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How Pomo Became a Four-Letter Word

By Reed Kroloff

I wasn't sure what to make of the announcement a couple of months ago that the American Institute of Architects (AIA) was conferring its highest honor—the Gold Medal—on that paragon of postmodern architecture, Michael Graves. After all, weren't these the same guys who at their annual convention once sported buttons reading "We don't dig Graves"? Why the change of heart? Why now?

Perhaps it's just the AIA once more demonstrating its unusual sense of timing: Everyone else knows postmodernism is dead. Try to find an admitted postmodernist today. We've spent the last several months doing just that, and even people who rode the movement to fame now want no part of it. Demonstrating that collective fear and loathing, Richard Ingersoll and Robert Venturi each independently invoked the notorious McCarthy-era phrase "I am not now and never have been a..." in essays which follow on pages 108 and 154. This from postmodernism's paterfamilias?

Known postmodernists we approached concocted all kinds of excuses not to appear in this issue. One office pleaded that they "had left that part of their history behind and didn't want to risk reminding anybody of it." Another insisted the building we wanted to publish wasn't finished, despite photographic evidence to the contrary. Finally this from one New York power player who first attained prominence as a postmodernist: "I wouldn't eat lunch with any of those people, much less appear beside them in your magazine."

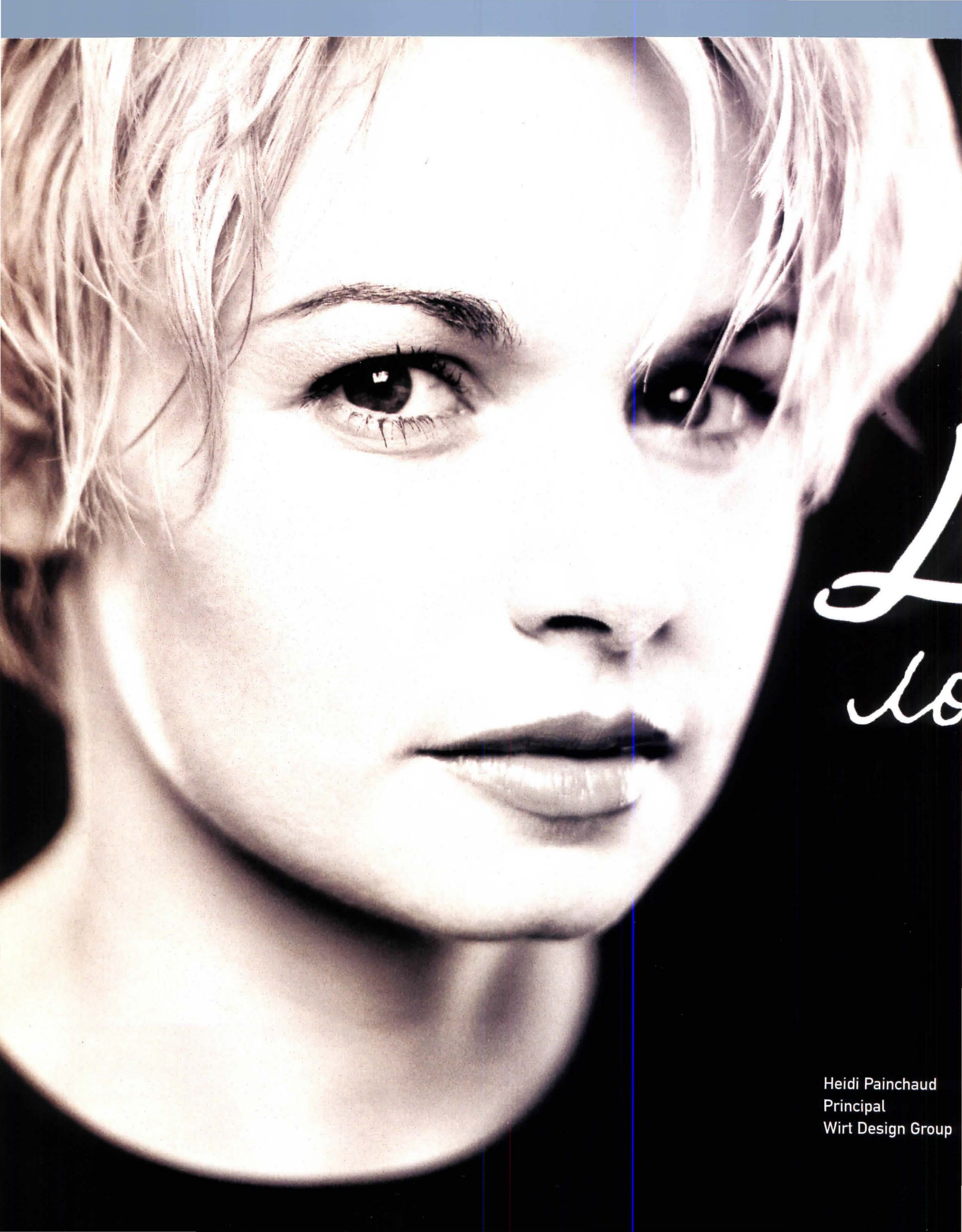
Where's the "risk" in reminding someone you were a postmodernist? Almost everyone was: from corporate powerhouses like Kohn Pederson Fox and SOM, to academic darlings like Machado and Silvetti

and Bernard Tschumi. They are all exceptional talents—as are the architects we included in this issue, hardly people whose company you'd be embarrassed to keep. Postmodernism was for them and others an earnest, intelligent response to the blundering insensitivities of late modernism. It also offered the first clear critique of a formal and philosophical system that had dominated the profession for the better part of the century, a system which by the 1970s—when postmodernism began to emerge—seemed to have exhausted itself.

But due in part to the work of Graves and colleagues like Robert A.M. Stern and the mediagenic Philip Johnson, postmodernism became synonymous with historicism. That association, initially liberating for generations of architects trained to abjure any historic references or associations, ultimately led to the ignominy in which the movement languishes today. By linking it so indelibly with historical motifs, postmodernism's strongest adherents reduced it to a style, sometimes a rather thin one. And as with most styles, people eventually lost interest. Less than a decade after the revolution, postmodernism quietly slipped from pastel to passé.

This fall from grace hardly explains the contempt in which postmodernism seems to be held today. People make exceptions for leading postmodernists like Charles Moore and Aldo Rossi, but even they are being "rehabilitated" as idiosyncratic geniuses with solid modern underpinnings. And besides, they're dead. No such luck for poor old Taft Architects (page 140), left to wander in the wilderness for over a decade, after being heralded in the 1980s as the next great thing (blobsters, take note). Too closely identified with mainline postmodernism, Taft's partners watched their practice dry up as tastes changed.

After nearly a century of modernist orthodoxy in architectural education and the media (mea culpa), postmodern historicism never really had a chance. Many architects instinctively recoiled from it, but not simply to avoid dropped keystones. Postmodernism repelled the profession because it suggested a heretical notion: No matter how sophisticated the theory, nor how sincere the intentions, at some level, architecture is also fashion. Ironically, much of the seductive neo-modernism that has followed simply reinforces the message. Perhaps that's why we now hate (fear?) postmodernism so much. It points out exactly who the enemy is, and it's us. ■



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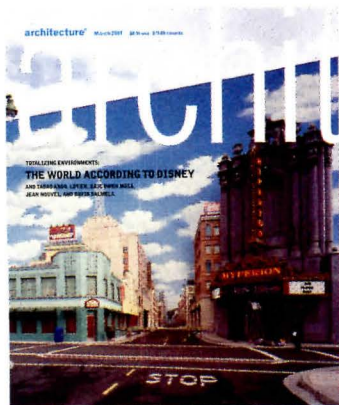
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Simmering Beanpot

On what planet has Mickey O'Connor been living? While hyper-ventilating his opinions about 111 Huntington Avenue at the Prudential Center Boston (March 2001, page 126), he might at least have tried to get the facts straight....

Let's start with his preposterous notion that this building "will subvert the Prudential's lauded circulation system." The Prudential Center as originally planned sat on an elevated platform 20 feet above street level, barely connected to the city around it. Fortunately, this is changing based on a totally revised master plan approved in 1990. The current construction, which Mr. O'Connor seems to think is some new, unrelated idea, in fact adds crucial elements all specifically called for by the 1990 plan. Urban improvements, such as a "winter garden" and a weather-protected entrance at the Prudential Center subway station, have been welcomed in the city.

Almost everyone would share Mr. O'Connor's opinion that the Christian Science Center's reflecting pool is one of the city's beloved public spaces. However, since 111's five-story low-rise façade faces south along Huntington Avenue, O'Connor's apoplexy about the supposed impact of 111's "five-story wall" on that space must remain a mystery unaffected by the facts. The construction of an 11-story residential/retail building on the

Belvidere Street frontage is anything but a "brutish gesture," and will enliven the street with shops and a public plaza.

While Mr. O'Connor is entitled to his opinion [criticizing the top of 111], the public is entitled to theirs. So far, the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Edward H. Linde
Boston Properties
Boston

A Misinformed Mission

I am sure you have received various complaints about the positions that you take on this and that, some excrescence that someone has erected, or some nonsense that NCARB has cooked up. But at least in my circles, there are many rolled eyes over the little things that crop up here and there in the magazine that are blatantly, comically political, bear no discernable relevance to architecture, and are usually misinformed.

Case in point: Bradford McKee jauntily covers the issue of D.C.'s lack of federal representation ("License to Annoy," March 2001, page 63) without mentioning, even in passing, why the problem exists—the clear and specific directive in the U.S. Constitution requiring the establishment of the district and its being wholly under the control of the Feds. I am certain that this was not ignorance on his part, nor on yours. You folks are too smart for that. The omission of this essential bit helps prevent pesky nuance from spoiling the fun of righteous indignation. The addition of a touch of good old-fashioned rabble-rousing by describing the district as "a colony" is a fair move in any fair argument. But none of this belongs in a magazine that theoretically has your mission.

Jonathan Sawyer
Fort Washington, Pennsylvania

Not Cool, Old-School

In concept, Leslie Gill's portable, luminous, theatrical boxes seem

to occur as an intriguing, slick, disruption in the usual classroom setting ("Pretty Cool for a School," February 2001, page 39). However, if one cuts through the sculptural literalism of "visually suggest[ing] worlds other than the world you're standing in," one quickly sees that the actual "design objective" is anything but novel.

That anyone could still conceive of rooms without windows as a space for education under the guise of "manipulating mood" or mitigating "discipline problems" is commensurate to ignoring history. Furthermore, to claim that students obediently respond heliotropically to such an environment is rather curious. What's next—aromatherapy?

If the intention is to foster a "sense of community [and]... broaden horizons," why not actually engage the outside world with a responsive architecture? Wouldn't more meaningful learning result from a critical interplay between inside/outside, individual/community, self/other, computer screen/ the landscape beyond your homeroom?

Nicholas Morisco
Burlingame, California

CORRECTIONS

The lower right photo on page 30 (March 2001) is of the lobby of Morris Lapidus's Americana Hotel, not the Eden Roc.

In "Cabinetmaker" (page 45, March 2001), President Clinton's EPA head should have been listed as Carol Browner.

Michael Meredith is the designer of the Chinati Foundation House (page 43, March 2001).

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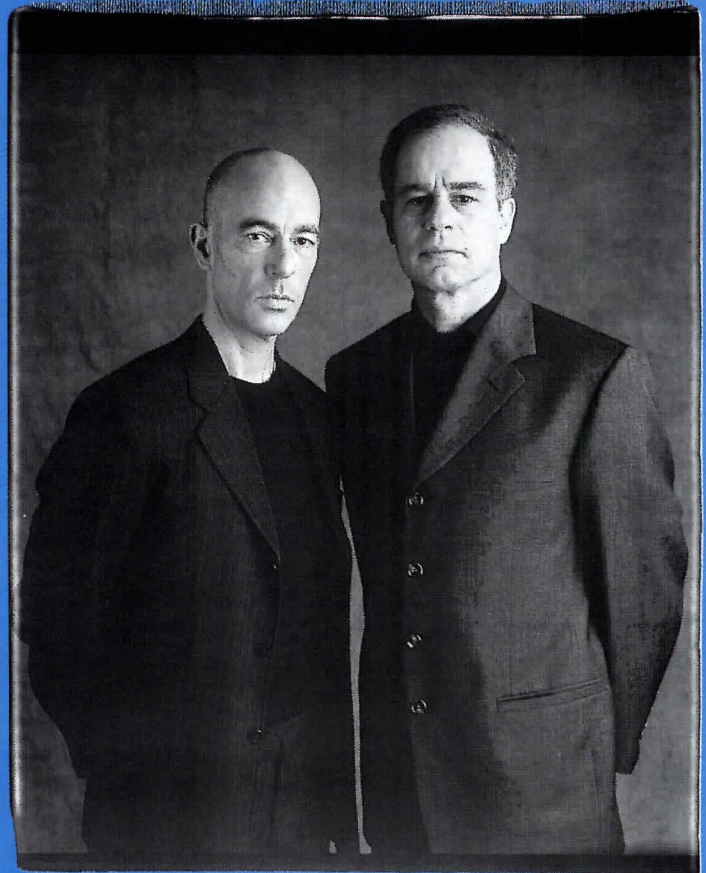
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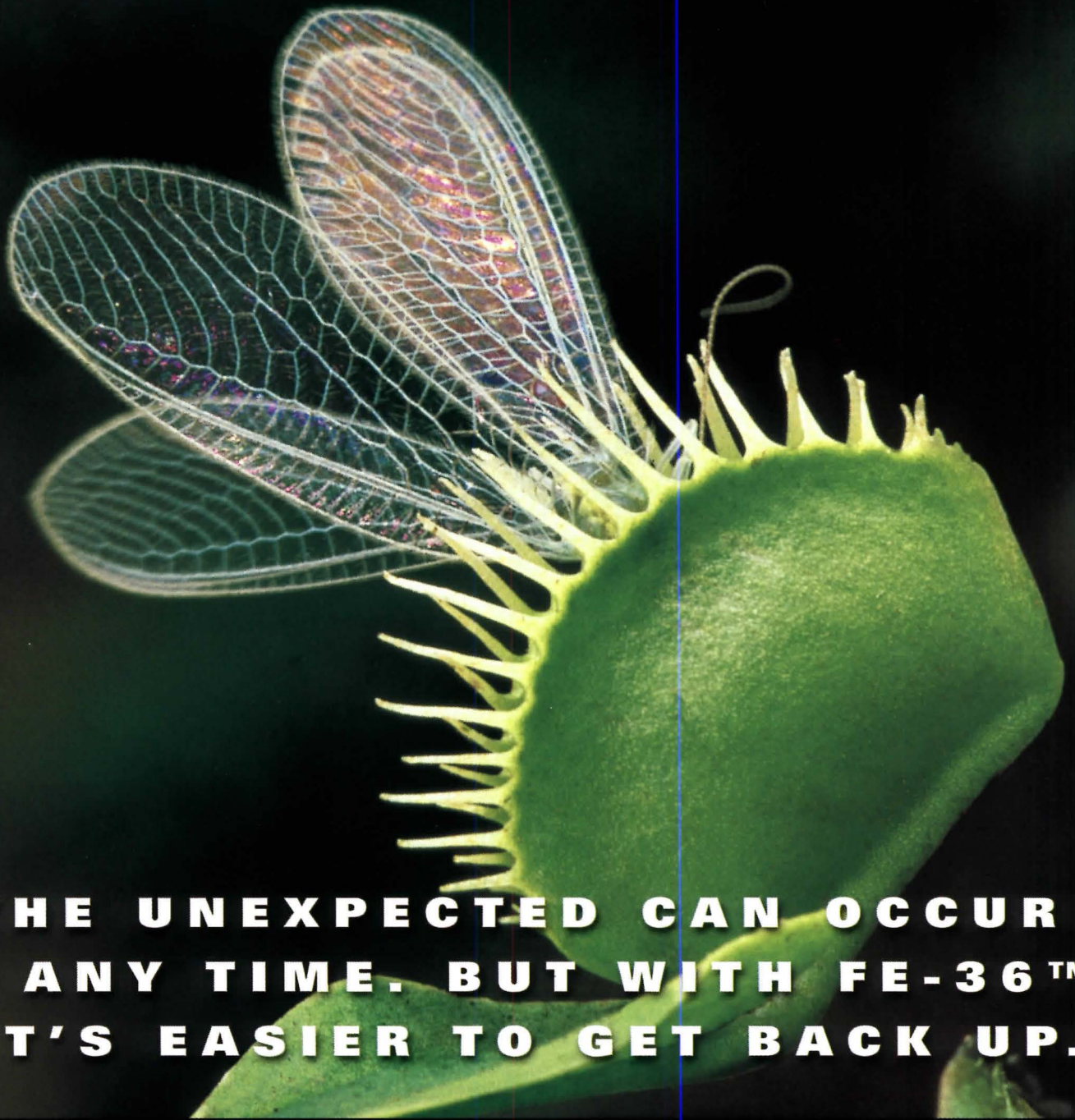
Herzog & de Meuron Win Pritzker

Award It's safe to say that not many people were surprised to see Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron win the Pritzker Architecture Prize this year. The two fiftysomethings have been combining compelling materials, technical genius and a penchant for novelty to move beyond the modern box and create a progressive, potent—and, it could be said, popular—modern architecture.

The jury specifically lauded the duo (above) for consistent techno-

logical innovations in a breadth of building types, from the architects' 1999 Signal Box, a railway utility building in Basel, Switzerland, to its conversion of the giant Bankside power plant on the Thames River in London into a new gallery of modern art for the Tate Museum, completed in 2000 (May 2000, page 146).

"They refine the traditions of modernism to elemental simplicity while transforming materials and surfaces through the exploration of



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new treatments and techniques,” commented Ada Louise Huxtable, critic and juror. “This is an art of reduction and enrichment that moves architecture to new levels of experience and effect.”

While the prize is awarded for the recipient(s)’ body of work, not for a singular building, the high-profile and much-lauded Tate Modern completed last year had to have made a big impression on

the jury. The small-scale Dominus Winery in Napa Valley, California, was also an achievement. Herzog & de Meuron looked to an ancient infrastructure method to redesign the winery’s appearance and function, using gabions, or wire containers filled with local basalt, to create façades that allow both heat and light to enter, generating the novel effect of a transparent masonry wall.

For Herzog, the firm’s philosophy is more wed to conceptual art than to the field of architecture. “Andy Warhol is an artist we would most like to have known. He used common Pop images to say something new,” Herzog has explained. “That is exactly what we are interested in: using well-known forms and materials in a new way so that they become alive again.”

At press time, the presentation of the award—and its \$100,000 purse—was to take place at Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia, the home of America’s first architect, Thomas Jefferson, on May 7. The choice of a quintessentially American landmark is ironic considering that an American hasn’t won the prestigious award since 1991. *Bay Brown*

Herzog and de Meuron were awarded for their body of work, which includes the Signal Box in Basel, Switzerland; a gallery for the Goetz Collection of Modern Art in Munich, Germany; and a rendering for the new Prada shop and offices in Tokyo (clockwise from top left).

Buzz

Diller + Scofidio (New York) have been selected by the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, to design a new museum at Fan Pier.

ROY (New York) has been selected by the Museum of Modern Art and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center as the winner of the second annual MoMA/P.S. 1 Young Architects Program competition. The firm, whose principal architect is **Linda Roy**, will try to bring tranquility to the heart of Queens by installing pools, hammocks, and walls of fans in P.S. 1’s courtyard. The project will open July 1.

London’s public areas are okay for hookers—so says the city’s architectural adviser, **Lord (Richard) Rogers**, at a recent lecture. Buskers and beggars are allowed to “ply their trade” in public areas, why shouldn’t street-walkers? Rogers’ words of wisdom came in response to accusations that some of his developments were inhospitable to urban poor.

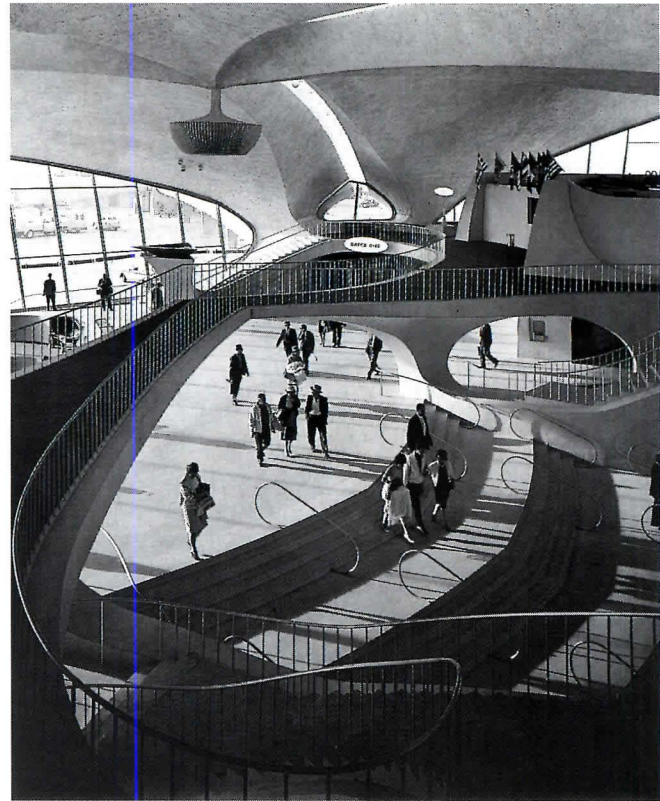


Saarinen's TWA Threatened

Preservation Completed in 1962, Eero Saarinen's elegant, avian Trans World Airlines Flight Center at Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in New York City evokes the grace, speed, and optimism of the jet age. But the structure, while still iconic, has become obsolete. The airport is overcrowded, and the terminal—made up of one main structure with two satellite pods connected to it by “umbilical tubes”—is forcing the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which oversees JFK and the region's two other major airports, to start a fight it doesn't want to have. The bi-state agency has a \$10 billion redevelopment plan for JFK, which calls for the renovation of TWA's terminal but also the demolition of its two gate structures, one of which is landmarked by the city.

Preservationists like DOCOMOMO and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission are incensed about the proposed destruction of the two gate structures (only one of which was designed by Saarinen's firm), which the groups see as part of the airport's visionary design. “It was designed as a totality,” says Theodore Purdon, DOCOMOMO president. “We don't go lopping off pieces of St. Peter's.” Preservationists are demanding increased public participation before demolition is approved by the New York State Preservation Agency, which oversees the Port Authority. *Alan G. Brake*

Though emblematic of the jet age, Eero Saarinen's TWA flight center has become obsolete.



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Poisoned Land: Prime Real Estate Goes to Cash-Strapped Schools

Many people were relieved when plans to build the Belmont Learning Complex atop a potentially poisonous former oil field and industrial site in Los Angeles were abandoned last year. But schoolchildren in other parts of the country may not be so lucky. Questionable campus construction—on a toxic waste dump in Love Canal, New York, above a garbage dump in New Orleans, Louisiana—looks as if it will continue across the country.

The U.S. government has acknowledged in a recent report compiled by the U.S. Accounting Office, "School Facilities: Condition of America's Schools," that while federal law impels students to attend school until age 16, it does nothing to guarantee the safety of school buildings.

The 83-page report "Poisoned Schools: Invisible Threats, Visible Actions," which cites the government's findings and was released this February by the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice (a nonprofit, nongovernmental, national environmental organization), says things are worse than the government's mild acknowledgement indicates.

Cash-strapped schools are often forced to look at inhospitable land as a quick financial fix, but help may be on the way in the form of the Johnson-Rangel federal initiative, "America's Better Classroom Act," sponsored by Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) and Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-CT). Introduced in March, the initiative, which has strong bipartisan support, is intended to fund the construction of 6,000 campuses nationwide. The Bush Administration has yet to take a position on it. *Shonquis Moreno*

Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen (Seattle) has been selected by McCann-Erickson to design the interior of the global brand-building company's Star Manufacturing Building in downtown Seattle.

Alberto Perez-Gomez and **Sylvia Lavin** have been shortlisted for the dean's chair at Cooper Union.

Richard Meier (New York) will design Viking Range Corporation's research and development center on the campus of Mississippi State University.

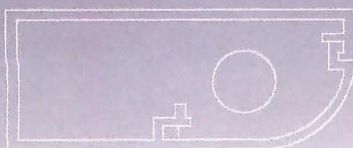
The **National Trust for Historic Preservation** has chosen five towns that have successfully revitalized their commercial districts as winners of the Great American Main Street Awards: **Elkader, Iowa; Mansfield, Ohio;**

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Legislation Proposes Brownfield Reuse



Brownfields, like this along the Jersey City, New Jersey, waterfront, can become prime real estate parcels.

Smart Growth There are an estimated 450,000 to 600,000 brownfield sites nationwide. Abandoned or idled properties where reuse has been complicated by real or suspected contamination, these brownfields impede economic development in both rural and urban settings.

Using New Jersey projects that have turned previously unused land into prime real estate as examples, new legislation—called the “Brownfields Revitalization and Environmental Restoration Act of 2001”—would primarily limit property owners’ liabilities, making such potentially productive sites highly attractive to developers.

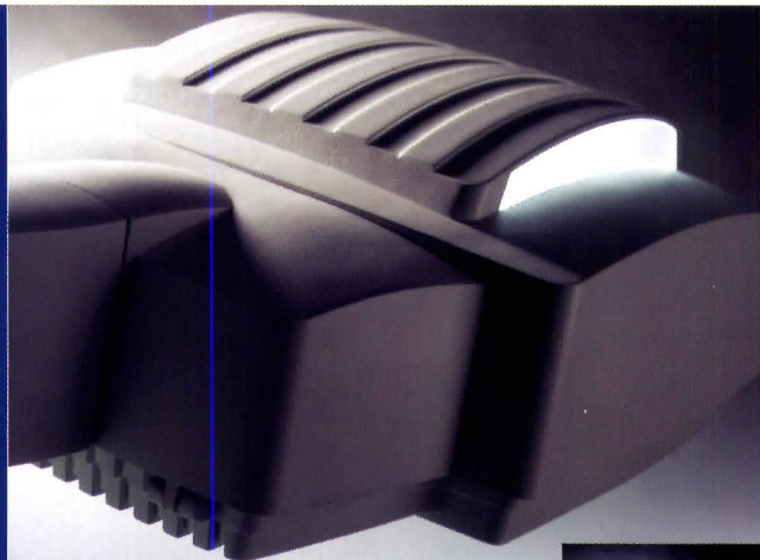
The bill would authorize 150 million federal dollars for the assessment and remediation of barren brownfield sites. Led by Senator Lincoln Chafee from Rhode Island and Senator Bob Smith from New Hampshire, the recently introduced bill is moving quickly ahead in the Senate. It has yet to be addressed in the House.

The new director of the Environmental Protection Agency, Christine Todd Whitman, who as Governor of New Jersey made high-density construction and the reuse of brownfields an integral part of New Jersey’s statewide growth-management framework, endorses the bill.

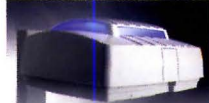
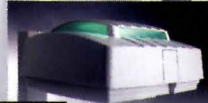
“This is a bill that is good for the country, our cities, and for architects,” says Dan Wilson, federal affairs director of the American Institute of Architects. “It separates brownfields from the Superfund debate, putting salvageable sites in a separate category from those littered with deadly toxic waste.”

President Bush has expressed interest in the bill and, according to Wilson, “seems to recognize this as a problem that can be solved.” *Susanna Sirefman*

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Battling blight ain't for the weak-willed—or the cheap. **Philadelphia** plans on spending up to \$190 million to demolish 11,000 to 13,000 houses and stabilize (or “repair” at least as much to make suitable for renovation) between 1,000 and 2,500 over the next three to four years.

Communities Foundation of Texas will fund a fountain/sculpture designed by **Santiago Calatrava** for the new Meadows Museum at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

Jean Nouvel has been chosen to design the new Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

Sunshine State of Grace

Simulated Salvation Though no one's sure why identifying the Holy Land Experience as either a theme park or an amusement park is important, reams of newspaper column inches have been devoted to trying to label it appropriately. Whatever it is—“living museum,” “totalizing environment,” “experience”—the Experience, which opened earlier this year in Orlando, Florida, depends mostly on its faux ancient architecture to get the point across: This is Jerusalem as Jesus may have known it. Though the King Herod temple (above, at center), with six stories, is about a third of the original's supposed size, it's still foreboding. Heck, it might even make you want to pray for forgiveness: “I'm sorry I blew 17 bucks on *that* ride.” *Anthony Mariani*



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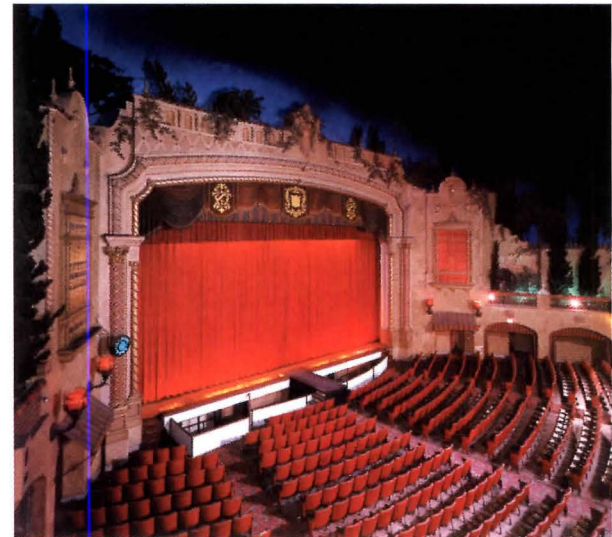
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Preserving Historic Movie Palaces Online

E-Preservation Historic movie palaces were some of American architecture's first themed environments, elaborate sets built by big studios that helped "create the cinema experience the moment you walked in the door," says Ross Melnick, cofounder of www.cinematreasures.org, a new Web site dedicated to movie palace preservation. By putting endangered theaters online, Cinema Treasures "brings preservation into the 21st century," according to Melnick. The site lists more than 200 movie palaces worldwide and can be searched by architectural style, location, condition, and number of seats, among other things.

