

# PLACES

## Elements of Sociability



1997  
NUMBER 1  
\$1 CANADA

*Places, A Forum of Environmental Design*, is published by the Design History Foundation, a nonprofit, charitable organization that sponsors a range of educational, publishing and research activities. The Foundation's mission is to establish forums in which designers, public officials, scholars and citizens can discuss issues vital to environmental design, with particular emphasis on public spaces in the service of the shared ideals of society.

#### **Sponsors**

Pratt Institute School of Architecture  
University of California, Berkeley, College of Environmental Design

#### **Patrons**

Design Center for the American Urban Landscape, University of Minnesota  
Fulton + Partners, New York  
Graham Foundation  
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Kenner  
The New York Community Trust, Blecher Family Fund  
University of California, Berkeley, DeMars Fund

#### **Supporters**

Altman-Stiller Foundation  
Todd W. Bressi and Amy B. Lempert  
Communitas, Boston  
Duany/Plater-Zyberk Architects and Town Planners, Miami  
Dobbins Foundation  
Ellenzweig Associates, Cambridge  
Eskew-Filson Architects, New Orleans  
Haines Lundberg Waehler Architects, Planners, Engineers, New York  
Hartman-Cox Architects, Washington, D.C.  
Lyndon-Buchanan Associates, Berkeley  
Moore, Ruble, Yudell Architects, Santa Monica  
The New York Community Trust, Ruth and Frank Stanton Fund  
Seaside Community Development Corporation  
Thompson and Wood, Boston

#### **Friends**

Buckhurst Fish and Jacquemart, New York  
David W. Buckman  
Victor Caliandro  
Ian Carter  
Henry Cobb  
E. A. Drake  
Inéz Elskop  
Robert J. Frasca  
Goody, Clancy Associates, Boston  
Daniel P. Gregory  
Adam Gross  
Gary A. Hack  
Willard Hanzlik  
George Hargraeves  
David J. Neuman  
Gerald A. O'Connor  
Monica Ponce de León  
Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development  
Jose Sanchez  
William Turnbull  
Peter Vanderwarker

**About the cover:** Library Square, Vancouver, British Columbia. Photograph by Timothy Hursley.

Library Square, opened in 1995, includes Vancouver's main library, offices for the federal government, retail space and indoor and outdoor public spaces. The project, designed by Moshie Safdie associates, was meant to catalyze a cultural district on the edge of Vancouver's downtown.

The popular atrium is activated not only by the mix of activities and the heavy pedestrian traffic they generate, but also by the transparent walls of the library and the fluid boundaries at ground level.

EDITOR

Donlyn Lyndon

PUBLISHER

Frances Halsband

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Todd W. Bressi

CONSULTING EDITORS

Randolph T. Hester, Jr.  
Allan B. Jacobs  
Alice Wingwall

ASSISTANT TO THE EDITORS

Heather Hood

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

John Esposito  
Rayan Shums

DESIGN

2x4, New York

BUSINESS MANAGER

Dana Forio

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Stanford Anderson  
Richard Bender  
Catherine Brown  
Clare Cooper Marcus  
Lois Craig  
John de Monchaux  
Wendy Feuer  
Ken Greenberg  
N. John Habraken  
Robert S. Harris  
Dolores Hayden  
Raymond Lefchez  
Roger Montgomery  
Anne Vernez Moudon  
William R. Morrish  
John R. Myer  
William L. Porter  
Cervin Robinson  
Ron Shiffman  
Michael Southworth

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DESIGN HISTORY FOUNDATION

Todd W. Bressi  
Donald Cauty  
Harrison Fraker  
James F. Fulton  
Lawrence Halprin  
Frances Halsband  
Donlyn Lyndon  
Thomas Schutte

The first purpose  
of architecture  
is territorial.  
It is about defining a place  
that a person,  
a group of people,  
a denomination,  
a community  
can imagine as its own.

## CONTENTS

### DEPARTMENTS

- DONLYN LYNDON 2 Caring about Places  
JONAS LEHRMAN 4 Portfolio  
RICHARD A. SMITH 10 Speaking of Places  
KATIE TRAGER 14 Speaking of Places

### ELEMENTS OF SOCIABILITY

- RAYMOND L. GINDROZ 18 Cross Section of Address  
MARILYS R. NEPOMECHIE 28 Unacceptable Echoes  
GALEN CRANZ, AMY TAYLOR 38 Community and Complexity on Campus  
ANNE-MARIE BROUDEHOX  
with JOHN RUBLE 44 How to Grow a Business School  
LUIS APONTE-PARÉS 52 Casitas: Place and Culture  
RENÉ CARLOS DAVIDS 62 A Wall Between Countries, A Bridge for People  
CHRISTINE KILLORY  
RENEE Y. CHOW 64 Sharing in a Setting  
JOSÉ LUIS GAMÉZ 66 Mi Casa: Snapshots of Life in an Other L.A.  
LOUISE A. MOZINGO 68 California Passegiata  
ANNE VERNEZ MOUDON 70 Boulevard Embryo: Mizner Park  
DIANE FAVRO 72 Roman Latrines  
RICHARD SCHERR 74 Review  
TODD W. BRESSI 77 Roots  
79 Contributors

Creating physical shelter, spaces that are warm enough and dry, or cool enough and quiet, is only part of architecture's charge — an often necessary but seldom sufficient way to make places that are claimed for human purpose.

Creating buildings in ways that are stylistically or culturally identifiable is another way to differentiate territory. Styles inscribe a place with an array of symbols that proclaim literal ownership or dominant use; they encode forms with established values. More provocatively, the pervasive evidences of a mode of thought, a way of making things, or a pattern of occupation serves to qualify our understanding of territory, proclaiming aspects of investment, aspiration and status.

Most simply put this formulation suggests that architecture separates inside from out. Less benignly (and increasingly these days), architecture is used to separate insiders from outsiders; haves from have-nots — or not-so-haves. Instead, architecture, in our time, should provide less decisive distinctions. In a democratic culture, dedicated to personal advancement and freedom of opportunity it must define territory that is porous, if not ambiguous. Architecture that serves only the marketplace, the temporary bonding of place and consumption, is a throw-away unless it speaks genuinely to another level of community, to common values and patterns of thought, or to qualities so fundamental to the human condition that they evoke some deep chord of recognition and invite many different kinds of people to empathize with its patterns and each other.

Architecture becomes most interesting when it serves many purposes, creates multiple definitions — when inside and outside are not binary, but overlapping; when it weaves a pattern of spaces which can be used to create shifting territories and alignments, and to offer multiple means of identification. Architecture then becomes the

locus of social exchange, the setting within which we encounter ourselves in many faces, or recognize our presence among others.

In this issue, we examine some aspects of place that promote sociability. The examples presented range from the layout of towns and the selection of house types to the management of a strip of asphalt; from elements that promote intimate encounter to public barriers that prompt speculation. We include places that are scabbled out of leftovers and places that have been generously defined. Together they present an instructive array of conditions where the specific nature of the forms and their relationships to each other prompt and qualify exchanges between people. They reveal shifting, fluid, overlapping territories that are not determined by, but made tangible through, and lent character by, the physical structures that define them.

As corollaries we include a portfolio with images of splendid monastic isolation, musings on two small private gardens that are utterly different in character and lodged in contrasting cultures, and a dispatch on a joint civic-private effort to stimulate ideas for remapping the territories of an urban waterfront.

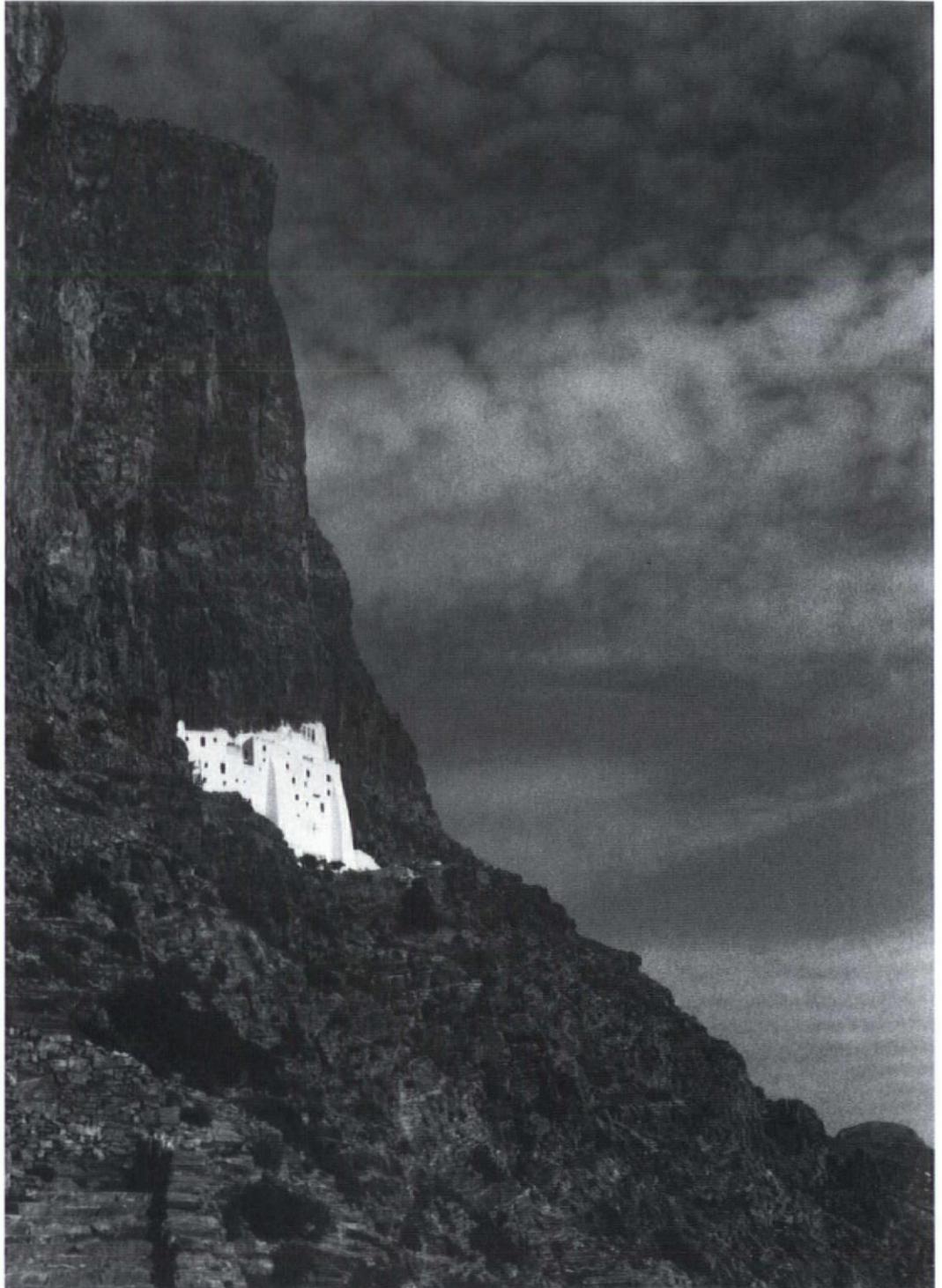
Beginning with this issue Frances Halsband will serve as publisher of *Places*. A practicing architect in New York City, she has been a most wonderful support during the last many years and we look forward to initiatives that she will bring. She inherits the mantle so magnanimously worn by James Fulton. His generous efforts and persistent dedication have made it possible for *Places* to continue to exist. He has been a great collaborator and genuine friend. We are very, very grateful to him and heartened that he will continue to provide helmsman's advice, and remain active in the conduct of our business, as chairman of the Design History Foundation.

— *Donlyn Lyndon*

## The Greek Byzantine Church and its Setting Jonas Lehrman

Moni Panayia Khoziviótissa (1088), near Amorgós, Cyclades. The whitewashed walls of the monastery and the steep rock face of Oros Profitis Ilias offer a stark contrast. Many alterations and renovations to the building have occurred over time, and the buttresses are of recent date. Some floors are built out of stone, others are hewn from the rock.

Photos by Jonas Lehrman.



The relationship between a building and its site is a fundamental one. The link is intriguing, as it reflects relationship between humankind and the natural order. The presence of a building intensifies any landscape, but the symbiosis is a success only when the attributes of the site are fully recognized. The early inhabitants of the Greek landscape seem to have possessed a highly developed respect for the particular attributes of a site in their selection of locations of great beauty for their temples and, later, for their churches.

This is well illustrated by Byzantine churches, especially those built from the eleventh century until the fall of Constantinople in 1453. For the most part, these churches reflect a continuity of structure and style, which enables a clear comparison between their typical form and shape with Greece's remarkably varied landscape — mountain barriers, shoreline, fertile valleys, barren hillsides, dense vegetation and dry plateaux.

Byzantine churches in Greece are always on a human scale and usually quite small. They can be found standing alone in open fields or valleys, perched on hillsides that overlook small communities, or on promontories that look out to sea. Churches in the countryside may be half concealed by a cluster of cypress; churches on the side streets of towns and villages may be partly hidden by adjacent buildings. Because of their modest size, quiet strength and restraint, these churches succeed in retaining a certain dignity that has more to do with the effect of size than with size itself. The result is that often, when a church is seen in the landscape, it seems to be in a space that is too large for it.

Byzantine churches are generally intended to be freestanding and their typical modeling — dome, drum, pitched roofs and curved apse — encourages views from various directions. This is additionally fortunate; because of the nature of the topography in Greece, one is just as likely to

see a Byzantine church from a higher or lower angle as on the level.

Many of the settings into which Greek Byzantine churches have been placed were believed to possess a mystical appeal. This may have been due to a pagan shrine or temple that once stood on the site, or to the beauty, grandeur or inherent natural drama of the landscape.

There are many distinct landscapes in Greece, each with its own character, and they often follow in close succession. Clearly defined landscape elements, such as hillsides, particular vegetation or a lake, easily become part of one's environmental image, especially when the elements are exceptionally striking, and the landscape of Greece has many such instances. They may relate to one's deepest feelings and yield a sense of association, of belonging.

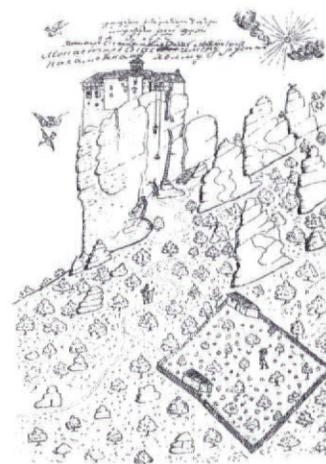
It is such an awareness of the character or nature of a particular site that in early times resulted in the attribution to it of mystical or sacred qualities. Where these particular characteristics resulted in a believed presence of divinity, a temple and, later, a church was often located. Sometimes a particular quality or element of a site, such as the presence of a spring, grove or cave, would be sufficient attraction.

*Security.* The Byzantine period was on occasion a time of great danger, of piracy, pillage and attack that could come from many directions. Numerous churches were located for protection on top of hills or mountains, within a *kastro*, or fortification. A view of the sea was important to give advance warning of the approach of pirates, but often it was just as necessary for a community itself and its church not to be seen from the sea.

*Water.* In Greece, water has always held a special significance and its quality is highly

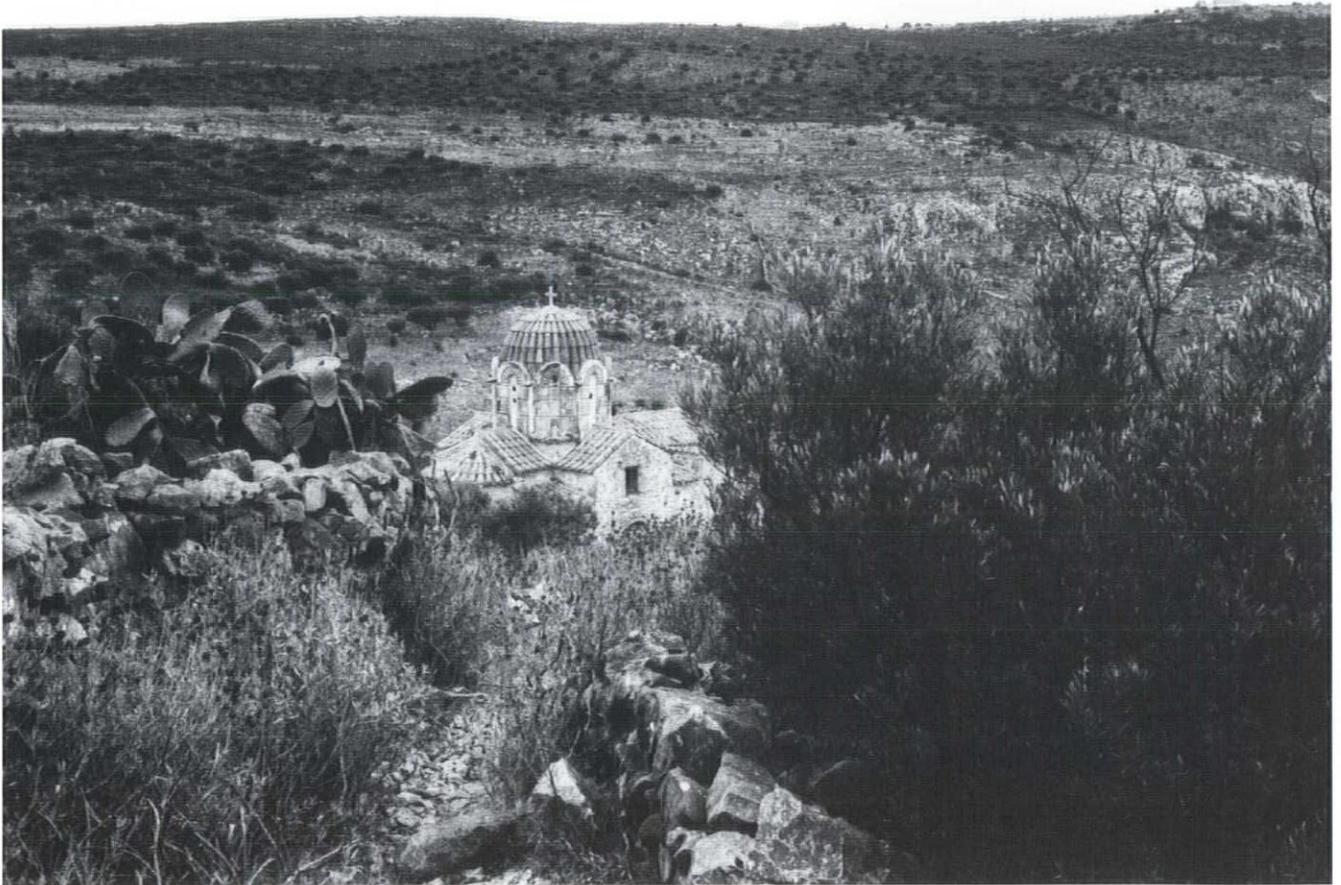


Moni Ay. Ioánnou tou Theológou (1088). Patmos, Dodecanese. This fortified monastery has a view of the sea from all directions. Immediately surrounding the walls are closely grouped sixteenth- and seventeenth-century houses that encircle the island's summit.



Moni Rousánou (c. twelfth-sixteenth century). Metéora, Trikkala. Compare with photograph, page eight.

Sketches by B. Barskiy (1745).



Episkopi (c. twelfth century). Stavri, Laconia. The approach to this church in the Mani, seemingly perched in the hollow of a hill, presents a view of the restored cupola, apse and north side of the transept. Beyond is the Bay of Mésapos and the peninsula of Tígáni.

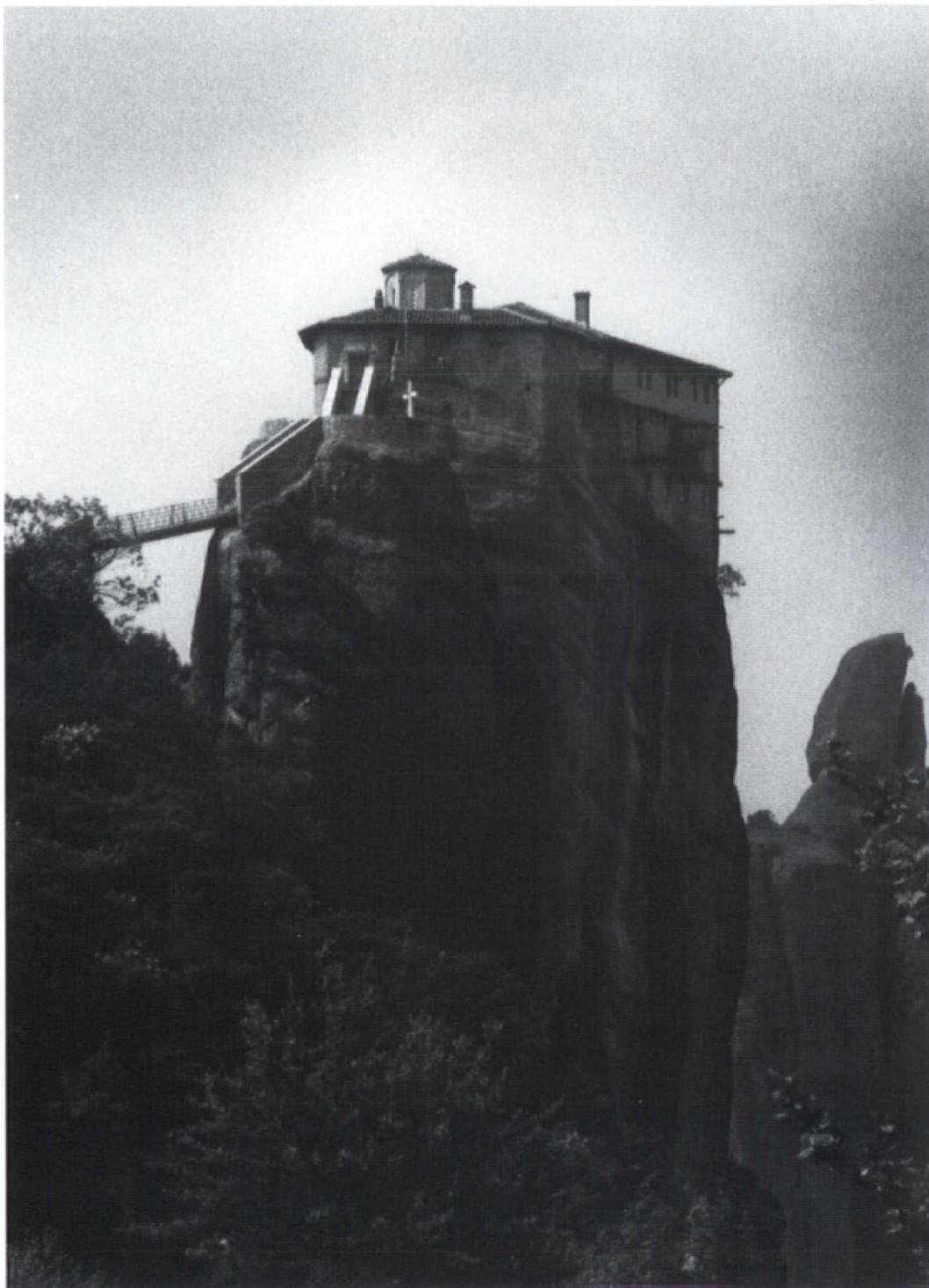
prized. The existence of a fresh water spring frequently determined not only the founding of a village or town but also the location of a temple and, later, a church in the vicinity. Some Byzantine churches are also located next to large bodies of water, possibly because a seacoast or lakeshore location could be interpreted as a symbolic reflection of intercession between God and man, or because of the regard for water as a symbol of life itself.

*Hills and mountains.* It may be assumed that the New Testament verse, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18), with its implied certainty and dependability, was a major determinant in the location of many Byzantine



Ay. Sophia (c. thirteenth century). Monemvasia, Laconia. Situated at the edge of a steep cliff at the end of a precipitous rocky promontory, this church overlooks a wide sweep of water. It is also adjacent to the summit ruins of a Byzantine town with an extensive history of attack and occupation.

Moni Rousánou (c. twelfth-sixteenth century). Metéora, Trikkala. The dramatic setting of this small monastery, on the pinnacle of an almost rock-hard combination of sand, pebbles and gravel, is more memorable than its architecture. Before the bridge was built in 1868, visitors and goods were hauled up in baskets. The remarkable location of this monastery is typical of others in the immediate area.



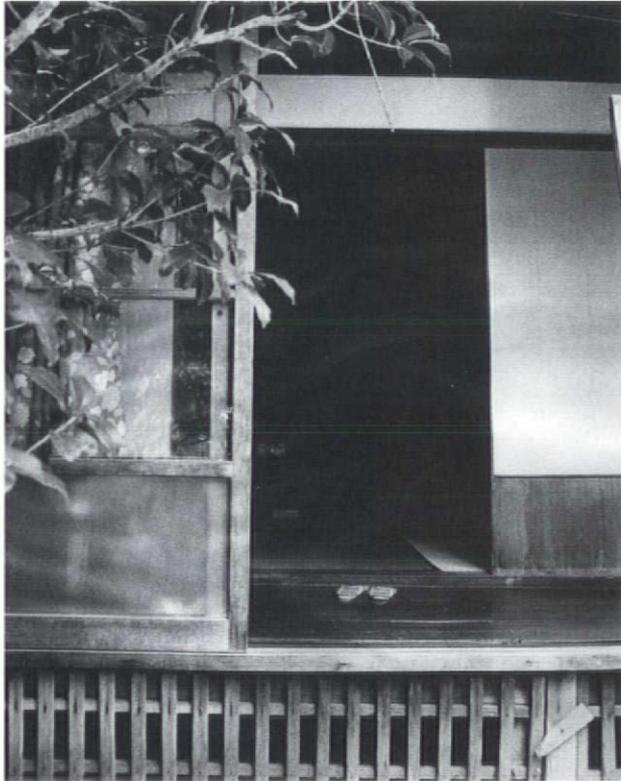


churches on mountainsides. A further possible reason for a high location may well have been a sense of being closer to heaven at the *axis mundi*, where heaven and earth meet, or a symbolic recognition of the Assumption.

Whereas a functional or religious cause can often be found for a church's particular location, in most cases there nonetheless exists a profoundly harmonious relationship between the church and its setting. It is suggested here that this harmonious relationship is due to the modest scale of the church building, the comprehensible scale of the landscape and to the respect felt by the Byzantine Greeks for the particular attributes of a site.

Moní Ay. Yeóryios (c. fifteenth century). Rhodes (old city), Rhodes, Dodecanese. This small, partially restored monastery, located on the west side of the medieval town, is surrounded by dwellings and narrow streets with St. George Bastion and the fortification wall behind. It is very near a main pedestrian thoroughfare in the old city.

Mr. Nakata's Garden Richard A. Smith



Above: The garden seems to be part of the house, and the house a part of the garden.  
 Right: The house and garden are in a traditional neighborhood in Kanazawa, Japan.

Photos by Richard A. Smith.

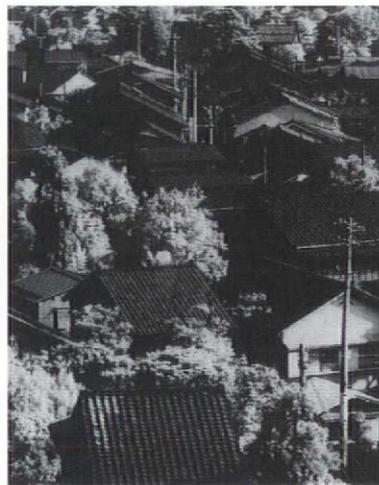
Mr. Nakata's house was not always a quiet, dark place of gentle hellos and goodbyes, refined conversation and good cooking. There was a time when armed cavalry gathered in the garden on a cold winter morning awaiting orders to advance. Whispered communications hovered in the air and horses' breath misted the dawn. On command, men and animals charged, filling the house with the clatter of hooves and the cries of battle as they rode through the *toriniwa* and into the street to ambush and slaughter enemy troops who were moving through the town. Or so the story goes.

Mr. Nakata's property, located in a traditional neighborhood in Kanazawa, was known to be ideal for such battle tactics. The size of both house, garden and *toriniwa* (literally, "through passageway to garden") had been specified by sumptuary regulations reflecting the owner's productive capability (measured in bushels of rice) and the military requirements of a feudal government.

Now, as then, the Nakata garden and its *toriniwa* provide the principal means of ventilating the whole house, allowing large quantities of outside air to permeate the darkened interior. The garden also provides a means of escape to the outdoors in the event of fire or earthquake.

Garden walls insure a degree of privacy between houses and can serve to retard the spread of flames from one house to another. Ladders are kept permanently in the garden to allow an escape to adjacent rooftops.

Little gardening, in the Western sense of the word, is done in these gardens. Activity is limited to wetting down the earth and plants, pruning a valued tree or shrub and tending potted plants. Gardens are also repositories for spare roof tiles, other house repair materials and



such difficult-to-store items as bicycles and baby carriages.

Although practicality is the foundation of the Japanese house, the essential is supported by aesthetic ideals. The potted plants so carefully tended by Mr. Nakata are being prepared for placement in the street for the pleasure of passersby. Similarly, when



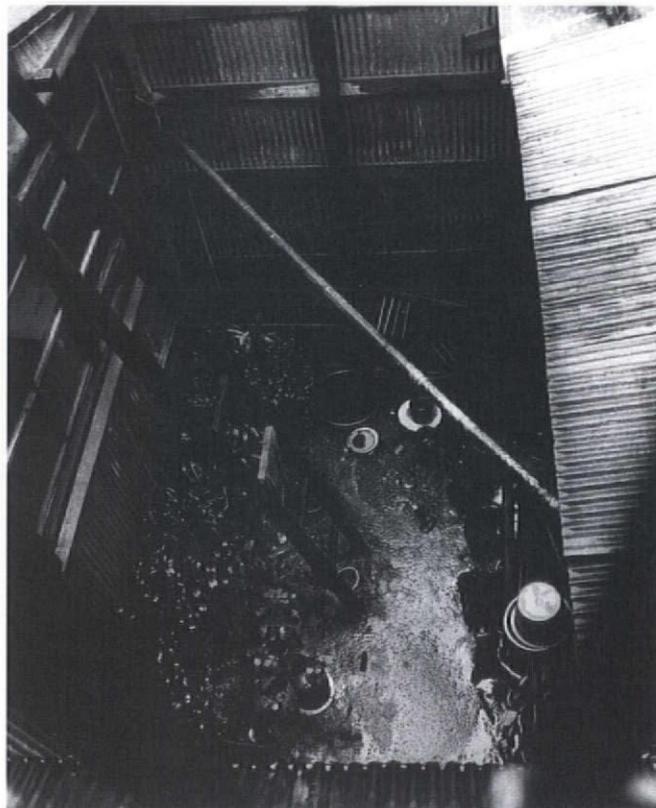
seen from the vantage point of an inside room, the colorful line of newly laundered clothes stirring in the garden is a bright accessory to the dark and still house. Threaded onto bamboo poles, they give the garden additional life and are not unlike the banners that decorate religious buildings during festival occasions.

