

IOWA Architect

Summer 1995/Issue No. 95:212 Three Fifty

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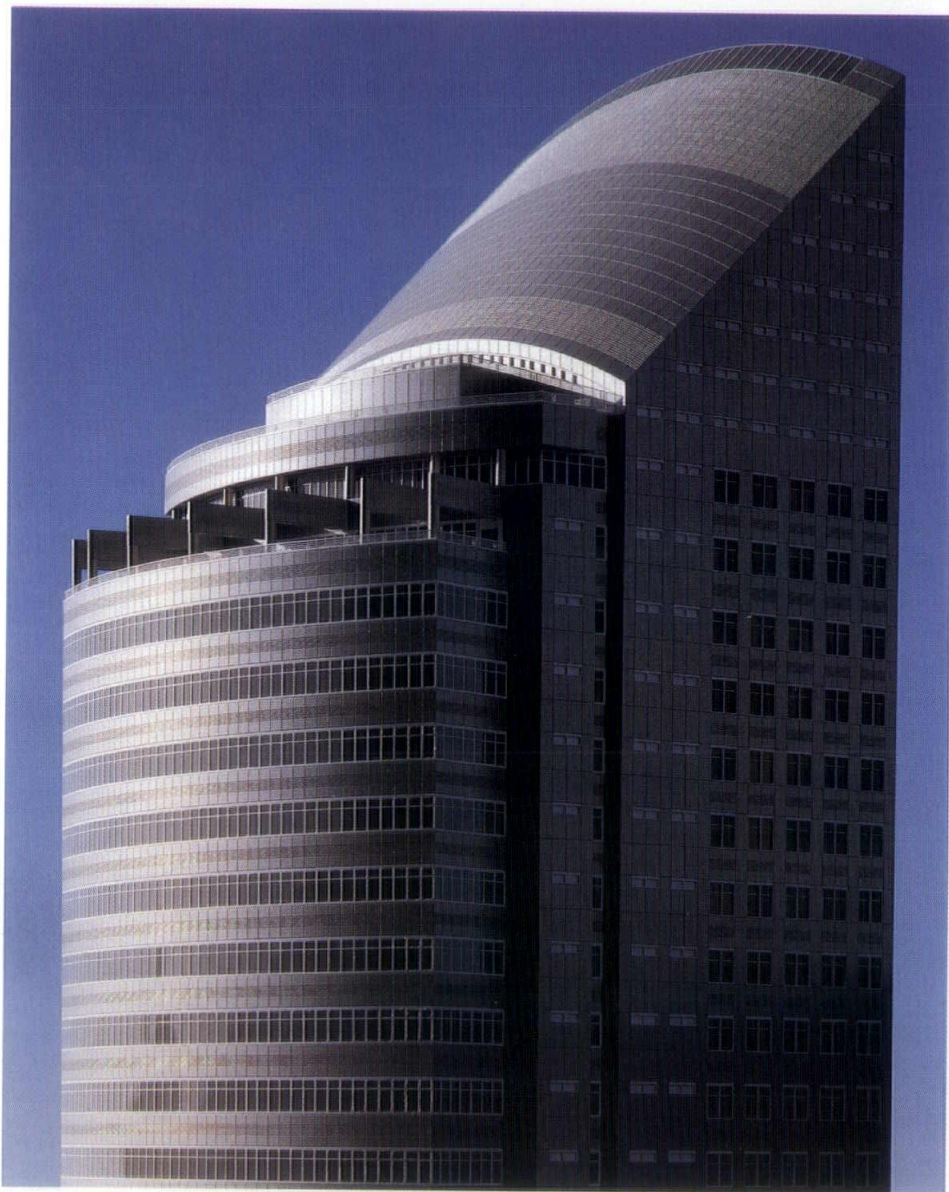


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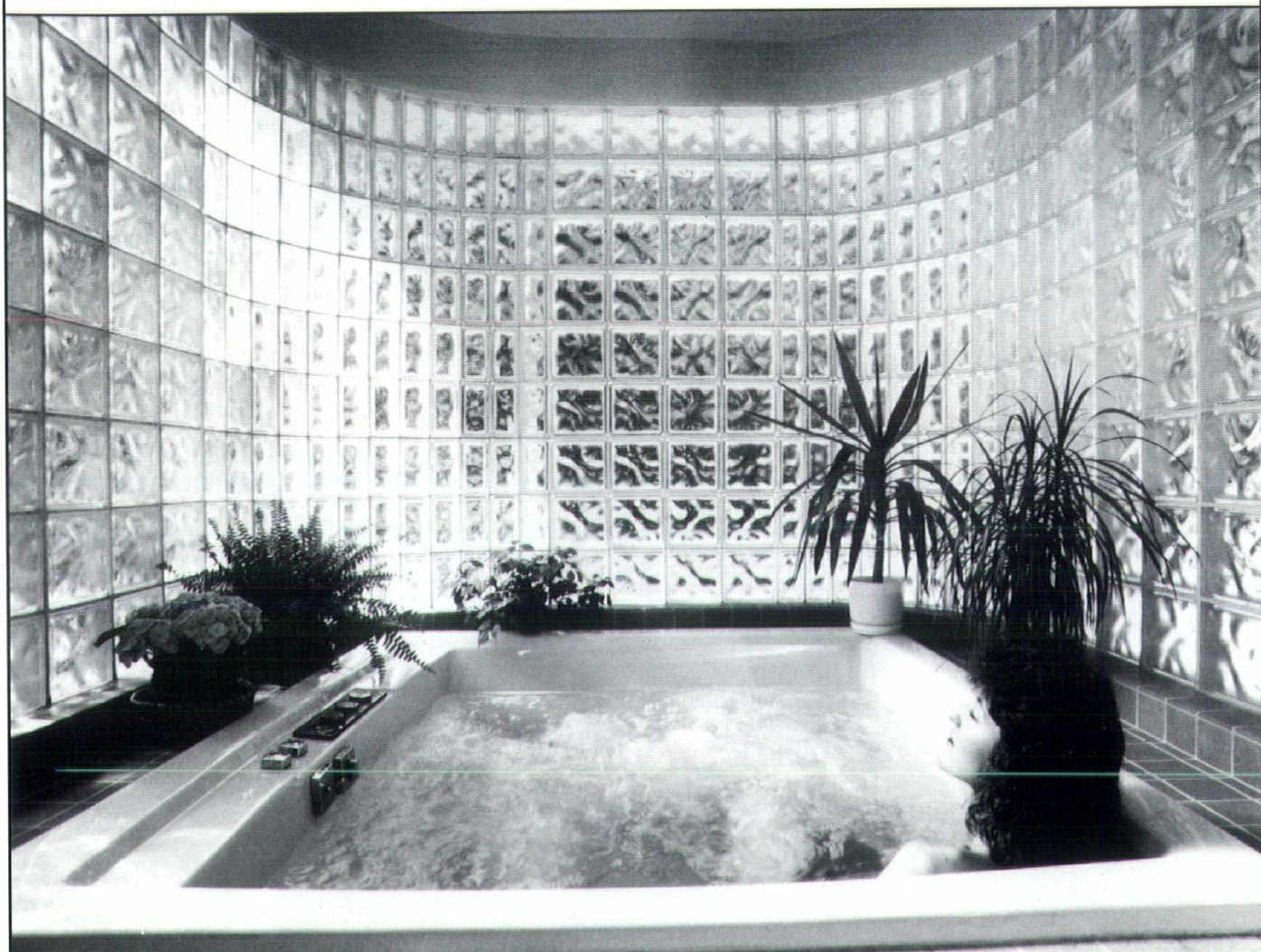
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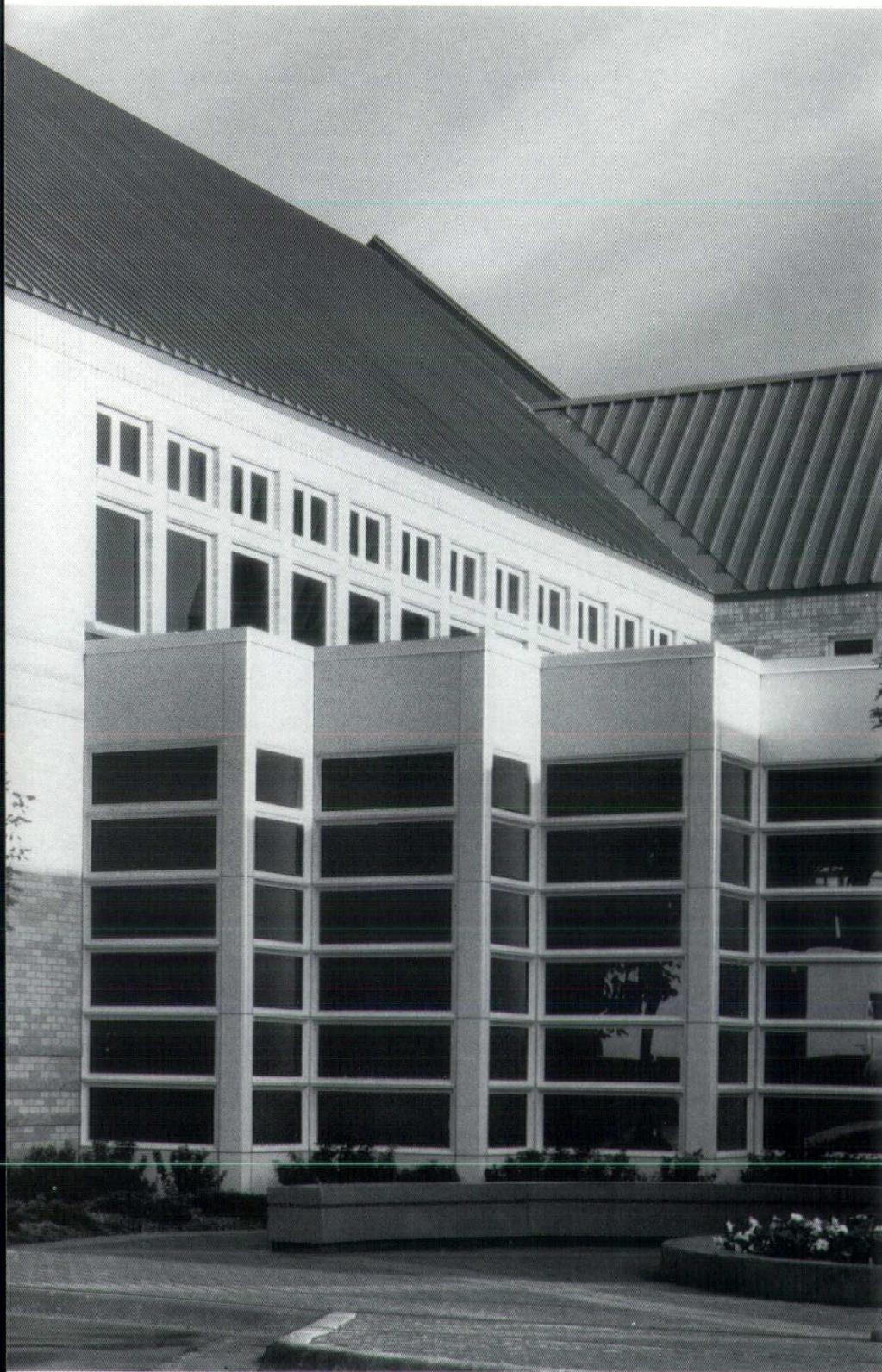
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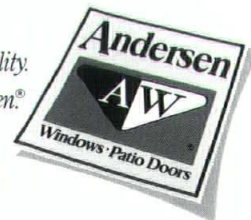
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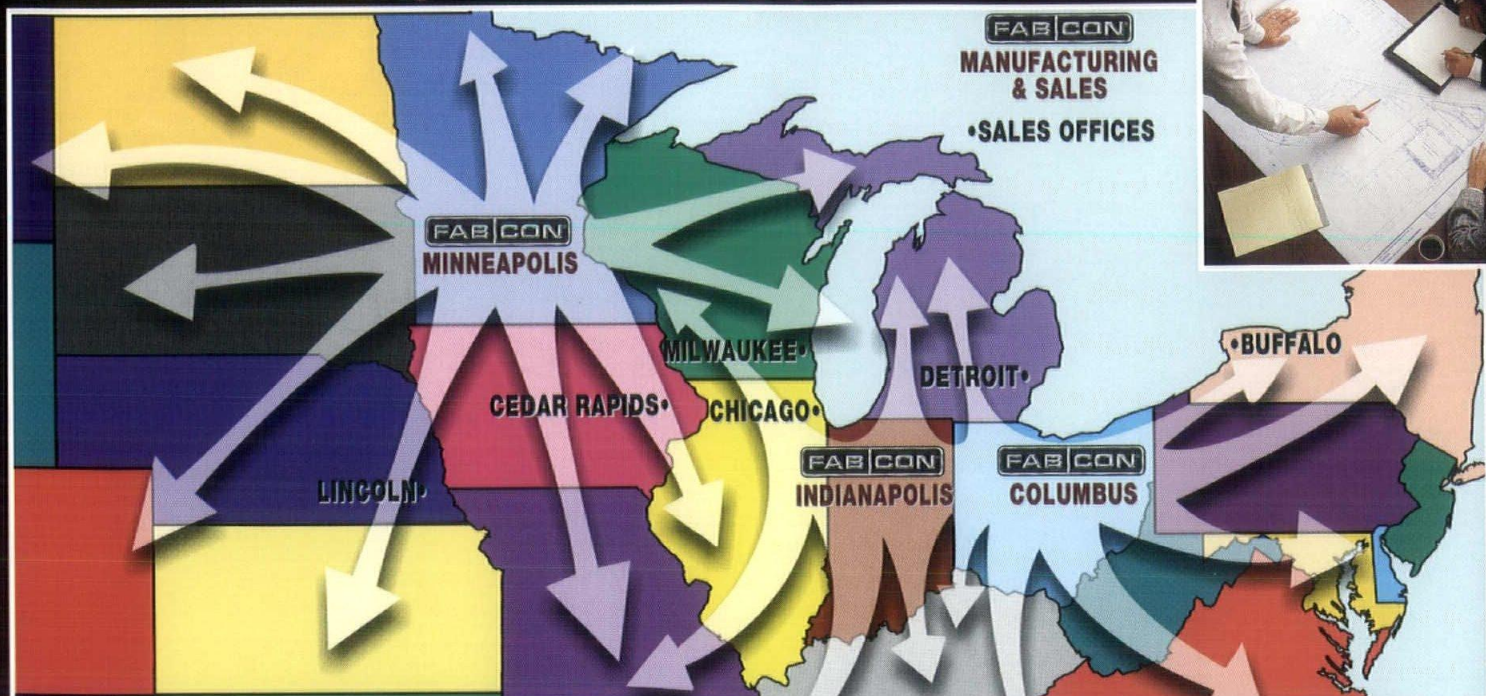
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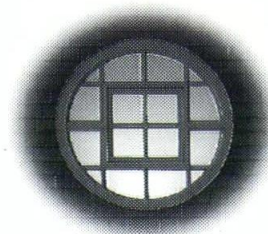
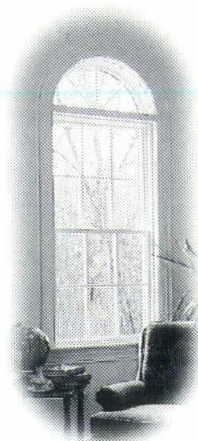
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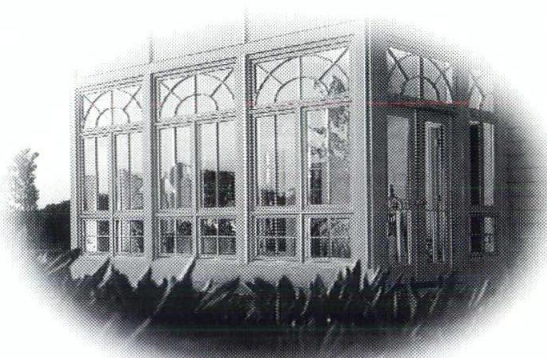
Enlarged view of images extended from a handrail in a home for the aged in Des Plaines, Illinois. Photo by Karant and Associates.

