NOVEMBER

Monday 6
Installation Committee
Chapter Office conference room, 5 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Tuesday 7
Bullet Court
Chapter conference room, 3:30 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Board of Directors Meeting
Chapter conference room, 5:45 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Chapter Election Meeting
Chapter conference room, 7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Wednesday 8
New Member Orientation
Chapter conference room, 6 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

AFLA Architecture of the Car
Art Centre College of Design, 7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Dagnor Richter
SCI-ARC lecture series, SCI-ARC Main Space, 6 p.m. Call (213) 825-3482.

Carys K. Jenkins Memorial Scholarship Dinner
Supporting USC School of Architecture minority scholarships, at USC Town and Gown, 7:30 dinner, $75/person. Call (213) 741-4471.

Monday 13
Designers Lighting Forum Lecture
Pacific Design Centre Blue Conference Center, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Call (213) 882-1596.

Tuesday 14
New Board of Directors Organizational Meeting
Chapter Office conference room, 5:30 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Urban Design Committee
Chapter Office, small conference room, 6 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Associates Board Meeting
Chapter Office conference room, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Wednesday 15
LA Architectural Editorial Board Meeting
Chapter Office conference room, 7:30 a.m. Call (213) 380-5177.

Architects in Government School District Office, 5-7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

CCAI Executive Committee Meeting
Yosemite. Call (951) 448-9082.

Billie Tsien
SCI-ARC lecture series, SCI-ARC Main Space, 8 p.m. Call (213) 829-3482.

Contrasts: Contemporary Provocative
Museum of Contemporary Art exhibit continues through December 13, 1220. Call (213) 380-5177.

Monday 20
Interiors Committee Meeting
Chapter Office conference room. Call (213) 380-4595.

Tuesday 21
Wednesday 22
Thursday 23
Chapter Office closed.

Thanksgiving Day
Chapter Office closed.

Thursday 2
CSI Seminar Series
Chapter conference room, 7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Government Relations Committee
Kaiser Permanente, 5:30-7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

In Pursuit of a Self-Critical Architecture
Lecture by Ted Williams, Perloff 1-02, UCLA, 7:30 p.m. Call (213) 825-3791.

Friday 3
Gilbert Stanley Underwood: His Rustic, Art Deco, and Federal Architecture
Exhibit continues through November 24 at UCLA Gallery 1220. Call (213) 380-3793.

Blueprints for Modern Living
Case Study House exhibit continues through February 18 at Temporary Contemporary. Call (213) 621-2586.

Saturday 4
Pasadena’s Finest
Self-guided Pasadena Heritage tours of the city’s finest mansions, 10 a.m-4 p.m. Call (800) 793-0617.

Los Angeles
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Terra Cotta
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Weekend

Friday 10
Science and Technology for Historic Preservation: A California Perspective
One-day conference at University of California, Riverside, $30. Call (714) 577-5521.

Saturday 11
Art Deco
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Broadway Theaters
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Pershing Square
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Sunday 12
Bullocks Wilshire
LA Conservancy tour, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Saturday 18
Spring Street: Palaces of Finance
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Broadway Theaters
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Pershing Square
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Sunday 19
Open House
Studio of Jan de Swart, 1235 S. Wadsworth Blvd, 1-5 p.m. Call (213) 259-4540.

Saturday 25
Seventh Street: Mecca for Merchants
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Broadway Theaters
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Pershing Square
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Weekend

Monday 27
Tuesday 28
Wednesday 29
Thursday 30

Codex Committee
Chapter conference room, 5-7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Merrill Elson
SCI-ARC lecture series, SCI-ARC Main Space, 6 p.m. Call (213) 829-3482.

Gordon L. and Virginia MacDonald Medical Research Laboratories, UCLA, by Venturi, Raebins, and Scott Brown.

Exhibit continues through December 13 at UCLA Gallery 1220. Call (213) 825-3791.

Friday 4
Studj Tour of Frank O. Gehry’s Works
UCLA Extension two-day seminar, $150. Call (213) 825-9061.

Saturday 2
Board/Committee Winter Retreat
Chapter conference room, 9 a.m-12 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Little Tokyo
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Terra Cotta
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Broadway Theaters
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Pershing Square
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Monday 2
Tuesday 3
Wednesday 4
Thursday 5

Cesar Chavez Committee
Chapter conference room, 5-7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Merrill Elson
SCI-ARC lecture series, SCI-ARC Main Space, 6 p.m. Call (213) 829-3482.

Gordon L. and Virginia MacDonald Medical Research Laboratories, UCLA, by Venturi, Raebins, and Scott Brown.

Exhibit continues through December 13 at UCLA Gallery 1220. Call (213) 825-3791.

Friday 4
Studj Tour of Frank O. Gehry’s Works
UCLA Extension two-day seminar, $150. Call (213) 825-9061.

Saturday 2
Board/Committee Winter Retreat
Chapter conference room, 9 a.m-12 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Little Tokyo
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Terra Cotta
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Broadway Theaters
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

Pershing Square
LA Conservancy walking tour, 10 a.m. Call (213) 623-CITY.

December 4
December 5

Focus on LA Architects
7:30 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Board of Directors Meeting
Chapter conference room, 5-45 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Management Skills for Architects: National AIA two-day workshop, LA Airport Hyatt. Call (212) 626-7144.

Wednesday 1
Housing Committee
Chapter conference room, 6 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Soviet Reception/Lecture
A. M. Groos-yevsky, Secretary, USSR Academy of Arts, Moscow, and E. E. Chouchanmuras, V.P., Union of Architects, at the Los Angeles Club, 3801 Wilshire Blvd, 22nd Floor, 6-8:30 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Adela Santos
SCI-ARC lecture series, SCI-ARC Main Space, 8 p.m. Call (213) 829-3482.

Thursday 30
CSI Seminar Series
Chapter conference room, 7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Investigations into the Particular
Lecture by John and Patricia Perlku, Perloff 1-02, UCLA, 7:30 p.m. Call (213) 825-3791.

Friday 31
Government Relations Committee
Kaiser Permanente, 5:30-7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

CSI Seminar Series
Chapter conference room, 7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Saturday 7
Chapter Office conference room, 5:30 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

CSI Board of Directors
Chapter conference room, 5:45 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

Holiday Open House
Chapter Office, 4-8 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

K. Michael Hays
SCI-ARC lecture series, SCI-ARC Main Space, 8 p.m. Call (213) 829-3482.

December 7
Government Relations Committee
Kaiser Permanente, 5:30-7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.

CSI Seminar Series
Chapter conference room, 7 p.m. Call (213) 380-4595.
In the dry mountains, dead leaves and twigs don't decay, they accumulate. After about thirty years, half the chaparral thicket is "dead dry stuff," and the reservoir living plants are no less flammable. McPhee writes, "High or low—hard, soft, or mixed—all chaparral has in common an always developing, relentlessly intensifying, vital necessity to burst into flame. In a sense, chaparral consumes fire no less than fire consumes chaparral."

