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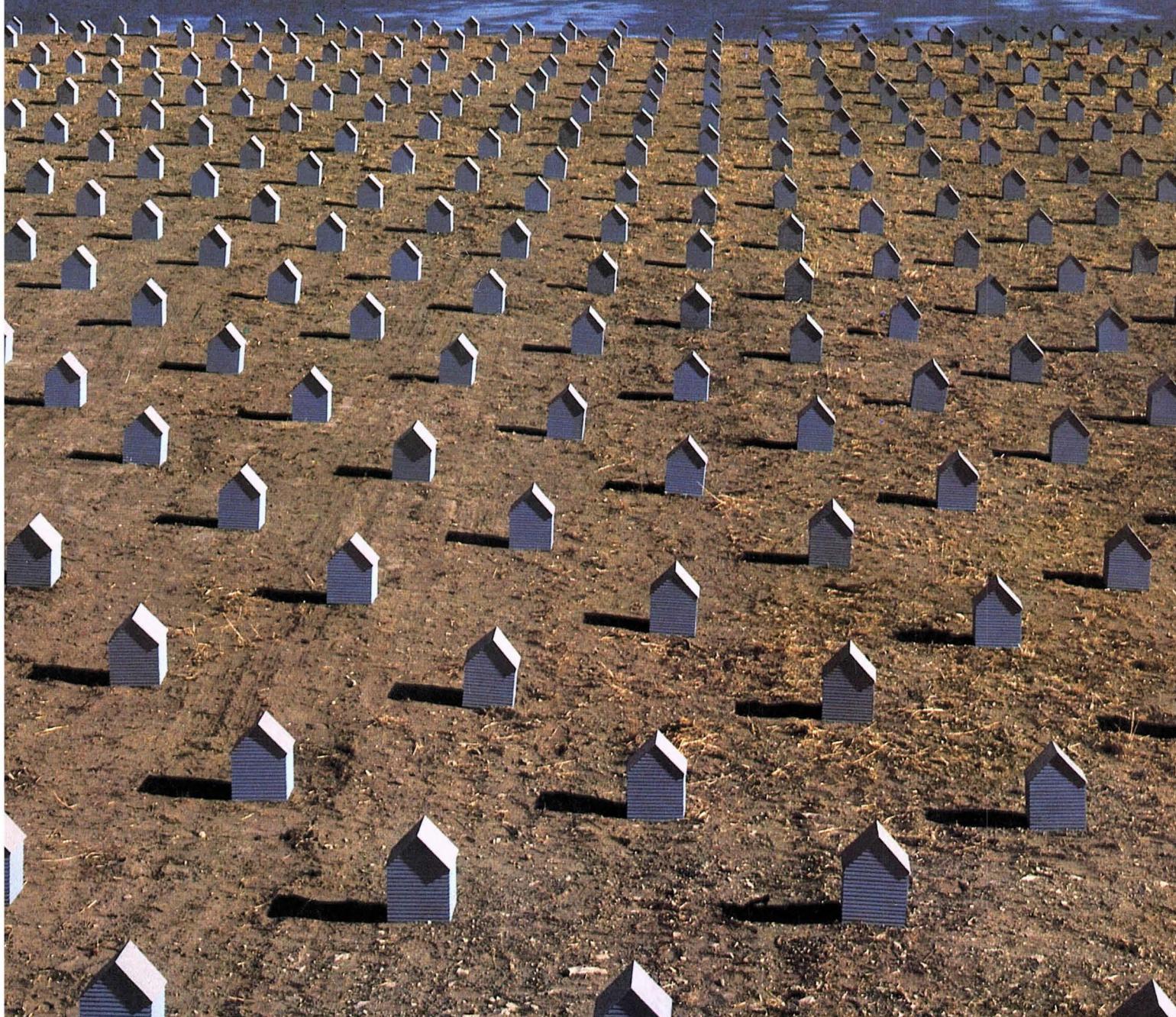
Architecture:
CCAIA Monterey
Design Conference

Furniture by Artists

Four California Artists:
Jay DeFeo
Charles Garabedian
Tom Holland
Michael C. McMillen

Downtown Los Angeles
Guidemap

Retrospect:
Konrad Wachsmann



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Fall 1981

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New Series

arts + architecture

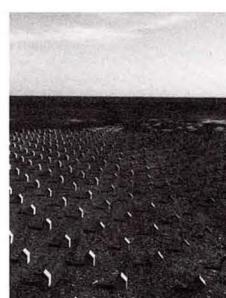
*To John Entenza, Editor of Arts and Architecture 1939–62, for creating a tradition of excellence and innovation.**To David Travers, Editor of Arts and Architecture, 1962–67, for continuing that tradition, giving it new life, and having the faith to pass it on.**To Esther McCoy and Tyler Owlglass for their unfaltering support and encouragement.**This issue of Arts and Architecture was sponsored, in part, with the aid of a Design Communications grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.*

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Cover: Stephen Pearson, Two Hundred Years of Architecture: A Bicentennial Salute to Los Angeles, 1791–1981

Last Spring, New York based artist Stephen Pearson returned to his native California to commemorate the Los Angeles bicentennial with a site specific architectural installation. He describes it as "an end to westward expansion" dedicated to Horace Greeley. As the setting for his piece, Pearson chose a prime oceanfront acre between Paradise Cove and Point Dume on the Malibu cliffs. Occupying the undeveloped lot were 794 identical blue houses, each 8 x 11 x 8 inches in size, with pine clapboard siding and peaked metal roofs. Beyond the uniform rows of houses, which ran to the edge of the eighty foot cliff, the sprawling Los Angeles skyline could be seen on the eastern horizon. (Photo courtesy Asher/Faure Gallery.)

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Arts and Architecture Selective Guide to Museum Events in the West

Arizona

November 8–December 17

Minamata

A selection of photographs from W. Eugene and Aileen M. Smith's controversial photo essay documenting the pollution of Minamata Bay in Japan by a factory of the Chisso corporation. The Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, 843 E. University Blvd., Tucson, (602) 626-4636.

Tomoko in Bath by W. Eugene and Aileen M. Smith from *Minamata*.



California

Continuing through September 27

Finland Designs

An exhibition of fine Finnish crafts including ceramics, glass, jewelry, textiles, metalwork and furniture. Craft and Folk Art Museum, 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (213) 937-5544.

Laminated birch and bent plywood armchair by Alvar Aalto from *Finland Designs*.



Continuing through November 1
Impressionism and the Modern Vision: Master Paintings from the Phillips Collection

75 paintings illustrating the Impressionist period, its sources, and influences. The works selected are the best of the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., which opened in 1921 as the first American museum to emphasize the work of modern artists. The paintings span 350 years and represent a variety of artists including El Greco, Chardin, Renoir, Vuillard, Eakins, Picasso, Mondrian, and Diebenkorn. California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Lincoln Park, San Francisco, (415) 752-5561.

Woman Sweeping by Edouard Vuillard from *Impressionism and the Modern Vision*



Continuing through October 4

The Museum as Site: Sixteen Projects

Site-specific works created especially for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art facility. Each of the artists represented achieved an international reputation in the 1970s. *The Museum as Site* is part, with *Seventeen Artists in the Sixties*, of *Art in Los Angeles*, an exhibition organized in honor of the LA Bicentennial.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (213) 937-4250.

Cathay by Alexis Smith from *The Museum as Site: Sixteen Projects*.



Continuing through October 4

Seventeen Artists in the Sixties

Groups of work by artists who achieved prominence in Los Angeles during the 1960s. Each group represents the creator at a particular stage in his development; seen together, they document the rise during the decade of Los Angeles as an international art center. *Seventeen Artists* is part, with *The Museum as Site: Sixteen Projects*, of *Art in Los Angeles*, an exhibition organized in honor of the LA Bicentennial. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (213) 937-4250.

Standard Station Amarillo, Texas by Edward Ruscha from *Seventeen Artists in the Sixties*.



October 22–November 22

Louis I. Kahn Drawings

An exhibition of 85 drawings and sketches by a master of modern architecture. Otis Art Institute, 2401 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (213) 387-5288.

Philadelphia Midtown (detail) by Louis I. Kahn from *Louis I. Kahn Drawings*.



Continuing through September 29
Netsuke: Myth and Nature in Miniature

A selection of 350 pieces, made from the Avery Brundage Collection, of tiny, functional pieces of Japanese sculpture which combine bravura craftsmanship with realism and wit. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, (415) 558-2993.

September 5–October 18
Photographs of the Southwest: 1929–1968

Images by Ansel Adams. Portraits, landscapes, and native architecture are depicted in 75 prints made from original negatives. The show is sponsored by the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson. San Diego Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, (714) 232-3821.

Colorado

October 3–December 6

Charles M. Russell: The Frederic G. Renner Collection

100 works by Charles M. Russell portraying the extinct frontier culture of the American West, as collected by his dedicated historian, Frederic Renner. The pieces presented in this exhibit, organized by the Phoenix Art Museum, are only a very small portion of the 40,000 he produced during his career. Russell fell in love with the West as a young boy and went to work on a sheep ranch in Montana in 1880 at the age of 16. It was only in 1893 that a commission from a hardware merchant in St. Louis led him to give up his vocation as a cowboy for one as an artist. Denver Art Museum, 100 W. 14th Ave. Pkwy., Denver, (303) 575-2295.

Texas

Continuing through September 27

Other Realities—Installations for Performance

Six performance environments designed or recreated for the museum by Vito Acconci, Eleanor Antin, Colette, Tina Girouard, Joan Jonas, and Robert Wilson. Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd., Houston, (713) 526-3129.

Continuing through September 27
Manifestations of Shiva

Different aspects of the Hindu deity presented in Indian painting and sculpture. 183 works have been assembled from collections in India, the U.S., and Europe, in a show organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Kimbell Art Museum, Will Rogers Road West, Fort Worth, (817) 332-8451.

September 12–November 6
Arshile Gorky, 1904–1948: A Retrospective

A comprehensive show of works on paper and paintings by a great Modern artist. It traces his career from 1920–1948, beginning with his immigration to the United States from Turkey and ending with his death by suicide. Gorky exerted a tremendous influence on the development of Abstract Expressionism and is best known for his own abstract work of the 1940s. He was, as is cited in the exhibition catalogue, "a painter of nature filtered through memory and fantasy who moved from representation toward abstraction, from the realm of the exterior world to the inner imagination."

Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Fair Park, Dallas, (214) 421-4187.

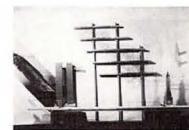
Continuing through September 27

Collaboration: Artists and Architects

An exhibition of the history, present state, and future possibilities of cooperation between the practitioners of both art and architecture. Included are 11 especially commissioned projects, by teams of architects and artists who chose subjects which they considered to represent important architectural problems of the 1980s. The exhibition was organized by the Architectural League of New York in honor of its own Centennial.

Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Fair Park Dallas, (214) 421-4187.

Bridge between Two Buildings: The World Trade Center and the Chrysler Building by Frank Gehry and Richard Serra from *Collaboration: Artists and Architects*.



September 17–November 1
Graphic Work of Edward Munch

A selection of prints by the Norwegian Expressionist artist. McNay Art Institute, 6000 N. New Braunfels, San Antonio, (512) 824-5368.

November 22–February 14

Impressionism and the Modern Vision: Master Paintings from the Phillips Collection

75 paintings illustrating the Impressionist period, its sources, and influences.

Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Fair Park Dallas, (214) 421-4187.

The Luncheon of the Boating Party by Pierre Auguste Renoir from *Impressionism and the Modern Vision*.



Washington

November 4–November 29

American Photography:

1970–1980

A collection of images representing major developments in contemporary photography over the past decade. Cheney Cowles Memorial Museum, 2316 W. First Ave., Spokane, (509) 456-3931.

December 3–December 27

New American Glass

A show organized by the Glass Society of West Virginia. Cheney Cowles Memorial Museum, 2316 W. First Ave., Spokane, (509) 456-3931.

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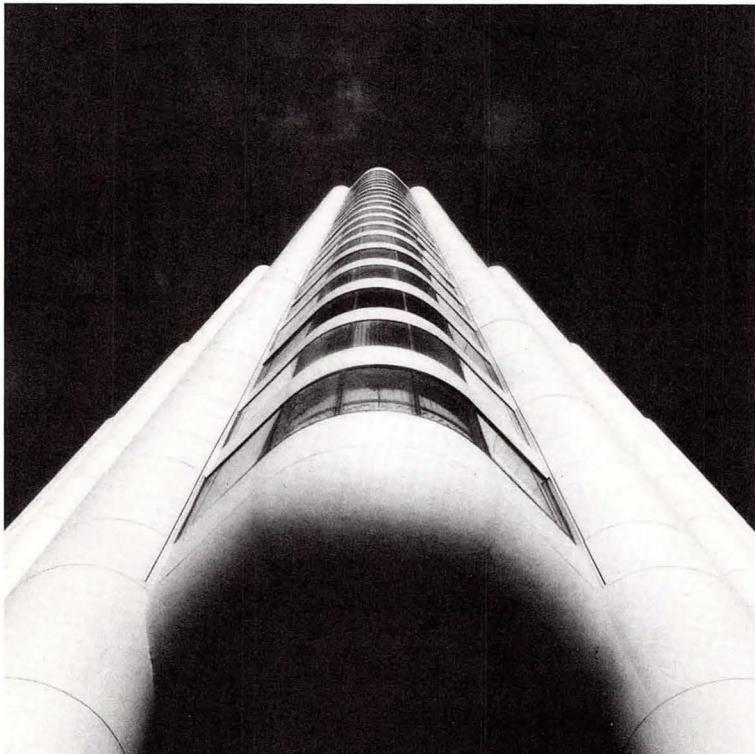
The Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum is currently seeking resource and participation assistance for a major, comprehensive architectural project curated by Charles Moore and Gere Kavanaugh:

American Vernacular Architecture Exhibition and Symposium

This event will be presented at a variety of institutions through the Los Angeles area beginning in the fall, 1983. Focus is on the identification, analysis and influence of such architectural types as: the temple/cabin/barn; the front porch and colors; interior details; California bungalows and ranchos; Indian structures; dogtrot and Cajun houses; sod homes; igloos; grass huts; frontier and floating architecture; artist housing; and toy houses.

Resource Participation

We extend to the entire architectural community a request for resource materials and seminar/display participation. For information contact Blaine Mallory, Project Coordinator at (213) 937-5544 or 655-1834. Craft and Folk Art Museum, 5814 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90036



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Whether the group was large, filling both studios and garden, or small and restricted to one room or the patio, the lace alone raised the common above the commonplace. It freed everyone's expression. It was a tool RMS and Pauline used with imagination and skill and it deserves to be remembered.

—Harwell Hamilton Harris from foreword of *Vienna to Los Angeles: Two Journeys* by Esther McCoy

There are spirits alive in the Schindler House, at least according to our psychic bookkeeper Linda. I know they're here, I've felt them; they're the spirits of hope and optimism. The Schindlers and Chases built this house themselves, planning a life full of friends, music and creative thought, a community of like-minded people. The Chases didn't stay here long, but they were followed by others: artists, writers and musicians who were drawn to the house by the kind of life it promised.

There is something about this place, about its rightness and solidity, that conveys a sense of strength and fellowship. It's a natural house, a place which is solid yet open, private yet friendly, silent yet filled with music.

The house is quiet now most of the time, except for the sound of occasional visitors receiving the stock guided tour. There are few of the conversations or arguments which really kept it alive. I hear stories of evenings in Pauline Schindler's living room, of days in Schindler's studio. I hear the stories, but I can't hear the words. Today, people meet in the house, but they meet over a conference table, not around a fireplace to join in friendly banter.

There's still a lot of hope here though; the spirit of the house lives on. It's here for anyone who enters, and for anyone who spends some time. The Schindler house has nurtured this project, has given it room to be born. The house will continue to resonate; it will open its doors and shelter new ideas, conversations, music and laughter. You can't keep a good house down.



Barbara Goldstein

The 1921 home of R. M. Schindler was recently purchased by the Friends of the Schindler House with the help of a grant from the State of California. The house is now a state historic monument, and has been dedicated to the public as a center for architecture and design.

Schindler's image of the ideal marriage is in the floor plan of the Kings Road house. He thought of each of the four occupants of the house as an artist who needed a studio to work in, so the house was four beautiful cells of equal size, of equal importance. . . . It was perhaps the first plan to give women equality with men. It also took seriously their work in the arts—Pauline was still teaching and had begun to compose music; Chase was a painter, his wife a ceramicist.

Both pairs of studios had an entrance hall off which was a bath and a stair to a sleeping porch. The plan was flipped to create two Ls which embraced a private patio with an outdoor fireplace for evening parties in the open. Each couple shared a patio, the studios opening to them by sliding canvas doors. When closed, the studios were lighted by clerestory windows. The single kitchen was the link between the two pairs of studios.

—Esther McCoy from *Vienna to Los Angeles: Two Journeys*



Life a sequence of events, captured for a moment, interpreted in a way unique to each individual,
then lost to the past—our memory.

In that moment we call the present, life is perceived by the senses and we exist in the most profound sense,
then from this moment our memory is born and the sensual experience is gone.

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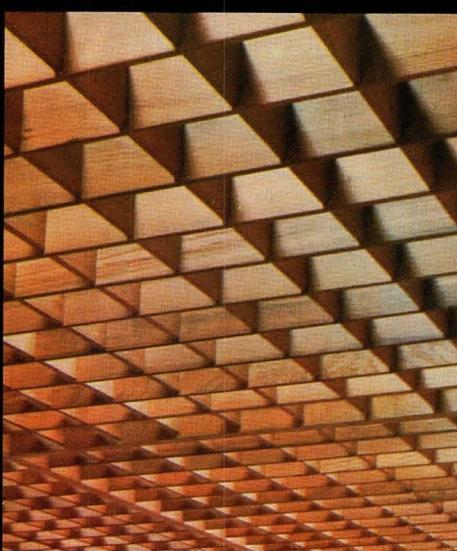
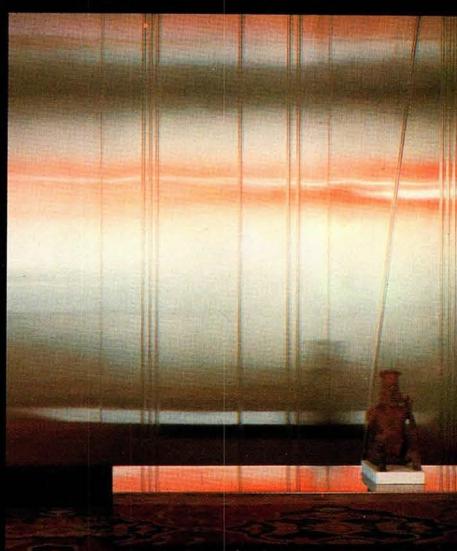
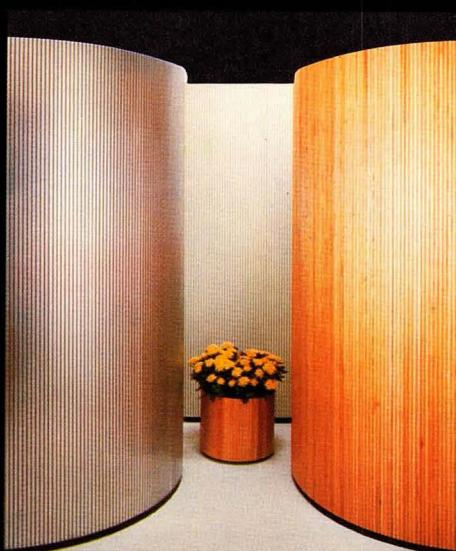
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Furniture by Artists

by Denise Domergue



Akari, Isamu Noguchi
63 x 19 inches



Steel Multiples, Scott Burton, 1979-80
Courtesy Max Protetch Gallery



Chair, Roland Reiss, stainless and sandblasted steel, 1980

Denise Domergue is currently writing a book about furniture designed by contemporary artists in the United States.

Recently there has been a growing interest in the furniture designs of artists. Free from the constraints and pressures of commercial interior design, sculptors and painters throughout the country have been creating individualistic, functional objects. The current flush of interest in this phenomenon seems to reflect an emerging need for more personal environments in a world dominated by conformity and sophisticated technology.

Prior to the last few years, artist furniture was rarely exhibited in art galleries or design showrooms, although the lamps of Isamu Noguchi are a notable exception. This work, unlike that of the professional designer, is seldom meant to be marketed or mass-produced. Typically, upon completion, a one-of-a-kind piece quietly disappears into a private home or corporate office. Therefore, artists' divergence into the realm of furniture design has not yet had the impact it may well prove to have.

Painters and sculptors have a wide variety of reasons for delving into the area of functionality. For some it reflects the simple need for affordable items of furniture in their own spaces. Other artists make their own furniture when faced with a lack of pleasing, commercially available items or in reaction to the impersonality that mass-production insinuates into their lifestyles. Occasionally, an artist is commissioned to construct a piece for a private patron.

In contradiction to the often imaginative but purely utilitarian furniture constructions are the more conceptual ones. Artists like Scott Burton and Roland Reiss, for example, find furniture, with its inherent references to social behavior, architecture and the human body, the suitable vehicle for their artistic statements. Bob Wilhite and Guy de Cointet, on the other hand, make functional sculpture to furnish the elaborate sets of their performance art. Bob Wilhite designed the Iglu set on the following page for Guy de Cointet's play.

The incentives for making these pieces are multifarious, and the end products are always imbued with an extremely personal rationale, as these few examples illustrate. If nothing else, this tangent of the artist's output testifies that furniture can indeed be endowed with form and content that transcend mere comfort and current taste.

I work with lines and planes to satisfy the practical demands of each piece of furniture, using various hardwoods of exceptional strength to minimize the structure and make forms that are unexpected. Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer used the same principles in their work with tubular steel. When a person sits down at a table I have made, I want the top of the piece to be like a horizontal painting.



I designed the Igloo furniture set for a play that I did with Guy de Cointet. The setting of the play was a Hollywood apartment. The original suite consisted of two tables and three chairs. I wanted to make furniture that I'd never seen before. The seats had angles other than horizontal. The pieces were more sculptural than functional, although I now use the stool every day at my drawing table.

Walter Wintel

Bob Wilhite

*Culptor and Performance Artist,
Los Angeles*

I like to use highly contrasting woods like maple and ebony to emphasize the linear qualities of the furniture. Looking down through the glass of the table top accentuates the sculptural forms of the base. The metal-shaded lamp was designed for a corner. As you move around, it shifts from plane to line.

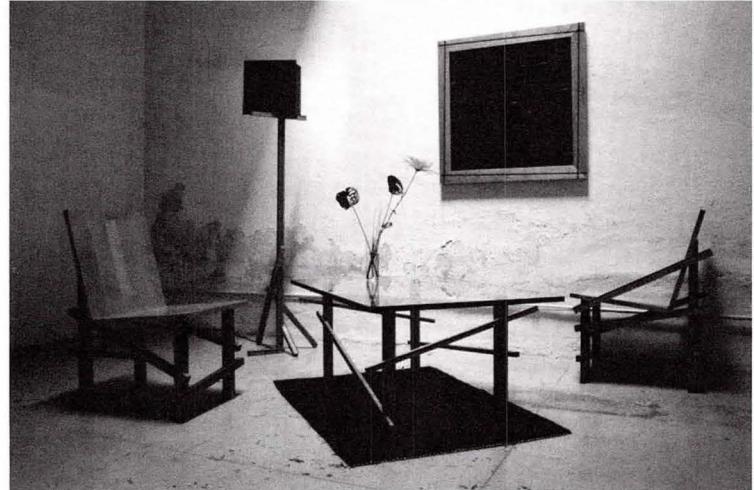
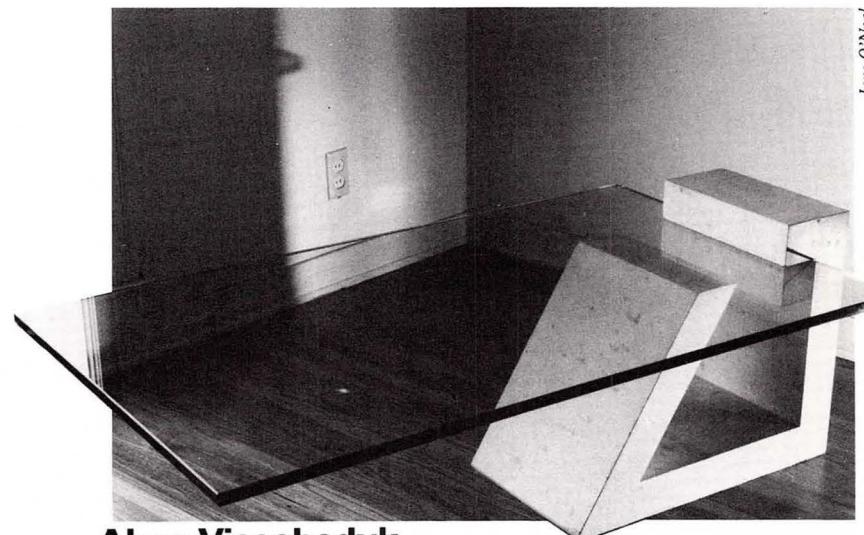


Photo: ONC/AF

started making furniture when I was 'bout sixteen just because I enjoyed it. 'round 1976 or 1977 I met Pauline Hindler. I used to visit her once in while to talk. One time, the bamboo around her house was being cut down. told her that I would do the work if I could just have the bamboo. I used that bamboo to start making furniture again.

My art and my furniture have influenced each other. Previously, I was making minimal pieces of solid colors using sand or canvas. Now I'm doing charcoal drawings which use some of the angles in the furniture. For example, I've expanded the angle of the seat in large-scale drawings.



Alwy Visschedyk

Painter, Los Angeles

was always interested in concrete, more geometric designs than in curved forms. I had the glass, so it was just natural to clip and work with it.

I wanted to make a chair designed for a transient lifestyle that you could knock apart. I started out first with just pure design and thought about practicality earlier.

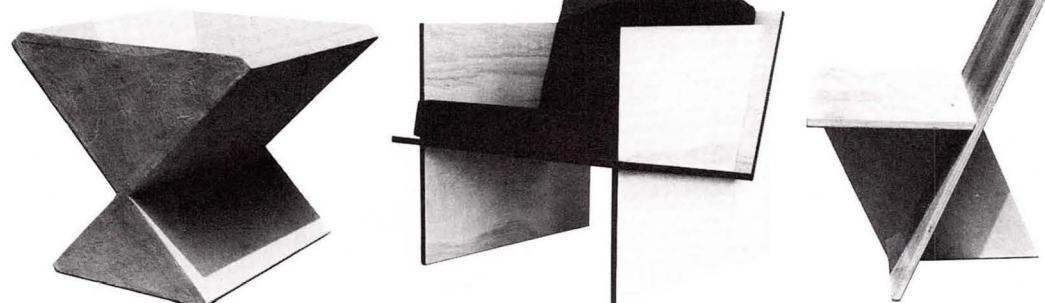
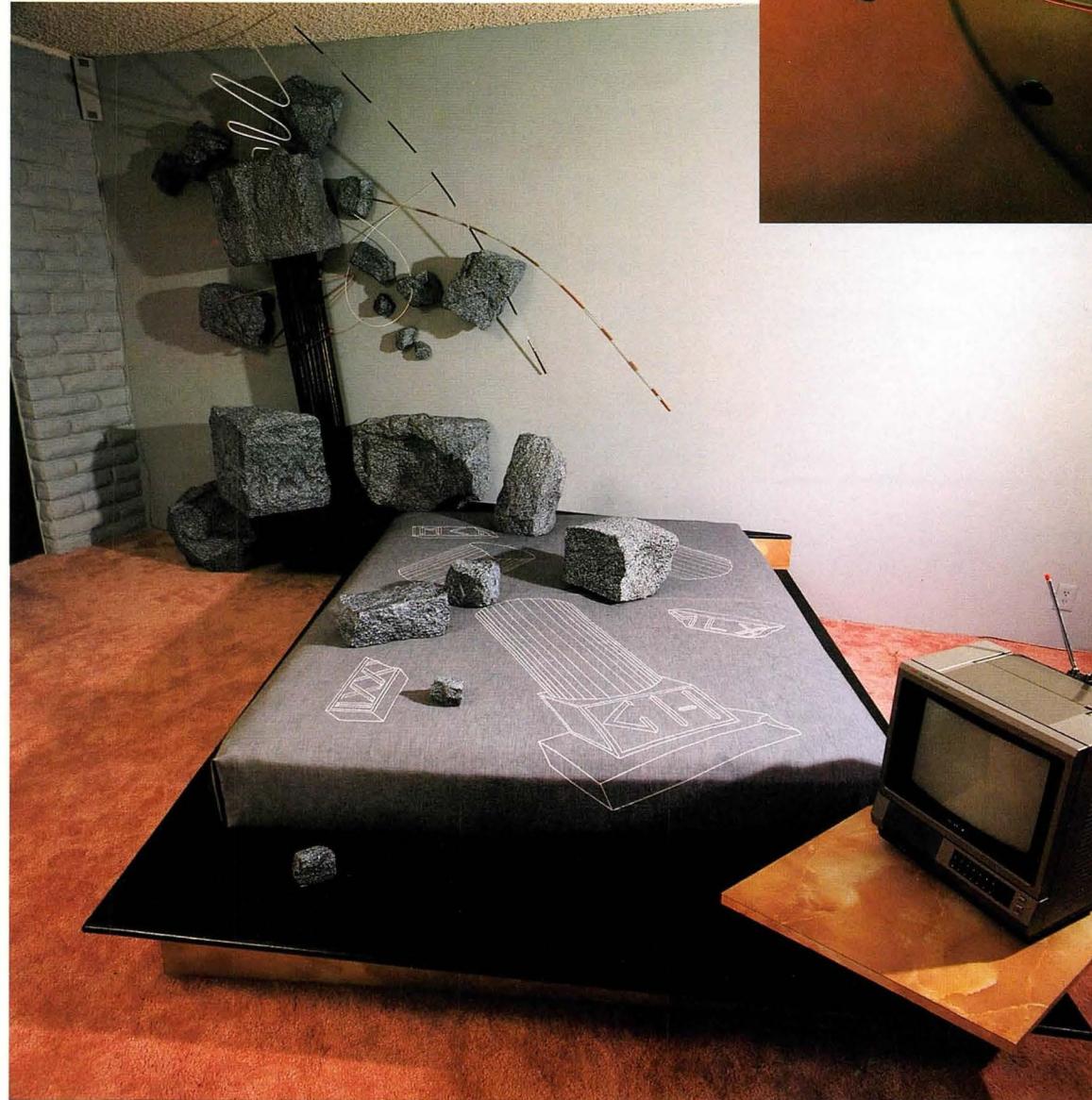


Photo: ONC/AF

Most furniture should be straight-forward and comfortable. You need a good chair, sofa and bed that look well and don't need any attention. Then you can add a fabulous or extraordinary or silly piece that you enjoy as an art object. I like the idea of combining sculpture and furniture—you get more for your money.

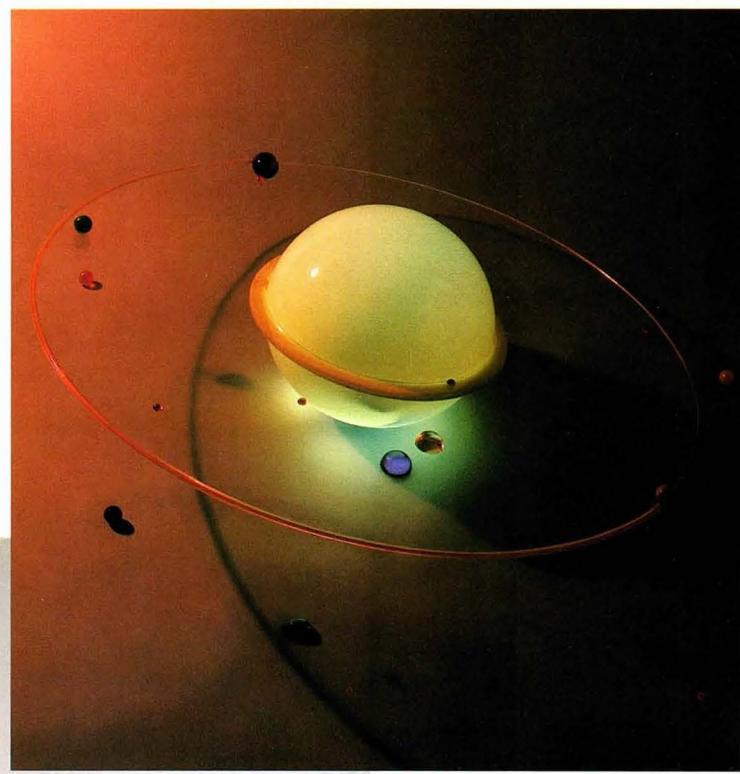
Eileen Gray is a heroine of mine. She started out doing beautiful commissions for wealthy Parisians. Her output wasn't huge (ditto for mine), but each piece was perfect. She designed some classic furniture that was years ahead of its time.



Paul Fortune Fearon

Designer and Sculptor, Los Angeles

Graham Herman



Hollywood and the movies have always influenced me. Beds are often extravagant or bizarre in the movies. I got the idea of a collapsing bed during an earthquake—a mix of periods, fake Doric column marble and rocks all collapsing. The construction tumbles onto the bed and the pillows are soft fake rocks. I paint the bedcover with the owner's name—in case he loses it. The platform is a subtle rhomboid shape, and the headboard is a triangular wedge laminated of slate Formica. The TV platform is a little trapezoidal off-shoot laminated of mottled Formica. Neon strips around the base give the impression that the bed is about to float out onto the freeway through curves spectacularly below the bedroom window.

ly materials are mainly wood, steel, ass, concrete, and sometimes mirror. I ways think first about the space the ece will occupy. In a way, it is acci-
ntal that the final product is linked to e idea of furniture or that it has a nction. Some of my pieces are placed w to the ground, others are higher-
ble or bench height. The objects become nctional, people can get involved physi-
lly by sitting on them or by placing ings on them. It is amusing to think at my work can inhabit the space not ly as a piece of sculpture, but also as mething else.