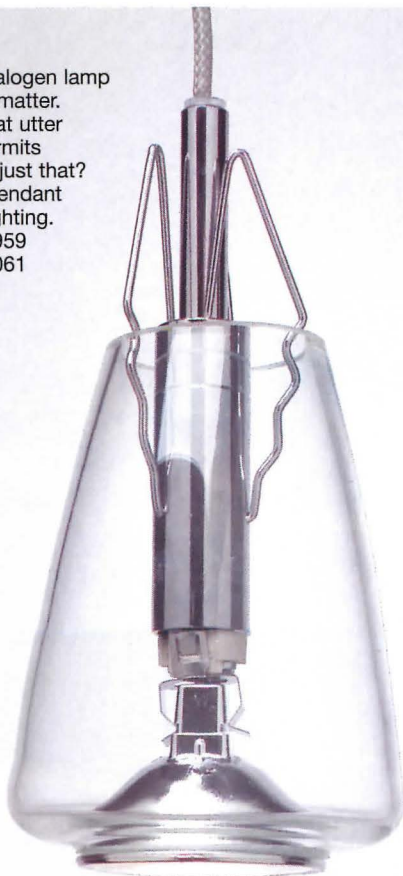
Allowing users to add their hometown theaters to the list, Cinema Treasures identifies forgotten palaces that are often located in small towns. The site is also calling attention to the myriad styles spawned by the often studio-owned theaters—including Pueblo Deco, Mission Revival, and Atmospheric (which often included fanciful pastoral scenes and simulated night skies), as well as beaux arts, art deco, and art nouveau.

Melnick and cofounder Patrick Crowley hope their site will lead sympathetic developers to traditional preservationists, cinema and architecture enthusiasts, and movie palace owners. "We want to give preservation a marketing facelift," says Crowley. Updated with additional theaters and news daily, the site is being outfitted to cover 600 palaces online by year's end. *A.G.B.*



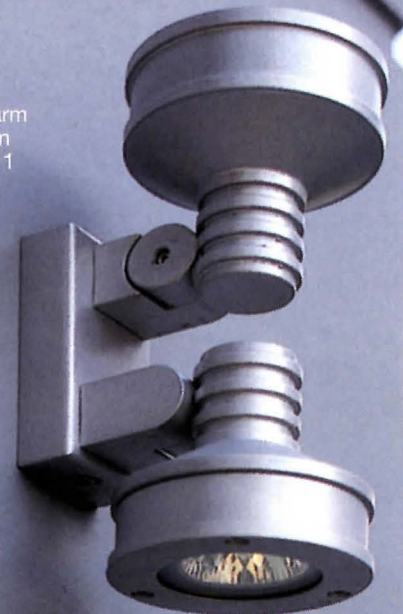
The Plaza Theater in El Paso, Texas, is one of hundreds of movie palaces featured at www.cinematreasures.org.

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Urban Planning

Las Vegas Wants a Real Skyline

Las Vegas has never been the type of place for adventuresome, meaningful architecture or development. Billboard-sized, neon 10-gallon lids? Sure. Tracks of subdivisions? Yup. Forward-thinking buildings or neighborhoods? Eh, not quite.

But this image of Vegas as made up of only Strip-ian structures and bacchanalia-heavy city planning might be old hat in about 10 years, once the city finishes developing 61 acres right smack dab in the geographic heart of Las Vegas, its new "downtown."

The city acquired the land, formerly a rail-switching yard, last year in a land swap with Lehman Bros. Holdings, which had taken possession of the land after its former owner defaulted on his loans. Those 61 virgin acres are unlike most anything anybody's ever seen before.

Under consideration is a long list of developments for the city's soon-to-be-built downtown,

called 100 South Grand Street. (A shortlist of viable programs is expected to be released this June.) Projects by Tate-Snyder Architects (for the world's tallest building, the Millennium Tower), Big Air Development (for an indoor ski dome), and the Simon Property Group (known for its Mall of America in Minneapolis, Minnesota) are some prospective downtown developers.

The city is pursuing its dream of having an honest-to-goodness downtown in the face of other recent developments that are fairing poorly, including the much-vaunted Fremont Street Experience (April 1996, page 78), as well as an entertainment venue called Neonopolis. Most of downtown, except for a cluster of new justice-related buildings, is still depressed. And don't go looking for a casino at 100 South Grand: Expect mixed-up Las Vegas to be all mixed-use. *A.M.*

www.new7wonders.com is soliciting input from the global community to determine a list of seven "new" wonders of the world. Some structures and developments on the ballot include the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty, Taj Mahal, Kyoto, Machu Picchu, the Sydney Opera House, the Empire State Building, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Kremlin and Red Square, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Roman Colosseum, the Great Wall of China, and Timbuktu.

The San Jose Greater Downtown Strategy for Development, "Strategy 2000" (what year is it again?), was voted for acceptance recently. **Field Paoli Architects** (San Francisco) led the six-month formulation of the plan.

Peter Eisenman has been elected to membership in the American Academy



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I.M. Pei is redesigning the top of the Four Seasons Hotel in New York City, including the hotel's stepped crown.

SANAA (Tokyo), with its lead architects Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, has been selected by the Toledo Museum of Art to design its proposed Center for Glass.

Seattle City Council has approved the acquisition of the 10 Broad Street property, the final piece needed to complete the city's **Olympic Sculpture Park**.

Interior Design editor-in-chief **Mayer Rus** is leaving the magazine for *House & Garden*.

Tallest Tower of London Draws Critics



Big Ideas London's Southwark Council has just begun deliberations on the London Bridge Tower. Billed as the tallest building in Europe, the project, designed by Renzo Piano and developed by Irvine Sellar, has Londoners—and the rest of Europe—contemplating the aesthetic impact of such a large and un-European structure.

One major concern is the proposed tower's location on the south bank of the River Thames, between Southwark Cathedral and the underground London Bridge Station. And though Adam Wilkinson of SAVE Britain's Heritage, a critic of the project, admits the building is "fine" design-wise, he notes that SAVE's opposition is less about architecture and more about the lack of policy and planning for tall buildings.

Martin Crookston of the economists and planners Llewellyn-Davies agrees that "there is no need for it [to be in central London]." Crookston chaired the Design and Transport working group for London architectural adviser Lord (Richard) Rogers' Urban Task Force. From a "demand and need" point of view, says Crookston, there is "not a particularly strong case."

London Bridge Tower's provisional completion date is late 2005.
Robert Such

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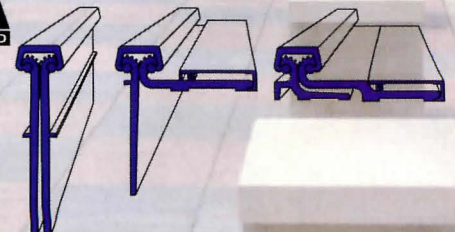
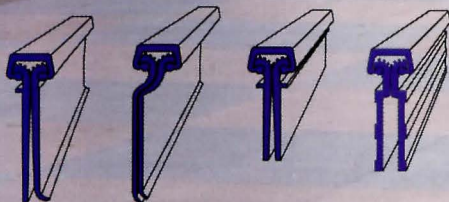
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Calendar

Exhibitions

Cambridge

Commencement Exhibition at the Harvard GSD through August 15 www.gsd.harvard.edu/events (617) 495-4784

Chicago

2001: Building for Space Travel at the Art Institute of Chicago through October 21 (312) 443-3600

Cyberspace

The City and the American Dream by Ian MacBurnie and James Britt at www.arch.ttu.edu/architecture

Denver

Work[place] 2010: The Office of the Future at 700 17th Street, 15th Floor www.workplace2010.com

London

Exploring the City: The Norman Foster Studio at the British Museum opens in June and runs through October www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk 0207-323-8000

Los Angeles

James Welling: Photographs 1974-1999 at MOCA at California Plaza through August 26 www.MOCA-LA.org (213) 621-2766

New York

Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan: The Architect's Other Passion at the Japan Society Gallery through July 15 www.japansociety.com (212) 832-1155

Mies in Berlin at the Museum of Modern Art opens June 21 (212) 708-9400

Mies in America at the Whitney Museum of Art opens June 21 (212) 570-3676

Rooms with a View: Landscape and Wallpaper at the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum through October 14 (212) 849-8400

Frank O. Gehry Retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum through August 26 (212) 423-3500

Philadelphia

Kahn at 100: Silence and Light marking the centenary of Louis I. Kahn's birth, at the Kroiz Gallery in the Architectural Archives at the University of Pennsylvania through September 15 www.upenn.edu/jgsfa/archives/archives/index.html (215) 898-8323

Princeton

Le Corbusier at Princeton: 14-16 November 1935 at the Art Museum at Princeton University through June 17 (609) 258-3788

San Francisco

Revelatory Landscapes at five outdoor sites around the Bay Area, by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art through October 14; Jennifer Sterling: Selections from the Permanent Collection of Architecture and Design and Custom Built: A Twenty-Year Survey of the Work by Allan Wexler, both through June 24 (415) 357-4000

Sante Fe

Eye of Modernism at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum through September 5 www.okeeffemuseum.org (505) 995-0785

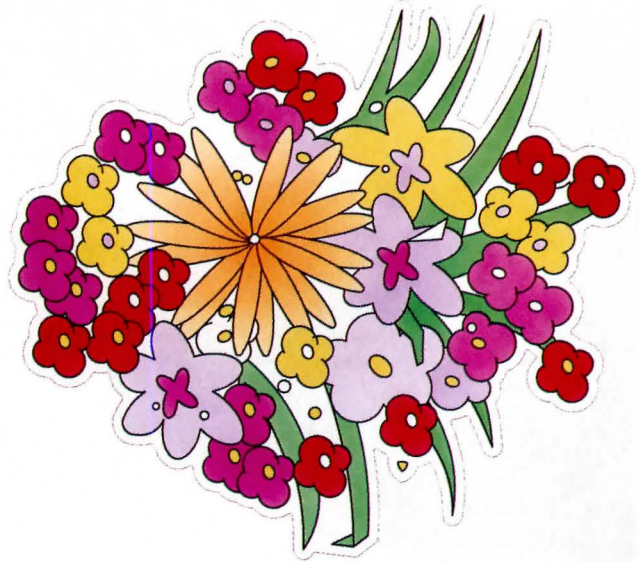
Washington

Federal Design Now! GSA 2000 Design Awards at the National Building Museum through July 8 (202) 272-2448

Conferences

Mesh International Landscape Architecture Conference (EDGE VI) hosted by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University at Storey Hall in Melbourne, Australia July 9-11 meah@rmit.edu.au +61 3 9925 3806

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards annual meeting in Seattle, Washington, from June 20 till June 23 (202) 783-6500



Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown have never before been the subject of a full-scale retrospective, an astonishing curatorial oversight that the Philadelphia Museum of Art will rectify this summer with the exhibition **Out of the Ordinary: The Architecture and Design of Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Associates**. Some 250 drawings, models, and photographs will be on display, dating from the iconic Vanna Venturi House (1965) to recent works such as the Mielparque Resort in Nikko, Japan (signage study, 1997, above). *Out of the Ordinary* opens June 10 and runs until August 5. For more information, call (215) 763-8100 or visit www.philamuseum.org.

Steven Holl at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., on June 25 (202) 272-2448

Urban Waterfronts at the New York Marriott on September 20-22 www.watefrontcenter.org (202) 337-0356

ACEEE 2001 Summer Study: Increasing Productivity through Energy Efficiency in Tarrytown, NY P.O. Box 7588, Newark, DE 19714 or e-mail Rebecca.Lunetta@riunetta@erols.com

Competitions

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards' Prize for Creative Integration of Practice and Education in the Academy invites architecture schools with NAAB-accredited degrees to submit established projects www.ncarb.org

Fresh Kills: Landfill to Landscape New York City and the Municipal Art Society of New York invite submissions via www.nyc.gov/freshkills. Selection of teams completed by July, design submissions due in October

Mid-Career Grants by the James Marston Fitch Charitable Foundation; submission deadline is September 1 (212) 691-3229

Call for papers by the Wessex Institute of Technology, UK Abstract deadline for High Performance Structures and Composites in Seville, Spain, is June 19; abstract deadline for Seventh International Conference on Shock and Impact in Montreal, Canada, is August 21 www.wessex.ac.uk

Design 21 Award by UNESCO and Felissimo; submission deadline is August 15 (212) 956-4438

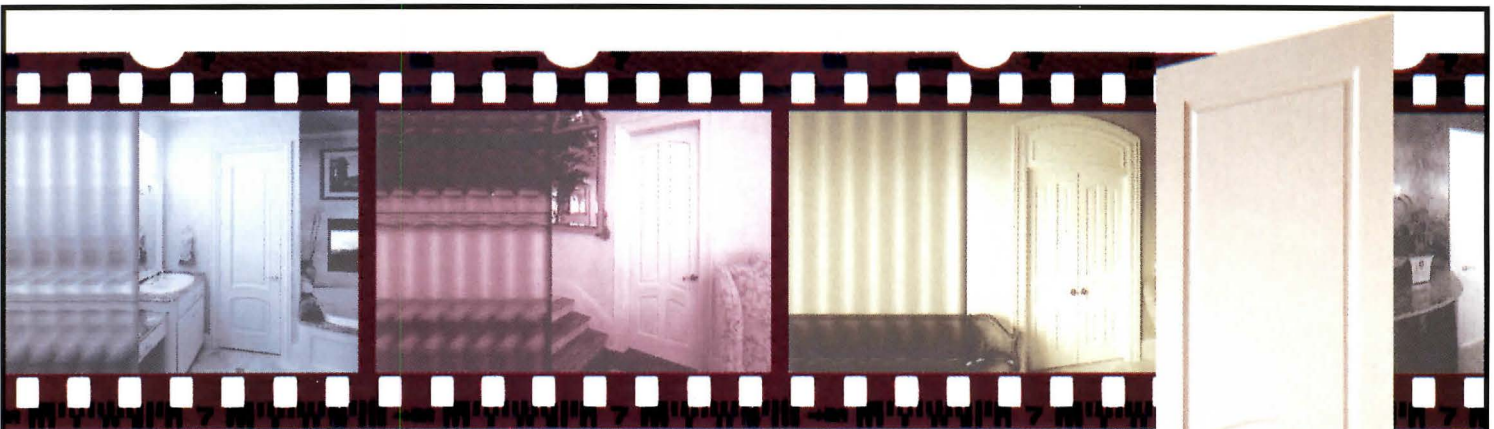


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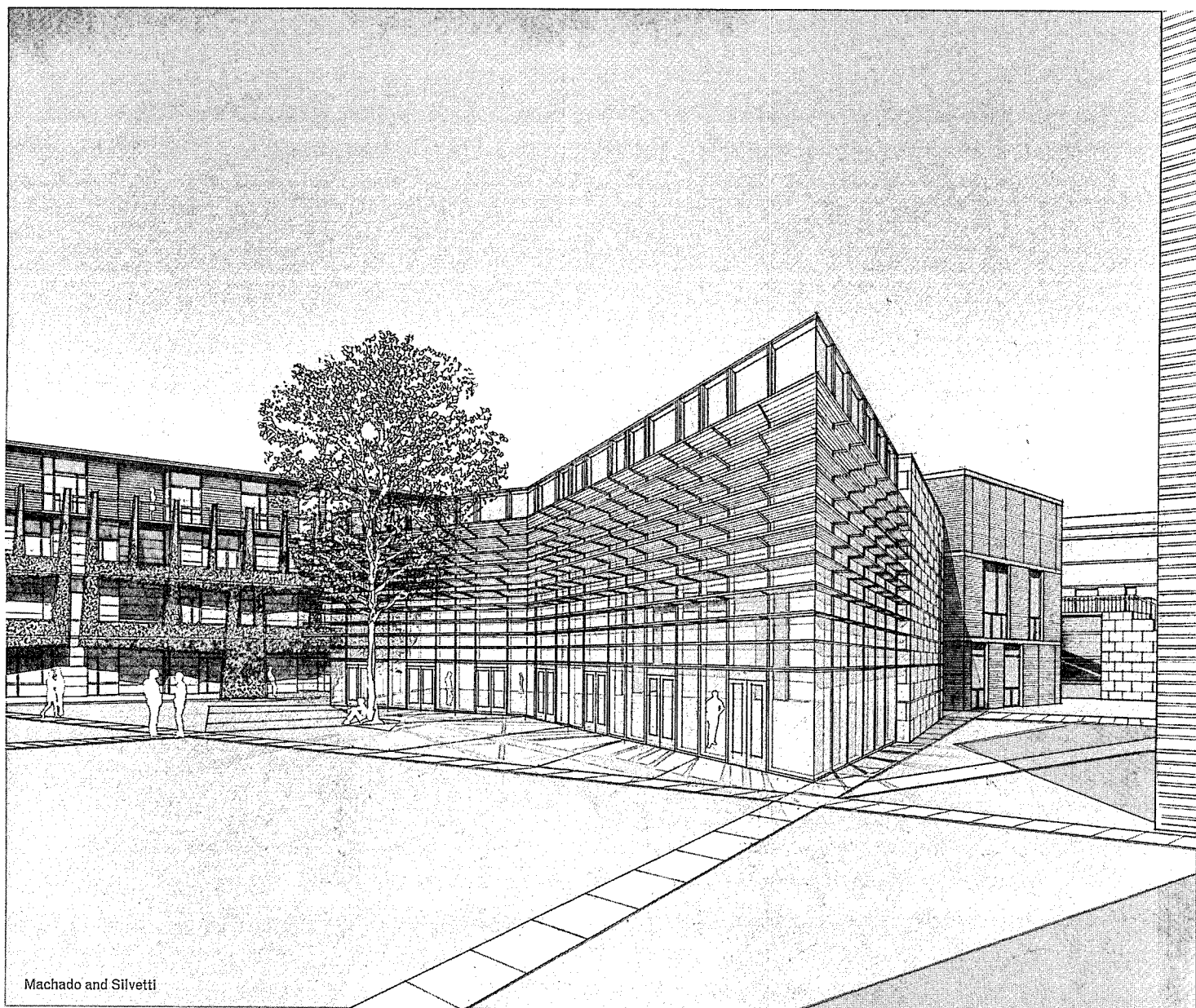
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On the Boards

Projects at Rice University, Houston:

Michael Graves & Associates with Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville, Martel College and additions to Brown and Jones Colleges

Machado and Silvetti Associates with Kirksey, Wiess College

Robert A. M. Stern Architects with Morris Architects,
Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Management

As a patron, Rice University in Houston reveres the fin-de-siècle vision of Ralph Adams Cram, the architect responsible for the campus' master plan and earliest buildings. Since the late 1970s especially, the university has capitalized on its initial investment by hiring architects with a vested interest in the past—stars such as Ricardo Bofill, Allan Greenberg (this issue, page 146), Cesar Pelli, and James Stirling and Michael Wilford. The best of their projects at Rice incorporated something unexpected into the mix, according to a rewardingly complex sensibility once hailed as postmodernism.



Robert A. M. Stern



Michael Graves

Three projects currently under construction on the campus—Robert A. M. Stern’s classroom and office building for the Graduate School of Management, and undergraduate dormitories by Michael Graves and Machado and Silvetti—all find inspiration in Cram’s narrow brick-and-stone buildings, with their loosely Byzantine character. Stern has established the most evidently loving, if problematic, relationship with his predecessor, one based on a strict imitation of style. The nostalgic renderings of his Graduate School of Management might have been drafted in Cram’s own office, if it weren’t for the excessive bulk of the

building they depict. By contrast, the slender footprints of the dormitories fall closer to precedent, while the elevations take greater license. Graves’s blocky fields of brick and stone are witty, almost Pop. Machado and Silvetti shield their brick walls behind sober and highly articulated metal screens. The dormitories, at least, enrich the campus architecturally with their careful balance between formal deference and contemporary assertion. *The label “postmodernist” may discomfort these architects, but when it refers to such good projects, they should take it as a compliment. Ned Cramer*

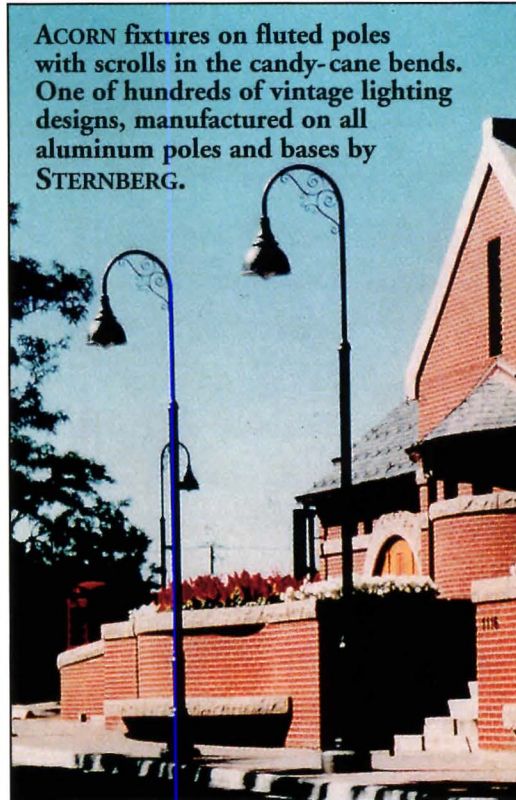


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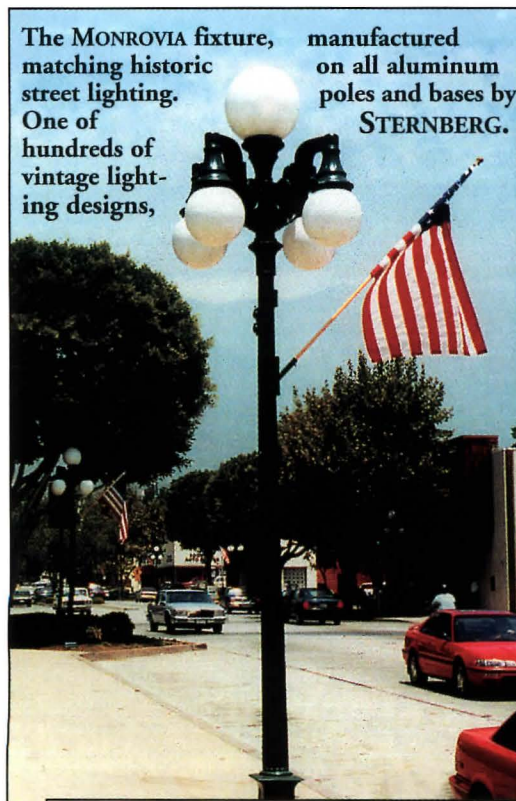
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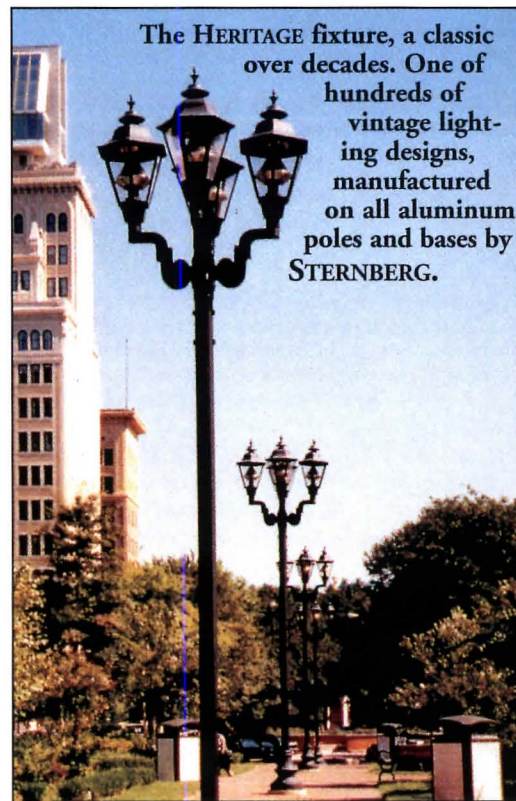


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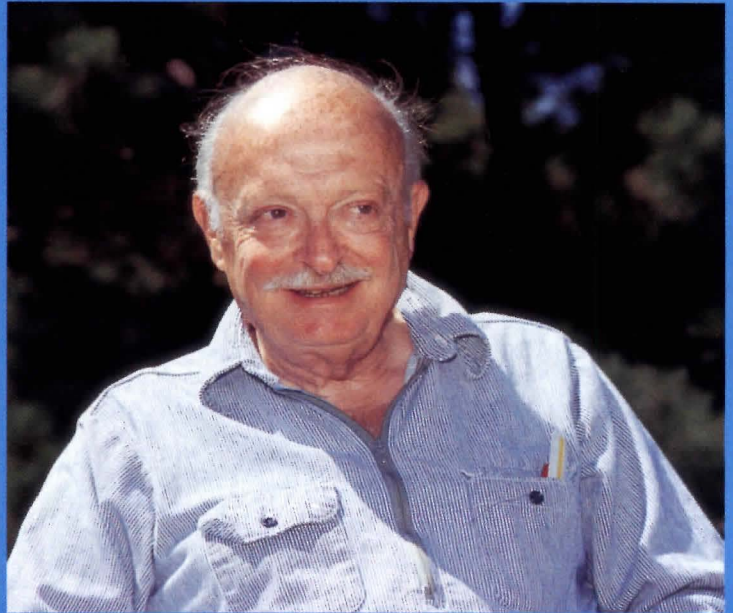
practice

“The degree to which you can expect architects to be businessmen is limited. The near-greats and greats are not in this for business reasons.”

Business, page 86

“New churches incorporate cafés, gymnasiums, computer centers, and even rock-climbing walls and bowling alleys.”

Religion, page 90



Moore or Less

Charles Moore was a complicated partner and mentor. **Christopher Hawthorne** speaks to Moore's successors about keeping his flame alive—or abandoning it altogether.

Legacy Charles Moore, who died eight years ago at the age of 68, spent much of his career playing the role of Johnny Appleseed to the architectural profession. Happily (if compulsively) peripatetic, Moore wandered the country during his most productive years, planting little architectural firms as he moved from one university teaching post to the next.

He would tend carefully to each firm for a few years while it was new and fragile; once it began to cast a healthy, noticeable shadow, he'd move on to repeat the process somewhere else, usually several states and thousands of miles away. For the partners he left behind, this created several challenges and frustrations—principally those of running a business whose founder and marquee talent was often no more than “an occasional visitor” to the office, as one Moore protégé puts it. And over the years the partners have discovered that carrying a famous name can be as much a burden as a benefit, particularly when it comes to carving out their own identities and reputations.

Charles Moore, pictured here shortly before his death, left his successors with a mixed heritage.

Some of the firms Moore founded didn't last long. His best-known collaborative, Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker—founded in Berkeley in 1962 and responsible for the architect's single most influential design, Condominium One at Northern California's Sea Ranch—broke apart in 1970, a few years after Moore moved east to take over the architecture school at Yale.

Three of Moore's firms are still standing, however, and have put down substantial roots in the architectural soil. Moore Ruble Yudell (MRY), formed in 1978 and now run by John Ruble and Buzz Yudell, has 41 people in its Santa Monica, California, offices. Centerbrook Architects, begun in New Haven, Connecticut, in the mid-1970s as Moore Grover Harper and now based in the Connecticut village from which it takes its name, has grown to a healthy staff of 80. And Moore Andersson, run by Moore's final partner Arthur Andersson, has 12 Austin-based staffers.

Just as these firms are reaching maturity, a reappraisal of their sometimes gleefully immature founder is under way. The MIT Press has just released *You Have to Pay for the Public Life*, a new collection of Moore's essays edited by Kevin Keim, who runs the Charles W. Moore



Moore Andersson Arthur Andersson's Austin, Texas, home displays Moore's lighthearted, quirky touch in updating the familiar.

Center for the Study of Place in Austin. The University of California Press has reissued *The Place of Houses*, written by Moore with Donlyn Lyndon and Gerald Allen, which lays out many of his theories about the archetypes of residential design.

At the same time, nearly a decade after his death and almost a full generation after Moore began to withdraw from active design, his firms are finally stepping out of his shadow. Centerbrook has been quietly building a separate identity for more than 15 years. MRY is staking its own claim, particularly with well-received projects in Europe. In a wrenching but long-considered move, Arthur Andersson decided this spring to drop Moore's name from his firm, and to add that of architect Chris Wise.

Though he is remembered as a postmodernist, Moore always disliked the label. He was above all a contrarian, and preferred not be identified with any school. Better, perhaps, to call him an antimodernist. His work—not just his humane and exuberant architecture but also his elegant, surprisingly restrained writing (which fills 11 books in all)—remains one of the most thoughtful, persuasive critiques of modernism on record.

Moore's reputation took a serious beating during the last years of his life. ("Say I design like anyone," Philip Johnson is said to have quipped. "But don't say I design like Charles Moore.") He was erratic and, as his career went on, increasingly prone to design overkill. But Moore understood as well as any American architect of the last 50 years how our sense of a building shifts as we move through it. Playful jabs at modernism aside, his skills as a designer make him an indispensable subject of study for a profession increasingly guilty of lavishing more care on image—how a building will look in a magazine or on a monitor—than on the user.

Moore's former partners, who experienced more directly than anyone his unusual approach to architecture and life, are quick to praise his

Over the years the partners have discovered that carrying a famous name can be as much a burden as a benefit.

congenial nature as well as his vision. As David Littlejohn wrote in his 1984 book about Moore, "His historical importance may be disputed, and the success of his individual works may be inconsistent. But his attitude toward the practice of architecture strikes me as exemplary."

Mark Simon, a Centerbrook partner who studied with Moore at Yale before going to work for him in New Haven, got a taste of that attitude as he soon as walked through the door. "Other architectural firms I'd been in were almost uniformly cranky, sardonic, and cynical," he says. "With Charles there was enthusiasm and a kind of intentional naiveté, and we all got completely swept up in it."

Anyone who hired Moore immediately became his collaborator; at the first client meeting he'd often hang up sheets of butcher paper and hand out markers to everyone in the room. "Charles was amazingly charismatic with clients," MRY's John Ruble says. "They all wanted him to be their best friend."

He was generous about sharing credit with his scattered crew of younger partners. "The work was intensely collaborative," Donlyn Lyndon remembers. At MLTW, "He always included us in the conception of projects—and in all the credits. With the condo at Sea Ranch, we argued every little bit of it, so that we could all make a valid claim to authorship."

Moore's design process, especially in the early stages, was free and loose. He liked to indulge the purely curious side of his mind. "We'd often start a project by going and having some drinks," Ruble recalls. "The spirit of doing things informally at first was always part of working with Charles."

That curiosity also made Moore less than reliable as a mentor or busi-



Moore Ruble Yudell MRY's addition to the UCLA law library (top) smacks of Moore's grand institutional work, while the firm's Yorkin Residence (above), sets a new, more contemporary tone.

ness partner, however. Moore was endlessly distracted and always itching to travel. His partners used to joke that if he ever got an invitation to speak at a high school assembly in Alaska, he'd be on the next plane out. Moore's chronic wanderlust, says Centerbrook partner William Grover, was "so frustrating to me that I stopped collaborating with him. If he had just settled down, his body of work would be better by tenfold or twentyfold. He was spread too thin, all the time."

In a sense, Moore's firms have been coping with his absence from day one, and when he died, the firms weren't forced to undergo a jarring period of transition.

