



# TexasArchitect

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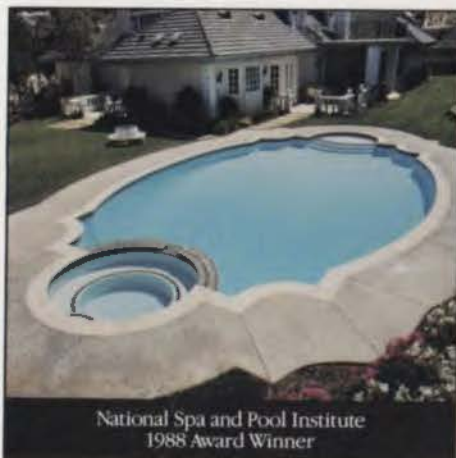
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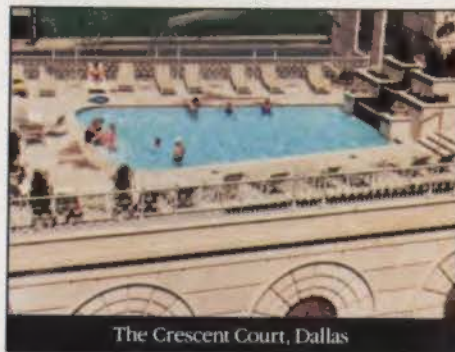
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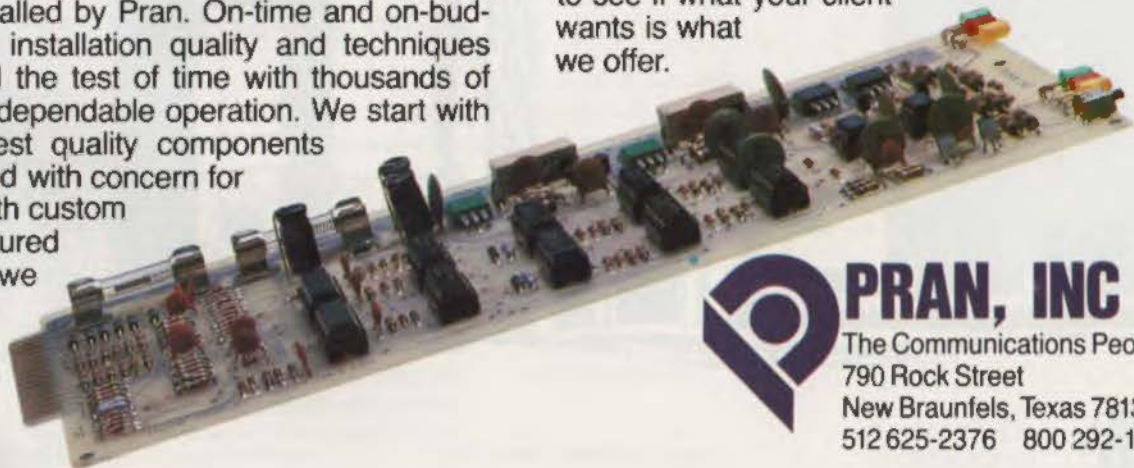
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EDITOR: I was intrigued by the letter from James Wofford of El Paso in your January/February 1988 issue regarding the 1987 TSA Design Awards Competition and its results.

Apparently, the program was what Mr. Wofford considers an "embarrassment" because few projects were awarded a citation. I cannot see what the problem is. How many citations would have made it a success—10, 15, 25? The projects that won awards showed the qualities that made them worthy of selection. Where is the failure or embarrassment in that? Because a project does not receive a citation does not label it as bad. It simply did not get an award, and better luck next year.

Let's not be so concerned with the investment of our \$85 entry fee and try to realize that if we want to win in a TSA competition we can: (1) involve ourselves in the selection of the jury and influence that selection to reflect values that we feel are more appropriate (and I challenge us all to find a jury with more appropriate qualifications or standards than we had in 1987); and (2) do work worthy of an award.

Congratulations to the winners of the 1987 TSA Design Awards competition. To the rest of us—better luck in 1988.

*James M. Stark,  
Good, Haas & Fulton Architects  
Dallas*

EDITOR: David Braden's tribute to George Dahl, FAIA, was beautifully written [Sep/Oct 1987].

In an age when eloquence is dying, Braden's comments are elegant and delightful.

*John M. Carson,  
Carson Consultants, Inc.  
El Paso*

EDITOR: For too long now many architects have been waltzing around in a trance at their own self-conceived masked ball, called by some the post-modern movement and by me a sad chapter in the history of American architecture. It therefore was refreshing to browse through the [Nov/Dec 1987] issue of *Texas Architect* and experience in both photographs and words what seems to be an emergent challenge to the largely mindless mannerism which in recent years has been passed off as responsible architectural practice.

Twenty-five years ago in Philadelphia, an energetic Ed Bacon successfully promoted an approach to urban design incorporating the Renaissance concept of "points in space." As evidenced by Providence Towers in Dallas, some latter-day architects have gone a step further in pursuing the ideas of "holes in space." Unfortunately, most of the buildings wrapped around such holes do not add up to either good urban design or good architecture.

It is reassuring to know that thoughtful architectural responses apparently are still being produced, and that some of these can be credited to familiar and long-respected names. To me this simply demonstrates that while architects possessing mature creativity and a strong philosophical underpinning may from time to time be tilted a bit by the impact of popular trends in architecture, such architects are not likely to be toppled and trampled upon. My compliments to those of you still standing.

*William Sheveland,  
Dallas*

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The years between 1919 and 1930 aren't cited often when Texans recount the good old days. The allegory that still spurs the Texan psyche—remarkably, given the urban growth of the past 40 years and the immigration from other states that has swelled the state's population—looks back to the decades when the frontier inched westward, the days of the cattle drives celebrated in Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove*. The myth draws little from any time later than 1901, when Spindletop came in.

It's a shame. The Texas arcadia of open space and unlimited personal independence is compelling, but it has offered little guidance during Texas' transformation into an overwhelmingly urban state.

As Stephen Fox argues in his feature "Lessons Learned with 20/80 Vision," most Texas cities today are places where "the automobile, suburban sprawl, and utter disregard for historic city fabric threaten to shred all sense of urbanity and community identity." By comparison, architects and builders in the 1920s were able to capitalize on urban forms and textures that had developed since the 1890s to "accommodate the contending claims of civic-corporate identity and individual expression," and "to produce buildings... that fit their surroundings so well that they have transformed them into distinctive places." Architect Jamie Lofgren, in her feature on 1920s Texas skyscrapers, analyzes the elements that made the decade's high-rise buildings so effective.

The architects of the 1920s had to deal with real-estate practices that often undercut their efforts. More important, in hindsight, the automobile strip emerged during the decade; this development, as Fox says, over the next several decades stretched the dense, human-scaled fabric of Texas cities out of all recognition.

Two "In the News" stories from Houston, the last major city in the country without zoning, have a serendipitous connection with the theme of these features. Organizers of the Gateway Houston project hope to use public/private financing and land controls to make something coherent out of the city's most chaotic freeway strips. And voters have approved a rail-transit package that will put a subway under Main Street. These endeavors suggest an attention to issues of cohesiveness, scale, and compatibility in city-building seldom seen since the 1920s.

Similarly, the feature by Ray Don Tilley on the banking hall of Momentum Place in Dallas profiles a new addition to the 1980s version of high-rise buildings, with grand, historicist lobby spaces and processional relationships to the street, that recall 1920s skyscrapers. If the MBank hall represents a now-familiar architectural movement, however, Donald Barthelme's essay "A Little Synergy" will come as a surprise.

Barthelme, the son of one of Houston's most celebrated architects, Donald Barthelme, FAIA, is one of the country's brightest literary lights (his "I Bought a Little City," among scores of stories he has published since the 1960s, is the funniest story ever written about urban design). In this issue he proposes a pedestrian zone north of the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, to be designed by some wildly eclectic teams.

As a distinguished and interested reader of *TA*, Barthelme deserves special thanks. His essay may turn out to be only entertainment. Or, along with other events in Houston, it may eventually be seen as marking the emergence of a new consensus on urban space in the state.

—Joel Warren Barna



*Charles Moore: Buildings and Projects,  
1949-1986*

Eugene Johnson, ed.

Rizzoli, New York, 1986

307 pages, 464 illustrations

\$45 hardcover; \$29.95 paper

Reviewed by Drexel Turner

The prospect of making places in a world that has become both different and indifferent imbues the work of Charles Moore with a gentle, if unlikely, heroism. Not that he affects the tragic view of the architect's plight or the sort of portentously "consistent polemical foundation" that some critics find reassuring as a hallmark of serious architectural endeavor. Rather, armed only with good will, a sense of his own vulnerability, and an intelligence at once observant, fanciful, and pragmatic, Moore has succeeded in producing a magic kingdom of considerable dimension, as this addition to the Rizzoli series of monographs on contemporary architects attests.

The monograph itself is a companion piece to a retrospective exhibition organized last year by Eugene Johnson at the Williams College Museum of Art. It is prefaced by a "festschrift" of reminiscence and appraisal from Moore's colleagues and peers. This multi-point perspective is followed by Johnson's carefully crafted portrayal of Moore's work in traditional, art-historical terms. The rest of the volume is devoted to a thematically arranged portfolio of nearly 60 buildings and projects, a handful of fantasy drawings, a teeming bibliography, and a checklist of work from 1946 on. The result is a picture in the round that lacks only a review of Moore's writings.

In the early pages, Robert A. M. Stern, himself a student during Moore's tenure at Yale, characterizes Moore as "a very modern, very American architect, a maker of places that correspond to the very American fluidity and restlessness of his mind." This may help to explain why Moore, like Venturi, is often better appreciated, or at least less likely to be taken for granted, abroad than at home. Whatever one's vantage point, it is difficult to imagine the shape, and edge, of

***The virtuosic push and pull  
of Charles Moore's recent  
work suggests that the  
synthesizing genius of his  
production is accelerating.***

American architecture today without him, or to conceive of a more vivid migration from the established conventions of post-war modernism to a *glasnost* that makes room for Hollywood and Disneyland, Maybeck and Borromini, and a garden of vernacular delights, from adobe to tinsel.

One of the small epiphanies of the portfolio is the realization that the strength of Moore's work is a development of the last decade or so, dating from the design and construction of the Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans (1975-78), a singularly provocative piece of civic architecture. This and the elephant-mirrored front of the project for the Best Products Showroom show at the Museum of Modern Art (1980, unfortunately missing from the portfolio) and the decorated roller coaster of the Wonderwall at the New Orleans World's Fair (1982-84) are high-wire acts that no one could have seen coming, perhaps not even Moore himself. Thrilling as they are, they co-exist in Moore's recent output with several equally resonant essays in what might be called regional free association. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Pacific Palisades, California (1979-83), is an excursion in the Maybeckian Bay Area timberline, picturesquely reconsidered, stuccoed, and shipped south to Los Angeles, while the additions to the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College (1981-85) and the Williams College Museum of Art (1977-86) are both keyed to new old New England themes—Georgian outcroppings on the road to Milltown. These two strains

meet at the Beverly Hills Civic Center (1982), fused by a sort of Goodhuesque romanticism and Borrominesque overlay into a cinematic, but not indecorous, extension of the public domain on the Santa Barbara model, which Moore was among the first to admire in print.

The virtuosic push and pull, razz-matazz, and happy-go-local of this collation of recent work suggests that the synthesizing genius of Moore's production has accelerated remarkably in recent years. The march from the Sea Ranch (1963-65) to Kresge College (1964-74), in company with a series of exemplary houses, would have assured Moore's place among the architects of his generation. But this recent work strikes out for new territory and claims it with a freshness that perhaps can be appreciated only now.

Moore's perception of our surroundings, no less than our inclination to attend to them, is unclouded by sentiment. "I think that the environment is lousy, and there is hardly any place in North America that the hand of man has touched that it hasn't ruined," Moore is quoted as saying. As a body, Moore's work can perhaps be seen as an unpretentious antidote to this vexation, an attempt to mitigate it in some measure with an architecture "full of moving," to use Gertrude Stein's phrase, set against a subliminal, often dream-like ground. In this respect Moore seeks to recover the romantic-eclectic spirit of an earlier generation of American architects, without ignoring the exigencies or forsaking the resources of the architectural present. His work belongs neither to a world of sweetness and light nor exaggerated angst. It shows instead remarkable fortitude and ingenuity in facing the world, on its terms and his.

*Drexel Turner is Assistant to the Dean at the Rice School of Architecture.*

Edited by Ray Don Tilley

## CORPUS CHRISTI SET TO RAZE COLLEY'S 1952 CIVIC DESIGN

Corpus Christi's long-awaited \$11.2-million City Hall (see "In the News," *TA* Jan/Feb, Sep/Oct 1984), designed by Taft Architects, Houston, in association with Kipp Richter & Associates, Corpus Christi, is now occupied, leaving the City Council with the problem of what to do with the now-vacant former City Hall. Assuming funding is available, the Council has decided to begin demolition as early as March, although last-minute appeals from preservationists, who cite the structure's local and national significance, may delay action.

Corpus Christi architect Richard Colley, who practiced internationally as Texas Instruments' architect until his death in 1983, designed the 1952 City Hall, along with Exposition Hall and Memorial Coliseum, as a new municipal complex. Sadly, the City Hall would become only the latest in the city's legacy of lost historical structures. The adjacent Exposition Hall, which was then revolutionary for its lift-slab roof, was torn down in April 1985. City officials and business leaders say the bayfront site should be cleared for parks to be used by residents and tourists.

*Progressive Architecture* selected the complex as the best civic design of 1952. Colley sited the 24,000-square-foot City Hall askew to the coastline at a true north-south orientation, with windows primarily on the north and south faces for energy efficiency. He added a brise-soleil grid to the south wall of the brick-veneer, concrete-block structure to prevent direct sunlight.

Colley employed a palette of subtle and striking colors on the City Hall's interior plaster walls, combining them with some wood paneling. He used fine mill-

Ken Randolph



Richard Colley's now-vacant 1952 Corpus Christi City Hall may be razed to create bayfront park space.

work in the original second-floor council chamber and marble in elevator lobbies and on the first floor. Two-inch plaster-on-lath partition walls defined offices for easy future reorganization.

"Colley was still finding his own direction in the City Hall," Houston architectural historian Stephen Fox says. "The City Hall and Memorial Coliseum [formed] one of the first modern civic-center groups of buildings in Texas."

The fate of the City Hall was sealed in June 1987, when the City Council voted to demolish it and its smaller neighbor, the Public Utilities Building, as well as to reroute Shoreline Boulevard, opening the site for a bayfront park.

In an attempt to save the buildings, a group of citizens has formed the private, nonprofit Preservation Corpus Christi Inc., with preservation activist Janet Rice as president. Rice says the City Hall deserves to be saved for its significance as a work of modern architecture. Her group persuaded leaders of Heart of Corpus Christi, a public/private downtown revitalization consortium, to ask city officials to halt demolition until a master plan can be developed for the area.

