

# ARCADE

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INTERNATIONAL ISSUE

December 1983/January 1984



July 19, 1983. Fourth Anniversary Celebration of the Triumph.

Photo by Kate Thompson.

In the spirit of the armchair escapist, ARCADE has devoted this issue to stories from Nicaragua, one written by a member of CANTO (Cultural Workers and Artists for Nicaragua Today), and the other an interview with David Bloom by the founder of CANTO.

In July of this year, six artists and designers from Seattle visited Nicaragua to attend a conference on Central America hosted by the Association of Sandinista Cultural Workers (ASTC). Upon their return, they formed the group CANTO in order to build a popular culture in this country and promote social change.



Ann Hirschi, an architectural designer from Seattle and CANTO member, tells this story of her visit to Nicaragua and encounter with two Nicaraguan architects.

Alejandro comes out of the lobby of the Hotel Ticomo, and he's grinning. He has finally made contact with one of his compañeros in the ASTC (Association of Sandinista Cultural Workers), and I'm going to get a chance to talk with a Nicaraguan architect.

We hitch a ride with Mario who, with Alejandro, is one of the many Nicaraguan cultural workers who has been helping with our conference (see related story). He careens down the narrow dirt road that separates the intricately landscaped cottages of this hotel from the main drag that will take us into Managua. Mario has a copy of his recently published book of poems on the dashboard. When I ask if he has any extra copies for sale, he shakes his head. Alejan-

dro explains that Mario is one of the hottest young poets in the country and that his book has sold out. Alejandro, too, has published both a book of poetry and one of short stories, although he is a lawyer by training and a printer by trade. My impressions tell me that these two young men are accomplished but not necessarily unusual.

**There is a flowering underway in every art discipline.**

Nicaragua is known throughout Latin America as a nation of poets. Since its establishment four years ago after the Triumph of the Popular Revolution, the Nicaraguan Government of National Reconstruction has made it a policy to encourage developing writers with available and affordable publishing. Poetry readings are common in every community and at political events as well. In fact, there is a flowering underway in every art discipline, and the popular cultural movement is considered an important gauge of the feelings of the Nicaraguan people and thus is carefully fostered.

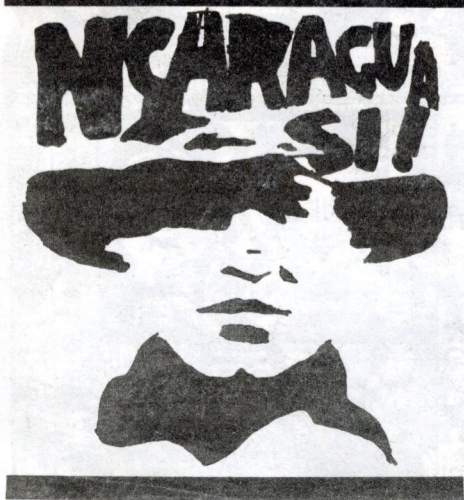
Mario speeds up as we hit a long straight stretch of road. Soon we are in the middle of the vast, open Plaza July 19th, named for the date on which their country was liberated from the despised dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. It also was the site of

Pope John Paul's visit to Nicaragua. It has a grandstand backed by tremendous billboards with huge portraits of Sandinista heroes and martyrs.

We left the Plaza and meandered through Parque las Palmas, a middle-class residential section of Managua, and soon arrived at the house of David and Carla Ocón. David is an architect who works for the Ministry of Housing. After sitting down with David and Carla with the obligatory Flor de Caña (Nicaraguans are proud of their rum, and rightly so), I was pleased and surprised to find out that Carla, too, is an architect! David and Carla are a handsome couple with two young children. They live in a single-story masonry house that abuts similar ones on each side and sports a small fenced front yard/patio as well as a tiny courtyard, off of which is David's painting studio.

David explains that many of the young architects work in various departments of the Government now, helping their country engage in full-scale reconstruction. The old ones, he smiles, for the most part have fled to Miami after the Triumph. The city of Managua, which was totally demolished by a massive earthquake in 1972, was left in various stages of decay while Somoza pocketed vast quantities of international aid that flowed into the country.

... continued on page four.



Stenciled Sandino motif.



# ARCADE

December/January Issue:

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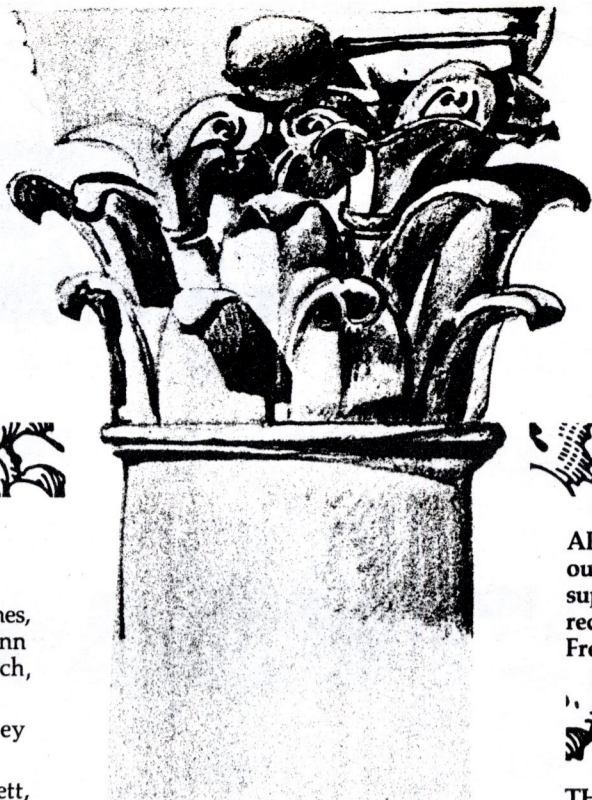




## ARTECH

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**"HOW FAR SHOULD THE CITY GO TO legislate design?"** The Seattle AIA announced at a public presentation on November 3 that the proposed draft downtown plan has gone too far. Computerized drawings of prototypical projects in the retail core, office core, and Denny Regrade illustrated criticisms of the Plan's effects. In the retail core, Dorm Anderson predicted, the 400-foot height limit would combine with developers' needs to maximize development in a plethora of "short, fat buildings almost without architectural input." For the office core, Jerry Ernst described a need for "measurable performance standards" rather than the proposed "prescriptive standards." Because of the proposed bonuses which would reward the mix of theaters with office projects, the audience was warned that the summary effect might be only a shift "from too many dead plazas to too many dead theaters." Drawings of massive residential towers flanking the sidewalk illustrated George Robertson's remark that "it will be possible to do bad design within these envelopes — the envelopes won't effect whether the design is good." Robertson's group concluded that the Plan will reduce incentives to produce housing in the Regrade.



Cityscape by Carl Smool, artist, and CANTO member.

The architects were disgruntled by their analysis: their creativity in future projects would be limited as would the volume of their work. According to a draft position paper, "The proposed planning policies . . . may in fact create a more static environment and place such severe limitations on the future development of Downtown Seattle so as to encourage major development to locate elsewhere, such as Bellevue." (They seemed unaware of Bellevue's recent efforts to implement similar policies.)

An Allied Arts representative asked the AIA to "remember where we came from . . . developers (have been) free to build anti-social buildings. Perhaps we can't legislate against all bad design, but we can legislate against really anti-social design." Mark Hinshaw, Bellevue planner, called the AIA's desire for flexibility and predictability "a classic dilemma . . . It's not possible to have the best of both worlds. You can't have 'measurable performance standards' without negotiation."

The architects repeatedly expressed their interests in "doing a good building." On the basis of their presentation, one would have to guess that a good building is one which is visibly different from its neighbors; no further definition was offered. The idea of building a good city was less well-explored. Perhaps, as one member of the audience suggested, the Plan's drafters "want the similarity" among buildings, not unlike Paris, where consistency establishes a grandness and acts as a canvas for the delineation of small-scale individual differences.

# COLUMN

ARCADE wishes a Happy Holiday to all our readers and thanks you all for your support through 1983. Special thanks for recent cash contributions from NBBJ and Fred Bassetti!

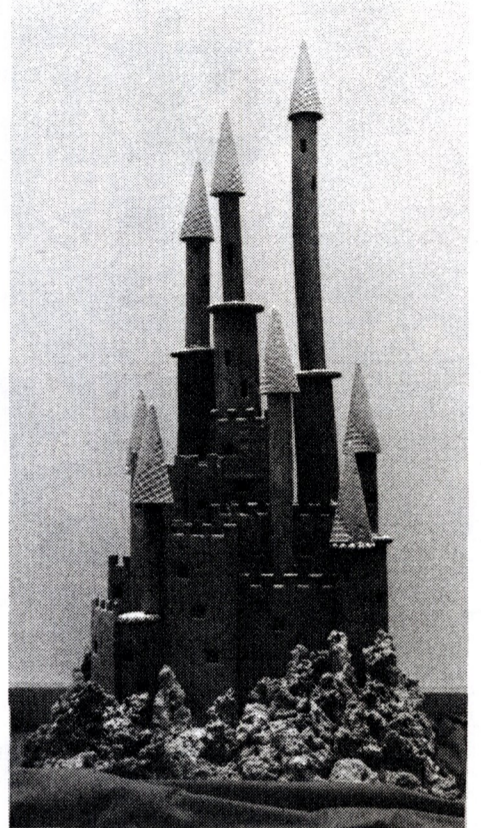


**THE ALLIED ARTS COALITION** to save the Cobb Building is coordinating an economic evaluation of the Cobb and would welcome those with property development and management experience to help assess another report by the UW Regents. Those interested should call 624-0432.

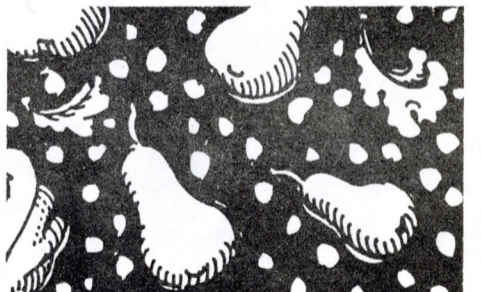


Robert Irwin installation. Photo by Mark Ashley.

