

Iowa Architect

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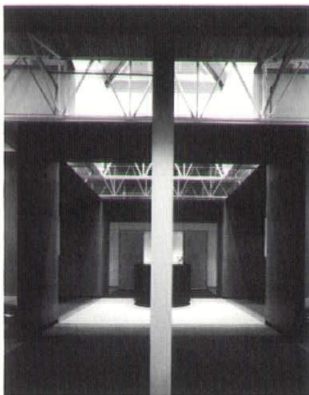
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Children and Families of Iowa
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Des Moines, Iowa

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Rocking Tradition

Modernism has not been kind to the rocking chair. Compile anyone's list of favorite rockers, Adirondack, Lincoln or Bentwood; you won't find a modernist among them. Perhaps the last, great, rocking chair of this century was crafted in 1905 by Viennese designer, Josef Hoffman. And while Richard Meier did at least pay some homage to the rocker's noble tradition with his 1982 Knoll chaise lounge, you cannot help but feel his heart was not

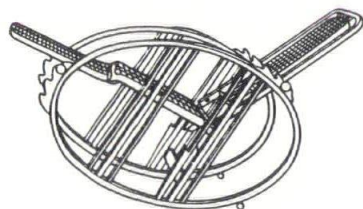
double-take on our expectations of the rocking chair. It clearly does not look "right." Yet, it is this pronounced incongruity which so succinctly focuses our attention on the fundamental simplicity and beauty of its original design.

But does it "work?" Pasanella thinks so. "Mothers have told me that the side to side rocking motion of the chair matches their own movements in comforting their young. A psychologist, in

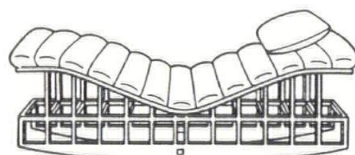
fact, suggested that the chair could have great therapeutic value in the treatment of disturbed patients."

Pasanella's chair would be admirable for these reasons alone. The importance of his work, however, is in sharing his recognition of the beauty inherent in the simple constructions of American craftsmen to a world that has mistakenly overlooked their considerable merits.

Lynn S. Spears



Rocking Chair 1905
Josef Hoffman



Chaise Lounge 1982
Richard Meier

really in the spirit of the endeavor. It is hard to imagine anyone truly enjoying the experience of rocking to and fro while lying fully prone.

Modernists, it seems, never fully appreciated the sensuous and beguiling pleasures of the rocking chair. There was something disturbingly suspect in its swaying indifference to conventional geometries. Modernists have always had difficulty with this sort of "arrogant" ambiguity. When it came to the rocking chair, they chose the only logically permissible course of action; to ignore its existence altogether.

That ignorance is, in part, the motivation for Marco Pasanella's creation. Born to a family of architects; traditional modernist architects, he reacted (and perhaps rebelled) by examining the rich, but frequently-dismissed beauty of native American furnishings. His rocking chair, though firmly rooted in a tradition of American craftsmanship, presents a curious



Rocking Chair, from the Pasanella Company, 420 Riverside Drive, New York, New York, 10025.

The Arts

Sculpture Series At The Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art

Sculptures by Auguste Rodin, Donald De Lue, and Paul Manship, three artists whose lives and work are related to Malvina Hoffman, will be on exhibition concurrently from September 15 through October 30 at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art. Hoffman is represented in the museum's permanent collection by more than 200 works, which are highlighted with those of her contemporaries. The sculpture series began last April and will conclude at the end of this year.



Auguste Rodin *Monumental Head of Jean D'Aire*, c. 1900 Bronze, Georges Rudier Foundry 26 3/4 x 19 7/8 x 22 1/2".

Brooks Stevens *Evinrude Fisherman*, 1957, rendering.



Ron Rodriguez *Bottle Cap Snake*, Tesuque, New Mexico, 1985, metal, wire, paint, wood, plastic, 58"L x 1 1/4" diameter. Animal Carnival Collection of the Museum of American Folk Art, gift of Elizabeth Wecter.

Brooks Stevens Designs In Motion

In conjunction with the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's survey of the work of Milwaukee designer, Brooks Stevens, the Madison Art Center will review Stevens' numerous boat and automobile designs. August 17 to November 11, 1991.

Access To Art: Bringing Folk Art Closer

From August 17 to October 20, the Madison Art Center will present works from the collection of the Museum of American Folk Art in an exhibition designed for blind and visually impaired individuals.

Landscape In 20th Century American Art, Selections From The Metropolitan Museum Of Art

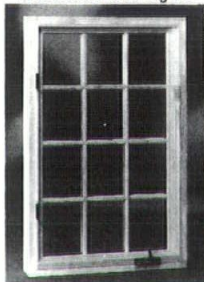
In September, the Joslyn Art Museum will mount: *The Landscape in the 20th Century*,

Selections from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This exhibition features the works of American artists who have interpreted the landscape through this century's diverse stylistic approaches: abstraction, realism and conceptualism. Various regional aspects of the American Landscape are also depicted. Among the artists included are Thomas Hart Benton, John Stewart Curry, Marsden Hartley, Edward Hopper, Rockwell Kent, Clyfford Still, and Max Weber. The exhibit will run from September 14 through November 10, 1991.

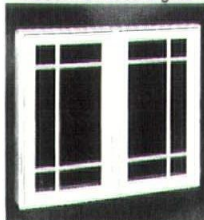
Horace Pippin *Lady of the Lake*, 1936, oil on canvas.



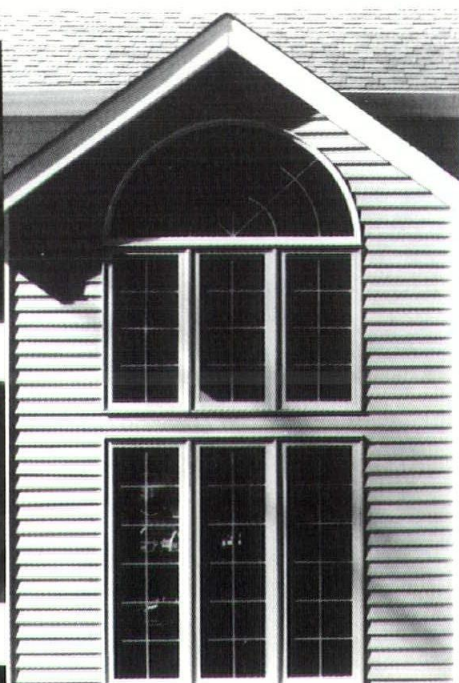
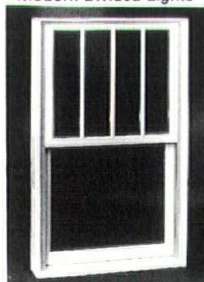
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Wood Grilles shown in this photo.

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**Viewpoints: Alan Rath
At The Walker**

This exhibition features computerized video sculptures by Alan Rath, an Oakland, California-based artist who explores the expressive potential of contemporary technology. Likening himself to a garage inventor in a field dominated by high-tech, big-budget corporations, Rath builds his sculptures from scratch, rummaging through Silicon Valley computer-parts warehouses for his materials, designing his own programs and circuit boards, and fabricating his

sculptures' metal framework. Though leavened by a wry wit, Rath's sculptures pose disturbing questions about the fundamental impulses behind the quest for technological advancement.

Part of the Walker's continuing Viewpoints series, the exhibition will run through September 29, 1991.

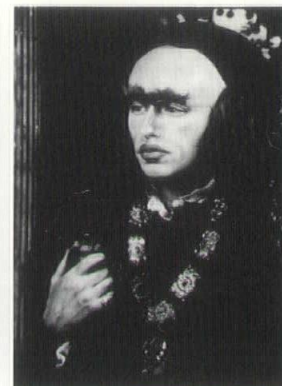
Alan Rath *Transmitter* 1990
Tripod, alum, electronics
4 speakers, 4 channels



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #224*, 1990. Type "C" color photograph.



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #199*, 1989. Type "C" color photograph.



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #213*, 1989. Type "C" color photograph.

**The Walker Features
The Photographs Of
Cindy Sherman**

Since the late 70's, Cindy Sherman has been photographing herself in a variety of costumes, poses and situations that comment on the manner women are depicted in contemporary culture. Her most recent investigation into the nature of stereotype explores the depiction of the human figure in the history of

art, particularly in portraiture of the past 300 years. In the monumental photographs that make up her "historical portraits," she masquerades as diverse subjects, including gods, monks, burghers, coquettes, and the Madonna. The Walker Art Center's presentation of this exhibit will close October 27, 1991.

Roger Spears, AIA



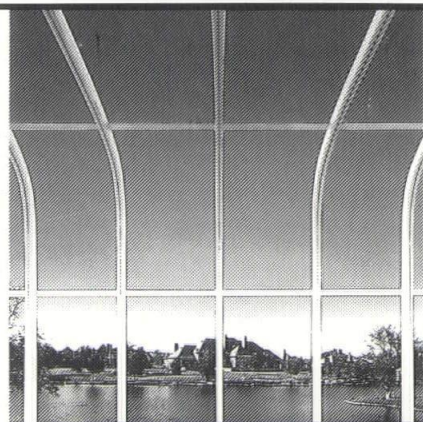
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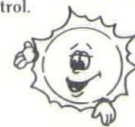


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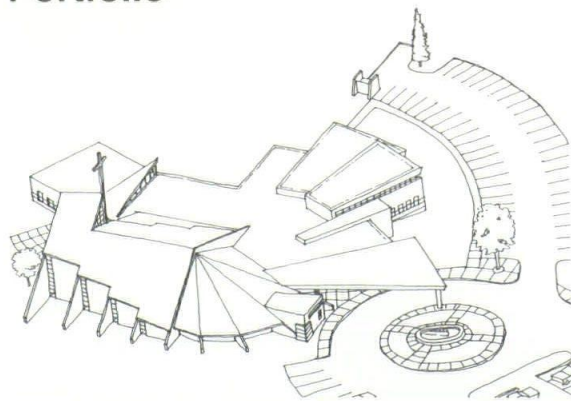
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Drake University Recreation, Sports and Convocation Center

RDG Bussard Dikis has recently completed design work for Drake University's Recreation, Sports and Convocation Center. This sports center is attached to the existing Bell Center. Massing and detail clues were taken from the existing fieldhouse and football stadium. The building fronts Forest Avenue at 26th Street and terminates the axis established by Old Main, Harmon Fine Arts and the proposed Law Building Addition. Construction is scheduled to be completed by fall 1992.

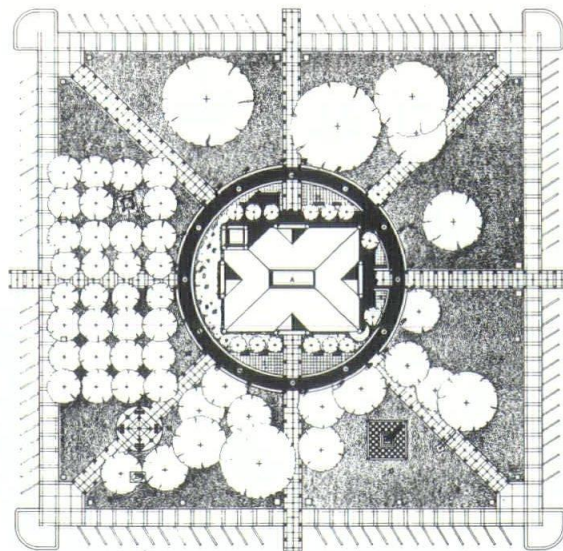
Faith Lutheran Church Adel, Iowa

Stouffer and Smith Architects has designed a new sanctuary and fellowship hall addition for Faith Lutheran Church in Adel. The major design elements of the radial plan focus historically towards the original location of the altar. The project is scheduled to start construction in the spring of 1992.



Town Square Chariton, Iowa

The Chariton Town Square has recently been designed through the Iowa Arts Council Town Squares program. A team of designers led by Thomas Baldwin, AIA, Des Moines, and Jayne Hileman, a Chicago artist, with Laura Miller, Douglas Adamson, Van Musser and Michael Hawkins participated in a 3-day charette involving town meetings and programming and resulting in a Schematic Design. The Design features new walks, plantings, parking patterns and a unique fountain inspired by the "lost" courthouse tower. Construction is scheduled for 1991.



Orange County Courthouse Orlando, Florida

A new 790,000 square foot courthouse facility is being designed by Hansen Lind Meyer, Inc. to accommodate Orange County's future judicial needs.

The design of the complex includes a 23-level courthouse tower, a 1,500-car parking garage, and two identical five-story office buildings.

