

Places

\$5.00

A Quarterly Journal
of Environmental Design

Published by The MIT Press

for the College of
Environmental Design,
University of California,
Berkeley,

and the

School of Architecture
and Planning,
Massachusetts Institute
of Technology

ISSN 0731-0455

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Maurice Culot

Volume 1, Number 1, Fall 1983

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Caring about Places

Of what use are places, to whom, and when? Places as used, thought, felt, and remembered are essential to our conceptions of private self; public places secure the idea of civic self. *Places* is about caring about places.

Places are made of things, of materials, of forms, of spaces. They are settings for human action and aspiration. They bear the marks of history; they suggest relationships; they reveal specific cultures. Like any source of riches, places require continuing investment and stewardship to yield their treasures. The role of the environmental design professions is to serve that process with expertise and imagination.

To engage the many dimensions of places, we believe many voices must be heard: those who traditionally have created designs for places; those who manage places; those who study society and place; and those who inhabit and otherwise experience places. Designer, scholar, scientist, lawyer, artist, politician, citizen—all those who care can shed new light, supply new metaphors, and suggest new directions for the notion of places and for ways in which they may be perceived and used. And we seek contrary and divergent views so that many issues will be brought to light and so that the plural nature of place will be revealed.

Places will focus on the shifting lines between the public and private domains, with particular attention

to public spaces in the service of shared and egalitarian ideals of society. It will also explore the subtle balance that must be struck between the need for professional intervention and the danger of introducing unwarranted external control in the creation and renewal of places. Initiatives for shaping public environments are concentrated in the hands of a very few all over the world.

Can design professionals simultaneously help us to realize our dreams and meet the highest standards of public responsibility and design? Can the public participate more vigorously in the shaping of places in their own interests? Can places reach beyond their initiators and designers to become good places over time for all people who will use them? Can intensely personal imaginings find their place in the public realm? These and related questions will give life to *Places*.

This issue, indeed the journal itself, owes its existence to the ideas and enthusiasm of Donald Appleyard, and especially to his love for people and places.



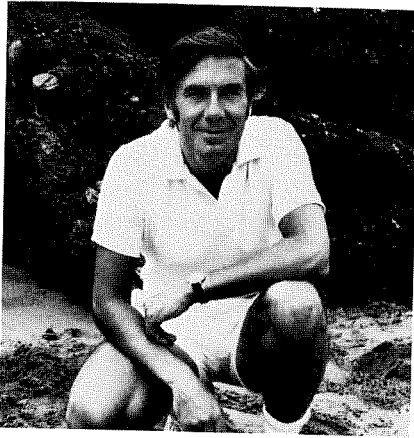
Donlyn Lyndon



William L. Porter

A Tribute to Donald Appleyard

Kevin Lynch and others



Donald Appleyard

Identity, Power, and Place:

A Review of Donald Appleyard's Unfinished Manuscript

Many of us feel the loss and the tragic irony that Donald Appleyard's death should have been caused by a careening automobile, the very device whose rational control he had so long been advocating. And since at his death he was at the height of his powers, our feelings are honed to a sharper edge.

With a long creative record behind him, he was moving in new directions, blooming before our eyes. He went steadily, throughout his career, from one accomplishment to the next, and yet, for all his patient, precise, and thorough methods of work, he was endowed with an astonishing creativity, a fountain of ideas and of human warmth.

I will pass lightly over his extensive output and his substantial achievements in environmental design—work that is already known and having an effect. He advanced from early interests in city images to careful studies in Guayana and later in San Francisco, which made clear the diverse images that are held by various groups, how city form affects those images, and how that knowledge can be applied to making an environment humane. His early studies of the view from the road led to a far more careful analysis of the inner-city street system in Boston, thence to the creation of the Environmental Simulation Laboratory, and then to his seminal studies of street livability, which brought environmental quality to bear directly on public policy. Donald could fantasize, imagine new

possibilities, and speak passionately about the city, as he did in Kendall Square, Cambridge; San Diego; Reno; and Dodoma in Tanzania. He could be absolutely rigorous, tough-minded, and realistic, as when he conducted the BART analyses or considered the politics of city streets. Former students remember his teaching; colleagues know his skill as an administrator. He was modest, eager to learn from others, possessed of a self-deprecating humor, and passionately and absolutely determined.

Donald made bridges: between urban design and social sciences, between the way people perceive and value their setting and the professional process of its design. He was an activist, a teacher, a researcher, and a humanist. He was interested in the livability of streets and neighborhoods, in the control of local traffic, in conservation, in the perception of place, in the community, in supporting the public life. He had lectured in dozens of countries in Europe and the Third World, had a great store of friends, and was intimate with the new advances in city planning throughout the world. But if his base for 15 years was Berkeley, his second home was Boston. His articles and reports make a lengthy list. His books deal with city perception, city conservation, and the management of traffic.

The list seems that of a man just completing a full career. Yet those who know him saw him in the very act of flowering: invited to Greece

to advise on a new turn in local planning, launched and editing a new journal to be called *Places*, and opening up new intellectual leads on the symbolism of place. The tragic accident in Athens put a stop to all these hopes.

This is well known. My sharpest regrets, however, beyond the sense of personal loss, are for the work that Donald was beginning. For all his previous accomplishments, one had the sense that he was just striking his own vein of thought, starting to see the symbolic meaning of the city as the subject that brought all his aims and hunches to a common focus. He was beginning to break that subject open in a way that semiotics, with its reliance on the linguistic model, has not yet been able to do.

Of course, this was not a completely new preoccupation, nor his alone. Some historians, geographers, and critics of the city are turning in that same direction. And I remember some of our arguments, years ago, in which he pressed hard for an analysis of the meaning, and not simply of the identity and structure, of places. Some of this was reflected in the text of an early student study at MIT called "Signs in the City." In fact, in the last few years of his life, thinking about meaning claimed Donald's attention and was expressed in a series of draft articles, and, especially, in the unfinished manuscript for a book, to be called *Identity, Power, and Place*. I review this manuscript briefly here, realizing that the review is completely unfair, since the work was clearly incomplete,

not wholly thought through, and only partly organized. Moreover, the author is not here to correct me. Yet the work must not go unnoticed. While reading these sheets, I felt as though Donald and I were once again talking together.

Professionals, he begins by saying, are unaware of the symbolic content of the environment, or of their own plans, while laymen see places primarily as a social medium. Professionals "de-symbolize" the environment to handle it on a neutral, technical level. While some of the avant-garde theorists speak eloquently of symbols, they divorce them from society and consider them a pure attribute of form. So "logical" proposals "break up on the iceberg of social meaning." In his book Donald intended to make laymen and professionals aware of these meanings, and, thereby, to enhance the citizen's sense of identity and control. He asserts that the role of symbolism in the physical setting becomes steadily more critical as society becomes more complex and its members feel more alienated from its settings and its processes. Moreover, he sees the study of environmental symbolism as a way of bridging the intellectual gulf that has opened up between physical and social planning. The city, in his metaphor, is frozen speech and frozen social action.

The manuscript is rich in themes and observations but his starting point and central idea is the relation of place and place identity to the social formation of self and group identity. He details the

psychological process and role of identity formation, drawing on many sources but particularly on Erikson, and explains the way in which place supports or suppresses, develops or degrades, that sense of identity. He discusses the home, the neighborhood, the street, and the city center, and finds in that identity much of the substance of conflict over what the city shall be, and much of the source of our satisfactions and discomforts. He uncovers the great diversity among the identities that are being sought and expressed, and, while he applauds individual expression, he worries that its excessive display may be antisocial. Clearly, he sympathizes with the group, with the public life, and hopes for a society which is diverse but open, fluid but endowed with a sense of wholeness and strong identity. That is, local communities should be self-aware but not exclusive. Many of his ideas are expressed in such dichotomies as: individual/group, inside/outside, exclusion/openness, home/distant place, control/freedom, commitment/change, and prestige/stigma. His central value is "health," or the appropriate balance between polar opposites.

Donald shows how identity is the joint creation of individual and society. He discusses the process of identity formation—socially defined roles and rebellions, moratoriums, experiments, regressions, commitment and overcommitment—and how this process is supported or echoed in the physical setting. Different personalities, classes, or stations in the life cycle have different needs

for expression, exploration, ambiguity, or defense. Physical settings have an important function in this difficult process—indeed, a special place, because of the relative stability of the physical world, the rich ambiguity of the messages it carries, and its psychological “distance” or “passivity,” which makes it less threatening to someone in inner ferment. He explains the significant differences between the environmental and the verbal languages, differences which make the application of semiotics to the city so chancy. He speaks of the contrast between “wholeness,” coherence due to strong internal connections, and “totality,” the unity gained by setting rigid boundaries, and applies that distinction to city places. He shows how places that are adaptive and evolving, and yet under the control of those who use them, are most supportive of the crucial process of personal and group identity formation. He talks of the way in which dominant landmarks, first seen as alien intrusions, become, in time, part of the familiar and loved identity of a place, and how people at certain stages of their lives, or in difficult situations, must retreat into anonymity and ambiguity, and, thus, seek hiding places without character.

A large part of the manuscript concerns the polarities of home and not-home, inside and outside, locals and tourists. The former know the social relations that underlie their locality—they read it easily. The latter depend on visible symbols to be read on the run. They must distort, simplify, and grasp at

superficial meanings. As our society becomes more complex, and its links more extensive, and as people become more mobile, we are more often tourists than locals, and thus more dependent on what we can learn from the visible setting before us.

The city becomes a spectacle, an aesthetic object rather than something known from the inside. Power relations are smoothed over, historic environments are simplified and idealized. More places are managed as comfortable tourist attractions, with live-in actors and clearly presented symbols ready to be photographed. It is all front: the presence of labor, dirt, and material goods is concealed. Tourism contaminates and trivializes places, and yet is essential to the world-wide exchange of ideas and values, and a source of enjoyment and education for many. Donald was an enthusiastic traveller, skilled in probing beneath the surfaces of things, and yet also appreciating memorable surface appearances. He looked for authenticity, the reliable connection of appearance with actual character, and saw it in constant tension with the demands of mass tourist management. He does not turn away from this increasing reliance on symbolic expression, but looks for ways to enhance authenticity and to increase the interpretive skill of the traveller. He discusses at length the means for restoring that authenticity.

He sees the environment as the product of the struggle for power. Some evidence of this struggle is

patent, but much of it is hidden. As with tourism, tension exists between appearance and reality. Reading the function of a place, which has been the expressive goal of design theory, is usually much easier than reading the social relations of power that are embodied in it. The question of who controls this place and for whose benefit it is used can be more obscure, even for the insider, than that of how it is used or how it is made. Power is sometimes expressed openly, to awe the observer; more often it is discreetly hidden. What he calls the “light” and the “heavy” elements of the environment further confuse the reading. The heavy elements—the solid and permanent—are often the relics of past relations of power, while the light parts—the recent, slight changes, the traces of current activity—are more authentic clues to the real situation. What are the ethical issues here, he wonders. In an unequal society, should the real relations of power be clearly expressed, so that they may accurately be known, or should they be softened to make life more bearable? While a critic of the bloated scale of many pieces of our cities, a scale that reflects the increasing centralization of our institutions, and while a devoted admirer of the local, human-scaled community, Donald still recognizes that some man-made objects such as dams and great bridges have a “natural” large scale, and can be enjoyed as such. Similarly, he criticizes artificial miniaturizations such as the three-quarter scale settings of Disneyland and the artfully designed complexities of

some large buildings, which are meant to bring these structures down to an inauthentic, but comfortable, size.

There are authoritarian, dominated places, marked by isolation, barriers, great size, and controlled activity, as well as open places, where strangers and diverse activities mix more freely. There are prestigious places and stigmatized ones: prisons, asylums, dumps, and shacktowns. There are places possessed by their users, and others in which their users are aliens. Clearly, his sympathies lie with decentralized user control and, especially, with the public life—with those communities where diverse groups meet and mingle and where community identity is expressed in common celebrations. He laments the increasing privatization of congregate spaces, such as is brought on by the enclosed shopping mall, the downtown atrium, or by the monopoly of the street by the private car. While he firmly advocates local group control, he also sees the tensions between local control and openness to strangers. Many of these ideas are forcefully expressed in the *Urban Design Manifesto*, which he wrote—just before his death—with Allan Jacobs. The good city is one that has a strong public life; is rooted (that is, authentically connected to its way of life); centered; in scale with the individual and the small group; rich and diverse in its people and its activities; open to, but not overcome by, strangers; cared for; and distinctive in form.

Public places become necessarily theaters of conflict, as different groups struggle for possession or entry. Donald tells stories of the environmental war over People's Park in Berkeley, of the high-rise controversy in San Francisco, and of the motorist/pedestrian combats over traffic barriers in residential streets. He reveals the importance of environmental symbolism in those battles, both as tactics and as substance. He discusses groups such as ARAU in Brussels and the Covent Garden Community Association in London, which use issues of environmental form and meaning as key elements in their strategy for social change. One chapter, to my knowledge never written, would have analyzed environments of revolution and decolonialization.

Half-formed, the manuscript is rich in leads. In one place, for example, Donald lays out the various sensory, instrumental, and symbolic meanings of a tree, which furnish many different groups in society the motives for protecting trees—or for attacking, manipulating, or disregarding them. It is quite a list: an agenda for research and an intriguing clue to the tree wars.

If Donald were still with us, I would delight in continuing our marginal disputes about this or that implication of what he was doing. But, most of all, I would have urged him to get on with his central work. Someone must be willing to take on the difficult task of putting these pieces into publishable form, whether as separate articles or as an

unfinished book. More than that, others must follow out the questions he was opening up.

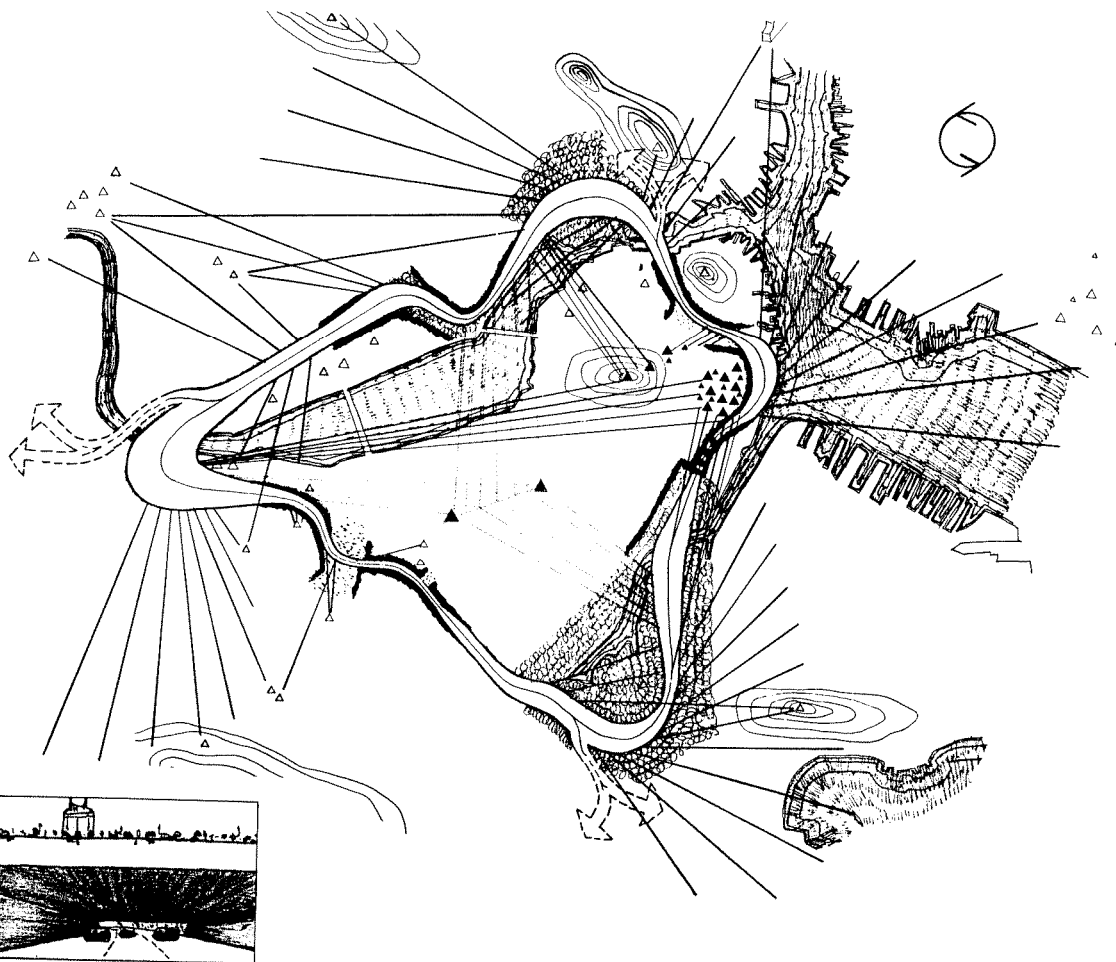
Kevin Lynch

Fragments from his work . . .

The View from the Road,
MIT Press, 1964,
Kevin Lynch and
John R. Myer, co-authors

. . . roadwatching is a delight, and the highway is—or at least might be—a work of art. The view from the road can be a dramatic play of space and motion, of light and texture, all on a new scale. These long sequences could make our vast metropolitan areas comprehensible: the driver would see how the city is organized, what it symbolizes, how people use it, how it relates to him. To our way of thinking, the highway is the great neglected opportunity in city design. (p. 3)

The objectives of design [are] . . . to present the viewer with a rich, coherent sequential form, a form which has continuity and rhythm and development, which provides contrasts, well-joined transitions, and a moving balance . . . to clarify and strengthen the driver's image of the environment, to give him a picture which is well-structured, distinct, and as far-ranging as possible . . . to deepen the observer's grasp of the meaning of his environment: to give him an understanding of the use, history, nature, or symbolism of the highway and its surrounding landscape. . . . We believe these objectives can be achieved in highway design. Usually, alas, one aspires to nothing more than an absence of irritation on the road. (p. 18)



I Space-Motion and View
Diagram,
Counterclockwise Travel

Livable Streets, U.S.
Government Printing Office,
1969–1981, M.S. Gerson
and M. Lintell, co-authors

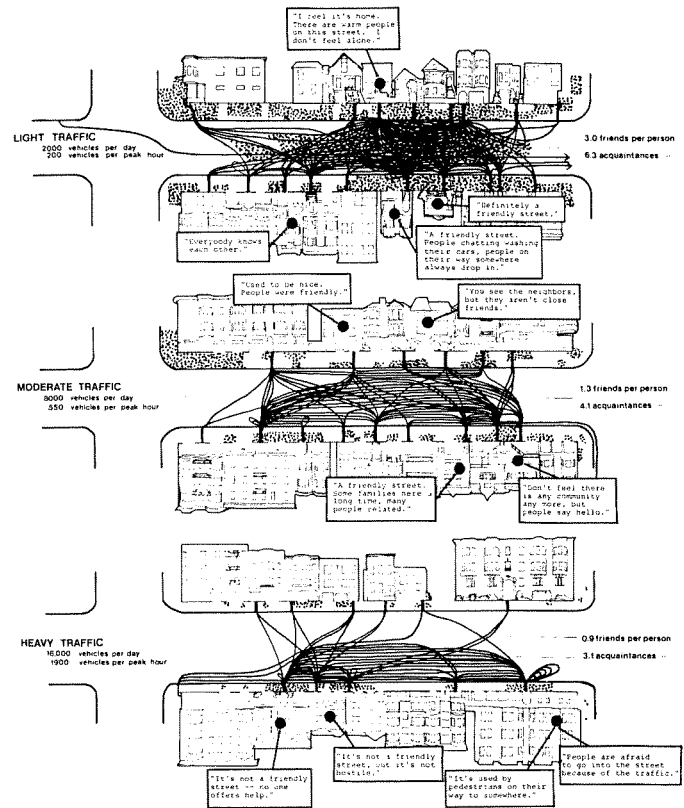
The protection and creation of livable streets is not simply a matter of increasing the comfort or safety of urban living. The street has other functions. As the place where most children grow up, it is a crucial mediator between the home and the outside world, where the child learns to confront strangers and environments on his own. It should be a receptive and reasonably safe environment that the child can explore, manipulate, and use as a setting for all kinds of activities. The street has personal and social meaning for adults and old people, too. It symbolizes one's position in the world almost as much as the house one lives in. And the social relations that take place on the street, its potential for neighborliness and street life, are values of urban life to be treasured . . . (p. 9)

The conservation of livable streets and neighborhoods is now a national issue. As the urban renewal program fades into history, and money for inner-city rehabilitation is scarce, low-cost methods of improving urban environments are among the only choices available. And as the freeway construction program slows to a virtual halt, the inexorable increases in traffic—especially in those neighborhoods around central cities and major urban centers—will somehow have to be managed to prevent their unnecessary destruction. All

this will demand a more imaginative and sensitive form of urban and transportation planning than we have had in the past. It will involve:

1. A thorough understanding of what goes on in residential areas, who lives there, the particular problems of different groups, and the changes taking place.
2. A variety of strategies to create more livable streets and protected neighborhoods to alleviate or compensate for conditions where traffic is necessary.
3. Effective participation programs that properly inform and encourage those affected by traffic changes to become involved in the planning process.
4. Reliable and relevant methods of assessing the costs and benefits of changes to different population and interest groups. (pp. 10–11)

(Permission to reprint excerpts from Donald Appleyard's *Livable Streets* kindly granted by University of California Press.)



2 San Francisco.

Neighboring and visiting on three streets: lines show where people said they had friends or acquaintances. Dots show where people are said to gather.

3 Free verbal recall of districts and places.

The major settlements, the steel mills, the Caroni Falls, the airport, and the Iron Mines Company are the best-remembered areas in the city.