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A cross section of the United States' demographics reads very clearly. Iowa, along with the rest of the nation, is growing older.

In 1990, 13 percent of our country's population was age 65 or older. In 2030, that group will comprise 22 percent of the population (70 million people), a greater percentage, at that point, than that of children. Iowa ranks third in the country with 15 percent of its population 65 and older, while ranking first with 2 percent over 85, including 300 Iowans over 100 years old.

An evolution in the paradigm of architecture for health and aging needs to respond to these changing demographics. Unfortunately, simply acknowledging the existence and relative age of this growing market is a vapid observation. What is equally important to understand are the various degrees and means of care available. Architects need to be at the forefront of decisions that create innovative project solutions instead of becoming passive lemmings blindly directed by codes and conventions.

In all of the projects featured in this issue of *Iowa Architect*, readers will find that the future of architecture for health and aging is not full of simple imitations of past conventions, but instead is an emotionally rich and programmatically eclectic group of innovative solutions. The importance

of innovation cannot be overlooked. Currently, one of the problems of conventional health care facilities is the imposing image of institutionalization that is dramatically different from the domestic environment to which people are accustomed. This lack of sensitive design may have stemmed from the perception that health care facilities can aspire only to the acute nursing care model, which invariably exchanges the domestic living environment for the efficient delivery of care. As the following projects exemplify, the pragmatic logistics for care should not be an exchange for design, but instead should be embraced, studied and evolved as catalysts for creativity.

The following projects all emphasize an architectural criteria concerned with the method of care, the organization of residents and the experience of living in order to produce a very rich, proud and diverse set of solutions. Rejecting the comfort in mimicking outdated and often unsuccessful conventional precedents, these projects go beyond these obstacles, striving to achieve a sense of warmth, care and humanity that stems from an insight to the future.

Robert Whitehead
Associate Editor

**Architects need to be at the forefront
of decisions that create innovative
project solutions instead of becoming
passive lemmings blindly directed
by codes and conventions.**

IOWA Architect

ARTS

Jeff Wall

Recent photographs by Canadian artist Jeff Wall will be on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago June 17 through August 20, 1995. Jeff Wall is an artist and theoretician who investigates complex ideas through photography. The exhibition is comprised of 15 recent works shown in large (up to 20 feet in length), backlit, color transparency boxes.

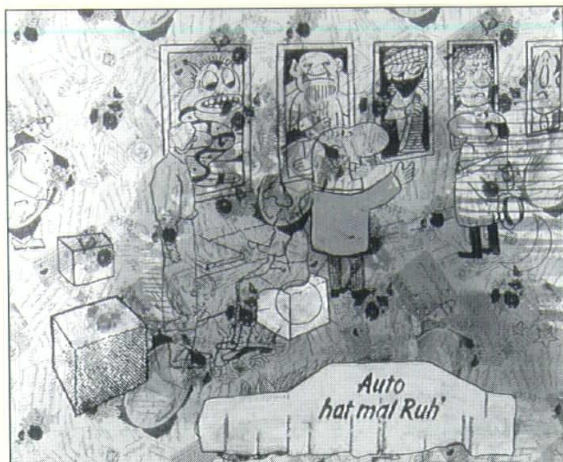
Wesley Kimler

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago will present the work of American abstract painter Wesley Kimler June 17 through September 10, 1995. This exhibition consists of a body of paintings created in the last 18 months which study the work of American Abstract Expressionists. The results are darkly hued, thickly painted works which combine abstract and figurative elements.

Richard Avedon: Evidence 1944 - 1994

The first museum retrospective of American photographer Richard Avedon will be presented by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts July 9 through September 17, 1995. Including over 150 images spanning 50 years of production, this exhibition will reassess and clarify the artist's place in the history of American photography.

PAUL MANKINS, AIA



Sigmar Polke: Illumination

More than 70 prints, multiples and artist's books by German artist Sigmar Polke will be on view at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis May 6 through September 17, 1995. *Sigmar Polke: Illumination* is a



retrospective exhibition, divided into three sections, chronicling projects created from 1966 through 1995. Since the early 1960s, Polke has been known as an uncommonly innovative artist.

By experimenting with a seemingly endless array of materials and pictorial sources he has continued to expand the definition of what painting can be.

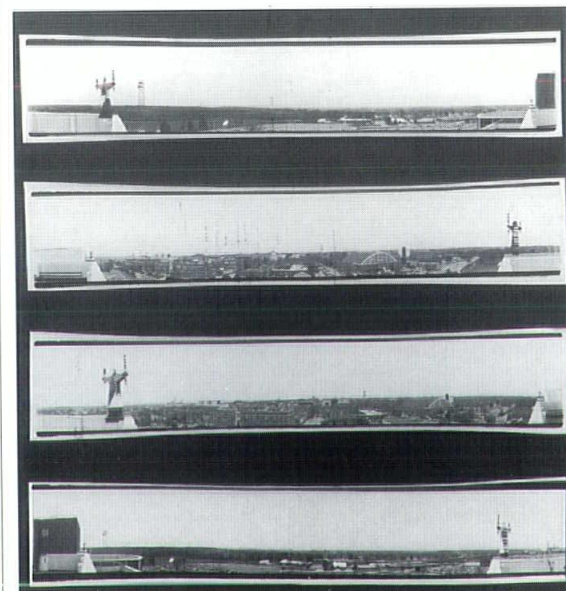
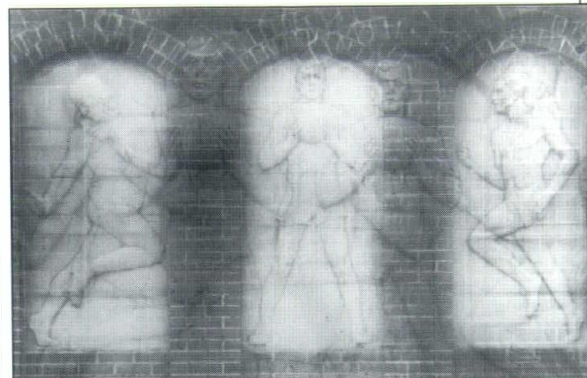


Interpretations of Interpretations

Photographic works by Iowa photographer and architect King Au will be on view at the Brunnier Gallery in the Iowa State University Center in Ames through July 30, 1995.

Interpretations of Interpretations investigates public art

on the Iowa State University campus through photographic fragments, superimposed images and other means to encourage the viewer to reinvestigate the university's rich public art program. The exhibition is accompanied by poetry which offers yet another set of interpretations of interpretations.



James Rosenquist: TIME DUST

The Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha will present an exhibition examining the 30-year career of internationally renowned American artist James Rosenquist June 17 through September 10, 1995. *James Rosenquist: TIME DUST* consists of 115 images, ranging from a tiny monochrome etching to a 35-foot-long, 82-color extravaganza, revealing the artist's innovation in print making. Rosenquist, one of this nation's best known artists, came to prominence in the 1960s as part of the Pop Art movement investigating the visual language of consumerism.

Mandala House

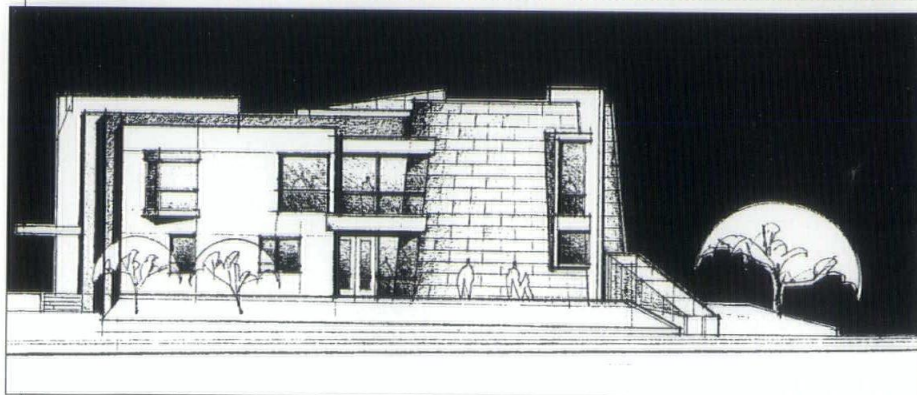
This 3,800 square-foot residence, designed for an Indian family by Sanjay Jani and William Nowysz, AIA, of William Nowysz & Associates, will be nestled in a gently rolling wooded site. An ancient nine-square grid called a "Mandala" was the inspiration for the house and details like the stair rail, lamps, carpets, stained glass and cabinet hardware. Spaces opening to the outside courtyard, an integral part of traditional Indian dwelling, are visually contained by the building. The fireplace and water fountain are designed to capture the Indian juxtaposition of color and geometry. The fireplace, inspired by a mythical being from Indian epics and colorful sari worn by Indian women, will be made of handmade colored glazed tiles. The water fountain evolved from an ancient depiction of cosmic order called "Tantra." The house is scheduled to begin construction in June 1995.

United Methodist Iowa Area Headquarters

Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil are in the design phase for the United Methodist Iowa Area Headquarters, located in Des Moines. A truncated stainless steel cylinder serves to anchor the two-story, 20,000-square-foot building to its site. The interior of the cylinder houses a chapel and cabinet room. Bisecting the building, and the cylinder, is a metaphorical wall of history that defines the public circulation through the structure. Housed within the wall are special historical items that the United Methodist Church has received from its members over the church's history.

Office Building

OPN Architects, Ryan Companies and Ruffalo Cody Associates have teamed together to convert the former American Legion Hall/Bowling Alley in Cedar Rapids into a single tenant office building. Located adjacent to Greene Square Park and across from the Cedar Rapids Art Museum, the existing facility, a series of masonry boxes void of fenestration, was almost entirely inaccessible to wheelchair users. The renovation inserts a glass curtain wall and steel fabrications into the existing composition, transforming the structure into a modern office building. A series of ramps and two elevators connects the large open interior spaces. A new masonry and steel canopy calls attention to the new entrance while serving as a formal gesture to the adjacent park and museum.



TODD GARNER, AIA

REGIONAL REALITIES

The Role of Context in the Evolving Architecture for Seniors

A firm rooted in Iowa explores the value of regional influences with five projects sited in New England.

Nearly seven years ago, just in time for the collapse of the "Massachusetts Miracle," the principals of Engelbrecht and Griffin, Architects P.C. (EGA), decided to establish an office in the New England region. Chuck Griffin agreed to take up residency in that area, and discovered an extraordinary property in Newburyport, a picturesque coastal community some 30 miles north of Boston. The property included, in addition to a historic prison, a former warden's residence and a carriage house which became the quarters for EGA in the East.

Since that rather dramatic beginning, the "colonization" has proven to be both challenging and rewarding. Unhappily, it is in the nature of the

economy and method of New England to extend each relatively simple task of building into an epic journey, and much of what is on view through the following five projects is newly finished.