The tower is designed for maximum security and utilizes

an "interstitial concept," in which a floor that houses judges and holding areas is sandwiched between two four-courtroom floors.

The colonnades along the covered walkways and at the tower's base are reflected at the top of the structure, assuring a courthouse and civic appearance. A Florida feeling is conveyed through the building's light-colored surfaces and plaza area with fountains and tropical landscaping.



Nebraska United Methodist Church, Wayne, Nebraska

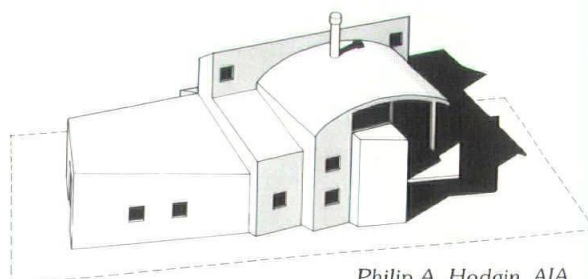
FEH Associates has completed schematic drawings for an addition to the Wayne, Nebraska United Methodist Church. The two-story structure will accommodate primarily educational functions and will house the church offices. All spaces are handicapped accessible through the use of an elevator or ramp.

The addition relates to the existing gothic structure through matching exterior finish materials and the recall of roof pitches and window and door detailing.

House in Aspen, Colorado

This rustic 3,000 square foot two-story house is currently undergoing design development by Baldwin Clause Architects. Living spaces on the upper floor maximize views of Aspen's ski slopes, fitting

tightly on a small west end lot. Serving the elements of the house, the central axis is rotated 15 degrees toward the major view. Major materials are wood siding, kalwall, insulated window units and metal roofing. Construction is scheduled for 1991.



Philip A. Hodgin, AIA



The Inside Story

Architects are not fond of distinguishing between the public image of their buildings and the inner manipulations they must perform to make these buildings "work." Architecture, in the best sense of the word, connotes an equivalent recognition of the demands of external imagery and internal functions. A legitimate work of architecture must accommodate these frequently disparate demands.

An "interior", in and of itself, may not necessarily define an architectural ideal or ambition. It is merely a pivotal component of the architect's aims. It is, however, the point at which an architect touches the user of architecture most directly. It is a relationship worth examining in some detail.

In this issue of the Iowa Architect, we will explore the architect's varied interpretations of architecture's inner substance. This "inside story" illustrates not only the fundamental skills of an architect's craft, but the critical role interior environments play in the perception and appreciation of architecture.

Inside Spaces and Inspiring Places

The problem with good interior design is that relatively few people ever see it. Because of this, architects and clients alike often commit an inordinate share of their budgets to exterior design. Good exterior design is fine. Everyone likes a handsome new building or a thoughtfully restored old one. Still, people must work and live inside these same buildings. So if a snappy new building goes up and draws a lot of attention for its clever elevations, but the inside is an impersonal collection of catalog junk, then the gesture is rather hollow.

Good interior design, especially commercial interiors, should express a client's personality and promote an image. It should provide a suitable environment for the people who work and do business there. But, exceptional interiors go beyond merely satisfying program requirements. The best interiors will stir something inside of those who enter. The configuration of spaces, sightlines, acoustics, lighting, color, and the use of materials, fixtures and hardware are all elements which designers use to create spaces as vivid as our own thoughts and places that truly inspire.

The following interiors clearly illustrate the results of a designer's successful composition of people, materials and space. Some interiors are ultra-contemporary, hard-edged and spare. Others are warm, rich and elegant. Still others are dark, mysterious and reminiscent of eras bygone. All, however, are original, and all create a distinct space with personalities as unique and endearing as an old friend.

Kelly Dinges Interior Design

Obviously, the office for this small interior design firm needs to express a sense of taste, talent and resourcefulness. This is exactly what Kelly Dinges has managed to do in its recently designed office.

By making the most of the existing space (little was done by way of renovation), the designers were able to create a strong, well-defined and well-controlled environment. The rhythm of existing rough-hewn, timber columns defines the flow of spaces and provides a dominant feature. Instead of over-accentuating the presence of these massive timbers, the

designers chose to offset them with a combination of refined antiques, industrial light fixtures and delicate partitions. The birch and glass partitions are especially effective because of the textured and embossed glass, which itself is reminiscent of another era in office design.

The Kelly Dinges office is attractive, comfortable, original and inexpensive. It is a tribute to the designer's resourcefulness, imagination, creativity and good business sense. These spaces illustrate that you don't have to spend a million bucks to do a great job. This is a lesson that surely will not be lost to their clients.



► The eclectic spaces of Kelly Dinges' office are both a personal statement and reminiscent of another era in office design.

Mauck & Associates

A large, curving reception desk serves as the centerpiece of this renovation project. The client, a graphic-design firm, wanted to present a contemporary, high-tech image while maintaining private and efficient spaces. The designers at RDG Bussard Dikis Associates used whites, greys, blacks and metallic finishes to accent an already spare, clean environment. The reception desk, through its scale and unusual shape, defines the spaces and directs the visitor's eye through the carefully placed sightlines. Other important and imaginative elements of the design include a double-layered perforated screen which effectively defines spaces without separating them. This screen also serves as an effective backdrop for the client's art collection.

The spaces here reflect a crisp, unencumbered wit and a highly creative resourcefulness. There is little pretense here; no back-slapping bravado. It is by no means a cold interior, but you'd be safe in saying it is "pretty cool." This design may not appeal to everyone, but if you're looking for a highly skilled, talented graphic designer then the self-confidence of these spaces will make a strong impression.

Park Clinic

Finding new uses for grand old buildings is perhaps the best way for a community to forge into its future while retaining its past. With an abundance of architectural treasures (including some remarkable F.L. Wright structures), Mason City, Iowa, is a city that is sensitive to good design. So when the Park Clinic decided to restore a downtown opera house that dates back to the 1880's, everyone in town became excited.

The high visibility of the site is partly why the Park Clinic chose this site for their satellite medical clinic. A local firm, Bergland & Cram, was given the task of restoring the exterior and renovating the interior into a family practice and women's health clinic, which would be architecturally sensitive to the original building.

On the inside, two separate clinics were created with a shared staff, lab and X-ray facilities. The two clinics are set on either side of the space and are divided by a row of "mini-houses" which house the shared facilities and staff.

While little is left of the original interior except for the pressed-tin ceiling, the spirit of the original building is maintained. The use of natural light in this open space brings a healthy exuberance that should be welcome to the staff and visitor alike.



▲ Unusual shapes and metallic finishes create a commanding backdrop for Mauck & Associates' impressive collection of art.

▼ Mini-houses in the Park Clinic separate clinics and maximize access to natural light. Above, restored pressed-tin ceilings retain the character of the original building interior.





Shiffler Associates

This is another interior that is vitally important to its business. Shiffler Associates designed its interior not only to look good, but more specifically, to express an image of controlled creativity with an eye on the bottom line. While such ideas can be communicated in proposals, they are best expressed by example. What better example of designers' work than their own offices.

In order to put these ideas across to visitors and at the same time create spaces which promote comfort and creativity in its staff, Shiffler Associates employed a linear, rhythmic plan. The horizontal flow of drafting tables runs parallel to a series of floor-to-ceiling partitions. The steady beat of tables and partitions is carefully broken by use of color (one of the partitions has been boldly painted red), stiff stone walls, and an arced ceiling element. Conversely, an uninterrupted light fixture runs the length of the space like a long stretch of West-Texas highway.

The space is daring, almost risky. It employs few traditional decorative elements, nor does it appear "futuristic" or glib. This interior is Shiffler's showroom, an essay on solid design skills. But if designers do not show off their skills in their own offices, then something is definitely wrong.

La Mair Mulock Condon Insurance

This 125-year-old firm celebrated its anniversary by purchasing and renovating a two-story, 20,000 sq. ft. brick building in downtown Des Moines. The building was featureless but not unattractive. La Mair Mulock Condon wanted to create an office environment that reflected their self-described balance between "old-fashioned business sense" and a desire to "flow with the challenges of a coming age."

In response, the architects at RDG Bussard Dikis came up with a comprehensive programming package that involved an evaluation of the firm's objectives and goals, analysis of departmental relationships, and growth projections. This led to the development of standards for systems furniture and private offices which allow for manageable growth within the master plan.

The intent here seems to be less breath-taking and more breath catching; less exhilarating and more engaging. It is by no means a dull space, there are intriguing details everywhere. It is, though, a relaxed and easy place that never overwhelms.

▲ Extended perspective and a steady, controlled rhythm dominate the dramatic office space at Shiffler Associates.

◀ The offices at La Mair Mulock Condon Insurance reflect the company's balance between "old fashioned business sense" and a desire to "flow with the challenges of a coming age."



Iowa State Bank

Unlike many commercial spaces, the Iowa State Bank is both a commercial and public space. Because of its high visibility, definite emphasis is placed on durability and quality of design.

Historically, rich design has been a hallmark of banks. The same is true in the Iowa State Bank where the architects at Wells Woodburn O'Neil have created a dark, sumptuous atmosphere that is never unctuous or lavish.

Deep, rich textures, colors and shapes dominate the spaces. Green marble, thick oak and tan and green rugs are composed in a carefully dim-lit setting. Custom wooden fixtures and screens give the place a feel vaguely reminiscent of a Greene and Greene home.

Christ Hospital

With the escalation of health-care costs, hospitals are finding that outpatient treatment is rapidly becoming the delivery method of choice for both physicians and patients. Because of this, hospitals must reorganize to accommodate the huge increase in daily traffic. Also, the hospital industry has become extremely competitive. In order to compete, hospitals all across the country have tried to brighten their gruesome images.

The same is true for the Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, where the designers at Hansen Lind Meyer set about to create a hotel-like atmosphere.

Accordingly, HLM employed a grand design scheme which features a five-story atrium. The sun-lit atrium creates a spectacular space that is intended to serve as a "Main Street." Functionally, this atrium allows for easy and coherent traffic flow. To assist visitors, a large reception area has been created.

In an effort to ameliorate the traditional "hospital" setting, HLM has carefully selected a soft palette of peach, rust, olive and grey. The effect emphasizes the architectural planes and natural light of the design. This non-hospital space should welcome and reassure visitors and hopefully make an otherwise difficult trip a little more pleasant.

Each of the spaces within this article attempts to achieve a different set of goals. Commendably, each has been fairly successful. Perhaps more important is that each has tried to create vivid places rather than merely decorating walls and floors. In an era when catalog furnishings are as pervasive and vapid as elevator music, it is both refreshing and encouraging to see spaces that inspire. ■

Robert Tibbetts is a frequent writer on art and architecture and lives in San Francisco, CA.



▲ Elegance abounds in this bank lobby of money colored marble and rich oak woodwork.

▼ A waiting area in the Christ Hospital has been designed to look more like an elegant corporate suite than a clinical hospital setting.



“Law Review”

Conventional wisdom and invention merge in this modest, but finely crafted law office.

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Mechanical:

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Electrical:

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King Au

Des Moines, Iowa

“Law office” conjures up a certain image — a conservative, tasteful decor, replete with gleaming wood panelling; a subdued library with leather wing-back chairs to complement the leather-bound volumes on high shelves; the quietly elegant use of costly materials — in a word, *restraint*. The Des Moines firm of Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck has cast a fresh light upon the aforementioned array of imagery. In doing so, the designers have demonstrated a distinction between tradition and convention, allowing a new interpretation of the former to create a space that is decidedly not party to the latter.

In their design for a newly-formed law firm, located in Des Moines’ Capital Square, the architects have distilled from the somewhat stuffy, safe, and at times shopworn, preconceptions of what a law office *should* be, the traditions upon which conventional elements are based, and re-interpreted them with a resonant clarity.