4 Structural styles (examples).

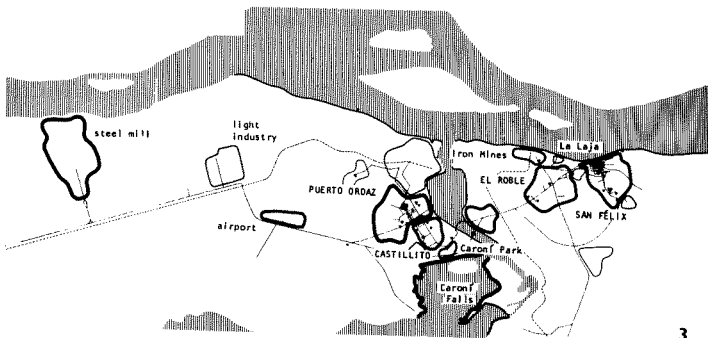
*Planning a Pluralist City:
Conflicting Realities in
Ciudad Guayana,*
MIT Press, 1963–1976

The ways in which the inhabitants structured the city were most clearly revealed through their interview maps. . . .

The maps predominantly used sequential elements (roads) or spatial elements (individual buildings, landmarks, or districts), the most accomplished maps employing combinations of both elements. . . .

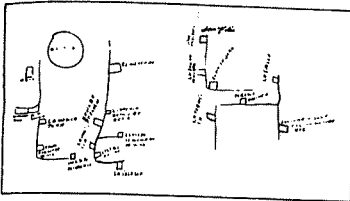
Within each of these map types, four subtypes were identified. Within the sequential type, there was a fairly clear gradation from the most primitive looking, which contained *fragments* of sequences, through *chains* and *branch and loop* maps, to more complex and usually more accurate *network* maps. The spatial maps were more difficult to place neatly on any gradient. A number were *scatter* and *cluster* maps of dots, points, or names, and these appeared to be the most primitive. Another set were *mosaic* in form; still others were *linked*. The final group, the more accurately *patterned*, were the only spatial group that stood out definitely as more sophisticated and assured. (p. 156–157)

We do not gain a complete understanding of city structuring from this survey. The task of drawing a map can tell us a great deal about some structuring methods but little about structuring through visual imagery, association, or symbolism, since maps usually abstract

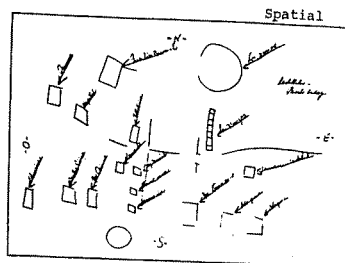


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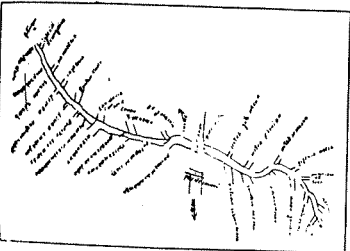
Sequential



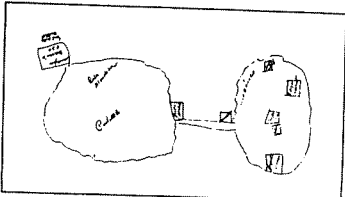
Spatial



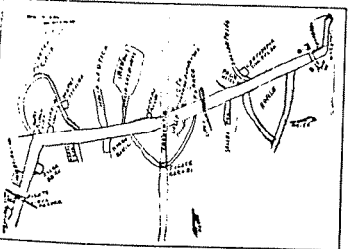
Fragmented



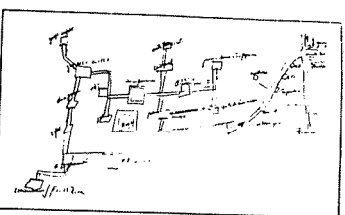
Scattered



Chain

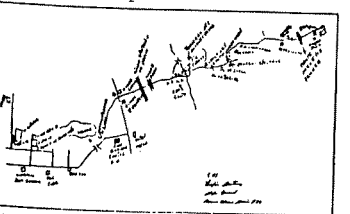


Mosaic

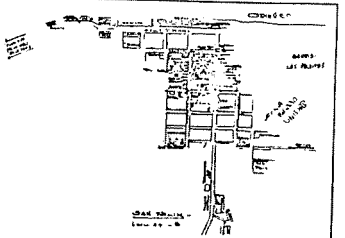


Linked

Branch and Loop



Netted



Patterned

4

9

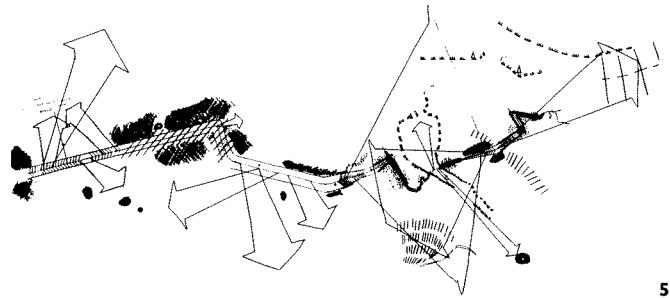
elements and emphasize their spatial location. What the maps do emphasize is the extraordinary variety of methods people use to conceptualize cities. (p. 161)

At this point it will be useful to step back from the map data, which is only one method of understanding how people structure cities, and try to visualize, with the experience gained from the field surveys, how people actually relate the various parts of cities. There appear to be three principal methods of structuring cities: an *associational method*, depending on the differentiation, association, and patterning of images and character; a *topological method*, stressing continuity and juncture; and a *positional method*, emphasizing spatial placement, direction, and distance. . . .

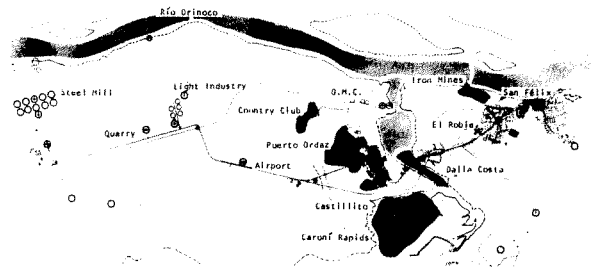
Associational structuring depends on the ability to differentiate parts of the city and associate them in groups or patterns. (p. 167)

Finally, awareness of pluralism can be a source of imaginative planning. The urban vocabularies of each population group could be used to shape the city. Group environments can be created. A city should communicate to the naive and the sophisticated, the poor and the rich, migrants and long-term residents, bus and automobile travelers, the conservative and the adventurous. (p. 231)

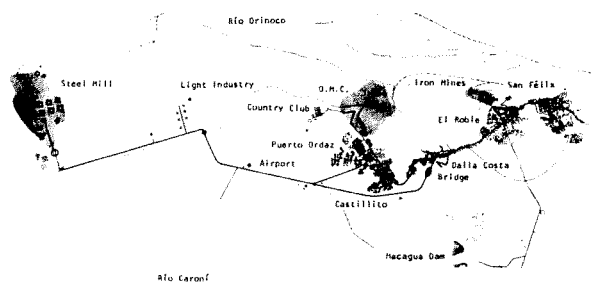
The public environment will be plurally received and must be plural in nature. It should be representative of its city, not simply the monumental facade that it is in some cities or the crowded, polluted, repellant place that it is becoming in most cities. For the public environment to be an arena for communication, it must be attractive enough for people to want to go there—and get out of their cars. The public environment of medieval cities was a place where people actually met each other, a stage where the scenery was recognized and understood. The modern city is in danger of having its population withdraw entirely from its public environment, both for reasons of livability and for lack of interest. (pp. 244–245)



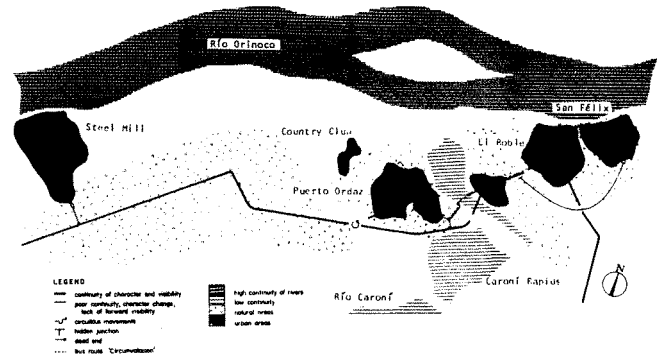
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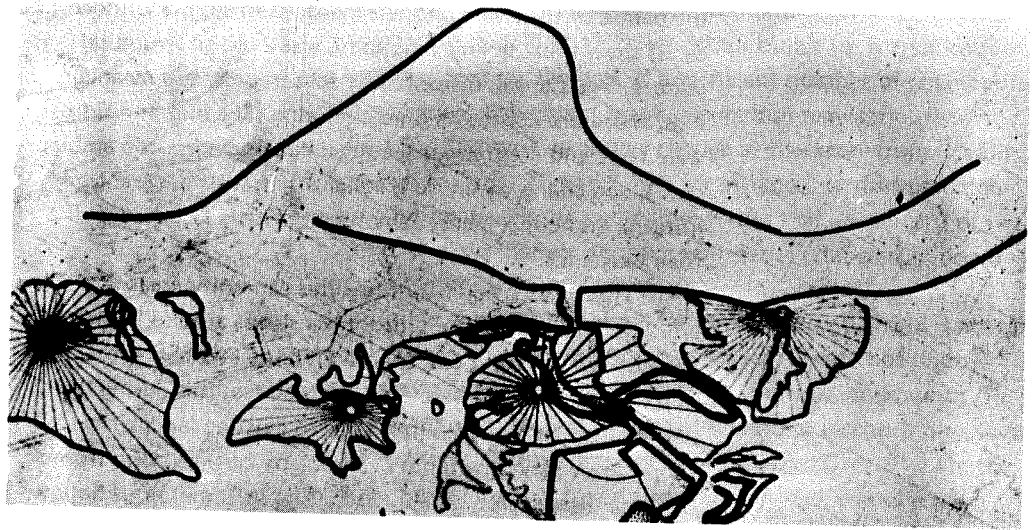
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7



8



5 Associational pattern of the east-west road before 1964.

The figure emphasizes the characteristics of movement, enclosure, views, terrain, rivers, and urban development as they were imagined along the route.

6 Form patterns.

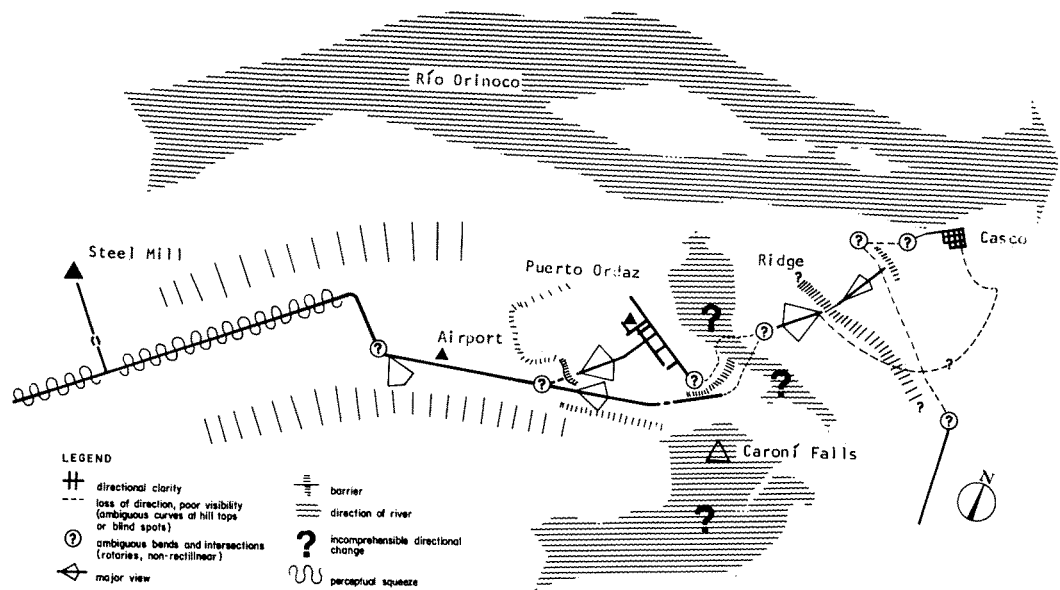
The map describes the form qualities of the main urban elements, their level of intensity, singularity, or significance.

7 Activity patterns.

The map describes the distribution of activity centers, the steel mill, some utilities, the bridge, the ferry, and various commercial and public facilities in the settlements.

8 Topological structure.

The varied and broken terrain made for dependence on topological structuring, but the sharp changes in character and direction of the main roads impaired even topological continuity.



9

9 Positional structure.

The positional structure of the city consisted of islands of directional clarity—Puerto Ordaz, San Félix—and certain axes—parts of the main road, floating in a sea of ambiguity, only partially connected by views across the valley.

The Conservation of European Cities, MIT Press, 1975–1979, Donald Appleyard, editor

The principal themes of this book will be the role that physical conservation plays in the lives of those who inhabit cities, the functional, social, and cultural significance of this environment to the different populations who live in the inner city, and the ways in which their needs and values can be satisfied and supported. The physical environment will also be seen as political territory, part of an often unconscious power struggle between different populations, professionals, and decision makers. . . .

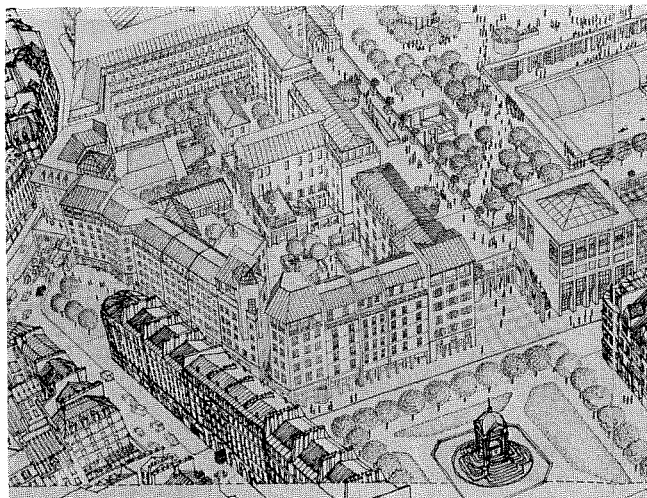
Most of the essays are about *neighborhoods*, since conservation, to a marked degree, cares for the detailed and small-scale qualities of cities, their people, the maintenance or rehabilitation of houses, public buildings, street character, small industry, local open spaces, trees, and back yards. . . .

The principal message from these papers is that although Europeans are now aware of the devastating impact that development, tourism, and redevelopment can have on historic cities and old neighborhoods, their conservation efforts are fraught with conflicts. We shall find that conservationists differ among themselves about what conservation means: that policies and acts of conservation can unexpectedly defeat their original intentions; that physical conservation provides no

assurance of social conservation, the maintenance of the existing population; that the administrative structure of planning, created in a period when planning was synonymous with development, is ill-suited to the small-scale, community-oriented needs of conservation; that social conservation may result in physical deterioration, and so on.

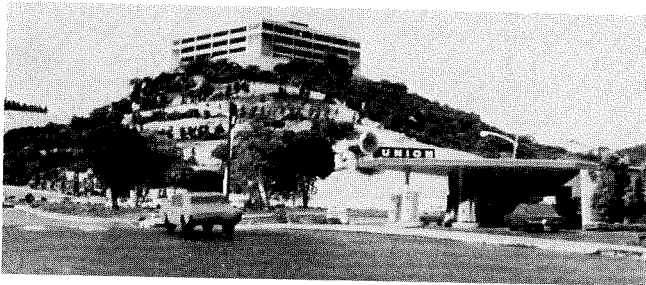
Conservation itself, like so many planning concepts, is often a mirage, an illusion that it is possible to retrieve the past or conserve the present by contemporary action. In fact, everything we touch, even the conceptual act of designating a neighborhood for conservation, changes our view of it and subtly modernizes it. (pp. 9–10)

The conflicts brought out in this volume should not obscure the deeper meaning of conservation to *all* groups in society, to capitalist as well as Socialist societies. Evidence of the past tells us about our origins. In a strange way, though most old cities have been built by builders quite alien to modern democracy, their original meanings no longer threaten. They have become idealized, part of a common cultural heritage, that draws us all together in the effort to save them. On this we have some agreement. The difficulties lie in the realm of social conservation. (p.48)



10

10 Submission to the Les Halles Competition, Paris,
by Donald Appleyard and Peter Bosselman



11

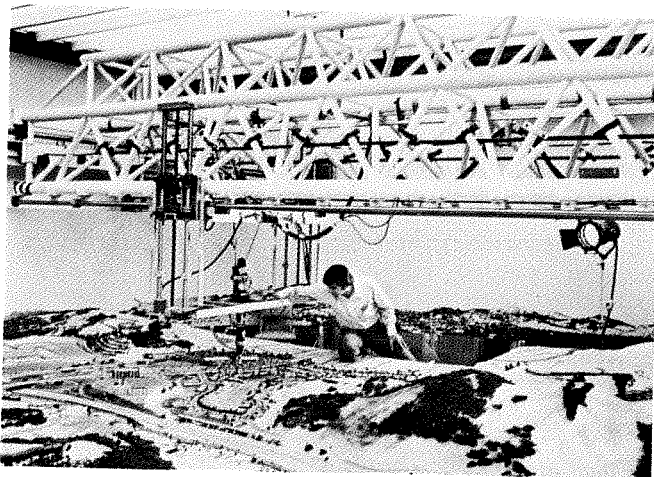
Visual Simulation in Environmental Planning and Design, University of California/Berkeley, 1979, Kenneth H. Craik, co-author

When an architect, planner, or engineer draws a perspective, makes a model, or presents a plan, he is simulating a future environment. Too often these simulations are quite distant from the ultimate reality as it will be experienced. Plans are difficult for laymen to understand; perspectives and models provide an illusion of reality that is frequently inaccurate. Drawings and perspectives are necessarily selective, and designers choose the viewpoints and features that best communicate their ideas of what the project *ought* to be like. At best there is a rich mixture of hope in these presentations; at worst there is downright deception.

Decision making in environmental planning, engineering, and design has until recently been closely contained within restrictive professional circles. This situation has been encouraged and reinforced by the use of specialized languages, which create barriers to understanding, communication, and involvement by concerned and affected citizens. The abstract nature of the typical environmental media (*i.e.*, plans, elevations, renderings) on which decision making is based fails to acknowledge the experience of the untrained public. (p. 1)

Goals of the Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

1. Identifying parameters that affect [their] psychological effectiveness.
2. Better understanding of the use of simulations in the communication and resolution of environmental issues.
3. To improve the education of environmental professionals and the public . . . [through] the search for innovative media combinations that are in practice attractive to professionals, easy and cheap to use, and responsive to public demands for accuracy and psychological effectiveness. . . .
4. To conduct basic research in environmental psychology. (pp. 17–20)



12

11 Environmental Simulator Photo of a Marin County roadway

12 The Environmental Simulation Laboratory, University of California at Berkeley

*Humanistic Design
Manifesto*, manuscript,
Appleyard and others, 1982

As agents of power, designers have withdrawn from social commitment. The rhetoric of social responsibility is still mouthed, but experiments in private form manipulation have become the obsession. . . .

*This new formalism
is a retreat from social
responsibility and sacrifices
the concerns and dreams of
common people to an elitely
defined aesthetic movement
for the few. . . .*

Break down bigness

Large-scale environmental change is inherently damaging; it is insensitive to local needs; it denies personal identity and participation; and the consequences are impossible to predict. Furthermore, big designs are based on highly dubious economies of scale that mainly serve corporations and bureaucrats, ignoring the far costlier effects of ecological imbalance and human alienation. Big design tasks must be broken down to human size whereby user involvement is possible, the complexity does not overwhelm, and the consequences of error are not devastating.

Free pedestrians

Until the car is curbed, children will not be free to play and travel; public life will not flourish. The automobile has destroyed the fabric of cities, turning formerly public places and neighborhoods into dangerous inhospitable environments.

Extend the design process

Every designed place must be thought of as an hypothesis to be tested.

Tell the truth

Designers must tell the public the truth about their designs in a language they understand.

Learn to listen

Effective design is a two-way process; we should listen as well as present.

*Fight for environmental
justice*

Environmental justice must guide the design process. Good design strives for environmental justice or redresses an injustice. Injustice usually takes the form of *inaccessibility*, *exclusion*, or *unequal distribution* of resources or amenities.

Empower people

People must be empowered to control and be responsible for the design, construction, use, and maintenance of their spaces.

Use what we know

When the future users of environments are unavailable, indirect participation is still possible.

Enhance community

Environmental designers should support the emergence of community and public life through the sensitive creation of shared and public spaces, and settings conducive to community self-reliance.

Abolish aesthetic monopolies

Art counts. Everyone's taste is holy; the numerous aesthetics which abound in our communities are *all* legitimate. Designers must foster human fulfillment by providing opportunities for all people to create and affirm their emergent identities in new or adapted places.

September 27, 1982

*To Students and Associates of the
Department of City & Regional
Planning, Berkeley*

It is with great sadness that I must inform you that Professor Donald Appleyard was killed in an automobile accident in Athens, Greece, this past Thursday, September 23rd. A car going in the opposite direction at almost 100 miles per hour crashed through a median strip and precipitated a multi-car pileup. Don was a passenger in a car being driven by Professor Mania Seferi, the Greek scholar who was in residence in Berkeley most of the past summer. Don was killed instantly. Mania has been in a coma since the accident and is not expected to live.

The loss and shock are profound to all of us who have worked with Don over the years. He leaves a wife and four children. He leaves many friends. And he leaves a lasting legacy to city planning and to people who live in cities—*Livable Streets*—a worthy vision. Over the weekend, as the faculty grappled emotionally with the shock, many of us noted that there were few other urban researchers we could think of whose work during the past decade had so directly influenced and improved the planning of urban environments all over the world. I'm hoping that as the grief and hurt subside, we will find some meaningful way to affirm and celebrate Don's life and work.