The five works address an evolution and refinement of a building type designed to house and serve the most senior members of our society. It is notable that the practice of EGA, which has for some time now been associated with this resident group, currently engages this expanded range of project typologies. Obviously, a maturing marketplace has continued to examine its requirements according to more specific ranges of identifiable needs and preferences of particular elderly cohorts. The ideal of a single comprehensive set of environments and services designed for the "life-long" needs of the retired, such as the classic "life-care" communities, has not carried the day, even though projects of this sort continue to be built.

Although only decades old as an identifiable project type in the United States, the full-service retirement community (sometimes referred to as a continuing care retirement community or CCRC) presents a program now well known to most architects. Combining integrated levels of support and environments, these projects are theoretically capable of responding to the life-long needs of elderly residents as they inexorably move from largely independent lives into circumstances that require increased levels of care and institutional support.

When EGA designed the first facility of this type for Massachusetts (North Hill, completed in 1985), this concept was gaining great currency throughout the nation, and it seemed that its promise to enrich and secure the final years of a substantial number of our elders was well established. From the perspective of 1995, however, that promise remains unfulfilled, having been challenged by the move to "unbundle" services and environments for seniors. Fewer of these full-service projects are being constructed today, and when they are developed there are usually some rather unique circumstances that propel them.

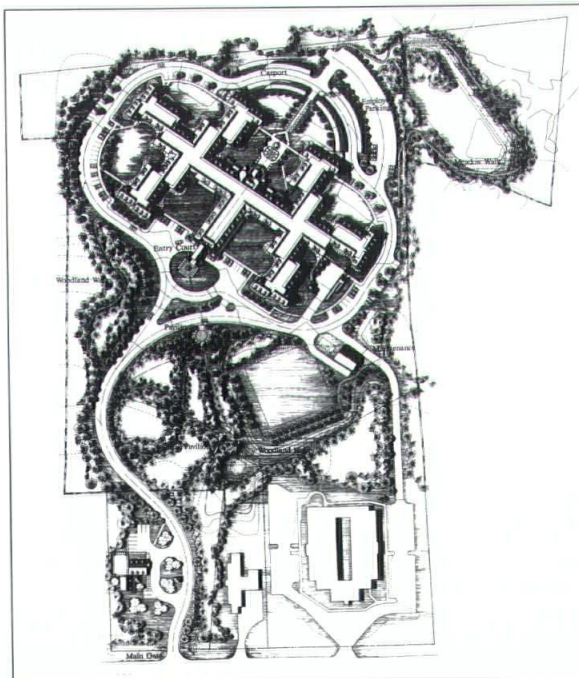
The Projects

On the face of it, the two full-service retirement communities now nearing completion, RiverWoods in Exeter, New Hampshire, and The Village at Duxbury, located on the south shore of Massachusetts, have much in common. Occupying sizeable, wooded, environmentally sensitive suburban parcels (82 acres in Exeter and 60 for Duxbury), the two developments share programmatic dimensions of approximately 200 independent dwelling units, commons, assisted living and available nursing. Beyond that, however, the two works diverge and, due to variations largely in matters of

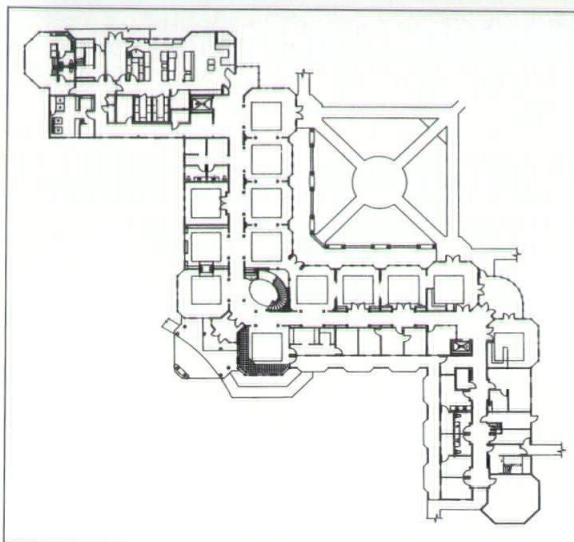
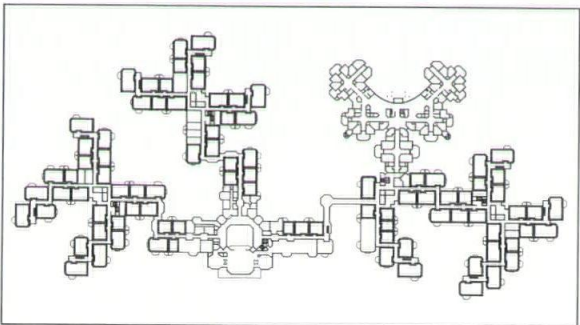


(Above) The "houses" of The Village at Duxbury, Photo One.

(Right) Partial site plan for The Village at Duxbury, Plan One.



MARK C. ENGELBRECHT, AIA



(Above left) Construction photo of a "village" at RiverWoods, Photo Two.

(Far left) Principle floor plan at RiverWoods, Plan Two.

(Above) View of Herrick House, Photo Three.

(Left) Plan of Herrick House, ground floor, Plan Three.

sponsorship and local contextual issues, take on quite singular expressions.

Duxbury, Massachusetts, is a picturesque community of largely eighteenth-century homes located on the southerly shore of the bay very near Cape Cod. The community is surrounded by substantial suburban development, particularly as one proceeds inland, and a diminishing but significant array of cranberry bogs and marshes. These two factors—the rather unique character of the old Duxbury housing stock and growing concern over the viability of the regional inland wetlands—directly influenced the design of this project.

Taken on for the Welch Healthcare Group, the project was programmed to provide up to 202 independent dwelling units, extensive common areas and 20 units of assisted living accommodations. Nursing facilities were not required since a substantial health care center, owned and operated by the Welch Group, was preexisting on a portion of the site.

As in the New England region generally, the local authorities and citizens were keenly interested in the project and provided substantial oversight. For example, zoning bylaws intended to protect the inland wetlands provided for a total coverage on the site of only 25 percent, including the building footprints, drives, parking and walks. On the other hand, the local architectural review board, expressing the wish of the community, was anxious for an architecture that would clearly identify with the character of "old" Duxbury in its massing, materials and detail.

The project design, represented by the site plan (Plan One) and photo (Photo One), attempts to reconcile these two potentially contradictory community objectives. A rather efficient plan rises through three stories (with a ground floor beneath a part of the building) but is articulated in such a way

as to present itself as an aggregation of two-story "houses," detailed in a way sympathetic to the nature and use of materials in the historic town center. Not only does this strategy satisfy the various local requirements, it also provides a happy result for the prospective residents who, of course, share many of these community values.

Some 115 miles north in Exeter, New Hampshire, a slightly different set of circumstances applied. A not-for-profit group consisting largely of retired and semi-retired faculty of the Phillips Academy and the University of New Hampshire in Durham, ten miles away, had attempted to promote the development of a full-service retirement community for the area for some time. In 1988, Retirement Services, Inc., a developer of projects of this sort, took on the challenge and, working on behalf of the not-for-profit sponsors, proceeded to produce RiverWoods at Exeter.

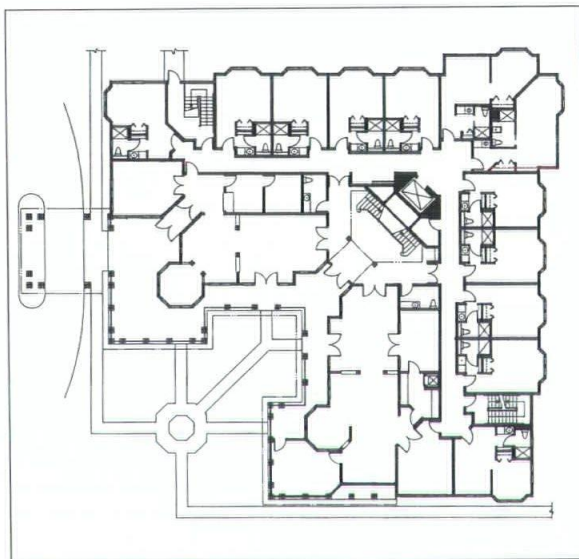
Many of the same conditions that applied for RiverWoods were faced by Duxbury, including the program (although nursing facilities would be required in Exeter), site conditions (wetlands again) and community interest. However, since coverage issues were not so carefully controlled, a site plan would be developed that arranged the program in a loose association of four clusters, or "villages." Centered on an elaborate commons, each of these "villages" was configured around lounge spaces, a courtyard and an entry, and joined to its neighbor in an informal way that permitted both adjustments to topographic differentials and wetland "lines" (Plan Two).

Since the town of Exeter is some distance from the RiverWoods site and because the community dates from a later time, there existed less passion for



(Above right) Entry, porch and garden at Gardner Park, Photo Four.

(Right) Plan of principle level at Gardner Park, Plan Four.



historic conformance, and in the face of this relative tolerance, inspiration was provided by the site visit. As the construction picture indicates (Photo Two), what developed is an expression that is highly articulated, sheltered by steep roofs and clad with stained shingles, in hopes that the resulting architecture will merge with the pine forests of the surrounding site.

The second pair of projects, Herrick House in Beverly, Massachusetts, and Gardner Park, a few miles away in Peabody, represents a new project type that responds to a "threshold" condition not adequately served by the early full-service projects. These so-called "assisted living facilities" support a residency of the frail elderly. This population, generally octogenarians, finds itself in some need of daily assistance, but clearly possesses the stamina and mental acuity to live outside the bounds of a fully staffed nursing facility.

Herrick House, constructed as a joint venture between the National Development Corporation and Beverly Hospital, is typical of the programs emerging for these new initiatives. Ninety dwelling units, ranging from 325-square-foot alcoves to one-bedroom

accommodations, are supported by a wide array of common services and spaces (Plan Three). The four-story structure is located within a beautiful forested grove on the campus of the hospital. The great majority of the common areas is associated with this first level, which opens into gardens and the surrounding landscape (Photo Three).

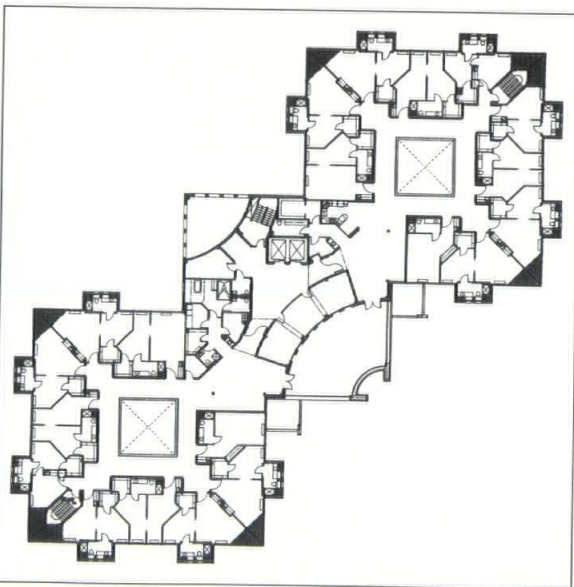
Gardner Park, the project located in Peabody, provides fewer dwelling units than Herrick House, and the accommodations, which average 300 square feet in size, are also smaller than those provided by the latter facility. This slight programmatic differential reflects the view of the various management groups; but taken together, the two projects represent the two poles of assisted living facilities, which, due to service programs and ease of internal circulation, never seem to exceed populations of around 100 seniors.

Of course, Gardner Park also is distinguished from Herrick House by architectural expression. Located on a heavily used street that is framed by large nineteenth-century houses, this project naturally took on the form and scale of the "home" that it quite literally replaced (Photo Four). An elaborate porch frames a slightly regressed garden that forms the focus of the plan (Plan Four). Again, a tightly ordered geometry minimizes travel distances for the residents and staff.

Rising out of a solid granite hillside overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee in Laconia, New Hampshire, is the fifth, and in many ways, most interesting and least finished of this project set. Designed for the Taylor Home, a local institution for the elderly founded in 1904, this nursing facility fits into the master plan incorporating the original home and 175 cottages for independent living. The plan and section of the project (Plan Five) trace the conceptual core of this architecture, which consists of two interlocked pavilions of two stories each supported by a base level of common services. Each of these pavilions is structured by a ring of flexible rooms defining a central space. The interconnection of these two primary elements supports entries, administrative



(Above left) Entry and balconies at Taylor Home, Photo Five.



(Left) Second level plan for Taylor Home, Plan Five.

Englanders, can hardly be denied, and presents a formidable challenge to architects working within the region. Indeed, to the extent that the local historic architectural inventory has been officially recognized, such as the town of Old Duxbury, one can expect the regulatory process to be driven by this passion for traditional form.

Laconia, New Hampshire, for example, is a community largely associated with vacation or seasonal living, and does not, therefore, support a significant stock of historic structures. The expression of the project for Taylor Home could respond to programmatic imperatives, site conditions and climate without gratuitous references to New England images. On the other hand, the Village of Duxbury was heavily manipulated to strike clear associations with local historic architectural patterns.

In many ways, these regional activities are consistent with the evolving nature of the work in the office of EGA. From the earliest projects, the imperatives of context have been credited in the design processes, and, in an interesting way, many of the traditional architectures of New England have developed around simple geometric orders quite consistent with the predilections at EGA. Still, one can hardly ignore the degree to which historic replication is prized by most Northeasterners, and, it must be added, the prospective residents of these projects.

