

# SKYLINE

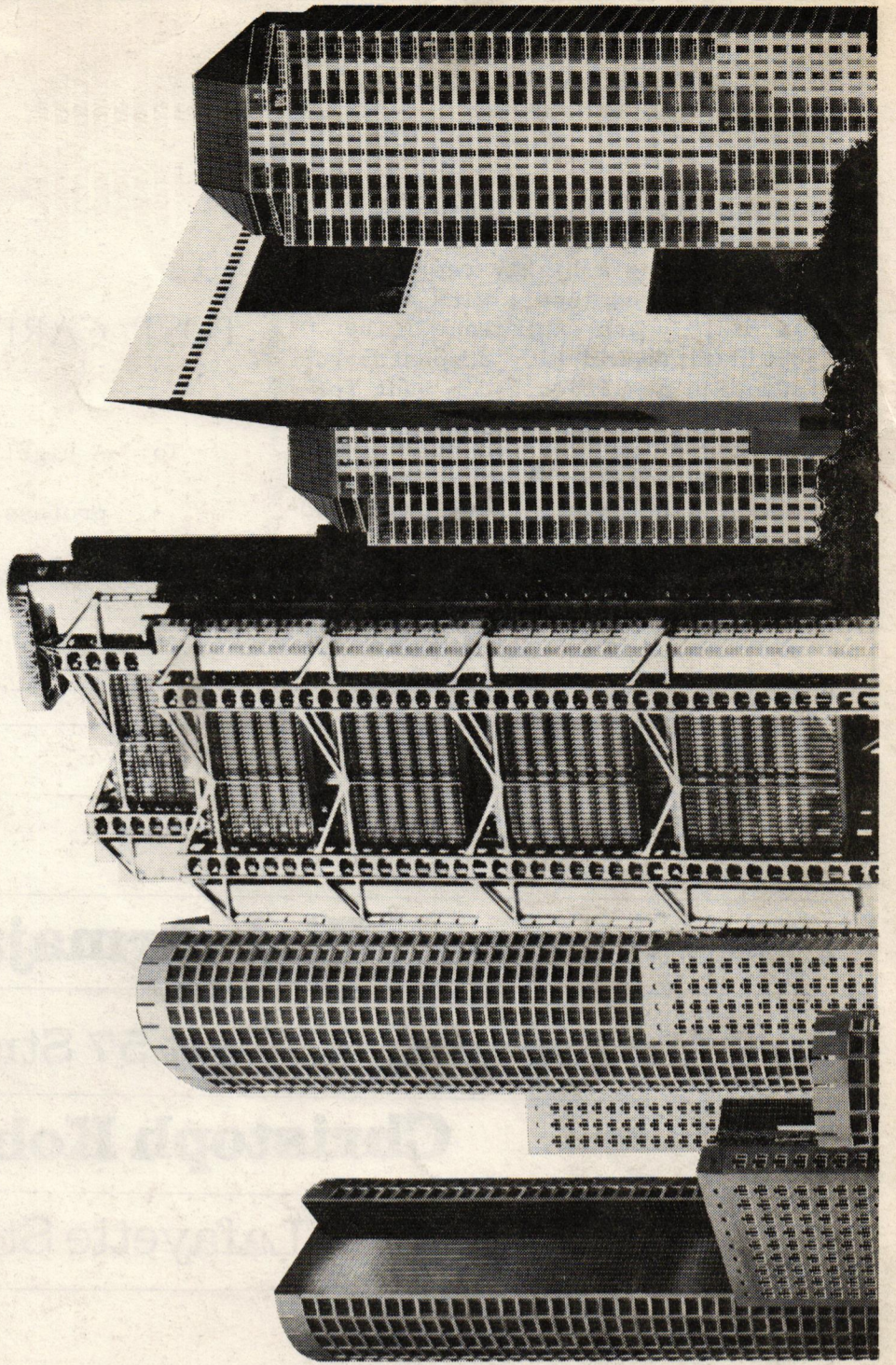
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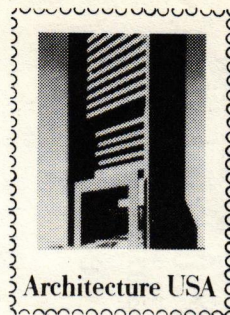
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## Tower Failure

In this issue we present a number of towers either proposed or under construction in New York, Boston, Houston and Hong Kong. Certain towers, like Norman Foster's scheme for the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (page 21), stay within the modernist genre. The Hong Kong tower is a technological artifact, fully expressive of structural advances in building. Other towers, such as Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's bank in Jeddah, adopt the pure, abstracted geometric forms of the late modernist idiom. Still other towers, such as Cesar Pelli's Houston high-rises or Johnson/Burgee's scheme in Boston, focus particularly on the skin and configuration of the building envelope.

The various solutions to tower design presented on the following pages are not convincing that architecture and urban design are being advanced. While the technological fetishism of Norman Foster's incredible structure for Hong Kong is exciting — the building looks as if it could be shipped to the moon and erected there tomorrow — this kind of construction has little place in most existing urban (or non-urban) situations, except perhaps Cape Canaveral. In addition, the accelerating costs, which were moving toward the \$1 billion mark, remind us that gantries, prefab modules, and building masts still cost more than steel and glass. The SOM Jeddah highrise also falls into the common trap of modernist buildings of recent vintage: scaleless,

detached, "pure" to a degree, in the end it has little to do with fitting into an existing environment.

The six towers Cesar Pelli designed in Houston are spaced together on a flat plain with less attention to siting than would be given an assortment of grain silos. Pelli unfortunately was *not* involved in site planning; his role from the start was much more limited (see page 18). This increasingly specialized role of "high-design" architects brings to mind Mario Gandelsonas' observation at the IAUS discussion of the Portland Building (*Skyline*, January 1983, p. 20): "Architects in the past were in charge of 100 percent of the building; today they are only in control of 100 percent of the skin." His lament touches on the dilemma facing most architects of skyscrapers in the United States who find that economics, programmatic concerns, and zoning predetermine much of the form for typical high-rises. Whether the casing is fractured — as in the Johnson/Burgee tower for Boston — or chipped, chiseled, and chamfered, whether the fenestration is made "historically allusive" or given a polychromatic setting, it is still all upholstery.

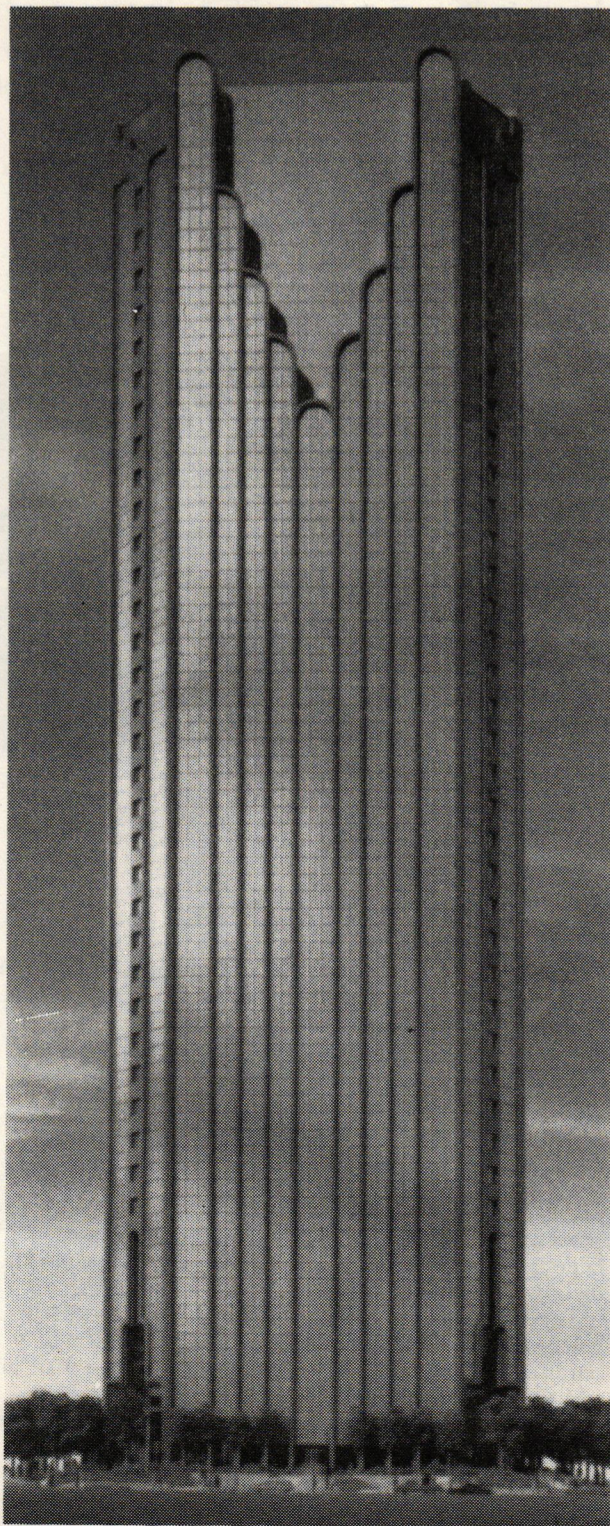
The dilemma of high-rise design today is now being dramatized most clearly in the current controversy surrounding the preservation of the Lever House, designed in 1952 by the architect for the Jeddah bank, Gordon Bunshaft of SOM. The owners of the land, the Fisher Brothers, propose to raze this modernist landmark — one of the first corporate glass curtain-wall high-rises built in the full-fledged modernist idiom. In its place they want to erect a 40-story tower, designed by Swanke Hayden Connell. The Swanke Hayden Connell scheme, shown on this page, is not a *fait accompli*; complicating the situation is the fact that the tower's designation as a landmark by the Landmarks Preservation Commission may be approved soon by the Board of Estimate, and that developer George Kline owns the actual building. The new proposal nevertheless raises serious issues.

Swanke Hayden Connell's first mistake was in accepting the commission for the site, even going so far as to submit a "white paper" saying the Lever House should go the way of other run-down old buildings. (Published in the February 1983 issue of *Oculus*, the magazine of the New York AIA Chapter, were telling excerpts from the white paper along with an editorial by C. Ray Smith denouncing its rationale.) Clearly there are times when architects should weigh the value of saving significant shreds of vanishing architectural history and urbanism, without self-interest interfering. This was one of them.

The architects' second mistake was to assume that their scheme was in any way better than the Lever House. Their design — and the controversy surrounding it — makes plausible the theory that people become preservationists because *all* change is for the worse. The irony is that this allegation was applied in the past to modern buildings that were replacing older, more ornate ones. This observation seems equally true now, when buildings aspiring to be "post-modern" are threatening to replace "modern" ones. Swanke Hayden Connell's proposal is franchise post-modern at best, with the same kind of relationship to the real thing that a Taco Bell has to a Mexican restaurant. The scheme's attempt at historical allusion makes it clear that no vocabulary for skyscrapers — modern or post-modern — exists that can be lifted and re-used with a uniform degree of success by all sorts of practitioners.

Swanke Hayden Connell are hardly alone. The question is, what do we do now? Send 40- and 50-year-old chief designers back to the boards? This would mean sending them back to school. And, maybe that is what's needed now. The universities are concentrating on young men and women, while professionals are out defacing the landscape. It is time for academics to enlarge their responsibilities, and begin to set up serious critical and theoretical seminars in which the problem of high-rise design can be intensively and systematically addressed. Only then, perhaps, will architects begin to solve the dilemma of recovering control over 100 percent of the building once again. Blaming bad designs on developers, clients and city planners can only go so far.

— Suzanne Stephens



Project for Lever House site; Swanke Hayden Connell

# New York City Report

Peter Freiberg

## Landmark Update

### Woolworth Building

The famed Woolworth Building is likely to be finally named an official city landmark within the next few weeks. According to sources within the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), approval is near on a staff recommendation to designate the soaring "Cathedral of Commerce" at 233 Broadway.

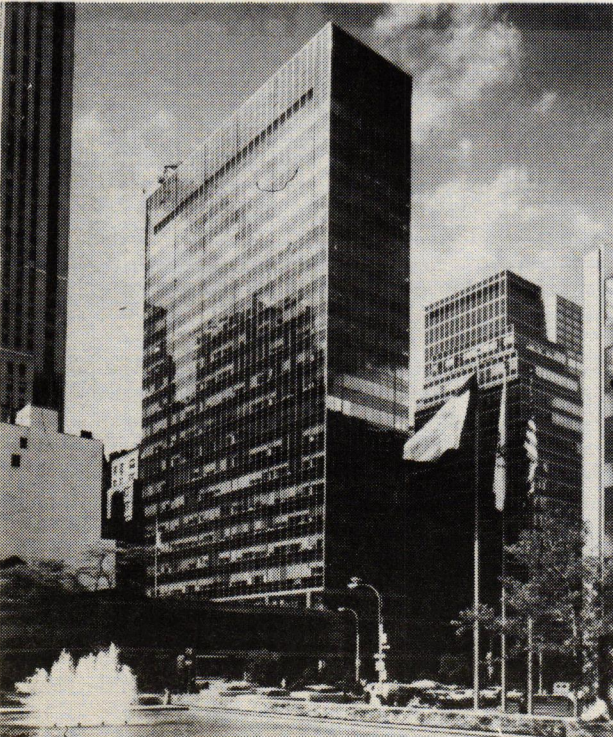
The landmarks agency staff had proposed designation of the Woolworth Building, designed by Cass Gilbert, twice before. Each time, the commission failed to act after the owners, the F.W. Woolworth Co., opposed landmark status. This time, the firm also spoke against designation, despite spending \$20 million on a much-praised restoration completed last year. But the Woolworth Co. has reportedly softened its opposition considerably since the public hearing early in 1982 — making it virtually certain that the Board of Estimate will uphold the expected LPC designation.

### Lever House

As *Skyline* went to press, furious politicking was going on behind the scenes over the proposed landmark designation of Lever House. The Board of Estimate is scheduled to vote in March on whether to uphold the Landmarks Preservation Commission decision to designate the 30-year-old glass skyscraper on Park Avenue between 53rd and 54th Streets. Fisher Brothers, the real estate firm that has contracted to buy the land beneath the building, wants to replace Lever House with a higher-rise structure (see previous page). Manhattan Borough President Andrew Stein was leading the political opposition to landmarking, while Mayor Koch and City Council President Carol Bellamy were expected to support it. Controller Harrison Goldin was the key vote.



Woolworth Building (1913); Cass Gilbert (John Bayley)



Lever House (1952); SOM (photos: courtesy Landmarks Preservation)

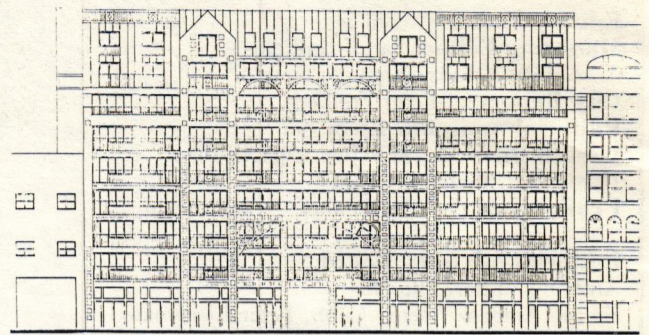
## SoHo Swells

Two plans for construction of new luxury residential buildings in SoHo are drawing intense opposition from community groups, which say the projects would impinge on the area's landmark cast-iron district and would accelerate the gentrification process already underway.

Both buildings are proposed for West Broadway near Canal Street, virtually across the street from each other, and both must get variances from the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA). Developer Lewis Futterman initially sought permission for a 10-story building, but reduced this to eight after the Landmarks Preservation Commission rejected the original plan as inappropriate; Futterman needs LPC approval because the site lies within the historic district. The building, designed by architect John Harding, includes a through-block retail arcade between West Broadway and Wooster Street. Futterman's plan is for regular apartments, rather than the joint living-working quarters for artists mandated under the zoning law. In arguing for a "hardship" variance, Futterman says that 11 years ago, the BSA granted a variance for a high-rise "sports palace" on the same site. The "palace" was never built, but Futterman maintains that a variance is still needed to build an economically viable building.

The second building, proposed by developer Donald Zucker and designed by Beyer Blinder Belle, would go up 16 stories and contain joint living-working quarters for artists. Its location, just outside the landmark district, is on the land where St. Alphonsus Catholic Church stood for more than a century until it was torn down in 1980 by the Archdiocese, which said the church was sinking because of the marshland underneath. Zucker asserts that soil and water conditions will increase his construction costs substantially, requiring a variance for a much larger building than allowed by the zoning. He, too, is proposing a mall-like shopping arcade.

To fight both these projects, the SoHo Alliance, an umbrella organization consisting of several community



Project for SoHo Mews; John Harding. Elevation

groups, was formed. The Alliance notes that both sites are above a landfilled stream and swamp, and that an engineering report the Alliance commissioned says any large-scale excavation or pile driving could dangerously upset the equilibrium of nearby buildings. The Alliance says the proposed buildings would be out of scale with the surrounding landmark cast-iron structures. With the new buildings' high population densities and the tourists their stores would draw, noise, congestion, and pollution would increase, says the Alliance.

Perhaps most importantly, the two proposals challenge the very notion of modern-day SoHo. When artist living-working quarters were legalized in 1970, the hope was that the artists, who need their spaces to work, would coexist with manufacturers. New construction of residential buildings, even for artist lofts, was barred. As SoHo became chic and property values rose, more manufacturers left, moderate-income artists found it difficult to move in, some non-artists violated the law by living there, and even some boutique-type establishments were displaced by rising rents. Despite this gentrification, SoHo today is still a mixed community but local groups fear the proposed new buildings would change this, accelerating the displacement of artists and small businesses. Although Zucker's plan calls for artist lofts, opponents say the projected rents of \$1200 for 1200 s.f. are too high for most artists, and they predict the developer would eventually seek another variance to make the building simply residential. This is one reason why Community Board 2 voted 24-0 against the Zucker project. How the BSA, long known for its sympathy to developers, will vote remains to be seen.

## J-51 Junked?

A major brouhaha is shaping up in Albany over the Koch Administration's attempt to convince the state legislature to extend the city's controversial J-51 tax abatement and exemption program for housing development. Reacting to sharp criticism that the program is a "giveaway," City Hall has proposed some changes even as it praises J-51 for bringing thousands of converted and rehabilitated housing units on the market. But a coalition of elected officials and public interest and community groups insists more drastic changes are needed to end tax breaks for Manhattan luxury projects that they say would be built without any incentive. These tax breaks, say the critics, are siphoning off millions of tax dollars.

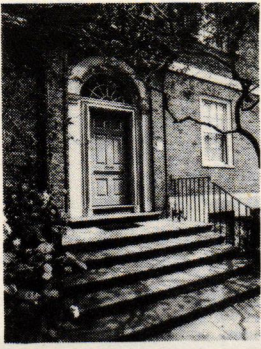
The J-51 program was begun in 1955 to stimulate rehabilitation of tenements by giving landlords tax benefits. But the program was subsequently expanded to include abatements and exemptions for converting industrial buildings and single-room-occupancy (SRO) hotels and for total rehabilitation of larger residential buildings. These changes have brought criticism that, in addition to the economic drain, the program encourages developers to harass businesses, low income tenants and SRO hotel residents out of buildings to make way for luxury apartment conversions.

The economic criticism was updated in a recent report

by the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) and City Council Member Ruth Messinger, a Manhattan Democrat. They concluded that the city will lose \$110 million in property taxes this year from J-51 and that new tax benefits are still being primarily funneled to Manhattan south of 96th Street — almost two-thirds of the reductions approved last year.

City Hall disputes NYPIRG's figures, asserting that J-51 reductions enacted in 1981 have lowered central Manhattan's share of the total tax breaks to less than 40 percent. But the Administration has agreed to a number of changes, including new curbs on SRO conversions and landlord harassment. The city is seeking state authorization to continue J-51 beyond next year, but the main obstacle is over the critics' effort to totally eliminate tax exemptions for luxury conversions. While the Administration says this would mean that some projects beneficial to the outer boroughs would go unbuilt, opponents retort that City Hall is simply protecting Manhattan developers. The majority of units built under J-51 are in the outer boroughs, but these are mostly low-to-middle income projects — Manhattan receives the lion's share of luxury units and tax breaks.

The Republican-ruled state Senate has gone along with City Hall's proposals; the Assembly is sympathetic to the critics. This Spring will see a lot of hard bargaining before a compromise emerges — if indeed it does.



Sutton Place

## Sutton Place Menaced



Sutton Place (courtesy Landmarks Preservation Commission)

Last June, some residents along Sutton Place, the East Side's elegant residential street, became alarmed when they heard that a developer was offering large sums for several townhouses, with the hope of putting up a high-rise riverfront apartment house. "We heard that some homeowners were willing to accept," says Barbara Di Mona of the Sutton Area Committee (SAC), but the plan was not implemented — at least not yet. Nevertheless, the possibility galvanized local activists into seeking landmark status for a portion of the area — and, not surprisingly, the effort has run into opposition.

The special quality of the blocks between 57th and 59th Streets has long been recognized (see *Skyline*, January 1981, p. 29), but the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) has never considered the area for designation. The SAC, with the approval of Community Board 6, has now proposed landmark status for 26 townhouses and one apartment building in the Sutton Place-Riverview Terrace section. Riverview Terrace, which extends from 58th to 59th Streets, is one of the city's few remaining private streets, and certainly one of its most charming. Most of the houses proposed for designation were built between 1878 and 1882 by Effingham B. Sutton and were renovated in the 1920s.

No one disputes that these buildings are worth preserving, but a group of homeowners led by Robert Goelet, a Manhattan real estate owner, insists that the area is protected by a covenant among homeowners between 57th and 58th Streets. The 1920 covenant was aimed at preserving the single-family home character, and Goelet wrote Board 6 that there was no need for additional government regulation. Activists like Di Mona point out, however, that there is nothing in the covenant to prevent any homeowner from selling a house — or to prevent any developer from putting up a high rise. (Coincidentally, it was Goelet's firm that contracted to sell the land under Lever House to Fisher Brothers — see above; he did not return several phone calls from *Skyline* for comment on the Sutton Place controversy.) The LPC says it intends to survey the area to see whether landmark designation is merited. If the staff does propose landmarking, another battle is certain.

## Slivers Stopped?

The Board of Estimate is expected to give its approval by next month to zoning legislation aimed at curbing the ungainly "sliver" buildings that have sprouted in Manhattan, especially on the East Side.

Last month, the City Planning Commission unanimously approved the legislation, several years after slivers began popping up. The buildings became popular among developers when land values rose sharply in Manhattan and any piece of property, no matter how narrow, was seized on for its development potential. As a result, at least 21 of the narrow, high-rise towers — which often

overlook low-rise buildings — have already been built or approved.

Under the zoning legislation, the height of a building on a lot of up to 45 feet wide in residential zones would be limited to the width of the street the development faces, or to the height of an adjacent building, whichever is higher. The legislation also rezones portions of Park and Lexington Avenues from the 60s to the 90s to prevent construction of new sliver buildings.

Forces of development are still at it, from Sutton Place to SoHo. Community groups are rallying to the various causes.

## FIT Fracas

In evaluating the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) campus, on 26th to 28th Streets between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, Paul Goldberger writes in his book, *The City Observed*, that he is intrigued by the "utter non-New Yorkness of it. It is not just that these buildings are bad, but that they are bad in a way so uncharacteristic of New York." Now FIT is proposing another "non-New York" addition — one that school officials and the architects predict will be a boon to the campus and the surrounding community, but that opponents in the Chelsea neighborhood charge will hurt residents and businesses.

The controversial addition is what FIT administrators and the Design Collaborative, the architectural firm they retained, like to call a "pedestrian urban space" — and which critics term, pejoratively, a "mall." FIT wants to permanently close 27th Street, which cuts through the campus, and redesign the block with gates, arcades, sitting areas, plantings, canopies, and flagpoles — the aim being to encourage FIT's 11,000 students, as well as residents, workers and passersby, to relax and stroll on the block. Architect Jon Michael Schwarting says a cul-de-sac from Eighth Avenue would allow truck deliveries and taxi drop-offs, but that even these vehicles would be barred from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays. Schwarting says the project would provide public open space in a neighborhood that has very little; John Clancy, FIT's vice president for planning and development, also plays down the benefit to the school, calling the project "an interesting contribution to the grid system."

But FIT has been angering some Chelseaites and elected officials for more than three years — and this latest plan has positively infuriated them. Since 1979, the city has closed 27th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays, barring all but truck deliveries and residents' cars. Critics assert this has not only inconvenienced businesses and residents on the block, but has caused severe problems on 25th Street, which they say has borne the brunt of traffic diverted from 27th Street. While a city study concluded there was no substantial traffic increase on 25th Street, the resident's own survey showed a doubling, with consequent pollution problems. Both Community Boards 4 and 5 have requested that 27th Street be reopened to traffic.

Opponents charge that the permanent closing would have a disastrous effect on both blocks, and would force the 70 small businesses on 27th Street to consider moving. "I think it's bad public policy," says City Council Member Carol Greitzer, who represents Chelsea. "It's an ego trip for the powers that be at FIT. They want a campus to enhance the prestige of that school." Some opponents say FIT really would like all residents and businesses to move from 27th Street — a charge strongly denied by FIT's Clancy, who says the school wants to enhance the "multi-use" functions of the block.

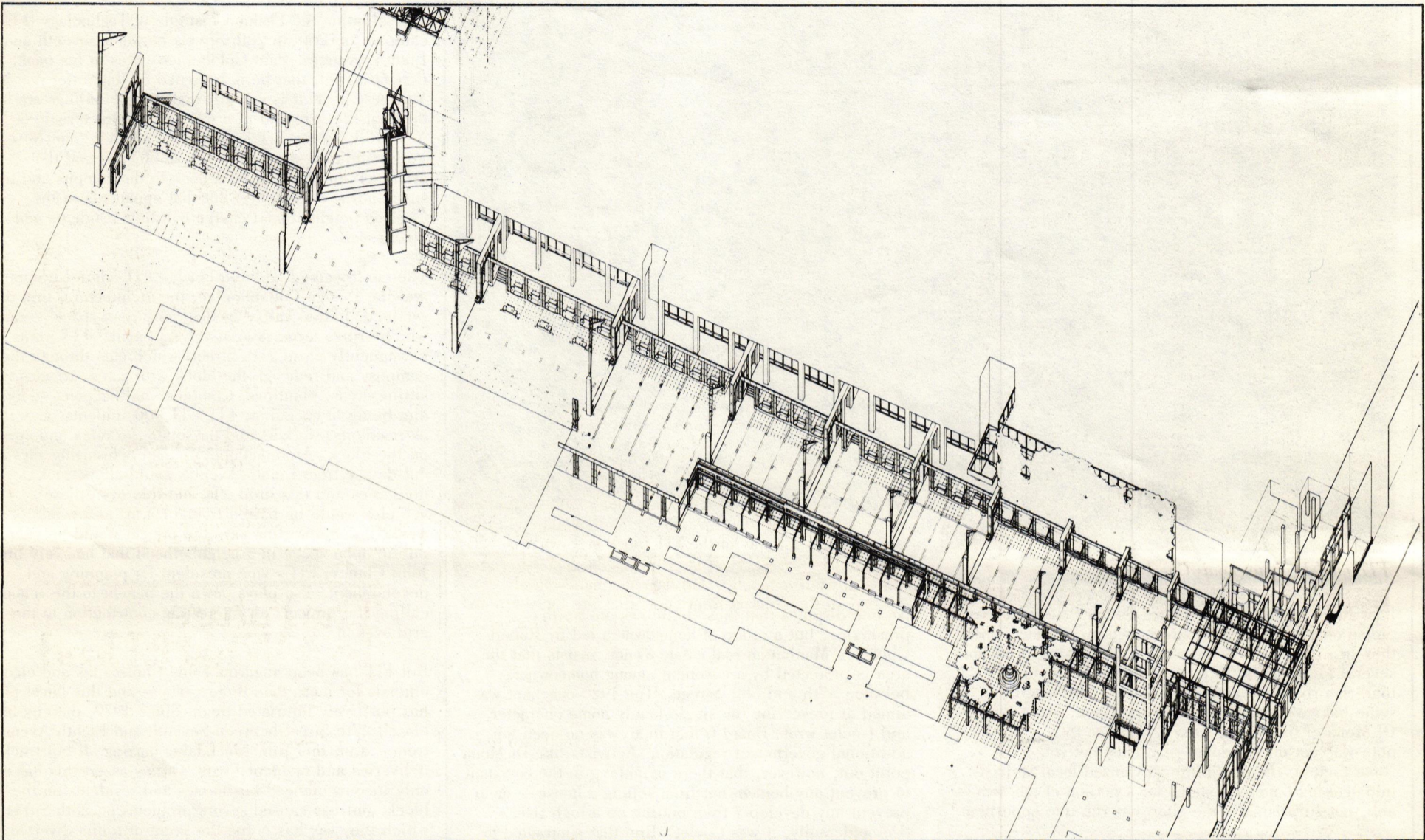
The Koch Administration has included the 27th Street closing as part of its effort (widely criticized as inadequate) to comply with the federal Clean Air Act. The permanent closing must first be approved by the City Planning Commission, whose chairman, Herbert Sturz, will do what City Hall wants. Any battle will come at the Board of Estimate. In preparation, FIT has hired Victor Marrero, a former Planning Commission chairman and now a member of the politically influential Tufo and Zuccotti law firm. But Greitzer predicts that "We're going to defeat it [the plan] politically, because we've now amassed a lot of support."

