

# LOUISIANA ARCHITECT

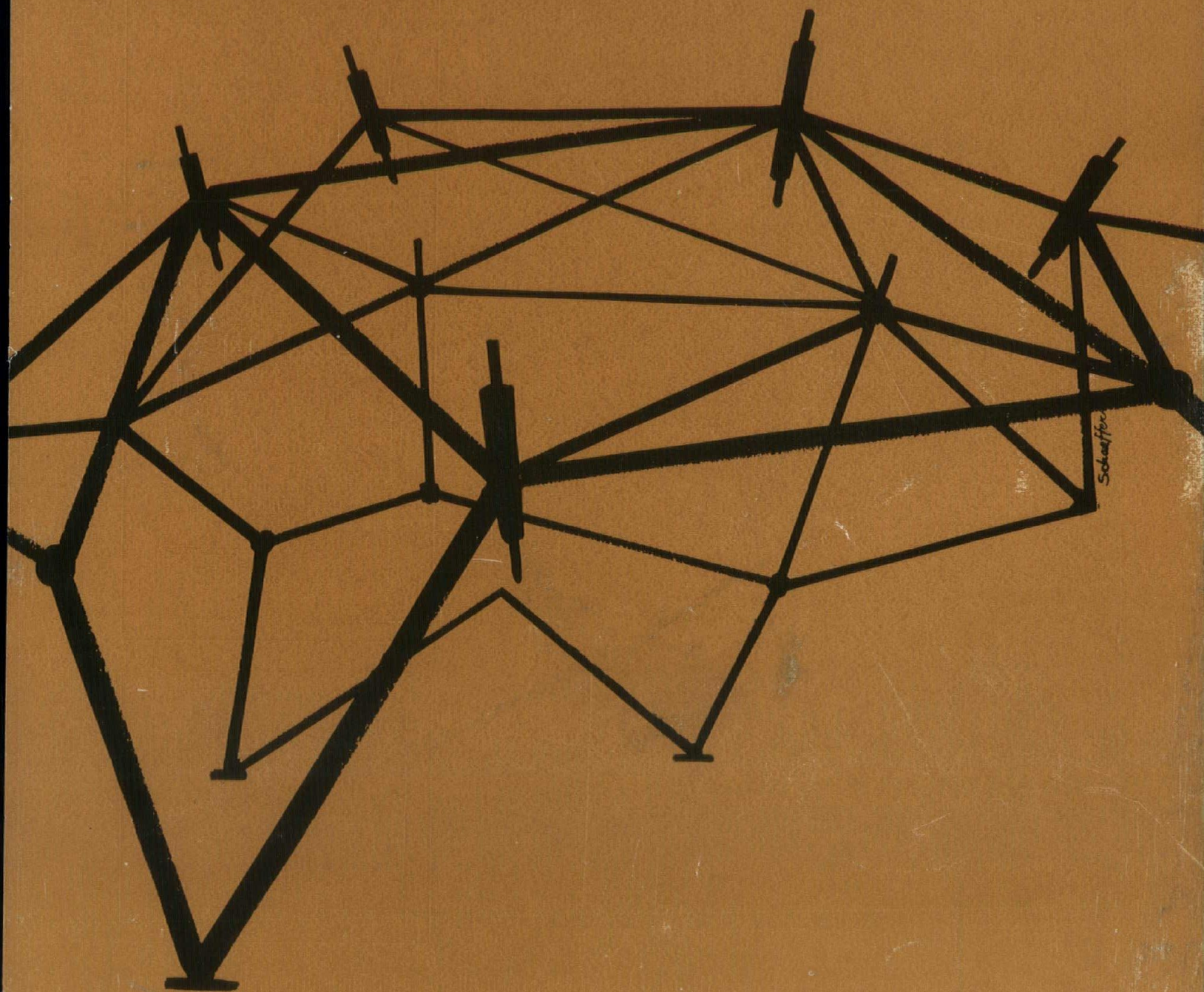
SEPTEMBER

1963

AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
OF  
ARCHITECTS

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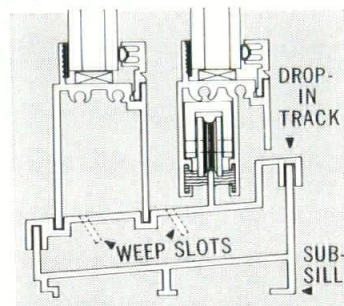


