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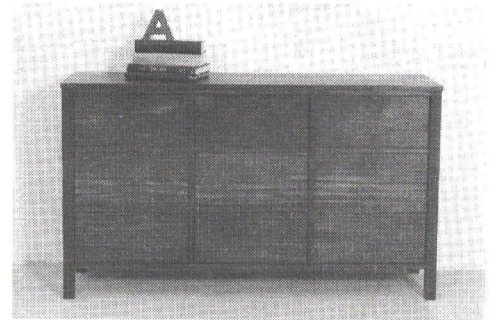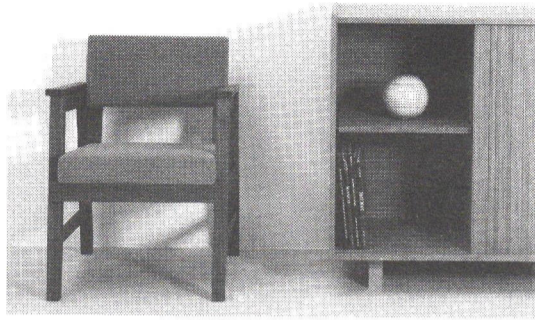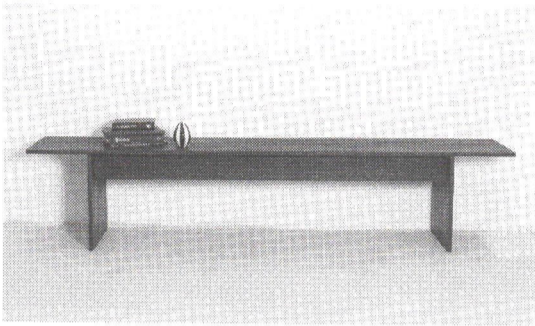
Architecture/Design in the Northwest

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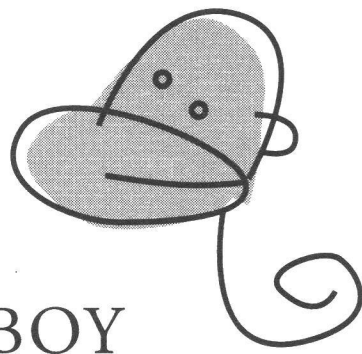**Image + Identity**
Guest Editor Norman Wacker
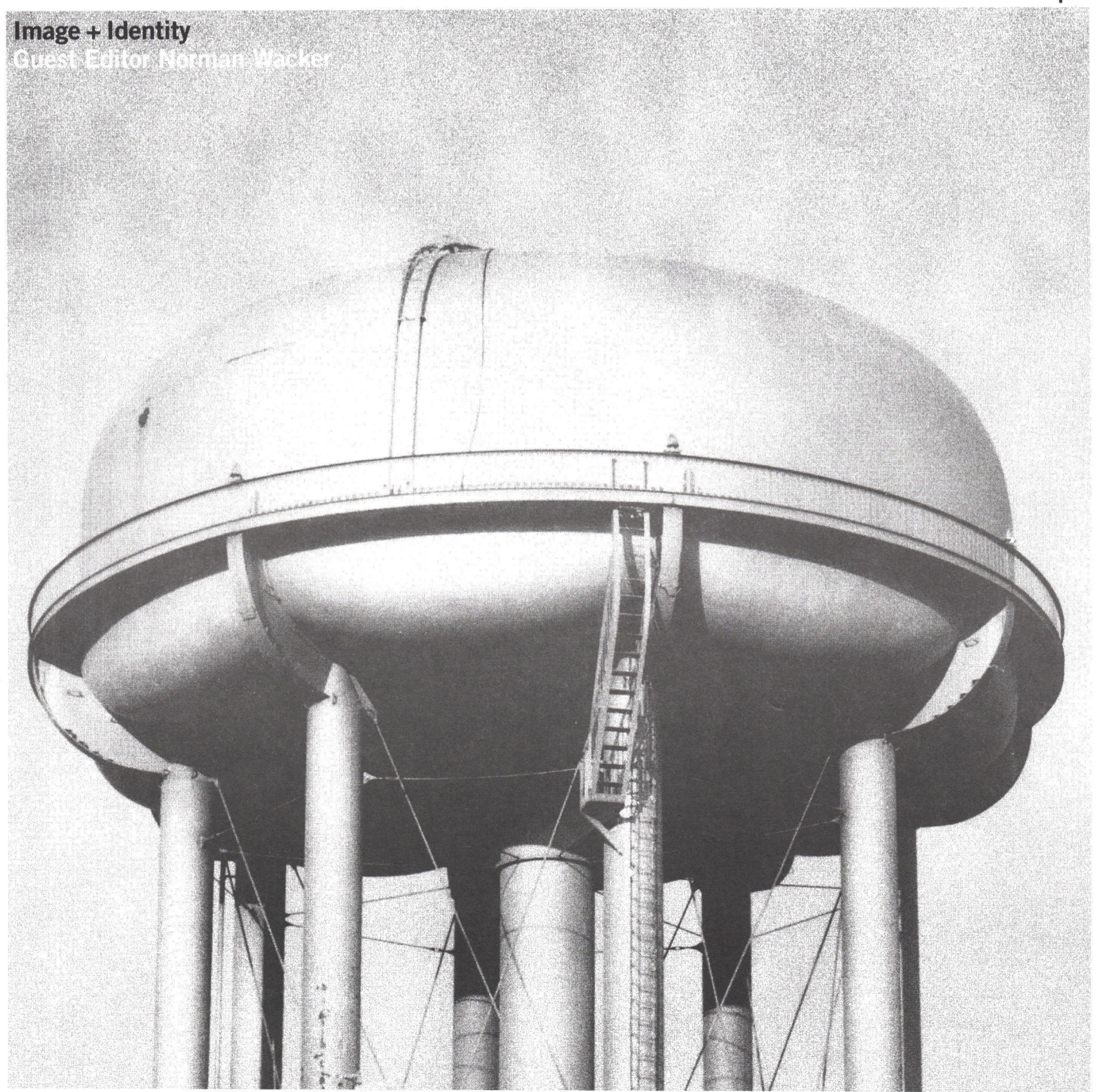
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Ideas for articles may be sent to info@arcadejournal.com. We also invite news items for COMO, calendar entries of interest to the design community, and suggestions for New Work—all of which may be sent to the editors listed here.

Cover photograph by John Rousseau

Guest Editor Norman Wacker

21.1 Image + Identity

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Out of Site: Fictional Architectural Spaces

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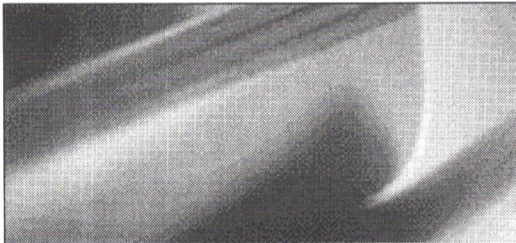
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News

Oregon Design: A Proclamation
By John Cava

Competition entry for Portland Signature Project site. Designed by Stephen Weeks, Cynthia Mosby and David Gabriel
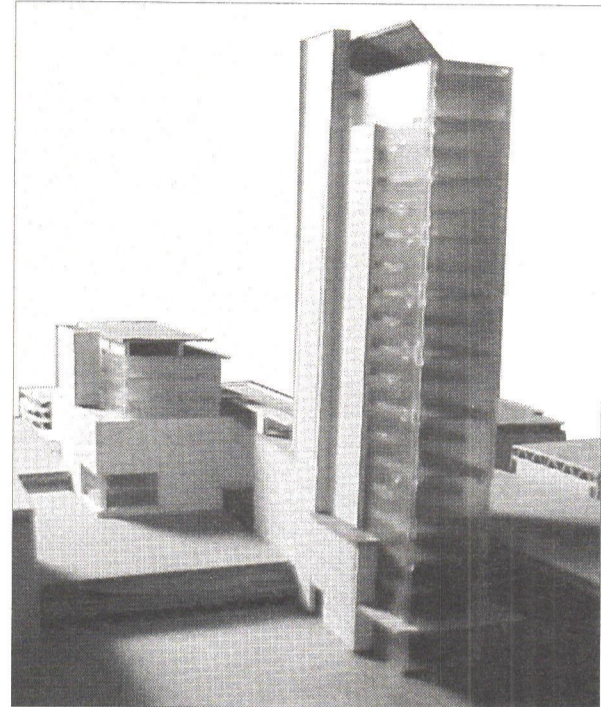
Competition entry for Portland Signature Project site. Designed by Robert Esau and Mark Raggett

Design Initiative Statement

Inspire quality design of all buildings constructed in the City...beginning with the City's own facilities and signature developments in which it has a significant investment. Demonstrate that design excellence is good business and beneficial to the life of the community by producing innovative and enduring works of architecture that will stand the test of time and be deemed remarkable examples of excellent design for years to come.

Which of the following best describes the statement above?

A) A particularly naive architecture student's idea of how city government will respect, honor and support their most creative efforts and ideas.

B) A guideline for architectural design in another country on another continent where design is a respected part of the culture, but where you'll probably never get a chance to practice.

C) Yet another crazy Utopian dream conjured up by a handful of frustrated architects one night after too many mint juleps.

D) A proposal by the mayor of a major Pacific NW city to officially encourage innovative architectural design with special projects and competitions for younger architects.

However unlikely it may seem, and however close to the truth the others may appear to be, the answer is D. The city of Portland, Oregon is the fortunate beneficiary of this arranged marriage between high quality architectural design and city politics.

Just seeing design and politics sharing the same line of type is slightly uncomfortable, like seeing an ex-couple accidentally seated together at a dinner party. But Portland Mayor Vera Katz's party is going to be different. She's giving these two entities —so often bitterly at odds—a supportive framework that could work wonders for Portland's architectural character, lately deemed inoffensive, but supremely dull. Mayor Katz, to her everlasting credit, not only listened to this grumbling from the design community, she took it as a serious critique of her city. In one of those rare occurrences that remind us what a representative form of government is supposed to be about, she took action. Swiftly, decisively and specifically. (Remember, this is design we're talking about, not civil rights or education or a major political crisis. Design!)

She and her team at City Hall drafted and published what must be a unique document among American cities, provisionally titled the "Mayor's Design Initiative." It outlines specifically how the city intends to support good (maybe even great) architecture and design. Not an easy task, given that the question of what makes for good design, like that of good art, is more or less permanently up for grabs. Even if that question can be provisionally answered, there's the pyramid of money, power and personal connections that eventually always controls what gets built and by whom. But this initiative takes a healthy swing at that unholy edifice, knocking off some good-sized chunks and opening up opportunities for ideas. With unusual courage and strength, it reaches well beyond the standard, lowest-common-denominator design guidelines that American cities so often use, and puts the burden on Portland's city government to jump-start the process of fostering high quality design with its own projects. This design initiative actually leads the way, rather than asking the private sector to conform to some vague criteria of "good design."

Although still in the feedback phase, some of the tenets of this manifesto read more like excerpts from a designer's wish list than an official government document. Here are a few direct quotes:

Design excellence as a priority.
Sustainable and green building practices.
Long-lasting, high quality and durable buildings.
Use of local resources, materials and manufacturers.
Hire the most creative and innovative of qualified developers and designers, not just the lowest bidders.
Nurture local design talent and aid involvement of small and/or disadvantaged firms.
Emphasize quality over quantity and focus on the longest building lifespan possible.

And that's just the beginning. Each year of the initiative will see three to six "Signature Project" proposals to stimulate design excellence. The projects will range from buildings to parks, streetscapes and infrastructure. Teams composed of individuals from both the private and public sectors will collaborate on the process from start to finish. Design guidelines and standards may be altered to allow for more inspiring design, and formal design review will be "less reactive and more collaborative." The initiative offers new awards for design excellence, programs for design education and conduits for community feedback.

Perhaps the most exciting element for architects is a proposal for open (not limited) competitions—the method by which so many extraordinary European talents have been nurtured (Aalto and Koolhaas for example), but which the more conservative and less design-oriented United States has typically shunned.

This year, Portland architect and activist Fredrick Zaal collaborated with the Mayor and the AIA on an open competition for architectural students and interns, using one of the city's proposed Signature Project sites. Thoughtful ideas by young designers were featured in a major public forum with nearly thirty completed submissions. Meanwhile the Mayor and her staff (in attendance at the entire event) received a kind of short course in urban architectural thinking, with renowned Seattle architect Peter Pran leading the jury in lively, intelligent discussion.

With any luck, Vera Katz will be elected President of the United States, head of the United Nations, or better yet, ruler of the Intergalactic Universe, so that she can proclaim the supreme reign of design in the civilized world. In the meantime, with a package like this design initiative issuing from her City Hall, Portland might be the best place around to wait it out.

Oregon AIA Design Conference: An Exploration
By John Cava

Is the notion of a unique Pacific Northwest architecture a myth or a reality? What does good design mean, for both buildings and urban design? What drives the design of our cities today? What's the relationship between the centuries-old technique of hand drawing and current computer-generated design, and where exactly should architects be going from here?

Any one of these questions could keep an inquisitive architect occupied for months, but in April at John Storrs' Salishan Lodge on the Oregon Coast, nearly 200 Oregon architects—along with a handful of interested developers, attorneys and builders—tackled all of these questions and more. Within the rustic wooden rooms and stepped timber eaves of Storrs' 1965 resort, the AIA and the Oregon Community Foundation sponsored the 2002 Oregon Design Conference, entitled *Seeing Through the Myth*. There was no lack of variety among the presentations, and—as with any good symposium—there were more open questions than succinct answers.

The definition of an expert, as common wisdom has it, is "someone from out of town." In this role, three renowned architects/scholars traveled a suitable distance (from Los Angeles and Texas) to stir things up: Craig Hodgetts, professor at UCLA and member of the brilliant design team Hodgetts + Fung; the indomitable Thom Mayne of Morphosis, also at UCLA; and Lars Lerup, the expansive architect and design oracle, now Dean of Architecture at Rice University.

Hodgetts presented exceptionally creative and ebullient work, with architecture, film, engineering and exhibition design co-mingling within their unusual Hollywood-based studio, reinforcing the comparison to the former Eames office as a place of overall creativity, eluding easy or traditional definition. Concerned with what he calls "the ephemera of daily life," Hodgetts suggested, "The fundamental task of architects today is to 'lubricate' human interactions, rather than create encumbrances." Our cities, he believes, "should be more like back lots, where the spontaneity of human activity can resonate."

Lars Lerup similarly eschewed traditional design boundaries in his urban studies of Houston. Using a series of delightful drawings, he overlaid the current disastrous automobile-based development with a new topographic and ecological vision of the region. In addition, indicating his broad range of interest, he presented a set of built furniture designs that were whimsical, functional and sensuously crafted. In the end, he said, "Architects need to be visible thinkers, showing how they understand the world around them, for architecture is built thought and in that lies enormous strength."

Thom Mayne, always fascinated by the interaction of technology, design process and construction, categorically declared the art of (hand) drawing irrelevant as a design tool in favor of the computer, recalling Victor Hugo's pronouncement on the end of architecture's narrative in the wake of the printing press. "For the computer to have real value," says Mayne, "it must be located in the processes by which we define our architectural problems...the projects are constructed in one-to-one scale within the virtual space of the computer...there are no sections, no elevations, no plans."

Speakers from Oregon ("experts" to LA and Houston) included the widely published architectural historian Leland Roth, a professor at the University of Oregon, who gave a comprehensive picture of the societal, cultural and architectural heritage of Oregon's built environment from the time of its early settlers to the present day. Roth argued against the idea of universality in architecture. "All good architecture is local—particularity is everything with respect to successful architectural performance," he maintained.

Randy Gragg, the Portland-based architecture critic and writer, discussed the "branding" of cities, integrating – with his typical breadth of knowledge – corporatism, capitalism, consumerism, sustainable design, marketing and of course, architecture. (An elaboration of Gragg's ideas is included in this issue.) Gragg is, at heart, a social activist with a great affection for urban environments and people living within them. "For me," he said, "branding is a way to promote *civitas*, political change," a way of encouraging a city to ask important questions such as, "What do we want to discuss and who are we?"

In all, the conference included over twenty individual project presentations, as well as keynote talks by Bob Stacey, from Rep. Blumenauer's office, and Don Stastny, one of Oregon's most active civic architects. An overstuffed grab bag of ideas, images, opinions and questions, it was probably as good a source of design discussion as the Northwest will get. If you missed it this year (it did sell out), you can attend the next one in the spring of 2004. According to conference organizer Bob Hastings of Tri Met, "It will be a delightful challenge for us to do even better."

John Cava has an architectural practice in Portland, Oregon, where he is a faculty member in the University of Oregon's Urban Architecture Program.

Other Places

Reflections on the WTC:
Understanding Airplane Attacks on Buildings
By Jon Magnusson, P.E.

