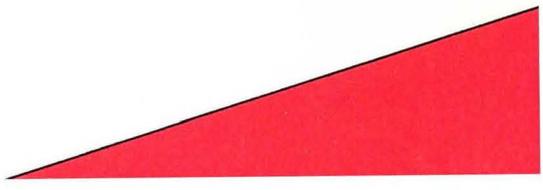
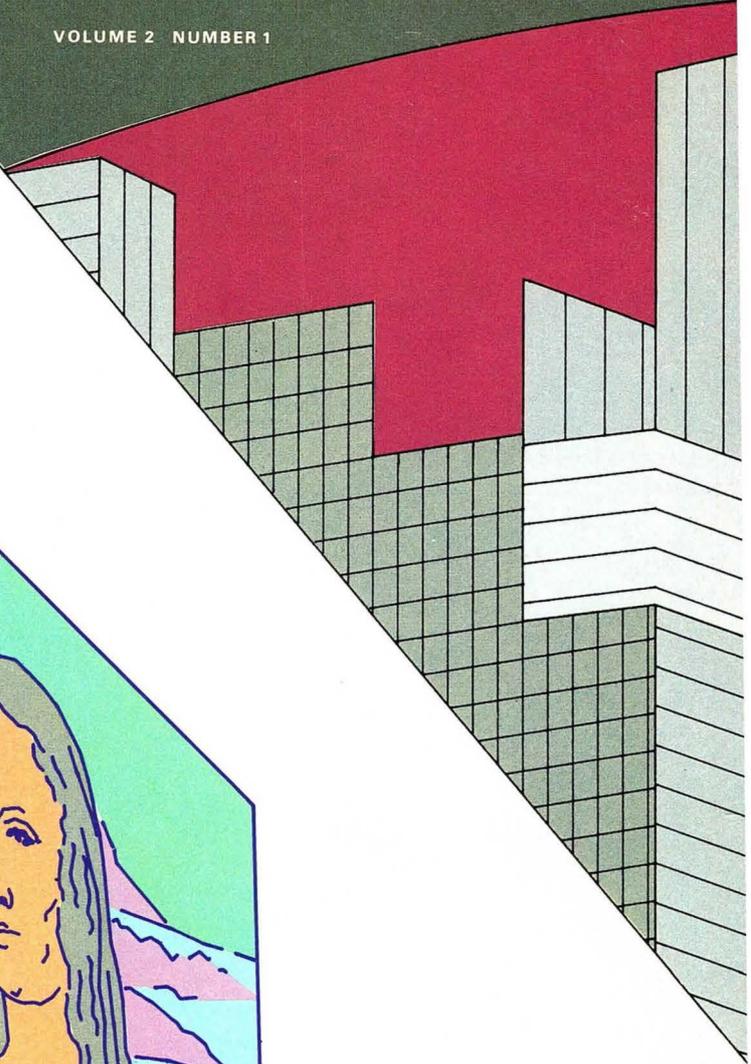
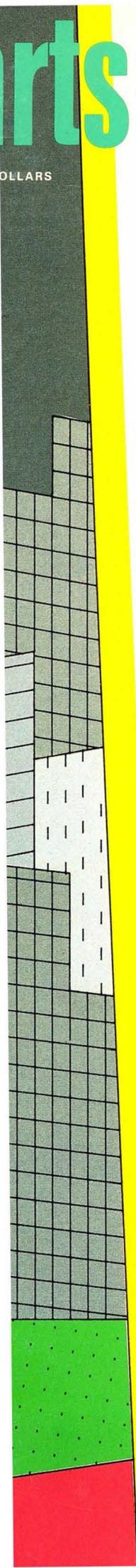


arts + architecture

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VOLUME 2 NUMBER 1

DOLLARS



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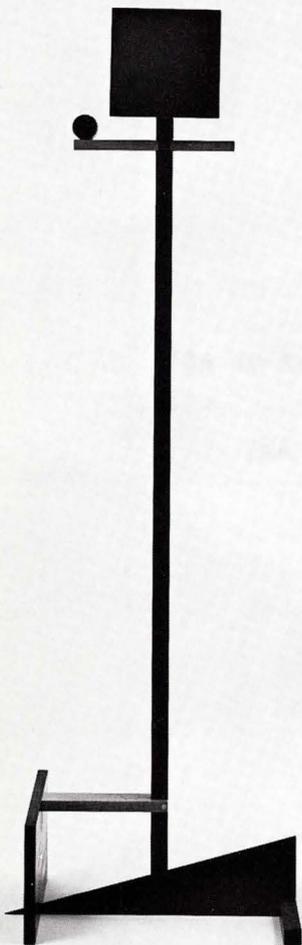


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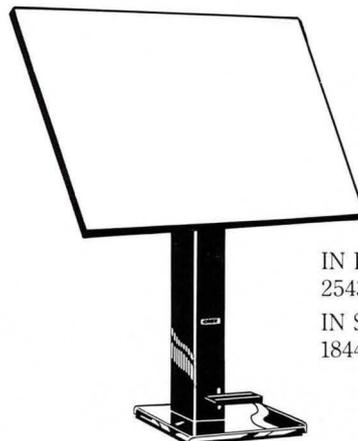
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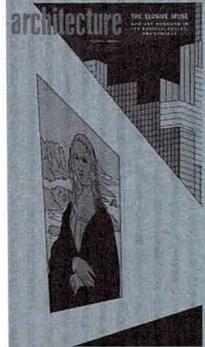
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and Architecture wishes to thank the National Endowment for the Arts, which supported the publication of this issue.



Van Hamersveld's eclectic style has been applied to post-graduate covers, and billboards. He studied at the Art Center College of Design and the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles, his images shaped trends in graphic design since the Sixties. He is, as he once said, "in favor of the elimination of recognizable style altogether."

A photograph of Tod Wizon's drawing, Desert Pools, in Volume 1, #4 was printed upside-down. We apologize to Mr. Wizon for this error.

A drawing on the bottom of page 66 of Volume 1 #4 was of Woodruff in Snowmass, Colorado by Robert Atkins, not the Centennial, as stated in the text.

The name Violich was misspelled in the Robert Eckbo article in Volume 1. We apologize to Mr. Eckbo and to Violich.

arts architecture

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Notes in Passing

Although to many people museums represent the tangible embodiment of cultural values, the workings of those institutions are no different than the working of any other. Museums appear to be the representation of society's collective vision, but they are composed of individuals and groups with their own separate values and loyalties.

The workings of these diverse forces became very apparent when we began this issue. First, it was difficult to obtain information; the museums were often reluctant to release their plans to public view. The worst offender was the museum which received the greatest amount of public funding. Furthermore, the players were always changing. In Southern California alone, during the gestation of this issue, three museum directorships have changed hands, Pontus Hulten of the Museum of Contemporary Art has resigned to be replaced by Richard Koshalek; and two others, Sebastian Adler of the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art and Stephen Garrett of the Getty Museum, have been dismissed or left by "mutual agreement." Speaking at a recent event to honor Richard Koshalek, Stephen Garrett laughingly pointed out the wisdom of honoring the new Director at the beginning of his term — there is no certainty to its duration!

It is against this background of changing players, private decisions and individual motives that museum buildings are built. The board of directors that donates or raises some of the money to build the museum sees it as its property and the selection of architects as its prerogative; and the professionals who are trained to plan and run museums feel that they have the knowledge to determine the program. The architects must defer to these and other forces; and the public must take whatever is offered.

In many cases the dialogue between the board of directors, museum professionals and architect leads to a respectable building. In others, the result is compromise, and changes must be made after the building's flaws are discovered in everyday use. The process of creating the program for the building and selecting the architect are often at fault.

It would seem that, because of the powers bestowed upon them, the first responsibility of museum boards should be to the people who use the building or experience it as part of their city:

the public and the museum professionals. Programming of building and selection of the architect should therefore be carried out in a more open and professional way.

Recently, a number of public building projects have been commissioned through architectural competitions run according to guidelines established by either the National Endowment for the Arts or the American Institute of Architects. The Beverly Hills Civic Center, the San Juan Capistrano Library, and Portland's Pioneer Square all had their architectural programs determined in detail prior to the architectural selection process. Design firms were selected as the result of open or invited competitions; in the second case, the list of invited architects was compiled by a professional advisor who was also responsible for running the competition. The public was involved either as members of an architectural jury or as individuals whose opinions were solicited and valued. In all cases, the results involved a publicly visible process in which choice resided outside the narrow confines of institutional boards.

As can be seen in this issue, the alternatives can be messy. Although the Museum of Contemporary Art is likely to prove a worthy piece of architecture, the conflicts involved in the selection of the architect and the interference of the private developers and museum's own building committee nearly resulted in disaster. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art's original building was the result of many compromises and the current extension involved no public participation despite the institution's public nature. The specific manner of displaying the Alexander Girard Collection was determined solely by the collection's donor.

At present, the Getty Museum is contemplating a major expansion. It is an institution with unsurpassed economic resources and public importance. One hopes that the Getty will learn from the problems of other museums and expend the money and effort necessary to conduct an open architectural competition once a program and site have been determined by professional consultants. Such a process would be a vehicle for communicating its objectives to the community specifically and clearly, and would stimulate the sort of design quality that usually springs from trustees' privately made selections.

BARBARA GOLDSTEIN

CURRENT EVENTS

Arts and Architecture takes note of outstanding museum exhibitions throughout the region.

William Wegman
Greek Restaurant
Color Polaroid



enne tipi designed and erected by Raymond Nakai, a Navajo-Ute.

APRIL 15 - OCTOBER 3

Pueblo and Navajo Textiles from the Silverman Collection

The collection of artist Jack Silverman is the source of 23 Pueblo and Navajo textiles from the 19th century. Included are first, second, and third-phase chief blankets, as well as Hopi *mantas*, dark, wool women's garments, worn as dresses or shawls. Silverman has documented his collection with serigraphs which will also be included.

CALIFORNIA

M. H. de Young Memorial Museum
 Golden Gate Park
 San Francisco, CA 94118
 (415) 558-2887

JULY 2 - SEPTEMBER 5

The Pennsylvania Germans: A Celebration of Their Arts, 1683-1850

Three hundred years ago the first German-speaking people made their American settlement in Pennsylvania. The anniversary is fittingly commemorated by an exhibition of 300 objects in the Pennsylvania German style, the oldest folk tradition in this country. The collection includes furniture, books, musical instru-



ments, and household objects, all decorated with simplicity and sincerity. Organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Winterthur Museum.

California Palace of the Legion of Honor
 Lincoln Park
 San Francisco, CA 94118
 (415) 558-2881

JUNE 18 - SEPTEMBER 5

Fantin-Latour

A retrospective including more than 150 works surveys the 19th century career of the French artist. Ignace Henri Joseph Theodore Fantin-Latour became known in this country for his lustrous paintings of still lifes and flowers and in France for portraits of other famous artists. But the works which he valued most were lithographic fantasies inspired by the music of Wagner, Brahms, and Berlioz. Examples of all three are included in this exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Canada, the Louvre, and Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
 5905 Wilshire Boulevard
 Los Angeles, CA 90036
 (213) 857-6111

CONTINUING THROUGH JUNE 5

The Works of Edward Ruscha

More than 150 paintings, collages, drawings, graphic works, and books trace Ruscha's artistic development from 1959 to the present. These include streamlined depictions of pop culture such as the painting *Standard Station, Amarillo, Texas* (1963); self-published books such as *Some Los Angeles Apartments* (1965); experiments in semantics and materials such as the series, *News, Mews, Pews, Brews, Stew and Dues* (1970) which is printed in

substances like chocolate syrup and salmon roe. Organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art
 550 Pacific Street
 Monterey, CA 93940
 (408) 372-7591

MAY 1 - 29

Selected California Artists:

Recent Work

This exhibition assembles new paintings in order to survey the strains of contemporary work in California. Represented are diverse approaches including abstract expressionism, radical realism, pop, hard-edge and non-objective, as well as a variety of artists including Nathan Oliviera, Sam Francis, Elmer Bischoff, and Wayne Thiebaud. Loans from the Berggruen Gallery, Fuller-Goldeen Gallery, and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

San Diego Museum of Art
 Balboa Park
 San Diego, CA 92101
 (619) 232-7931

JULY 4 - SEPTEMBER 25

Between Continents/Between Seas: Pre-Columbian Art of Costa Rica

More than 300 objects of ceremonial, utilitarian, and decorative uses make up the first comprehensive collection of pre-Columbian art to travel from Costa Rica to the United States. Included are fine gold jewelry in the shape of animals, natural and supernatural; richly incised jars and vessels; grinding tables or *matates* in volcanic stone; jade pendants and large stone sculptures. Coordinated by the Detroit Institute of Arts.

San Diego Museum of Man
 Balboa Park
 San Diego, CA 92101
 (619) 239-2001

JUNE 17 - SEPTEMBER 30

Tension and Harmony

Since early Navajo Blankets were made principally for daily wear, very few have survived to the present day. This exhibition features a collection of these rare weavings and documents their evolution. Included are a first-phase chief blanket and a



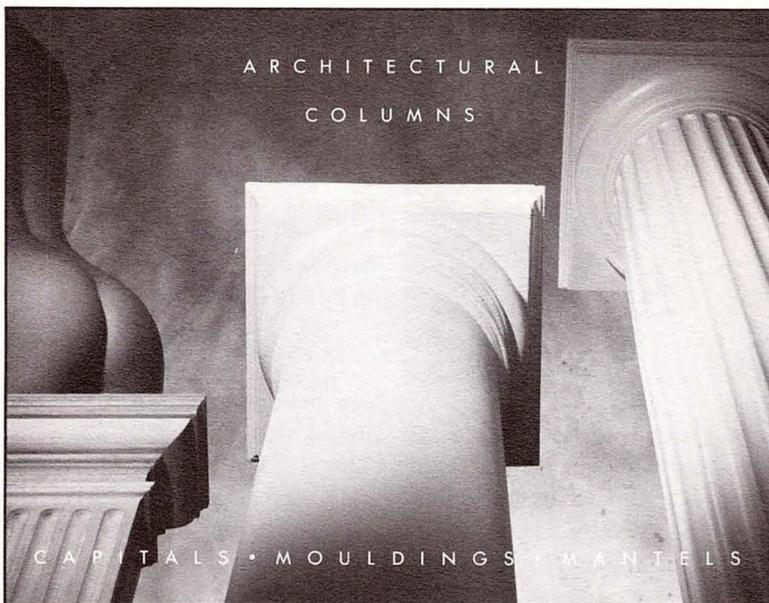
IZONA

Heard Museum
 East Monte Vista Road
 Phoenix, AZ 85004
 (602) 252-8848

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 31

Plains Indian Tipi: and Architecture

Tipi was a unique architectural form ideally suited to the lifestyle environment of the Plains Indians. While most were unadorned, tipis of special individuals, families or societies were decorated by commissioned artists with war designs, expressions of visionary experiences, clan symbols, and medallions. This exhibition offers an interpretation of these designs, as well as displaying three different types of tipi: one from the Flathead Reservation in Montana, a Sioux painted for the exhibition by Lee Whitehorse, and a Cheyenne



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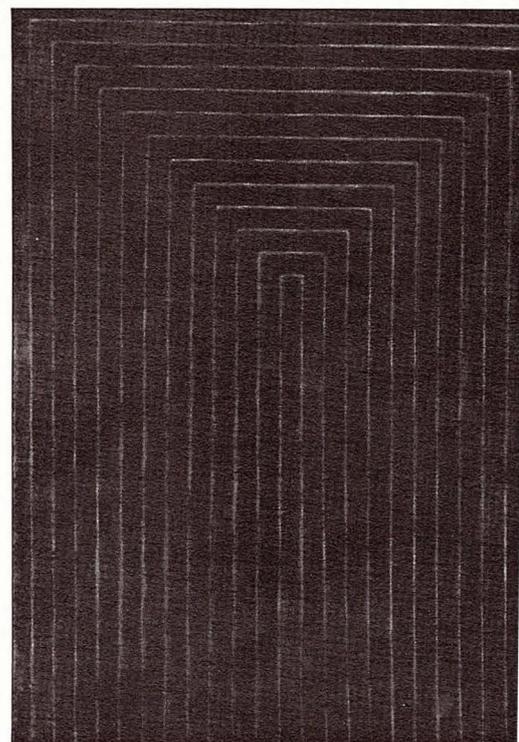
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Frank Stella
Clinton Plaza
Black enamel on
Canvas, 1959

classic child's blanket, as well as a variety of contemporary weavings valued for the excellence of their design and workmanship.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Van Ness Avenue at McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 863-8800

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 1

Stella Survey: 1959-1982

Since he began painting the Black Series in 1959, Frank Stella has remained a major force in American art by experimenting with the relationships between color, pattern, surface, and edge. He divides his work into interrelated series; the works in the exhibition represent 14 of the 19 series that Stella has created to date. Five works are drawn from the museum's collection, while nine are lent by others in California.

MAY 5 — JUNE 26

WPA Allocation

Between 1935 and 1941, the Work Progress Administration (WPA) engaged over two million people in a variety of public works, including arts projects. This exhibition consists of 30 pieces, by period artists such as Rufino Tamayo and Loren MacIver, which were executed for WPA and assigned to the museum.

JUNE 1 — JULY 31

Twentieth Century Masters: Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection
For the description of the exhibit see listing at Oregon: Seattle Museum.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art

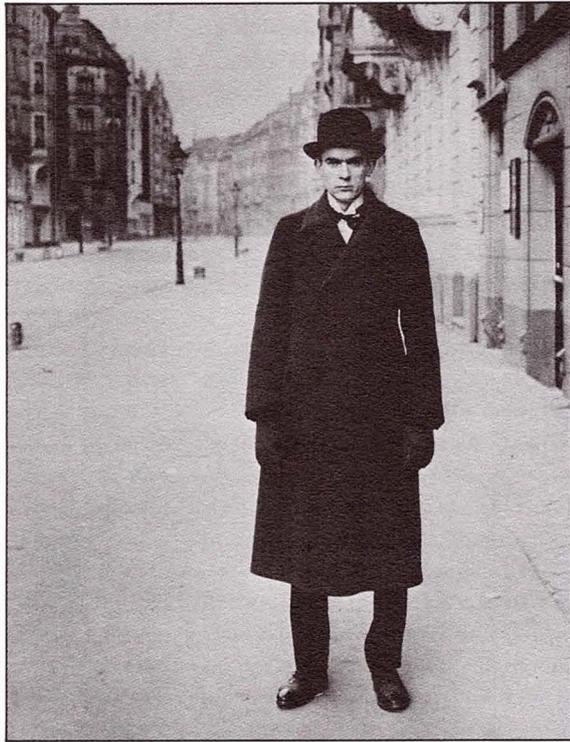
1130 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 963-4364

CONTINUING THROUGH M.

August Sander: Photographs of an Epoch

"Some photographers set up artists, others as moralists. The artists make an inventory of the world; the moralists concentrate on hard cases. An example of photography-as-science is the project August Sander began in 1910, a photographic catalogue of the German people." — Susan Sontag, *Photography*.

"Man of the Twentieth Century" was Sander's attempt, between 1910s and 1940s, to photographically capture an archetype for the era: a person in occupation, class, and description. The result was an astorically disapproved gallery of the German society; it is the principal subject of this exhibition consisting of more than 200 images loaned from the Sander family archive. Organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



at Sander
r
ne, 1927

erick S. Wight Art Gallery
A
Angeles, CA 90024
825-9345

the dye-transfer printing technique affords an unparalleled brilliance.

I D A H O

TINUING THROUGH MAY 8

Frozen Image:
Scandinavian Photography
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dian photography illuminates
evolution of this little known tra-
dition over the past 130 years. More
450 images are presented in
categories devoted to subject
within Scandinavian photog-
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phy, urban life, portraiture, the rela-
tionship between painting and pho-
tography, historic events, and
contemporary art issues. Organized
at the Walker Art Center with the
National Center for
Photography.

Boise Gallery of Art
670 South Julia Davis Drive
Boise, ID 83702
(208) 345-8330

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 15

**Third Biennial
Juried Exhibition for Idaho Artists**
In 1979 the museum initiated this
competition for Idaho artists,
replacing the former Idaho Annual
which had been held since 1936. It
was hoped that a change in format
would foster a higher level of art-
istry; the new program was so suc-
cessful that it is now in its third rep-
etition. The competition is open to all
artists living in the state, and this
year the categories included paint-
ing, sculpture, printmaking, draw-
ing, photography, mixed media,
ceramics, glass, metalwork, and
fiber art. The exhibition is the result
of the program.

T E X A S

L O R A D O

er Art Museum
West 14th Avenue Parkway
er, CO 80204
575-2794

TINUING THROUGH JULY 24

ate Landscapes:
Photographs by Eliot Porter
Recent gift to the museum, these 55
images examine nature with
sharp views of grasses, flowers,
and rocks. Porter's mastery of

Art Museum of South Texas
1902 Shoreline
Corpus Christi, TX 78401
(512) 884-3844

JULY 1 - AUGUST 14

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Los Angeles, CA 90069

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Images of Texas

This exhibition, organized to commemorate the centennial of the University of Texas at Austin, explores the views of Texas life and landscape taken by visiting and local artists. The 100 paintings and drawings span a period beginning in 1835 with *View of the Junction of the Red River and the False Washita*, by George Catlin, and ending in 1982 with *Pack and Possums* by Melissa Miller. They also represent some unexpected names such as Homer, O'Keeffe, and Benton.

Amon Carter Museum

3501 Camp Bowie Boulevard
Fort Worth, TX 76113
(817) 738-1933

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 22

Carleton E. Watkins:

Photographer of the American West

The first retrospective of work by Carleton Watkins (1829-1916) surveys his photographic career from its courtroom beginnings in 1858, to his years of fame as a chronicler of Yosemite and the developing West. The exhibition includes 111 images,

most of which have not been displayed since the photographer's death. These range in size from small stereo views to a ten-foot-long panorama of San Francisco, taken in 1864 and assembled for the first time. Organized by the museum with the Saint Louis Art Museum.

Contemporary Arts Museum

5216 Montrose Boulevard
Houston, TX 77006
(713) 526-3129

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 8

Louise Bourgeois

The first retrospective of works by the American sculptor explores her development since the early 1940s. Although Bourgeois worked for many years outside of the American mainstream, she was able to prefigure contemporary concerns for the personal image and intense expression. Deborah Wye, co-curator of the exhibition, has described the subliminal effect of her works which "stir up previously unacknowledged feelings or force exploration of totally unfamiliar emotional terrain." The exhibition is comprised

of 96 sculptures and a selection of paintings, drawings, and prints. Organized by the Museum of Modern Art.

The Fort Worth Art Museum

1309 Montgomery Street
Forth Worth, TX 76107
(817) 738-9215

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 6

Wegman's World

William Wegman is something of an artistic curiosity. While technology holds little fascination for him, he is an accomplished photographer and maker of video recordings; his interest in the relationship between words and images would connect him to the conceptual artists, but his work is far from theoretical. Instead, Wegman creates crazy, humorous pieces, many featuring his late dog, Man Ray, which nevertheless explore weightier issues such as the transfer of identity and realm of the irrational. The exhibition includes examples of his work since 1969 — videotapes, conceptual photographs, altered photographs, oversized polaroid shots, and drawings.

WASHINGTON

Seattle Art Museum

Seattle Center
Second N and Thomas Street
Seattle, WA (206) 447-4796

CONTINUING THROUGH MAY 11

Twentieth Century Masters:

The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

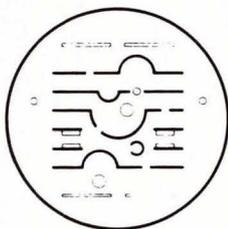
Selected from the private collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, 66 pieces in this exhibition span a year period in modern art history, organized into six sections exploring expressionism, abstraction, irrealism, the city and of still life, surrealist figurative painting, and American painting. The European collection is unusual since it possesses 100 works by American artists.

Yō no Bi:

The Beauty of Japanese Folk Art

The beauty (Bi) of things that are made to be used (Yō) is celebrated in the first of a series commemorating the museum's 50th year. The exhibition includes 150 objects, selected from collections in the Pacific Northwest, which illustrate the aesthetics of Japanese design.

William Stout announces the opening of an out of print section containing hundreds of monographs, historical studies, and periodicals for the discriminating collector and student of architectural publications. We also perform book searches and are interested in purchasing libraries of merit to expand our growing collection.



Aldo van Eyck

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DIVERSE MUSIC OF THE RECENT PAST

Today, the diversity of music has become so great, it might be that modernism has been lost...

ography

s Amirkhanian:

l Music, 1750 Arch Records #1779

o Berio:

ia, Columbia MS-7268

Lutoslawski; String Quartet

he Gramophone DG 2530735

1 Nancarrow:

ete Studies for Player Piano, Vols. 1-3

rch Records #1768, 1777, 1786

1 Subotnick:

he Butterfly, Nonesuch 78001

reas previous periods in the his-
of music have been defined by
large issues (e.g., development
v media or forms), the impor-
eature of the modern period as
le, beginning about 1908, is its
me stylistic variety. If fugue
he dominant form of the late
ue period and sonata form the
of the classical period, diversity
element that binds our century
er and sets it apart.

tradition of modernism from
to the first part of this century
s a clear, easily traceable line.
ter the explosions of 1908 and
— Schoenberg's *Three Piano*
, Op. 11, the first truly atonal
, and Stravinsky's *Rite of*
g, with its innovations in
n and color — the unified path
ern music split apart. At the
hese two giants were forging
ain lines of music in the first
f the century, a variety of other
was being pursued by other
osers. Nowadays, the diversity
come so great, it might be con-
l that the thread of modernism
en totally lost. Frayed it may
t it is still intact.

major work in which many
diverse streams of new music
o flow back together is Witold
lawski's *String Quartet*
. It is as approachable and as
lly clear as any Mozart quar-
t this is not to imply that it is
stic in its handling of materi-
otions, or in its "message." It
nes an ostensible simplicity

with a rich musical complexity, with
layers of depth which invite the lis-
tener to repeated hearings.

Though it is an atonal work re-
flecting the Schoenberg line, it also
has roots in the Stravinsky/Bartok,
East European idea of juxtaposed
blocks of sound, each with its par-
ticular color, texture, and harmonic
layout. Although there is no func-
tional tonality in the Mozart sense,
there are obvious tonal centers
throughout the work which immedi-
ately draw the listener's attention to
important structural points.

Another idea germane to this
work, coming primarily from John
Cage, is that chance can have a role
in musical composition. In Luto-
slawski's quartet, this element is
tightly controlled, each player being
given fixed materials which he plays
in a given time and which are coor-
dinated with the other players only
at the beginnings and ends of sec-
tions. Hearing it without score in
hand, one would not realize what
part chance plays in this piece, so
skillfully is it built into the overall
concept. Nevertheless, it is there,
only one of many far-ranging ideas
and techniques which come together
in this magnificent work.

For centuries, composers have
delighted in quoting other music
and our age has not been an excep-
tion. Luciano Berio took this prac-
tice to its most extreme and remark-
able point in the third section of his
Sinfonia (1968-69), a movement
based on music from Gustav Mah-
ler's *Second Symphony*. The Mahler
music is heard throughout most of
Berio's twelve minute movement,
but layered over it, almost in the
manner of a Schwitters collage, are
snatches of dozens of works by other
composers, from Beethoven and
Berlioz down to Stockhausen and
Berio himself. Along with the
musical collage, played by large
orchestra, is a collage of texts —
here, Samuel Beckett's *The Unna-
mable* serves the same primary func-

tion as the Mahler quote does in the
music — which is sung, spoken,
whispered, and shouted by eight
solo voices.

Text and music are scrupulously
structured and interrelated so as to
make constant reference to one
another and, particularly, to the
Mahler music. Though it is an
immediately attractive work, it is
also a complex sounding piece in
that there are many things going on
simultaneously and there are numer-
ous connections to be made. Many
of the quotes are unmistakable on
first hearing: fragments of *La Mer*,
Beethoven's *Sixth*, or *The Rite of*
Spring. For others, one has to dig a
little deeper. *Sinfonia*, (meaning
"sounding together") is made up of
music spanning two centuries, but it
is a modernist creation which could
only have happened in our own
generation.

Technology, in perhaps the most
important musical development
since World War II, has allowed the
synthesis and modification of musi-
cal sound through electronic means.
At first, this was only done in special
electronic studios, the final product
being a tape recording to be played
through loudspeakers in a concert
hall. (The masterpiece of tape music
is generally thought to be Stockhau-
sen's *Kontakte*, finished in 1960.)
More recently, composers have
found ways of using live instruments
(acoustic and electronic), whose
sounds are modified electronically
while played in concert, resulting in
"live electronic music."

One such work by a pioneer in
this medium is Morton Subotnick's
After the Butterfly (1979). This is a
kind of concerto for trumpet in
which an ensemble of seven players
backs up the soloist. The instru-
ments are amplified and, in addi-
tion, the trumpet's music is electro-
nically altered. Thus, what one
finally hears, are the sounds of the
live instruments, plus all the same
sounds electronically transformed in
one way or another. The resulting
ambiguity between the pure instru-
mental colors (themselves often
sounding, in this "raw" state,
almost electronic) and the live elec-
tronic sounds coming from the
speakers, makes for a provocative,
entirely fresh twenty minutes of
engrossing listening.

Another technological applica-
tion of a vastly different sort is found
in the music of Conlon Nancarrow.

Since the late forties, this American-
born composer has produced more
than forty *Studies* for a most
unlikely instrument, the player
piano. His final products are hand-
punched paper piano rolls which are
played on instruments modified to
produce a special, metallic sound.
This method of work allows him to
achieve speeds and textures which
would not be humanly possible. The
pieces range from good natured,
jazz-inspired works — *Studies 3a-e*
sound like a boogie-woogie pianist
gone berserk — to the more abstract
and hair-raising pyrotechnics of
Study 25. Part of the charm of this
music lies in the composer's choice
of a relatively primitive mechanical
device, rather than electronic equip-
ment or computers, to realize his
highly sophisticated pieces.

Finally, in this quick look at some
of the widely diverse music of the
recent past, is Charles Amirkhanian,
a composer who does not use pitches
or instruments of any kind. Words
provide the material for his unusual
pieces, the end result being not poe-
try or prose (even though the works
are genuinely "poetic"), but music
of a particularly lively sort. In a piece
like *Seatbelt Seatebelt* (1973), the
words lose all literal meaning and
become purely percussive in their
effect. Through tape loops, words
are repeated, split up, and recom-
bined. These materials are then
manipulated abstractly, just as a
composer would use any other
musical-instrumental sounds. The
piece has a maddening kind of rhy-
thm and a humor uncommon
among "serious" composers.

Another work, *Mahogany Ball-
park* (1976), combines spoken
words ("limit, pace, sparse, the,
inform, ballpark, ballpark, bundle,
pulse") with wavelike sounds from
the environment, foghorns, birds,
airplanes, and children's voices.
Through the words, an implied dia-
logue — though one without any lin-
ear sense — is set up and mixed with
the ambient sounds. Though these
materials are somehow "poor,"
something greater than the parts
alone is achieved; a musical, text-
sound composition is built and the
widely disparate, unconventional
materials mesh to form a significant,
larger whole.

CHARLES BOONE is a composer liv-
ing in San Francisco.

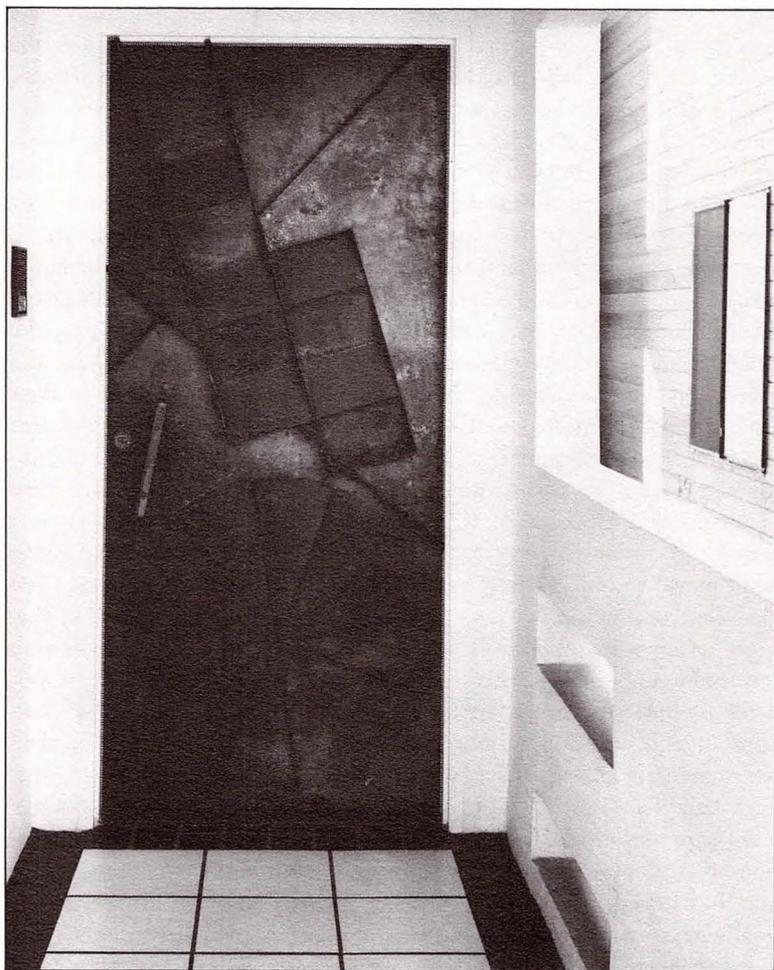
THE STURMAN DOORS

While maintaining the impression of strength and balance, he found he could suggest their opposites...

