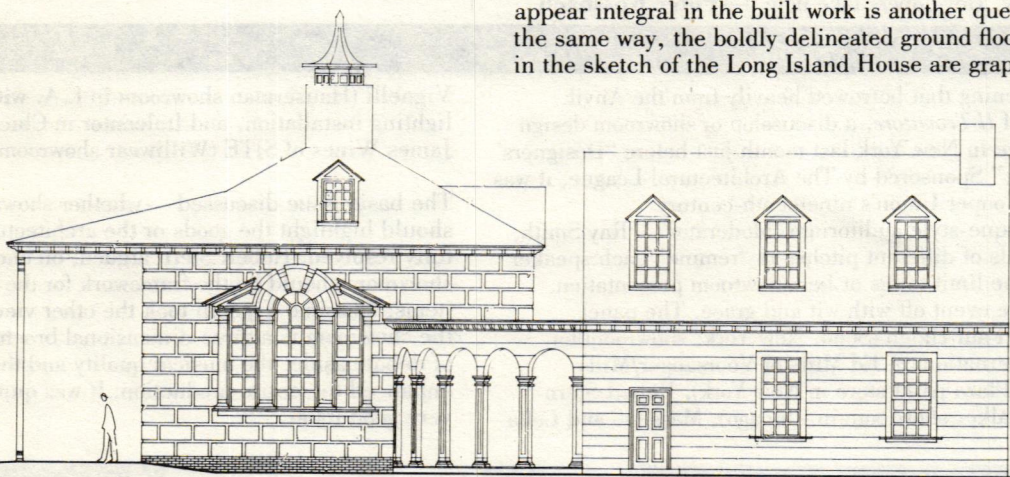
Below, top left: House based on Mount Vernon (1979). Bottom left: view of Hennipen Avenue Entertainment Centrum looking north (1981). Bottom right: Butler College Dining Facility, Princeton (1981). Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown

and conceptually clear. But in the work-up drawing the capitals disappear behind the eaves, and one has to imagine the extent to which the shadow-line of the appliqué silhouettes, so bold in the drawings, would be visible at all over a long weekend. Least convincing of all, as architecture, are the graphic presentations for Hennipen Avenue, dependent as they are on a fictive night-life that never materializes. Deprived of Venturi's own angular personal handwriting, the drawings emerge as boardroom documents.

The full trajectory of *idea*, first transformed into graphics, finally built and embodied, is evident only in a few cases, such as the Institute for Scientific Information (Philadelphia, 1978). What is schematic and artificial in the drawing is (we happen to know) in real life understated and quietly effective. With the Baghdad Building (1981), the reverse appears to be true. The drawing makes links at once to Le Corbusier's schema of the stilted infrastructure at Marseilles and also to the jokey infill to the infrastructure in his Obus scheme for Algiers. Expressionist pilotis are transformed into Arabian Nights arches—a witticism that works as drawing but . . .

Given the premise that the flat freeway image is now all we have, one ought not to feel any pain when flatness is extended to include the classical order. If the Ionic capitals are stylized as drawing, isn't it true that we can now only retrieve the antique by abstracting it? In the Wynings (Houston, TX, 1981), the antique reappears also in the hierarchy of the orders (Tuscan below, Ionic above), making us aware again of Alberti's rules at the very moment of lamenting their loss. I cannot help but feel that Venturi is lamenting their loss.

Almost as a last word, Venturi has shown us his 1960 aerial perspective for the F.D.R. Memorial competition—the earliest work in the show. This freehand drawing demonstrates a wonderful mastery of pictorial and real space. Remembering the revolution in architectural draftsmanship that came in with Le Corbusier's squiggly line, emphasizing judicious massing rather than elegance of profile, we come here in contact with an older tradition that demanded (as Labatut did in his teaching at Princeton) surface skill *combined* with conceptual parti. This dual demand, we may reflect, could well be the source of Venturi's insoluble dichotomy.



Area Events

On Japan and Mass Culture

In a recent symposium entitled "Metropolis: Locus of Contemporary Myths," a revealing comparison of the merits of urban life in New York and Tokyo led to a discussion of the effect of consumerism on contemporary culture. The public debate, held on October 4 at the Japan Society in New York, culminated a series of closed weekend workshops among sociologists, architects, and consultants sponsored by the Institute for Research Advancement in Tokyo and the Japan Society.

Stuart Ewen, professor of media studies at Hunter College, commented that the Japanese seem to view "mass culture" and myth as "positive and identity-building," while Americans view them as destructive and illusory. The Shinjuku district of Tokyo was used frequently as an example of the Japanese preference for entertaining and socializing outside the home. Shinjuku's "pedestrian paradise," referred to in a film that concluded the symposium, was heralded by the Japanese for its discos, sushi bars, and several hundred nightclubs and movie houses, and promoted as a "happily indifferent society" where the Japanese spend their "cushion time"—a loose sociological term that describes time spent neither at home nor at work, but more active than "leisure time."

William H. Whyte, renowned urban studies expert with the Conservation Foundation, praised these active spaces, particularly the "selling streets" of Shinjuku. "Inhabitants of such dense areas as Tokyo and New York instinctively head for the center of things," he said, concluding that urban design should support this impulse, particularly by making the most of the selling street with all of its visual and commercial challenges. Whyte spoke highly of the multifunctional "miscellaneous pyramids" of the Shinjuku district, where the pedestrian experience is multiplied vertically in tiers of shops, restaurants, and entertainment centers.

But this celebration of the "selling street" left many of the American panelists uncomfortable. References to a "happily indifferent society," and the film of the rampant



Fumihiko Maki (photo: Dorothy Alexander) consumerism of Shinjuku reminded some panelists of the worst parts of Times Square and Disneyworld; this exemplified Professor Ewen's observation that many Americans would react to myth and "mass culture" as destructive and illusory. The Japanese, by contrast, focused on the benefits of Shinjuku to the masses, rather than to culture.

Indeed, American urban theorists were equally uncomfortable ten years ago, when the rapid growth of the urban Hispanic population presented planners with the values of plaza culture, in stark contrast to the promenade traditions of Olmsted and Moses. Americans may value privacy and individuality more than Hispanics or Japanese.

One comment about New York City was worth noting for the future, however. Following a question on gentrification, panelist Richard Sennett of the New York Institute for the Humanities commented that current trends would make Manhattan "entirely gentrified by the end of the century," in a manner similar to "the displacement of lower income groups out of Paris in the eighteenth century." Tokyo architect Fumihiko Maki responded that the future of New York lay less in people moving in and out than in the development of the waterfront as both a social center and the island's boundary. Developers take note. —Peter Rossbach

On Showroom Design

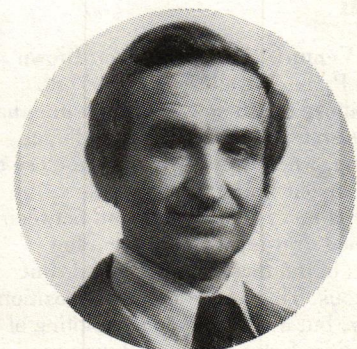
Left to right: Marita O'Hare, C. Ray Smith, James Wines, Massimo Vignelli, Lella Vignelli, Robert A. M. Stern, Betsy Feeley, Edward Mills, Paul Haigh (photo: Dorothy Alexander)

In an evening that borrowed heavily from the Anvil Chorus of *Il Trovatore*, a discussion of showroom design took place in New York last month just before "Designers' Saturday." Sponsored by The Architectural League, it was held in Cooper Union's nineteenth-century Romanesque-style auditorium. Moderator C. Ray Smith, using bells of different pitches to "remind" each speaker of the time limit to his or her showroom presentation, pulled the event off with wit and grace. The panel included Paul Haigh (Soho, New York, showroom for Knoll International), Ed Mills of Voorsanger/Mills (Janovic Plaza paint store in New York), Robert Stern (Shaw-Walker showroom in Chicago), Massimo and Lella



Consumption and display were underlying themes in a number of lectures and panel discussions in New York last month.

Rykwert on Style



Joseph Rykwert (photo: Photocraft, G. Cohn)

In a recent lecture presented at Princeton University, historian Joseph Rykwert speculated that the nervous eclecticism of post-modern architecture parallels interestingly the situation at the turn of this century and that the year 1900 had "a catastrophic effect on architecture." Designers in the 1890s felt that a radical change was in order, one that would produce an architecture qualitatively different from that of any past era. The basis of this new style was Nature. After describing the various manifestations that this short-lived style took in various countries, Rykwert stressed that Art Nouveau was not forcibly replaced by an opposing aesthetic, but rather withered away due to its inherent insubstantiality.

Contemporary designers, Rykwert contended, can learn something from this failure, for they look to history for solutions in much the same way as Art Nouveau architects turned to nature. But neither history nor nature can provide a totally satisfactory aesthetic, Rykwert advised, stressing that artists must deal with the contingent—with actual construction—rather than with contrived aesthetic systems. "Some of us see [resorting to history] as a distraction from the real issues before architecture," he added, for it makes the history of architecture into a succession of styles that pigeonholes the past. —Lois Nesbitt

Vignelli (Hauserman showroom in L.A. with Dan Flavin lighting installation, and Italcen in Chicago), and James Wines of SITE (Williwear showroom, New York).

The basic issue discussed—whether showroom design should highlight the goods or the architecture—was not fully resolved. Robert Stern argued, on one hand, that the showroom should be the framework for the displayed items; Massimo Vignelli took the other view, saying that the showroom is a three-dimensional brochure. Resolution of debate aside, the musical quality and theatrical staging enhanced the entire production: It was quite a show in a very good room.



C. Ray Smith with "anvil" (photo: Dorothy Alexander)

Born in Milan in 1893, Giovanni Muzio trained as an architect at Milan Polytechnic and began to practice architecture in Milan in 1920. According to Fulvio Irace (curator of the exhibition "Precursors of Post-Modernism: Milan 1920s/1930s," see page 18), Muzio's Ca'Brutta of 1919-23 with its ironically distorted classical elements and structurally incongruous relationships (see pp. 18-21 for photos) was adopted as the "true manifesto" of the architectural Novecento. During the twenties and thirties

Muzio's architecture combined an analytic attitude with a classical code. Although his work varied from a heavy-handed rhetoricism to a more moderate rationalism, two well known pavilions—for the Italians at the Exposition of the Press in Cologne, 1928, and for the Italian Exhibition of Journalism and Books at Barcelona in 1929—were to reveal best his continuing experiment in synthesizing rationalism and tradition.

On Museums

Daralice Boles

The sheer quantity of design and construction now underway makes the museum a hot topic for architects and critics alike. As one of the institutions about to expand its facilities, the Whitney Museum of American Art has a sizable stake in the matter, and its interest has been made manifest both in an exhibit of New American Art Museums curated by Helen Searing and in a symposium held in the Whitney's downstairs cafe on September 27.

The program's participants included a curator, an architectural historian, and a critic. The brief introduction by moderator Suzanne Stephens outlined the major issues influencing contemporary museum design, among them the question of contextualism (an issue of special significance for museum additions), the museum as monument, the public purpose of art—be it object of contemplation or consumption—new additions to museum programs, and analogies equating museum with shopping mall or theater.

Harvard Professor Neil Levine then proceeded to consider museum typology, focusing on the two models of the centralized room and linear gallery. Levine's brief historical analysis was followed by a more specific discussion of two museums by Louis Kahn. The speaker Edmund Pillsbury, formerly curator of the Yale Center for British Art and now at the Kimball Art Museum of Fort Worth, described the numerous strengths and infrequent weaknesses of the two museums. Kahn's synthetic ability to suggest discrete rooms within a continuum of infinite space became the prototype against which efforts by other architects were measured. Thus Pillsbury criticized Edward L. Barnes' museum in Dallas for its additive "variety pack" approach that included every possible type with no attempt at synthesis. Likewise architect James Stirling (whose Fogg museum addition at Harvard was not included in the exhibit due to its uncertain status at the time the show was assembled) earned praise from both Levine and Pillsbury for plan organizations that arrange discrete rooms en filade, preserving qualities of both centralized and sequential space.

The evening's entertainment was provided by an unlikely performer—Paul Goldberger, the panel's third participant. The *New York Times* critic, typically so circumspect in prose, was unusually outspoken. When prodded by moderator Stephens to evaluate the exhibit's museums, Goldberger bemoaned the "banal and bland" Mondrian aesthetic of MoMA's tower designed by Cesar Pelli and worried that the addition would obliterate the original, a concern seconded by fellow panelists. Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer's addition to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts was termed "rampantly anti-contextual, whatever the rhetoric." We are, says Goldberger, "grateful that this addition is in the back." His final tour de force was a request that Michael Graves design his addition to the Whitney in such a manner as to make it appear that the Breuer building is the later addition and Graves' the stately original.

Such criticism, while valid, remains tied to particular projects and fails to address more substantive issues of type and style, concerns which are equally absent from the specific projects on display. Just as the projects paper over questions of formal expression or symbolic content with uniformly mediocre modernism, so too the panel, while acknowledging advances made in museum design since the Hirshhorn, still failed to carry its analysis that final step to comprehensive criticism.

Ann van Zanten: 1952-1982

Architectural historian Ann van Zanten was among those killed in the terrorist attack on Goldenberg's restaurant in Paris during August. A teacher at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, Van Zanten, who received her Doctorate from Harvard in 1980, served on the architecture committee of the Chicago Architecture Foundation, and was president of the Chicago Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. She had recently been named curator of the architecture collection at the Chicago Historical Society. Her husband, David van Zanten, also an architectural historian, was injured at the time of the attack.

In Memoriam Giovanni Muzio: 1893-1982

Richard Etlin

"Perhaps, you've already heard," the letter began, "Muzio died in May." Giovanni Muzio, premier architect of the Milanese Novecento, the first modern movement in Italian architecture after World War I, is dead. Search for Muzio's name in the compendiums of twentieth-century architecture and you will find a silence that only the present time is beginning to rectify. And yet, ironically, the Ca' Brutta (1919-23) or "ugly house," Muzio's seminal work, was admired and respected by Giuseppe Terragni, a leader of the Rationalist movement that rejected the architectural style this building spawned.

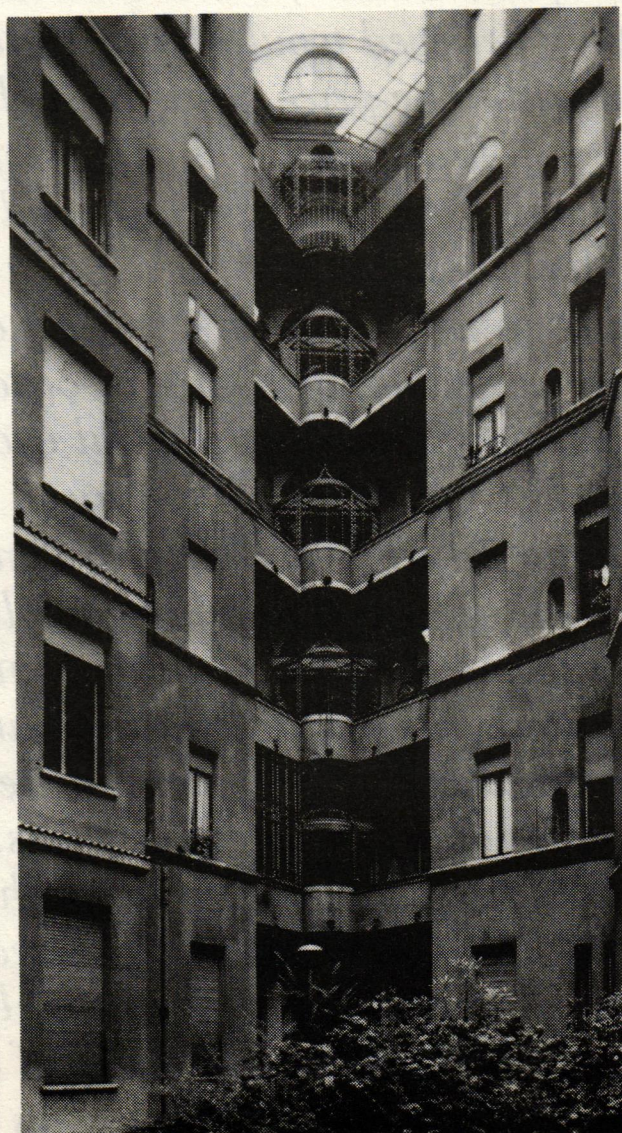
The Ca' Brutta. Just one year ago in the spring, I listened as Muzio explained how he had returned to Italy after the war to take a job in a Milanese firm that was designing a large speculative apartment block. All of the windows had been purchased before Muzio was assigned to the project. How could he avoid the monotony of a modern building where all the floors were the same height and where the size of the openings already had been predetermined? In a sense, the decorative application of classical architectural elements was an expedient to give variety and rhythm to the facade. Was there irony or humor in their use? No, the architect was attempting to imbue his work with a timelessness that these decorative features seemed to offer.

Muzio was proud of the way his architecture had aged or rather, had escaped from aging. In addition to expostulating on the durability of the stone he used in various projects, he shared his enthusiasm for the Parisian manner of stuccoing that he had employed in the middle zone of the Ca' Brutta. Muzio also claimed to have introduced the German klinker into Italy, a dense "finished" brick he used to cover the reinforced concrete skeleton of both the residential buildings on the Piazza della Repubblica and the earlier Palazzo dell'Arte. This latter building, a masterpiece in spatial planning, was a work that satisfied few when it was constructed in 1932-33 to house the Triennale. To the conservatives, its abstract rhythms lacked the imperial and classical

references they relished. To the rationalists, the failure to expose and thereby celebrate its true structure made it ineligible to represent the spirit of the Machine Age. Like so much of Muzio's work in this period, the Palazzo dell'Arte achieved a balanced expression of modernity and tradition that failed the test of the more radical ideologies of the moment.

Muzio's apartment in the Ca' Brutta held many delightful surprises. The young architect had taken for himself the maid's quarters under the roof, and gradually expanded his space as he married and had children. Muzio laughingly pointed to his "ante-rationalist" *fenêtre en longeur* in the living room, a generous horizontal window he had designed for what was originally his studio at a time when Terragni et al. were just beginning architecture school. Nearby in the hall was a lovely marbled sculptural base which, I learned, was the work of Pietro Lingeri. This discovery only increased my admiration for the two great Italian Rationalists, Lingeri and Terragni, who had begun their careers as fine Novecento artists. Muzio invited me to return to visit and look through his library. Several days later, I found myself poring over his extraordinary collection of rare books. I had come expecting to find a complete library of 1930s architecture. Instead, I was treated, for example, to folio editions of Vitruvius and Palladio. As we looked at Mannerist drawings of aediculae that seemed to me to have provided the basis of the decoration for the Ca' Brutta, Muzio gestured emphatically while asserting that this was "metaphysical" and "absolute." I recalled a similar encounter between Muzio and Vincenzo Cardarelli, editor of *La Ronda*, in this same apartment around 1924. Writing in 1936, Cardarelli reminisced about his meeting the architect who had used engravings of Palladio to lecture him about absolute values in architecture.