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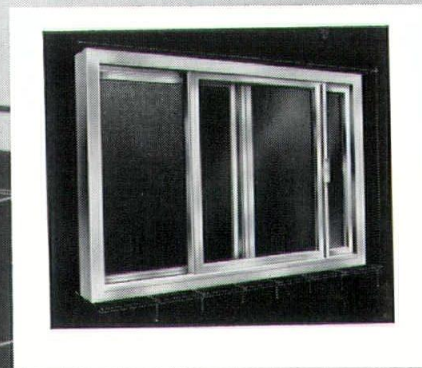
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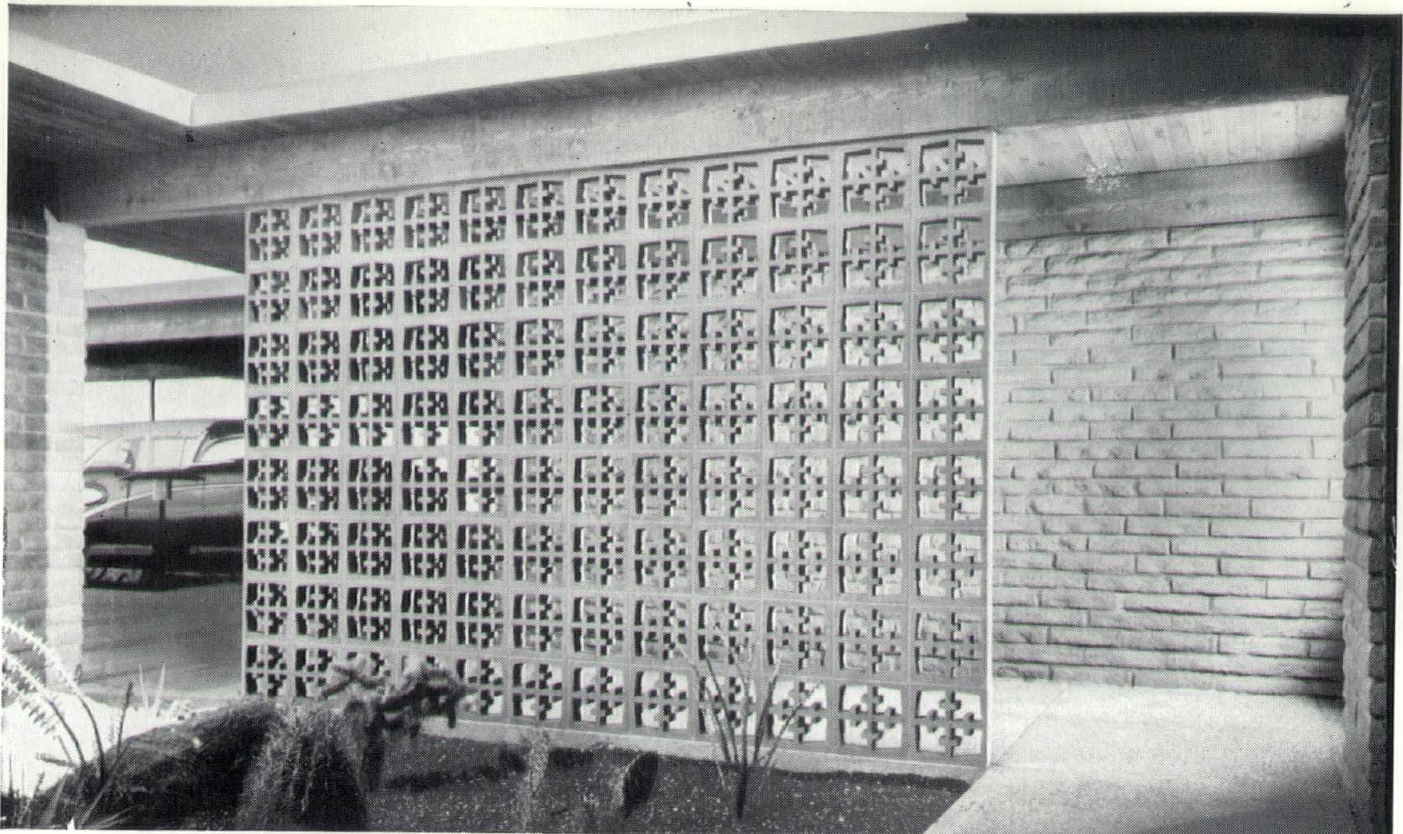
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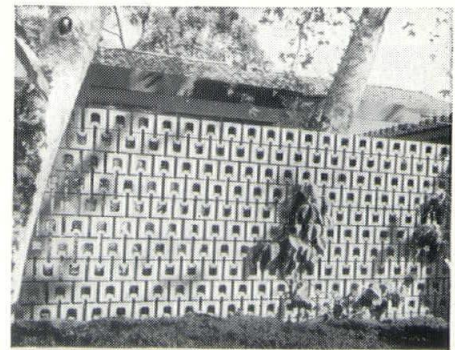
*"Lace curtain" concrete masonry provides decorative entrance.*

## TAKE A NEW APPROACH TO OUTDOOR BEAUTY WITH **MODERN CONCRETE**

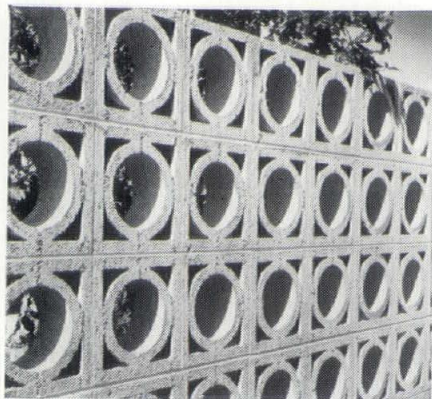
Today, concrete is building a reputation as the basic material of a "million" winning ideas.

Take grille block, for example. Hundreds of different patterns are now offered. Every day sees new uses of grille block in sight screens, solar screens and carport walls—to name just a few.