# Tight FIT

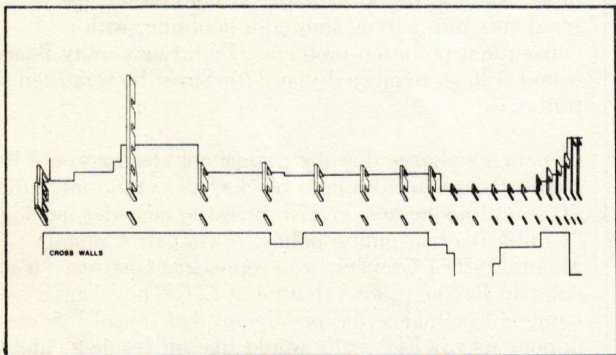
An urban design plan recently on view at the Urban Center in New York presents a number of interesting ideas. The questions it poses are equally intriguing.

## Sartogo and Schwarting's Redesign of FIT Block

Suzanne Stephens

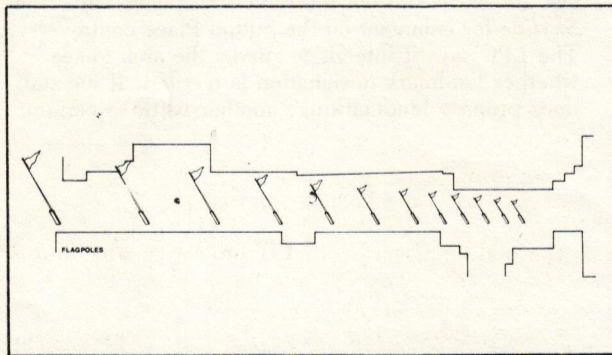


"Transforming City Space: An FIT Project for West 27th Street." Design Collaborative. Isometric



Design elements: Cross Walls

If two exhibits currently on display in New York are any indication, architectural models are once again superceding drawings (even lushly colored ones) as the tool for presenting a project in its most persuasive manner. The model for the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank by Norman Foster & Associates at the Museum of Modern Art is a stunning example of the level of detail that can be accomplished through this medium. This model might be outdone in an exhibition now on view at the Urban Center that includes *three* models — with a specially constructed room-size case — representing a proposal for the redesign of a street in Manhattan. The show, sponsored by the Municipal Art Society, illustrates the controversial scheme that Design Collaborative (Piero Sartogo and Jon Michael Schwarting) has conceived for a block on 27th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenue, 80 percent of which is occupied by buildings belonging to the Fashion Institute of Technology. The architects' scheme, which transforms the block into a pedestrian street, has met with community resistance (see New York City Report, preceding page). The community believes that the design, calling for closing the street to most traffic, would essentially turn a public city-owned area into a private campus for FIT. Already one of FIT's buildings bridges the street at the Seventh Avenue end, making the block, which still has commercial buildings on it, seem private.

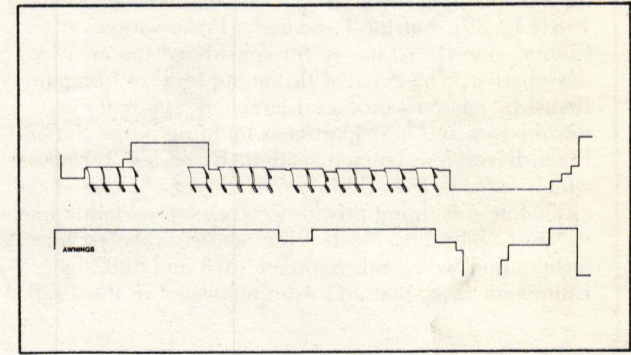


Flagpoles

Clearly the models for the FIT project are meant to do more than just enlighten the architectural public. They are meant to convincingly communicate the architects' and FIT's intentions to the community, the city planning boards, and to private donors, who will be asked to help fund the \$10 million scheme. Meanwhile, community and city agencies will be holding hearings over the next few months to decide whether the street should be closed to most traffic.

Sartogo and Schwarting's striking design space for the block is stunning in its parts but less assuring in its overall perceptual effect. Doubts about the scheme remain even though the models — of the entire street, of a portion of the street, and a full scale mock-up segment of that portion — are extremely persuasive in the sophistication of their execution. The models, along with the drawings, slides, and diagrams included in the show, attest to the sensitivity and thought given by Sartogo and Schwarting to this scheme. The success of their intentions, however, will be judged only if the project is finally realized. Not even models can adequately forecast these results, so tricky are some of the design decisions.

The proposed design attempts to work visually with the watered-down modernist vocabulary of the assorted limestone buildings designed for FIT between 1958 and



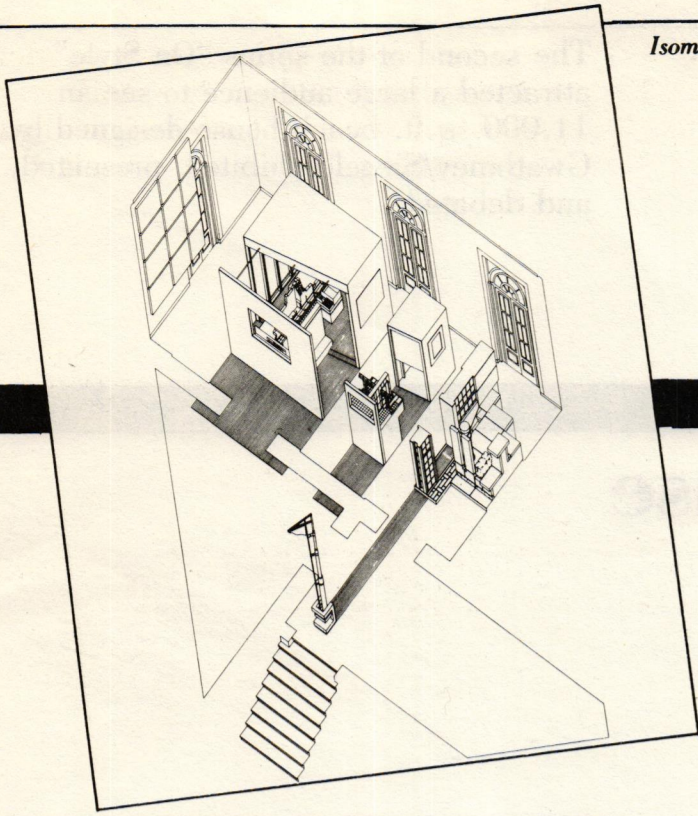
Awnings

1974 by DeYoung & Moskowitz (subsequently DeYoung, Moskowitz, Lockwood & Green). By adhering to a modernist vocabulary, Sartogo and Schwarting are clearly trying to "improve" on the existing architecture, not ignore or fight it.

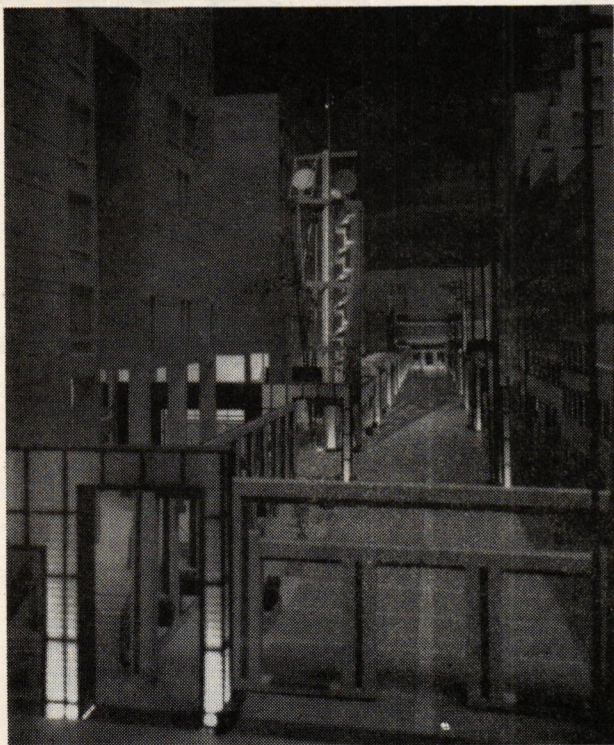
Their proposal to tie the buildings on the 800-ft. long by 30-ft. wide street involves design elements that span a 60-ft. width from building line to building line. Stretching the length of the street and parallel to it on the north side is a screen wall "arcade" open to the sky and composed of steel columns and beams clad in limestone. Perpendicular to the arcade is a series of steel-framed cross walls made of glass block and partly clad in slate. Inside these arches, behind the sandblasted inner faces of the glass block, are lights that will give the arches a soft eerie glow at night. Also included in the street furniture is a series of flagpoles of steel, designed with constructivist angularity and placed on the south side of the street in alignment with the spacing of the glass block cross walls.

The grade of the street drops eight feet from Seventh to Eighth Avenue, while the existing podium on which the FIT buildings now sit stays level. Sartogo and Schwarting have designed the base, lighting, benches, and arcade to pull these two levels together as they

Isometric of FIT exhibition



FIT model (photo: Louis Checkman)



Model "by night" (photo: Louis Checkman)

diverge. While the arcade itself runs the length of the buildings and matches their 24-ft. long bay increments, the flagpoles and the cross walls are spaced and scaled differently. In this secondary "theme" — a dynamic grid overlaid onto the existing one — a serial progression of elements is manipulated to enhance the perception of the space and give it variety. Thus the arches along the north side of the street are spaced eight feet apart in the area nearest Seventh Avenue, but 120 feet apart at the Eighth Avenue end. This progression of spacing is also underscored by a progression in the width of the arches, 18 inches deep at Seventh Avenue, and four feet deep at Eighth Avenue. They maintain the uniform height of about 18 feet above the datum level of the podium but the cross walls toward Eighth do get longer to meet the grade change. To further compensate for the drop in grade, the flagpoles on the street's south side change in height from 26 to 85 feet as they march from Seventh to Eighth Avenue. Punctuating this space is the 85-ft. high clock tower, which looks very much like a 27th Street version of the Vesnin brothers' 1923 Pravda project.

Where arcade, podium, benches, and cross walls meet, the whole ensemble breaks down into humanly-scaled places; this is well demonstrated in the mock-up on view. The combination of materials — including sand-colored ("crab orchard") slate, gray slate, stone paving,

plus steel painted in colors like forest green and terra cotta — promises to soften the hard linear qualities of the scheme. The composition of parts and pieces and the combination of variously scaled elements should go a long way in providing a finely grained quality akin to that presented by the balustrades, stoops, and moldings of New York's nineteenth-century urban fabric. The architects seem to have achieved a high degree of sophistication in their manipulation of scale and detail, but with a modernist instead of traditional vocabulary. The scheme would seem to be most successful at this specific local level of niches and cross walls. Parts of the scheme should also create dramatic spaces at the "medium" distance, where one would see the series of cross walls framing the sidewalk, or creating a glass-canopied portico near the Seventh Avenue end.

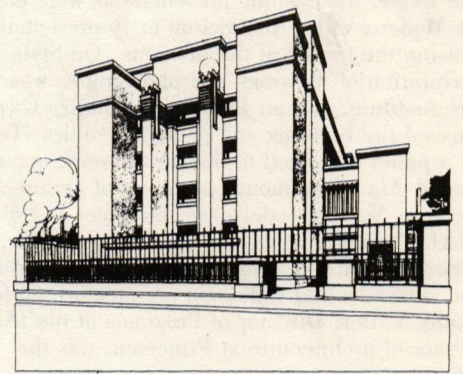
This scheme in the aggregate, however, causes severe reservations. In real life, the entire ensemble — flagpoles, cross walls, arcades, canopies, clock tower, and so on — could make the pedestrian feel he or she is running a gauntlet traveling the 800 feet from one end to the other. The problem lies not so much with the choice of elements, or their repetition, but with the play on scale, change in size, and variation in spacing that occurs. Because of the narrower spacing and smaller size of the elements at the Seventh Avenue end, the viewer entering the gateway of the FIT block sees what is essentially a foreshortening of the scene: instead of cross walls appearing smaller and flagpoles more closely spaced as they retreat from view, they are foreshortened into a densely clustered grouping. This kind of reverse perspective is rarely effective when one experiences it kinesthetically, that is, walking through the space. The perspective distortion occurring at the other end, at Eighth Avenue, is another matter entirely. There the large 26-ft. high cross walls, 85-ft. high flagpoles, and 85-ft. high clock tower will loom monumentally in the foreground. The cross walls and flagpoles in the rear ground will extend even more dramatically into infinity than the length of the 800-ft. long street would normally suggest.

The play on perspective would make more sense in a small space, where a heightening of perspective is needed to suggest greater size, or in a very large space, where a shortening of the depth of field is needed to suggest intimacy. In either case, the illusion is furthered if the observer is stationary, e.g., sitting in the spectator section of Palladio's Teatro Olimpico, or standing in front of the famous example of foreshortening, Paolo Ucello's painting *Rout of San Romano*.

The real question for the FIT project is, why do this? This play on perspective and the overlaying of one grid on another to expand the dynamic sense of a scheme are devices Design Collaborative has used before. Previously, however, their experiments were confined to interiors, where there was a strong sense of reference — a confined, actual room that could make this exercise work. While it is enormously difficult to form a criticism of the FIT project when one is unable to experience the space, at this point one can conjecture: From Eighth Avenue the design could well appear simply gargantuan and aggressive — more so than the hall at the New State Chancellery in Berlin; from Seventh it could well seem as dense and cluttered as any view from under the El.

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# On Style II

The second of the series "On Style" attracted a large audience to see an 11,000-sq. ft. beach house designed by Gwathmey/Siegel exhibited, presented, and debated.

## Gwathmey/Siegel's Beach House Discussed at IAUS

In the second of its series "On Style," the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies presented two evenings last month focusing on a large beach house in East Hampton designed by Charles Gwathmey and Robert Siegel. Organized by Diana Agrest, architect and teacher at the IAUS, the evening presentations were entitled "The Modern Villa: Abstraction or Representation?" Following the format of the previous "On Style" events, an exhibition of drawings and photographs was mounted at the Institute, and on January 24 Charles Gwathmey discussed the building and presented slides. Two nights later a panel convened to debate the work; panelists included Alan Colquhoun, professor of architecture at Princeton, Mario Gandelonas, architect and director of the IAUS' education program, Paul Goldberger, architecture critic of *The New York Times*, and Robert Stern, architect and Columbia architecture professor. Anthony Vidler, Director of Programs at the IAUS and professor of architecture at Princeton, was the moderator.

The Gwathmey/Siegel project has not received the attention or the notoriety of the subject of the first "On Style" evenings: Michael Graves' now nationally famous Portland Building (see *Skyline*, January 1983, pp. 20-21). As Diana Agrest explained, however, the villa does provide an opportunity to explore a range of issues relating to architecture. This intention was well demonstrated by the panelists' remarks throughout the discussion. They seemed to feel more at home with a circumspect dissection of the project than with an aggressive "carving up" of the final results, as was the case with the Portland Building critique. This may have been due to the fact that none of the panelists had actually been *inside* the Gwathmey/Siegel house, or due to the nature of the project itself—a large private house executed in a fairly accepted vocabulary by youthful masters of the modernist genre. Nevertheless, the issues raised during the evening were provocative.

### Modernism's Legacy

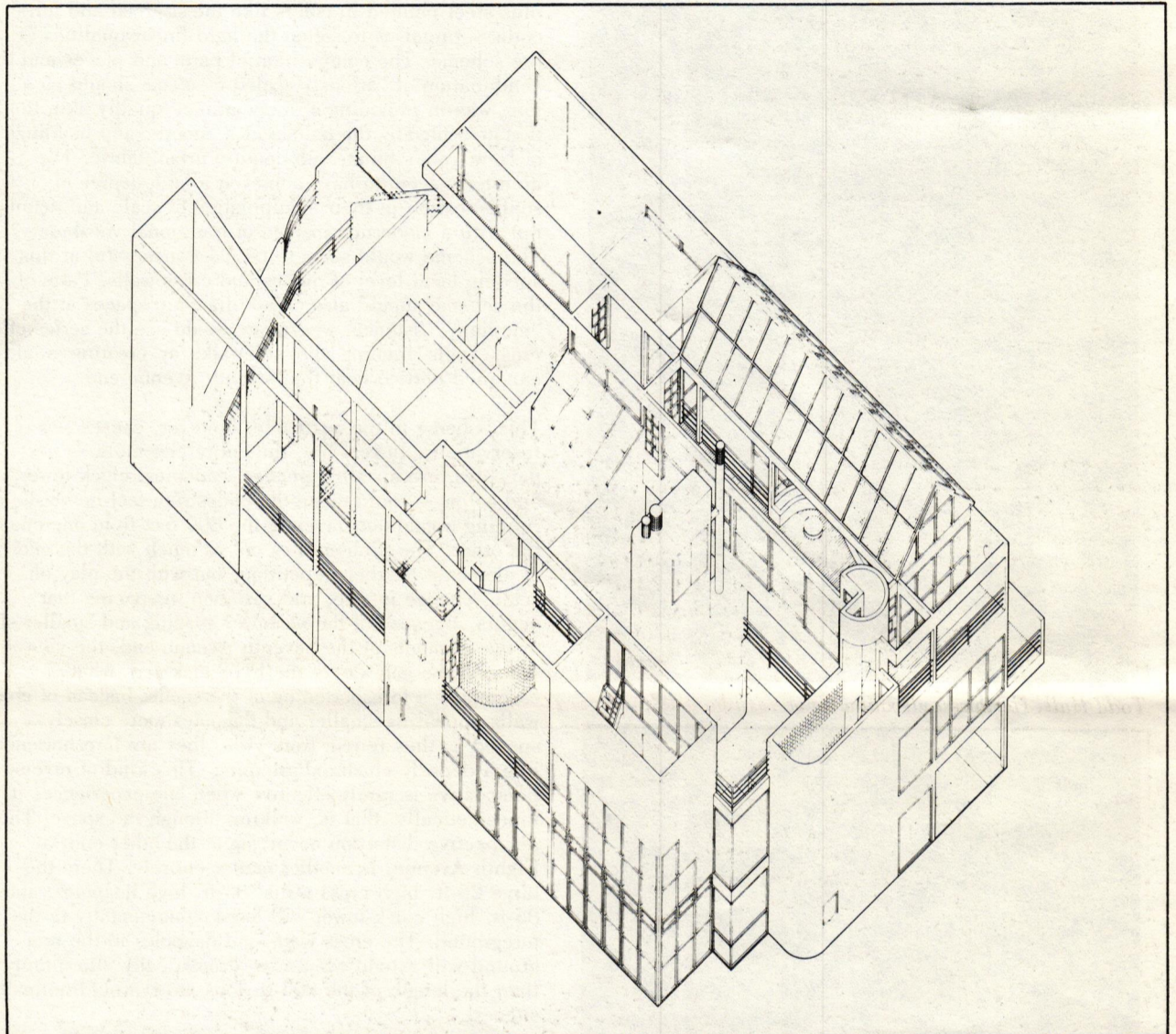
Alan Colquhoun's beginning comments introduced a certain doubt as to the architectural success of the house. Colquhoun observed that the large cube of the house contained a diversity of architectural elements he called "empirical incidents." Normally these pragmatic elements, developed in response to particular facts or programmatic needs, are integrated into the pure geometric construct of a modernist scheme to create richness and texture. Le Corbusier played empirically-determined elements against platonic forms, but because they accommodated functional or mechanical needs, a coherent dialectic was created. This does not exist in the Gwathmey/Siegel house, Colquhoun observed, and the incidents appear gratuitous. They lack meaning except, as Colquhoun put it, "in the most abstract and attenuated sense, which is hardly appropriate to a private home."

In commenting on Gwathmey/Siegel's modernist approach, Robert Stern surprised the audience by *not* excoriating the house on the basis of his own well-known preference for overtly traditional architectural elements. In fact, he described the house as a "wonderful modernist building and a wonderful piece of architecture." Stern further observed that this beach house maintains a faith in *bauen*, or beautiful building, in its unity of expression and solidity of construction.

What Stern found problematic, however, was that space within the house began to take on a "life of its own," moving vertically up and down and around. "Everything is about the space," he contended, "not about rooms, but about the interpenetration of this nebulous thing called space." The space, he went on, "disconnects the building from its place. It becomes a continuous flowing thing that goes on and on and never anchors one in the landscape."

### The Intensification of Nature

Mario Gandelonas discussed the house in terms of its establishment of an "artificial nature." As he explained, this scheme addresses that basic contradiction underlying most architectural efforts—"the contradiction between the artificial nature the architect creates and the real nature that God has already created." Gandelonas suggested, however, that Gwathmey/Siegel resolved that



Toad Hall, East Hampton, NY (1982); Gwathmey Siegel & Associates. Isometric

contradiction by including architectural elements that relate to the natural world—such as the greenhouse contained within the volume of the house or the large wood brise soleil framing the southeast facade. The architects' decisions to use both literal devices—such as lush planting in the greenhouse—and metaphorical ones—such as a brise soleil, normally used to deflect intense rays of the sun—place the house in a "tropical" context, as Gandelonas put it. The entry path, he went on, runs through a sequence of gardens or different "natures" and into the house proper. The visitor enters the grounds by way of a gateway, then passes by an artificial pond, through an allée, and over a lawn to reach the tropical forest of the greenhouse. Behind that forest is the house itself, and finally the brise soleil, which extends beyond the body of the house and connects it to the outdoors. Architecturally speaking, he conjectured, the house is essentially a structure for the garden, and the brise soleil acts as an intermediary device between artificial nature and the "real" nature beyond.

### The Return of the Gable

While the evening was entitled "The Modern Villa: Abstraction or Representation," it could as easily have been called "The Return of the Gable": that single element in the Gwathmey/Siegel house provided the pivot around which most of the debate turned.

Because Gwathmey/Siegel works with such a defined modernist vocabulary—"utterly rigorous and exacting," as Paul Goldberger put it—their introduction of the gable proved provocative. The gable, a figurative element of architectural language, conventionally symbolizes the "house" and evokes picturesque connotations. Anathema to the pure modernist vocabulary of primary geometrical forms and flat or single-pitched roofs, the use of the gable prompted Vincent Scully, unable to participate in the panel, to send the following statement: "One notices and is grateful for the vertical gable body of the greenhouse, embraced by the flat planes of the house, and lending the house a kind of presence and resonance that it would

not otherwise possess. A structural and spatial type, indeed, a kind of being, is inserted into it."

Goldberger agreed, adding that he found the "dialectic between the conventional symbolism and the modern materials used the most successful thing about the house." Mario Gandelonas elaborated on this observation with the comment that "this element, extracted from the history of greenhouses, plays a significant role as a fragment." The insertion of that fragment, the crystalline gable roof, into a work of "canonical modernism" shows the power of an architectural sign to change one's "reading."

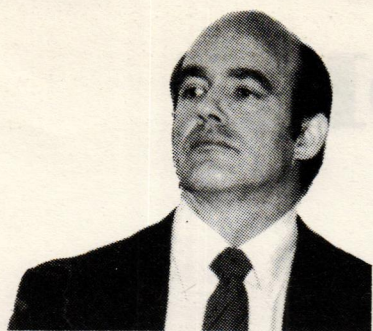
### Type and Taste: When is a House a Home?

Discussion also centered on the issues raised by the sheer size of the greenhouse and brise soleil in particular and the 11,000-sq. ft. house in general. Gandelonas observed that the brise soleil had been enlarged to the degree that it transcended its role as an architectural screen to become a spatial element. In fact, he added, the enormous size of the house transcended scale and program to become more than a "private object." It was not a "domestic" house, he explained, but a semi-public entity, borrowing shapes of public objects and public spaces. "One doesn't need a tropical forest in a house," he ventured, and "the gigantic brise soleil is too big for the house." "But it is the *excess* that interests me," he added, with a glint in his eye. With regard to the subject of "domesticity," Goldberger remarked that the "extraordinary power of the Gwathmey/Siegel house convinces you that your notion of what is domestic can be expanded to include this house."

Moderator Anthony Vidler brought up the issue of typology in relation to this discussion, since architectural language "has to say something about life," and "has to embody a fiction in a form that gradually leads to a 'type'." Vidler further raised the question that if "the use of the modernist language was tied to the goal of forming a new way of life, can we now use that modern language effectively to organize a way of life that is in the end



Charles Gwathmey



Robert Siegel (photos: Jack Deutsch)



Unfortunately, because of a previous publication agreement with Architectural Digest, the architects were not permitted to provide Skyline with any photographs of the finished house.



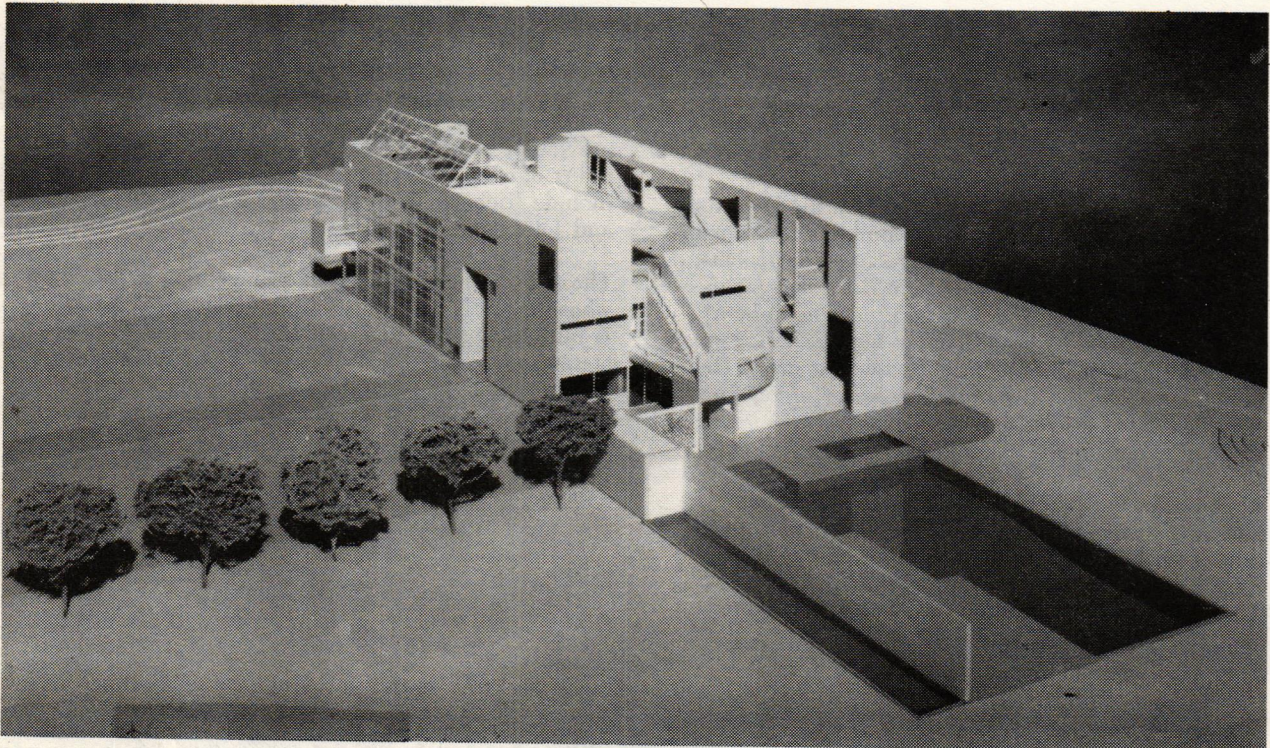
Mario Gandelonas and Alan Colquhoun



Anthony Vidler



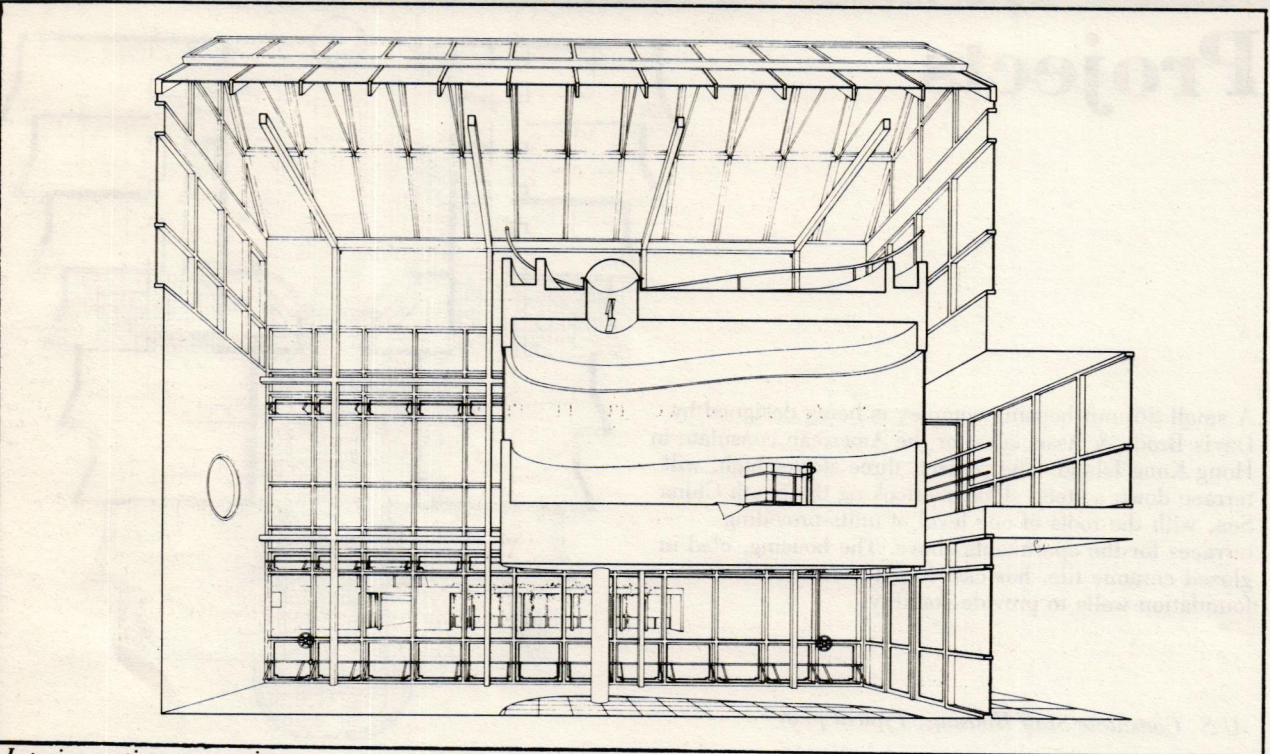
Paul Goldberger and Robert Stern (photos: Jack Deutsch)



Toad Hall. Northwest elevation (photo: Nathaniel Lieberman)

traditional?" His question picked up a theme introduced earlier by Colquhoun. As Colquhoun had put it, Modern Movement architecture has indeed become a style, largely because it is no longer attached to the notion of a new philosophy of life and society that European modern architects had envisioned. While Colquhoun felt that the manipulation of modernist forms was now gratuitous, Gandelonas countered that once architectural elements are formed into a language, it no longer matters how the language was invented or what the original meaning was.

