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Notes in Passing
by Barbara Goldstein

Calendar
by Bruce Bibby

Arrogant Chaos: George Segal's Holocaust Sculpture
by Jan Butterfield

Frank Cole
by Marina LaPalma

The Beautification of Market Street
by Joshua Freiwald

Dreaming New Worlds
by Robert Hine

La Reunion: The Fourierist Last Hurrah
by James Pratt

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The System/The Process
by Bruno Giberti

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by

ARTS + ARCHITECTURE
Notes
In Passing

To create an ideal society is an underlying notion of the great American Dream. The founding fathers, in order to achieve a "more perfect union," framed into their constitution the Enlightenment dream of freedom and equality as fundamental human rights. And, their idealistic spirit helped to encourage the establishment of small utopian communities throughout the country. Although the more famous of these were located in the eastern states, many were founded in the West. In this issue, Arts and Architecture presents a survey of western utopias. These range from the experiments of 19th century religious and socialist groups to those of the 20th century counterculture. We examine their philosophies, forms, successes and failures. Arts and Architecture investigates other areas where utopian dreams have flourished, as well, in the realm of science fiction with its fantastic descriptions of cities in space, and in visionary architecture with its religion on urban form as an influence on human behavior and understanding. We also examine the more prosaic manifestation of this vision, the post-war American suburb. Although many of the utopian experiments floundered, they had at their base an enduring and universal belief, that by living and working together in harmonious settlements, humans can lead more healthy, happy and productive lives. This year, with Orwell's gloomy literary predictions and the very real specter of nuclear annihilation looming over us, this belief still seems valid and worth pursuing.

BY BARBARA GOLDSTEIN
ken in the 70's by non-traditional Indian artists Fritz Scholder and R.C. Gorman. Traditional themes are simplified and abstracted, or juxtaposed with other images; color, form and composition often overshadow these themes.

---

**California**

**California Academy Of Sciences**

Golden Gate Park
San Francisco, CA 94118
(415) 221-4214

*Continuing through March 4*

**Mountain Light: Photography by Galen Rowell**

A self-taught photographer, Galen Rowell has selected 99 photographs from his world-ranging mountain expeditions. Rowell has written five wilderness books, and his photographs have appeared in National Geographic, Audubon and National Wildlife magazines.

---

**San Francisco Museum of Modern Art**

Van Ness at McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102-4582
(415) 863-8800

*Continuing through May 31*

**Pushing the Boundaries: Photography in California, 1945–80**

A post World War II boom of experimentation set California photography off from the rest of the art world. During these past decades, California artists have often photographed landscapes, while their eastern counterparts have typically photographed urban life. Experiments with light, text, subjective realities and painted, scraped or marked images, are evident in the exhibition’s 250 black and white, and color photographs. Artists included in the show are Jo Ann Callis, Judy Dater, Robert Heinecken, Richard Misrach and Minor White.

---

this first summary of the conceptual artist. Objects include architectural fragments, gestural instruments, autonomous language pieces, scripts, storyboards and documentation of performances. Also included are invented musical instruments and a retrospective survey of Anderson's video performance tapes. Organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania.

---

**Paul Strand, From the Viaduct, New York, 1916, Amon Carter Museum**
Hennessey & Ingalls

Art and Architecture Books will be open at its new location 1254 Santa Monica Mall (between Arizona and Wilshire) on February 1, 1984. Larger space = more books (free parking in nearby structures). New phone: (213) 458-9074.


Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century
Ebenzer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Robert Fishman
$8.95 62 illus.

The American City
From the Civil War to the New Deal
Giorgio Ciucci (The City in Agrarian Ideology and Frank Lloyd Wright: Origins and Development of Broadacres); Francesco Dal Co (Progressive Ideology and the Reform of the American City); Mario Manieri-Elia (Daniel H. Burnham and the City Beautiful Movement); Manfredo Tafuri (The Skyscraper and the City).
$17.50 292 illus.

Visionary Drawings of Architecture and Planning
20th Century Through the 1960s
George R. Collins
$15.00 98 illus.

Arcology
The City in the Image of Man
Paolo Soleri
$17.50 extensively illustrated with the author's drawings

The MIT Press
28 Carleton Street, Cambridge, MA 02142

February 9-April 1
Lee Krasner: A Retrospective
The first comprehensive retrospective of the art of Lee Krasner, this exhibition examines Krasner's role as a pioneer member of the New York School of Abstract Expressionism. Krasner's career between 1937 and 1982 is traced with more than 80 paintings and works on paper. Organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Judah L. Magnes Museum
West 2911 Russell Street
Berkeley, CA 94705
(415) 849-2710

February 12-May 13
The Jewish Experience In Prints and Drawings
Both secular and religious themes of Jewish life are depicted in 63 drawings, etchings, lithographs, woodcuts and watercolors. Taken from the museum's works on paper collection, the art works depict scenes from the 18th century to the present.

San Diego Museum of Art
1435 El Prado
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 232-7931

February 4-March 11
Selections from the Collection of Dr. Vance Condon
German expressionism is the focus of Dr. Condon's noted collection of 20th century art. Artists Nolde, Grosz, Schmidt-Rottluff and Beckmann are included in this exhibition of oil paintings, watercolors and woodcuts.

La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art
700 Prospect Street
La Jolla, CA 92037
(619) 454-3541
March 10-April 22
American Art Since 1970: Painting, Sculpture and Drawings from the Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Works from the Whitney Museum's holdings, chosen from those of emerging artists in the 1970's, are on exhibit. Included in the show are artists also considered to be promising work during the 1970's: Christo, Dan Flavin, Kim McKeown, Julian Schnabel and Alexis Smith among the 50 chosen Organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90036
(213) 857-6111
Continuing through May 6
Riders of Power In African Sculptures
Forty-one objects dating from the 14th to the 20th century depict the sculpture-producing peoples of Africa. Wood, bronze, iron, terracotta and unfired tiles portray African leaders, hunters, warriors and chiefs; works suggest positions of wealth, status and militarism. Banamu, and the Bozo, Bobo, Bwa and Gurunsi peoples of the upper Volta are among the various cultures represented.
The exhibition's objects include photographs of Anglo, black, Mexican and Indian cowboys, as well as a 1942 peacock jukebox programmed with recordings of the great cowboy singers of the 1930's and 1940's. Organized by the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON

Seattle Art Museum
1661 East Olive Way
Seattle, WA 98102
(206) 447-4729

March 8–May 27

Praise Poems: The Katherine White Collection

Masks from the Bamana of Mali and the Yoruba of Nigeria are included in Katherine White's collection of African, pre-Columbian and oceanic art. The collection was carefully composed over a period of 30 years. African masks and textiles are exhibited in a setting that approximates the original situation, both in lighting and positioning. Each of the 100 objects is accompanied by a guide, as well as a praise poem written by White.

American Cowboy

Boy myth from the dime novel 1870's to the fashion crazes 80's, contrasts with the reality of life, both in the 19th century and today. The exhibition's objects include photographs of Anglo, black, Mexican and Indian cowboys, as well as a 1942 peacock jukebox programmed with recordings of the great cowboy singers of the 1930's and 1940's. Organized by the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Temporary California Art: Art Makes Sense

Color, line, form, texture, space are basic elements directed toward a youthful audience, providing an overview of art. Artists in the exhibition are Larry ichard Diebenkorn, Jasper and Frank Stella.
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Arising Tradition in African Photography

Africa's first wave of modernism, the 1920's and 1930's is re-
in this selection of photographs from the museum's collection. All
are shown through March 11.

The museum's collection includes works by artists such as
Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Willard yke and Edward Weston.

San Antonio Art Institute

6000 New Braunfels
San Antonio, TX 78209
(512) 824-0531

17-March 27

Shogun Age

Shogun families during the Edo era, also known as
the 350 years of Japan's Age. The Samurai warrior
feudal system was established in the 12th century, estab-
lishing the Kamakura Shogunate, as a military government. Organic
the Shogun Age Exhibition Committee.

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VIEW

GARDENS

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Horrible corpses flung arrogantly, chaotically, in a great heap: mothers, daughters, fathers and sons.

Catatonic, the survivor stares inward, the borders of his reality frayed by barbed wire. He lives, but it is not possible for him to feel fortunate. He is conscious only of being alive—and of his blue tattoo. His head rings with tortured cries and screams, and the incessant report of guns.

He inhales slowly, shallowly, to screen out the mingled odors of blood and excrement and the nauseatingly sweet smell of death.

For 12 years at Oranienburg, Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz, the terrible death toll mounted. Two thirds of the Jews of Europe were killed by gunshot, cyanide gas, carbon monoxide, electrocution, phenol injections, flame throwers and hand grenades, as well as from typhus, dysentery and starvation. On September 29 and 30, 1941, in the single worst atrocity of them all, 33,771 Jews were machine-gunned to death in the ravine at Babi Yar.

Conceived for a light-dappled site within a forest, George Segal’s sculpture, The Holocaust, is a ghastly image of the world’s nightmare. Cast of white bronze, the work presents mimaetically the terrible finality of bodies covered with quicklime. Hands claw, fighting for some shred of being; a mouth gasps its last gulps of air; ribs poke through starved flesh like knives. Everywhere heads roll backwards, loosely, like those of dead animals. There is no dignity, no respect for the dead and dying. Man’s inhumanity to man lies spread out for all the world to see.

The sculpture was first exhibited at the Jewish Museum in New York. The crowds came in a never-ending stream: frail old Jews whose heads shook, palefaced, in an eternal “no,” and whose bony wrists bore indigo numbers; young boys in yarmulkes; rabbinical students in traditional black; dark-eyed, soft-skinned women, some of them pregnant, some holding small children.

If there is any relevance in this piece for the world community it will be because it talks about the dark underside of human nature; what happens when a certain combination of historic circumstances produces an insane fever. If you couple that with 20th century technology and our human ability to marshall enormous numbers of people, and a war machine capable of incredible destruction, all of the nervousness about nuclear freeze comes into focus. It is a reflection of the same kind of anxiety. Those things are absolutely connected. Every philosophical concern in the 20th century—existentialism, “God is dead,” the fear of nuclear war, Communism, you name it—all those things are related in the phenomenon of the holocaust.

If there is no moral underpinning, if there is no awareness of what can make this dark, insane fever sweep the world, everybody is in danger. That’s how I feel. The subject matter of the piece is essential.

A + A: Despite your personal knowledge of the holocaust, you decided to do research in a literary sense. In the course of this study, what, if anything, affected the image of the sculpture as it now exists?

GS: After looking at a thousand photographs, I think it was the arrogant disorder of the heaping of the corpses that offended me deeply. I am a very visual person, and that image spoke volumes to me. So I decided to tackle head on the dumping of the corpses.

A + A: That was wise, because the earlier title had implications of a more individual pain, and the new title frames the intent of the piece on a more universal level. Partly why I believe the piece is so important is because it will help keep the knowledge of those terrible deeds alive, not only in the Jewish community, but in a larger world community.

A + A: If the work is so important, what, if anything, do you feel is the knowledge of
We have already spoken about the general, universal aspects of the piece, but there is also a specific aspect to it. There was a concerted drive to annihilate every Jew in Europe. Just the bald recital of that fact is horrendous. Nobody that I know, including myself, is indifferent to the great number of Russians who were killed by the Germans, as well as the gypsies, the homosexuals, the Catholics and the socialists—it was horrendous and inconceivable. But the Jews were singled out for total annihilation. So in addition to the general aspect of the piece, there is this very particular aspect. I often deal with the play between the general and the specific in my work. I cast specific people, with their own specific personalities, hoping to arrive at some state of mind or some kind of generalized abstraction. So, I am dependent upon the particular as a vehicle toward a valid generalization.

A+A: Let’s talk about the Abraham and Isaac figures in the sculpture, and the Adam and Eve figures in relations to knitting the whole piece together.

G5: The piece is rather complicated, because it has a lot of levels. We are talking about literary subject matter, and then we are talking about meshing the literary with visual images.

The holocaust was Jewish and about Jews, and so the sculpture has to be about their suffering, but it also has to refer to the Jewish mental state, and that is often the Old Testament. The way Jews hold themselves is contained in a body of law which is dictated by a divinity. That is the architecture of the Jewish race, and it is expressed in the visual imagery of Old Testament stories, which are supposedly of divine origin. I wanted to bury subtle references to Old Testament imagery in the work, just to refer to the mental architecture of the Jews. So, you see, there are human bodies there, but I had to make some referral to the inner immensity that is in every human being. In my sculpture, in this litter of death and chaos, I felt it was necessary to bury some gestures that were absolutely human and tender.

A+A: Is The Holocaust solely a memorial, or will other people involved with it as well?

G5: Will people other than Jewish involved with the sculpture? Absolutely yes.

You see, the subject matter holocaust is overwhelming an sionate. If there are 200 million Jews living in the United States, 100 million of them had died in you'd have some idea of how overwhelming the Nazi statistics rel the concentration camps are were 12 million Jews in Euro six million were killed by Nazis, no subject matter more horrend 20th century. We have to f
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Circle 30 on information card.
With half of all office workers in this country laboring in systemized environments, it is difficult now to imagine the effect of the open office when it was first introduced in the early 1960's. But if you bear in mind that at that time the typical office was a ring of closed cubicles surrounding an open bullpen, you will feel how startling was the first picture of that open room, the entire staff working quietly together in an apparent chaos of chairs, tables and plants. The provocative concept of the open office emerged in Germany, where it originated with a group of planning consultants, the Quickborner Team. Like their American counterparts, the Quickborners based their designs on analyses of work, communication and circulation. In contrast, they rejected rectilinear geometry and ignored the shape of the building, which they considered nothing more than an envelope in which they could juggle departments and work stations. From this shuffling process emerged an organic scheme which optimized communication; the space plan was literally a bubble diagram for the critical paths within the organization. The process required a different consideration of the office's physical elements. Fixed partitions, which reflected sound and hampered interaction, were abolished.