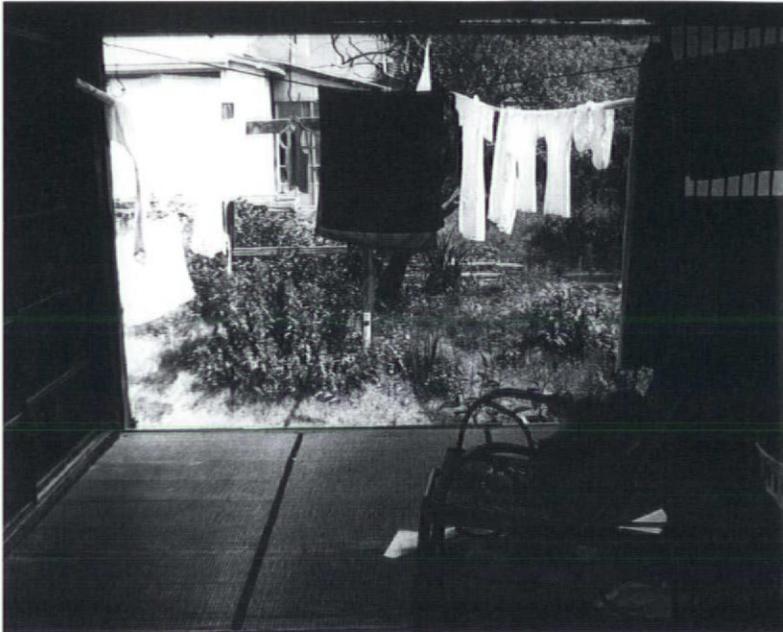
The Japanese domestic garden, in fact, encapsulates many qualities found at Myoshinji, Ryoanji and Kenrokuen. When Mr. Nakata visits these gardens and other historically important places, he finds a confirmation and celebration of the essential elements of his own garden. Conversely, Mr. Nakata's garden is a daily reminder of nobler places.

One of Mr. Nakata's neighbors has a small garden that contains a tree and a large stone lantern that can almost be touched from her bed. The tree and lantern have an imposing presence and seem to find a place in the room. The distinctions between in and out, here and there, are blurred.

The full width of the clear opening that links the indoors with the outside is an important feature of the Japanese domestic garden. Openings without glass or insect screens give the impression that the room is part of the garden and that the garden is part of the room. Glass is a wall, however transparent. It keeps out bird song and the

Above left: Potted plants are cultivated in the garden before being placed on the street. Below: Gardens are a place of escape in times of fire or earthquake; ladders lead to adjacent rooftops.





The colorful line of laundered clothes is a bright accessory to the dark house; it is like the banners that decorate religious buildings during festivals.

smell of damp earth. Insect screens attached to the room opening also form a visual barrier between the inside and outdoors, and they reduce the flow of air.

Mr. Nakata's garden is revealed by the movement of sliding panels, which can be placed in various locations at the edge of his room or removed entirely. The *amado* (rain shutters) or *sboji* (translucent paper panels) can be manipulated with great precision and subtlety and placed to achieve desired effects. They are practical in that they establish degrees and kinds of shelter but there are, also, strong aesthetic consequences as the dimensions and proportions of solid and void are altered.

Mr. Nakata can look from one room through one or two others into a garden beyond and, sometimes, into a room beyond that. The resulting sense of telescoping space is an inevitable feature of contiguous spaces defined by movable screens. Moving about the house provides an infinity of views, never precisely remembered and always new, depending on one's position within the space. The matted room contains the audience and *sboji* reveal the drama of the outdoors. A moment is seized as the scene is revealed. Timing is all. *Sboji* may be parted just slightly to allow the moon to cast its light upon an old futon, and then closed again. The early morning sun falls on wet rocks, or a spring snowfall is caught within the garden and so becomes part of the room. Wet foliage and hot earth release smells that comfort the soul. The chirping of crickets and the sound of birds, some free and some in cages, have their own place within the scenario. The true importance of the garden is in the viewer's imagination.

Beyond its practical and aesthetic meaning, the garden is a place of the spirit. Gardens compensate for the absence of nature in our daily lives. In Japan, the wilderness, as an untrammelled ideal, disappeared long ago.

Mr. Nakata's garden is a metaphor for the vanishing rice paddies and the rocks and islands of a distant sea. The countryside as well as the mountains and forests of Japan are increasingly inaccessible to a people caught up with daily life in the city. Deep within the house, gardens attach themselves to particular rooms which are often the abodes of matriarchs and patriarchs.

In his later years Mr. Nakata finds solace and respite in his garden. It is a refuge from the street, with its traffic and indifference, presenting the prospect of a gentler time and place. The garden, next to Mr. Nakata's bed, is the place he glimpses during sleepless nights and in early morning hours; a place that fosters the contemplation of memories. Here, Mr. Nakata is connected to a more constant order than he is at other times and in other places.

The garden changes little. It simply exists, offering views of green leaves and blue sky, wet stones and freshly laundered clothes lightly moving on a hot summer afternoon, and reminding one that some things are continuous in a life of insistent change.



The sense of telescoping space provides an infinity of views, never precisely remembered and always new.

## In the Garden Katie Trager

We've got a pine tree right in the middle of our meditation garden in Redondo Beach. A big, beautiful Scotch pine that inhales with the wind and makes a forest of sound. They hacked it up but good, sawed off the limbs, scattered the insides all over the ground. It bled and wept, sticky tears. But it stayed a magnificent animal. The blood crystallized. Its basic arc is there.

I'm going to draw it soon, on white with pink fluorescent marker. Just the branches, the basic gestures. De Kooning limbs as they come forth from the mind. No compositions. Not going to get sidetracked by that line of rocks beyond the frame, or anything else. Just strokes as they arrive from space.

Now there's an insight I didn't even ask for. Beginnings and endings. Wanting. Not the in-between. Where most of life is. Maybe not. After all, there's every morning and night. Every day a birth. The rush of emerging consciousness. Drawing. Architecture. For a minute it all makes sense. Form-making, the building emerging out of the swamp of voices, the mud of so many desires, so much grasping. When it emerges, what a triumph. Like the tree. Creation. It doesn't even have to be this tree. It just has to be.

The short circuiting. That would explain it — the constant going back to the center — Zen *satori*. The moment of creation, the beginning. If you go back long enough and strong enough the *satori* will organize all the short-circuited paths just like a road, the only road that could've gotten you there. A charitable interpretation. I'll skip the rest.

I wander away from the insight, let it fall where it may. It's a garden, after all. Brown needles pile up in the space between our sidewall and our neighbor's. A whole wilderness lies — cobwebs, mushrooms, time, dirt, dust, deposits, pine tar. It's the Angeles Forest outside the city, rocks in the open sky, the angst of nature. Nature you





don't own and know, blue sky, white, hot rocks. You're only there for a minute in your car. Anyone could appear. You have to fortress the moment, even the angst. You should have downloaded it to someone else. You've got to know your way back to the city in a day. Nothing belongs.

My own pine needle universe the sun lights up.

That line of rocks that wasn't going to be in the composition. It's not set in dirt, it's sand, that's what the soil is here, ancient dunes. A little patch of ancient sea. Anza Borrego, that beautiful spiritland, the same mute patches of sandy earth. Looking up at you. Saying nothing. Ancient mute discovery. No scale. Like you're a little kid. L.A. is just an overlay on these little patches. You can find them anywhere.

Somebody else set the line of rocks. And the plants, the rose bush. The old barrel with metal straps. Even the cat isn't ours. We're renting. It's our own found city. We found it in two hours. Lived here a year and a half. Momentary ownership slides against the layers of time, floating like a plate, waiting for the quake. And it will come. The tiny house is a tear-down; that's why there's so much land and time. Forty-five years of hands trading places, nobody marking the time but the dirt. Constantly found and forgotten. True L.A. Breathe the currents in.

We planted a lawn in the back. Long, green, shiny grass, most of it bent over in the wind. I sit in the net chair hung on the tree, twirling my feet. The Midwest, my childhood, the plains. In the shade. I can touch it.

Anywhere in this palace of a side yard you can see and be seen. Of course, it's L.A. I don't mind. Out past the tree, at the corner, I can see six houses pasted together across the street. Palm trees. Telephone poles. Wires. Neighborhood watch. Stop. People walk by. Cars. Motorcycles. Biplanes overhead. Everybody's fired up on his

Photos by Katie Trager.



own extended short circuit. Trajectories fly by. Like constellations. Moving past. Even the cat pads warily by without a glance.

They pass right by the center. And that's about the only comfort I can get. But it's natural here.

At the side of our meditation hall, our gorgeous stolen slice of land, is a huge townhouse, running the entire length of the yard. Blank. Stucco and siding. Nobody there. A wall of meditation. Our five-foot high cinder-block wall and then this wall. I know what lies beyond, I walk it every day. But for a boundary, this is better. Simpler. A better organizer of meditation. One wall of the tunnel. The koan. A gateway.

Back in the back, in the real meditation area facing west, to the ocean, away from the street, is a truly shattering space. Just framed sky. Above the townhouse deck. So irradiated blue you can't believe it in your heart. It's the ocean rocking, every boat trip I ever took, the floating docks at King Harbor in the 60s. It's my youth on the beach waiting for a bigger and better life to come. It's the family bound for an instant, stopped together in eternal promise.

The siding frame moves back and forth, adjusting the perspective. The ugly crooked lamp. The door nobody comes out of. The essential porch. All the depth that childhood and the world has to offer.

The whole structure hangs there in open space. The sun just radiates that blue eternity until it comes in through the gate and touches you right on the face.

You can't give it more than a sidelong glance. You know it's there. It's part of that well we stumble, short-circuiting, towards.

I focus back in on the ground, sitting with my back to the sun. Creating pathways in the dirt, observing limits, fragments, leaves, pieces of weird plastic trash sticking up from before, going around in circles, remembering so many coun-

tries, lives within lives, trying to position them, trying to slow the progression down. Is it all over at forty-three? No, new directions burst out. I do my work. It was always like this.

This plot of garden now. Is it inside the world out there, or is the world and stream of time inside it? The Chinese boxes begin to load up. It's so openly transparent here, exposed, a constant reminder of the interpenetration. Set in motion, the infinite regression, self in the world.

I give up figuring, concentrating, focusing; I don't want to follow that path right now. I throw my attention up to the sky where the stars move together. No-one is alone there, no wall, but no eyes. There's some kind of path. Everything remembers the big bang but can't quite get back to it. Nothing escapes its fate. They're all drawing from the same well. Parallel gardens in parallel universes.

I'm just as much eternity looking at them as they're eternity staring down at me.

I see this mysticism stuff doesn't give up. It's got the grasp. The short circuit is out there somewhere — death, the edge, whatever reversal there can be — and yet we continue to move through our gardens. Any solace we can create, any worlds, are the bridge, fusion.

The sun lights up our skulls every day. The sky comes in to grace our dirt floor. We let it in and walk right over it.

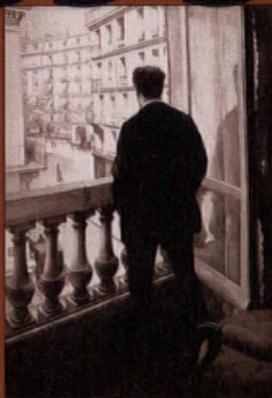
There's time in the garden yet.



Raymond L. Gindroz

# Cross Section of

# Addresses



Gustav Caillebotte, *Man at the Window* (1875).



Two women on a porch in Diggs Town, a public housing project in Norfolk, VA. Photos courtesy Raymond L. Gindroz/UDA Architects.

### Young Man at His Window

The young man is looking through the window of his family's apartment in Paris. He appears to have jumped up from his chair. His body is tense and he seems excited. Does he recognize the young woman visible on the street corner a block away? Are his predatory instincts aroused by someone he does not know? Does he see something extraordinary happening on the next boulevard? Whatever has attracted his interest, he is keenly involved in the activity of the street while still inside the privacy of his living room.

Gustave Caillebotte's painting brings to life the relationship between the private spaces behind facades and the public spaces those facades create. The energy of the figure and the dominance of the window make us vividly aware of both inside and outside space, of the relationship between the public and private realms. This painting enables us to visualize the three-dimensional form of this address in the city.

The details of the painting tell us about the quality of this address. All of the windows we see lining the streets outside have the same proportions, which contributes to the orderliness of the composition of the space. The facades have an almost equal or figure-ground relationship between the closely spaced windows and the solid walls between them.

The result is a glittering pattern of ornamented windows, all symbols of human presence. As we walk through these streets, we pass through spaces lined with visible symbols of that presence and experience Jane Jacobs's famous "eyes on the street" made manifest. The ornament on the windows and balconies, the elegance of street furniture and the gracious proportions of the public place, all tell us that this is a safe, orderly, fashionable address.

### Two Women on a Porch

Two women lean on the rail of a front porch in an American neighborhood, looking across a front

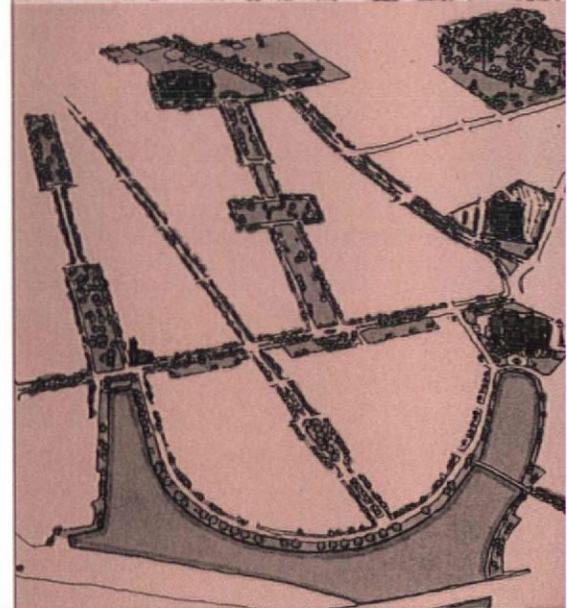
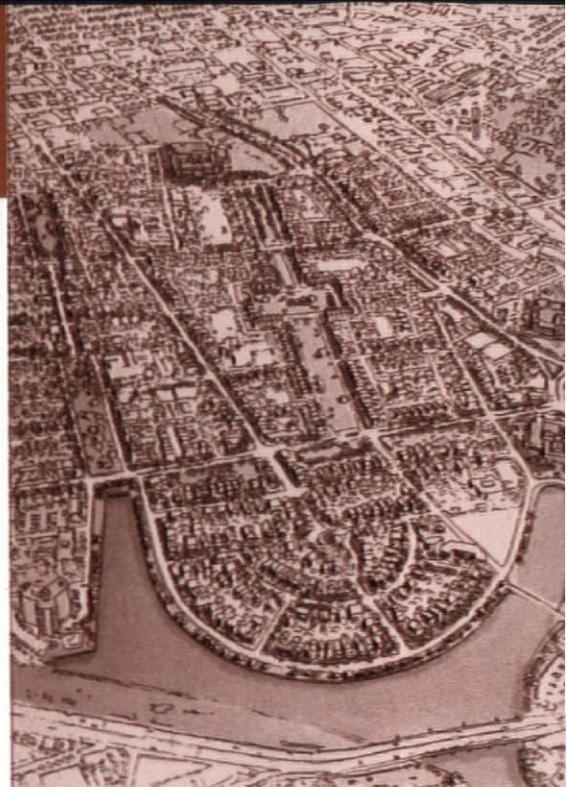
Top right: The Ghent neighborhood developed at the turn of the century in Norfolk, VA.  
 Bottom right: Diagram of major streets, public spaces and institutions in Ghent—a network that connects to every block, establishing a visual and social anchor for the community.

lawn to the street. Are they watching children play on the street? Has some unknown person who looks suspicious ventured into this quiet neighborhood? While securely in the privacy of the front porch, the two women are actively engaged in the life of the street.

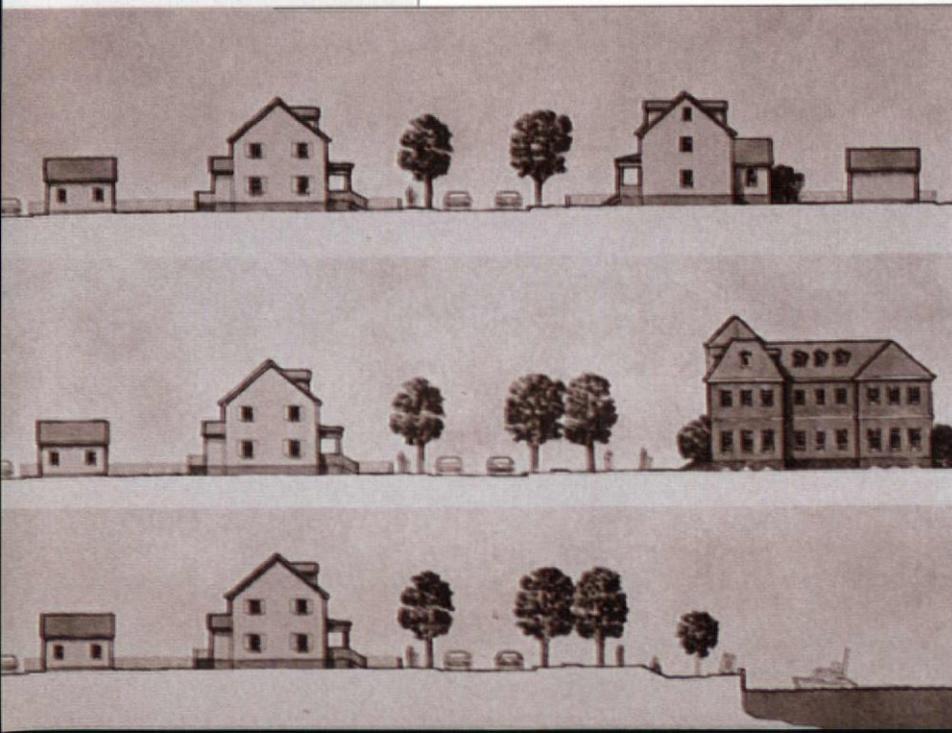
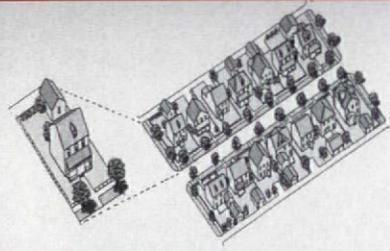
While the taut, uniform facades of Paris define a strong boundary between public and private, the traditional American neighborhood street is more complex. It is lined with two-story houses with porches, each of which stands as a symbol of the individuality of the family it represents. Together, the porches and brick facades of the houses loosely define the edges of the public space of the street.

A cross section drawing of a typical American neighborhood street illustrates this complexity. In the center is the cartway of the street itself, framed by a tree lawn and sidewalk on each side. The facades of the houses are set back from the sidewalk, creating a richly complex space. Porches extend the private zone of the house into this space, and front lawns further extend this personal territory so that it is visually part of the public space of the street. In spite of the overlap of public and private space, there is no ambiguity about ownership. Each individual's property is clearly marked by the edge of the front yard and, perhaps, by a picket fence or hedge.

This physical form reflects American urban culture and its concept of the relationship between the individual and society. We sit on



Below: A typical neighborhood block and sections of the types of streets commonly found in such areas. The street is the focus of the address; the facades of houses and institutions face the streets, and the streets define the edge of public spaces.



our front porches as individuals, looking across our lawn to the street. Our porches and lawns are part of the public space, contributing to its character and image. With our rights as individuals come responsibilities to contribute to the community by creating, maintaining and participating in the public realm.

The formal fronts of houses face each other across the space of the street, as if in polite conversation, creating the address of a group of individuals and courteously greeting passersby. The back yards, part of the private world of the individual families, are screened from the public realm by fences or by the houses themselves.

Never should a back yard face the street or the front yards of homes across the street.

Just as a residential street is a collection of individual house addresses, a neighborhood, in fact the whole city, is a collection of different types of streets and public spaces — each of which itself is an address. Some of these are very small-scale residential streets; others are large-scale boulevards lined with houses; still others are small parks, while others are civic squares.

For all of these addresses, the street is the focus of the address. The front facades of houses, with their porches and front yards, always face the street. Schools and other institutions also have an address on the street, with facades facing across the street to the facades of houses.

Parks and natural features, such as rivers and lakes, should also be defined by public streets, so they are connected to the whole community. They should not be next to someone's back yard, blocked from public access and view.

#### **Creating an Address**

When Baron Georges Eugene Hausmann built the boulevards of Paris, he created a series of dramatically new addresses. He accomplished this by cutting swaths through the city that included more land than necessary for the boulevards themselves. The additional land on each side of the street made it possible to build eight-to ten-story buildings with handsome facades. The investment in the lavish landscaping and elegant street furniture in the public right-of-way was combined with elegant architecture to create a marketable address. Many new boulevards cut through unfashionable areas, but they succeeded so well that they transformed the whole city.

A superb application of this strategy of creating an address in an American city can be found in the Ghent neighborhood in Norfolk, Virginia. At the turn of the century, an entrepreneur decided to develop a new community at the edge of one of Norfolk's many tidewater swamps. He understood that he needed to create a great address and that the swamp lacked marketing appeal. So he dredged the swamp and installed a beautifully curving bulkhead to create a semicir-

cular canal. Along the bulkhead he built a linear park that was bordered by a street lined with the fronts of large houses. He named the canal The Hague, gave the houses Flemish facades and called the whole community Ghent.

Mowbry Arch, the street along the canal, is a truly magical address, whether experienced along its promenade or from across the water. At one end, the vista is terminated by the beautiful Chrysler Art Museum, and at the other, space is extended through the spaces of Stokely Gardens. It is the focus of a larger composition in which a network of parks and public gardens provide settings for major institutions and are connected to every neighborhood street and block, becoming visual as well as social anchors of the community.

This strategy can be helpful in making inner-city neighborhoods — many of which have deteriorated and become symbols of urban problems — safe, comfortable places in which people of different incomes will want to invest. We have found that by creating a series of addresses, with images based on the best, most stable neighborhoods of a city, it is possible to attract a diverse new market to the inner city. To do so, it is necessary to see the “cross section of the address” not as a two-dimensional technical drawing, but as a three-dimensional vision of the place to be created.

#### **Creating New Addresses in Diggs Town**

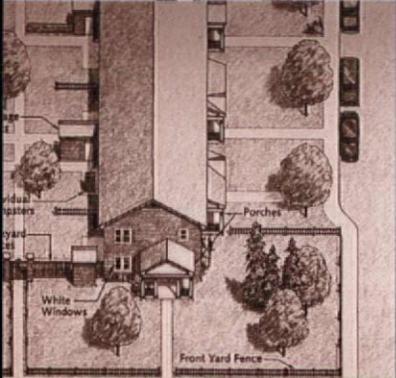
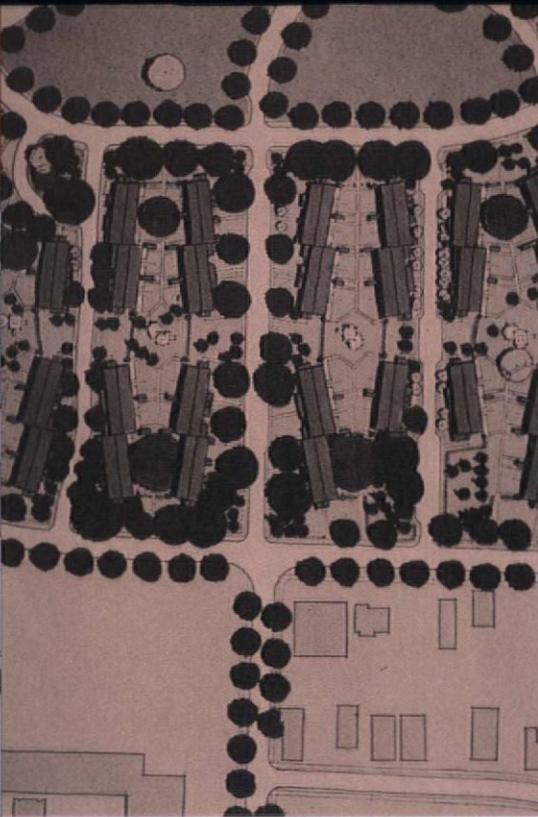
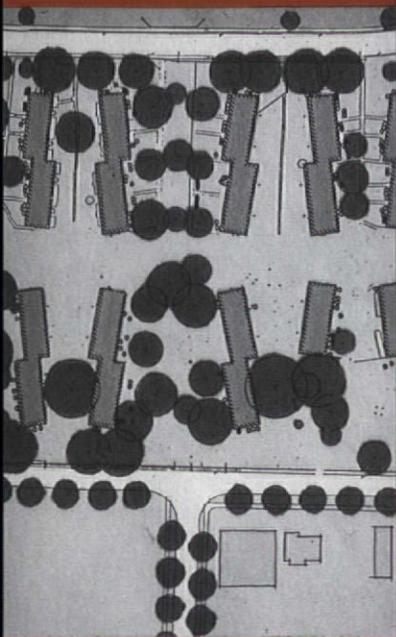
Perhaps the most vivid way to understand the importance of the cross section of an address is to see examples of where it does not exist, where there is no statement of either individuality or community and no street.

We were asked by the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA) to suggest ways in which its renovation budget could be used to make the most difference in people's lives in a public housing project called Diggs Town. These funds were coordinated by the NRHA, along with a number of other programs, including early childhood education, community policing, drug prevention and employment training.

There are 428 units of housing in Diggs Town, almost all of which are two-story, town-house-type units. The buildings, 40 years old,



Diggs Town, before and after renovations.



Top: Before and after plans of Diggs Town.  
 Above: Detail of modifications to the space around the rows of housing. New streets were added; sidewalks connect house entrances to the streets; some yards are fenced.

were long, barracks-like rectangles whose fronts faced courts and whose ends turned a blind side to the street. Because the units did not face a street, they had no real address. There was an ambiguous “no-man’s land” surrounding them, no definition of either a public realm or the private domain of individual residents. Gangs took over and residents were afraid to come out of their house.

Garbage was collected in large, communal garbage bins. These not only dominated the streetscape, creating a very messy image for this address, but also presented dangers for residents. As one person put it, “When you have garbage in your own trash can it’s your trash, but when it goes to the ‘big bin,’ it becomes the world’s trash, and therefore not maintained at all.” Drug dealers used them as impromptu sales counters to make sure they did not have incriminating evidence on their persons when the police came by.

We worked with residents and with the city to find out how to reclaim this no-man’s land from the gangs and criminals and how to establish a safe, stable community. The residents told us, “We want to have porches, not because we need another place to sit, but so we can come out of our houses, see one another, be together and come together to deal with our problems.” That is a powerful statement of citizenship.

The most dramatic change was that, wherever possible, streets were inserted through the no-man’s land. The project once had superblocks with interior courts that could not be seen from the street; now it is a series of smaller neighborhood blocks, more like the neighborhoods around it.

The dimensions of these new streets were critical because of the close spacing between buildings. Wherever there was sixty feet of space, it was possible to insert a street. Much-needed parking was included, but the section could not accommodate a planting strip between the curb and front lawn. In areas where streets could not be placed, courts were defined with fences and twelve-foot-wide walks were built with curbs separating them from front lawns, thus providing a strong definition between public and private.

The major investment on the exterior of the buildings was the construction of good, full-sized porches. They have correct classical columns with balusters that provide an elegant frame within which people can sit in dignity, no matter how humble their furniture may be. Since our house is a mirror of ourselves, we should make sure we are designing mirrors that contribute to personal pride, self-image and dignity. The porches are symbols for the individual families they serve.

Small-scale, white picket fences define the edge of each citizen’s property, particularly at the corners where gangs and others have trampled the lawn. Taller fences create secure back yards, which are shared among the group of houses on each side but closed to outsiders — a private place for those who live around it.<sup>1</sup> Individual trash bins were provided for each family, just like in a normal neighborhood.

These very simple elements create the cross section of address in Diggs Town. Where once there were units on an anonymous wasteland, there are now “houses” with front yards, front porches and back yards with patios. The residents now have one of the most basic elements of citizenship: an address.

The impact has been remarkable. The statistics indicate a sharp drop in police calls and crime. Residents tell us that before the changes, they heard four and five gun shots a night; now

they hear a gun shot once every four or five months. Norfolk's police chief has said that visible evidence of people taking care of their neighborhood discourages criminals from doing business there. So these simple elements of fences, porches and streets have had a major role in securing the neighborhood.

Most important is the creation of an address in which residents take pride. The community police officer has said that the most significant change is one of spirit. Once residents began to take pride in the community and gain self-respect, they also gained hope.<sup>2</sup>

It would be foolish, however, to credit this change on the physical environment alone. There are also a number of social programs that have been coordinated with the physical changes. The physical form provides a framework that enables residents to re-establish a neighborhood.

#### **Creating New Addresses for Public Housing**

Generally, public housing projects do not have the richness and clarity of urban structure found in a neighborhood like Ghent. Although Diggs Town now has a series of neighborhood streets and courts as addresses, it is still a bounded project and not part of a mixed use, mixed-income com-

munity in the same way that the various neighborhood streets of Ghent are. The challenge, then, is to find strategies that can enable public housing projects to become part of larger, stable, mixed-income neighborhoods. In Norfolk, the city established a citizen task force, led by two city council members, that suggested several ideas.