After a wildfire, the first rains form a network of rills on the demuded slopes. The rills increase the speed of the runoff, greatly multiplying its carrying capacity. When a big rain comes, the rill network will conduct enough water to mobilize the deposits in the canyons below.

Annual rainfall in Southern California is typically less than fifteen inches, but Pacific storm systems sometimes drop huge amounts of rain on the San Gabriels. McPhee cites a 1943 storm when 26 inches fell in 24 hours. Multiple storms trigger the big debris flows, about once every ten years. The biggest in this century were in 1934, 1938, 1969, 1978. "Even with a geology functioning at such remarkably short intervals," McPhee observes, "the people have ample time to forget it."

McPhee also explores New Orleans, which is as much a city of artifice as is Los Angeles. Nearly half the city is below sea level, by as much as fifteen feet. When the French founded New Orleans in 1718, the foundations filled with floodwater. Leves were built by 1727. The city was inundated in 1735 and in 1785. The levees were extended and raised, again and again. By 1937, the twin 30-foot-high levees along the Mississippi were each as long as the Great Wall of China.

At Old River, three hundred miles above the mouth of the Mississippi, the Army Corps of Engineers operates a lock that allows ships to drop 33 feet into the Atchafalaya. Old River Control, a spillway designed to accept fully half the main river's flow at flood, meters and rationed all of the water flowing into the swamp. McPhee interweaves exposition with observations and conversations with a marvelous assortment of characters on the front lines and the sidelines of the struggle to control nature. The anecdotal material enlivens the book, bringing a human scale to the confrontation between engineering projects and natural forces. However, for a visually oriented reader, the paucity of illustrations is an annoyance. There are a few decorative drawings, no maps or photos and only one highly schematic diagram. Perhaps in "Cooling the Lava" McPhee comes closest to elucidating the nature of control. During the Surtsey eruption in the 1960s, physicist Thorbjorn Sigurdsen observed that when lava reached the beach, it flowed along the coastline. "The sea cooled it. Then lava ran along that cooled wall."

He recalls, "I wondered, could anything similar be done by man?" His observation led to the extraordinary five-month battle of 1973, vividly reconstructed by McPhee, and to its consequences. Introducing the key sequence of events that reconfigured the island of Heimaey, McPhee observes: "They resulted in delivery and destruction, on a large scale. They all involved human intervention, with effects that affected other effects and were ultimately so imponderable that no one could assign to people or to nature an unchallengeable ratio of triumph to defeat."

Arthur Golding, AIA
Mr. Golding, an AIA/LA Director, practices architecture in Los Angeles.
unsound structures located on the site, at the corner of Child's Way and Hoover Street on the University Park Campus, may be replaced by the new building.

The City of Los Angeles awarded Architect a contract for the masterplanning of physical improvements at the Griffith Observatory. Work on the masterplan began in July and is scheduled for completion in December, 1989. Project consultants include: Karlstrom & Associates, structural engineers; S&K, cost consultants; and Barton-Arschmann Associates, parking consultants.

Barbara Phelps and Associates have been selected by the City of Los Angeles to design the new Los Feliz Branch Library. The firm was also recently commissioned by UCLA to design new classroom facilities at the University Elementary School.

Letter to the Editor

I did enjoy the day-long symposium, "Critics and Cranes," put on by LA Architect last week at the Biltmore. However, as a fellow architect and local resident, I feel a few well-intentioned remarks about the event and the presentations are in order.

First, while the conference had been advertised as an attempt to initiate a critical design dialogue in the city, most of the day was taken up in individual drum-beating, whether it was the architect's re-run of his design rhetoric and a particularly cynical point of view or whether it was the trumpeting of an individual critic's preoccupation with words and defense strategy. There was no real participant in what I hope will be a continuous dialogue in the city, most of the day perhaps, the barbed pen of one of the attending critics. There seemed to be many of the post-conference dialogue that ensued. You deserve credit for making this happen, and I look forward to being a participant in what I hope will be a continuing and informed interaction about the quality of our built environment here in Los Angeles.

Second, I felt that the general level of architectural design of the four projects presented was, at best, mediocre. At least the library design evolved out of a long community dialogue and interaction; but it is debatable whether this process resulted in a better building, even though it will probably serve the city and its people quite well. The same cannot be said of the I.M. Pei and S.O.M. design solutions, in my opinion.

Third, some of the architectural presentations or discussions by any of the critics talked to the most important program requirement for any major urban construction project: people. Furthermore, there was little or no discussion of private, much less public, people spaces, to say nothing of the quality of those spaces. The challenge of design in LA is not just making money, I believe, but also helping to solve the increasingly critical requirements of environment and people.

This having been said, however, I do feel the conference represented an encouraging beginning, based on its attendance and some of the post-conference dialogue that ensued. You deserve credit for making this happen, and I look forward to being a participant in what I hope will be a continuous and informed interaction about the quality of our built environment here in Los Angeles.

Walter Scott Perry, AIA

Errata

On the cover of the October 1989 issue, LA Architect neglected to credit Julius Shulman for his photograph of Case Study House #9. We apologize for this omission.

1989 Directory Available

Looking for a member's phone number, or the name of a committee chair? The 1989 AIALA Membership Directory has a new, soft-pitched color cover, but contains the same hard information as in previous years. The directory price is $100 for non-members, $75 for members. Call now to order a copy (213) 380-4595. Limited number available.

Continued from 3

Architects in Government

Within the context of a continuous dialogue between the government agencies and architectural community, the August meeting, the speakers represented the public. Ronald Fox, Principal with Weinberger, Fox & Esaux, a government relations private firm, shared with the committee his observations and concerns about dealing with government agencies. Lawrence Bernhardt, AIA, Director of Facilities Design and Construction with Kaiser Permanente, briefly described the Facilities Design and Construction function and services of the organization, and indicated that one of the goals is to promote better communication with the government agencies in order to expedite project reviews and approvals. Concluding the agenda, Victor Nahmias, AIA, Area Architect with Kaiser Permanente, emphasized that each additional day of construction documents review adds to the cost of health care statewide due to delays, additional design, unnecessary construction and increased inefficiencies of operation.

The next Architects in Government Committee meeting will take place on November 15, 1989, at 5pm, in room 404 at Los Angeles Unified School District, 1425 South San Pedro. The speaker will be Byron Foster, Deputy Fire Marshal with Office of State Fire Marshal.

Maria Magdalena Campeanu, AIA
Chair, Architects in Government Committee

New Members


Reinstatement: W. Douglas Breidenbach, Breidenbach, Cuen; Michael W. Folonis, Mithun Folonis; Leland G. Kilgore, Architects Engineers Pacific Palisades; Bruce Jay Melzter, Baxter Healthcare Corp.

Associate: David S. Scargill, Skidmore Owings & Merrill.

Transfer In. Arthur A. Hurton, AIA.

Chair, Architects in Government Committee: George T. Howard, Associate, from Philadelphia.

Professional Affiliate: Alan C. Krokowski, DWP City of LA; Gretchen Ann Seelig, Archiems, Inc.