As part of a national law firm’s expansion into the city, the Des Moines branch office needed to quickly establish itself as a presence within the established Des Moines market, and yet, at the same time, project an image which would set it apart from its competition. In addition, the firm had not only a restricted budget, but a challenging schedule to be met: within ninety

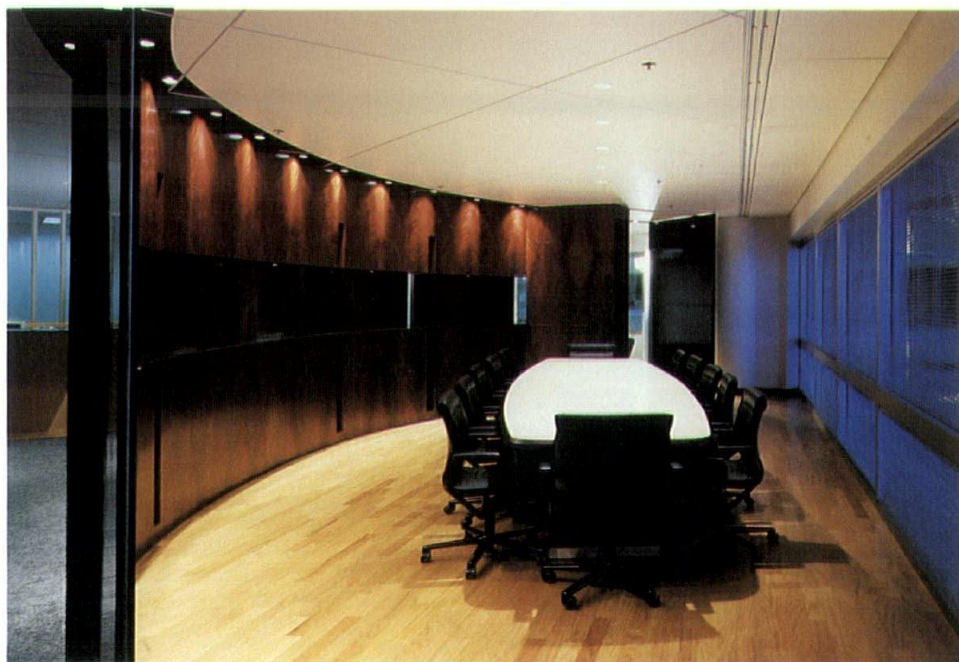
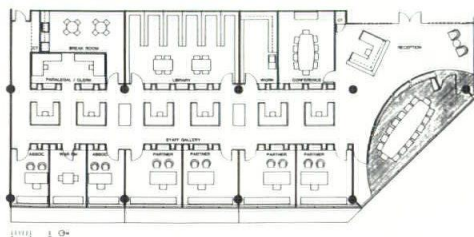
days from the first contact with the architects, the law office had to be operational. Rather than hinder the design, these constraints ultimately led to a lithe and elegant solution.

Instead of attempting to use the ubiquitous wood as a backdrop (a move which would bankrupt the budget) various types of woods were used to identify and enrich select areas, imbuing important programmatic elements more prevalent in the office space with a larger presence befitting their ‘public’ role. Thus, the conference room is encircled by a sweeping arc of bookmatched African Crotch mahogany; its simple form attesting to a confidence in the rich material qualities of the wood to speak for itself. Similarly, the reception desk is not merely a piece of furniture, but a jutting rhomboid prism, fashioned of Birdseye Maple; from various aspects within the office, both the wall and the desk are glimpsed in a fragmentary fashion, allowing reference to the central spaces.

Due to schedule and budget, private office spaces and ancillary areas utilized existing — or slightly modified — building standard finishes, and were laid out in an efficient, matter-of-fact manner. Rather than detract from the sculptural forms and idiosyncratic geometries of the public areas of the office, the more prosaic layout and material usage in the private

►
Conference area with open view to Plaza.

▼
Floor Plan





areas serves to amplify the impact of the feature elements.

Throughout the law office, view and movement were carefully considered, allowing a gradual understanding of the overall space, and of the office's relationship to external elements — such as the atrium, and the view to Nollen Plaza beyond. Initially, visual access is controlled, allowing only glimpses of views beyond to pique the viewer's interest; at certain moments a full view is revealed, as happens within the conference area, when floor-to-ceil-

ing glass exposes the dramatic view to the Plaza below.

With an apparent sleight of hand, resulting in a few simple, elegant and yet dynamic moves, the conventional image of a law office has been put aside, in favor of refurbishing longstanding traditions of craft, quality and subtlety. ■

▼ Reception area with partially screened view towards Nollen Plaza beyond.



A sweeping curve of mahogany separates the conference area from the reception area, indicating movement towards the private offices.



View slot from outside, through arced, mahogany wall of conference area.

Laura Miller is an Assistant Professor of Architecture at Iowa State University.



Children and Families of Iowa

Making Things Right

This is one of those rare buildings that almost perfectly responds to the client's needs and earnestly defines their goals.

Project:

Children and Families of Iowa Headquarters
Des Moines, Iowa

Owner:

Children and Families of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa

Architect:

Brooks Borg and Skiles Architects-Engineers
Des Moines, Iowa

Project Architect/Designer:

William Anderson, AIA

Partner-in-Charge:

Paul S. Skiles, AIA

Interior Design/Furnishings:

William Anderson, AIA

Erin M. Rice, IBD

Structural Engineering:

Brooks Borg and Skiles Architects-Engineers
Des Moines, Iowa

General Contractor:

Ringland Johnson Crowley Company
Des Moines, Iowa

Mechanical Subcontractor:

Stroh Corporation
Des Moines, Iowa

Electrical Subcontractor:

ABC Electric, Inc.
Des Moines, Iowa

Photographer:

Farshid Assassi
Santa Barbara, CA

Construction Completion:

July 1990

Square Footage:

19,000

In the 1880's, for many children, it was indeed the "worst of times." Immigrant families arriving in Iowa and other families struggling to survive turned children into orphans as parents succumbed to disease, poverty and starvation. Many children were left both "penniless and homeless."

In 1888, a group of volunteer citizens formed a private, not-for-profit agency to deal with the problem. Their original mission was to find a "loving home for every homeless child."

Known for many years as the Iowa Children's Home Society, it focused in the early years on finding adoptive and foster homes for children. Then as society's needs changed, it broadened its focus to deal with both children and families. In 1968, the organization's name was changed to Iowa Children's and Family Services and again, more recently, to Children and Families of Iowa.

Today, this voluntary state-wide agency, with its citizen Board made up of civic and community leaders provides a broad range of social services which touches and improves the lives of Iowans from all walks of life.

Children and Families of Iowa handles problems in the areas of family crisis, domestic abuse, child development and placement, and provides a spectrum of other creative, innovative social programs. Next year the agency budget will exceed \$6.2 million and provide

services from 16 facilities and program sites around the state.

Recently, Children and Families of Iowa completed work on a new administrative and service building, which handles over 600 clients per week. According to the executive director, Donna Walgren, "This building is a beautiful place with a peaceful environment where people can come to solve their problems. It shows that this agency is evolving with and addressing the issues that effect society. The new building does a lot for the people that work here and the clients they serve."

To its credit, the City of Des Moines practically donated the site for this project. The site is in a particularly depressed part of the city, one that the agency has worked in and tried to improve for years. The presence of this building, along with the agency's nearby and newly completed child development center, will hopefully serve as anchors for additional neighborhood redevelopment.

The program for this project was especially difficult, particularly because of the cramped site. Adding to the limitations in area was the city's stipulation that the single-story structure be predominately brick and sit on the front setback line to establish a commercial character to the redevelopment area. Also, the site was to accommodate parking for 75 cars.

Stylistically, the client requested an uplifting,

▶ The exterior provides the neighborhood with a warm, residential feeling through its gabled brick forms and a strong commercial presence with its scale, mass and extensive use of glass.

▶ ▶ A dramatically curved ceiling directs attention to the sun-lit reception desk while allowing visual access to the rest of the building's open spaces.





ostentatious or "stylish." Finally, the project budget was around \$1.5 million, very low considering some of the facility's unique characteristics.

Given the strict provisions and limited budget of the project, little was left for the architects at Brooks Borg and Skiles to do but "follow the rules." What they came up with was a typically deft, skillful interpretation of a difficult program. This building is far too good for any site other than the bad neighborhood it inhabits. After years of being overlooked, this place deserves just such a gem.

On the exterior, the architects gave the city the brickwork they required. But mitigating a 220 foot long brick wall was a problem. In response, the building is divided and divided again, and again. First, a north-south axis cuts through the building. In turn, this axis serves as the main entrances, houses the sky-lit reception area and defines the administration block to the west from the larger human-services block.

Having effectively broken the building in two, the designers set about breaking it into smaller, more neighborly parts. This was accomplished on the outside through a combination of gabled sections and rhythmic fenestration, all of which is echoed on the interior. To add mass and presence, a square, grey-stained cedar volume was placed in the center. Accentuating this large block are horizontal bands of extruded aluminum channels. In order to further "dismantle" the structure, a shed roof has been used on the larger human services block instead of the gabled forms on the west end of the building. Echoing the gables, however, are diagonal aluminum bands that lend definition to the black asphalt shingles of the shed roof.

The elevations work extraordinarily well with the street. This could easily have been a frighteningly long, dull box, or a hypnotically rhythmic one. Instead, it is a splendidly designed, almost melodic composition that is never busy but always at work.

On the inside, many of the same problems faced on the outside were dealt with. For instance, long corridors are modulated by "in and out" forms; columns, windows, doors, storage "houses," ceiling joists and overhead lighting are all designed to break up the monotony without disrupting the simple, serene plan of the interior.

The dominant feature of this interior is the main entrance axis and its reception area. A dramatically curved ceiling above the narrow north-south axis directs attention to a simple reception desk, which is sun-lit from a recessed

plan, and extensive use of pale, pickled oak gives the reception area an elegant and polished appearance.

In fact, the use of wood is limited in the building. Because of this, the architects custom designed wood desk tops for various spaces throughout the interior. Also, the designers selected colorful fabric for chairs and other furnishings, all of which accentuates the interior's personality.

For the most part, however, simple, warm colors dominate the interior. Open and sun-lit, the 16-foot ceilings create an extremely easy, breathable space. Like the outside, the inside is rather large and potentially intimidating. But, through careful use of lighting, oversized roof joists, exposed mechanical works, and extensive use of natural light, the building is broken up into dozens of small, autonomous places. In short, it's its own little neighborhood.

change the people. Still, it is worth the effort especially when the effort is as skillful, sincere and sensitive as the CFI Building. As Ms. Wagren puts it, "That this building was ever funded and built validates our work. It says that people respect us. But, more important, it says that they respect our clients." ■

Robert Tibbetts is a frequent writer on art and architecture and lives in San Francisco, CA.

▶ Potentially long, intimidating corridors have been effectively mitigated through the use of columns, gabled forms, perpendicularly placed light fixtures and ceiling joists, and exposed duct work.

▼ Open duct work, over-sized ceiling joists and extensive use of glass all combine to enliven the open, yet intimate spaces of the building.





Getting Better With Age

Recent renovation design work of Baldwin & Clause has upgraded the lobbies and common areas of what was for 50 years the tallest building in Iowa. The main intent: to recapture the integrity of the building's original design and bring it back to life.

Project:

Equitable Building, Second Floor
Des Moines, Iowa

Client:

First Office Management
Chicago, Illinois

Architect:

Baldwin Clause Architects
Des Moines, Iowa

Design Team:

Tom Baldwin, AIA, Laura Miller, Debra Peckum

Photographer:

King Au, AIA
Des Moines, Iowa

Contractor:

Ringland Johnson Crowley
Des Moines, Iowa

Square Footage:

1940

When visitors step into the Equitable Building and stand under sparkling hanging lamps in the marbled lobby, waiting at the flank of eight shiny brass elevator doors, it's like stepping into the 1920's. A downtown Des Moines landmark — the nineteen-story Equitable Building at Sixth and Locust — fairly glows with the results of its recent makeover.

The restoration results ring true to the original 1922 design plans of Proudfoot & Bird (now Brooks Borg & Skiles), exhibiting an attentiveness to detail of which the firm of Baldwin & Clause is proud. "Their attitude was that to try and modernize the building (which a lot of buildings downtown are doing) would not give the best results," said building manager Dee Grove. "By going with the strong points, the original design, we were able to come out with something that a lot of people think is high quality."

The building was completed in 1924 as headquarters for the Equitable Life Insurance Company, and Equitable Life still holds forth today as the largest tenant in the building, occupying the upper seven floors. The Chicago-based Equity Group (not related to Equitable Life) bought the building in 1989.

"Very little work had been done over the years," said Tom Baldwin, project architect. "Some twenty years ago they had come in,

knocked out all the fancy plaster ceilings, taken down all the light fixtures, put orange carpeting over the marble floors, built large boxes on the ceilings with grills in them, containing a total of a hundred fluorescent light strips, and that's what we had for many, many years."

Most of the original lobby fixtures have been incorporated into the design, including plaques of former Equitable presidents, the ornate letter drop box, and the building's original Roman-numeralled clock, which still tells the time as people pass in and out of the building.

"We were really lucky to find the old light fixtures," said Baldwin, referring to reconditioned bronze hanging lamps in the entrance lobby. The lights were found in a basement back room while searching for the original bronze "Equitable" sign, which was also unearthed and incorporated into the decor of the cigar counter on the first-floor entrance, a hallmark of the era. Cigars are still sold here, although it's a non-smoking building now.