The first step is to expand the boundaries of the planning effort to identify both strengths and weaknesses in the larger community. Positive elements, such as churches, schools, community centers and civic buildings can be used as a means to create new addresses. By establishing partnerships with the institutions and with both private and nonprofit community-based developers, a comprehensive revitalization can be accomplished in which the public housing is only one of many components:

Focus on the institutions as anchors and create a framework of public space that makes them the visible focal points of the community. Always bound these open spaces with streets and make sure the churches and schools have a dignified setting.

Build new housing along these new addresses that have been created with houses or apart-



Above: The cross section of the address includes yards and porches, spaces with a transitional public-private nature. Below left: Diggs Town is now filled with signs of residents taking care of their yards and their community.

Right: Streets have become a place for play; the porches are places from which parents can keep a watchful eye.  
Below: Typical houses in the Fairfax neighborhood.



Above: Rendering of neighborhood with vacant lots filled with new houses or turned into streets that make through-block connections.

ments that have the character and image of a good local neighborhood.

Add infill development on vacant and deteriorated properties with buildings that are consistent with the image of the community.

Remodel the remaining public housing structures to have the essential elements of a good address with streets, porches, front yard amenities and well defined back yards.

**Bicentennial Place: A New Address to Revive an Old Neighborhood**

Bicentennial Place is a new, block-long street in Fairfax, an aging Victorian neighborhood on the Near East Side of Cleveland, Ohio. It connects two existing blocks that have a mixture of recently constructed infill houses and rehabilitated and restored nineteenth-century houses. Along this street, new houses have been fitted carefully onto a sequence of empty lots.

The houses on Bicentennial Place (the name celebrates Cleveland's two-hundredth anniversary) demonstrate the many housing programs the city offers to encourage the revitalization of troubled neighborhoods. They serve as model homes for a

sales program that will offer houses scattered throughout Fairfax at a wide range of prices.

The new street has exactly the same cross section as the historic streets. The twenty-four-foot-wide cartway permits parking on both sides and slow moving, two-way traffic. This is narrower than current city standards but was approved because of the low volume of traffic and the fact that it is based on the existing streets in the neighborhood. There is a three-foot-wide tree lawn between the sidewalk and the curb.<sup>3</sup> The houses are set back ten feet from the sidewalk to permit a small front lawn and an ample front porch. The front facades of the new houses line up to create the edge of the public space.

The cross section does not include alleys (most of Cleveland's traditional neighborhoods do not have alleys), so access to garages must be from the street. The key, therefore, is not to interrupt the continuity of house facades with garage doors, a problem whose difficulty was compounded by the narrow forty-foot-wide lots. Therefore, the front-loaded garages are set back twenty feet behind the front facade, with a maximum ten-foot-wide driveway interrupting the front yard.

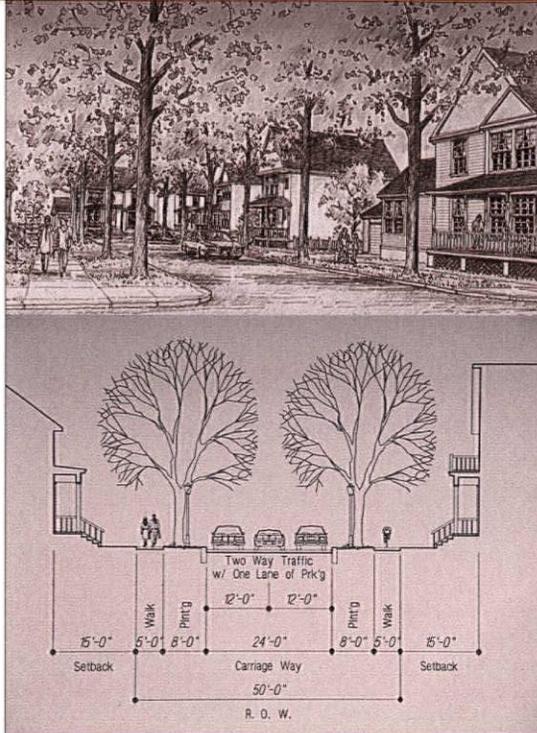
While developing the master plan for Bicentennial Village and the detailed house designs, we engaged in a broad-based public process with extensive participation by the many block clubs in the neighborhood. We learned that there were many vacant lots on which terrible things took place and, therefore, that the area was perceived to be unsafe.

But when people talked about safe streets, they talked of windows and porches overseeing the activity of the street. As one woman said, "I love my porch because I am a nosy neighbor. When I sit on my porch I know what is going on in the street. And I know that when I am not sitting on my porch, there are things that are going on in the street that would not be going on if I were sitting on my porch." To which a man in the meeting replied, "The best security system is a nosy neighbor."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, when we developed a pattern book to make sure the essential elements of good street were incorporated in the design of houses, the primary criteria were to serve the interests of nosy neighbors.<sup>5</sup>

The new street has another important community purpose. In this part of Fairfax, the blocks are extraordinarily long – 2,100 feet, instead of the more conventional 500 to 700 feet. However, we know from Jane Jacobs and other observers of neighborhood form that short blocks are better for building communication among neighbors than long blocks. Bicentennial Place connects the people of several streets and creates a shared focus for them.<sup>6</sup>

The three-dimensional character of the cross section is typical of Victorian neighborhoods. New houses without the essential qualities of the adjacent historic ones would not succeed in creating the address. The pattern book we developed calls for houses that will both harmonize with and enhance the existing houses. It calls for steeply pitched gable roofs facing the street and full-size porches with some decorative elements.

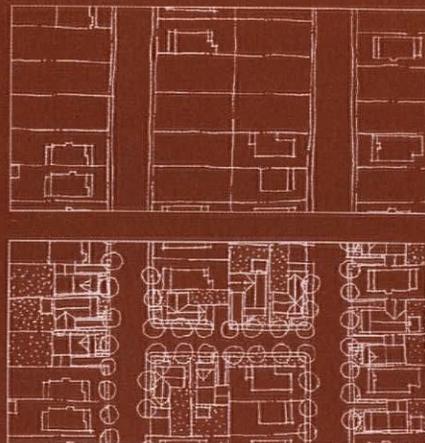
Because there will be a wide range of house designs (with a range of prices so that various income groups can afford them), it is essential to create a unified character and imageable address in which the differences are easily absorbed.



Rendering and sectional drawing of the cross section of address in Fairfax.

Houses by Habitat for Humanity have been modified from the standard model to have these essential elements. They will stand side by side with market-rate houses and restored Victorians as respectable members of the community.

Also part of the master plan are a series of village greens and street corners that combine residential uses with retail and institutional uses. These are anchored by landmarks such as churches and located at key intersections. Emmanuel Place will be developed by Emmanuel Church and includes church-sponsored housing over



Plan of typical area in Fairfax (above left), and conceptual plan for how it might be transformed by using vacant lots for infill housing and connecting streets (left).



Celebration's pattern book seeks to create neighborly streets and public spaces.

ground floor space that is a mixture of retail and church educational programs. The image in the drawing indicates a new address based on the architectural character of the church.

**Celebration: Traditional Addresses for a New Town**

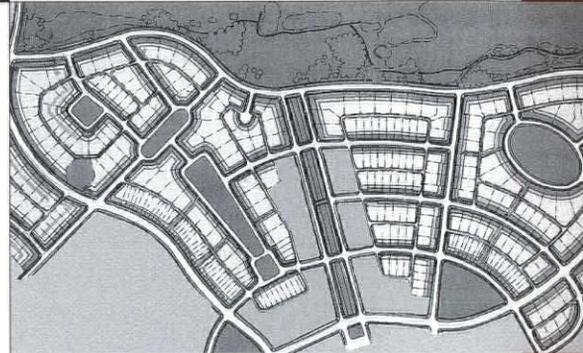
The images of the neighborhood street are an integral part of the success of Celebration, the new town being developed in Orlando, Florida, by The Walt Disney Company. Celebration is a landmark project because it challenges some of the most negative and destructive aspects of the way communities have been built in the past 50 years.

By providing a wide mix of types and price of housing in one small area, the town has demonstrated that mixed-income communities can be revived as part of American culture. The reason people are accepting this in Celebration is because of the quality of the address and the sense of community it represents.

The first phase is a village with 800 apartments, townhouses and houses. The master plan, by Robert A.M. Stern and Cooper Robertson Partners, creates a series of beautiful addresses, each with its own character and identity. Each

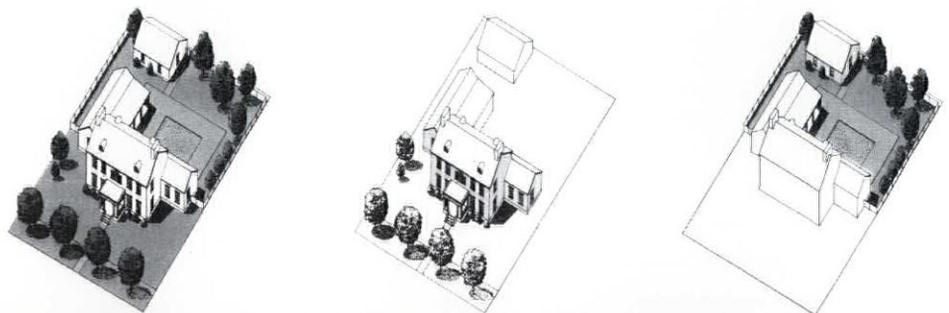
address has a different range of home types, but within the town you will find apartments renting for \$650 a month across the street from large, \$900,000 houses, which in turn are adjacent to small cottages, which are on the very same street as modest townhouses.

Our role, after the master plan was done, was to develop design guidelines that would ensure both quality and harmony among these various housing types. Many of the houses and town-



houses are being built by merchant builders with their own standard plans and elevations. The Celebration pattern book, like the traditional ones on which it is modeled, establishes patterns for building good houses and a good neighborhood. It is meant to be seen as part of marketing the development rather than a regulatory tool that inhibits the builder.

The focus of Celebration's pattern book is the creation of neighborly streets and public spaces. There are community patterns and architectural patterns. The community patterns establish setbacks and placement of key architectural elements, such as the central volume of the house, which contains the front door, porches (if appropriate) and landscape elements.



Right and opposite page: Community patterns establish setbacks, placement of key architectural features and landscape elements.

Although the cross sections vary for each type of community space, they are coordinated to establish a harmony of scale and style among the different addresses. The more expensive homes might be larger, but the scale of the parts of the house would be similar to those on the smallest houses. It is the harmony among the elements that create the community space — the address — that makes it possible to have a great diversity of price and type of house.

The architectural patterns include six architectural styles that are based on architecture indigenous to the Southeastern U.S. and provide the essential elements necessary to create a good neighborhood address. For example, windows are carefully designed to be dominant on facades so they can serve as symbols of human presence and as “eyes on the street.” The detail of cornices is specified so the height of houses and the profile of the roof define the boundaries of the space. Porches not only provide comfortable places to sit and but also represent the individual families that support the street.

**A Revival of American Urbanism**

Celebration’s marketing success indicates that the creation of a sense of community is regaining importance in American life. Home buyers are paying more for a smaller house because, they say, they want to be part of a community, not simply owners of a house in an anonymous subdivision. This sense of community is most visible in the character of the neighborhood streets, squares and parks of the town.

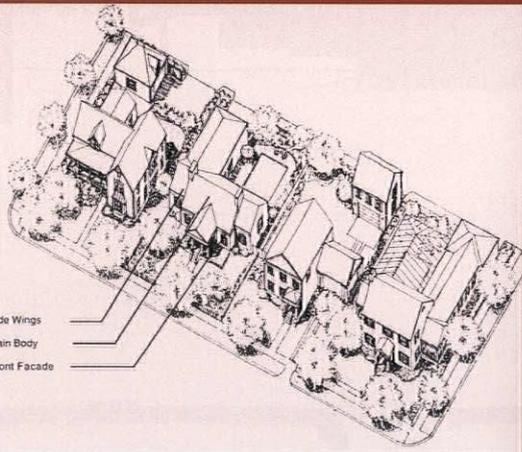
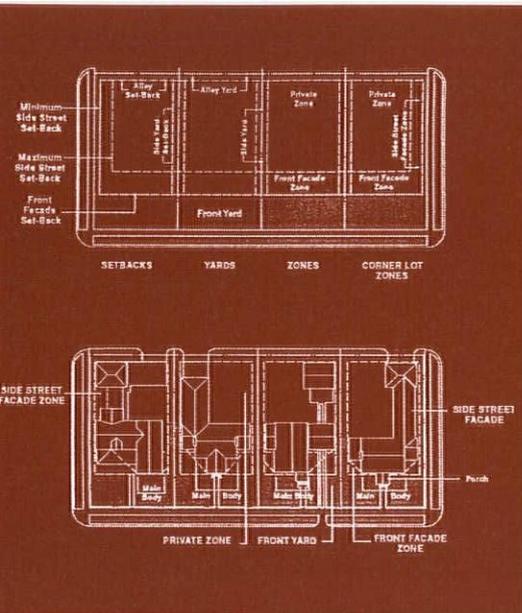
In Fairfax, restoring the now tarnished image of its neighborhood streets has been the means of bringing together the residents and leadership of the city in an effort to re-establish Fairfax as a mixed income and vital community.

In Diggs Town, the transformation of barren spaces into a series of neighborhood streets and courts has enabled residents to come together to deal with the community’s problems.

These three efforts are in very different regions of the U.S. and involve people from a wide range of economic and social conditions. Yet, the image of a comfortable, safe and socia-

ble neighborhood street, park or square is central to their success.

In each effort, the focus of the design effort was to create an address that appeals to a wide range of people — to encourage them to take a risk and move back to an urban neighborhood like Fairfax, or to become part of a new town like Celebration, or to think differently about a public housing project like Diggs Town. Gustave Caillebotte’s painting helps us under-

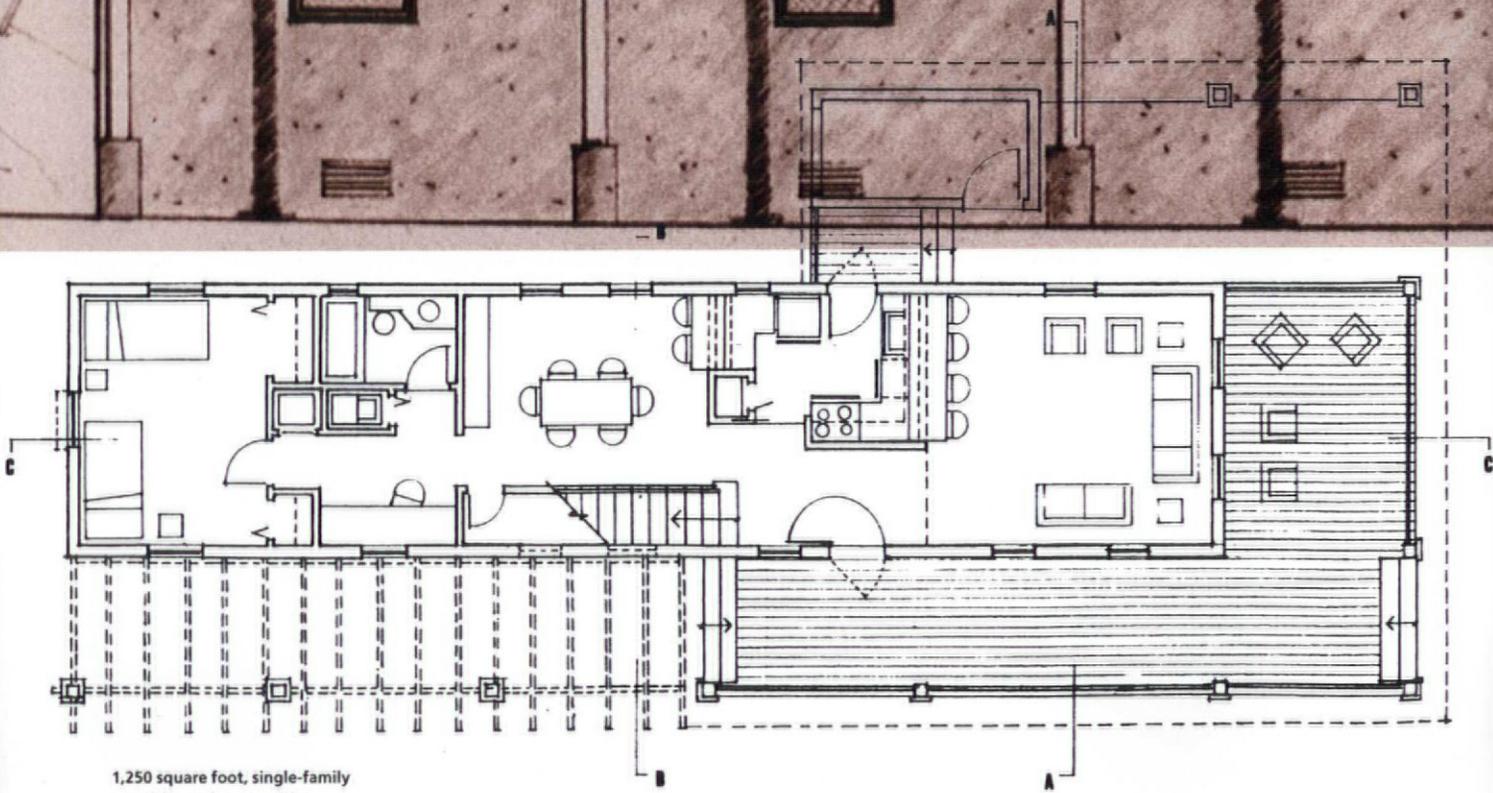


stand the complexity of such spaces and therefore how to create the cross section of wonderful addresses.

**Notes**

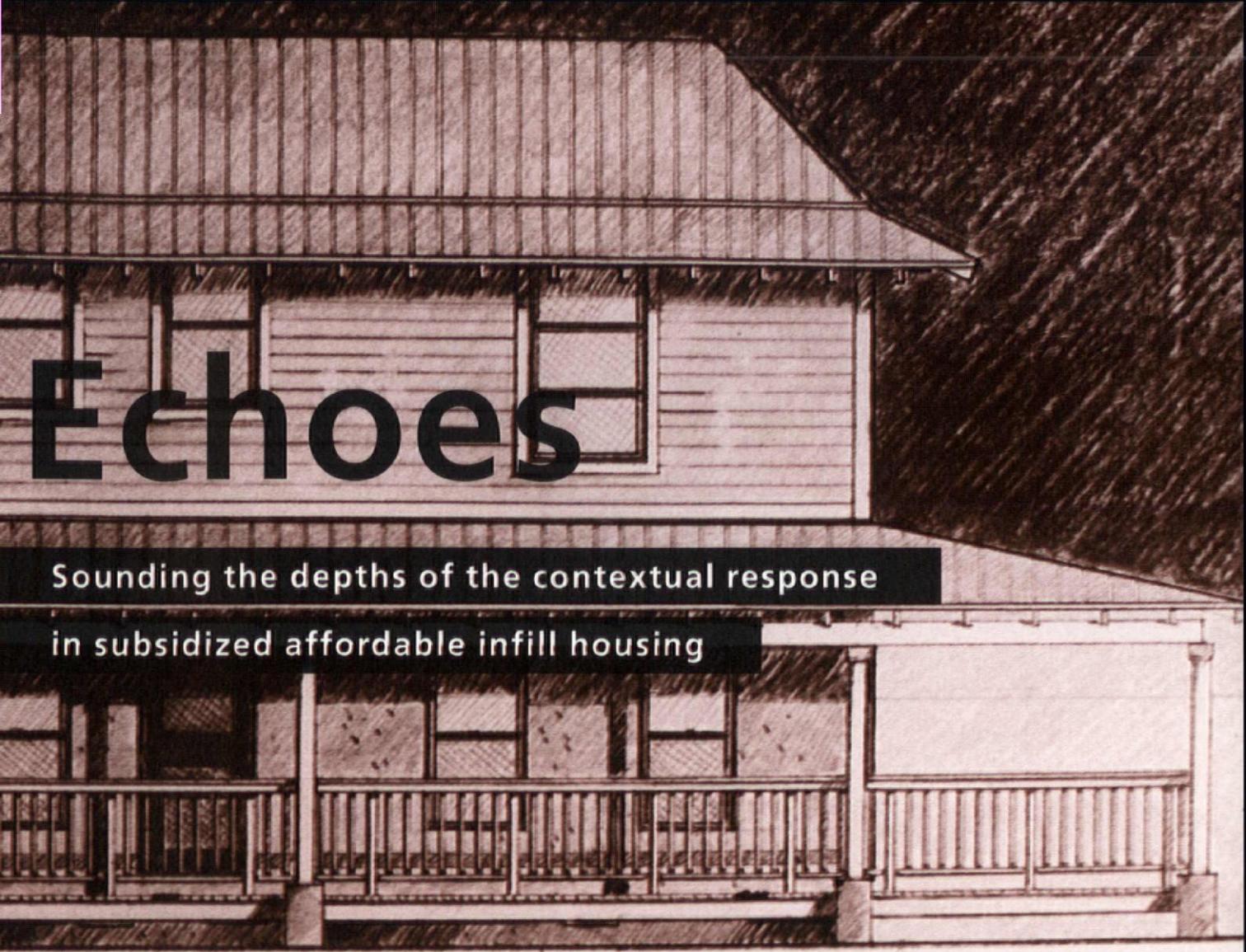
1. Fencing each yard individually would have required inserting either an alley, for which there was no room, or a pedestrian way. The problem of gangs was so severe that it was decided not to have such a public way but, rather, to enclose yards with gates operated by the residents of the units around each block (sixteen to thirty-two units). Storage buildings and four-foot high fences define the zones closest to each house as private areas.
2. A study of a local educational and job training program compared the participation of Diggs Town residents with that of residents of another project. More Diggs Town residents participated regularly and were employed at the end. Incomes appear to be up, meaning that people are getting jobs and new residents are not all at the bottom of the scale. Family reunions are being held in Diggs Town for the first time, because people are proud of where they live.
3. We prefer a six-foot minimum width for tree lawns, and depending on the character of the street, it might be desirable to have a width of up to twelve feet.
4. The nosiness being celebrated here is about what goes on in the street, not what goes on behind the front facades of the houses. It is a human and natural security system.
5. We often express design guidelines in the form of pattern books, which reach back to the way traditional American neighborhoods were built until World War II.
6. The Bicentennial program is an infill project that relies on the city land bank. New streets are located where land is available to tie together two or more streets.

# Unacceptable



1,250 square foot, single-family wood-frame house, with typological ties to shotgun, camel-back and side porch houses of the American Southeast.

Illustrations courtesy author, unless indicated otherwise.



# Echoes

Sounding the depths of the contextual response  
in subsidized affordable infill housing

In May, 1992, the city of Delray Beach and its Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) held a competition for the design of affordable housing, to be built on scattered vacant lots throughout Mount Olive, a turn-of-the-century, African-American neighborhood. The brief encouraged contextual proposals.

We responded by turning to examples of the shotgun, a house type brought to the Florida Gold Coast by its earliest African American (Caribbean) settlers—and the Charleston single house, a type indigenous to a region with history and climate greatly similar to those of Mount Olive. Our competition entry



## We believed the authenticity of the and climatic appropriateness expressing the most compelling

transformed those types into a building similar, but in no way identical to, the houses currently existing in the neighborhood.

We believed the historic authenticity of the shotgun and the urbanism and climatic appropriateness of both types were vehicles for expressing the most compelling elements of Mount Olive. We hoped that the proposal of a contemporary house drawing upon elements of each while mimicking neither would contribute to the development of the neighborhood in a manner respectful of its context. It was our hope that residents would find self affirmation and empowerment in our proposal.

The jury awarded our small house a first prize. During the awards ceremony, Christopher Brown,

Events in Delray Beach have forced us to reflect on the current interest of the profession in a regionalist architecture of culture. They have raised important questions relative to the generation and communication of meaning in architecture. The competition results have caused us to re-examine our belief that such meaning is fluid, something that emerges from history and use in a specific geographic and cultural context. Our proposal effectively argued that a change in use and a redefinition of context might, over time, also result in a change in meaning. Yet the results of the competition have prompted us to reconsider the use of building typology not only as a contextual design tool, but also as a way of defying the limitations that adherence to the socially con-

Typical shotgun and "cracker" houses in the Mount Olive neighborhood, Delray Beach, FL.



director of the Delray Beach CRA, explained to us that judges saw merit in its understated, dignified approach to filling missing teeth in the fabric of a historic neighborhood while enhancing the value of a unique place.

The cold reception that greeted the announcement of the competition results took its sponsors (not to mention us) completely by surprise. Prospective African-American residents of Mount Olive have refused to commission any building with a resemblance to the quarters of their ancestors, explaining that houses with such clear lineage to a slave past could only serve to stigmatize and marginalize them further. As a result, our house has not been built.

structured meaning of a built form (the shotgun house) clearly places on an interpretive community (the residents of Mount Olive).

The outcome of the Delray competition has also caused us to examine the place of historic preservation in the context of government-subsidized, affordable housing. And it has prompted us to scrutinize the modern insistence of our profession on forging a link, however uneasy, between the form and content of our work. For even in the face of empirical evidence indicating that a conjunction of the two is less than ideal, a Romantic separation of form and content in contemporary practice has proven increasingly unsatisfactory for both architect and client.

# hotgun, and its urbanism ere vehicles for lements of Mount Olive.

We are convinced, in short, that the Delray competition is not simply another instance in a long history of miscues between architects and clients. Rather, it is the theater in which a fundamental tension in the direction of current architectural practice has inadvertently been revealed.

## Mount Olive and Shotgun: Architecture and the Racial Past

Originally built amid pineapple and mango groves in the 1890s, Mount Olive centers around (and unofficially takes its name from) the Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church, home of the oldest African-American congregation still active in Palm Beach County. The neighborhood, a product of a deeply segregated South, was purposely set so far



apart from white Delray (at the eastern edge of the Everglades) that it virtually defined the frontier of civilization at the time of its founding.

Mount Olive was one of many Colored Towns whose labor supported the agricultural and tourist economies of the Florida Gold Coast through the mid-twentieth century. Despite far-reaching changes wrought by the civil rights movement, contemporary Mount Olive is full heir to a history of post-Emancipation Proclamation racial injustice.

Currently, Mount Olive's housing stock consists primarily of single-family detached residences one or two stories tall (wood-frame Florida Cracker houses as well as Mission-style



masonry houses). Lots range from 50 to 75 feet wide but are uniformly 130 feet deep. Much of the neighborhood's social life centers on the street, played out on front porches, yards and driveways. The houses, which are in varying stages of disrepair, comprise the fabric of a historic neighborhood in peril of disintegration — a neighborhood languishing as it loses its upwardly mobile population to the suburbs.

Shotgun houses are common in this neighborhood. Uniformly one room wide, extended in length (and sometimes height, as in the camelback variation), they can be found throughout the South, precisely in African-American neighborhoods like Mount Olive. Most were constructed as slave and agriworker housing during the 1800s,



but variations on the type were built during much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The type has subsequently been the basis for considerable contemporary design exploration across a range of regional, cultural and economic contexts.

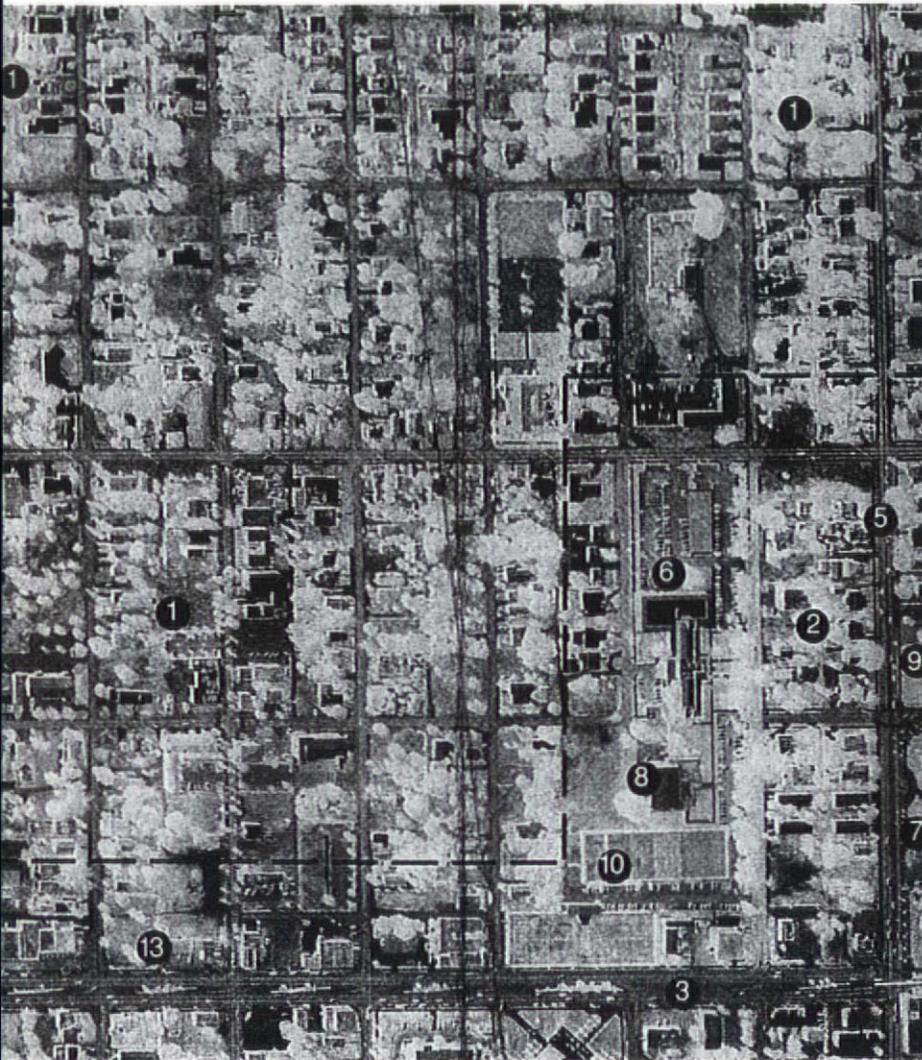
Both the shotgun and the Charleston single house are uniquely suited to a sub-tropical, urban context, such as Mount Olive. Both have deep porches and cross ventilation in every room. Their narrow structural bays and simple framing systems make them strong in the face of hurricane winds, as well as inexpensive and easy to build. Both types were traditionally erected without front setbacks on contiguous narrow lots. These houses generated tight, pedestrian-scale environments whose

Opposite page and above:  
Typical shotgun and side porch  
houses, the two types on  
which the author's prototype  
was based. From A. G. Noble,  
*Wood, Brick and Stone*, Vol. 1.

focus was life on the street as filtered by the semi-public space of their front and side porches.