Frederick C. Collignon, Chairman

*Exploring Environmental
Media*, manuscript,
Kenneth H. Craik and
Peter Bosselman, co-authors

"What architects do," writes Spiro Kostof, is "to supply images for a new structure so that it can be put up." . .

The media then become the essence of the design language, the focus of design development, debate, and decision-making. Think for a moment. All major development decisions are now made on the basis of simulations. (p. 1)

Simulations fall into two classes, *experiential*, usually visual but they can also be verbal, auditory or tactile, and *structural*, or conceptual which try to depict the physical or spatial structure of a project or plan, or its social or economic form. Throughout the history of the design professions there has been a tension between these two kinds of simulation. The first was more important for the client, the second more crucial for the builder. But they are also two fundamental ways of looking at the world (Pirsig, 19—), one phenomenological, the other conceptual.

This book is primarily about *experiential* simulation. . . . (p. 2)

Outline of the Book

The first chapter will sketch out briefly the role that media have played in the history of the environmental professions. Chapters 2 and 3 will introduce a conceptual model of the role that media play in the contemporary design process culminating in a communications model of the design presentation/planning review hearing. Chapters 4 and 5 describe how media can be used in the citizen participation at different scales, drawing on a number of experiments conducted by our students. Chapter 6 states the main criteria for a good simulation, especially defining the meaning of realism, and Chapter 7 explains how we evaluated the level of realism achieved in one of our first movies. Chapter 8 reviews the different media now available to environmental professionals, briefly evaluating each one against the criteria defined in Chapter 6. Chapter 9 describes the uses of simulation in environmental psychology. An Appendix describes in detail the Berkeley simulator, for those who might wish to build their own. (p. 4)

Heeding the perception of others and vigorously expressing one's own views—these complementary dispositions were at the center of his conception of a pluralist city (Planning a Pluralistic City, 1976), one which would encompass and be responsive to the multiple perspective of its inhabitants. In his tolerance and forthrightness, he was himself an ideal citizen for the humane and pluralistic city he sought to bring about in his research and practice.

Kenneth H. Craik

Perhaps Donald's greatest strength as a teacher was that he was a man of ideas. He read widely and was able to give us a broad and systematic understanding of the field's intellectual foundations and structure. At the same time, he was intellectually creative, able to synthesize the ideas of others, to apply ideas from distant disciplines to the field, and to generate new insights of his own. Finally, and very significantly, he had a talent for helping us to uncover and develop ideas of our own. . . . His approach communicated a strong sense that what really matters is the individual, and the quality of each and every individual's experiences and feelings.

He is survived by his wife, Shiela, and their four children: Justin, Moana, Bruce, and Ian. He is survived, too, by thousands of people who may not have known him but whose environments and lives are more joyful and satisfying because he helped to plan them—humanely. Knowing him and knowing their own neighborhoods, many of the survivors will wonder about the sanity of automobiles that can go 150 kilometers per hour on city streets and kill people.

Allan Jacobs and
Tom Dickert

If Henry James were able to have known this man, he would have found him a perfect sequel to his American heroes in Europe. Don Appleyard was a fully Americanized Englishman. His worldliness and learning had come to encompass the optimism and innocence of the American experience.

Jay Claiborne

Donald was able to find even in the most half-baked and unformed idea, a kernel of truth and validity that could be nourished and brought out. And, in this way, Donald returned to his students not only good counsel but also a sense of their own integrity and intellectual ability.

Donald Appleyard also had the unique ability to translate serious ideas into practical reality. He was an activist, who made things happen in the real world, and, in this way, he gave to us students the irreducible notion that, despite all difficulties, change can be brought about and that one can make the world a better place to live and work in; and this is perhaps his lasting legacy to us all.

Terry O'Hare

For me, Don has been an irreplaceable friend, always open to ready dialogue, with time to listen, keeping his own views at low key. He had a special way to so gently and diplomatically draw out and question your own ideas, leaving you with a sense of personal attachment to him. Don genuinely enjoyed being a friend and his open, informal, adaptable, and completely unflappable manner invited involvement of so many of us: students, faculty, professionals . . . his own children . . . and some of mine as well.

Francis Violich

Donald

1. form and experience: attributes of physical form and activity; to bring the two into some kind of relationship in order that designers might manipulate them with an idea of the outcome in terms of experience.

multiple perceptions of the same place, perceptions which again were suggestive of attributes of the physical form of cities. measurable attributes of place in relation to the satisfactions people derive; view from the road as well as residential areas.

2. the real and the unreal (the designers' companions): the model, gantry crane, and camera plus video recorder which he caused to have made—some of the most realistic and, reportedly, helpful simulations of the three dimensional consequences of various schemes.

notation systems by means of which designers' jottings, environments-as-experienced, and the physical place could all meet on the drawing board or the back of the envelope.

3. the ordinary and the ordinary: irony and richness of human experience, and would not iron our perception to averages, except that he was willing to use the force of common experience and the tools to determine what it was.

but also, diversity had to be separately stimulated by places owned, designed, felt-to-be-right, private, special, and idiosyncratic without reservation.

4. love: of work and of life and of the ironies between them.

of ideas and of people, with their failures and imperfections, and of the humor which reveals their shortcomings (like the degree of abstraction of these few remarks).

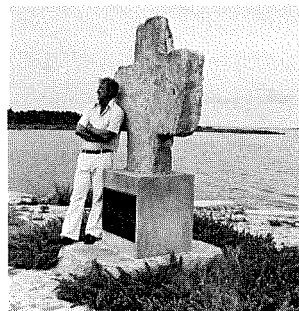
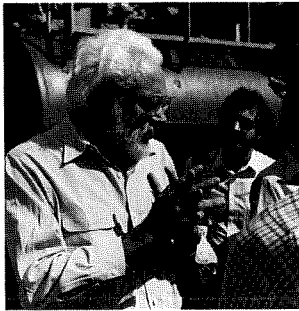
and, finally, love of people and places, of the struggles between them, and of the extraordinary satisfactions which derive from a good relationship between the two.

Bill Porter

There were many other testimonials given at MIT and Berkeley. Space does not permit printing them all.

Labors of Love in the Public Landscape

Randy Hester



1 Richard Haag

2 Robin Moore

3 Jule Burrus

Richard Haag, Robin Moore, and Jule Burrus have labored for 40 years on the public landscapes in their communities. The results of their efforts provide a new model for making places that are meaningful, not merely tasteful.

In Seattle, landscape architect Richard Haag has spent nearly 20 years building Gas Works Park, first determining what was most valuable on the site, then battling public opposition to save the derelict gas works. He practically lived there—nurturing the project, designing the place—and observed the site's transformation from an object of controversy into a popular playground, a place with a character of its own.¹

In Berkeley, planner-educator Robin Moore works almost daily on the Washington Environmental Yard, a project he initiated a decade ago. He wanted to turn the asphalt wasteland around Washington Elementary School into a place for the community to come together, create, learn, and play. On a given day Robin may be found going over construction plans with school children, parents, and city staff, reviewing the curriculum of the school or advising on the management of an intensively cultivated urban garden. Years of conflict, controversy, and sacrifice to make this innovative schoolyard work are beginning to pay off.²

Across the country in the coastal town of Manteo, North Carolina, motel owner and town commissioner Jule Burrus has labored weekly since 1973 to reclaim a vacant lot for his town's first park. Using scavenged seedlings and brick and concrete rubble salvaged from an old high school building, he has created a green oasis amidst decaying buildings along the town's waterfront. Although officially

named American Revolution Bicentennial Park, everyone calls it Jule's Park as a tribute to Burrus's toil. His work has inspired others, and Jule's Park has sparked a community improvement effort.³

Projects like these can be found all over the country, in cities and at country crossroads. Almost every community has one: a labor of love that originates as one person's dream of what his town should have. Success requires a sustained effort and sacrifice that may be viewed at the same time by the community as eccentric, though respected. It is the sort of project that can make heroes and heroines out of ordinary people, create local legends, and turn unused places into worthwhile spaces.

Innovation

These projects usually begin with a new idea about an environment close to home. When the city of Seattle purchased the ugly, defunct gas-works site in 1962 and proposed to demolish the industrial ruins for a park, Richard Haag and everyone else in the city was pleased.⁴ But six years later Haag hit upon a new and different idea. Familiarity with the site led him to discover a sculptural beauty in the despised black pipes and towers. Haag recalls that the guardian spirit of the place told him to leave the plant's ruins and build the park around them. His mentor agreed, suggesting that the values expressed by the counterculture would make his idea appropriate "way down the road."⁵ Haag was "literally in love with the place," and after spending

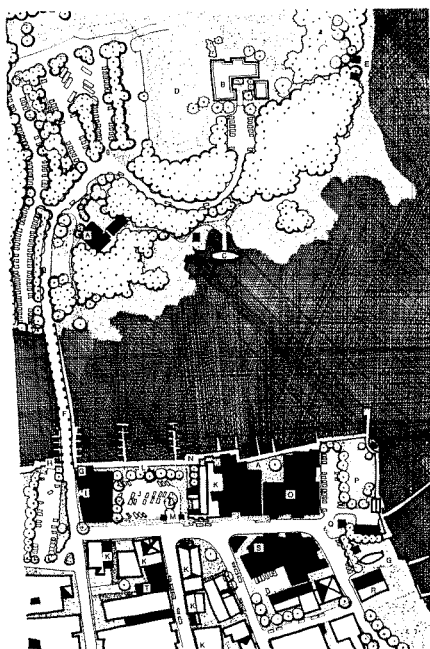


4

4 Jule's Park

Jule's Park was raised to a near religious plane through the use of symbolic rubble, memorial lamps, and the theme of building from ruins.

(Photograph by Aycock Brown, courtesy of the Town of Manteo, North Carolina)



- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A Living-Learning Center | K Sacred Buildings |
| B Performing Arts Center | L Sacred Tree |
| C Elizabethan Ship | M Sacred Gate |
| D Anglo-American Folk Festival | N Boardwalk |
| E Beach | O New Housing-Commercial Condominiums |
| F Bridge | P Jule's Park |
| G Exhibits | Q Sacred Statue |
| H Town Launch | R Boat Building Center |
| I Inn | S New Housing-Commercial |
| J Sacred Lot | T Infill Buildings |

5

5 Manteo Village Plan

6 Jule's Park Plan

Although Jule's Park has inspired other waterfront improvements including the multi-million-dollar Manteo Village redevelopment, Burrus resists modifying his park. The boardwalk that was intended to connect all waterfront activities stopped abruptly at Jule's Park, which maintains its homemade style. The entire Manteo Village Plan was modified to conform to the casual character of Jule's Park, which residents felt was more in keeping with their community.

\$6,000 of his own money for renovations, moved his office into an old blacksmith shop on the site.⁶ He was convinced he knew what the gas plant should be.

Sacrificial Struggle

If the process begins with passion and an idea, it is sustained by struggle. Since by definition innovation involves changing the way things are done, most people are skeptical, sometimes even hostile, and certainly not forthcoming with the resources necessary for its implementation. People in Seattle found Haag's idea outrageous and said so. "Newspaper columns, his peers and enraged citizens attacked him," reported one publisher; only someone as "stubborn and committed as Haag could have survived the community's ridicule."⁷ Many of his friends and associates privately voiced their doubts to Haag as well.⁸ He recalls that he had little encouragement even among the people in his own office.

Robin Moore faced similar opposition to his Washington Environmental Yard project. The educational approach it entailed was so novel that a number of key school district and city officials opposed it. The junk on the play yard was teaching material to passersby who complained to school officials. They in turn threatened to close the project down until plywood walls enclosed the site. Although many of Moore's colleagues were appalled by the project, he has continued to work

on it without pay for five years. His tenacity has made him a neighborhood legend. His commitment has inspired others to take responsibility for managing and maintaining the site.

When Jule Burrus began creating his waterfront park again the townspeople were skeptical and the town board unwilling to supply the funds. His colleagues disapproved and people made fun of the idea of trying to beautify such a wasteland. He ignored the criticism and showed the strength of character needed to introduce an innovation.

Action and Involvement

The campaign to win support and resources eventually yielded results. When Burrus realized he could use the rubble from the old county high school that was being torn down, he persuaded a local contractor to move the rubble to the park site at no cost. Because older townspeople had attended the school that was being demolished, the rubble had sentimental value for most residents, and by using it Burrus symbolically involved them in his project. People became more sympathetic to his idea, although he was still without official sanction. He reinforced the idea by using the theme "building from ruins" for the proposed park, a phrase related to the catastrophes in the town's history since 1584.⁹

This historical theme allowed him to persuade the town board to endorse his efforts as part of the American Bicentennial celebration. Official recognition was important:

supporting an unauthorized project suggested a kind of civil disobedience that few in the community would willingly undertake. Although quasi-illegality can be attractive to innovators (Haag, for example, recalls the camaraderie his group experienced when they were ejected from their blacksmith-shop office by Seattle authorities during a storm), official approval is prerequisite to widespread involvement. For success a strategy has to be devised to attract the support of elected officials. Haag tried to persuade community and civic groups first, “going for the capillaries, not the jugular,” so they in turn could persuade the unwilling mayor to adopt the plan. In Burrus’s case official endorsement came rather easily, partly because he was an elected official, partly because the project had gained widespread support, and partly because he had succeeded in tying it to a special event, the American Bicentennial celebration.

Burrus was then able to solicit help. A local handyman collected beach sand that had blown across nearby streets and dumped it on the high-school rubble as fill. The electric-power company sold him lamps at cost, and Burrus got residents to donate them as memorials to loved ones.¹⁰ A local cement company, using a piece of rubble broken into the shape of a cross, erected a monument in keeping with the park’s theme. Still Burrus labored daily, doing most of the work himself with help from one other resident. He was always there to lead, to organize, to solicit help, to

persuade people of the project’s merits. But Burrus’s use of the symbolic rubble, of the memorial theme and lamps, raised the project to a patriotic plane that allayed the skepticism innovation always elicits.

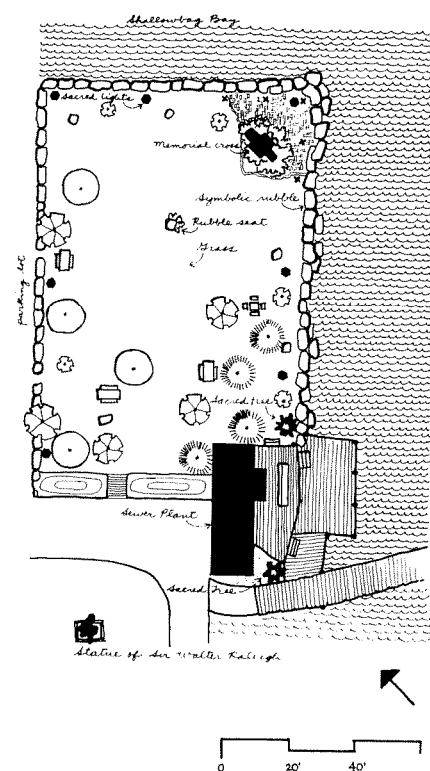
Campaign of Education

In the cases of the Washington Yard and Gas Works Park, it was more difficult to persuade the public. Moore and a sympathetic principal held workshops with the teachers to interest them. A drop-in clinic was set up to solicit opinions. Questionnaires went out to children, teachers, and parents, asking what they wanted to have developed.¹¹ As people began to express their own wishes for the project, opposition waned.

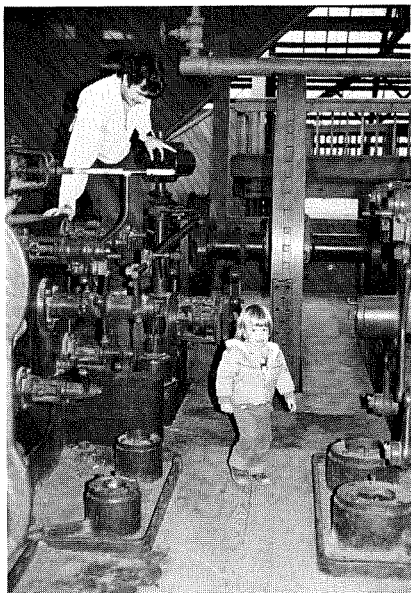
To end the opposition to his idea for saving the Seattle Gas Works, Richard Haag developed a slide show that he used in his three-year campaign of education. The slides portrayed the gas works as multi-purpose modern art. He also gave parties on the site and sponsored bus trips so local officials could look at the possibilities as he proposed them. After nearly three dozen public showings, Haag had opened many eyes and minds to the potential beauty of the site, and people began to “respond with more tolerance and, occasionally, enthusiastic support.”¹²

Results

Public education can only do so much. It can neutralize detractors and inspire participants, but in the



6



7

7 Gas Works Park

Haag's Gas Works Park emphasizes human movement and activity rather than the traditional preoccupations with edge articulation and joining materials. The results may seem junky to the designer's eye but are the delight of participants.

end success depends on results demonstrating that the plan will work. This is especially difficult to do in projects of this sort because resources are limited and construction slow. Three years elapsed between the time Haag obtained the contract to design Gas Works Park and the time construction began. But only months after he had the contract, Haag had converted the blacksmith shop into his on-site office, and that at least served to persuade the public that the filthy, ugly gas works could be used. For the first phase of construction he chose visible and popular facilities: a picnic and play area, a grassy mound with trees and shrubs, and an observation station to oversee the whole site. Only then did he begin work on recycling the more controversial gas-generating towers.¹³

Robin Moore's master plan called for a number of small projects: yard festivals, a garden, murals, and workshops, but progress was slow. Ten years went by before the central community play area was built, and the school principal admitted that acceptance of the Washington Environmental Yard was slowed by the failure to show visible results earlier in the process.¹⁴

In contrast, the first phase of Jule's Park was completed in a year. Burrus had carefully planted the idea in enough minds to be able to mobilize important community resources when he was ready to begin. Although Burrus continues to work on the park, the first phase of construction, a landscaped lawn, was finished in 1975 to provide a

place for community festivals and religious and civic functions. Burrus remembered that "town involvement and donations continued steadily after the initial effort became visible." The most prominent memorial, which towers over the park like a protective father, was given by the women's club: a twenty-foot statue of Sir Walter Raleigh, carved from a single cypress tree.¹⁵

Transfer

The next stage in the project is usually the vindication of the designer who has withstood the community's scorn and has made sacrifices to see his dreams realized. Once the project shows tangible results, it is usually accepted, although sometimes still grudgingly, by the community. The originator often continues to work, sometimes throughout his life, but eventually he transfers the responsibility to others. Nearby residents maintain Jule's Park. One woman described "evening walks through the park, with friends and their private 'trash pick-up' campaigns to keep the park clean." Another 80-year-old woman frequently mows the park lawn as if it were an extension of her own backyard.¹⁶

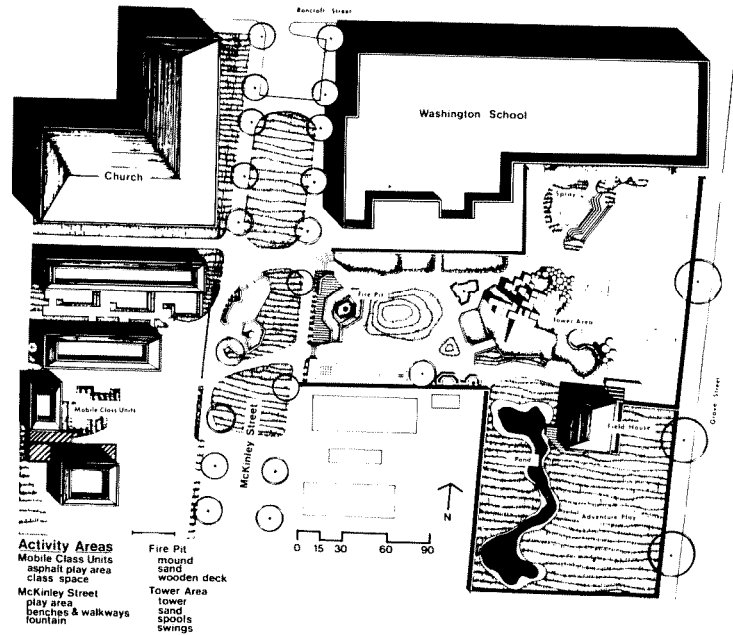
As responsibility is transferred to others, the facility changes. Although change is necessary if the project is to be sustained, the process can be painful for the founder. Haag is glad people take pride in his Gas Works Park and that many groups have established symbolic ownership of it, but he also admits that he "still feels very proprietary" about it.¹⁷ He cringes

when he mentions the chainlink fence the parks department installed to keep people out of a tower.¹⁸

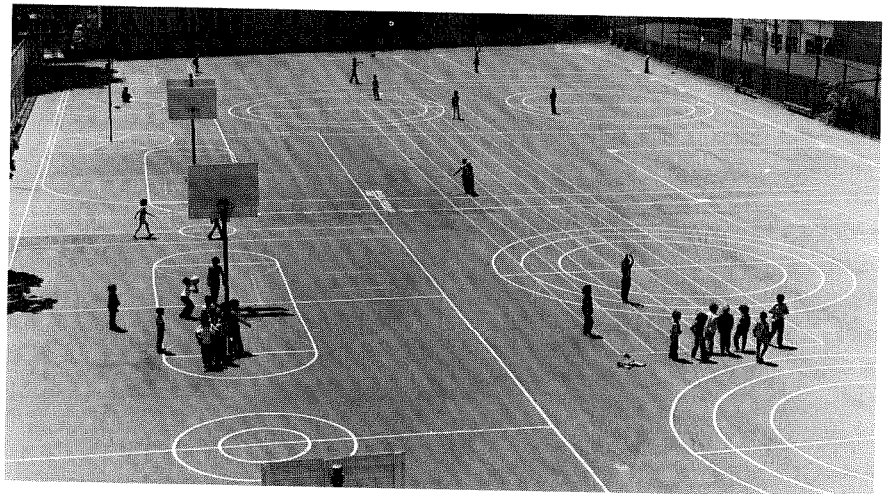
Jule's Park has inspired other waterfront improvements in Manteo, thereby changing its function, but Burrus resists modifying his concept to conform to an outside designer's master plan. He has welcomed small changes by fellow citizens, however, a hallmark of all these parks: flexibility allows others to use the places as they please, to create their own labors of love, but it requires planning and intervention that are hardly noticeable. Moore developed an extremely flexible master plan¹⁹ that encourages community artists and gardeners to work there.