To reconstruct the feeling of the original building initially meant getting back to the original surfaces: exposing marble floors in the lobby, reconstructing the false beamed ceilings popular in the Twenties, and upgrading the corridor systems. On the second floor, the Skywalk entrance lobby, the design team faced the task of creating a flavor of the 1920's where

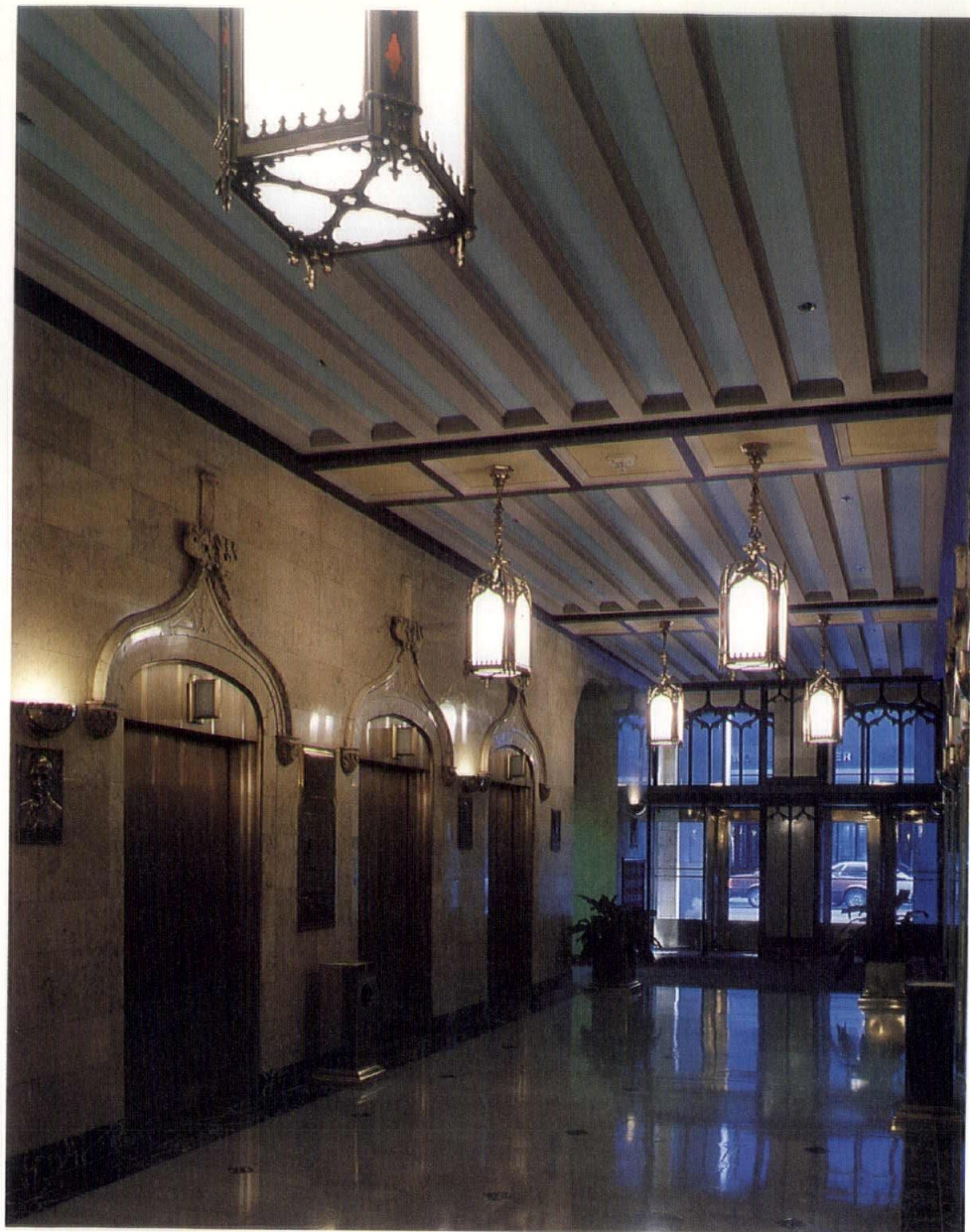
Pages 22 and 23.

Des Moines artist Doug Sheldon executed the cityscape mural of the Equitable Building as it would have appeared circa 1924. Says building manager Dee Grove, "So many of the people in Des Moines grew up as children being brought to the Equitable Building by their moms or dads to see the family doctor or family dentist. People stop and stand in front of it as they pass through the building, pointing and talking about it. They come into the building and say what a beautiful job has been done and how pleased they are to see it. It's gratifying to see that the general public feels that way."



(Main Lobby-First Floor): Blending old and new: Original bronze lamp fixtures (unearthed during the remodeling process) and creamy marble walls give a soft fresh feeling in the Equitable Building's main lobby.





originally no lobby had existed. Said Deborah Peckumn of Baldwin & Clause, who helped tie the design together there, "We wanted to promote what we felt was a look of history — a classic look that would say something about the Equitable.

This was achieved in several ways. First, a rich walnut and cherry archway, reminiscent of the Twenties, was constructed by Woodcraft in Des Moines. Crafting this archway, joining many intricate curved woods pieces, involved skills not often called upon today.

Finding consensus on color scheme in the second-floor lobby and harmonizing its design with the first-floor posed one of the project's main stumbling blocks. "There was a little bit of disconcerting air for awhile about the brightness and boldness of the colors being used on the second floor," said Ms. Peckumn, referring to the burgundy upper walls and rosso levanto marble accents in the marble floor. Toward the end of the project, the team hit upon the idea of using a *faux* marble technique on the plaster walls in that lobby, to restate the original marble walls in the first-floor lobby and visually lighten the area. Artist Steven Hay painted the *faux* marble, and the effect is splendid. "We have people who swear on a stack of Bibles that it is real marbles on the walls," says Baldwin.

The tour de force of the second-floor lobby is a large mural scene depicting the Equitable Building as it would have looked in the mid-Twenties, soaring above the surrounding downtown buildings. Artist Doug Sheldon painted the mural on canvas in muted colors, like an old black-and-white photograph: a drizzly day in downtown Des Moines. "The mural really drew it all together," says Dee Grove. "It's a focal point."

Long-term tenants love the results and, though rents have been hoisted, the building, once considered the premiere downtown office space, now enjoys a high occupancy rate. Once again, the Equitable Building has become a very desirable address. ■



Christina Ladd Breed lives in Fairfield and frequently writes on the arts and social change. She is a graduate student in Professional Writing at Maharishi International University.

▲ (Main Lobby-First Floor, w/more floor): Heels click across these shiny, polished floors of greyish-white marble. Diamonds of rosso levanto marble were added for contrast.

◀ (Lobby-Second Floor): Former Des Moines artist Steven Hay was brought in from Seattle to paint the *faux* marble beneath the bold burgundy walls. A travertine balustrade was created by Des Moines Marble around the open stairwell.





A roadside oasis

When faced with a client in desperate need of new quarters, a fast-track approach can deliver the project on time. With the Casey's General Stores' headquarters, Savage-Ver Ploeg & Associates has demonstrated that interior detailing does not have to be sacrificed for speed.

Project:

Casey's General Stores, Inc.
Corporate Headquarters

Owner:

Casey's General Stores, Inc.

Architect:

Savage-Ver Ploeg & Associates, Inc.

Landscape Architects:

Croze-Gardner Associates

Project Team:

Robert E. Savage, AIA, Principal
Scott A. Hatfield, AIA, Project Designer
Richard E. Gardner, ASLA, Landscape Architect
Jesse W. Lewis, ASLA, Landscape Architect
Kent R. Zarley, ASLA, CADD Production
Charles R. Gilliland, AIA, Production
Timothy C. Van Cleave, AIA
Stanley C. Ver Ploeg, AIA, PE, Structural Engineer
Dennis L. Schaffer, PE, Structural Engineer

Contractors:

Ringland-Johnson-Crowley
Kevin Tubbs, Project Manager
The Waldinger Corporation
Clint Leonard, Mechanical Engineer
Baker Electric
Leonard Ivis, Electrical Engineer

Photographer:

King Au

Completion Date:

February 15, 1990

Area:

278,950 square feet

Cost:

\$16,500,000

Like truck stops and fast food restaurants, Casey's General Stores has become a welcome rest stop for midwestern travelers. The red shingled buildings are now as recognizable as the "golden arches." When Savage-Ver Ploeg & Associates set out to design the company's new headquarters near Ankeny, they were faced with creating a building that presented a strong corporate image, yet captured the friendliness represented by the individual Casey's stores.

The design started by focusing on efficiency. Each functional relationship was critical to the design. But designing a successful multi-function building required going beyond simple space planning. Project designer Scott Hatfield and his team developed bright circulation areas and work spaces that are open and relaxed.

Because the corporation was rapidly outgrowing its existing facilities, the headquarters developed as a fast-track project. To keep the process flowing, the same designer carried out every phase of the project, including the interior detailing and furniture selection.

The main entrance to the building is marked by a two-story canopy leading into a peaked skylight over the reception area. It is at this point that the headquarter's 350 employees and visitors enter the building. The reception area, with its exposed stairway and polished granite floors, is alive with sound and light. The use of mahogany and granite finishes works well with the white and grey tones outlining banisters and exposed trusses. "Quantum Physics," an eight-foot, three-dimensional wall hanging in primary tones splashes the neutral setting with color.

At the opposite end of the reception area, large windows overlook the pond and fountains that are familiar to motorists on Interstate 35. From here, visitors have access to any part of the building. All of the building's spaces, other than the distribution warehouses and vehicle maintenance area, are located along a roughly

▶ The lobby entrance strongly links the inside to out and visa versa with volume and form.



▶ Similar elements to those used at the entrance are used to intersect the organizing spine of the corporate center.





east-west circulation spine topped by a skylight filtering sun into both levels through slender cuts in the second floor slab.

In the western wing, office spaces which open along the spine are reminiscent of the gates in an airport terminal. Departments requiring heightened security, such as payroll and computer areas, are enclosed in glass to maintain the open scheme. This is possible because the keypad security system employed throughout the building is relatively non-invasive, allowing the designer a high level of freedom. Variations of dusty blue, gray and mauve further unify the offices.

The suite occupied by the chief executive officers is paneled in oak and African mahogany, as is the horseshoe-shaped reception desk, and uses deeper shades of teal and gray found throughout the west wing. The boardroom, with its impressive black granite oval table and tri-tone carpeting, is enclosed in glass to enlarge the space. Cyclos light fixtures playfully drop down to eye level in the center of the room.

To the east of the main entrance lie the daycare area, cafeteria and training facilities. All are flexible spaces, assuring maximum use. The large gathering area in the daycare center is sunny, bright and lined with child-sized lockers. Adjacent rooms, home to over 35 children each day, divide into separate care spaces for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Every detail in the daycare area has been planned with children in mind, encouraging an "I can do it" attitude. While miniature fixtures and counters in the restrooms elicit giggles of delight from adults who must kneel down to look in the wall-length mirrors, they are in perfect proportion for toddlers learning to wash their hands.

As the building approached its final stages, Casey's established an art selection review committee to work with the designers in selecting artwork for use in the headquarters. Most visible to the public is the sculpture titled "Casey's Trio" overlooking the pond on Interstate 35.

Casey's selected Savage-Ver Ploeg & Associates because they wanted a firm that could

▲ The organizing spine accepts a variety of interfaces with different department needs.

▶ The building's white metal spine successfully establishes a unifying base from which all else has developed.

"do everything." Through this continuous association, a relationship developed that allowed the designers to guide the client in selecting the interior details that reflect the company's personality and suit the building's architecture. While this can sometimes lead to a homogenization that's tedious and repetitive, Savage-Ver Ploeg & Associates has introduced surprising details to capture light and spark the interest of anyone using the building. As a result, the building portrays an attitude appropriate for the flagship of one of the country's fastest growing corporations, yet lighthearted enough to be related to the familiar red and white buildings we all recognize. ■

Martha Huntington is a graduate student in the Department of Architecture at Iowa State University.



Mercy Hospital Medical Center

Red Line

A marriage of metal and glass produces an atrium that guides patients through an array of medical services in an efficient and pleasing manner.

Project:

Mercy Medical Plaza
Des Moines, Iowa

Owner:

Mercy Hospital Medical Center

Architect:

Hansen Lind Meyer
Iowa City, Iowa

Construction Manager:

Graham Investment & Construction Co.

