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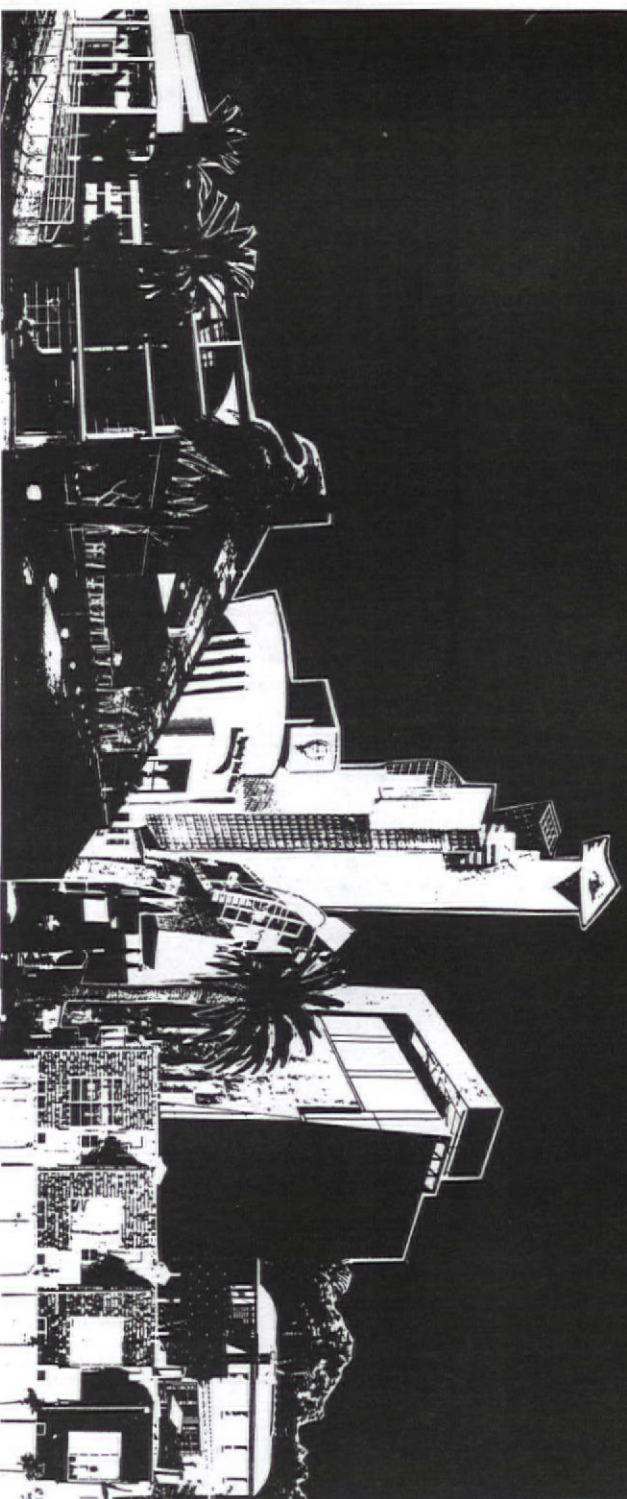
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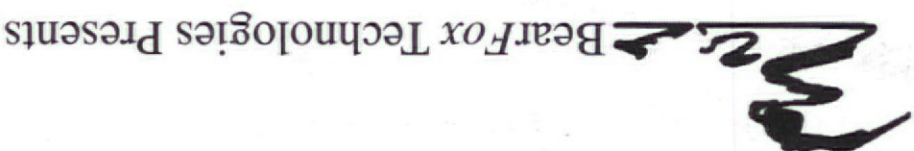
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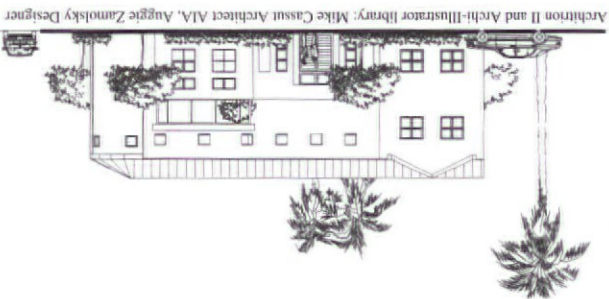
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ARCHITECTURAL MODELS

U R A R T U



DECEMBER

Weekend

"Clay Today: Contemporary Ceramists and Their Work." Pacific Design Center, Center Green Rotunda, Floor 1. Through February 28. Monday-Friday, 9:00 am. to 5:00 pm. **UCLA Extension** offers courses on Dry Climate Gardening, Trees for Landscape Use, and Home Vegetable Gardening. Contact Division of Science, 310/825-7093.

"Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries." L.A. County Museum of Art, through December 29. Phone 213/480-7676.

Weekend

Saturday 7
AIA '92 Board of Directors
CCAIA Seminar ADA. CSU, Fresno Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum: **1920s Electrical Christmas** tours highlighting Christmas celebrations in Southern California during the 1840s, 1870s, and 1920s. \$2; students and senior citizens \$1. Homestead Museum, 15415 East Don Julian Road, City of Industry. For information call (818) 968-8492.

Weekend

Saturday 14
AIA/LA Board/Committee Retreat. 9:00 am. to 2:00 pm.
CCAIA Seminar ADA, East Bay Chapter
"Catherine the Great: Treasures of Imperial Russia, the State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, USSR," exhibition at the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center, through April 12. This exhibition marks the first time this collection of treasures has been shown outside of the USSR. For information contact Brigette Bonner (213) 443-7074.
Open House & Benefit Bash at The Santa Monica College Design, Art and Architecture. 7:00pm-2:00am, 2204 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica. Call (310) 281-1750

Monday 2

Tuesday 3

AIA Board of Directors, D.C. through 5th.
AIA/LA Finance Committee meeting. 3:00 pm.
AIA/LA Executive Committee meeting. 4:00 pm.
AIA/LA Board of Directors meeting. 5:30 pm.
Call (213) 380-4595 for more information.

Wednesday 4

AIA/LA LA Architect Editorial Board meeting. 7:30 am.
AIA/LA ProPractice Committee meeting. 5:45 pm. Call (213) 380-4595.
Chris Burden; Sci-Arc lecture series. 8:00 pm, Main Space.

Thursday 5

AIA/LA Urban Design Committee meeting. 6:00 pm.
Call (213) 380-4595.

Friday 6

AIA Inaugural.
CCAIA Seminar ADA. Department of Water and Power
Aspects of Contemporary Mexican Painting: Nine Artists; Santa Monica Museum of Art, through March 5.
Mexican American Nacimientos in Los Angeles; features "nacimientos", nativity scenes, by L.A. Mexican American folk artists; Southwest Museum, through February 2, 1992. (213) 221-2163.

Monday 9

AIA/LA River Committee meeting. 6pm. Call (213) 380-4595
"A Mickey Mouse Lighting Job -- Disney's Approach", sponsored by Designers Lighting Forum. 6:30 pm. Pacific Design Center. Members \$5; Non-Members \$15.
"The Excitement of Theme Park Lighting" Designers Lighting Forum. Pacific Design Center, Blue Building- Second Floor Conference Center. 6:00 pm. Registration, 7:00 Program. \$5 DLF members, \$15 non-DLF members.

Tuesday 10

AIA/LA Associates meeting. 6:30 pm.
Call (213) 380-4595.

Wednesday 11

AIA/LA Government Relations Breakfast with L.A. City Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky. \$10. 7:30 am. to 9:00 am. For reservations 213/380-4595.
LA/AIA CADD Committee Open House. Medical Planning Associates, Malibu. RSVP 213/380-4595.
Lecture: Eloy Torrez. Concerning recently completed mural "Entrada al Mundo Nuevo" in Saint-Denis, France. 7:30 p.m. Self help Graphics, 3802 Brooklyn Avenue (213) 264-1259

Thursday 12

CCAIA ExCom retreat at Napa, through December 13.
Presidential Commemorative Award.

Friday 13

CCAIA Seminar ADA. Sunnyvale Hilton, Santa Clara Valley AIA.
Closes: Catherine Wagner, "Selections". Photography Exhibition. Jan Turner Gallery, Los Angeles.

Monday 16

AIA/LA Historic Preservation Committee. 6:30 pm.
Call (213) 380-4595.

Tuesday 17

AIA/LA Executive Committee meeting. 4:30 pm.

Wednesday 18

Thursday 19

AIA/LA Health Committee meeting. 3:30 pm. Call (213) 380-4595.
Florence Henri: Artist
Photographer of the Avante Garde. L.A. County Museum of Art. Through February 23.

Friday 20

Weekend

Monday 23

Tuesday 24

Office Closed through 1/3/92

Wednesday 25

Mexican-American nacimientos (Nativity scenes) in Los Angeles through Feb. 2, 1992, Southwest Museum, contact: Cheryl Barton, 213-221-2164

Thursday 26

Friday 27

Weekend

January 10

AIA/LA Government Affairs Day. 8:30 am. to 4:30 pm. For reservations 213/380-4595
"First Los Angeles Photographic Print Exposition" at 7601 Sunset Boulevard, through January 12 1992. For more information call (213) 654-1890.

Calendar listings compiled by:
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4517; **Architecture for Housing,** Manuel Gonzalez, AIA (213) 394-0273; **Building Performance & Regulations,** John Petro, AIA (213) 207-8400; **Communications/Public Relations,** Michael J. Kent, AIA (213) 826-2500; **Westweek,** Frank Fitzgibbons, AIA (213) 624-8383; **LA Architect,** Arthur Golding, AIA, (213) 622-5955; **Government Relations,** Victor J. Nahmias, AIA (818) 879-9656; **International Relations/Hospitality,** Raymond Kappe, FAIA (213) 453-2643; **Licensing Task Force,** William Krisel, AIA-E (213) 824-0441; **Urban Design,** Jim Black, AIA (213) 380-2102; **Associates,** David A. Ferguson (213) 556-0880; **Real Problems Design Competition,** Steven D. Geoffron (213) 278-1915; **Sandcastle Competition,** Andrew E. Althaus (805) 496-1101; **Student Visions for Architecture,** Jeffrey T. Sessions (213) 933-8341; **Districting,** Gregory Villanueva, AIA (213) 727-6086; **Ethics,** Herbert Wiedoft,

AIA (213) 413-3131; **Fellowship Nominations,** Norma M. Sklarek, FAIA (213) 454-7473; **Library,** James R. Combs, AIA (213) 388-1361; **Long Range Planning,** Rex Lotery, FAIA (213) 208-8200; **Membership,** Robert H. Uyeda, AIA (213) 250-7440; **Membership Directory,** Janice J. Axon, HAIA/LA (213) 476-4593; **Mentor's Hotline,** Morris Verger, FAIA-E (213) 824-2671; **Minority & Women's Resources,** Michele Pride-Wells, AIA (213) 399-1715; **Office Operations & Management,** Joseph M. Madda, AIA (213) 394-7888; **Past Presidents Council,** Donald C. Axon, AIA (213) 476-4593; **Professional Affiliates,** Brad Elder (213) 474-5710; **Students Affairs,** Michael Hricak (213) 823-4220, 829-2074; **Women's Architectural League,** Maureen Vidler March (213) 661-7907.

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INTERSECTION OR TRAFFIC JAM?: Feminism in Architecture Examined

"*The Intersection of Feminism and Values in Architecture*" was the title of the Third Annual Julia Morgan Colloquium held at UCLA on Saturday, October 26, 1991. The program suggested a unique place/event which elicited expectations that gender and process would be openly discussed within clearly organized parameters pointing to a feminist, or perhaps female, approach to design and new paradigms of practice. We quickly learned however that this intersection contained a pluralistic "traffic jam of intentions" which proved too ambitious and ambiguous to overcome, within the constraints of time and organization.

The format of the colloquium was tripartite and hierarchical. In the morning a panel of five local practitioners was introduced by AIA/LA Board Member Kate Diamond, AIA. Each panelist presented slides of her work and spoke briefly of her philosophy.

Victoria Casasco presented elegant projects ranging from commercial lighting fixtures to academic ideas about urban redevelopment. While her rhetoric called for a reorganization of the "structures of knowledge", she dismissed feminism as an issue in her work though she did not clearly offer an alternative, coherent epistemology. Casasco seems to be an advocate of powerful women in architecture rather than feminism in architecture.

With a more casual attitude, Elyse Grinstein presented design partner Jeff Daniels' work including a residence for artist David Hockney and the award-winning Western Ave. Kentucky Fried Chicken. Active in the LA art hegemony, Grinstein used her experience at Frank Gehry's office, her political contacts and her gender to catapult her practice into national prominence. Like Casasco, she said her work does not express feminism per se, but does claim that nurturance is the motivation for her (politically correct) AIDS housing project in San Pedro.

Jackie Leavitt, a planner, defined aspects of the "women's movement" which would have been more appropriate as an

introduction to the colloquium. She did however clarify the diversity of opinion among the panelists. Leavitt's work focused upon housing, health- and child-care and lifestyle choice as expressed through submittals to affordable housing design competitions and direct work with tenants to revitalize public housing projects.

In contrast to Leavitt's pragmatic activism, Dagmar Richter presented a "radical/ reactionary" conceptual approach to architecture in protest against virtues traditionally attributed to women. Her bristled edge and dark flirtation of her projects attempt to deconstruct pretty domesticity and masculine corporatism alike: an agitated three story cubist addition devours a quaint Spanish bungalow and her student urban designers topple a sky-scraper to create a flaccid "earth-scratcher" object as a typology for the new decentralized pluralopolis.

Lisa Wightman is the most similar to the historical personage of Julia Morgan. As a sole practitioner, Wightman unabashedly admits that her elaborately designed single family residences are not intended to be politically correct and that her small commercial projects are not great architecture. She says that as a woman she is more sensitive to the needs and contributions of her clients, is more concerned about consensus than authorship, and expresses her feminism through professional associations.

The discussion which followed neither demonstrated female nurturance nor consensus, nor did it respond to the audience's concern for an agenda to address future challenges. Instead, each panelist differentiated her position from her peers. While Casasco, Leavitt and Richter argued for profound changes in the structures of power and the distribution of privilege, no new paradigms of practice were proposed.

The afternoon panel, moderated by Lian Hurst Mann, AIA, included Deborah Dietsch, Editor of *Architecture*, Judith Rowe, AIA, Chair of the National AIA Women in Architecture Committee, and Betsey Dougherty, FAIA, California Regional Director

of the AIA. The individual presentations indicated that these women, active on the national scene, were more involved in collaborative associations not necessarily resulting in specific built works. Because of their "national" responsibilities, Mann twice asked what effect such status had on their critical edge. Their avoidance of the question in fact answered the subtext of Mann's point.

The final event was an open interview of Adele Naude Santos, Dean of the new School of Architecture at UCSD, by Diane Favro, UCLA professor of architectural history. Representing the "international" component of the symposium, Santos presented slides of several recent projects including collaborative competitions for an Art Park in the San Fernando Valley and the City of Perris, California Civic Center.

One of only three women in the US to gain the distinctive position of Dean of an architecture school, Santos has the enviable opportunity to develop a school from the ground up. Her educational program includes a multifaceted approach to overhauling traditional architectural education by addressing global societal changes ranging from cultural interdependence to advanced technology. While she did not, in this event, articulate a social or architectural theory, it was clear that she believes the "architect as superstar" is an anachronism to collaborative, process oriented methodologies. As such, architectural education should promote disciplinary variety and alternative careers. Her working approach parallels urban design practice: instead of an object-oriented architecture there is a commitment to craft and quality as well as context, function and social concerns. Similarly, she claims not to have a single definition of feminism but engages in a search for the pluralistic view of feminist theory and philosophy and its relationship to her own work.

Santos acknowledged rapid changes have been leading to major commissions for women who are fast becoming international superstars. It is interesting to note

that, her own statement notwithstanding, Santos is a superstar. She readily admitted, in her droll manner, that she felt like a "rock star" by the recent attention she has received from the national architectural community.

During the course of this colloquium, no coherent or clearly defined social theories of feminism were articulated or discussed, although participants alluded to different approaches. Architectural theory and practice follows social theory and practices, as in social utopianism and Modernism, postmodernism and stylistic eclecticism, post-structuralist linguistics and deconstruction. These critical movements first developed in realms outside of architecture and then were systematically formalized into an architectural language. Within this framework, feminism has influenced and begun to impact our culture. We have yet to see if this force leads solely to the collision of intention and form or to a new formal order.

