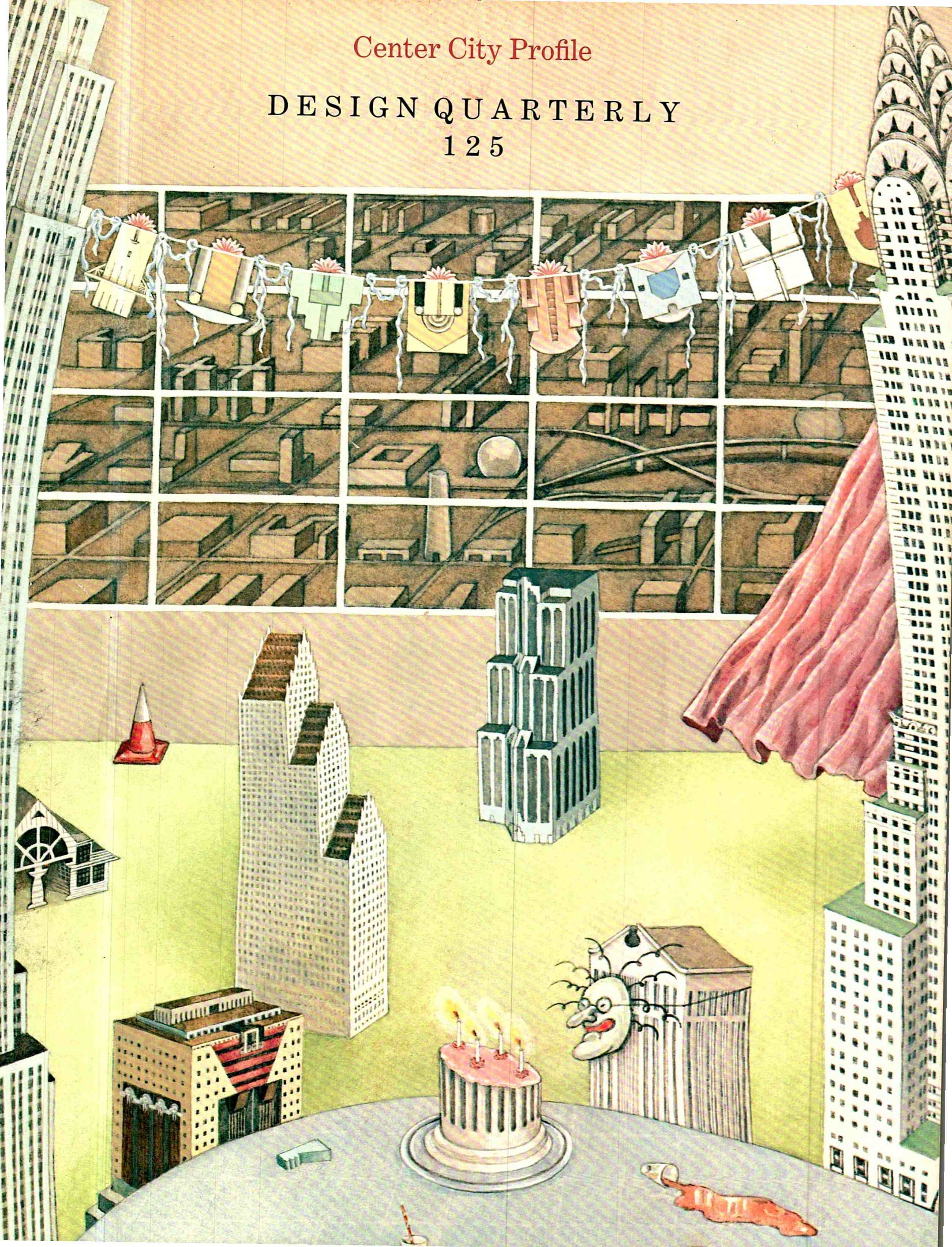
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Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty.

Daniel Burnham, 1907

Editor's Notes

In response to the accelerated physical change in a city that is still dotted with vacant sites created by post-World War II urban renewal, Walker Art Center organized a symposium, *Minneapolis Profile 1983*. This event provided an opportunity for the planners and architects of several proposed and ongoing center city projects to present them in a public forum. Each project was discussed in terms of what it will bring to the city: how it will relate to its immediate neighbors; how it will expand Minneapolis's urban amenities; and what the project's outstanding characteristics as architecture and as an urban place will be.

Current activity involves sites from the long-neglected Mississippi River at one edge of the city to the extension of Minneapolis's Nicollet Mall at the other. In addition to those already in place, several major new district proposals are on the way to realization. These projects, when taken as a whole, will radically transform the physical and social environments of the city. Critical examination by architects, planners and an informed public is appropriate to the scope and impact of this work.

A cursory backward glance indicates the error of the ways of the demolition zealots who in the 1950s and 1960s systematically removed nearly all of the tentative ties this young city had to the history of urban architecture. Their ill-conceived idea of renewal replaced Edward Bennett's largely unrealized, visionary 1917 beaux-arts plan for Minneapolis, with its beautifully scaled, solid facades surrounding gracious public squares and tree-lined boulevards—the accepted urban paradigm of that period and this—with a city of isolated, self-contained structures placed arbitrarily within the original grid street pattern laid out at the city's founding.

In addition to his idealized "city beautiful" proposal, Bennett advocated the development of so-called garden-city suburbs and the concomitant fast and economical transportation system necessary to the success of linear urban expansion. Violently opposed to the congestion associated with the despised "tenements" of European and eastern American cities, Bennett believed in severely limiting the number of houses per acre in the developing suburbs. So Minneapolis made a partial commitment to the idea of the garden-city suburb, although it lacked the essential element of fast public transportation. The resulting population movement inevitably led to the urban sprawl characteristic of all American cities today. (A strong case can be made for the thesis that as Americans moved westward across our generous continent, houses were built farther and farther apart, creating communities that were less and less urban, in the accepted sense of the traditional compact city in history. Vincent Scully, in his *American Architecture and Urbanism*, comments on America's struggle with its European past. Writing about the contributions of Thomas Jefferson to American urban planning, Scully says:

> Jefferson's work should be seen as a struggle between the fixed European past and the mobile American future, between Palladio and Frank Lloyd Wright, between a desire for contained classical geometry and an instinct to spread out horizontally along the surface of the land.)

By the early 1970s it was evident that population growth in Minneapolis had flattened out. In part as a result of suburban expansion, the city core's offices and shops were virtually deserted at night. Though many of the city's finest old buildings were gone by that time, the growing preservation and energy conservation movements focused attention on its few remaining landmarks and the need for the adaptation of those existing structures to new uses. The two missing ingredients, essential to a healthy urban area, unarticulated in Minneapolis at that time, were carefully planned public spaces and a segment of the dispersed suburban population moved back into the city to use them. Amorphous open spaces and a lack of definition between the public and private realms that continued to be dominant characteristics of the city, inhibited the development of areas appropriate to public needs. The resulting no-man's-land created safety hazards, a lackluster street life, empty vistas and little sense of place.

In Minneapolis, these problems have been complicated by the city's much admired second-story skyway system. On the positive side, this system provides a climate-controlled pedestrian way connecting most of the major downtown buildings. However, the fact that the skyway system has no direct relationship to the street, and that its second-story building connections have created a somewhat erratic network of anonymous passageways, indicates that effective additions to the system should include more explicit orientation within the skyways and to the streets below.

The city's profile, now rapidly changing, was for many years completely dominated by Philip Johnson's IDS Tower, rising in solitary splendor above the prairie skyline. Its brilliantly conceived plan, its concern for public amenities, its dead-center location, have made it Minneapolis's most lively city-core place. This preeminent skyscraper has been joined on the horizon by a number of unprepossessing tall buildings, and several promising ones. Residential towers on the city's periphery are gradually bringing a small but vital population of apartment dwellers into the city. However, these buildings remain islands in a sea of essentially nondescript open spaces and streets. Despite these problems, the potential for a positive urbanism is inherent in the city's current development, for an environment of a very high quality can be achieved where planning flexibility still exists.

The symposium was opened by Rem Koolhaas, distinguished architect and author of *Delirious New York*. Koolhaas discussed those qualities essential to the vitality of urban areas, citing as examples projects from the 1920s and 1930s. From those cases he projected attitudes appropriate to today's city. An abbreviated version of his presentation is included here.

Four in-process Minneapolis projects were the focus of the symposium. In response to the presentation of these, a number of attitudes that may be predictive of changes in American cities over the next ten years were pinpointed by six highly qualified respondents: Adele Chatfield-Taylor, Executive Director, New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation; Michael Dennis, Professor of Architecture, Harvard University; Joseph Giovannini, architectural writer, *The New York Times*; Martin Krieger, lecturer in the Department of Urban Studies, MIT; Robert Maguire, Los Angeles developer; and, Jaquelin Robertson, Dean, School of Architecture, University of Virginia. Excerpts from their remarks accompany the images of the city made by photographer Jerry Thompson. He shows us exactly what we now have, "the good, the bad and the ugly," an exuberant melange characteristic of America's cities today.