Historians of vernacular architecture have unearthed considerable evidence that the shotgun house has its origins in a West African residential prototype and was first brought to the New World in the 1700s by the West Indian slave trade.<sup>1</sup> Today the shotgun is widely regarded as a significant African contribution to the American built landscape, an expression of African culture carried on in the face of extraordinary strife. Nevertheless, dismissive of the early origins of the shotgun, and despite the fact that our proposal married it to a house that historically housed both rich and poor, Mount Olive residents persist in rejecting it, focusing on the social meaning of its more recent history.

Aerial view of Mount Olive neighborhood.



### The Delray Beach Competition

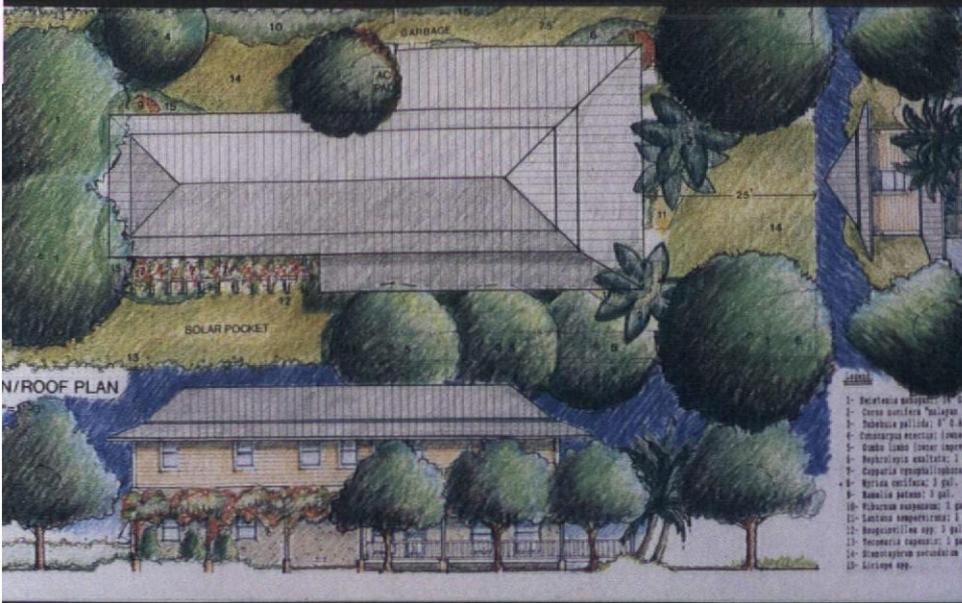
The Delray Beach competition was part of a program to provide well-designed, affordable, single-family houses for residents with annual incomes ranging from \$17,000 to \$25,000. City officials sought to assemble a portfolio of designs for the southwestern district of the city, which includes approximately 9,000 residents, some 3,000 homes and some 300 scattered, buildable lots. Pending land acquisition by the city, prospective residents, pre-qualified by the CRA and state lending agencies, would be free to choose a new home from among the winning designs. City-approved builders would then cooperate in constructing the homes.

The competition, whose stated intent was “to upgrade traditionally neglected neighborhoods through new affordable construction,” was announced in spring, 1992. Organized by Elizabeth Debs, a Delray Beach architect with affordable housing experience, it drew 45 completed submittals. The brief explicitly insisted on affordability and ease of maintenance. It encouraged, but did not require, a contextual response.

Four entries were awarded first prize, ours the first among that group. We proposed a \$40,000, three-bedroom, two-bath, 1,250 square foot, single-family wood-frame house, with typological ties to shotgun, camelback and side porch houses. It was intended neither as a literal reconstruction of neighborhood structures nor as a romanticized, sanitized version of the past. Rather, it represented a desire to reinforce and validate the morphology of a significant place by adding to it in (relative) kind, while offering new housing stock that included spatial variety and modern conveniences.

Our interest in the Delray competition came from a conviction that urban infill presupposes the neighborhood as a social construct and artifact worthy of conservation. We believe that designing within recognizable building traditions allows forms to become the repositories of multiple simultaneous meanings, resulting in a richness, at both urban and architectural scales, of incalculable worth.

Our proposal for a shotgun – side porch house did not intend to freeze Mount Olive in time, either physically or psychologically. We hoped to



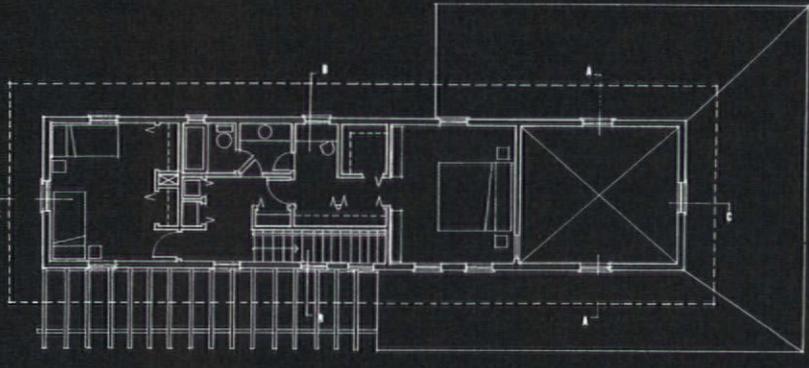
Roof plan, site plan and side elevation.



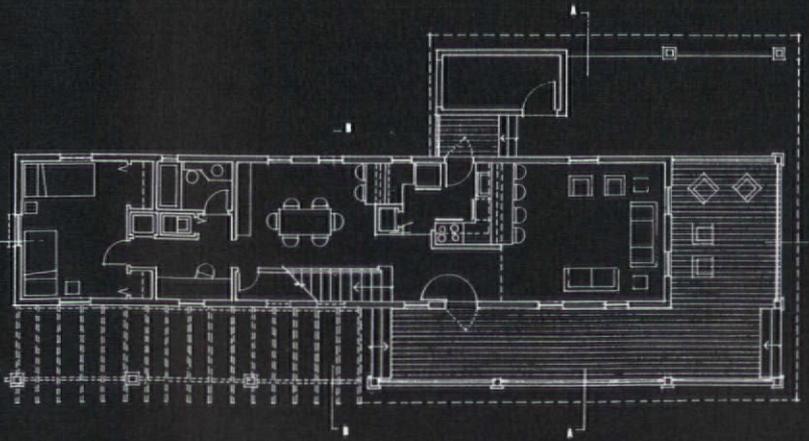
Front elevation.

## Proposal for Delray Beach Competition

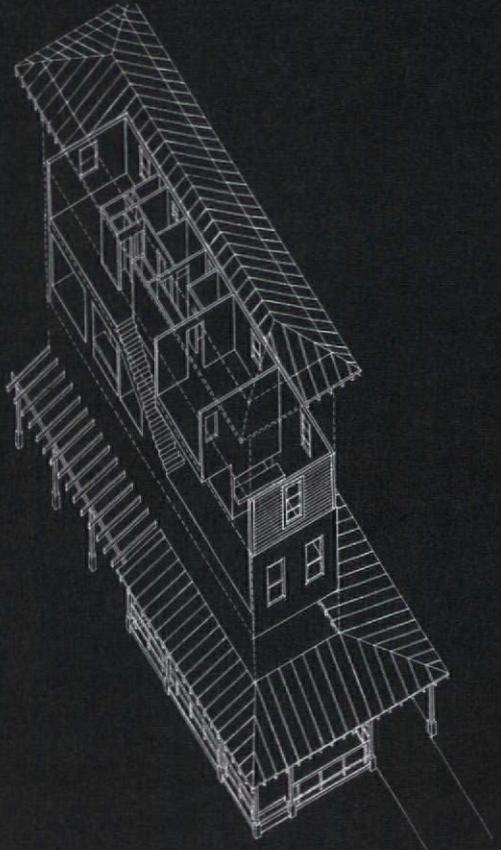
Architect: Marilys R. Nepomechie.  
 Landscape architect: Molly Feltham-Adams.



Second floor plan.



Ground floor plan.



# Residents explain that the image suggested by our house carries with it powerful and abhorrent associations with the Jim Crow history of Delray Beach.



Above and opposite page:  
Typical new construction in  
Mount Olive.

encourage simultaneous processes of preservation and transformation by working within the framework of the existing spatial urban structure (de facto zoning codes) and the parameters of existing typology (vernacular building strategies). Aware of the African roots from which the shotgun typology emerged, we assumed that both current and prospective residents shared our respect for the history and physical make-up of the neighborhood.

Yet prospective homeowners who have approached the Delray CRA since the competition have shied away from our design precisely because it draws, however indirectly, upon these roots. They explain that the image suggested by our house carries with it powerful and abhorrent associations to the Jim Crow history of Delray Beach.

### **Self Determination, Preservation and the Ironic Solution of Gentrification**

Instead, would-be residents of Mount Olive prefer what can only be described as white, middle-class housing circa 1960. This reaction has placed the physical integrity of Mount Olive in jeopardy, as gaps in the neighborhood fabric are filled with impoverished versions of suburbia and, gradually, existing vernacular houses are demolished and replaced with more of the same. Imprisoned by the limitations of their interpretations and associations, Mount Olive residents effec-

tively devalue what the larger interpretive community has come to hold dear: a cohesive tectonic construct that can support a sense of community.

The houses that Mount Olive residents are choosing to build suffer the hallmark ills of the region-neutral, developer-designed, single-family houses that have sapped the vitality of late twentieth century (sub)urbanism. These houses turn their backs on the streets, traditionally a place for community life, centering instead on private interior spaces and rear yards. They undermine the character of the neighborhood by the non-contributing aesthetic of their materials, tectonics and proportions. And in flagrant contradiction to the demands of a subtropical climate, they have deep sections, low ceilings, shallow roof overhangs and single-exposure spaces that prohibit cross-ventilation.

Ironically, our site-specific, wood-frame, typologically-based affordable house may well be built, not in a modest neighborhood where it represents an extension of local building traditions, but in the central Florida town of Loughman. A newly-minted "neo-traditional" town, Loughman is being crafted as a nostalgic (re)vision of suburbia for upper- and lower-middle classes. In search of an affordability that supports thematic continuity, the designers and developers have responded to the value of the type solely as artifact, and have thus focused on the objective merits of a region-specific architecture rather than on the socio-economic context in which that form was first built.

Gentrification, in fact, may be the only route through which Mount Olive will remain physically intact. Inhabitation by a middle class disassociated with the neighborhood and its history, responding instead to a reinvented, commodified take on the small-town America of yesteryear, seems far more likely to result in the physical preservation of Mount Olive than the reconfiguration that would render the neighborhood palatable to current and prospective residents.

Were this to occur, the artifact, bereft of the descendants of its original inhabitants, would remain physically intact, if ultimately romanticized. Yet the most valuable part of Mount Olive's genius loci would be lost, as would the hope of the Delray CRA to provide in situ housing for part of the city's population.

This is the gentrification pattern for many American inner cities: developers acquire run down, potentially valuable, downtown real estate inhabited by the poor. It is refurbished and subsequently marketed under circumstances that displace its original residents in favor of upwardly mobile people seeking something newly fashionable.

Mount Olive might have become an unusual variation on the typical gentrification pattern. Its architecture is only beginning to be considered significant, and its location has yet to become truly valuable. As a result, although demolition and reconstruction were not economically out of the question, it became possible to consider retaining the neighborhood for its current population. The brief, written by the Delray CRA, underlined and supported that possibility. Post-competition events have all but destroyed it.

#### **At What Cost Preservation?**

In recent years, the City of Delray Beach has gone to considerable lengths to refurbish its significant historic structures. Residents have supported municipal preservation efforts, approving funds to restore City Hall and tax credits to private owners who preserve historic properties.

In theory, Delray could designate Mount Olive an historic district and so insist on its preservation, encouraging residents to remain and engage in the effort. But it is highly uncertain that the historic designation would wield any persuasive power with either current or prospective inhabitants. Instead, we suspect that placing Mount Olive among protected historic districts would only hasten gen-



trification, taking the neighborhood away from its current residents altogether. Similarly, our experiences indicates that enacting architectural and zoning codes directed at maintaining the physical character of the place would only be seen as coercive, paternalistic efforts to keep a disadvantaged segment of the local population oppressed.

Historic district status for places like Mount Olive, while not unheard of, is hardly commonplace in South Florida. A poor neighborhood with an unsavory history is not readily seen as worthy of preservation unless the proposal is accompanied by an economically and socially attractive promise of gentrification. In cases where the context itself is either socially embarrassing or otherwise questionable, and where gentrification is not the ultimate goal, mandated preservation is immediately suspect. This holds true for current residents (who devalue their own holdings and can only envision a radical transformation of their neighborhood), for building and zoning boards (whose members seldom understand the goals of preservation are not solely economic) and for the general public (whose support fuels and protects preservation efforts).

The price of preservation, as it is currently practiced, is unreasonably high for a neighborhood like Mount Olive. Such realities speak volumes about the typically exclusive character of our historic areas and suggest a need for more

# We have ended up exactly where we started, deciding that the best interests of a place are served not by something other than

careful scrutiny of their economic and social dynamics both before and after historic district designation. At stake is the very definition of the city, an organism whose physical form preservationists work to maintain, but whose social, cultural and economic content are the sine qua non of its multi-dimensionality and authenticity.

## **Forging a Design Attitude for a Post-Romantic Professional Practice**

The clear disjunction of form and content represented by the Mount Olive competition also raises important questions for what Thomas Fisher has called a post-Romantic era of professional practice.<sup>2</sup> These questions not only probe the ambivalent social role of preservation, but also direct self-reflexive inquiries about the design stance of the profession. As architects, how independent do we want to make form from content? How independent do our clients want us to make the two? In a competition like this one, in which the jury and the intended inhabitants of the project turn out to have vastly different agendas, is it ever really possible to reconcile form, content and meaning?

Hoping to avoid some of the land mines of many decades of institutionalized separation among architects, clients and the physical context of their work, and in the absence of a flesh and blood client, we naively thought that by serving Mount Olive, we were serving its inhabitants. We assumed a positive correspondence between a physically cohesive place, neighborhood identity and resident satisfaction. In purposeful contradiction to the late eighteenth-century, Romantic disassociation of form, user and meaning under which contemporary practice often labors, we harbored the illusion that by building according to the laws of the vernacular as translated into a type, we would be doing our part not only to conserve the neighborhood but also to empower the people who lived there.

It seems clear to us now that we were operating in a context that simply did not permit us to find a solution that would save Mount Olive while finding favor in the eyes of its population. We (and the prototype clients we conceived) held a widely different vision for the future of Mount Olive from its present and prospective residents.

The desires of Mount Olive residents had one important parallel with ours and one important difference. Like us, the residents assumed a correspondence among the place, its form and its intended inhabitants. But while we posited a necessary correlation among place, form and user, they instead posited a complete identification between themselves and their physical surroundings. In a social context that imbues image with tremendous power, especially in terms of self-identity and self-determination, it is not surprising that Mount Olive residents, in rejecting the content associations of the shotgun, also rejected its image, and thus its form.

## **The Re-Interpretive Agenda**

Our proposal for Delray Beach was a plea for pride in both place and history. We saw these as a source of strength from which to forge a future, rather than a shackles to an oppressive past. Yet we find ourselves in the unexpected position of having to re-evaluate a scenario in which preservation and continuity, even as interpreted through the elastic prism of typology, are perceived as symbols of a coercive rather than natural fit between form and content.

We had hoped that the African roots of the typology would lift it above the stigma of its more recent history and refocus the attention of prospective residents on its cultural authenticity and intrinsic value as a tropical residence. The example of the Charleston side porch house, which, from its inception, existed in both ramshackle and luxury editions, seemed reason enough to assume

# here we so wanted not to be: and its people are served that they themselves expressly desire.

that the shotgun, too, might be manipulated to bridge the gap in economic and class differences.

In retrospect, the reaction of Mount Olive residents to this design is far from incomprehensible. The desire to leave a position of social and economic marginality in favor of full assimilation and acceptance by the larger culture virtually defines the ethnic, racial and immigrant history of this country. But membership in that larger culture is purchased at a dear price. The cost of assimilation and accommodation for racial, national and ethnic groups in America has always included a collective forgetting, a loss of specific identity, history and past.

It is precisely against that loss that our small house was a physical argument. We chose to rail against a collective amnesia because we considered that it should be difficult, not to say inauthentic, to accept a manufactured, fictionalized history in lieu of a genuine past. We hoped that typologically based design in a meaningful context might be the vehicle through which real history had a chance to survive its potential trivialization and commercialization. Beneficiaries would include groups whose history might be preserved long enough so that the pain of old memories could be incorporated into a newly positive collective identity, and American cities, which would become increasingly multi-dimensional as they found ways to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

In an effort to refrain from imposing foreign ideas on either a people or a place, our design sought to speak the physical language of Mount Olive and its history, supporting an architectural fabric that would strengthen a rundown but viable inner-city neighborhood. Ironically, largely as a result of a competitive process that separated user from professional, we have ended up exactly where we so wanted not to be: deciding that the best interests of a place and its people are served by something other than what they themselves expressly desire.

Although we believe strongly that we see far-reaching consequences in blind acquiescence to as narrow a reading of an architectural form as Mount Olive residents wish to impose on themselves, we also understand the historically devastating results of professional hubris. Nevertheless, Mount Olive residents might reconsider the voluntary self-imprisonment inherent in this particular social construction of meaning.

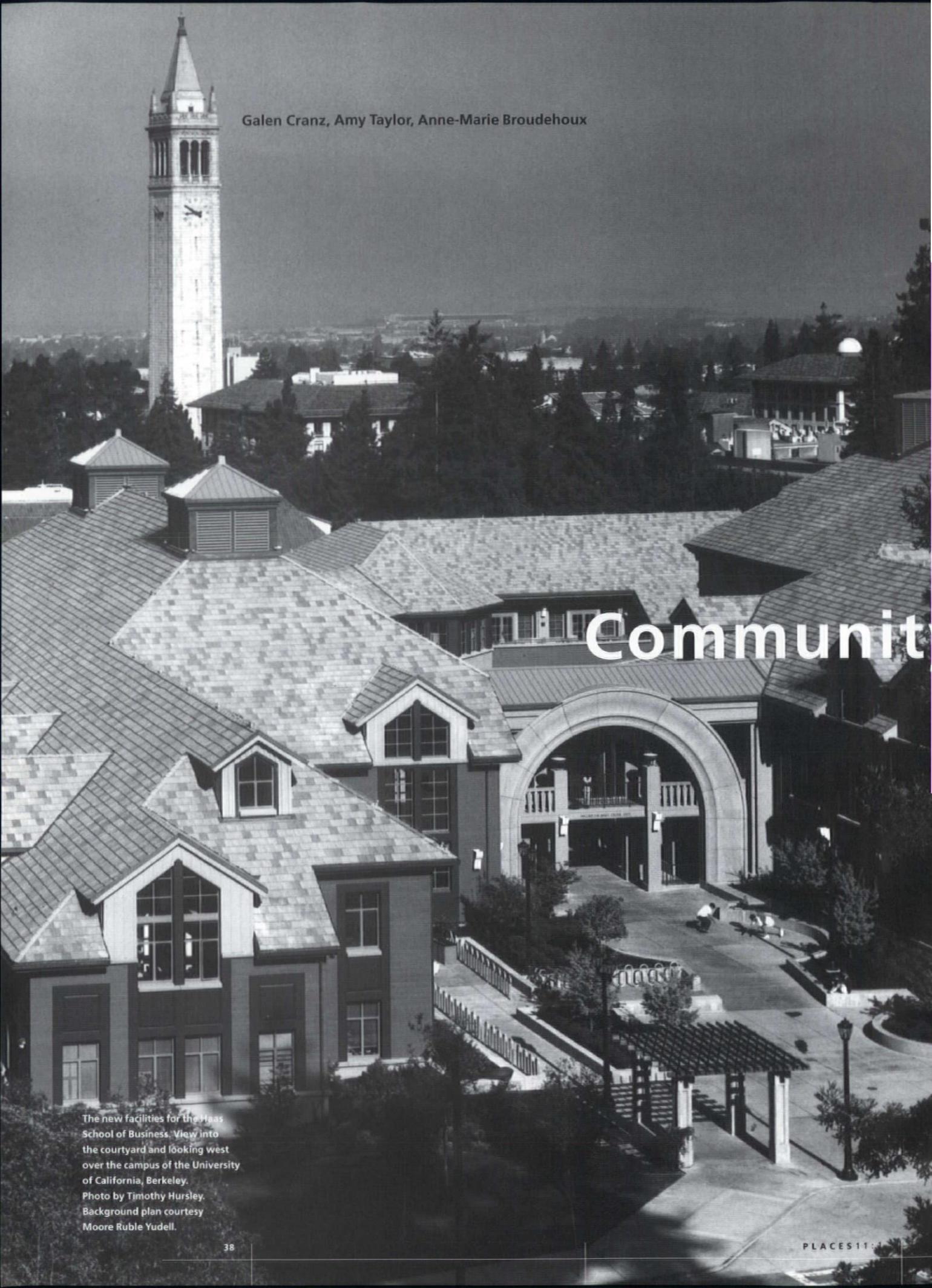
We suspect that Mount Olive residents would mourn the disappearance of their former neighborhood in the aftermath of the destruction that would result from yielding to their preferences. We cannot help but suspect that our small shotgun house, hopelessly ravaged now by unacceptable echoes in the eyes of Mount Olive residents, would appeal to them if they were to come upon it in Loughman, or in their own, long-since-gentrified former community.

By then, however, Mount Olive would have become a different place, transferred to people unfamiliar with, and perhaps uncaring about, its history. By then, it would be far too late for former Mount Olive residents to reclaim and ultimately re-create their own past with any degree of authenticity in a historically meaningful location.

After considerable reflection, after acknowledging frankly that our solution may not be the best or most appropriate in all cases, we have (gingerly) returned to our original position. Despite the local response, we find ourselves unable to ignore the vast chasm that separates a transformation and reinterpretation of the history of enslavement from its abandonment, either through the destruction of its physical remnants or through gentrification. We must conclude that in our own estimation, at least, genuine empowerment for Mount Olive residents lies in embracing and celebrating their history rather than in succumbing to the urge for its destruction.

## Notes

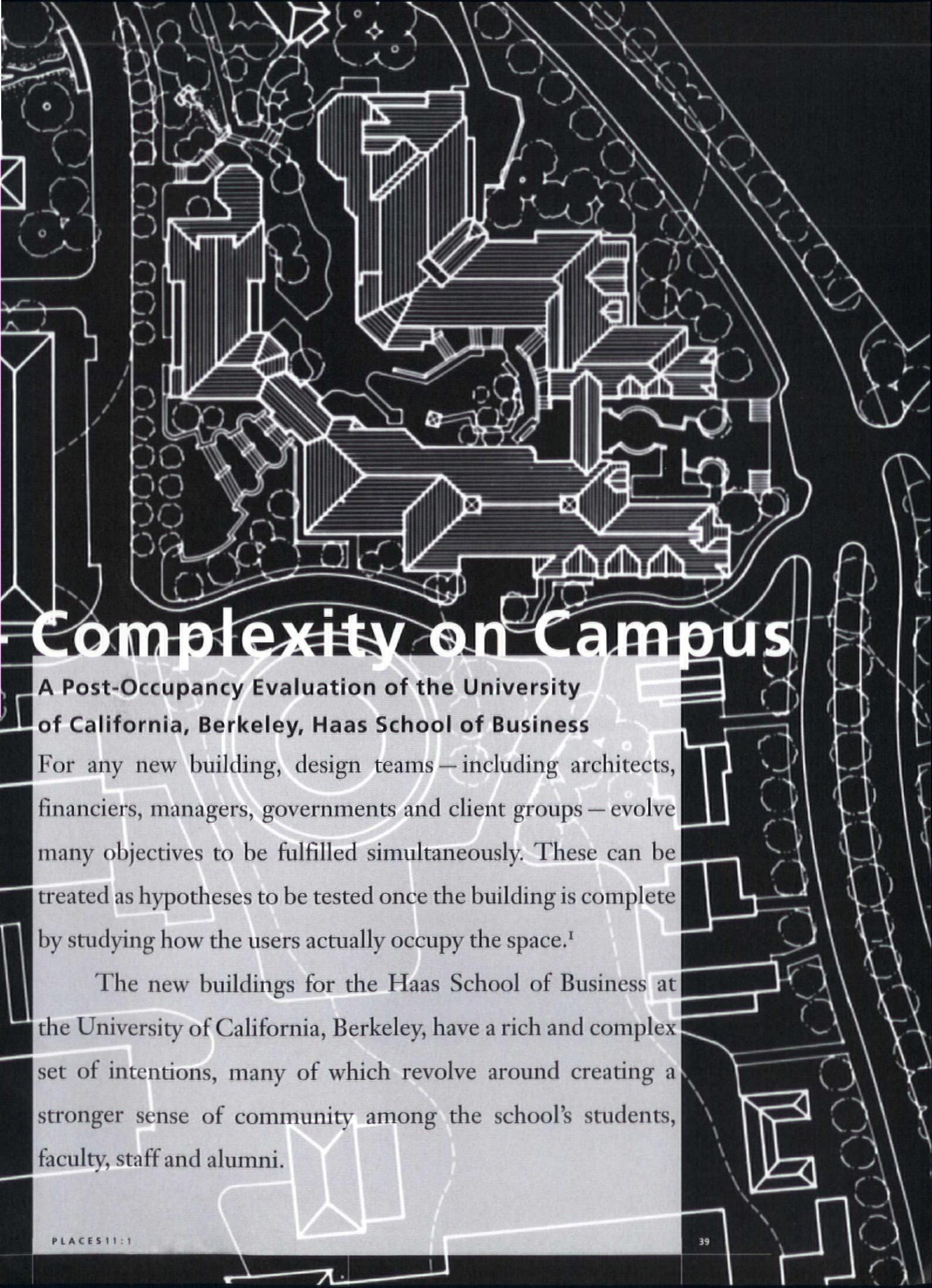
1. For example, see John Vlach, *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986).
2. Thomas Fisher, "Escape From Style," *Progressive Architecture* 9 (September 1994), pp. 59-63, 100. Fisher believes that the economic, social and intellectual frameworks increasingly guiding the profession will dictate a critical architecture of "content, context, climate and culture of place" (p. 63).



Galen Craz, Amy Taylor, Anne-Marie Broudehoux

# Communit

The new facilities for the Haas School of Business. View into the courtyard and looking west over the campus of the University of California, Berkeley. Photo by Timothy Hursley. Background plan courtesy Moore Ruble Yudell.

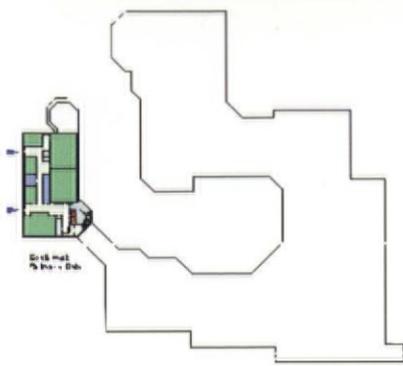


# Complexity on Campus

## A Post-Occupancy Evaluation of the University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business

For any new building, design teams—including architects, financiers, managers, governments and client groups—evolve many objectives to be fulfilled simultaneously. These can be treated as hypotheses to be tested once the building is complete by studying how the users actually occupy the space.<sup>1</sup>

The new buildings for the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley, have a rich and complex set of intentions, many of which revolve around creating a stronger sense of community among the school's students, faculty, staff and alumni.



1



2



3

Above: Plans for each level of the Haas school. Graphic by Archer Design; courtesy University of California, Berkeley.

The business school's former home was Barrows Hall, a nine-story, slab-style structure built in 1964. Barrows was considered inadequate for two reasons. Insufficient classroom and office space forced faculty and students to disperse elsewhere on campus. And the building was regarded as unpleasant to work in; offices and classrooms connected directly to the busy double-loaded corridors that served as main circulation routes, leaving no space for informal social interaction. Both of these conditions contributed to the sense that the business school lacked community.

The architecture firm Moore Ruble Yudell worked with the school's building committee to produce three low-rise buildings that are connected loosely around an open courtyard and spill down over a moderate slope, like a campus within a campus. Altogether, the buildings provide 204,000 square feet of space, including classrooms, research centers, student services, offices and a library. The new setting conveys an overall impression of informality and complexity.

We undertook an evaluation in spring, 1996, after the school's new facilities had been open for nearly one academic year.<sup>2</sup> We identified issues to evaluate by consulting with David Irons, the school's director of public affairs; Professor Fred Balderston, past chair of the building committee; and MRY's Stephen Harby, all of whom explained that the new school had a clear social mission. "From the beginning, both architects and committee have been united in one overarching goal: create a community," Irons said.

Community can be defined in many different ways. According to a behavioral conception, interactions between people may be the actuality of community. According to a more subjective, experiential conception, interactions are the means by which the feeling of community is created. In either case, interaction is key, so it became

a focus for our investigation.

We divided students into several teams, each of which was assigned one of four research methods: interviews, questionnaires, behavior trace analysis and direct observations.<sup>3</sup> Their task was to investigate the sense of community within the new school by analyzing several architectural features that were meant to stimulate interaction:

**1 Faculty offices** In reaction to the experience at Barrows Hall, the arrangement of faculty offices within the the new facilities was intended to foster social interchange among faculty and students. We investigated students' impressions of faculty accessibility as well as physical clues, such as whether the suite layout encouraged faculty to leave their doors open, or whether the inclusion of glazed panels in office doors increased visual connection.

**2 The forum and courtyard** These spaces, considered the heart of the new school, are located at the convergence of major circulation routes and are designed to foster informal encounters.

**3 Informal seating** To promote interaction, the building programmers wanted to create informal seating, such as built-in benches and window seats, at different locations.