We question the structure and organization of the colloquium which suggested that feminist values in architecture were the exclusive domain of women; and moreover ask if it is incumbent upon every woman architect to make every project a feminist statement to be judged exclusively from a feminist viewpoint.

A coherent "feminist", or holistic, human theory must be developed within society as a whole through individual actions affecting economic and political reform. Feminist theory will then be rooted within a body of knowledge and an attitude that permeates both built work and architectural education. That knowledge, which itself will reform conventional architectural theory, can then be utilized by individuals as a catalyst to advance the human condition, providing nourishment for our individual paths as collaborators and artists.

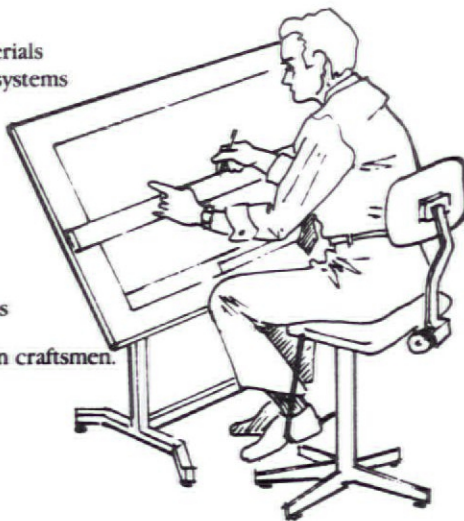
This review results from the intersection of opinions of Amy Alper, Mary Eaves Mitchell, Marc Futterman, and Paul A. Mitchell.

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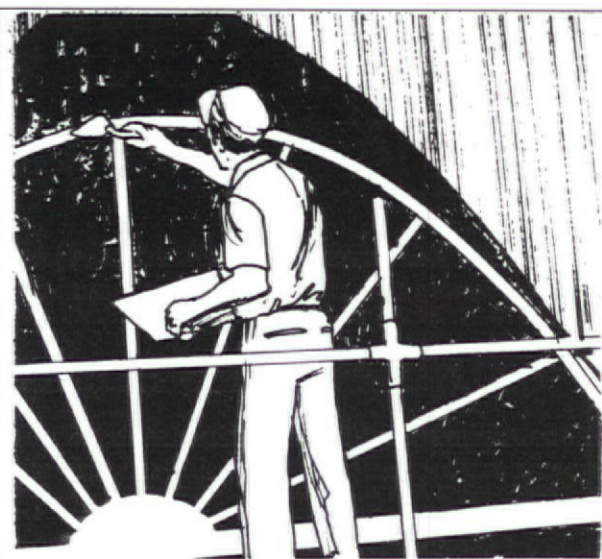
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development or demolition project. More than anything else, over the years Sorkin used his privileged role as architecture critic to urge community involvement in the decision making process and openness in the debates about the future shape and character of his city. He largely halted his writing projects over the last three or four years to devote his time to proposing architectural strategies for a better future, and to academic work as well. His boldness over the years has cost him, however. Although repeatedly a candidate widely favored by students and even from time to time faculties for major administrative posts, his candidacy has always been burned at the upper echelons, in smoke-filled rooms where potentates from all walks of life inevitably come together to make gentlemanly decisions about who will be moved up the ladder. Just as Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves and a few other modest talents owe much of their notoriety to Johnson's patronage, so does Sorkin probably owe some of the rebuffs he has received to the enmity of Johnson.

Has it been worth it? Only Sorkin can answer that for sure, but the architecture world of the late 1970s and 1980s would have been enormously impoverished without his spirited critiques. I doubt whether he would have been constitutionally capable of writing his columns any differently.

PROBLEMATIC GHIRARDO

Out of Site: A Social Criticism of Architecture, edited by Diane Ghirardo, Bay Press, Seattle, 1991, \$16.95.

By **Jeremy Levin**

Edited by Diane Ghirardo, *Out of Site*, is a collection of essays aimed at explicating architecture's long neglected social dimension. Though all the essays prod deeply and profoundly into the issues at hand none warrant as much criticism, both good and bad as Ghirardo's own.

According to Ghirardo, architecture is complicit with the ideology of its patron. This is strong stuff that represents only the cornerstone of her spirited attack on the lack of concern on the part of architects for the social implications of their work. In the article, entitled 'Two Institutions for the Arts', the

author focuses her sights on the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts for the Ohio State University by Peter Eisenman and the unbuilt Getty Center for the Getty Trust by Richard Meier. The first half of the article carefully dissects and analyzes the Wexner Center as a 'fine' though 'depthless' building. However, it is on the second half of the essay, devoted to the Getty Center, that I wish to focus. For here is where she makes her most troubling assertions.

Ghirardo works through a close reading of the plan of Richard Meier's Getty Center to show how the building reflects the unethical social agenda of its patron. For Ghirardo, the experience of a work of architecture is intimately tied to the 'messages' it transmits. This causes her to worry about the implications of architecture which speaks a politically incorrect message.

Thus, Ghirardo seeks to engender a politically correct policy within the profession which would affect which commissions architects accept in order to prevent the abetment of unethical institutions. According to this scenario architects would carefully screen their clients to determine their ideological fitness. If they seem fit then they would be entitled to the benefits of good architecture.

The ramifications of this policy are extremely troubling. To begin with, architects would spend much of their time carefully researching their client's backgrounds and only then agreeing to accept their commissions on the condition that they held an ethical political agenda. This points to two major problems with Ghirardo's line of thinking. First, she assumes that the world has an easily perceptible black and white character. This is undoubtedly not so, as institutions and corporations are never simply good or evil but operate within the gray zone of moral territory.

Furthermore, the line for dividing acts into good and evil varies somewhat from individual to individual. Consequently, the other problem with her policy is that it forgets that each architect would have a different operative definition for what it means to be

politically correct. There are plenty of architects who would find the ideology of the Getty Center perfectly acceptable. What Ghirardo is really calling for is a commitment to an ideology, preferably a liberal one.

Equally problematic is Ghirardo's literalization and then reduction of the metaphor of reading as it applies to the interpretation of architecture. These bad reading habits cause her to view buildings as the most transparent of texts. Her methodology for reading is based on three reductive moves. The first occurs when she chooses to examine a building solely in terms of its plan configuration. She says of the building which houses the Getty scholars that its "placement on the site and the circular form of the building's plan articulates the private withdrawn character of the activities within."

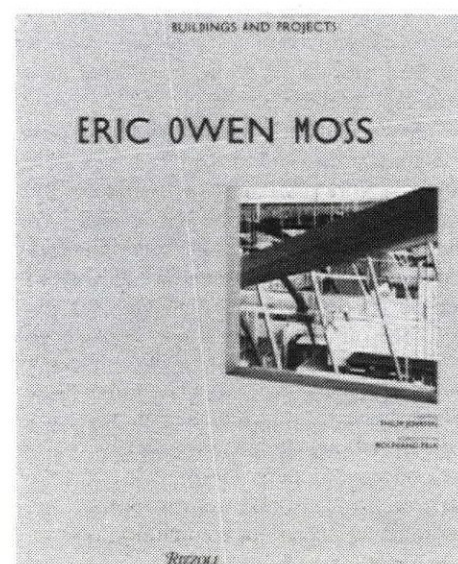
This is undoubtedly a valid interpretation but it is typical of its author's method of reading architecture. A method which looks solely at one aspect of a building's character to evidence an interpretation. A building may in fact seem "fascistic" in plan but incredibly "democratic" in the opportunities it gives for sectional inhabitation. Furthermore, the play of light within a space may suggest an altogether different reading from either the plan or section. Considering the incredible variety of phenomena experienced in any building it seems rather dubious to suggest that one can convict a work of architecture of exhibiting a single distinct ideological character.

Herein lies the second of Ghirardo's reductive positions in which she takes the platonic stance of assuming that there is only one correct way of interpreting a work of architecture. This representationalist account of the world assumes that one could have access to some Archimedean point of objectivity from which they could compare their representation/interpretation of things to the way in which they 'actually' are. The impossibility of such a position leads to the conclusion that we make truth rather than discover it. Truth is consequently a matter of consensus among the members of a given interpretive community situated in a specific historical

moment. Each community is defined by a membership which shares many of the same presuppositions about the world. The key being that there is no monolithic interpretive community and thus there may be many different equally valid interpretations of what a given object means. Take the case of the Capitol Building in Washington D.C., which has been viewed as both a symbol of democracy and of authoritarian control. Architecture doesn't make statements, rather we make statements about architecture.

One of the primary lessons of semiology is that there are infinite texts. However, Ghirardo holds a rather reductive notion of reading which privileges ideological content above all others. There are however, phenomenological, psychological, and even erotic ways of reading which may suggest multiple and conflicting interpretations.

Ghirardo's desire for architects to operate with a political consciousness is well taken but when this becomes a call for political correctness she loses the moral ground. Aesthetic experience does not have a moral dimension only a poetic one. This does not absolve architects from designing without a care for their works political implications but rather asks that these implications be seen for what they are.



Above, cover of newly-published monograph on the work of Eric Owen Moss.

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

A selection of stocking-filler Fall architectural publications

By **Noel Millea**

Modern Landscape Architecture, Private Gardens and Public Parks. Photography by Felice Frankel, text by Jory Johnson, Abbeville Press, \$49.95

The City Shaped, Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History. Spiro Kostof, Thames and Hudson, \$50

Green Architecture, Designs for a Sustainable Future. Brenda and Robert Vale, Thames and Hudson, \$40.

Louis I Kahn, Writings, Lectures, Interviews. Alessandra Latour, editor, Rizzoli, \$35

The Paintings and Sketches of Louis Kahn. Jan Hochstim, with an introduction by Vincent J. Scully, Rizzoli, \$85

Louis I. Kahn, In the Realm of Architecture. David B. Brownlee and David B. De Long, Rizzoli, \$60 (\$40 paper)

Richard Meier, Architect, Volume 2. Essays by Kenneth Frampton and Joseph Rykwert, Rizzoli, \$60 (\$40 paper)

Eric Owen Moss, Buildings and Projects. Forward by Philip Johnson, introduction by Wolf D. Prix, Rizzoli, \$50 (\$35)

The Architecture of Mott B. Schmidt. Forward by Robert A.M. Stern, Rizzoli, \$50

The New Finnish Architecture Scott Poole, introduction by Colin St. John Wilson, Rizzoli, \$35

Towns and Townmaking Principles. Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberck, Architects, Krieger, Alex and William Lennerz, eds., Rizzoli \$25

Team Zoo, Buildings and Projects 1971-1990. Manfred Speidel, editor, Rizzoli \$35

Mediterranean Vernacular, a Banishing Architectural Tradition. Vlacheshev I. Atroshenko and Milton Grundy, Rizzoli, \$45

Making a Middle Landscape. Peter G. Rowe, the MIT Press, \$34.95

Modern Architecture in America, Visions and Revisions. Richard Guy Wilson and Sidney K. Robinson, eds., Iowa State University Press, \$34.95

Modern Architecture, Otto Wagner, A Guidebook for his Students to this Field of Art. Introduction and translation by Harry Francis Mallgrave, The Getty Center, \$16.95

Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940. Richard A. Etlin, the MIT Press, \$65

The Origins of Modernism in Russian Architecture. William Craft Brumfield, University of California Press, \$75

Architecture, The Natural and the Manmade. Vincent Scully, St. Martin's Press, \$40

Contemporary Architectural Drawings, Donations to the Avery Library Centennial Drawings Archive. Janet Parks, ed., Columbia University, \$24.95

An Industrious Art. Innovation in Pattern and Print at the Fabric Workshop. Marion Boulton Stroud, ed., W.W. Norton and Company, \$39.95

Arts and Crafts Style. Isabelle Anscombe, Rizzoli, \$50

Emerging Japanese Architects of the 1990s. Jackie Kestenbaum, ed., Columbia University Press, \$25

The Urban Text. Mario Gendelsones, The MIT Press, \$14.95

Formica and Design, From the Counter Top to High Art. Susan Grant Levin, ed., Rizzoli, \$40

Architecture from Without: Theoretical Frameworks for a Critical Practice. Diane I Agrest, The MIT Press \$30

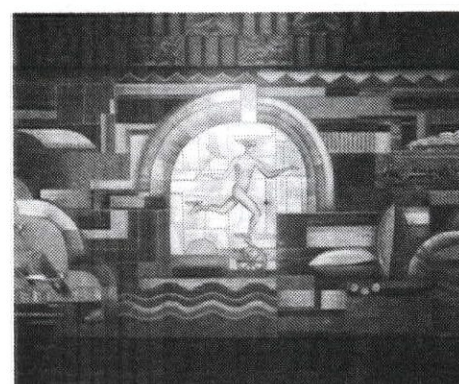
The Architecture of Western Gardens: A Design History from the Renaissance to the Present Day. Monique Mosser and Georges Teyssot, eds., The MIT Press, \$95

Edge City, Life on the New Frontier. Joel Garreau, Doubleday, \$22.50

The Getty Center, Design Process. The J. Paul Getty Trust, \$40.

The Built, the Unbuilt and the Unbuildable: In Pursuit of Architectural Meaning. Robert Harbison, the MIT Press, \$25.

100 Contemporary Architects, Drawings and Sketches. Bill Lacy, ed., Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, \$49.50



Aldo Rossi: Buildings and Projects. Morris Adjmi, ed., Princeton Architectural Press, \$60 (\$40 paper)

Aldo Rossi: Drawings and Paintings. Morris Adjmi and Stefano Fera, eds., Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Flesh. Elizabeth Diller and Richard Scofidio, Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Condemned Buildings: An Architects Pretext. Douglas Darden, Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Theo Van Doesburg: Painter and Architect. Evert van Straaten, Princeton Architectural Press, \$60

American Architectural Masterpieces. Princeton Architectural Press, \$65

Erich Mendelson, The Complete Works. Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Courtyard Housing in Los Angeles. Polyzoides, Sherwood, Tice, and Shulman, Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Order of the American City. Mario Gandelsonas, Princeton Architectural Press, \$24.95

Low and High: Design in Everyday Life. Ellen Lupton, ed., Princeton Architectural Press, \$19.95

The American Houses of Robert A.M. Stern. Clive Aslet, Rizzoli, \$75.

LA Deco. Carla Breeze, with an introduction by David Gebhard, Rizzoli, \$17.95

Left, an example of L.A. Deco from Carla Breeze's book on the subject.

BOOK REVIEWS

EXQUISITE SORKIN

Exquisite Corpse: Writings on Buildings, Michael Sorkin, Verso, \$35.

By Diane Ghirardo

Students who study architecture are regularly forced to undergo the tortures of public jury reviews at which visiting firemen hold student work up for evaluation - with widely varying degrees of civility. The point of this bizarre ritual - unique to architecture - is to toughen up the student in preparation for the rigors of criticism in the real world. Alas, it falls short of its goal. Those who survive develop elephantiasis of the ego, and becoming famous and big typically fails to allow them to rise above the criticism - the bigger they are, the more skin is exposed. And very thin skin it is, too. Architects' overwhelmingly hostile reaction to criticism has led to an anemic architectural press in which no blood is spilled.

It should come as no surprise that many powerful figures in the architecture world never took kindly to Michael Sorkin's articles for the *Village Voice* and other publications, many of which are now collected in *Exquisite Corpse*. Unlike most architectural writers, Sorkin pulled no punches and spared not even the most sacred of cows from the sting of his rapier wit and trenchant critiques. Although his subjects range from Los Angeles to Los Alamos - booms to bombs - the skyscrapers, power brokers, architects and problems of New York constituted his primary turf.

No one could believe, in 1978, that someone would actually write "if Philip Johnson has a talent, it is a tastemaker's talent: He jumps on a trend with the best of them," and, in this same 1978 article, "Johnson doesn't so much design, he signs, a Louis Vuitton among architects." Because the *Village Voice* is not easily accessible, for years fuzzy fifth-generation photocopies of some of his more memorable articles circulated almost clandestinely among architecture faculty members and practitioners. In the words of the Quakers, Sorkin spoke truth to power, and this, in the architectural community, is more than refreshing - it is unheard of.