The group's pleas, however, have little

chance of succeeding, says Council Member Mary Rhodes. "If [the City Hall] were located anywhere else," she says, "there would be more support.... The building is really bad inside. I think it's an attractive building, but the City's engineers say it's structurally unsound."

Rhodes says those who would save the buildings "are a very, very small group," and that local sentiment runs strongly *against* preservation—not just for this project, but in general. According to Rhodes, she was booed during a recent campaign forum when she said she supported preserving the abandoned former Nueces County Courthouse, designed by Harvey L. Page and built in 1914 (see "Endangered County Courthouses," *TA* May/June 1986). The city council has voted to begin the process of having the former courthouse demolished.

The chief objection to renovating Colley's City Hall has been its location. A Corpus Christi *Caller-Times* editorial conceded that several worthwhile proposals for reusing the soon-to-be-vacated buildings had been presented, but urged that "all should be denied.... The buildings are located in the middle of Corpus Christi's most valuable real estate—the

bayfront... Perpetuating them would compound a serious error."

Just for the record, says George Graham, a partner in Colley Associates, the City Council picked the site. "Colley was against putting the buildings down on the beach," he says. "He carried [his objections] as far as he could without saying he wouldn't do the project."

Ironically, Robert Kipp, a principal of Kipp Richter & Associates and an associate on the new City Hall, would be among those most disappointed by the demolition. "It breaks my heart a little," he says. "I was an intern in Colley's office in the summer of '50, and I worked on the construction drawings for the City Hall... I felt very fortunate to be able to work for [Colley]."

For now, preservationist Rice says, little else can be done to change the Council's mind. Demolition bids were opened Feb. 2 and, once the move to the new City Hall is completed, demolition can begin. The only obstacle may be paying the expected \$300,000 removal price.

If the buildings are lost, architect Graham says, "It will be more than just a shame...it'll be wiping out the last of a whole period of significant architecture."

—Ray Don Tilley

## "GATEWAY HOUSTON" DRIVE AIMS TO IMPROVE FREEWAYS

Houston architects, developers, and political leaders are working together on Gateway Houston, an ambitious attempt to change the city's freeways from environmental free-fire zones to uncluttered parkways, in hopes of changing the way visitors perceive the city. Observers say that the project, in addition, could mark an important change in the way Houstonians see their city's future.

Business leaders and politicians used to regard development along Houston's freeways as a symbol of the city's booming economy. They treated visual clutter and congestion as mere inconveniences traded for a shot at the good life.

Over the last decade, however, things deteriorated. The sense of unfettered energy became one of uncontrollable decay, particularly along Interstate Highways 59



Some Houstonians see visual clutter and "offensive uses" along the freeways as threats to economic growth.



Gateway Houston planners want to change I-45 north of downtown, ABOVE, into a parkway, BELOW.



and 45 between downtown and the city's two airports—the roads that visitors saw first. Massage parlors and seedy motels displaced churches. Marginally profitable strip shopping centers crowded up against used-car lots, whose owners proclaimed mental inadequacy to attract customers. Overhead, billboards hawking everything from liquor to vasectomies got bigger and shriller.

At the same time, Houstonians were being forced to think about ways to overcome a dramatic economic slump. Politicians and business leaders, led (and backed financially) by developer Kenneth Schnitzer, founded the Houston Economic Development Council and Hous-

ton Proud, two post-bust organizations working to diversify the local economy and plan for future growth. In 1987, Houston Proud gave birth to Gateway Houston, which proposes to change everything from landscaping to signage along the "gateway" freeways.

Like Horatio Alger, who urged his fellow paper boys to improve their personal grooming if they wanted to prosper, those trying to clean up the freeways are motivated not just by an aesthetic urge but because they see the move as essential to the city's future economic growth.

Kenneth Schnitzer, whose Century

NEWS, continued on page 14

# Important New Architecture Surveys and

## The Chicago Tapes



## CHICAGO TAPES

*Introduction by Stanley Tigerman.* This invaluable handbook documents the lively, controversial proceedings of a two-day closed meeting of 24 internationally known architects who convened at the University of Illinois, Chicago in November 1986. Participants included Diana Agrest, Thomas Beeby, Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Michael Graves, Helmut Jahn, Robert A.M. Stern, and Stanley Tigerman, to name a few. 224 pages. 7" x 9". 120 illus. 0875-0. Paper \$29.95

## DE-ARCHITECTURE

*James Wines.* A controversial book of theory, opinion, and critical history on the subjects of architecture, public art, and community spaces. The text is a reflection of the philosophy of the architectural group SITE (founded by Wines), and it offers an overview of the problems and possible solutions for communication in the building arts of this century. 208 pages. 8 1/2" x 11". 300 illus. Hardcover: 0861-0. \$40. Paper: 0862-9. \$25

## PLACES AND MEMORIES

*Photographs by Roberto Schezen. Preface by Bill N. Lacy. Introduction by Diana Agrest. Afterword by John Hejduk. Designed by Massimo Vignelli.* Master architectural photographer Schezen offers this beautiful collection of photographs of the world's most interesting architecture. The tour includes Vienna (houses by Hoffmann, Olbrich), Germany (Gropius), Milan (Rossi), ancient sites in Mexico, and marvelous houses in Newport, Rhode Island. 120 pages. 11" x 11". 89 duotone photographs. 0891-2. \$45

## PARIS 1979-1989

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Two of the 35th annual *Progressive Architecture* awards went to Texas firms. Architect **Milosav Cekic**, Austin (who contributed a "Musings" column to the Nov/Dec 1987 issue of *TA*) won an urban-design citation for his plan for the Paul Young Ranch in Laredo. **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Houston**, won an architecture citation for the Memphis Brooks Museum in Memphis, Tennessee (see "In Progress," *TA* Sep/Oct 1987). The Hillier Group of Princeton, N.J., also won an architecture award for the Arizona State University College of Architecture and Environmental Design in Tempe, Arizona. **Douglas Pegues Harvey**, who wrote a feature story for the Jan/Feb 1988 issue of *TA*, was a member of the project team.

**Joe Guy**, artist and associate professor of architecture at UT Arlington, was one of 20 winners selected from a competi-

tion for the 1988 Lewis Comfort Tiffany Award. The award includes a grant for \$15,000.

Waco architect **Larry Gawloski**, of the firm Dudley, Bailey, Jezek and Rose, Inc., won a competition to design a new 13,000-square-foot, \$1-million Texas Sports Hall of Fame.

Houston's **Rice Design Alliance** celebrates its 15th birthday in May. In preparation for this year's fundraising gala and in honor of out-going Rice School of Architecture Dean **O. Jack Mitchell, FAIA**, there will be a reception and exhibition of birthday toys (designed by Ricardo Legorreta, Ricardo Bofill, Cesar Pelli, SOM, Gensler Associates, et al.), 7-10 p.m., April 8, at the Sewall Art Gallery on the Rice Campus. The fundraising gala (organized by Carolyn Farb) will be held May 21.

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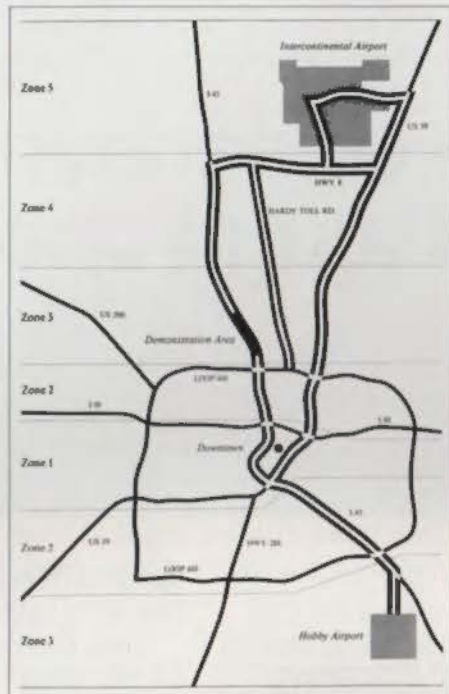
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Development Corporation has built projects including Greenway Plaza and the Allen Center downtown, says, "[F]irst impressions are vitally important in our ability to compete with other cities for economic growth." Gateway Houston will support the city's overall economic-development efforts, making Houston's major access points "positives, rather than negatives," Schnitzer adds.

Over the next five to eight years, the Gateway Houston plan calls for a number of physical improvements along 43 miles of freeways and roads serving Houston Intercontinental and Hobby airports. These include installing extensive new landscaping, reducing the number of billboards, removing or relocating utility lines and poles, and establishing common design standards for the freeways.

The plan also calls for creation of an "Airport Corridors Improvement District," a financing entity that must be authorized by the Texas Legislature. The district would use bond sales and tax incentives to raise funds for the improve-

ments; it would also enforce guidelines on signage and "offensive" land uses. Schnitzer is enrolling corporate sponsors for a project endowment.



Gateway Houston aims to clean up freeways and roads (outlined above) to Houston's airports.

A two-mile, \$7.5-million demonstration project on IH-45 was inaugurated in 1987. Houston Lighting and Power, the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation, the City, and many businesses chipped in for the project. Thirty architecture, engineering, and landscaping firms donated services.

In fact, Houston architects were active in the effort from the start. Peter Brown of the Houston firm Phillips & Brown, a past president of the Houston Chapter/AIA and the chairman of the chapter's urban-design committee, is co-chairman of the Gateway Houston project committee, with developer Doug Konopka. The committee developed project goals and plans for landscaping, signage, and other improvements.

"I see it as a commitment from the architectural community in general and the Houston Chapter in particular," says Brown. Gateway Houston team members included architects Craig Hartman, Liz Burkholder, and Irving Phillips, along with landscape architect Clark Condon and graphics designer Catherine Hardin. Members of the group, working as the

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Houston Proud Urban Design Committee, have met with an association of businesses along IH-45 and developed a cooperative agreement on private-property landscaping and signs.

Brown cites work by Houston Proud on other projects, such as an adopt-a-park program, neighborhood revitalization, and efforts to landscape areas around the Houston Medical Center. "I hope this is the beginning of a much broader effort to deal with urban-design issues," he adds.

But success won't come easily. The two-mile demonstration project area includes 45 billboards, Brown says. These have proved to be the toughest problem. Owners are entitled to compensation as billboards are removed; each billboard removed makes the remaining billboards more valuable, escalating the compensation to be paid. Some new legal formula may have to be devised, says Brown, for Gateway Houston to succeed.

Observers agree that, if it works, Gateway Houston will alter Houston's appearance significantly. More important, however, is the psychological change created by the spectacle of developers working to guide and stimulate future economic growth by controlling land use. In the last major American city without zoning, things may never be the same.

—Joel Warren Barna

## TEXAS GETS PRIVATE PRISONS

The 70th State Legislature last year found itself trapped between shrinking oil-and-gas revenues and federal court orders to end dangerous overcrowding in the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC), the nation's largest prison system. In balancing the opposing demands, the legislators decided for the first time to allow privately run correctional facilities.

The measure requires the private contractors to build and operate the facilities for at least 10 percent less than state-built facilities would cost. At the same time, the plan's supporters hope to get 2,000 new cells "on-line" more quickly than TDC units could be produced.

The TDC received competitive bids

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NEWS, continued on page 47



# LESSONS LEARNED WITH 20/80 VISION

By Stephen Fox

*The architectural and urbanistic practices of the 1920s elicit both admiration and discontent. The cities that grew up during the decade had qualities—coherence and strong urban character—that are missing today. But the decade's failures are as instructive as its successes.*

**T**he 1920s were the golden age of the American city—in retrospect. Looking back, one sees many qualities absent in present-day cities, especially in the boom cities of the American Southwest, where the automobile, suburban sprawl, and disregard for historic city fabric threaten to shred all sense of urbanity and community identity.

But to look back without historical awareness misleads. City development cannot be isolated conveniently by period. Cities of the 1920s were accumulations of all that had come before, beneficiaries especially of a complex of attitudes about city living that emerged in the 1890s. They were also staging areas for radically new patterns of development and movement that predominated after World War II.

Examining the 1920s from the perspective of the present can be instructive if we look selectively. How did things get to be the way they are? And what could people do in the past that we now cannot do or do badly?

Texas cities in the 1920s shared a number of distinguishing traits: the florescence of downtown districts, rising on the horizon in newly acquired skylines; the growth of garden suburbs; and the emergence of automobile strips—corridor streets linking center to periphery.

## DOWNTOWN

Texas downtowns had flourished since the 1890s when streetcars enabled large numbers of people to move between suburbs and city centers, making downtowns not just symbolic, but operational, centers of cities. The emergence of retail and entertainment districts in downtowns especially attracted whole new categories of people, particularly middle-class women, to what had been a predominantly male, all-business enclave. Cycles of construction in the 1890s, the 1900s, and the 1910s endowed the downtown districts of Texas cities with a dense, cohesive fabric of multi-story office, hotel, retail, and theater buildings. Since the turn of the century, these districts had grown to absorb older, near-town residential neighborhoods, so

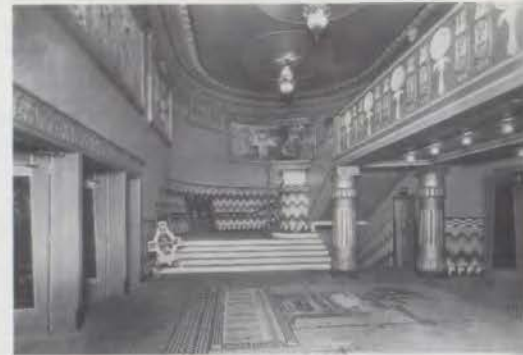
that the largest churches and the oldest schools were suddenly downtown, although they had not started out there. Expansion into surrounding neighborhoods not only occasioned large-scale redevelopment; it also introduced a distinction between “old” and “new” sections within each downtown that became pronounced in the 1920s.

What is most appealing about downtowns of the 1920s is the mixture of uses that they contained and the intensity with which they were used by a broad range of citizens. However, it cannot be forgotten that not all citizens were welcome. Legal segregation and discriminatory practices made it common to have a parallel, smaller version of downtown, with businesses operated by or serving blacks in the old part of downtown. The same circumstances might prevail where Mexican-Americans constituted a significant minority. The area near the intersection of Milam Street and Prairie Avenue near Market Square in Houston and the west end of Commerce and Houston streets near Market and Milam squares in San Antonio typify these segregated downtowns-within-downtowns.

New construction occurred at a prodigious rate after 1925. This was most visible in the rise of skylines, eclipsing those from the building boom of 1909-1912. Despite an increase in scale, these new tall buildings reproduced the dense texture of the existing city.

An appealing illustration of this took shape between 1925 and 1927 on a block of Main Street in Houston. There Jesse H. Jones, Houston's most astute real-estate developer, built the 16-story Lamar Hotel, the Metropolitan Theater with its flamboyant Egyptian interiors, the adjoining Loew's State Theater, and the eight-story Democratic Building, all to the designs of Alfred C. Finn. The two tall buildings bracketed the Main Street facade of the block, with the two theaters inserted between, accessible from their Main Street entries via long, architecturally elaborated promenades. This arrangement evokes what Rem Koolhaas, in describing Manhattan in the 1920s, called the

*FACING PAGE: Terra-cotta ornament on the J. M. Nix Professional Building shows the penchant for ornament exercised by San Antonio architects in the 1920s. Photograph by John Dyer, San Antonio*



Jesse Jones's hotel-office-retail-theater complex in Houston typified a 1920s "culture of congestion."