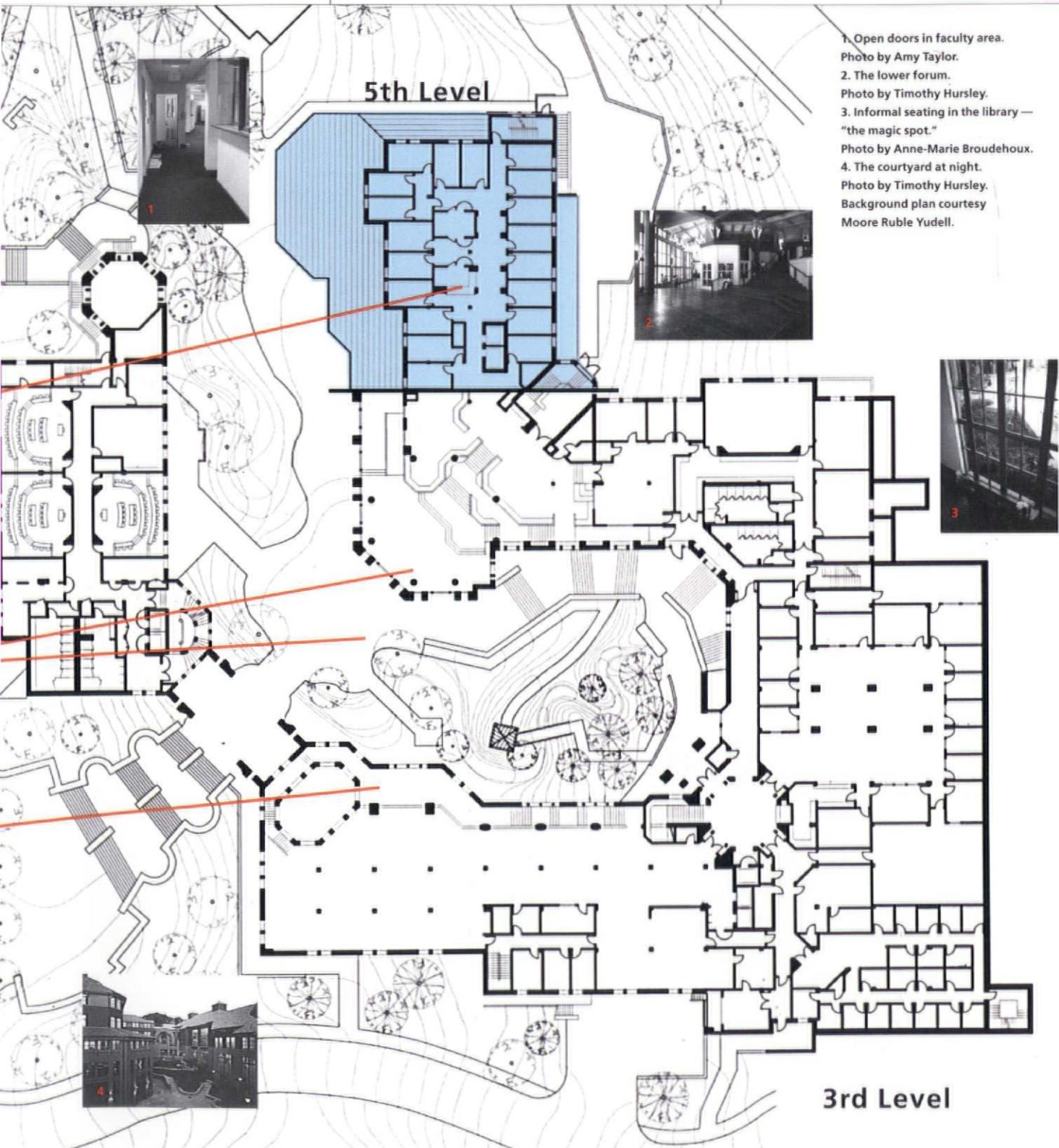
**4 Wayfinding** Another design goal was to welcome the larger community into the school. We investigated the ability of visitors unfamiliar with the new complex to find their way around it.



5



6



5th Level

- 1. Open doors in faculty area.  
Photo by Amy Taylor.
- 2. The lower forum.  
Photo by Timothy Hursley.
- 3. Informal seating in the library —  
“the magic spot.”  
Photo by Anne-Marie Broudehoux.
- 4. The courtyard at night.  
Photo by Timothy Hursley.  
Background plan courtesy  
Moore Ruble Yudell.

3rd Level



The forum (above and right) and the courtyard are popular places for meeting, pausing and working. Photos by Timothy Hursley. However, the east side of the courtyard (below) is shaded almost continuously. Photo by Donlyn Lyndon.

### Courtyard and Forum

In general, the courtyard design is successful in facilitating chance encounters. Its central location captures a high volume of circulation and increases the chances of regular contact among members of the school. Most students use the courtyard frequently, mainly as a place to rest, socialize or eat. The courtyard was found to be inviting to visitors and well used as a pleasant access route to the rest of the campus.

Student researchers observed that the northern section of the courtyard is very popular, perhaps because it is exposed to sunlight, close to the forum and directly accessible from two building entrances. In contrast, the eastern portion of the courtyard is used much less, perhaps because it is almost continuously in the shade and offers no direct access to the building.



The forum was generally perceived by respondents and student researchers alike as two physically and visually separate entities: the lower forum, which serves as an entry hall, and the upper forum, which serves as the real community room for students. Students appreciate the flexibility of the upper forum, where they study, work on laptops, eat, socialize and occasionally hold nighttime parties. The lower forum is less appropriated by the students and is often empty.

Haas students expressed the need for better visual contact between the upper and lower spaces. Because these spaces are separated, it is hard to wait in one and watch for someone coming, or to pass through and glance quickly to see who might be hanging out. Students would also appreciate seating, public telephones and drinking fountains in the lower forum. Now that a cafe is operating there, more amenities are being offered.





The new complex has various types of informal seating: the gazebo in the courtyard, window benches and wing chairs in the library. Photo above by Donlyn Lyndon, photos below by Anne-Marie Broudehoux.

### Informal seating

Student researchers investigated the potential of informal seating arrangements throughout the project to facilitate casual encounters. They concluded, in general, that the abundance of seating choices has, indeed, allowed for active appropriation of the space by the Haas community.

The window chairs, on the lower level of the library overlooking the courtyard (referred to by David Irons as “the magic spot”), are a favorite place for relaxing or even sleeping. Most of the people using these chairs said they enjoy the quality of the light, the comfort of the upholstered wingchairs and the opportunity to observe the community in action. Some said they found it difficult to study there because of the distractions

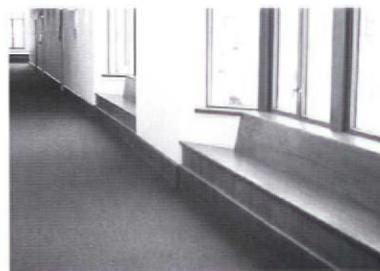
of the activities taking place in the courtyard just outside.

One research team observed that the built-in window seats located along circulation paths inside the building are rarely used for spontaneous, casual, social interaction. Rather, the students rest their bags on the seats while they are waiting to get into classes. Interviews revealed the reasons: students perceived the window seats to be too exposed, too close to the flow of traffic to be good places for socializing or reading. This explains why the seating areas hidden in corners are used more frequently for these purposes.

In the upper forum, movable chairs and tables are greatly appreciated as they allow for groups to form casually and configure themselves comfortably. However, students complain that the chairs are too bulky to allow enough people to cluster around a table.

In the courtyard, benches, planters and low walls provide abundant and diversified seating arrangements from which users can choose. Not surprisingly, more people use informal seating and stay there longer (fifteen minutes on average) than anywhere inside. Some users expressed the desire to have movable tables and chairs that could be used in both the courtyard and the lower forum, which are adjacent to each other.<sup>4</sup>

A gazebo, located in the more shaded part of the courtyard, is used less intensely. Perhaps in the future, when the trees are mature and the gazebo peeks above their crowns, it will become a favored place for introverts and shade lovers.



# How To Grow

When we interviewed for the job of designing new facilities for the Haas School of Business in 1987, the idea of team spirit was very much on our minds. Our perception of the school as a spirited organization with a keen sense of mission inspired us to prepare one of our most energetic and well-organized presentations ever. After all, we were pursuing clients who knew the value of time, and who gave their students formal training in interviews!

As our collaboration got underway, the idea of team spirit evolved into a richer concept of community, and we saw that the vision of a school community would influence the design in a variety of ways. It became the common theme in three very different sets of influences: the school's program, our design process and our common understanding of Berkeley and the campus as a place.



Students are more likely to greet a faculty member casually if an office door is left open (below right), but most faculty doors are closed most of the day (above). Photos by Amy Taylor. Right: The upper forum. Photo by Timothy Hursley.

## Open Doors

The move to the new complex has had a modestly positive effect on faculty-student interactions. All students surveyed responded that they are more likely to greet a faculty member casually if an office door is left open. While visiting with faculty in their offices, students report that they are more likely to engage in informal conversation, not just official academic matters.

Student researchers observed that doors to offices within faculty suites are open more than doors to offices along corridors. The semi-privacy of the suite encourages open doors, but in busy and noisy areas (near elevators and stairs, for example) doors are more likely to be closed. Regardless of this distinction, most doors are closed most of the time because faculty rarely occupy their offices; after all, office hours are scheduled for only a few hours each week.

Window glazing in the doors allows students to peer into the offices, whether doors are open or not. However, glazing panels in some of the doors are covered with a range of materials, from paper to hanging coats to formal blinds, indicating that some occupants feel too exposed by the visual link through the door. Covering these windows reduces casual and impromptu exchanges between faculty members and students.

Appointment sign-up sheets, hand-outs and informative fliers posted outside the doors of faculty offices indicate that students go to the faculty areas, creating opportunities for social exchange.



# Business School

## Program: Learning in a Collaborative Setting

An example of the Haas school's educational philosophy is its MBA curriculum. Its focus is the case study of real life business enterprises and their success or failure. The core classes are highly interactive, and the typical MBA classroom in the new building features tiered seating, complete with data ports and interactive media via video projection.

In this modern-day *teatro anatomico* companies like Xerox are laid on the table in a simulation of some critical juncture in their corporate history. Students are called on to propose their own strategies: What do you say Mr. Yamato? Capitalize? Sacrifice profits for market share? Re-structure? Yamato's proposals are fed into Professor White's laptop, which is displayed to the class on the video screen as he jumps from linked spreadsheets to the World Wide Web in search of just the right database. Soon the class begins to see the consequences of Mr. Yamato's approach. The same classroom, with its tiered, wrap-around seating, allows students to communicate as readily with each other as with Professor White, and thus to function as one large team as they work to improve Xerox's fortunes.

This fundamental experience in interactive, group problem solving—the heart of the Haas

## Wayfinding

The implicit theory of social life for which Moore Ruble Yudell is known is that a variety of spaces and settings are necessary to support the many kinds of social interaction that take place in a community. But this strategy, when applied to the sloped site of the new business school, resulted in an extremely complex plan that may have had the opposite impact on newcomers or visitors.

Since our investigation fell fairly late in the academic year, most members of the Haas community already knew how to get around. But visitors stood out as appearing confused or wandering aimlessly. More signage would be helpful to those unfamiliar with the school, particularly if it



were located in the high traffic areas.

As perceived by Haas students, the courtyard and forum are easy to find, classrooms are split between easy and difficult, restrooms are difficult to find and elevators are especially hard to locate. The purposeful location of elevators out of the way contributes to the use of stairways and visible paths, as intended by the designers. But some of those surveyed admitted that when they first arrived at the school, they had trouble finding their classes and gave up and left the building completely.

As a test, we asked architecture students to locate two classrooms and the main lecture hall, the Andersen Auditorium, in their first visit to the site. Most students, describing their experiences on a written questionnaire,

reported difficulty finding the assigned destinations. This is particularly telling coming from architecture students, who might be expected to have developed more skills in reading how to move around the built environment.

Several architectural decisions contributed to the disorientation. The architects deliberately chose an asymmetrical ordering; yet examples of a building cascading over a hillside symmetrically or moving linearly along a significant view are not hard to find or imagine.

By separating the school into three buildings, MRY established a circulation pattern that wraps around the central courtyard, which is terraced. Large portions of the building were built under-

Major circulation routes wrap around the courtyard and are visible from it. Photos by Timothy Hursley.





Above: The buildings' residential references belie the presence of the large auditorium just inside.  
 Right: The east facade attempts to maintain the residential scale of the street it faces.  
 Photos by Timothy Hursley.

ground. Consequently, no two floor plans are alike, and some paths move between buildings while others do not.

For some decisions, such as where to locate the computer center and library, the architects had less precedent to react to or against because computers are relatively new in our culture and we do not yet have a convention for the most meaningful or effective relationship between these two kinds of information resources. Thus it is all the more important that the building convey the location of these facilities with no signage.

In older models of campus planning and design, the library's location would be obvious because of its tall windows. Here, people in the courtyard can easily identify and see into the library, but they must follow a hairpin route into the building, up several flights of stairs and back down again to reach the library.

The residential references in the complex's massing intentionally blur distinctions between large and small spaces. For example, the size of the doorway to the Andersen Auditorium is similar to that of other doors to much smaller spaces, such as offices. Nothing about the doorway indicates gathering. The presence of such a large gathering space is not expressed the wall design, entry treatment or other visual cues, like color. (In fact, the beautiful color palette was used to blur distinctions between parts, where it could have been used as a code to aid orientation.)

One easy improvement would be better sig-

philosophy—is augmented by team projects that are underway day and night in the library and computing center. The forum, with its various lounges and work areas for student organizations, offers a social complement to the curriculum. The forum emerged during programming and conceptual design as a kind of interior "town square" and is home to all student groups. Its lounges are filled with the bustle of chance meetings, lunches, receptions and lectures.

#### Process: Design as Community Building

The Haas school is composed of a wide range of programs, departments, faculty and student groups, graduate and undergraduate clubs, and staff. As a transition between space programming (already undertaken by ROMA Architects) and schematic design, we staged a series of design workshops that were open to a broad sample of these many constituents. Such workshops provide us with an opportunity to collaborate with those who will occupy the building and allow the more subjective goals of the program to be expressed. For the business school, we wanted to know more about the culture of the organization and what thoughts and images the students, faculty and staff would have as they set about to design the project themselves.

This process had further significance: designing the new school was itself an act of community building. Students, faculty and staff worked as peers in groups of six to ten, using their varied

nage, particularly at the main entrances, where visitors first encounter the complex. At the forum entrance, what looks like it might be a directory turns out to be a list of donors. Informally taped signs show where clarification would be useful.<sup>5</sup>



talents as part of a team. Our monthly meetings offered design problems for each team to explore and present back to the group. Participants studied overall siting alternatives, the distribution of departments, special rooms and typical problems, such as how to arrange staff and faculty offices.

The participants' experience with their previous building (Barrows Hall, a high-rise slab with centrifugal rings of offices around a core) left clear impressions of how the school should not be housed. Barrows' circulation scheme was clear, but its long hallways were short on departmental identity and encouraged faculty to keep their doors shut. Workshop participants envisioned the new building almost as a large house, with clustered offices linked by generous stairways to student lounges and the Forum.

For us, the most significant products of the workshops were diagrams that depicted relationships between the major components of the space program. The diverse collection of groups and departments, all of which sought an identifiable address in the plan, were organized into three interconnected buildings, which offered a strong expression of the school's complex community structure. At the same time, there was also a clear sense of the school's overall identity, which we suggested by gathering the buildings around the hierarchic centers of the courtyard and the forum.

As the plan was further developed, we sought to enhance the town square function of these central places by locating shared facilities, such as the

### A Role Perspective on Community

On campus projects, faculty and students are often considered the primary users. But what about administrative and maintenance staffs?

Do they also experience the unity of purpose and commonality associated with community? Since the Haas school wants good ties with the business community, does this mean that visitors should also have a sense of community? We asked the student researchers to investigate the way that five different groups — administration, faculty, students, maintenance staff and visitors — experienced community at the Haas school.<sup>6</sup>

*Students:* One indication of community might be that students spend more time at Haas than that required to attend classes. The research team

that developed this inventive measure found that almost all students spend some time at the school outside of class. Most of this extra time was spent in academic facilities, such as the library or computer center, while some time was spent in the central courtyard, the most sociable of these three spaces.

Yet another measure of community is feeling associated with others via common interests. Regardless of time spent outside of class, some students said that simply coming to the same place to take classes created a sense of community for them. Those students who had experienced the former location in Barrows reported an increase in this feeling.



Almost all students spend some time at the school outside of class, working alone or in groups in spaces like the forum. Photo by Amy Taylor.



Above: A coffee stand has opened in the lower forum, adding needed food service. Photo by Amy Taylor.  
 Right: The massing of the school responds to the sloping terrain and the creek corridor to the rear. Photo by Timothy Hursley.  
 Below: Informal seating in the library. Photo by Timothy Hursley.

Haas students themselves said the building's architecture helped create a sense of community. Having classrooms and pathways pour people directly into the courtyard increases the probability of social contact. The feeling of enclosure in the courtyard reinforces the idea of a bounded community. The building itself — its distinctive aesthetic, separate site, grandness — has contributed to the development of "Haas pride." The separateness of the site has given Haas students a sense of destination and belonging, reinforcing their identity as Haas students, not just Berkeley students.

Yet, students remain pessimistic regarding access to their professors. When asked about student-faculty interaction they cited office hours as virtually the only opportunity. Professors are perceived as wanting isolation and privacy. One researcher concluded: "Loitering in areas frequented by students is not a pastime of Berkeley professors, and the Haas design has not changed that behavior." Academic hierarchy has not been overthrown by architecture.

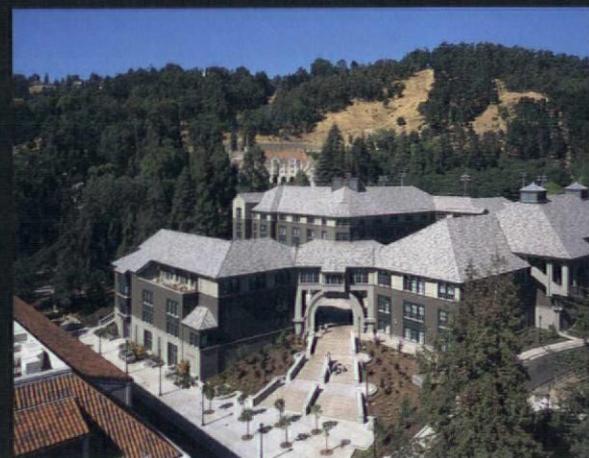
Another caveat regarding architecture: Pre-Haas students ranked their sense of community around 2 on a scale of 1-5. After the move, the average score increased substantially to 3.6. However, the increase may not be all attributed to the design, since the planning and preparation for the new building undoubtedly helped coalesce people around a sense of common purpose.

*Staff:* Student researchers interviewed nine

library, main auditorium and cafe, nearby. The movement between classroom, office, library, courtyard and forum would establish the daily rhythm of life. The architecture provides a choreographic form for this movement and shapes the experience of community.

**Place: Celebrating a Minor Theme on the Berkeley Campus**

Community is also very much a matter of the surrounding place—of sharing experiences and values with a particular part of the world. In that sense, the campus and town provided rich resources that we wanted the Haas school to draw upon and extend. At this point, the architects' own sensibilities and judgment—our interpretation of what makes Berkeley a place—come into play. But we also studied images of the campus and neighborhood during the workshops, allowing participants to respond directly and reflect their own values.



administrative staff about interactions between faculty and staff. Surprisingly, they found that such interactions were less frequent at the new facilities than they had been at Barrows. Two interviewees said that they had friends on the faculty, but had made no new friends after the move. In their opinions, this was a direct consequence of the new school's design.

In Barrows the two groups shared a common passage through the faculty lounge to get to the mail room, which was also the copy room and supply room. But at Haas, administrative staff and faculty offices are in different wings; separate lounges in separate wings accommodate separate lunches. Opportunities for informal,

The campus has several distinct architectural orders. First is the Italianate–Beaux Arts fabric of formal plazas and discrete, mostly light-colored buildings. This major theme is complemented by a minor one, of a more regional and somewhat woodier set of buildings, such as the faculty clubs, arranged in close connection to the shady meander of Strawberry Creek. Finally, there is the order of postwar expansion, dominated by a rogues gallery of notoriously unsuccessful interventions.

The new facilities for the Haas school belonged to the second order. Despite the size of the program (204,000 square feet), we all wanted the school to make close connections to the Strawberry Creek landscape and to fit responsibly with the residential scale of neighboring houses along Gayley Road. Our strategy was to use the sloping site to hide large areas of windowless space—library stacks, the computer center—while benefiting from the division of the program into separate buildings.

For seismic safety, the exterior walls had to be poured-in-place concrete, and we took maximum advantage of the design of the formwork to establish scale, pattern and surface texture in ways that supported the minor theme. Using these patterns, Tina Beebe's deep-hued color scheme places the Haas unmistakably in the company of the faculty clubs, just downstream, and new student housing, just up the hill. Complementing the texture of windows, ledgers, and battens, there are grand arches and monumental stairs that anchor the Haas in what is, after all, a big campus.

accidental interactions are limited. This separation does nothing to counteract the perception of hierarchy between the two.

Only on level four are faculty and staff offices located near each other in the same wing; here interactions were reported to be as frequent as they had been at Barrows. These researchers concluded that the number of shared facilities should be increased following the example of level four, and that those features that worked at Barrows should be introduced.

*Faculty:* Another research team directly observed the behavior of faculty on the fourth, fifth and sixth floors of the faculty wing. They were looking to determine where interactions



might occur; in the linear corridors, in the widened corridors in front of clustered suites of offices, in stairways, or in doorways.

They saw most interactions at entrances to stairs and building exits; the faculty lounge and Ph.D. lounge were empty during early afternoon hours between one and three p.m. when they made their observations.<sup>7</sup>

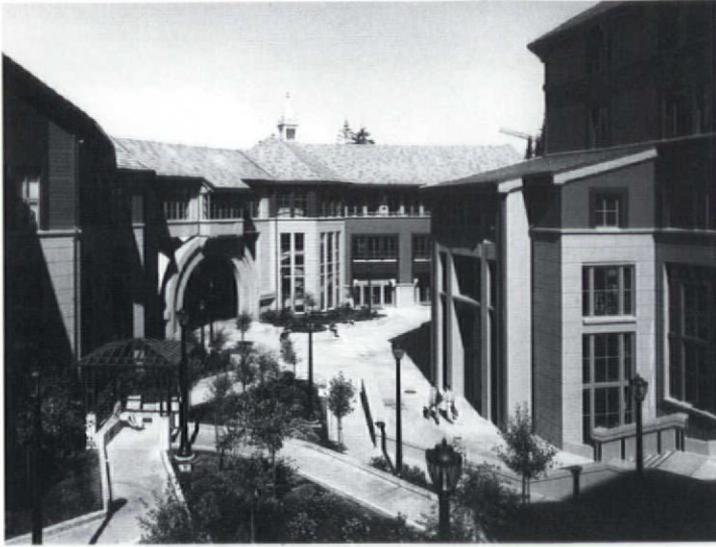
The student researchers liked the irregular corridors more than straight ones, but doubted that the mazelike layout enhances community any more than any other layout might. They concluded that the complex corridors contribute to difficulty in wayfinding, rather than promoting interaction. One student researcher reported that in an hour of observation he was asked twice for directions.

Another observed ironically, "I guess community is developed by lost people running into each other and asking for directions."

*Visitors:* Another research team studied visitors' impressions by giving them questionnaires, and obtained fifteen responses. The cohesive design of the Haas complex helped some visitors feel connected and relaxed, while others felt it wasn't a friendly place. Most visitors find Haas physically more pleasant than other buildings on the Berkeley campus. Visitors frequently get lost and ask for directions, but they perceive students as knowing where they are going. Obviously, wayfinding issues are a recurring theme, whether in promoting interaction or in disorienting people.



Top: The school wanted its new facility to be welcoming to visitors, such as alumni and the members of the local business community. Photo courtesy Haas School of Business. Above: The facility's complex circulation system makes wayfinding difficult. Photo by Timothy Hursley.



The courtyard (left) and Wells Fargo Room (opposite page) are public spaces whose use can continually be reinvented by the Haas community. Photos courtesy Timothy Hursley.

*Maintenance staff:* The maintenance staff like the building more for its ease of cleaning than for its looks. Not surprisingly, the maintenance staff have more camaraderie among themselves than with students, faculty, or administrative staff. Opportunities for interaction are limited because maintenance crews work at night; some also find faculty rude. However, some interaction — mainly greetings and salutations — does occur between maintenance staff and students and faculty.

The in-group feeling obviously results from the fact that maintenance staff work together and also because they rest in the staff lounge. Tellingly, one maintenance staff member perceived that they were not allowed to use the central courtyard for resting.

### Conclusions

From the students' findings, we can make several inferences:

Community at Haas has taken a step forward and a step backward, but is not the same as it was at Barrows. Common classrooms, enclosure and pathways have increased student-student interactions and increased their self-reported sense of community. But spatial segregation has worked to reduce some spontaneous and informal faculty-staff interaction. In these cases, the architectural design had a significant impact.

Architecture is not all powerful. It cannot create interaction when other rituals or routines

### Community is Also Philanthropy

Thinking about the Haas school's sense of community, one can hardly forget the extraordinary fact of entirely private funding for the project. The process of raising money galvanized the alumni and regional business community—could it also have influenced the design? Perhaps it did, by focusing keenly on ideas that characterized the image and purpose of the project.

Almost as soon as the design effort got started, two fundraising mottoes appeared, which were also relevant to the design. "Gateway to Excellence," a reflection of the school's strongly felt mission, suggests that the Haas is a place of passage, of preparation for the future. It also directly speaks to the school's special role as an entrance to the campus.

The other motto, "Campus within a Campus," gets closer to the idea of community. This is of great importance to a school that was previously scattered around the campus. The virtues of having it all within the boundaries of a special precinct have been realized—the Haas school has its own library (shared with the economics department), computer center, auditorium, front porch (the forum) and courtyard gardens, complete with cafe. Each facility is named for its donors, which seems to add another sense of community, a sense of those who came before.

We hope these facilities encourage the Haas community to continue to evolve its own way of

intervene — for example, faculty not being around their offices much anyway, or maintenance staff being scheduled to work at night.

Specific architectural features vary in their effectiveness. The overall configuration unites in the courtyard but divides in the wings, with social consequences. The clustering of faculty offices into distinct suites may encourage keeping doors open, but only when noise and the need for privacy do not override. Benches are a good idea, but possibly overdone, since some are not used; incorporating seating as a stylistic flourish may be wasteful.

Wayfinding in a complex plan is problematic. Where the building has not yet spoken in regard

doing things, in terms of both curriculum and culture. The forum's stairs and balconies make it useful for informal gatherings, just as the Wells Fargo Room, a top-floor lodge for elegant luncheons, would make a delightful small recital hall.

Qualities of place are very much dependent on the ongoing responses of inhabitants, as communities claim and value the buildings and the landscape. If we have been successful, the spirit of community at the Haas will evolve over time, as future generations of students and faculty make imaginative use of the places that the designers, builders and donors have made for them.



to signage, its silence disorients. The designers never aspired to create crystal clear circulation. Getting to an office without being seen is sometimes desired, so many options for circulation has advantages; after all, several prior sociological and architectural studies have taught us that one cannot promote community by taking away privacy. Having to "learn" the building is both a plus and a minus. It disorients but may build participation and a sense of being an insider, hence community.

#### Notes

1. One purpose of this research is to demonstrate that post-occupancy evaluation studies can be done economically within the culture of professional architectural offices by dividing tasks and integrating them back together within the matrix of a coherent research design.

An employee with a few spare hours can go to the site, make observations, conduct interviews, or administer questionnaires and return them to a central file. Over time, the contributions of different individuals can add up to a significant amount of information about how a building is performing.

In general, the profession has no standard procedure for going back to see how well initial objectives were met by the design after it was occupied. Seldom does anybody pay for such research. Instead, architectural educators and students occasionally undertake this task, using methods largely borrowed from the social sciences.

2. This report is based on research done by more than 90 students, primarily undergraduates, in the University of California, Berkeley, architecture department. The students worked under the direction of professor Galen Cranz in the course "Social Cultural Factors in Architecture and Urban Design."

3. These methods can be used to cross-check each other. Face-to-face interviews can induce bias, depending on what the respondent thinks the interviewer wants to hear. Questionnaires may be more objective but they limit the spontaneous discussion that can arise in the interview process. Observing behavior and looking for behavior traces have the advantage of removing the researcher from any direct influence on those being studied.

4. William Whyte's research highlights the importance of movable chairs in increasing the use of small urban spaces. See William Whyte, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Washington, D.C.: The Conservation Foundation, 1980).