Completion Date:

July 1988

Area:

145,900 square feet

Photographer:

Farshid Assassi
Santa Barbara, California

The use of tiers to create a bold presence is made evident in the position the building makes from the street level. A set of stairs, flanked by large concrete flower boxes, rises off of the public sidewalk. These stairs lead to a pebbled concrete plaza and then to another set of stairs, which are bordered by more flower boxes that are set at an angle to the building. This second set of stairs lead to the main entrance. A circular driveway surrounds the plaza and brings the visitor to the main entrance.

Upon entering from the street level, the visitor steps into a large vestibule, specifically designed for the valet parking service. This parking service is not only a convenience, but at times can be a necessity for the mobility of the many cardiac patients who visit The Heart Center.

Sliding doors lead to the main floor where an octagonal information desk is located. The desk is highlighted by counters of polished granite and a lighted map of the facility that instructs patients on how to find their way when the staff person must be away from the desk. Clarifying path-finding is an important function of the building since the entire complex is directly tied to the hospital and existing surgery and radiology suites via two pedestrian skywalks.

The glass atrium functions as a huge skylight

and transfers the elements of nature indoors. This has a calming, soothing effect on an area that sees much pedestrian traffic during the day. Providing a tranquil environment is an essential element of the design, considering that Mercy's 50,000 square-foot Cardiac and Pulmonary Prevention and Rehabilitation Department, located on the main level, saw over 1,500 patients last year.

On either side of the atrium are twin medical office buildings (one new, one existing). The atrium linkage of these areas with the hospital provides accessibility to a variety of patient services.

For the convenience of the patients, two sets of double elevators were placed in the atrium. One set is located at the center and the other, which is glass backed, is on the east side.

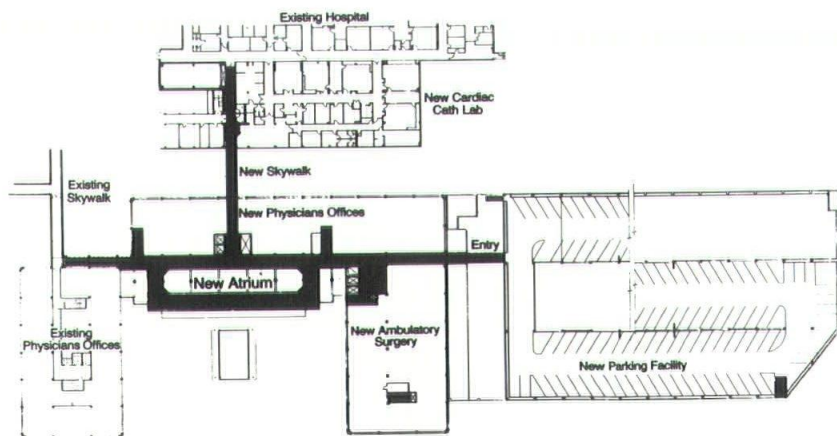
Chairs upholstered in light purple fabric are scattered throughout, as are oak planters holding large ficus trees.

Energy efficient fluorescent lighting is concealed within crimson-colored metal wall boxes and handrails.

Lush greenery is used as a border around each level of the atrium. Plants also are used as a focal point at the center of each level to create a pyramid effect that culminates at the apex of the atrium.

Hospitals are steeped in medical history. As

Outlined in red and black metal, this glass facade creates a striking image by day or night.



the oldest continuous operating hospital in Des Moines, Mercy Hospital Medical Center has a rich architectural past, as well.

Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1893, Mercy's first address was the house that had been the residence of Hoyt Sherman, a Des Moines postmaster and insurance company executive and brother of Union commander General William Tecumseh Sherman; perhaps best remembered for his devastating march through Georgia.

Now known as Hoyt Sherman Place, this grand 1877 Victorian Italianate manor is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The hospital moved to its present campus in 1895 where it opened in a four-story, red brick building with a ward for five people and two private rooms.

Today Mercy Hospital Medical Center is a 555-bed acute care facility covering some 806,000 square feet and employing over 4,000 people. Over 27,000 patients were admitted in 1990 and over 45,000 were treated in the Emergency Department.

As a leader in cardiac care (Mercy has performed the most heart transplants in the state), expansion was needed to accommodate the growing demands of coronary facilities and equipment. Together with The Graham Group (who maintains ownership of the building and leases space to Mercy and individual physician groups), Mercy consulted with the Iowa City firm of Hansen Lind Meyer, Inc. to create the Mercy Hospital Medical Center Plaza, or as it is better known — The Heart Center.

This 145,000 square-foot project was built in 1988 on the southern 5.8 acre section of the campus. It is adjoined by a 740-car parking ramp for patients and staff.

The four-story atrium, with its vivid red mulions and gabled glass elements, produces a major reorientation of the hospital toward downtown Des Moines.

The exterior cascading atrium wall, which descends from a 30-foot skylight, creates a dramatic entrance to the medical plaza. The intersecting gabled peaks form the main entrance canopy. The use of reflective, bronze-silver glass on the vertical areas, and an application of bronze tint to the sloped areas, makes a striking impression upon arrival.

The second floor walking track encircles the atrium and provides a panoramic view of downtown Des Moines. This elevated track was initially devised for the benefit of the cardiac rehabilitation patients, but its popularity has spread and hospital employees also use it to take a brisk walk during inclement weather. The track's floor covering is a gray flecked carpet highlighted by geometric patterns in mulberry

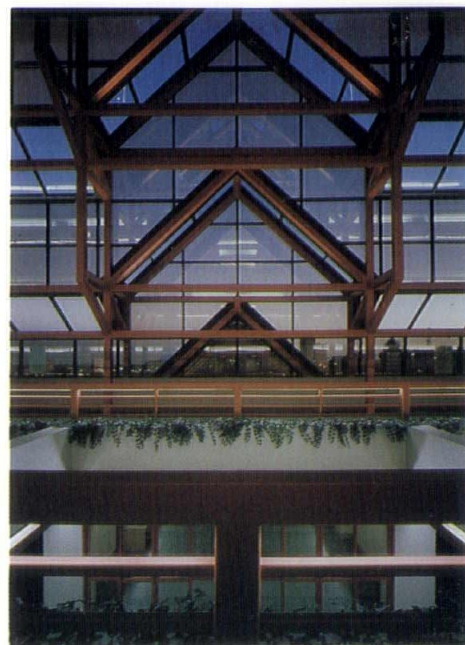


Scarlet metal pillars intersect one another at odd angles to create intriguing geometric shapes on the elevated walking track.

and mauve. The geometric design is carried throughout the areas that are tiled, using light gray and mulberry colored squares to enliven the expanse of the main floor.

The overall effect of the atrium is that of simplicity and utilitarian function. It serves as a gateway to lead people to where they need to be and does so in a manner that is uplifting to the spirit. ■

Debra Kurtz holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. She has written exclusively on film, entertainment, and the arts.



The Butler House: Appropriately Modern

A premiere showpiece of architecture and technology, the Butler House after fifty years continues to fascinate the observer. Along with the meticulous restoration of the house, an exquisite underground addition emblemizes design excellence and appropriate context. The Thirties vision has been revived and updated for the next half century.

Project:

Butler House Addition & Renovation

Location:

Des Moines, Iowa

Owner:

Kragie/Newell Advertising

Des Moines, Iowa

Architect:

Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil

Des Moines, Iowa

Partner in Charge of Design:

Douglas A. Wells, AIA

Project Architect:

Michael J. Kastner, AIA

Charles H. Swanson

Structural Engineer

Britson Consultants

Des Moines, Iowa

Contractor:

PACE Development Co., Inc.

Des Moines, Iowa

Photographer:

King Au

Des Moines, Iowa

Completion Date:

August, 1989

Area:

Original 13,500 sq. ft.

Addition 7,500 sq. ft.

Cost:

Rehabilitation \$18/sq. ft.

Addition/Sitework \$73/sq. ft.

For over fifty years the Butler House has been a source of curiosity and mystery. From prestigious private residence to college classrooms, to languishing real estate listing and now to restored Kragie Newell Advertising offices, the dramatic monolithic streamlined building continues to exemplify the pinnacle of Thirties design. Motorists on Fleur Drive now observe a sweeping parapet, the uppermost section of an underground addition and the dignified house. What they miss from the street, however, is a magnificent interior restoration with modern furnishings, vibrant colors, and a tempered industrial aesthetic to induce creativity among the advertising executives and studio artists.

The interior restoration mainly consisted of repainting walls and ceilings to their original white and installing gray commercial carpet throughout most of the house. Black, white-flecked floor tile was laid in executive offices, lavatories, and main halls. This pristine neutral color scheme functions as an appropriate backdrop for utilizing strong graphics and bold colors to recall imagery of the Twenties and Thirties.

The dining room, with its abundant glazing, now functions as the main conference area.

Black sconces have replaced the long-absent torchieres depicted in original photographs. A gleaming chrome base racetrack table with wood and glass top echoes the sweeping curves of the house and the use of matte black chairs functions as visual counterpoint. This brilliant, naturally illuminated room is protected from excessive sunlight by window Tech-shades, a feature on all southern exposure fenestration.

A curved sliding door opens into the only room in the house with woodwork. The full height cabinets and shelves were restored and missing fronts replaced as necessary. A built-in credenza occupies the space beneath the window and a vivid blue biomorphic desk completes the scheme. The dynamic blue is finely juxtaposed against the natural wood and original brass luminaire providing a visual tension to the room.

Executive offices are located directly above the conference room and in the uppermost sunroom. The two offices share many characteristics with acoustical ceiling tile being the functional commonality. The owners found it necessary to install the tile to achieve a conversational ambience within the rooms. Additional ceiling mounted lighting is provided in both



Exterior view from street. A pleasing white assemblage of various design elements visible from Fleur Drive.



▲ Industrial elements and custom millwork in the spacious studio forms an interesting juxtaposition.

◀ A vibrant blue desk in the former library creates tension with the woodwork.



spaces with original fixtures in the sunroom. Desks of black pedestals and sumptuous red marble tops are focal points and impart distinction to the executive occupant. Both offices also share an important design element evocative of the Thirties. The black tile floors are partially covered by rugs recalling the strong geometry of the streamlined era and emulate the original roof tile pattern.

The underground addition also allowed the architects to augment their experimentation with color and design as exhibited in the house. As in the original building, a neutral white and gray palette serves as a subtle background for intense stimulating colors reflecting the Deco and Streamlined periods.

An industrial high-tech image is achieved by

an exposed white metal roof deck, open-web joists, beams, and columns in the office and studio areas. This hard-edged geometry is tempered by a progressively intensifying use of energetic color as one moves through the addition. Gray serpentine millwork in the largest studio is transformed into teal framing and rust wall and laminate further into the space.

The most picturesque room of the entire project is a small conference area. This eloquent and provocative room achieves a perfectly balanced symmetry of spatial organization and color. The exposed white ceiling elements and lateral walls create a stark backdrop for a kinetic combination of color and form. A dynamic purple back wall section centered between two columns almost overwhelms the space but other colors come into play to distract the eye. A black luminaire mysteriously hovers above a square table of teal base and opaque green glass top. Chairs of black frames and red upholstery complete the unusual but very satisfying color scheme. The overall effect is both

extreme tension and harmony and the architects have formulated a lasting impression without resorting to excess.

The interior restoration and furnishings selection have enabled architect and client to utilize avant-garde elements from both the inter-war period and recent design. A stimulating environment has been created for the house and addition and, after a half-century, the interior finally reflects the modern line of order demonstrated by the exterior. ■

Mark E. Blunck has written numerous articles on architecture and film. Through Blunck/Designwrite he assists San Francisco Bay area design firms in marketing programs.

▼ The main conference room with racetrack table utilizes Techshades to provide light control. The 96-bulb luminaire is still in operating order.



▼ Executive office. Perfect symmetry is achieved in this executive office with four illumination sources, red marble desk, and graphic rug.



▼ Intricate and powerful balance of form and color is exhibited in this striking conference room — an impressive visual feast.



▶ As one moves through the addition, colors become more intense as shown with the teal frame and rust wall.



Postcards from Home

The New Realism in Residential Design

Life around the house isn't what it used to be. Contemporary homeowners, questioning the utility of formal settings, are forging a "new realism" in residential planning. In this article, the work of four Iowa architects illustrates this growing trend.

There is a story about a woman who, when asked by her architect what she expected of her new house, replied: "I just want the kids to call it 'home'."

That was it.

No lofty demands for extravagantly appointed spaces or heady explorations into the state of contemporary existence. She wanted none of that. "Don't make my house an art museum. Make it something worth coming home to."