Everyone worked in the open, and visual privacy, when necessary, was effected with portable, sound-absorbing screens. Bulky desks were replaced with lightweight tables. Only active paper was allowed on the floor, and most file cabinets were removed. Wall to wall carpeting was installed for its acoustic qualities, as were potted plants, giving rise to the German name for this form of planning: Bürolandschaft or office landscaping. The redressing of the office was accompanied by new considerations of privacy, discipline and status. Sight and sound were regulated by a broadly defined theory of grey noise. "The rule of Bürolandschaft would be, then, that when everything is distracting, nothing is distracting," (Progressive Architecture). Workers were expected to be responsible for maintaining quiet and reasonable in their use of the centrally located Pausenraum, or lounge. The general simplification of furnishings conspired with the lack of privacy to strip the manager of his conventional trappings. This, combined with the sense of individual autonomy, gave office landscaping its radical character, an egalitarian assertion of relationships within the work place. Obviously familiar with the principles of Bürolandschaft, Robert Propst of Herman Miller published The Office: A Facility Based on Change in 1968. In it he reiterated the German view of the office while describing a system for more specialized work stations. Propst simultaneously codified an American version of Bürolandschaft and laid the theoretical foundation for the sale of Herman Miller's then-new Action Office. The first office landscape in America went into operation that same year. Quickborner, Inc. of New Jersey, helped Du Pont re-design the offices of its Freon division. An article in Progressive Architecture described it as "...appropriately expressive of its product; an open, unenclosed space with
Heyworth's Unigroup is a comprehensive system including electrified panels, supported and free-standing lighting, functional work surfaces for electronic equipment, and an ergonomic seating group.
The Race system, designed by Douglas Ball Soar, is an ingenious and stylish approach for organizing electrical and communication wiring, work surfaces and storage.
THE BEAUTIFICATION OF MARKET STREET

Last night was warm and clear, people were walking around without coats. I was out on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as itchanged from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail. I was on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as it changed from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail. I was on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as it changed from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail. I was on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as it changed from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail. I was on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as it changed from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail. I was on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as it changed from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail. I was on Market Street, and it was a productive outing. The late afternoon sun was picture perfect; it reduced the cityscape to harsh and surreal tones and spotlighted corners as it changed from moment to moment. I feel certain that some fine pictures resulted from that special combination of clear sky and late light. I don’t know that I got anything that Beautifiers can use, but hopefully there’s something—one or two pictures that might be perfect for them, a picture with a bench perhaps, or one of those elaborate bus canopies, or something of the brick paving sparkling in the late sun, with its elegant granite curbstone detail.
lings faced with terra cotta and cut stone, wrought and cast iron—have a way of commanding attention. Their complexity of detail and ornament did so much to my understanding of the street that to have passed them by and concentrated only on the fixtures of the Beautifiers would have been a mistake. The fading splendor of these relics gives dimension to the street and meaning to the work of the Beautifiers. Without the humanizing effects of these buildings, the boring, fussy, encroachments of the modern highrisers would be unrelieved. They provide a balance to the often inhospitable orn buildings filled with corporate offices. The newer highrisers tend to barricade themselves from the street, or put a meaningless plaza between selves and it; their designers believe such plazas are parks, or a form of park, when they are really a first line of defense in an era of security conscious. The suburban intelligence, which sees other a park with a walkway or a landscaped e come to see Market Street, or the beautification from the Ferry Building on the east, the porated into the new plan are various monu-kled irregularly along the length of the beauty of the pioneers, a statue of Miss Liberty, the natural elements which unify the park-like design of the Beautifiers, and lend some substance or narrative to an otherwise flimsy plan. The Beautifiers themselves, Mario Ciampi, John Carl Warnecke and Lawrence Halprin, architects and landscape architects, commissioned few monuments; the Frost relief standing near Drumm Street was a gift to the city from the San Francisco friends of the poet on the anniversary of his 100th lay. The only other new monument is Lawrence Halprin’s United Nations fountain and plaza at the Civic Center, with its centerpiece, a somewhat black marble form, oddly uninscribed. Part of the confusion evident at Halprin’s fountain is the difference between a public park and a garden, a contradiction rampant throughout all of the beautification work along the length of the street. Without fail, the Beautifiers used the fairy of a garden in a design that was obviously intended to be something like a park, and by including few monuments they ignored the meaning of the street as a battlefield, believes the street should causeway. It is thought to be basically uninhabitable. of the street, to Van Ness Avenue on the west. ments erected by past Beautifiers out of civic pride, fication section of the street. These old pieces—Muses, a Rough Rider scaling San Juan Hill—are part of the confusion at Halprin’s fountain is the difference between a public park and a garden, a contradiction rampant throughout all of the beautification work along the length of the street. Without fail, the Beautifiers used the fairy of a garden in a design that was obviously intended to be something like a park, and by including few monuments they ignored the meaning park which, on some levels, is about edification. As a result there’s a sense of things being at odds. In a public park, there’s a civic responsibility to educate; its monuments need to refer to something, some source of civic pride or manifest destiny. The St. Louis Arch on the bank of the Mississippi, a symbolic structure to paradise, and is placed consciously in a park setting as a confirmation of political purpose. Implicit notion of God and a respect for order and process, understood by all who come to see it. If Halprin and the other Market Street Beautifiers it wasn’t entirely because they commissionied the wrong kind of monuments; they failed for other reasons. Perhaps in the absence of clear civic constructing a park that is intended to give form to plurality isn’t possible. Perhaps in a period of social and political dissolution, the only parks are amusement parks and ballparks. Or perhaps the Beautifiers, like so many other designers confronting a problem such as Market
Street from a suburban point of view found themselves confused by the diversity of the urban problem. Conditioned by their years of subservience as advisors and as minor functionaries to bloodless corporations, they responded to Market Street as they would have responded to any corporate client: with banal and inoffensive ornament, with form for its own sake, devoid of meaning and impact. I must have walked miles, up one side of the street and down the other, from the Ferry Building to Van Ness and back again. Again the light was good, and there was action on the street—people shopping, to work and going to lunch. There were drunks, heads, and lovers lounged around Halprin’s United Nations. A two-year-old ran naked through the jets of water in the fountain. A group of haggard Indians sat on the new granite benches, passing a bottle. Businessmen enjoying the sun strolled up the street, seemingly with no part place to go. Crowds of lunchtime sun worshipers sunned themselves on Justin Herman Plaza. It’s on this low of the street that the beautification program can be said to work, that the appointments—the benches canopies, the ornate cast iron street lights—are all of a piece. It all fits and complements the corporate high which line both sides of the street. The double rows of sycamores offer some shade and help create the impres a grand boulevard, in the manner of the C Élysées, but without the passion for heroic st or the drama of a royal concourse. It isn’t t intentions of the Beautifiers can be questioned hearts were in the right place; they certainly something attractive, something grand and thing French. It’s just that their success was by their collective understanding. The old simply refused to become something it was remains essentially what it was—Main St rhe Champs Élysées. The vitality and energy Street is purely American: tourists, shoppe tlers and hookers, balloon sellers and street
REMNANTS OF THE PAST

COMMAND ATTENTION...

...all seem to congregate or pass through Hallidie Plaza, an open space on the north side of the street, built a level below the street grade to serve as a IT subway entrance. Because of this grade difference the benches and seating are tiered, and it’s like being in an amphitheater or in an arena, where possible to buy anything at any time of the day or night, or just sit there above the floor of the arena, on one of those granite benches and watch the fa unfold. It’s throbbing, people standing around doing nothing, people watching people, or selling something. There’s a long queue of tourists ing for the cable cars at the turnaround at Powell and Market Streets. The careful brick paving of the Beautifiers is all splattered with discarded ing gum. The bronze trash cans are filled to overflowing. The plan of the Beautifiers doesn’t account for or accommodate all this vitality and chaos; at, the beautification seems almost incidental to the nature of the street. Its seething stream of organized mayhem is oblivious to all the painstaking : of the Beautifiers. One of them said to me when the photographs were commissioned, “You don’t want to go much beyond Third Street—and try to photograph Larry’s fountain in a full moon, when the fountain
lights are on, against the moonlit dome of City Hall.” The crowds begin to thin out past Sixth Street where the cheaper fast food joints, the discount novelty shops and the pawn shops begin.

Two blocks from Hallidie Plaza at Seventh Street the United Nations fountain and the black marble obelisk sit across the well- appointed street from the Starlite Lounge, the porno theaters burned-out surplus store. Further on, the street changes again at the new State Compensation Insurance Building and the Fox Plaza Building; eney atmosphere fades, the traffic seems to be more orderly, and the activity along the street is less intense. The area around the fountain is still a . The bums and winos gather early on the lovely landscaped promenade. Some lie on the grass and the rest of them sit on the benches which line promenade, drinking, arguing and discussing. Sometimes they get too drunk and harass the pedestrians as they pass back and forth along the made between the BART Station on Market Street and City Hall. I expect that someday they’ll be moved out, rehabilitated and transformed, these ints of humanity, as the street becomes more sedate, the arrogant corporate highrises advancing across the Third Street barrier like a sullen, ering horde, supported by the work of the Beautifiers. Of course it would be impossible not to lament the passing of these relics, and to see the tion of an alien and foreign culture as progress. In time, Market Street will become the grand, tree-lined imitation French boulevard it was fied to be: immaculate offices lining both sides of the street from the Ferry Building to Van Ness Avenue, with smart shops, elegant little boutiques g to the rich, small bistros with red-checked table cloths and chic sidewalk cafes. Gay boulevardiers will stroll the street and lunch on croissants, baisse and white wine, while their maids will shop the charming charcuteries for Marcel & Henri’s gourmet pates, and lovers will rendezvous at untain, when the lights are on and it can be seen against the moonlit dome of City Hall.

Freiwald has been an architectural photographer for 20 years. He is compiling a book of his essays and photographs.
BY ROBERT HINE

Designing New Worlds

Californians have always yearned to redefine their environment—to spread moisture and grow turf on their deserts, to plant Brazilian navel orange trees or Australian eucalyptus, to draw water over long distances, and to build an imitation Venice on the Pacific shores. As early as the 1870’s they schemed to flood the Colorado Desert and grow trees the size of sequoias. And, although there was more than mere whimsy in this tendency, it was related to the same fantasy world as their camel races, Egyptian columns, Greek theaters, Spanish tiles, Disneyland weekends, and movie sets. It’s little wonder that California has also nurtured a larger number of utopias than any other part of the nation.

Before 1950 at least 17 groups had experimented with different utopian social patterns, and after the 1960’s a generation of rebellious spirits had started enough communes to put their utopian predecessors to shame. All of these communities originated out of a deep dissatisfaction with the established ways. Their founders’ vision was of an ideal society—a model of which, faint though it might be, they were actually living. In general they had given up working within the larger society, and in one form or another had withdrawn from it. If they were religious, they dreamt of the family implied in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. If they were secular, the brotherhood of man was an end in itself.

The utopian story began in 1851 not long after California was admitted to the Union. In that year a colony of Mormons settled in San Bernardino. These people had learned social cooperation both from their faith and the persecutions they had suffered in the Middle West. Christianity and survival had directed them away from the established competitive society. In San Bernardino, they worked together to construct a security enclosure of sycamore and pine, water ditches for communal agriculture, and to create a model in which the group took precedence over the individual. In its first years the community gave its people a life of dances, music and outings, real joys to combine with hard work; but by 1857 factionalism had undermined the basic cooperativeness. Brigham Young recalled the saints to Utah so that they might help defend Zion against troops marching from Washington. By then, however, the ideal vision had already been lost among the disidents.

Sometimes religious utopians have been rooted in more esoteric traditions—as with Fountain Grove, founded by Thomas Lake Harris near Santa Rosa in 1875. Harris was a western version of John Humphrey Noyes of the Oneida Colony in New York. A Spiritualist and a mystic, he believed in the “divine respiration” of Emmanuel Swedenborg, adding to his direct communication with God an “electro-vital force.” Requiring celibacy of his followers, he proclaimed a new harmonic civilization without private property in which he was the “pivotal man.”

The colony contained 1,700 acres, mostly planted with grapes. By 1886 it was bottling 70,000 gallons of wine a year. The wine was thought to contain “a divine
and celestial energy,” based on the fraternal life. The community constructed six main buildings dominated by “Aestivossa,” a Victorian mansion with high ceilings, panelled walls, thick carpets and stained glass windows embellished with angels and knights. The halls rang with poetry, music and communal dancing. The colony began its decline when, in the 1890’s, local newspapers charged Harris with immorality and enslavement.

Esoteric religious colonies attained their zenith with a variety of Theosophical societies centered in Halyon, Ojai, Pasadena and San Diego. In 1895, Katherine Tingley, whom the Los Angeles Times labeled the “Purple Mother,” led her Theosophists to Point Loma, between the sea and San Diego Bay. Over a span of some 30 years they raised several magnificent buildings, including two aquamarine glass domes that were internally lit, acting as beacons to the sea. The colony’s charming Greek theater used the Pacific Ocean for a backdrop and was the setting for lavish communal productions of Sophocles and Shakespeare. Cultural life glowed with orchestras, lectures and libraries. Children were raised in carefully controlled nurseries and dormatories away from their parents. In 1907, the Point Loma Theosophists numbered nearly 500. In 1929 the colony was shaken by the death of Katherine Tingley and the Great Depression.

A religious society must ultimately be based upon absolute obedience to the will of God, and a utopia establishes the machinery of such obedience. In so doing, a charismatic individual can sometimes pervert religious hope. Such certainly happened with the racist Father William E. Riker who set up his colony at Holy City in the Santa Cruz Mountains before World War I. He proudly disavowed book learning, receiving instead spiritualistic messages through his nervous system. These messages caused his followers, many of whom were poor European immigrants, to construct Holy City. Cabins, restaurants, barber and print shops clustered near the highway along with primitive sign boards (“If you are contemplating murder, suicide or crime, see us first”). In the 1960’s, Jim Jones preached another message demanding complete obedience. His ideal society was based on a social brotherhood of help to the poor, the addicted and the elderly. But the means to this end were through unquestioning loyalty to Jones himself, which was ultimately demonstrated by the mass suicide of his followers in Guyana.

It is easy but erroneous to lump all religious utopias with such charismatic nightmares. Swami Kriyananda, although a highly magnetic leader, has produced strikingly different results in his Ananda Cooperative Colony in the Sierra foothills near Nevada City. Kriyananda is an educated man, the product of Kent School, Haverford and Brown. In 1968 his followers began building their ideal community among the pines and oaks, constructing remarkable geodesic domes for a temple and for communal dining. In their place of worship among the manzanita they felt they had architecturally lowered the bowl of heaven to an energy field commensurate with the human skull. The village’s population of 160 lives cooperatively, allowing no drugs or alcohol; and they have prospered in spite of two disastrous fires.

Secular utopias, too, seek commitment and cohesion but not through obedience and charisma. They also find the prevailing society hopelessly corrupt, alienating and bureaucratic, but their reformism would avoid violent revolution and instead create a collective model for others to follow. Such was the approach of the 55 Icarians who arrived in Sonoma County in 1883. Their articles of agreement were similar to their parent commune of French socialists in Iowa. These younger, more radical adherents of Etienne Cabet set up their Gallic island of utopian socialism near Cloverdale. One of their leaders, Emile Bée, had fought on the barricades of the Paris Commune in 1871. He and his friends sent letters back to Iowa, enclosing pressed flowers to show how California blossomed while Iowa shivered. The commune was soon producing Zinfandel wine, peaches, prunes and wheat. Fraternity, they claimed, was the greatest good and competition the greatest evil. Since they required fluency in the French language, their base for recruits was limited, but more importantly the radical tempera-
La Réunion

To Charles Fourier, “civilization” represented an evil intrusion upon Nature; it limited love, made work an enslavement, and caused boredom. He proposed that “civilization” be replaced by “harmony,” a new stage of history where man’s sensate needs would be satisfied and all individual desires and interests would be honored. All the world’s races, classes, sexes and ages were to live in phalanstères: groups of 2000 where individual passions could be developed and expressed to promote collective ends. The phalanstères would provide a milieu for the multiple and varied relationships that would promote a full and complicated life of the senses. By organizing and sharing the drudgeries of life, time could be found for better things. The physical image that evolved under the leadership of Fourier’s chief disciple, Victor Considerant, was that of a great building situated in a bucolic, pastoral setting; architects Morise and Daly were paid to design a community similar in form to Versailles. There would be sumptuous and modest quarters for every taste and pocketbook. The kitchen and the theater would be prominent and children were to be provided for in the equivalent of daycare centers.

The movement spread all over France and into Belgium by the mid-1840’s. An experiment west of Paris in mid-1830’s failed; another started floundered on an island off the coast Brazil; in Algeria, a community began the hills outside Oran, where great for gardens were laid out to embellish project. Outside Boston, Brook Farm, transcendental idyl of small buildings a school draped over a hill along Charles River, was converted to Fourierism but failed after two years. By the 1850’s there were only two color remaining.

Yet the Fourierists never seemed give up hope. Albert Brisbane, American propagandist for the cause, brought Considerant to Texas in 1853 to look for place to make the supreme experiment building the phalanstère. Arriving empty north Texas that spring, Considerant thought he had found Eden: for analogous description, his closest in was that of a natural English park; specially, Henry VIII’s garden at Richm. The specific site he wanted was the Fort Worth, about to be decommission by the Army. Considerant reported his vision in a book called In Texas, painti picture of a tropical paradise to be hac the plucking. Within seven months a s company was formed and had raised $400,000 and an advance party hac off to buy some 13,000 acres, not in Worth, but in nearby Dallas County. site was similar: a high bluff overlooki rich, partially cleared alluvial plai river, and long vistas beyond.

Colonists soon arrived after spent eight weeks at sea and walking for 30 from Houston. Welcoming them w large building with wide verandas run
und its exterior; inside there were no doors or windows in the four large rooms. A kitchen was outside. The colony’s American carpenters had probably on them a one story, enlarged version of a southern planter’s house.

