

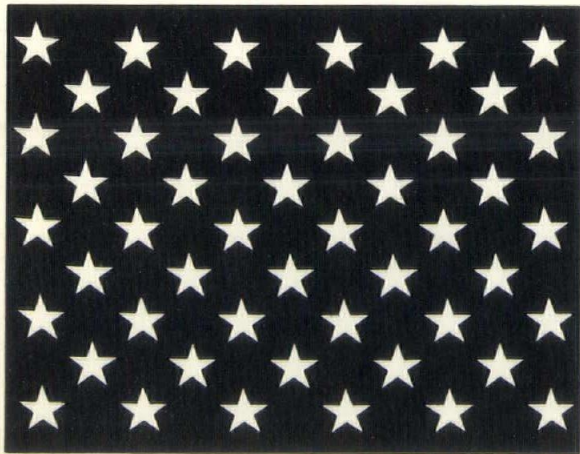
# IOWA ARCHITECT

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER / 1969

AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
OF  
ARCHITECTS

FEB 18 1970

LIBRARY



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NSIVELY FOR THE LAST 300 YEARS**

## EDITORIAL

### DESIGNED FOR PEOPLE

by Donald Kaul

(As printed in the DES MOINES REGISTER'S "Over the Coffee" Column, August 27, 1969)

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe died last week at the age of 83. I wouldn't bring it up except for the fact that, if you live in Des Moines, you owe him something.

Mies was one of the three giants of modern architecture (the others being Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright) and the only one represented by a building in downtown Des Moines—the Home Federal Savings and Loan Association building.

That's what you owe him; gratitude for the Home Federal building.

In that sea of ugliness we call downtown Des Moines, the Home Federal building offers one of the few, one of the very few, touches of class.

It stands there at Sixth and Grand, with its trees and benches, saying "Welcome" to the tired passerby. It is a delight to the eye and a refreshment to the spirit; the very antithesis of a parking ramp.

Mies did not believe in flamboyant architecture.

"Architecture has little or nothing to do with the invention of interesting forms or with personal inclinations," he would say. "Nor is it necessary to invent a new architecture every Monday morning. It is better to be good than to be original."

Statements like that and his "less is more" dictum might lead one to suspect that Mies' architecture was cold and dehumanized. There was more to him than that.

Mies was a master of subtlety and proportion and his masterworks—like the Seagram building in New York or the 860 Lakeshore Towers in Chicago—were elegant structures of exquisite taste.

The Home Federal building (like Des Moines' other Mies building, Meredith Hall at Drake) is not up to those, but it's still very good. It approaches Mies' architectural goal of "giving the spirit the opportunity for existence."

It would be nice if all buildings strove for that goal, but you can't sell the people who run things on an intangible like that. Not in Des Moines, not anywhere.

"Human spirit?" they ask. "How much does it cost per front-foot? Can you depreciate it?"

You see, city fathers seem unable to grasp the fact that downtown areas that aren't good for people aren't good for anything.

And furthermore, that people and cars cannot co-exist on the same thoroughfares. One or the other has to go.

This misunderstanding has led to the fiction that downtown business districts are losing trade to shopping centers because it's easy to park there. When you stop to think about it, it isn't all that easy to park there.



They go because once they've parked, they can forget about cars; their own and other people's. They can go about their business in an atmosphere designed for people.

That's why we should be grateful to Mies.

In one small corner of downtown Des Moines he created an atmosphere designed for people.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The above article is of interest not only because it is about Mies, but, more importantly, because it is about architecture. Few architectural discussions are seen in writing and television, especially in the Midwest. It is not for lack of interest . . . millions of people are intrigued by one aspect of architecture or another, and all people are affected by thousands of architectural experiences in their life. Iowans must look to national magazines and newspapers like the New York Times, St. Louis Dispatch, Washington Post and Christian Science Monitor for architectural press. Donald Kaul is the rare journalistic voice in Iowa who occasionally comments on architecture.

This situation is not entirely due to lack of insight by Iowa's news editors, for talented architecture critics are an extremely rare breed. No curriculum exists to train such a person . . . he must guide his education through a broad background emphasizing architecture and journalism. One such person is Wolf van Eckhardt, whose article on contemporary architectural criticism appears in this issue.

It would be a public service as well as an attraction for our media to feature regular commentary on Iowa's environment, urban and rural concerns, and architecture, with emphasis on sensitivity to problems and appreciation of quality.—WMD

# ia

## IOWA ARCHITECT

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The **IOWA ARCHITECT** is the official publication of the Iowa Chapter, The American Institute of Architects, and is published quarterly.

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## IOWA ARCHITECT

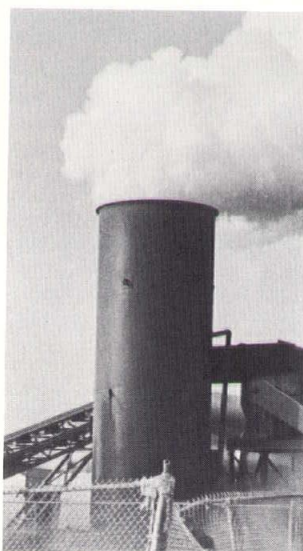
OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER - 1969

DESPITE NATURE'S MANY EARLIER WARNINGS THE POLLUTION AND DESTRUCTION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT HAS GONE ON INTENSIVELY AND EXTENSIVELY FOR THE LAST 300 YEARS

Environment has become the IN word and a national political pastime, the patriotic thing to do. In that spirit, this month's **COVER** graphically presents a national flag for ecology. The text is abstracted from Lewis Mumford's introduction to **DESIGN WITH NATURE** by Ian McHarg, noted ecologist and the keynote speaker at the Iowa Chapter AIA convention, January 23-24.

**1** The imaginative **TABLE OF CONTENTS** was cited as one of the reasons that the **IOWA ARCHITECT** received an AIA Award of Merit as explained on page 2. The 1969 graphical content has been treated in a clear and consistent manner, from the wide title band and Trade Gothic typography to the handsome ia logo and mailing envelope designed by Ron Walker.

**2** Architectural **NEWS** is always interesting. This is one of the most popular features of the 1969 format and includes new projects, personalities, and current events.



**10** The mainstream of public attention now and finally includes concern for our man-made and natural surroundings. The January convention will concentrate on that subject in the person of Ian McHarg, well-known ecologist. In **ENVIRONMENT: INVOLVEMENT**, convention chairman Jim Wilkins lays a foundation for the topics to be considered on January 23-24.



**14** Following the precedent of a 1968 academic quarter spent in Finland, Iowa State students of architecture in 1969 traveled to **MERIDA, YUCATAN, MEXICO** for their Spring Quarter. **IOWA ARCHITECT's** student correspondent, John Hanway, assembled a report with the aid of several students.

**18** Wolf Von Eckhardt speaks his mind in **AN ARCHITECTURE CRITIC SPEAKS OUT ON ARCHITECTURAL CRITICISM**. In colorful prose and gymnastic vocabulary, he illustrates how the subject of architecture can emerge from the printed page and come alive in one's mind.

**Photo Credits:**  
Davenport Redevelopment—Phil Hutchison

**Environment:**  
Involvement—Jim Brewer

**Merida—**  
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Text is set in variations of Trade Gothic Extended and Trade Gothic. Type is set by Knight's Typography.

The Iowa Architect is printed by Ad-Color Press.

## ARCHITECT RELOCATES IN SIOUX CITY

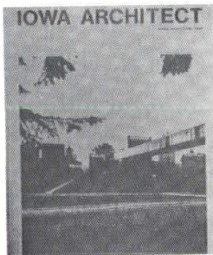
DeWild Grant Reckert & Associates Co., Architects and Engineers, formerly with architectural offices in both Sioux City and Rock Rapids, have combined their offices by moving the entire Rock Rapids staff to Sioux City, where it is now under the direction of Bernard I. Jones.

Ed Cable and Lee Gayer have joined the firm, both located in the Sioux City office. Formerly with Engineers Bossenberger Rietz Middlebrook of Ames, Lee is a native of Rock Valley and received a Bachelor of Architectural Engineering Degree from Iowa State University in 1966. Ed is a native of Cedar Falls and received a Bachelor of Architecture Degree from Iowa State University in 1969.

IOWA ARCHITECT



IOWA ARCHITECT



IOWA ARCHITECT



The IOWA ARCHITECT is pleased to announce that it has received an Award of Merit from the American Institute of Architects in the 1969 Component Publications Competition. The Jury, composed of Francis D. Lethbridge, FAIA; Ray Lackey, Public Relations Counsel; Hugh Newell Jacobsen, AIA; and Preston Stevens, Jr., AIA as Chairman, judged entries in two categories—magazines and newsletters. Both were judged on the basis of editorial content and graphic design and content. The Jury gave two classes of awards: the Honor Award for the best in a category; and the Award of Merit for high quality. From 23 entries in the magazine category, INLAND ARCHITECT, published by the Chicago Chapter, AIA, and the Illinois Council, AIA, was presented the Honor Award. NORTH CAROLINA ARCHITECT, published by North Carolina Chapter, AIA received the other Award of Merit. In evaluating the IOWA ARCHITECT the Jury commented that "the graphic design and content is consistently excellent. Editorial quality is good, and appears to be getting better. This publication is a most favorable reflection of the architectural profession in Iowa."

Editor Bill Dikis received the award at the Editors Conference in Washington Nov. 12-13. He was also elected to the Editors' Liaison Group, which works with the Public Relations Committee of the AIA.

The Editorial staff of Iowa Architect is committed to further improving the magazine's effectiveness in 1970. Constructive criticism and support from all Iowa professionals is essential in this effort. Let us hear from you.

## THE U.S. FUTURE: A MATTER OF WILL

The president of The American Institute of Architects said recently that the task of improving our environment and making our future what we wish it to be "involves not a question of resources, but of will."

Addressing the annual meeting of the Producers' Council, Rex Whitaker Allen, FAIA, said that "society cannot have everything it wants," but that it can "have anything it wants"—once it acquires the will to make choices.

An AIA study of the future of the architectural profession concludes that "our nation now is in the shock-front years of profound change—a change equal in magnitude to the agricultural and industrial revolutions" and that we "badly need new social inventions to direct our technology to human ends."

"The future," Allen said, "will take form depending on whether it comes through revolution, through our pragmatic responses to situations before they fully develop, through reason, or through violent reaction to conditions after they develop. If we decide on a future formed by the process of reason, it will require us to establish clear priorities for ourselves as a nation."

