

Skyline

January 1983

The Architecture and Design Review

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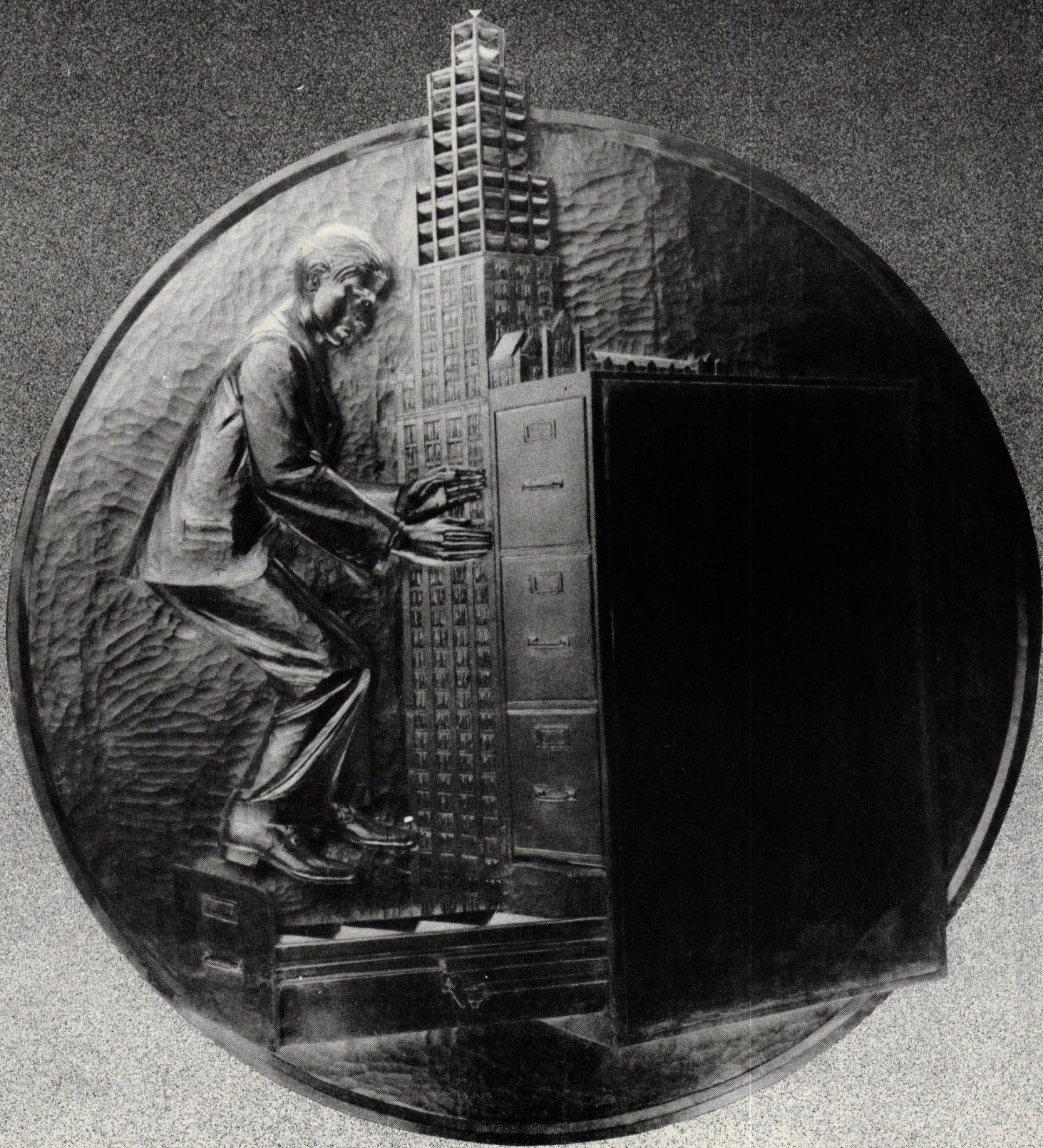
On Style

**Graves in Portland, Portman in the Far East, Chicagoans at Home
Plus Exhibit at La Jolla,
Installation at the Met, Architecture in Film**



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Oppositions Books



Style and Epoch

Moisei Ginzburg
 translated and introduced by
 Anatole Senkevitch, Jr.

Moisei Ginzburg was one of the founders of the Constructivist movement in Soviet architecture, and its chief spokesman. This book, originally published in Moscow in 1924, is widely regarded as the single most important architectural statement to come out of Russia in this century.

160 pp. 79 illus. \$30.00

Spoken into the Void

Collected Essays 1897-1900

Adolf Loos

translated by Jane O. Newman
 and John H. Smith

Loos's architectural work is part of the Modernist canon and his writings provide a new perspective on the Modern Movement at a time when its theories, artifacts, and buildings are under attack. These perceptive and witty essays range from interior design to men's fashions and are written in a brilliant and outspoken style that few contemporary polemicists can match.

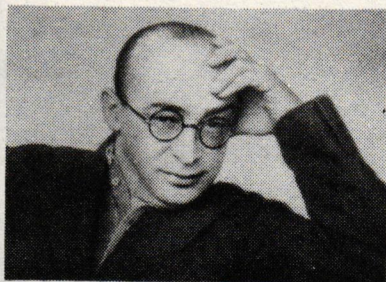
160 pp. 99 illus. \$30.00

Essays in Architectural Criticism

Modern Architecture and Historical Change

Alan Colquhoun

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Aldo Rossi

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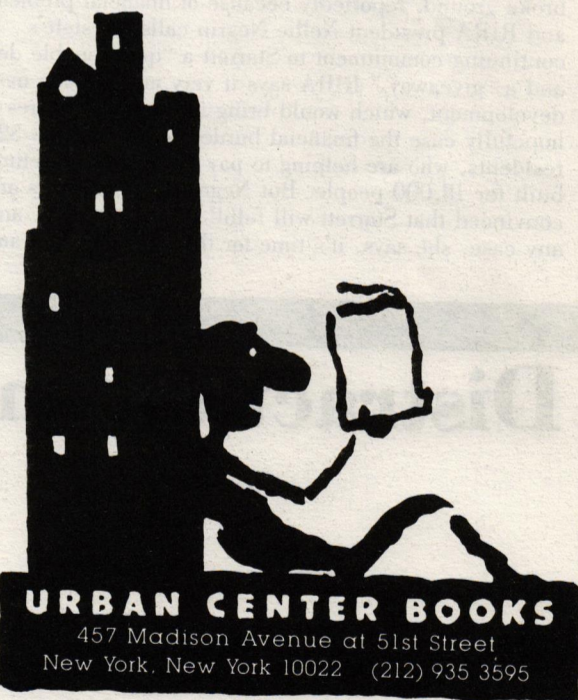
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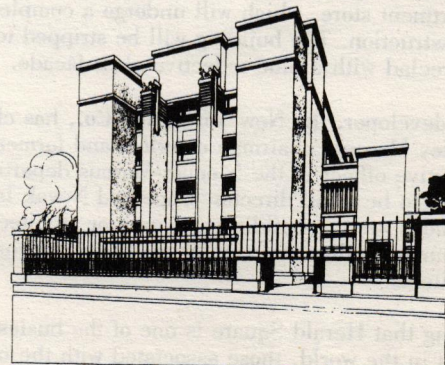


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New York City Report

Peter Freiberg

Action on Roosevelt Island

Ever since planning began back in the 1960s to convert Welfare Island into a "new town" called Roosevelt Island, the narrow East River sliver has not had an easy time. The developer, the state's Urban Development Corporation (UDC), suffered a fiscal collapse, a master plan by Philip Johnson and John Burgee was radically altered and large portions of the land slated for construction were left vacant. After completion of the first housing — North Town I — in the mid-1970s, a lengthy rent strike and tram breakdowns marred what has still been, for many residents, an attractive way of life.

Now, Roosevelt Island is again the focus of several disputes. The state is seeking to spur construction by the Starrett Housing Corporation of a second phase of residential development, but the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) distrusts Starrett and wants a rethinking of the island's master plan. Meanwhile, the city and state are clashing over the completion date of a Roosevelt Island stop on a new subway line. And residents are battling the state over a 19.5 per cent rent hike imposed on the low-to-middle income Eastwood project.

The development conflict is over North Town II, which would be built north of the present housing and facing Manhattan between 73rd and 79th Streets. In 1977, the state leased the land to Starrett, which signed a development agreement in 1979; the designated architect was Gwathmey Siegel and Associates. But Starrett never broke ground, reportedly because of financial problems, and RIRA president Nellie Negrin calls the state's continuing commitment to Starrett a "questionable deal" and a "giveaway." RIRA says it very much wants more development, which would bring in additional stores and hopefully ease the financial burden on the current 5200 residents, who are helping to pay for an infrastructure built for 18,000 people. But Negrin says residents aren't convinced that Starrett will fulfill its commitment, and in any case, she says, it's time for the city, the state and

the community to reexamine a master plan that goes back more than a decade.

Deputy Mayor Robert Wagner, Jr. told *Skyline* that he, too, favors a reexamination of Roosevelt Island's master plan. But he says his "instinct" is to exclude from this rethinking the Starrett housing, because the firm has a commitment from Washington of 200 federally-subsidized units to be included in the 1000-apartment development (the remaining 800 units would be market-rate); without Starrett's participation, Wagner says, the low-rent units would be lost. Negrin counters that she'd like to see "documentation" that only Starrett can get the federal subsidy. If the Starrett site is left out of a reevaluation, she says, that would mean the only site studied would be South Town — between the tram and the present housing — which does not yet have a developer.

To service the present residents and the 2500 people the proposed Starrett project would bring in, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is building a Roosevelt Island stop on a new IND subway line running under East 63rd Street and the East River into Queens. The city is pledged to open this stop by December 1984, and if it doesn't, the state could seek, under the terms of the original contract, to turn the management of the island over to the city — a prospect that terrifies City Hall. Wagner says the city has "every intention" of meeting the deadline, but just in case unforeseen circumstances arise, wants to extend the deadline by one year. Residents wonder whether the MTA is questioning the opening of another money-losing line, and the state, which says its financial agreements could be affected by a delay in subway service, has refused to go along with a one-year extension. As a bargaining tool, the Koch Administration is holding up Board of Estimate approval of a transfer of the management of Roosevelt Island from UDC to the state Division of Housing and Community Renewal.

Retraction on Air Rights

In the face of a likely defeat at the Board of Estimate, the Koch Administration has withdrawn — at least temporarily — its precedent-setting plan to sell air rights over city-owned properties (see *Skyline*, October 1982, p. 4; April, p. 4). But the Administration insists it will reintroduce the proposal after it draws up specific air rights development plans for two midtown properties that were to constitute the initial sales.

The withdrawal of the proposal adds to City Hall's budget problems, since Mayor Koch had included \$4.5 million from air rights sales in this year's projected revenue. In arguing for the sales, the Administration said that substantial income could be generated by allowing developers to build over lowrise city properties, such as firehouses, schools or police precincts, or on adjacent sites. But community and civic group critics responded that the city had failed to develop a comprehensive policy for such sales and that they could make congestion intolerable in already overbuilt areas such as midtown. In the case of the two midtown properties — a firehouse on West 48th Street and a transit substation on West 53rd Street — the city had neither specific air rights plans nor buyers, leading City Council President Carol Bellamy to oppose the sales.

Opposition from the theater industry was also a factor in the Administration's decision to withdraw. With theater owners seeking, in return for landmarking, "floating air rights" transferable anywhere in the Broadway district, nearby sales by the city would reduce the potential value of theater air rights. It's unlikely that City Hall will reintroduce its own air rights proposal until the theater question has been resolved.

Distraction on Herald Square

Macy's and Gimbels are scheduled to have a new neighbor in 1984 — a \$50 million theme retail center billed as New York's first "vertical shopping mall."

The 200-store mall, called Herald Center, is to be built on Herald Square in the now closed Korvettes department store, which will undergo a complete reconstruction. The building will be stripped to its frame and reclad with a blue reflective glass facade.

The developer, the New York Land Co., has chosen Stanley Marcus, chairman emeritus and former chief executive officer of the Nieman-Marcus department store chain, to be retail director. Copeland Novak Israel and Simmons are the building and interior architects, with Schuman, Lichtenstein, Claman, Efron the consulting architects.

Noting that Herald Square is one of the busiest retail areas in the world, those associated with the new project express confidence about its success. Officials of Macy's and Gimbels, who were present when the plans were unveiled, apparently believe the mall will help them, too, by drawing even more shoppers into the area, including tourists. The recession has hit the retail industry hard, however, and it will be interesting to see which stores sign up for Herald Center; so far, the developer has declined to name any prospective tenants.



Project for Herald Center, NYC

Update

• New York City will receive an estimated \$90 million for the right-of-way required to build Westway — even though it's far from certain the controversial superhighway-and-development project will ever be built (see *Skyline* May 1982, p. 4; October, p. 4).

A federal appeals court overturned a decision by Federal Judge Thomas Griesa that barred Washington from giving New York State the money to purchase the land for the project from the city. However, Westway opponents said they were confident the appeals court will

uphold the major thrust of Griesa's decision, which blocked virtually all funding for Westway until the environmental impact on the Hudson River's large striped bass population is determined. The opposition is seeking to have the city and state "trade in" the federal highway funds for \$1.4 billion that could be used to rehabilitate mass transit and build a modest West Side replacement road.

• Another hotly argued project seems far from getting underway, if indeed it ever does. St. Bartholomew's Church has yet to sign a contract with developer Howard Ronson or to seek Landmarks Preservation Commission

(LPC) approval to raze its community house at 50th Street and Park Avenue. The church leadership wants to reap the financial benefits from allowing Ronson to put up a 59-story office tower on the community house site (see *Skyline*, November 1981, p. 6; December, p. 3; February 1982, p. 4; March, p. 5).

Leslie Slote, a press spokesman for St. Bart's, says a formal application will probably be filed with the LPC in January. It's considered virtually certain that the landmarks agency and the Board of Estimate will refuse demolition approval, after which the church will take the matter to court.

Clean-Up in Bryant Park

Sitting in midtown behind the New York Public Library, Bryant Park, once an oasis for workers, shoppers and tourists, is now best known as a congregating place for drug dealers. But in the last two years, a nonprofit group has attempted to "recapture" the park for the people — and has chalked up some successes.

The Bryant Park Restoration Corporation (BPRC), supported by foundations and nearby corporations, faced the problem of halting a vicious cycle: fewer people used the park, giving over more "turf" to drug sellers, derelicts and hangers-on — many from nearby Times Square — which in turn persuaded additional people to stay away from the park.

The BPRC has tried to attract visitors to the park through lunchtime summer concerts, and by setting up a flower stand at the southwest corner of the park at 42nd Street and Sixth Avenue, among other alternatives. The canvas-covered iron support flower shop, funded in part by the Parks Council, a private group, has helped displace drug sellers from that corner and presents a positive image to passers-by. Even before BPRC was formed, the Parks Council had brought in book and record stalls to the park, and BPRC developed an artist-in-residence program. The artists were chosen to create works in the park, such as a series of transparent trellises and pillars, which the public could be involved in by making suggestions about their placement.

Bryant Park's maintenance was bolstered when BPRC hired a maintenance crew to supplement the city's work, and bought a graffiti remover for the Parks Department to use. On its part, the city stepped up maintenance and police efforts.

Has it worked? Bryant Park is far from totally transformed, and in the cold weather it doesn't look much different than it used to. But police report that crime and drug-selling has dropped significantly, and last summer the park had a livelier look, with more visitors and events than had been seen for a while. With

the graffiti removed, the central lawn resodded and shrubbery pruned, the park is more attractive physically. This spring, a major innovation will be the installation of a Bryant Park tickets booth, which will sell half-price music and dance tickets. Scheduled to be operated by the Theatre Development Fund, the booth is being designed by Mayers and Schiff, the architectural firm that designed the TKTS booth for half-price theater tickets in Duffy Square.

A cafe and some redesign of the park are also planned for the future. Although the Landmarks Preservation Commission, in designating the park, called it a "rare example of a small axial park in the classical French landscape tradition," its present design, implemented by Robert Moses in 1934, causes problems. Dan Biederman, BPRC's executive director, says Moses' raising of the park above street level isolated it from pedestrian traffic. Two additional entrances allowing people to go to the upper terrace from 40th and 42nd Streets are scheduled to be built — and hopefully will aid in a continuing "recapture" of Bryant Park.

Build-Up at Ruppert Site

On the Upper East Side another bitter development battle has sprung up between the city and some local residents. A community group has filed suit to compel the Koch Administration to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before going ahead with plans to complete the Ruppert Urban Renewal Project, which would bring more than 2000 new residents into the neighborhood.

The site in question is the square block bounded by 93rd and 94th Streets between Second and Third Avenues. To the south, from 90th to 93rd Streets, stand four residential towers that make up the first phase of the Ruppert urban renewal. The city is now proposing three more buildings: a 30-story luxury tower, to be built by Tishman Realty and Construction Co., Wayne Kasbar and Related Housing Companies and designed by Davis Brody and Associates, with 20 percent of the units reserved for federally-subsidized low income families; a 15-story low-rent project for the elderly, sponsored by the New York City Foundation for Senior Citizens and also designed by Davis Brody; and a 32-story luxury tower slated for a privately-held parcel, with Rafael Vinoly as architect and the Masovi Corp. as developer (Masovi is a subsidiary of B.A. Capital, the firm chosen to build the controversial Lincoln West complex on the West Side — see *Skyline*, April 1982, p. 4; June, p. 7; October, p. 5).

There is virtually unanimous support on the Upper East Side for the senior citizen housing, but the consensus then breaks down. The Koch Administration says it chose the Tishman luxury housing proposal because the firm agreed to pay the city \$10 million for the urban renewal land, and also promised to make up a potential \$400,000 shortfall in federal funds required for the senior citizen housing. Even if Washington comes through with the money, says City Hall, Tishman will pay the \$400,000, making possible a better-designed building. While Community Board 8 supported rezoning the land for highrise development, it initially favored another developer's plan and has not yet formally considered the Tishman proposal.

But a neighborhood group called CIVITAS, formed two years ago under the leadership of former city Parks Commissioner August Heckscher, is questioning the city's actions, including the rezoning. City Hall, says CIVITAS president Genie Rice, is using the senior citizen housing as a "Trojan horse" to get the luxury development approved. The neighborhood group insists it is not anti-development, but says it opposes piecemeal, "reactive" planning that doesn't consider the impact of new development on transportation, sanitation, police and other services. In its lawsuit filed in Manhattan Supreme Court, the East Side organization charges that the city reached a "clearly erroneous" conclusion in deciding that no EIS was necessary because the environmental impact of the new projects would be minimal. Rice says that in preparing an EIS, the city would have been forced to study "other alternatives."

Charles Reiss, a deputy commissioner in the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, denies that the 2000-plus new residents will have a deleterious impact on the neighborhood. Census reports, he says, show that the population in the area did not increase between 1970 and 1980. If the lawsuit is successful, says Reiss, it would "only set us back and make us do the whole thing [the plans] all over again."

The city's proposals would destroy an 11-year-old community garden designed by Graham Mackenzie Gordon, an architect and CIVITAS leader. CIVITAS is not making retention of the garden an issue, but the group does say the city has failed to provide for enough open space. Reiss retorts that the urban renewal construction would include new and upgraded sitting and recreational space. It is clear that the rabidly pro-development policies of Mayor Koch and previous mayors have left a legacy of distrust among many New Yorkers, and it's doubtful that this latest battle can be settled out of court.



Bryant Park looking east, c. 1935 (photo: New York Public Library Picture Collection)

Chicago Builds

Several projects just completed and others still under construction show yet another Chicago Style in the making.

One South Wacker

David Woodhouse

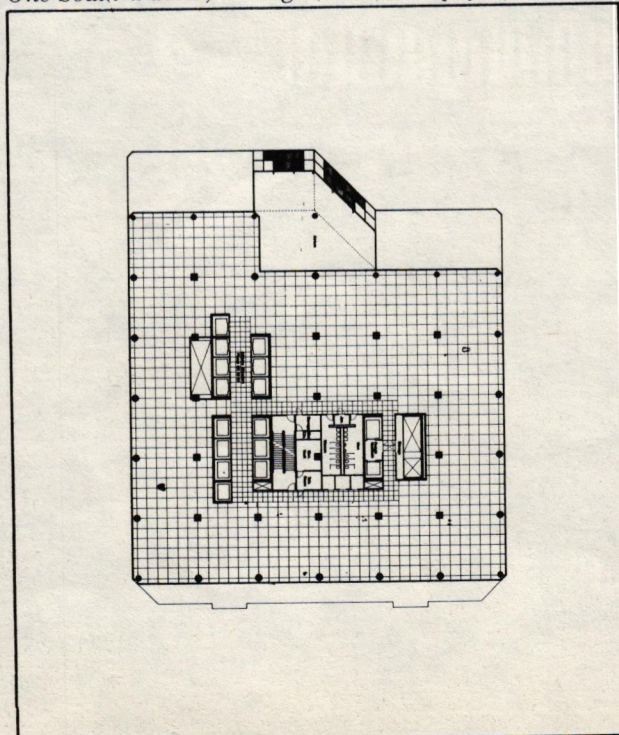
If the architects at SOM head every granite salesman's Christmas booze bottle list, the boys at Murphy/Jahn must have pride of place on that of every pitchman for reflective glass. Previously, Chicago has been pretty much the land of tinted glass and has tended to think, somewhat sniffily, of reflective glass as being something only worn in the suburbs or perhaps Texas. Murphy/Jahn, however, has been changing all that with an impressive string of large-scale urban office buildings, but never more completely as with their new, shimmering One South Wacker office building. Sheathed entirely in mirrored motley (a Whistler palette of silver, black, and pearl gray), it stands as massive and glittering as the majestic and sequined Margaret Dumont in *A Night at the Opera* (appropriately enough, as it is catty-corner from the Civic Opera House). Its skirt hiked slightly in front over its protruding knee to allow pedestrian access, it coyly exposes its cyclopean ebonized feet below the fringed hem of its spangled cloak at the side. By artfully manipulating this gridded reflective sheath, Jahn has been able to indulge his exuberant interest in both building skin and in the rich skyscraper heritage of the late twenties. He has also been able to delight his developer since gross rentable area is calculated to the glazing plane in Chicago.

The building's form clearly reflects Jahn's fascination with these confidently expressive buildings — in its centralized massing, its prominent setbacks (above and below each of which are multi-storied atria at the facade), its dominant verticals of geometrically patterned appliqué, its notched corners at shoulder level (which act as finial lanterns when lit at night), its angled corners (which also neatly solve the module-turning-the-corner problem by eliminating an awkward half-module of the glass skin), its vast marble-walled lobby with dogleg to side entrance, and its stepped tiara top.

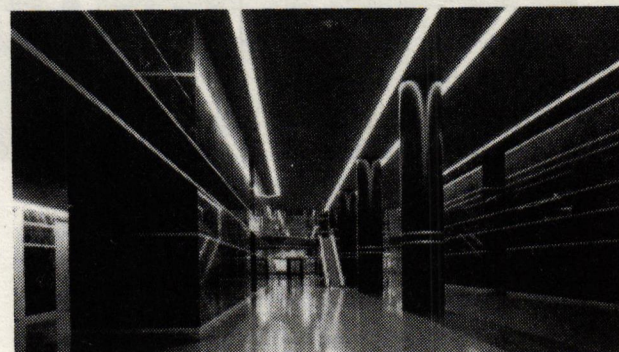
More interestingly, it frankly explores the notion of a tall building not as the embodiment of the familiar Vitruvian trinity, but as the clothed figure of the architect as couturier. This idea, always implicit in the curtain wall tradition, is developed here with a skill and an ironic wit very rare for Chicago.

Project: One South Wacker, Chicago, Illinois
Architect: Murphy/Jahn (Design Team: Helmut Jahn, James Gottsch, Philip Castillo)
Structural Engineer: Alfred Benesch & Co.
Client: The Madison-Wacker Joint Venture
Site: 190' x 240' corner lot in Chicago financial district
Program: 1.3 million s.f. of office space, to include two levels of parking below grade for 129 cars
Structure and materials: Modified flat plate reinforced concrete construction, with structural column base on 30' x 30' grid. Exterior material: silver reflective glass with a 5' module accented with black glass patterns, and coral glass.
Completion: January 1983

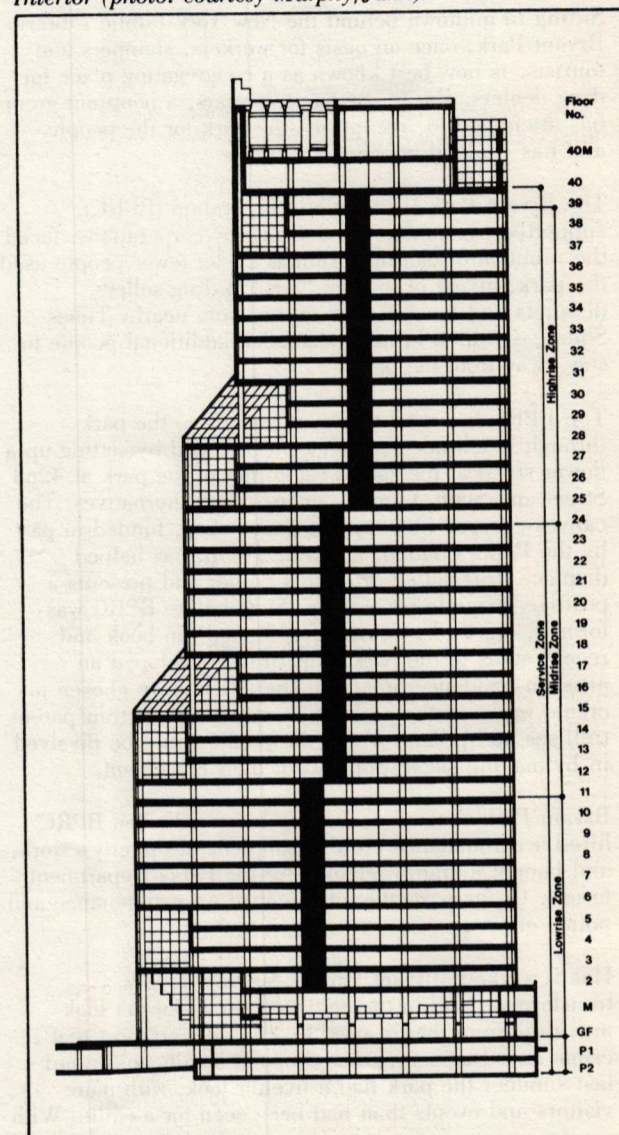
One South Wacker, Chicago (1983); Murphy/Jahn



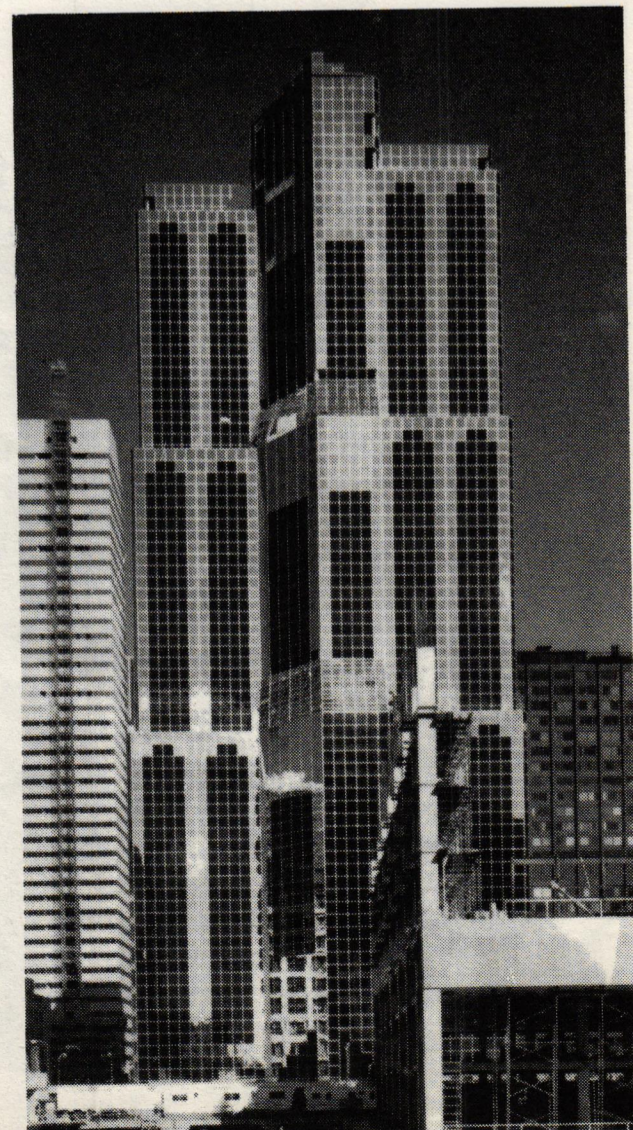
Typical floor plan



Interior (photo: courtesy Murphy/Jahn)



Section



Exterior (photo: courtesy Murphy/Jahn)

Board of Trade Addition

David Woodhouse

Murphy/Jahn's glittery Addition to Holabird and Root's 1930 Board of Trade looks much like a chromed clone of the original immediately behind. The massing of its south face is based on the original and rises, shorn of allegorical groups and ornament but with vestigial clock, to a broad hipped skylight topped by an octagonal finial logo of the trading pits. Although very difficult to perceive from the adjacent street level, due to the district's extreme density and the gingerbread confusion of the elevated railway tracks clogging Van Buren Street to the south, the Addition's orthogonally arranged reflective glass facets glint in a powerful crystalline image when glimpsed from the railroad yards or an expressway ramp.

The Addition's functions and structure are unusually complex and are belied by the apparent simplicity and uniformity of its outward appearance. The buildings *raison d'être*, of course, is its enormous (35,000 square feet) column-free multi-story trading floor, which is the largest that the site would allow and was the final determinant of the building's mass. The new trading room is on the fourth floor so that it can be connected to the trading room on the north side of the original building, with its tall narrow windows commanding a dramatic view straight up LaSalle Street. The new trading room is a far cry from the one that used to be in Sullivan's Stock Exchange right up the street (and now preserved like a fly in amber in the Art Institute) and is also quite different from its neighboring predecessor. Due to programmatic exigencies (e.g. the need to establish direct sightlines unimpeded by obstruction or visual distractions), it is windowless, being embedded in a dense poché of data display equipment and visitors' galleries. Thus its location (its existence even) is not marked on the exterior as the original trading room's was. Perhaps more remarkable, given Chicago's (and especially Murphy/Jahn's) heritage which has made so many of its buildings doxologies to the skeletal rather than the epidermal dieties, is the utter lack of any expression of the extraordinary system of large trusses required to stack a complicated office building atop such a large clearspan space. This huge room, the spare trading room above (which was to have been home to the Options Exchange before it built its shoebox across the

street), and the undulating two-story lobby space at street level with contiguous commercial space form the lower portion of the building.