Becoming a business independent of its founder has instead been "a gradual process for us," says Grover. "Other architects here slowly gained the confidence of our long-term clients." Being without Moore has even had its client-management benefits, Grover says. Some clients "began to realize that things got done faster without Charles."

Moore's death did wipe out some practical benefits. The flow of young architects from the nearby schools where he taught, once a steady source of talent for all three firms, began to dry up. And partners lost a key bargaining chip for luring clients: No longer could they claim that Moore, who even in the last years of his life was a roving consultant to his successors, might step in briefly and give a building an injection of genius.

The successor firms were faced with a subtle curse. Moore's most postmodern quality was his distrust of standardized design. He always

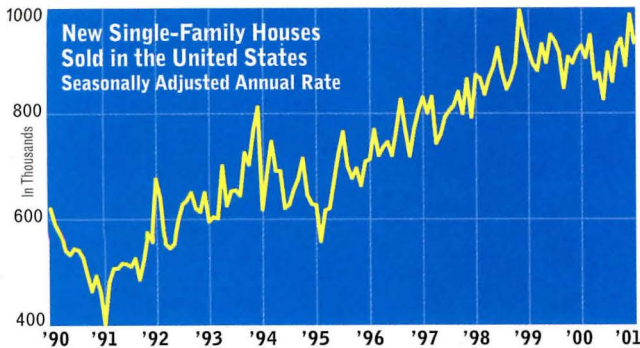
taught young architects that each commission required a unique approach. As a result, Moore's rich but highly varied body of work leaves his successors with a vaporous design heritage to follow.

And yet, says Ruble, his firm's perceived links to Moore and post-modernism have been tough to shake. MRY is currently working on a University of Cincinnati building that Ruble calls "taut and tough-looking;" terms no one would ever apply to Moore's work. Ruble finds, however, that clients still expect postmodern touches—façades with pilasters and blatant contextualism—that Ruble says his firm was "more interested in doing 10 or 15 years ago." MRY's entry in a recent California design competition had been computer-modeled, and featured aggressive, modernist lines. The jury, says Ruble, "couldn't figure out which project was ours." MRY did not get the job.

In light of Moore's altogether unpredictable personality and design history, it's surprising that the work of MRY, Centerbrook, and Moore



Centerbrook Architects The firm's work for Quinnipiac College (top) and Connecticut College (above) are more sober interpretations of Moore's interest in traditional form.



Economy

Homemakers Rejoice

Theoretically, residential architects should be worried. Consumer confidence is low, the stock market is sinking and economic growth is slowing. Historically, these factors have undercut the demand for new homes. But an odd thing is happening: New homes are selling like gangbusters.

Sales of new homes are an important factor for builders considering new developments. The National Association of Realtors (NAR) expects 920,000 new homes to be sold this year, an increase from 2000 and comparable to 1999's record sales. In fact, both the NAR and the National Association of Homebuilders point out that the residential housing market, which includes existing home sales, is one of the few remaining pillars of the strong late 1990s economy. And many experts *think home sales will remain healthy through 2002*, thanks to expected favorable interest rates.

Low inflation and the availability of 30-year mort-

gage rates under 7 percent are both important reasons why home sales are so robust (7 percent is a key threshold—mortgage rates below that are considered a steal; right now, they're near a 30-year low).

One remaining threat to home sales is the possibility of increased unemployment. Job insecurity can discourage people from investing in or modifying a home, and stable employment is also a critical concern for banks. As the NAR's director of forecasting, Stan Duobinis, points out, "The first question on the mortgage application after your name and address is: 'Who is your current employer?'" Unemployment levels are currently at 4.3 percent, a marginal rise from 2000's decade-low 3.9 percent.

With easy access to loans for all types of real estate development as well as other favorable trends, residential construction is expected to sustain its strength for at least the near future.

Daniel Cohen is an editor for Bridge News in New York.

Andersson shares a conservative quality. It is not that the surviving firms' buildings look exactly alike. All three share a commitment to a significant strain of contextualism, which means that, in the best Moore tradition, none has anything close to a signature approach. Yet their projects frequently offer a thin veneer of eccentricity atop solid, reliable design. To flip through *The Enthusiasms of Centerbrook*, for example, is to see page after page of projects where Moore's sharp-edged idiosyncrasy has been sanded down to mere gregariousness.

Moore was capable of extremely productive collaboration, and actively worked to keep his clients happy. Often in architecture, this sort of creature is cast as a conservative designer: a conciliator whose work

Like the children of very eccentric parents, Moore's architectural offspring understand, perhaps too well, the value of stability.

settles for middle ground. But Moore was always pushing architecture in a direction that, for all its occasional faults in execution, was invigorating and fresh. His architectural offspring, for the most part, have inherited the first quality—Moore's humanity and sensitivity to site, context, and the wishes of the clients—but not his flair for breaking molds.

His partners have skills that Moore lacked, however. Even with two feet on the ground he could be harried and restless, more than most big names in architecture. It fell to his partners to connect the dots and keep track of the balance sheet. As Ruble puts it, "Formal clarity and management aspects were pretty much what we had to pick up. Charles tended to steer clear of all that." Simply to make sure their firms stayed afloat, Moore's partners learned to be consistent, careful with details, and good with the books. All of this is evident in the buildings they've gone on to design without him.

"Most of what I learned from Charles was how not to do things," says Grover wistfully. "He was a genius at design but not a good businessman. When difficult architectural projects came up, there was a tendency for him to step out and go to California and let someone else deal with it."

Like the children of very eccentric parents, Moore's architectural offspring understand, perhaps too well, the value of stability. In a recent interview, Arthur Andersson suddenly alluded to this out of the blue. "I want to make a house with stone walls that are as thick as possible," he said. While Moore liked to create ephemeral and temporary landscapes, Andersson finds himself increasingly drawn to the idea of permanence. "I'm interested in materials and in buildings," he said, "that will look better in 50 years." ■

Christopher Hawthorne lives in Brooklyn and writes about architecture and design for The New York Times, Metropolis, and Interiors.

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MARENGO TABLES

Design D'Urbino, Lomazzi
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August Sage

Since founding the Coxe Group in 1967, architect Weld Coxe has personally consulted more than 800 architecture firms on practice management. Coxe, 71, recently spoke with **Jacob Ward** about his 40 years watching the profession.

Business

On being businesslike versus being a business:

The distinction has to do with how you apply business thinking: A pure business will simply cut back on design when the design budget is exceeded. A businesslike practice might decide to lose money on a job because it's important to do that job for other reasons—but that firm knows when it's making that decision, and the exact implications of that decision. But the degree to which you can expect architects to be businessmen is limited. The near-greats and greats are not in this for business reasons.

On the difficulties of being a partnership:

The first and most frequent entry-level difficulty is a lack of communication—they don't know how to talk to each other. Usually, it's easy to get a firm up to speed on communicating better. But then what frequently happens is that there's a perceived imbalance in contribution—someone's seen as not pulling their weight. That's just a condition of existence. So you have to teach partners how to take that into account and manage it.

On surviving the next recession:

If you know your costs and your income to the penny, and as you go into it you don't accumulate liabilities, you'll be fine. But you can't just keep four good people on because they're good designers—and hope you get work—because when you don't get work, they'll still have to be let go. The firm's financial strength will be sapped in the process. I'm an optimist. Even if this is as serious a recession as it was before, the economy has been swelling across every sector. The number of people who will get really hurt is smaller than you think.

On competitive threats to the profession:

At the American Institute of Architects' national convention in 1967, my former boss, the architect Norman Kling, spoke about the "threat of the package dealer:" a contractor who hired and owned an architect as staff. Now that same threat is called "design-build." Forty years ago

architects felt threatened because they believed that clients didn't care about independence. But clients have always wanted the architect to be independent. If this were truly just a business, the package dealers would be in charge today. Today, they're part of the market, but just a part.

On diversification:

A business hires the capability it doesn't have. A businesslike firm sees that its people are doing less work than they could do, and they diversify from who they have. Follow the client. If you have a client with ongoing work in several parts of the country, and you move to where their needs are—that's a businesslike decision.

On not growing your practice for the wrong reasons:

The first concern of any practice should be the client. I believe the client doesn't give a continental damn what the business plan of the firm is. They want to know that firms care about them. Clark Tribbel Harris & Li in Charlotte, North Carolina, was one of those skyrocket firms—it became focused on the developer market at the right time, grew quickly, got businesslike, and went public on the unlisted securities market in London. With great fanfare, they announced the offering to all their clients, and the next day Li got a call from his biggest client. "Congratulations," the client said. "It's too bad we'll never work with you again." Li asked, "What do you mean?" "Well," the client answered, "you work for your stockholders now, not for us." It illustrates clearly the tension between being a business when you're not really a business, and being businesslike.

On growing your firm and maintaining quality:

Our experience is that in spite of efforts to instill quality, it's all in the people. It all comes out of smart recruitment and the care and feeding of your employees. Businesses are, in theory, activity-centered, but practices are people-centered. Architects by their nature are on a life-long journey of learning, and if they're not learning in your firm, they'll go elsewhere. ■

Weld Coxe and friend pictured on the steps of his home, designed by Robert Venturi, on Block Island, Rhode Island.

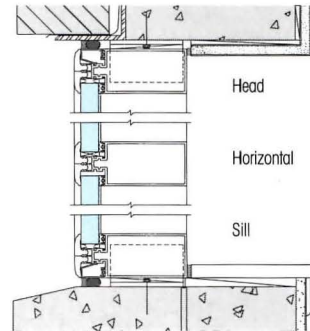


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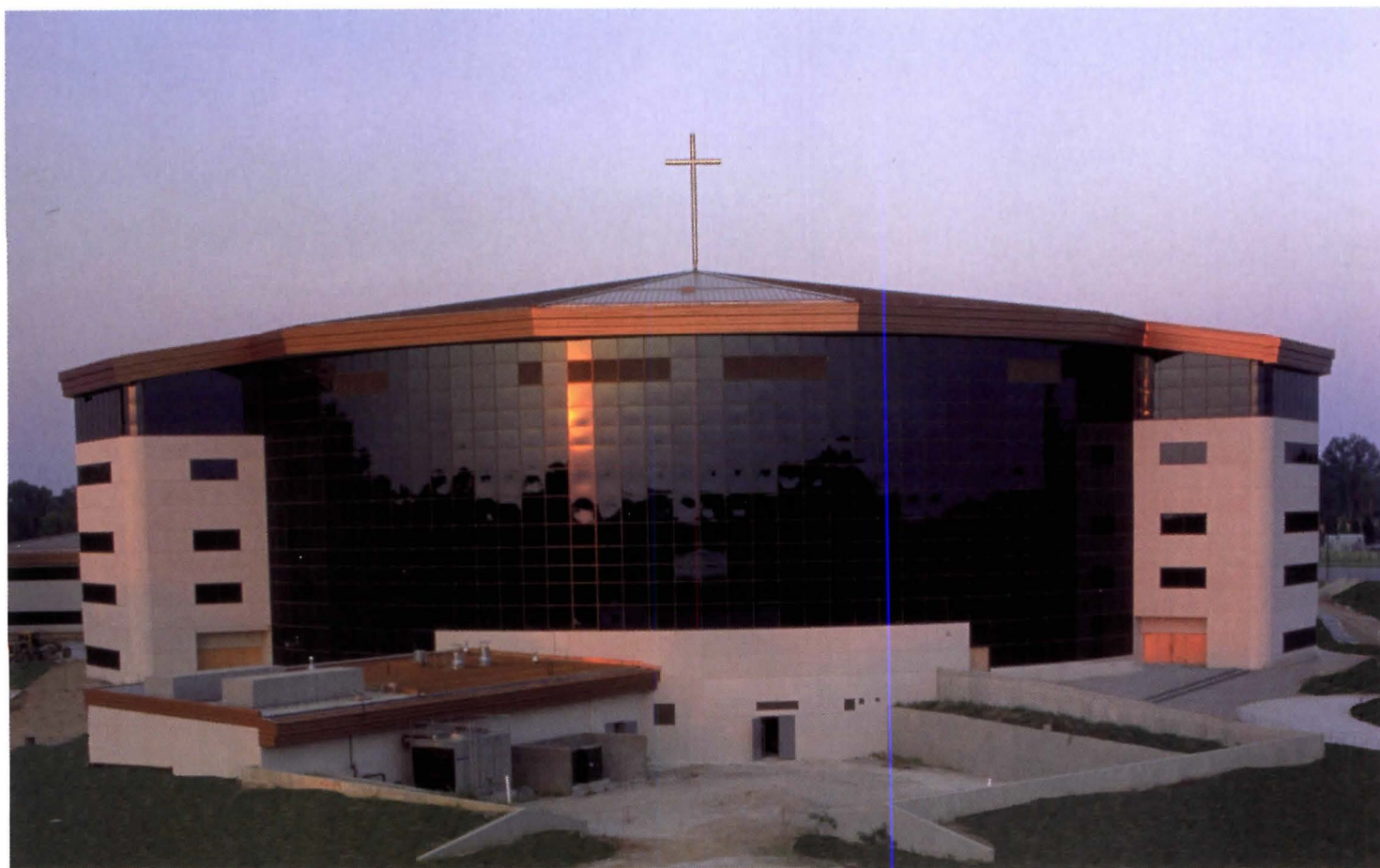


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Megachurches

Contemporary Christian congregations are building themselves enormous, high-tech houses of worship. **Mathew Comfort** steps inside.

Liturgy The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in Manhattan is big; so big it calls itself the world's largest cathedral. "Two football fields end to end with room left over for the football" was the cathedral's popular tag line when it opened in 1941, and today it holds up to 3,000 worshippers. But next to Southeast Christian Church (SCC) in Louisville, Kentucky, the 165,000-square-foot cathedral looks like an airport chapel. With a 110-acre site and 770,000 square feet divided between two buildings, SCC, which seats over 9,000 people in its sanctuary, can comfortably tuck the world's largest cathedral under its arm.

In 1900, around 35 percent of the United States' population claimed religious affiliation. That number more than doubled over the past hundred years to around 75 percent in 2000. This boom in religious mem-

bership has been a boon to religious construction. In 2000, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded \$7.96 billion spent on religious construction projects, up \$500 million from 1999. There are now over 400,000 houses of worship in the United States, 50,000 more than there were just 10 years ago, yet the number of religious facilities per capita has declined over the same period: To hold the increase in worshippers, newly constructed churches are getting larger.

As a result, the sight of monstrous suburban churches has grown increasingly common, creating new icons for America's evolving religious landscape. Big, multifunctional, and technologically advanced, these buildings are keenly attuned to the social and spiritual needs of a nation that grows more actively religious every day.

Across Christianity, congregations from progressive nondenominational to traditional Catholic are updating their worship spaces to address the more human elements of worship. Rather than gathering the faithful for a single weekly service, they bring individuals and communities together throughout the week by offering a wide array of activities.

SCC's facilities, finished in 1998, include a youth center, outreach classrooms, and a fully equipped fitness club for its 17,000 congregants. Other new churches incorporate cafés, gymnasiums, computer centers, and even rock-climbing walls and bowling alleys. "Twenty years ago, churches mainly met the spiritual needs of the congregation," says Mike Hankins, vice president of Myler Church Building Systems, a Crawfordsville, Indiana-based firm that has built hundreds of churches. "Today we find more and more seven-day-a-week churches in which the emotional and social needs of the congregation are being met as well."

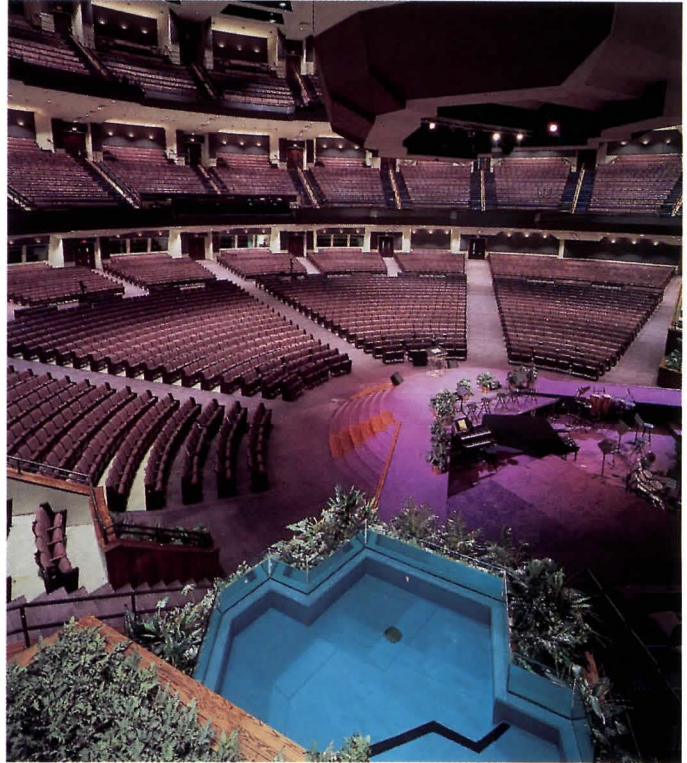
Nowhere is this shift being more deeply felt—or prompting more construction—than in evangelical churches. A wide range of evangelical churches—Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal, and nondenominational, among others—have created enormous stadium-style worship spaces which bring the faithful and the curious in each Sunday for spectacular "seeker services." These impressive productions, which often include video montages, full orchestras, and dozens of preachers, are the centerpiece of the megachurch.

Enormous sanctuaries are now a standard complement to the more traditional methods of evangelizing and proselytizing—helping the church to both save souls and increase its economic resources. SCC, a nondenominational church, is a prime example. "The number-one prong of our mission statement is to evangelize," says Dave Stone, the congregation's associate pastor. "There is no question that the facilities attract people."

David E. Miller, SCC's architect, runs a surprisingly tiny practice for having designed such an enormous building. He used to work alone, but the times have prompted him to bring two employees into his Orange, California, office, which specializes in church design. Miller designed SCC's previous incarnation in 1987—a 2,500-seat church on the same site—and was brought in again in 1997 when the church elders decided they needed to expand their evangelical capabilities.

SCC wields enough cachet in the community that a single bank agreed to take on the financing for the project, and through an impressive congregational donation campaign, the church was able to condense the entire three-phase project into one. "This is one of the only projects of my career in which the building was finished in one phase," Miller says. The work can be lucrative. SCC's budget for its sanctuary and Youth and Activities Center was \$80 million. Miller's fee, including engineering: roughly 5.5 percent, or \$4.4 million.

Miller says his average project is in the 2,500–3,000-seat range, but that a new trend is emerging. "Several clients right now are buying big old buildings and renovating them to hold as many people as the city will allow," he says. "We took a Hughes Aircraft building recently and made it into a worship space."

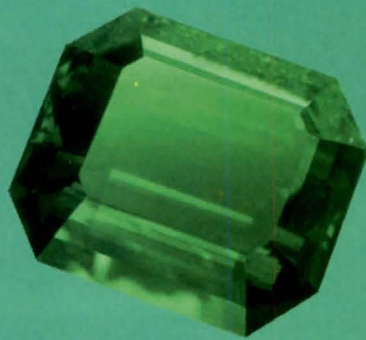


Southeast Christian Church (facing page) is the ultimate contemporary evangelical church. The main sanctuary (above), which seats 9,100 worshippers, has theater-quality sound and video systems, and a high-capacity baptistry.

The rise of a market culture has powerfully influenced American church facilities. With thousands of members donating large sums or even tithing a percentage of their yearly salaries to their churches, many congregations have become multimillion-dollar enterprises. In a 1997 report, "The Role of Religion in the 21st Century," Dr. Michael Kerze, a religious historian and former director of the Interfaith Center at Occidental College in Los Angeles, noted that the megachurches have come to use advanced marketing techniques to increase their membership. "They provide...in essence, a ready-made community. And community is something we all seek."

Though these social amenities are directed at the congregation, churches are also seeking to make their facilities an essential civic space. "The church now plays a vital role in ministering to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the community at large," says Ray Robinson, president of American Church Builders, in Westerville, Ohio.

Further, as Miller and Robinson can attest, the act of worship has become a multimedia experience. Contemporary churches integrate sophisticated media technology: cinema-style theater screens, stadium sound systems, and broadcast facilities. "We did a church in Thousand Oaks, California," says Ed Friedrichs, CEO of Gensler, "and their theatrical technology is better than the perform- *continued on page 170*



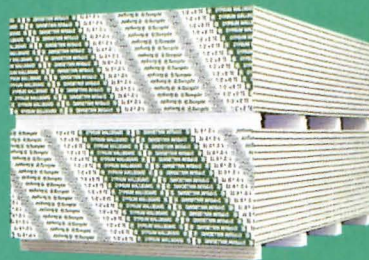
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Charles Jencks's Continual Revolutions

Le Corbusier—grandfather of postmodernism? This and other revelations fill Charles Jencks's latest book, a biography of Père Corbu. **Brian Brace Taylor** checks it out.

Review A gifted storyteller is one who makes his subject come alive. Charles Jencks is unequivocally architecture's greatest living storyteller. He has probably produced nearly as many books and articles during his prolific career as did Le Corbusier, the subject of his latest work. In *Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture*, Jencks has woven together readings of Corb's writings, paintings, architecture, and city planning with pertinent (and sometimes impertinent) biographical details. It is an epic poem in the tradition of Chaucer, and can be read as such.

Jencks's style is jocular, freewheeling, anecdotal, and provocative—as he is in person. In this book there is much on Le Corbusier that has been said before, by Jencks himself as well as others. *Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution* is, in large measure, a revision and vastly

Le Corbusier, with Josephine Baker, at a costume party aboard the ocean liner *Giulio Cesare* en route to Brazil in 1929. Corb was often dressed as a clown or convict at such parties, Jencks reveals.

expanded version of his *Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture* (Harvard University Press, 1973), drawing upon research and testimony that continue to emerge about a man whom Jencks believes to be not only a tragic persona, but a genius as well. He rewrites, splices, condenses, expands, speculates, and even offers his own chart of history so that we may easily visualize developments.

Jencks is true to his signature method of interpretation, which proceeds by analogy and metaphor, with limitless imagination. However, he also follows, or leads, a trend in architectural theorizing that has become widespread in the late 20th century, namely to look to other realms of intellectual inquiry for insight and guidance. The absence of a single, comprehensive, overarching theory that might serve practitioners has led would-be theorists, writers, and teachers of architecture to seek parallels within other disciplines, such as literature, linguistics, and sociology. Jencks's references range from Noam Chomsky and semiology in the 1970s to the sociology of David Harvey and David Herf in the 1990s, illustrating that he has kept abreast of cutting-edge theory. Most recently he has forayed into cognitive science, finding in it another means for classifying (something the author claims he dislikes) the crucial facts of Le Corbusier's biography to fit a type, namely of the "typical genius," or "basically protean type" of creative individual.

Fortunately for readers who have not yet read Howard Gardner's *Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen Through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham and Gandhi* (Basic Books, 1993), Jencks includes an appendix summarizing his theory. Gardner explores seven figures whom he calls "Exemplary Creators," individuals who radically altered their fields, yet also shared common features in their development. To Gardner's "Big Seven," Jencks wants

Interview

Jencks Speaks

Cathy Lang Ho: You wrote *The Language of Postmodern Architecture* 24 years ago.

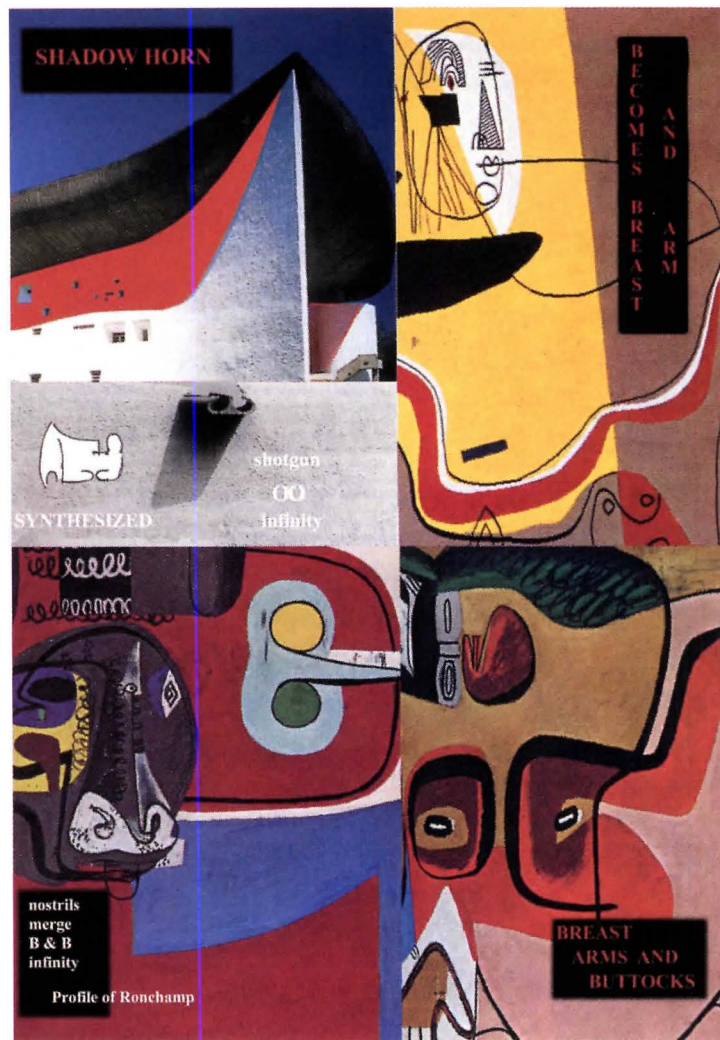
Do you feel the need to revisit that work now?

Charles Jencks: Absolutely. *I'm going to do the seventh edition. I haven't touched it in 10 years [a sixth edition came out in 1991]. I needn't tell you that the 1990s was a period of reactionary minimalism and a decade when people lost their nerve.*

So what's happened to postmodernism?

If you look at the Evolutionary Tree you'll see that postmodernism is the latest blob of the idealist tradition, and it's getting smaller. Postmodernism is being squeezed by minimalism and corporate modernism. What happened in the '90s was postmodernism became Complexity Theory Part Two. Postmodernism goes on today also, in a way, in the biomorphic school, which Gehry is partly in.

I think postmodernism has changed in very important ways because of Complexity Theory Part Two and the computer. Complexity One started not only with Venturi but also, let's



Richly coded as a result of Le Corbusier's obsession with symbolism, Ronchamp is proto-postmodern, according to Jencks. In this collage, he highlights the multiple readings of its forms and imagery (above). Drawings by Hillel Schocken (facing page) also depict some of the metaphors that Ronchamp evokes.

remember, with Jane Jacobs, who wrote that the city is not a problem in simplicity or statistical complexity but in organized complexity. At that time, there wasn't any philosophical or scientific understanding of the term. But after the 1980s, a complexity theory became fully formed, and that is the basis of Complexity Two.

I don't think anything Jacobs wrote is contradicted by the later complexity theories. The same is true for Venturi. He wrote about the complexity of life—and the obligation towards the difficult whole was an absolutely key text of his *Complexity and Contradiction*. I wish he hadn't forgotten it.

Why do think people resist your assertion that Corb's work was a "harbinger of postmodernism"?

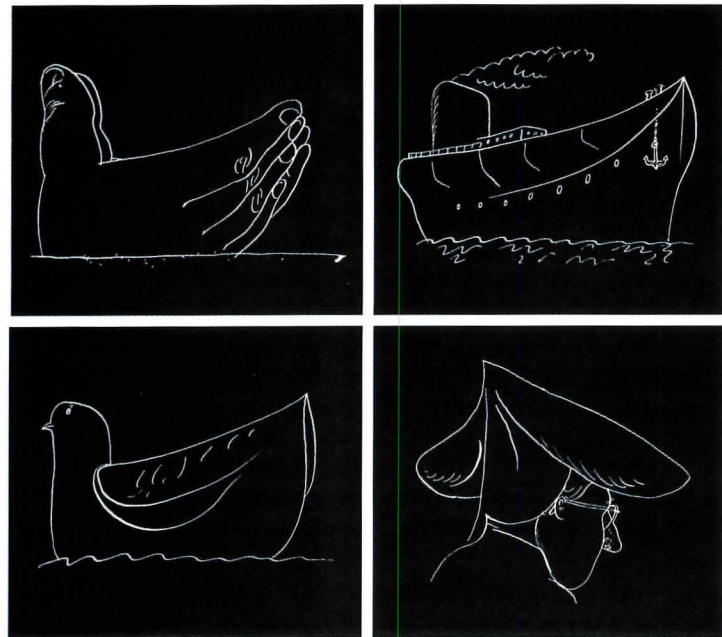
I don't think I'm special-pleading to see Ronchamp as a proto-postmodern building. It's clearly multiply coded; it's symbolic in so many ways, and symbolism is one of the main messages of postmodernism. People resist [this reading] because it's unorthodox. Modernism is a clean, rational, pure style that can't be contaminated by other issues, symbolic issues. Look at the attacks on Ronchamp in the 1950s. Nikolaus Pevsner and Jim Stirling considered it a primitive, sludge-built,

to include an eighth: Le Corbusier. His previous comparisons between Corb and Don Quixote, Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Jesus Christ, etc., are also present in the new book. What remains unclear is the purpose of introducing a new paradigm in which to slip Corb. Is it fundamental to our understanding of Le Corbusier that he fit the pattern of a "genius" of the caliber of Einstein or Stravinsky? "He loved the idea of standardization and the type," says Jencks, who then concludes, "so he would

have liked to be considered a normal genius, warts and all, with all the nasty and cruel truths revealed in the end." It is sufficient to say, as Jencks ultimately does, that Corb was "a man driven by a vision" and leave it at that, rather than apply a label that has become a cliché.

The tone Jencks adopts throughout the book is one of revelation, as he ostensibly divulges important facts we never knew about the great architect. He is consciously rewriting 20th-century architectural history to reveal Le Corbusier as its most revolutionary and inventive designer. (Jencks claims elsewhere that Antonio Gaudí, too, deserves that honor.) Some years ago Jencks invented the elaborate "Evolutionary Tree" for architecture, various versions of which have appeared in his books over the years, including *The Language of Postmodern Architecture* (Rizzoli, 1977). He is continually updating the tree, which appears now in this book, spanning the period 1900 to 2000 and depicting 40-odd movements and 400 persons producing six types of architecture. The author points out that his "revolutionary" Le Corbusier—no longer "evolutionary"—appears four times (more than any other figure), and that he invented four or five different languages in architecture.