The Chester door, by Eugene Sturman, shows a synthesis of polarities; an ongoing harmony permeates and resolves the portal.

We may be witnessing another quiet revolution in art: a return to the values of craft.

On the one hand, craft suggests utility. Yet we had become so deeply indoctrinated with the idea of art for art's sake that, with a few dramatic exceptions like Picasso's ceramic production at Valauris, the notion of producing an artwork which could actually be used was little



short of anathema. On the other hand, craft suggests technical competence, if not mastery — a quality which has been almost programmatically scorned by a contemporary aesthetic which gives primacy to idea and to process.

When an architect first suggested to Eugene Sturman several years ago that he make doors, the artist was surprised by a real sense of threat. He had been working in recent years with paper-thin copper, beating and

shaping and aging it into wall relief structures which had begun to make their individual mark on the contemporary Los Angeles art scene. To be sure, he had been playing with the *idea* of craft — the skill of the metalworker, the utilitarian aims of the armorer. But the notion of actually making an object to be used threw him into a fit of hesitation and anxiety. What would people say?

Back in the days when artists were craftsmen and craftsmen were artists, of course, there would have been no hesitation. The doors of a church, say, in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance, could be the meeting ground of both art and craft, to the greater glory of God and the edification of mankind. Serving Mammon, however, is perhaps a different proposition for the contemporary artist, whose hard-won freedom assures primary allegiance to the expression of a personal creative vision; to the Muse.

Architect A. Thomas Torres, who proposed the idea, had felt much the same about architecture: that, as an art, it had moved into the realm of the untouchable. What he wanted was a return to the actuality of touch and to the symbolic values which enrich daily life. He wanted, for his clients, a door which would reflect "the perceptual value of their domain." In Sturman's work, he saw the possibility for something with scale and mass which, beyond the efficiency and delight of design, could provide the psychological and ritual support for living which he saw to be essential to that inherent "perceptual value."

Sturman turned his attention first to the outside of the door. Working with his familiar medium of copper, he created structures which conveyed the impression of great mass and weight, but which remained light and manageable to operate. Working within the architectural context, he also created the illusion of depth and upward thrust in a stairway motif of passage, planes, and angular relationships. Suggesting the possibility of movement within the vertical rectangle of the door was also important to him: while maintaining the impression of strength, balance, and massive impenetrability, he found he could suggest its opposite, an openness and invitation, the human imbalance and asymmetry which encourages approach. Thus, too, in the

color values, the warm, red glow of the copper and its greens performed a double function appearing to resist or absorb inclemencies of climate, yet allporously providing access to its official mildness.

Sturman's most recent door is the home of Dr. and Mrs. A. Chester in Malibu, works with interior and exterior environment. Flanges and panels, the ceiling image of the disc (suggesting the ancient shield and contemporary dish antenna) and the all-ethereal, deep-space image of white, star- and galaxy-like flecks on the surface of the aged copper provide both close-up and infinitesimal focus for the eye. The tilted composition, along with the spin of the disc, combine with the door's mass and weight to create an impression of slow, endlessly orbiting eye to the universe.

Inside, the warm glow of unaged copper, etched and scaled in elegant proportions, for striking contrast with the more expressive exterior. It has immediacy and the precision of drawing, as opposed to the depth of the exterior which impresses in the manner of a painting. It is beyond the confines of its space, requiring the completion of its forms by the observing eye, therefore activating the mind in perpetually pleasing ways.

The Chesters glow in appreciation both of the function and the aesthetic qualities of their door. In the way people come into our lives, they say, stressing the ritual of passage. Guests can no longer in and out with barely a ripple; they're stopped short, shocked by thought and talk about their passage. Passing through an outer gate, a short corridor to the front through this and the vestibule, the final arch leading to stairs to the main living area, one is reminded of the Japanese processional door and the progressive, private passage into the private center of the home. Sturman's work, in correlation with that of the arch, makes this passage a meaningful special event to both visitor and occupant.

PETER CLOTHIER is Dean of the College of Fine and Communication Arts at Loyola Marymount University.

MILL CREEK PARK

Bayer's design is more landscape architecture than pure art; the creative role is subsumed by function...

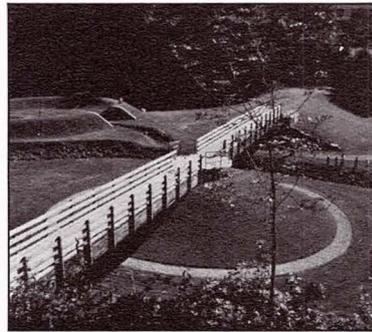
A channel sinks below ground and flows into a circular catch basin and ring-pond surrounding another torus-shaped berm structure.

greenbelt subject to chronic erosion and flooding exacerbated by suburban development above the canyon. The earthwork was designed to correct the runoff problem and create an attractive, inner city park; funding was solicited from various arts agencies (including the NEA) and community development grants.

Bayer's elegant solution channeled the rampaging creek with holding ponds, back-up drainage canals, and a system of dikes which double as footpaths. An irregular-shaped catch basin at the head of the site empties into a channel lined with basalt rock, which bisects a splitting berm through symmetrical concrete abutments. Near its junction with the original, newly relined streambed, this channel sinks below ground and flows into a circular

above. Asphalt footpaths meander through the site. One is atop an earthen bulkhead spanning the park and separating the sloped lower end of the site. During the period of maximum runoff, approximately two weeks each year, this bulkhead will contain water.

The symposium preached esthetic innovation, but was couched in problem-solving and cost-effectiveness. The Morris commission was touted as ostensibly cheaper than the estimated cost of conventional landscaping techniques in restoring the site to natural conditions. (This point was not lost on the ideologue Morris: his symposium keynote address questioned if earth art was meant to "wipe out technological guilt" by offering alternatives "cheaper than nature"



and "fulfill[ing] a kind of sanitation service.") Morris' project attempted in grand earthwork fashion to establish a dialectical relationship between art and the land. In order to bridge the gap between topical issues in contemporary art and the timelessness and scale of the landscape, Morris drew upon cultural traditions and formal structures. His cut-and-fill terrace evokes ancient archeological sites; his metaphor the unapproachable distance between the past and present.

In that sense, the Bayer earthwork is more literally topographical, with accessibility and function the guiding concerns. Harmonious contrast of tamed nature and geometric design coexist (at least until the floodwaters come) in a calm and tranquil park, an urban oasis that has been readily assimilated into the leisure pastime of the neighboring citizenry. (By contrast, the Morris earthwork sits alone on the hillside across from the city.)

But the crucial difference between the two sites is the parameter of reclamantion involved, and the relative success in parlaying the task. The steep outer incline of Morris' pit actually created an erosion problem

— since corrected, though the scars remain. Thus, the "cheaper" esthetic solution to reclamantion appeared extravagant, as no dire problem existed prior to the installation of the earthwork. Nature was in fact reclaiming the site on its own; evidence of landscape abuse was hardly noticeable. Hydraulic testing was needed at the Morris site to assure that its implementation would not tip nature's balance. Morris' uncompromising dogmatism stresses pure sculptural form; his work "reclaims" because it is art, and through the history of earth art it seeks validation.

The critical hydraulic and engineering designs of the Mill Creek earthwork were necessary to establish proper reclamantion. Bayer's design is pure Bauhaus — emphatically functional and unambiguous, the merging of design and technology. It accommodates in every possible way the aspects of use, accessibility, reclamative function, and even civic pride. The relationship of landscape architecture to earthworks is highly differentiated at the Morris site, where the former designation would not be permissible with regard to the artist's intent. But the Bayer addition to Mill Creek Park is more purely landscape architecture than pure artwork, for the creative role is subsumed by the needs of functionalism, whose manifold aspects demand accommodation.

It is difficult, perhaps even irrelevant, to discuss these two projects from the same set of determining needs, expressed from vastly different points of view. Morris' piece is perhaps too rarified, while the Bayer installation tries too much to please. But both are welcome additions to the landscape, and to the vocabulary of earthwork.

The "earthwork enhancement features" of Mill Creek Park were funded by the City of Kent, The National Endowment for the Arts, the Washington State Arts Commission, King County Arts Commission, a Housing and Community Development Block Grant, and 150 private donations. URS Engineers of Seattle were the hydraulic and environmental engineers for the project, which was built by Scoccolo Construction of Seattle.

RON GLOWEN is a Seattle-based art critic and Contributing Editor to *Artweek* and *Vanguard* magazines.

August, 1979, the King County Commission sponsored a symposium, *Earthworks: Land Reclamation as Sculpture*, to create public dialogue and, coincidentally, to commission studies and realized projects "reclaim" as art several surplus city-owned gravel pits and leased parcels of land. The pilot project for a sloping 3.7 acre tract in the Seattle suburb of Kent, a



excavated pit and mound by New York sculptor Robert Morris, was completed with the symposium and deleted later that year. A second project commissioned for the symposium has now been completed — a park site with the 100 Mill Creek downtown Kent, incorporating a storm water retention basin facility designed by the 82-year old Bauhaus architect Herbert Bayer.

Bayer's site is at the foot of a narrow canyon, an unimproved

catch basin and ring-pond surrounding another torus-shaped berm. This pond run-off is channeled underground back to the old streambed near its lower park outlet. A parking lot and service road comprise the southern upper level of the site. A wooden plank footbridge approached from the road and supported on a conical earthen pier crosses the park to its unrestored north side, and embankment between the old creek and a highway

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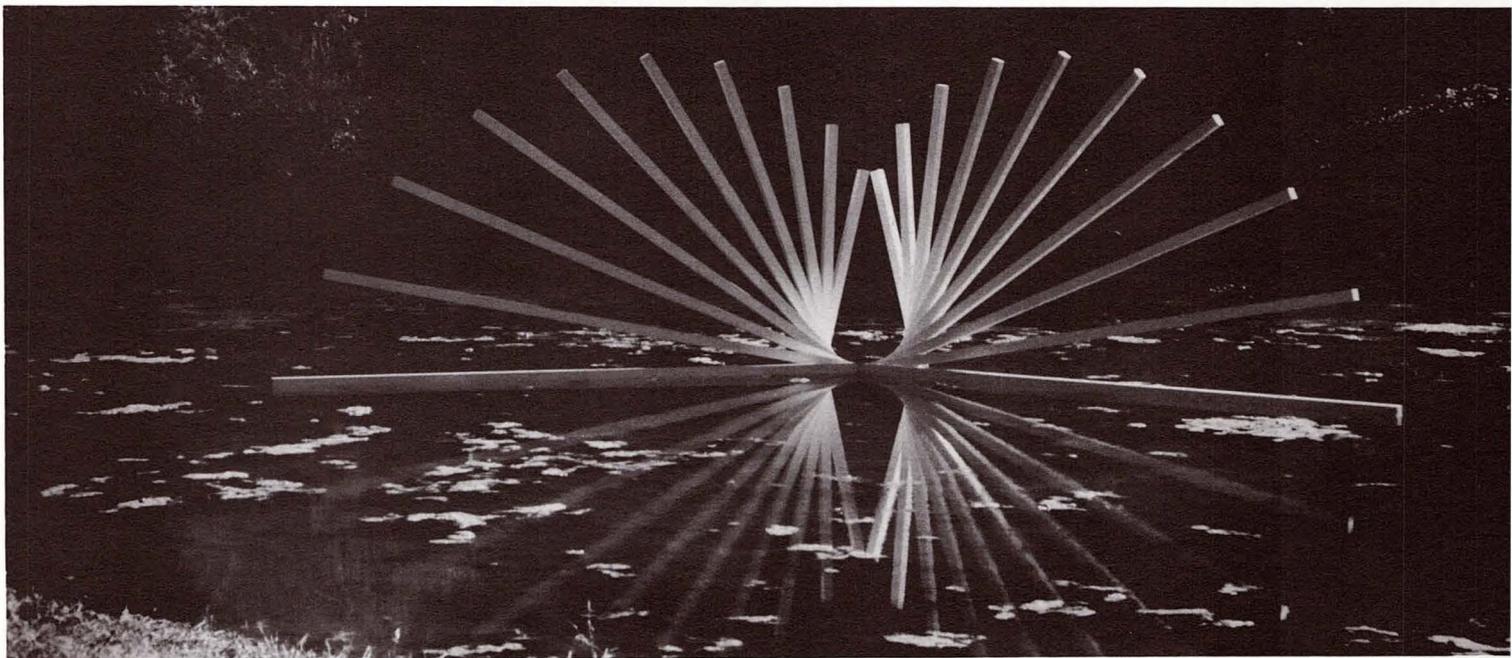
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MEMPHIS



MARTINE BEDIN
"EASTERN" 1982

INTERVIEW

ETTORE SOTTASS

BY SIMON LANE

At the Milan Furniture Show of 1982, Italian designer Ettore Sottsass introduced a new series of manufactured furniture. Mysteriously named Memphis, the objects were created by a group of 20 designers and artists from around the world. While highly diverse in imagery, the shared philosophy behind the furniture questions conventional principles of functionalism and taste. Memphis is now being introduced in the United States, and was featured at the Pacific Design Center's WestWeek. In the following interview by Simon Lane, Ettore Sottsass explains his current design preoccupations, and the ideas which inspired Memphis.

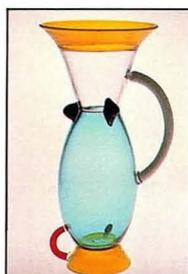


GERARD TAYLOR

MATTEO THUN

ETTORE SOTTASS

MARCO ZANINI



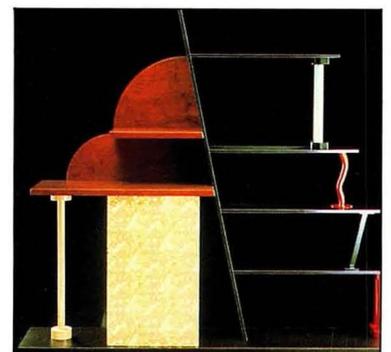
ETTORE SOTTASS
"ALTAIR" 1982

NATHALIE DUPASQUIER

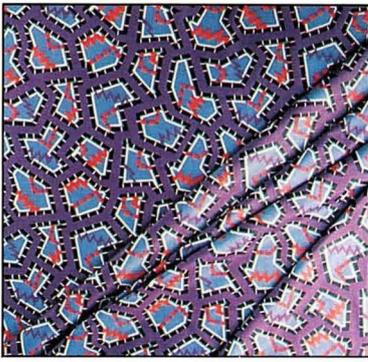


MARCO ZANINI
"VEGA" 1982

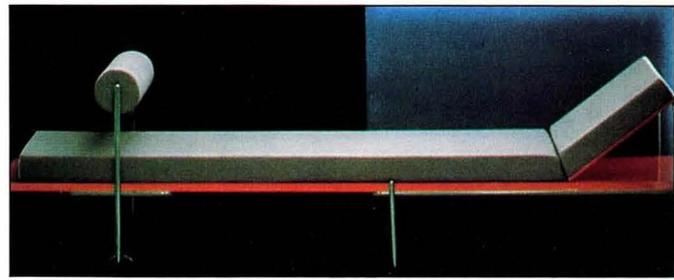
SHIRO KURAMATA



ETTORE SOTTASS
"MALABAR" 1982



**MICHAEL
PODGORSCHKEK**



◀ **NATHALIE DU PASQUER**
"KENYA" 1982

**MARCO
ZANINI**

▲ **ANDREA BRANZI**
"CENTURY" 1982

**RUDI
HARBERL**

ES: For many years I have been developing a group of ideas which are unrelated to functionalism. I wouldn't say I am anti-functional, but I have ideas about the way the word "functionalism" can be enlarged upon. I have been exploring a kind of romanticism.

**PETER
SHIRE**

SL: Is it Gothic, perhaps? The feeling of something different?

ES: Just a feeling, yes. The Memphis catalogue, for instance, has to do with the Orient, with carpets; and the invitation to the show was illustrated with a dinosaur. In itself, the name "Memphis" is very ambiguous; it has to do with the Bible, with Egypt, with America, with Elvis, and a lot of other things. One idea we wanted to establish in the graphic attitude was not to touch anything, not to design a graphic, but to choose from things that already exist.

**CHRISTOPH
RADL**

**GERARD
TAYLOR**

SL: The interesting thing about the catalogue, the most prominent impression it creates, is the semblance of house style, of unity.

ES: There is a certain unity in the catalogue which I am unable to define. I know some of the elements which create this unity, but I do not know the details. One element is decoration; a second is that the iconog-

**DANIELA
PUPPA**

raphy of the decoration is not taken from other types of decoration but from, let's say, common suburban elements.

SL: The thing that is striking about the catalogue and your drawings is their humor and wit. That must also be an important factor.

ES: Yes, I am dealing with optimism here; optimism and pessimism. In Milan, there is a group called Studio Alchemia whose leader, Alessandro Mendini, is concerned with a very profound sense of pessimism towards modern life which I don't share at all. I do keep a certain distance from it, but enjoy it. We have to take it as it is and find out what the possibilities are, not the impossibilities.

SL: This optimism, this humor, seems to manifest itself through a childish, naive approach to construction, the idea of taking one thing and then attaching something onto it. This is a childish idea.

ES: Yes, you're right, and I have written about this. The structure of all my work is the structure of a child who puts one thing on top of another, or near another. These are very simple operations, very childish. Baroque objects, in contrast, try to find a very complicated structure.

SL: That idea ties in with the decisive quality of your work, and the way in which decoration is used. Memphis blends pieces together often in an anarchic fashion.

ES: Yes. My attitude is never to do things too dramatically, never to be too passionate about things and not to believe too much in ideology. Your word "anarchic" is very appropriate in the sense that the anarchist is supposed to rebuild his own world every day to revise himself and change what is necessary.

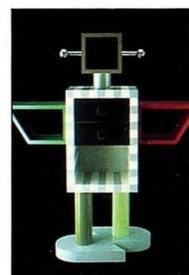
SL: In England, the set formula for modern design with Terence Conran's Habitat stores consists of a unhappy alliance between a particular aesthetic and conservatism. Its only possible merit is functional quality, which does not seem enough.

ES: Not only that — it's not functional at all. Functionalism is really a very ordinary idea. If Conran comes to me and says, "I want you to design a table," and I reply, "What kind of table do you want? For what number of people? How large?" and a hundred other questions having to do with function, he would be unable to answer me because he doesn't really know who the consumer is. When the object is done, he will say, "This object is



NATHALIE DU PASQUER
"CABON" 1982

**GEORGE
JAMES SOWDEN**



MASANORI UNEDA
"GINZA" 1982

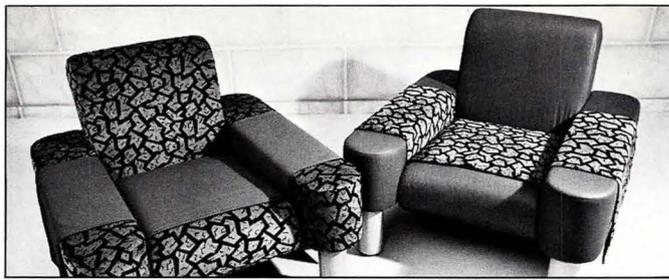
**SHIRO
KURAMATA**



BERNARD TAYLOR
"PICADILLY" 1982

**ANDREA
BRANZI**

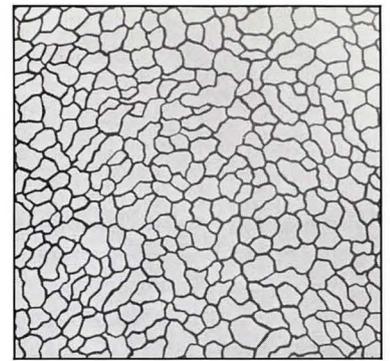
**ATHALIE
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GEORGE JAMES SOWDEN ▲
"OBEROY" 1982

MICHAEL PODGORSCHER ▶
"ARGILLA" 1982

**MICHELE
DE LUCCHI**



ional;" but that is after the fact. I know this very well because I worked for Olivetti; and when, for example, they asked me to design a teletype machine, naturally they had some ideas about what they wanted. There was a briefing, and then we, the designers, would start working with the engineers. The solution would not be a response to any ideal of functionalism; rather it was a response to the demands of the market, which is another thing altogether.

The formulation of an object involves through a very ambiguous mechanism. For example, when the design for the teletype is finished, someone might tell me that it is not functional because it is not a salable color, or because we need another wheel here, or because there is no table underneath it! There are always reasons to say that a new object is not functional. Right now, it might be "functional" to sit in a certain way. Tomorrow, the way people are sitting may change radically because the Queen is sitting in a new way. Maybe everyone then decides to sit that way. The result is that the chair that was "functional" in the 1950s now becomes uncomfortable."

o people have to be told what is "right" or are they in a position to decide for themselves?

ES: The public should examine its own needs. There is no moral attitude implied in what I am saying.

SL: The Beverly Sideboard is an amazing piece of furniture. Tell me about it.

ES: All my life I have dealt with a certain kind of structural problem. Normally, a child tries to build things on an axis, and he relates his body to this axis. Grown up people have the same idea; and the entire Indian culture, yoga, deals with the location of anatomical points over one another. At a certain moment, this idea becomes an ideology, a formula. Another formula is that if you build things up, you achieve integration, one stone over another. Now, an interesting thing would be to destroy this entire mechanism, to see what would happen if you didn't follow this line of thinking.

I decided to see what would happen if I built an object which suddenly changed direction. I not only lost the axis, I completely changed the rhythm, so instead of building one thing over another, I created a circular movement which implied toppling. Added to that was the question of materials: there is snake skin decoration, this is wood, this is chrome, this is a light bulb. The sideboard is a

collage, a mixture of absolutely unexpected materials never before used in this context. It is sort of an intellectual exercise.

SL: The basic idea is asymmetry, isn't it? You usually expect a piece of furniture to be symmetrical.

ES: The irony is this: it starts symmetrically, like a monument, then suddenly changes.

SL: Looking at your work, it seems natural to raise the question of kitsch. It seems to appear in many of the Memphis pieces.

SL: As far as kitsch is concerned, I don't think it applies to my ideas, and certainly not to the Memphis pieces. I want to keep the objects, even the computers for Olivetti, as far outside of the consumer attitude as possible; to make of an object something that looks like a monument of concentration, that asks people to be silent. I believe that kitsch is more the result of using up different iconographies, putting them together to produce a result which is consumed — or sometimes rejected — very quickly. I don't know — maybe we should explore the definition of kitsch...

SIMON LANE is an artist and writer currently living in London.

**MARTINE
BEDIN**

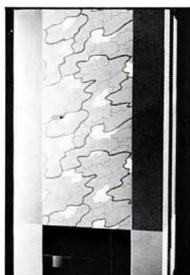
**ALDO
CIBIC**

**MATTEO
THUN**

**MICHAEL
GRAVES**

**THOMAS
BLEY**

**WALTER
KIRPICHENKO**



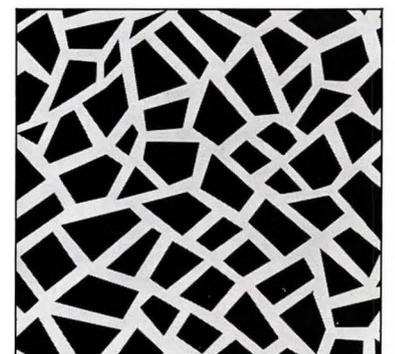
GEORGE JAMES SOWDEN
"LUXOR" 1982

**MASANORI
UMEDA**



MATTEO THUN
"TITICACA" 1982

**WALTER
KIRPICHENKO**



CHRISTOPH RADL
"ISOLE" 1982

BY DIANA RICO

6

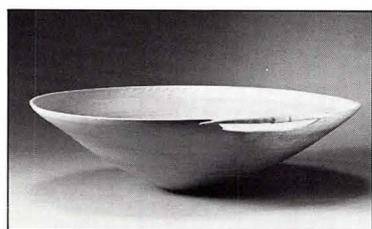
CERAMIC ARTISTS

The six artists whose work is presented here have found clay to be a congenial medium for serious artistic expression. Some use clay because they love the material; others use it for sheer expediency. These artists are giving us fresh ways of considering the role clay objects might play in our lives. Their work varies from the traditional vessel to representational and abstract sculpture, and it indicates the range of the ceramic art being produced.



Mill Valley, California artist Miriam Licht makes teapots, boxes, jars, and bowls that she sprays with slips (watered-down clay bodies, sometimes with coloring agents added) and then burnishes with a smooth piece of jade up to three times to produce highly polished surfaces covered with hundreds of tiny fac-

Bowl
Porcelain, slip, shells, 1982
10 X 15 inches

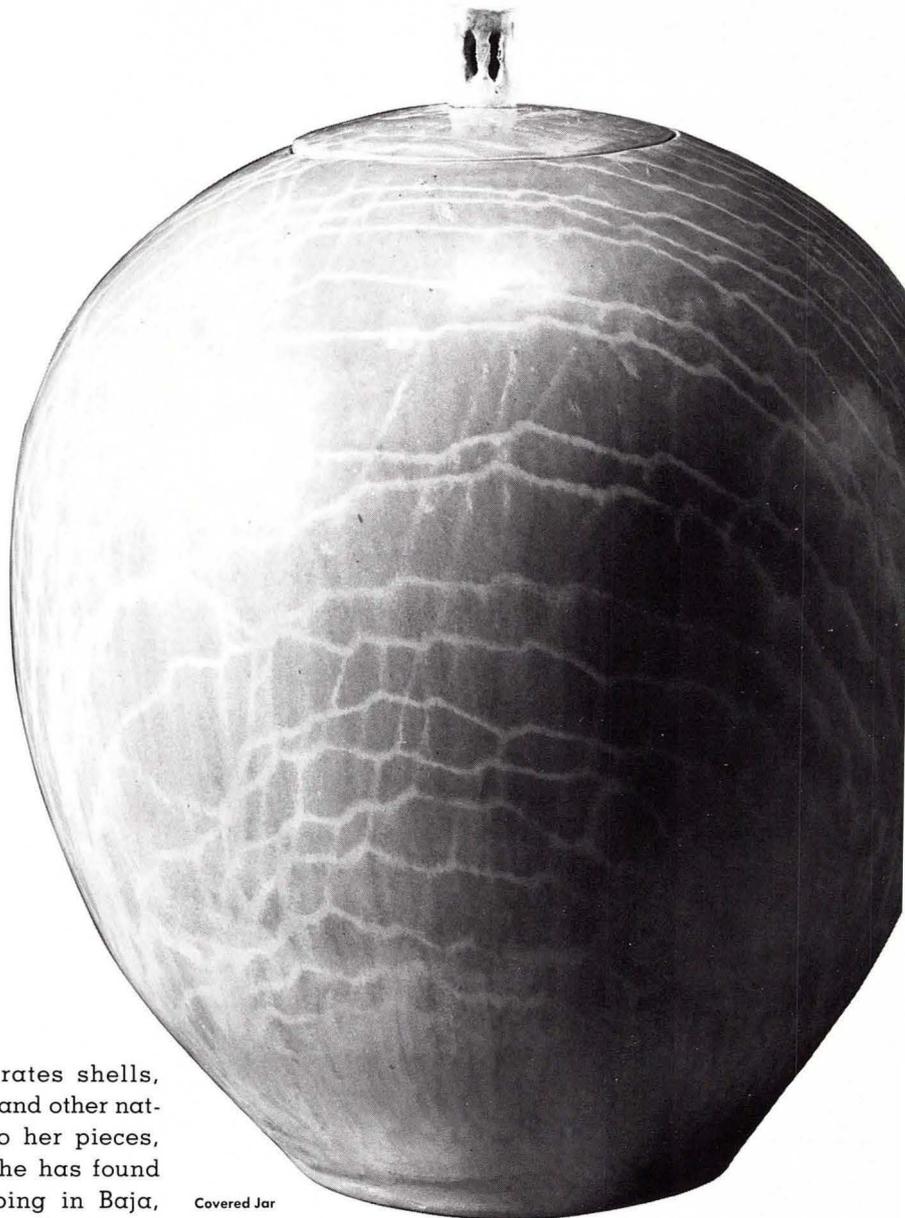
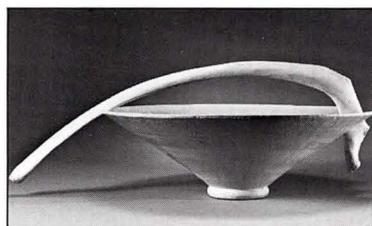


Bowl
Low-fire clay, slip, shells, 1982
4½ X 16 inches.

Bowl
Porcelain, slip, bone, 1982
6 X 17 inches.

ets. She incorporates shells, bones, driftwood, and other natural artifacts into her pieces, usually objects she has found while beachcombing in Baja, California and other shorelines.

Licht's elegant bowls, most often pale pink or sea green with highlights of grayish green, lavender, or light blue matched to



Covered Jar
Low-fire clay,
Slip, fish vertebrae, 1983
6½ X 4½ inches.

M. Lee

the natural artifacts she is using, are the most successful pieces. Thin, even walls rise from a small base to form a wide, generous cone; exteriors are sometimes left matte so as not to compete with the pearlescent interior surfaces. Sometimes a pinkened piece of driftwood or a water-worn fragment of shell will rest over a curve of the bowl. Other times the artifact may be found at the bottom of the pot (one has a fish vertebrae foot) or spanning the top (another has a large bone laid across the top to form a handle), gentle references to artistic and historic origins.

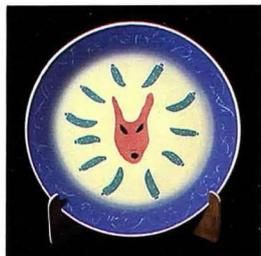
These are works of contrast and balance: the asymmetrical organic form of nature set against the precise symmetry of the thrown vessel; the neutral matte exterior enclosing a lustrous polished interior; the steady rise of a conical wall ending in an entirely horizontal wide rim. The bowls are refined, poised, beautiful; they quietly capture a moment of perfect balance, cast a near-poetic spell of silence over both movement and moment.

MIRIAM LICHT

WARREN MULLER



Through the Gates
Earthenware, underglazes, 1980
12 X 12 X 2 inches.



Rabbit
Earthenware, underglazes, 1980
13 X 13 X 2 inches.

Over the years Warren Muller has used clay to fashion altars, lamps, masks, fans, helmets, dance wands, and all sorts of other objects, many of them props for his performances and installations.

Muller spent over a decade as a performance artist with Philadelphia's Woo World Players before moving to Colorado and then San Francisco. Play, ritual, costume, dance, and animal imagery are central to all his work. He likes to put his objects into a context or to make objects that create their own context: *Tomb Guards* (1982), for instance, are a pair of animal heads mounted on gold luster bases, like ancient Egyptian religious artifacts, and are meant to guard an entrance to a space.

Often Muller's works feed off each other. *Dialogue* (1982), two aggressive, caricatural heads mounted on poles and facing each other, arose from a dialogue he was having with himself while working on a series of sculptures. He sometimes works out ideas or records things that have already occurred on clay plates or bowls, drawing on or scratching into the surfaces or using cutout paper stencils to airbrush recurring images. In *Life of a Dog* (1979), silhouettes of



Life of a Dog no. 2
Earthenware, underglazes, 1979
14 X 14 X 6½ inches.

a dog reminiscent of cave paintings swirl around the inside and outside of a bowl in a narrative.

Muller's clay objects are both mysterious and accessible; they express a private mythology but refer to forms, contexts, and ideas as old as culture. They remind us that the impulses to create art, to engage in ritual, and to play are not so far removed from each other as they might seem — and, ultimately, underline our very humanity.



Life of a Dog
Earthenware, underglazes, 1979
14 X 14 X 6 inches.

JENS MORRISON



Casa Dulcitas
Earthenware, slips,
Underglazes, glazes, 1982
54 X 17 X 14 inches.



Casa Amarillo
Earthenware, slips,
Underglazes, glazes, 1982
58 X 18 X 15 inches.

Jens Morrison's *casas* are the latest manifestation of the Carlsbad, California artist's longtime interest in vernacular architecture styles of non-industrialized peoples. These funny four-sided dwellings, built of white earthenware slabs, have spears of Nopal cactus growing crazily from their steeply pitched roofs. Slips, underglazes, and glazes in bright, glossy candy colors are

built up thickly to produce a rich, layered, painterly surface.

Several years ago, Morrison created a written history and a collection of cultural relics for a civilization called Farmounia. On the matte white walls of little shrines, reliquary boxes, tablets, and altars he depicted pastel-colored narratives about an ancient race of piglike creatures. These evolved into a series titled *Tea Temples*, in

Casa de Guadalupe
Earthenware, slips,
Underglazes, glazes, 1983
46 X 12 X 15 inches.



Hombre Nopalito
Earthenware, slips,
Underglazes, glazes, 1982
40 X 12 X 14 inches.

Scot

which the figurative drawings became more abstract, the forms whimsical — the outlook itself more fantastic.

