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Book Review

Master Architects, Gardens and Cooling Systems

Barton Myers: Selected and Current Works (Images Publishing; distributed by Books North, Carsons $60 hc).

Handsomely produced monograph on a Virginia-born architect, who studied under Louis Kahn, established his reputation in Toronto, and now heads a substantial office in LA. One of a new "Master Architect" series, this book celebrates Myers' success in Canada, where he created major works in every field, and the struggle to realize his full potential in the US, where a series of imaginative projects ("A Grand Avenue" on Bunker Hill, the competition-winning Phoenix Municipal Center, and the US Pavilion at Expo 92 in Seville) remained on paper. Best-known locally for the Corrins Performing Arts Center, and the new Ivan Reitman Production Offices, Myers is likely to achieve broader fame with the completion of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. The introduction by John R. Dale, an Associate of Myers, explores how this thoughtful and versatile modernist has sought to preserve and enhance the urban fabric, to make inventive use of old buildings, and to create prototypes for new forms.


A thorough, in content and presentation, to the modesty and sobriety of Architectural Forum. It describes, and readably and black and white illustrations, 20 taut yet expansive houses that were designed by Marcel Breuer (1902-81) and/or by his partner Herbert Beckhard in the three decades after the war. "More space with less mass" was their motto - in contrast to the massive concrete forms of the Whitney Museum, the UNESCO and HUD headquarters which made Breuer's reputation. A color section in back shows how well these board- and fieldstone-shed houses fit into the leafy Eastern suburbs where most of them are located, and what conducive living environments they provide. The most remarkable revelation is that Breuer, who studied furniture design at the Bauhaus and created two of the century's classic chairs, received no formal training in architecture.


Bargain-priced reissue of the definitive book on the most influential and successful exponent of modernism in the West. The recent centennial celebration of Neutra's birth, and the growing respect for his residential buildings, make this a timely publication.


The second volume of a monograph has become, tragically, a memorial to Stirling, who died in June 1992. It is doubly melancholy, for projects far outnumber descriptions as: "Societal attitudes in the text contains such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes in the text contain such indigestible morsels as: "Societal attitudes 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AIA/LA's New Director

Nicola Solomons has been named executive director of the AIA Los Angeles chapter, according to association president Virginia Tanzmann, FAIA.

"Nicci Solomons has demonstrated a passionate commitment to serving the interests of our members," said Tanzmann, adding, "Inside the chapter, her experience and enthusiasm will allow us to implement continuing education programs and develop vital professional development resources for architects. Outside our membership, she will help articulate to the public and our clients the breadth of professional services that can be provided by architects and our role in the development process."

Solomons assumes the executive director's post after serving for more than two years as a member of the AIA/LA staff, first as the association's director of membership and special events and more recently as its associate director. Prior to her work for the LA chapter, she held administrative positions in two architectural firms, serving as project administrator for a large San Francisco-based firm and as office manager and marketing assistant for a firm in Los Angeles.

According to Solomons, as one of the seven largest AIA chapters in the country, Los Angeles must hold a leadership position in fostering design excellence, facilitating the professional development of its members, and education the public about the practice of architecture.

President's Message

Where Do My Dues Go Anyway?

It's a valid question we all ask. When the 1993 Board began to assemble the 1994 Budget last October, it recognized that the Chapter members (and prospective members as well), while they had access to this information, didn't have a clear sense of where we were. There was, perhaps, a perception held by some that this information was not widely discussed, it was perhaps being withheld, and surely there must be trouble. We wanted to respond affirmatively and openly. So we took a lesson from AIA/CY—by tracking all non-revenue expenses to our chapter dues.

We developed a balanced budget that:

1. added items that had arisen earlier but that had not been budgeted (e.g. continuing education, legal, and repair of the Headquarters Fund);
2. restored items previously cut, like membership and public relations programs;
3. aligned more realistically with current trends; and
4. tracked Convention separately so we wouldn't be tempted to rely on it for 1994 only, but for the future.