"culture of congestion" in its complex layering of uses. Jones crowned this development with his own expansive penthouse apartment atop the Lamar Hotel, designed by John F. Staub. Yet despite the presence of a single client and a single architect, the complex was not resolved architecturally. The rear elevation on Travis Street revealed a jumble of shapes cloaked by blank brick walls, indicating the extent to which this sort of development proceeded from conventional real-estate practices of the day, rather than from an architectural vision of how the center of the city ought to function.

San Antonio has the most intact example of a 1920s downtown in a major Texas city. The retail district along Houston Street, the twisting courses of Broadway, St. Mary's, and Soledad streets, even the recently abused Auditorium Circle, are redolent of the way one remembers other Texas cities and towns—combining a mixture of building types with a rich array of architectural incidents that work as well from the sidewalk or in the lobby as from a distant skyline view. San Antonio's tall buildings of the 1920s not only continue to give the city its distinctive skyline but embody in their colors, materials, and shapes the characteristics of the city. The predominance of brown tapestry brick as a facing material gives them a strong but subtle unity on the horizon. Differentiation is visible as one approaches. San Antonio architects had a penchant for decorative detail, and they shaped building masses in response to in-

flections of the street network, turning irregularities to urbane advantage.

Provocative shapes and sparkling ornament highlight the First Baptist Church (1925, Will N. Noonan), the Medical Arts Building (1926, Ralph H. Cameron), the San Antonio Casino Club (1927, Kelwood Company), the *Express-News* Building (1929, Herbert S. Green), the J. M. Nix Professional Building (1929, Henry T. Phelps), Central Catholic High School (1931, Henry Dreisoemer), and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (1931, I. R. Timlin). On Auditorium Circle, the juxtaposition of the gracefully composed, delicately ornamented elevation of the Martin Wright Electrical Company Building (1929, Atlee B. & Robert M. Ayres), the Telephone Company Building's overpowering terra-cotta ornament, and the stolidly authoritative symmetry of the smooth-skinned Municipal Auditorium (1926, Atlee B. & Robert M. Ayres, George Willis, and Emmett T. Jackson) provides a tangible sense of how big-city architecture should make being in downtown feel.

Yet these buildings were typical products of their time, not exceptional works of genius. It is their coherence and their strong urban character that today imbue them with an extraordinary quality, one that critics would never have ascribed to them when they were new. This is architecture that grew better with time and use.

TOP: Alfred C. Finn designed a flamboyant neo-Egyptian interior for the Metropolitan Theater on Main Street in Houston, ABOVE: The back of the block shows an architecturally unresolved complex, despite the participation of a single client—Jesse H. Jones—and a single architect—Alfred C. Finn.

## THE CORRIDOR STREET

Automobiles drastically transformed certain locales in Texas cities merely by seeking out the best-paved, most direct routes linking key points. A Houston example is telling. Between 1870 and 1920, the upper (southern) part of Main Street was the most elite residential thoroughfare in the city, lined for nearly 20 blocks with Victorian mansions and Colonial Revival houses, all in lush gardens. By 1919, however, the lower end was collapsing: the mansions were being pulled down and replaced by service stations, auto agencies, low retail buildings, and hundreds of advertising billboards.

By the middle 1920s the city's showplace thoroughfare was in disarray. This affected new commercial development, not in the old residential district, but farther up in the blocks between Elgin and Richmond. There, architecture was called upon to restore a semblance of order to Main Street, to repair its reputation and enable it to resume its role as Houston's most exemplary street. By consensus, rather than any formalized plan, Mediterranean architecture was adopted as the unifying style of this new, linear, suburban business corridor. Pierre L. Michael, an advertising man, initiated the trend toward what Peter C. Papademetriou has called "Main Street Spanish" with the Ironcraft Studio (1927, Hiram A. Salisbury), a combination retail and residential block. Two years later, he completed next door Main Street's Spanish monument, the Isabella Court (1929). Its architect, William D. Bordeaux, went on to design the Studio Building (1929) and the Hovas-Donovan Shops (1929).

Although only one among many "minor" styles of European architecture popular in the eclectic 1920s, the Mediterranean proved especially appealing to architects struggling to give new "drive-in" building typologies architectural respectability. Beaumont's unparalleled complex of apartments and shops, The Mildred (1926 and 1930, The Austin Company), is an especially fine example of this trend, as are a series of small roadside strip shopping buildings designed by the San Antonio architects Adams & Adams, with their distinctive bulbous cast-concrete detail. Fooshee & Cheek of Dallas became specialists in the application of Mediterranean imagery to drive-in building types, as Anita Toews documented in a 1984 article in *Perspective*. Among their works were the prototype Magnolia Petroleum Company service station (1930), the Grande Court Tourist Lodge (1931), and, most deservedly famous, Highland Park Village (1931-1935).



Martin Wright Electrical Company Building, 1929, Atlee B. & Robert M. Ayres



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ABOVE: The Municipal Auditorium, 1926, by Atlee B. & Robert M. Ayres, George Willis, and Emmett T. Jackson, presents a smooth, authoritative facade. It contrasts with the overpowering terra-cotta ornament on the nearby Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (1931, I. R. Timin). LEFT.

BOTTOM: With its encrustation of billboards, the Studio Building, 1929, by William D. Bordeaux, shows the fate that overtook the "Main Street Spanish" and other styles as the dense urban fabric was stretched to fit the emerging automobile strip.



Architects of the 1920s, trained to be facile in the manipulation of stylistic imagery, employed it to mask, as winsomely and tastefully as possible, the disintegration of the dense fabric characteristic of the center city, as that fabric was stretched out of shape to span the emerging auto strip. Photographs of Houston's Main Street taken in the 1930s and 1940s imply that the attempt was less than successful—the examples of Main Street Spanish came to be decked with illuminated advertising signs, proclaiming that the strip required neither stylistic consistency nor architectural charm.

### THE GARDEN SUBURB AND THE COUNTRY HOUSE

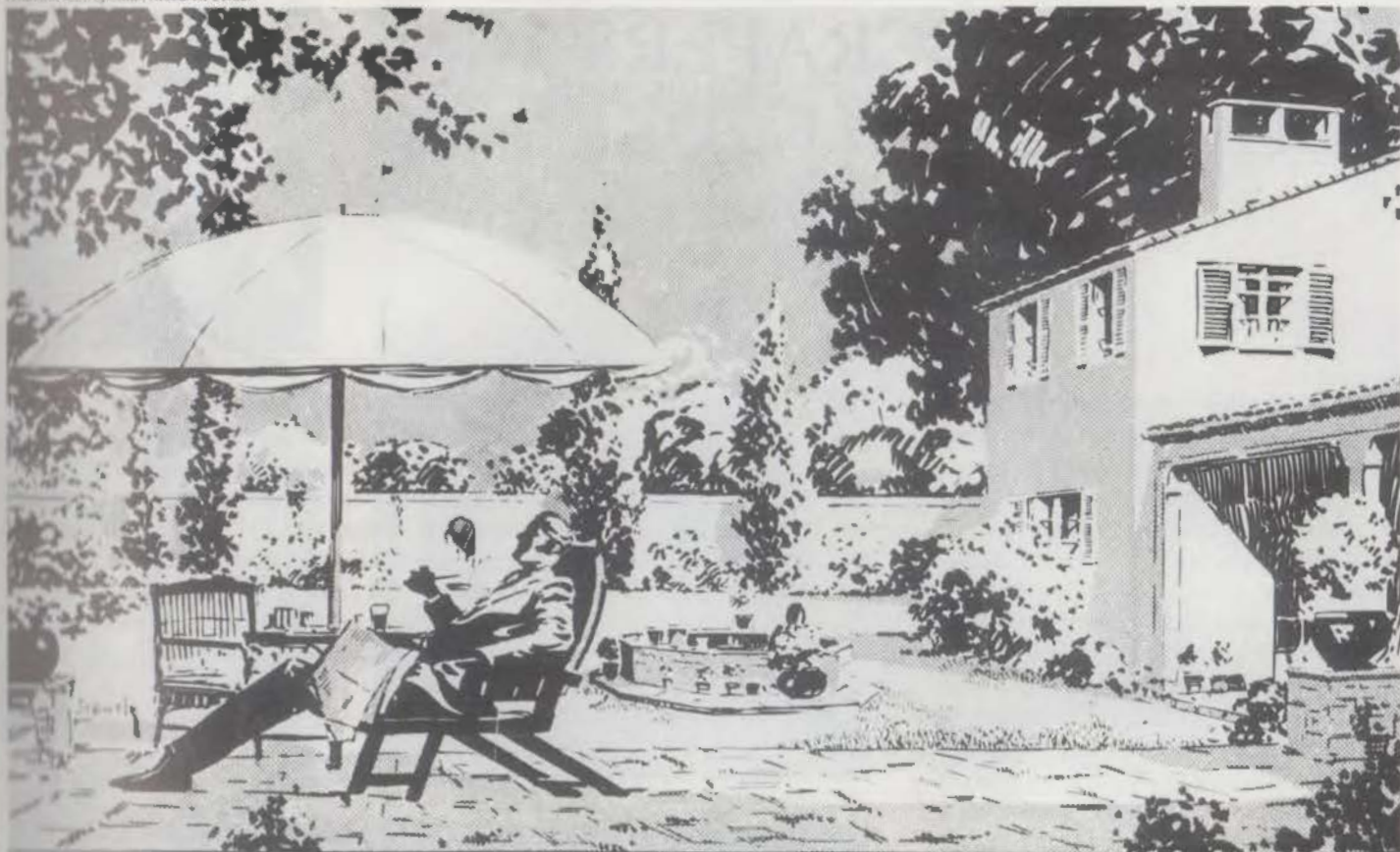
The preferred terminus of the corridor street was at the fanciest new suburb on the edge of town. Aspiring cities accomplished this transition with greater finesse, employing the parkway, a restricted-access, high-speed thoroughfare cut through a continuous landscaped greensward. Downtown Dallas was linked to Highland Park by the Turtle Creek Parkway, downtown Houston to River Oaks by the Buffalo Bayou Parkway. The destination points at the end of these routes were garden suburbs, small residential cities that strove to be the antithesis of the mixed, crowded, surging downtowns to which they were directly, efficiently, even beautifully joined. Curvilinear street networks broke emphatically with the city's ruling grid, proclaiming the community's detachment and self-contained identity. Dense plantings, large lots, and comprehensive legal restrictions, with associations to enforce them, all were attributes of these conspicuously planned suburbs. But there was something more. The garden suburb was marketed not merely as a real-estate development, but as a way of life, "A Distinguished Experiment in Fine Living," as one advertisement for River Oaks read.

The garden suburb was not an invention of the 1920s. Alamo Heights, begun outside San Antonio in 1890, was the first garden suburb in Texas, and Highland Park, River Crest in Fort Worth, and Terrell Hills outside San Antonio all predated the 1920s. But it was during the decade that they, like River Oaks, Olmos Park outside San Antonio, and Westover Hills outside Fort Worth, acquired their distinct identities. Built in them was a new type of house that differed from the pillared Colonial Revival houses characteristic of the teens. Called the "country house" (although it was more apt to be built in a garden suburb than on a rural estate), it was intended as a gracious domestic haven rather than a semi-public showplace.

Adequate ventilation and a new concern for family privacy entailed several distinctive architectural responses. Lots on the south side of the street were the more prized, and therefore the more expensive, because they allowed the major rooms to be oriented to the rear of the property and still take advantage of the prevailing breeze. To facilitate ventilation, such houses were relatively thin, often only one room deep. Streets in garden suburbs customarily ran east-west to provide the maximum number of south-facing lots. Because of this orientation, the longer dimension of the house paralleled the street. This conjunction of attributes resulted in the provision of elongated street façades on which the stylistic character desired might be expressed. Public decorum was observed by this arrangement, even though placing major living rooms at the back of the property reversed long-standing convention.

Once the prosaic "backyard" had been elevated to the honorific "garden," landscape design became a critical facet for consideration. Axially aligned but unostentatious garden layouts, directly accessible from living rooms by way of stone- or brick-paved terraces, were favored because they could function easily as outdoor spaces for entertaining. The community aspect of the street frontage was preserved by treating front lawns as a continuous field of green, unobstructed by walls, fences, or hedges, which often were explicitly proscribed by deed restrictions. As with the architecturally composed street front of the country house, this enabled the visual breadth and continuity of the neighborhood to be preserved without diminishing privacy. It is this deft balance between the conflicting desires for family privacy and community identity in architecture and landscape design that made these houses and neighborhoods such marvels of tact, subtlety, and ingenuity. The exquisite sensation of well-being that attentiveness to building material, crafted detail, and harmonious proportions can instill makes the best houses in Texas' garden suburbs remarkable architectural achievements.

Preserving the illusion of historical period consistency without disrupting expectations about convenience, comfort, and efficient servicing was another dexterously manipulated accomplishment of the best of these houses. Indeed, they were so persuasive as works of formal virtuosity that they forestalled, at least initially, questions about the logic connecting appearance and use. Such virtuosity was the hallmark of John F. Staub, Houston's foremost country-house architect, as well as H. B. Thomson of Dallas and Birdsall P. Briscoe of Hous-



## *The Day of Rest in River Oaks*

*Garden Suburbs such as River Oaks in Houston (advertisement, ABOVE) were not invented in the 1920s, but during the decade they gained their identities. In them the "country house" was intended as a gracious domestic haven rather than a semi-public showplace.*

ton. It is a testament to their abilities (as well as those of Fooshee & Cheek and Anton F. Korn, Jr., of Dallas, Joseph R. Pelich of Fort Worth, and Ralph H. Cameron, Harvey P. Smith, and Atlee B. & Robert M. Ayres) that the houses they designed and the suburban neighborhoods in which these are located remain the most desirable places to live in their respective cities. Comprehensive planning, building controls, and inspired architectural design that strikes the right balance between social convention and personal inclination successfully calmed the instability in urban residential real estate that produced such anxiety in the 1920s. But the price came high: economic zoning and rigorous exclusionary practices combined with an architecture in which the factor of make-believe proved so troubling intellectually that it could not be sustained, despite its general popularity.

### **20/80 VISION**

Architectural and urbanistic practices of the 1920s, when examined critically, elicit both admiration and discontent. Their unresolved contradictions mirror our own. It is not consol-

ing to realize the extent to which the intense urbanity of big-city downtowns resulted from building typologies determined by then-current real estate practices, the same system of formulas that, 60 years later, has wreaked such havoc. It is dispiriting to see how ineffective architects, despite their formal proficiency, proved to be at imposing architectural and urbanistic order on the emerging typologies of the corridor street. Even the unqualified success story of the decade, the garden suburb, rankles. Its insularity and limited accessibility are too obvious; its architectural preferences are irrational and, today, crudely debased.