Fourierists for this comedown from considerant’s grand depiction of the environment. The frontier, not European intellectualism, determined the environment. Most immigrants, when they saw the first prepared sites, fought to share smaller cabins, built their own separate ones. The colonists soon decided that “association” would be limited strictly to work, not singing. To the dismay of the theorists, dream of the great phalanstère began to unravel.

 till, a town plan was created (probably the first buildings were constructed) using the Paris model, in stark contrast to pragmatic surveyor’s grid of neighboring Dallas. The diagonals were generated, likely probability, from drainage defiles springs which flowed during the rainy season. But none of the simple things could live up to the ambitions of plan. Along the slope from the top of the bluff, Considerant had a garden for formal parterres or cingois. The pragmatists who put in their vegetable garden railed at the use of city for these ornaments. The best element the colonists found was one of green; Madame Considerant held court “cedar salon,” whose green branches cascaded with the yellowed summer vegetables. Under the trees, a rug of grass, hammocks and nets of twine were suspended from tree to tree; in these the colonists escaped snakes, which were forever crawling in uncounted numbers everywhere, and conducted the last remnant of their European life left to them, the art of conversation.

Those with funds, like Cesar Daly, the editor of the chief architectural review in France, soon saw that only frontier problems could be solved here, not European social problems; ultimately, they left. Those who could not afford to return to Europe migrated across the river to Dallas, another village the size of Réunion. A young Belgian architect created the first professionally designed building, a Greek revival hotel, for the village, but then left; a Beaux-Arts classmate who stayed became a builder-carpenter of frontier structures by necessity.

This largest and final experiment under Fourierism lasted some 18 months as a commune under its stock company umbrella, but the people and investors carried on after the company folded, with the last resident leaving the site some 13 years after it began. The stock company resorted to Texas land speculation for the remainder of its 20 years. But its members did not give up their idea of utopia: several of those infected with the dream tried to establish “Mutuelle” on a neighboring site, proposed reviving the North American Phalanx in New Jersey, continued to support a Paris bookstore of the École Sociétair e, held annual celebrations of Fourier’s birthday until the 1890’s and supported cooperatives and other forms of “associations.”

James Pratt is a Dallas architect.
BY DOLORES HAYDEN

Llano del Rio
Building a Desert Community

The Socialist City should be beautiful, of course; it should be constructed on a definite plan, each feature having a vital relation to and complementing each other feature, thus illustrating in a concrete way the solidarity of the community; it should emphasize the fundamental principle of equal opportunity for all; and it should be the last word in the application of scientific discovery to the problems of everyday life, putting every labor saving device at the service of every citizen.

Alice Constance Austin, October 1916

Llano del Rio was launched in California in 1914 and moved to Louisiana in 1917, surviving for twenty-four years, always on the verge of financial collapse, never solvent enough to build very much. In California, Alice Constance Austin, a feminist and self-trained architect, led the community in criticizing the ways in which the political problems of women were reinforced by the design of traditional dwellings. Under her leadership the group developed a model single-family home which they believed would suit an egalitarian society. When Job Harriman was defeated as the Socialist Party and Labor Party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles in 1910, he suggested that his supporters organize an alternative city in the Antelope Valley north of Los Angeles. Born in rural Indiana in 1861, Harriman had trained for the ministry by attending law school in Colorado Springs and organizing ten years earlier as a Fountain Colony of Colorado in imitation of Greeley. Harriman then moved to California, where he became involved in communities based upon the ideas of Edw. Bellamy and William Dean Howells, whose portrayal of the evolution of socialist society as a rational, nonviolent process which involved few or no changes in the role of the nuclear family and private home.

Harriman recruited Alice Constance Austin, a self-trained architect who shared his reverence for the family home and hoped to reorganize cooking and laundry as communal activities. He also enlisted bank managers, labor leaders, a journalist, a membership director to implement a plan for an alternative town.

Some 900 members joined the community; they were described by a visitor in 1917 as "men and women of intelligence and common sense . . . substantial people who had banded themselves together to attempt to work out a community life without a capitalist and where fruits of toil went . . . to the laborer." Ban workers and small business owners were joined by a substantial number of farmers. In return for a membership fee of $1,000 each family was to receive a house, and men would be employed...
rhymester and women, who were assigned to domestic work or handicrafts at less than men’s wages.

The Llano organizers chose a site adjoining the Mohave Desert, 90 miles by road from Los Angeles and 20 miles from Palmdale, the nearest railroad depot. The area they selected had first been settled in the early 1890’s as Almondale, a “Sunset Colony” organized in Chicago by Farm, Field and Fireside magazine in emulation of “the great Horace Greeley in his New York Tribune, Greeley Colorado colonization enterprise.” Since the Chicago organizers had promised their colonists irrigated land to produce an almond crop, they excavated a tunnel approximately three quarters of a mile long for this purpose before going bankrupt. Their unusual radial town plan remained unrealized when residents dispersed after three years.

Unmindful of the downfall of Almondale, the Llano organizers planned to develop the desert until it was as “green as the map of Ireland.” Ultimately they owned or controlled about 2,000 acres, chiefly desert land, some in the foothills of the mountains. Thirty picturesque acres at Jackson’s Lake were designated as the community’s “resort.” Views of snowcapped peaks tended to inspire colonists to rhapsodize about their scenery, and views of the colony from the peaks were colored by desert sunsets, but the colony site itself was cold in winter, hot in summer, arid, and flat. Furthermore, the parcels owned by the community were not contiguous, since the organizers had purchased land in scattered locations on the east side of the Big Rock Irrigation District in an attempt to gain control of adequate water.

Despite problems of internal and external transportation and irrigation, Llano’s organizers celebrated the advantages of their environment in their publications, Western Comrade and Llano Colonist. First the productive possibilities were overpraised: “Once this rich plain—which in its dry state is valueless—is touched by water and the plow, a veritable gold mine of virgin strength is tapped. This land will yield its wealth of fruit and grain, beef, wool.” Houses, barns, workshops were “to be completed within a week,” month after month.

While the Western Comrade advertised bliss and comfort, colonists complained of inadequate housing. The community’s first dwellings were tents and adobes, uncomfortable in damp winter weather but praised by “Doc” Robert K. Williams, a Fresno chiropractor, who wrote articles about Llano’s “snow-white” tents and “snug” adobe houses. Houses were cramped, according to the Elkins family: “The kitchen is too small and too low, no air at all, seven in the family and its an awful small place not quite (six) feet high. . . .” Construction crews did poor work, according to Josephine Miller, who protested that her adobe house should not be built without a foundation. One member was lucky enough to be given a frame house, then found that it was boards without battens, so that flies rushed in. Williams’ soothing injunction that building teams should construct other members’ houses as if they were building their own was of no avail. Every family was engaged in the struggle for shelter, and the community managers did not hesitate to threaten dissident members with eviction as a disciplinary sanction.

At the same time that design and construction proceeded in a rather haphazard manner at Llano del Rio, members participated in extended discussions of the architecture of the ideal City led by Alice Constance Aust. Perhaps debate over future alternate proved useful in deflecting conflict o the authoritarian tactics of the direct. It was unfortunate that just as members developed a radical approach to dwell design, the community foundered financially and no new homes were constructed.

Alice Constance Austin assumed role of city planner and architect Llano del Rio between 1915 and 15 bringing architectural drawings and models to the weekly Llano General Assen for discussion, teaching in the colony’s Madre Industrial School, and writing a series of articles on “Building a Soci
Tom Two of Austin's houses for Llano.

Karlene. She was a member of the community but, according to one member, offered her services in the hope of seeing a lifelong dream fulfilled. Another member characterized her as an upper-class radical, the daughter of a railroad executive. She read George Pullman's propaganda on model settlements at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893, and then educated herself to become the designer of a model town that would be owned and run by women.

Leonard A. Cooke drew up a preliminary site plan for Llano in 1915. Austin's plan was less grandiose than Cooke's, but his plan was designed for arid land, and the community owned and occupied, hers was prepared for a better site not included in their land holdings. Austin seems to have absorbed most of her town planning theory from Ebenezer Howard, author of To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform, published in London in 1898 and reissued in 1902 under its well-known title, Garden Cities of To-Morrow. Austin's debt to Howard is reflected in the organization of the city and its central buildings as well as in the graphic presentation of these ideas, but her approach to dwelling design was distinctively feminist and Californian.

Howard outlined the economic and social structure of a town of 30,000 inhabitants housed on 1,000 acres surrounded by a "green belt" of allotment gardens and farms. His civic buildings were set in parkland, ringed by a "Crystal Palace" which served as a pedestrian shopping arcade and winter garden. A radial street system culminated in a ring railway line. Austin accommodated 10,000 people on 640 acres, the square mile area common to many ideal communities planned for the United States. A green belt of unspecified size was to surround the town. Her civic center recalls Howard's "Crystal Palace," with eight "rectangular halls, like factories, with sides almost wholly of glass," leading to a glass-domed assembly hall.

Howard's diagram included six major "boulevards," twelve "roads," and eighteen "streets." Austin provided more vehicular circulation but reduced street width (50 feet versus 120 feet) because she placed all business traffic underground. Howard proposed external transportation in the form of railway lines; Austin allowed each family an automobile and housed them in communal garages. Perhaps Austin's most memorable transit innovation is whimsical: the ring road around the city doubles as a drag strip with stands for spectators on both sides.

Austin's housing designs, like the infrastructure of her town plan, expressed her concern with the organization of domestic work and its implications for the role of women. She rejected the idea of large combined households of the sort established by the Shakers, Fourierists, and Oneidans.

Dissatisfaction with the role of women in a sexist society motivated Austin more than a desire to emulate other communes' household arrangements. She maintained that the traditional home functioned as a Procrustean bed to which "each feminine personality must be made to conform by whatever maiming or fatal spiritual or intellectual oppression."

In her Socialist City, with labor saving devices in the home and central laundries and kitchens, a woman would be "relieved of the thankless and unending drudgery of an inconceivably stupid and inefficient system, by which her labors are confiscated. . . ."

Charlotte Perkins Gilman raged over this "confiscation" in The Home and suggested careers for women; in spite of her criticism of the socialization and economic exploitation of women, Constance Austin offered not careers but domestic life for the socialist woman. Her program is therefore a synthesis of the domestic efficiencies proposed by Catharine Beecher, who wished to "redeem" women's profession as homemakers, and the collective economies proposed by those communitarians who organized communal work to lighten women's labor. Her plans do not include any version of the communal hotel accommodations and communal child care which were available at Llano del Rio. Although these omissions narrow the scope

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In 1908, Allensworth, an all-black town, was established in California on the Santa Fe Railroad line, midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, by William Alexander Payne and Allen Allensworth. These men joined forces with three others from Los Angeles, and later that same year incorporated the California Home Promoting and Colonization Association. The corporation acquired a 3000 acre tract which was subdivided into town lots and rural parcels and named Allensworth. As an all-black town, Allensworth fulfilled the dream many black men and women of that period had for a community free from racial prejudice, a community where they could own land, secure an education and achieve political and economic independence.

Self-governed black towns, or race colonies, while a relatively recent and unique phenomenon in California's history, had been on the American scene as early as the Colonial Period. The first recorded settlement was Parting Ways in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Some of the earlier communities were no more than unincorporated villages, but others, like Langston and Boley in Oklahoma, Mount Bayou in Mississippi, and Nicodemus in Kansas, became cities of substantial size.

It was believed that race colonies could help Afro-Americans achieve their full citizenship in accordance with American beliefs. The formation of all-black towns varied somewhat at various periods in history. In the 19th century it was practical for ex-slaves to secure farmland in the South, form a town and thereby secure their political rights. By the late 1870s race colonization was characterized principally by the movement out of the South towards the western frontier. It was believed that outside the South the all-black town could achieve social equality through its educational and moral development.

At the beginning of the 20th century a new definition of race colony goals was determined. It was then thought that all society, regardless of region, was effectively closed to former slaves. Therefore attention turned to changing this popular sentiment in order to effect beneficial economic and social changes. Emphasis was placed on educational achievement as a strategy to contradict the social theory of black inferiority.

Changing such public sentiments seemed to have been the founding principle behind Allensworth.

Colonel Allen Allensworth was a former slave who became chaplain of the 2...
ited States Army Infantry, one of the
r black regiments in the segregated
itary. At his retirement, Allensworth
achieved the highest rank of any
ited States Army chaplain. According
letter he wrote to the editor of the
York Age, published on January 11,
the idea for Allensworth came to
while he was still chaplain:

Before my retirement from the
my I commenced considering my
future work to aid in making senti-
ment favorable to the race. I investi-
gated the forces at work against us
and soon realized that something
must be done. A great deal is being
one in the abstract, but something
a concrete form should be done on
he Pacific Coast to gain additional
ce to work of the New York Age
nd the great work of Booker T.
ashington. After discussing the
bject with a number of persons
nterested in checking the growing
eling against us, I was led to or-
ganize an association to secure a large
act of land where all conditions
ould contribute to the success of
e movement. The specific work to
 was soon decided upon.

Following his retirement from the
ervice in 1906, Colonel Allensworth began
an all-out campaign to build support for
his idea of a self-governed black town in
California. Self-help and political self-suf-
ficiency, the tenets of his colleague Booker
t. Washington, were his main themes as
he travelled throughout the east and west
promoting the town. Allensworth’s princi-
pal partner in this endeavor was Professor
William Payne.

Payne, a 1906 Denison University
graduate and educator, came of age in
Ohio. Many nights were spent listening to
his father and friends, like Adam Clayton
Powell, Sr., discuss the condition of blacks
in the United States. Those evenings were
instrumental in molding young William’s
vocational course and generating the
theme which would govern his adult life:
“Get an education and opportunity will
come.”

Like many other blacks of the period,
the Paynes were attracted to California as
a place where they might educate their
children and realize full employment. In-
stead, they found that discriminatory hir-
ning policies denied black teachers
employment. Menial labor was the only
employment open to Payne—his bac-
calaureate degree, experience as assistant
principal in Rendville, Ohio, and
professorship at the West Virginia Col-
ored Institute were ignored. Allensworth
offered him a means to further his life’s
goal of educating blacks so that they could
realize economic independence and free-
dom from racial prejudice.

The town of Allensworth was, there-
fore, born out of the period’s black politi-
cal theory; a place where men and women
of the race could, through cooperative
industry, achieve intellectual and economic
independence as enjoyed by other Ameri-
cans. By governing themselves and orga-
nizing and managing their own
enterprises, the town founders believed
they would become a powerful example of
the race’s fitness for pioneering and na-
tion-building. Blacks would demonstrate
the injustice of the badge of inferiority
and incompetence enforced upon the
group and used to justify discriminatory
practices and violence. Once this point
was made, it was expected that policy
changes would evolve towards ending ra-
cial discrimination. Colonel Allensworth,
in an article entitled “Social Status of the
Negro” published in the New York Age,
June 10, 1889, explained this strategy:

All the laws are merely public opin-
ion in legal forms. To change these
laws we must change public opinion
by meeting its demands. Public

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Some time ago, in anticipation of the terrible year, Ray Bradbury proclaimed that 1984 would not arrive. By this he meant that the world cannot end thus, that man will not allow it. But, as a date at least, 1984 has now arrived. In doing so it has turned prescriptions into predictions again, for the arrival of this date tells us, if nothing else, that there is still a future with which to deal. This affirmation raises the problem of how our fictions can relate to that future. The difficulty with Orwell’s 1984 is that it is a terminal vision. And Bradbury, accepting it as an end, would forestall: his answer to Orwell’s finality is merely another fiction that takes things out of the course of time. But what is the fictional mode that can face the coming and going of 1984, that remains committed to the open-ended process of time in the very act of speculating on endings? We must turn to science fiction for a possible answer.