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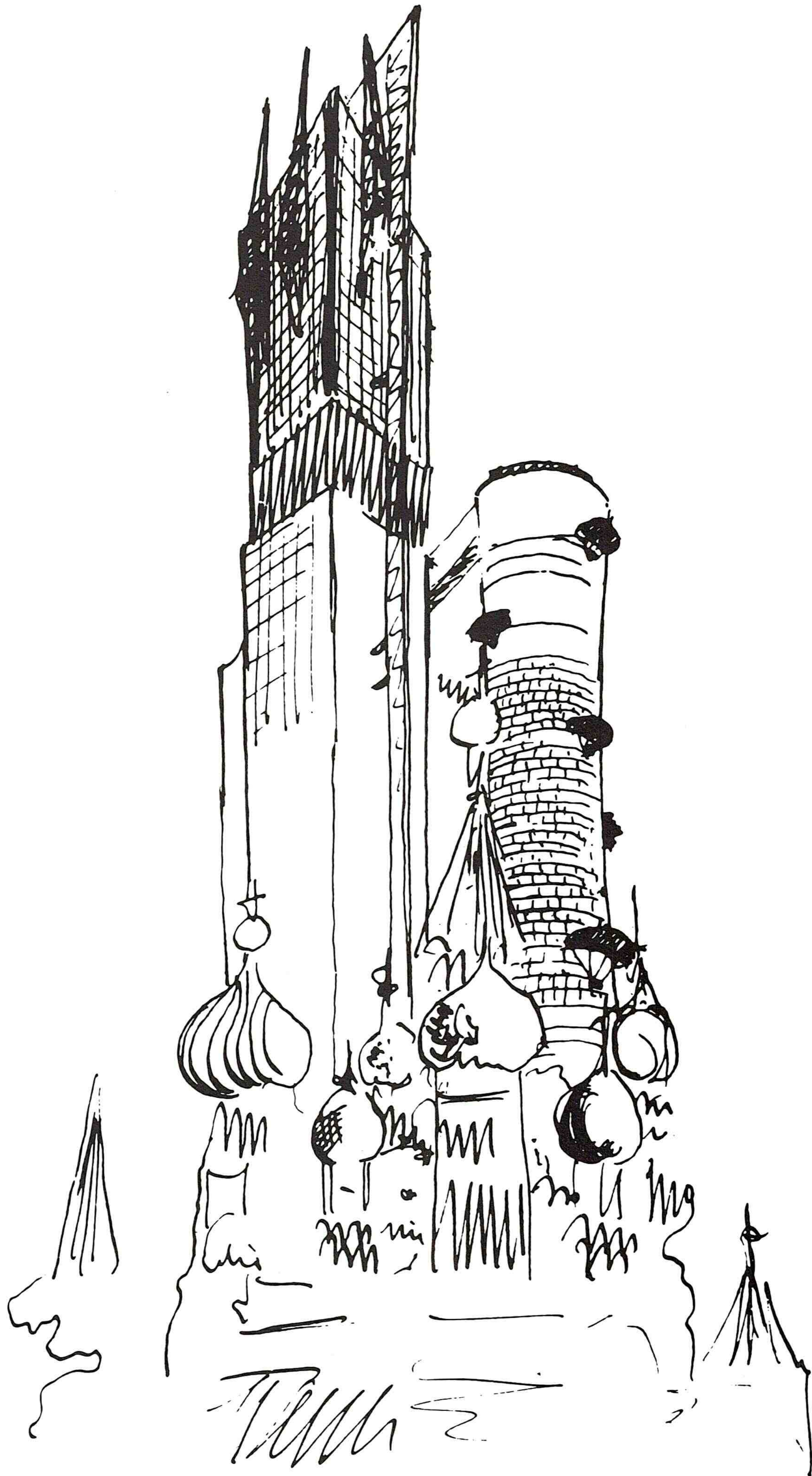


A Foundation of Amnesia

Rem Koolhaas

Throughout the 20th century, in Europe and America, architects, urban planners and the public have been seeking an inventive, vital reality for urban life. On both sides of the Atlantic expectations for architecture were established and the potentials defined early in the century, particularly during modernism's most creative decade, from 1920 to 1930. Now as we see the first harvest of postmodernism in the decade from 1975 to 1985, we find that our buildings, modern and postmodern, embody, instead of vibrant mass, a void, a malaise of unrealized potential. Something seems to have been lost, although we are in the midst of an incredible upsurge in enthusiasm for architecture. More and more architects are becoming stars or folk heroes, more and more is written about architecture not only in serious papers but all over the popular press. Architecture is becoming an urgent subject and one can sense both in Europe and the United States the expectation that architecture is going to deliver something significant. Yet I think that expectation has gone hand-in-hand with a very curious forgetfulness about architecture's recent past and a distortion of that past.

Advocates of postmodernism embrace historicist architecture maintaining that modern buildings have two essential flaws: they do not complement the architectural environment of most European and American cities, nor do they meet the needs of the people who will use them. I want to show here that this postmodern hypothesis is based on a solid foundation of amnesia. Modern architecture does not emerge from emptiness. Good modern architects carefully consider a city's existing needs and historical context.

A project by Ludwig Hilberseimer, 1920–24, is an often used example that gives modern architecture a bad reputation. No tree-lined parkways, aging stone facades, or awning-draped storefronts here. Is Hilberseimer's city homogeneous, inhuman and boring, a city unrelated to the past, to existing cities, to its inhabitants? Hilberseimer's vision was, in fact, a project for nine city blocks in central Berlin, and it was supposed to relate strongly to its surroundings as is evident in a series of contextual sketches by the architect.

Consider another notorious project, again for Berlin: Mies van der Rohe's 1921 design for a twenty-two story office building competition. Often this unrealized project is seen out of context, creating the impression that Mies designed a triangular tower for the middle of nowhere. But the following statement by the architect indicates that Mies meant to complement the baroque context with a modern reinterpretation of the historical situation.

Ivan Leonidov
Sketch of a proposal for the Ministry of Heavy Industry (Dom Narkomtiazhprom) on Red Square, Moscow, with St. Basil's Cathedral in the foreground, 1933.

In my project for a skyscraper at the Friedrichstrasse Station in Berlin I used a prismatic form which seemed to me to fit best the triangular site of the building. I placed the glass walls at slight angles to each other to avoid the monotony of over-large glass surfaces.

Berlin's South Friedrichstadt district is a baroque plan with a grid that terminates with geometrical shapes on each entry point: an octagon, a square, and a series of lines converging on a circle. So at one end of this historical development, Mies proposed the triangular glass tower for a site on the Spree River (see red triangle, p 7). Even in his drawing, where he includes the surrounding architecture, Mies shows concern for context, and he carefully places his building to derive the maximum benefit from its contrast with the immediate environment. The building is clearly not a non sequitur, brutally inserted into the city.

Two projects designed between 1928 and 1935—New York City's Rockefeller Center and the Ministry of Heavy Industry (Dom Narkomtiazhprom) in Moscow, which unfortunately was never realized, exemplify the best of that period. They demonstrate that the early modern architects had more awareness of and concern for the architectural environment and the occupants of their buildings than do the postmodern architects of the 1980s.

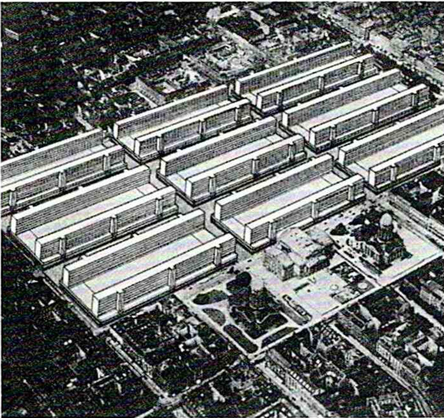
In the Moscow of 1933, although the cold breath of Stalinism threatened modern experimentation, Ivan Leonidov, a constructivist architect, submitted the winning design for the most significant ministry of the Soviet state, the Ministry of Heavy Industry. Refinements in modern architecture's ability to relate to the real world in the early post-Revolutionary years led to Leonidov's unique design, which I consider one of the 20th-century's architectural triumphs, and which in our prevailing amnesia remains virtually unknown.

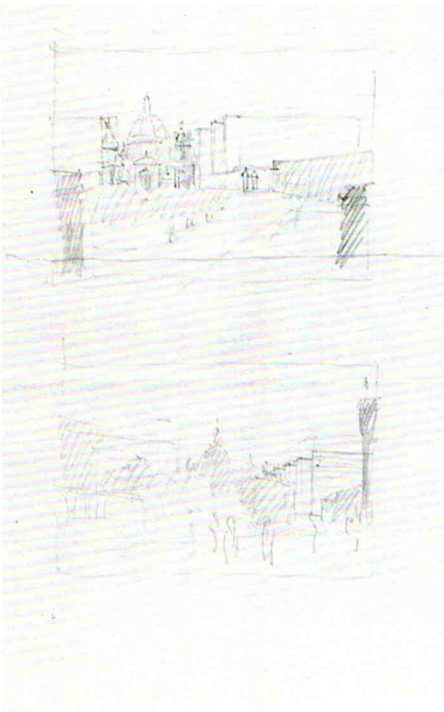
Leonidov's project demonstrates how modern architecture can accommodate the most difficult situations, for it is impossible to find a site in the whole world that is more loaded with significance and ominous meanings than the heart of Moscow—Red Square. This project shows the ability of modern architecture to relate to every aspect of a project, not only on an architectural level but also in terms of the ideology and mythology that exists in a place.