Beginning at the twelfth floor the building becomes a U-shaped office building arranged around a dramatic atrium which is roofed by a hipped glass skylight on exposed steel trusses. The glazed elevators serving these office floors are free-standing in the atrium, Hyatt-style, arranged around an exposed steel tower so that the trader, hoarse and dishevelled from the pits, is wafted skyward through the atrium space to his office to pop a cork or lick his wounds as Fortuna dictates. The south side of the atrium is bounded by open circulation balconies but the east and west sides have flush-glazed walls that cascade (vertically and in segmented arcs) downward and inward in echelon, exposing the offices behind. The north side of the atrium is bounded by the ex-exterior wall of the original building itself whose windows now look into the atrium and afford a certain feeling of interesting ambiguity as to what is inside and what is outside as well as what is unobjectionable observation and what is out-and-out voyeurism. The strong verticals of the original building soar up, punctuated by setbacks, through the new hipped skylight to the hipped roof.

Jahn evidently took his inspiration for the characteristic rounded echelon motif that informs so much of the Addition from the same form that was prominently used in the original building's lobby, which is one of the Art Deco glories of Chicago. This motif was originally to have been the exterior shape for the Addition itself but was then discarded (only to reappear in Jahn's work in the office tower soon to replace the venerable Northwestern Station). It is used to visually unify the original and the new buildings as well as for the Art Deco associations in which Jahn has shown such a keen interest here and elsewhere. The undulating shape is everywhere — in the south entrance, the lobby mezzanine plan, the light sconces, the atrium walls, the atrium flooring pattern, and the tops of the elevator hoistway enclosure. Its flexibility, allusiveness, and playfulness are exploited fully in countless quotations, inversions, and inflections.

But if the decision to relate the addition to the original building through the elaboration of curved echelon motifs is successful, the fundamental decision to do likewise with the addition's shape is somewhat more problematic. Perhaps the difficulty is that the execution undermines the strategy. The same forms that were so successful in the original building are here made squat, bloated, mute, and are then decked out in mirrors. This, however, may be the addition's ultimate justification. What image could be more apt for Chicago's wheeler-dealers than a quick-silvered monument to fast money?

Project: Chicago Board of Trade Addition, Chicago, Illinois

Architect: Murphy/Jahn (Design Team: Helmut Jahn, R. Schildknecht, M. Wolf, R. Lieber, A. Cable)

Structural Engineer: Lev Zetlin Associates

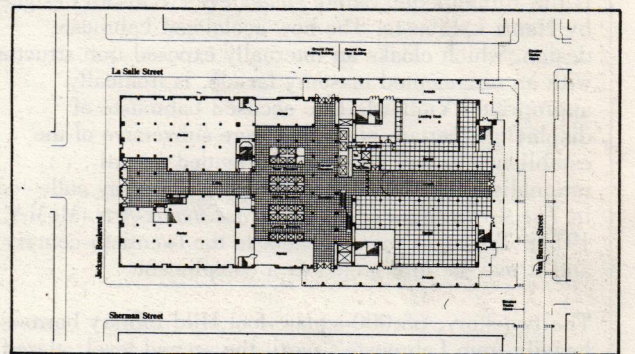
Client: Chicago Board of Trade

Site: 205' x 170' site on south end of LaSalle Street

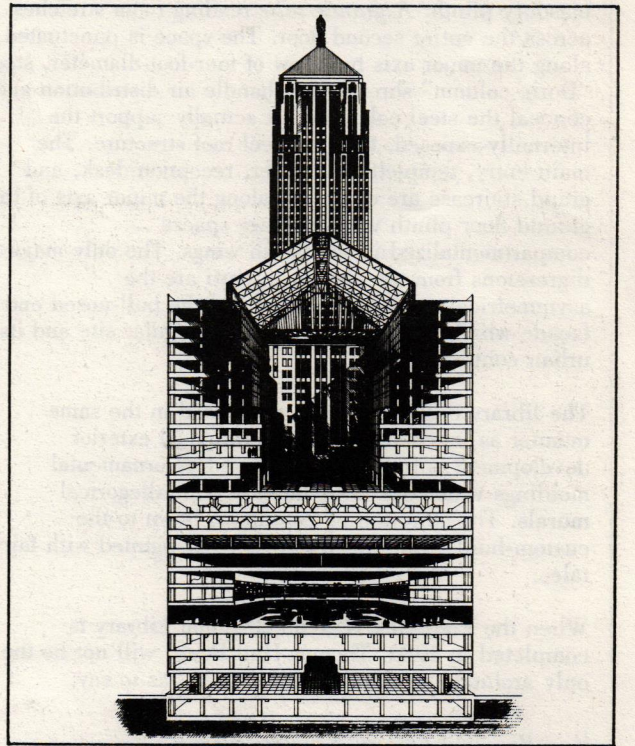
Program: 620,000 s.f. of trading space, support space, offices for members of the Chicago Board of Trade

Structure and materials: Steel frame with concrete on steel decking floors. Building is clad with reflective silver and non-reflective black glass and beige limestone curtain wall.

Completion: December 1982



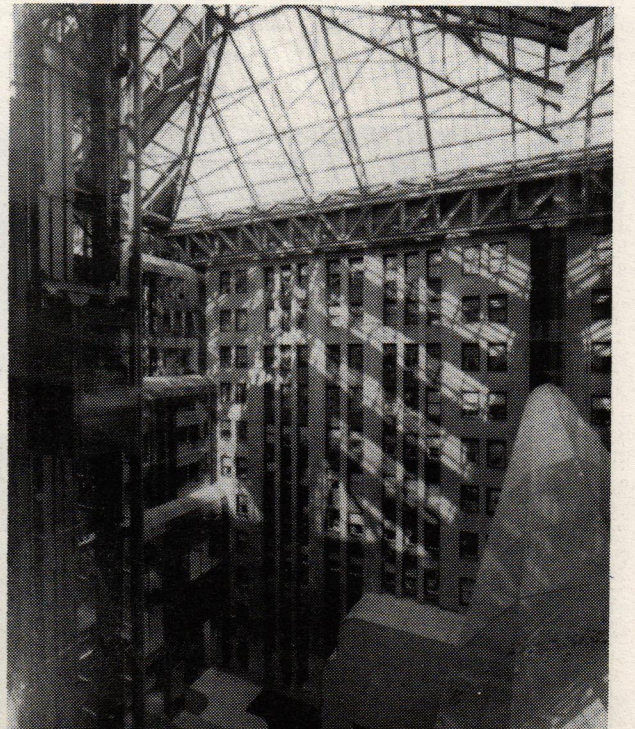
Ground floor plan



Section perspective



Chicago Board of Trade Addition, Chicago (1982); Murphy/Jahn | Shaw, Swanke, Hayden & Connell
(photo: courtesy Murphy/Jahn)



Interior of addition (photo: courtesy Murphy/Jahn)

Chicago Builds

Hild Library

Deborah Doyle

Thomas Hall Beeby has devised his own game plan to derive a design aesthetic that will counter Modern Movement apathy without resorting to post-modern pastiche. The Frederick H. Hild Regional Library plays out one variation of the game strategy that evolves from his 1977 essay "The Grammar of Ornament/Ornament as Grammar," published in the University of Pennsylvania's architectural journal, *Via III*.

This article attributes the Modern Movement's stagnation to oversights in subsequent technology and education. Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier were trained in, and derived their individual design aesthetics from, ornamental manipulation and classical composition. Lacking this knowledge, their followers failed to evolve new formal solutions: their inductive proceeding from the master builders' finished products generates an endless cycle of falsely inspired derivations. Furthermore, an evolutionary link was lost when early nineteenth-century architects failed to integrate the industrial technology developed by civil engineers into the architecture of their time.

The design of the Hild Library represents Tom Beeby and project architect Tannys Langdon's search for a solution that will not only retrieve the missing nineteenth-century link, but will also transport it into the twentieth century. The vehicle for this venture is a classical building using modern materials. Its role model is the Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève (1838-50) designed by Henri Labrouste. The now acclaimed Labrouste design, which cloaks an internally exposed iron structure with an ornamented masonry facade, is ironically appropriate: Viollet-le-Duc accused Labrouste of displaying "certain ideas that were subversive of the established order" and that "he tended toward . . . rationalism," as Neil Levine noted in an essay collected in *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts* (MoMA, 1977). Transport this comment to the twentieth-century and it may be interpreted as a compliment.

The two-story, 65,000-square-foot Hild Library borrows heavily from Labrouste's parti: the second level, glazed colonnade facade sits atop a one-story rusticated masonry plinth. A *grande salle* reading room stretches across the entire second floor. The space is punctuated along the major axis by a row of four-foot-diameter, steel "Doric column" shrouds that handle air distribution and conceal the steel columns that actually support the internally-exposed, tapered-steel roof structure. The main entry, tempietto-like foyer, reception desk, and grand staircase are organized along the minor axis of the ground floor plinth with ancillary spaces compartmentalized in the plinth wings. The only major digressions from the Labrouste parti are the asymmetrical mechanical tower and the bull-nosed end facade which is a response to the triangular site and its urban context.

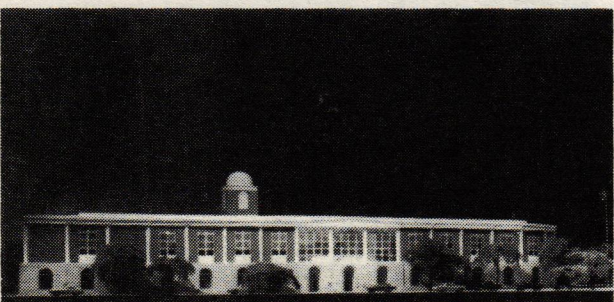
The library design is meant to be read in the same manner as its contents. The hierarchical exterior development is internally expressed by ornamental moldings which are to be filled in with allegorical murals. The story-telling continues, down to the custom-built children's furniture hand-painted with fairy tales.

When the Frederick H. Hild Regional Library is completed in 1984, Thomas Hall Beeby will not be the only architect anxious to hear what it has to say.

Hild Regional Library, Chicago (under construction); Hammond, Beeby and Babka



Section



Front elevation

One Magnificent Mile

Deborah Doyle

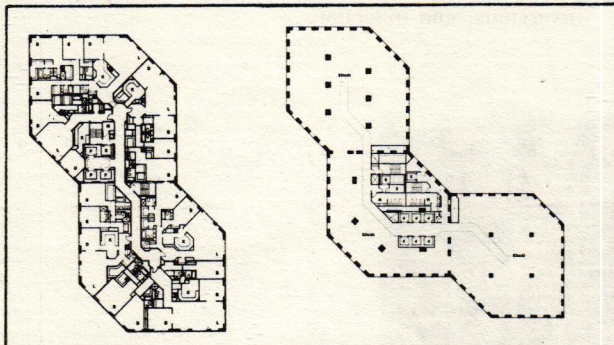
The Magnificent Mile is that stretch of North Michigan Avenue that affluent city dwellers ensconced in the Gold Coast to the north must traverse in order to reach their offices in the Loop. The southern gateway to this commercially elegant fairway is symmetrically anchored by two of Chicago's architectural doyens: the Wrigley Building (Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, 1921 and 1924) and the Tribune Tower (Raymond Hood, 1922). One Magnificent Mile, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (Chicago) and currently under construction, tries to strike up a similar gateway relationship with Benjamin Marshall's Drake Hotel (1919).

But North Michigan Avenue does not crisply terminate and One Magnificent Mile cannot claim clear title to the gatepost position that its configuration clearly aspires to. SOM's photomontage with One Mag Mile (in the local argot) artfully super-imposed still belies the fact that the position was sullied long ago when Sidney Morris designed the 50-story apartment tower directly to the north.

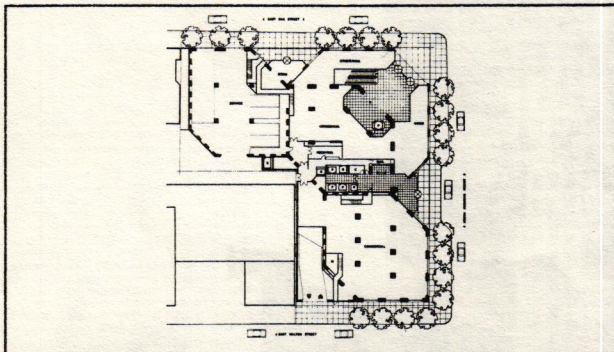
Sidney Morris did not intentionally foil SOM's aspirations: he was just doing his job in a flip-flopping urban context. In the early 1900's the riche lived in mansions on Lake Shore Drive while the nouveau riche occupied the ornate East Lake Shore Drive apartments and the Drake Hotel, all designed by Benjamin Marshall. But then the riche took over these apartments when their homes were demolished to make way for the nouveau riche lake front towers. How was Morris to know that his addition to the lakefront apartment wall would be the last? Or is it? One Mag Mile formally shuns this title with its 45° angles, but its 57 stories more obviously relate to its neighbor's fifty than to the more prestigious thirteen of the Drake Hotel.

Bruce J. Graham, the SOM senior design partner of One Mag Mile, designs in an idealized urban context. His sculpted pink granite creation will have its gateway reign when the riche tear down the apartment wall and move

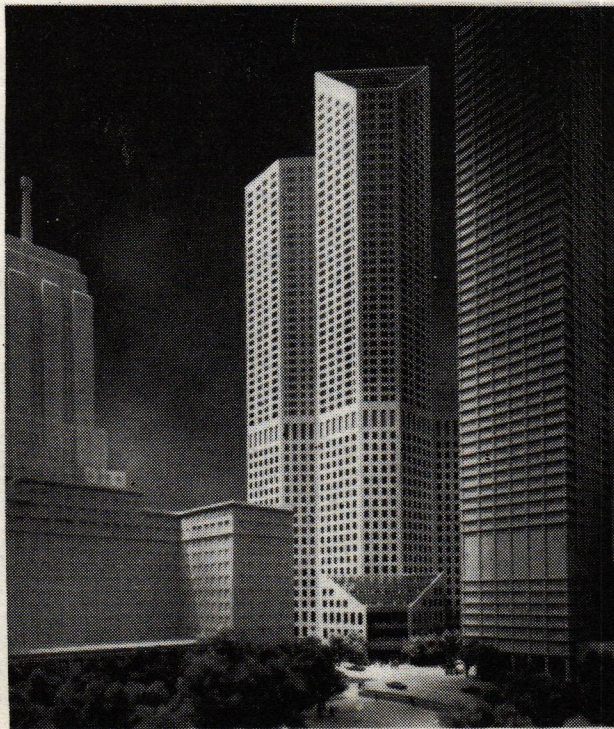
One Magnificent Mile, Chicago (under construction); Skidmore, Owings & Merrill



Typical apartment; typical office



Ground level plan



Model (photo: Hedrich Blessing)

back across the street, and when the west side of Michigan Avenue becomes a wall of More Magnificent Mile Monuments neatly bookended by none other than One Magnificent Mile.

The L shape of One Mag Mile's small site was no less challenging than the urban context it occupies. As in the John Hancock and Sears Towers (1970 and 1974), Graham's solution is an aesthetic geometry game made possible by the structural ingenuity of the late Dr. Fazlur Khan. Unlike Hancock and Sears, monumental height was not the desired effect: computer simulations determined the optimum height One Mag Mile could soar before its shadow would darken the adjacent lakefront park and beach.

Instead Khan's mission was to create a structural system that would maximize leasable floor area and plan flexibility in the given L configuration. He solved this problem with a bundled-tube system: three nested concrete hexagons with punched window openings are tied together by the concrete columns they share along their lines of tangency. These common columns assume all horizontal loading, thereby eliminating the multiple structural cores traditionally employed in an L-shaped building that limit flexibility and net square footage.

The resultant \$100-million, 1-million-plus-square-foot, multi-use complex developed by the Levy Organization is set on a 45-degree axis to Oak Street Beach. It is an axial parti only in reference to Chicago's skyline. Pedestrians not wishing to cross fifteen lanes of traffic in order to enter the building axially from the lakefront will be instead scooped from the corner pavement by the six-story atriumized segment of the center tube that slides out to form the main entry. From this point, one can roam the first four floors of commercial space, shuttle down to two levels underground parking, or take an escalator to the mezzanine level's central elevator bank serving the offices on floors 4 through 19.

For those wishing access to that segment of the towers above the bent computer card facade with the clear-glazed office window punchouts, there is a more discriminatory Michigan Avenue side entrance. From here elevators ascend 1,000 feet per minute up to the glazed-and-sundecked swimming club/mechanical levels that align with the externally expressed mechanical band, or to the 181 condominiums on floors 22 through 56 that are externally expressed by the gray glazed apartment window punchouts. Claustrophobics, and not acrophobics, may wish to purchase one of the three greenhouse/penthouses, complete with exterior terraces set into the angularly sheared glass rooftops of the two taller towers.

Benjamin Marshall will continue to rest in peace as his new neighbors move in across the street: his Drake Hotel, compositionally backed by the Palmolive Building (Holabird & Root, 1929), has not been one-upped by One Mag Mile. "State-of-the-Art" design statements may be the current Loop rage, but SOM has chosen not to play. John Hancock is their Michigan Avenue design statement; One Magnificent Mile is restrained and dignified.



Photomontage facing south (photo: Hedrich Blessing)

320 North Michigan

Joan Jackson

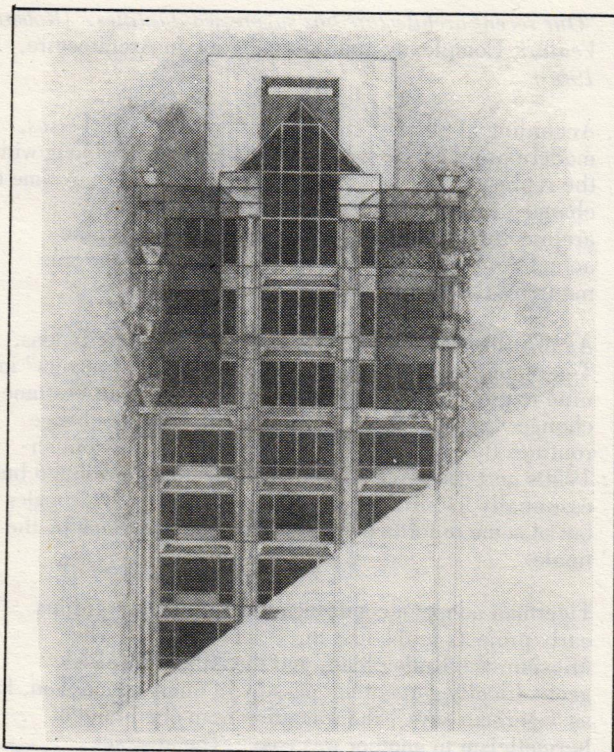
The recent practice on Chicago's Michigan Avenue has been to tear down older midrise buildings that maintained the proportion of building to street width intrinsic to the identity of the boulevard. The block of buildings is then replaced with a superstructure, such as One Magnificent Mile. An exception to the rule, however, is the new 320 North Michigan Avenue, by Laurence Booth and Paul Hansen, with associate-in-charge Steve Weiss.

Going south on Michigan Avenue, just across the Chicago River on a narrow 48-foot lot, there sits a small highrise that looks as if it has been there quite a while. The observation that the building looks old is not an insult to Larry Booth, who frequently hears prospective office and condominium buyers ask if the building is a renovation. The facade, made up of three bays of well-proportioned windows opening out to the street, is reminiscent of the skyscrapers of the first Chicago School. Its powerful columns rise up to form the symbolic "temple" that grows from the structure, rather than being applied to the top in post-modern style. The temple — made up of six penthouses — will be surrounded by cascading gardens.

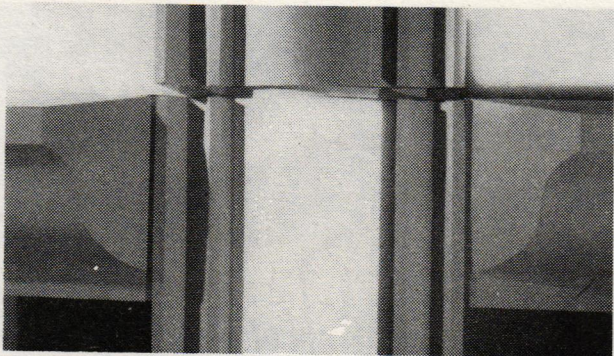
Although the building is old in character, it is at the same time innovative technically. The reusable pre-cast forms for pouring concrete in place ornament the facade. According to Booth, these forms accomplish several goals: the details in the forms create shadows that hide imperfections in the concrete, which in turn add texture. Additional texture will be provided by the weathering that will occur in the joints of the forms. Meanwhile, the detailing of the forms helps shed water, and the forms themselves express a structural continuity between horizontal and vertical by use of a "continuous capital." For only an additional cost the forms allow the architect to design the parts rather than choose them from catalogues. All of this was accomplished for approximately \$55.00 per square foot.

The design of the 70 units of condominiums and offices offers an alternative to monolithic superstructures. As Booth points out, development can occur in small segments that follow the pattern of normal financing arrangements, besides retaining the disappearing character of the city.

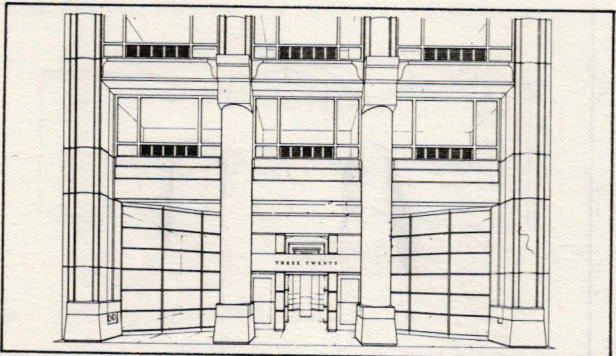
320 N. Michigan, Chicago (under construction); Booth/Hansen. Elevation



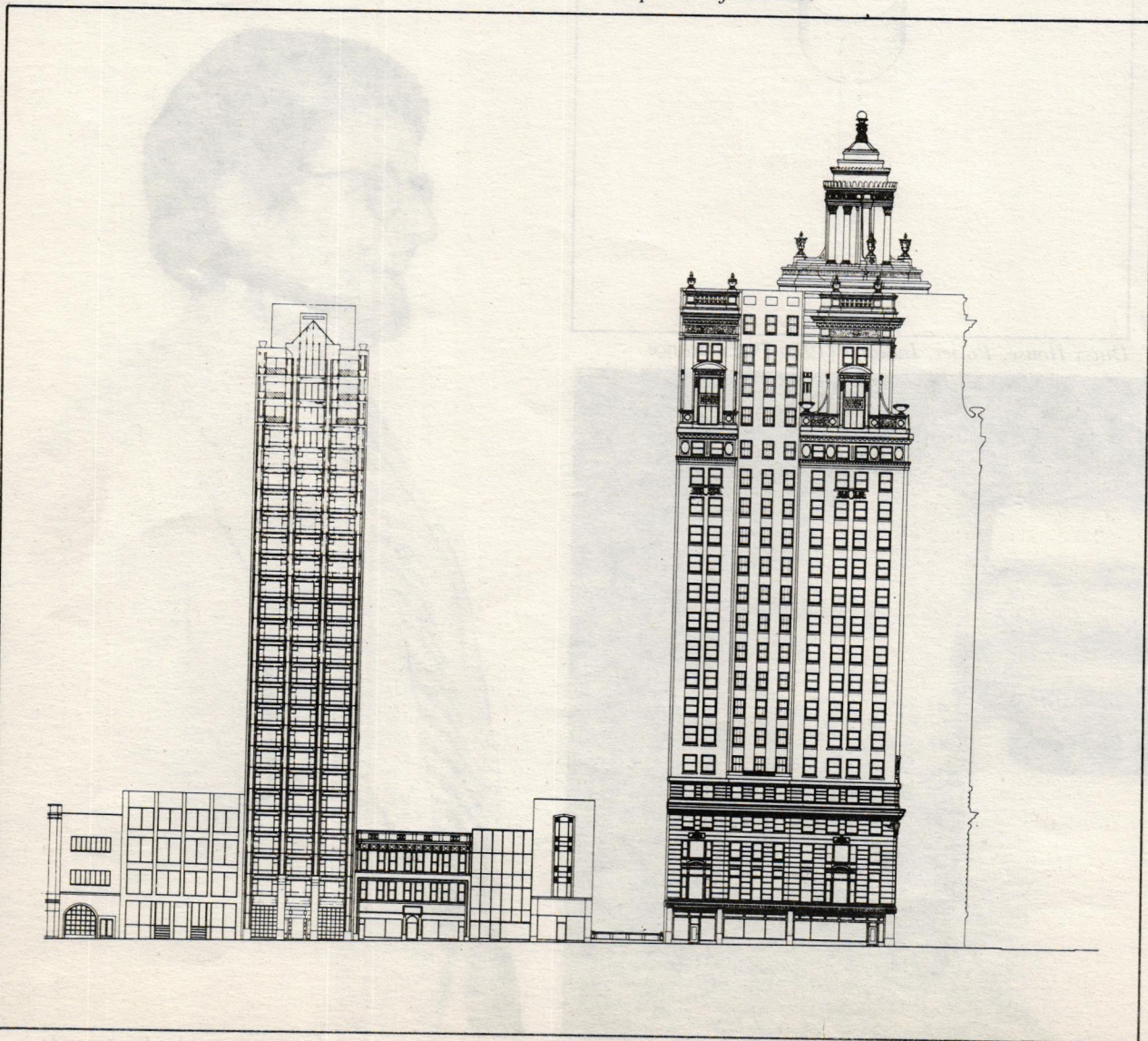
Front elevation



Facade detail



Perspective of entrance



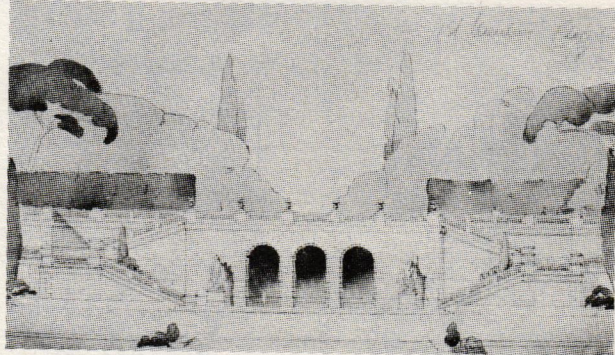
Art Institute Exhibit

Kim Clawson

The exhibition on view in the Burnham Gallery of Architecture of the Art Institute of Chicago until April 10, 1983 is entitled "Chicago Architects Design," though it could easily have been named "Chicago Architects Draw." Sixty-nine drawings (and two models) selected from more than 5,000 drawings donated since 1978 form an ensemble that focuses on the richness and diversity of drawing types and techniques employed by architects practicing in the Midwest.

Until 1978, the Art Institute had a sporadic program of acquiring and displaying architectural drawings. The first acquisitions, received in 1919, happened to be a significant collection of watercolor and gouache drawings by Peter B. Wight that only recently received their first major public showing in a Wight retrospective in 1981. Many other collections, important both in a regional and an international context, found their way into the Art Institute's holdings over the years. These include Louis Sullivan's exquisite little pencil drawings executed for a "System of Architectural Ornament," magnificent watercolor and ink drawings done for the 1909 Plan of Chicago, and naturally an assortment of works from the Chicago School. Much has also unfortunately left the Chicago area: The bulk of Mies van der Rohe's work is now in the Museum of Modern Art, and a set of important Sullivan drawings was purchased for Avery Library of Columbia University.

In 1978 Daphne Roloff (Director of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries of the Art Institute) and John Zukowsky (then Architectural Archivist of the Burnham Library, currently Associate Curator in Charge of the Department of Architecture founded in 1981) promulgated an extensive acquisition program and formulated a plan for a trilogy of exhibitions. These were intended to extend public awareness of architectural drawings as art, to be a synoptic display of the Art Institute's vast but seldom seen holdings, and to serve as a catalyst for potential donations to a collection that they hope will ultimately become the outstanding archive of drawings by architects who have practiced in the Midwest. "Chicago Architects Design" is the concluding installment of that trio of exhibitions.



Shelter under a terrace (c. 1927); Mary Ann E. Crawford

The two preceding exhibitions were both entitled "Chicago Architects," in homage to an earlier 1976 exhibition of the same name that was assembled as a *salon des refusés* by Larry Booth, Stuart Cohen, Stanley Tigerman, and Ben Weese. The first show of the present trilogy opened in 1979 and was historical in content, including only material then currently in the collection, ranging from 1871 to 1929. The second exhibition opened in 1981 and showed a sampling of work donated since 1978, most produced since World War I.

This third show, "Chicago Architects Design," highlights work by contemporary architects. Because of the freshness of the material (there are several major projects in the show that are still on the boards) and the diversity of drawing styles represented, it is the most interesting of the three. The curators have attempted an inclusive selection. The soft pencil drawings of the Prairie School hang comfortably next to the ink and watercolor works from the eclectic styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The work of younger, little known architects who have built little is blended in around that of the so-called Chicago Seven and the architectural renegades of the 1960s. Just as the 1976 "Chicago Architects" presented the pluralism of the Chicago architectural tradition through photographs of built works, "Chicago Architects Design" continues that emphasis with a multiplicity of drawing styles.

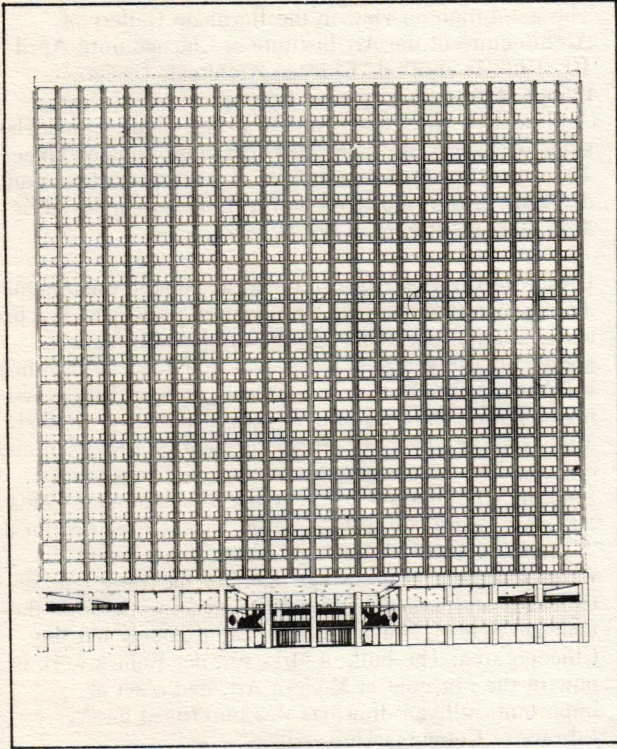
The catalogue *Chicago Architects Design* is in fact the collective catalogue for all three exhibitions, and is billed as a "handbook" to the Burnham Library collection. Its value in this latter role as a reference book is problematic, since it fails to provide even an abridged index to the holdings in the collection. The strength of the catalogue is not in its biographic entries of the architects represented — these entries are of varied scope and quality — but as a compendium of graphic methods employed by architects who have embraced varied polemical stances.