Haag's has been called a "splendidly simple format,"²⁰ which he describes "as an open space to encompass and allow for continual change and adaptations."²¹

Projects of this sort typically begin as an individual, sometimes elitist idea. They are neither participatory nor populist in origin, and consequently one might expect them to be rigidly designed, but in fact the contrary is true. Each of the projects described here has a clear unifying structure that is inviolable, but nonetheless open-ended, possibly because the designer is aware that the task is too great for one person alone, and he will have to accommodate the wishes of others in order to solicit their help. Sometimes the designer is so aware of his need to create that he is sensitive to the needs of others to do the same. The result is a frame-



8



9

8 Washington Environmental
Yard Plan
9 Totally asphalted yard, 1971

work structured in a way that allows other users to undertake small projects, such as the sundial which Seattle sculptor Charles Greening placed atop the grassy mound in Gas Works Park.²²

For Bicentennial Park, Burrus developed only a sketch plan required for a dredging permit; the plan changed as he proceeded, or as other townspeople added their own touches. When planners suggested changing the park, one local newspaper printed an editorial against it by arguing that the park was a “perfect jewel.”²³ The process had gone full circle from innovation, opposition, sacrificial struggle, through action, education, and involvement to a result that vindicated its creator by being adapted and institutionalized by the community. Some citizens became defenders as passionate about the idea as the original designer, starting the process all over again with new labors, but now also with a foundation on which to build.

There is nothing new about these eccentric labors of love. They have long been at the root of folk design, and sometimes capture national attention—as the Watts Towers in Los Angeles did, for example. But they represent a model for social design that is worth encouraging because it provides a vehicle for introducing environmental innovation. They are born of creative necessity, thrive where resources are scarce, and produce flexible environments that are humane—all considerations of importance to designers today.

These projects are particularly significant for designers searching for images that express a more humanistic trend. In contrast to the numerous environments that are mass-produced, these labors of love are built and symbolically owned by the community. They are idealistic as well as functional places. The honest, unself-conscious effort and sacrifice create a sense of place for laborers and users alike. In Manteo, for example, a survey of townspeople indicated that they looked upon Jule’s Park as being a more sacred place than local churches. It had become what Ted Relph calls an “authentic” place.²⁴

These community projects have less clearly articulated boundaries than recent landscape designs. Haag interprets this practice as indicative of the movement away from “a preoccupation with joining materials” and toward emphasis on human activity. “The traditional design would have bulk-headed the entire waterfront to create a clean, well-defined edge, but we have all sorts of edges, some hard, some muddy, some sloppy, and look at how people use it.”²⁵ The variety of activities that go on along the water’s edge would indeed be difficult to imagine had the bulkhead been continuous.

The indifference to edge articulation has created an aesthetic unacceptable to some designers, who view the water’s edge of Gas Works Park, the rubble edge in Jule’s Park, and the woods and ponds at Washington Environmental Yard as unsightly, uncrafts-

manly, unpolished, dangerous, unprofessional, and dysfunctional.²⁶ From the point of view of classical design, these projects are nightmares, but to others they represent a move toward a more participatory and humanistic aesthetic, whatever mistakes they might make. The challenge for designers is to integrate their professional knowledge with the energetic local action represented by such labors.

Designers are most apt to build their labors of love where they live. They know the community intimately, and they are familiar with local user evaluations and adjustments in the environment. Long-term involvement might even be a prerequisite for developing an appropriate model for the practice of humanistic design. Practitioners may find themselves in the roles of grassroots organizers, environmental educators, and landscape managers as well as form givers, especially if they want to create meaningful, and not merely tasteful, places.

Because these labors of love require long effort, that investment usually ensures a well-cared-for environment,²⁷ if it becomes meaningful to the users. In each of the cases cited, the designers planted trees. At Gas Works Park, Haag points with pride to “my trees, I grew them from seedlings” as he walks by a stand of 15-foot maples.²⁸ Moore encouraged residents to plant trees at Washington Environmental Yard, and Burrus purchased Italian cypresses in California and drove



10 Overview of the Environmental Yard, 1981

When Moore began working at the Washington School, he created an extremely flexible master plan that was open-ended to encourage community-built projects. Those small projects incrementally transformed the barren asphalt first into a more diverse play space and eventually into a child's wonderland.

(Photograph of the partly developed yard by Drew Werby. Photographs of the asphalted yard and the Environmental Yard by Robin Moore)

them across the country to plant in Bicentennial Park. In each case the trees symbolize concern with the environment.²⁹ Professional design awards ought perhaps to be given annually for projects that encourage this kind of environmental ethic.³⁰ Otherwise such important projects may continue to be ignored because they are unsightly to design juries. It is also entirely possible that participatory, humanistic design will produce no single star in architecture and design, but constellations of local heroes and heroines, creating in ways that are innovative, sensitive, and appropriate to their own communities.

Labors of love offer innovative solutions to community problems. Gas Works Park introduced the notion that wasteland could be turned into enjoyable open space. Washington Environmental Yard is recognized as a model for integrating play and learning by changing the outdoor environment. Jule's Park represents an early attempt to preserve open space and encourage urban redevelopment using conservation as a theme. Projects like these also encourage community cooperation and heighten environmental and political awareness.

The three projects taken together provide one model for a more humanistic design process, in its combination of innovation, struggle, and vindication. The results are identifiable, yet flexible spaces, symbolically charged, meaningful places that invite us to use them and encourage us to care for them. But they also raise questions: is humanistic design just



a last-ditch effort to save a sense of place that will inevitably be lost? Or a model for community space-making for the future?³¹ Why did these three projects work? Are there others that did not? Can the processes represented by them be reconciled with traditional practice? Should they? Can they be planned, or must they occur spontaneously? How can professional and technical expertise be integrated efficiently and effectively into the process? Community designers, and, indeed, everyone concerned about design, will have to struggle with these questions. Only in this way can environmental philosophies be developed that will lead to models and methods for making humane spaces that contribute to man's sense of freedom and equality and acknowledge the need for a sense of place.

11 Washington Environmental Yard, 1981

A labor of love can introduce an innovation like the integration of outdoor play and the school curriculum as done at Washington Yard. Such an innovation provides for everything from basketball to the study of Native American lifestyles. (Photograph by Robin Moore)

- 1 Craig Campbell, "Seattle's Gas Plant Park," *Landscape Architecture* (July 1973), p. 342.
- 2 Randolph T. Hester, Jr., *Neighborhood Space* (Stroudsburg, PA: Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross, Inc., 1975), p. 192.
- 3 Billie B. Harper, "Implementation of a Youth Center in Manteo, North Carolina, unpublished paper done for LAR 611, North Carolina State University, 1981, pp. 3-4. See also the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, *National Urban Recreation Study* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1978).
- 4 Grace Brynolson, "GasWorks (ugh!) reborn as a city park," *Smithsonian Magazine* (November 1977), pp. 117-119. Mrs. Myrtle Edwards, a member of the Seattle City Council and chairperson of the Parks Committee for 14 years, negotiated the purchase from the gas company, and the park was to be a memorial to her. After Haag convinced the city to save the gas plant, her family requested that the park not be named in her honor.
- 5 From conversation with Richard Haag, April 17, 1981.
- 6 Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 340.
- 7 Harriott Bullitt, "Pile of Junk Wins Design Award," *Pacific Northwest* (January/February 1981), p. 45.
- 8 Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 342.
- 9 Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 342. The town is near the site of the Lost Colony, England's first colony in the New World that survived from 1584-1587, but had lost its inhabitants by 1590. After the Civil War, a freedman's colony established nearby was obliterated. Twice in the 1900s most of the town burned.
- 10 *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
- 11 Hester, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-193.
- 12 Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 342.
- 13 Memorandum of September 1975, "Seattle, Washington Gas Works Park Fact Sheet," Richard Haag, Associates, Inc., pp. 3-4.
- 14 Hester, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
- 15 Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 5. Local people still consider themselves the spiritual descendants of the original colonists who came to the New World through the expedition organized by Sir Walter Raleigh.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- 17 Paul Goldberger, "Gas Works is Centerpiece of Seattle Park," *New York Times* (Saturday, August 30, 1975).
- 18 From conversation with Richard Haag, April 17, 1981.
- 19 Hester, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
- 20 Sally Woodbridge, "It was a real gas," *Progressive Architecture* (November 1978), p. 98.
- 21 Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-339.
- 22 From conversation with Richard Haag while touring Gas Works Park, August 5, 1981.
- 23 Editorial, "Our Answers," *Coastland Times* (March 24, 1981), p. 4.
- 24 Billie B. Harper, "Special Places Survey," North Carolina State University, unnumbered summary chart results published in *A Guide for Development*, published by the Town of Manteo, North Carolina, 1981, p. 5.
- See also Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Limited, 1980), pp. 63-78.
- 25 From conversation with Richard Haag, April 17, 1981, and August 5, 1981.
- 26 From a student evaluation of Washington Environmental Yard made as part of Landscape Architecture 231, Winter 1981, University of California, Berkeley.
- 27 In some cases the landscape seems abused and unloved as in the case of Washington Environmental Yard. In others, when the maintenance of the project exceeds the ability of the volunteer laborers it can easily fall into disrepair. Technical problems that sour a good intention can also produce poor results.
- 28 From conversation with Richard Haag while touring Gas Works Park, August 5, 1981.
- 29 This is a good example where technical knowledge would have benefited the labor of love. Although the tiles were lovingly treated, they were not well suited to the soil and microclimate.
- 30 In 1981 Gas Works Park won the President's Award, one of the highest honors given by the American Society of Landscape Architects.
- 31 Relph, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-147.

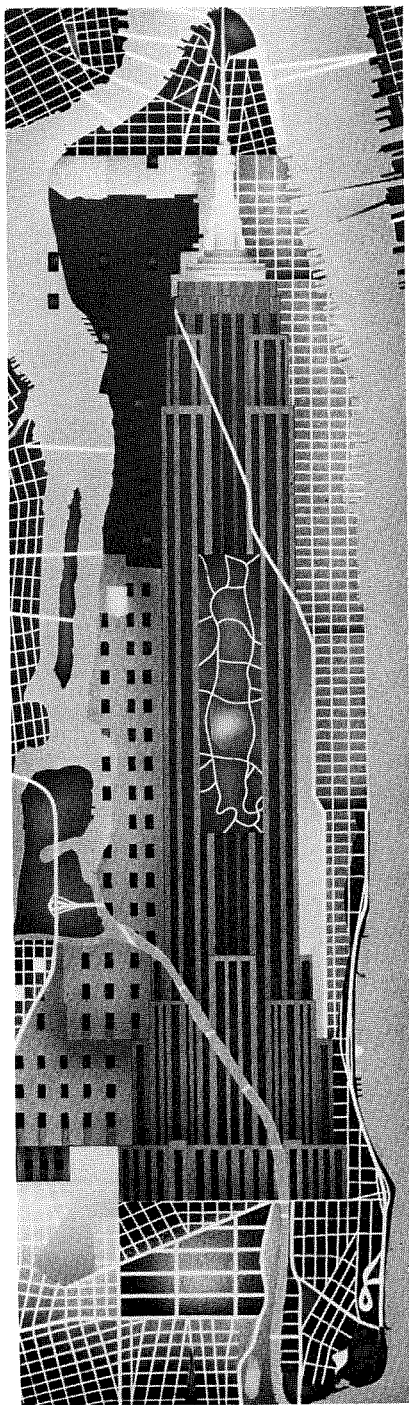
A Vision of Four Cities

Text and Drawings by Stanley Saitowitz

These drawings depict cities
as physical and mental
landscapes.

First geography: the site.
Inhabitation [building,
dwelling, thinking—eds.]
continues the geological
evolution, governed (perhaps
mysteriously) by a collective
intention, a common sense
of place.

Cities, the shared
declarations of their
builders, are seen as a
mentality in response to
location: a Human
Geography.



New York, New York

the male city
of the East,
where
the sun rises,
where
every tower
that
sticks up
into
the
air
is a
mirror
of the
phallic boat
of land
that
sticks
into
the
water.

San Francisco, California

the female city

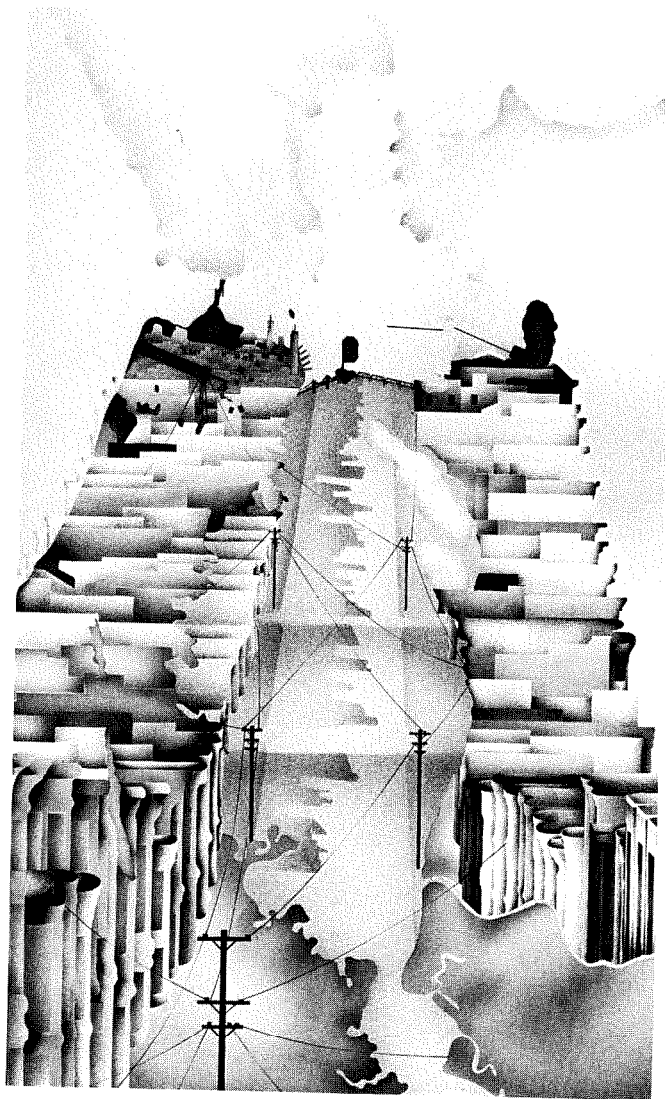
of the West Coast,
where

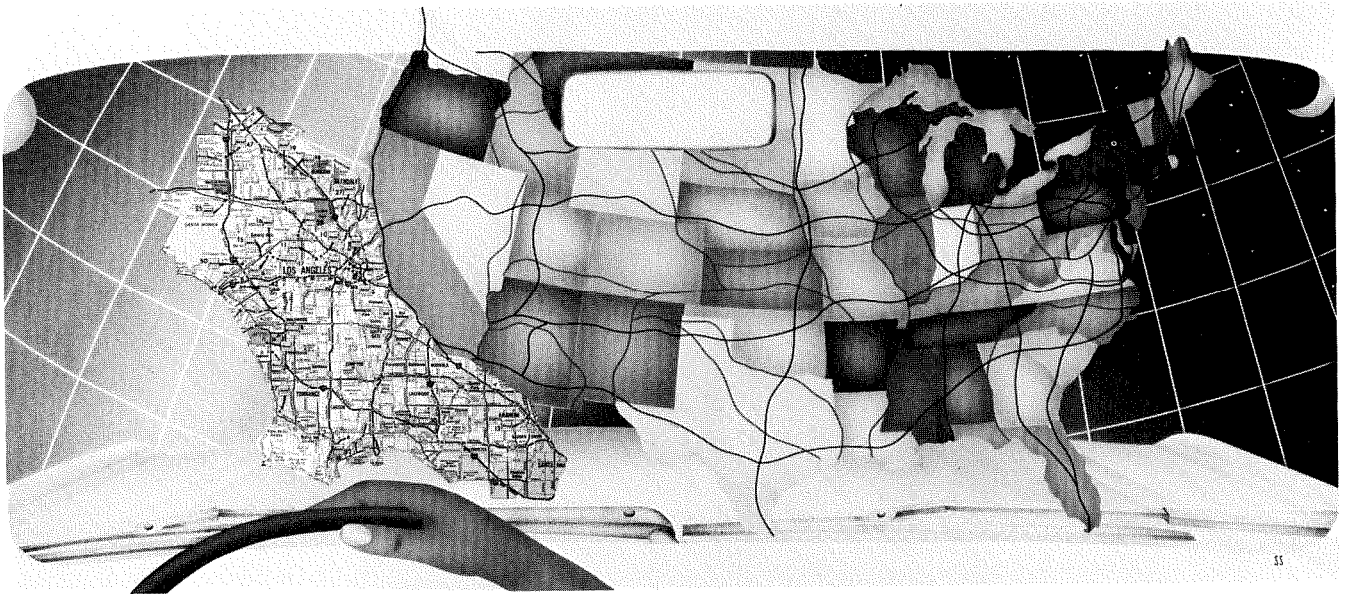
the sun sets,
hugging
the ground
surrounding

its hollow
navel of bay,

whose streets
run like
water
over the hills,

lined with shores
of bay window
walls.

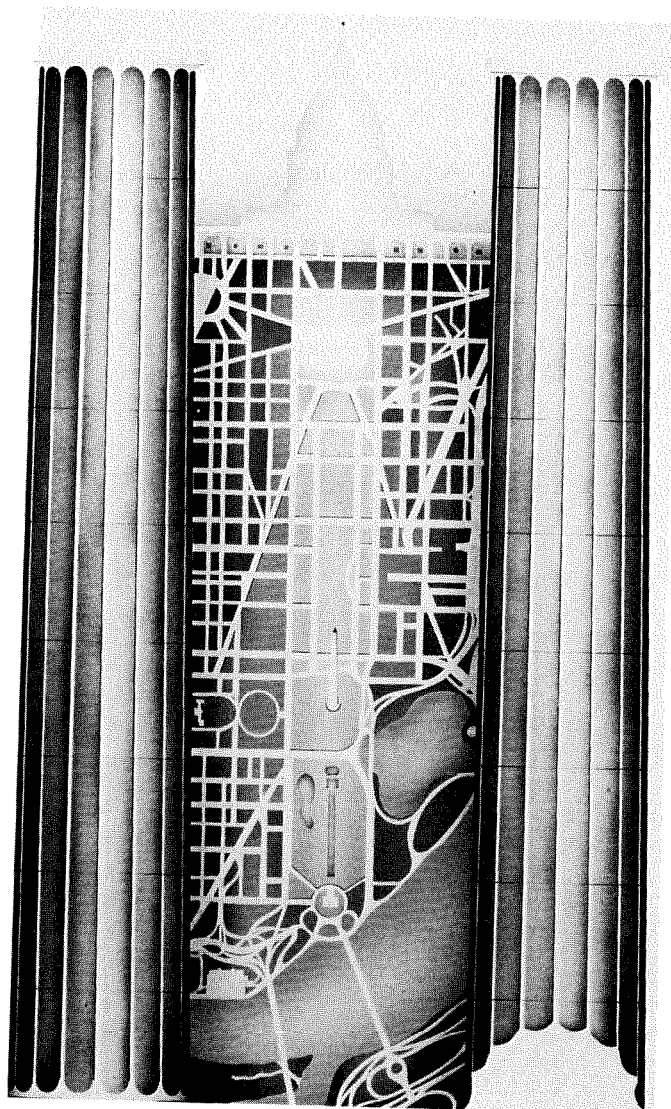




Los Angeles, California

Washington, D.C.

the
grandfather
city,
the
paternal
city of



respectability,
imported
from Europe
by its
immigrant
children.

An Interview with James Turrell

On January 23, 1983, just after completion of *Batten*, his new installation in the Hayden Gallery at MIT, James Turrell talked with Kathy Halbreich, Lois Craig, and William Porter representing *Places*. For James Turrell, space, objects, the materials of the earth, distance, and even time are not only revealed by light, they are illusions created by light. For nearly two decades, he has explored light through site-specific installations in California, New York, and Italy. He also has carried out a series of explorations involving how people perceive light, with a background that includes an undergraduate major in psychology and an avid avocation of flying small aircraft. His most ambitious current project is the transformation of the Roden Crater near Sedona, Arizona, that will include a "sun and moon viewing room." Like ambiguous figure-ground drawings, his works alternate between presenting themselves and serving merely as illusionary media through which external reality and an observer's own perceptions become evident. This ambiguity is integral to the extraordinary power of Turrell's places.

Places: Are you meant to feel transcendent in the installations you've created?

Turrell: What do you mean by transcendent?

Places: One almost leaves one's body through one's body because one is made so sensitive to how one is sensing.

Turrell: I do like that you are sensing and that it's nonvicarious; it's about your seeing and you know it's about your seeing. You can decide you don't want to deal with it but if you do engage it, there is something to engage.

Places: The only way you cannot engage places that have power is by leaving them . . . but does one's arrival play a role?

Turrell: The Grand Canyon is one of those places. It's possible to come up to the canyon in such a way that you don't even know you're arriving, and then suddenly burst upon it. I like to fly up the Colorado River to this canyon which you have to climb into through a tiny valley. I fly through the bottom of that valley in a slow climb to a small opening; as you fly through the opening, boom, suddenly you're in it, and the ground falls away for 5,000 feet.