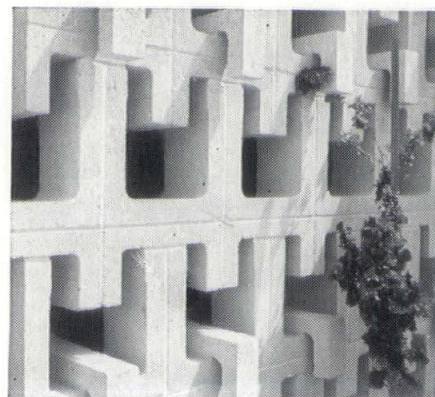
Scores of other examples of what concrete, plus imagination, can produce are seen everywhere . . . in reflecting pools, terraces, patios, and in garden walks and walls. Cast-in-place, precast, colored, textured or polished, modern concrete is the low-cost way to create truly beautiful effects outdoors.



*Attractive concrete block sight screen encloses patio for breezy seclusion.*



*Concrete grille block garden wall with novel geometric design.*



*Close-up of decorative grille block used for intriguing wall pattern.*

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# LOUISIANA ARCHITECT

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE  
LOUISIANA ARCHITECTS ASSN.

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 11 1963

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## LAA OFFICERS — 1963

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## "LIAISON"

by myron tassin



LIAISON (lē ā-zōn' . . .) n. 1. a connecting of the parts of a whole, intended to bring about proper co-ordination of activities esp., intercommunication between units . . . .

This is Webster's definition. Where organizations are concerned, this oft-misspelled word is likewise oft-misused. It has become convenient terminology for unadulterated eyewash. It is used to denote activity when there really isn't much happening. Some LAA committees have leaned frequently on this word since 1960.

But, at the September 6 meeting of the LAA Board of Governors, genuine LIAISON was very much in evidence. Throughout the day-long session, committee chairmen paraded before the Board to report active LIAISON with contractors, engineers, governmental leaders and agencies, architectural educators, the business community, religious leaders . . . even with the high schools which are today cultivating our future architects. Great comfort comes from knowing that a fair percentage of the LIAISON is being initiated by others.

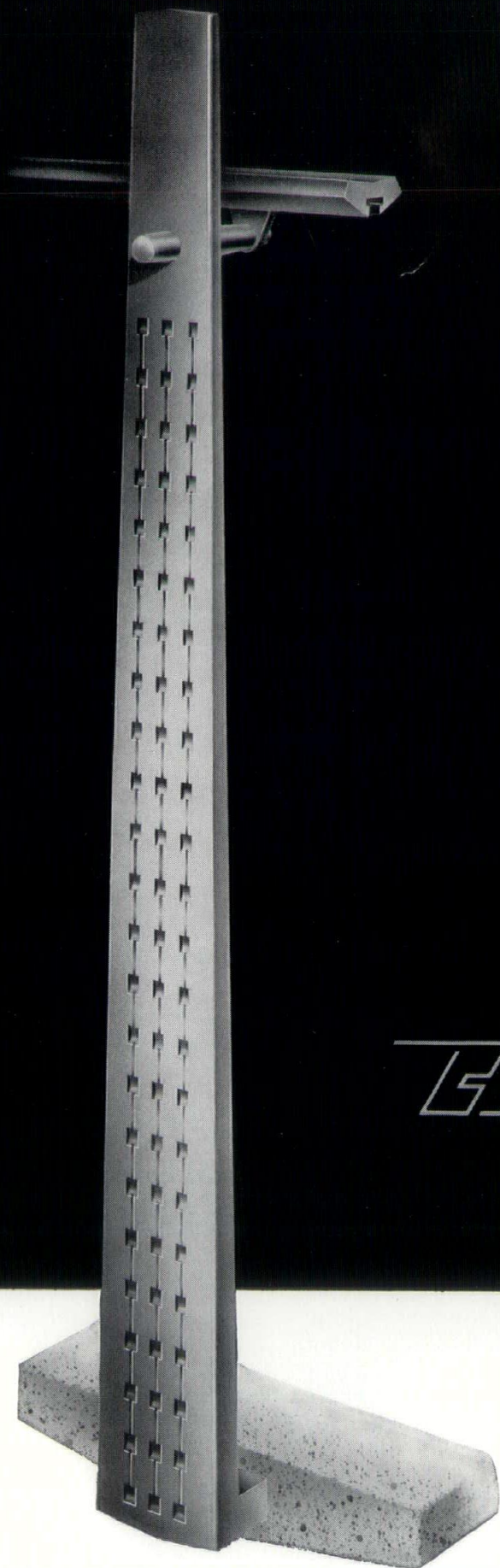
Isolation can quickly stymie an organization. LIAISON can propel its sphere of influence in worthy directions. Who can deny that the need for "proper coordination of activities" increases with society's ever expanding complexity?

Cover: September, Classes, Charettes, Shapes.

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## **A SMALL TOWN PRACTICE: STRICTLY PERSONAL**

The practice of architecture in any location presents a myriad of challenges, opportunities, disappointments, frustrations, elations, and gratifications. Although I, personally, have never practiced in a large city, I would venture a guess that there is a considerable difference in the two types. Our big city brethren, I would imagine, have a more detached association with their clients than we do. I heard of a case, just recently, in which an architect was selected out of the yellow pages of the phone book—for a residential job, naturally, but it led to a large bowling alley project. Even the most blasé sophisticate will admit that this is a risky method of selecting an architect. The only thing riskier, in my opinion, would be an architect selecting clients from the yellow pages.