**READERS OF SEATTLE'S Daily Journal of Commerce** were treated to two doses of heatedly articulated design philosophy by two local landscape architects who were aroused by the Robert Irwin installation at the Public Safety Building at Fourth and Cherry. Immediately above the headline, "Design Awareness Month," in a late September issue of the paper, was a letter from Richard Carothers, proclaiming, "In my opinion 'Prison Plaza' is a gross miscarriage of art, architecture, and landscape architecture — let alone urban design and, be it so bold, reasonably good taste." He concluded, "What really saddens and maddens me is that there are many architects, landscape architects, artists, urban designers, etc., etc., who could and would have done a far superior job for Seattle — AND, they all live in Seattle!!!" Little more than a week later, Marcha Johnson came to the defense of, if not the work itself, at least the process by which it came to be. "For a landscape architect to imply that artists should not compete with the design professions for public open space work is to narrowly define the nature and function of public places from an ill-concealed self-serving viewpoint . . . Exposure to a variety of aesthetics, including the challenge of a confrontational, imperfectly understood avant-garde, enriches our interested and sophisticated public and contributes to an image of Seattle as a leader in support of public arts." She concluded, "I applaud the involvement of artists with viewpoints and objectives that contrast and even conflict with those of the design professions in creating spaces like the Public Safety Plaza sculpture. This new work adds to the essential variety of the cityscape and has stimulated a kind of broadening, passionate controversy that the present Northwest design community desperately lacks."



'Tis the Season to put your architectural talents to work in the kitchen! This gingerbread house is typical of the entries in the annual Seattle Art Museum Gingerbread House Display and Raffle, and seems to exhibit some Rationalist motifs, now so popular everywhere. However, Expressionism will never die, as evidenced by the creepy-crawlies at the base.



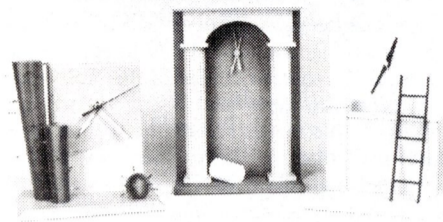
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# OF MANY ORDERS

Rebecca Barnes and Caroline Petrich



Clocks by Heather Ramsay available at Bizart. Photo by Randy Eriksen.

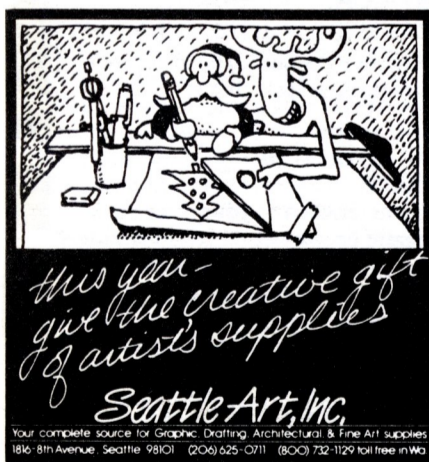
FOR THE DESIGN PROFESSIONAL, Christmas shopping can be an extension of one's art. One is BIZART: "The store that puts business before art and still has fun" and "The store that puts art before business and still makes money." At 1st and Lenora. "Why be bi-coastal when you can buy local?"

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL Architects for Social Responsibility is being formed in Seattle. The basic philosophy of the group is to extend architectural professional ethics to include the premise that nuclear weapons pose an intolerable threat to our nation's economic health and ultimately to world survival.

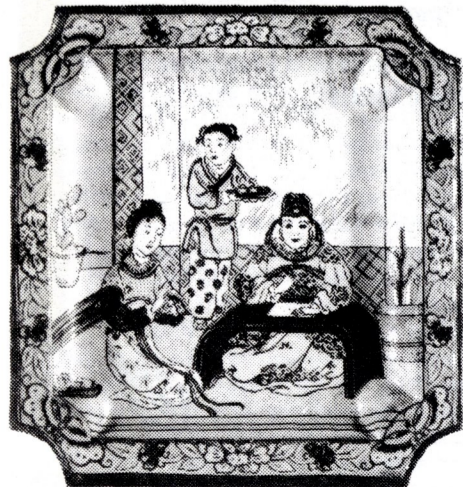
Acting on that premise, the local group has sponsored several recent projects and hosted several town meetings during November for Target Seattle/Soviet Realities. Future goals are to promote creative educational and political activities in the architectural community and related fields.

The business of architecture has suffered deeply from the long-term emphasis on arms race economics. Architects for Social Responsibility will be working toward alternatives to high deficit military spending, high interest rates, and inflation. Energies will be coordinated with other professional groups to influence public policy, to reach out to fellow architects in the Soviet Union, and to help clarify issues for further action.

For more information, call Gary Sortun at 624-9100.

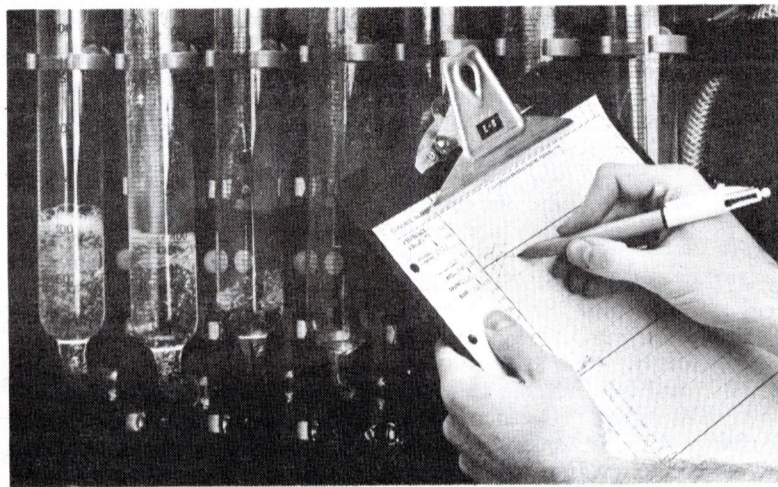


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SEATTLE'S OWN HORATIO ALGER story: Martin Selig, German refugee, whose first real estate transaction was a \$2500 down payment on a small U. District building when he was an undergraduate at U.W., was just named AGC's 1983 Construction Person of the Year. No wonder. Columbia Center's 76 stories will testify, in short order, to this man's construction vision. According to the AGC news release, "Selig, in excepting (sic) the award, praised the construction industry in the Pacific Northwest and the U.S. system of free enterprise which made it all possible." Nothing was said of the fact that all the steel used to structure this giant was purchased from South Korea.

A SILVER LINING HAS BEEN FOUND in the cloud of the slowed construction industry by the Portland Chapter AIA. Their recent awards program was redesigned to reflect the realities of architectural practice. There were two categories of built projects (construction costs under \$200,000, and above), as well as a brand new unbuilt project category. Most eye-catching among the winners by virtue of the questions raised by its composition is SOM's "Orbanco Building Gazebo" pictured here, a memorial of sorts to a former work of architecture, which consists of fragments of the past framing the entry to an underground restaurant.



Orbanco Building Gazebo, Portland. SOM, Architects.

### DEAR ARCADE,

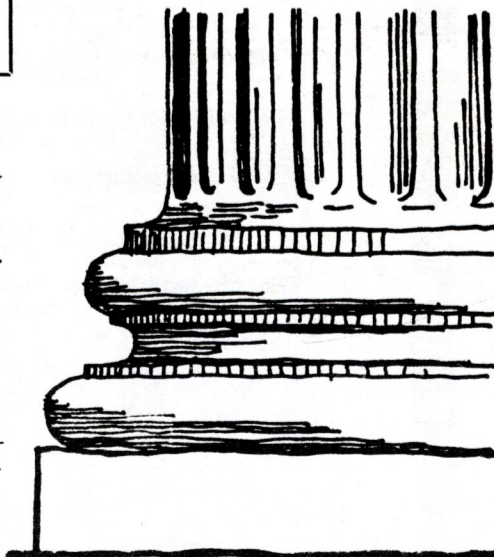
As a subscriber to your magazine, and as an artist - I look forward to your calendar of art activities and events. I was, therefore, extremely disappointed to see that my November 10 Show at Linda Farris was not listed! I did enjoy Susan Boyle's article which talked about our house (Mark Millett).

I don't know what happened — whether it's a paid listing or what — just bringing it to your attention — unless it is an oversight on Linda's part.

Sherry Markovitz

### ARCADE RESPONDS:

The material which appears on the calendar is compiled from two sources: our mail, and from the collections (solicited and unsolicited) of a small loyal group called "calendar contributors" who have "beats." Because of our lead time — approximately three weeks — and our bimonthly format, timing of items can be a problem. (Ever notice that the calendar is usually dense with information at the top, and thin at the bottom, or "dark" and "light"?) We do, occasionally, make mistakes which cause us to lose an item somewhere between the mailbox and the printer. As it happened, we missed an interesting show, and we are sorry. Now, a suggestion: anyone who has a special interest in having a calendar item printed, address it directly to "Calendar Editor" or call it in to the appropriate beat. (See vital statistics, this page.) We can't guarantee to print an item, but we try to, and we do it for free.







# ARCHITECTURA

Even today Managua is a city with no "There" there. One is struck by the wide open spaces that follow the faultline, areas that were previously a dense urban fabric. There are no plans to rebuild again on the highly sensitive faultline, and David explains that the open spaces are being developed as public parks. As such, there is no downtown, and most of the new housing in the capital city is occurring in decentralized barrios surrounding the city. Concrete skeletal remains of earthquake-damaged buildings are still prominent features — buildings that had obviously never felt the strong embrace of a Dave Walton or a Building Department. The one prominent exception is the Bank of America Building. This single highrise office building was seismically reinforced and resisted the shock.

Regarding building codes in Managua, David remarked that all projects must be approved by the Office of Structural Security and codes in effect now are the inspiration of North American influence — vestiges of the U.S. corporations that played a major role in the Somoza dictatorship and kept a tight grip on the country's resources and labor. David feels strongly that the time is now right for Nicaraguans to develop their own codes. "If regulations are necessary to protect people and property in a capitalistic society, would not the need for codes diminish under socialism, where buildings are built to serve people's needs rather than to create a profit?"

## The mere thought of life without a building department sent shivers down my spine,

but the denseness of the language barrier and the questions raised by his statement was enough to end that particular line of discussion and relegate it to the "to do" list.

Alejandro translates this conversation, although David speaks a little English and some Italian. He studied in Florence a few years ago. My Italian is being eroded with grade-school Spanish to further confuse the situation. I question Carla: "What is it like to be a woman practicing architecture in Nicaragua Libré?" Carla works for the Ministry of Health and is now supervising construction of a major new hospital — one of the many that the Sandinist government has provided in the last four years. Since the Triumph, all medical care is free for every Nicaraguan citizen. She replies that the people who hired her first thought that she would have trouble supervising the predominately male construction workers, but that was not the case. As traditional relationships between men and women change with the rebuilding of this country, so is the notorious machismo breaking down. It does, of course, take time. Carla tells me that there are many more women practicing architecture now than before 1979 and that it will soon be evenly divided between the sexes.

continued from front page . . .