Jencks has built a career on the "game of signification" as he calls it, which is based upon finding hidden coding and new metaphors, each more astounding than the previous ones. But one begins to suspect that the exercise of rewriting, or revising, previous books is self-serving in more ways than one. Having a vested interest in postmodernism as a concept, Jencks now offers Le Corbusier as the "grandfather" of the movement because his work, Ronchamp in particular, is imbedded with the "multivalence[s] of meaning" so cherished by the postmodernists. This makes the building, in Jencks's words, a "harbinger" of postmodern architecture. He likens the chapel's *continued on page 158*



reactionary retreat from modernism. They want to keep the canon of modernism pure. They want to keep Corb in their box, their mental box, the box that says "Villa Savoie." Today, John Pawson, Tadao Ando, and a thousand minimalist architects want Corb to fit in that box, and I'm saying, well, he does fit in that box, but he fits in four or five others, too.

What does your latest book do that other Corb books haven't already accomplished?

I tried, as others have, to give an overall picture of Le Corbusier's message or mission [which] was basically to bring harmony

to an industrial civilization, and he delivered his mission like a prophet. My emphasis on his prophetic strain and his devotion to a cosmic-natural message may be stronger than other writers' partly because of my own interest in science and nature.

I also found it uncanny how well Howard Gardner's theory of the "Exemplary Creator" applied to Corbusier. Gardner's seven figures turned their fields on their heads. My contribution to this theory is to say that it isn't just the creative personality or psyche but it's the outside world that is forcing change. That's my subtitle: *Continual Revolution*.

Gardner's "Big Seven" were revolutionary personalities who had to completely destroy in order to create. Corbusier was creative, yes, but his creativity was responding to these external political pressures and those from within architecture.

Have there been any "creative geniuses" recently?

I don't think we have the same conditions for that sort of formation. Postmodernists are not in as antagonistic a relationship to society—neither is the architecture profession—as was the case for these seven modernists. I think there are some pretenders

to the throne. Take Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas, and Richard Rogers. Gehry doesn't have any overall theory he's advancing, so he's a prophet without a message. Koolhaas understands aspects of the cities, but in his view, the city has collapsed and disappeared, and he wants to surf the remains of that. Rogers loves the city and his theories happen to be right. But his architecture doesn't have the creativity or depth of Corb's. There's no one who's picked up on everything. These figures are very creative, but it's microcreativity compared to Corbusier's multiple intelligences, his ability to think on many levels. ■



City

New Urbanism Goes Neo-Moderne

Aqua, a residential development planned for a private, gated island on the Inter-coastal Waterway between Miami and Miami Beach, may be instigating the post-neotraditional styling phase of New Urbanism. With style a long-declared weapon of persuasion, modernish is being added to the movement's arsenal of market-friendly imagery.

The premise at Aqua, a venture of Dacra Development, is the combination of a traditional urban pattern with contemporary design. Duany Plater-Zyberk designed the master plan, which is essentially a street grid (once you move past the gates) open to the water, lined with townhouses and a couple of mid-rises. Buildings were commissioned from Walter Chatham (above), Alison Spear, Hariri & Hariri, and others, whom, one gathers, were told to do up the "Miami Beach thing." The style is "neo"—evoking rather than advancing traditions. Though

Aqua's own publicity champions its creation of a "modernist neighborhood," it is good to remember far more poignant innovations such as settlements in Tel Aviv, where the street plan of Sir Patrick Geddes and the buildings of Bauhaus expatriates produced, in the 1920s and 1930s, a truly intelligent hybrid of Garden City planning and International Style architecture.

Though Aqua's ambitions make it an easy target, the recent news that Richard Meier and a dozen high-design architects of his choosing are designing a subdivision of high-priced homes in East Hampton, leads to a ponderous comparison. Surely, Meier's colleagues will produce more stunning architectural effects than those at Aqua. But whether the sophisticated ranchburgers in the sprawl of the Hamptons, or Aqua's promise of an urbane, gated community prove more instructive to architecture and urbanism remains to be seen. *Alex Krieger*



New Life for an Old Airport

What do you do with a defunct airport on prime real estate? Kai Tak Airport, crammed into Kowloon's canyon of buildings, has been recycled into a leisure-land. **Thomas J. Campanella** reports.

City

Few major airports in the world could match Hong Kong's old Kai Tak for making palms sweat and knuckles turn white. Approaching jets were forced to bank madly above a hilltop park before weaving past high-rise apartments and dropping onto the airport's tarmac. The jets swept so close to Kowloon City's rabbit warren of apartment towers that living room TV sets could be seen from the aircraft.

Kai Tak closed in 1998, and today passengers traveling to Hong Kong arrive at Chek Lap Kok Airport, on the lush, mountainous island of Lantau. With a magnificent terminal designed by Sir Norman Foster, the airport is as capacious and light-filled as Kai Tak was dark and cramped by its overbuilt surroundings.



But Kai Tak has lightened up these days. Far from being abandoned, Hong Kong's entrepreneurial spirit has put the retired airport to a range of new uses. The airport's runway (constructed partly by Chinese prison labor during the Japanese occupation in the 1930s) is now home to Oriental Golf City, one of the largest golf driving ranges in the world. The facility boasts 500 driving bays and draws a weekend crowd of up to 2,500 golfers a day. Kai Tak's passenger terminal building has likewise been put to new use. Once described by Pico Iyer as "the Grand Central Station of the Orient," Kai Tak's former departure hall is still thronged, but by a much more lighthearted crowd. One section is now occupied by the massive showroom of the Royal Kai Tak Motors Megastore, where more than 400 automobiles are on display. Last November came Karting Mall, itself one of the world's largest indoor go-cart "rec-plexes."

Perhaps the biggest draw is the Kai Tak Bowling Club. Covering 90,000 square feet of what was Zone C of the departure hall, the 62-lane club is the largest in Hong Kong. Including snooker tables and arcade games, the facility is packed with several thousand people on a Sunday afternoon. Overhead monitors, once alit with flight information, now blinker high scores and league updates.

The fun won't last, however. Hong Kong is much too serious about real estate to tolerate frivolous uses of its scarce land. In September 1998, government planners unveiled a \$4.7 billion scheme for an immense new town on the site, a "city within a city." The new urban center would house 320,000 residents, reclaim more than 700 acres of waterfront, and provide parks, schools, a museum of transportation, a new

The runways of Kowloon's Kai Tak Airport, opposite Hong Kong (left). Since the airport closed in 1998, it has been the site of outdoor festivals and markets (right).

hospital, and an international sports arena. Buildings would be stepped back from the waterfront to assure maximum exposure to the harbor and the skyline of Hong Kong across the way.

The business community applauded the plan, but environmentalists were quick to raise a number of concerns about density, traffic congestion, and the dangers associated with the site's extensive contamination. But the real flash point was the issue of land reclamation. Victoria Harbor is among the most beautiful in the world, yet in recent years it has shrunk measurably as land-poor Hong Kong persistently expanded its buildable area with continual landfilling operations. Arguing that the proposed renewal would further threaten the beauty and ecological well-being of Victoria Harbor, the government scaled back its plans for the "city within a city."

With a revised plan, Kai Tak's redevelopment is still a large project by Western standards. Its new target is to have a population of 240,000 by the year 2016. Toxic cleanup and site preparation work has begun, and most of the old airport structures have already been leveled. The bowlers and go-carters will soon be gone: The fun-filled passenger terminal itself has a demolition date of 2004. ■

Thomas J. Campanella is an urbanist and historian of the built environment. He is a contributing writer for Wired, and recently completed a book on early American aerial photography for Princeton Architectural Press.

Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction

Marking the dawn of the 21st century, the exhibition *010101* features art based in new media. **Glen Helfand** checks in and logs on.

Review It's hardly news that technology is steering the course of contemporary image-making. Alluring, reality-blurring, digitally manipulated images appear everywhere—magazines, films, art, Web sites. Imaging tools have been extended, naturally, to the production of architecture—a profession that relies on visual representation in its intermediary phase between concept and reality. Who hasn't read countless references to how Frank Gehry's buildings could never have existed before CAD programs? By the forces of capitalism and gee-whiz seduction, these seemingly miraculous technological innovations enter public and professional consciousness at a rapid-fire clip, leaving their cultural implications eclipsed.

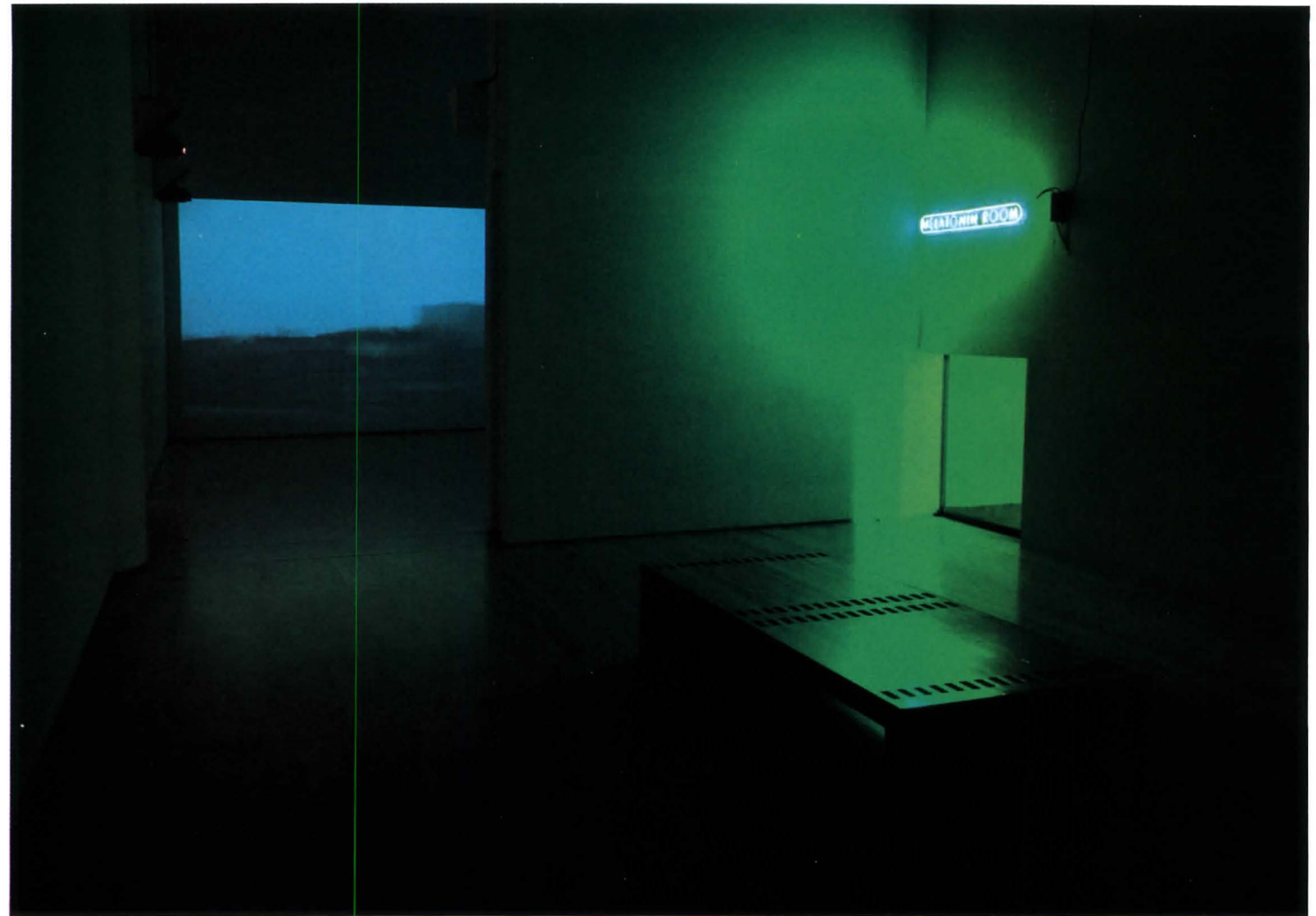
010101: Art in Technological Times, the online and gallery survey of electronically influenced art and design at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), is intended to be something of a snapshot of the present digitally inflected moment. This dawn-of-the-21st-century show (hence its name) was organized by curators from across the museum's departments (painting and sculpture, media arts, education, architecture and design) and was sponsored by Silicon Valley giant Intel. It features a number of artists and designers who use various forms of technology to mediate physical and subjective experience of the world today. Space, this show asserts, is very much at the forefront of current creative practice, no matter what discipline or media. Whether it involves virtual space, imagined space, or actual space, many of the artists in *010101* aim to realize places that ideally suit our present, if fleeting, consciousness, habits, and desires.

Kevin Appel's paintings, for example, have a utopian air, resembling ethereal visions of high-modernist residential experiments of the mid-20th century. The triptych *House Revision 1-3* (2000-2001) is a monochromatic assemblage of translucent planes. Although the paintings possess the distinctly smooth, floating appearance of digital imagery, Appel's painting technique is notably analog. His controlled acrylic and oil brushwork glistens alluringly on the surface. His tight yet sensuous geometric abstractions embody a lucid purity that could only exist in the idealized realm of rendering the unreal.

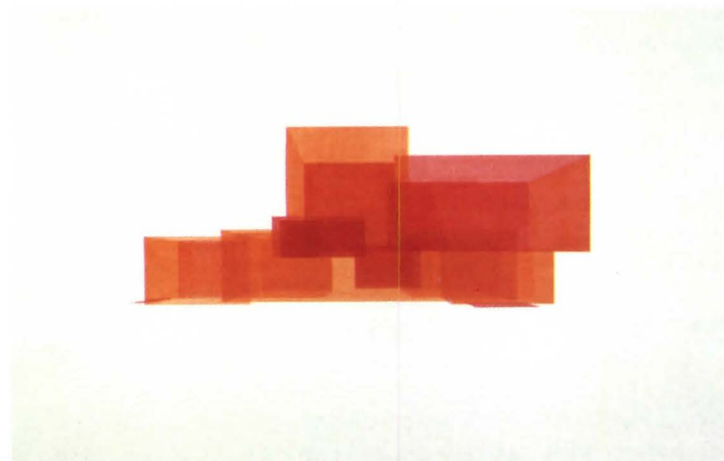
Melatonin Room (2001) by Swiss architects Décosterd & Rahm, on the other hand, pulls light effects into real-world practice. Their installation is actually two padded rooms that use colored illuminations to alter the moods of visitors by facilitating or blocking the body's production of melatonin, the organic chemical that induces sleep. The understanding of human responsiveness to different types of light is clearly the result of concrete scientific research, as is the production of artificial light itself. The perk-up chamber has heat-generating green lights and austere yoga-mat padding, while the chill-out room has purple lights and thick vinyl cushioning. The rooms effectively illustrate the power of environments to direct moods through physiological experience, while subtly alluding to insidious biotech implications.

Several of the installations, it turns out, are tech-enhanced lounge environments. Composer Brian Eno contributes *New Urban Spaces Series #4: Compact Forest Proposal* (2001), a darkened environment that uses layered music tracks to create a sense of calm respite. Industrial designer Karim Rashid's *Softscape* (2001), a maquette display of soft modular furniture, is a landscape of *blobjets*-cum-*chaise-longues* that rise from a flat plain to accommodate reclining persons. It's also one of the show's few technical misfires as the original soft memory foam material was unworkable. The installation, then, is of hard plastic rubber-paint-coated fiberglass with a computer animated explanation of the intentions, which one surmises will be possible in the not-too-distant future.

Artist Craig Kalpakjian's video stroll through a computer-created corridor offers a spookier vision of the hypersmooth surfaces that Rashid and other designers have popularized, with the sexy, seamless design objects and cool, minimalist places that have become so pervasive lately. While meditative, *Corridor* (2000) is uninflected artificiality at its finest—an infinite hallway with eternally unsullied floors and semi-translucent windows. The artist uses the same tools as architects to explore how technology lubricates the way we navigate through space. The irony is that places have never felt more lacking in texture, and people have never felt more alienated or lost in these germ-free vacuums that ultimately lead nowhere.



Architects Décosterd & Rahm's *Melatonin Room* (2001) has two parts—a perk-up chamber and a chill-out room—which draw on scientific research about the mood-altering effects of artificial lighting (above and right). Kevin Appel's paintings, *House Revision 1–3*, resemble computer-rendered versions of a Pierre Koenig Case Study House (below left). Craig Kalpakjian's moving video *Corridor* (2000) takes viewers on a fly-through of a hypersmooth, never-ending hallway (below right).





Review

Suite Fantastique,

Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio, through April 15

Suite Fantastique, a quartet of exhibitions at the Wexner, makes an argument that perfection is approachable only by coming so close to the disappearance of physical form that no mere reality could mar its illusion. Curated by Jeffery Kipnis, the four presentations play arpeggios around architecture, making it as evanescent as the medium from which the exhibition takes its title.

The prelude is a small exhibition of the work of Imaginary Forces, a graphics and special-effects firm best known for its design of opening credits for films such as *Seven* and *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. In these short works of animated art, typographic shapes continually threaten to drift from legibility, with fragments of perfect letterforms appearing only to fade away.

Perfect Acts of Architecture is the heart of the exhibition.

It includes drawings by Daniel Libeskind, Thom Mayne, Peter Eisenman, Bernard Tschumi and Rem Koolhaas created during the 1970s, at the dawn of paper architecture. The works are not so much proposals for buildings as scores for construction. They are reminders of a time when architects thought they could avoid both planned utopias and the banality of the everyday by evoking the pure beauty of architecture.

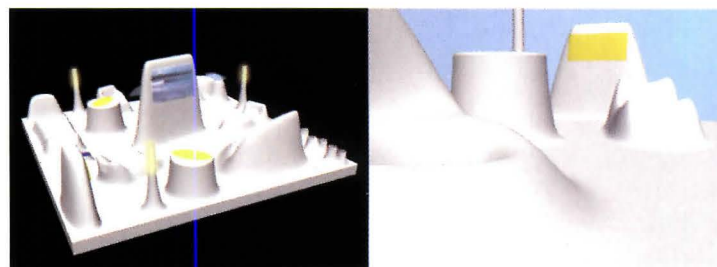
As discursive variations, furniture by the faux-monumental artist Scott Burton is strewn about the galleries. One could presume they are meant to question the notion of use, but their heavy weight does little to anchor the speculative flights around them.

The finale, *Predator*, turns Greg Lynn's abstract notion of the "spline"—a mathematical device that forms the backbone of supposedly "authorless" structures—into a fiberglass serpent, painted by artist Fabian Marcaccio (above). Based on the beast that Arnold Schwarzenegger battled in two films, *Predator* preys not so much on gallerygoers as it does on our sense of what the proper place of art may be.

The dangerous beauty of the works in *Suite Fantastique* lies in how they glorify the delineation of ideas over the experiences that might result from such proposals. *Aaron Betsky*

With endless boundaries and possibilities, cyberspace has been put to good use by the SFMOMA, which mounted a companion exhibition to *010101* on the Web. Designed by Bay Area graphic-design firm Perimetre Flux, the site is visually stunning and rich with layers of images, text, and specially commissioned art projects. While these Web site-specific pieces elaborate on the tech-culture themes of the show, they seem to exist quite separately from the gallery works. Flat-screen monitors are positioned throughout the SFMOMA's galleries, but it's easy to avoid them, no matter how sleek they are. It might be old-fashioned, but installations win out.

Sarah Sze's extremely physical, detailed work is, in fact, among the most successful pieces, in part because it directly engages the building itself, a work of classically obsessive symmetry by architect Mario Botta. Sze's new work, *Things Fall Apart* (2001) disrupts the authority of the structure, with the parts of an exploded SUV strewn throughout the



Karim Rashid's *Softscape* (2001) imagines a total environment, with furniture inseparable from the floors and walls, formed by soft memory foam.

tall entrance atrium, perched on landings and lodged into the columns. The artist suggests that the piece looks as if "someone has Photoshopped a physical object" in real space. Sze translates virtual possibility into physical reality, liberating our imaginations.

Technology's capacity to communicate our own ideas and experiences to the outside world is one thing, but what about the ideas and experiences of someone else? One of *010101*'s most memorable works is *The Telephone Call* (2001) by artist Janet Cardiff. She ups the dimension of electronic museum tours by using portable video cameras to lead viewers on a highly personalized walk through the museum building—accessed with a digital video camera and headphones checked out at a desk in the lobby. Looking through the camera's intimate screen, you'll zoom in on private conversations, and through headphones hear the narrator's memories and footsteps following you. Cardiff's work suggests that the most effective spaces, whether virtual or actual, are those activated by emotional triggers and lived experiences. ■

010101: Art in Technological Times, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and <http://010101.sfmoma.org>, through July 8

Bay Area writer *Glen Helfand* writes about art and culture for *Artbyte*, *Art on Paper*, *Nest*, *Salon*, *Wired*, and *the San Francisco Bay Guardian*.

Considerations about

PAINT

For Metal Surfaces

Due to the vulnerability of unprotected metal surfaces to the corrosive effects of moisture and the atmosphere, architects must take different considerations into account when specifying paints for these substrates, compared to substrates such as wood and masonry. This module focuses on those considerations, ranging from the choice of primers and paints to the importance of the topcoat.

The coating of metal surfaces in industrial and commercial facilities is commonly referred to as maintenance painting. Maintenance painting itself is usually divided into two categories: industrial and light.

Industrial maintenance painting is the "heavy duty" side of the process. Metal structures such as storage tanks and bridges are coated to protect the surfaces from highly hostile atmospheres that can corrode the surface and degrade conventional architectural paints not designed specifically for this type of application.

Light maintenance painting usually involves painting metal surfaces with corrosion-resistant coatings in much milder environments. Architects are generally more

involved with this type of application than they are with industrial.

The main components of a maintenance coating are the same as those in a conventional architectural coating: namely, pigment, binder, liquid and additives. (See Module #1: "The Ingredients of Paint and Their Impact on Paint Properties," *Architecture*, October, 1999.)

However, their formulations differ because of differing objectives. Architectural coatings are formulated more with decorative purposes in mind, while maintenance coatings are formulated for functional purposes, including corrosion inhibition and adhesion to metal.

PAINTING METAL SURFACES TRAINING COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you will:

- Understand why it is so important to know what metal substrate is being coated, and the conditions under which that coating must perform.
- Know what to look for in corrosion-inhibiting water-based primers.
- Know the differences between solvent-based and water-based metal coatings.
- Know when to specify direct-to-metal water-based coatings.
- Understand the importance of film formation in inhibiting corrosion.

To take the Painting Metal Surfaces training test, log on to www.architecturemag.com. Upon successful completion of the test, you will earn 3 AIA learning credits.

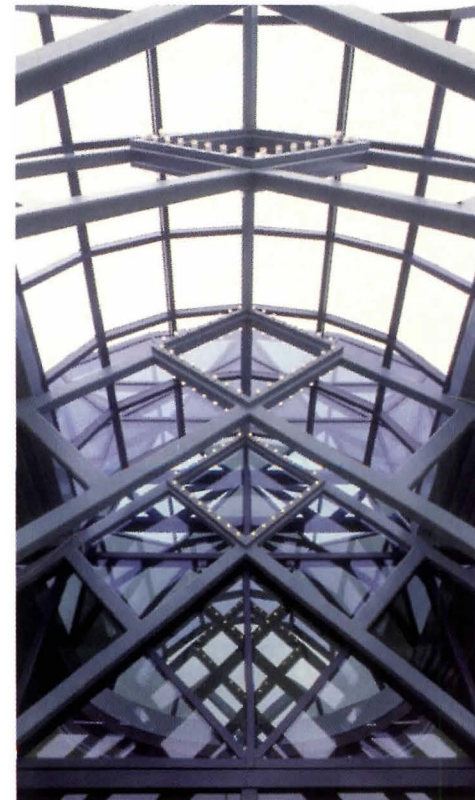


OXIDATION: ENEMY OF METAL

Maintenance coatings are designed primarily to protect metal surfaces from oxidation. Oxidation refers to the loss of electrons by a substance during a chemical reaction that results in the formation of a new compound. The rusting of ferrous metals is a common example. In this electro-chemical process, iron combines with oxygen to form iron oxide, which in turn combines with water to form rust. Rusting not only corrodes the surface, but also weakens the metal.

Fortunately, if there is an interruption in any of the steps, the entire process stops. A way to accomplish this is to cover the metal surface with a protective coating that will block moisture from reaching the metal substrate.

A number of different coating technologies can be used to attain this objective, including waterborne acrylic coatings, alkyds, epoxies, polyurethanes and polyesters. This module will focus on waterborne acrylic systems.



KNOW YOUR APPLICATION

BEFORE SPECIFYING A COATING FOR ANY METAL SURFACE, MAKE A THOROUGH ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION. WHEN SELECTING A COATING FOR A PROJECT, THREE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS ARE:

THE SUBSTRATE	THE ENVIRONMENT	SURFACE PREPARATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the surface that needs to be coated? • A wide variety of metals can be painted. Most common: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferrous metals Galvanized metals Aluminum • Make sure the coating you specify will inhibit corrosion and adhere to the substrate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under what conditions will the coating have to perform? • Interior or exterior? • Aggressive environment (e.g., salt spray near coast) or non-aggressive? • It makes a difference when specifying coating, film thickness, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper surface preparation is vital to the success of any paint job. • It's especially important when specifying coatings for metal because of substrate vulnerability. • Guidelines on preparing metal for painting are available from the Steel Structures Painting Council (SSPC).

CORROSION-INHIBITIVE METAL PRIMERS

Primers used in general-purpose maintenance finish systems for metal surfaces perform two vital functions: they provide the bond between the topcoat(s) and the underlying substrate, and they protect the metal from corrosion. The key to fulfilling these roles is a binder that both provides good adhesion and forms a tight continuous film, thereby preventing moisture from reaching the substrate.

For decades, the coatings industry relied almost entirely on solventborne resins, primarily alkyds, to satisfy metal primer binder needs. In the last two decades, however, the growing concern over the high levels of emissions produced by these solvent-based chemistries has generated a steadily increasing demand for alternatives that pose fewer problems in this regard.

In response, paint chemists have now developed advanced, hydrophobically modified acrylic binders that make it possible for the formulation of high-quality waterborne primers that can match or exceed solventborne primers in performance with considerably lower levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

In addition to these specially designed binders, water-based primers for use on metal contain a number of other ingredients intended specifically to inhibit corrosion.

INGREDIENTS THAT INHIBIT CORROSION

REACTIVE PIGMENTS

- Usually in the form of borates, phosphates, molybdates or chromates.
- Interrupt the oxidation process.
- Do so by pacifying active metal surface or by acting as a sacrificial agent.

FLASH RUST ADDITIVE

- Flash rusting: temporary problem that occurs on bare ferrous metal when water-based coating dries slowly.
- This additive protects metal while water evaporates.

DIRECT-TO-METAL WATER-BASED COATINGS

Direct-To-Metal (DTM) coatings are all-purpose light maintenance coatings that are designed for direct application to metals without the use of a primer. They function as both primer and topcoat in just one coating.

DTM coatings can be used for a variety of interior and exterior applications, are available in semigloss or gloss formulations, and are now offered in high performance latex products. To insure proper protection of the substrate, two coats are usually recommended.

When specifying a DTM coating, look for one that is acrylic-based. DTM acrylic coatings are VOC-compliant and offer good flexibility and durable long-term protection. They also feature the same fast-drying properties as other waterborne coatings do.

Compared to a primer-topcoat system, DTMs usually offer cost savings, both in terms of materials (only one coating needs to be purchased rather than two) and labor (only two coats need to be applied rather than three...one primer and two topcoat).

In terms of performance, however, a primer-topcoat system generally provides a better appearance and better protection of the metal substrate than a DTM, especially in more aggressive environments. DTMs work well as a primer and as a topcoat, but not as well as an individual primer and topcoat.

Thus, when choosing between a direct-to-metal coating and a primer-topcoat system, the decision often narrows down to one of cost savings versus performance.



LIGHT MAINTENANCE TOPCOATS

PRIMERS AND TOPCOATS EMPHASIZE DIFFERENT ATTRIBUTES.

While adhesion and corrosion protection are principal requirements for primers, features such as exterior durability, lack of dirt pickup, chemical resistance, and gloss carry a higher priority in topcoats.

As with water-based primers, the use of water-based acrylic topcoats on metal has also grown tremendously. Three of the main reasons are:

1 The compelling advantages of waterborne acrylic maintenance coatings from the standpoints of health, safety and protection of the environment. High quality water-based coatings have considerably lower levels of VOCs than solvent-based products. Plus, there is no need to deal with toxic and flammable solvents.

2 The ever-improving performance of water-based acrylic maintenance coatings. For example, high quality acrylic systems can last as much as two to four times longer than commonly used alkyd systems. Water-based maintenance coatings are also very stable. Unlike alkyds, latex coatings do not cross-link over time, which means they do not tend to yellow, crack or become brittle. Cracks in a metal coating are a nemesis, because they allow water to penetrate the film. This difference translates into longer repaint cycles and reduced maintenance costs.

3 The coating's favorable application characteristics, including quick drying time. Painters can often apply a second coat within hours after application of a first coat. In comparison, solvent systems commonly used for metal may require a full day's cure before another coat can be applied.

When it comes to application, maintenance paints should always be applied to metal surfaces in thick coats for optimum durability and corrosion resistance. That's because the thicker the coat, the less chance of moisture penetrating the paint through pinholes in the film.

Similarly, two coats of a topcoat are generally recommended rather than a single coat for two reasons: increased overall thickness of the coating, and elimination of the possibility of pinholes extending through the coating.

Brushes may be used for smaller applications, while rollers or airless sprayers are better for covering large areas.



FILM FORMATION: A KEY TO CORROSION RESISTANCE

Maximum protection against corrosion requires a uniform, highly continuous hydrophobic film. There must be no microscopic channels that allow access for moisture and oxygen to the metal substrate.

One of the components necessary to produce such a film in a waterborne coating is an appropriate rheology modifier or thickening agent.

In the past, the only thickeners generally available to coating manufacturers were "non-associative" cellulosic products. These

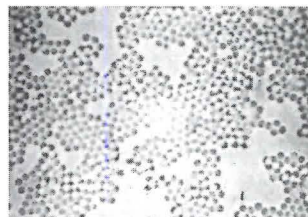


Figure 1

products had drawbacks for waterborne finishes. Among these was the fact that they could produce non-uniform, flocculated films. Cellulosics created random "domains" scattered throughout the body of the coating film through which moisture could attack a metal substrate. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 2

Today, however, there is a new generation of urethane-containing rheology modifiers that interact or "associate" with other paint components. These form a series of interlocking structures and generate a uniform, highly continuous film that is far more resistant to the passage of moisture than a cellulosic-thickened coating. (See Figure 2.) The continuity of the film also ensures more consistent gloss and hiding power.

CONCLUSION

Specifying paint for metal surfaces is not difficult as long as you know the substrate, the environment and the coating system. In the past, architects may have been reluctant to specify a latex system because they were not totally confident that a water-based coating could be applied to metal and provide good corrosion resistance.