The AIA study also points out the possible effect on the future environment of accidental or deliberate "systems breaks"—such as a low birth rate, longer life expectancy, and new technology—which cannot now be predicted.

The study concludes that in the foreseeable future, the demand for money in the building industry will continue to exceed the supply, escalating land costs will result in intensified uses of land, government action will be needed to revitalize decayed urban centers, and the demand for architects and other design professionals will soon outrun the supply.

## CAPITOL RESTORATION: A VICTORY

A House-Senate Conference Committee, chaired by Sen. Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.) and Rep. George W. Andrews (D-Ala.) has approved spending \$250,000 for a complete engineering investigation of cost and procedures to restore the historic West Front of the U.S. Capitol. Twenty-five thousand dollars was also approved for emergency repairs to the section which was constructed in 1803 and 1830.

For more than 10 years the American Institute of Architects, with heavy editorial support from newspapers and other media throughout the country, has urged such a study by independent engineers and other design professionals.

William L. Slayton, AIA Executive Vice President, commended Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) and Rep. Samuel S. Stratton (D-N.Y.) for helping convince the public and Congress that the large expansion should not proceed at least until the restoration study is made.

The Conference Committee also earmarked \$2 million for a start on the expansion, but this can-

not be used until the restoration study proves restoration is feasible. The Institute has opposed the expansion on grounds it will erase the last remaining exterior walls of the original Capitol Building, will damage the noble architecture of the landmark, and will cost more than \$166 per square foot.

### ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN GRANTS

The National Endowment for the Arts has announced the opening of its second annual program of grants in the area of environmental design—architecture, landscape architecture, planning, industrial design, and interior design. According to Paul D. Spreiregen, AIA, Program Director, Architecture and Design, the purpose of the program is to further design knowledge and capabilities by supporting the development of significant new concepts. He reported that in the first year of the program 44 proposals, totaling \$250,000, were awarded grants.

Again this spring, two types of grants will be awarded: individual grants of up to \$5,000 and group (matching) grants of up to \$10,000. The latter must be matched by a receiving institution which is non-profit and tax-exempt. Proposals must be received by March 6, 1970. Inquiries should be directed to Mrs. Alice Morgan, Program Assistant, Architecture and Design Programs, The National Endowment for the Arts, 1800 F. Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506.

### OFFICE NOTES

Tom Clark has joined the Des Moines firm of Charles Herbert and Associates. A graduate in architecture from the University of Minnesota, Tom was formerly with Maiwurm and Wiegman of Fort Dodge. He serves on the editorial staff of the IOWA ARCHITECT and was responsible for the handsome cover on the last issue.

Howard Pals, a 1967 graduate in architecture from Iowa State University, has joined the firm of Maiwurm and Wiegman, Fort Dodge. Howard was formerly with the United States Army.

### AIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

The Board of Directors of The American Institute of Architects in December set 1970 priorities for national issues for the architectural profession: 1.) housing problems, primarily for low and middle income groups; 2.) cities, including new towns, urban growth and urban decay; 3.) social change as related to physical environment; 4.) natural resources, emphasizing ecology and conservation.

In other action, they approved a recommendation that AIA scholarships include training in preservation and restoration of historic landmarks and urged that chapters stimulate state legislatures to

set up State Rotating Funds for Historic Preservation to purchase and maintain landmark buildings threatened with destruction.

The Board also ruled that there will be a recessed session of the 1970 AIA Convention in London, England, on June 29, 1970, following the Boston session.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

In addition to those architects listed in the last issue as being active in the Des Moines Art Center, John Brooks serves on the Board of Trustees, and John Wetherell participates on the Members Council.

Mayor Thomas Urban has appointed three architects to the City of Des Moines' nine-member Advisory Committee for Excellence in Urban Design; Jim Wilkins, Joe Borg, and Bill Dikis. The Committee is charged with the review of proposed public buildings and grounds for placement, design and aesthetics, as well as the identification of buildings and locations of historical preservation merit.

### AIA PUBLIC SERVICE ADS

The AIA has sponsored advertisements in nationally prominent magazines to further the goals of environmental quality and to establish architects as a concerned profession. Following a two-page spread in the August 22 TIME magazine and another in the December 6 SATURDAY REVIEW, the third in the series will appear in the February FORTUNE. This series complements the sixty second television spots, "America the Beautiful," "Pollution," and "A Child Went Forth."

### AREA COLLEGE DRAFTING CLASSES

Architectural Drafting Programs at Hawkeye in Waterloo, Kirkwood in Cedar Rapids, and Des Moines Area College began new classes for their 12-month courses in September. Seventeen new students are enrolled at Hawkeye, twenty at Kirkwood and twenty-one at DMACC. Three students who enrolled in the DMACC program last February are in their third quarter.

DMACC graduated seven last August; five are employed by architects and two by sub-contractors. Average starting wage was \$3.00 per hour.

Kirkwood graduated ten, all of whom are employed in various aspects of the construction industry.

As of October 6th, Hawkeye graduated twelve; three are employed as draftsmen, one is taking additional training at Hawkeye, five are military bound and seven are seeking drafting employment. For further information on these seven, contact Bruce Lee, Instructor, Hawkeye, P.O. Box 8015, Waterloo, Iowa 50704.

## LANDSCAPE AWARD

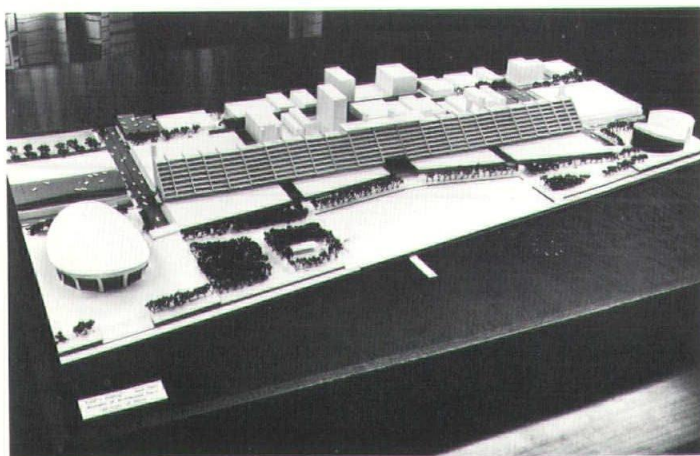
The Ruan Transport Corporation landscape at Keosauqua and Third has received a Landscape Award Certificate of Merit from the American Association of Nurserymen for outstanding landscape design. The Certificate of Merit is a high tribute to excellent landscaping contributing to good community and business relations.

The Certificate of Merit Award was presented to John Ruan, President of Ruan Transport Corporation, R. Kenneth Kendall, Griffith-Kendall Architects who designed the landscape, and William R. Heard, Heard Gardens, all of Des Moines.

The Landscape Awards Program, now in its seventeenth year, gives public recognition to firms which have made American business a good neighbor. The program is credited for playing a major role in stimulating and encouraging the Center City to become aware of its responsibility to make pleasant places for man to live, work, shop, study, play, heal and worship.

The Ruan landscape, completed in 1964, is an investment in the Des Moines Center City environment. It has yielded dividends and has set a worthy standard for the Center City and the River Hills Urban Renewal area.

Mrs. Richard M. Nixon, Chairman of the 1969 program, presented the Landscape Awards during a luncheon on October 15, 1969, at the Statler Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.



## DAVENPORT REDEVELOPMENT

Directors of the Davenport Chamber of Commerce have reviewed a long-range planning concept for the development of downtown Davenport. Fred J. Ebeling, a recent graduate from the University of Illinois at Urbana, developed the concept as an undergraduate design thesis problem. The concept is based generally on the maximization of the river as an asset to the city and the

revitalization of the city's core area. Details of Mr. Ebeling's work will be presented in a future issue of the IOWA ARCHITECT.

## MERGER OF ARCHITECT AND PLANNER

The firms of Brown Healey Bock, Architects-Engineers, and Herman Thompson Associates, Landscape Architects-Urban Planners, announce a merger of the two firms. The new firm will be known as Brown Healey Bock, Architects-Engineers-Planners. The firm's principal office will be located at 3413 Mt. Vernon Road S. E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Herman W. Thompson, A.S.L.A., will be in charge of the new department of Landscape Architecture and Planning; Edward H. Healey, A.I.A., will continue to head the Architectural Department; Larry R. Moore, P.E., Mechanical and Electrical Engineering; Jack C. Miller, Structural Design; Harold R. Bogert, P.E., Field Inspection; Wayne M. Whitmer, Estimating and Specification; Barbara Truemper, Interior Design.

## LETTERS

Editor:

I opened the last issue of the IOWA ARCHITECT and with great pleasure found your article on the Woodbury County Courthouse. Believe me, I was pleased beyond words with your article and the presentation and illustrations.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to you for giving credit to my father as you have in this article. There have been a number of articles written by others, particularly those written by Wm. Purcell and Mr. Gebhard, who consistently and insistently gave almost full credit to Purcell and Elmslie.

It might interest you to know that George Elmslie was a close and very dear friend of my father, who died in 1949. At the time of the design of this courthouse, when I was still a youngster, I can remember Mr. Elmslie spending some time at our home, living with us while the design was taking form. Mr. Elmslie himself never attempted to take credit in the same manner as did Purcell. May I again express my deep appreciation and personal thanks for your fine article.

Sincerely,  
Wm. L. Steele, Jr.

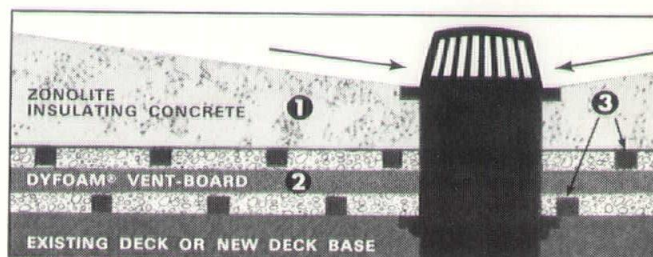
## EDITOR'S NOTE:

The text of the article was collected mainly from a commemorative brochure issued by the Woodbury County Supervisors. This booklet, available to visitors, presents a very complete history of the building, and it identifies the architects as described in the story.