5. The school is installing new signage.

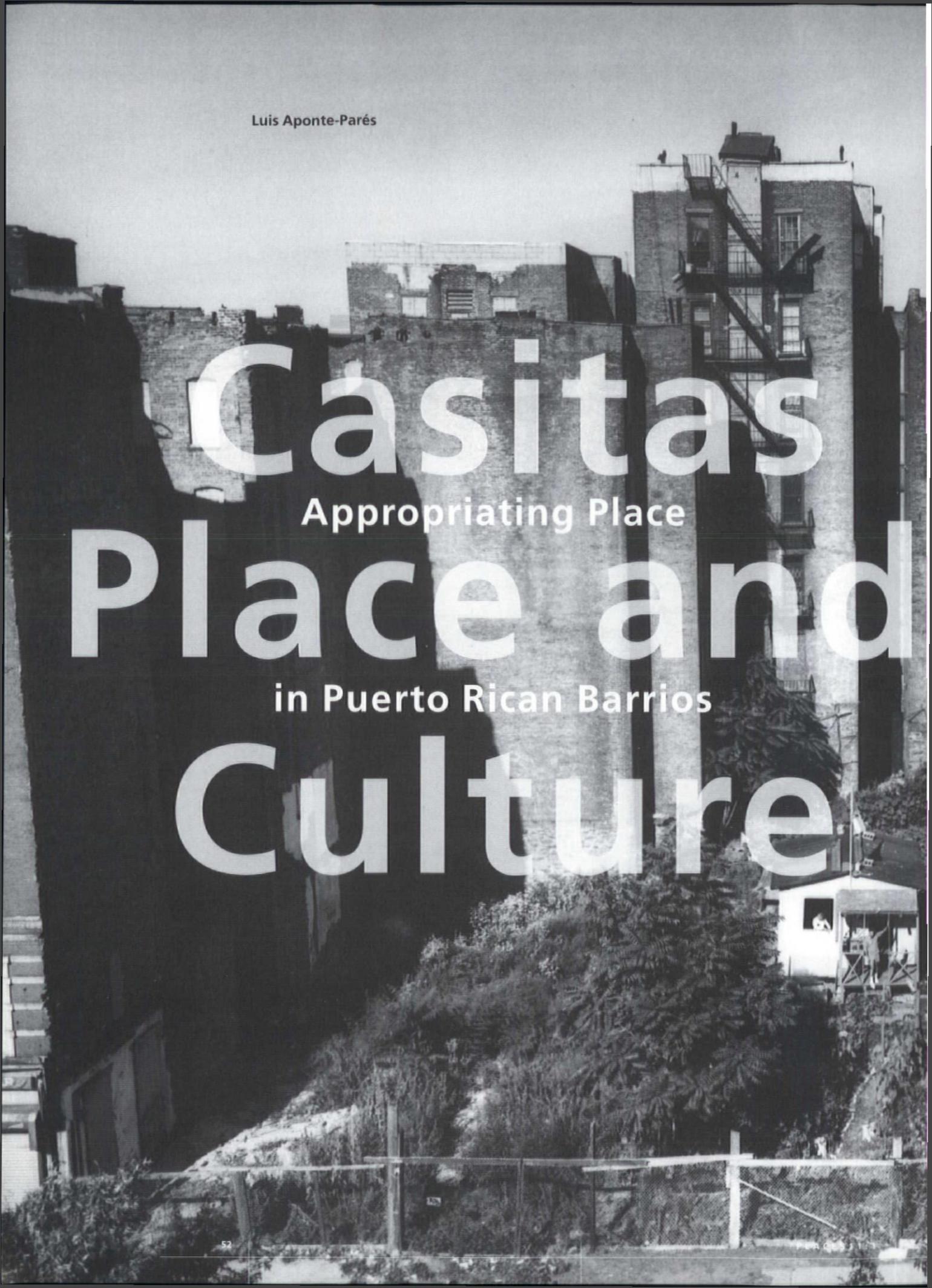
6. Because of the democratic connotations of the word "community," we chose to include the maintenance staff, a group generally overlooked in both programming and evaluation research.

7. A weakness of this study is that students had to fit their research into their academic schedules. They were able to make observations only within a two-hour afternoon period. We cannot say how much the lounges may have been used at other times.

#### Credits

Architect: Moore Ruble Yudell, Santa Monica; Associated Architect: VBN Architects, Oakland; Programming: ROMA, San Francisco. Landscape Architect: Abregast Newton and Griffith, Berkeley; Interiors: Simon Martin-Vegue Winkelstein Morris, San Francisco; Lighting: Peters and Myer, San Rafael; Acoustics: Paoletti Associates, San Francisco; Color: Tina Beebe, Santa Monica. Structural Engineer: T. Y. Lin International Engineers, San Francisco; Civil Engineer: Kennedy/Jenks Consultants, San Francisco; M.E.P. Engineer: Gayner Engineers, San Francisco; Cost Estimator: Hanscomb Associates, San Francisco; Contractor: Hensel Phelps Construction, Berkeley.

Luis Aponte-Parés



# Casitas

Appropriating Place

# Place and

in Puerto Rican Barrios

# Culture



Jaran's face filled with joyful pride as he showed us photos  
of the latest party held at his *casita*, or "little house."  
He recalled building it with his family and neighbors  
at 142nd and St. Ann streets in the South Bronx some years back,  
and how they christened  
it with that evocative name, Villa Puerto Rico.

Looking through the photos, he spoke of the many times Villa Puerto Rico had served the neighborhood as place for celebrations and get-togethers of all kinds: birthday parties, Puerto Rican Day Parade ceremonies, Thanksgiving dinners, block association meetings and political rallies. Not only these events but also the *casita* itself is a source of pride and memory — it articulates and validates the neighbors' Puerto Rican identity in space.

Villa Puerto Rico embodies the endurance of Puerto Rican culture in New York and the strength of Jaran and his neighbors in appropriating the environment and conferring meaning to it by building alter-

native landscapes. On 142nd Street, and throughout the South Bronx, East Harlem (el Barrio), the Lower East Side (Loisaida) and Brooklyn, *casitas* stand as cogent metaphors of place and culture.<sup>1</sup>

*Casitas* belong to a family of wooden, balloon-frame structures generally associated with Third World vernacular architecture. Built on stilts and surrounded with land (often used as a vegetable garden), they can be identified by their corrugated metal gable roofs, shuttered windows, bright colors and ample verandas, so favored in the Caribbean. This architecture took shape during the nineteenth century, when increased trade between the Caribbean and the U.S. led to exchanges of people and culture, bringing about

the transformation and modernization of the islands' traditional or vernacular architecture.<sup>2</sup>

*Casitas* built in New York have specific roots in Puerto Rico and are generally located in neighborhoods that witnessed massive population displacement in the past three decades and now suffer from extreme poverty. In these neighborhoods, large tracts of empty land are surrounded by abandoned tenements and "tower-in-the-park" enclaves, legacies of government housing paradigms that were envisioned, perhaps, as instruments that helped "eradicate the most vocal and visible pockets of non-white inner-city life"<sup>3</sup> and were so successful in fracturing the city.

#### Displacement, Replacement and an Architecture of Resistance

Jaran's smile betrays the deeper role and complex meaning that these humble structures have assumed in the lives of his fellow Puerto Ricans in New York City. As industrial jobs relocated from New York to other parts of the world, significant numbers of displaced workers and their families were not integrated into the new economy. In recent years, the influx of immigrants has created additional economic pressure.

At the same time, massive dislocations impacted working-poor neighborhoods throughout New York, with the loss of hundreds of thousands of homes. Not all neighborhoods fared equally. Some became surplus with diminished value to the financial hub; el Barrio, for example, lost close to one third of its structures. Others,



Villa Puerto Rico, 142nd Street and Brook Avenue, the Bronx. Photos by Luis Aponte-Parés unless otherwise indicated.

Photos on previous pages by Martha Cooper.



Balcón Criollo in East Harlem.  
Below: Casita on 119th Street,  
East Harlem.

like Loisaida, experienced gentrification. Still others became places of arrival for new immigrants, perhaps becoming a new or reconfigured borderland. These high-density ethnic enclaves burst with the dynamism and energy of Third World metropolises like New Delhi, Mexico City and São Paulo.

For Puerto Ricans and others, this has led to an increased poverty rate, increased dependence in transfer payments and an overall decline in living standards. Also, growing numbers of New Yorkers are connected with the informal, “floating,” illegal or underground economy. This is reflected in changes in the landscape — an increased presence of street vendors, illegal sweatshops, squatters, cardboard condos, “Bushvilles” and *casitas*; alternative, informal landscapes of the post-industrial city.

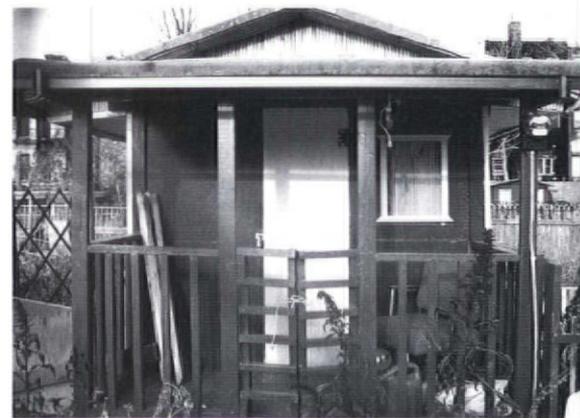
The losses, of course, were not only of buildings and people, but also of primary “life spaces,” places in which people’s “dreams were made and their lives unfolded.”<sup>4</sup> This signalled the detachment of a people from their most recent history, their memories, *sus memorias*, rendering them invisible and making them guests in the neighborhoods to which they were forcibly relocated. The decline and loss of institutions, bodegas, churches, social centers, schools, friends and neighbors has led to a collective need for people to play an active role in rearranging the environment, and thereby restoring the community’s sense of well being.

These transformations have led to sharper contrasts in the everyday spaces of New York, a

divergence in the quality of life among various neighborhoods, perhaps greater than ever before, and the rise of a unique form of an American urban apartheid: “fortress cities” brutally divided into “fortified cells of affluence” and “places of terror” where police battle the criminalized poor. As class polarization increases, there is an increasing inequality in different populations’ ability to choose where to build and appropriate place, the foundation of their identity as people in a neighborhood.<sup>5</sup>

Thus *casitas* are built by the disenfranchised urban poor, who live in landscapes of pollution, joblessness and violence, are increasingly invisible to the rest of society and represent the underside of the “triad imagery of post-industrial landscapes like Silicon Valley, i.e. ecology, leisure and liveability.” Predictably, they are the same people who are unable to buy manufactured landscapes and are left out of information circuits, representing “lag-times — temporary breaks in the imaginary matrix” of the new city.<sup>6</sup> Paradoxically, in cyber-city, the city ostensibly with no spatial needs, the virtual electronic city of computers and modems linking together every place in the globe, the need for meaningful, precious places that validate cultural identities in space may have increased.

It was to address these needs that Jaran and





El Jaragual, *casita* on 103rd Street, East Harlem.  
Photo by Zyduia Nazain.

others like him and their families chose to take an active role in reshaping landscapes of despair into landscapes of hope: transforming fragmented and discontinuous urban landscapes into “cultural forms with continuity” that are rich in values and bring forth a sense of “attachment” — a feeling of “congruence of culture and landscape” — while, perhaps, providing them a sense of regional identity.<sup>7</sup> Key to this attachment is the ability to take possession of the environment simultaneously through physical orientation and through a more profound identification.

But Jaran and other builders of *casitas* can hardly boast the means to build model communi-

ties; their will to reshape is tempered by meager resources and recent history. Their language is one of circumscribed impact, where holding ground, turf, *rescatar*, takes on the primary role, a true architecture of resistance subverting the traditional city. The *casita*, like the ubiquitous Puerto Rican flag, becomes a vehicle through which their builders articulate and defend their national identity, their imagined community, their innate essence, who they are.<sup>8</sup>

**The Puerto Rican Experience:  
From Bodegas to Casitas**

Since arriving in New York early in this century, Puerto Ricans have defied severe housing prob-

lems, involuntary resettlement being the most disruptive. After decades of slowly giving shape, character and meaning to many life spaces in places like Bellevue, Chelsea, Lincoln Square and Hell’s Kitchen, Puerto Ricans began to lose the weak control they had gained over their environment.

From the 1950s through the mid-1970s, urban renewal and the private market intersected to accelerate displacement, inducing a “process of loss, rupture and deterritorialization” of a whole community.<sup>9</sup> Building community was less an act of settling and shaping neighborhoods and more a process of a people being expelled from place to place by the relocation officers of city agencies, unscrupulous landlords or the heat from the last fire.

This removal of buildings and people resulted in the erasure of images that recorded Latinos’ cultural presence in New York, including contributions they had made to the built environment, the replacement of historical and personal narratives, and the loss of memory.<sup>9</sup>

By choosing names like Villa Puerto Rico, El Jaragual, *Añoranzas de mi Patria* and *Rincón Criollo*, *casita* builders introduce and defend the possibility of place, both physical and metaphorical. The practice of building *casitas* imparts identity to the urban landscape by rescuing images, *rescatando imágenes*, and by alluding to the power of other places everybody recognizes, feels good towards and can identify with.

Building *casitas* is an act that both affirms the



*Casita* on 8th Street,  
Lower East Side.

power of culture in space and offers resistance to further deterritorialization. *Casitas* become place to displaced people, new “urban bedouins” removed from other places. Perhaps they also become new invented traditions, new segregated public arenas in which “the other” can congregate and celebrate their self-identity in a city where their invisibility in the public discourse renders many of them non-personae, at best, or personae-non-grata, at worst, and where unifying and inclusive images of the urban narrative seem to be fading daily.<sup>10</sup>

Puerto Rican migration patterns have been fundamental to the development of *casitas*. As colonial citizens of the U.S., Puerto Ricans circulate freely between two spaces, colony and metropolis, thus circumventing barriers traditionally associated with borders, or *fronteras*. This condition has provided several generations ongoing contact with fresh images of the *otra Patria*, the homeland, providing a fluid exchange of people, culture and images.

The commuting airplane has been an agent linking contiguous social realities, Puerto Rico and Nueva York. East Harlem and La Perla, a shanty area in San Juan, are more closely connected, culturally, than East Harlem and Battery Park City. Hence, *casita* builders, when introducing the *casita* language to Nueva York, do more than provide places for the local neighborhood. They also release a new urban language, a Caribbean vernacular, to many the language of Third World *favelas*, squatters’ shanties, *arrabales* or *villas miserias*.

There is something ominous about the presence of *casitas* on the streets of New York, something threatening to many people who may otherwise live in relative security. The abiding message of the *casita* is one of shelter, a squatters’ metaphor many find disturbing, particularly in the increasing presence of the wandering homeless in the most advanced and richest urban center in the world. *Casitas* signal that the visual discourse of *favelas*, *arrabales*, *comunidades marginadas* — the destitute slums ringing the periphery of Third World cities — has its place in the developed world, alongside concocted theme parks, places for the rich, “dreamscapes of visual consumption.” They become “conquered

space,” where the “separation of the Puerto Rican Diaspora is defeated.”<sup>11</sup>

### Popular Dwelling and Changing Urban Landscapes

*Casitas* represent the amalgamation of architectural styles and building techniques from Europe and North America with those from two other cultures — the Amerindians, who contributed the common hut (*bobío*), and the Africans, who gave the *bobío* its final configuration in the plantation hut. *Casitas* evoke a pan-Caribbean language, shared among all the islands (although manifested somewhat differently in each) and regions that were in close trading contact with them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>12</sup>

Before Columbus arrived in the Carribean, Puerto Rico was called Borikén and was home to the Taíno, descendants of Arawak cultures. The Taíno lived in *yucayeques*, nucleations whose principal structures were the *caney*, the *cacique*’s home, and the *bobío*. *Yucayeques* were organized around a central open plaza, the *batey*.

Between 1509, with the founding of Caparra, the first European settlement in Puerto Rico, and 1535, when the conquest of the continent began, between 5,000 to 50,000 people were conquered and permanently displaced. The Spanish destroyed all *yucayeques* and resettled the people of Puerto Rico into *encomiendas* (medieval institutions that were recreated as compounds for the purpose of colonization), where they were enslaved to mine for gold. The attendant loss of place and identity contributed to the eventual eradication of the Taíno.

The invaders soon abandoned the island and their *encomiendas*, but only after having demolished the territorial systems of the indigenous people. *Bobíos* and a reconstituted *batey* endured, nonetheless, as the common dwelling and the fundamental cultural space, albeit at a personal-family scale, particularly in the countryside. In time, this became associated with the yard adjacent to the peasant’s home. *Bobío* and *batey*



*Casita* “ideal” outside Ponce, Puerto Rico.

became foundations of a Puerto Rican vernacular that expressed its dual parentage: the Taíno and the African.

Between 1535 and 1830 the *mestizaje*, or cross-breeding, of the Taíno, African and Spanish cultures occurred as the island slowly repopulated. In these years, the major spatio-cultural arenas were the farm and the town. The farm (homestead), was isolated and severely limited by the island's mountainous topography. *Bobíos* and, later, *casas de hacendados*, were the principal structures in the self-contained social and economic compounds of *haciendas* throughout the centuries.

Towns each had a public place, usually an unadorned plaza, often no more than a clearing, at the center. The plaza was surrounded by symbols of European power — church and *cabildo* — religious and civil government buildings that formed the core of the meager new civic life. The plaza was also where informal markets and religious festivities occurred. It mediated between the town

and its hinterland, while attesting to the hegemony — control of European culture over the island's landscapes.

This territorial differentiation made for sharper class demarcation in housing structures, particularly between the *bobíos* of the *jibaros*, or rural peasants, and the *casas* of the townspeople, usually clergy, artisans, merchants and military. *Casas* were made of

wood or masonry, emulating Spanish or other European architectural styles, and those owned by merchants being the most elaborate. *Bobíos* were the pre-Columbian huts that peasant-slaves had appropriated; their building characteristics retained an organic relationship to the local ecology and they changed very slowly, their builders adhering to traditional building methods. The quality of *bobíos* varied in relation to their owner's social position; those of slaves and the landless, *agregados*, were possibly the most rustic and least evolved from the original Taíno dwelling.

One pictorial record of this differentiation is found in *El Velorio*, a painting made in 1893 by the Puerto Rican artist Francisco Oller. *El Velorio*

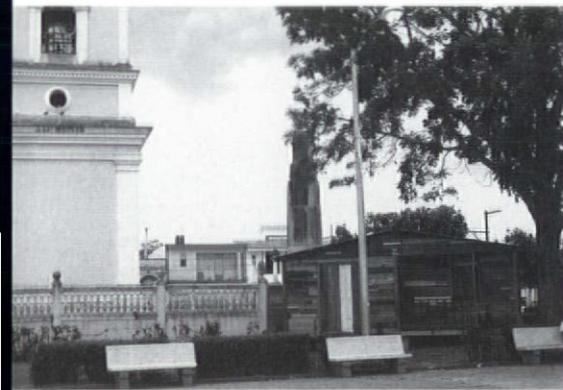
depicts a peasant child's wake, a *jibaro* celebration emulating a Baquiné, a traditional African ritual.<sup>13</sup> The site of the celebration is not a large public place, such as a church or a plaza, but a *jibaro's* home — which comprises a *bobío*, a small, rustic, single-room hut, and, possibly, an outside room, the *batey*.

The *bobío* depicted in the painting has a wooden floor isolating the structure from the terrain, protecting it from the elements, a significant improvement over early Taíno huts built on compacted dirt. Doors and windows have double shutters, a clear reference to Spanish architecture. The walls, although framed by tree trunks, are covered by a skin of commercial-grade wood on the outside. It appears that the house has a balcony or veranda on one side. The hut is covered by tree trunks that support a more humble thatch roof.

Apparently, the *bobío* is still a one-room configuration. Although sparse, the furniture depicted in the painting, a comfortable chair and wooden table covered with lace, suggests that the family is either of some economic means or borrowed these pieces for the occasion.

The *bobío* in *El Velorio* had become a new structure, an emerging vernacular combining cultural elements from three sources: from the Taíno, the hut; from Africans, the ritual and the building hands; and from the Spanish, the furnishings and the structure with the added veranda. It coincided with the birth of a national identity that evolved throughout the nineteenth century. It codified a rural emblem, a narrative of the transition from folk to popular culture, from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist society — an emblem that has survived throughout the twentieth century.

The *jibaro's* home had become the center of his life, an integral part of the declining subsistence existence that had been the dominant economic mode of the island for over three hundred years of Spanish colonial rule. To deeply rural people like the *jibaros*, their isolation on their farms was a centripetal force that bonded them to their land and neighbors. Events like that depicted in *El Velorio* provided social and cultural bonding in the most important of the ordinary landscapes of the period: the rural *bobío* and the *batey*, suggesting poverty as well as independence.



Vintage 1930s *casita* reconstructed in the center of Cabo Rojo, a town on the southern coast of Puerto Rico.



*El Velorio* (Francisco Oller, 1893). Courtesy University of Puerto Rico Museum of Art.

### Urban and Rural *Casitas*

In the nineteenth century the spectacular growth of commercial agriculture brought new wealth to the poor island, incorporated Puerto Rico into world markets and brought it into ever closer interaction with other cultures, particularly that of the United States. The island's territorial systems were reshaped to facilitate the production of commodities for export. The early port cities, where Europeans and Creole elites managed trade, gained power and prestige over the rest of the island.

In the early twentieth century, the collapsing coffee economy resulted in massive migration from the *altura*, or highlands. Meanwhile, in the *bajura*, or lowlands, the expanding sugar economy resulted in the construction of sugar factories, or *centrales*. These compounds enabled the production sugar at a great scale, and at times were even larger than the built-up cores of many towns.

Balloon-frame construction, the underlying building technique of *casitas*, was introduced in the large compounds of worker housing built around the *centrales*. The generalized adoption of this imported technology signalled the commodification of the popular dwelling, accelerating the loss of traditional building techniques, an essential element of the collective narrative of rural society. The popular dwelling was now linked more strongly to the economic forces of the marketplace, signalling its transformation from vernacular architecture to an architecture of the poor, both urban and rural.

In the *bajura*, before long, many of the new arrivals became surplus labor as the new economy could not absorb them. By the 1940s, most were compelled to migrate once again, this time to the island's urban nucleations. The built-up areas in the center of these urban areas served as residential quarters for the elites and for a very small middle class (mostly professionals), as well as the location of major civic, cultural and economic institutions.

The new arrivals were driven to marginal or peripheral lands of less value, usually along rivers or on swampland. *Casitas* became the principal form of shelter in these new communities.

Urban *casitas* were called upon to serve added functions, particularly for new arrivals whose skills were not needed in the city. Unable to own farmland, a necessity for survival, most *casita* dwellers created small subsistence farms, small plots of land surrounding the shanties, where they could raise chickens and a pig or two and grow a few staples. The garden became an integral element of the urban *casita*.

By the 1950s a second wave of industrialization transformed the island's economy. The introduction of *urbanizaciones*, tract suburban housing,



Middle-class urban *casitas* in Ponce, Puerto Rico.



Restored working class casitas in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

made older working-class neighborhoods obsolete and exploded residential districts into class-specific, segregated segments. The generalized adoption of concrete construction technology and tract housing produced further differentiation in popular dwellings. Wooden architecture (in *casitas*) was further reduced to housing for the truly urban poor, the working poor in outlying towns and people in rural communities attempting to survive as farmers.

As Puerto Rico continued to transform to an industrial society, from traditional to modern, *casitas* acquired a new status in the island's lore. They became part of the narrative that recalled the destruction of a peasant agricultural society, one that seemed less threatening when looked at from a distant time.

Puerto Rican migration to New York City and elsewhere peaked during the same period. To those who left, images of *casitas* were implanted in their collective memory as emblems of the old world, a "fantasized paradise"<sup>14</sup> they left behind. These images collapsed ecological, social and built landscapes into a new symbolic architectural language.

To those who remained on the island, *casitas* became repositories of tradition, modulating change while assuring permanence and the transmission of a legacy.<sup>15</sup> When I visited Plaza de Cabo Rojo, a very old town on Puerto Rico's southern coast, I found an vintage 1930 *casita* constructed in the center of town. A group of women sitting in a park nearby reported that there had just been a town festival celebrating Puerto Rican

#### Notes

This essay was supported by the Bronx Council on the Arts, and by a Rockefeller-Schomburg Fellowship.

1. In the last decade, many *casitas* have been destroyed by fire or actions of the city government, which fears they would be generalized as squatters settlements. Villa Puerto Rico, one of the oldest *casitas* in the South

Bronx, was rebuilt in 1991.

2. John Newel Lewis, *Ajoupa, Architecture of the Caribbean, Trinidad's Heritage* (Trinidad: J. Newel Lewis, 1983); Roberto Segre, "Continuidad y Renovación de las Tradiciones Vernaculares en el Ambiente Caribeño Contemporáneo," in *Anales del Caribe* 4-5 (1984-1985); Jack Bertelot and Martine Gaumé, *Kaz Antiyé: Jan Moun Ka Rété,*

*Caribbean Popular Dwelling* (Point-à-Pitre: Editions Perspectives Créoles, 1982); Luis Aponte-Parés, *Casas y Bobíos: Territorial Development and Urban Growth in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico*, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1990.

3. Trevor Boddy, "Underground and Overhead: Building the Analogous City," in Michael Sorkin, ed.,

*Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Noonday, 1992), 134.

4. John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff, "World City Formation: An Agenda for Research and Action," in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 6:3 (September, 1992): 326.

5. Mike Davis, "Fortress Los Angeles: The Militariza-

tion of Urban Space," in Sorkin, 155; Richard Harris, "The Geography of Employment and Residence in New York Since 1950," in John Mollenkopf and Manuel Castells, eds., *Dual City: Restructuring New York* (New York: Sage, 1992).

6. Sharon Zukin, *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disneyland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 17;

culture, and that when townsfolk were identifying a "universal symbol" of Puerto Rican culture from the earlier part of the century, the *casita* won by acclamation. They found one and rebuilt it in the middle of the town plaza.

### Casitas and the Puerto Rican Diaspora

The accelerated migration of people of Hispanic origins to the U.S. and the cultural impact they are having represent opportunities to be explored. More than one third of all Puerto Ricans live outside of Puerto Rico. New York is home to the largest urban concentration of Puerto Ricans anywhere, followed by San Juan, Chicago and possibly Poncé. Increasingly, Puerto Rican immigrants from earlier periods return to the island to retire.

Circular migration continually exchanges people and refreshes cultural images; thus, *casitas* continue to be summoned by Puerto Ricans, both on the island and in New York, as metaphors of places past. On the island, their rebirth may have been ignited by economic and cultural forces.

Lumber companies, for example, responding to worsening and divergent economic conditions, have promoted new uses for balloon-frame construction. Economically strapped urban dwellers can build wooden additions to their homes. The small group who can afford to build leisure homes can construct second homes, *casas de campo*, nostalgic references to yesterday's *quintas*.

This occurrence has resulted in peculiar typologies being built across the island, in *urban-*

*izaciones* as well as in poor rural areas, where *casitas* are built atop flat-roofed concrete tract housing. To those who can afford the second home in an exurban microfarm, the *casita* brings them closer to their identity as Puertorriqueños in a rapidly changing world and island. To those who recall them in New York, *casitas* grant their builders, like Jaran, with the power of place and culture, in a city that has yet to offer many of them acceptance, and a sense that they belong and are accepted.



Casita atop a concrete house, Puerto Rico.

Christine M. Boyer, "The Imaginary Real World," *Assemblage* 18 (1992): 115-127; Saurie Oulette, "Information Age Lockout" in *Utne Reader* (September/October 1993).  
7. Robert Riley, "Attachment to the Ordinary Landscape," in Irwin Altman and Setha Low, *Place Attachment* (New York: Plenum, 1992), 17.  
8. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities, Relfec-*

*tions on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

9. Guillermo Gómez-Peña, *Warrior for Gringostroika* (Minnesota: Graywolf, 1993).

10. On urban bedouins, see Mike Davis, "Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space," in Sorkin, 164. On invented traditions, see Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of*

*Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

11. Patricia Leigh Brown, "The Architecture of Those Called Homeless," *New York Times* (28 March 1993); Zukin; Celedonio Abad, "El Espacio Conquistado," in the catalogue for the exhibit, *La Casa de Todos Nosotros*, by artist Antonio Martorell (New York: Museo del Barrio, 1992).

12. These areas include all Caribbean islands; the coastal, southern and Gulf states in the U.S.; and the Caribbean-facing areas of South and Central America.  
13. Puerto Rican cultural critic Guillermo Ramírez has been unable to identify similar events in African culture in the Americas. He argues that *El Velorio* depicts a Spanish religious custom, finding

evidence in other Spanish paintings of the period.  
14. Juan Flores, *Divided Borders: Essays on Puerto Rican Identity* (Houston: Arte Público, 1993), 135.  
16. María Elena Rodríguez Castro, "Las Casas del porvenir: Nación y Narración en el Ensayo Puertorriqueño," in *Revista Iberoamericana*, 162-163 (enero-junio 1993): 37.

René Carlos Davids, Christine Killory

## Elements of Sociability

# A Wall Between Co



The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a wall as “a continuous and usually vertical solid structure, narrow in proportion to length and height, serving to enclose, protect or divide.” But walls can often generate the opposite forces; they can entice, invite one to cross or unite. Think of the Wailing Wall or the activities the Berlin Wall used to provoke.

The wall along the border between Mexico and the U.S. is not a single piece of construction. Along some stretches it is a metal skeleton or sheathed in corrugated metal; in other places it is made of chain link. White marble obelisks mark the border a regular intervals as it passes through the desert; metal bars define it at its western end. As the wall attempts to divide two distinct territories, the sand, tides, wind and people flocking to the wall come together.

The appeal of what cannot be reached because it is obstructed, the lure of what is forbidden or unreachable, is stronger when the reality beyond the wall is partially visible, veiled or screened. When not attempting to cross, people

# tries, a Bridge for People



stream to the border to get a glimpse of the other side, to take photographs, to talk to each other and people on the opposite side, to watch for helicopters, INS vans or patrol boats. The militarization of the border has given it a cinematic quality.

The chronically troubled Mexican economy makes the U.S. – Mexico border at Tijuana-San Ysidro a permanent magnet for illegal crossers. Since political pressure to control immigration into the U.S. intensified, the preferred route of immigrants has moved eastward to the Sonoran Desert. At the western end of the wall, visual rather than physical transgression has become the norm. “Is that San Francisco?” asked a Mexican man through the bars, pointing to the distant skyline, his eyes gleaming.

The border wall has no architectural program, yet it generates intense activity. Crudely built, it is loaded with complex symbolism, more construct than construction. The wall reveals the power of an abstraction to create human environments. By dividing nations, it unites people.

The border wall at the Pacific Ocean (left) and near the San Ysidro–Tijuana crossing (above).  
Courtesy René Carlos Davids and Christine Killory.

Renee Y. Chow

## Elements of Sociability

# Sharing in a Setting



Sach apartments. Photos and graphic courtesy Renee Y. Chow.

A community is defined by what its individual participants share — an interaction, an identity, an everyday way of living. We measure the place of a community through the propensity of its setting to support and promote this sharing. A funda-

mental task of residential design is to build this propensity explicitly in the architecture.

Settings can support sharing through an infrastructure of services and spaces that residents hold and use in common. Sharing also can be promoted through the collective use of a type. While it is rare to find a setting that totally excludes these ways of sharing, the degree to which infrastructure or type is emphasized has consequences for the form of a setting.

In a setting dominated by infrastructural sharing, common spaces and facilities are designed, owned and maintained for collective use. These can include streets, sidewalks, recreational centers, golf courses, courtyards or shared entries to residences. Since sharing is not dependent upon the form of the individual unit, dwellings can be independent of each other within the hierarchy of the common framework.