In what other ways do they show their support for the Government that was won at such a high cost? David and Alejandro have recently returned from an ASTC-sponsored cultural brigade which toured the Front. They traveled along the Honduran border and entertained the troops, USO style, between attacks from the Somocistas or "contras," as they are also called. David made portraits of the heroes and the martyrs of this "undeclared war" and painted murals in the small border towns. Alejandro read and wrote poetry with the soldiers. Theater troops also accompanied them.

At the end of my visit with Carla and David, they each shook my hand and kissed my cheek. All of the Nicaraguans I met were friendly without exception. There is a Sandinista hymn, one of the most popular songs in the country that is heard everywhere, with a line that states bluntly, "Los hijos de Sandino, luchamos contra el yanqui, enemigo de la humanidad" (Children of Sandino, we struggle against the Yankee, the enemy of humanity).

## The people always make the distinction between the government of the U.S. and the people of the U.S.

Through the eyes of the people of Nicaragua, I at last have a vivid and shocking understanding of the term "imperialism."

It is no longer simply jargon, but stands as a concrete reality in the lives of these people. This has been true since the Marines first occupied Nicaragua in 1909 to ensure that it would be safe for United States "interests."

My emotions were wrung during my visit to this beautiful country. To know that my government could be responsible for such callous denial of the most basic human dignities for which the Nicaraguans are struggling, against such odds and with such determination, is almost too much to comprehend. The word that kept coming to my mind was "inspiration." It is inspiring to see the extent to which a truly democratic society can have meaning for its citizens. This meaning in their lives was evident in everything we saw from the determination to defend to the death their borders, to celebrating the Fourth Anniversary of the Revolution.

It was often repeated by Nicaraguans we met, of all classes, that in the event of a U.S. invasion and overthrow of their country, the Yankees would be left only with a country of ashes. Herein lies the superior strength of the Nicaraguan people who, in their unwavering commitment to their hard-won freedom state unequivocally, "Patria Libré o Morir!" — Free Homeland or Death.

Ann Hirschi

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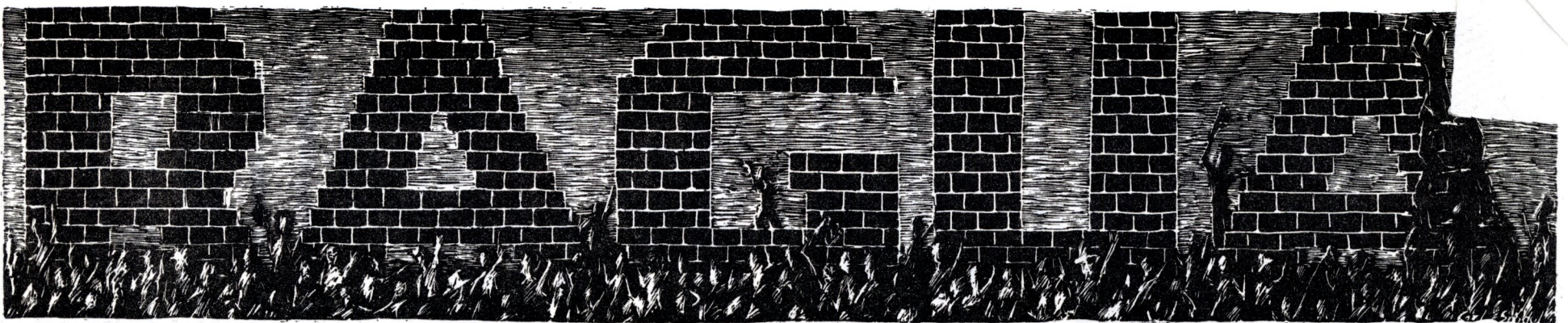
Second Choice \_\_\_\_\_

# The Empty Space

Just off Broadway at 919 East Pike.







Drawing by Carl Smool.

# CANTO: AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID BLOOM

David Bloom is the Urban Minister of the Church Council of Greater Seattle. He recently returned from a trip to Nicaragua, sponsored by the Seattle-Managua Sister City Association. Jill Medvedow, founding member of CANTO (Cultural Workers and Artists for Nicaragua Today), interviewed him shortly after his return.

Could you talk a little about the history of Nicaragua and characterize some of the social gains that the Sandinista Government has made?

**D.B.:** Nicaragua was ruled by a series of dictators from the Somoza family from the early 1930s until 1979. The first Somoza was put into power by the United States, which had occupied Nicaragua in the early part of this century. Under the Somozas, little if anything was done for the people. They were kept illiterate, their health deteriorated, and there was literally no sanitation, particularly in the rural areas. 60% of Managua's neighborhoods were without electricity, running water, sewers, curbs, gutters, or paved streets.

**This is the capital city of a Central American country!**

The Sandinistas appear to have a goal of rebuilding the infrastructure of their country and that means providing the basic services that any nation, rural community, or city needs in order to enjoy some decent quality of life. They are undertaking a number of ambitious projects. The one that is most well known in the United States occurred almost immediately after the revolution. This was the literacy campaign where thousands of volunteers spread around the countryside and taught the peasants to read and write. The literacy rate has increased noticeably over a very short period of time.

The development of health clinics in rural areas has also been a priority of the Sandinistas. Infant mortality has dropped from 25% to 2% in just a few years because of the efforts in terms of providing health and sanitation. These are important strides. In barrio after barrio in Managua we saw evidence of new sewer lines being put in, curbs being placed for the first time in neighborhoods, streets being paved, and running water being put in the houses. We talked with a woman in the Calderone barrio in Managua where some of this work has occurred and she was very happy that this has been happening, "because," she says, "now my daughter doesn't need to walk five blocks to the community water supply just so that we can have water for cooking and cleaning in our house."

**JM:** How has the earthquake in Managua affected the planning there?

**DB:** The earthquake in Managua in 1972 had a devastating effect on the central area of the city. It leveled block upon block of houses, stores, and office buildings. If you travel in what was downtown Managua before the earthquake, it's amazing. It's just a huge open space with nothing but tall grass growing where the buildings used to be. About 20,000 people lost their lives in Managua alone as their houses literally fell on top of them. A few office buildings had to be vacated because they were rendered uninhabitable by the earthquake damage, and you see them as skeletons against the sky, six-eight-ten stories high. The only buildings that were able to survive in downtown were those that were of recent construction that had some seismic controls built into them.

**The tragedy of the earthquake is that the country received many millions of dollars in relief assistance from around the world, and Somoza diverted most of that to his own use.**

Many thousands of Managuans were displaced from the city and forced to live in the outskirts. No attempt was made to rebuild neighborhoods for them so that they could move back, and the result is that those people now have to ride miles on their public transit system in order to get to work. The buses in Managua are overtaxed, overcrowded, wearing out, and dirty. It's another example of the situation they're having to deal with in order to survive from day to day.

**JM:** I noticed when I was in Nicaragua a lot of parks are being rebuilt. This seemed to reflect a certain priority in their rebuilding by the Sandinistas.

**DB:** It's a marvelous thing to see what the Sandinistas' priorities are in terms of their rebuilding. They're not just rebuilding the buildings. One of the real priorities is "people places." Right in the heart of the city, right on top of what had been one of the main boulevards of the city which was named after Roosevelt is a marvelous public open space that covers many blocks. It's on land that was devastated by the earthquake, and since the revolution the Sandinistas have built a beautiful park there, with basketball courts and tennis courts and restaurants and a children's library.

One of the things that the American people are not learning about is the genuine commitment that this revolution has to its children. Understanding the nurturing of children is a basic necessity of any society that thinks of itself as having any kind of a human future.

**It is amazing how much the people there admire the values of our own American revolution and the ideas of people like Thomas Jefferson.**

It isn't the Sandinista revolution that is being betrayed, even though the Americans often accuse the Sandinistas of doing that, but it is the American Revolution that is being betrayed in Central America, and that's the tragedy.

**JM:** It sounds like the decisions on rebuilding and reconstruction had some input from the people. Are they an active part of the governing body? Did you speak to any of the people?

**DB:** There are a number of ministries that are charged with the responsibility of rebuilding their society. There is one ministry, for example, the Junta for the Reconstruction of the City of Managua. We met with the head of that Junta, Samuel Santos, who is responsible for all the programs to rebuild the city. He seems to have a mandate from the government to build houses and parks, provide sewers and sanitation and curbs and gutters in the neighborhoods. He said, "What we are trying to do is develop Managua into a city again," and that's what they are doing.

One of the tragedies of his efforts and the efforts of the government is that because of the harassment from the American government through the counter-revolutionaries and the Honduran Army, they are having to divert their limited resources from the reconstruction of the nation to the

defense of the nation, and our government's role in terms of that harassment is, in my opinion, criminal.

What they need is economic and technical expertise. Nicaragua is having to turn to other nations for aid in these areas, and they are receiving assistance from countries from both the Eastern and Western blocs of nations. They will accept help from anyone who is willing to give it, but they will not accept any strings attached to that aid. "This is our nation; this is our revolution, and we intend to be in control." I think the charges of Nicaragua becoming a Marxist- or Communist-dominated nation are erroneous. Certainly, there are Eastern bloc nations giving technical assistance and possibly military assistance, but at the same time we have refused to provide that assistance. They have had to turn to whomever would give. They have also said that they are not about to trade domination by the U.S. for domination by the Soviet Union. They are intending to be independent.

**"This is our nation; this is our revolution, and we intend to be in control."**

**JM:** In the United States there are various cultural arts: painting, architecture, sculpture. All seem very removed from political decisions or from any significant input into our society. This seems not to be the case in Nicaragua. That seems to be a very significant gain since the revolution.

**DB:** It is very difficult for me to respond to that, except to say that it is clear that the Revolutionary Government has a deep appreciation for the creative instinct of humanity. There is a strong creative streak in the Nicaraguan people that was pretty well suppressed under Somoza, and most of that indigenous artistic expression has been allowed to flourish under the revolution. The result is that art is thriving in the country now.