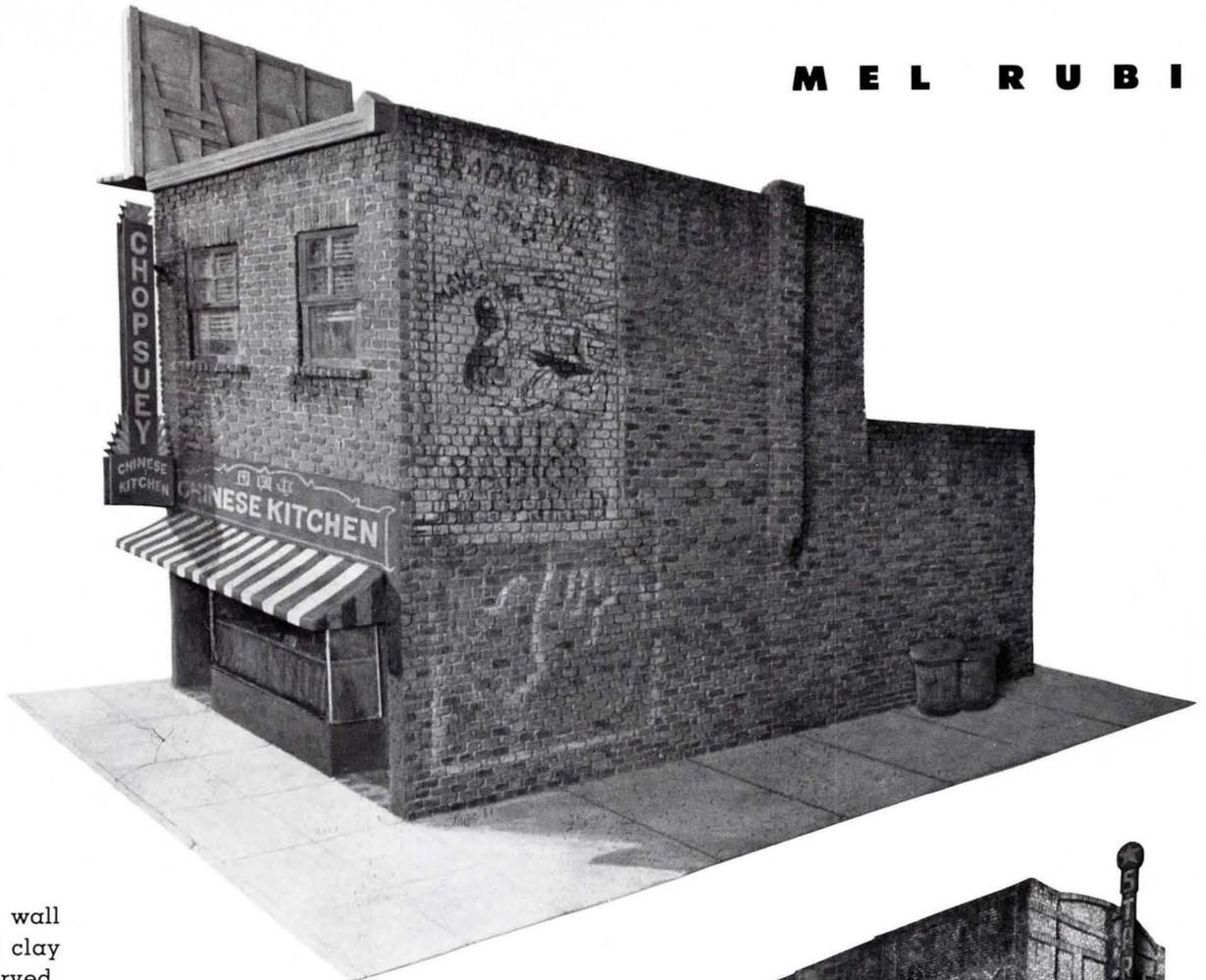
The current *casas* mark a move into purely abstract surface treatment and the beginnings of an anthropomorphization of form. In *Casa Dulcitas* (1982), the windows, door, and piece of cactus sticking from the front make the facade read as a face, and the roof looks like a cactus patch. Even more cartoon-like are *Hombre Nopalito* and *Hombre de Techo* (1982): the structures lean wackily to one side, windows and doors are askew, and the long branches of cacti are tilted that they threaten to succumb to natural force and fall.

Morrison's *casas* give the sensation of enormous energy that's barely under control. About to come alive, explode, topple and dance off, or shoot away, these endearing dwellings laughingly challenge our notion of the house as a stable, static structure.

Foster Freeze I
 low-fire clay, acrylics,
 Plexiglass, 1983
 10 X 3 inches.



Chop Suey
 low-fire clay, acrylics,
 Plexiglass, 1983
 10 X 3 inches.



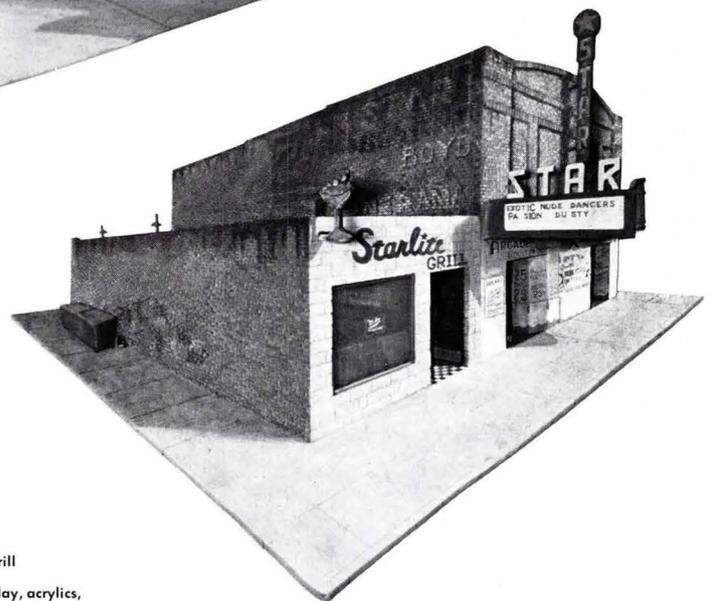
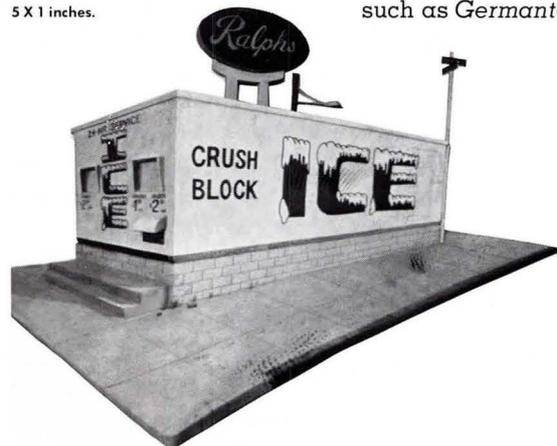
Chinese Kitchen
 Low-fire clay, acrylics,
 Wood, Plexiglass, 1981-82
 24 X 28 X 2½ inches.

Rubin's architectonic wall pieces are constructed of clay blocks that have been carved, dried, then painted in acrylics combined with Plexiglass, plaster, and other materials. Although these are highly detailed works, they're not strictly accurate depictions of their subjects — sometimes a detail will be derived from another building or simply made up, sometimes a piece will actually

be a composite of several buildings. Their point is to articulate the essence of the various buildings they represent.

Mel Rubin grew up in Philadelphia, a city with a palpable sense of history, and he came to feel that the walls of buildings observed, absorbed, and remembered the lives that went on within and around them. The pieces that refer to the East, such as *Germantown Ave.* (1982)

Starlite Grill
 low-fire clay, acrylics,
 Plexiglass, 1982
 5 X 1 inches.



Starlite Grill
 Low-fire clay, acrylics,
 Wood, Plexiglass, 1982
 30 X 40 X 4 inches.

Mel Rubin

and *Chinese Kitchen* (1981-82), show the way old buildings look now, with fading signs painted on the walls or billboards up above, shattered or boarded-up windows, the dark stains and dirty bricks and illegible graffiti that structures acquire in an inner city setting. More recent pieces depict the architecture in Los Angeles, where he now lives, and also move out of two-dimensional and into three dimensional space: in *Foster Freezes I and II* (1982-83), awnings come forward sculpturally, and signs are attached via curved poles that give the illusion they are straight in the space. He is also revealing interiors for the first time, painting counters, ice cream machines, and other *Foster Freeze* accoutrements before installing "windows."

Rubin, who started out as a painter, is interested in creating illusion and regards clay as a way to break past the limitations of paint on flat canvas. What he makes are portraits that take buildings as their subject rather than people. They are thoughtful, affectionate, and engaging; they reveal as much about the artist's relationship with the buildings as they do about the buildings themselves.

WILLIAM C. DAVIS

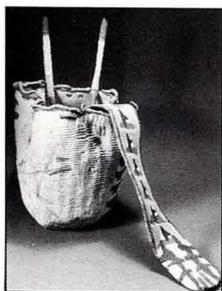


Parfleche
Neriage clay, 1982
18 X 15 inches.

When William C. Davis was a little boy growing up in the Pacific Northwest, he convinced his grandmother to buy him some Plains Indians arrows he had seen in an antique shop. That was the beginning of a life-long love affair with the Native American cultures and the products of those cultures. Now the

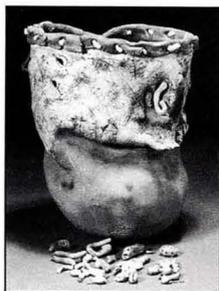
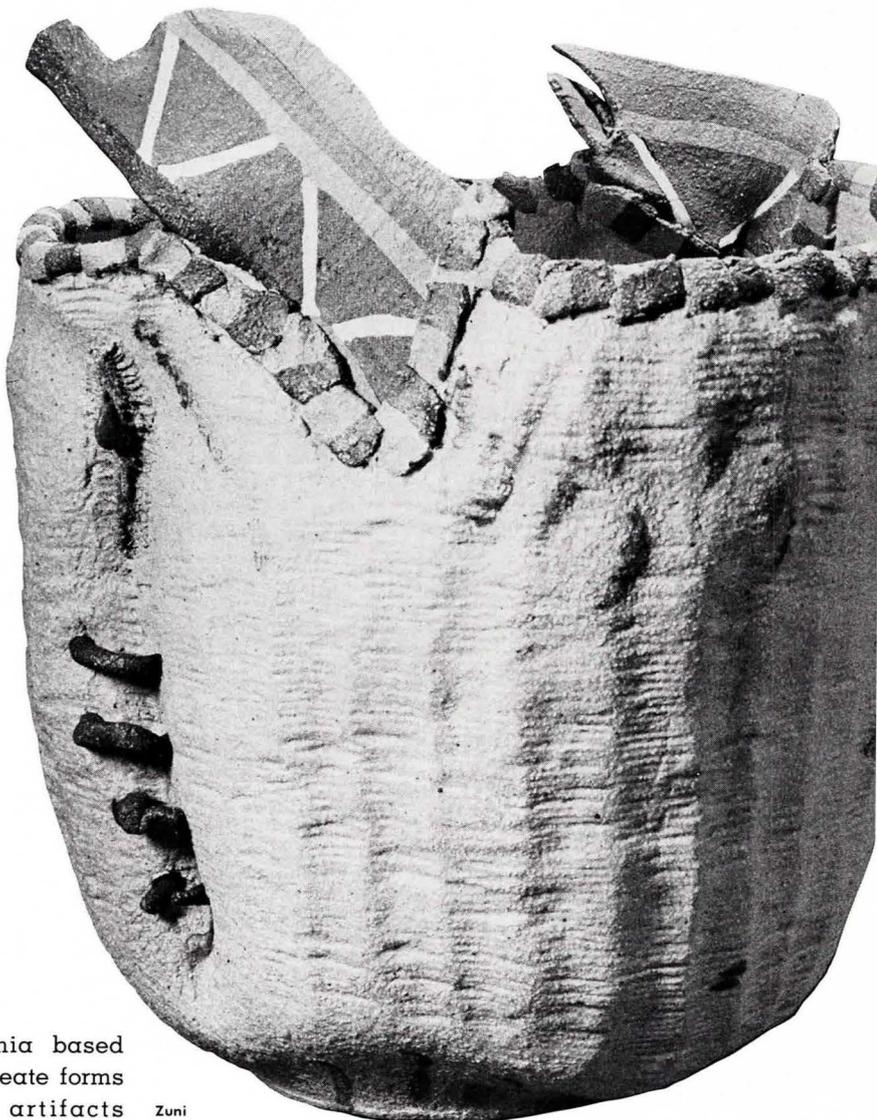
Northridge, California based artist uses clay to create forms based on Indian artifacts—prayer sticks, fetishes, chief and squaw robes, quivers, leather straps, and, his most recent focus, baskets.

Davis' "baskets" start out as thick wheel-thrown vessels that he then alters manually by push-



Zuni
Neriage clay, 1982
14 X 12 inches.

Sara's Medicine Bag
Painted clay, 1982
10 X 5 inches.



ing the clay outward, thinning the walls as much as possible. The clay is allowed to fold, collapse, and tear where it will. Sometimes Davis presses the soft clay walls against the surface of a real Indian basket, as in *Nez Perce Pemmican Bag* (1981). Other times he breaks through the wall and then carefully "sews" it back together with bits—"stitches"—highlighting the frailty of the joined edges, as in *Parfleche* (1982) and *Zuni Wicker with Straps and Fetishes* (1981).

Constantly pushing the clay to the limits of its fragility, and being sensitive to the material's responses, Davis deliberately mimics deterioration he has witnessed in the objects of the Native American past. His works speak most eloquently of history's effects on material objects and, in turn through them, of the cultural heritage we have neglected to preserve. It is in this way, then, that Davis' art has synthesized two parallel realities, through his incorporation of pieces of the past with art of the present. By so doing, he has underlined the continuity of art that seems to exist independently of its creator.

WILLY SCHOLTEN



Untitled
Stoneware, stains,
Glazes, 1981,
23½ X 15 X 7 inches.



Untitled
Stoneware, stains,
Glazes, (1981)
24 X 11½ X 6 inches.



Untitled
Stoneware, stains,
Glazes, (1981)
24 X 11 X 7 inches.

Untitled
Stoneware, stains,
Glazes, (1981)
23½ X 13 X 7 inches.

Courtesy of Marcia Rodell Gallery

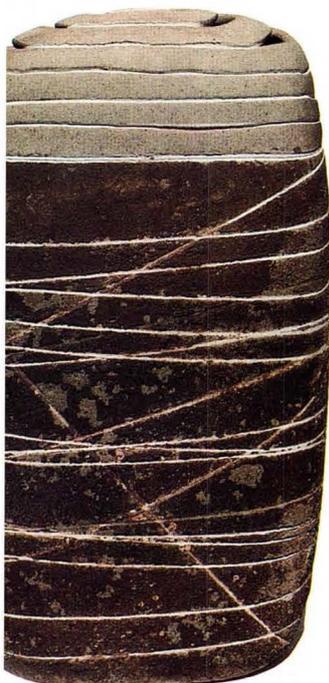
piece has white lines scratched into its roughened, mottled brown walls, resembling layers of sedimentary rock. Another piece, with a white coil "ladder" descending from the top and "doors" at the base, suggests Indian and Spanish colonial dwellings.

The lozenges are a good example of integration of form and method; soft, organic, and tactile they suggest many things — phallus and womb, rock and shell. Combining the roughness of the Southwest's landscape with the controlling hand of the artist, the sculptures look as though they belong on the vast sands of the desert that literally and figuratively bore them.

DIANA RICO is a writer and potter based in Hollywood. Her articles on the visual arts have appeared in *Architectural Digest*, *American Ceramics*, *Images and Issues*, and *EMMY Magazine*.

The author wishes to thank Egrets Fine Art Gallery and especially the Marcia Rodell Gallery for their help during the research of this article, and to acknowledge the recent passing of Marcia Rodell. In November 1980, Rodell opened the doors of the first gallery in Los Angeles devoted exclusively to contemporary American ceramics, and her attempts to provide wider recognition to American ceramic artists, who she felt "are currently producing some of the most dynamic work in art today," have been felt and appreciated by all of us who love clay.

ch-born Willy Scholten
tes large, lozenge-shaped
is that she sprays thinly with
es she creates herself and
s three or four times to
ieve subtle variations in
th and tone. She builds the
ght forms by joining large
s of clay, smoothing out the
ts to produce seamless
ls, softly rounding the cor-
s, and selectively revealing
edges of some coils to articu-
e the construction, create
igns, or give access to a mys-
ous interior space.
cholten's works bring to mind
landscape, architecture, and
erial of her adopted home of
ta Fe, New Mexico. One





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The Envelope; The Show; The Eye Opener

by Esther McCoy

useum:

a place
contents
mood

In other words:

the front side
the inside
the night side

The front side is the side that photographs well.

The inside is what is on the walls.

The night side is the unexpected.

In other words:

How you know when you are there.

The objects you came to see — Memory transforms these;
it selects out what *it* wants not what *you* want.

The night side — the mood — is what happens when objects
are seen by accident in an unexpected light.

The first two tend to overlap. Take the front side.

It should be so good that it is good in 2001. It should be *right* that
you never see it in 2001. To be good and right it will be an obliga-
tory stop off for visiting architects. The local architects will be
divided over it. The non-architects will name it: jack-in-the-box;
Blue Whale — whatever.

Maybe you are in a cab driving past the Metropolitan. You don't see
it — any more than you hear Beethoven's *Fifth*. But your eye has
already leaped the steps and your head has tipped back and you
race up the arm, and across the hand, and up the index finger
right into the introspective gaze of Lorenzo the Mag.

The Modern is different. At the Modern you see the facade. You
look at the straight line and the glass wall of the Thirties. Then the
curved line of the Fifties. You look — and you wonder how the
vanishing line of the Eighties is going to hook on.

The mind puzzles this. The eye jumps inside to Monet's *Water Lil-
ies*. No color is absolute in the Monet; nothing is absolute in the
facade.

At the Tate, nothing remains but the steps. You sit there often and
stare at the Thames and think about the underside of the bridges
from a boat to Greenwich. At the back of your head a Turner is
burning. Infinity is something you don't want to carry around on
the street with you.

Below the night side. The mood. The accident.

It is the old County Museum at Exposition Park. It is 1957. We
are hanging the Irving Gill show. It is night. There is talk about
who will design the new County Museum on Wilshire. It will be
Mies. It will be Corb. It will be Kahn.

The place has been usurped for the Museum in a park with tar pits. In
the new Museum there will be many architecture and design
shows. The curators are keen on architecture. In 1957 Gill was
almost unknown. Yet we were hanging a big show of his work.
The future is bright for architectural shows, familiar and new.

Something happened one of those nights at the old County
Museum that produced the kind of accident that somehow
should be written into the program of a new museum. There
should be an allowance for accidents.

To this to me is a museum:

The envelope

The show

The eye opener

The rooms where we hung the Gill show were intensely lighted.
When you strayed out of that light everything was mystery. A
dinosaur. The scale is monstrous. The bones are wired together.
The white bones mean: produced on the premises. The dark
bones mean: "Lo! I wandered a millennium ago to the tar pits to
drink. Who of you saw my last writhings as I sank into the tar?"
The accident was this: the great beast suddenly had flesh and
breath.

Now to the County Museum on Wilshire. Mies, Corb, Kahn. It
was none of them. Someone held out for the artist-turned-
architect who designed Home Savings and Loans. There was a
compromise. Then came the exodus of curators who were keen
on architecture. Then came the Museum. Then came the
changes. The entrance to the loading dock wasn't high enough to
bring in a large canvas. Some of the men's toilets were sinking
into the tar pits. There was no real place for architecture and
design.

There was another night scene after the County Museum opened
on Wilshire. The show we are hanging is *Ten Italian Architects*.
We work in a large space flooded with light. Some time during
the night I take a walk and pass a room with many portraits in
half shadow. The eyes follow me. They are alive. The portraits
are the spectators. I am the object.

Whether the museum goes to the accident or the accident goes to
the museum is less important than that the museum attract acci-
dents. The unexpected — like the very first Le Corbusier show at
the Modern, or the International Style show there. Those were
dinosaurs with breath in them. So were *Naives and Visionaries*
at the Walker, and the Newsome show at the UC Santa Barbara
galleries.

The exhibitions are the bread. Let us have jam too.

This is an edited transcript of a talk delivered at a symposium,
"The Elusive Muse," sponsored by the Architecture and Design
Support Group for the Museum of Contemporary Art.

LACMA Expands

by Hunter Drohojowska

When the Los Angeles County Museum of Art was built in 1965, the surrounding Miracle Mile district was a partially developed area of office buildings, department stores and vacant lots. Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors deeded the museum five and one half acres of Hancock Park adjacent to the Los Angeles Tar Pits and agreed to pay all maintenance costs if LACMA board of trustees would build and fill the museum structure. The board raised \$12 million and, after some controversy, hired William L. Pereira Associates as the architects. Pereira designed three separate pavilions surrounding a number of reflecting pools and fountains.

Photo courtesy LACMA



Pereira's 1965 design featured fountains in the entrance terraces

While the design may have related visually to the surrounding park, it proved impractical on a functional level. Separate entrances to the three buildings, the Ahmanson Gallery, Frances and Armand Hammer Wing, and the Leo S. Bing Center confused visitors. There was no ticket booth or clear indication where tickets could be purchased, so visitors were regularly frustrated in trying to enter the museum. Furthermore, the buildings were only connected at basement level, where maintenance and administrative offices were located. Visitors were forced to go outside to get from one part of the complex to another.

Within the buildings, there were labyrinthine circulation patterns. In the Ahmanson Gallery, where the permanent collections are housed, the exhibition spaces were chopped up and a single category of art was rarely on view in a single place. In addition to the confused circulation patterns, both the Ahmanson Gallery and the Hammer Wing were dark. Although Pereira had built the Ahmanson Gallery around a spacious four-story skylit atrium where the light poured straight down from above, illuminating only the ground floor without entering the galleries. Furthermore, the interior columns which girded the four-level space obstructed any clear view across the atrium to the opposite wall.

In March of 1980, Dr. Earl A. Powell III became LACMA's Director. He came to the museum from the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. where, as Executive Curator, he was closely involved in the construction of I.M. Pei's East Wing. The need for expansion and reorganization at LACMA was immediately apparent to him.

Prior to his arrival, the museum board had allocated a \$4.5 million contribution from the Ahmanson Foundation for the northward expansion of the Ahmanson Gallery. Trustee Dr. Armand Hammer had also contributed \$2.25 million towards the construction of a bridge gallery to connect the Hammer Wing to

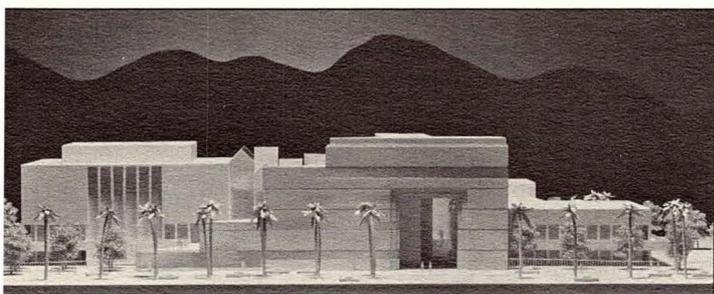
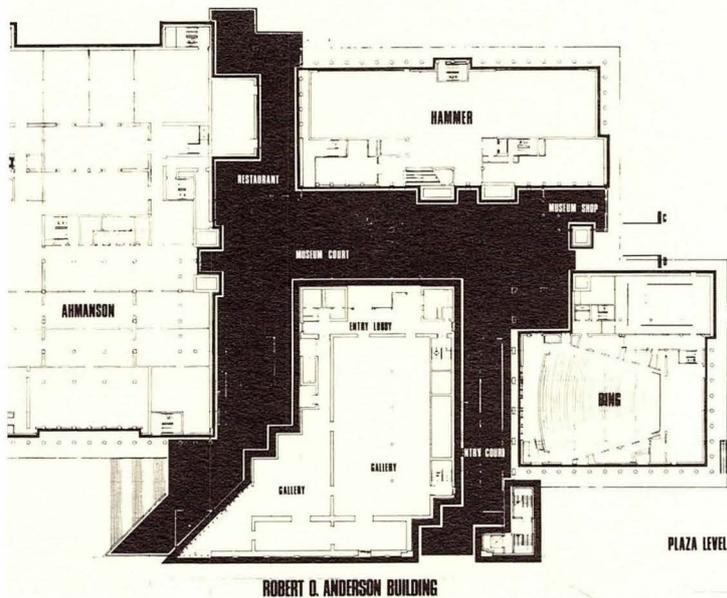
Pereira was selected to carry out the expansion since he would be finishing his own building. HHPA was commissioned to analyse and propose solutions to the museum's functional and organizational problems.

Ahmanson Gallery at third floor level, and add an escalator in front. Pereira was selected to carry out the expansion since he had already designed the foundations for it and would be, in effect, finishing his own building. The same year, Atlantic Richfield pledged a \$3 million matching grant for a new modern and contemporary art gallery.

The massive expansion was imperative. Since 1965, the museum staff had doubled, and administrative space had been broken into smaller and smaller offices to accommodate changing needs. Functions which should have been clustered, such as conservation, the registrar, curatorial offices, and the press office, were scattered all over the museum. Furthermore, much of the museum's permanent collection was in storage due to a lack of exhibition space, and even the storage area was cramped.

Subsequent to Powell's arrival, the board had agreed that Pereira's responsibility culminated with the expansion, and that a different architect should be hired to design the new galleries. During a lengthy search, the board's facilities committee reviewed proposals by California architects Frank Gehry and Charles Moore, Toronto's Barton Myers, New York's Gwathmey Siegel, and Mitchell/Giurgola from Philadelphia. Ultimately they chose the New York firm Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates for its substantial experience in renovating and rehabilitating such museums as the Cooper Hewitt and the St. Louis Art Museum. They were selected not only for their experience in working with existing buildings, but also in creating organizational master plans for museums.

Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates was commissioned to devise a plan which would analyse and propose solutions to the museum's functional and organizational problems. This took six months of discussion with staff from every department of the museum before the modern and contemporary art galleries were designed. The resulting proposal has three phases, each proceeding with the availability of funds. Phase I, costing approximately \$22 million in private donations, includes the Pereira construction and the new Robert O. Anderson Building for modern and contemporary art, named for ARCO's board chairman. Landscaping and a covered bridge linking the third levels of the Anderson Building and the Hammer Wing are also part of the first phase. Powell and Norman Pfeiffer, the principal architect of the project, presented the plan to the museum board's facilities committee, to the entire board of trustees, and to the L.A. County Board of Supervisors in December, 1981. Approval was easily won, and construction began.



**Robert O. Anderson
Modern Art addition;
Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer
Associates**

Although the imposing front wall has been criticized as monolithic and uninviting, both Powell and the architect maintain that the effect will be softened by the glass block on the facade.

While Pereira started on the Ahmanson extension, HHPA built a new conservation laboratory on the ground level of the Ahmanson Gallery. Moving the laboratory down from the third level of the Hammer Wing was the first step in relocating all administrative and support systems to the ground level of the museum. This gesture also freed the third level for galleries and precipitated the reorganization of almost all the collections in chronological order.

Completion of the Ahmanson extension and the Hammer Wing in March of this year added 35,000 additional square feet of exhibition space. Now a visitor touring the third level of the Ahmanson Building will be able to pass through the galleries chronologically from Greco-Roman art, through the Medieval and Renaissance periods to 17th century European art. The progression continues chronologically through the new galleries in the extension, to the Hammer galleries in the bridge, to the Hammer Wing itself. For the first time, a visitor will be able to walk through the entire museum without going outside.

Inside the Ahmanson Gallery, the view across the atrium from east to west has been walled up on the top three levels creating more unified galleries, additional exhibition space, and a controllable lighting situation. Although modern and contemporary works will interfere with the complete chronological progression of the Ahmanson's third level, upon the completion of the Anderson Building in 1985 there will be another 50,000 square feet of exhibition space bringing the museum's total to approximately 160,000 square feet.

In designing the Anderson Building, HHPA's challenge was not only to design new exhibition space, but to "disguise" and unify the three existing structures. According to Norman Pfeiffer, the separate entrances and the "rural" appearance of the buildings required the most urgent attention. Pfeiffer's solution to both the style and confusion was to place the Anderson Building directly on Wilshire Boulevard and to create an entrance portal, 50 feet wide and 65 feet high at the east end of the 300 foot long facade. The facade will step up to a height of 100 feet.

Although the imposing front wall has been criticized as monolithic and uninviting, both Powell and the architects maintain that the effect on the passing pedestrian will be softened by the glass block on the facade, giving the building a translucent appearance. The officials also believe that the addition of landscaping and a car drop-off area will mitigate the effect of the wall on the street.

Once visitors have passed through the grand entrance of the Ahmanson Building, they will encounter the museum books and a central courtyard where tickets are sold. Inside the building, the plaza level will contain changing exhibitions in the 10,000 square foot Times Mirror Gallery and the 5,000 square foot Kendall Gallery.

The permanent collection of modern and contemporary works will be installed on the third level which contains eleven galleries, and on the fourth level which holds seven, all about 10,000 square feet. Ceiling heights of all galleries are approximately 10 feet, and the walls are moveable. On each level, "rest galleries" created by the odd 45 degree angle, will feature exhibit-related education materials, such as videotapes or interviews.

While four of the top level galleries have skylights, most of the galleries will be illuminated by the 12 to 14 foot bands of glass block clerestory windows which cover the front and north sides of the building. The three-foot thick sandwich of glass block blinds and louvers will act as a vertical skylight, reflecting and diffusing natural light into the galleries to create ambient illumination. A motorized shade may be lowered to block day light when desired. Pfeiffer collaborated with lighting designer Robert Marantz in devising this system.

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art has been in need of additional exhibition space for modern and contemporary art for over a decade. While local enthusiasm about the new showcase is undeniable, a certain skepticism persists. As assured as Powell and the trustees, and HHPA seem to be about the facade, many still find it uncomfortable, impersonal and even ugly. Another complaint is more of convenience than esthetics, concerns parking. Pfeiffer says there is no place to build parking, either in a vertical or horizontal direction. Paid parking in an adjacent lot or on the crowded street remain the only options.

Phase II of the master plan will be considered after the completion of the Anderson Building, and includes more landscaping, paving and partial covering of the central courtyard with translucent pitched skylights. Additional bridges will eventually connect other levels of the three buildings. Phase III includes a new restaurant, additional skylights over the courtyard, and perhaps a spanning of the Ahmanson Gallery atrium with full floors of gallery space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA is Art Editor of the *L.A. Weekly* and a contributor to *Art Forum* and *Art in America*.

Critique

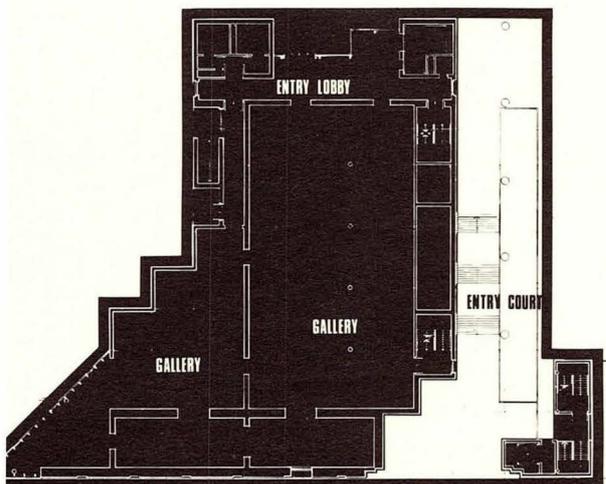
by Michael Sorkin

A current moral center of architectural argument is the idea of “context.” Ontologically speaking, a building *responds* to a context and it is the nature of this response that is judged. In the good old days of modern architecture, context was universalized, a building was to respond to the idea — the creed, rather — of modernism. Nowadays, the situation is transformed and complicated. Context embraces a cadre of particulars from the history of architecture to the *genius loci* of a building’s particular plot. However, if the components of context have become concretized, the qualities demanded of the architectural response have grown ineffable. All a modernist had to do was produce a modern building. Now...?

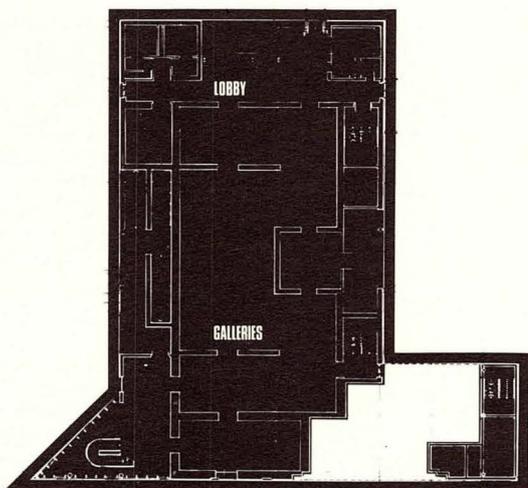
Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer’s proposed addition to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art is an attempt to navigate the difficult shoals of contextualism. The weight of context on the designers’ pens is drastically greater than usual not simply because of the large number of readily identifiable “contexts” entailed but also because the historical moment of the building’s conception is one of flux, a time when accepted views about many of these contexts are in disarray. For example, the local architecture critics have been engaged in a dispute over whether the project offers a suitable response to the context of “the street.” But the real argument is a prior one, as nobody knows which of the standard tropes about “the street” is applicable, to which street context Wilshire Boulevard properly belongs.

Still, the building has made its choices, drawn its shape from them, offered itself as a solution to the problematics it implicitly describes. Of these, the most conspicuous and elemental is the County Museum itself. Indisputably, William Pereira’s original museum building is among the worst instances of kitsch yet erected. However, by the dialectics of kitsch, a valid local esthetic, it is also one of the greatest. Whichever view one adopts, adding on to this building means having an attitude towards it. The choices are pretty much limited to effacement or celebration. And because the original is so powerful at what it does, it demands to be addressed directly: to lay back is to fail to solve the problem.