To this one must contrast the virtues of the 1920s: the ability to design at a range of scales, to accommodate the contending claims of civic-corporate identity and individual expression, to make architecture that feels as good to be in as to look at, to produce buildings, whether in the center of the city or on its restricted periphery, that fit their surroundings so well that they have transformed them into distinctive places.

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*Stephen Fox is a Fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas.*

# TEXAS SKYSCRAPERS IN THE 1920S

By Jamie Lofgren

The skyscraper—the most significant architectural development of the modern age—had established itself as a powerful symbol of American civilization in the early 1900s. A flourishing economy in the first decades of the century led to an unprecedented building boom across much of the country. The period was critical to the formation of many cities nationwide, and especially in Texas.

The optimism and economic prosperity of Texas cities in the 1920s found expression in the skyscraper, as emerging cities sought to prove their urban status. Much more than office buildings, skyscrapers became monuments to aspiration, placards of power and prestige.

Skyscraper aesthetics also reached a zenith in the '20s. Since the inception of the tall building, architects had been seeking an appropriate vertical expression—a skyscraper style. The period between 1910 and 1930 was the richest era in skyscraper design, with an eclectic smorgasbord of historical styles to choose from. By the late 1920s, the classical and gothic experiments began to retreat before the influences of a new age, and a unique skyscraper style emerged.

The first true skyscraper in Texas was the Amicable Building in Waco (1911). A marvel of economic and engineering showmanship by Sanguinet and Staats, it was at 22 stories the tallest building in the state for 11 years. The early development of skyscraper style in Texas can be seen in the classical Amicable Building and the exuberant Beaux Arts style of the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas (1912), which give way to the use of gothic style in the nearby Busch (now Kirby) Building (1913), by Barnett, Hays & Barnett of St. Louis.

By the 1920s, the largest cities in Texas reached a climax of construction. Rapid urbanization and provincial growth, bankrolled by the oil boom, planted a modern crop of skyscrapers that towered over the prairies. Skyscrapers were built in a variety of styles in cities across the state, and a number of outstanding examples still stand, although many are gone.

The 29-story Magnolia (later Mobil) Build-

Texas Collection, Baylor University



Amicable Building, Waco



Alfred Bossom's neo-classical Magnolia Building, Dallas



Lang and Witchell's Hilton Hotel, Dallas

ing in Dallas (1922) displaced Waco's Amicable Building as tallest in the state. Designed by prominent New York architect Alfred Bossom, it followed the pattern set by the Equitable Building in New York (1915). The building's light well is turned to face the street and its two massive blocks rise straight up in a towering U-shape. Spare classical details contribute to the rather severe character of this early giant. The 1925 Hilton Hotel in Dallas, by Lang & Witchell, shows the influence of Bossom's design at a smaller scale.

Another building drawing on a classical expression, John Ebersson's Niels Esperson Building (1927) in Houston manifests the elaborate stage-set tendencies popularized by Beaux Arts proponents McKim, Mead and White of New York. The 32-story building's dramatically stepped masses culminate in a six-story "choragic monument," a columned memorial to Esperson.

On the opposite end of the stylistic spectrum, the Medical Arts Building in San Antonio (1926), by Ralph H. Cameron, exhibits the picturesque qualities of a free and romantic adaptation of the gothic style. A rare commercial example of the "chateau-

esque" style, the design combines ornate gothic elements with a mansard roof and tiered hexagonal tower. The Norwood Tower in Austin (1929), by Giesecke and Harris, is a later and more typical version of the gothic skyscraper; although its form begins to suggest the set-back massing of the later art deco style, the building's ornament is purely gothic.

Three major events influenced skyscraper design in the 1920s: enactment of the New York City zoning ordinance of 1916 (which re-





Niels Esperson Building, detail



Niels Esperson Building, lobby detail



John Eberson turned classical details into exuberant theater in the Niels Esperson Building, Houston, 1927.



Eberson's bucranium ornament appears at the entrance and at the peak of the choragic monument.

quired that buildings step back to preserve daylight on city streets, later dramatically illustrated by Hugh Ferriss); Eliel Saarinen's modernistic entry to the Chicago Tribune Tower competition of 1922; and the 1925 *Exposition des Arts Decoratifs* in Paris. By the end of the decade, architects working in New York City had synthesized these elements into a dramatic new skyscraper style that inspired what Rem Koolhaas, in *Delirious New York*, calls "ecstasy about architecture;" both the classical and gothic styles gave way to art deco (a name derived from the 1925 Paris exhibition).

The art deco skyscraper style was a popular attempt to embody "the spirit of the age." It combined historic tradition with an optimistic view of the future and, while representative of the machine age, it was not mechanistic in expression. The stepped-back massing, strong vertical lines, crowning tops, and luxurious ornament of Manhattan's skyscrapers, publicized both in the architectural press and the popular media, were emulated by smaller cities seeking to be modern and progressive. The Gulf Building in Houston (1929) and the O.T. Bassett Tower in El Paso (1930) are exceptional local examples of the set-back art deco form.

The Gulf Building, by Houston architect Alfred C. Finn, is a 30-story square brick tower on a six-story limestone base. The building's several setbacks culminate in a bristling crown of abstract finials.

An early example of the gothic style in skyscraper expression was the Dallas National Bank Building in Dallas, BELOW, designed by Co-burn & Smith and built in 1927.



General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin



Janice LaForen



Medical Arts Building, San Antonio, 1926: free-style gothic

Trost & Trost's O.T. Bassett Tower, El Paso, 1930



Austin History Center



The irregularly octagonal Smith Young Tower of 1929 in San Antonio, by Ayres and Ayres, combines gothic and art deco decoration.

Norwood Tower, Austin, 1929, by Giesecke and Harris

Henry Trost designed the O.T. Bassett Tower, using a strong vertical expression to make it look much taller than its 15 stories. Its step-backs lead to a steeply pitched roof. Clad in yellow brick and buff stone, the building is trimmed in colorful art deco ornament.

Other Texas skyscrapers from the era bear similar stylistic marks. The Smith Young Tower in San Antonio (1929), designed by San Antonio architects Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres, is an irregularly octagonal tower clad in brown brick and terra-cotta, with green accents and a pyramidal roof. Like the Gulf Building, it uses a combination of art deco and gothic detail and a richly ornamented lobby.

Ornament is the most important feature of these buildings. It plays an important role in



*The Real Estate Building, San Antonio, RIGHT, was designed by Adams & Adams and built in 1928. FAR RIGHT, the Petroleum Building, Houston, was designed by Alfred Bosson and built in 1927. These two buildings are among those that show the development of the art deco skyscraper style from elaborations of local stylistic roots.*

giving the large buildings' masses a human scale and in providing historical continuity in an architectural language that is already used and understood, making these skyscrapers not only more comprehensible to people but more compatible with smaller neighboring buildings.

On a large scale, ornament breaks up the large block with setbacks and the composition of vertical and horizontal lines. The designs of the Gulf, Smith Young, and O.T. Bassett buildings are all carefully composed to emphasize height: using setbacks to taper the towers, windows arranged in channels with recessed spandrels, and continuous vertical piers, the architects stressed upward direction. The setbacks are also lavishly detailed; the Smith Young Tower's setbacks feature gargoyles, while the O.T. Bassett Tower's end in eagle busts.

The top of the building is also a critical part of the design. Skyscrapers in the '20s met the sky with grace and a dramatic flourish, directing human eyes toward the heavens. The top establishes the character of the building and its shape becomes an important part of the skyline. The gothic tradition, emphasizing projecting vertical elements, had introduced a picturesque silhouette to skyscraper design. The art deco style continued to place a special emphasis on the building top. The crown of the Gulf Building, for example, demonstrates both the picturesque and structural implications of the art deco tradition. Its abstract sculptural projections are reminiscent of gothic finials, but continue the lines of the structure below. Both the Smith Young and O.T. Bassett towers end in steeply pitched roof "hats" that are further ornamented

with dormer windows and decorative trim.

At close range, the ornament employed on each of these buildings provides yet another layer of symbolism and visual activity. The base of the Gulf Building provides perhaps the best example. It features creamy limestone abraded into horizontal wave patterns. Entries are set into three-story portals outlined by scalloped molding, with elaborate bronze screens. Geometric scroll and prism motifs decorate windows and setbacks, and second-story windows feature unique cast-iron surrounds.

In addition to these lavishly ornamented lower-level bases and entrances, lobbies became art forms in themselves—everything from office directories to doorknobs played a part in the total design. The Gulf Building elevator lobby's colorful handkerchief vaults feature molded-plaster ornament in stylized sunbursts.

The base of the Smith Young Tower is also richly ornamented, but with more traditional gothic details. A two-story base of cream-colored terra-cotta features large segmental-arched openings with copper awnings and an entrance recessed within a massive segmental arch. At the second level, a series of windows is topped with pointed arches in an elaborate frieze punctuated by crocketed finials. The gothic elevator lobby is a fantastic vaulted space with ornate bronze grills, chandeliers, and elevator doors.

The O.T. Bassett Tower's art deco ornament of terra-cotta, granite, and marble is concentrated primarily at the two-story base. An elaborate entrance aedicula features a colorful assemblage of floral and animal forms, geometric abstractions, and decorative human heads



The lavishly detailed ground-floor spaces of Alfred C. Finn's Gulf Tower in Houston of 1929 show how ornament and structure were unified in the art deco style.



The Gulf Building, LEFT, is Houston's best-known gothic-deco skyscraper; it still stands tall on the north-west side of downtown. BELOW, one of a series of murals that depict the city's history.



Stone, metal, and terra-cotta details articulate the base of Finn's Gulf Building.

(including the architect's), framing the door and embracing the windows of the second floor.

Representing the technological and material advances of modern society, these buildings symbolized the heroic human figure, conquering new frontiers in a new age. With the success of the modern movement, however, skyscrapers became less connected with tradition, less human, more machine-like. Stripped of meaningful ornament, traditional window openings, and recognizable entrances, skyscrapers became mute giants, disconnected from the human spirit.

The 1980s have seen a new skyscraper age that looks back to the 1920s, to crowning tops and glamorous lobbies, to a renewed concern for scale and symbolism. Philip Johnson's Transco Tower in Houston and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Texas Commerce Tower in Dallas are just two examples of a national trend back to a romantic eclecticism in skyscraper design. ■■■■■

Texas architect Jamie Lofgren now works at Kaplan, McLaughlin, Diaz in San Francisco.



*"Steel processing plant," by Chris E. Petrash*



# IS MODERNISM REVERSIBLE?

By Joel Warren Barna

Charles Jencks, in his new book *Post-Modernism: The New Classicism in Art and Architecture*, says that the first and most important lesson of post-modernism is that, "in its continuous evolution, the classical language has been transformed over time and ties generations together in a common pursuit. Artists and architects who work on archetypal problems will naturally come to related solutions, which serve to pull history together into a continuum and even, on a cultural level, make history reversible."

Jencks, one of the decade's most prolific champions of post-modernism, calls history "reversible" not in the sense that it can be rolled back or undone, but in the sense that participants in the historical continuum can be said at times to tunnel backwards under the terms of their present predicament and connect up with the sources that informed the sensibilities and work of their predecessors. In this way, Jencks argues, earnest, historically correct classicism, without insider's jokes, has again become a viable option for today's architects.

Jencks's insight is recalled by an event that could hardly seem more unrelated. It was "Aspirations Toward Architectural Purity: A Study of Industrial Form," an exhibit of photographs of industrial and vernacular buildings that was mounted by architects Steven L. Edwards, J. Kevin Story, Chris E. Petrash, and Frank Wen at the University of Houston in early 1987.

While attending the University of Houston, Edwards explains, each of the four began looking for little-known buildings around

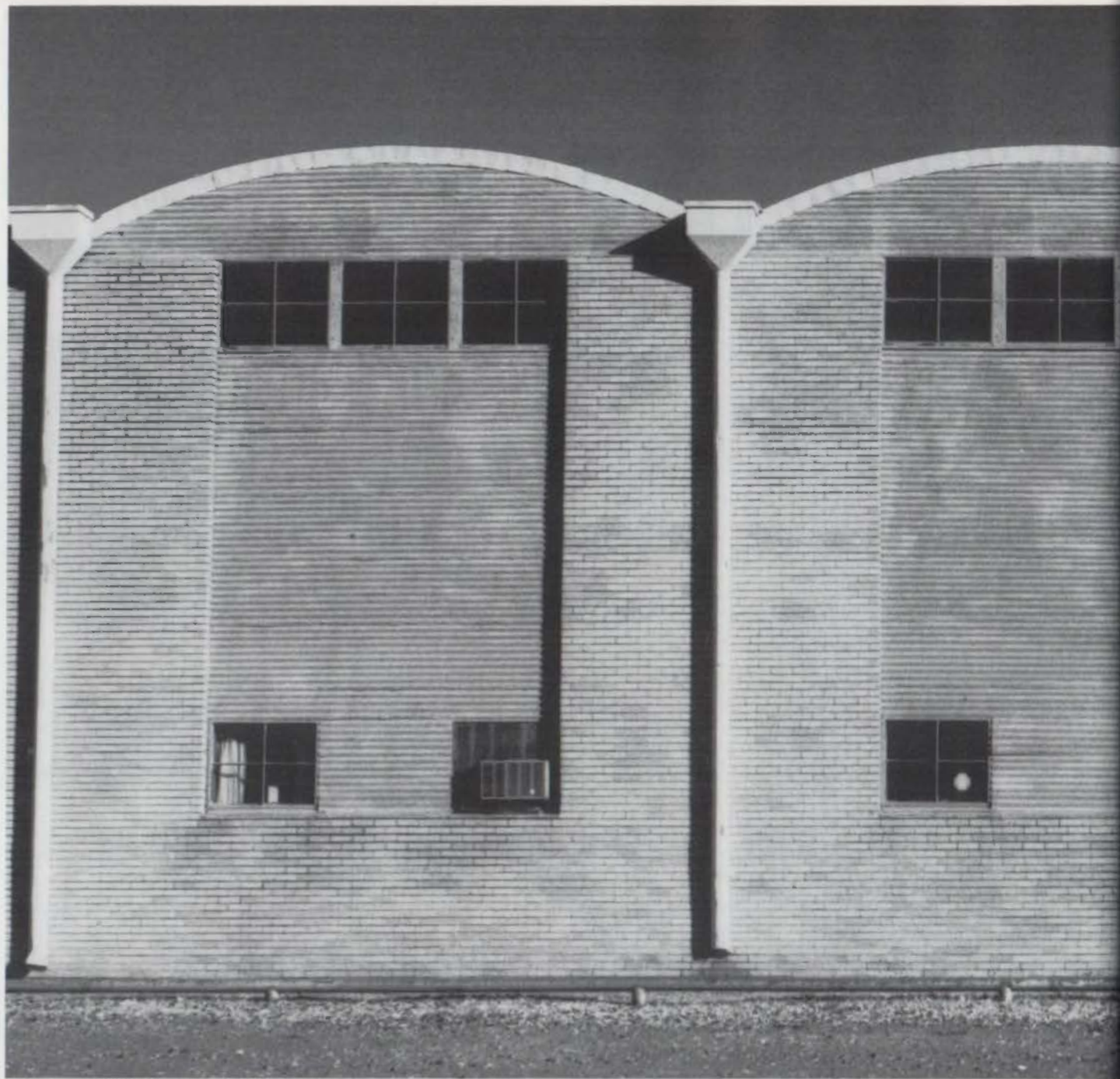


"Vented Tower," by Steven Edwards

Houston to study. "In the process we came across numerous industrial and agricultural buildings that we found very intriguing," Edwards says. Over time, they developed a group of photographs and set of affinities which coalesced into the show.