These five New England projects represent an attempt to produce a regional architecture that is informed by, but not enslaved to, a set of environmental traditions. By analyzing the role that climate, landscape, materials, scale and even spatial relationships play within these built and natural environs, the architects were able to draw lessons applicable to these emerging programs. Because, no matter what else it must be, a significant architecture for seniors is about shelter and security, which, it seems, involves a relationship to a traditional "place"—if not a traditional "home."

Mark C. Engelbrecht, AIA, is principal in Engelbrecht and Griffin and Dean of the College of Design at Iowa State University, Ames.

functions and a series of balconies overlooking the lake and hills beyond.

The rather complex plan and unusual spatial configuration provide the management of the project with a very broad range of options for accommodating occupancies of widely varied dependencies. Residents suffering from dementia can be appropriately housed within one of the levels, while others, who may remain alert but need assistance with mobility or other functions, can take up quarters in another, yet related area. The device of the double atria promotes a sense of "wholeness" or belonging, and supervision and response to the occupants should also benefit from this openness in plan and section.

Conclusion

Of course, the character of this project emerging above Lake Winnepesaukee (Photo Five) does not evoke the images of New England that most of us carry along as part of our visual inventory. That this preconception exists, particularly among New

THE MEANING OF HOSPICE

Hospice of Central Iowa, Kavanagh House

The ideals of the Hospice Movement are not easily articulated in architectural terms. Their fulfillment requires contemplation, sensitivity and profound respect. In Kavanagh House, Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil demonstrate the considerable deliberative grace required of such an endeavor.

(Right) The Kavanagh House's comfortable juxtaposition of natural materials evokes the warmth and familiarity of a home-like atmosphere.

(Opposite) The arcing central corridor recedes from view beyond its intersection with the artfully detailed day room.

Project Hospice of Central Iowa, Kavanagh House

Location Des Moines, Iowa

Owner Hospice of Central Iowa

Architect Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil, Des Moines

Project Team Douglas Wells, AIA; Patrick Uhron, AIA; Charles Swanson, AIA

General Contractor Passport, Inc.

Structural Engineer James W. Wilson, PE

Civil Engineer Butts Engineering, Inc.

Mechanical Baker Mechanical

Electrical Brown Brothers

Landscaper PBS Landscaping, Inc.

Interior Design Business Design One

Photographer King Au, Studio AU

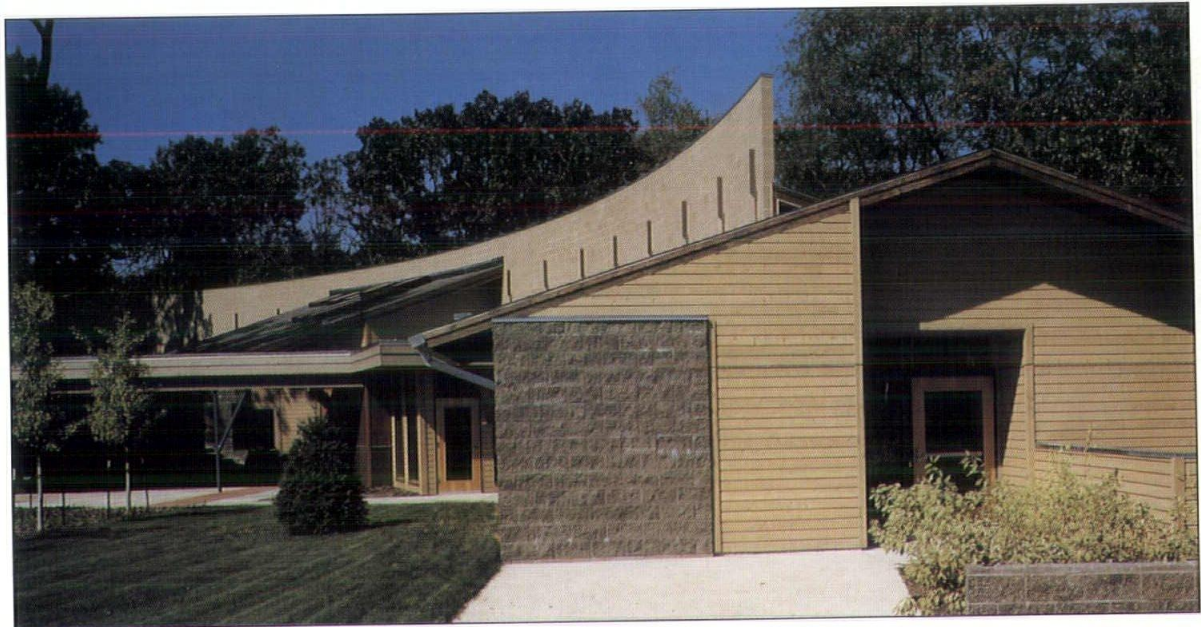
Resources See page 32

There is a group of individuals who share an affinity with much of our aged population. They too are individuals in need of varying degrees of assistance, individuals whose expectation of their time remaining is measurably less than that which they have already experienced. They are frequently, but not always, older adults. They are often gravely ill and, as a consequence, compelled to grapple with, among all else of life's complexities, the inevitability of their own mortality. They are individuals burdened by disease or impairment for which there exists no restorative cure. These individuals are the terminally ill.

ended deserves the same consideration and care as any of life's other significant rites of passage, that the question of death may ultimately only be understood and reconciled in an environment of support and nurturing, in the company of family and friends and loving care-givers.

These ideals are the foundation of the Hospice Movement. For Hospice of Central Iowa, these guiding principles offer a firm philosophical and spiritual grounding for its recently completed inpatient facility, Kavanagh House.

Kavanagh House is located on a two-and-one-half acre site in Des Moines, adjacent to Interstate 235,



We are all, of course, mortal. We are all, in this sense, terminally ill. Still, for those whose life is quantifiably limited, for those whose prognosis of the future must be measured not in years or decades but by months and days, the time remaining represents a profoundly tangible and significant commodity.

The value of this commodity is in no way diminished by its temporal limitations. Its demonstration requires the same dignity and sense of purpose we accord all existence. The evident limitations are only more acute, more pressing and more needful of reconciliation and understanding.

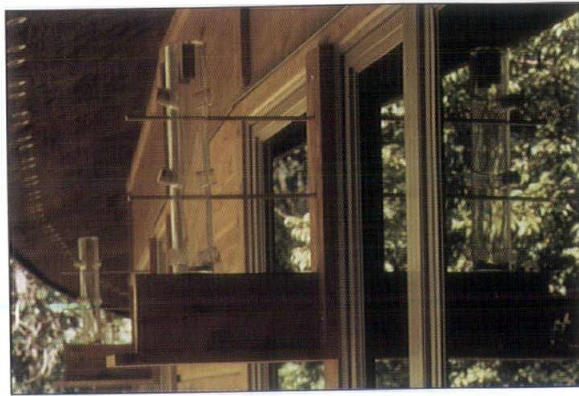
The Hospice Movement, first articulated in Scandinavia and more recently in America, is a frankly stated recognition of the common and universal fate which one day awaits us all. The movement is guided by a fundamental and underlying premise—that all life, whatever its duration, is to be cherished, that an existence well-

abutting a quiet, residential neighborhood, overlooking a placidly wooded glen. The twelve-unit residential facility was designed by Des Moines' Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil.

To fashion an environment appropriate to the needs of the terminally ill requires both contemplation and sensitivity. Conventional assumptions regarding these patients' desires may prove unreliable; few architects can reasonably draw upon personal experience in such matters. What is required is patience, careful research into the growing body of literature regarding hospice residences, and a receptive ear to the voices of patients nearing the end of life.

Out of such deliberative inquiry, several distinctive features of hospice arise. A hospice is first, not a hospital. Though furnished with much of the same equipment and fittings as a primary-care facility, its mission is not curative, but palliative

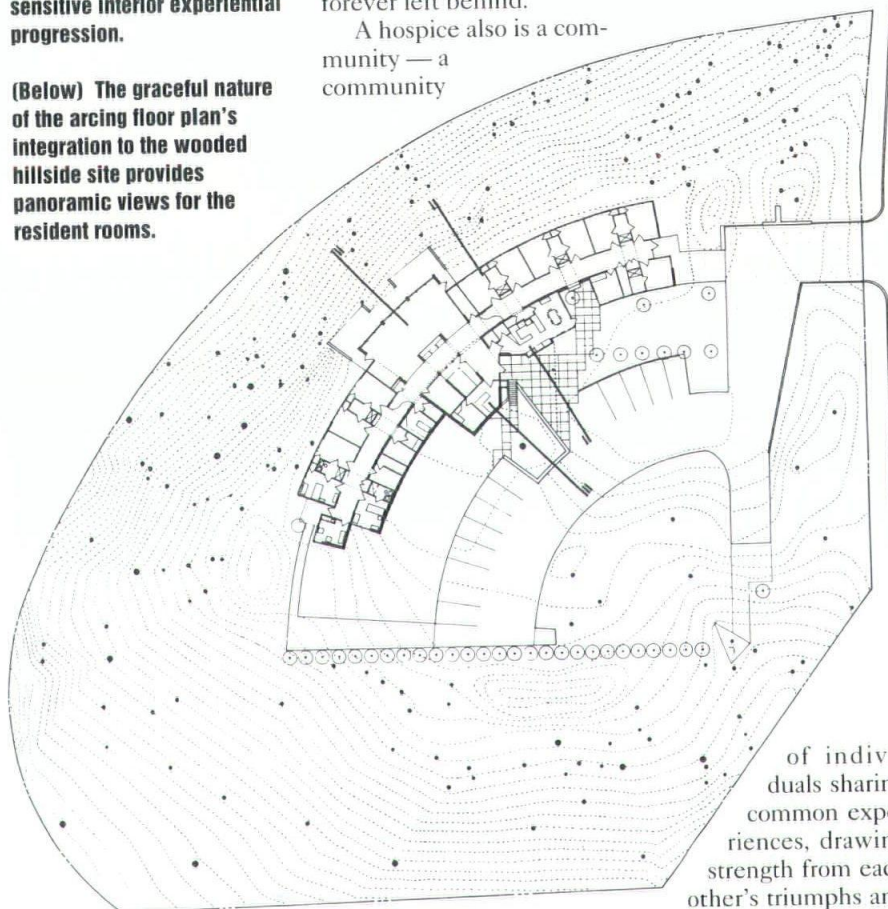




(Above right) The birdfeeders that extend outside each resident room window seem to capture the intimate level of detailing inherent throughout the Kavanagh House.

(Above far right) The attention to various textures, colors and surfaces at the entry foreshadow the sensitive interior experiential progression.

(Below) The graceful nature of the arcing floor plan's integration to the wooded hillside site provides panoramic views for the resident rooms.



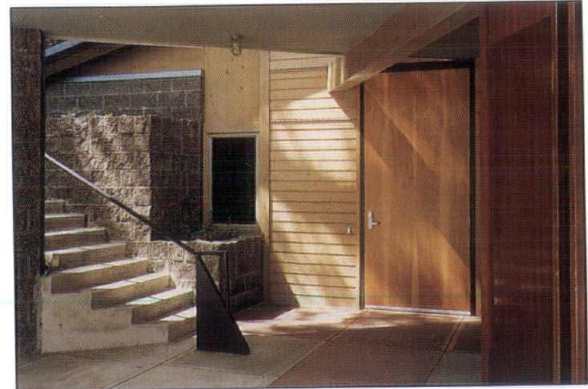
treatment. Pain, discomfort and suffering are all addressed, but medical procedures which artificially prolong life beyond its reasonable limits are consciously absent.

Neither is hospice a traditional medical institution in any other sense of the word. Absent is the endless and bewildering network of sterile-white corridors; missing, the impersonal entourage of faceless medical personnel; gone, the pervasively unnatural odor of disinfectant and scrub soap. A hospice is something far more familiar and comfortable, something which for many is very much like the home they have forever left behind.

A hospice also is a community — a community

of individuals sharing common experiences, drawing strength from each other's triumphs and humility in the face of each loss. Hospice is a place of gathering, of collective reflection, and of mutual support.

Hospice is finally a refuge, a place of quiet contemplation. The necessity for moments of intimate privacy is understood and privileged. At such times, contact with nature seems especially comforting. The significance of one's own life can be better appreciated in the context of nature's recurrent and eternal cycles of birth, growth, death and renewal.



The Kavanagh House gracefully articulates each of these characteristic features of hospice. It is situated in the midst of nature, surrounded by a thick brocade of ancient hardwoods. The building rests naturally on the land, stepping in harmony with the site's gently sweeping and descending grade. The irregularities of the predominant contours have been abstracted in the form of a broad arc, a geometrically pure segment of a circle. There is in this formal gesture a subtle allusion to the circumstances of those residing within Kavanagh House—that life, though limited, remains inseparable from a much greater and unbroken circle of existence.

The arcing segment of the building's plan possesses other utilities. The central and curving corridor which connects each resident's room is continually receding from view. In contrast to the predictable monotony of a more efficient, straight-drawn corridor, the passage's lilting sweep evokes a welcomed sense of expectation and anticipation. Moreover, the curve affords each resident's room a unique and individual position along the arc.

Another consequence of the building's arc is its imprint on the composition of individual rooms. The residences are slightly splayed from inside to out. The gesture is both subtle and consequential. The space of each room perceptibly moves from a focus of concentration outward into the limitless eternity of nature, poised at the horizon beyond. This geometric metaphor, linking life's end to an infinitely expanding embrace of the natural world, seems especially poignant.

Along the curving corridor, a stoutly reassuring masonry wall demarks the boundary between the residences and their necessary spaces of support. Here, at the inside face of the arc, is a series of utilitarian functions: administrative offices, intensive care and treatment rooms, kitchen and pantry and a lounge for visiting family and friends. The position of these necessities, proximate but gently removed from the day-to-day activities of residents, suggests considerable forethought and sensitivity by both client and designer. The reality of support and assistance is always present, yet never pervasive.