Goldberger compared Gwathmey/Siegel with Delano & Aldrich, architects known for Georgian-style houses and clubs designed in the 1910s and '20s. Like Delano & Aldrich, Goldberger felt, Gwathmey/Siegel display a determined devotion to the manipulation of space and movement within a certain style, for a wealthy conservative clientele who demand good craftsmanship. Stern (admitting that he would prefer to be compared with Delano & Aldrich) agreed with Goldberger's point. Gwathmey and Siegel, Stern pointed out, look at how a building is organized, and their designs involve a strong conception of how people would live in their buildings. And like the 1920s Georgian houses of Delano & Aldrich, Stern added, these latter-day houses "are playthings. They tell us that we like to look at the landscape, encapsulated by a building and at a remove from the particular place."

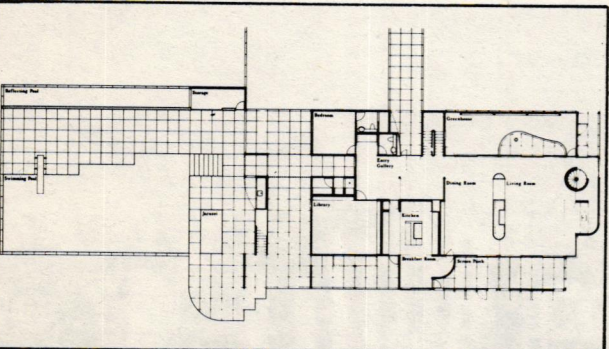


Interior section perspective

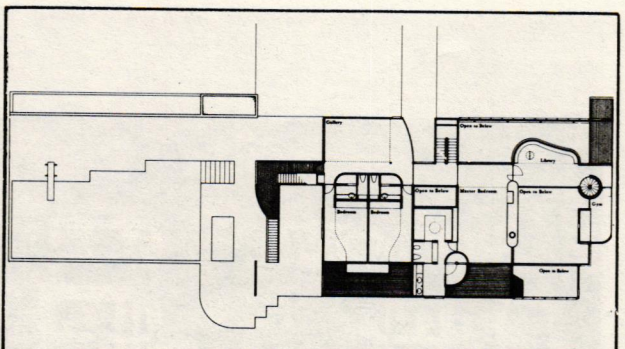
**Questions without Answers**

With the previous discussion of the Portland Building at the IAUS, members of the audience seemed to feel they could apply the criticism to other buildings executed with similar intentions, or perhaps even to their own work. In the Gwathmey/Siegel debate, however, many points were raised that were not pursued to the bitter end. For example, if the modernist house can be read differently because of its inclusion of a representational element such as a gable, does that indeed imply a radical departure from canonical modernism, as Gandelonas suggested? How does it fit within the notion of a house "type"? Is it had to have a large house that seems to be masquerading as a public building? Can the modernist vocabulary be used, even if the social content of the problem has been forgotten; does the language effectively withstand changes in meaning along with changes in program?

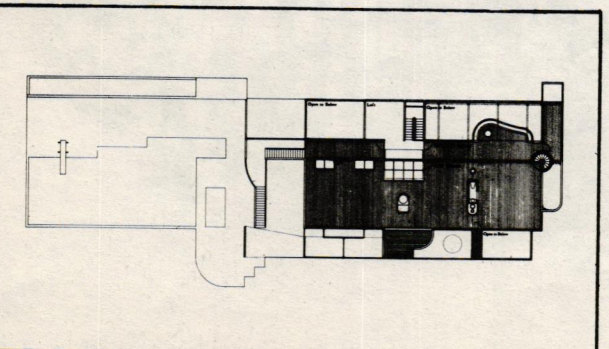
Because of the emphasis on analysis, the resolution of these questions was not given enough time. The fact that this is a very private house — removed from the world, from the sea even, behind a dune — for a private client who does not want his name used suggests that the issues it raises are not of the same order as those triggered by Graves' Portland Building. When the significant context is removed — a city site, a public building — architecture can only be criticized on its own terms. Seen in this light, the Gwathmey/Siegel house represents a very refined investigation of a known genre that has been "bent" — but not radically transformed to create a new architectural language. — **Suzanne Stephens**



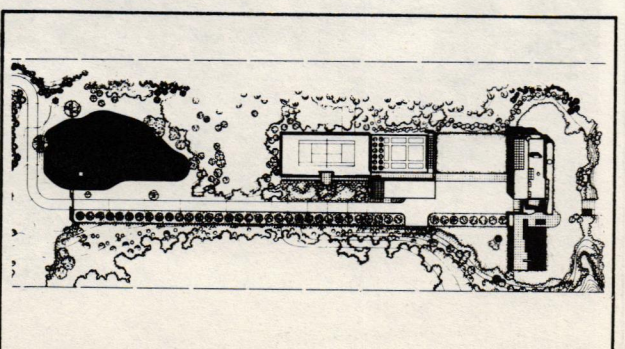
Ground floor plan



Second floor plan



Third floor plan



Site plan

**Project:** Toad Hall, East Hampton, New York  
**Architect:** Gwathmey Siegel & Associates. Design Team: Bruce D. Nagel (associate in charge), Paul Aferiat, Henry Ayon, Vicky Hage, John Meder, Thomas Phifer, Daniel Rowen, David Steinman  
**Site:** Seven acres on a wooded dune half a mile away from the ocean  
**Program:** 11,000-sq. ft. private residence includes four bedrooms, gourmet kitchen, dining room, living room, gymnasium, and movie theater in the basement. Exterior facilities include 2,000 sq. ft. of decking, swimming pool, whirlpool, tennis court, outdoor bar, vegetable garden, flower garden, and vineyard  
**Structure and materials:** Steel structure with smooth-sawn cedar siding to the exterior and interior. First-level floor of polished black granite with second- and third-level floors of mahogany. Built-up flat roof  
**Consultants:** Structural engineers: Neal Schlendorf of Geiger Berger. Landscape architect: Daniel D. Stewart. Lighting consultant: Carl Hillman of CHA Design. General contractor: John Caramagna of Caramagna and Murphy, Inc. Cabinetmaker: Bachmann and Dunn  
**Completion:** August 1982

# L.A. Hong Kong

## Valley Victorian

### Robert Coombs

Canoga Park in the San Fernando Valley is not exactly a center of architectural chic in L.A. Canoga Park is one more of those interchangeable rancho suburbs in the valley, another example of the spread of Los Angeles over the Santa Monica mountains into what had been orange groves and farms in the 1950s.

Yet now on Sherman Way stands a remarkable monument to nineteenth-century nostalgia built by a contractor/designer named Denis Platt. He and his crew have erected the largest and most exact recreation of Victorian architecture in Los Angeles. The Platt Building is a massive and wildly elaborate evocation of the great Queen Anne hotels and resorts of the nineteenth century along the California coast. Only in this case, Platt has used the style for a three million dollar, twenty-five unit office block of some 35,000 square feet.

Well over four stories tall, the facade is dominated by two massive towers crowned with steep witches' caps. In the center of the facade above the ornate portico are triple-arched stained glass windows. From this glittering arcade, the roof rises steeply to a small lookout tower. Studding the front of the buildings are beautiful handcrafted panels of swags and lions' heads. These are harmoniously welded into the blue and white color scheme of the building. And along the sides of the massive shingled roof are lushly decorated dormers and balustrades.

As you open the bevelled glass front doors, you find that the interior keeps up the high quality. The halls and offices are fifteen feet high. There is a profusion of intricately worked plaster and wood details everywhere. The doors are solid oak. Warm light reminiscent of gaslight streams from copies of original nineteenth-century chandeliers of brass and etched glass.

In the office suites, Victorian nostalgia again dominates, from the coffered ceilings down to the wall coverings, furniture, and carpets. Sliding mahogany and rosewood doors alter spaces into the double parlors of the nineteenth-century house. Over his twenty-five years as carpenter and contractor, Platt has collected every possible type of architectural fragment, stained glass, and woodwork from the Victorian era. He carefully preserved these and either used them in this building or had them replicated. He and his crew experimented with different kinds of brackets, cornices, and molding segments. If they worked well, then copies were made and incorporated into the fabric of the building. Thus the Platt Building is a harmonious mosaic of old and new. Platt wanted to revive the intricate design and superb craftsmanship of a bygone era. And he has accomplished this with dash and flair.



Platt Building, L.A. (1981); Denis Platt (photo: Robert Coombs)

## Notes

### Peter Seidel

Hong Kong has not been especially noted in the past for its architectural interest. Currently, however, it is being presented with works of architecture that in their quality and importance appear intent on challenging the prevailing attitude that by 1997, with the expiration of Great Britain's lease on the colony, it will all be over.

Foundation work has been completed on the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Headquarters Building by Norman Foster & Associates. The superstructure components, being manufactured in Europe, the U.S., and Japan, will soon appear on site. The project, promising to be a finely orchestrated tour-de-force of high-tech modernism, is scheduled for a mid-1985 completion date. The 41-story, 1 million-sq.-ft. building, however, is reported to have escalated in cost to more than four times its original estimate of \$230 million. . . .

Meanwhile, the Bank of China, which has a long-standing rivalry with the Hongkong Bank, recently appointed I.M. Pei & Partners to design the new headquarters building. A spirited dialogue of architectural styles between the symbolically paired institutions should be in the offing. . . .

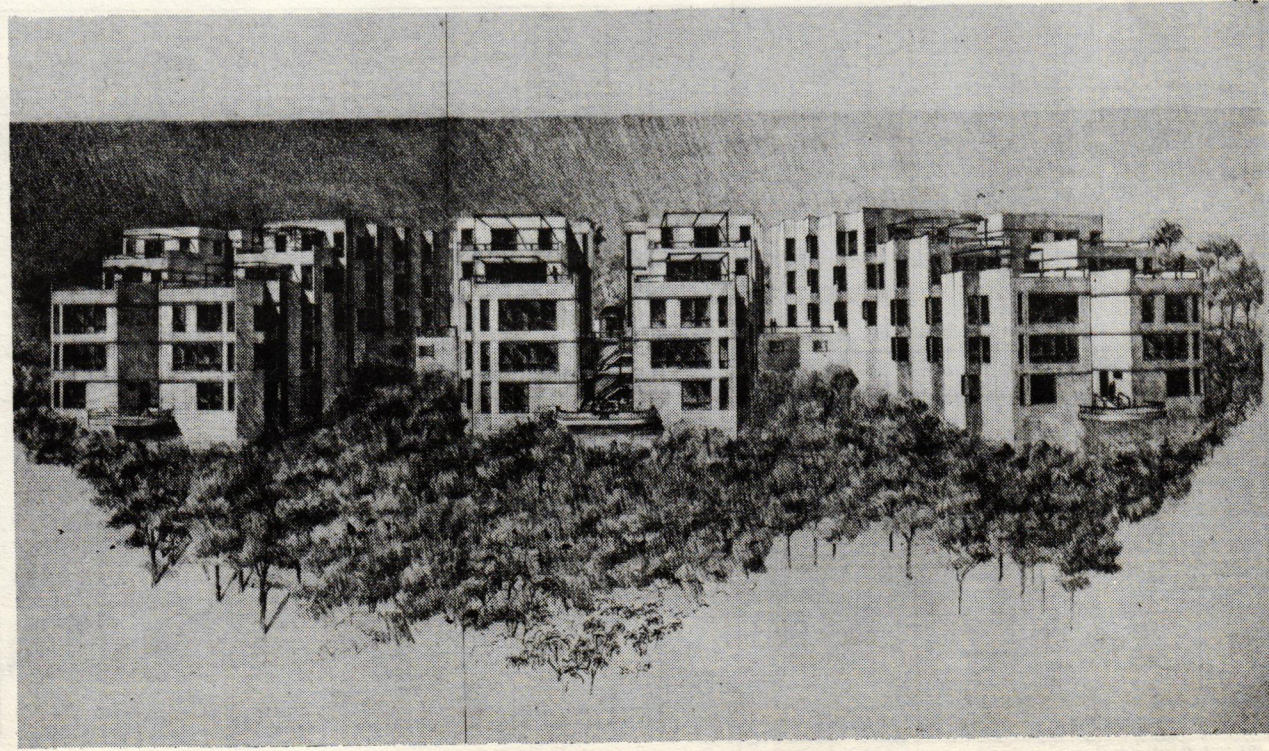
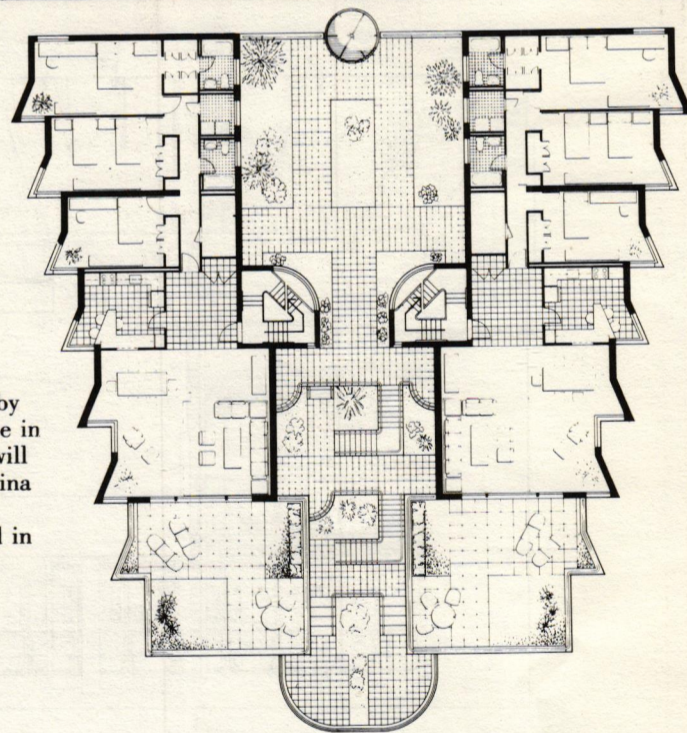
Judging of the Peak Competition is to take place between March 14 and 20, with results to be announced immediately thereafter. Over 500 submissions had been received as of January 15, which was the final date set to allow for postal delays. (The competition deadline had previously been extended to cope with the unexpected influx of over 1700 registrations.) Members of the jury include Richard Meier (U.S.A.), Arata Isozaki (Japan), and John Andrews (Australia).

The sponsor behind the Peak Competition is Alfred Siu, whose recently opened "T" Club designed by Joe D'Urso is introducing twentieth-century furniture and art as status symbols to the local scene. The club has had difficulty finding subscribers, with its initial dues established at \$6500 for annual membership, but a monthly membership is now being offered at a reduced price.

## Projects

A small 26-unit housing complex is being designed by Davis Brody & Associates for the American consulate in Hong Kong Island. The project, three stories high, will terrace down a steep slope overlooking the South China Sea, with the roofs of one level of units providing terraces for the apartments above. The housing, clad in glazed ceramic tile, has cast-in-place concrete foundation walls to provide stability.

*U.S. Consulate Staff Housing. Typical plan*



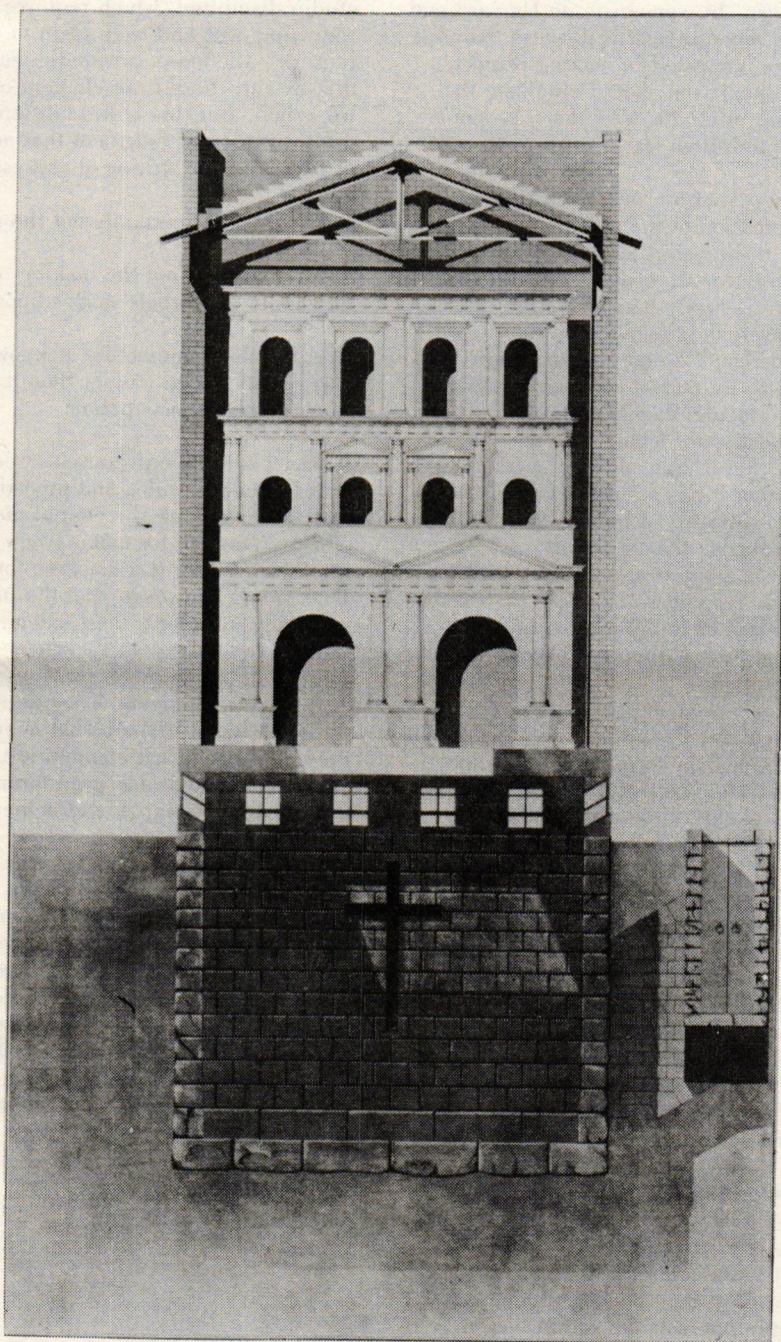
*U.S. Consulate Staff Housing, Hong Kong; Davis Brody & Associates. Perspective*

# London

News from all over: Foster's Hong Kong high-rise is reportedly soaring to a cost of \$1 billion; Victorian architecture is making a comeback in an L.A. office building; Rossi shows schools, cemeteries and other work in London.

## Around and About

Janet Abrams



Mausoleum for Molteni family (1980); Aldo Rossi

It seems to be Norman Foster season here in London. He has just won the BBC headquarters commission (*Skyline*, February 1983, pp. 6-7), and news has recently leaked that he is to be awarded the 1983 Royal Institute of British Architects Gold Medal for Architecture, the Institute's highest accolade, at the precocious age of 47. The nomination, disclosed in *Building Design* of February 4, was approved in secret by RIBA councillors at the end of January and has gone to Buckingham Palace for the Queen's approval. The official announcement is due this month.

Foster himself has so far been discreetly reluctant to accept congratulations. "I'm not at all sure that it's in order," he chuckled, "It's only a recommendation." But the profession has already greeted the news with enthusiasm. Last year's winner, veteran modernist Berthold Lubetkin, extended "heartily congratulations" to "an extremely able architect who expresses the most tragic features of our society." Previous winner Sir Denys Lasdun said, "This is good news. He is an architect of consequence. There is a certain classical control about his buildings which I have always liked."

But hot on the heels of this distinction have come strong indications that Foster Associates' 41-story Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation headquarters in Hong Kong (currently one of MoMA's "Three New

Skyscrapers," see pp. 28-9 of this issue) could cost an astonishing one billion dollars by completion in 1985. This estimate has been widely quoted in the Hong Kong press recently, and reliable sources confirmed with *Building Design* that it is a serious possibility. That would be approximately ten times the current local cost of an equivalent sized commercial building and more than four times the original cost estimate at 1980 prices of \$230 million. Project Consultant Gordon Graham, a former RIBA president, admitted that "Whatever pressures there are, they (HKSBC) are not going for the cheapest alternative." Foster refuses to discuss the budget ("All matters of cost are confidential to the Bank and I cannot discuss the subject at all") but denies that the reinforcement design team that flew out to the British colony after Christmas had been sent to take part in a cost-cutting exercise.

The building will be a high-tech composite of parts manufactured all over the world, using technologies derived from diverse industries such as aerospace and military engineering. Special features contributing to the high cost include a flooring system enabling computers to be plugged in virtually anywhere, a helipad, and half a mile of tunnelling to convey sea water from the bay for the cooling system. Steelwork for the exposed mast structure began on site last month after completion of the substructure — the only conventional part of the building

— which had been complicated by the high density of surrounding development.

Attention has been focused on building abroad throughout January and February with the opening of the Institute of Contemporary Arts' second "Art and Architecture" festival. The ICA picked up the lost thread of architecture in 1982 after a period of considerable neglect, with a two-day conference in February under the same banner, at which Kenneth Frampton, Joseph Rykwert, and Charles Jencks were speakers. "One per cent for art" legislation was much discussed but the serious architectural issues underlying such palliative gestures were conspicuously avoided. The 1983 series thus represents a renewed attempt to broach the difficult subject of contemporary architecture, in a manner palatable to the lay public. "Ten New Buildings" and "Aldo Rossi: Projects and Drawings" introduced the series of six shows running in pairs until the end of May.

The choice of architects in "Ten New Buildings" was somewhat curious and scarcely explained in the show or catalogue. The organizers, architect Martin Lazenby and art critic Michael Newman, were clearly striving not to fall into "post-modernisms," but ultimately the only unifying factor among the ten was a refusal to conform to any universal architectural code and an espousal instead of "contextualism" — or more fashionably perhaps — "critical regionalism." Comparisons could be made between James Stirling's nearly-completed Staatsgalerie Stuttgart and Hans Hollein's Mönchengladbach Museum, between Arata Isozaki's Tsukuba Civic Center and Josef Kleihues' Wulfen Town Center. Mario Botta's Casa Rotunda and Charles Moore's Licht House gave examples of private houses, while Henri Ciriani and Alvaro Siza showed contrasting approaches to mass dwelling at La Cour D'Angle, Paris, and Malagueira, Portugal. Frank Gehry's Loyola Law School and Clotet & Tusquet's La Balsa Restaurant completed the spectrum.

Each architect was allotted a bay off a central spine in the main ground floor gallery, and the work was illustrated via original drawings, construction photographs, and occasional large models. By displaying details, plans, sections, and elevations, the organizers could not be accused of skimming photogenic surfaces, but the sheer range of material — in terms of graphics and information content — made for very cluttered booths. Consistency of presentation was sacrificed for thoroughness of representation; the result was earnest and frankly lacking in vitality.

The Aldo Rossi retrospective upstairs was more successful, though this too would probably have been pretty unfathomable to anyone not already familiar with Rossi's work. One room contained blueprints of major projects and buildings over the past twenty years. These included Gallarate, the schools at Fagnano Olona and Broni, Modena Cemetery, and the Molteni Tomb of 1980 — an enigmatic roofit cube containing a Palladian facade on the ground floor and a simple black crucifix in the clerestory basement. In the other room were drawings and etchings showing recurrent Rossi motifs and some fabulously evocative photos of the Teatro del Mondo in Venice and Dubrovnik.

The "Art and Architecture" series continues this month with "Artists' Architecture: Scenes and Conventions," a mixed show of American and Canadian environmental sculptors, and "Drawings by Architects," including work by OMA (Rem Koolhaas, Elia Zenghelis, et al.), Agrest/Gandelsonas, Robert Krier, and Massimo Scolari.

At least these exhibitions have been launched with aplomb and are attracting audiences. The same could not be said of the recent show of (nearly all) the entrants for the hapless National Gallery competition, tainted by the same bureaucratic bungling that has distinguished the entire proceedings. The Property Services Agency managed to book the show into the RIBA's premises without any senior official of the Institute knowing until a few days before its opening. In the end, the public stayed away in droves. Colin Amery summed it up in the *Financial Times*: "If this show represented the cream of British practices, they would be well advised to line up against a concrete wall and wait for the shooting to begin."

# Interview

Peter Eisenman discusses problems of teaching and criticizing architecture with Robert Maxwell, an English architect who is now dean of Princeton University's School of Architecture.

## Robert Maxwell and Peter Eisenman

**P.E.:** It was a surprise to many people in the architecture community and in the academic community that you were chosen as the new dean of Princeton's School of Architecture. In recent years both Harvard and Yale have chosen practitioners of some reputation as heads of their architecture schools. Their appointments seemed to signal a more direct relationship of the schools to the profession. Although you are a professional, you have been perceived here as largely an academic. Did the fact that you are not an American affect your being chosen as dean?

**R.M.:** In a citation in one of the newspapers I think I was described as an "educationalist." That gave me a shock; I had never thought of myself that way. It is true that I am better known for my academic role than as a practitioner, although I have kept some kind of foothold in practice over the twenty-five years I have been teaching. As a foreigner, if I had been a practitioner, I would have been a more dangerous person to invite here. The fact that I have been perceived as an academic makes me harmless, perhaps.

**P.E.:** Perceived by whom as dangerous?

**R.M.:** The American architectural establishment, which is very competitive. Architectural practice in America seems to be very difficult to break into.

**P.E.:** For Americans as well. I would say that there is every opportunity for you to quickly form an interesting practice, if you choose to.

**R.M.:** That is encouraging; that is just what I would like to do. I would like to start a small practice, building mission halls, schools, anything with a facade on the street. Of course there are a number of other reasons I accepted the invitation to come to America, one of them being that as a visitor here in the past I found American life intriguing. America provides opportunities that do not exist in Europe. I find that ideas move faster here than in England. That applies to academia too: English universities are generally rather stuffy, while in America there is more openness, at least in conversation.

**P.E.:** Do you perceive Princeton, with its particular size, location, and history, as a very different institution from Yale and Harvard? If so, will you reinforce that difference?

**R.M.:** That is a difficult question because I do not know Yale or Harvard very well. In a certain way, Princeton is the only American school I know; I'm quite fond of it. It does seem to be rather different from Harvard and Yale, particularly in that Princeton has an undergraduate program thoroughly built into the university system. This means that architects who attend Princeton receive an education first of all. The undergraduate degree is based on the idea of liberal arts and sciences, the idea of education through knowledge. That idea is very important to me. In that sense I admire Princeton. It seems that the graduate program at Princeton, as opposed to those at the other schools, is somewhat confined by its setting in the university. That's a tentative perception, but my worries about Princeton are concentrated more on the graduate program than on the undergraduate.

**P.E.:** Princeton has a tradition of a strong undergraduate teaching university. The best undergraduate liberal arts instruction in the "Ivy League" probably occurs at either Princeton or Columbia, especially in terms of the students' relationship to important faculty. It is true that Harvard and Yale are much more oriented toward graduate work. It could be argued, though, that Yale and Harvard are even more interested in the liberal arts precisely because they do not offer an intensive undergraduate architectural program. While students can major in architecture, only in the last year do they have an introduction to studio. At Princeton, on the other hand, the junior and senior years of the undergraduate program — the first two years of the architecture program — are very much oriented toward training architects rather than the advancement of knowledge. At Yale and Harvard that decision and that training are delayed until the

student is in a graduate environment. Cornell, which has a B. Arch. program, begins training students in their freshman year, even earlier than at Princeton. Princeton is somewhere in between. In comparison to Harvard and Yale, I would say it is more professional rather than less professional. If you are interested in making Princeton less professionally oriented, you should eliminate the undergraduate program, offer only a graduate program, and extend the curriculum from six to seven years.

**R.M.:** That I would not do. I am interested in the relationship of the profession to the university. I think it can be a very fruitful relationship, especially when clear distinctions between the two are made. When I say the undergraduate program is firmly founded in the university and the university is founded on the advancement of knowledge, I do not thereby imply that undergraduate programs are part of someone's research. They can be related to faculty members' research, but they are basically educational. What I like about Princeton is precisely that it grew out of a specific kind of college education, that it has a single faculty, and that it takes education seriously. I believe that is why Princeton took me seriously, since I am an "educationalist." That is a value in itself. As for what the profession requires, I would say that the profession will benefit from the input of well-educated architects. You will remember that the architecture AB degree at Princeton is not accredited.

**P.E.:** Since you do perceive Princeton's role as different from Yale or Harvard's, how do you intend to channel these special qualities? How do you intend to energize the school, change it, modify it, so that it remains distinct from other architecture schools?