With Le Corbusier's admonition to "believe the words of engineers but beware of architects" as their prologue, the group opened the show with the following statement:

"We as architects realize and appreciate the qualitative differentiation between the conceptual nature of architectural design and the problem-solving nature of industrial societies. Within the functionalism found in industrial form an architectural clarity and simplicity exists that we can learn from and apply towards our individual conceptual ideals."



"Warehouse #1," by Chris E. Petrash



"Storage facility," by Kevin Story



"Hulling facility," by Steven Edwards



"Hockley, Texas," by Steven Edwards





“Our intention in this pursuit of architectural purity is not a re-use of forms found, but rather an understanding of the underlying essence that makes these forms necessary. The underlying essence of any archetypal form is the sum of the processes which created it. The industrial archetype which disregards architectural aesthetics achieves through its problem-solving, formal invention. The architect that has complete regard for architectural aesthetics can use his/her conceptual design abilities beyond just problem solving and aspire toward inventive architectural purity.

“To understand the essence of form is to understand the power of its purity.”

Even in these post-modern times, few will forget that in *Vers Une Architecture* Le Corbusier also praised the purity of America's vernacular buildings, comparing them and other aspects of the growing industrial world with the architecture of ancient Greece.

Edwards, Petrash, Story, and Wen do not intend to undertake a project as comprehensive as Corbu's, but what they show is that not only classicism, but modernism, can be seen as a continuum, not just the expression of a particular moment. By linking up with *l'esprit nouveau*, these architects are trying to find a way back to the wellsprings of modern architecture. They succeed in showing that modernism is reversible.



“Gas Holder Field,” by Chris E. Petrash

# A LITTLE SYNERGY

In Which a Houstonian Considers Helping His City Create an Experience

By Donald Barthelme

**T**he citizen, in relation to urban design, is more or less powerless, doesn't have much to say about the city that surrounds him. This disenfranchisement is not the result of a plot or cabal. It's the result of ceding power to the experts, whether they are experts in design, finance, or simply busy Deavers who "get things done." Is light rail better for Houston than heavy rail? I don't know; I could read all of Metro's surveys and still not know. The citizen is asked to decide things he is not in a position to decide. My instinct is that heavy rail is appropriate to New York, Moscow, Paris, London, and Tokyo, probably not Houston, but instinct is all I've got. Here is where the tattered cliché, "I don't know about art but I know what I like," takes on fresh meaning. The citizen is almost by definition a non-expert; we are lucky if he knows what he likes.

This points to a considerable anomaly in the planning process. The planners don't want me to vote on light vs. heavy rail because I don't know enough—I haven't studied the question, I am an uninformed and thus unintelligent voter. Yet they are forced by law to submit these proposals to me, even though I go to the polls, if I go, wearing a dunce cap. Metro would argue that it has undertaken campaigns of education on the matter, but in the normal course these are campaigns not of education but of persuasion: the experts have already decided what is good for me and they want me to vote in such a way as to facilitate this predetermined end.

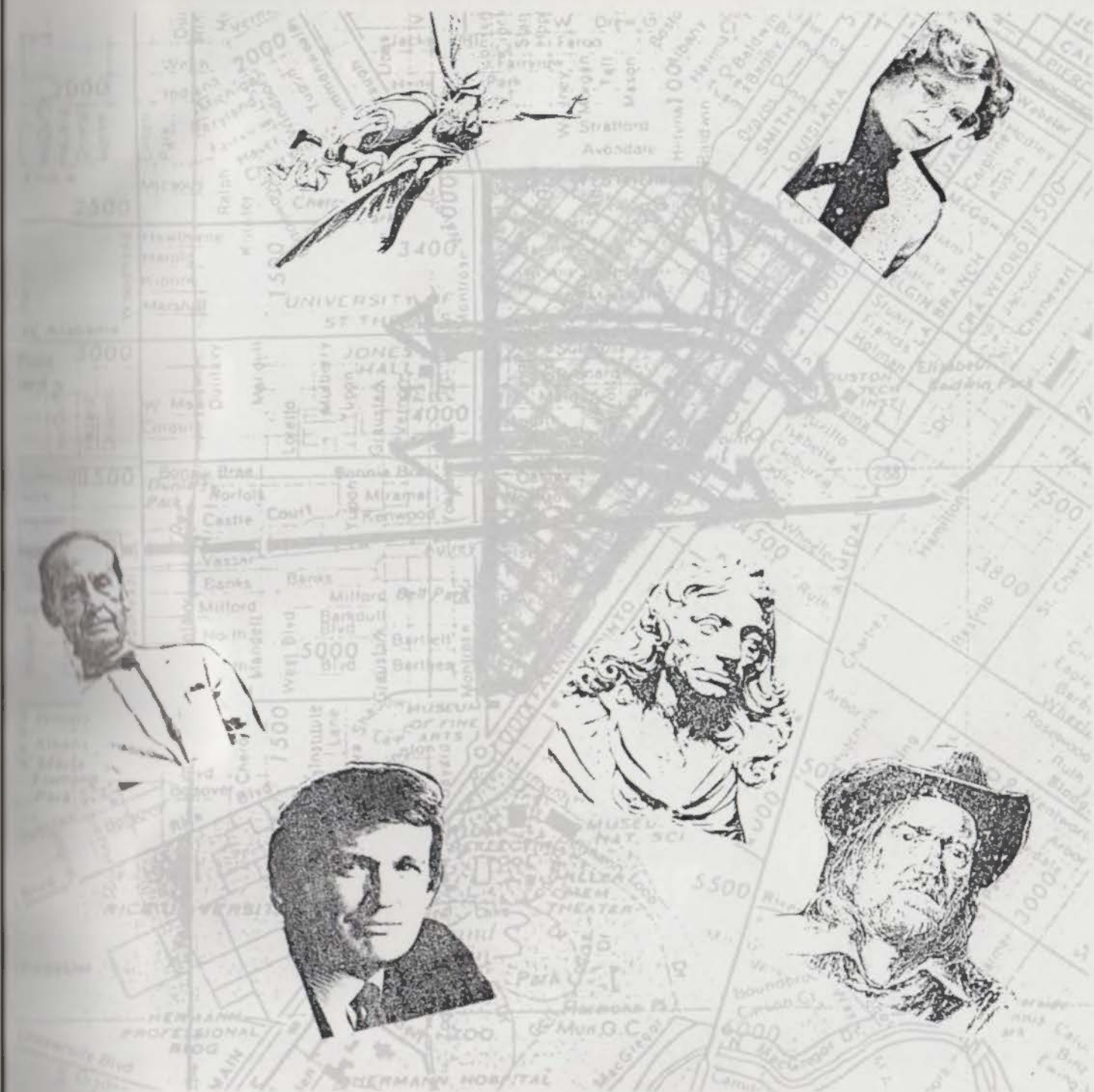
The sticking point here is the quality of the experts. Are they good experts or lousy experts? We have the same problem in terms of the nation's business, which we cede to the Congress, the executive, and the courts. The Congress, expert in all manner of things, does much that I don't want it to do, including the creation of the \$2.3-trillion deficit as of August 1987 and the move to cut Social Security inflation adjustments for old people—neither of them things I want, both done in my name and endorsed by battalions of

experts. What one does not, in general, hear is Philip Johnson denouncing one of his own projects, [as he did while taking part in a session recorded for *The Charlottesville Tapes*] as "two million goddamn square feet that should not be built in this part of Boston." In other words, I like my experts confused, uncertain, even fearful.

In terms of the political establishment's contribution to the process, it's a little much to ask that the mayor and city council of any very large city be architects or aestheticians. This kind of problem is usually delegated to a City Planning Commission, which is usually pretty well toothless—I don't mean just here, but everywhere. In the 19th century, Napoleon III famously gave Baron Haussmann all of Paris for his canvas, and the boulevards, parks, and vistas that resulted are one of the glories of Western civilization. Can you imagine a City Planning Commission that has the power of condemnation, as Haussmann had? Well, no, and perhaps it would be unwise to again give mere mortals such vast powers. If they'd been given to Le Corbusier in the 1930s, would his stuff have worked? I think not.

How much planning is healthy? Many theorists argue for leaving things alone. To the very fashionable argument that the best planning is no planning, I must enter a dissent—some planning, I think, is better than no planning. What is to be avoided is any sort of totalization, any sort of messianic dream. Albert Speer, Hitler's architect of choice, is what we don't want. Let the planners plan the left leg, the right shoulder, the pancreas, and possibly an ear—and forbid the rest of the civic corpus to them.

Let me cite 10 areas of Houston that I think have been done well, a list by no means exhaustive, and consider which part of a four-part equation has been operative in each case: (1) The Rice Campus, including the area from Hermann Park Zoo to Holcombe Boulevard, but excluding the Medical Center; (2) The Museum area, including North and South Boulevards,



with their great oaks and generous medians; (3) The Village; (4) The Galleria, by which I mean the two main Galleria structures themselves, the surrounding area, less so; (5) The University of Houston campus, blessed with Texas shellstone and a certain architectural restraint; (6) Downtown, with its several notable big buildings and the grand civic enterprises such as the Wortham and the new convention center; (7) River Oaks, although visitors repeatedly ask, "Why did they put such big houses on such relatively small lots?" (8) The Memorial area and, on a smaller scale,

North and South MacGregor; (9) Elements of the Heights; (10) and Westheimer, for its espousment of values that contradict all of the above.

You will note that five of the 10 are identifiably the work of developers, two the work of institutions, and three—the Museum area, downtown, and Westheimer—more or less just happened. The distinction is between an area that began with an overall plan, such as the Rice or, to a lesser degree, the Houston

*A Little Synergy, continued page 55*



Symbol	Price	Change	Volume	Symbol	Price	Change	Volume
IBM	125.00	+0.25	1000	MSFT	28.00	-0.10	500
GOOG	275.00	+1.50	200	AMZN	175.00	+2.00	150
APPL	150.00	+0.50	300	FB	120.00	-0.20	400
DIS	110.00	+0.10	250	WMT	65.00	+0.05	180
BA	180.00	+0.75	120	CVX	55.00	+0.15	100
GE	30.00	+0.10	350	PG	45.00	+0.05	160
MS	25.00	+0.05	400	KO	35.00	+0.02	140
ORCL	45.00	+0.15	280	LLY	110.00	+0.50	90
CRM	130.00	+0.80	110	UNH	190.00	+1.00	70
ADBE	220.00	+1.20	80	MDA	75.00	+0.30	60
INTC	35.00	+0.10	320	QCOM	60.00	+0.20	130
AMD	20.00	+0.05	270	TXN	40.00	+0.10	110
NVDA	400.00	+2.00	50	AVY	150.00	+0.50	80
QCOM	55.00	+0.15	170	MRK	100.00	+0.20	100
TXN	38.00	+0.08	190	ABBV	120.00	+0.40	90
AVY	145.00	+0.40	70	MRK	98.00	+0.15	110
MRK	95.00	+0.10	120	ABBV	118.00	+0.35	80
ABBV	115.00	+0.35	70	MRK	96.00	+0.12	100
MRK	94.00	+0.08	110	ABBV	116.00	+0.32	70
ABBV	114.00	+0.32	60	MRK	93.00	+0.05	90
MRK	92.00	+0.05	100	ABBV	112.00	+0.28	60
ABBV	110.00	+0.28	50	MRK	90.00	+0.02	80
MRK	88.00	+0.02	90	ABBV	108.00	+0.25	50
ABBV	106.00	+0.25	40	MRK	85.00	+0.01	70
MRK	83.00	+0.01	60	ABBV	104.00	+0.22	40
ABBV	102.00	+0.22	30	MRK	80.00	+0.00	50
MRK	78.00	+0.00	40	ABBV	100.00	+0.20	30
ABBV	98.00	+0.20	20	MRK	75.00	+0.00	40
MRK	73.00	+0.00	30	ABBV	96.00	+0.18	20
ABBV	94.00	+0.18	10	MRK	70.00	+0.00	30
MRK	68.00	+0.00	20	ABBV	92.00	+0.16	10
ABBV	90.00	+0.16	10	MRK	65.00	+0.00	20
MRK	63.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	88.00	+0.14	10
ABBV	86.00	+0.14	10	MRK	60.00	+0.00	10
MRK	58.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	84.00	+0.12	10
ABBV	82.00	+0.12	10	MRK	55.00	+0.00	10
MRK	53.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	80.00	+0.10	10
ABBV	78.00	+0.10	10	MRK	50.00	+0.00	10
MRK	48.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	76.00	+0.08	10
ABBV	74.00	+0.08	10	MRK	45.00	+0.00	10
MRK	43.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	72.00	+0.06	10
ABBV	70.00	+0.06	10	MRK	40.00	+0.00	10
MRK	38.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	68.00	+0.04	10
ABBV	66.00	+0.04	10	MRK	35.00	+0.00	10
MRK	33.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	64.00	+0.02	10
ABBV	62.00	+0.02	10	MRK	30.00	+0.00	10
MRK	28.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	60.00	+0.01	10
ABBV	58.00	+0.01	10	MRK	25.00	+0.00	10
MRK	23.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	56.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	54.00	+0.00	10	MRK	20.00	+0.00	10
MRK	18.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	52.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	50.00	+0.00	10	MRK	15.00	+0.00	10
MRK	13.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	48.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	46.00	+0.00	10	MRK	10.00	+0.00	10
MRK	8.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	44.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	42.00	+0.00	10	MRK	5.00	+0.00	10
MRK	3.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	40.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	38.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	36.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	36.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	34.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	32.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	32.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	30.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	28.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	28.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	26.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	24.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	24.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	22.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	20.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	20.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	18.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	16.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	16.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	14.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	12.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	12.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	10.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	8.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	8.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	6.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	4.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	4.00	+0.00	10
ABBV	2.00	+0.00	10	MRK	0.00	+0.00	10
MRK	0.00	+0.00	10	ABBV	0.00	+0.00	10

# MBANK'S TRADE THEATER

By Ray Don Tilley

Photography by Nick Merrick,  
Hedrich-Blessing

The furious trading on Wall Street that culminated in October 19th's 508-point Dow Jones plummet kept even nonparticipants riveted to their TVs, watching brokers scramble while the ticker lagged hours behind. Bankers usually downplay such harrowing scenes, emphasizing a safe, federally insured sensibility. But MBank Dallas has chosen instead to make the trading flurry the heart of its 60-story Momentum Place office tower in Dallas, designed by John Burgee Architects with Philip Johnson in association with HKS Architects, Dallas, and completed last year.