## CALENDAR

- Jan. 11-  
Feb. 1 "40 Under 40—Young Talent in Architecture", sponsored by The American Federation of Art; Gallery, Memorial Union, Iowa State University
- Jan. 17-  
Feb. 15 "Urban Design—Manhattan", sponsored by The Smithsonian Institute; Design Center Gallery, Iowa State University
- Jan. 22 "Underground and Experimental Cinema", a series; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 23-24 Iowa Chapter, AIA, Convention lecture by Ian McHarg, Head of Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania; Art Center, Des Moines
- Feb. 3 "Computers and Science in Planning", lecture by Britton Harris; University of Pennsylvania City and Regional Planning; Carver Hall, Iowa State University, 8:00 p.m.
- Feb. 5 "Underground and Experimental Cinema", a series; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 12 "Landscape Architecture", lecture by John Collins, Philadelphia planner; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 8:00 p.m.
- Feb. 19 "Underground and Experimental Cinema", a series; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 7:30 p.m.
- March 1-30 "University of Northern Iowa Faculty Show," Design Center Gallery, Iowa State University.
- March 11 "Film Lecture", Stan Vanderbeek, MIT Center for Advanced Visual Studies; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 8:00 p.m.
- March 12 "Modern Art", lecture by Clement Greenburg, critic for Art Forum Magazine; Memorial Union, Sun Room, Iowa State University, 8:00 p.m.
- April 2 "Computers and Design", lecture by Carl Steinitz, Harvard Graduate School of Design; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 3:00 p.m.
- April 16 "Lecture on Architecture", Gerard Grandval, Architecture-Urbaniste, Paris; Kildee Auditorium, Iowa State University, 8:00 p.m.

# New double-insulated Dyzone roof deck is self-venting



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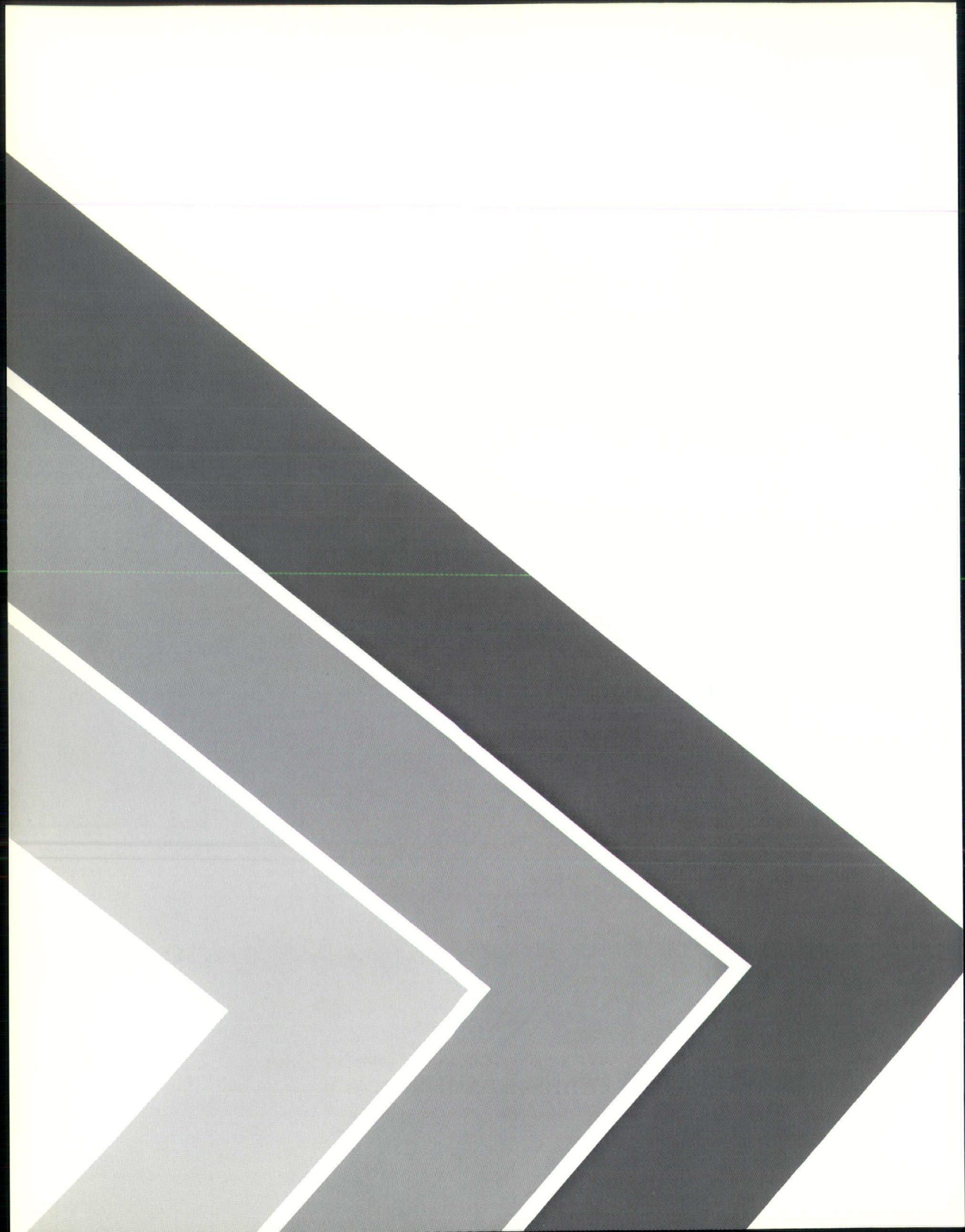
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Textures, unlimited shapes, a multitude of colors . . . that's the reality of precast concrete for the 70's. With the imagination of today's architects, precast concrete has become a creative partner as well as a means for providing efficient, low cost and exciting structures.

Precasting, with its succession of advances the past few years, promises even more inspirational applications in the coming decade.

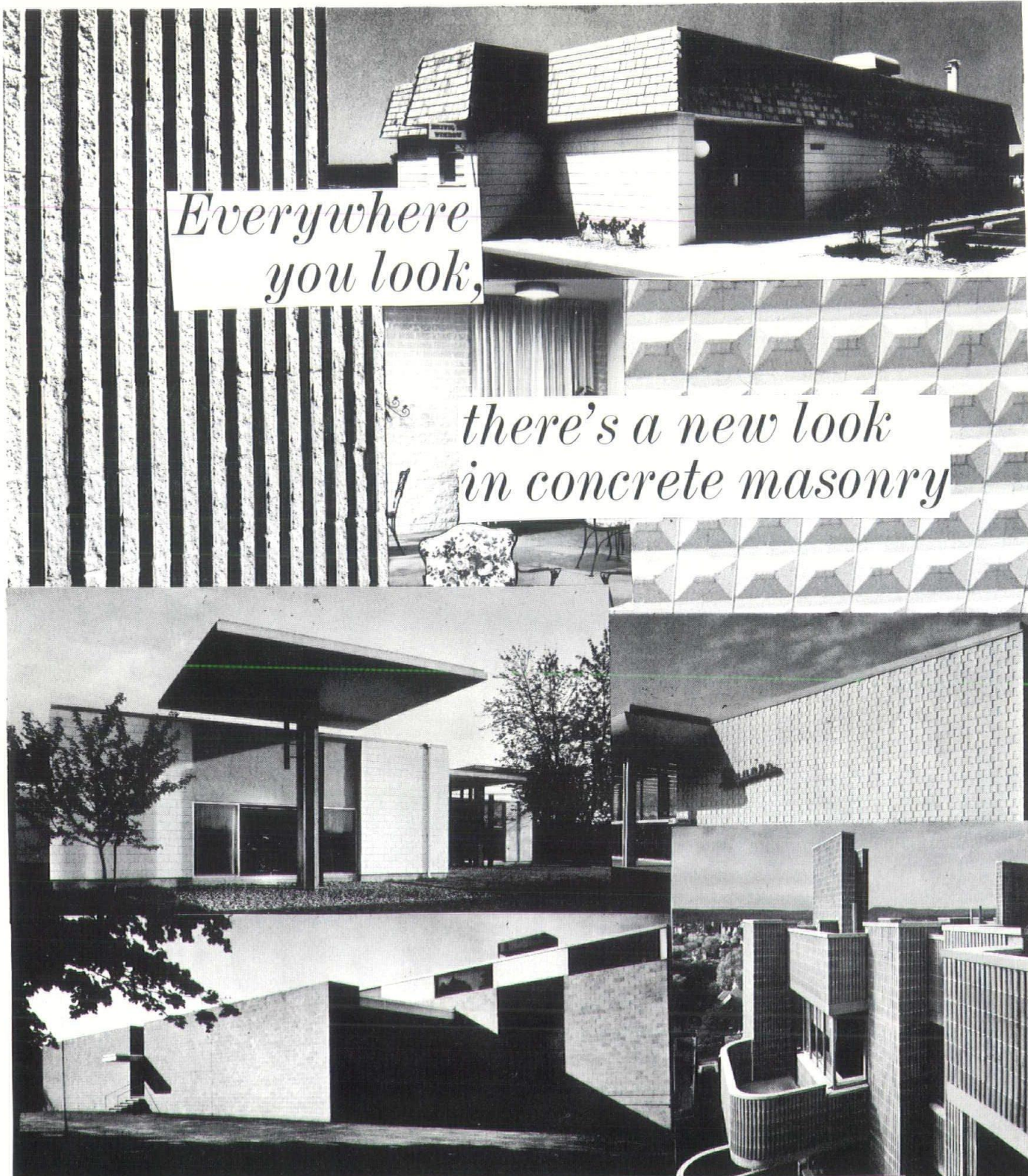
A dynamic voice — a forward look — an extraordinary means for architectural expression.