So the approach can order your experience. You can come in through the side door of one of the places we're considering and have a different experience than if you enter through the front

door; you can reorder it as you get in, but entry is important. We do learn in this culture not to see afterimages. But in any situation your previous experience is important. If you went from a rather pink room into a very pale green one, at first the intensity of the green would be very high because you loaded that green room with a green afterimage that came from seeing the pink room. Size matters too. Coming through an opening into a big space—in Canyon de Chelly, for example, there are some areas like this. Conversely, there are natural places that wouldn't have power were something man-made not there. Borobudur and Split have this quality. . . . I think one of our greatest conceits is to feel we're not a part of nature. We feel victimized by technology. Well, we're technology: It's as though the coral that creates the Great Barrier Reef were appalled by the coral. The Great Barrier Reef *is* coral. We build cities, and that's what we *are*. We're crustaceans that make these shells we inhabit. You can see New York from space about as well as you see the Great Barrier Reef.

Places: How do you see your crater being in phase with nature?

Turrell: Well, more like Persepolis or Split, where the built environment works with the siting. This is a

volcano, and it will remain so.

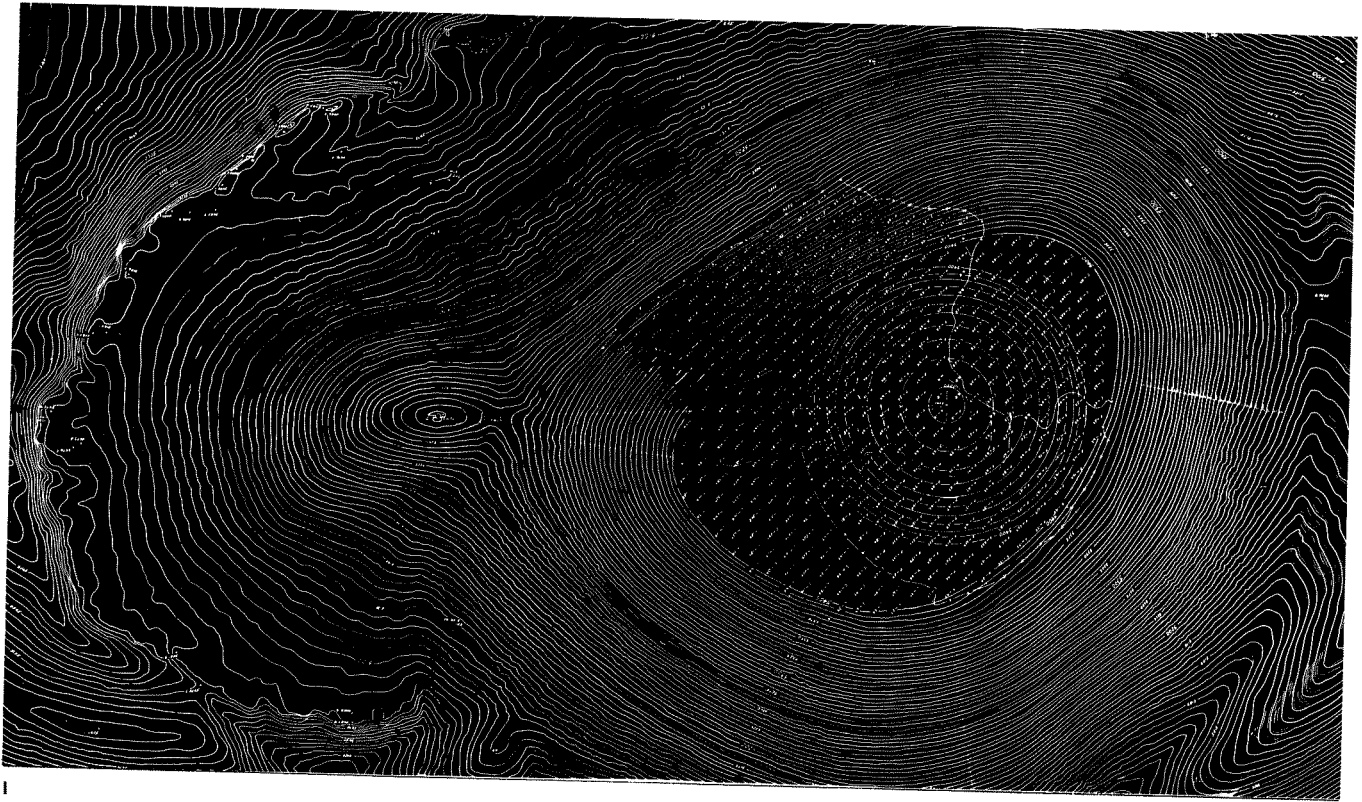
Places: What about the materials used to make the crater?

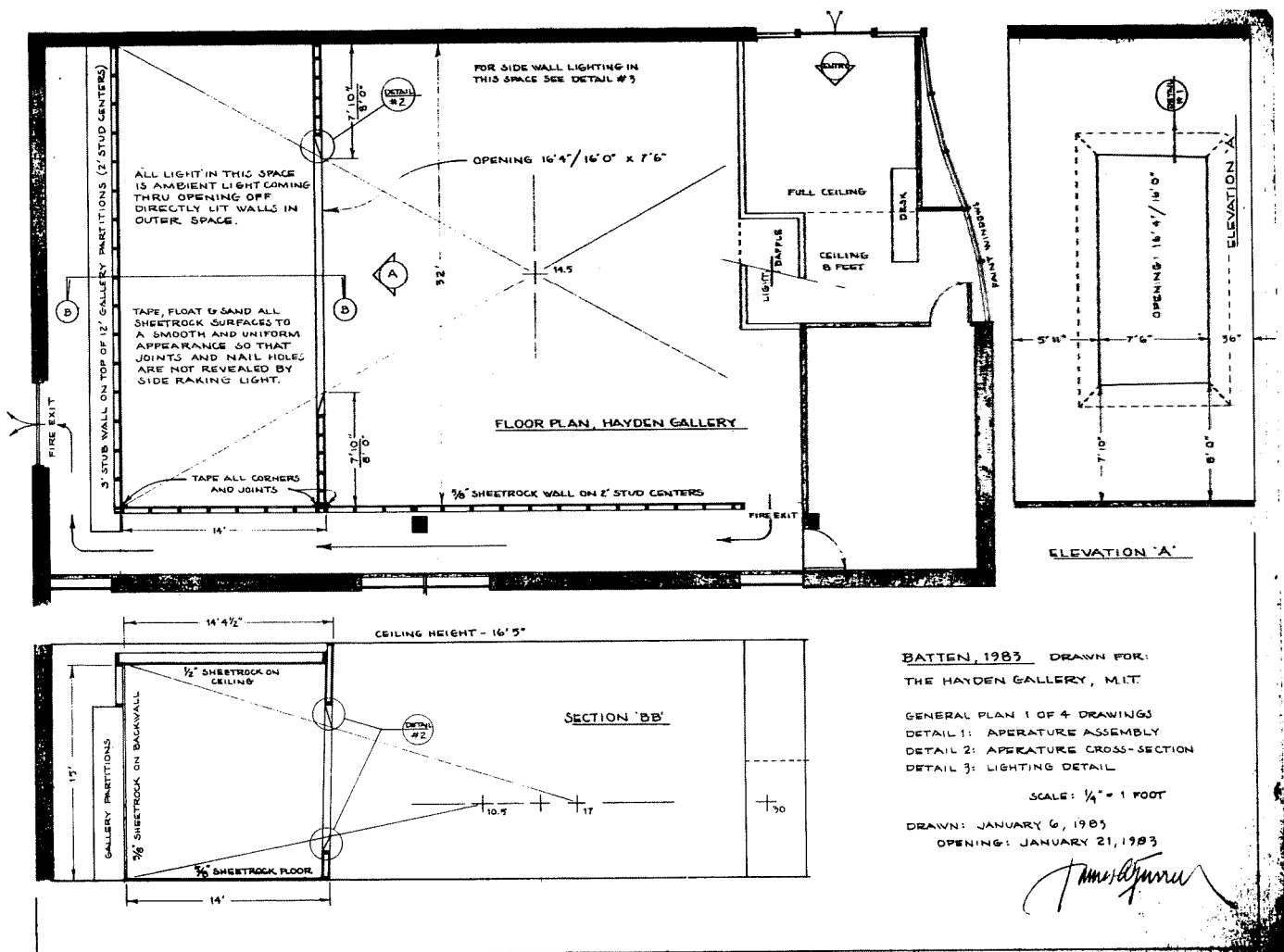
Turrell: There are lots of materials right there, so there's an economy in using them. Some of the great material producers are cinder cones. They are used for cinderblock and for all kinds of aggregate, sand such as silica—pure black silica—and obsidian. . . . Cinder is a wonderful material . . . almost as hard as glass, and yet it's light and has wonderful insulating properties because it contains air. . . . It also is reasonable to use those materials to make the place itself. . . . For instance, we are making plaster out of the different kinds of sand so that the plaster takes on the color of that sand; then we are sandblasting the plaster walls with that same sand and leaving 18 to 24 inches of sand on the floor . . .

Many of the pieces I originally made were like this piece at MIT, but you were on the other side—inside it. Those spaces were pretty hard to maintain because the floor had to be painted and kept clean, and if you asked people to take off their shoes, in many cities—and New York is one of them—people would get very put out.

Places: So, in the crater, you're on the other side.

Turrell: Yes. You would be





2

on the inside, and the space you stand in for the MIT piece would be like the sky of low horizon for the crater spaces. There will be some spaces, however, where you can look in from both sides, even though they will be powered from the sky.

Places: In the crater the natural events provide a tremendous variety of source material, whereas in the gallery it's . . .

Turrell: It's fixed. But basically, the image created by the four light bulbs in the gallery is about eight and one half feet. It softens out, as you may have noticed, because it is directed away. In the crater that would be the image of the moon, so that when it came into one space it did something in another space. In one space an event creates image and that image then makes space in a space right next to it. It's no different from the interrelationship of spaces created in time and music.

Turrell: I was very interested in a site that was on a flat plane. This crater stands off by itself and comes out of a plane that is the Painted Desert. One of the first descriptions of that sort of space that excited me was by Antoine de Saint Exupéry. He talked about flight spaces and spaces in the sky. He also talked about the fact that from 600 to 3,000 feet up the earth looks as though it curves the wrong way. A little higher, it looks level, and finally at 18,000

feet the real curvature of the earth can be seen. But the way we sense was not made for flight spaces, obviously, so when we move into that realm there are glitches where our sensing doesn't work as well as it might.

The reason I'm making the tunnel [up into the bowl of the crater] is so that you don't go up a mountain and down in a hole. It has a lot to do with entry . . . as you go up the tunnel you only see sky, you don't see the other side of the crater. It is important to me that when you enter the crater space, you walk along into it, and as you walk along the edge of the crater, the earth seems to curve the wrong way—which happens because of our sensing. I wanted this sort of space blown out from underneath you.

Places: What about strong, impressive places that you're not sure you really want to know about because of their oppressive associations?

Turrell: For me one of the most interesting structures to look at is the Siegfried Maginot Line. I love the quality of those bunkers, their mass. What I like best, and this has to do with my work in the crater, is that this space is designed entirely from the outside . . . the inside is made for this thing outside. In the same way I'm interested in Jai Singh's observatory where the structures are formed completely in relationship to events that occurred in that space in the heavens.

Places: They're a viewing chamber . . .

Turrell: Exactly. They're only interested in events that occur in that space. That's why the Pyramids are much more interesting to me than Stonehenge. A pyramid is a structure with an opening to an event outside. The light enters down the shaft only once a year and lights a figure of one of the pharaohs full on. Stonehenge is like siting stones; that is, you stand in it and you site the external events. In Egyptian structures, phenomena enter the space and actually make a lighting event inside. That space is sensitive to events from places outside itself and when an event occurs outside that you want inside, it enters the space and does something. It's the *camera obscura*. In a way, the camera is the room and that's really a sensitive space. Bunker architecture also is sensitive because this space contains an opening to look out to or to deal with the events, and then there's a space inside.

Places: Push the idea of the camera a little more. In the crater there are certain events which occur externally, like the moon rising at a certain time of year, which, in fact, will be displayed as a virtual image in that chamber itself.

Turrell: Yes. Basically what I am doing with the crater is that I'm working with the interior and exterior space, that is, the working of one space against another.

Generally an aspect of that space is charged and related to how that space is filled. This quality of how the light inhabits the space changes throughout the day. Occasionally certain events will penetrate two or three openings and create image in the space. This image will destroy this sense of space in the space in which it happens but it also will create a sense of space in the one next to it.

Places: Can you describe a little more what you mean by "image"?

Turrell: When you see defined image—it has edge—you actually see the surface.

Places: If we were to use the Hayden Gallery installation as a model, your image is where the light hits the wall on the left or the right, from those two flood lights on either side.

Turrell: Yes, it's direct light—direct light on a surface—and direct light generally will define surface. Ambient light, if it's not penetrated by direct light, can define space. Here at the Hayden Gallery there's a space that has direct light in it and it's like space as we always see it. But the space next to it is filled with ambient light only which will define space if the space is properly sized to the amount of light and its color tone. . . . When I see how fragile it is, though, it's quite surprising. You just turn on one little light and, boom, it's gone, just like that. I

think these pieces have a lot to do with time.

Places: You're really challenging the 15-minute museum experience. There is a requirement, there's a demand in this to be somewhere.

Turrell: Well, if you don't do that, then, it's just the emperor's clothes. Either you do the work or you forget it. There is a price of admission and most people don't pay it.

Places: A source of power is that delicate balance between image and ambiance, between human intervention and natural condition. An imbalance seems to destroy it.

Turrell: I think that's quite true. Does Brazilia succeed? Borobudur, Split, and Persepolis work in phase with their surroundings in an amazing way. You could make a Split and maybe it wouldn't be anything. Art becomes totally incidental to what is there. Often it's in opposition.

Places: When you come to some of these spaces or places which were created in other cultures, you're actually perceiving them quite differently from the people that live in that culture.

Turrell: I think it's fair to say you are. That's not to say that they're any less powerful. We find Indian blankets quite impressive, but they don't function for us in the same way they did

for the people that wore and used them.

Places: In the crater as one is going through this sequence of spaces, will one also be going through a sequence of materials?

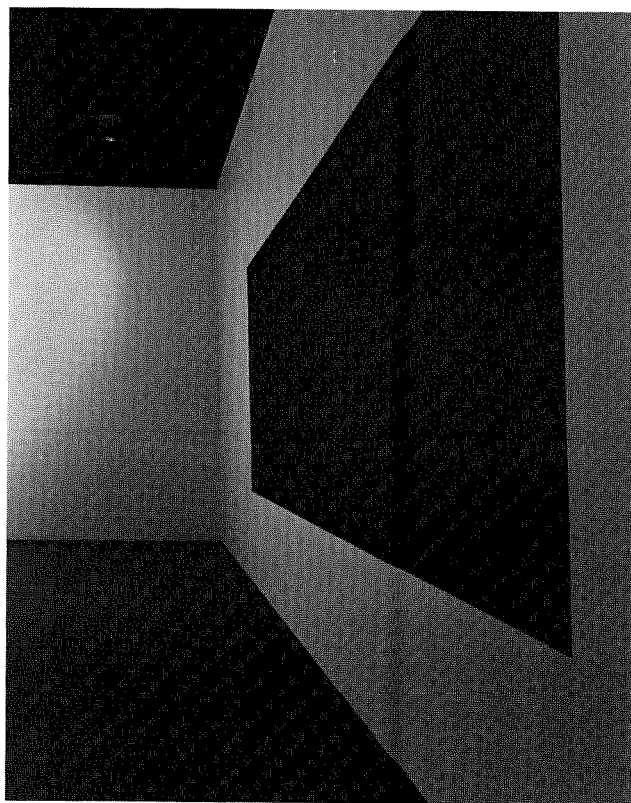
Turrell: Definitely, and all the materials are from that area. The sands are collected from the Painted Desert and the variety of sands available is extraordinary.

Places: How will you make a decision as to which sand is appropriate for which space?

Turrell: It depends on which event that space is oriented to. There is a sand that is the same color as you see flying over the desert on a full moon night. I want to house the events and have color tones appropriate to them. . . . For instance, there's one light event that's very important to me: the rise of the earth's shadow. When the sun goes down in the West and you look to the East on a clear day you'll see this pink line, with white silvery-blue below. Actually, you're looking at the earth's shadow advancing up in the



3



4

- 3 Borobudur
- 4 Batten
- 5 Persepolis



5

sky in the East as the sun goes down in the West, so you see the earth's shadow projected in the atmosphere. What you see underneath is night rising. Night doesn't fall. It rises.

Places: We want to ask about the relationship between people and their rituals and the activity that you anticipate people going through when they enter one of your pieces.

Turrell: It has to do with how you load a situation with information before entry to an experience. Here's an example that might be called a performance piece—this piece in which you take a plane out to Albuquerque or Phoenix and then go by car up to this one area in Canyon de Chelly, on the night of the year when the night-blooming cereus blooms. So we take you down there in a jeep and then you go by horseback or mule down the canyon at sunset. You go into the night. Finally, you come to this area where the cereus can be found, and you spend

several hours looking for one that hasn't quite begun to open. You go through this experience of watching this withers and is gone. Now, by the same token, there might be someone here in Boston who raises this plant in a wonderful hothouse. You go there, have a few drinks, stand around watching this happen, and it's over. The object is the same, yet, it's a totally different experience. And if you work with the limits of experience, you pay attention to how the experience is brought about and you don't worry as much about the object. In fact, that same experience might be had without the flower.

I feel that I work with a certain sense of physicality and materiality and I like it to come about from things that we don't think about as physical. I'm interested really in the experience and how it's experienced, so it's important to deal with those things that create the experience and not the object. One of the things that does happen and that

sometimes is encouraged by museums is hothouse art: art made for that. It's like the difference between, say, an orchid growing in Hawaii and then growing an orchid solely for the prom.

Places: The hothouse also implies an audience which appreciates these objects that are being grown.

Turrell: We're not apart from nature so the hothouse is not unnatural. Someone was talking to me about the difference between natural light and artificial light. Well, there isn't any difference because in light everything reveals what it is. When astronomers look at the stars, the stars reveal themselves in their light. When you do the flame test in chemistry to find out what something is made of, it releases a characteristic light of that material at that temperature. The same is true when we make a light-bulb. You heat tungsten and it gives off a particular light. If you heat xenon under high pressure it will give off a characteristic light and so there is no unnatural light—

there is only natural light. I'm interested in light wherever it comes from. I like gallery light. It is as reverent an object as, say, the sun or the moon. And it is something we've done.

Places: I think that this dialogue around the hothouse and the earth house, this larger house that we live in, around the gallery piece and the crater, around these places of power that you felt and have been so much a part of your own thinking and your own work, makes a wonderful set of connections.

Turrell: One thing about many of these places is that you must visit them, an idea not too dissimilar from the story of the night-blooming cereus.

Peyton Place

Revisited

William Morgan

Grace Metalious was a perceptive observer of the New England townscape and its architecture, but this aspect of her talent was obscured by the fuss over her 1956 novel *Peyton Place*. An exposé of the secret lives and passions of a small New England town's denizens, its frankness created a national sensation. The book sold over 10 million copies, making it one of the best sellers in history. Today, it seems incredible that either the novel or the movie based upon it (filmed in Camden, Maine, after the residents of Gilmanton, New Hampshire, and Woodstock, Vermont, denied permission) could have caused such a scandal, but in the more inhibited 1950s parents were horrified when they caught their offspring devouring *Peyton Place*. Mrs. Metalious's husband was fired from his post as Gilmanton's grammar-school principal, because, as the novelist said, "To a majority of people who live here, it is a dirty book. People suddenly decided that George is not the type to teach sweet, innocent children."

Yet Mrs. Metalious was a not inconsiderable crafts-woman, especially for a hitherto unpublished and relatively unsophisticated thirty-one-year-old housewife. That the setting and the other details that embellish the narrative go unnoticed in the telling of

the larger tale is perhaps one mark of a good novelist. From the opening sentence ("Indian summer is like a woman"), *Peyton Place* is filled with handsomely turned descriptions, especially of townscape ("She could see the belfry of the grade school, the church spires and the winding, blue road of the Connecticut River with the red brick mills, like growths, attached to one of its sides"). Grace Metalious appealingly and convincingly captured the character and feeling of northern New England, from the courthouse ("a large white stone building with a verdigris-colored dome"), with its "wooden benches which seem to be a part of every municipal building in America's small towns," to the general store and the annual town meeting. Beyond the six-block business district along Elm Street, Peyton Place's wealthier residents lived in grand manses on Chestnut Street, but the houses in protagonist Allison MacKenzie's neighborhood were mainly "simple, well constructed, one-family dwellings, most of them modeled on Cape Cod lines and painted white with green trim."

Any architectural historian who has labored over building analyses for survey forms cannot help but admire Mrs. Metalious's succinct description of the

Peyton Place high school: "It was made of brick, with windows so large that each one made up almost an entire wall, and it had a clinical, no-nonsense air of efficiency that gave it more the look of a small well-run hospital." The elementary school does not fare so well; it is dismissed simply as "Victorian architecture at its worst." Her paragraph on the annual spring hop will strike a familiar chord in anyone who has ever tried to transform a high-school gymnasium, with its basketball hoops and cinderblock walls, into a ballroom with the aid only of crepe paper and balloons.