Although every community shares some infrastructure — at a minimum, residents share a road and land subdivisions — some communities are explicitly built around extensive systems of common spaces. One example of an infrastructure rich community with hierarchic common spaces is

Radburn, New Jersey. Radburn residents share two independent networks, vehicular and pedestrian, that give access to a town center, recreational spaces, common facilities and private homes. The houses are arranged between pedestrian walkways and vehicular culs-de-sac that are shared by six to twelve residences. Despite the constraining size of the houses, residents choose to stay in Radburn because of its sense of community.<sup>1</sup> One remembers Radburn for its infrastructure, not its houses.

When type is emphasized, the setting is characterized by the repetitive assemblage of a pattern. By “type,” I mean a complex weaving of dwelling patterns — ways of living, of articulating forms, of sequencing spaces and of building. Sharing is developed on a unit-by-unit basis, typically house by house, each of which is built as a variation on the collective understanding.<sup>2</sup> Because this sharing is based on the agreements of participants to follow the type, the setting is dependent upon the relationship between the individual dwellings.

A good example of sharing through type is found in Charleston, South Carolina. One well-known characteristic of Charleston is the arrangement of houses along the northern property line of each lot. This frees the space south of each house for uses like gardens or yards. The north wall of each house is predominantly solid, building the southern edge of the neighbor’s yard. Other characteristics of this type include the way of connecting house to yard and yard to street, and of separating the porch from the street (through the form of doorways).

Describing a type this rich is problematic. Its description is never complete, nor fully accurate, since it is only through the variations that the type is

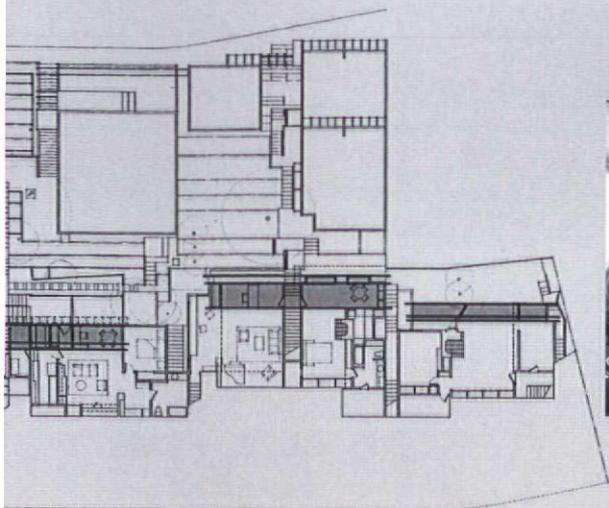


Diagram and views of four-foot space in the Sach Apartments.

known.<sup>3</sup> One remembers Charleston for its houses and its gardens, each house uniquely perceived but contributing to the community of the place.

But, are type and infrastructure sufficient to build a setting for a community? By themselves, they do not promote sharing as a connection of residents to their setting. While architectural elements like windows and doors provide access to a dwelling, a connection requires something more, a territory that links that dwelling with its setting. When this territory becomes a place that each resident inhabits, the presence of the individuals and their differences are shared.

An example of this territorial sharing can be found in the Sach Apartments, designed by Rudolph M. Schindler. Located on a hillside between two streets in Los Angeles, the Sach Apartments are accessed by public footpaths that climb between streets. Entries to the residences occur at different levels along the footpaths. Central to the site and parallel with the hill is a small path used by the residents to access common garden, laundry and storage facilities.

All the residences are oriented toward the light and view of the other side of the valley. Bearing walls extend perpendicular to the hill, reinforcing this orientation. Household activities are layered in this structure — some occur in the darker, cave-like places against the hill, some in the diffuse

light of the mid-zone. Typically, at the very edge, in the direct light, there is a four-foot zone that is structured by walls, overhead light troughs and outdoor porches.

The four-foot dimension is key. In contemporary houses, it is rare to find an unprogrammed, interior space. This four-foot territory cannot hold the major activities of dwelling, such as preparing food, entertaining or sleeping, but it can accommodate personal activities, such as writing, reading, informal dining and working.

The specific activity is selected by and unique for each household. When residents occupy these territories, they overlook the community paths and gardens. The Sach Apartments are a reminder that support for this sharing is most effective when territories connect adjacent activities, both indoors and out, not just attached to houses.

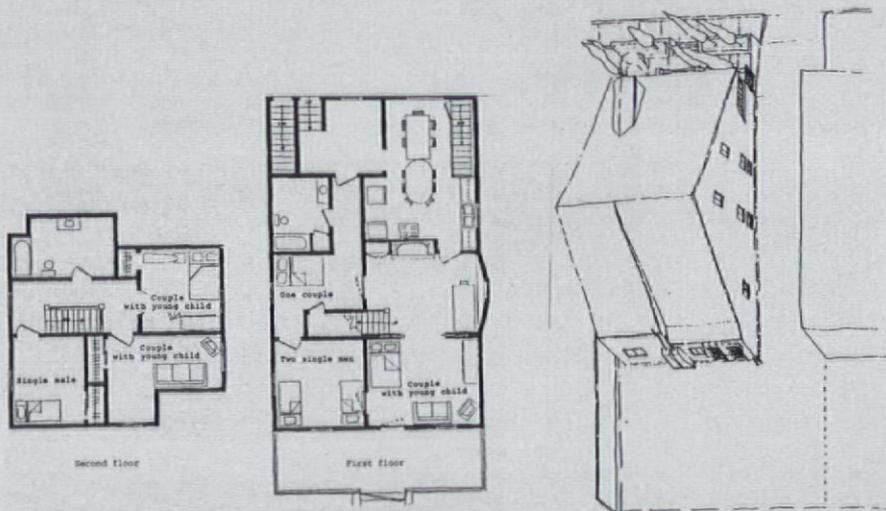
In territorial sharing, it is the habitation, the particular ways in which people live, that builds the setting for community. Individual territories, such as bay windows, porches, stoops and steps, are connectors. When territorial sharing is structured across a setting, like the four-foot zone of the Sach Apartments, community is promoted. Rather than separating public and private, indoor and out, or individual and community, the task is to design a setting for one that is the setting for sharing.

#### Notes

1. This conclusion is based upon interviews with residents conducted by the author in 1991.
2. N. John Habraken, *The Appearance of the Form* (Cambridge, MA: Awater Press, 1985). This book thoroughly describes typological sharing.
3. Ibid.

José Luis Gámez

## Elements of Sociability



## Mi Casa:



Plans and rendering: The house occupied by several immigrant families from Puebla. Photos: A range of activities that occur in the space of the driveway. Courtesy José Luis Gámez.

Moving east from downtown across the Los Angeles River, one encounters a Latino “second city” whose residents share a “more ‘classical’ way of living in the city based on gregarious, communitarian uses of markets, boulevards [and] parks.”<sup>1</sup> East Side communities like Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles have served as centers of Mexican and Mexican-American social life in Southern California since the early 1900s. Today, the presence of successive generations of Mexican descendents and the influence of continued immigration have helped to shape and tailor the urban landscape to reflect the cultural preferences of these groups. Here, public spaces like streets, sidewalks, yards and parking lots bristle with activity — in contrast to the almost nonexistent and often regulated public life of many West Side communities.

But while these areas have developed into established working-class neighborhoods, many Latino newcomers still struggle to find a place for themselves in Los Angeles. Often they can only find low-wage work, or jobs in the informal economy, leaving them with little money. Moreover, their regional, ideological and cultural backgrounds often differ from those of previous gener-

ations. They are more likely to come from beyond northern Mexico, even from Central or South America; more likely to identify with their pre-Columbian, rather than Spanish, heritage; but less tied to the politics of the capitalist, corporate state. Lacking the financial resources and the extensive social and spatial networks available to more established immigrant and resident groups, these newer immigrant groups find their access to the city limited in many ways. They are forced to appropriate and reconfigure space through social action rather than physical construction.

In one case, several immigrant households from Puebla, Mexico, have transformed the space of a single-family house into multiple social settings. The three-level building (a two-story house with a basement), once divided into two apartments, is now home to eight households. Bedrooms and living rooms, which once served specific functions, now constitute the entire private space for a household, while kitchen areas serve as shared public spaces for all the residents. Entry is now through the rear of the house, as the original front door leads to a space (the former living room) that is now occupied by an individual household.

## napshots of Life in an Other L.A.



As each room has become a home unto itself, the house's parking area has taken on multiple functions with varying degrees of publicness and privateness. Here, the men of the house unwind after work, sometimes operating an informal auto repair yard, and children play. On occasion, the parking area serves as a festival site, a location for *pueblo* parties and wedding festivities, making it seem as if the *zocalo* has immigrated as well. The residents have established an insurgent public realm in what might otherwise be regarded simply as a domestic space.

As immigrants with few resources or services at their disposal, these residents remain within a loop centered more on Puebla than on Los Angeles. They rarely utilize the public spaces of the city; their most traversed paths are those leading to places of employment or shopping. This is due, in part, to economic constraints (eating out or going to a club is out of the question) and, in part, to a lack of connection to the social life of East Los Angeles. Since this group constitutes a new "family" of immigrants, its social ties are contained, for the most part, within the walls of the house. Ties that reach beyond the house generally lead back to Mexico; these families socialize pri-

marily with others from the Puebla region in insurgent public realms like the parking area of the house.

This place, therefore, resembles a point in what Roger Rouse calls a "transnational migrant circuit," a social network linking this house, several similar places around Los Angeles and the Puebla region, which have become so closely interconnected that "they have come to constitute a single community spread across a variety of sites."<sup>2</sup>

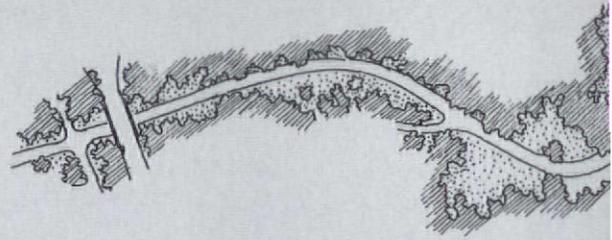
Many factors contribute to these households' social situation — including low-wage work, narrowly defined legal notions of citizenship that force people to occupy spaces provisionally, and limited access to existing social resources. Yet they have not been rendered powerless; with these adaptive spatial tactics, they have begun to mitigate the oppressive circumstances of their daily lives.<sup>3</sup> In doing so, they have reprogrammed the rationalized, modern, single-use approach to space with activities tied to specific times, histories and cultures.

### Notes

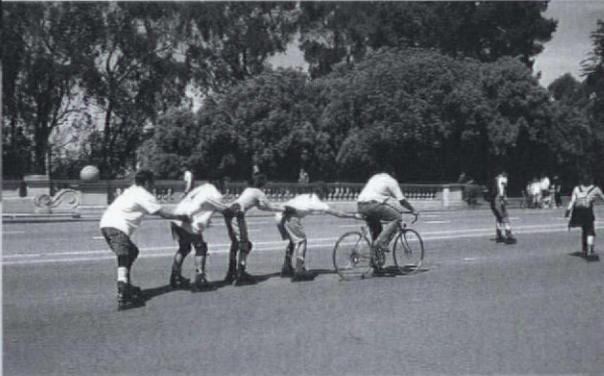
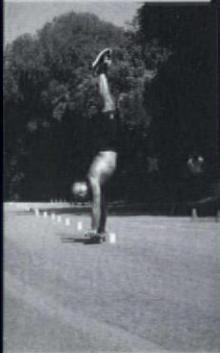
1. Mike Davis, "Chinatown Revisited? The Internationalization of Downtown Los Angeles," in David Reid, ed., *Sex, Death and God in L.A.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 36.
2. James Rojas, "The Enacted Environment: The Creation of Place by Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in East Los Angeles," Masters Thesis, Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991.
3. Roger Rouse, "Mexican Migration and the Social Space of Postmodernism," *Diaspora* 1:1 (Spring 1991), 8-23.
3. Michael deCerteau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Louise A. Mozingo

## Elements of Sociability



# A California Passegiata



Every Sunday morning, San Francisco's Parks and Recreation Department strings barriers across Golden Gate Park's John F. Kennedy Drive, barring automobile traffic for half its length. The wide, elegant roadway, conceived as a carriage drive for polite society but debased during the week as a commuter cut through, becomes an ululating artery of self propulsion, an agora of the American obsession with movement. The street becomes the vibrating, energizing spine of this 1,100 acre, nineteenth-century pleasure ground — all because the city skips its nervous Nellying about liability and lets the vertiginous action rip.

The asphalt is seized by a teeming surge of bicyclists, inline skaters, trolley riders, skateboarders, roller skaters, bike racers, runners and their prolific variations. In the byways, the disco skaters, slalom skaters and street hockey players rhythm and swerve and smack, entertaining spectators who occupy the natural theaters formed by the picturesque topography. The kids are out, too, carefully watched by parents, egg crated in helmets, elbow protectors, and knee pads, demonstrating their splayed-leg lack of expertise on skates or trundling along on training wheels, indulged in the illusion of independence.

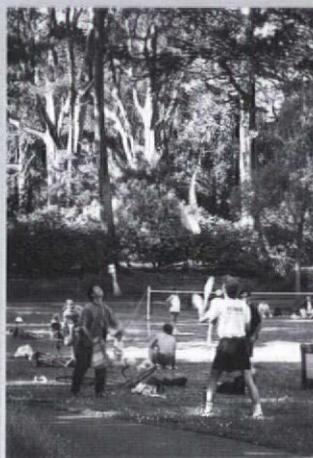
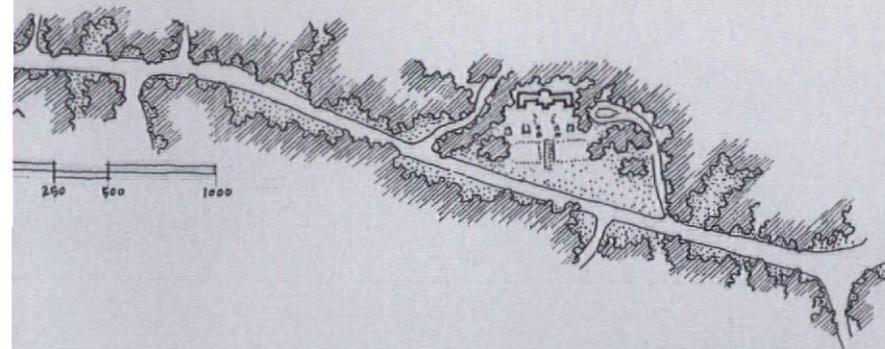


Diagram of Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive; scenes from a Sunday in the park. Courtesy Louise A. Mozingo.

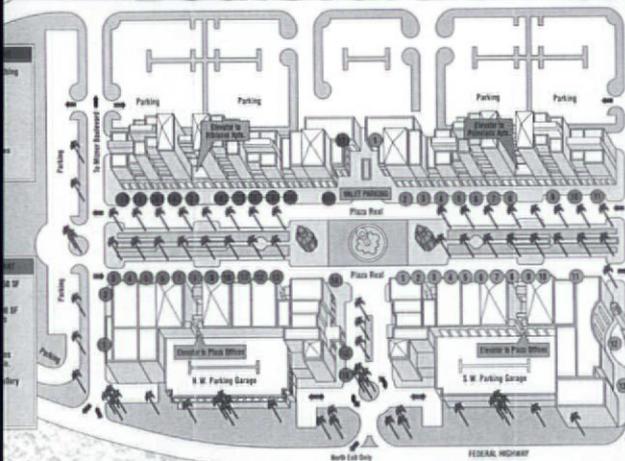
The paths that parallel the roadway are filled with amazed onlookers — parents propelling baby carriages, interlinked elderly couples, strollers who seek the security and warmth of numbers and wide-eyed tourists. Some of the edging meadows capture weekly habitués of communal athleticism: hackysack players and jugglers who kick and flip under particular Monterey cypresses; volleyballers who shout from an exceptionally wind-sheltered enclave, Wiffle ball and Frisbee players. Other meadows, less proprietary, harbor the eddies of the human tide the quietly seated observers of the fray: parents and children who recognize each other from school and neighborhood, drinking juice and checking for injuries; families picnicing on broad blankets; and lounging lovers willing to be distracted from each other by sleek athletes.

The hot exoticism of the rose garden, the rhododendron dell, the conservatory and the tree fern forest bejewels the roadway and gives satisfaction to the veterans of flower shows and garden clubs, families in their Sunday best posing for the picture to send Far East or back East, and the plump ladies who miss the winter back in Russia not one bit. At the pedestrian underpass near the

conservatory, instead of the lurking danger we have come to associate with such places, the civilizing urbanity of live music, acoustically resonant in the arching tunnel, lures an audience crowded cheek to cheek. In the morning the music flows from a sparkling jazz trio, in the afternoon from a Middle Eastern, New Age ensemble with a loinclothed, dark-headed Fabio who stirs the juices of at least three quarters of his audience.

An ample, curving roadway, set amidst the generous pastoral of easy undulating lawns and the arcing shelter of enclosing tree groves simply structures this articulate, savory sociability. People can make it their own — with heat, happiness and the inevitable West coast-left coast hipness. The speed and the risk are unfettered yet there are generous, genial havens in the invisible lines of demarcation, mutually agreed upon by the tacit negotiations of urban life, socializing habit, and the salubrious effect of shared pleasures. The spaces layer up and everyone, including the elderly, the young and the less than Spandex-ready, finds a place to be.

# Boulevard Embryo: Mizner Park



Plan of Mizner Park.  
Courtesy Smith & Knibbs.



Boca Raton's new, mixed-use development, Mizner Park, offers hopeful news about suburban redevelopment. Replacing a mall which, in the 1950s, had helped sign the death warrant of the city's downtown, this second generation suburban center is a surprise. It looks like a postmodern reincarnation of nineteenth-century Paris and Barcelona served in the instant-recipe style of Mediterranean architecture so typical in Florida or California.

Mizner Park is less of a park than the embryo of a boulevard.<sup>1</sup> The development is anchored by a linear public space that runs perpendicularly to a six-lane suburban arterial, which links to the rest of the city. This linear public space consists of a wide median (the "park"), two roadways with parking along them and two generous, arcaded sidewalks. It is embryonic in that cars can and do cruise along what amounts to one, albeit sizable city block. In reality, cruising becomes looping around the block.

The median, or park, is comfortably furnished with grass and hard surfaces, benches, fountains and palm trees. The space evidently works well for both pedestrians (tired shoppers or mere boulevardiers strolling and stopping to watch the

action) and cruisers, who prefer the privacy of their cars. Crowds occupy the space until early morning hours. They include a mix of young and old people, but almost everybody is white, whether tourists or apparent residents.

One side of the boulevard is lined with cafes, bookstores and other shops below a few stories of offices. The other side hosts the same kinds of uses at the street level but is topped by several stories of housing. It is more upscale and, at least at the time of my visit, much more crowded than the office side of the boulevard. A department store will be added along the main arterial.

Monumental multistory parking structures fill in what becomes the middle of both the housing and the office blocks. On the far side of the housing block, which runs parallel to the boulevard, the parking structure is lined by a row of single-sided, four-story row houses. These are, in effect, back-to-back houses which can be entered from the parking structure, via private enclosed parking stalls, or from the street. The row houses line up in a pleasant fashion and are a wonderful example of how an unpopular housing type can be reinterpreted to provide a desirable residential environment and enhance the public realm.



Mizner Park is a financial success. While a multiplex cinema, located at the corner of the arterial and the beginning of the boulevard, was meant as the project's catalyst, the housing sold or rented with little advertisement before construction was completed — more proof that mixed-use development can flourish in suburbia, if only city officials and developers dedicate the added energy that such projects require.

It is also significant that the project's success centers on the strength of the public realm. Given the opportunity, suburbanites do go out and mingle. Still, like many projects of this sort, the mix represents only a slice of the region's population, and the energy on site seems to have little connection to, or little effect on, the surrounding area.

Just south of Boca Raton, downtown Fort Lauderdale is working hard to revive itself after years of disinvestment and failed plans. With several civic, educational and private projects on the boards or under construction, the main attraction right now is Las Olas Boulevard, which links downtown with the beach a few miles away.

Las Olas Boulevard was a good old-fashioned 1930s Main Street in Fort Lauderdale's down-

town, transformed into an arterial on its run to the beach and ended with a small commercial center at the beach front. But the section next to downtown had been slowly declining as its clientele was getting older and shops and uses were becoming obsolete.

Six blocks of this old Main Street have now been revamped to include a refurbished old hotel, cafes, restaurants and boutiques. The street continues to carry four lanes of briskly moving traffic, with parallel parking at each curb. The narrow median is lined with mature trees that match those planted along the sidewalks. Sidewalk surfaces and widths vary considerably along the five blocks, the result of many years of adaptation from the abutters. Cafes and restaurants overflow with people, thanks to a new law that allows them to put tables and chairs on the sidewalks.

This is a programmatic street redesign. Little was done to the public spaces, although parking was added behind the stores. This ordinary and pleasant streetscape, building on the attraction of people and food, is a great example of how good public places can be created simply by relying on the correct uses in the right location.

#### Note

1. The name refers to Florida architect Addison Mizner (1872-1933), whose Spanish Colonial style was an inspiration for the project. Mizner built many residences in and near Boca Raton, as well as a cloister and other private clubs.

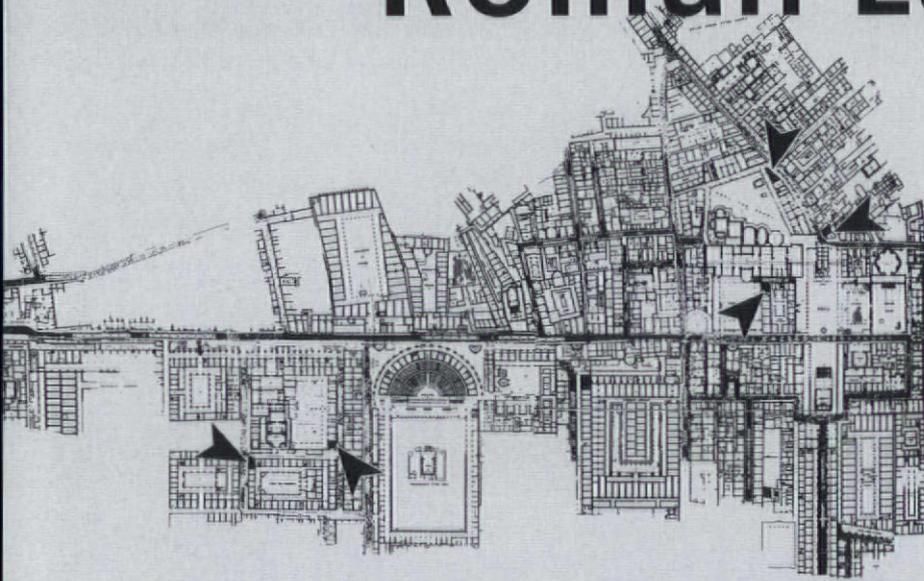
#### Reference

For more information on Mizner Park, see *Redevelopment for Livable Communities* (Olympia, WA: Washington State Energy Office, Washington State Department of Transportation, Department of Ecology, and the Energy Outreach Center), 53-56. This report can be obtained from the Energy Outreach Center, 503 West 4th Avenue, Olympia, WA 98501, (360) 943-4595.

Diane Favro

Elements of Sociability

# Roman Latrines



A brief epigram by Martial reveals a telling aspect of urban socialization in antiquity: “Vacerra dallies for hours, and sits a whole day in all the [public] latrines. Vacerra wishes to dine, not to empty his bowels” (11.77).

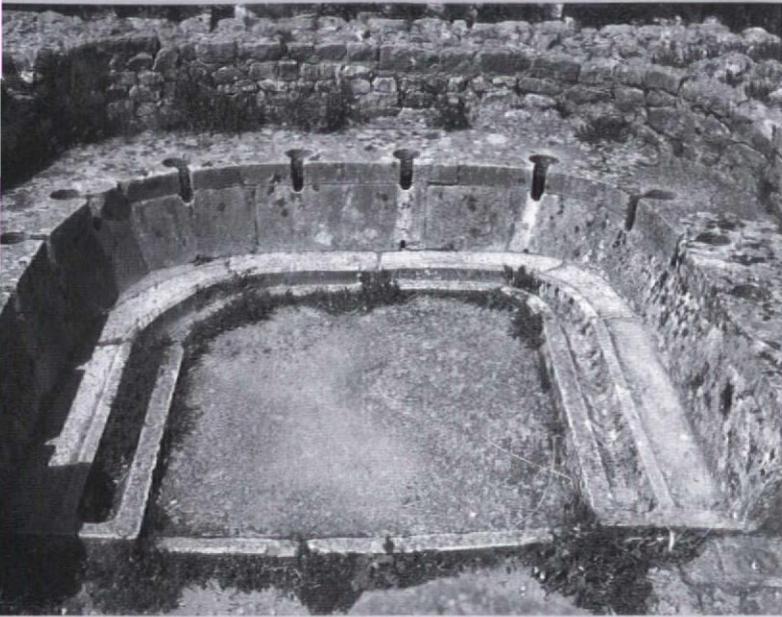
At first confusing, if not shocking, to modern readers, the meaning of this passage was clear to all Romans. Ancient urban residents openly acknowledged public privies as among the best appointed, best situated and most frequented places in the city for socializing. After all, everyone had to use such facilities during the course of daily activities.

The State and private owners alike vied to provide lavish appointments. Roman latrines boasted open, group seats that accommodated up to twenty-five people at a single sitting, sculpted marble arm rests, elaborate mosaics, wall paintings, extensive artworks, fountains and even shrines, most often to Fortuna, goddess of the good outcome. In such environments Vacerra could comfortably sit for hours in hopes of wrangling a dinner invitation from another privy user.

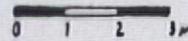
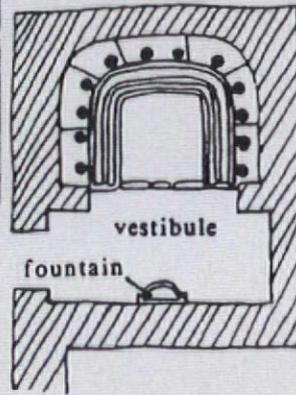
Today, discussion of bodily functions is considered impolite and a visit to a public bathroom something to be couched in euphemisms — and, preferably, avoided. In contrast, the Romans openly discussed such topics as a normal part of human existence, and found a visit to a privy as natural as a visit to a dining hall, and just as conducive to conversation.

In Roman cities public latrines were located at important gathering points, such as *fora*, theaters and baths, and could be used for a small fee. They were frequented generally by the middle and upper classes who found these well-appointed, semi-private spaces ideal for relaxing and networking. For example, game boards and phrases were often inscribed in the space between stone seats, including the famous quote, “Baths, wine and women corrupt our bodies, but these things make life itself,” a testament to both the atmosphere and the time spent in public latrines.

In Rome, Senators and businessmen frequently gathered in a heated latrine above the shops of Caesar’s Forum, where a semicircular



Plan of Ostia showing location of public latrines; excavated public latrine in Dougga (photograph by Fikret Yegul); plan of public latrine at Dougga; conversation in a public latrine (after Pascolini). Courtesy Diane Favro.

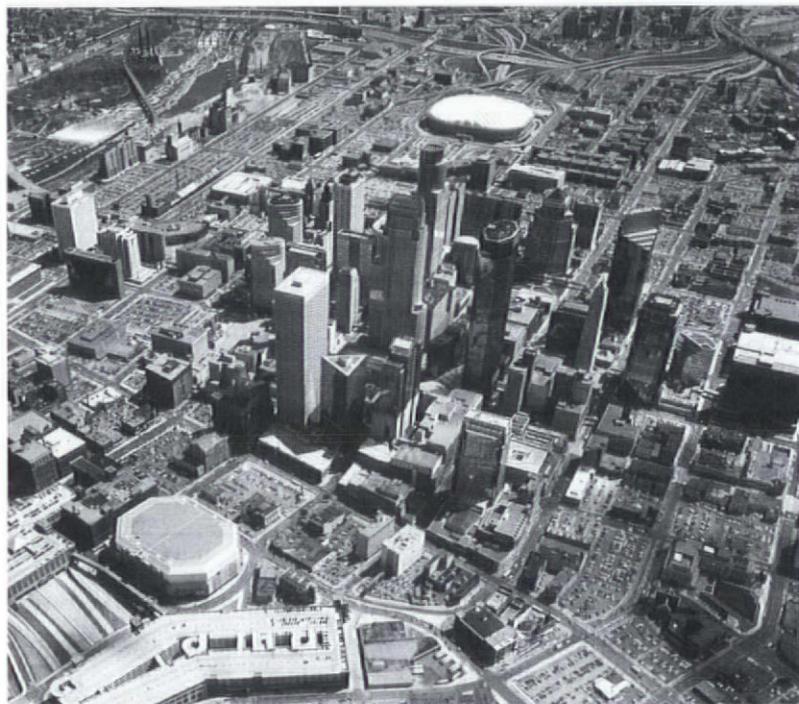


seating arrangement and hard, reflective surfaces encouraged conversations and flights of oratory, along with more mundane activities. Acknowledging the popularity of these spaces for public discourse, the unpopular emperor Tiberius sought to minimize himself as a subject by making it a capital crime to carry a ring or coin with his image into a privy.

In the modern world, public bathrooms are viewed as potential sites for vandalism, inappropriate behavior and outright danger. Yet when security allows, these become the locus for animated discourse, just as they did in antiquity, a fact affirmed by the public bathrooms in any high school or dance club where the genders separate to primp and gossip. Rather than treating public facilities in our modern cities as places for unspeakable activities or flash points for danger, perhaps we should follow the model of Roman cities and acknowledge and celebrate their potential for socialization.

## The Minneapolis Riverfront: Vision and Implementation

Richard Scherr



Top: Downtown Minneapolis, with riverfront zone at the upper left. Above: Victor Caliendo leads a public discussion. Photos courtesy Cunningham Group.

There are times when the forces of capital and market are unable, by themselves, to generate the vision and initiative necessary to sustain urban development. This is true for urban waterfronts, which have lost much of their economic vitality through the shifting of nineteenth-century industries to newer technologies and alternate locations. The result is a proliferation of deteriorated waterfronts, full of rundown, empty buildings and vacant spaces devoid of human activity — zones that prevent central cities from benefiting from their natural edges.