### **Closer Relationship**

Here at the grass roots level we are on a much closer and more personal relationship with the majority of our clients. This, of course, has advantages and disadvantages, as do all things. One great disadvantage, particularly if one is a native born son, is the difficulty in gaining the confidence of people who knew you as a "wet nose kid." This sometimes takes years to conquer, but I do feel that it can be accomplished, particularly if the community and parish leaders have the practical and far sighted objective of keeping local talent at home. I can say with great pride and considerable gratification that this has been the case in this parish. Of course, the trust and confidence on the part of the local citizenry demand of the local architect an even greater devotion to duty than might be necessary in a larger city. It is extremely difficult to sit across the dinner table some evening from a "personal-friend client" whose roof leaked that afternoon. It is even more difficult to have a bank job come in out of the money if that bank is holding some of your demand notes, or the mortgage on your house. In many cases the one year warranty is merely a legal phrase that cannot be mentioned between friends, if friendship is to prevail. The problem is to find contractors whose loyalty to your friends is as great as your own. There are some, too, I must admit.

This close association with clients extends, also, to public jobs, as well as private. Our office is visited frequently by school board members, police jurors, city councilmen, and others. The coffee pot is on all day long, and we welcome these distin-

guished visitors with open arms. The time that they spend in the office is usually well spent, because it affords them and us an opportunity to express our ideas and/or complaints. It is much better for all parties concerned for a school board member, for instance, to air some complaint in the architect's office rather than at a school board meeting where it could be misconstrued, or worse yet, completely misunderstood by other parties. Of course, if the complaint is of a nature that should be aired in public, by all means, it must be done that way. It is a firm belief of this office that the expenditure of public funds is a sacred trust, and that those expenditures are open to public scrutiny at all times, not only to the press, but to any responsible citizen.

### **Diplomacy and Patience**

An amusing part of a small town practice is the position the architect has in the eyes of some of the lesser informed citizens. I have had calls such as, "do you make blueprints?" — "how much does a toilet cost?"—"can you tell me if this contractor is gypping me?" One merchant in town called me and said, "assuming you spend all day on it, how much will you charge me for a set of store plans?" These transgressions against one's dignity must, of course, be handled with diplomacy and patience, because since you are the only architect in town, the image of the entire profession is the image you create.

When one man does most of the architecture in an area, if he is a sincere practitioner of the art, he will have moments of serious reflection as to whether or not his work compares favorably with that being done by the rest of the profession. Only by extensive reading and travelling can he determine the answer to that question—if there is an answer, since architecture differs from other professions in that there is no single solution to any problem. The longer I practice, the more I am convinced that every building ever built was a compromise of one kind or another. In a small town there is apt to be more compromising than in a large city, because of the familiarity between clients. On many occasions, it takes quite a bit of Frank Lloyd Wright's "honest arrogance" to maintain one's position.

The advantages of a small town practice are many and varied. I would be tampering with the truth if I did not admit that job opportunities are easier to come by and acquire, particularly in areas of sudden rapid growth such as ours. This, in turn, creates a problem in that qualified draftsmen, who could be procured when work is plentiful and laid off in slack periods, are non-existent. We have found that a small and well qualified permanent nucleus is the best solution to that problem. With the cooperation of our clients, we have been very fortunate in being able to space our work over the years into a fairly consistent program.

### **Rabbit Range**

There are many other experiences associated with a small town practice which border on the folklore side, but nevertheless, are the very things that distinguish it so greatly from big city practice. I would think that I am one of the few architects in the country who had the dubious honor and distinction of having killed two rabbits from my office door. Of course, that was early in my career, when this subdivision was first started. We have come a long way since then; in fact, I do not even keep a loaded gun in the office, anymore. This is mute testimony to the fact that I fear nothing from either wildlife or clients.

I hope you are now convinced that country architecture can be stimulating and challenging, so much so, that you will all want to move to the country. You will, I am sure, be welcomed with open arms . . . in any parish but this one.