The 1994 Chapter budget is approximately $590,000. Deducting Convention for separate tracking, the remaining operant number is $468,000. For this, the broad income categories are dues, events, projects (like LA Architect, the scholarship, and committees), and other. Local dues are about 68% of local income. A breakdown of expenditures of the basic local dues of $140 shows spending in its broad categories, like this:

Salaries/benefits: 16.9% annually, 5.18 daily, or 45.8%.
Accounting: 16.8 annually, 5.04 daily or 11.6%.
Rents/parking: 11.96 annually, 3.04 daily, or 11.4%.
LA Architect: 10.00 annually, 3.04 daily, or 10.7%.
Public Relations: 14.47 annually, 0.04 daily, or 3.2%.
Travel/meetings: 1.39 annually, 0.01 daily, or 2.8%.
Telephone: 0.270 annually, 0.007 daily, or 1.9%.
Delivery: 0.270 annually, 0.007 daily, or 1.9%.
Other office costs: 0.14 annually, 0.003 daily, or 2.2%.
All other costs: $12.05 annually, 0.03 01 daily or 0.8%.

Obviously programs are self-sufficient in this scenario, that's why there's a charge at AIA programs to keep the dues in bounds. MACC and National AIA each do the same. The trend is towards single-point dues collection, elimination of Supplemental Dues, and delivering program services at lower or no charge wherever possible. Within AIA/LA, we will be attempting to do just this ourselves, and you will likely first see this for continuing education programs.

So how are we doing for 1994? We are on track. We expect to achieve balance or better. While someone was not realized, and some expenses rose beyond anticipation, the Board has worked constantly at cost control. Personnel changes will yield a net savings for the year. We have also had the boon of extra gifts/grants from National, so we could move forward—workable computers, additional public outreach (especially after the earthquake), and extended payment schedules.

Please know that we're in solid financial shape and are working hard to be stronger. You can feel solid about the management of your money and can recruit members with that confidence as well.

And, if you want changes, speak up! Now is the season, so get into it if you want something changed.

VIRGINIA TANZMANN, FAIA

President, AIA/LA

Nominations:

Chapter:

The Chapter Nominations Committee is pleased to announce the following nominations for:

Vice President/President-Elect: Michael Hricak; Treasurer (2 year term): Ann Crav; Board Director (3 year term): Carmelo Sabatella; Secretary; and Treasurer. Associate members (both license and non-license track) of the AIA/LA Chapter in good standing are urged to run for the 1995 AIA/LA Associates Officers. Each of these positions hold a one-year term.

The elected Vice President/President-Elect shall succeed the 1995 President. Each nominee must submit a nomination letter from an AIA/LA member in good standing. Letters of nomination should be addressed to: Ethel Ruby, 1995 Associates Officers Nominations, AIA/LA Associates, 3780 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 900, LA, CA, 90010 and must be received no later than September 30, 1994. For more information, call Ethel Ruby at 213/386-7070.

Architecture and Health Care

On Thursday, September 22, Gary L. McGavin, an architect with the HMC Group who specializes in health care design, will speak to the monthly meeting of AIA/LA's Architecture for Health Committee about the lessons learned for health care facilities from the Northridge Earthquake. The meeting will be held from 3:30 to 5:00 pm in the chapter offices.
Changes at the Schindler House

Against a backdrop of clinking, clashing avant-garde music and a lavish buffet, friends of the Schindler House, other luminaries of the Los Angeles architecture scene and members of the Austrian community gathered on August 17 to commemorate the passing of Rudolf Schindler’s seminal, but now delapidated, house, and MAK, under the direction of Peter Noever, is making assurances that present regular users, such as the L.A. Forum, will continue to have ready access, and that the Friends will continue some curatorial control. Nonetheless a sense of melancholy pervaded the many visitors, for whom the house has served as an elegant and much-loved hub, even a home for several generations of Los Angeles-based architects and architecture enthusiasts. Among the former occupants of the Schindler House are architects David Kellern and Josh Schweitzer, architectural historian Kathryn Smith, and former Arts + Architecture editor Barbara Goldenstein who lived there and produced Arts + Architecture from the garage. If any former users of the Schindler House would like to share their memories with readers, please write LA Architect, 5787 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 900, LA 90010/FAIX-213/380-6692.