In such a strategy of divisioning, there is the temptation to mask the ultimate consequences of a resident's tenure. A denial of the reality of death could easily be accomplished—a discretely placed back door exit, an out-of-the-way side corridor. Such seemingly well-intended manipulations would, however, be philosophically inconsistent with the principles of hospice. The finality of a resident's life is a significant point of closure in the hospice experience. At Kavanagh House, a patient's final passage is along the same curving corridor traversed



(Above) The interior finishes throughout Kavanagh House radiate the warm comfort of naturally finished, inauspicious materials.

throughout the course of his or her residency.

At the heart of Kavanagh House lies its communal gathering space, the day room. Like its adjoining residences, the day room opens outward onto the landscape, its sunlit and warmly nurturing interior beckoning residents to gather in the presence of their companions and share the comfort of each other's experiences. A delicately screened alcove sits to one side of the day room. It is a space where the most seriously ill of patients may enjoy the support of the community without sacrificing the comforting privacy they would find in their own rooms. A few steps away is a non-denominational chapel for moments of spiritual reassurance and guidance.

The sensitivity of Kavanagh House extends to the execution of each of its most intimate details. Its evident, home-like character is enhanced by the choice of humble and unpretentious materials: clear-finish wood paneling; burnished and rough masonry units; and naturally hued carpet and exposed colored concrete flooring. As with life, no detail is insignificant, no event unworthy of expression and articulation. Small, vertical clearstory windows which align the central corridor, each representing an individual resident within, are consciously crafted. Each is surmounted by an emblematic mantle of steel plate and hardware. Each cradles, on both interior and exterior, a delicately bracketed

incandescent light fixture. The symbolism of these individual points of light, both natural and artificial, is as deliberate as it is carefully wrought.

This same sense of tangible expression appears throughout Kavanagh House, from the artfully supported bird feeders outside each resident's room to the hand-crafted furnishings and cabinetry that enrich the interior. Throughout, the evidence of this place's humanity is marked by the recurring presence of human touch.

Compassion, support and understanding are not uncommon human expressions. There are many times in life, especially as life approaches its final act of closure, when such emotions come to us quite naturally. What is less easily accomplished, of what we are less certain, is our ability to sincerely convey these expressions to those most in need.

The challenge for the architecture of hospice is much the same. In this ambition, Kavanagh House succeeds with elegance and grace and sensitivity. It is a place where dignity and respect reside in comfort. It is a place where the complexities and contradictions of existence may be reconciled and put to rest. It is a place of care and support and community. It is hospice.

Lynn Spears is based in Raleigh, North Carolina, and currently serves as advisor for publications created by students of North Carolina State University's School of Design.

THIS IS NOT ABOUT HANDRAILS AND SHELVING

Two Installations by Mark Rakatansky and The Committee on Physical Thought

Two recent installations by Mark Rakatansky and The Committee on Physical Thought explore the conventions of institutionalized housing for the aged, the utility of the trope in subverting such conventions and the language of a gestic architecture.

(Right) A close-up detail of the handrail connection to the wall.

Project Adult Day, Interventions at an Adult Day-Care Center

Location Des Plaines, Illinois

Clients The Retirement Research Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, Marilyn Hennessy, Executive Vice President, Brian Hofland, Vice President; Advocate Health Care, Lutheran General Hospital, Metropolitan Chicago, Illinois, Robert L. Capp, President, Ellen P. Brown, Director of Aging Services, Pat Cohen, Director of Older Adult Services; The Staff and Residents of Des Plaines Adult Day-Care Center, Des Plaines, Illinois

Designers The Committee on Physical Thought, Department of Architecture, Iowa State University, Ames

Project Team Mark Rakatansky, Project Director and Designer; Andrew Blocha, Project Manager; Mark McKinney, Susan Melsop, Anne Thrush, Assistants

Consultants Dr. Donna Cohen, Gerontology; Media International, Inc., Audio Services

Prototype Construction Dan Blue, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

Photographer Karant and Associates, Chicago, Illinois

LYNN S. SPEARS

"This project is not about handrails."¹ So begins Mark Rakatansky's 1992 essay "Transformational Constructions (For Example: Adult Day)," published in MIT's journal of architecture and design culture, *Assemblage*. The handrails, which are not the subject of his essay, are integral to a privately funded installation created for residents of a modest Des Plaines, Illinois, home for the aged.

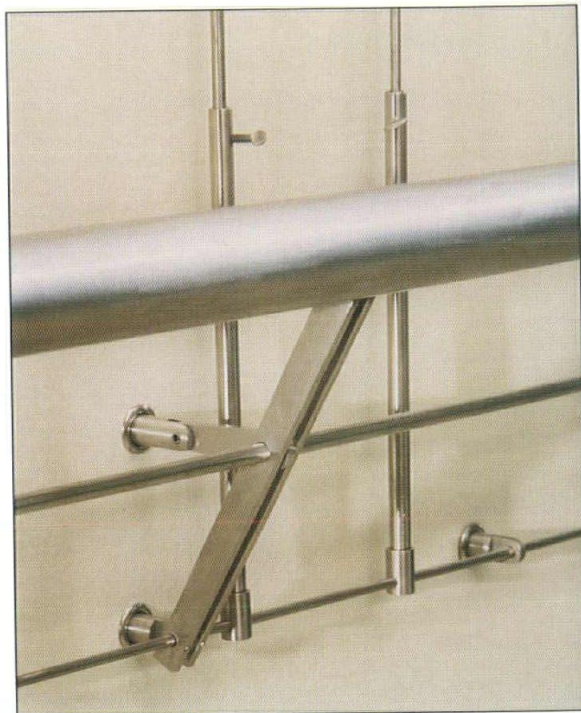
Were it then completed, Rakatansky might have written with equal disinterest in the presumed subject of his Committee on Physical Thought's more recent installation, shelving constructed as part of renovations to a low-income, subsidized housing project in metropolitan Chicago. This project is not about shelving.

Each of these articulately detailed and eloquently defended projects share common interests poised beyond their literal definition of use. They are concerned with the sociological and psychological needs of their users, the aged and the disenfranchised. They are concerned with the relevance of architecture to the everyday circumstances of the individual. But mostly they are concerned first with the interests of architecture itself.

Rakatansky is quite clear about this. "The subject of this project is the subject, or rather, the subject and architecture, the relations that circulate between them, the ways each constructs the other, the ways each constructs and is constructed by institutions,"² he writes.

Rakatansky's grammatically obtuse, though philosophically astute, observation is that architecture has been too often and for too long about anything but itself. It has served, either unknowingly or unconsciously, the interests of others. Frequently, these "others" are the social or political institutions of our civilization, and their interests are primarily concerned, not with architecture, but with the matter of their own self-preservation. And among the more effective "self-preserving" instincts of the institution is the calculated imposition of convention, a strategy which cunningly misrepresents the institution's manipulations of its clients' behaviors as seemingly entirely natural and above reproach.

Institutions predicate convention as a matter of convenience. It is obviously more effective to satisfy an individual's needs if you first share a hand in defining those needs. The institution says, in effect: "We will serve your needs, but only after we have first conditioned you to expect nothing more." In this reading, it is the dulling sedative of institutional convention which, in its seeming disinterest, turns the expectation of architecture against itself. Rakatansky attributes this subversion of architecture's true attentions to *mètis*, the cunning intelligence of surreptitiously pitting the weaknesses of opponents against themselves.³ For the institution,



the utility of *mètis* or "cunning intelligence" is to exploit the individual's unthinking willingness to embrace dictates prescribed by convention to the institution's own advantage.

The strategies of *mètis* can, however, be worked in both directions. The institution is itself vulnerable to the exploration of its own greatest weakness: the very transparency of the act of imposing convention. It is, as we shall soon see, the basis of Rakatansky's own mechanism of subversion.

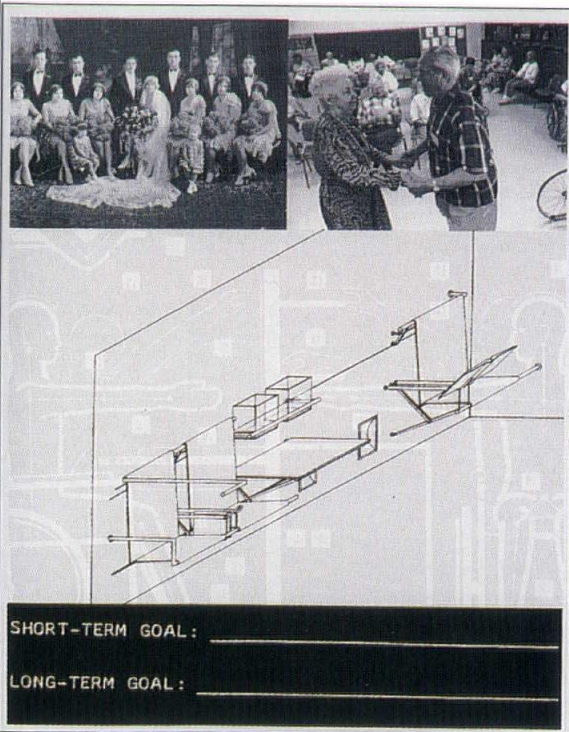
Nonetheless, an institution's most fundamental objective, beyond its own continued existence, is the cleverly camouflaged imposition of prescribed and sociologically predetermined convention. By quantifying and then accommodating behavior in only the narrowest manner, an institution's use of convention precludes its constituents from experiencing anything but the most unconscious and unsensing of actions. The institution, in return, profits from (Rakatansky's words) its "appearance of seamlessness and fixity."⁴

Architecture, as a consequence, must choose to either defend or subvert the predictive conventions of its commissioning institution. Rakatansky, through a dense but artful haze of rhetorical construction, persuasively argues for subversion.

The settings for Rakatansky's own cunningly intelligent subversion of convention are the artifacts of the commonplace, the everyday, the matter-of-fact: handrails and shelving. The operative



(Left) The handrail and its appendages (photographs, keepsakes, text and memorabilia) respond to and elicit response in the social and psychological behavior of the home's residents.



(Below left) The photo album, supported by an extension of the rail, bridging two places of seating positioned by the rail, poses the opportunity to share the images of others looking at the photo album.

satisfactory construction and suitably pleasing finish is conditioned to mean nothing more. The everyday object as the site of human engagement is rendered experientially transparent. Except for its edited value of spare utility, it might as well not even exist.

The purpose of the trope is to redirect the attentions of the object (and more broadly, architecture itself) back not to utilitarian necessity, but to its sociological and psychological roots. The trope, employing "the form of convention to swerve from that convention ...," cunningly dismantles and unmasks the institution's carefully wrought "stamp of familiarity."

Playing an institution's foibles against itself is not, of course, an uncommon ploy among artists of any generation. Manet's 1863 *Le Dejeuner sur l'herbe* comes to mind, as does Duchamp or any of the Dadaists, Warhol or Venturi, particularly in his subversively gentle credo for an architecture which was challenged to be no longer "either/or" but "both/and."

What distinguishes Rakatansky's working of this strategy is his particular reconstruction of the troped and disassembled fragments of convention. The newly reconfigured object refers not only to its originating convention, nor only back upon itself, but reflectively outward in response to the unconditioned social, psychological and behavioral characteristics of those for whom it is created. "Form and detail are of primary importance, but not for their own sake,"⁸ writes Rakatansky, who completes his thought with a quotation from Kurt Weill: "(This approach is) interested in material things only up to the point at which they furnish the frame of, or the pretext for human relations."⁹

In this pretext, Rakatansky suggests the possibility of a "gestic architecture"¹⁰ composed of elements which recursively and responsively engage the human condition. A gestic handrail, for example, both directs and is directed by the behavior of its user. Unlike an architecture borne of only institutional convention, a gestic handrail illustrates the "considerable difference between description that reduces and calcifies behavior—to the matter-of-fact-ness of convention—and description that is suggestive of the transformational potential of behavior."¹¹

There is, of course, some danger inherent in an architecture unduly bound by its own theoretical construction. It risks, to paraphrase former Iowa State University professor David Heymann, becoming

mechanism of his subversion is the trope.

To "trope," in its literal derivation from the Greek *tropos*, is "to turn" or "to turn from." To trope in Rakatansky's lexicography is to "swerve, either from literal or conventional usage."⁵ Rakatansky enlists the aid of dramatist Bertolt Brecht to demonstrate the trope's utility: "A representation ... allows us to recognize its subject, but at the same time makes it seem unfamiliar, 'freeing' socially conditioned phenomena from the grasp of that stamp of familiarity which protects them against our grasp."⁶

The most suitable objects of the trope's attentions are, in Rakatansky's reading, the articles of the every day, elements whose intentions of use have been so narrowly prescribed and therefore devalued that they no longer elicit any degree of experiential engagement within their users. A handrail of rigorously specified diameter and height and smoothness and strength is presumed to possess no other significance. An overhead cabinet of sufficient linear footage,

(Above and below right) "The interwoven network provides the general context for localized attentions. For example, at each element there is an attempt to reveal social and psychological gestures in relations to a framing of a part of the body..." Mark Rakatansky.