The Square is bound on one side by the Kremlin, a walled triangle with a number of loose objects inside. Most important are the buildings that were the palace of the czars but are now the seat of government. Surrounding Red Square are, in addition to the Kremlin wall, St. Basil's Cathedral, GUM, the enormous arcaded department store, and the State Historical Museum.

The most dominant element on the square is Lenin's mausoleum. Designed by A. V. Shchusev in 1926, it replaced a 1924 improvised wooden structure. The architect Konstantin Melnikov designed the sarcophagus, basing his display of Lenin's body on the story of Sleeping Beauty. By that analogy, the never-ending stream of visiting Russian workers may one day bring the leader back to life.

Keeping this charged context in mind, Leonidov doubled the size of Red Square, removed an enormous part of medieval Moscow to create an equivalent of New York's Central Park, and positioned his building to form a new wall on Red Square.





Ludwig Hilberseimer
Bird's-eye view and contextual sketches for a proposed housing project for nine city blocks in central Berlin, 1920–24.

The focal points of the building are three towers. The first consists of straight elements; the second, straight and curved elements; and the third, curved elements. The three towers seem to represent past, present and future. The straight tower, the most historical tower, is the one closest to the Kremlin. Were you to stand with your back toward the Kremlin, facing this complex, a unique composition would unfold. The historical tower blocks your view of the completely modern, curved tower, while the half-modern, half-traditional tower is in full view. But if you move onto Red Square, the curved tower comes into full view. In other words, the future is hidden by the past, but you catch glimpses of both in the present, and leaving the past reveals the future.

The materials in each of the towers also reinforce their themes. The square tower is mostly stone, a traditional material. The straight and curved tower is half stone and half glass, and the curved tower is covered with solid black glass block, creating a shimmering black tower with golden balconies along its edges.

Critics charge that modern architecture is as faceless as the anonymous bureaucrats who often work in such architecture. Although the Ministry of Heavy Industry was designed to accommodate bureaucrats, it is not faceless. The building establishes a relationship with its context, not by making historical citations, nor by simply resembling the structure of the Kremlin. It creates an analogy through inferences from the structures and the themes of the immediate context.

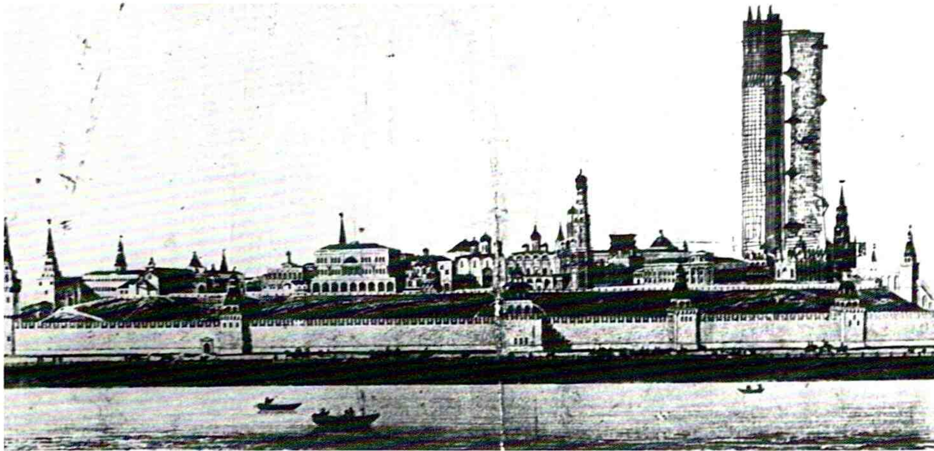
The building also has important programmatic enrichments. Between the three towers are two lower elements. One with an enormous lobby, and the other with staircases or continuous rows of seats that face Red Square and form an arena. Near the top of the tower, large platforms serve as stages for political demonstrations.

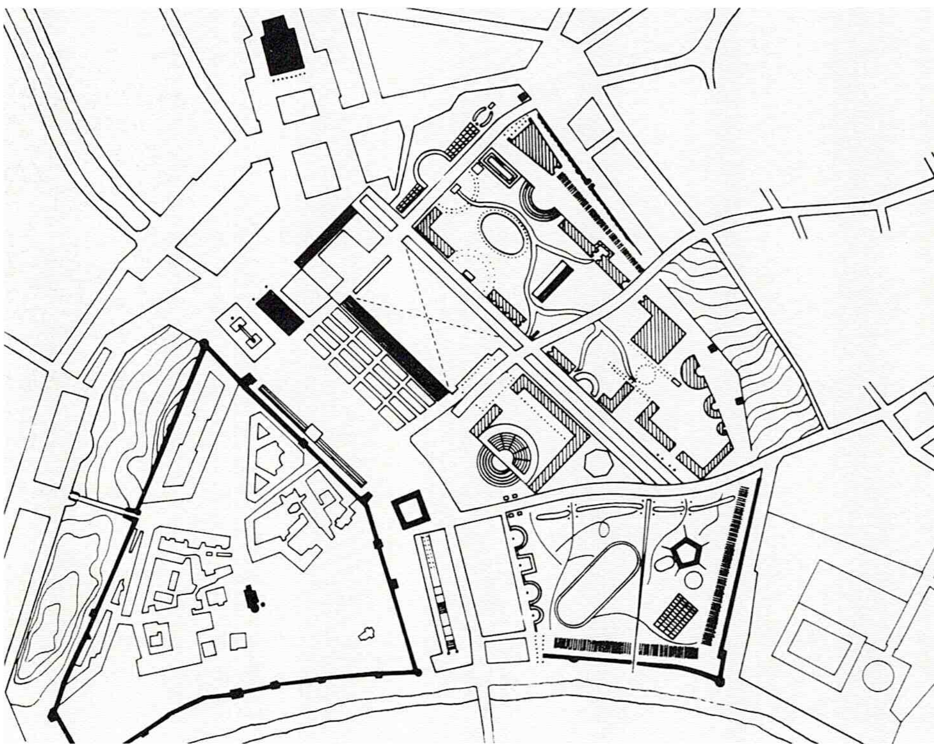
To help anchor his colossal design in the scale of the immediate context and the city, Leonidov used not only the ministry's lower buildings, but also the buildings nearby. If you draw a line between St. Basil's Cathedral and the Bolshoi Theater you will see that the entrance to the Ministry of Heavy Industry lies at the center of the line and that it maintains the scale of the other buildings. When you look inside the Kremlin wall, you see another building that consists of three towers, a strange building, the belfry of Ivan III, which was undoubtedly the source of Leonidov's inspiration.

Leonidov's design is a colossal extrapolation of all the city's historical elements. If you study Leonidov's drawings, you will see in sketch after sketch that establishing a relationship with context and history is the main focus of his design. Leonidov envisioned that out of the bizarre and baroque architecture of Moscow could grow an equally bizarre and baroque modern architecture, and that without quoting, without resembling, this new architecture could establish a rich and harmonious relationship with the past. In various sketches the architect inserts his building into the site as if a mysterious fertilizer has been applied on the ground of Red Square making the existing elements merge with the new to grow into an amazing architectural mutation.

In the 1920s the forms of modern architecture emerged. Ten years later the forms changed to accommodate the present and developed a relationship with the past. Instead of being shockingly new or

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Perspective drawing for the Friedrichstrasse Office Building, 1921
charcoal and pencil on brown paper
68¼ x 48 inches
Collection Mies van der Rohe Archive, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Gift of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

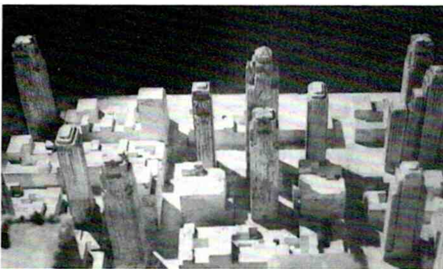


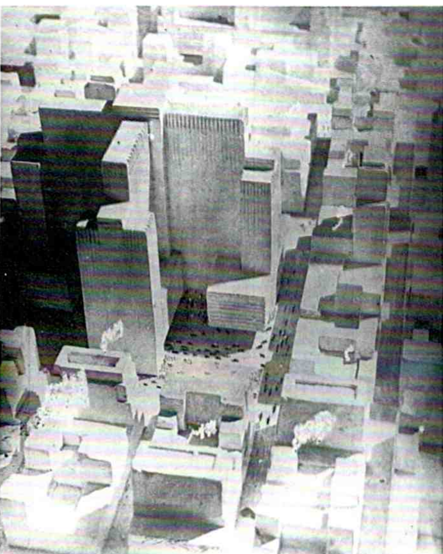


A view of the Kremlin with the Ministry of Heavy Industry towers inserted in collage form into the existing cityscape. This map of Red Square locates the Ministry opposite Lenin's tomb (dotted X) on the site of the existing GUM department store. The model (right) of the Ministry project, made in 1977, demonstrates Leonidov's conception for the three towers, indicating the variety of materials and form envisioned by the architect.