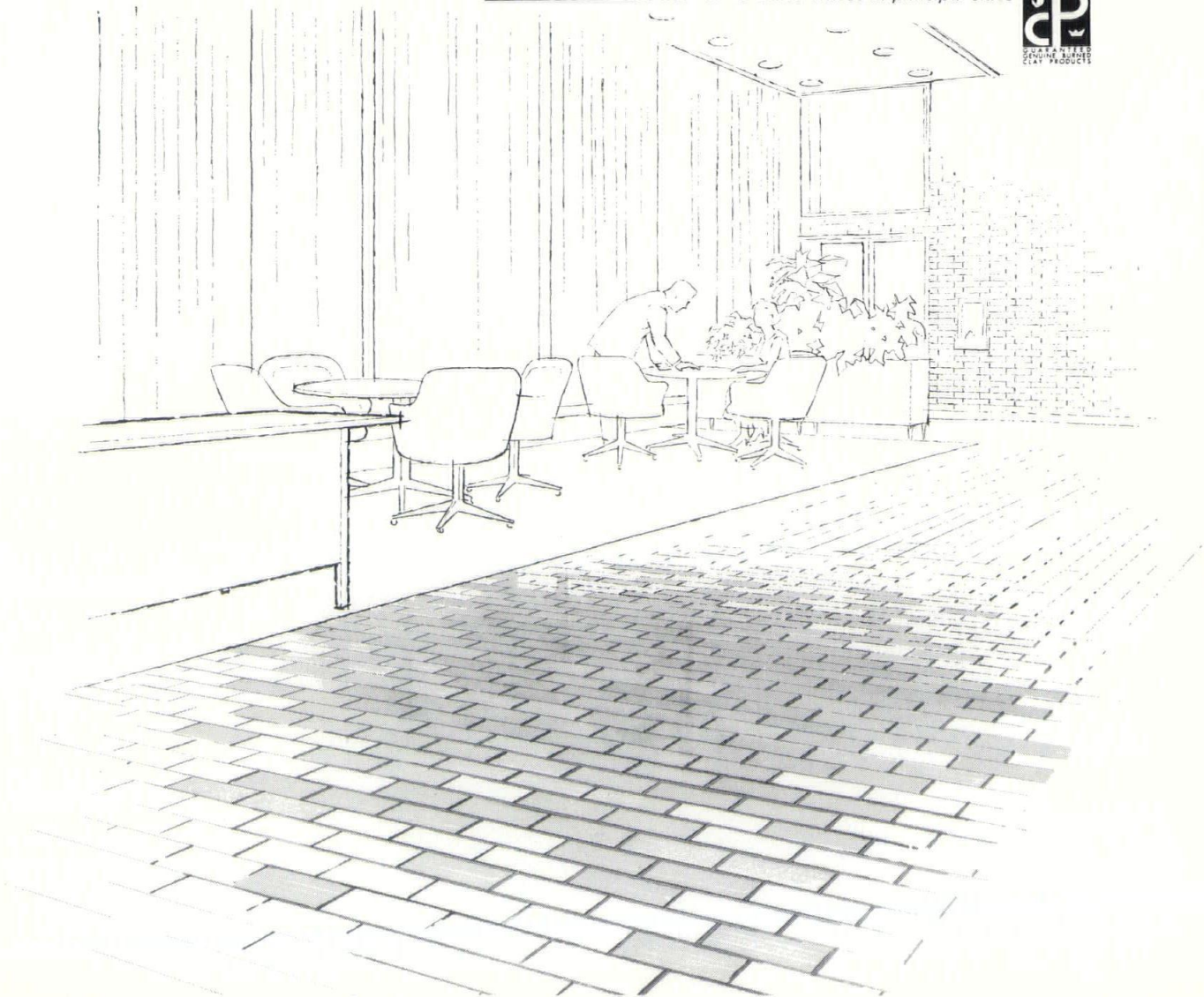
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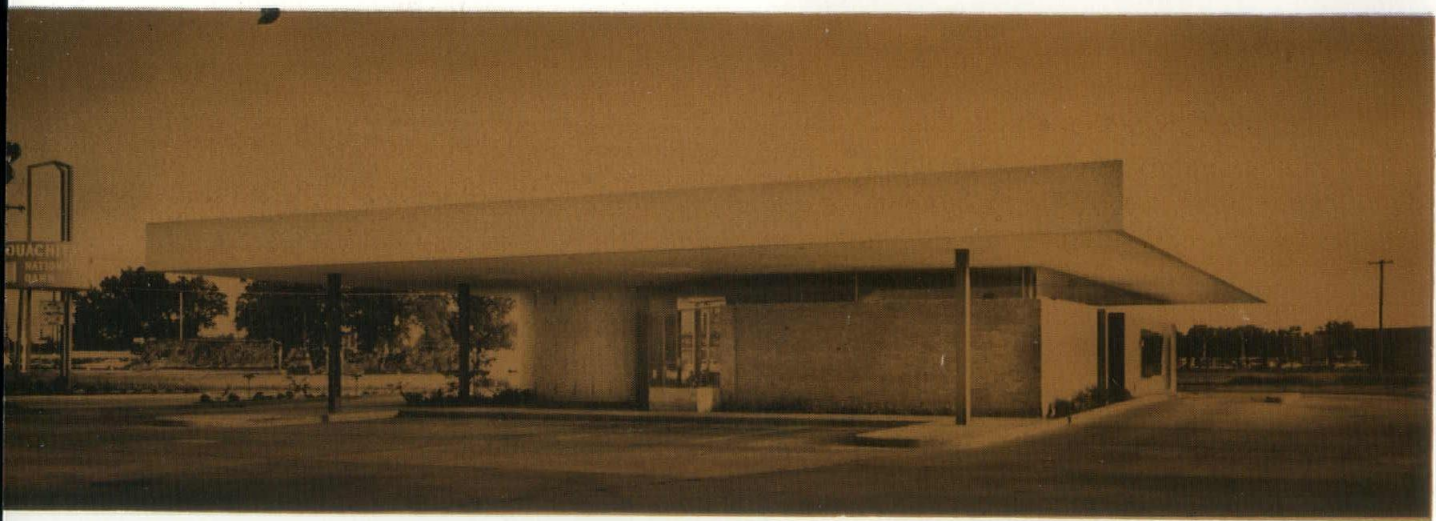
## **Ouachita National Bank Northside Office**

MONROE, LA.