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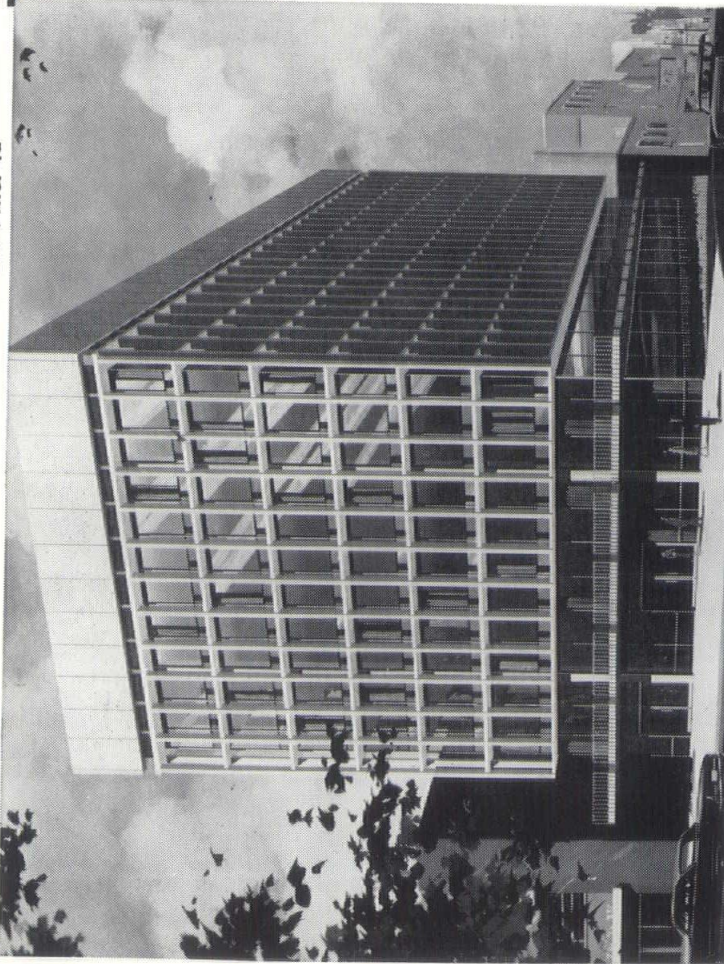
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# r/c floor electrification

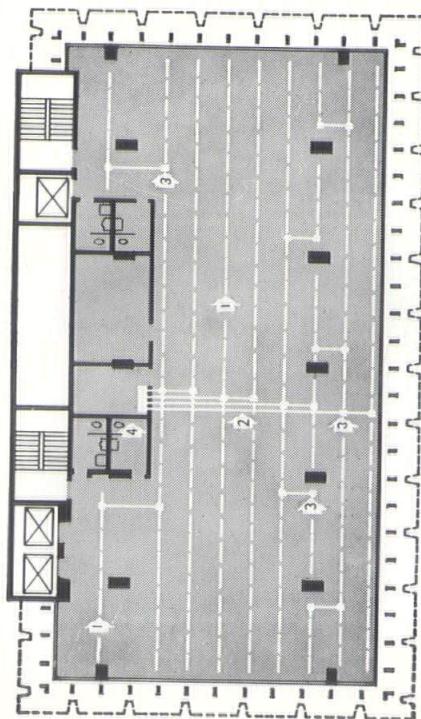
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Prepared as a service to architects by Portland Cement Association

Clip along dotted line



Anchor Savings and Loan Building, Madison, Wisconsin, Architects & Engineers: John J. Flad & Associates, Madison.



## LEGEND

- 1 = Distribution Ducts
- 2 = Pyramidal Feeders
- 3 = Junction Boxes
- 4 = Electrical Panel

## NOTE:

Space ducts and floor inserts to match desk module. Check with Electrical Engineer.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

Today, raceways under concrete floors can be readily designed for maximum versatility. One method, a pyramidal feed system, that provides adequate capacity for future utility requirements as well as changing plant or office layouts is shown at left.

Fig. 1 shows the distribution ducts and the floor inserts. All inserts for the service fittings will be flush with the finished concrete floor. One duct is for power, one for telephone wiring. Fig. 2 shows the installation in progress. The two-level system allows feeder ducts to pass under distribution ducts. Fig. 3 shows the placing of concrete after reinforcement and ducts have been carefully set. Fig. 4 shows a typical completed installation.

In addition to the basic power and telephone services, many modern buildings may require additional raceways for other uses. These include, for example, panelboard feeders with voltages up to 600V, low potential signal services, intercoms, T.V. and programming. Designers should estimate future requirements as generously as possible.

Write for additional free information. (U.S. and Canada only.)

PORTLAND CEMENT ASSOCIATION

619 Savings & Loan Bldg., Des Moines, Iowa 50309

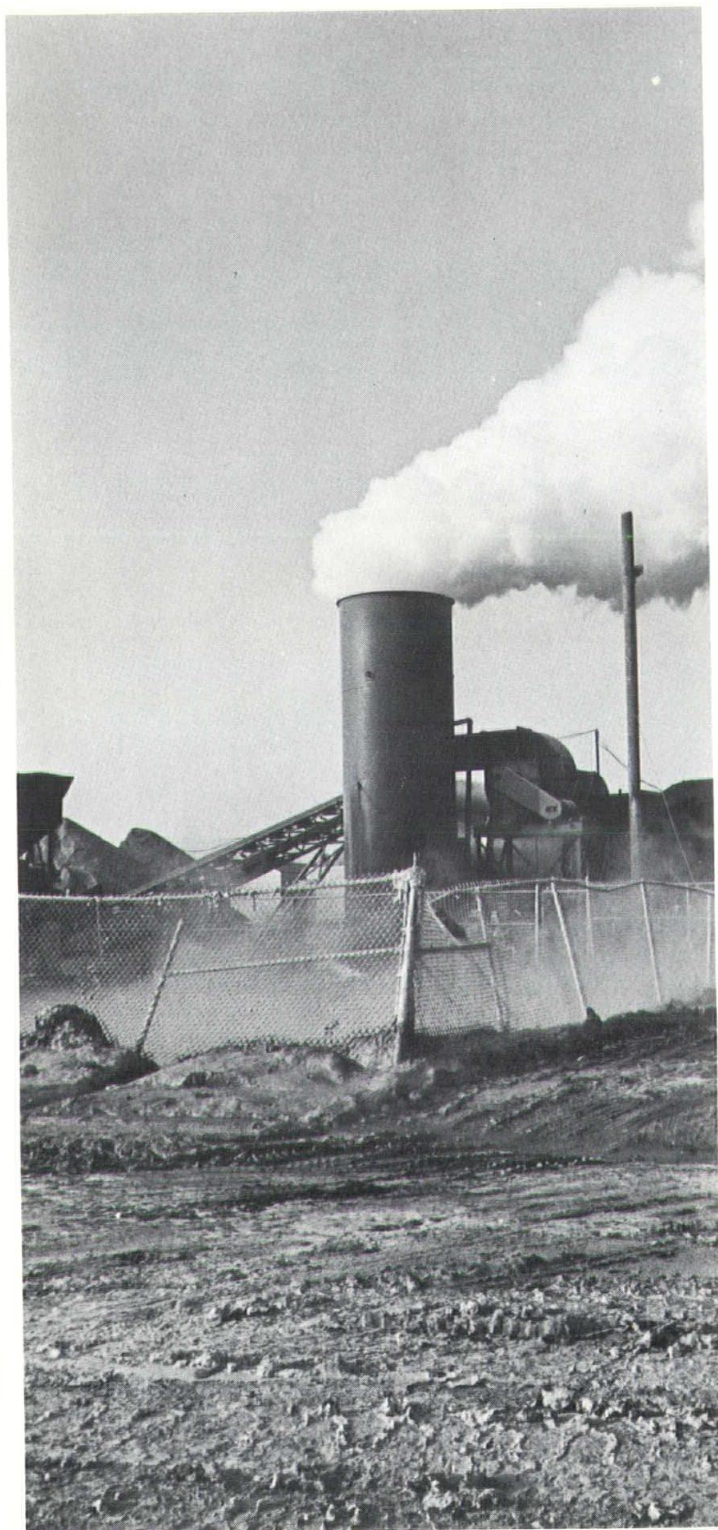
An organization to improve and extend the uses of concrete

# ENVIRONMENT: INVOLVEMENT

By Jim Wilkins



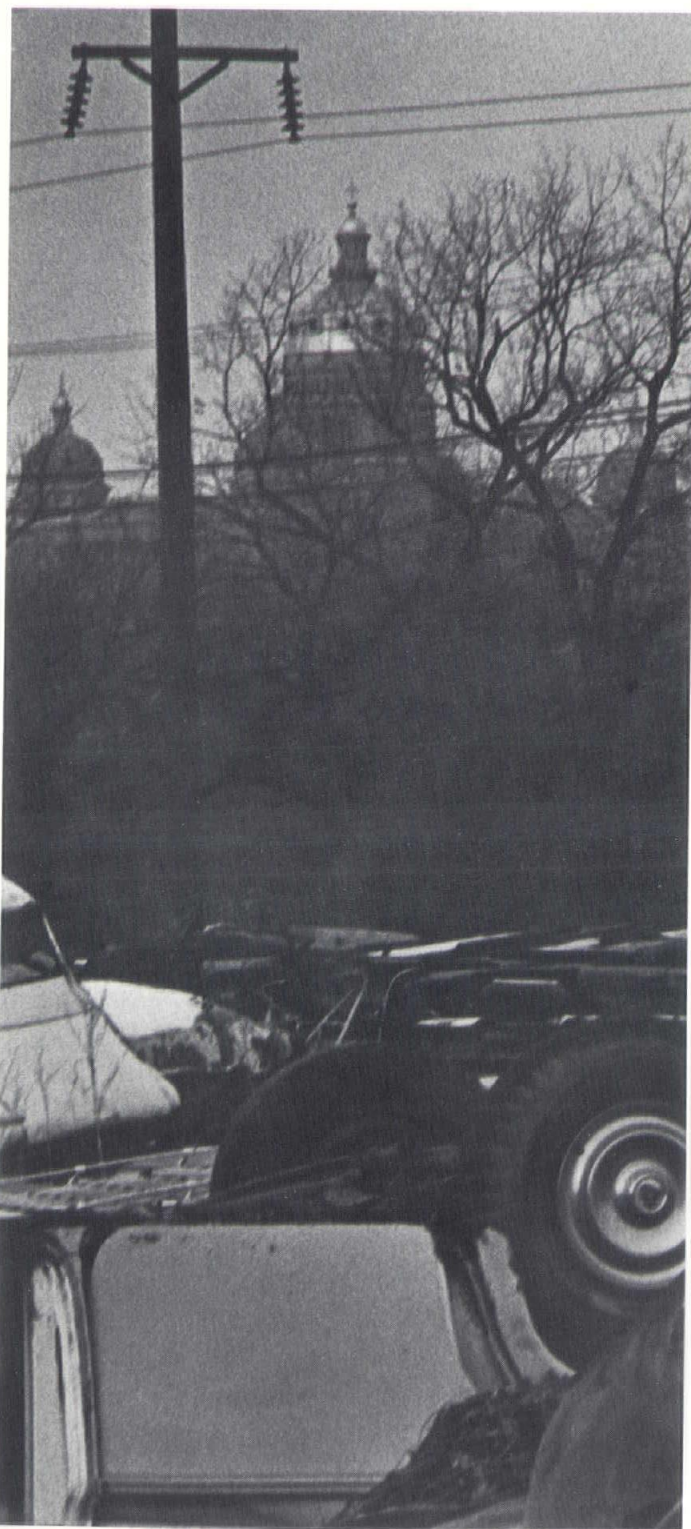
Jim Wilkins



We hear so often these days pleadings and warnings about the environment. They come in many forms and from as many sources, but they all carry the same message . . . the environment is in trouble. How much trouble we face in the future is dependent upon our growth in population, accompanied by the growing demand for, and intensified use of, space. Our profession is no different from other professions with its developing interest in the total environment; late perhaps, but no different. We are admonished from all sides to become involved, to be relevant. At the same time, however, we are warned to not dilute our efforts and talents, especially in those areas for which we are not trained and do not practice. Whether we are involved as professionals or as citizens, the education we have had brings us into conflict with existing trends. Our unique training in special sensitivity and creative problem solving, along with our developed ethical standards, has drawn us into the search for a better environment.