In the year since the attacks on the World Trade Center, we have seen criticism of aviation security, police and fire fighter response and building codes. Less has been said about what went right, that the buildings survived long enough for more than 25,000 people to safely escape. Many of the things that have been said are misguided, at best, and flat out wrong in other cases. To comprehend what happened to the structures of the World Trade Center, it is important to first understand how hazards are considered in structural system design for all buildings, especially tall buildings.
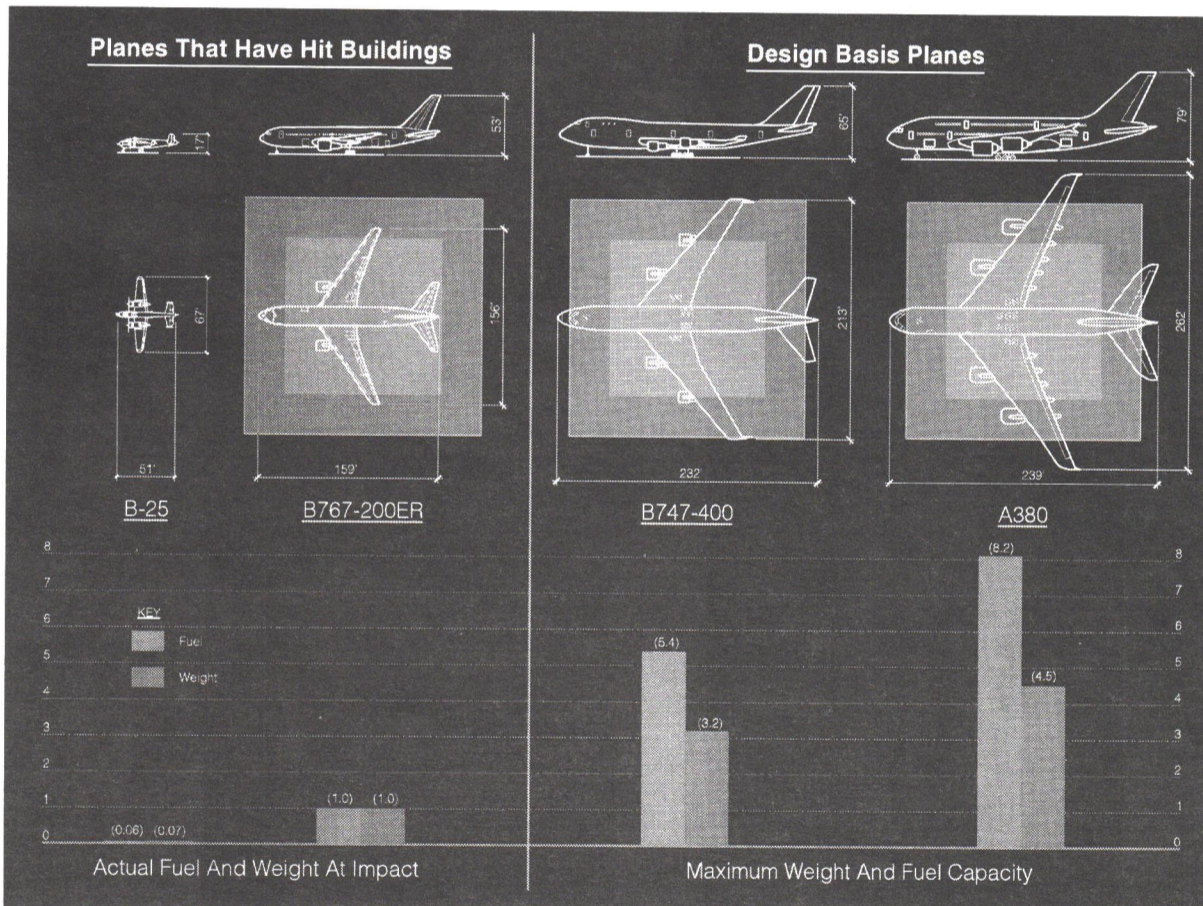
Designing for aircraft impact would require consideration of much larger planes than have previously hit buildings
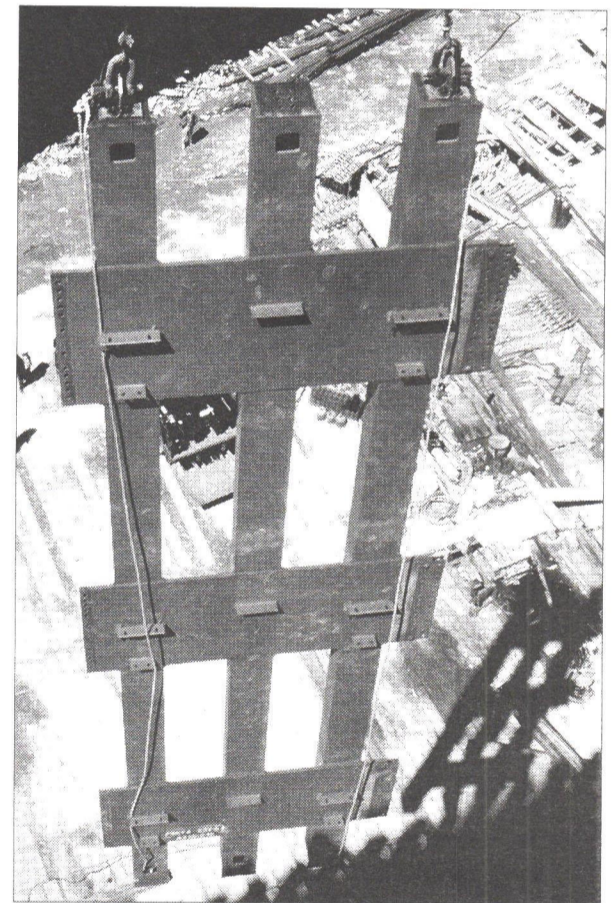
Closely spaced columns were fully welded with the spandrel beams to form an extremely rigid frame

Images courtesy Skilling Ward Magnusson Barkshire

Structural Design

Every structure is exposed to certain hazards during its life. Building codes identify and quantify the specific hazards that engineers must consider in their designs. Inherent in the code provisions, though not stated, are building performance objectives for each hazard and each building type. These performance objectives vary from hazard to hazard and even vary within one hazard type. For most buildings, the performance objective for a small earthquake is no property damage; for a moderate earthquake, repairable damage; and for a large earthquake, as with all hazards, preventing loss of life, although damage may be so extensive that the building may have to be razed.

The seismic risk for the World Trade Center was very small because the New York geology has a low earthquake probability and the sway of tall buildings reduces earthquake forces. If the World Trade Center towers had been built in Los Angeles, even to today's more stringent earthquake standards, their design would not have needed an additional pound of steel, more bolts or bigger welds.

Wind hazard controls the design of most tall buildings. Contrary to appearances, high-rise buildings have a low density. They are mostly air! The density of a high-rise office building is about 8 to 9 pounds per cubic foot. This is lower than balsa wood, which has a density of 10 pounds per cubic foot. As another example, the weight of the soil excavated for the basement of Seattle's 76-story Bank of America Tower was greater than the weight of the entire building and its contents. With these "light" buildings, the size of the main structural frame members is usually determined by the requirement to control sway under wind loads.

There are some hazards that building code authorities consider as possibilities too remote to incorporate into code provisions. Events such as a meteorite strike, a large earthquake-induced shearing displacement of the soil beneath a building and military and terrorist attacks are examples. There are no performance objectives for hazards that have not been considered in the design. If one of these hazards does occur, the results are usually severe.

World Trade Center—September 11th

Everyone has seen the news video showing the South Tower "swallow" the 767 aircraft after it slammed into the south face of the building. This image, burned into our minds, gave most people the wrong expectation that a building can remain standing after a plane hits it. The WTC, however, presented an extremely unusual case because of its great width and its tight column spacing. The tower was 209 feet wide and was left with a hole about 140 feet wide. Many buildings aren't even 140 feet wide. It's not necessary to have an engineering degree to know what would happen if a 140-foot-wide hole were to be placed in a 140-foot-wide building. The building would collapse immediately.

The unusually large width of each WTC tower was not by itself enough, however, to have prevented immediate collapse of the structure. The other critical factor was the structural system for the exterior wall. The exterior columns were spaced at 3'-4" center-to-center. Each was a 14-inch-square steel box, which left only 26 inches clear between columns. This tight column spacing was a direct result of WTC architect Minoru Yamasaki's fear of heights. He wanted the occupants to feel as if they couldn't fall out. This close spacing, in addition to fully welded connections to the spandrel beams, allowed the exterior wall to bridge over the "gaping wound" created in the side of each building. Because of this rare combination of structural features, if there had been the same amount of considerable structural damage, and no fire, the towers could still be standing today.

There have been some calls for changes to fire codes as a result of the WTC attacks. There was nothing in this event, however, that demonstrates that fire codes are inadequate. This event was not a fire as anticipated by building codes. Fire was one component, but the attack also destroyed at least six different systems that would have been present in a fire. Sprinkler systems, fireproofing on the structure, emergency exits, stairway pressurization, floor compartmentation and the redundancy of the complete structure would have been available to protect all lives in the event of a "regular" fire. This attack was not a hazard anticipated by building codes, so it should not be considered a test of code provisions. The codes never attempted to meet any kind of a performance objective for this hazard.

Aircraft impact as a defined hazard

Should aircraft impact be a hazard included in building codes? This question cannot be answered without answering another critical question: Can buildings be designed to stand after airplane impact? If the building structure can't be designed to survive the initial impact, all other questions are moot. The fireproofing thickness, exit widths, or stair separations will be irrelevant if the building becomes an instant pile of debris.

It is possible for a building to survive the impact of an airplane. The Empire State Building was hit by a B-25 in 1945. However, it was a fraction of the size of the 767 aircrafts that were used in the attack on the WTC. If codes were attempting to include aircraft impact as a design hazard, the B-25 and the 767 are certainly not the largest planes that would need to be considered. Design loads for the impact of a 747-400 need to be based on about 3 times the weight and over 5 times the fuel that was on-board the 767s used in the attack on each of the Trade Center Towers. For an Airbus A380, the multiples go up to about 4.5 times the weight and over 8 times the fuel.

Virtually all buildings would collapse immediately upon the impact of a 767. The physics involved in the impact of a 747 or A380 clearly prevent any attempt to design a building to survive such an attack. It can't be done.

What is the solution?

To find the solution to preventing the kind of attack we saw on September 11th, the following question must be answered: Can our country assure the security of the controls in the airplane cockpit? If the answer is "no," then the problem of security extends beyond tall buildings. Sports venues, religious and cultural facilities, cruise ships, bridges, power plants all become potential targets of terrorists using airplanes as bombs. Nothing is safe.

If the answer is "yes," then the September 11th hazard becomes a horrible historical footnote that will not be repeated again. As a country, we must get to "yes." This is achievable and we are almost there. Weapons screening in the terminal, hardened cockpit doors, flight crew protocols and the reactions of passengers during a hijacking are the keys to the solution. The aggressive response of the people on-board the hijacked plane that crashed in Pennsylvania prevented the terrorists from accomplishing their goal of destroying a building. Passengers and crewmembers now know to immediately fight back against hijackers and to never give up control of the plane.

As we tackle the larger problem of terrorism's challenges to building design, each hazard must be carefully considered. The solution strategies for hazards such as car bombs, truck bombs and biological attack will be different. Some will involve preventing the hazard (as in aircraft impact) and others will involve "hardening" the building. The answers will depend on probabilities, strategies, and what is realistically achievable. Changing building codes to consider aircraft impact is the wrong thing to do. Buildings can't be designed to supply this much capacity. The solution is to control the hazard. Keep buildings and airplanes apart.

Jon Magnusson is Chairman/CEO of Skilling Ward Magnusson Barkshire Inc. of Seattle. He served for seven months on the FEMA/ASCE national task force that investigated the WTC attack.
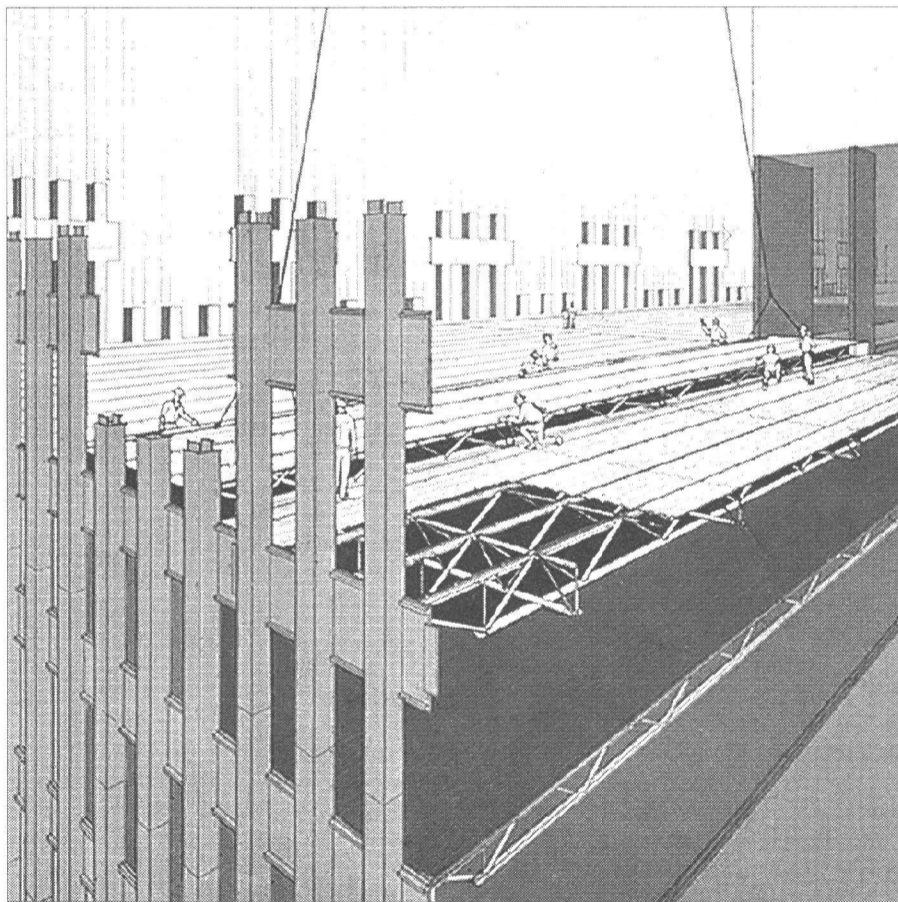
Floor trusses spanned 60 feet from the exterior to the core

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Image + Identity

By Norman Wacker

There is a kind of isolation of communication in architecture, and an isolation of where the architecture occurs—Brad Cloepfil

"Home and Away," my contribution to this special section on Image and Identity, begins with a *mea culpe*. I am a product, a consumer and an accomplice to most of the features of commercial and residential development and urban design that exasperate me. The promise of "affordable," "ready made," "predictable" and "convenient" products were as integral as the GI Bill and the Interstate Highway system to securing housing, clothing and transportation for large families of relatively modest means in the postwar America where I grew up. Unfortunately, these qualities also became trusted esthetic criteria for negotiating the interchangeable parts of the postwar landscape. The templates of the 50s informed ideas of what was orderly, spacious, safe and comfortable, not to mention the design features for generations of products for mass consumption. Furthermore, they established what identities were easily placed in our virtually continental territory and what identities demanded scrutiny or exclusion. They may account for a culture that has grown both more blandly homogeneous and more destructively polarized as our society has grown dramatically more plural. We *share* "affordable," "ready made," "predictable" and "convenient," but articulate our *distinctness* largely by opting out, defacing or upscaling beyond the blandness of our shared arrangements and the unresolved problems of our difference.

A second mea culpe. From this compromising location, I have used my vocations as teacher, writer and critic to form an imaginary and oppositional identity—the intellectual. Like many identities, this one has a large quantity of virtuality and dream. I am not actually an intellectual; I am an employee of a large public institution. But like the intellectual as I idealize him, I aspire to perspective, critical distance and a moral vision uncomplicated by complicity—if only to *imagine* alternatives to uninspiring and oppressive practices. And like my undergraduate mentors still staggering under the weight of T. S. Eliot, I cultivate love and appreciation of those exemplary intellectuals. What is gained in the operating room may be lost in

distancing, however, and perspective may be purchased by loss of engagement and first hand knowledge of practice and its processes.

The pieces in this section display a tension between the concepts we entertain as "dreamers" and the identities, sometimes far richer, surprising and constructive, that we enact as "doers," when engaged in collaborative, discipline and interest crossing practice. I have often been struck by how unavailable our conceptual language can be to the depth, particularity and immediacy of the urban landscape. We deploy conceptual language in part to state our fervent opposition to our lives as consumers and accomplices and to gesture toward an identity beyond it—and of course we can feel deflated when these gestures prove empty. This is often true in my home "discipline" of literary and cultural studies, and I wonder if it is nearly universal in our business schools, schools of architecture and in media studies as well. I also wonder if our theoretical languages in the age of Enron and virtual accounting practices are proving Orwellian operators that secure a false omniscience, a specious independence, while obscuring quite real possibilities for agency and identity.

In my discipline, visionary postmodernism promises a conceptual, technical and imaginative reverie floating above and below the material landscape. Pragmatic postmodernism conceives of a present that cannot escape the circulation of power, interests and their self-serving narratives. Our contributors reflect these poles of contemporary thought. Each piece is touched by despair at what young or independent architects might find to do in large scale, corporate and capital driven development. Each calls attention to the substance and appeal of the visionary in shaping new and meaningful experiences of the city and for the architectural imagination. Brad Cloepfil's description of the divided scene of reflection *about* architecture, and the venues where the *planning* and *doing* of architecture are actually done, spoke to me of both a danger and an opportunity in the tensions between our material and imaginary locations in the modern city, modern architecture and the rhythms of advanced capitalism—what Randy Gragg distinguishes as our *behavior* and our *dreams*.

These pieces demonstrate that *doing architecture* and *actual processes of planning and development* disclose a bewildering and productive web of singular, immediate problems, each requiring "made-to-fit" solutions that are in scale, in context and can integrate the flow of collaboration and conflict. Here "interests" are checked and interrogated and perhaps modified by rival interests. Budgets, materials, regulations and sites must be negotiated. The interactions whereby projects are finalized and constructed alter and ground dreams, even as dreams inform conceptions of what the ground is and what new and old constructions it might bear. The contributors acknowledge the influence that powerful agents, ranging from Peter the Great to Concord Pacific and Henderson, exercise on the architectural imagination. They also acknowledge the force with which the imaginary circulates in the city. The virtual, largely visual and conceptual dimensions of cityscapes are, as it were, new materials.

These pieces may work together, like Owen Gump's photo essay of town halls and municipal buildings, as entries in an incomplete and intriguing anthology. Gump's essay might even be titled, *Northwest Identities, an Incomplete Project*. The buildings loom as if from elite dreams of the good life. Some articulate dreams of the inclusive life of intersections and crossroads to further identities and territories; others appear monuments to working lives; others are embedded to the point of effacement in suburban sprawl, the working woods and waterfronts—sites once on the metropolitan margins, now sites of emerging municipalities. Roxanne Williams and J. Lee Glenn suggest that intersections themselves rendered in the materials of the region, engaging and representing the natural world, might ground and normalize the condition of perpetual transit, perpetual departure and perpetual arrival.

The shaping hands of regional planners, pacific rim constituencies, local concerns, developers, visions of sustainable growth and self-identifications (those Vancouver bicyclists representing those vista friendly high rises to which they are "entitled") converge in the brochures reviewed by Gordon Price. His article analyzes the role of promotional material in constructing a language and visual field for shaping

consumer preferences, preferences that helped generate the margins that could support both developer profits and investment in diversity and public space. Gragg argues that automobile design reflects generations of cross talk between what consumers prefer and what Detroit puts on offer, creating the most "evolved and committed design expression of the individual in America." If our visionary agendas grow exclusionary and disengaged, he fears the greening of production and consumption and the fostering of community may fail to be conversant with the articulating force of industrial design and marketing synergies, ways of knowing acutely adapted to the dynamics of capitalism and markets. Erik Roraback describes the way the contemporary residents of post-modern St. Petersburg will become postmoderns surrounded by monuments to a centuries-long collision between Russian national identity and modernizing, globalizing dreams. Roraback's contribution suggests reading such a convergence well will play no small role in the vitality of that enterprise.

Finally, Cloepfil suggests that development schemes and architectural projects of scale constitute an identity and community making "wild ride" that is budgetary, political, technical and esthetic. For example, the execution of a major project like the Seattle Public Library displays the emerging workings of communities, institutions, technologies and self-understandings of actors. In the fray, groups articulate themselves and come to know each other in a way that is generative, vital and consequential. Analysis that articulates this tumult, and ideas that take on the texture and complexity of large and small scale city making, remind us that in the land of details and actors, crude conceptions of others, rigid self-identifications and sweeping generalizations seldom hold. When dreams of identity and dreams of perspective engage the land of details, and are sharpened and disciplined, when they grow plural and tied to the identities and perspectives of others, they can become venues for crafting identities as articulated, complex and heightened as our cities, as our times.

Photographs by Daniel Waugh
Above: Gothic, Baroque, Fin de Siecle and
Modernist construction coexist along the Vlatava
river in "historic" Prague.

Home and Away: Decentering and the City

By Norman Wacker

I am just returned to my "native" Seattle from an academic quarter in Prague, and have reawakened old dissatisfactions with my city. Perhaps I am dissatisfied because I am a suburban transplant of the mid-western variety, living in a city of suburban transplants and recent arrivals. Seattleites are, like most Americans, urban only by default. In flight from natal suburbs, we come to adulthood in cities. We are urbanites until graduation or until our children are school age, our partners are promoted and our portfolios complete. Then we return to our birthrights—suburban schools, presumably less predatory suburban streets—and we purchase our own stands of suburban trees. We opt for exposed arteries and private cars over the "common space" of the metro car, the metro platform, the metro station.

Mea culpa? Perhaps. Being an urban person who clashes with urban realities may be more than a personal failing, though. It may be a typical feature of urban life. Praguers seem as out of their element in Prague as I am in Seattle. They are city dwellers whose nationalist mythology remembers militant religious reformers of medieval times and a vanished Czech life of the countryside. These mythologies contributed to a 19TH century national revival that articulated a heroic Czech present via the iconography of a pre-urban and pre-industrial past. At the turn of the century, this myth of Czech identity would have poorly served Praguers who, like most Czechs, were agnostic, or were Jews, Roman Catholics, German speakers or Roma. Nonetheless, staves of grain, the Hussite revolution and the late feudal hamlet, along with the decorative languages of art nouveau and cubism, graced the building facades and bank notes of the 1st Republic in the 1920s and 30s. A medieval past imagined and a timeless exchange between city and countryside remain backdrops to Prague's edgy, highly entrepreneurial present.