Certain fundamental assumptions underlie all of Sorkin's writing. First, criticism in the various mass media must address a wide range of issues. He opposed that criticism which focuses on loosely argued formal issues and thereby "helps preclude other ways of seeing and understanding. Buildings are to be viewed not as complex, condensed products of cultural aspirations, as instruments of social forces or as texts susceptible to and demanding readings of rigor and discipline, but as discrete incidents, as individual acts, as just another consumer product." His arch-examples of this flawed position were the two architectural writers for the *New York Times*, Ada Louise Huxtable ("the Hedda Hopper of architecture") and Paul Goldberger ("the toady"), who used a "limited lexicon of valuation, of a cluster of categories that by their very incantation assure legitimation of a subject." Sorkin repeatedly zeroed in on Huxtable and Goldberger: Huxtable ("the doyenne of development") for her unbelievable *apologia* for the Trump tower and the MOMA "Transformations" exhibit; and Goldberger for much more. Sorkin challenged Goldberger's less than compelling discussions of buildings, as the goldbergerese of this comment about Frank Lloyd Wright's Price Tower: "The tower is...tensile and tart." To which Sorkin responded: "And what of 'tart'? Beyond its obvious alliterative appeal, is it meant to suggest that the building is sour, piquant or saucy?" Even more outrageous, Sorkin reminded us of Goldberger's selection of the slave quarters at the Evergreen mansion in Louisiana as one of "ten buildings with a style of their own" because of its incomparable "architectural experience."

What differentiated Sorkin from Goldberger above all - other than intelligence, wit, architectural savvy and powerful prose - was the relation of their writings to the sources of power and patronage in New York. While Sorkin suffered no reservations about criticizing the publisher of the *Voice* or anyone else, Goldberger, as Sorkin noted, "seems to have a radar-like instinct for the buttered side of the bread." Thus recurrent encomiums for the less than mediocre works of Johnson and Robert Stern (his chief patrons) flow from Goldberger's pen, and thus too his defense of the indefensible *Times* project for Times Square. Sorkin's

exposure of Goldberger as compliant toady of assorted masters is thorough and lethal, and alone worth the price of the book, not just to see Goldberger humbled, but for a clear demonstration of how so-called architectural criticism can serve the most reactionary interests under the guise of representing a disinterested, even academic, perspective.

This brings us to a second constant in Sorkin's articles - an unwillingness to ignore hypocrisy. Knowledgeable about the New York architecture scene as he was, he let few pass by unremarked. Since the early 1970s, for example, the now defunct Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS) has enjoyed a largely undeserved reputation as a center of innovative intellectual energy. Following exhibitions and tributes to Philip Johnson and Wallace K. Harrison at the IAUS, Sorkin suggested that the prospect of large donations led to a series of catalogs and exhibitions dedicated to "the work of mediocre older architects who are also men of substantial means." A lavish MOMA exhibit in 1983 on skyscrapers featured but three architects - Norman Foster, Philip Johnson and Gordon Bunshaft - and, again Sorkin drew attention to the fact that the latter two were MOMA trustees at the time. When the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority decided to develop an important site at Columbus Circle in 1985, the "best interests of the public" were totally identified with the bottom line, but Sorkin showed how ill public interests really would be served by the development proposals then under consideration.

In general, however, Sorkin has rarely needed to do other than allow his targets to impale themselves with their own words. One of my all time favorite columns recounts the story behind the 1988 MOMA Deconstructivist exhibition, the one which certified Decon as a movement and Johnson as its somewhat tardy chief exponent. Sorkin of course delivers some of his unfailingly deadly zingers. Regarding the selection process for who would be included in the show: "Absent a primary idea about the subject matter, Johnson shops around - much the same way he approaches design." When Peter Eisenman stopped Sorkin to show him drawings by

Johnson, "Eisenman - longtime loyalist - carried on about how impressive it was that the great man was able to change his stripes so late in his career, as if Johnson had ever done anything but. Naturally the building will get a little better when the kids in his office get to work on it." But for the most part, Johnson does Sorkin's work for him, as in the following exchange:

"I pressed him about what the show was, what it stood for, and he responded that 'it represents a direction that interests us.' But what's it about, I wondered?"

"That's what we're trying to work out. That's why I've got [Mark] Wigley."

"And where'd you get Wigley?"

"From Peter."

Sorkin's defiance in the face of the most entrenched centers of power has earned him wide esteem, but Sorkin has other strings to his bow as well. Who would expect to find a writer so adept at polemics and tart critiques also capable of delivering a finely tuned explanation of architecture as accessible to the nonexpert as to the cognoscenti? Exemplary in this respect are his essays on Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim and the proposed Gwathmey Siegel addition; Marcel Breuer's Whitney Museum and the dreadful enlargement scheme concocted by Michael Graves which leaves nothing of the Whitney unvandalized; the Richard Rogers building for PA Technology in New Jersey, and many others. Remarkably, Sorkin's prose in praise of a building or a project is as powerful and engaging as when his pen is dipped in acid. A bit less funny, but still enormously interesting.

What does Sorkin's eleven years of writing architectural criticism of various kinds add up to? At the very least, it is a powerful record of a tough-minded, intellectually honest individual with plenty of moxie standing up fearlessly to some pretty obnoxious characters in the worlds of architecture and real estate development. Perhaps more importantly, it is a powerfully affirmative body of work - affirmative of the need to build cities according to something other than the dictates of the bottom line, of the positive role of architecture and the architecture critic, and of the potential weight of the community when it chooses to stand against or in favor of a

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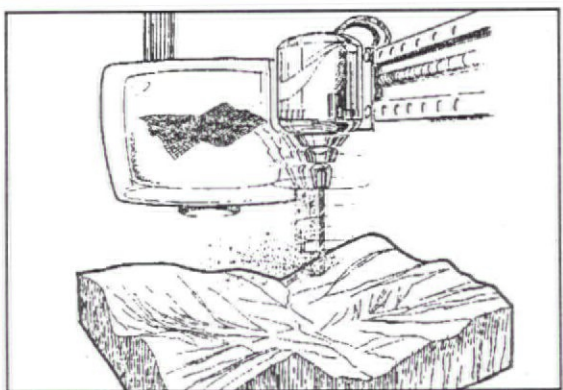
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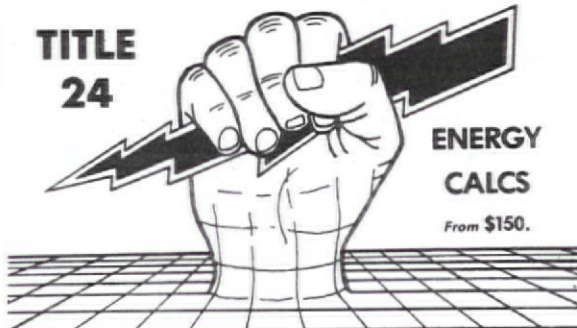


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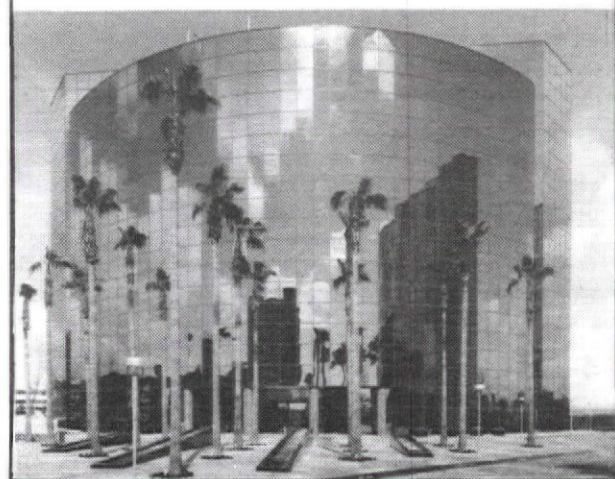
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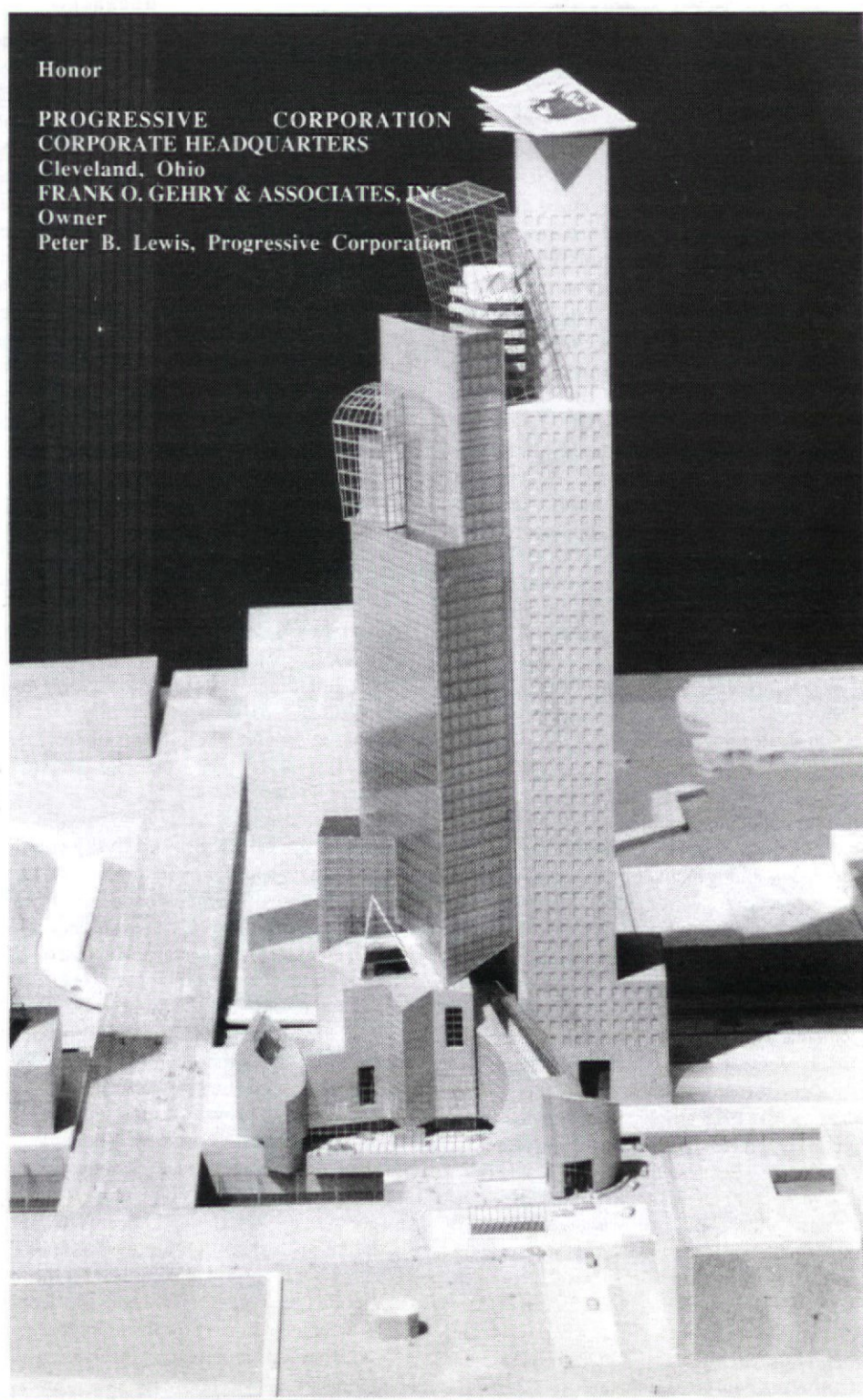
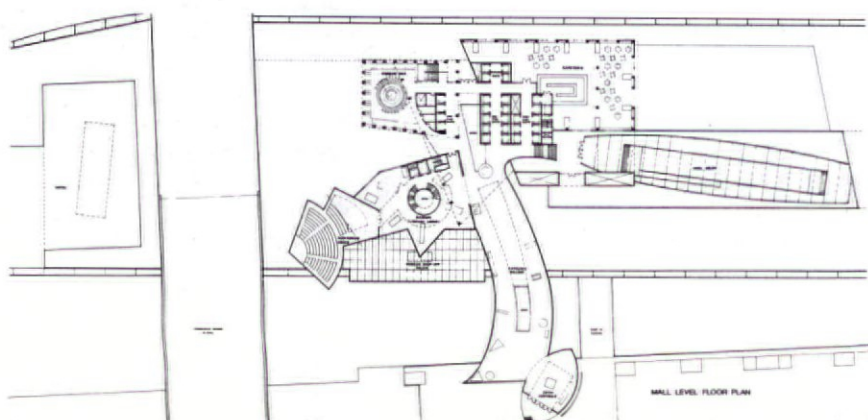
The end of Cleveland's historic Burnham Mall is to be flanked by this Progressive Corporation corporate headquarters tower and a high-rise hotel, creating a gateway to the city which mirrors the positions of the City Hall and the County Building. In addition to office space for this innovative insurance company, the project includes an art museum, creativity and research centers, and a health club. The visual mass of the tower is broken into two contiguous vertical elements clad with metal and stone, respectively. Executive and mechanical penthouses, and a restaurant, are each articulated at the top of the building by changes in both form and material. The art museum, with its scholars' library and auditorium, provides an entrance for the tower via an enclosed bridge. The health club, training center and cafeteria inhabit a structure separated from the tower to preserve views from City Hall to the lake.

The 100-foot walkway from the Mall to the lakefront is to be designed by Donald Judd. A sculpture by Richard Serra, on the deck of the parking garage, is to be the first installation in a proposed art park. Claes Oldenberg's giant carpenter's C-clamp holds down a part of the health club, while his oversized newspaper perches atop the tower, creating an unusual skyline.

GWATHMEY:...a dynamic of two materials.....a sequential progression which gets you to tower. It deals with the pedestrian scale with this unique entry sequence. It is great to have that sequence of entering and then to come to an elevator....very strong urban gestures; engages definitely as a silhouette.
PRAN: innovative as a highrise...quite powerful.....a project that grows on one.
SANTOS: Why award him for doing himself again?

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Project Principal/Management
David Denton
Project Architect
Bruce Biesman-Simons
Project Designer
Eileen Yankowski
Project Team
C. Gregory Walsh
Susan Narduli
Andrew Alper
Christopher J. Bondura

Associate Architect
van Dijk, Johnson & Partners, Cleveland
Photographer
Tom Bonner, Venice



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Ethereal fog and sea breezes permeate the site while the groves of trees temper sun penetration. The ocean presence and the play of light and shadow are preserved in the design of the theater and its surrounding site. Theater-goers pass through the eucalyptus grove to emerge in a clearing where gravel underfoot and the enveloping fog create a sensuous arrival. They view their emerging images reflected by the mirrored wall through which they then pass into the theater. As a ramp behind the mirror continues the progression of discovery, a steel, cantilevered balcony allows a last look back to the clearing and the ocean beyond. This line of demarcation is a sharp threshold making conscious the transition into the world of dream and myth.

GWATHMEY: The piece...the glass and the ramp...a very poetic idea. The entry and court are a little mean, it feels trapped and doesn't get you back to the trees again. But the transformation of the facade: day, solid, at night, transparent.....a kind of expectation is produced, one would really like to go to the top of the ramp and see what's inside.
SANTOS: The glass wall reflects a phenomenal fabric of the eucalyptus trees. It is a calm project with an idea in it.

Honor

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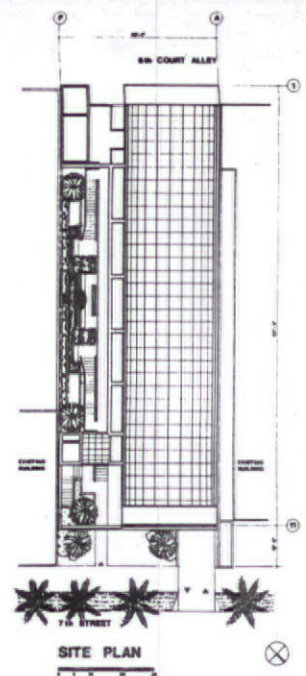
A small, four story, in-fill building near the Santa Monica business district, this structure consists of two floors of parking and two of office space. The top floor is roofed with a translucent vault and contains another loft level internally. The design concept involves the "timelessness" of architecture through the exploration of steel and concrete, both structurally and sculpturally. The primary structure is concrete. A brise-soleil frame masks the glazing at both front and back. The steel shear frame is celebrated, in yellow, within the structure. The concrete is left natural with a graining from the plywood forms. Also formed of natural concrete, the sculptural fountain displays stepped details at the corners.