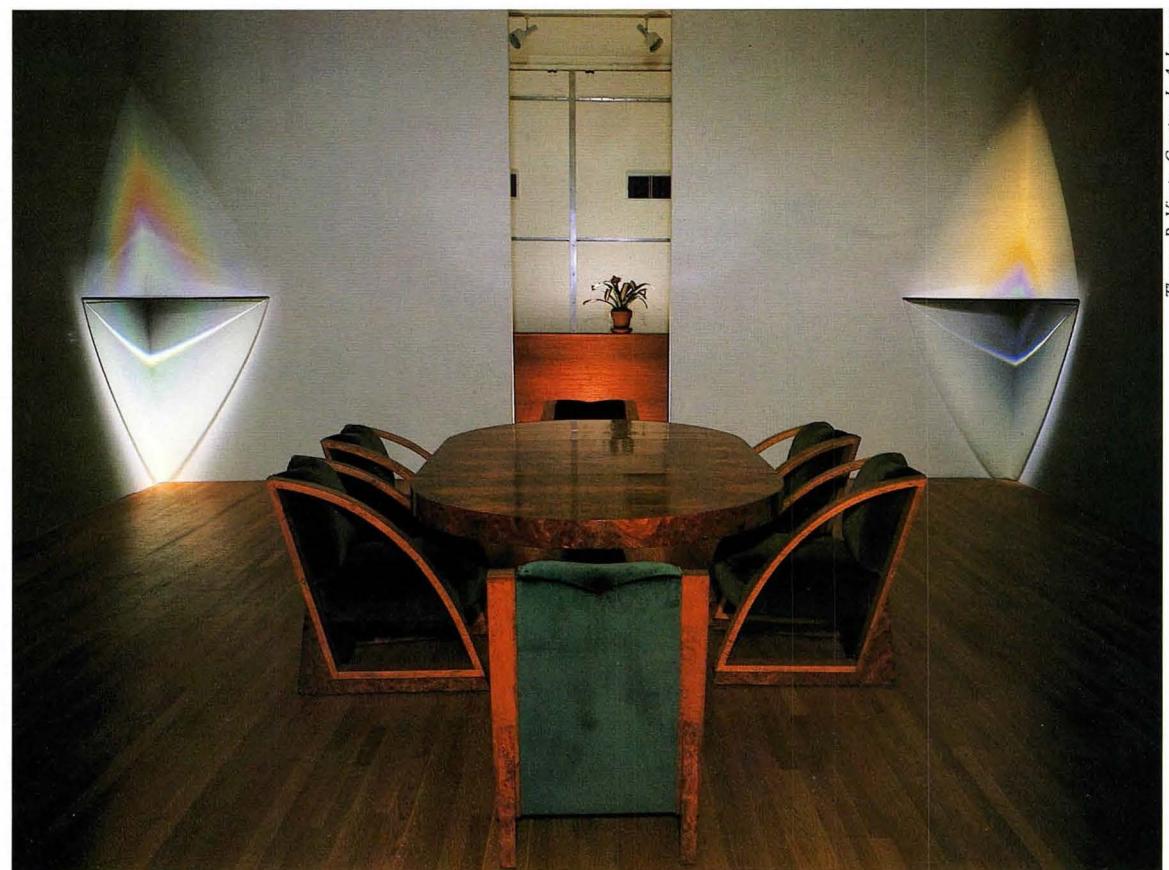
Masayuki Oda

Sculptor, Los Angeles



ot involved in furniture because I inted to make something that I really ed for my studio. An old chair inspired . It was just some old chair that I sed for years, that I bought in a junk re for \$20. The basic design of the tir is based on a quartered 40 degree ipse. I didn't realize that there were so my other kinds of pieces based on the ipe of the chair that were brewing in mind. I used the same materials for pieces derived from the chair (Carthian elm burl veneer and French ton velvet), but they are essentially ferent configurations. The materials re so beautiful there was no point in ting them.

'on't separate any of the stuff I do m my art. It's a studio activity. It's nothing that has to do with the deci-
ns that are part of my every day work cess. I'm not going to say that they're ces of sculpture, but I certainly can't arate the desire to do them, the kinds decisions I make about them, from the ds of decisions I make about my lpture.



Larry Bell

Sculptor, New Mexico

B

O

Y

D

These original floor lamps utilize texture in metal and glass for decorative, yet functional, task lighting.

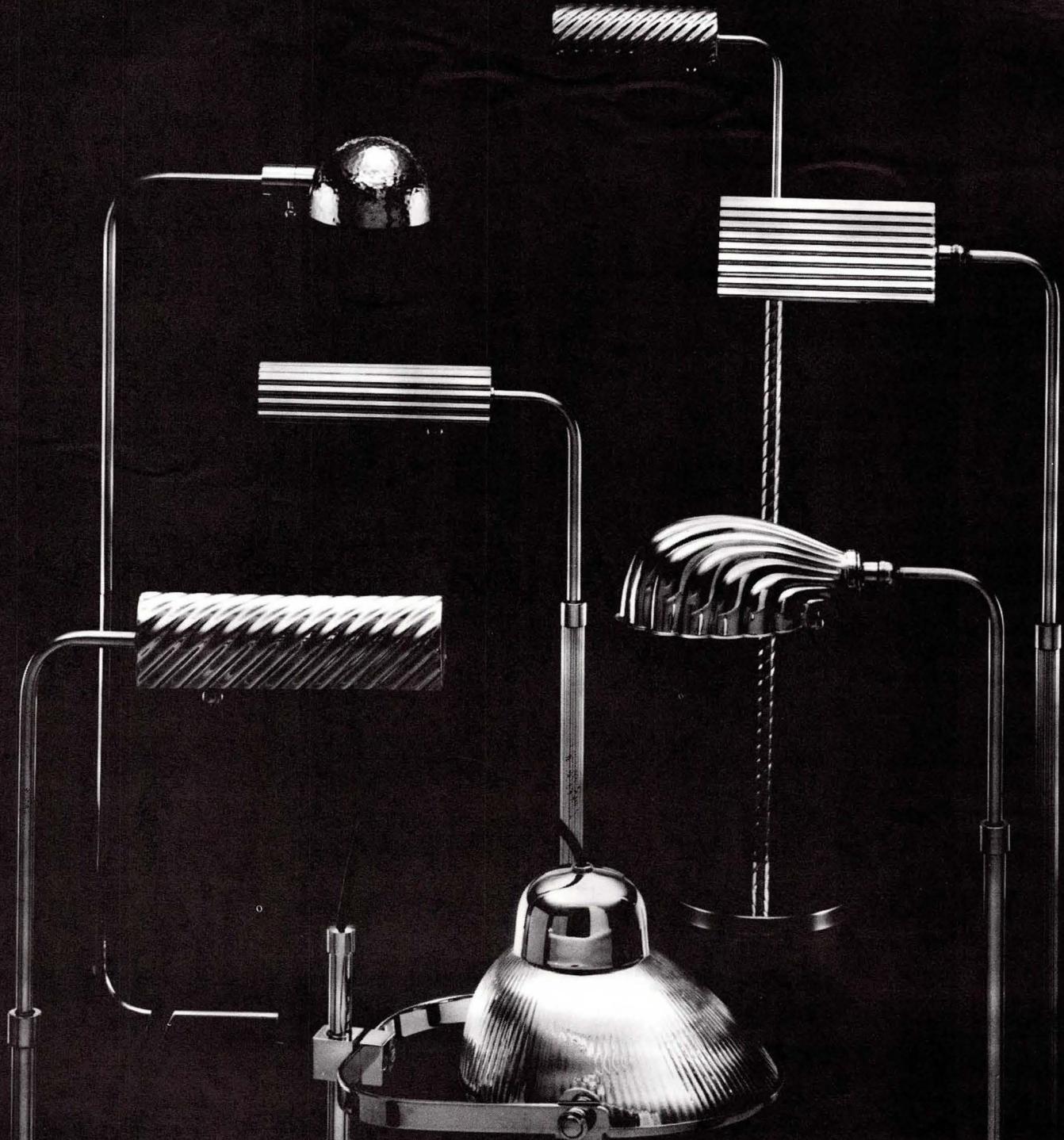
The Originals, shown below, left to right:
#950 Swirl (3); #870 Hammered Hood;
#400 Rib Glass; #937 Reed Lamp;
#940 Swirl (1); #200 The Shell; #954 Reed Tent Lamp.

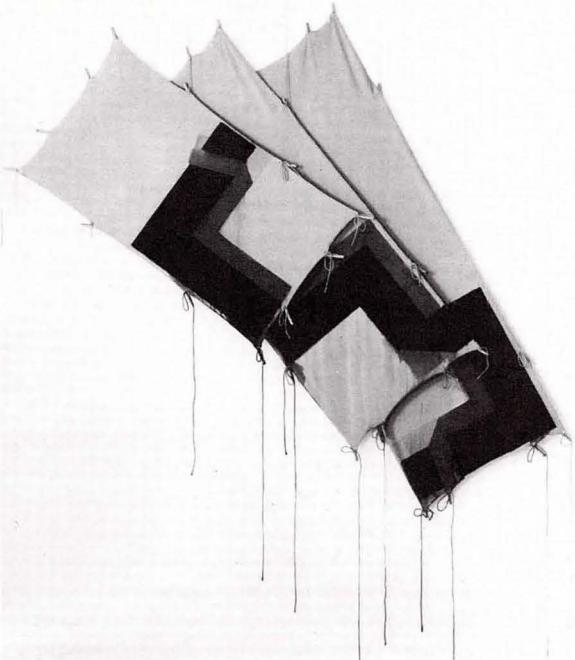
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"Black Ribbon," 1981, 8 X 6'

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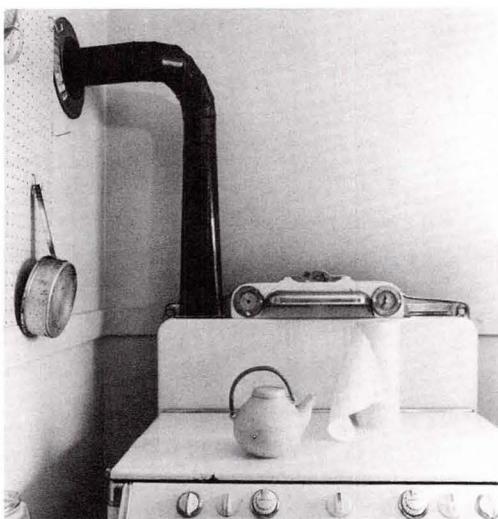
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Joanne Leonard



"Teapot on Stove"
1979
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Series

Photo/Trans/Forms

21 August–11 October, 1981
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

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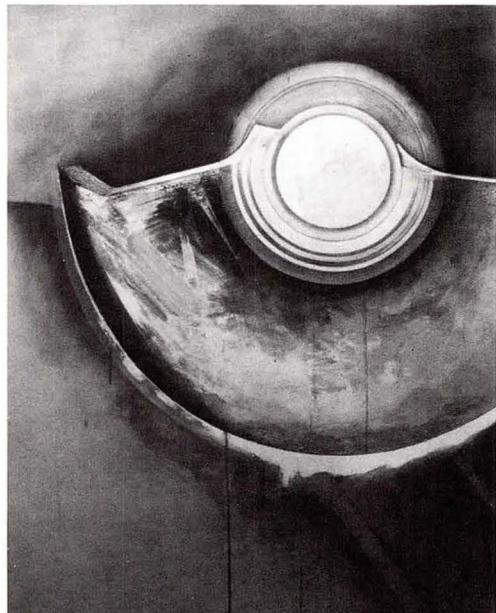
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Jay DeFeo

by Judith L. Dunham



Mimi Jacobs



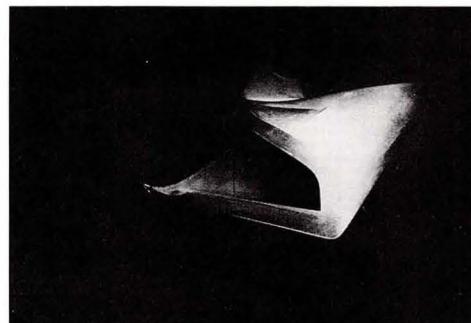
*One O'Clock Jump series
Three Mile Island No. 2
mixed media on paper, 1979
40 x 30 inches
ARCO Collection*

While some artists work with found objects, Jay DeFeo works with found forms. During the thirty years she has been living in the San Francisco Bay Area, DeFeo's work has acquired an intensity of vision based on the imaginative transformation of shapes abstracted from familiar objects. The images in her recent paintings and drawings are developed from such common items as a broken tape dispenser or what appears to be a fragment of metallic hardware. Through an often lengthy, alternately additive and subtractive process of rendering the subjects on paper or masonite, they transcend the specificity of their sources. Yet mysterious vestiges of the objects' previous function remain within DeFeo's metamorphoses of forms and materials, and it is this tension between the seeming concreteness of the subjects and the expressive handling of surface that opens the works to overlapping visual and psychological meanings.

DeFeo is probably best known for a large painting, titled "The Rose," which has become a legend possessing a life independent of its source and even of its creator. It took her six years, from 1958 to 1964, to complete this massive, sculptural canvas of a radiating form—a canvas so thick and heavy with layers of paint that it has remained in storage at the San Francisco Art Institute for over ten years. Understandably, DeFeo has not attempted a project of such scale and duration since those Beat Generation years in San Francisco, but she has approached much of her subsequent work with a similar focus on a single image, usually developing it over series of related paintings and drawings.

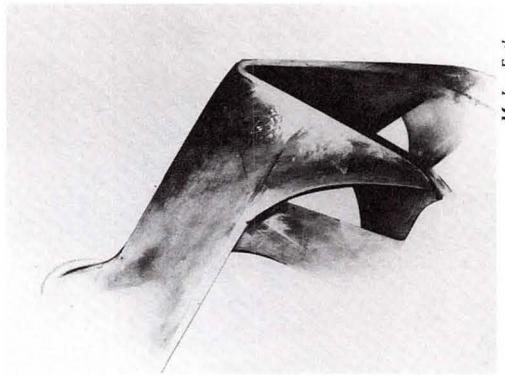
Despite the emphatic two-dimensionality of these works, her selection of subjects and the way she sees them reveal a sensitivity to sculptural form. Limiting her palette to a tonal range that suggests black and white photography and occasionally introducing color, as in the recent *Eternal Triangle* series, DeFeo carefully positions her subjects within the format so that they "participate," she says, in the surrounding space. Rich areas of modeling and textural layerings of pencil or acrylic appear to melt into the surface, allowing the abstracted objects to recede into illusionistically deep space. These contrasts—between light and dark, tactile surface and indefinite space—are among the many oppositions in DeFeo's authoritative works. Hard edges cut through velvety surfaces, gestures of paint seem to swirl around static images, and objects that should be small are made monumental by the environment that DeFeo has made for them. Ultimately, her works are distinctive, individualistic expressions of the eternality of basic forms.

Temple (For WB)
mixed media on masonite, 1980
48 x 72 inches
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Lidow



Judith L. Dunham, an art writer living in San Francisco, is the recipient of a 1980-81 critics project grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Eternal Triangle 7
mixed media on paper, 1980
30 x 40 inches

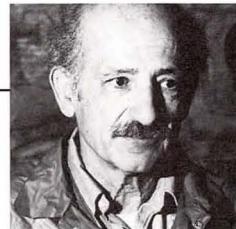


Eternal Triangle 8
acrylic and mixed media on paper, 1980
1 1/2 x 29 3/4 inches

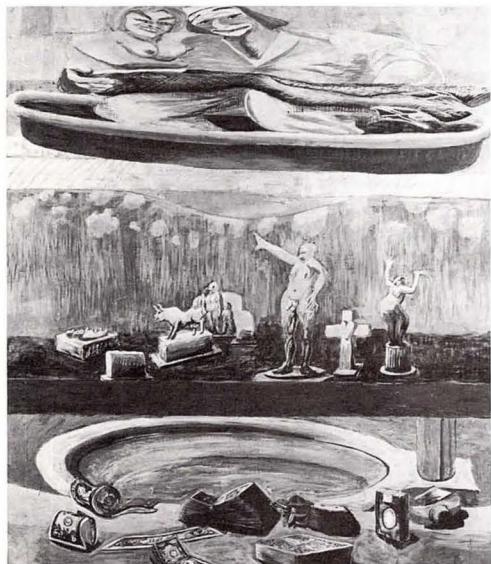


Charles Garabedian

by Fred Hoffman



Thomas P. Viner



Love, Death, and Gambling
Flo-paque on paper, 1966
54 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 48 inches

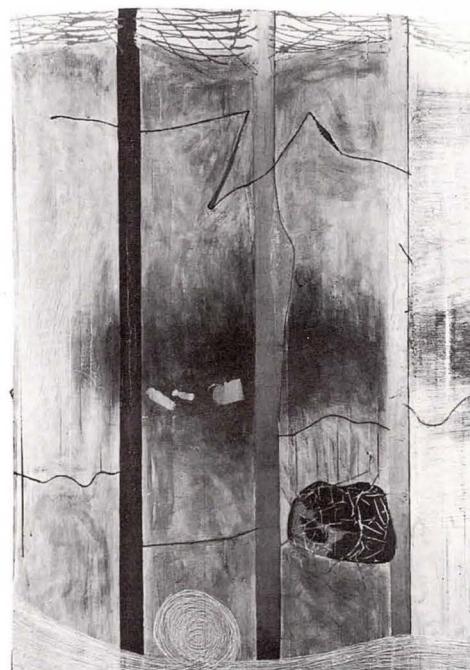
Early this summer, the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art exhibited 40 paintings by Charles Garabedian completed since 1968. The exhibition was appropriate yet somehow ironic because, despite past inclusions in shows at the Whitney Museum, the Venice Biennale and elsewhere, Garabedian's name is still enigmatic in discussions about the notable artistic trends of the 1960s and 70s. His work has escaped critical attention and is missing both from major private Southern California collections and from the permanent collection of any museum.

In tracing this lack of attention, one can point to a critical oversight which has blinded people to the work of a true master. Until recently, most esthetic judgments have been based on a limited conception of Modernism using considerations such as the treatment of the picture plane, figure-ground relationships, and the impact of color as key factors in evaluating contemporary art. If at one time Garabedian's work appeared awkward, crude or even bad, it now clearly exudes cultural and art historical meaning.

The remarkable quality in Charles Garabedian's work is his ability to translate personal experiences into a set of symbols and stylistic devices which are visually, emotionally and psychically compelling. For example, in an early work such as "Love, Death and Gambling" the most important element in the painting is the artist's choice of subject matter. Here, the mythic and hardcore realities of life confront each other head on, only to be transformed into an other-worldly and mildly erotic vision. In "Green China Wall" it is the inventiveness of his technique which captures the imagination. Having first fused rough wooden slats into a construction notable for its varied texture and linear articulation, he transformed the surface by cutting it and partially re-filling it with resin. Resembling a Chinese screen, this work is evocative both as a physical object and for the refined ephemerality of its subject matter.

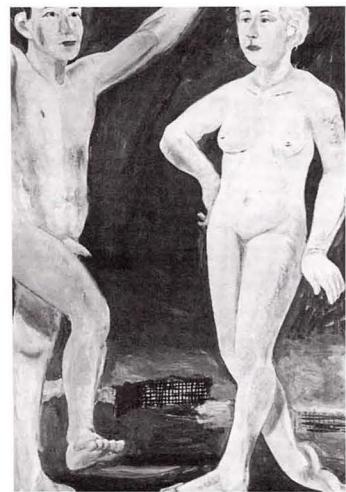
In his recently completed "Prehistoric Figures," Garabedian has convincingly captured primitive man's cognitive relationship to his world. Having depicted the figure in various poses which read ambiguously as both self-consciously awkward and intuitively graceful, he alludes to a state of existence devoid of fear. This is not to imply that these figures evoke a sense of well-being. Hardly. They struggle and stumble their ways through a plethora of obstacles. However although these "Prehistoric Figures" can not maintain their balance, they appear grounded to the reality beneath their feet, conveying trust in the power of the own inner beings.

Green China Wall
wood, acrylic, and resin, 1969
95 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 73 x 10 inches



Fred Hoffman is a Contributing Editor of Arts and Architecture Magazine. A curator and art critic, he recently co-curated and wrote the catalog essay for "Just a Great Thing to Do," the Charles Garabedian show at the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art.

Prehistoric Figures
acrylic on panel, 1978–80
40 x 30 inches



Prehistoric Figures
acrylic on panel, 1978–80
40 x 30 inches

Thomas P. Vinez



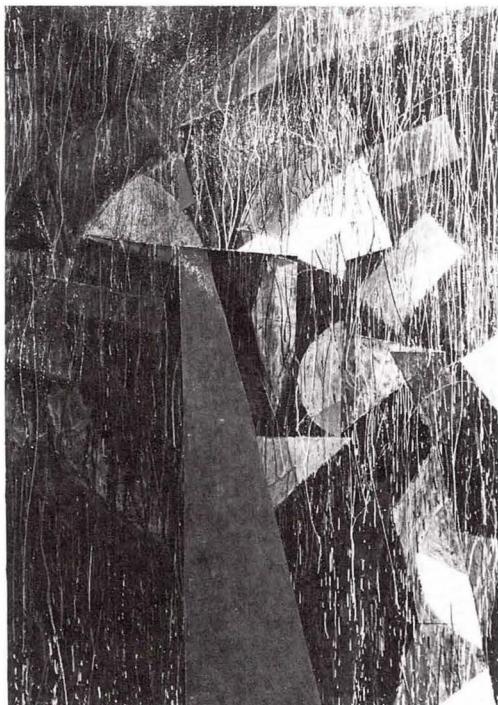
Thomas P. Vinez

Tom Holland

by Cathy Curtis



M. Lee Fatherree



Panther
epoxy on fiberglass, 1980
89 x 63½ inches

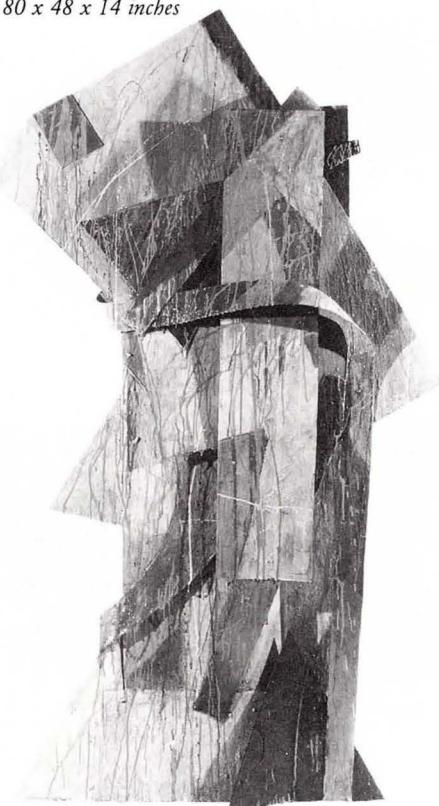
Good styles don't die in Bay Area art; they don't even fade away. From Hassel Smith to Richard Diebenkorn and Sam Francis, the vitality of the abstract expressionist tradition has received continual reinterpretation. Over a decade ago, Tom Holland traded in the funk vocabulary of his early paintings for sturdy fiberglass (sometimes aluminum) assemblages coated with dripping tiers of epoxy enamels. But even the funk echoes lingered; the curving strips and rhomboid shapes were attached to their supports with rivets—a reminder of the airplane imagery that fascinated Holland in the 1960s.

By 1979, the new style reached constructivist maturity. In an untitled freestanding blue piece—a long aluminum sheet torn, bent, slung with bolted strips and shielded by a curving "bumper"—Holland held in balance a playful sense of form honed to elegant simplicity and a delight in the physical waywardness of paint.

The following year, the number of separate pieces and the density of the structures increased; the sheer level of baggage bolted together suggested a return to more prickly and personal standards. Now the enamel (which has been known to captivate even curmudgeonly critics who decry the "decorative" aspect of Holland's art) was no longer a luscious reply to a spare assembly of separate elements. Thin white streams destroy the easy linkage of part to part. In "Panther" (1980) the familiar galaxy of forms is obscured by a shower of epoxy trickles. Only the tall blue triangle bolted down on one side like a door escapes the deluge. It seems that Holland won't let paint just sit there looking delicious anymore; it now plays its part in muscling around the sculptural elements.

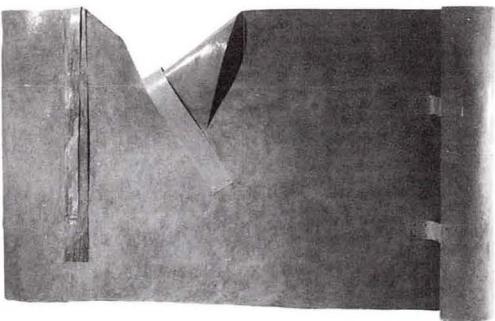
"Zinc" (1980) is among the most felicitous pieces in this style. Bright colors snapped on a white ground sustain the carnival rakishness of the angled forms. In his Dome series of the past two years, the artist has found a new outlet for the light approach of his best free-standing work by coaxing soft-pedalled easy-breathing bits of shape and color from modestly-sized sheets of paper. These paintings reveal his true gifts as tinker and tailor, joining awkward forms and glossy swipes of color into seemingly inevitable harmonies.

Zinc
epoxy on aluminum, 1980
80 x 48 x 14 inches



Cathy Curtis writes on art and dance in Artweek, Artbeat, Performing Arts Magazine and other publications.

Untitled
epoxy on aluminum, 1980
53 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 109 x 24 inches

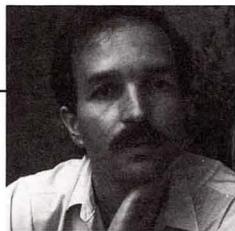


Dome Series No. 20
epoxy on paper, 1980
35 x 46 inches



Michael C. McMillen

by Christopher Knight



Robert Flick



The Oriental Magician (Blue)
mixed media, 1980
33 x 6 x 2 inches

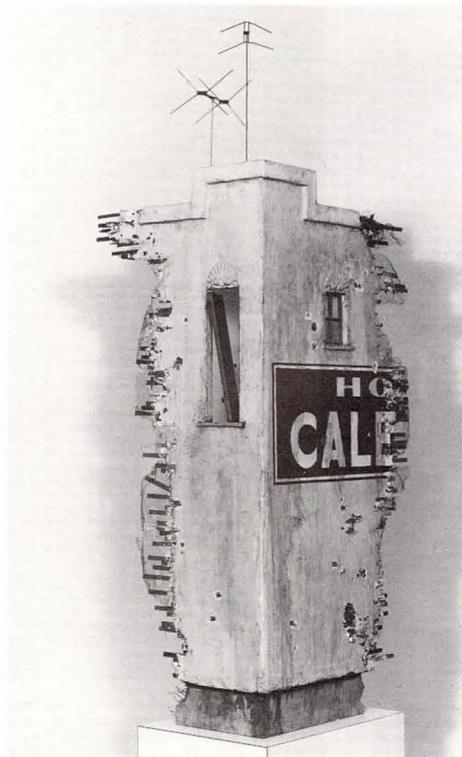
Whether architectural fragment or complete environment, Michael C. McMillen's sculpture continually employs the trompe l'oeil manufacture of aged and weathered surfaces. His contemporary sham ruins oscillate between the reality of a whimsical, though slightly ominous scene, and the romantic nostalgia for some lost age. The corner of a dilapidated hotel standing in isolation on a pedestal; a streamline moderne diner hovering in the air over a barren expanse strewn with bones; a power plant nestling in a rocky, burned-out landscape; a weathered door approached by ruined stairs and hanging on an empty wall; a partially mummified skeleton reclining on a battered chaise in the Mojave Desert—fantastic images of disaster and decay form a continuous thread in his work.

The sham ruin is associated with the larger concept of "the picturesque." As the ordered manipulation of natural and artificial elements to create a physical structure that simulates a picture, the picturesque acts as both a decorative scene and as a catalyst for meditation. It is a double-edged device in which fantasy is projected on the real world, and that reality in turn becomes a springboard for projections of the mind. However, unlike their 18th-century ancestors—gothic towers and medieval fortifications overrun with ivy and carefully placed as the focal point of the tamed wildness of the English garden—McMillen's ruins are denatured, cast adrift in dessicated industrial wastelands, the alien terrain of deserts, or even the pristine blankness of the contemporary gallery space.

The idea of the picturesque represents both a recognition of the limitations of and a flight from—present realities. At the beginning of the industrial age, the sham ruin mediated between man and the natural landscape; at the end of the industrial age, McMillen's sham ruins mediate between man and the technological landscape. His 1940s diner, with its streamlined "faith-in-the-future" moderne style, becomes a satellite in outer space, hovering over the remains what it has devoured to get where it is.

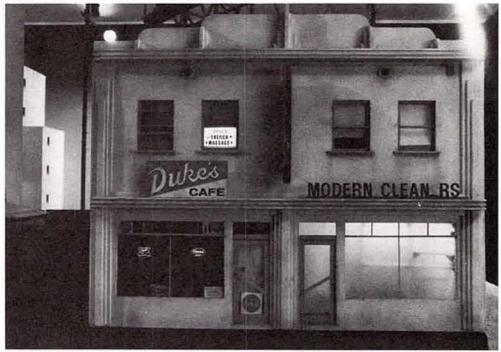
The 18th-century sham ruin—part fantas part reality—was a place largely inhabited by the eye and by the mind. So, too, are McMillen's, but with an added dimension. Through the frosted windows of an abandoned cleaning store in his 1977 installation, "Inner City," stacks of canvases and stretcher bars offer visible evidence of the dweller within.

Caledonia
mixed media, 1980
49 x 19 x 17½ inches



Christopher Knight is
Art Critic for the
Los Angeles Herald
Examiner and a frequent
contributor to Art Forum
magazine.

Inner City
detail
mixed media, 1977
10 x 12 x 11 feet



The Floating Diner
mixed media, 1981
inner: 18 x 21½ x 18 inches
room: 9 x 20 x 24 feet



The Poppy Chair, designed by John Follis and Dave Hammer, features upholstered seat and back, side frame members laminated out of 15 layers of 1/16" bent ash. Extremely strong and resilient, the chair is available in a variety of fabrics and leathers.



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CCAIA Monterey Design Conference: *California 101*

Although there are more than 5000 architects in California today, their numerical strength is not really reflected in the quality of the built environment. Few architects design large enough or adventurous enough buildings to become household names. The most noticeable urban and civic buildings are generally designed by large commercial firms whose work tends to be predictable and conservative, matching the taste of their bureaucratic clients. Profitable real estate developments such as tract housing, condominium complexes and industrial parks often do not involve architects at all. As a result, some of the most innovative architecture is small in scale and precious, hardly the type of work which attracts public attention.

In short, although there are many architects living in California, the public visibility of the profession is not very high. California architects have failed to communicate adequately about the importance of their work, and therefore good architecture is seldom well known, encouraged or appreciated. Against this background the CCAIA held its second annual Monterey Design Conference, California 101.

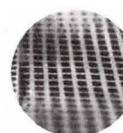
Appropriately, "Design Communication" was the theme of the conference; and it was explored both implicitly and explicitly in the four program segments: design communication; the "architect of the year," Frank Gehry; the "project of the year," the Bunker Hill redevelopment competition; and presentations of architectural work.

1981 Monterey Design Conference Committee:

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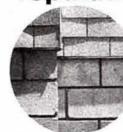
The CCAIA Monterey Design Conference and this issue of Arts and Architecture were partially sponsored by a Design Communications grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



The segment of the program on design communication was organized by Richard Saul Wurman, Professional Advisor to the conference (see opposite page). This consisted of continuous audio-visual presentations about different aspects of the built environment. Oddly enough, although this was entertaining and demonstrated various ways that architects can present their ideas to clients, it didn't include discussions with architectural photographers or journalists, two professions which are actually responsible for explaining architecture to the general public and to other architects.



The keynote speaker was Frank Gehry, who was selected as "architect of the year." Widely conceded to be California's most important architect, Gehry has inspired, influenced and infuriated fellow professionals. A brief look at his recent work illustrates why he has earned such a controversial reputation.



During the conference, more than 50 architects gave slide presentations of their work. There was a surprising mixture of small scale projects by promising young architects, larger, well-detailed projects by service oriented offices, technical presentations on energy and management programs, and design work encompassing interiors, furniture, restoration and planning. Viewed as a whole, the spectrum of work was impressive.



The Bunker Hill redevelopment competition was a topic that deserved fresh examination. Here was a perfect example of a failure to communicate; an instance where a well meaning public agency launched a competition without clearly defining its underlying agenda. The five resulting schemes were totally different and difficult to evaluate. The reasons for the selection of the winning architect/developer team are, to this day, unclear. Architectural critic Michael Sorkin explores the urban design problems involved in the Bunker Hill competition, and discusses the five schemes submitted to the Community Redevelopment Agency.

Arts and Architecture was commissioned by the CCAIA to report on California 101. The following pages are a selected summary, drawn from the conference, of California architecture today.

California is the home of the largest number of architects of any state in the country; and it also produces architecture of the highest quality.

The foremost reason for California 101 in Monterey was to establish useful design conversations between California architects. My personal interest in the conference stemmed from an unending quest to make things understandable; to solve more and better methods of uniting information, ideas and people with clarity and quality of communication.

Architecture is a field which requires an increasing amount of sophistication to communicate its ideas to a multiple audience. It is also a field that addresses itself to environmental quality and qualities. It is difficult to describe "quality" because our language for comparisons is founded on a system of numerical indices. For example, no legislation was passed when President Carter vowed to improve the quality of American life because no one could define "quality of life."

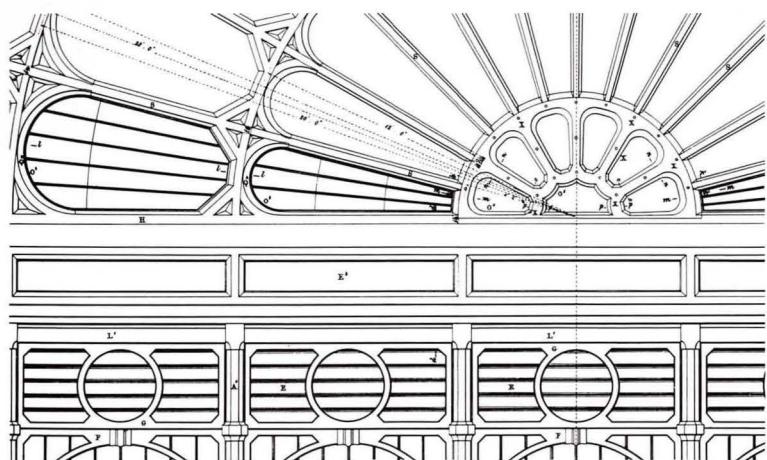
At best, architectural communication is an attempt to describe how space affects the quality of life and how it shelters all our activities. Communicating about the environment and striving to make communities and cities observable are of fundamental importance, yet we are not taught how to do that in a primary sense. An architect still thinks in terms of working on a design until it is solved and then recruiting someone, externally or internally, to communicate that idea in the form of a rendering or a model.

Communication about architecture begins with an idea and evolves through the whole process of its growth and flowering. And, the material a model is constructed of affects the actual design and what can be designed. The fact that Lou Kahn drew with charcoal affected the very form of his buildings. The development of new ideas concerning perspective transformed our concepts of buildings as they relate to each other.

At this year's Monterey Design Conference architectural communication soared to new heights. The films of Ray and Charles Eames and those of Glenn Fleck, Peter Bosselmann's inventive studies from Berkeley, Crombie Taylor's grand historical triptych of the Crystal Palace, the description by Carlos Diniz of his drawings and how they describe the quality of life envisioned by his architect clients, Peter Pearce's presentation and explanation of his space frame projects—all are examples of this important and essential art.

As evidenced by the high quality of design work discussed throughout the conference, our expectation is that in years to come this time and week in Monterey will serve the quality and communication of architectural design in California. ●

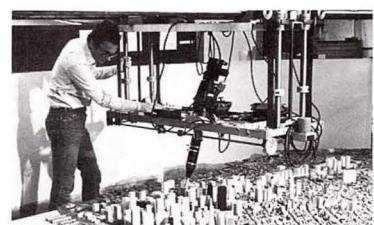
Richard Saul Wurman
AIA, architect and
designer, was Professional
adviser to the Monterey
Design Conference.