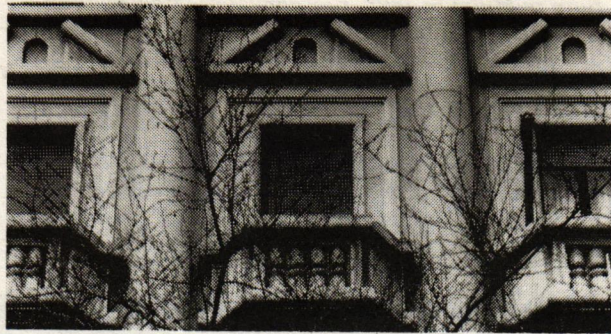
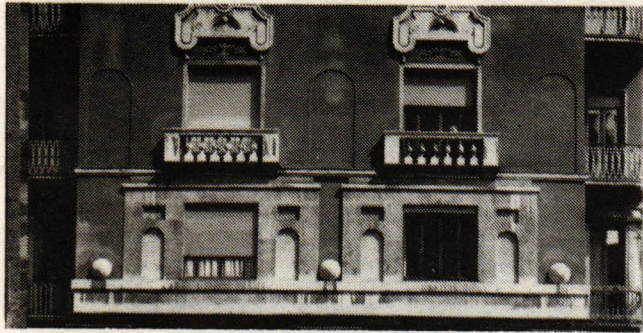
I feel privileged to have known Giovanni Muzio, in a manner of speaking, at the beginning and the end of his career. The passion and commitment to transcendent values as well as enduring structures I found in the man of eighty-eight seemed to have the same intensity and conviction that had so impressed others sixty years ago.



Ca' Brutta ("Ugly House"), Milan (1919-23); Giovanni Muzio. Interior court (photo: Gabriele Basilico)



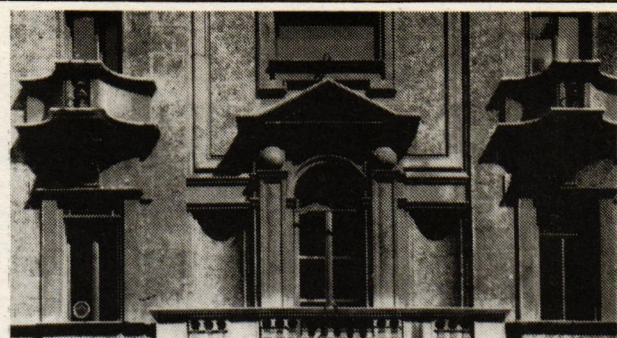
Giovanni Muzio (photo: Richard Etlin)



MILAN

In their relentless pursuit of Utopian models, the architects of the Modern Movement engaged in a Long Journey they believed would lead, in the course of generations, to social justice and a humane world. The price paid for such a single-minded quest was the neglect of the Short Journey—the twenty-four hours of the day, the many daily routines and rituals of which Long Journeys are composed. In order to see the future clearly and run toward it lightly, these pursuers of Utopia unburdened themselves of architectural memories. Seeking to achieve purity as they approached their ever-receding goal, they also deprived themselves of the pleasures of ornament and texture. Hence, the Day, as the measurement of an individual's existential cycle, was sacrificed to the Generation as the earliest due date for social reckoning.

The tragic realization that for the sake of long-term dreams whole generations have rejected the heritage of their architectural forefathers has lately dawned on us—and with different degrees of response. As the anti-historical mist dissolves, we are beginning to perceive that there were architectural enclaves in time and space that actively fought to preserve their roots. Whether it was due to a deep intellectual understanding of architecture as an historical continuum, or whether it was, as this exhibition may suggest, the result of an overwhelming longing for metaphysical images dwelling in para-historical domains, is not the smallest question raised by this remarkable body of work. To these architects working in Milan in the 1930s, Utopia seems to have existed not in the Future, but in a period before the emergence of our consciousness of the Past; an Olympian realm somewhere in the Surrealistic recesses of the mind, populated by ethereal beings strolling along porticos casting eternal shadows.



An exhibition opening at The Architectural League of New York this month resurrects the work of a forgotten group of Italian architects. Precursors of Post-Modernism: Milan 1920s/1930s was curated by Fulvio Irace; photographs are by Gabriele Basilico. The show, made

possible by a grant from Alessi, will be on view from November 4 to December 18. It is accompanied by a catalogue published by The Architectural League (\$6.00).

Left to right: Ca' Brutta, Milan (1919-23); Giovanni Muzio (photo: Fulvio Irace). Detail of building in the Piazzale Cervino, Milan, architect unidentified. Apartment building in Milan (1930); Giovanni Muzio. Detail of a building, Milan, architect unidentified. Office building, Milan (1926); Piero Portaluppi (photos: Gabriele Basilico)

anno

1920
1940

There is in the work of these architects a will to conceive the city as a series of metaphysical De Chirico-like stage sets. But such a quest is not unique to their work. The pursuit of surrealistic imagery seems to be a constant aspiration of the architectural spirit. It reappears throughout history in different garments and diverse forms. Some of the distinctive features of this imagery have been evoked by the use of fragments and ruins; the creation of secluded spaces and barren plazas suggestive of absent presences; and the treating of solid matter as if it were endowed with an empty core, or as if it were made up of innumerable layers whose different meanings can be revealed only by a careful peeling away. Thus, walls come about by stratifying cut-out planes, and facades are revealed as meta-geological strata of overlapping masks.

To us the phenomenon of these architects is interesting on many levels. Not only did they anticipate current concerns with history and bricolage, but also their methods foreshadowed some of our contemporaries' experiments. That their results still intrigue us today may be credited to the fact that their wager was placed on a conception of architecture as a magic theater, rather than a treatise of wittily juxtaposed architectural references.

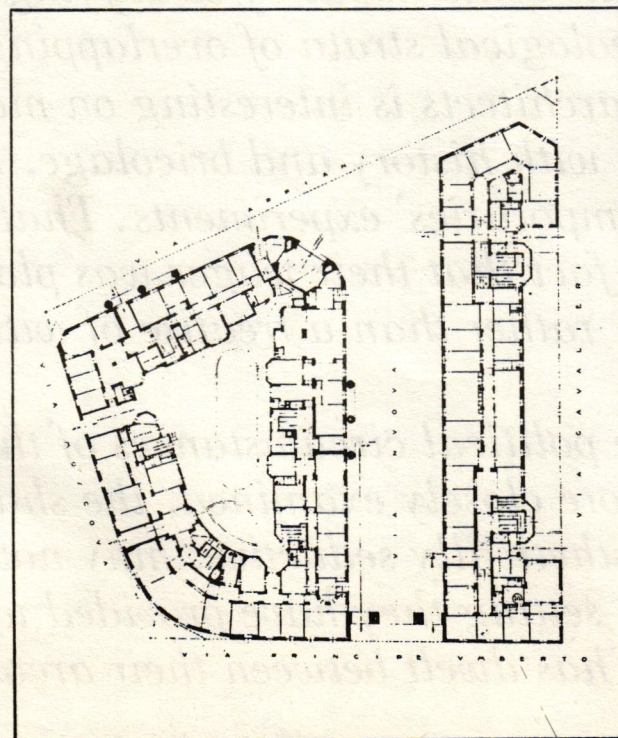
Perhaps at high noon, when the political circumstances of the 1930s that provided a context to their meanings are more closely examined, the shadows painted on these Milanese stage sets, however aesthetically seductive, may not allay our sense of moral discomfort. But what a magical setting they have provided while the mental arc spanning from twilight to dawn has dwelt between their arcaded promenades.

Emilio Ambasz

“Young Muzio would meet with a group of like-minded architects in a studio on Via San’Orsola. The work of this coterie is well represented at the Architectural League.”



This page. Ca'Brutta, Milan (1919-23); Giovanni Muzio. Top: facade. Above left: court. Above right: interior private street (photos: Gabriele Basilico). Right: typical floor plan. Opposite page. Left: Ca'Brutta. Top right: house in Milan (1924); M. Fiocchi. Bottom right: apartment house in Milan (1928-29); Gio Ponti and Emilio Lancia (photos: Gabriele Basilico)

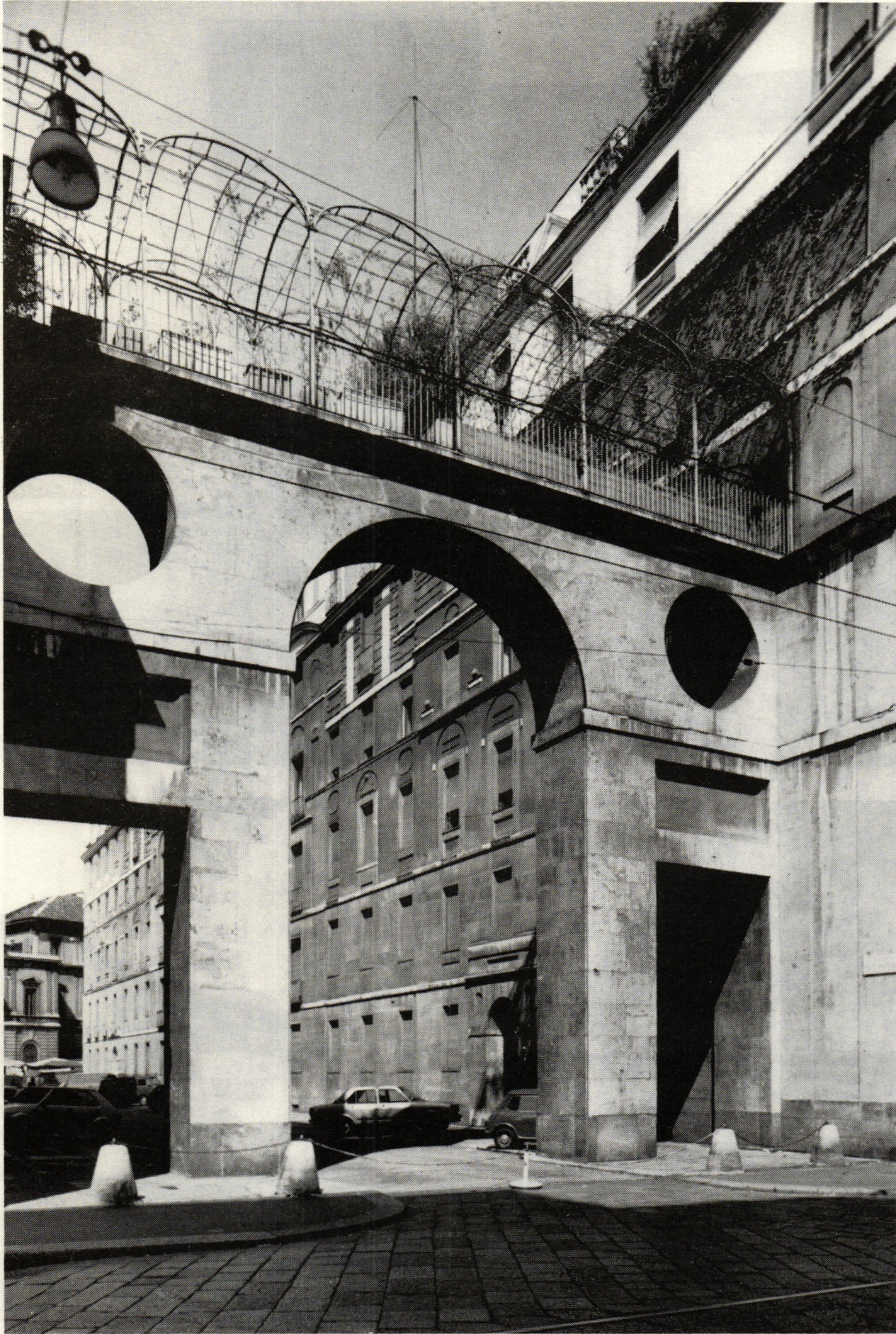


Richard Etlin

The show about to open at the Architectural League of New York entitled “Precursors of Post-Modernism: Milan 1920s/1930s” brings to an American audience, perhaps for the first time, an entire modern movement that has been largely ignored for half a century. The show is particularly timely since the buildings represented are remarkably similar to what passes for “post” modernism today. In effect, if post-modernism represents an attempt to recover traditional and timeless values through the use of indigenous architectural motifs along with the classical vocabulary of architecture, then “post” modernism began in 1919 and, at least for the leading practitioners, ended in 1930.

Much space has been deservedly given to the masterpiece of the Novecento, **Giovanni Muzio's Ca' Brutta** (1919-23) (photos this page and opposite page left), which gave birth to the new style. Returning to Italy after the War, Muzio found work in the firm of Barelli & Colonnese. There he was assigned the task of designing a speculative apartment building on a large, irregular terrain. Instead of attempting to design a building in the guise of a large *palazzo* as would have been expected, Muzio wrapped two buildings around the perimeter of the site and divided them by a new private street. The larger

“Much space has been deservedly given to Muzio’s Ca’Brutta, which gave birth to the new style of the Novecento.”



structure to the left of the arch is organized as well around an interior courtyard. With this unusual design, Muzio was able to give street frontage to 95 per cent of the main rooms. Other features, according to Muzio, included the first use of both central heating and underground parking in a Milanese apartment building.

The exterior of the Ca' Brutta gives little indication that this is a reinforced concrete frame structure. Actually the oversized columns that appear to support the two projecting blocks are simply there to disguise a cantilever which, by its very nature, Muzio considered unsightly. Muzio felt no need to glorify structure through its bold expression. Rather, the skeletal frame is largely hidden under a facade organized into three horizontal zones: travertine for the base, blue-gray stucco in the Parisian manner in the middle, and white stucco of the Palladian type at the top. Between the windows, all purchased before Muzio began the design, the architect modulated his facade with thinly layered niches, sunken and raised panels, lattices, arches, and pediments. Through a reversal of colors, the decoration in each stuccoed band appears to have migrated there from the other. Finally, the two buildings are connected by a giant Palladian arch.

The combination of the seemingly amorphous shape and the unorthodox decoration caused the structure to be

dubbed the “Ca’ Brutta” or “ugly house.” Of course, a close examination reveals that Muzio organized his facade around a series of local centers often developed like the great Mannerist urban compositions. The convex portion of Ca’ Brutta, for example, makes reference to Baldassarre Peruzzi’s Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne (1532-36) just as the interior street closed by the arch owes much to Vasari’s Uffizi.

Young Muzio would meet with a group of like-minded architects in a studio on Via San’Orsola—Giuseppe De Finetti, Mino Fiocchi, Emilio Lancia, and Gio Ponti. The work of this entire coterie is well represented at the exhibition. The most closely neoclassical building is **Mino Fiocchi’s own house on Via Cernaia** (1924-1925) (top right). Ponti and Lancia’s early work appears in the form of the Palazzina (1924-1925) on Via Randaccio where they lined the roof with tiny obelisks and modulated the spaces between the windows with raised panels and sunken niches. While Muzio praised **Gio Ponti and Emilio Lancia’s Casa d’Abitazione** (1928-1930) on Via Domenichino (right, bottom) for the contrasts in colors and materials, it seems to be a minor building when compared with the magnificent Palazzo Borletti (1927). About De Finetti, the faithful student of Adolf Loos, Muzio would write that his Casa della Meridiana (1925) exhibited “a schematic and intransigent

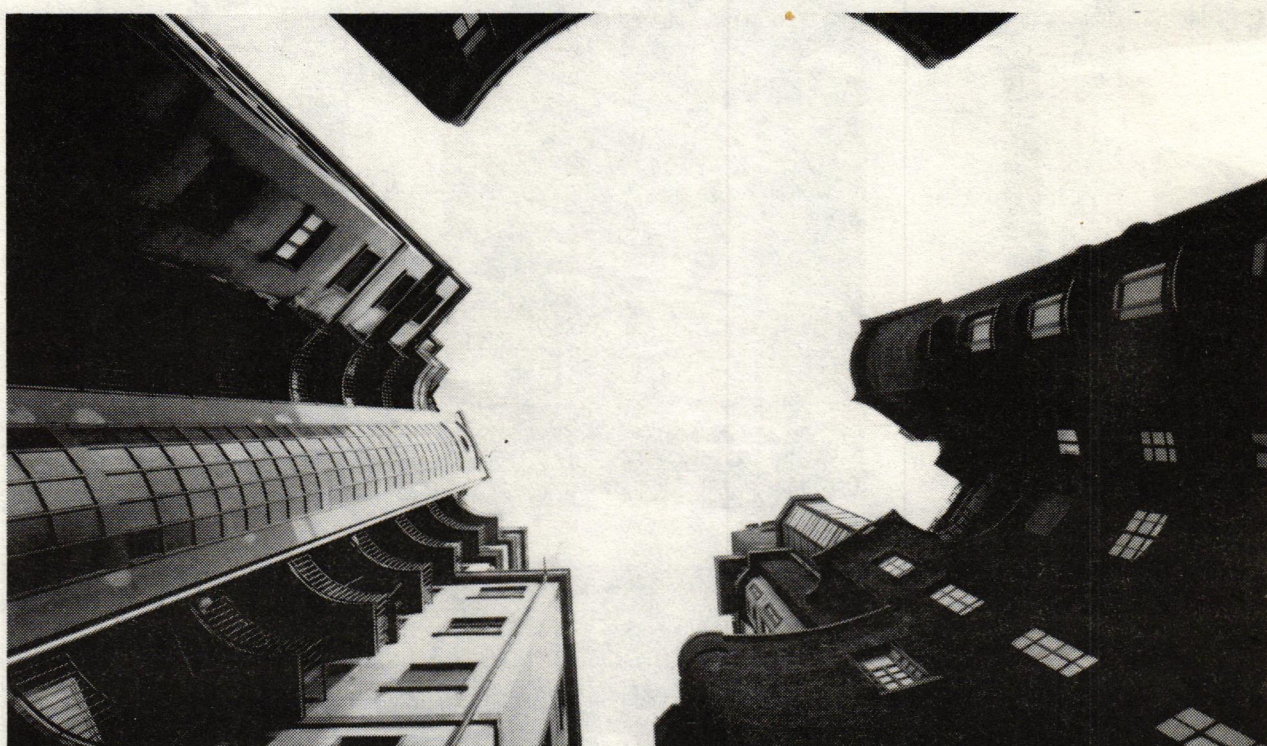


nudity.” Like Ponti and Lancia at the Palazzo Borletti, De Finetti solved the problem of monotony in the modern apartment block by the varied and hierarchical pattern of windows and by the stepped massing in this agglomeration of “superimposed villas all with open terraces facing the garden,” according to Muzio. De Finetti’s debt to Loos’ Scheu House in Vienna (1912) was particularly appropriate here, for the Casa della Meridiana steps back in response to a majestic cedar of Lebanon at its southeastern corner.