Perhaps, of all that has transpired in the preceding decades of residential design, it is this simply rendered request that is most profound.

Our homes were first, our shelter. They kept us warm and secure from the elements, rooted our families and lent comfort in our later years. Our homes were not so much the source of our pride, but the vessel in which that pride was kept.

It was only in relatively recent times that the private home (as distinct from the royal palace or villa) assumed the role of social arbiter. A home's locale, size and finish were crafted to

impress its visitors as much as to shelter its inhabitants. Residential design experienced curious schism. Quarters, created solely to enhance an owner's social prestige, assumed dominant position in a home's planning. Spaces consigned, on the other hand, to merely shelter a family's day to day life were relegated to substantially subordinate positions. The home possessed two distinct faces: the first, though dominant, was composed of largely superficial and pretentious imagery. The other, the home's real point of dwelling, was suppressed and constricted to the sparest means and resources. The home's public face consisted of elegant parlors, grand foyers and spacious salons. The family of record lived, for the most part, elsewhere.

Nowhere was this chasm between the home as "image" and the home as "dwelling" more warmly embraced than in post-war America. Homes of this era, be they sprawling estates or tacky-tacky tract-house constructions bore one unmistakably telling trait; they possessed a clear and unyielding demarcation between



MARK ENGLUND



Private Residence, Bloodgood Sharp Snider

spaces intended solely for the consumption of admiring neighbors and the somewhat meaner accommodations intended for the life of the family.

There were, to be sure, voices raised against this troubling cleft in the persona of the American home. Early in this century, Frank Lloyd Wright decried the appalling "boxiness" of American dwellings. His early residential designs, invigoratingly fresh and deftly open, (an investigation which ultimately culminated in the Usonian house) illustrated a compelling critique of the then, predominant methods house planning. Wright was, however, (and in some quarters remains) something of a heretic. His fundamental ideals and those of his adherents were largely ignored, despite recurring, though frequently superficial, references to the stylistic characteristics of his works in the contemporary ranch home.

These precepts of the American home, divided between the ambitions of pretense and

the realistic requirements of the family, remained unchallenged well into the third quarter of the twentieth century.

The prevalent and well-documented dissolution of the American family in this era should not be surprising under these circumstances. Cooped up in the restrictive atmosphere of their "usable" dwellings, families simply tore apart at the seams. Kids cruised, fathers stayed away at the office and wives, justifiably, looked for some way out. An acquaintance, recalling the breakup of his own marriage, pointed with no reservation to his diminutive family room, "It was in this little room, night after night in front of the television that our lives together fell apart." The American home had ceased to function as the nurturing hearth of family values.

Clearly, change was in order. In the seventies, homes did indeed become more open. The concept of the "Great Room", a combination of a family's living, dining and entertainment requirements within a single space

became a prevalent prototype for American dwellings. Though the initial motivations for this consolidation were economic; more house for less aggregate space, the consequences of these shared accommodations yielded unexpected benefits. Families were again joined in a common environment, which recognized the pivotal position of the family as the center of a home's existence. Living rooms, where they appeared, were vestigial and implicitly subordinate to the dwelling's principal spaces.

A new manner of living emerged with the family as its center. Kitchens were no longer merely a place to prepare meals, they had become the heart of the families' activities. They were places to discuss the day's events, balance the family finances (kitchen/offices are now becoming a virtual requirement of residential design) and entertain accommodating guests. The pretense of formal living areas intended solely for the purpose of impressing occasional visitors seemed, in this context, frivolous. Homes again became the domain of the family.

So when a client requests that her house become merely "home" to her children, it is not, in these times, so unusual a demand. It is what we should all demand of our homes, regardless of how long this recognition has been in coming.

The homes illustrated in these pages capture something of this essence. They have been designed to accommodate both the particular needs of their users as well as a broader recognition of the importance of the home as place for the growth and nurturing of the family.

Few architects can speak as knowledgeably about the transformations in residential architecture as Jack Bloodgood, FAIA. For nearly three decades, he and, more recently, his associates Bloodgood Sharp Snider, have been charting the course of the evolving American home. "The home is no longer a showplace for others, it is a pleasure-space for the family. In the nineties, there is a recognition of a "new realism" in residential planning. Home is a place for the family."

In planning a recent private residence, Bloodgood and company took their recognition of this fundamental change to heart. The clients, empty-nesters seeking both the comfort and convenience of condominium life, purchased two adjacent condo units at The Park at Southern Hills, a Bloodgood project from some years back.

The original residences, though tastefully appointed, were somewhat conservative in their approach to finishes and planning. The clients wished to lighten the tone of the combined interiors and create a far more fluid relationship between the various living spaces.



The architects began by gutting much of the existing interior construction. One unit's garage was converted to a spacious bath/exercise suite and linked to the master bedroom. The other unit's ground floor accommodations were reconstructed as an expansive kitchen, dining and den ensemble. A free-flowing openness between adjoining rooms was emphasized. The original stair serving the upper-floor bedrooms was stripped of its confining walls, a move which enhanced the spacious flavor of the home and introduced filtered clearstory daylighting to the lower levels. The palette of the original interiors was lightened considerably; a fresh and contemporary, "whitened" atmosphere was one of the clients' initial requests. Coupled with carefully selected furnishings and witty works of art, the interior is striking for its crisp accessibility and comfort.

Bloodgood continues, "...a whole sense of graciousness has returned to residential planning. Corridors are no longer considered 'wasted' space. They are now 'galleries' which link and unite the activities of the family. There is today a far more sensitive evaluation of the way people really live." True to his words, this residence decisively speaks to the virtues of the new realism in residential interior design.

Iowa City architect William Nowysz, AIA, would no doubt concur with Bloodgood's assessment. He, too, has devoted much of his professional career to the design of residences. Three examples of his more recent work: the Goodridge, Reinganum, and Zlatnik residences all share a common interest in the openness of their accommodations and lightness of touch. Nowysz attributes their similar language to his own sense of the innate integrity of materials. "Each home is rooted in the

same design philosophy." Nowysz acknowledges the sound influence of both Eero Saarinen and Gunnar Birkerts in his work and devotes considerable attention to the detailing and assembly of materials shaping the home's interior. "I strive for consistency and integrity in the use of materials; it is essential to determine the best possible use for a material and then apply that use in a consistent and reasoned manner."

Nowysz is not, however, afraid to let a client actively participate in the home's conceptualization. When presented with well-conceived options, be they commercial-grade carpeting, upscale furnishings or finishes, an informed homeowner will naturally gravitate to choices with "lasting power." "You rely", he concedes, "on their own good judgement and sensibility."

As in Bloodgood's work, Nowysz's homes reflect a gracious and accommodatingly fresh attitude towards contemporary life. While the

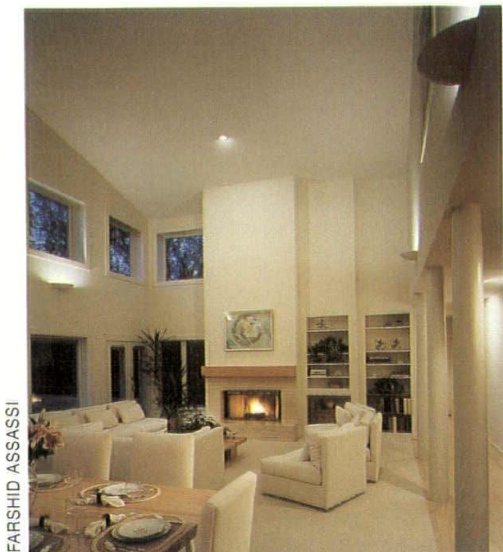
use of volume is characteristic, (two-story heights are featured in each home's principal living spaces) of greater importance to the essence of these homes is their comfortable informality. They are places to be inhabited by families. Pretense seems quite out of place in these accommodating settings.

Nowysz does, however, note other significant factors in the evolution of the American home. "There is an enormous appetite for space." Homes are becoming larger. The trend is, in part, another aspect of the new realism of residential design. Homeowners view their dwellings less as an economic investment, than as a haven in which they might more fully enjoy the comforts of family life. This subtle, but important, shift in attitude accounts for a far more generous concept of normally required dwelling spaces. American families have come to demand more space in their homes because they recognize the values such space offers.

▼
Reinganum Residence, William Nowysz and Associates

▼
Zlatnik Residence, William Nowysz and Associates

▼
Goodridge Residence, William Nowysz and Associates



FARSHID ASSASSI



FARSHID ASSASSI



Space, in and of itself, is not the only telling attribute of the American home's new realism. Homeowners have come to expect that their homes should reflect not only their spacial needs, but fundamental aspects of their personality and lifestyle.

In creating a vacation residence for a prominent Des Moines businessman, architect Daryl Metzger, AIA, immediately recognized the importance of conveying not only the explicit requirements of his client, but the persona of the individual involved.

"This was a very sophisticated client, one who understood the role of the architect as well as he did his own needs. His approach to the style of this residence was highly personal, yet graciously open to interpretation and exploration."

The siting of the project, however, had as much to do with the design's interior development as did the homeowner's functional requirements. Situated on two, densely wooded lots fronting Lake Okoboji, there was

an undeniable impulse to embrace the natural beauty of this extraordinary site. Early on, Metzger determined that a light and open structure which incorporated the rich landscape of enveloping trees would take best advantage of the site's natural features.

The house was conceived as a series of glazed pavilions, open to the environment on all quarters. The home was to be similar to a "big welcoming porch." Individual spaces within the enclosure were defined by graceful shifts in vertical volume, each defined by a series of complimentary horizontal planes. The planes are at times roofing elements, lighting "shelves" or frames for clearstory lighting depending on their position within the overall composition.

What emerges is a sensitive dialogue between the home's refined horizontality and the impressive verticality of the forest which surrounds it.

The resulting interiors are, naturally, the consequence of this dialogue. There is a frank

recognition of the role of the house in relation to its setting. The architecture, through its facile manipulations of view and daylighting, avoids intruding on the clear perception of the virtues of its site.

Fittingly, there is something of the client in all of this. As a highly public figure accountable to the constituency he serves, this house, in its open and accommodating demeanor, seems a highly apt response to its resident as well as the setting in which it is placed.

Finally, there is a residence crafted by Douglas A. Wells, AIA, Wells Woodburn O'Neil, which has deservedly received much attention at both local and regional levels (Iowa Architect Spring 1990 and Iowa Architect Spring 1991).

Here, much of the soul of the new realism in residential design comes clearly into focus. A casual informality of accommodation is evi-

▼
Private Residence, Walker Metzger Architects



dent. Coloration and the use of "humble" materials (concrete block, rough-hewn cedar and painted steel) all contribute to an exceedingly rich, but unpretentious environment. Functional spaces flow freely, one to the next without interruption and then spill outward into the landscape. There are few points of comparison between this house and the predominant residential tradition which preceded it. It is unconstrained, uninhibited and thoroughly exuberant in its execution.

The substance of the new realism in residential design is a renewed appreciation of the true value of home life. In any of these residences, you could, without much prompting, imagine the kids coming home for the weekend, casually congregating around the kitchen counter and doing the things that kids and their parents are supposed to do.

Being a family. ■

KING AU



▲ Private Residence, Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil

▼ Private Residence, Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil

KING AU



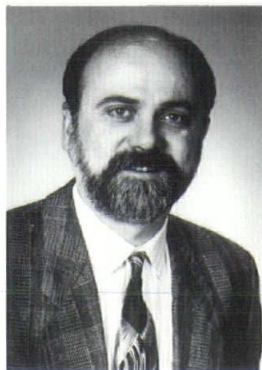
Lynn S. Spears lives in Des Moines and teaches at Iowa State University.



Title Registration for Interior Designers

In the next Iowa legislative session, a bill advocating title registration for interior designers developed by a joint committee of the Iowa Chapter of the AIA, the Institute of Business Designers (IBD), the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and other independent designers will be introduced. Earlier this year, two members of that committee; Sonja Roberts IBD and Tom Baldwin AIA spoke with the Iowa Architect regarding this forthcoming initiative.

IA Why should interior



designers be registered?

SR It is certainly more of a concern for interior designers than it is for the architectural community. The most important aspect of the issue is for interior designers to be recognized as professionals under state law. It is basically a matter of protection and the preservation of our rights to practice as design professionals.

IA Title registration for interior designers seems a logical step, yet early on there were certain factions of the AIA that opposed this kind of legislation...

TB And there still are.

IA What were the architects' principal objections?