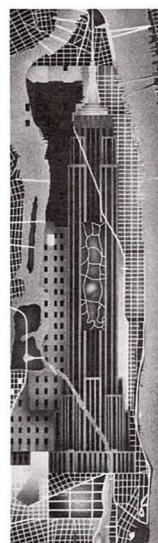
Construction drawing of Crystal Palace used in Crombie Taylor slide presentation.



Still from Glenn Fleck's animation of King Khalid Military City.



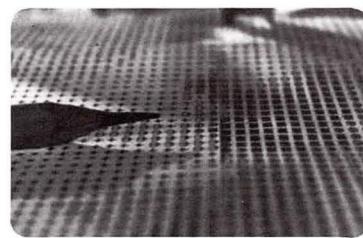
Peter Bosselmann at work filming a model of San Francisco.



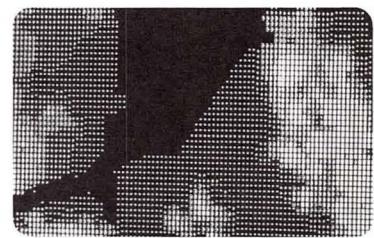
Conceptual Drawing of Manhattan, Stanley Saitowitz.



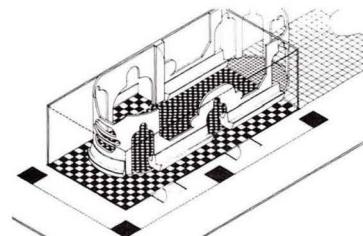
Rendering of Federal Reserve Bank, San Francisco, Carlos Diniz.



Stills from Photography in the City by Charles and Ray Eames.



Axonometric drawing, Franks for the Memory restaurant, R. Fernau and L. Hartman.



Photograph from space frame presentation by Peter Pearce.



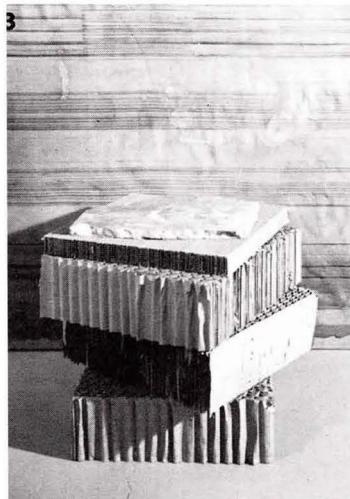
Frank Gehry called his Monterey lecture "I'm Not Weird," as if to remind the audience that, for many, his ideas have been hard to accept. The thing about him that is unusual has been his staunch refusal to compromise or produce work which is not completely his own.

Despite a general lack of recognition outside the profession, Gehry has had a great influence on current architectural thought, not because he has spawned imitators, but because his independent attitude has encouraged others, particularly the young, to stick with their creative principles. He is forthcoming about his design struggles, and this honesty has been an inspiration to his colleagues.

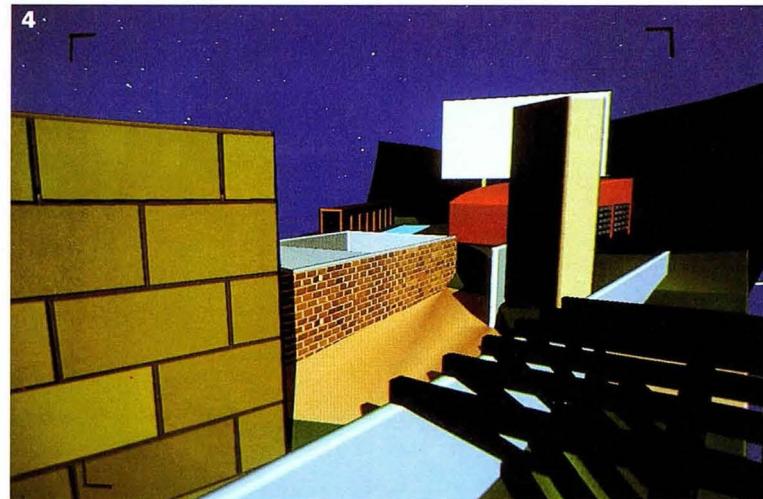
Gehry's approach to architecture is uniquely inventive; his ideas, although firmly rooted in the builders' traditions of Southern California wood frame construction, have taken those traditions along new paths. He accepts the limitations placed on him by making a virtue of "cheap," ordinary materials—using them cleverly rather than covering them up.

1,2. The Spiller House and Indiana triplex are inexpensive, multiple dwellings on small lots on existing residential streets. Designing such buildings is a problem which faces many architects now, as single family houses give way to apartments and condominiums. Gehry solved it by reducing the apparent size of the buildings, making each dwelling into a separate unit. The Spiller house looks like it belongs on a back street in the old city of Rome, its two corrugated iron clad forms linked by a narrow alley, an interior courtyard and a dizzying sequence of open wooden stairs. All that's missing are the clothes lines.



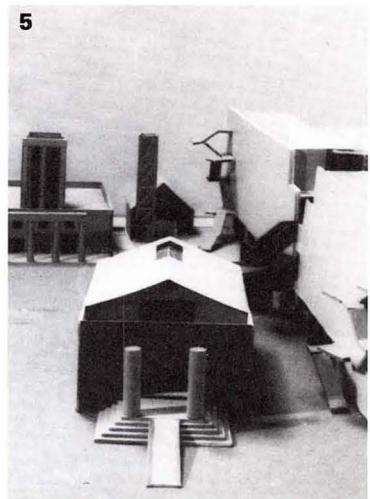


One of Gehry's earliest experiments with inexpensive materials was his corrugated cardboard furniture, "Easy Edges." Recently, together with Richard K. Wurman, he designed another line of furniture made from slabs of honeycombed cardboard. These pieces, although fairly crude in appearance, will evolve into an entire range of tables, chairs and sofas. The "spontaneity" involved in designing and producing furniture is a quality he hopes to achieve in his architecture.

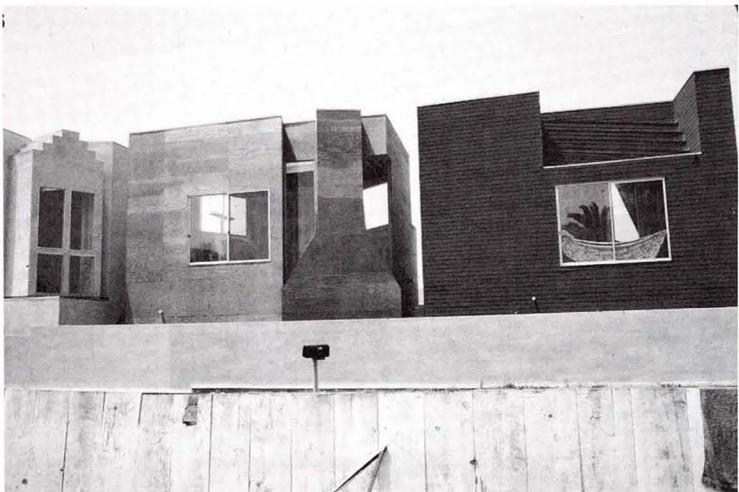


4. More in keeping with current obsessions is a house for computer filmmaker John Whitney, Jr., a collection of buildings at the mouth of Santa Monica Canyon. Based on the client's desire for a "Spanish courtyard house" it is, according to the architect, "a conglomeration of

objects arranged in relation to each other." Each has a different form and exterior surface: one is covered with plywood, one with metal, and one with fiberglass and stucco. More little buildings will be added later; and Whitney himself has explored the visual relation between the buildings with a series of computer simulations. This seemingly casual arrangement of buildings is a recurring theme in Gehry's work.



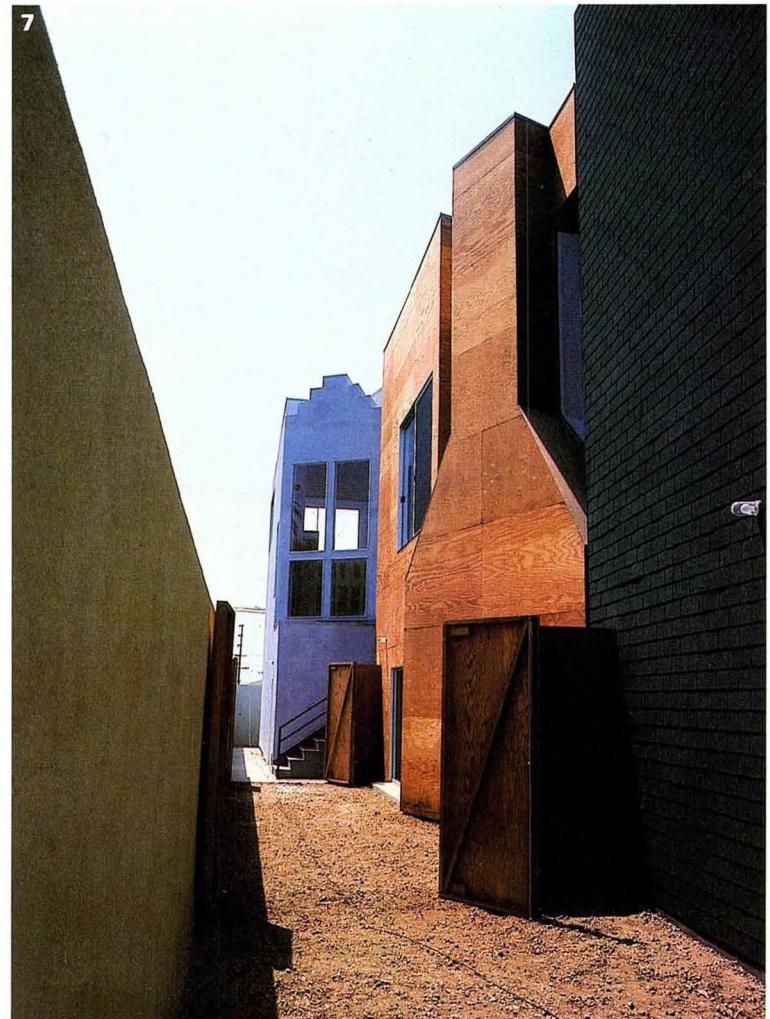
5. At Loyola Law School on Olympic Boulevard in Los Angeles, the architect was "inspired by the idea of Roman law." He added to an existing "campus," and made a new central courtyard flanked by a long, dignified building. The new building, which will contain offices and classrooms, is intentionally classical in form. It has a piano nobile on the second floor, an edicula on the roof, and a monumental staircase cascading down into the courtyard. A small "moot court" building with columns at its entrance, and a non-denominational chapel with a tower and curved apse complete the composition.



Tomko

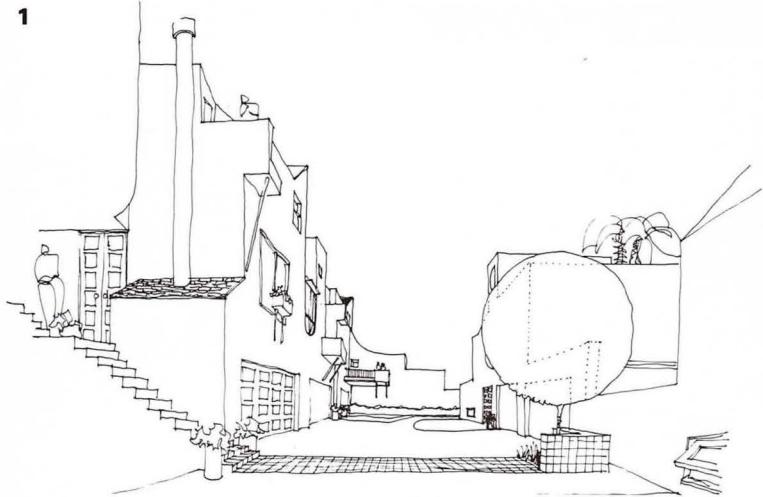
7. At the Indiana triplex, there are three studio residences, separated by pitched, alley-like gaps. Each has a studio-height studio on the second floor to provide daylight and sufficient room for additional loft levels. Here Gehry used common building elements in surrealistic sculptural arrangements—a "aircase" on a roof, a "fireplace" on a corner—a comment on post-modernist games with building parts, he says.

Whatever the rationale, by placing the houses so closely together and by giving each a distinctive shape, he recreated the atmosphere of a small town street, rather than jolting the neighborhood with an oversized condominium block. This is a model worth emulating.



Tomko

1



3



4



6



2



Rob Wellington Quigley is a young San Diego architect with a relaxed manner and an irrepressible sense of humor, two qualities which are reflected in his buildings. He believes in "contained chaos," in designing buildings which "you don't have to be an architect to live in." All this adds up to an architecture which is comfortable, witty and appropriate to its casual beach town setting.

All of Quigley's projects use local building methods in an artful way, whether 1960s tacky construction materials or more traditional techniques. All of his buildings are also designed to use active or passive solar systems to conserve energy.

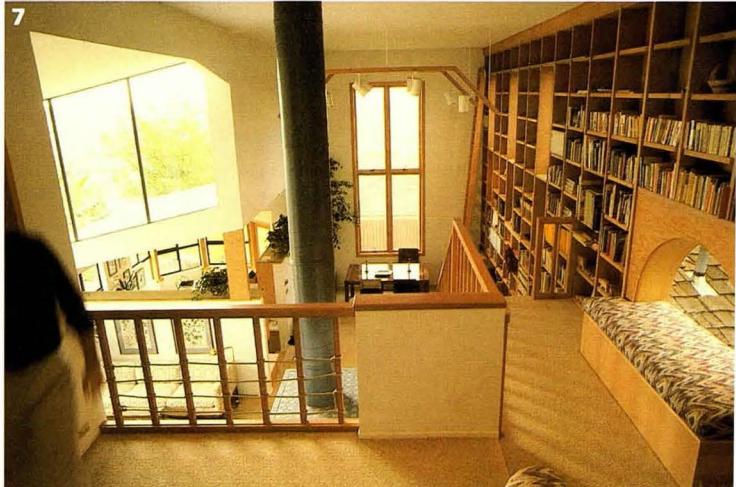
1,2,3. At Pacifica Condominiums, a prototype employed was the Spanish courtyard apartment. Here, a series of white stucco condominiums were arranged around a central automobile and pedestrian court. The architect enhanced the vertical rows of townhouses with cut-out balconies and curved roof lines, giving each house a separate identity.

5



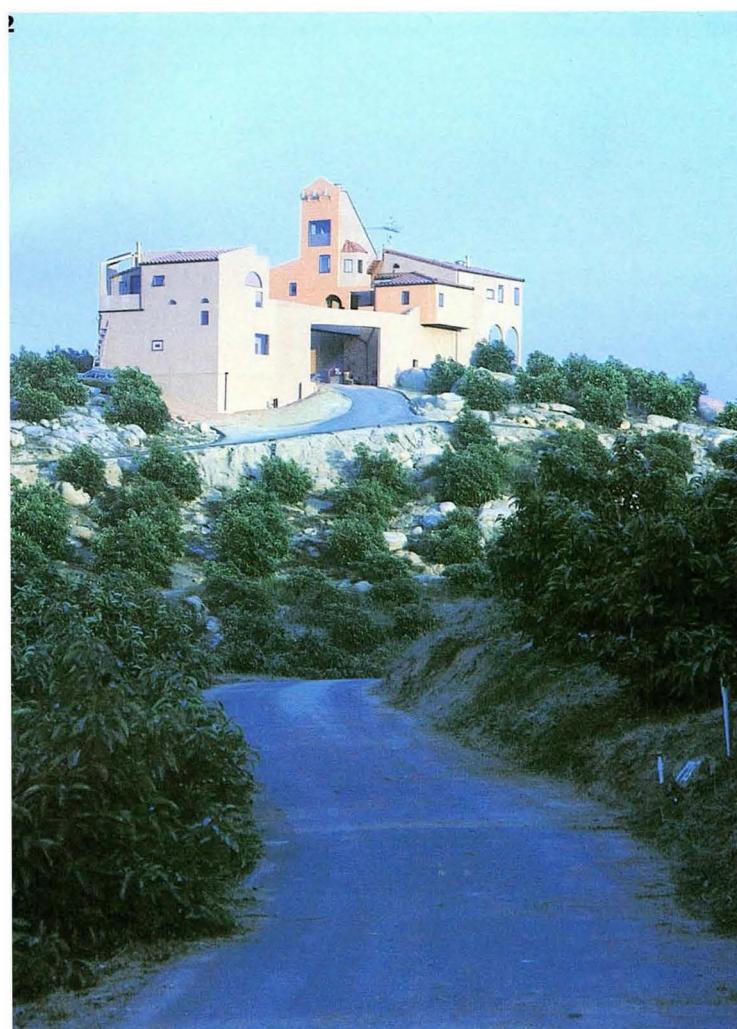
4,5,6,7. In another house Quigley tried to reconcile two residential styles: the 1960s tract house the clients lived in and the Queen Anne shingle style house they wanted. Here he arrived at an amusing solution—he sliced the house in half, leaving the original facade to face the street, and erected a "dematerialized" mirror glass wall above the central roof ridge. He then built a new, two story shingle style house onto the back, allowing the clients to take advantage of a spectacular view, obtain additional space and have their dream house without moving!

7





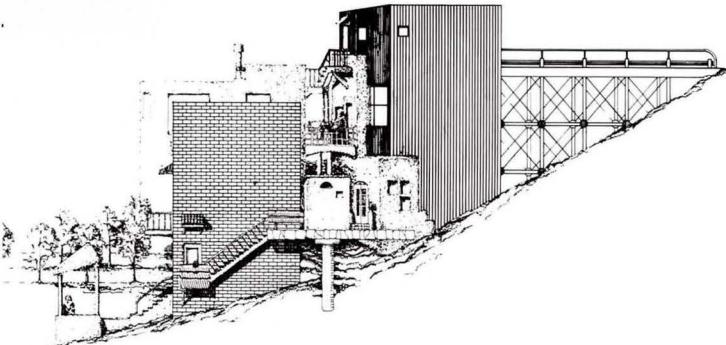
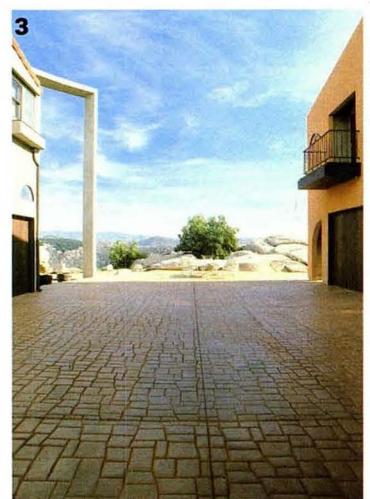
Tom Grondona describes himself as an artist; and indeed, as one of this year's Artist Guild award winners, his work was displayed at the San Diego Art Museum. His architecture demonstrates a flair for color and form, a tendency to create miniature townscapes, and a mastery over ordinary domestic building materials. He learned his building skills from his father, Ben, and together they have built a number of speculative projects.



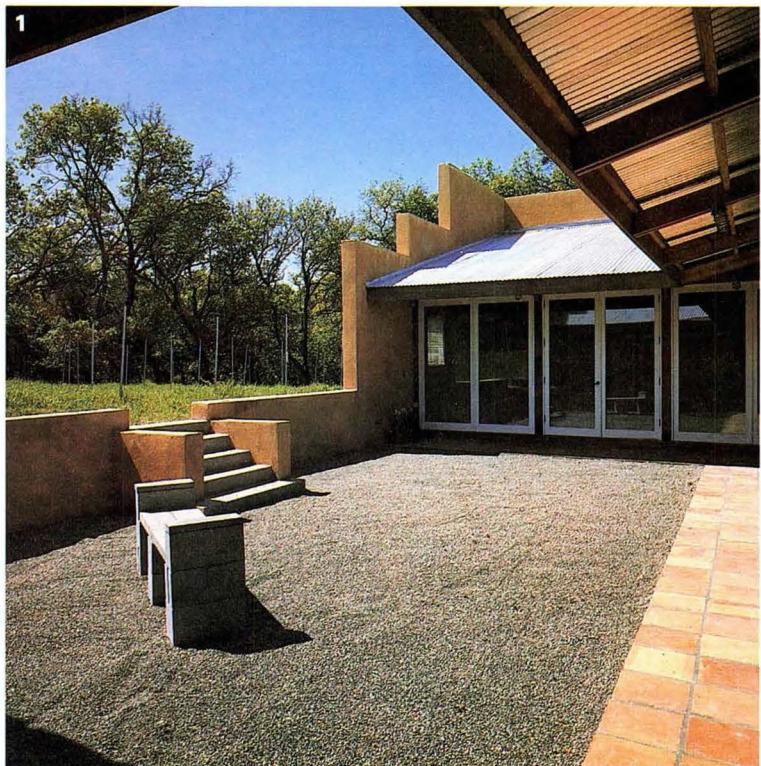
1. In Grondona's own house, "the Talbot Street train," he took advantage of a narrow lot by designing a long skinny house with rooms, like railway compartments, slung off a central corridor. The shape of the house is carved away on the top floor to create two outdoor decks; and the second floor living area steps down making an amphitheatre for television viewing. Garages at the bottom of the house are angled to the street; with a yellow line painted on the asphalt drive leading up to them.

2,3. At a villa north of San Diego, Grondona built a miniature version of an "Italian castle" on a steep, rock covered hill. Arranging the main house, guest quarters, garages and wine cellars as if they were separate buildings, he created a sequence of forms which look like a tiny hill town. The house contains all the elements of a medieval village—a "pope's deck" for outdoor eating, a tower overlooking the parking court, a high wall and entrance gate, and an obelisk. The tower serves triple duty: it is a viewing platform, it draws cool air up through the house, and its sloping back wall is a frame for solar collectors. The parking court acts as a small piazza, with its obelisk at one end and gate at the other; a bridge on top of the gate leads from the main house to the guest quarters.

4. The jumbled forms of Italian villages continue to fascinate Grondona; and he explored the theme again in a recently designed speculative house soon to be built. Designed in two parts with a drive running between, each area of the house appears to be a separate building. Each will be covered with a different material, and an overhead bridge will connect the two parts of the composition.

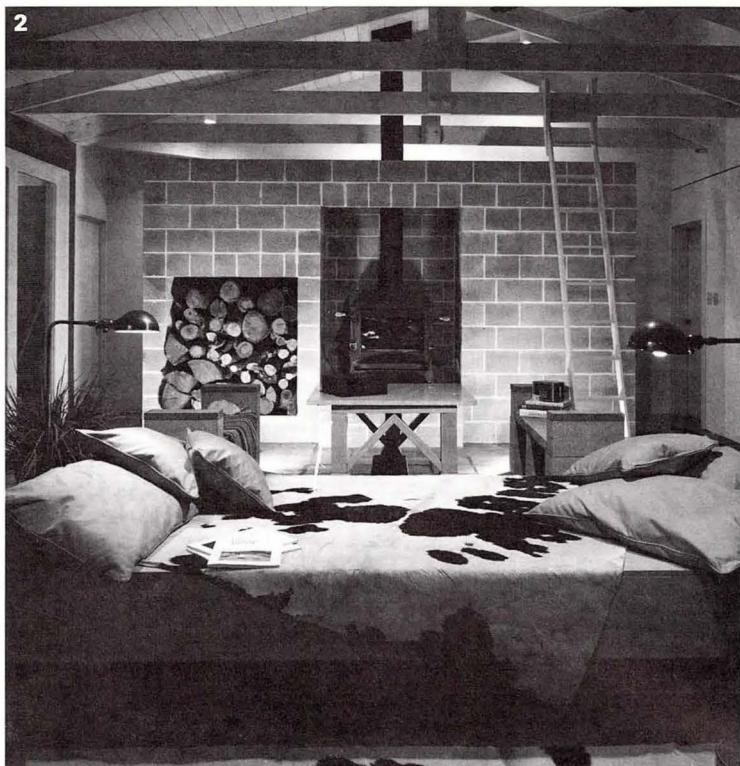


1



Henry Batey

2



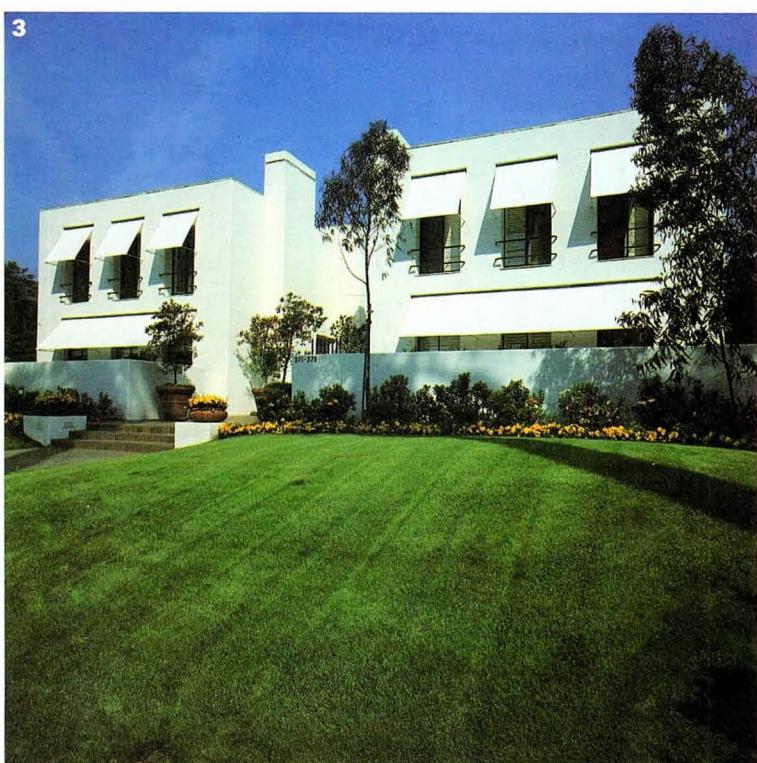
Andrew Batey and Mark Mack are concerned with the "purification" of architectural form; and their architecture is a clear reaction to the paper-thin decorative tendencies of post modernism. Their buildings, with bold, unornamented facades and simple symmetrical plans, achieve a timeless quality. They are quiet buildings which blend into the landscape rather than demanding attention.

1,2. The Kirlin house, a villa in the Napa Valley, exemplifies Batey and Mack's "neo-primitive" style. Set against a landscape of rolling hills, it has the solidity of an adobe or a traditional farmhouse. The house is symmetrical, with courtyards to the north and south; and it is massive, with its concrete block walls and long horizontal facade tying it very firmly to the land. Outside, the house is finished with warm, earthy colors relating to the colors of the surrounding hills; inside, the atmosphere is decidedly cooler.

Exposed concrete block walls and concrete and wooden furniture designed by the architects create an austere and ascetic atmosphere, like the interior of a monastery.

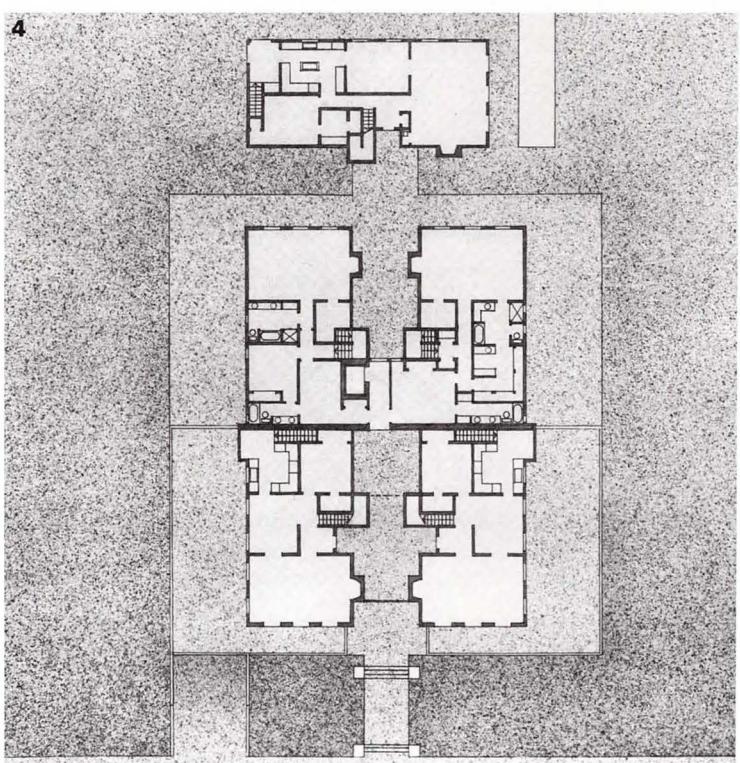
3,4. A group of five condominiums on a residential street in Pasadena are another example of the architects' classic and reductivist approach. Set back from the street by a lawn, a processional staircase and a high garden wall, the condominiums look like a large dignified home. A central slot flanked by a symmetrical arrangement of condominiums and chimneys slices through the building mass and leads to an entrance court. The height and proportions of the condominium block compliment the large private houses on the street making it a discreet neighborhood and a good example for future development.

3



Tim Street-Porter

4





Paul Miyamoto

e design of private houses

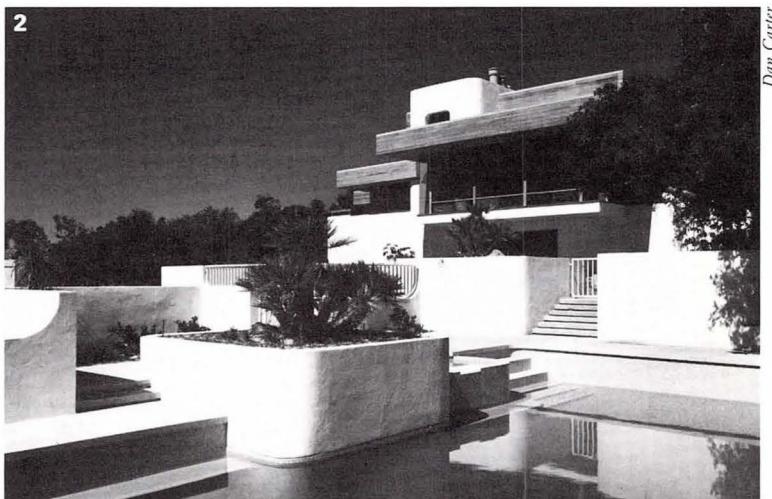
one of the most frequent commissions all and medium sized architectural ns receive. Since houses are often a 'lection of their designers' current pre upations, the variety of projects illus tered here reflects a broad range of bitectural styles.

4. "Every architect should sign and build his own house. It is a nning experience perhaps as important my project he will complete for an side client." So says architect James Spencer in reference to the house he igned for himself. The structure is ed on a sloping site and includes not his living quarters but also a darkn and an architectural office. The ral space of the house is a solarium ch collects heat in winter and vents m air in the summer.

1. Pulliam, Matthews and Associates designed this home for an attorney, his artist-wife, and their two children. The plan of the house is trapezoidal, widening to the rear of the site, and has as its focus a two-story atrium which serves as a foyer and gallery for display of the wife's work.



James G. Spencer



2. Donald G. Sharpe designed this house for a young, art collecting couple and their four children. Because of its site high in the foothills surrounding Santa Barbara, it has good views which can be enjoyed from a cantilevered living room or from several open decks. The white stucco walls, an important part of

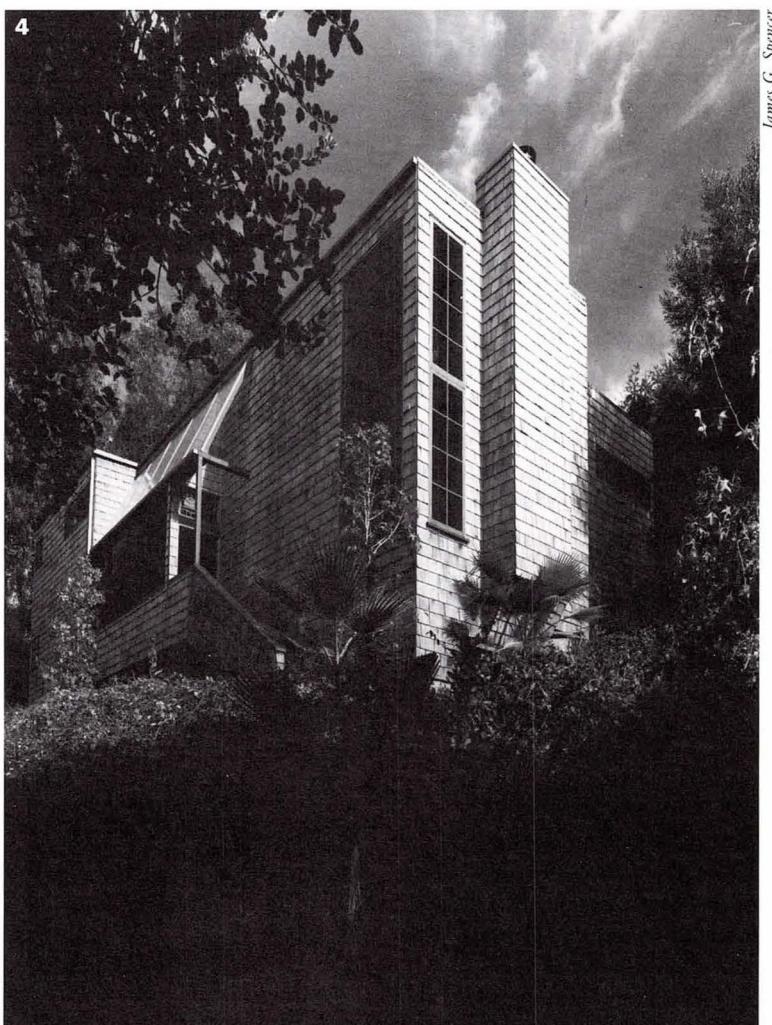
the exterior and interior design, were a result of the couple's desire for adequate wall space to display their collected works.



Leland Y. Lee

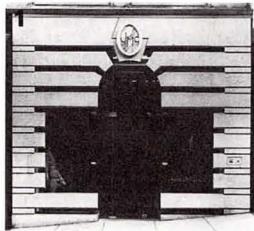
. John Blanton designed a st and open modern house for an surgeon and his family in Fresno. wood-frame structure is clad in redwood siding, and the entire house has a level of finish detail, as requested by tient. The dramatic shed roof of the wing slopes low to the south to

shade a glassy garden elevation; high to the north to illuminate an art collection with a band of clerestory windows. The western end of the main wing contains the garage, which acts as a buffer between the living spaces and the heat of the setting sun.

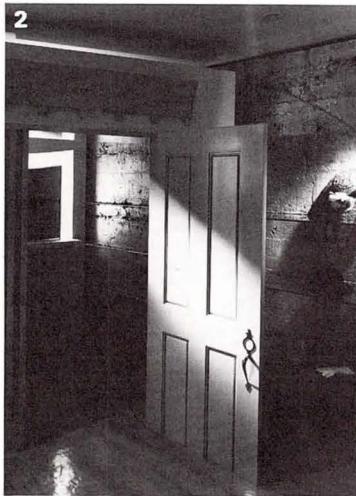


Leland Y. Lee

Dan Carter



Colin C. McRae



Colin C. McRae



Three building renovations by young San Francisco architects illustrate an attachment to architectural history and the romantic secrets of the past.