"more beautiful intellectually than visually."¹² Rakatansky's colleague, Jennifer Bloomer, recognizes the seductive allure of such rhetorical invention: "... I could not fail to notice that some people were making constructions with words as if they were materials themselves, not transparent containers of meaning but fabrications with structuring geometries and joints and details."¹³

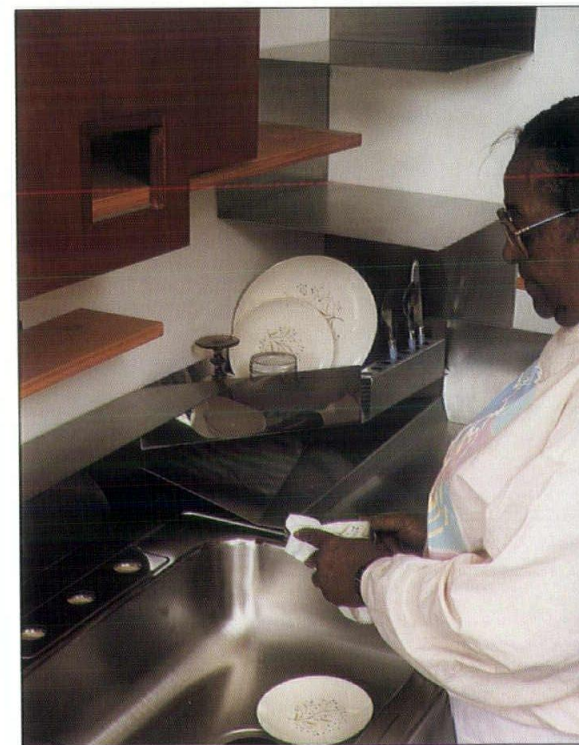
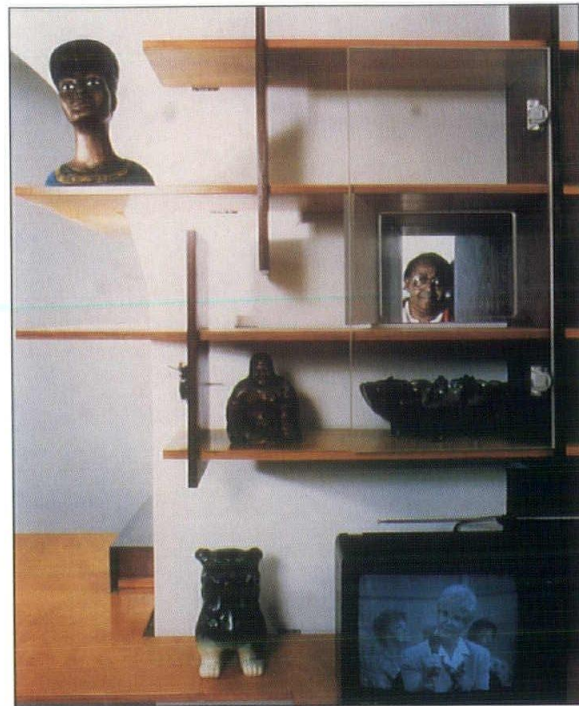
In this light, what is intriguing in Rakatansky's demonstration of theory is the substance and felicity of its formal language. The depth and richness of its constructive fabric arise as much from Rakatansky's explicit engagement of the user as from abstract theory.

So, the handrail installation for Des Plaines supports not just the physiological requirements of the home's residents, but their sociological and psychological needs as well. The handrail supports the memory of things past (photographs and memorabilia intertwine its armature), the immediacy of things present (a mirror to check one's looks, garment hooks to check one's coat, a calendar, a fish bowl) and describes a stage for the commonplace events of human existence (sitting, reading, conversing, sharing, remembering, living). The construction both responds to individual gestures and in turn elicits response.

Simultaneously, the handrail engages and dissects the institutional conventions which surround it. Its passage through, around and across the building's fabric continually mediates and "reconfigures the existing props"¹⁴ of familiar convention. It reassembles the same elements and events the institution so strenuously attempts to keep separate. It forges "reciprocal connections between various autonomous forms of support, always transforming as it engages specific local and physical conditions throughout the facility."¹⁵ The autonomy of the institution is, as a consequence, subdued and then transferred back to the individual.

Similarly, The Committee on Physical Thought's recent renovation of low-income housing in Chicago engages institutional convention by reconfiguring and extending the artifacts of everyday habitation. Cabinets are relieved of the artificial constraint of specified boundaries. Instead, a revealing network of open shelving is interwoven across the apartment's narrowly construed restriction of named rooms and intended use. In Rakatansky's words, "... at each element there is an attempt to reveal social and psychological gestures in relation to the framing of a part of the body ..." ¹⁶ Each everyday event, the washing of dishes, the placing of photos and memorabilia, the arranging and rearranging of life's necessities, becomes the site of architectural attention.

A gestic architecture then, as demonstrated in



these two installations, attempts to make tangible the social and psychological constructions of the subject, to make legible the gestures of human habitations and existence. It disables convention by turning convention back upon itself, thereby liberating both the individual and itself from unconscious constraint.

There remains in this only one slightly discomforting reservation. The Committee on Physical Thought is after all itself an institution, albeit a very small one. And Rakatansky's gestic architecture is itself conditioned by a theoretical and constructional logic that bears close resemblance to any other prescription of convention. Rakatansky is, of course, well aware of his dilemma: "... it is necessary to remember that all figures of expression begin as tropes of other conventions. That is why

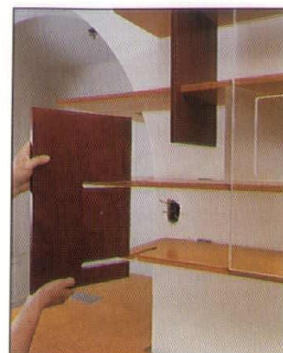
Project A/Partments, Interior Renovations, Low-Income Housing for the Aged, Chicago, Illinois

Client The Rothschild Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, Robert N. Mayer, President; People's Housing, Chicago, Illinois, Donna Smitley, Executive Director, Teresa Irwin, Project Developer; Phillip Kupritz & Assoc., Phillip Kupritz, Principal
Designers The Committee on Physical Thought, Department of Architecture, Iowa State University, Ames

Project Team Mark Rakatansky, Project Director and Designer; Gerardo Cerda, Project Manager; Mary Beth Berns, Tim Gillet, Steve Kolliopoulos, Doug Pfeiffer, Michael Terwillinger, Assistants

Prototype Construction S.L. Natof Furniture, Wood Fabrication, Chicago, Illinois; Dan Blue, Inc., Steel Fabrication, Chicago, Illinois

Photographer Karant and Associates, Chicago, Illinois



(Above and left) The open and unfolded shelving extends beyond the limits of institutionally prescribed usage to form the site of human interaction.

throping is critically most productive as a constant process ... Otherwise, one convention will merely be replaced by another, one fixity with another, one solution with another, without revealing its own contingency, its own capacity for alteration."¹⁷

Lynn S. Spears continues to write on an occasional basis for Iowa Architect from Raleigh, North Carolina.

Notes

1. Rakatansky, Mark, "Transformational Constructions (For Example: Adult Day)," *Assemblage 19*, MIT Press, December, 1992, page 7.
2. Rakatansky, page 7.
3. Rakatansky, page 9.
4. Rakatansky, page 7.
5. Rakatansky, page 11.

6. Rakatansky, page 9, from Bertolt Brecht's "A Short Organum for the Theatre," *Brecht on Theatre*, 1992.
7. Rakatansky, page 9.
8. Rakatansky, Mark, "The Gestic Body of Architecture," *Journal of Philosophy and the Visual Arts, The Body*, Academy Group Ltd., 1993, page 72.
9. Rakatansky, "The Gestic Body...", page 72.
10. Rakatansky, "The Gestic Body...", page 72.
11. Rakatansky, "Transformational...", page 17.
12. Heymann, David, "On Architecture of the Rural Landscape in Iowa," *Iowa Architect*, Winter 1990, page 28.
13. Bloomer, Jennifer, "Jennifer Bloomer Writes," *ANY*, May/June 1993, page 16.
14. Rakatansky, "The Gestic Body...", page 75.
15. Rakatansky, unpublished commentary provided by The Committee on Physical Thought, no date.
16. Rakatansky, unpublished commentary provided by The Committee on Physical Thought, no date.
17. Rakatansky, "Transformational...", page 11.

INDEPENDENCE AND SUPPORT

The Madrid Home Independent Living Duplexes

This modest but significant project, designed by Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil, illustrates an assured exploration of a relatively recent form of housing, the transgenerational residence. It is instructive for its skillful merging of familiar imagery with supportive, accessible accommodations for the aged.

(Right) The expansive corner bay windows present a panoramic view of the Iowa landscape.

(Opposite) Tapered masonry piers and broad overhangs, characteristic of the Bungalow style, evoke a familiar recognition of Madrid's residential tradition.

Project The Madrid Home Independent Living Duplexes for the Elderly

Location Madrid, Iowa

Owner The Madrid Home

Architects Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil, Des Moines

Project Team Douglas Wells, AIA; Patrick Uhron, AIA; Michael Kastner, AIA

General Contractor Jensen Builders, Fort Dodge, Iowa

Photographer King Au, Studio AU

Resources See page 32

LYNN SPEARS

Life proceeds incrementally, in gradual stages of growth and maturity that are rarely distinct or obvious in their definition. The boundaries which lie between youth and middle age and our later years are fuzzy at best, distinguishable as much by one's state of mind as by true physiological or biographical age.

On the other hand, the conventional forms of housing for each of life's increments are far less subtle. Until recently at least, there has been only one of two choices for the aged: the traditional private residence or institutionalized care. Neither option adequately addresses the needs of individuals approaching the indistinct threshold which lies between the independence of middle age and the assistance warranted by advancing years.

Most private homes are not designed to accommodate the particular physiological requirements of older adults. Most institutional settings (hospitals and nursing homes) offer an intensity of care which is by necessity restrictive in the independence allowed its residents. The alternative of transgenerational housing, a residential environment which is both supportive and independent, is only a relatively recent architectural development.

This form of transitional housing, developed over the past two decades, has been described by a variety of terms: independent living, assisted living and life-care. Each, however, shares common characteristics and philosophies. Residents in such communities maintain an independence of lifestyle that is, in most respects, comparable to that of a private dwelling. Such residences project a decidedly home-like atmosphere and ambiance. Accommodations are made for the special physiological needs of the aged (at-grade dwellings, wheelchair clearances, supportive handrails), but these refinements are both inconspicuous and non-institutional in appearance. Another feature of an independent living community is frequently its close proximity to a primary care facility, a reassuring presence in the event emergency medical attention is required.

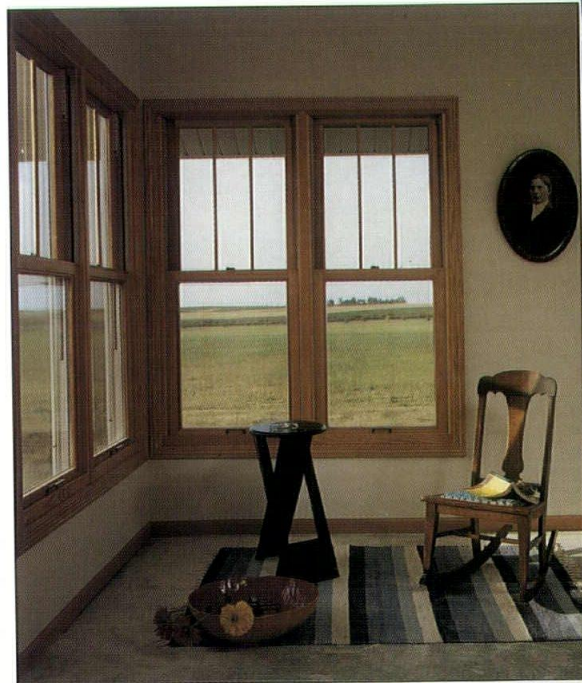
At the edge of its already well-established long-term care facility in Madrid, Iowa, The Madrid Home has erected two independent-living duplexes which skillfully demonstrate the benefits of transgenerational housing. Designed by Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil, the project represents the first phase of a planned residential community of both independent and aggregate living accommodations.

What is expected of housing for the aged is evident. Spacious, unencumbered interiors provide ample clearance and on-grade access for wheelchair travel. Hardware, fittings and appliances have been chosen for their suitability of use by older adults. Consciously placed hand and guardrails offer discretely convenient support.

What is less expected, but more important, is the sensitive attention these homes devote not just to physiological need, but to their residents' psychological well-being. Each dwelling possesses a heart-felt, home-spun authenticity which belies their highly specialized use and design. Residents draw a special emotional comfort in the presence of such familiar and non-institutional surroundings.

Part of that comfortable familiarity comes from the architect's liberal borrowing of vernacular residential motifs characteristic of residences near the Madrid Home's campus. The Arts and Crafts-inspired Bungalow style is common in many Midwestern communities and Madrid has its share of these distinctive, cottage-scaled residences. The architects have deftly integrated the formal signatures of the Bungalow—broadly sweeping, low-slung roof lines projecting generous overhangs, louvered shed dormers, Dutch gables, expressive structural brackets, battered masonry porch piers and flared porch skirts—with the efficiencies of contemporary construction technique and current age-conscious design practice. The juxtaposition is so skillfully played that these new homes are sometimes mistaken for the genuine article.