(opposite)
Ivan Leonidov
Dom Narkomtiazhprom Project, Moscow, 1933
(1977 replica of the architectural model submitted to the ministry competition)
28¾ x 58$^{1}/_{16}$ x 24
Collection The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Gift of D.S. and R.H. Gottesman Foundation

revolutionary, in the 1930s modern architects created intricate and constructive contextual relationships. In the Soviet Union, we saw a scheme that would have allowed the city to survive and improve with the invasion of modern architecture. In the United States we will see the city improve in fact. American architects of the 30s ask, how can modern architecture contribute to life in the city? There is a stroke of genius in their application of modern forms, especially vivid in New York's Rockefeller Center.





Rockefeller Center is the product of careful theoretical preparation primarily by two New York architects, Harvey Wiley Corbett and Raymond Hood. The significance of their contribution to the city is enormous and it explodes the myth that American architecture, apart from the works of Frank Lloyd Wright and a few other geniuses, simply happened. The thought of these two architects and the team that worked with them fills me with reverence and melancholy. I know that few living architects can hope to be assembled with a similar group, preoccupied with the same amount of dignity with a project such as Rockefeller Center. The group's character suggests the need to criticize the architects of the 1980s. In comparison to these men we are frivolous; we lack both theoretical interest and ability. We are improvisers who struggle desperately with every new commission. In the 30s, an architect's career embodied a series of related ideas; in the 80s we only emboss our trademarks in the manner of Gucci or Vuitton.

Harvey Wiley Corbett had one obsession: fill New York City with people and traffic until it overflows. Instead of resolving congestion, he hoped to exacerbate congestion for architectural purposes. In Corbett's vision each block becomes an island in a sea of traffic. You climb to the higher regions of the islands to find calm and quiet away from the frenzy of the streets below. The city is an archipelago of blocks, each with an identity and autonomy, but each connected to the next by second-story pedestrian bridges (or skyways), the unifying elements of the community.

Raymond Hood, the other genius of Rockefeller Center, had several visions. First he saw a city of isolated towers surrounded by open spaces, a landscape of needles. With this in mind he designed the McGraw-Hill building and the Daily News building. His next idea came closer to the concept of Rockefeller Center—superbuildings where you live, work and play, that would eliminate congestion. Finally, he decided to keep most of the old city, but build clusters of modern buildings at every tenth street on an avenue, and to house the people who work at these outposts in apartments built into the bridges that span the city's two rivers.

Although Corbett and Hood were hard-nosed pragmatists and businessmen, their reservoir of ideas and theories makes them significantly more creative than most developers. Rockefeller Center is the result of those ideas.

Corbett prepared a model for Rockefeller Center that fit his vision of a city of islands like those of Venice. On the model, serene pedestrian precincts float above the street level, skyways connect the buildings, and an opera house is surrounded by business and housing structures. Hood, on the other hand, interpreted Rockefeller Center as one of his first outposts of modernity in a cluster of four towers that form a diagonal

intersection on the grid of Rockefeller Center's three-block site.

Neither of these concepts was realized. The final design resulted from a collaborative effort. Instead of reviewing the design in detail, I will show how Rockefeller Center fits into the context of New York City.

Rockefeller Center is interesting because it is several architectural projects in one. In its basement is a three-block shopping area. On the tenth floor level its roofs are gardens and parks, which are connected by bridges that span the space above the streets. The roof-top park seems outrageous at first, but one side of the project occupies land that was originally a park (even at this stage, modern architects established emphatic and direct relationships with precedent). So in Rockefeller Center you find all of the Venice metaphors of Hood and Corbett crystalized in a monumental project: an island paradise, a self-sustaining outpost of modernity.

Three early schemes for Manhattan's Rockefeller Center are illustrated (from top):
In a 1930 rendering by Hugh Ferriss, Harvey Wiley Corbett's "islands in a sea of traffic" are connected with second-story skyways; the "city of towers" concept of Raymond Hood, with landscaping and low buildings between the towers, relates directly to Le Corbusier's tower city depicted in *Vers une Architecture*, 1924; Raymond Hood's "city under a single roof" followed the city of towers conception, theorizing that urban concentration is desirable and predicting the urban megastructures of the 1960s and 1970s.

(overleaf)
1981 aerial view of the "city-within-a-city," which occupies twenty-two acres of midtown Manhattan. Innumerable schemes for this vast complex were made and modified as successive tenant changes impinged upon the architect's plans, yet it remains one of the most successful urban complexes of this century, its sequence of exciting outdoor public spaces interacting with the variety of mid-size and tall buildings that constitute Rockefeller Center today.

The model of the ground floor for the Center is fascinating, although it was never fully realized. In addition to Radio City Music Hall, the model calls for an uninterrupted floor containing from five to eight theaters, which are to be run simultaneously. The stages are connected by short corridors, so a performer leaving one stage can enter another stage seconds later. Therefore, with ingenuity a writer can write three plays for one cast. That alone is a beautiful metaphor about city life.

Of course, only two theaters, Radio City Music Hall and Center Theater (demolished in 1954), were realized. In the United States, people usually consider the Music Hall as a beautiful example of Art Deco, rich and nostalgic. But the architects had more outrageous ambitions. As the result of a trip to Moscow, they probably borrowed a somewhat sinister idea from a Soviet project.

The Soviet government held a competition to design a system of "green" satellite towns around Moscow where exhausted workers could go to relax. Konstantin Melnikov submitted revolutionary proposals. He suggested that an artificial environment of re-created natural phenomena and chemical substances would speed the process of recuperation. For example, special dormitories would induce specific types of sleep. In the dormitories, control towers would alter the incline of the floor and administer gases for dreams and psychedelic experiences. The concept was never realized—in the Soviet Union. But in the United States, for a brief time, the designers of Radio City Music Hall administered laughing gas, ozone, and other gases to transport the audience—and the resident Rockettes—to another world. So New Yorkers heard the slogan ". . . two hours in the washed, ionized, ozoned, ultra-solarized air [of Radio City Music Hall] are worth a month in the country."

Rockefeller Center is a primary example among those works of 20th-century architecture that have a solid theoretical base. Such works offer visions, corrections, alterations, or at least interventions, into the way people live. The architects of such projects are concerned not with how their designs look, but how they happen. Instead of imitating established styles, through the use of innovative materials, programmatic enrichments and planned contextual relationships, these architects make significant contributions to urban life.

The city, as one finds it in history,
is the point of maximum concentration for
the power and culture of a community.

Lewis Mumford, 1970

Piper Jaffray Tower

Piper Jaffray Tower looking south.

(pages 16, 17)
A view of the Minneapolis skyline, May 1984, seen from the roof of a parking garage looking north.

Architects:
Hammel Green and Abrahamson, Minneapolis
Developer:
Maddux Properties, Inc.

The Piper Jaffray Tower is a single purpose forty-two-story glass and aluminum curtain wall office tower located at 222 South 9th Street on a quarter block site. It has 687,000 square feet of space ranging from 7,000 to 22,700 square foot suites on each floor. Its first two floors offer highly visible office space to firms needing public access. The offices located on the third story and above are reached by sixteen-passenger elevators. Enclosed parking is available on four levels below the recessed entrance lobby and the tower will be connected to Minneapolis's commercial, government, entertainment and hotel districts by the city's skyway system.

The tower's adjacent properties are generally three stories which will guarantee both unobstructed views for the office suites and high visibility for the building itself.

Dennis
Through the 1930s the American skyscraper had cultural, formal and commercial aspirations. At some point the skyscraper became a purely commercial high-rise building. It is essential now to adjust that building type to a new set of urban cultural aspirations.