Chicago Builds

Tigerman v. Tigerman

On Versus

Gavin Macrae-Gibson



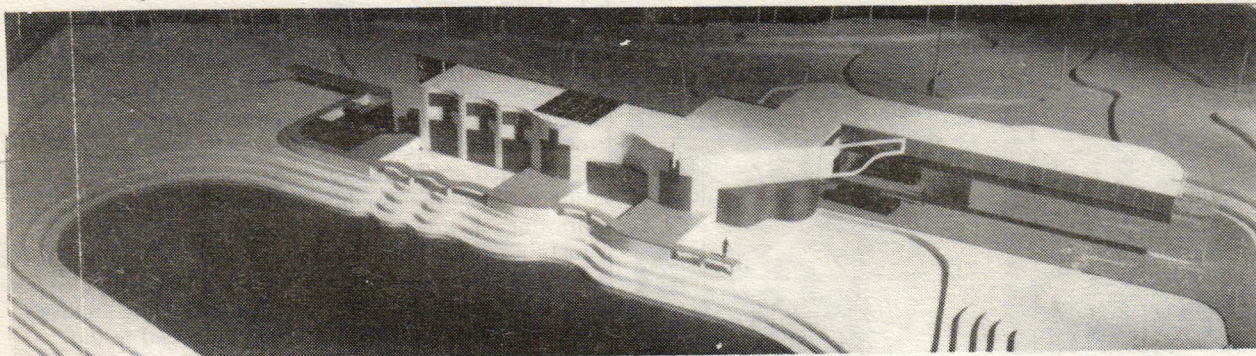
Boardwalk Apartments, Chicago (1971-74)

"Our recent architecture has suppressed dualities." (Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, 1966)

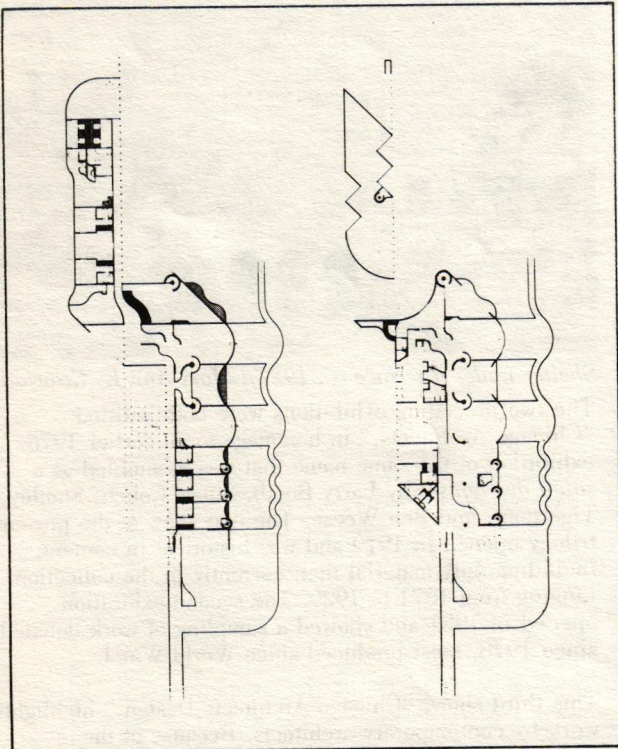
According to Stanley Tigerman in his new book *Versus*, modern architecture has been concerned for too long with the representation of a state of perfection; it is now time to change course, to represent simultaneously in architecture the desire for the perfect ideal and the actuality of imperfect reality; this will reflect the true nature of the times.

Against the background of these three connected ideas, Tigerman presents his work, introducing his "players" in nine roughly chronological acts. There are swift costume changes between acts, and during these quick change routines the set is slowly transformed from the loutish 1950s anti-theory of Miesian Chicago to a convoluted but essentially inspiring theoretical position which struggles out of some unfortunate historical generalizations by the finale.

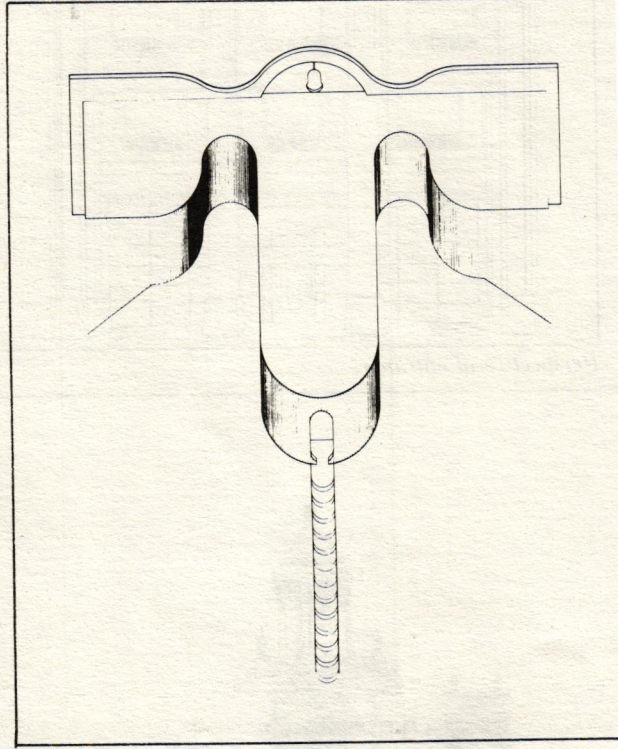
Tigerman adopts a condescending attitude toward his early projects in the first three acts of *Versus*. The Miesian, the Rudolphian, and the Albers-inspired geometrically gargantuan pass by in quick succession, for as Tigerman says, "the transition from one brand of hermeticism to another was easy." The abstract



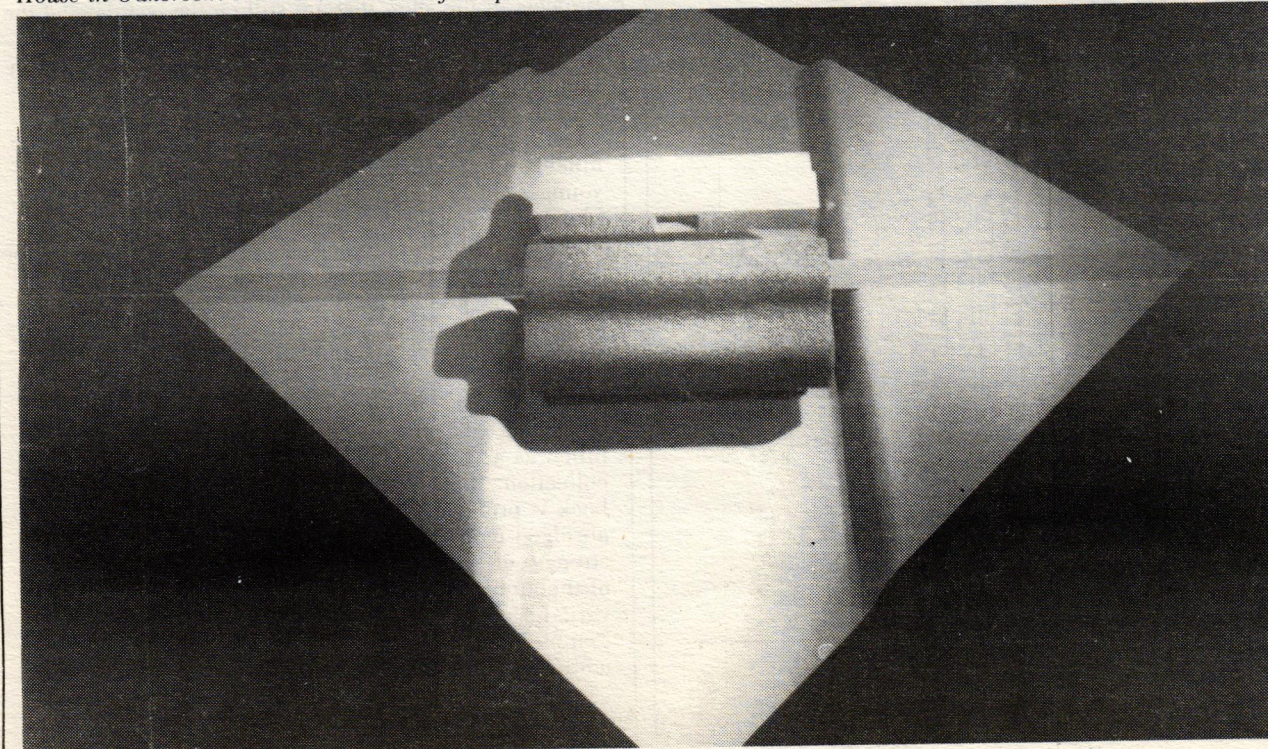
Project for House in Oakbrook, Illinois (1976-77)



House in Oakbrook. Ground and second floor plans



Daisy House, Porter, Indiana (1976-79); entrance



Project for Little House in the Clouds (1976)

Versus: An American Architect's Alternatives. Stanley Tigerman; with essays by Ross Miller and Dorothy Metzger Habel. Rizzoli Publications, New York. 192 pages, over 300 illustrations, 16 pages in color. \$35.00, hard cover; \$19.95, soft cover

geometrical purity of this work signifies Tigerman's twin obsessions of the time, "ideality and perpetuity," which, to Tigerman, carry forward a "traditional Hellenic" approach.

Act four of the book opens in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) with Tigerman's determination to escape the hermeticism of the earlier work through the design of five polytechnic institutes. Tigerman's writing at this point is moving, more so than the architecture, the reverse of the case in the rest of the book. The kind of buildings this "problem-solving approach" produces, despite the best of intentions, is painfully obvious, especially when, as in other projects in act four, there is no defined client.

It is here that we begin to see how the argument against the "Hellenic" will cause Tigerman to veer toward the "Talmudic." We have been told that the work in the first three acts was "the result of a deteriorating Platonic frame of mind." The resulting intellectual disposition Tigerman calls "dualism" and he identifies it with Talmudic thought, "that is, the concept of the simultaneous study of opposites without the necessity of creating a new synthesis." The client provides the key to the "non-Hellenic" side of this dualism, for the client is important to Tigerman's argument in two respects: first, as a way of getting barometric readings of specific places and times; second, as an individual who "in all his or her idiosyncratic glory" can be used as a foil to Tigerman's own Hellenic side. In this way, "the nature of struggle replaces my ideas about Platonic ideality"; a struggle, that is, between the expression of immortality and mortality, the pure and the vulgar, the rational and the irrational, the universal and the particular.

This approach is developed in the fifth act, Tigerman's "Manipulated Modernist Phase." But here the classification system begins to strain noticeably, and the remaining acts begin to blur into each other. Thus "the notion of argumentation itself" is expressed for the first time in the house in Oakbrook, Illinois (1976-77), where, says Tigerman, "I ruptured a perfectly innocent modernist stucco and glass house, revealing, as it were, its innards." Next, the "imperfect" side of the impending dualism finds expression in such projects as the Hot Dog House (1974-75) of the "Surrealist Phase," and the Daisy House (1976-78)—an example of Tigerman's "Architecture of the Absurd"—that magnificent celebration of life and land under the midwestern sky. Finally, in the last scene of the book, the "imperfect" side is brought together with the "ideality" of the opening sequences through the opposition of incomplete forms, as in the Little House in the Clouds (1976) and its later manifestations, such as the Bahai Archives (1976-82) or the Museum for a Painting That Will Never Go There (1981).



Stanley Tigerman (photo: courtesy Art Institute of

Notes & Comments Chicago Style

Joan Jackson

Several themes are drawn together in acts five through eight as this dualistic method approaches a denouement in the not so tongue-in-cheek finale, "Post-Modernism is a Jewish Movement." These themes are "the schisms of the (post-Viet Nam, post-patriotism) times," that is, the "fall from grace," and the "coming of age" of America; the side effects of dualism, namely incompleteness and fragmentation; the role of the client as a recorder of the times and a device for getting at the "imperfect" side of the dualist equation; absurdity and surrealism, intellectual mechanisms for the articulation of the client doctrine; and finally, the "Talmudic tradition" as a vehicle for trying to tie together all these themes into a coherent theoretical position.

By the finale one is prepared for "the tension formed by the desire to create a perfect state of being on the one hand and the wish to destroy that state of being on the other." This is where post-modernism is revealed as a "Jewish movement," for Tigerman argues that "Talmudic reasoning does not suggest synthesis, [but] is based instead on the fact of being torn this way and that." Hellenic (i.e. modernist) reasoning, on the other hand, is deceptively unifying, denying "the trends of the times."

Tigerman's argument suffers from three principal flaws. First and foremost, it takes a too limited view of *modernism*. Mies pervades the entire book, and blinds Tigerman to important dualistic complexities in other modernists, notably Le Corbusier and Aalto. Given these complexities in modernist work, how can *post-modernism* exclusively be defined as dualistic? Second, and more irritating, is Tigerman's attempt to manufacture a historical pedigree. While Tigerman has rightly and bravely tried to free himself of Mies' strangling doctrine of "build, don't talk," he would have done well to avoid the generalizations into which his mix-and-match Aristotelian, Kierkegaardian, Hegelian, and scriptural snippets lead him. It may well be that the Talmud is dualistic; but so are those arch-Hellenics Apollo and Dionysus. So, more to the point, is much of chapter 10 of Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, where the notion of dualism has had a rather more recent airing, but to which Tigerman refers only very obliquely. The third flaw of *Versus* is Tigerman's ambivalent attitude toward the *Zeitgeist*. For what is the difference between Mies' statement "architecture is the will of the epoch translated into space," which Tigerman condemns, and Tigerman's own proclamation that, because "America vintage 1960-80 was more Hebraic than Hellenic," dualism is the correct form of architectural expression because it is in tune with the times? It is a difference of emphasis, but not of kind.

On the positive side, *Versus* has three principal strengths. First, and most important, is Tigerman's unique brand of humanism. Within the dualism Tigerman sets up, the imperfect side rings as true as a clean bell on a bright morning. The other (perfect) side is, as Tigerman admits, "part of a phase I never really felt was mine," and his attempts to make it so inhibit the generalizing, dualistic work. Second, and most provocative, are the possibilities that Tigerman's dualistic approach suggests. There are at the moment not just two, but several alternative architectures, representing alternative subjects. Bringing these into alignment in some way is a tantalizing prospect, one that *Versus* should encourage. Lastly, Tigerman, like nineteenth-century eclectics before him, shows perhaps better than anyone that "a style for the job" is the most sensible, flexible, and appropriate response to a specific program and client.

The **Art Institute of Chicago** is planning a number of architecture exhibits for 1983 and 1984. "New Chicago Architecture," a reorganization and expansion by **John Zukowsky** of the 1981 Verona show (*Skyline*, December 1981, p.16), will be at the Art Institute from May 19 to August 9, 1983. Unlike the Verona show, the new exhibit will be organized according to firms rather than individual architects. It will highlight the work of previously unrecognized firms in the area and will be accompanied by a slide/tape presentation by Robert Bruegmann on new tendencies in Chicago architecture. Scheduled for March through July of 1984 is another exhibition titled "Chicago — New York: Architectural Interactions Over the Past Century." The drawings for the show, from the Art Institute and the New-York Historical Society Drawings Collection, will be published in a catalogue with essays by co-curators David van Zanten and Carol Krinsky. . . .

While organizing these temporary exhibitions, the Department of Architecture at the Institute is also encouraging architects in the area to donate drawings, models, and architectural fragments for their permanent collection. The architecture fragments collection already includes approximately 100 pieces such as windows, terra cotta and iron work, elevated grills, and decorative panels. **Pauline Saliga**, who has researched the fragments collection to be installed outside the Chicago Stock Exchange Room at the Institute, encourages architects to remember the collection as they renovate buildings in Chicago. Saliga hopes to fill the gaps in the collection, which now consists mainly of fragments from buildings by Adler, Sullivan, and Wright. . . .

Meanwhile the Art Institute is planning changes to the building itself. **Hammond, Beeby and Babka** are currently studying the feasibility of a new wing to be added to the building east of the railroad tracks. The new wing will make use of old, poorly used space for the display and storage of both temporary shows and permanent work. In addition, **John Vinci** has presented the Institute with several alternative plans for the renovation of the Michigan Avenue lobby, which are intended to restore the lobby to its original architectural

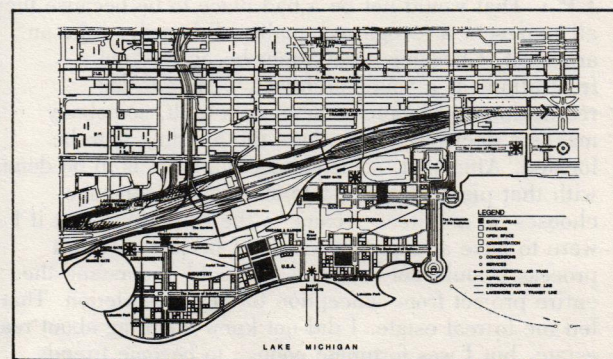
quality while still allowing it to function efficiently. . . .

The Chicago Theater has come under fire again. The owner of the 61-year-old building, Henry Plitt, has requested a demolition permit because, he argues, the theater no longer attracts a wealthier clientele and is losing money. Mike Royko of the *Chicago Sun Times* commented that Mr. Plitt is not a Philistine, but simply "believes that by threatening to demolish the Chicago Theater he can stampede the city into buying it from him for more than it is worth. That's a much faster method of turning a big profit than showing quality movies." On December 6 the Chicago Landmark Commission unanimously voted to recommend landmark status for the building to the City Council, which will vote on the recommendation in January. . . .

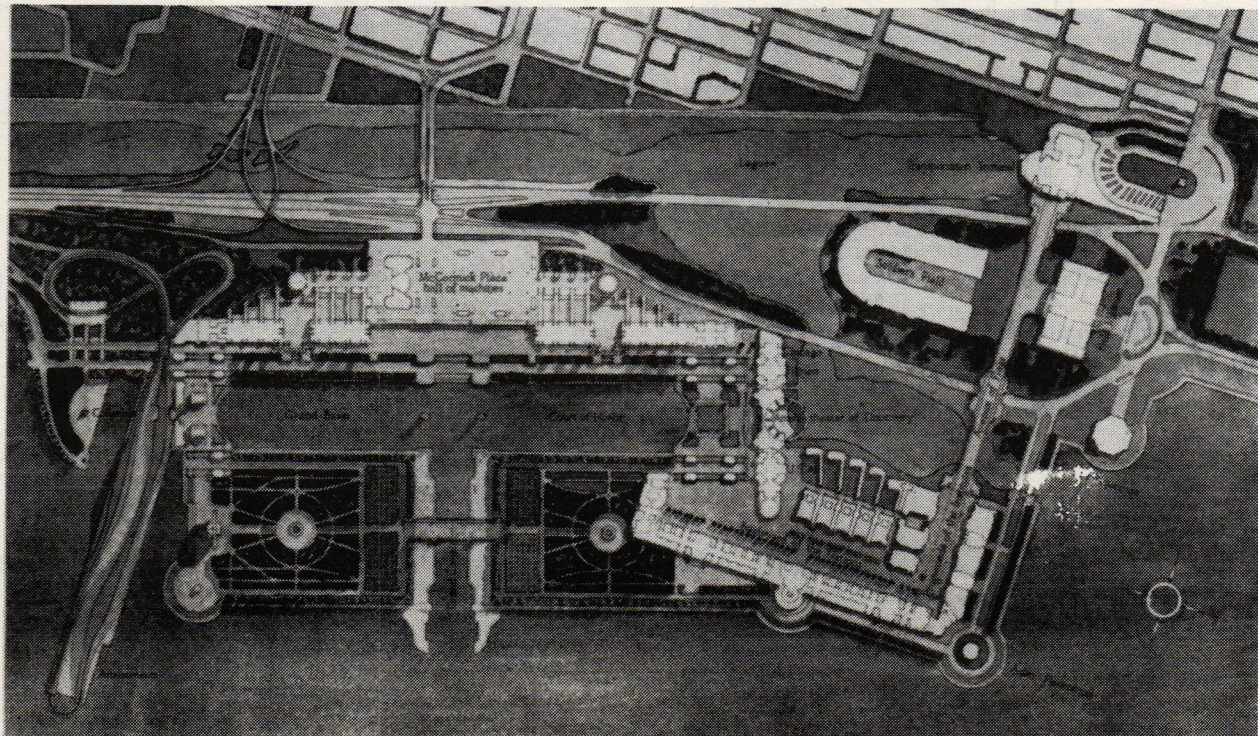
A committee of Chicago architects has been working on a central area plan for Chicago in conjunction with the 1992 World's Fair proposals. The committee, working out of the offices of **Skidmore, Owings and Merrill**, consists of four SOM partners — **Bruce Graham, Diane Legge Lohan, Adrian Smith, and Roger Seitz** — along with **Thomas Beeby, Kim Goluska, John Holabird, Gerald Horn, Helmut Jahn, Dirk Lohan, Carter Manny, George Schipporeit, Stanley Tigerman, Tom Welsh**, and a half dozen students from Illinois Institute of Technology and University of Illinois/Chicago. **Dan Wheeler** of SOM, who is organizing the material to be published in March, sees the new plans as being visionary in the same sense as the Daniel Burnham plans of 1909. In developing the new plans, the organizers are looking at what was and was not completed of the Burnham plans. Both the Burnham material and the new plans are to be included in the March publication, which will be funded by the Commercial Club and the City of Chicago. . . .

Meanwhile, the **Citizens' Fair Committee** — headed by **Stuart Cohen** and **Anders Nereim** and galvanized by the efforts of a group of Chicago businessmen — has come up with an alternate scheme for the fair "in response to" SOM's proposal. The committee's plan, developed by Cohen, Nereim, **Max Underwood, Paul Janicki, Paul Danna, and Steve Lacker**, is based on a series of grand-scale urban streets and demountable buildings whose industrial construction would evoke the tradition of Chicago architecture. Their proposal is to be published in *Chicago* magazine in May. . . .

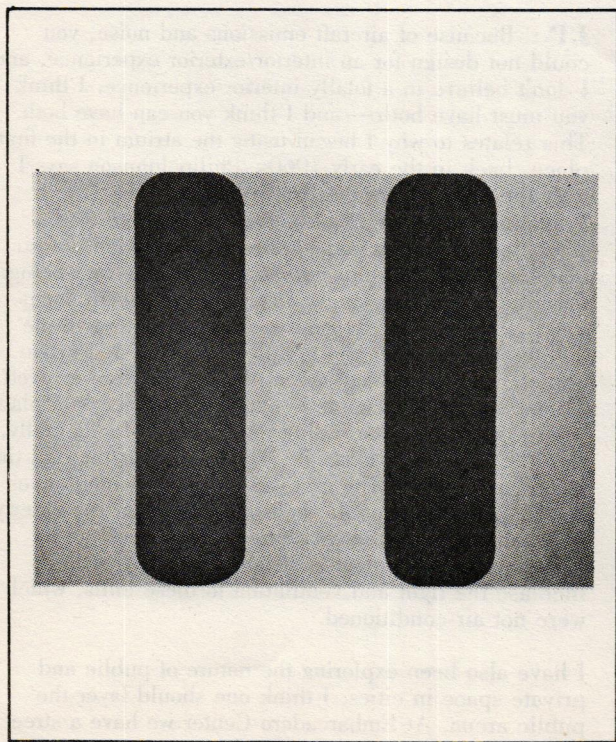
From February 5 to June 15 the **Chicago Historical Society** will display the exhibition "The Architect's Vision from Sketch to Final Drawing." The show will examine three current projects in Chicago: One Magnificent Mile by SOM, the Board of Trade Addition by Murphy/Jahn, and the Helene Curtis Building by Booth/Hansen. Curated by Sabra Clark, the exhibit will document the design process from conceptual sketch to the final work itself.



Project for 1992 Chicago World's Fair; SOM. Above: model. Right: concept plan (photo: courtesy SOM)



Project for 1992 Chicago World's Fair; proposal by Citizens' Fair Committee



"Green, Blue, Red" (1964); Ellsworth Kelly

Interview

In an interview with architect/developer John Portman, Peter Eisenman asks the controversial figure to respond to criticism.

John Portman and Peter Eisenman



John Portman (photos: Dorothy Alexander)

P.E.: You are unique in that you are involved in both architecture and development. Thus, this is an interview that falls between those I have done with several architects and one developer. Philip Johnson (*Skyline*, February 1982) and Cesar Pelli (*Skyline*, June 1982) represent a certain group of architects who, although they are producing high quality architecture, work for commercial developers. Gerald Hines (*Skyline*, October 1982), on the other hand, is a developer who hires these architects, yet he has said that he would not have them on his own staff. You seem to be in the middle — either-both, neither-nor. Do you think that is a reasonable way to place you?

J.P.: That would not be a bad place to be because they all represent a recognized quality. Primarily, I am an architect. I became a developer because of my frustrations as a young architect. I came to the realization that before something is built, somebody makes a decision about where the building is to be located. After that, someone decides what is to be done with that piece of real estate and finally, someone chooses an architect. I came to the conclusion that if I were to have an impact — and not be just part of a process I could not control — I should understand the entire project from conception through completion. That led me to real estate. I did not know anything about real estate, but I was fortunate enough to become friends with John O. Chiles, the dean of the Atlanta real estate community, and learn how the real estate business works. I became an architect *and* developer.

Times have changed so drastically that today the real decision-makers in most major events related to architecture are in the development sector. Even corporations are now seeking out developers like Hines because they realize that undertaking a major building is a complicated and expensive process that requires professional help. Unlike the master builder of yesteryear, the architect of today can be — not that he is — the master coordinator only if he expands his vision. He already coordinates all kinds of consultants in landscaping, lighting, mechanical, electrical, and structural areas. If he is capable of organizing all that, why can he not also work with a real estate advisor, or financial and marketing consultants? He should be able to pull all of these aspects together and make them work — then he can produce on a higher level.

I think we, John Portman and Associates, are producing on a different level because we can select what we do. We decide that we will do certain things at a certain location for certain reasons. Specifically, I have not selected the easiest projects. I believe that the city — which is my first love — is also the greatest problem facing our society, and I have taken the city as a sort of canvas on which to work.

I attempt to understand the qualities of traditional urban environments — such as Paris, Venice, or even the hill towns of northern Italy and southern France — that people responded to so favorably. I do this not in order to mimic them in any way, but to adapt them to our very different world. For example, the time-distance factor is important: A person in this country will walk for only seven to ten minutes before he starts thinking of using transportation. We have to recognize current human concerns and what time means to people. Consequently, in developing what I call the “coordinate unit” — which is explained in my book (*The Architect as Developer* by John Portman and Jonathan Barnett; McGraw Hill, 1976) — I have been trying to create within a time-space framework a physical environment that will offer the maximum variety of excitement and interest, comfort, peace and tranquility — all of those things, within the circumstances of the present time.

Embarcadero Center — which we began planning in 1965 — was developed in terms of trying to understand what is really important in a city: people and space, and how they relate to scale and density. [Embarcadero Center is a five-block, 8.5-acre complex of four office towers and a hotel with related shopping and restaurant facilities completed between 1971 and 1981. Co-developers with Portman were David Rockefeller and The Prudential Insurance Company.] I feel very strongly that density in a city should be managed in a quiet way — not abused in an architectural extravaganza. Urban density should have its own scale. The scale of the whole is different from the scale where people live and work. We try to recognize the fact that the greater mass of high density in the city is in private space. When you leave that great density of private space, you enter the public arena. Public space is what creates the character, the excitement of a city at the urban scale, and it must respond to the higher density of private space.

P.E.: You have been very successful in dropping things in cities where there is an established infrastructure, where there are those sorts of public arenas in which the density of the private experience relates to the public experience. But the public domain is not the same in Houston, for example, as it is in San Francisco.

J.P.: What I am trying to do is to create a situation in which buildings are not individualistic elements, but in which the total environment they comprise is the important thing. Buildings should appear quiet, as backdrops, instead of the flexing of architectural muscle to attract attention.

I am interested in breaking down the scale of large buildings. I started doing that in the early '60s, when everybody else was doing boxes. The division of the slivers in the Embarcadero Center buildings is related to

the scale of the offices, to the activities within the buildings. There *can* be human scale in a multi-story building.

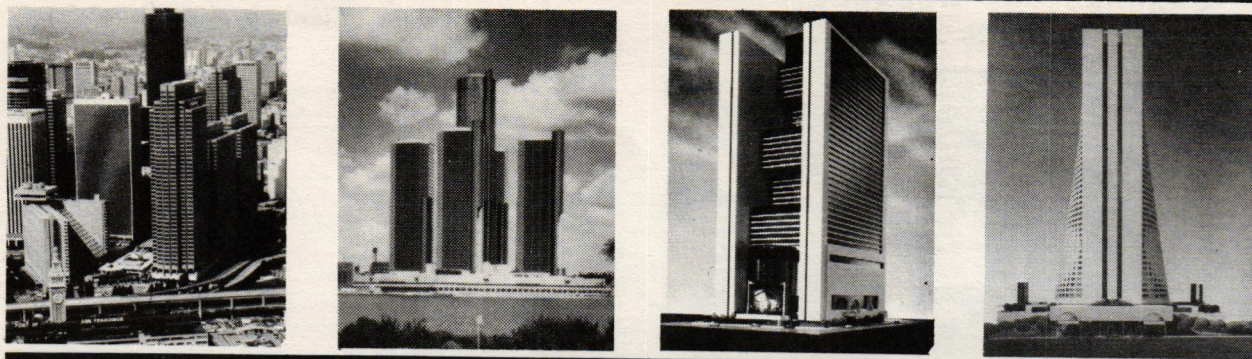
P.E.: You maintain that you want people to walk in the city, to move from the private space to the public space. On the other hand, in your hotels, the restaurants, the boutiques, the excitement, even the good weather, are all inside. One could argue that you are not encouraging people to move outside at all but, in fact, to stay within that environment.

J.P.: Some people have said that by designing these great interior spaces we have turned our backs on the city and created an isolated, plastic environment. I prefer to say that we are adding a new dimension to the city: a grand interior space the city did not have before. That is not “turning our backs on the city.”

P.E.: One could propose that the cities of the future — especially considering the kinds of units you are talking about — ought to be new cities at airports. I have made trips to Chicago and never left O'Hare Airport. I stay in an airport hotel, go to meetings, and never get to downtown Chicago. We are a generation of air travelers; the businessman does not need a car. Why not build one of your coordinate units, or combine several of them, at an airport? That might be a breakthrough in a new kind of urbanism.