Nineteen eighty-four, as event and as book, is a paradoxical experience. To read Orwell’s work in its anniversary year is to note two contradictory things: the awful absoluteness of its vision, and the ease with which we slip beyond that finality. We are able, at one and the same time, to see things literally and figuratively. We sit on the edge of total nuclear destruction, the culmination of a century of totalitarian horrors. No, we are being warned: the scenario is monitory, and if we heed it we can change things, still have a future. In relation to the end we can be both determined and free. While safely in our garden suburbs we dwell in Orwell’s urban nightmare. Collectively we experience holocaust as a televised spectacular significantly titled “The Day After.” Yet it is out of this same matrix of contradiction, where our desires to terminate and to continue meet and mingle, that science fiction seems to fashion its most characteristic structures. 1984 is a literature of the day itself. In response, Bradbury calls for a literature of the day before. Science fiction however could be called a literature of the day after. It is so because it seeks to harness these tensions between chronology and finality that inform our fictions of utopia or dystopia, breaking through endings in the hope of knowing no end.
So we might say that 1984 is to the genre of science fiction as its terminal landscape is to the changing vistas of the real city—London—that inspired and informed it.

Orwell’s book is often considered a piece of science fiction. Such a designation, however, may misrepresent the latter form. For in its ideologically pure or “hard” mode at least, science fiction is a speculative literature that not only believes in science as indefinitely progressive knowledge, but purports to measure the impact of this scientific advancement on man. It implies, therefore, both an open future and a constant human element as participant in that future. By contrast, utopia and dystopia, in calling for static perfection either good or bad, seem ultimately to infer human absence. Since Voltaire declared that man was not fit to remain in Eldorado, the path to utopia, it seems, has become one of transcendence. And in converse fashion, the way to dystopia now appears to lie, more and more, through utter dehumanization. The dystopian despair of a work like 1984 then may arise, finally, less from a tradition of science fiction than from that of “realism” itself—a vision so confident in the permanent intelligibility of the world it presents that it is increasingly unable, as that permanence is challenged by new dynamic and relativistic stances, to restore the intelligible except in the form of a finality from which the troublesome human variable has been removed. In this climate of anxiety, the dream of the end becomes an exacerbated dream.

But if science fiction does not share with 1984 its sense of finality, it does share its urbanity. As with Orwell’s novel, science fiction uses the city as a primary means of figuring the future. Once again however, the science fiction city announces itself as open-ended and man-directed. Again the ideology of hard science fiction asks us to see, in the rise and fall of its structures, the image of our advancing technology. In this light we might say, at the meeting point of the city, that 1984 is to science fiction as its terminal landscape is to the changing vistas of the real city—London—that inspired and informed it. As great urban center of the 19th century industrial revolution, the real London has spawned new cities: New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo. At the same time, as mythic city, it has given rise to new city myths. As they outlive 1984, it is these myths—in their power to mediate between physical reality and the idea of the city as that growing edge whereby man interacts with nature—that will continue to generate science fictional speculations on the future.
On the edge of total nuclear 
destruction, we are being warned; 
the scenario is monitory. While safe 
in our garden suburbs we dwell in 
Orwell's urban nightmare...

Beyond 1984 then, the city serves as meeting place 
for deeper currents — those of science fiction and of the 
utopian tradition in its broadest historical sense. In fact, it is 
perhaps only in light of this meeting that we fully experience 
the profound contradiction that lies at the heart of this 
tradition. From More to Orwell, utopia/dystopia aspires 
to be a fundamentally urban vision. Yet to approach 
the finality of this ideal city, whether of the sun or of 
dreadful night, is apparently to trigger an opposite impul-
sion. To Rousseau, for example, who came to see cities as “the 
abyss of the human species,” this reaction was agrarian, 
pastoral and ultimately prelapsarian. In Rousseau’s eyes 
the need to build and live in cities, as admission that 
man needs regulation, is proof that his condition is a 
fallen one. But the return to the garden, as an attempt to 
recreate or re-engineer innocence, is no less proof of the same 
fall. Short of the absolute (hence unobtainable) stability of 
the beginning or the end, all things in between exist in a 
state of continual lapse. Civilization controls our ani-
mal passions only to bring the counterexcess of bureau-
ocracy, the machine-state whose collective structures in turn 
provoke an individualistic or atavistic reaction, and so on back 
and forth. This utopian impulse, once it recognizes its desire 
for heaven on earth as contradictory, is free to seek roots 
and strength in man’s fallen condition as quintessence 
of dust, and its cities and gardens alike, interacting in this 
perpetual thrust and counterthrust, become dynamic figures 
of that condition. In bringing utopia to see its sense of an 
ending as endless tension — conflict which itself can be 
channelled and redirected to the end of keeping mankind 
to his open future — science fiction is less anti-uto-
pian than meta-utopian.

Seen in this light, the cities of science fiction, in their most 
simple expression, are not absolute but tentative constructs. 
These cities are not the utopian “good place” so much as, in 
a comparative sense, a better place. Like Robert 
Heinlein’s Luna City, they are the places we achieve 
and don’t look back from, the places to be superceded in 
turn like Earth was before it, left behind in our arduous 
progress across the galaxies. Despite its expansionist feel how-
ever, the path of even the “hardest” science fiction is far 
from the indefinite advance or euchronia (“good time”) 
envisioned by some utopian thinkers. Progress here is
The cities in science fiction, in their simplest expressions, are not absolute but tentative constructs; they are not utopian good places so much as, relatively, better places.

no straight line but rather a spiraling way that encompasses seemingly endless cycles of building and collapse of cities. An interesting example is found in Heinlein’s *Orphans of the Sky*. A spaceship that is in reality a flying city on its multi-generational voyage to colonize in the Proxima Centauri system reverts through mutiny (the classic rebellion against regulation) to barbarism. As urban diversification yields to subsistence farming, life collapses into its lower depths, and the structure becomes an encapsulated world with a cosmology that is analogous to our medieval, geocentric vision of things. Within this fallen city though, Heinlein’s story is of a renaissance of scientific inquiry; the climb of a new Galileo to the top of the ship, the ruined spires from which he can again see the stars. Unable to convert his world, this hero abandons it. Learning to reuse machines, he and his band fly to a nearby planet and, miraculously, find a virgin Earthlike world. But as Heinlein makes clear, this is neither heaven nor paradise regained. What these men find is none other than their original destination, a place to build new cities and launch new assaults on the stars.

Through over 40 years of chronicling mankind’s perpetual striving, Heinlein, the dean of American science fiction writers, has been unable to conceive of an end. The closest he has come yet is perhaps in one of his latest novels, *Time Enough for Love*. Here however, when his super-hero Lazarus Long — a Methusaleh who is also a phoenix who has risen from the ashes of countless fallen cities—is finally allowed to reach utopia, the place where his striving in time should end, what does he find but a society living in Pompeian villas. In another turn of the spiral, these artificial garden retreats merely suggest another reaction against some crumbling Rome, the imminent fall of a great city that should, if the familiar pattern persists, nurture in its ruins once again the rise of new empire. But if such science fiction cities are never wholly utopia, they are never wholly Babel either. Indeed, in work after work from Fritz Lang’s classic film *Metropolis* to recent novels such as Samuel Delany’s *The Fall of the Towers* and Robert Silverberg’s *Tower of Glass*, man’s urban efforts rise and fall, only to rise again, perchance to fall. By means of such perpetual motion science fiction is apparently seeking to capture the most fundamental energy source of all —
But if science fiction cities are never completely utopia, they are never completely Babel either, indeed urban efforts rise and fall, only to rise again, per chance to fall.

that of the Fall itself. In what seems an engineer’s version of the paradox of the fortunate fall, the science fiction city, admitting the futility of our urban labors only to use that futility as the means of goading us on, is as dynamic and everchanging as the city of classic utopia strives to be static and everlasting.

If the city in science fiction functions then as man’s interface with nature, that interface can in turn be defined by the two fundamental ways in which scientific man interacts with his environment: either he changes it to fit him; or he changes himself to fit it. The Heinleinian city embodies this first method of approach, as do all those urbanizing constructs of “hard” science fiction which owe their inspiration to the “terraforming” speculations of scientists like Freeman Dyson. The vector here is clearly positivist and optimistic, and the science fiction that follows it the most likely to be called “utopian” in the popular sense of the word. The second method of interacting with nature also produces city-like structures. These however, again in the popular sense, are far more “dystopian” and problematical. For here the city is not merely man’s instrument — subject to the same caveat as all his technology this side of paradise — but his extension, and finally his “pan tropic” displacement; James Blish’s word describing the complete adaptive change that leaves nothing of the original form behind. To achieve utopian stasis and harmony through such adaptation is to cease to be human, for man must literally become the city. The source of this quest may be the speculations of the British scientist J.D. Bernal. Believing the human brain a marvelous adaptive organ capable of indefinite advancement, Bernal foresaw a literal farewell to arms and limbs, the neurosurgical readaptation of our nervous system to new and ever more versatile prosthetic members. The result, however, is the conversion of man into brain — an entity truncated, enclosed, finally isolated. Such a vision is possibly the source for Arthur C. Clarke’s transcendent “overmind” in his novel Childhood’s End. “Evolving” out of man, this entity comes to be by totally casting off the human form, by destroying the utopian city of New Atlantis, and the entire green Earth in the bargain.

Science fiction is full of closed and claustrophobic cities. These, often utopian experiments that become
The science fiction city, admitting the futility of our urban labors only as a means of goading us onward, is as everchanging as the city of classic utopia strives to be everlasting.

dystopias, bear close structural analogy to Bernal’s truncated brain. The city in Lang’s _Metropolis_ for instance becomes a machine once the body (in the political and metaphorical sense) that informs it is sundered, and the head separated from the hands, the technocrats from the workers who toil in its depths. Or, more radically, we have the situation of Harlan Ellison’s “I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream,” where a global computer, in revolt against man his maker, literally declares itself the city as artificial brain, consigning man’s now cast-off and extraneous physical being to eternal torture in its hellish bowels. In this light the brainwashing techniques of _1984_ prove absolute and final in their dehumanizing effects. Contrastingly, in most works of science fiction the attempt to dismember man through transfer of his functions to the machine-city runs aground on an irreducible human core. Numerous science fiction films are little more than elaborate rituals where at the center of some future enclosure — be it the computerized narcotopia of _THX 1138_, where human nerves and feelings have been chemically or electronically displaced, or the sterile “vortex” of _Zardoz_, a world from which organic vitality has been banished — the human spark is spontaneously rekindled, and swells to tear down the walls. Or in more sophisticated fashion we have, in a pattern of breakthrough which rejoins that of Heinlein’s orphans of the sky, the example of James Blish’s “Surface Tension.” Here the microorganic descendents of a now completely re-engineered humanity, living in a mudpuddle utopia, recover in miraculous manner their lost human curiosity and drive, and break through the tensile confines of their world to glimpse the stars once again.

There is an irony in this latter situation which precludes our falling back, in this story or in science fiction in general, on stock utopian explanations. We do not have here, in any simple sense, the classic exchange between urban and agrarian solutions, but rather a dynamic interaction between man and nature that continually suspends all solutions. In Arthur C. Clarke’s _Against the Fall of Night_ for example, the protagonist Alvin escapes from the dead machine city of Diaspar. His destiny however is not, as we might first expect, a simple return to the garden. Indeed, no return in this novel is an end in itself and Clarke, by later retitling the work _The City and the Stars_, renames the
As seen in most works of science fiction the attempt to dismember man through transfer of his human functions to the machine-city runs aground on an irreducible, undeniable human core.

creative dynamic at its core as the opposition between closure and openness itself. Here, to embrace the city as finality is, as its name implies, a diaspora. And yet there are many forms of exile in this work, and all of them — from city or garden, earth or outer space, past or future — are separations that instantly command a return. In another example the propensity of science fiction to adapt the utopian impulse to its own purpose, seeking to bring open-endedness out of man’s persistent desire to enclose and end, can be measured in the landscape of Clifford Simak’s classic novel City. Here, suspended between a waning mankind sealed in his city-tomb of Geneva, and the menacing rise of an ant society spreading their monolithic arcology or “building” across the face of the earth, the open world of robots and dogs contemplates its future: “It is better than one should lose a world than go on killing.” There is yielding, but no end of ends. In the course of this novel men have gone to Jupiter and changed their bodies to adapt to its conditions; dogs have found their way into another dimension and back — in all of its city-enclosures there is always a door leading somewhere else to be found. Throughout 10,000 years of interchange between its various races, and between urban and agrarian options, there has always been displacement, but never finality; no lasting utopias or dystopias, but always new worlds for old.

Few critics of traditional utopia share the open-endedness, let alone the open-mindedness, of science fiction. Frank and Fritzie Manuel for instance, in their monumental Utopian Thought in the Western World, view science fiction negatively, as the sign of a waning of the “utopian propensity” in our scientific century. They state their case thus: “What distresses a critical historian today is the discrepancy between the piling up of technological and scientific instrumentalities for making all things possible, and the pitiable poverty of goals.” In the eyes of science fiction however the goals of this utopian propensity seem quite clear: Bernal’s disembodied brain, Orwell’s totalitarian machine, the end of all human sense of man, biologically and spiritually. It is precisely because our goals have become unthinkable that science fiction’s fascination with means is so important, for it incarnates, in the midst of our endings, the will not to end, the survival of at least a hope for progress at the heart of the defeatism that informs
Science fiction courts conclusion so as not to conclude... It is because our goals have become unthinkable that science fiction's dwelling upon means incarnates the will to survive...

our millenial and totalitarian fantasies alike. Science fiction courts conclusion so as not to conclude. Its dystopian closures are open; its utopias, as we see in works like Samuel Delany's *Triton* and Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, claim to be ambiguous. As one final example shows, however, this ambiguity is neatly functional. In *The Dispossessed* Le Guin posits two worlds and two societies — Urras and Anarees — one capitalist, the other anarchical, one dystopian and the other utopian. But we soon see these labels do not fit — the dystopian world proves a garden, the utopian world an arid desert. In the midst of the Anareesti capital is a small garden where Urrasti trees and vegetation grow. In this interpenetration we have the seed of a dynamic which, at the heart of a novel that examines man's propensity to build walls, provides the means of breaking them down. Spanning these two worlds in both body and spirit, the physicist Shevek achieves a breakthrough which, preserves at least the premise of opening, the perennial need to surpass 1984.

*George Slusser* is curator of the Eaton Collection and adjunct associate professor at UC Riverside, and visiting professor of Film/Literature at UC San Diego. He has written over 60 articles on science fiction, and is currently working on a book concerning science fiction and fantasy in film, *Shadows of the Magic Lamp*. He holds a Harvard PhD in Comparative Literature, and was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, a Harvard Fellow and twice a Fulbright lecturer.

*Forrest J Ackerman*, son of the architect of the futuristic Bradbury Building, saw his first painting by science fiction artist Frank R. Paul in 1926 and was on his way to becoming the world's authority on sci-fi (he invented the term 30 years ago). His incomparable collection, destined to become a major metropolitan museum, numbers over 300,000 pieces, one of which graces our cover.
Most utopian proposals have generated little innovation in architectural thinking; utopian buildings may have reflected a change of social structure, but most have relied on traditional forms or methods of construction.

Architectural utopias have been more radical. Optimistically believing that the shape of a city could condition human behavior, visionary designers have proposed enormous changes in the physical environment. Paolo Soleri's arcoologies are one dramatic example of this kind of thinking. Other architects, like Glen Small and Carolyn Dry, are examining ecological and biogenetic models as the basis for a utopian architecture.

Glen Small is concerned with creating a utopian environment where people can live in complete harmony with nature. He feels that the exploitation of the earth for conventional buildings and cities has threatened man's survival, and that a new "global building code" is necessary to protect the environment while fulfilling human needs. In 1965, he began work on a proposal for a megastructure which embodies his ideas.

Small envisioned using a "union of nature and technology" to create a city which could grow itself into any required configuration with the aid of computer-guided building machines. He called this megastructure the Biomorphic Biosphere. In essence, it consisted of intermittently spaced vertical cores supporting a continuous series of tent-like structures. The megastructure would be built above the land, over existing cities. Living units would plug into its exterior membrane, and agriculture, public spaces and movement systems would take place within. The structure would be built, in part, with materials recycled from the cities below.