Student, Hraznai S. Zeitlin, Columbia University.

healthcare facilities professional

Celebrating a 25 year track record of success, PBS Building Systems, Inc. has emerged as an innovative leader in the field of modular construction for the healthcare industry. You could become part of this success as our corporate clients, correctional institutions, higher education facilities as well as the government and military.

We offer a competitive salary, a superior work environment and excellent benefits. Please send resume with salary history to:

Building Systems, Inc.
P.O. Box 5928
Los Angeles, CA 90089.
The Mexican College of Architects in collaboration with the Autonomous University of Baja California is sponsoring a symposium entitled "Border Architecture," to be held on February 8-10, 1990 at the Mexican campus of the Autonomous University of Baja California, Mexico. The symposium's objective is to begin a dialogue between professional environmental designers from adjacent areas along the U.S. Mexican border, about the relevance of increased commercial, industrial, and cultural exchanges and their effect on the built environment. The registration fee is $60 U.S. Currency on or before January 1, 1990, and $80 afterwards. Papers for consideration must be under 10 pages, and should be submitted by November 30, 1989. Send papers and registration payments (payable to: Colegio de Arquitectos de Mexico, A.C.) to: Organizing Committee, "Border Architecture 90," PO Box 826, Calexico, CA 92231, or call (619) 357-3193.

Science and Technology for Historic Preservation

On Friday, November 10, the University of California, Riverside will host a one-day conference on "Science and Technology for Historic Preservation: A California Perspective," co-sponsored by the California Preservation Foundation. The purpose of the conference is to consider ways to enhance links between centers of education and research, and professionals in the public and private sector concerned with the conservation of the prehistoric and historic-cultural heritage of the United States. Conference topics will focus on issues and problems in California. Presentations and discussions will highlight developments in preservation technology since the 1985-1986 Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) series of workshops and major report on "Technologies for Prehistoric and Historic Preservation." The registration cost, which includes the luncheon, is $20. For more information, call (714) 787-5521.

Land Use Negotiation

The Los Angeles Section of the American Planning Association (LAAPA) will present a negotiation workshop entitled "Compromising Positions: Negotiating Development in the '90s," at the Bel Age Hotel in West Hollywood on November 9, 1989. The workshop will focus on the processes involved in resolving and avoiding impasses, and will utilize and expand skills required in negotiations involving groups with different development agendas, including preservation groups, developers, and governmental agencies. In addition to LAAPA members, developers, regulatory agency staff, community leaders and others will be invited to attend the event. Registration in advance is required, and the cost is $125. For further information, call (213) 381-5393.

Jazz at SCI-ARC

Beginning in the fall of 1989, the Southern California Institute of Architecture will present a jazz and contemporary music concert series with particular emphasis on improvised music and its makers. The first year's series will feature the John Carter Octet, Richard Grossman Trio and Friends, Quartet Music, Vinny Golia Large Ensemble, and ROVA Saxophone Quartet. A master class/workshop will be given at 4 pm on the day of each performance so that artists and architecture students and the public may come together in a cross-disciplinary spirit to explore the relationships between musical creativity and architecture. The John Carter Octet will open the series with a performance on November 4 at 8 pm. Tickets are $8 at the door. Call (213) 829-3482.

Projects and Architects

With this issue, LA Architect establishes a regular section highlighting recent architectural commissions received by Los Angeles firms. Each month, LA Architect will publish brief project descriptions like the ones following, listing teams members and consultants. Call (213) 380-5177.

Rebecca L. Binder Architects and Neupert & Thomas Associates have been commissioned to design a 71,000 square foot visual arts facility for the University of California, San Diego. The facility is the first project to be reviewed under the new campus masterplan guidelines developed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in conjunction with Daniel Solomon.

The Figueroa Corridor Partnership (USC Real Estate Development Corporation in partnership with the Jones Commercial Development Corporation) is working with architects Barton Myers Associates, The Kennard Design Group and Green Associates in the development of USC Plaza, a mixed-use development located on the northeastern corner of Figueroa and Jefferson between the Harbor Freeway and the USC campus. The mixed-use project will combine office and residential development on an approximately 4.5 acre site. Barton Myers Associates have been commissioned to do the masterplan for the project, and The Kennard Design Group and Green Associates will design the first and second buildings.

Barton Myers Associates have also been commissioned to do the masterplanning and programming for a USC educational support services building. Approximately 100,000 square feet, the building will house financial services, business affairs, and student services. Several serio
On Context

John Pastier: I don’t think there is one. I think there used to be one when people walked downtown. The Biltmore Tower encapsulates the issue of which side of the block should be addressed, and it is a real dilemma. My own sense is that Pershing Square is more important than a somewhat anonymous intersection on a slope. But that’s not the way the development money seems to perceive it.

We are not dealing with a traditional city here, and the issues of context are very clouded. The context for most of these buildings is at a distance of a mile or more. I think most of them perform worst at the pedestrian level.

Robert Campbell: From the general context, I think any newcomer would say that the Bunker Hill area, in its present state, is an unbelievable disaster. You couldn’t find a more depressing series of streetscapes and blank walls, of useless empty plazas. Of course, a lot of it is vacant, a lot of it is under construction, and in that sense, it is an unfair question.

We have spent the last 20 or 30 years in most office development violating the grid. The first building that does a twist on the grid gains a kind of presence. The 30th or 40th one that does it is not very nice. So it is nice to see (the grid) as a kind of ordering principal being returned to. Beyond that, the architects didn’t seem to have much to go by, simply because there was really an absence of context.

Michael Sorkin: Let me just say, parenthetically, that my feeling about the L.M. Pei building, in terms of the context of three miles away, is that it’s too small by half to satisfactorily pull the skyline of Los Angeles together. God forbid it should be an inch taller. Nevertheless, if one isolates that argument, if one looks for a satisfactorily crescending skyline composition, it ain’t squat, that building.

It is interesting that all of these buildings were described as buildings which are responding in the manner of preservation to some notion of an urban context, which doesn’t exist, in this case, exist. It speaks volumes about where we are as architects, at this moment. Speaker after speaker made this interesting claim of, “I am designing a building which is continuous with the past and yet is boldly in line with the new.” People are obliged to look to preservation, to look to values of the past, because all the propositions of modernity seem to have been viscerated, which I think is too bad.

On Hiring Local Architects

Diana Ketchum: It is certainly disturbing to me to see how much discussion in the press seems to be wasted on complaints about whether local architects have been unfairly excluded from consideration, or whether they report that an architect from elsewhere is considered to be very doubtful because he or she is from another cultural realm. Many of the values that we have come to associate with regionalism, being alert to the site and the history of the place, should be taken for granted. I don’t think these attributes come from the soil or are developed by designers because they have lived on the West Coast for a number of years.