**JM:** What did you see as the position of the Church in the new Nicaraguan Government?

**DB:** There are a number of Christian people in leadership positions in the Nicaraguan government. There are two priests in the Parliament. There are also priests and Protestant ministers at lower levels in the bureaucracy, so there's a heavy involvement on the part of clergy people in the leadership of the government. I think that's a significant point, and many of those people say that the values of the revolution are consummate with the values of Christianity; that is, that they are particularly concerned about people who are very poor. They are concerned about rebuilding their society, and they are trying to develop a system that is known for its kindness and forgiveness rather than retaliation.

In an official sense, I'd say that there is strong freedom of religion. I talked to people who come from what are known as the Evangelical Churches, primarily the Baptist Churches. I talked to the head of the Nicaraguan Baptist Convention, and he was very outspoken in his support for the Sandinista revolution. He said that the Baptists have no problem practicing their religion under this government. There is conflict between the government and the Catholic Church, and our country is accusing the Sandinistas of religious repression, but I think you need to look at what is actually happening in order to understand this. First, it's important to remember that Nicaragua

sees itself as being in a state of war. They are convinced that the American Government is going to invade their country. So they are in a state of siege. Any time a country is in a state of siege, there is greater control than might be exercised at other times.





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Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

# December

4

**Only 21 more shopping days** till you-know-when. Stop in at Bizart, "the kind of store that makes the words 'impending doom' seem trivial." 105 Stewart St., hours Mon.-Fri. 11-7.

**Seattle Harborfront Development Forum**, 3:30 pm at Seattle Aquarium Auditorium, Pier 59. Contact Susan Heikkala at 543-6640.

**Today is the last day** to see The Frozen Image: Historical Scandinavian Photography, an exhibition that focuses on historical and contemporary photography in Scandinavia. Tacoma Art Museum.

11

**John Cage performs** his music at Cornish Institute with the Cornish New Performance Group tonight in two shows: 6:30 and 8:30. 710 E. Roy St. Admission \$6.50/\$4.50 students.

**John Simon Recent Works**, wood sculpture, paintings, prints, and drawings at the Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, through 1/8.

18

**Opus I Contemporary Music Performance Series** continues at Broadway Performance Hall, Seattle Central Community College, tonight. Call 587-4166 for details.

**Amendments** to the Seattle Land Use Code become effective 11/24. To get your copy of the new improved improvements, contact the DCLU Information Center, 4th Floor Municipal Bldg.

Frank Sinatra, 1915

5

**Comments due** on East Police Station DEIS. **George Nelson**, noted architect/designer/educator/author, will speak at the Conference Center, Design Center Northwest, 7:30 tonight. \$5 admission.

12

**Architects for Social Responsibility** open meeting tonight at AIA Chapter Office, 1911 First Avenue. Reception 7:30, Program 8:00. For more information, 624-9100.

19

**Science Circus**, an eight-day holiday extravaganza of family entertainment with six buildings full of special programs. This year's highlight will be an exciting and educational presentation by animals and trainers from the Olympic Game Farm in Sequim. Pacific Science Center, 12/26 through 1/2. Call 625-9333 for prices.

26



6

**Design Center Northwest** is open two hours later on Tuesday nights (5-7 pm), 5701 6th Ave. S.

**200 Photographs** from the Museum Collection features a range of photographic styles such as documentary and art photography and documents, primarily the work of American photographers. Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Art Museum Pavilion at Seattle Center, 12/8 through 2/5.

**Documents Northwest: The PONCHO Series** — Robert Helm. "Shadow Box Paintings" of mixed media by Eastern Washington artist Robert Helm. Seattle Art Museum Pavilion at Seattle Center, 12/8 through 1/8.

13

Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" was first performed, 1892 (it bombed).

20

Calvert Vaux, co-designer of Central Park, N.Y., with F.L. Olmsted, born, 1824

27

**Peter Eisenman lectures** at San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco, at 8:30 pm. Admission \$3.

7

**European Avant-Garde Film Series** at 120 Kane Hall. Tickets \$4 at the door. Call 324-5880 for details.

**Canadian Architect Michael Kirkland** speaks on "Suburban Monumentality" at Robson Square Media Centre in Vancouver as part of the continuing Alcan Lectures in Architecture.

**John Sloan in Santa Fe**. John Sloan, American artist (1871-1951), is best known for his paintings of New York and its people. Every summer, however, he spent his time in Santa Fe painting regional landscapes. This exhibition features paintings from his Santa Fe period. Opens 12/7, through 12/31 at the Tacoma Art Museum.

14

**European Avant-Garde Film Series** ends tonight. 120 Kane Hall, 7:30. Tickets \$4 at the door.

**Paintings and drawings by Jay Steensma** will be on display at the coffee shop of the Thomas Burke Memorial Museum through 1/14.

**"Unwearable art — or soft sculpture"** — display at Two Bells Tavern, 2313 4th Ave. For awhile.

21

**A panel discussion** on the Art of Collecting and Maintaining Photographs will be held at the Volunteer Park Museum Saturday, 1/21, from 10:30-4:30. Pre-registration is required; \$25 Art Museum members, \$35 nonmembers.

28

**The Society of Architectural Administrators Education Fund** is sponsoring a 10-week course: "Design Discipline/Office Practice Overview." Deadline for registration is 1/18. Call Corliss Perdaems at 682-9720 for registration. The course is

8

**Davidson Galleries** opens their annual Christmas Show tonight, 67 Yesler Way, through 12/31.

**Opening at Linda Farris Gallery** tonight is Marsha Burns' portfolio of 20" x 24" polaroid images. On display through 1/5.

**Gallery Artists present** a group show at Stone Press Gallery, 91 Yesler Way, through 1/26.

**"The Crooked Beak of Heaven,"** a film integrating Edward S. Curtis' 1912 anthropological footage of Northwest Coast Indian tribal rites, with contemporary documentation of the same. The title refers to a particularly spectacular dance of the Kwakiutl tribe. At Volunteer Park Museum, 5:30

15

**Donally/Hayes Bookstore and Gallery** will feature photos by David Melody, through 1/10.

**Film at Volunteer Park Museum:** "Heritage in Cedar: Northwest Coast Indian Woodworking, Past and Present." 6 and 7 pm.

**Film at Volunteer Park Museum:** "Northwest Coast Indians: A Search for the Past." 5:30 and 6:30 pm.

22

Josef Hoffman, founder of the Wiener Werkstätten, born 1870

29

9

**Comments due** on Convention Center DEIS today.

**Focal Point Media Center presents** "Thundercrack," a film John Hartl calls "the most intelligent, the most erotic, and the most enjoyable film of its type ever made." 911 E. Pine St. 8 pm.

**Color Photographs** by Jim Laser will be on display at Design Concern Gallery tonight through 1/14, 1427 Western Avenue. Reception tonight for the artist, 6-9 pm.

16



23

James Gibbs, architect of St. Martin-in-the-fields Church, London, 1682

30

**Fused Glass panels** by Darrellyn Hollowell and Glass Jewelry by Jane Nyhus will be on display at Glass Showcase Gallery, 29840 Eastlake E., through 1/2.

Opening through 20 Feb. "Seattle: The Art of

10

**Also opening this week:** small works by Gallery artists at Hodges/Banks Gallery. Through 12/31. **More erotic films** at Focal Point Media Center, 911 E. Pine, 8 pm.

17

**EATING IS BELIEVING.** That's the title of a new book on Seattle's great inexpensive restaurants, by enterprising Seattle writer/publishers Carol Brown and Scott Glascock. Look for it in your bookstore right after Thanksgiving — just in time for Christmas giving!

24

**Illustrating for the Scientific World**, featuring the work of Charles Wood and Valerie Stout, Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, through 1/29.

**William Merritt Chase Retrospective Exhibition**, a retrospective exhibition of 100 figure paintings, still lifes, and landscapes by turn-of-the-century American artist William Merritt Chase. Organized by the Henry Art Gallery, the exhibition then travels to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, through 1/29. Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington.

31

**Opens December 3.** Public Comments, COCA's second major installation exhibition, features large scale work by Terry Allen, Lauren Ewing, Edward Kienholz and Nancy Reddin Kienholz, Komar and Melamid, Tad Savinar, Peter Shelton.



Christmas Day

Mao Zedong born, 1893

Radio City Music Hall opens, 1932

Through 1/28 at Sacred Circle Gallery of American Indian Art, 2223 4th Ave., Mixed Media Constructions by Edna L. Jackson and Conrad House.

N.X. Panding-Groot, inventor of the stuff of the same name, born, 1822

and Times of Willie Seaweed" at Pacific Science Center. a show of "art about art," rather it is an exhibition of works which are vehicles for the artists' commentaries about real experiences. Located at 2216 Western Avenue, near Blanchard. Hours: 11 am-6 pm, Tuesday-Saturday, 11 am-8 pm, Thursday. Admission: \$2, except Tuesday and Thursday when it is free. Through 1/28. Call COCA 624-6394 for more information.

# January

New Years Day

Elvis Presley born, 1935

Horatio Alger born, 1834

15

**Three Short Films** on Asian ceramic firing and glazing techniques will be shown at 3 pm at SAM Volunteer Park Auditorium as part of the "50 Years: a Legacy of Asian Art" program.

**Allied Arts Annual Membership Meeting.** Call 624-0432 for specifics. Coming up: Allied Arts Annual Fundraising Auction will be 3/3. Let them know if you have items to donate.

**Fibers Unlimited 1983,** the ninth juried textile exhibit featuring the works of fiber artists from Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Snohomish Counties at the Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, through 1/15.

22

**Opus I,** a contemporary music performance series sponsored by Seattle Central Community College, continues in the Broadway Performance Hall tonight, 8 pm. Call 587-4166 for details.

**"Color and Clay: Japanese Glazes,"** a lecture by Shirley Ganse, China Specialist for the Pacific Science Center exhibition, "China: 7000 Years of Discovery" will be given 7:30 pm at the Volunteer Park Museum.

**"Photographic Pursuits of the 1970s: A Decade of Eclecticism"** is the title of a talk to be given this afternoon by Thom Sempere at the SAM Seattle Center Pavilion at 3 pm.

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31

**Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks.** How the Olmsted Brothers Firm Affected the Seattle Parks System, David Streatfield Lecture II.