4,5. In a graphic design studio by Jennings and Stout, the architects incorporated the notion of urban geometry and geology into their design. They built four identical sets of parallel stairs ascending to a new mezzanine. Each staircase points directly to a window. The stairs parallel the direction of an ancient streambed which ran beneath the site and out to the China Basin; they also echo the lines of San Francisco's changing street grid which turns in a new direction at the edge of the building site.

1,2,3. At Jessica McClintock, an elegant boutique for a well known fashion designer, architect Hanns Kainz created a surrealistic and dream-like environment. Like the ghostly sister of older buildings on the street, the facade of the boutique floats in space, its cast mouldings suspended in front of a large

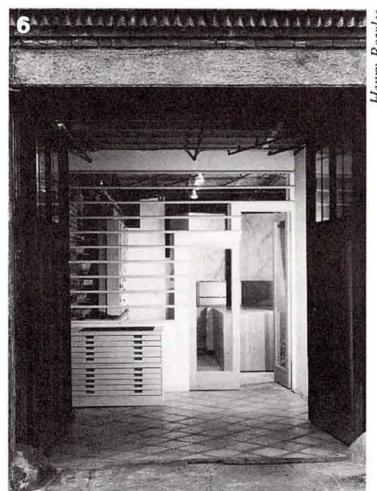
plate glass window wall. Inside, the shop is equally mysterious, a classical pavilion inserted into the gutted shell of an ancient ruin. It's impossible to tell where the old building ends and the fantasy begins; oversize details confuse the scale, and recessed lights and mirrors extend the space into infinity.



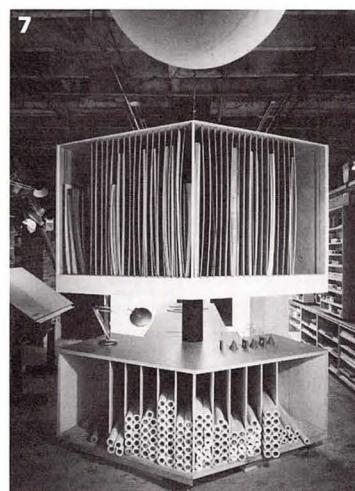
Peter Henricks



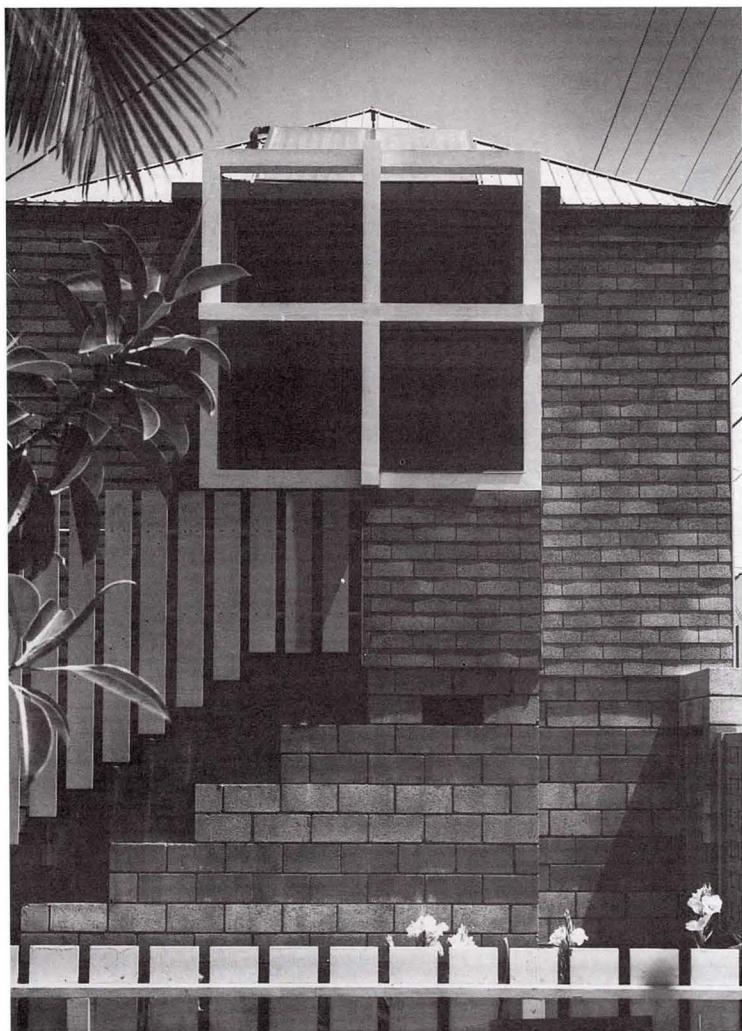
Henry Brooks



Henry Brooks



6,7. At Arch, an art supply store inserted into a minuscule alley shop, Susie Coliver and Daniel Friedlander stripped the plaster away from the brick walls and inserted a set of separate architectural elements into the empty space. Each element serves double duty, as a storage unit or sales desk; and as a decorative object drawn from a catalogue of historical architectural parts.



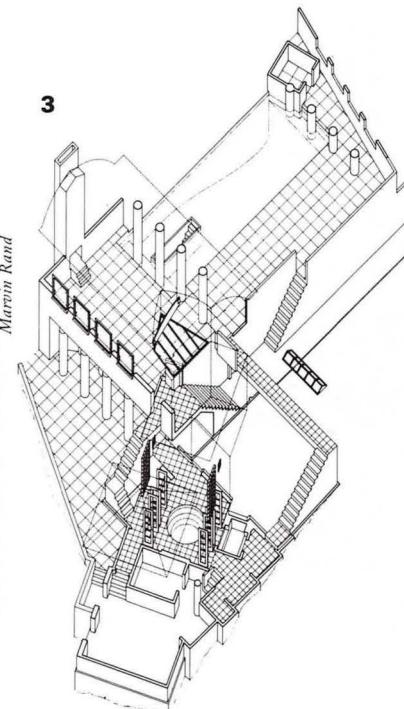
Marvin Rand

1. The 2468 house has a central window on each wall ranging in size from two feet to eight feet square. Each window is identically framed, and the changing dimensions create ambiguity, inside and out, about the actual size of the house.

Morphosis (Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi) and Eric Moss are architects who are concerned with intellectual explorations into form-making. They are architect's architects who manipulate building elements in a literary way.

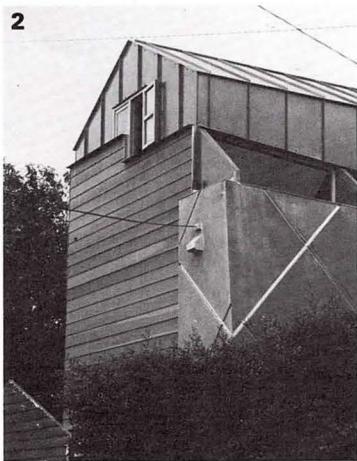
The 2468 house and Sedlak house, garage additions on Venice walk streets, are good examples of Morphosis' fascination with the vocabulary of building. Having little space to work with, they carefully defined each architectural element, making the viewer aware of the parts which make up the whole.

3



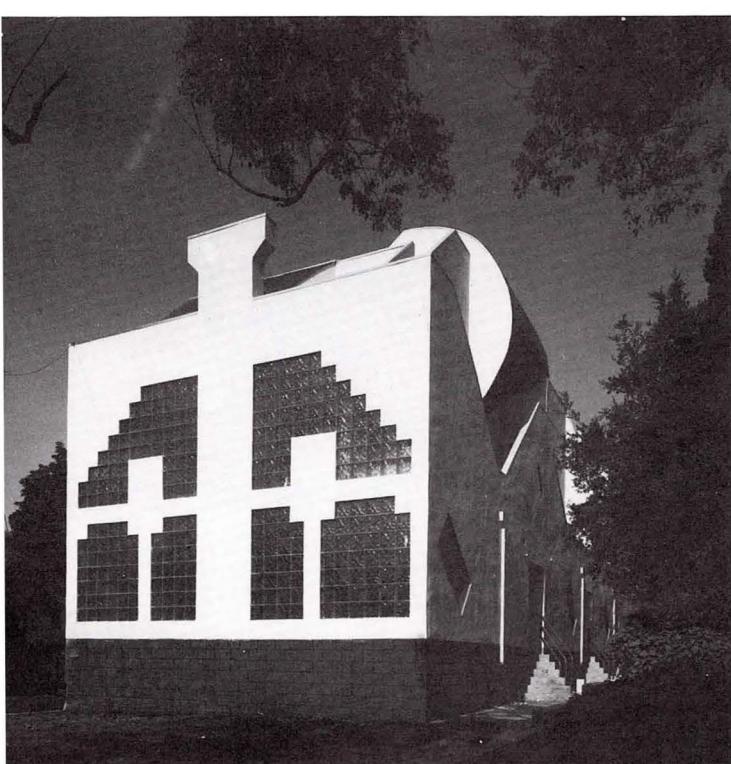
Marvin Rand

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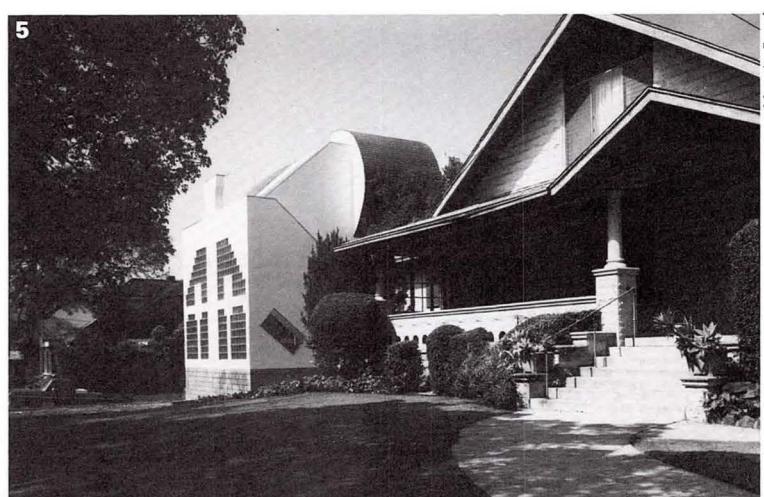


2. At the Sedlak house, the addition seems to be dropped into a space created by the older garage structure. The small, new house on top pulls away from the older one, and this impression is bolstered by the forced perspective of the roof line.

3. At the Cohen house, an unbuilt project, the architects were given a more complex problem. Here they assembled a series of classical elements in a processional sequence, as if the house were telling a story.



Marvin Rand



Marvin Rand

4,5. At the Pasadena condo- miniums designed by Eric Moss and his former partner James Stafford, the architects played with the context. They decorated the facade with a pattern of glass bricks which echoes the typical profile of adjacent bungalows. Each of the other walls is treated in a completely different

way: one has a pattern of windows which look like faces leering at the neighbors, one has windows tilted at the same angle as the interior stairs, and the rear facade has a domed window which, together with the rolling front roof, makes the building look like a train pulling out of a station.

1



1,2,3,4,5. Macondray Terrace,

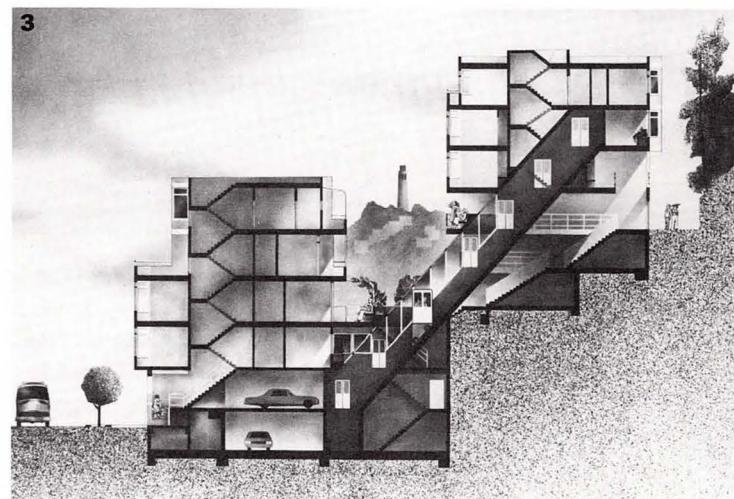
designed and developed by Hood Miller Associates, is a thirteen-unit condominium project on Russian Hill. The site, which has been empty since before the 1906 earthquake, is on a steep slope between busy Union Street and pedestrian Macondray Lane.

The building has two entrances, one on Union and another on Macondray. These are joined to each other and to parking and living levels by an inclined elevator. The many setbacks required by code, or desirable to preserve views, or admit sunlight or provide balconies have resulted in a great variety of floor plans.

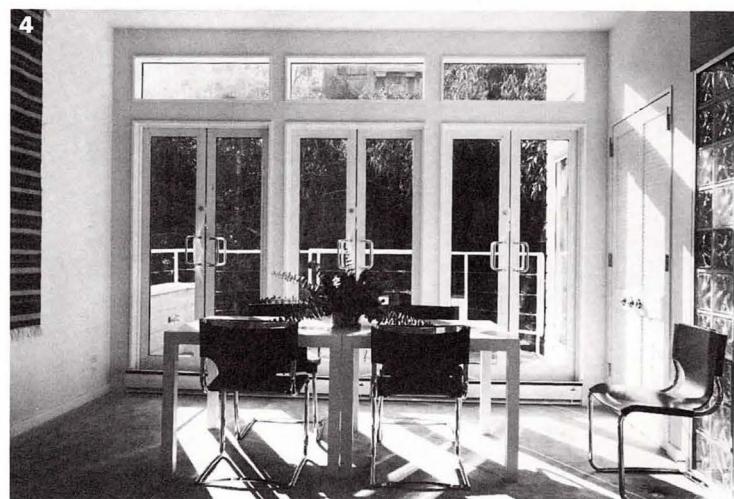
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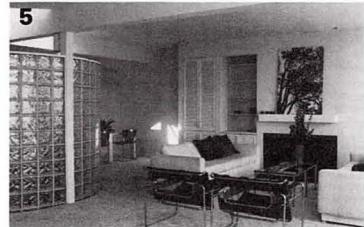
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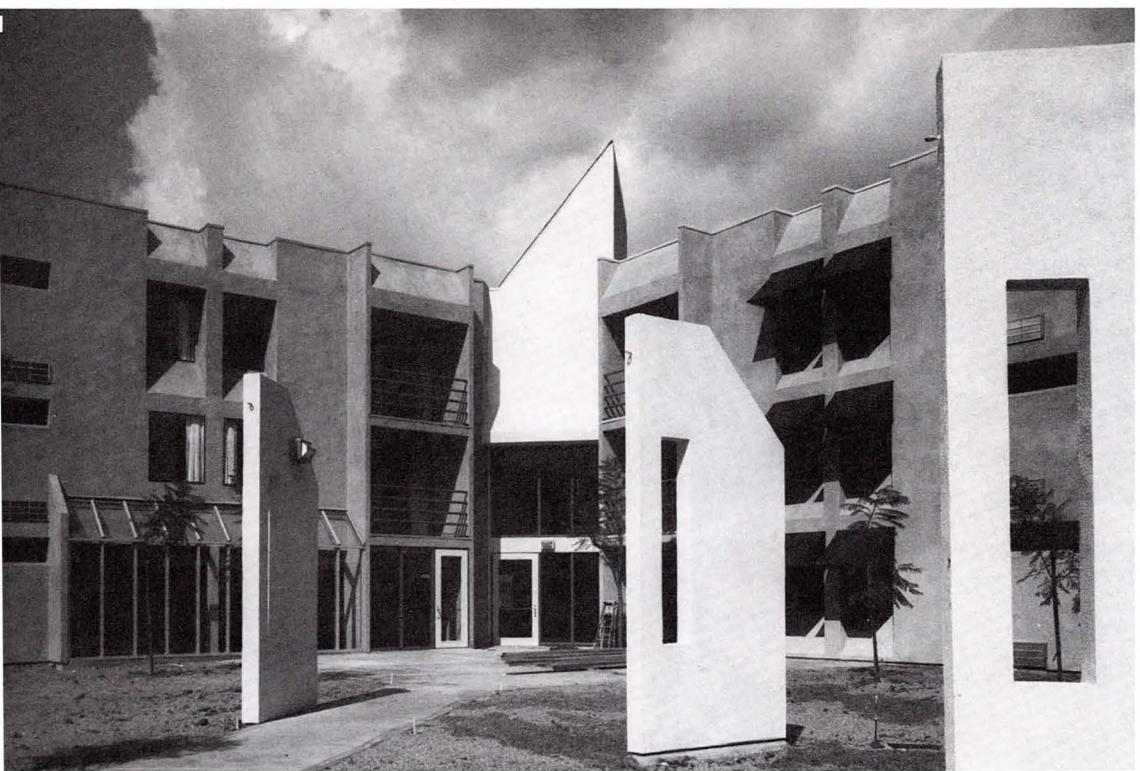
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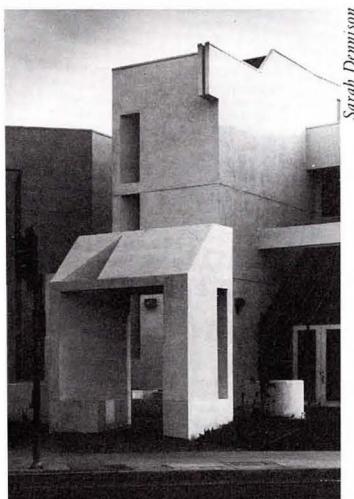
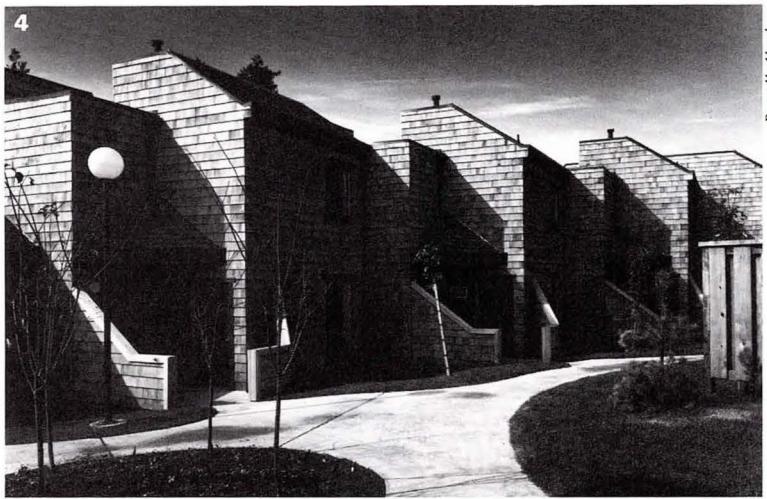
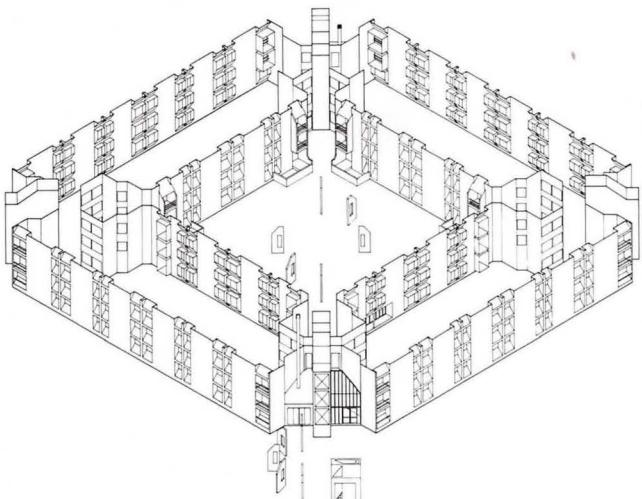


The finest characteristic of Macondray Terrace is its sensitivity to context. Like neighboring developments, it is divided into an upper and lower block, separated by an open area. The Union Street elevation is faithful to the existing pattern of a base, containing the entrance, surrounded by a strip of bay windows.



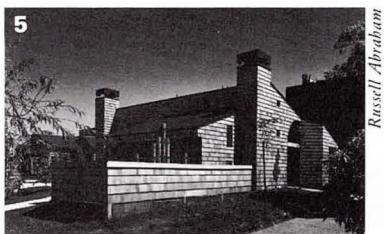
1,2,3. Pico Union Villa by John Mutchlow is a federally financed, locally owned housing project for the Hispanic elderly. The scheme consists of a three story square of apartments surrounding a landscaped courtyard. Shared spaces such as entrances, stairs, a community room and laundry rooms are located at the corners. Apartments, which line both sides of the corridors, overlook the streets or the courtyard. This arrangement allows a maximum number of apartments on the site, as well as a secure outdoor space. The enclosed courtyard, a traditional feature of Latin residences, is a reassuringly familiar element to the residents.

The most striking feature of the Villa is its color scheme. The architect tried to relieve the usual monotony of public housing by selecting a variety of colors. Following the principle of color temperature, he chose a palette which would balance the sunlight and warmth reaching each wall: mauve on the south, blue on the west, yellow on the north, and pink-beige on the east. The corners of the building are neutral white.

**3**

4,5. This housing development by Kurtzman and Kodama was inserted into a declining lower income neighborhood. The plan arranges two story row houses around the outside of the property, enclosing common landscaped areas. Wooden shingles, stepped back houses, and kitty-corner entrance vestibules give each unit a homey scale and individual identity.

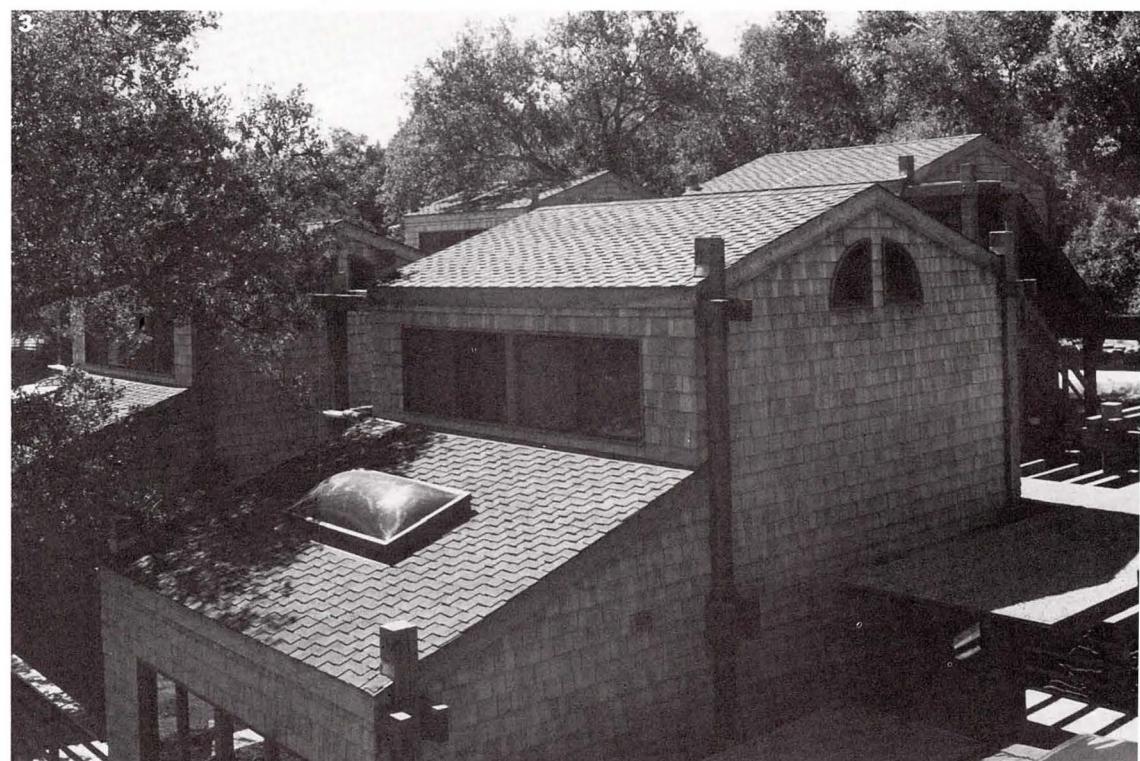
The client was a corporation formed by the Savo Island neighborhood, with the city of Berkeley and its redevelopment agency. A group of representatives met weekly during the course of the project, voicing the neighborhood's hopes and concerns. It was this group that decided to develop the project with the aid of a federal subsidy, putting home ownership within reach of lower income families.

**5**



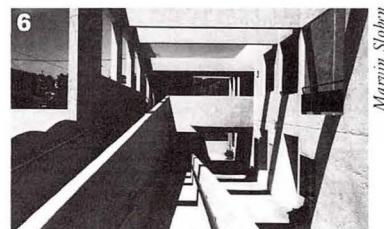
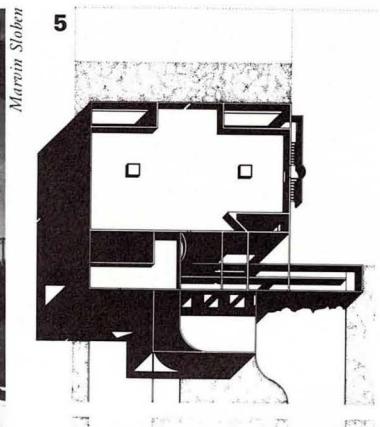
1,2,3. The Oak Grove

Elementary School by Wilson and Conrad was built for a developing religious community in Ojai, the Krishnamurti Foundation. The gently sloping site is shaded by live oaks permitting the use of skylights without major heat gain. The principle design units are two story free-standing buildings containing classrooms and living areas for instructors with open playdecks adjacent. A covered walkway joins these "pavilions" to each other and to a large building which houses craft and science activities. Buildings, walkways and decks are raised off the ground by poles resting on concrete footings. Since the buildings appear to stand up in the trees, the children call them "nests" and have named them after birds. This method of pole construction, along with the casual planning of the structure, allowed the school to be placed on the site with minimal disturbance to the landscape.



4,5,6,7. The Montessori School

of San Diego by Martinez/Wong and Associates was designed for 125 children between the ages of three and ten. The spaces required by the school fell naturally into two categories: teaching areas and non-teaching areas. This division was used to architectural advantage. The architects separated the school into two buildings: a small one in front containing the entry, office and lounge, and a larger one in back containing classrooms and observation booths. A ramp for the handicapped leading to the second floor fits neatly between the two structures. Combined with other circulation elements and a screen wall, it forms a link between the two buildings. The screen wall is punched out, like cardboard, with simple, playful shapes.





Philip L. Molten

1,2. The new Commodore Sloat

School by Marquis Associates combines remodeled portions of the existing elementary school with new classrooms and offices, a cafeteria, and a media center. The program for the project was developed with the help of a community workshop.

The school's sloping site is in a neighborhood of detached, mostly Spanish style houses, and the design respects the context by keeping buildings low and incorporating local characteristics such as white stucco walls, arched openings and tile, typical of the Spanish revival style.

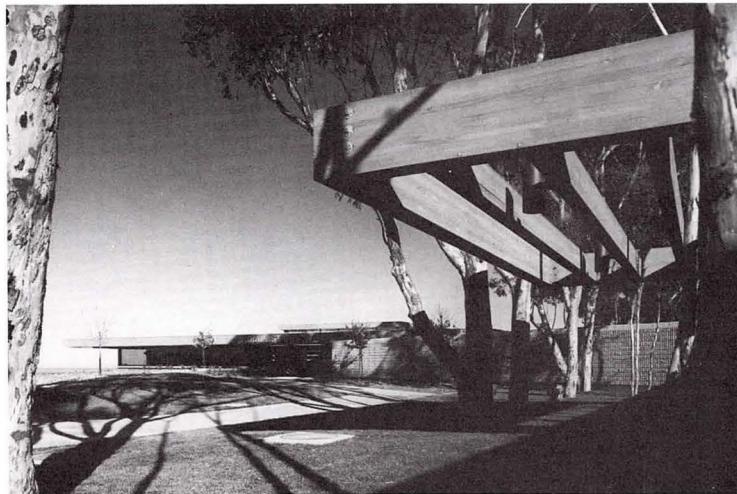
The new teaching areas consist of a kindergarten and three new classroom blocks. These blocks combine four semi-open classrooms with shared storage, toilets and an enclosed patio. The focus of the school is the new audio-visual center, linked to the playgrounds by a "reading courtyard."

Major spaces in the school have natural light and operable windows; the classroom blocks even enjoy cross ventilation. A system of shaded walkways joins the buildings, giving the school a unified appearance.

3,4,5,6. Torrey Pines High School by Deems/Lewis and Partners was the result of an unusually comprehensive architectural service. The architects not only designed the building, but also the landscape, interiors, graphics and engineering. The result of the program, developed by a team of teachers, administrators and architects, was a campus consisting of four buildings grouped around a quadrangle. The materials, wooden roof beams and textured concrete block walls, are pleasant and vandal resistant; and the system allows demountable interior partitions.



Rondal Partridge



Wayne Thom



Wayne Thom



Wayne Thom



Wayne Thom



Julius Shulman

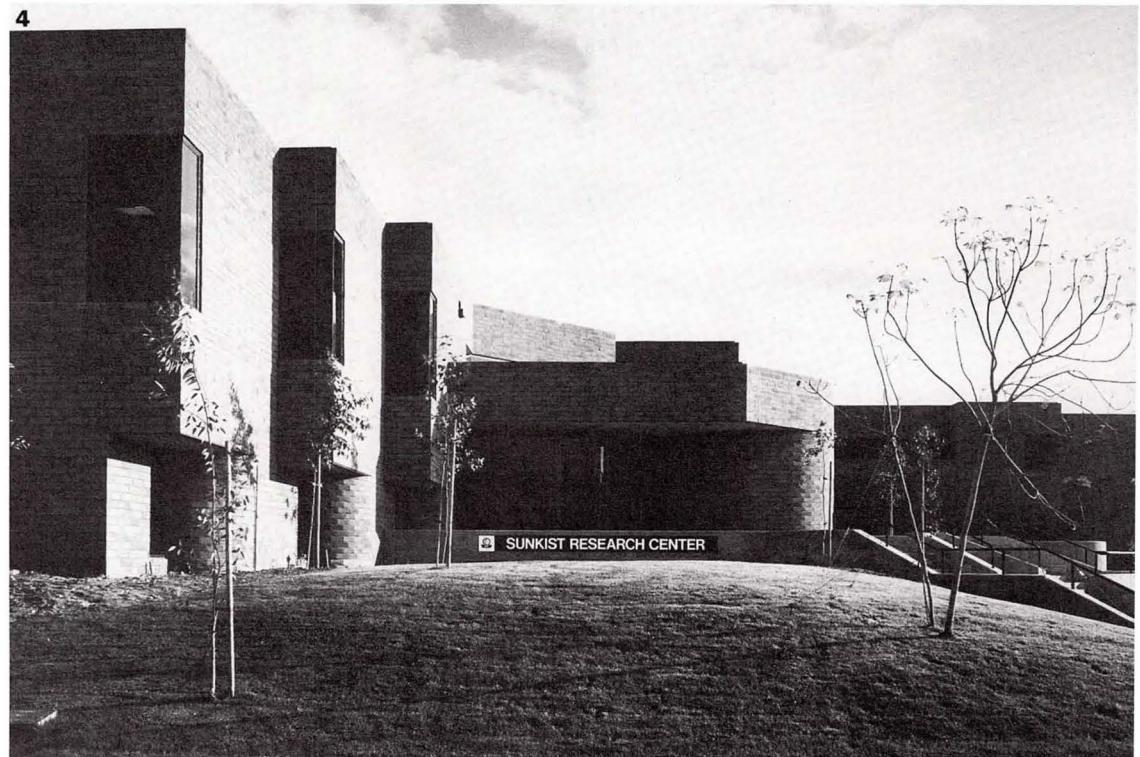
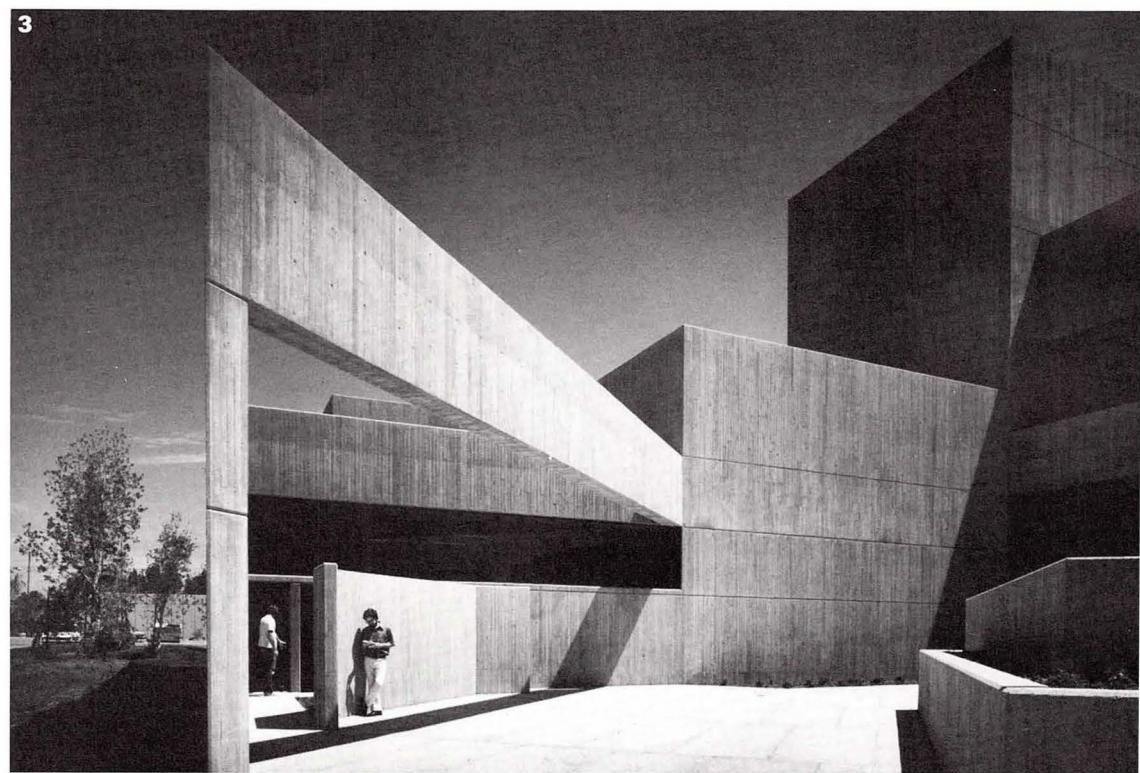
Two buildings which are aesthetically similar are the Sunkist Research Center designed by William Blurock and Partners, and the Theatre Arts Building at Dominguez Hills State University by Daniel Dworsky. Both are highly articulated, heavy, inward looking buildings constructed of reinforced concrete in the Brutalist style.

1, 2, 3. The Theatre Arts building by Dworsky took advantage of its sloping site to generate a formal composition of stepped, interlocking volumes. Built from board-formed concrete left in its natural state inside and out, the building has a solid, sculptural presence which dominates the surrounding area.