SANTOS: I love the translucent glass.



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Peter Ritter
Project Team
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Yasuro Yamaguchi

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Plumbing Engineer
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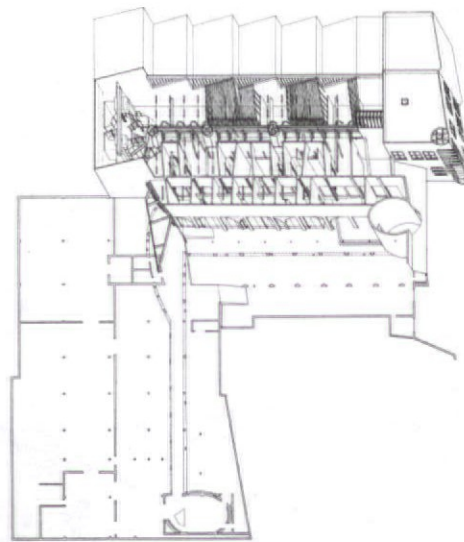
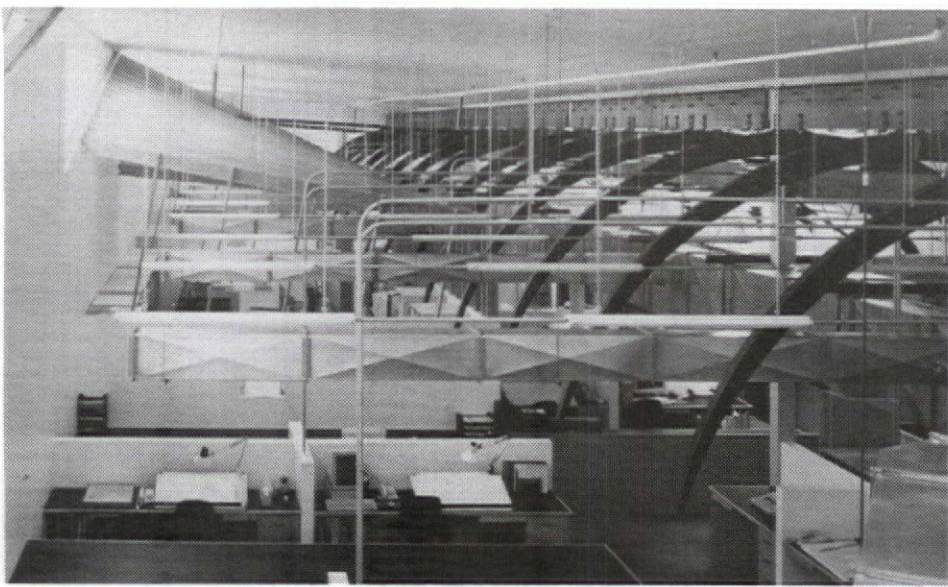
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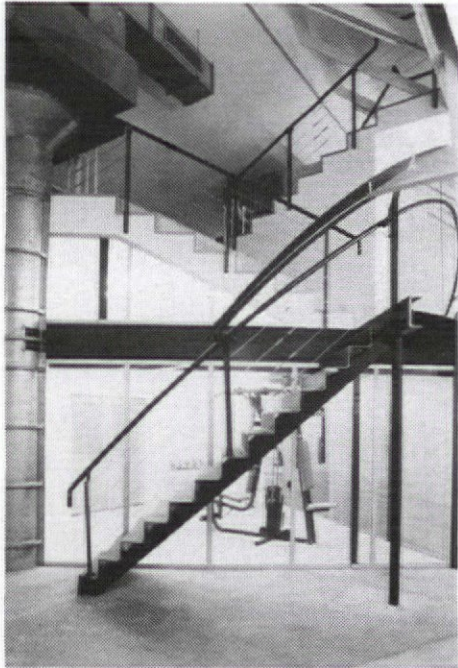


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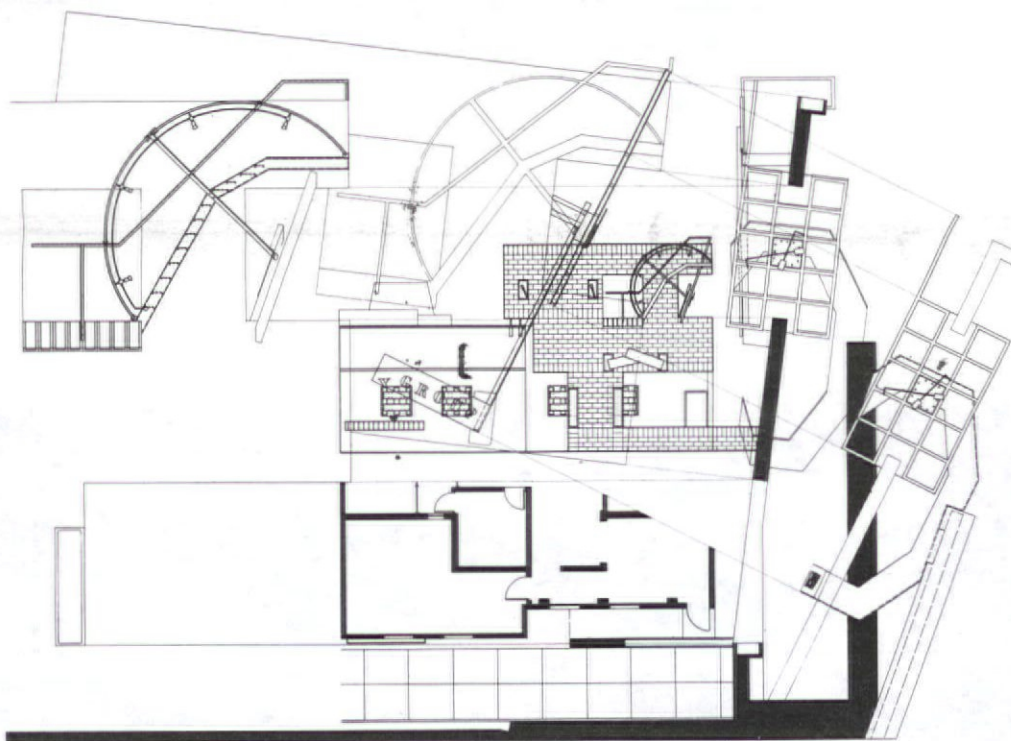
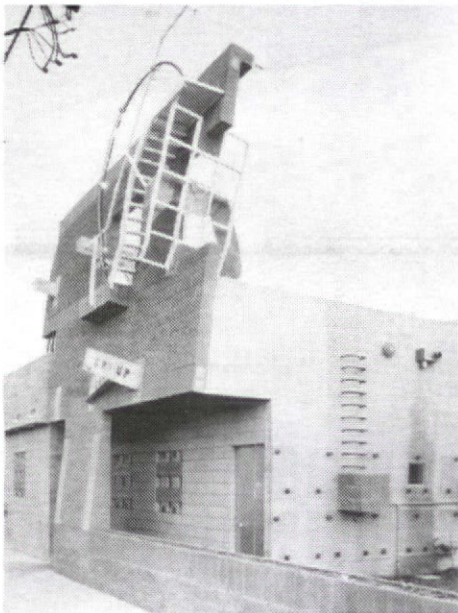
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Custom Metal Fabricator
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Jamik Construction & Management, Redondo Beach
Construction Manager
AJ Contracting of California, Inc., Los Angeles
Photographer
Tom Bonner, Venice



This building, for The Gary Group, is conceived as a picaresque novel with a series of discontinuous adventures involving the same participants; the novel can be opened at any point and read either forward or backward. The building has two entrances: the street-facing one is cut from an almost freestanding, leeward-inclining, concrete block wall, resting on "C"-shaped steel ribs implanted in an adjoining wall. The second entrance, cut in a wall embellished with chains, wires, pipes, re-bar, block planters and flowers, confronts the parking lot. Inside, work stations, arranged within a cruciform plan/gable section, mix with four tiny landscaped courtyards. Adjoining this "crucigable" is a hall terminating in a private meditation room. A conical steel cap supported on legs of wood and steel punctures a half-pyramid skylight that roofs the room. South of the hall is a two-story area of private offices and open counters for graphic artists. The vaulted roof, supported by two bow-string trusses, is carefully interrupted by two enormous aluminum, glass and sheet metal funnels that let in natural light inside.

GWATHMEY: It's very strong.

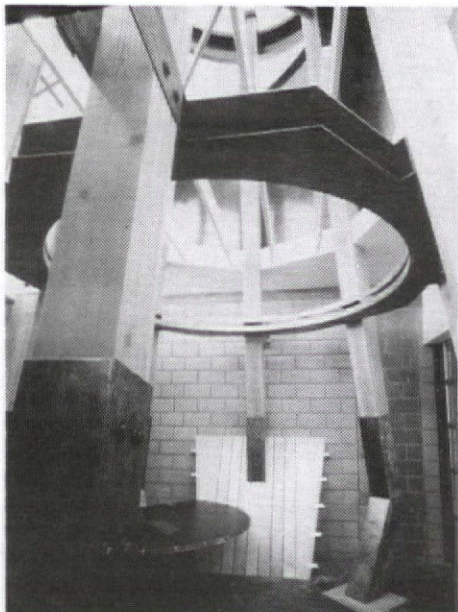


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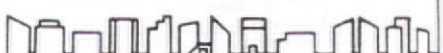
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Steel Rib Fabrication
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Photographers
Grant Mudford, Los Angeles
Frank Jackson, Los Angeles



The conceptual organizer of this project for S.M.A., a design firm specializing in video graphics, is a central causeway anchored at the west by an exercise room and at the east by a stairwell. The causeway itself follows an original line of wood post supports and connecting beams running the length of the space. Steel angles, bolted to both sides of the beams, form a precise organizational reference line to which all additional components conform. To this central beam, tapered steel ribs are attached. The whole is roofed by a hyperbolic lid. Private offices run parallel to the causeway with three circulation links to the main walk. These three intersections are defined by pairs of steel ribs, stiffened with tubular struts and ribbed acrylic sheets. Positioned above the acrylic sheets are round domed skylights.

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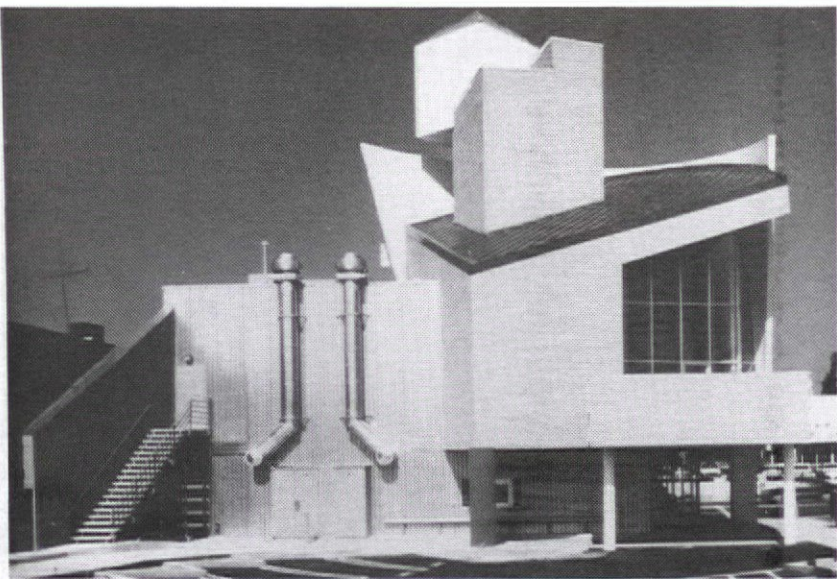
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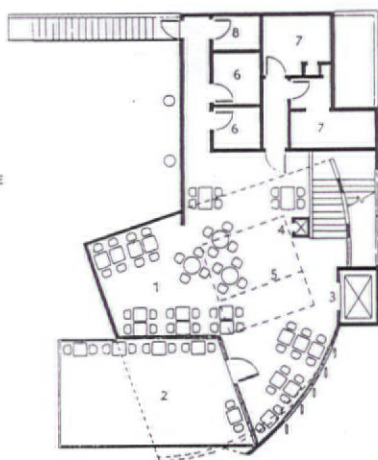
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LEGEND

1. DINING
2. TERRACE
3. ELEVATOR
4. DUMBWAITER
5. SKYLIGHT ABOVE
6. RESTROOM
7. LOCKER ROOM
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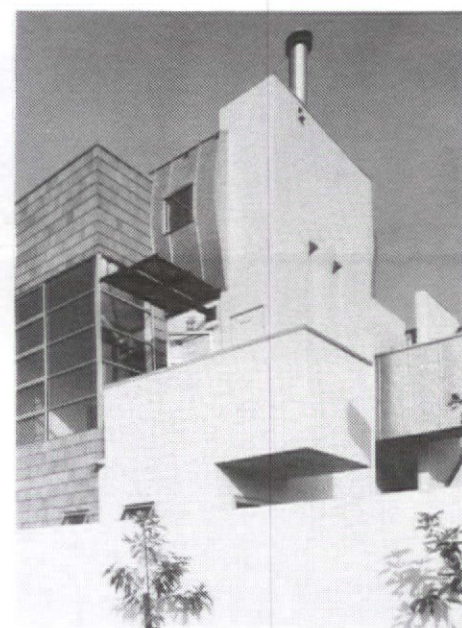
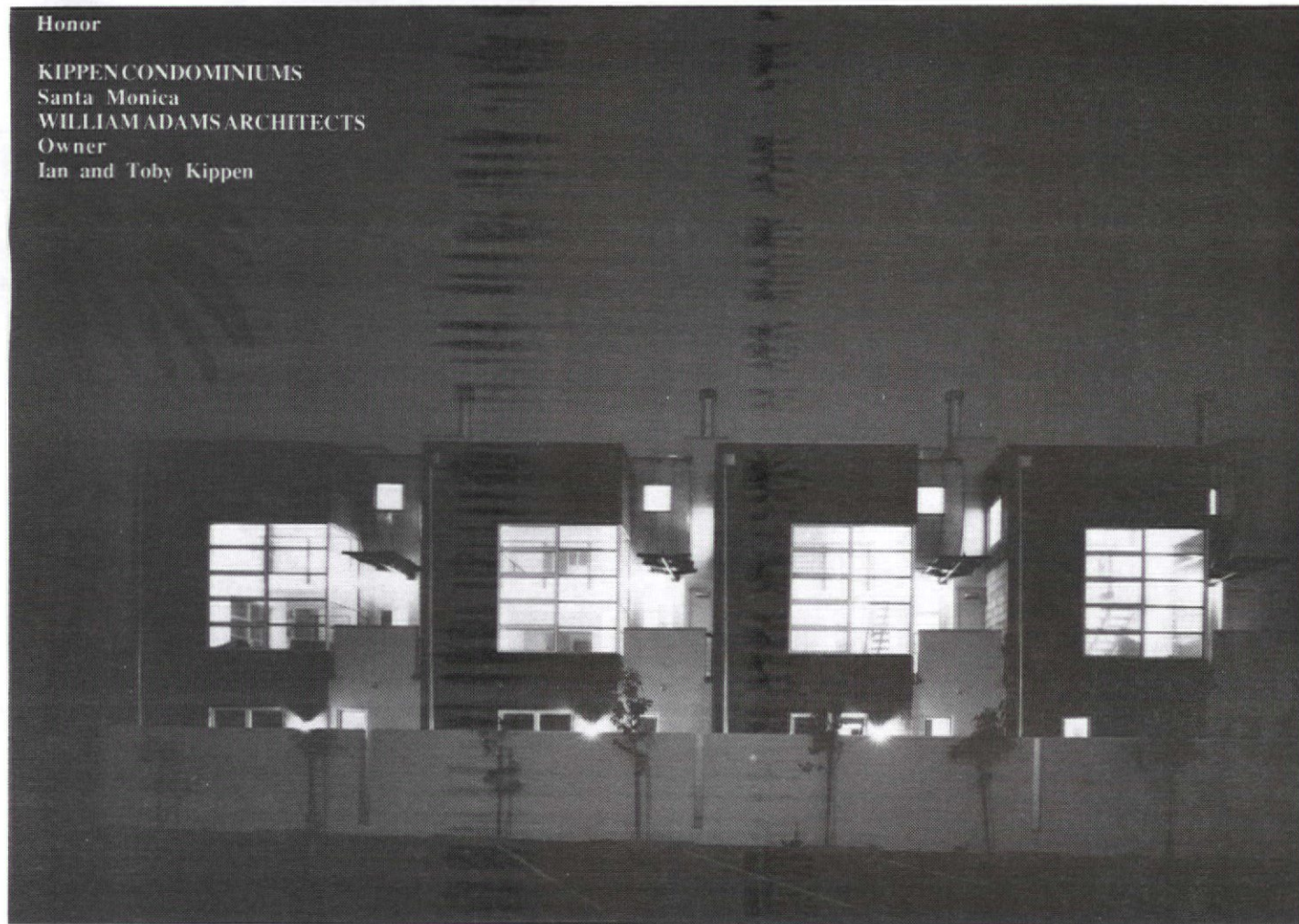
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Here, the typical KFC building type was discarded in favor of something more out of the ordinary. The sculptural nature of this store's design offers an instantly recognizable landmark that integrates building and signage as one. Parking, normally at the front, was placed behind the store, along with the driveway servicing the drive-through window. The eat-in area, on the second floor, is a light-filled room with high ceilings and an outdoor terrace. The stairway winds around the curving street wall and is visible through the large front window. The curving wall serves to draw the eye and the automobile around the corner. Metal fins shield the dining area from the afternoon sun and add a distinctive element to the overall composition.