Happy Birthday to: Sir John Vanbrugh (1664), Robert Motherwell (1915), and Oral Roberts (1918)

8

**A Meeting of Architects for Social Responsibility** tonight. For place and time, call 624-9100.

**Registration applications** for "Successful Rehabilitation," a series of two two-day workshops on financial and technical aspects of renovation of historic properties, must be made by 1/9. For more information, call (202) 673-4092, or write: Center for Preservation Training, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

9

10

**Pike Place Market Constituency Meeting** at the Meeting Place in the Soames Dunn Building, 6:30.

**Design Center Northwest** is open two hours later on Tuesday nights this month. (5-7 pm) 5701 6th Ave. S.

11

**Phillippe Bonnafont Gallery** exhibits drawings by Studio PER (the Barcelona firm of Oscar Tusquets and Luis Clotet) through 2/11. 2200 Mason St., San Francisco.

**Historic Seattle's "Perspectives on Preservation"** lecture series starts tonight at 7:30 in the Dome Room of the Arctic Building. Series tickets for four lectures \$25. Call 622-6952 for more info.

12

**Randy Hayes' larger-than-life** pastel pictures will be at Linda Farris Gallery now through 2/5. Opening 6-8:30.

**Design Concern Gallery** presents a showing of handcrafted jewelry and watches by Georg Jensen, Denmark. 11/30-12/1, 10-6 pm. Opening 11/29, 5-9 pm. A Danish design and product exhibit will continue through 1/14.

13

14

**Traditional Japanese porcelain potting techniques** will be demonstrated by Mary Niefeld at SAM's Volunteer Park Museum 1-4 pm today.

**Janet Boguch's Mixed Media** paintings and textiles will be in the gallery space at Cerulean Blue, 119 Blanchard St., through 3/3.

**Documents Northwest:** The PONCHO Series — Diane Katsiaticas. Current, mixed media wall pieces by Seattle-based artist Diane Katsiaticas. Seattle Art Museum Pavilion at Seattle Center, through 2/5.

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**Continuing Education** at the University of Washington: a lecture discussion series entitled "The Body and How it Works." Research scientists in physiology and biophysics explain in laypersons' terms what their research means. Wednesdays from 1/18 through 2/29. \$40 fee. Call 543-2590 for more info.

Bernardo PeBenito, inventor of modern day pizza crust, born this day, 1902

19

**Technology, Taste, and Tea:** Aspects of Japanese Ceramics in the 16th Century. A lecture at Volunteer Park Museum, 5:30 pm.

**Call For Entries** in P/A's 4th Annual Conceptual Furniture Competition. Deadline: 1/26. For more information, see the October issue of Progressive Architecture.

**"Subject/Object: People in Photographs"** is the title of a Gallery Talk to be conducted by Mark Frey, photographer, at Seattle Art Museum's Seattle Center Pavilion this evening at 7:30.

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**The Whitney Museum's Biennial Video Exhibition** will be screened starting tonight at Focal Point Media Center, 913 E. Pine St. 322-4304 for details.



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**Deadline is approaching** for the NIAE traveling Fellowship in Architecture. Entries due 1/31. For information contact: NIAE, 30 W. 22nd St., New York, New York 10010.

25

**Deadline is approaching** for entries in the 24th annual Reynolds Aluminum prize for architectural students. Entries due 2/8. For more info contact: A.I.A., Attn: Reynolds Student Prize, 1735 New York Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

26

**Henry Trubner,** Associate Director for Art and Collections, will give a gallery talk on Chinese and Japanese ceramics at 7:30 pm this evening, at the Volunteer Park Museum.

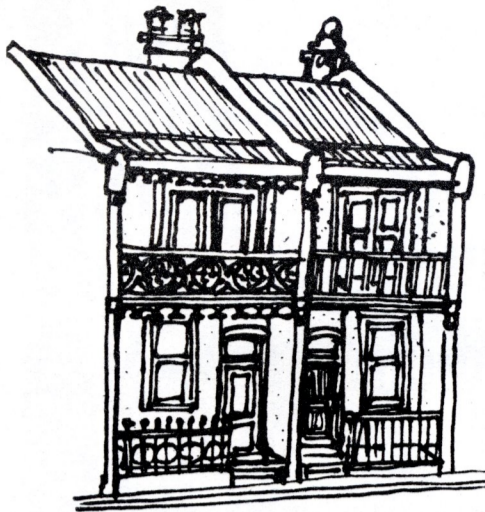
**Watch for China:** 7,000 Years of Discovery, a spectacular exhibition of ancient Chinese science and technology, starting 18 practicing artisans from the People's Republic of China. Pacific Science Center, 3/1 through 8/31.

27

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**Watch in the next issue** of ARCADE for more information on **Architecture Now**, a series of six lectures by internationally renowned architects that will focus on the current architectural pluralism. Lectures will be in February and March at the Seattle Art Museum in Volunteer Park. Series tickets will be available in late November. **Call Jill Rulkoetter at 447-4790 for more information.**





Terrace Housing, Sydney.

We received this letter from Kristine Bak, an architectural historian and designer who recently moved to Sydney, Australia with her husband John Kvapil (of the same profession) and their new daughter Anna.

The view from our kitchen in suburban Kirribilli is enlivened by ships and ferries and sailboats in Port Jackson and Sydney Cove, but the city skyline beyond is mostly boxes. With the obvious exceptions of the Opera House and Sydney Tower (Australia's answer to the Space Needle), the last twenty years have not brought architectural distinction to downtown Sydney. An arguable case might be made for the QANTAS building. Its strong vertical corner elements, over-sized concrete trusses, and hexagonal rooftop space-frame soar above neighboring buildings, a symbol of technological power and reliability. In general, however, Basic Boring is the urban stylistic rule.

The blandness of the skyline gives no clue to the fascinating action below. While parking provides problems equal to those of most major cities, life for the pedestrian is delightful.

The blandness of the skyline gives no clue to the fascinating action below. Guides to Sydney bemoan the disorder and narrowness of streets in the CBD, the cutting of grand boulevards having been mercifully frustrated by apathy or recession. While parking provides problems equal to those of most major cities, life for the pedestrian is delightful.

Hundreds of small shops and a few large department stores crowd the several stories around street level in an area roughly equivalent to that between Seattle's Belltown and Pioneer Square. Not only do shops line the streets, but they also fill

# FAIR DINKUM NOTES FROM OZ\*

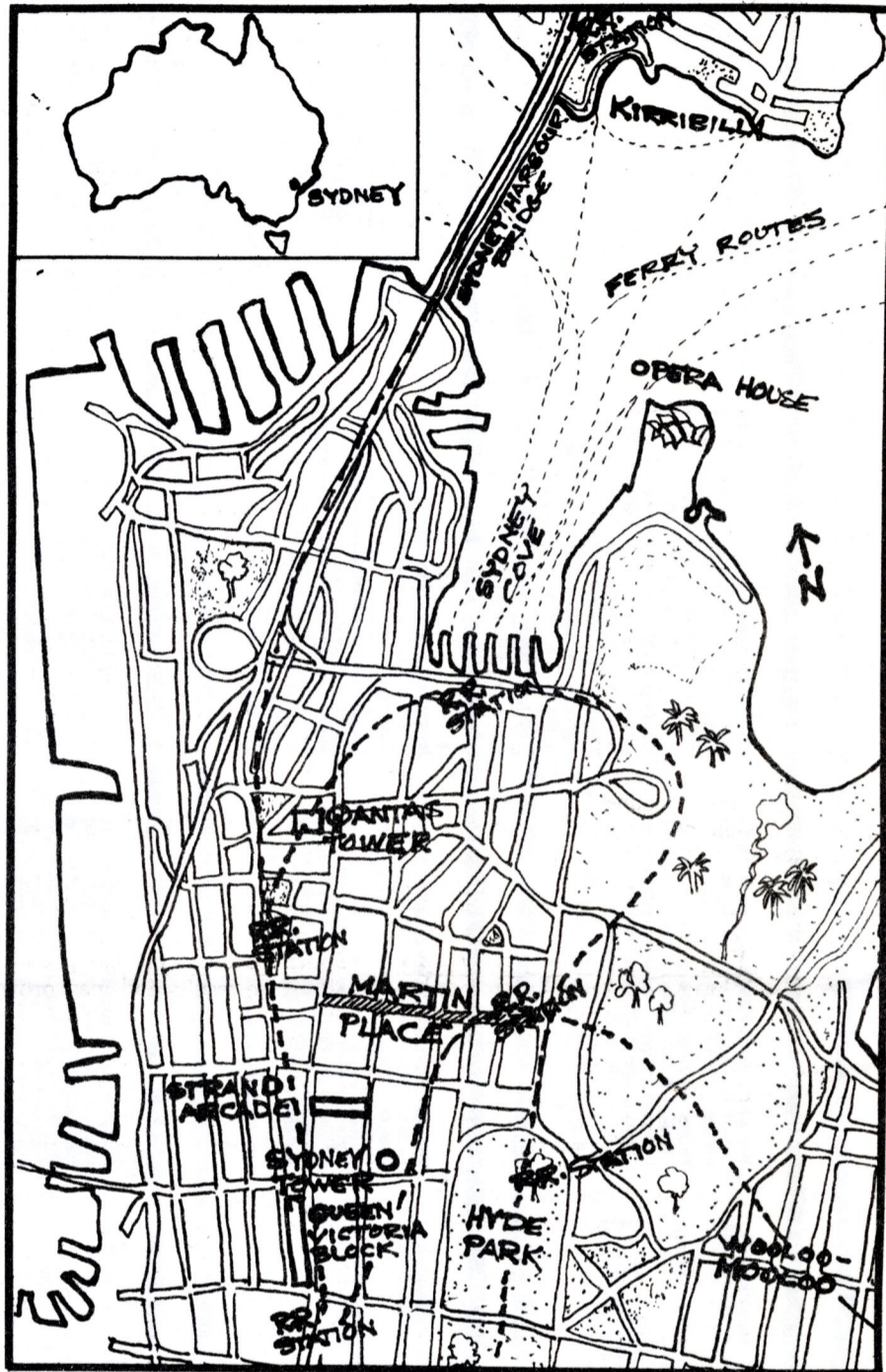
arcades that weave through the interiors of building blocks in a complex pattern of escalators, ramps, passages, and sky-bridges. In a less lively urban scene, such interior alternatives as these might diminish the vitality of the streets, but Sydney's center is a constant parade of human activity indoors and out.

The turn-of-the-century Strand arcade lends a note of dignity and elegance in the fine tradition of European galleries of similar vintage. Neither the Strand nor the other arcades create an impression of shopping mall sterility, but seem to be rather an auto-less continuation of the streets; and the streets are given a sheltered "interior" feeling by more or less continuous awnings or marquees offering sun and rain protection and restricting the upward view.