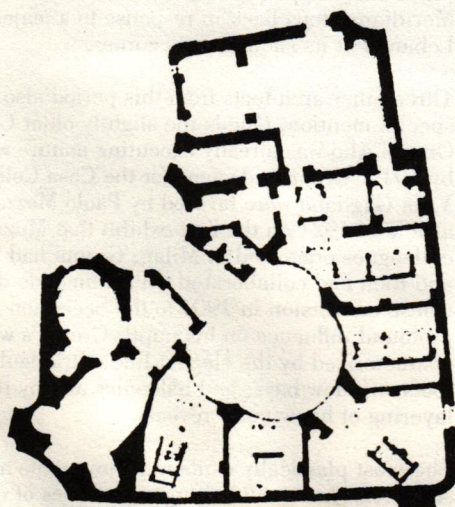
Three other architects from this period also deserve special mention. One is the slightly older Giovanni Greppi who was already executing mature works in Milan by 1919. Greppi’s designs for the Casa Collini and the Villa Gagliano were favored by Paolo Mezzanotte in an article of 1921 on the first exhibit that Muzio and his colleagues organized in Milan. Greppi had studied under and then had collaborated with Raimondo d’Aronco, whose conversion in 1901 to the Secession was to have a profound influence on his pupil. Greppi’s work was characterized by the elegant line of triangular projecting roofs, window bays, and balconies and by the thin layering of his window reveals.

The most plastically exuberant Novecento architect was **Aldo Andreani**, who designed a series of residential

“The most plastically exuberant Novecento architect is Aldo Andreani; the most splendid of his buildings is certainly Palazzo Fidia, where Novecento meets the Amsterdam School.”



This page. Palazzo Fidia, Milan (1924-30); Aldo Andreani. Top: detail of the upper levels. Above left: corner detail. Above right: the interior court (photos: Gabriele Basilico). Below: typical plan



buildings in the Sola-Bucca garden between 1924 and 1930. The most splendid is certainly the **Palazzo Fidia** (this page), where Andreani combines the Novecento with the Amsterdam School. The numerous photos at the exhibition show how Andreani applied Novecento decorative motifs to a brick idiom in which the sculptural massing has the distinct flavor of its Dutch counterpart. Yet even when Andreani left both brick and Holland behind in his stone and stucco buildings on the rest of the site, he revealed himself to be an artist of great plastic power in whatever mode he was working.

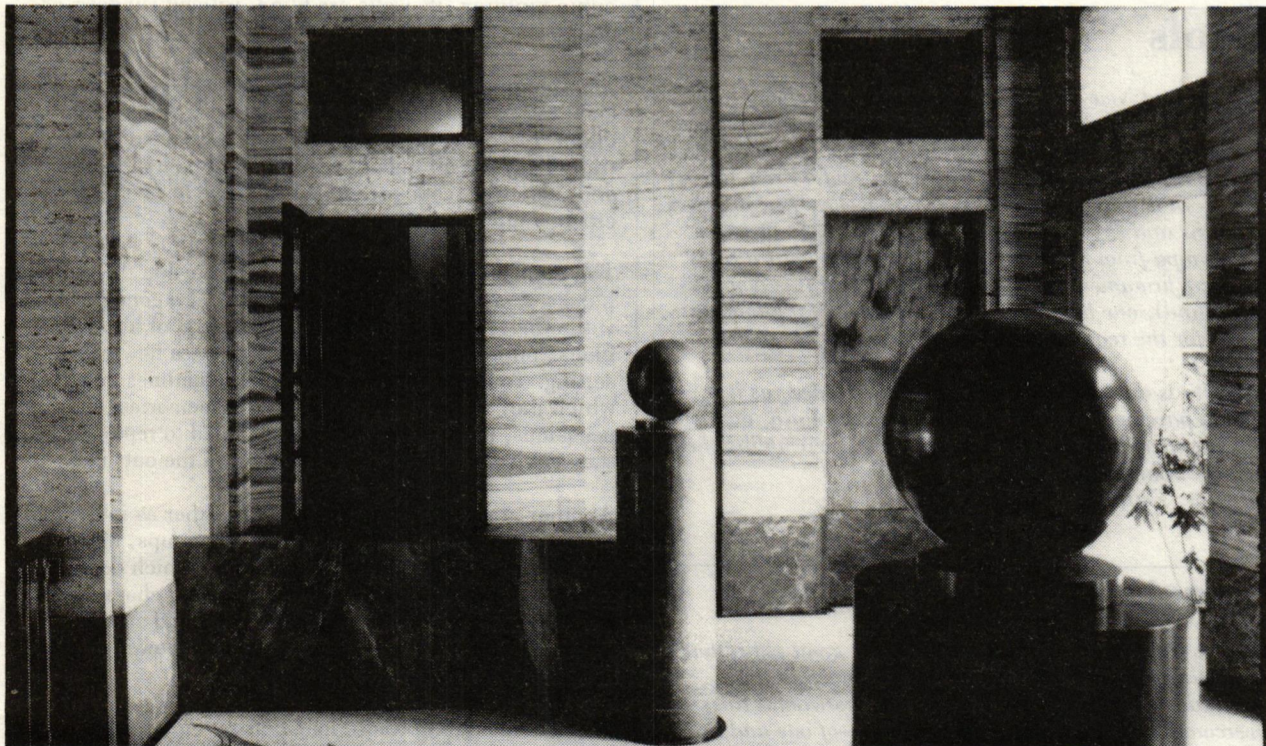
Finally, there is the special case of **Piero Portaluppi**, who developed a decorative technique expressive of “electricity” and applied it to the hydroelectric power stations he designed in 1924-25 for the Società Edison. He then employed these motifs in Milan to decorate the grand mixed-use building with shops, offices, and apartments on the Corso Venezia (1926-30). One of the finest urban compositions of the Novecento, this massive structure bridges over a nearly perpendicular side street with a giant barrel vault framing the view of a large, pedimented Novecento building to the far end. The expressive articulation of quoining on one surface and the interlocking pattern of windows with rounded arches or niches found here and elsewhere, such as the **office building on Via Case Rotte** (1927), were typical of his style.

Portaluppi constitutes a special case not only because of the eccentricity of his “electric” decorative patterning, but also because he was one of three panelists convened by the municipality of Como to decide the fate of the second modern Italian building that caused a major public scandal. Like the *Ca' Brutta* before it, Giuseppe Terragni's *Novocomum* (1928-29) prompted an outcry for its demolition as an aesthetic affront to the city. The jury decided in favor of Terragni's rationalist prism, and from that point onward Novecento architecture was never the same.

By 1929 the Novecento architects accepted the criticism the Rationalists made in late 1926 that their decorative patterning had fallen into a sterile formula. While most of the Novecento architects did not convert to Rationalism, they responded by developing one of the most fascinating styles for urban facades in the history of modern architecture. Still maintaining their interest in decoration, they abandoned the superficial application of classical motifs in favor of an abstract geometric patterning integral to the structure of the facade. This second phase, beginning in 1929 and lasting until World War II, might be called the geometric Novecento.

The shift from the picturesque to the geometric Novecento varied from one architect to another. With the **Palazzo d'Abitazione on Piazza Duse** (1933-34) (this page, top

“The League’s exhibition presents a wide spectrum of what might be termed the ‘picturesque’ phase of the Novecento. Later they developed what might be called ‘geometric’ Novecento.”

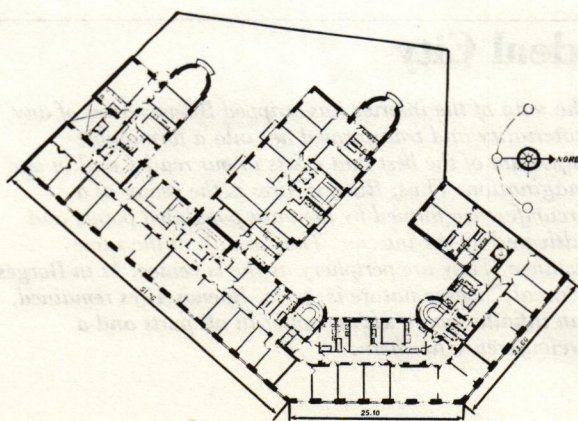


and bottom left), the metaphysical painter and architect **Gigiotti Zanini** was moving in this direction. On the other hand, the combined **shops, offices, and residences** at the intersection of **Corso Matteotti and Via Monte Napoleone** (1934) by **Emilio Lancia** (this page, bottom right) represent one of the finest realizations of this later style.

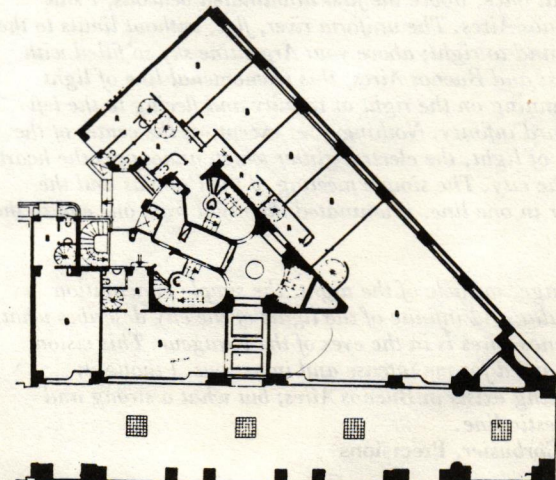
Perhaps the most ironic example is Portaluppi’s corner building on Via Aldrovandi (1929). Here Portaluppi adapted the stepped *parti* of his earlier Casa Crespi (1927) to his new interest in Terragni by adding “racing stripes” to the base in the form of parallel stringcourses and by dramatically rotating a projecting bay out from the corner in a direct parallel to the famous glass corner of the Novocomum. In the end, though, this is a transitional piece. Like Muzio, Ponti, and Lancia, Portaluppi was soon very successful in designing in the geometric Novecento style.

The implications of the current discovery of these precursors to “post” modernism are considerable. The idea of modernism was obviously more pluralistic in the 1920s and ’30s than many historians have been willing to admit. “Post” modernists will lose their prefix. What they sacrifice in originality of image, though, they gain in legitimacy by being able to claim predecessors. Since the first “post” modernists soon abandoned the picturesque

phase with its pastiche of classical motifs, then perhaps the shift into the geometric Novecento constitutes the true challenge to the “post” modernists of our own era.



Top left: house in Milan (1933-34); Gigiotti Zanini. Top right: office building, Milan (1927); Piero Portaluppi. Center left: apartment building in Milan (1933-34); Gigiotti Zanini. Center right: office/apartment building in Milan (1933-36); Emilio Lancia (photos: Gabriele Basilico). Left: apartment building in Milan (1933-34); Gigiotti Zanini, typical plan. Below: office/apartment building in Milan (1933-36); Emilio Lancia, typical plan



Emilio Ambasz' Fables

La Citta del Design: Italy has remained a

Anthology

for a Spatial Buenos Aires

The Mythological Foundation of Buenos Aires

*It seems to me a tale that Buenos Aires ever started:
I judge her as eternal as the water and the sky.*
Borges, Cuaderno San Martin

Limits

*Buenos Aires has as limits the Rio de la Plata to the East,
the Brook to the South, the Pampa to the West, and the
Viceroyalty to the North. Two sides of water, one of past,
one of future.*

*. . . Sides? She has only four, for there are only four
cardinal points. Four faces and two doors. Through the
door of earth the country enters, through that of water, she
goes out.*
Martinez Estrada, Las Cuatro Caras

Sky

*The Argentine sky? Yes, the sole great consolation. For I
have seen this sky from the limitless Pampa, punctuated
here and there by a few weeping willows, unlimited,
shimmering in the day as in the night with a blue
transparent light or swarming with stars. This celestial
countryside is on the four horizons.*
Le Corbusier, Précisions

Pampa

*Pampa, Indian voice for space, land where man stands
alone as an abstract being who would have to recommence
the history of the species—or to conclude it.*
Martinez Estrada, Los Señores de la Nada

*Yearning plain, dematerialized;
Metaphysical peace. Divine geometry
Of abstract horizons and stripped land.*

*Landscape of the space, dreams of the firmament
Glory of solitude in savage ambits
Mane, wings, and clouds for the winds' joy.*
Larreta, La Pampa

The Memorable Horizontal

*All at once, above the first illuminated beacons, I saw
Buenos Aires. The uniform river, flat, without limits to the
left and to right; above your Argentine sky so filled with
stars; and Buenos Aires, this phenomenal line of light
beginning on the right at infinity and fleeing to the left
toward infinity. Nothing else, except, at the center of the
line of light, the electric glitter which announces the heart
of the city. The simple meeting of the Pampas and the
river in one line, illuminated the night from one end to the
other.*

*Mirage, miracle of the night, the simple punctuation
regular and infinite of the lights of the city describes what
Buenos Aires is in the eyes of the voyageur. This vision
remained for me intense and imperious. I thought:
nothing exists in Buenos Aires; but what a strong and
majestic line.*
Le Corbusier, Précisions

federation of city-states. There are museum-cities and factory-cities. There is a city whose streets are made of water, and another where

all streets are hollowed walls. There is one city where all its inhabitants work on the manufacture of equipment for amusement parks; a second, where everybody makes shoes; and a third, where all its dwellers build Baroque furniture. There are many cities where they still make a living by baking bread and bottling wine, and one where they continue to package faith and transact with guilt.

Naturally, there is also one city inhabited solely by architects and designers. This city is laid out on a gridiron pattern, all city blocks

are square, and each city-block is totally occupied by a cubic building. Its walls are blind, without windows or doors.

The inhabitants of this city pride themselves on being each radically different from the other. Visitors to the city claim, however, that all inhabitants have one common trait: They are all unhappy with the city they inherited; and moreover, concur that it is possible to divide the citizens into several distinct groups.

The members of one of the groups live inside the building blocks. Conscious of the impossibility of communicating with others, each of them, in the isolation of his own block, builds and demolishes every day, a new physical setting. To these constructions they sometimes give forms which they recover from their private memories; on other occasions, these constructs are intended to represent what they envision communal life may be on the outside.

Another group dwells in the streets. Either as individuals or as members of often conflicting sub-groups, they have one common goal: to destroy the blocks which define the streets. For that purpose they march along chanting invocations, or write on the walls words and symbols which they believe are endowed with the power to bring about their will.

There is one group whose members sit on top of the buildings. There they await the emergence of the first leaf of grass from the roof that will announce the arrival of the Millennium.

As of late, rumors have been circulating that some members of the group dwelling in the streets have climbed up to the buildings' rooftops, hoping that from this vantage point they would be able to see whether the legendary people of the countryside have begun their much-predicted march against the city, or whether they have rather opted for building a new city outside the boundaries of the old one.

Roofs

London and New York are metropolises symbolic of two islands. Buenos Aires has been engendered and conceived by the plain. Horizontal surface: this is the key word. New York is all facades. Buenos Aires is all roofs. From the sky New York is a honeycomb of masonry icicles. Buenos Aires is plains and sky. In the same manner as one has to see the Pampa from below because it continues until it fuses with the firmament (and it can be said that it is more sky than land), one has to see the city from 1,500 kilometers high (for the real facade of Buenos Aires is her roofs).

The city is an immense roof, carefully gridded, as if it were a pavement. A floor was laid over the earth, on top of this another, and thus the land gets built resembling the layers of pampean earth.
Martinez Estrada, Desde el Cielo

Streets

Buenos Aires is the faithful image of the great plain that, encircling her, has its straightness continued in the rectitude of the streets and houses. The horizontal lines overcome the vertical. The perspectives—of one and two story dwellings lined up and facing one another for miles and miles of asphalt and stone—are too easy to be believed. Each crossroad intersected by four infinities.
Borges, Las Calles

Streets of Buenos Aires, designed for the long vista, all the way to the horizon. Through those straight infinite streets, along those gutters, the country empties into the cities, the cities empty into Buenos Aires, and all of them empty into the river.
Martinez Estrada, Pampa y Techos

Ideal City

The man of the interior has stripped Buenos Aires of any materiality and transformed her into a formidable emporium of the best that exists in our reality and in our imagination. Thus, Buenos Aires is the center of a circumference formed by the most populated points and cultivated by the interior. They are all at the same distance. They are periphery as she is center. As in Borges' "Pascal," where nature is space, Buenos Aires remained, "an infinite sphere with a center in all parts and a circumference nowhere."

She is a kind of "civic divinity," the federal district that 21 provinces have envisioned as the other city; the other life; the certainty of greatness; "the ideal city."
Martinez Estrada, Civitas

Saul Bellow's Fiction

The Literature of Cities

Ross Miller

With his latest novel, *The Dean's December*, Saul Bellow reasserts his interest in the effect of cities on the mind. In Bellow's description of Bucharest, he makes architecture prominent in a manner formerly associated with writers like Gogol and Kafka, in whose work the built environment was as much a character as the tortured protagonist. Bellow—like his predecessors—clearly relates the narrowing of personal and political possibilities to the architectural lifelessness of the urban setting.

He suggests disquieting relationships between man and the products of the mind. In this sense, the modern city—be it manifested in the architecture of Bucharest, Chicago, or New York—is the modern mind projected and objectified. The city is man. If contemporary Bucharest, under a rigid control, shrinks the human spirit, Chicago stretches the framework of social respectability out of shape. Cities of both types must be considered almost inevitable extremes of contemporary life. Irrespective of their particular political structures, both are ultimately destructive environments. One contracts, folds in upon itself, and implodes; the other expands until it pulls apart and explodes. Architecture, like a face revealing a deeply felt psychic weariness, is the public expression of things too disquieting to discuss.

But through their architecture cities do talk and sometimes even reveal secrets. Albert Corde, Bellow's principal character, speaks of Bucharest's "air sadness." Corde, dean of a Chicago college, is in a city seven thousand miles from home to attend his dying mother-in-law. He and his wife Minna are pressed into a typically bleak Eastern European room as they await official clearance to visit the old woman. The architecture seems to be a conspirator—yet another emanation of the stolid bureaucratic mind. "December brown set in at about three in the afternoon. By four it had climbed down the stucco of the old walls, the gray of Communist residential blocks: brown darkness took over the pavements, and then came back again from the pavements more thickly and isolated the street lamps."