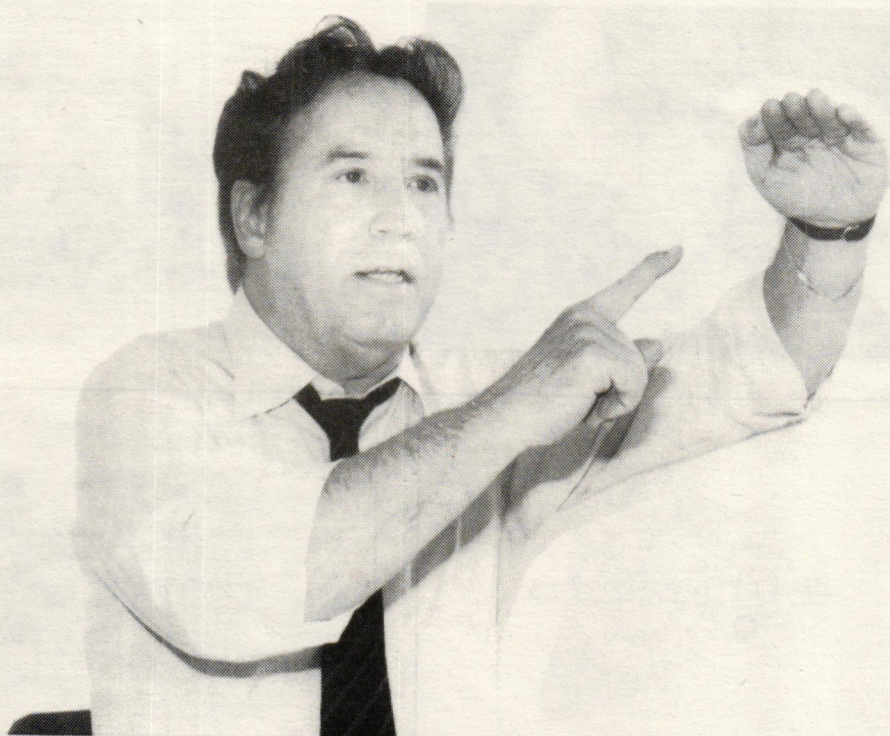
J.P.: Because of aircraft emissions and noise, you could not design for an interior/exterior experience, and I don't believe in a totally interior experience. I think you must have both — and I think you can have both. This relates to why I began using the atrium in the first place, back in the early 1960s. Philip Johnson says I took the atrium from the Brown Palace and Trammel-Crow says I took it from somewhere else. Everybody seems to know where I took it from but no one seems to really understand that it came into being as an antidote to congestion. An urban area needs lungs. It needs space. It needs openness. I wanted to give the feeling of a resort in the middle of a congested urban area. That was how my use of the hotel atrium evolved. The atrium allows people to experience space in a place where they would not ordinarily expect it. Incidentally, the Regency Hyatt Hotel in Atlanta was not the first time I used an atrium. The first was in the Antoine Graves Home, a 210-unit public housing project for the elderly in Atlanta, completed in 1966, a year before the Regency. I used a double atrium configuration to increase the light and ventilation to these units, which were not air-conditioned.

I have also been exploring the nature of public and private space in cities. I think one should layer the public arena. At Embarcadero Center we have a street



John Portman and Associates. Left to right: Embarcadero Center, San Francisco (1971-81). Renaissance Center, Detroit (1976). Project for New York Marriott Marquis, NYC. Project for Atlanta Marriott Marquis, Atlanta

“Some people have said that by designing these great interior spaces we have turned our backs on the city and created an isolated plastic environment. I prefer to say we are adding a new dimension to the city . . .”



level, an intermediate level, and a podium level, thus multiplying the ground area by three. The public amenity area is a bit like Venice in the sense that we have bridges over vehicular rivers to form a total environment. Creation of the environment starts with architectural design and continues through the placement and function of shops, art galleries, food facilities, and so on. You're really dealing with the components of a city; by placing these components throughout the environment to create maximum interest, the human being becomes involved as a participant and spectator within the urban drama.

P.E.: Are you saying that you can make a commercially viable space on two and three levels in a city where the infrastructure exists at a single level? Many people would say that is a very difficult thing to do.

J.P.: It is extremely difficult to do with one building. When there was only one office building in Embarcadero Center we had an awful time with leasing and performance of the space on the three public levels. It was the same with the second office building. Things got better with the third office building, as we began to achieve a proper mix of density and amenities, and then the concept took off with the fourth. When you get enough mass to create the necessary synergism, then you can be successful. But to create a single building with this multilayered retail enclave on a typical street corner, jammed in on all sides — I won't say it's suicidal, but it's close.

P.E.: I would like to discuss Renaissance Center. [A 35-acre mixed-use development in Detroit. Phase I, completed in 1976, contains four office towers, a hotel, and a retail and entertainment plaza. Phase II, completed in 1981, includes two small office towers with one level of retail space. Renaissance Center was developed by a consortium of 51 companies including Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, National Bank of Detroit, and Stroh's Brewery.] You know the negative argument: that it has removed the energy from the rest of Detroit and concentrated it in one place. The positive argument is that in order to revive Detroit it is necessary to start with a single energy base and endure years of the down-side, when the energy is in one place, in order to start again. Would you say that it would be useful now, some years after, to build another nucleus in Detroit, to begin to expand from Renaissance Center?

J.P.: Ren Center was never envisioned nor planned as an isolated island even though, so far, it has turned out to be that. In the master plan we have bridges that span the eleven-lane freeway, Jefferson Street, to an older section of the city, which is not a very good section. Most people aren't aware of the master plan and consequently have raised the question of context. We

have to be very careful when we analyze something in relation to context. I have been criticized as being insensitive to context. I totally disagree. I have been very sensitive to context, knowing that only through sensitivity to context can one really create something viable. There are several ways of relating to context. When you decide to develop a project or solve a problem, you have to take in the total context: physical, social, and financial. When we were invited to Detroit, there was a signboard that said, "Would the last person to leave Detroit please turn out the lights."

Our job was first, to try to stop the outflow; second, to change the attitude of the country about the future of Detroit; third, to change the attitude of Detroiters about their own city; and fourth, to bring people back to the city. We were given a site that was already selected. It was bounded by the Detroit River on one side and a large freeway on the other; in addition, the entrance to a tunnel under the river from Windsor, Canada, at the very entrance to the site created fantastic traffic congestion. Our immediate context was warehouses, old factory buildings — slums. Even the area across Jefferson Street was a downtrodden part of the city. The best part of the city was some distance away.

Crime was another "context." I had to overcome that with architecture. I had to create a situation that would be economically strong enough within itself because it had nothing to lean on for support. So, we had to create something out of nothing.

P.E.: Today, to go to a restaurant outside of Ren Center, you still have to take a cab; it is still not safe enough to walk.

J.P.: Well, the only restaurants within walking distance are in Greek Town, but Detroit has changed. People do walk there. Renaissance Center has had a terrific impact. A partnership that includes General Motors is renovating an eighteen-block area. Also, Max Fisher and Taubman are building some towers along the Detroit River, and Trizec has just completed 600,000 s.f. of office space. Ren Center, which is considered a failure by some people financially and otherwise, was so successful in its first stage that we started a second stage. In that second stage the partners were the Ford Land Development Company and Rockefeller Center Development Corp. from New York. RCDC was interested in the expansion of Ren Center because they saw a successful, viable project. It made good economic sense and it was a good type of development to become involved with. During the development of the second phase, though, the automobile industry collapsed. Architecture can't solve that sort of problem. We did complete the second phase, however.

I am attempting to deal with the physical and social context, and the problems of the times. For example, given the environment of Times Square, trying to get investors to commit huge sums of money for the hotel on Broadway between 45th and 46th Streets was an enormous problem. [The Portman Hotel project, begun in 1973, is now under construction and scheduled for completion in mid-1985.] I felt like Don Quixote with the windmills. I heard that Philip Johnson referred to the hotel as "Portman's Folly" — and for a while I thought he was right. But I believe that New York has to expand into the West Side and a project of enough magnitude and substance could abet that process. This is the reason I spent ten years on the hotel: I felt it was significant. There are many other projects I could have done without that hassle. During the process I went from being a hero to being a bum. In the early stages Mayor Lindsay gave me a key to the city; the New York Board of Trade gave me an award in 1973. A Broadway group wanted to make me man of the year. I believe my concept and goals were right in the beginning and will be proved right in the end. I am absolutely, totally, unalterably confident that history will prove, when it is all over, that we were right.

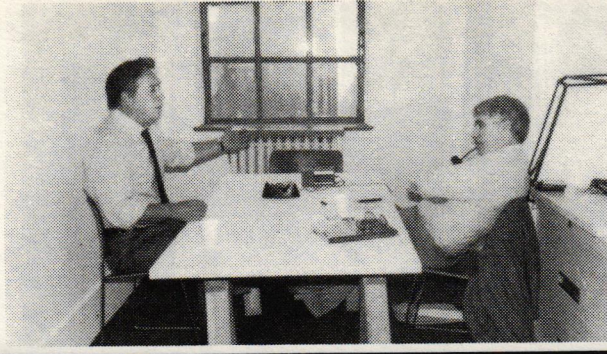
P.E.: Do you think that a nucleus such as the hotel on Times Square will affect a larger area? Right now, one would not walk the four or five blocks from the Port Authority Bus Terminal to that site. It seems your hope is that when the hotel is finished, the increased number of people coming there will make the area safe.

J.P.: That will not happen because of the hotel alone. I hope the hotel will be a catalyst that will generate new moves by others. One can't do everything, but one can be the agent changing a situation from bad to good. I have no doubt that our project will be one of the catalysts to change the West Side.

P.E.: How do you think your hotel will relate to the convention center [on the Hudson River between 33rd and 39th Streets, designed by I.M. Pei and Partners and scheduled for completion in 1984]? Do you think the energies of the two buildings will come together, or are they too far apart?

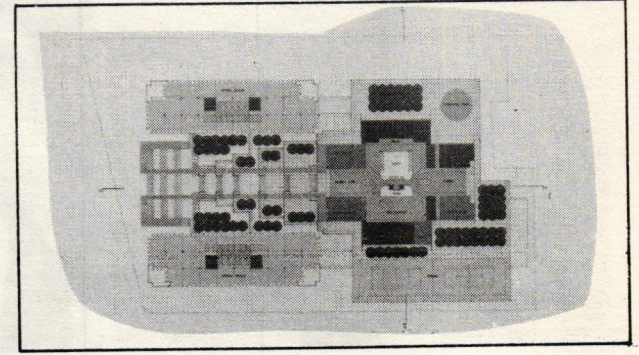
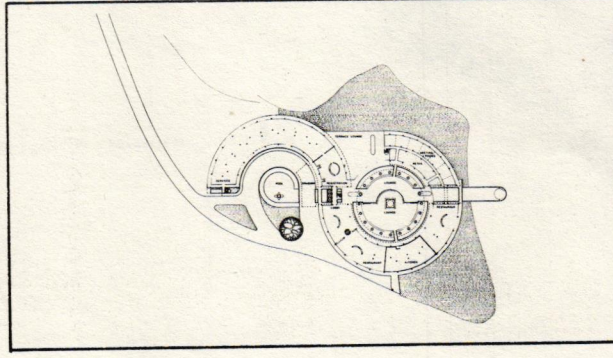
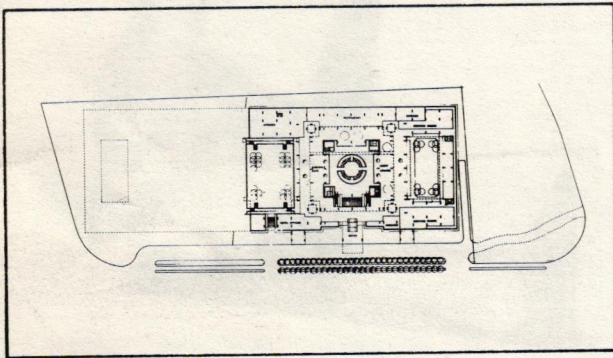
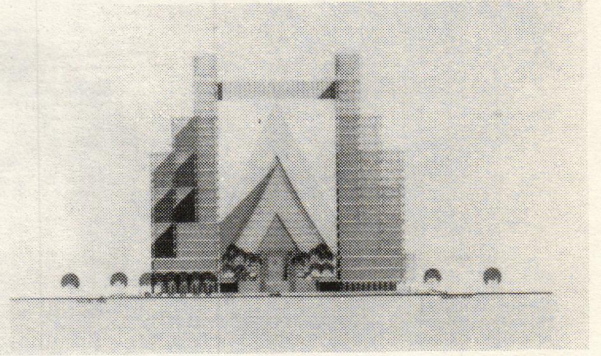
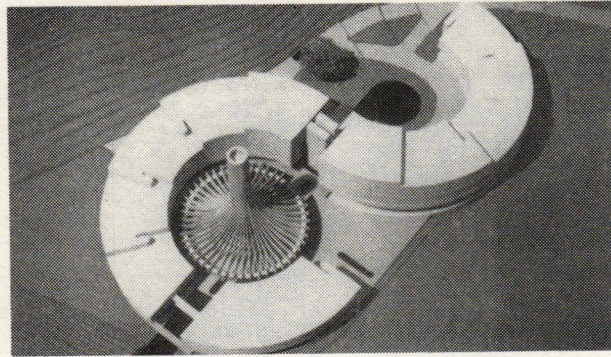
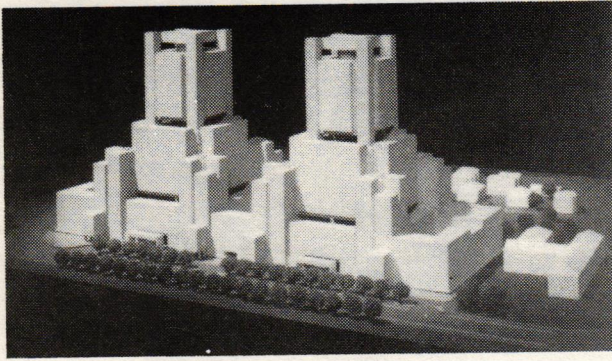
J.P.: Ideally I would like to have the convention center next door. Anyone would. Even if it were within walking distance, the environment is not yet such that anybody would walk. But the convention center is a very, very important part of our project — and vice versa. Without our project the convention center would have had a really tough time. Until the recent downturn in the economy, the hotels were filled. Now, with a \$350 million convention center, where are all those people going to stay? At the moment, there are not enough hotel rooms to support it. But that will come.

Interview



John Portman and Peter Eisenman (photo: Dorothy Alexander)

“I don’t think the critics have ever really understood what I am trying to do. There is also a tremendous resentment in the profession of me as an architect/developer.”



Shanghai Hotel, Shanghai, People’s Republic of China. John Portman and Associates. The atrium of this reinforced concrete, 1,233-room hotel is 32 stories high. The scheme of 85,868 square meters includes restaurants, lounges, meeting rooms, retail shops and landscaped public spaces. Top: model. Bottom: plan

Hangzhou Hotel, Hangzhou, People’s Republic of China. John Portman and Associates. The hotel, built of reinforced concrete, is centered around an ancient and historically significant camphorwood tree. The scheme of 28,355 square meters outside the city consists of 428 guest rooms with retail shops, restaurants, and public areas. Top: model. Bottom: plan

Thep Thani, Bangkok, Thailand. John Portman and Associates. A mixed-use urban complex is proposed, to be built in reinforced concrete on a 27,000-square-meter site in Bangkok’s commercial and banking district. The complex will have two 21-story office towers, a 300-room hotel, a department store, and a three-level retail shopping mall. Top: model. Bottom: plan

P.E.: Do you think Johnson/Burgee’s project for George Klein on Times Square, and the whole 42nd Street Development Project, as another anchor to the south of you, are going to help energize this area? [See *Skyline*, December 1981; May, October, and December 1982.]

J.P.: Yes. We are already past the point of beginning to change the West Side of New York: the change has begun.

P.E.: To what do you attribute all the negative criticism you have received? Listening to you, one would think you must be right. Assuming that you are — I would like to walk on 42nd Street as I do on Fifth Avenue — why is everybody so upset?

J.P.: I think the negative criticism started with public relations people being hired to generate opposition to the hotel in order to raise the price of property acquisition.

P.E.: If people were trying to raise the price of acquisition, they were betting that you had a good idea and a viable project, whether they were against it or for it.

J.P.: Nevertheless, they had everything to gain, nothing to lose. If we went ahead they would gain more; if we didn’t go ahead, they would still have what they had to begin with.

P.E.: That is not criticism, however.

J.P.: All I am saying is that this gave birth to the effort that first spurred the “antis” to make it more difficult. [See *Skyline* October, November 1981; February, March, April, June 1982 for the background and details of opposition to the Portman Hotel.]

P.E.: I still do not understand why someone like Joan Davidson would be against this project. [Davidson is President of the J.M. Kaplan Fund and a leader of the Save Our Broadway Committee, which was active in the efforts to restructure the Portman plan.]

J.P.: I was not suggesting that Joan Davidson had any ulterior motive. While I disagree with her, I do think that she was very sincere in what she was trying to do. There were a lot of considerations, but the ultimate issue was the saving of the Helen Hayes and Morosco theaters. The opposition stated over and over again that they were not opposed to the hotel per se — the theaters were what the fight was all about.

P.E.: I find that hard to believe.

J.P.: Everybody would have been perfectly happy had we built over the theaters. Of course, the foot-print of the structure made it impossible to build over and still handle the logistics of all that has to move in and out of a facility of that size. There simply was insufficient space for everything to take place.

P.E.: The benefit of having that area of the city viable seems to outweigh the saving of two theaters that would probably have deteriorated if the district had been allowed to run down.

J.P.: As a matter of fact, when we first conceived the project in 1973 there were great fears that the theater district was going to be lost forever. We feel that we have now secured the future of the theater district. As for the two theaters on our site, we know how they have operated during the last ten years. Not once during that period did they make an annual profit. In effect they have been subsidized by the owners.

P.E.: One could construct an argument another way: It is in your interest as the developer of a hotel to have those theaters alive.

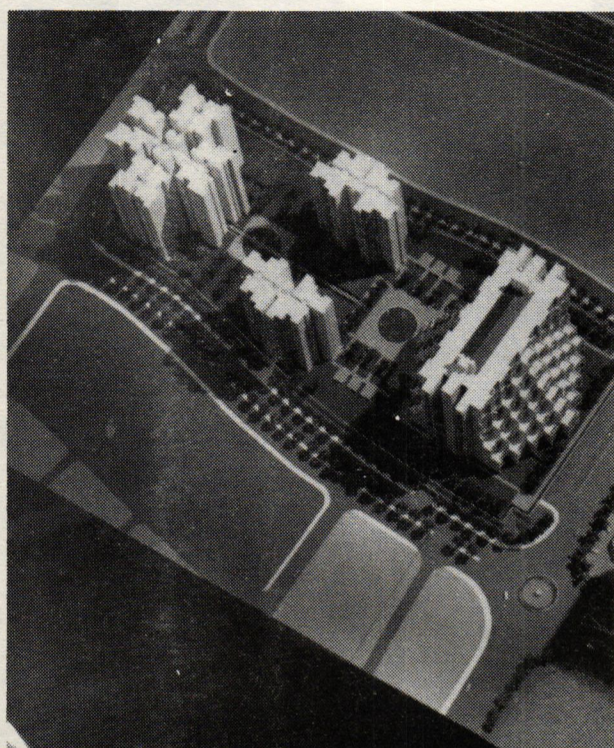
J.P.: Of course it is in our interest to have as many theaters as possible. In fact, we have included a 1500-seat theater in our Times Square hotel and believe it will become a vital part of New York’s theater district. There is, however, the whole question of historic preservation and landmarking. I do believe in saving buildings of historic merit, but I have some reservations

about the process of landmark designation whereby a non-elected group can select someone’s property for landmarking, even though it may cause a great hardship for the owner. There can be cases where a landmarking action for the public benefit has been initiated despite the fact that the property is no longer economically viable. It may cost the owner substantial time and money, which he can ill afford, to resist this action. In other cases, the possibility of landmarking may keep an owner from making even minor changes to enhance his property for fear of evoking the designation process. If a building is being preserved for the public benefit, then it is unfair to ask an owner to bear full financial responsibility for keeping it as it is. It is possible to reverse the designation after a building has been landmarked; however, that process is cumbersome and time-consuming, and the owner must demonstrate hardship. If structures that are no longer economically viable are to be landmarked for the public good, a way must be devised to publicly finance those structures. Having said all that, I do sincerely believe in landmarking, in spite of the unwieldy process. As a matter of fact, we are currently involved in the landmark designation and restoration of the old Federal Reserve Building in San Francisco, which will become an integral part of an expansion of Embarcadero Center. My only point is that the current process needs further consideration in order to be fair for all.

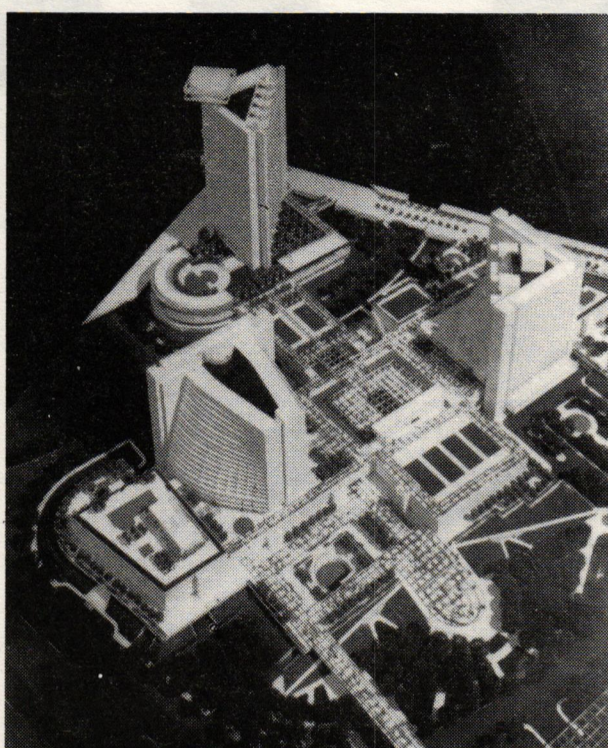
P.E.: Consider the future. Certainly you don’t want the kind of challenges you faced in Embarcadero, Renaissance, and Peachtree centers again. Do you have ideas about what may be next?

J.P.: I am, I hope, always continuing to learn. I may, as Emerson said, refute tomorrow what I say today. In light of new knowledge I will change my direction, but the one thing I am convinced of is the relationship of the physical result to the human experience. The more I learn about how people relate to environmental conditions, the more I will be able to create physical circumstances that fulfill my goals. I get a little upset when I see an article on “Architecture as Theater,”

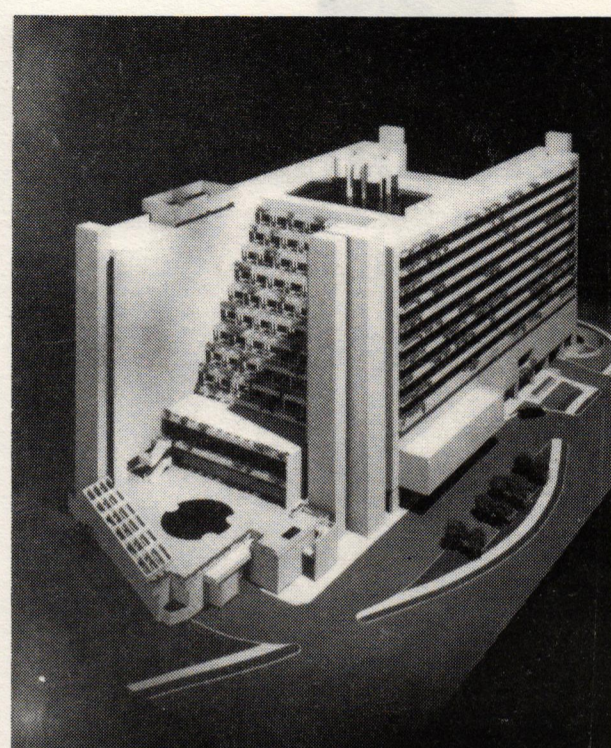
“I think the negative criticism on the Times Square hotel project started with public relations people being hired to generate opposition to the hotel in order to raise the price of property acquisition.”



Landmark City, Jakarta, Indonesia. John Portman and Associates. This multi-use urban complex is to be built in reinforced concrete on a site of 50,000 square meters in the heart of downtown Jakarta. The fully coordinated Landmark City will consist of two 18-story apartment towers with 136 units, a 20-story convention hotel with 624 rooms, 2,700 square meters of retail space, and parking.



Marina Center, Republic of Singapore (projected completion date: 1985). John Portman and Associates. On this scheme Portman is also developer in association with Singapore Land Ltd. Marina Center is a 23-acre development with 88,000 square meters of retail space, including 220 specialty shops, and three hotels: the Marine Mandarin with 613 rooms, the Singapore Oriental with 591 rooms, and the Pacific Singapore with 845 rooms. There will be 5,900 square meters of rentable space in this reinforced concrete complex.



Pavilion Inter-Continental, Republic of Singapore (1982). John Portman and Associates. Designed for Pontiac Land Ltd., the reinforced concrete, 504-room 12-story pavilion will be operated by Inter-Continental Hotels as its deluxe entry into the competitive hotel market of the headquarters city of Southeast Asia.

“Architecture as Collage,” “Architecture as Typology,” “Architecture as” Those are isolated aspects that may be interesting, but they are only one-dimensional. That attitude is almost like caricaturing architecture. Architecture is really much more comprehensive, and the only thing that will keep architecture relevant is its relationship to the human spirit. That has not changed through history and will not change in the future.

P.E.: Is there anything you have done that you would now refute?

J.P.: I do not know of anything I would refute. There are a lot of things I am not happy with, but none of us is totally happy with anything we do; we know too intimately all of the things we dislike.

My philosophy that architecture relates directly to the human experience originated during my trip to Brasilia for its dedication in 1960. Nothing there related to human scale, nothing made a person want to walk around a corner. Since that trip I have been trying to understand the human being and his interaction with his architectural environment. As long as I maintain that fundamental value, I am not concerned about how history will record what we do.

P.E.: But you seem to have a disproportionate number of critics. Why is that?

J.P.: I don't think the critics have ever really understood what I am trying to do. There is also a tremendous resentment in the profession of me as an architect/developer. Architects do not want to accept me and developers do not want to accept me. The truth is that I am an architect who is using development in order to carry out a philosophy I feel very deeply and very strongly about. Since the way I work is a departure from the norm, it tends to upset people. If you are comfortable in the way you think, if you have your views all reasoned out — whether you're a critic, an architect, or whatever — and something comes in out of left field that makes you question those views, you immediately

attack the intruder. I had that experience myself when I first saw Le Corbusier's Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp. I thought I had him all figured out, and then he did that. It took an adjustment in my thinking, but rather than rejecting it, I sought to understand it. I am not in a position to be rejecting or praising people; I leave that to the critics.

Among my fellow architects I admire those people who are seriously trying to explore a new reality in architecture. Even though I may disagree with the directions they take, I have tremendous admiration for them. There are those in our profession who may never have an original idea of their own, but are very good at appropriating other people's ideas and putting them into a different context. I do not admire this kind of person; that is an eclectic, shallow approach. I do admire anyone who genuinely probes a phase of architecture, seeking to shed new light.

P.E.: One could say that most architects today have lost their nerve and become eclectics. In other words, the people who are picking and choosing from history do not concern themselves with originality or taking risks. The visionary, the dreamer, seems to be disappearing.

J.P.: I agree. That approach is waning in our entire society. This has to do with technological advances, with the failures of the past, and with a loss of faith in the future. They have no faith in the future, so they seek the comfort of the past rather than meet the challenges posed by the circumstances and context of the present. Pulling things from the past for use today is like cutting a dead man into pieces and rearranging those pieces, expecting him to live again. He will not live again. I am convinced some of those people are headed in the wrong direction and nothing will come of it. Their work will be a passing fancy like the 1936 Airflow Chrysler. It does not have the substance to last; it has no depth; it is much too surface-oriented. However, I must repeat that I have a certain amount of admiration for the fact that they are genuinely trying to do something.

P.E.: I would like to reintroduce the idea of caricature — you used the term earlier. Walt Disney World is a city, with all the technology of a city, yet it is a caricature of a city. Jonathan Barnett has said that your interiors are like amusement parks. The same people you are criticizing for caricaturing history would criticize you for creating things that are caricatures of human experience — in the same way Disney World is a caricature of the future.

J.P.: I am not dealing with caricature. I am dealing with the question of how to create spaces that have a positive effect on people. I was very influenced by the Tivoli Gardens. They really are the grandfather of Disneyland. It is not the same, of course, but I recognized at Tivoli, for instance, the positive effect an environment can have on the emotions. I have been quoted as saying that I create Disneylands for adults. I did not mean that I am designing Disneylands per se, but that I am trying to understand those ingredients — the magic about those environments — that give people pleasure. In this day and age, when there is so much stress, to give pleasure and happiness is terribly important. If we can create that sort of environment in our cities, then architecture should not do less.

P.E.: Are you saying that you are not trading in instant gratification? Do you really feel that the buildings you build today will give the same pleasure fifty years from now?

J.P.: Yes. What I am doing is building on the human, innate responses to environmental conditions. There are all sorts of variables from one project to the next, but the human experience is a constant. My observations about people's reactions to the constructed environment define where I stand in architecture. I'm not coming from any single aspect of architecture. I don't know what I'm going to do next, but I do know that no matter what architectural form may evolve, what I do next will incorporate this philosophy.

Portland

The Building

Kurt W. Forster

Commercial buildings, tree-lined squares, and bridges that connect riverside parks and link the older parts of town with the suburbs preserve, to a degree, the urban character of Portland in both fact and appearance. A vital downtown corridor, serviced by modern transportation, is well appointed and dominated by stores and office buildings. A few early bank buildings with smartly designed, fully glazed bays introduce at once a crisply commercial tone and a distinctly modern element. Pietro Belluschi's fine Equitable Building of 1948 continues in its elegantly detailed curtain wall the tradition of these highly economical but solidly crafted early structures. Today, these commercial buildings reveal perhaps more than ever before an unprepossessing quality that springs precisely from the architects' ability to address the immediate realities of building without any compulsion to hide them with luxuriant ornaments. It takes both boldness and discretion to stick with the data of construction itself. While the buildings remain "silent" themselves, every inflection and detail of their shape acquires special weight and meaning. By contrast, sheer massiveness or cellophane-thin facades merely evade the making of architecture.