The scope of the Biomorphic Biosphere is ambitious both in scale and imagination; but Small believes that if we channelled our creative energies into a project of this kind, it could be realized. As proposed, the average height of the Biomorphic Biosphere is 5,000 feet, housing 250,000 people per linear mile. The Biomorphic Biosphere would generate its own energy through the use of solar and wind power; it would collect and recycle rainwater and dew; and it would grow food by means of hydroponic farming. The living units would be totally responsive, capable of changing shape, size, color and opacity. They would be individually powered, so that the inhabitants could fly them to different locations on the megastructure, or even down to earth.

In 1978, Small applied some of the basic principles of the Biomorphic Biosphere to a more readily achievable project, the Green Machine. The proposal was meant to help solve the housing problem in Los Angeles, and a prototype was designed for a 200 x 200 foot lot on vacant railway land in Venice, California. The Green Machine was an open, steel-framed structure, built above land, containing three separ layers of housing and communal space. It was pyramidal and lowed light to penetrate all layers of the structure without it's cast shadows on neighboring buildings.

The Green Machine used many of the basic principles of the Biomorphic Biosphere. It was raised above the ground, leaving space below for recreational activity and agriculture. Its living units were located on pads at the outside perimeter, and could be added or removed as needed. Community space was in the central areas. Furthermore, Green Machine was designed as a self-contained city capable of generating its own energy through solar collectors and windmills. It contained food and recycling waste.

Small proposed three separate kinds of dwelling units for Green Machine. The first, an e-tower form of housing, was the stream trailer, which could be stacked, trailer-dwellings. The Green Machine evolved from the Biomorphic Biosphere, right, a continuous city made of tent-like enclosures.

Glen Small's Green Machine is a low-cost housing project for stacked, trailer-dwellings. The Green Machine evolved from the Biomorphic Biosphere, right, a continuous city made of tent-like enclosures.
hoisted into place and used without modification. The second was a specially designed modular unit based on the same technology as the trailer. The third type was a kitchen/bathroom core with a sleeping loft which could be placed on an open dwelling pad and used as a studio residence. There were ten dwelling pads on the first floor, eight on the second, and six on the third. Loft units could only be placed on the third floor where there was greater ceiling height and daylight. All units could be easily moved by crane.

The Green Machine offered people a low-cost alternative to conventional housing since the projected cost of a living unit is $7,000–$14,000; but its success depends somewhat on its inhabitants’ willingness to live in compact quarters. The megastructure is not radically different in concept from a trailer park, but provides its inhabitants with greater amenities in the form of private outdoor space and secure communal areas. There is additional outdoor space for play, gardening, and parking on the ground. Viewed as either an infant version of the Biomorphic Biosphere or an alternative to conventional multi-family housing, the Green Machine seems a worthwhile experiment.

Architect Carolyn Dry is also interested in creating human environments which are harmonious with nature, but using natural forces to make them happen. She calls her architecture “Natural Process Design.” Based on the principles of biogenetic engineering, it sets an adaptive process in motion which stimulates the environment to respond to the needs of its users. Dry describes this work as design in which humans participate but the process itself yields the final form. In other words, instead of designing structures which are dependent on human labor, her designs trigger processes that enable the structure to build itself.

Although the idea of a self-generating environment may seem far-fetched, over the past several years Dry has carried out serious studies for both the United States Navy and NASA exploring particular applications of this concept. For the Navy, she designed a seaport which would use the chemistry of seawater to attract calcium carbonate and accrete a concretelike material. Like coral or human bones, the resultant structure could adapt to environmental stress over time. So, for example if one part of the pier were continually buffeted by waves, the calcium carbonate would give off an electrical charge causing ions to migrate to the place being pressured. The structure, to strengthen itself, would become thicker, or dissolve when it wasn’t needed. The system also used a communication network operating like human nerves, with ions travelling over a charged membrane to equalize the concentration of materials. Other parts of the process were an osmotic pump and a saline computer which used seawater to record memory and make decisions. Essentially, the seaport created a system in which matter could order themselves in the inertial manner of a netic engineer, intervening in nature’s existing design.

Another project carried out by NASA explored a quick way to generate habitable structures on the moon. Dry proposed using a sun-focussing mirror to melt iron oxides from the moon’s core and produce glass. This would be blown into a structural configuration by means of a balloon, and the resultant oxide would form the basis of a breathable atmosphere. This would allow primitive structures to be built within weeks of colonists landing. Glass bubble would protect settlers from cosmic radiation, and the cultivation of plant life would be possible.

Barbara Goldstein
Paolo Soleri is known as a utopian architect because of Arcology; his conception of the correct and inevitable evolution of humanity, as he would say, within its chosen instrument of culture, the city. Depicting single-structure cities of amazing geometrical complexity accommodating 500,000 to 8 million people each, Arcology also suggests the social order which will accompany these cities:

In the critical inquiry it is assumed that the best hopes for contemporary man have been fulfilled and the urban medium has been cleared of slums and cleansed of ills and grievances. If there is no mention of segregated minorities, of slum clearance, of exploiter and exploited, of tax unfairness, of bossism, of children killed by delivery trucks, of skid-row peripatetics, of "pets not allowed," of profit incentives, of self-help, it is because one assumes that in time the skill of man will take care of them all. The foundation of equity is thus granted. (italics are Soleri's)

"The skill of man will take care of them all;" in the face of present urban life, it is a nearly incredible assertion of faith. The founding of Arcology must lie in a distant future, and imply a hundred sociological revolutions to reach that foundation.

However, Arcology, for Soleri, would not be the effect of some societal cause which is the commonly understood relationship between architecture and the peoples who build it. Rather, Arcology would be the reverse. In *The Bridge between Matter and Spirit is Matter Becoming Spirit* (Anchor Books), Soleri writes:

The way biological life develops into forms and consciousness seems to confirm that the instrument has a chronological precedence over the performance. An organism...
Robert Jensen

A man does not willfully construct for himself a new organ so as to attain a certain goal, but stumbles by mutant chance onto a certain characterization given to it fractionally and in infinitesimal doses. The neck of the giraffe does not grow out of the neck of the animal, but out of a sequence of genetic variations accidentally useful for well-being. The function does not originate the form. It maintains it. The long neck of the giraffe is incorporated into the species in as much as it has found a function useful for the animal.

The neck came first and the giraffe learned how to use it, Soleri reverses Louis Sullivan's dictum and says not that form follows function, but the "function follows form." When built (and as equity has been achieved), his Arcologies will be the necessary "instrumentalization" by which a new "mutant" can emerge; that is mankind itself in its private and social conditions. An unimaginable new culture, and a new human being, will come to be.

It's an interesting theory. My role is not to judge the epistemological correctness of this theory but to show that Soleri, in this part of his being, is utopian in precisely the way Sir Thomas More was in 1516 when he imagined and wrote about a perfect place called Utopia, and the ideal state of the society that inhabited it. Underlying Soleri's work and life is a rather comprehensive scheme for a more perfect world. Soleri understands that utopia is impossible to realize today. The ideal is not, and cannot be made to be, real in the present.

I was a workshopper (as they called us) at Arcosanti for six weeks during the sum-
Arcosanti residents working on the site.

mer of 1973. I built formwork, mixed concrete, set steel, cleaned the construction site and cleaned the latrines. As an “old hand” I have since kept up with news of the place and watched several changes in the ultimate design for Arcosanti which Soleri and his staff have made.

Soleri is in no way attempting to build a utopian society at Arcosanti (the usual method of a Fourier or an Owen) but building only the forms themselves as an utter pragmatist, a realist. At Arcosanti daily work is often shifted to conform to available materials and means. Activity is adjusted pragmatically to meet opportunities or work around disasters. There was a crane on the site the summer I was there, and a broken redi-mix truck, so that most concrete had to be purchased from a local batching plant. A small site mixer was also used occasionally, its concrete buggied by hand over incredible paths in four ancient carriers. (As I braced for my first run with one of these concrete-filled buggies, it was explained to me: “Your main objective is to keep it from killing you.”) Along with two vibrators, a selection of power saws and an arc welder, these were Arcosanti’s principal technical means. Other implements like steel scaffolding were unmercifully begged and the work went forward. Any society in camp was and is secondary to the purpose of the work. Life at Arcosanti is temporary, confusing, boring, permeated with curiosity and hope, but it is not utopian.

Somewhere between these two polarities—between the encompassing vision of an architectural/social transformation in the future, and the real conditions of a present construction—lies the architecture of Arcosanti. The designs we see have been formed by both poles.

Though Soleri has never thought of it as a real arcology, Arcosanti was at first drawn like an arcology, and made to look like one. Quarter-sphere apses, sweeping half-arches and concrete-like forms dominate the first published drawings of 1975 and once illustrated in a magazine the first phase of a single “final” built these early structures actually match the forms shown by the Arcosanti drawings in the Arcology book.

Then, for several years after 1975 decided realist—rather than ideali
The Crafts III building was constructed at Arcosanti during this period. Rectilinearity and "modernist" pre-ricated panel construction is immediately noticeable, and at odds with the rest of the architecture. In 1977, drawings and model for a new main structure appeared. These depicted a 25-story building of metal and glass that was derived from the aesthetic of all previous structures. Dominated by exposed and clearly spaced metal ribs, this main structure looked like a design that a 350-person architecture/engineering firm might have turned out for a high-profile, multinational, corporate client. With sufficient capital and a good construction company, it could have been built in three years. In the late 1970's there was some hope at Arcosanti of bringing more capital to the project through large institutional investors. The main structure model and drawings appear to be a representation of that kind of thinking; they are about the slick technological present, and reality more than utopia.

But they are not about the reality of Arcosanti: Soleri has never attracted substantial private or government funding. Since 1981, both construction at the site and plans for the future show a return to the curvilinear, apsidal and biological forms for which Arcosanti is known. And which, by the way, can be efficiently made using low-tech construction means available at the site. Future plans now depict the final structure as not one building but several smaller ones, distributed over a wider area than before, both on the mesa where construction is now concentrated and in the valley below along the Aqua Fria River. Soleri has returned to the architectural forms with which he began, but is now trying to gradually increase the number of people the site can support.

During some periods of the year Arcosanti attracts 500 visitors a week. A few must imagine they are seeing the beginning of some vast utopian experiment, the cliff dwellers of the future; others must imagine how interesting (and how hot) it would be to work there in the summer. Judging from Soleri's writings and ultimate goal both are right, but the latter attitude is closer to the truth of Arcosanti today.

Robert Jensen is an architect living in New York. He is co-author of Ornamentalism (C.N. Potter, 1982).
NO SURVEY OF UTOPIAS would be complete without considering postwar American suburbs. In the popular mind, such places are utopia, or at any rate come close enough. Suburbia may not be perfect, but it is readily available. Ubiquitous and pervasive, our nation’s bedroom communities are the main mechanism of the American Dream.

We can speak here of an ideal community uncomplicated by idealism, of a utopia notable mainly for its creature comforts and ease of implementation, because we live in an age and a culture where the word “literally” is often used in place of “figuratively.” Within such a framework, new house, a patch of lawn, middle class schools and neighbors, clean industry, a good supply of national chain stores and convenient parking can easily be taken for a vision of an ideal society.

Since the late 40’s, Americans have been voting with their feet, and suburban residents have come to outnumber not only rural ones, but even those of the central cities. Over the same period, the cities have become more suburban: population densities and mass transit have declined, while cars, highways, fast food outlets, triplex movie houses, and shopping centers have made significant penetrations into most urban cores. In a gesture full of symbolism, part of the south Bronx is currently being redeveloped as a single family housing tract. We are now a nation of suburbs, partly by individual choice and partly as the result of sweeping social changes.

In the most literal sense, suburbia is utopia. The household word that Sir Thomas More invented for the title of his 1516 essay means “no place” in Greek. He coined it to indicate that his ideal society did not yet exist. Today it can be used to signify that America’s ideal settlement pattern is one that negates any special quality of place; we have embraced a standardized environment that recognizes only minimally the character of its region or its residents.

In a more exact sense, suburbia is atopia: it is without place. The reasons for its placelessness are manifold and easily understandable. What is odd is that we have capitulated to its charms without protesting the loss of focus and identity that virtually every previous form of settlement has managed to attain, in some fashion or other, throughout human history.

At this point, it is important to distinguish between suburban eras. The topic here is not suburbia generally, but its postwar version. Prior to the late 40’s, American suburbs generally had stronger character and individuality than those built after the war. There were far fewer of them, built closer to town and at more rational densities. Many were served by rail transportation—streetcars, electric interurbans, or commuter trains—and were normally built on the model of a real town with pedestrian scale core districts containing apartments, offices, entertainment and shopping.

The sense of place in such a core was convincing, since it typically grew from a clear public transportation node, out of a historically evolved settlement, or both. Development normally took place in small increments, sometimes just a lot or two at a time. Those lots were compact by today’s standards, and the houses that sat on them were often two or three stories tall. The resulting physical proximity of buildings, plus front porches, real sidewalks, and the continuity of the built pattern, all contributed to a reasonable street life and a sense of community. Compared to their successors, prewar suburbs were visually and functionally diverse. With the obvious exception of enclaves for the very wealthy, their scale was comfortable and clearly predicated upon human perceptions, patterns, and limits.

The postwar suburb, in contrast, is predicated overwhelmingly on mechanical and electronic devices. The automobile is the dominant one, but electronic entertainment and communication, air conditioning, and proliferating kitchen appliances have also been major determinants of the autonomous suburban life and its disconnected physical form. On other levels, increased mechanization in the building trades and the standardization of government regulations and the private development process have also put their stamp on the suburban environment. The net results, affecting suburban society and environment alike, have been homogeneity on one hand and fragmentation on the other.

Suburban life has come to depend on massive consumption of energy and goods not just for diversion or satisfaction, but even for its basic operation. The great American escape for urban problems, real and imagined, has required a startling escalation in the overhead of living; long before the present administration’s efforts to shift basic obligations from the public sphere to the private one, suburban existence led indi-
A brand new house, a patch of lawn, clean industry, a good supply of national chain stores and convenient parking can easily be taken for an ideal society.
What suburbia most lacks is seasoning. It sprang up almost instantly and has yet to develop its history. As a place, it is still only a very rough first draft.

Individuals to bear responsibility for processes that had traditionally been supplied publicly or communally as part of urban life. These include transportation, entertainment, and casual social contact, and even, in some cases, education, outdoor recreation, water supply, street repair, trash collection and sewage treatment. Paradoxically, suburbia has promoted the pleasures and inconveniences of rugged individualism during a period when human society has become ever more complicated and interdependent.

The implications of these trends toward mechanization, consumerism, and privatization cannot be adequately explored in a short essay, but they should be examined with respect to their effects on the nature of place, or its absence, in the suburban environment. The three are inextricably linked, and in many ways contribute to a self-reinforcing cycle. The automobile, for example, not only conquers distance but also inflates it through its voracious demands for space in the form of parking, selling, servicing, and fueling, and roadways. Its operational needs further consume space in the form of wide lanes and turning curvatures. Once a community is built to such standards of space (and its resulting low densities), it makes cars mandatory by precluding such alternatives as pedestrian self-sufficiency and effective public transport. Each vehicle is not just privately owned and operated (usually at great expense, especially since most families need several), but is also a sealed capsule that makes casual social exchange unlikely.

Similarly, television is another isolating device. Its rise as a mass medium coincides with postwar suburbia; it simultaneously filled and intensified the vacuum of public social opportunities there. Unlike its predecessor forms of popular entertainment—radio, vaudeville, movies, ballroom dancing—it is more private than public. In short order it became a mainstay of suburban life, and, more gradually, became the role model and distorting mirror for that life through programming that promulgated conservative and largely mythical norms of family behavior (and which is now being rerun, thirty years later, by a fundamentalist religious network), and more powerfully, through commercials celebrating the most rampant forms of consumer materialism. These vignettes are produced with far greater care than the programs they interrupt, and through deft manipulation of competitive instincts, conformist tendencies, guilt feelings, and plain old self-gratification, have set the tone for much of contemporary life. They have also become a major formative influence on children too young to grasp their self-serving nature.