DIETSCH:...fun...
GWATHMEY:...inventive...I hated the chicken,
but I loved the space of the dining room.

Honor

KIPPEN CONDOMINIUMS
Santa Monica
WILLIAM ADAMS ARCHITECTS
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Project Team
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Eric Odor
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General Contractor
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Sheet Metal Fabricator
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Ornamental Metal Fabricator
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Douglas Hill, Los Angeles

The inspiration for this four unit building arises from three basic methods of making shelter. First is the use of existing site materials or earthen materials interpreted here in Portland Cement plaster. Second, the gathering of materials elsewhere, then modifying and assembling them on site is displayed through lumber, plywood, shingles, and typical construction techniques. The third is shelter of very modified material assembled elsewhere and brought to the site; in this case, metal, glass, plastic and prefabrication. The evolution of references in time dominates this idea. An abstract view of the project is as a remnant or ruin entertaining the perceived insertion of elements with contextual overtones, and the attachment of elements of a technological nature. This allows both an elusive melancholy in the remnant elements, and the inclusion of references of a more contemporary nature.

GWATHMEY: I like the use of shingle as a graphic instead of a connotative material....graphic, sequential, good scale...strong.
PRAN:It is gorgeous at night.

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Morphosis' interest in this problem, in both formal and pragmatic terms, was with transfiguration. The existing building was a prototypical, mid-sixties, speculative structure of somewhat limited assets as an artifact of that era. Its primary systems were used as a datum or base for a series of subtractive and additive design manipulations which focused on the accretional manner of city growth (backwards and forwards). Part of the strategy was to take apart one thing and make two (and then put them back together again), making two structures, the thinner one and the taller one. Front, corner, entry and top were all part of the discussion. The interest in proportionality was heightened by the vulgarity of the original.

GWATHMEY: This building on the strip...is giving a volumetric, sculptural form while maintaining the edge. The matrix of the wall has a three-dimensionality, a pure layered grid that transcends the edge.

PRAN: A skin game...suddenly someone comes along and shows us how to make buildings transparent again.



Project Principal

Thom Mayne

Project Architect

Mark McVay

Project Team

Michael Brandes

Craig Burdick

Cathleen Chua

Daniel Eggen

Todd Dundon

Kim Groves

Dominique Jakob

Richard Lee

Sheridan Lowrey

Frank Martens

Alexander Moh

Scott Romes

Craig Scott

Chris Wahl

Selwyn Ting

Michael Volk

Structural Engineer

BP Consulting Engineers, Inc., Santa Monica

Mechanical Engineer

Rosenberg + Associates, Los Angeles

Electrical Engineers

Sasco Electric

MOGAB Electric

Dickerson Electric

Pyrocom

Construction Manager/General Contractor

Tishman Construction Co., Los Angeles

Curtain Wall Fabricator

La Habra Glass, La Habra

Sheet Metal Fabricator

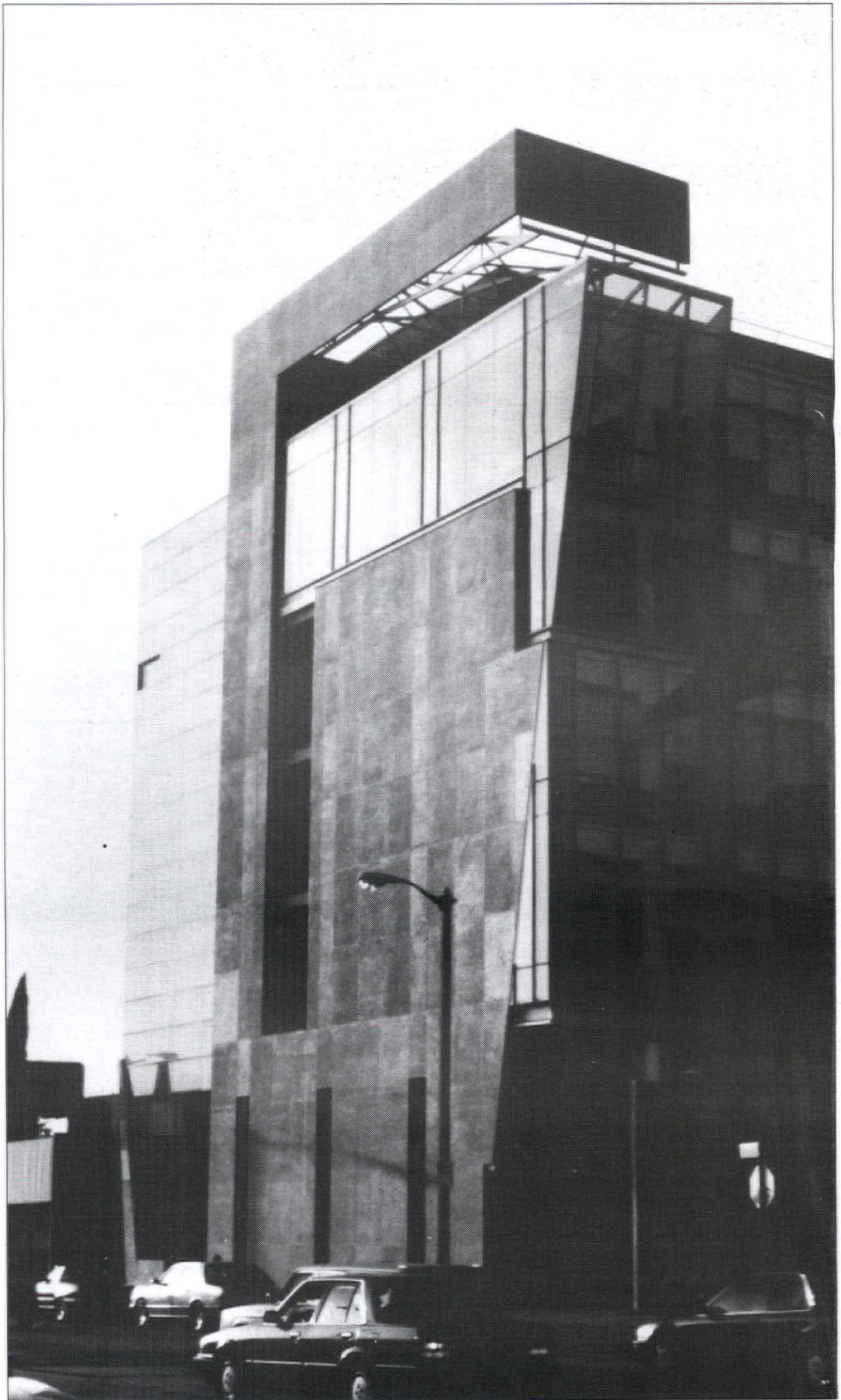
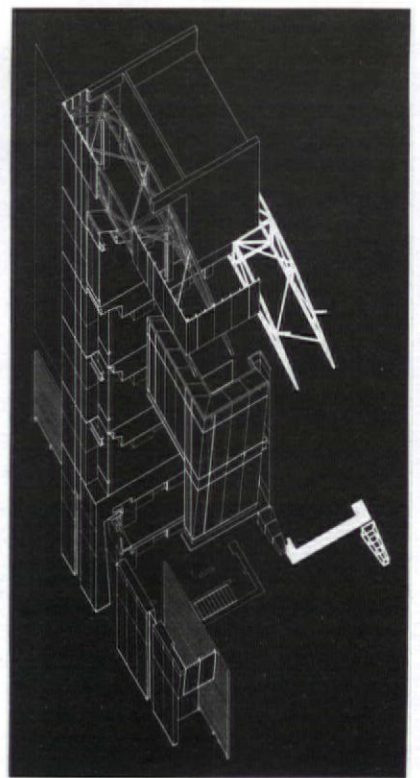
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Stone Fabricator

DBM/Hatch, South El Monte

Photographer

Michael Volk, Los Angeles



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Vice President/Sales Manager

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MORPHOSIS
ARCHITECTS

AIA/LA DESIGN AWARDS 1991

After a long day assessing nearly 200 entries and a hot evening at the Hollywood Roosevelt justifying their choices before an expectant audience, jurors Adele Naude Santos, Deborah Dietsch, Peter Pran and Charles Gwathmey conferred two Merit and eight Honor awards to the following schemes. Several of the winners were members of L.A.'s now fully-established avant-garde (and were, despite supposed anonymity, instantly recognized by the jurors); their designs were seen as "most resolved on their own terms." Many other entries, which, irritatingly, were not displayed before the audience, were dismissed for "lack of density of ideas" and for "parodying the more innovative architects." Somewhat unfairly, considering the frivolous nature of some of the winning schemes, entrants were also chided, by Adele Naude Santos, for "lack of social ideas." Gwathmey, on the other hand, despite reminders from the audience about hard realities such as the recession, called on the architect's "overriding obligation to provoke" and lauded L.A. for its continuing freedom and experimentation. To conclude, entrants were advised to improve presentation (during the day, it was also noted that "persistence pays off"; one winner was third time lucky) and Pran reminded an unconvinced audience that "after all, awards aren't that serious."

Design Awards feature edited by Mary Eaves Mitchell.



ACKERBERG HOUSE
Malibu
RICHARD MEIER & PARTNERS
Owner
Norman and Lisette Ackenberg

By referring to the indigenous courtyard types of Southern California, this house mediates the extreme differences between the mountains to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the south. Conceived as an L-shaped two story plan, this house looks out over three adjacent courts: an internal courtyard connected to the living room, a tennis court to the east, and a narrow swimming pool south of the house. To modulate and inflect the changing California light, the house is generously proportioned and provided with clerestories and skylights. Brise soleil and a loggia sequence serve both to frame the panorama over the ocean and to provide protection from high-angle sun. Throughout the house, a high level of interpenetration exists between exterior and interior space.

DIETSCH: I think it's formulaic.
GWATHMEY: This is one of the few, white objects in the whole California place that works.....site responsive, layered, formally resolved and elegant.
PRAN: It is really architecture...there is high quality in all the details.

Project Principal
Richard Meier
Design Team
Richard Meier
Gunter Standke
Collaborators
Steven Theodore
Marc Hacker
Mark Mascheroni
Brian Healy
Hans Li
Daniel Stuver

Structural Engineer
Severud Associates, New York
Mechanical/Electrical Engineer
John L. Altieri, New York
General Contractor
Arya Design, Los Angeles
Artist of Sculpture
Robert Graham, Venice
Photographer
Wolfgang Hoyt (c) ESTO, Mamaroneck

Merit

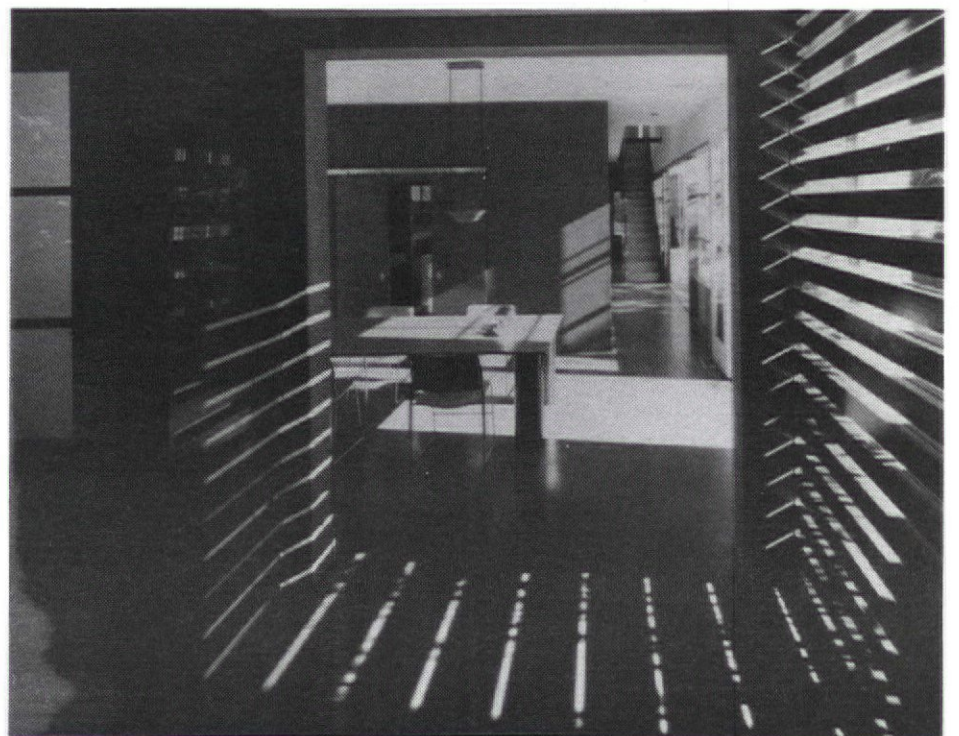
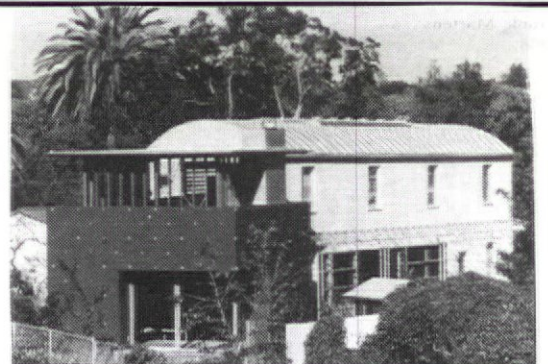
909 HOUSE
Santa Monica
KONING EIZENBERG ARCHITECTURE, INC.
Owner
Hank and Julie Koning

Building elements of this house illustrate a variety of influences expressed through differences in form, materials and scale, reinforcing the individual place in the garden and imparting a sense of accumulation over time. Throughout the complex there is a mixing of the romantic and the modern. The main house is arranged as a linear, semi-open plan and is designed as a big tent to take advantage of Santa Monica's mild weather. Openings are located to maximize cross-ventilation. Wide overhangs and exterior vertical wood louvers provide shade. Vegetation is also employed: the arbor will grow to shade the southeast wall facing the garden, and a grove of eucalyptus will further shade the house. Water conservation appears in the use of underground irrigation and grey-water recycling systems.

GWATHMEY: Given (my) bias against this assemblage architecture, this one is very clear.
PRAN: It is really quite beautiful...it has alot going for it (especially) the way the volumes are treated separately.I like that it's very simple, and I love the dots on the green wall.
SANTOS: The detailing seems very thin, very cheap and off-the-shelf.