The financial "stadium" is an 11,000-square-foot trading floor in a five-story atrium banking hall designed by 3D/International, Dallas. Computers, monitors, news tickers, and telecommunications equipment connect the traders on the floor to worldwide markets. A bridge from the main, Ervay Street entrance runs 16 feet above the middle of the market floor, and balconies on each of the floors overhead allow customers ample opportunity to peer down at scurrying brokers.

"Through sight and sound," says James Gardner, MBank Dallas's chairman and chief executive officer, "some of the mystery of banking is revealed. The activity and vitality... will invigorate the bank and create excitement for both retail and commercial customers."

MCorp and MBank offices, also designed by 3D/I, occupy floors six through 20 in the tower.

In the public areas, polished, deep red Spanish *rojo alicante* marble frames the building's 55-foot glass-filled archway; the arch is flanked by cream Italian *bot-*

*ticino classico* marble pilasters, which are tied in to cornices on each of the balconies. The cream marble of the balustrade continues in the floor throughout the hall, punctuated by a diagonal pattern of black Spanish *negro marquina* marble squares. Cast-bronze grillwork fills voids between balusters on each balcony.

High above the tiered balconies and the trading floor, a glass-paned barrel vault lets light pour in. Dark American cherry panels line the walls below the vault in classical pilasters, arches, and cornices. The lower balconies are finished in lighter panels, integrated with inlaid soffits.

Careful attention to materials and detailing was fundamental to 3D/I's design, says Jim Baker, senior vice president and director of the Dallas office. "Our challenge," he explains, "was to take the bank's...trading room operation, vaults, computer rooms, security stations, and furniture to house CRTs and maintain a traditional image successfully integrated with high technology requirements."

During the workday, sunlight floods through the atrium, the grand arch, and the generous windows that line the side walls of the balconies. At night, dramatic downlighting heightens the warmth of the cherry wall finishes and the shimmer of the polished marble. The stepped balconies, which project 15 feet farther out with each successive level, generate the dramatic space that is the essence of the banking hall, although the resulting balcony strips along the Ervay Street wall appear to have little real use.

Still, 3D/I's opulent Momentum Place interior confronts the



Spanish and Italian marbles meet American cherry panels at the grand arch.



Balconies, ABOVE, and the upper level, BELOW, of the vast banking hall.

continuing stock market drama in stately defiance. It is an architectural argument for optimism in the state's business future.

PROJECT: Momentum Place,  
MBank Dallas Headquarters  
ARCHITECT: 3D/International,  
Dallas Office  
CLIENT: MBank Dallas  
CONTRACTOR: HCB Contractors



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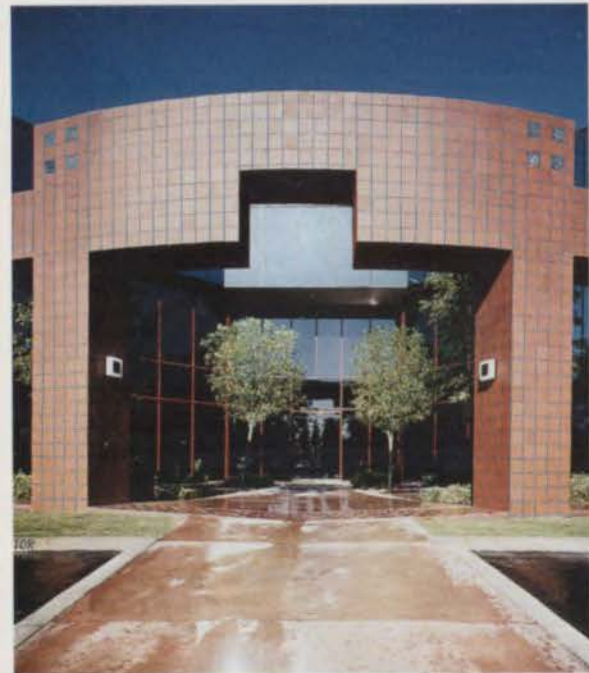
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# The 1988 Ceramic Tile Institute Awards

*Color, Pattern,  
and Durability*

**L**ast year, a group of Dallas-area professionals in the ceramic-tile industry formed the Ceramic Tile Institute of North Texas (CTI/NT). The institute is now the second of two related ceramic-tile organizations, joining the Ceramic Tile Institute of America, based in California. CTI/NT offers technical support, product-testing services, and tile standards and information to architects, contractors, and tile suppliers.

CTI/NT promotes the tile industry through various programs and services, including the 1988 Ceramic Tile Institute of North Texas Awards. The awards program recognizes exemplary applications of ceramic tile in projects that were completed during 1987 in a five-county area around Dallas. Although only members of CTI/NT could submit projects, Mark Sickmann, manager of the Dal-Tile distributorship in Richardson and chairman of the awards committee, says, "We wanted to recognize the entire group involved on the project: the architect, the designer, the tile contractor, and the supplier."

Judges for the contest were "active members of the institute—" Sickmann says, "some of the top professionals in the industry." The judges visited each site, making sure the tile had been properly specified and applied before considering the project's overall quality of design and construction. ■

Rick Grunbaum



## COMMERCIAL CATEGORY: FIRST PLACE

**Project:** Hughes Trigg Center, Southern Methodist University. **Architect:** Harwood K. Smith & Partners, Dallas (Lynn Perry, project designer). **Tile contractor:** Ray Boyd Construction (entrant). **General contractor:** Clark Morris. **Type of material:** 8-by-8-inch porcelain tile by Dal-Tile. **Description of Project:** Lynn Perry, project designer, says "We used porcelain tile in most of the public areas and circulation because of its durability and because we wanted to accent traffic flow and define circulation paths. The tile gave us the range of colors and flexibility we needed. In the student union cafeteria, floor tile and glazed tile made the space feel more the way we wanted—more like a food court."



photograph by John Benoist

## COMMERCIAL CATEGORY: SECOND PLACE

**Project:** Pacific Street Grill. **Architect:** Vivian-Nichols Associates, Dallas, (Paula DeMarco, designer). **Tile contractor:** Al Smith Tile Co., Richardson. **General contractor:** Dal-Mac Construction. **Type of material:** 4-by-4-inch ceramic tile by Dal-Tile\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** Reggi Nichols, a partner in the firm Vivian-Nichols, says, "Pacific St. Grill was within an office-building complex, where the clientele ranged from administrative assistants to corporate officers. In one restaurant, it was necessary to appeal to various functions and tastes. With the use of tile, we were able to integrate architecture and interior design into a consistent, strong image."



**SPECIALTY CATEGORY:  
SECOND PLACE**

**Project:** Brookhaven Country Club, Farmers Branch. **Architect:** Malone May Architects, Inc., Arlington (Robert May, project architect, Steven Farr, designer). **Tile contractor:** Ed Flores Tile Company, Garland. **General contractor:** Ali Aghassibake, CCA. **Type of material:** supplied by Knox Tile\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** Architect Robert May says, "The project was a small shower and whirlpool addition to a country club. It was a totally enclosed, wet area that might otherwise have been dark, too. We used the tile for easy maintenance. We also got color and active patterning."



John Benoit

**HORIZONTAL SURFACE CATEGORY:  
FIRST PLACE**

**Project:** Forest Lane Porsche Audi, Dallas. **Architect:** Craycroft Architects, Dallas (Tim Pool, project manager). **Tile contractor:** Grissom Tile, Denton. **General contractor:** E. L. Jones. **Type of material:** 12-by-12-inch granite tiles, supplied by American Tile\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** Tim Pool of Craycroft Architects says, "There were really two main reasons we used the polished black tile in this project: we wanted a dark background to really make the showroom sizzle, and we wanted to respond to the sleek, high-tech nature of the cars. Durability was important, too; the owner's previous dealership had a vinyl-tile floor that was redone three times due to wear."



Tim Pool

**HORIZONTAL SURFACE CATEGORY:  
SECOND PLACE**

**Project:** Dallas Chamber of Commerce, Dallas. **Architect:** André Staffelbach Designs (Sandy Strand, project manager, Mary McAdoo, construction manager). **Tile contractor:** Dimensions in Stone and Glass. **Type of material:** supplied by Knox Tile\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** Sandy Strand says, "The briefing area of the chamber that we dealt with will be used for international marketing, so we wanted a clean and sleek look. We used polished black tiles throughout the reception and formal areas with 2-by-2 salt-and-pepper tiles at the edges. The whole idea was to make it look international."



John Benoit

**SPECIALTY CATEGORY: FIRST PLACE**

**Project:** Meadows Junior High School. **Architect:** Claycomb & Associates. **Tile contractor:** Custom Tile, Dallas. **General contractor:** Ken Isdue, Cedar Hills. **Type of material:** supplied by Dal-Tile\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** Kevin Smith of Claycomb Architects says, "We had to use a foundation that allowed for differential movement, so ceramic floor tile gave us the necessary flexibility. Since it's a school, we knew the interior surface would take a lot of abuse; but we still wanted low maintenance and color opportunities. The tile allowed us to create different design elements on floors and walls."



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#### SINGLE FAMILY LIVING UNITS

##### CATEGORY: FIRST PLACE

**Project:** Don and June Williams Residence, Heath. **Tile contractor:** Edward Flores Tile Company\*, Garland (entrant). **Type of material:** variety. **Description of Project:** Edward Flores says, "In the pool cabana, the owner wanted a durable, waterproof finish, so we used a three-quarter-inch concrete-bodied tile with a slate texture, glazed on-site, and finished with a waterproofing sealer. The entire project was a 10,000-square-foot residence with the cabana and a maid's quarters. Tile was used in many places, especially in the bathrooms, because of the variety of finishes, colors, and patterns that were possible."



#### SINGLE FAMILY-LIVING UNITS

##### CATEGORY: SECOND PLACE

**Project:** Randy Lively Residence, Las Colinas. **Architect:** Peelham Group, Dallas (Tim Peelham, project designer). **Tile contractor:** Noe Urias, Dallas. **Type of material:** variety, supplied by American Tile\* (entrant). **Description of project:** The Lively Residence contrasts the clean, polished feel of marble with soft, beige carpeting. The 12-by-12-inch tiles carry the marble look from the entry area to an irregular octagonal living area where the tile picks up again in the fireplace finish.

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#### APARTMENTS AND CONDOMINIUMS

##### CATEGORY: FIRST PLACE

**Project:** The Centrum, Dallas. **Architect:** Rossetti & Associates, Dallas (Brenda Stubel, Phillip Dangerfield, and William Ahlstrom, design team). **Tile contractor:** Dal-Worth Tile\* (entrant). **General contractor:** Avery Mays. **Type of material:** Granite and ceramic tile by American Olean. **Description of project:** The Centrum is a mixed-use development in the Oaklawn community of Dallas. Street-level retail space is topped by nine floors of offices. The building's mass is completed by an additional eight floors of condominiums with tile-paved terraces. Tile in the foyers, bathrooms, and floors throughout the condominium area allowed the designers to embody the Oaklawn community in their project through architectural detailing and imagery.

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**COMMERCIAL  
CATEGORY:  
SECOND PLACE**

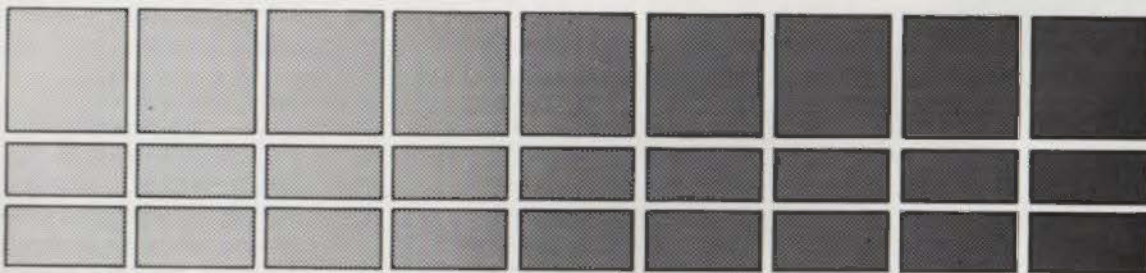
**Project:** Pacific Street Grill. **Architect:** Vivian-Nichols Associates, Dallas, (Paula DeMarco, designer). **Tile contractor:** Al Smith Tile Co., Richardson. **General contractor:** Dal-Mac Construction. **Type of material:** 4-by-4-inch ceramic tile by Dal-Tile\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** Reggi Nichols, a partner in the firm Vivian-Nichols, says, "The checkerboard tile element we created was fundamental to the design concept. The colors, in black and cream, created a tailored image for the business environment. The location of the installation created a visual focal point. The tile material itself also created a fun, spirited theme that carried through the entire restaurant in a banding motif, which unified the design."



**VERTICAL APPLICATIONS CATEGORY:  
SECOND PLACE**

**Project:** Texas Tile and Marble Building. **Architect:** Enloe & Summers (Carol Young, designer, Emily Summers, partner-in-charge). **Tile contractor:** Robin Stone, Dallas. **General contractor:** Alan Merritt, Dallas. **Type of material:** mosaic tile by American Olean\* (entrant). **Description of Project:** According to Carol Young of Enloe & Summers, "The design concept was to create a working showroom, where designers could create their own designs on work tables provided for that purpose. My goal was to display as much tile as possible in the space, without the visual effect becoming distracting." ■■■■■

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Any work of architecture completed since Jan. 1, 1983 is eligible, including new buildings, restorations, adaptive uses projects, building complexes, urban designs, and interiors.

Texas architects are invited to submit one or more entries for consideration by an eminent jury. Winners will be honored at a brunch and slide presentation during TSA's Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Nov. 18-19. In addition, the projects will

be covered in the year-end issue of *Texas Architect* and publicized in newspapers and magazines throughout the state.

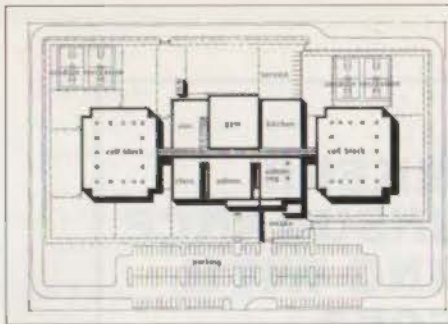
Look for full rules and entry forms in the May/June 1988 issue of *Texas Architect*.



from 19 companies last summer, eventually selecting the Becon-Wackenhut Company, Houston, and Corrections Corporation of America, Nashville, to build and operate two 500-bed prerelease centers each. Each center will cost \$9-12 million, with an eight-month construction period beginning after contract signing. Contract negotiations began after the Feb. 5 selection of a final site in Kyle, south of Austin, to join sites in Bridgeport, northwest of Fort Worth; Venus, southwest of Dallas; and Cleveland, north of Houston. Site selection was delayed by public opposition in cities picked earlier.

Becon-Wackenhut's architect is The Parker/Croston/Lackey/Blake Partnership, Austin; CCA will use 3D/International, Houston.

Although the centers will be privately managed, the TDC will monitor construction and operations. The facilities must meet all applicable TDC and American Correctional Association standards, as well as standards set by federal rulings that affect the TDC system.