**R.M.:** I have a number of ideas that form a kind of interlocking dialectic. First of all, within the university we have two modes of knowledge: that of scholarship and that of empirical experimentation. A university must accommodate both of these as means of advancing knowledge, although they have different formats, different methods, different styles. I would like to exploit both of those modes within the general context of the school. This means that within the undergraduate program there must be some way for students to perceive how science works — how the experimental mode operates — and to understand that where empirical verification is not available, other possibilities must take over — other systems of organizing knowledge, other critical discourses. It is the nature of that second mode, which provides criticism without benefit of empirical verification, that deeply interests me within the university. In relation to architecture, I would hope to see coming out of this a heightened perception of the role of criticism: how a level of criticism can be maintained, what criteria and standards are being put forward, and, generally speaking, what its mode of operation is and how it differs from mere rhetoric. It is quite clear that the rigor of logic operates only within closed systems, axiomatic systems, definitions, and so on. But virtually nothing having to do with criticism can be worked into that closed system. Therefore, it must be concerned in some sense with argumentation, which in turn must be concerned in some sense with presentation, the ancient art of persuasion or rhetoric.

**P.E.:** I make a distinction between the training of professionals — an undertaking perhaps better accomplished in the professional environment than in the university — and the making of knowledge — that is, dealing with scholarship and criticism. You talked about scholarship and empirical experimentation. I maintain that both scholarship and empirical verification are part of the making of knowledge. But there is a very definite bias in all our professional schools to produce people who can take licensing examinations and pass NCARB examinations. Accredited schools are homogenized precisely because they must teach structures, professional practice, specifications — all those things that have to do with professional training. What is your feeling about the duality between professional training and the production of knowledge?

**R.M.:** The opposition of training and education is quite easy to make but difficult to sustain. I think of the first

degree program at Princeton as primarily educational. You see it as having a large degree of training in it. The element of training seems to be located largely in the studio discipline, which requires imitation, reiteration, returning over and over again to recurring problems. It requires, therefore, an interiorization of judgment, and to this extent, there is an element of training in the studio workshop. But this is little different from the interiorization of judgment that accompanies the reading of texts and the writing of essays.

**P.E.:** But it is certainly not the making of knowledge.

**R.M.:** No; it is not the making of knowledge at all. The university as a whole makes knowledge.

**P.E.:** If the manufacture of knowledge is not the central part of the design studio, then it certainly will be seen as a peripheral occupation.

**R.M.:** I see the university as operating on certain well-formulated rules and procedures, modes and styles, that ultimately are directed at *making things clear*. That is a prerequisite for making new knowledge. So the whole university is a machine for extending knowledge. That means, however, that the university is also operating in order to best extend knowledge.

This mode of operation provides an educational advantage to students. They do not necessarily discover any knowledge beyond what is simply new to them, but they do receive that element of training that is directed at good statement and good formulation. This ultimately makes students capable of achieving new knowledge.

The other side, of course, is the professional interest. Obviously, a professional has to receive training. I would probably agree that within the graduate program there is a great deal of training, but I would not see the whole program as being oriented toward training. At Princeton, for instance, the final qualification for the undergraduate degree can take the form of a design project or a written paper. Similarly, within the graduate program there is a certain balance between making drawings and writing papers; in that sense the program remains firmly within the context of the university.

***“I find that ideas move faster here than in England. That applies to academia too: English universities are generally rather stuffy, while in America there is more openness, at least in conversation.”***

**P.E.:** One could argue, given your stated position, that the kind of training Princeton offers could lead to educators, critics and architects who would play a different role in the profession than those who merely manufacture or produce work. They could manufacture ideas. It seems that may be the kind of school you want to have.

**R.M.:** Yes, eventually, but only as the result of sound methods. First I want to put education and training in their proper relation. Then the architecture school, well-based and organized on the idea of well-formed discourse, could address a wider world from its position within the university. In that I see another dialectic. The world of practice is very active, dynamic; it seems to move faster than the advancement of knowledge. It does not proceed in a well-regulated fashion, but responds to all sorts of irrational currents in society. The university must be aware of changes of perception in the profession that are being articulated — such as the loss of modernism or the advent of post-modernism. Movements

in architecture do not usually emanate from within the university directly, but come from professional practice. These movements affect the behavior of architects, changing fashion and the direction of training. So there is a dialectic between what is formed in the profession and the field of practice and what is formed within the calm of the university. They clash.

**P.E.:** There is a way to insulate a school against the ebb and flow of fashion. Mies van der Rohe at IIT tried to insulate his curriculum by teaching within a strict discipline, which he perceived as necessary to the training of architects, whether in the year 1800, 1900, or 2000.

**R.M.:** Everything grows old and dies — everything. Even if I could, I would not wish single-handedly to create a discernible school style. I am much more interested in a continuing process. In any case, it could be said that a Princeton tradition already exists.

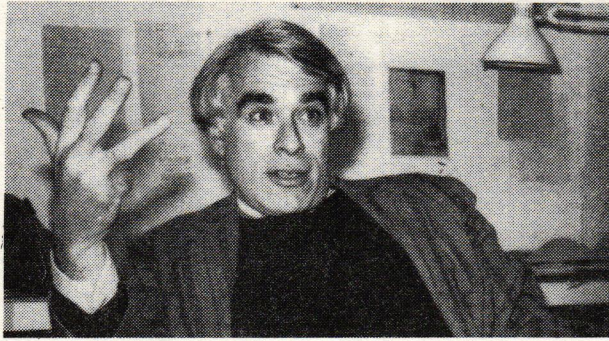
**P.E.:** But one could argue, as Colin Rowe has, that history can be taught through an understanding of how it relates to architecture, by using a model of that relationship rather than merely teaching history as a continuing chronological sequence. For example, the model of such a discourse could be constructed for a specific period — say, northern Italy in 1520-1600. One could define a curriculum concerned not with the history of architecture as data, but rather with the history of architecture as method and discourse. Most important would be learning the discourse between history and design.

**R.M.:** Colin Rowe has a unique place in the development of modern sensibility largely because of his perception of history and its relation to design. His method is not my method. For instance, I remember his asking me why one should look further if one could simply take the model of Le Corbusier in 1926 and make that the didactic mode. When I go to a studio class and see thirty exercises in creating a single cubic



## Interview

**“The school cannot afford to be in anybody’s pocket, including Michael Graves’. On the other hand, I do not see it as a bad thing that students find him glamorous. . . . He creates waves that disturb the calm of the system.”**



Peter Eisenman

volume in Corbu style, I do not feel overjoyed. Imitation may perhaps be a necessary part of learning. It is, however, valuable chiefly as a didactic method. It will not, for instance, move architectural practice back into Corbu 1926.

**P.E.:** There are two related issues that have to be discussed here. One is that no matter who is teaching and who is studying, there will always be a few students who need no teaching and a majority who will never be helped by teaching. Teaching is almost irrelevant because in a class of twenty, three will not need teaching and ten will not really benefit from any extended discourse.

**R.M.:** I think that is a cynical view of institutions like universities, which do have some kind of contractual relation to society. It is possible to carry that cynical view further and say that universities simply socialize people into a desirable mold, rather than fostering individuals who can offer a real criticism of society. From time to time I do get the impression that everybody is in league in the establishment game. I do not exclude universities from this simply because they are ostensibly oriented toward the enlargement of knowledge. Ordinary human foibles dictate that all humanist institutions are in some sense corrupt. But even taking that into consideration, I think good is being done. There is no other alternative but to teach what is already known. In order for the rebel or the exceptional student to stand out, there has to be a normal mainstream, something to react against. Education, however, should be regulated like the heating indicator in a house: the temperature should be set slightly higher than the expected result. There should be an attitude of idealism.

**P.E.:** You stated that your method of teaching history, or *using* history, is different from Colin Rowe’s. I am reminded of the polarity which Colin argues exists between curriculum and faculty. Colin has said there are two methods of education: one is to formulate an ideal curriculum and find people to teach it; the other is to assemble a faculty you respect and let them teach what they know best. What is your feeling about these models?

**R.M.:** Although I’m not familiar with them, they seem characteristic of Colin’s forthright way of setting up a polemic — forcing a choice of one of two things, both of which are in a sense impossible.

Compared to Colin’s, my position is existential. It seems to me that it would be difficult for a lousy faculty to teach well. A good faculty is important. But some kind of curriculum is also necessary. Neither of these constitutes a sufficient condition for good education, although both are perhaps necessary conditions. Beyond these elements, there also must be some vision or attachment — glamour, perhaps — something to lift the school out of a simple engagement with regularity. Neither curriculum nor faculty alone can do this — there has to be some kind of vision. Sometimes vision comes from the head of a school, sometimes from circumstances within a school, sometimes simply from an atmosphere, an openness to the waves coming in from the profession. In the case of Princeton at the moment, the vision is provided by Michael Graves.

**P.E.:** I maintain that I have had one of the best educations one could ever have because I spent two eight-week sessions traveling with Colin Rowe, looking at architecture night and day. I was forced to learn history by becoming involved with it, attempting to understand the social, cultural, and political aspects of it while also seeing the artifacts day and night. Why not teach design during the year — or theory, because the books are there — and take two summers for a history sequence? This kind of intensive study seems very real. A lot of schools have programs abroad, but they merely replicate what they do at home. Many students in this country have never been inside a piece of architecture!

**R.M.:** First of all, I would agree that your educational experience was very special. No one would ever think of calling Colin Rowe an educationalist. He is a *teacher* and his method is one of intensive induction into his

world, located in the area where architecture starts to speak. He has a very special value; he is unique, in fact. Without Colin Rowe one could not teach his method, although one could always try to emulate his intensity of interest. I still consider myself his pupil even though he has gone in directions different from those in which my own inclinations have taken me. Colin Rowe passes over semiology, for instance, whereas I am deeply interested in it.

In thinking about education through direct experience of buildings, it seems to me there is a wonderful opportunity in the dialectic set up between looking at buildings in photographs and plans and looking at them in real life. Impressions gathered from visiting a building can be as erroneous as book knowledge if they lack analytical insight. The reconstruction of buildings in the mind from books and drawings seems as valid a way of gaining insight as actually going to the buildings. Best of all no doubt is to do both. Truth is never found by standing in one place; it is found by looking at things across fences, by crossing over fences.

**P.E.:** Let’s get back to vision and glamour. Cesar Pelli [*Skyline*, May 1982] has explained that Yale attempts to teach through a visiting critic system. The real energy of the school comes not from the core faculty but from bringing in glamorous, visionary, dynamic critics who “turn up the heat.” By being close to that heat or light — that vision — students would understand not *how* to duplicate it, but *what* it was. Yale has often been criticized for its “star” system, its reliance on that kind of light, heat and energy. Yet you are saying that vision and glamour are a necessary part of a curriculum. In what way do you intend to moderate, mediate, energize Princeton with that kind of energy?

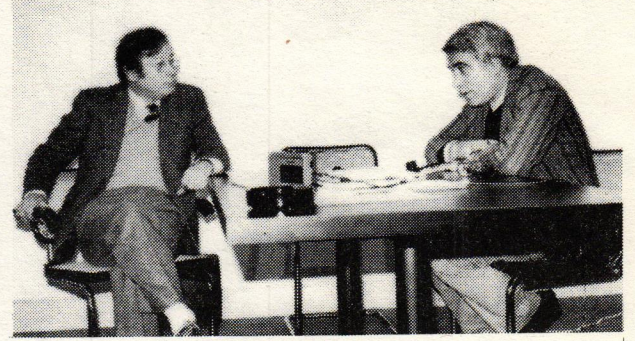
**R.M.:** A system that uses stars to generate heat is not a system I would ever choose. Any institution that tries to systematize experience runs into difficulties. The Architectural Association in London, for example, for many years systematically tried to be a radical school. In the end they were left with many degrees of imitation radicalism. If innate feelings and judgments are taken as absolute values, the system will run dry. What is always necessary is a dialectic between such innate feelings and judgments and a system that gives them value. Within a calm system these elements have some movement and dynamism. With a calm university, the glamour is often located outside.

Occasionally glamour does enter into the ranks of the faculty; there have been teachers within the university who have become scandalous because of their independence from the system. That can also be welcomed, but not systematized. The inertia of the system will benefit from the dynamism and movement of an exceptional person.

**P.E.:** Michael Graves — who is a very good teacher, by the way — has put the stamp of his particular ideology on the school at Princeton, without even wanting to. At least that is how it is perceived outside the school. Everyone says that Princeton students “do Michael Graves.” How are you planning to deal with that?

**R.M.:** The school can not afford to be in anybody’s pocket, including Michael Graves’. Graves could get so successful that he would not be seen at the school anymore. The school must be able to continue, if necessary, without him. On the other hand, I do not see it as a bad thing that students find him glamorous, that they come to Princeton to touch his arm and that they imitate his design. I am very grateful for the school at this moment has somebody of that calibre. He creates waves that disturb the calm of the system. Out of that disturbance comes new thought, new development, new attitudes. His work often has scandalous aspects, as does anything really new. One might even say that without a certain scandal the new cannot be recognized. Innovation cannot be done quietly.

**P.E.:** But you cannot teach innovation. Critical judgment falls into a void because one has to accept the premises of the innovative operation. If one does not, there is no possibility for criticism. Since Michael’s



Peter Eisenman and Robert Maxwell

premises themselves are not dialectical, it is difficult to determine as a visiting critic or a juror how to formulate a critique that is useful without either hurting the student or merely legitimizing the work.

**R.M.:** A critic incapable of accepting the premises and bent simply on rejecting them is perhaps not the best critic. Michael happens to be an excellent teacher who really cares about how students receive his ideas. He is not looking for simple imitation. He would be right to reject a contrary polemic if he felt it to be too personally motivated. I do not concede that he would not allow a discourse that included ideas different from those he himself has been responsible for.

**P.E.:** That is not what I meant. Michael is most open about that kind of discourse. But it is not easy to know how to deal with a discourse if an internal dialectic is not accessible from the start. If one accepts the premises of the discourse, then dialogue can occur only within it. That is one kind of critique. But there is another kind of dialogue that questions first principles. I think Princeton has tended to foster the type of dialogue in which first principles are *not* questioned. The questions occur after first principles are accepted. There is a tendency to vitiate the real energy of a teacher as dynamic as Michael precisely because first principles are not at issue. The emphasis is on working out the accepted principles. The discourse — and the school — could be enormously energized if the debate were on the initial assumptions, and if that debate were made part of the student’s work.

**R.M.:** I would like to think the questioning of first principles possible. The other kind of discourse folds in on itself. On the other hand, the terms and conditions of criticism that questions those principles have to be established by a “community” of criticism. I regard that as one of my jobs: to try to establish a community of criticism. It is possible that Princeton is too small to allow much pluralism, but one hopes that is not the case.

**P.E.:** What about the idea of a master — for example, Louis Kahn, who generated the whole Philadelphia School?

**R.M.:** I could not possibly organize the school that way.

**P.E.:** But at Princeton Michael Graves is perceived to have a similar master status. At Yale there seem to be many masters, while at Harvard there may be none at all.

**R.M.:** I do not think of Princeton as a “master” school. You have to remember that Michael is relatively inexperienced as far as his work is concerned. His real career is just beginning. However it develops, the school must remain, and that means we have to sharpen the system of criticism so that the school can continue. As for Michael, his concerns — the consideration of surface and decoration apart from those inherent in space or form — are at the very heart of the architectural debate today. Having him at the school can only be a benefit.

**P.E.:** I find your ecumenical behavior somewhat suspicious. One wonders if you are neutral, or whether you have any principles. If so, what are they?

**R.M.:** I am against formulating a direction or position as far as the school is concerned. Its direction will emerge from its directing influences.

**P.E.:** I know where Michael Graves, Alan Colquhoun, and Anthony Vidler, three members of your faculty, stand. At least I can predict from their writing where they would stand on certain current issues in architecture. I have read your work no less than I have read theirs. Yet I am more often surprised by the things you say. What I am asking is for you to define a certain set of issues more clearly than you have in the past.

**R.M.:** I feel a need to say where I am only when I am in groups of people who ask me, “where are you?” If my writing can surprise you, there may be some good in it. In one sense, where you stand in architecture is perhaps

**“Colin Rowe has a unique place in the development of modern sensibility largely because of his perception of history and its relation to design. His method is not my method.”**



Robert Maxwell (photos: Dorothy Alexander)

most easily defined by the kind of design you do — whether you admit decoration or insist on abstraction, for instance. Since I am not a designer above all else, I do find it difficult to decide just how far I would go in the direction, say, of decoration or pure abstraction. On the other hand, I do stand by my designs. They are inspired by a kind of judgment, my judgment, what I can do.

When it comes to my position in a wider sphere — relating to architectural criticism and a discourse within architecture — I would say that its formation began with Colin Rowe but did not end there. Colin Rowe

what its truths are. For me, history is interesting because it is not subject to empirical testing and yet it deals, apparently, with facts, with verities, with what actually happened. The fascination of history is its ability to be definitive or to deal with a settled and consistent view of humanity while also having the character of fiction, of being constructed, of being interpretation. In the past I resisted Banham's personal interpretation of history — which was largely a product of his own feeling about what kind of architecture we should have and his vision of the immediate future. But in the end all we really have is interpretation.

**R.M.:** The discipline exists, evidently, as a phenomenon in society, but this does not mean it is an absolute truth.

**P.E.:** No, but is there some way to know what it is? Are its limits definable?

**R.M.:** It is a series of phenomena carried along in society. I am not able to treat architecture as separate from adjacent arts and adjacent attitudes. In that sense, I do have difficulty in seeing architecture as a self-contained discipline. For instance, it would be hard to understand the development of architecture in Russia around 1917 without seeing it as related to the development of abstract art in a more general sense. Architecture is essentially an art, but insofar as it is tied to habitation, however metaphorically, it can deal only with certain elements. *This* is the material of architecture. The discipline of architecture, therefore, is the rules and restrictions placed on the discussion of the arrangement and manipulation of those elements.

**P.E.:** The taxonomy could also center on the differences — the edges between wall, roof and window — instead of the objects, the elements themselves.

**R.M.:** That could be interpreted in a number of ways. You have interpreted it in your own work in terms of a kind of abstract figuration. I use the word figuration advisedly because no matter how empty a form is, the totality of the form always carries a value in relation to other forms. So it remains figuration, even if it is a remote figuration.

**P.E.:** There is no question about that, but it moves toward a “degree zero” figuration. What about ideology?

**R.M.:** Ideology is another ambiguous concept. When I first came into contact with this term, I was transfixed, as it were, by Roland Barthes' *Mythologies*, which is very old now. He spoke of ideology as the production of a factioned society that wishes to maintain itself and therefore naturalizes all of the devious conditions by which it maintains itself. What a very appealing idea: the idea of unmasking; the idea of seeing through! All those things were very exciting until I became interested in a wider discourse, which included the work of Althusser. In the course of an agonized career and an agonized death, Althusser stated that a positive new society could not be formed without ideology, which would be necessary for that society to maintain itself. In light of that, it does not seem unfair, it does not seem an absolute judgment, to point out that there is bourgeois ideology and there is nonbourgeois ideology. One is left, then, with the ambiguous fact that ideology is necessary and yet always serves some sort of power. I would say that this ambiguity applies as well to polemical thought in architecture.

One could then use “ideological” in relation to architecture or design as a term of approval. For example, I have applied it as a term of approval to Neave Brown's architecture — Alexandra Road — which seems to illustrate certain broad, general ideas of the welfare state in post-war Britain. His architecture tries to do this without bringing in any other material. Of course, someone fighting against the welfare state would find this work unconvincing or fictitious. Inevitably, one comes back to the position from which ideology is judged. Ideology, if you like, is a way of combining the writing with the idea, the text with the concept, the form with the content. In my view it's the *only* way we have to express ideas.

**P.E.:** But ideology is not to be confused with theory. The intersection of the text with the object is certainly a theoretical notion, not an ideological one.

**R.M.:** I have not talked about theory. Theory should be able to deal with ideology by pointing out its recurring characteristics. However, a theoretical system also tries to be value-free, but never is. Everything is relative. The world is made up of the objects we encounter and the objects we construct. They recur and are transformed in an endless flux, and never come to an end. But in that flux we can perceive terminations and fresh starts. And I am quite happy with that.

**“Movements in architecture do not usually emanate from within the university directly but come from professional practice. These movements affect the behavior of architects, changing fashion and the direction of training.”**

introduced me to Ernst Cassirer, who articulates very clearly certain ideas of process and change that I have returned to endlessly. I am also fascinated by authors like Georg Simmel, the sociologist who sees color, form and sensuousness in everything, who even sees a relationship between abstraction and sensual behavior. Simmel has certain ideas that interest me, among them the idea that we can only play — that play is all we have — but that within play there is nevertheless much to be discovered; this is rather along the lines that Nietzsche had suggested. I am also interested in his idea that an endless dialectic between concepts and experience produces forms that are full of ideas. Our ideas become invested in objects and through that objectivity they embody self-evident truths, even though it is inevitable that as we look at them our senses dull and we need other objects. That process of cognition is what really interests me. This is why someone like Reyner Banham would characterize me as having a fundamentally philosophical stance. I am always looking for a form sufficiently general to explain *all* occasions of all phenomena. What fascinates me about a world like architecture is that it inevitably is concerned with the production of objects, yet it is also concerned with ideas and so its objects are invested with ideas.

**P.E.:** What you have just elaborated does not seem to admit historicism. The current tendencies toward historicizing or eclecticizing cannot be adjusted to the particular ideology you described — Cassirer, Simmel, and Nietzsche. Yet you do not view history as a historicizing, progressive, or eclectic agent. If you do not take it as historicizing, how do you deal with the problem of ideology?

**R.M.:** Both of those are fascinating problems. The application of history to architecture that we have seen in recent years has the character of a somewhat uninformed fashion. It has become fashionable in architecture to refer to history without much understanding of the method of history, how it works and

The relationship of history and architecture has not been fully understood. One must think rather deeply about what history reveals about the course of style and movement. One would find, I think, that every moment in history — let's say the moment in Malevich's work when the red square moves clearly onto the black — is a wonderful moment. Yet it is not a moment that can be built upon forever. It is not a moment that provides evidence we can use now, because that moment depended on Malevich's own sensitivity and his own integration of things at a particular time.

**P.E.:** You have not talked about the discipline of architecture itself. Do you believe there is such a thing? I do not consider modern architecture an abstract architecture. It is a representational architecture using abstract means. I see abstraction as the very understanding — in a structural way — of signs themselves as integers in a system of potential expression. I define abstraction not as the destruction of the potential for meaning or discourse, but as the reduction of discourse to its integers. This allows for the examination of these integers and their potential to manipulate the discourse. This is what I call abstraction. For me abstraction must be at the root of architecture because there are no “signs” in architecture. In order to make a sign, a door, a column, or a wall must first be reduced or abstracted (not embellished) from its own materiality. You have talked about imitation, replication, representation, history, the uses of history, but you have said nothing about the *discipline* itself. Do you accept that as a term?

**R.M.:** The discipline of architecture? Yes. It is a discourse; it is a discipline in the sense in which Foucault defined a discipline. It depends on certain rules and restrictions for its maintenance, just as history depends on belief in and use of the method of history as though it were completely scientific, which it isn't.

**P.E.:** Do you think the discipline of architecture exists?

# Cesar Pelli Arr

## David Dunster

In the Post Oak section of Houston, Cesar Pelli has designed a cluster of apartment and office towers now nearing completion. David Dunster, an English architecture professor teaching at Rice, offers his views.



Four Oaks Place, Houston (1983); Cesar Pelli & Associates (courtesy Cesar Pelli & Associates).



# ives in Houston



## Pelli in Houston

Houston is different from any other city in two immediately apparent respects. It has grown very big very fast and it has never bothered with any planning laws. Regulated growth insofar as it exists is a function of those who control the sewage system and its capacity. Thus an architect wishing to respect context will have a hard time unless that context is the horizon of clustered skyscrapers that delineate the nodal places in the non-place urban realm. Each site tends toward a condition of self-containment. While it is isolated, it is rarely monumental because the urban fabric that normally provides the background for the monumental is so dispersed that no texture of streets and walls of buildings is anywhere to be found.

Areas in Houston become fashionable either because they represent the values to which the upwardly mobile aspire before they expire in the struggle or because they satisfy a demand for secure luxury. The architect seeking to expose his moral probity, civic concern, or vision of the future could find himself a minority of one unless he deals with those leaders of the city who own very large parcels of land.

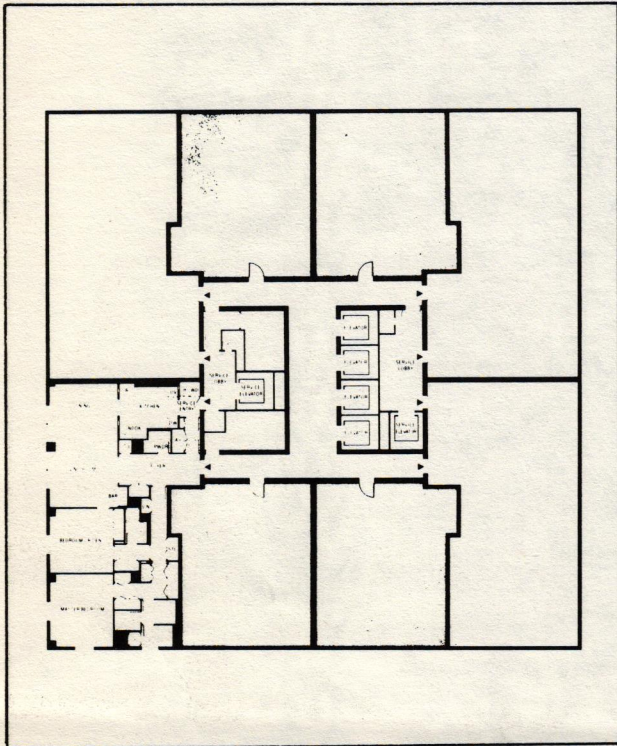
Even so, the legend of Texas — so big it could still secede from the federacy — nonetheless has to be sustained by out-of-town talent. Such is the draw of the stars from the East that Houston will soon boast "pieces" by most of the big names, each of which will glitter against the more mundane works of local firms. Thus Cesar Pelli has joined the ranks of visiting luminaries with his development at the junction of San Felipe Road and South Post Oak Lane for the Interfin Corporation.

Presently units in Four-Leaf Towers, two residential buildings of 40 floors each, are being sold. These towers will be joined in the summer by the soon-to-be-completed office development to the north, Four Oaks Place. This will consist of two 25-story towers, a 30-story tower, and a hybrid 11-story tower that relates visually to both the residences and the offices and will house the headquarters of the developers. A mall with shops has also been planned to complete the development. Pelli was responsible for the

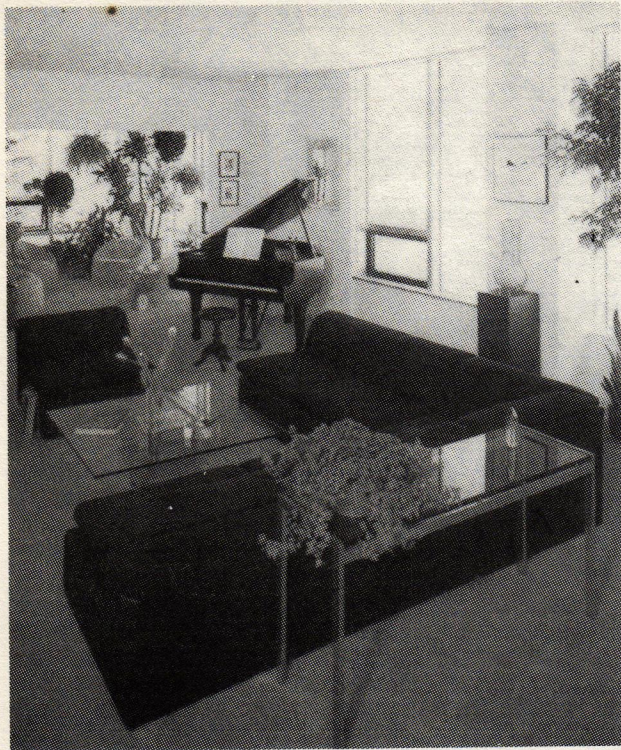
facades of all the towers in both complexes. The developer's architect Lorenzo Borlenghi designed the floor plans and interiors and developed the site plan; Melton Henry supervised construction.

The residential towers are made up of 13 floors of one- and two-bedroom apartments, 23 floors of three-bedroom apartments, and two top floors below the mansard roof with four penthouse duplexes. The prices vary from \$200,000 for the smallest apartment to \$1,525,000 for the penthouse. The color coding on the outside of the towers — in warm tones of beige, brown, and dark red — divides the buildings according to the number of bedrooms in each section. The mullions are visually suppressed so that the curtain wall is a coded surface, enclosing the accommodations like a skin. Portions of the facade have been walled off to make "windows" in the rooms themselves; the tinted glass is very high quality and appears clear from inside the apartments.

The office towers will also be curtain-walled but in this case the same ceramic-backed glass will be in shades of blue and the aluminum mullions will stand out distinctly to emphasize the horizontal nature of the layouts. The headquarters building, similar to the residences in form



Four-Leaf Towers. Two bedroom suite plan



Four-Leaf Towers. Typical living room

**Project:** Four-Leaf Towers, San Felipe Road, Houston

**Design Architect:** Cesar Pelli & Associates

**Client:** Interfin Corporation

**Site:** A flat 9.5-acre corner site in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Houston

**Program:** The site area includes two 40-floor residential towers, each containing 200 units of living space and four two-story penthouses. Features include a swimming pool, tennis courts, gymnasium, saunas, and landscaped gardens, with parking for 700 cars below grade and 70 on the surface

**Structure and materials:** A flat slab reinforced concrete structural system supports a fluoropolymer painted aluminum frame with a curtain wall of tinted vision glass containing three colors of ceramic frit glass

**Consultants:** Floor plans and layout: Lorenzo Borlenghi. Construction documents and administration: Melton Henry Architects. Contractor: Henry C. Beck Company. Construction Manager: Hubor Construction Company. Mechanical/Electrical: Cook & Holle. Structural Engineers: CBM Engineers. Civil Engineers: Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam Inc. Landscape: SWA Group

**Completion:** 1982



Four-Leaf Towers, Houston (1982); Cesar Pelli & Associates (photo: Balthazar Korab)

and color, will be horizontally banded like the offices. The architects have thus tackled the problem of the use of curtain walling for different functions. Like Helmut Jahn in Chicago, Pelli is interested in the use of both tinted and colored glass; to Pelli the pattern created on the facade should not be arbitrary but coded.