As a result of advancements in binders and rheology modifiers, that concern should no longer exist. Today's waterborne maintenance coatings for metal provide corrosion resistance comparable to, or better than, that imparted by solventborne coatings. In addition, they also provide all the benefits of conventional acrylic latex coatings, including durability, rapid drying, low toxicity and ease of handling and cleanup.



THE 1980s are back; the signs are everywhere: A Bush is in the White House. Another George—Boy—has returned to the music scene as a DJ, spinning to packed crowds in London nightclubs. The March *Vogue* heralded a resurgence of preppy chic with an article titled “Muffy, Come Home.” And Michael Graves has won the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects.

Does this mean that pastels and pediments will be making their own comeback? Not likely. Most architects old enough to remember the '80s are possessed of an intense, dare we say irrational, dislike of postmodernism. Never mind that as a theoretical concept postmodernism encompasses far more than the classically derived architectural style, and that in other disciplines it is alive and well. Never mind that according to this broader definition most architects are still designing in a conceptually postmodern manner. Never mind that many of the architectural movement's protagonists are still active, and that while some of their number have rewritten history and revised their design strategies to exclude any stylistic hint of postmodernism, just as many haven't changed a thing. Never mind, because to architects, “pomo” is a four-letter word.

Kudos are due to the AIA for recognizing the talents of an architect now so staunchly outside the stylistic mainstream. The surprising news of Graves's award helped inspire the theme and structure of this issue of *Architecture*, which compares the current and past work of six architects included on Charles Jencks's famous postmodernism chart. The issue also incorporates essays by critic Richard Ingersoll and architect Robert Venturi that probe the depths of architects' discomfort with the subject. Consider it a form of regression therapy.

To celebrate winning the AIA Gold Medal, Michael Graves modified this limited-edition silk-screen (above), which he initially created last year to raise funds for the Charles W. Moore Foundation. (To purchase one of the prints—sans medal—contact the foundation at (512) 477-4557 or director@charlesmoore.org.)

POSTPOSTMODERNISM

RICHARD INGERSOLL ASKS,
“ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN
A POSTMODERNIST?”

You don't need a coroner to find out if postmodernist architecture is dead; for over a decade the term and the corresponding scenographic style have been anathema to architectural magazines. But what then explains the continued production of buildings with postmodernist-style traits, or the recent awarding of the AIA Gold Medal to Michael Graves, the architect who first comes to mind when the term comes up? Are there zombies among us?

In its origins, the proponents of postmodernism gathered the 1960s rage against modernism's pseudo-scientism, its urban alienation, and its brutality of materials and forms, and, like Pop artists, sought clever ways of engaging people with familiar imagery. Ironic jumps in scale, inappropriate juxtapositions of symbolic elements, and garish applications of color became expedient methods of making buildings seem more interesting than they otherwise were. Postmodernism emerged as a full-fledged architectural movement in

the mid-1970s, defined by the indefatigable taxonomer Charles Jencks as an innovative linguistic awareness of how architecture denotes and connotes. Since the only style that has ever withstood the analogy to language is classicism, the new linguistic mandate of postmodernism privileged all use and abuse of classical architecture—a form of Pop-classicism. By the 1980s, the disaffected critic Kenneth Frampton explained the phenomenon as nothing more than meretricious packaging ordained by rampant commodification and advocated a resistance to its scenographic ploys in his theory of “critical regionalism.”

The tendency toward Pop-classicism, which became synonymous with the term “postmodernism,” reached its denouement during the Reagan years. If one could quickly scroll through the famous buildings produced between 1979 and 1988, half would fit comfortably into the Pop-classical style bracket. My list would include Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia in New

TAFT ARCHITECTS, WHO WERE TOO WITH THE POP-CLASSICIST TREND FOUND THEMSELVES MARGINALIZE

Orleans (1976–79), Michael Graves’s Humana Tower in Louisville (1978–84), Frank Gehry’s Loyola Law School in Los Angeles (1980–82), Stirling and Wilford’s New National Gallery in Stuttgart, Germany (1978–84), Mario Botta’s Casa Rotonda in Ticino, Switzerland (1980), Ricardo Bofill’s Marne-la-Vallée housing complex outside Paris (1978–82), Aldo Rossi’s Carlo Felice Opera house in Genoa (1987), Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates’ Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London (1986–91), Arata Isozaki’s Civic Center in Tsukuba, Japan (1983), and Jones & Kirkland’s Civic Center in Mississauga, Canada (1987).

As for the simultaneous stylistic trends that were equally appreciated during this period, such as the extremely popular neo-Purism of Richard Meier, the moniker of postmodernism, though appropriate, did not stick. A more inclusive theory of postmodernism, such as that offered by geographer David Harvey in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989), would consider all recognizable styles produced after 1973 to be postmodernist. Due to the new economic context he described as “flexible accumulation”—a protoglobalist loosening of labor practices, heightened mobility of capital and labor, and intensified consumerism—a new era of information-based capitalism had begun.

The name-brand architects who emerged during the 1970s and 1980s in an architectural star-system were engaged, much like top fashion designers, in the production and consumption of an intensified demand for “symbolic capital.” Their capacity to create an authentic style satisfied the market for codes of distinction in an economic environment increasingly based on the competitive value of symbols. This renewed iconological emphasis in architecture

shifted the profession away from structural innovation and social concerns and closer to the strategies of marketing. Rem Koolhaas concludes in his essay “The Generic City” that postmodernism will always remain the preferred style, because it is “the only movement that has succeeded in connecting the practice of architecture with the practice of panic... a method, a mutation in professional architecture that produces results fast enough to keep pace with the Generic City’s development.”

Are you now, or have you ever been a postmodernist? One senses currently among architects a stigma associated with the term to the point that it would be difficult to find anyone who would identify themselves as such. A small office like Taft Architects in Houston, who were too strongly identified with the Pop-classicist trend during its heyday in the 1980s, found themselves marginalized during the 1990s even though their style had changed. Robert Venturi, who is often identified as the theoretical godfather of this movement, and his partner Denise Scott Brown, who served up the Long Island Duck (a restaurant in the shape of a duck) as the analog for the semantic poverty of functionalism, continue to sustain that their preference for “the decorated shed” is consistent with modernism. Quinlan Terry, on the other hand, the architect of Richmond Riverside in London (1987), is a fundamentalist who ascribes to the neoclassical style and building techniques of the 18th century, and would exclude himself from being postmodernist for the simple reason that he aspires to be a preindustrial classicist.

Despite a general bust in the market value of postmodernism in the media, many protagonists of the

STRONGLY IDENTIFIED DURING ITS HEYDAY IN THE 1980S, DURING THE 1990S.

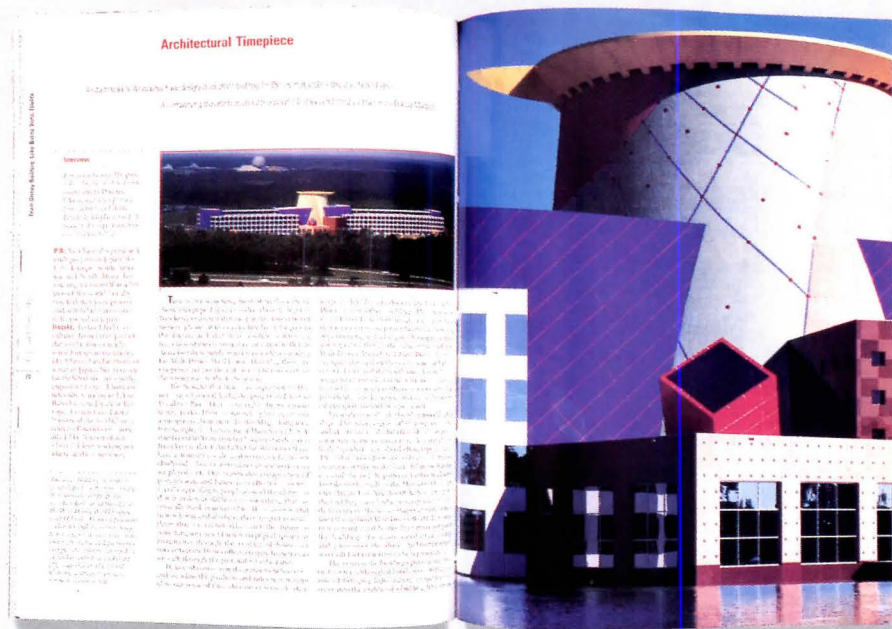
1980s, such as Michael Graves or Mario Botta, have continued to elaborate their signature styles and have more work now than ever before. Their position in the charmed circle of star architects has insured a steady clientele for both commercial and institutional projects. Other offices that were strongly identified with postmodernism, such as Ricardo Bofill or Kohn Pedersen Fox, while no longer designing in a Pop-classical style, also maintain the high name recognition that attracts important commissions. In the end, the style component of a project (the part that interests the magazines the most) may not be as important as the satisfaction these offices provide in their supply of professional services. In other words, the facetious iconography of Graves's temple-fronted headquarters for the Disney Corporation in Burbank, California (1988)—with its colossal seven dwarves cast in fiberglass and wedged into the tympanum—is probably less a deciding factor for a new client seeking an architect than his office's ability to satisfy the organizational needs and budgetary concerns of one of the world's most powerful corporations.

The greatest legacy of this movement to which no one seems to have truly belonged is not the imagery but the revival of urbanism that accompanied it. Call it New Urbanism, or good old urbanism, the attempt to redesign cities in terms of dense urban fabric, with a balanced mix of functions, a viable pedestrian network, and a strong sense of neighborhood identity and focus, has become a standard goal that transcends stylistic prejudices. Applications range from that of classicists such as Leon Krier and Robert A.M. Stern, to that of ecology-conscious designers such as Peter Calthorpe and Doug Kelbaugh, to that of European

modernists such as Alvaro Siza and Oriol Bohigas. The undeniable vitality of such regenerated urban districts as Barcelona's Vila Olimpica or Montpellier's Antigone, the former executed in a variety of neomodernist styles, the latter in a ponderous Pop-classical drag, derive mostly from the astute programming of coordinated economic and social functions and not from their style.

The demise of postmodernist style during the past decade can be understood as a fable of architectural culture: first celebrated because of its Pop imagery, and subsequently dropped for the same reason in the search for ever new imagery. If certain works of postmodernism appeared to be mere exercises in façadism, the introduction of full-color photography in the architectural magazines of this period gave further motivation to put the emphasis on packaging. Because of the excess attention given to eccentric decoration and exterior form, the significant art of space-making—the research and invention in plan and section that was present in most of the buildings mentioned on my hit list of postmodernism—was rarely given due consideration. It would be sad to toss out the baby of classical goofing around and forget the luxurious bathwater of Charles Moore's compositional inventiveness, of James Stirling's contextualism, of Michael Graves's investigation of color, or of Hans Hollein's collaging of spaces.

We must offer respect for the dead, but I'm not sure to whom the condolences should go if no one admits to really being a postmodernist, and if most of those presumed to have been such are still thriving, and, in some cases, are designing in more or less the same style. Anyway, whoever you are, rest in peace. ■



Isozaki's Team Disney Building, *Progressive Architecture*, April 1991

Arata Isozaki has stripped his architecture of symbolism to expose the bare essentials of Platonic form.

By Aaron Betsky

ARATA ISOZAKI

Bass Museum of Art
Miami Beach, Florida

Arata Isozaki always returns to the solace of good form. From his fascination with a fragmented classicism in the 1980s, to his current desire to rescue some sense of monumental place-making from the maws of an increasingly virtual reality, the Japanese master has depended on forms that resonate with the historical elements of architecture to anchor his work. After almost half a century of practice, he has refined his search to the composition of a few delicately posed and perfectly proportioned objects. His addition to the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach, Florida, shows how effective this strategy can be.



Mass Museum's gallery sits on an open-air terrace set at a steeply skewed angle in a pool-like pool.



TODAY'S
MUSEUMS ARE
A CONFLUENCE
OF CIVIC
FUNCTIONS,
OF WHICH
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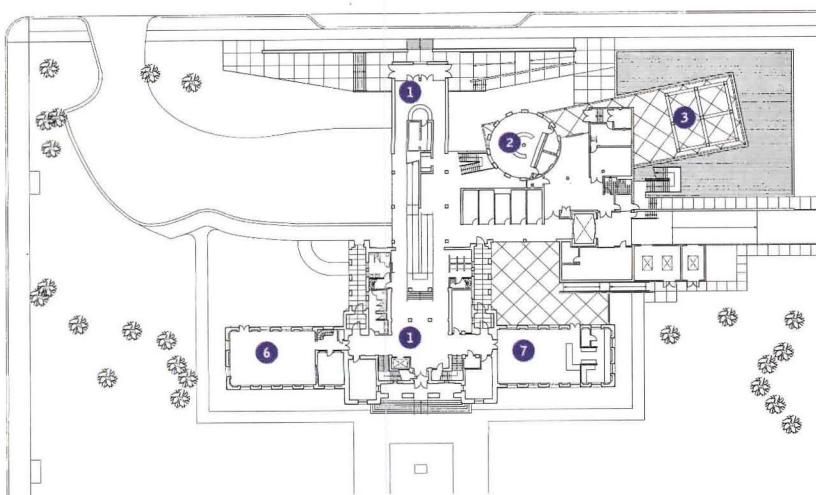
With Isozaki's addition, the Bass has reoriented itself toward the street (the original entrance opened onto a park), though it is still a somewhat reserved presence. The sculpture terrace (top) is visible from the sidewalk, but separated from it by a shallow pool; the three doors of the main entrance (above, and facing page) are marked by a long blue canopy and shielded by a coral-stone wall.

"Architecture has always been conceived as, or has been based on, Platonic solids," Isozaki has said, and his 20,000-square-foot addition to the 1935 Russell Pancoast-designed museum accordingly consists of two rectangular volumes posed at an angle to each other. One contains a new circulation spine that extrudes perpendicularly from the center of the old building, and the other holds a single skewed gallery. Eventually, a second gallery will mirror the first one on the other side of the circulation spine, completing the addition's symmetrical composition in an open-armed gesture of entry.

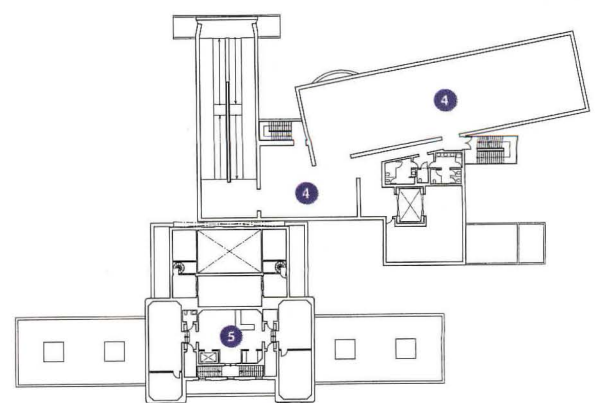
This seeming simplicity hides a few drastic strategies. The first is that the original coral-stone building is now, for all its monumental symmetry, an empty shell housing a café, a lecture hall, and some offices. The spaces that perform the work we associate with a museum—exhibiting art—are in the addition. This new museum faces away from a park that will soon, with the elimination of a 1960s library, reach all the way to the beach two blocks away. However, the new wing and entry turn away from this public space. Today's museums are a confluence of civic functions, of which exhibitions are the most rarified. The work of communication, through architecture as well as through education and entertainment, takes place up front and in the public realm.



- ① lobby
- ② museum store
- ③ sculpture terrace
- ④ gallery
- ⑤ offices
- ⑥ multipurpose room
- ⑦ café



Site plan 39' >

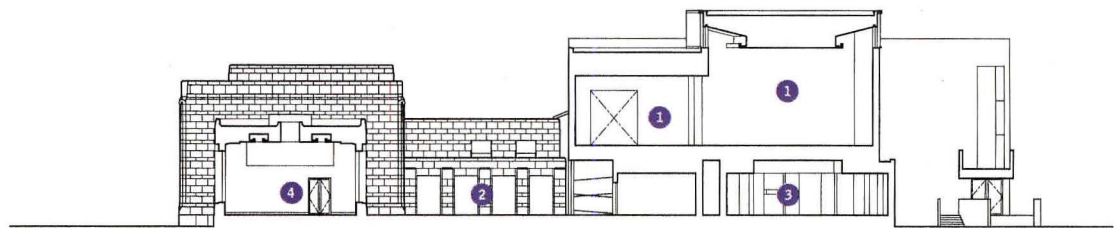


Second-floor plan

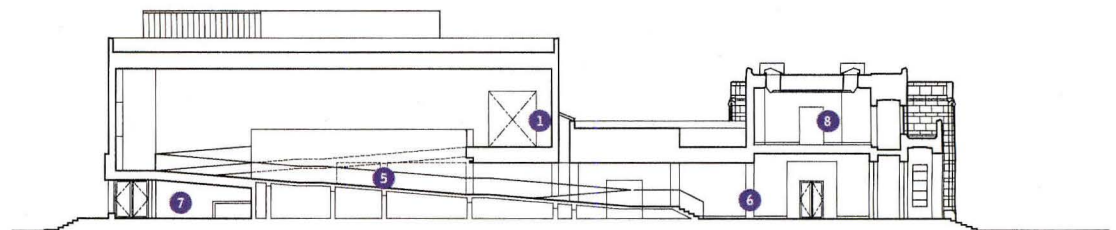


The gap between the original coral-stone building and Isozaki's stuccoed addition is bridged by a thin ribbon of glass (above left) in addition to being marked by the material shift. Inside (above right), the glazing illuminates the ramp as one walks up to the galleries.

- ① gallery
- ② courtyard
- ③ museum store
- ④ multipurpose room
- ⑤ ramp
- ⑥ lobby
- ⑦ main entry
- ⑧ office



North-south section through galleries 17'



North-south section through ramp 17'

BASS MUSEUM OF ART. MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

CLIENT: City of Miami Beach, Bass Museum of Art Board of Trustees and Building Committee; Miami Beach, Florida **ARCHITECT:** Arata Isozaki & Associates, Tokyo—Arata Isozaki (principal-in-charge); Yasuyori Yada (design team project director); David Gauld, Howon Kang, Rokuro Muramatsu, John O'Reilly, Michie Yahagi (project team) **ARCHITECT OF RECORD:** Spillis Candela DJMJ—Michael Kerwin (partner-in-charge); Charles Crain (project manager); Steve Berler (project team) **ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS:** Renovation area: Frankel & Associates—Markus Frankel (principal); Fitting work: Zyscovich—Bernard Zyscovich (principal) **ENGINEER:** Spillis Candela DJMJ (structural, mechanical, electrical) **CONSULTANT:** Fisher Marantz Stone (lighting) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Danvill Findorff **COST:** \$8.4 million **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Simon Hare

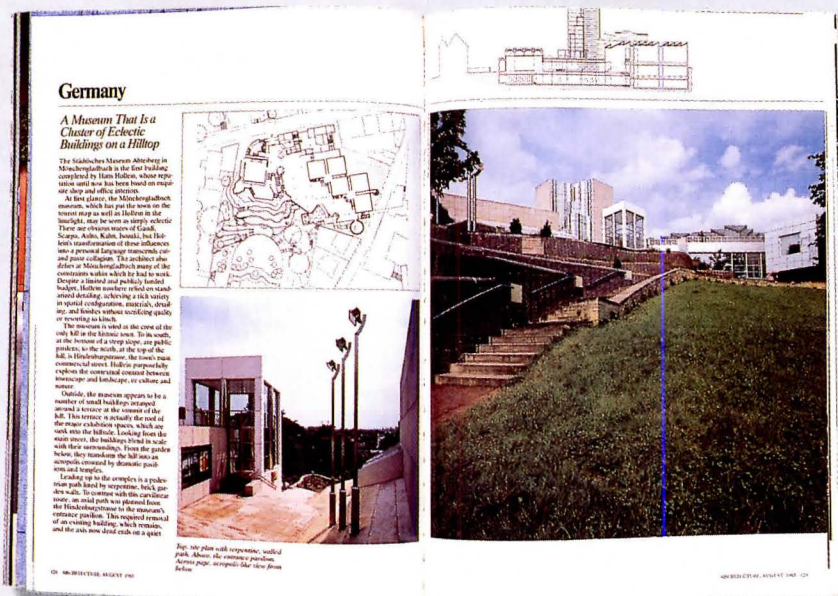


The second deformation of what one might expect from a small art museum's plan is the disproportionately large size of a switchback ramp that penetrates into the old building's very heart. It suggests that museums are places to promenade, places that exhibit people as well as art. Isozaki has stretched the experience of ascent into what, since the 1970s, we have come to think of as an "event:" the act of museum-going.

Isozaki uses subtle moves to make his forms work. The ramp starts from a landing at the head of a set of steps, which spill out around two columns marking the old building's perimeter, underscoring the transition from old to new. The ceiling in the main gallery seems to hover in space, surrounded by clerestory windows that bathe the beautifully proportioned, 22-by-36-by-126-foot space with a softened version of Miami Beach's nearly eternal sunlight. Rotated toward the surrounding neighborhood, the gallery block hovers on a grid of columns on a platform set in a shallow pool of water; the circular museum store adjacent to the lobby acts as the pivot point.

Bass Museum director Diane Camber, one of the pioneers in preserving and popularizing Miami Beach's art deco district, sees the building as "abstracting and refining the forms" of that neighborhood. In so doing, Isozaki has found the basic building blocks inherent in the indigenous mixture of pared-down classicism and streamlined modernism. Perhaps this is the core of at least one kind of postmodernism: Le Corbusier's "clear play of forms in sunlight"—fragmented, stretched, carefully detailed, and responsive to the ways in which we experience and use space. It responds too to the complexities of a modern world which does not rebuild itself so much as it layers and adds new forms onto what already exists. ■

Vistors now enter in the new wing and ascend to the galleries via a long switchback ramp (sections, facing page). The ramp begins in the original building before flipping back on itself (bottom) and arriving in the new addition (center). The main gallery space is a simple rectangular volume lit by clerestory windows (top) that temper Miami's strong sunlight.



Hollein's Städtisches Museum Abteiburg, *Architecture*, August 1983

Hans Hollein is: a) a surrealist, b) a conceptual artist, c) a postmodernist, d) all of the above. Answer: d.

By Liane Lefavre

HANS HOLLEIN

Interbank Headquarters
Lima, Peru

The cool, sleek, Interbank building, clad in a titanium screen interwoven with multicolored fiber-optic threads, is not like anything Hans Hollein has ever designed before. This 20-story office tower's seamless profile rises over the mostly low-rise expanse of Lima like a harbinger of some McLuhan-esque global village. Since opening in January, it has become a major landmark in Lima—taxi drivers all seem to know it by name. Such a high-profile hypermodernist display is about the last thing one would have expected from the Pritzker Prize-winning Viennese architect, but in its seeming difference from his oeuvre, Interbank declares itself a Hollein building.

The Interbank Headquarters is in fact typical of the architect, because there are as many "Holleins" as there are Hollein buildings, as though each one had been designed by someone else. What could be more different from his 1950s land-art projects than his 1960s pop collages? What do his minimalist, buffed-aluminum Retti Candle Shop and the Städtisches Museum Abteiburg (above) have in common? Arguably, not a thing.

screen of titanium
fibing and fiber-optic
ble curves diagonally
cross the face of Hans
pillein's Interbank
headquarters in Lima,
Peru, creating an optical
illusion of motion
for passing drivers.





Located at the edge of a cloverleaf formed by the intersection of two of Lima's busiest roads (top), the Interbank building reveals a different form from every vantage point; drivers going towards the center of Lima on the Via Expresa see a broad façade; on the return trip the tower looks like a slender ellipse (above); a sign cantilevered 65 feet out from the tower ensures that each and every one of those drivers will know whose building they are passing.

The same holds true for Hollein's current work. His Austrian Embassy in Berlin joins a Miesian sense of rigor with the expressionism of Scharoun. His Vulcania Museum in the French Auvergne area is in the form of a gigantic volcano. His Harvard Libraries Extension Building on Mount Auburn Street in Cambridge, which is a take on the 19th-century German architect Gottfried Semper's analogy of a building's cladding as cloth, looks like its façade has just slackened and begun to flutter in a breeze.

Who is Hans Hollein? A conceptual architect? A postmodernist? A pop artist? A pop architect? A Green architect? A realist? A surrealist? The more mutually exclusive the questions get, the more the answer is yes. He is the only architect whose works are kept in the art collections of both the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and the only artist to have won a Pritzker. He shifts nimbly from one identity to another.

There is nothing arbitrary about this multiplicity; it is the result of a premeditated design strategy. Just as Le Corbusier opened up the architecture canon to include ocean liners and grain silos, Hollein has tried to open it up to everything else. In his 1968 manifesto *Alles ist Architektur* (Everything is Architecture), Hollein set forth his polemics about the discipline's limitless reach. There is a long history of this, of course, from Vitruvius to the 18th-century Viennese architect Fischer von Erlach and to the Bauhaus. However, Hollein was "everythingizing" in the 1960s, and the spirit of the time was such that the expansion went further than form or type: high and low, sacred and commercial, machine age and Pop, conceptual and haptic, inspired by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe but also by Marilyn Monroe. This is Hollein's major contribution; the reason it is not better known is twofold. First, almost immediately after he wrote *Alles ist Architektur*, architecture culture turned its back on the experimental spirit of the 1960s. Second, as soon as Hollein wrote the manifesto, he gave up words for action and concentrated on the production of space.

Like its designer, the Interbank building takes multiple forms. In addition to being what could be called "I-tech," it is extremely contextual. It takes up the challenge of Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard's 1964 book *The View from the Road*, by trying to impart "imageability" or a sense of order to a site dominated by speed and movement: a multi-lane traffic hub surrounded with seedy parking lots, primly modest residential low-rises, and bustling office towers. The 487,000-square-foot building sits at the edge of a cloverleaf in an intersection through which 450,000 cars pass every day, and it exploits the sculptural potential of being the leftovers of a traffic solution. The curve of the tower is defined by the curve of the cloverleaf. The titanium tubing of the screen is aligned diagonally so as to create an op-art illusion when seen from a moving car. These shimmering lines create the impression that the tower is gently throbbing as one drives by. One of the features of the interwoven fiber-optic bands is that they can be changed at will or be pre-programmed. This part of Lima is dotted with low-rise and high-rise buildings in blue, green, red, orange, and



The tower's northern façade overlooks a much less hectic setting—a low-rise residential district and a park. The block-like service core with elliptical windows (above, at left) and a bright orange emergency-egress stair frame a strip of glass curtain wall.



- 1 lobby
- 2 offices
- 3 parking
- 4 boardroom

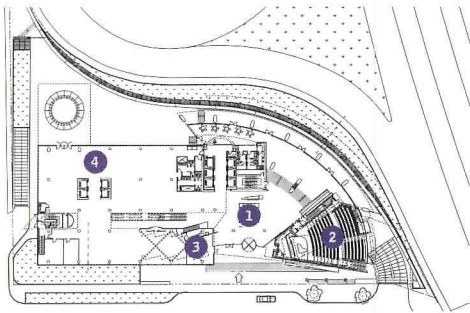
North-south section 23'

turquoise; Hollein chose 12 colors for his optic fibers. Even for those on foot, the Interbank tower manages to present many forms: Depending on one's vantage point, it looks like a different building—now slender, now broad, now smooth, now fragmented.

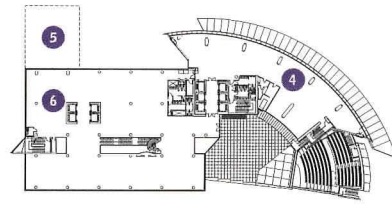
The idea of movement is also conveyed by the glazed trading room in the orthogonal base of the tower. It is a 24-hour-a-day hive of activity that cantilevers over a bustling traffic artery. At night, the trading room glows like a restless white beacon above the stream of traffic lights. The corporate identity of banks is usually more in tune with turbocharged architecture than with critical regionalist gestures. But the Interbank building rests on a solid base of red Peruvian granite extending down to the highway. The retaining wall is like those found in Machu Picchu, and it is rimmed with a thin strip planted with cacti. It is hard not to immediately grasp the message here, that there is a possible harmony between global modernization and local cultural traditions.

There is also a madcap Pop side to this coolly silhouetted building. The top is literally over the top, with its Buck Rogers helicopter port next to the flying saucer-like structure that caps the boardroom below. Three-quarters of the way up the tower, there is a colossal "I-am-a-Bank" sign cantilevered out, like an element of a skyscraper with a mind of its own that had flipped and decided to go horizontal. It is the most imposing of the building's characteristics from a distance, and it can be seen from almost everywhere in the vast, flat landscape of Lima. At some level there is, of course, probably a statement here about male fantasy—power and money and banking. One thing is certain though, the building is good company on the edge of this whizzing traffic interchange. There has never been a building quite like this. It's one more wholly unexpected departure by an unpredictable and protean mind. Where Hollein goes from here is anyone's guess. That's the prerogative of multiplicity, of "everythingism." Once you have taken the theoretical position that everything is architecture, the logical conclusion is that there is nothing you can't do. ■

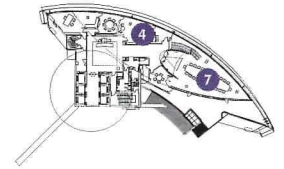
- ① lobby
- ② auditorium
- ③ banking counter
- ④ office
- ⑤ trading room
- ⑥ cafeteria
- ⑦ boardroom



Ground-floor plan 157' ↙



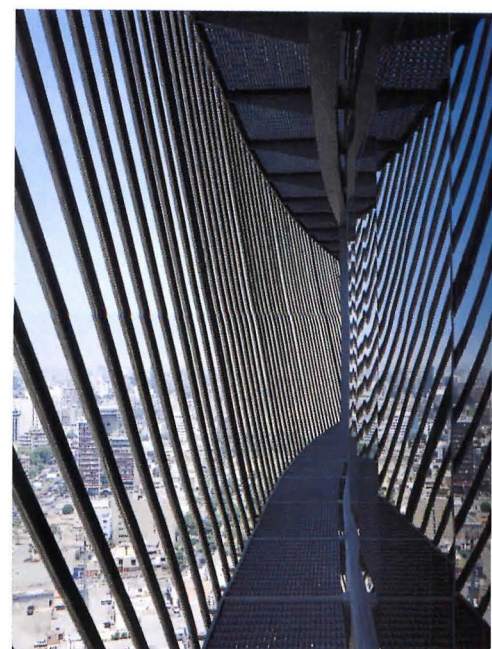
Third-floor plan



Nineteenth-floor plan

The tower's façade is a conic section that tilts outward at a 3-degree angle (facing page, left and center). A helicopter landing pad on the roof provides quick access to the boardroom for bankers who have no time for elevators. The main entrance (below, both photos) is flanked by a six-story glass office block (at left) and a granite-clad auditorium (at right, and in plans). Because of a slight grade change across the site, visitors walking through the lobby can look down on the rush of traffic below.