Robert Campbell: There are several arguments to be made in favor of local architects. One is that working among neighbors is a very important constraint on architects to do their best work. Second, in the international star system that we have now, the architects that do become famous get stretched much too thin. There are certain firms that are doing far too many buildings, and doing them in a very thin and unimaginative way. The third reason is that how the hell is a local culture or a younger architect going to emerge if it can’t get the commissions that will stretch it.

Michael Sorkin: Los Angeles is a city which has as interesting an architectural culture as is going in the world these days. And to the degree that this culture is excluded from commissions of this magnitude is a sorry state of affairs. There are a lot of quite stunning propositions out there, and my question is how come none of them seem to be materializing on the skyline?

On the Central Library

Diana Ketchum: I am inclined to think of this as an example of where preservationist sentiment has been applied to the design in a way that is not satisfactory. It is something to be in favor of preserving and reused buildings that were built at another time, and it is something else again to be imitative of them. I think the library would have been better served by a design that departed more in style. Between the two schemes, I preferred the earlier one to the final scheme.

John Pastier: I don’t see how anybody can conclude that the first scheme is better because it is fighting, overwhelming and upstaging the old building. I think that what we have in the second case is a better behaved building, not as interesting, but at least adequate to the situation.

Planning is not an absolute activity. There has to be an opportunity for plans to be reviewed, amended and updated. The ability to look at such things as trading density against public benefits is part and parcel of the mechanism that allows the city, the developer, the architect, and other interested parties to participate.

On the Effects of Criticism

Richard Kresing: For the most part it has been quite a happy interaction between architecture in practice and the people writing about it. There is a kind of compact that exists if you think about the city as coming out ahead, and not about your own ego and your own particular building all the time. So when one critic writes about a building and he doesn’t like it, you just have to let that roll off your back because it tends to be subjective to some degree, and he’s only trying to interpret his point of view for a larger audience.

Tom Landa: I think that criticism which has been properly done, responsibly done, has raised the level of expectations in the communities in which I have been working. I think we’re making steps in the right direction, and I think it is getting better.

On City Planning Responsibility

Robert Campbell: It is a failure of the government and public realm when the city says, we’re not going to pay for the new library. The city says, we will get the private market to pay for it by giving away extra space. It is an arrogance of the whole idea of planning. Someone ought to be thinking about what the densities ought to be.

Donald Spivack: (City planning) has to be a process that involves both the city and the architects as well as the developers, and there needs to be participation on the part of the city in setting overall guidelines, which in large part does take place in Los Angeles.
On September 16, 1989, LA Architect and the Architecture Foundation of Los Angeles sponsored a symposium entitled “Critics and Cranes,” exploring the constructive role architectural criticism plays in the development of a city. Moderator Suzanne Stephens, Editor of Oculus, was joined by critics Michael Sorkin, of The Village Voice, Robert Campbell, of The Boston Globe, John Pastier, of Architecture, and Diana Ketcham, of The Oakland Tribune. The symposium focused on four new projects at the intersection of Fifth Street and Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles: I.M. Pei’s First Interstate Tower, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill’s Southern California Gas Center, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer’s Library Extension, and The Landau Partnership’s Bilmore Tower. Presenting the buildings and responding to the critics’ remarks were Donald Spivack, Community Redevelopment Agency; Norman Pfeiffer, FAIA, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates; Tom Landau, AIA, The Landau Partnership; Jim Anderson, Maguire Thomas Partners; and Richard Keating, FAIA, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The event was made possible by a grant from the Design Arts Program, National Endowment for the Arts. Excerpts from the day’s proceedings are featured on the facing page, and below, Aleks Istanbullu offers a critical perspective on the outcome of the symposium.

Contrary to my expectations of fireworks, “Critics and Cranes” was almost complacent. Except for a brief interchange in which Robert Campbell and John Pastier banished Michael Sorkin as he attempted to take over the discussion out of the realm of “what the symposium was about,” the dialogue was generally non-confrontational. The critics and the architects all agreed on the content, role, and impact of criticism.

They all felt that criticism should “raise the public consciousness” about the quality of our environment and, independent of political influence, champion the highest ideals of our society. They agreed that it should lay the groundwork and infuse the development process with the ideology of public awareness. They affirmed that criticism should use the power of the written word to attack complacency and the regurgitation of old solutions and cliches, to “stimulate debate,” to “take architects to the edge and make them notice the fragmentation of the life around us,” and in general to hold “everyone’s feet to the fire and embarrass them into doing better work.”

However, the critics also confirmed that “as in architecture, criticism has its limitations and compromises,” and that any serious criticism “must hold ninety percent of the pieces constant so that it can raise issues about the other ten percent.”

Furthermore, as Suzanne Stevens illustrated in her keynote address, criticism is fallible. It is a product of the context of the time in which it is delivered, and similar to architecture, its language and content can be deemed prophetic or pathetic in history. The symposium participants concluded that critics should carry the responsibility of being the voice of both the public and the professional conscience, as architects tend to the careful “detailing” of each site within the framework of the planners’ guidelines. Thus, in the context of the city, the roles of critic, architect and planner should theoretically be “not adversarial but complementary.”

Overtaken on this day of encouraging and positive discussions of the relationship between criticism and architecture, there was substantial negative commentary about the Bunker Hill area and the four buildings under discussion. With the exception of Skidmore Owings & Merrill’s Southern California Gas Center, the critics faulted the architects for either mimicking history too much or too little, for not addressing the pedestrianism and Pershing Square, for failing to create viable new public spaces, and for creating cliche towers with cheap wall paper.

It is unsettling that the national talent and vast resources poured into these projects by one of the most celebrated public/private partnerships in the history of this city has produced anything less than one of the most convincing urban settings in Los Angeles. If Bunker Hill can be referred to as “an unbelievable disaster of useless and empty plazas,” and not be defended by its architects, developer, or redevelopment agency, the public should be concerned about the resignation with which their downtown’s future is being approached.

It is also unsettling that the architectural criticism, which must have been part of the original Bunker Hill development process, did not generate enough public interest to have a positive impact on the result. Uselessness and timeliness of any criticism lies in its ability to inspire decision-makers to create real solutions. Looking at the new crop of Bunker Hill projects and the failures of architects, planners and agencies, we also must recognize the critics’ failure to bear their responsibility to “raise the public (and professional) consciousness.”

The symposium was successful to the extent that it introduced a discussion about the history, methodology and role of criticism, and critics’ and architects’ shared responsibility for urban form. However, it did not address our understanding of the wall which separates the “real” high stakes development from the public and professional “ideal” of creating better living environments. Serious criticism and cohesive decisions about the future of Los Angeles cannot be made without breaking this barrier. The symposium will have been a success if it serves as a springboard to generate a series of symposiums using a similar format, made credible by a similar panel of national caliber critics. As an isolated piece it is merely “wallpaper with probably some subtleties that you can’t really see...” (John Pastier on LM. Pei’s First Interstate Tower.)