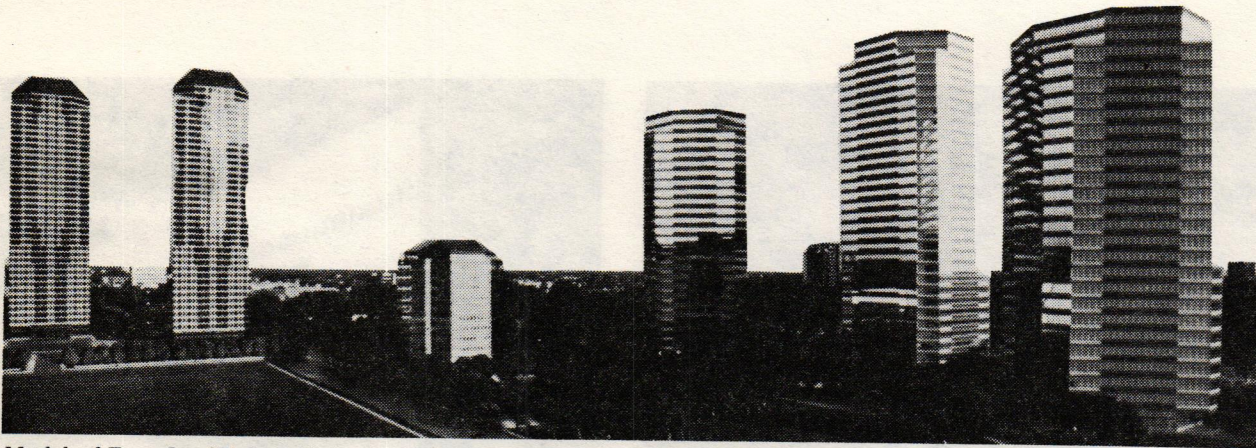
Pelli's plan accepts the fact that cars exist — an important consideration in a city like Houston — and avoids the typically obtrusive downtown parking garage. An underground carpark for 682 cars half cut into the ground and topped by landscaping solves the problem for the residence towers, while the office towers have their parking to the west, "behind" the site. Thus the towers stand firmly on the ground, which is so neatly and geometrically landscaped that anyone "enjoying the park" will stick out like a sore thumb.

But the name of the real estate game in Houston is to attract the big bucks into towers where security is omnipresent in the so-called "public" areas and where most creature comforts can be enjoyed with minimal contact with the city's celebrated climate. The towers are indeed urban enclaves, defensible spaces, and — when the offices are completed with helicopter landing pads on top — walled super-fortresses. No architect without political clout can handle alone the problems of violence and security that erupt in cities. But the exterior spaces serve as surface protection, keeping the interior life closed to anything like a public element.

The residence towers have a clear top, an extruded middle, and a very reduced base so they obey the narrative principle of having a beginning, a middle, and an end. It seems, though, that their forms are those of the daytime; at night the towers will look like any other building. While Pelli's buildings are not in the same league as, for instance, Mies van der Rohe's Lake Shore Drive Apartments in Chicago, for Houston they represent

a kind of advance. Together with the office towers, the residence towers attempt some definition of an edge to the area they front (although there is no reason another developer could not build a huge "Marseilles block" behind). To the northwest stretches the suburb of Tanglewood, now deprived of some sunlight. To the south the Galleria will soon receive the full force of Johnson/Burgee's Transco Tower. To the east is Memorial Park and the suburb River Oaks. Pelli's site might therefore be described as some kind of edge, and he has rightly tried to reinforce it.

Rather than the *Stadtkrone* posture of the Transco Tower, Pelli has adopted a quieter profile, albeit a tinted one. Instead of posing as "landmarks," Pelli's buildings sit there, a bit too cosily perhaps, but at least with some sense of urban decorum. This new project suggests that Pelli has done Houston a service by absencing his work from the screaming horde of look-at-me post-modernist buildings. His towers tend toward a certain anonymity, the sure sign of the really rich — those whose dreams become reality, even when the dreams are hedonistic.



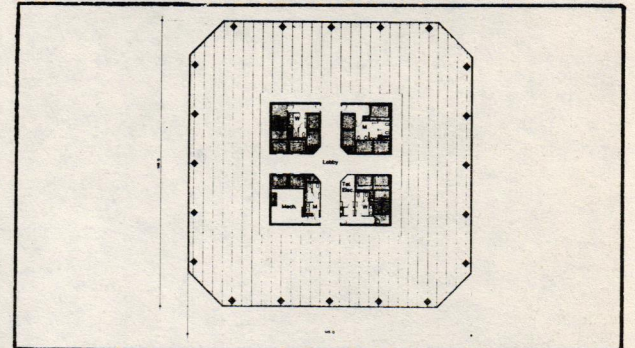
Model of Four-Leaf Towers (left) and Four Oaks Place (right)



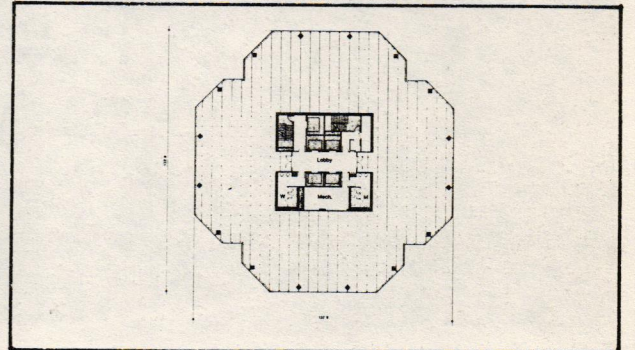
Aerial view of Four Oaks Place (front) and Four-Leaf Towers (back) (courtesy Cesar Pelli & Associates)



Cesar Pelli (photo: Dorothy Alexander)



Four Oaks office towers. Typical floor plan



Four Oaks headquarters building. Typical floor plan

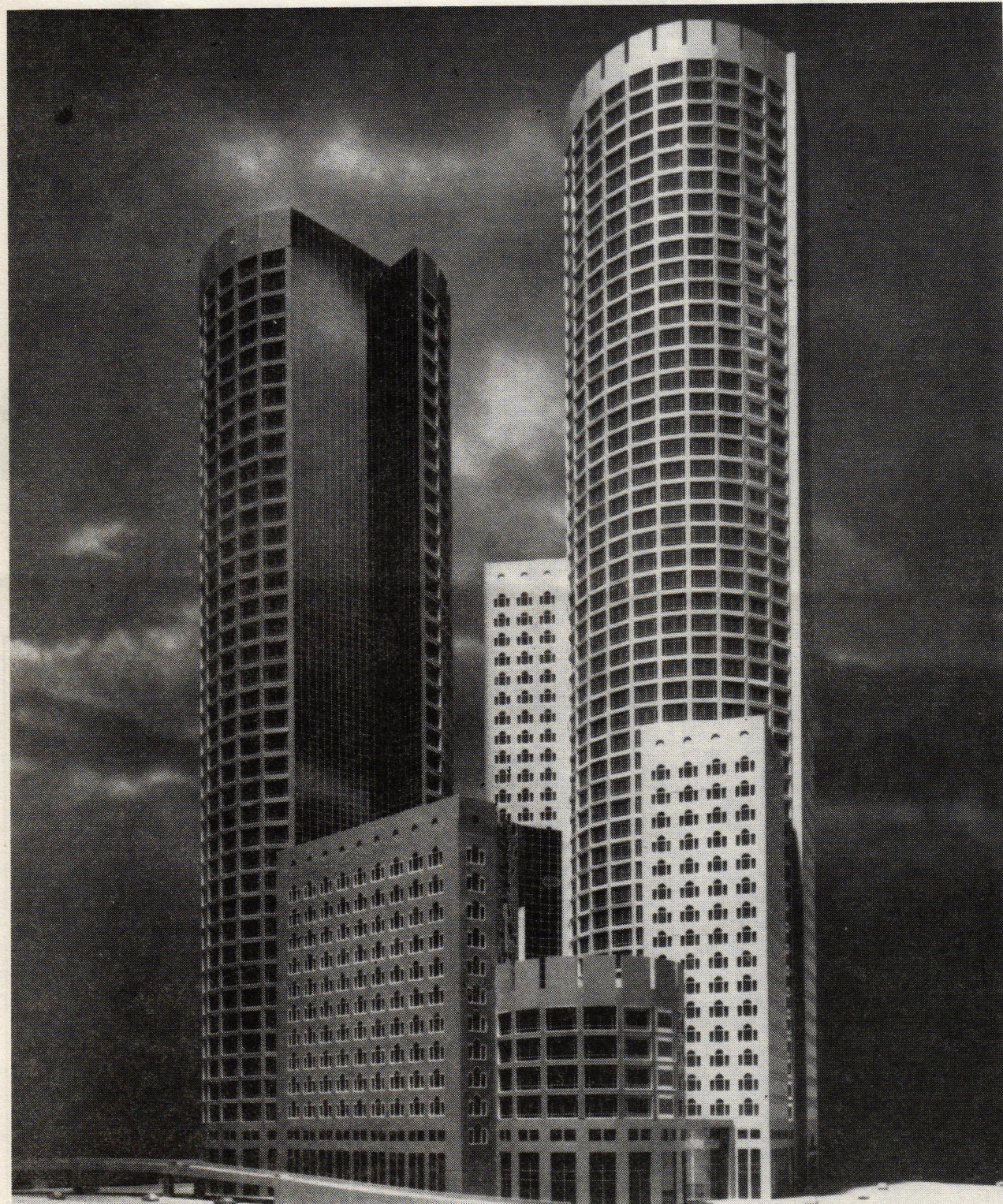
**Project:** Four Oaks Place, Post Oak Road, Houston  
**Design Architect:** Cesar Pelli & Associates  
**Client:** Interfin Corporation  
**Site:** A flat 20-acre site bounded on two sides by major roads leading into the center of Houston  
**Program:** Four Oaks comprises three rentable office-space towers and a headquarters building for Interfin Corporation. Facilities include one 30-floor and two 25-floor office towers, 500,000 s.f. each, and an 11-story, 120,000-s.f. headquarters building. The towers have a 4,500-car garage, and the headquarters building a 490-car garage  
**Structure and materials:** A flat slab reinforced concrete structural system supports a lightweight curtain wall of aluminum and two shades of blue spandrel glass and gray reflective vision glass. The headquarters has warm gray-brown shades of spandrel glass  
**Consultants:** Floor plans and layout: Lorenzo Borlenghi. Construction documents and administration: Melton Henry Architects. Contractor: Henry C. Beck Company. Construction Manager: Hubor Construction Company. Mechanical/Electrical: Cook & Holle. Structural Engineers: CBM Engineers. Civil Engineers: Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam Inc. Landscape: David Stanger Associates  
**Completion:** 1983

# Tower Hungry

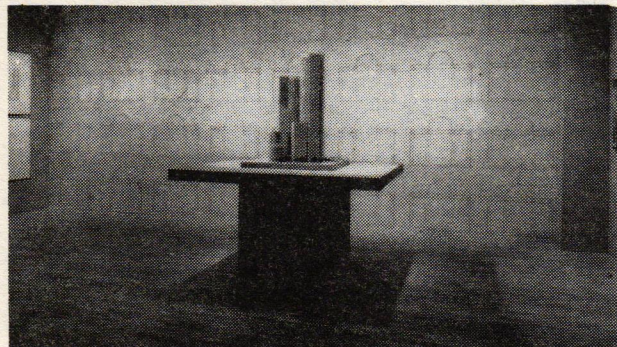
Three tower projects, including Norman Foster's Hong Kong bank building, Johnson/Burgee's Boston high-rise, and SOM's Jeddah bank, have generated critical comment.

## Three Skyscrapers at MoMA

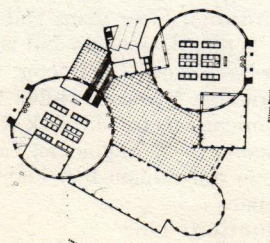
Michael Sorkin



International Place at Fort Hill Square, Boston; Johnson/Burgee Architects (photo: Nathaniel Lieberman)



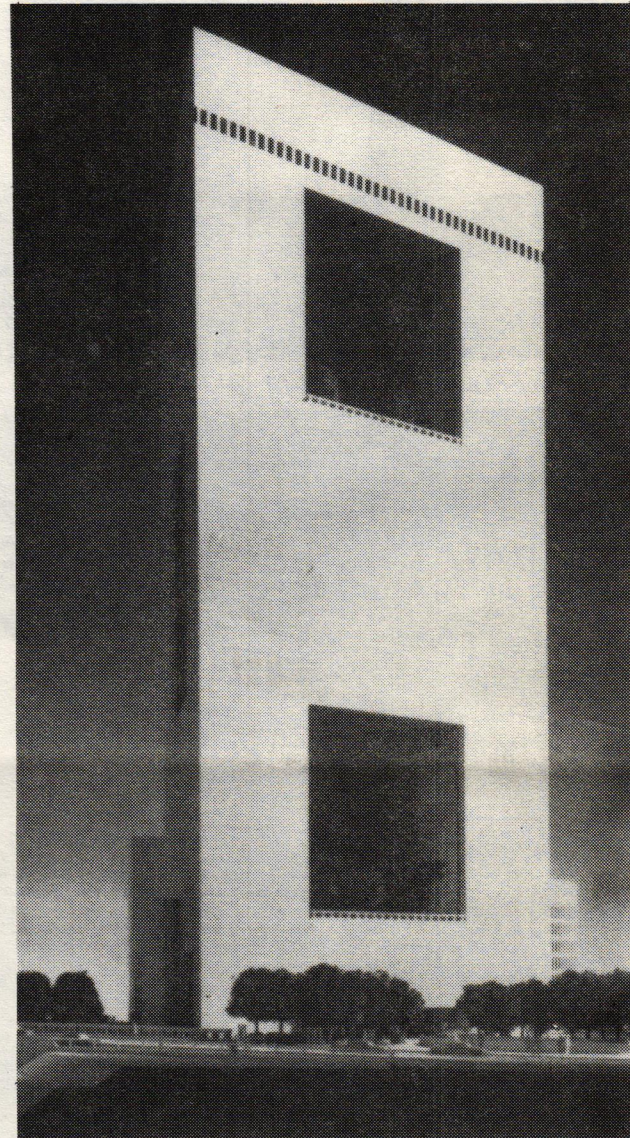
Model at MoMA (photo: Mali Olatunji, courtesy MoMA)



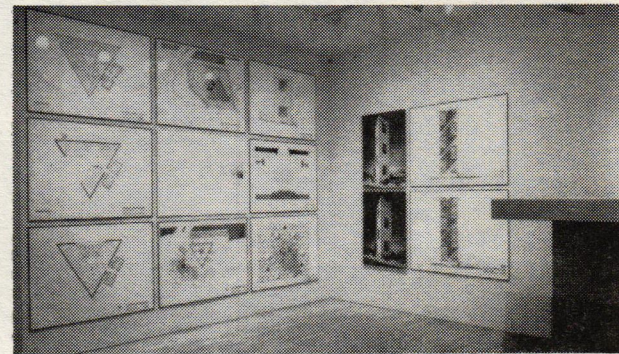
Plan

The point of the current MoMA skyscraper show is definitely at odds with its pleasures. Indeed, the curatorial rationale behind it entails such a heart-rending declaration of angst that one wonders whether the show is meant as the death-knell of civilization itself. Drexler writes: "Skyscrapers are machines for making money. They exploit land values to the point of rendering cities uninhabitable, but that is no reason to stop building them: in a free society (sic) capitalism gives us what we want, including our own demise." Never mind the interesting test of repressive tolerance at a Rockefeller institution currently involved in purveying condos in the clouds at a million a pop [MoMA tower]; this statement raises truly frightening prospects. Are we to expect Drexler's high-rise defenestration? Is this an allusion to the dangers of getting conked by debris tumbling from an upper story? The towering inferno? The apocalypse?

Fortunately, paranoia has not interfered with business as usual or deformed familiar rationales. The show presents three projects, all of which are designed for what might politely be called "financial institutions" although this programmatic commonality has no serious impact on questions of design. The buildings are by Norman Foster, Gordon Bunshaft, and Philip Johnson, the latter two of whom are museum trustees, a point actually observed in print by Paul Goldberger in an unprecedented nibble at the feeding hand (*The New York Times*, January 30, 1983).



National Commercial Bank, Jeddah; Gordon Bunshaft/SOM

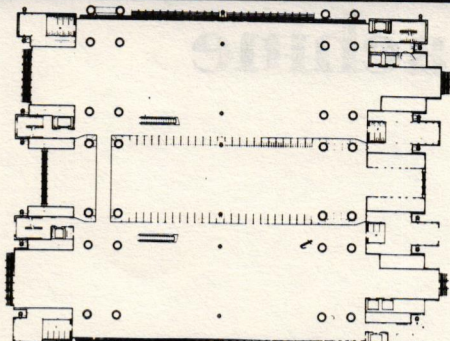
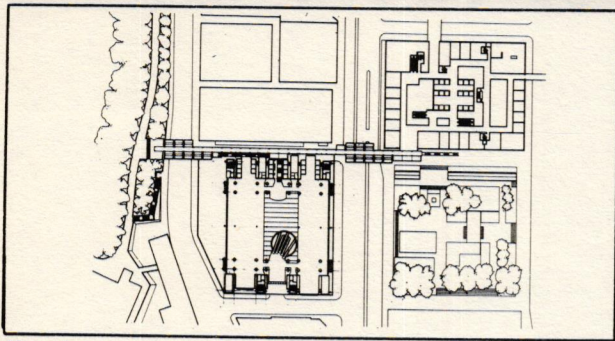


(photo: Mali Olatunji, courtesy MoMA)

In fact, the three buildings fit nicely into the Chinese restaurant approach to exhibitions, representing three familiar, if languid, taxonomic streams in the critical approach to current building: "high-tech," "abstract-modernist," and "eclectic-historicist." Like all typological inventions, these categories have the useful side effect of falsification. The show's text claims that the three were selected for their contributions to the transformation of the nature of skyscrapers, but the buildings themselves seem to raise arguments largely about appearance, an argument reinforced by the familiar categorical lie of the objects in question.

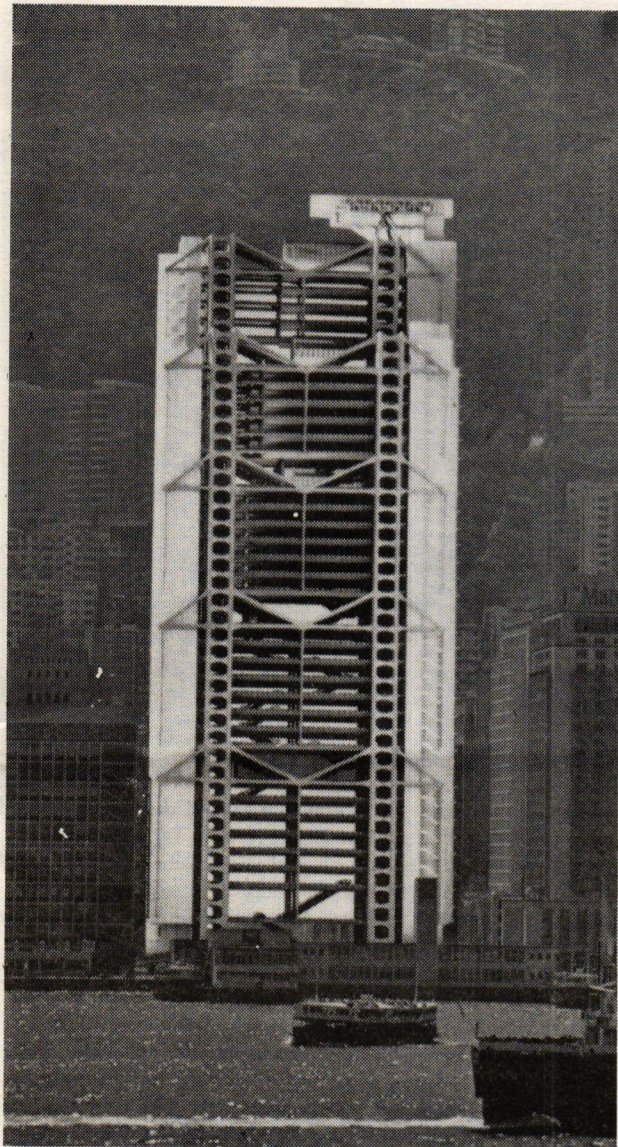
Of these, Philip Johnson and John Burgee's is the clear loser. The main design schtick of this group of towers for a site in Boston is the attempt to mingle three unusually dreary skin types throughout the project. The catalogue refers to this as the "deployment of contradictory facades" entailing the "synoptic inclusion of most varieties of modernism, including the 'Palladian'." Such hokey notwithstanding, the project betrays the usual Johnson problem. Having cloaked himself in erudition he begs seriousness for the most banal and random tactic (A Palladian window! You don't say!). As with so much of Johnson's work, one sees only the outline of architecture, building more described than designed. The problem — skins, clusters of towers — gets stated but remains unsolved. Philip's tragedy is that

**“Still, for all its pizzazz the building doesn’t really depart from familiar parti: its typological triumph is in the slipped slab redeemed.”**

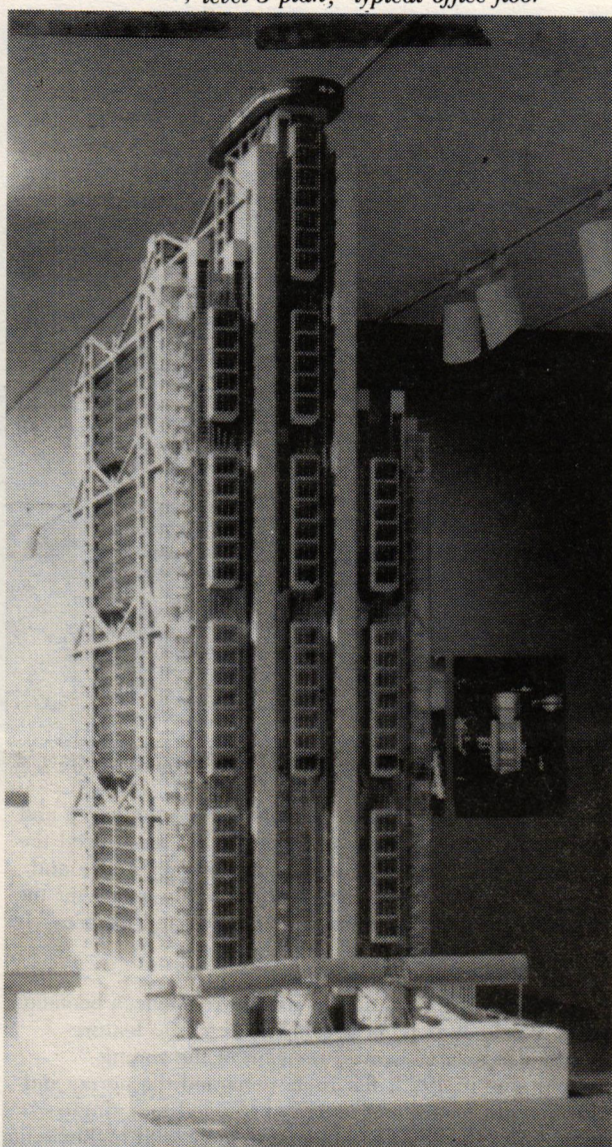


Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Hong Kong; Foster Associates; level 3 plan; typical office floor

A structural frame of eight vertical masts, four on each short side, are horizontally stiffened by trusses at five levels, from which floors are suspended. Three bays of 28, 35, and 41 levels are clad in glossy silver-gray by an aluminum structural system and glazed, solid, translucent or lowered areas. All services and stairs are in 144 prefabricated modules, built in four towers on each short side. Services connect through structural floor voids, accessible through removable panels. Sunlight is reflected into the building by reflectors on the south (long) elevation at the 11th level and on the atrium ceiling. Usable space is 75% net to gross.



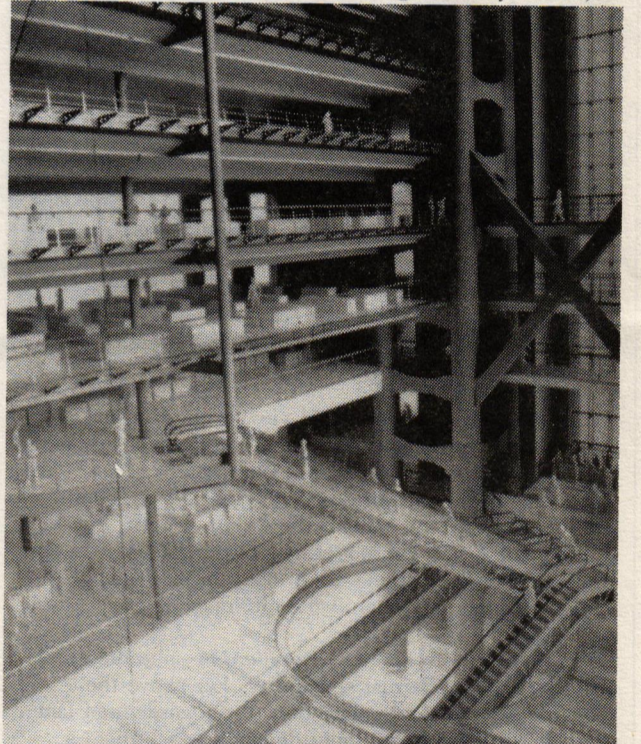
Photomontage of model (photo: Richard Davies)



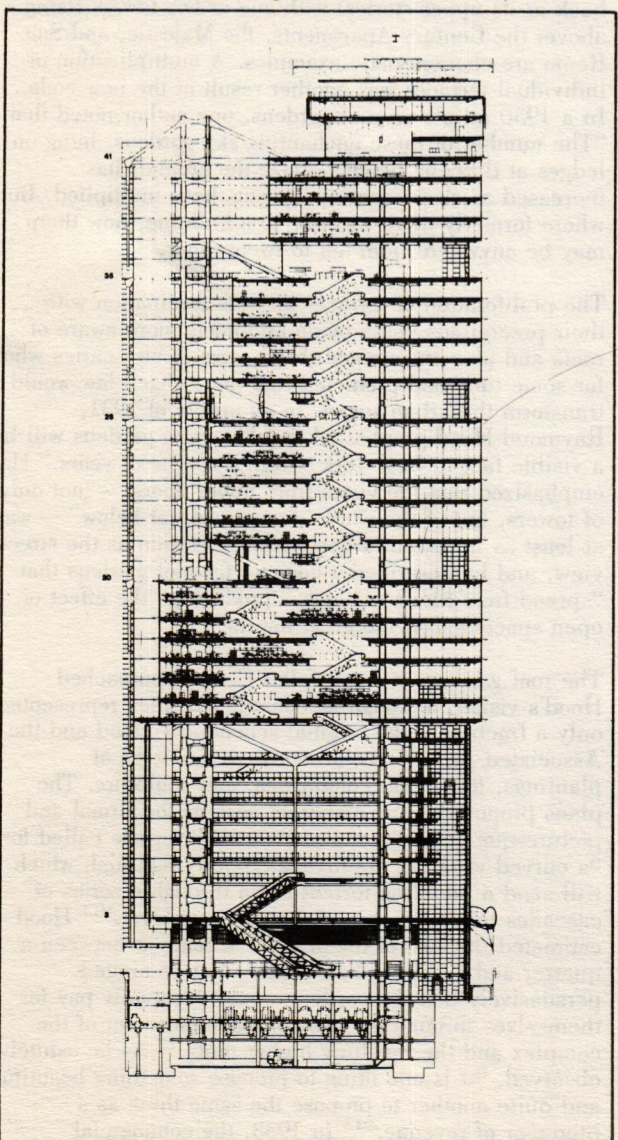
Model at MoMA (photo: Mali Olatunji, courtesy MoMA)



Model close-up (photo: James Welling, courtesy MoMA)



Interior of model (photo: Richard Davies)



East-west section

the polish and politesse that has permitted his free movement among the older monied has deflected the delicious Robertson Boulevard sensibility that might otherwise have emerged. I’m not saying that a skyscraper with Palladian windows is entirely unamusing: merely that it represents the tip of a mighty iceberg likely never to be exposed.

Bunshaft’s contribution is his well-published bank tower in Jeddah, the current architectural capital of the free world (sic). This is the triangular building with aerial oases that Drexler proclaims the first “Muslim skyscraper.” What this means I am not sure: the orientation is not to Mecca. On the other hand, there is something Saudi about its feudal elevations, easily defensible should the local lumpen grow restive and decide to try to liberate some of the petrojillions from the burnoosed oligarchs within. And the helipad might be useful for falconing. Mainly, though, it is a building without a context and as such must be seen as the source of its own problems. These are fairly straightforward and can be considered “resolved” on only two of three sides. On the third are glommed the elevator towers. Then again, two out of three ain’t bad. Goldberger lamented the fact that the show fails to include any of the architect’s study drawings and presents the Jeddah project as if it sprang full panoplied from Bunshaft’s head. What can Paul be thinking? I can see Gordo crumbling yards of yellow trace as he struggles to configure two identical squares on a rectangle.