The most imposing, and architecturally the most interesting, structure in Peyton Place is Samuel Peyton's castle, a dark and sinister granite pile that overlooked the town. The model for Grace Metalious's castle is undoubtedly Stanton Harcourt in Windham, New Hampshire. Stanton Harcourt was erected between about 1906 and 1915 by one of America's richest men, the enigmatic Edward F. Searles of nearby Methuen, Massachusetts, who inherited a fortune from his much older wife, who had, in turn, been the widow of railroad financier Mark Hopkins. Local legend holds that Windham's castle is a copy of Searles's ancestral estate in Oxfordshire, a

fifteenth-century Tudor manor house of the same name, but Stanton Harcourt (and thus Peyton's Castle) was in fact designed by Henry Vaughan (1845–1917), the Anglo-American architect who was responsible for such Gothic Revival monuments as the school chapels for St. Paul's and Groton, and the first designs for the Washington Cathedral. The huge granite walls and the portcullis gate are mentioned in *Peyton Place*, and one of Mrs. Metalious's characters even goes so far as to declare: "Every stick and stone, every doorknob and pane of glass in the castle was imported from England. . . . I'd be willing to bet that this here is the only real, true, genuine castle in New England." Stanton Harcourt may not be a transported Victorian baronial estate, but it was reputed to have cost \$1.4 million, and it does contain a fireplace from the Tuileries. It is easy to understand how this imposing curiosity close to the novelist's native Manchester would have become such an important presence in *Peyton Place*.

In addition to architecture itself, Mrs. Metalious also uses zoning, long anathema to the independent small-town Yankee, as a theme in her book. Mill owner and old-style capitalist Leslie Harrington stands out solidly against any sort of

planning in a way that reaches far beyond his own one American town: "When you start telling a man he's got to do this, that or the other thing, you're coming pretty damned close to infringing on a citizen's rights." A voter asks at town meeting, "You mean to say that you kin tell a man what kind of house he's gonna build?" when moderator Jared Clarke defends the board of selectmen's right to restrict the type of dwelling that can be erected in Peyton Place. As part of the story's broader background, the author introduces a variety of problems that arise in a New England village's attempts to reconcile economic growth with the preservation of an historic past.

Unfortunately, the descriptive qualities and cultural insights of *Peyton Place* are absent in its sequel, *Return to Peyton Place*, written quite literally to cash in on the sensationalism spawned by the original. Two later novels, *The Tight White Color* (1960) and *No Adam in Eden* (1963), have mill towns as their settings—the latter includes a long description of that sublime nineteenth-century industrial complex, the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester. But *Peyton Place* remains the only one of the group that—in its descriptions of a small northern New England town in the Eisenhower years—evokes a sense of place.



Stanton-Harcourt, Windham, New Hampshire; Henry Vaughan, architect, c1906–1915. The model for Peyton's Castle in Grace Metalious's novel *Peyton Place*. (Photograph by Ernest Gould)

A Place in the Sun*

Text and Photographs by Charles Correa

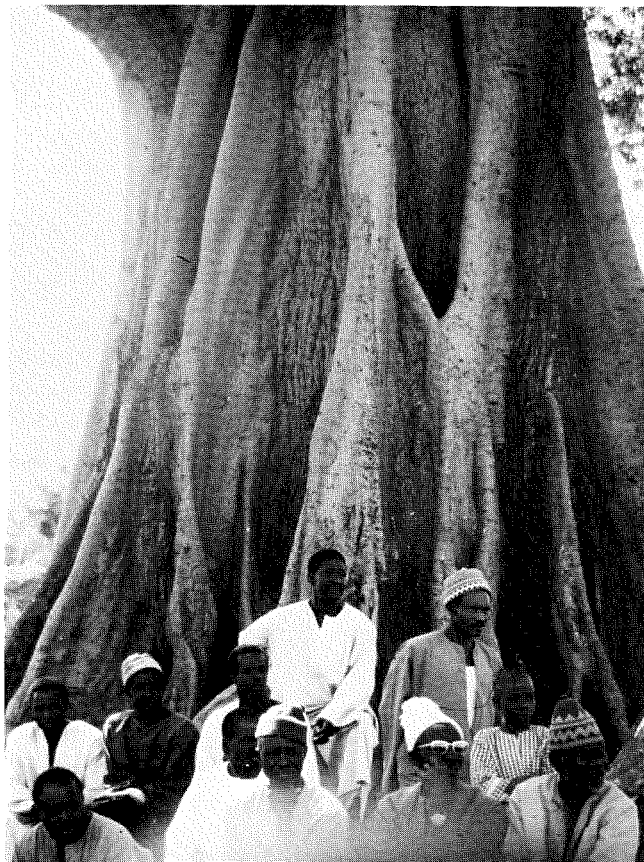
My subject is concerned with building in a world far removed from Britain. India—where a great many things are quite different: the climate, the energy resources, the social patterns, the cultural ethos.

Hence my title: A Place in the Sun. In actual fact of course, as Mr. Sherban Cantacusino has already so obligingly pointed out to me, my talk should really have been called: a place in the SHADE—since that presumably is the prime purpose of shelter in India. (And had I to deliver this talk in the heat of a Delhi summer, I might well have called it just that.) However, here we are in the middle of a London winter and I rather hoped that this phrase, “A Place in the Sun,” does what I wish it to do: namely, in one fell swoop, lift us out of this freezing North European weather into a faraway clime, swing us into another state of mind, into another ambiance, where warm and languid breezes blow.

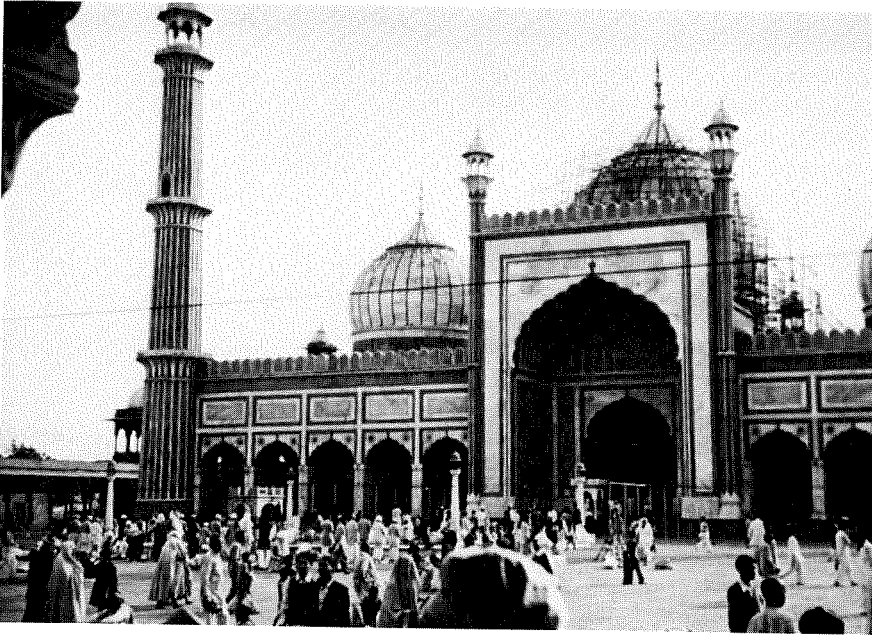
If we can conjure up such a fantasy in our minds, I think we might begin to experience new attitudes to many things around us: to the clothes we wear, to the room we are sitting in—in fact, even to our manner of sitting in it.

For climate makes a fundamental difference to our need for—and perception of—built-form. In these northern regions, where the cold is so severe, the architect has perforce to stay within the design parameters of a totally insulated, weather-resistant box. One is either *inside* this box, or *outside* it. The transition from one condition to

**The Thomas Cubitt Lecture for 1983. The lecture appears here exactly as it was delivered on January 31, 1983, at The Royal Society of Arts in London, to an audience of architects, planners, civil servants, and architectural correspondents. The lecture is published in the May 1983 issue of the Society's monthly journal, The Royal Society of Arts Journal.*



I African kapok tree
Senegal



2

2 Borobudur
Java, Indonesia

the other is through a hard, clearly defined, boundary: the front door. Inside or outside exist as opposites, in a simplistic duality. (A proposition lucidly expressed in the Miesian equation: a steel-and-glass box set in a sea of open space.)

Compare this to the complex manifestations of built-form in a warm climate. Between the closed box and open-to-sky space there lies a whole continuum of zones, with varying definitions and degrees of protection. One steps out of the box to find oneself . . . in a verandah, from which one moves into a courtyard, and then under a tree, and beyond on to a terrace covered by a bamboo pergola, and then perhaps back into a room and out on to a balcony . . . and so forth. The boundary lines between these various zones are not formal and sharply demarcated, but easy and amorphous. Subtle modulations of light, of the quality of ambient air, registers each transition on our senses.

I believe that this pluralism—this ambiguity—is an essential characteristic of built-form in a warm climate. I believe that this is precisely the quality that classical European Architecture lost as it moved from the Greek Islands, up through Rome and the High Renaissance, to lodge finally along the banks of Threadneedle Street.

Furthermore, I believe that for us in India, an understanding of this spatial pluralism is of prime importance since it is the key to several of the most vital issues we

face. This evening we shall concentrate on three of them. The first concerns our relationship with built-form; the second, energy-passive architecture; and the third, housing the urban poor—i.e. dealing with the enormous migrations which are changing cities all over the developing world, from Jakarta and Caracas to Calcutta and Bombay. Looking back on almost three decades as architect and planner, I find these three seemingly disparate issues have been central to my work. In this survey, I shall try to relate them, one to the other, and set them in the context of a fourth issue—one that is crucial to India (indeed, to the entire developing world)—and that is the nature of change.

Let us start with the first: our relationship with built-form. To summarise what I was just saying: life in a warm climate makes use of a much wider range of physical conditions than it does in a cold one; furthermore, the boundaries between the various gradations along this spectrum (between room and verandah and terrace and courtyard) are blurred and casual, so that one passes easily from one zone to another.

In such a situation people develop totally different attitudes to architecture. They find that for a great many activities, over much of the year, the “box” is neither the best nor the only answer to their needs. This has profound implications—in pragmatic and functional terms, and in meta-physical ones as well. Thus, while

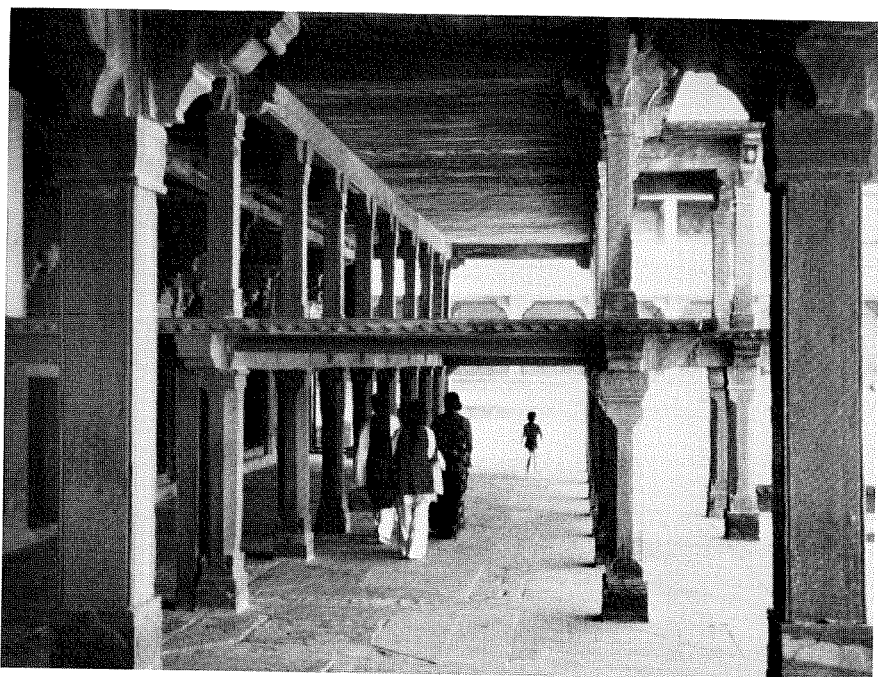
the Little Red Schoolhouse is the symbol for education in North America, in India—as in most of Asia—it has always been the guru sitting under a tree. Not only is this image of the Lord Buddha and the peepul tree more evocative, more conducive to Enlightenment, it is also—as far as physical comfort goes—far more sensible than sitting inside a stuffy old box. So these variations of open spaces (verandahs, pergolas, etc.), are not just cheap ad-hoc substitutions for solidly built construction—as is too often misunderstood by the casual observer. On the contrary. At certain times of the day, and at certain seasons of the year, they provide the most pleasant—and most appropriate—environment for our activities.

This of course makes for a difference in our perception of what is architecturally desirable and significant. If one lives in a cold climate and is continuously involved in the production of boxes (and mutants thereof), then one becomes obsessed with the surface-patterning, the coding, the tattooing of those boxes. And architectural photography, in journals and books, reinforces this obsession—since the printed image dramatises two-dimensional patterns, but is almost valueless when it comes to communicating any sense of the ambient air.

Which is indeed a great pity. For to walk on a seashore in the evening, or to cross a desert and arrive at a house around a courtyard, is a human experience beyond the

3 Jami Masjid
Delhi

4 Transitions,
subtle and amorphous, Fatehpur Sikri



3



4

merely photogenic. At these moments, responses are triggered off in our minds, responses conditioned by thousands of generations of life on this planet. Perhaps they are the half-forgotten memories of a primordial landscape, of a lost paradise . . . but in any event, as we approach the open-to-sky end of the continuum, they condition, very powerfully, our perceptions.

This is why, here in Europe, the great wellspring of Architecture has always been the region along the Mediterranean Sea. Here the colonnade is not just a (heavily coded) screen through which you see the main building, but a perfectly pleasant spot to saunter around for much of the day. And the monumental Hindu temples of South India—at Madurai, at Tanjore, at Srirangam—are experienced not just as a collection of gopurams and shrines, but as a pedestrian path (a pilgrimage!) through the sacred spaces that lie between. In fact, this open-to-sky processional movement is of the utmost religious and symbolic significance. It is found throughout the warm regions of the Earth, from the Sun Temples of Mexico, (which consist of pyramids, and—more importantly—of the sacramental open spaces they define), to the temples of Bali (with their ritualistic pathways up the hillside, through the knife-edged doorways).

Religious ceremonies in Asia have always emphasized movement through open-to-sky spaces—and the quasi-mystical sensations these

generate within us. Thus while the cathedrals of Europe are all variations of the closed-box model, the great Islamic mosques in Delhi and Lahore are at the other end of the spectrum: they consist mainly of large areas of open space surrounded by just enough built-form to make one feel one is “inside” a piece of architecture. Indeed, they exercise a rare finesse.

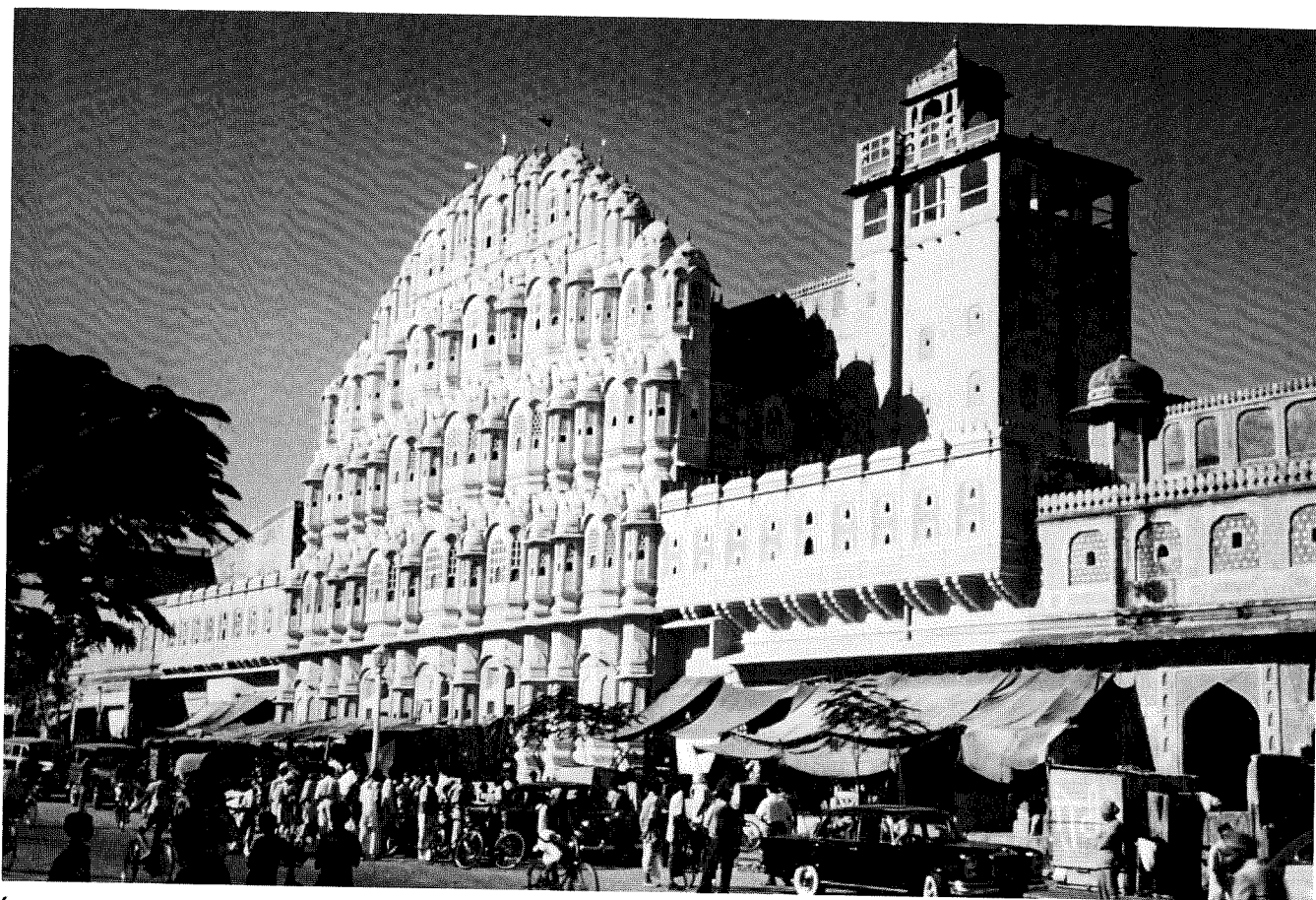
This phenomenon is not confined to temples and mosques. Examples are found in the secular world as well: as witness Fatehpur-Sikri, which exemplifies so much of what we have been discussing here. They are also found at the scale of domestic architecture: those of you who have travelled to warmer climates might recall early mornings on a lawn, or sitting out on a verandah, when the thought of stepping back into an airconditioned box appears suddenly claustrophobic.

Perhaps the most familiar example of all might be the Acropolis at Athens, where the sensations we experience, partly tactile (air movement on our skin) and partly metaphysical (the ascending progression, under an open sky) move us so profoundly. Unfortunately, as we go northward, we lose these responses. Thus, even if there is a promenade, as for example, in Corbusier’s *Armée du Salut* in Paris, the cold telescopes it into a hop-step-and-jump we must scurry through. The Acropolis, it would seem, is not a moveable feast.

Discussing movement patterns in a warm climate brings me to our



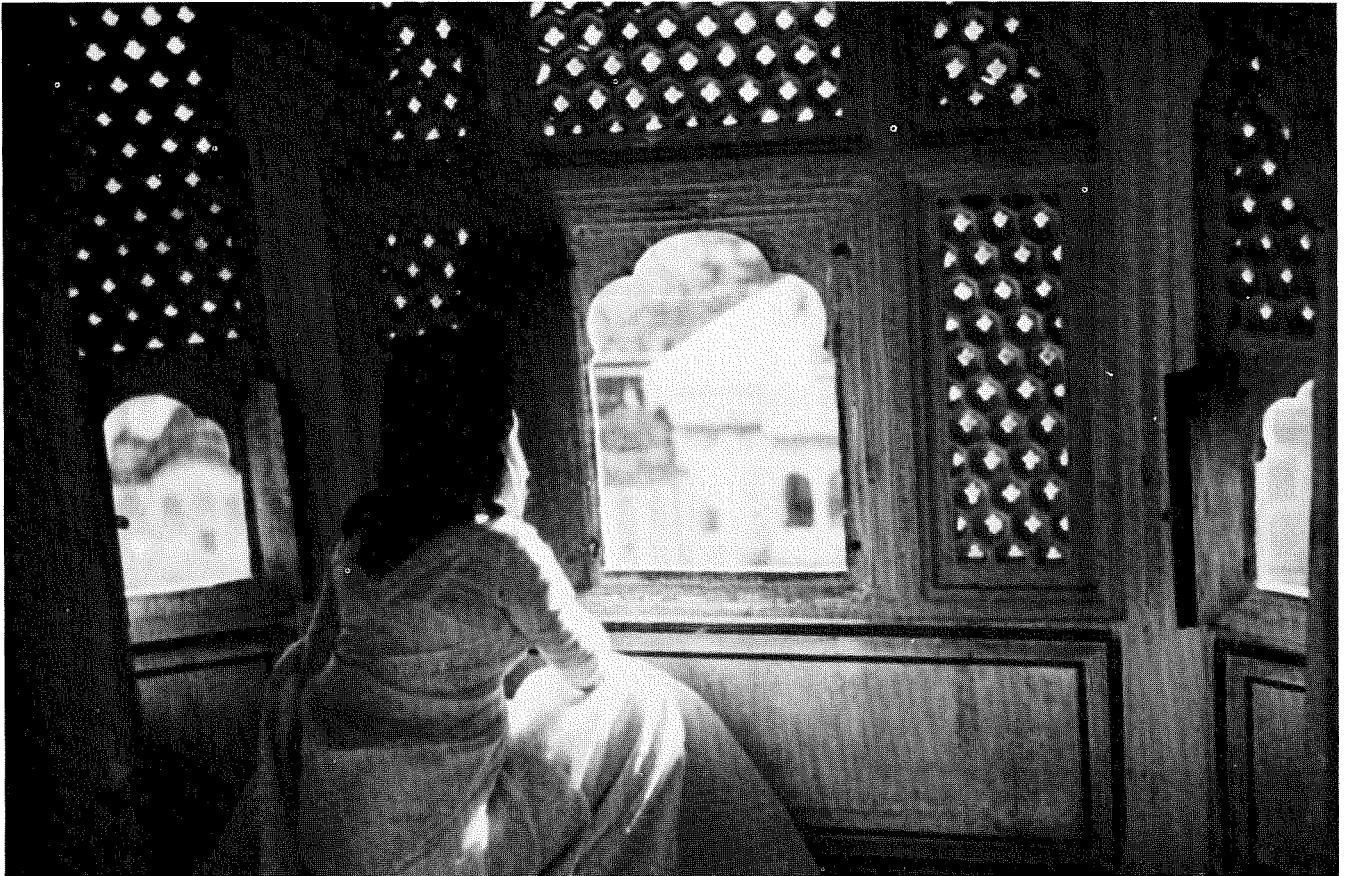
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5 On its way to Threadneedle Street,
the Acropolis

6 "The machine for living,"
Hawa Mahal, Jaipur



7

second point, viz. the importance of such patterns to the crucial issue of energy-passive architecture. For in a poor country like India, we simply cannot afford to squander the kind of resources required to air-condition a glass tower under a tropical sun. And this, of course, is an advantage. For it means that the building itself must, through its very form, create the “controls” the user needs. For centuries now, people all over India—in villages and palaces—have invented wonderful combinations of the kind of spaces (from closed box to open-to-sky) we have been discussing here. At the same time, they developed the kind of life-styles which allowed them to use these different spaces in optimal patterns. Take, for example, the Red Fort at Agra: in the early mornings of the summer months, a velvet shamiana (i.e. canopy) was stretched over the top of the courtyards—thus trapping the cold overnight air in the lower level of rooms, where the Moghul Emperor spent his day. By evening, the shamiana was removed and the Emperor and his court came out on to the gardens and pavilions of the terrace level. In the cold (but sunny) winter, this nomadic pattern was reversed: the terrace garden being used during the day, and the lower levels of rooms at night.