Schematic plan by the Parker/Croston/Lackey/Blake Partnership for a 500-bed prerelease center

Once they are built, the medium-security facilities will house inmates who are within three to six months of release, although stays of up to two years are possible. The centers will include mandatory education, counseling, and vocational programs. "This kind of program is not possible in other TDC facilities where you have so many different levels of inmates," says Bob Owens, TDC's committee chairman for coordinating the private contractors' participation.

The layout of the building complex combines the general form of a school campus with that of a normal prison. The educational, recreational, and administrative functions share a central building,

which is connected by covered passages to two 250-bed cell blocks. "All the cells will have daylighting," Parker/Croston/Lackey/Blake's Jim Blake says. "Everything is designed to help the inmates re-adjust to normal life."

Owens says the TDC is treating the centers as an experiment in inmate housing. "Once these have been in operation for a while," he says, "the question will be, 'How does it work?'" With continuing inmate population and state budget problems, Owens says, successful results may mean the next legislature will opt for more private facilities.

— RDT

#### HOWARD MEYER, FAIA, 1903-1988

Architect Howard Meyer, FAIA, who died Jan. 10 at 84, practiced for more than 50 years in Dallas, and gave the city some of its most notable buildings. He was best known for Temple Emanu-El and 3525 Turtle Creek, both in Dallas, al-



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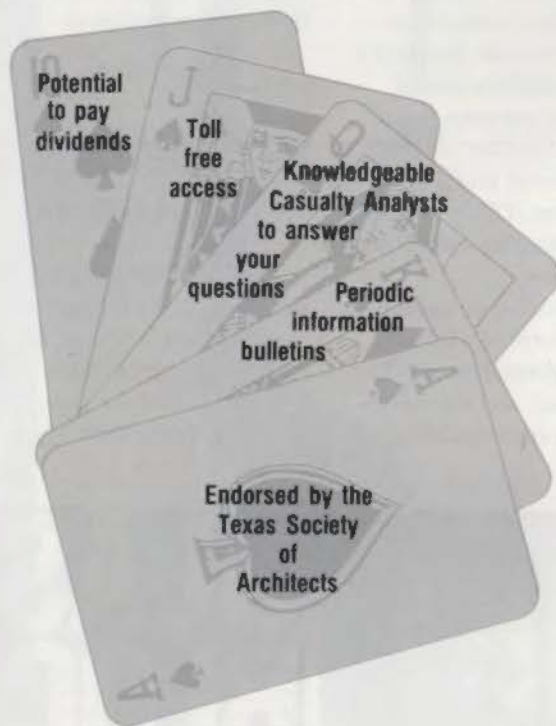
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though he designed many houses, schools, and churches across the state.

Meyer was an exacting designer who embraced European modernism early in his career and stuck to a consistent, but rich and personal, style. He combined meticulous, soft design with traditional forms and materials.

Meyer graduated from Columbia University in 1928, where he gained respect



Howard Meyer, FAIA

for the Beaux Arts discipline, tradition, and emphasis on precise drawing. He worked briefly for William Lescaze and Bertram Goodhue, then spent a year in Europe with his wife Schon studying the International Style, especially the work of Le Corbusier. It was there that he found his architectural truth. "Corbu convinced me the new forms had great meaning," Meyer once said. "He knew how to make geometry sing and could get more wit and charm out of a square than anyone."

In many ways, Meyer's career was a continual refinement of his singular design approach. His first work upon returning to the United States was a reverent salute to Le Corbusier's clean, crisp early work. He soon embraced a more sumptuous use of color and materials, however, that would sometimes be mistaken for the work of Frank Lloyd Wright or O'Neil Ford.

Meyer always designed a project twice, according to those who worked with him. He drew the ideal solution first, then inked another set of drawings that responded to the constraints of the budget and the client. In his thoroughness, too, he sometimes became stubborn. "Once

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Howard got an idea down on paper it was hell to get him to change it," recalls architect Howard Glazbrook, who worked with Meyer in the early 1970s. "He always listened and treated you as an equal, but he clung to that original idea."

Meyer's office rarely had more than 10 employees, even during the busy 1940s and 1950s. He was able to oversee a project's smallest details and ensure that his design was properly carried out.

He once said contemporary architecture was, "just too cute, a dead end. For some reason people want more definition in their spaces, more stylization. But stylization that gets away from structure is mere decoration."

Now, Meyer's body of work is being documented and preserved in several projects. The Lipshy-Clark House, built in Dallas in 1950, was recently restored and has received a historic preservation award from the Dallas Historic Preservation League. Last year, Meyer donated his drawing collection to the University of Texas at Austin General Libraries' Architectural Drawings Collection. The Center for the Study of American Architecture hopes to publish the collection and organize an exhibit. In addition, the Center plans to distribute an hour-long video, directed by Jim Murray of West End Productions, Dallas, that covers Meyer's life and architecture and includes interviews with the architect conducted by Dallas-based architecture critic David Dillon. Murray says the video should be finished in late spring.

— RDT, from reports by David Dillon

## FORT WORTH CHAPTER/AIA SELECTS WINNING PROJECTS

Seven projects by six firms were selected 1987 Design Award winners in the annual Fort Worth Chapter/AIA competition. Ward Bogard & Associates-Architects received the only honor award among the contest's 34 entries. Multiple-award recognition went to Vestal • Loftis • Kalista Architects, Inc., for two elementary schools the firm designed.

### Honor Award

- Alps Office Building, Fort Worth,



Alps Office Building, Ward Bogard & Associates

historic/adaptive reuse, by Ward Bogard & Associates-Architects.

### Merit Awards

- James E. Starrett Elementary School, Grand Prairie, general building, by Vestal • Loftis • Kalista Architects, Inc.
- Charlotte Anderson Elementary School, Arlington, general building, by Vestal • Loftis • Kalista Architects, Inc.
- Treasure Tree—a gift shop for Japanese Garden, Fort Worth, general building, by Bransford Architects.

### Citation Awards

- Witherspoon Office Building, Fort Worth, general building, by Kirk Voich +



Treasure Tree, Bransford Architects

Gist, Architect-Engineer.

- Bryce Building, Fort Worth, historic/adaptive reuse, by Cauble-Hoskins Architects.
- Residence and Weaving Studio—Remuda Ranch, Tarrant County, residential, by Jackson and Ayers Architects, Inc.

Judges for the competition were Vel Hawes, FAIA, EDI Architects, Inc., Dallas; Joe M. McCall, principal of McCall-Harris Architecture, Dallas; and Julius M. Gribou, assistant professor of architecture, Texas A&M University, College Station.

— RDT

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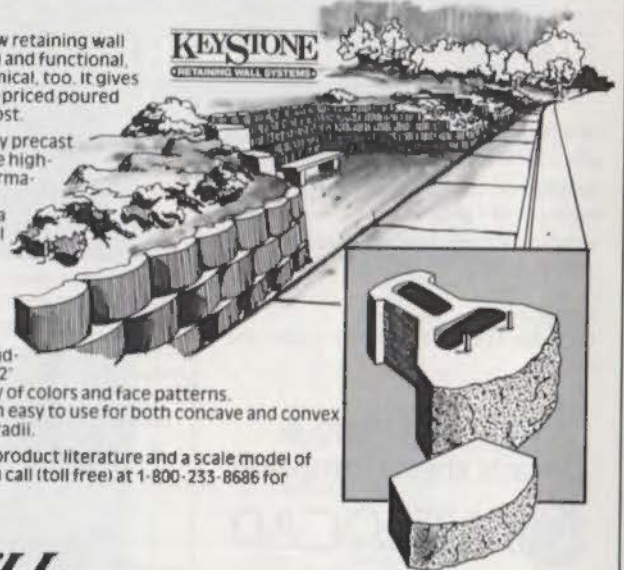
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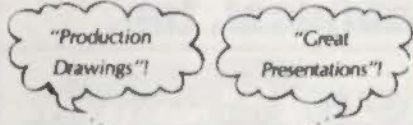


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**HOUSTON CHAPTER/AIA NAMES  
NINETEEN DESIGN WINNERS**

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill led a field of 139 entrants, winning four 1987 Houston Chapter/AIA Design Awards. Morris\*Architects, Taft Architects, and Gensler and Associates/Architects were cited twice each.

*Architecture Awards*

- Austin Hall/Old Main Memorial, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, by Ray Bailey Architects, Inc.
- Ashbel Smith Building, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, by C/A Architects, Inc.
- Kaiser Pavilion, Marmion Park, Houston, by John Martin Associates Architects.
- Providence Towers, Dallas, by Morris\*Architects.
- Wortham Theater Center, Houston, by Morris\*Architects.
- Village Corner Townhomes, Houston, by Rey de la Reza, AIA, Architects and McGarity Fehn, AIA, Associates.
- Park Industrial Square, Albuquerque, N.M., by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.
- Williams House, Austin, by Taft Architects.
- Covenant Presbyterian Church, Houston, by Tapley-Lunow Architects.

*Interior Architecture*

- Arnold, White & Durkee, law office, Austin, by Gensler and Associates/Architects.
- Bertha's Mexican Foods Restaurant, Houston, by Kathy Heard Design.
- Steelcase/Stow & Davis Showroom, Houston, by Janita Lo & Associates, Inc.
- Baker and Botts, office, Austin, by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.
- Texas Commerce Bank, Dallas, by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.
- Herman Miller Showroom, Dallas, by Taft Architects.
- Teaching Wall, University of Houston College of Architecture, by Team Fal.

*Urban Design*

- Hamilton Lake Village, Itasca, Ill., by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

*Unbuilt Projects*

- 800 Milam, office tower, Houston, by Gensler and Associates/Architects.
- Davis House, Houston, OAD/Office for Architecture + Design.

Judges for the Architecture, Urban Design, and Unbuilt Projects categories were Graham Gund, FAIA, Graham Gund Architects, Cambridge, Mass.; Lawrence W. Speck, University of Texas at Austin; and Roger K. Lewis, FAIA,

Rick Gardner

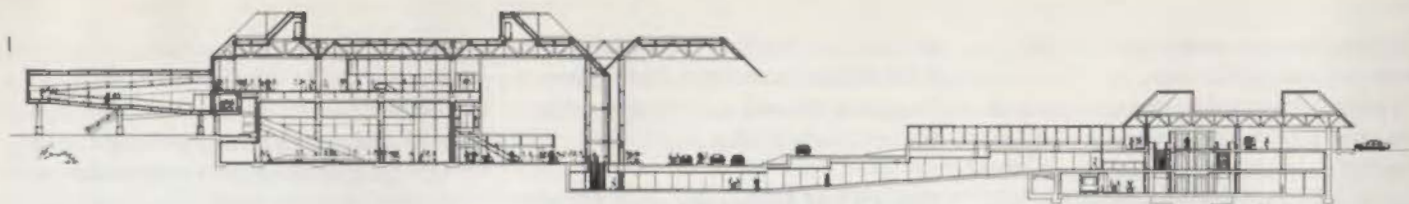


Covenant Presbyterian Church, ABOVE, Baker & Botts office, BELOW, and Steelcase/Stow & Davis Showroom, RIGHT



Jim Miller, Hecks & Blumstein





Section through the new International Terminal. ABOVE: project model. BELOW

**IN PROGRESS**

**PROJECT:** International Terminal, Houston Intercontinental Airport  
**ARCHITECTS:** A joint venture of Golemon & Rolfe Associates, Inc., and Pierce Goodwin Alexander; in association with Nathelyne A. Kennedy & Associates, Inc.; Lemus Engineering Corporation; Lockwood Andrews & Newman, Inc.; James L. Marshall Associates; Molina & Associates, Inc.; Turner, Collie & Braden, Inc.; A.B. Weeks Energy Consultants; and Georgia A. Wilson & Associates, Inc.



The new \$76-million international terminal building at the Houston Intercontinental Airport will be the first linear terminal at the 23-year-old airport

north of Houston. Terminals A, B, and C, designed by the joint venture known as Airport Architects and built between 1965 and 1979, are variations on the

architect and *Washington Post* columnist, Washington, D.C. Interior Architecture judges included Patricia Conway, Kohn Pederson Fox Conway, New York; Paula Rice Jackson, *Interiors Magazine*; and Charles Pfister, Charles Pfister Associates, San Francisco.

— RDT

**HOUSTON ARCHITECTS BACK METRO REFERENDUM VICTORY**

Houston voters Jan. 16 approved a sweeping referendum on the Metropolitan Transit Authority's \$2.5-billion long-range transit plan. Metro plans an 18-mile rail line, extensive street and freeway improvements, and new transit facilities.

Supporters say the plan will make the transit system more efficient and create a more positive image of the city.

One of the referendum's most active backers was the Houston Chapter/AIA. Chapter leaders first met with Richard Everett, FAIA, president of Century Development, and John Walsh, president of Friendswood Development, for several strategy sessions, says Chapter president Logic Tobola II. The Chapter Executive Committee then endorsed the plan and sent letters to community leaders. The January newsletter included a guest editorial from Everett, and on Jan. 13 a special Chapter meeting was called for a Metro presentation and a discussion with Everett, Walsh, and Gunter Koetter, FAIA, Metro board vice-chairman.

The Chapter officially raised \$10,000 toward campaigning for the plan, although, Tobola claims, "it was more like \$20,000." The Houston architecture community's turnout, Tobola adds, "was a chance for architects to have an effect on their environment not on a project-by-project basis, but through direct political action on a city-wide level."

— RDT



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"centroid" type, in which gates radiate from a central service core.

The need to increase airport security as well as to accommodate wide-bodied aircraft led the architects to design an "air-side" facility on the European model, according to architect Mario Bolullo of Golemon & Rolfe Associates, Inc., chief designer of the project. Arrivals and departures are on separate floors of the 900-foot-long building, and eight gates are spaced in the 190-foot-long modules required by long-haul jets. The new terminal is built around the operations of the Federal Inspection Services, which until now have been scattered around the airport.

Departing passengers will enter the glass-and-white-enamel-panel-faced building at ground level under a dramatic canopy (which announces the tube-truss-framed module of the terminal's construction) and proceed to the third level to buy tickets, check baggage, and board planes. Arriving passengers will proceed through a "sterile corridor" to Immigration and Naturalization Service processing on the mezzanine level and on to baggage claim and inspections by customs and agriculture officials before exiting at ground level. One "finger" of Terminal C will be renovated and connected to the new international terminal (moving sidewalks will help to cut down the distance), adding three international arrival gates. The airport's underground train system will link the new terminal with terminals B and C.

Infrastructure and road construction is underway, and actual construction of the terminal is scheduled to begin in mid-1988, with completion in late 1989 and occupancy in early 1990.

—JWB

## SCHOOLS

Three **University of Houston** students won top awards in the 1987 Wendy Haskell Meyer Student Design Competition, sponsored by The Decorative Center of Houston and *Houston Home & Garden*. Wendy Morgan won Best Individual Interior Design; Deuk-Hoi Kim, Best Individual Architectural Design; and Tenley Hansen, Damon Gee, and Naki Kim, Best Team Interior Design. Among the nine

judges were Preston M. Bolton, FAIA, P. M. Bolton Associates; Peter Brown, Phillips & Brown; and Marilyn Archer, Pierce Goodwin Alexander.