*Minneapolis Riverfront: Vision and Implementation* documents a planning process intended to inspire new vision and initiative for a stretch of the Mississippi River at the edge of downtown Minneapolis. This area was once one of the largest water-powered industrial districts in the world. Now, most of the factories and warehouses are demolished, leaving a dispersed

scattering of isolated commercial buildings, a residential tower and the Metrodome, surrounded by blocks of parking.

The planning process was initiated by the Cunningham Group, a private Minneapolis architecture firm. Cunningham solicited design proposals from teams in the U.S. and Europe, then organized an ad hoc committee of public officials, planners, business leaders and developers “to seek out innovative ideas and develop a basis for their implementation.” The publication documents fourteen design responses and summarizes the committee’s initial responses as a series of values and goals to guide further planning.

The sponsors wanted to encourage the widest range of possibilities and opportunities for redevelopment, so programming, budget and development constraints were minimal. To that end, they were most successful: taken together, the proposals constitute a diversity of concepts and techniques that offer a summary of the state of urban design today, showing both the potentials and limitations of current thinking about transforming cities.

The proposals share a common outlook. They all posit the city as a physical, cultural and spiritual artifact, tied to a specific place and time. They unabashedly advance physical visions that evoke the nature, spirit and qualities of the place to be developed — particular programs, buildings, landscape, circulation and other features to be implemented on certain blocks and defined in three dimensions (or, at least, plans with projected shadow). Some even suggest the type of inhabitant or culture that would reside in or visit such a place.

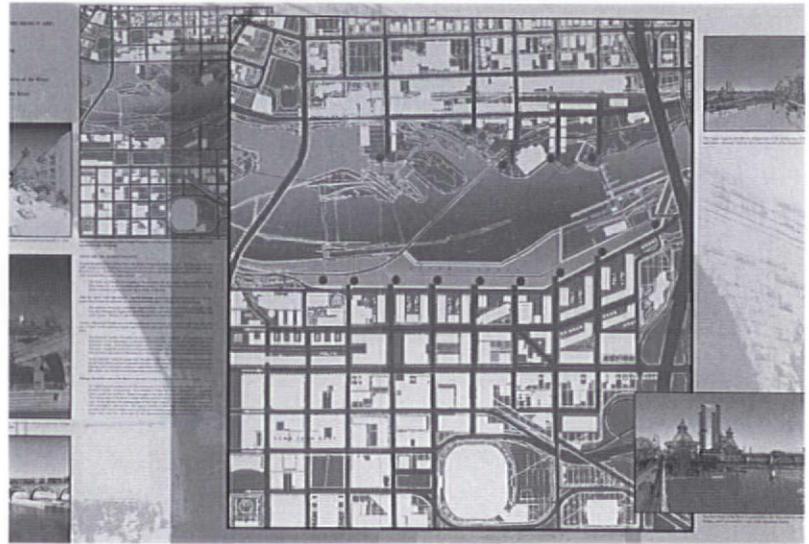
But as a group, they reveal a fundamental rift within the urban design profession. Many are dominated by large-scale urban design structures, public landscape orders that define a context for private projects (Jo Coenen and Co., Lee Weintraub, Frederick Bentz/Milo Thompson/Robert Rietow). While this is a valid approach to estab-

lishing urban form, one used throughout the twentieth century, it is often too open-ended and generic, leaving critical physical qualities and programming for particular places undefined.

Other proposals set out specific concepts for physical redevelopment, representing actual architectural forms (reflecting specific programs and spaces) that can be replicated to create a larger urban form (Ralph Rapson and Associates). The problem with this group is that it tends to overly design the city, which can limit both the flexibility needed in market-generated development and the richness and diversity of loosely controlled development that occurs over time.

The central issue was how should one relate to, or connect to, the riverfront, both in terms of form and circulation, and here another revealing dichotomy emerged. The most common approach (although advanced by less than half the proposals) was simply filling in the voids between the CBD and the waterfront with new development — bringing the city and the grid to the river. These proposals played by the traditional rules, as it were, trying to restore the dense, nineteenth-century block and street fabric.

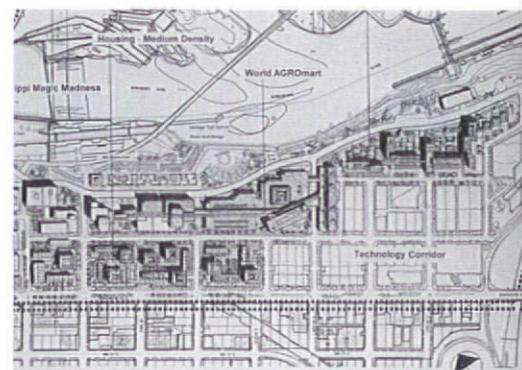
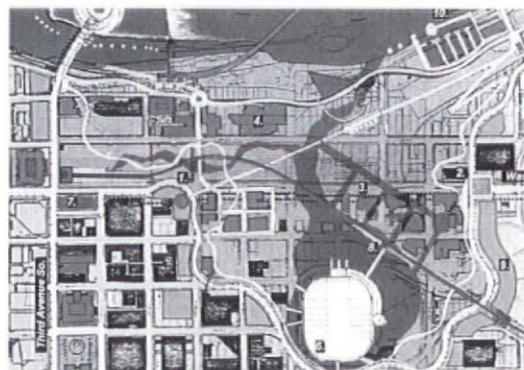
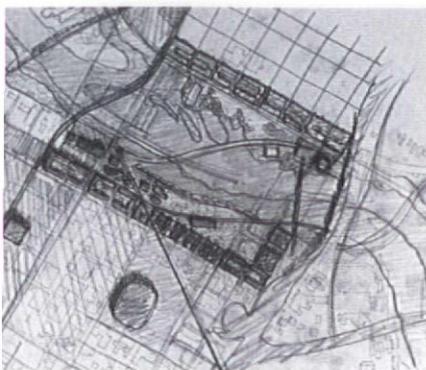
But these proposals all depend on a standard, general mix of commercial — housing — retail fabric to complete the open blocks. While the notion of mixed uses, a living — working neighborhood, is to be applauded, one wonders whether there will ever be adequate demand to spark such development in areas like this without major public improvements, such as municipal incentives to attract new business (Rapson) or new transit systems. Typically, the commercial and residential market has moved elsewhere — although Min-

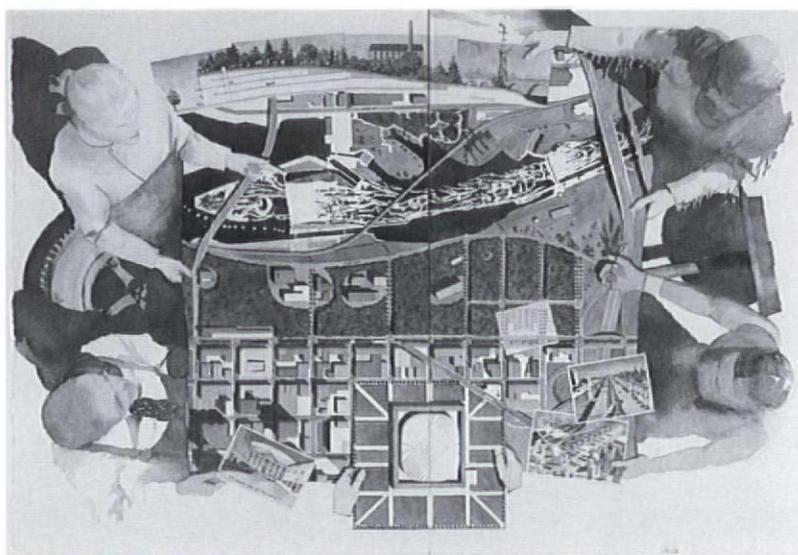


**Proposal Credits:**  
 Above: Frederick Bentz, Milo Thompson, Robert Rietow, Minneapolis.  
 Below left: Jo Coenen & Co., Maastricht (Jo Coenen, Joop Slangen, Paul Kuitenbrower). Below center: Peter Cavaluzzi, New York.  
 Below right: Ralph Rapson and Associates, Minneapolis (Ralph Rapson, Toby Rapson).

neapolis planners claim that the downtown is now primed for new development.

An equally strong impulse was, "If you can't bring the city to the waterfront, then bring the waterfront to the city!" Most of the schemes were subtractive, proposing significant interventions of new open space and landscape systems. Numerous themes were expressed: stretching linear parks parallel to the river (Coenen), extending a finger of park perpendicularly from the river into the city, and expanding the river park right up to downtown, leaving existing buildings and the Metrodome as islands in a sea of green (Cavaluzzi). "Voiding the city," as it were, is currently a popular urban design theory, with a lineage reaching back to the days of urban renewal and including the current thinking of Rem Koolhaas, Bernard Tschumi, Michael Sorkin and other proponents of recent modernist planning.





Proposal credit:  
Lee Weintraub, Richard Hoyen  
(illustrator), New York.

Here, the logic seems to be that given a riverfront with an existing park (good), we can somehow make more of it (better) and reduce the underutilized, dilapidated (bad) city. Developers haven't been attracted to the waterfront, and even the healthier downtown area is a hard sell these days. What do we need, or, better still, want? The answer is, of course, open space for leisure activities — places to enjoy ourselves, play, be healthier, safe, quiet and calm. These proposals suggest that to save the city, we must green it or suburbanize it, in the tradition of the garden city movement, and are by and large skillful and convincing, despite the threat they pose to the traditional urban qualities of the historic city.

In many cases, the most inventive ideas relate to programming, which is especially critical in making the waterfront vital, active and economically sustaining. Many proposals hinged on critical catalysts that could spur development over time. One suggested a "World AGROMart" trade center and a "Mississippi Magic Madness" glass-enclosed cultural and entertainment center along the riverfront (Rapson). Others elaborated the notion of recreational or entertainment theme parks into a more comprehensive urban narrative of programmed events, such as a water theme park or a sports and entertainment district (Cavaluzzi).

These proposals suggest and accept a makeover of the city, sliding into the invented, simulated

urbanism that has played an increasing role in our culture since the 1960s. It is difficult to criticize the notion of the city as a theme park, given its ubiquitous presence; it is not only here to stay but also has asserted its own authenticity, and can be done well within its own rules.

But isn't it still possible to strive for authenticity, to play it simple, maintain the original natural amenities of the waterfront, and celebrate the remaining historical artifacts — such as buildings and the original St. Anthony's Falls — that connect to the city's actual past? Refreshingly, the last scheme in the book proposes "peeling back the layers of time," developing an interpretive landscape, with fragments of the actual buildings, machinery, power stations and transport systems that existed on the site (Weintraub).

The book's greatest value, perhaps, is to validate the power of an urban design process to develop an "awareness of opportunities" and clarify a vision of possible futures that can serve as a catalyst for action. But will it take such a radical shift in the nature of the existing city, as most of the proposals suggest, to make a viable transformation come about? Or can smaller, catalytic public improvements, which can maintain the soul and authenticity of our urban culture, bring about a gradual revitalization over time?

Clearly, the proposals suggest that urban design continues to assert its role through the clarity and power of grand schemes rather than the incremental process of redevelopment. While stimulating to the eye, they also threaten to disengage the city from the critical continuity of memory and meaning.

*The Minneapolis Riverfront:  
Vision and Implementation*  
(Minneapolis: Cuningham  
Group, 1996) 56 pp, \$27.

Contact:  
Cuningham Group  
201 Main St. S.E., Suite 325  
Minneapolis, MN 55414.

## Hunts Point Comes Home Todd W. Bressi

Over the past decade, some of New York City's most devastated neighborhoods have seen a remarkable turnaround. City agencies, working with nonprofit and private developers, have created 50,000 new housing units in properties taken for non-payment of taxes. From Bedford-Stuyvesant to Harlem to Morrisania, nearly all of the burned and abandoned buildings, nearly all of the lots where buildings once stood, have been reclaimed with affordable housing.

But as hundreds of thousands of new residents reoccupy these neighborhoods, it is evident that the services they need lag far behind. Community groups have scrambled to provide social services, but cuts in parks and transit and sluggish school construction continue to marginalize these residents. Also missing from these re-emerging communities are "life spaces" — the shops and stoops, bars and clubs, gardens and playgrounds that pulse with the spirit of the people.

"The Point," a cultural center and market in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx, shows how life spaces can be created through a combination of entrepreneurial vision and architectural deftness. From the outside, the Point still looks like

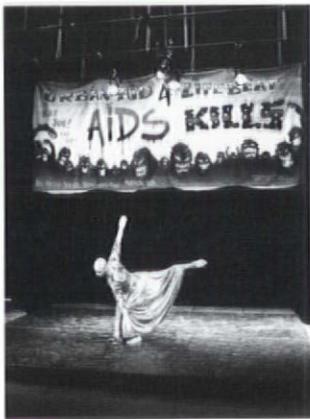
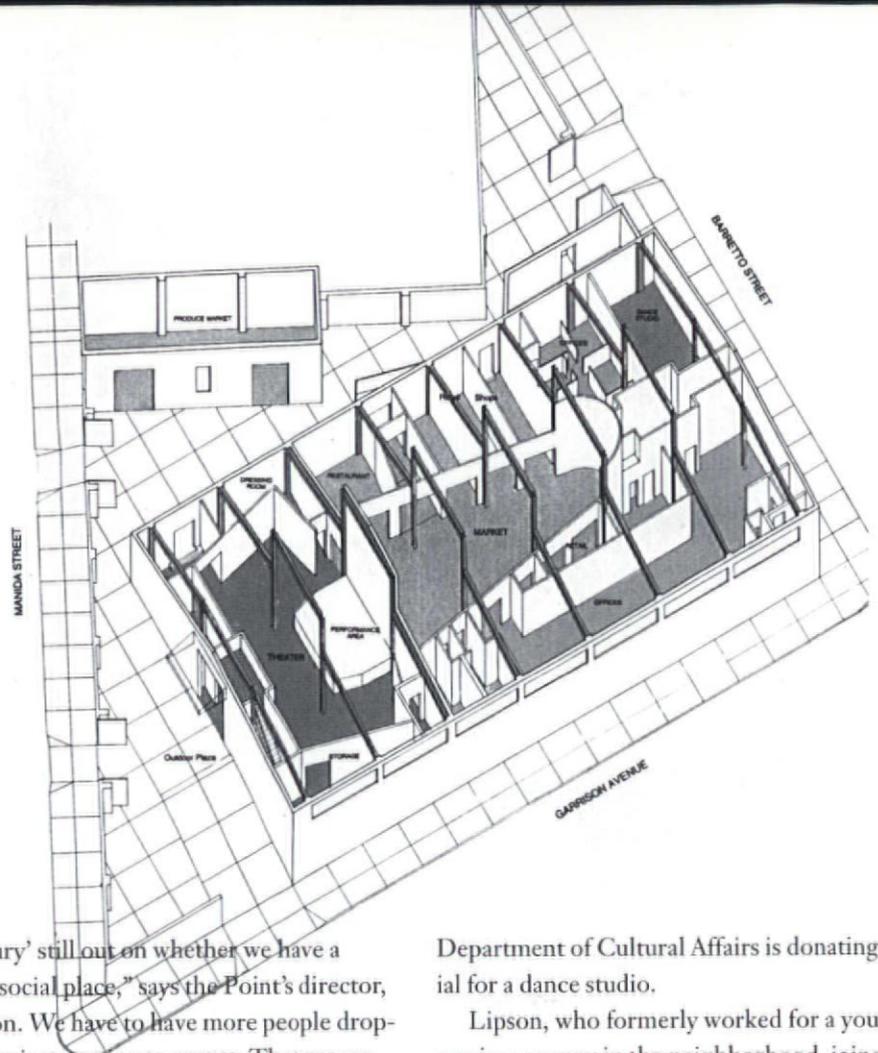
the former factory and warehouse. But inside, it is a hopeful, energetic crossroads for artists, aspiring businesspeople and residents.

The Point consists of two main spaces: a central gallery, which is lined by tiny spaces in which entrepreneurs have set up shop, and a black box theater. There is also an office suite, which is leased by a social service agency. The offices provide rental income that keeps the project going and constant foot traffic; the other spaces accommodate a range of activities, both planned and spontaneous. There are afterschool dance, music and art classes, and evening dance, music, comedy and theatrical events.

Consider that in the course of one summer day, the following things happened. A disk jockey came to check the stock of records in his shop and prepare for an upcoming event. A *New York Times* reporter brought by a group of interns, who were treated to a Southern-style lunch (by a caterer who hopes to open a restaurant at The Point). Arthur Aviles, once a member of the Bill T. Jones dance company, came by to offer an impromptu dance in honor of the youth class he would be teaching. A local theatre company rehearsed a play.

An impromptu lunch at the point: newspaper interns eat with local artists and residents. Photos by Todd W. Bressi.





Top right: Plan of The Point. The theater is at the lower left, the gallery is at the center and the proposed market and ice-cream shop is at the upper left. Above: Dancer Arthur Aviles practices in front of a banner painted by youths who are turning their graffiti-painting skills into a sign-making business.

“The jury’ still out on whether we have a successful social place,” says the Point’s director, Paul Lipson. We have to have more people dropping by, not just coming to events. That means making sure that whenever people drop by, there is something going on.”

Drawing casual visitors is in difficult, acknowledged Lipson and architect Robert Zagorelli, of the Pratt Institute Planning and Architectural Collaborative. They noted the difficulty of giving a former warehouse building a strong street presence — especially given the sparse pedestrian traffic on industrial arterial the Point fronts. And it is a relatively small building, 12,500 square feet, making it difficult to build the retail energy that will draw in shoppers. But there is room for small improvements. The Point expects to turn a garage on the other side of the courtyard into a farmers’ market and ice-cream stand.

The design work was funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and the Ferris Booth Fund. The project directors and community members donated some \$250,000 in materials and labor; construction was contracted to local businesses to help them get experience on renovation projects. The Corning Corp. donated the glass block that fills the clerestory windows; the city’s

Department of Cultural Affairs is donating material for a dance studio.

Lipson, who formerly worked for a youth services agency in the neighborhood, joined with two of his friends to create the non-profit organization that leased, rehabbed and operates The Point. Lipson’s father was born in the neighborhood and he still has some family members living in the area. “If I weren’t working here, I would be doing something else. I’m a professional Bronxite.”

**Luis Aponte-Parés** is associate professor of community planning at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. His research focuses on the contributions of Puerto Ricans and other Latinos to urban history and development. He is editing a book on casitas and has contributed to *Centro, Journal of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies* and the forthcoming anthology *Despierta Boricua*.

**Anne-Marie Broudehoux** is a doctoral student in the architecture department at the University of California, Berkeley, and a graduate of McGill University.

**Renee Y. Chow** is assistant professor of architecture at the University of California, Berkeley. Her current research focuses on alternative design approaches and concepts for single-family detached housing.

**Galen Cranz** is a sociologist who has been teaching architecture for 25 years, first at Princeton University, and now at the University of California, Berkeley. The author of *The Politics of Park Design*, she frequently lectures and consults on urban design projects. Her current research and forthcoming book, *The Culture of Chairs: Rethinking the Body-Design Connection*, turns to the scale of the near environment.

**René Carlos Davids** is a professor of architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, and a principal in the firm of Davids Killory. He has taught at many schools, including the Architectural Association School, where he directed the diploma program, and studied at the Universidad de Chile and the Royal College of Art in London.

**Diane Favro** is an associate professor in the department of architecture and urban design at the University of California, Los Angeles. She has written extensively on Roman urban legislation, administration, imagery and ritual. Her recent book, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*, analyzes the symbiotic relationship between physical interventions and conceptual shifts in the imaging of a capital city.

**José Luis Gaméz** is a doctoral student in the department of architecture and urban design at the University of California, Los Angeles, where his research focusses on social constructions of identity in relation to place and space. He studied architecture and environmental design at the University of California, Berkeley, and Texas A&M University.

**Raymond L. Gindroz** is a cofounder and principal responsible for urban design at Pittsburgh-based UDA Architects, where he has prepared urban design plans for numerous cities in the U.S. and France. Gindroz has taught at Yale, City University, and Carnegie Mellon, and studied architecture at Carnegie Mellon and Centro per gli Studi el Architettura, A. Palladio, in Vicenza.

**Christine Killory** teaches architecture at the University of Southern California and is a principal of the firm Davids Killory. She studied architecture at the Architectural Association School and architectural history and planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. Killory has been awarded a design research fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Jonas Lehrman** is an architect and professor at the University of Manitoba. His article reflects a love affair with Byzantine churches that dates back to his student days.

**Anne Vernez Moudon** is professor of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and planning at the University of Washington. She is also associate dean for applied research and directs the Cascadia Community and Environment Institute for Interdisciplinary Education and Research. Her books include *Built for Change: Neighborhood Architecture in San Francisco* and *Public Streets for Public Use*. She is a *Places* contributing editor.

**Louise A. Mozingo** is an assistant professor of landscape architecture at the University of California, Berkeley.

**Marilyn R. Nepomechie** is a principal of Marilyn R. Nepomechie Architect in Coconut Grove, Florida. She is a lecturer in design at the Florida International University School of Design, in Miami, and received a Master of Architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1983.

**John Ruble** is a principal at Moore Ruble Yudell in Santa Monica, where he has headed projects such as Tegel Harbor in Berlin and master planning for the University of Washington's new Tacoma campus. He studied at the University of Virginia and the University of California, Los Angeles, and served as a town planning volunteer for the Peace Corps in Tunisia.

**Richard Scherr** is chair of Pratt Institute's graduate programs in architecture and urban design. He is a practicing architect and has consulted on urban design projects in Dallas/Fort Worth. His writings on urban design theory and practice have been published and presented extensively, most recently at the Union of International Architects conference in Barcelona last July.

**Richard A. Smith** has taught architecture at the University of Oregon, the University of Liverpool, and other institutions, including NCUK (ITM) in Malaysia and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His article in this issue is derived from a forthcoming book, *Saiwaicho, Continuity and Change in a Japanese Neighborhood*, which he wrote with his wife, Elizabeth.

**Amy Taylor** is a graduate student of architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, where she has been an instructor for several courses. She plans to pursue the practice of architecture, with a focus on public buildings.

**Katie Trager** works as an architectural designer in Los Angeles. She has lived in Japan, Iran and Afghanistan. She holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Princeton University and a master's degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley. She is a former staff editor of *Places*.

**A CRITIC WRITES**

Essays by Reyner Banham

**Reyner Banham***Mary Banham, Paul Barker, Sutherland Lyall, & Cedric Price, Editors*

"Banham's special skill was to take objects that we otherwise might take for granted and to open our eyes and minds to their visual and cultural associates.... These perspectives are every bit as relevant now as they were in the past."

—Sir Norman Foster,

Foster Associates

\$39.95 cloth, illustrated

**STREETS**

Critical Perspectives on Public Space

**Zeynep Çelik, Diane Favro, & Richard Ingersoll, Editors***Introductory Essay by Spiro Kostof*

**New in paper**—"A profoundly useful book, even a brilliant one, and well worthy of the great historian in whose memory it was conceived."

—Vincent Scully,

Professor Emeritus, Yale University

\$19.95 paper, illustrated

At bookstores or order 1-800-822-6057

**GARRETT ECKBO**Modern Landscapes for Living  
**Marc Treib & Dorothee Imbert**

Garrett Eckbo has been a major influence in the field of landscape architecture. In this elegant study that includes more than 100 of his designs, Treib examines the aesthetic formation of Eckbo's manner, and by implication the broader field of landscape architecture since the 1930s, while Imbert writes about Eckbo's social vision.

\$39.95 cloth, illustrated

**THE FATE OF PLACE**A Philosophical History  
**Edward Casey**

"A brilliant, elegant, and meticulously thorough analysis of the 'hidden history of place' . . . destined to become the standard reference for all those interested in rethinking space, place, location, and containment."

—Elizabeth Grosz, author of  
*Volatile Bodies*

A Centennial Book, \$45.00 cloth, illustrated

**ACCENTS AS WELL AS BROAD EFFECTS**

Writings on Architecture, Landscape, and the Environment, 1876-1925

**Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer***Selected and Edited by David Gebhard*

While highly regarded for her 1888 biography of the architect Henry Hobson Richardson, Van Rensselaer's lesser known writings provide a rare view of the architecture of turn-of-the-century America. Now, at last, David Gebhard brings Van Rensselaer's significant writings together in one volume.

\$45.00 cloth, illustrated

Art from: *The Fate of Place***UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS****Program in the Design of Urban Places**College of Environmental Design  
University of California, Berkeley

This is a new intensive one-year program of study leading to the Master of Urban Design degree. This is accomplished in close collaboration with senior faculty drawn from the departments of Architecture, City and Regional Planning, and Landscape Architecture, including Professors Donlyn Lyndon, Allan Jacobs, Daniel Solomon, Linda Jewell, Michael Southworth and Randolph Hester. The program is targeted at exceptional architects, planners and landscape architects with prior professional degrees and a minimum of two years of professional practice, who seek a concentrated interdisciplinary program of advanced study in urban design.

Inquiries should be directed to:

Graduate Assistant  
Master of Urban Design Program  
202 Wurster Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
(510) 642-2965

Free On-Line Document Search...  
Discount on Document Delivery

UnCover

**Announcing Access to UnCover**  
Document search and delivery for readers of  
*Places*

You can now access free of charge the UnCover on-line data base, which indexes table of contents information from over 17,000 journals. You can also order delivery of full text from any of the articles in the data base and receive a \$2.00 discount per article off the regular document delivery price.

With *Access to UnCover*, you can search for articles by topic, by author, or by journal. You can then order on-line the full text of articles for delivery by fax within 24 hours. Document delivery fees will be billed to your credit card.

*Access to UnCover* is available now over the Internet. Simply Telnet to the *Access to UnCover* address: allen.carl.org. When prompted for your Password, enter: deliver.

**New benefit: Discount on Reveal**

Your *Access to UnCover* Password now also entitles you to a 20% discount on UnCover's new *Reveal* service. With *Reveal*, you receive by e-mail the tables of contents of journals you select—right after each issue is published. In addition, you can also receive weekly topical alerting by creating keyword search strategies. To sign up for *Reveal* at a 20% discount, call 800-787-7979 and mention your *Access to UnCover* Password.

*Places: A Forum of Environmental Design* is published three times a year by the Design History Foundation, a nonprofit, charitable organization that sponsors a range of educational, publishing and research activities. The Foundation's mission is to establish forums in which designers, public officials, scholars and citizens can discuss issues vital to environmental design, with particular emphasis on public spaces in the service of the shared ideals of society.

*Places* and the Design History Foundation depend on support from foundations, firms and individuals to continue these activities. To support our mission and to learn the benefits of joining us as a sponsor, patron, supporter or friend, please contact our Brooklyn office: (718) 399-6090.

#### Editorial Offices

Center for Environmental Design Research  
390 Wurster Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
(510) 642-1495

110 Higgins Hall  
School of Architecture  
Pratt Institute  
200 Willoughby Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11205  
(718) 399-6090  
placepratt@aol.com

#### Advertising

Frances Halsband, Publisher  
*Places*  
110 Higgins Hall  
School of Architecture  
Pratt Institute  
200 Willoughby Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11205  
(718) 399-6090  
placepratt@aol.com

#### Submission Information

*Places* encourages submissions from its readers. Please submit five copies of each manuscript, along with illustrations, to our editorial office. Color transparencies, black-and-white prints and line drawings are acceptable. Copies of our current Call for Submissions and editorial guidelines are available from our editorial offices upon request.

Articles published in *Places* have been reviewed by at least four people, including consulting and contributing editors and other scholars and/or professionals with specific background and expertise in the subject matter. All final editorial decisions are made by the editor.

#### Copyright and Reprint Information

© 1997, the Design History Foundation

*Places* is protected by U.S. copyright law. No copying, reproduction or excerpting of *Places* or any of its contents is permitted, including duplication for course readings, without prior consent of the publisher and payment of applicable fees. Please contact the publisher for authorization to copy from *Places*.

*Places* is available on microform:  
University Microfilms  
300 N. Zeeb Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106  
(313) 761-4700

*Places* is indexed in the *Architectural Periodical Index*, *Art Abstracts*, the *Art and Humanities Citation Index*, the *Art Index*, the *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals*, the *Design and Applied Arts Index* and *Uncover*.

#### Subscription Information

Subscription orders, single copy orders, address changes and mailing list correspondence should be addressed to:

*Places*  
P.O. Box 1897  
Lawrence, KS 66044-8897  
(913) 843-1221  
(913) 843-1274 (FAX)

Annual subscription for individuals: \$30 U.S., \$36 Canada, \$42 elsewhere. Add \$15 for airmail (outside U.S.).

Annual subscription for institutions: \$50 U.S., \$60 Canada, \$70 elsewhere. Add \$15 for airmail (outside U.S.).

Single copies, \$10. Add \$3 per copy for postage and handling; add \$5 per copy for airmail (outside U.S.).

All payments must be in U.S. funds.

#### Missing Issues

Claims must be made immediately upon receipt of next published issue. Call (913) 843-1221.

#### Postmaster

Send address changes to:  
*Places*  
P.O. Box 1897  
Lawrence, KS 66044-8897

A Forum of Environmental Design

# PLACES

## Elements of Sociability

Jonas Lehrman

The Greek Byzantine Church in its Setting

Richard A. Smith

Mr. Nakata's Garden

Katie Trager

In the Garden

Raymond L. Gindroz

Cross Section of Address

Marilys R. Nepomechie

Unacceptable Echoes

Galen Craz, Amy Taylor

Anne-Marie Broudehoux

Community and Complexity on Campus

John Ruble

How to Grow a Business School

Luis Aponte-Parés

Casitas: Place and Culture

René Carlos Davids, Christine Killory

Renee Y. Chow, José Luis Gaméz

Louise A. Mozingo, Anne Vernez Moudon

Diane Favro

Elements of Sociability

Richard Scherr

Review: The Minneapolis Riverfront,

Vision and Implementation

Todd W. Bressi

The Point

The Design History Foundation  
Pratt Institute, School of Architecture  
University of California, Berkeley,  
College of Environmental Design

ISSN 0731-0455 Made in U.S.A.