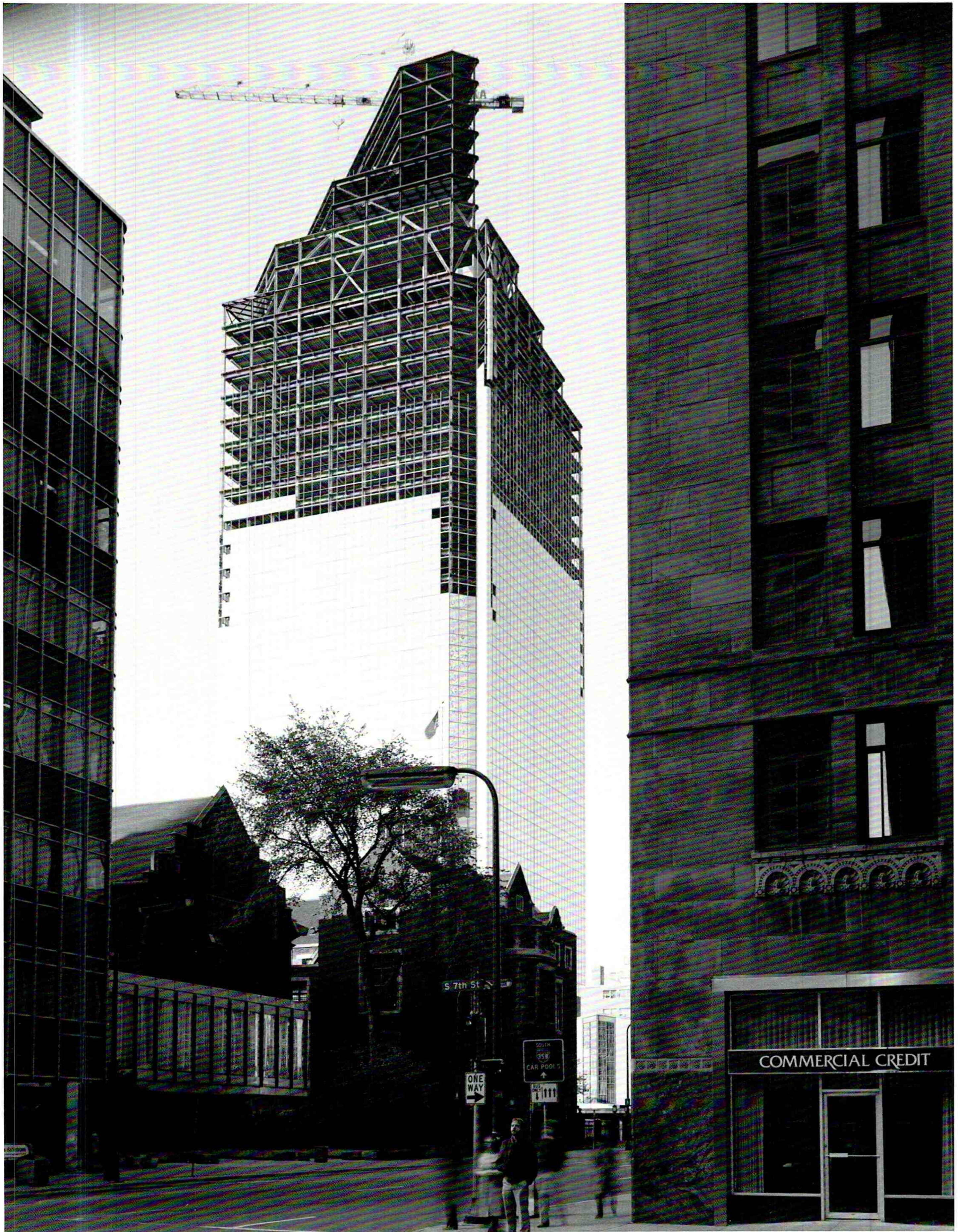
None of us is very enthusiastic about speculative office buildings. They are supported by announcements from chambers of commerce describing how they're going to revitalize the city. I think they're nearly always architecturally disappointing. There is a whole series of formal issues one can talk about. I really don't think you can make cities out of such projects. Physically, you can't do it. The U.S. is filled with new towers and that's why we have no cities—we have lots of built-up areas, but no cities.

Krieger
Ten years from now, a good fraction of this development will presumably slow down, and we'll be left with a set of artifacts. And some of them we'll decide are fantastically wonderful things to have, and I don't know how we know ahead of time. It may not be apparent when they first go up.

Dennis
I think this building is very very suave and quite elegant, but the question is simply what kind of city do you want? Do you see your city as an agglomeration of a gazelle and a giraffe? Do you see it like a zoo? Or do you see it with a certain degree of unity and homogeneity? And that takes it out of the realm of one building and puts it on the level of a building as a fragment of urbanism, of a whole kind of complex society, and I think you have to see them that way.

Giovannini
I do understand that at 55 miles an hour from the freeway, a building does have a highway context to respond to, and I do think that a gesture of that scale is appropriate. I think, though, in the immediate context when you finally get out of your car and walk on the street, there's no intermediate range that this building responds to whatsoever.

Dennis
No traditional architect would have made a violently individual building like this without some adjustment at the base of the building. Now, I know there is an attempt to open the thing up, and make a kind of diagonal erosion on the bottom. But, to give Minneapolis a shaft that goes uninterruptedly down to the ground plane is a very difficult thing to do. In essence, it divorces the building from the continuity of the urban fabric.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LOOP PHARMACY
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Marlin Schlottman says,
"Increase Sales, using
7 words or less!"
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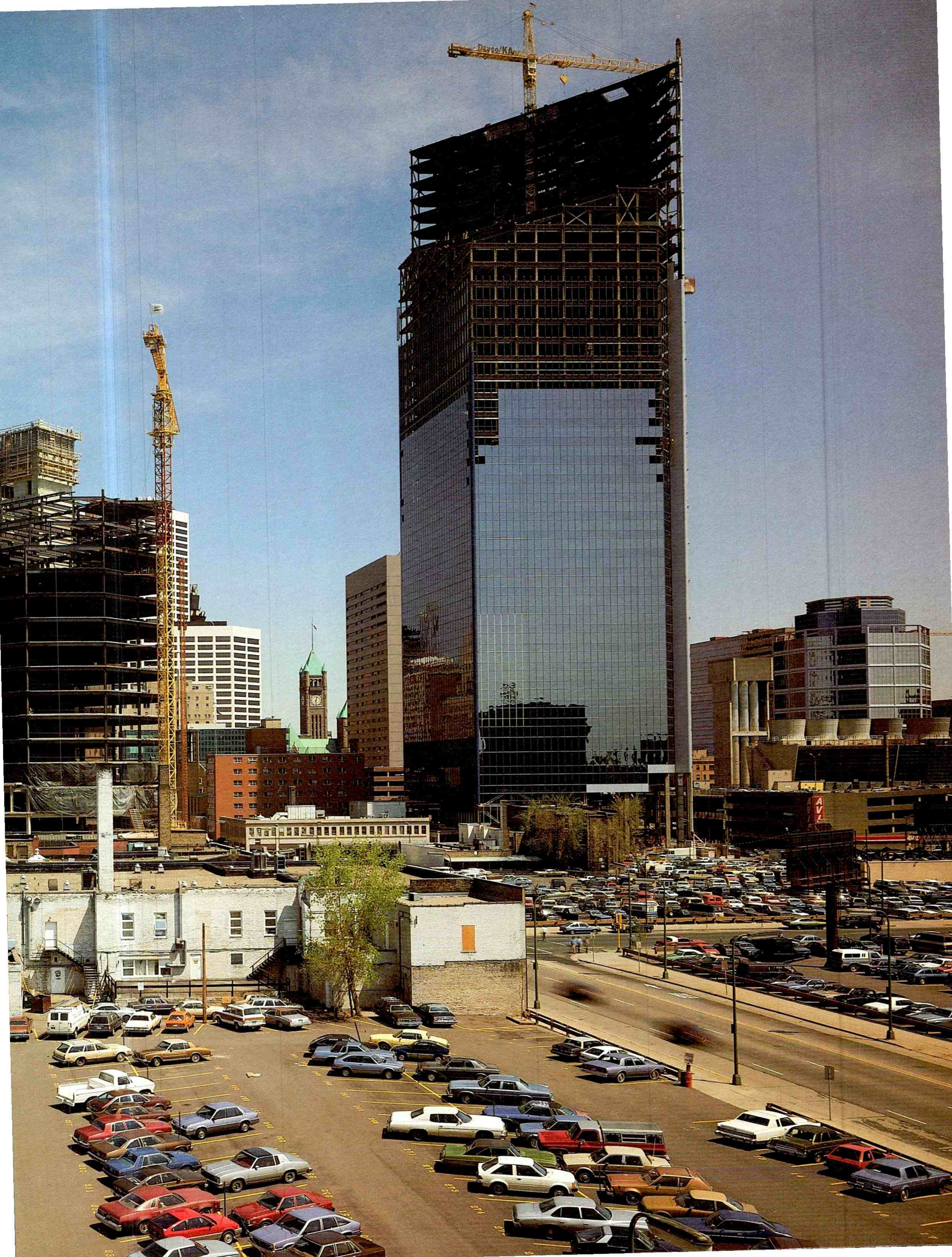


701 Fourth Avenue

The northwest facade of Helmut Jahn's office tower seen from Government Center Park.

Architect:
Murphy/Jahn, Chicago
Developer:
Turner Development Corporation

The project site for this eighteen-story office tower is a quarter block on the corner of 7th Street and 4th Avenue. Its position adjacent to the Lutheran Brotherhood headquarters and Hennepin County Government Center and Park, as well as the opportunities of a corner site, determined the facade, landscaping and diagonal orientation of the building. The octagonal plans for the tower respond to this diagonal axis on its square side and minimize the facade surface directly facing existing and proposed buildings along its interior lot lines. The surface grid of blue and silver glass refers to the facade of the neighboring Lutheran Brotherhood building, and steps along the 7th Street surface establish a relationship with the set backs of the Lutheran Brotherhood headquarters as well as providing a transition from the surrounding low-rise architecture to the new high-rise buildings. Landscaped terraces on these outer "steps" create both a continuum of Government Center Park and an amenity for the office user.