Prague, like the Czech language, always slightly escapes me, but so does my own city. Seattle combines the preservation of its vistas with traffic impasses that make the city's natural gifts—its in-city neighborhoods—seem less accessible, more colored by exasperation, rendering them strangely remote and less consequential to the spirit. They are so beautifully there and so distant. Perhaps cities subvert our identities as profoundly at home as they

do abroad—especially since, for most of us, home and abroad now intersect in the same place. Cities are places where recent arrivals, who self-identify with their origins, their social classes and their faiths, encounter environments whose very scale and historical reference points challenge existing identifications. At the same time, old hands take all attempts at new identity formation with an ironic grain of salt.

In Central European cities with newly opened borders, and in increasingly globalized Northwest US cities, the weight of new and estranged residents upon brittle, tenuous and increasingly transient senses of existing community is a defining feature of urban life. Praguers extend hospitality and form friendships in ways that seem to me extinct in North America, yet no Prague landlord or lady fails to warn tenants against Russian, Bulgarian and Roma "foreigners." Prague teenagers decry the "center" as too expensive for "us," and claim that the hardcore music clubs in the basements of the outlying housing estates are where the real Prague youth culture resides. The implication is that the center is for "foreigners." And in important ways, it is. English language, Visa cards, logo-inscribed dress are all accepted in the center, if not yet required. For some Praguers, standards of living and forms of consumption and leisure have unfolded in their midst, from which they feel excluded, or simply find different from what they had in mind when they imagined life after the police state.

On holidays, Praguers flow into the countryside, to the *hatas*, the vacation cabins that multiplied during Normalization in peripheral green space along woods, rivers and railroad rights of way. They escape to their garden plots, or, carrying rucksacks, to the trails in the woods that can be reached by train. For some in an economy of scarcity, housekeeping was reserved for the *hata* or the grandparental house in the village. The spiral entryways, the silent lifts, the lofty ceilings and parquet floors of Prague flats can look stark and "unimproved," as if paint and furnishings had been neglected for a decade or two. When the weather turns, those of us without country places experience the exchange between Prague and the countryside with our rucksacks. My neighbors leave early in the morning from the local bus stops and tram stands, looking like disorganized school groups or sketchy

paramilitaries. They flow into the metro escalators, catch commuter trains at Masaryk station and disembark at Srbsko. They straggle and meander through the woods to Karlstein, and take the late afternoon return train, and we encounter each other again waiting at the bus or tram stand to return to our flats, quiet, gratified and sunburned. Like its churches and cathedrals, which house few living congregations, Prague can feel evacuated on a spring day and during the summer months.

The distinct quarters and squares, the manufacturing plants and the housing estates of Prague's perimeter are joined by the tubes of the green, red and yellow lines. The metro is characterized by speed, safety and a notorious absence of chatter and eye contact. The toiling of escalators back to the surface recalls Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. Above ground, the discontinuous collage of old quarters and new towns is not easily pieced together again. The labyrinth of squares, passages, courtyards and lanes was never successfully tamed by the geometric grid of 19TH century urban planning.

The interwar expansion of Prague, capital of the newly minted Czechoslovak state, was accompanied by a massive boom in residential housing. In Devitska, for example, wedges of private seven-story flats with central entryways, circular landings, open balustrades and silent elevator cabins in exposed shafts were built along spoke-like streets radiating from the central traffic circle. Terracotta roofs and narrow stucco facades embellished with both national revival and socialist evocations of rural life are mixed with art nouveau, "cubist" motifs and unadorned, self-consciously functionalist restraint. Ground floor storefronts house grocers, fruit stands, pubs and droggeria, drawing their clientele from the immediate vicinity. Pharmacies, sit down restaurants and merchandisers cluster about the squares, the metro stops and the main tram exchanges. Global chains and logos and Czech corporate flagships dominate Wenceslaus Square, Namesti Republika and Narodni Trida.

The heavy dunning of the tram carriages and their webs of overhead lines memorialize the burgeoning proletarian and capitalist bourgeois energies of interwar Prague. They coexist with other rhythms, including the aggressive modernism of Le Corbusier, Adolf Loos and Karel

Teige. These utopian projects call for rationality, imposing order on the chaos and indeterminacy of urban space through unencumbered, technically refined buildings. The brushed aluminum and plate glass Trade Place, built in the 1920s, currently houses the contemporary collection of the national museum. Recently built, seemingly weightless alloy and glass, light bearing descendants of the Trade Palace, house a regional Seimens headquarters and a Frank Gehry designed residential complex, buildings that share the "Evropska" corridor with its terminus at Ruzyne International Airport.

Adolf Loos's Mueller Villa, the dream of rigorous, unencumbered privilege, built during the interwar boom, dominates the single-family residences bordering Prague Castle grounds and overlooking Evropska. Interior stairs, as precipitous as those in the metro or Berlin's Jewish Museum, link the staggered floors of a domestic theatre. The interior window from Mrs. Muller's bedroom assured she could view the living room and in turn be viewed—the Lady on her pedestal. High kitchen windowsills obstructed wayward servants from viewing street life. Moving through the floor plan is exacting, a kind of spatial inhibition—homage to the seamlessness of the designer's authority over sightlines, movements, textures and living spaces. From the rooftop deck of Villa Mueller, you can see the 1960s and 70s housing blocks that ring Prague. On a sunny day, their flat roofs and block-like geometries resemble limestone formations on distant ridges. When it's overcast, the housing block facades look like silk-screened, watermarked, tattooed monoliths. They compose together the functionalist Villa and its Other—amorphous, cost-effective housing blocks, those miscarriages of Loosian space and Karel Teige's minimal dwelling.

In a world of gothic and baroque cathedrals, peaked roofs and domes, the more contemporary functionalist structures such as housing estates, manufacturing plants and warehouses can be welcome. Structurally efficient, spare, relatively open and self-evident, they offer respite from history's accretions and labyrinths. Ludwig Wittgenstien's father developed the coalfields in neighboring Kladno. Like veterans of the Kladno steel works—greenhouse structures built in part by forced labor—he worked to escape Central European history, clerical and imperial rule and the suctions of militarism and scarcity.

Those disparaged housing blocks where I lived happily ten years ago in a Slovakia still socialist in all but name, appeared on bright days as one more incarnation of the tower, the elevated garden, the balcony in the firmament. Esthetics and the identities they make possible blur ideas of the beautiful, the cost effective, the functional. Children played communally seven floors below; physicians and factory workers coexisted; vistas on the Tatras and the cloudscapes above were available from the porches where we set the wash out to dry. Admittedly they were

towers for workers, people preoccupied with weekends and escaping the darker features of the past's proximity to the twilight of Habsburg and Nazi, not to mention, Soviet rule.

This spring when I was leaving my Prague flat on Pushkinova—I trust people who name public spaces after poets—I felt like I was leaving home. Willow and linden trees, benches and intersecting walk ways. Drunkards and dog walkers congregating into the small hours just below my window. Toddlers, parents and teens filling the square when the sun shines. In-your-face entrepreneurs, expatriates and Prague Spring and Normalization survivors do not easily coexist in the lifts and entry ways, but in this modest square and in more imposing ones, people are together after all. In this public meeting ground, it's as if they're on holiday from the private confines of their flats. These public squares can seem, in this city of Kafka's, more like "interiority" made visible than physical spaces. Given its history, Prague has few deeply rooted elements of civil society, and adaptations to former police states die hard. The influx of foreigners, tourists and immigrants brings global habits of work and consumption, frequently denominated in euros and dollars rather than crowns. These developments can provoke anomie and backlash. But for now, the niche-like mix of pubs, inexpensive spirits, Czech language bookstores and small scale and specialty retail imbues each of Prague's residential quarters with a sense of place that seems able to absorb the blows.

Perhaps built environments, arts and entertainment venues, residential patterns and amenities anchor both the enterprise of identity formation and the experiences —transient as they may be—of participation, orientation, even belonging. The post-socialist ethnopolitics of the Yugoslav wars suggest just how crucial and constructive less exclusionary forms of identification can be, rather than identifications with dubious and polarizing histories and their fixed and prescriptive loyalties. Abundant momentary and local places *to identify with* are vital, encouraging a feeling of location and participation, even if fleeting and opportunistic, fostering only an impromptu "we" or mediating our transition from workplaces to our private places.

Face to face transactions in small establishments, humble and grand public spaces and private worlds aired out and sunned in the local square may explain why so far, for Praguers, the politics of xenophobia are just another reviled dogmatism. In these enclaves, if one meets the global city at all, it is mediated by distinctly Prague textures and curmudgeonly, labyrinth-like, but human scales, even as the influx of foreign purchasing power, a leveling, all appropriating force that the dissident face of Prague defied, has defied previous appropriating waves and invasions. Bohumil Hrabal's stories of drunken integrity, ignobling squalor and aging grace, and Frank

Gehry's "Fred and Ginger," a graceful apparition on an errant allied bomb site, are icons of burgeoning energies contained in an Aikido-like engagement of a violent history, a dance-like dispelling of its forces in humor and grace.

I returned to Seattle with an altered sense of proportion, feeling placed, not fettered by density of forms and histories. I have a heightened appreciation and an orientation toward others moving through city spaces with me, in some momentarily inclusive spectacle. And yes, I grit my teeth, exasperated that I cannot move with alacrity across the open vistas of my Seattle in the way that I can fly like Elizabeth Bishop's Man-Moth below ground in the historic quarters of my Prague.

I watch the low rises spilled across lower Queen Anne Hill with my son, who was born in those housing blocks in Slovakia ten years ago. I am wondering what has happened to the tops of the buildings, the squares and plazas defined by verticals, the blocks of flats with their ceaselessly shifting facades and the labyrinths, spiraling lanes, towers and elevations. I had forgotten that it could be the job of a building to stay out of the way of spaces, to be a node for the flow of vistas and traffic, like islands in time-lapse photographs, but I wonder if the loft and variegation of the built environment we experience more immediately suffer accordingly. I am reminded of our history, this light industrial, aviation factory town, whose light emitting sheds bordering the Duwamish may still be our most distinctive and rigorous buildings. I had forgotten high rises might huddle like a weather-besieged stand of ancient trees in a clear cut, by turns undistinguished boxes and obsidian, an aluminum axis on which a whole basin seems to turn in uneven light.

A city can curate its vistas and proximity to nature while erasing it at the margins with its cars. A city can border an ocean or an estuary even as it makes their larger connections to the natural order disappear. A freeway can curve like a maturing river through the environment, for better or worse. I had forgotten in my preoccupations with things European that my children grew and grow up here as happily as any souls I know, and were reared on these freeways. We have our own horizontal, high power line crossed, taillight-illuminated, rolling-backup-inflected ways of calling the firmament to dwell among us.

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Some Provisional Notes on Branding Regional Architecture

By Randy Gragg

It's nearly impossible to talk about the future of Oregon architecture by talking about architecture at all. We've lost much of the culture of building that defined the best moments of the last century when architecture was defined by the egos—and superegos —of corporations and individuals with long-term investments in the community. The valuation of business now resides neither in buildings nor in its role in the community, but instead almost exclusively in shareholder returns. The valuation of individuals is measured less by the innovation with which they lead their lives than by their style. In this climate, architecture is little more than a vending machine for the corporation, and a display case for the individual.

Theory or even history won't be much help in repositioning the field—and by the field, I mean for the ordinary practitioner, not the stars—to a place of greater relevance.

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1/ 2/ 3/ 4/

Note 1

A few weeks ago at EnvironDesign, an annual meeting of those committed to "sustainable design," the high priests of better behavior were all in attendance: William McDonough, Sym Vand der Ryn, Carl Frankel, Robert F. Kennedy, even Oregon's governor, John Kitzhaber. The second night's keynote speaker, however, was someone a little unexpected: J. Mays, design director of Ford. Though Mays is an art center graduate and worked at Volkswagen and Audi before his current position, a surprising number of Oregon's eco-congregation "boycotted" his talk, because he works for Ford, maker of evil SUVs.

Ford's new CEO, Henry Ford's grandson, is attempting to green the company by, among other things, redesigning its entire central factory in Dearborn using William McDonough as the architect. But the more important point the boycotters missed is what Ford might do for manufacturing. There is no more evolved and committed design expression of the individual in America—really in Europe, too—than our cars. Few items match the automobile industry's economy of scale. If Ford adopts and successfully markets a sustainable hubcap, it will entirely change the course of manufacturing. And these architects boycotted him.

Here are a couple of things Mays shared:

We are moving from a sustenance driven culture to an altar-driven culture, to more inner-directedness and an emphasis on self-fulfillment. People are not looking for products. They are looking for dreams.

The bottom line to Mays is, you sell nothing with guilt. You sell by appealing to need and inspiring love.

I asked Mays afterward how Ford must change to reach the next generation of consumers. He said flatly, "We must behave. They want to know everything about us: where we make our products, what charities and political causes we give our money to. They are not buying a car, they are buying something to believe in."

Note 2

I presented a panel discussion last spring entitled "Branding the City: Beyond the Sales Pitch" at Portland City Club.

Branding has become the current buzzword among civic promoters and politicians. With Portland currently creating "downtown retail strategies" and "economic development plans," I wanted to see if there might be a slightly deeper way of looking at the issues than the usual reliance on themes. Instead of slogans like Atlanta, Georgia's "Welcome to the possibility city—anything is possible" or efforts to focus investment like Ottawa's "Canada's Advanced Technology Capital," I am interested in the example of Edinburgh, Scotland which has developed a program called "Excellence in Edinburgh." The original idea was simply to create a brand around the stamp, "Made in Edinburgh." But it evolved into a more ambitious project of defining that logo as a brand of quality. To meet eligibility requirements for the "Excellence in Edinburgh" seal, you have to earn accreditation through a rigorous review of your services or your products by a city panel.

It's a pitch to sell brand Edinburgh to the world, but it's also a pitch from Edinburgh to itself: We want to be excellent.

Note 3

The business of America is business, so too is 99 percent of architecture. If we want to think about architecture differently, we'll need to think about business differently first.

Ford, Kohler, Cadbury, Weyerhaeuser, Boeing and others once understood that business was an integral part of society. Its role was not only to generate wealth for the owner, but also to create opportunity for all who engaged in the business' transactions, from the entry-level employee to the most distant customer.

Today, the ethos of business is better described as "corporatism." It's useful to remember that the spreadsheet was only invented in the early 80s. Much as the valuation of anything, from color to love to life itself, can now be reduced to profit and loss columns and actuary tables, so to has the valuation of architecture.

In response to business, the customer is tired and feels abused. So, too, with the inhabitants of our architecture.

Note 4

Markets are conversations. So is architecture. So what should we talk about?

Sustainability, of course, is the latest buzz. But for the most part, that's vocabulary, not conversation, much less poetry. It's technique, not architecture.

Consider another approach.

"Medicine will not be adequate to deal with the health challenges of the 21ST century, not even with the help of the sequenced genome and advances in robotic surgery," writes Richard Joseph Jackson, MD, MPH of the Center for Disease Control. "The U.S. spends one of every seven dollars on medical care, but we will not significantly improve health and the quality of life unless we pay more attention to how we design our living environments."

Asthma is reaching epidemic proportions, with as many as 30 percent of our children packing inhalers in urban areas. Since 1988, psychotropic drug intake has more than tripled. Ritalin use has risen from 70 million doses daily in 1987 to 350 million in 1998. Diabetes is now the 7TH largest cause of death in the U.S. In Atlanta, during ozone alert days, emergency room visits have increased by 30 to 40 percent. Seventy percent of adults have no meaningful exercise. Fifteen percent are obese.

In the meantime, the most self-obsessed generation in history—the American baby boomers—are entering their older years. A degrading environment, increased health risks, an aging population. Add it up: health will be the reigning issue of the early 21ST century. Whether it will pervade the loftiest thinking of architectural theorists I couldn't say, but it sure is going to pervade the market. And in its best form, it could reinvigorate the notion of regionalism.

The question is: Do architects want to make buildings for a market? Or do architects want to engage the public in a conversation that *defines* the market?

It comes down to brand: how you behave and what values are behind your stamp of excellence.