The physical and spiritual darkness of Eastern European architecture is inspired, in Bellow's view, by its society's all-too-human pettiness. Studying the architecture, one can understand the culture in a palpable way. Bellow interposes scenes of Chicago with those of Bucharest, suggesting a comparison on two unlikely cities. The "air sadness" of the Rumanian city is juxtaposed with tortured descriptions of Chicago's decaying neighborhoods. Like a cosmic event—Dean Corde's wife is a celebrated astronomer—these wildly different places, separated by a huge distance, appear together at the same moment in Corde's mind. For Corde, the two cities begin to mirror each other until the physical results of Rumanian oppression are indistinguishable from those of American freedom. The defiled and gritty Baroque palace and the dilapidated triple-decker apartment are merely two common varieties of modern architectural ruins. Both have come to be associated with a progressive limiting of human freedom. In Bucharest, one cannot comfort a dying mother; in Chicago, a student seeking relief from the grim routine of study is killed by a man he thought to be a friend.

Saul Bellow's vision over the past twenty-five years has unquestionably grown darker. In *Henderson the Rain King* (1958) and earlier stories the problem was more "nature going to extremes" than the built environment doing so. In *The Dean's December*, Bellow sees with the astronomer's cold eye the world man has made. From this vantage point it is now the City, as well as the Heavens and Nature, that has somehow moved beyond man's control. As an initial response, Bellow argues, it is better to observe coolly than to pretend you are in control. Architects must understand that they do not define the city's condition; rather, they work boldly around it.

The modern city acts as a giant mirror, reflecting man's extremes; one need only have the courage to look. For example, in Bucharest the architecture is heavy, ornate, and bleak. The people feel small. The man-made environment is part of a collective bureaucratic order that is stolid in its logic and unforbearing in its application. The newer architecture of Chicago, on the other hand, gleams in a tight metallic skin and hugs the lake for safety as the

older sections, more human in scale, sprawl in decay to the west. This metaphysical connection between man and the city has always been one of Bellow's major concerns.

Man, alienated from his labor, is in the end alienated from the final forms his labor takes, his own creations. The city—the most intimate and the most complex of man's social expressions—has become remote and terrifying. Bellow considered this alarming aspect of the city in his first novel, *Dangling Man* (1944). He observes in urban architecture a surprising "lack of the human in the too-human," and continues his lament: "We find it, as others before us have found it in the last two hundred years, and we bolt for 'Nature.' It happens in all cities. And cities are 'natural' too." The city becomes ultimately inhospitable. As Bellow argues in *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970), all living things tend to have a difficult time there.

Sammler's New York is a composite of Eastern European cities and Bellow's favorite locale, Chicago. Sammler, an elderly Polish-Jewish immigrant, is a natural urbanite who is bullied into self-enforced retreat by a swaggering Black pickpocket. Shaken, Sammler becomes an unwilling captive of his niece's dark rooms in New York's Bucharest, the Upper West Side. There the personal freedom of an American city gone mad is combined with

The Dean's December. Saul Bellow. Harper & Row, New York. 312 pages. \$13.95

distant observer. He has come to distrust even an old man's visions, because the human impulse to "see wickedly" is inextricably linked to the potential terrors of social license. Human beings have not yet demonstrated to Bellow's satisfaction their ability to live either with the unbounded freedom of the U.S. or with the total control characteristic of Eastern Europe. In response to their surroundings people choose to risk their lives in a deadly wasteland: the established territory of Bucharest's black market or Chicago's inner-city streets. It is an almost instinctive reaction to the listless, boring surface of the contemporary urban environment.

Our present culture is one that celebrates the superficial. Art is a commodity: Painting is colorful and decorative; music in elevators and dentists' offices provides a distraction from the actual urban experience. Contemporary art, like wallpaper, treats the surface condition. It is not surprising that architecture has not escaped this trivializing tendency. Critic and knowledgeable consumer both speak knowingly of this or that "move" on a building's facade. Meaning is located, according to this fashionable view, on the skin—the building's face—or at the top. The point at which architecture meets the street is still uncomfortably problematic and often disastrous. We are prompted to ask along with Dean Corde, "Where could you take your most

The modern city acts as a giant mirror, reflecting man's extremes. In Bucharest the architecture is heavy, ornate, and bleak. The newer architecture of Chicago, on the other hand, gleams in a tight metallic skin as older sections sprawl in decay to the west.

the Eastern European feeling of claustrophobia. But in America, unlike Rumania, human possibilities are not limited by the State. Instead, freedom here deteriorates more slowly as human beings lose all sense of a shared destiny. Nature is literally trashed until it is stunted; the city is overworked until it is barely able to support life. Yet in spite of this, we all still work the soil. In a city like New York man feels this failure most acutely. He can be habitually frightened on the street not by a Soviet bureaucrat, but by his own paranoia affirmed by experience. Paradoxically, because the built environment encourages a stimulating anarchy, even Sammler, who has survived the Holocaust, can now in his "posthumous life" enjoy the spectacle, suspended between the cold deadness of an Upper West Side gloom palace and the lure of the street. After observing the pickpocket elegantly plying his trade on a bus, Sammler is momentarily transformed. He sees vividly. He "received from the crime the benefit of an enlarged vision. The air was brighter—late afternoon, daylight saving time. The world, Riverside Drive, was wickedly lighted up."

In *The Dean's December* Saul Bellow has trouble admitting as much of the vision into the Bucharest/Chicago cityscape. Unlike his view of New York in *The Victim* (1947), *Seize the Day* (1956), and *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, or of Chicago in *Humboldt's Gift* (1975), Bellow's perceptions are now more those of the astronomer, the

passionate feelings? Carry them into what setting?" Neither contemporary architects nor Saul Bellow yet have the answer.

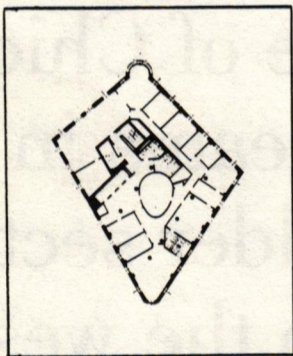
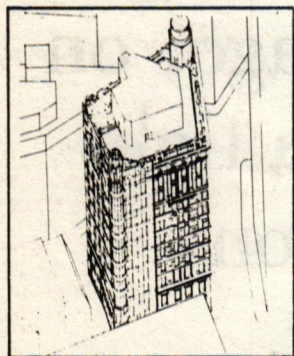
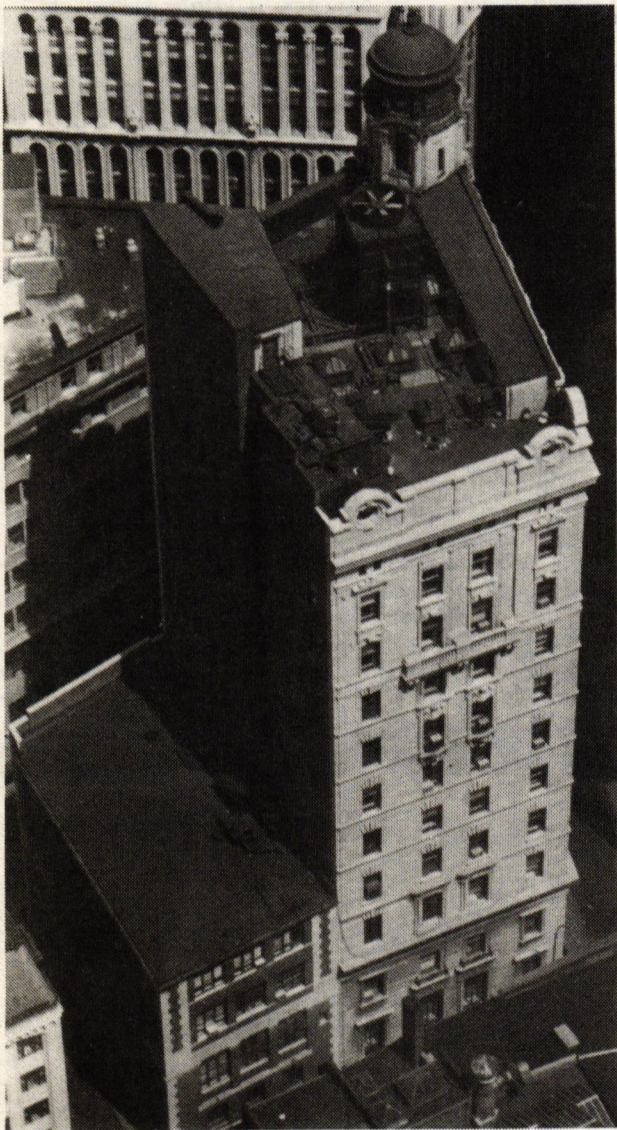
Saul Bellow's subject remains the relationship between man's mind and the urban world. To his credit he has always strained to make great connections. His latest novel, however, too often bucks and lurches under the burden. The narrative creaks as it tries to carry its tremendous weight: Bellow is never able to achieve a smooth integration of the plot with the motivating ideas. But the novel is still provocative, especially when considered with his other work. Bellow addresses people who find themselves caught somewhere between stark gloom—the actual end of possibilities represented by a city like Bucharest—and the anarchy of Chicago. He tries to reassure those who cannot achieve an "adequate attitude" situated somewhere between passion and withdrawal. Architecture, too, must build more for that middle ground, for in the tension between these extremes lies the passion of life and the achievement of art.

Projects

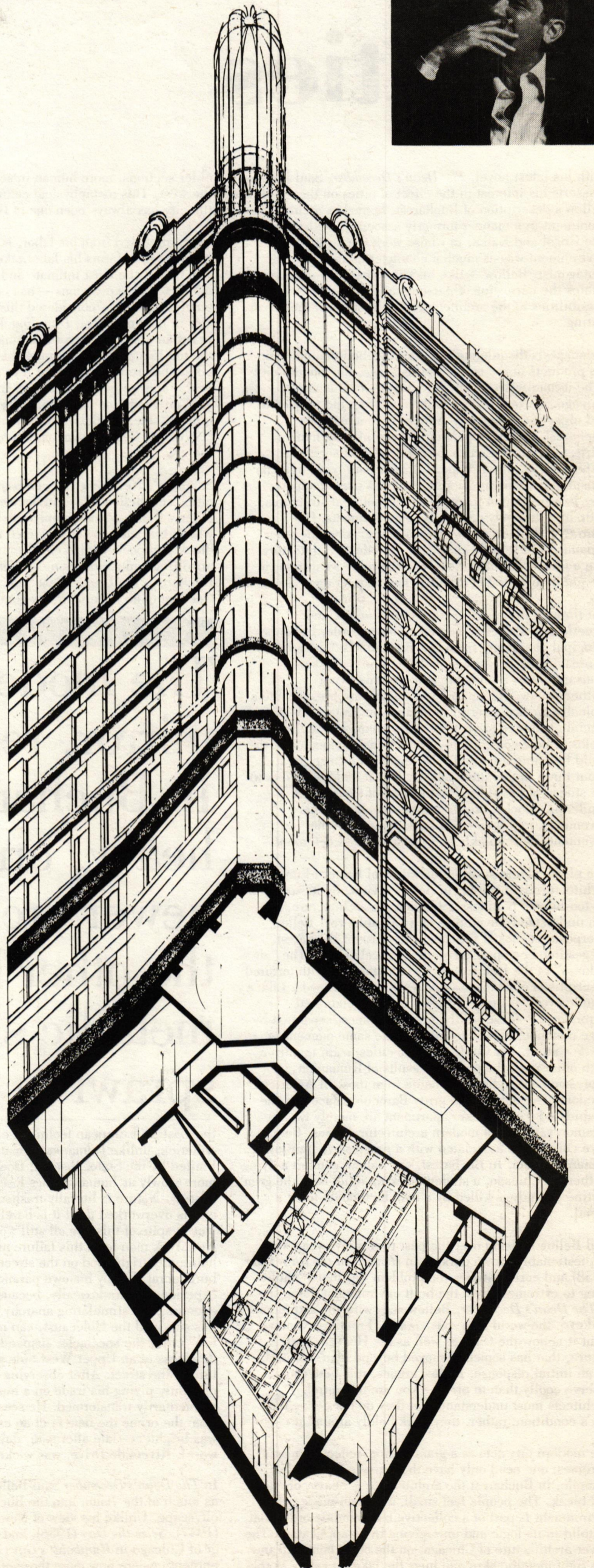
Italian architect Gino Valle is designing an addition to the old Lehman Brothers building in New York's financial district for the Banca Commerciale Italiana.

Gino Valle's New York Bank

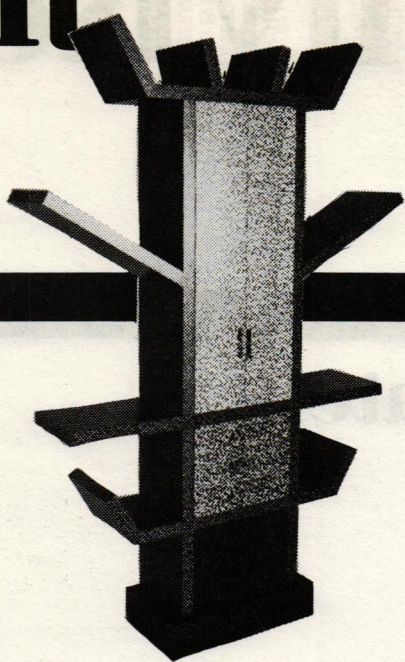
Banca Commerciale Italiana expansion, New York. Gino Valle in association with Jeremy P. Lang & Associates and Fred L. Liebmann. Top left: Lehman Brothers building, New York (1907); Francis M. Kimball. Bottom left: axonometric and plan. Center: Worm's eye axonometric. Top right: Gino Valle (photo: Antonia Mulas)



Gino Valle has designed a new building in downtown Manhattan for the Banca Commerciale Italiana, which is moving its New York branch office into the old Lehman Brothers building at One William Street and the site next to it. The existing 11-story building was designed by Francis M. Kimball and constructed in 1907. Valle's structure for the "annex" on the adjacent site is not only the same height as the older building, but will also be faced in limestone, as is the existing one, with black granite coursing. A tower at one corner, with an aluminum "birdcage" rising at the top, echoes the form of the Kimball design on the opposite corner of the building. Valle's detailing creates a minimalist mirror image of the main building in an individualistic yet sympathetic relationship to the styles and proportions of the older neighborhood. His addition appears as the second half of a single building with a dual identity, both traditional and modern. According to BCI, the foundations for the new building are in and they expect to begin construction of the steel structure during the last week of October; Valle is working in association with Jeremy P. Lang & Associates and Fred L. Liebmann. Plans for the new branch also include a complete interior remodeling of the Kimball building. The bank does intend to keep the original banking floor with its travertine entrance hall and gold-leaf coffered ceiling, but designs are not settled on the rest of the project. The bank hopes to move in by early 1984. — MGJ



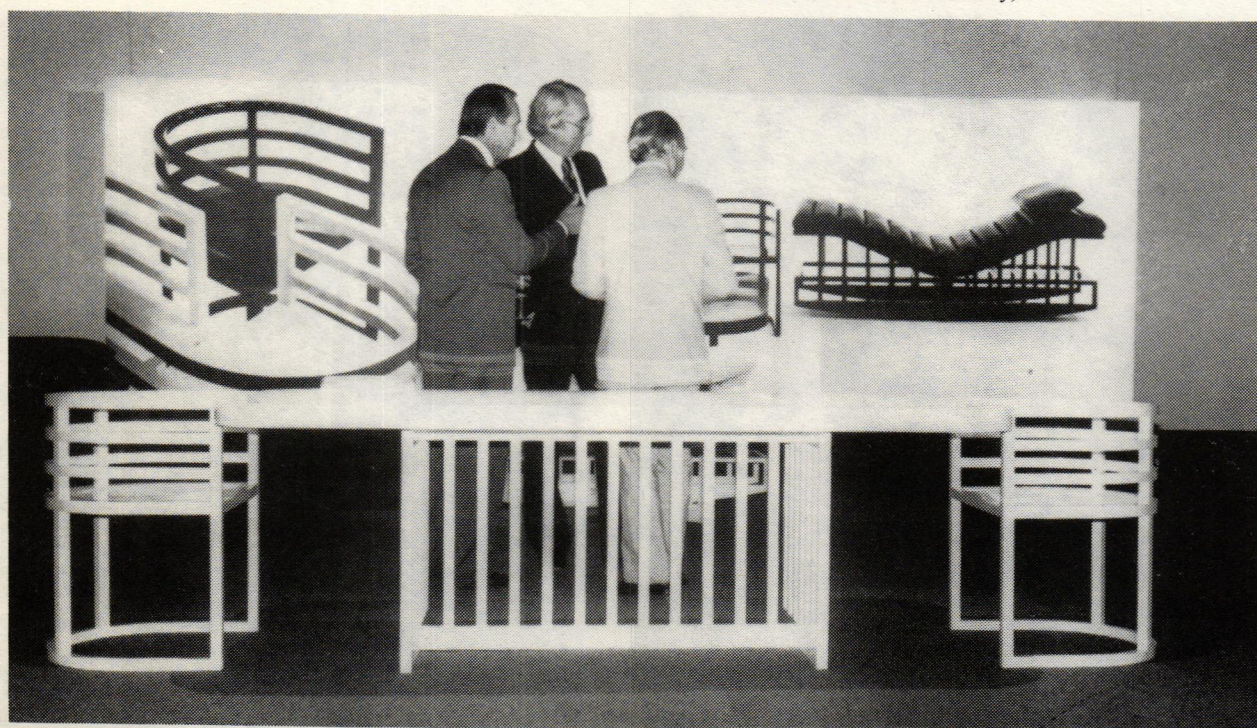
Comment



Casablanca sideboard by Ettore Sottsass (photo: courtesy Furniture of the Twentieth Century)

Armchair Notes

Three furniture design bashes timed to precede and end Designers' Saturday activities on October 14 to 16 in New York attracted much attention this past month. First several thousand architects, designers, journalists, and people in the furniture business flocked to **Knoll International's** Soho showroom to see the new line of nine wood tables and chairs designed by **Richard Meier**. The elegance and craftsmanship of the 27 separate pieces executed in three different finishes—black lacquer, white lacquer, and natural wood—with



Marshall Cogan, Richard Meier, and Leo Castelli viewing Meier's new furniture for Knoll (photo: Dorothy Alexander)

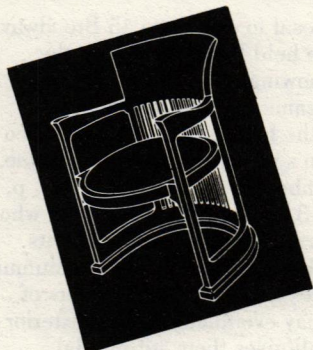


Richard Meier and Nan Swid, Design Manager of Knoll (photo: Dorothy Alexander)

mortise and tenon joints drew much praise, along with questions about price (\$400 to \$6,075) and speculations about comfort. The furniture was developed over a period of three years with Knoll's Design Manager, Nan Swid. Other furniture also introduced—Lucia Mercer's granite tables and elliptical sections and Carlos Riart's rocker—was greeted well but, judging from comments, didn't seem to spark as much jealousy and desire.