Television is part of a larger category of media that have helped undermine real time and space; the telephone, stereo, video games, and the computer. Two decades ago we began to hear predictions of the decline of place and location as determining factors in our lives. Economist Melvin Webber called it “community without propinquity,” and social observer Marshall McLuhan named it “the global village.” In either case, expanded communications would conquer space and drastically reduce the need to be near colleagues or even to go anywhere. Staying comfortably at home we would be wired to the office, bank, school, and supermarket through computer terminals, and to the farthest corners of the earth.

Like so many others born in the 60’s, this vision has not unfolded as planned. The global village has turned out to be a place of noisy video arcades, living room betamax replays, and space out kids and adults plugged into their walkmen. CB radios are no longer promoted as active communication devices, but as emergency equipment packaged with flares and first-aid kits and stowed in the trunk. We still go to work physically, and the people who work most with computers—the 8-hour-a-day operators—find it not much more liberating than working on an assembly line. Nor do we bank by phone, rather, we use money machines which may or may not be operational. Today’s classic and irrefutable business excuse is that “the computer is down.”

And, despite the flowering of mail-order specialty shopping, we still do nearly all our buying in person. For suburbanites, this usually takes place in a mall or a strip shopping center. Placeless as these places may be, in suburbia they are still where it’s at. Moon Zappa’s “Valley Girl” loves her suburb because it has a “Galleria,” lots of clothing and shoe stores, and a salon where she can get her toenails done. Consumerism is one of the great joys of suburbia and provides one of the few direct social experiences possible outside the home.

Valley Girl is interesting as social criticism because it comes not from an academic, but a teen-ager, and not from an
Every automobile is not just privately owned and operated but is also a sealed capsule that makes anything more than casual social exchanges rather unlikely.
The implications of these trends toward mechanization, consumerism and privatization should be examined with respect to their effects on the nature of suburbia.

urbanite but a foothill-dwelling Los Angeleno. The protagonist is a modern archetype as believable in New Jersey or Texas as she is in California. Placelessness once again: the suburban culture is not so much one of regional variation as it is of standardized attitudes.

Charges that suburban existence is sterile and conformist are of course not new; indeed, they began surfacing soon after postwar suburbia was first occupied. They gave rise to countercriticism by conservative sociologists such as Herbert Gans and William Michelson, who found suburbia to be what people wanted and a good place to live. At the same time, part of the marketplace explicitly acknowledged the notion that suburbs were one-dimensional places by producing more comprehensive and sophisticated ones, promoted under the snappy but not totally accurate buzzword “new towns.” Near Washington, D.C., Melvin Simon’s Heston offered good architectural design and a clear sense of place, while James Rouse’s Columbia provided a good local employment base and a sociologically researched neighborhood structure.

Outside Los Angeles, two large family landholdings were master planned by well known commercial architects and prominently included college campuses at their center. Planned by Victor Gruen on land of the Newhall ranch, Valencia attempted some separation of pedestrians from automobiles, and, as something of an afterthought, convinced the Walt Disney-sponsored California Institute of the Arts to locate within its boundaries, far removed from the urban cultural institutions necessary to its fullest success. The far larger Irvine ranch holdings were more dramatically conceived, centered from the beginning on a new branch of the University of California and served by a vast shopping and office center. At its outset in the early to mid 60’s, Irvine was seen as a near-utopia, and William Pereira’s bold planning efforts earned him the ultimate accolades: A New Yorker profile and his picture on the cover of Time.

How have these places fared? Columbia has achieved economic stability and a population of 53,000, nearly half of its goal, but is not yet self-governing and though it is an interesting incident within the Baltimore-Washington sprawl it is clearly not the real city that it was meant to be. Economic difficulties forced Reston’s sale to an oil company, and political forces denied it proper freeway access, but it has still attracted over 36,000 residents and can boast the most coherent and architecturally satisfying focal point of all the claimed new towns.

In California, Valencia’s progress was slowed by the 1971 Sylmar earthquake (its population is just over 12,000), but it also seems the most predictably suburban of the new towns, notwithstanding its resolutely avant-garde art institute. Irvine has been a notable economic success. It has been inventively marketed to precisely targeted segments of the population, built to above-average standards, and unlike the others, has crossed the legal threshold of self-government. Living in two adjoining municipalities, its roughly 85,000 residents enjoy rising property values and the best of Orange County’s good life, but they are nevertheless suburbanites in the path of freeway-connected sprawl that seems destined to stretch 150 miles from Valencia to the Mexican border.

To one degree or another, each of these communities has improved on early postwar suburbia (as have scores of other recent but less ambitious subdivisions around the country), yet none of them has really succeeded in transcending suburbia’s socioeconomic uniformity, dominance by the automobile, and emphasis on newness and tidiness over real character. As postwar suburbia has evolved over 35 years, it has advanced from atopia to, say, semitopia.

The other half of its evolution will take at least as long. Economic forces are starting to bring about higher densities and mixed uses in current development, but until the automobile changes radically or is supplanted by something less environmentally demanding, and until existing transportation alternatives are allocated some of the space and money that goes exclusively to cars, the possibilities for place and character will be limited. The detached single family house, that other main prop of suburban life, already seems on the way out; it is no longer within financial reach of very many people, and its space demands seem ever harder to satisfy. For better or worse, attached housing, apartments, condominiums, and non-traditional group living arrangements will account for a greater share of suburban living accommodations. Another

Continues on page 94
The postwar suburb is predicated overwhelmingly on mechanical and electronic devices... they have been major determinants of the autonomous American suburban lifestyle.
In 1982, artist/inventor Philip Garner recorded some of his time-and-labor saving ideas in *The Better Living Catalog*. Since then, he has devoted himself to more advanced and sophisticated solutions to contemporary human problems. His new book, *Utopia or Bust: Products for the Perfect World*, includes the most successful of these inventions. By special permission of the inventor himself, *Arts and Architecture* is proud to present a selection of these ideas.

**Air Swimming.** Self-sealing vinyl "inflatable blouses" are filled with light gas to achieve body weight zero. "Human bumper" effect assures personal safety when "swimming" in crowded airspace. Competitive applications range from individual and team racing to "airpolo," in which the ball is inflated to slightly less than zero weight and the players must struggle to keep it aloft.

**Futuristic (Home-Made High-Rise).** A do-it-yourself project for the community suffering from "urban sprawl." Multi-story log cabin-style structure rehouses the whole town including all facilities and conveniences, while preserving the beauty of the surrounding landscape. FUTURISTIC residence modules include technically sophisticated but homely appointments such as microwave hearth, hologram moosehead and solid-state electroquilt.

**Head-Huts.** It is now possible for occupants of the same bed to maintain entirely different sleeping schedules and/or nocturnal habits. This multifunctional contrivance muffles snoring and sleep-talking while insulating wearer from activities of bedfellow. Pegboard roof creates effect of starry night when device is used in an illuminated location.
Miniature golf courses have been played in this country since the early part of the 20th century. They are to be found along highways, beside gas stations and drive-in hamburger stands, next to barns on rural roads, next to public parks and wedged between old hotels in beach resorts. Many of them are old and run-down now, stubbornly surviving the fickle whims of modern roadside strip development.

Others are brand new and getting increasingly sophisticated. One company, Castle Enterprises of California, is banking on an international return of the miniature golf craze and has already designed a number of courses for the golf-obsessed Japanese players.

Wherever they are situated, they are never far from the flow of traffic—accessible to that restless cruising of automobiles in search of pleasure. They are almost always along highways, lodged somewhere in the commercialized, condensed, noisy zone that J.B. Jackson refers to as a prime symbol of America's drive for self-definition. Still, there is something enchanting and childishly comforting about putting a golf ball across Astroturf carpeting, over concrete hills-ocks, water obstacles and sand traps. And then the wait to watch it ricochet, as if part of a Lilliputian dream: through miniaturized Chinese pagodas and rustic log cabins, around Dutch windmills, between the legs of growling wild beasts, and into churches made of white clapboard. The golf course is a compressed city of romantic imagery, a symbol of faraway places.

There is a miniature thrill in watching the ball disappear into one hole and the wait as it rattles through a series of curving pipes to appear on a lower level of concrete. Any child who has ever played the game is not only fascinated by the scale of the course but also by that secret exchange which takes place within the labyrinthian network of underground pipes.

There is something festive and alive about the sections of town where the courses are often found. At night, naked lightbulbs shine overhead, casting an orange glow on the players below. Balmy summer breezes ruffle the red and yellow pennants, evoking a car-
nival atmosphere. The scene is always happily frivolous, and it conforms to the highest standards of American bad taste and commercial kitsch. But there is something genuinely beautiful to see if one can shed the veils of conventional culture from our eyes.

By no means, however, is the game a regular part of America’s highway pastimes. It is no longer an integral element of the strip landscape, having been replaced in large part by video game arcades and Disney-like theme parks. But there was a time when the miniature courses were everywhere, at every crossroads, and the game swept the nation from coast to coast.

In September 1930, at the beginning of the Depression, the Department of Commerce estimated that there were as many as 30,000 miniature golf courses operating in the United States. They also reported that the sport had in the past year snowballed into a $125 million business. In the midst of the worst unemployment in the country’s history, certain individuals were getting rich from the newest fad; the hottest thing since Mah Jong, it was said.

William Hodge, the stage actor, had a private miniature course built in the basement of New York’s Bijou Theater while he was performing there. The Prince of Wales played the game in Brussels with the Queen of Belgium. Garnet Carter, owner of a hotel in Tennessee, built a course beside his hotel and made such a profit that he went on to open hundreds of such courses all through the South under the auspices of his newly formed company, “The Fairyland Manufacturing Company.” James Oviatt had a course built on the patio of his downtown Los Angeles penthouse.

The game found its greatest success among the working classes. It was cheap to play and it helped to pass the long weeks of unemployment blues. Cinema owners built courses beside their theaters so customers could play 18 holes before watching the feature film. Miniature golf was a complement to the extravagant escapist movies that Hollywood was churning out at the time—visions of Fred Astaire tap dancing his way up a golden flight of stairs as hundred dollar bills floated down from the sky.

Less than a year after the grim days of the Wall Street crash, Americans were beginning to accept the fact that the world’s economic worries were not going to vanish overnight. Miniature golf, like movies and baseball games, offered a temporary escape from the bad news of the day.

It was also a game that could be played by anyone; both sexes, any age. It was an inexpensive date for young men without incomes, and an affordable evening out for the family with kids. It provided a physical recreation at a time when most other pastime the working class were sedentary.

One of the principal psychological di was the similarity between the minic version of the sport and the “real” game. Golf was originally a way of contai the wild landscape of western Scotlan created a recreational use for the sandy tillable soil of St. Andrews. Miniature was viewed as the poor man’s golf. Pri courses had become too expensive for r to join, so miniature golf offered the best thing. With a little imagination a pl might convince himself that it was not toe removed from the sport played by lionaires at exclusive country clubs.

For half a dollar one could take the g as seriously as one wanted. One could more than once and keep score to comp later with friends. It was also encoura that one dress as much like the real golfer possible. There was an all-Black course in deep South where plus fours were rec recommended as suitable attire for evening p.

One big department store chain advert a line of “tiny clothes for tiny golf.”

But apart from all the obvious social economic factors that gave the game its appeal, there was something else—a transcendent quality to the design, imagery, landscaping of the courses that beckoned the American psyche.
Miniature golf had its roots in the history of pleasure gardens and parks. Its basic simplicity was that it provided a different physical realm from that of the daily world of business and politics, as all gardens and parks are meant to provide. It may not have been as sophisticated and elaborate as Vanderbilt's Central Park, or the English gardens of Repton and Brown, but it nevertheless could present the metaphor of a contained and ordered world amid the flux and anxiety of the 20th century.

The courses could offer an overview, a passing domination of one's surroundings, as did Gulliver towered over Lilliput. It allowed the player to momentarily enter a completely different mental space.

The mini-courses are the same as compact pleasure gardens. They are enclosed on four sides like Italian Renaissance gardens. They are laid out with a series of pathways, each leading to the next visual element, the unexpected sight.

The pleasure gardens and miniaturized escapist scenes of the world often evoke a mirror effect. They take us back to the sensual memory of childhood when we accepted the literal truth that all the objects surrounding including our parents, were huge and oversized. Now, as we have grown and set into the normal scale of things, we take relative size of objects for granted. Everything fits into place in a logical, perceptual order. When the landscape is reduced in scale and we become giant, there exists an opposite effect generated in parity to our infant memories of smallness.

Besides the regular combinations of embankments, chutes, tunnels, water obstacles and sand traps (all metaphors for geological phenomena), the miniature golf course almost always contains a similar series of literary, historical and architectural themes. These themes are part of a general cosmology of popular imagery and seem to be related to a specifically Romantic sensibility.

Most courses I have seen have a hole that represents the rustic frontier myth. It might take the form of a small log cabin, or just a pile of logs. But one of the favorite images is that of the grizzly bear, provoking the memory of Daniel Boone and the heroic myth of rugged frontier individuality.

In Montauk, Long Island, there is a seven-foot plaster grizzly who growls down on the player from the end of the Astroturf thoroughfare. The only obstacle he presents is the fact that one must aim between or around his big feet.

In the 1930's there was a course in Los Angeles that advertised a hazard with a live bear who had been trained to snatch the customers' honey-dipped golf balls. The symbol is nature uncontained and wild. Another popular image of the sublime in nature is the volcano hole, usually one of the most difficult shots in the game.

Another oft-repeated image is the Chinese pagoda or bridge. This presents an exotic structure, mysterious and distant.

Most of the other structures represent architecture which we normally think of as being pitted against Nature, one-on-one. The ruined castle evokes Arthurian romance and honorable defiance of nature. The lighthouse signifies solitude in nature, a tower of safety on the extreme borders of land, and the windmill, operating on Nature's forces, is a symbol of dreams and aspirations, clocking the wind and the changes in season. Then there is the little white country church, standing stalwart through the winter storms, always remaining pure and simple.

All of these structures could be the setting for a Gothic romance, with their counterparts in the cosmology of European gardens; whether in the Greek grottoes created for French formal gardens or the ruined country cottage for lovers' trysts in English picture gardens. As we play point-to-point on the ordered course, the layout of landscape and structures becomes a map for imagined experience. The player may be released for a moment without thinking. However light and amusing, however insignificant, it presents an escape, a wink of surprise.
GRAVEL GARDEN

Landscape has long been one of the more blatant examples of the human desire to control nature. The front yard in particular has been subjected to repeated assaults as a means of expression. Gravel takes this struggle into a new realm.

In the gravel yard, vegetation is reduced to a minimum and a more orderly system is substituted—one based on permanence and a minimum of entropy. The gravel yard is no less expressive than other gardens, but often is encoded with different semiotics. The messages are generally positive, as often are the names of the communities in which they can be found: Dreamland Villa, Leisure Town. As different as their appearances may be, each embodies a personal concept of environmental precision and perfection. TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS AMOS.

In this yard, the gardener has clearly achieved a sense of harmony within himself and his surroundings.
A row of bricks serves to separate one neighbor's gravel patch from another's; the gravel is always greener.

The saguaro cactus outline resembles the painted outline of a murder victim. Neither requires much maintenance.
A holiday theme, with religious overtones.

The concrete birds on the ponds of blue gravel are frozen for eternity—an idyllic moment in nature.
A Zen-like simplicity: a dead cactus pointed to look like a sea monster, a trellis with nothing growing on it.