Foster’s building, on the other hand, is absolutely sensational. Perhaps Drexler’s secret agenda was to humiliate Johnson and Bunshaft with the contrast. The tower — for a bank in Hong Kong — is strikingly original in concept and carried out with a meticulousness and dedication that is emblemized in the stunning models and drawings included in the show, themselves well worth the trip. To categorize this building in terms of its imagery is to slight its subtlety, sophistication, and effects, many of which promise to be dazzling. Foster

has designed a fully resolved technical and aesthetic system which is so suave and convincing as to be virtually unprecedented, whatever its declared affinities with the Gothic cathedrals or the iron works of the nineteenth century. Still, for all its pizzazz, the building doesn’t really depart from familiar parti: its typological triumph is in the slipped slab redeemed. The brilliance of the solution lies in the familiarity of the problem.

If Foster’s tower is a mighty work of art, it cannot — as the show’s premise somehow means to suggest — be regarded as a modification of the skyscraper’s characteristic mode of production, either of space or of profit. Indeed, it is the perfect paradigm of that mode, occupying and abetting as it does one of the most artificially inflated pieces of real estate in the free (sic) world. The building’s vaunted space-saving structural innovations will presumably be of interest to its owners principally for their ability to increase rentable space. Drexler nonetheless argues that the three buildings on exhibit represent a “rethinking of what constitutes a humane environment.” How this differs from his lament over skyscrapers that merely embody “features” memorable enough for advertising value is not clear: the three buildings in no way alter the bureaucratic production relations that have always lain at the heart of the skyscraper’s real inhumanity.

# Pastoral Obsessions

## The Garden in the Machine

Carol Willis



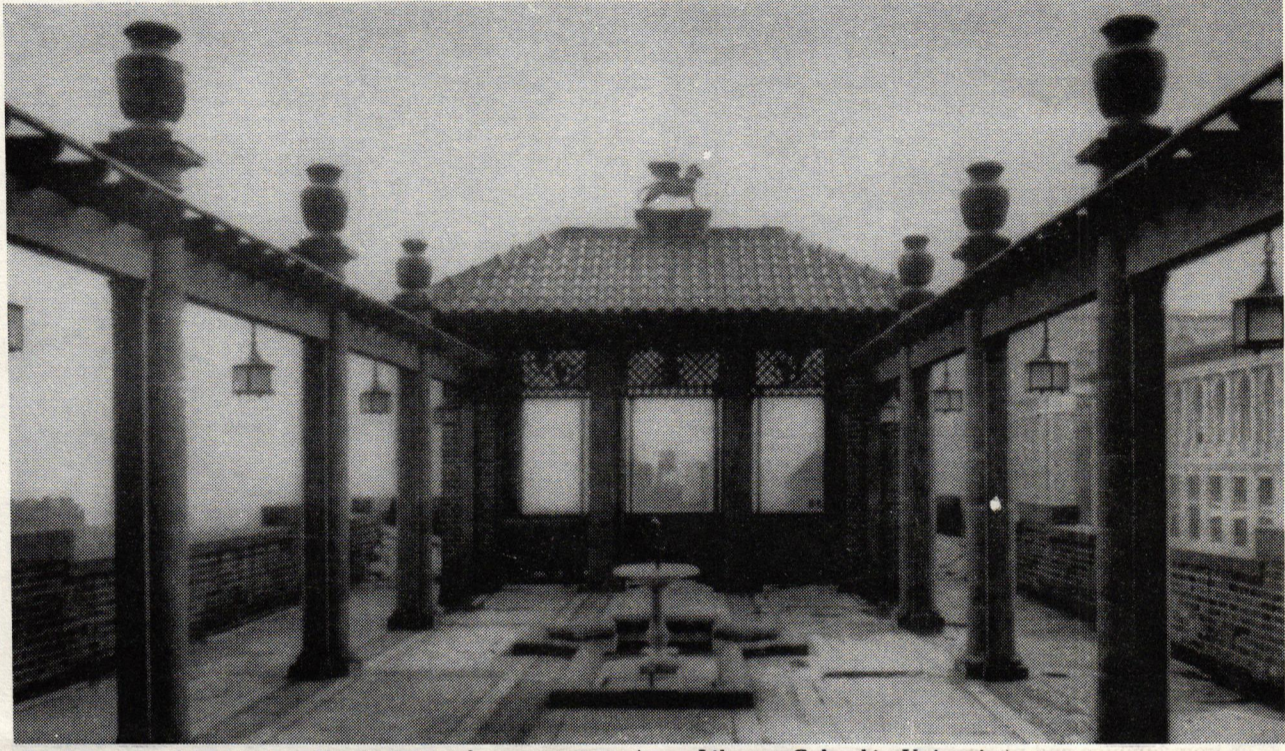
City roof garden (1926)

"A garden is man's idealized view of the world . . . and fashionable gardens of any community and of any period betray the dream world that is the period's ideal."<sup>1</sup> And what was the ideal world of modernism? For some it was the garden city, for others, the city in a park, but for a number of American modernists of the 1920s — in an inversion of the nation's traditional pastoral ideal — it was man-made gardens in the city machine.

Gardens on the roofs of skyscrapers became the elite edens of the modernist sensibility. Far above the constant clamor and congestion, these gardens of fact and fantasy offered (without demanding sacrifice) a release from the city into a tranquil landscape of artificial mountains and cliffs. The future New York, it was predicted, would become "a city of a multitude of aerial gardens, tiny forests of pine and cedar, cascades of vines, colorful patches of blossoms, 100, 200, 300 feet above street level." "Paradoxically," wrote the critic George MacAdam in 1924, "it is the modern skyscraper — ultimate product of congestion — that promises to bring the color of the rural wayside back in our city streets."<sup>2</sup>

*La belle nature* appeared all the more beautiful for its convenience. "To reach the out of doors," prophesied Hugh Ferriss in 1922, "New Yorkers will not go away, they will go up."<sup>3</sup> Departure from the city would take only a few seconds by elevator. At the altitude of a summer resort, one could enjoy "the air clear, fresh, full of ozone from the vast spaces of the Atlantic; the noises of the city life far below, mellowed in a monotone, soothing like the rush of a mountain brook, the surge of the ocean against the sand."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Claude Bragdon, architect and mystic poet, perceived the ascent as an escape from the city. Admiring the new Shelton Hotel Bragdon opined, "To the high perched denizen of one of its thousand cubicles the city sounds come somewhat softened, the city smells afflict an altogether lower stratum, he sees his environment not as a nearby limiting wall, but as a series of distant diminishing planes and perspectives; he receives the sun's first rays long before they penetrate into the city's canyons, and all day long he gets the bright radiance of an unobstructed and unafflicted sky."<sup>5</sup>

Though rooftop terraces had been popular for musical theaters and restaurants since the 1890s (for example, Madison Square Garden, the Astor Hotel, and the Waldorf Astoria), residential roof gardens began to flourish only in the 1920s. In the 1910s, the uppermost floors of large apartment buildings had been relegated to servants' and service spaces, and the term "penthouse" simply meant a structure built on the roof of a building to cover a stairway, elevator shaft, watertank, or ventilating equipment. Soon, however, artists and other creative individuals with little money but much ingenuity



Roof terrace of the Shelton Hotel, 1924 (photos: courtesy Avery Library, Columbia University)

began to assemble series of rooms under the eaves and the stars. Wealthy New Yorkers quickly recognized the advantages of the light, views, and privacy above and began to abandon the cachet of the *piano nobile* for the floors at the building's crown. Servants and masters exchanged quarters.

Commercial construction of rooftop residences boomed after World War I, as developers began to feature penthouse space. Until a revision of the zoning regulations in 1928, flat roofs remained the norm, and the domain of the roof usually belonged to a single tenant. As the top floors began to command higher rents, however, the roof was subdivided into several penthouses, each with a terrace. By 1930, the term "penthouse" (according to one author, "exclusively New Yorkese") had taken on its contemporary connotation of swank. Penthouse space cost about 50 percent more than the comparable floor below; rents varied considerably, but one could "find comfort" at \$5000 a year and "real luxury" at \$25,000. An eight-room penthouse on the sixteenth floor of one building rented for \$9000-10,000 a year.<sup>6</sup>

Designs for the gardens pursued every picturesque fantasy; according to the client's wishes, the landscape architect evoked an English manor house, a country cottage, or an Oriental paradise. Aerial arboreta naturally faced many restrictive problems — the weight of watered soil (about 100 lbs./sq. ft.), the limited varieties of plants hardy enough to survive the exposure, and so on. Thus many terraces contained few or even no plants, but instead alluded to garden architecture of belvederes and Spanish miradors. Like the medieval ideal garden, these terraces were usually walled and inward-turning, a perfected landscape of private pleasures.

During the 1920s, though, some New York artists began to perceive these exclusive settings not as interior stages, but as platforms from which to behold the theater of the city beyond and below. Vertiginous views from the tops of office towers became a favored subject of modernists like Sheeler and Strand, who celebrated the pullulated metropolis in their joint film of 1921, *Manhatta*.<sup>7</sup> In the mid-1920s, apartment houses were not yet permitted to erect towers, though hotels could. Thus residence hotels with their lofty towers (the Shelton of 1924 and the Ritz of 1925, for example) opened a new frontier of fashionability to New York's upper classes. Some hotels provided communal terraces for the residents. At the Shelton, a roof garden atop the sixteenth-floor setback stretched across the entire south wing. "By day," rhapsodized Claude Bragdon in a review of the new building, "the terrace commands a view in three directions of extraordinary interest and variety, and by night of mystery, for then the harsh jazz of the jagged

skyline is muted by a velvet curtain of darkness painted with a silver river and bespangled with innumerable points of light."<sup>8</sup> Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O'Keeffe, the quintessential modernist couple, shared Bragdon's romance with the Shelton's Olympian heights. From their apartment on the thirtieth floor, they recorded in their art the changing image of the new New York.

The revision of the Multiple Dwellings Law in 1928 allowed apartment buildings to follow the setback formula applied to commercial buildings and to erect towers over 25 percent of their site. This change in regulations produced a new formal type for New York apartment buildings — a main block (usually stepped back at its upper stories) with one or two towers rising above; the Century Apartments, the Majestic, and San Remo are characteristic examples. A multiplication of individual terraces was another result of the new code. In a 1930 article on roof gardens, one author noted that "The number of these enchanting sky gardens, hung on ledges at dizzying heights above the ground, has increased as skyscraper apartments have multiplied. But where formerly there was one to a building, now there may be anywhere from ten to twenty-four."<sup>9</sup>

The proliferation of terraces and the fascination with their precipitous views made architects more aware of roofs and also encouraged the dreams of visionaries who for some time had predicted that the setback law would transform the urban scene. In an article of 1931, Raymond Hood prophesied that "hanging gardens will be a visible fact in New York within a couple of years." He emphasized that the views from upper floors — "not only of towers, but of the whole city spread out below" — was at least as important a design consideration as the street view, and he described a concept for roof gardens that "spread from block to block," producing "the effect of open space among the great towers."<sup>10</sup>

The roof gardens of Rockefeller Center approached Hood's vision, although as constructed, they represented only a fraction of the original scheme (by Hood and the Associated Architects) for nearly seven acres of plantings, fountains, colonnades, and sculpture. The plans proposed many elaborate designs for formal and picturesque gardens; one (unexecuted) terrace called for "a curved waterfall approximately forty feet high which will send a tumbling torrent down through a series of cascades to a reflecting pool at the roof level."<sup>11</sup> Hood estimated the cost of the original scheme at between a quarter and a half million dollars, but he argued persuasively that the gardens would eventually pay for themselves through the aesthetic enhancement of the complex and the resulting higher rents.<sup>12</sup> As he astutely observed, "it is one thing to propose something beautiful and quite another to propose the same thing as a producer of revenue."<sup>13</sup> In 1933, the commercial

Many architects of the 1920s envisioned towers with hanging gardens for the commercial construction proliferating in New York after WWI.



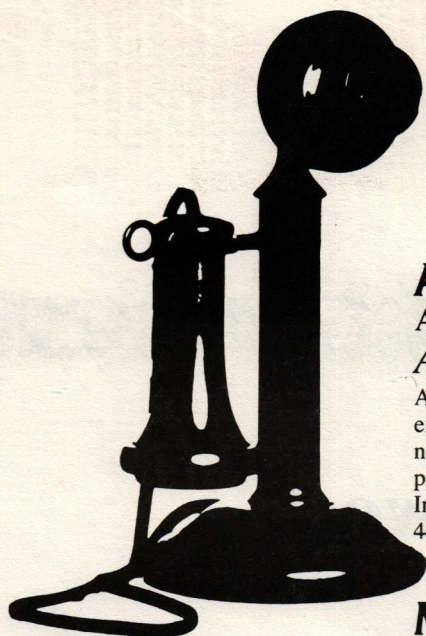
"Gardens of the Nations" on the eleventh floor roof of the RCA Building were opened to paying visitors. Among the many theme exhibits was a rock garden with a 100-ft. long meandering stream and more than 2000 varieties of alpine plants and dwarf conifers.<sup>14</sup> In the manicured gardens of Rockefeller Center, nature was trained to make money.

"Half again as large as the hanging gardens of Babylon," was the Center's boast for its gardens. Architects and critics of the 1920s and '30s frequently compared New York with ancient Babylon — presumably to enrich the meaning of their work through historical allusion. Hugh Ferriss, for example, delighted in drawing dramatic terraces worthy of (and perhaps influenced by) epic films such as D.W. Griffith's *Intolerance*. But if Babylon was often invoked by architects of the period, it was not to portend a spectre of debacle, but rather to revel in the spectacle of its artifice — for like the fabled ziggurats and hanging gardens, modern skyscrapers and their terraces were perceived as man-made mountains.

A fascination with reversals of nature was one aspect of the modernist response to the metropolis in the 1920s and '30s. In addition to enjoying the city from an artificial oasis, modernists favored views, not from the street, but the sky — either from the tops of skyscrapers or from airships and planes. At night, the brilliant illumination of towers and their radiant crowns proclaimed the triumph over the air and the darkness. Writing in 1932, the historian and technocrat Charles Beard expressed a popular American belief: "Technology supplies a dynamic force of inexorable drive and indicates the methods by which the progressive conquest of nature can be effected."<sup>15</sup> The urban optimism of the 1920s was based on this unwavering faith that man was inventing technological solutions to all of his problems. In the nineteenth century, the intrusion of the machine into the metaphorical American garden produced, as Leo Marx and others have argued,<sup>16</sup> a sense of conflict and tension. In the modern period, for those who celebrated the city, the inclusion of nature in pastoral patches like the skyscraper gardens tranquilized urban anxieties and offered a new American ideal, the machine-age metropolis.

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3. Hugh Ferriss, "The New Architecture," *New York Times*, March 19, 1922, Sec.4, p. 8.
4. MacAdam, "New York's Towering Terraces," p. 2.
5. Claude Bragdon, "The Shelton Hotel, New York," *The Architectural Record*, 58 (July 1925), p. 18.
6. Mara Evans, "Rooftop Residences," *Saturday Evening Post*, 202 (June 14, 1930), p. 46.
7. The film, which opened in New York in July 1921, was originally titled *New York, the Magnificent*; the title was changed to *Manhatta* when it was revived in New York in 1926.
8. Bragdon, "The Shelton Hotel, New York," p. 18.
9. Harriet Susan Gillespie, "A Modern Sky Garden," *House Beautiful*, 68 (July 1930), pp. 60-61.
10. Raymond Hood, "Hanging Gardens of New York," *T-Square Club Journal*, 1 (September 1931), pp. 13-17, 27-29.
11. Benjamin F. Betts, "Gardens on the Roofs of Radio City," *American Architect*, 140 (November 1931), p. 35.
12. Carol Hershelle Krinsky, *Rockefeller Center* (New York: Oxford, 1978), p. 61.
13. Raymond Hood, "The Design of Rockefeller City," *Architectural Forum*, 56 (January 1932), p. 5.
14. Alan Balfour, *Rockefeller Center: Architecture as Theater* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), p. 52.
15. Charles Beard, introduction to *The Idea of Progress* by J.B. Bury (1932; reprinted by Dover, New York, 1955), p. xx.
16. See Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford, 1964).



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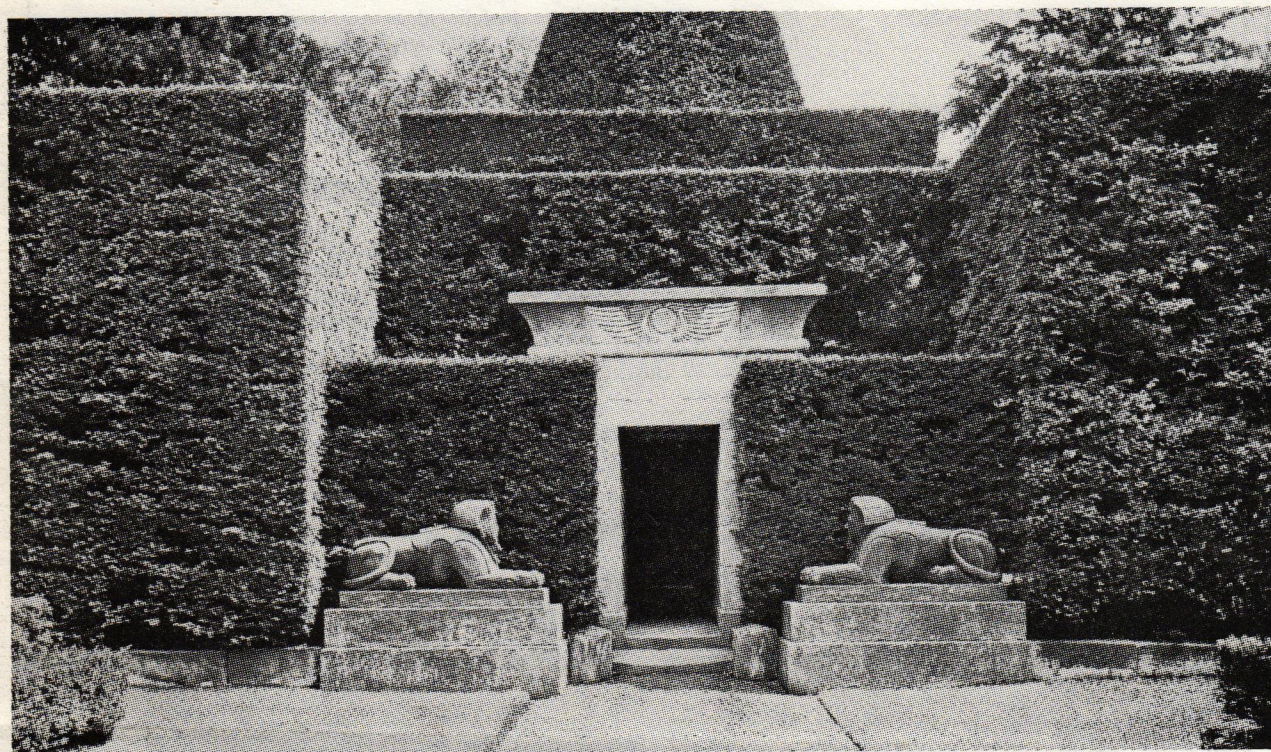
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## Pastoral Obsessions

# English Gardens: Three Books Reviewed

William Howard Adams



Formal gardens at Biddulph Grange, Cheshire (1842); John Bateman (from *Garden Ornament*)

From the television views of Castle Howard in *Brideshead Revisited* to Ralph Lauren ads or cozy chintz rooms by Sister Parrish looking out from the picture windows of an East Side "sliver" high-rise, the nostalgia for the Picturesque has engulfed the popular imagination. But the fragmented, deposed, rootless image we see exploited on every side today did indeed have roots in the ancient life of the English countryside once upon a time. Green lawns and dappled parks, gentle hills spotted with manor houses, rectories, cottages and church spires make up what David Watkin calls "these beautiful myths," which include, of course, miraculous flower borders behind well-kept hedges, laid out perhaps by Gertrude Jekyll to shine harmoniously in each succeeding month of the year. Even an IBM vice president living in the suburbs of Connecticut could not improve on the dream, for all the newly laid cobble stones, Georgian breakfronts and stabled Jaguars. One suspects that more than a little of the post-modern frippery tacked on to twentieth-century buildings has been drawn from picturesque style books of eighteenth-century architecture.

Nothing is quite so consoling in the technological debris of the late twentieth century (unless it's a stack of old *Country Lives*) as to glimpse a view of this magical lost world through pages of a well-written and sumptuously appointed book on English gardens and architecture. *The English Vision* by David Watkin, *Gardens of a Golden Afternoon* by Jane Brown, and the reprint of Jekyll's *Garden Ornament* amply fill the bill for the urban escapist as well as the serious student.

*The English Vision* is a cogent and handsomely presented study of the characteristics of the picturesque style. Not since Christopher Hussey's landmark *The Picturesque, Studies in a Point of View* appeared over fifty years ago have we had a more successful book on the dominant English domestic style that encompassed virtually everything from stately homes to Surrey cottages, "redolent of wood-burning, pot-pourri and furniture polish," in the words of Francis Jekyll describing his aunt's house, Munstead Wood.

In his introduction, while recognizing the moist, temperate climate as an important factor in the organic development of the landscape — background and foundation of the picturesque phenomenon — Watkin also acknowledges the deeply embedded English devotion to "keeping up appearances," to maintaining a gloss and a facade in order to hide often cataclysmic changes taking place beneath the sylvan landscapes. "These beautiful myths have been fostered in a country which has specialized in preserving the picturesque facades of ancient institutions whilst making fundamental changes to the reality behind them." Witness the glitter and dazzling ceremony that accompanies the ritual of the

monarchy, the church and the transfer of political power from one part to another, while the country continues its steady economic decline.

In eight chapter essays Watkin explores with a telling eye the elements of this "make-believe" romantic world of architecture, gardens, ruins, town planning and even interior decoration. He identifies the origins of the picturesque tradition in the English country house and views its spread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as "the triumph of illusion in which architecture resembles scenery, gardens resemble paintings and the natural landscape is assessed and criticised . . . as though it had been devised by a painter." The suggestion that garden art is closely allied to theater is not a new idea, particularly in considering the formal gardens of seventeenth-century Italy and France, but to advance such an interpretation for the romantic English landscape is bold and original. While Watkin proceeds in his analysis along more conventional lines once he gets into the subject, the seed of fantasy he has planted provides an exhilarating new element.

A preoccupation with the past and an over-heated historical consciousness played an important part in the growth of the picturesque movement, from John Vanbrugh's effort to preserve Woodstock Manor in 1709 to Edwin Lutyens' Castle Drago, a pile finally completed in 1930. As a historian Watkin keeps a steady grasp on this important aspect of the process. Nowhere is this awareness of history more starkly revealed than in the chapter called "The Cult of the Ruin" and the essay on "The Picturesque House: Vanbrugh to Soane" followed by a companion chapter on Anthony Slavin (1799-1881) and the achievement of Edwin Lutyens.

With Lutyens and his sometime gardening partner Gertrude Jekyll we finally enter the "Golden Afternoon" of the vanished world of Edwardian England, a world that distilled the tradition-laden accumulations of one of the Western world's great storehouses of cultural energy. No wonder the reflection of its rays — like those of a dead planet — continue to light our TV fantasies and to provide an endless source for pastiches in fashion and "Style" sections of our daily papers. These fantasy images are all dedicated to creating a world of make-believe for the dispossessed, or at least uprooted, urban masses who have never walked in an English park created by Capability Brown or sipped tea on a Lutyens terrace aglow with the sunset of an empire soon to disappear.

For a vicarious visit to such a terrace overlooking a garden setting carefully composed by Miss Jekyll (or "Bumps" as her architect friend affectionately called her), Jane Brown's fine study, *Gardens of a Golden Afternoon*, is one of the best ways, if not the only way,

The English have contributed a great deal to the art of cultivating landscape into an architectural form that both preserves and enhances the natural milieu.

**The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape and Garden Design.** David Watkin. Icon Editions, Harper & Row, New York. 228 pages, 150 black-and-white illustrations. \$55.00  
**Garden Ornament.** Gertrude Jekyll. Antique Collectors' Club, London. First published by Country Life, 1918. 460 pages, 600 black-and-white photographs. \$49.50  
**Gardens of a Golden Afternoon. The Story of a Partnership: Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll.** Jane Brown. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York. 208 pages, 97 illustrations, 16 in color. \$29.95



Munstead Wood, Surrey (1895-97); Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll (courtesy: Country Life)

to recapture a sense of what it must have been like to live among the chosen in England at the beginning of this century. The creations of Jekyll and Lutyens were well-bred, understated islands in a world that was already transforming itself beyond recognition: green, quiet entrances, "restrained" creepery on house walls, simple perfumed rose gardens, water rills and stone or brick walks and steps. Looking at the book's illustrations and well-documented plans of some of their major works, one can hardly believe these places were commissioned and maintained by individuals of living memory.

Like Henry James and Edith Wharton, Jekyll and Lutyens, as everyone knows, were the best of friends. Professional partners, together they would provide one of the last coherent bursts of the picturesque aesthetic in the form of gardens and architecture. How they worked together to create over one hundred gardens is the main subject of this admirable book. The reader is mercifully spared the garden enthusiast's often purple jargon although Jane Brown knows her gardening very well. She can provide the most fastidious plant addict with a satisfying notion of the actual materials that went into a Jekyll garden as well as precisely how they were combined not only to make a work of garden art, but to complement and enrich the architecture itself.

For the student of Lutyens' achievements, Brown gives us a fresh insight into the working relationship that enabled Lutyens, who would become the more famous of the pair, to learn a good many things about designing houses from his older, less sophisticated partner who spent most of her life in one small corner of Surrey.

In a short summing-up preceding a checklist survey of 112 gardens, Brown confronts the fact that although the gardens (and houses) covered by her study were made "at the last possible moment in history," it is clear that it was too late for them to survive. The social and political changes in society that were in fact masked for a time by the rock walls, yew hedges and garden temples were simply too great to support the style of life obviously envisioned and implied in their creation. Those changes made it impossible to ever again build a garden that at today's cost might have exceeded a quarter of a million dollars, not to mention the unimaginable expense of maintenance. A few gardens have survived, and in her survey Brown provides a useful key to their present condition.

The reprint of Jekyll's *Garden Ornament* is a most welcome event. No garden library shelf should be without it as a complement to the works of David Watkin and Jane Brown. First published in 1918, the book includes several hundred photographs that document all types of architectural elements from steps to bridges and pergolas. Lutyens understood the use of garden ornaments and was fortunate to have been able to work at a time when such domestic extravagance as terrace walls, canals and elaborate gateway entrances were not beyond the means of his wealthy clients. Although he liked to carry out garden projects on a princely scale where the architecture would at times take command, some of the best results were smaller creations developed in collaboration with Jekyll. These achieved a more subtle orchestration or in Jekyll's words "reposeful dignity." The excellent color photographs of surviving Jekyll-Lutyens gardens in the Brown volume help to animate the old static black-and-white views of the ornament book.



**Humphrey Repton Landscape Gardener, 1752-1818**, an exhibition that was on view at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, until February 20, opened at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich (Norfolk), in September 1982. The catalogue includes contributions by George Carter, Patrick Goode, and Kendrun Laurie (176 pages, illustrated in color, £4.95).

## Repton's Landscapes on View

### Barry Bergdoll

*In every place in which I was consulted, I found that I was gifted with the peculiar faculty of seeing almost immediately the way in which it might be improved and I only wanted the means of making my ideas equally visible, or intelligible to others. This led to my delivering my reports in writing, accompanied with maps and such sketches, as at once shewed the present, and the proposed portraits of the various scenes capable of improvement.*  
— Humphrey Repton

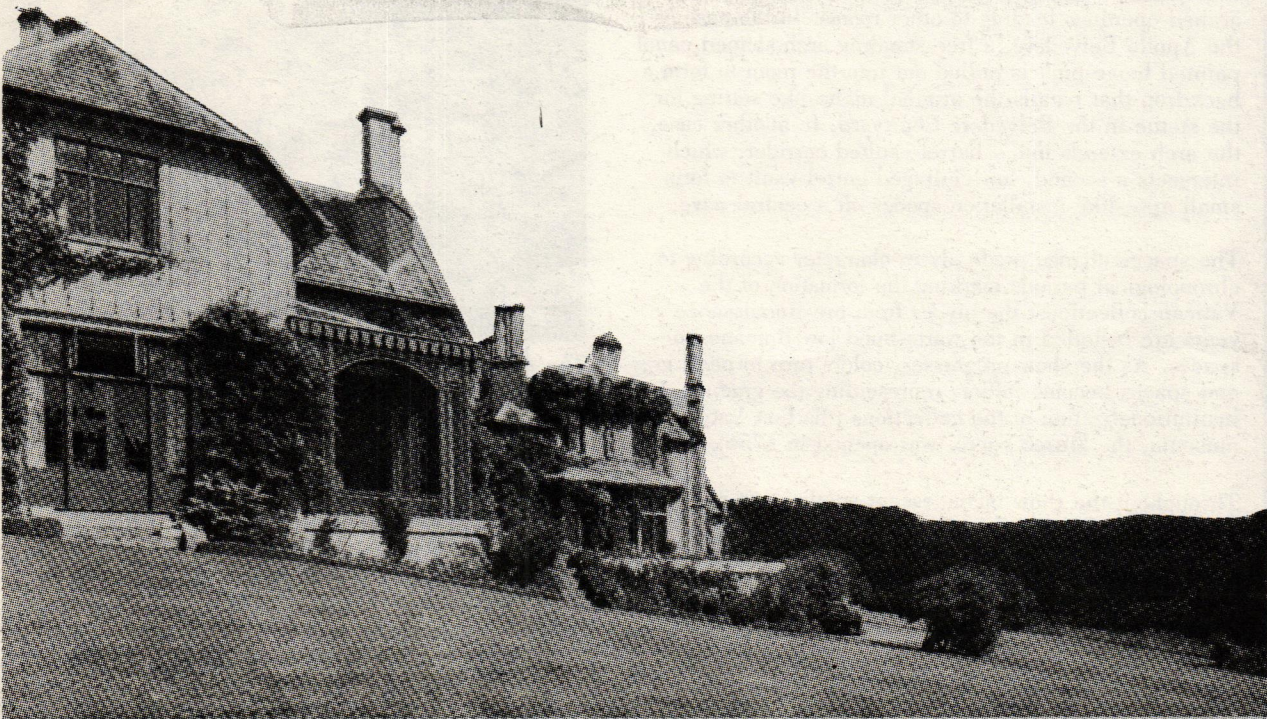
Lifting the flap of one of Humphrey Repton's red books still conveys much the same surprise and delight that seduced the proprietors of some 400 English estates to support one of the most prolific careers in the history of landscape gardening. Repton (1752-1818) himself coined the term "landscape gardener" when he suddenly changed profession in mid-life. At the same time he invented the red books with their famous "slides" to present his ideas to clients. Like a child's "pop-up" book — also, it seems, an eighteenth century invention — or a plastic souvenir book that brings ancient Rome or Pompeii to life with the flip of a transparent overleaf, the red book "slide" transforms the mundane debris and blunted features of familiar countryside into a picturesque and harmonic landscape. Repton defined his art in terms of editing rather than authoring the landscape. Just as his predecessor and personal hero Lancelot "Capability" Brown (1716-1783) had convinced the English aristocracy of the "capabilities" of their parks, so Repton *italicized* what God had only suggested by "raising the hills and sinking the hollows."