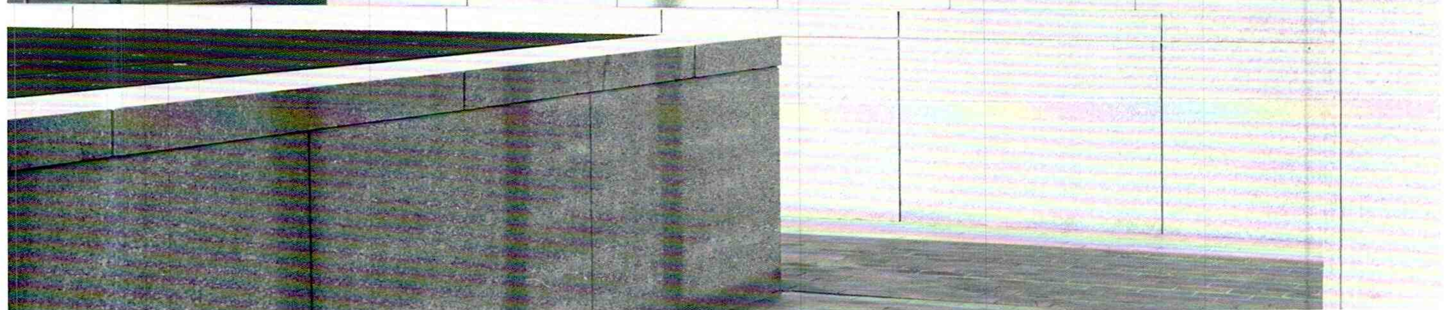
The project contains 316,000 square feet of office space varying in size from 18,400 to 9,800 square feet and a single penthouse office of 9,800 square feet. Because of the octagonal shape, all floors have the potential for eight corner offices and because of the stepped facade, tenants on the 3rd, 7th, 11th, 15th and penthouse levels will have access to roof terraces. The two-story lobby accommodates both the street and skyway entrances.

Robertson
The thing that I like about the building is that it sets its main entrance along the diagonal path system of the park, so that it's a building that responds to the larger order. Buildings must always respond to the larger order. The city is the order, the building follows that. It can't be the other way around. The entrance is also in the right place. It's a stupid, correct idea. Absolutely stupid and absolutely correct.

For me, at least, Jahn is saying two things: to build a commercial building you give it a shape, you get the door in the right place, you sheathe it in what is the cheap and fashionable material, but you wrap it—at least at the bottom, and part of the way up—so that it makes some connection to something that is very strong in the surrounding context. And, in that sense, this building that is both new and old, is making the right kind of references to the best things around it. The building next to it (Lutheran Brotherhood) looks like a NASA solar dish, or something, that's sending a message to the moon.

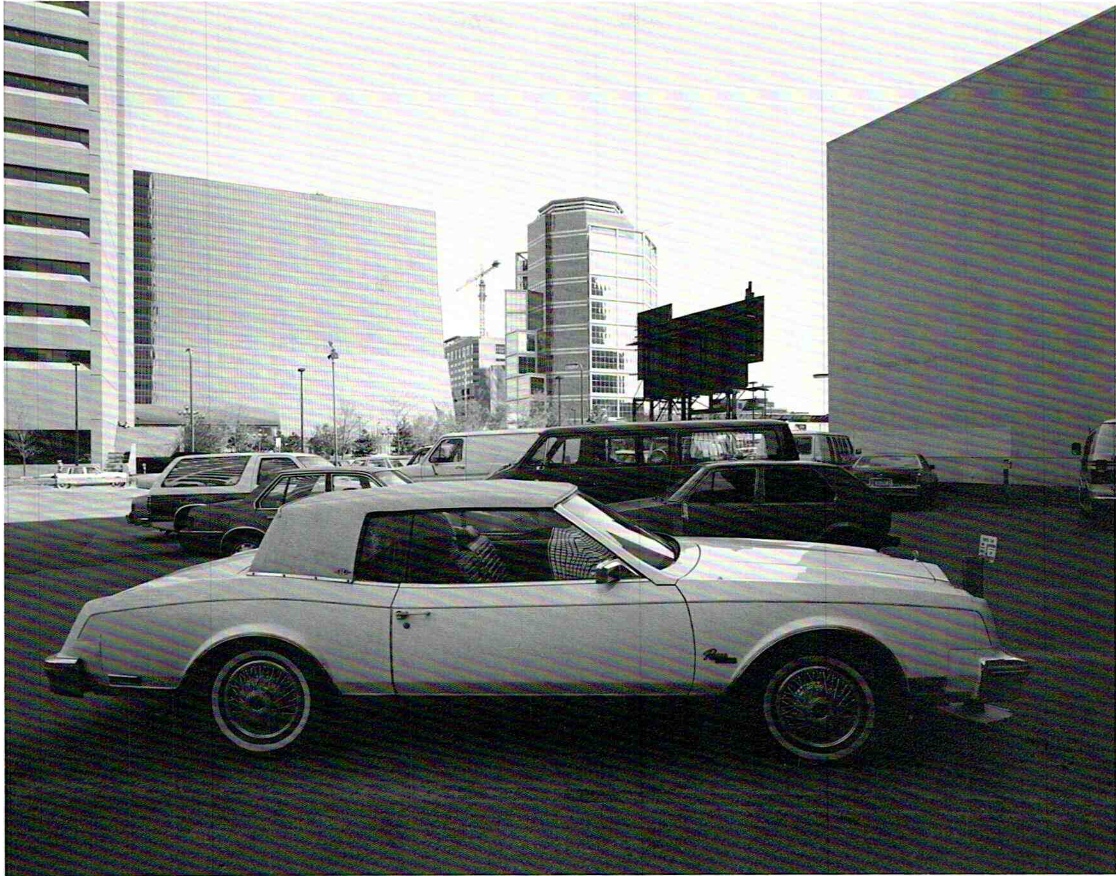
Dennis
I think it's a marvelous idea for a taller building—sort of 'mooshed down' into a small building. But it does attempt to meet the street and it does attempt to respond to the diagonal and it does attempt to make a humanly-scaled base with a middle and a top. I think those are, in straight architectural and human terms, noble aspirations.

Robertson
Buildings are not the problem with American cities. We're enormously skilled at making individual projects and they don't really ever seem to add up to much. I'm more interested in talking about the basic problems of urbanism that cannot be solved by well designed buildings.



701 Fourth Avenue and its neighbor to the north, the Lutheran Brotherhood building of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, San Francisco, seen from the west.

(opposite)
Two distant views of 701 Fourth Avenue show its immediate context, May 1984.



Normandy Inn

Riverplace

Riverplace, under construction, May 1984.
Lady of Lourdes Church from the near bank of the Mississippi River visible through two of the site's other historic buildings.

Architects:
Miller Hanson Westerbeck Bell Architects, Inc.; Palaia-Svedberg Architects; Korsunsky Krank Erickson Architects, Inc., Minneapolis
Developer:
East Bank Riverfront Partners

This 1.2 million square foot mixed-use development will create a new community along the historic east bank milling district of the Mississippi River. Located on cobblestoned Main Street and extending on both sides of Hennepin Avenue, Riverplace will provide more than two hundred and ten condominium and townhouse residences, one hundred sixty five rental apartments, office space and a nine hundred-car parking facility. In addition to housing and office space, Riverplace features a center of seventy retail shops, a food market and restaurants.

The historic Main Street Warehouse and Brown-Ryan Stable, which was moved to Main Street last year, are being extensively renovated to enhance the turn-of-the-century appearance of the development and to visually frame the historic Lady of Lourdes Church, which serves as a backdrop for Lourdes Plaza, a year-round public square. The Brown-Ryan Stable will serve as a transportation and information center for residents and tourists.

Chatfield-Taylor
In thinking about Riverplace, it strikes me that the approach is exactly correct, in that it is the assets approach. It treats the historic buildings as a resource rather than as voids in a place. Beginning with that as a principle, the next step is to identify the things that are valuable and to figure out how they can be enhanced through the development. The problem that we all have in historic preservation now is how to design around old buildings, incorporating them into the contemporary fabric. To me, that's a most interesting problem: how to keep the balance. Keeping the real face of the building—not stripping it and cleaning it too much—keeping the real street, keeping the real slope of the park are guarantees against the 'cute' look that comes with cleaning things up too much. It's very important to leave alone the thing you're trying to protect.

Giovannini
Not only is Riverplace creating almost ex nihilo a whole district, but it is taking advantage of a large existing urban infrastructure: the river, the warehouses, the other districts around it, the point of arrival and departure to and from both sides of the river. One of the problems in dealing with new architecture is the issue of meaning, from a democratic and sociological point of view. It seems that the sense of place has been violated by a lot of new developments in Minneapolis, but this project takes advantage of the meaning of river and land to Minneapolis—the reason why Minneapolis is here today.