Inside, the building accommodates a variety of uses. Used by both the university and the general public for classes and events, it contains a 500 seat auditorium, as well as classroom, rehearsal and service areas. The levels of the building are organized so that activities do not clash with one another. The main entrance and box office are at the top of the sloping site so that people can filter into the building and down through the raked auditorium. The service areas are at the bottom where loading and unloading of scenery can take place without disturbing other activities. The building's highly articulated, angular walls create courtyards which were designed for "informal drama and music performances," according to the architects.

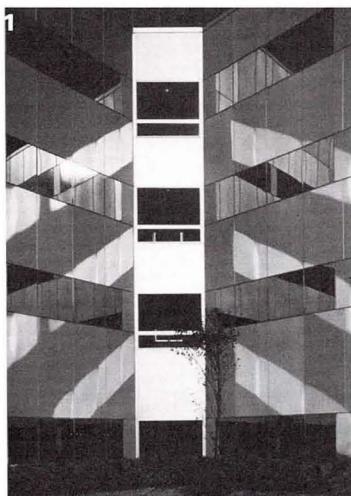


Julius Shulman



SUNKIST RESEARCH CENTER

4. The Sunkist Research Center by the Blurock Partnership houses food and product researchers. A series of inward looking concrete volumes clad in red clay brick, the building's heavy structure serves functional as well as aesthetic purposes. The dense walls reduce heat load and the impact of noise emanating from a nearby international airport, as well as providing vibration-free floors which are necessary for the delicate calibration equipment used by Sunkist scientists. On the outside, the building has a fortress-like appearance, but inside there is a two story skylit reception area and airy open plan working areas.



Marvin Wax



Travis

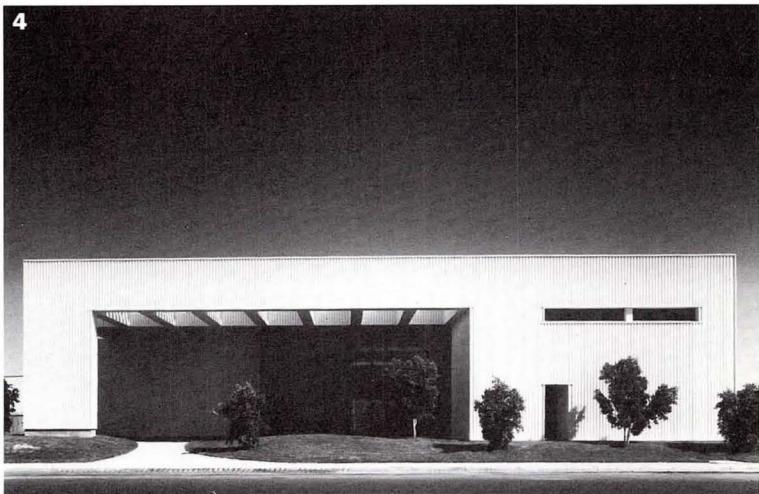
2. MBT Associates' IBM Santa Clara Programming Center is designed in a style suitable to the company's reputation as a highly efficient electronic service industry. The center, located at the end of California's famous "Silicon Valley," accommodates 2000 employees working at research and customer services computer programming for the western United States and Asia.

The center consists of a series of shiny, cruciform shaped buildings overlooking small landscaped courtyards and a central raised plaza. Underneath the plaza is a computer center with one of the largest capabilities in the world.

The buildings are clad with alternating bands of aluminum and mirror glass panels. Although a repetitive panel system was used, sections of the complex are enameled in bright primary colors, giving it the lively, dynamic appearance of an oversized computer toy.

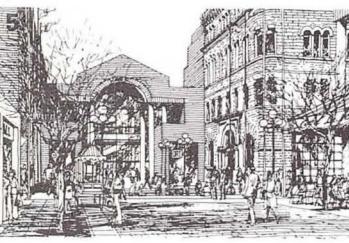
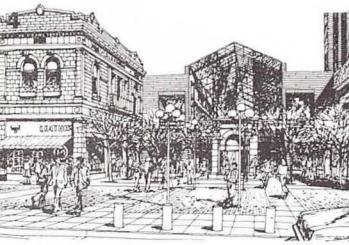
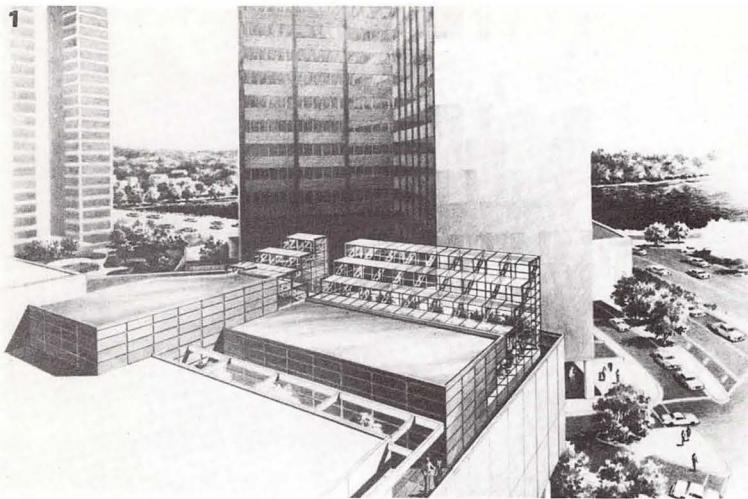


Ward Williams Associates



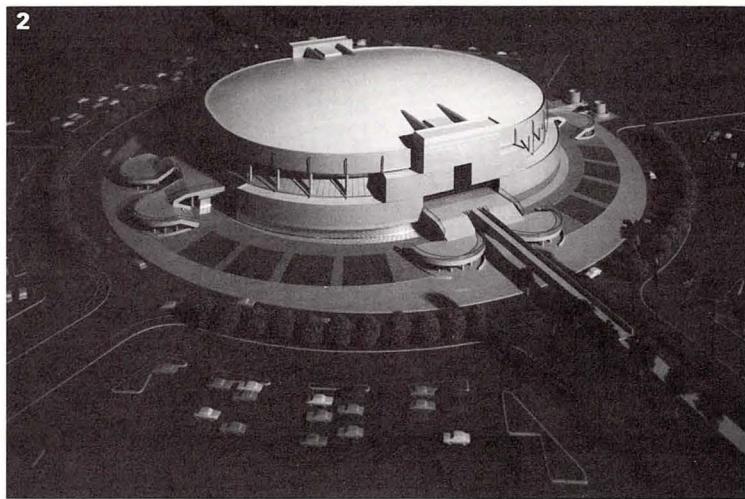
Ward Williams Associates

3,4. Salerno Livingston and Partners were architects for the Atkinson Marine Corporation, a company whose principal client is the United States Navy. In their efforts to create a complex which was visually and functionally appropriate to their client's needs, the architects designed a group of high tech buildings containing corporate headquarters, a ship repair building and a surface preparation building. They used simple, industrialized building techniques, cladding the buildings with a uniform system of corrugated metal panels on all outside surfaces as well as inside public areas.

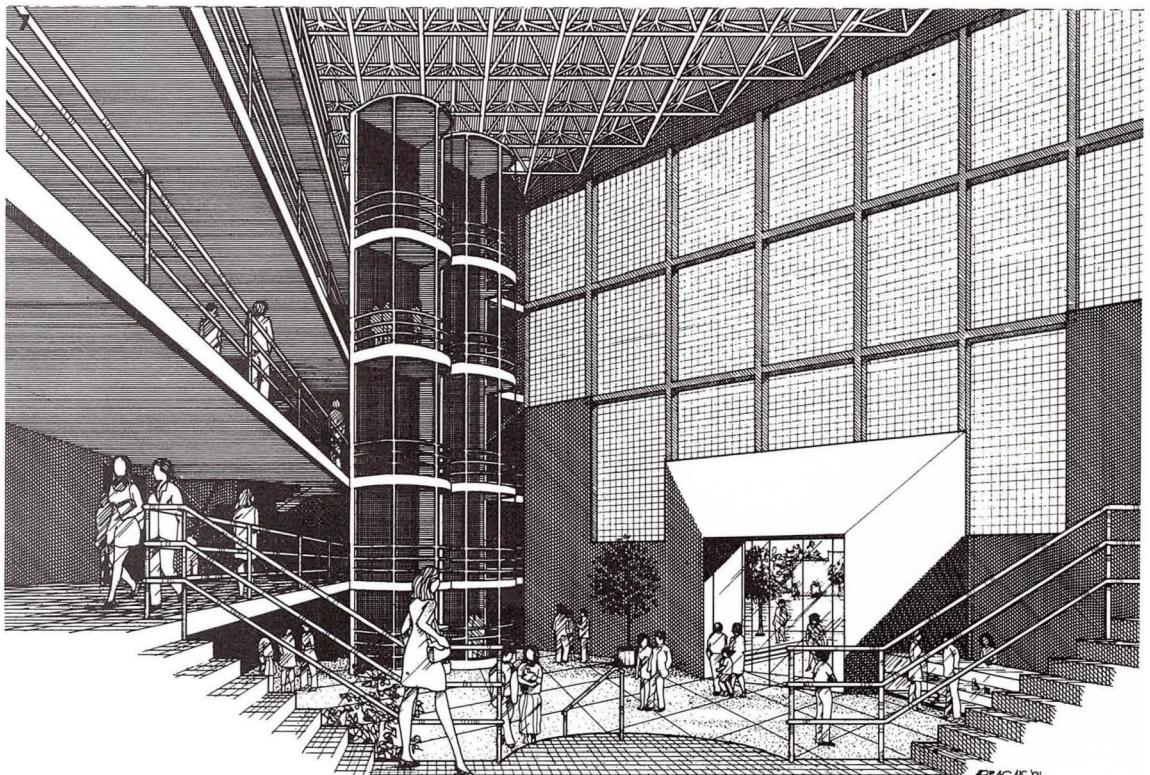
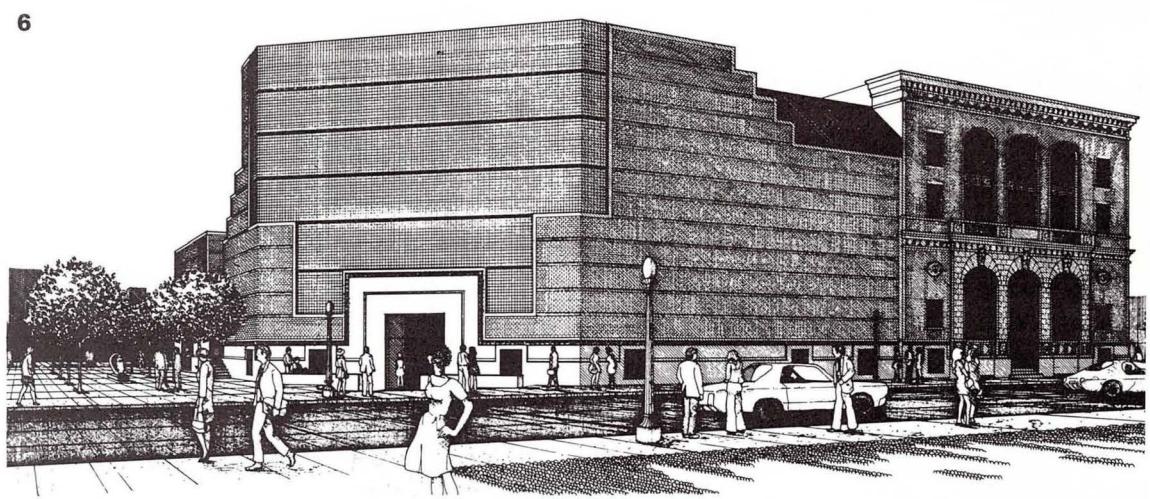
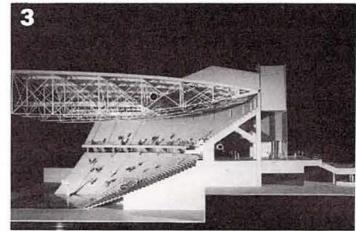


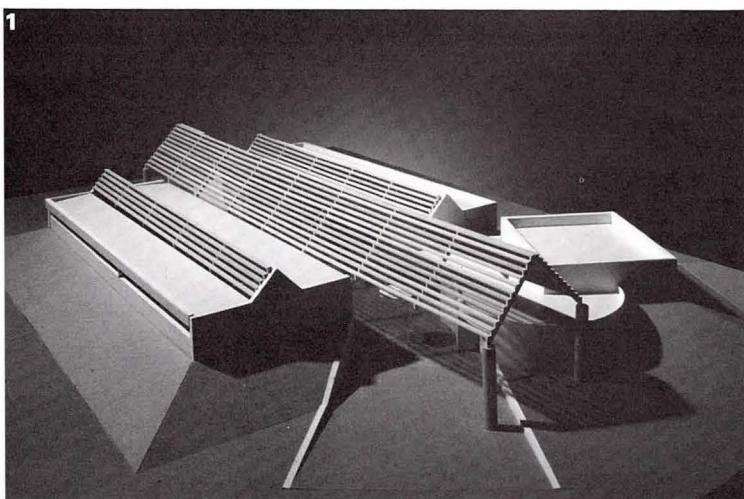
4,5. Charles Kober Associates designed an urbane solution to the problem of the in-town shopping mall on an eight block site in downtown Boise. The scheme mixes existing buildings with new retail and parking space, and organizes the whole with a network of pedestrian streets, punctuated by plazas, as a continuation of the surrounding grid.

6,7. Lew and Patnaude have planned the rehabilitation of an old newspaper plant into a museum of art, history, and science for the Fresno Metropolitan Museum. The most historically significant structure on the site will be left exposed. The other buildings will be combined with a new atrium in a brick and glass block envelope designed to sympathize with the original 1922 structure.

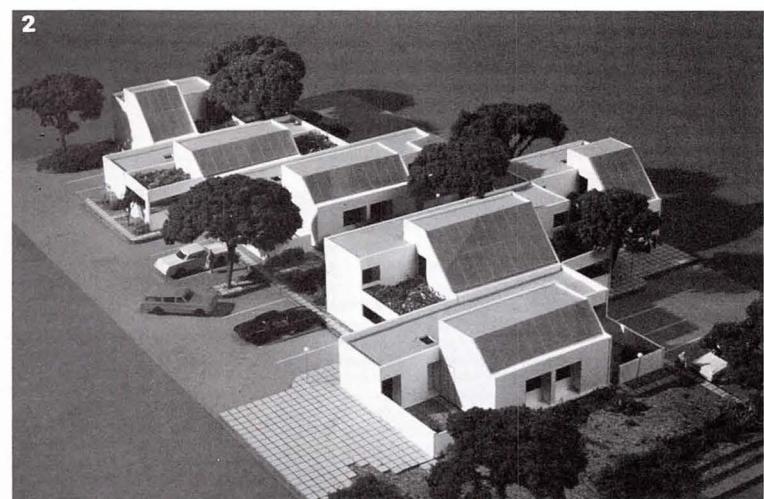


2,3. John Carl Warnecke and Associates designed a basketball arena for the University of Nevada which seats 18,000 people. The roof of the building is supported by an enormous two-way system of cable trusses, and the skin consists of metal panels painted red and silver, the university colors.



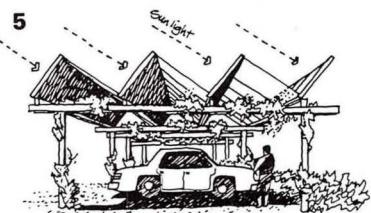
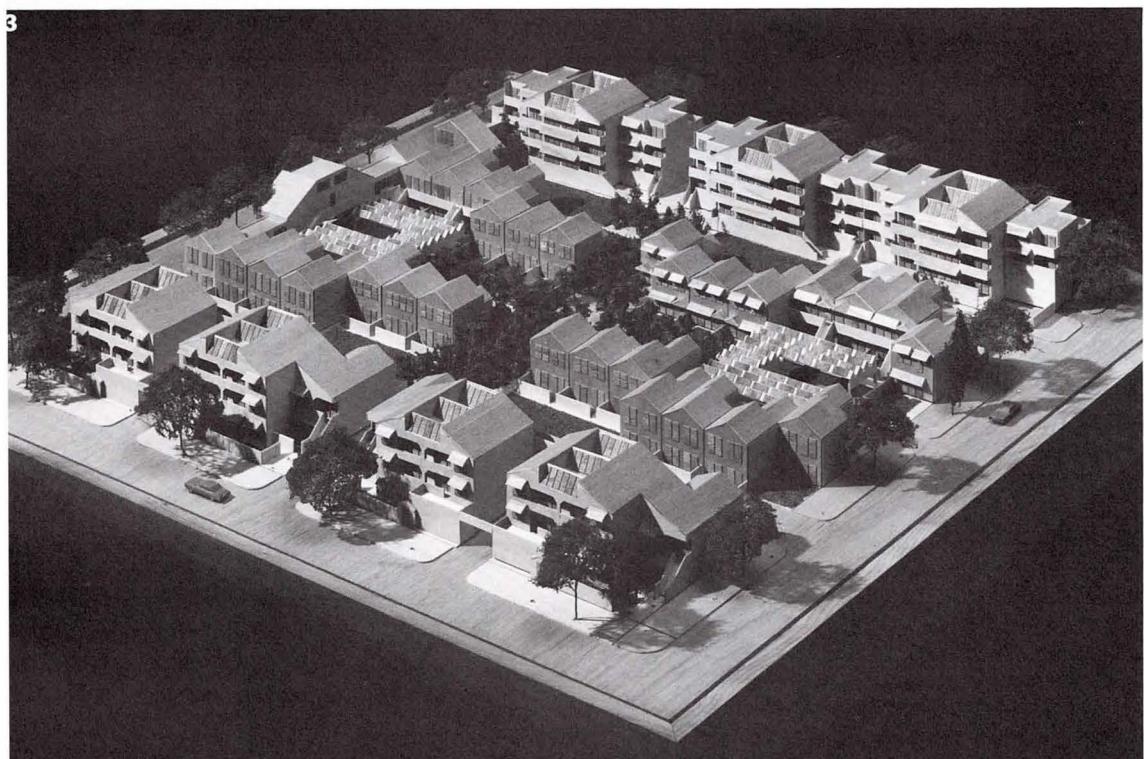


1. The Energy Showcase by 'ol-Arc was commissioned to demonstrate the practicality of heating and cooling commercial buildings by means of massive solar devices. The 7600 square foot structure will house visitor programs and the energy management control system for McClellan Air Force Base.



2. The detached home is popular because it provides privacy and identity; but because it requires exposure on all sides it is wasteful of land and energy. In this design Sam Davis attempted to improve on the traditional pattern with a more efficient scheme of clustered, 32-foot square courtyard houses. Each

unit is well insulated, has cross ventilation and is equipped with an active solar system for heating and cooling. The square plan is adaptable to various solar orientations, while the repeated basic unit allows site plans of density and diversity.



3,4,5,6. Van der Ryn, Calthorpe and Partners have developed a richly detailed plan for putting 107 units of affordable, energy-efficient houses on a one-block site. The scheme includes a small amount of commercial space as well as a good mix of townhouses, apartments, and condominiums. To keep costs down, density is high, and the units are designed with small but efficient floor plans. Similar tenants will be grouped together on an appropriate part of the site: Larger family units are clustered in the safer, more secluded center of the project, while smaller single and double units line the perimeter of the project and are oriented to the street. A variety of park-like spaces give each area a separate identity.



As part of the scheme to make the project energy efficient, active solar heaters are planned for all water and some space heating. Passive design also plays a part, the most important element of which was the design of the spacing and massing of the buildings to guarantee year-round sun penetration.

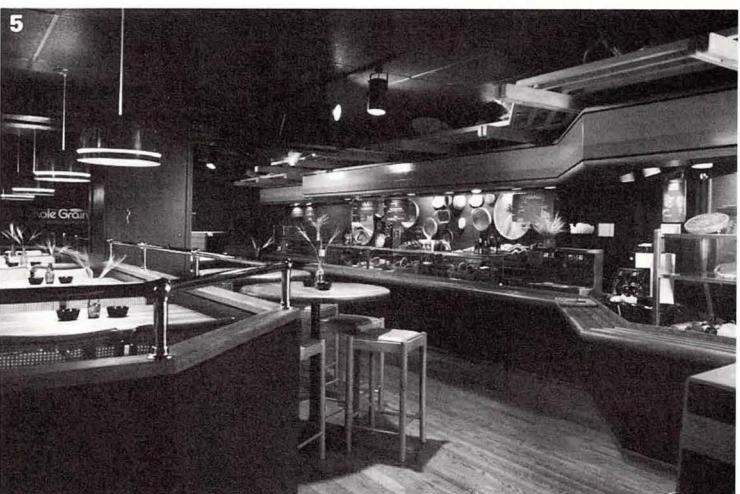
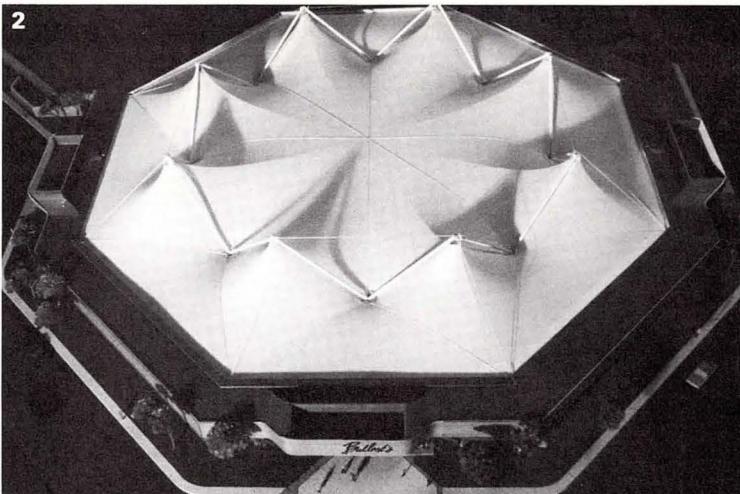




1. 945 Front Street is an ordinary tilt-up concrete warehouse which has been rehabilitated for office use. The architects gutted the building, creating a two story interior skylit street surrounded by two levels of office suites. Ramon Zambrano and Associates acted as both architects and developers for the project.

2. Bullock's Fashion Island by Zellmer Associates is a one story department store covered by 70,000 square feet of translucent fiberglass fabric. This giant skylit tent allows a reduction in daytime lighting and its accompanying heat load which will save an estimated \$50,000 per year in energy costs.

3. The Warren Chair was designed for hospital use by Ken Leib, and is named after his infirm father. An award winning design, the steel frame gives the chair stability and permits the patient to rock and to easily push himself up. The mesh seat and back are well ventilated, allowing for dry, long term sitting.



4,5. WME is a firm which sees itself practicing interior architecture as a discipline distinct from either architecture or interior design. These two projects are indicative of the work they do. Top of the Hub is a rooftop restaurant whose design combines warm colors and rough

textures with high tech materials. The Whole Grain places seating on a raised platform amidst natural materials and colors.



California 101: Bunker Hill Competition

Early in 1980, the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency announced a competition for the development of the last remaining parcel of land on Bunker Hill. Developer/architect teams were invited to submit proposals which included schematic designs as well as financial plans. The team selected by the CRA committee and the reasons for its selection became a center of controversy among local architectural observers. Michael Sorkin discusses the competition and analyzes the five schemes submitted.

1.

Developer: Metropolitan Structures, Inc.

Architect: Fujikawa, Conterato, Lohan and Associates

2.

Developer: Olympia & York/Trizec Western

Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

3.

Developer: Cabot, Cabot & Forbes

Architects: A. C. Martin and Associates; Davis, Brody and Associates

4.

Developer: Bunker Hill Associates (a consortium of Cadillac Fairview/California Goldrich, Kest and Associates, and Shepell Government Housing)

Architects: Arthur Erickson and Associates; Kamnitzer, Cotton, Vreeland; and Gruen Associates

5.

Developer: Maguire Partners

Architects: Barton Myers, Harvey Perloff, Edgardo Contini, Charles Moore, Lawrence Halprin, Cesar Pelli, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, Ricardo Legoretta, Frank Gehry, Robert Kennard



Angel's Flight, 1931

Edward Hopper

Oil on canvas, 50 1/4 x 40 inches

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Gift of Mrs. L. M. Maitland

Michael Sorkin is a Contributing Editor to Arts and Architecture. An architect and writer, he lives in Los Angeles and New York.

Bunker Hill Mentality

by Michael Sorkin

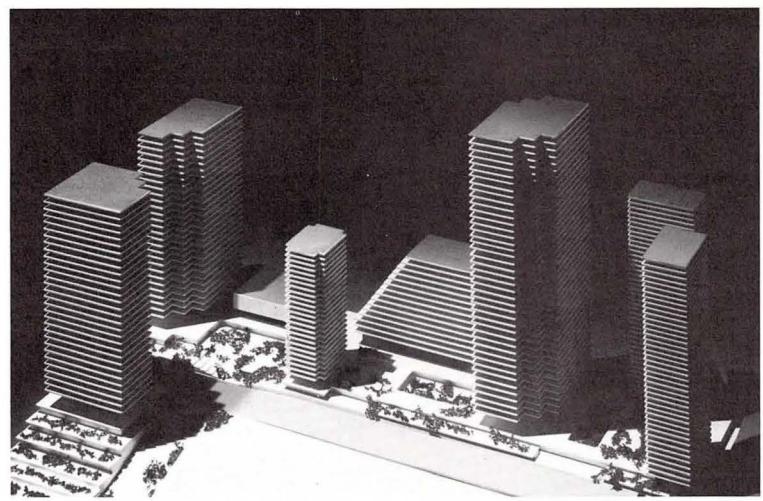
Attitudes towards city planning have metamorphosed mightily in the last few years. Where once the model for urban renewal was total destruction ("We had to destroy it to save it"), the new consciousness recognizes that cities have frail ecologies as subtle, complex, and interdependent as any in nature. The hygienic fantasies of Modernism, with its visions of pristine towers standing in solipsistic splendor amid primeval greenwards have been supplanted by an awakened reverence for the richness of tradition. If the Modernists saw cities as agglomerations of parcels (a concept that meshed neatly with the divide and conquer *realpolitik* of real estate development), the new notion reinstates a view of urban form in which the basic generative elements are streets and squares, carved from a solid matrix. The one, born of the anti-social mentality of automobile worship and "human engineering," emphasized the discreteness of urban elements; the other prefers to celebrate continuity and cohesion.

When the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency announced its Bunker Hill competition, it was caught at the very moment of transition between old and new paradigms. The CRA had already nuked the charming and funky, if delapidated, neighborhood surrounding and including the competition site and replaced most of it with a brace of projects of unalloyed mediocrity, hostile to the street. At this point, someone must have realized that there was only one chance left to make Bunker Hill nice for people. The competition brief clearly reflected this guilty anxiety: the programmatic requirements were a *Summa Urbanistica*, a distillation of the principles of the "new" planning. It offered nothing less than the planner's equivalent of the right stuff—the right mix. On one 11 acre site were to be office towers, condominium apartments, a hotel, a museum of contemporary art, thousands of parking places, a misguided "people-mover" station

(recently scotched by the Reaganoids, presumably to free the money to buy an extra MX missile), cinemas and other entertainment facilities, shops, restaurants, parks and plazas, promenades, even a specifically mandated piece of instant nostalgia, the "restored" Angel's Flight funicular railroad, a symbolic tithe to mass transit from autopria. The gesture was especially penitential since the hill up which the conveyance had formerly run—part of the urban renewal free fire zone—was now blasted to mole hill proportions.

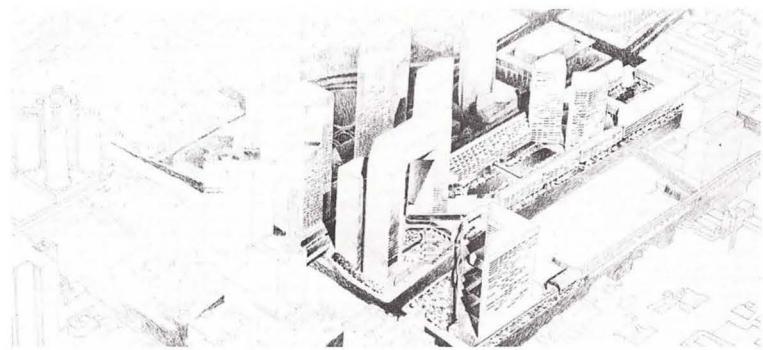
The road to Alphaville, alas, is paved with good intentions. Most of the submissions bore a relationship to the program like that of a cadaver to a living being: the parts are all there but something is missing. The absent ingredient in most of the schemes was precisely that which the program could only signal, not specify—urbanity. Urbanity on Bunker Hill must logically include three components. First, it calls for a restoration of the city sense that is born of street and square, the sort of urban configuration at work in the surprisingly cohesive ensemble of the adjacent downtown core entered on Broadway (see Guidemap, page 48a). Second, one would expect a cogent expression about the particular character of Los Angeles, one of the world's wonder cities. This requires an act of the imagination, an act which unfortunately proved unnatural to most of the entrants. Finally, any solution had to address the special particulars of the site itself, not simply in terms of mediating between the variegated character of its surroundings (downtown core, boring new office slabs, boring new housing, music center, civic center, Broadway shopping area) and in recognition of its sloping topography but also with respect to the obliterated memory of what once was, a place of variety, of texture, of character.

Proposals were submitted by five architect/developer teams. The scheme submitted by **Fujikawa, Conterato, Lohan and Associates**, successor firm to Mies van der Rohe, a man who could hardly be accused of sympathy with cities, was of predictable *Mieskeit*, a perfect example of the old, repudiated, way of doing things. It placed a gaggle of large, unelaborated buildings randomly around the site, and filled the interstices with a carpet of teeny townhouses; yielding an incoherent form. Here in bold relief was the kind of development that has been accessory to urbanicide in cities from coast to coast, the LA version in no way departing from its clone in Chicago or Tulsa. The scheme was fit to its site only in its dimensions.



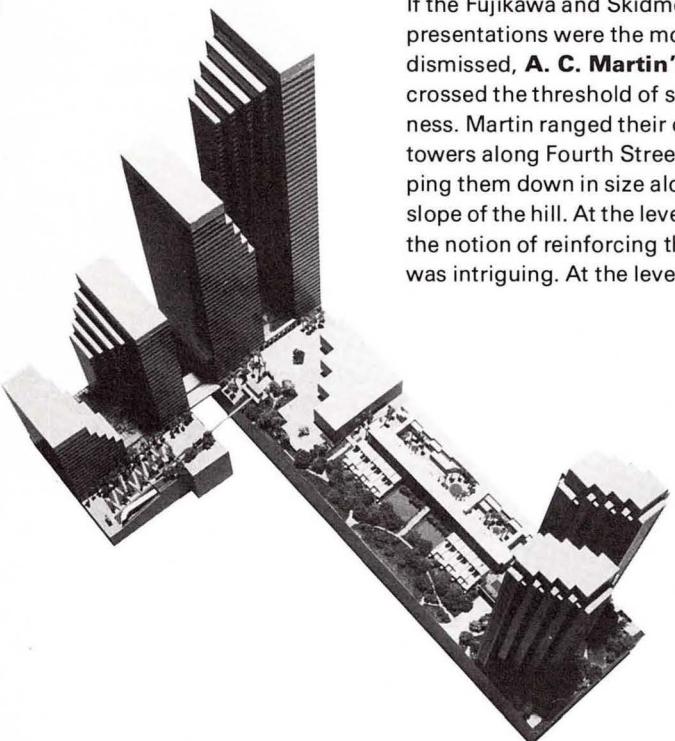
What Skidmore, Owings & Merrill proposed was a typically quantitative solution in which was embedded the kernel of a single good idea. This unfortunately, was destined never to germinate. Like A. C. Martin and Erickson, SOM chose to cluster its three strikingly peculiar office towers at the western end of the site. It was, however, unique among the submissions in proposing as its centerpiece a long enclosed courtyard, modeled, explicitly, on the Palais Royal in Paris. This courtyard was to be surrounded by low buildings containing apartments and the art museum and these buildings were, in turn to provide hard continuous edges along Grand Avenue and

Olive Street. That, however, was it. A single convincing gesture, larded with precedent but presented as no more than a diagram. Ideas do not become architecture until animated by design. The rest of the submission offered no straws of hope that any was likely to take place.

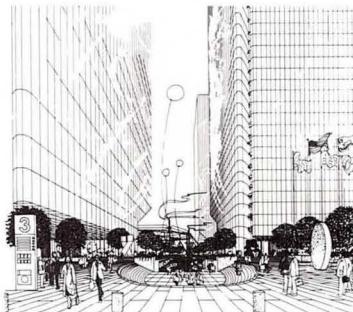


If the Fujikawa and Skidmore presentations were the most easily dismissed, **A. C. Martin's** clearly crossed the threshold of seriousness. Martin ranged their office towers along Fourth Street, stepping them down in size along the slope of the hill. At the level of idea, the notion of reinforcing the slope was intriguing. At the level of

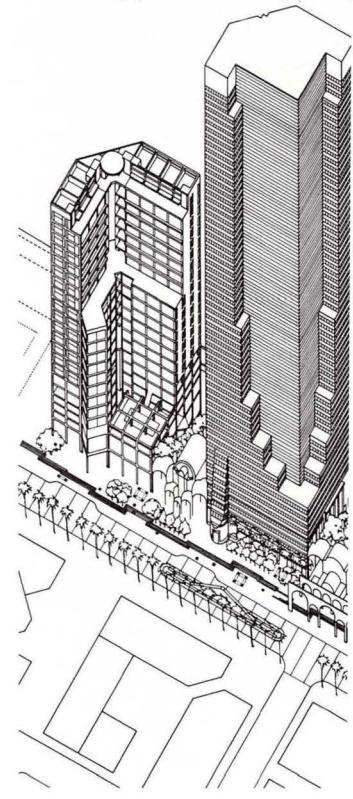
design, the proposal was less convincing. At the level of Fourth Street, the wall of building was likely to be horrible. To the east of this phalanx, however, Martin proposed to build "Grand Steps," a processional connection through the dog-leg of the site. This was a very fine, very beautiful notion indeed, clearly the strongest and most thoughtful link between the Broadway shopping area and the development site conceived by any of the competitors. There were also two apartment towers by Davis and Brody at the east end of the site, typical of their unspectacular if efficient work. The space between the two groupings of towers was devoid of any real interest, leaving Grand Avenue virtually a secondary axis. On Olive Street, the cop-out was worse: a skinny sloping park with a junior executive jogging path.



The winning scheme—by Arthur Erickson and Associates—was striking for the yawning gap between its rhetoric and reality, a true triumph of hype, the architecture of lists. To be sure, four out of five submissions chose to take refuge behind their conjectural, "conceptual" character. For this the CRA must take the heat. Asking for "conceptual" architecture is tantamount to announcing you intend to judge a competition on the basis of whim, and an ill whim it turned out to be. The Erickson presentation, instead of actually supplying any evidence of good design, sought to overwhelm by a mass of visual codes signifying good design.