City Hall

Photographs by Owen Gump
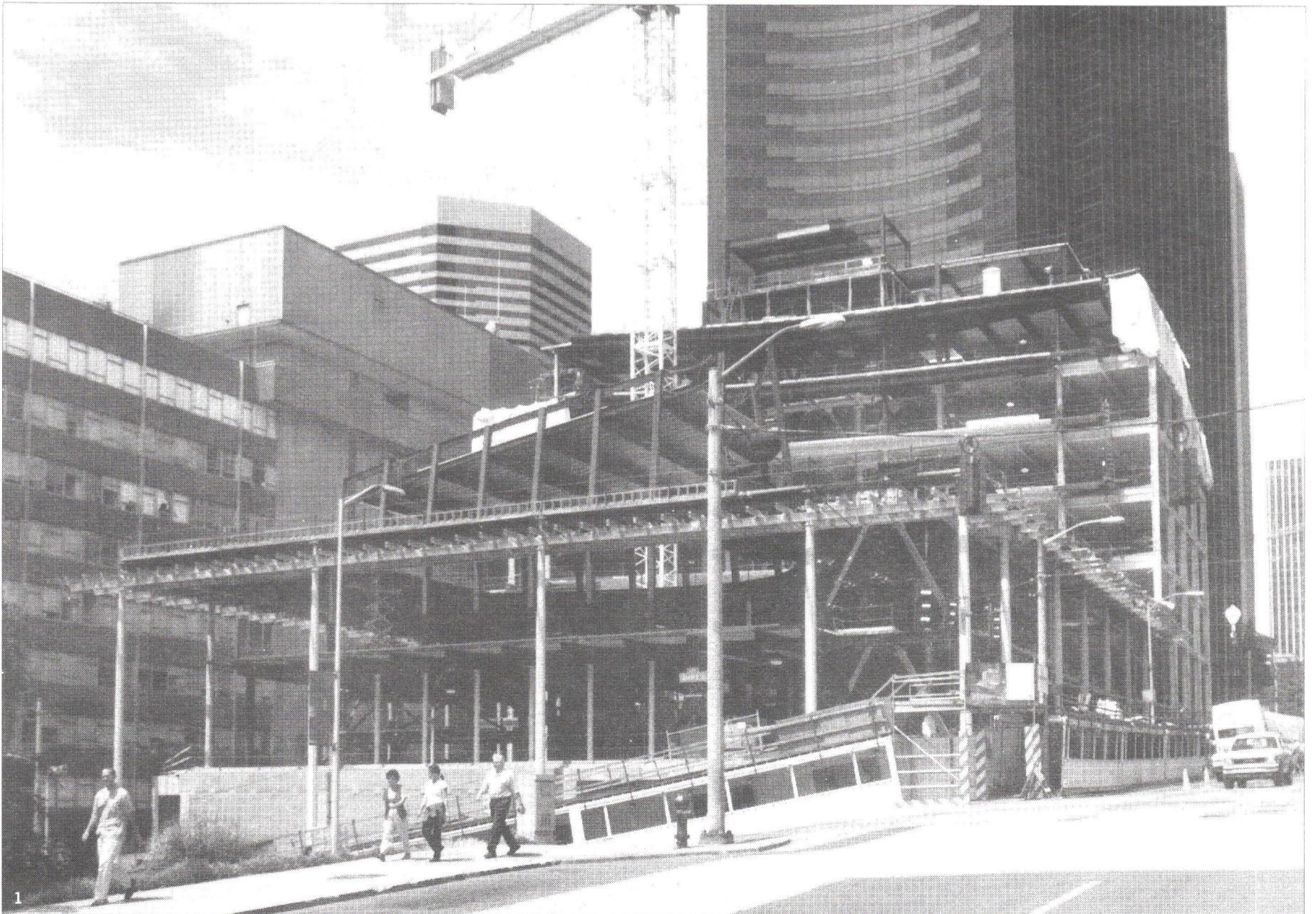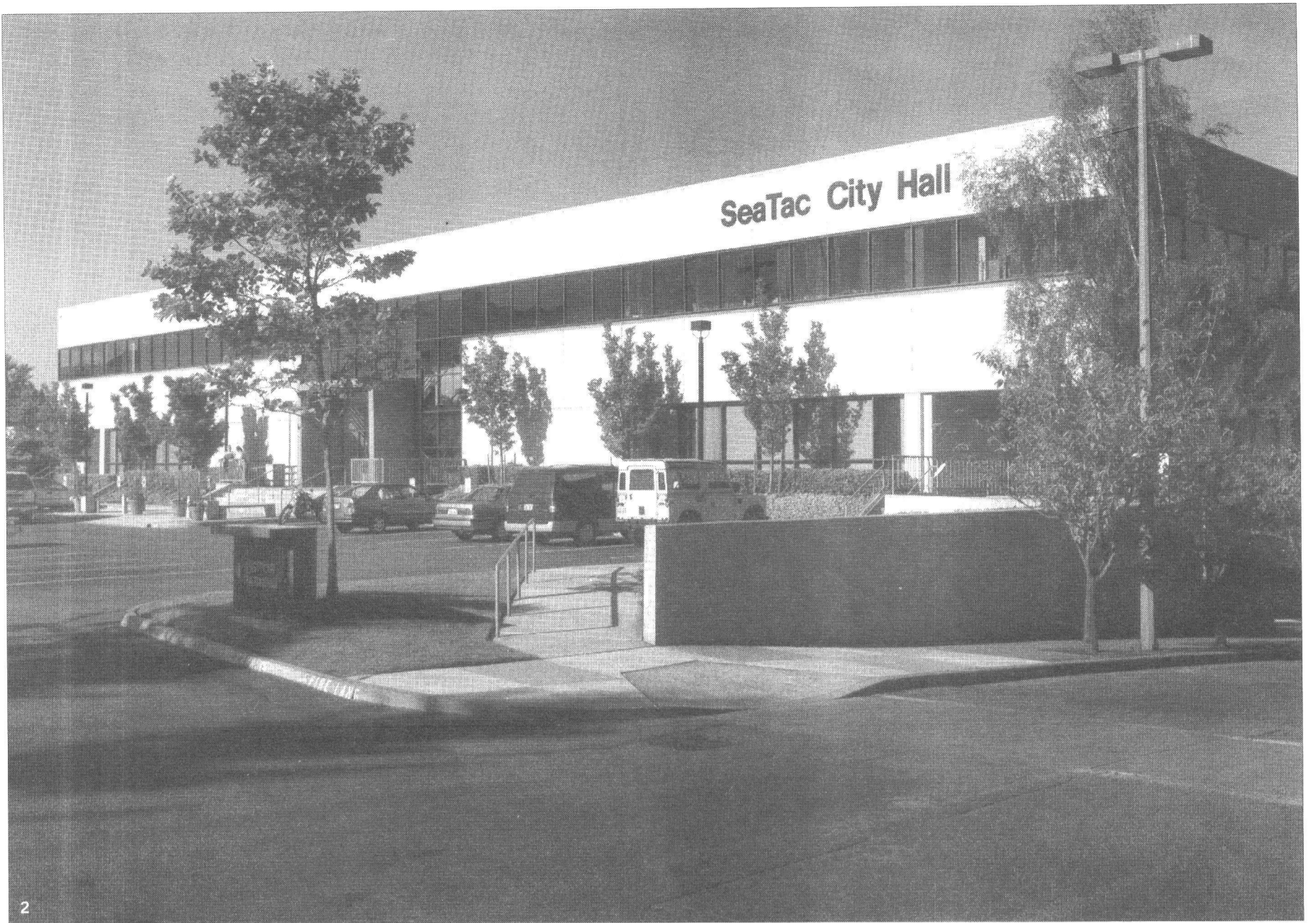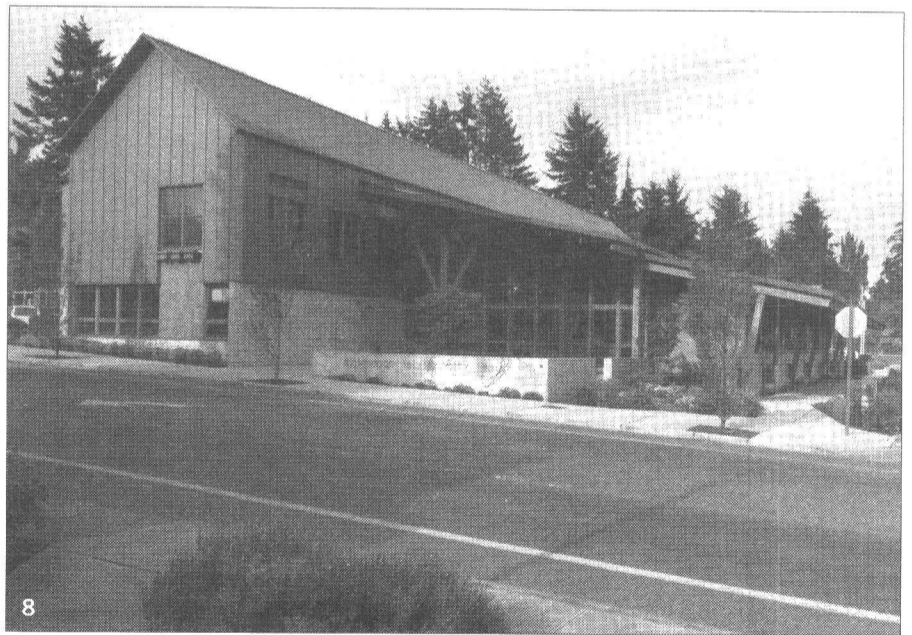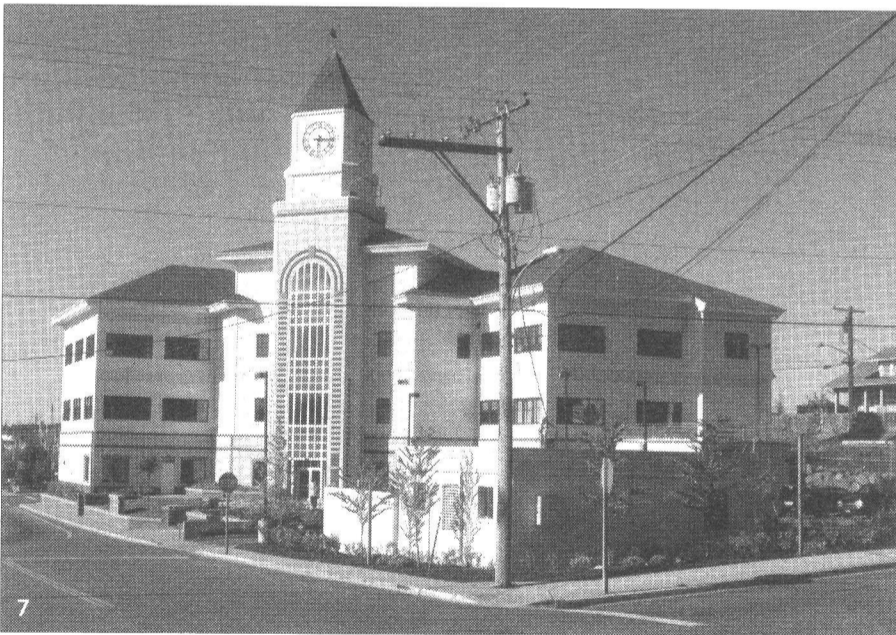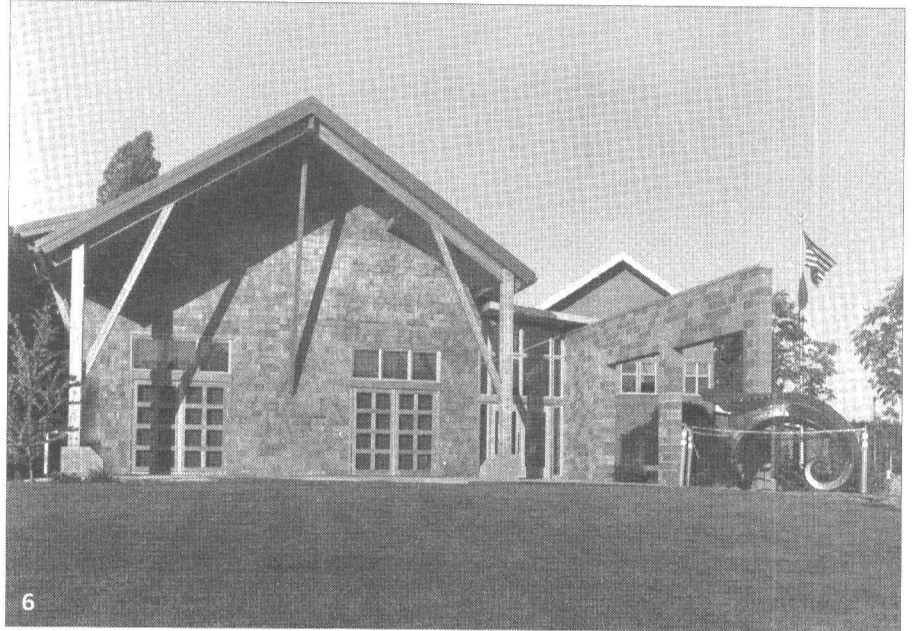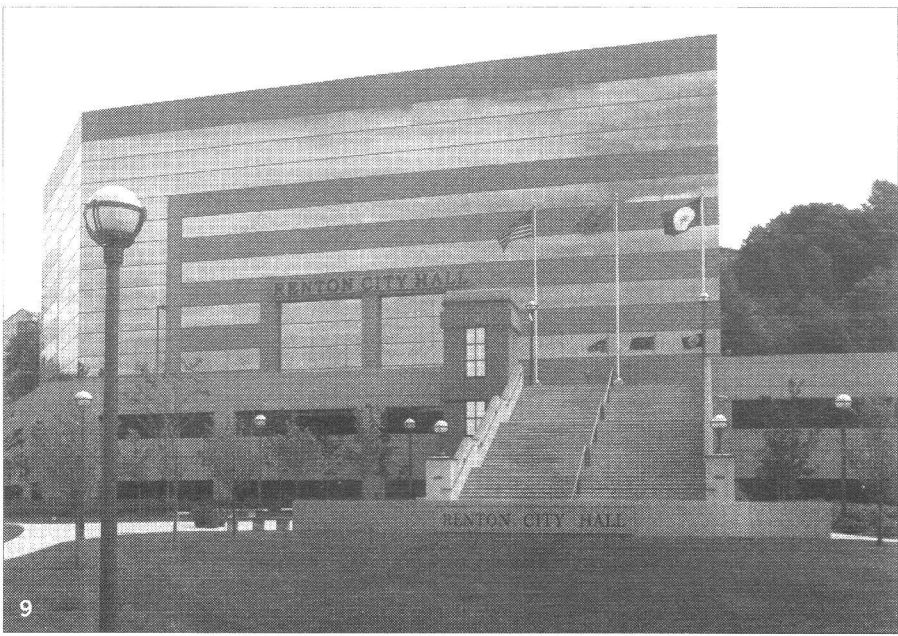
Owen Gump has held solo and group shows at the American Institute of Architects, Seattle; the University of Washington; and the University of Oregon, Portland Center. He received his BA in Design and Planning from the University of Washington in June of 2002.

1. Seattle / Fall 2003
2. SeaTac / 1980
3. Mukilteo / Date unknown
4. Port Townsend / 1892
5. Medina / 1915
6. Woodinville / 2001
7. Port Orchard / 1999
8. Bainbridge Island / 2002
9. Renton / 1985
10. Redmond / 1970
11. Shoreline / 1982

Identity and Airports

By Roxanne Williams and
J. Lee Glenn

A Sense of Place in an Environment of Change

An airport is the epitome of an environment of change. The traveler is in transition, whether arriving or departing. In a setting often marked by harsh lighting and rampant over-stimulation, confusion is everywhere. Yet despite the inevitable identity of the airport as an environment of change, there is no other locale in which establishing a site-specific relationship is more crucial to its success. Correspondingly, regional distinctions and regional identity are crucial components of establishing a sense of place.

Establishing a Sense of Place

While every airport design team recognizes this need, there are two distinctly different ways to approach the challenge. For many, establishing place is approached through the use of simplistic, iconographic imagery and literal representations of regionally specific symbols and objects, whether Texas Longhorns or Georgia Peaches. It's hard to miss this overt message when there is a steer around every corner.

The air traveler is uniquely vulnerable to the terminal's message because of the airport's nature as an environment of change, particularly so in these times of heightened (in)security. The shouting voice of cartoonish, iconographic imagery is ultimately self-defeating if an airport's design team seeks a fluid and calming environment that also radiates a strong and healthy relationship to its unique locale. The harsh and two-dimensional iconographic approach actually increases the frenetic quality and confusion that signifies the traveler is, in fact, in no place special, despite an attempt at regional representation. The literal recognition of where you are and a deeper perception of the regional character of the area served by an airport are two very different things.

Truly establishing regional identity requires identifying key elements that embody the unique character of the region or its inhabitants, and balancing those elements in an organic, multifaceted environment. This is the conceptual approach for the Sea-Tac South Terminal Expansion Project (STEP), scheduled to open in spring, 2004.

At SeaTac, elements specific to the Pacific Northwest will be obvious to the passengers even as they disembark from the plane. Passengers arriving at the new South Terminal will experience the grace and the grandeur of the Pacific Northwest through a wall of glass, with a view of indigenous trees and the towering Cascades in the distance. In the main Departures Hall, shadows created by skylights placed above the beams will reproduce the ever-changing pattern of shadows projected on a forest floor. In addition, by modulating the amount of light in the interior, through a careful balance of diffuse and direct sources, the facility recreates the celebration of bright sun-breaks in a generally cloudy region.

The materials used in the expansion project will also help create the sense of place, as they originate in the Pacific Northwest and reflect the natural palette. Even the pattern of the terrazzo in the new STEP arrivals lobby resembles rock slabs sculpted by time, alluding to the patterns that glaciers made when they carved out the region.

These are non-literal images that create a specific, local connection, introducing the region without cheapening or mimicking the experience by simplifying it to the lowest common denominator of a popular theme. This approach recognizes the complexity of regional expression and ambitiously strives for a richness of experience often assumed unattainable in an airport environment.

Another variation on this approach to regional specificity involves an expressive incorporation of place into the materiality of the base terminal building. This methodology utilizes elements, particularly interior finish materials that have a connection to the region, whether in production, use or coloration. A further extension of this response is the integration of a comprehensive art program, where the art program is based on expressions of regional significance.

In the design of significant new terminal facilities at the Calgary International Airport this approach is utilized in a comprehensive manner to enrich the site-specific passenger experience. Culturally, Calgary melds Native American and European influences, coupled with the resilient attitude required of people who settled a region of Canada challenged by climatic extremes. The existing terminal is large-scale, buff colored precast with infill of both metal panel and glazing. This expression is also evident in the existing interior, where buff colored tile and multi-colored carpet floor treatments are prevalent. To capture the essence of the airport in its regional context, the detailing of the hall is crafted from a balance of existing airport materials and materials indigenous to the region. The superstructure of the new Central Hall is derived from the buff colored concrete of the existing terminal, coupled with the long-span trusses necessitated by the large open space. Surfaces are articulated with indigenous stone and wood to provide a substantive materiality for the space, and to facilitate durability and longevity. In addition, secondary columns finished in Rundle stone from nearby Mount Rundle, patterns in the carpeting, water features and an extensive art program contribute to melding architecture and cultural expression.

Conclusion

In the airport environment of change, passengers are themselves moving, and everything around them is in a constant state of flux, engendering an emotional imbalance. Hence calming is an important airport design goal that can best be addressed by establishing an organic, multi-layered sense of place, through means that are subtle in effect. A successfully established balance may even transcend the traveler's conscious awareness, creating a non-obtrusive environment that results in subliminal calming.

Naturally, there are airports that both employ simplistic iconography and attempt to codify the essence of place without literal interpretation. To achieve emotional balance, the latter comprehensive, architecturally integrated approach is superior in its ability to achieve the reconciliation of motion and stasis inherent in an airport design problem. In addition, it avoids the pitfalls of two-dimensional and blatantly cartoonish design.

The codification of defining elements of a regional character and the use of those elements within the context of the airport requires a level of commitment and refinement of effort that is all too rarely evidenced in airport design execution. Such an effort, however, will have a profound impact on the creation of airports that are extraordinary in their ability to capture an evocative and expressive sense of their host region, a defining characteristic of airports that are clearly somewhere rather than nowhere.

Roxanne Williams and J. Lee Glenn are award-winning architectural designers with extensive experience in large scale public building prototypes. Their primary focus is the design of transportation facilities, including aviation terminals at major hub and regional airports. They currently lead transportation design projects at NBBJ in Seattle.