Appropriately, the second event focused on the wood chair, with a very crowded book party at the Urban Center for *The Wood Chair in America*, published by Estelle Brickel and Stephen Brickel. The book features succinct and useful historical texts and a glossary of wood chairs as well as a section on the design and craftsmanship of chairs designed by **Ward Bennett**, sold through Brickel Associates, Inc. The book thus could be accused of being promotional, but the text by C. Ray Smith and Marian Page and the design and production by Michael Donovan and Nancye Green make it educational.

The third event terminated Designers' Saturday festivities. "Memphis at Midnight," a party given by **Furniture of the Twentieth Century**, displayed new designs of the Milan furniture group by **Ettore Sottsass**, **Marco Zanini** and **George James Sowden** among others. The furniture, executed in humorous, vigorous, fifties-garish style, was upstaged only by the costumes of the hundreds of guests.



Oak Barrel Chair (1904), Frank Lloyd Wright

Projects and People

In San Francisco: **John Portman & Associates** is the architect for a pair of towers totalling 600,000 s.f. on two parcels recently acquired by the Rockefeller Center Development Corp. adjacent to the Embarcadero. RCDC has also bought the adjoining Federal Reserve Building which it plans to renovate. . . . In New York: **Der Scutt**, Architect, has been commissioned as both architect and interior designer for the Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corp.'s Americas headquarters, which will occupy the former Playboy Club Building on 59th Street. The 10-story structure will be stripped to its frame and a penthouse will be added. Scutt is currently exploring several facade approaches and reports that the program should be fully developed by the end of the year. Construction will probably not start before next spring. . . . In Hastings-on-Hudson: A group of developers that includes golfer **Jack Nicklaus** is building 200 condominium units overlooking the oldest golf course in America (1888) at St. Andrews Country Club. **Robert A.M. Stern** is the design architect for the project and is working with **Davies & Poe** of Tulsa, Ok. While Nicklaus is redesigning the course, Stern will also be renovating the Clubhouse—built in 1891, reputedly by Stanford White, and expanded by Hoppin & Koen in 1913—and remodeling the Andrew Carnegie Mansion on the property as a recreation center. Construction of the model units is now underway; construction of the first group of about 75 units should begin in the spring. . . . In Cambridge: Ian Woodner, a New York based architect, developer, art collector and 1927 recipient of an M.Arch. from Harvard has endowed the **Ian Woodner Professorship in Architecture** at his alma mater. The third named professorship to be created at the GSD, this is also the first fully endowed chair in architecture to be established there at the specific request of a donor. . . . **Myron Goldsmith**, institute research professor at IIT and partner of SOM in Chicago, has been appointed the Eliot Noyes Visiting Fellow at Harvard's GSD for the fall term.

Art | Theory | Criticism | Politics

OCTOBER

21

Rainer Werner Fassbinder
A Special Issue

Rainer Werner Fassbinder
Robert Burgoyne
Douglas Crimp

Tony Pipolo
Thomas Elsaesser

In a Year of Thirteen Moons
Narrative and Sexual Excess
Fassbinder, Franz, Fox, Elvira,
Erwin, Armin, and All the Others
Bewitched by the Holy Whore
Lili Marleen: Fascism and the
Film Industry

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2 Art and Architecture:
Wrestling with Desire
Lecture by Germano Celant

9 The Skin and The Bone:
Introduction to Exhibition
"Precursors of Post-Modernism"
by Curator Fulvio Irace

16 The First "Post" Modernism:
Stile Novecento, 1919-1934
Lecture by Richard Etlin

30 Building of the Month:
The Portland Building
Presentation by Michael Graves
followed by panel discussion
Japan Society Auditorium,
333 E. 47th Street, N.Y.C.

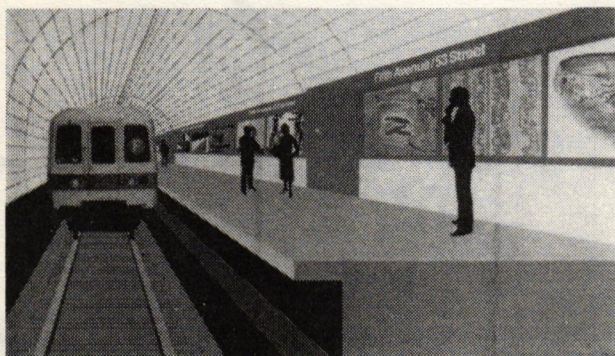
4-18 Dec. Precursors of Post-Modernism:
Milan 1920-30's
An Exhibition of Architectural
Photographs by Gabriele Basilico
at the Urban Center Gallery,
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Sponsored by Alessi.

All lectures begin at 6:30 P.M.
Admission to lectures is free for
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Members are encouraged to make
reservations.
This event is made possible with
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State Council on the Arts.

New York City Report

Peter Freiberg

Subways



Fifth Avenue/53rd Street subway station

New York's subways are known for many things, good as well as bad, but they have rarely been associated with culture. This could change under a pilot program that seeks to give cultural institutions near four subway stations a "vivid presence" underground by redesigning the stations themselves. The program, jointly sponsored by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Municipal Art Society with Alexia Lalli as design consultant, involves two stations for which a total of \$7 million in renovation funds have been allocated—Fifth Avenue/53rd Street and Astor Place—and two for which money is still being sought—66th Street/Lincoln Center and Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn.

The IND's Fifth Avenue/53rd Street station is near four museums, the Urban Center, and Donnell Library. In a scheme seemingly inspired by the Louvre station in Paris with its platform reproductions from the museum above, Pomeroy Lebduska Associates and Pentagram Design call for illuminated "culture boxes" containing exhibits and displays from the nearby institutions and possible television exhibits from the Museum of Broadcasting.

For the Astor Place station on the Lexington Avenue IRT, Prentice and Chan, Ohlhausen, together with Milton Glaser Associates, were retained to renovate the station serving Cooper Union, NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, and the Public Theater, as well as galleries, off-off-Broadway theaters, and movie houses. But the Astor Place renovation has sparked a contretemps. The Landmarks Preservation Commission reviewed the plans of the landmark station—and rejected a portion of them. The agency objects to Ohlhausen's proposal to cover up the badly damaged original glass tiles with new glazed tiling. While the renovation proposal says no material matching the original tile is readily available, the Commission says it has found a Bronx firm making such tile—at a price much less than the new glazed tile. As a government agency, the MTA is not legally bound to follow the Commission's recommendation, and so far the MTA has not agreed to make changes. But design consultant Lalli does not believe the MTA would overrule Landmarks, and presumably the Municipal Art Society would also find any such overruling an embarrassment.

For the 66th Street station on the Seventh Avenue IRT, architect Richard Dattner would install large, well-lit posters from Lincoln Center's institutions, a three-dimensional map of the neighborhood, and closed circuit television to show passengers what is being performed above. And at the IRT's Eastern Parkway station in Brooklyn, which abuts the Brooklyn Museum, the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, and the Brooklyn Public Library, posters, signs, and other displays would inform passengers about the three institutions; the design team selected was Edwin Schlossberg Inc. and Two Twelve Associates. Private and government funds will be sought to implement these plans.

The "Culture Stations" program raises the question of whether these scarce capital funds could be better spent directly on improving service. Carlyn Meyer of Straphangers, a subway monitoring group, said she could think of many alternative subway projects that deserve priority and would actually increase ridership. But consultant Lalli argues the MTA intends to make many other improvements, too, and that the "Culture Station" program is only one part of a major attempt to "turn around" the subway system.

Theaters



Final hearings on the proposal to designate 45 Broadway theaters as landmarks were held last month, with the expected cast of players showing up to testify. On one side were activists who became aroused during the unsuccessful fight to save the Helen Hayes and Morosco theaters from John Portman's wrecker's ball (see *Skyline*, October 1981, p. 4; November, p. 5; February 1982, p. 3; March, p. 5; April, pp. 3 and 6; June, p. 4), and who are determined to avoid further destruction of theaters. On the other side are the theater owners, who at minimum are opposed to landmark designation of the interiors of their buildings, and who may eventually oppose exterior designation unless City Hall gives them substantial economic benefits in return. The October 19 hearing continued for nine hours, and it is likely to be many months before the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) makes any decision.

The LPC, which was criticized by a number of activists during the Portman Hotel fight for not having landmarked the Helen Hayes and Morosco, has proposed designating the interiors of all 45 theaters as landmarks, along with 38 of their exteriors. Underlying the proposal is fear that the theater district will be faced with escalating pressure for development, particularly in view of the new midtown zoning that seeks to spur construction on the West Side and the projected 42nd Street redevelopment project. At this point, most of the theaters are protected under a midtown zoning clause that requires a special permit before any theater can be demolished—but this clause expires next May, and the theaters have no permanent protection.

Supporters of landmarking were buoyed by strong backing from Community Board 5, which includes the midtown business area and often favors real estate interests; Board 5 had supported the Portman Hotel, but last month came out in favor of landmarking most of the theaters. The Committee to Save the Theaters—the group organized by Actors Equity Association during the Portman battle—marshalled an impressive array of actors, playwrights, preservationists, and citizens who urged the LPC to act decisively to preserve the theater district. Initially, the Committee had sought landmarking for the entire district on grounds of its cultural and historic as well as architectural value (see *Skyline*, July 1981, p. 3; October, p. 4), but when the LPC indicated it was not enthusiastic about a landmark district, the Committee went along with landmarking the individual theaters.

Theater owners strongly opposed interior landmarking, arguing that it would keep them from mounting technologically innovative productions like *Cats*. While the owners have not yet taken any stand opposing exterior designation—they have commissioned Hardy, Holzman, Pfeiffer Associates to study the proposal—they emphasize that any such designation should be tied to



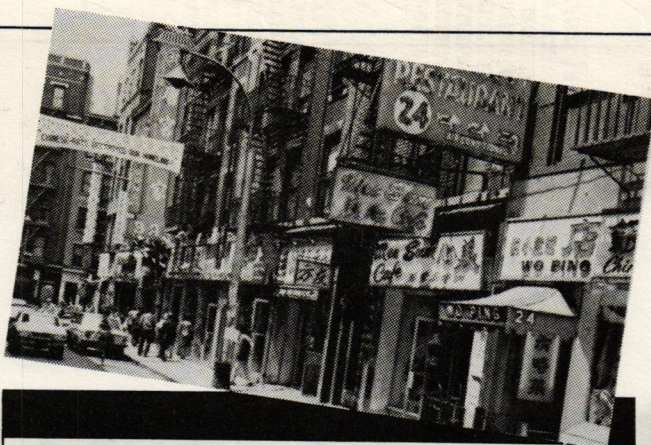
The Cort Theater (1912); Edward B. Corey
The Booth Theater (1913); Henry B. Herts (photos: New York City Landmarks Preservation)

economic help for the theater industry. The theater owners contend that no landmarking should occur before the City Planning Commission (and the Theater Advisory Council appointed under the new midtown zoning) come up with a "comprehensive plan" for the theater district, including economic aid.

The owners' arguments do not hold up under close examination. Interior designation would not preclude altering interiors for shows, as long as the interiors are returned to their original condition. As writer-activist Roberta Brandes Gratz pointed out, the fact that "so many of the splendid interiors still exist" testifies to their flexibility. It is not the job of the LPC to devise economic incentives for the theater industry; that is the responsibility of other city agencies. LPC's job is to decide whether the theaters deserve to be landmarked; if the Commission decides in favor, the theater owners, like other property owners, can always seek relief under the hardship clause if they find it impossible to make a profit.

The theater owners are aware of the hardship clause, and, in any case, none of them appears to be contemplating demolition at this point. What the owners are really seeking, in addition to tax benefits, is "floating air rights" that would allow them to transfer air rights over their low-rise theaters to anywhere within the theater district; as of now, designated landmarks are only allowed to transfer air rights to property that is contiguous, across the street or under common ownership down the block. But if the city does allow "floating air rights," that would open a Pandora's box for the theater district: architect Lee Pomeroy estimates there are 4 million s.f. potentially transferable from the theaters, and even a portion of this amount could radically change the ambience of the district. Landmarking the entire district—as producer Joseph Papp advocates—would bar any air rights transfers, but the owners seem to have enough political clout to fight this.

The LPC will probably not make a decision on any of the 45 theaters before mid-1983 at the earliest. In the meantime, it is certain that both sides will continue to lobby behind the scenes.



Chinatown street scene (photo: Colourpicture)

Eastside

Despite strong opposition from developers, the Landmarks Preservation Commission last year designated a wide swath of the Upper East Side as an historic district. Now, with the help of the Municipal Art Society, a citizens watchdog group has been organized to make sure that new buildings—as well as alterations in existing structures—are designed in keeping with the landmarks law.

The Friends of the Upper East Side Historic District includes many preservationists and residents who fought long and hard to win landmark designation in the first place. The district, which extends roughly from 59th to 79th Streets between Fifth and Lexington Avenues, contains one of the largest concentrations of architecturally distinguished buildings in the country, ranging from elegant townhouses to stately apartment buildings. The area has seen numerous landmark-quality buildings disappear as developers sought to cash in on the desire of many people to live on the East Side. The Landmarks Commission remains understaffed, and after the Board of Estimate approved the Upper East Side Historic District, the Municipal Art Society obtained \$4000 grants from the J.M. Kaplan Fund and Ronald Lauder to set up an autonomous organization that would, in effect, serve as the "eyes and ears" of the landmarks agency in the neighborhood.

John Weiss, executive director of the Friends, emphasizes that the Friends does not intend to be an "antagonistic" group. However, it is inevitable that its watchdog goal will bring it into conflict with developers. Already, the Friends organization has gone before the Landmarks Commission twice to oppose building plans considered inappropriate to the district. Weiss notes that the Upper East Side has been lucky because high interest rates have slowed development plans.

Within historic districts, building owners must seek permission from the Landmarks Commission to demolish a building or put up a new one. If the Commission rejects a demolition application, the owner can reapply on grounds of economic hardship; unless the agency comes up with a tax abatement or another alternative, or disproves the hardship case, demolition must be approved. In addition, the Commission has jurisdiction over proposed alterations in buildings. The organizing of the Friends group is by no means wholly altruistic, since its membership includes many townhouse, brownstone and co-op owners whose property values would go down if the historic district loses its architectural character. But one of the main purposes of the Friends is to educate people about the landmarks law and tell them how to make legal alterations in their buildings, as well as keep the community aware and informed about issues related to the district's architectural character.



57 East 75th Street (photo: Stephen L. Senigo)

Chinatown

Spurred by the seemingly insatiable market for housing in Manhattan, developers have been showing a great deal of interest in one of the borough's largest ethnic enclaves—Chinatown (see *Skyline*, July 1982, p. 3). The area's proximity to the financial district, the City Hall area and Battery Park City make it a potential goldmine for new construction as well as co-op conversions. But Chinatown residents and business people, fearful that a gold rush by real estate speculators will drive out the very people and businesses that give Chinatown its character, have been fighting back on the legal and political fronts—and have been winning some battles.

One legal victory came on the special Manhattan Bridge Zoning District pushed through by the Koch Administration last year. The district, which allows luxury high-rises to be built on several sites along the eastern fringe of Chinatown, was challenged by community activists on grounds that the predominantly Chinese-speaking population was not adequately informed of public hearings. A state Supreme Court justice agreed, and while the city is appealing his decision, it could stall one project that was approved by the City Planning Commission and was ready to go to the Board of Estimate. That project, a 21-story luxury condominium (architect: Daniel Pang and Associates) would be built by a group called the Henry Street Partners, which includes two officials in Helmsley-Spear Inc. (The developers assert the giant real estate firm is not involved in the project and that they are investing as individuals.) The project generated some community support because the developers promised to provide space for a new Chinatown YMCA, but opponents charged that it would accelerate the rise in property values in the low-rise, working-class heart of Chinatown—and thereby encourage displacement.

Another luxury project approved by the Board of Estimate—at the urging of the Koch Administration—may be dead. After City Hall gave the go-ahead to developer Thomas Lee's East-West Towers, twin 21-story buildings on Madison Street (designed by Wei Foo Chun, Architects and Planners), former tenants and lawyer Joyce Moy brought together evidence that Lee had harassed tenants into moving so he could demolish a building on the site. When the city's Department of Investigation confirmed many of the allegations, the City Planning Commission rescinded Lee's permit; he must now decide whether to sue in court for permission to build. And in another tenant battle—this one over an attempted co-op conversion in the apartment building at 50 Bayard Street—residents defeated the co-op effort. "I would say that developers are now aware that this area's going to resist, in one form or another," says Moy. "The tenants know that organizing can be successful."

Nevertheless, there is no question that Chinatown remains under threat. If anyone doubted that real estate values are escalating in Chinatown, the bidding on a 20,000-s.f. city parcel under the Manhattan Bridge should convince the skeptics. At the September 15 auction, the city started bidding at \$40,000-a-year rental—and wound up with a winning bid of \$505,000 a year by Short Division Realty Inc. The 30-year lease will require the developer to build retail stores or offices, which will probably go no higher than two stories. "I would say the city was pleasantly surprised at the bidding," says Stuart Fischer, spokesman for the city's Department of General Services. "There's definitely a great deal of interest in Chinatown." And while there was no known opposition to the mall, the fact that bidding went so high is another warning that rather than encouraging luxury condominiums in Chinatown, the city should be trying to devise ways of preserving the neighborhood—a neighborhood that is not only attractive to the people who live and work there, but is important to the city's economy as well.

East Side West Side, various groups continue to wage battles, stake out turf, and make plans—including proposed improvements in subway stations.

Westside

While city and state officials continue to express optimism, there are still a lot of question marks about the billion-dollar-plus Times Square redevelopment plan for 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues (see *Skyline*, December 1981; May 1982; October 1982).