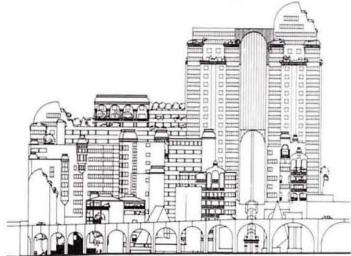
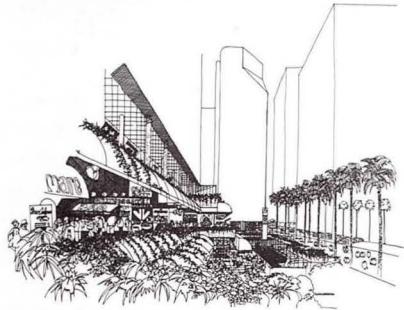
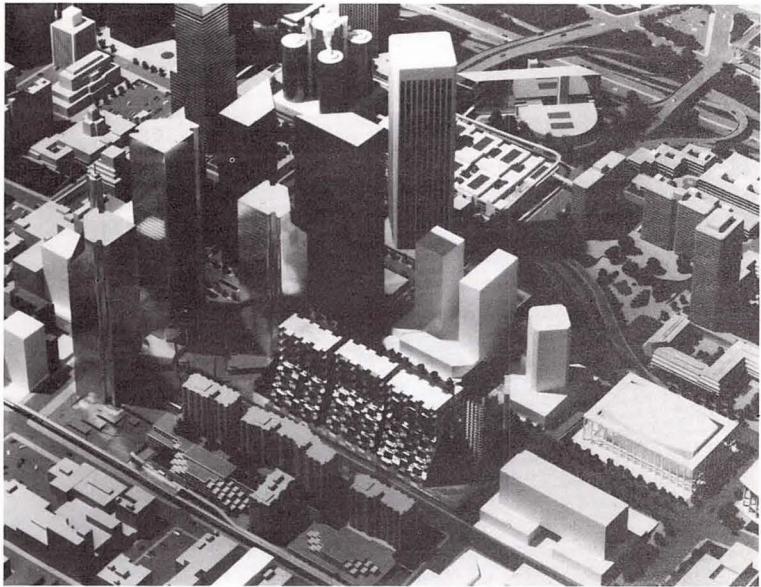
It has now been over a year since the CRA's decision was announced and this opportunity for hindsight has done nothing to diminish the original strong impression made by the runner-up scheme offered by **Maguire Partners** and designed by a consortium of architects. If it will never produce a building (although Cesar Pelli is sure to put his up somewhere), it has already produced a mytholog-





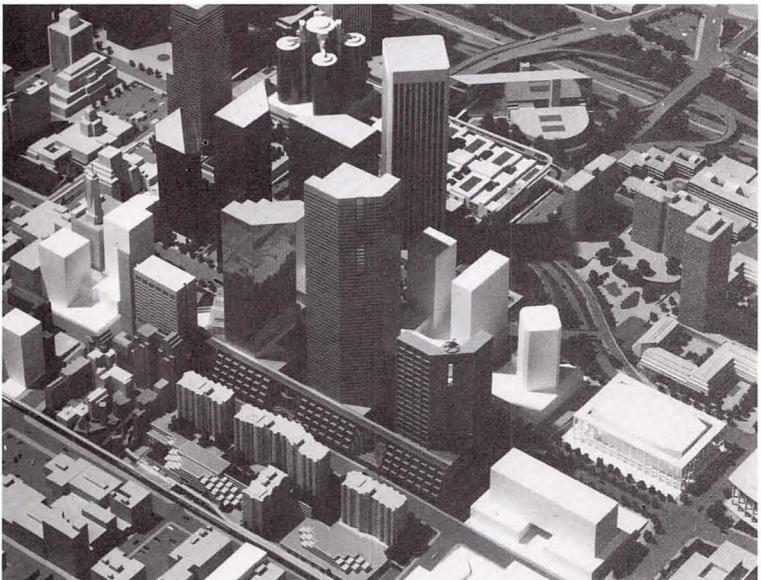
Instead of architecture, one was exposed to a banal lexicon of renderer's icons for urbanity: flapping banners, balloons, push-carts with mustachioed vendors, thistle shaped fountains, and airport-style signage reading "espresso." Site planning was rudimentary. Dull-looking office towers at one end, a dull-looking hotel at the other, dull-looking housing in between, and a dull-looking plaza out front. The scheme's evocation of Los Angeles was even less than rudimentary. Its major gesture was a (now eliminated) linear art museum whose contents were meant to be visible from passing cars, a truly ludicrous conceit meant to evoke the supposed importance of cruising in southern California's culture.

At this year's Monterey Design Conference, architect Erickson was asked to identify elements in his project which he thought were responsive to Los Angeles' particularities. He mentioned palm trees, a London-inspired string of gardens (described in the formal presentation as a "regal umbilical cord," a remarkably revolting metaphor), orchids, and the availability of ethnic food. What animates this proposal is the same spirit that lends ersatz validation to the shopping mall as a central civic place—the notion that commerce is culture and shopping entertainment, the conviction that if ten movie theaters make good urban design, sixteen make great urban design. Mind you, there is nothing wrong with sixteen cinemas, it's just that we're still waiting for the architecture.



placing it among such distinguished also-rans as Eliel Saarinen's Tribune Tower project and Le Corbusier's League of Nations entry. While not really the architectural watershed many suggest, it was in every way the finest proposal in front of the jurors and their failure to recognize the public's real can only reflect eternal shame upon them all.

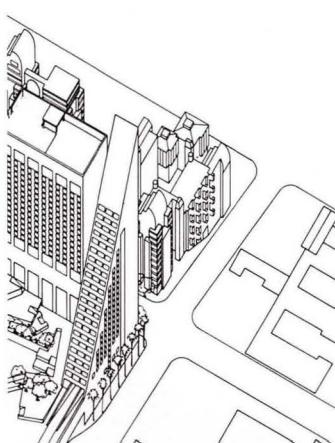
The Maguire proposal was unique among the submissions in answering—through actual design—a sufficient range of questions to show its architects' capacity to live up to the stated intentions of the competition. It did this with signal success at three levels. First, in a succinct and convincing reconciliation of traditional ideas about the urban street with a more indigenously Los Angeles style of symbolic off-street place making. It combined a traditionally conceived (if somewhat fragmented) promenading street along Grand Avenue with a group of energetically designed enclosed plazas of more intimate scale, sheltered from traffic. If anything, the courtyard is arguably the emblematic Los Angeles pedestrian space, encompassing such diverse expressions as the forecourt at Grauman's, Spanish style apartments, and bungalow courts. Second, the proposal created a winning ensemble in the way cities at their best naturally do, by the assembly of diverse elements which share certain conventions about common goals and the larger obligations of city building. Finally, this was the only submission to propose so much as a single building of quality and character. While all were not up to a uniformly high standard, the scheme would have been worth having if only to get Charles



Moore's brilliant housing complex (the only moderate cost housing offered by any of the competitors), Frank Gehry's zany studios and plaza, and Ricardo Legoretta's triangular hotel, a pinnacle in high-rise design.

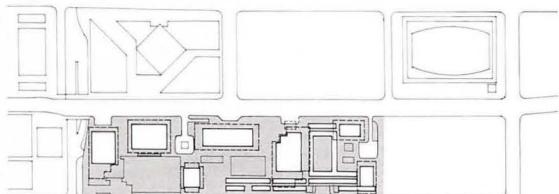


There is a rumor abroad that the Maguire proposal was rejected because of the adventurousness of Moore's and Gehry's work. These, more than any others, succeeded in their rich texture and intimate scale in evoking real memories of a ravaged past and in suggesting architecture of genuine excitement. What an irony that this excellent project might have lost for its failure to forget.

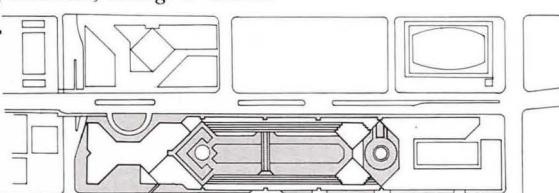


One reason why the Bunker Hill competition was difficult to judge was the fact that every scheme was drawn to a slightly different scale in an entirely different style. Below, we present all of the schemes as figure-ground drawings in the same style and scale to demonstrate the relationship between built and open space in each proposal.

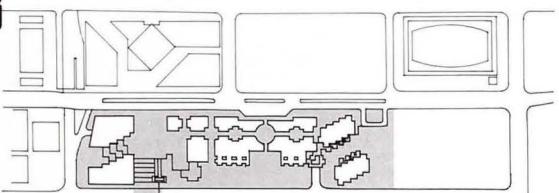
Fujikawa, Conterato, Lohan and Associates



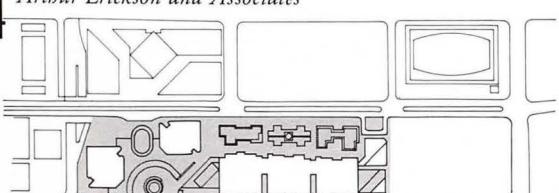
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill



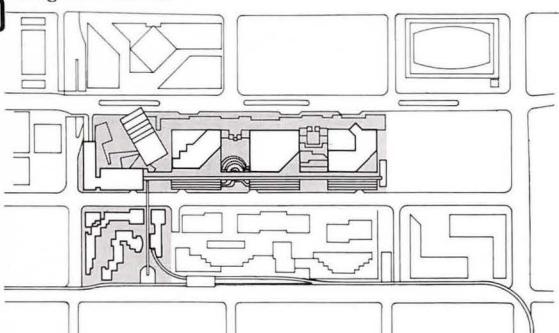
A. C. Martin and Associates



Arthur Erickson and Associates



Maguire Partners



Drawings by Nancy Lupo

And MOCA for Dessert

by Deborah Perrin

"Don't you think it's about time that we had a museum of modern art in this town" art collector Marcia Weisman asked Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, her tablemate at a dinner party in 1978. He did. In 1979, Bradley appointed a ten member Mayor's Museum Advisory Committee with a mandate to select a site.

"What focal point on Bunker Hill could draw all the people of Los Angeles downtown?" wondered the Community Redevelopment Agency as it refined its objectives for the final undeveloped parcel on Bunker Hill.

A June 1979 article in the *Los Angeles Times* on the newly formed museum advisory committee brought the separate seekers together. Inspired, the CRA wrote to the president of the advisory committee urging the selection of downtown Los Angeles as the site of the museum. A meeting was held between the CRA and the committee, and several locations were considered. The immediate choice of both groups was the Bunker Hill redevelopment site.

To the museum committee, the prospect of a new building in a prestigious downtown center to be financed by money traditionally set aside for art acquisition was irresistible. To the CRA, an institution envisioned by its founders as a composition of elitist content with populist style seemed capable of luring Angelenos from as far away as the West San Fernando Valley.

The final CRA Request for Proposals required the inclusion of a 100,000 square foot museum in the plans and a contribution of 1½% of the developer's total projected budget, or approximately 7.5 million dollars, toward its cost. Negotiations continued during the selection process; potential developers were queried about their willingness to assume the entire construction bill. By the time Bunker Hill Associates was selected as the developer in July 1980, they were committed to building a 16 million dollar museum.

Situating the museum ended the task of the Mayor's Museum Advisory Committee. In April 1980, seven prominent Angeleno art supporters, several of whom had been on the Mayor's committee, incorporated as the Los Angeles Museum of Modern Art. As parity to the museum building, they pledged to raise 10 million dollars for an operating endowment by July 1, 1981, and to provide a permanent collection of excellent contemporary art. By September 1, 1981, the Trustees had surpassed their endowment goal by almost 3 million dollars.

It is notable that the original chartering board included an artist, Robert Irwin, among its complement of substantial citizens. Another artist, Sam Francis, was soon added to the Board roster, reinforcing an involvement with artists unique among museums. Los Angeles artists had already formed an *ad hoc* advisory council in 1979 as a manifestation of their intense interest in the formulation of the museum. Surprisingly, the artists were recognized at an early date by the Board of Trustees. In 1980, another organization, the Architecture and Design Support Group, was formed to lobby for the inclusion of architecture and design in the exhibitions and collections of the museum.

The working name for the museum was changed to the Museum of Contemporary Art in July 1980, acknowledging the intention to achieve primacy in Post-World War II art. Pontus Hulten and Richard Koshalek, museum administrators known for innovative programming, were engaged as Director and Deputy Director. In a remarkable show of political muscle for such a young organization, the Board of Trustees succeeded in eliciting an agreement from Bunker Hill Associates that they could select their own architect for the museum. The internationally famous Japanese architect Arata Isozaki was chosen.

The CRA has affirmed its belief in the viability of the museum by reducing the base lease price to Bunker Hill Associates in return for the museum's expenditure. The MOCA Board of Trustees has predicted increased development value as an outgrowth of the anticipated museum's international prestige; the CRA retains a stake in this potential appreciation through its participation in developer profits.

The Museum of Contemporary Art confidently declares that it will open in 1984 as a world-class institution. Director Pontus Hulten, an art showman who is at least partially responsible for increasing attendance at the Centre Pompidou five-fold over that originally anticipated, talks of an experimental, aggressive museum, suited to the city and the climate. The CRA has opened the way to that goal by devising a bold maneuver to top off the redevelopment of the heart of downtown Los Angeles.

Downtown Los Angeles

by John Pastier

INTRODUCTION

Contrary to widespread belief, Los Angeles does have a downtown. Until the postwar period, it was the unchallenged hub of the West's biggest city. It was here that the local network of streetcars and the region's 1000 miles of electric interurban railways converged, bringing hundreds of thousands of Angelenos daily to shop, work, visit the doctor, dine or see the latest movie. For all its concessions to the automobile, the city's heart was not appreciably different from that of any other large American urban center.

After 1945, the nation's *de facto* policy of favoring suburban development and private transportation undermined hundreds of inner cities, and downtown Los Angeles was one of the worst casualties. The middle class dispersed in all directions. New freeways obliterated countless structures and injected discontinuity into the closely woven pattern of streets and neighborhoods. The trolleys and commuter trains were scrapped in favor of an inadequate bus system. Lushly landscaped Pershing Square became an underground garage with sparse greenery on roof. Buildings of physical and architectural substance were torn down to create further parking, and the residential population is decimated as thousands of housing units were demolished for a new Civic Center, Music Center, and the Bunker Hill urban renewal project. The hill itself, home of fine Victorian mansions, is bulldozed down to half its height, and the three projects together transformed an intimate and irregular street pattern into one of banal and inhuman superblocks. All the American urban ills that Jane Jacobs diagnosed were discovered independently by city fathers who took them to be cures.

Downtown Los Angeles could ill afford such civic steps; its dominant street grid already contained blocks sufficiently oversized to make walking difficult and far from pleasurable. Originally laid out for farming, these 5-acre blocks are scaled for vehicles rather than people and are the largest of any American downtown save Salt Lake City—another case where agriculture rather than urban use was planned.

But, just as it flourished despite its early isolation, lack of nearby water, and absence of a natural harbor, the city seems destined to triumph over its poorly scaled downtown framework. Over the last decade or so, the central core has begun to rehumanize itself. The quality of new architecture is superior to that of the 50–70 period. Older buildings such as the Oviatt, Biltmore Hotel, and Bradbury have been conscientiously restored while others have been brought back to better use if not as strictly turned to architectural grace. Broadway's shopping and entertainment center is now patronized largely by the city's Blacks and Latinos, and its crowded sidewalks disprove, seven days a week,

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the otherwise plausible contention that Los Angeles is not a place where people walk. Recently, new pedestrian streets and spaces have been created in Little Tokyo and Chinatown, adding to an older stock that includes the Broadway Arcade, Grand Central Market, "New" Chinatown, and Olvera Street.

The skyline, long limited by law to a 13-story maximum with only two exceptions, has grown to be the sixth tallest on the continent. Those skyscrapers manifest a corporate confidence in downtown that could not have been taken for granted a decade or two ago. To be more accurate, that confidence applies mainly to a small portion of downtown, lying west of the historic core of Broadway, Spring and Main Streets, and east of the Harbor freeway. There, public and private enterprise have built an antiseptic precinct of blank-faced architecture, manicured plazas, market-researched restaurants and retail outlets, and pedestrian bridges spanning wide highways disguised as city streets. Resembling a movie set for a city of the future (albeit one designed by a singularly timid art director) this new Financial District is geared to middle and upper class suburban commuters more appreciative of individual urban amenities than of the interrelated dynamics of genuine urbanity.

Thus the west side is dotted with indisputable goodies: revolving cocktail lounges, clean new buildings, business-sponsored art galleries and outdoor sculpture, stores and eating places that accept all the leading credit cards, universal air conditioning, and employer subsidized parking. It is a prime sign of the rebirth of downtown, but that rebirth carries a peculiar price: The west side of central Los Angeles could just as well be Houston or Atlanta, its improvement has come only at the cost of its character.

Fortunately, most of downtown has not yet been "improved," or if it has, the improvement has retained some of the district's flavor. Broadway may be a bit worn and shabby, but its human vitality far outweighs those shortcomings. Spring Street may be half-deserted, but its solid spatial framework constitutes an impressive setting for future occupants of its buildings. Main Street is undeniably seedy, but the resulting low real-estate values in the vicinity have brought hundreds of artists downtown to work and even live.

That last phenomenon is perhaps the most promising of many healthy developments downtown. The artists have brought in their wake dozens of galleries, and this combination has created a climate that adds meaning to the decision to build a Museum of Contemporary Art downtown. The art world has already conferred a certain form of respectability upon the district's far east side, and rents are rising to the point where many tenants will someday have to look elsewhere for affordable studio space. That pattern of artists being victimized by their ability to improve urban neighborhoods is not unique to Los Angeles. It does prove, however, that the forces of change in downtown are not exclusively in the hands of local government and the largest businesses, and suggests that the district's physical framework and human energies are adequate enough to assure a continuing evolution in Southern California's most interesting and substantial urban quarter.

Numerical Key

- D 1** City Hall
200 N. Spring St.
- G 2** Los Angeles Mall
E. of Main St., N. and S. of Temple St.
- V 3** Triforium
Los Angeles Mall,
300 N. Main St.
- C 4** Children's Museum
Los Angeles Mall,
310 N. Main St.
- A 5** Garnier Block
415 N. Los Angeles St.
- A 6** Masonic Temple
416 N. Main St.
- A 7** Merced Theater
420 N. Main St.
- A 8** Pico House
430 N. Main St.
- A 9** Old Plaza Firehouse
S.W. Corner Los Angeles St.
and Old Plaza
- G 10** Old Plaza and Kiosko
N. of 101 Freeway between
Main St. and Los Angeles St.
- A 11** Plaza Church
535 N. Main St.
- G 12** Olvera Street
Between Macy St. and
Old Plaza, ½ block E. of Main St.
- A 13** Avila Adobe
14 Olvera St.
- A 14** La Casa Pelanconi
33 Olvera St.
- AU 15** Union Station
800 N. Alameda St.
- A 16** Macy St. Bridge
Macy St. at Los Angeles River
- UV 17** Terminal Annex Post Office
900 N. Alameda St.
- M 18** Sing Lee Chinese Theater
649 N. Spring St.
- U 19** Philippe's Original
Sandwich Shop
1001 N. Alameda St.
- C 20** The Woman's Building
1727 N. Spring St.
- M 21** Pagoda Cinema
1021 N. Broadway
- G 22** "New Chinatown"
900 block of N. Broadway
- C 23** Chinatown Branch Library
536 W. College
- G 24** Alpine Park
N.W. Corner Alpine St.
and Yale St.
- M 25** Kim Sing Theater
722 N. Figueroa St.
- P 26** Ahmanson Theater
S. of Temple St. between
Hope St. and Grand Ave.
- P 27** Mark Taper Forum
N. side of Music Center Plaza
- G 28** Los Angeles County Mall
Center of blocks bounded by
Grand Ave., Temple St.,
Broadway and 1st St.
- V 29** "Song of the Vowels" sculpture
Music Center Plaza, N. of 1st St.
between Hope St. and
Grand Ave.
- P 30** Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
135 N. Grand Ave.
- A 31** Department of Water & Power
111 N. Hope St.
- S 32** Bunker Hill Towers
800 W. 1st St.
- C 33** Museum of
Contemporary Art site
300 block, S. Grand Ave.
- SA 34** Crocker Center
300 block, S. Grand Ave.
- S 35** Security Pacific Bank
333 S. Hope St.
- V 35** Security Pacific lobby gallery
333 S. Hope St.
- V 36** Calder sculpture
Plaza S. of 333 S. Hope St.
- G 37** Security Pacific gardens and
sunken fountain
N. of 4th St. between Hope St.
and Flower St.
- G 38** ARCO Garage roof garden
S.W. corner 4th St. and
Hope St.
- S 39** Wells Fargo Bank
444 S. Flower St.
- SOA 40** Bonaventure Hotel
404 S. Figueroa St.
- S 41** Union Bank
445 S. Figueroa St.
- SAV 42** ARCO Towers
505 and 555 S. Flower St.
- V 43** "Double Ascension" sculpture
ARCO Towers Plaza
- A 44** California Club
538 S. Flower St.
- AVC 45** Central Library
630 W. 5th St.
- G 46** East lawn, Central Library
S.W. corner 5th St. and
Grand Ave.
- S 47** Crocker National Bank
611 W. 6th St.
- S 48** First Interstate Bank
(formerly United California
Bank)
707 Wilshire Blvd.
- A 49** Linder Plaza
888 W. 6th St.
- A 50** Global Marine Building
(formerly Havenstrite)
811 W. 7th St.
- S 51** Broadway Plaza Office Building
700 S. Flower St.
- G 52** Broadway Plaza Atrium
700 W. 7th St.
- O 53** Angel's Flight Restaurant
711 S. Hope St.
- U 54** The Original Pantry Cafe
877 S. Figueroa St.
- AP 55** Variety Arts Center (formerly
Friday Morning Women's Club)
940 S. Figueroa St.
- U 56** LA Convention Center
1201 S. Figueroa
- V 57** Tiffany stained glass windows,
First United Methodist Church
813 S. Hope St.
- AP 58** Embassy Auditorium
843 S. Grand Ave.
- U 59** Brooks Brothers
530 W. 7th St.
- S 60** One Wilshire Building
624 S. Grand Ave.
- A 61** Oviatt Building
617 S. Olive St.
- A 62** Theatre Jewelry Center
(formerly Pantages, Warners,
and Warren's theaters)
655 S. Hill St.
- S 63** City National Bank
S.E. corner 6th St. and Olive St.
- A 64** Pacific Mutual Building
523 W. 6th St.
- C 65** Caravan Bookstore
550 S. Grand Ave.
- A 66** Biltmore Hotel
515 S. Olive St.
- G 67** Pershing Square Garage
Roof Garden
Block bounded by Olive St.,
5th St., Hill St. and 6th St.
- A 68** Title Guarantee Building
(formerly Guarantee Trust)
N.W. corner 5th St. and Hill St.
- U 69** Pages 317 Bookstore
317 W. 5th St.
- A 70** Subway Terminal Building
417 S. Hill St.
- GU 71** Grand Central Public Market
317 S. Broadway
- APM 72** Million Dollar Theater
307 S. Broadway
- V 73** "Angelic Duet" sculpture
S.W. corner Broadway and
1st St.
- U 74** Los Angeles Times
S.W. corner 1st St. and
Spring St.
- V 75** "Bridal Couple" mural
N. wall, 240 S. Broadway
- V 76** Los Angeles Contemporary
Exhibitions (LACE)
240 S. Broadway, 3rd floor
- A 77** Bradbury Building
304 S. Broadway
- M 78** Teatro Broadway
428 S. Broadway
- V 79** "Chicken Boy" sculpture
atop building, 450 S. Broadway
- M 80** Roxie Theater
518 S. Broadway
- AM 81** Cameo Theater
528 S. Broadway
- M 82** Arcade Theater
534 S. Broadway
- GA 83** Broadway Arcade Building
542 S. Broadway
- A 84** Finney's Cafeteria
217 W. 6th St.
- A 85** Broadway Cafeteria
(formerly Schauber's)
620 S. Broadway
- AM 86** Los Angeles Theater
615 S. Broadway
- AM 87** Palace Theater
(formerly Orpheum)
630 S. Broadway
- A 88** Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria
648 S. Broadway
- G 89** St. Vincent Court
N. side 7th St. between Hill St.
and Broadway
- AM 90** State Theater
703 S. Broadway
- M 91** Globe Theater
744 S. Broadway
- M 92** Olympic Theater
313 W. 8th St.
- AM 93** Tower Theater
802 S. Broadway
- M 94** Rialto Theater
812 S. Broadway
- AM 95** Orpheum Theater
842 S. Broadway
- V 96** May Company Window Gallery
W. side Broadway between 8th
and 9th St.
- A 97** Eastern Columbia Building
849 S. Broadway
- C 97** Los Angeles Conservancy
849 S. Broadway, Suite 1225
- V 98** Gallery 1:16
116 W. 9th St., 2nd floor
- AM 99** United Artists Theater
933 S. Broadway
- AM 100** Mayan Theater
1040 S. Hill St.
- A 101** Los Angeles Herald Examiner
1111 S. Broadway
- SOV 102** Occidental Center
1150 S. Olive St.
- A 103** St. Joseph's Church
1200 S. Los Angeles St.
- V 104** The Ivan Gallery
124 E. Olympic Blvd.
- A 105** Gerry Building
910 S. Los Angeles St.
- AM 106** California Theater
810 S. Main St.
- V 107** LA Center for Photographic
Studies
814 S. Spring St.
- A 108** Van Nuys Building
S.W. corner 7th St. and
Spring St.
- A 109** Bank of America Building
(formerly Hellman Bank)
N.E. corner 7th St. and
Spring St.
- A 110** Banks-Huntly Building
632 S. Spring St.
- A 111** Pacific Coast Stock Exchange
618 S. Spring St.
- U 112** Greyhound Bus Terminal
S.E. corner of 6th St. and
Los Angeles St.
- M 113** Optic Theater
533 S. Main St.
- A 114** Firehouse for Engine Co. 23
225 E. 5th St.
- A 115** Frontier Hotel
(formerly Roslyn Hotel)
111 W. 5th St.
- A 116** The Design Center of Los
Angeles (formerly Title
Insurance Building)
433 S. Spring St.
- A 117** El Dorado Hotel
416 S. Spring St.
- A 118** Farmers and Merchants
Branch, Security Pacific Bank
401 S. Main St.
- A 119** Banco Populár Center
(formerly Hellman Building)
354 S. Spring St.
- M 120** Linda Lea Theater
251 S. Main St.
- A 121** St. Vibiana's Cathedral
210 S. Main St.
- G 122** New Otani Hotel roof garden
120 S. Los Angeles St.
- G 123** Weller Court
W. side of Weller St.
- V 124** Mizuno Gallery
210 E. 2nd St.
- V 125** Sumida Gallery
29 Japanese Village Plaza Mall
- V 126** Friends of Little Tokyo
Arts Display Windows
Japanese Village Plaza Mall
- G 127** Japanese Village Plaza
W. of Central Ave., between
1st St. and 2nd St.
- VC 128** Japanese-American Cultural
and Community Center and
Gallery
244 S. San Pedro
- V 128** Outdoor Isamu Noguchi
sculpture
Japanese-American Cultural
and Community Center
- V 129** Downtown Gallery
427 Boyd
- V 130** Oranges/Sardines Gallery
320 Omar Ave.
- V 131** Banyan Art Gallery
319 S. Towne
- V 132** Simard Weber Gallery
323 S. Towne
- V 133** Atelier West Gallery
607 E. 3rd St.
- V 134** Neil G. Ovsey Gallery
705 E. 3rd St., 3rd floor
- V 135** Los Angeles Institute of
Contemporary Art,
(LAICA) Downtown Gallery
811–815 Traction
- V 136** Traction Gallery
800 Traction, 2nd floor
(enter on Hewitt)
- V 137** Cirrus Gallery
542 S. Alameda, 2nd floor rea
- V 138** Simon Lowinsky Gallery
542 S. Alameda
- V 139** LA Artcore Gallery
652 Mateo, 2nd floor
- V 140** Kirk deGoyer Gallery
830 S. Central
- A 141** Coca Cola Bottling Company
1334 S. Central Ave.

Minibus Route

Pedestrian Bridges

Designed Pedestrian Spac

Landscaped Open Space

Water Bodies, Pools and
Fountains

Urban Form

Groundscape Elements: Designed Pedestrian Space

- 2 Los Angeles Mall Sunken pedestrian shopping mall
12 Olvera Street Old-fashioned Mexican outdoor marketplace (trinkets and food)
22 "New Chinatown" Pedestrian theme village
52 Atrium, Broadway Plaza Large, two-level skylit court linking stores, offices and hotel
71 Grand Central Public Market Double-aisle interior passage between Broadway and Hill St.
83 Broadway Arcade Building Three-story skylit passage connecting Broadway and Spring St.
89 St. Vincent Court An alley reclaimed for human use by means of a small sidewalk cafe and a flower stand
123 Weller Court Open air three-level shopping court
127 Japanese Village Plaza Pedestrian shopping mall

Landscaped Open Space

- 10 Old Plaza and Kiosko Relocated original plaza of Pueblo de Los Angeles
24 Alpine Park Recreation park
28 Los Angeles County Mall A very large open space much in the spirit of the adjoining governmental buildings
37 Security Pacific Plaza gardens and sunken fountain
38 ARCO Garage roof garden
46 Central Library east lawn
67 Pershing Square Garage roof garden
122 New Otani Hotel roof garden Traditional Japanese garden on 5th floor rooftop

Skyscrapers (15 tallest buildings in order of height) stories feet

- 48 62 st 858' First Interstate Bank (1973)
34 54 st 760' Crocker Center (1982)
35 55 st 738' Security Pacific Bank (1973)
42 52 st 699' ARCO Tower (1971)
42 52 st 699' Bank of America Tower (1971)
39 48 st 625' Wells Fargo Bank (1981)
47 42 st 620' Crocker Plaza (1968)
41 41 st 516' Union Bank Square (1967)
1 28 st 454' City Hall (1928)
102 32 st 452' Occidental Center (1963)
51 33 st 414' Broadway Plaza (1972)
60 28 st 395' One Wilshire Building (1964)
40 35 st 367' Bonaventure Hotel (1976)
32 32 st 349' Bunker Hill Towers (1968)
63 24 st 344' City National Bank (1966)

O

Observation Decks and Restaurants with Views

- O 1 City Hall observation deck 27th floor, free, open M-F 8am-5pm, 485-4423
O 40 34th Lounge and Top O'the Five Restaurant, Bonaventure Hotel Revolving bar and restaurant on 34th and 35th floors, respectively, 464-1000
O 53 Angel's Flight Restaurant, Hyatt Regency Revolving rooftop restaurant and cocktail lounge, 683-1234
O 102 Occidental Center observation deck Free, open M-F 10-11am and 2-4pm, 748-8111

A

Architecture and Historic Buildings

- A 1 City Hall John C. Austin; John Parkinson and Albert C. Martin; Austin Whittlesey, 1928
A 5 Garnier Block 1895
A 6 Masonic Temple 1858 (exterior)
A 7 Merced Theater attrib. Ezra F. Kysor, 1869 (exterior)
A 8 Pico House attrib. Ezra F. Kysor, 1868 (exterior)
A 9 Old Plaza Firehouse 1884
A 11 Plaza Church 1822; 1862; 1912 (exterior and interior)
A 13 Avila Adobe ca. 1818 (reconstructed)
A 14 La Casa Pelanconi 1855 (exterior)
A 15 Union Station Parkinson & Parkinson; J. H. Christie, H. L. Gilman and R. J. Wirth, 1939 (exterior, interior and adjoining outdoor courtyards)
A 16 Macy Street Bridge
A 31 Department of Water and Power Albert C. Martin and Associates, 1964 (exterior and interior spiral staircase)
A 34 Crocker Center Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, 1982 (exterior)
A 40 Bonaventure Hotel John Portman and Associates, 1976 (exterior and atrium lobby)
A 42 ARCO Towers Albert C. Martin and Associates, 1972 (exterior)
A 44 California Club Robert D. Farquhar, 1930 (exterior)
A 45 Central Library Bertram B. Goodhue and Carleton M. Winslow, 1926 (exterior, rotunda and reading rooms)
A 49 Linder Plaza Honnold, Reibsamen and Rex, 1973 (exterior)
A 50 Global Marine Building Walker and Eisen, 1925 (exterior and lobby)
A 55 Variety Arts Center Allison & Allison, 1923
A 58 Embassy Auditorium H. C. Deckbar and Frank G. Krucker, 1912 (interior)
A 61 Oviatt Building Walker and Eisen, 1928; restored 1980-81 (exterior, lobby and restaurant)
A 62 Theatre Jewelry Centre B. Marcus Priteca, 1920 (auditorium)

A

- A 64 Pacific Mutual Building 1908, 1922; restored 1974 by Wendell Mounce and Associates (exterior and lobby)

- A 66 Biltmore Hotel Schultze and Weaver, 1923, 1938; restored 1979 by Ridgeway Ltd.; Gene Summers and Phyllis Lambert (exterior, lobby and public rooms)

- A 68 Title Guarantee Building Parkinson & Parkinson, 1930; Hugo Ballin, muralist (exterior and lobby murals)

- A 70 Subway Terminal Building Schultze and Weaver, 1925; restored and remodeled by Bernard Judge, 1971

- A 72 Million Dollar Theater Albert C. Martin; William L. Woollett, 1918; Joseph Mora, sculptor

- A 81 Cameo Theater Alfred F. Rosenheim, 1910

- A 83 Broadway Arcade Building MacDonald and Couchet, 1923 (exterior and central arcade)

- A 84 Finney's Cafeteria Plummer and Feil, 1914 (interior)

- A 85 Broadway Cafeteria Charles F. Plummer, 1927 (interior)

- A 86 Los Angeles Theater S. Charles Lee, 1931 (exterior lobby and auditorium)

- A 87 Palace Theater G. Albert Lansburgh, 1911; Domingo Mora, sculptor (interior)

- A 88 Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria Wurdeman and Becket, ca. 1938 (interior)

- A 90 State Theater Weeks and Day, 1920 (interior)

- A 93 Tower Theater S. Charles Lee, 1925-26 (exterior)

- A 95 Orpheum Theater G. Albert Lansburgh, 1925 (lobby and auditorium)

- A 97 Eastern Columbia Building Claude Beelman, 1929 (exterior)

- A 99 United Artists Theater Walker and Eisen; C. Howard Crane, 1927 (exterior, lobby and auditorium)

- A 100 Mayan Theater Morgan, Walls and Clements, 1927 (exterior, lobby and auditorium)

- A 101 Los Angeles Herald Examiner Julia Morgan, 1912 (exterior and lobby)

- A 103 St. Joseph's Church attrib. to Brothers Adrian and Leonard, O.F.M., 1901

- A 105 Gerry Building ca. 1938 (exterior)

- A 106 California Theater A. B. Rosenthal, 1918 (exterior and auditorium)

- A 108 Van Nuys Building Morgan and Wals, 1911 (exterior)

- A 109 Bank of America Building Schultze and Weaver, 1924 (exterior)

- A 110 Banks-Huntly Building Parkinson & Parkinson, 1931 (exterior)

- A 111 Pacific Coast Stock Exchange Parkinson & Parkinson; Samuel E. Lunden, 1930 (exterior and interior)