Equally sensitive is the respect these residences display for the individuality of their occupants. The unit plans themselves are staggered in relation to the street, lending the impression of individual, not attached, residences. A graciously scaled, covered front porch becomes the comfortable setting for





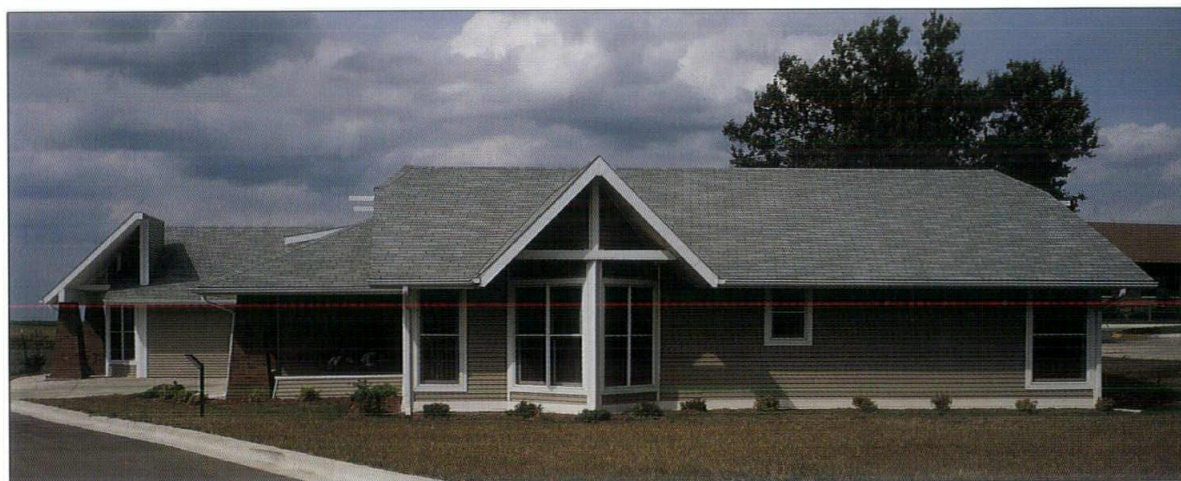
outdoor seating, framing views onto Madrid's patchwork of surrounding cornfields and pastures. Inside, a similar concern for the comfort and outlook of the individual is evident in the large corner window bays which share the porch's view outward.

This latest addition to Madrid Home's campus represents an admirably ensured and sensitive response to the

question of transgenerational housing. Its confidence, comfort, independence and support all suggest a most enviable stopover in the inevitable transitions of life.

Lynn Spears continues to live in North Carolina, still writing occasionally on the subject of architecture and still looking for some good excuse to come back and visit Iowa.

(Right) The architect's skillful appropriation of elements of the Bungalow style lends an air of comfort and authenticity to the Madrid Home Independent Living Duplexes.



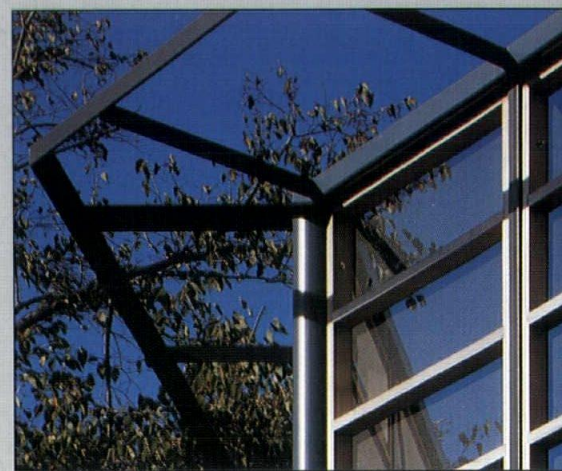
The Madrid Home Terrace

At roughly the same time Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil began design work for the Madrid Home duplexes, they also were commissioned to create an enclosed, outdoor terrace for Madrid Home's existing long-term care facility. The second floor terrace was to be attached to the home's Alzheimer care unit. The addition reflects the special needs of patients afflicted by this debilitating and, as yet, irreversible disorder.

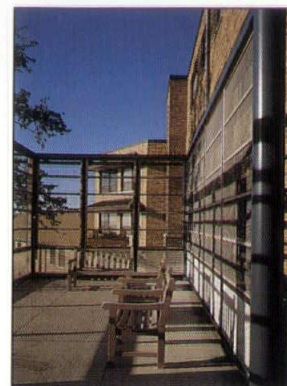
In addition to the characteristic symptoms of Alzheimer's disease (memory loss, cognitive impairment and the ultimate destruction of personality) is frequently a compulsion for pensive and aimless wandering, propelled by the body's need to expend energy and the mind's inability to offer purposeful direction. Such patients are often a physical hazard to themselves and to others around them.

In a less enlightened era, it was customary to restrain these innocent victims of disease, to bind them to their beds and pacify their ceaseless motion with heavy sedation. More progressive forms of treatment now recognize the insensitivity of such restraint. The ambition is to accommodate the patient's behavioral needs in the context of a safe, hazard-free environment.

Madrid's outdoor terrace is a logical extension of this philosophy of treatment. It is, in essence, a large sunlit space, free of obstructions, which also connects a pre-existing interior system of circulation. Patients may exercise their bodies' instinct for motion without risk of injury or wandering away from the unit.



Project Madrid Home Terrace
Location Madrid, Iowa
Owner The Madrid House
Architect Architects Wells Woodburn O'Neil, Des Moines
Project Team Patrick Uhron, AIA, Project Architect
Structural Engineer Charles Saul Engineering
General Contractor Luke and Spenla Construction, Inc.
Photographer King Au, Studio AU



Requirements for the interior of the terrace were limited to the issues of safety, security, proper drainage and maintenance. The external appearance of the terrace enclosure, however, demanded a different perspective. The enclosure needed to reflect some relationship to its context—a 1960s-era medical facility—and needed to demonstrate a gently stated empathy for the plight of its occupants to the outside world.

In meeting these aims, the architects draw upon construction motifs already present in the original building. The articulation of an existing, well-proportioned glazing system is replicated in the

terrace's enclosing walls, and elements of the earlier building's cornice are abstracted in the terrace's own delicately framed cap-piece. This horizontal frame is not just decorative; it provides lateral support to the underlying walls.

The enclosure and its supporting structure are deliberately and logically detailed in an articulate language of steel, Lexan sheathing and metal screen. There is in this deliberateness another special kind of empathy, an architectural recollection of reason and hope designed to protect a community of individuals for whom reason and hope must seem as elusively distant as their own memories.

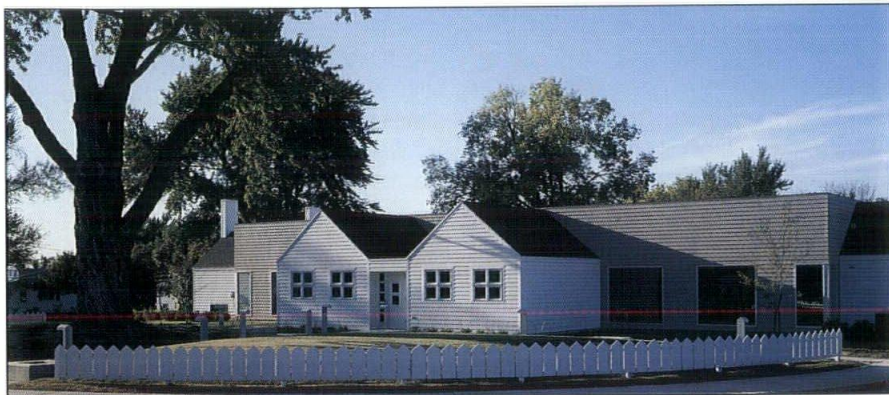
—Lynn Spears

BLENDING IN

Polk County Senior Center South

The Polk County Senior Center South is a home away from home for some Des Moines seniors, which is exactly what it was designed to be.

Nestled amidst single-story white clapboard houses is the Polk County Senior Center South in Des Moines. Though built in 1990, the senior center blends into the 1940s neighborhood surrounding it. That was one major consideration in the design, according to architect D. Bryan Shiffler, AIA, of Shiffler Associates, Architects.



(Above) An overscaled white picket fence creates a front yard for the facility.

(Opposite) The Polk County Senior Center South blends into the surrounding neighborhood of white single-story clapboard houses.

(Below) Four pairs of houses surround the main activity area of the senior center.

"We created a house—actually houses—clad in white horizontal clapboarding to remain consistent with the residential area," Shiffler says.

The 16 x 16-foot houses are service spaces, such as a kitchen and restrooms, that in pairs surround the 48 x 96-foot main activity area. The large main area, which is used for activities from congregate meals to hula lessons, and from art lessons to square dances, can be partitioned by movable walls.

The senior center, which is owned by the Polk County Board of Supervisors, is a prime example of how modern architecture can embrace the elderly, Shiffler says. He says the facility was made functional by adding huge windows in the large central room. In addition to lots of natural lighting, the room also was designed with bright lights to accommodate activities such as art classes. The facility was made homey

through the use of the houses surrounding the central room. Also, the lawn features an overscaled white picket fence to create a front yard between the parking area and the front door. Comfort was added to the building by including a user-friendly mechanical system so that the temperature is easily controlled.

"Clients (seniors) love it," Shiffler says. "It's their home away from home."

The increased use of the facility is testimony to its popularity. The senior center previously had been housed in an old fire station in which up to 50 lunches were served daily. At the new location, about 150 lunches are served to seniors each day.

The site of the new facility was originally an elementary school which had been torn down. An open space with a basketball court was all that occupied the site. With neighbors occupying the same block as the new facility, there might have been skepticism about any changes on this site. But neighbors were enthusiastic about the project, Shiffler says.

"Immediately after the schematic design we had a neighborhood meeting," Shiffler says. With facts in hand, neighbors gave the project a thumbs up. The senior center occupies half of the block, while houses occupy the remainder. Residents didn't lose their recreation area or the neighborhood's atmosphere. The exterior of the senior center features a basketball court, shuffleboard court and horseshoe pit, and an effort also was made to leave all trees on the lot.

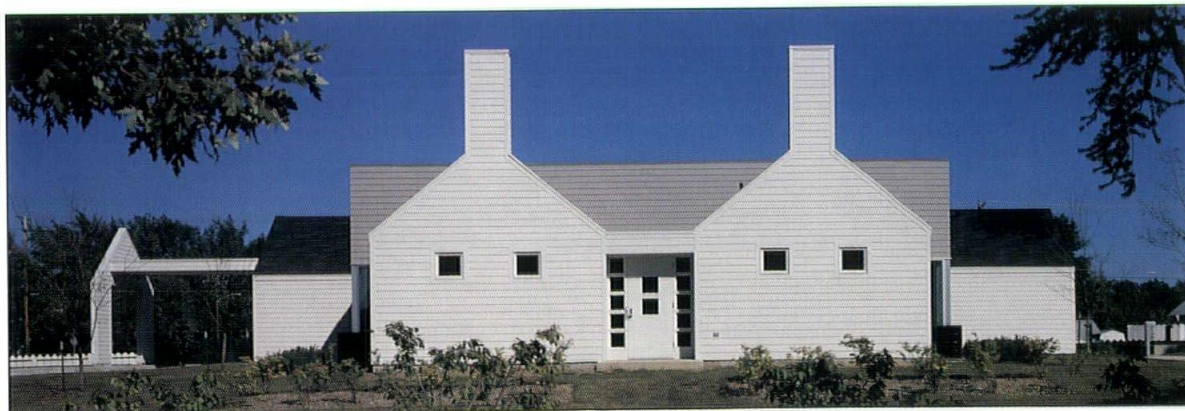
"This is a classic example of distinguishing function by form," Shiffler says. "Keeping the pieces of the building separate is a strength of this project."

For Polk County Senior Center South, the pieces come together to form a place that is pleasing to its neighbors by blending into the style of the neighborhood, and provides a useable place for senior citizens.

Kelly Sankey is a freelance writer from Des Moines.

Project Polk County Senior Center South
Location Des Moines, Iowa
Owner Polk County Board of Supervisors
Architect Shiffler Associates, Architects, Des Moines
General Contractor King-Bole-Holmes, Inc.
Consultants Shuck-Britson, Inc., Pulley and Associates, Crose-Gardner Associates, Landscape Architects
Photographer Farshid Assassi

KELLY SANKEY



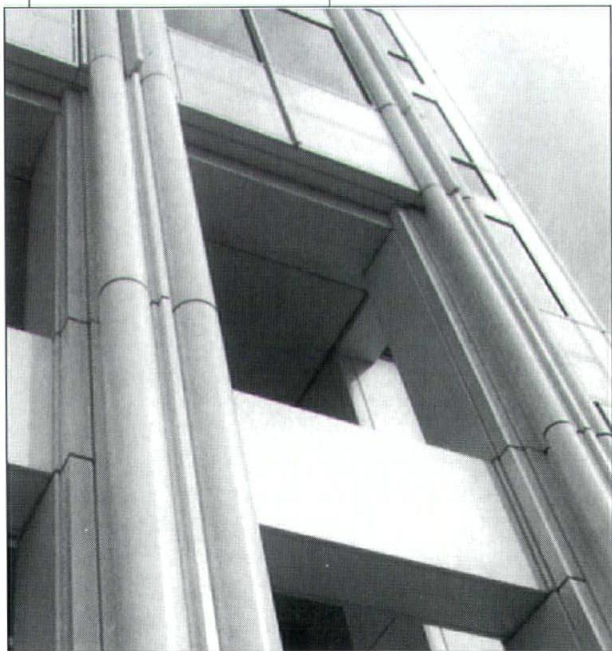


**Blue Chair
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The Blue Chair was designed in 1929 by Eliel Saarinen for his house at the Cranbrook Academy of Art. The stepped slats reflect the natural motif used for a common capitol design by Saarinen. The grey-blue lacquer finish is highlighted with gold leaf. This chair, along with other Saarinen reproductions, is meticulously hand-crafted by Arkitektura in Princeton, New Jersey.