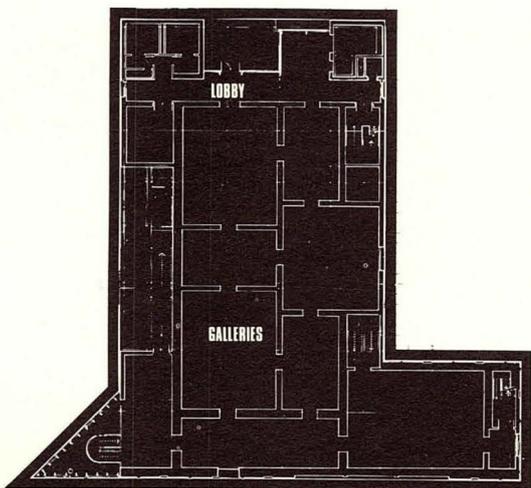
Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates seem to have partly chosen and partly been forced into an approach that is just too composite. Having ruled out the idea of simply trying to obliterate the structure, they’ve assumed the tactic of simultaneously undermining it and competing with it. This entails, on the one hand, resurfacing some walls, screening others, and reworking interior spaces and, on the other, erecting a rival structure meant to sap



Ground Floor Plan, Robert O. Anderson Building.



Second Floor Plan.



Third Floor Plan.

The new building aims to distract more than obscure, fighting a battle of maneuver more than position. The huge Paramount-style great wall alludes to those which surround the studio compounds.

Pereira's power by means of competing imagery; by an attack on the logic of the original. On one level, this approach is likely to be successful: the transformed museum will surely be different than its predecessor. The question remains whether the new guise will be convincing.

HHPA's main avenue of attack is the conversion of Pereira's "pavilions in a park" into some version of a traditional beaux arts museum, like the Metropolitan in New York. Their new wing along Wilshire reduces a rough horseshoe of buildings to singleness by inscribing a central, linking, interior court and by adding the apparatus of axiality in the form of a heroic arched entry, denoting a single approach to a single building. The addition also pulls the museum's symbolic center of gravity out to the street, a gesture meant to evoke the traditional street wall trope of old world urbanity, presumably appropriate to a cultural institution on the make. If this approach founders, it's in a certain ultimate reserve. Spiritually, at least, HHPA's problem is similar to that confronted by Kevin Roche in adding on to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, a museum which also fronts a great street and sits in a park. Roche had no uncertainty about his aims, though. Faced with McKim's beaux arts heroics in front and by an eclectic mix of shapes and styles in back (including a great wing by Calvert Vaux) he decided that when the dust had finally settled, there would be just him and McKim and so proceeded to obliterate everything else. This may not have been exactly sensitive but it was certainly to the point. Whatever the sacrifices of park land or predecessors, the backside of the museum is entirely his; mission accomplished.

Still, to prevail in struggle, you've got to play to win. HHPA's has always been an attitude of detail combined, a Biedermeyer sensibility that resists too unified a gesture. Lately, though, this seemed to be changing, in buildings like the Best Products Headquarters and two museum projects in L.A.. But at LACMA, this new freedom with scale is ultimately vitiated. To overcome the Pereira "problem," a radical strategy is required. For all the talk about a "great wall of Wilshire" the new building aims to distract more than to obscure, fighting a battle of maneuver more than position. The huge Paramount Studios-style gate alludes to a great wall — like those which surround the studio compounds — but only penetrates part of one, the sense of incompleteness heightened by the down-stepping form which seems to await finishing off. The addition's striped deco horizontality jars against Pereira's vertical Yamasakoid fuss. The tightly organized strips of garden seem incidental, more sentimental than really convincing.

Perhaps the problem finally rises from another context dilemma, from the idea of "Los Angeles." The notion of an LA architecture preys upon the collective architectural myth enjoying special currency and favor. To outsiders in particular the place seems to beg a certain lurid, licentious abandon. There's enormous pressure to be recognizably regional. Generally, interpretations tend to either irony or gush, extremes which HHPA avoid. But, by choosing to respond to the Los Angeles problematic, they seem to have sapped their ability to respond to other issues on their agenda.

In the standard view, Los Angeles "means," among other things, an attenuated freedom of sources — even unto kitsch, tolerance, even celebration — of extreme possibilities of juxtaposition, evocation of palm-lined outdoor living, and a general fascination with a certain gross iconography. HHPA has engaged all these issues with varying results. Most satisfactory are the internal particulars of the deco-derived style which strikes a fine balance between detail and expanse. The architecture, however, resists the possibilities of its own means of expression. Whimsical shapes betray the impetus to orderliness. The forms in the courtyard look both unrelated and arbitrary, contradicting their "Californian" informality the functional rationale behind them. The building aims to be an icon, a billboard, but appears unclear as to what it's actually advertising.

As every tourist knows, right next door to the County Museum is the La Brea tar pits, one of the great shrines of kitsch. Extending to the side of Wilshire Boulevard is a long, primeval, oil slick. In the midst of this, a life-sized replica of a mastodon is seen in the act of sinking, its trunk extended in pathetic desperation towards shore. On the far bank stands the poignant figure of a baby mastodon, heart-rendingly unfurling his own proboscis towards what can only be his mother. No feeling person can fail to be moved, to be reminded of Disney's little Dumbo. HHPA's bind is in being stuck between two elephants, Pereira's whimsical Jumbo and the elephantine "context" of L.A.. It's a fantastic difficult situation, trying to impart integrity to a building against the original museum or to a sculpture garden set against the tar pit tableau. To my eye, they haven't quite got it.

MICHAEL SORKIN is a Contributing Editor to *Arts & Architecture*.

MOCA Builds

by John Pastier

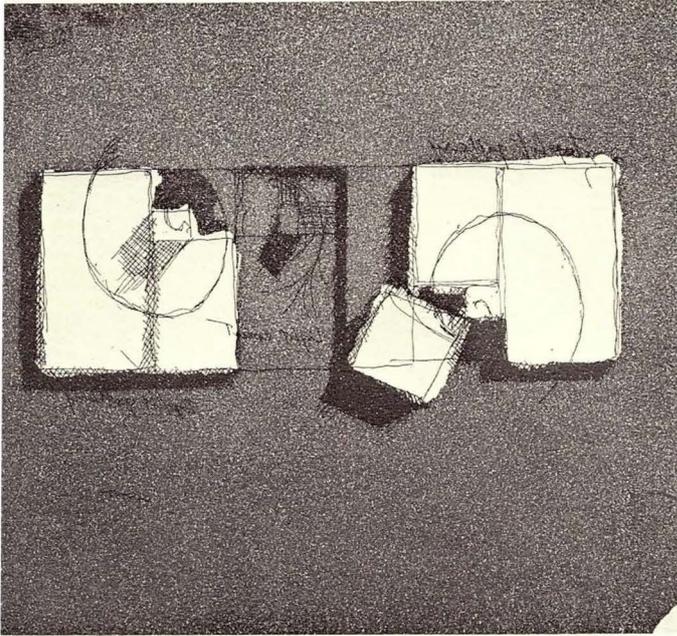
If it is remarkable that Los Angeles should build two new modern art museums at once, it is all the more remarkable that there should be so many similarities in the architectural circumstances surrounding them. Both the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Anderson Wing of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art have been shaped by larger nearby buildings devised by other architects. Both designs have led to public concern, if not outright controversy, and both are the work of architects who are strangers to the city and based thousands of miles away.

Both have ceremonial portals facing major streets, but there the architectural resemblance ends. MOCA will be a soft-spoken, gently scaled building with much of its bulk underground yet making daylight its prime architectural feature. LACMA will be monumental and self-asserting, establishing its civic presence through scenographic means. The first is an exercise in articulation and refinement, the second a broad stage gesture.

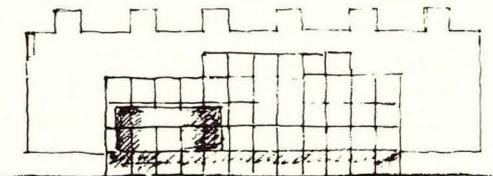
The Museum of Contemporary Art is Arata Isozaki's first American building, and required 36 design schemes according to one associate's reckoning. (Isozaki laughingly says that he can no longer count them.) The project was a brutally difficult one that nearly culminated in the architect's resignation, but also one in which he demonstrated remarkable professionalism and tenacity and in which MOCA itself showed a salutary and not totally expected capacity for self-correction.

The saga of the museum began with a fortuitous convergence: at a time when several art collectors were exploring the possibility of establishing a modern art museum, a major land lease for five adjoining parcels of downtown land was being organized by the city's redevelopment agency. Normally, builders on that land would have had to devote 1-1/2% of their construction budget to public art works, but in this case the sum thus derived would have reached eight figures — a staggering amount for buying art work but also a plausible figure for constructing a moderate sized museum. Breaking precedent, the agency decided to interpret its art requirement freely, and use the money for an institutional shell.

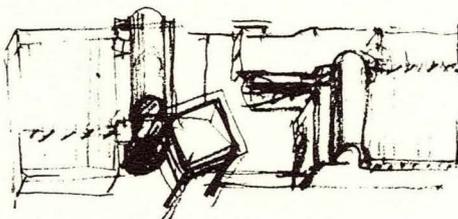
Sadly, this happy bit of bureaucratic creativity was offset by a disastrous choice of a development team. (See *Arts & Architecture*, Fall 1981.) Rejecting an urbanistically and architecturally superior plan by developer Robert Maguire and a team of designers that included Charles Moore, Cesar Pelli, Lawrence Halprin, Barton Myers, Frank Gehry, and Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, the agency chose a crude anti-urban proposal of Bunker



Aquatint of MOCA by the architect, Arata Isozaki, done in the Fall, 1981



Isozaki's sketches of the museum seen as a sculptural object



Isozaki's volumetric study of MOCA, detailing the sculpture garden

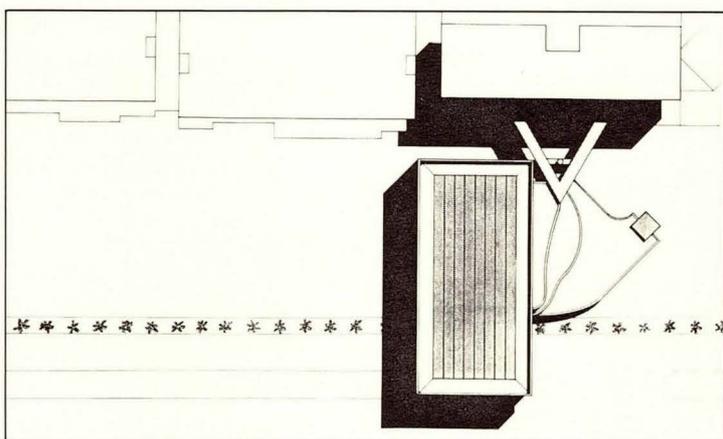
Having vetoed both a superior design and the notion of a prominent structure, the developers allowed the museum a somewhat better site on the condition that the building would be very low.

Hill Associates (BHA), an ad-hoc marriage of Canadian developers and local partners. The rationale for this gaffe was that prime developer's immense financial resources would spell success for the project, but agency design ignorance and city politics also played major roles.

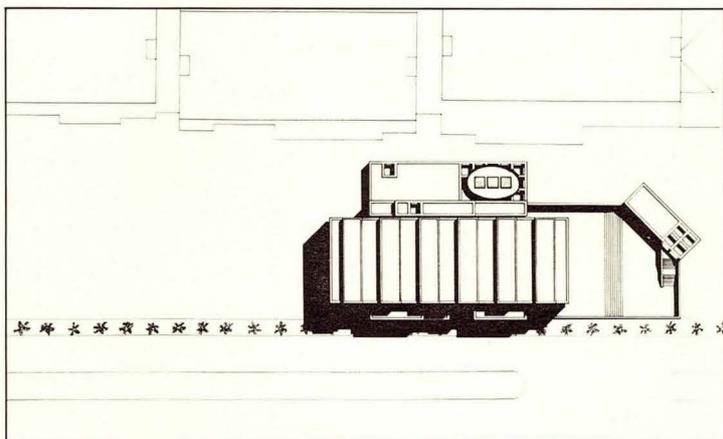
In his plan, BHA's architect Arthur Erickson proposed a linear drive-by museum whose unshaded 35 foot high glass walls would supposedly permit automotive viewing of immense artworks mounted high above the floor. This concept impressed MOCA trustees so strongly that they successfully lobbied for a separate museum structure designed by an outside architect. After considering such figures as James Stirling, Edward Larrabee Barnes, Frank Gehry, Richard Meier, and Kevin Roche, they chose Isozaki because they felt he could produce a strong building without relying on stylistic preconceptions. In the months that came, that adaptability would be put to many tests.

Isozaki's three dozen schemes were actually a half-dozen variations. The first was an attempt to cope with a minuscule half-acre site by using flying ramps to link with the planned condos, (where some of the museum space was still located as a remnant of the Erickson scheme), and by projecting over half the width of Grand Avenue. This latter tactic drew objections from the redevelopment agency and Erickson, so a somewhat larger freestanding site was provided and the museum was detached and turned broadside to the street, paralleling the condominiums. This was unsatisfactory to Erickson, BHA, and the redevelopment agency on the grounds that it blocked access to views from their condos and shops from the street. Since the museum was far shorter than those structures and less than one-third their width, the problem of obstruction might have been attributed more accurately to the development team, especially in light of the museum's civic importance and its architectural superiority to the structures behind it. In retrospect, this may have been Isozaki's best scheme, for it combined vigor, elegance and clarity, accommodating most functions in a single skillfully resolved form while housing a bookstore and restaurant in a small pavilion overlooking a sunken sculpture court.

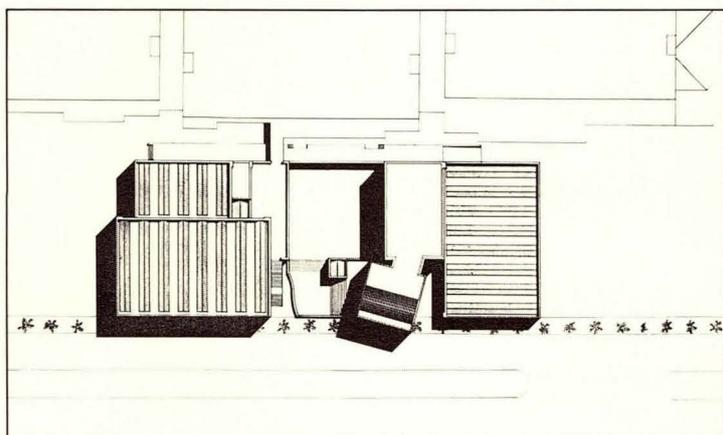
Having vetoed both a superior design and the notion of a prominent museum structure, the developers allowed the museum a somewhat better located .9 acre site on the condition that the building would be very low and split in half to permit even better views of their structures. (As of this writing, construction of condominiums whose visibility was so important has been postponed indefinitely. Erickson's nearby office towers have b



Scheme One, February 1981



Scheme Two, July 1981



Scheme Three, September 1981

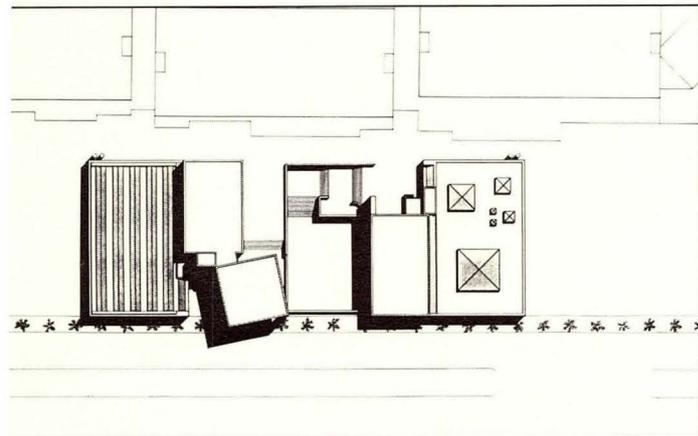
Isozaki's last four designs reflected the new site and its arbitrary restrictions... Of necessity, the architecture became internalized and refined.

(redesigned largely for the worse, ground has yet to be broken almost three years after the developer was selected, and BHA recently took in a new partner to bolster its diminished financial resources.)

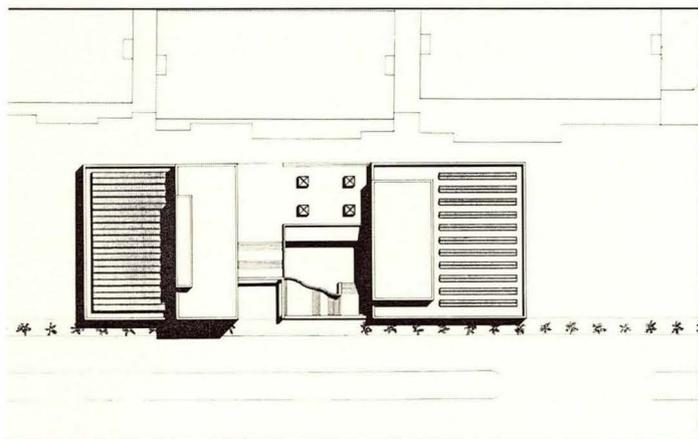
Isozaki's last four designs reflected the new site and its arbitrary restrictions. They differed far less among themselves than from the earlier versions, being accommodations to imposed limitations rather than autonomous design statements. Of necessity, the architecture became internalized and refined. In the third scheme, circulation took the form of spirals, clockwise on one side and counterclockwise on the other. Each half derived its shape from a square subdivided into rectangles with sides in the proportions of a golden section. The intervening courtyard was also a golden section rectangle, as was the shape formed by combining the courtyard with either adjoining square. Rather than using this classic geometric device in the manner of the renaissance or ancient Greece to achieve repose, Isozaki shifted or twisted one element in each square to break the plan's symmetry. This was most evident in the scheme's one signature element, a barrel vaulted mass that overhung the property line at a slightly askew angle.

This intricate geometry proved too much for another body with right of design approval — the museum's own architecture and design committee. Composed of three trustees — chairman Max Palevsky, and artists Robert Irwin and Sam Francis — it also included MOCA's peripatetic director Pontus Hulten and Coy Howard, an advisor who has staked a professional claim in the nebulous territory between art and architecture. MOCA's architecturally trained deputy director Richard Koshalek had no seat on the committee, and as Hulten was often in Paris, staff representation was a sometime thing. (Since that time, Hulten has resigned and Koshalek is now director.) Previously this group had been Isozaki's ally in dealing with the developer and the redevelopment agency, but with the third scheme it became a tough client, finding his ingenious plan far too complex.

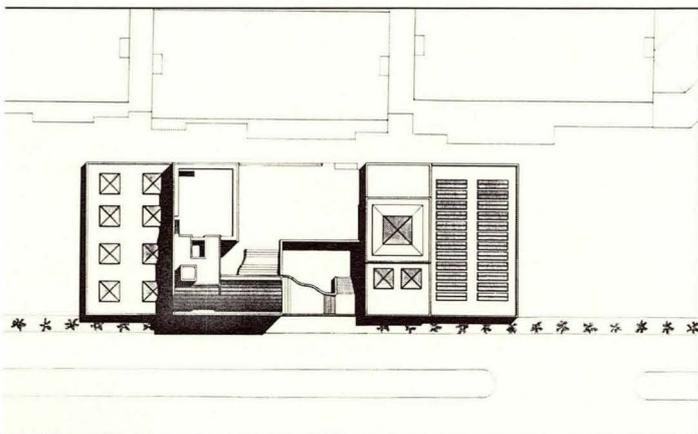
Isozaki responded by simplifying the circulation and placing the galleries on a single level, but those changes were not sufficient for the committee, which rejected the fourth version on the grounds of prohibitive cost and because it felt that the architecture should be even more subordinate to the art inside it. Redesigning once again, in scheme five the architect devised a building subservient enough to win the committee's approval. Strictly orthogonal, it was also one that he couldn't live with: Isozaki asked to be allowed to redesign this approved version, and, to



Scheme Four, January 1982



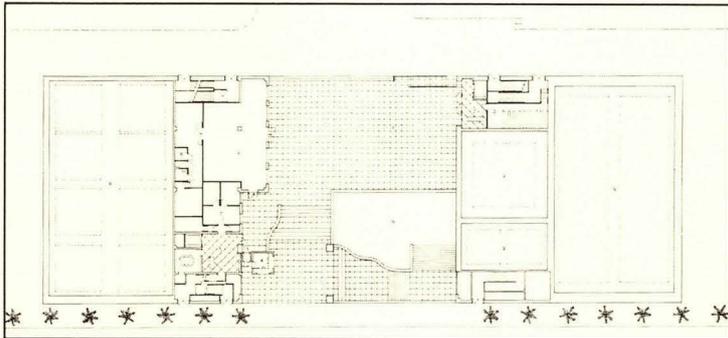
Scheme Five, March 1982



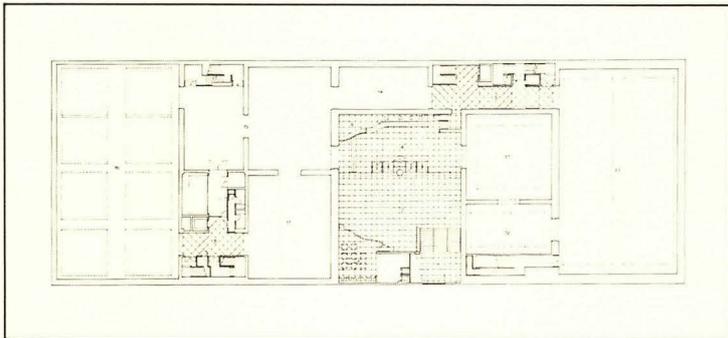
Scheme Six, July 1982

A minor scandal ensued as local critics ferreted out reports of unusual committee behavior including a charge that one member had presented his own design as an alternative.

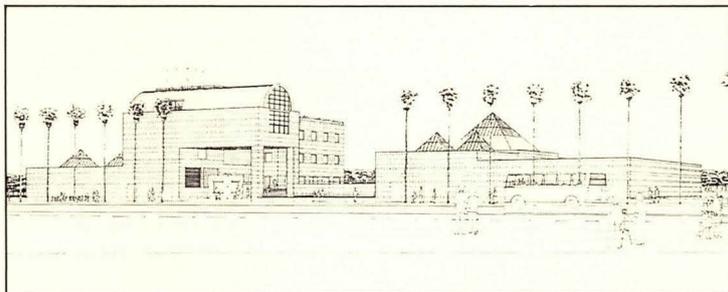
add weight to the request, informed the press of his unhappiness with the plan. A minor scandal then ensued as local critics ferreted out reports of unusual committee behavior including a charge that Howard had presented his own design at one meeting as an alternative to Isozaki's efforts. The resultant public attention and Isozaki's hint that he would withdraw if the museum had lost confidence in his work precipitated a beneficial crisis. The architecture committee was replaced by a building committee comprised of Palevsky, Hulten, and new trustee Frank Nicholas, who established a link between the museum staff and an architect that had been neglected by the earlier group. Isozaki was allowed another design attempt and although Palevsky still took strong exception to it, this final version was approved by a 15-3 vote of the trustees.



Plaza level



Gallery level



Grand Avenue elevation of MOCA showing copper-clad pyramidal skylights

This sixth scheme itself had two versions, and it is interesting to examine Isozaki's changes after the concept was accepted. The earlier one introduced a greater diversity of skylights, including several pyramidal ones large enough to be design statements. In contrast to those pointed forms, a barrel vaulted board room and library was placed at the front of the site and raised on stilts to create an entrance portal that also acted as a pedestrian portico and a cochere. These two sets of gestures transformed the anonymous fifth scheme into a design far more in character with Isozaki's main body of work.

But even after this version was approved, the architect continued to make the structure more differentiated and unpredictable. Strip windows became square punctures in the wall, an expanse of glass block was placed on a wall of the administration wing, the window beneath the vault was expanded and reshaped, and a sassy diagonal jointed green metal cladding was introduced in contrast with the elegantly detailed red sandstone that sheathes most of the museum structure.

The effect of these elaborations is to make the museum more a Los Angeles building and more one of the moment. Each change nudges the design from a condition of repose toward contradiction, and from a not easily dated late modernism toward today's post-modern and new wave fashions. By making his design look rigorous and more trendy, Isozaki has gone native. This is a subtler process than it might seem, for his work has often shown Western tendencies and at least one of his revisions reflects local motifs that themselves seem borrowed from his own country's recent architectural and graphic traditions. In paraphrasing Southern California's hip design argot, Isozaki is also quoting himself back to us. The effect is akin to viewing the reflectic

Whereas MOCA's final destination is the squeaky clean habitat of accountants and lawyers, its temporary quarters are in an old mixed neighborhood of artists' lofts and galleries.

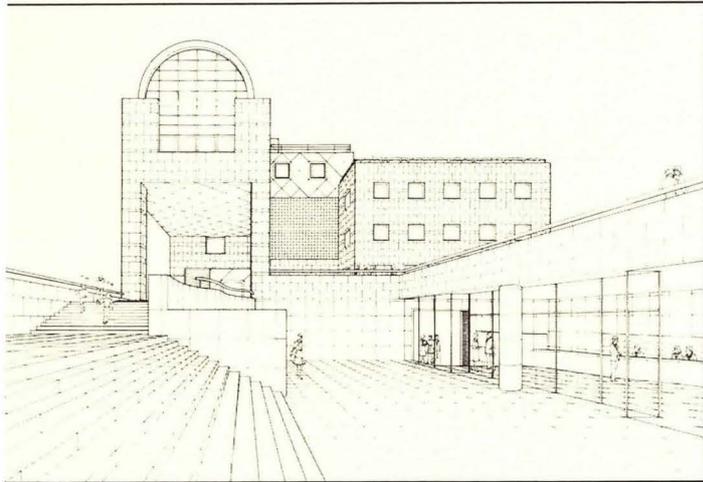
created by parallel mirrors of slightly different tints, one labeled domestic and the other imported.

One may ask how much of this final loosening up is beneficial to the design and how much is detrimental, but the issue is not a major one. It is more important to realize that out of a professionally difficult and sometimes even absurd situation Isozaki has produced a refined and human building. Polite and deferential, it is at times serious and at times slyly mocking its seriousness. Reasonable and carefully reasoned in the main, it occasionally contradicts itself just to keep things interesting. Usually its meanings and intentions are clear, but at other times — as in its juxtaposition of pyramids and palm trees — it can only make us wonder whether it is showing us what it thinks we want to see, or instead is gently pulling our leg. Once inside, however, ambiguity vanishes. Circulation is interesting yet easily negotiated, the spaces are simple and nicely varied, and the abundance and diversity of natural light filtering from above seems sure to enhance both the architectural spaces and the act of visual perception. On the outside, MOCA will be a complex attempt to deal with a difficult gestation and unpromising setting, but inside it will be a simple, nicely lit place, perhaps even an idealized world, where all there is to see is white walls, other people, and art.

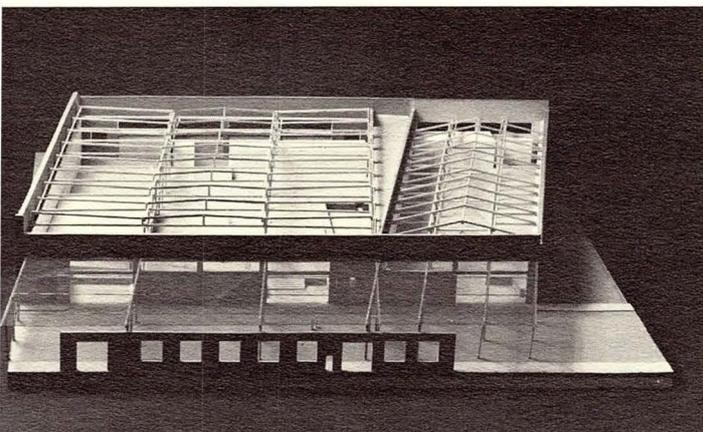
Meanwhile...

Before opening its doors on swank Grand Avenue in late 1985, MOCA will inaugurate its operations in the low-rent end of downtown. Two warehouses in Little Tokyo will be minimally renovated under a still-evolving design by Frank Gehry. Whereas MOCA's final destination is the squeaky-clean habitat of accountants and lawyers, its temporary quarters are in an old mixed neighborhood that has attracted artists' lofts and storefront galleries over the last several years. Unlike Bunker Hill, it is a district where art is already at home, and the museum's first two or three seasons promise to have a special flavor that will not likely survive the move uptown.

At the moment, Gehry is still pondering the "moves" he will make inside, but he has proposed to build a large wire mesh canopy over the street to enclose the space in front of the two warehouse structures. The interior's large open expanses, skylights, and 3-story-high ceilings will essentially be left intact. Temporary MOCA thus promises to be not so much a museum as an immense studio space used for exhibition and performance.



Sunken sculpture court connecting MOCA's two masses



The "Temporary Contemporary," which opens in October, is a renovation of two warehouses in Little Tokyo by Frank O. Gehry.

Dallas Museum of Art

by Bill Marvel

There are dark moments — fortunately now less frequent than they were a few years ago — when Dallas residents suspect that their city is known mostly for its football team (the Cowboys) and its assassins (Lee Harvey Oswald, John Hinckley, Jr.).

The part about the Cowboys is okay. But the city would also like to be known for its healthy business climate, for the shiny new skyline that is rising all around, and for its arts institutions which are thriving as never before.

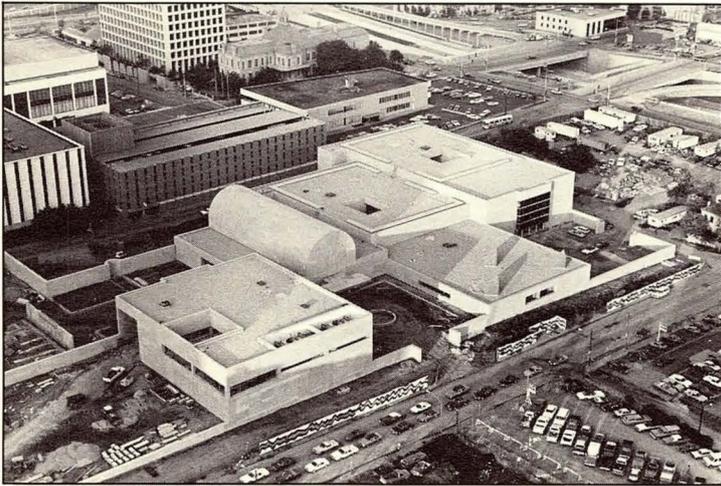
The most conspicuous sign of this roseate cultural health is a new Dallas Museum of Arts, now nearing completion on the northern edge of the downtown area. It is a fine building, long and low, elegant and sober. The architect, Edward Larrabee Barnes, has managed to produce exactly what the museum's director, staff, and Dallas citizens said they wanted; a supremely functional museum building and an imposing civic monument. And he seems to have done it on time and within the approximate \$30 million budgeted for construction.

Barnes was on the job two years before citizens even got around to voting the money for the project. The Dallas Museum of Fine Arts (the name changes to Dallas Museum of Arts next January with the move into the new building) had been struggling also for decades in an inadequate building in Fair Park, in the middle of some of the city's least desirable real estate. In 1978, Dallas property owners were asked to approve a bond issue for a new museum, but turned it down. The next year, however, they reversed themselves and voted \$24.8 million for the project — the largest public bond issue ever approved for a cultural edifice. The museum's Board of Trustees went on to raise an additional \$25 million from private sources, an extraordinary feat of fund-raising by Dallas standards. (What is left over from construction will be applied to endowment and programs.)

Building design, meanwhile, was well in hand. With the help of Lawrence Anderson, retired dean of the MIT School of Architecture, an architect search committee had invited more than 100 architects to submit slides and information about previous projects. Barnes was already something of a museum specialist, with Minneapolis' Walker Art Center, the Scaife Gallery in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute, New York's Asia Society, and the Arts Complex at Purchase, State University of New York among his accomplishments.