- A 114 Firehouse for Engine Co. 23 Hudson and Munsell, 1910 (exterior)

A

- A 115 Frontier Hotel 1914; refurbished 1981 (exterior and lobby)

- A 116 The Design Center of Los Angeles Parkinson & Parkinson, 1928 (front entrance and lobby)

- A 117 El Dorado Hotel Frederick Noonan, 1913 (exterior)

- A 118 Farmers and Merchants Branch, Security Pacific Bank ca. 1910 (exterior and interior)

- A 119 Banco Populár Center Alfred F. Rosenheim, 1905 (exterior and lobby)

- A 121 St. Vibiana's Cathedral Ezra F. Kysor; W. J. Mathews, 1876; remodeled facade by John C. Austin, 1922 (exterior and interior)

- A 141 Coca Cola Bottling Co. Robert V. Derrah, 1937 (exterior and interior)

U

Urban Institutions: Luxuries and Necessities

- U 15 Union Station Railroad station, 683-6873

- U 17 Terminal Annex Post Office Main LA post office, open 24 hours, 688-2273

- U 19 Philippe's Original Sandwich Shop The reputed birthplace of the French Dip sandwich—honest food, high ceilings, no nonsense decor, operating since 1908, 628-3781

- U 54 The Original Pantry Cafe Never closes, and never seems to change: An island of stability in a constantly changing downtown, 972-9279

- U 56 LA Convention Center 748-1291

- U 59 Brooks Brothers A preppie outpost in the capital of dress-as-you-please, 620-9500

- U 69 Pages 317 Bookstore A 24-hour bookstore specializing in paperbacks and periodicals, 628-3968

- U 71 Grand Central Public Market Los Angeles' culinary Casbah, frequented by 30,000 patrons daily, 624-2378

- U 74 Los Angeles Times Home of America's thickest and most profitable newspaper, 972-5000

- U 112 Greyhound Bus Terminal 620-1200

Arts and Entertainment

V

Visual Arts

Public Art Works

- V 3** "Triforium"
Sculpture, light display and electronic musical instrument, Joseph Young, 1975
- V 17** WPA Murals
Wall paintings depicting the history of communication, Boris Deutsch
- V 29** "Song of the Vowels"
Sculpture, Jacques Lipschitz
- V 36** Untitled
Red metal sculpture, Alexander Calder
- V 43** "Double Ascension"
Sculpture, Herbert Bayer, 1973
- V 45** Murals and sculpture
12 murals by Dean Cornwell; 13 murals by Albert Herter; exterior relief sculpture by Lee Lawrie; Children's Room murals by Charles M. Kassler, Julian Garnsey and A. W. Parsons
- V 57** Tiffany stained glass windows
- V 73** "Angelic Duet"
Outdoor metal sculpture, James Russell, 1979
- V 75** "Bridal Couple"
Heroic outdoor mural, Kent Twichell
- V 79** Chicken Boy
Polychrome rooftop sculpture
- V 128** Untitled
Outdoor sculpture, Isamu Noguchi
- Galleries and Exhibit Spaces*
- V 35** Security Pacific Gallery
- V 42** ARCO Center for Visual Art 488-0038
- V 76** Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), 620-0140
- V 96** May Company Window Gallery
- V 98** Gallery 1:16, 626-4983
- V 102** Occidental Gallery, 742-2111
- V 104** The Ivan Gallery, 746-6967
- V 107** LA Center for Photographic Studies, 623-9410
- V 124** Mizuno Gallery, 625-2491
- V 125** Sumida Gallery, 680-0394
- V 126** Friends of Little Tokyo Display Windows
- V 128** Japanese-American Cultural and Community Center Gallery, 628-2725
- V 129** Downtown Gallery, 617-0015
- V 130** Oranges/Sardines Gallery, 687-4716
- V 131** Banyan Art Gallery, 680-4368
- V 132** Simard Weber Gallery, 617-3667
- V 133** Atelier West, 680-9986
- V 134** Neil G. Ovsey Gallery, 617-1351
- V 135** Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art (LAICA), Downtown Gallery, 680-1427
- V 136** Traction Gallery, 680-4743
- V 137** Cirrus Gallery, 680-3473
- V 138** Simon Lowinsky Gallery, 687-8943
- V 139** LA Artcore, 617-3274
- V 140** Kirk deGoyer Gallery, 623-8333



P

Performing Arts Spaces

- P 26** Ahmanson Theater
Drama, musical comedy, 972-7211
- P 27** Mark Taper Forum
Drama, chamber music, 972-7211
- P 30** Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Symphony, opera, ballet, recitals, musical comedy, 972-7211
- P 55** Variety Arts Center
Variety, music, 923-9100
- P 58** Embassy Auditorium
Music, theater, 622-4530
- P 72** Million Dollar Theater
Films, Spanish language variety, 629-2895

M

Movie Theaters

- M 18** Sing Lee Chinese Theater, 626-7175
- M 21** Pagoda Cinema, 221-1139
- M 25** Kim Sing Theater, 972-9005
- M 72** Million Dollar Theater, 629-2895
- M 78** Teatro Broadway, 624-6272
- M 80** Roxie Theater
- M 81** Cameo Theater, 628-1974
- M 82** Arcade Theater, 624-6272
- M 86** Los Angeles Theater, 624-6272
- M 87** Palace Theater, 624-6272
- M 90** State Theater, 624-6272
- M 91** Globe Theater, 624-6272
- M 92** Olympic Theater, 624-6272
- M 93** Tower Theater, 622-9109
- M 94** Rialto Theater, 624-6272
- M 95** Orpheum Theater, 624-6272
- M 99** United Artists Theater, 624-6272
- M 100** Mayan Theater, 749-6294
- M 106** California Theater, 624-9675
- M 113** Optic Theater, 623-6434
- M 120** Linda Lea Theater, 624-5648

C

Cultural Institutions

- C 4** Children's Museum, 687-8800
- C 20** The Woman's Building
Classes, readings, exhibits related to feminism and the arts, 221-6161
- C 23** Chinatown Branch Library, 620-0925
- C 33** Museum of Contemporary Art site
To be built from a design by Arata Isozaki, opening 1984, 623-6396
- C 45** Los Angeles Central Library, 626-7461
- C 65** Caravan Bookstore
New and old books, thoughtfully selected, many about Los Angeles, 626-9944
- C 97** Los Angeles Conservancy
Conducts downtown walking tours, active in architectural and urban preservation issues, 623-2489
- C 128** Japanese-American Cultural and Community Center and Gallery, 628-2725

Concept and compilation: John Past

Cartographer: Georgia Kajer-Weiss

Advisor: Arielda Sikora

Aerial photos: Courtesy Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency

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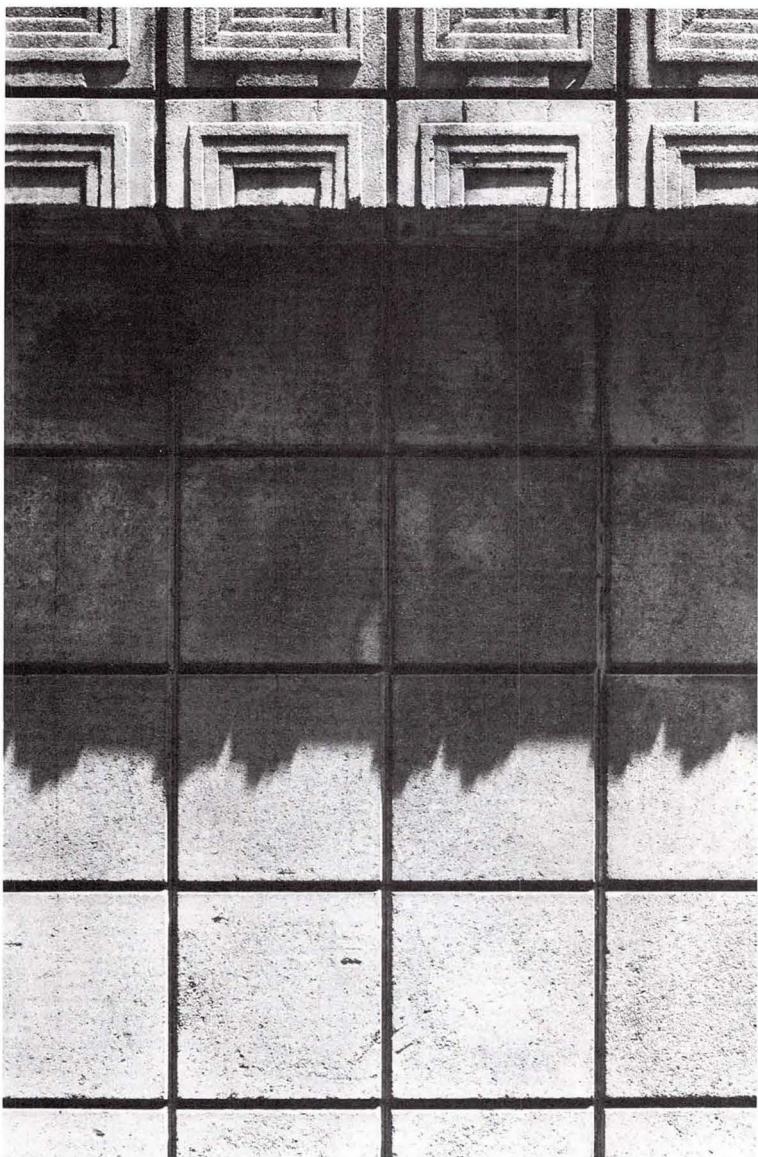
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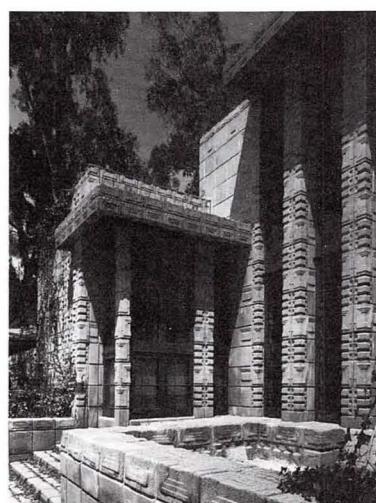
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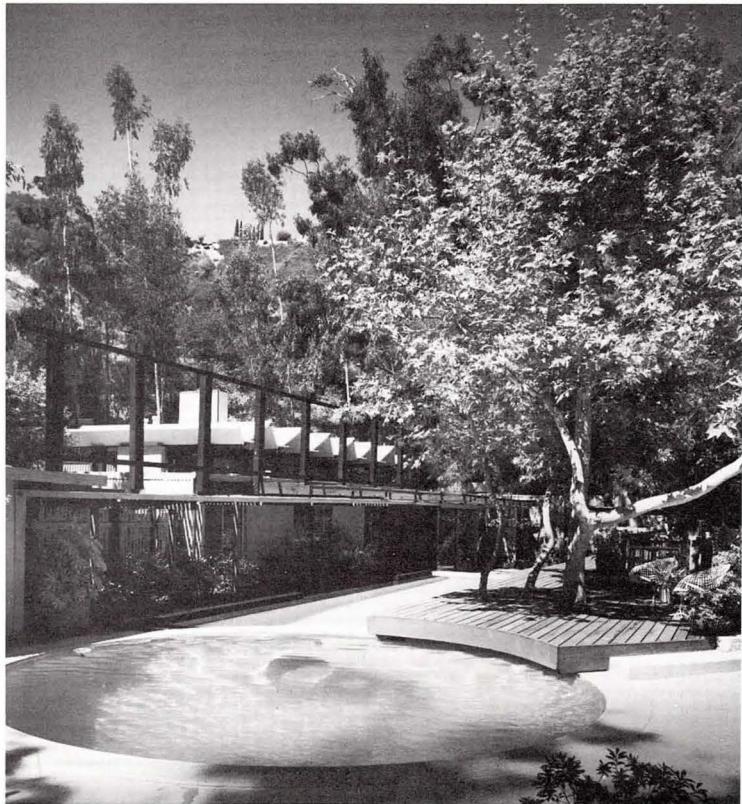
The Peacock Chair Hans J. Wegner, 1947



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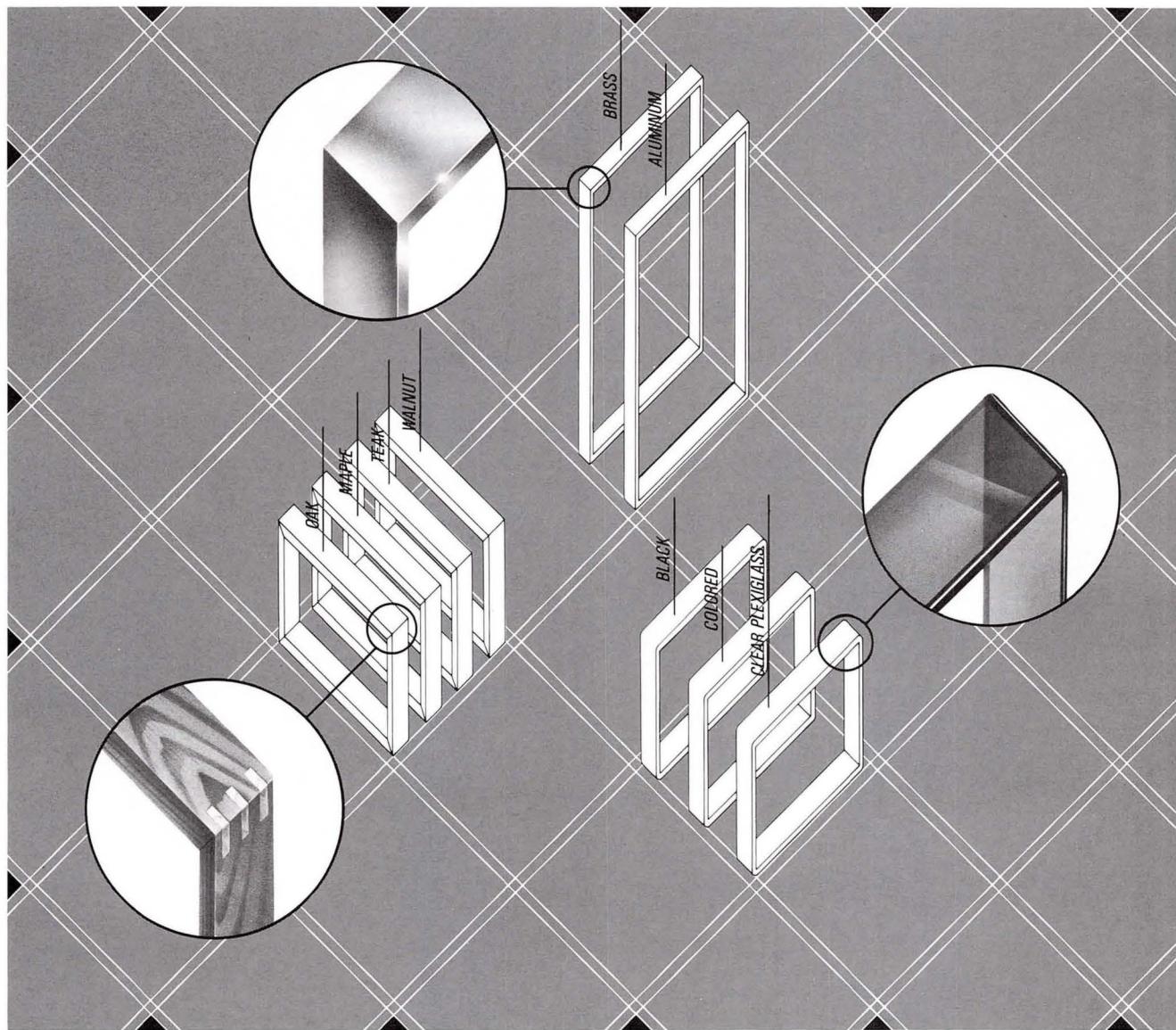
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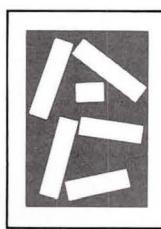
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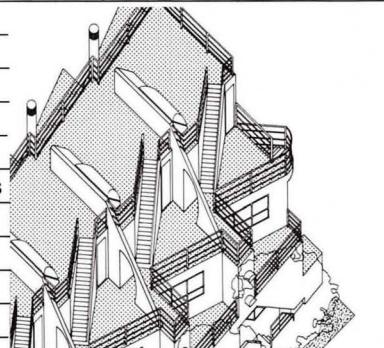
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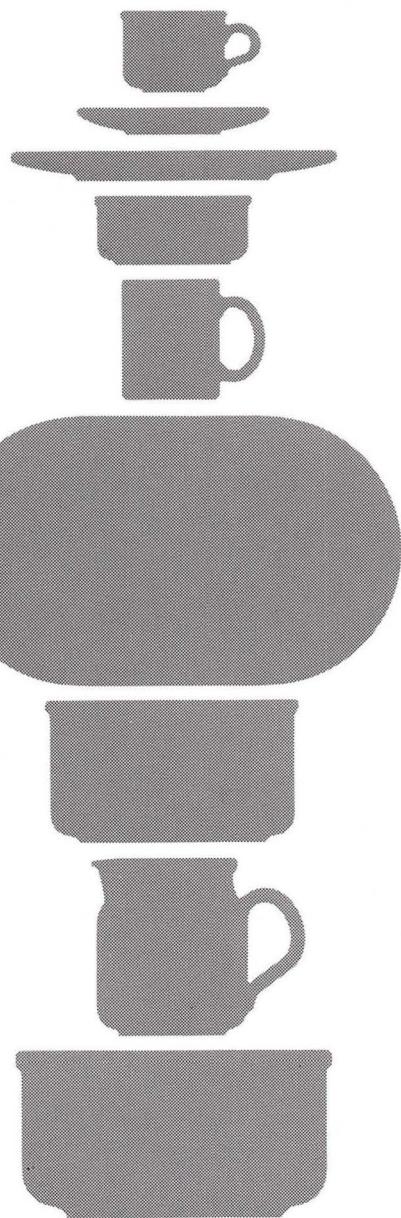


RAPHAEL SORIANO THE SHRAGE HOUSE

Los Feliz district, built in 1951. Listed in LACMA Guide, number D3-7. International style construction and detailing on .63 acres. 85 foot curtain glass walls opening to patio and gardens, \$375,000. Photograph by Julius Shulman.

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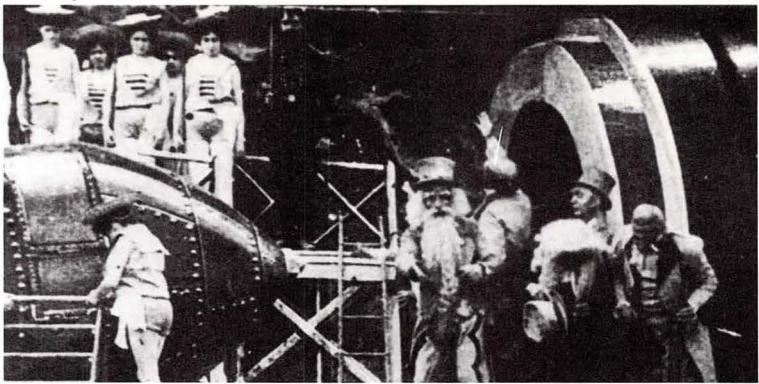
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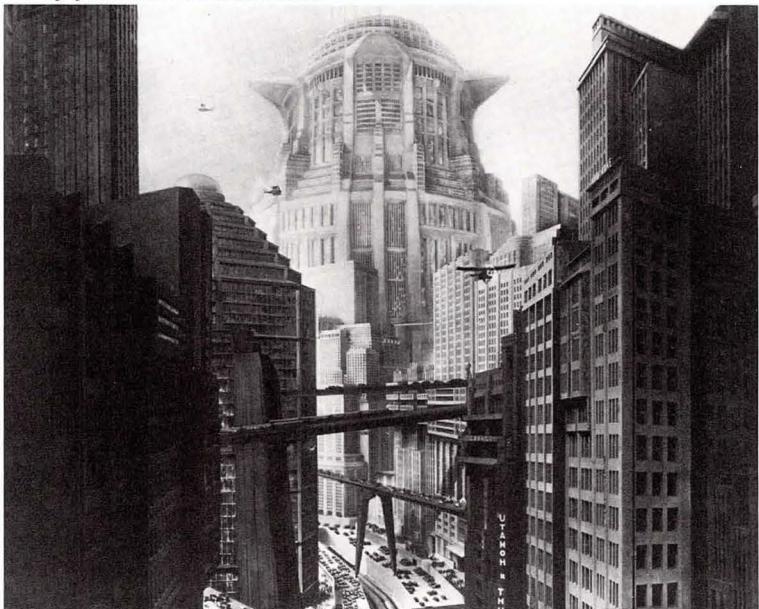
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Screening Our Fantasies:

80 Years of Sci Fi Movies

by Michael Webb

The movies were born in the same year, 1895, as H. G. Wells wrote *The Time Machine*, and ever since we have ridden that magic carpet to other worlds and eras. All movies are partly science fiction. They break natural laws, speed up or reverse time, and offer a distorted reflection of contemporary society. But science fiction (more accurately, speculative fantasy) is the most revealing of genres. As critic John Baxter described it: "sf is the poetry of the atomic age, a short-hand evocation of the pressures that are making us what we are and what we will be."

The parameters are well defined by one of the first sf movies—Georges Melies' *A Voyage to the Moon* (1902)—and one of the most recent, *Outland*. Melies, a professional magician who used the newly invented cinematograph to create dazzling illusions, was the first master of special effects. *A Voyage to the Moon*, like all his work, is pure theater. A huge cannon fires a projectile to the moon. Its silk-hatted occupants beat off aggressive Selenites with their umbrellas and return to a hero's welcome on earth. There is no pretense of plausibility: the story is merely the prop for a series of extravagant tableaux.

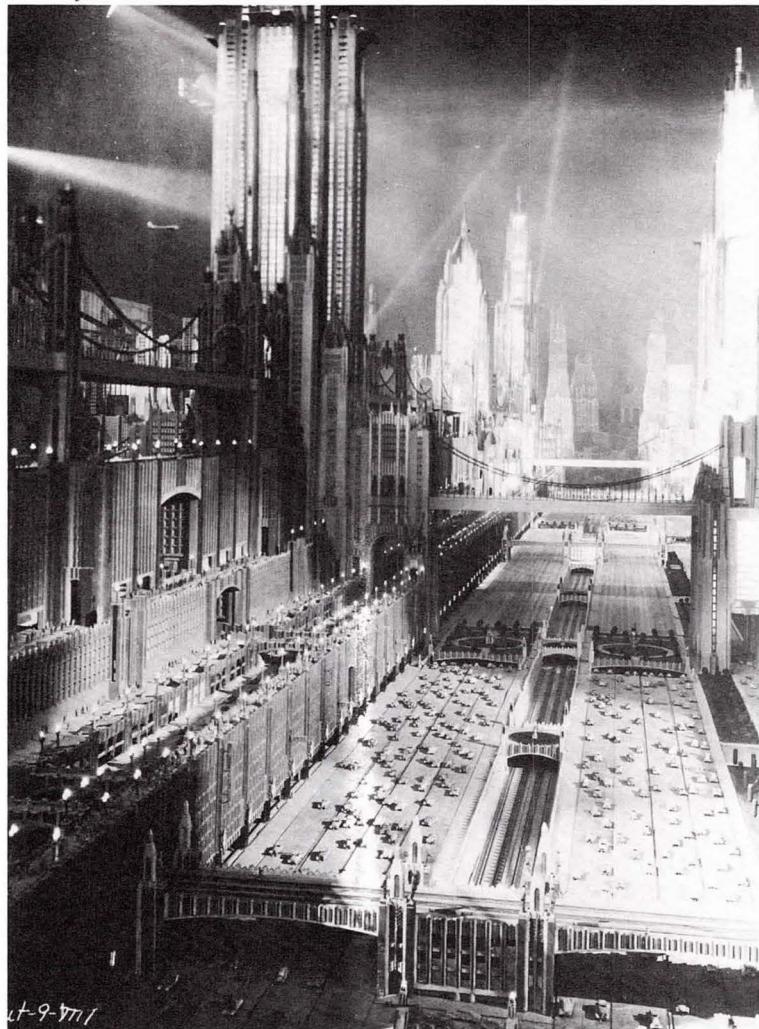
Moon shot as magic: George Melies'
A Voyage to the Moon, 1902.

The model for Fritz Lang's
Metropolis, 1926, is a combination
of Sant'Elia futurism and Lang's
memories of Manhattan.

Michael Webb, a Contributing Editor of Arts and Architecture, is a journalist, author and former Director of national film programming for the American Film Institute. He is currently writing a television series on design and architecture.

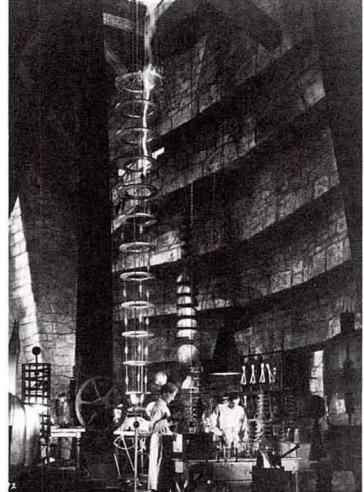
... everyone had a fine time

Outland, by contrast, uses special effects to enhance its story: the lone marshall trying to maintain law and order in a remote mining camp. The marshall discovers that the company is peddling stimulants that increase productivity make their users suicidal. "I could use some help," he remarks to apathetic miners, knowing that gunmen have been dispatched to kill him. It's a timeless morality as relevant today as when it was first filmed as *High Noon*. Only are not in a dusty Western town but a settlement on one of Jupiter's moons. The technology is understated; a tough female doctor replaces the pneumatic spud gun of traditional sf; the shunting that brings the gunmen is an updated version of the train steaming into the station.



47-9-3771

Just Imagine, 1930, was an American version of utopia, also inspired by New York.



In **Bride of Frankenstein**, 1935, alchemy is dressed up as science, offering a caricature of the mad inventor.

land demonstrates that there is an audience for the Western if you change the props. It also challenges those writers and futurists who complain that sf movies have made little advance on the classics, presenting lurid melodramas replete with monsters and superheroes, decked out with Judy special effects, lacking both art and science. In general you're right: movies do simplify, in order to reach the largest audience. That is why they offer a better indication of public taste than specialized literature.

In the early years of this century, revolutionary developments in art, science and politics lay concealed beneath the stable surface of a conservative society. The movies (and, even more presciently, popular authors like H. G. Wells) latched onto such discoveries as x-rays and manned flight, Lowell's theory of Martian canals, and Europe's growing militarism, to create a nightmare fantasy of aliens wielding death rays and cities destroyed from the air.

World War One brought a different, but no less deadly apocalypse and, in its wake, a fear of catastrophe, a yearning for utopia. Sf has always thrived on this dichotomy: utopia or dystopia; the lure versus the fear of the unknown. Two classic sf movies explore these options: Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926) and Alexander Korda's *Things to Come* (1936). Both mirror their social contexts: a Germany haunted by the fear of anarchy, an England dreading a new and even more ghastly war.

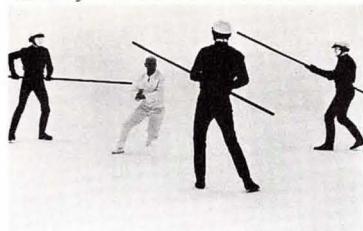


wearing crisply-tailored togas . . .

Metropolis portrays a dystopia in which workers tend huge machines in underground caverns and never glimpse the light of day, while their masters live and work in vast skyscrapers above. A revolution is brutally suppressed, and the status quo restored when the overlord's son symbolically introduces a note of humanity "to mediate between the brain and the hand." *Metropolis* captures the mixture of awe and loathing a newly-urbanized people felt towards the big city. Its spectacular model sets were inspired by Lang's memories of the Manhattan skyline, but they also incorporate the iconoclastic rhetoric of Sant' Elia and the brute power of 19th-century engineering. Individuals are overwhelmed by these sets (as well as by the pretentious dialogue). More impressive are the choreographed movements of the crowd-influenced, no doubt, by Erwin Piscator's Epic Theater. The moral of *Metropolis*, like the decor, expresses the contradictions of Weimar Germany, torn between 19th-century paternalism and 20th-century authoritarianism, a hierarchical society on the threshold of violent upheaval.

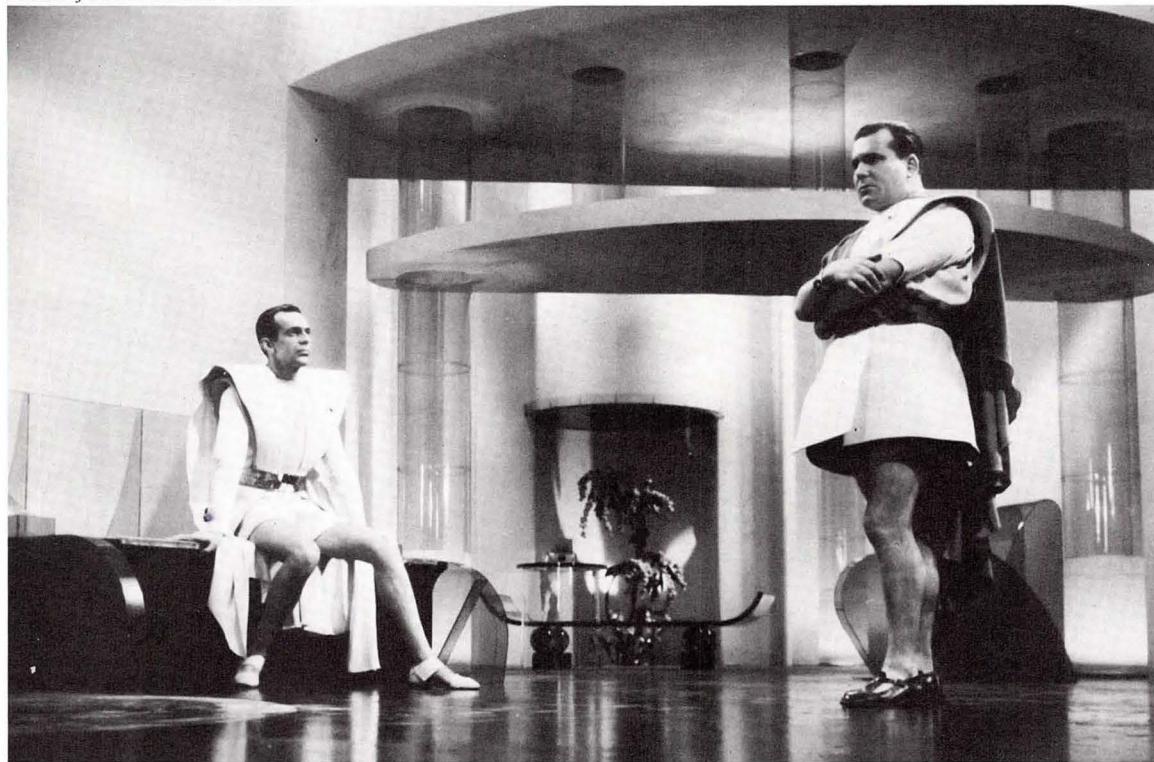


Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archives



In George Lucas' **THX 1138**, 1971, the all white paradise of Things to Come has been transformed into a sterile operating theater.

Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archives



Plexiglass furniture and polyester kilt embellish the brave new world of **Things to Come**, 1936 (note the footwear).



Things to Come begins with a series of Goyaesque scenes of the horrors of war and the total destruction of our civilization. Like *Metropolis*, it goes on to combine a dubious version of future bliss with a great deal of moralizing (supplied by Wells) about the need to follow where science leads. The ambivalence is fascinating, for at the time of the film's release the screen's favorite villain was the mad scientist, whose epitaph was: "there are things man was not meant to know." Here the imperious voice of reason proclaims the need to risk more, reach further, as the Luddites rush in, too late to prevent the launching of the first moon shot.

The 1930s spawned a cycle of monster movies—*Frankenstein*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *Devil Doll*—an outgrowth of the German gothic tradition, now transplanted to Hollywood. Essentially, they were magic dressed up as science; the scientist, with his bubbling retorts and electromagnetic apparatus, was a reincarnation of the medieval alchemist.

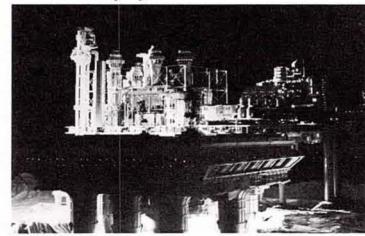
Public acceptance of such freak shows may have reflected the turbulence of the Depression era. Certainly the political hysteria of the 1950s contributed to the second wave of sf movies. Beneath the tranquil prosperity of the Eisenhower years lurked a fear of the unknown: of UFOs and subversion, of nuclear holocaust and the effects of radiation. Radioactivity enlarged insects, shrank people and created hideous mutants. Aliens swarmed in to seize our women and control the world.

Even though they didn't carry flags we all knew who they were. In *Planets Mars* God intervened on one side of America, and aging priests overthrew the Bolsheviks following radio instructions from Mars. The most threatening monsters were invisible: a fast-breeding vegetable embedded in the polar ice cap in *The Thing*; the forces of the *Id* in *Forbidden Planet*, and, most terrifying, pods that assumed human guise in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. In the 1950s you could get clobbered driving to your neighborhood drugstore—especially the Mojave Desert—and your neighbor might prove to be a closet alien.



... playing in a vast streamline moderne atrium with glass elevator

The Ladd Company



Archigam on Io: a mining settlement of the future as seen in **Outland**, 1981.



Columbia Pictures



In **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**, 1977, Steven Spielberg combined new-fashioned special effects and lots of fireworks.

Warner Brothers



A latter-day Saturday afternoon serial set in a fantasy galaxy: **The Empire Strikes Back**, 1980.

"It goes beyond all known architectural principles," declares the astonished villain in the Fortress of Solitude, **Superman**, 1978.

