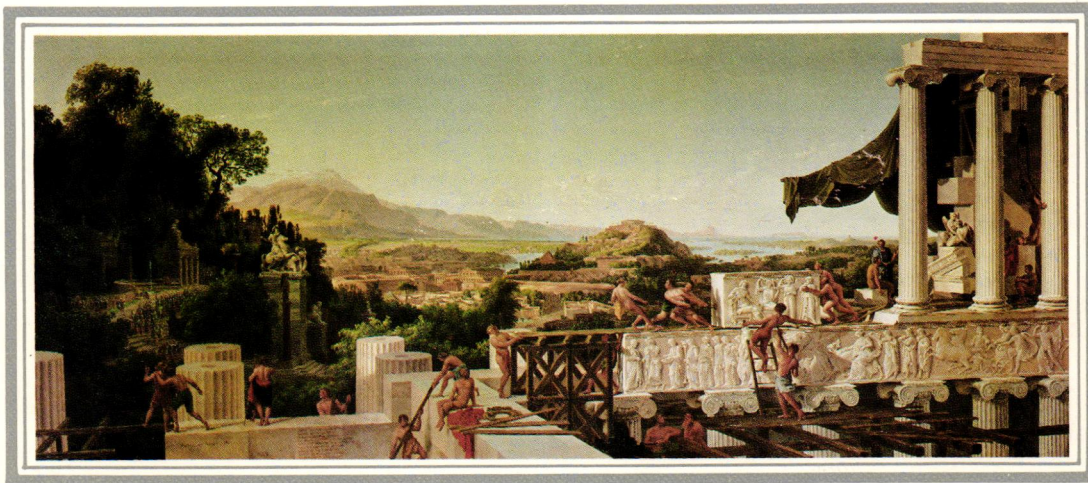


# MODULUS 16

The University of Virginia Architectural Review



*We have an urbanism still.*

15.95  
170 V S T O N  
5 MAY 1988

# M O D U L U S 16

The University of Virginia Architectural Review

*We have an urbanism still.*

The University of Virginia School of Architecture  
Charlottesville, Virginia

Distributed by Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.  
712 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019

The University of Virginia School of Architecture  
Campbell Hall, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

© 1983 by the University of Virginia School of Architecture  
All rights reserved  
Printed in the United States of America  
ISSN 0191-4022  
ISBN 0-8478-5386-1

*Cover: Blick in Griechenlands Blüte (View of Greece in Its  
Flowering), painting copied after Schinkel's original of 1824-25.*

*In memory of  
Mr. Benjamin C. Howland, Jr.  
Professor of Landscape Architecture, 1975-83  
The University of Virginia School of Architecture*

**Editor**

Robert Claiborne

**Production Editor**

Leslie Mason

**Business Manager**

Cara Carroccia

**Subscription Manager**

Phillip Collins

**Advisory Board**

Roxanne Brouse

David McKinney

Philip Scott

**Editorial Consultant**

David Bearinger

**Faculty Advisors**

Richard Becherer

Thomas Schumacher

Kirk Train

**Staff**

Karen Boyd

Martin Brandwein

Jeff Bushman

Katherine Chappell

Michael Crackel

Leslie Dyenson

David Gobel

Lowell Hawkins

Craig Konyk

Mimi Mead

Robin Roberts

Anthony Scott

Elisabeth Sloan

Adam Yarinsky

## Contents

**Introduction** 1  
Robert Claiborne

**In Search of an American Urban Order, Part I:  
The Nagasaki Syndrome** 2  
Jaquelin T. Robertson

**New Deal, New City** 16  
Diane Ghirardo

**Roses for the Rotunda** 30  
William Mullen

**The Love of Ruins, *or* the Ruins of Love** 48  
Leon Krier

**Schinkel's Panoramic Planning of Central Berlin** 62  
Kurt W. Forster

**Towards a New (Old) Architecture** 78  
Carroll W. Westfall

**The Boston Plan** 98  
Fred Koetter and Susie Kim

**Excursus Americanus** 110  
Michael Dennis

## Introduction

Robert Claiborne

*Our culture is based on the acknowledgement of the sovereign greatness of classical antiquity. We have taken our way of thinking and feeling from the Romans. From the Romans we have our social perceptions and the discipline of the soul.*  
Adolf Loos, "Meine Bauschule," 1913.

The history of Western culture and civilization is, ultimately, a history of the city. It is the history of an idea first discovered by the Greeks, glorified in the cities of the Romans, transmitted throughout Europe, and extended to the New World. In the city were concentrated the political, religious, economic, and cultural activities which directly affected the lives of all. Our values, our traditions, our entire way of thinking have passed down through a magnificent history that began in earnest with Graeco-Roman civilization. The cumulative results of that urban tradition are astounding.

What makes a city good? The ancient Greeks applied a great deal of intellectual energy to that question, and some of their clearest insights into it emerged through their basic political institution, the *polis*. The political activities of the Greek state made citizenship a distinctive and precious condition of life. Active participation in the civic life was both the highest honor and the most serious responsibility. As the Greek historian Thucydides credited Pericles with saying of Athens, "We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as harmless, but as a useless character." The *polis* compelled men to use their talents to promote an enduring good.

Based on this classical legacy, Carroll W. Westfall has offered a definition of the city as a place that not only assures the sustenance of life, but also "contains the institutions required to allow citizens to aspire to the good life, . . . the life of moral excellence." Civic institutions, the enduring forms given to the principled activities of a group of people, embody the highest values of the citizens and, therefore, of the culture. The political character of the citizens is revealed by the city's hierarchy of institutional arrangements and the unique archi-

tectural character of the city. Wolfgang Braunfels has written, "Just as the nature of the ideal determines the character of the institution, so does the ideal desire to express itself in terms of architectural form." And, of course, architecture, in combination with landscape, is the organizing element which establishes the character of the urban setting.

The ancient Greeks knew these things; the city centered on the agora and dominated by the Acropolis attests to that. The Romans learned from the Greeks, developing the political system that transformed political purpose into the making of things worthy of public man—cities, governments, laws, fora, temples, roads, aqueducts, and bridges. The Roman Empire not only developed models against which succeeding cultures gauged their achievements; it also distributed similar versions of those models throughout the world.

These observations lead ultimately to America and to Thomas Jefferson—our most direct pathfinder between *then* and *now*. In proposing architectural models worthy of and able to represent the new American Republic, Jefferson drew directly from the Romans. To him the Roman Republic was the most convincing and practical embodiment of the Greek political ideal. Jefferson's intense commitment to the symbolic power of classical architectural models—redefined to accommodate and enhance the political life of the citizens of the new republic as envisioned in the American Constitution—was an impressive reaffirmation of the Western political tradition. That tradition also maintains our cities as living embodiments of our true values, constantly remembering, preserving, renewing.

Our ideals determine our institutions and the buildings that serve them; our cities express our composite political and moral character. In our cities, we daily live out our best attempts to attain the tenets of the political ideal. As we continue to build in our cities, may we remember the cultural traits which guided men who built cities before us—order, balance, and faith in the intellectual capacity of man.