## Project Description

A branch bank was desired to provide complete banking services, including drive-in facilities. The corner building site, located at the intersection of two major thoroughfares is virtually flat. Easy access to, and egress from the drive-in windows was a major consideration in the site plan development. Adequate "stack up" space for cars at the drive-in windows and sufficient customer parking spaces were required. In order to avoid traffic congestion caused by cars waiting for the intersection traffic light, the main access drives are located as far as possible from the street intersection. Landscaped areas are provided to break up the large paved areas. The generous roof overhang provides the protection required at the drive-in windows, as well as a limited number of covered parking spaces near the main entrance. It was desired to further accent the large ceiling expanse (more than twice the area of the enclosed building) by using a continuous strip of glass at the upper portion of the exterior walls to provide visual continuity between the interior and exterior ceilings. This glass strip also provides excellent natural lighting and is fully protected from direct sunlight. The curved form of the vault which is faced with a repetitive design of beige, brown and metallic gold glazed ceramic tile becomes the dominant feature of the design. Ceramic tile (un-glazed) is also used to provide an easily maintained surface for the wide overhang fascia. The triple face gold and white identification sign is separated from the building proper in order to be visible from a considerable distance on both major thoroughfares; its verticality presents a pleasing opposition to the basically horizontal lines of the building.



Photographs: Frank Lotz Miller  
New Orleans, La.



# A Compleat Draughtsman: A Miscellany - - - - - Or What to Do Until the Doctor Comes

W. R. BROCKWAY A.I.A.

Baton Rouge, La.

Do you sometimes get the feeling that too much time goes into the preparation of your working drawings? Are there too many requests for clarification during the bid period? Do you spend more time than you think you should supplying missing information to contractors during construction?

If you experience the above symptoms with any regularity, you may be suffering from the common occupational disease, *draftsmania horribilis* or working drawing sickness. This malady is endemic in architectural offices, highly contagious and, if allowed to go untreated, extremely difficult to cure.

In its simplest form, *draftsmania* produces in its victim an almost uncontrollable urge to include in his drawings many things which add nothing to accuracy, completeness or clarity and, in more advanced cases, to omit from his drawings many things which the contractor must know to bid the job or build it as designed.

Fortunately, if treated in its earliest stages, the prognosis for recovery is good. The disease is easily arrested by surgery and can even be cured. The cure is usually accompanied by a dramatic recovery of the architect's effectiveness to himself, his clients and the contractors who build his work.

What are some of the causes of this disease and what can we do to avoid them?

*The big question—how much to show?* Everybody knows this, but just for fun, let's repeat it: Working drawings (and specifications) have only two reasons for being:

- (1) To give the contractor the information he needs to bid the job.
- (2) To give the contractor the information he needs to build the job *as you want it built*.

Anything that does not meet either of these criteria is superfluous and should be eliminated from your drawings. Be ruthless. Scrap those repeat details, those extra views and unnecessary lines.



Enough has already been said about the complimentary nature of working drawings and specifications and what information should go into each. I would add only one comment: Don't duplicate information in both documents. This is not only time consuming, it can get you in trouble. The contractor who reads "mahogany" in the specs and sees "walnut" on the drawings doesn't know what to do.

*Pretty pictures:* Resist the urge to turn each sheet into a work of art. All that is required from an artistic point of view is that the drawing be neat, orderly and legible.

If you feel that you can't turn out a proper set of drawings without a bird's eye perspective on the cover sheet, then go ahead and do it. But first, weigh the advantages (are there any?) against the 2 to 4 days of draftsman's time required to produce the drawing. The contractor won't be impressed.

Curb that artistic instinct. Full, minutely detailed material indications are not necessary for the contractor's purposes. Use symbols and notes instead. Nothing is more wasteful of the draftsman's time than drawing every shingle on a roof or every brick in a wall.

*Help stamp out repetition.* Repetition, in its various insidious forms, is the draftsman's worst enemy. Aside from the extra time required to draw or letter an item more than once, this habit increases the opportunity for error in direct proportion to the number of times repetition occurs. Some common examples are:

*Repeat sections.* Have you ever seen a set of drawings with an interior elevation, a transverse building section, a wall section, and a cornice detail, all showing exactly the same information, the only difference being that of scale? No further comment.

*Repeat dimensions.* No dimension should ever appear in more than one location, except under very unusual circumstances. A good general rule is to put horizontal dimensions on plans and plan sections, vertical dimensions on elevations and vertical sections. If you must repeat a dimension, remember that you will have to change both (or all six) locations when that dimension gets itself changed. And it probably will.

*Details — good and bad.* A set of drawings should include all the details necessary to build the job exactly as you want it built and NO MORE.

If the accepted building industry standard for a particular item will get the job done, then eliminate the detail. (Why detail a typical 2x4 stud partition?)

Never, never detail a stock manufactured item. How many hours have been lost laboriously tracing stock sliding doors or projected windows?

Why draw details if all the necessary information can be shown on an elevation? Classic example — kitchen cabinets.

Why draw details if a note will suffice?

Details should have easily identifiable titles. How much better to say, "A/2 South Wall—Kitchen" than, "Det. A/2."



It helps the poor man know what he's seeing.

It is also helpful if a detail is flagged or referred to by note on ALL small scale drawings on which it can be seen: plans, elevations and sections. And don't forget to include in the flag a reference to the sheet on which the detail may be found.

Some complicated items, such as special flashings, can be shown more quickly and more easily with a small isometric drawing than with any number of sections.

*What's going on here?* Any line on any drawing that is not identifiable in one way or another will get you in trouble. Either erase it or, if it is really necessary, tell the contractor what it is.

Try very hard to eliminate any dimension that is not necessary for the proper execution of the job. If you use center to center dimensions on a row of brick piers and the piers themselves are dimensioned, then the distance between piers is not necessary. And vice versa. The same goes for window and door openings and duplicate strings of dimensions on opposite sides of the building.