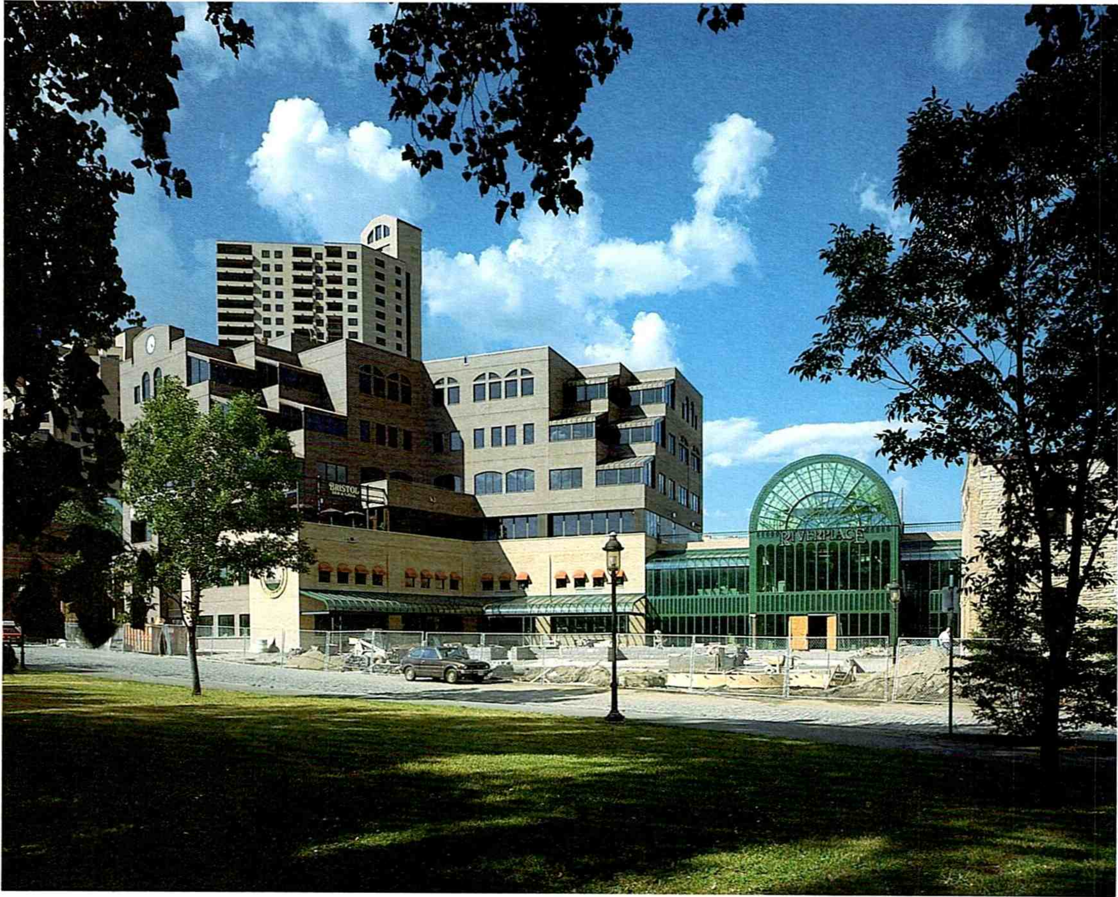
In an area that has a very low density, it's extremely important to seek an architecture and an urban design that intensifies the energy of the place so that its activity is the attraction to it. It is very important to program it as a place that is not self-contained and isolated from the rest of the city but one that is open, inviting people from both sides of the river.

Chatfield-Taylor
Only those things that are not designated landmarks should be considered fair game for change. Yet all the power is still on the side of change. Government is set up to bring about change, and the system is profoundly oriented to it. We have city agencies that are budgeted with millions of dollars a year to scout out where change can occur and what it should look like and how it can be heightened and invited in, and how developers can be enticed into a situation.

Usually, if we have a landmarks commission, it has a budget of $2 a year and is the only agency of government that is there to strike a balance. Minneapolis is unusual in that it has completed a building survey. Out of 160,000 properties there are nearly 4,000 that are considered worth looking after.

(p 24)
Riverplace under construction, June 1984, as seen from the banks of the Mississippi (top), and from cobblestoned Main Street. The complex opens in September 1984.

(p 25)
Riverplace looking west at uncompleted site with Lady of Lourdes Church at its center (top), and view looking west at Riverplace's tallest tower and lower adjacent buildings.


BRISTOL
RIVERPLACE

NO
PARKING

City Center

View of City Center from beneath one of the IDS building's four skyways.

Architect:
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Denver and Chicago offices
Developer:
Oxford Properties, Inc.

In the heart of downtown Minneapolis between Hennepin Avenue and Nicollet Mall, City Center features a retail mall, a fifty-two-story high-rise office tower, a 634-room Amfac Hotel and a multi-level parking garage. The facades of each component of City Center are designed to retain separate identities for these individual structures. The Multifoods Tower on 6th Street and Donaldson's Department Store on Nicollet Mall and 7th, are of granite aggregate precast while the exterior finish of the thirty-two-story, triangle-shaped hotel is a reflective glass curtain wall. The Hennepin Avenue exposure is made of metal grillwork which functionally masks the above-grade portion of the parking garage. More than one hundred retail stores, services and restaurants are accessible from the street as well as from the covered retail mall and are connected to seventeen square blocks of downtown Minneapolis through the city's skyway system.

Chatfield-Taylor
A building like City Center is, in a sense, history proof. That's not my term, but it is a new term that is being used to refer to buildings that can't be incorporated into the existing situation.

Robertson
If you're going to build densely in a city you must have an unbelievably tough planning and development authority that will work together with your business community and really hassle out the issues. The issues are extremely important because a building decision is with you for the rest of your lives, the most serious decision you make next to those affecting your health and your family's financial security. It's the only thing you can't escape.

Giovannini
City Center is not a cheap building. There's a great deal of attention paid to detail, but I think the big picture was missed and they got the small picture. They got the elevator buttons and the door handles and the way joints meet, but there is more to a building than the details. It's a question of the basic intelligence of the concept. I don't favor conformity or a boring uniformity, but I think we need continuity in the city.

Chatfield-Taylor
It seems to me that the city has to be willing to take a risk, too, and that might be losing the developer, if the developer can't build a small enough, discreet enough, constructive enough project to actually solve the problem and be a good addition. Because, if it's examined in the long run, you take a big risk by having a building like that introduced into the scene, because of the damage that it does to a large part of the city.

Maguire
If you examine projects that have been built in Minneapolis, and there are things you don't like very much, you have to ask if there was a reason for them to turn out that way. Was there some economic constraint that said that you had to have a blank wall against the Nicollet Mall in the City Center building? There can be alternative solutions.

Dennis
A long transformation has taken place, from a public tyranny in the time of Louis XIV in France, three hundred years ago, to a private tyranny, an absolute rampant explosion of private exploitation, culminating in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Modern architecture was an aspect of that in America, as was the city that was envisioned by the architects of those buildings. Most of the architects practicing today have been trained in the techniques and methods of private building. Now to what degree we can all readjust to the public life I'm not certain.

(p 28, from top)
Looking north from the Amfac Hotel's 19th floor past the office tower of City Center; the intersection of Hennepin Avenue and 7th Streets looking northwest. City Center's parking garage facade faces onto Hennepin Avenue and wraps around onto the 7th Street side.

(p 29)
City Center's Amfac Hotel seen from the northwest.

J.C. PENNEY

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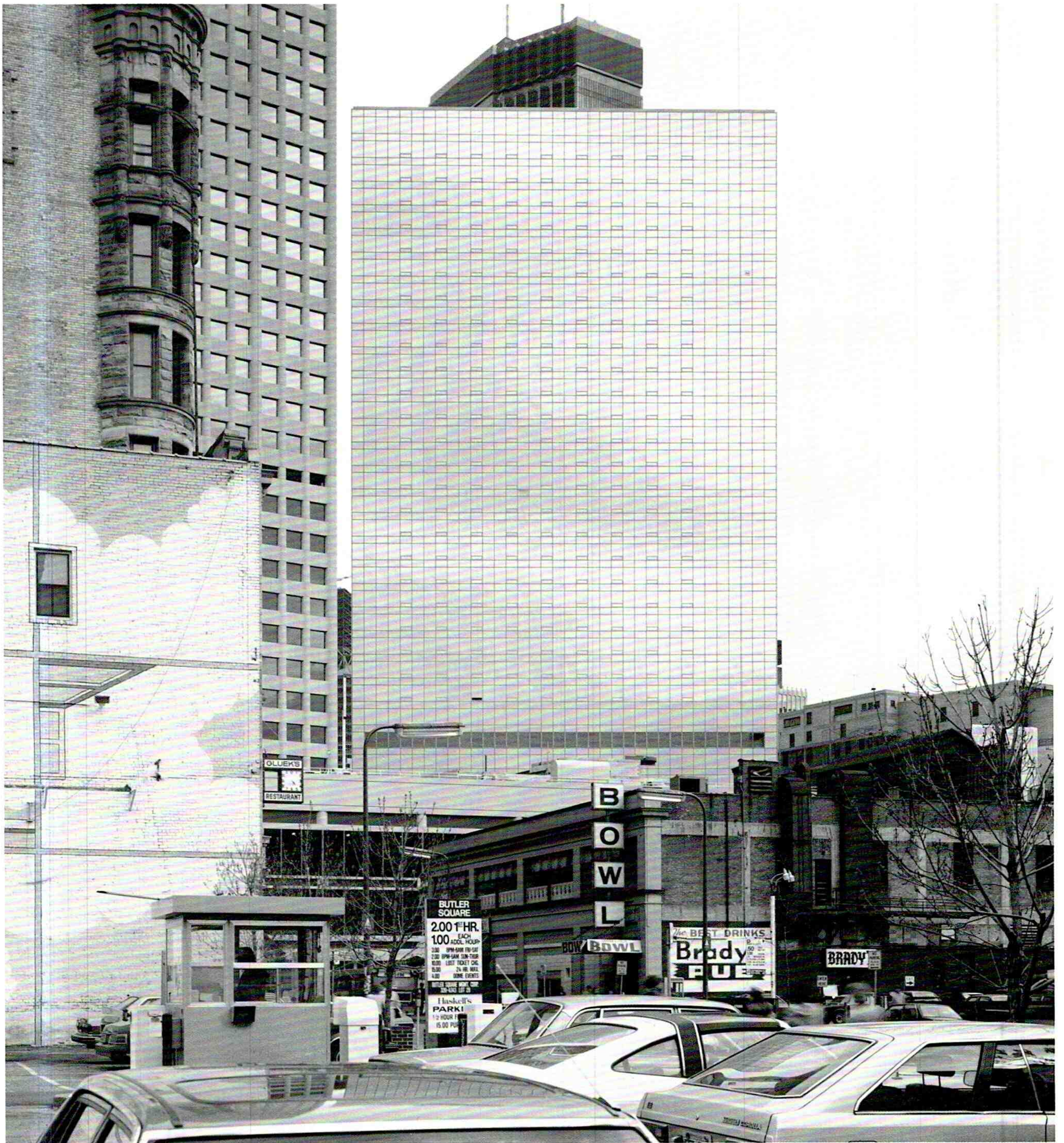
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15.00 24 HR. MAX.
4.00 DOME EVENTS
BOWL
The BEST DRINKS
Brady
PUB
BRADY
Haskell's