In short: dealing effectively with climate necessitates an inventiveness about living patterns, i.e. about *life-styles*. Indeed, all truly *new* architecture and planning is, in the final analysis, concerned with the conceptualisation of alternate life-styles. This was the driving force

behind Wright’s Prairie Houses. It is also the real issue—and opportunity!—of the present energy crisis, both in Asia as well as here in Europe.

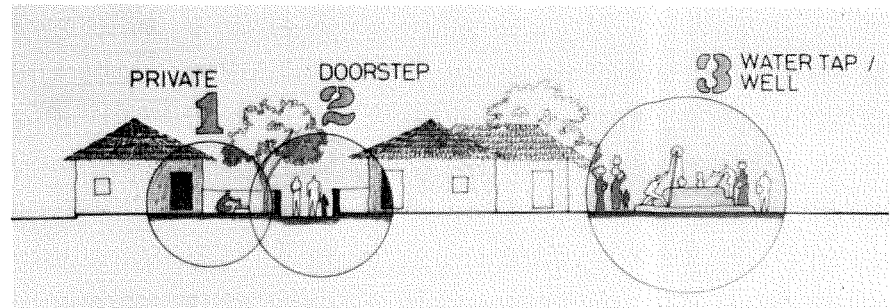
The example of the Moghuls is not such an esoteric one. Adapting in a quasi-nomadic manner to different conditions of built-form was a common practice even in the U.S., where as recently as the 1950’s, families still used their porches in summer. By 1960, the mechanical engineers, (with the connivance of the architects) had changed all that. Everyone withdrew into their airconditioned boxes. Somewhere in the process, Architecture—and the issues it addressed—had become sadly diminished.

It is a dislocation apparent in formal architectural vocabulary as well. Consider, for instance, the house of Ali Qapu, facing the Meydan-i-Shah in Isfahan. An enormous roof hovers over the entrance, creating not only shade and protection, but a great evocative gesture towards the city—exactly the kind of architectural tour-de-force that made Corbusier, that frozen Swiss, come to life when he saw the Mediterranean, and later Brazil. The machine for living! Yes, and always the great sculptural decisions (the overhangs, the double-heights), were placed facing the elements—i.e. at the business end of the habitat, (e.g. the Esprit Nouveau Pavilion, the various Unités, the Shodan house in Ahmedabad, etc.). But as Corbusier’s influence permeated into the colder climates, these heroic gestures had to withdraw

into defensible space, into the mechanically heated (and cooled) interiors of the building. In this retreat, they lost much of their rationale: they began to appear rather arbitrary and capricious. Indeed, the bigger they got, the more willful they seemed—till finally one has the wild extravaganza of a Hyatt Regency. In those incredible lobbies, despite the spatial pyrotechnics, the ambience is somewhat artificial, contrived, stillborn. And for a simple reason: they do not connect with the kind of open-to-sky space which could quicken them to life. Even the superb Ford Foundation building in New York suffers from this syndrome; for at its centre beats an artificial heart: a hot-house, electrically-illuminated, “garden.”

Precisely the contrary is true of the Alhambra; here a structurally-decadent, rococco building generates a truly extraordinary experience in us. Why? Because the basic premise of the Alhambra, viz. axially-placed courtyards, inlaid with fountains and water channels, under an open sky, evokes an echo in the deep-structure of our minds.

“Fiction” said Cocteau, “is primordial memory.” Perhaps so also built-form. Certainly Architecture is concerned with much more than just its physical attributes. It is a many-layered thing. Beneath and beyond the strata of function and structure, materials and texture, lie the deepest and most compulsive layers of all. And these can manifest themselves not only in epic monumental architecture, but in



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projects of a much smaller, more humble, scale as well.

We now turn to our third issue, viz. housing the urban poor. It is indeed a wrench, for this is an area involving totally different kinds of knowledge and skills: in economics, sociology, land policies, mortgage rates, and so forth. Yet even here, we will find that the spatial continuum we have been discussing is of decisive importance—not only for housing, but for the very survival of the cities themselves.

Most of you are already aware of the scale of the problem. All over the Third World, from Africa to Asia to Latin America, migrants from the rural areas are pouring into towns and cities to find work. I don't think the world has seen such epic migrations since the 18th and 19th centuries—when Europeans, through their military prowess, re-distributed themselves around the globe, for much the same reasons. This is an option not open to most Third World countries today, and hence we must see our cities, like Jakarta or Bombay, for what they are: mechanisms for generating employment (especially in the tertiary and bazaar sectors), growth centres for absorbing distress-migration on a scale which is truly mind-boggling. Bombay, for instance, as recently as 1965, had a population of about four million; today it is over eight. By the turn of the century, it is expected to cross fifteen million. To generate urban land on a scale commensurate with this demand, necessitates a transformation of the transport network, the job locations, the

desire lines, etc. in short: a re-structuring of the city.

In this process, I believe that the architect has two crucial roles to play. Firstly, in conceptualising the new growth options; and secondly, in establishing the ground rules which will generate the housing. Now both these tasks necessitate an understanding of space (and its alternate uses); but of course it is the second which relates so clearly to the continuum we have been discussing here.

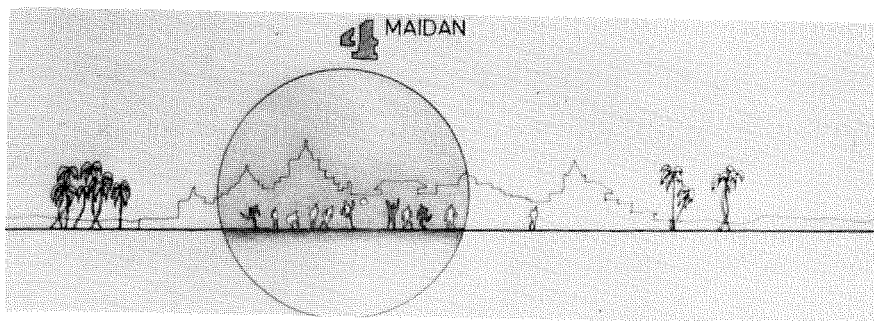
For there is much more to housing than just building houses. The room (the box) is only one element in a whole system of spaces which a family needs in order to live in a city. This system is usually hierarchal, starting with the private family zone, and moving on to the doorstep (where you greet your neighbour), then to the water tap or village well (the community meeting place), and finally to the great meydan (the principal focus of the city).

Each element in this hierarchy consists of a mix of spaces (from closed box to open-to-sky), in a delicate balance determined by the cultural and economic context of that particular society. Thus the first step towards generating economic housing is to identify the hierarchy and to understand the nature of the balances. Otherwise, one is in grave danger of formulating the wrong questions—as witness the many low-income projects which perceive housing as a simplistic problem of trying to pile up as many dwelling units (as

many boxes) as possible on a given site, without any concern for the other spaces involved in the hierarchy. Result: the desperate effort of the poor to try and live in a context totally unrelated to their needs—a state of affairs not only inhuman, but uneconomic as well.

For in a warm climate, many of a family's most essential activities (like cooking, or sleeping, or entertaining friends), do not require to take place within the four walls of a box, but can occur in verandahs, and courtyards. Under Indian conditions, where such spaces are liveable for more than nine months of a year, we estimate that courtyards have a usability coefficient of about half that of a room, and verandahs about three-quarters. Now rooms have a production cost, dependent on the amount of bricks, cement, steel, and other materials used to build them. Verandahs and courtyards have a production cost as well: measurable in the amount of additional land, roads and service-lines they require. By quantifying these various costs and benefits, the points of trade-off can be determined and the most economic—and efficient—patterns of housing identified. In most Third World cities, this turns out to be low-rise high-density configurations, making extensive use of terraces, verandahs, and courtyards. For in a warm climate—like cement, like steel—space itself is a resource.

This conclusion is an extraordinarily important one. First of all,



it describes a habitat which people can build for themselves—and that means not just sites-and-services, but also the kind of indigenous vernacular architecture one finds all over, from Mykonos to Rajasthan to the casbahs of North Africa. Furthermore it is of decisive relevance to employment. For while money invested in high-rise steel and concrete buildings goes into the hands of the few contractors who can build such structures and the banks who can finance them, this low-rise pattern of housing is built by small masons and contractors—which of course generates a far greater number of jobs exactly where they should be generated: in the bazaar sector of the economy, where the rural migrants are looking for work.

Of course these and all the many other benefits (incrementality, identity, variety, etc.) become possible only when we realise that the way to low-income housing in the Third World is not through increasingly sophisticated technology but in the more inventive use of the open-to-sky end of the continuum. This is where indeed our efforts should be directed—and where the people themselves have been so incredibly resourceful and innovative. It is we architects who have been remiss.

For the developing world is eager for innovation and change. Much more so than here in the West, where the past (perhaps because it is receding so fast) evokes so much nostalgia. “I have seen the future—and it works!” wrote the American journalist Lincoln Steffens in the

1920s on his return from the U.S.S.R. A statement so optimistic, so naive, so poignant, as to be almost incomprehensible in the 1980s. For today, architects and planners in Europe and North America are an extremely cautious tribe, heads bloody and very much bowed. “We have seen the past, and it appears to have worked . . . maybe.”

This is indeed ironic. For it is societies like India who *live* with the past all around, who accept it in their everyday lives as easily and casually as a woman drapes a sari—these are the societies most impatient to invent the future. They see the past everyday—and much of it doesn’t work, much of the time. Thus we have Mao Tse-tung, with a kind of divine impatience, re-structuring China through his concept of communes. And we have Mahatma Gandhi with his non-violence and his Sarvodaya movement.

To invent the future . . .
Architecture as an agent of change. This is our fourth issue—and perhaps the most basic one of all. Past and future, continuity and invention—how is the balance struck? If we look at Mao or Gandhi, we find that neither of them was hung up about whether an idea was new or old—or indeed where it came from—so long as he knew he could make it work in the context of his own people. Thus Mao’s Communism stems from a German who lived halfway around the world and a whole century earlier, and much of Gandhi of course derives from Emerson and

Thoreau. The genius of both these men was that they could stitch these ideas into an old social fabric and produce a seamless wonder. New ideas making the past work. (And vice versa!)

There are no great men, said Stendhal apropos of Napoleon, there are great events. We are only as big as the questions we define. And this, to my mind, is the central rivetting fact of life for an architect in the Third World. Not the size or value of the projects, but the nature of the questions they raise—and which we must address. A chance to grow: the abiding virtue of a Place in the Sun.

Photographic Place: Crossroads and Porch

Text and Photographs
by Alice Wingwall

Prologue: Photographic Place

Photographic place has as much to do with deliberate design as with the existence of any physical space. With the eye, and with the camera in hand, the photographer responds to spatial passages and feelings evoked by people and structures. The photographer positions him/herself in order to frame—and thereby to redesign—the forms and juxtapositions of things seen and imagined. The photographer places elements and transmits, with another kind of room (camera), the power of formed, traversed, and inhabited places.

Place: Crossroads

The mission of San Antonio de Padua in California is a place of crossings. Here, Spanish religious fervor and architectural ambition served the expansion of Spanish royal power in the New World. The mission buildings marked the landscape in a seeming wilderness of Indian culture.

This place proclaims the merging of a built culture with the landscape, enclosed dwellings within the flat, open plain and surrounding hills, the implantation of an alien notion of communal organization on land that the Indians had not presumed to possess with buildings.

The landscape remains, the building forms follow the landscape. The long, long road to this still active mission poignantly recalls the long path of the Spanish friars through California. The road is the place memory of that arduous path, the trace of New Spain. At present, this road is watched over by the military, observed from the neo-colonial (mission revival) Officers' Club.

© Alice Wingwall





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Place: Crossroads

An urban crossing.
A walk to tea. The edge of the vast plain of the Boston City Hall Plaza meets the beginning of Court Street along the trace of Cornhill Street (now vanished). New plaza and past paths to Faneuil Hall and the old State House meet under a hanging tea pot, a warming sign of present hospitality, as well as a hint of Boston's tea legacy. Beside this sign of tea is another T, marking the entrance to the subway—to the system of trains working just under the feet of pedestrians in Government Center Station, an important confluence of lines and a transfer point.

The corner itself is an architectural viewing place. The photographic corner selects three enthusiastic building designs. Down the street to the right are the luminous columns and base of the old City Hall Annex; to the left, the arched motif of the Sears Crescent ends in the handsome proportions of the windows of the Sears Block. One hundred and fifty years of architectural design and renovation converge upon this one place, a crossroads for architecture, history, government, and the underground.



3

Place: Porch

A place must be evocative. A bench for a quick sandwich becomes a transport to a larger world, a many-faceted view of an urban space. A bay of the Boston Five Cents Savings Bank addition frames benches, making a porch for city viewing. Between columns whose granite bases are scaled to human size, the glass panels of the bay mirror other buildings in the street, so that a sidewalk passage becomes a stopping place for urban confrontation and reflection.



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Place: Porch

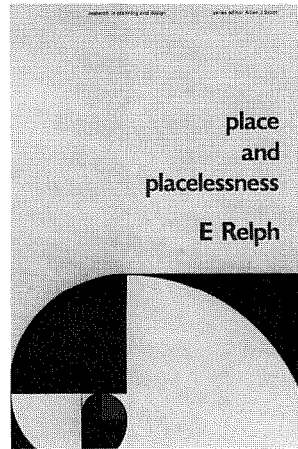
A porch, a lawn: components of domestic residence. This porch, this lawn form one corner of the Lee County Courthouse in Giddings, Texas. Entry porches on four corners of the courthouse initiate diagonal paths to the outer corners of the courthouse square and connect directly to the main sidewalks around the square providing visible physical access to Lee County. These porches allow the town to view, figuratively, the county transactions, which are separated from, but framed within, the town. The courthouse relies on place

recall of domestic porches for this framing. Rather than using a single entry with a monumental stairway, the courthouse design utilizes four smaller porches similar to those of multi-entry houses, making the county as accessible as a private residence might be. The county hierarchy begins on a porch.

Views across the lawn to the light stone base of the courthouse porch, the white-based houses and porches, white picket fences (talking across the fence), more distant shop fronts, and commercial signs, extend the sense of connection to daily life. The component pieces reflect each other. The business of the county is removed from the town across the lawn, but is transacted in seemingly amicable fashion "on the front porch." A very neighborly notion of place, after all.

Reciprocal Reviews

In 1976, Edward Relph, a professor of geography at the University of Toronto, and Dean MacCannell, a professor of sociology at the University of California at Davis, published fascinating books about the sense of place that were in many ways dramatically opposed to each other. Relph's book, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Limited, 1976), was a carefully conceived tirade against the placelessness of so many modern buildings, products, planning matters, and—ultimately—places. Drawing on phenomenology and, in particular, the writings of Heidegger, the concepts of authenticity and inauthenticity are central to this critique of the modern world. MacCannell's book, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), offers brilliant insights into the nature of tourism and tourist places. MacCannell accepts the phenomenon of tourism, suggests, in fact, that it is one of the most significant modern activities, and coolly analyzes the “staged” authenticity of tourist places. Both books have many insights for the designers of places, so we have asked the authors to review each others work in order to start debate. Here are some extracts. We hope that readers will continue the dialogue in future issues.



Edward Relph,
Place and Placelessness
(London: Pion Limited,
1976)

If there were a movement to combine social and aesthetic thinking into a new humanism with a solid philosophical base, then Edward Relph's *Place and Placelessness* would fall squarely into it. Since there is not, a careful study of his book might tell us why such a badly needed movement does not yet exist. Relph's position is clear cut: the rootlessness of human beings in modern society combined with single-function uses of space (e.g., specialized places for working, eating, playing) drain life of any apparent purpose. The absence of a strong identification with a particular place, in Relph's view, forces us to live our lives trapped in superficial relationships to other human beings while suffering from a chronic case of nostalgia. One symptom of this nostalgia he finds in housing design, where townhouses disguised as peasant cottages are supposed to satisfy the urbanite's longing for a rural past. Ultimately such devices only increase a particular form of alienation which Relph calls “placelessness.”

As a criticism of modernism, there is nothing new about his thesis. It is shared by most liberal humanists who have written on the subject in the last 30 years, including Jane Jacobs and Daniel Boorstin. But Relph has secured the same ground with a good deal of justification and an unusual sensitivity to human feelings about place. He has also done a superb job of

revealing the political program implicit in “scientific geography,” community development, and what he calls “technique-dominated planning, divorced from places as we know and experience them in our everyday lives, and quite casually ignoring or obliterating them.” (p. 89)

“Such narrow and scientific attitudes, conveniently subsuming ethical questions, are the basis for improving the efficiency of pacification programs in South Vietnam, for displacing single-family residences by high-rise offices in the interests of economic growth, or for flooding Indian lands for the construction of hydroelectric projects.” (p. 89) As an antidote to these modern pathogens, Relph proffers a Heideggerian theory of place as existentially experienced.

At first one might be tempted to set the book aside as just another weak reflection of the 1960s, no longer relevant to our current hard-nosed and practical approach to cultural and political affairs. But it would be foolish to do so. Much of what he says is essentially correct. A most interesting question is why humanist criticisms, especially powerful ones such as Relph's, fail. Why have all the manifestos not attracted an effective political following to counter the current selfish utilitarian approach to development and planning?

Before dealing with this question, I ought to note some characteristics of Relph's argument that distinguish it from merely left-or-right leaning criticisms of modernity. First among them is the observation that any solution to practical or applied problems, including the design and construction of environments for human life, requires the combined efforts of several disciplines. The second is a realization that interdisciplinary cooperation is impossible unless a common language is used and understood by everyone. Scientific method, statistical inference, and general systems theory have all functioned in the past as languages in the building of the modern world, but it is against precisely those products of interdisciplinary collaboration mediated by scientific rationality that Relph directs his most biting criticisms. That collaboration resulted in environments that were efficient from the standpoint of big business and centralized authority, but divorced from the intimate requirements of daily life. As a corrective, Relph suggests that we make phenomenology—not rationality—the common denominator of our collaborative efforts.

On the surface, this would seem to be a move in the right direction. The prestige of modern phenomenology is based, for the most part, on Edmund Husserl's demotion of scientific rationality and

his restoration of subjectivity and consciousness to philosophical authority. Husserl thinks scientific rationality is an inappropriate universal world view; it should be restricted to its proper role as the method for handling a series of technical exercises. If used in dealing with essences, phenomenology would—according to Husserl and his followers, including Relph—put us back in touch with ourselves, with others, and with our environment, or "life world," as the phenomenologists call it. Every vital modern movement from existentialism to abstract expressionism has been influenced directly or indirectly by these ideas. Relph comments:

The approach I adopt derives a great deal from phenomenological methods. These proceed from an acceptance both of the wholeness and indivisibility of human experience, and from the fact that meaning defined by human intentions is central to all our existence. The lived-world and its geography are thus taken as being irrefutably and profoundly human and meaningful, and place can be approached with as few presuppositions as possible concerning its character or form, for it is recognised from the outset that place has a range of significances and identities that is as wide as the range of human consciousness of place. (p. 7)

The difficulty with Relph's

position does not lie in his criticism of scientific rationality or in his insistence on the importance of the role of subjectivity in the creation and analysis of human habitats. Rather, it is undermined by his tendency to equate humanism with individualism, an idea which phenomenology, as it is practiced by Relph and others, seems to support and which is accepted and promulgated by common sense, the Catholic Church, and Western capitalism. His position ignores considerations of community, even of the effects of the simple presence of other human beings, except as extensions of the original, central, unified, authoritative subjectivity.

Phenomenology should question—and not just accept and advance—the unexamined assumption of a link between individualism and humanism, but the phenomenological reflection still goes on in terms of my consciousness vs. everyone and everything else.

The phenomenological viewpoint is, thereby, not unlike that of big business and centralized government, the very institutions which Relph wants to oppose, and in that sense Relph's use of phenomenology as a philosophical basis for his criticism of modernity is politically naive. Programs and operations, including large-scale construction of human habitats, if organized

using a phenomenological perspective, could succeed only if everyone involved were essentially a “good guy,” the kind of person that was once—though apparently no longer—thought to be dependably raised by proper upbringing and a liberal-arts education. Certainly the subjectivity at the center of Relph’s space is of a type sensitive to the needs and desires of others and concerned about the preservation of nature and tradition.