As the field of candidates was winnowed down to a dozen, museum director Harry Parker III and members of the search

Photo by Daniel Barsotti



The new Dallas Museum of Art (under construction);
Edward Larrabee Barnes

Detail, Dallas Museum of Art

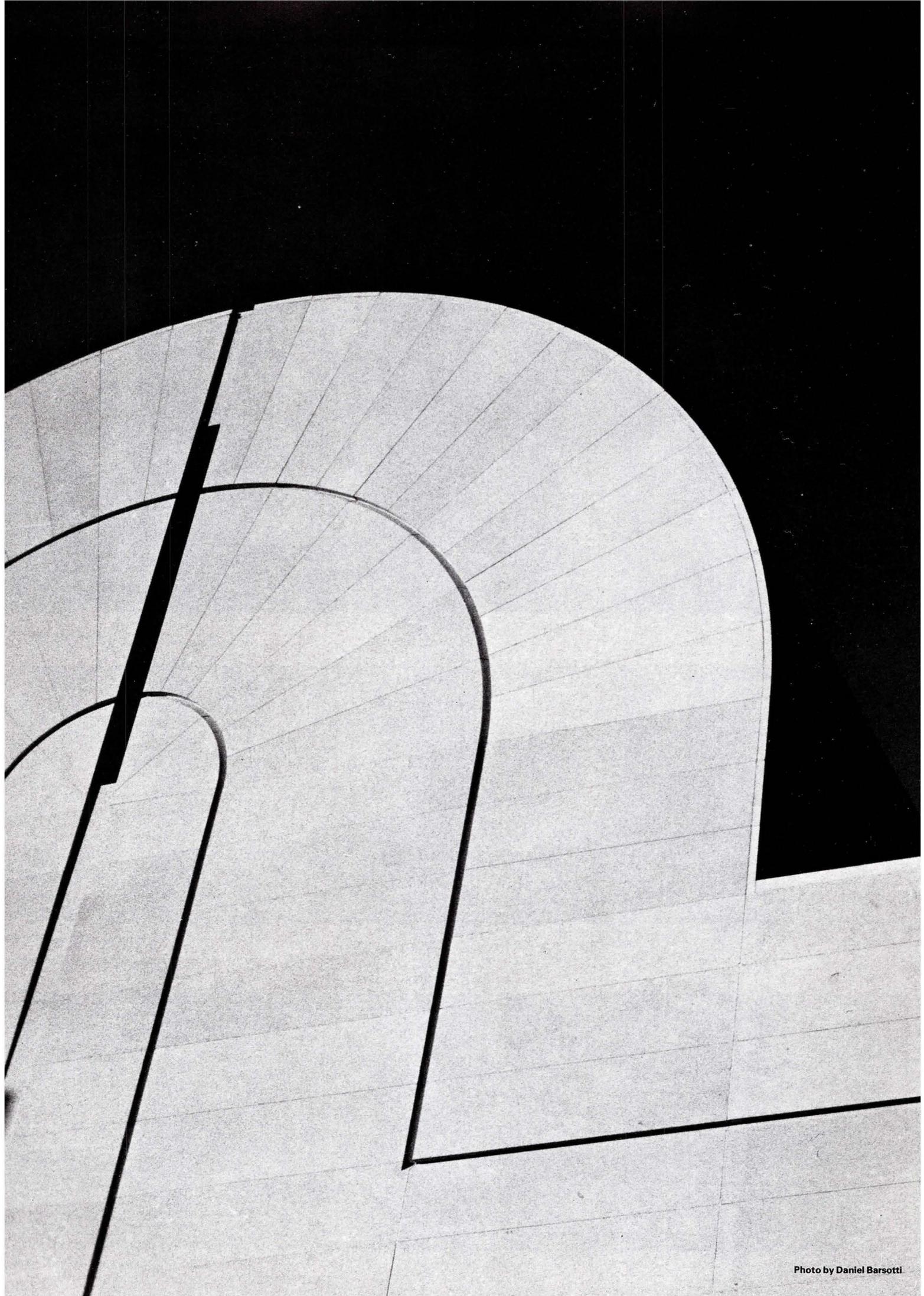
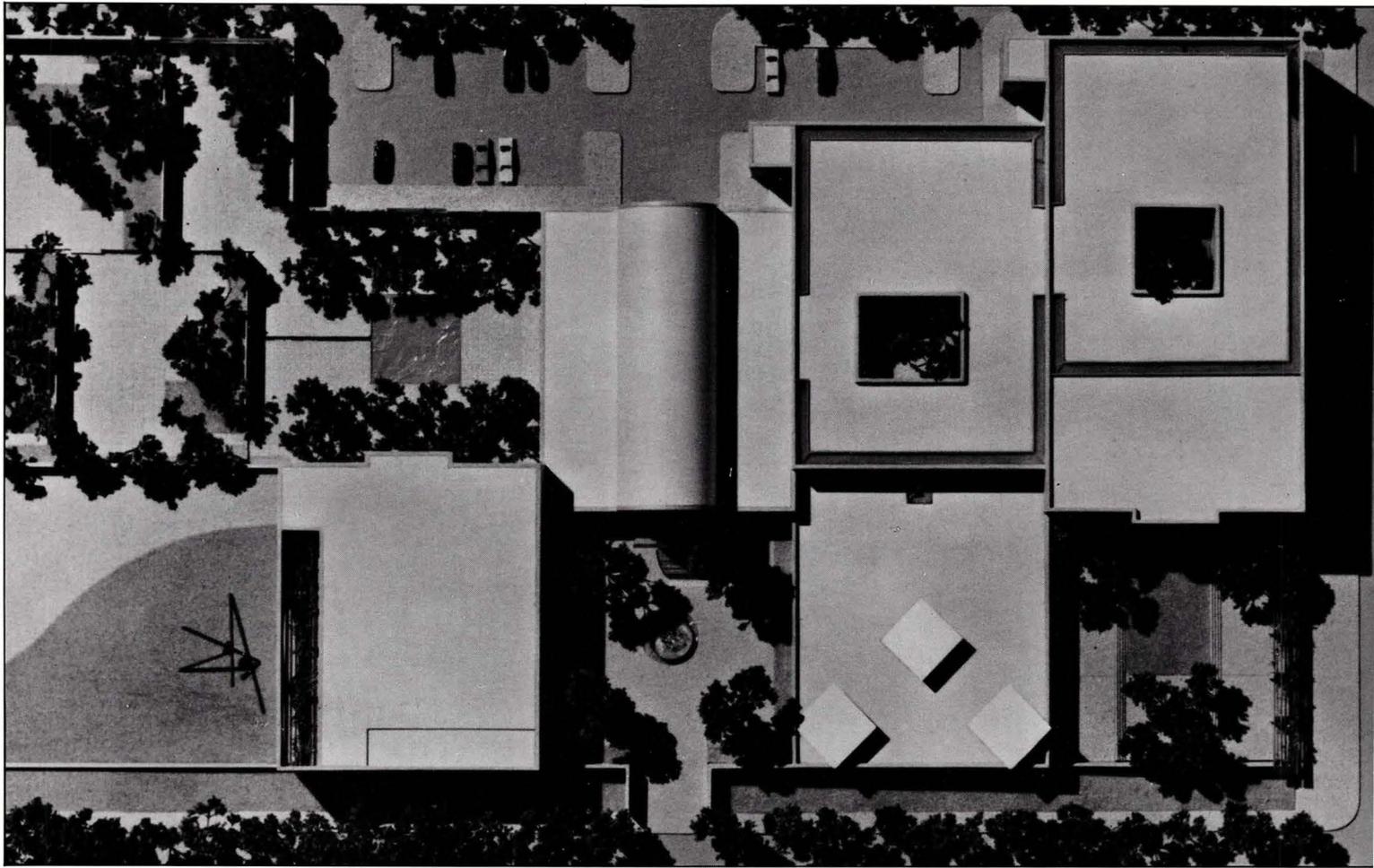
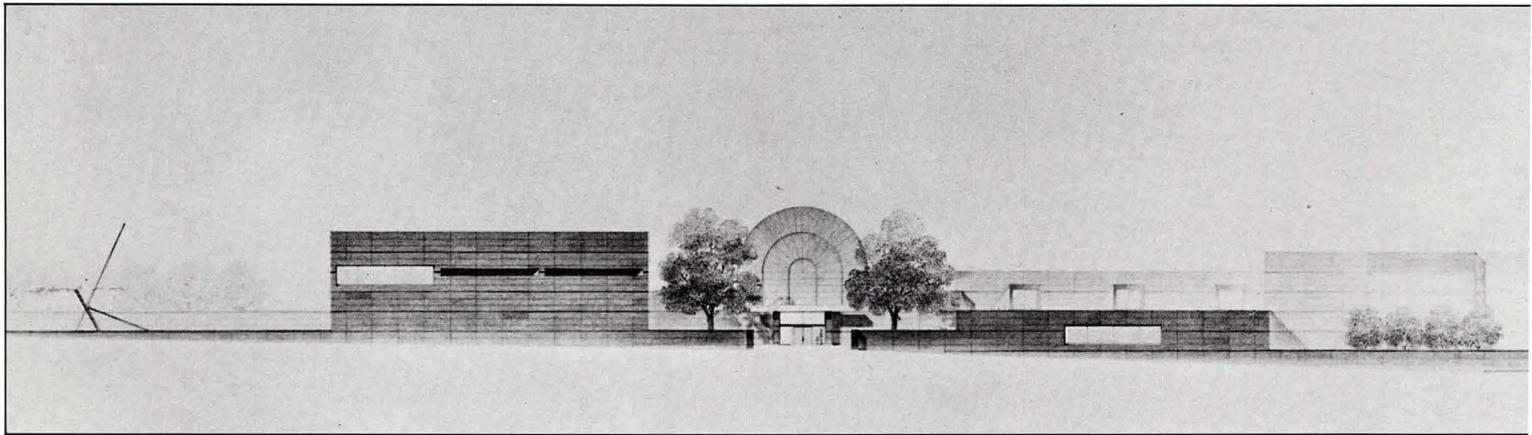


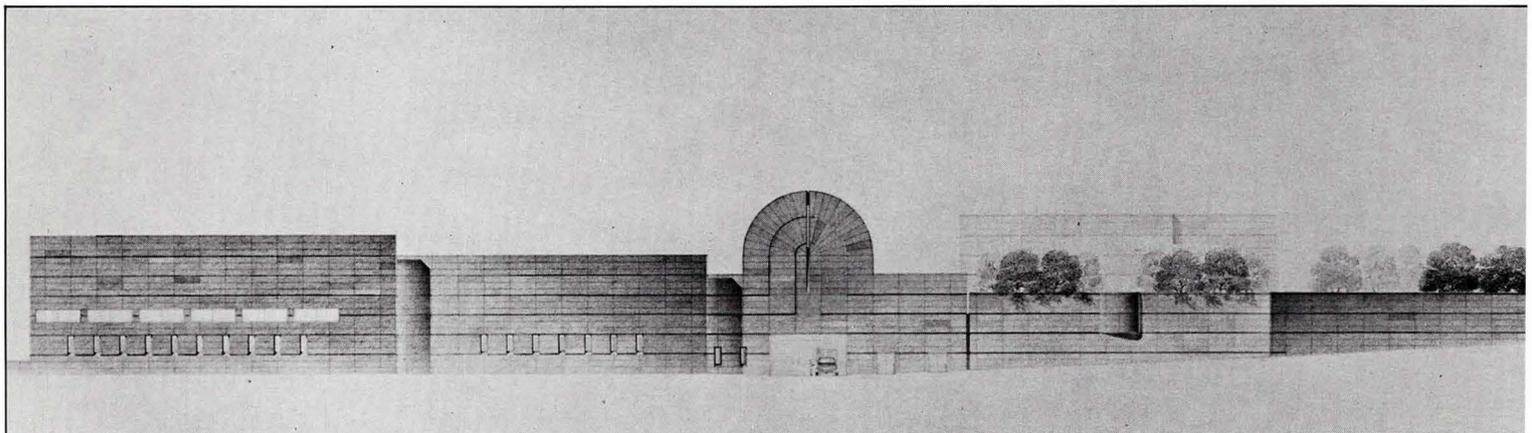
Photo by Daniel Barsotti



Model, Dallas Museum of



Rendering of Harwood St
elevation by Robin Sen



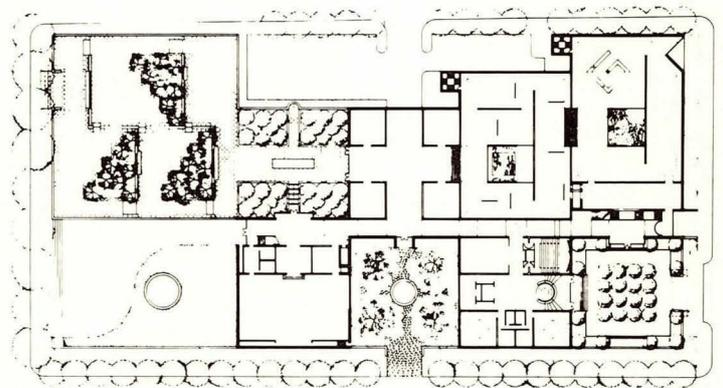
Rendering of St. Paul Str

It was probably Barnes' cheery willingness to subordinate the building to the art it would house, as well as his reputation for pleasing clients, that won him the job.

committee visited dozens of museums, including the Walker and the Scaife. Some of the committee members weren't too keen on the Walker's exterior — that empty expanse of brick — but everyone responded to the flow of space and the simplicity and understatement of the design. In the end it was probably Barnes' cheery willingness to subordinate the building to the art it would house and display, as well as his reputation for pleasing clients, that won him the job.

One of Barnes' earliest contributions to the design was to nudge the museum's board in the direction of a downtown site. The museum is located on 8.9 acres at the northern edge of the central business district. The city's glittering new skyline forms a dramatic backdrop for Barnes' low-slung, low-key design, while its large panels of gray Indiana limestone provide a sober contrast to the acres of mirror glass that have become the cliché of high-rise architecture in Dallas. Barnes' only gesture to the skyline is the 40-foot barrel vault rising midway along the museum's length. Some local observers have assumed it is the architect's attempt to out-vault Louis Kahn's well-vaulted Kimbell Art Museum in nearby Fort Worth. Dallas and Fort Worth are keenly competitive but not *that* competitive. Rather, it is Barnes' solution to two problems. Outside, it provides a visual focus for Flora Street, the thoroughfare that will run through the heart of the city's proposed arts district and terminate at the museum's formal entrance. Inside, it is the dramatic crossbar that links the two great circulation systems within the museum. These are the ground floor corridor stretching 520 feet north to south along the building's major axis, and, running parallel to that, what Barnes describes as the "great river" of galleries in which the permanent collection is displayed.

These galleries ascend in a series of three "trays," starting at corridor level with the barrel vault and its four associated galleries that will house the museum's fine collection of contemporary art. Up one short flight of stairs is the tray occupied by 19th century European and American art. One final short flight of stairs leads to the level housing African, Oceanic, pre-Columbian and other non-Western art. Thus visitors will move symbolically through time and space, from the present to the past if they begin their visit at the barrel vault, and literally down to the present if they take the elevator up to the ethnic galleries and descend. An additional tray of offices has been inserted between the ethnic galleries and the ground floor library, almost as an afterthought. Ceilings are low and the offices are unprepossessing, but the arrangement illustrates one of the most conspicuous virtues of the building's design. Barnes has scrupulously separated func-



Gallery level

For the first time, the museum will have a conservation lab, adequate security, ample storage space, and an art reference library worthy of the name, as well.

tions so that they do not interfere with each other. The key to this separation is the great ground floor corridor. Early in the design process Barnes decided to make this corridor an insecure space, open at all hours to visitors who might just be passing through on their way to a movie or a lecture. When the museum is closed, the galleries and other spaces that open off this thoroughfare can be individually closed off and secured.

With some exceptions, all of the art and the administration are on one side of this central spine and almost everything else is on the other. A visitor entering the building from the parking lot at the north end, for example, passes the library on the right, then the staircase leading up to the office level and beyond to the ethnic galleries. Next, on the left, is the orientation and education wing. Further along, the great barrel vault opens dramatically onto the corridor opposite the museum's formal entrance. About halfway along that corridor is the vault that opens above the contemporary galleries. The effect is deliberately churchly, the nave of a great cathedral of art accentuated by a narrow window slit high in the west wall.

Continuing south along the corridor, one passes the entrance to the temporary exhibitions gallery on the left and, opposite that, the exit leading to the sculpture garden. Finally, near the south entrance (and convenient to workers in nearby office buildings), a staircase leads up to the museum's restaurant on the floor above the temporary gallery.

The trek from north to south, made slightly arduous by a rise in elevation of 14 feet, would be a long one indeed but for a series of pleasant vistas, glimpses out into sunny courtyards alternating with galleries and shops.

The 1.8 acre sculpture garden is an oasis of grass and flowing water. The main entrance also opens onto a court, with a circular driveway, a fountain, and ornamental plantings. Another courtyard is at the north end of the education wing and the museum has commissioned sculptor Richard Fleischner to create an environmental piece for this space. Fleischner's proposal calls for a cluster of sixteen flowering trees that define an elevated plane in the center of this space and a contrasting arrangement of limestone blocks around the courtyard's perimeter.

The interaction between indoor and outdoor spaces is carried on throughout the museum. Each gallery level is pierced by an atrium courtyard, with each planting related to each gallery: for example, bamboo with oriental art and water lilies with impres-

sionist works. Galleries are lit by a mixture of artificial illumination and, where possible, natural light, which enters through peripheral skylights and washes the walls mysteriously.

All this will be something new to Dallas art lovers who, for years, have felt torn between apologizing for and defending the 1950s Park museum. With 195,000 square feet (55,200 in exhibit area alone), the new building is three times the size of the old one. By early next January when the paintings and sculptures have been installed, the museum's staff will have doubled. New programs will have been added and old ones expanded. For the first time, the museum will have a conservation lab, adequate security, ample storage space, and an art reference library worthy of the name. Long-range plans call for eventual extension of the building to the north.

As recently as late January, 1983, the museum's Board of Trustees was considering a proposal to add a story to the education pavilion before the new building opens and while the architectural contractor team is still together. The \$2.5 million addition would house more gallery space and while this would seem to violate Barnes' best-laid floor plan, with its separation of functions and ordered flow of traffic, the addition does make a certain amount of sense.

Admittedly, the proposed addition would alter the museum's silhouette somewhat. Skylights on the education wing would be eliminated, complicating lighting in the wing's studios. The barrel vault would perhaps look a little pinched, with two-story pavilions now rising on both sides. Barnes concedes that some of the vault's visual impact would be lost from certain vantage points.

On the other hand, the two pavilions, now equal in height, will help to frame the vault, enhancing its symmetry as viewed from Flora Street. Straightened, widened and landscaped, Flora is to become the major axis of the proposed Dallas Arts District, a project of 15-year, 60 acre exercise in urban renewal. The new museum and I.M. Pei's proposed new concert hall, to be built a few blocks away along Flora, are to anchor the Arts District.

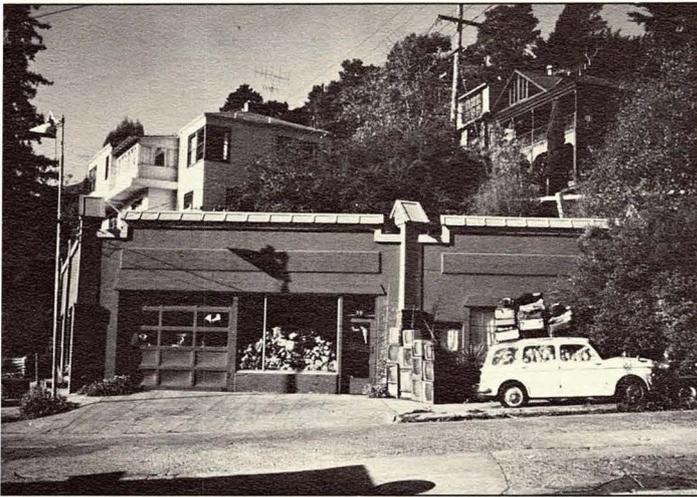
Nobody knows yet how many millions the Arts District will cost, how it is to be financed, or what it might contain. In the meantime, in the new Dallas Museum of Art the city already has a reassuring presence and a potent new symbol.

BILL MARVEL writes about art and architecture for *The Dallas Times Herald*.

The Unknown Museum

by Philip Garner

Photos by Phil Garner



Exterior, Unknown Museum.



Vehicular Sculpture Garden

The Unknown Museum has no snack bar, checkroom, lavatories, bookstore, wings, additions or annexes. It doesn't even have a security guard unless you consider the Pet Peeve, a soggy stuffed animal (a raccoon?) which peers out from an old doghouse situated next to the museum's entrance. In actuality, the "entrance" is defunct, an unusual condition as museums go, and the contents of the Unknown Museum must be viewed through several picture windows. Only "curators" may physically access the interior. However, as all the collections are housed in a single large gallery, this restriction upon regular visitors in no way hampers their fullest scrutiny of the works; it has actually been found to enhance the aesthetic experience of astute and perceptive onlookers. For one thing, the work may be viewed in its purest state; that is, without being violated by animate foreign bodies. Also, the removed vantage point enables one to enjoy the multiplicity of artistic statements and their respective interactive energies free from the "proximity prejudice factor" which causes one to place undue emphasis on the immediate and the tangible. And from a curatorial standpoint, display objectives can be met with a minimum of compromise since the safety and convenience of spectators within the exhibit area need not be taken into fullest account.

Being kept at bay windows renders tactile sensations an impossibility for visitors, but again, this is no deterrent to aesthetic enjoyment. Many of the works and objects contained in the collection(s) are so graphically tactile that the visual experience could hardly be enhanced by full physical contact!

This is not to say that actually going inside the Unknown Museum is not a unique and highly individualized experience. As mentioned earlier, this privilege is reserved for those whose involvement with the arts has led them to don the curatorial cap and lend their own creative sensibilities to the manipulation and recontexting of the museum's treasures. During the decade of dynamic and digressive development that this institution has enjoyed, a considerable number of visiting curators have made contributions. The selection of these curators and the responsibility of overall museum direction, including periodic revitalization of window displays and maintenance of the vehicular sculpture garden (adjacent to the building) is brilliantly disposed by the "curator in residence." He occupies an artistic laboratory on the premises which is separated from the gallery by a section of Christo's *Running Fence* (1976). Compared to the museum proper, the laboratory gives one the impression of stark simplicity except for an array of liquid-filled jars containing "specimens" such as Mr. Peanut, a coiled snake and other stuffed, plas-

The local residents regard the museum with affection, tolerance, spiritual reverence and of course, an awe of the unknown. Above all, it is a source of great amusement.

tic and/or rubber objects. The effect is whimsical but with a slightly sinister edge. Kitchcockian, as it were.

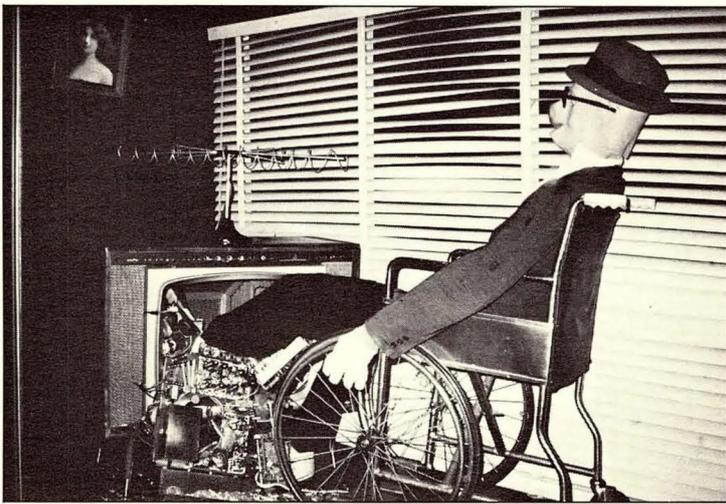
From the windows, as one studies the exhibits, fleeting glimpses of human activity are apt to punctuate the view. Certain observers have claimed, perhaps overcome by the museum's idyllic setting, that the curator must be pixilated. A sense of enchanted enigma which the place exudes does nothing to dispel the impression and even suggests that certain spirits may reside there, most notably those of Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray and Albert Einstein.

Where is the Unknown Museum? At the base of a mountain, surrounded by redwoods, on a winding side street of an affluent suburban community in northern California. With the inflated property values for which the area is well known, it is another enigma that the museum can continue to exist. It seems oddly protected, like the court fool of English history whose combination of eccentricity and prophetic wisdom brought a certain immunity. The local residents regard the museum with affection, tolerance, spiritual reverence and of course, an awe of the unknown. Above all, it is a source of great amusement.

A sense of deep history pervades the Unknown Museum, even though nothing in the collection is truly antique. The rapid deterioration of mass-produced materials suggests an accumulation of centuries rather than decades. To an extent, the museum is a mirror of the community in that most of the material was collected within a radius of a few miles. More importantly, the Unknown Museum is a great American institution. It houses fragments from the lives of several generations, with special emphasis on the mementos of childhood. It is a shrine to the phenomenon of mass-production, containing various collections: of the same thing, lunch boxes and hamster cages, for example. And through a concentration of imagery relating to recreation, entertainment, travel and family life, to say nothing of an interweaving of amused faces throughout all exhibits, a high-spirited optimism is strongly conveyed.

Philip Garner, artist/inventor, is the author of *The Better Living Catalogue* (Delilah Books, \$6.95), a collection of not-quite-believable consumer products. According to Mr. Garner, we are exactly at the midpoint of the Industrial Age — two hundred years down, two hundred to go — and the best is yet to come. *Philip Garner's Utopia*, (coming out soon) will include concepts of the Glass Bottom Bus, an Electric Thought Remover, Sense Humor cologne, and Kant Krash Kars.

Photo by Phil Garner



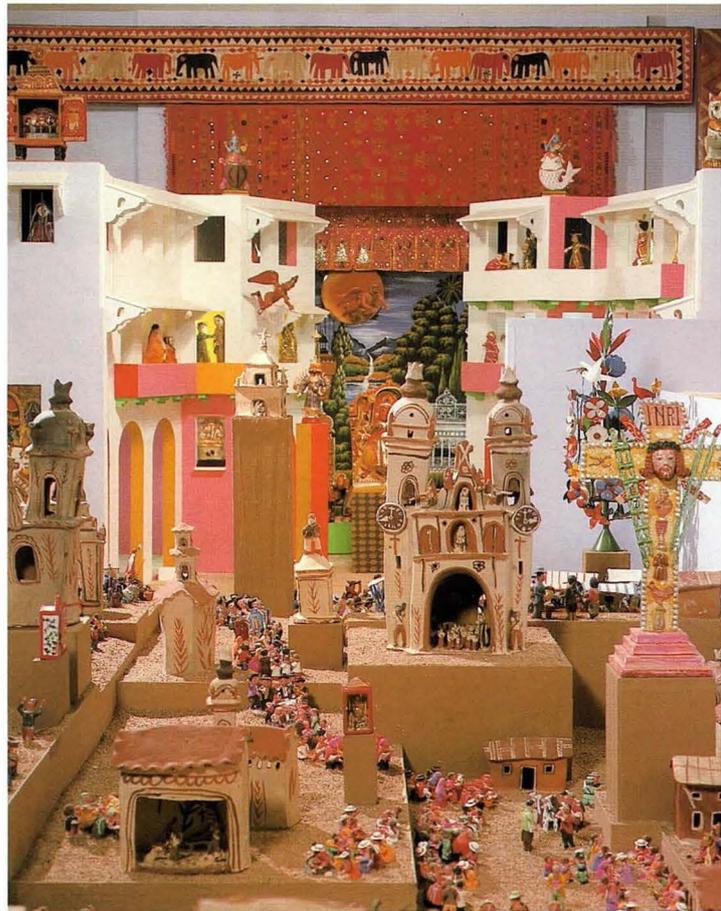
Window Display by M.D. McGowan, 1982.



Photo by M.D. McGowan

"Last Supper" window display by M.D. McGowan





The Girard Collection: More is More

by Kenneth Brecher

or the first-time visitor to New Mexico, “The Land of Enchantment” begins before the rented car’s license plate announces this state-held truth. How else could one explain the American sikh families in the airport adorned with expensive cowboy boots, down vests, and turbans? Or the fine carved wood doors of the airport rest rooms or the Georgia O’Keefe-red rubber railing on the escalator juxtaposed with its beige-pink adobe-hued metal sides? Is there a collective palette for the citizenry and do they know the thrill it gives a city boy to make the drive from Albuquerque to Santa Fe, through 360 degrees of sky, and at the same moment notice both the hawks soaring above and a highway sign that warns “Speed Monitored by Aircraft?”

ow can the Girard Foundation Collection of the Museum of International Folk Art (opened to the public December, 1982) fully “enchant” the visitor who, two miles away in the plaza of Santa Fe, can see his first adobe laundromat, be asked by a waitress with no explanation whether he wants “green or red?” (chili), and converse with Indians from the neighboring pueblos who sit wrapped in blankets on the ground in front of the superb 1609 Palace of the Governors? That’s stiff competition even for a collection of what the museum describes as 106,000 “folk art items” whose inaugural exhibition (“Multiple Visions: A Common Bond”) presents close to 10,000 objects representing about one hundred countries.

ow to receive, catalogue, install, and describe what is said to be the largest private collection of folk art ever given to one institution has occupied the museum’s leadership since 1978. The legislature of the state of New Mexico accepted the Girard gift without any endowment and appropriated \$1,375,000 to construct a 27,300 square foot wing to house the collection. The Boston firm then known as Johnson, Hotvedt, DiNisco and Associates prepared a master plan for the museum and the Albuquerque firm of Harvey Hoshour, Ltd. was selected to design the expansion project. At this time Hoshour was best known as the architect of the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Learning Resources Center.

onstruction was completed in 1980 and Alexander Girard, then age 72, began the two and one half year preparation of the first installation, which, according to the negotiated terms of the gift, was to be designed solely by himself. The opening date for the Girard Collection was postponed more than once. Word filtered down to Santa Feans that all was not well up on the hill. Many of the accounts are apocryphal, but even the newspaper vendor in the hotel on the plaza has a tale of what went on: Sandro, as he is

All Photos by Marc Schwartz

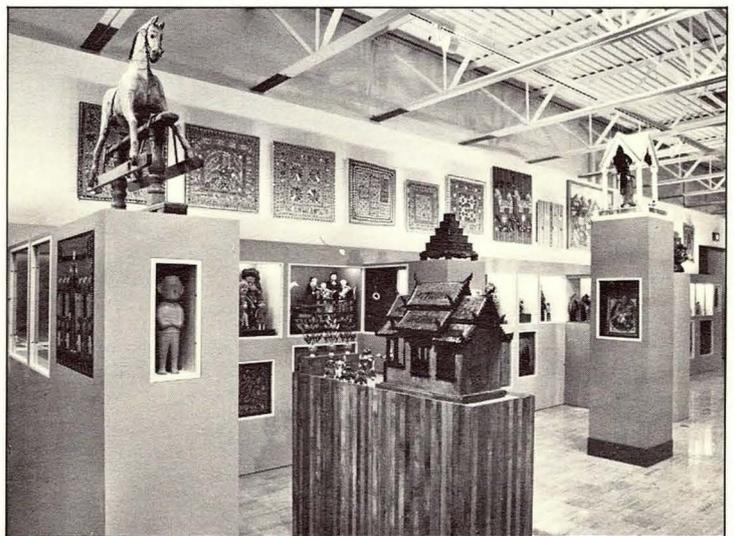




Photo by Marc Schwartz

known to his friends, worked on in his own way without drawings or models. "I'm making it up as I go along," Girard told reporter (*Albuquerque Journal North*, Jan. 21, 1981). "The objects, from a hundred countries, cost about \$2,000,000 to acquire but they are now worth three or four times that."

What did go on in the 75 x 140 foot central room of the gallery involved thousands of empty beer boxes and pieces of Styrofoam which were stacked to form what Girard prefers to call "sets" for his folk art. A loyal master carpenter from the museum stood by, waiting for that moment when he could begin constructing a replica of the same so that it resembled a Mexican market place or a 1890s black settlement in Louisiana or a 19th-century Christmas lunch.

The task was prodigious, the carpenter heroic, but the result of the exhibition of the vast Girard collection is as Henry James said in *Middlemarch*, "A treasure-house of detail but an indifferently whole." The first impressions upon entering the gallery provide a set of clues.

The ceiling is high with steel bar joists left exposed but painted with colors that suggest a faded fiesta. There is an overwhelming sense of *deja vu*, not surprising in what at first glance seems to be a warehouse of toys, but the memory hovers somewhere between Marshall Field's Christmas windows in Chicago and the first Mexican meal I ever had. It was in New York, neither then nor now to be recommended for Mexican cuisine, but the restaurant had just opened in the Time-Life Building and was much talked about. It was 1960, the restaurant was La Fonda Del Sol and its interior was designed by Alexander Girard.

Second impressions: Nothing is labeled. There is a guide that may be borrowed or bought but everything about the installation has been placed for visual effect. It is a maze of scenes, "sets," but with players, almost always figurative and usually repetitive, seen from in and out of perspective and scale. Some of the grander scenes such as "Pueblo Feast Day" contain hundreds of figures in an impressionistic re-creation of a Pueblo Indian ritual. The viewer should feel he is being given a privileged view of another world that has for years been forbidden to tourist cameras. What the viewer feels instead is an invasion of privacy because a sensitivity to the real meaning of the ritual is missing.

A cosmology has been ignored by the presence of out-of-scale Kachina figures that have been dropped into the scene almost as if the designer/collector could not resist showing off another

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boundaries. We learn how
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at, what to fear, how to
express our love and
how to bury our dead...**

aspect of his collection or leave a section of scaled mountain range uncovered. If, as the museum wishes, we are to refer to this collection as folk art, (not as the “Girard toy collection” as it was known for years) then certain pieces must be allowed their own, individual resonance. If we deny their patrimony then we deny our own, as well.

his is a collection wanting in humor and sexuality. Where are the tricksters and the irrespressible procreators who fill the mythologies of the cultures that have contributed their art? What of the chase and the conquest? Why does everything seem to be new or unused? One feels that the thousands of folk artists and craftsmen, whose exhibition this truly is, must have washed their hands before handing over or making the pieces requested by the collector. One yearns to chat with the fifty dedicated volunteers who for the past three years have toiled to catalogue over 100,000 pieces. They would know if it is indeed plausible that in fifty years of traveling and collecting it is possible to avoid acquiring one male figure whose joyous desire for life is visible to all the world.

t is the great gift of folk art that it crosses boundaries — male and female, sacred and profane, young and old — and allows each of us to recognize both our limitations and our needs. Each tribe and each society has a plan for its own survival. It need not be conscious, because it is present in that society’s myth and architecture and art. We learn how to live, what to laugh at, what to fear, how to express our love and how to bury our dead from a common iconography.

hat one senses in the Girard collection is restraint, some elegance, a touch of America’s “natural” aristocracy, and the collector’s passion for objects in quantity. Girard says as much himself in an interview with Curatorial Coordinator of the inaugural exhibition, Charlene Cerny, in the catalog of the show. “Making a collection, per se, never entered my mind until what seems to be the day before yesterday. It just happened ... we began to travel more frequently, mostly on business, and each new international assignment gave me the opportunity to buy ... for example, all of the Polish cut-outs in the exhibition here come from an exhibition to which I was taken ... there were about 200 cut-outs in the show and they were all so great that I bought the whole thing.”

his species of ravenous collector has hardly been seen since the British reached Egypt and realized that if they could get it crated, they could get it home. One can almost hear Walter Benjamin

(1892-1940) whose essay on collecting is the best I know (*Illuminations*, 1969) murmuring, “For inside him there are spirits, or at least little genii, which have seen to it that for a collector — and I mean a real collector, a collector as he ought to be — ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them.”