"[The American built landscape] is littered with cartoon buildings and commercial messages...we whiz by them, through them and forget them. They do not celebrate anything beyond their mechanized ability to sell merchandise and services. One convenience store looks like the next and we do not want to remember them. We did not savor the approach and we were not rewarded upon reaching the destination, and it will be the same next time, and every time. There is little sense of having arrived anywhere, because every place looks like no place in particular."
—*The Geography of Nowhere* by James Howard Kunstler
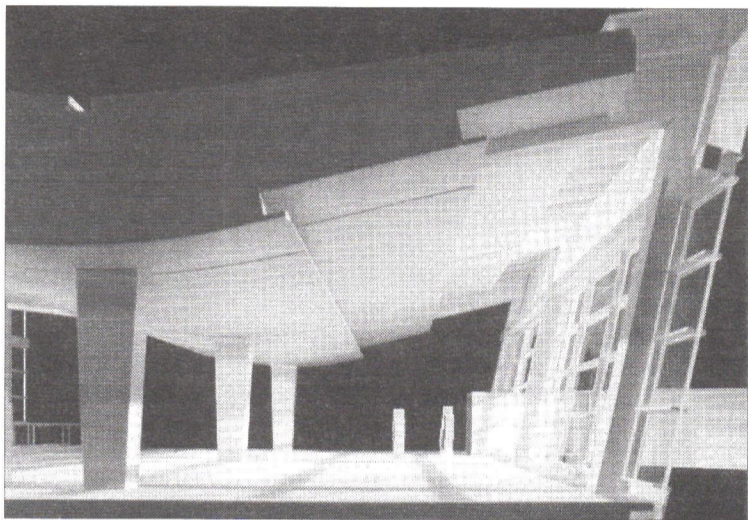
The movement of the ceiling in the new STEP concourse lifts gracefully toward the curtain wall, leading the passengers through the space.
Photography by Fred Housel
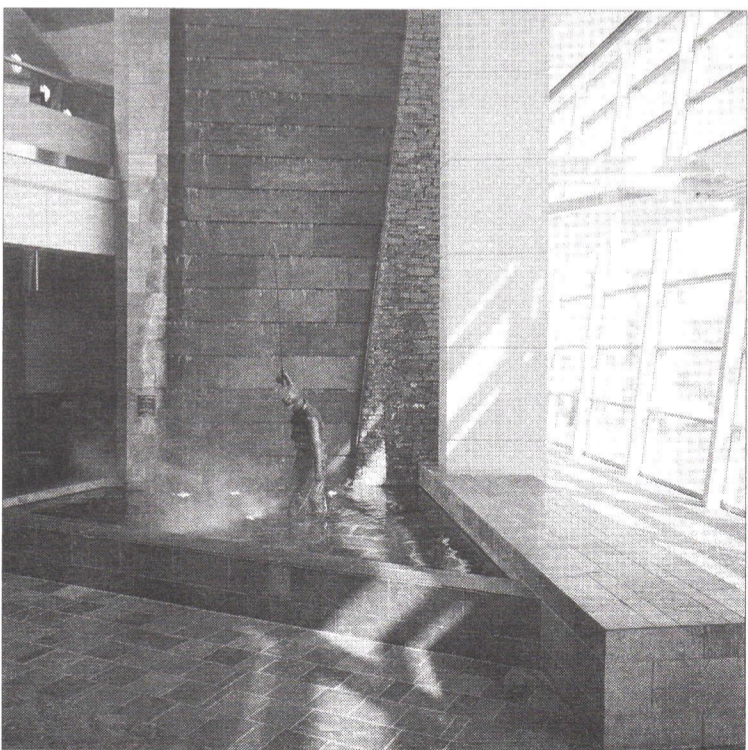
Natural local materials are used throughout the Calgary International Airport to provide places of repose that involve the senses.
Photography by Colin Goldie

Folding St. Petersburg Communities: Spaces and Subjectivities

White Palace, Neva facade

By Erik S. Roraback

Looking at three buildings in St. Petersburg, one Petrine (from the time of Tsar Peter the Great), one Modernist and one Postmodernist, reveals the Latebaroque (1750s) and Postbaroque (1760–present) continuum that has continuously served to subjectivize the Petersburg subject. The most distinguishing characteristic of the Baroque for Gilles Deleuze in his *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* is the operative concept of the fold and of how matter of all kinds is folded in Baroque artworks. In this light, I shall examine how these three architectural works are still constructing the 21st century Petersburgian community, space and subject. In this way, the nonhuman parts of subjectivity, subjectification and identity that architecture constitutes will be illuminated both to throw light on Post-1991 (Post USSR) capitalist subjectivity in St. Petersburg, and to suggest some approaches out of the impasse of today's dominant subjectivity.

The contemporary French thinker Jean-Luc Nancy speaks of the "*free space* at the heart of which freedom can exist," and of how "freedom is, at every moment, the freedom of a free space." St. Petersburg's violent history, which includes a notorious, extremely devastating 900-day Nazi blockade, serves to underline such claims about the importance of spatiality for one's ontological freedom. Spaces and their consumption are a substance and an apparatus that produce community and subjectivity. The following three sites in which freedom and identity are both articulated and obstructed form a historical dimension that St. Petersburg's inhabitants are facing in new ways.

Our first Petersburg image is the Baroque Winter Palace of 1754-64, designed by Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli. For the sharp-eyed critic and historian William Craft Brumfield, "the final version of the Winter Palace remains the great expression of imperial Russian architecture and of the autocratic state that willed its construction. Authority is connoted by the very scale of the building, whose horizontal lines are segmented by the repetition of column and statuary...the Winter palace represents the quintessence of Saint Petersburg's monumental style." This edifice visualizes and exposes the immense regard given to sovereign and foundational classical structures in Russian cultural and political life. Here

the individual perhaps feels the ground being pulled from under her feet, but the aesthetic pleasure the building renders as an exposition of spatial and community identity speaks to the notion of a Russian Baroque identity. This informs the view that we are in a Neobaroque period today, partly because of the staying power of such structures as the Winter Palace.

As a bearer of cultural values and an artifact of national identity, the Palace poses even more questions than it answers about different forms of identity and community. The subjectification and identity making process promoted by the aesthetic and the material power of the Winter Palace is enmeshed with the potent Tsarist tradition, and with a desire by some to be ruled by a monumental and autocratic political and religious regime of power. Today, Petersburgians are largely proud of the Winter Palace and exploit its material value on the stock exchange of the tourist market. The feudalist-inspired monumentality of the Palace cooperates neatly with today's capitalist structures, even while it oozes cultural capital. In truth, here, the two forms of capital are indissociable.

The second building to examine is an apartment house, no.159 Fontanka Quay in Petersburg of 1910-11, designed by the architect Aleksei Bubyr. Brumfield notes, "he himself developed the rationalist side of the style moderne, with equal atten-

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Apartment House, No. 159 Fontanka Quay

Apartment House, Vasilevskii Island, Leningrad

tion to aesthetics and engineering...the building is striking not only for its lack of ornamentation, but also for its molded outline." Here one observes the increasing rationalization of building materials folded onto one another, and so also a kind of half-baked building for rationalist consumption for that Enlightenment-based belief system of communism that would be forged inside one decade in Russia, in the name of a freedom and identity that would not be accomplished. What is more, insofar as metaphysical, rationalist and therefore even communist modernist buildings set the plate for postmodernist ones, there is a postmetaphysical, postrationalist, and Postmodern Petersburg subject who runs through the door that was opened up by modernist dwellings such as Bubyr's.

One such Postmodern edifice for us to observe here to fill out our trio is the apartment complex on Vasilevski Island in what was then Leningrad of 1983-86, from the architects V. Sokolov and P. Kurochkin. Brumfield writes of the complex: "the multistoried arches that led into the courtyards of Stalinist apartment complexes have reappeared in an attempt to deal with the monotony of the endlessly repeated facade. Perhaps the most striking...example is the Leningrad housing development." The scale of this project and of its endlessly folded Postmodern building matter signals that in the Post
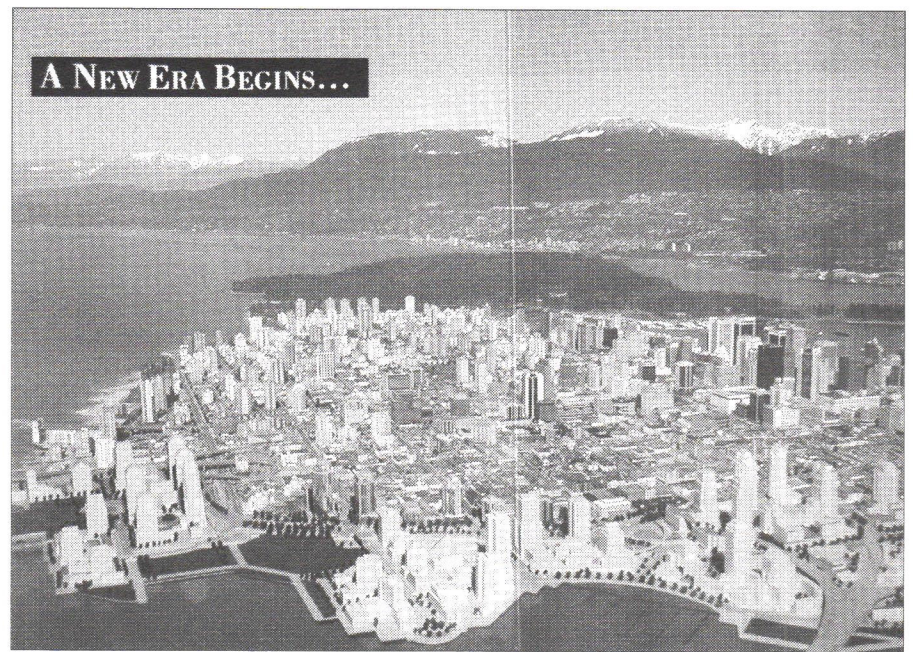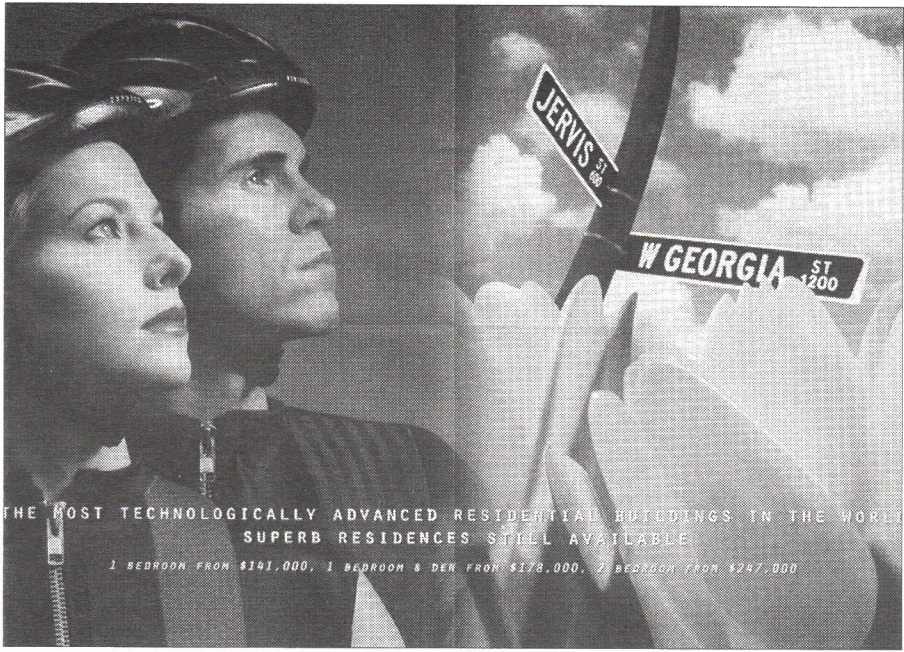
Stalinist period there remained a quest for efficiency in the last hours of Petersburg's Soviet era, one in which freedom and social identity were more often than not thwarted and brutalized. This structure points to a quality of monumentality that extends back to the Winter Palace of the 1750s-60s, which informs the proud Russian's conception of self and of country and exemplifies the folding of different historical epochs and conceptual ideals in Petersburg's cityscape.

All three Petersburgian buildings we have assessed illuminate a way of filling out space that continues to engender different forms of community, space and subjectivity. The movement from one to the other indicates that for all their singleness, all three buildings are nonetheless operating on a Latebaroque and Postbaroque register of the fold to which we are still terraced. It remains to be seen to what degree that other Baroque period invention of modern capitalism will be played out in the Northern Russian city of lethal battles and accomplishments, and what this will mean for new decodifying forms of communities, spaces, freedoms and subjectivities. A singularization of the people of St. Petersburg might find new possibilities in a milieu without any overcodified socialist or capitalist project as its trajectory. This may occur architecturally if Petersburg takes its fertile Baroque legacy to produce new vectors of complexity to accom-

modate a contemporary, innovative and experimental human subject, and urban self-presentation.

Gilles Deleuze writes, "Architecture has always been a political activity, and any new architecture depends on revolutionary forces, you can find architecture saying 'We need a people,' even though the architect isn't himself a revolutionary. Through its relation to the bolshevik revolution, constructivism links up with the baroque. A people is always a new wave, a new fold in the social fabric; any creative work is a new way of folding adapted to new materials." If this is so, then Petersburgians will find this revolutionary force through an exponential amplitude of folds, subjectivities, communities and spaces to invoke a new, more free chapter for the magical, painful and storied Petersburgian text as it approaches and passes its three-hundredth anniversary in 2003. Furthermore, the way in which contemporary Petersburgians interact with the above trio of buildings discloses a Baroque complexity to life in the city on multiple levels, and an abiding belief in the extravagant power of architecture to construct conceptual cartographies, cultural capital, capital money, national identity and social identities.

Erik S. Roraback has taught film, literature and philosophy as an Assistant Professor at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic since 1997. He holds a doctorate from Oxford University and is now writing an interdisciplinary text on the literary and philosophical baroque that also discusses architecture, film, music and painting.

A NEW ERA BEGINS...

THE MOST TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN THE WORLD
SUPERB RESIDENCES STILL AVAILABLE
1 BEDROOM FROM $141,000. 1 BEDROOM & DEN FROM $178,000. 2 BEDROOM FROM $247,000

Photographs by Gordon Price of various marketing materials for Vancouver developments

Big "D" in Downtown
How the Developers
Sold Sustainability in
Vancouver

created for living

wired for the future
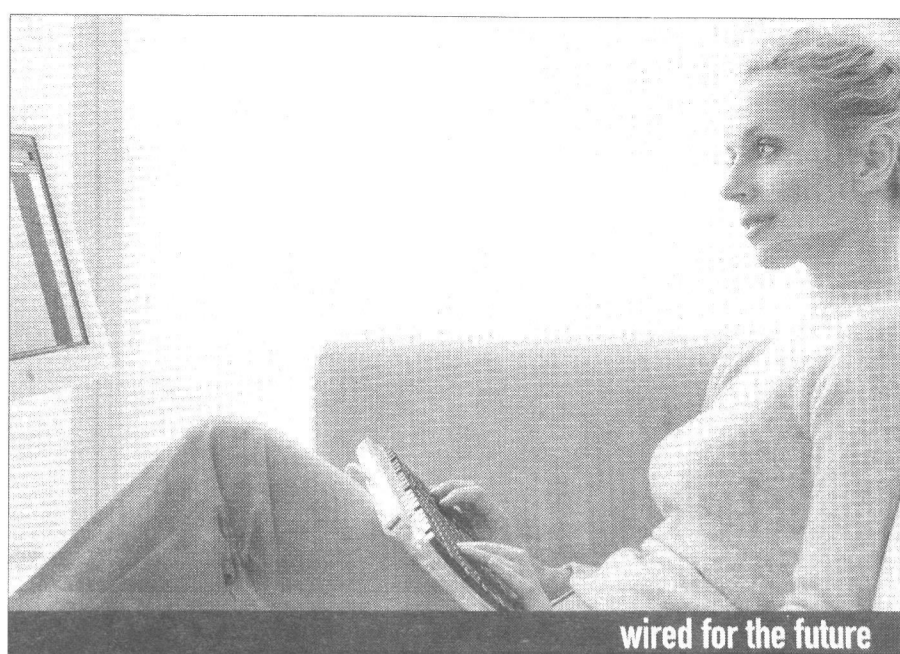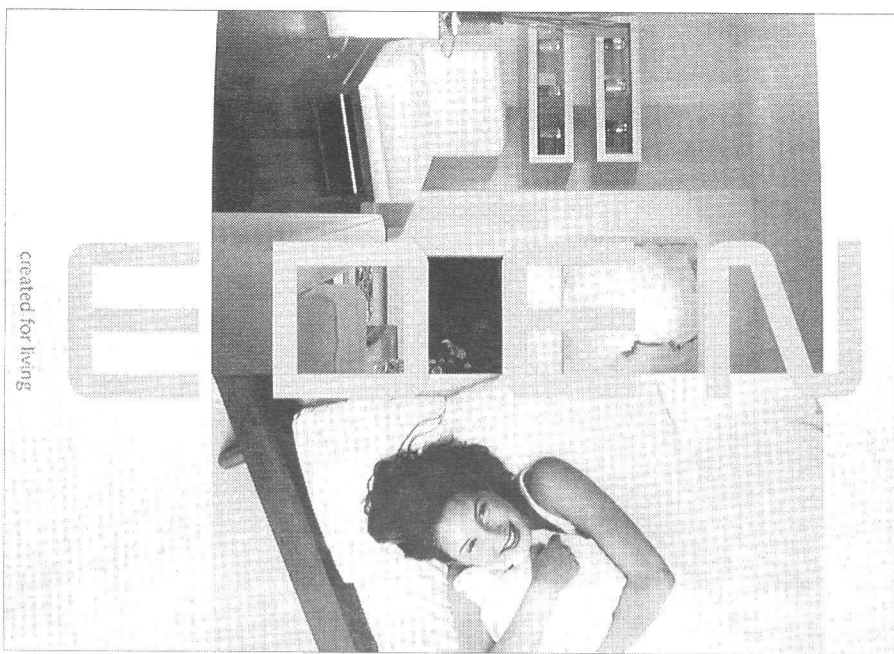
By Gordon Price

I knew the revolution had arrived the day I saw the propaganda. It was, of course, an ad—actually a marketing brochure, promoting yet another downtown condominium project, one of dozens launched in Vancouver during the 90s, selling lifestyle along with the square footage. The image was high-concept, glossy, ironic and slick—but then that's a given—featuring two yuppies in bicycle helmets. Heads raised, eyes intensely fixated on the vision of a brighter future, a better way of life and a high-speed Internet connection. Mock Soviet Realism in service to High Capitalism, set to music by the Pet Shop Boys: "Go West"—or at least to West Georgia—and (here's the revolutionary part) go by bike!

Imagine if the city, in its high-minded pursuit of sustainability and alternative transportation, had committed hard-earned taxpayers' dollars (there's no other kind) to a marketing campaign to promote cycling. Impossible —unless it reeked of health food: "Here, have a spoonful of sustainability; it's good for you." By tying the image of cycling to an upscale product, the designers took the bike out of the alternative-lifestyle gutter into the mainstream traffic of contemporary living. This one ad probably did more to assist cycling in the city than any number of well-intentioned, but guilt-inducing, campaigns to get people on two wheels.

And cycling wasn't the only thing getting a makeover. The marketing campaigns of downtown developers were taking many of the public policies embedded in the grim, gray text of Council reports and translating them into eye-catching images of unquestionable appeal. Above all, they were making desirable what was generally perceived to be politically unspeakable. They were selling Density.

Indeed, the earliest marketing brochures, generated at the beginning of the downtown boom, were almost indistinguishable from planning documents. In many cases, they were planning documents: renderings and photographs of models used to gain city approval for development permits. But very quickly, the dominant images shifted away from buildings to people, and it became clear that the major developers, particularly of Hong Kong-controlled Concord Pacific and Henderson Development, were appealing to two markets simultaneously—one offshore and Asian, the other local and mixed. This was multiculturalism in action: never stated, always understood. The people were as beautiful as the setting, and

the setting was always spectacular. The developers knew right away that they were selling views, but it took them awhile to understand that the attractions of public spaces and the unique character of the city were as appealing as the granite countertops and designer faucets.

The advertising always used the E words—Extraordinary! Entitled! Exclusive!—to suggest that purchasers of their product were entering a special realm. Although Vancouver never allowed gated communities and required large amounts of accessible public spaces, and even though the city bought the Yaletown docks to keep them in the public domain, the advertising implied otherwise. Of course the ads didn't even mention the non-market housing that had to be mixed into the mega projects—next door, in many cases, to the million-dollar condos. Or the family-housing requirements that ensured kids had to be as much a part of the human fabric as lean-bodied singles.

The campaigns were successful, at least measured by the number of condos sold. Within a square mile surrounding the central business district, over 150 high-rises went through the approval process, and each had to distinguish itself. The designers soon went into their Mannerist phase. They took subtlety to the point of obscurity. Brochure covers with only leaves and water. Text in a suggestive Italian. Invitations with no point at all.

The sold the technology, they sold the art. The bits per second numbers seemed as important as square footage and interest rates. Dale Chihuly got equal time with the architecture. Then they started selling themselves. The architects took on the trappings of celebrities. Even the developers got their pictures in the promotions, looking rather like architects. Ultimately, they sold the Sell.

Through this carefully crafted procession of images, they sold a way of life that a few decades ago would have been unthinkable. Vancouver, like most North American cities, had rejected the excesses of modernism in the 1960s. It said no to freeways, no to urban renewal, no to high-rises. The consensus was that only renters lived downtown, and few by choice. After the downzonings in the 1970s, it was difficult, if not impossible, to build a residential tower in the city of Vancouver.