Restful plazas like Martin Place (until 1973 a busy through-street) provide the opportunity to enjoy the cosmopolitan ambience from a comfortable bench. In December a Christmas tree stands in Martin Place against the backdrop of the ornate 1886 sandstone post office and carolers swelter in the midsummer heat. There is also Hyde Park, which runs parallel to the city center, and offers peaceful green space in contrast to the surrounding urban intensity.

The many large and small nineteenth century buildings in downtown Sydney make it painfully obvious that many more have been demolished. Like the U.S., Australia has only recently come to appreciate its heritage of existing buildings, this enlightenment certainly assisted by recession. Redevelopment of existing nineteenth century blocks tends to take the form of propping up facades and thoroughly gutting insides. According to the New South Wales Heritage Council, the 1893 Queen Victoria Market Block (an elaborately detailed sandstone building with a central dome and lantern) will be dealt with more carefully. Meanwhile, it hangs in empty limbo as the developers and city council renegotiate contract terms.

In Sydney "suburb" refers to any place that is neither the CBD nor the Bush, but somewhere in between.



Plan of downtown Sydney, Australia.

Although the city railway stations also are in the midst of a renovation that seems to have gotten stranded on a bureaucrat's desk, the railway system is fast and efficient. Sydney's trains plunge underground at the edge of the CBD and stop at closely spaced stations throughout, connecting with little white passenger ferries and buses at strategic points. Some of the rail cars still have blackout screens from World War II; others are more modern. They all run frequently to and from the inner and outer suburbs: school children, commuters, shoppers, and even surfers on their way to one of Sydney's thirty-four surf beaches with their boards, travel on the trains.

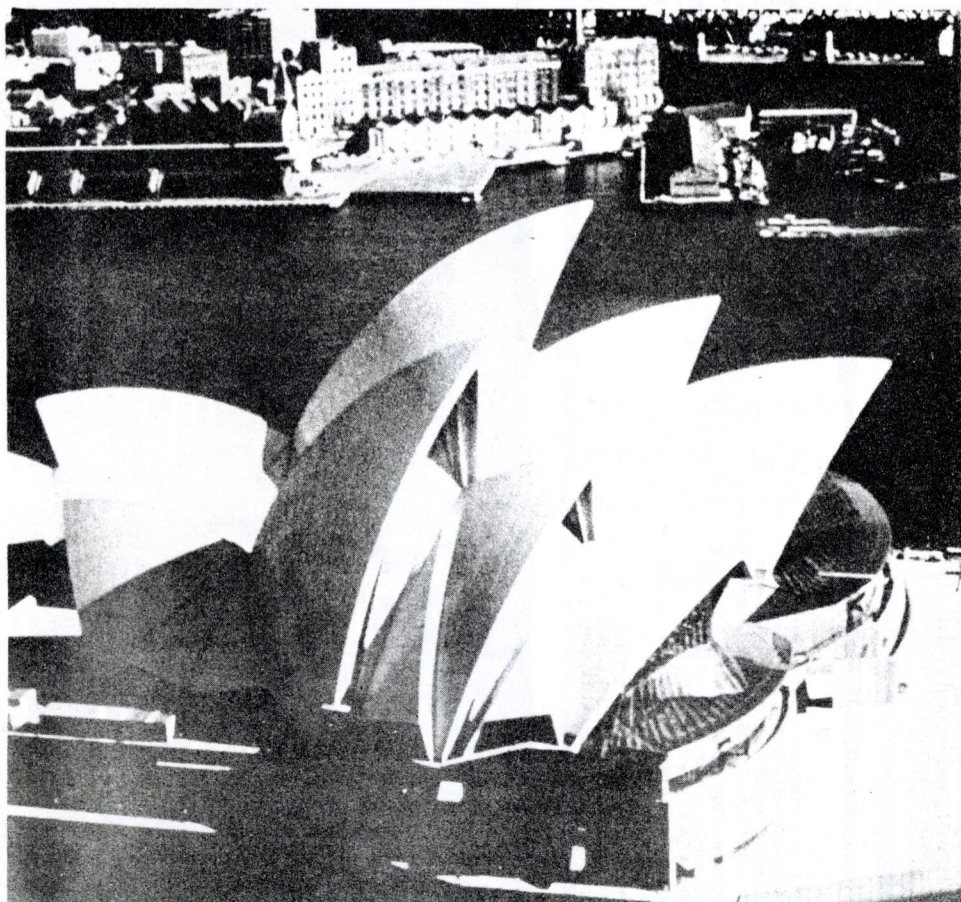
In Sydney, "suburb" refers to any place that is neither the CBD nor the Bush, but somewhere in between. From short acquaintance, the outer suburbs seem to be featureless collections of red tile roofs, but the inner suburbs that look across various waterways to the city are rather dense and distinct little neighborhoods with their own shopping centers and community centers.

Among the several types of domestic architecture typical of Sydney, the terrace house is certainly the most appealing, reminiscent of New Orleans and San Francisco with a South Pacific romance of its own. These two- or three-story row houses are generally twenty to thirty feet wide with balconies and terraces at the front and perhaps a courtyard or small garden in back. Usually of pastel painted or stuccoed masonry, the terrace houses have slate, red tile, or corrugated metal roofs, and often

cast iron tracery as ornament. The rooflines are enlivened by handsome chimney pots and sometimes ornamental urns or scroll-work.

Entire streets of terrace houses can be found in any inner suburb, but thousands have been demolished in ill-advised development sweeps. Dislocation of long-time residents has accompanied demolition of terrace houses, especially in the inner suburbs of Woollahurst. Those unfortunate enough to have seen the Australian film "Heatwave" saw an absurd caricature of architectural single-mindedness in pursuit of the removal of worker housing to make way for the more affluent. Events very similar to those depicted in the film actually occurred here in the early seventies. One major difference between fact and apparent fiction is that the body of the missing woman anti-development activist has never been discovered. No one has yet been convicted of any crime related to the lately reopened case. Developers have been treading more lightly in subsequent years, but the mysterious burning of historic houses and other less subtle tactics are occasionally seen.

Sydneysiders, like Romans, consider winter to be an interruption of normal conditions that comes around with annoying regularity and is best ignored until it goes away.



8 Sydney Opera House.

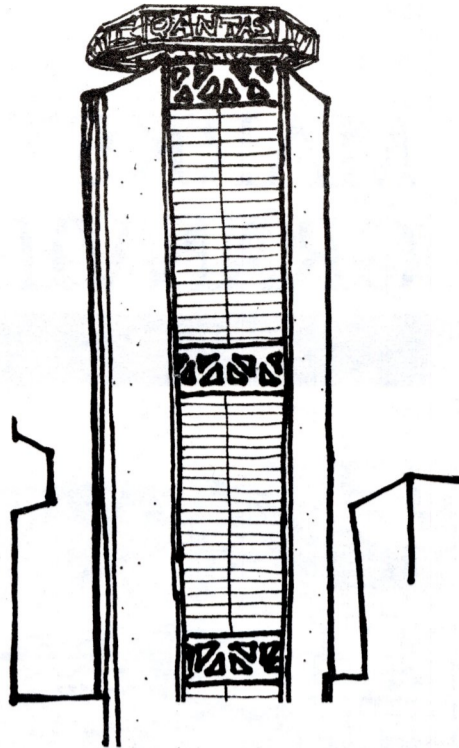


Less appealing than the terrace house, but also typical, is the Australian bungalow; a low, square house with a wide sheltering verandah, usually of a depressingly dark-colored brick and white wood trim. Its origins lie in nineteenth century industrial England where specifications were produced for the developers in the early part of this century. Many houses built around the turn-of-the-century period of Australian Federation (and called, appropriately, Federation Houses) employ similar materials to a much more pleasant effect. Attention to detail is shown in stained glass,

**There is an exciting sense of exploration in this country full of new immigrants from all over the world.**

windows, ornamental tiles, graceful verandah design, and rich red or green trim. Recognizing the various forms of Federation Houses requires a practiced eye, but appears to be well worth the effort.

Evaluating a house in Sydney means abandoning some of a Northwest architect's preconceptions. For one thing, Sydneysiders, like Romans, consider winter to be an interruption of normal conditions that comes around with annoying regularity and is best ignored until it goes away. Consequently, residential central heating in this subtropical climate is nearly nonexistent. Fireplaces and small portable gas or electric heaters are brought into service when absolutely necessary. Residential buildings large and small have grilled vents high in the walls of each room that remain open to the outdoors winter and summer, discouraging mildew and condensation inside the double wythe masonry walls. In our house, the wind blows freely around casually fitted and caulked windows. Add to this lack of interest in "weatherization" the fact that north facades are sunny and southern ones are in the shade (not to mention that the Pacific Ocean is to the East, and the storms come from the heartland to



QANTAS Tower.

the West) and the disorientation is pretty thorough.

An expatriate New Zealand architect contends that the indifferent interior design here is largely a result of the exuberant outdoor-oriented lifestyle in a climate with 342 days of sunshine each year. The high cost of wood on this practically unforested continent makes extensive wood detailing rare, but the ubiquitous sandstone and clay provide well for masonry construction.

Unfortunately, the possibilities of austere Mediterranean beauty in masonry design have remained undeveloped in Australia, probably due to a persistent British colonial influence. Despite the exotic climate and vegetation, the architecture is pretty staid. Recently a few architects have begun to investigate the hybridization of Southwestern Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean influences with a flavor of the South Pacific. This has produced some attractive results and may prove to be a productive new trend in Australian domestic architecture.

There is an exciting sense of exploration in this country full of new immigrants from all over the world. A steward on our twenty-hour QANTAS flight from Vancouver said, "Good on ya! You're going to the last free country left on Earth!" Regardless of the hyperbole in that statement, there are a lot of people here who seem to see some truth in it and who are determined to test their own limits in that atmosphere of freedom.



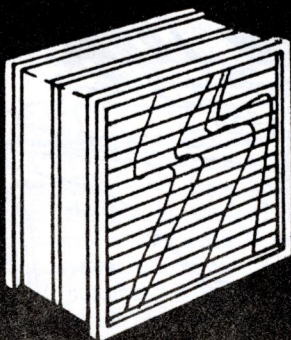
Federation House.

Kristine Bak

All drawings this article by Kristine Bak. Kristine Bak is an architectural historian and designer living in Sydney, Australia.