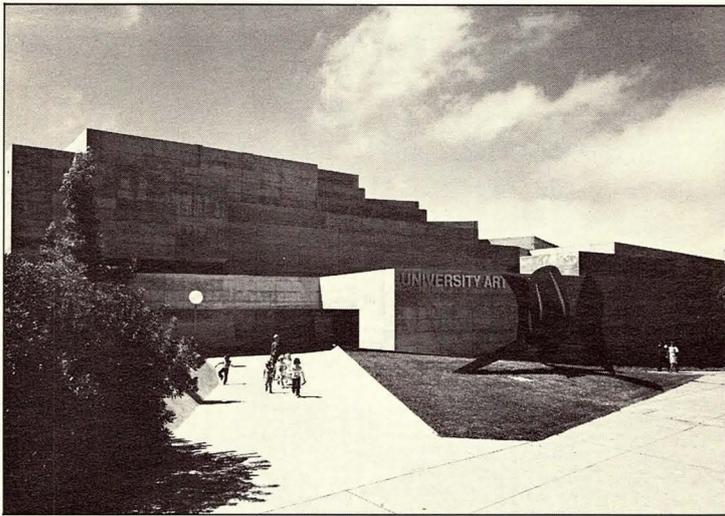
What one has in the Girard Collection’s first installation is true to the founding spirit. It is a collector’s personal and idiosyncratic statement. As much as the highly impressive and creative curatorial staff (see the superb gallery guide) might like to convince themselves that there are unifying themes, one suspects that it will be in future exhibitions that the collection’s value will be more apparent. Girard himself is the theme of this exhibition and in each “set” or context he has designed, the viewer feels the truth of Benjamin’s comment: “The most profound enchantment for the collector is the locking of individual items within a magic circle in which they are fixed as the final thrill, the thrill of acquisition, passes over them.”

KENNETH BRECHER, an anthropologist trained at Oxford University; is currently the acting Artistic Director of the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

Museums: Decision Making

by Cathy Curtis

Photo by Benjamin Blackwell



Berkeley University Museum
Mario Ciampi, Richard Jorasch,
Ronald E. Wagner

Berkeley University Museum,
during construction (1970)

There's a joke in the profession," says Henry Hopkins, director of the San Francisco Museum of Art. "The best way to lose your job is to build a new building." The process of creating a new museum — or adding substantially to an existing one — should ideally involve an exchange of ideas between the architect and the users of the building. But, as anyone who has been through the process knows, a museum can be the pawn in a series of battles involving the architect, board of trustees, director and staff. When the building is a public commission, with city departments demanding their say, another wrench gets thrown into already-complicated works.

The most notorious recent example of a museum threatened by the centripetal force of several factions is The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. Contemporary art collector Marcia Weisman suggested the idea of a modern art museum to Mayor Tom Bradley in 1978; at the same time lawyer Will A. Norris (now a federal Court of Appeals judge) also approached Bradley with the same thought in mind. Both Norris and Weisman served on the ten-member mayor's advisory committee, formed the following spring. Soon thereafter, the Community Redevelopment Agency, about to begin developing 11.2 acres in the Bunker Hill area, got into the act. The C.R.A. proposed that instead of having the project developer spend 10 percent of the total construction budget for works of art, the proposed museum could be entirely financed with 1.5 percent of the entire construction budget of over a billion dollars.

The MOCA arrangement, worked out by Norris during the course of a year's negotiations, established that the developer (later announced as Bunker Hill Associates, a consortium of Cadillac-Fairview, Shapell Government Housing and Gold Kest) would build a museum with a 100,000 square foot interior. The estimated \$16 million cost (in 1980 dollars) would come out of the developer's pocket. The endowment, to be raised by the museum's trustees, was to be at least \$10 million, the income of which was projected to generate a considerable amount of the projected \$2.2 million annual operating budget, with the rest coming from the usual combination of grants, admissions and other sources.

In addition to Norris and Weisman, the founding board included other contemporary art collectors: Eli Broad, a real estate and insurance executive who helped to organize downtown business support for the museum; Leon Banks, a pediatrician; a Robert Irwin; Robert Rowan, former president of the Pasadena Museum of Modern Art (which, when it became the No-

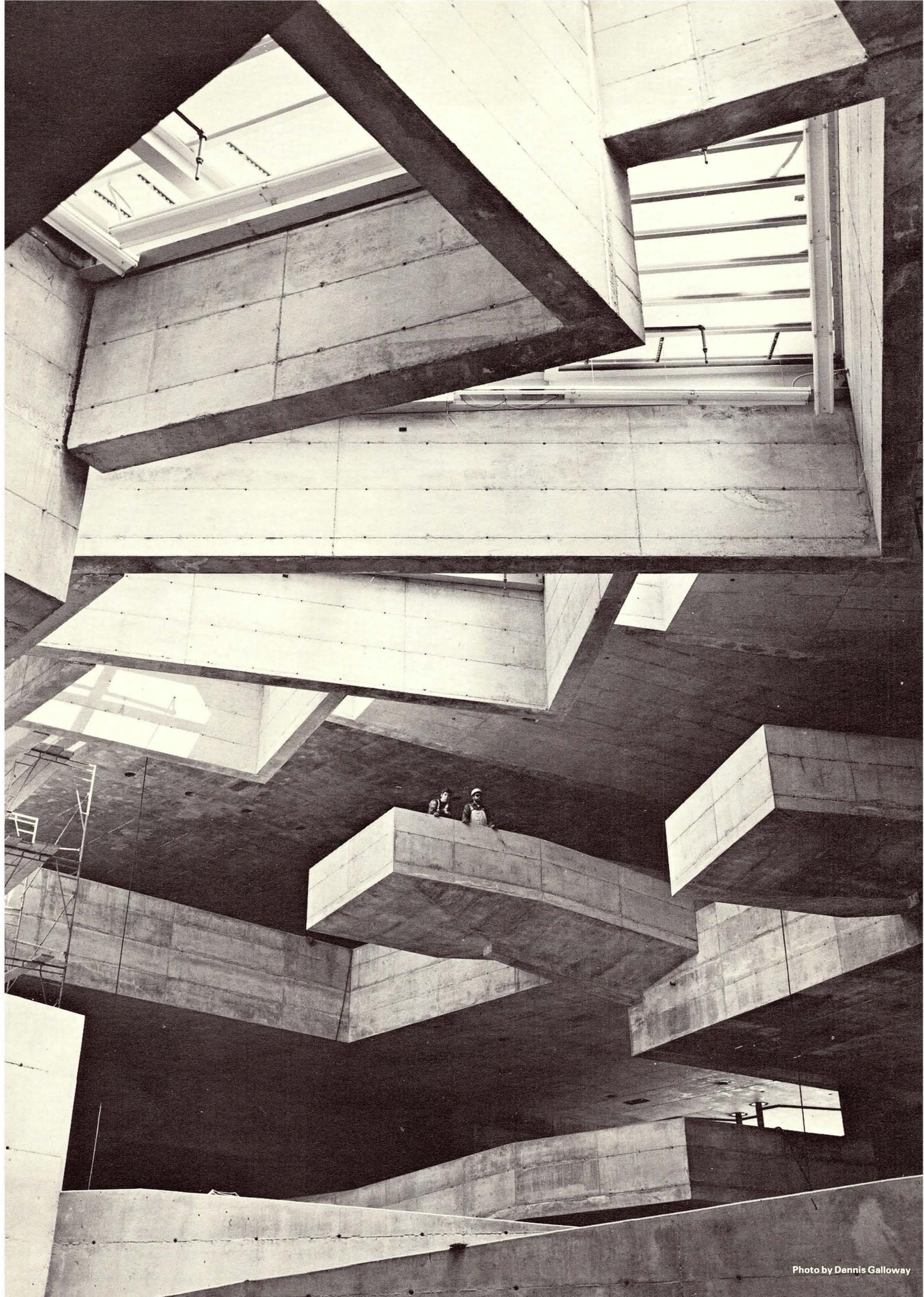
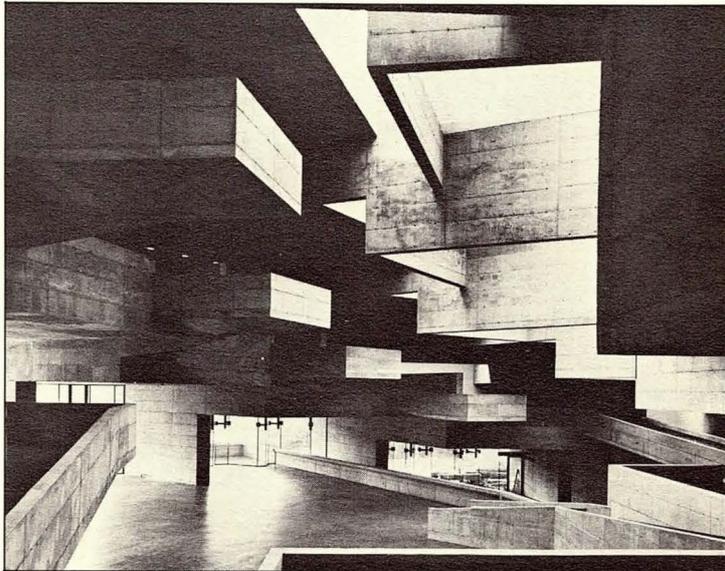


Photo by Dennis Galloway

“Having an architecture committee made up of talented, highly skilled individuals experienced in art and architecture was the beginning of the problem,” says Nicholas.

Simon Museum of Art, left contemporary art in Los Angeles without a home); and Max Palevsky, an industrialist and film producer. Robert Irwin was also a member of the artist’s advisory council, a vocal group anxious to ensure that the planned museum was really to be dedicated to *contemporary* art. The board’s search committee easily chose Pontus Hulten, director of the Centre Pompidou in Paris (the Beaubourg) as director and Richard Koshalek, formerly whiz-kid director of the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, New York, as deputy director and chief curator.



Berkeley Museum

When it came time to choose an architect, Bunker Hill Associates had already hemmed in the proposed building’s height limit and size, presenting a major design challenge. The architecture committee — Palevsky, Hulten, Irwin, artist Sam Francis and Coy Howard, a local architectural designer whom the artist advisory committee had used as a consultant — was looking for someone flexible enough to work with a committee, an architect with proven ability in solving tricky site problems, and a large non-stereotyped design vocabulary. Arata Isozaki, a Japanese architect who had never previously worked in the U.S. and had no office in this country, was chosen out of a short list that included James Stirling, Edward Larrabee Barnes, Frank Gehry, Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo, and Richard Meier.

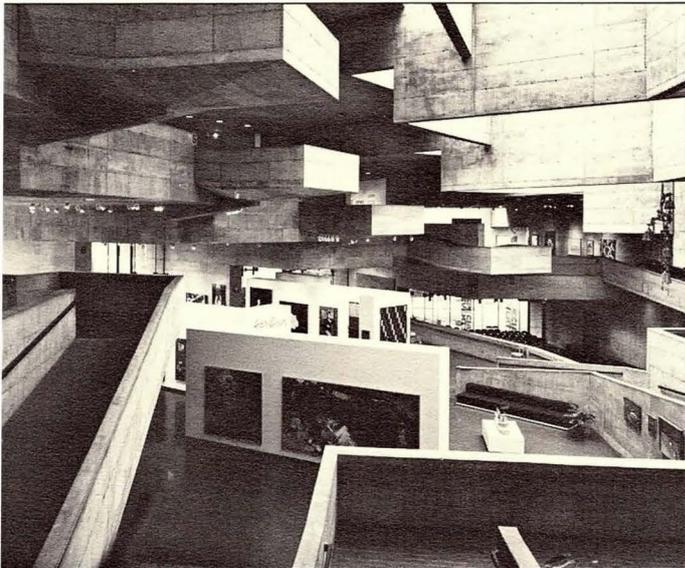
Over a year-and-a-half period, the committee and Arata Isozaki, project architect for the whole Bunker Hill development, worked with Isozaki to develop a final design. It didn’t take long for trouble to begin developing, too. Fred Nicholas, the private developer and lawyer who was entrusted with piecing up the pieces when the future of MOCA seemed gravely endangered, tells the story succinctly. “Having an architecture committee made up of talented, highly skilled individuals experienced in art and architecture was the beginning of the problem.” Isozaki was accustomed to brooking minimal interference from his clients in his prior museum and office building work. He hadn’t dealt with committees, and budgetary concerns were not of great importance to his work. “Anything he did was considered to be a work of art,” says Nicholas. There were a number of problems, according to Nicholas, with Isozaki’s imperfect mastery of English.

As Nicholas relates, “The first bit of conflict was that the artists wanted the interior design to be the optimum place for showing art — the light perfect, the walls unobstructed, a flow through the galleries. The architect had to blend his flair for the decorative with the interior simplicity the artists required.” Disputes

Trustees and staff took sides; even within the board, those who were not members of the executive committee felt somewhat estranged from the decision-making process.

arose as to which parts of the 336-foot long red sandstone building were intended to serve purely as design elements (Isozaki favored a “symbolic” trio of cube, pyramid and barrel vault in the exterior design) and which elements were primarily meant to serve the interior function of the building. At one point, Palevsky presented a statement to the effect that the architecture must be subordinate to the gallery spaces.

Photo by Colin McRae

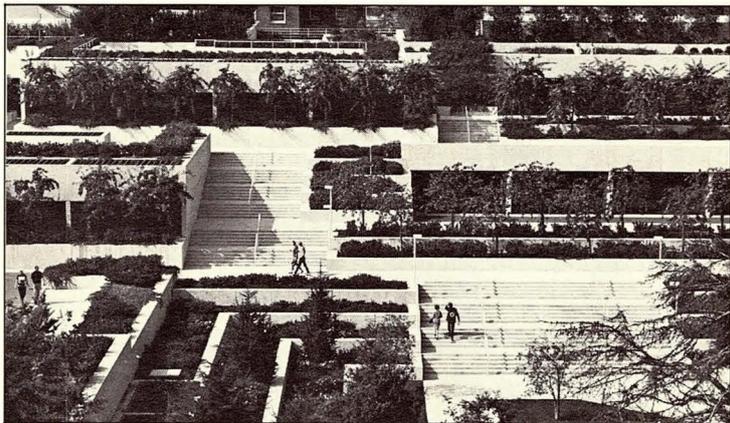


Berkeley Museum

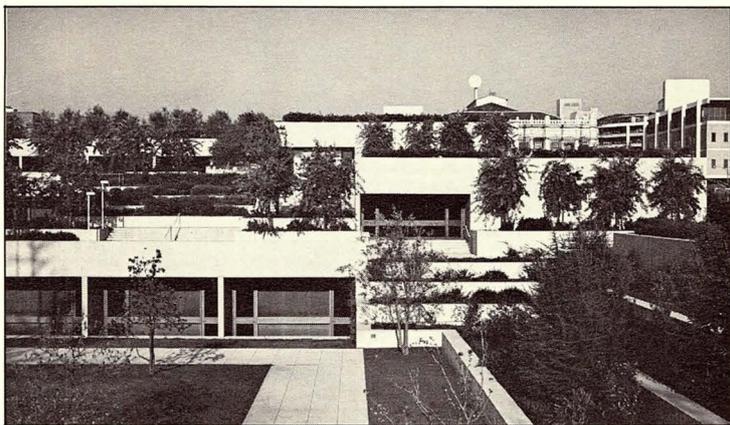
But who was the client in this project? The once definitive answer had become a moot point. Some felt it was Hulten; others thought it was the architecture committee. Meanwhile, the size and shape of the site changed several times during the design process. Certain members of the committee, led by Max Palevsky, charged that initial designs went over budget and failed to solve the site problems created by the developer’s insistence on a low profile that would not obscure the surrounding rental structures and condominiums. Shortly thereafter, a letter written by Palevsky seemed to indicate to Isozaki that he had somehow become only a consultant to the project. Trustees and staff took sides (the staff favoring Isozaki); and even within the board, those who were not members of the executive committee felt estranged from the decision-making process.

During the unveiling of the model last March, Isozaki admitted to preferring one of his earlier conceptions over the bland and warehouse-like version chosen by the architecture committee and which drew sharp criticism from the architecture press. When the trustee-architect disagreements became public knowledge, Isozaki felt his integrity was invaded, and, says Nicholas, “He threw down the gauntlet: ‘Get rid of me or the committee.’” Design development was left unfinished and the working drawings were postponed while the local and national architectural community rallied behind Isozaki’s predicament.

At this juncture, Nicholas was called in to “pull the pieces together.” In addition to design problems and the battle with the architecture committee, Isozaki was not being paid and he had no local office to take care of essential, albeit mundane, issues, such as easements and zoning problems. Since then, more responsibility has been placed in Isozaki’s hands. The official client was designated as the museum director, and Koshalek, who became museum director in March, with Hulten devoting increasingly more time to his new position of cultural and artistic activities director for the 1989 World’s Fair in Paris — a move that prompted some observers to wonder whether he was “bailing out.” The renamed building committee was given powers of recommendation only, subject to the final authority of the trustees.



Oakland Museum
Roche Dinkeloo and Assoc.



Oakland Museum

Of the old architecture committee, only Palevsky remains. Despite his often abrasive manner, Nicholas credits him with having “done more to create the [right] architectural climate than anyone else.” Construction is slated to begin this summer. The “Temporary Contemporary” a Frank Gehry renovation of a downtown warehouse, will open in October. Koshalek calls Nicholas a “shaman” for his peacemaking work. He stresses the amount of time necessary for a new museum to get off the ground — “at least five years to really start singing.” He has veiled words of reproof (based, most likely, on his brilliant but short-lived tenure at the Fort Worth Art Museum) for “trustees who hire and dismiss” without allowing the director to get used to the community. In line with virtually all the museum directors interviewed for this article, he noted that “each city is different with different people, ambitions, goals. It takes time to read the map — more than a few months, certainly.”

The kind of interior Koshalek dreams of at MOCA is (he quotes the title of a Hemingway short story), “a clean well-lit space.” A variety of spaces will be provided for man-made and natural lights within the museum. As a model, Koshalek looks to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art: “The light is so intense you feel you can chin on it.”

Nicholas speaks in more workmanlike terms about the choice of lighting scheme for MOCA. Isozaki had created an exterior with pyramids atop two main galleries — “very beautiful structure from the exterior, but they didn’t work well in the interior; there was not enough light.” The architect journeyed to Denmark’s Louisiana Museum to investigate the skylight there, and the Louisiana’s light designer came to Los Angeles to explain the workings of his plan. A representative of the West German firm that fabricated MOCA’s skylight also spoke to the committee. Models of all the galleries were built to allow a study of the fall light. Finally, information about the building was fed into a computer; combined with readings for different times of day and seasons of the year, the information yielded a chart indicating precisely how the candle power will vary over the course of a day. Isozaki in turn redid all the skylights to reflect the new data.

Other museums have been built with less dramatic confrontation yet an intrusive board of directors seems to be an almost inevitable part of the picture. Almost. Some directors have mainly had trouble with specific architectural aspects of their museums: the lighting method or the ceiling heights; others regret the non-inclusion of a pet architectural feature. Every facility — not just the “compromise” museums — requires a period of adjustment.

Some directors have mainly had trouble with specific architectural aspects of their museums; others regret the exclusion of a particular pet architectural feature.

James M. Brown III, first director of the Oakland (California) Museum, has some circumspect words to say about his dealings with the board of directors. “When anybody isn’t completely familiar with something, they tend to say ‘no’ rather than ‘yes.’” As Brown remarks, “There is a certain urgency to get things done,” and a tendency to bemoan “the time it takes others to understand the correctness of your position.” Lured from his previous post with the Corning Glass Center in New York because he had “fallen in love with the design” of the new museum, Brown arrived after Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo had completed the major part of their design work. The selection committee had been considering Eero Saarinen among the finalist candidates; when he died of a brain tumor, Roche and Dinkeloo asked to be interviewed anyway and thereby received their first independent commission. The park-like, three-tiered complex of art, history, and natural science galleries and gardens — a consolidation of three smaller existing museums — was built with the proceeds of a \$6 million bond issue.

Brown feels that, contrary to his experience, the director “should come on board with the architect, just from a practical point of view. There are things museum directors know and are aware of — such mundane things as electrical outlets for changing exhibits and access to toilet facilities.” The former director remembers sitting in the mayor’s office with the chairman of the museum commission. “We looked at the plan for the Great Hall,” Brown recalls. “Twelve thousand square feet and with only two electrical outlets for the night cleaners.” The curators of the individual departments of the museum did consult with Roche during the planning process, however. Paul Mills, the museum’s first curator of art (and subsequently director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art), designed the art exhibition area with the assistance of city architect John Papadakis. Mills remembers Roche as “the cool, controlled, intellectual end” and Dinkeloo as “a very feeling person, not only a kind of workhorse.” Realizing that the new museum couldn’t compete with major San Francisco institutions, Mills had decided to specialize in the history of California art. The design evolved “oddly,” with the major problem of making the linear development of California art fit the allotted space. At one point, says Mills, Roche and the museum commission “were not getting along very well. I wasn’t supposed to be talking to him, but he and I did, anyway. We were quite close and worked well together.” When a pair of ten-foot walls were designed with a doorway between them, Mills realized that pairs of pictures on either side of the doorway would be awkward for viewers. He suggested putting the corridor on the side of the gallery — creating a 20-foot wall with an

outside corridor. Roche agreed to this change, despite having to make adjustments “all the way through the building.” According to Mills, the architect’s attitude toward altering his plans was “sometimes cheerful, other times reluctant.”

The original design included skylights in the Art Special Gallery, but at some point in the design process the idea was dropped. Brown came to the museum when the final decision was being made and sided with Roche against the skylights. Brown says he was more concerned about a greater danger of rain leakage and preferred to have more control over the light as well. Although Mills realized there were also ventilation and heat build-up problems, he feels that “skylights would have actually transfigured the room — it would have had less the London subway effect.”

The Great Hall was a special pet project of the museum commissioners, who “backed the curators off in a corner,” according to Mills, actually telling them they were to avoid direct dealings with Roche. From the commissioners’ points of view, the space was potentially ideal for important civic events, an emphasis that resulted in “an unlikely combination of heights for an exhibition gallery,” says Mills. “If I had had more to say, I would have said, for heaven’s sakes, make the spaces bigger, the ceilings higher and move the walls out to where the [supporting] columns are. Roche hadn’t done much work with exhibitions. If anyone in a position to know could have spoken with him ...”

Of the building as a whole, however, Mills says, “It took a lot of adapting on the curators’ part, but a great building was making that effort worthwhile. Peter Selz, the founding director of the University Art Museum at the University of California, Berkeley, also has high praise for his former domain. As advisor to the final jury that selected the design by Mario Ciampi and associates Richard Jorasch and Ronald E. Wagner out of 366 entrants, Selz was “really delighted when they picked the one I liked best. It was the most innovative, dynamic, likeable, inventive — it had a real presence. Most proposals looked quite uninteresting — too much of the International Style, Philip Johnson type of thing.”

The reinforced concrete structure of five fanned levels proved a challenge to Selz and his staff: “It took a long time to learn how to use it.” But the dramatic size of the building, the way the ramp effect still allows for the respite of separate galleries, and even “the feel of the wall” made Selz very enthusiastic. He remarks on “that Baroque quality of surprise” that greets visitors at the door. “When they first walked in, people gasped at that space!”

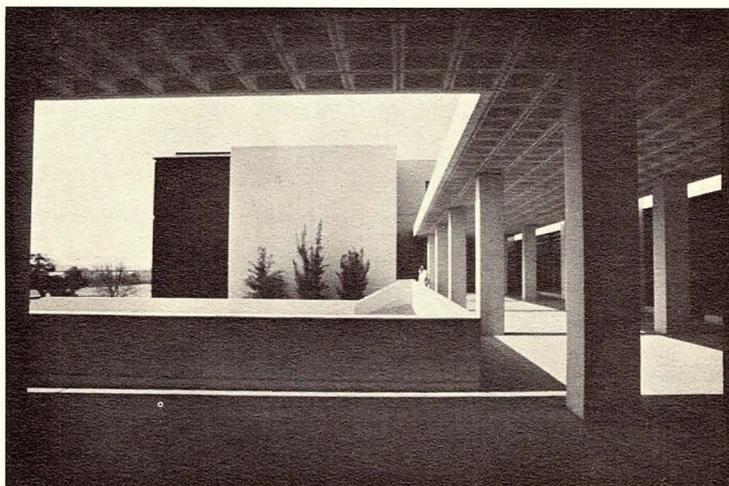
On the ubiquitous issue of light: “An essential aspect of this building. Pictures should look different on a bright day from the way they look on a dark or gloomy day.”

Not that there weren't problems. The rain leakage has long been a source of worry within the galleries. Selz claims he was aware of the potential problem (“I was building a house at the time. I said, ‘Let’s wait for a winter of rain till we accept.’”), yet he was unable to stall the process. The official (and eager) clients were the architectural engineers within the campus Facilities Management office. On the ubiquitous issue of light, Selz and Ciampi were united. “It was the first museum in 20, 25 years that let in daylight,” claims Selz. “We put up a big mock-up of almost the whole bay to study the light for three months. Light is an essential aspect of this building. Pictures should look different on a bright day from the way they look on a gloomy day.” Light in staff offices was another matter. “Jorasch and Ciampi felt that windows would interfere with their design. The architectural engineers had the final say and went along with Ciampi. It would have meant the redesign of the model.”

The other major thing we lost on,” says Selz, “is that the sculptor garden was supposed to have been designed by Noguchi. He was turned down by Ciampi — too expensive. This was after Noguchi had done Chase Manhattan and Yale. The [UAM] garden would have been even more beautiful.”

Caution tends to be the by-word when the revamping of an existing museum is at issue. When Henry Hopkins first came to the Fort Worth Art Museum in 1968, the Herbert Bay designed building had a pegboard interior (“Someone felt in the 1950s it was an interesting thing to do,” comments Hopkins drily) and cork floors. Having inherited a collection of American art “essentially Western in orientation,” at a time when there was no major art museum “competition” in the area, Hopkins and his board decided to create a “general art museum” that would include contemporary works, which was mighty hard to do with that pegboard. (“One of the first objects I bought — a Frank Stella with blue benday dots — diffused into eternity when put up on those pegboard dots.”) Out of a \$300,000 budget, Hopkins was able to save enough to redo the walls with three-quarter inch plywood covered with painter’s canvas and painted. The board was “essentially in agreement” with the move toward museum professionalism. Over a two year period “step-by-step,” they acceded to a number of other direly needed changes.

But after four years of extensive growth, the collection needed more space. With a \$1 million donation from local foundation, Hopkins investigated the possibilities. Kevin Roche was not interested in such a small project, but a Texas architect, O’Neil Ford



**Fort Worth Art Museum;
O’Neil Ford**

“A majority of the trustees were immersed in earlier art — up to post-impressionism — and kept cutting down time and space available for modern and contemporary shows.”

Edwin D. McMane Museum of Fine Arts

Architect: Edward Larrabee Barnes, New York

Site: 8.9 acres in new “Arts District” at northern edge of downtown Dallas

Completion date: Late 1983

Construction budget: \$29.6 million

Total floor space: 195,000 sq. ft.

Gallery space: 55,200 sq. ft.

Net public space (excluding circulation): 25,200 sq. ft.

Range of gallery sizes: 988 to 8,000 sq. ft.

Gallery ceiling heights: 12 to 40 ft.

Special features: 1.2 acre sculpture garden, 360 seat auditorium, 50,000 volume library

Harold W. Miller Gallery Wing, LACMA

Architect: Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, New York

Site: Approx. 1 acre of 6 acre site in southwest corner of Hancock Park, Los Angeles

Completion date: September 1985

Construction budget: \$15.3 million

Total floor space: 100,000 sq. ft.

Gallery space: 44,000 sq. ft.

Net public space (excluding circulation): 3,600 sq. ft.

Range of gallery sizes: 800 to 8,000 sq. ft.

Gallery ceiling heights: 16½ to 18 ft.

Special features: 8,000 sq. ft. sculpture terrace, new entry passage to present building complex

Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art

Architect: Arata Isozaki, Tokyo

Site: 0.9 acres within Bunker Hill redevelopment project, downtown Los Angeles

Completion date: Early 1986

Construction budget: Approx. \$22 million

Total floor space: 98,000 sq. ft.

Gallery space: 42,000 sq. ft.

Net public space (excluding circulation): 9,500 sq. ft.

Range of gallery sizes: 1,100 to 7,300 sq. ft.

Gallery ceiling heights: 10 to 45 ft.

Special features: Outdoor sculpture court, 240 seat auditorium

Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art

Architect: Frank Gehry, Los Angeles

Site: Two warehouses in Little Tokyo district adjoining Los Angeles civic center.

Completion date: October 1983

Construction budget: Approx. \$1.2 million

Total floor space: 50,000 sq. ft.

Gallery space: 39,000 sq. ft.

Net public space (excluding circulation): not yet determined

Range of gallery sizes: Up to 22,000 sq. ft.

Gallery ceiling heights: 26 to 37 ft.

Special features: 80 by 345 ft. screen canopy over adjoining street

Ford, was able to create new galleries, a new office building and increased storage space for a total of \$1.3 million. Hopkins credits his board with great understanding and trust during this period. “Texans were then happy to listen to professional advice,” he says. “The key thing in Fort Worth was the combination of people involved in all three museums [the Amon Carter and Kimbell museums were also taking shape at the time] with three people [the directors] telling them what to do.”

Hopkins recalls only two major points on which the board’s decision resulted in a less-than-satisfactory architectural result. One was the covered entryway for rainy days, a lavish facade that drank up dollars. (“A lot of money went into that thing to make people dry,” remarks Hopkins.) Another sore spot was the corner window, which extends from the gallery space to the board room on the top floor. It was a question of grandeur as opposed to practicality, limiting available hanging space and allowing excessive light into the galleries.

Hopkins was Director of the Los Angeles County Museum during the time of its transition from the original Exposition Park building to the current William Pereira structure on Wilshire Boulevard, a building one critic has called, “the first tract house museum in the United States.” Throughout the design process, “the trustees were involved clear down to selecting the salt-cellars for the cafe,” Hopkins says. Some of the design problems were conveniently blamed on former director Rick Brown, forced out (he went to the Kimbell Museum) during the planning process. Hopkins says of the “old” L.A. County board that it “almost seemed to be against contemporary art in general. A majority of the trustees were immersed in earlier art — up to post-impressionism — and kept cutting down time and space available for [contemporary] exhibitions.”

Currently, the museum is changing its profile with the addition of the four-floor, 100,000 square foot Robert O. Anderson Gallery of Modern Art, intended to house the museum’s modern art collection and provide space for special contemporary art exhibitions. The Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates design creates a 300-foot long, 100-foot high wall along Wilshire Boulevard. The stone, terra-cotta and glass block facade will be longer than the new gallery itself, with a huge door leading to a stairway and then to the central plaza area, which (in later phases of the project) will be roofed over to form a court.

Earl A. Powell III, the present L.A. County Museum Director, is very pleased at the museum’s working arrangements with the

“... we’ve tried at the architect’s request not to impose something on an unsuspecting staff... one of the reasons we chose the firm is that no one is left out of the process.”

architects. “I think we stayed away from the urge to develop a program,” he says. “Very rarely did someone say, ‘Move this wall here.’ At the same time, we’ve tried at the architect’s request not to impose something on an unsuspecting staff.... One of the reasons we chose the firm is that no one is left out of the process.” Maurice Tuchman, Senior Curator of modern and contemporary art, has been working with the architects to plan the interior spaces of the new gallery. At pains to identify [appropriate] spaces in other museums, he singles out “a central gallery on the second floor” of the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. and “certain spaces at the Whitney” as being helpful prototypes “as we try to find a lingo.” The areas meant to display pre-1945 art will be “more domestic,” Tuchman says. “The art tends to be smaller, enframed, and the galleries won’t rotate much.” To help the architectural team visualize the appropriate type of space for post-1945 art, Tuchman and Norman Pfeiffer visited over a dozen artists’ studios in Southern California. “Norman was very affected by the space of Ace Gallery in Venice,” says Tuchman. “That space derives from the studio space of Robert Irwin. We’ve been on that track since Norman’s first visit out here. California studio space doesn’t look like Chicago art space or New York art space.” The “light problem” will probably be resolved with light louvers which will provide diffused natural light or (in the closed position) permit the use of man-made light sources when appropriate.

Director Powell suggests that “one virtue of a nonprofit building is the gestation process that requires a certain amount of reflection.... We have a building that’s a generation old. We know what the problems are.... they are mostly caused by growth.” The present museum board has welcomed the design solutions proposed by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer; Powell feels that the board’s ease in dealing with the planning process is due in part to the fact that most members “have been involved with buildings of one kind or another.” His only admitted regret about the design process is the continued lack of a parking facility for museum patrons.

Harmony also reigned in Houston, where Lefty Adler, former Director of the La Jolla Museum, had the good fortune of working extensively with the architect, Gunnar Birkerts. “The architect and I were the two sole people putting the building together,” he says. “You get into trouble when too many people try to put together a museum.” One of the few aspects of the building Adler would have done differently is the facade. The trustees “preferred a slick, stainless steel facade; that ate up money for the building. And the interior skin — I was terribly dis-

appointed with that skin. It was constantly puckering, bucking out, and it cost a lot of money. My idea was to have the skin lined with wood that would just be whitewashed.”