The deer adds a hint of something living. Its perpetually startled position serves to recognize the approach of the viewer.
Durable Elegance
In the Modern Mode
Indoor and Outdoor
For All Climates
Maximum Traffic
Color Impregnated
Molded Fiberglass
Structural Tubing
Anodized Aluminum
Designed by Stacy Dukes for
Glassform Architectural Products
Overlay: Contemporary Art and the
Art of Prehistory

by Lucy R. Lippard
266 pp., fully illus., $16.95 paper.

Like many syncretic conceptualizations, this book sprang from a chance encounter. When New York art writer Lucy Lippard stumbled over a small upright stone while hiking on the Dartmoor in southern England, and looked behind her to notice a long row of similar stones, the experience galvanized connections across time. “It took me a moment to understand that these stones had been placed there almost 4,000 years ago,” she relates in the introduction, “and another moment to recognize their ties to much contemporary art.” Touching the stone, she realized that some fundamental link had been made between herself and a complex subject, which in turn drew upon and illuminated multiple “overlaid” concerns: “The sensuous dialectic between nature and culture that is important to me as a socialist/cultural feminist, and the social messages from past to present about the meaning and function of art. . . .”

Thus this “shock of the old,” as it were, inspired a tumbling forth of images, verbal as well as visual, from both recent art practice and remote astronomical and religious rites. They are loosely gathered into six thematic chapters, sorted out by their predominant material (“Stones”), function (“Ritual”), or subject (“Feminism and Prehistory”). Mostly, though, they overlap, or rather “overlay,” in dense networks of examples and allusions that are both fascinating and vertiginous. The peripatetic references are embedded by the layout: sections of text divided by black bands, blocks of poetry and prose quotations, rectangles of photographs and columns of lengthy annotated captions, many of which describe works not discussed in the text. The assemblage is held in absorbable stasis by its highly-ordered geometric design, but its complexity demands a leisurely perusal.

The survey’s panoramic perspective presents the first extensive examination of the similarities between the environmental land projects or earthworks of the 1960’s and 70’s and the prehistoric deployment of rocks or earth mounds. It was Carl Andre’s 1977 Secant, a line of 100 timbers which snaked over the grounds of the Nassau County Center for the Fine Arts, articulating its sloping contours, that Lippard’s first trip over a row of rocks brought to mind. In another example, the huge boulder at the centerpoint of Robert Smithson’s 1971 work, Broken Circle/Spiral Hill in Emmen, Holland can be seen as a kind of Indian axis mundi or American Indian omphalos. This hub of complementary semi-circular components of earth and water, of negative/positive forms, of female/male allusions as well as many other essential dualities recalls ancient pillars symbolizing the center of the universe, the navel of the earth, and the link between earth and sky.

The issue such an interpretation immediately raises is that of intention. Can we arrive at an understanding of the significance of a sculptural element which the artist himself, “a self-declared anti-romantic . . . initially disliked an [innovable] intrusion” by comparing it to a similar form which conveyed ancient beliefs of sacred relationships? In other words, can we attribute archaic and communal meanings to a creation by a late-20th century stylistic innovator? How important, anyway, is the artist’s intention to an understanding of the impact of a work which so evidently resonates from archetypal structures? And exactly what is the contemporary social significance and function of art that does so?

These are important questions of analytical assumptions and contextual meaning that the author’s “overlay” touches on only lightly, if at all. A more concise subtitle—and direct theme—of this wide-ranging book might have been “Prehistory Meets Postmodernism.” It is fundamentally about the postmodern assimilation of (pre)historic forms, as well as the anti-formalist reintegration of socially-bound referential meaning. But the overlay is not followed by deeply “laying-into” such topics. Jack Burnham’s essays on “Contemporary Ritual” and “The Artist as Shaman” in his Great Western Salt Works remain the most profound psychological insights into such contemporary work, Jose Arguelles’ Transformativer Vision the most substantial discussion of the artist as visionary, and Robert Goldwater’s Primitivism in Modern Art the most cogent analysis of attitudes still pervasive to the contemporary art Lippard describes.

Instead, her approach is more encyclopedic than conceptual, which may be most appropriate for an initial text that ventures to “speculate” (as she repeatedly terms her attitude) on connections between disparate endeavors. The procedure particularly serves individual works or styles, and allows her, for instance, to go back to Pythagoras’ doctrine of perfect form to explain Tony Smith’s and Sol LeWitt’s investigations of cubic structure, thereby giving timeless meaning to such minimalist and conceptual art which has been customarily discussed almost exclusively in formal terms. Her comprehensive experience (11 previous books range from Pop Art to From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women’s Art to Ad Reinhardt) facilitates her juxtaposition of diverse images in new revealing ways. One particularly striking collection is the five photographs of gigantic “X’s” marked on landscapes by male artists, displaying a domineering signature over nature that is in dramatic contrast to more sympathetic collaborations with natural forms produced chiefly by women, but as well by other male artists.

Overlay contains enough stimulating material for six thought-provoking books. Another underlying theme woven throughout is that these environmental works offer the possibility of an authentic integration of advanced art with community context, the epitome of successful public art. In their aims to draw upon meaning beyond those of subjective perceptions, the works encourage connections to landscape (urban or rural) and to cyclical rhythms of nature that are essentially social experiences uniting the self with greater wholes. But that is re-
Fulfilling his egocide pact probably be difficult and frustrating, rare—albeit restrained—lapse every temperament. Fuller v.

"... I have had many times to wrong things in order thereby to what next needed to be done. A mistake can be and usually is dismaying experience—so discursive that it makes one seem easier along with unhinking custom."

The experiment was beset by external problems, as well. Perhaps among them being a lack of Fuller's friendly support over the years; his research and development projects and prototypes have cc in excess of $20 million. Don't serve and money kept the lamp alive, but by a slim margin: 'always operating in proximity to the house but never going bankrupt.'

Fuller worked outside conveniences architectural and social theories by a degree of passion geometry at a time when the Dymaxion Car to perhaps his most familiar invention, the Geodesic Dome structure, are presented in full technical detail, both verbally and pictorially. In addition, there is a typically revelatory introduction by Fuller himself—"Guinea Pig B"—the "B" standing for "Bucky." In it, he makes a full accounting of his work from hanging storage units to radial geometry.

### Rarities

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by R. Buckminster Fuller
St. Martin's Press, New York, 1983. 316 pp., fully illus., $40.00 cloth.

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Racing Alone

Racing Alone is a story of strength and m. Architect Nader Khalili, born in Iran in 1937, spent five years of searching for a method to fire houses and turn them to stone, episodic journey successfully nated in 1980. The book does not merely Khalili’s architectural achievements, but also his inner values: the divinity of creativity, lover of beauty and perhaps most the truth of simplicity.

Setting: primarily the Iranian. The period: pre- and post-Islam-evolution. The mood: one of self-observation and contemplation the Byzantine atmosphere. “It’s own choosing to go to the desired leave the high society lives of ed architects behind,” says i., “Now I see my work as art for the people. Not like a painting to be hung in a museum, like a Persian rug to cover floors. I see my firing and glazing tiliarian craft, just the way our always been.”

A altruistic search to create house the poor required a sophisticated in order to reject a ethnocentric value system; in it is thought that Western cul methods are best and there- n sits steel, glass and concrete are. Perhaps it was his own ularity with the West, having lived there, that made him really traditional architecture was fective, environmentally suited and historically and culturally “All I have to do is adjust my system and expectation level, e my work from the eyes of the who can only afford their own and the earth around them,” he

Continually sought to improve aural. During the rains, laden mud roofs collapsed, often tragic results, and earthquakes yed unreinforced cities. Fire solution —by making each house into a kiln and firing it, the could turn into brick. By glazing excav and firing the structure a hygienic and beautiful finish.

Simple materials and methods d by the architect were cond by the turbulent political cli-
ments among them came to wonder if their approach was effective in helping the poor and suffering of the world.

There were no such doubts among a different group of socialists which met in San Francisco on November 9, 1884 to form the Kaweah Cooperative Colony. Their leader, Burnette G. Haskell, a 27-year-old lawyer, was a pioneer organizer of California trade unions. The Kaweahans occupied land in the Sierra foothills as far as the Giant Forest in what now is the Sequoia National Park. Up to 75 people would eventually live in the colony at any one time, and over 400 all together during the five years of its existence. They built a road to timber and with the lumber raised cabins, a community center for dining, barns, a community store and a print shop. They held literary and scientific classes, their orchestra played on summer evenings and they picnicked in the redwoods. They named the sequoias after socialist heroes, the largest being “Karl Marx,” now known as “General Sherman.” The outside community labeled the colony strange and a threat. In 1890 the federal government withdrew most of the land to form Sequoia National Park, but never reimbursed the colony for any of its improvements, including the 18-mile-road used for years as the only access to the big trees.

The same political ferment which influenced Haskell produced another young idealist, Job Harriman. He was slender, handsome and could inspire others to a cause. After moving from Edward Bellamy’s Nationalist Club to the Socialist Party, he was then nominated for Vice President on the same ticket with Eugene Debs in 1901. In 1910 the Socialists nominated him for Mayor of Los Angeles. His popularity would have seen him elected were it not for his involvement in the defense of the McNamara brothers in the bombing of the Los Angeles Times. Thus his political career ended and he turned to utopian colonies.

In the Antelope Valley near Palmdale he and his friends bought a tract of desert and in 1914 the Llano del Rio colony was born. Within a few years it had nearly 900 members. They built a community hotel, fronted by four large columns of native boulders, and used it for assemblies and communal dining. The colony attracted Alice Constance Austin, a Los Angeles architect, who drew plans for a true socialist community.

In time, however, disgruntled factions grew, and Harriman came to believe that no colony could succeed without prior change in human nature. Still, Llano del Rio would have had a far more notable success had not serious water problems developed. The initial engineering mates proved faulty and neighboring ranchers disputed the water right. In 1918 the colony moved to 20,000 acres in Louisiana, called Newllano. Inhab there grew to about 400 before the Depression intensified other problems and sent them into receivership.

California’s largest and most notable utopian experimentation emerged
It was associated with the New Criticism of the depersonalized, banal America that was so glaringly l by the Vietnam War. Through al rifts of these years the hopes for ally altered society took shape. "ds of young people abandoned college or city to live communally. overnight the communal dream e form of a movement. In 1971, Smith, a physician in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district, counted 500 communes in northern California alone. In them, he estimated, lived 10,000 adults and several hundred children. Sociologists entered the scene, defining these new groups as five or more people, unrelated by blood or marriage, seeking a quality of life substantially different from, or superior to, the established way.

To past utopians, competition and private property were at the root of discontent. The abolition of these obstacles would call forth cooperation and sharing that would in turn alleviate human selfishness. The transformation of humanity would arise from a new environment. By the 1960's the perception of evil had changed. Utopians of that era were not so sure that the environment was the place to begin. Perhaps an effective change in society would have to be preceded by transfigured spiritual and psychological motivations. The watchword became higher consciousness, like the mystical awareness with which Huxley undergirded his unfolding vision in Island.

In 1967, following the "Summer of Love" in San Francisco, individuals seeking higher consciousness spearheaded the communal movement. From Haight-Ashbury and the urban counterculture, groups streamed to the hinterland of northern California. The inward revolution was still their goal, but now it would come in the context of earth and sky. In that attachment to nature, they were like latter-day romantics, turning their backs on intellect and reason, glorifying youth, and seeking to integrate mind and body and soul.

About this time Lou Gottlieb, a folk musician, threw open the 32 acres of his Morning Star Ranch near Occidental to any who wished to live close to the land. He and his friend Ramon Sender attracted over 60 people, and during the following years hundreds wandered through the gate. Communing with wind and rain, they worked naked in the fields, performed Sioux sun dances, and read Kahlil Gibran by firelight. Work was for those who enjoyed it, a practical recognition that scarcity should no longer be allowed in the industrial world. In an economy of plenty, the proper business of life should not be work but higher thoughts and deeper awareness. For the Gottlieb followers, the path lay through natural foods, a ban on detergents, and occasional ingestions of LSD. Though they lived communally, the individual was the focus. Unlike most 19th-century experiments, the longevity of Morning Star as an institution was never a primary goal.

The ideals of Gottlieb appealed to a young artist and former Yale University student, Bill Wheeler, who had used an
inheritance to buy 315 acres of "spacious and lyrical" woods and meadows about eight miles from Morning Star. Wheeler's Ranch or Ahimsa ("harmlessness") joined Gottlieb's colony as a mecca for believers in unstructured joy based on the organic order of nature. Wheeler called his ranch "the model of a new age." It would show the compartmentalized, urbanized world a way back to pantheistic anarchism.

Unquestionably incongruous with the prevailing reality, these two open land communes were predictably subject to hostilities from the outside. Reflecting even stronger antipathies, county officials began raids in 1969. Charges were based on drug usage, fire dangers and building code violations. Their land was attacked more directly. By 1973, on sheriff's orders, the temporary dwellings of both places had been bulldozed to the ground.

Paradise Valley and many other rural communes—like Yarrow Hill, Happy Valley, or School of the Earth (all near Santa Cruz) or Sunburst Farms near Santa Barbara—are concerned with survival and the future of human society in a polluted and anxious environment. In the rural environment we may bring our technology up-to-date with our awareness and discover that in the long run the axe may serve us better than the chain saw. Ecological concerns are strong in modern utopians and are hardly limited to rural communes. One current of experimentation for a new age is urban as well as ecological. It sees the cities as transformed (not abandoned) through extensive home and community gardens, with an emphasis on vegetable rather than animal sources of protein, careful composting and recycling of wastes, changed sources of energy for a simpler life and a cleaner environment.

Camp Joy, a four-acre farm in Boulder Creek near Santa Cruz, is part of a network dedicated to a redirection of urban life. Their gardens and orchards are models of intensive horticulture, heavy mulching, absence of chemicals, and companion planting for higher yields. Since 1971 the residents have maintained their example of a small farm in an urban context.

Kerista Village, once known as the Purple Submarine, has grown in San Francisco from three people in 1971 to 16 in 1980. They live in four Victorian flats near Golden Gate Park and are divided into "families" based on polyfidelity, their form of multiple sexual relationships. They feel they have found a system that successfully eliminates jealousy, possessiveness and anger.

Robert Owen in the 1820's envisaged his New Harmony as a vast network of cooperating communities. That network ideal is very much alive in the California vision. From 1971 to 1976, for example, the Albion Community Center, south of Mendocino, served a web of communes through a small restaurant, a used clothing exchange, a nursery school, a library, and a center for weddings, dances, and recreation. During the mid-1970's Vocations for Social Change in Oakland and New Directions in San Francisco coordinated a variety of utopian schemes. Likewise, Well Being began in San Anselmo in 1971 as a network of communal living situations but changed its focus to spiritual communality. Journals like the Modern Utopian (1967–1972), Kaliflower (1969–1972), Communities (1972–present), Common Ground (1974–present), to mention a few, have tried to hold various strands together. One, Grapevine, itself run by a collective, covers the joys, problems and skills of group living.

These communal networks have not yet noticeably broadened the base of their utopian followers. Organized labor and Marxist radical networks, which might be thought congenial, now barely overlap. In California's history, both workers and Marxists were intimately involved with a communitarian venture. The Marxists tired, however, after their break with the Socialist Party in 1917; organized after its victories in the New Deal. Communitarianism became an arena for middle class which, it might be remembered, has been the seedbed of a many modern revolutions.

The radical and labor contingent came to see communitarianism chimerical, too doused with whimsy. The later California experience bore out these concerns. The modern countermovement made similar leaps while imagining environmental redefinitions as in Callenbach's Ecotopia (1975). Son of the contemporary revealed in the kingdom like that of Tolkien's The Rings where no shadow lay was as it were inside a song munes with names such as House Seventh Angel, Magic Forest, Never Mu Family, Zanadu, Rivendell and appeared.