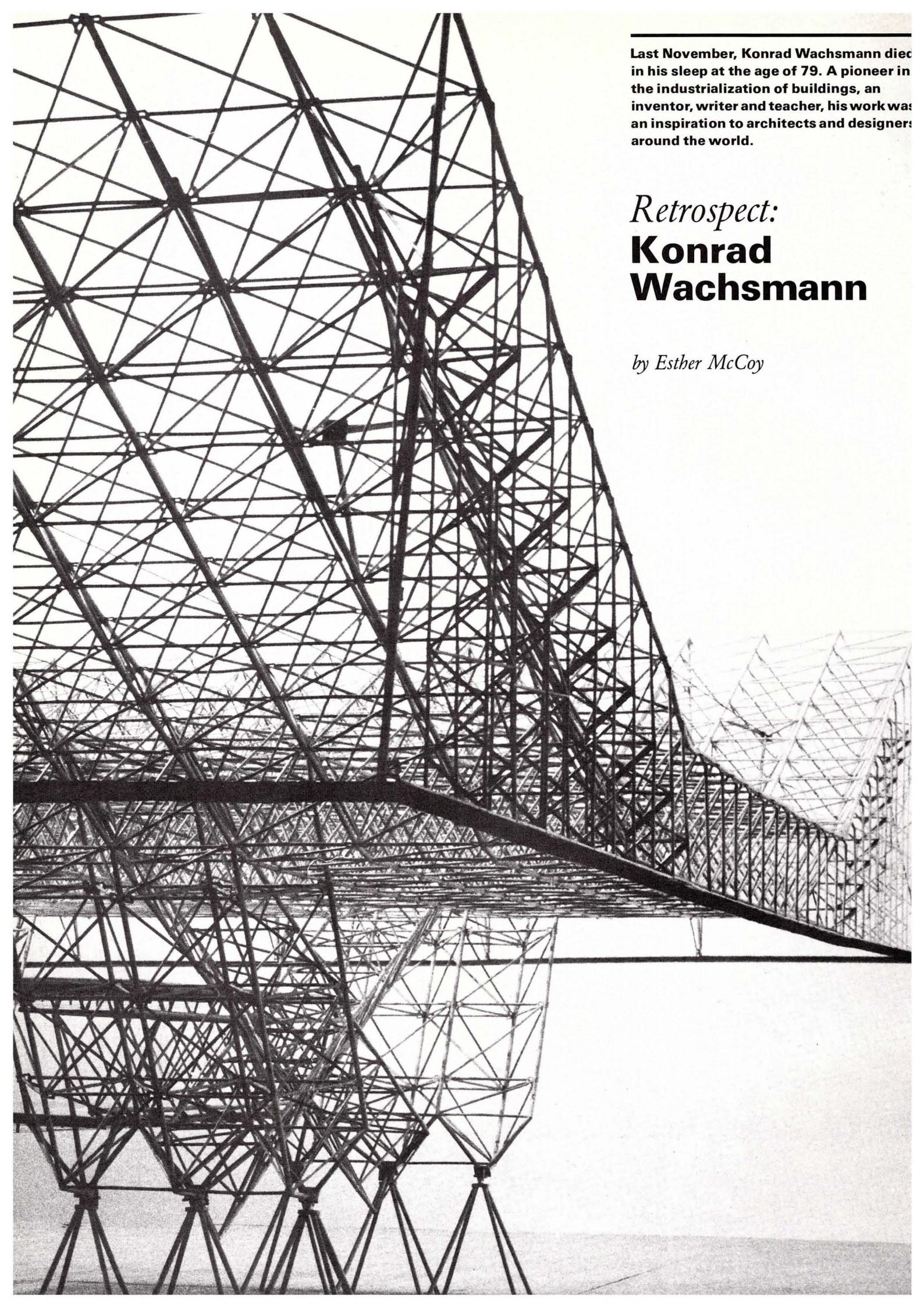
The 1960s tired of such localized errors, and began to explore future dystopias. In *Things to Come*, everyone had a fine time, wearing crisply-tailored togas and playing in a vast streamline moderne trium with glass elevators, like conventioneers in a Portman hotel. In 1942, the pulp magazine "Amazing Stories" had proudly announced: "The City of the Future—a giant plastic, metal and unbreakable glass city of the 21st century. A city of science, of atomic power, of space travel and of high culture." Sant'Elia would have loved it.

By 1968, our faith in plastics and atomic power had waned as rapidly as our trust in political institutions and human perfectability. We no longer needed to hiss tyrants or mad scientists; science itself appeared to have failed us. Computers ran amok in *2001*, *Colossus* and *Westworld*, and in *Demon Seed* raped the (good) scientist's wife. In *THX-1138* life was so suffocatingly regimented that the sane course was to flee to the wilderness—as kids all over America were doing in 1971. The all-white paradise of *Things to Come* had come to seem as sterile as an operating room. In *Planet of the Apes*, *Phase IV*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *A Clockwork Orange* and *Logan's Run* the message was reiterated: the future will be a) chaotic and violent; b) over-regulated and violent; c) administered (violently) by another species.

What of today? For centuries, men dreamed of space travel. The moon was tantalizing because it could be reached only through the imagination. Now the moon walk and close-ups of Jupiter have become a part of our collective experience, sandwiched between images of riot and disaster and aspirin commercials. We have seen the future and it doesn't work: we know that our solar system is barren and lifeless; contemporary problems baffle us. More than ever we need inspiring myths, and sf movies are there to provide them.

Star Wars was set in a galaxy far away, long ago—all the way back to George Lucas' childhood in the movie theater. It orchestrates leitmotifs from *The Wizard of Oz*, *Flash Gordon* serials, *The Searchers*, Laurel and Hardy, and World War Two aerial dogfights into a bubble-gum Niebelungen. *Close Encounters* was a treasure house of Steven Spielberg's movie memories and boasts a bunch of aliens that are as innocuous as they are enigmatic. (In the 1950s we would have shot first and asked questions later; today we are no longer sure of our own superiority). Lucas and Spielberg have an intuitive understanding of which buttons to push. Their movies combine an old-fashioned story, new-fashioned special effects, dashing heroes and exotic beasties, and a lot of fireworks. The leads in these latter-day Saturday afternoon serials are big kids acting out their fantasies. It's a search for lost innocence, an escape hatch for a generation that cannot live with reality; one more chapter in our ambivalent relationship with the movies. ●

ike conventioneers in a Portman hotel . . .



Last November, Konrad Wachsmann died in his sleep at the age of 79. A pioneer in the industrialization of buildings, an inventor, writer and teacher, his work was an inspiration to architects and designers around the world.

Retrospect: **Konrad Wachsmann**

by Esther McCoy



Konrad Wachsmann and
Mies van der Rohe.

Konrad Wachsmann liked to call himself a carpenter and Mies a stone mason, skipping over entirely his formal education. In Frankfurt-Oder where he was born in 1901 he was a shy and sensitive child and a miserable student. The accomplishments of his brilliant older brother were constantly held up to him but he never improved. By the time he was 17 his family had given up hope and he was apprenticed to a carpenter. Finding the work congenial, his world quickly expanded. With the pressure off he began his self-education, reading widely and challenged by ideas. His aunt was very much impressed by his progress, and after three years as an apprentice and two as a skilled carpenter she persuaded him to enroll in the Academy of Applied Art in Berlin. He became interested in architecture, and after a year transferred to the Dresden Academy of Art where he studied under Heinrich Tessenow and became a master student.

The crippling inflation in Germany in 1924 drove him back to Berlin where he could hold a job as he studied. At the Academy of Art in Berlin his professor Hans Poelzig took him into his studio in the Palace of Sans Souci. There Konrad lived and worked.

In Berlin he discovered cafe life, and he liked to say that his real education was at the Romanische Caffe, a gathering place for the intelligentsia from the arts, theater and films. His academic education continued to parallel his self-education until he was 25 years old.

This excerpt from his autobiography begins as he leaves Poelzig's studio in the Palace to go to Holland. He wrote the entire manuscript in three months in his 79th year. The haste gives it great buoyancy and immediacy; pervading it is the perennial youth that never deserted Konrad. Some of it reads like the exploits of the Rover Boys. The broken sequences, the cinematic cuts and changes of scene, the literary leaps, are amusingly at odds with the orderly accumulation of data that he expected of his seminar students at USC when they analyzed the requirements of a building.

But a book is not a building, and even if it were, one discipline is enough for one lifetime. His experiences spill out on the pages. The one I have selected for this first issue of the resurrected *Arts and Architecture* is about his three years at Niesky when he first discovered his direction—industrialized building. It is among the great passages of affirmation, but there are many others in the book, as when he first looked at New York at age 40, and cried in wonder, "This is my city, this is my scale."

There are scenes of slow terror. Just before the outbreak of the Second World War after being forced out of Italy, an English poet in Vence gave him a place to live in an abandoned stable. Every day artists, theater people, scientists and writers, many poorer than himself, straggled up the mountainside to Vence seeking refuge. At dusk each day Konrad waited for the searchlights to go on in the Tower of Antibes far below his stable. One night they did not go on. "I trembled," he wrote. "I knew now the war had started."

He could follow such scenes with rollicking ones. He was interned with many intellectuals in a brick factory in Aix-en-Provence, the huge kiln tunnels their bedrooms, the factory space their living room. Their spirits soar as they start eating regularly for the first time in months, and the arguments on art begin. Konrad, who loved comfort, found pipes and materials to carry hot and cold water to the tunnels for showers. He provided the framework for entertainment by building a stage where the playwrights and actors could put on plays.

He always had the resilience to pick up the pieces after a blow had struck. He saw life as essentially tragic, but few could have been so cheered as he by the lines from his favorite book, *Candide*, that this is the best of all possible worlds. He enjoyed the world, and for him it would always be stuffed with wonders. His world was never governed by doctors and pains and self pity. At the time he died he had not seen a doctor for fourteen years.

Esther McCoy and
Konrad Wachsmann.



Esther McCoy, a Contributing Editor of *Arts and Architecture*, wrote frequently for the original version of this magazine. She has written extensively on California architecture and her publications include Five California Architects, Richard Neutra, and Vienna to Los Angeles: Two Journeys.



Excerpt from
A Time Bridge
*Konrad Wachsmann's
autobiography*

I had gone out to reach the antechamber of architecture, but if to be accepted in the Temple of the Pallas of Athene meant to learn clay modeling, that was too much. I left the golden cage of the Imperial Palace in the park of Sans Souci in Potsdam and that wonderful man, Hans Poelzig, my master. Poelzig was my professor at the Academy of Art and he had his studio in the palace. I worked there as a master student and lived there.

I went to Holland, directly to Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud. When I reported to him I could not imagine that he would not immediately offer me work. Instead, he made it unmistakably clear that dreams and enthusiasm are not enough, that I had first to learn more about the tools I would build with. I was a cabinetmaker and carpenter but that was not enough. To say nothing of the depressed situation in Europe in 1926.

My beautiful plans and hopes collapsed. I realized that it was illegal to hold a job without a work permit but at the time I had little grasp of reality. I ended up in jail and was finally shipped home. Desperate, I appealed to an acquaintance who was a manager of a travel agency in the Rhineland. He sent me a ticket to Paris. There another of my heroes lived—Charles Le Corbusier. I went immediately to his office and talked with him. He was interested in me, and to test my skill he asked me to copy in ink a plan of a building for Moscow. (I saw this building fifty years later when I was invited to Moscow to lecture.)

I copied the plan to Le Corbusier's satisfaction so he generously permitted me to work in his office without pay—everyone in the office worked without pay in order to learn what they could from him. But I did not have a penny to live on. And again so close to the antechamber of architecture my dream collapsed. I tried to make enough to live on by selling newspapers on the streets. This meant more starvation, and if my dear sister had not sent me a ticket home instead of the money I had asked for I probably would have collapsed from hunger.

I surrendered and returned, beaten and not knowing what to do next. I lived in hiding in the slums of Berlin. I did not dare to return to my beloved Romanische Caffe. Nevertheless the rumor spread that I was back.

One day my old master Hans Poelzig was standing at the door of my miserable room. I weighed little more than a hundred pounds. With a stern voice he ordered me at once to the country, a place far from the city where I would eat regularly. Although I had left him on short notice he showed no rancor. He helped when I needed it most.

The next day I arrived at the place he had arranged for me to stay. The railway station was a small brick building at the edge of a large wheat field, far from the village. It was a bright summer day and as I walked my despair began to fall away and I felt very much at home. By the time I had approached the edge of town I was singing. When I reached the first house I could not believe my eyes—in an upper window stood a beautiful woman, smiling and waving a welcome to me. It was an omen, for later when I inquired about the house I learned it had long been vacant. Thus I was welcomed to Niesky, which was to be a turning point in my life.

Poelzig had sent me to Christoph and Unmack, the largest wood construction factory in Europe. Niesky was a village in Silesia colonized in the early 18th century by a Protestant sect from Bohemia. The village was delightful in a monotonous way. In an orderly line along the straight streets stood houses of an early 18th century neo-classical

**in an upper window stood a
beautiful woman, smiling and
waving a welcome to me.
It was an omen, for later when I
inquired about the house I learned
it had long been vacant.**



*Wachsmann as a
young man.*

**And I also saw for the first time
factories mass producing—
production machines producing.
It was like a miracle.**

style. The roof heights were all the same, the walls and window dimensions were standardized. Nothing was pretentious, everywhere was calm. Even the trees were in regular rows. In this self-imposed universal system the people lived in remarkable harmony and contentment.

In Niesky I sensed for the first time the equilibrium between man and nature. And I also saw for the first time factories mass producing—production machines producing. It was like a miracle. And what was the product? Prefabricated panel systems for housing, hospitals, schools. Since before the turn of the century this had been the industry of Niesky, and its products were shipped all over the world.

I had come to Niesky for trivial reasons but I feel strongly now that the stage had been set for me. I had gone to Holland and Paris to reach the antechamber of architecture in the offices of Oud and Le Corbusier, but Niesky was the antechamber. If I had not found it in 1926 I should have found it under any circumstance, for it was essential that I be exposed to it. Life would somehow have taken this direction which I still follow more than fifty years later. It was the time and the place where seemingly unrelated coincidences or happenings began to shape my thoughts, my work, my life, and not least, my chances.

I came to stay three weeks and stayed three years.

I learned everything I could about the technology of wood construction, from small structures to large span buildings, everything from carpentry to mass production. In addition I had the opportunity to organize and shape large work teams which went from design studio to research laboratory to management office and to the factory itself.

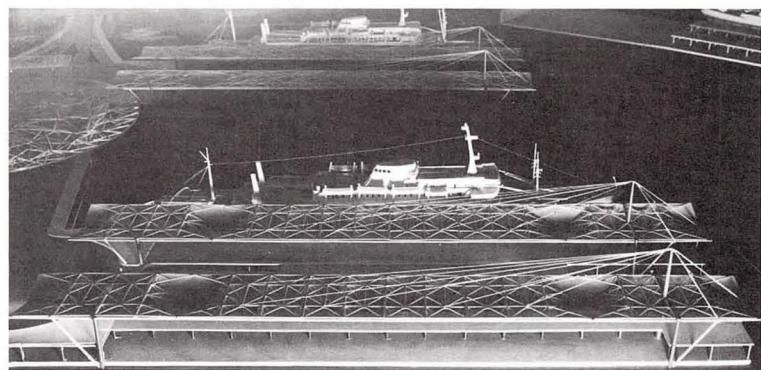
I remember specifically a hotel complex built in Curaçoa for the Dutch oil industry which was completely fabricated in modular panels and then shipped to the Caribbean and erected on a remote site in a few weeks. I foresaw the technology of container shipping, so widespread today, by planning the containers as building components, and packing them in the factory with hundreds of parts.

One of my innovations was to offer for sale with structural components all the mechanical equipment, appliances, even light fixtures. With hospital pavilions we offered beds and operating tables and standard medical instruments, and desks and blackboards with schools. I included modular grids in the catalogs so a customer could lay out a building to his special dimensions, and the men in my office developed shop drawings from the rough plans.

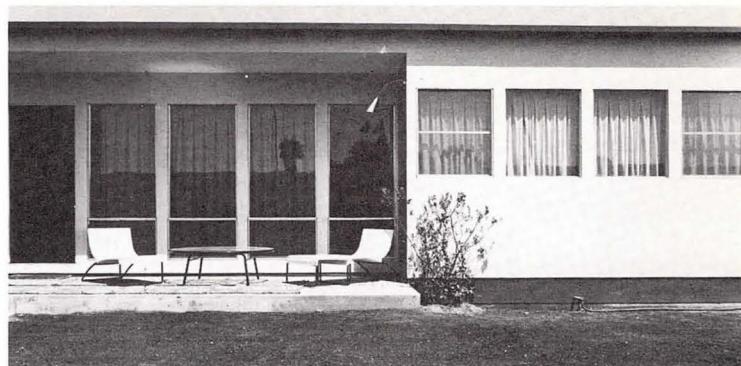
By the end of three years at Christoph and Unmack I had "built" millions of dollars worth of buildings for all over the world. It had been a delightful and inspiring time. In those three years I had passed beyond the antechamber of architecture. No longer the enthusiastic young man filled with dreams who had applied to Oud for work, I had now a grasp on reality.

I left Niesky to oversee construction on a house I had designed for Albert Einstein.

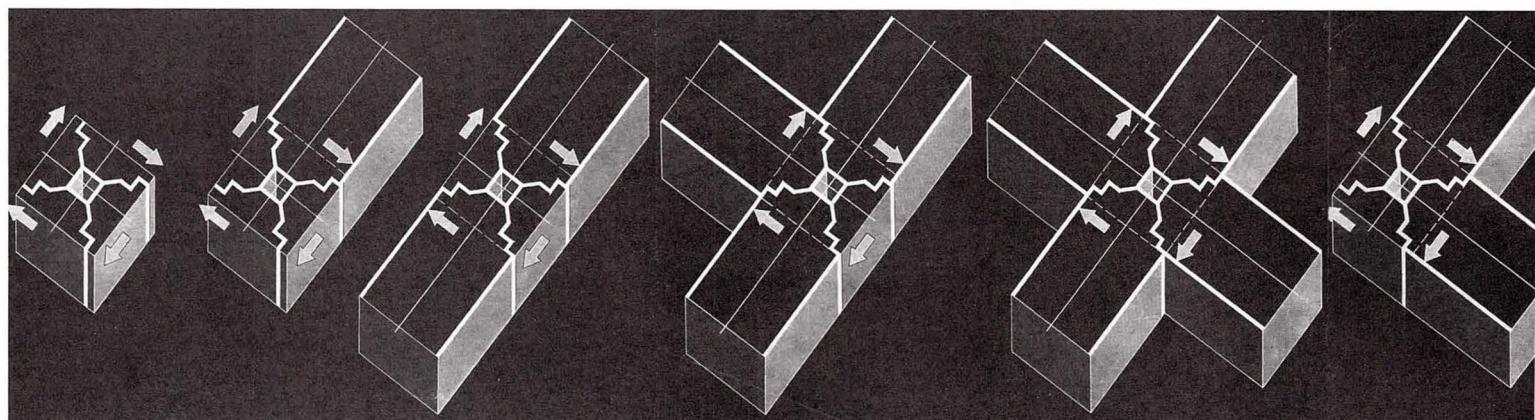
But that is another story.



Genoa Harbor passenger terminal island,
pier structure adjacent to helicopter
loading platform, 1961.



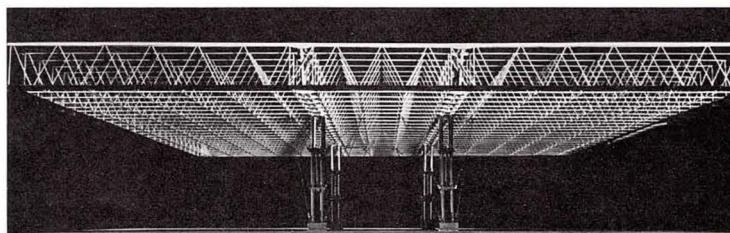
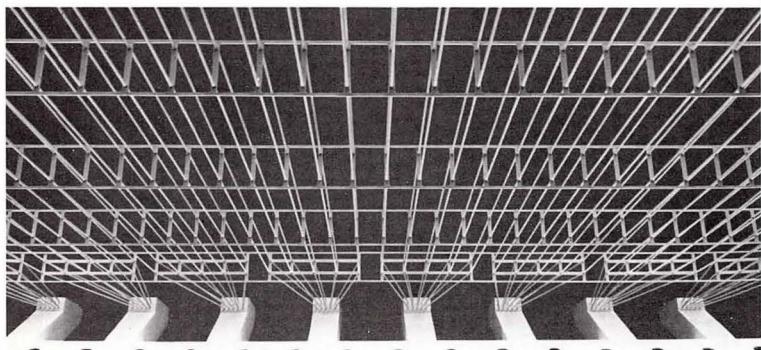
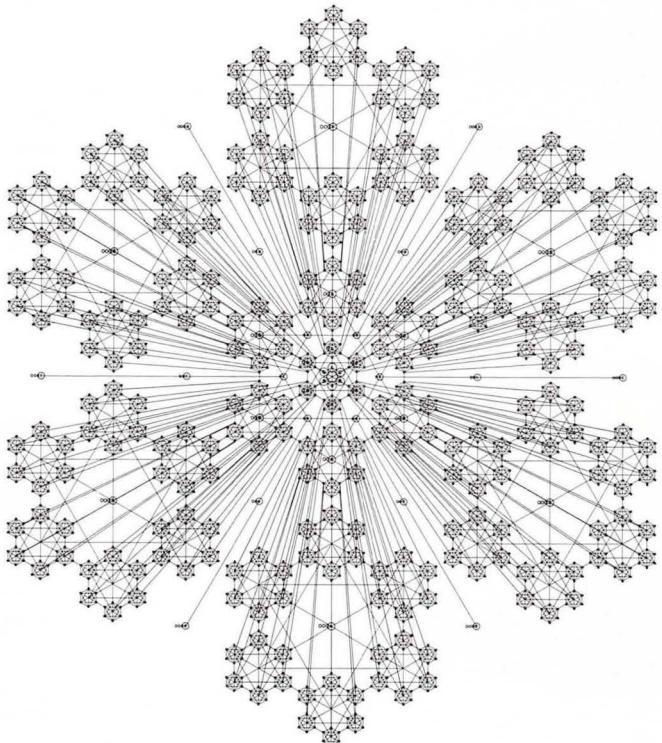
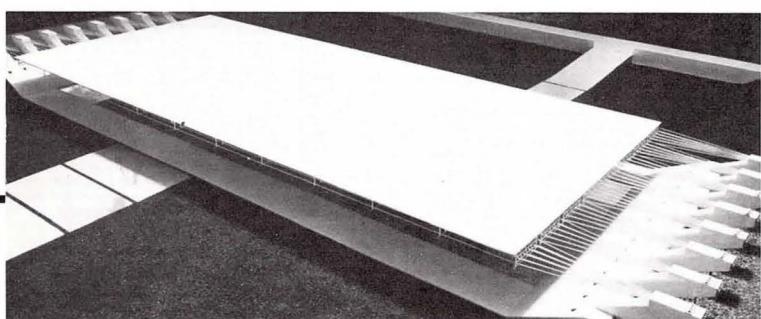
General Panel house, designed and
manufactured by Konrad Wachsmann
and Walter Gropius, 1945–47.



Metal connecting device used to join
standard elements and to transfer the
resultant stresses, 1943.

*Diagram outlining the coordination of
educational information for a graduate
research project, USC School of
Architecture.*

Model of city hall designed for
California City, 1966.



Mobilair Structure, 1942, a large span
light weight structural system made up of
uniform tubular elements joined by a
standardized connector.



RAPHAEL SORIANO THE GOGOL HOUSE

Detailed example of International Style architecture. Los Feliz hills, built in 1938. Listed in LACMA Guide, number D3-3. \$275,000. Living, dining and bedroom areas open onto large deck with view. Photograph by Julius Shulman.

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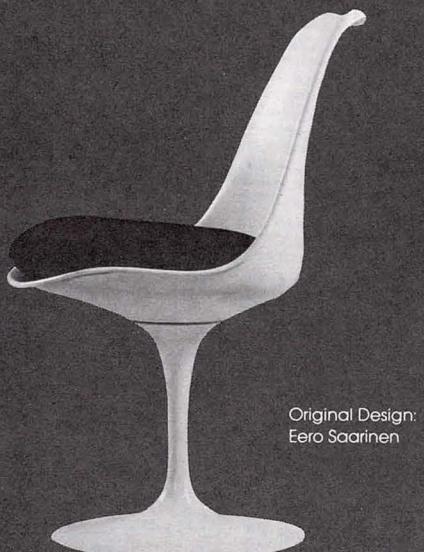
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The Song of the Open Road

by John Beach

California Crazy: Roadside Vernacular Architecture by Jim Heimann and Rip Georges, introduction by David Gebhard. Chronicle Books, 1980, \$8.95.

The End of the Road: Vanishing Highway Architecture in America by John Margolies. Penguin Books, 1980, \$12.95.

Billboard Art by Sally Henderson and Robert Landau, introduction by David Hockney. Chronicle Books, 1980, \$9.95.

the eighth decade of the 20th century the America that Walt Whitman retold and celebrated, the America of total personal mobility, of the endless road and the endless adventure, is undergoing a series of transformations whose resolution is neither clear nor in sight. For the most part those eight decades the most potent metaphor for the personal freedom of American life has been the privately-owned motor car. The automobile has altered America's social patterns, the plan of the American house, the form of the American landscape. It is obvious that the automobile is to be a victim, partial or total, of contemporary changes, and that this is a natural time to reassess its impact and its artifacts. Many of those artifacts already lie rusting and crumbling along the highway; the abandoned gas station, the giant orange with its last juice squeezed out, the closed and vandalized drive-in have become common, melancholy objects in our landscape.

This era of reduced expectations has left rapidly discernible tracks across the landscape. Cars are smaller, gas stations are fewer, sign bars are tinier, and the amount of anything which can be purchased for a dollar is reduced. It is not, therefore, surprising that that cultural thermometer, the coffee table book, has dropped several inches of pressure. Mr. & Mrs. With-It, who ten years ago would have had a low, glass-topped Miesian coffee table displaying *Shells*, *The Doric Temple*, and a Bauhaus book (their edges carefully and rigidly parallel and perpendicular to the edges of the table) now have a glossily-painted Parsons table with a casual scatter of brightly-colored paperback photo books devoted to a wide range of visual and environmental subjects. The taller, cheaper, paperback book can respond more rapidly and more economically to changes in fashion than its more respectable predecessor. This has resulted in some too-hastily written books; it has in some cases transformed the coffee table book into the instant-coffee table book; but it has also provided access to images and subjects not previously available.

Three recent publications reflect the book industry's ability and eagerness to respond to current interests: *California Crazy: Roadside Vernacular Architecture*; *The End of the Road: Vanishing Highway Architecture in America*, and *Billboard Art*. All deal with aspects of the environment which have been formed by the presence and use of the automobile; and which have, with the threatened demise of the automotive age, become objects of serious interest and study for the first time. There is some overlap in the material covered in *California Crazy* and *End of the Road*, but despite the rather inclusive titles of both books, neither is truly comprehensive. The material in each presents an impassioned, but coherent, idiosyncratic and highly selective vision of what is most important in the roadside environment.

Except for a short section at the end, included for comparison purposes, *California Crazy* limits itself geographically to California. It explores buildings shaped like objects and animals (toads, cameras, lemons, diners, ice cream freezers, etc.) with excursions into the more exotic shapes of the period revival. The illustrative material includes both recent photographs and documentary ones which recall the elegance and sense of excitement of that period when the massive use of the automobile by the middle class first began to alter the scale and imagery of the buildings which lined the road. Many buildings included here survive only by chance in casual snapshots. Unfortunately, their destruction continues.

The text provides excellent accompaniment to the visual material, but there is a problem here with terminology: Gebhard's phrase "grammatical architecture" is not a happy one. It has inescapable references to that period in the late 1960s when it was believed, naively but logically, that better design would automatically result by labeling all steps in the design process with terms borrowed from the field of computer systems. Robert Venturi's use of "ducks" seems simpler, less pretentious, and it immediately evokes an important and representative archetype. Otherwise, the text is Gebhard at his best; amusing without being arch; learned without being pedantic; and providing both fact and a careful and provocative balance.

A short afterward by Jim Heimann discusses the discoveries and enthusiasm which led to the creation of the book.

The End of the Road presents images preserved from cross-country travels over a five-year period. The photographs, both as a collection and as individual photographs, are superb. They are ill-served by their format and by the accompanying text. The black page edging may have been intended by the book designer as a mourning band for a dying environmental phenomenon but it is fussy and distracting. The text evokes that once-important American summer ritual, the family motoring vacation (license plate and alphabet tag, bags of penny candy, and "Are we there yet?" beyond the counting).

Margolies' memories of these childhood experiences are accompanied by an annoyance that the world changes. The derelict artifacts of the golden age of the American road represent important aesthetic, technological, social and cultural ideas; they deserve a more serious response than petulant nostalgia.



There is also a clear anti-design bias to the text; a reluctance to admit that the vernacular and the high art influence one another; that they depend upon one another for new ideas and new vigor:

"Professional architects and planners tried to impose an intellectual order upon the environment—at the expense of ornament, humor, and spontaneity. And they flushed the roadside environment down the drain. The symbolic and representational elements in architectural design were obliterated by people who had assumed they knew better than we did about what we wanted. What these people didn't understand was that they were also eliminating the soul, character, and individuality."

Margolies neglects to mention that the very handsome Spanish Colonial Revival service station (No. 30) was done by the important high art Los Angeles firm of Morgan, Walls & Clements. The discussion of the changing roadside through seven decades states that by the end of the mid-1950s the end of the road was in sight. "Bolder and simpler designs replace the richness of regional variety in this decline-by-franchise decade." Yet No. 20, the Hat & Boots gas station was built in the mid-1960s. No. 90, the Cabazon Monster was finished in the 1970s. Nos. 57, 98, and 120 also appear to have been quite recent. Such sloppiness and lack of documentation is disappointing, particularly from a figure with Margolies' legendary authority in the field.

While *California Crazy* and *The End of the Road* deal primarily with buildings (*The End of the Road* does include some signage and other objects) *Billboard Art* concerns itself with a related but separate subject. It traces billboard history from Lascaux to the Sunset Strip, and includes information on technique and technology. The visual material, as in the other two books, is spectacular (like *California Crazy* it combines recent photos with archival material).

The billboard is threatened not simply by the changed relationship between the American and his automobile; it has as well been a convenient and frequent target of beautification groups and good-tasters. But the billboard has also attracted the attention of many artists; it remains the only common opportunity for heroic-scale work since the mural programs of the New Deal era. In fact, if the billboard as a commercial device is threatened, it seems likely that it will continue in its new reincarnation as a medium for high art.

Americans generally like billboards (or billboards wouldn't be an effective way to advertise) but they aren't sure that they really ought to admit it (after all, aren't they—well—commercial? Well, just a touch-shoddy? But isn't that one over there pretty?). This schizophrenia is currently fighting itself on the streets of our cities. There is a stretch of freeway through the southern part of downtown San Francisco which is enlivened by a constantly changing gallery of brilliantly-colored billboards. If the city's recently enacted and strongly backed billboard ordinance is ever enforced this visually exciting signage complex will be replaced with excellent views of the dullest portions of the city's armpit. Simultaneously, a popular advertising campaign by a local bank has posted giant reproductions of paintings on billboards all over the area.

These books are period pieces. In their physical form, in their choice of subjects, and in their reflection of changing attitudes towards our own recent past they personify important trends and ideas of the early 1980s. Produced by people of widely varied backgrounds, interests and levels of sophistication they intermesh, and compensate for one another's weaknesses. Bound together they would make a fine book; an appealing, informative, lavishly illustrated elegy to Autopia.●

Architectural historian John Beach is co-author of *Bay Area Houses* published by Oxford University Press, and Julia Morgan, Architect from Oakland.



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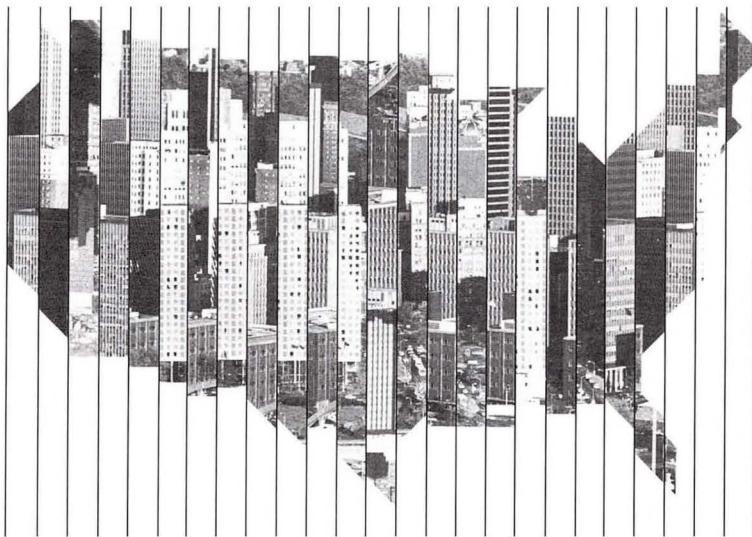
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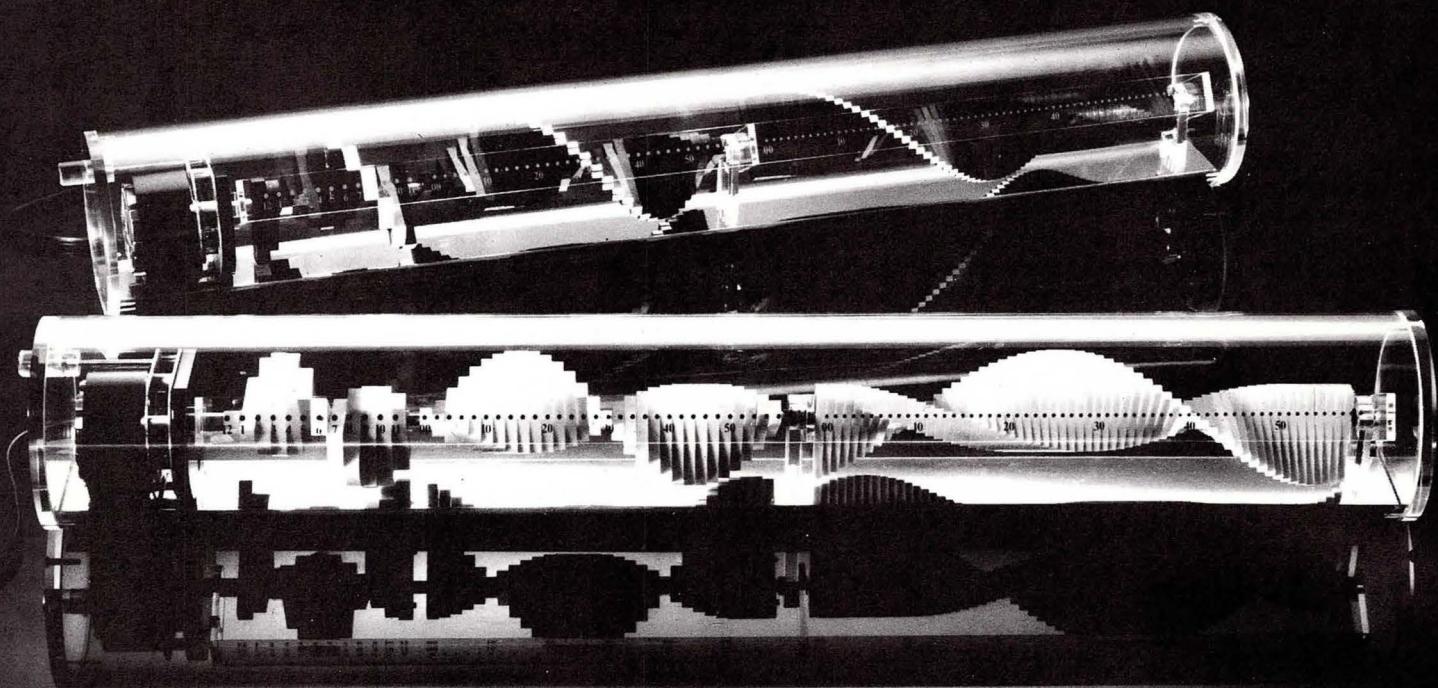
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