What really is the state of the environment? What is the level of our concern? How can we be most effective? It goes without saying that single answers to any of these questions are impossible. The problems are vast, complicated, and interwoven, and so are the answers. Seldom a day passes without the newspapers, magazines and books drawing our attention to another aspect of the problems of the environment. DDT, the SST, the Everglades Airport, oil in the Santa Barbara Channel, air pollution, water pollution, ghetto housing, crime and unemployment are some of the problems currently being aired. There are as many more as there are elements in the environment. The state of the physical environment is more easily identifiable and measurable. A recent article in the August-September 1969 NATIONAL WILDLIFE shows very graphically how their staff measures the state of some of the prime elements in our environment. The article, entitled "Our National EQ, The National Wildlife Federation Index of Environmental Quality," notes where immediate action must be taken to reverse trends toward the destruction of many necessary environmental elements.

What is the thread tying these problem-elements together? Admittedly the thread is, in some cases, tenuous; the relationship is hard to see, but I believe it is there. The years since the Industrial Revolution have given power and authority to the specialist, those who have had the time and money to develop expertise in a concentrated area of study. This, I believe, has led to many of the problems in the environment. Singular approaches to the development of industrial, institutional and governmental functions have caught us unaware of the cause and effect of their interrelationships. An interesting expression of environmental interrelationships appears in the June 1969 AIA JOURNAL article, "The Great Lakes: The Tie That Binds." Granting that the historical review of the Great Lakes problem is simplified by retrospect, there



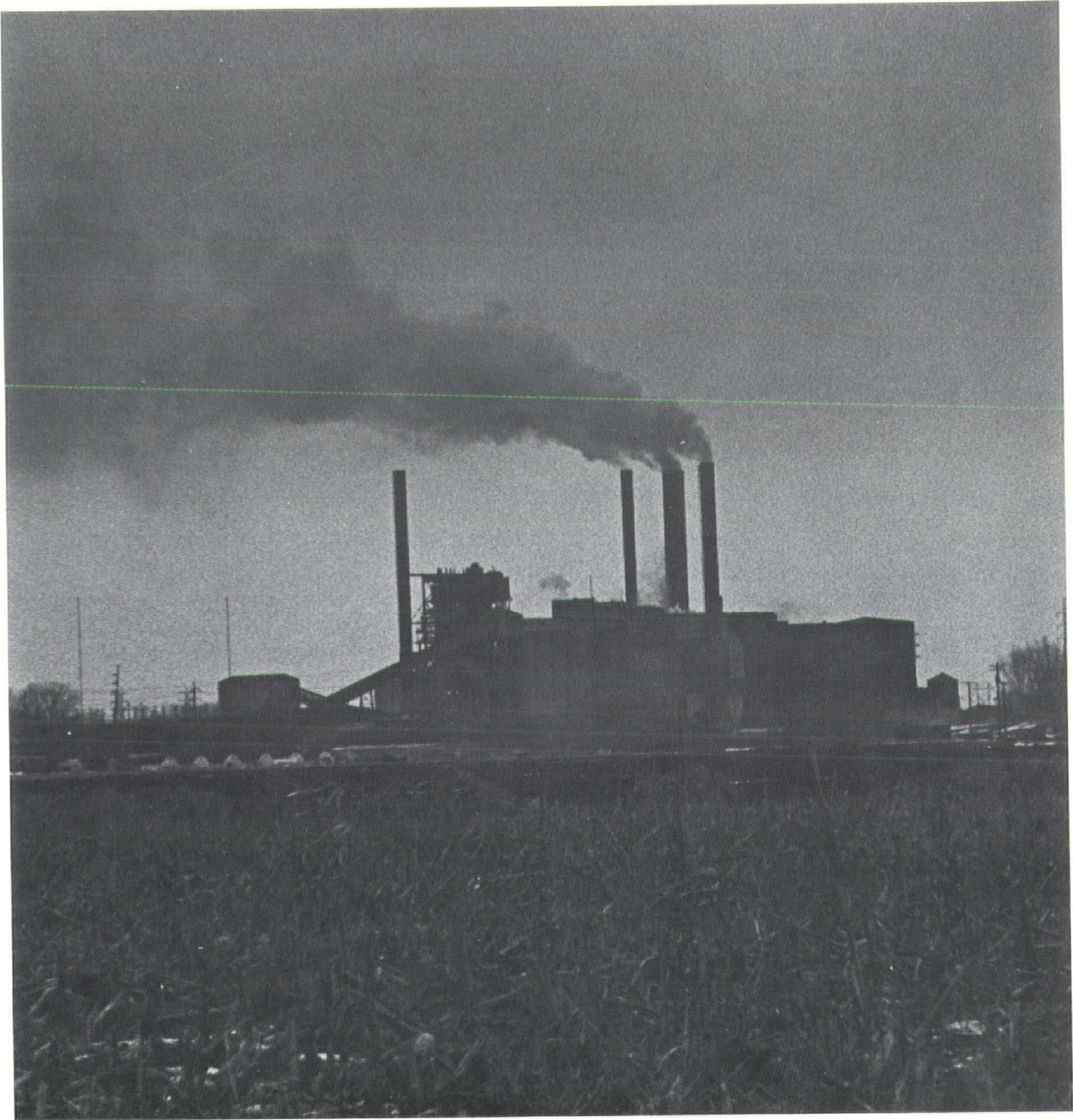
still is merit in pointing out the value of interdisciplinary knowledge and effort. This article shows that we must try to employ combined knowledge and effort to avoid, in other ecological systems, what has happened to the Great Lakes. If the definition of Environment as "the sum total of all external forces affecting an organism," is valid, then we must learn about the environment as a summation of these forces and not as isolated elements.

Within the environment is a myriad of systems of interacting organisms. The organisms, man, plants and animals, interact within systems, and the systems interact with other systems forming a continuum of cause and effect relationships. This study of the relationships of organisms to each other and to the systems is called Ecology. While the word ecology has been applied in the past primarily to plant and animal life, it is apparent that this approach is also valid to study the activities of man. None of man's activities are isolated phenomena. Crime is affected by poor social conditions, which are affected by low income, which is affected by poor education, etc. These problems are all interrelated and form a social continuum, analogous to the continuous processes found in nature.

The growth of central cities and suburbs has occurred with no concern for man's inherent ties to nature. Man's need for air, water, food, reproduction and space are basically similar to the same needs in other organisms in nature. Yet, the development of man's living communities was governed almost solely by laissez-faire economics. Only recently have efforts begun to assure future generations an available supply of those elements necessary to the proper growth of man and his communities. The business-industrial community is woefully unaware of the problem and noticeably reluctant to lead in the efforts necessary to plan for the future. So far only the government and a few diverse conservation groups are mobilizing for the long and costly fight. The government until recently has stressed the area of housing and associated social problems. The conservation groups, such as The National Wildlife Foundation and the Sierra Club, have been largely interested in plants, animals, air and water, primarily outside our urban areas.

What can we do as citizens and members of the Profession? First, we can bring our influence to bear among those who must formulate public policy and appropriate public money, the elected officials and professionals in government. The ARCHITECTURAL RECORD, October 1969, "News Reports," notes several acts of the President and Congress toward developing awareness and control of the environment. It is my opinion that environmental coordination between governmental agencies and private interests is so large a problem that it immediately deserves cabinet level, state and county authority. As the above "News

continued overleaf





Report" notes, environmental quality appointees are given advisory status. Many of the elements of our environment, especially air and water, are in such bad shape, that I am not sure the government, business or industry is willing to invest enough to reverse the trends while supporting a war, a moon race and other dubious expenditures. The pressures of our profession and other interested groups must be sufficient to reverse the pressures of business and industry to pump oil into Santa Barbara Channel, build a Disneyland in a National Forest or destroy the Everglades with an airport. An interesting indictment of the Corp of Engineers and its single-minded efforts to build dams can be read in a recent PLAYBOY MAGAZINE. It was authored by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

The second thing we can do is to be interested and influential in the field of education at all levels. From the early grades we study many subjects which, when taken as a whole, are the study of environment and ecology. But, rather than a continuous interrelated process being stressed, an isolated independent approach is presented. An occasional overview could pull this course work into a unified understanding of the world we live in. Studies of the environment, ecology, and cause and effect should be taught as an adjunct to the highly specific courses in sociology, psychology, physiology, chemistry, physics, economics and government. The education of students in the design professions continues this spotty process. They are misled into designing objects and spaces for man with little or no knowledge of man's psychology or physiology, sociology or economics, government or religion; with little or no knowledge of how man relates to man and his community as a part of this continuous system.

In short, design, like other disciplines, ignores man as a natural organism, ignores the reasons for his stresses and ignores the ways man has to counteract social and physical stresses. Or, even more disastrous, the design professions rely on design itself as the single solution to man's environmental problems.

The third thing we can do is welcome the knowledge and participation of other disciplines; to admit our ignorance of man as a physical-social organism and to admit that the past influence of other design community has been slight. We do, however, have, as others do, enough generalized education to see the problems ahead. Planners and architects are not, if present trends continue, going to lead the way to a better environment. In fact, we are not even going to be influential until we are willing to join the efforts on a basis which allows room for the talents, knowledge and opinions of others who are better prepared in specific disciplines. The Great Lakes article attests to the complexity of a real environmental problem and the value of the multi-disciplinary approach to the intended solutions. Another example is to welcome the com-

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# DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

MERIDA, YUCATAN, MEXICO  
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

By John Hanway



Pyramid of the Magician Uxmal, Yucatan



El Castillo Chichen Itza, Yucatan



Typical Mayan Huts Yucatan

While most of the students at Iowa State University were just beginning their first day of class for spring quarter 1969, twenty-six architectural students and two faculty members, Karol Kocimski and Peyo Mihailovski, were assembling in New Orleans. This group boarded a plane and flew to Merida, Yucatan, located at the lower end of Mexico on the Gulf peninsula.