What changed all that was the condominium act (now you could own that concrete box in the sky), a shortage of

land, a housing crisis and a development-approval process that ensured both public input and design control. Growth had to help pay for growth, and developers had to pay for amenities like parks and day-care centers to convince the public they were getting something back for the increases in height and density.

Even all that might not have been enough to change public opinion and justify the risk inherent in large-scale development. For without a market, no product, no matter how appealing, can be successful. While the marketing campaigns themselves could not have sold something people didn't really want, they did neutralize critics' claims that such a dense urban environment, particularly in the form of high-rises, was socially and politically unacceptable. The beautiful people were paying a high price to live there, after all, and you could see them for yourself. They were on bicycles.

Gordon Price is a City Councillor in Vancouver, British Columbia. He also serves on the Board of the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

Collecting Architects*

It's a wonderful time to reflect on the nature of architecture. There's a tremendous amount of energy and effort being put into focused, symbolic acts of architecture and communities. I think it's very exciting when people like Rem Koolhaas come to town and push the boundaries, putting effort and intensity and research into projects, because it elevates the dialogue of architecture in general. I certainly know that in Portland, when important things get done, it really opens up the base of architecture for young architects. But it also raises some other very interesting issues. You can take any community and ask, "Where is the architecture happening?" Well, it's happening in these very symbolic acts—with lots and lots of money. It's very difficult to find little or quiet moments of architecture, or a sort of integrity of architectural investigation in a community. There is a kind of isolation of communication in architecture, and an isolation of where the architecture occurs.

It's a very interesting question where that energy comes from in a community to actually take a risk, and what is the nature of the risk. I think there are clearly two forms of risk in architectural patronage.

One is hiring Rem Koolhas and going for the wild ride budget-wise and constituency-wise, getting through the city processes, and producing a major symbolic piece of civic architecture. Another very difficult and challenging process of architecture is to pose a question about what else is possible. The question (admittedly simplistic, but I think there's something in it) is whether you as an institution or a city choose to collect architecture, or whether you choose to create architecture. I know it's not as black and white as I'm saying, but I think there is a difference of intent on the client's side that has a huge impact on what the possibilities of that architecture are. There's a very interesting phenomenon right now in our communities where collecting architecture is becoming a medal of status.

I also think it's very interesting if you look at the nature of architecture in our current historical context. There's been an explosion of new media and technology and a kind of blurring of the boundaries of architecture in the last ten/fifteen years that is very exciting. Architects are really searching, looking outside of the bounds of conventional architecture or the historical body of architecture, trying to incorporate this new information, technologies and techniques. There's also inherent in that search a bit of insecurity in architecture, when there's all this stuff going on in other media, venues and disciplines, that architecture wants to have a piece of. Architects have always wished that their buildings were like film, and always wished that their buildings were really maps of digital media. Buildings are these horribly tedious, regressive things made out of material and construction

techniques that have been around for 200 years and take 4-5 years to build. There's this interesting tension between architects modeling efforts and representing the imagery of new technologies, and the fact that in the end, architecture is still what it always was.
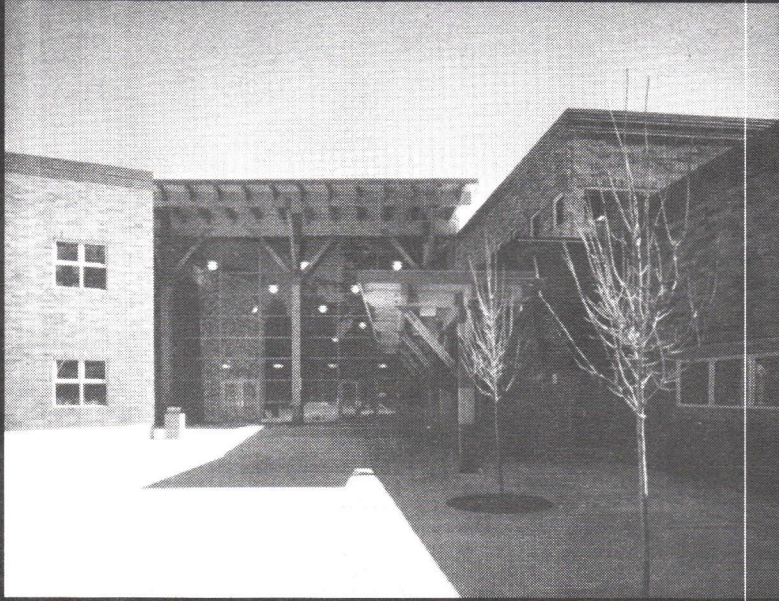
We both desire novelty and we reject it at the same time. The minute we see it we push it away, I think, because we understand that it's part of a cycle. It's actually a cycle of consumption of both imagery and commodity. The idea of making exceptional architecture, something that is an exception to the city and an "other" to the city, actually creates distance, both from the people who are experiencing it and from physical contexts. It's an interesting question how many Experience Music Projects a city can have, how many new public libraries. What if they build four office buildings with similar ethics right next to it?

What if, rather than look to the horizon in this kind of search for the new, you think of what exists here: in this city, this place, this context, this institution. What is there that exists in the thing that is as yet undiscovered? We've been using concrete for 150 years now, but I still think that there's something inherently possible in that material that hasn't been seen yet. What is new in the nature of a library? Or in the nature of an art museum?

I think the most important thing you can achieve in architecture, rather than this distancing quality of novelty, is immediacy of experience, which is a very delicate phenomenon. It's something that we are not accustomed to in our culture right now. Everything that we experience is about distancing and a sense of consumption, except in those rare moments when suddenly that sense of you and the world, or you and that space, or you and that structure, gets condensed and you're actually really moved. Then it isn't about humor, or satire, or all the other sorts of rhetorical devices that many other media do much better than architecture. It's actually about evoking human experience. That's the exciting possibility for architecture. It doesn't preclude exploring new technologies and possibilities. But if you're going to incorporate new ideas, then you need to incorporate the people who are good at them and the people who really understand them, and the people who can push you in the possibilities of them, in a spirit of collaboration. And you, as architects, should investigate what you know, which are buildings.

Perspective Entry—Plaza View / Drawing courtesy Weiss/Manfredi Architects

Bringing Art and Open Space to the City
By Lesley Bain and Liz Dunn

"In enshrining art within the temples of culture—the museum, the concert hall, the proscenium stage—we may have lost touch with the spirit of art: its direct relevance to our lives, [and] we may have stressed the specialized, professional aspects of the arts at the expense of their more pervasive, participatory nature. In the process, art became something that we watch other people do, usually highly skilled professionals, rather than something we do ourselves."

The National Endowment for the Arts
American Canvas report

"Partly the move outdoors by Heizer and others reflected 60s art politics, the new eco-spirit and a general reaction against the art object as commodity...Artists working outdoors wanted to reconnect the art world and the real world. Their materials were no longer canvas and paint, or marble, but dirt, sand and steel—even sun and air."

Michael Kimmelman on Michael Heizer, sculptor of *Adjacent, Against, Upon* at Myrtle Edwards Park

Does the Olympic Sculpture Park offer a model for Seattle?
Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi unveiled their design for Seattle Art Museum's Olympic Sculpture Park before an enthusiastic crowd in Town Hall on May 14. Weiss/Manfredi showed how eight and a half acres in Belltown, once a fuel transfer facility, will become a dramatic new open space and a platform for sculpture.

This is a project that rides in with a white hat. An almost unprecedented typology, the Sculpture Park brings art into the city, and much-needed open space into urban neighborhoods. The new sculpted landscape replaces an urban brownfield site and reconnects the waterfront and the city. The design masters the largest challenges of the site, draws on local landscapes and takes advantage of the sweeping views of Elliott Bay and the Olympics. Seattle finally has a project that makes the most of our city and its setting.

The park's location creates a bridge between some of Seattle's most notable sculptural elements. Michael Heizer's *Adjacent, Against, Upon* in Myrtle Edwards Park represents the move to bring art outside and to transform landscapes. Uphill, at the Seattle Center, sculpture is already prominent, with Alexander Lieberman's *Olympic Iliad* on Broad Street. The Experience Music Project is unarguably sculpture on a grand scale, and the Space Needle crowns the hill.

A very public "private" project
Not-for-profit organizations may be an emerging resource for raising the quality of our region's cities. Neither beholden to the bottom-line driver of private developers, nor the multiple political agendas of government, these organizations can make decisions that are more difficult for other institutions to make.

Interestingly, it is not the traditional "public sector" that took the lead on bringing us this public space. The Seattle Art Museum was the primary instigator, taking on a venue that is free and open to all. Another not-for-profit, the Trust for Public Land, helped to broker the acquisition of the former UNOCAL site. Later support from the City and the County allowed acquisition of the adjacent R.C. Billiards site.

The Seattle Art Museum's mission includes the notion of extending art beyond its walls and making art accessible to all. To meet this mission, the park will offer art and cultural programs throughout the year, including family festivals, performances and special events, temporary exhibitions and lectures by visiting artists.

Art as community-builder
The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles provides another example of a museum expanding the definition of art and reaching out into the city. MOCA commissioned new solutions for low-cost housing as part of their retrospective exhibit on the experimental Case Study housing of the post-war era. As part of their exhibit, "A Blueprint for Modern Living," MOCA sponsors prototypes from architects including Adele Naude Santos, Eric Owen Moss and Metamorphosis. The commissioned works were displayed with the retrospective, and Santos' project now stands at the corner of Franklin and LaBrea in Hollywood.

The arts may be the most significant underutilized forum for rebuilding community in America. This was a conclusion of the recent Seguaro Report, authored by a panel of people active in building the country's "social capital," and follow-up to author Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*. The report points to "the vast promise of the arts to bring diverse people together and to enlarge our sense of common connections and linked fate."

According to the report, "America needs to commit itself to creating new and exciting opportunities for shared cultural experiences—opportunities compelling enough to lure us away from 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire.' We need to find the modern-day equivalent of the opera house or the dance hall, an entertainment venue that doubles as a community space. Cultural institutions are eagerly reinventing themselves, and all of us need to join them in finding new and innovative roles for the arts to play in building social capital."

A new model?
The Olympic Sculpture Park design, according to Marion Weiss, "brings art, city and sound together—implicitly questioning where the art begins and where the art ends." This blurring of art and city makes for a rich civic life. And the sculpture park example shows how not-for-profits can be a catalyst for great, and needed, actions. If Seattle pays attention, this could be a trend.

Lesley Bain is a principal at Weinstein Copeland Architects. **Liz Dunn** is a principal at Dunn & Hobbes, LLC, a developer of small mixed-use real estate projects in Seattle.
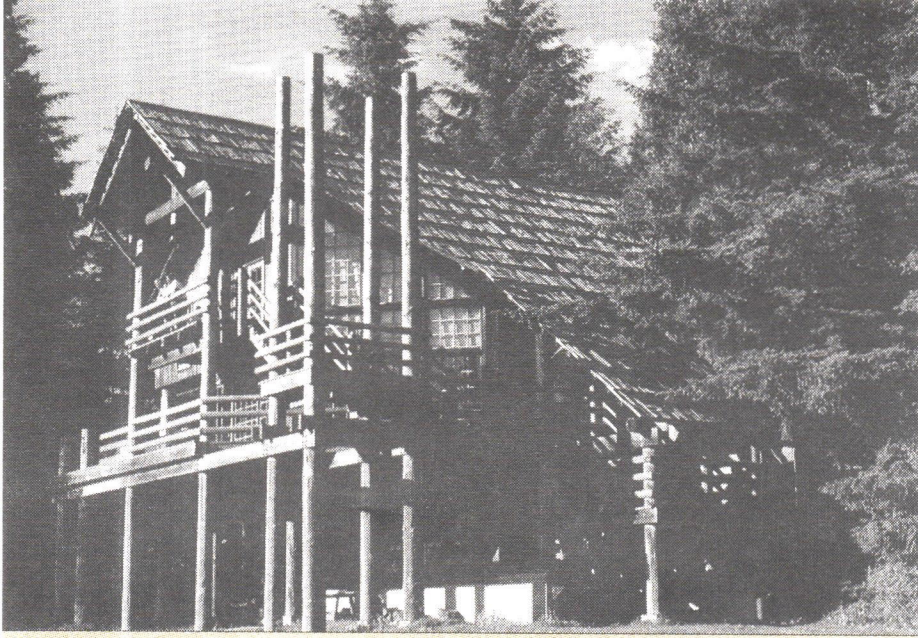
Pilchuck Glass School Lodge / Photograph by Nick Gunderson

Glass, Art and Architecture
By Kai-Uwe Bergmann

The Pilchuck Glass School, like an emerald, reveals many facets. It's an art school known internationally for its quality, a pastoral campus set upon a tree farm outside of Stanwood, WA, and a community of glass enthusiasts and artists that use the common bond of friendship to exchange ideas and grow exponentially through collaboration.

Unbeknownst to many, through the artistic directorship of Pike Powers, Pilchuck is also dedicated to bridging the experimental world of studio glass with the world of architecture by providing a course every year that focuses on glass and architecture. In years past, the instructors have included Ingalill Wahlroos, Peter Drobney, Paul Marioni, Ann Troutner, Hank Murta Adams and Jamie Carpenter. Although the names may not be easily identifiable to architects, their work is integrated into architecture locally and is on the vanguard of glass technology worldwide. Students in the classes range from art students to licensed architects. Pilchuck sometimes allows students with no previous glass experience to participate in the courses.

Pilchuck's mythical birth, as chronicled by its founding members, is also tied to the local architecture scene, as well as exhibiting an eccentric and inventive vernacular. Tom Bosworth was asked by co-founders John Hauberg, Anne Gould Hauberg and Dale Chihuly in 1974 to design a campus for the fledgling glass school. Bosworth's passion led him not only to design Pilchuck, but also to take on the role of the school's first director. After Bosworth built out the core of the campus, the mantle was passed to Weinstein Copeland Architects to fulfill the vision. In the early years, artists independently built their own lean-to structures, including stump houses, tee pees, yurts, wigwams and a Moroccan wedding tent. Although a few of these individualistic expressions remain, most have been rummaged to lore. Hank Murta Adams, a New York based glass artist, did, however, convince Pilchuck to realize his dream of a concrete and glass chapel entitled the "Trojan Horse," and it remains, serving to capture the spirit that is Pilchuck.

In 1994 and 1996, Pilchuck held a Glass and Architecture Symposium, which brought the likes of architects Maya Lin, Ed Weinstein, Tom Kundig and Steven Holl together with glass artists Ann Gardner, Ben Moore and Jamie Carpenter to discuss opportunities for bridging the two worlds. The discussions involved examining how experimenting with glass in artwork can influence the implementation of glass into a work of architecture. Steven Holl actively pursued this collaborative effort. He used the hot shop facilities as an opportunity to cast lenses for his St. Ignatius project in Seattle, which was still in the design phase at that time.

Perhaps what is truly remarkable about Pilchuck is its global outreach. Over the years, more than fifty nations have been represented through various students, instructors, staff and artists-in-residence. This cultural mix continues to be an essential part of Pilchuck. Sometimes, as the saying goes, we are most unfamiliar with what is in our own backyards. I encourage you to visit Pilchuck during their open houses, discover their resources online at www.pilchuck.com, contact Pike Powers with any questions and most importantly to apply to their programs in the years ahead.

Kai-Uwe Bergmann has participated as a volunteer and student at Pilchuck since 1995.

Diversity Matters in Practice: Working Together
By Carlin MacDougall

Members of the architectural community gathered on June 21st for the 5th annual diversity conference and solstice feast in Seattle, titled "Diversity Matters in Practice: Working Together." The AIA Seattle Diversity Roundtable sponsored the conference this year, in partnership with MulvannyG2 Architecture and in cooperation with the Seattle chapter of the Association for Women in Architecture. The event was an opportunity for architects at all stages of their careers, from interns to partners, to discuss how to promote diversity in a profession that has traditionally been slow to accept and reluctant to support women and minorities.

Race and gender-based inequities in the profession were the subject of the conference keynote address delivered by Kathryn Anthony, professor at the University of Illinois, and author of *Designing for Diversity: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Architectural Profession* (U. of Illinois Press, 2001). Anthony presented findings based on a survey of over 400 architects that confirmed what many have long suspected. In comparison with their white male counterparts, women and minorities experience lower compensation, less job satisfaction, fewer possibilities for advancement and higher rates of attrition. Anthony asserted that "underrepresented architects have long contributed to the profession, but they were not always recognized." She offered historical examples of their achievements as a reminder that architects of diverse backgrounds have played a significant role in shaping the built environment and continue to make significant architectural contributions that deserve recognition.

In a panel discussion of local leaders in the architectural community, John Paul Jones, a Native American partner at Jones + Jones Architects + Landscape Planners, echoed Anthony's sentiments. He said, "There are a lot of signs left by my ancestors, and they are as magnificent as the European cave paintings."

The panel discussion focused on the ways in which diversity brings fresh perspectives to a profession that has historically been conservative and conformist. Jerry Lee of MulvannyG2 said, "We look at it as not only the right thing to do…We look at it as a business venture." Lee believes that drawing on the strength of a diverse staff enables his firm to more successfully approach design challenges. But AIA Seattle President Steve Arai, of Arai Jackson Architects and Planners, warned that simply increasing the numbers of underrepresented architects might not be sufficient. He cautioned that promoting diversity involves more than achieving statistical equality, and urged firms with higher than average numbers of minorities and women to continue to be proactive. Arai emphasized that it is imperative not only to actively hire architects from diverse backgrounds, but also to ensure their professional success through support and mentoring.

Mitch Smith, of Mulvanny G2, responded to concerns that local conferences on diversity tend to draw firms that may already be aware of inequities in the profession, and thus fail to address the people who most need to hear about diversity issues. He suggested that the subject of diversity be the theme of the next AIA national conference, which targets a larger and more mainstream audience. Patricia Saldaña Natke, chair of the AIA National Diversity Committee, added that diversity in architectural firms could become a criterion for awarding the AIA Firm of the Year, thus encouraging diversity to be publicly recognized and rewarded.

Perhaps claiming diversity as a priority needs no justification, as firms have a legal and moral obligation to give equal consideration to employees, regardless of gender or minority status. Yet it may be useful for the architectural profession to view promoting diversity as an opportunity to draw on varied perspectives from an array of cultural backgrounds and personal experiences, rather than an as an obligation to fulfill. Challenges to conventional thinking are what enable architects to create innovative solutions for their clients. As Susan Jones, a partner at NBBJ, succinctly stated, "Diversity is ultimately about great design."

Carlin MacDougall is a designer at NBBJ and co-vice president of the Seattle chapter of the Association for Women in Architecture.

New Work

CoCA (Center on Contemporary Art)
James Graham Architects / zero plus
By Kai-Uwe Bergmann

The new CoCA gallery space in the Pike/ Pine neighborhood is located in a large warehouse space that is a level below 12th Ave and daylights out to the west facing downtown. The gallery proper is connected to an adjacent deck via a glazed garage door that gathers the warm west sun. Jim Graham of James Graham Architects designed the original tenant improvements for the space. When CoCA moved into the space, Graham collaborated with Joshua Brevoort and Lisa Chun of zero plus to develop a plan to fit CoCA's need for flexible gallery space. The new gallery space was designed to neither intimidate the viewer nor be too casual to be mistaken for lacking vision.

The relationship of the new improvements to the original building is one that honors the beauty of an 80-year-old structure, offering no apologies for its clean and unadorned, if slightly industrial image. When the gallery moved in, a series of continuous white walls were added for the dual purposes of hiding storage space and serving as the backdrop for the wide variety of media CoCA exhibits. Finding a delicate balance between these exhibition devices and the more functional needs of storage and support spaces presented one of the biggest challenges in the limited space provided. The designers' overarching hope was to create a home for CoCA that continues to increase its influence as a leading forum for contemporary thought in the Seattle art scene.