Enter the new Portland Building by Michael Graves: it possesses an undeniable presence and radiates a power of its own. The site alone has considerable interest, fronting as it does on the main thoroughfare in town and sloping gently toward a city park. Its neighbors are the city hall and the county courthouse, but Graves appears to take little notice of them in the design of his massive, cubic block. Graves typically renders the building either in elevation, or at an oblique angle across the park so as to exhibit its two distinct elevations. It is no mean task to design a municipal office building that will have to compete with the entrenched real and symbolic power of executive and judicial institutions. What did Graves opt for under these difficult circumstances? His ambition to raise a building capable of holding its own and, if possible, exceeding its functional status must have led to the basic decision to place the structure on a pyramidal base, to assert its mass by means of a squat cube, and to accentuate its height with tall vertical elements and a



The Portland Public Office Building, Portland, Oregon

Michael Graves' Public Office Building in Portland has generated much commentary and debate as the first major public structure to be completed that turns dramatically toward a new historically-based idiom.

Portland

roofscape. Both cubic closure and vertical emphasis reappear throughout the elevation. The basic cube, however, with its mechanically stencilled fenestration and a pattern of *revetment* grooved into its concrete walls, dominates. Heightened by a cream color, this cube "represents" the building *en bloc*, whether seen from afar or implicitly on every office floor. Its starkness is deliberate, contrasting with the other features of the elevation that in color, sheen, and shape are played against it. Reflective glass surfaces — with a few small, or no windows at all behind them — are layered over the cube, and opaque vertical bands ascend to half its height where massive wedges extrude from the facade in front and back, and zig-zagging garlands connect them on the sides. All of these parts are quite literally stuck onto the building, relating to its interior as a rule only in converse fashion: the larger the glass-covered surface on the facade, the less actual fenestration behind it; the more forcefully stereometric, as in those massive wedges, the less spatially real they are.

Project: Portland Public Office Building, Portland, Oregon

Architects: Michael Graves Architect; Lisa Lee, project manager

Associated architects: Emery Roth & Sons, New York City and Edward C. Wundram, Portland

Client: City of Portland Public Buildings Corporation; Earl Bradfish, Director of General Services

Site: 200-foot square block in downtown Portland adjacent to city hall and county courthouse and across from city park

Program: 362,000-sq.-ft. 15-story block for the architectural design of a design/bid/build competition to house city services, with publicly accessible functions, including auditorium, restaurant, meeting rooms, and gallery space located in the first two floors

Structure and materials: Concrete poured-in-place structure with 30' x 30' structural bays around central core; gypsum board, paint, terrazzo floors (in public areas)

Cost: \$22.4 million, approximately \$51 per sq. ft.

Engineers: DeSimone & Chaplin, Consulting Engineers (structural); Thomas A. Polise, Consulting Engineer and Cosentini Assoc. (mechanical/electrical)

Interior designers: Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership for municipal offices

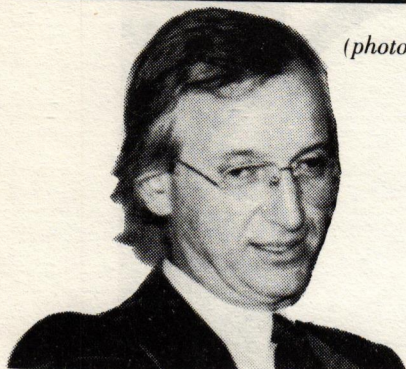
General contractor: Pavarini Construction Co. and Hoffman Construction Co. (joint venture)

Construction manager: Morse/Diesel, Inc.



The Portland Building

“By comparison with Le Corbusier’s Pavillon Suisse in Paris, the Portland Building comes off as more abstracted from both the classical syntax of structure and the symbolic imagery of buildings?” —Kurt Forster



Michael Graves
(photo: Dorothy Alexander)

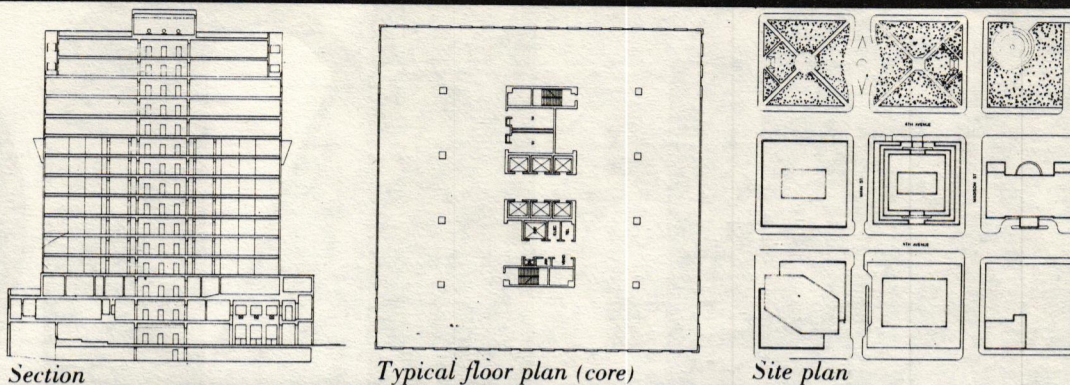
Values of surface matter enormously to Graves, and this is a quality so central to his imagination that I must return to it in relation to the shape and configuration of spaces. Distinctive spatial qualities can probably not be expected on the “typical” office floor of the Portland Building but surely and fairly should inform the lobbies and public areas. They have been the object of lavish praise by Paul Goldberger of *The New York Times* and other critics. Having grown up in a town with many public buildings, banks and corporate headquarters, schools and theaters, I recall many remarkable lobbies, memorable halls and ingeniously scaled passages that mediate between the disparate scales of atria and stairwells, between the diverse requirements of reception areas and office corridors. To my mind, it is precisely in this essential respect that the Portland Building fails as a major public building.

Perhaps one’s expectations ought not to be too high after the crushing monotony of innumerable lobbies consisting only of massive banks of elevators and uniform passages guarded by video monitors. The partisans of post-modernism, however, have been so merciless in their accusations of modernist shortcomings that we are entitled to an imaginative performance. Graves himself never tires of showing airport lobby doors as an illustration of the impoverished state of so much current practice, and right he is. His own doors, however, are about as different from the familiar catalogue specimen as those to the baggage claim area are from the doors of the front lobby.

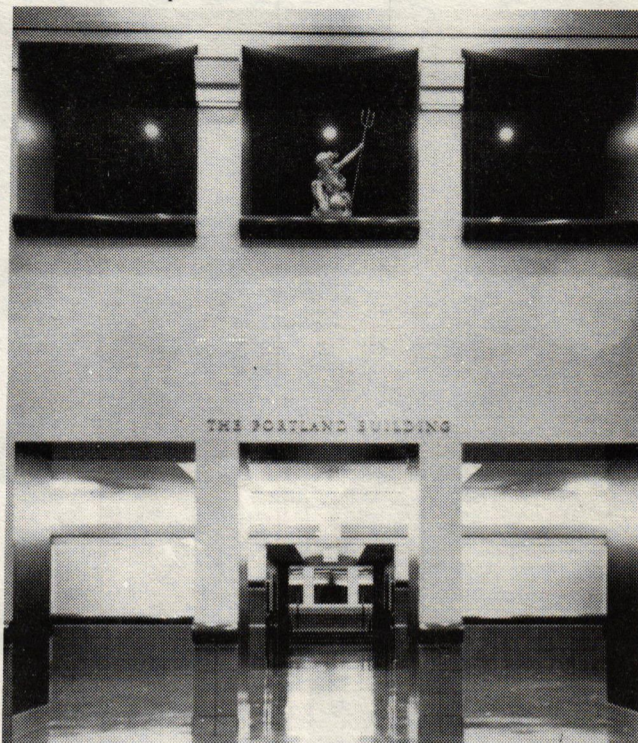
What kind of spatial scheme did Graves develop for the Portland Building? Despite the free-standing structure and its distinctive orientation to main street and park, the public spaces of the lower floors are deployed in a unilinear fashion: the main entrance under the streetfront porticus gives access to a two-story lobby, fully surrounded by a mezzanine gallery — of very cramped proportions — and after a cross-passage with lateral stairs, one reaches the elevators under a pitched low ceiling. The floor level of yet another lobby to the rear rises ceremonially to a platform with a wide view over the garage ramp that dips underground from the parkside street. A second glance at the floor plan betrays at once its origin in the configuration of the ancient Roman house, quasi doubled to bring front and rear atrium into correspondence, since the building would ideally have two entrances. Surprisingly here vehicular access is provided only from the park side. The rear lobby rises to a “dining area” as a latterday *triclinium*. In the core of the building, where the elevators are conventionally located, the narrow, low passage between front and rear lobby assumes a nearly subterranean, Etruscan character, as if one could descend right into the underworld.

In the opposite direction, the elevators carry the visitor to another never-never land, the roofscape. According to the final scheme — although not executed for financial reasons — small pavilions were to perch on cantilevered parapets and on the roof itself as aboriginal models of architecture itself, not unlike the rooftop aediculae and gazebos on a few of the taller buildings at Herculaneum. After toying with these memories of the oldest “house” in the attic of imagination, or under the open sky, Graves attends to the down-to-earth business of building. He leaves intact the conventional division between office spaces inside and external package. In this regard he acts no differently from the ubiquitous designer of commercial structures. The practical result is problematic as a result of the deep mass of his block and its very limited fenestration, especially on the upper floors. The frequently invoked humane intent of post-modern design and Graves’ anthropomorphic metaphors turn out to be a matter of appearance rather than substance.

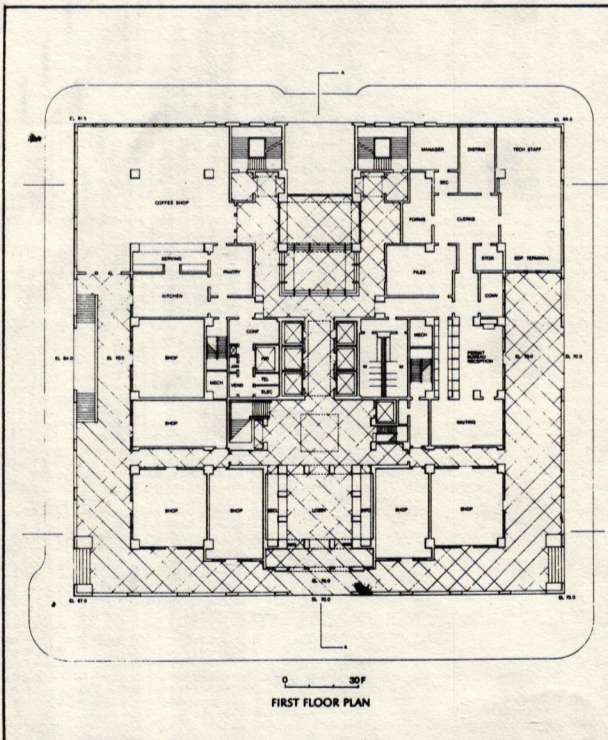
Across a richly variegated series of preparatory studies, the facades acquired the quality of enormous signboards. Graves progressively drained his architectural ideas of physical presence in favor of graphic signs. Disembodied and abstract, these signs quite willingly lend themselves to logo-like reduction, because they are far more removed from the bodily qualities of architecture than even modernist buildings tend to be. By comparison with Le Corbusier’s *Pavillon suisse* in Paris, the Portland



View from 4th Avenue (photo: Acme Photo)



View of the interior

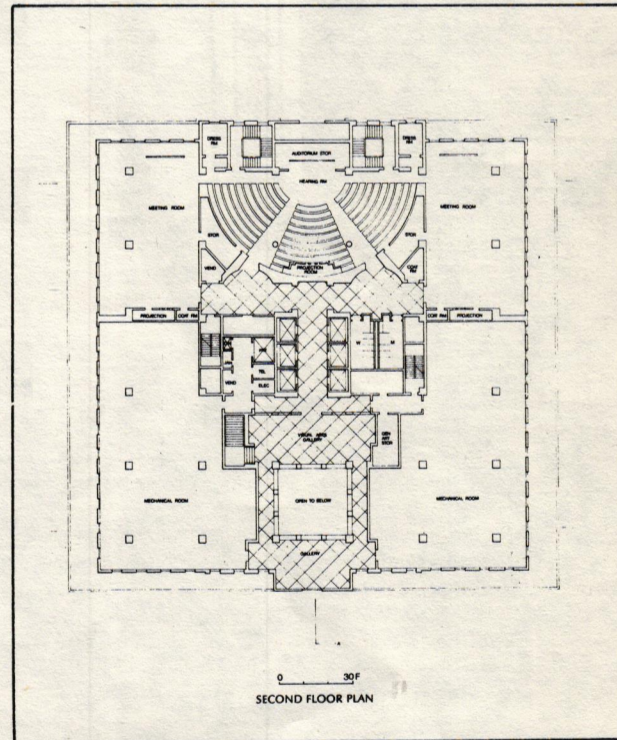


First floor plan

Building comes off, perhaps surprisingly, as more abstracted from both the classical syntax of structure and the symbolic imagery of buildings. Hence Graves abstains from architectural integration of materials and structural role, component shapes and figural whole. Only in the most tenuous fashion can tall strips of maroon stucco sustain their columnar role against a huge sheet of glass, or giant wedges convey allusion to capitals or keystones.

Graves’ building makes strangers of the fully specialized “house plan” — laid out on the ground floor — and of the “mythic origins” of architecture — playfully conjured onto the rooftop. The true business of architecture, namely to mediate between the two in terms of a precise historical moment with all its necessities, has been abandoned to mere signs hovering on the billboard of design ideology.

Faint resonances of a Pompeian taste reach a crescendo in the treatment of wall surfaces: brightly tinted stucco and the *revetment* heighten the planar emphasis, and moldings, patterns and proportioned color fields suspend their surfaces altogether. Le Corbusier’s fascination with Pompeian houses and their laterally displaced doorways that left wide expanses of wall intact, reemerges in Graves’ schemes and may explain a constant predilection



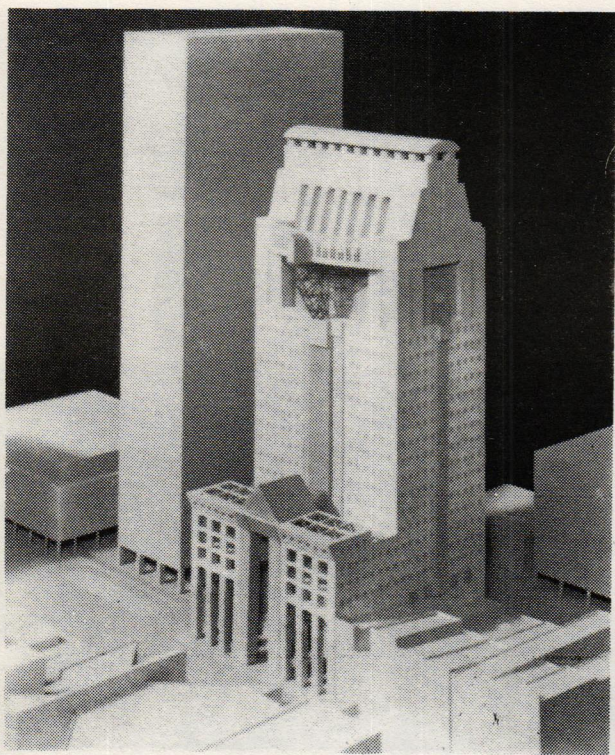
Second floor plan

in all of his work. One need not wait for Graves’ latest buildings to recognize that he conceives of architecture strictly in terms of planar articulation. Little has changed through a supposedly dramatic alteration of course in the architect’s work. Like his collages and murals — the true field of his experimentation — spaces are still conceived in terms of bounding planes. A small detail illuminates the Gravesian sense of surface: wherever an opening or passageway is made in the wall, the generously applied moldings never turn the corner, confirming in their exposed cross-section that they belong to the wall surface.

In the lobby areas with their narrow passages, closely ranging posts — themselves mere remnants of the wall — colored fields and indirect lighting, terrazzo flooring and imitation Deco patterns, the wall planes rise to a kind of architectural essence. What holds true inside is all too plain outside: the Portland Building is nothing if not a sophisticated play of signs on surfaces, layered — at least conceptually — two and three deep, and orchestrated in the interplay of glossy reflexes, opaque stripes, crisply shadowed grooves, and boldly cut shapes on the surfaces of its box-like structure. It is an almost gaudy package with ribbons, stick-ons, pop-ups, bows and strings, all neatly tied together with the pictorial greetings from an architect for all ideological seasons.

“The forms hold one’s attention because they imply more and better possibilities, and the sense of proportion pleases me because it is so earnestly idiosyncratic.” —Arthur Drexler

Other Assessments



Humana Headquarters project, Louisville, Kentucky

Arthur Drexler

The Portland Public Office Building is a problematic work I feel bound to defend despite the academic *singspiel* it provokes. The building deals with some palpable problems of scale, color, and materials, and some phantasms of literary symbolism. The effort to invent meaning undermines the handling of forms. Where the meaning is intelligible it seems silly. But the forms hold one’s attention because they imply more and better possibilities, and the sense of proportion pleases me because it is so earnestly idiosyncratic.

To criticize specific failures is idle because so much that was built is not the original design, and even with its superfluities the original design is an impressive work. But no doubt Graves can be faulted for miscalculating the effects of the successive compromises forced on him.

If the forthcoming Humana building is not decapitated by its client or trivialized by its architect, it will be a work of architectural rather than literary significance. Arthur Drexler is Director of the Department of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art.

Vincent Scully

The Portland Building is a bold, brave and — as Stanley Tigerman recently called it — an “optimistic” building chosen by a courageous jury. Critics talk of the ambiguity of the sign language in the building, but this has been a fundamental part of modern art since Leonardo. What is moving in Graves’ idea is that he wants to mix the classical principle of an urban building as a block with a decorativeness in which classical forms are transmuted by his own invention. Unlike those who call themselves post-modernists, Graves finds new ways to use pre-modernist architectural details. In opposition to post-modernism, which categorizes all of modernist principles as belonging to the later International Style, and negates the validity of an ongoing modern search, Graves’ architectural approach is miraculous, tapping roots of both urban dignity and decoration in its treatment of the block and massing.

The detailing and color of the Portland Building relate to the pre-International Style buildings in the city. While the painted concrete is a subject of much discussion, why shouldn’t this building — emblazoned like a flag — have its concrete painted? It is much more civilized than the rough concrete of late modernism. The flatness, abstraction, and colors he uses continue the tradition of the Art Deco style before it was destroyed by modern architects, who removed all decoration.

Portland has a turn-of-the-century tradition behind it. Graves’ building attempts to sustain and revive this

urban fabric, which has been eroded by buildings of the corporate late International Style. The architectural problems of the building become overshadowed by the greater importance of Graves’ efforts to fit the building into its urban context. The little temples on the roof, unfortunately lost during the design process, would have completed the picture of the building by relating it to the nearby hills. These hills, surrounding downtown Portland and containing it, are similarly crowned with small houses. Seen from downtown, the Portland Building and hills present a similar massing effect. This is a real contextualism.

In light of the bold, optimistic image presented by the Portland Building, I was disheartened by the severity and tone of criticism Michael Graves has received. The only architects I have heard criticized by other members of the profession in quite the same defensive way have been Robert Venturi, Le Corbusier, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Vincent Scully is Trumbull Professor of Art History at Yale University.

Alan Colquhoun

The manipulation of scale is for me the most interesting and problematic feature of the Portland Building. This is apparent both in the building as a whole and in its separate parts. If our perception of the colossal centralizing motifs is that their size is “real,” then the building appears quite small and dense, and the repeating small windows become dots. This effect is related but not identical to Michelangelo’s Capitoline buildings or Sullivan’s Wainwright building, where a double reading is still possible of the colossal order and “real” windows that allow a continuous and imperceptible oscillation between figure and ground. The true ancestors of Portland seem to be certain later works of Le Corbusier, especially the Algiers tower project of 1939-42 and the Chandigarh Secretariat (1958), where the repeating openings become a textural ground against which to read the figural incidents. But of course in Le Corbusier these incidents are intended to represent how the building actually works. In Graves this function of self-representation has disappeared.

Within this abstract formalism, the figural tectonic elements themselves must lose even the residual literalness of Sullivan’s pilasters. These elements are now mere signs of architecture, bearing no relation to the putative “real” structure or purpose that has been historically assigned to them. Any complete figure would be kitsch (unconscious meta-architecture). The necessary historical distancing is created by synecdoche: keystone standing for arch, pilaster and garland standing for order.

There is thus a double rhetorical substitution: small and dense for large and disparate; part for whole. This process may have a humanizing and reconciling intention, but its effect is overwhelmingly ironical and critical. What the building is saying, with a power and an intensity that are almost unique and not at all banal, is that architecture, as it has come down to us from history, is now impossible.

Alan Colquhoun is Professor of Architecture at Princeton University.

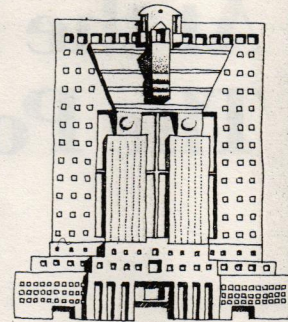
Allan Greenberg

The Portland Building is the most significant public building since the Chicago Civic Center (1964-65). Graves’ bold use of color and decoration augurs a return to a significant public architecture.

Allan Greenberg is an architect practicing in New Haven.

Philip Johnson

Having been very instrumental in Graves being awarded this big building [the firm of Philip Johnson and John Burgee acted as advisors to a citizens’ jury that recommended the design of the Public Office Building to the City Council], I frankly feel disappointed in the final results. But I don’t think the final outcome was Graves’ fault. The city gave him an impossible program that wouldn’t allow for the opportunity to give the building any shape other than a block with that height and width.



It ended up, therefore, being dumpy in proportion. Also, since it is basically an office building, it had to have punch-board windows, ribbon windows, or Gothic vertical fenestration. There was no money for projections of any kind of depth, and you couldn’t have great courtyards in front, so very limited change was possible. When John [Burgee] and I first saw the scheme, it did have projections. It also had an arcade at the bottom made up of narrow spaced columns that later became more widely spaced. While originally Graves had designed a classical colonnade, now it is more like a modern one. Michael’s original windows were smaller [3’ x 3’ instead of 4’ x 4’]. They were like polka-dots on a necktie — they just formed a general background. Now the result is a punch-board building with some fancy paint. Also, the aediculae on the tops of both sides of the building block added charm and the shift in scale that only Michael knows how to do so well — and now they are missing. I also miss the flaring garlands. The present garlands do not have the sense of flamboyant decoration the building very badly needs, and none of the photographs yet show the “Portlandia” sculpture *in situ*, which would of course help. As for the colors, I think they are extraordinarily successful. Graves has managed to decorate an “undecoratable” box very successfully. This is, I think, the essence of the architectural treatment, though it is still a modernist one. I would say he took the keystone theme and the pilaster theme about as far as you can in an individualistic manner. And why not? We want our pilasters and keystones to be quite individual and original. The design is extraordinarily original, perhaps even “uncopyable,” but it seems to me it shouldn’t be “copyable.” In our work [Philip Johnson and John Burgee], we are much more severe, contained, and similar to our sources. Well — good for Graves. One of the fine things that didn’t show much in the original design, but shows very much in the executed building, is the sense of layering. For example, he sets the blue stripes of the mullion of the giant window behind the pilasters. This layering effect makes the columns appear as though they stand out; it is very clever. With this big chunky box Graves’ painterly quality has allowed him to give the illusion of depth in place of dimensions. Because he didn’t have a chance to really work in three dimensions, elements like these count very much in his favor. You have to call the building a wild success. The dumpy quality of it diminishes when you cross the river. People who do cross the river should look down on the building and see it together with the surrounding buildings. Then they’ll see how fine it is. But there is no “contextualism” really possible here. If the building is all glass, it will be contextual with one building; if it’s classical, it will be contextual with two buildings. So I think Graves’ neo-classic, original, painted box is as good as you can do.

John Burgee

I think the Portland Building is contextual in that it is a civic building among other civic buildings: It doesn’t imitate the other buildings, but it does indicate that it is part of the group. The building doesn’t look as good in photographs or drawings as it does when you are actually there, because it stands next to the courthouse, which has a colossal order applied to it too. In that company it comes off very well. I thought it would be jarring or shocking in the location — with the older buildings next door — but it just isn’t.

It is true that the columns are scaled outside the strict classical system, but who’s to say that’s bad? The building is abstracted, but who’s to say that’s bad? I’m not as disappointed as Philip is in the final result of the building because I never thought it was the handsomest building Michael could do. But I was always encouraged by the fact that at last we would have a county office building that looks like a county office building. We’re so used to seeing county office buildings of the last fifteen years that look as cheap as — or cheaper than — the cheapest spec office buildings in town. There is no mistake that this is a civic building, a building people can identify with Portland.

Philip Johnson and John Burgee have their own firm in New York.

The Portland Building

Several architects and historians commented on the controversial nature of the Portland Building.

At the Institute: The Portland Building Analyzed

(photos: Dorothy Alexander)



Michael Graves and Charles Gwathmey

The Portland Public Office Building by Michael Graves has been greeted with acclaim and criticism since it was officially opened this fall. In response to the issues raised by the historically referential civic building, two evenings at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies last month were devoted to an analysis of the building's implications for architecture and urban design. The evenings, called "On Style," were organized by architect and teacher Diana Agrest for the Institute and attracted overflowing crowds. On the first evening, December 6, Michael Graves presented the building and outlined his intentions for the project. On the second, December 8, a number of panelists discussed the building within the larger framework of the topic "On Style." Panelists included architectural historian Vincent Scully from Yale, critic Paul Goldberger of *The New York Times*, art historian and *October* Editor Rosalind Krauss, *October's* Managing Editor Douglas Crimp, architectural historian Kurt Forster of MIT, and architect and director of the IAUS education program Mario Gandelonas. The moderator was Princeton architecture professor Anthony Vidler.

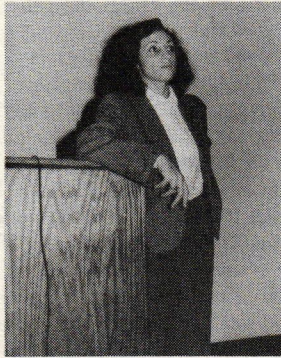
While the topic of style was intended to locate the building in the context of more general issues, it more notably provided a framework from which panelists entered directly into a debate about the Portland Building. Judging from the themes that appeared and reappeared in the panelists' remarks, the issue of style was nevertheless very present, whether panelists relied on the art-historically based usage of "style" — referring to the characteristics that distinguish one period from another — or the fashion-oriented term describing an artifact's look or image.

The very visible attributes of the Portland Building — its two-dimensional, rather than three-dimensional qualities; the planarity of its bounding surfaces as opposed to more volumetric spaces; and the emphasis on skin and surface rather than mass — anchored the debate. The pictorial qualities usually ascribed to modernist architecture were found to dominate perceptions of the building in spite of its historical imagery, color, or classical composition.

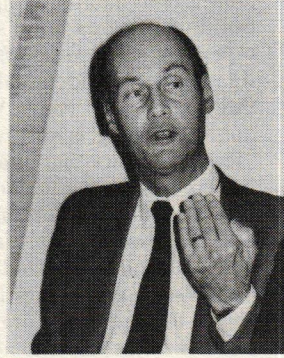
Vincent Scully began his remarks by asserting that Graves, much like T.S. Eliot in his literary criticism, is searching in his architecture for an "objective correlative" — a particular image by which to convey an idea. This search for an image has led him to look for a "sign" (by which Scully means a two-dimensional referent) to communicate his architectonic concept. The recent appropriation of semiotic theory by architects has led to the belief that meaning is communicated through "signs" rather than embodied through mass. Scully continued that meaning in architecture (and art) can be perceived in two ways: through association at an intellectual level, or through empathy, that is, an



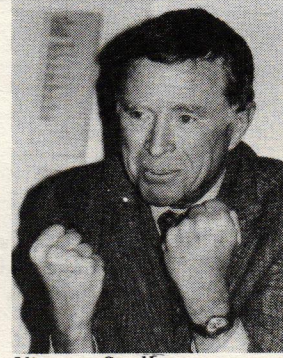
The Portland Building, Portland, Oregon (1982); Michael Graves



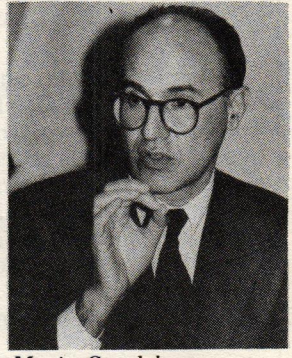
Diana Agrest



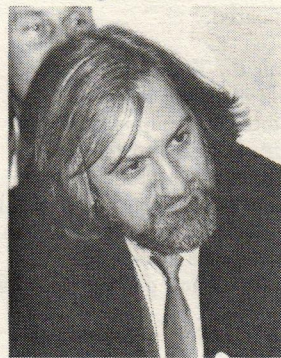
Kurt Forster



Vincent Scully



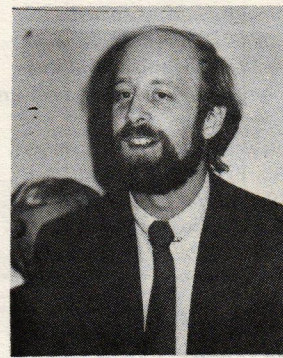
Mario Gandelonas



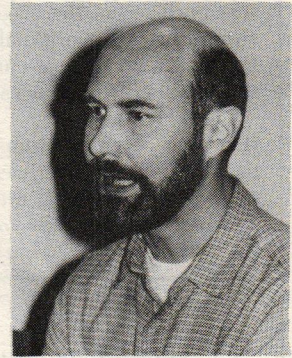
Anthony Vidler



Rosalind Krauss



Paul Goldberger



Douglas Crimp

emotional sense of relating physically to a building. The fascination with the sign as a flattened image does not allow this second kind of experience, he explained.

Continuing discussion of the two-dimensional qualities of the Portland Building, Kurt Forster commented that the conception of building in terms of planar layering has always been found in Graves' work, in spite of his presumed shift in the mid-1970s from a modernist vein to a more historically referential one. Paul Goldberger, as Scully had done, compared Graves' buildings to Frank Furness' work, characterized by tension and compression in mass and manipulation of scale. He then reasoned that the Portland Building represented Furness-like impulses filtered through the International Style. The result is understandably more planar and less volumetric.

In light of earlier comments, it was not surprising that the next panelists addressed the question of "reading" the facade, analyzing what it communicates. Rosalind Krauss maintained that because of the facade's layering, "citational grafting," and fragmentation of images, the observer's experience of the building is fundamentally ambiguous. She pointed out the problem of decoding such a work when the signs have been "recontextualized" in this manner and different readings become available.