TB I would cite a few; I think one is that architects and interior designers overlap considerably in the work that they do. Architects have accredited educational training, a licensing program that requires rigorous testing as do all the other licensed professionals in the different states, and continuing education. Many architects felt that interior designers may be competing, number one, and performing some of the design services that should be performed by licensed professionals. Competition, per se, is of course, a big factor in any market driven profession.

SR That is one of the main reasons why we are looking at the legal aspects of title registration. It would preclude people who do not have the proper testing and educational experience from calling themselves interior designers. They could continue to provide certain services but could not describe themselves as "interior designers." It is really a way

of informing the public of whom is capable and qualified.

IA Ultimately, the AIA on a national level, did respond to the concerns about interior design registration. What happened next?

SR In 1987, discussions between representatives of the AIA, IBD, ISID, and ASID were initiated. After a series of long and sometimes difficult negotiations, the group came up with an Accord which later led to a Letter of Agreement between the various parties describing a format for interior design title registration.

IA When did all this happen?

TB The Letter of Agreement was signed in December 1989.

SR ...and the Accord was signed almost a year before that.

IA This agreement was then proposed to various states as a guideline for legislation.

SR That's right.

SR In my experience, the construction industry is becoming more focused on interiors. The AIA has predicted that by the year 2000, only 10% of all construction will be new construction, so

90% will be either interiors work or additions to existing buildings.

Interior design was work that most architects weren't interested in doing a few years ago. I think that is one of the important reasons why the interior design profession emerged; as a response to work that architects typically wished not to do.

TB I think to some extent that's true. Architects were interested in new buildings, particularly for the profit margins they presented. Also, with the emergence of furniture systems, for instance, and the trends towards working within existing structures, the whole landscape of the interior has changed. Interiors are no longer merely decorative: adding color and fabric to the walls and chairs, carpeting, whatever. Today, interiors work involves the layout of whole spaces and so there has been a great transition from what I might call "decorating" to full-fledged design.

SR The key difference is that decorative concepts are, gen-

Iowa Architect

1991/1992 EDITORIAL CALENDAR

SUMMER-INTERIOR DESIGN

From bathrooms to boardrooms, this issue will feature the best and brightest of the world within.

FALL-1991 CONVENTION

The Iowa Chapter, AIA is host to this year's Central States Region Convention. This issue will focus on a retrospective of 1978 and the 1978 Chapter Regional Convention. Included will be features on each of this year's jurors, internationally renowned architects who participated in the 1978 convention: Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, Charles Gwathmey, and Robert Stern.

WINTER-MEGA CLIENTS

This issue, which focuses on projects commissioned by institutional clients, will also delve into the inner workings of these large entities and gauge their impact on our built environment.

DIRECTORY

In addition to membership and firm listings, the Directory also features a users guide to the work of the architect and an outline of services important to the public and profession.

SPRING-DESIGN AWARDS

This Eighth Annual Review of Midwestern Architecture will present the Central States Region and Iowa Chapter, AIA's 1991 award winning projects.

The Iowa Architect is a quarterly publication of the American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter.

erally, applied. When you talk about design as we understand it, you are dealing with code requirements, fire-rating of materials, lighting, and coordination of the work of other professionals. It is much more complex.

IA So the differences between architects and interior designers are largely a matter of competition.

TB To an extent that's true but, aside from the turf battles, architects are also concerned with protecting the public domain, and though it might seem a little self-serving of course, in our case, as licensed professionals, we have a responsibility to see that the buildings we create are safe. Among the people performing interiors work, we see a very diverse group of individuals, many without formal training or licensing requirements...

SR And no regulation...

TB Virtually no regulation. There is a legitimate need for a set of uniform standards for people working in interiors.

IA Where is the registration process headed in Iowa?

TB The executive committee of the Iowa Chapter, AIA and the registration board represented on our committee by Bill Dikis AIA, are working with interior designers to assist them in writing appropriate legislation and following it through the process. We are not interested in obstructing the progress of interior designers towards their goal of title registration because cooperating will best serve both groups in the long run.

SR I would agree with that. It is the kind of process that requires a cooperative spirit.

IA What are the prospects for passage of the bill?

SR We have a six month schedule. Hopefully the bill will be written by August or September. We are trying to address areas of disagreement first. There are still issues to be ironed out. By fall, our grassroots organization will be working hard to communicate our issue. We want to introduce the bill as early in the legislative session as possible.

IA And assuming passage, a

start date sometime in 1992?

SR We hope so. It could potentially be in 1993. It depends on the body of language in the final bill.

IA Is there any political opposition to this idea?

SR Some of our opposition may come from the interior design/decorating community. We are prepared to work with those entities to inform them and educate them and let them know that this is not something that will put them out of business. It will just change the nomenclature that we use.

TB With the AIA cooperating in the movement towards title registration in Iowa, it is my guess that most of the opposition will come from within the interior design community.

SR That's not to say there won't be a few architects who will be in opposition.

TB I think there will be individual architects in opposition. The other factor is that any new registration group sends up some red flags which suggest the state is going to have new expenses. There might be some reticence in the legisla-

ture to this sort of legislation if it appears that its going to cost the taxpayer money.

IA Aren't registration boards self-supporting?

SR Most legislation is written to be fiscally neutral. It is a matter of the number of individuals seeking registration and the fees they contribute.

TB You have to have a lot of members to support the staff required to process registration documentation. Hopefully we will have this potential problem ironed out just by having a joint board.

IA Any closing thoughts?

TB I would say that the state chapter of the AIA certainly hopes that any architects have gotten beyond suspicions and fears that our cooperation with the interior design community offers any kind of threat. My feeling is that we are insuring the best possible future for both our endeavors by working together on this. That is certainly my goal as president of the AIA and I'm encouraged that Sonja and the rest of the joint committee seems to echo that feeling.

SR That basically says it all. We are committed to the same goals.

Editors Note: The following individuals are members of the Coalition for Interior Designers of Iowa/Iowa Chapter, American Institute of Architects: Tom Baldwin AIA, Bill Dikis AIA, Tom Klemuk IBD, Fred Malven Ph.D, Iowa State University, Sonja Roberts IBD, Norm Rudi AIA, Suzanne Schwengels, Executive Director, Iowa Chapter, AIA, Lon Sinclair AIA, Bonny Smith IBD, Marie Thayer, Executive Secretary, Iowa Board of Architectural Examiners, and Jennifer Voorhees IBD.

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Paul S. Skiles, AIA ▲
1922-1991

This past April, Iowa's architectural community lost a distinguished practitioner and friend. Des Moines architect Paul Skiles died April 28 after a prolonged illness.

Skiles, a partner for three decades with the firm of Brooks Borg and Skiles, was a skillful architect and an ardent

proponent of an interdisciplinary approach to design.

Though he firmly believed no single individual could claim sole credit for the design of a building, he was invariably a natural leader of others.

Skiles was a sensitive designer who never lost sight of the concerns of his clients. He avoided short-lived fads in favor of concepts which complimented the needs of their

clients and setting. His work was always innovative, yet remained rooted to a reasoned and pragmatic commitment to the integrity of materials. He believed there existed only five materials suitable for the creation of architecture: concrete, brick, wood, steel and glass. His well-known skepticism of "newer" materials, plastics and synthetic composites, suggested a fundamental faith in the enduring presence of architecture. If a detail could not last at least fifty years, it was simply not acceptable. Skiles knew the value of quality.

During Skiles' tenure with Brooks Borg Skiles, the firm expanded in size and services. His contributions played a significant role in the improvement of the built environment in Iowa. Though he was personally responsible for numerous important projects; The Federal Building, Employers Mutual, Iowa Farm Bureau, Preferred Risk, Central Life Assurance and the Hoover State Office Building, his influence on the content of the firm's work extended to

many more buildings. The Des Moines Convention Center, Century Center Office Building, the Federal Home Loan Bank Building, numerous skywalks, parking ramps and projects for numerous regional colleges and universities all bear, in one form or another, the reasoned signature of Skiles' personal vision.

Among his friends and associates, Paul was something of a Renaissance man. He took up the violin at age forty-one and played for over twenty years in a string quartet with long-time friend, Dr. Henry Corn. He also played with the Des Moines Symphony and was a past member of the symphony's board of directors. As an artist, Paul studied sculpture at Iowa State University under Christian Petersen and taught water color painting. Many of his watercolors and paintings are displayed in residences across the United States. He was, as well, an accomplished writer, whose accounts of his experiences as a World War II aviator were published in the book; "No Metals."



The National Building Museum ▲

Friends of the National Building Museum, established in 1980, are encouraged to support the efforts of this institution by becoming members. The museum focuses on all aspects of building, from the architects and engineers' role in the original design to the finishing touches of skilled craftsmen.

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America's Country Schools

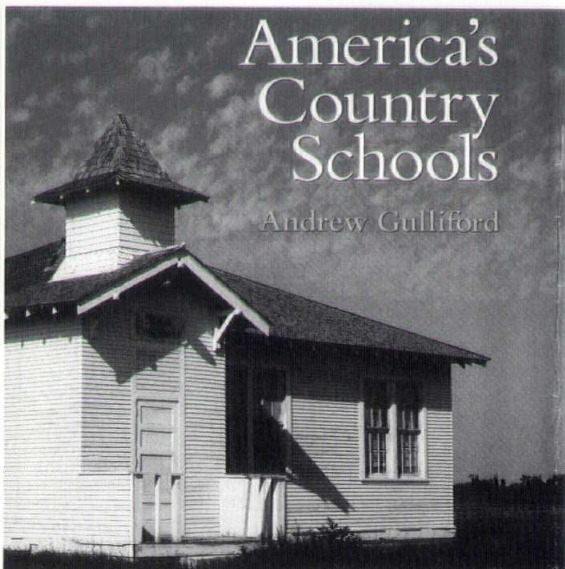
"America's Country Schools" by historian and photographer Andrew Gulliford is an ambitious work filled with nostalgia, sentiment and charm. Rich in anecdotes drawn from extensive interviews, this is the first book to examine the country school as a distinctive building type. Schools,

which varied from crude dug-outs, log cabins and adobe buildings to wood frame, stone or brick structures, are accorded a thorough and sympathetic examination. A complete listing of 729 existing country schools is included in the book's index.

America's Country Schools is published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. ISBN 0-89133-179-4.

America's Country Schools

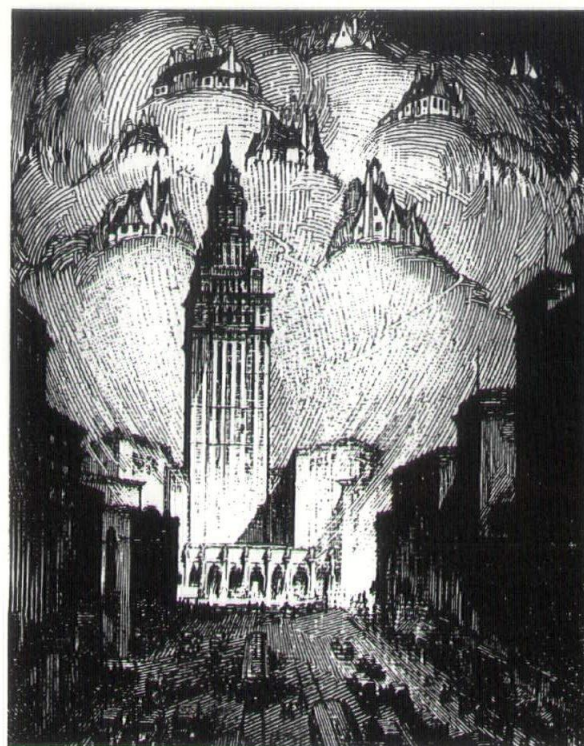
Andrew Gulliford

**Modern Architecture in America**

Two distinguished expatriots of Iowa have collaborated in creating "Modern Architecture in America." Richard Guy Wilson, University of Virginia and Sidney K. Robinson, University of Illinois, Circle Campus, both taught at Iowa State University in the late 70's and early 80's.

Their book is a tribute to architectural historian Leonard K. Eaton by nine of his former students. The work reflects a new perspective in architectural history — the movement away from formalistic historical analysis and toward viewing buildings with respect to geography, site, and intellectual, cultural, political and architectural philosophies of architects and their patrons.