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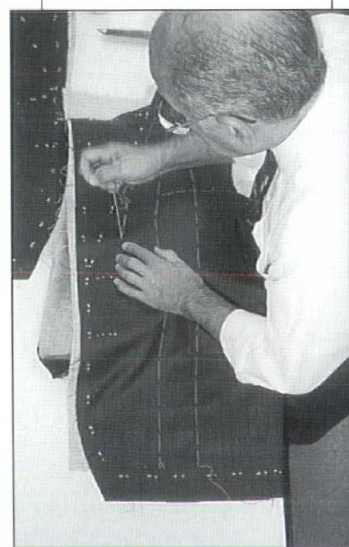
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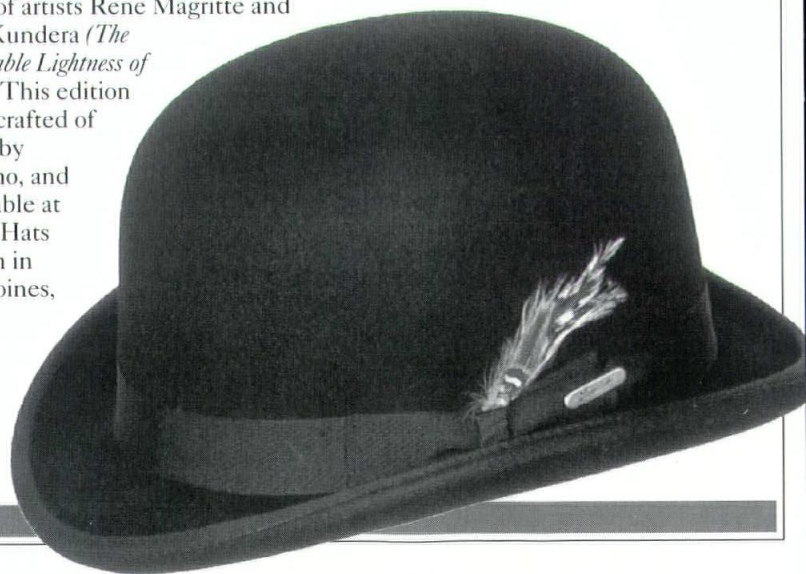
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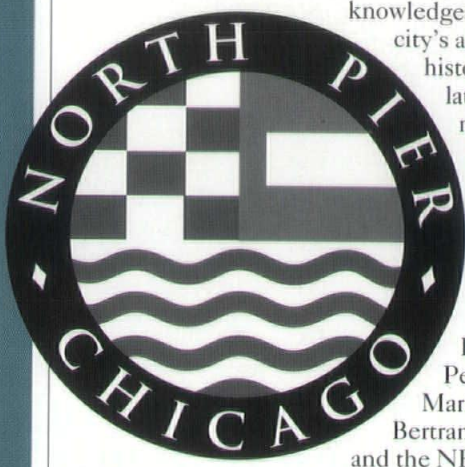


Journal

Iowa Architect Magazine Receives National Award

Iowa Architect magazine has received an Honor Award in the American Institute of Architects' first publication awards program. The Component Publications Awards, sponsored by the AIA and *Architecture* magazine, recognized the editorial and design excellence of magazines, newsletters and publicity campaigns from local and state AIA chapters. The competition received 120 entries from across the country.

Jurors included architect Amy Weinstein, FAIA, principal of Weinstein Associates of Washington, D.C., graphic designer William Longhauser from Philadelphia, and former *Architectural Record* editor Mildred F. Schmertz. *Iowa Architect* was noted for its "clean, crisp and consistent" graphic design, typographical hierarchy and lively editorial comment. Schmertz praised the publication as "first class."

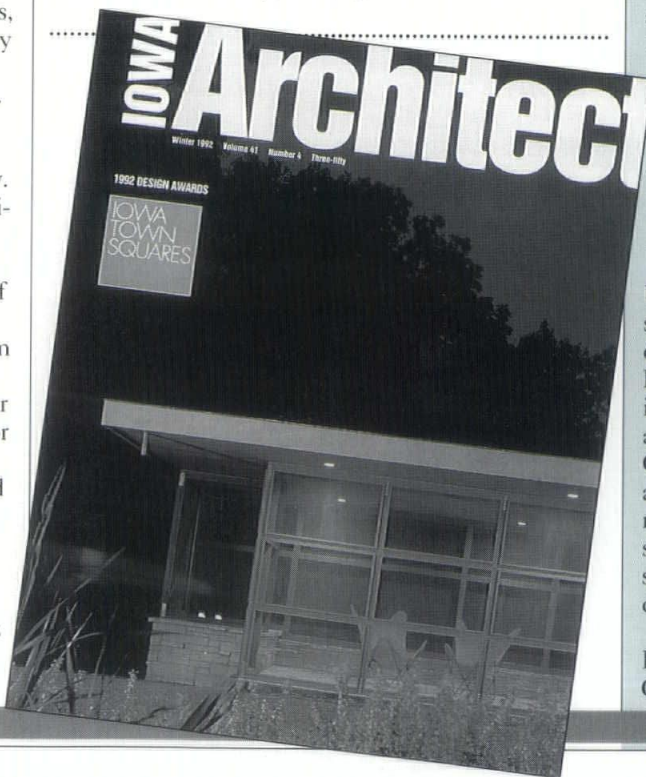


Architecture Cruise

An architectural river cruise through the heart of downtown Chicago is available from Chicago on the Lake, a tour company located in Chicago's North Pier. The 90-minute cruise is led by trained guides knowledgeable on the city's architectural history and the latest developments on the Chicago skyline. Among the highlights are Meis van der Rohe's IBM Building, 333 Wacker Drive by Kohn Pedersen Fox, Marina City by Bertrand Goldberg and the NBC Tower by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. For more information, contact Chicago on the Lake at 312/527-1977.

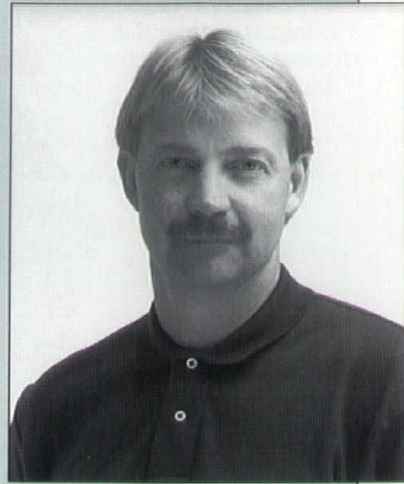
Carnegie Library Publication Available

In the Spring 1995 No. 95:211 Issue of *Iowa Architect*, the series "The Places of Iowa" examined the architectural heritage of Iowa's Carnegie Libraries. A publication for use by communities when planning to provide effective library services in Carnegie Libraries is available through Iowa State University. *Carnegie Libraries: Making Decisions About Space, Access, and Preservation* was prepared in 1994 by Iowa Community Design, an outreach agency of the College of Design at ISU. The booklet provides guidance to the many communities deliberating future library needs and facility choices. For more information call 515/294-8707.



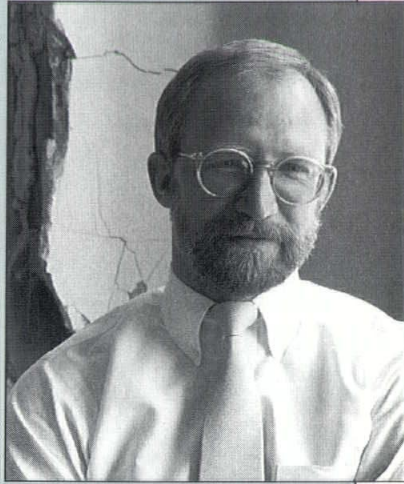
Iowa Architects Named as Fellows

Kirk V. Blunck and Calvin F. Lewis, principals in Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture, Des Moines, have been admitted to the College of Fellows by the American Institute of Architects. Fellowship, which recognizes significant contributions to the profession, is the highest honor outside the Gold Medal that the AIA can bestow on any member. Nationally, only 3 percent of all architects are elevated to Fellowship. Blunck and Lewis' induction brings the number of Iowa Fellows to twelve.



Kirk Blunck, FAIA

Kirk Blunck is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Des Moines, and received his undergraduate degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his graduate degree from the University of Oregon. He served as editor of *Iowa Architect* magazine and the *Architecture at Hand* guidebook. Blunck also was the architect for the



Cal Lewis, FAIA

Des Moines Art Center's first long-range restoration plan, and participated on the Des Moines Architectural Advisory Board and the Vision 2005 plan for the remaking of Des Moines' public schools. Blunck has been honored with 21 honor awards for design excellence, bestowed by AIA Iowa, Central States Region AIA and *Interiors* magazine.

Cal Lewis is a graduate of the Iowa State University Department of Architecture. He served as Adjunct Professor in the Department of Architecture, and chaired the department's Professional Advisory Board, which provides information and feedback for the evolution of architectural education. Lewis served as Program Chair on three Central States Region conventions and numerous AIA Iowa conventions, bringing a number of nationally prominent architects to the state to speak. He has been the recipient of 47 state, regional and national honor awards for design excellence.

Blunck and Lewis were presented with their Fellowship medals at the AIA National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, in May.

GREG LEHMAN

A list of
contractors and
manufacturers for
major building
elements in
featured projects.

RESOURCES

Kavanagh House, page 16

Bathing unit: Parker; closer: Norton; generator: Hogler; hollow metal: Curries; HVAC systems: Carrier; lighting: Abolite, McGraw-Edison, Stonco, SPI, Lightolier, Artimide, Kock Lowy; locksets: Sargent; masonry: Zenith Burnished Block; membrane roofing: Carlisle; plumbing: Crane, Delta, Sloan, Symmons; skylights: Wasco Products Inc.; windows: Anderson; wood doors: Graham.

Madrid Independent Living Duplexes, page 24

Ceramic tile: American Olean; exterior cladding: Wolverite Technologies Vinyl Siding; hardware: Schlage, Stanley; hollow metal door and frame: Kewanee Corp.; HVAC system: Heil Natural Gas Furnaces and AC Condensers; lighting: Progress and Lightolier; masonry: United Brick; plumbing:

Crane; plumbing fixtures: Crane, Aqua Glass Showers; premanufactured cabinets: Mid-Continent Cabinetry; roof trusses: Structural Component Systems, Inc.; toilet and bath accessories: Bradley and Nutone; windows: Pella Windows; wood flooring: Perma Grain.

Polk County Senior Center South, page 28

Aluminum glazing system: Kawneer; asphalt shingles: Owens-Corning Fiberglass "Supreme"; clad wood windows: Marvin; exterior siding: Redwood Clapboarding; fire extinguisher cabs: J.L. Industries; H.M. doors and frames: Fenestiza; HVAC: Lennox; operable partition: Hufcor; roof trusses: Trus Joist Corp.; sinks: Elkay; site furnishings: Play Structures; toilet accessories: Bobrick; toilet partitions: Sawmetal.

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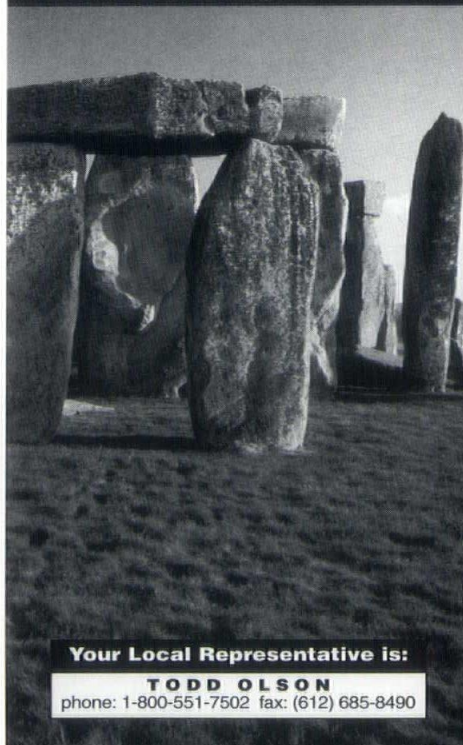
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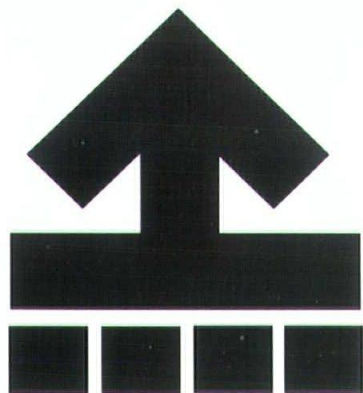
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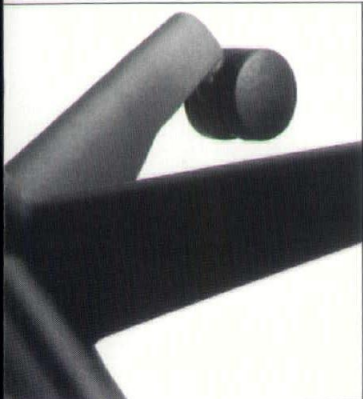
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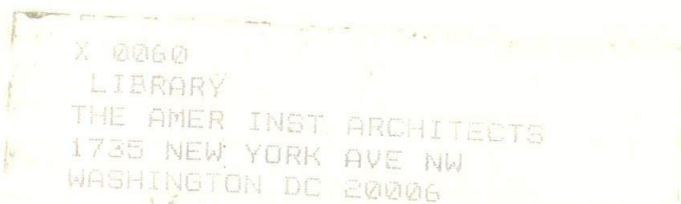
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