Two of the Interbank building's most spectacular spaces are the trading room (facing page, top)—which cantilevers 53 feet out from the building—and the conference room on the tower's 19th floor (above). A circular staircase connects four levels in a narrow atrium that brings daylight into the center of the office block (facing page, bottom left). Catwalks between the southern façade's glazing and titanium screen (facing page, bottom right) allow for the cleaning of both.

INTERBANK HEADQUARTERS, LIMA, PERU

CLIENT: Interbank Corporation, Lima, Peru—Carlos Rodriguez-Pastor (president) **ARCHITECT:** Hans Hollein, Vienna—Hans Hollein (principal-in-charge); Ulf Kotz (project architect); Christoph Monschein (job captain) **LOCAL ARCHITECT:** Persivale-Calle, Architects, Lima, Peru—Jaime Persivale (principal); Christian Reusche, Mario Medina (collaborators); Pablo Haaker, José L. Sánchez-Concha (collaborators on auditorium) **ENGINEERS:** GCA-Gallegos, Casabonne, Arango, Ingenieros Civiles (structural); Werner Sobek Ingenieure (screen façade); Termo Sistemas (HVAC) **CONSULTANTS:** Müller-BBM (acoustics); Zumtobel Dornbirn (lighting); Rie Sakata (external lighting); Raúl Basombrio Zender (electrical installation); Pablo Padilla Franchini (sanitary installation, fire prevention); Daniel Gutiérrez Castillo (air conditioning); Carlos Bisso (communication system cabling); Victor A. Rivera Flores (heliport); Engineering Service (security) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Cosapl S.A. Ingeniería y Construcción **COST:** Withheld at owner's request **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Christian Richters



Michael Graves's Portland Public Services Building, *AIA Journal*, May 1983

The reigning prince of postmodernism leaves his unmistakable signature on a Pittsburgh theater.

By Cynthia Davidson

MICHAEL GRAVES

O'Reilly Theater
Pittsburgh



The O'Reilly is the first newly constructed theater in the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust's ambitious plan for developing a cultural district in the city.





When the image of Michael Graves's Portland Public Services Building was first published in 1980, it may as well have been the shot seen round the world: The design set off a debate for and against the "postmodern" that did not abate for nearly a decade, when deconstruction became architecture's new straw man. The sheer novelty of the multihued Portland Building and its golden Portlandia sculpture appeared to let loose all kinds of architectural inhibitions. Ornament and history, which had been easing back into architecture, returned with a vengeance, and Graves rose to international prominence.



This year, perhaps a decade past his due, the AIA awarded Graves the Gold Medal in recognition of a career of excellence—although its timing might make it seem more an award for record sales of his household goods, from the high-end Alessi tea kettle with its whistling red bird to the ergonomic, egg-shaped blue handles on kitchen utensils sold by the discount Target chain. Graves continues to build everywhere, but as retailers make him a household name, the media, ever in search of the new, has worn down his star's luster.



Graves's O'Reilly Theater in Pittsburgh, completed in 2000, is the fourth theater—and the first newly constructed one—in the city's rebounding downtown cultural district. The new building is distinctly Graves, a product of his own iconoclastic language of architecture: a cylinder; a barrel vault; Kasota stone; an exaggerated running bond pattern on a side elevation; extensive use of curly maple inside. It is elegant, a little bit precious, and somewhat overstated; the latter quality, according to Graves, is to help the small building (53,000 square feet) hold its own in a neighborhood of large loft buildings.

Are these the characteristics of a continuing postmodernism? Graves would say no: "I never thought of postmodernism as a style, but as a way to make a language richer." This richness is often confused with superficial detailing, but in fact it comes from Graves's continuous return to pure form at the start of each project. At the O'Reilly, the cylindrical lobby and the horseshoe-shaped theater seem to be generated from two overlapping circles of the same diameter. The basic diagram underlying the collage of forms is pure geometry.

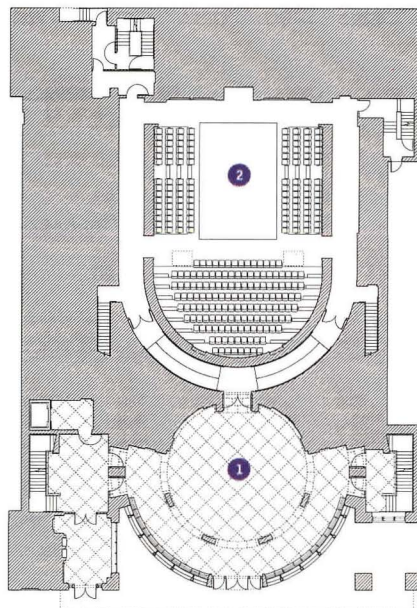
The structural and spatial tension of the O'Reilly comes at the intersection of the protruding, glazed cylindrical lobby with the copper-clad barrel vault that runs across the front of the theater and serves as a marquee. The vaulted form, punctuated by large foursquare windows that overlook the street below, confounds one's reading of the space within; the graceful room it contains is a rehearsal space rarely open to the public, giving the bold form a mysterious presence.

For most, however, the 650-seat thrust-stage theater is what really matters. The rake of the seats and the room's U-shape combine to make an embracing, intimate space with excellent sight lines. The flat-floor thrust stage is surrounded on three sides by the audience, blurring the space between actor and

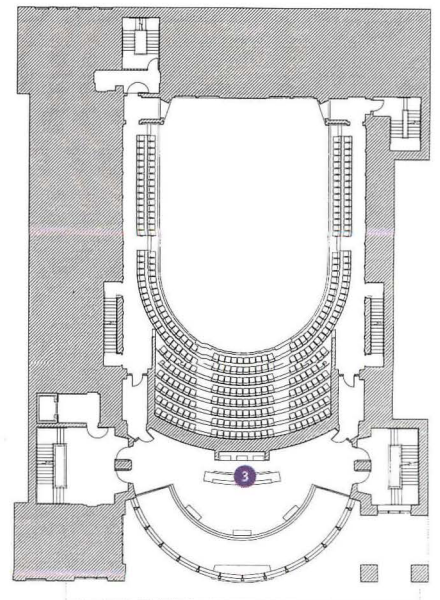
Graves repeats the circle as a motif, in both plan and section, throughout the O'Reilly: The barrel-vaulted roof protrudes slightly out over the street (top); the lobby (center) is formed in plan by two concentric circles. At night, the lobby's two levels are clearly visible through a customized, curved curtain-wall system (center). The balcony above the entrance to the theater holds a bar (facing page), behind which is one of Graves's signature murals (above).



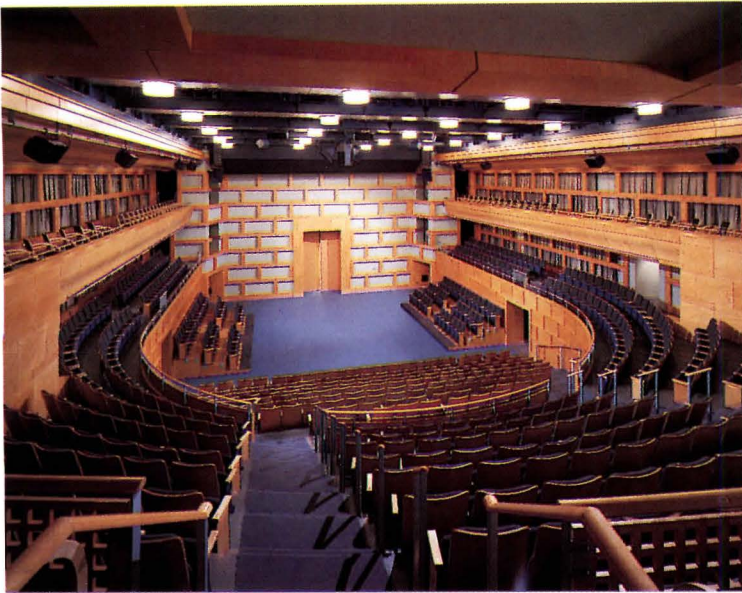
- 1 lobby
- 2 theater
- 3 bar



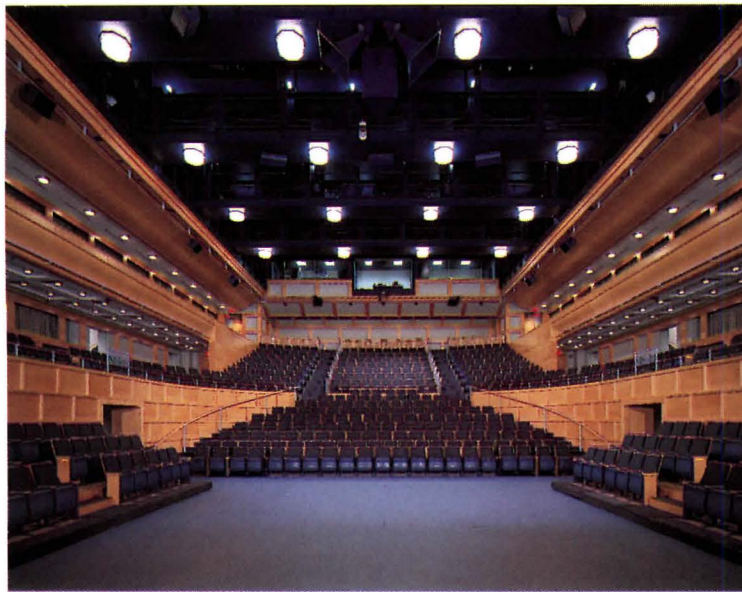
Ground-floor plan 23' ↗



Second-floor plan



IN AN AGE OF
CLOYING
ARGUMENTS
FOR "CONTEXT,"
THE STRONG
SIGNATURE IS
ALMOST A
MODERN RELIEF.



THE O'REILLY THEATER, PITTSBURGH

CLIENT: The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Pittsburgh—Carol R. Brown (president); David Lowry (director of planning and special projects); Jennifer Dickinson (capital projects assistant) **ARCHITECT:** Michael Graves & Associates, Princeton, New Jersey—Michael Graves (design principal); Thomas P. Rowe (principal-in-charge, project architect); Gregg Wielage (senior associate, project manager); Mark Cox, Robert Fahr, Keoni Fleming, Travis Hicks, Shih-Fu Peng, Jill Peters (design team) **ENGINEERS:** DeSimone Consulting Engineers (structural); Jaros Baum & Bolles (mechanical, electrical, fire protection, elevators, HVAC); The Gateway Engineers (civil) **CONSULTANTS:** Calori & Vanden-Eynden (signage); Schnabel Engineering Associates (geotechnical); Fisher Dachs Associates (theater consultant); The Talaske Group (acoustics); Cerami & Associates (acoustical vibration isolation) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Turner Construction Company **COST:** \$14,500,000 **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Edward Massery

spectator. The array of seats on three levels also decreases the demands on circulation, thereby reducing the width of corridors and stairways to an almost domestic scale. This has the added effect of making the small theater seem spacious. All of the finishes in the public spaces come out of Graves's familiar repertoire: The carpet design, lobby and theater lights, curly maple bar, lobby benches, vitrines for posters, and trays for brochures were all designed by the architect's office.

As a whole, Graves's design has little to do with the context of Pittsburgh. (Ironically, the clients feel their building is strongly related to the specific context of their city.) It brings to mind something Charles Jencks wrote about Graves in *Architectural Design* in 1991: "Much of the work was signature stamped rather than context specific: It said more about who designed it than where it was." The mural commissioned from Graves and installed behind the O'Reilly bar gives the game away: His signature Tuscan yellow and ochre color an architectural landscape, accented by his uniquely Gravesian trees. It does more to stamp the theater as "Graves" than any other single element. In an age of cloying arguments for established "context," the strong signature is almost a modern relief.

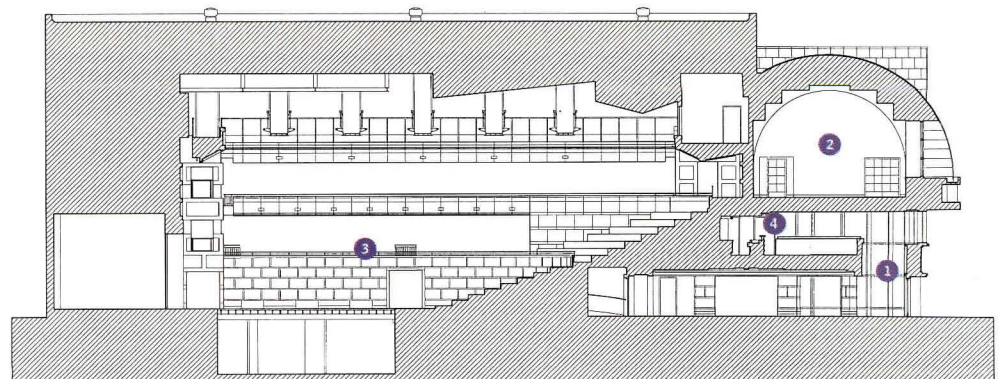
As the mural also makes clear, Graves still works out his synthesis of classical forms and 20th-century influences like Leon Krier and Aldo Rossi through drawing. In an age when new geometries are being articulated architecturally through computer software, the sign of the human hand still has the power to touch the soul. Only when that hand becomes automatic, when the synthesis becomes empty, will the romance run out of it, and the architecture that it produces become as discounted as the geegaws at Target. This is the post-post-modern predicament that Graves has brought about. ■

Cynthia Davidson is the director of the Anyone project and editor of ANY magazine and the Writing Architecture book series.

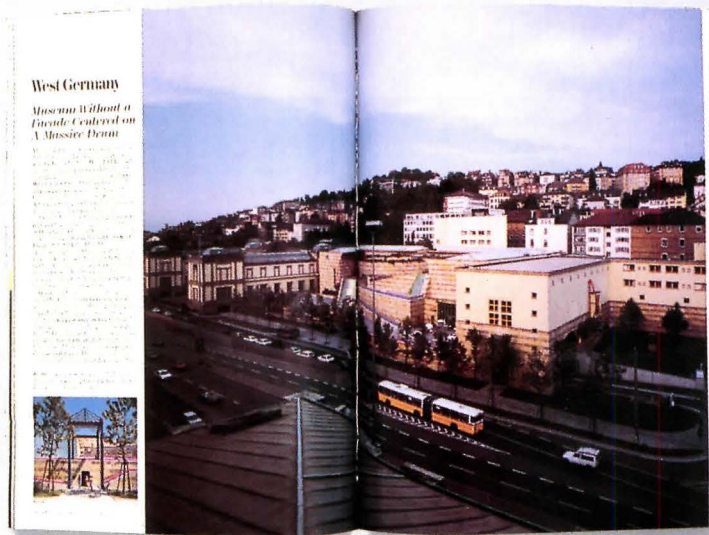


Because the vaulted rehearsal room (above) is one of the more dramatic spaces in the theater, it is also used for smaller recitals and cast parties. Graves gave the theater (facing page, both photos) a steep rake and horseshoe shape to bring the audience as close as possible to the stage.

- 1 lobby
- 2 rehearsal space
- 3 theater
- 4 bar



Northwest-southeast section | 15'



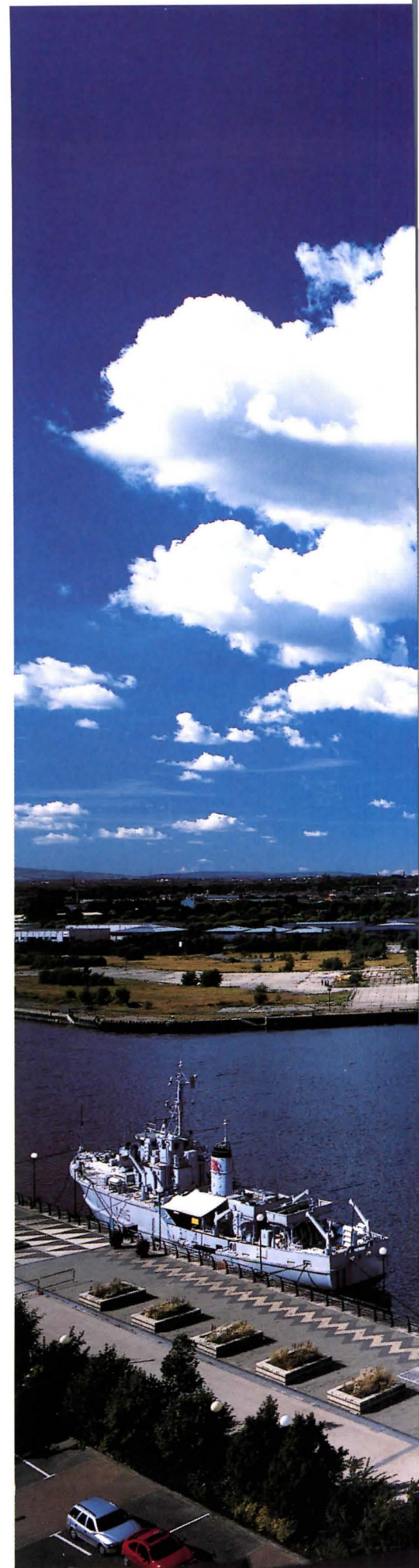
Stirling Wilford & Associates' Stuttgart Staatsgalerie,
Architecture, September 1983

After decades as the silent partner of postmodernist James Stirling, Michael Wilford finds a voice of his own.

By Catherine Slessor

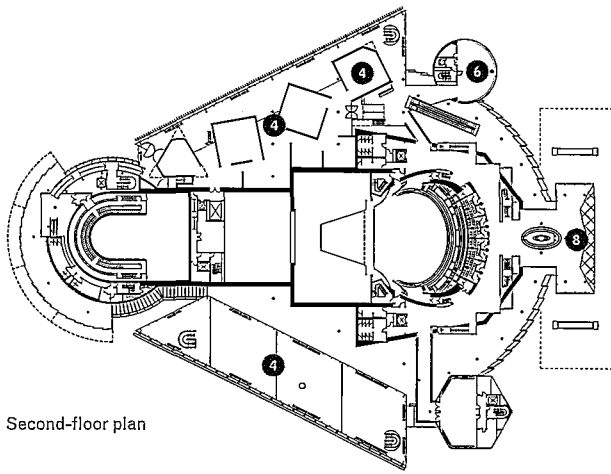
MICHAEL WILFORD

Lowry Arts Center
Salford, England

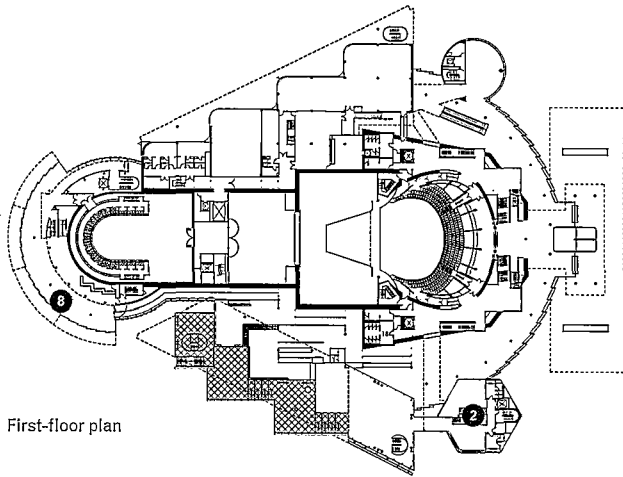


The stainless-steel cladding and clustered forms of Michael Wilford's Lowry Arts Center hold their own against the industrial landscape of the Manchester Shipping Canal.



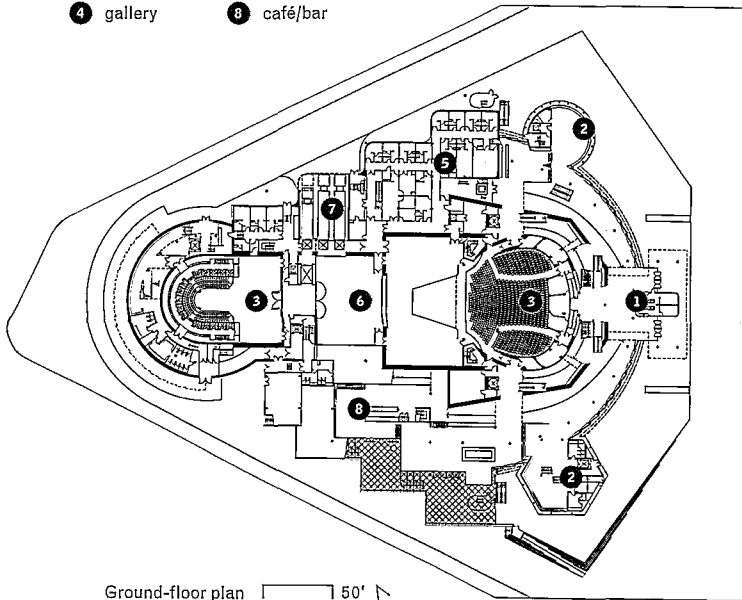


Second-floor plan



First-floor plan

- 1 lobby
- 2 museum shop
- 3 theater
- 4 gallery
- 5 dressing rooms
- 6 storage
- 7 loading dock
- 8 café/bar



Ground-floor plan 50'

In a scenario of industrial desolation familiar the world over, leaden clouds scud bleakly over the decaying docks of Salford, England. The warehouses and mills that once clustered at their edges are now flattened wastelands. The Manchester Ship Canal, an industrial artery that transformed this inland city into a crucible of British enterprise, is now scarcely used. The artist L.S. Lowry, Salford's most celebrated inhabitant, immortalized the now-vanished landscapes of factories and docks in pictures of crowds of emaciated workers under smoke-laden skies. Today he would scarcely recognize the place.

Within this bleak landscape, one can detect attempts at regeneration—new housing, businesses, and transportation infrastructure—but they seem positively Lilliputian against the sweeping panorama of dereliction. Among these feeble shoots is one noticeably hardy specimen that does succeed in squaring up to its surroundings. Dominating a dockside promontory is Michael Wilford's new Lowry Arts Center, a cluster of stainless steel-clad forms that shimmers in Salford's wan sunlight, reflecting the changing skies and rippling water. Inside, two theaters, an art gallery (housing a permanent collection of Lowry's works), shops, restaurants, and bars are linked together by a series of promenade spaces.

Although it forms part of an evolving cultural master plan for the area, the Lowry is, of necessity and by inclination, an object building. But it is not the only swaggering extrovert on the block: Later this year it will be joined by a new northern outpost of the Imperial War Museum, designed by Daniel Libeskind, just across the docks. Bilbao's Guggenheim is an obvious model—perhaps too obvious—and Wilford is sanguine about references to superficial similarities of form and program, noting that it is simply "part of the baggage we have to carry." More pertinently, he sees the Lowry as "a coming together of themes which we have been developing in our work for some time. [It presented] an opportunity to rehearse ideas and concerns."

The project dates back to 1992, when Stirling and Wilford were invited to draw up a feasibility study for a proposal dubbed the Salford Opera House. James Stirling died just days before the practice was due to present their ideas, but he had been developing the basic outline of the scheme on a prow-like site at the apex of Salford's Pier 8. Early versions reveal a grouping of forms in the spirit of Stirling and Wilford's unbuilt projects for Los Angeles' Disney Hall and the Tokyo Forum. The basic components of the scheme as built—auditoriums and gallery spaces threaded through with a public promenade—were already in place in 1992. Wilford subsequently developed the notion of a landmark tower, which is now realized as a cylinder that houses the Lowry archives and study center. He also relocated the public route from an intermediate zone to the perimeter to take advantage of waterside views.

The Lowry reflects numerous concerns that have been present for some time in the practice's work, such as the Corbusian

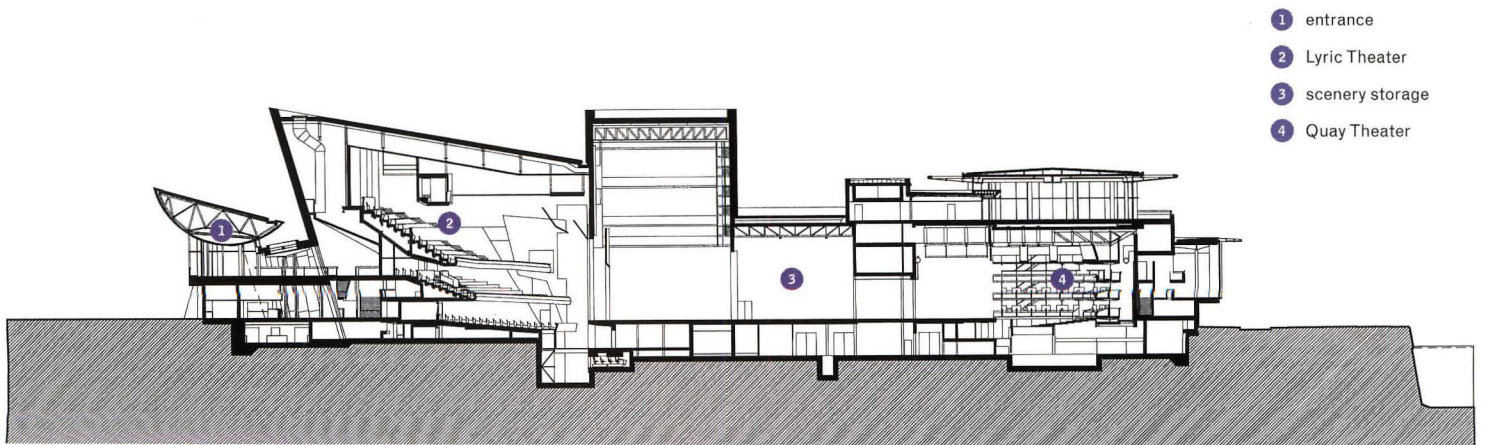


At the heart of the Lowry are two theaters that share support spaces (plans, facing page). These are surrounded by a ring of promenade-like circulation paths that link several restaurants and bars, one of which occupies the double-height circular volume overlooking the quays (above). A promenade wraps the outside of the building as well, following the water's edge (below) and leading to a new footbridge across the shipping canal (above, at right).





A gift shop sits in the base of the round tower next to the Lowry's monumental entrance canopy (above); on the upper level, there is a study center and archive for the work of the building's namesake, the prominent local artist L. S. Lowry.



- 1 entrance
- 2 Lyric Theater
- 3 scenery storage
- 4 Quay Theater

East-west section | 42'

WILFORD'S CORUSCATING COLORS MAY BE A SHOCK TO THE RETINA, BUT THEY ADD TO THE VIGOR OF THE ARCHITECTURE.

notion of the architectural promenade, and the use of vivid color and strong geometric forms. Yet one can also sense evolution, a moving away from the monumentally and historically inflected postmodernism so memorably embodied in the Stuttgart Staatsgalerie (1984), to a lighter, sleeker, even vaguely deconstructivist sensibility. Wilford admits to “an increasing interest in articulating activities into discrete forms that give each piece an identity, which together become an interesting constellation of forms.”

At the building's core is an inner armature composed of two theaters and their associated foyer spaces. Around this are wrapped the more permeable layers of galleries, shops, cafés, and restaurants. With its soft and sensuous womb-like atmosphere, the main 1,700-seat Lyric Theater is an attempt to rekindle the glamour and sense of occasion traditionally associated with theatergoing. The smaller Quay Theater is a 466-seat studio space designed for more intimate performances using flexible staging. Luminous and top-lit, the tall galleries on the north side of the gallery are calm, contemplative spaces along the building's promenade. Describing a legible circuit around the interior, the promenade compresses, expands, and weaves through different levels and spaces to culminate in a circular belvedere at the apex of the promontory, with magnificent views down the Manchester Ship Canal.

Wilford has little time for the currently fashionable pursuit of minimalism, preferring the seductive, humanizing qualities of geometry and color. He described the Lowry as “a collage—a mass broken down to express what's inside—which has the quality of an abstract sculpture, that nonetheless remains a logical formal expression of its varied functions.” In contrast with the industrial exterior, color is used with baroque abandon on the inside, to articulate volumes and spaces. Wilford's coruscating oranges, purples, and yellows may be a shock to the retina, but they undoubtedly add to the formal vigor of the architecture. The new Lowry is, after all, a building that must shout loudly to compete with its surroundings; through its blowsy “maximalism,” it bellows with intensity and style. ■



A blue terrazzo ramp (above), part of the promenade that wraps the two theaters, passes by a restaurant on the ground floor. The landings of staircases (below) to the upper tiers of the 1,700-seat Lyric Theater overlook the ground-floor lobby.





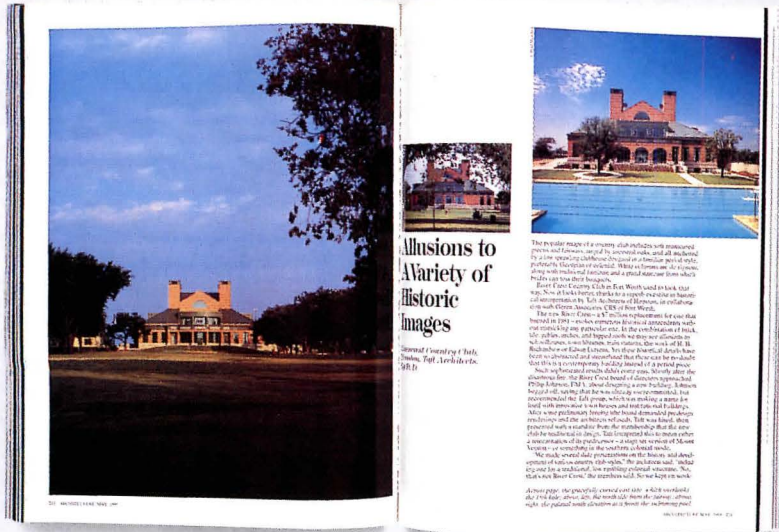
The galleries (below) occupy four rotated cubes set along the building's northern edge (above). Wilford, who originally planned to use purple—his favorite color—on the building's exterior, instead indulged himself on the interior of the Lyric Theater (facing page).