On the bureaucratic level, there is the question of leadership at the state Urban Development Corporation (UDC), the prime mover in the 42nd Street project together with the city's Public Development Corporation (PDC). UDC has not yet hired anyone to oversee the redevelopment, which calls for construction of four office towers, a hotel, and a merchandise mart, along with renovation of nine theaters. Despite objections from city officials, UDC was preparing to hire Nell Surber, a lawyer and planner who heads Cincinatti's economic development program. Suddenly, before any announcement was made in New York, Surber herself announced in Cincinatti that she was accepting a \$70,000-a-year UDC offer. Her disclosure came just as a storm was swirling about her—a storm of which UDC was apparently unaware—over allegations that she had worked improperly as lawyer for a businessman who dealt with the Cincinatti agency she heads. Embarrassed by the allegations as well as by Surber's premature announcement, UDC denied it ever made a job offer, and Surber decided to stay in Cincinatti.

Howard Brock, UDC's public relations spokesman, says the absence of a Times Square coordinator has not "put a crimp into the overall schedule." But some critics, including two former UDC officials, say it symbolizes the lack of leadership at the top: UDC's acting chief executive officer, Donald Glickman, is a lame duck, since his future depends on whether the new governor makes him permanent or replaces him.

Given the scale and complexity of the Times Square project, it was virtually inevitable that obstacles would crop up—and it would not be surprising if the 1984 date for starting construction is moved back. Currently, an environmental impact statement is being written, with a scheduled completion date of this spring. Condemnation proceedings will not begin until the impact statement is finished, but UDC is reportedly behind in preparing for condemnation.

Nevertheless, the major question mark about the Times Square redevelopment is its financing. "The big unknown," says Philip Aarons, president of PDC, "is still whether there will be the financing that is necessary to do the projects. We are looking for private financing of a billion and a half dollars . . ." Aarons says city and state officials and the private developers "are optimistic it will go ahead, that the financing can be put together . . . but we have no firm commitments yet." As *Skyline* went to press, it was learned that the Morse family, a California firm that was selected to build a wholesale trade mart for garment and non-garment industry along Eighth Avenue between 40th and 42nd Streets, is in arrears in its monthly fees to UDC; the need for the mart has always been questionable, and while UDC says it is trying to work things out, the Morse firm may be having second thoughts.

According to Aarons, the office towers—to be built by George Klein's Park Tower Realty Corp., with Philip Johnson as master planner and John Burgee Architects as coordinating architects—and the theater renovation have made the most progress. The Nederlander Organization is scheduled to begin a renovation of the New Amsterdam theater (and its rooftop cabaret) early next year, and Aarons says the city and state are "very close" to designating the developers for five theaters on the north side of 42nd Street. Some skeptics wonder whether the hotel, scheduled to be built along Eighth Avenue between 42nd and 43rd Streets, will go ahead if hotel occupancy rates in the city continue to drop. The linchpins of the Times Square redevelopment, however, are Klein's office towers at the intersection of Broadway, 42nd Street, and Seventh Avenue (Klein will also pay \$21.6 million for renovation of the Times Square subway station). Klein has become one of the city's major builders, but as one former UDC official said, "Whether the numbers will actually work [in Times Square], whether the office market boom is past, who knows?"

Preservation

The Mayor's mansion has long been allowed to drift into doddering dotage. A group of concerned citizens has organized to strengthen the historic and emblematic roles of the house.

Gracie Mansion on the Mend

Last July New York's Mayor Edward Koch officially announced the formation of the Gracie Mansion Conservancy and plans for the restoration of the house. Originally a modest country house, the mansion has weathered two centuries of New York history, becoming the mayor's residence only forty years ago. In contrast to the requirements of its function as the city's "first house" (President Carter slept there), however, the mansion's character has never quite achieved that of "Mansion." It has never acquired the same status as, say, the Morris-Jumel Mansion, a house of similar origins in upper Manhattan that is now a house-museum. The Conservancy, under the direction of Joan K. Davidson, is intending to change this. Its goal is to renovate the house in such a way that it will be able to satisfy more efficiently and appropriately the conflicting demands placed upon it as both private residence and public symbol.

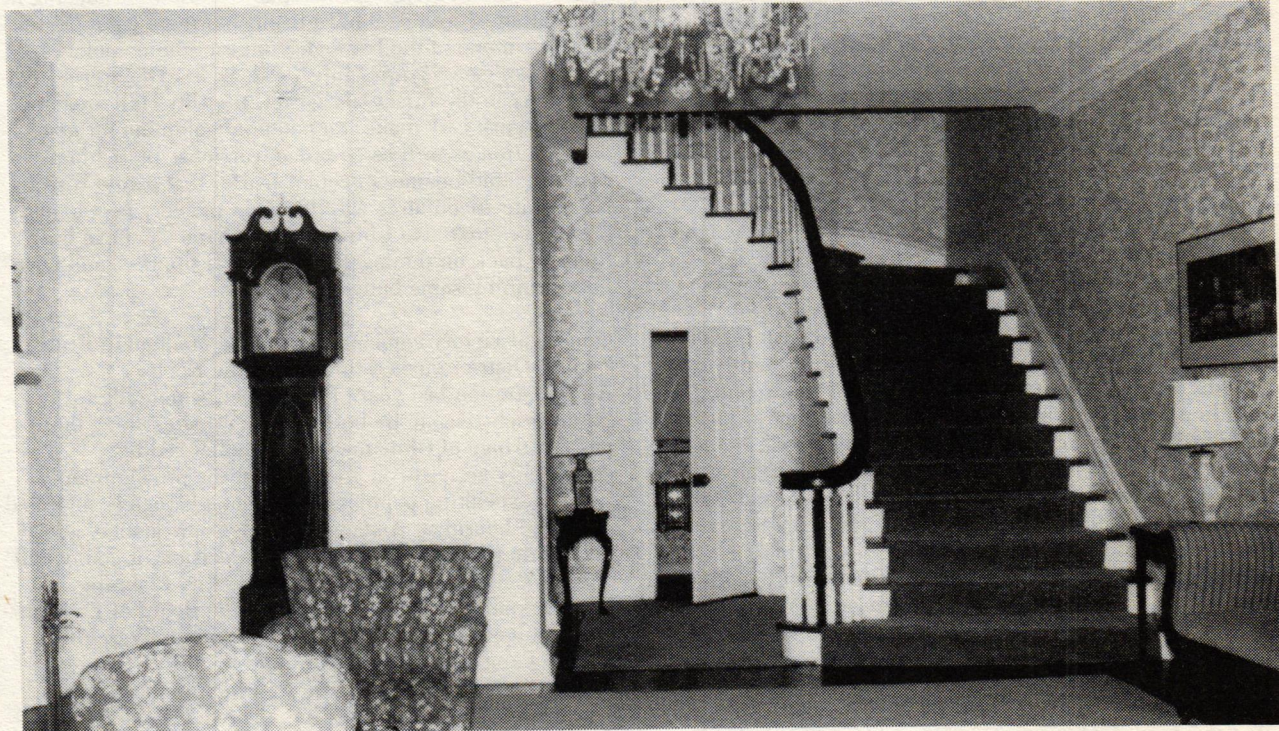
The kernel of the present house was built by Scottish-born merchant Archibald Gracie as a country retreat around 1798. As family fortunes rose and fell, the house passed through the hands of several owners and underwent various additions and changes. The last family to own it completely remodeled the by then run-down house, redecorating in the at-least-half-a-dozen-patterns-to-a-room, highest Victorian style. Shortly thereafter the house and land were "condemned" by the city to be appropriated as part of Carl Schurz Park, a precious open space needed by the city as it spread uptown at the turn of the century.

Under the control of the parks department the building was used as a refreshment stand and a storage shed. In 1923 it became the first home of the Museum of the City of New York with certain portions redecorated in the Federal style. At the end of the thirties, at the direction of then Parks Commissioner Robert Moses, the house was designated the official residence of the mayor. Fiorello LaGuardia moved into the house in 1941. Since then the mansion has been occupied by six other mayors and redecorated by each, although the house has had few structural changes during this period—the only major ones being the addition of the Wagner Wing for receptions and an elevator.

The house's condition is the result of a history with a minimum of continuity and a maximum of abuse. According to one connoisseur, the decor of the house "is not even close to the average in Westchester." Much of the building's original fabric, both historic and structural, has been obscured and records are amazingly scarce. A working group for the Conservancy has already spent a year gathering physical and historical data on the house by means of archaeological digs, infrared scans, archival searches, wallpaper and paint samples (the house, now white, was originally a pale yellow ochre similar to that at the restored Boscobel Mansion in Garrison, N.Y.), and other extensive tests and explorations. The group has done a complete analysis of the existing conditions and requirements of the house and outlined a program concentrating on several different areas.

The first and most important task faced by the Conservancy is that of making the mansion work; this will include repairing the roof and mechanical systems, reorganizing the facilities for entertaining (until recently the only connection from the formal reception area to the rest of the house was through the kitchen), and expanding the warrenlike staff quarters in the basement. Action is also being taken on rebuilding the porch, which is in danger of collapsing, and repainting the exterior.

More conceptually difficult is the task of enhancing the historic and symbolic qualities of the mansion. The Conservancy is proposing a solution that is neither a traditional period restoration nor a continuation of the comfortable home with little stylistic character. They hope to modify the interiors to create rooms that reflect the spirit of different periods of history, showcasing fine art, furniture, and decorative objects—all made in New York, of course—imparting some of the elegance or quality that one might expect of the mayor's house. To ensure its efforts the Conservancy has established an arts advisory committee, which is already assembling a loan collection as predecessor to a permanent one of furniture, artwork, and objects; they will also be appointing a full-time curator.



Gracie Mansion today (photo: Holland Wemple)

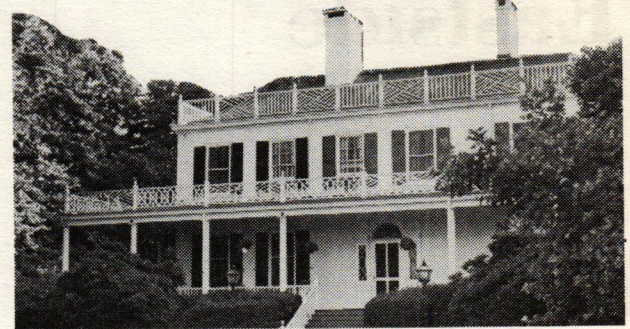


Gracie Mansion Main Hall c. 1890 (photo: courtesy New-York Historical Society)

The project is expected to be completed in 1984 at a cost of about \$5 million, most of which will come from the private sector. —MGJ

The Gracie Mansion Conservancy is a multi-faceted institution created by the Mayor, and given its shape by Joan K. Davidson, president of the J.M. Kaplan Fund, who, with the Mayor's Office, organized the undertaking and is its overall chairman.

A not-for-profit corporation, the Conservancy has as members, in addition to the Mayor and Mrs. Davidson, Mrs. Vincent Astor, president of the Vincent Astor Foundation; Kent Barwick, chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission; James R. Brigham, former budget director of the City of New York and chairman of the Public Development Corporation; Gordon Davis, commissioner of parks and recreation; and Richard Salomon, former chairman of the board of the New York Public Library. Adrian W. DeWind, of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton, and Garrison, is pro bono counsel.



Gracie Mansion today (photo: Holland Wemple)

The professional working group is under the Conservancy's supervision; its members are: Charles A. Platt of Smotrich and Platt, the coordinating architect; Robert Meadows, preservation architect; Dianne Pilgrim of the Brooklyn Museum and David McFadden of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, decorative arts advisors; Albert Hadley and Mark Hampton, interior designers; John Altieri, mechanical engineer; Robert Silman, structural engineer; and Judith Winslow, curatorial assistant. Also included are Dianne Coffey, the Mayor's administrative assistant, Linda Cahill, and Joan Tucker, all from the Mayor's office. The Public Development Corporation will oversee construction; Arthur Andersen Company is providing financial and auditing services on a pro bono basis.

In addition to the working group, there is an arts advisory committee, consisting of directors and curators from the City's museums, libraries, and historical societies; the chairman is John Dobkin, director of the National Academy of Design. A Friends committee is also in formation. The project is administered by one lone staff member, Deborah Krulewich from Marsh and McLennan, where she was manager of public affairs. Mary Black of the New-York Historical Society is working on a history of the mansion that will be published next spring. The Conservancy is also developing programs of lectures, tours, and special events that will increase public access to the mansion.

Books

Finally, *Skyline* brings you its own best-selling book list. Not quite as scientific as that of *The New York Times*, it is nevertheless revealing.

Bestsellers

From a highly unscientific poll of eleven bookstores known for trading in architecture and design, *Skyline* has compiled the following list of recent bestsellers. The stores contacted—Brazos (Houston), Ballenford (Toronto), Hennessy and Ingalls (Los Angeles), Mandrake (Boston), Prairie Avenue (Chicago), Jaap Rietman (New York), Rizzoli (New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles), William Stout (San Francisco), and Urban Center Books (New York)—provided us with a list of the ten most popular architecture-related books of recent months. Without specific sales figures, no overall rankings were possible; we simply allotted one point for each citing of a book, and ranked them on that basis. Special mention should go to Edwin Lutyens, who, as one bookseller asserted, is "very sellable," and to the small studio edition of Schinkel, which many sellers applauded as a beautifully produced and reasonably priced volume—"a real buy."

- SAMMLUNG ARCHITEKTONISCHER ENTWURFE.** Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Smaller format reproduction of 1866 German edition with English translation, contemporary critical essays, and 174 plates. Exedra Books. \$65.00
- THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY.** Aldo Rossi. MIT Press, for the Graham Foundation and the IAUS. \$30.00
- LA CASA ROTONDA.** Mario Botta. Bilingual English/Italian. L'Erba Voglio; distributed by Belmark Books. \$25.00, soft cover
- THE WORKS OF THE ENGLISH ARCHITECT SIR EDWIN LUTYENS.** Colin Amery. Arts Council of Great Britain. \$16.00, soft cover
- ADOLF LOOS: THEORY AND WORKS.** Benedetto Gravagnuolo. Photographs by Roberto Schezen. Rizzoli. \$50.00
- FROM BAUHAUS TO OUR HOUSE.** Tom Wolfe. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. \$10.95
- INDIAN SUMMER: LUTYENS, BAKER AND IMPERIAL DELHI.** Robert Grant Irving. Yale University Press. \$39.95
- H.H. RICHARDSON: COMPLETE ARCHITECTURAL WORKS.** Jeffrey Karl Ochsner. MIT Press. \$50.00
- RICHARD HAAS: AN ARCHITECTURE OF ILLUSION.** Richard Haas. Rizzoli. \$35.00
- ROBERT A.M. STERN: BUILDINGS AND PROJECTS.** Robert A.M. Stern. Rizzoli. \$45.00
- VERSUS: AN AMERICAN ARCHITECT'S ALTERNATIVES.** Stanley Tigerman. Rizzoli. \$35.00

Compiled from B. Dalton and Doubleday bookstores, these "mass" bestsellers could not be ranked accurately on a one-to-ten scale.

- LAURA ASHLEY BOOK OF HOME DECORATING.** Elizabeth Dickson and Margaret Colvin. Harmony Books. \$24.95
- THE APARTMENT BOOK.** Apartment Life Editors. Crown. \$27.50
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- FROM BAUHAUS TO OUR HOUSE.** Tom Wolfe. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. \$10.95
- RECORD HOUSES OF 1982.** Architectural Record Magazine. \$7.95, soft cover

Reviews

Daralice Boles

Those observers of society who believe that history moves in cycles must have smiled at the publication of the inaugural issue of *The New Criterion* in September. We have apparently swung so far to the Left that the Right (or the middle) appears radical by contrast. As in politics, so belatedly in culture and criticism. Focusing on politics and particularly leftist politics as the great corrupter of the independent life of the mind, editor Hilton Kramer, formerly the *New York Times*' senior art editor, reaches in speech and metaphor to the right, ending in his introduction with a pro-capitalist, pro-democratic speech that is both doctrinaire and nostalgic: "It is imperative that we recognize, as the first condition for any serious criticism of the arts in the contemporary world, that it is now only in a democratic society like ours that the value of high art can be expected to survive and prosper."

Kramer as critic rebels against the general decline in critical standards, rejecting contemporary journalism as "hopelessly ignorant, deliberately obscurantist, commercially compromised, or politically motivated." Together with contributor Joseph Epstein, the editor calls for genuinely apolitical criticism free from polemical bias. His introduction does not live up to this criterion, but there is a deeper contradiction between aesthetic and political judgment that flaws both his introduction and the essay "Postmodern: Art and Culture in the 1980s." While praising modernism as the "only really vital tradition that the art of our own time can claim as its own," Kramer fails to acknowledge the heavily political—and predominantly leftist—origins of modernism, the style to which he as critic clearly adheres.

Epstein goes further in his essay "The Literary Life Today," blaming the leftist milieu of the university for the fall of criticism from art to politics. The twin threats of popularization and politicization have combined in his view to destroy independent intellectualism. Epstein's nostalgia is of the doomsday variety; our literary culture has been reduced to mere propaganda and publicity stunts, and the literary intellectual is a breed extinct.

Polemics aside, the "dissenting critical voice" of *The New Criterion* as it speaks in the September and October issues is indeed notable for its scholarship, clarity, and eclecticism. We are treated to discourse on subjects ranging from Polish film to modern-day English manners as reflected in the writings of Barbara Pym. Whether we accompany William Arrowsmith on his detailed exploration of T.S. Eliot's poetry, travel with Elias Canetti to Berlin of 1928, or visit the Beat convention (the Colorado "On The Road" Conference) with Andy Stark, we are in select critical company.

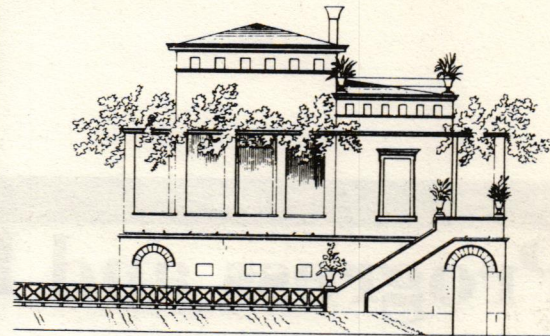
Not all the essays, however, reach the standards of critical excellence articulated by the editor. An essay on the subject of "The New Museum" by William H. Jordy does little more than describe in sloppy and shallow terms the exhibit of New American Art Museums shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The historian, usually so detailed and specific in his writings, is here vague and non-critical, his essay an exercise in cataloguing, not criticism. Likewise, Roger Scruton, in his "Reflections on a Candlestick" muddies a review of the recent Royal College conference on design with impressionistic musings.