As Repton's parks have fallen victim to time and the twentieth-century British economy, the red books — so-called because they were often bound in red morocco leather — have themselves come to stand for Repton's creation and have become sought-after collector's items, if only in the recently published deluxe facsimile editions. Never have so many of these books been brought together as in the understated but richly suggestive Repton exhibition mounted at London's Victoria & Albert Museum. The assembly of over forty examples provides an occasion for a re-appraisal of our own view of Repton at a time when interest in the picturesque has reached new proportions. Repton emerges from this exhibition as much more than an aesthetic engineer, a sort of Claude Lorrain with a shovel. Rather than the mere *coda* to that great eighteenth-century tradition of the English landscape park from William Kent to Capability Brown, Repton seems the catalyst — almost in spite of himself — of a radical transformation of landscape design from a gentlemen's leisure activity to a professional service for the emerging urban, and suburban, bourgeoisie. Ironically — for Repton spared little contempt for the arising middle classes — his historical significance lies less in the picturesque parks of major houses such as

Sheringham (Norfolk) or Luscombe (Devon) than it does in his collaboration with Nash on Regent's Park or his creation of the more modest landscape settings for Nash's picturesque villas and cottages. Unfortunately these houses are little emphasized in the exhibition, although they were prototypes for that omnipresent suburban domestic style common to the outskirts of most nineteenth-century cities on both sides of the Atlantic.

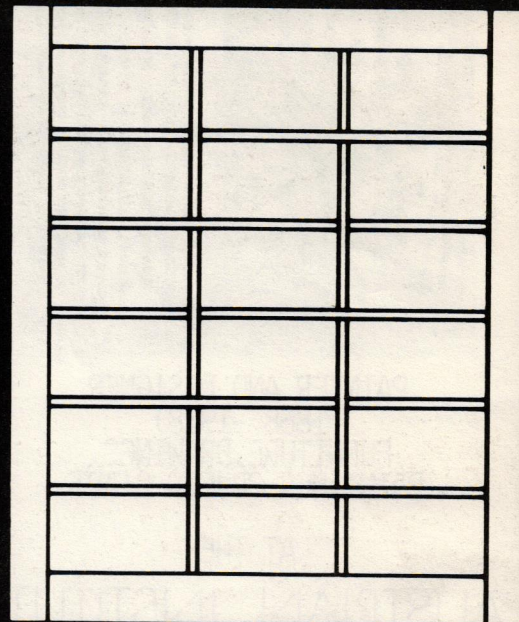
Once the novelty of flipping from "before" to "after" in the red books has worn off, it is Repton's fundamental conservatism and the strident moral undertone of his vibrant watercolors that the exhibition brings to the surface. Repton's "after" is more a nostalgic and idealized memory of a lost landscape than it is a realistic program for the future. Just as Pugin was soon to argue the social and moral superiority of pre-Reformation English society in his didactic *Contrasts* (1836), so Repton's contrasts form a polemic pointed at the evils of industrial society. Time and again his "slides" cover the evidence of commerce and industry and their unpleasant social effects. Plowed fields gave way to green pastures with flocks of sheep always, as the catalogue authors note, more picturesquely grouped in "after" scenes. Plantings obscure the encroaching industrial landscape or, in towns, the signs of trade, and humble farm buildings are transformed to accord with the landscape rather than the economy. As Stephen Daniels demonstrates in a superlative catalogue essay on Repton's political views, this idealized landscape vision is wholly paternalistic and traditionalistic in its belief in the power of the improved environment to exert a beneficial influence on society.

Nowhere is Repton's vision more tellingly evident than in the final contrast presented in the exhibition; the "before" and "improved" view from Repton's own cottage at Hare Street, Essex (1816). Here he spent the final years of his life in exile from the world. His commissions dwindled, but he still projected his own edited vision of the view from the window: a fence gives way to a hedge that visually "appropriates" the public green; ornamental plantings hide the hams in the butcher's window across the road; and finally a down-cast, peg-legged and one-eyed beggar is erased from the scene! Repton had not chosen to ignore the issues. As his late writings reveal, he was increasingly involved with the small garden and he sought adamantly to find solutions to social realities in the paternalistic application of his art. Far from a picturesque magician, it is a much more complex and interesting figure that emerges from this reunion of Repton's famous red books.



Endsleigh, Devon (1810-11); Jeffry Wyattville, landscaping by Humphrey Repton (courtesy Country Life)

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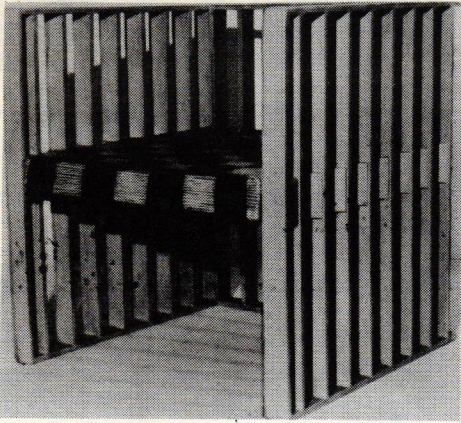
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# Exhibits

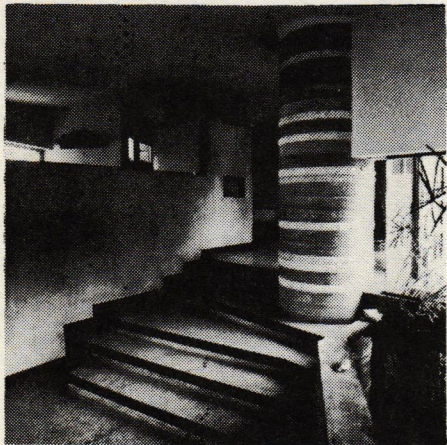
## Vatican Installation

**The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art** will be on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, until June 12. The show will then travel to the Art Institute of Chicago (July 21-October 16) and the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco (November 19-February 19, 1984).



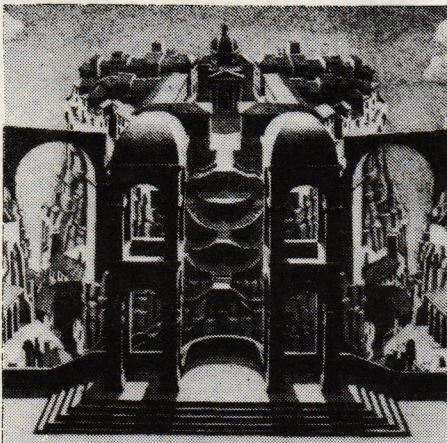
Left: Relief carving by Arnolfo di Cambi (c. 1296); right: mosaic attributed to Giotto (c. 1310)

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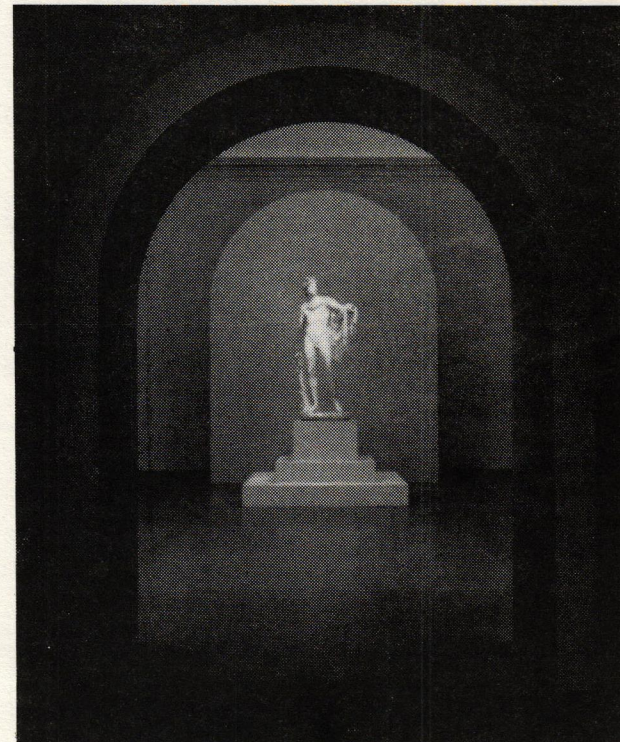
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While the promotion and publicity surrounding the Metropolitan Museum's exhibit of "The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art" has been characterized by exaggeration and hype, the tone of the installations for the exhibit is marked by elegance and subtlety. After passing the miles of "acoustiguide" machines and vendors hawking catalogues, one enters a series of rooms that have been transformed into a 22,000-sq. ft. museum-within-a-museum. Two main design elements — the use of an arch motif and a muted color palette — serve to define the spaces and provide evocative settings for the 237 works brought from the Vatican. Rooms are painted warm beige, tan, dusty rose, pearl gray and off white. The Roman arch motif may take the form of painted wall segments — framing a sarcophagus, for example — or arched openings leading to other rooms. In the case of the Apollo Belvedere, a free-standing arch-shaped panel painted beige-pink is pulled out into the room to form a backdrop that recalls the original niche-like setting for the statue in the Belvedere Courtyard. In another case, the arch extends into a barrel-vaulted corridor, which intersects a second, low-ceilinged barrel vault to form small apse-like installation spaces off a central nave.

The spaces change gradually in character according to chronological periods marking the formation of the Vatican collections: the pieces from pre-Renaissance years are installed in the warm-hued low Romanesque spaces. As the show progresses, colors turn to pearl gray and spaces become loftier, representing the gradual institutionalization of the collections (the first Vatican museum, the Museo Sacro, was opened in 1756).

Throughout the show incandescent spotlighting is carefully modulated and filtered to create the ambience of shafts of sun beaming through church windows, lighting objects and bathing other spaces in warm shadows. The vitrines, too, are treated in a dramatic but understated way: rose moiré taffeta forms the dropcloth for a thirteenth-century ivory diptych here; plain dark gray cloth brings Etruscan terra cotta into high relief there.



The Apollo Belvedere (c. 130-140) (photos: Adam Bartos)

The materials for the architecture of the installation are dry wall and stud construction with bent marine plywood for the arched doorways, and plaster for the barrel-vaulted crossing. It took about a year and a half for Stuart Silver, the project designer, and Clifford LaFontaine, his design associate, to put the installation together. Silver, vice president of design communication for Knoll International, was the design director at the Met for 12 years. Knoll not only supplied Silver for this exhibit, but also donated the carpeting and fabric used in the installation.

# Notes & Comment

## New Arrivals

### Highlights

**GA Document, Special Issue 3: Modern Architecture 1920-1945.** Kenneth Frampton. A.D.A. Edita, Tokyo. 260 pages, 200 illustrations, 30 in color. \$35.00, soft cover

*Modern Architecture 1920-1945* is a continuation of Frampton's earlier volume, which covered the years 1851-1919. The book is divided into five general sections, each introduced by a critical/historical essay. Following the essays are beautifully reproduced photographs by Yukio Futagawa of representative buildings, accompanied by short incisive commentaries by Frampton.

**Michael Graves: Buildings and Projects 1966-1981.** Edited by Karen Wheeler, Peter Arnell, and Ted Bickford; introduction by Michael Graves; essay by Vincent Scully. Rizzoli Publications, New York. 304 pages, over 700 illustrations, 300 in color. \$45.00, hard cover; \$29.95, soft cover

Part of an ongoing Rizzoli series of architectural monographs, this book documents Graves' work from his earliest residential projects to his most recent public buildings, such as the San Juan Capistrano Public Library and his controversial scheme for the Portland Public Office Building.

### JAE Revamped

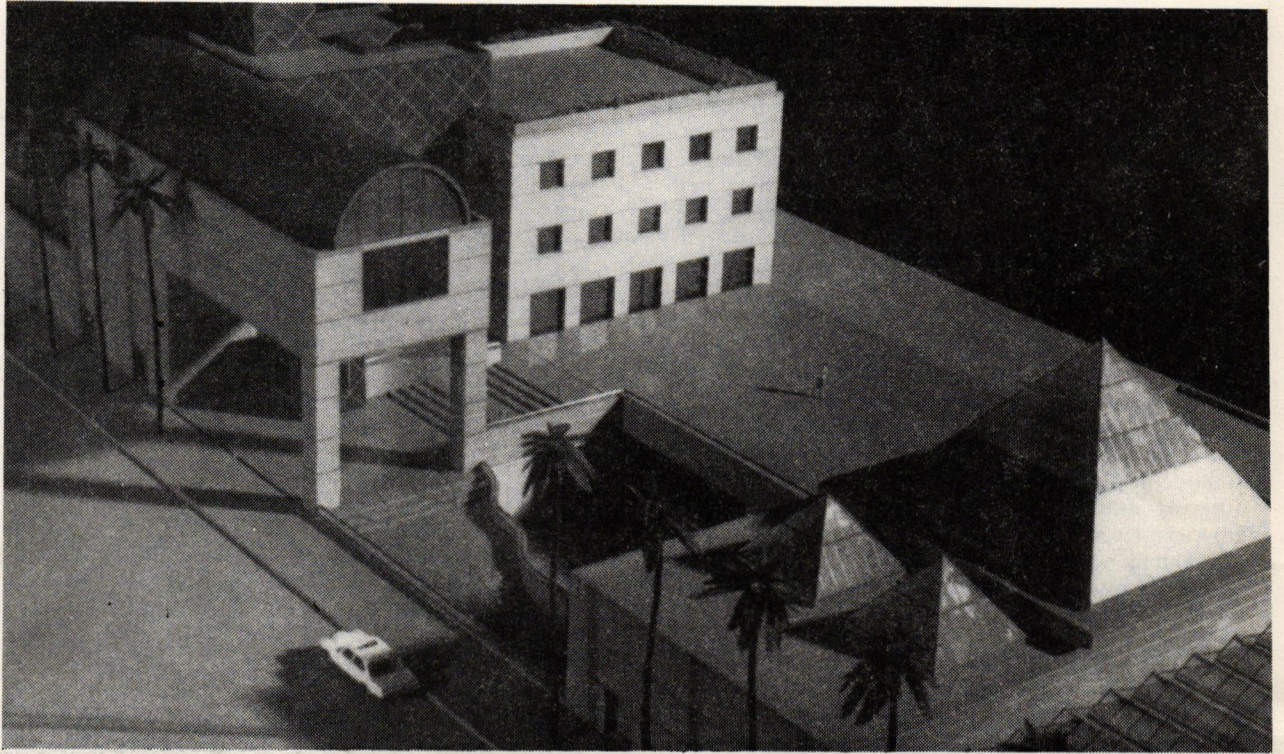
The *Journal of Architectural Education (JAE)*, in publication since 1947, has experienced a complete structural and visual transformation as a result of the appointment of Peter Papademetriou of Rice University as executive editor, the creation of an editorial board, and new graphic design by Chernayeff & Geismar. In the rejuvenated format, Papademetriou has shortened the period between editorial proposals and their realization in print, enabling current issues to be presented when they are still of topical interest. Furthermore, by liberating the journal from a predetermined thematic unity, and by exploring the expansiveness of the editorial board's concerns, the *JAE* is now able to include diverse and contrasting subjects.

The journal covers a spectrum of pedagogical topics through various methodological systems. Case studies, abstract theoretical essays, interviews, and book reviews are the primary devices used. The articles by Colin Rowe, Raul A. Gomez Crespo and Alfonso Corona Martinez, and John E. Hancock are erudite analyses of the design process. The interviews with Stanley Tigerman and Albert Speer are even more recondite in their discussion of the "teleological role of design education." Although the essays are well-written and the interviews supply thought-provoking questions and answers, the reader is left to discern their applicability to today's architectural classroom. According to Marc Treib's straightforward case study, students lack "verbal facility" and the "grammatical means for producing enriched and developed thinking." If this is true, how can Tigerman propose to teach his students religion, philosophy, literature, and design in one year, and how useful to a professor is heuristic reasoning if his students have never heard the term? Architectural educators will derive the most benefit from the clear and pragmatic conclusions of the case studies.

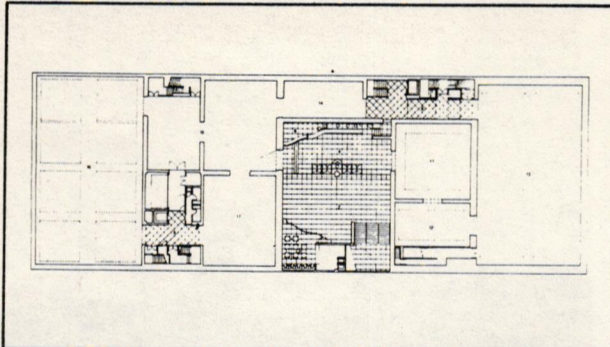
Peter Papademetriou has certainly "updated" the *JAE*, creating a means for timely and representative discussion, but its contents avoid basic questions concerning the practice of architectural education. This type of journal is limited in scope, by its own definition, but within that realm more direction is required. The reader is beset by the same difficulties confronting today's student; more effort is exerted on the fine-tuning of architectural polemics than on the simple transmittal of information. Students must possess the essential tools of reading, writing, and drawing before they can design in a meaningful way, or take advantage of complex theories about design process. If future issues were to focus on concrete suggestions for overcoming these obstacles, as exemplified in the case study, it would facilitate the instructor's task, and the *JAE* would be an unparalleled contribution to architectural education.

—Sylvia Lavin

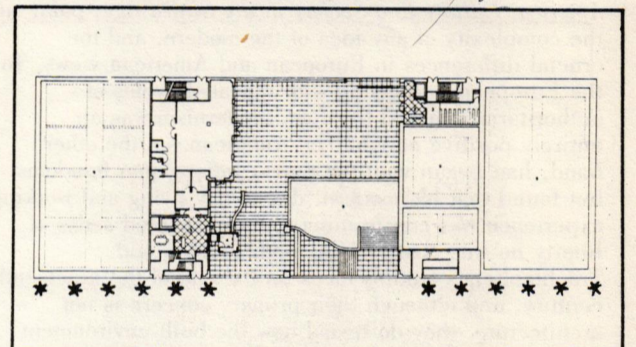
## Projects and People



Museum of Contemporary Art, L.A.; Arata Isozaki and Gruen Associates. Model showing main entranceway



Gallery level plan



Plaza level plan

### More MoCA

Just released is a progress report, with architectural models and drawings showing the latest refinements in the **Museum of Contemporary Art** in Los Angeles. The design, drawn up by Tokyo architect **Arata Isozaki** in association with **Gruen Associates**, is slated for a completion date of 1985. The partially submerged low-rise scheme, located on the Bunker Hill development, will have red sandstone walls and copper-clad barrel-vaulted roof for the library, and painted aluminum panel and glass block walls for the offices. The galleries and circulation space of the 98,000-sq. ft. building total 42,000 square feet, a large part of which is tucked under pyramidal skylights and a sawtooth roof with translucent glazing. The museum is expected to cost \$22 million.

### Dallas Update

The **Dallas Arts District** proposals by **Sasaki Associates, Halcyon Ltd., and Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam** (*Skyline*, February 1983, p.8) now have a legal foundation by which they can be implemented. On February 16 the City Council passed an ordinance amending the Dallas development code to re-zone the area for cultural activities. Setback requirements are now established for the new buildings, and 50 percent of the first two stories of the buildings' facades will have to be constructed of a transparent material. Residential buildings are the only exception. The City Council also passed a cost-sharing resolution whereby developers will assume 40 percent of the cost for public amenities and other improvements within the Arts District.

### By a Waterfall

The 58-story **Trump Tower** designed by **Der Scutt** when he was with **Swanke Hayden & Connell** opened Monday after a great deal of hustle, bustle, and last-minute preparation. This vertical version of a retail mall at 56th Street and Fifth Avenue in New York has six levels of stores, plus two exterior landscaped terraces,

all organized around a daylit atrium with a four-story waterfall and lots of brass trim. Above the stores are thirteen levels of office space, and above that 253 luxury condominiums.

The American Academy in Rome prize in architecture has reportedly gone to **Frederic Schwartz** of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown and to **Wendy Evans** of I.M. Pei & Partners. Schwartz was also just awarded an NEA Professional Design Fellowship to study monument lighting in Manhattan. . . . **David Dunster** will be Senior Lecturer at the Bartlett School of Architecture and Planning, University College London, beginning September 1983. He is taking Robert Maxwell's place, who is now dean at Princeton's School of Architecture. . . . **Joseph Giovannini**, until recently architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* and now with *The New York Times* Thursday "Home" section, won an award in criticism in the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company-Art/World first annual distinguished newspaper critics awards. . . . **Robert Stern** has been given a grant from Mobil Oil to develop a television series on architecture. . . . **Richard Meier** returned with rave reviews for the February 12 and 13 meeting in Paris entitled, "Cultural Congress of Paris: Creation and Development," which was sponsored by the French government. Some 65 to 70 writers, philosophers, economists, and artists were invited to the Congress, along with architects Meier, **Kenzo Tange**, **Vittorio Gregotti** and **Renzo Piano**. Meier termed it "fabulous and incredible". . . . **Michael Graves** has just won the Indiana Arts Award, and received the keys to the city of Indianapolis, his birthplace. Graves is also building a house for Houston developer **Gerald Hines** in the River Oaks section of Houston. . . . Moshe Safdie has been named the architect for the new National Gallery in Quebec City, and **Harold Cardinal**, a native Indian architect, was given the commission to design the new Museum of Man. . . . **Fred Koetter and Associates** have won the competition to design the Kodex World Headquarters in Canton, Massachusetts. The project, with 250,000 square feet of office space, facilities, and sports center(!) will soon go into construction. . . .

# Literature

The differing views of modernism in nineteenth-century Europe and America are assessed in the following discussion of two recently published books.

## From Here to Modernity

Ross Miller

Now that the "great debate" over post-modernism has died down, it is a good time to consider some important issues neglected in the past few years. The fascination of post-modern architects with the nostalgic resuscitation of the past has resulted in a distraction from what motivates the best architects and produces the most enduring architecture. Architecture must constantly define and redefine its relation to the present. Modernism, viewed in the most general terms as a positive openness to the new and the possibilities of the future, is central to present-day architecture.

Since the nineteenth century, architects have had a particularly difficult time coming to terms with a proper modern stance. It is useful in this regard to consider the meaning of the "modern" in Europe and America in the last century and to examine the effect of modernism on architecture. This study, however, is complicated by differing attitudes towards values and phenomena that are considered "modern." Europeans and Americans, with common roots in Rousseau and the Enlightenment, came to view modernism in different ways, owing to their separate histories. For the former modernism offered a promise of freedom; for the latter, a sense of the restriction of possibilities.

Two recently published books, Marshall Berman's *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* and Alan Trachtenberg's *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*, point out the complexity of any idea of the modern, and the crucial differences in European and American views. To the European, struggling with repeated cycles of authoritarianism and freedom, modernism was an entirely positive notion. The American, on the other hand, had begun with the purest Jeffersonian freedoms but found that his modern, day-to-day living and working experience was constraining the much-touted sense of liberty he was "born" with. Both Berman and Trachtenberg's studies focus on the end of the nineteenth century, and although their primary concern is not architecture, they do reveal how the built environment affects our attitudes toward the modern.

Berman, through readings of Marx, Goethe, Baudelaire, Pushkin, and other pivotal nineteenth-century intellectuals, attempts to clarify the increasingly intimate relationship between spiritual values and materialism. What we recognize today as a definable modern attitude ("all that is solid melts into air") was created in the nineteenth century by the rift between material progress (modernization) and spiritual development (modernism). Political and social revolutions, inspired by marginally bourgeois artists and intellectuals, overturned or severely modified traditional institutions — church, patriarchal (feudal) economies, and authoritarian regimes. But the problem for the individual was how to marry the modern self, progressively freer in sensibility, to the modern environment, progressively more complex and bureaucratic.

Even to Baudelaire, if not to Flaubert and Zola, the new, ever-expanding bourgeois class might succeed in creating liberating institutions for the modern man suspended between threatened belief and continuous change. Baudelaire's hopes were fueled by the kind of social disruptions that finally erupted in the pan-European revolutions of 1848. Of course Marx, even more than Baudelaire, understood the profound pressure on a society of individuals with no solid institutions and only property and capital as signs of worth. Marx felt that the bourgeoisie, far from consolidating a new sense of independence, would squander freedom for false respectability. Marx's attack on the modern's lack of substance and its retreat into fashion is echoed by Baudelaire, who saw mid-century Paris as essentially an amoral, empty, and nihilistic procession of styles.

The literature of the period implied that the seemingly unlimited possibilities of liberty brought about by modernism were too much to bear. Modernism in Europe, however, also had a decidedly positive aspect, manifested in its architecture and urban planning. This positivism could be seen, paradoxically, not in visionary new cities, but on the streets of older imperial capitals: Haussmann's Paris, Hapsburg Vienna, and Czarist St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg's Nevsky Prospect, in particular, encouraged the liberating qualities of modern life. Writers as diverse as Dostoevsky, Gogol, Pushkin, and Chernyshevsky observed how a formerly subjugated class — government clerks, for example, who only a generation before may have been peasants or serfs — could assert their innate sense of dignity in the new openness of public space. Architecture can provide a special public arena in which to live out private passions in an anonymous and therefore protected way. As Berman describes, on the street the man in the "overcoat" — an oppressed bureaucrat — could challenge his superiors and assert his own independence. Out in the open street a "small" man can imagine himself free, as does the character in Dostoevsky's *The Double* (1846). The architecture and layout of the streets encourages this dream of freedom in a sense by providing a middle ground between the ruthlessly organized establishment power and a seemingly unattainable future state of liberation. Architecture is not sufficient to "institutionalize" and thereby make permanent this fleeting burst of well-being; in asserting themselves, characters risk exile, madness, and death. Yet there is something undeniably thrilling — something modern — on the city street. Carl Schorske, in *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Knopf, 1980), identifies this new attitude as one in which people "define themselves not out of the past, indeed scarcely against the past, but in



Court of Honor, World's Columbian Exposition, 1893 (courtesy The Art Institute of Chicago)

independence of the past." Note a government clerk's response to the city in Gogol's "Nevsky Prospect" (1855):

"The Nevsky Prospect always lies, but more than ever when the thick mass of night settles over it and makes the white and yellow walls of houses stand out, and when the whole town becomes thunderous and dazzling, and myriad carriages roll down the street, and postillions shout and mount their horses, and the devil himself lights the lamps in order to show everything in unreal light."

In Europe, where history was chained to a still lingering aristocratic or feudal order, the fluid and changing nature of life made modernism, in almost any form, attractive. This was not true in America, as Alan Trachtenberg's thought-provoking book *The Incorporation of America* helps to demonstrate. Here, modern ideology, instead of holding the promise of liberation, suggested just the opposite. If anything, Americans were actively anti-modern, or, as Henry Adams was, perversely accepting.

The new in America came to represent a lessening of achieved freedoms and the threat of an indentured future. A figure like Daniel Burnham could be perceived as Faustian: rather than encouraging native expression of

**All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity.** Marshall Berman. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1982. 384 pages. \$17.50

**The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age.** Alan Trachtenberg. Hill & Wang, New York, 1982. 262 pages. \$16.95

architectural freedom, of which he himself had been an early exponent, he turned away from Chicago's example of modernism and sponsored the building of a White City for the Columbian Exposition (1893). The neo-classical "White City" represented a manifestation of the equivalent to the European bourgeois condition criticized by Marx. It was the dressing-up of an insecure class who asserted the power of money over freedom. Whereas in Europe there existed only a promise of modern liberty, in America it had been a birthright for over a hundred years. The Columbian Exposition's symbolic betrayal of the possibilities of that freedom was quite extensive. While enshrining the artifacts (machines and goods) of progress behind a white papier-mâché facade, the Exposition gave American life a decidedly imperial tone. The White City seemed to finally codify and legitimize the accumulation of capital by robber barons, rather than celebrate the struggle of native artists who, among other things, had created a Chicago architecture. Burnham's Beaux-Arts fabrication seemed to announce that America, unlike Europe, had not experienced the liberating spirit of modernism, but rather only the self-burdening process of materialistic modernization.