Have you heard the one about the contractor who supplied cypress because the drawings called for SYP? Wherever possible, eliminate abbreviations. When they are absolutely necessary (almost never), they should be identified by legend.

*The hard pencil must go.* Too many draftsmen, having found they can make

a better looking tracing this way, use the hardest pencil they can find with the least amount of pressure they can apply. There is only one problem with this procedure—it produces lousy blueprints. If you have an experimental side to your nature, try this on your next set of drawings: Use nothing but an HB pencil, with plenty of weight on the nether end. No cheating now. What's that? It looks messy? Inaccurate? Smears? Never mind. Plow on to the bitter end and then see what the blueprints look like. Why, you can read all the lines. The brick hatching can be differentiated from the concrete block. The dimension lines actually refer to a point on the drawing. Amazing.

*How to draw a line.* All lines on a drawing should be drawn with authority. Make them look purposeful. Every line should have a beginning and an end. Lines that fade out to nothing or vary in intensity are fine for renderings, but do not belong on a working drawing.

*The Arrow.* Years ago, so I am told, there were two standard tests of a draftsman's ability. The first was his lettering, the second his arrowheads. In those days arrowheads were made long, finely tapered and narrow. This produced a beautiful arrowhead, but sometimes left some doubt as to which line on the drawing the arrow pointed.

A better system is to use a short wide arrowhead, with the point firmly planted where the draftsman intends. Not as

pretty perhaps, but much less confusing.

Arrows from notes should always be run through otherwise blank spaces in the drawing. Arrows that cross or sidle up to other lines at an acute angle get lost quickly. A good way to avoid this problem is to dimension your drawing before adding notes with arrows.


*Lettering.* Lettering should be neat, legible and as small as is consistent with readability. It matters not a bit whether your lettering is vertical, slant, upper or lower case, or script. The important thing is to letter so the contractor can read it. It will be helpful if all lettering of a similar nature (sheet titles, room titles, notes, etc.) be made a similar size.

Don't worry too much about pseudo technical language in notes. Say what you have to say in the simplest way you can.

*More lines - faster.* Draw freehand, whenever practicable. This can include hatching on plans and sections to a fairly large scale and the drawing of simple items with irregular contours (moldings, stair rails, etc.).

Make use of templates. Nowadays, templates are available for almost anything. Circles, triangles, squares, ellipses, plumbing fixtures, furniture, the list is almost endless.

A tremendous amount of time is spent just adding and subtracting minuscule



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subfractions of an inch. What difference does it make if a room is 12'5 $\frac{3}{4}$ " or 12' 5-13/16" in length? For most architectural work, forget fractions smaller than  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Modular dimensioning comes in here somewhere.

*To erase or not to erase.* The amount of erasing that can be done before it becomes more practical to redraw a sheet will surprise most of us. If the amount of drawing that can be saved by erasing will take less time to redraw than the time spent in erasing, then and only then, is it wise to redraw. You may have to erase  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the sheet before this point is reached. Think about it.

*Who's in charge here?* Probably the biggest time saver of them all is the assignment of single responsibility for the production of a set of drawings. Depending on the organization of the office, the responsible person may be the principal, the chief draftsman or the draftsman. Whoever he is, it is important that this man have access to all the information pertinent to the job and that he be available at all times to the men doing the drawing.

The person making the drawing should be encouraged to assume as much initiative as possible in solving routine technical problems, freeing the man in charge for weightier duties. The old routine of the draftsman asking the chief draftsman and the chief draftsman asking the boss whether to use 1x6 or 1x8 roof sheathing has no place in an efficient organization.

*And finally.* Most architects will agree that, from a job cost point of view, the production of working drawings is probably the most important single division of their practice.

It follows that any procedure or technique which will really save time and result in better drawings is worth our consideration. I do not pretend that these ideas show the only way, or even the best way, to produce effective working drawings. They are simply some things which have worked pretty well for me in the past. If you can use any of them, you are welcome to them.

Remember, the time you save may be your own.

## • CONVENTIONS

### State Meet

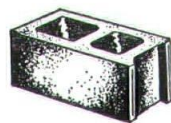
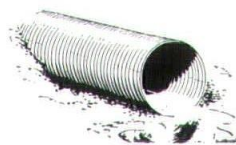
"INTERIORS" has been selected for the theme of the 1963 LAA Convention. Speakers of national, regional and state renown will participate on four panels: Commercial, Residential, Educational and Religious.

Several unforgettable social functions are scheduled including: an evening in one of the finest cuisines in America's food paradise; an evening nightclub tour; a Dixie-land Jazz Fest at a cocktail party; (for the ladies only) a breakfast at Brennan's and a walking tour of places seldom seen in the Vieux Carré.

Your attendance would be assured, if you would simply tell your wife about the 1963 LAA Convention.

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## CONVENTIONS • CONVENTIONS • Gulf States Regional



The star-studded program of the 13th Annual Gulf States Regional Conference is still intact, according to a fresh report from Conference Chairman Arch Winter.

The mixture of architects with the Gulf's balmy breeze promises to transform Dauphin Island into a veritable paradise.