Composed of second through fifth year students, each paid approximately \$1000, including tuition, transportation, room, board and some personal expenses, for the three month study program. Most students felt that they spent less in Merida than they would have spent in Ames during a normal spring quarter.

The day after they arrived, formal class work began. Classes were held in a building on the campus of the Technical University in Merida. The regular architectural courses (design and seminar) were offered, along with Mechanical Engineering, Building Construction, and Freehand Drawing. Everyone was required to take a Spanish language course and a course entitled "History and Archeology of The Area", which included field trips to nearby points of interest.

In the design class, a brief study of the University was initiated to help everyone get his bearings, and then the group was divided into three teams. The teams were assigned the problem of designing the master plan of a hypothetical fishing village, "Yukalpeten." The teams studied the village of Progreso, located on the coast fifteen miles from Merida, which lies adjacent to the selected site of Yukalpeten. Existing housing needs, building techniques (predominantly concrete block and plaster), and industrial plants were studied and evaluated. After each team had designed a prototype housing unit, the second year students then developed this unit during the remainder of the eight weeks spent in Merida. The third and fourth year students continued with their team concept and devised a master plan for Yukalpeten.

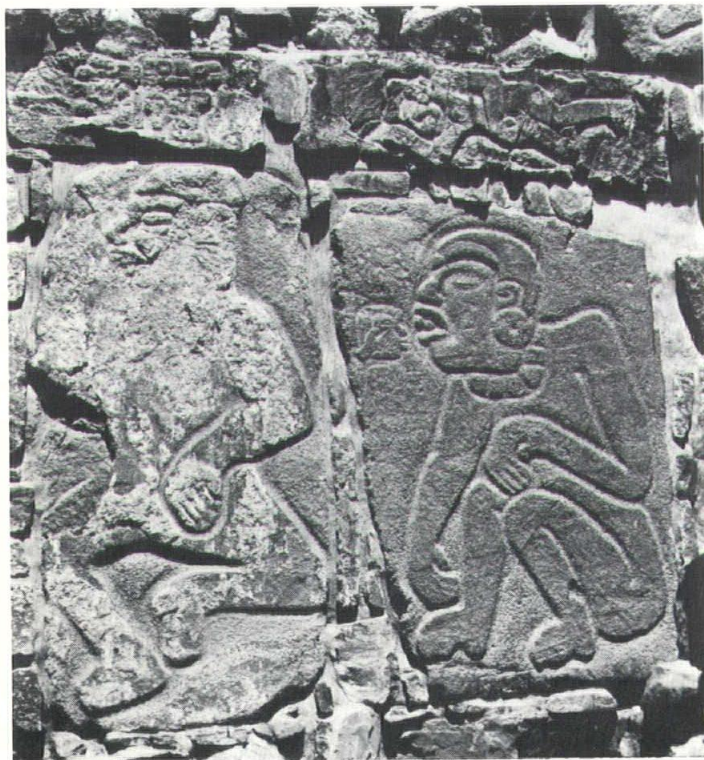
From the middle of March until the middle of May, the students lived in a two story motel in Merida. The motel featured a pool, bar, restaurant, and a deck overlooking a private courtyard; hardly comparable to the dorms back in Ames.

Merida, now a city of 145,000 people, was originally a Mayan village (the Mayan civilization dates back to 432 - 455 A.D.). Much of the population today is of Mayan ancestry and many of the Indians still live in stick huts with thatched roofs. The Spaniards conquered the Mayans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and now Yucatan exists as a province of Mexico. Merida is a clean, village-scaled city. The streets are still shared with the horse and buggy. The weather during the three months was a holiday . . . it rained only twice and the temperature varied between seventy-two and eighty-five degrees. Banana, orange, and palm trees are plentiful. Also plentiful are cathedrals representing the large Catholic num-

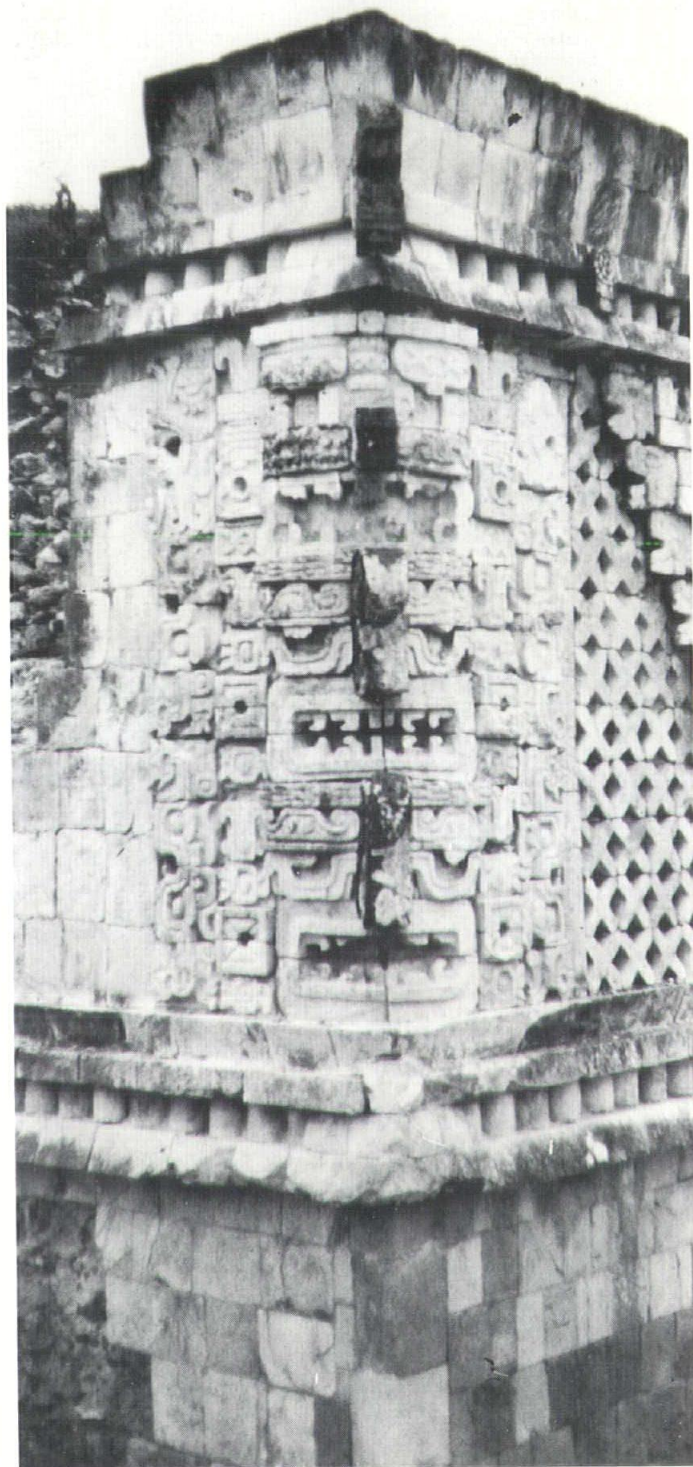
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Temple of the 7 Dolls Dzibilchaltun, Yucatan



Figures of "Dancers" Monte Alban, Oaxaca



Building of the Columns Mitla, Oaxaca



bers in Yucatan. Most of the people derive their income directly or indirectly from the fishing industry. Children in Yucatan go to school only half-days and help with the family income for the rest of the day.

The students made several field trips while based in Merida. These included Chichen Itza, Uxmal, Dzibilchultun, Kabah, Sayil, Progreso, and Isla Mujeres. After they had completed their tests for the quarter, the group left for Oaxaca, further to the north. While spending two days in Oaxaca, they also visited Monte Alben and Mitla. The formal tour ended with two weeks in Mexico City, with attractions such as the Folklorico Ballet, a bullfight, the Olympic Stadium, the Museum of Modern Art, the typical market atmosphere and several surrounding towns, Puebla and Tasca included. The students were formally dismissed at the end of the two week period; however, several students remained in Mexico City and environs like Acapulco for extended periods.

Besides seeing and experiencing a totally different contemporary culture, the class also gained an insight into an ancient civilization that was extremely advanced. Early city planning, sewage systems, building techniques, and artistic expression evidenced a sophistication invaluable to the education of a future architect.



Fishing Village Progreso, Yucatan



Library at Univ. City Mexico City, Mexico



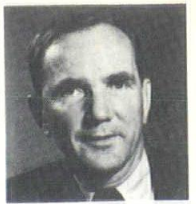
ISU Architectural Students and Friends in Mexico

# AN ARCHITECTURE CRITIC SPEAKS OUT ON ARCHITECTURAL CRITICISM

By Wolf Von Eckardt

Architecture Critic of The WASHINGTON POST

(As printed in the EMPIRE STATE ARCHITECT)



Wolf Von Eckardt

Thank God, we are speaking more bluntly now.

The blacks in the ghettos and the kids on the campuses have cut the cocoon of the complacent cant. For too long we had spun silky words around the American condition in the delusion that this would somehow hatch the butterfly—Great Cities in a Great Society.

We had gotten high on our delusion of domestic affluence and foreign omnipotence, higher even than SOM's 100-story Horrible Hancock in Chicago. And now, down in the slums of our reality and confusion, we are in a state of national hangover, a hangover partly remorseful, partly aggressive, decidedly irritable.

Irritable men dispense with politeness and extenuation. They are inclined to speak out, to face failures, to ridicule foibles, to rake muck, to insist on relevance, to criticize. Why, now even on television they sometimes try to tell it like it is.

Isn't this all to the good? It manifests, does it not, that, hang-over or not, we care. Surely, it is a sign of a deeper caring about our condition, our culture, that in recent years art has tired of freaking out into cold, abstract expressionism and is moving back into the heat of human social concern. And that now we can read and hear so much more and so much sharper, more sophisticated and more literate criticism of literature, theater, film, music and all the rest.

But not of architecture and design. Not really.

There is, to be sure, more general interest and more public discussion about architecture, urban and industrial design than there was a decade ago. Nat Glazer and his school of sociologists are wrong. Environment does have an influence on human behavior. Genuine scientists, such as the brilliant microbiologist, Rene Dubos, are coming forth with the evidence. The pervasive importance of the environment is beginning to be recognized and talked about not only on the cocktail circuit, but in neighborhood meetings. Winston Churchill's truism that, though first we shape our buildings, in the end our buildings shape us, has become almost a platitude. On rare occasion this notion is now even entertained by the agents of government who program our urban highways, school and other public buildings, though never, oh never, will they willingly permit such as beauty and humanity to enter their narrow-mindedly engineered cost-benefit equations.