But there is also something too optimistic about his viewpoint. *Place and Placelessness* does not consider the dark side of space, aside from his criticism of the sterility of scientific rationality and his warnings about the consequences of neglect. He does not concern himself with the evil cures that have already been invented for “placelessness”: the atrocities committed in the name of the Fatherland, the “wholeness and indivisibility of the human spirit” defined as racial purity, and current explanations of antisocial behavior as motivated by “territorial instincts.” By making a methodological principle of the isolation of the individual from colleagues, comrades, peers, and adversaries, and by assuming that everyone is essentially well-meaning, phenomenology is open to easy manipulation by anyone who pretends to be concerned about others and

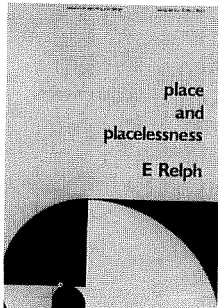
the environment, but who is in fact self-interested, bumbling, or just plain greedy.

The phenomenology of space is not only naive, it is also sociologically incorrect. In opposing individual subjectivity to the space that surrounds it (“place”), Relph has dropped from his analysis two considerations central to the definition of space and place: who else is there, and what are they doing? Relph writes, “Each place is unique and has a persistent sameness within itself.” (p. 61) Evidently he has not been in a bank as it was being robbed, or in a restaurant when some celebrity was eating dinner. Space influences social relations, and vice versa. Tight space requires persons to come into intimate contact with one another, forcing an exchange of small civilities even among the unacquainted. The largest spaces are equally marked by social organization: satellite photographs reveal that the border between Canada and the United States can be seen clearly from outer space, and some analysts have suggested that the visibility of this invisible line results from the different forms teaching, research, and extension take in the colleges of agriculture in the two countries.

The incorporation of detailed sociological knowledge into the design and analysis of space raises an interesting question: Can a place have a meaning—

that is, influence life sufficiently to cause us to think, see, and act more freely—that is not anchored in a subjective form of consciousness that is tied or housed in that place? If the answer is “no,” Relph’s analysis and approach are essentially correct. But I think even Relph would agree that there is another way of looking at space and place. Instead of identifying subjects with stabilizing, objective spaces, consider the possibility that the making of space never ends. It begins perhaps with an architect, but it is remade at every moment by its users, not just in their minds but by their presence and by their acts. Thinking of space this way redirects our attention away from the subject at the center of the space and toward the ways changing spaces can point and direct our subjectivity. Following this line of thought, we might eventually arrive at an analogue to Lévi-Strauss’s remark about primitive myths, that “space is good to think with.” Now where is the subjectivity? It is in the phenomenological subject, but it is also in space. The spaces that have been made by human beings are a form of language that no one can read very well.

Relph’s analysis of “authentic places,” which he defines as space that is lived in and used, marked by human intentions, carries him beyond the phenomenological subject into analyses



of actual factories, homes, and neighborhoods. Those are often superb; they combine details in a way that opens the reader's eyes. In these analyses, Relph is on the verge of deciphering the meaning of the specific places he analyzes from Liverpool to Disneyland without recourse to phenomenological subjectivity. But he never quite gets there, because he cannot, or will not, accept the possibility that one effect of living in a space and making it authentic is polluting it. Relph would like a clear and simple working definition of pollution as things he does not want mixed in with the positive or authentic. But our attitudes toward things like filth, graffiti, and pollution are not clear and simple. An explorer once described how overwhelmed with joy and relief he was when he came across some tin cans and other rubbish after having been lost for several days in an unmapped area of Baja, California. If the cans had been left in his own backyard, he would have had quite a different reaction. Beethoven scratched his initials on the backs of his quartet of Guarnerius stringed instruments (extremely valuable even in his day) to remind his friends who came to play not to wander off with them. Today the instruments are displayed graffiti-side out in the Beethovenhaus in Bonn. Obviously notions of what constitutes defacement

change with the defacer and the circumstance. Pollution is only a clear and simple matter to those who have agreed to read the evidence in the same way. It might better be defined as a modification of the environment by something to which society attaches no value. Once it is defined in this way it is possible to discern two ways to eliminate pollution: one is to eliminate the pollutant; the other is to upgrade its social value. At the present time, we seem to be shifting to this second mode of cleanup. Once again, the smoking stacks of factories are being pointed to with the pride they elicited in the nineteenth century.

Relph has correctly identified the two poles of modern culture as the authentic, at one end, and the tacky, polluted, and superficial, at the other. But he is wrong in suggesting that we can clean up and eliminate the slick, superficial, or dirty side of modernity and enjoy a happy future of perpetually authentic existence. About midway through his book, Relph provides a low, oblique air photograph of factories and working-class neighborhoods in Chicago, all blanketed in smog, with the following comment: "The richly varied places of the world are rapidly being obliterated under a meaningless pattern of buildings, monotonous and chaotic." (p. 118) He does not mention that Chicago is

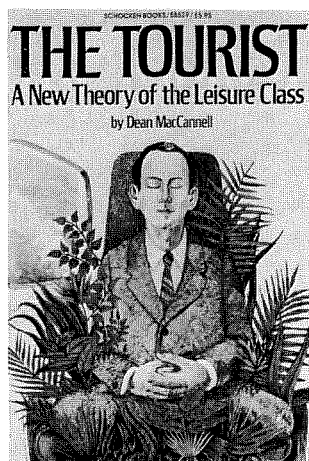
regarded as the typical American city by sophisticated Europeans precisely because it is unplanned, dirty, industrial, and pragmatic.

Authenticity is irretrievably an inauthentic category that owes its existence to our conviction that modernity is "slick" and "superficial." If anyone has ever led an authentic life, it would be impossible for him/her to know it. Only partly modernized peoples, distressed by the condition of their lives, are nervously concerned about "authenticity." The inauthentic and the authentic are reciprocal in essence, and we need much more sophisticated critical paradigms to find our way out of the impasse of modernity.

Toward the end of his book Relph switches without any explanation from a phenomenological to a semiotic framework for his analysis. In analyzing the facade of an X-rated movie house, he begins to find meaning in the sign (the "X") and completely abandons the phenomenological subject in his search for the meaning of the place. But he does not probe the implications of his shift; I, for one, would like to see him begin his next work there.

Dean MacCannell

Dean MacCannell,
*The Tourist: A New Theory
 of the Leisure Class*
 (New York: Schocken Books,
 1976)



Visitors to Saint Paul's Cathedral in London are now admitted through new revolving doors in the west entrance—hardly a dignified way to enter a cathedral, but apparently a necessary device to prevent tourist jams. Other English cathedrals have resorted to economic rather than architectural solutions to handling the flow of visitors in the form of prominently located collection boxes. The money thus collected helps to finance restoration work by charging admission from those who come to look rather than to worship. As Dean MacCannell sees it, the modern world is one vast tourist attraction designed for the use of those who are just passing through, collecting new places and new experiences. The old and rare are preserved for the tourist's brief gaze; nature is their playground; cultural and social events—especially those in national costume—are staged for their instamatic record. We may consider ourselves serious travelers, in contrast to the consumers of package tours, but no matter how or why we travel, we necessarily share the tourist world, whether in the airports and hotels we patronize or in the commercial attractions we encounter.

The thesis of *The Tourist* is that the tourist represents modern man in microcosm, surrounded by commercial images and enticements,

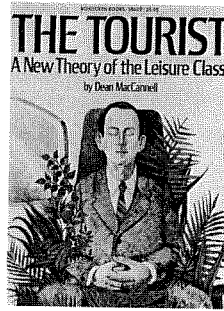
searching for meaning in life and new experiences, and consuming whatever he encounters along the way. Using an ethnographic approach MacCannell tries to look at modern culture from within, rather than to detach himself from it. He supports his argument with his own experience, evidence drawn from brochures and guidebooks, and bits of overheard conversation. The results are presented with wry humor (but no illustrations) and analyzed from various perspectives—Marxism, structuralism, semiotics, and ethnomethodology. He occasionally wavers between social criticism and analytic social science, and, in the end, while I do not think the results add up to the new theory of the leisure class that is advertised in the subtitle, I was not disappointed. *The Tourist* is a serious and original attempt to uncover the social structure that lies behind tourism. Whatever the validity of its theory, the author has made some perceptive comments about the character of modern culture, and his insights cannot be ignored by responsible designers and managers of the built environment.

Tourism is a pleasure to many of us and I hesitate to be too earnest about it. It seems a harmless enough activity, and whatever political and economic problems it might pose seem

minor compared to most. On the other hand the energies of millions of people, entire regions, and substantial parts of national economies, are tied up in the tourist industry, and it ought not to be dismissed as incidental merely because it is supposed to be fun.

MacCannell points to two related reasons for the popularity of tourism. First, it is a ritual through which we confirm our belief that people are different: travel allows us to see how our own lives differ from the lives of others, especially of the poor and sedentary. At the same time it allows us to absorb those differences into our experience and to test what we have read or seen on television against reality. Paradoxically, of course, tourism erodes the very differences it celebrates, for it inexorably reduces them as it introduces into the sightseers's realm of experience the identical set of conveniences and attractions that tourists have come to expect at every place they visit. The directory entry for the Holiday Inn at Equitos in Peru reassures potential customers with this message: "International Airport 3 mi., free transportation. Near Amazon River & Jungle. Lounge, Disco."

MacCannell also argues that tourism is an attempt to uncover realities suppressed or hidden by modern commercial culture.



Consider plastic flowers, vinyl leather, fiberglass oak beams, mock-Tudor houses, and false identities for towns (the town of Kimberley in British Columbia has taken on a Bavarian façade complete with *Wilkomen* signs, a Stadtplatz, bands, and “Bavarian” gas stations to boost its tourist trade). Florida oranges were once dyed orange and stamped “artificial color added.” Reality has to be reinvented, reconstituted, and otherwise improved to maintain its commercial appeal. No doubt someone benefits from this, and it may not seem to matter much that oranges are made to be more orange than they are. But small deceptions can lead to bigger ones, and soon it may be too late to ask questions about truth or honesty. Hope lies in the moment of the disappointment that still comes when we realize that the flowers are plastic, and MacCannell argues that many of us still believe that truth and honesty live on in whatever remains of precommercial cultures.

So off we go hoping to find something honest in fragments of medieval cities, Gothic cathedrals, Indian pueblos: there one can still perhaps glimpse “real life.” In this respect, architects and designers have long been tourists in their enthusiasm for traditional craftsmanship and unself-conscious building. But just as tourism effaces differences, so it destroys the truth it seeks

through the application of what MacCannell calls “staged authenticity,” whereby places and events are not left as they are, but are contrived to look as tourists expect them to look.

Tourism has assumed a pervasive and symptomatic form in modern times in exemplifying the extent to which leisure has replaced work as the foremost social activity for more and more people. In a study of Paris, MacCannell shows how work can itself become a curiosity for tourists. As early as 1900 tours of Parisian factories, stock exchanges, sewers, and the abattoir were on the serious traveler’s list. As manual labor becomes an increasingly scarce commodity, it also becomes a form of recreation—helping to build Paolo Soleri’s city in the desert, for example, or volunteering assistance on archaeological digs. That tourism is taking on this form and turning into a quest for the real thing seems to me to be an important observation. I was, therefore, disappointed that MacCannell did little with it in his conclusion. If I understand his final chapter correctly, he proposes only that ethnographic approaches can help to provide a firmer foundation for tourist management, that tourism should be integrated into conventional community planning, and that developing countries should take care to profit from it.

These suggestions can only exacerbate the problems he tells us that endless sightseeing produces. The conclusions and applications I garnered from my reading of *The Tourist* are quite different, and they have important implications for the aims of environmental design as I understand them.

Current practice suggests that environmental design can be defined either as a set of techniques for achieving efficient plans or as the application of behavioral science to create places that will produce obedient citizens. For those who accept these definitions, the greatest challenge to their skills must be found in theme parks and shopping malls where total design is possible because the parts can be subjected to all the manipulations necessary to guarantee maximum efficiency, pleasure, people flows, and profits. These are controlled environments in which authenticity can be faked and artful deception can be brought to perfection. MacCannell’s analysis clearly implies that the designers of these environments are supertourists given the techniques they use to contrive places for ordinary tourists to visit. These supertourists engage in promoting the type of modernity that causes Dean MacCannell to wonder how a society that has no allegiance to truth and commitment can be called progressive.

There is, however, another way of considering environmental design. It ought to be concerned with finding ways to recreate places in which people can live as free and responsible citizens and in which they can enjoy working at tasks that exploit neither other people nor natural environments. MacCannell’s demonstration of the distortions of tourism remind me both of the necessity and of the difficulty of achieving those aims. The aims may be idealistic, but this idealism is not in itself a fault. In *The Causes of World War Three* the sociologist C. Wright Mills argues that it is no longer enough to offer so-called realistic or practical solutions—they simply make a bad situation worse by rendering problems ever more subtle and intractable. He maintains that instead we must develop ideals and hold them with conviction. In an era when authenticity is manufactured for tourists, technology constructs the environment, and the threat of nuclear annihilation is constant, utopian thinking may be the only kind of thinking that can be humane and reasonable. If so, then environmental design has a fundamental role to play in translating it into reality.

Edward Relph

Le Tango des Styles

Refrain:

Dis-moi pourquoi,
Pourquoi tu pleures sous
l'péristyle?
Dis-moi pourquoi,
Pourquoi tu n'chantes plus le
tango?
Dis-moi pourquoi,
Pourquoi tu pleures la mort
des styles
Alors qu'ils sont bien
vivants,
Alors qu'ils dansent
gaiement
Les styles de l'architecture
Mo-derne.

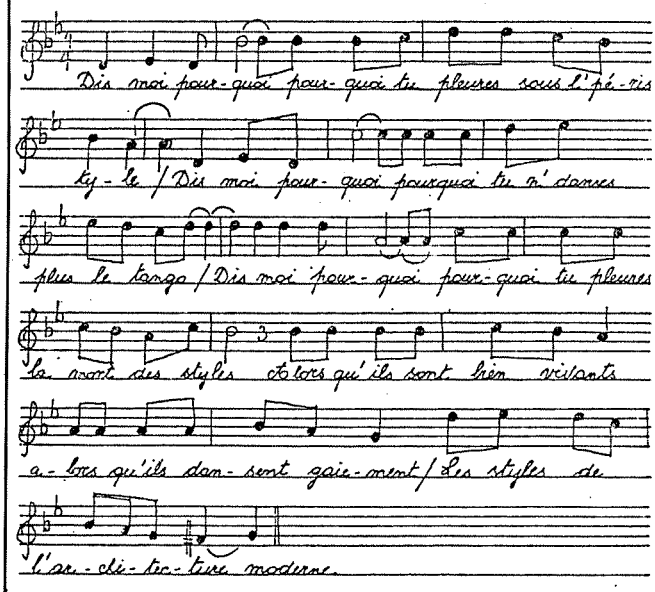
Il y a le style alvéole,
Suffit d'un peu de colle,
De quelques hexagones,
Pour bâtir des écoles,
Des crèches où l'on rigole,
Ca libèère les mômes.

Il y a le style pâtissier,
Pour cela vous mettez
Une tranche sur une autre,
Une de verre fumé,
Une de béton armé,
Puis vous recommencez

Refrain:

Le style démocratique,
Qui nous vient d'Amérique,
Fait des Kroll à Bruxelles.
Bois, inox ou plastic,
L'art c'est d'être chaotique,
Que la confusion est béeëlle.

Le cache-radiateur,
Pour banquiers, assureurs,
C'est le style d'la finance.
Plus besoin de sculpteurs,
Le module accrocheur
S'empile avec élégance.



Refrain:

Il y a le style colonel
Brillant et fonctionnel,
Derrière ses lunettes
sombres,
Que ce soit à Bruxelles,
A Milan ou Marseille,
Il frappe plus vite que son
ombre.

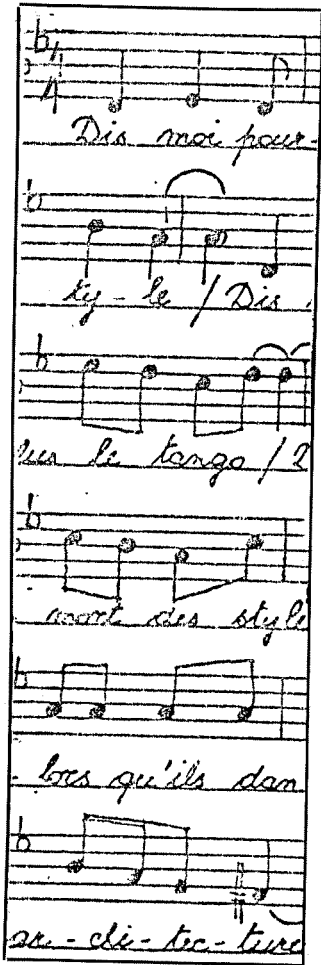
Puis il y a le style plombier,
C'est le genre qui sied
Aux palais d'la culture.
Vous le reconnaîtrez
A ses tripes étalées
Qui sèchent sur l'ossature.

Refrain:

Il y a le style sexy,
Des seins et des zizis,
Tout est dans la courbure,
Ici tout est permis,
"Libérez vos envies,
Respirez la nature."

Enfin le style tango,
C'est de loin le plus beau,
C'est le plus beau du monde.
Tout est dans le mouvement,
Dans le petit décalement,
C'est le déhanchement qui
compte.

This song is one of a number written in the School of Cambrai, Brussels, in 1979 before the architect Maurice Culot left the school. The Anti-Industrial Resistance led by Culot set itself against modern architecture, instead favoring traditional materials and crafts. The eighteenth century is its ideal.



Refrain:

Tell me why
Why do you cry under the
peristyle?
Tell me why
Why don't you sing the
tango anymore?
Tell me why
Why do you mourn the
death of styles?
They are still so alive
They dance so merrily
The styles of modern
architecture.

There's the honeycomb style
All it takes is a little glue
Some hexagons
To build a school
Kindergartens where you
laugh and play
The kids can have free rein.

There's the pastry shop style
To make this one, you put
One slice on top of the other
One of tinted glass
One of reinforced concrete
And then repeat.

Refrain:

The democratic style
Which we get from America.
Do a Kroll in Brussels
Wood, marble, or plastic
The trick is to be chaotic
Oh the beauty of disorder.

The radiator cover
For the bankers, the
insurance companies
It's the style of high finance
No more need for sculptors
See how the standard
module
Stacks with elegance.

Refrain:

There's the colonel's style
Brilliant and functional
Behind his dark glasses
Whether it be in Brussels
In Milan or Marseille
He strikes faster than his
shadow.

Then there is the plumber
style
It's the kind that's right
For a city's cultural center.
You will recognize it
Because of its insides
Hung to dry on the skeleton.

Refrain:

There's the sexy style
Some boobs and some wee-
wees
It's all in the curve
Here everything is allowed
Give way to your desires
Enjoy nature's gifts.

And finally the tango style
It's by far the most beautiful
The most beautiful in the
world
It's all the movement
In the slight shift forward
It's the thrust of the hip that
counts.

**English translation
by Leslie Gould**

The Chandigarh Rock Garden

Text and Photographs
by Allan B. Jacobs

Unexpected, Delightful Places:

The Rock Garden comes as a wondrous surprise. On a hot, hot summer day, after you leave the broad-spaced, cubist, formal structure of the complex of government buildings in Chandigarh and the relentless, shimmering heat of the open-air business center, you can find, if you are lucky, a whimsical wall and behind it a maze of outdoor rooms and spaces, of landscape, of sculpted people, animals, musicians, and abstractions that look at you as you pass. Suddenly, you are unaware of the heat. Every landscape scene, every combination of figures and shapes that invites visual dialogue is new. Yet most of the materials—bricks, discarded electric fixtures, broken bathroom fixture ceramics and pipe tiles—are old, reused.

When Indian officials “discovered” the Rock Garden of Chandigarh they wanted to tear it down. They failed and so the garden remains, a small pause in the still growing city. Designed and built in secrecy by Nek Chand, a maintenance-yard worker, the garden is an expression of individuality within a strong cultural context. It may be one of the most creative urban landscapes of the past 50 years.



To Rally Discussion

The purpose of *Places* is to rally discussion.

We want it to be provocative, to cause us to see places in new ways, and to elicit comment on issues that are embedded in the places where we live. *Places* asks those who have developed ways of caring about places to share their ideas, and it seeks to stir the imaginations of those who have not yet realized that their interests are at stake.

We will publish descriptions, drawings, photographs, and discussions on all types of places: big and small, special and ordinary, public and private, old and new, hidden and found, run-down and tended. *Places* will examine how professionals deal with the conceptual and technical design of places. *Places* will look at how people have shaped satisfying places, with and without professional assistance. And *Places* will publish the results of research because our ideas about place must be subject to testing and reassessment.

Each issue of the journal will carry a mix of articles and comment. The longer features will explore ideas that affect the ways in which we structure our thoughts about places and the many ways in which the concrete reality of place has consequences in our lives. "Place debates" will examine places from several viewpoints: Milton Keynes in England and Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans are scheduled for the

next two issues. We shall also include many short features and essays that quickly bring our attention to issues, share design ideas, or highlight responses:

Visual essays that evoke the quality of place in new ways and representations that shift the focus of attention from professional artifact to experienced places and summon the skills of the artist to awaken latent understandings.

Contrasts of design presentation and built reality, of winners and runners-up of competitions, of similar places in different cultures, and of the same place at different times.

Fantasy design schemes that reach beyond the practical into the scarcely possible, or change a real design or place into one that challenges belief.

Perceptions, memories, hopes, and gripes of individuals and groups about their environments, and even *manifestos*, which assert what the nature of place ought to be.

And with your help there will be *argument*.

Send letters of response, articles, short features, and visual essays to the editors for review. Submissions should be brisk, urgent, and readable; they should make readers care.

Donlyn Lyndon
William L. Porter