Rapid industrialization and urbanization, geometric growth in population, unrestricted and unmanaged immigration, in addition to the progressive weakening of established institutions — all produced in America more restriction on individuals rather than more freedom. Trachtenberg perceptively sees this as a general and extensive process of "incorporation." From the increasing mechanization of the farming and factory systems to the creation of giant banks and trusts, both capital and labor were gradually placed under tighter and tighter controls. In 1900, a working man — whether he was a paternalistic company owner or a cog in the ballooning federal bureaucracy, an exploited miner or an urban garment worker — most likely had less sense of personal liberty than his counterpart in 1800. John D. Rockefeller expressed well the change: "The incalculable must give way to the rational, strife to cooperation. . . . This movement [towards increasing social organization] was the origin of the whole system of modern economic administration. It has revolutionized the way of doing business all over the world. The time was ripe for it. It had to come, though all we saw at the moment was the need to save ourselves from wasteful conditions. . . . The day of combination is here to stay. Individualism has gone, never to return."

It seems oddly appropriate that European modernism in architecture was officially introduced in America at the Museum of Modern Art (1932) as the *International Style*, whereas the actual arrival of Schindler, Neutra, Gropius, and Mies had more to do with strongly felt issues of culture and politics. Unfortunately today our idea of the "modern" still has more to do with *style* of the sort Baudelaire and Marx cautioned against than it does with the fundamental alteration of man's consciousness. Sadly, contemporary architecture has made a substantial retreat into "style" and away from some of the more freeing — if also problematic — possibilities of the modern orientation. Perhaps New York's 57th Street in the 1980s will be as poignant an image of betrayal as Chicago's White City in the 1890s. Fifty-seventh Street, as important a thoroughfare as any in Vienna, Paris, or St. Petersburg, has now been overwhelmed by buildings of an inappropriate scale, cast into shadow, and marred by malls. In fact, the wholesale change of 56th and 57th Streets between Madison and Fifth Avenues has arbitrarily fractured the city grid. The IBM, Trump, and AT&T buildings represent architecturally the same incorporation process that Trachtenberg describes happening in the nineteenth century. If it is to serve that positive side of "the modern" rather than merely perpetuate modernization, contemporary architecture must create public spaces to support a real public life for people seeking the freedom of the street.

# Etc.

The lyrics of *Fiddler on the Roof* have inspired the following disquisition, perhaps the last word in the semiotic analysis of architecture.

## The House of Tevye (or the Limits of Gesture)

Thomas L. Schumacher

Recent interest in the semantic domain in architecture has prompted numerous scholarly investigations into the origins of recurrent architectural elements. Crucial to the identification and explication of such elements, principles, or even syntactic relationships is the simple criterion of contextual adaptability. As Demetri Porphyrios has argued for the Hellenic mode of expression in his *Classicism is not a Style*,<sup>1</sup> types accrue meaning through re-use, but they must possess a meaning "potential," and while no architectonic *potentiometer* has yet been devised for the prediction of cultural longevity, certain identifiable objects do, indeed, recur.

On the Hebraic side of such a discourse, certain folk myth structures tend to dominate, but they must be found outside the realm of a broadened proscription against "graven images" typical of all urban theory of the post-Babylonian exile. The breakdown of these proscriptions did not occur until the middle of the nineteenth century when Emmanuel Cohen-Spinoza theorized that "graven image" did not necessarily apply to either low-relief statuary or to photography, where the image was chemically produced (and therefore came under kosher laws instead).

Because of the transitory and agrarian nature of the nineteenth-century Jewish settlements in eastern Europe we must rely on literature and its interpretation for architectural theory. It is here that the work of Shalom Aleichem, as reinterpreted by Joseph Stein in *Fiddler on the Roof*, becomes an important, and original, source of scholarship.

To begin, let us examine the second verse of the song "If I Were a Rich Man." The crucial lines begin with the phrase, "I'd build a big tall house . . ." Here, at the outset, certain concepts immediately surface. First, the house must be tall as well as large, reminding us of a similar quality in Italian traditional culture, known as "campanilismo." Now there is no indication in the context of this work of literature that Tevye meant his house to be a tower. But height, especially for its image-quality in the context of the general squalor of Anatefka, must have meant three floors at least. (Lyrics that we will examine later imply a pitched roof, probably without internal access, although a fiddler's ladder would certainly have been intended.)

Next is the phrase, ". . . with rooms by the dozen." Here we find an adherence to the cubicle spaces of pre-plan-libre masonry construction. Granted, the setting of the musical is the late nineteenth century, but the date of its opening (September 22, 1964, at New York's Imperial Theater) would indicate that, since the phrase is not, ". . . with a column grid and overlapping zones in a space-time continuum," clearly Tevye's (read Aleichem's) intention is patently anti-Miesian, not to say subtly anti-Corbusian. A further veiled anti-Wrightian tone may be discerned in the insistence on height, rather than a ". . . big low house with eaves intersecting."

Finally, as regards the first line, the phrase "right in the middle of the town" is anti-suburban and anti-open-city. It comes through as a classic vernacular re-assertion of the need for urban density. Later, the onomatopoeic cackling of Tevye's fantasy chickens creates an ambiguity between town and country. It is an effect that might best be characterized as a "Jewish middle landscape."

If we proceed to an analysis of the very next line some startling metaphoric images come to light. It reads, ". . . a fine tin roof and real wooden floors below." Obviously an emphasis is made here on the authenticity of materials, an authenticity that was lost in 1852 when the Czar required all shtetls to use aluminum roofs and V.A.T. floors. The material *tin*, in the technology of that time and place, would have assumed a pitch of 4 in 12 to 9 in 12, depending on latitude.

The persistence of vestigial architectural elements, like aedicules and quoins, is revealed in the next verse, the very key to Tevye's architectural intentions (and, as some scholars believe, the probable origin of the epithet "Kosher Baroque"). It reads, "There could be one long

stairway just going up, and another even longer coming down, and a third one going nowhere just for show." Here is the *véry* essence of Venturi's dictum, "Valid ambiguity creates useful flexibility,"<sup>2</sup> for Tevye weaves "useless" elements together in an internally logical, even modernist tapestry. The separation of the up-stairs from the down-stairs (which is, as far as scholarship has been able to discern, the source for that very motif in so many of those public schools that immigrant descendants of the shtetls attended in America) is reminiscent of the traffic engineer's ideal separation of traffic modes, as exemplified by Le Corbusier's 7-V's. The *larger* stair is the *down* stair, a simple but necessary condition that most filmmakers and nightclub designers know so well. Tevye obviously understood that grand entrances are all the more effective in *descent*, for the simple reason that the "enterer" can be seen all the way down.

But the third stair, an allegorical enigma outside its literal meaning as peacock plumage, resists deeper analysis. The closest equivalent one can conjure up is the single long fingernail affected by nineteenth-century Sicilian noblemen, a sign that those peacocks did no manual labor. Is Tevye's implication that the symbols of wealth are transient and that today's high style is tomorrow's kitsch? Could the ambiguity go so far as to imply that the whole house that Tevye limns, like Pliny's, is but a transient — and ultimately abstract — excuse to give him time to read the "Good Book," as a later verse in the same song suggests?

It is outside the purview of this paper to answer these heady questions, but perhaps the key to some of these enigmatic, analysis-resistant metaphors may be found elsewhere in *Fiddler*. By this I mean the whole question of the nature of *tradition* in architecture and culture. Linked with Tevye's architectonics, the notion of tradition becomes a powerful, even charismatic, force. It gives us stability; as he says, "How do we keep our balance? This I can tell you in one word: Tradition!" The geometric logic of the argument is closed, however, in the next refrain, "And how did this tradition get started? I'll tell you: I don't know! But it's a Tradition!"

Text of Tevye's song, "If I Were a Rich Man" (Part I)<sup>3</sup>

If I were a rich man,  
a devi devi devi devi devi devi dum,<sup>4</sup>  
All day long I'd devi devi dum,  
If I were a wealthy man.

Wouldn't have to work hard,  
a devi devi devi devi devi devi dum,  
If I were a bitty bitty rich,  
yaidl deedle daidle daidle man.

I'd build a big tall house with rooms by the dozen,  
right in the middle of the town.  
A fine tin roof and real wooden floors below.  
There could be one long staircase just going up,  
and one even longer coming down,  
and one more leading nowhere just for show.

I'd fill my yard with turkeys, chicks and geese and ducks  
for all the town to see and hear,  
Squawking just as noisily as they can,  
And each loug ptgow, ptgigo, ptigee, pitigeghoo,  
would land like a trumpet on the ears,  
as if to say, "Here lives a wealthy man."

### Notes

1. Demetri Porphyrios, ed., *Classicism is not a Style*, *Architectural Design* 52, May/June 1982.
2. Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 40.
3. Joseph Stein, Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick, "If I Were a Rich Man," *Fiddler on the Roof* (New York: Sunbeam Music Corp., BMI, 1962).
4. Tevye's patter is possibly derived from the chants of old Jewish roofers of nineteenth-century Russia. See Glickstein, Chiam-Yanekl, "The Stones of Riga: Synagogue Construction, Myth, and Jewish Architecture in Russia and Her Dependent States," *Galician Studies Quarterly*, vol. VI, no. 4 (1957), pp. 4-25.

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## Exhibits

### Austin

#### James Riely Gordon

**Through Mar 18** The work from 1889-1901 of Gordon, designer of fifteen Texas courthouses. Architecture Library, Battle Hall, University of Texas; (512) 471-1733

#### Paul Cret

**Mar 31-May 22** "Paul Cret at Texas: Architectural Drawing and the Image of the University in the 1930s." Archer M. Huntington Gallery, University of Texas, 23rd Street and San Jacinto Street; (512) 471-7324

### Boston/Cambridge

#### Harvard Exhibits

**Through Mar 11** "Rebuilding Central Park," sponsored by the Central Park Conservancy. **Mar 15-Apr 1** "Recent Work by Fumihiko Maki." Drawings, models, and photographs document work from 1972-82. **Apr 5-22** "Kazuo Shinohara: Houses and Theory 1954-81." Single-family private residences built in Japan. Gund Hall Gallery, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 48 Quincy Street, Cambridge; (617) 495-9340

### Chicago

#### Current Projects by Five Architects

**Through Mar 26** Includes work of Thomas Beeby, Laurence Booth, Helmut Jahn, Krueck and Olsen, Stanley Tigerman. Young Hoffman Gallery, 215 West Superior; (312) 951-8828

#### Chicago Architects Design

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

#### Decorative Screens

**Mar 11-Apr 11** Exhibition of screens by Thomas Beeby, Michael Graves, Richard Haas, Robert A.M. Stern, and Stanley Tigerman. Rizzoli Gallery, Water Tower Place, 835 North Michigan Avenue; (312) 642-3500

### Houston

#### Cervin Robinson

**Mar 9-Apr 15** "Cervin Robinson: Architectural Photographs." Farish Gallery, School of Architecture, Rice University; (713) 527-4870

### La Jolla

#### At Home With Architecture

**Through Mar 20** "At Home With Architecture: Contemporary Views of the House." Work by Arquitectonica, Batey/Mack, Peter Eisenman, Frank O. Gehry, Michael Graves, Moore Ruble Yudell, Rob Wellington Quigley, Susana Torre, Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown, Tod Williams and Associates. Mandeville Art Gallery, University of California at La Jolla; (619) 452-2864

### New York

#### John Hejduk

**Through Mar 5** "Solopacan Variations." Architectural drawings and models. Max Protetch Gallery, 37 West 57th Street; (212) 838-7436

#### The Paris Prize

**Through Mar 11** "The Paris Prize: The First Thirty." Original drawings of the Paris Prize Competition, 1904-34. National Institute for Architectural Education, 30 West 22nd Street; (212) 924-7000

#### P.S.1 Reopens the 60s

**Through Mar 13** "Survivors of the 60s." Drawings and photographs of projects and completed works, curated by Andrew MacNair. The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, P.S.1, 46-01 21st Street, Long Island City; (212) 784-2848

#### Three New Skyscrapers

**Through Mar 29** "Three New Skyscrapers." Includes Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Hong Kong, by Foster Associates; National Commercial Bank, Jeddah, by S.O.M.; International Place, Fort Hill, Boston, by Johnson/Burgee. Museum of Modern Art, 18 West 54th Street; (212) 708-9750

#### Giurgola Exhibition

**Through Mar 31** "... fragments of an itinerary . . ." Texts by Romaldo Giurgola and sketches relating to projects by Mitchell/Giurgola Architects and Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp Architects. Avery Hall, Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia University; (212) 280-3414

#### Blank Walls

**Through Apr 6** "Blank Walls: The New Face of Downtown." Curated by William H. Whyte. Freedman Gallery, Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

#### Koloman Moser

**Through Apr 15** Furniture, artifacts, drawings, and paintings by the Austrian designer. The Austrian Institute, 11 East 52nd Street; (212) 759-5165

#### Theater Design

**Through May 1** Costumes, stage designs, drawings of theater architecture from the 16th century to the present. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

#### Tiffany Lamps

**Through May 15** Lighting fixtures and stained glass. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

#### Alliance of Women in Architecture

**Mar 1-31** Traveling exhibition of work by women architects in celebration of AWA's 10th anniversary. Dairy Barn, New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, Long Island; (516) 686-7659

#### Austrian Architecture and Furniture

**Mar 2-7** Austrian architecture, 1860-1930, and turn-of-the-century Austrian furniture. Dairy Barn, New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, Long Island; (516) 686-7659

#### Art Deco in Brooklyn

**Mar 2-Apr 6** "Revival and Art Deco Architecture in Flatbush, Brooklyn." Upstairs at the Urban Center. Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

#### Inside Insights

**Mar 8-Apr 30** "Inside Insights: Interiors of Architects." SPACED Gallery of Architecture, 165 West 72nd Street; (212) 787-6350

#### Lower Manhattan Buildings

**Mar 9-Apr 6** "Buildings in Progress: Lower Manhattan." Eight buildings under construction in Lower Manhattan. Gallery II, Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

#### Ornamentalism

**Mar 17-May 15** "Ornamentalism: The New Decorativeness in Architecture and Design." Curated by Robert Jensen. The Hudson River Museum, Trevor Park-on-Hudson, 511 Warburton Avenue, Yonkers; (914) 963-4550

#### The Great East River Bridge

**Mar 19-June 19** Paintings, drawings, prints and photographs of the Brooklyn Bridge. This exhibition coincides with a city-wide program of events marking the 100th birthday of the Bridge. Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; (212) 638-5000

#### Architecture on Paper

**Mar 24-May 15** "Architecture on Paper: American and European Drawings from New York State Collections." Curated by Deborah Nevins. Trevor Mansion, Hudson River Museum, Trevor Park-on-Hudson, 511 Warburton Avenue, Yonkers; (914) 963-4550

### Philadelphia

#### Frank Lloyd Wright

**Mar 7-Apr 2** "Studies and Executed Buildings by Frank Lloyd Wright." *Wasmuth Portfolio* lithographs (1910) from drawings by Wright for projects designed in 1893-1909. Route 66, 2026 Locust Street; (215) 985-1061

### Washington, D.C. Area

#### Green Architecture

**Through Mar 5** An exhibition on landscape architecture, featuring formal French and Italian gardens. The Octagon, The American Institute of Architects Foundation, 1799 New York Avenue, N.W.; (202) 626-7464

#### Post-Modern Architecture

**Through Mar 27** Traveling exhibit, "Speaking a New Classicism: American Architecture Now." National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Eighth and G. Streets, N.W.; (202) 357-3176

### London, England

#### Drawings by Architects

**Through Apr 2** Includes drawings by Argest/Gandelonas, Rob Krier, OMA, Scolari, Studio GRAU, and Morphosis, among others. Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall; (01) 930-3647

#### Artists' Architecture

**Mar 2-Apr 2** "Artists' Architecture: Scenes and Conventions." Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall; (01) 930-3647

#### Young Architects

**Mar 4-31** "Young Architects." A new series of exhibitions devised by the *RIBA Journal*. Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place; (01) 580-5533

### Montreal, Canada

#### Bobrow/Fieldman Work

**Through Mar 4** An exhibition of recent work including projects, drawings, and paintings. School of Architecture, McGill University; (514) 392-5409

### Otterlo, Holland

#### Nieuwe Bouwen/CIAM

**Apr 3-May 29** Exhibition devoted to functionalism or "Nieuwe Bouwen," in which the international context is stressed. Rijksmuseum Kroller-Muller; (08) 382-1241. Local work of the "Nieuwe Bouwen" architects will be stressed in two shows: **Mar 11-May 1** "Nieuwe Bouwen' and Amsterdam," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and **Mar 31-Jul 17** "Nieuwe Bouwen' and De Stijl," Gemeente Museum, The Hague

### Paris, France

#### IFA Exhibits

**Mar 1-31** "Adolf Loos 1870-1933, Exposition du cinquanteenaire" and "Jean Prouvé, Constructeur." Institut Francais d'Architecture, 6 rue de Tourmon, Paris 6; (1) 633-9036

#### Correction

In the December issue of *Skyline* an incorrect building name was given in Alexander Gorlin's article "Jahn at Yale." The Frank Lloyd Wright building mentioned should have been the Price Tower (1956).

## Coming

**American Architecture: Innovation and Tradition**  
A symposium inaugurating the Center for the Study of American Architecture.

**Apr 21** Keynote speech by Vincent Scully; 6:00pm.

**Apr 22** "The Object: Decorative and Industrial Arts," with chairman Mildred Friedman; 9:45am. "The Building: Vernacular and Monumental," with chairman William Jordy; 1:45pm. Keynote Speech by J.B. Jackson; 5:00pm.

**Apr 23** "The Place: Urbanism and Suburbanism," with chairman J.B. Jackson; 9:30am. Keynote speech by Tom van Leeuwen; 1:30pm. "The Profession: Contemporary Practice," with chairman Arthur Drexler; 2:30pm. \$75.00. Columbia University, Avery Hall, NY; (212) 280-3473

## Events

## Boston/Cambridge

## MIT Lectures

**Mar 3** G.M. Kallmann on Kallmann, McKinnell & Wood's recent work. 5:30pm. Room 3133, MIT Campus, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge; (617) 253-7791

## Harvard Lectures

**Mar 9** Elizabeth Barlow, Frederick Law Olmsted Lecture, "Rebuilding Central Park for the 1980s and Beyond" **Mar 16** Fumihiko Maki, Eliot Noyes Lecture, "Architecture in Place" **Mar 23** Dusan Ogrin, "Abstraction and Landscape Design." 6:00pm. Piper Auditorium, Gund Hall, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 48 Quincy Street, Cambridge; (617) 495-9340

## Tour of France

**May 20-June 3** Boston Architectural Center is sponsoring a 15-day architecture tour of France. Itinerary will include architecture sites in Normandy, Burgundy and the Chateau region, Paris, Versailles and Chartres. Reservation deposit due Mar 15. For more information: Leon Baily, BAC Tour Committee, 320 Newbury Street, Boston; (617) 536-3170

## Houston

## Rice Design Alliance Lectures

Continuation of lecture series, "Design and Communications." **Mar 2** Lou Dorfman **Mar 9** Colin Forbes of Pentagram **Mar 23** Ivan Chermayeff of Chermayeff and Geismar **Mar 30** Saul Bass. \$6, RDA members \$4. 8:00pm. Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Main Street and Bissounet; (713) 527-4876

## Architectural Photography

**Mar 9** Lecture by Cervin Robinson, "History and the Problem of Architectural Photography." 8:00pm. Sponsored by School of Architecture, Rice University. Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Main Street and Bissounet; (713) 527-4870

## New Haven

## Yale Lectures

**Mar 1** M.J. Long **Mar 22** Roger Dixon **Mar 31** Helmut Jahn **Apr 5** Rem Koolhaas. 8:00pm. Hastings Hall, A&A Building, Yale School of Architecture, 180 York Street; (203) 436-0853

## Victorian London

**Mar 24** Lecture by Roger Dixon, "Victorian London: The Capital." 4:00pm. Lecture Hall, first floor, Yale Center for British Art, 1080 Chapel Street; (203) 432-4594

## New York

## The Shape of the City

Continuation of the lecture series, "The Shape of the City: Who Decides and Why." **Mar 1** Herbert Sturz, Alexander Cooper, Max Bond **Mar 8** Brendan Gill, Kent L. Barwick. \$7.50 each lecture. 8:15pm. 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Avenue; (212) 427-4410

## Columbia Lectures

**Mar 2** Elliot Sclar **Mar 9** Hugh Jacobson **Mar 23** Bernard Tschumi **Mar 30** Ada-Karmi Melamede **Apr 6** Nancy Troy. Avery Hall, Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia University; (212) 280-3414

## Club-Mid Lectures

Lunch-time talks at Municipal Art Society. **Mar 2** Fred Kent, "Making a Small Urban Space Work" **Mar 9** Joe Bresnan and Alan Cox, "Preservation in the Parks" **Mar 16** Dan Biederman, "Miracle on 42nd Street" **Mar 23** Tupper Thomas, "Prospects for Prospect Park" **Mar 30** Ronald Fauers, "Managing Urban Parks." 12:30pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

## Michael Graves

**Mar 2** Talk by Graves, "Then and Now." 5:00pm. Rizzoli Bookstore, 712 Fifth Avenue; (212) 397-3700

## West Week '83 at the Pacific Design Center

Highlights include: **Mar 17** "Memphis: Concept and Philosophy," with Andrea Branzi, Michael Graves, Arata Isozaki, Peter Shire, Ettore Sottsass, Barbara Radice; 2:00pm. **Mar 18** "A Sneak Preview: The PA Third Annual International Furniture Competition," presented by Pilar Viladas; 12:15pm. "A Design Charrette and Evaluation," moderated by Charles Moore, with Michael Graves, Arata Isozaki, Ernesto Gismondi, and Massimo Vignelli; 3:15pm. "Design Trends," exploring post-modernism, New Wave, the New International Style, etc., with moderator Frank Gehry; 3:30pm. "Design

## Pratt Lectures

**Mar 3** Ed Bacon, "American Urban Experiences" **Mar 10** Edgar Tafel, "The Frank Lloyd Wright I Knew" **Mar 17** Cathy Hutman/Alan Forest, "O Jerusalem." 6:00pm. Higgins Hall, Pratt School of Architecture, St. James Place & Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn; (212) 636-3407

## Architectural League Lectures

Architects on recent work. **Mar 7** William Pedersen of Kohn Pedersen Fox **Mar 21** Cesar Pelli **Mar 30** Helmut Jahn **Apr 4** John Burgee **Apr 5** "Emerging Voices": presentations by Morphosis and Peter Waldman. 6:30pm. Freedman Gallery, Architectural League, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 753-1722

## Municipal Art Society Lectures

**Mar 9** Michael Weiss, "Celebrating the Past, Creating the Future: Flatbush, Brooklyn." 7:00pm. **Mar 11** William Whyte, "Blank Walls: The New Face of Downtown." 6:00pm. **Mar 16** "Development on the Upper West Side: Are Controls Needed?" Panel discussion with Paul Goldberger, Rick Rosan, Roberta Gratz, Sally Goodgold, moderator Paul Byard. 6:00pm. \$5, members free. Freedman Gallery, Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

## Architecture Walking Tours

**Mar 13** "Art Deco Architecture: Lower Manhattan and Midtown" **Mar 20** "A Walk Through Peter Stuyvesant's Farm" **Mar 20** "Pre-Pesach Tour of the Lower East Side" **Apr 3** "Tribeca: An Architectural Grand Tour" **Apr 3** "Geometric Broadway." \$6.50 per tour, any four \$24. For reservations: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Avenue; (212) 427-6000, ext. 179

## Directions in Architecture

**Mar 22** "Directions in Architecture: The Next Generation." Slide presentations and panel discussion by Frances Halsband of Kliment & Halsband, Laurinda Spear of Arquitectonica, Peter Wilson of Peter Wilson Associates, moderated by Richard Oliver. \$10, members \$7. 7:00pm. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

## New York and The Bridge

**Mar 23** First in a series of lectures by Barry Lewis entitled "The Borough, the Bridge and the City." \$10, members \$5. 6:00 and 8:00pm. Freedman Gallery, Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

## Brooklyn Bridge Film

**Mar 26** and **Apr 3** A film by Ken Burns documenting the story of the Roebling family and the building of the bridge. 2:00pm. Third Floor Lecture Hall, The Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; (212) 638-5000

## Church Architecture

**Mar 26** Walking tour of church architecture on the Upper West Side. 1:30-5:30pm. \$15, members \$10. To register: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 860-6868

## Philadelphia

## University of Pennsylvania Lectures

**Mar 2** Anthony Vidler, "The Uses and Abuses of History" **Mar 21** Robert Marvin, landscape architect **Mar 23** Eugene Kohn on his recent work **Mar 30** Cesar Pelli, "The Tradition of Building & The Tradition of Architecture" **Apr 4** Jack Diamond, Toronto architect, on his recent work. 6:30pm. Alumni Hall, Towne Building, 33rd & Locust Walk, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania; (215) 898-5728

## Princeton

## Princeton Lectures

**Mar 2** Robin Evans, "Between Other Worlds: Architectural Space in the 15th and 20th Centuries" **Mar 10** Demetri Porphyrios, "Classicism and Style" **Mar 24** Reyner Banham, "American Industry and the Sources of Functionalism" **Mar 30** Ram Aranoff, "Exploring Tension" **Apr 6** Neil Levine, "Post-Modern History, Vol. 0 (Louis Kahn's Trenton Bath House and Day Camp)." 7:30pm. Betts Lecture Hall, Architecture Building, Princeton University; (609) 452-3741

Basics: Lighting and Color in 1983," with Dan Flavin and Hazel Siegel, among others; 4:30pm. **Mar 19** "Interiors by Architects," 8:30am. "The Design Decade: Mass Quality or Elitism?" with moderator Susan Lewin; 9:30am. "Spectacular Environments in the Americas," exploring interiors; 10:30am. "Personal Profiles/Design Masters/Design Symposium," moderated by Charles Gandee, with Robert Stern, Lella Vignelli, and others; 10:30am. "The Americas: Three Viewpoints in Design," moderated by John Pastier and featuring Frank Gehry, Ricardo Legorreta, and Charles Moore; 3:00pm. Pacific Design Center, 8687 Melrose, Los Angeles

## Providence

## RISD Symposium

**Mar 17** Symposium, "Translations Theory and Practice: France and the United States," moderated by William Jordy. David Van Zanten, "Hunt's Lenox Library: What He Did and Did Not Learn at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts"; Samuel B. Frank, "Henry Van Brunt: From Reform to System"; Elizabeth Grossman, "Paul Cret and the WWI Memorials in Europe"; Isabelle Gournay, "Jaques Carlu (1890-1976) and American Architecture." 3:00pm. Room 106, Bayard Ewing building, Rhode Island School of Design, 231 South Main Street; (401) 331-3511, ext. 148

## San Francisco/Bay Area

## Aldo Rossi

**Mar 9** Rossi on his recent work. 8:00pm. 155 Dwinelle, College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley; (415) 642-4942

## St. Louis

## Washington University Lectures

**Mar 14** Lebbeus Woods, "The Myth of Totality" **Mar 21** Noel Michael McKinnell on Kallmann, McKinnell & Wood's recent work **Mar 28** Robert Campbell, "The World Has Stopped Revolving Except in Crystal." 8:30pm. Steinberg Auditorium, Washington University School of Architecture; (314) 889-6200

## Sweet Briar, Virginia

## The New American Architecture Symposium

**Mar 24** "The Past in the Present," speech by Vincent Scully; 8:00pm. **Mar 25** "Solution or Problem," panel discussion with Paul Goldberger, Charles Moore, Paolo Soleri, and Vincent Scully as moderator; 10:00am. "Site or Statement," panel discussion with Diana Agrest, Michael Graves, and Phoebe Stanton as moderator; 1:30pm. "The Quality of Life," panel discussion with Laurinda Spear, Robert Stern, Wolf von Eckardt, and Jaquelin Robertson as moderator; 3:30pm. "The Urban Question," speech by Jaquelin Robertson; 8:00pm. \$10 registration fee, \$5 for students. Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, VA 24595; (804) 381-5502

## Syracuse

## Syracuse University Lectures

**Mar 23** Peter Bohlin on his recent work **Mar 30** Jack Quinnan, "Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Administration Building: Form and Three Kinds of Functions." 8:00pm. 108 Slocum Hall, Syracuse University School of Architecture; (315) 423-2255

## Washington, D.C.

## Post-Modern Architecture

**Mar 1** Gavin Macrae-Gibson, "Amoral Architecture" **Mar 8** Diana Agrest on recent work **Mar 15** Richard A. Etlin, "Before Terragni: The First Post-Modernism." \$12, members \$9. 8:00pm. The Smithsonian Institution, Carmichael Auditorium, Museum of American History, 14th Street and Constitution; (202) 357-3030

## Catholic University Lectures

**Mar 2** Neal Payton, "Architecture in the Middle Landscape" **Mar 9** William MacDonald, "Villas as Towns: Ideology and Influence" **Mar 30** Thomas Beeby, "Drawings and Buildings." 7:30pm. Gowan Nursing Auditorium, Catholic University Campus; (202) 635-5188

## London, England

## RIBA Spring Lectures

"The Great Debate: Modernism Versus the Rest." **Mar 1** Frei Otto, "Nature Against Design" **Mar 15** Peter Hodgkinson, "The Great Debate and the Taller de Arquitectura" **Mar 22** Terence Farrell, "The Breakfast Story: TV-AM Building in Camden Town" **Mar 29** Andrew Saint, "The Image of the Architect." 6:15pm. Royal Institute of British Architects. 66 Portland Place; (01) 580-5533

# *We're Jumping.*

SHAW-WALKER