Only a dozen exhibit spaces are yet to be rented. Winter is urging interested firms to take immediate steps to rent space because a late surge in booth ren-

tals is expected. Firms thus far committed to exhibit their products are:

Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co.  
The Mosaic Tile Company  
Jenkins Brick Company  
General Equipment Mfgs.  
Burton Brothers  
Bridgeport Brass Company  
Concrete Products, Inc.  
L.C.N. Closers  
Caloric Corporation  
Robbins Flooring Company  
Mobile Gas Service Corp.  
Mobile Paint Mfg. Co.  
Ramset Fastening System  
Thrasher Company  
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**NEW YORK**—United States Plywood Corporation will co-sponsor the new two-hour Jerry Lewis Show over ABC-TV Saturday nights during the '63-'64 television season, the company announced.

The Jerry Lewis show, which debuts Sept. 21, will be a completely "live" program broadcast from Hollywood and featuring personalities from all walks of life. On his infrequent television appearances, Lewis has scored extremely high ratings.

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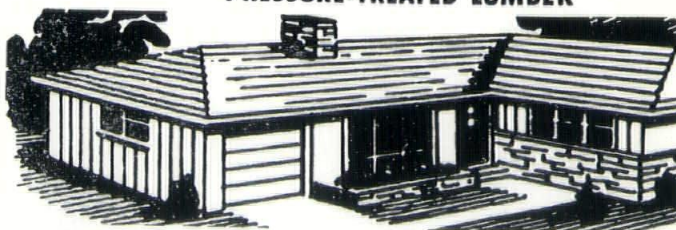
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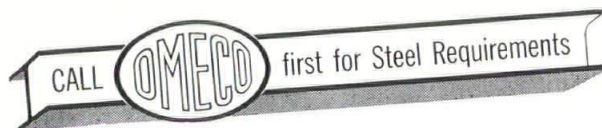
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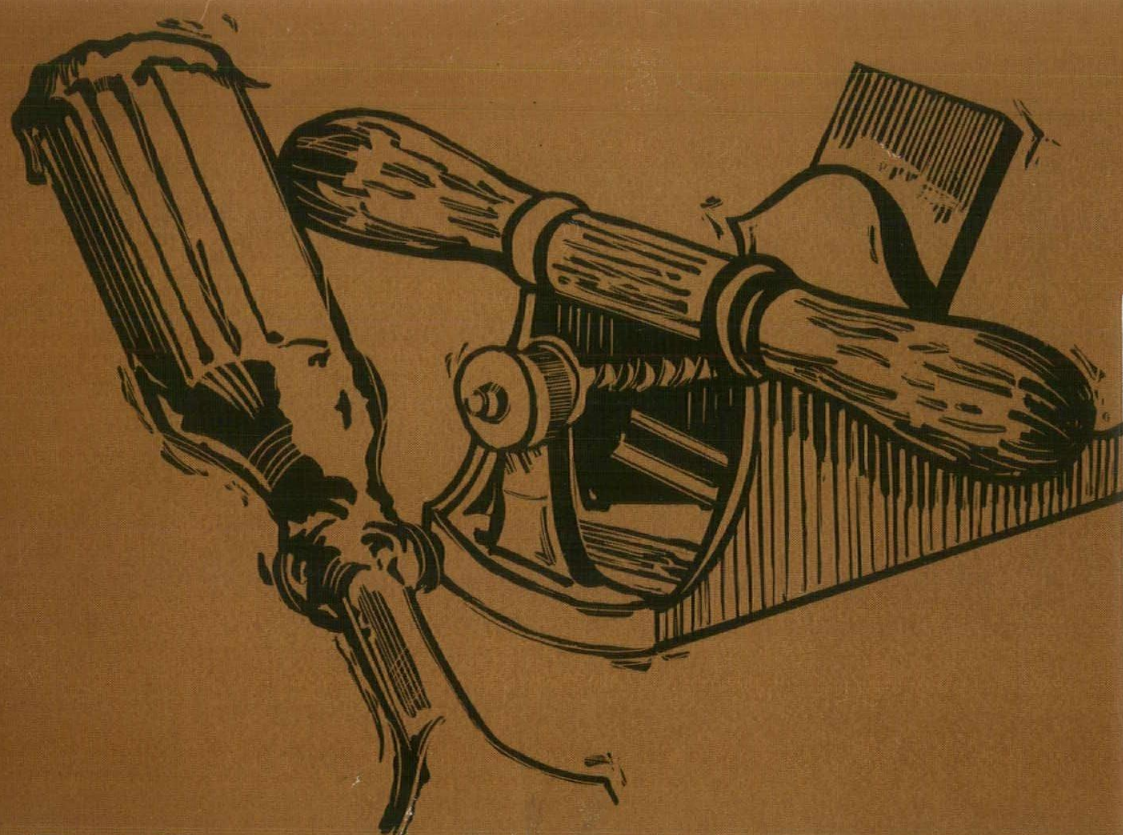
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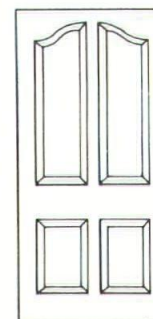
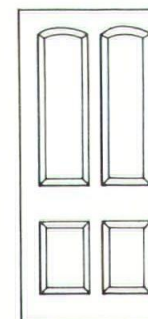
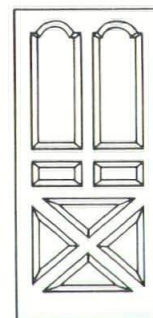
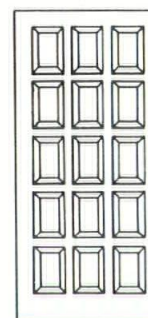
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