The essays contained in *The New Criterion* are clearly addressed to the cognoscenti.

Press Notes

Two new tabloids with familiar parentage have recently appeared on architects' horizons: *Cite*, a publication of the Rice Design Alliance edited by Gordon Wittenberg, and *Design Action*, published by Architectural Arts of Washington, D.C., and edited by Richard Etlin. Although the primary focus of each is on local events and issues, these are approached in a way that will make them of more general interest. *Design Action* will appear bi-monthly—with continuing support from the National Endowment for the Arts. *Cite* reports that its schedule is somewhat less certain—they do not expect to be able to produce more than three issues a year. Welcome to the fray!

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EXEDRA BOOKS INCORPORATED

Historical Perspectives

Progress and Primitivism: The Roots of John Soane's Style

Anthony Vidler

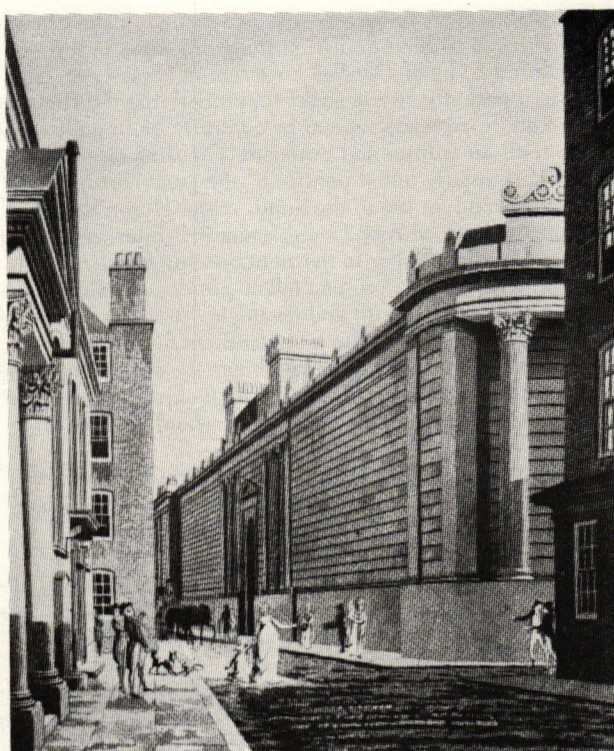


John Soane. Pencil drawing by N. Dance, 1774

Among those late eighteenth-century architects whose work exhibits a tendency to "return to the origins" of building to generate an enlightened and rational design, John Soane has always presented an ambiguous but intensely engaging case. Ambiguous because he refused the utopian idealism and the political commitment of the French "visionaries"; engaging because he, more than anyone—French, German or English—managed to weld a personal and powerful aesthetic out of a sense of abstraction on the one hand, and a nostalgia for the great ruins of classicism on the other. More than Piranesi, whose fantasies he echoed many times in the commissioned paintings of his designs as ruins, Soane brought together a strict, geometrically controlled formalism with a sensuous play of motifs, reminiscences, and actual fragments of antique monuments. Perhaps it is for this reason that his works are now so eagerly studied.

For many years, however, the lack of serious scholarly studies of Soane has hindered assessment of his work as a whole. Yet the popularity of his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London (1812-13) has sustained itself as a place that, like the ruins of Palmyra or the Acropolis to Soane's generation, might be visited as a kind of museum of the romantic sensibility. The memory theater of romantic neoclassicism, with its embedded fragments of casts, sarcophagi, statues and decorative friezes, might have provided the repository of an architect's life work, but the separation between romantic image and accurate knowledge has been absolute. The artifacts of the architect have been seen more as a part of the seamless dreams of Soane's student and painterly interpreter Joseph Gandy than as a record of his life, professional formation, and completed works. What Piranesi was for Thomas de Quincy, Soane has been for the nineteenth and much of the twentieth centuries. A distinctly "odd fish" had evidently lived there—that was evident. But beyond his famed paranoia—a trait common to many architects of the Revolutionary period—and his now-destroyed Bank of England Complex (1792-1823), little was known, or even liked.

This is at first perplexing, largely because the obvious interpreter of Soane, in contemporary historical terms, lived daily in the Museum as its curator. But John Summerson has preferred to study the development of English architecture in general, or the careers of other architects, such as John Nash or Inigo Jones, or the emergence of London itself. His remarks on the center of his preoccupation, Soane, were confined to a short essay-length monograph (London, 1952) and a few articles. Dorothy Stronach's successor as curator, has in turn been daunted by the subject, offering her own monograph (London, 1961)—useful enough, but hardly the study, architectural and historical, that Soane's complex life demanded. Add to this the intriguing asides in George Teyssot's good analysis (Rome, 1974) of the



The bank facade to Lothbury, London (1796); John Soane (aquatint by T. Malton, 1799)

urban and institutional works of Soane's first employer, George Dance the Younger, and the available offerings on Soane are almost complete.

With the publication of Pierre de la Ruffinière Du Prey's meticulous thesis on the early years of Soane's career, however, a new standard of Soane scholarship has been established. Conceived at first, as its subtitle indicates, as a record of the professional formation of an interesting late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century architect, the available documentation rapidly led the author to address themes central to the history of building types, style, and antiquarianism in this period. The result, entirely rewritten out of an earlier doctoral dissertation, is one of the best—certainly one of the most exhaustively researched—studies of an eighteenth-century architect, rivalling that of the more monographically complete study on William Chambers by John Harris (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971). (London, 1970). Du Prey's emphasis is double: On the one hand he is concerned to exemplify the daily working life of an architect—his training, self-education, designing, and building; on the other, he builds up a sense of the institutional and conceptual discourse of design, involving new programs, like the asylum and the prison, as well as new philosophies of form like primitivism and rationalism, that determined the manner of a well-read and ambitious practitioner of the period. With admirable economy the final book manages to join both concerns in a readable but complex narrative, illustrated with hundreds of well-reproduced sketches, finished drawings, engravings, and photographs of built works. There can be no better introduction to the first years of Soane's life, 1768-1784—that is, from the entrance of Soane into Dance the Younger's office in London to his marriage and establishment of a full private practice.

The groundwork, then, has been completed or rather outlined (for factual description has correctly overweighed interpretation in this preliminary study) in a way that may enable us not only to gauge the importance of Soane's education and early contacts in his later extensive practice, but also to situate Soane among his predecessors, peers, and followers: Does he fall somewhat uncomfortably between Ledoux and Barry, for example, or does he stand as a theoretical and stylistic innovator in his own right?

The answer to this question is implicit in, but not wholly described by Du Prey's study. Painstakingly uncovering the varied influences and early responses of Soane as he developed a practice through competitions both public and academic, Du Prey nevertheless wavers in his assessment of the importance of Soane's developed style. Certainly it is clear from every chapter that Soane is aware of theoretical influences, quick to catch a stylistic innovation. But Du Prey hesitates to conclude, for

John Soane: The Making of an Architect. Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey. The University of Chicago Press, Illinois. 408 pages, 275 black-and-white illustrations, 8 color plates. \$37.50



John Soane. Pencil drawing by George Dance, 1795

example, that he actually registered Laugier's primitivism as he read and reread the treatise (after all he only *noted down* extracts of a practical nature). In the same vein, Du Prey prefers to attribute his geometrical abstraction to inadequate drawing skills rather than to any self-conscious reductivism. These are moments when the masterly array of evidence fails to result in a convincing conclusion.

In the end, however, despite the absence of "hard" evidence, the power and consistency of Soane's style must win over all uncertainty as to its self-conscious nature: Balanced between a tenacious predilection to pull back all classical motifs and forms to their abstract roots and a passionate love of display of the remains of classical monuments in themselves, Soane's architecture cannot be anything but forged out of a double inheritance, and wilfully so. This double impulse was the product of the influence of the *philosophes* of the French enlightenment, who proposed the radical reduction or rather the restoration of architecture to its primitive roots; and of the more empirical English, who were engaged under the auspices of the Society of Dilettanti in recording the actual shape of antique ruins. In Soane, the influence of John Wood and Robert Adam, with their restoration of Palmyra and Diocletian's Palace at Spoleto, was joined to that of Laugier, Ledoux and Boullée, with their elemental forms of structure and symbolism. But Soane, "furtive" and "paranoid," went further. He created a personal style often shocking to contemporaries that, manifesting all the contradictions between illuminist natural law and historicist relativism, "spoke for itself." And here the relationship with language has to be understood as escaping all the commonplaces of the linguistic analogies or semiotic analyses of the last twenty years. For Soane, and for many of his contemporaries, architecture *was* a language in its own right, communicating by means of signs its ideas and aspirations, disseminating its influence—moral, political and empirical—in the world like so many rhetorical addresses.

This search for what the later critics of the nineteenth century termed scornfully *architecture parlante* was the reason so many teachers and architects emphasized the idea of *character* in building. The dictum that a work should exhibit, like an actor on the stage, its own essential nature so that it was recognizable as, say, an asylum or a prison, became a commonplace in the last years of the eighteenth century. Soane, as Du Prey shows was the heir of such prescriptions, and worked with them on his own terms. Utilizing carved emblems in bas-relief—as in the Dairy at Hammels—materials, and entire compositions, Soane developed a repertory of motifs and moods that enabled him to describe each of his designs to an observer.

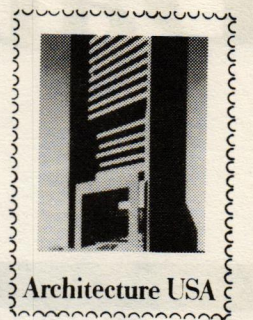
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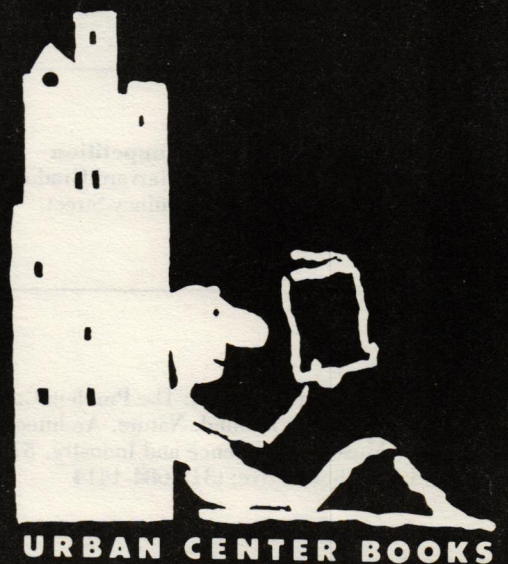


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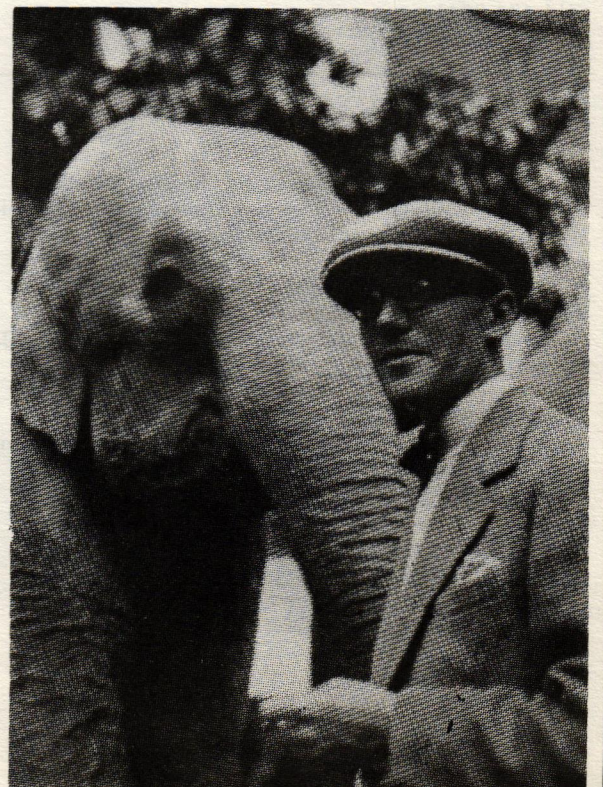
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The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies is pleased to announce that Rizzoli Communications, Inc., has taken over as publisher of *Oppositions Journal*. Designed by Massimo Vignelli, *Oppositions* was founded in 1973 by Peter Eisenman, Kenneth Frampton, and Mario Gandelsonas. Since that time, Anthony Vidler and Kurt W. Forster have also become Editors, with Joan Ockman as an Associate Editor.

In June this year, *Oppositions* received the 1982 medal from the American Institute of Architects for "influencing architecture through a superior forum for scholarly ideas and criticism."

Oppositions addresses itself to the evolution of new models for a theory of architecture, relating such models to specific buildings and theories. The discourse is not limited to the very latest work, but rather attempts to link the present and past, in order to assess the overall contribution of major individuals and movements still relevant today. It encourages a climate of opinion where ideas and actions are necessarily complementary in any vital architectural culture.

Oppositions 25 is a special issue on *Monument/Memory*, edited by Kurt Forster. ISBN 0-8478-5359-4. September.
Oppositions 26 includes essays by Francesco Dal Co, Kenneth Frampton, and Rafael Moneo, among others. ISBN 0-8478-5360-8. December.



But if the imperative to demonstrate the use of different types of building was marked in Soane's work, another aspiration, that of revealing the essential nature of architecture itself, was equally evident. The "return to origins" had been a favorite cry of the mid-century *philosophes* as they tried to distinguish fact from fiction, certainty from myth, essential nature from civilized accretion. The celebrated model of the primitive hut, described by the Abbé Laugier and repeated as if by rote throughout the century, was one such return, corresponding to that proposed by the Abbé Condillac as a means of reducing the structure of language to fundamental elements. The frontispieces to Laugier's immensely influential essay, published in 1753 and 1755 and translated into English almost immediately, were the bases of so many "primitive" fantasies of architectural origins for the rest of the century. Du Prey demonstrates that Soane was well aware of these images as he sought to describe "primitive manner of building" in projects for dairies and humble rural cottages, farm buildings, and estate outhouses.

Allied to this overt primitivism was a sense that the radical principle of architecture lay not so much in allegories of origin, or literal evocations of bark-covered columns, but more in the primal forms of geometry itself. Ledoux and Boullée explored such abstraction, allying it to a renewed sense of symbolic form in antiquity. Although Du Prey does not emphasize it enough, Soane took his cue from their example. In this kind of "radical classic" architecture, the surface of the building, stripped and polished, exhibited the play of a pure Newtonian principle, and represented not only the basic volumetric elements of the composition but also their process of assembly.

For many architects, these returns to the origin were reconciled with antique precedent only with difficulty. Ledoux was certain only when both might be represented diagrammatically; Boullée, only when geometry and symbolism came together, as in the pyramids of his cemeteries. But for Soane, the demands of antique precedent and radical form were easily joined together, and under the sign of architectural *character*. In his personal and developed manner, emblem—in the form of classical fragment—and root—in the form of primitive allegory or primal geometry—were literally superimposed on each other. The building, with its abstracted surfaces, became a sort of page on which allusion might be deployed as on the white expanse of a book. And he went further, abstracting in plane beyond receding plane all the panoply and apparatus of the classical orders and their extension into three dimensional spaces and vaulting. The segmental arches, disconnected literally, and by mirrors sometimes phenomenally, from their supports; the stripped pilasters with linearly inscribed bands and flutes, the apologies for classical forms; the spaces themselves, each encapsulating a "type" of antique room without quoting it—all lent an air of mannered removal from precedent, while self-conscious of its looming presence. The "lines" of classical motifs were, so to speak, inscribed like writing in the planes and volume of the building itself. On top of this the literal encrustations, the implantation of the collector's passion, were simply so many clues to what had already been abstracted.

This type of architecture, represented at its height by the Bank of England Complex and the Soane Museum itself, was thus both a return to a primitive root and an intensely sophisticated elaboration on the root: at once both primal and decadently modern. Invested with all the despair of the historically conscious mind, it yet retained traces of a utopia of pure form. In this sense, Soane is the Adolf Loos of his generation. Resisting stylistic eclecticism to the last, he nevertheless understands that a pure and abstract "philosophical" language is beyond the competence of modern man to decipher. Only in a taut and sometimes deliberately ugly compromise, inventing "solutions" with all the will of a self-conscious decadent, a dandy withdraws from his public in order to preserve his couture for another day. In Soane as in Loos we recognize that type of modern man described for the first time by Baudelaire—he looks in the mirror for a key to pure autonomy, yet always fears that what is behind the mirror is in some way more authentic.