Project Team
Hank Koning, AIA
Julie Eizenberg
Tim Andreas
Stuart Emmons
Yo-ichiro Hakamori

Structural Engineer
The Office of Gordon L. Polon, Venice
Landscape Designer
Robert M. Fletcher & Associates, Los Angeles
General Contractor
Brown/Osvaldsson Builders, Inc., Santa Monica (formerly Bruce Brown Construction)
Cabinetry Fabricator/Installer
Charles Gemeiner Cabinets, Los Angeles
Photographer
Grant Mudford, Los Angeles



Robert M. Fletcher
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

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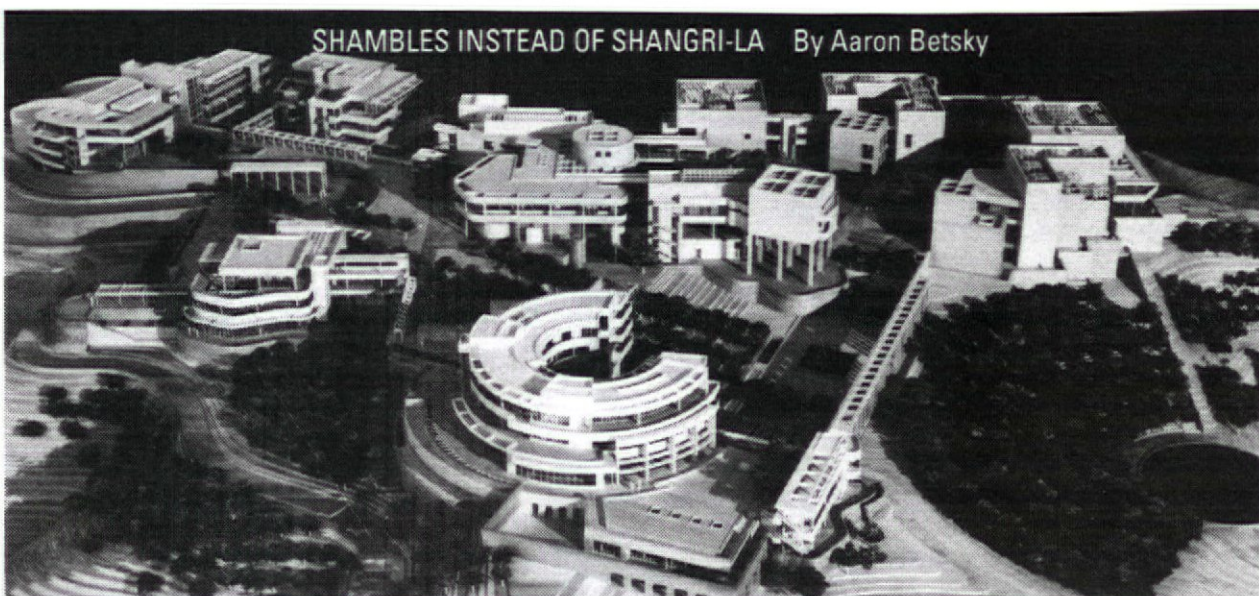
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It could have been great. That's the problem with Richard Meier's long-awaited design for the Getty Center. It had a great site, a client who not only had deep pockets, but took the time and energy to think about architecture, and an architect who has created civic institutions that are both grand and sensuous at the same time. Here was our chance for the acropolis. Instead, it appears we will end up with a beautiful detailed, richly appointed and thoroughly bland corporate office park that happens to contain a few galleries. Those galleries will be perfectly nice, but there is something very wrong about using up a spectacular site for such a confused, mediocre building. Even worse, the public face of the Getty Center is that of a closed-off citadel, further enforcing the idea that this is an elite, snobbish institution hoarding its wealth of art and money on top of an inaccessible hill. When you do get past the massive parking garage and board your little tram to visit the center, the experience will actually be a little bit more like a high class version of Universal City where all effects are controlled, a world of orderly fantasy.

It all starts from Meier's attitude towards the site. Though he claims to have been fascinated by the steep hillsides and split ridges that limited the areas on which he could build, he seems instead to have bulldozed the best aspects of the site and accentuated its worst. The two ridges have been turned into flat plateaus, creating a kind of mesa hovering over the precipitous landscape. What was the gorge inbetween these two ridges has been turned into a fragment of a French garden, and axially arranged series of steps leading down to a pergola and, beyond a semi-circular grove of trees, to a round pool. This path from nowhere to nowhere is cut off from the geometries and entrances of all the buildings, so that it becomes a designed void that isolates rather than connecting. Meier talks much about his love of the California landscape, which he, like most Easterners, can only understand in relationship to Italy, but his response has been to destroy the rough splendor of the terrain. The absurd justification Meier gives for the split in the two axes of the buildings is that one of them is aligned with the grid of the city, so that he has "set up a dialogue between the street grid and the hilltop's curvilinear natural forms." This is supposed to make the Center seem both "in the city and removed from it." Yet there is nothing in either grid to remind one of the reality of Los Angeles, while the curvilinearity of the hill has been replaced with rigid geometric incisions. The umbilical cord of the tramway, which takes you from a massive, freeway-adjacent parking garage to the more rarefied climes of the Center, is the exact complement of this strange formal space: an abstract device whose artificiality only emphasizes the unnatural aspect of the Center as a whole.

In fact, this soulless heart of the scheme sums up the main problem with the design strategy: a lack of overall order, hierarchy or point is masked by a proliferation of grids, screens, geometrical cranks, columns, circles, squares and innumerable other fragments of a Meierian menu of forms. All the buildings look the same because they have been assembled from the same elements, but each one spins out into its own formal games. In



SHAMBLES INSTEAD OF SHANGRI-LA By Aaron Betsky

Meier's best buildings, order was achieved by separating these elements out into three groups: those concerned with circulation, those concerned with structure, and those that created a rhythm of openings and closings, of light and dark within or as a relationship between the first two datums. The beauty and exhilaration you sensed as you moved through Meier's buildings came out of a tension caused by the purposeful dislocation of these three elements from each other, so that you could understand yourself moving through a fixed series of reference points and discovering a series of forms revealed in light.

Almost all of that is gone in the design of the Getty Center. The only remnant is the diagonal alignment of the auditorium, the entrance to the museum and the cafeteria. Each of these elements is a splendid Meierian moment, a fragment of a monument whose skin slip away in different ways to allow access and views. Unfortunately, the rotation serves only to highlight the lack of formal connection these pieces have to the overall mass of the Center. The Museum is even more problematic in its arrangement. Meier is proud of the fact that he has broken the collection up into a series of pavilions, so that you have to move outside inbetween viewing groups of artwork. But the circulation elements that connect these pieces are a series of understated bridges and pergolas, while the main orientation hall is a round object divorced from this sequence. There are no seductive series of markers cutting through and opening up the galleries, nor is there the sense that the architect has then posited his forms as a device that serves to heal the rift between structure and circulation. Instead, we are provided with a series of static boxes, designed according to the now universal principles of skylighting and measured progression through symmetrical rooms, strung about a garden that appears more like left-over space than a designed outdoor courtyard.

One could find such deadly moments throughout the de-

sign. I would only touch on what seems to be the single most awkward form, the semi-circular Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities. This large curving mass occupies the southwestern corner of the site and might have been some kind of culmination. Instead it turns its one open side at an angle away from the center, facing the visitor with a mass that seems to have sprouted some rectangular pustules to try to tie the Humanities Center back to the overall composition. Meier claims that the client's functional requirements dictated the round shape, though, as with many of the forms of the Center, one recognizes a certain relationship to Meier's previous buildings. Yet the result is again not the exuberant concave circle of the High Museum of Art, sending out its long ramps to suck you up into its vortex of Constructivist layers, but a static, concave object.

What we are left with is Meier fragmented, monotonized, and spread out over a flat site suspended over Los Angeles. How could it have been better? The design was always an isolated, somewhat confused citadel, but at least earlier versions were more coherent courtyard buildings riding the ridgelike proper citadels. The main problem seems indeed to have been that Meier understood the site as an abstract, geometric plane or boundary, rather than a steep hillside. It is interesting to note that Meier's idea of a California tradition has to do with sunlight and formality, not with any reaction to either manmade or prehuman nature. If Meier had explored the verticality of the site, if he had given the Center a proper face or point of arrival, if he had created a clear focus by deciding what the most important program elements where, if he had made a building that was as intelligently and experientially organized as the best of his civic buildings, if.... Meier has done none of this, leaving us with a \$300 million-plus museum of his own architecture, each exhibited as a relic of a golden (or is it white?) age that he seems to have forgotten. We deserve better from this master.

GETTY AND DISNEY: GIFTS FOR THE CITY? Given the extraordinary site, budget and client, the new Getty Center should be a formidable monument to high culture. Yet the public has been presented with an isolated and muddled collection of Meierian forms. Whereas the dramatic, expressionist Concert Hall by Frank Gehry, for the Disney family, could, despite the public's present alarm, be a unique architectural statement and gift to the city.

Controversy has characterized the work of Frank Gehry from the start, and so the furor that has resulted from the release of his latest scheme for the Walt Disney Concert Hall in the Sunday Times recently should come as no surprise to anyone. What is surprising, and quite ironic, is that the majority of that criticism should come from the public rather than the profession, and has been levelled by the average Angelenos whose complex psyches this architect is supposed to represent. Instead of the "undulating walls" which "seem to be blown along in a stiff breeze," or the "majestic galleon in full sail" that was so consistently praised by Leon Whiteson in his critique on September 15, the person on the street has interpreted the Hall as a gigantic taffy-pull, seeming to melt in the noonday sun. Metaphorical misreadings of this sort had been relegated by most historians to the decade before Deconstruction, when Utzon's white sails in the sunset became "a scrum of nuns" to everyday Australians, and therein lies a clue to this debate.

Having begun in typically disjointed fashion, with four separate volumes rendered in completely different materials connected only by the functional logic of their individual massing, the Disney Concert Hall, or "Bunker Hill" as it has come to be known, has slowly come to conform to the twin constraints imposed by acoustics and property lines. In response to an original competition directive to design the Concert Hall in the shape of a drum, on the advice of acoustician Daniel Commins, who consulted on the program, Gehry's first scheme featured three spiralling, limestone clad balconies. These led the eye upwards gradually from a diminutive entrance covered by his signature soccer ball elegantly rendered in faceted glass panels, to the high tower on top of the stage. The solidity of this stone spiral was offset by a triangular glass "conservatory" of nearly equally size, that swept up from a base line running

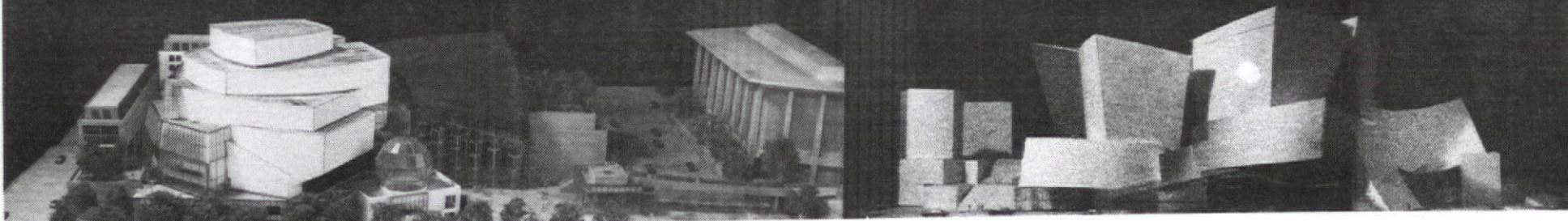
alongside the entrance pavilion, to a high point braced by stylized acropolis that approximated the roof lines of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion across the street. Each piece of the winning competition entry seemed to complement the other by playing off hard against soft, fragile against durable and the monumental against the ephemeral in a way that only Frank Gehry has been able to manage. Following the award of the commission, Minoru Nagata, who is based in Tokyo, took over as acoustic consultant, and required that the circular form of the hall be changed to a rectangle, with walls tilting inward and a concave ceiling to improve performance. This radical shift, along with the speculative addition of a Ritz Carlton Hotel to the site that has since been withdrawn, forced a new strategy. The result is a more uniformly monolithic building that reads as a complete entity, with the fragility and angularity of the lost and lamented conservatory now replaced by a serpentine, street-side arcade, and the crocus-shaped towers that hide the acousticians shoe-box inside.

In a presentation at Sci-Arc recently, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk noted that the "single-building syndrome" is alive and well, and that the majority of architects continue to focus on an isolated monument to the detriment of urban interaction, community and context. For Frank Gehry, whose tectonic attempts to break down this monumental approach to more accurately reflect the eclectic city scape of L.A., the Disney Concert Hall represents a singularity made necessary by circumstance and is an anomaly to those who have mistakenly labeled his urban readings as Deconstruction in the past. The misplaced metaphors of late are the inevitable result of having made such a dramatic step into previously uncharted formal territory, and are a healthy sign that Gehry has been right all along. The people of this city are unique in that they respond instantaneously to

likes and dislikes, with pens or pocketbooks, in spite of what architects may think. Before the first curtain goes up, however, there is no doubt that many of the shapes that have caused such a fuss will evolve further through a process of sniping away at the model that has already begun. Judging by recent buildings of similar scale, such as the Vitra Museum, or the American Center in Paris, the odds are that the Walt Disney Concert Hall will retain much of the polished, monochromatic elegance of the former, while picking up a bit more of the looseness of the latter, as the master collagist continues to work.

Following the total inability of Post Modernism to convincingly establish any of its stated objectives in regard to reuniting architecture with the urban fabric, Gehry's string of recent public buildings seem to provide a seductive alternative. While not Neo-Modern, they are sculptural "objects" to be appreciated as three-dimensional works of art, and as they move further away from any possible confusion with Deconstruction they continue to offer an entirely new medium for many, who are disillusioned with the profusion of theories being bandied about today. They celebrate form, and the making of it, for its own sake, and as Gehry continues to feel less guilty in his acceptance of fine materials, such as the limestone chosen for Disney, the sophistication of those forms continues to be a source of delight.

In spite of this minor controversy then, caused mainly by the presentation of the building from an aerial perspective that few of the public will ever be able to see, Bunker Hill will soon have its long awaited cultural symbol. If the architect has his way, that symbol will be more accessible than any Concert Hall has ever been in the past, and the memory of Walt Disney will be honored with an architectural fantasia beyond the imagination of anyone but Frank Gehry and himself.



BUNKER HILL OR WATERLOO? By James Steele

L.A. Architect At Large

After the unveiling of two major civic building projects, October was a hard act to follow. However, L.A. architects have been keeping the show on the road. On November 7, after seven long years in the making, Chiat/Day's new building, designed by the inimitable Frank Gehry, opened, but to a mood much different from that surrounding its inception. Despite a party where parking valets appeared to outnumber guests (of which there were many) and enormous excitement at being finally able to step inside the Oldenburg binoculars (lit a curious acid yellow by huge light-bulbs), the prevailing mood was one of concern - about a recession which causes even Jay Chiat to delay decorating the top floor. And Frank Gehry to find himself now building mainly in continental Europe, where admiring dignitaries of Barcelona, Paris and Frankfurt are keeping him busy.

Europe is where, unbeknown to many, no less than 43 Los Angeleno architects recently exhibited their work - at the "Salon International de l'Architecture," part of a huge trade fair in Milan. Organized hastily though efficiently by Francesca Garcia-Marques, the exhibit was a great success, though admiring visitors were disappointed by the lack of available press releases. A mixed show included work by designers as diverse as Josh Schweitzer, Victoria Casasco, Ed Niles and Ray Kappe.

The latter was publicly praised here by the 'International Committee of Architectural Critics', who graced L.A. with their presence at a forum at the PDC on November 21, courtesy of CalPoly, AIA/LA, the Cultural Affairs Department and HMC Architects. Having had the privilege to visit the Kappes' beautiful house, and many other exemplary local buildings, the critics took the floor and spoke about regionalism and the "invention of a cultural landscape," which appeared - despite their obvious approval of the architecture of Los Angeles - to be exemplified in Le Corbusier-inspired, barren, brick buildings in the Third World. Noone from this most inventive of cultural landscapes, however, had a chance to challenge the critics, as

the moderator, who kept the speakers to time like a drill-major, permitted no questions. Meanwhile, on the same evening, in the same building, an architectural audience was receiving criticism of a more practical nature at another AIA event. International Critic William Curtis' "landscapes of the mind" would have cut no ice with the Real Estate Brokers speaking at 'ABC's (The Architect, The Broker, & The Client)' who declared that good client relations, getting the job on time and on budget were what guaranteed an (interior)architect more work.