Appropriately, Mario Gandelonas turned to the facades of the Portland Building as a "text," and performed for the audience an imaginative interpretation that also took into account the architect's verbal text, presented several nights before. If one analyzed Michael Graves' lecture, Gandelonas pointed out, one would notice he spent much time discussing not only the strict budget for the building, but also its doors and garland motifs. "There must be something there," Gandelonas concluded disingenuously. Gandelonas saw the building as a box made of four walls given a certain texture by the little holes for windows and four monumental "doors."

Since Graves has long talked about communication in architecture, particularly the significance of doors and "entrance," Gandelonas felt compelled to understand what the windows and doors were trying to say. He found that the doors are not doors one can enter, but large windows. Within those windows are columns or pilasters that support garlands and keystones. The keystone, Gandelonas reminded the audience, was traditionally the last stone used in building an arch; it locks the structural system in place and becomes the "sign" for the arch. Similarly, Gandelonas noted, the garland was used in architecture to decorate the lintels of temples. "What we have in the Portland Building," he elaborated, "are two pillars or pilasters with the keystone but *not* the arch, and a garland from the temple *without*

At the League: Discussion with Graves

the architrave or pediment." Not only have these signs of the arch and the temple been displaced here, but they have also been monumentalized and made colossal in scale. Gandelsonas, taking his reading a step further, suggested that the large keystone could be seen as a metaphor for the Portland Building, which, like a keystone, locks the system of "post-modernism." Similarly, the garlands, evoking flowers worn by victors and heroes, imply a similar status for the building. Or does it, asked Gandelsonas impishly, pointing out that a garland could equally signify a crown of thorns. With this interpretation, Gandelsonas saw the building's garlands as symbols of "flagellation" or "masochism."

Gandelsonas then linked this sense of masochism to the state of the architectural profession today. In the past, he noted, architects were allowed to develop the plan, the section and the perspective of their buildings, and had control of 100 percent of the building. Today, however, after the input of the developer or client, and after the budget is worked out, all that is left for the architect to work with is 100 percent of the skin.

In spite of the panelists' attention in their remarks to the facade, an emphasis integral to any commentary on the building, other issues were also taken up — for example, the building's response to its urban context. Scully argued that Graves' use of classical and vernacular architectural traditions was successful in placing the building within the existing urban fabric that so much late modernist development had destroyed (for an elaboration of this argument, see p. 19). Goldberger defended the Portland Building as "fundamentally conventional," by which he meant that the building is not "ordinary," but "respects certain basics that the International Style took away from us," such as the urban relationship of building to street, the clear demarcation of entrance, and the logical formal procession through a building.

The effort on the part of architects such as Graves to provide an alternative to perceived failings of the Modern Movement's urban design concepts occupied a good part of the discussion, as did recent efforts to combat modernist architectural shortcomings. Goldberger blamed the Modern Movement for failing to create a workable vernacular with which the entire world could be built and instead creating a modern "style" easily vulgarized by real estate developers. Forster countered that a modernist vernacular has in fact been developed — one as true to the technical facts and circumstances of the modern epoch as the classical vernacular was to Greece — "whether one likes it or not."

In addition to this debate, discussion naturally turned to "post-modernism." Although most of the panelists expressed contempt for the word, Douglas Crimp argued that the term had been handled very "vulgarily" in architectural parlance, but could be useful if thought of more "theoretically," as it applies to other disciplines such as painting or sculpture. Crimp added, however, that a split still plagues those dealing with theoretical issues: some people think of themselves as "beyond ideology" while "others really understand that we live within ideology."

To ignore issues of ideology and style as they relate to architecture, or to concentrate on a single aspect as if others did not exist, would lock one into an "unknowing" position. An architect with a critical but open stance, on the other hand, can generate an architecture capable of speaking for its time without being susceptible to the reductiveness of passed-down ideas or the seductiveness of fleeting images. While the Portland Building, with its emphasis on skin, may seem to be trapped by its surface characteristics, its importance lies deeper. The building has struck a chord because it has raised as yet unresolved questions about the extent an architect can make decisions beyond the skin, and about the nature of monumentality, symbolism, and interpretation. Through serious exploration of these issues in the Portland Building, architect Michael Graves has successfully launched a debate worthy of further investigation. Indeed, the Institute plans to investigate additional architectural works in its presentations each month. The next set of evenings in the "On Style" series will concentrate on the work of Gwathmey/Siegel.

— Suzanne Stephens

Michael Graves' newly completed Portland Public Office Building was also exposed to public scrutiny in New York at a presentation and panel discussion hosted by The Architectural League to a standing-room-only audience at the Japan Society November 30.

Graves' presentation included the outline of antecedents well known to those who have been following the project since the first sketches were released in 1978. The building's symbolic role was explained with regard to its location at the edge of Chapman Square in the city's downtown grid of streets; its proximity to the 1895 city hall and the 1913 county courthouse, both designed in the classical manner; and its relationship, contextually speaking, to a ring of glass towers. In deference to the architectural composition of the older classically-styled buildings, Graves also described his building's tripartite division, the classical centering of the building's parti, the polychromy and, of course, the much-noted keystone, pilasters, and garlands.

Much of his presentation went into the "sordid tale" of the competition for the commission with Arthur Erickson Associates and Mitchell-Giurgola Architects. That Graves won, he felt, was due as much to the fact that his was the only scheme that came in on budget, as it was to the fact that Philip Johnson and John Burgee advised the jury.

The competition was "sordid," Graves explained, because there was a great deal of opposition from sympathizers with Erickson, forcing another run-off competition. While Graves won that round as well, he did lose the commission to design the interiors of the municipal offices. He also lost a number of elements of the building, including the multi-hued glazed tile and stucco skin, the free-flowing garlands, and the tempietti on the roof of the building. In addition, two floors were added and window sizes increased from nine to sixteen-foot square apertures. The much publicized statue of Portlandia, being designed by sculptor Raymond Kaskey, is still to be put in place on the outside of the building.

Panelists at the League presentation — art historian Rosemarie Bletter, *Skyline* Editor Suzanne Stephens, and moderator Gerald Allen, an architect — raised questions about Graves' formal intentions as actually realized. Bletter questioned how historical references were manipulated — that is, amplified out of scale to their original usage in the classical systems from which they were taken. Stephens wondered if Graves' abstraction of historicist references led to the same kind of reductiveness considered endemic to the modernist architectural condition. In response, Graves maintained he was attempting to re-establish a language of architecture and values that are not part of modernist homogeneity. He then stated that the treatment of the building's surface was intended to be read as something between column and wall, and that he did indeed want the surface to read as flat. When this statement was challenged with the observation that architecture deals in three dimensions, Graves argued for the possibility of a two-dimensional reading for architecture and a three-dimensional one for painting. He subsequently pointed to the example of the Palais Stoclet by Josef Hoffmann, in which the wall is "alive, pulsating, conveying a sense of texture." Graves admitted that the Portland Building "does not do that," but he did close with the irrefutable insight that the Portland Building had to bear much pressure and scrutiny because of its acknowledged role in heralding a new architectural direction. Because of compromises made along the way, Graves said, the burden was hard to bear. The panelists concurred and concluded that because the building does attain a high level of quality, it deserves a good deal of attention. Already a monument, it cannot be shrugged away.

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Events/Exhibits

Several symposia and lectures held in Cambridge and New York addressed a diverse range of topics of architectural interest.

Holland at MIT

Suzanne Frank

If there was an underlying *raison d'être* for the colloquium "Dutch Architecture Between the Wars" held at MIT November 5-7, no structure gave an overall shape to the investigation. Despite this lack of outline, there was a great sharing of fruitful ideas among the 15 speakers — who came from both Holland and America — and the participants. This friendly atmosphere was due largely to the efforts of director Stanford Anderson and his assistants Nancy Stieber and Donald Grinberg.

Manfred Bock, a professor at the University of Amsterdam, gave the first talk on H. P. Berlage and his pivotal contributions to Dutch architecture. Bock's talk was marred by an absence of formal analysis, and the implications of Berlage's influence were lost in a multitude of slides and citations of historical opinions.

The best all-around discussion was by Richard Pommer, Professor in the Department of Art at Vassar, who discussed Dutch influences on German architecture. Pommer pointed to the cultural exchange between the two countries after Holland's industrial revolution in the 1870s. Germany's prosperity allowed for a series of commissions for the Dutch architects Oud, Stam, Lauweriks, and Berlage. The sense of exchange was highlighted in Van Doesburg's hope of "conquering the world through Germany" when he went to Weimar in 1921, and in the German-language publication of books by Berlage and Oud.

Christ Rehorst from the University of Leiden presented "A Synthesis in Dutch Architecture," centering on a hitherto little-known architect, Jan Buijs, and his stylistic influence. Jan Buijs' reputation was based on his design for the Volharding (1927-28), the socialist headquarters in the Hague. While Rehorst's discussion of Buijs' relation to Constructivism and Expressionism was insightful, he diluted the strength of his subject by concentrating too much on comparisons with other architects.

The two most impressive talks about secondary Dutch trends were by two Dutch expatriates, Wim de Wit and John Habraken. Wim de Wit, a Dutch curator and researcher who recently came to New York, discussed the rise and decline of the Voortgezeten Hooger Bouwkunst Onderricht, the Dutch counterpart to the Beaux-Arts. John Habraken, Professor at MIT since 1976 and Dutch by birth and training, insightfully evaluated the policies and powers of Grandpré Molière, a retrograde architect (1883-1972) who since the 1970s has drifted into obscurity. While this architect was derivative to say the least, and received relatively few commissions — the most important being "Vreewijk" in Rotterdam (1916-19) — it was because of Molière's highly toned intellect that people such as Bakema admired him.

Several talks focused on urbanism and housing. Helen Searing, Professor of Art at Smith College and a superb speaker, discussed the Betondorp (1922-23) in Amsterdam, a village of sorts that was built by J.B. van Loghem, among others, in low-cost concrete when building prices were abruptly on the rise in Holland. According to Searing, this village was in a certain sense a realization of the Garden City planning tradition. Nancy Stieber, of the Department of Architecture at MIT, discussed design standards in Amsterdam housing of the 1920s and 1930s. Based on extensive research in contemporary documents and journals, her lecture concentrated on the debate at the time as to the most suitable arbiters of design decisions. She also discussed governmental reforms in housing of the period. Ed Taverne, Professor of Art History in Groningen, presented with an exceptionally inquisitive approach Oud's proposal for the center of Rotterdam. Particularly interesting were his quotations from Van Eesteren and Oud on the relation of architecture to city planning.

Maristella Casciato, a teacher at the Delft Technological Institute, gave an effective talk about Johannes Duiker. Although her presentation of Duiker's theories — the main one being that structural reinforced concrete skeletons signified dematerialization — was more astute



Volharding, The Hague (1928); Jan W. E. Buijs (photo: F. R. Yerbury)
than her observations on the works themselves, on the whole her contribution to the research on this visionary genius was both poetic and exemplary. Nancy Troy, of the Art History Department of Johns Hopkins, eloquently presented valuable ideas about Van Doesburg's and Mondrian's spatial conception. According to her central thesis, Mondrian wished to eliminate the spatial center of his work and ultimately to do away with the presence of the viewer; Van Doesburg, on the other hand, sought the abolition of the frame.

Stanislaus von Moos, Professor at the Technological School in Delft, gave an excellent presentation on the reciprocal influences of Dutch and Swiss architecture, but besides the work of Moser and Giedion, the architectural material represented was less than first-rate. Other talks, by Ben Rebel, Professor at the University of Amsterdam, A. van der Valk, a Dutch graduate student, and Donald Grinberg of MIT, were instructive and quite effective in providing much information and a degree of interpretation behind the various forces that affected architectural work and thinking in Holland in the 1920s and 1930s. Nevertheless, the extent of the information assembled still required a more cohesive framework whereby its implications could be better located within the efforts and achievements of other architectural movements.

Regionalism at Columbia

Daralice Boles

On Monday, November 29, the editors of *Precis*, the architectural journal of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, staged a forum with guests Alan Colquhoun, Kenneth Frampton, Mary McLeod, and Robert Stern. Edward Mendelson of Columbia's English department moderated the panel discussion, convened to consider "What are the promising directions for architecture today?" Mendelson's introduction sketched parallels between recent developments in architecture and current trends in literature or music, outlining the tendency in all fields to move away from orthodoxy towards a pluralism of possibilities, filtered nonetheless through an unavoidably modern sensibility.

Frampton, arguing for the architectural supremacy of the Johnson's Wax Building, suggested Frank Lloyd Wright as the source of a truly American architectural tradition. McLeod answered the forum's title question with a specific list of young architects — among them Daniel Libeskind, Mark Mack, Andrew Batey, Steven Holl and Lauretta Vinciarelli — whom she considers the potential leaders of a New Modernism, based on a synthesis of formalist modern principles and (post-modern) metaphorical readings.

Among the evening's debated issues was the question of regionalism. Robert Stern offered remarks in praise of

the provincial. Colquhoun argued that monopoly capitalism had effectively eliminated the possibilities of separate indigenous styles, to which Stern offered the sardonic suggestion that an extended bus trip around the country would correct his English colleague's misconceptions.

More surprising than the differences in opinion was the convergence of outlook that did emerge. In a neat trick of genealogy Colquhoun placed Stern and Frampton, whose ideological differences are known, side by side as heirs to the Gothic Revival: Colquhoun had Stern absorbing its legacy of regionalism and eclecticism and Frampton inheriting the movement's tectonic interest. Mendelson suggested a further consensus, adding that no contemporary architecture or criticism can escape the legacy of modernism — a loss of innocence and a corresponding awareness of history.

To suggest that the forum found a consensus is not to homogenize the diverse and often conflicting observations offered by the panelists. Their remarks will be published in their entirety in the forthcoming issue of *Precis* (No. 4), edited by Sheryl Kolasinski and Pat Morton, which will take up the subject of American architecture and its search for traditions.

Celant at the League

On three successive Tuesday nights from October 19 to November 2, Germano Celant tackled a topic cryptically titled "Art and Architecture: Wrestling with Desire." Celant, author of *Arte Povera*, contributing author to *Domus* and *Artforum*, and organizer of the 1981 exhibit "Italian Art Since 1960" at the Centre Pompidou, treated his audience at the Architectural League to a panoply of projects that exemplified the intersection of art and architecture.

Art, says Celant, should break out of its frame, step down off its pedestal, and take over its environment! His lectures took the form of a selective historical survey with pictures to support the polemic.

Not surprisingly, the best examples of this ideal relationship between art and architecture occur either in the studio itself (consider, for example, Mondrian's Paris studio, a three-dimensional manifesto of his neo-plastic aesthetic) or in works of sheer fantasy. Projects such as Oldenburg's Alphabet Town, Christo's wrapped Whitney Museum or some of the fantastical Constructivist visions take architecture as their subject matter; buildings become a series of *objets trouvés* to be manipulated and transformed at will. Interestingly, Celant focused almost exclusively on architecture created by artists; only in the case of Frank Gehry did he recognize efforts by architects to affect a rapprochement between the two fields. — Daralice Boles

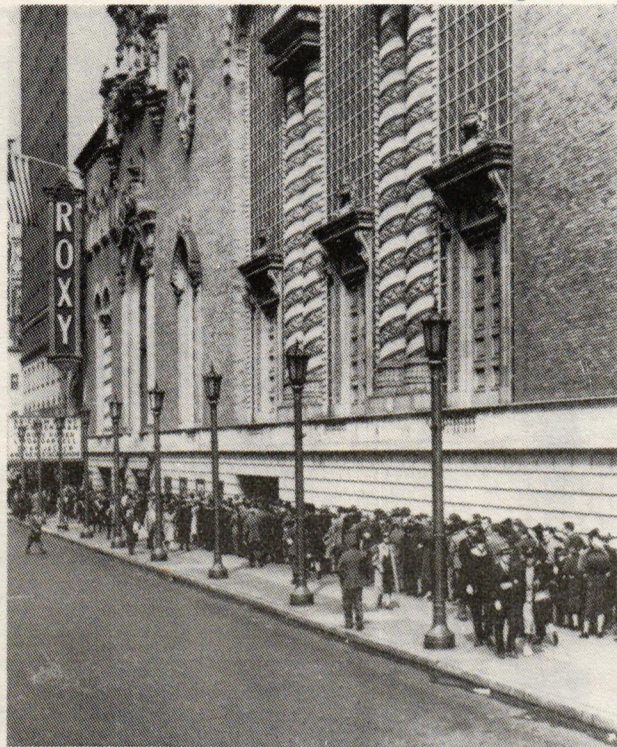
Scandinavian Modern: 1880-1980 opened at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, and was organized by David Revere McFadden, curator of decorative arts at the Cooper-Hewitt. The show will travel to the Minnesota Museum of Art, St. Paul (February 27 to April 24, 1983) and the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. (July 8 to October 10, 1983). The catalogue was edited by McFadden and published by Abrams. (288 pages, \$45.00). **Design: The Problem Comes First** was at the Cooper Union in New York, is now at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago until January 6, and will travel to the AIA in Washington, D.C. The show was designed by the Danish Design Council.

Thermo jug (1976); Erik Magnuss (photo: H. C. Andersens)



Picture Palaces On Exhibit

Roxy Theater, NYC (1927); Walter W. Ahlschlager



(courtesy Cooper Union Press)



Roxy Theater (Theater Historical Society)

An exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum curated by David Naylor and on view until February 27 assesses the unique contribution of lavish American movie palaces during their "golden age," from the end of World War I until the Depression.

Movie palaces, like the entertainment they served, democratized their audience by selling large blocks of inexpensive tickets while at the same time providing their patrons with the vicarious thrill of aristocratic luxuries. Designers like W. W. Ahlschlager, the architect of New York's Roxy Theatre (1927), combined elephantine reworkings of European, Mayan, or Oriental architecture — decorative excesses that would have made Flo Ziegfeld blush — and energetic explorations of some of the newest technology of the early twentieth century. Some of their designs came very close indeed to fulfilling the vision of a world transformed by dazzling, colored light prophesied by utopian architect and poet Paul Scheerbart. It is tempting to see these architectural delights springing from the movies themselves, a medium wholly dependent on light for its creation and exhibition.

The movie palaces that most dramatically realized the trance-inducing goals of movie designers were perhaps those with the "atmospherics" originated by John Eberson. Meant to be magic carpets to distant times and places, "atmospherics" involved the use of cloud machines and theatrical lighting to transform ceilings into vast star-filled skies. Side walls and proscenium arches were provided with varied architectural decor, recreated from Persian courts or Spanish villages. If this aesthetic form still existed, we might be seeing *Star Wars* and other such filmic space operas within the appropriate enriched surroundings of Eberson's atmospherics, rather than in our empty shoebox-like movie houses. —Donald Albrecht

Scandinavia Assessed

Margot Jacqz



Armchair (1925); Gunnar Asplund (photo: courtesy Cooper-Hewitt Museum)

The exhibition "Scandinavian Modern: 1880-1980" recently at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design is nothing if not comprehensive. Organized by David McFadden, the museum's curator of decorative arts, the show documents the history of design in Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland with about 350 objects — including cutlery, glassware, furniture, jewelry, tableware, and textiles — by at least 250 designers during the last century. The accompanying hard-bound catalogue not only has photographs of each item along with detailed captions and commentary, but also includes eight quite substantial essays that discuss both internal and external forces affecting the nature of design in these countries while outlining the facts of the history as well.

The retrospective offers a rare opportunity to examine the rise and fall of a popular style. It also reveals in its chronological installation a complete cycle of design achievement reflecting both European trends and independent traditions. There is a sense that in this concentration one has an overview of the history of twentieth-century design since the Scandinavians were certainly a part of the mainstream, both considerably influenced and at times influential. It is refreshing, however, to have a look through a slightly different magnifying glass.

The earliest work in the show, from the last two decades of the nineteenth century, is perhaps the most interesting because the least well known. Related to both the European Art Nouveau and the English Arts and Crafts movements, this work also draws heavily on a specifically Nordic heritage, with Viking and other mythic motifs adorning tapestries and silverware. As this nationalistic romanticism faded, designs began to take on still more international character: Highly modern chairs by the Swedes Carl Bergsten (1906) and J.A.G. Acke (1900) echo the work of the Wiener Werkstatte with their unadorned geometry and attenuated lines. A chair by Gunnar Asplund for the Paris exposition of 1925 has a smooth, curved, Moderne line similar to that appearing on the continent, but without the luxe, ornamental quality that French Art Deco assumed.

After the transitional decades of the early twentieth century, modernism, too, emerged in Scandinavia. Formal abstraction and technological experimentation moved to the fore as artisans and industry began working together in an atmosphere of social reform. Although clearly influenced by the concerns of the Bauhaus, the functionalism of the thirties in these countries often maintained an awareness of natural materials and a contact with history that the Germans did not. Kaare Klint's chairs were contemporary renderings of traditional designs and Alvar Aalto's clean, sinuous pieces exploited the capabilities of wood as Mies and Breuer were

exploring "colder," newer materials. Tableware and other household items also evidence a stripped geometry with little or no decoration. Kay Bojesen's cutlery of 1932 or Wiwen Nilsson's straight hexagonal vase of 1930 and rounded hexagonal water jug of 1941 are exemplary.

The experiments and refinements of the thirties and forties, in which the hard edges of industrial forms were softened and innovation was common, were the direct precursors of the designs of the fifties: what the world knows as "Scandinavian Design." This period of international inundation is typified by the work of Hans Wegner, who designed "The Chair" in 1949, by Arne Jacobsen's minimalist cutlery and wrap-around Egg Chair of 1957, Tapio Wirkkala's brilliant, streamlined glassware, Grethe Meyer's beautifully proportioned tableware for Royal Copenhagen, and by the equally familiar work of many others of lesser caliber who promulgated stripped, simplified, stylized, machine-crafted images. There is no decoration other than the occasional use of color; materials are used to exaggerate their inherent qualities. The focus was, ultimately, on form and texture alone, in a briefly engaging, very practical way. It is a style that is markedly, often stunningly sculptural but, almost by its own definition, neutral. Function flourished without fantasy, and was eminently acceptable. It is also a style that, when taken to its extreme, reached the end of a line. In the last two decades the striving of designers for technical and formal perfection has abated. It is apparent that artisan and industry have each gone their separate ways in the contemporary design system. Singular, "organic," crafted objects inspired by nature and tradition have, in a not very gainly manner, replaced the formula-laden objects of mass production and social well-being as representative or current trends.

The particularly pedantic nature of the Scandinavian approach to design was more easily grasped in a small show at the Cooper Union in September. Organized by the Danish Design Council and titled "Design: The Problem Comes First," it was a one-course meal in contrast to the feast at the Cooper-Hewitt. Twenty-six objects — ranging from computer circuitry, in-line pumps, and Kevi casters to kitchenware, tricycles, and Lego bricks — were displayed along with a description of the "problem" each was designed to "solve" in an abecedarian primer on the processes of product and industrial design.

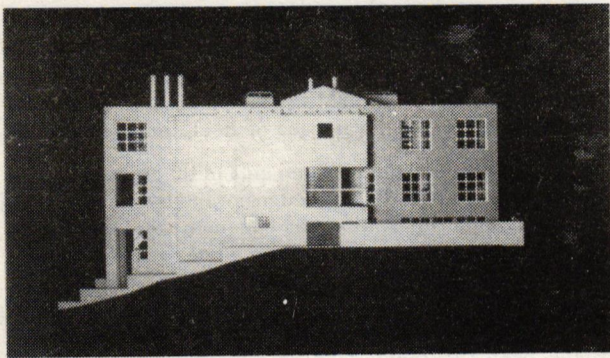
On the other hand, while the clinical nature of the problem-solution presentation is an accurate characterization of some designers' work, it does little to account for the more appealing aesthetic qualities of many of the objects shown, such as Henning Andraesen's F78 telephones or Jacob Jensen's Beocenter stereo system for Bang & Olufsen. At the same time, the fact that Poul Henningsen's multishaded lamps — also featured at the Cooper-Hewitt — were innovations in diffusing light evenly does not overshadow the fact that they now seem unattractive.

So one must applaud the Scandinavians' interest in design — a tradition lacking in this country — and their very good intentions with generally successful results. One must also remark, however, that social, economic, intellectual, and functional superiority are not the alpha and omega of design. It is clear from both of these shows that the Scandinavians have achieved extremes of both inspiration and banality. Only a small percentage of the objects presented have the elegance that transcends rational explanation and makes a piece a classic in any time (many of the best, by the way, are by architects — Gunnar Asplund, Alvar Aalto, Kaj Franck, Eero Saarinen, and Kaare Klint). The rest, well . . . There are a few especially disagreeable deviations from the mainstream, but the majority of the work has a second-hand texture. It may be in the nature of a retrospective like this to present many adequate, and sometimes heavy-handed, derivatives of the first-rate examples. It may also be the nature of the product itself. The Scandinavians have long been acclaimed for "good design," which in the long run may be like sensible shoes — comfortable and unchallenging.

Exhibits

California Architects at La Jolla

Joseph Giovannini



Anyone who tries to understand California has to break through the wall of clichés that surrounds the state. Many people, however, come to California and, with instamatic thinking, snap views that confirm their preconceived images. This is the California in their mind.

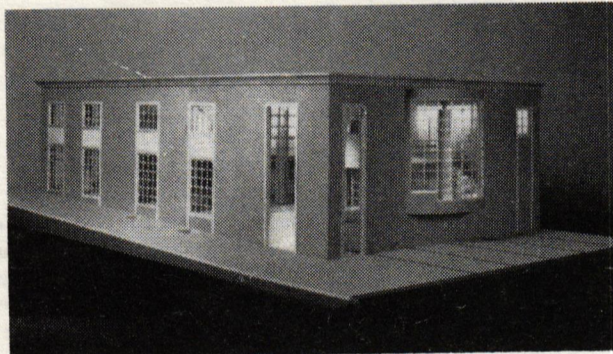
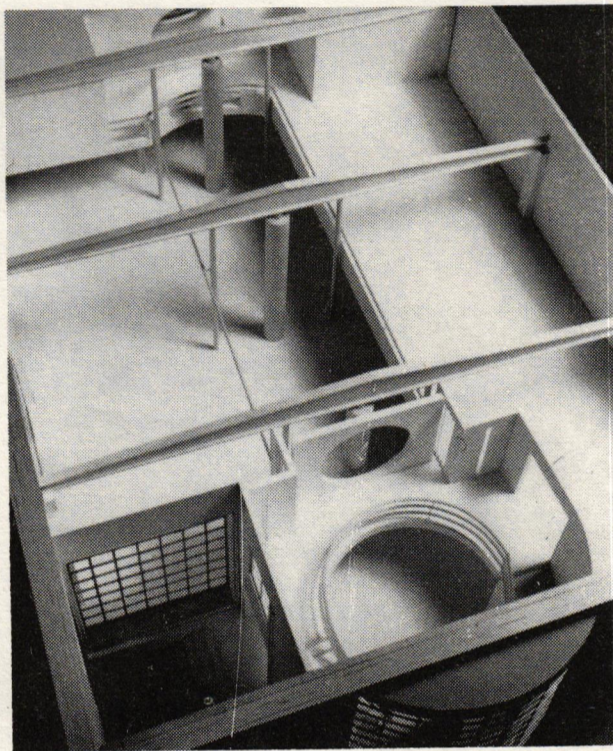
In November, the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art opened "The California Condition: A Pregnant Architecture." Guest-curated by Chicago architect Stanley Tigerman and Susan Lewin, Creative Director of Formica Corporation, the show exhibits the work of 13 firms from across the state. An exhibition of this size and scope would normally be a welcome forum of ideas, a summary of architectural thinking at a particular point in time, and a minor marker in national architectural history. Instead, the show manages to crop contemporary California architecture far short of its depth and complexity, reducing it to a superficial, image-oriented phenomenon. Unfortunately, the show has been filtered through the preconception that California is a fountainhead of the bizarre and eccentric — a place where Hollywood mated with Disneyland to produce architectural issues of the odd sort.

In his own misconceived essay in the catalogue accompanying the show, co-curator Stanley Tigerman creates a dubious taxonomy to describe all California architecture. Tigerman deduces that California architecture may be rich in "semantics" but lacking in "syntax" and fails to notice that this, precisely, is what is wrong with both his essay and the way the show interprets California architecture: Tigerman drops all the fashionable intellectual names and ideas, touches base with scores of California architects in one-sentence descriptions, and ends up with an essay that uses the names/ideas as scattered signs and images without any convincing syntax of thought. Because the exhibition itself lacks textual explanation and even photographs of built projects, it emphasizes the "look" of California architecture, turning a rich phenomenon into a style event.

Tigerman, who drops Hegel into the California condition by the third paragraph of his essay, paraphrases the philosopher without implementing Hegel's thought: "Art can only be understood by absorbing the culture for which it was made and which it reflects." He then talks of local architects as "California schizophrenic," "gone Hollywood," and "exaggerated," yet fails to interpret the buildings as cultural artifacts behind the clichés he imports to California.

One architect admitted that to assure inclusion in the show he designed a building with a bizarre facade that he believed would appeal to Tigerman's preconceptions, one resembling Tigerman's own designs. This is not architecture gone Hollywood, but architecture gone Tigerman — and beyond Tigerman, architecture designed for exhibition and publication, more responsive to national architecture culture than California culture.

Some of the work plays to the gallery; other perfectly serious work seems superficial because incomplete documentation allows it to appear arbitrary, preoccupied with style and form. Left out of the show was the hands-on mess of texts, photos, and design miscellany. Even napkin drawings were transformed into art pieces in the context of the white gallery walls, frames, and spot lighting. The show lacked the vitality its architecture purported to be about. The installation might have been truer to its subject had it resembled an



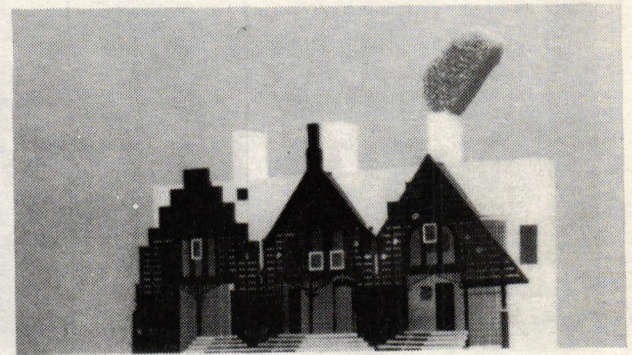
architect's studio; at least then it could have better acknowledged the difference between architecture and art.

The fact that California has a strongly conservative character with free-wheeling impulses in its nature evidently eludes Tigerman. This is a state in which citizens talk real estate as though it were weather: architecture here is strongly tied to sale, resale and affordability. Houses are to Los Angeles what cars are to Detroit, and the rules of the market are an extremely strong design force. The curators have not adequately dealt with the ubiquitous California builders' building, which is the significant commercial competition, the larger context, and even the inspiration for many of the show's architects practicing at a domestic scale. Frank Gehry, fellow Angeleno Eric Moss, and San Diego's Rob Wellington Quigley all enlarge standard builder houses with custom additions that derive much of their meaning by using the original builders' house as a datum. Frank Israel and Bob Johnson take a standard warehouse structure in West Hollywood as their datum for a new restaurant that features a large dramatic staircase as the main architectural event (shown this page).