\*Oz: Strine for Australia  
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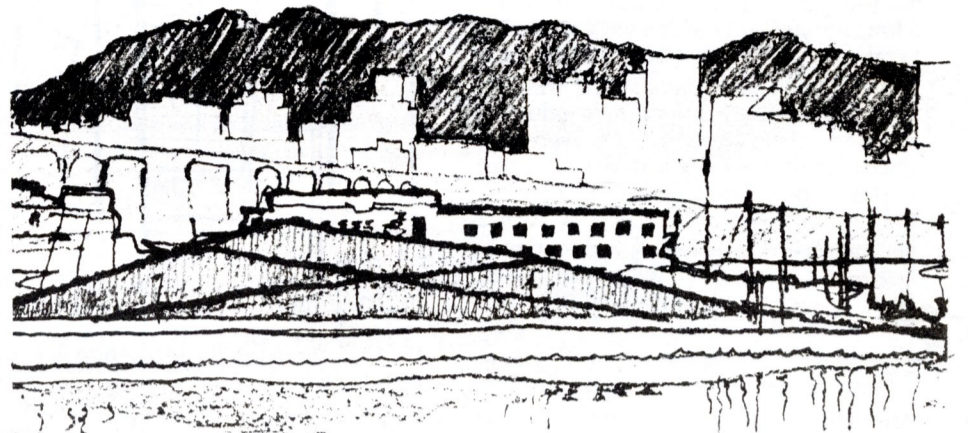
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# MARKETING GRANVILLE ISLAND



Granville Island and the City of Vancouver beyond.

Granville Island, Vancouver, B.C.'s contemporary answer to Seattle's historic Pike Place Market (after which it was modeled), is the studied consequence of putting principles into practice. Originally just a ripple in the middle of False Creek, the "island" was dredged up from the creek bottom for new life as a pioneering early-1900s version of an urban industrial park. It is now a successful urban park

Given life by a campaigning national politician, the Granville Island project became Hotson's after a preliminary study's five alternative plans generated a sense of realism about the project. At the University of Toronto, Hotson's thesis project had been a study for a new community in that city's inner harbor. In Vancouver, he had completed studies of waterfront re-use. This history helped him secure the Granville Island commission in 1976, as a one-man firm. He had been accurate in his assumption that the West Coast (of Canada) would be a good place for a young architect to begin.

Rarely does an architect credit the government with constructive assistance, but Hotson reported that the Federal ownership of the 38-acre property "made it easier to bring the project into being. If we needed to, we even controlled the zoning. It did involve public participation, but it did achieve certain things not otherwise possible without these special conditions."

A simple land-use plan and a well-defined set of development principles allowed Hotson and other architects to design buildings in support of planned objectives. The design and development of the public domain, or open space, involved a special effort on the part of the architect to accomplish the client's goal, "a place of public attraction, not just passive recreation."

**Every entrance crosses a bridge over water, although the place is not technically an island.**

Hotson told his clients, "If you really want people to come here, there has to be something singular about it. And the thing that is singular about it is that it is industrial." At least in its visual theme, Granville Island is industrial; its land-use plan consists of a market area at the north end, a park area

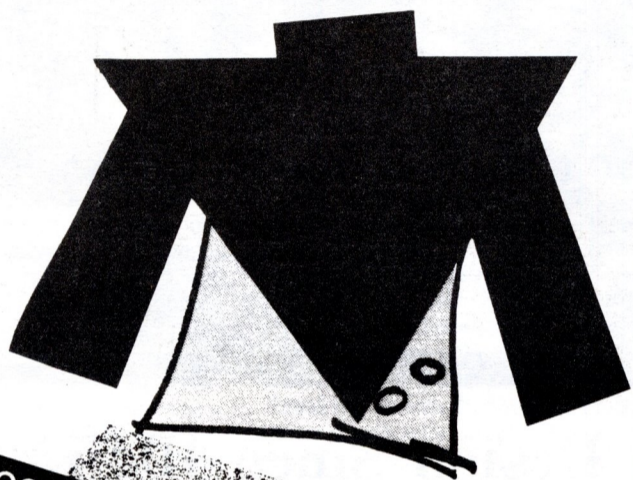
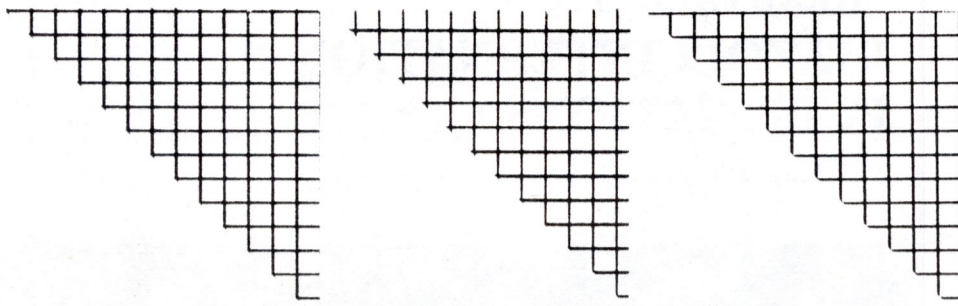


Site furnishings.

where recreation for tourists and locals alike consists of shopping for foods, arts, crafts, and marine supplies, going to the theater, a restaurant, a hotel or a park on the waterfront, and strolling in a special place. Granville Island is, as well, a place where Vancouverites go to work, and it is a case study of attitudes toward urbanism practiced by Vancouver, B.C. architect, Norman Hotson, and his associates. Hotson presented his thought processes as the designer of the renewed Granville Island environment, and as its continuing design coordinator in a lecture November 3 at the UW School of Architecture. Unlike rationales presented by architects, in which spoken words and illustrating slide images seem to address separate issues, Hotson's words and the images of Granville Island on the screen expressed a single, coherent design stance.



Unit pavers set around existing train tracks.



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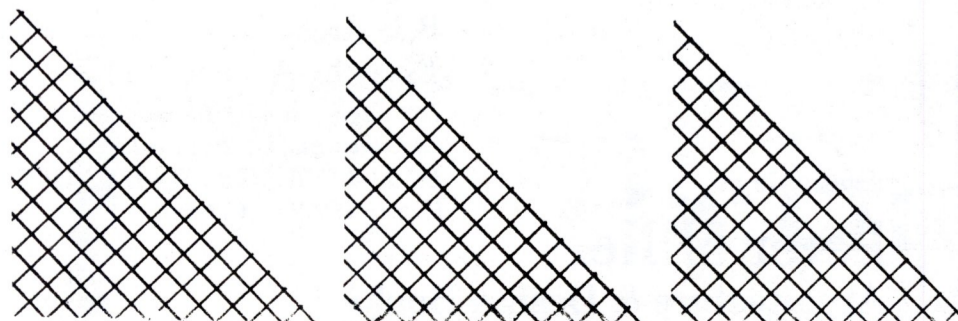
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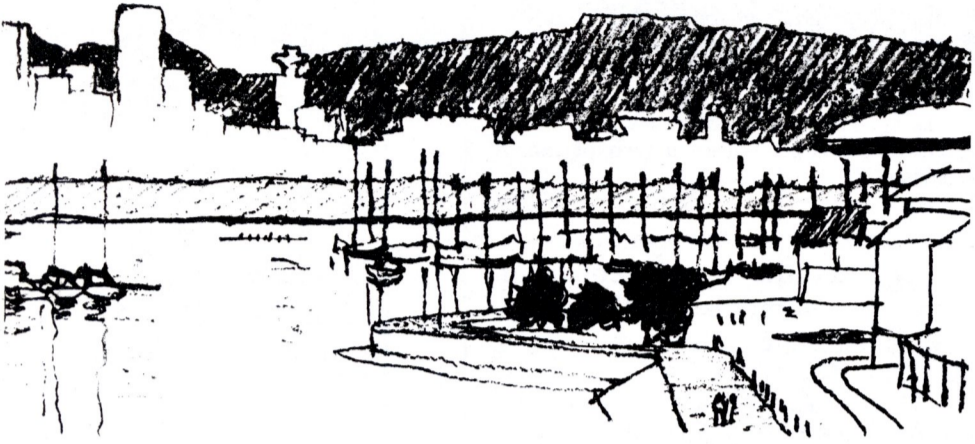
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# Waterfront Park(ing) as a Rational Art

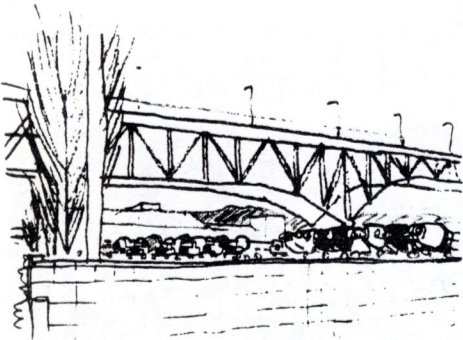


at the south (oriented toward the False Creek residential development across the water), an area for artisans and industries centrally located without expensive waterfront access, a "New Realm" on the northeast waterfront (an art school now resides here) and recreational uses along the residential-oriented South Shore.

Basic to the development of the Island was Hotson's commitment to incremental development. "We don't want to commit ourselves to doing something now that we want to develop over time. We want to recognize that as time goes by, people's attitudes change, conditions change." The intended result is an otherwise elusive quality of reality to the physical environment. Hotson worked hard to convince his clients of this; he managed to stop the Government from buying out successful existing industries and thus kept a cement plant, a major tenant, operating on the Island. Battles were waged on behalf of another key design principle, that "to the greatest extent possible, new uses should make use of the spatial integrity of existing buildings. Frankly, that's been one of the hardest to follow."

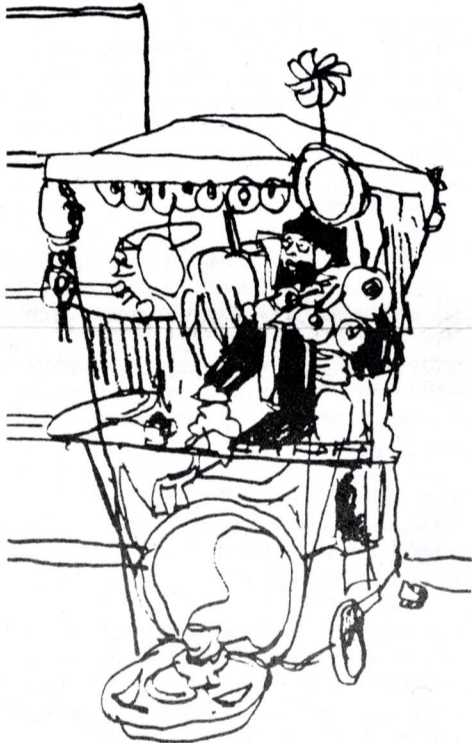
**If we needed to, we even controlled the zoning.**

The design of the public domain draws visitors' attention because of its appearance: the ground plane is paved with unit pavers without traditional definitions of pedestrian and vehicular zones — there are no sidewalks. Cars and people mix without danger; Hotson designed for flexible use of the open spaces by both. "What is a parking lot one day can be anything the next. We tend to overdesign for a single use." Exceptions to that rule take the form of a playground in the middle of a parking area, a parking lot painted as a backgammon board, cafes on the streets. Subtle definition of pedestrian areas exists in the form



Cement plant mixers.