Aleks Istanbullu
Mr. Istanbullu practices architecture in Los Angeles.
Owner
Leo Baeck Temple
Mechanical
John R. Kerr
Landscape Designers
Joanne Sterling & Judith Farber
Electrical Engineer
John E. Silver
Structural Engineer
Wilhelm and Barili, Inc.
Contractor
Amoco Construction, Inc.
Landscape Designers
Jenne Starreh
Judith Farber
Electrical Engineer
John E. Silver
Structural Engineer
Wilhelm and Barili, Inc.
Contractor
Amoco Construction, Inc.

MERIT AWARD

Leonard I. BeerMan Early Childhood Center

Owned and operated by a religious institution, the project was built to foster the influx of new young families into an older congregation. The program called for three classrooms of 15 students each, which could be either combined or used as separate rooms, a central snack area which could involve the children in food preparation, and the provision for concealed observation of all classroom activity, in addition to a private office, reception and storage. The classrooms were designed to read visually as individual "houses." Smaller pitched forms at the entry and storage shed reinforce the imagery, while the exterior geometry is intended to be suggestive of children's blocks. Neutral and muted interior colors were used to give the children's artwork more prominence, and windows and skylights were used to provide balanced natural light in classrooms.

Ted T. Tanaka, AIA

TANAKA/HO RESIDENCE

The architect approached the building as a rectilinear mass, based on a 4-foot grid system, from which the entrance court, interior courtyard and carport were sculpted. Responding to the site's location in a neighborhood in transition, with neighbors on both sides and an alley in the rear for access, the architect designed the inner courtyard to provide the main source of light and view for the primary residence. The front yard serves as a private garden for the mother-in-law unit in the front of the building. The architect chose not to use windows because of the lack of privacy and view, instead substituting a large number of skylights to provide additional interior light. The residence's open floor plan allows the orientation of all rooms and circulation to the interior courtyard.
MARYMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

Located at an historic Catholic girls high school, on the only remaining site for a new building, the library houses 20,000 volumes in addition to related library offices and classrooms. The architect’s challenge was to fit the building into a tight and sloping site, and to make it compatible with the existing historic buildings. The library’s exterior design uses traditional forms and materials to complement the existing Spanish Colonial Revival design style. The main reading area was designed as a flexible open space with “houses” that create intimate groupings for carrels, and define the card catalogues. Perimeter offices have notched corners with glazed doors and windows to create visual sight lines into the library. The corners of the library are stepped to scale the building down and to create window seat corners.

Owner
Marymount High School

Civil and Structural Engineer
Tom Kanai/Wheeler & Gray

Mechanical
Paul S. Bonner, Inc.

Landscape Architect
Lawrence Reed Molina Ltd.

Electrical Engineer
Pacific Engineers Group

Interior Architect
Robert Herman Associates, AIA

Photographer
Tom Bommer

ESHERICK: The new building fits gracefully into a setting of older structures, achieving useful interior spaces in a stylistically preordained environment.

KOHN: It is a most successful and appropriate solution: a quiet, respectful building that relates to and completes the Spanish Colonial Revival campus, fitting comfortably to its sloping site.

MERIT AWARD

Gruen Associates

BEVERLY HILLS PARKING STRUCTURE

Located on a narrow, 55-foot strip along Santa Monica Boulevard in Beverly Hills, the five, two-level parking structures, one half level above and below grade, contain a total of 407 parking spaces. The architect used a layer of metal work and planters to create a soft edge which would serve both as a civic facade for commercial Beverly Hills and relate to the park across Santa Monica Boulevard. Vehicular traffic and pedestrian access is from the east-west streets. The lower level contains double-loaded angular parking stalls, and the upper level deck provides single-load spaces along the south side to mitigate the visual impact of the view from Santa Monica Boulevard. Multi-trunked flowering theme trees and seasonal flowers were used to express a “vernacular Southern California theme.”

Owner
City of Beverly Hills

Civil Engineering
Patler-Roberts Engineering

Landscape Architect
Peter Walker/Martha Schwartz

Structural Architect
Culp & Tanner

Lighting
Horizon-Lees Lighting

Photographer
Charlie Daniels

ESHERICK: The project is a unique and successful solution to parking, in an easily accessible, five block, linear structure. The street environment is greatly improved rather than degraded, as is too often the case with parking structures.

GOLDSMITH: These five parking structures make an excellent solution to the program. They are almost invisible except as landscape from Santa Monica Boulevard, and at the same time provide a practical and “user friendly” parking facility.

KOHN: Its very presence greatly improves this section of Santa Monica Boulevard, with a low scale streetwall of structure and landscape which works for both the pedestrian and the automobile. The modulation of the structure with its metal light shields breaks down the scale and provides enjoyment for the eye.
MERIT AWARD

David Lawrence Gray & Associates
SUNSET TOWERS/ST. JAMES CLUB

Opened in 1932, the Sunset Towers, an art deco reinforced concrete highrise apartment building, was home to many Hollywood stars. At the time of its restoration, however, the concrete facade and ornamentation was cracked almost beyond repair, and the tower was structurally unsound. Currently in use as a St. James Club hotel, the architect’s adaptive reuse included retrofitting the building to meet highrise code requirements and earthquake ordinances, and restoration of the facade to close to its original design by Leland Bryant.

EEHERICK: The structural upgrading and retrofitting to current highrise code requirements has been achieved with virtually no damage to the quality of the tower. The conversion from apartments to hotel was very successfully carried out.

GOLDSMITH: I like the recycling of the apartment building into a hotel, which is a compatible use. The exterior is an excellent restoration of a fantastic art deco building. Not enough information was submitted to judge the low addition, and the jury limited the award to the tower only.

KOHN: (The jury felt) an appreciation for the effort to find an appropriate use, and to bring this art deco tower up to today’s codes while faithfully restoring it, thereby preserving a part of Los Angeles’ architectural history.

Facade detail.

Sunset Boulevard entrance.

MERIT AWARD

Deversky Associates
SAN JOSE STATE ENGINEERING BUILDING

Built on a restricted site along a major pedestrian walkway on the north side of the campus, the 280,000 square foot structure connects with the existing engineering building to form a central courtyard with exterior work space for large projects. A large curved mass at the intersection of the two wings of the building forms the main entry. Located at the end of the plaza in front of the student union, the entry creates a new front door for the engineering facility, which had previously turned its back to the campus. The soft colors of the ceramic tile skin and glazing and the arched space between the entry mass and lecture room scale down the building’s simple form. The architects designed a 62-modular laboratory space, a vertical service distribution system, and an easily accessible cable tray system to accommodate future building modifications and changes in technology. The entry lobby and the crossroads of the two building wings promote interaction between faculty and students.

San Jose, CA

Owner
The California State University

Civil Engineer
Louis & Diedericke, Inc.

Mechanical
Ayres Ever Len

Electrical Engineer
Cohen & Kanwar, Inc.

Structural Architect
Robert Englekirk Structural Engineers, Inc.

Renderer
Uri Bunt

Photographer
Christopher Irion Photography

EEHERICK: The expansion to an existing engineering building is extremely well-fit into a tight, restricted site. The interior spaces are especially fine.

GOLDSMITH: I like the way this “L” shaped building gave order to a part of the campus which had previously been very messy.