No matter how restricted or incipient its modern constituency, utopia reenters serious commentary on its surroundings. It continues to be rooted in dismemberment and in contemplating the present society occasionally sinks to proportions of doom. Kriana and palliative cyclicals, a prime example, found their community, and Anarcho-Communism was the cooperative vision partly as projection for disaster. Others, such as the Bart, offered survival in a third world. Harrad West began with mental disenchantment with modern society. The Christian World Order Front spoke of "this ugly, impossibly cyclical about to be plastered over again—for the last time." Jovian answers have been propitious for the future to avoid the pain of the past. As such, they offer surcease from the terrors and cynicism of their time the unifying communal vision of utopia.

Robert Hine is a professor of history at UC Riverside.
We still have a limited number of copies of the first six issues of *Arts and Architecture*.

**Number one** featured contemporary California architecture, furniture by artists, art by Jay DeFeo, Charles Garabedian, Tom Holland and Michael C. McMillen, and a downtown Los Angeles guidemap.

**Number two** contained an overview of contemporary art and architecture in Texas, and a guidemap to Houston's Montrose-South Main District.

**Number three** included articles on recent work by David Hockney, Ed Ruscha and Ed Moses, contemporary California houses, and Jaun O'Gorman.

**Number four**, entitled "The Perception of Landscape," featured articles on Isamu Noguchi, Grand Hotels in National Parks, the changing American landscape by J. B. Jackson, and included a guidemap to Bisbee, Arizona.

**Number five**, *The Elusive Muse*, looked at several new art museums in the Western U.S.

**Number six** was a survey of the architecture and design of the 1950's.

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The Association secured four county-supported administrative services by petitioning the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. The first of these services was granted in 1912 when Allensworth was made a school district and voting precinct covering 33 square miles. The Allensworth School District employed two teachers and provided elementary and high school classes which were held in a substantial two-room school building, erected in 1914 at the edge of town. William Payne was school principal and the district’s Superintendent of Education. Mrs. Josephine Allensworth chaired the first three-member school board. The school was more important in the community than the church. According to a report by W.C. Woods, Commissioner of Secondary Schools, that appeared in the 1917 California Blue Bulletin, “The free American school these settlers regard as their sanctuary.”

In 1914 the County Board of Supervisors declared the Allensworth precinct a judicial district, and in the August primary, Oscar Over and William H. Dotson were elected justice of the peace and constable, respectively. They were the first black men in the state to hold these offices. A petition for a county branch library was approved that same year.

Allensworth’s economy was rooted in agricultural enterprises — the cultivation of alfalfa, grain, sugar beets, cotton, and the raising of dairy cattle, chickens, turkeys and Belgian hares. A small commercial district situated in the town section boasted several establishments — a bakery, drug store, livery stable, barber shop, hotel, two general stores, a grain warehouse, and a machine shop.

For the first five years, when drinking water flowed continuously from artesian wells, the town’s population grew steadily, although it apparently never surpassed much more than 200 people. However, irrigation water, as vital for growth in Allensworth as it was throughout the San Joaquin Valley, was never provided in adequate supply. The grant deed provided for a water system equal to the needs of the community, but that agreement was never honored, even after the townspeople engaged in a long and expensive legal battle to effect compliance. The scarcity of water ultimately inhibited thepio agricultural enterprises and hampered their efforts to provide fire protection for their property.

Perhaps the most significant made by the pioneers to alleviate the water problem and its resulting constraints on development was the Allensworth State Industrial School campaign. A well-orchestrated political campaign succeeded in getting legislation introduced in the California State Assembly in 1914 which provided for a supported industrial secondary school to be located in Allensworth. It was the school would diversify the economic base and provide the town with a water supply. Despite the skillful campaign, the bill died in committee.

The local economy began to shudder when the irrigation water supply dried up in 1920. The economic condition worsened as residents took their businesses elsewhere. Over the ensuing years, the prosperity of the town waned. In 1956, dangerous quantities of miscible water were found in the well water systems. Public Health Services forced the town to close its drinking wells in 1961.

Despite the investments of time, and skill to bring about the social and political conditions that could support town’s development, Allensworth did not develop the needed economic base to sustain itself. The reason was not the lack of marketing skill, nor was it the absence of the political process. The reason was the awareness of the political nature of the process itself. There is sufficient evidence that the town’s efforts to provide fire protection for its property were hampered by the political process. Much of the evidence indicates that the lack of awareness of the political nature of the process itself was not the cause, nor is there any evidence to indicate that the town’s efforts to provide fire protection for its property were hampered by the political process. 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Planning (continued from page 21)

...is swirling to diffusion.... I ideal office, with the power of modernism rather than ideological transcendence, might have high rate of change, have great deal of money with flexibilities. However, a stronger motivation is to design the open office system to suit the needs of people, each at least seven years. Systems, rated from seven to ten, unify for this credit; fixed real estate, don’t...

The first generation of systems, represented by the original version of Action Office, are faithful to Prost’s principle of the vertical function of space: “Existing office concepts make poor use of vertical space.... Walls were never considered as function-bearing structures.” The center of these open office systems is the standing panel, which provides visual and aural privacy, when necessary, and the structure from which work and storage components can be hung, where necessary.

These first systems were not electrified. (Herman Miller has since provided an optional raceway for telephone cables and a modular electrical system.) Prost insisted that “Wiring is part of the office environment and since it is so abundant and must frequently be changed, it has to be a successful, visible design detail.” He had no idea just how abundant wiring could be: the automated office has made it clear that honesty is not a sufficient solution.

A second generation of systems incorporated an integral raceway; Hans Sunar’s Race system, designed by Douglas Ball, considers this problem and proposes a completely new concept for the open office system. The central component of Race is not the panel but the raceway itself, raised to table height and bolted to carry 26, 25-pair telephone cables and 10, 20-ampere electrical circuits. This raceway is the structural part of the system, a “beam” which spans between vertical posts and which supports the other components of the system.

In retrospect, it is clear that the earlier assumption that the open office would be a universal solution has been shown wrong. Given the emphasis on communication, it is understandable that the open office would take root more successfully in those organizations, like design firms and sales agencies, with a high degree of interaction.

Herman Miller, once promoting its product with the powerful image of a dynamic, changing environment for work, now sells Action Office with color theory. Granted, it is an attempt to submit the subjective decisions of design to process, but the choosing of finishes is a superficial act compared to the shaping of human interaction.

It is this emphasis on process, on design which is not preconceived, which distinguished Bürolandschaft and separates it today from open office planning. Without it, the open office design is nothing more than a tax-deductible version of its fixed-wall cognate; with it, the open office has the power to achieve the Modernist ideal of transforming life — even in the quotidian atmosphere of the office — into something ideal.
of her vision of a better future for women, her designs for the individual homes were excellent.

Living in southern California, Austin perhaps had some knowledge of the innovative workers’ housing which Irving Gill had built near San Diego in 1910, the Lewis Court in Sierra Madre. Gill surrounded a square site with small concrete houses connected by open porticos which presented a solid wall to the street and completely enclosed a large communal garden. Austin’s scheme was larger and more complex. She included continuous street facades and communal gardens like those designed by Gill, but she also developed private patio areas enclosed by the houses and separated from the communal gardens. She wished to promote privacy and discourage quarrels between neighbors; she also intended to make family child care easier, since the private patio could be supervised from every room in the house.

Austin set forth criteria for her Socialist City: beauty, illustration of the solidarity of the community, illustration of equal opportunities for all, and employment of labor saving devices. Most of these criteria reflect the three dilemmas faced by all communitarian settlements: balancing authority and participation in design, communal and private territory, unique and replicable plans.

She balanced her emphasis on participation in design for individuals and small groups, with a demand for communal unity and authority. She declared that the political results of “allowing each person to build to his own fancy” were inappropriate in the Socialist City. Only if land and dwellings were owned and developed collectively could the full range of community services be provided: utilities, heating, food, and laundry.

Her definition of equality of opportunity depended on a balance of private and communal features: equal housing; more or less equal access to community facilities (no house is more than half a mile from the community center); and a car for every family. The final criterion for the Socialist City, that it “should be the last word in the application of scientific discovery to the problems of everyday life, putting every labor saving device at the service of every citizen,” recalls the design for visible uniqueness typical of all communitarian experiments. Of course, automobile, as a symbol of equal opportunity and the “last word in scientific covery,” were provided for every f

Austin’s tiny “parkways” would be inadequate, generous parks would be parking lots, and the whole question community boundaries would have reevaluated.

Aside from this problematic provision for private cars (perhaps more just in 1916 than it would be today), At design allowed for both communal private territory, unique and replans. The houses she proposed were personalized and distinct, adapted to specific sites, yet quite simple and economical. She had the basic elements “intentional vernacular” worked out or presented them articulately and successfully. In Austin’s proposals for Socialist City one can find serious rebuttal to realization: she planned large par gardens, knowing that the commun not have an adequate water supply, and she designed the extensive communal infrastructure knowing Llano lacks total. She was very practical, however she planned thick-walled courtyard for the desert climate and took advantage of the socialist context to eliminate kitchens in residential construction.

After the colony’s move from Llano del Rio to Louisiana, Constance Austin an architectural office in Los Angeles reworked her Llano designs to appeal to other potential clients. She stressed design’s adaptability to many situations, and economic systems, arguing she had the uniformly sized socialist pattern could expand or contract, even point of allowing a palace to be built by side with a cottage.

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Dolores Hayden is a professor of Planning at UCLA. Two of her books Grand Domestic Revolution: Designing the American Dream, honored by the NEA’s Design Program.

**G E O D E S I C P U M P K I N**

**PROJECT:** MODERATE ENCLOSURE

**ARCHITECT:** BRIAN A. MURPHY

**COST:** WITHHELD BY REQUEST

**PROGRAM:** VEGETABLE REMODEL

**STRUCTURE:** GEODESIC

**LOCATION:** SANTA MONICA

**CONTRACTOR:** B.A.M. CONSTRUCTION

**CONSULTANTS:** E. FREEMAN, S. FRENZ

We as a group are primarily concerned with forward momentum and direction in both research and design... We do not reject the current fashion of looking backward to find “inspiration”... We submit that “life is too short” and that it is for designers to move forward, question, challenge and dare... Clients can, want and need to be different. It is for us to share resources, create new mediums, expand the present vernacular and compete only to outpace our exponential growth.
The piece, originally intended to be temporary—perhaps lasting only through the summer—still stood in early October. East of the campus on Old Miramar Road, across from the old ammunition depot, three billboards are arranged like a stage set. Among them are about 20 wheels and signposts of three types: clocks, compasses and arrows. Several large “X” shapes are interspersed among them; one giant red “X” lies on the ground as if marking some cryptic spot.

Two billboards represent faces in profile, cropped at the bottom to resemble the floating heads of submerged swimmers. The center rectangle, a poolscape, functions as partial backdrop for the heads. In the middle of the space thus defined, two large cut-out hands, one black and one white, reach for the sky. Most who see this piece do so from automobiles, at about 35 miles per hour. This is indeed an appropriate way to experience this work. But for those curious enough to stop and approach the objects on foot, there is more.

From stencilled lettering on various parts of the sculpture we can reconstruct an event which took place during Cole’s training period at Navy boot camp in 1969. One day, his group of trainees was told to jump into a pool and swim. A terrified young black recruit protested that he could not swim, but was pushed into the water. As the others paddled across to pass their swimming test, hethrashed and bobbedlike a drowning man. They looked on, not knowing what to do, afraid of being punished if they tried to help him. Eventually, he did get out of the pool. But the next day this young man, Frank Brown, died.

Arrows attached horizontally to the scaffolding of the billboards contain the wording of an “official” telegram, the kind by which the military informs a family that their son has been killed. Among other things, then, this sculpture is a roadside commemoration of Frank Brown—a victim, it would seem, of the impartiality, precision, and rigor of our system of military training. This death could be seen as a byproduct of the dominant cultural models by which such systems are designed; precluding the idea that someone’s cultural background may not have prepared him to be tested for something. How could the white guard—instucted simply to get his charges into the pool—know that, as a black man from the rural South, Frank Brown had never learned to swim? Frank Cole never forgot this incident of cultural blindness that cost Brown his life. The black and white pair of hands at the center of the piece may symbolize an identification with Frank Brown. This story unfolds (non-linearly, to be sure) for the viewer willing to get close, to stay awhile and read and ponder.

Not all spectators have been completely benign, however. There has been vandalism and graffiti; at one point, all the original signposts and windmills had vanished! Many were retrieved from nearby porches and patios. This amazed the idealists and confirmed the worst fears of cynical members of the local art scene. Cities are covered with evidence of urban dwellers’ desire...
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Frank Cole

The urban landscape is scarred and decorated—in destructive, clever, obscene or subtle ways—by the myriad, anonymous hands of its inhabitants.

Art observers sometimes stand in bank plazas and corporate pavilions wondering why the massive maeho-metal aesthetic dominates public art. Why do these objects tend to alienate us? The answer lies only partly in the fact that as corporate investments they must endure, and that they are attempts to match, complement or compete with the scale of neighboring buildings. The pressing practical consideration for these works must be their measure of indestructibility, their imperviousness to alteration at the hands of strangers. Alone on the front lines, at the anarchic border between the corporate world and the individual urban dweller, these works simply must be unscratchable, unblemishable and unsmashable.

Frank Cole’s work has none of these qualities. Made of wood, painted with latex, it is inherently fragile and vulnerable. Left on its own, it would slowly decay, literally blending into an ecology of wind and wild grasses. This capacity for alteration is integral to an aesthetic predicated less on a concern with product, and more on attention to process. Whether erected on the forlorn site of a demolished house in Oakland, at a San Francisco gallery or on public land, the materials are generally organic and recyclable—wood, cardboard, plaster, etc. Cole’s works are often rearrangeable, consisting of multiple pieces intended to function together.

Most of the pieces stand on thin supports, legs and braceings of wood. Cole traces this recurrent structural theme to a prevailing architectural motif in the South, where he was raised. Some houses stand on stilts as a precaution against floods—the Mississippi’s periodic overflowing of its banks, or hurricanes blowing in from the Gulf of Mexico. Such cataclysmic possibilities underlie the fragility of our control, the limits of human mastery over materials and the natural world. Standing on spindly legs, Cole’s charged and charming images reflect an awareness of this tenuousness and offer a viable stance of flexibility and grace.

Marina LaPalma is a poet and vocalist.

Suburbia

Continued from page 69

anchor of suburban existence shopping mall, is also evolving from economic changes. It coming more compact, with shopping floors as standard and not unheard of, and some are next to or over multi-level structures. (One older center Chicago has begun charging for its parking lots.) It seems safe that many suburban centers will late their in-town offsprings by ing hotels or offices, and even perhaps housing, in their prog

These economic realities will suburban evolution, for despite rhetoric about private enterpr urchia has long been a hothous fertilized by massive direct anrect government subsidies th seem dwindling. But much of t

utionary process cannot be for what suburbia most lacks is ing. It sprang up almost insta has yet to develop its historic place, it is still only a hastily p first draft; revisions and polis both possible and necessary have already been cited, and ot clude a broadening of populat (many towns are segregated by race, or age), selective rebuildi most important, greater imp on the part of developers an
tacts operating in suburbia. ample material resources professions have not yet for what suburbia should be and should work; instead they have on small pieces of the totality often on too large and un dle a broadening of populat (many towns are segregated by race, or age), selective rebuildi most important, greater imp on the part of developers an
tacts operating in suburbia. ample material resources professions have not yet for what suburbia should be and should work; instead they have on small pieces of the totality often on too large and un scale), and, even when suco themselves, those pieces have a together convincingly.

It may be unrealistic to exp from postwar suburbia that achieved so far, since new cur rarely define themselves well g generation. But it is real expect improvements over generation, to hope for com that can be enjoyed without a diversity of people, where on the patina of time, a multij design expressions, and an u able quality of place.

John Pastier
We're Watching

This year has gotten an awful lot of bad press. Some publications are predicting the worst, but not us. We're out to prove the others wrong on four counts.

Winter Utopian Settlements—The History of the Future.

Spring After Industry—Computers, Technology and Transportation.

Summer The Summer Olympics—The World Watches Los Angeles.

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