Dateline: November '82

Exhibits

Atlanta

Rob Krier Drawings

Nov 12-30 Material from the recent book *Urban Projects 1968-82*. Rizzoli Gallery, 328 Omni International; (404)688-9065

Boston/Cambridge

Skowhegan School Charrette Competition

Nov 9-12 Drawings and models. Harvard Graduate School of Design, Gund Hall, 48 Quincy Street, Cambridge; (617)495-4122

Chicago

Scandinavia Today

Through Jan 6 "Danish Design: The Problem Comes First." Nov 17-Jan 9 "Finland: Nature, Architecture and Design." Museum of Science and Industry, 57th Street and Lake Shore Drive; (312)684-1414

Houston

Dreams and Schemes, Visions and Revisions

Through Nov 14 New proposals for the expansion, renovation, rebuilding, or conversion of the existing Contemporary Arts Museum structure. Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd.; (713)526-3129

H.H. Richardson

Through Nov 28 Photos and drawings of residential projects 1879-86. Farish Gallery, Rice University; (713)527-8101

Josef Hoffmann Design Classics

Nov 17-Jan 9 Furniture, decorative arts, drawings. Fort Worth Art Museum, 1309 Montgomery Street; (817)738-9215

La Jolla

The California Condition

Nov 13-Jan 2 Exhibition by 12 contemporary California architects, curated by Stanley Tigerman and Susan Grant Lewin. La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 700 Prospect Street; (714)454-3541

Mies van der Rohe

Nov 20-Jan 2 Mies' Barcelona Pavilion and furniture designs. Organized and sponsored by Knoll International, the exhibition includes a scale model of the Pavilion. La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 700 Prospect Street; (714)454-3541

Los Angeles Area

Daniel Libeskind

Through Nov 10 Drawings by the designer. Southern California Institute of Architecture Gallery, 3201 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica; (213)829-3482

SITE Transformed Houses

Through Nov 19 Exhibition of schemes. UCLA Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles; (213)825-8950

Panos Koulermos

Through Nov 21 "Context and Response," architectural drawings and projects. Municipal Art Gallery, 4800 Hollywood Blvd., Barnsdall Park; (213)660-2200

Arata Isozaki

Through Jan 1 Isozaki's proposals for the Museum of Contemporary Art. The Schindler House, 835 N. Kings Road, Los Angeles; (213)651-1510

Lawrence Halprin

Nov 17-Dec 10 Drawings by the landscape architect. Southern California Institute of Architecture Gallery, 3201 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica; (213)829-3482

Miami/Coral Gables

Le Corbusier's Saint-Pierre de Firminy

Nov 20-Jan 2 Exhibition of the church scheme. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 121 Anastasia Avenue, Coral Gables; (305)442-1448

New Haven

Helmut Jahn

Nov 3-Dec 3 Recent work. Art and Architecture Building, Yale University, 180 York Street; (203)436-0853

New York City

The Drawings of Hector Horeau

Through Nov 27 Drawings by this visionary architect. French Institute/ Alliance Française, 22 East 60th Street; (212)355-6100

Scandinavian Modern 1880-1980

Through Jan 2 Retrospective of Scandinavian design. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212)860-6868

Precursors of Post-Modernism

Nov 4-Dec 18 Work by Milan architects of the 1920s and 1930s, sponsored by Alessi. The Architectural League, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)753-1722

Top of the City

Nov 18-Dec 6 Photos from Laura Rosen's book *Top of the City: New York's Hidden Rooftop World*. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)935-3595

American Picture Palaces

Nov 23-Feb 27 Photographs of movie houses. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212)860-6868

Philadelphia

Quaint and Secret Places

Nov 8-Dec 31 Photographs of Philadelphia, 1862-1982. AIA Gallery, 117 South 17th Street; (215)569-3168

San Francisco

Urban Obsessions

Through Nov 14 Drawings by Lars Lerup, Stanley Saitowitz, Mark Mack, and Barbara Stauffacher Solomon. Philippe Bonnafont Gallery, 2200 Mason Street; (415)781-8896

Italian Re-Evolution

Nov 15-Jan 16 Design in the '80s, a travelling exhibition curated by Piero Sartogo. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Van Ness Avenue at McAllister Street; (415)863-8800

Stamford

Furniture by American Architects

Nov 12-Jan 26 Designs by Richardson, Furness, Wright, Saarinen and Meier. Whitney Museum of American Art, Fairfield Branch, Champion Plaza, Atlantic Street and Tresser Blvd.; (203)358-7652

Washington, D.C.

Rhode Island Architecture

Through Jan 3 "Buildings on Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings 1825-1945." AIA Foundation, The Octagon, 1799 New York Avenue, NW; (202)626-7464

America's City Halls

Nov 16-Dec 30 Photos of 50 city halls spanning two centuries. AIA Building, 1735 New York Avenue, NW; (202)626-7464

Athens, Greece

Paris-Rome-Athens

Through Dec 15 "The Travels in Greece of French Architects of the 19th and 20th Centuries." Exhibition from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Alexander Soutzos Museum, 50 Vassileos Konstantinou; 7211010

London, England

E. C. P. Monson

Through Nov 11 An architectural practice in local authority housing, Islington 1919-1965. Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place; 5805533

Oxford, England

Ernest Trobridge

Nov 2-28 An exhibition of Trobridge's work; third in the series "Extraordinary Mainstreams." Museum of Modern Art, 30 Pembroke Street

Paris, France

La Construction Moderne

Through Nov 15 Biennale de Paris architecture section. Institut Français d'Architecture, 6 rue de Tournon; 6339036

Tadao Ando

Through Nov 20 "Minimalism," recent work by the Japanese architect. Institut Français d'Architecture, 6 rue de Tournon; 6339036

Rome, Italy

James Stirling

Through Nov 20 Works of the English architect. American Academy of Rome, Via Angelo Massina 5; 6588653

The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies

The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies has recently modified and strengthened its internal structure and broadened the membership of its Board of Trustees. Edward L. Saxe and Kenneth Frampton have been named President and Director of Programs, respectively, while Peter Eisenman will serve in the future as Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees and in a senior advisory capacity in program and academic related matters. At the same time, a number of nationally and internationally prominent architects have been added to the Board, including John Burgee, Henry Cobb, Cesar Pelli, Jaquelin Robertson, Kevin Roche, Arata Isozaki, Aldo Rossi, and James Stirling, bringing the present board membership to a total of twenty-six. Bruce Brackenridge will continue to serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Charles Gwathmey will remain actively involved as Vice Chairman of the Board. Other additions at the staff level include the appointment of Edith Morrill, formerly Budget Director at the Museum of Modern Art, who will serve as director of Administration and Development, and Barry Goldberg, formerly Development Officer at the American Council for the Arts, who takes up the post of Development Officer.

Mr. Saxe has most recently served as Deputy Director and General Manager of the Museum of Modern Art. He brings with him twenty-six years of managerial and organizational experience at CBS, where he was President of CBS-TV Services from 1969 to 1972. Kenneth Frampton, in addition to serving since 1972 as a tenured faculty member of the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, has been affiliated with the Institute since 1970, serving in various capacities and most recently as Director of Publications. Aside from being responsible for the programmatic content of the IAUS, he will also serve as Chairman of the Board of Fellows. Both Frampton and Saxe envision several new undertakings as part of the Institute's efforts to broaden its civic role and reputation as a center for advanced research and a forum for architectural debate.

Coming: First of the "Skyline Evenings," November 16. "Post-Mortem on P3," an international symposium moderated by Robert Stern with Philip Johnson, Aldo Rossi, Peter Eisenman and others; call 398-9474 for details.

Classified: Office and studio, 18th Street near Seventh Avenue. 2,000 sq. ft., ground floor. Office with skylit studio. 14 ft. ceiling. 5-7 year lease by owner. Available 12/1/82. Call (212) 924-8614

Corrections

Contrary to the report in Skyline last month, Richard Meier and Charles Moore will not be among the participants at Columbia University's symposium on American Architecture scheduled for the coming spring.

The photograph of Bruce Goff that appeared in last month's Skyline was wrongly credited to the estate of Bruce Goff; we apologize for this error. The picture was taken by Donald Hoffmann (*Kansas City Star*).

Events

Boston/Cambridge

Dutch Architecture Between the Wars

Nov 5-6 Conference including speakers John Habraken, Stanislaus von Moos, Richard Pommer, Helen Searing, Stanford Anderson. Room 9-150, Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; (617)253-7791

Harvard GSD Lecture Series

Nov 10 Myron Goldsmith **Nov 17** Christopher Alexander **Dec 8** Emilio Ambasz. 8:00pm. Gund Hall, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 48 Quincy Street; (617)495-4122

Skowhegan School Charrette Competition

Nov 18 Symposium chaired by Graham Gund. 7:30pm. Gund Hall, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 48 Quincy Street; (617)495-4122

Charlottesville

University of Virginia Lectures

Nov 2 Alexander Cooper **Nov 9** Leon Krier **Nov 23** Jim Heeson **Dec 2** Joseph Connors. 8:00 pm. Room 153, Campbell Hall, University of Virginia; (804)924-0311

Chicago

Graham Foundation Lectures

Nov 3 Michael Dennis, "The French Hotel: Excursus Americanus" **Nov 15** Emilio Ambasz, "Ambasz on Emilio!" 8:00pm. Graham Foundation, 4 West Burton Place; (312)787-4071

Houston

Dreams and Schemes, Visions and Revisions

Nov 3 Hossein Osconie **Nov 10** Bernardo Fort-Brescia **Nov 12** Charles Tapley. Informal talks by participants in "Dreams and Schemes, Visions and Revisions for the Contemporary Art Museum." 12:00 noon. Contemporary Arts Museum, 4216 Montrose Blvd.; (713)526-3129

Ithaca

Cornell University Lecture Series

Nov 11 Everette & LaBarbara Fly **Nov 16** Claus Herdeg **Nov 30** Leon Krier **Dec 2** Nick Weingarten. 8:15pm. Olive Tjaden Hall, Cornell University; (607)256-5236

La Jolla

California Connections

Nov 6-Dec 12 Lectures by Frank Israel, Michael Ross, Anthony Lumsden, Moore Ruble and Yudell, Eric Moss, Morphosis, Frank Gehry, Rob Wellington Quigley, Ted Smith, Tom Grondona, William Turnbull, Dan Solomon/Barbara Stauffacher, Thomas Gordon Smith. La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 700 Prospect Street; for details (714)454-3541.

Los Angeles Area

SCI-ARC Design Forum

Nov 3 Raimund Abraham **Nov 10** Dara Birnbaum **Nov 17** Lawrence Halprin **Dec 1** Kenneth Frampton. 8:00pm. Southern California Institute of Architecture, 1800 Berkeley Street, Santa Monica; (213)829-3482

New Orleans

Tulane Lecture Series

Nov 15 Steven Holl, "The Alphabetical City and Projects" **Nov 22** Ralph Knowles, "The Polar Landscape: An Interpretation of the City." 8:00pm. Room 403, Richardson Memorial Hall, Tulane University; (504)865-5389

New York City

Architecture and Interiors of the '80s

"A Decade of Challenge," lecture series **Nov 1** Stephen Jacobs **Nov 8** Theo Prudon **Nov 9** Kevin Walz **Nov 10** Jack Lenor Larsen **Nov 13** James Wines **Nov 15** Giorgio Cavaglieri **Nov 16** Louis Tregre **Nov 18** Bart Voorsanger **Nov 22** Kent Barwick **Nov 23** Sam de Santo **Nov 29** Wrap-up on preservation **Nov 30** Jack Dunbar. 6:00pm. Lectures will be held at the Pratt Manhattan Center, 160 Lexington Avenue, and various studios; for information call (212)685-3754

Architectural League Lectures

Nov 2 Germano Celant, last in a series of three lectures on "Art and Architecture: Wrestling With Desire" **Nov 9** Fulvio Irace, "Precursors of Post-Modernism" **Nov 16** Richard Etlin, "The First 'Post-Modernism': Stile Novecento 1919-1934" **Nov 30** "Building of the Month: The Portland Building." Presented by Michael Graves with discussion. 6:30pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)753-1722

Interior Design Lectures

"Evolving Forms and Concepts." **Nov 2** Salvatore La Rosa **Nov 9** Jon Michael Schwarting **Nov 16** Beverly Russell. 6:00pm. Higgins Hall, Pratt Institute, St. James and Lafayette, Brooklyn; (212)636-3600

Architecture: The State of the Art

Nov 3 Paul Goldberger, "The Architecture of New York" **Nov 10** Brendan Gill, "The Preservation of Our Architectural Heritage" **Nov 17** James Marston Fitch, "The American Dream: The Garden City" **Nov 24** Norman Foster, "An Oversea View of Architecture" **Dec 1** Moshe Safdie, "Private Jokes in Public Places." Series sold out; limited single tickets, \$5. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street; (212)570-3949

Urban Center Books

Authors speak on their recent books in "Forums on Form." **Nov 3** Arthur Drexler, *The Architecture of Richard Neutra* **Nov 10** Craig Castleman, *Getting Up: Subway Grafitti in New York* **Nov 17** Robert Jensen and Patricia Conway, *Ornamentalism* **Nov 24** James Wines, *Highrise of Homes* **Dec 1** Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design*. 12:30pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)935-3595

Le Corbusier Sketchbooks

Nov 3 Symposium with Kenneth Frampton, "Le Corbusier: Notations of Experience"; Stanford Anderson, "Jeanneret and Behrens"; Kurt Forster, "An Architecture Drawn from Life." Special viewing of the exhibition. 6:00pm. National Academy of Design, Fifth Avenue at 89th Street; for reservations (212)369-4880

American Architecture Series

Nov 3 Peter Eisenman and Jaquelin Robertson **Nov 17** Kevin Roche. 5:00pm. \$40 for the course, \$8 at the door. The New School at Parsons, 66 Fifth Avenue; (212)741-5690

Columbia Lectures

Nov 3 Barton Myers, "Recent Works" **Nov 10** Robert A.M. Stern, "Works" **Nov 17** Fernando Domeyko-Perez, "Analytic Methodology for Structuring Traditional Forms" **Dec 1** Raimund Abraham, "Works." 6:00pm. Woods Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University; (212)280-3473

Tekné Lectures

Series of lectures on "Form in Furniture." **Nov 4** Richard Artschwager, "The Cusp: The Useful and the Useless" **Nov 11** Frank Gehry, "Latest Pieces" **Nov 18** Scott Burton, "Recent Furniture." 6:30pm. \$90 for the series, \$9.50 at the door. The Open Atelier of Design, 12 West 29th Street; for reservations (212)686-8698

Royal Oak Lecture

Nov 30 Malise Ropner, "Splendour Restored: The English Baroque Architecture of Wren, Hawksmoor and Vanbrugh." Members \$5, non-members \$6.50. The Mayer House, 41 East 72nd Street; (212)861-0529

Pratt Lectures

Nov 4 Crombie Taylor, "Sullivan Banks," 12:00, and "Crystal Palace," 6:00 **Nov 11** Lewis Rudin, "The Role of the Developer in the Community" **Nov 18** Milton Glaser, "Recent Work" **Dec 2** John Burgee, "Excitement or Confusion: The State of the Arts." 6:00pm. Higgins Hall, Pratt Institute, St. James and Lafayette, Brooklyn; (212)636-3404

Bauhaus Dances

Nov 6-7 Reconstruction of Oskar Schlemmer's "Six Bauhaus Dances." 8:30pm. 179 Varick Street. Call The Kitchen for information; (212)425-3614

Twentieth Century American Culture

Lectures sponsored by the Whitney Museum of American Art. **Nov 18** Fredric Jameson, "Post-Modernism and the Consumer Society" **Dec 1** Annette Michelson, "Transgression and Institution in Artistic Practice." 8:00pm. \$5. Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center; for tickets call (212)570-3652

Philadelphia

University of Pennsylvania Lectures

Nov 3 Taft Architects, "Recent Work" **Nov 17** Bernardo Fort-Brescia/Arquitectonica, "On Recent Work." 6:30pm. Alumni Town Hall, University of Pennsylvania, 33rd Street and Locust Walk; (215)898-5728

San Francisco/Bay Area

University of California Lectures

Nov 10 Tom F. Peters, "The Genesis of the Wire Suspension Bridges of Switzerland and France, 1920-50" **Nov 17** Gwendolyn Wright, "Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America." 8:00pm. University of California at Berkeley, School of Architecture; (415)642-4942

Calgary, Canada

Public Library Lecture Series

Nov 12 Diana Agrest, "Recent Work." Central Library, Calgary; for details (403)264-5015

Düsseldorf, Germany

Architectural Trends

Lectures sponsored by the Academy of the Chamber of Architects, Northrhine-Westfalia. **Nov 9** Ricardo Bofill **Nov 23** Vittorio Gregotti. 6:30pm. Staatliche Kunstacademie Düsseldorf, Eiskellerstrasse 1. **Nov 18** Hans Hollein. 3:30pm. Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Abteistrasse 27, Mönchengladbach

London, England

RIBA Lectures

Nov 2 Dr. Patricia Garside, "E.C.P. Monson: An Architectural Practice in Local Authority Housing, Islington 1919-1965" **Nov 16** Quinlan Terry, "Genuine Classicism" **Nov 23** Dr. Peter Smith, "Architectural Aesthetics: A Science Based Hypothesis." 6:15pm. Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place; 5805533

Paris, France

Festival d'Automne

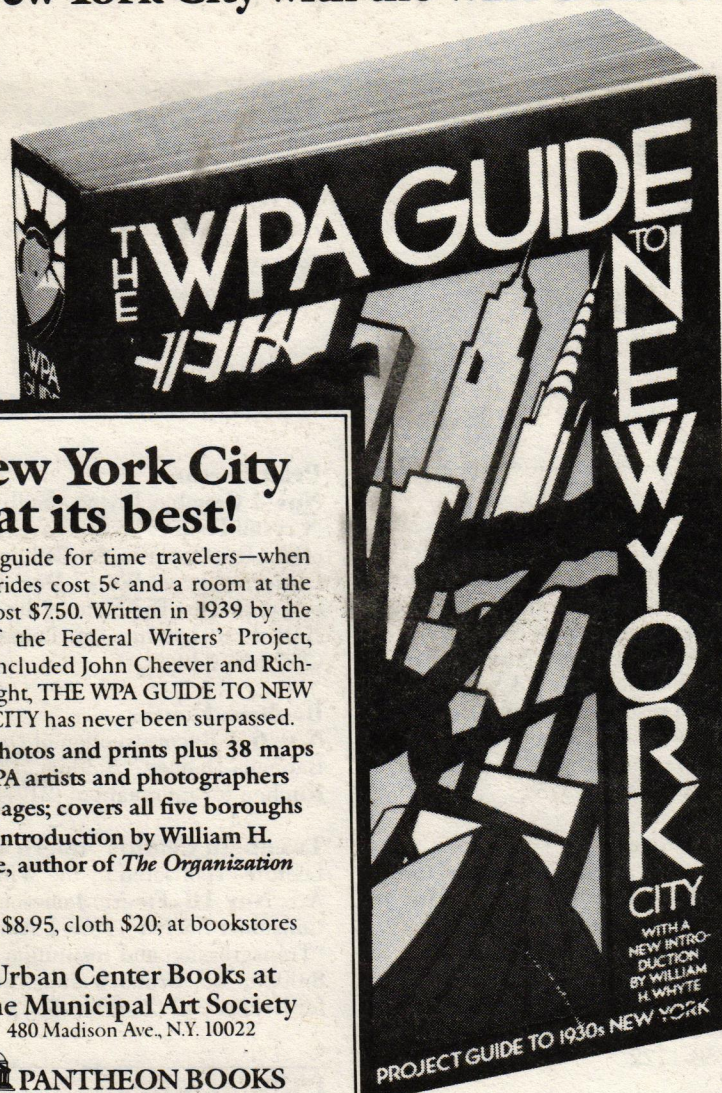
Nov 4 Berthold Lubetkin, "Architecture and Social Engagement" **Nov 12** Oriol Bohigas, "Tradition of Catalan Modernism." 6:30pm. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Salle Melpomene, 11 quai Malaquais; 2603457

La Modernité: Un Projet Inachevé

Oct-Nov A series of conferences with speakers Meier, Chemetov, Burckhardt and Schmidt, Lubetkin, Van Eyck, Smithson, Frampton, Gregotti, Stirling, Raullet, and Hollein. For information call Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 2603457

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