For those keener on the European-style intellectualism, however, Anthony Vidler held forth at SCI-arch on November 13, dazzling (or bamboozling) his audience with "thirty years of research" synthesized into a high-speed lecture on "Architecture of the Uncanny." From pyramids to Piranesi, Vidler drew on a massive range of sources to illustrate his particular take on in Modernism.

From esotericism to economic realities, also at Sci-Arch, on Sunday 24, where the school recaptured a flavour of its former politicized self by hosting Liberal Democrat Jerry Brown. Movingly introduced by Frank Gehry, Brown incited recession-hit young architects to political activism.

Inspired leadership is in the air: this month the formidable Kate Diamond, AIA, was voted in as Vice-President/President-Elect of AIA/LA (its first female President). And everybody is wondering who will be the new Dean of USC...

LETTERS

DEAR AIA

I am now 74 years of age and have had a period of poor health which has resulted in 4 heart angioplasty surgeries over the past four months. This has confined my activities to my home areas and leaves little time for what I love most, the American Institute of Architects.

Through the years, the AIA has played a major role in my life. As you know, I was Chapter President, President of CCAIA, member and often Chairman of at least 40

Honor Award Committees through-out the United States. These included the Reynolds Award which I was both member and chairman. The Concrete Institute Awards, also Chairman, and for three years I was on the National Fellowship Committee, the third year in 1976 I was Chairman. I also served for two years on the National Honors Committee, etc., etc., etc., etc....

All this was great fun and rewarding in every way. Apparently my health is telling me that much of this activity must come to a halt. I have cut away at most of my programs and now it is time that I back away from what I have treasured most... the AIA. **Edward A. Killingsworth, FAIA.**

P.S. I will still be around if I can help in a 'crisis'.

RESOURCEFUL RESPONSE

As the foundation of sustainable societies, the buildings in the articles about Nader Khalili and Biosphere 11 (L.A. Architect, November) could hardly have shown a greater contrast.

We have to resolve the habitual almost fetishistic manipulation of resources (space and materials) and people by a white upper income elite, which we underlings of a country are urged, nay, forced to copy (though invariably rewarded by the trickle down effect), before the destructive mechanistic narrow view pushes us and the world beyond the already overstretched generous tolerances given.

At face value Khalili's houses do address basic issues of the poor world-wide which Biosphere as a reductionist, objective, technological experiment and solution denies. Mud is cheap and widely available to most anybody. They are simple, thereby reducing the need for specialists (destroying the mystique of Architecture and building) whilst the potential for self empowerment through the creative process of construction is opened up to all. Certainly the new idea of firing the buildings allows possibilities of using mud in areas where conditions would otherwise proscribe it. I am concerned though that some countries do not have a widely and plentiful availability of subsidised fuel! As far as California is

concerned, it should not be thought of as a replacement for tract housing without considering the issues of low density suburbanization of the surrounding country and its associated heavy use of services.

Although both projects have low energy running costs, the method of construction and materials of Biosphere are obviously high and likely to be less durable. Where I do draw the line with both Khalili and Biosphere is in space. Having made such an awful mess of this planet we hardly need repeat ourselves on the moon.

Jerome Partington
Architect
Santa Monica

QUICK WIT, SLOW DELIVERY

I very much enjoy the sharp wit and broad horizons covered in these latest issues of L.A. Architect. I was especially enticed by the delicious new gossip column, and appreciate the human touch in the selection of articles.

However, it is miraculous that the wit shines through the murky tedium of the present graphic layout which is, I understand, restrained by the millstone of inadequate technology.

And what a pity too that the postal technology cannot span the broad distances to the readers houses with such a quick delivery.

Gale Rote,
Architect/Children's Illustrator
Sherman Oaks

DESIGNER KAFTAN KUDOS

I was shocked and appalled by the lack of fashion sophistication exhibited in your tawdry and tasteless new column in the November L.A. Architect, "At Large". The author appears to believe that world famous architect Richard Meier has become a figure of fun merely because of the High Tech mu-mu he wore at the recent Getty Museum design unveiling. I suppose the author and his/her ilk would be happier if Meier were wearing some off-the-rack C&R special. Well, kudos to Meier for donning the Designer Kaftan.

Mr Blackwell of Reseda

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December 3, at 7:00pm, as well. Contact the East Bay Chapter, at City Square, 499 Fourteenth St., Suite 210, Oakland Ca. 94612, at 415-464-3600.

YOUNG ARCHITECTS SOUGHT

The Los Angeles Chapter of the AIA is sponsoring a local group of Young Architects to participate in the AIA Young Architects Forum, to be known henceforth as the LAYAF. Considered to be most relevant to those who have been licensed for up to ten years, the Young Architects Forum is open to anyone who is able to attend a minimum of one meeting per year at any of the various locations available. The goals of the organization are:

1. The implementation of programs addressing the needs and concerns of young architects in the profession.
 2. To make the YAF indispensable to the AIA by providing programs that harness the energies and abilities of younger architects and to assist the Institute now and in the future through committee meetings.
 3. To promote the values of the architectural profession through special programs at the AIA Convention and Grassroots.
 4. To improve and maintain public appreciation of design and the role of architecture in shaping the quality of life through presentation to high-schools, clients and the public.
 5. To provide access to an entire segment of the profession with needs that are distinctly different from those of other members of the AIA and one that can positively affect membership recruitment.
 6. To implement programs to be included in 1993 Congress to be held in Chicago and to actively participate in the International Relations Program."
- The LAYAF has the potential of providing young architects with a voice within the AIA, and an effective way in which to contribute to and influence their profession.

DOCUMENTS NOTES STANDARDIZED

To decrease the number of discrepancies on drawings produced during the Documentation Phase of a project, Tag Architecture Inc.,

AIA, has developed a Standard for Document Notation that works with CSI Master Format. The Construction Specifications Institute standards, which were adopted by the AIA in 1964, are divided into sixteen sections and TAG has used this system as a key to a universal noting standard for the entire construction document package. They will demonstrate their proposal at two seminars in the third week of January. Call (818) 954-8957 for more information.

Paul Li, TAG Architecture, Inc.

COFFEE MORNINGS PLANNED

The Los Angeles Chapter of the AIA is planning to hold a Coffee Morning each Thursday for those seeking news about activities on the job market. This will also serve as an opportunity to network and discuss possible initiatives. For more information call (213) 380-4595.

BINDER MISSING

A binder of work submitted by Barton Phelps, AIA, for the Design Awards, has gone missing. The 8.5"x11" wire-backed binder (#130E) with ten clear plastic sleeves, contains a page of description and nineteen photographs of the Epstein House project. If any reader has inadvertently received this binder, please call the Chapter office at (213) 380-4595.

LEGAL ADVICE

MARKBOROUGH REVISITED

On February 11, 1991, in Markborough v. Superior Court, a ruling was passed down in the Fourth Appellate District which limited the liability of a design professional to fees received, in order to distribute more evenly. All contracts should now include a limitation of liability clause. As Samuel Muir, of Collins, Collins, Muir and Traver, reports, "Limitation of liability clauses must be agreed upon by both parties and there must be the opportunity to 'negotiate' the contract which includes the limitation of liability clause. In Markborough, the Court held it sufficient that the design professional simply wrote a cover letter attached to the contract which invited

the owner to discuss any problems or changes. There is no requirement that the provision be highlighted, separately initialed or underlined. On the other hand, it would not be wise to try to hide or deceive the other side by burying the limitation of liability clause in small type.

The limitation of liability clause cannot and does not apply to a third party who sues the design professional for negligence. It only applies between the two contracting parties. Nevertheless, such clauses are proving invaluable in resolving matters before they get to litigation or those already in litigation.

Although we are seeing a slight backlash in owners and others resisting attempts at including a limitation of liability clause, now more than ever each design professional should include such a clause in every contract and be prepared to argue its merits. Prepare your arguments for its inclusion in advance of sending out the contract.

Limitation of liability clauses are most appropriate when the risk being undertaken by the design professional greatly exceeds the fee. This is particularly true when the risk is beyond the control of the design professional, and an entire practice as well as personal resources are jeopardized for a 5,000 fee. Even with insurance, few can afford recent jury verdicts, which have exceeded \$2,000,000.

Although the standard limitation of liability language usually reads something like: "The liability of the design professional will be limited to \$50,000 or the fee, whichever is greater," this is not often accepted by the contracting party. However, even if not accepted, it can form the basis of further negotiations and at the very minimum the limitation of liability clause should extend to the available policy limits of the design professional at the time the judgment is entered or the settlement is consummated.

The availability of proper insurance, the high cost of premiums and the rising litigation accompanied by skyrocketing jury verdicts demand inclusion of this clause in all contracts. The State Legislature has seen fit under California Civil Code Section 2782.5 to allow limitation of liability clauses and now the Appellate Court has, for the first time, ruled that such clauses are applicable for design

professionals. To not use them is to take unnecessary risks which can jeopardize a practice as well as personal finances.

Samuel Muir

ALTOON IN ARMENIA

The statue of V.I. Lenin no longer graces Lenin Square. The former communist party headquarters building, a mid-50's historic revival style, remains in disrepair. On the corner a temporary building now stands where fallen debris killed 400 school children that December morning in 1988. Leninakan exists no more. Out of the devastation that claimed 50,000 lives and rendered 350,000 people homeless there is now a new beginning. Shedding the imposition of an alien master the ancient name of Gumri now replaces that of Leninakan.

My third trip to Armenia was for specific purposes. Beyond the initial earthquake response, and the on-going relief effort, I have acted in the intervening two years as a technical advisor to an organization donating three manufacturing facilities producing construction materials that the unskilled might utilize to rebuild their shattered lives. The three facilities are now complete and operating. Concrete blocks, door and window frames, wooden roof trusses, and standing xxx metal roof are now being produced at a state of the art level. These facilities are capable of producing enough product to build 10,000 housing units per year.

Our bus ride from Yerevan to Spitak, epicenter of this disastrous event, took us past numerous new farms, recently plowed, the evidence that 85% of the agricultural land in Armenia is now in private hands. More than anything else this was the evidence that a market driven economy is taking hold in this remote republic. Having recently declared independence, and having elected its first democratically elected President in its history with an 85% majority, Armenia is the eastern most nation state of Europe lying at the cusp with both Asia and the Middle East. Afflicted in history by Alexander, the Romans, Darius, the Tartars, and the Czars, Armenia was the traditional refueling station for the Crusaders as they made their way to Constantinople. It is for these reasons that ancient animosities persist. Animosity which Mr. Gorbachev, despite his spirit of perestroika, refuses to amend. As a consequence, Armenia is isolated. The rail lines, subject to human blockade since the earthquake, do not convey badly needed food, medical supplies, fuel, construction materials, or labor to this Republic. It is entirely self-sufficient depending now on the air lift of these supplies along with clothing and blankets and western xxx how.

My trip brought me into direct contact with the new elected President, his Foreign Minister (an American lawyer), the Mayor of Gumri and Yerevan, the xxx of the Armenian xxx Church and the Directors of the State Design and Construction Agency (Gosstro) and the Design Institute in which I worked two years ago. The latter led to a two hour critique of the housing units they are designing to be constructed of concrete blocks produced in our plant.

Prior to leaving we had an opportunity to visit an aesthetic center which houses and teaches 300 orphans from the earthquake among the 900 enrolled, painting, drawing, and sculpture, weaving, music, and ballet. We visited a remote refugee center, housing 280, those who have fled the ancient Armenian lands of Nagorno-Karabagh, currently under Azerbaijan control. They shared with us the atrocities perpetrated upon their families left behind. Just before leaving, parents delivered to our group two youngsters in need of medical assistance. One will require open heart surgery, the other hopefully an operation to correct his deafness. Finally, we witnessed the opening of the University of California sponsored, American University of Armenia, evidence that, despite the turmoil and the remoteness, energies are being brought to rebuild the system itself.

The massive Soviet initiated construction effort to provide housing in Leninakan has slowed to a snail's pace. Left unfinished, the Soviets abandoned the project and they, themselves, could not penetrate the Azerbaijan blockade. With 1/6 of the project initiated, it may be a blessing.

Ronald A. Altoon, FAIA
President, AIA/ALA

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URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE STRATEGIES FOR ACTION

Committee Co-Chairmen Jim Black, Patric Dawe and Ben Rosenbloom report that at its August meeting, a Strategic Plan was ratified that will provide a framework for action for the next 3-5 years, continuing the kind of community service that won the Committee the CCAIA Distinguished Service Award in 1990. This framework has three major goals, which are each backed up with specific objectives. Activities that support these have been designated with a Committee and Chair as follows:

1. *The Los Angeles River Task Force* (Arthur Golding, Chair) will work closely with political leaders and community groups over the next several months to initiate a Master Plan for the Los Angeles River.

2. *Taylor Yards* (Deborah Murphy, Chair) will work during this winter to establish a Workshop which will study alternative schemes for the development of this large parcel of land adjoining the Los Angeles River, which is now being sold by the railroad. This key parcel has great potential as open space, to serve the community. The workshop, which will involve several sessions, is planned for Spring 1992.

3. *Rail Corridor Transit Policy* (Ben Rosenbloom, Chair) will support a current effort by the City Planning Department and the LACTC to coordinate land use, urban design and transportation plans for the transit corri-

dors that are unique to Los Angeles.

4. *Visions for Los Angeles* (Patric Dawe, Chair) is addressing Urban Design issues revolving around its ethical and political basis, and intends to examine topics such as higher density neighborhoods, mixed use, transportation and open space preservation.

5. *Wilshire Corridor* (Katherine Diamond, Chair) is monitoring the selection of the MetroRail corridor past Western Avenue and the way that it relates to existing and potential urban development patterns along Wilshire Boulevard.

6. *Annual Urban Design Conference* (Jim Black, Chair) is planning a one day workshop/conference on Urban Design for local participants. This is intended to demystify the subject by bringing urban designers, architects and other design professionals together to explore ways in which urban development in the region can achieve higher quality.

7. *Los Angeles Planning Director Selection* (Jim Black, Chair) seeks a role for the Chapter in the choice for this post.

8. *Political Action* (Marc Futterman, Bill Christopher, Co-Chairs): this Committee will convene a group that will continue to look for ways to define the relationship between urban design and political implementation, consistent with the Long Range Action Plan of the Chapter.

9. *Legislative Monitoring* (Bruce Sternberg, Chair) follows development approvals and legislative and regulatory planning proposals in order to plan involvement.

10. *Minority Recruitment* (Allyne Winderman, Chair) has a specifically stated goal of minority and ethnic representation in the membership of the Committee, to more effectively address urban design and policy making decisions in a multi-cultural region and city.

11. *May Company/Park La Brea* (Marc Futterman, Chair) is monitoring the fate of the landmark May Company Building at Fairfax and Wilshire, as well as the development of

the property directly adjacent to it.

RIVER SKETCH DAY

The AIA/LA River Task Force will hold a River Sketch Day on Saturday, December 14. Those interested can join the group at the EAT cafe, at 3207 Los Feliz Blvd, between 8:00 and 8:30. For further information contact Pam Edwards-Kammer, AIA at 818-762-7874, or Martin B. Gelber, AIA, at 213-393-06

ARCHITECTS IN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE REVIEWS OSHPD

At its April meeting, the Architects in Government Committee, organized by Victor Nahmias, AIA, Richard Checél, AIA and Albert Roden, AIA, focused on Senate Bill 47, which designates OSHPD as the agency that will now be responsible for reviewing the construction of health facilities. Guest Speaker Gary Pettigrew, Deputy Director of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, was invited as guest speaker.

OSHPD supercedes OSA and SFM effective January 1992, and the agency will be staffed with the personnel necessary to carry out structural and fire safety reviews and construction inspections. OSHPD Architects and Mechanical Engineers will also be trained by the State Fire Marshall to perform part of the fire safety reviews. OSHPD has subsequently organized a task force utilizing volunteers from organizations involved in the health facilities industry, such as Hospital and Engineering Associations and the AIA, to present proposals for more efficient procedures. These will be compared with guidelines now being prepared by OSHPD itself. Mr. Pettigrew indicated that personnel in OSHPD offices in Sacramento and Los Angeles will soon be redistributed and that projects in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, including those costing more than \$500,000.00, have now been reassigned to Los Angeles.