Hotson told his clients, "If you really want people to come here, there has to be something singular about it."



Typical vendor.

of a "pipe lintel" system of stocky red cedar posts carrying colorfully painted steel pipe above head height, along the boundaries of parking areas, and parallel to building fronts. The pipes carry lights and electrical power for outdoor uses. They bend to articulate entries and in some locations carry awnings.

**What is a parking lot one day can be anything the next.**

Simple ideas contribute to the singularity of the environment and create the effect which is identifiably and memorably Granville Island. Strong colors are coordinated to create sympathetic effects among neighboring buildings. Red maples define outdoor spaces. Every entrance crosses a bridge over water, although the place is not technically an island. Pools were created to build an impression of land surrounded by water, a special and somewhat remote place. Hotson's message was appealing, in part because of the obvious care with which he'd implemented his ideas, and in part because of his thoroughness in explaining the process and the criteria by which he worked.

Rebecca Barnes

Rebecca Barnes is an urban designer for the City of Seattle.

Drawings by Jestena Boughton.

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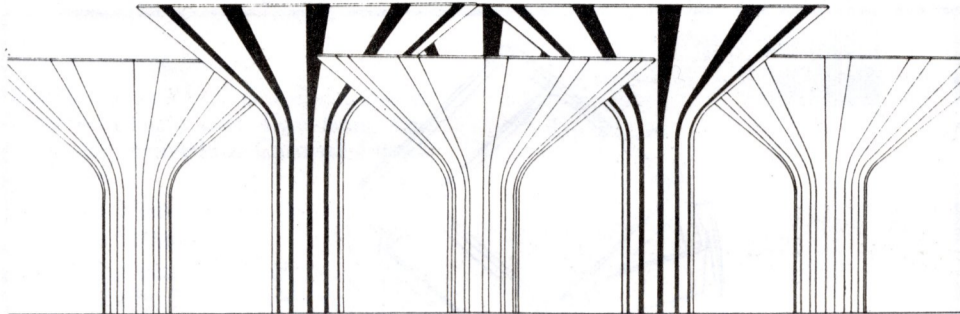
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# ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITY

BOOKS



Water towers, Kuwait City, Kuwait.

*Architecture and Community: Building in the Islamic World Today*, edited by Renata Holod with Darl Rastorfer (1983, Aperture, Millerton, NY).

The dark drizzle of Northwest winter has descended, and with it, in me, a seasonal blend of introversion and escapism. I have spent the weekend immersed in exotic cultures where the sun shines, half-way around the globe. Despite its large-scale format, abundant photographs, and impeccable layout, *Architecture and Community: Building in the Islamic World Today* hardly constitutes the fare of armchair-traveling escapists. It strikes home too often, too deeply to permit undisturbed romantic reverie in the visual feast which spreads from Senegal to Java. The road traveled today in the Islamic Third World is rough and poorly marked; in many areas it still is being built. *Architecture and Community* chronicles an important journey of awareness underway in Muslim countries across the earth and reminds us that we are all fellow travelers.

**The Aga Khan competition, from its very inception, parts company with the gallery-of-pretty faces approach to architectural awards.**

Editor Renata Holod, professor of Islamic architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, has organized *Architecture and Community* to document the first cycle of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Forty-seven year old Aga Khan IV is the forty-ninth hereditary spiritual leader of Islam's principal minority sect, the Shiites. The awards, presented in 1980, honor fifteen projects built between 1964 and 1977. A second cycle of awards is being presented this fall and will be the subject of a sequel volume to be published next year.

The Aga Khan competition, from its very inception, parts company with the gallery-of-pretty-faces approach to architectural awards. In a 1978 speech the Aga Khan stated, "The Award will not be confined to architects competing with designs for a succession of prestigious public monuments. We are concerned with the Islamic world and, above all, with the people of Islam."<sup>1</sup> His fervor is evident in his preface to the text, from which one senses that the Aga Khan's vision empowers this competition more than his financing. "It may just be that, as the Award highlights the search of the Muslim world for an architecture centered on man and proclaiming the potential of life, an example is given to the whole world of how this can be done."<sup>2</sup>

Editor Holod's introduction presents the chronology and summarizes the root issues of the competition. Nearly 200 projects from the Atlantic Ocean to Indonesia were considered. They were nominated confidentially rather than by open solicitation. Seminars were held to help generate . . . "a body of thought about the nature of a built environment that is culturally and economically responsive to the present and future societies of the Islamic world."<sup>3</sup> Ten essays based on these seminars follow the introduction and lay groundwork, as they did in the competition, for the ultimate project awards arrayed for the reader in the final, major portion of the book.

The essays, written by academics, design professionals, an economist, and a lawyer, vary considerably in style and content: lucid, dense, polemic, arcane. Most informative and thought-provoking are those which discuss public institutions. All raise far more questions than they attempt to answer. This fact seems appropriate to the spirit of search and dialogue which the competition itself encourages.

The award recipients range geographically across Africa to the Middle East, India, and Indonesia. Their scale ranges from single-family dwellings to complete urban infrastructures. The level of technological sophistication ranges from hand-pressed, sun-dried brick enclosures to Frei Otto-designed tensile pavilions evoking Bedouin tents.

The desire to chart new paths of human interaction and to find seminal, replicable solutions is common to all the award winners. The financial and institutional barriers described are often formidable, but the goal has been achieved: appropriate fit of building to context is clearly visible in these projects. *Architecture and Community* provides ample poetry for the eye. It further elucidates the process by which each act of design and physical realization was accomplished and herein adds much to the outsider's appreciation of the architecture.

In her remarks, Professor Holod identifies commonalities among "very different societies bound together by their participation in the Islamic experience."<sup>4</sup> About two-thirds of the world Muslim population lives in "absolute poverty,"<sup>5</sup> on 25¢ US (or less) per day. Massive rural in-migration to cities is overwhelming local resources, infrastructures, and expertise. Housing is a critical environmental need. Another common thread is the double-edged sword of colonialism, no sooner cast off than replaced by Western modernization pressures, without time to establish indigenous national pride or perspective. The awards clearly seek to reinforce efforts toward self-determination, for which design and construction processes can be a vehicle. Other

commonalities among Muslim nations are the religion and culture of Islam and a rich, if regionalized, architectural heritage. ". . . The Nations of the Islamic world are at once members of the third, developing world and also uniquely bound to one another by a common cultural and visual heritage and a living, religious, centripetal reality. The creation of a new Muslim architecture is set within a web of many strings."<sup>6</sup>

**. . . reveals the strength of design based on the fundamentals of spiritual humanism rather than Western materialism.**

The book closes with a tribute to Egyptian architect, artist, and poet Hassan Fathy, recipient of a special Chairman's Award and lifelong champion of vernacular design and community-based construction. These concepts possess more currency now than ever, and are given a renewed prestige by the Aga Khan Award. Among Fathy's stirring words I found the following particularly apt: "We know that architecture, in all its styles, is one of the most important elements of culture, and that culture may be defined as the results of the interaction between the intelligence of man and his environment in satisfying both his spiritual and physical needs."<sup>7</sup>

What sets this book, and the Islamic world, apart is a non-secular approach to life and architecture. In this country architects insulate themselves from global issues with superficial concerns about aesthetics and finance. Our profession may continue to function with this selective vision of our responsibilities, but in third world countries pressures are too intense and too immediate for architects to avoid the political, social, and moral dimensions of environmental design. "In fact, their changing societies will reshape the architects themselves."<sup>8</sup>

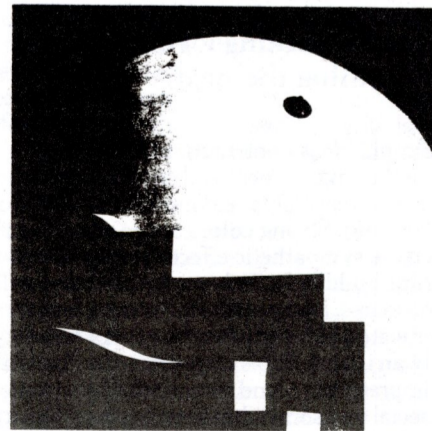
*Architecture and Community* reveals the strength of design based on the fundamentals of spiritual humanism rather than Western materialism, and thus heralds great hope for an entire world in the process of learning to heal itself.

#### REFERENCES

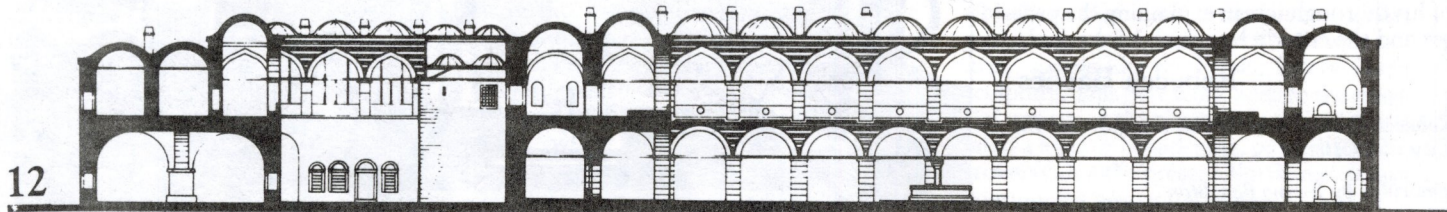
1. p. 40, 2. p. 12, 3. p. 17, 4. p. 16, 5. p. 40, 6. p. 17, 7. p. 245, 8. p. 20.

Eliza Davidson

*Eliza Davidson is an architectural designer working in Seattle.*



Halawa House, Agamy, Egypt, completed in April, 1975.



Section of Rustem Pasha Caravanserai, Edime, Turkey.

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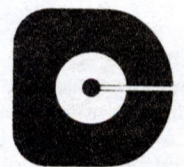
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