KOHN: Through renovation and expansion, this project creates a new streetwall which, as a result of its colonnade, the projection of the entry piece (a focal point), and the lecture hall, activates and energizes the space it defines. The project provides a most successful solution, well-executed, and very professional.

Section at lobby.

Main entrance.
HONOR AWARD

Appleton, Meachar & Associates

EDWARDS STUDIO/RESIDENCE

Low-ceiled and dark, the original 1960 tract house had little relationship to the owner's terraced garden behind. The architect closed the front of the house off from street traffic by adding front walls and a gate, and opened the private back of the house to the garden. Although there were only minor additions to the existing first floor in plan, the second floor studio addition and stair provided a greater opportunity in section. Raised ceilings and new studio windows step up from the living room to the stair and clerestory spaces, connecting the first and second floor areas and expanding diagonal views through the house to the garden. A bridge with potting counter extends the studio out to an upper garden level terrace.

MERIT AWARD

Frank O. Gehry & Associates

HERMAN MILLER WESTERN REGIONAL FACILITY

The architect used a 100' deep, densely planted row of redwood trees to create a wall into the 56-acre site located 15 miles northeast of Sacramento. The main building development is located along the ridge of the site to create a large flat pad and take advantage of views across the rolling Sacramento Valley plain, which will be sown with wildflowers and left in a natural state. Three separate manufacturing buildings are located on the same level to facilitate material handling. To ensure that none of the buildings become too large in scale, and that they remain functionally "indeterminate" to support Herman Miller's changing needs, each building was limited to approximately 100,000 square feet. Major buildings are distributed around a courtyard and ramp, which creates an entrance to the complex. Program elements lining the courtyard, including a lunch room, kitchen, toilets, shower, audio/visual meeting room and outdoor eating areas, are developed as sculptural objects to give the entrance human scale and meaning.
**SEACLIFF HOMES**

Commissioned by four families to design two double-house residences on an oceanfront bluff in Malibu, the architect used a careful arrangement of functional living elements, landscaping and garden walls to maintain visual and acoustic privacy. The building envelope is constant so the complex reads as a whole, although individual entry courts and interior building finishes are customized for each home. Designed to be energy efficient, the south-facing sloped roofs contain flat plate solar collectors for domestic hot water. The north-facing clerestory windows provide natural light for the stairwells and master baths, and the operable sash provides natural ventilation and air circulation.

**HUMBOLDT BIBLIOTHEK**

Designed as the first phase of the Cultural Center for the Tegel Harbor master plan, the library’s long hall continues the axis of the harbor along the north boundary of the site. The classical facade is broken with a glassy entrance bay and framed by a pair of free-standing portals which lead to a central rotunda, encircled by an arched balcony. From the rotunda, a grand wall of books meanders along one side of the main reading room, and gives access to the open stacks and smaller reading alcoves beyond. Passing continuously above the various areas of the loft is a double-layer, vaulted ceiling lit by a clerestory window. On the north side, the light is balanced by a series of bay windows and doors that alternate with niches for books. The steel and concrete frame is exposed on the interior, and elaborated into a playful, almost baroque set of details for arches and ceiling. The library’s construction, which began in 1986, coincides with the creation of a large water area adjacent to the harbor, a waterfront promenade and 350 units of housing.
HONOR AWARD

OKULICK STUDIO

To provide artist John Okulick with large walls, ambient light, and enough space to expand his art, the architect designed a 2500 square foot addition to the artist's original studio, a 1000 square foot converted gas station. The new addition engulfs the old, providing extra work space, a composing room and a gallery. The architects attempted to create the illusion of being in a 'white out,' "moving through a snowstorm and having John's sculpture emerge before one's eyes." Spanned by a bow string truss, 28-foot-high white walls create a space filled with translucent light from skylights and strategically placed north-facing windows.

Owner
John and Marlene Okulick

Structural Architect
Gary Karinen

Photographer
Grey Crawford

ESHERICK: The interior spaces are beautifully simple and have a bright refreshing starkness. One only hopes that the insistence of the little bow-string trusses doesn't get in the way of the artwork.

GOLDSMITH: An exceptionally fine building with very good, straightforward facades and a wonderful interior.

KOHN: The renovation and addition have captured the essence of its users: vertical space, natural translucent light and large wall surfaces to feature objects of art.

2425 Main Street, Santa Monica

HONOR AWARD

Owner
Sher Development

Mechanical
Russell & Company

landscape Architect
Emmet Wemple & Associates

Electrical Engineer
Summit Electric

Structural Engineer
Kurily & Szymanski

Photographer
Tom Bonner

ESHERICK: The project is refreshing in its programmatic conception of joining a small art museum with a two-level commercial development. It is equally refreshing as a building group in its freedom from the standard treatment of street commercial development.

GOLDSMITH: I liked this project very much, especially the mixture of simple buildings with sculptural elements.

KOHN: The variety of forms, their texture and color, the play of light and shadow, and the resultant spaces draw you into the project. The breakdown of scale works with the immediate context.

EDGEMAR DEVELOPMENT

Occurring the site of a former dairy, the project combines an art museum and commercial development on two levels, with both on-grade and subterranean parking. The architect's major concern was to maintain the small scale character of the surrounding shops and restaurants by lining the 250-foot-wide street frontage with five small, visually separate structures. Historical continuity was maintained by retaining some of the old dairy buildings, newly clad but not formally altered, as the visual centerpiece of the project seen from the street. Along Main Street, a wall fragment of the former dairy, previously plaster, is now sheathed in copper and green glazed tile. An openwork tower stands above the wall, beside a curved shape surfaced in natural grey stucco, containing shops and an office block. Two other towers, a greenhouse structure and the elevator draped with chain link mesh, lead the eye back into the courtyard, which contains the art museum and a restaurant housed in two renovated dairy structures.

Owner
Sher Development

Mechanical
Russell & Company

Landscape Architect
Emmet Wemple & Associates

Electrical Engineer
Summit Electric

Structural Engineer
Kurily & Szymanski

Photographer
Tom Bonner

EDGEMAR DEVELOPMENT

Frank O. Gehry & Associates

Main Street entrance.
The design process. Another important committee activity is providing a focus for professional dialogue in health. Committee members are kept informed of the rapid changes in codes and laws relating to health care, as well as the changes in medical technology which affect health care design. Among the recent meetings which drew large attendance were reports from the Office of the State Architect and OSHPD. Key points in maintaining the future success of this committee include: maintaining an effective subcommittee on codes; appointing a co-chairman and a program chairman to lighten the work load; establishing a telephone committee that calls each member for meeting reminders; appointing an effective secretary, as notes are important to the members; advertising the meetings in publications like LA Architect; insuring that the subject of the meeting is timely as well as informative; writing thank-you notes to the speakers and giving them gifts such as items from the AIA gift catalogue; and interfacing with other AIA committees.