Currently on display at the CoCA space is blurred, which explores the breadth and depth of architectural possibility, expanding the traditional definition of architecture in the Northwest. Participants, who represent Portland and the Puget Sound, include landscape architects, game designers, sole practitioners, artist architects and graphic designers. They were asked to engage CoCA's gallery space to express their thoughts on architecture, to explore the senses and to hone their research through site-specific installations.

Many events have been planned surrounding the show's theme. Several of the architects will offer lectures on their work, as well as presenting films they've produced over the show's duration.

A tour of Capitol Hill artist and architect studios, orchestrated by Marlow Harris of Coldwell Banker Bain and Associates, is scheduled for Saturday September 7th from 2pm to 6pm. CoCA-motion, the twice weekly cultural evenings of poetry readings, music and film presentations, will continue to be held Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the two months of the show. A full calendar of the events at CoCA is available on their website: www.cocaseattle.org

CoCA is located at 1420 11th Avenue between Pike and Union in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood. blurred concludes its run on September 13th.

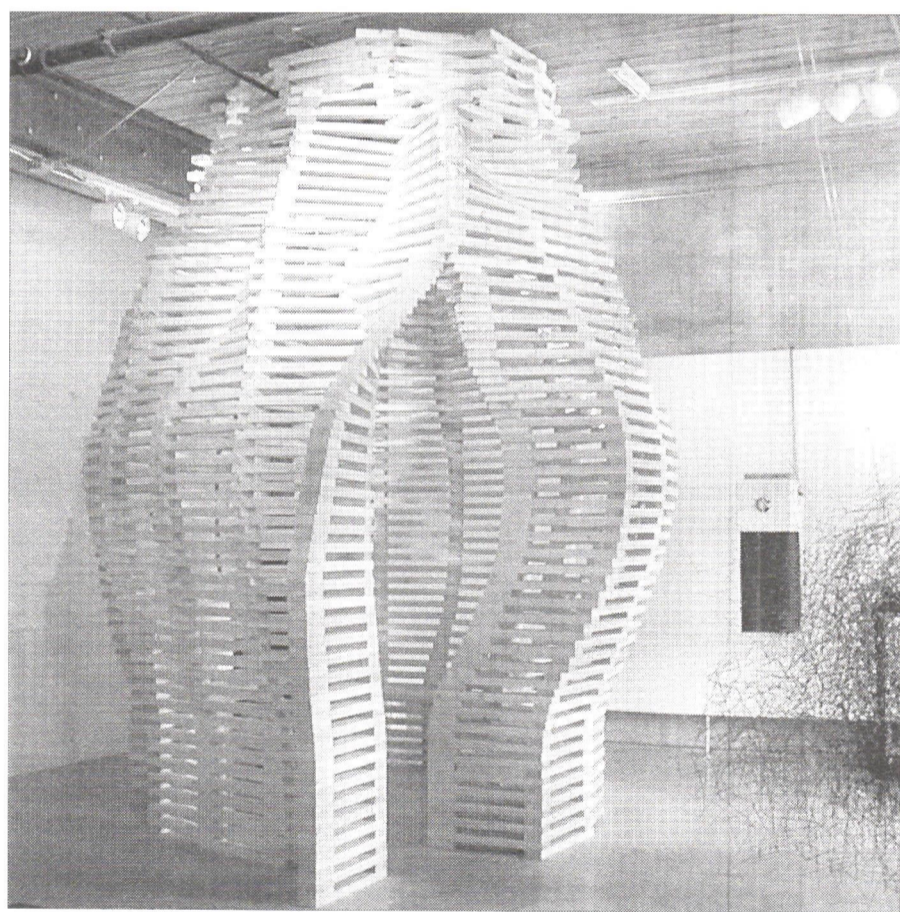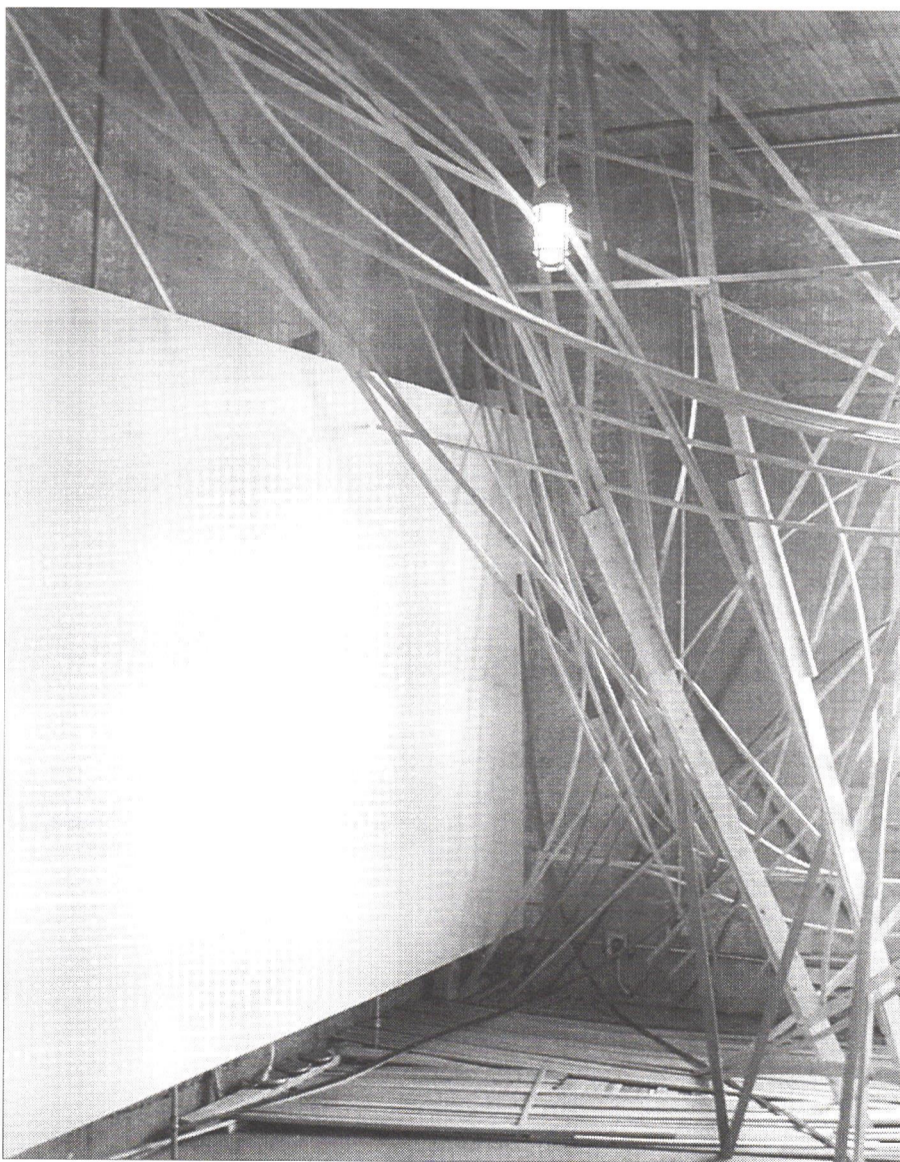**Kai-Uwe Bergmann** co-curated blurred@coca with John Bohn.

Currently on display at the CoCA space is blurred, which explores the breadth and depth of architectural possibility, expanding the traditional definition of architecture in the Northwest.

Left: *Corner: CoCa* by Mark Johnson
Right: *DAAHOUD A Stack of Notes for Bambino #1* by James Harrison

Photography by Kai-Uwe Bergmann
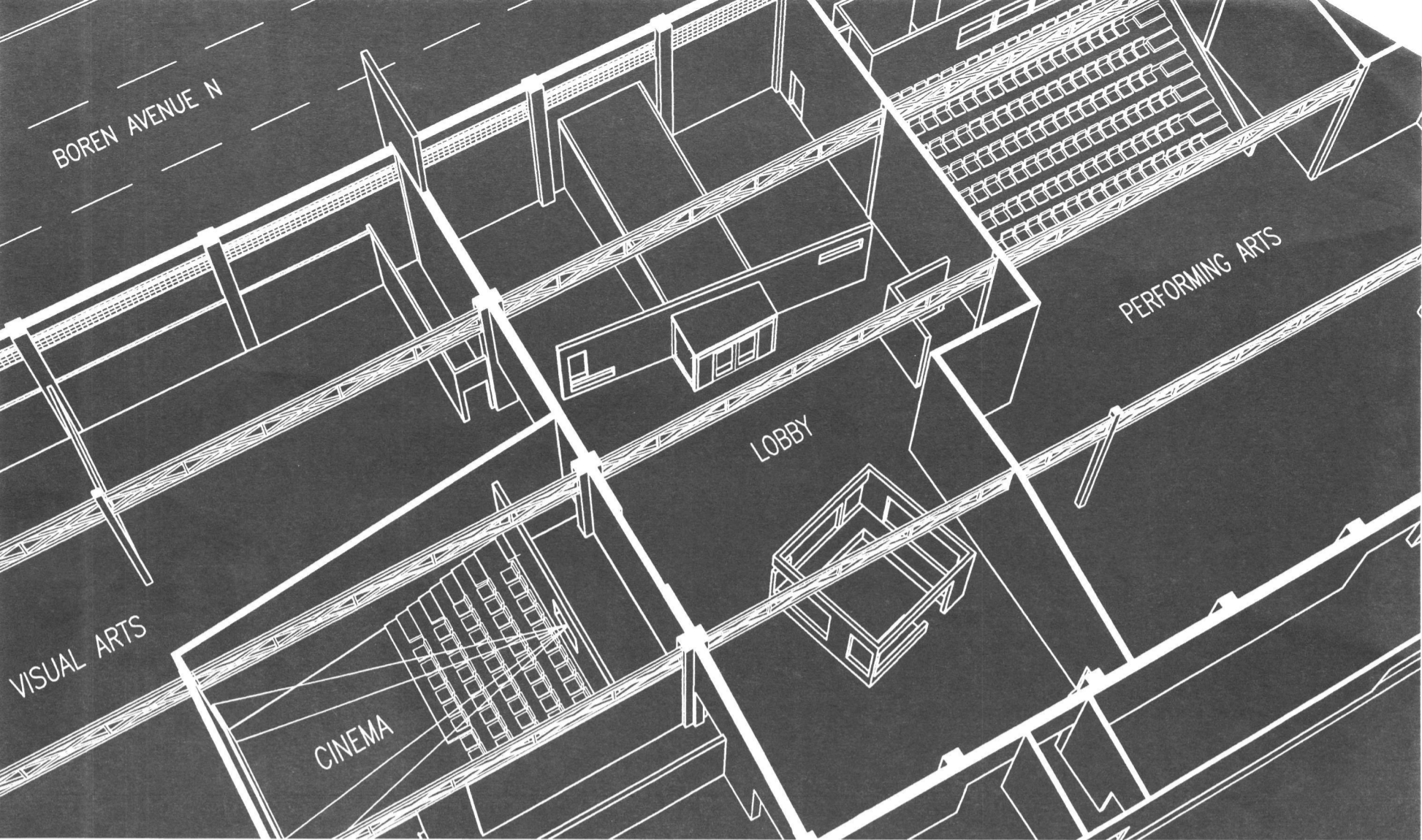
Consolidated Works at 500 Boren Avenue N.
Drawing courtesy McVey Petterson

Consolidated Works
McVey Petterson Architects
By John Rahaim

Consolidated Works is a multi-disciplinary arts center, or more eloquently, an arts center that offers "different dialects within the single language of the arts." At Con Works, these dialects include theater, cinema, visual arts and music, each under the direction of a curator. A range of related activities including lectures, poetry readings and performance art pieces often complement these primary activities.

For four years, since its founding in 1998, Con Works was housed within a 100-year-old wood-framed conglomeration on Terry Avenue, providing the organization with a raw, unfinished space appropriate for the mission of a young, cutting edge arts center. The signature of the old center, also designed by McVey Petterson, was not one of the actual art spaces, but the "Egg," the central lobby/gathering space that served as a kind of mixing chamber for Con Works. The egg was defined by a series of simple curved trusses, and was accessible from the street. Visitors to the center passed through the Egg to enter the theater, cinema, gallery, etc. In this way, audiences were constantly being mixed up, by design.

On September 13, Con Works will begin its second phase of life in the southern two-thirds of a building in the South Lake Union area in Seattle: the well-known Ducky's Furniture building. The space will contain a 150-seat theater, a 49-seat cinema, a 4000 square foot gallery, two painting studios and rehearsal rooms, a café/bar, a resource center, and administrative space for seven non-profits. Thanks to a generous write-down of the rent from the building owner, Vulcan Inc, Con Works will have 32,000 square feet, astonishing for a four-year-old arts organization. The large space will provide the center with exciting new opportunities.

The challenge for the architects, staff and board was to develop a series of functional spaces within the cavernous warehouse that maintain the raw energy of the previous space, while providing an increased level of support. For example, wing spaces will be added to the theater, and additional project rooms created for the gallery. The new home will also contain a somewhat higher level of architectural finish, to attract a broader arts audience and reflect a more established organization.

The mixing function of the Egg, whatever its final shape, will remain. The primary entrance will be mid-block, through a forced perspective tunnel that pierces the Egg. Within the Egg will sit a huge piece of movable furniture containing the box office. This cube will be transparent at eye-level and only 10 feet high, to maintain the visual continuity of this large volume, and to allow the huge wood trusses and 25-foot ceilings to be fully exposed. The Egg will open out into entranceways for all the arts spaces: the theater on the left, the cinema and gallery on the right, the café straight back and the bookstore/resource center within the space. This arrangement also provides acoustical separation for the various performance areas.

The lesson of a capital campaign for a small arts organization, and perhaps any organization in a post 9/11 environment, is patience. Due to funding constraints, the Egg will not be completed by the opening of the center this September. For Con Works, however, this is perhaps fitting. The space will shift and morph as it fills with people and activities, allowing the audiences that mix within it, and the ongoing needs of the center, to define it over time.

John Rahaim is a member of the board of Consolidated Works, and is Executive Director of CityDesign, Seattle's office of urban design.

Reflection
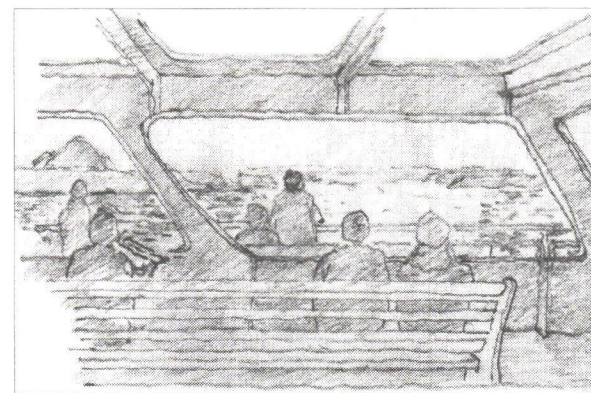
The Case For Tangible Reality
By James L. Cutler

A letter to Robert Ivy, editor-in-chief at
Architectural Record

Dear Robert:
I have written the following letter, not because I think that the views expressed are the only way to view the making of buildings, but because it is a way; one that is rich in design opportunities and applicable to most of our building types and locations, and one which the architects doing the everyday buildings of this world should know, if not embrace. I learned this view of the world from my teacher, Louis Kahn, and feel obligated (just once) to pass on what, to me, is still a rich and varied path.

The Case For Tangible Reality

Sitting on the upper deck of the ferry that travels from my island home to Seattle, I am pondering the future of my profession and wondering if we have overlooked or even lost some of our core values.

It's an unusually sunny day in late December. A fiddler plays in the corner of the sheltered area. High-pitched children's voices mingle with the lower pitch of adults in quiet conversation. The ferry engine hums steadily in the background and the hull pushes aside the water with a gentle sound. The low winter sun sparkles silver off the water and the dark north face of Mount Rainier, 60 miles away, looms over this picture, reminding us of our position in the landscape. What does this delightful scene have to do with architecture? In my world, everything. For I feel that architects can capture these moments of visual and acoustic pleasure that elicit emotional and memorable responses.

I often find myself surprised and then moved by the photographer's ability to capture moments of beauty in objects or events that, at first glance, appear mundane or go unnoticed. A stick on the beach, a pattern of stones, a person sitting on a porch, another person at work; ordinary sights, but somehow transformed by the way in which they capture our attention and reveal the inner truth of the subject. This visual revealing of the subject's essence connects us to it and evokes our emotions. Can we, as architects, do likewise? I feel that we can, when we viscerally realize that every combination of moments and circumstances in this world is unique. Every place in which we create architecture has unique characteristics and history that we can respect, reveal and reflect. Each material has its own characteristics that, if we are listening, tell us how it wants to be used.

The work of reflecting and revealing the uniqueness of each element in a particular circumstance can be a poignant and powerful, although difficult, approach to designing and constructing buildings. One could begin this exploration by first assuming that all people, institutions, places, objects, materials and even events have unique sets of characteristics that we can call their "nature." For purposes of communication, we inscribe and define these characteristics with single words or names: Bruce, the school, the valley, the table, the war—shorthand for much larger and more complex definitions. *If one decides to work within the boundaries of something's nature,* then we can ascribe to that "something" a will. There are certain things it is capable of doing and many things it will be unwilling to do, while still falling within the definition of the word that defines it. For example, if we build a table that has a lumpy surface and is tilted in compound directions, it would clearly fall outside the definition of a table. It may be art, but it's not a table. The table, therefore, has a "will" to have a physical presence that falls within its own definition. As do people, places and materials. If something has a "will," then one might extrapolate that it has a spirit.

Design, therefore, could be inspired by studying, understanding and then revealing that spirit so that it can not only be comprehended, but also felt by the viewer in the same way that one feels this pleasant scene of sun, sound, water and people.
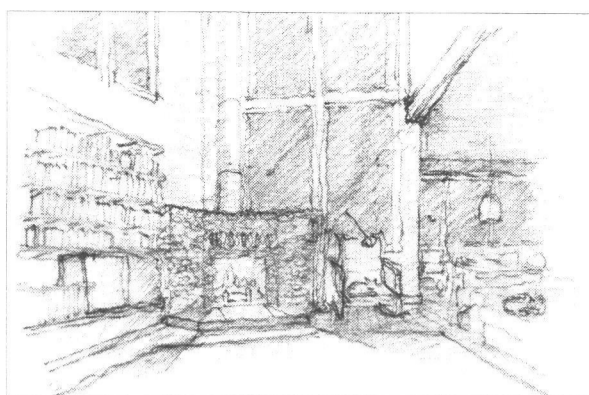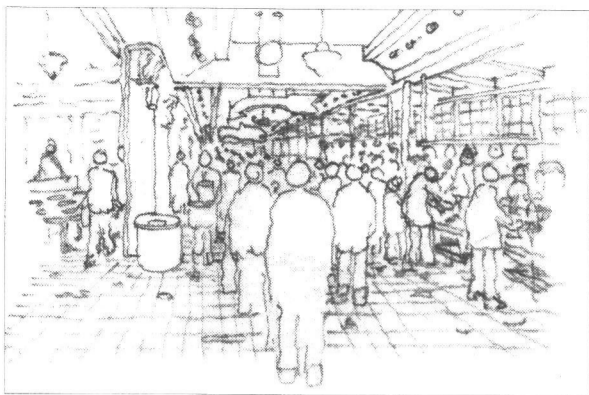
Drawings by James L. Cutler

I've meandered from the downtown ferry terminal up to the Pike Place Public Market. This collection of fully functioning 19th and early 20th century concrete and wood buildings literally form a vertical edge between the downtown core and the waterfront. I've purchased some fresh baked bread, Spanish cheese and a little basket of out-of-season raspberries, and am now sitting in a public eating area in the center of the main arcade. The cold air permeating the market has not deterred the weekend crowds. The place is filled with grocery shoppers, children, tourists, suburban teenagers, musicians, panhandlers, young urbanites eating Chinese take-out, old Asian men eating pizza, an elderly balloon artist painted like a clown, knots of people admiring flowers, fish mongers throwing salmon, hucksters calling out specials and people just walking, looking and enjoying this intensely urban show.