The two architectural uncles in this show — Charles Moore and Gehry — both use conventional builders' materials, and although they try to transcend these givens, their acceptance of many builders' conventions is itself a convention shared by most of the architects in this California avant-garde. Quigley, even in his most "accidentalized" projects, purposely avoids custom detailing because standard builders' details are so much less expensive and more efficient. Fellow San Diegan Ted Smith has devised a for-the-market "loft" suburban house (at \$40 per square foot), with completely open interiors to be subdivided with movable armoires. Though Smith's houses and even the armoires may have a strong style component — one that is meant to be, almost symbolically, arbitrary — the loft idea is an original modification of a basic suburban builder house type. The show, however, fails to explain the intent of the houses and reduces their design to an exercise in

The California Condition: A Pregnant Architecture, an exhibition at the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, was on view from November 13, 1982, to January 2, 1983. Curated by Stanley Tigerman and Susan Grant Lewin, the show highlighted the work of thirteen contemporary California firms. An exhibition catalogue of the same title includes essays by Tigerman and Lewin (104 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations).

Left: Lawrence Residence, Hermosa Beach, CA (1982); Morphosis. Rear elevation. Center, top and bottom: Project for a Chinese/Continental Restaurant, West Hollywood, CA; Frank Israel and Bob Johnson (photos: Ed Goldstein). Right top: Susan Lewin and Stanley Tigerman behind a model of Changi Hotel, Singapore (1980) by Anthony Lumsden/DMJM (photo: courtesy La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art). Right bottom: Model of Victor Condo, Carlsbad, CA (1979-80); Ted Smith



facades, emphasizing images of "pop consumerism" typifying California architecture.

Nowhere are the substantial research and designs of Christopher Alexander and his Berkeley group mentioned, let alone analyzed, either as theory or practice. Nowhere in the essays is there mention of the serious original research of such feminist scholars as Dolores Hayden and Gwendolyn Wright, who have been uncovering determinants of design that may affect urban and domestic organization, if not style.

Susan Lewin conceived the show as pluralistic rather than polemical — an appropriate non-partisan stance — and the exhibition is successful in showing the great stylistic diversity of California architecture. The essays in the catalogue, however, do not explain whether the diversity is a function of cultural broadmindedness, permissiveness, indifference, or simply the phenomenon of western space isolating imaginations. The show also fails to note that the California condition resembles the American one in its current crisis of rationale — "What the hell to make the building look like?" asks Smith. The experimentation we see in this show is partially the wandering of architects in a philosophical diaspora, while the design procedure for many of these architects is to look for rules to break. The belief structure is that there is no belief, only agnosticism, personal expression, and a building response specific to site, program and client. It is an architecture of relativism — one for which there is no normative critical vocabulary.

The design, however, is not arbitrary. Each architect looks for devices by which to order the buildings (although the ordering device itself may be arbitrary). No one in this show looks to the grid as an ordering image. William Turnbull of San Francisco used the ordering metaphor of a "house in a garden" for one design, while Quigley ordered a beach house into its apparent randomness by conceiving the house as broken by a tidal wave. In a hotel design for San Juan Capistrano, Moore Ruble Yudell ordered the building along a circulation spine that is a narrative walk of

The conception and installation of two exhibits opening last month have spurred candid commentary.

“The Little house and its great room have never been rated highly . . . but they were always basically presentable, with a Wrightian aura, not brilliant but clear.”

Wright at the Met

Edgar Kaufmann, Jr.

Living room from Little house, Wauzata, MN (1914), now installed at the Metropolitan; Frank Lloyd Wright (photo: Cervin Robinson)

spatial episodes: small conversational spaces, larger gathering spaces — all reinforced by secondary design elements of landscaping, waterworks and color. The path is discursive and unfolds like a plot.

Los Angeles' Morphosis orders its Lawrence house in Hermosa Beach (1980-82) (shown opposite page) by conceiving it as a dialogue between the memory of the site's original bungalow and a new, larger, modern box-building. Bay area architect Thomas Gordon Smith turns to classicism for its hierarchical order, while Ted Smith looks to the immediate neighborhood for context.

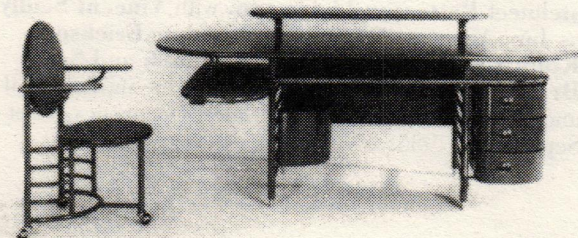
Frank Gehry, whose work clearly influenced several architects in the show, demonstrating a regionalism of influence rather than the influence of the region, seems to probe his intuition for a design basis beyond intellect. (This is an architecture difficult to imitate because the forms, but not the intuitions, survive the formal translation to other projects by other people.) San Diego's Tom Grondona — whose work could easily be dismissed as pop flash — orders his houses by sustaining spontaneity from sketch, to initial and secondary models, to on-site construction. Although his architecture is not yet self-confident and lacks subtlety, there is a consistency behind the work, certainly a sincerity, and a seriousness of intent. His (and Moss') buildings, especially, display a design mode popular in this show — unexpected juxtapositions of materials and images that form a surprise collage. (Moss' efforts are much more controlled and taut.) Other architects limit their juxtapositions to simple hybridization — Ted Smith designed one set of houses (the Victor Condo in Carlsbad, 1979-80, shown opposite page) with style facades (Dutch gables) attached to a standard builders' box.

Every intellectual period has its chosen subjects. Although it is difficult to generalize, and no one building or architect is typical, certain buildings in “The California Condition” show an interest in the builder's vocabulary; certain are humanized by humor, color, randomness, tension, and jolt; most are preoccupied by the building context. Energy, even for an architect like Quigley, who comes out of the solar decade, is no longer foremost on these design minds. Technology as a word was emphasized only by Los Angeles architect Michael Franklin Ross, and even then in a catalogue statement and not in his designs. No one except Gehry was working in wood-as-wood, gyp-as-gyp.

Most surprisingly, few architects addressed, either in their catalogue statements or their designs, the California out-of-doors or urbanism. Eric Moss' Petal House has virtually no relationship to its (difficult) yard, and will sit better on the published page as an image than as a house on land. Smith's houses may blend stylistically with their neighbors, with a gable from one and a door pediment from another, but they make no gesture to the yard. Anthony Lumsden, of Los Angeles' Daniel Mann Johnson Mendenhall, displays elegant, geometrically resolved megastructures (such as the Changi Hotel in Singapore, 1980, shown opposite page) that have little apparent relationship to the street.

While Moore Ruble Yudell's supple architectural forms have an implicit urban and outdoor vocabulary, only San Francisco architects Daniel Solomon and Barbara Stauffacher-Solomon explicitly treat architecture as one aspect of a total environment that includes both the city and the garden. A cogent text accompanies their exhibit, which includes maps and drawings of gardens and plants.

Perhaps the most revealing comment on the California condition (or at least the Southern California condition, which Susan Lewin perceptively says differs from the Northern) is a simple remark made by Gehry: “The nicest thing about Los Angeles is that nobody here appreciates what you're doing. The intensity of the East, the crucible of it, is missing here. That leaves more room to experiment. The ability to move on is very important to our survival in California. That's all I do — change things, do things, go on to something else.”



Desk and armchair (1939); Frank Lloyd Wright

The Frank Lloyd Wright room at the Metropolitan Museum of Art has been widely approved, and anyone who has seen the big, warm, tranquil, and comfortably furnished room will understand why. The Museum salvaged the room and its furnishings from a house about to be demolished. As a permanent installation, these elements will represent Frank Lloyd Wright's accomplishments to a large public in addition to demonstrating the catholicity of the Museum's standards. To herald the event, a great scarlet banner reading “The FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT Room” has been hung over the Museum's façade, and a paperbound booklet of color photos and comments issued, in which museum Director Philippe de Montebello has written that this was “a notable occasion for The American Wing and for the Museum.” The best-known American architect of the twentieth century has been adopted as one of the Museum's star attractions. Certainly the installation (and the accompanying temporary exhibition of Wrightiana, well displayed) cost a mint. Bravo for the Metropolitan and for architecture? Well, yes but not entirely.

Suppose the Museum had decided on a deliberate policy of establishing Wright as its “modern” hero of American architecture and design; what then might be the criteria for acquisition? One would hope to demonstrate the chief qualities that identified Frank Lloyd Wright's works from the beginning: the command of space as an individualized portion of a continuous whole; a rare skill in asymmetric composition; a sensitivity to materials; miscellaneous requirements of use harmonized in masterful unity in key with the environment. All this is exactly what the Metropolitan didn't get.

The living room from the Francis W. Little country house of 1912-1914, now installed in the American Wing, had an unhappy development from the start. It was to be a setting for musical recitals and large gatherings; other smaller spaces served informal occasions. The commission came to Wright in 1908, and only three years earlier, with consummate artistry he had built just such a setting for Mrs. Dana in Springfield (now owned by the State of Illinois). The Dana pavilion

plays strong symmetry against the evasion thereof; at one end a grand glass wall and flight of stairs balance the fireplace at the other. In 1908, however, Frank Lloyd Wright's family life was dissolving, and he welcomed escaping to Berlin to discuss a major publication of his works. The Littles, who had lived contentedly in their earlier Wright house (1903), were obliging; they set up temporary quarters for country living and, with other Wright clients, contributed to a fund needed to produce the now famous Wasmuth portfolios.

In 1910 Wright returned in a storm of scandal with his mistress and began work on the Little's house. After the first suggestions were turned down the house took form substantially as known in Wright publications today. But the Littles remained captious and Wright, who felt indebted to them, made concessions that chilled the design. The living room ceiling was raised considerably, so that the space no longer associated easily with the outdoors. The ornamental glass was made almost colorless and mechanical (though the ceiling light retains some of the original spirit). Wright did not supervise construction, and banal brick, badly laid, mars the chimney breast and scraps of exterior wall in the reconstruction, as it marred the whole house originally. Not only is the main space too high and self-contained, but the ironclad symmetry, side to side and end to end, has become absurd in the museum setting. The forty-foot runs of windows on two sides are now naturally illuminated on one side and electrically lit on the other. The glassed-in alcove (opposite the chimney) that originally mediated the room and the terrace has been blinded. The Littles were dead set against the suggested furnishings, although one or two pieces were executed and show Wright's new manner, spartan in feeling and scaled in size to the big room. For the most part furnishings kept from the 1903 house when it was sold were used either as they were, or somewhat adapted to the new setting. A clash of tone and detail was the inevitable result. The room lacks consistent variety and its space is static.

Why do all these disadvantages, inherited and newly created, not make a disagreeable impression? There are two reasons. The Museum has been blissfully oblivious to Wright's concepts and has aimed at no more than a decorated period room, rather than a fragment of significant architecture. More importantly, Wright himself was too adept a designer, too much a trooper, to let the Littles and himself be responsible for a truly bad piece of work. The Little house and its great room have never been rated highly; Henry-Russell Hitchcock cited merely their spaciousness. But they were always basically presentable, with a Wrightian aura, not brilliant but clear. That, it seems, has sufficed to let the Little living room shine with humane decency in the overwrought museum milieu of rarity and richness. As he liked to say, Wright again has “snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.”

Arriving

Notes & Comments

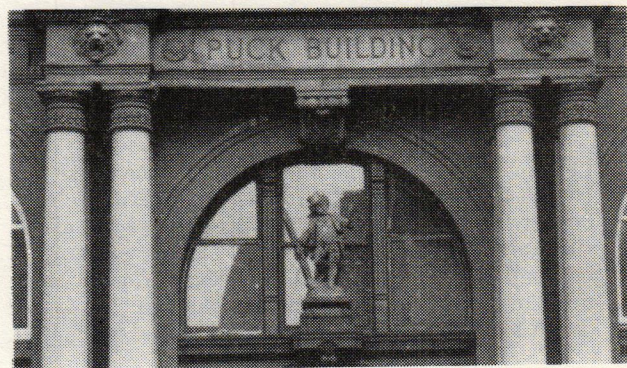
People and Projects

The projected design of **James Stirling** and **Michael Wilford's** Columbia University physical chemistry building, known as Chandler North, has still not been released. It awaits funding decisions and maintenance projections before being made "official." Meanwhile, Stirling and Wilford's Fogg Museum wing at Harvard is under construction, as is their Clore Gallery at the Tate in London. Their Cornell University performing arts center is in working drawings, and their Staatsgalerie extension and Chamber Theater in Stuttgart will open in the fall of 1983. . . . The High Art Museum in Atlanta, designed by **Richard Meier**, is also scheduled for a fall 1983 opening. . . . The unofficial word leaking out of the drafting room has it that the firms being considered for the development of the parcel owned by and adjacent to Carnegie Hall are **Cesar Pelli Associates**, **Charles Moore** (working with a New York developer and his in-house architect), and the New York office of **SOM**. **James Stewart Polshek & Associates**, architect for the Carnegie Hall renovation, is involved as executive design consultant for the project. . . . At South Street Seaport, The Rouse Corporation will be opening several stores this summer in the renovated "museum" buildings. **Moore Grover Harper**, with **Mark Simon** as the project architect, is designing two stores — one a clothing store, the other a paper goods store. . . . **Joseph Giovannini**, architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* and contributor to *Skyline*, is joining *The New York Times'* weekly "Home" section. . . . Quote of the month: "Being a good architect is like being in training 365 days a year. You've got to be physically and mentally fit because every day there is another confrontation." — **Charles Gwathmey** in an interview with **Davis McHenry** in the December 1982 issue of *Interview*. . . . The debate continues over Lever House, newly designated a landmark (*Skyline*, December 1982, p. 24). Fisher Brothers — owners of the land under the building — may try to contest its landmark status, while Park Tower Realty, which has an option from Lever on the building itself, may seize the day and use its air rights for the new tower they propose for an adjoining property (being designed, some say, by Edward Larrabee Barnes). In the meantime, **SOM**, architects for the 1952 landmark, recently gave the drawings of the building — designed by retired partner **Gordon Bunshaft** — to Avery Library at Columbia University. . . . In Atlantic City the contract for a 768,000-s.f. casino/hotel for Hilton has been awarded to **Warnecke Associates**. Construction, to begin this July, will be completed by summer 1985. . . . Nine of the entrants to the Parc de la Villette competition in Paris have been awarded first-round prizes of 150,000 francs. They are **Rem Koolhaas** and **Elia Zenghelis** (England); **Bernard Tschumi** (New York); **Alexandre Chemetov** (Paris landscape architect and son of architect Paul Chemetov); **A. Arriola** (Spain); **J. Gourvennec** (France); **Gilles Vexlard** (France); **Sven Andersson** (Denmark); **Bernard Lassus** (France); and **Van Gessel** (Holland). Second-prize winners, who were awarded 50,000 francs but will not proceed further with design, are **Richard Meier**, **Hiroshi Hara**, **Jefferson Riley** of Moore Grover Harper, **Jean Nouvel**, **Alain Sarfati**, and **Roland Castro**. According to **Hélène Lipstadt**, the jury of 21, which included **Vittorio Gregotti**, **Arata Isozaki**, **Renzo Piano**, **Joseph Rykwert**, and **Françoise Choay**, among others, met in December to choose a single prize winner, but couldn't settle on one. The second round of judging for the design of the 55-hectare "urban park" in the northeast section of the city will take place in March. . . . Stage one of *Architectural Design's* competition for the design of dollhouses has been completed, with 50 finalists selected from 300 entrants. Jurors **Vincent Scully**, **Bruno Zevi**, **James Gowan**, **Robert Maxwell** and **Andreas Papadakis** will judge built dollhouses by the finalists, who include **William Adams**, **M. Barsky** and **B. Sanders**, **Laura David** and **Raymond Yin**, **Vladimir Donchik**, **N. Downing** and **A. Snyder**, **Robert Mitnik**, **William Parson**, and **Melanie Taylor** from the United States, along with dollhouses submitted by AD's specially invited participants: **SITE**, **Richard Rogers**, **Demetri Porphyrios**, **Mario Botta**, **Jeremy Dixon**, **Eduardo Paolozzi**, **Takefumi Aida**, **Christian de**

Portzamparc and **Charles Moore**. The models will be on exhibit until April 19 at the Royal Institute of British Architects, and will then tour England and Europe. No U.S. exhibition is planned, and whether the houses will be sold to benefit charity, as originally intended, is now uncertain. . . . The American Institute of Architects will award **Nathaniel Alexander Owings** its highest award, the Gold Medal, at the 1983 AIA National Convention in New Orleans next May, in recognition of the cofounder of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill's "service to the architectural profession and to the Institute". . . . In New York, Shaw Walker has contracted **Robert A.M. Stern**, the designer of their Chicago, L.A., and Washington showrooms, to design its new 4250-s.f. showroom in the Kent Building on 42nd and Third, down the block from its old offices in the Chrysler Building. An early May opening date is expected for this "tight" space. . . . Other New York furniture news notes that Furniture of the Twentieth Century is offering reeditions of furniture, rugs and decorative accessories designed by **Charles Rennie Mackintosh**, made in Spain under the supervision of **Roger Billecliffe**, Chairman of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society. . . . In Anchorage, Alaska, a closed competition is being held for the design of a state office complex, under the professional advisorship of **William King Associates**. The program calls for a first phase with 760,000 gross square feet including 1000 parking spaces, and an optional second phase for 370,000 square feet and 500 additional parking spaces. Judges for this administrative office/commercial complex are Alaska state employees, and Anchorage area architect **Patterson Livingston**, with **Vincent Scully** as Jury Advisor. Proposals from **Arthur Erickson**, **Kohn Pedersen Fox**, **Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown**, and **Mitchell/Giurgola** are due in mid-April and will be judged one month later. Occupancy is set for September, 1985.

In Memoriam

A memorial service was held in New York on December 14 for Jeanne Davern, who died on November 15 after a brief illness. Davern, called "Jonnie" by all those who knew her, had been a mainstay in architectural journalism for about thirty years, a good twenty of which — from 1948 to 1969 — she was with *The Architectural Record*. Born in 1922, she graduated from Wellesley College before joining the staff of the *Record*. There she quickly became known for her "dedication and intensity," according to the magazine's Executive Editor, Mildred Schmertz. In 1959 Davern was made a senior editor of the magazine and in 1963, Managing Editor. She resigned in 1969 to devote her time to free-lance writing, editing and consulting: one of her last efforts was the book *Architecture 1970-1980: A Decade of Change* (McGraw-Hill, 1980), which she edited and partially wrote. Davern's interests led her to promulgate advocacy planning, user needs, and other broadly-based architectural concerns in the 1960s, when Schmertz feels Davern exerted the greatest influence on the profession. At Jeanne Davern's memorial service, held at the Church of Our Saviour in Murray Hill, Schmertz, Paul Rudolph, Edmund Bacon, Frederick Gutheim, Jonathan Barnett, and Martin Filler all paid tribute to her contributions to the field of architecture and architectural journalism.



Puck Redux

While light industrial and working lofts in New York's SoHo are generally being converted into living quarters, one building is being converted into offices and workspaces for visual and performing artists. The Puck Building, located on the corner of Houston and Lafayette Streets, is being renovated for sale as commercial condominiums for art galleries, workshops, professional design offices, and an art school.

Built by Albert Wagner in 1885 to house the editorial and printing offices of the comic weekly *Puck*, the Italianate structure is similar to many that have attracted conversion to residential condominiums over the past ten years. The Puck Building, however, is zoned for commercial use, and its developers — Peter Gee and Paul Serra — are hoping for a successful gallery / condominium real-estate experiment in its high-ceilinged studios.

The largest building in nineteenth-century America devoted entirely to printing, it has five acres of space, with 232,712 square feet available. None of the building's 10,000-, 7000-, and 5000-s.f. printing rooms is being partitioned and all of the original columns will be left standing.

The cleaning and restoration work will include the gilding of the twin Puck statues leaning out over the Houston Street corners, and the installation of traditional English tiles on the vaulted ceilings and twenty-foot high walls of the Puck lobby. Plumbing and security improvements are also being undertaken.

Heralding the experiment will be the March 23 opening of the building, which will capitalize on the building's history by exhibiting drawings and lithographs from *Puck* editions of 1876 to 1918. Jane Clark Chermayeff is the exhibition curator. The owners hope that by the time of the opening the building will have received landmark status. Applications to the National Register of Historic Places have already been filed. — PR

Ahrends, Burton & Koralek have just won the London National Gallery Extension competition. Details next month.

Development

Although Cadillac Fairview Corporation has seen selling assets to reduce outstanding debts, it recently announced the financing of one of two planned office towers at the Bunker Hill site in Los Angeles. The Canadian real estate concern, responsible for financing the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art [*Skyline*, May 1982, p. 6; October, p.24] as part of the Bunker Hill project, had delayed commitment on the office towers because no tenant had yet been found, even though the *L.A. Business Journal* had predicted a shortage of office space in the city by late 1984. But on December 4, L.A. Mayor Tom Bradley announced that he had received a \$220 million preliminary commitment letter from Metropolitan Life for the first office tower. Construction of the 1.1 million square foot tower, as well as the museum, a parking garage and a plaza, will begin this spring.

Cadillac Fairview, meanwhile, has been the subject of articles in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, due to its effort to sell off \$1.9 billion in assets during the slump in the real estate market. The company has tried to eliminate \$1.4 billion in assets, and has already sold approximately 30 percent of its housing assets for \$650 million, including interest.

Last February, Cadillac Fairview's new Board Chairman E. Leo Kolber announced the firm would withdraw from the land and housing business that comprised 56 percent of the developer's assets, and reemphasize its strength in shopping and office complexes. In August, the company announced a \$1.2 million operating loss for the six preceding months, compared with earnings of \$24.1 million in the corresponding 1981 period.

In October Cadillac Fairview abandoned a \$21 million downpayment to Citibank for a \$105 million site on New York's 53rd Street and Lexington Avenue, scheduled for an office tower designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes. The mortgage default, plus a controversial \$270 million November sale of 11,000 Toronto apartments that later sold for \$500 million to Arab investors, made it seem that the company had greater financial troubles than it really may.

Analysts see the default to Citibank as a sound effort to cut losses that could have grown beyond \$20 million. Moreover, although the *Times* speculated that the firm had made "a \$230 million mistake" in selling the Toronto apartments for "only \$270 million," the \$500 million sale figure is now disputed, and Toronto real estate experts say Cadillac got a good price. Analysts have also confirmed Kolber's contention that Cadillac Fairview will continue to finance its strongest projects, avoiding such speculative work as office towers lacking committed leasing or financing. "They still have lots of boring power," said Ira Gluskin of Toronto's Brown, Baldwin, Nisker, Ltd. — PR

Architects for Disarmament

Architects for Social Responsibility (ASR), a national non-profit educational organization, formed this November to protest current increases in nuclear warhead and civil defense spending, is joining similar groups of physicians, lawyers, and performing artists in fundraisers, lobbying, and educational efforts to oppose the Reagan Administration's defense policy. ASR Chairman James Stewart Polshek has called attention to Administration decisions to deploy Pershing II missiles in Western Europe, produce the neutron bomb and cruise missiles, and hire architectural students for air raid feasibility studies during the summer, as issues that need to be addressed. In addition, ASR intends to study the Federal Emergency Management Administration's plan to evacuate communities in the case of nuclear attack.

ASR also hopes to raise funds for a travelling exhibit showing the consequences of atomic attack for cities and the limitations of evacuation plans, and for a speakers' information bureau to help citizens and planning agencies compare their capital improvement needs with federal nuclear weapons spending. ASR's office is at 225 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012. (212) 334-8104. — PR

Books

Architects Design for Furniture. Jill Lever. Rizzoli Publications, New York, and Royal Institute of British Architects Drawing Collection, London. 144 pages, 170 illustrations, 20 in color. \$25.00, hard cover; \$15.00, soft cover

Architecture of the Twentieth Century in Drawings: Utopia and Reality. Vittorio Lampugnani. Rizzoli Publications, New York. 192 pages, 166 illustrations, 16 in color. \$35.00

Architecture San Francisco: The Guide. Sally B. Woodbridge and John M. Woodbridge. American Institute of Architects/San Francisco Chapter and 101 Productions, San Francisco. 200 pages, black-and-white photographs and maps. \$10.95, soft cover

Bugatti. Text by Philippe Dejean; photographs by Jacques Boulay; edited by Nadine Colleno and Uwe Hucke. Rizzoli Publications, New York. 360 pages, over 600 illustrations, 58 in color. \$50.00

Contemporary Canadian Architecture: The Mainstream and Beyond. William Bernstein and Ruth Cawker. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, Toronto. 190 pages, 200 black-and-white photographs and drawings. \$25.00

Design and the Public Good: Selected Writings of Serge Chermayeff, 1930-1980. Serge Chermayeff; edited by Richard Plunz. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 450 pages, 70 black-and-white illustrations. \$35.00

The English Terraced House. Stefan Muthesius. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut. 288 pages, 233 illustrations, 33 in color. \$30.00

The Designs and Drawings of Antonio Gaudi. George R. Collins and Juan Bassegoda Nonell. Princeton University Press, New Jersey. 246 pages, 186 black-and-white illustrations. \$75.00

A Gift to the Street: A Celebration of Victorian Architecture. Carol Olwell and Judith Lynch Waldhorn. St. Martin's Press, New York. 196 pages, 350 black-and-white photographs and illustrations. \$19.95, soft cover

The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America. Galen Cranz. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 352 pages, 75 black-and-white illustrations. \$25.00

Aldo van Eyck. Essays by Van Eyck, Herman Hertzberger, Addie van Roijen-Wortmann, and Francis Strauven. Stichting Wonen, Amsterdam. Includes biography, bibliography, and list of works. 128 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations.

Wallpaper: A History. Texts by Françoise Teynac, Pierre Nolot, and Jean-Denis Vivien. Rizzoli Publications, New York. 250 pages, 451 illustrations, 173 in color. \$50.00

Periodicals

Architecture as Theme. Oswald Mathias Ungers. Lotus Document 1. Published by Gruppo Editoriale Electa, Milan, and Rizzoli Publications, New York. 128 pages, 182 illustrations, 10 in color. \$25.00

Daidalos 5. "The First Sketch." Published by Bertelsmann Fachzeitschriften, Berlin; distributed by Rizzoli Publications, New York. Includes essays by Frank Lloyd Wright, Erich Mendelsohn, Louis Kahn, Alvar Aalto, Anna Teut and Werner Oechslin. 128 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations. \$20.00

GA Document 5. Published by ADA Edita, Tokyo. Includes Michael Graves' Sunar showrooms; Arata Isozaki's Hauserman showroom; James Stirling and Michael Wilford's School of Architecture at Rice University; Frank Gehry's Cabrillo Marine Museum and Loyola Law School; critiques by Paul Goldberger and Peter Papademetriou. 112 pages, heavily illustrated in black-and-white and color. \$19.95

Lotus International 34. "On India." Published by Gruppo Editoriale Electa, Milan. Contributions by Werner Oechslin, Gavin Stamp, Attilio Petrocchioli, Romila Thapar, Bijit Ghosh, Anthony D. King, Romi Khosla. 132 pages, 200 black-and-white illustrations. \$20.00

Mimar: Architecture in Development 5. Published by Concept Media, Singapore. Includes special section edited by Charles Correa; "Contemporary Arab Architecture: The Architects of Iraq" by Udo Kultermann; and an examination of the work of Turkish architect Ahmet Gulgonen. 88 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations. \$10.00

Modern Architecture and the Critical Present: Architectural Design Profile. Guest-edited by Kenneth Frampton. Published by Architectural Design, London. Includes essays by Frampton, Alan Colquhoun, Kurt Forster, Rafael Moneo, Demetri Porphyrios, Manfredo Tafuri, Bruno Zevi. 120 pages, heavily illustrated in black-and-white and color. \$14.95

October 22. Published by the MIT Press for the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies. Includes Annette Michelson, "De Stijl, Its Other Face"; Linda Nochlin, "The De-Politicization of Gustave Courbet"; Perry Meisel, "Fredric Jameson's Revisionary Romance"; Rosalind Krauss, "When Words Fail." 136 pages, 75 black-and-white illustrations. \$5.00

Oppositions 25. Special issue, "Monument/Memory," edited by Kurt Forster. Published for the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies by Rizzoli Publications, New York. Includes "The Modern Cult of Monuments" by Alois Riegl and essays by Forster, Anthony Vidler, Ignasi de Sola-Morales, Alan Colquhoun, Andre Corboz, O.K. Werckmeister, and William H. Gass. 152 pages, 107 black-and-white illustrations. \$15.00

Corrections

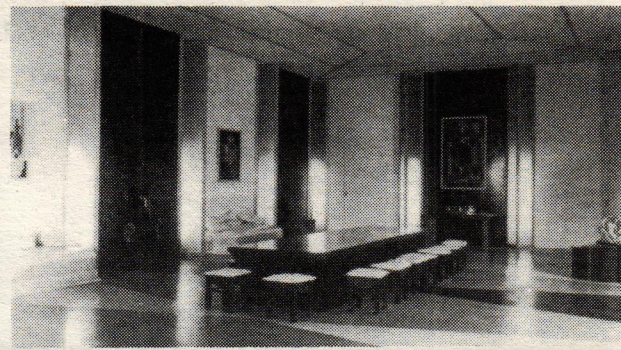
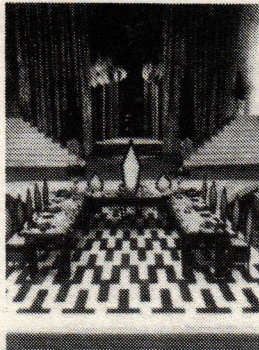
The photograph on page 28 of the November *Skyline* identified as the Cort Theater is in fact the Lyric Theater, 43rd Street facade, designed in 1903 by V. Hugo Koehler.

The photograph of the Charles Moore/Urban Innovation Group model for the Beverly Hills City Hall Competition in the November *Skyline* should have been credited "Copyright Raymond St. Francis 1982."

An entry in the New Arrivals list of last month's *Skyline* should have read, *California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture 1982*, published by the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies and Rizzoli Publications, New York.

The pavilion "VT ORNAMENTVM ARCHITECTVS" at the Beaux-Arts Ball (December *Skyline*) was a joint effort by Janet Colesberry, Richard Parley, Michael Moore, and John Wicks.