THE LOWRY, SALFORD, ENGLAND

CLIENT: The Lowry Trust, Salford, England **ARCHITECT:** Michael Wilford and Partners, London—David Artis, Paul Barke-Asuni, Christian Bocci, Simon Branson, Pam Campbell, Chris Chong, Iain Clavadetscher, Mark Emms, Thomas Hamilton, Liam Hennessey, Elinor Hughes, Mark Jeffs, David Jennings, Andrea Lane, Kirsten Lees, Giles Martin, Kenny Martin, Chris Matthews, Gillian McInnes, David McKenna, Stuart McKnight, Alison McLellan, Ian McMillan, Adele Pascal, Andrew Pryke, Peter Ray, David Reat, Brian Reynolds, Leandro Rotondi, Sven Schmedes, Charlie Sutherland, Joanna Sutherland, Jason Syrett, Simon Usher, Helle Westegaard (project architects) **ENGINEERS:** Buro Happold (structural, mechanical, electrical); Arup Façade Engineering (façade) **CONSULTANTS:** Theatre Projects Consultants (theater consultant); Lord Cultural Resources (museum consultant); Sandy Brown Associates (acoustics); Davis Langdon & Everest (quantity surveyors); Equation Lighting Design (lighting); Gleeds Management Services (project manager) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Bovis Construction Limited **COST:** \$91 million **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Richard Bryant/Arcaid, except as noted







Taft's Rivercrest Country Club, *Architecture*, May 1985

Taft Architects develops a new take on the postmodern sensibility that made the firm famous.

By Lawrence W. Speck

TAFT ARCHITECTS

Williams House & Studio
Houston

Taft paired the carport of the Williams House with the front entrance (right), so that the auto becomes an icon for inhabitation and domestic life, not just a functional necessity.







Taft built to the setback line, organizing the house internally around a central courtyard (above). The sawtooth roof of the two double-height wings incorporates light monitors that illuminate the studios within; an exterior metal stair (facing page, top) provides the only access to one of the studios.

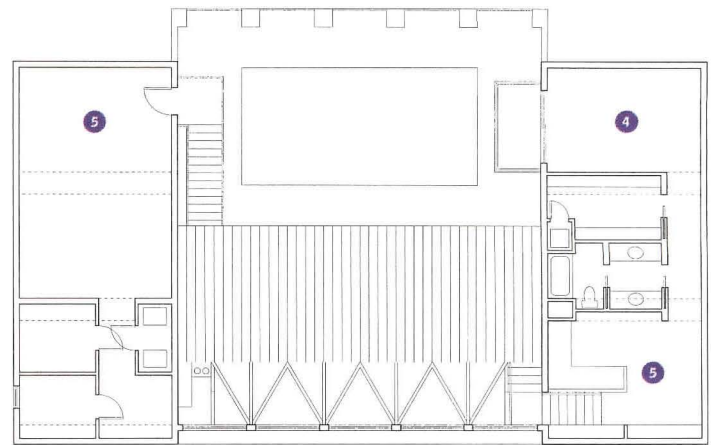
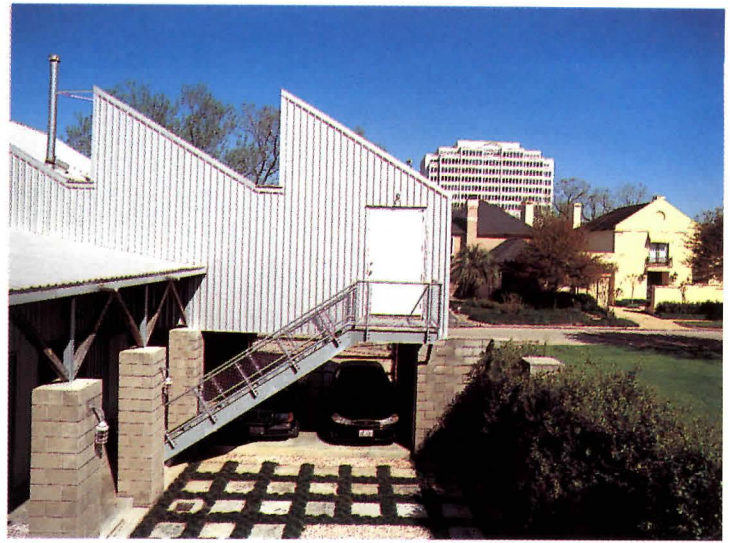
Architecture swallowed postmodernism whole, gagged violently, and spit it out. In contrast, disciplines as diverse as science, psychoanalysis, literature, and philosophy partook of postmodernist thought more moderately, nourishing a generation of creative growth with genuine relevance to contemporary life and values. In architecture, the same seminal ideas that nurtured other fields became too quickly codified into a reductive style, and the baby of postmodernist thought (interests in the particular, the timely, and the local; tolerance of social, cultural, and intellectual diversity) got thrown out with the bathwater of postmodern style.

Along with the bathwater went a handful of very talented designers for whom postmodernism was a broad world of right-headed ideology and not just a grab bag of visual gimmicks. In the early 1980s, the heyday of postmodern style, Taft Architects—John Casbarian, Danny Samuels, and Robert Timme—was a fresh, dynamic triumvirate with top-grade pedigrees and adventurous spirits. Their early projects were full of verve and energy, though limited by miniscule budgets and a construction naiveté inevitable in young architects. At just about the time these young Turks began to win promising commissions and their maturity as builders began to catch up with their earlier aspirations as designers, the gods of architectural style changed direction. Burdened by restrictive labels and associations, Taft's developing direction got less notice than it deserved. And now, two decades after their initial fame, the firm has built up a very distinguished body of work rooted in legitimate postmodern notions like diversity, inclusivity, and particularity. Notably absent are the trappings of postmodern style.

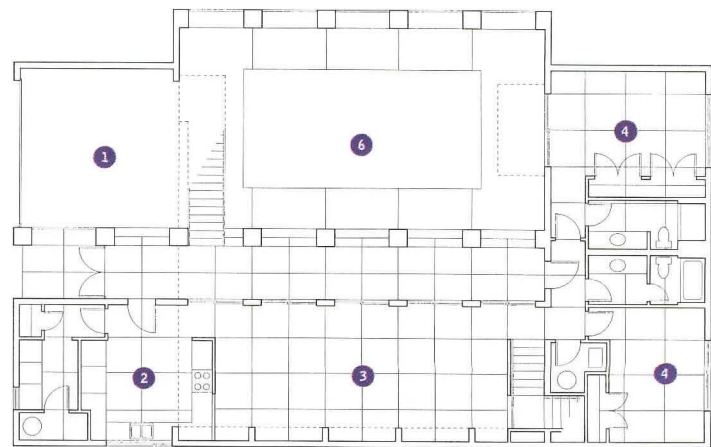
The Williams House in Houston, the second house Taft has designed for clients Casey and Joanna Williams, is a good example. Reinforcing a postmodern respect for diversity, it could hardly be more different from the first, which was built in Austin in the mid-1980s. Though they loved this grander, more formal home, the couple, who are both artists, preferred their new one to be more spare and austere, to feel like a "beach house" with lots of light and openness.

Longtime friends of both Samuels and Casbarian, the clients wanted to give the architects as much freedom as possible in terms of design vocabulary. They knew they would get options: Postmodern processes revel in alternatives and choice. For the Austin house Taft had presented seven initial schemes, and for the Houston house they did three. Casbarian notes that design for Taft is about "inclusivity—being about more than one thing." He and his partners generate options in order to be able to experiment and free their minds of dogmatic constraints.

Inclusivity, in the case of the Williams House, embraces inspirations as diverse as Tuscan, Texan, and French farmhouses; the early work of Le Corbusier; and industrial materials such as metal siding, concrete block, and chain-link fencing. But there is also a real particularity to the Williams House that makes it



Second-floor plan

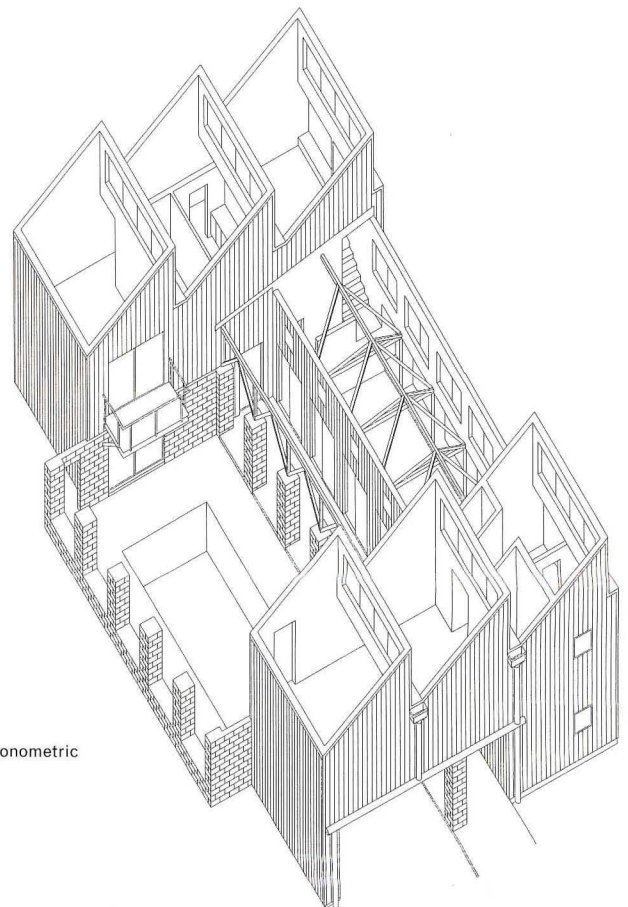


First-floor plan 18' V

- 1 garage
- 2 kitchen
- 3 living and dining room
- 4 bedroom
- 5 studio
- 6 courtyard



The Williamses traded the richly colored and highly articulated interiors of their first Taft-designed house for the clean white backdrop of their new living and dining room (above left), highlighting their eclectic collections of art, furniture, and decorative objects. In the Williamses' two studios, one larger (above right) and one smaller, this simple aesthetic serves an equivalent purpose. The living and dining room opens onto the internal courtyard through a south-facing porch (facing page), which provides shade during Houston's long summers (below).



Axonometric



more than just a collection of favorite elements. “The look of a house,” notes Casbarian, “always evolves out of a program and its relation to the site.” The need for north light in a live-work home for two artists and the desirability of private courtyard views on a tight urban site strongly shaped the building’s diagram. It has a U-shaped plan clustering all of the rooms around a south-facing living space with monitors grabbing a softer, balancing light from the opposite side. The tight budget and informal lifestyle of the clients provoked the use of inexpensive materials and simple detailing.

The Williams House rejects the singularity, certitude, and universality of a bygone era in favor of an accepting ambiguity and synthesis of diverse elements appropriate to our time. It is a rich, broad-minded little house, full of responsiveness and invention. Speaking a language that is both fresh and familiar, the Williams House represents an appropriate cultural manifestation of the contemporary postmodern condition. ■

WILLIAMS HOUSE & STUDIO, HOUSTON

CLIENT: Casey and Joanne Williams, Houston **ARCHITECT:** Taft Architects, Houston—John J. Casbarian, Danny Samuels (partners); Larry A. Dailey (senior associate) **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Stephanie Kaldis **ENGINEER:** Erv Grafe & Associates (structural) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Pantheon Architecture & Construction **COST:** \$300,000 **PHOTOGRAPHER:** James McGoon

William Greenberg's Humanities building deftly adheres to the stylistic parameters that Cram established at Rice campus in the 1910s and 1920s, retaining details such as small arched niches (as seen on this page, at bottom) and all the work of Cram's English contemporary, Edwin Lutyens.





Cram designed Rice's central quadrangle to be flanked, cloister-like, with thin, arcaded buildings (above) daintily punctuated by Venetian Gothic pinnacles; the bell tower of Greenberg's humanities building appears in the distance at one corner of the quadrangle (above, at center). This new building sits just outside the quad's existing arcade (facing page); Greenberg incorporates it and an adjacent classroom building (facing page, at left) as the north and east sides of a small new cloistered courtyard. The south and west sides of this courtyard are Greenberg's own (below); the varied patterns of brick that pave his arcade extend a Rice trademark.

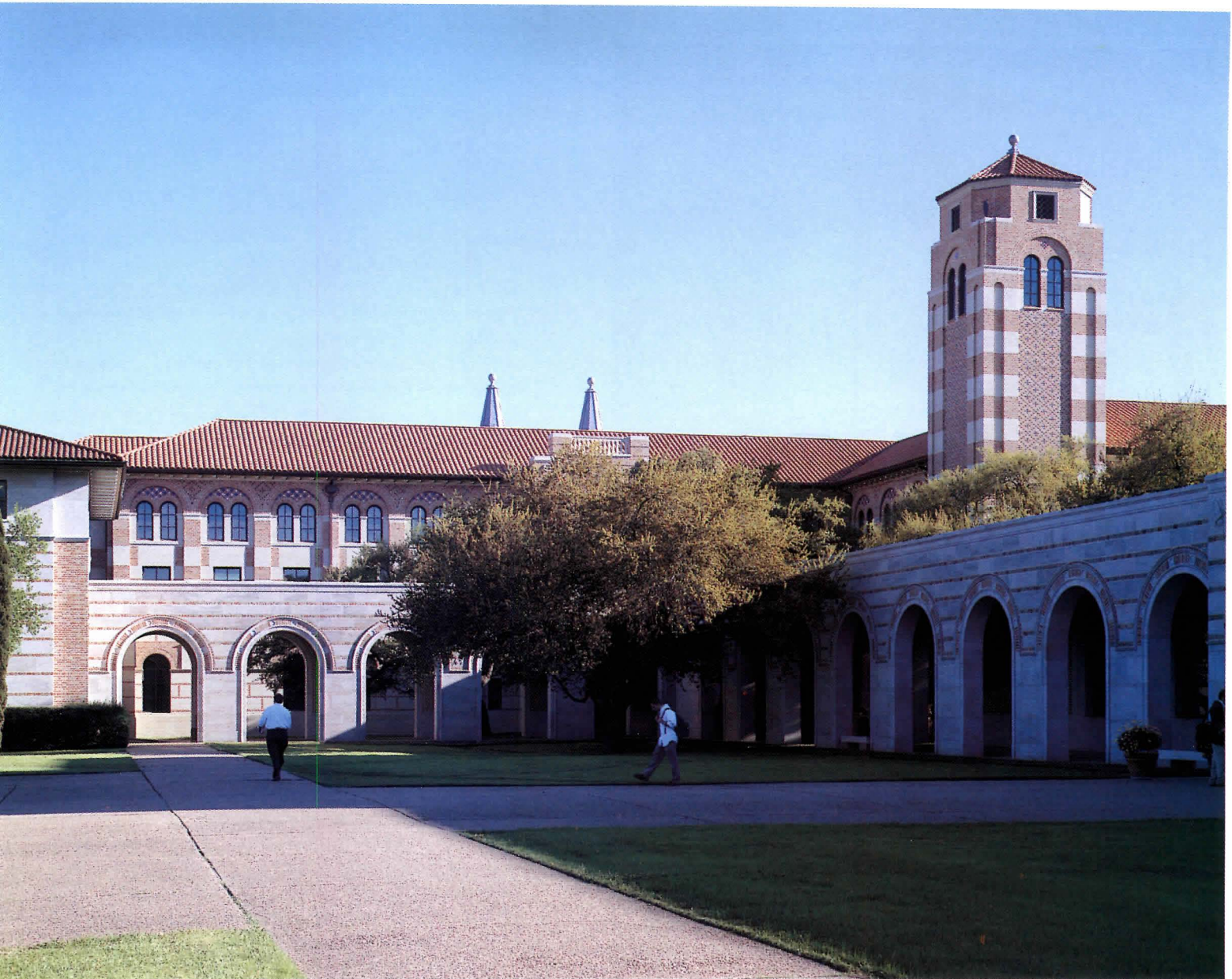


"Byzantinoid," if you consult Henry-Russell Hitchcock's magisterial 1958 survey, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Local historian Stephen Fox, more favorably inclined, suggests "neo-Byzantine" in his scholarly new campus guide to Rice (which is now a university, and, it should be told, my alma mater). No matter what the name, the formal response to Cram's question can be found, perfectly embodied, in the brick-and-stone humanities building just outside Rice's cloistered main quadrangle. Organized according to sound beaux-arts planning principals, and ornamented with an unorthodox, yet agreeable mix of details from, according to Cram, "South France and Italy, Dalmatia, the Peloponessus, Byzantium, Anatolia, Syria, Sicily, Spain," the building provides a setting eminently worthy of Justinian and Theodora; it is an oasis of aesthetic order in a free-form postmodern city.

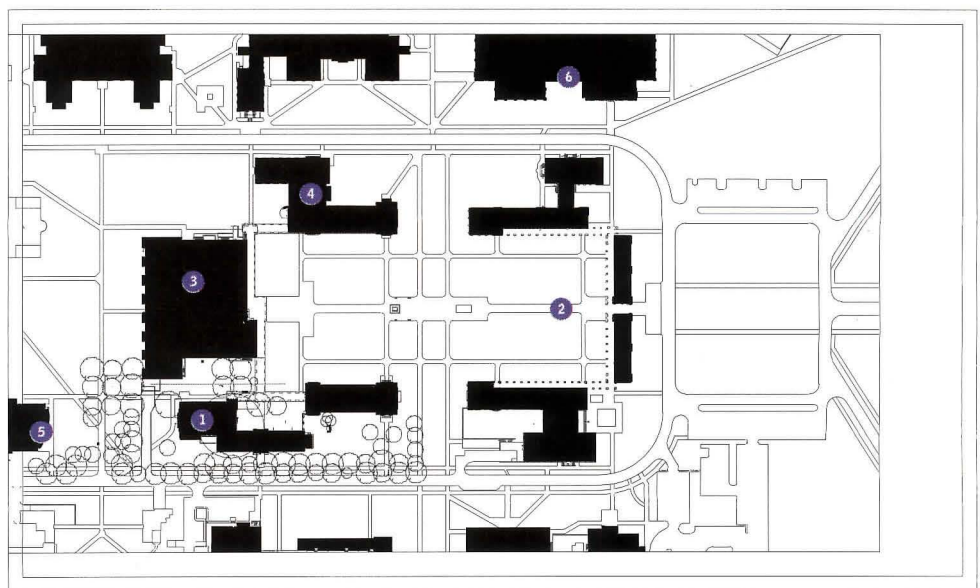
It is also brand new, a circumstance likely to diminish the building's appeal for architects. Given the backlash against history-happy postmodernism, and the five decades of predominantly modernist education that propelled it, most architects are probably inclined to agree with Hitchcock. The appreciation of such a literal evocation of the past may require a leap of faith. Even Charles Jencks, the critical father of postmodernism and no stranger to tradition, hung the building's architect, Allan Greenberg, from the "Revivalist Classicism" branch of his movement-defining chart (page 108)—a lonely subcategory that Jencks summarized as "autonomous, automatic revivalism, a language, as semiologists would say, without speech, and as successful as its detail and overall appropriateness."

Greenberg, for his part, thinks that classicism "remains the most comprehensive language of architecture for serving the diverse needs of human beings and the societies they create." The quote originally appeared in the September 1994 issue of *Architecture*, in an essay Greenberg titled "Why Classical Architecture is Modern," which is to say, "relevant." What might rankle about Greenberg's philosophy are the parameters within which he defines an acceptable, "true" classicism: broad enough to encompass Cram's allusive, eccentric Rice style, but narrow enough, in this architecturally eclectic post-postmodern age, to smack of fanaticism. The argument, like the architecture, is sufficiently reactionary as to seem almost radical—especially given how many of Greenberg's predecessors at Rice, including several unrepentant modernists, successfully respected the administration's Cram-derived strictures on siting, materials, and massing, while still creating an identifiably contemporary architecture.

If the humanities building's thick, ornament-encrusted skin looks 100 years old, it nonetheless wraps a reinforced-concrete frame and was drawn on computer. Unlike some other strict traditionalists, Greenberg employs modern methods, materials, and technologies where convenient (and on occasion, I suspect, when code or budget makes it necessary—at



- 1 humanities building
- 2 original Cram buildings
- 3 library
- 4 James Stirling and Michael Wilford's architecture school
- 5 Cesar Pelli's business school
- 6 John Outram's science building



Site Plan ^



A canopy of live oak trees, green year-round, obscures the south face of the humanities building (above). The building's façade, with its rich brick patterns, courses of stone, cast-stone ornaments, and tile work, is more visible to the west (top).

THE HUMANITIES BUILDING, RICE UNIVERSITY, HOUSTON

CLIENT: Rice University, Houston—Paul Sanders (senior project manager)
ARCHITECT: Allan Greenberg, Architect—Allan Greenberg (managing partner); David Buegler (project manager); Suzanne Klein (senior project architect); Thomas Noble (project designer); William Bourque (staff architect) **LOCAL ARCHITECT/INTERIOR FURNISHINGS:** Morris Architects, Houston—Andy MacPhillimy (project manager) **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Sasaki **ENGINEERS:** Walter P. Moore (structural, civil); Smith Seckman Reid (mechanical, electrical, plumbing) **CONSULTANTS:** Acentech (acoustics); Cosentini (lighting); Ulrich Diederich (signage); Heller & Metzger (specifications) **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Gilbane Building Company **COST:** \$10,500,000 **PHOTOGRAPHER:** Timothy Hursley

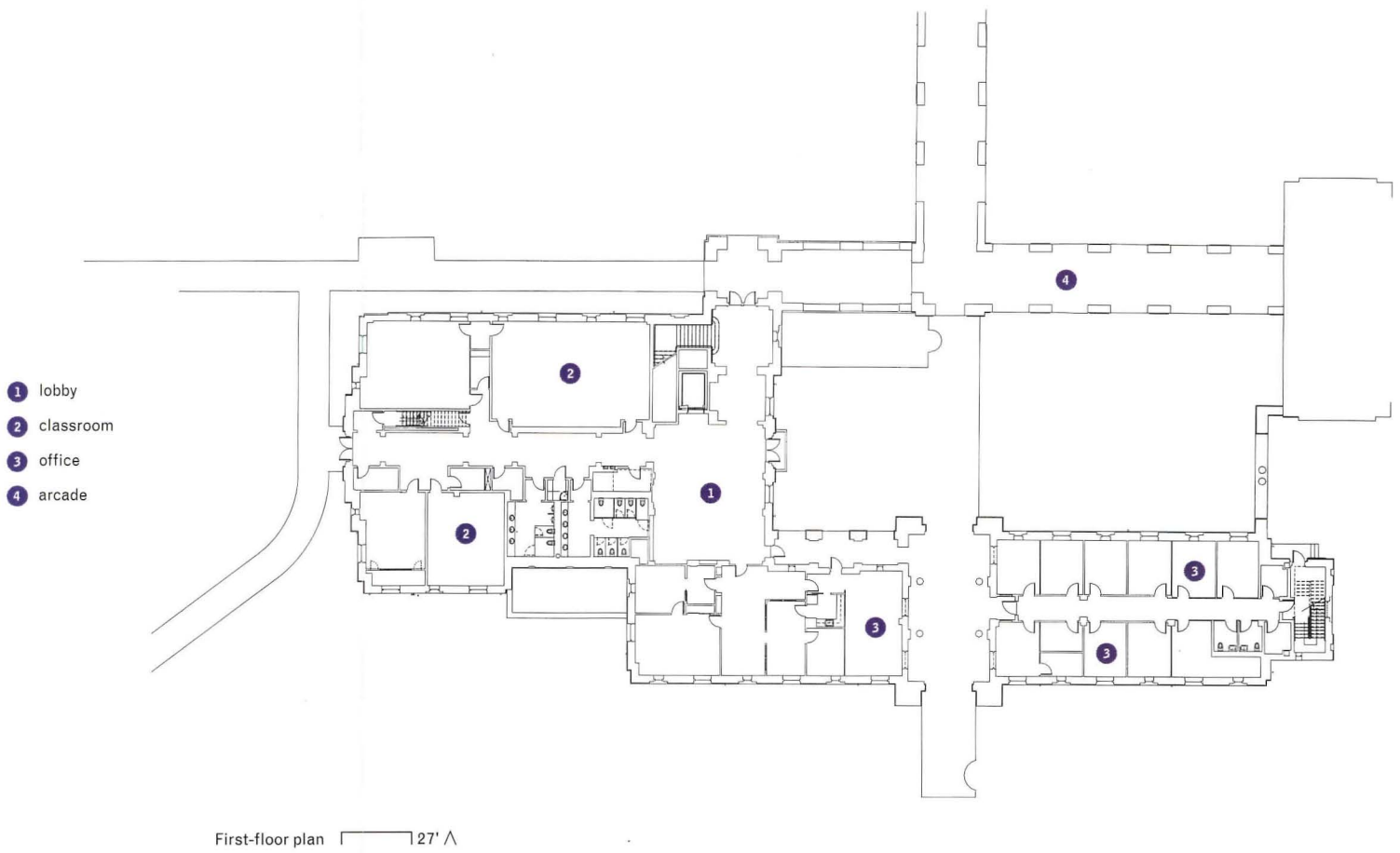
Rice he had \$10.5 million to cover 45,000 square feet, and it still wasn't enough). But wherever possible, he denies such harsh realities, slyly substituting cast stone for carved, and hiding expansion joints behind copper drainpipes as well as along indented corners.

Greenberg evidently preferred to cut his corners on the inside, where Cram set a spartan precedent in exposed brick and raw plaster. But the sum of Greenberg's modern material choices is insubstantiality, not austerity. The vestibule and lobby, with their nods to turn-of-the-century British architect Edwin Lutyens, approach plausibility, despite the drywall; in the hallways, vaults and moldings alarmingly begin to drop away; and, in the classrooms and offices, slate window sills and mahogany-veneer doors can't compensate for the acoustical-tile ceilings.

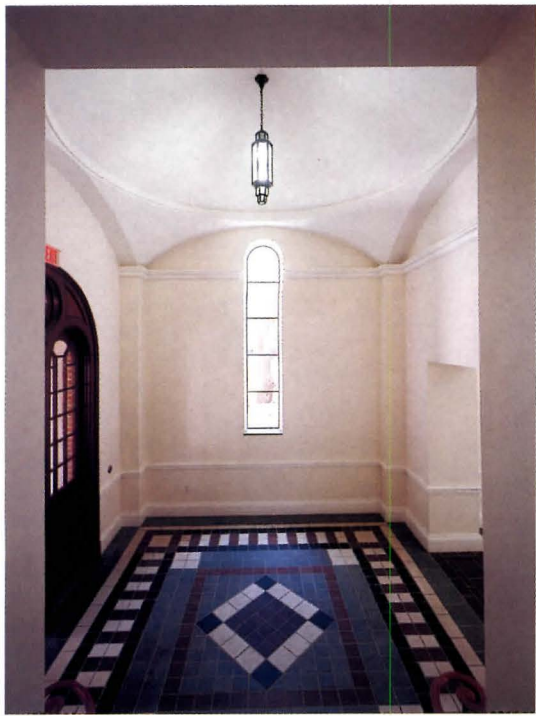
Discounting such anachronisms, and the absence of a hundred years' patina, what Greenberg has built appears, to my classically untrained eye, convincingly close to what Cram might have done—he's even expanded the repertoire a bit. But the patina is lacking, and the interior anachronisms glare, with an altogether disconcerting effect. The success of Greenberg's archaeological architecture depends largely upon the suspension of chronological disbelief, yet at his humanities building real time keeps flying in and disrupting the reverie. The only solution is to stay outside and wait for the walls to weather.

Eventually, the building's exterior might accrue something of the Byzantine character that Cram's contemporary, the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, upheld in his 1937 apologia, "A Vision": "I think that in early Byzantium, maybe never before or since in recorded history, religious, aesthetic, and practical life were one, that architect and artificers...spoke to the multitude and the few alike," wrote Yeats, who, like Cram and many of their generation, was enthralled by the apparent cultural cohesion of that ancient empire.

Even Yeats knew the center could not hold, and today such visions of aesthetic solidarity are a fantasy. When confronted with contemporary classicism, most architects see a style without substance. But collective memory persists where dogma fails, ensuring that Greenberg's architecture still has an appreciative, if nonprofessional, audience. As recently as 1997, the British historian, John Julius Norwich, could make a fair claim about the name, and image, of Byzantium that reads like a defense of Greenberg's enterprise at Rice: "Even had its Empire never existed, Byzantium would surely have impressed itself upon our minds and memories by the music of its name alone, conjuring up those same visions that it evokes today: visions of gold and malachite and porphyry, of stately and solemn ceremonial, of brocades heavy with rubies and emeralds, of sumptuous mosaics dimly glowing through halls cloudy with incense." It may be just a dream—but then everybody's got to sleep, and they might as well enjoy it. ■



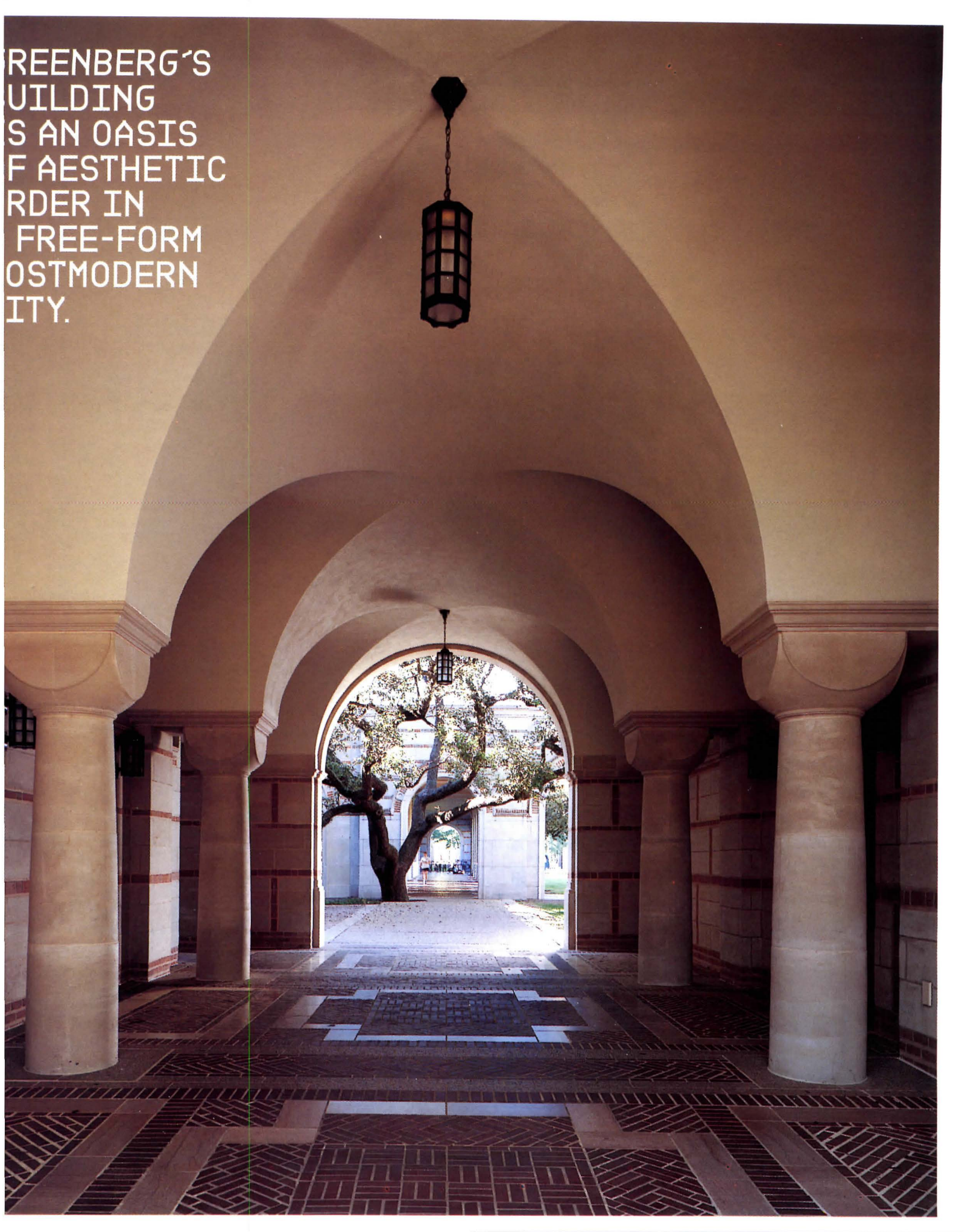
The humanities building's principal interiors, such as the vestibule (below left) maintain a level of detail consistent with the exterior. In a typical classroom, however (below right), acoustical-tile ceilings, fluorescent lights, and A/V equipment don't jibe with Greenberg's century-old aesthetic.