Joel Jaffe, AIA Chair, Health Committee

Urban Design Committee

A special poll of the Board of Directors was held to support a Chapter resolution calling for the adaptive re-use of the May Company building located at the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue. The May Company is threatened by a proposed development of Forest City Dillon, owners of the property, who are proposing a new shopping mall or office complex. The Mayline Design Committee is currently reviewing the property, and will respond to the masterplan when it is issued later this year.

The Committee has also been asked to review and comment upon the Cal Trans masterplan goals program for the year 2000. Cal Trans is in the process of revitalizing its direction, and has appointed a Working Policy Committee to draft a master plan. Fernando Juarez, AIA/LA President, is a member of that committee. The Urban Design Committee is currently reviewing preliminary material provided by Cal Trans and will respond to the masterplan when it is issued later this year. At the November Board meeting, the Urban Design Committee will present a resolution to the Board of Directors asking for adoption of a Chapter policy on the LA 2000 plan issued in the September issue of LA Architect. The LA 2000 plan was developed by a Mayoral Committee and released in November 1988. The Chapter is currently discussing possible projects with the LA 2000 Partnership, a public-private coalition which will be implementing aspects of the LA 2000 plan.

Professional Practice Committee

Walt Disney Imagineering has agreed to host a tour of their “Imagining” Headquarters in Glendale at 6 pm on Thursday, November 9, 1989. The event will include a facility tour, a dinner, and lectures on Disney’s creative process, architectural design, and facility engineering. Bill Sims, Vice President, Architecture & Facilities Engineering, is graciously providing this show to promote ties with the AIA/LA and our local design community. All of this effort, including dinner, is free to committee members. Call (213) 394-7888.

Joe Madda, AIA Chair, Professional Practice Committee

Code Talk

On August 18, 1989, the following memo was sent to all plan checkers from Richard Holguin, Chief, Plan Check Division. Sec. 91.3305(c) of the Los Angeles City Building Code requires interconnection of required exits on floors having more than ten occupants by means of a one-hour corridor. However, Sec. 91.3305(e) allows the elimination of the 1-hour corridor under the following conditions: “(e) Exits Through Adjoining Rooms. Rooms may have one exit through an adjoining or serving room which provides a direct, obvious and unobstructed means of travel to an exit corridor, exit enclosure or until egress is provided from the building, provided the total distance of travel does not exceed that permitted by other provisions of this code.”

This section in the code has served as the basis of what is commonly known as the “open room concept.” The established standard of an “open room” has been an open area at least 12 feet in width having no partitions greater than 5 ft-9 in height. This open room could be placed anywhere on the floor as long as it provides a continuous path to the required exits. This interpretation and enforcement of the open room concept has permitted many unsafe floor layouts in the City of Los Angeles. In many cases, the 12-foot open room was not a straight or clearly defined path to the required exits. Instead, it meandered throughout the floor and created a “maze-like” exit pattern. These conditions are not safe and should not be allowed.

To abide by the intent and purpose of Sec. 91.3305(c) in requiring the open room, providing a direct, obvious and unobstructed means of travel to an exit, the Department hereby establishes the following guidelines for “the open room concept.”

The open room, having a minimum width of 12 feet, shall follow the line of the core or the exterior wall of the building provided that there are no openings or offsets. Constructions of less than 12 feet shall not be allowed except for structural columns within this open room. The layout of furniture, partitions and equipment shall provide a clear, unobstructed aisle with a minimum width of 44 inches within the open room. This clear aisle shall be arranged in a regular pattern. An aisle with a minimum width of 44 inches leading from the open room to a required exit is required. The maximum height of all partitions within this open room shall not exceed 5 ft-9 in. In addition to overhead exit signage, low level exit signage shall be required to assist in locating the required exits.

A newly published ordinance: No. 185,139, effective 9/29/89, requires conditional use approval to establish a nuclear power plant or a desalination plant. Proposed ordinance in study: New L. A. ARCHITECT 3

Continued on 13

Membership is now available to engineering and architectural firms. Once a firm becomes a member of Engineers Federal Credit Union full financial services will be available to them and their employees.

Call today for information. (213) 385-8111

808 S. New Hampshire
Los Angeles, CA 90005

Engineers Federal Credit Union

PRICE $10.00 Total

USA addresses only

1988 MASONRY CODES and SPECIFICATIONS

NEW AND UP-TO-DATE

• Building Codes for many cities and the State of California.
• Standard Specification for Public Works Construction.
• ASTM Standards.
• Quality Control Standards.

Masonry Institute of America
2550 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90057 (213) 386-0472

L. A. ARCHITECT
HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Focus on Architects
On December 4, 1989, "A Focus on Los Angeles Architects" will conclude with the last of six panel discussions between well-known, accomplished local architects, discussing the practical aspects of architecture, influences on their design work, their personal and professional goals, and how each has achieved success. The series is being sponsored by the AIA/LA General Membership Committee, chaired by Herb Nadel, AIA.

The final program features Frank O. Gehry, FAIA. A reception at 7:30 pm preceding the 8:15 pm program will offer guests an opportunity to meet the panelists and other colleagues. Call the Chapter Office for location.
To reserve a place, send $10 to the AIA/LA, 3780 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 900, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Seating is limited.

Tickets will be held at the door, and no refunds will be given after December 1. For information, call (213) 380-4595.

USA/USSR Exchange
On October 4th, under the joint sponsorship of Architects Designers Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR) and the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, 125 people gathered at the Pacific Design Center to hear Ray and Shelly Kappe and three architecture students tell of their experiences during a recent student/faculty exchange between SCI-ARC and the Moscow Institute of Architecture. The USSR exchange included a three week faculty/student collaborative design studio project at the Moscow Institute of Architecture and two weeks of travel to Leningrad, Tallinn in Estonia, and Tbilisi in Georgia where they visited with architects and toured the architectural schools. SCI-ARC students Kanisa Rutangapridakul, Alexander Soronko and Tom Zook talked about the collaborative design project, a complex on a site southeast of the Kremlin including three theaters, a Russian toys exhibition area, a communication center, and an eating area. The project continued at SCI-ARC with the students and faculty from Moscow returning with the SCI-ARC delegation and spending six weeks in Santa Monica.

This first USA/USSR student/faculty exchange has set a precedent for the future and the opportunity for the American and Soviet people to know each other. Participants reported that the Soviets are interested in establishing as many exchanges as possible, and they all seem to have a great desire to open up their society. Soviet architects can now receive private commissions through cooperatives which were established to promote entrepreneurial potential. For information about ADPSR, Los Angeles chapter, call (213) 644-4360.

Estelle Brisker
Ms. Brisker is the ADPSR Chairperson.

Celebrate Design
"Celebrate Design" is the theme of the January 13th Installation of 1990 AIA/LA and associated organizations' officers and directors. Departing from the past, the event will be less formal and cost approximately 40% less per attendee. With the new format, it is hoped that attendance will increase and represent more of the fabric comprising the entire profession, indeed the area itself. Allied design and construction professionals will be invited to join in the festivities.