Slickness was the opposite of what Adler was aiming for in what he envisioned as a *Kunsthalle*-style building for contemporary art, where “anything could be done in it, and it wasn’t precious, wasn’t sacred.” He wanted a warehouse design with concrete floors “so we wouldn’t have to worry about the artist ruining the precious floor.” One of Adler’s pet design projects, the subject of “the only disagreement the board and I had,” was a ceiling with pulleys. “It could come down or go up in sections as the artist wanted it.” But Adler has nothing but praise for Birkerts’ entrance, which consists of a narrow doorway (“instead of a passive pylon gate, a very mysterious slit”) that opens out into a large space. “I didn’t want the mass of an overpowering facade,” says Adler. “It would intimidate children who didn’t come from the families used to going to museums.”

At La Jolla, Adler again basked in “the privilege of trust by trustees.” There, a redesigned space was required to accommodate the current needs of the museum. “One wing was set up like a school,” recalls Adler. “When I arrived, it had four big studios. There wasn’t that much of a need for that space... and when you figure how much real estate costs, we were losing money. At all, a museum is a business!” Robert Moser designed a series of spaces that “keep changing, light-wise, size-wise. It’s not a big, huge gallery with blue chip art. I have always liked to think of the space in terms of people.”

Remarking on the differences between the Houston and La Jolla museums, Adler is philosophical. “I was 37 at Houston; I’m 70 today, it’s a different place. Every city is different — the climate, the people, the needs. Otherwise, all sculpture should be the same: sculpture for human activity. A building is not just to glitter and glow. It’s got to be designed to accommodate the needs of the artists and produced so as not to be overpowering to the people coming in.” Adler’s dismissal from the directorship of the La Jolla museum was announced in early April. The official explanation for this action was vague, but is rumored to focus on personality differences between Adler and the museum trustees.

CATHY CURTIS writes frequently on the arts in the Bay Area. She is the author, with the architecture/urban design firm, CITYWORKS, of *Building for the Arts: Strategies for Planning, Design and Implementation*, a project of the Western States Arts Foundation with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

BY MICHAEL WEBB

R E S T A U R A N T S
A S T H E A T E R

The five restaurants illustrated here range widely in style and cost, but each — a neon-jeweled cave, witty pastiches of Italian gelateria, an inventive combination of industrial materials within a landmark building — serves as a stage set in which the customers star.



The *trompe l'oeil* arches, the central serving counter, and a partial view of the titled "Figaro."



One of the black marble obelisks in the rear setting area, set against one of the mirrored walls.

O A K L A N D

F I G A R O

Using simple materials, Ace Architects turned a neighborhood store into an idealized Italian piazza. Figaro could be the 80s equivalent of the traditional soda fountain gelati and espresso replacing milk shakes and root beer. Owners Ronald Dion and John Markley wanted a low-cost spectacular. Ace gave them a *trompe l'oeil* set of mirror-panelled walls, Palladian arcades supported by galvanized columns a checked tile floor that spells out FIGARO and marbalized obelisks, inscribed in Latin with the building's credits. Red, green and white underline the Italian theme.

ACE ARCHITECTS

PACIFIC WINE BAR

This restaurant and wine bar fulfills not only the owner's desire for a sophisticated yet economical interior, but respects the City of San Diego's concern for the historic Gas Lamp Quarter as well as the architect's interest in social and perceptual choreography. A brushed aluminum storefront grid is imploded behind the carefully preserved facade fos-



The restored facade of the restaurant provides a physical as well as historical perspective for the observer.



The glass block bar is gently illuminated from behind in the back room of San Diego's Pacific Wine Bar.

tering a sense of volume and invitation; three small tables animate this transitional space and inform the street. A collage of forms and colors serves to break up the long narrow spaces and create varying levels of movement and intimacy. A black rubber-covered staircase with a canted mirror to its side foils both physical and visual bottlenecks, providing escape to a more sedate basement and wine cellar. Stylistically, the interior alludes to the colorful 100-year history of the building itself. Mission Revival and art deco shapes from the 20s and 30s, colors from the 50s and high tech elements are kept deliberately vague in this workable mix.

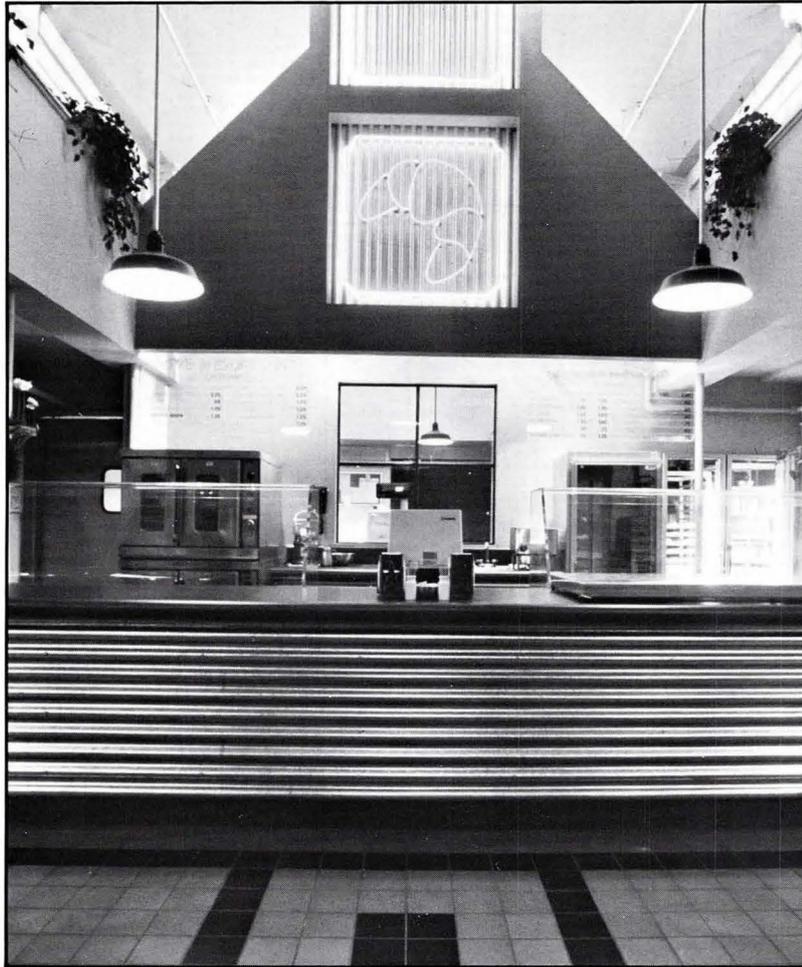
— Terry Bissell

ROB WELLINGTON QUIGLEY, AIA

ARCHITECT

VIVE LE CROISSANT

Architect George Dedekian reconciled three design constraints in this attractive downtown lunch counter/carry-out. A National Historic Landmark, the 20-foot-high storefront is divided into bays by handsome plaster pilasters. But the previous tenant had cut into this space with a mezzanine and sprinkler system that would have been too



A view from behind the service counter at Vive Le Croissant, Oakland, shows the clear delineation of spaces.



Simple and direct lighting, details, and decoration allow for a human, yet sophisticated atmosphere.

expensive to remove. And the owners, Garson Foos and Richard Weinstein, wanted a high-tech interior. Dedekian combined the classic, ad hoc and contemporary, taking his inspiration from the marquee of the neighboring theater, and the angular facades of nearby buildings. He accentuated the space by installing a neon canopy that spans the solid mezzanine railings drawing the eye up to the ornate plaster capitals, and demarcating the service area from the food preparation space behind. Corrugated metal reflects the light from behind the marquee, and fronts the counter and cabinets. Walls and quarry-tile floors are in three shades of grey — a foil for the colorful neon and chrome bar stools.

GEORGE DEDEKIAN

ARCHITECT

V E R D I

Bernard and Sheila Segal acquired a landmark building on Wilshire Boulevard, and commissioned Morphosis to remodel the interior as a restaurant and showcase for opera. The Segals wanted a contemporary look for their restaurant — an understated setting for the professional singers and musicians who would perform selections from classic



The performance area at Verdi, seen from the upper-level dining room, with the bar over on the right.



The subdued quality of the restaurant allows the music to regulate the overall mood of the space.

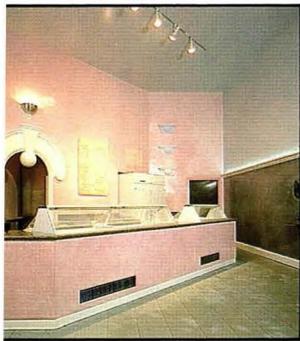
operas. Morphosis' created a sense of place, of hierarchy, and a subtle definition of spaces. They excavated part of the floor three feet for the sunken main dining room. The stage is at the far end; a half-enclosed dining area to the left of the entrance functions as a gallery. Artist David Shore to create murals of scenes from Verdi operas. To the right is the bar, and between runs an axial hallway, with a segmented vault. A sense of intimacy and an elegant articulation of space are achieved by this shift of levels, and by surface mouldings whose angularity is softened by concealed lighting. The architects stripped the exterior and painted it dark red — a dramatic paraphrase of a classical opera house.

MORPHOSIS

ARCHITECTS

GELATI PER TUTTI

Gelati per Tutti, another high-style Italian ice cream parlor, is housed in a bijou Spanish corner store on Melrose Avenue. Owner Darlene Welch designed the space in collaboration with architect Dan Friedlander. The decor is a witty pastiche of a Roman gelateria that, like Figaro, makes inventive use of a small space and low-cost materials. A new



The rhythm of the pink and grey planes at Gelati per Tutti creates a dramatic and stark front area.



The intricately illuminated initials of the signage contrast with the simple, uncomplicated interior space.

wall was constructed across the inner corner to match and parallel the angled entrance and thus create a hexagonal plan. Walls were frescoed in pink and light and dark grey, then sealed with many coats of resin to achieve a polished marble-like gloss. Fragments of lettered tablets, capitals and mouldings were applied to dramatize the smooth expanses of the walls. The serving counter is covered with dark grey granite, and its massiveness is echoed by the grey slab door in the corner that leads to the kitchen. During the day, lofty window arches allow sun to flood the interior with natural light; at night, illuminated by icy fluorescent lighting, the interior glows like a fish tank.

DARLENE WELCH & DAN FRIEDLANDER

DESIGNERS

Rondine

Hanging fixture with shade in white and purple mottled glass. Diameter 22 inches. 150-watt incandescent lamp. Semidirect light.

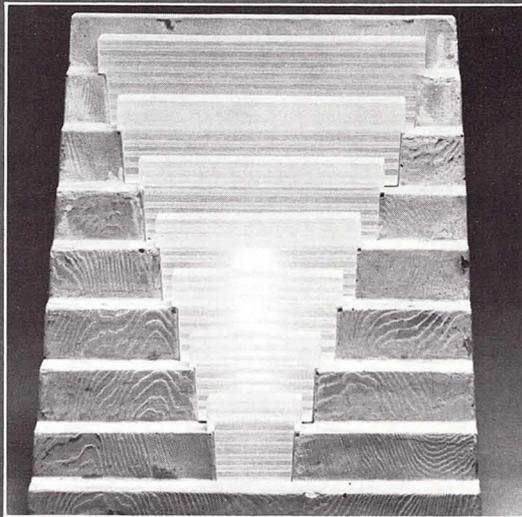
Manufacturer: Barbini
Distributor: Lighting Associates, Inc.

200 model

Hanging fixture with shade shown in white-painted, perforated steel. Also available in beige, black, grey, and red. Diameter 24 inches. 60/100-watt incandescent lamp with frosted bulb. Semidirect light.

Designer: Ron Rezek
Manufacturer: Ron Rezek Lighting + Furniture

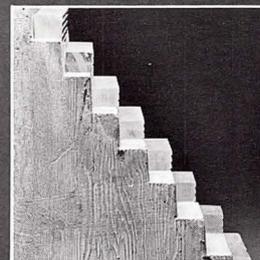
A M I



Piramide Step

Table fixture with body in grey concrete and diffuser in scored plastic blocks. Height 12³/₄ inches, width 12 inches, depth 10³/₄ inches. 60-watt incandescent lamp. Diffuse light.

Designer:
Faramarz Azizi
Manufacturer:
Azizi Enterprises



BY BRUNO GIBERTI

NT LIGHTING

Egina Suspension

Hanging fixture shown with diffuser in sanded glass and support in black-painted metal and black plastic. Diffuser also available in clear glass. Height adjustable to 84½ inches, diameter shown 15". Diameter also available as 11 inches. 100-watt incandescent lamp. Semidirect light.

Designer:
Angelo Mangiarotti
Distributor: Artemide

In the worst case of open office design, the notion of ambient lighting brings to mind a dull picture of identical luminaires, row after row, receding into the naturally lighted distance like an exercise in forced perspective.

However, there are a number of palatable, portable fixtures appropriate for the home and private office and because these provide general area light instead of local, task illumination, they qualify as ambient lighting. These fixtures produce background light, but they are not background objects: They do not slip inconspicuously into any setting, but have strong designs which demand attention and appreciation; they are architectural as opposed to functional fixtures. The implications of this distinction are curious, but let's assume the reference is to their sculptural qualities.

For reasons of simplicity, economy, and good color rendition, architectural fixtures traditionally use incandescent lamps, and the majority of the fixtures presented here use a common, household-type incandescent bulb. A small minority point to a modest revolution in lighting by using a variation on this, the quartz-halogen.

Three fixtures are not brand new but are included because they are available and worth noting as classics. These objects present a capsule history of high industrial design and in their pure concepts are an invigorating contrast to the stuffy group of found objects now classified as "high tech."

The Pap Stehlampe of 1923 was designed by Gyula Pap, a Hungarian student at the Bauhaus, especially for the recently invented silver-tipped bulb. This standing fixture is emblematic of Bauhaus intentions in its straight-forward solution to the illumination problem, elegant materials and nearly divine proportions. It has never been produced in quantity, but is now being manufactured according to original specifications.

The quality of the standing Toio lamp, designed in 1965 by Italian designers A. and P.G. Castiglioni, is acknowledged by its inclusion in the Design Collection of the Museum of Modern Art. This witty fixture incorporates an automobile headlight and the stem of a fishing rod for a convincing exercise in the appropriation of found objects. The *serenissima* 200 model by Ron Rezek is surely one of the most elegant hanging fixtures on the market. Its beautiful, perforated steel shade throws soft upright to the ceiling while permitting a tantalizing view of the naked white bowl bulb.

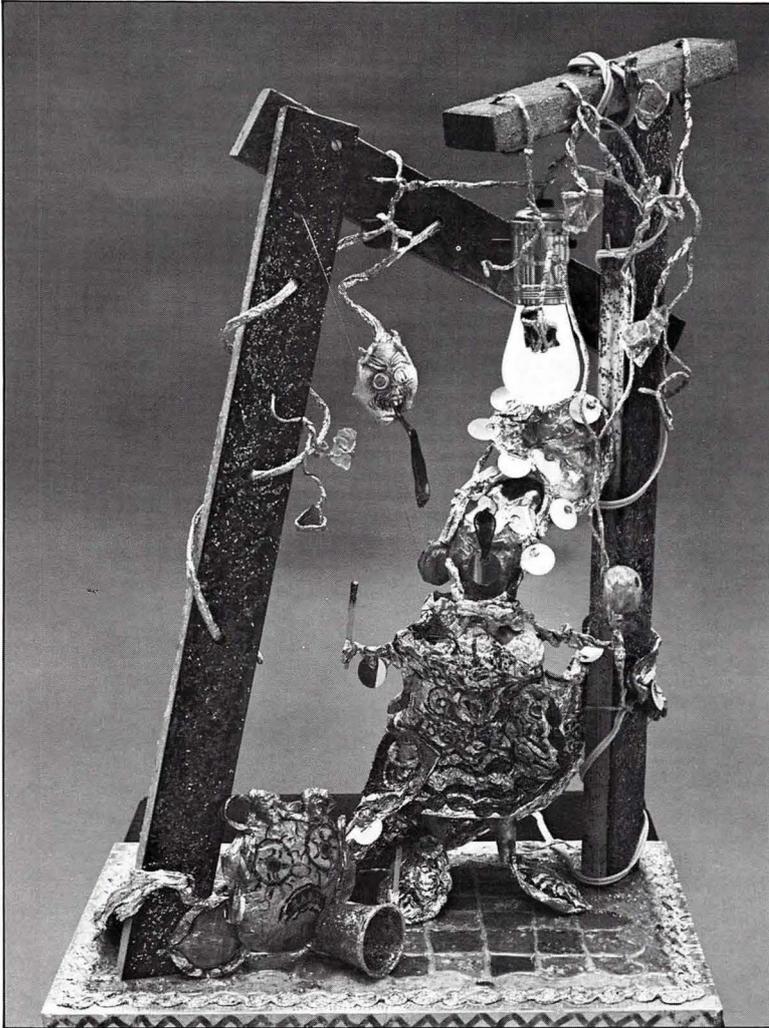
A spot check of available colors for both the Toio and 200 fixtures will show the effect of a revolutionary wash that dates from the influential Paris and Los Angeles retrospectives of Constructivism in 1979 and 1980. Although their geneology is more German than Russian, western

AMBIENT LIGHTING

Daytime Nightlight

Table fixture in wood, cellophane, foil, paint and glitter. Height 23 inches, width 15 inches and depth 10 inches. 11-watt incandescent lamp with frosted bulb. Diffuse light.

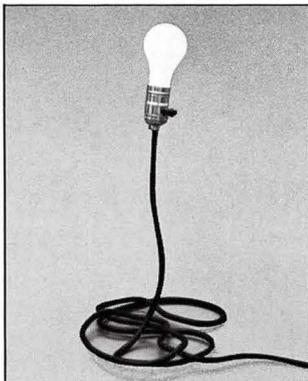
Artist: Lanigan Schmidt
Holly Solomon Gallery
The Functional Art Store



One of an untitled series

Floor fixture with black iron base. Height varies. 40-watt incandescent lamp. Diffuse light.

Artist: Philip Garner
Functional Art Store



industrial designers seem to have decided that the sky is red, white, and black. In a more highly styled vein, the form of the black Arcoballena incorporates a hammer and sickle, and the black base of the Jalest fixture is supported by shades in primary shapes and colors which give it all the image of a Suprematist sailboat.

In the field of ambient lighting the most vigorous steps forward are being taken in the category of standing fixtures. The design of these intrinsically monumental objects is fueled philosophically by a revived interest in the architecture of rooms, but it is also receiving a technological boost from the introduction of the quartz halogen lamp into non-institutional settings.

Like the common household bulb, the quartz-halogen lamp is incandescent, which means that it is comprised of a sealed, glass envelope containing various gases as well as a tungsten filament which is heated to produce light. This incandescent filament is evaporating like water, and the "boil-off" can cause the inside of the bulb to darken and the filament to deteriorate and eventually fail.

Unlike the common glass bulb, the quartz-glass envelope contains halogen vapors, like iodine, which chemically oppose the evaporation of the filament. The result is a lamp that burns brighter for a period about double the normal life of an equivalent incandescent.

The more interesting of the new standing fixtures have designers who are working with what can only be called a iconographic approach. They use traditional materials with exotic finishes, and they combine pure forms in a sentence-building fashion as an attempt to release the meaning inherent in these forms. The process is illustrated by Ettore Sottsass's Callimaco and by Rezek's Iris. From these abstract monuments it is only a short figurative leap to the more literal architectures of the Egina Suspension by Angelo Mangiarotti and the Piramide Step by Faramarz Azizi.

In the no-man's-land between design and art there are a group of fixtures by artists. These include an untitled lamp by Philip Garner, one of a series of sly remarks about middle-middle sensibilities, as well as Daytime Nightlight by Lanigan Schmidt, a wild concoction of candy wrappers which ambiguously combines Biblical imagery with the sci-fi implications of its subtitle: "The Man From Mars Confronts Greed and Envy."

Such hybrids are becoming increasingly attractive to artists, maybe because the constraints of designing a usable object are such a relief from the choices of abstraction. In all truth, these pieces of "functional art" are only marginally functional, but like the preceding standing fixtures, they are an attempt to induce content into the personal environment. They bring to industrial design, which is at best impersonal, and at worst stylized, an engaging quality of commentary and narrative.

nd

fixture with base in
and black plastic,
ated to wood, and
in blue, yellow and red
ed fabric. Height 69 3/4
s. 60/100-watt
escent lamp on goose-
tem. Diffuse light.

facturer: Jalest
butor:
-Bobois



- fixture with base shown
ack-painted steel and stem
ckel-plated brass. Base
available in red and
. Adjustable height 67
3.8 inches. 300-watt incan-
ent lamp with pear-
ed bulb and high/low
1 switch. Indirect light.

gner:
nd P.G. Castiglioni
ibutor:
ier International

Pap-Stehlampe

Standing fixture with base
in lacquered black iron, stem
in nickel-plated brass, and dif-
fuser in frosted glass. Height
63 inches. 100-watt incan-
descent lamp with semi-silvered
bulb. Diffuse light.

Designer: Gyula Pap
Maufacturer:
Tecnolumen



Callimaco

Floor fixture in painted metal
with grey base, yellow stem,
and red shade. Height 78
inches. 500-watt quartz-
halogen lamp with dimmer
switch. Indirect light.

Designer: Ettore Sottsass
Distributor: Artemide

Arcoballena

Floor fixture with base and
stem in black-painted
metal and diffuser in frosted
glass. 60/100
watt incandescent lamp.
Semi-indirect light.

Distributor: MBI

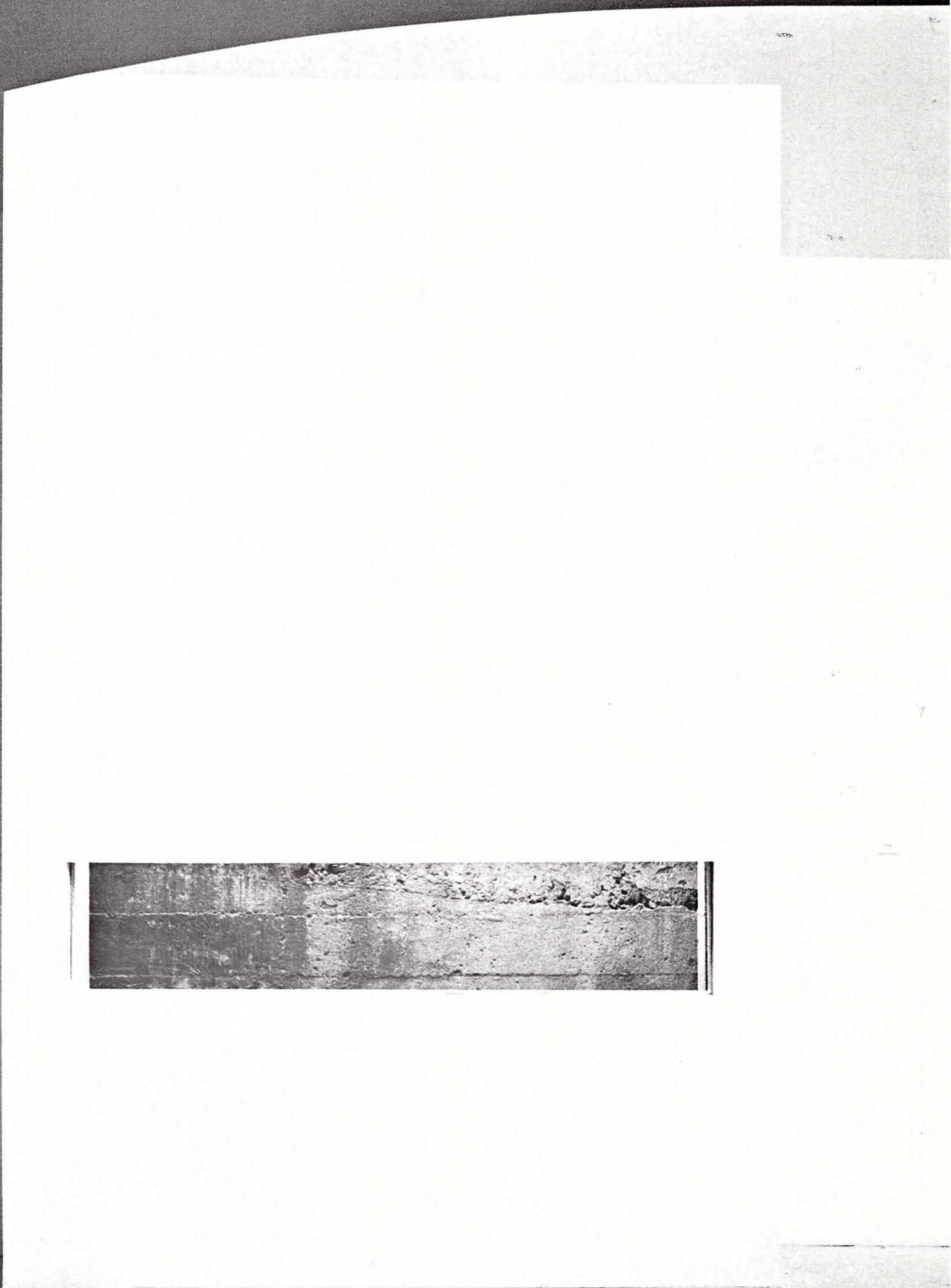


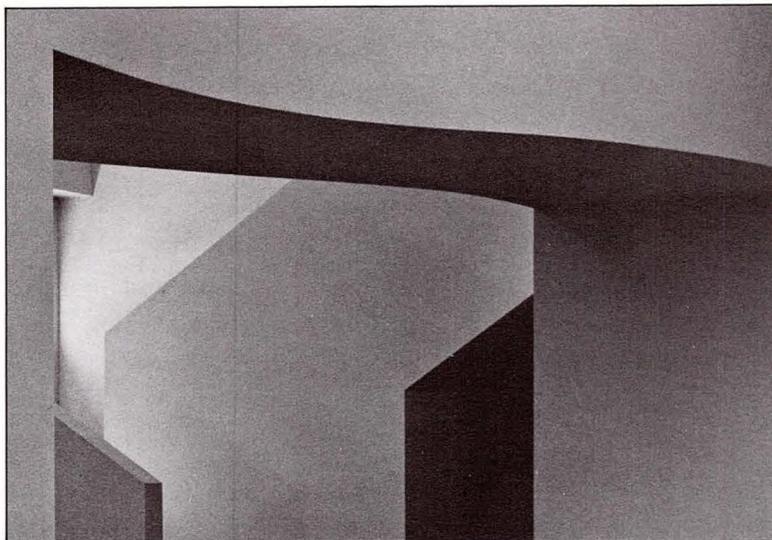
Iris

Floor fixture shown in metal with
black epoxy-coated base,
nickel-plated stem, and
green epoxy-coated shade.
Also available with grey or
black epoxy-coated stem and
white, black, pink or blue
shade. Height 74 inches.
250-watt quartz-halogen lamp
with four-way capacitance
switch. Indirect light.

Designer: Ron Rezek
Maufacturer: Ron Rezek
Lighting + Furniture







DAVID IRELAND'S
65 CAPP STREET
 BY ROBERT ATKINS

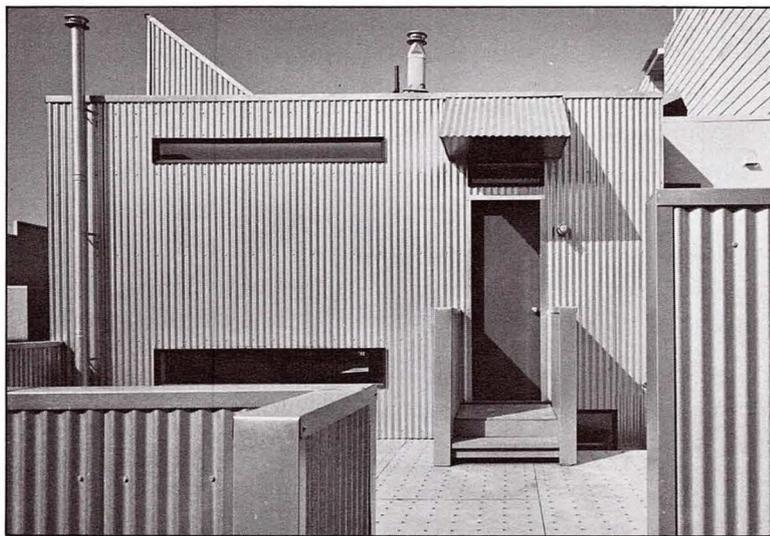
a typical San Francisco neighborhood of aging, bay window flats, 65 Capp Street stands out. Its facade rises sheer and flat from the sidewalk to the gabled roofline two and one-half stories above. Clad in corrugated steel siding, this single plane is punctuated only by an ordinary door and an eye-high, horizontal slit-of-a-window ostensibly suitable for the deployment of weapons in case of urban warfare. Seen from the street, Number 65 resembles nothing so much as a fortress.

Moving inside, or even catching a glimpse of its highly articulated 15th Street side, shatters expectations raised by the facade. One is immediately confronted with an airy, light-suffused space, the kind which brings to mind the Guggenheim and Berkeley museums. A two-story living area, view-opening windows, and an exterior bridge suggest that this is a carefully designed piece of architecture, while the mysterious quality of light proposes that it may be something more. Fortress is not the only metaphorical equivalent appropriate here. Castle, pleasure palace, even temple apply well, but only if one limits oneself to the language of architecture.

David Ireland, creator of 65 Capp Street, prefers not to be categorized as an architect. His architectural training was not the formal variety: For a year in the mid-fifties he worked in a South African architect's office, and beyond this, he was virtually self-taught. He has earned two degrees in art — a BA from the

California College of Arts and Crafts in 1953 an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1974. At CCAC he studied industrial and stage design; at the Art Institute he specialized in print making. He hasn't, however, pulled a print in eight years.

He refuses to be categorized because he operates in the turf separating classifications of architecture and art, the space in between. From this position his work emanates, resounds, and ultimately derives its meaning. An architect producing a house is one thing — a professional practicing his trade. A visual artist producing a house is quite another, and much rarer, matter. Such activ-



ity raises questions about taxonomy (what is it?), the usefulness of art "objects" and the relationship of art to social and art-world systems. 65 Capp Street is no less provocative than beautiful.

Much of this beauty is compositional, deriving from the massing of forms and dialectical play between architectural opposites — curved and hard edged, interior and exterior, bridge and balcony. These forms are newly dissolved in the sensuous bath of light streaming through lightwells, dormer windows, and balcony doors. At times a literal haze envelops 65 Capp Street, an almost Mediterranean variant on the fog for which San Francisco is renowned.

Natural light is, of course, the most mysterious of art agents, at once intangible and generally regarded as a force to be channeled rather than a material to be manipulated. In Ireland's hands, light renders two contiguous, identically gray surfaces virtually black and white, inviting meditation

on the continually changing vista and the liquid passage of time. These light-oriented concerns seem to ally Ireland with Southern California artists like Robert Irwin, Maria Nordmann, and James Turrell, whom he particularly admires. This alliance must be largely attributed to *Zeitgeist*, a response to the light-shot California environment.

Ireland's interest in color and light seems revealingly painterly, although his views on painting sometime border on hostility. Ireland sees the problem with painting vis-a-vis sculpture as that of "having it pass;" making the painting look like something else. Put another way, a sculptor presents, a painter re-presents, removed a step from experience.

Does this leave Ireland without artistic roots? Has he been unmasked as a frustrated painter, a muddle-headed sculptor or dilettante-architect? By no means. It simply reinforces him as the good conceptualist that he is.

Conceptualist attitudes inform and even define Ireland's work. Central to this method is his use of non-traditional art forms (in this case, architecture and real estate), an emphasis on the process of creation and on an open-ended viewing experience. Rather than being solely a painter, sculptor, photographer, or architect, the conceptual artist utilizes any appropriate techniques or media to articulate his vision.

"Post-Discipline Art" is what Ireland has dubbed his brand of conceptualism, and he is most likely unique as a practitioner of it. It's an educator's

term that suggests getting beyond the limitations of rigid, curricular distinctions by acknowledging the fluidity of experience in the face of attempts to rectify it. Its touchstone is the 20th century situationalist aesthetic embodied in Marcel Duchamp's realization that to exhibit a urinal as a work of art is to declare that context determines content. Today's conceptualist calls this "framing." Ireland frames, or contextualizes, 65 Capp Street.

To view Capp Street apart from Ireland and the rest of his output is to miss an essential frame of the content-determining context. Ireland's intellectual framework began to develop soon after he received his MFA in the mid-seventies.

Partly, his thinking sharpened in response to Bay Area conceptualist Tom Marioni. In 1976 they worked on two projects together: Ireland's *Repair of the Sidewalk at 500 Capp Street* with video documentation by Marioni and *Restoration of a Portion of the Floor, Wall and Ceiling of the Main Gallery, Museum of Conceptual Art*. For the latter, Marioni, founder and director of the museum, commissioned Ireland to restore part of the gallery from historical photographs. Ireland found this task, which he described as an exercise in "photo-realism," exhilarating, even revelatory. "There was an issue of truth there," he says. "The project's logic was internal, not formal."

This internal logic became the *Leitmotif* of 500 Capp Street, Ireland's major work to date. The two-story, century-old Victorian residence serves as Ireland's home as well as a museum to his activities and itself. Ireland stripped the walls down to lathe and plaster and polyurethaned them, yielding reflective, amber colored surface and a record of nine decades of domestic alterations. Curious artifacts populate this house. Wads of old wallpaper, complete with imprints of Ireland's hands removing them from the wall, are lined up on a shelf like so many primitive paper casts. Brooms found in the cellar are assembled in a circular, Shaker coven-of-a-configuration. Sociology meets personal history in an audiotape of Ireland removing a rubber band from the morning paper each day and in a videotape of Mr. Gordon, the boarder Ireland inherited with the house, on the occasion of his 95th birthday. The link between experience and objects is what animates 500 Capp Street and endows it with presence.