Which leaves the factors which might make Americans yet something better than wretched victims of their technological revolution to the Donnybrook of "black power" and "citizen participation." There is nothing wrong with participatory democracy and equality, of course. And in time those who so rightly demand a piece of the action will also learn to act constructively. But on the urban scene remains participation in what? Power to do what? The confrontations are seldom, if ever, about design issues. So the best we can hope for as yet is to resolve some of our most explosive urban conflicts by political compromise. We would all be better off to resolve them by creative design.

But who confronts design?

Newspapers may report in elaborate detail all the politics—"who struck John" blow by blow—of a building or urban planning or new transportation project. More often than not, they tell us little about the project's functional or esthetic merits, little save its cost and other uninformative statistics. The picture of the model, sheepishly pointed at by some hastily summoned female, or worse, some grinning official, is of little help. Scrap for the scrapbooks.

We read these days in considerable detail how the lack of protein in the diet of malnourished slum children affects their later learning. We find little in public print how the learning of even well-fed children may be impeded by poorly designed school buildings, to say nothing of the effects on our populations of the esthetic malnutrition prevalent in—oh, no, by no means just in the poverty areas.

There are perhaps half a dozen professional journalists in this country today who write regularly and critically about these matters in the newspapers. (CANSAC, the Casual (but most cordial) Association of (fully employed and overworked) Newspaper Staff Architecture Critics (no, please! not "architectural" critics; architectural they are not), has only two members—Ada Louise Huxtable of the NEW YORK TIMES and this writer, who works for THE WASHINGTON POST.) A few more journalists venture an occasional architectural piece in a magazine not exclusively devoted to the subject.

Statistically, which seems the only way we measure it these days, this is progress. A decade or so ago there was only one professional architecture critic, Lewis Mumford and his sparkling "Skyline" pieces in THE NEW YORKER. Since Mumford has absorbed himself in his books, however, THE NEW YORKER has been as silent on architecture as the LADIES HOME JOURNAL used to be on social disease. (I can't really blame them, though, if that's what they think architecture is.)

American television, even the educational kind, has not yet discovered architecture, that is to say, a lively format for scrutinizing this important subject with good minds and good cameras. Aline Saarinen might occasionally mention it. Ever so often some TV reporter might stick a microphone in the face of an architecture critic in the hope of catching a good quote. But on the whole we don't have the enlightened tele-vision of the British who quite frequently put their many articulate architecture critics—Rayner Banham, Ian Nairn and others—on the tube.

Need we argue the pressing need to assess architecture in the press and to air it on the air? It is not a new idea. In fact, one of America's foremost architecture critics, Montgomery Schuyler, was at his journalistic best (on the old NEW YORK WORLD and later the TIMES, as well as in HARPER'S WEEKLY and ARCHITECTURAL RECORD) some seventy and eighty years ago. Yet, I still as gladly own Schuyler's argument for criticism as I still sadly subscribe to his judgment.

"It is more true, perhaps, of architecture than of any of the other arts that deal with form," Schuyler argued, "that the prosperity and advancement of it depend upon the existence of an enlightened public as well as of skillful practitioners."

He thought it vital that educated laymen "have a sense so habitual and automatic that it may well seem to be instinctive of the fitness or unfitness, congruity or incongruity, beauty or ugliness of the buildings that he daily passes, and that in any case must exert upon him an influence that is not the less but the more powerful for being unconsciously felt."

Such a sense, Schuyler went on, is best acquired by the "habitual contemplation of excellent works." But—and here comes the judgment—"it will not be denied that there are many American communities in which one may grow up to manhood without once having sight of a respectable specimen of the art of architecture."

Thank you, Mr. Schuyler. As we all know, architects obviously need clients to produce architecture (unless it's Philip Johnson building a mini-pavilion for Philip Johnson). Obviously, father's best chromosomes don't assure a respectable offspring if mother is a moron. The client, in the end, is always the public. Not a moron, perhaps, but devoid of late of that habitual and automatic sense for fitness or unfitness, congruity or incongruity, etc. The public instinct got lost somewhere in the confusion of our age. (So, it would seem, somewhere between the Ecole des Beaux Arts and the Rue de Sevre in Paris did the architects' instinct.) There are no works on whose relevant excellence we could orient ourselves. As in art we need blunt critics in architecture to—well, if not to enlighten the public, at least shed light on the subject. Or try to.

We need them even more than in art. Architecture and urban design and the stuff they make in Detroit and in the furniture factories are so much more pervasive. They are not safeguarded in galleries. We all have to suffer them, even if some architectural stunt abominates the skyline, even if some private client, like San Francisco's Transamerica Corporation foots the bill. As Winston Churchill said . . . Why, we're not even talking about architecture, man. We're talking about like the whole environment fights us. We've gotta fight back.

But how does the critic know?

That is simple. He doesn't.

The best he can do is to try to develop some literacy, cultivate his knowledge of history. We have to know where we have been to gain some perspective on where we might be going. Ha, here is the word. Perspective. Try to gain some perspective. And speak up. Speak bluntly. This is no time for on the one hand pussyfoot this and the other pussyfoot that. And if architects can't stand the heat, they should get out of the public kitchen.

But let the reader be warned. In the end the critic, too, only rationalizes his instinctive, or gut reaction, much as most architects are apt to

rationalize their first inspiration on the back of that proverbial envelope (even if that inspiration was for an entirely different commission or program). Only the architects, or too many of them, rationalize with more or less plausible public relations mumbo-jumbo about the depth of their searching design studies, the erudition of their spatial relationships, about functional symbolism and symbolic function. The critic tries to rationalize with a little learning and understanding of public needs.

But he doesn't know for sure. He can be very wrong. Some critics have argued that Mozart in his time wrote terrible music and a whole generation of architecture critics have told us that all Victorian architecture was eo ipso awful. Times change. Tastes change. And the critic doesn't write for eternity. He is just as much part of the epoch that, according to Mies, architecture translates into space. Except he tries to stay ahead of the pack.

And he has a point of view. You don't see anything much unless you have a point of view. And my point of view is simply, as Albert Mayer has put it so well, that trend is not destiny. Just because we are moving at the speed of sound toward an unlivable technocracy we don't have to go on moving in that direction. The brakes will screech and fume. They will jolt us and badly shake conventional wisdom. But there is a reverse gear—a new humanism—we can still shift into. We don't have to be infatuated by a Horrible Hancock just because it is there. Our capabilities are not necessities. Just because we can ram a big skyscraper into Grand Central Station quite legally, we don't have to justify it morally.

Poppycock. Whose morals? Well, dammit, mine, if you will. I am no more impressed by the imperatives of what some call "progress" than I am by zoning and building legalities or some investor's God-given right to make a lot of money. The progress, the codes and the investors have not of late very noticeably improved our environment. They are steadily disimproving, "deproving" (Joe Alsop's word), our place to live. It is high time to reverse the trend towards ghastly giganticism and stunting stunts. The quality of life we profess to seek has little to do with the quality of our engineering.

The time has come for public discussion not only of what and how to build but also what and how not to build. More building, more of the same, not even more money and more of Bob Wood's wooden model city magic will renew our cities even to the point of their old efficacy (no, I am not romanticizing the past), let alone modern livability. They will be livable only if they are lovable and beloved. That calls as much, if not more, for creative preservation than for technical, innovation. It calls for continuity as well as for change. Yes, I am angry.

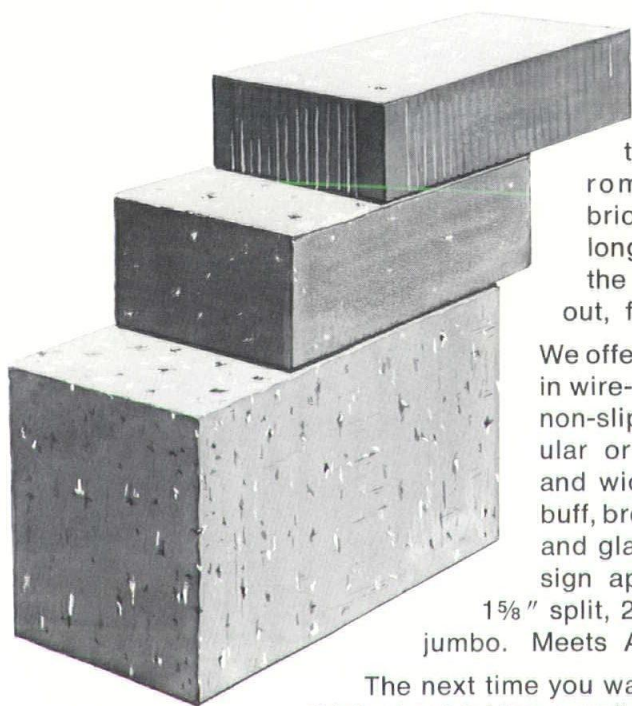
I share the anger of the young about so much that is so wrong, so deadly wrong about the established system of values and—the phrase bears repeating—the mess that is man-made America.

Yet I stand four-square on my side of the gener-

continued page 29

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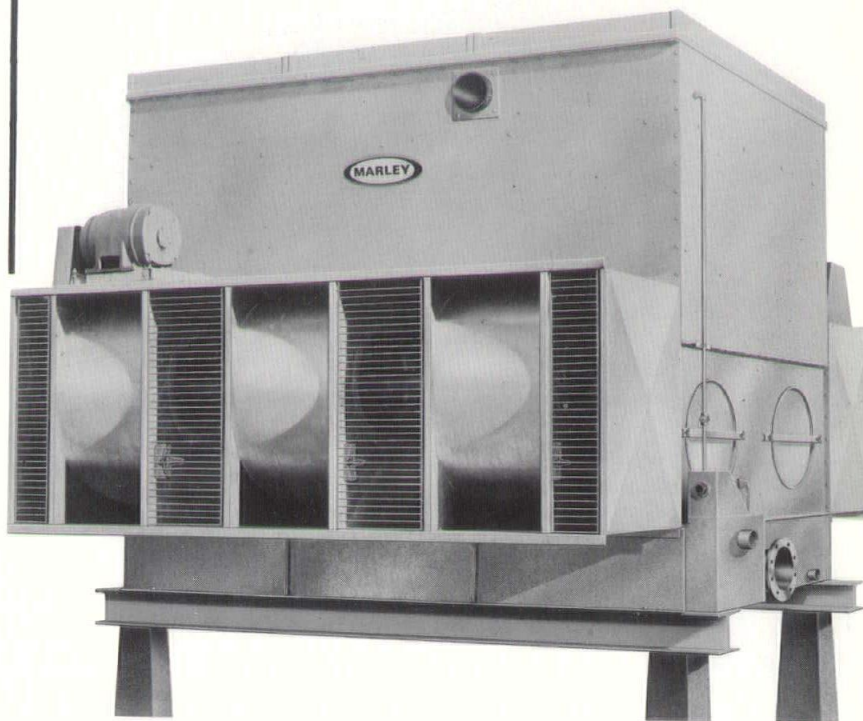
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## Environment cont.

puter sciences into the mathematical and graphic structuring of the highly complex environmental relationships, relationships which are too difficult to see without this valuable tool.