Cities

Loring Greenway, looking northeast at recent development.

Robertson

There's so much individualism, we're swamped with it. Variety is killing American cities. The best parts of every city are made up of about three standard building types, with very little variety: same plan, same size, same scale, same kinds of openings and same materials. And, in fact, it's the only way you can actually build well, because you finally get to know how to detail something. So the notion that variety must be introduced to make things 'interesting' just isn't so.

We must really abandon the hope that architecture is going to make good cities, and that the better the design of the buildings, the better the cities. It's just clearly not true. There are beautifully designed buildings all over the country. Architecture is everywhere, and the architects are becoming celebrities. But the cities are getting worse. It's not that we want repetition, I think we want variety within organization. It's really a balance of the two.

Until we put planning, both policy planning and physical planning, and design and development back together as the central concern of citizens and city managers and city builders, we won't have a chance of dealing with the kinds of problems that are lying ahead of us. We won't produce elegant, uplifting cities—the kind that modernism started to talk about, the thing that has obsessed Western imaginations: the city as the cradle of man. We won't have those. We're just going to have a lot of strips to the airport and a lot of building activity and a lot of prizes.

Giovannini

Flying into Minnesota I saw a land that was subdivided into beautiful grids—an agricultural patchwork. As we got closer to Minneapolis, the grids interrupted to a certain extent to make way for the lakes, but it seemed that there were two salient features of the landscape: one, the grid, and two, the water.

The grid of the city is there; it exists, and should be treated as an asset and not as something to be ignored. Furthermore, if we're talking about historic preservation, the grid is a historic fact and insofar as it relates to the land and the gridding of the prairie, it's actually an extension of the prairie into the city.

Dennis

Great histories have always been a kind of coming together, a balance between public and private expression, public and private means. Not even the strongest French despots could accomplish great public feats by themselves. A lot of the things that we know and love about cities like Paris were in fact accomplished through concerted effort, even though the balance was, in fact, in favor of the king. But it did take the coming together of private interests and public demands.

In the transition between public and private, I think the United States has had a rather unique condition. One of the nice things about American cities is that the balance between public and private has always been a delicate one, and we've had rather more individual expression in buildings than most European cities have had. That worked perfectly well when we had a sense of ourselves culturally and formally. We knew what our cities were up to the post-World War II decades. There was a sense of civic responsibility, of front yard, front porch, public rooms. Everyone knew what society was. Perhaps things are not quite so simple anymore, but I think some semblance of that public realm probably has to be maintained.

Robertson

Minneapolis has a number of legacies of quality decisions. Among them is the park system, for example, which you can walk around in and look back at buildings from, really the greatest gift that can be given to a culture. Such amenities take a lot of time, and a lot of commitment. Still, although there is architecture everywhere in Minneapolis, there is as yet no city. There is the residue of an old city, and promise of a city to come. But the new city that one walks through is really a kind of Sweet's Catalog *of spare parts. There's absolutely nothing about it that relates to any historical concept of any culture in the history of urbanism.*

Physically, we don't have a clue yet about how the standard parts might go together. Until we have even the crudest blueprint of what cities are, we won't make them. We'll continue to build. We have lots of built-up places, but we're not building cities—not this culture, *not yet.*

Biographies

Adele Chatfield-Taylor is a Virginian who has lived and worked in New York City since 1967. She received a B.A. in 1966 from Manhattanville College and an M.S. in historic preservation from Columbia University. In 1968 she was a founding partner of Urban Deadline Architects, a firm established to address the problems of deteriorating historic urban architecture. She joined the staff of the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1973, becoming its executive director in 1980, and currently she is adjunct professor of architecture at Columbia University. She received a 1984 Rome Prize and spent six months at the American Academy in Rome working on a book on historic preservation policy.

Michael Dennis, Professor of Architecture at Harvard University, was educated at the University of Texas and the University of Oregon. He worked in Europe for five years in the mid-60s prior to becoming a founding partner of Wells/Koetter/Dennis Architects in Ithaca, New York. While in Ithaca, he taught at Cornell University and, in 1977, established his own private practice. He moved his practice to Boston in 1981 where he began teaching at Harvard. His many residential projects have been published in *Architecture and Urbanism* and *Progressive Architecture* magazines. He is a frequent lecturer and author of the books *Residential Squares, French Hôtel Plans* and *Urban Precedents*.

Joseph Giovannini writes architectural criticism for *The New York Times* Home Section and was formerly architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*. He also serves as a contributing editor to *Metropolis* and as a consultant to *Architectural Digest*. Educated at Yale University, The Sorbonne in Paris, the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome and at Harvard University, Giovannini received a masters degree in architecture in 1974. He has twice been awarded certificates of appreciation from The Los Angeles Chapter AIA, and in 1981 received an Honor Award from the Los Angeles Conservancy.

Rem Koolhaas, Dutch architect and author, studied at the Architectural Association in London and came to the United States on a Harkness Fellowship where he was a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York. He is a partner in the Office for Metropolitan Architecture which has offices in London and Rotterdam where since 1980 the firm has been working on several Dutch commissions. His many honors include a *Progressive Architecture* award with Laurinda Spear in 1975, and a shared first prize in the competition for the Dutch parliament in The Hague in 1978. His book, *Delirious New York*, has had an enormous influence on attitudes toward the city as a phenomenon.

Martin Krieger, trained as a physicist, has been a lecturer in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for the past four years. Prior to 1980 Krieger was for six years assistant professor at the Hubert Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and he spent five years at the University of California, Berkeley as a lecturer and planner. He was educated at Columbia University and received an M.A. and Ph.D. as a National Science Foundation Fellow. He has written numerous articles for such diverse publications as the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Policy Sciences*, and *The New York Times*.

Robert Maguire is co-managing partner of Maguire/Thomas Partners in Los Angeles. Founded in 1965, Maguire/Thomas Partners specializes in the development of office and multiple-use properties noted for their quality and architectural distinction. Maguire received a degree in political science from UCLA. For five years he was a senior loan officer at Security Pacific National Bank where he became interested in urban planning and architecture. His many recent projects include Crocker Center in downtown Los Angeles, one of the largest developments recently completed on the West Coast.

Jaquelin Robertson, a principal partner in Eisenman/Robertson Architects in New York City, is also Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. In 1967, after working with Edward Larrabee Barnes in New York and with Sir Leslie Master in England, Robertson founded the New York City Urban Design Group. He became director of the Mayor's Office of Midtown Planning and Development in 1969 and later served as a New York City Planning Commissioner. He has received design awards from *Progressive Architecture, Architectural Record,* and *Urban Design* magazines and has taught architecture both here and abroad. He received both his B.A. and M.Arch. from Yale University and his M.A. from Oxford University where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

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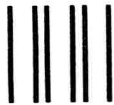

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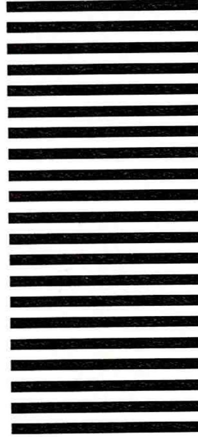

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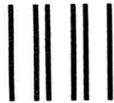

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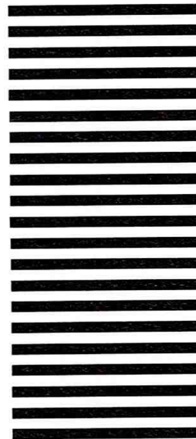

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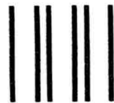

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