The Architects in Government Committee is also hosting a breakfast with Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky to meet with the AIA in Suite 900, 3780 Wilshire Blvd. on December 11. Councilman Yaroslavsky represents the Fifth Councilmanic District, and was origi-

nally elected to the City Council in 1975. His most recent Committee involvement has been his post as Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee, and as Vice Chairman of the Community Redevelopment and Housing Committee. He will be discussing a Government Affairs Day to be held in January.

Maria Magdalena Campeanu, AIA Chair

ARCHITECTURE FOR HEALTH COMMITTEE

La Canada Design Group, with Richard A. Checél AIA, presented the implications of preparing clients to comply with the new Americans with Disabilities Act to the Committee on Health on November 21st. The ADA Act, which went into effect in 1990, expanded the network of federal civil rights laws to include 43 million Americans with some form of disability. In signing the Act, President Bush said that it: "allows an unprecedented opportunity to bring Americans with disabilities into the mainstream." Checél conveyed to the Committee that those responsible for State Building Codes, as well as building owners and employers, are often confused about the new regulations and that the State of California is currently holding hearings on the proposed California Building Code, which will incorporate provisions of ADA, the Federal Fair Housing Act and the 1991 Uniform Building Code. The State Code will be in effect by July 1, 1992, and all new construction and renovation work will have to conform with it to get a building permit. Companies that ignore the Act expose themselves to civil suits.

Richard Checél, AIA

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

The East Bay Chapter of the American Institute of Architects is offering a Mock Design Exam and a Mock Site Exam for those taking the December 1991 Architectural Registration Exams. There are a limited number available. Two review sessions have been scheduled at the Chapter office, for the Mock Site Exam on Monday, December 2 at 7:00pm, and the Mock Design Exam on Tuesday,

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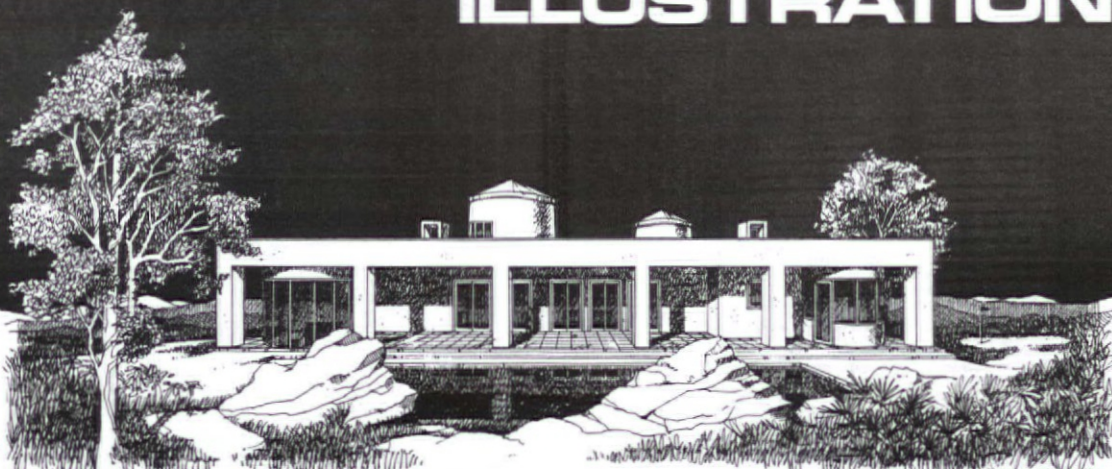
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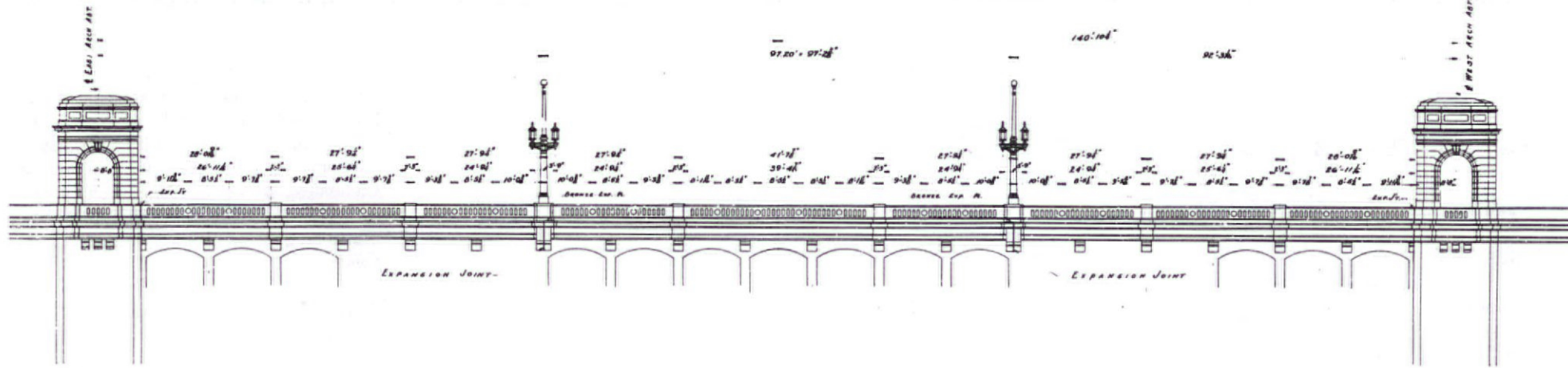
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LA ARCHITECT is published monthly except for August by the Los Angeles Chapter/American Institute of Architects, 3780 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 900, Los Angeles, CA 90010 (213) 380-5177. Subscriptions are \$18 domestic, and \$36 foreign. Editorial submissions should be addressed to the editor and sent to LA ARCHITECT at the publisher's address, above. Except where noted, the opinions stated are those of the authors only and do not reflect the position of either the AIA or the Los Angeles Chapter. The appearance of names and pictures of products and services, in either editorial, advertising, or inserts does not constitute an endorsement by either the AIA or the Los Angeles Chapter.



L.A. ARCHITECT

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LA RIVER COMES ALIVE

At the River in the City conference in June 1990, the vision of a revitalized Los Angeles River was shared by a number of persons distributed among government, academia, the professions and business. The Griffith Park conference, sponsored by Mayor Bradley, SCI-Arc and the Friends of the Los Angeles River, marked a turning point. River consciousness was no longer the private province of a few visionaries, artists, teachers and students. The idea of a living Los Angeles River was going public.

We are now witnessing the next evolutionary step, the growth of LA River consciousness from a few hundred to a few thousand concerned persons. During the last year, California Sen. Art Torres and U.S. Rep. Anthony Bielensohn have taken an active interest, as have a number of other elected officials. A study of the historical flora and fauna of the River, financed by a state grant and conducted by the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, is under way. The Mayor's River Task Force has developed goals for a master plan and identified demonstration projects for early implementation. Los Angeles County has initiated an overview master plan study.

The transformation of the River is an undertaking of enormous scope. It will require 40 years or more of effort and public and private investment. Above all it will require a powerful political will and a very broadly based consensus of support. In February 1991, AIA/LA formed its LA River Task Force. Drawing architects, planners, landscape architects, and other professionals and academics together, the group began with the intention of facilitating the growth of public awareness of the River and its opportunities, issues and challenges. Early in the process the pro bono working group determined to address the entire LA River corridor, from the confluence of Bell and Calabasas Creeks to Long Beach.

Taking public information as a central part of its mission, the Task Force has developed the idea of a Prospectus, a widely-circulated document to be shared by many persons and agencies concerned with the River. The Architectural Foundation of Los Angeles joined with the AIA to obtain a state grant to finance production of this important public document, now being developed by Task Force members. In addition to providing background information on flood control, ecology, the welter of jurisdictions and ownership along the corridor and the history of the River and its bridges, the Prospectus will pinpoint critical areas of opportunity and concern, including the significant points of confluence with tributaries such as Tujunga Wash, the Arroyo Seco, Rio Hondo, and Compton Creek. Taylor Yard, the 250-acre Southern Pacific railyard located between the River and San Fernando road opposite Elysian Park, has emerged as a site of urgent concern: LACTC is planning a locomotive maintenance facility on a portion of the 50 acres it has acquired, and several single-purpose agencies have expressed interest in the remainder of the site, which is for sale.

Arthur Golding AIA,
Chair, AIA/LA River Task Force

ADA DELAYED

Slow-moving state bureaucracy has apparently delayed the deadline for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act in California. Originally, the state regulations based on the federal statute were to be published on January 1, 1992 and compliance required in July for companies with 25 or more employees. Now the regulations appear delayed until spring 1992, with the new compliance dates to be decided in January.

Rod Ward, chairman of the codes committee for the California Chapter of AIA, last month cited slow communication between the Office of the State Architect and the state Department of Housing and Community Development for the delay. "It's a bureaucratic issue, as opposed to a substantive issue," he said.

The delay of the ADA deadlines adds another note of possible confusion to an enormous piece of legislation that is likely to dumbfound both architects and employers for years. Signed into law last July by President Bush and described as the most sweeping civil rights legislation since the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the intent of ADA is to bar discrimination in the workplace by removing physical barriers and

inconveniences to the estimated 43 million disabled Americans. The law provides sweeping changes both for building owners and employers. Not limited to wheelchair access, the law requires employers to alter workplaces to accommodate sight-, hearing- and otherwise-impaired employees.

Though still not fully clear, the implications for commercial property appear awesome. The U.S. Justice Department estimates 5 million buildings in the U.S. will undergo changes under ADA.

A note of comfort to California employers and building owners is that property owners in the state are less likely to be hard hit by ADA than many other areas of the country, since "a lot of ADA is already redundant" with California's Title 24 building codes, one of the strictest in the country regarding handicapped access, according to architect Chet Widom, principal of Widom, Wein & Cohen in Santa Monica. RTKL's Myers, notwithstanding, says "100 percent" of existing buildings will find there is "some implication of the law that affects them."

A larger discussion of ADA will be published in next month's L.A. Architect.

WOMEN'S FORUM AWARDS GENSLER

Gensler and Associates/Architects has received the "Corporation that Makes a Difference" Award from Women's Forum West, an organization that represents "the most senior women" in the San Francisco Bay Area (and with its affiliate, the International Women's Forum, represents 2,000 woman leaders around the globe). Gensler was recognized both for demonstrating support of women and for presenting them with positive business opportunities.

Gensler and Associates was founded in 1965 by architect Arthur Gensler, his wife Drue—who remains on the Board of Directors—and one staff member. It has grown to a broad-based organization with several regional offices in addition to those in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Of its professional staff 40% is female. 32% of all Vice-Presidents, 31% of the management committee, and 33% of the Board of Directors are female. Gensler's hiring statistics are exceptional in view of a 1990 study by Mary Ann Glinow of USC that showed that of the Fortune Service 500, only 4.3% of corporate officers were female, even though women make up 62% of all service workers.

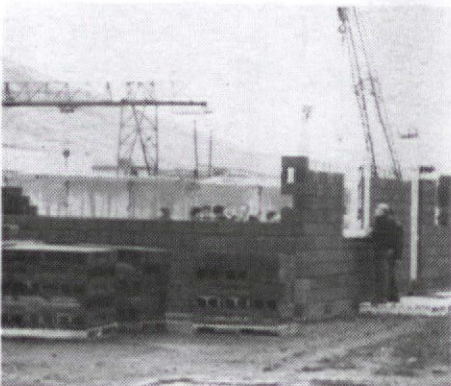
See p.14 for review of the women's colloquium.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSAL GRANT

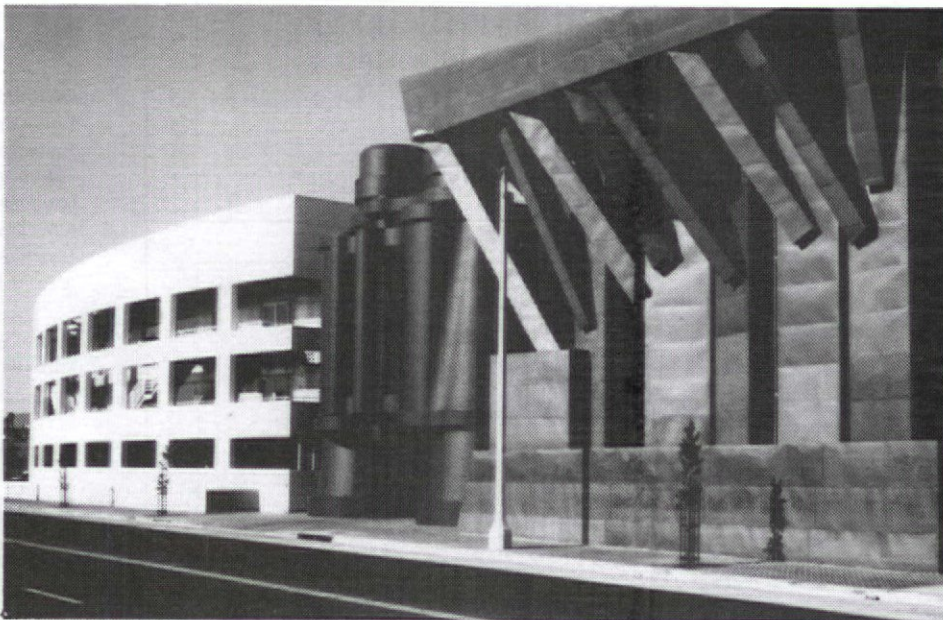
The Westside Urban Forum is seeking to award a \$75,000 grant to a team who would create a model affordable housing program to increase the production of new affordable multi-family rental housing on the Westside. Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Programs has contributed \$30,000 to the grant. Any architects interested in the Request for Proposals, whose requirements include an analysis of the economic, legal, political, social and physical impediments to the production of affordable housing, should call James McCormick at (310) 459-8516. The Westside Urban Forum is an association of concerned citizens including real estate development and land use professional, public officials, and environmental activists.

ALTOON IN ARMENIA

Since the 1988 earthquake in Armenia, AIA/LA President Ronald Altoon, FAIA, has been acting as technical advisor to a reconstruction project. He recently returned there to see the fruits of his efforts. For his report, see p.3. Below, state of the art construction materials provided by the organization for which Altoon is advisor, now being utilized to build thousands of housing units.



CURTAIN UP FOR CHIAT/DAY



Frank Gehry's new building for Chiat/Day, already famous for its Claes Oldenburg binoculars, opened in November after seven years in construction.

LEASON POMEROY MERGES WITH NBBJ

The Los Angeles office of Leason Pomeroy Associates merged in November with Seattle-based NBBJ, a Seattle-based health-care specialist described as the nation's second largest architectural firm (in billings). The move reflects rising interest in health-care work as a "counter-cyclical" specialty.

The merger, which affects only the 25-person Los Angeles office of LPA, gives NBBJ a base in the Los Angeles market, where the firm has been active in health-care projects. Other offices of Irvine-based LPA, will continue to practice independently of the Seattle firm, with its remaining 110 architects. LPA chief executive officer Robert Kupper said the merger of the NBBJ and his firm's L.A. office represents a "long-range planning effort on our art of pursuing someone involved in the health-care industry." He described health-

care as a "definite trend in our industry in the next five to 10 years."

The 500-person Seattle firm is inheriting LPA's L.A. practice, including the L.A. Automart reuse proposal for the former postal annex in downtown Los Angeles, Burbank Media City Center, and the consolidation of MCI's downtown Los Angeles office.

Recent and ongoing NBBJ projects in Los Angeles include additions to Saint Joseph Medical Center in Burbank; Children's Hospital and California Medical Center, both in Los Angeles; Long Beach Memorial Medical Center; and the Loma Linda University Medical Center.

Former Leason Pomeroy staff joining NBBJ include Robert Lee Gilley, who is to be principal in charge of the Los Angeles office, while William H. Bigelow is principal in charge of design. David L. Noferi is transferring from NBBJ's Seattle base to be principal in charge of operations.