Editors Wilson and Robinson have defined an important, though not widely-perceived, interpretation of American Modernism; one which relies far less on the European precedent conventionally credited for the



ascension of Modernism. Their tact is straight forward; American Modernism is inextricably rooted in the American experience. It is an insight which has escaped many, more indoctrinated, architec-

tural critics. Modern Architecture in America is published by the Iowa State University Press. ISBN 0-8138-0381

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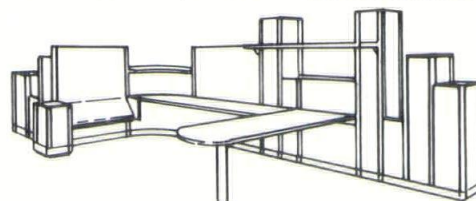
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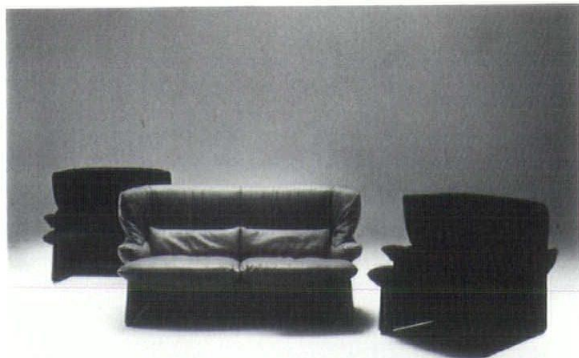
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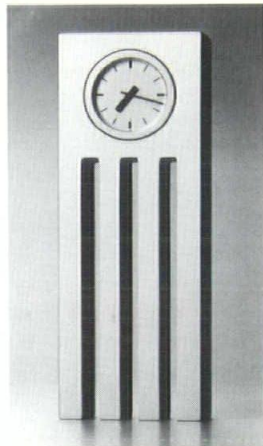
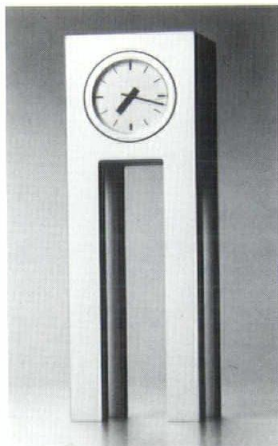
For table top elegance, ▼ internationally famous Japanese architect Shigeru Uchida has designed two clocks for Alessi of Italy. Named "Dear Vera 1" and "Dear Vera 2", they are two versions on the same theme. Both stand 5 1/4" on four columns, are made of grey anodized aluminum, and run on quartz movements. (The Markuse Corp. 617-932-9444.)



The Jonathan Arm Chair, ▲ with dynamic "lumbar spring" design, looks as though it could get up and walk away. Designed by Stanley Jay Friedman for Brueton Indus-

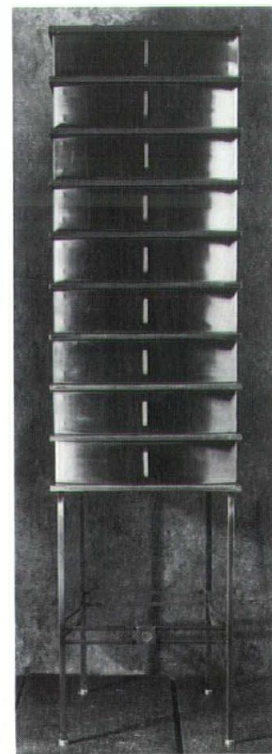
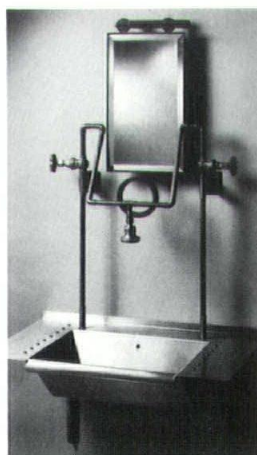
tries Inc., it is executed in tubular steel and molded reinforced resin. It is available in Brueton high gloss, matte, or custom opaque colors. (800-221-6783)

Italian architect Vico ▲ Magistretti is the designer of the Portovenere lounge seating collection being produced by Atelier International. Features include unique moveable headrest "wings" which can offer not only comfort but personal privacy. The group includes an armchair, ottoman, 2 & 3 seat sofas and are constructed of expanded polyurethane foam injected over a welded steel armature. Cushions are removeable and are zippered for cleaning.

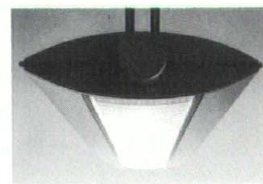
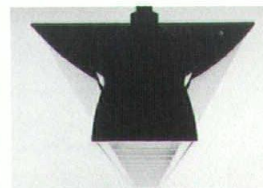


For that stainless steel ▼ industrial look try Boxe's "Tallboy" drawer unit or Hastings' "Prologue 2000 Wash Basin." The "TallBoy" steel frame is powder-coated with polished stainless steel fronts and brass handles. It is accompanied by a waiting desk and chest of drawers of similar design by Box Products Ltd., London, England (071-724-9389). The Wash Basin, designed by David Zel-

man for Hastings Tile & Il Bagno Collection (312-527-0565), has exposed copper tubing and brass fittings. It comes with mirror and towel holder.



Two uniquely profiled ▼ pendants from Zumtobel Lighting, Inc. combine beauty with excellent glare control. Spheros, designed by Hartmut Engel is based on the image of an aircraft wing floating in air. It is available in several colors, has louver options and comes in 4', 5', 8', or 10' lengths. The other one, called simply ID-VM, was designed by the late Hans T. von Malotki, lighting designer. Its direct/indirect light is designed to give exemplary performance in computer intensive office environments. (800-537-7802).

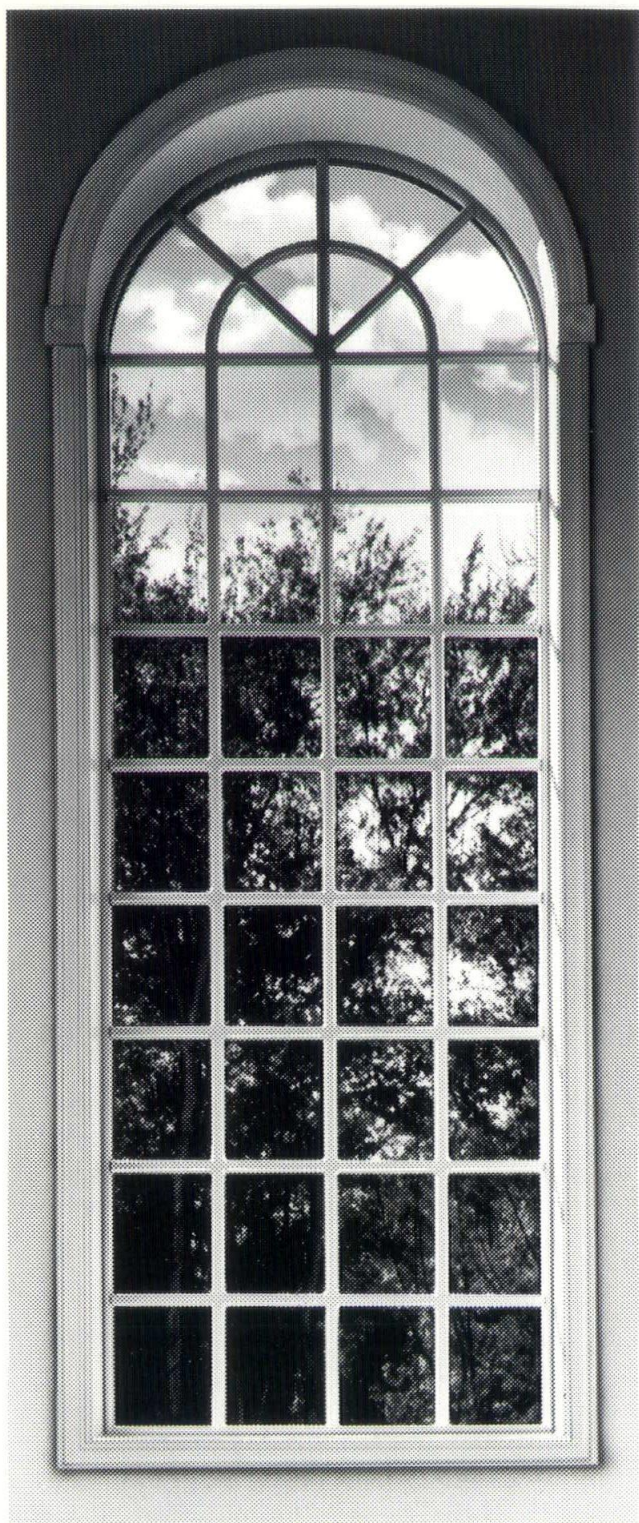


William Anderson, AIA



Mario Botta's suspension ▲ fixture is an elegant indirect light that will add sculptural interest to any ten foot or more ceiling. Called Zefiro, this 300 watt (max) halogen

quartz fixture adjusts from 35 1/2" to 43 3/4" in height. The frame is matte black painted metal while the diffuser is white painted perforated metal. It is manufactured by Artemide.



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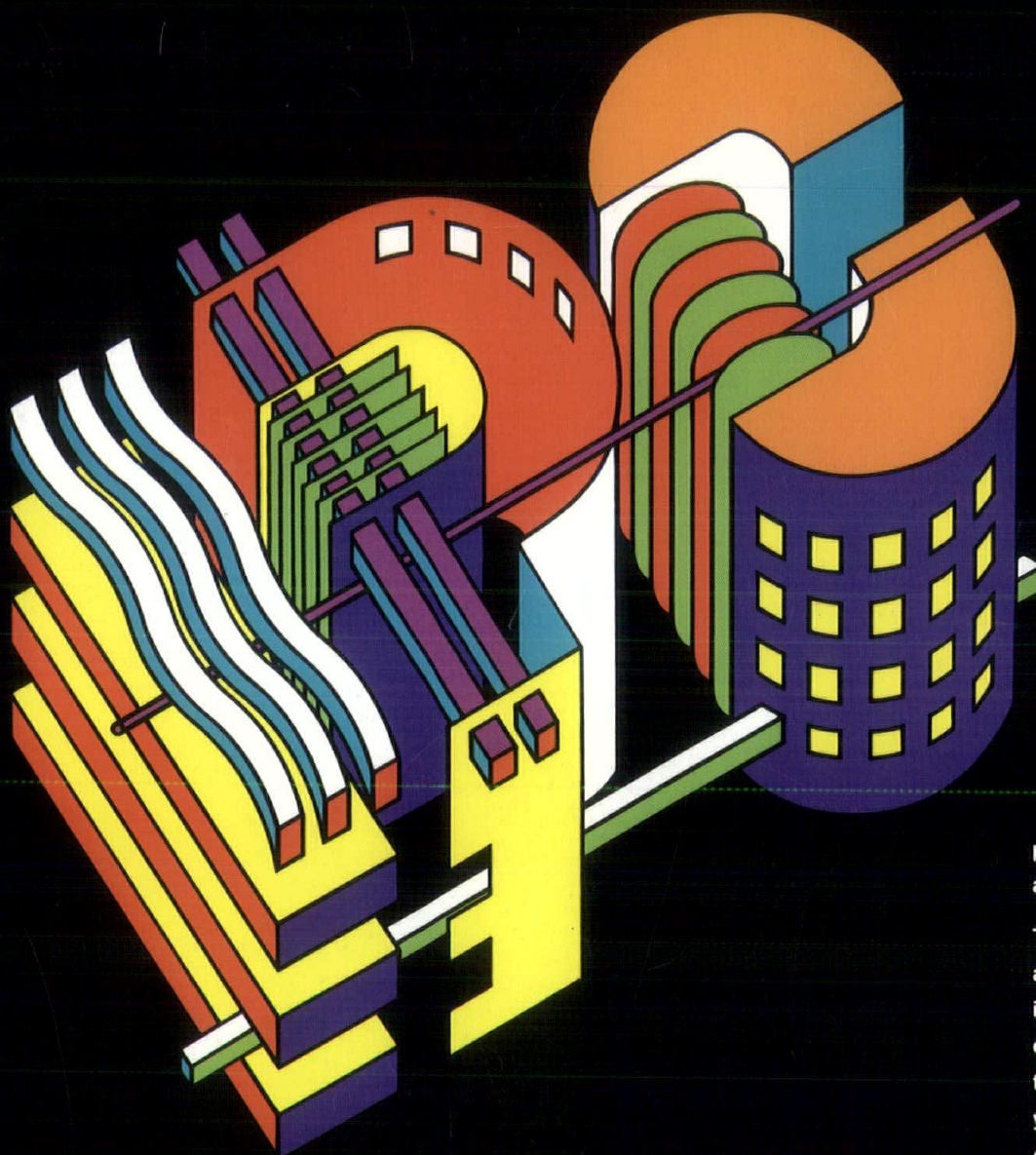
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