**Texas A&M University** offers "Italy: Summer 88," a summer program at La Poggerina, a former seminary in the Chianti region south of Florence, with excursions to other sites in Italy. There are four courses: "Special Problems in Design," "Drawing," "The Arts and Civilization," and "Roman Literature." 409/845-1285.

The **University of Texas at Austin** will hold the "UT/Cambridge Program 1988" from July 3 to July 30, including 13 two- and three-week courses taught in small group seminars by "dons" of Cambridge and other British universities. Other summer classes are "Birds of Britain," May 8-23, and "Scotland: Heritage and Culture," July 30-Aug. 7. 512/471-3124.

## EVENTS

**Mar. 15:** Deadline for registered architects to submit state-of-the-art projects for the AIA Committee on Architecture for Health's 1988 *Health Facilities Review*, the second in a series of publications on the design of health care facilities. 202/626-7366.

**Mar. 22:** Deadline to enter Pacific Coast Builders Conference's Gold Nugget Awards—Best in the West design competition, which is open to architects for all residential, commercial, and industrial developments. Winners will be published in *SUN/COAST Architect/Builder* magazine. 916/443-7933.

**Mar. 31:** Deadline to enter the Pittsburgh Corning Corporation's GlassBlock Design Awards Competition. Architects, designers, and students may enter projects that include PC GlassBlock products as a central design element. There is no entry fee and winners will receive up to \$6,000 in prize money. 412/327-6100.

**Through Apr. 3:** The Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston will display the exhibition "Sally Gall: Tropical Landscapes," featuring Gall's large, dreamy images, which challenge the documentary nature of photography. 713/526-0773.

**Apr. 15:** Deadline to submit justice facility projects for the 1988 Exhibition of Architecture for Justice, sponsored by the AIA Committee on Architecture for Justice and the American Correctional Association. 202/626-7366.

**May 1:** Deadline to enter *Architectural Record's* In the Public Interest awards program for "excellence in the design and planning of public architecture." Housing projects completed during the past three years are eligible. 212/512-3088.

**Through May 1:** Austin's Laguna Gloria Art Museum will display "A Different Place," an exhibition that examines the alteration of traditional ways of perception in a series of installations by six Austin artists. 512/478-7742.

**May 4:** Deadline to enter the 1988 Architectural Artisans Exhibit, sponsored by Austin Women in Architecture, the Austin Chapter/AIA, and Laguna Gloria Art Museum. The juried exhibit is open to Texas artisans for architectural works affixed to buildings. Box 5568, Austin, TX 78763.

## SOURCES

### MBank Dallas

Banking Hall:

*Interiors:* 3D/International, Jim Baker

*Lighting:* Claude Engle

*Marble Fabricator:* Mariotti Primo, Carlo Mariotti

*Marble Installer:* Skinner Marble, Jim Lemoine

*Ornamental Metals:* Trinity Architectural Metals Company, Al Ptomey; Trinity Brass, Mark Linteau

*Millwork:* Woodwork Corporation of America, Mike Korkosz

*Trading Floor Design:* The Wilke Organization

*Telecommunications:* Comsul, Ltd.



campus, compared to an area, such as downtown, that has taken on the character of a battleground, as contesting commercial interests, princes of retailing and barons of banking, swept back and forth over a rather limited field in the years, say, from 1900 to the present. The developers have their own ideas, not all of which are bad. It's a confusion of interests and a collision of interests, some fruitful, some not. The equation is: so much ceded to the developers, so much to the planners, so much to happenstance, almost nothing to the individual.

To single out these areas is to ignore miles and miles of Houston which range from the ordered to the funky to the semi-slum, with semi-industrial mixed with residential, commercial mixed with residential. This mixed-use pattern (or absence of pattern) can provide its own pleasures. Very often I don't want to be planned for. I want to encounter the unexpected, which cannot be planned for. I even want "ugly"—"A little bit more ugly over here please, because I'm tired of looking at your noble spaces and fine proportions."

What would happen if we turned Buffalo Bayou over to the Rouse Company? I don't know. To many people the idea would be anathema. A strong cohort would vote for leaving the bayou alone. Another would opt for letting local designers handle what business there is, as Team Hou, a group of young Houston architects, is doing on the Sesquicentennial Park around Wortham Theater Center. Should the Rouse Company be invited in? I don't know, I am confused. I don't much like what the Rouse Company has done in Baltimore, I haven't seen what they've done in Boston, but the South Street Seaport in New York seems quite successful—Lord knows people like it. On Friday evenings, after Wall Street closes down, it's the world's biggest cocktail party.

I am a citizen: I can't make up my mind.

Or maybe I can. Let us construct an experimental model, as follows: Let us say that I am a citizen and that I have a good idea or what I think is a good idea. I have noticed that the stretch of Main Street between Elgin and Binz is more or less dead—a dismal parade of small, faltering businesses, with only the big Sears store and a couple of handsome churches along its

***I explain my plan for an urban pedestrian loop to the third assistant mayor, and he becomes very enthusiastic. He grasps the picture immediately. He says he can get Willie Nelson for the opening. Maybe also Echo and the Bunnymen.***

length still active. Let us also say that I have contemplated the vigor of the Westheimer strip running into Main, have relished its tackiness and have been acute enough to place some value thereupon. Let us say I take pleasure in the Museum district at Binz, and the vitality of Montrose from Binz to Westheimer.

Synergistically putting all this together, I come up with a plan for making a pedestrian loop of these four streets—that is, closing them to cars, returning the streets to the people, creating an urban experience, a combination of Copenhagen's famous Stroget or "walk street," the rambles of Barcelona, and Paris's Boulevard Saint-Michel. I telephone the mayor, the governor, and the president to explain my conception. Unfortunately, each is occupied with other business. I am disappointed, but I persevere.

Meanwhile my idea is generating sub-ideas, some of which verge on practicality. I begin to worry about traffic flow, and decide that we will leave West Alabama and Richmond open to their customary east-west traffic—a great concession, given my dream of carelessness, but let no one say that I do not have the welfare of the city as a whole in mind. What

about deliveries to the merchants in the area? If their businesses are to remain healthy, trucks must have access, at certain times, to the area. I recall that in Copenhagen the merchants are serviced between midnight and 9 a.m., and incorporate this in my plan. But then I must worry about overtime for the Teamsters and the folks who untruck the goods at the individual stores. My computer cal-

culate that the overtime pay will be offset by greatly increased revenues in what will become the city's shopping core, an outdoor Galleria of superb economic strength. Should the city buy up in advance certain properties on the now-desolate stretch of Main that I am considering for the pedestrian loop? What are the ethics of the situation (since the city will know in advance what is to happen)? I telephone my ethics consultant, now out of jail and pursuing an intellectually rewarding ministry in Christian broadcasting. He assures me that the city, being the active arm of all the people, has a perfect right to make a profit on civic improvement of its own devising, and begins calculating city profits per front foot.

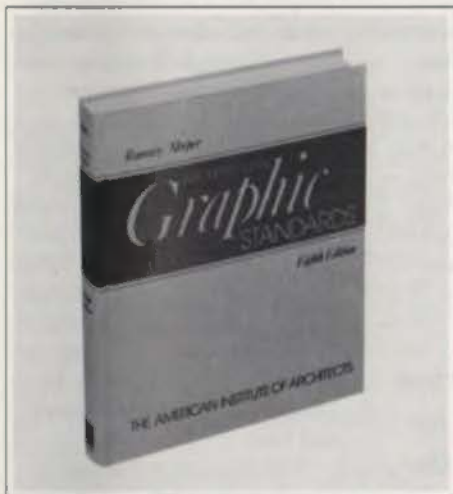
By now, the third assistant mayor has returned my several calls. I explain the situation to him, and he becomes very enthusiastic. He grasps the picture immediately. A way of putting excitement back into the city core, etc., etc. To make the pedestrian loop a reality, we will have to have a coherent design scheme—the kiosks, benches, and other street furniture, the barriers that demarcate the area, the landscaping, signage, and so forth, should

make a design statement, showing us, as a city, both sensitive to people and to worldwide design trends. What firm is big enough, or small enough, to be given serious consideration? Shall we award the contract to SOM, at one end of the scale, or Michael Graves, at the other? Or should there be, perhaps, an international competition? The third assistant mayor believes he can get Willie Nelson for the opening, because he has connections in Austin, maybe also Echo and the Bunnymen. His favorite colors, he tells me, are teal blue and more teal blue.

Very soon the project has grown so large that only Donald Trump, who flies in from New York, can handle it. He immediately says some nasty things in the newspapers about our good mayor. The mayor, he says, lacks vision, and if the city will just give him the job he'll get it done in 30 days and well under budget. This gets the mayor's attention. Donald Trump, she says to the newspapers, is nothing but a damn Yankee, has lingered too long in the wicked, sinful cities of the east, and has about the aesthetic sense of a tennis shoe, and her Mayor's Task Force on the Main-Binz-Montrose-Westheimer Pedestrian Experience has retained Walter Gropius, Christopher Wren, and Andrea Palladio for the project; their report will be in any day now, as soon as the annoying static between here and heaven is cleared up. In the meantime the schoolchildren are already out hustling the citizens for contributions toward the named paving bricks that will be used in the project, and the Mafia is wondering about the popcorn concession. The alarm bells have gone off at CRSS; SOM is considering re-beefing its Houston office.

And I look at all this and I say, "Yes, a citizen can make a difference." ■■■■■

*Donald Barthelme's most recent book is Forty Stories (Putnam, 1987). This story is based on a speech he made in 1987 sponsored by the Houston Forum for the Humanities.*



John Wiley & Sons' publication date for the 8th edition of **Ramsey/Sleeper Architectural Graphic Standards** (Wiley, \$150) is Apr. 28. Begun in 1932, the book has become the most-used reference in its field. This edition includes 65 percent new or revised material, with three new chapters and an expanded index. All details and specifications follow the CSI Master Format. For more information circle number 14 on the reader inquiry card.

**ThermaFormUSA, Inc.** has introduced a heated form panel as a replacement for conventional plyform in concrete formwork. The heated forms accelerate curing, allowing forms to be stripped the day after pouring. Each form can be used for over 100 pours. For more information circle number 15 on the reader inquiry card.



**Best Sign Systems** offers affordable, lightweight Graphic Blast carved signs made from Avonite. This material resembles granite or marble but costs and weighs much less. A variety of edge treatments, shapes, and custom carving is available. For more information circle number 16 on the reader inquiry card.

The **Construction Specifications Institute (CSI)** has added 18 SpecGUIDEs to its construction documents library. These are comprehensive workbooks for writing and coordinating technical specifications. New topics include stone, metal fabrications, ceramic tile, and roofing tiles, along with various sections on doors and sealants. For more information circle number 17 on the reader inquiry card.

**GTE** has expanded its glass manufacturing to include ceramic floor tile products. The new tiles are produced from optical-quality glass and fine clays, yielding optimum wear and stain resistance. The tiles are available in six standard sizes and 29 colors. For more information circle number 18 on the reader inquiry card.



**SONIN Inc.** has a series of electronic distance-measuring instruments for easy and accurate field measurements. Models are available with ranges of 60, 150, and 250 feet, all to an accuracy of  $\pm 1.5$  percent. The SONIN line also offers built-in area and volume calculating ability. For more information circle number 19 on the reader inquiry card.

The 1988 **SPECTRA-GLAZE** catalog of factory-glazed modular wall units is available from the Burns & Russell Co. The catalog includes complete specification data. For more information circle number 20 on the reader inquiry card.

**American Marazzi Tile's** 1988 "Specifier's Catalog" covers in detail its series of glazed ceramic floor and wall tile. For more information circle number 21 on the reader inquiry card.



Designer door handles from **Valli & Colombo** respond to a variety of hand dysfunctions. The basic model is designed for disabled people in general, with variations designed for people with dystonic, spastic, or ataxic hands. For more information circle number 22 on the reader inquiry card.

**Dur-O-Wal's** Fiberweb 300 flashing combines metal foil with a fiberglass/Mylar reinforcement and sheathing for better workability and durability than copper flashing, and at a lower cost. For more information circle number 23 on the reader inquiry card.



**Normbau, Inc.**, known for its nylon-design-systems cabinet and bath hardware, now has nylon-coated tubular-steel railings that are warm to the touch, easy to maintain, and strong. Twelve colors are available. For more information circle number 24 on the reader inquiry card.

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By David Braden

To my knowledge, no School of Architecture has placed this column on its required reading list.

Canfield's Fudge Soda became a multi-million-dollar success in the soft drink business *only* after being mentioned in Bob Greene's syndicated newspaper column. Subsequently he mentioned Vanna White. We all know what happened to her career! He has yet to mention an architect. Why not send him your brochure?

The art of city planning was recently enhanced in a *New Yorker* article by Lisa Walker which described the mythical Graceland, Tennessee, obvious successor to the mythical Lake Wobegon, Minnesota. Graceland residents are all Elvis worshippers of one form or another. All roads and highways extend from the city's two major landmarks: the

Suspicious Minds Museum and the Jailhouse Rock, and appropriately merge to form the shape of a guitar. Just shows what can be accomplished with a *CADD system!*

Do you find it interesting to ponder the significance of the fact that Florida, a state which levied a tax on architectural and engineering services has now made it legal to carry a concealed weapon?

Why is it that the profession of architecture is so attentive to advice from those who have done nothing with their own lives except criticize the works of others?

Why is it that both the public and private sectors will gladly pay lawyers \$160/hour, but will completely balk at paying an architecture firm principal more than \$85/hour?

In view of the current market-

place, our firm is preparing a self-help course for other architects on how to net \$300,000 per year from the operation of a one-man office. As a beginning, prospects must attend our one-day \$300 seminar and purchase our \$285 home study manual (including 12 audio cassettes). We expect to net \$300,000 this year for *our* efforts!

There are all sorts of ways to make money out there. *Wall Street Journal* columnist Foster Winans was fined \$5,000 for violating SEC insider trading rules and then was offered a \$35,000 advance to write a book about the experience. Pursue this route in your next brush with professional liability.

At cocktail parties these days, I am usually asked what comes after post-modernism. The answer is obvious—post-depressionism.

The guilt trip placed on Sena-

tor Joe Biden for plagiarizing the TV political rhetoric of another was unconscionable! If architects were subjected to similar scrutiny for every cliché they cribbed in the name of style, the biggest names in the profession would be banished to serve with the Cubans in some Federal Detention Center.

Stringent originality standards are not generally observed by those who speak or write humorously. In the humor business it is definitely OK to steal material from any source except the Captain and Tenille or Milosav Cekic. I hasten to add, however, that one must steal with superb good taste.

David Braden, FAIA, is a partner in Dahl • Braden • PTM, Dallas.

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Frankie Hatfield  
TSA Senior Administration Analyst

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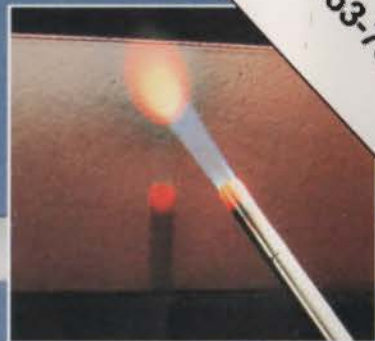
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