The fourth thing we can do is to support regional planning. Governmental subdivisions are artificial and only of value in environmental problems because of taxation and public spending. The majority of the environmental problems overlap community boundaries. So far, regional planning is the only instrument to deal with these. In the cases of the Great Lakes, major rivers and long distance power transmission, the problems will involve many states and therefore must become problems of the Federal Government or widespread planning units.

Finally and perhaps most importantly is the value of personal involvement. The problems of the environment are vast, as are the solutions. We cannot all be involved in all of the issues, but we can be involved in some . . . those about which we have some knowledge and interest. Many of the issues of environmental improvement will be unpopular with the business community, the source of many of our clients. Crowded subdivisions, substandard housing, power transmission lines, sign proliferation and parking lots are to many people the signs of prosperity and good business . . . and they are. Our problem, it seems to me, is one of selling the idea that better planning, land use and design will not diminish the cause of that business success, but will make a better environment in which these things can flourish. The total costs in the long run will be less. Listening to and being sympathetic with the motivation of the business and industrial sectors is essential in joining efforts to assure that our communities become better places in which to live instead of the source of constant problems.



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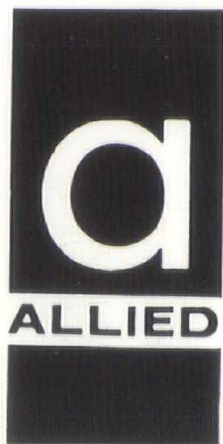
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## **AIRTEX** *radiant ceiling from ALLIED* *offers total comfort conditioning in airport*

Dubuque's Municipal Airport features floor-to-ceiling glass exterior walls. They posed special heating and cooling problems to the architect. In addition, acoustical and lighting needs had to be met for the large waiting room, as well as for ticket counter and baggage areas. AIRTEX\* acoustical textured metal panels from ALLIED made this attractive integrated ceiling a continuous radiant surface — highly efficient for year-around air comfort and sound conditioning — with each panel immediately accessible and no heating or cooling obstructions on floors or walls. Integrated in the ceiling over large open areas were KEENE lighting fixtures. Then, for customized overhead lighting in the ticket counter and baggage section, ALLIED furnished CEPCO fixtures and panels.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss your next project.

\* AIRTEX radiant ceilings will be found in seven major Iowa hospital installations.



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**STRENGTH**—in excess of Federal and ASTM specifications and local building code requirements.

**FIRE RESISTANCE**—Underwriters Laboratories Standards for Safety UL 618, August 1958, tests rate 8" Haydite block, with a  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " face shell, at 2 hours. A  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " face shell is rated at 4 hours.

**UNIFORMITY**—in size, texture and color for accuracy and beauty.

**ACOUSTICS**—are improved by the cellular structure of the aggregate and the texture of the block. Approximate noise reduction coefficient of a medium textured, unpainted Haydite block is 0.45.

**THERMAL INSULATION**—the U factor (average) on 8" Haydite blocks is 0.32 and on 12", 0.29.

**DURABLE**—exceeds Federal and ASTM specifications for hollow, load-bearing masonry, above and below grade. Laboratory tests show 100 cycles of freezing and thawing without visible damage or loss of weight.

**NON-STAINING & NON-CORROSIVE**—the chemically inert composition of Haydite eliminates discoloration of the block, or to paint or plaster applied to the block.

**ATTRACTIVE**—a pleasing texture and natural gray color suitable for many applications without further treatment.

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#### Criticism cont.

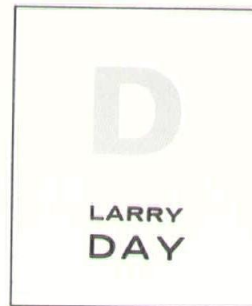
ation gap. Besides, it wouldn't gain me anything to be uncle tomming with the young (Nicholas von Hoffman's phrase). That would be as dishonest as it is for middle-class suburban kids to ape the slang of the ghetto. I wouldn't look good in long hair, in any event, and I would look worse were I suddenly to condemn what I have so long supported. I wouldn't serve architecture by disavowing all those honest attempts, those searching efforts of the past 50 years. In its social aims the 20th century architectural revolution has failed. But that is no cause for counter-revolution. It is cause to try harder.

So I am not seduced by the Ventury bit. There is, to be sure, a certain fascination in visual chaos of the Las Vegas strip. But ugliness is not beautiful. Complexity is not simple. Contradiction is no value in itself. Chaos is chaos. I, too, love the messiness of life and I, too, believe that it takes germs to germinate a true, a genuine, a popular culture.

But nature, including man's messy nature, takes care of itself. We have our hands full attempting order. There can be no social order with an urban order. Nat Glazer, as noted, is wrong. And messiness, lovable and not so lovable, will take over soon enough.

An architecture critic's foremost responsibility, then, is responsibility—response-ability to the architectural and design needs of society as he sees them. He cultivates, if he can, his public's cultural awareness. He speaks bluntly to launch the discussion on whether the design he reviews does or does not fairly translate the best of our epoch into space.

But he is mindful, too, that the epoch is what we make it. If we do make it.



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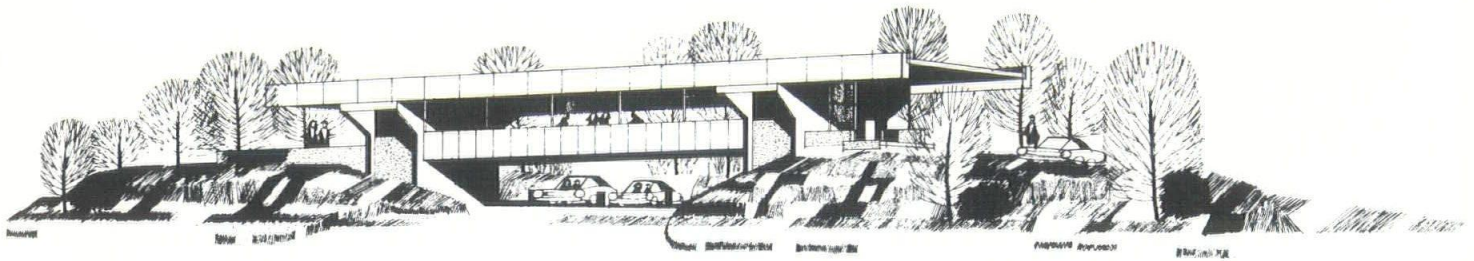
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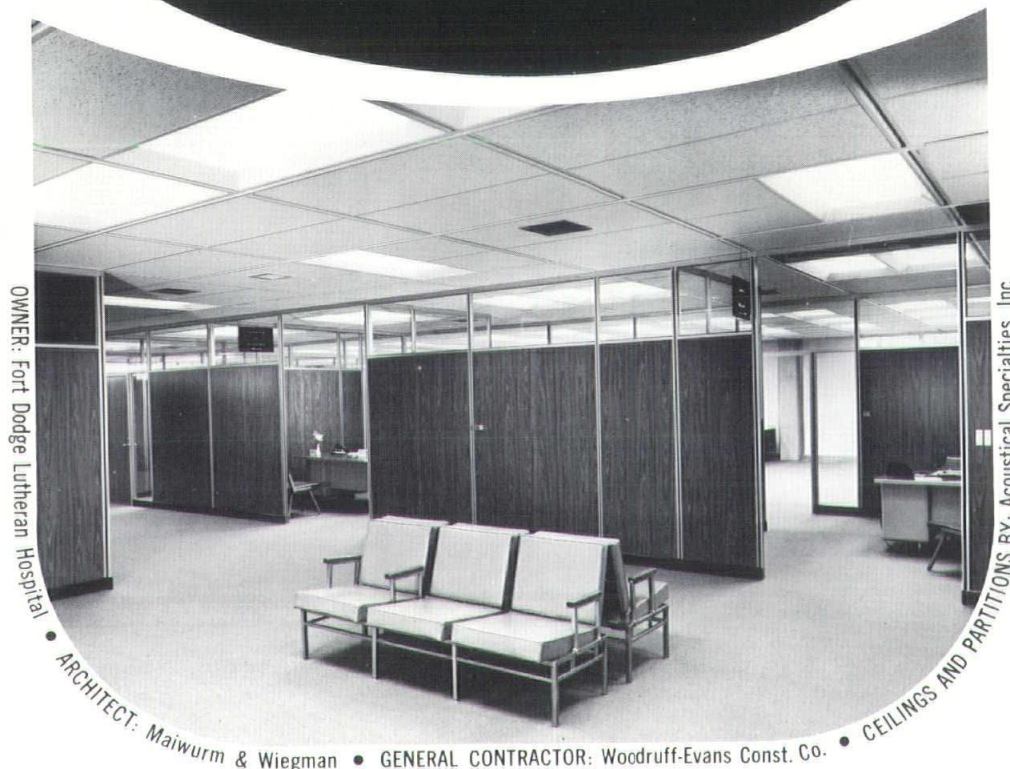
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# MASONITE-O'BRIEN PARTITIONS CONWED CEILING BOARD KEEP FORT DODGE HOSPITAL ON A 5' MODULE



OWNER: Fort Dodge Lutheran Hospital

ARCHITECT: Maiwurm & Wiegman

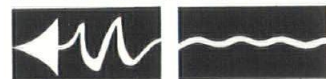
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Woodruff-Evans Const. Co.

CEILINGS AND PARTITIONS BY: Acoustical Specialties, Inc.

There's no need to be chained to a 4' interior module with these attractive partitions. Here at Lutheran Hospital, the Architect used a 5' x 5' structural system - the 30 x 60 Conwed Fissura ceiling and the O'Brien feature stud system tied in. The panels are Teak Vinylcote with doors to match. They're beautiful, completely movable - and not nearly as expensive as they look.

*Acoustical Specialties also installs Pen Metal Partitions and Johns-Manville and Owens Corning Fiberglas ceilings.*

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