Visiting the two Capp Street houses in succession, one becomes aware of correspondences between them: the sinuous shape of Number 65's bridge echoes that of Number 500's hallway; the juxtaposition of angular and curved elements; the all-pervasive, dematerializing light. Like Number 500, Number 65 is complete. It awaits only a new owner, real occupants.

Ireland had hoped a museum might purchase Number 65, possibly using it to house guests or special events. Times being what they are, no offers have been forthcoming. Although he's a little leery of the occupants assaulting his pristine, painted walls, Ireland believes strongly in the necessity of making art that exists in the world of experience rather than in hermetically sealed aesthetic realms. Superficially such an attitude seems in line with a historical moment when, on one hand, scores of artists are mak-

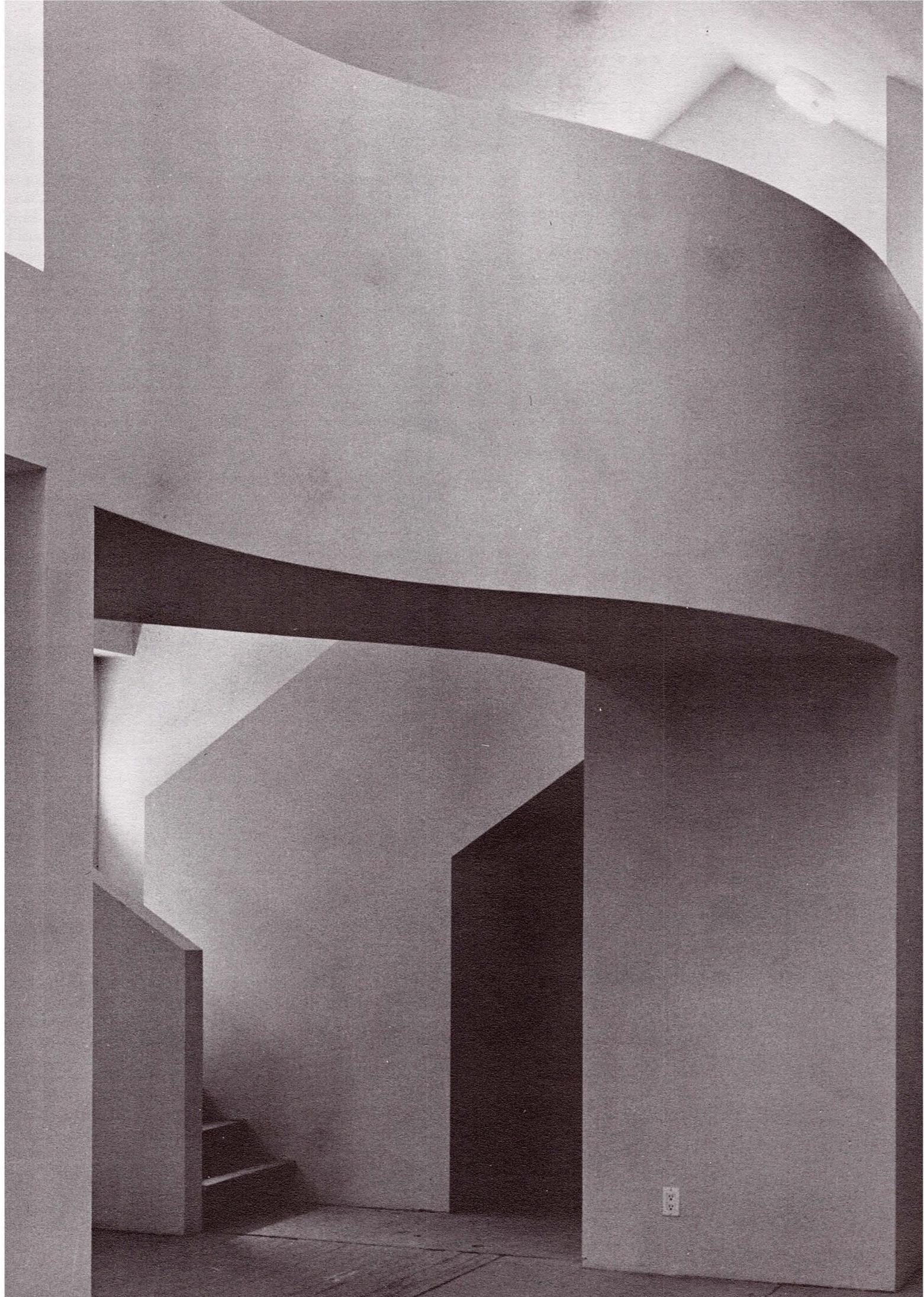
ing furniture that demonstrate the supposed irrelevance of traditional art objects, and conversely scores of architects fueling their practicality-fetted imaginations by making virtual drawings. Both bodies of work are destined for general consumption and represent another instance of quixotic determination of precisely what the traffic will bear.

If Ireland feels squeamish about the prospect of the occupying disturbing the calm of 65 Capp Street, it has less to do with the sanctity of the environment than with the potential loss of experience. Art is clearly not the few realms of unmediated experience left to the denizens of consumer society. Just as Cage's remark that "music is all around us, it's only listening that stops" inspired Ireland's response, "Then art is all around us, it's only seeing that stops. Or, is it thinking?"

Since this article was completed, 65 Capp Street has been sold to a collector who intends to maintain it as created by Ireland. On Ireland's recommendation he has temporarily leased the space out as a designer furniture showroom.

Still, questions continue to arise. Should the house be granted artwork status under the purposes of California resale/royalty statute? Should Ireland's dealer be compensated for her role between artist and collector? It is safe only to predict that 65 Capp Street will raise further issues both practical and philosophical.

ROBERT ATKINS is a New York based art historian and critic.



STATE OF THE ART ART OF THE STATE

The free and open spirit that made Berlin a haven was replaced with fear and terror; the end was near.

Berlin: 1910-1933

Eberhard Roters, Editor
Rizzoli, New York
1982, 284pp., \$60.00

Reviewed by Orville Clarke

From 1910 to 1933 there was an explosion of great artistic achievements in painting, music, sculpture, film, literature, theater, and archi-



itecture in Berlin. Remarkably, this cultural boon took place against a dramatic and paradoxical background of economic chaos, the failure of an empire, World War One, the great depression and the rise of Adolph Hitler.

Asked by the publishers to document this unparalleled period of German history, Eberhard Roters first narrowed the field to five areas: architecture, painting, sculpture, film, and theater. He then gathered a group of experts, each responsible for writing one section. The result — *Berlin: 1910-1933* — is an impressive collection of essays skillfully blended to form a fluid and cohesive analysis of the time.

In his brief, yet lucid introduction, Roters establishes a vital foundation to the understanding of this period. Two key points are developed: first, that Berlin is historically a haven for the banished peoples throughout

Europe as well as the first stop for immigrants from the East. A free-minded city, it attracted many young and gifted artists. Berlin was a city open to artistic expression — the city where the Berliner Secession triumphed over the academics.

Secondly, Berlin rivaled both Paris and New York as a center for avant-garde art. The city's transition to the commercial center of Northern Europe and the economic and political center of Germany was reluctant and tumultuous. As the center of a vast and growing empire, Berlin anchored an industry of culture where art became a vehicle for resistance against political and social oppression reflecting this painful and unstructured passage.

"City Architecture and Habit," the opening essay by Janos Frecot and Sonja Gunther, is a brief look at Berlin's architecture and the social and political forces molding it. The AEG Turbine Factory (1907), Peter Behren's manifestation of the concept of function, the early attempts at attractive and inexpensive workers' housing, and the devastating results of the city's love for the automobile are among the accurately outlined highlights during this period. One wishes that these insightful writers had been allotted more space in the book.

"Sculpture," by Joachim Heusinger von Waldegg, explains that during this period realistic, figurative pieces predominated and Berlin's 19th century worldwide reputation had all but vanished. However, as the author points out, there were bright spots "as evidenced by Moholy-Nagy's experiments with light, Naum Gabo's constructions of transparent materials, or Alexander Calder's wire structure," as well as the talents of Hans Arp, Kurt Schwitters, and Alexander Archipenko.

In stark contrast to the static condition of sculpture is the wealth of talent working in Berlin theater in the 20s. Arno Paul points out in "Theater" that a comprehensive history of this period has not yet been conceived, and he can only offer "but an approximate and restricted version." It is a heady task, as important premieres took place almost daily throughout the city. Playwrights such as Max Reinhardt, Leopold Jessner, Bertolt Brecht, Jürgen Fehling, and Kurt Weill created an environment of tremendous potency. This period of theater is

handled by Paul with authority and precision.

Two exceptional essays merit special attention. The first is "Painting," by the editor, Eberhard Roters. His awesome collection of artists created a charged atmosphere in 1910. Roters recreates this fascinating environment of dynamic interaction by focusing on Expressionism.

Expressionism had originated in the provinces; Brücke moving to Berlin, the country and Blaue Reiter coming from small Bavarian towns. The goal was to return to the simplicity inherent in nature — a reaction against industrial society and its consequences that were its legacy. There was an enthusiasm for color, for the strength of nature, and its lack of sophistication. Roters uses the work of Ludwig Kirchner to dramatize and demonstrate the effect of Metropolitan man. *Friedrichstrasse* (1914) is a decisive attack on a corrupt society. The rhythms, tempos, and angles of the city have been translated into sharp angularities illustrating psychological turmoil and a dehumanization of man in modern urbanity. The city was a savage environment that crushed the weak and helped the strong.

Importantly, the role of *Sturm* is explored. This magazine which first appeared on March 1910, and its founder, Herzog and Walden, were to play a key role during this period, much as Kahnweiler had done for the Cubists. The magazine provided a forum for an expression and allowed art to become a weapon against the injustices and inequalities of German society. The text underlines the devastating economic upheavals that made housing for many a vital struggle.

Equally impressive is Ulrich Grogger's presentation, "Film in Berlin." Berlin's contribution to film during this period comprises the whole history of German cinema to that of Gregor begins by pointing out key facts: all the important German film companies were headquartered in Berlin, all foreign films were distributed through Berlin, the city itself was an inspiration to filmmakers, and the most important journal of film criticism of the time, *Filmkritik und Lichtbildbühne*, was published in the city.

Cinematic masterpieces such as *Der Blaue Engel*, *Westfront 1918*, *Das Testament des Dr. Mabius*, and *Metropolis* came out of this

Gregor's insight and understanding are evident in his treatment of silent classics: *Das Cabinet Dr. Caligari* (1918) and *Nosferatu* (1922).

Caligari by Robert Wiene is an expressionistic work which "force-conveys a metaphysical content. It is a haunting film with the 'taking place entirely within the dark depths of the soul.' Stylized sets were painted directly on flat surfaces, becoming metaphors for space. Molded light playing against shadows created a cinematic masterpiece that was to set the tone for the films which followed in the

contrast to the nebulous setting of *Caligari*, *Nosferatu* was filmed on location. Gregor points out that this integration of reality and fiction created unbearable tension. Based on *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, Frederick Murnau's *Nosferatu* is one of the greatest horror films ever made. Superb cinematography, skillful editing and strong performances resulted in a powerful terrifying movie, one, unfortunately, rarely seen today.

Each of the essays ends similarly, with a sense of gloom closing in on the artistic community. The Reich's Fine Arts Department forbade one artist to influence another from exercising their creative freedoms. Gradually, those who were able emigrated to other countries. Among them: Joseph Albers, Wassily Kandinsky, Lenya, Fritz Lang, Walter Ruttmann and Kurt Weill. Those who remained were either imprisoned or

exiled. It is difficult to read this book without sensing the portentousness of the situation. This great flowering of intellectual and artistic expression was soon crushed by the Nazis. The free and open spirit that made Munich a haven was replaced with a climate of fear and terror: book burnings suppressed expressive freedom. The freedom and excitement of this era is replaced with the cold reality of the situation that was to cover Europe.

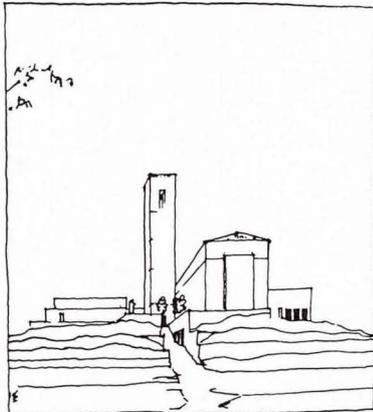
1910-1933 is a brilliant collection of essays. Numerous photographs enhance the writing and soften the scholarly overtones of the text, making it appealing not only to the casual reader, but to the more serious arts historian as well.

WILLIE CLARKE is a Los Angeles architect and critic.

Sources of Modern Eclecticism

by Demetri Porphyrios
Academy Editions, St. Martin's Press
1982, 138pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by Scott Poole



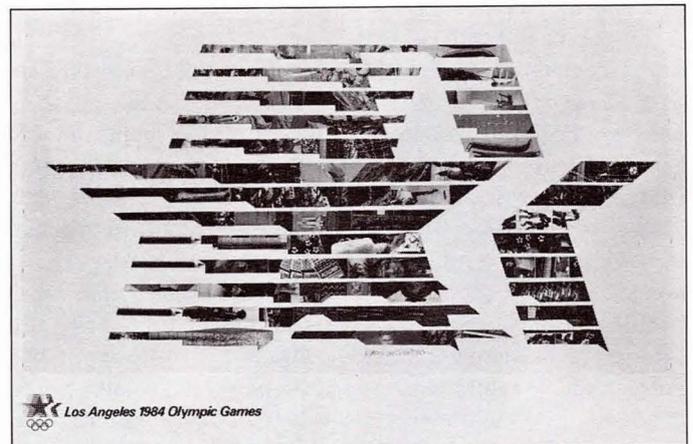
Competition, Church; Töölö, 1925

Conventional wisdom has it that Alvar Aalto was an idiosyncratic architect whose "organic" approach to design was anti-intellectual and therefore inaccessible to analysis. Demetri Porphyrios refutes that notion and demystifies Aalto's work in a study that combines theoretical analysis with critical history. *Sources of Modern Eclecticism* is not a linear chronology of Aalto's career, a catalogue of his styles, or a monograph of his buildings; instead it is a reassessment of Aalto's work that applies a critical understanding to 20th century architecture and explores modern eclecticism.

As defined by the author, this latter phenomenon was employed by Aalto through "stylistic metaphor" in an effort to recapture the myths of rootedness to the land, individuality, tradition and culture — which industrialized society denied. "Stylistic quotation," a more recent manifestation of modern eclecticism, is seen as a superficial borrowing of historical forms in an attempt to infuse a compromised architecture with a sense of authenticity and culture: "a game that is aimed at delectable fantasy at minimum cost."

The first half of the book is a formal analysis that establishes the rules under which Aalto's work was formulated, while the second situates Aalto's design strategies within the ideological context of post-Enlightenment modernity. Its strength lies in the thoroughness of Porphyrios' research and the conviction of his arguments. Romantic

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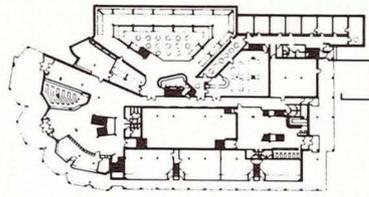
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myths perpetuated throughout the breadth of Aaltonia are deflated by a rational analysis that places little stock in received opinion. The simplistic image of Aalto as a down-to-earth humanistic architect whose source was nature and who trusted his senses to unlock the mystery of form is challenged from the outset.

Porphyrios begins by mapping out Aalto's "heterotopic" ordering sensibility, a design strategy that welcomes discontinuities and inconsistencies while "circumscribing the autonomy of every ordering gesture." Although many critics have taken this aspect of Aalto's work as proof of his intuitive nature and irrational technique, Porphyrios argues convincingly that heterotopic organization has vernacular precedent in Nordic architecture and that these ordering gestures are highly rational and hardly the working method of an anti-intellectual.

Given the importance of Aalto's work, information about it is scant and, more often than not, mistaken in categorizing him as an eccentric variation of the modernist mind. Porphyrios instead places him within the continuum of 19th century architectural thought, attribu-



Cultural Center; Wolfsburg, 1958

ting to him "a mind preoccupied with kaleidoscopic fragmentation, and reflections of the mediation of production, bringing him thus closer to our 'fin de siècle'."

The multivalence of Aalto's work is attributed to his cultivation of conventional historical types and their power to imbue architecture with traditional meaning. Appealing to memory and rejecting the "fictitious utilitarianism" of modernism, Aalto could quote freely from both the remote past and the avant-garde without embracing either stylistic affectation or the precepts of modernist objectivity.

The Villa Mairea is established as Aalto's concrete polemic in the Enlightenment debate, initiated by Rousseau and Voltaire, between nature and civilization. His discourse was expressed through stylistic fragments and the associative

value of materials. By simultaneously employing modern construction and vernacular details, Aalto produced a house firmly rooted in the present that is also permeated with a sense of the past.

It was his synthesis of Nordic tradition with the broader iconological associations inherent in architecture that earned Aalto universal appeal. Although his works in the United States number just two buildings and one interior, his influence on American architecture and design is considerable, encompassing such diverse manifestations as Eames furniture, Central Texas Regionalism, and Robert Venturi's efforts to reconcile historic precedent, vernacular influences, and rational choice.

Sources of Modern Eclecticism is a seminal study in which Porphyrios develops a critical framework for the future analysis of Aalto's architecture. It is an interpretive work that demands frequent rereading.

SCOTT POOLE, trained as an architect and anthropologist, has been awarded a fellowship to study recent architectural developments in Finland by the American Fulbright committee.

New American Art Museum

by Helen Searing
Whitney Museum of American Art in association with the University of California Press
142 pp., \$10.00

The Museum Interior: Temporary and Permanent Display Techniques

by Michael Brawne
Architectural Book Publishers
159 pp., 330 illus., \$33.95

Reviewed by Catherine Brown

In the last twenty years, American art museum design has changed technologically, but from an organizational standpoint, it has been culturally transformed. An evolution of the museums' function as a national institution has broader kind and amount of spaces have been. Even more significant have been changes which have resulted in economic considerations.

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ively, these changes along with a revitalized public make the "new" museum like the contemporary urban use center than the traditional temple.

American Art Museums and Museum Interior explore the inside of contemporary museum architecture. Helen Seares presents a historical overview of the evolution of museum architecture and seven new American art museums from the exhibition at the Getty Museum of American Art. Michael Brawne explains the principal elements of gallery design, details technical innovations in floor, lighting and environmental controls.

Searing describes the early museums of Europe as "children of the Age of Enlightenment." Those museums, like their American counterparts of the 19th century, were straightforwardly built for the frontal viewing of works of art. The museum prototype was a tripartite composition with a central skylit rotunda surrounded by galleries with blank exterior

This pattern persisted until 1893 when the Chicago World's Fair set off an art museum boom that continued until 1932. As Americans amassed and subsequently donated private art collections, there was a corresponding expansion in the function of the museum. Public education became important and museums grew intricate with lecture halls, libraries, research facilities, and studios added to the customary exhibition galleries.

The International Exhibition of Modern Architecture, organized and circulated nationally by The Museum of Modern Art in 1932, introduced to the United States the International Style. The Museum's own new headquarters (1939) changed the entire conception of what was suitable for visitor circulation and exhibition spaces. Formal axes, grand corridors and fixed galleries were abandoned for loft-like floors that could be partitioned into more intimate areas.

The debate which began in the 30s and continues today is to what degree should the architect predetermine the exhibition space. Mies van der Rohe's 1942 proposal for "A Museum Without Walls" was one

large area allowing complete flexibility for the curator in shaping the interior volume through the design of the installation. One can contrast this with Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum, which preordained the visitors' movements and allowed only minimal curatorial flexibility, but on the other hand provided the institution with a readily identifiable image.

To a degree, the debate extends through the seven museum projects comprising the second part of Ms. Searing's book. She asks, "Should the museum make a positive architectural statement expressing the interplay between personal artistic vision and communal needs or be an efficient and self-effacing warehouse?" and finds that the seven architects do indeed lean toward the former philosophy.

In addition to project data information, statements by the directors and the architects are historical exemplars along with plans and model photographs. The seven museums either under construction or scheduled for construction are the Museum of Modern Art, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Shin'enkan, Portland Museum of Art, High

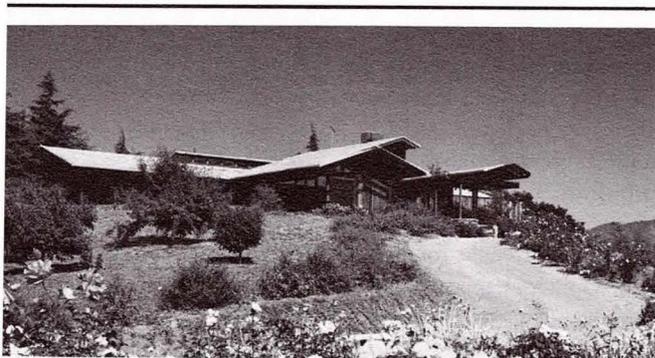
Museum of Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and Hood Museum of Art.

For those interested in the specifics of museum design, Michael Brawne, a London architect who has designed a great number of installations, has written his second book on museums, this one focusing on interior exhibition space design.

The photographs, drawings, and detailed descriptions of all the surfaces that the designer can manipulate in the creation of the exhibition space are enlightening. Beginning with permanent and movable walls he discusses the effects of varying wall height, surface, texture, color and arrangement, and wall construction techniques. Parallel sections cover design considerations for floors, ceilings, and showcases.

The final section presents four museums as case studies; however, these are really too superficial to add much to the reader's knowledge of interiors.

CATHERINE BROWN, of CITYWEST, an urban design firm, is also a Regional Representative of the Design Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts.



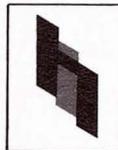
A Harwell Hamilton Harris classic from 1948, both externally and internally; one of the great houses of Southern California. It makes use of such materials as rolled roofing and celotex, with beautiful detailing throughout. High clerestory windows provide light and ventilation for the interior spaces; these are augmented by bands of doors and windows, wide overhanging eaves, and screened porches.

—from *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles*, by David Gebhard, Robert Winter.

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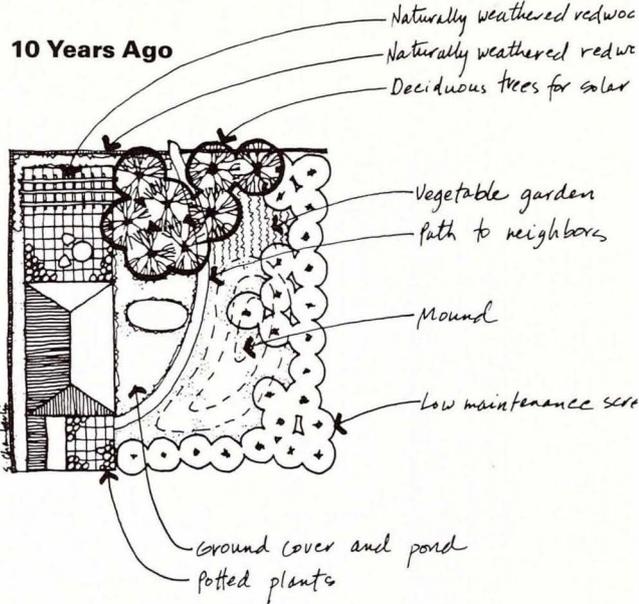
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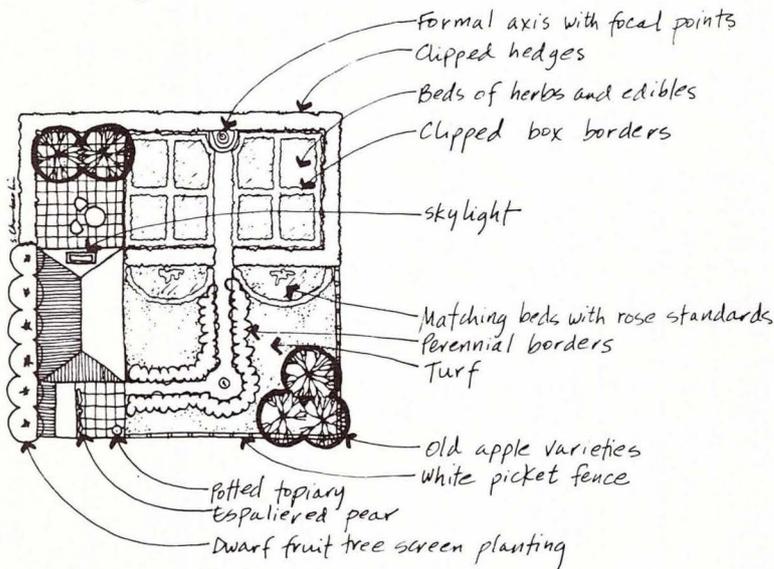
Robert and Roberta are part of a group that collectively owns and operates a vegetarian restaurant. They collectively move into a house, cover it with rough-sawn wood siding, tear out most of the interior walls, and fill it with Mucha posters, hanging potted ferns, and brown, handcrafted coffee mugs. Clipped shrubbery and the lawn outside are abolished because they are a symbol of middle class values, a waste of resources, and a hinderance to man's relationship to the natural environment. The grass is liberated to grow naturally over a pile of soil dubbed "mound." A mound of garbage is called compost.

Everyone is concerned with conservation, solar power, and organic vegetables, and they all fervently believe in the moral— aesthetics play a secondary role here — superiority of free-form spaces, earth tones, and natural weathering. Redwood is "the natural choice" for the fences that are needed to screen the herbs being grown for recreational purposes.

The house is featured in *Sunset* magazine under the title, "If you'd like a house and garden, what about a cooperative?". Robert says, "Screw tradition. We have to save the planet and live with nature." He is not quoted in the magazine.



5 Years Ago



Robert and Roberta have an outdoor wedding. A substantial down payment on their house is a gift from Roberta's parents. The collective breaks up. Robert's interest in organic foods has shifted to pasta and croissants, and he becomes the restaurant critic for a hip magazine. Roberta gets her MBA and a job. They drink their coffee out of plain white Victor mugs, and weekends are spent stripping the house down to its bare beams in the hope of uncovering a quaint little cottage. Unfortunately, there is none. In the garden, the mound has created drainage and health problems, and the fish pond is full of scum. Robert and Roberta hire design professionals to give them the new-old look they want for entertaining.

The architect structures archy of public and private (rooms) then applies Lutyce white paint liberally. The scape architect's solution is inspired. Clipped hedges and frame informal, lush planting limited turf areas (lawn) as a sic foil for the flowers. Her edibles are grown for culinary

Their home fills with a reletasteful mix of antiques and tional implements. Perennially cut flowers for the clear glass shaped vases that have replaced ferns inside. "A Fo Romance" gushes *House and den*. Robert and Roberta are "Following traditional conve gives us the freedom to dis that the best revenge is living

Robert raves about mesquite charcoal and goat cheese. He is getting a fabulous salary from his column in the hip magazine that now carries full page ads for the NRA. Roberta moves into management and gets pregnant for the first time. Morning coffee is served in exquisite bone china cups and saucers. Afternoon tea is a new ritual. Weekends are spent recreational shopping for herbs and edibles at expensive charcuteries. No one has time to change flower water. Robert and Roberta decide they need to remodel, and they want famous designers this time.

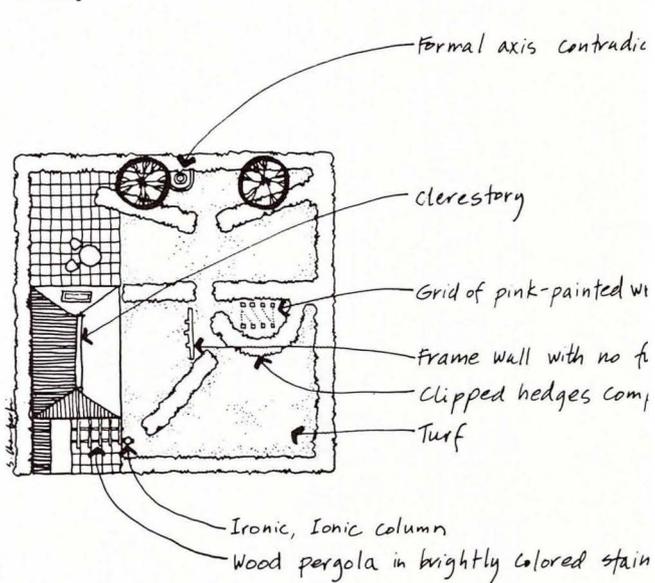
Architect and landscape architect have the same design strategy: produce a sensible, vernacular homestead with historical allusions start-

ing at the entry pergola — that's Italian for "arbor." Pink and glass block return with a vengeance. So does lawn. Investment Neo-Expressionist paintings replace cut flowers indoors.

The headline in *Progressive Architecture* proclaims the result "A Stunning Triumph of Ambiguity." The architect alone is quoted, "Abstract versions of traditional architectural rhetoric evoke witty, unsentimental, and specifically spiritual art for life's sake." Both interior and exterior spaces can be maintained with power equipment.

SUSAN CHAMBERLIN is a landscape architect and author of *Hedges, Screens and Espaliers* published by H.P. Books.

Today



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It's a beautiful magazine and you're to be congratulated. **Carl Ruff, Carl Ruff Associates, New York City**

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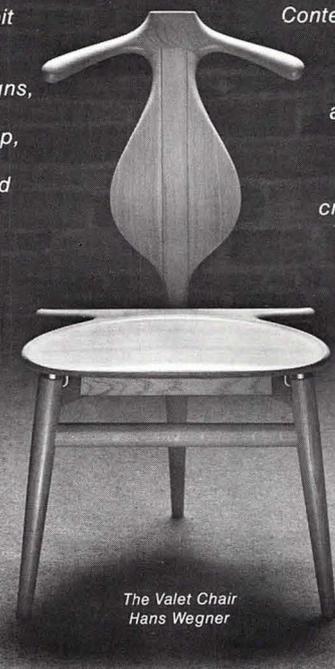
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Foreword by Allan Temko

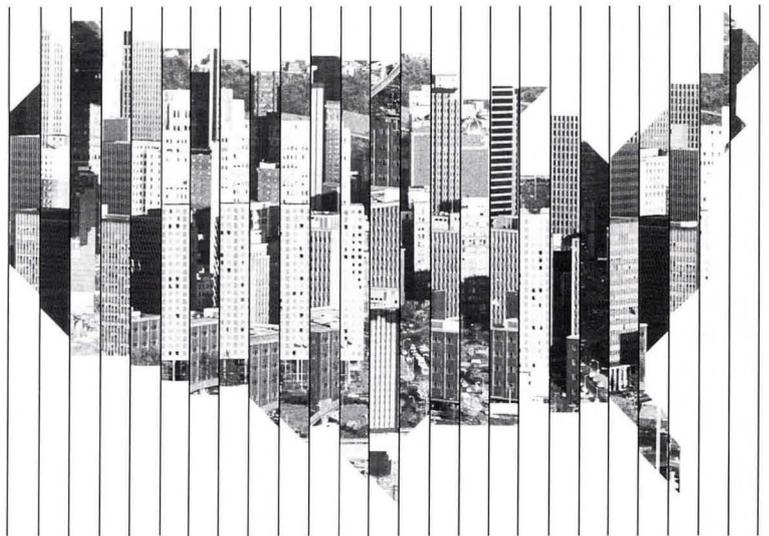
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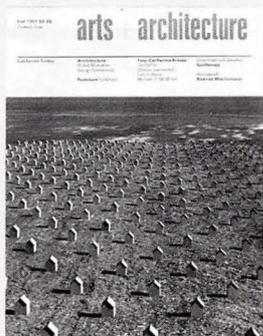
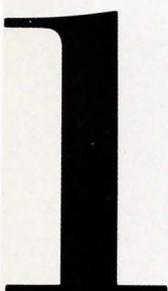
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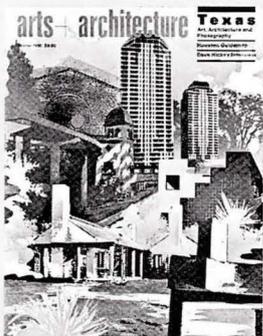
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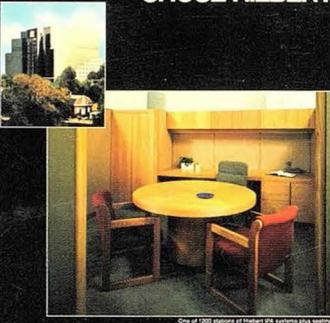


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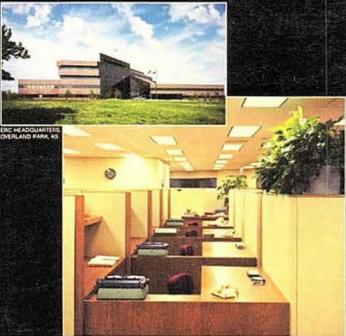


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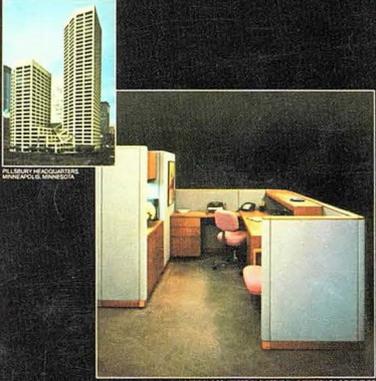


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