Film



Architecture on Film: Mallet-Stevens to Meerson

Donald Albrecht



French cinema of the 1920s brought together the aesthetic visions of both modern architects and a new group of artists — filmmakers. *L'Inhumaine*, the first film to make use of modern architecture, typified not only the period, but also the ability of vanguard French artists to move with relative ease between the "high" and the popular arts. Directed by Marcel L'Herbier in 1924, *L'Inhumaine* was a conscious, rather pretentious effort to promote modern art and architecture a year before the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes took place in Paris. The film was the effort of those whose work at the Exposition — with the notable exception of Le Corbusier — would define the avant-garde: the architect Robert Mallet-Stevens designed the exterior sets; Fernand Léger, the machine-age laboratory; Pierre Chareau, the furniture. Lalique, Puiforcat, and Jean Luce provided the decorative objects; Raymond Templier, the jewelry; and Paul Poiret, the fashions.

This effort to bring artists and filmmakers together in *L'Inhumaine* was prompted by France's loss of hegemony in world cinema in the years following the war. Although before the war France dominated the world's cinema production, her studios were soon paralyzed and Hollywood gained the edge in sheer quantity of output. Just as decorative artists revived pre-war plans for an international exhibition — the future Paris Exposition of 1925 — to reaffirm a battered France's artistic pre-eminence, filmmakers sought reaffirmation of her cinematic pre-eminence. It would be achieved in quality if not quantity, and one of the ways to this end would be film decor. In 1921 the enthusiasm of the *cinéaste* Louis Delluc led to the formation of the world's first cinema club, the Club des Amis du Septième Art or C.A.S.A. With no equal outside France, C.A.S.A. brought together filmmakers Marcel L'Herbier, Jean Epstein, Germaine Dulac, and Abel Gance, the director of the recently reconstructed *Napoléon* (1927); plus architect Mallet-Stevens; artist Fernand Léger; composers Eric Satie and Maurice Ravel; and poets Blaise Cendrars and Jean Cocteau. All vowed to raise the cinema to its rightful place among the established arts and to use film

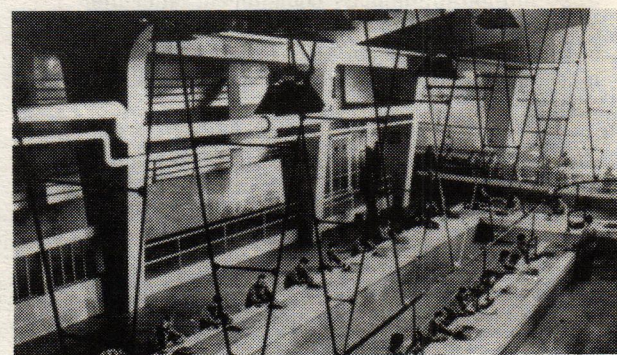
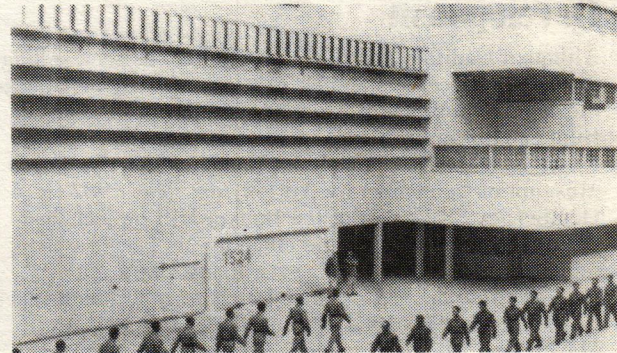
as a tool to promulgate new ideas in design. The club's directors experimented with avant-garde photographic techniques and modern decor, with a whirl of modern art movements racing before their cameras. Futurism, expressionism, and surrealism were integrated into their films and soon became part of France's rich cinematic tradition. Their cinema was represented in many exhibitions during the 1920s: the Salon d'Automne of 1921; the Exposition de l'art dans le Cinéma Française in 1924; and Mallet-Stevens' cinema studio on the Champs de Mars done for the Société des Auteurs de Film at the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs in 1925.

Robert Mallet-Stevens and the 1920s

Mallet-Stevens was well suited to spearhead C.A.S.A.'s architectural efforts. Born into an artistic family, young Robert was a frequent guest at the famous Palais Stoclet, the Brussels villa designed for his uncle Adolphe Stoclet by the Viennese architect Josef Hoffmann. The villa's Secessionist style of rigid geometry and lush decoration was to influence Mallet-Stevens' designs of the early 1920s and provide the model for one of his earliest film sets for *Le Secret de Rosette Lambert*, directed by Raymond Bernard in 1920. Within a few years, however, he would embrace the tenets of the Modern Movement and would continue to be one of its most vociferous supporters for fifteen years.

A propagandist for the cinema as well as architecture, Mallet-Stevens wrote in 1928 the only book to date devoted exclusively to the subject of modern architecture and the cinema, *Le décor moderne au cinéma* (Charles Massin et Cie., 1928). Adopting the picture-book format of such partisan tracts as Gropius' *Internationale Architektur* (1925), Mallet-Stevens presented photographs of Art Deco and modern architectural sets prefaced by a brief, impassioned introduction. Here he launched a diatribe against plagiarizing historical styles for contemporary film sets and complained that modern sets are "used exclusively for the places of debauchery: nightclubs or boudoirs of the demi-mondaine, which would allow one to suppose that the admirable efforts and researches of painters, decorators, and architects are

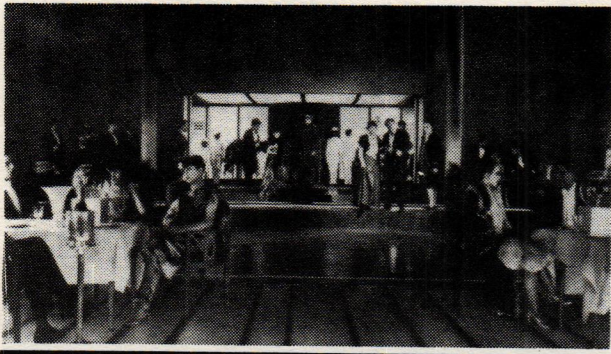
A number of films mentioned in this article are part of **Rediscovering French Film, Part II**, a retrospective of French cinema beginning January 6 at the Museum of Modern Art. The first few months of the series will highlight the innovations of such silent film masters as Marcel L'Herbier (*La Carnaval des Vérités*, January 16 at 5:00 and January 18 at 2:30; *L'Inhumaine*, January 23 at 2:30 and January 28 at 6:00) and Jacques Feyder (*Gribiche*, January 29 at 5:00 and February 3 at 2:30.) Also featured will be films by Raymond Bernard, Abel Gance, René Le Somptier, Louis Delluc, Jean Epstein, René Clair, and Germaine Dulac. The films will be shown at the Roy and Nina Titus Auditorium, MoMA, 18 West 54th Street; (212)708-9500 for information.



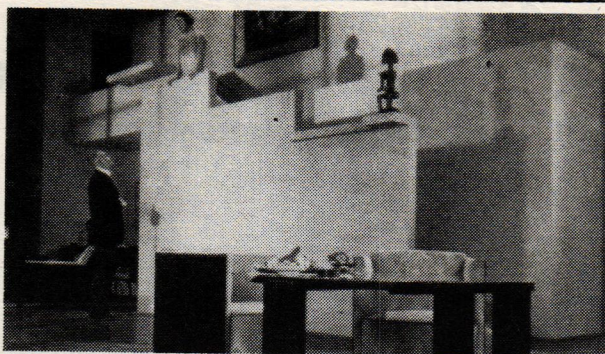
good to surround drunkards or those of ill-repute." He concluded with praise for those few who saw the cinema as an admirable means of artistic expression.

Equally imbued with this fervor was the director of *L'Inhumaine*, Marcel L'Herbier. Playwright, screenwriter, and poet in the style of Oscar Wilde, L'Herbier turned to filmmaking in 1917. Until 1928 — when commercial constraints set in — his audacious films mirrored modern French art and architecture. *Le Carnaval des vérités* (1919) contained Art Deco sets by Claude Autant-Lara and decorative artist Michel Dufet. In 1920, *Villa Destin* was designed by the fashion illustrator George Lepape in the Russian Ballet-inspired Art Deco style of his mentor, Paul Poiret, France's leading couturier of the teens. Cubism influenced L'Herbier's *Don Juan et Faust* (1922), which had sets by Robert-Jules Garnier, the grandson of Charles Garnier, and costumes by Autant-Lara. *Le Vertige* of 1926 reunited many of the *L'Inhumaine* team as well as the architect André Lurçat and the artists Robert and Sonia Delaunay, whose sets and costumes appeared in René Le Somptier's *Le P'tit Parigot* the same year. In 1927 L'Herbier directed *Le Diable au coeur*, which contained a luminous, all-glass nightclub by Robert-Jules Garnier. Pierre Chareau, who collaborated with L'Herbier, probably saw this set; it is tempting to speculate that it influenced the lighting schemes for the transparent exterior walls at his *Maison de Verre* (1931).

In 1928 L'Herbier directed *L'Argent*, the swansong of the aestheticism that characterized so much French film of the decade. The apartment setting of the Baroness Sandorff — played by the twenty-year old Brigitte Helm — is in the smart "Parisian chic" style of Jean-Michel Frank and Eileen Gray, in particular Gray's 1932 apartment for Suzanne Talbot. Here the hard-edged geometry of cubism was tempered by luxurious black lacquers, leathers and chrome. Anticipating the Talbot apartment further, an incomparable luster was created with indirect lighting, as in the triangular-shaped pilasters in the raised baccarat parlor and in the chevron wall decoration in the living room. The film's energetic



Above, left to right: *L'Inhumaine* (Marcel L'Herbier, 1924); interior set by Alberto Cavalcanti. Brigitte Helm in *L'Argent* (Marcel L'Herbier, 1928); sets by Andre Barsacq and Lazare Meerson (photos: Cinémathèque Française). *Le Diable au Coeur* (Marcel L'Herbier, 1927); set by Robert-Jules Garnier (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale). *Les Nouveaux Messieurs* (Jacques Feyder, 1929); set by Lazare Meerson. *Club de Femmes* (Jacques Deval, 1936); set by Lucien Aguetand (photos: Cinémathèque Française)



Below, opposite page, left: *Le Secret de Rosette Lambert* (Raymond Bernard, 1920); sets by Robert Mallet-Stevens (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale). Right, top: *A Nous la Liberté* (René Clair, 1932); set by Lazare Meerson (photo: Museum of Modern Art). Middle: *A Nous la Liberté* (René Clair, 1932); set by Lazare Meerson. Bottom: *Le Vertige* (Marcel L'Herbier, 1926); sets by Robert Mallet-Stevens, Claude Autant-Lara, Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Pierre Chareau (photos: Cinémathèque Française)



Below, this page: *Le P'tit Parigot* (René Le Somptier, 1922); sets by Robert and Sonia Delaunay (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale)



exploration of light extended to fashion as well. As Anne Hollander notes in *Seeing Through Clothes* (New York, 1975), movies of the period, without the advantages of a rich color palette, created the luster of luxury with light-reflecting materials. The iridescent surfaces of silvery clothes exaggerated for the camera every move of a screen siren like *L'Argent*'s Brigitte Helm. Rarely were fashion, architecture, and star power fused so well into as crystalline an image.

The 1930s and Lazare Meerson

Because of this participation of modern architects and designers in film, France was dominant in modern film decor during the 1920s. With the coverage of modern architecture spreading from design publications to the popular press, and with the publicity generated by exhibitions such as the Paris Exposition of 1925, modern film design soon became the domain of film specialists who adopted its imagery on an international scale. The filmmakers created their cinematic architectural idiom without the same ideological program as modern architects. Many film set designers were in fact not architects. Even L'Herbier's last experiments in modern decor were not designed by supporters of the modern movement, as his earlier films had been. *Le Diable au coeur*, designed by Garnier, and *L'Argent* by Andre Barsacq and Lazare Meerson, signalled that change.

Barsacq's designs for Jean Grémillon's *Maldone* (1927) exhibited an architectural style inspired by ocean liners. Meerson's designs for films were to show a more pictorial sensibility merged with an architectural one. Meerson was born in Russia and educated as an architect but emigrated to Germany and then moved on to France in 1924, where he soon became a leading designer of modern film sets. Throwing over the dark brooding decor of German expressionism and the cerebral aestheticism of the L'Herbier/Mallet-Stevens group, Meerson created a unique film style by fusing two seemingly contradictory approaches to film aesthetics: the on-location "reality" pioneered by the Lumière Brothers and the studio-created artifice of Georges Méliès. While he began with the most ephemeral, Chagall-like sketches

and collages, Meerson would end up with strong, abstract compositions in his finished sets that displayed a modern pictorial and architectural sensibility.

For Jacques Feyder's *Les Nouveaux Messieurs* (1929), Meerson designed an interior that echoes the interlocking solids and voids of Le Corbusier's Villa La Roche-Jeanneret (1923-25), although the setting is indicated as the nearby rue Mallet-Stevens, where Robert Mallet-Stevens' own recently completed ensemble of urban villas was located. The modern setting is as much a satire of the artistic pretensions of Mallet-Stevens and L'Herbier as it is an aesthetic device. Glass walls and an open plan — exaggerated by Meerson's false perspective — enhanced the illusion of depth. Meerson's bathroom for Jacques Feyder's *Gribiche* (1925) reified the cult of physical health extolled by Le Corbusier in *Vers Une Architecture* (Paris, 1923): "Demand a bathroom" he wrote, "one of the largest rooms in the house or flat, the old drawing-room, for instance," and equip it with "the most up-to-date fittings with a shower-bath and gymnastic appliances."

Meerson's factory for René Clair's *A Nous la liberté* (1932) adopted the formal language of the modern movement, but the story line refuted the utopian connotations modern architects attached to the industrial building. Movement, hygiene, efficiency, airiness, and open space — all elements praised by modern architects — were present in Meerson's phonograph factory. Inspired by J.A. Brinkmann and L.C. Van der Vlugt's 1927 Van Nelle factory in Rotterdam, the exterior of the "factory" was erected at full scale on the set of the Tobis Studio lot using architectural materials. To enhance the illusion of a vast space, Meerson built the factory interior in false perspective and placed adults in the foreground, children in the background, and people of decreasing stature between.

Yet instead of the positive connotations that historians and architects were ascribing to this kind of imagery, *A Nous la liberté* equated the factory with the prison from which the two protagonists escaped in the beginning of

the film. The long, clean lines of the architecture symbolized regimentation; hygiene suggested sterility. Movement, expressed by such recurrent motifs as horizontal windows, stairways, and open vistas, became an ironic counterpoint to the closed world of the factory/prison. A similar alignment of modern architecture with regimentation and sterility occurred in Jacques Deval's *Club de Femmes* (1936). Lucien Aguetand's white decor suggests the frigidity at a female boarding school where a stern headmistress attempts to limit the all-too-natural sexual awakenings of her young students.

The set for *A Nous la liberté* was Meerson's best modern design. As the visibility of modern architecture in France waned throughout the 1930s, Meerson continued to design modern sets — most notably for Feyder's *Le Grand jeu* (1934) — but never with equal success. The pioneering filmmakers of the 1920s were even less active in pursuing innovative design. After *L'Argent*, L'Herbier's non-historical films suffered from the blandest design. *Le Vertige* contained Mallet-Stevens' last modern set. In retrospect, the trajectory of Mallet-Stevens' career corresponded closely to that of modern decor in French film. His 1923 villa in Hyères, one of the first examples of modern architecture in France, provided the model for the cinema's first modern villa in *L'Inhumaine* the following year. The urban villas on rue Mallet-Stevens, the apotheosis of his career, were completed in 1927: one year after *Le Vertige*, one year before Meerson's recreation in *Les Nouveaux Messieurs*. Within two years after 1932, the year of *A Nous la liberté*, Mallet-Stevens' career, like that of many French modernists, shifted toward unbuilt theoretical projects. His interest in the cinema resurfaced, however, at the 1937 International Exposition in Paris, where the enormous curved facade of his Electricity Pavilion was used for evening film projections. In this, his last important building, Mallet-Stevens reaffirmed his commitment to the cinema and his position in its heady successes of the 1920s.

DateLine: January '83

Exhibits

Austin

James Riely Gordon

Jan 21-Mar 18 The work from 1889-1901 of Gordon, designer of fifteen Texas courthouses and other public buildings. Architecture Library, Battle Hall, University of Texas; (512)471-1733

Chicago

Finnish Design

Through Jan 9 "Finland: Nature, Architecture and Design." Museum of Science and Industry, 57th Street and Lake Shore Drive; (312)684-1414

Danish Design

Through Jan 16 "Design: The Problem Comes First." Museum of Science and Industry, 57th Street and Lake Shore Drive; (312)684-1414

Chicago Architects Design

Through April 10 A century of architectural drawings from the collection of the Art Institute, curated by Pauline Saliga. Gallery 200, Art Institute of Chicago, Michigan Avenue at Adams Street; (312)443-3625

Iowa City

The Plan of St. Gall

Jan 8-Feb 20 Carolingian plans of the Monastery of St. Gall, Switzerland. Museum of Art, University of Iowa, Riverside Drive; (319)353-3266

Los Angeles Area

Rob Krier

Jan 12-Feb 12 Drawings from *Urban Projects 1968-82*. Rizzoli Gallery, South Coast Plaza, 3333 Bristol Avenue, Costa Mesa; (714)957-3331

Lincoln, Nebraska

Le Corbusier's Saint-Pierre de Firminy

Jan 18-Feb 13 Drawings and models of Le Corbusier's church. Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, 12th and R Street; (402)472-2461

New York

Alliance of Women in Architecture

Through Jan 28 A travelling exhibition of work by women architects, ranging from publications to built projects, in conjunction with the tenth anniversary of the AWA. National Institute for Architectural Education, 30 West 22nd Street; (212) 255-2014

Decorative Screens

Through Jan 31 Exhibition of screens by Thomas Beeby, Michael Graves, Richard Haas, Robert A. M. Stern, and Stanley Tigerman. Rizzoli, 712 Fifth Avenue; (212)397-3706

David Macaulay Revisited

Through Feb 25 Drawings from *Cathedral, Pyramid, City and Castle*. SPACED Gallery of Architecture, 165 West 72nd Street; (212)787-6350

Karle Amend

Through Feb 26 Exhibition of this theatrical designer's work during the Art Deco period. The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Vincent Astor Gallery, 111 Amsterdam Avenue; (212)930-0717

American Picture Palaces

Through Feb 27 Arts and artifacts from movie palaces of the 1920s and '30s, curated by David Naylor. Includes architectural renderings and photographs. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212)860-6868

Frank Lloyd Wright

Through Feb 27 Sixty objects from the Metropolitan's collection of the architect's drawings, furniture, photos, engravings, ceramics and graphics, in conjunction with the permanent installation of Wright's living room from the Francis Little House. The American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street; (212)879-5500

Unprotected Landmarks

Jan 12-Feb 19 "Landmarks That Aren't, II."

Unprotected treasures from the other boroughs; photographs by Cervin Robinson. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)935-3960

Theater Design

Jan 25-May 1 A survey of European and American costumes, sets and architectural drawings since the 1500s. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212)860-6868

Austrian Architecture

Jan 27-Feb 11 Austrian architecture, 1860-1930. Avery Hall, Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia University; (212)280-3414

Skyscrapers

Jan 27-Mar 29 Drawings, models, and construction photos of three highrise banks: Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Hong Kong, by Foster Associates; National Commercial Bank, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, by SOM/Gordon Bunshaft; International Place, Fort Hill, Boston, by Johnson/Burgee Architects. Organized by Arthur Drexler. Museum of Modern Art, 18 West 54th Street; (212)708-9400

San Francisco

Furniture '83

Through Jan 9 Concrete block furniture by Mark Mack and Bruce Tomb. Limn Studio of Furniture and Art, 457 Pacific Avenue; (415)397-7474

Italian Design

Through Jan 16 "Italian Re-Evolution, Design of the Eighties," an exhibition curated by Piero Sartogo. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Van Ness Avenue at McAllister Street; (415)863-8800

Washington, D.C. Area

Finnish Architecture

Jan 10-Feb 25 The work of the Finnish architect Lars Sonck (1870-1950). American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Avenue, N.W.; (202)626-7300

Maryland Alumni Work

Jan 16-Feb 11 Exhibit of recent works by alumni. School of Architecture, University of Maryland, College Park; (301)454-3427

Athens, Greece

New Trends in Contemporary Architecture

Through Jan 26 Exhibit of works by Raimund Abraham, Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, Rem Koolhaas/Elia Zenghelis, Richard Meier, Cesar Pelli and Massimo Scolari. National Gallery, 1 Micaalakopoulou Street; 71-10-10

Lausanne, Switzerland

The Laurentine Villa

Jan 17-Feb 2 The travelling exhibition from the Institut Français d'Architecture presents various architectural responses to Pliny the Younger's agrarian villa in Rome. Department of Architecture, Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, 12 avenue de l'Eglise-Anglaise; 471111

London, England

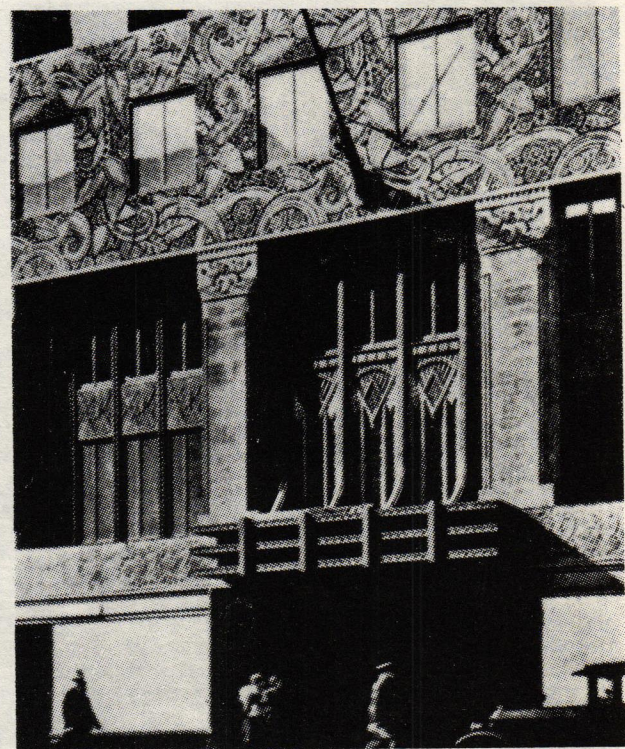
Furniture by Memphis

Through Feb 20 Exhibition of pieces by Memphis design group. Boiler House, The Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington; 589-6371

Dollhouse Exhibition

Through April 19 *Architectural Design's* competition entries by Takefumi Aida, Mario Botta, Jeremy Dixon, Charles Moore, Eduardo Paolozzi, Demetri Porphyrios, Christian de Pontzamparc, and Richard Rogers. Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place; 580-5533

Highlights



Chanin Building, NYC (1928); Irwin S. Chanin. 42nd Street main entrance

A Romance with the City: Irwin S. Chanin. Through Jan 28. An exhibition of photographs and historical documents illustrating the work of this architect/engineer, organized by Diana Agrest and designed by Rudy de Harak. The Houghton Gallery, Cooper Union, Third Avenue and 7th Street; (212)254-6300. [The show will be reviewed next month in *Skyline*.] A catalogue of the same title, edited and with an essay by Diana Agrest, was published by the Cooper Union Press to accompany the show (112 pages, black-and-white and color illustrations).

On Style II: Gwathmey/Siegel. Two evenings devoted to Gwathmey/Siegel's 1982 villa, "Toad Hall," in East Hampton, NY. The 11,000 sq. ft. villa has not yet been published. **Jan 24** Charles Gwathmey presents the villa. **Jan 26** Panel discussion, "A Modern Villa: Abstraction or Representation," with speakers Douglas Crimp, Kurt Forster, Mario Gandelsonas, Paul Goldberger, Vincent Scully, and Anthony Vidler as moderator. An exhibit on view from Jan 24-Feb 7 presents drawings of the villa. Presentations at 6:30 pm. The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 8 West 40th Street; (212)398-9474

Transforming City Space. Jan 12-Feb 19. An exhibition of models and drawings illustrating a project for a pedestrian urban space on West 27th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. The design is by Piero Sartogo and Jon Michael Schwarting of Design Collaborative, who have been commissioned by the Fashion Institute of Technology. The Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960



Project for West 27th Street, NYC; Piero Sartogo and Jon Michael Schwarting of Design Collaborative

Look for Skyscrapers at MoMA, Gwathmey at the Institute, St. Gall in Iowa City, and the Laurentine Villa In Lausanne . . .

Events

Eugene, Oregon

The Chicago Style Lectures

Jan 7 Leland Roth, "Planning in Chicago: the River; Grid; the Railroad; the Automobile." 4:30 pm. Jan 11 John Vinci, "The Restoration of Residences by Chicago Architects." 12:30 pm. Feb 2 John Hartray Jr., "One Hundred Fifty Years of Modern Architecture." 8:00 pm. Feb 3 John Hartray Jr., "Nagle, Hartray and Associates: Recent Projects." School of Architecture and Allied Arts, University of Oregon; (503)686-3656

Theory of Modern Criticism in the Arts

Jan 10 Rosalind Krauss, "Photography's Discursive Spaces: Landscape/View." 8:00pm. Lawrence Hall, Department of Architecture, School of Architecture and Allied Arts, University of Oregon; (503)686-3656

Houston

Charles Moore Lecture

Jan 19 "Plans for Hermann Park." 8:00pm. Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissounet at Main Street; (713)527-4870

New York

Club Mid Lunchtime Lectures

Jan 5 "New York Futures: Visions for the City" Jan 12 Richard Lattis, "The New Zoos" Jan 19 Barry E. Light, "Battery Park City" Jan 26 Sheila Thorn, "Lincoln West: 76 Acres Reclaimed." 12:30pm. The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)935-3960

Boroughs of New York

Lectures by Barry Lewis on the history of New York boroughs. Jan 21 "The Once and Future Bronx" Jan 26 "Brooklyn: The Best Little City in New York" Feb 2 "From Planned Suburb to Melting Pot: Queens." 6:00pm. Doris C. Freedman Gallery, The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212)935-3960

Grand Central Tour

Every Wednesday at 12:30pm, meet in the Station by Chemical Bank and underneath the Kodak sign; (212)935-3960

Cooper-Hewitt Winter Lecture Series

Jan 27-Mar 3, every Thursday. Jerrilynn Dodds, "Architecture and Decorative Arts in Classical Islam." 6:15pm. Elizabeth Kudyan, "Architectural Styles of New York." 2:30pm. \$50 per course. The Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212)860-6868

Architects for Social Responsibility

Feb 2 General meeting to discuss nuclear disarmament and other socially-oriented programs. 5:30pm. Japan House, 333 East 47th Street; (212)334-8104

Columbia University Spring Lectures

Feb 2 Michael Kirkland Feb 9 Rafael Vinoly Feb 16 Joseph Rykwert Feb 23 Anthony Vidler Mar 2 Elliot Sclar Mar 9 Hugh Jacobson Mar 23 Bernard Tschumi Mar 30 Ada Karmi Melamed Apr 6 Nancy Troy. 6:00pm. Wood Auditorium, Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia University; (212)280-3414

Philadelphia

University of Pennsylvania Lectures

Jan 24 Robert Maxwell, "Classicism and Innovation" Jan 26 John Collins, landscape architect, "Works" Jan 31 Steve Badanes, "Jersey Devil Architecture." 6:30pm. Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, 34th and Walnut Street; (215)898-5728

Washington, D.C.

Post-Modern Architecture

Lecture Series, "Challenges and Dilemmas." Jan 25 Kenneth Frampton, "Toward a Critical Regionalism" Feb 1 Warren Cox, "Varieties of Contextual Experience" Feb 8 Thomas L. Schumacher, "Post-Modernism: The Metaphor is the Mirage" Feb 15 Rosemarie Bletter, "Was the International Style Abstract?" Feb 22 Stanley Tigerman, "The Unresolved Dialectic" March 1 Gavin Macrae-Gibson, "Amoral Architecture" March 8 Diana I. Agrest, "Recent Work" March 15 Richard A. Etlin, "Before Terragni: the First Post-Modernism." Members \$63 for the course; non-members \$89. 8:00pm (Feb 15 session at 6:00pm.) The Smithsonian Institution, Carmichael Auditorium, Museum of American History, 14th Street and Constitution; (202)357-3030

High School Architecture Program

A five-week studio course in contemporary architecture. Saturdays from January 22 to February 19 at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies. Please call (212) 398-9474 for information and registration.

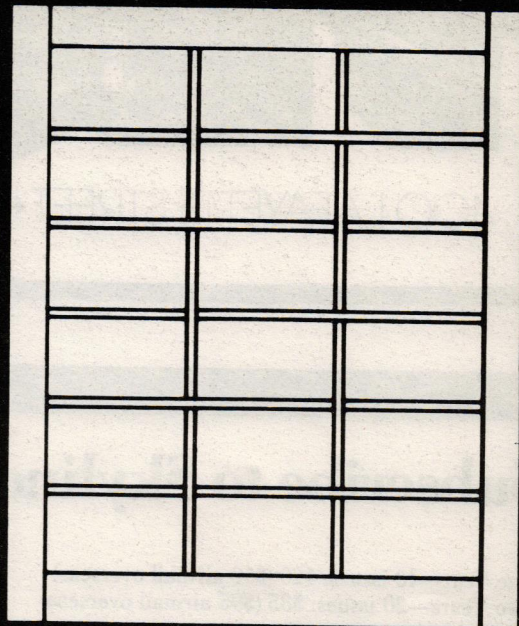
Competitions

The Harvard Architecture Review is sponsoring an open competition for the design of a gate. This gate is to be located at the southern end of Quincy Street on the Harvard University campus, and will provide a public introduction to the architectural promenade along Quincy Street. The focus of the competition will be the exploration of precedent and invention, and their relationship to the process of design. Jurors will include Ed Jones, Stanley Tigerman, Henry Cobb, Laurie Olin, Jaquelin Robertson, Susanna Torre, and Anthony Vidler. Prizes of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 will be awarded, and honorable mentions will receive \$100. Selected entries will be published in the *Harvard Architecture Review: Precedent and Invention*. Due date for entries: February 8, 1983. Registration and competition materials from: Competition, The Harvard Architecture Review, Gund Hall, 48 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Entry deadline for the **Third Progressive Architecture Annual International Furniture Design Competition** is January 26, 1983. For details: (203) 348-7531.

The Los Angeles Chapter of the AIA is holding an open competition for the design of a **Gateway Arch to the 1984 Summer Olympic Games**. Entries will be accepted, at \$25 per entry, until July 4, 1983, and winners of the competition's \$1000, \$500, and \$250 prizes will be announced in November 1983. Contact: L.A. AIA, 8687 Melrose Avenue, L.A., CA 90069.

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