Leading off the festivities at the Pacific Design Center will be a reception and cocktail-buffet with entertainment. Lou Naidorf, FAIA will encircle the evening, with National AIA President Sylvester Damiano, FAIA presiding as "Installing Officer." Highlighting the evening will be a talk by 1989 AIA Gold Medalist Joseph Esherick, FAIA.

Architecture for Health Committee
Among the important functions which AIA committees provide are the focus for professional dialogue and the exchange of information to which we, as individuals, would not have access. This mutual cooperation and dialogue can have significant results.

Recently, the Health Committee was able to provide valuable information to Assemblywoman Delaine Eastin, chairwoman of the Assembly Committee on Governmental Efficiency and Consumer Protection. She has introduced a bill aimed at restructuring the state's design and construction regulating agencies, and has been conducting hearings to determine the scope of the problems. Based on data provided by committee members, the Architecture for Health Committee created an Agency Processing Survey which, among other facts, revealed that the average processing time for plan checks is 11 months. This objective data is not only helpful to Assemblywoman Eastin in her efforts to secure passage of her bill, but is also a useful tool to us as architects in educating our clients about the intricacies of the problems.

LA ARCHITECT
Editorial Board: Barton Philips, AIA, Chairman; Don Azon, AIA, Treasurer; Janice Au; Kenneth Caldwell, Book; Carl Davis, Obit;
Raymond L. Gao, AIA; Arthur Gahlin, AIA, LA LA Board; Barbara Goldstein; Arts; Paul Sterling Hoag, AIA, The Listener; Roger Holtz, E.; Law; Barbara Horton; Associates; Ann Moore; Secretary; John Mutton, AIA; Ray Ryan; Interviews.
Editorial Board Emeritus: Peggy Cochran; AIA; Thomas S. Hines; Frederica P. Letman, AIA; Michael F. Ross, AIA; Thomas R. Revel, FAIA; Lester Wertheimer, AIA.
Editor: Noel Milieu.
Editorial Consultant, Barbara Goldstein.
Contributors: Aleks Istanbullu, AIA; Norman Kadamian; John Kalajian, AIA; Christine Magar; Esther McCoy; Kevin O'Shea; Karen Polk; Ivan Preston, AIA; Christopher Restak; Ray Ryan; Ray Sutera; Roy Takayuki, AIA; Charles Wheatsley, AIA; Nn Burns, AIA; Miguel Batman.
AL/AIA Officers, Fernando Juarez, AIA, President; Raymond L. Gao, AIA, Vice-President; William H. Flars, AIA, Treasurer; Ronald A. Alston, AIA, Secretary.

LA ARCHITECT is published monthly except for August by the Los Angeles Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 3780 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 900, Los Angeles, CA 90050.
Subscriptions are $18 domestic, and $28 foreign. Editorial submissions should be addressed to the editor and sent to LA ARCHITECT at the publisher's address, above. Except where noted, the opinions stated are those of the authors only and do not reflect the position of either the AIA or the Los Angeles Chapter. The appearance of names and pictures of products and services, in either editorial or advertising, does not constitute an endorsement by either the AIA or the Los Angeles Chapter.
1989 Design Awards

The Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects honored eleven architects and twelve projects in the 1989 Design Awards Program. The jury included Eugene Kohn of Kohn Pedersen Fox, New York; Joseph Esherick of Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis, San Francisco; and Myron Goldsmith, retired from Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, Chicago, replacing Walter Netsch, who was unable to participate.

The judging took place on September 9, 1989 at the Chapter Office. Twelve winners were selected from a total of 135 submissions out of 154 registrations, slightly more than last year's totals despite an increase in the registration fee. In an effort to recognize outstanding work without creating a competitive atmosphere, the jury chose not to necessarily give an award in each category of submission, nor to limit the number of awards in any category.

The projects were presented in slide format with project descriptions read aloud, a format the jury preferred to the usual presentation books or boards. Kohn commented that the slides "allow more spontaneous response from the jury and more interaction." After an initial viewing of three hours, the jury selected 45 projects to be reviewed in more depth. The 12 projects finally selected were divided between five awards of honor and the seven awards of merit, for projects which the jury felt were not quite honor awards but still deserved recognition. All jury selections were unanimous.

Perhaps representing the character of this year's jury, awards went to projects which weren't necessarily avant garde, but which the jury felt were well executed, beyond stylistic concerns. Issues such as solar orientation, response to climate and social concerns were given more attention than exhibited by other recent juries. Responding to the Los Angeles climate, Esherick commented, "Although I wouldn't jump up and down over the enormous beauty of a lot of exterior environments we saw, they were handled in a very positive, friendly way. The ability to deal with the outside in an admirable Los Angeles quality."

Continuing a trend, fewer awards were given to residential projects than in previous years, and the jury was disappointed by the few quality residential projects they saw. The three residential projects which did receive awards were firmly in "the great tradition of Neutra and Schindler" which Esherick was looking for, but he commented on the decline in the quality of the single-family residence. "The house seems to be declining all over the country. You don't get the feeling people are independent about their houses anymore. They're not to be part of some stream or vain."

While the jury recognized a number of commercial, institutional, and remodeling projects, reflecting the maturing of Los Angeles architecture, they were still disappointed with the large projects they saw. Kohn found the commercial architecture "most disappointing," speculating that Los Angeles architects are "not comfortable with a more indigenous architecture. It looks like buildings are still being transplanted from other places. Tall buildings (in Los Angeles) still tend to be objects."

However, possibly in reference to Frank Gehry's Herman Miller West Coast Facility, he also noted that "small-scale projects which open new areas are now being translated to major scale projects, an attitude still in evolution." Once again, the jury had advice to those who hope to win future awards. Esherick noted that "the quality of the submission explanations overall wasn't very good." The jury didn't respond well to sheets of working drawings floor plans or unrehearsed details. Kohn recommended that potential entrants "treat the jury like your client. There needs to be a certain logic as to how the slides are set in the carousel. People may have lost out because we didn't understand their projects.

It became evident from this year's jury that the Design Awards Committee will need to find a different way to deal with planning and urban design submissions in the future. No awards were given in this category because the jury found it impossible to evaluate complex planning issues in a 15-slide format. Kohn went so far as to recommend the exclusion of planning from the awards. "(Planning) requires a lot more information dealing with issues of traffic and scale. I don't think you can do it justice.

Esherick observed, "What we're seeing in 15 slides is probably a 15-page report with back-up data and diagrams. I don't think you can make the judgment without reading the report." While a separate planning jury is probably not feasible, the Committee will consider alternatives such as sending planning reports to the jury in advance, or having a special planning session in the evening before the architectural judging.

Interestingly, of the 12 projects which received honors, at least five had been submitted last year without receiving an award. This situation brings up at least two points. First, persistence pays off, and second, winners and losers alike should bear in mind that these design awards, while justifiably coveted, largely represent the opinions of three individuals on a particular day.

Larry Schlossberg, AIA
Mr. Schlossberg, an architect at Gruen Associates, was Co-Chair of the 1989 Design Awards Committee.