I love this place, like everyone in this region. Why? Is it that the market serves as a tangible conduit for people to make an emotional connection to this city and region? Partly, perhaps. Or is it more fundamental than that? Do we respond so viscerally to this place because it takes the everyday experience of shopping and, through its social and physical setting, reveals more truly the actual nature of "market?" The directness of social experience, the personal contact with the merchants or craftpersons, the barter, the banter, the exchange of information, the visual experience of hand-painted pricing, the careful arrangement of produce or crafts, the presence of the crowds of shoppers all serve to connect us to the fundamental essence of the institution of "commerce." It is real. And because it is so real and true, we connect to it and then respond to it emotionally. We simply feel more here than at the automated checkout of the supermarket or the mall. I suspect that all markets of this classic variety arouse similar emotions.

This example of an institution revealing its true nature, and thus creating an emotional and memorable response, is more than applicable to our profession. It is not clear to me that we, as professional architects, see or value this. It is difficult to listen to the voices of every one of the social and material components of a circumstance and produce a design that allows them to sing in harmony. It is much easier to pick up on a narrowly focused topical abstraction or a technological marvel and run with it, while ignoring the tangible realities of religion, place, materials and even institutions.

My concern is that instead of moving toward an architecture that exhibits a deeper comprehension and reflection of the ever-present variety of this planet, we are instead moving toward architecture that very often arrogantly and myopically does not respect anything except its own abstract theory or novel technology. This is a loss, because the very elements that can help us create a vital and unique architecture are and have always been with us, and I feel that our current rigid focus on form keeps us from designing an architecture that emanates not only from historical theory or technology, but also from culture, place, climate and materials.

This was literally brought home to me when I received the December 2001 issue of Architectural Record. Depicted on the cover was a beautiful computer-generated drawing of a building that floated with no context, and almost no

sense of materiality, and even seemed to defy gravity! This stunning drawing led me to conjecture that, as the mass intoxication of the dotcom bubble led people to ignore the basic realities of economics, so too has our profession's current fascination with the computer's novel and almost magical ability to manipulate spaces blinded us to the reality of all of the other physical and emotional circumstances that contribute to the making of architecture. It is my belief that, in the long run, we will find that a deeper and more profound use of the computer will be to use it as a tool for creating designs that more thoroughly reveal and reflect the true nature of our *real* visual and emotional experiences, just as this bustling market reveals, connects and engages us to the fundamental realities of "commerce."

I'm home now. The weather has turned. The wind is howling through the fir trees on the edge of my bluff. The gusts carry with them a horizontal rain that is pelting the windows. This rain and wind have gathered their energy far out in the North Pacific and are expending it against my trees and house. Immense thermal forces that are generated thousands of miles from here are knocking on my windows to remind me that the small place where I live is connected to the whole planet, and is subject to its forces.

Inside, it's calm. The cats are sleeping on their respective turfs. There's a low fire in the ill-scaled stone fireplace. In the bookshelves above the fireplace there is a book entitled *Life*. Author Richard Fortey, who was chief paleontologist of the British Museum, traces in a mere 400 pages the history of life for the past two billion years! This synopsis of the broad sweep of evolution concludes with a photo of rows and rows of slot machines. The photo is used to illustrate the fact that we are the product of a million times a million almost random chances, possibly more chances than the number of stars in our galaxy. Fortey makes it clear that we were not inevitable. At each of the chance occurrences in the history of life, things could easily have gone a different way. Given the enormous compounded number of events that created us, it is probable that we are unique in the universe. There almost certainly is other life out there, but something that sees, perceives and feels the world around it the way that we do is highly unlikely. For all we know, we may be the only living things in the universe that feel emotion or see beauty. Our rational and emotional cognition of the world around us are what make us human. It is a gift beyond measure.

Given this singular ability, I would argue that responding to, revealing, reflecting and protecting the uniqueness of the real world around us should be our highest calling. Choreographing the visual experience of individuals so that the most poignant "photos" of a particular set of circumstances are revealed can give viewers the opportunity to understand the world around them, not only in an intellectual sense, but on the more important emotional and human level. These emotional responses connect us strongly to the world, and in this memorable way, they open the doors for us to feel and love, essentially reminding us of the gift of cognition.

In a world in which the sheer pressure of human population growth is devouring our biodiversity and changing our atmospheric chemistry to the point of radically altering our climate, there may be great value in employing an

ethic that guides people to an emotional connection to reality. I know of no one who is in favor of these ongoing environmental alterations or who is looking forward to the unpredictable consequences. I also know of no one who feels that the planet will be a better place to live 200 years from now. Yet why do we do very little, or nothing, to change this potentially unpleasant future?

Even though the answers to this question may be politically complex, I feel that the core of the problem lies in our fundamental disconnection from the living world that sustains us. We, as a culture, no longer have that primitive emotional knowledge that we are one with the rest of the living world. We may not ever be able to do anything about this loss and its concomitant problems, but if there is a path that avoids this looming future, it will start from an ethic of respect, appreciation and love for all the variety of this planet. That love can only be fostered by first promoting an emotional connection to the world. Where our hearts go, our minds and actions will follow.

Therefore, I feel that any methodology, in any craft or profession, that reinforces an emotional recognition of the gift of the real world, is valuable in defending a future in which other people can enjoy the wind howling through Douglas firs.

James L. Cutler FAIA is a Registered Architect in Washington, Alaska, New York and Hawaii. He has a Master of Architecture degree from the Louis I. Kahn Studio program and the University of Pennsylvania. His firm, Cutler Anderson Architects, was established in 1977 and has become nationally known for its environmental awareness and attention to detail.
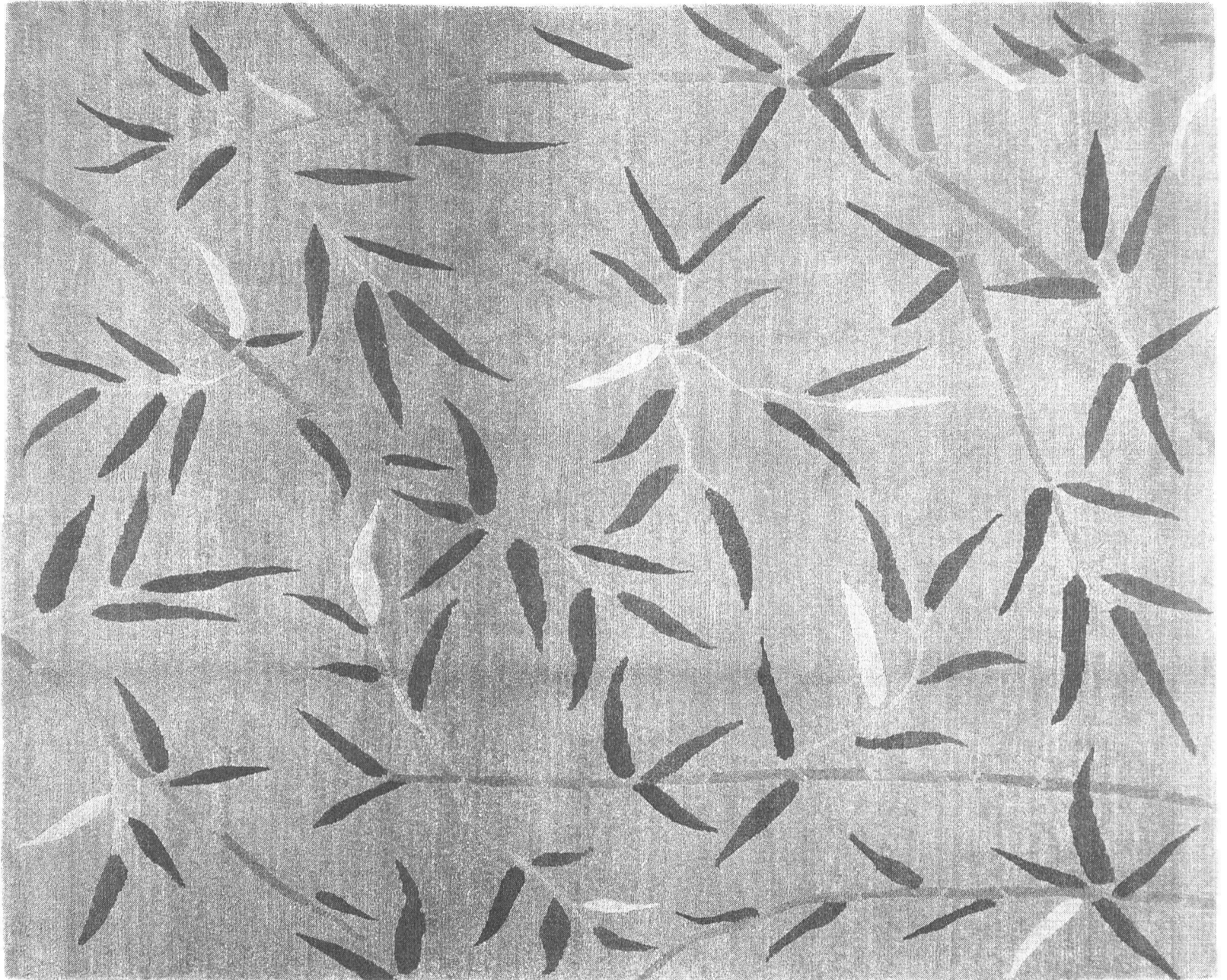
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Book Review

Image Redux
By Dennis Ryan

In the late 1950s, Kevin Lynch, professor of planning at MIT, sought to understand public perceptions of the city and to find qualitative conditions that contributed to legibility and clarity of city form. His book, *The Image of the City*, was published in 1960. Cleanly and simply written, it identified five elements in the physical/spatial qualities of cities that provide structure and identity to place: paths, edges, nodes, landmarks and districts. In those modern times of many dumb, flat-footed urban renewal projects and neighborhood-severing highway construction, Lynch's work—along with Jane Jacobs'—was taken as the city designer's way into the complexities of urban qualities and form making. Lynch's work melded city and image at a time when it was still possible to confine city design and the sensory experience of city qualities to direct cause and effect equations. It was before postmodernism and deconstruction did away with our "faith in a stable text," and before the hyper-reality of our present media-infused context.

The essays in *Imaging the City: Continuing Struggles and New Directions* were commissioned for an MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning Colloquium in late 1998, both to honor Kevin Lynch and to explore city image 40 years after his seminal work. Editors Lawrence J. Vale and Sam Bass Warner, Jr. note that since Lynch's study, there has been an "enormous explosion of visual imagery that today permeates everything" and that in this new climate, design and planning work should be approached as an imaging activity. I don't find much in this collection to support wholesale adoption of their dictum and terminology. Is their advice just a bit of imaging too?

The book's 16 chapters are organized in three thematic parts: *Struggles over City Images, Response to the Overwhelming City* and *New Images and New Image Makers*. Most authors are academics, many on the faculty at MIT. I found the essays delightful, with ample accompanying graphics and a layout that invites flipping around, as a subtitle or photo catches the eye. This is an easily readable, thoughtful and instructive series for anyone concerned with the design and planning of cities and their expressive qualities. Although some authors reference other chapters, the overall effect is an open, porous collection of views, ideas and findings about the concept of image that stand comfortably with one another, without claiming a unified argument or position.

Although "City Imaging: A Bibliographic Essay" by Lawrence J. Vale is an appendix, I would read it first. Vale briefly reviews image and imaging since Lynch's work in the late 50s. He looks at how "media and built environment work together to shape and alter public perceptions of places," and at today's city image construction and interpretation processes at all scales.

A sample of three essays illustrates the variety of approaches to the subject of city image. The book's first essay, "Image Construction in Premodern Cities," by architect/urbanist Julian Beinart, hooked me with a taste of medieval city guides that extolled the virtues of the city's landscapes, buildings and civic goodness. Books and the literate were scarce so the guides were read aloud to the general public by travelling civic promoters. Like today's TV commentators reporting on venues for the Olympic Games or the World Cup with materials provided by the city (public/private), constructing and marketing city image is an old and perfected art.

Geographer Larry R. Ford's "Skyscraper Competition in Asia: New City Images and New City Form" looks at the trophy building, image-making skyscrapers in Asian cities and "the impact they are having on urban form, city images, and the spatial organization of metropolitan areas." Lawrence J. Vale and Julia R. Dobrow, in "Urban Images on Children's Television," examine the role children's television environments play in the production of city images and stereotypes. Many children visit "these carefully designed environments...more frequently than they do real cities." The discussion spans *Sesame Street* and *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* to animated shows, including *Arthur, Hey Arnold!*, Disney's *Doug* and *The Simpsons*.

Lynch would have found the essays fun, informative and of broad value. They don't present a unified position about city design or designers, and this keeps the book lively. Ignore the editors' call for branding city design as imaging and just enjoy the collection and the results of your own imagination.

Dennis Ryan is on the faculty at the University of Washington in urban design and planning. He directs the interdisciplinary major, Community and Environmental Planning.
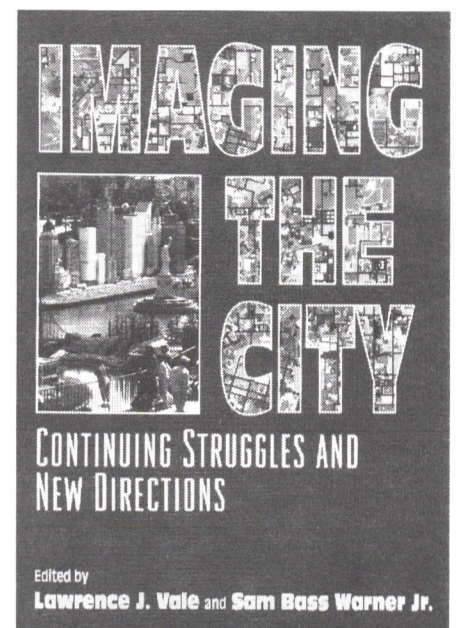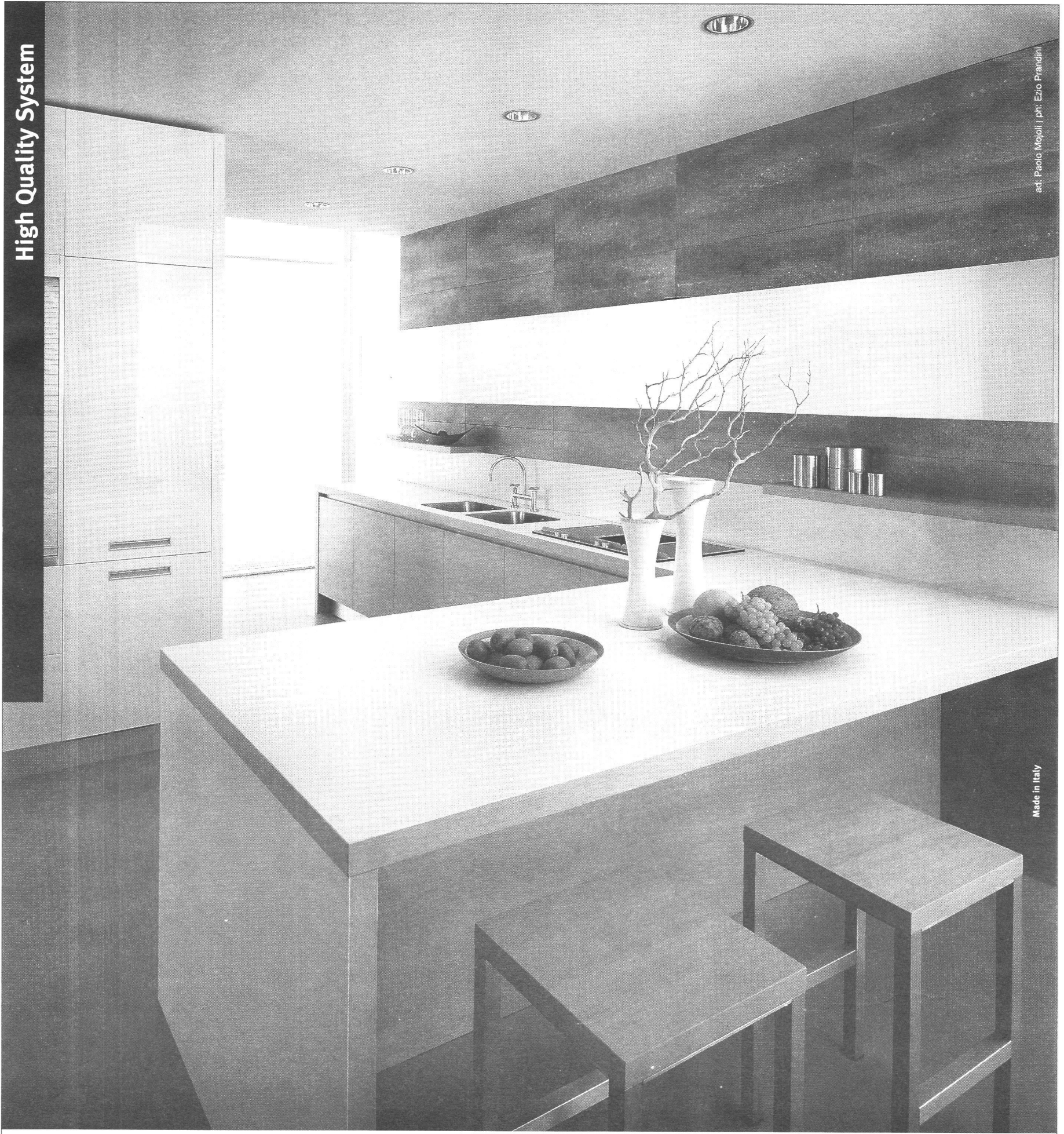
Redesigning ARCADE
By John Rousseau

It seems appropriate that with an issue dedicated to image and identity, ARCADE would introduce a new identity of its own.

ARCADE presents a unique design challenge in that the essence of its identity is change. From volume to volume, the magazine has evolved to respond to an increasing audience and a growing regional presence, while reflecting the individual approach of each new designer. Moreover, guest editors have brought unique perspectives to each issue that have inevitably contributed to this aesthetic of change. The result has been a dynamic publication that undoubtedly elicits anticipation from its core readers as they wait for what's next.

However, the approach has been problematic in that perpetual change has occurred at the expense of a functional identity. Can you quickly visualize the cover of *Time Magazine*—or more appropriately, *Domus* or *Metropolis*? How about ARCADE? The masthead, through its typographic voice, scale, color and composition immediately identifies the magazine on the newsstand or in your library. At its core, visual identity relies on the consistent application of a set of formal attributes over time to encourage memory and build recognition. Image is equally important—in this case the appropriateness of the form to the content it represents. Indeed, you can judge a book (or magazine) by its cover.

With that in mind, the new ARCADE has two design ambitions. The first is to ensure long-term visibility and public presence via the application of a memorable, recurring masthead. The second is to maintain the legacy of creative exploration by striking a balance between variety and consistency—allowing ARCADE to continue evolving during and beyond Volume 21. Stay tuned for what's next.

John Rousseau is a professor in the Visual Communication Design department at the University of Washington and an independent design consultant specializing in identity, print and web design for corporate and institutional clients.

ARCADE

Next/21.2/Tacoma