A vaulted passage through the humanities building frames an existing cross-campus axis, enhancing an already animated sequence that alternates rhythmically between open and covered, light and dark.

GREENBERG'S
BUILDING
IS AN OASIS
OF AESTHETIC
ORDER IN
FREE-FORM
POSTMODERN
CITY.



A BAS POSTMODERNISM, OF COURSE

AN ESSAY BY ROBERT VENTURI

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN SCHOELLER

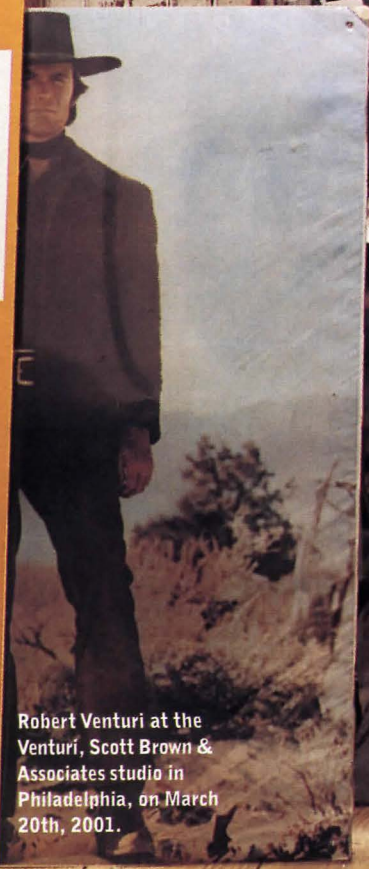
I am not now and never have been a postmodernist and I unequivocally disavow fatherhood of this architectural movement. The reaction against it by the architectural and critical establishment in the early 1990s I can understand; however I disagree with Neomod, the modern-revival or modern-dramatique style that has replaced it.

I first heard the term “postmodernism” in the late 1940s when I was a student at Princeton. Its author was said to be my professor, Jean Labatut, and/or Walter Gropius. I rather liked the sound of it but hardly thought about it again, although I did mention it once while talking to Robert Stern in the 1960s. Soon after that Philip Johnson took it up.

There was no promotion of postmodernism in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*,

published in 1966, but ironically, accusations abound that that book started it. A lack of any kind of prescription in *Complexity and Contradiction* is noted by Alan Chimacoff and Alan Plattus in their September 1983 essay in *Architectural Record*:

...Venturi’s book challenged, in certain significant ways, the entire tradition of architectural theory since the Renaissance. From Alberti and the Quattrocento rediscovery of Vitruvius on, the principal thrust of the theoretical enterprise, with a few isolated exceptions, has been normative—concerned with the establishment and polemical propagation of rules, or systems thereof, according to which the “right” kind of architecture could be built, taught, and, of course, understood. Venturi, however, was not concerned with the substitution of one set of rules for another but rather sought to question, and even to undermine, the uncritical acceptance of any supposedly universal system of rules and the purity of style or taste they supported.



Robert Venturi at the
Venturi, Scott Brown &
Associates studio in
Philadelphia, on March
20th, 2001.

THE ISSUE HERE IS THE FUNDAMENTAL IN ARCHITECTURE.

The revivalism characteristic of postmodernism cannot, in my view, be derived from *Complexity and Contradiction*. Such an interpretation would constitute a profound misunderstanding of my ideas. The book did not “give architects license to draw once again on the historical styles,” as Herbert Muschamp asserted in a 1997 *New York Times* article. *Complexity and Contradiction* employed a well-established method of analysis, the comparative method, using architectural analogy and comparison, not as sources for architectural vocabularies but as methods for understanding and clarification—just as Sigfried Giedion did not refer to the spatial characteristics of baroque architecture in order to promote it as a style. I feel it helps to know where you’ve been in order to know where you are and to learn how to evolve or revolt as you progress as an architect. But such references to history seem to create fear among architects and critics educated in our era.

A further irony: Postmodernism, as a style involving historical revivalism, was engaged with symbolism in architecture, while *Complexity and Contradiction* was essentially about form in architecture. Our next book, *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972), was about symbolism but it involved impolite, vital commercial iconography—i.e., signage—rather than historical style, as an element of architecture.

A further misunderstanding: Historical ref-

erence in our architecture unambiguously involves reference; it is not intended to convey “maybe the real thing,” nor to cover the whole building form, nor to create overall motific consistency. It does involve representation—representation as explicit ornament, as applied two-dimensional signage—and in the end it deals in iconography rather than style. For example, the front façade of the Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London is not a postmodern-revivalist, historically correct copy of the historical façade beside it: It is a plane, a sign, a very large billboard; it refers manneristically and incorrectly to that other façade and thereby accommodates the context of Trafalgar Square and creates aesthetic tension.

Ultimately our architecture engages mannerism, an architectural approach that accommodates aesthetic ambiguity but also, in our time, creates ambiguity: In our time the critics don’t get it—i.e., mannerism.

The issue here is the fundamental relevance of iconography in architecture—symbolic, graphic, informative, persuasive/didactic iconography that embraces a human dimension that was lost in 20th-century modern architecture and is lost once again in revival modernism where abstract-expressionist form predominates. The unacknowledged industrial symbolism that accompanies modern formalism is as historical now as the

AL RELEVANCE OF ICONOGRAPHY

symbolic classical vocabulary of Renaissance architecture would be now. Everyone except architects and critics knows we are in the Post-industrial Age. Let us learn from the relevant, if shocking, everyday commercial vernacular of now, as the modernists learned from the relevant and, we tend to forget, shocking everyday industrial vernacular vocabulary of the early 20th century. And let us in our Post-industrial Age, in our Electronic Age, our Multi-cultural Age, our Information Age dedicated to communication, acknowledge the relevance of electronic technology for our mannerist-iconographic architecture, where the famous building with the Nasdaq sign incorporated into its façade and Times Square equate with the Doge's Palace with the ornamental façade and St. Mark's Square.

Remember it's not about Space any more, it's about Communication. A bas Space and Structure of then; viva Symbolism and Iconography of now!

Other criticisms of postmodernism that are explicit abound in our later writings, such as my assertion in the June 1982 *Architectural Record*: "The Postmodernist, in supplanting the Modernist, has substituted for the largely irrelevant universal vocabulary of heroic industrialism another largely irrelevant universal vocabulary—that of parvenu Classicism, with its American manifestation, a dash of Deco, and a whiff of Le Doux." More recently, in a

1992 edition of *Lotus International*, Denise Scott Brown has further differentiated our approach: "Contextual borrowings should never deceive; you should know what the real building consists of beneath the skin. For this reason our allusions are representations rather than copies of historical precedents. The deceit is only skin-deep."

Ultimate irony, I promise: At this moment our position is not so much misunderstood as unacknowledged—when, ironically, pragmatism is all the rage at MoMA and Columbia. Yet my book, *Iconography and Electronics Upon a Generic Architecture* of 1996, which is essentially about pragmatism, is ignored—and MoMA's new design for its Queens, New York, satellite is like our Basco building of 1976!

And then there's our mannerism!

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Charles Jencks's Continual Revolutions

continued from page 95

distinctive form to "a nun's cowl, a monk's hood, a ship's prow, praying hands." Setting off on a game of "Hunt the Symbol," as he calls it, Jencks identifies with "a certain surety" the "formal similarities behind different symbols." Le Corbusier's *Ubu* sculptures, fractal geometry, and anthropomorphism (ear-like forms) generated the plan and shape of Ronchamp, Jencks asserts, among other metaphorical readings.

As we know, with raconteurs much of the story is in the telling. A recurrent theme favored by Jencks in his repeat performances on Corb is the supposed relationship between the architect's sex life and his architecture. The chapters "Jeanneret Discovers Sex in a Pot," "The Primitive and the Sexual," and "Josephine [Baker]—Goddess of Dance," as well as long discussions of Le Corbusier's purported affairs with Marguerite Tjader-Harris and Minnette De Silva take us into armchair psychology and moral speculation that can only increase the popularity of this book. Jencks has always supported the notion that female shapes in Corb's paintings could be correlated with aspects of his urban-planning projects for Rio and Algiers. The reader is offered further "evidence" of Corb's sexual obsessions (big hips), voyeurism (sketching women cavorting in brothels), in addition to extramarital affairs, but these will have little impact on our overall long-term assessment of Corb's architecture.

On the subject of Chandigarh, however, (the city in India designed by Le Corbusier) Jencks makes insightful remarks. Invited to Chandigarh in 1999 to participate in a symposium commemorating the city's 50th anniversary, he had the opportunity to learn a great deal—especially from the Indians, but also from other foreigners. In opening his remarks to the assembly of "survivors of modernism," and "speaking as a postmodernist," Jencks asked, "What would Le Corbusier do today for Chandigarh as a city?" Almost lost in ethereal discussions about solar rituals and transcendentalism was a proposal

that polarized opinion: to re-urbanize and densify Chandigarh, beginning with the esplanade of the capitol. While it is pure speculation whether or not Corb would accept this kind of growth, Jencks does well to raise the issue of this city and other planned modern cities within what he calls an ecology of succession: layers of growth that permit conservation, but also accept change.

What is disturbing in Jencks's approach is his ignorance, or purposeful omission, of some of the very best Corb scholarship of the last 25 years, including work by Manfredo Tafuri, Bruno Reichlin, Jacques Lucan, Giuliano Gresleri, as well as Alan Colquhoun and Kenneth Frampton. This



Cooling tower "cap" of Chandigarh, with symbols of summer and winter sun.

seems to point at the deep gulf that separates Jencks's particular genre of interpretation from that of many of his colleagues. Nonetheless he modestly admits, "One is bound to be wrong, or at least too limited, in any attempt to fix his essential contribution. The interpretations that are usually made are either contradicted by Le Corbusier's supremely dialectical development, or they pale beside the creative wealth of his output." As biography, *Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture* provides highly readable, entertaining speculation about the life and nature of a "normal genius." ■

Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture, by Charles Jencks (Monacelli Press)

Brian Brace Taylor is professor at Ecole d'Architecture Paris-Belleville and at the School of Architecture of NYIT. He is a former editor of Architecture d'Aujourd'hui and MIMAR. He has written widely on Le Corbusier, and was a curator of drawings at the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris in the early 1970s.

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Megachurches

continued from page 91

ing arts center out there." The demand for media is so great that a magazine, *Technologies for Worship*, exists just to keep churches up-to-date on the latest audio/visual advancements.

"New buildings used to be 90 percent design and 10 percent infrastructure," says architect Bill Brown, whose Colorado Springs, Colorado, office specializes in architecture and planning for churches. "Modern evangelical church-building is now 40 to 60 percent infrastructure. It's more about quantity than quality—steel studs, drywall, and then lots of electronics and audio and video capability."

It should follow that the new scale and function of these evangelical churches would open doors to a wider range of architects. While sensitivity to matters of faith is essential, even "high church" denominations like Catholics, Methodists, and Episcopalians increasingly employ architects who are not of the church's religion. "The changes emerging out of Vatican II [a Catholic summit from 1962 to 1965 which rethought church practices] meant we all started out on an even playing field," says Bloomfield Hills, Michigan architect Jack Brown, whose firm, Brown-Teefey, has worked on dozens of churches.

But where megachurches are concerned, specialists rule. And within that group of specialists, all-in-one design-build firms like American Church Builders, Myler, and Goodman Church Buildings best appease the budget anxiety and inexperience of the market. Denominations with extensive building histories like the Lutherans, Episcopalians, or Catholics have veteran dioceses that oversee the financial commitments of several congregations. Large evangelical churches, by contrast, generally have local governance—typically a single highly charismatic pastor. "A church usually rebuilds or renovates only about once a generation," explains Bill Brown, "but the governance of evangelical churches tends to roll over about every five to seven years, so by definition these churches are always first-time clients. That means they often choose an all-in-one company."

These all-in-one church-builders do everything from fundraising to construction, and although they usually employ an in-house architect, they tend to rely heavily on standardization to bring costs down. "Steel studs, drywall—none of this has to be custom-fitted. We often adapt the simplicity of a box, where all the structural components are standardized," explains Robinson. American Church Builders is currently designing Atlanta, Georgia's *New Birth Convocation Center*, which, when not hosting professional sports events, will seat 40,000 worshippers—almost twice the capacity of Madison Square Garden.

Standardization threatens lively, lasting religious architecture: Through the Web site ChurchConstruction.com, for instance, churches can purchase catalogued church blueprints, according to the size of the congregation and the budget of the church. Miller mentions an all-in-one church-building company that has plagued his career: "We've gone back and demolished or renovated their buildings for years," he says. "They'd throw some-



The church's ministries require fully developed in-house facilities. Drug and alcohol treatment, educational ministries, and employment counseling use extensive classrooms (top), and the activities ministry features a state-of-the-art fitness center (above).

thing up for a first-time congregation, and sure, it met the needs of that church, but 20 years later the doors would fall off."

Worshippers, architects, and design consultants caution that this focus on the functional attributes of contemporary church design must be reconciled with the need to provide holy space for worship. "The most important part of a church complex is the sanctuary," says Duncan Stroik, editor of the magazine *Sacred Architecture* and associate professor at the Notre Dame School of Architecture. When the vast sizes and broad array of services consume the attention of the design, "the church becomes just a country club," says Stroik.

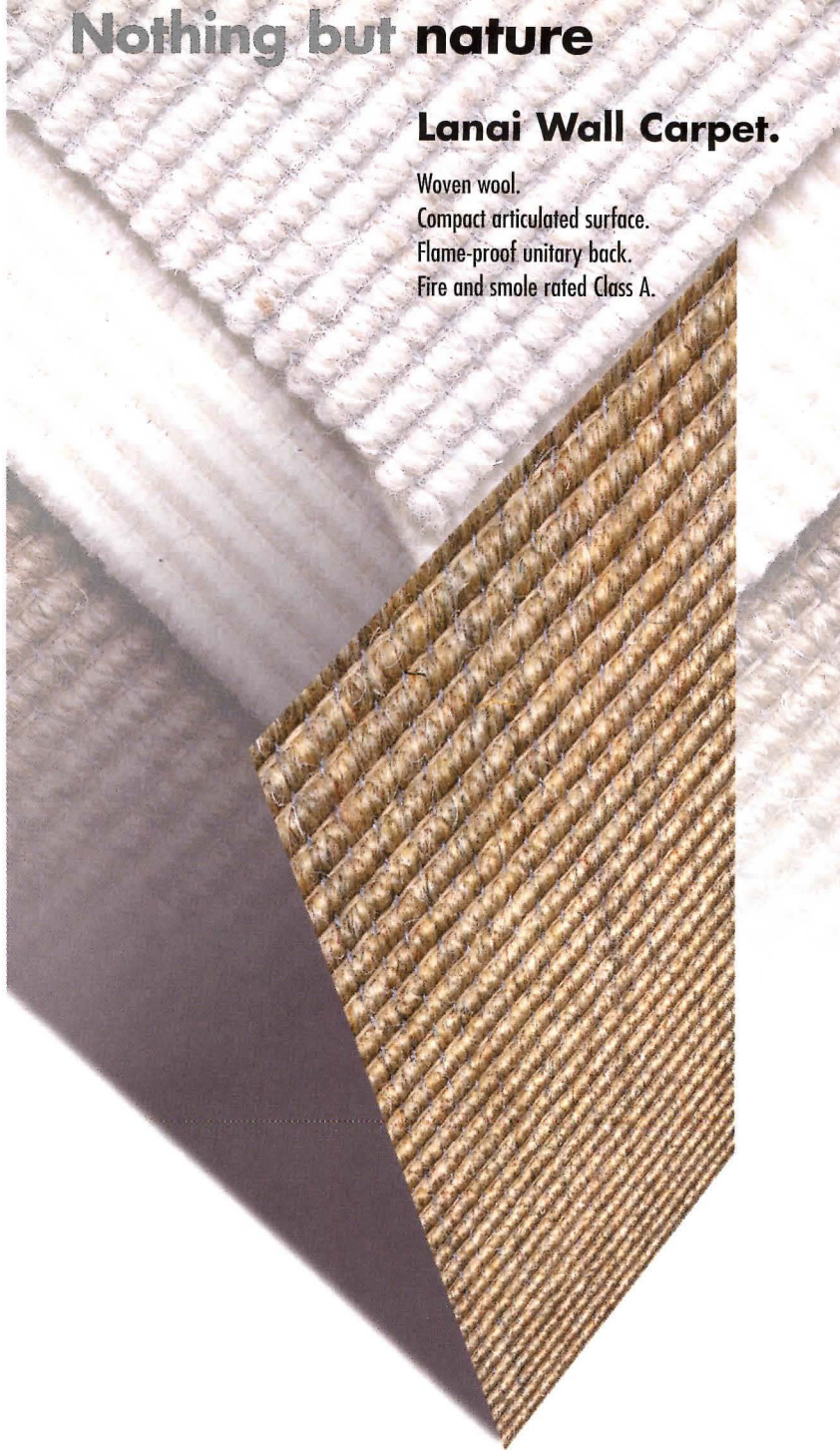
Ultimately, each church must respond to the history of the congregation, and the time and place in which it is being built. This is as much a critique of obdurate *traditionalism* as it is a caution against the current trend of standardization. "Architects who want to just pick up a traditional form of architecture from another age, country, and time, and plop it down in the middle of Kansas are missing the point," says Richard Vosko, a liturgical design consultant and Catholic priest. The design process is an opportunity for religious leaders, congregations, and architects to all challenge their assumptions. And if it helps a community come together in faith, it may well mean replacing vaulted ceilings with video screens and chapels with fitness centers. ■

Mathew Comfort is a recent graduate of Union Theological Seminary. This is his first article for the magazine.

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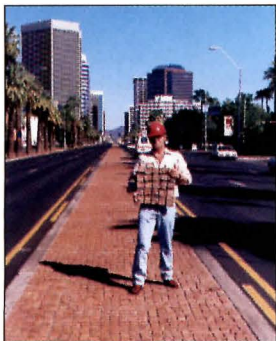
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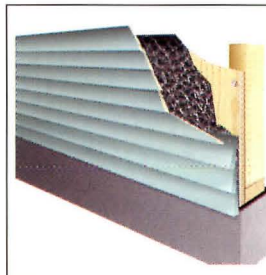
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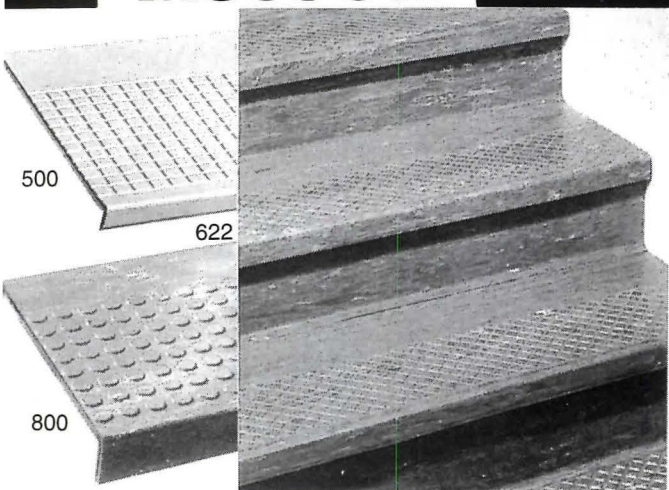
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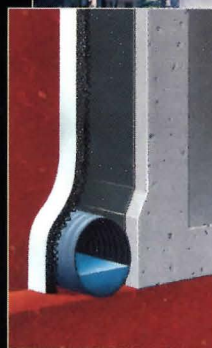
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Stern's 1984 dining pavilion, itself an addition to an earlier modernist structure, will come down to make room for a larger addition.

Southern Discomfort

Andres Duany cries foul over the demolition of a Robert Stern–designed dining hall at the University of Virginia.

Intellectual hostility is being played out at the University of Virginia, one of those places that was chartered to provide a common ground of ideas, architectural ones included. The victim this time is a refectory designed by Robert A.M. Stern—Observatory Hill Dining Hall—barely 20 years old, slated for demolition and replacement by a larger building.

The prospective destruction of such a building is not unusual. What is unprecedented is the utter absence of protest, for this is not a trivial project. In its day it was recognized as an important proposition: It was the first classical building in half a century to be built on Thomas Jefferson's classical campus. Furthermore, it is not a copybook design, but one that stretches the classical language to an extent that Jefferson could not have imagined but would likely have approved.

And what of the architect? Robert Stern is no mere initiate. He is a formidable figure: In all his many endeavors—design, writing, education—Stern is blessed by that rarest of attributes, an open mind. His buildings offer an astonishing range, either contextual or appropriate to the task. (For this, apparently, he is not considered serious by those who presume to pass judgment.) Today, the proposition of a flexible, contextual architecture is passé. The hegemony belongs to the monomaniacal genius.

Does anyone remember that for a time Stern was perhaps the most radical architect in America? One can date this apotheosis with precision to the April 1975 issue of *Progressive Architecture*, where the Lang House

appeared on the cover as a stunningly clear vision of postmodernism.

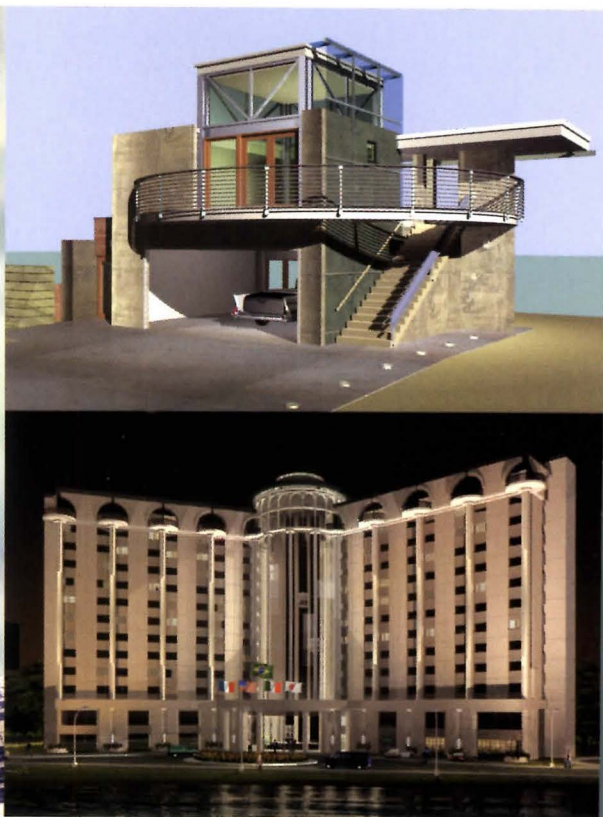
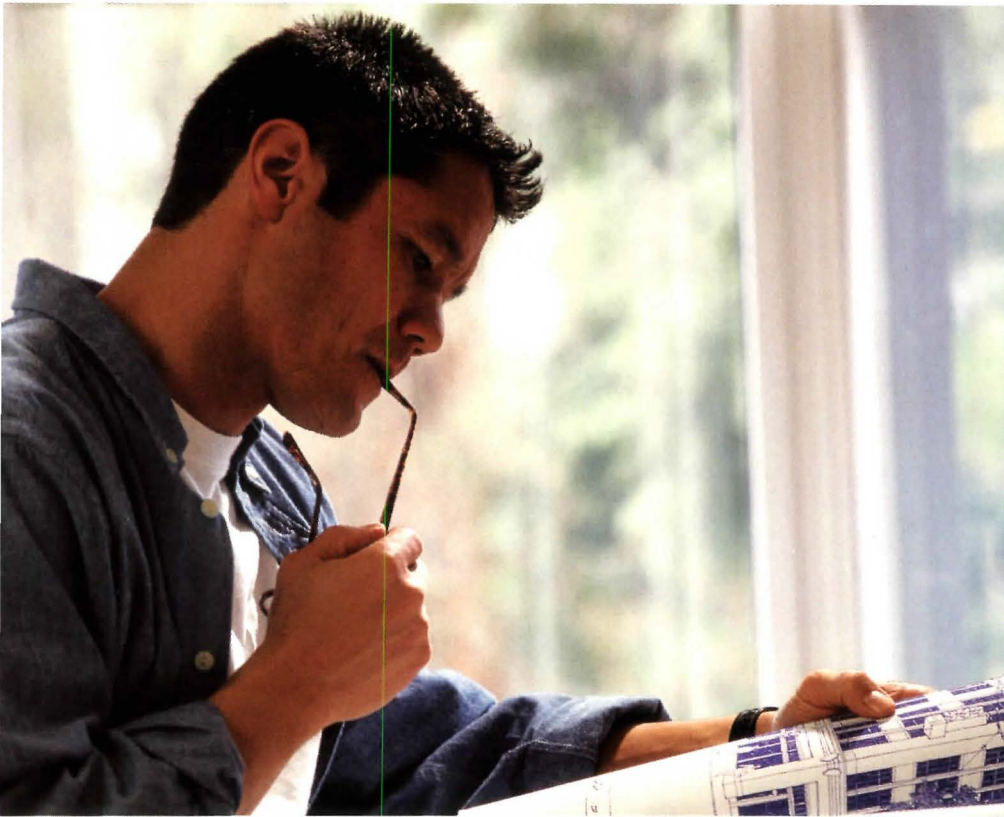
Postmodernism was not, as it is idiotically explained today, an attempt to rehabilitate the reputation of nostalgia, but a campaign to expand the formal repertoire of architecture, not excluding that of modernism. The Lang House and the rest of Stern's work of that time stood in perfect equipoise, open to all possibilities. What remains from this period is an expanded field of ideas that all architects would be enjoying were it not for the newly rampant bigotry of ideology.

Stern is now in the desert, as Paul Rudolph and Charles Moore were before him. These brilliant architects, at the peak of their powers, are brought down by the insufferable fashion industry that architecture has become, as represented by this magazine and its sister periodicals.

The protest that I hereby register is not directed to the functionaries at the University of Virginia, who are, by their lights, only behaving rationally. It is directed against the shortsightedness of Stern's presumed colleagues, whose own buildings are vulnerable to oblivion, and, one day, to demolition. This article is unlikely to move the UVA administration, but it is as important to have fought against this building's destruction as it is to win its reprieve. ■

Andres Duany is principal of Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company in Miami, Florida. He is a cofounder of the Congress for New Urbanism.

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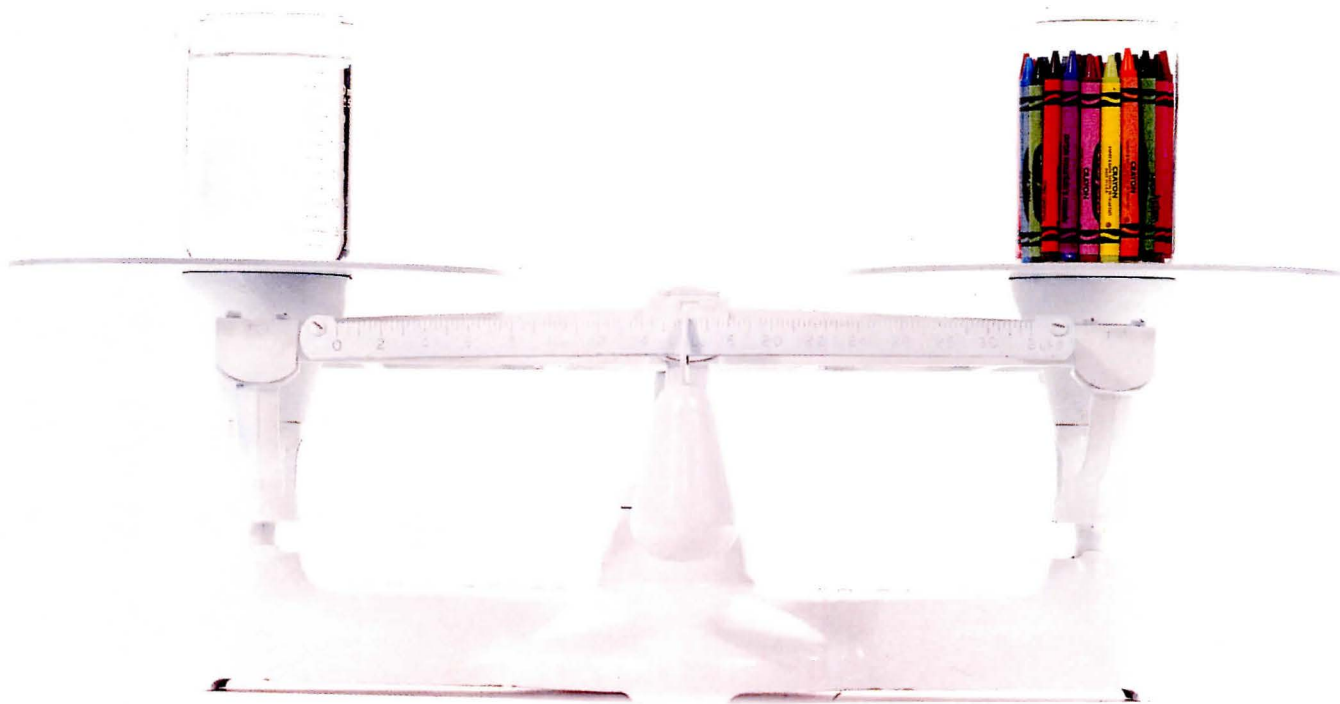


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