People and Projects

Good Fellow

Thomas S. Hines, above, UCLA professor of history and architecture and urban planning and the author of Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture, has been elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Collaborating

Anshen + Allen and Barton Phelps & Associates are collaborating with UCLAs Scuola di Architettura to simulate Los Angeles’ urban environment and has been used to help neighborhoods envision redevelopment projects in South Central Los Angeles, the Picu-Umino district and the area around the Vermont subway station in Los Angeles.

News from RTKL

David J. Brown, RTKL, executive vice president of RTKL and managing director of the firm’s LA office, has been elected vice chairman of the firm. RTKL has just completed a masterplan for the Irvine Entertainment Center in Irvine, California and a design for Myer Centre Townsville shopping center in Queensland, Australia. In addition, Seaton Square, the largest retail development in Southeast Asia and a collaboration design effort between RTKL and SLA/Studio Land Inc. of Irvine and the Bangkok-based Design Directions, has opened in Bangkok.

Fun in the Sand

Sand sculptures of a giant reclining sunbather and computer sinking into quicksand were among the winners at the most recent AIA Sandcastle Competition on July 11. Sponsored by the AIA Associates and held at Will Rogers State Beach, the contest featured about 12 competitors representing both schools and design firms. The winner in the large-group category was “David’s Day Off,” a giant sculpture of an oce, recumbant bather, mug up in mid-shore, by RTKL Associates. Second and third prizes went, respectively, to Ellebe Becker and Skidmore Owings Merrill. CallPoly Pomona was the winner in the small group category, for a pair of giant computer terminals, with other computers sinking into the sand like mastodons mired in the La Brea tar pits. A team spokesman said the sculpture allegorized the fast pace of obsolescence in CADD computing. Second and third prizewinners went to Allison & Porter and EcoGem, respectively. Landmark Entertainment Group organized the event, and Tom Brighton of Landmark was the judge foreman.
L.A. Architect

UK/LA...Some Exciting Architectural Competitions...

Inside

UK/LA Show at Blue Whale

An exhibition of contemporary British architecture opens September 9 at the Pacific Design Center, as part of the city-wide UK/LA festival.

The exhibit showcases the wide variety of work done by architects and designers throughout the city. The UK/LA festival features 60 arts and culture events throughout the city, including theater, art and music as well as a lecture series given by the architects themselves.

Machado/Silvetti for Getty Villa

The J. Paul Getty Trust has selected Machado and Silvetti to renovate and reprogram the Getty Villa in Malibu. Currently the home of the Getty Museum, the 20-year-old hilltop villa is noted as an attempt at an architecturally correct copy of a First-Century Roman villa. Currently the home of the Getty Museum, the villa will be repositioned as an eclectic neighborhood educational center, according to the Getty Trust. The renovations will respect the appearance of the building and will accentuate its original beauty and character, according to a Trust spokesperson.

Built in 1974, the villa was designed by Langdon Wilson of Los Angeles in a historicist vein, in consultation with architect Norman Neuerberg, although some critics have found the building ersatz. The Argentina-born and Berkeley-educated team of Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti won the commission from a field of architects including Juan Navarro Baldeweg of Madrid, Spain; Alvaro Siza of Porto, Portugal; Kallman, McKinnell & Wood of Boston, Mass.; Frank Ippolito; and Huddleston & Fang, both of Los Angeles.

USC Arch. School Seeks New Dean

The revolving door at the top of the USC School of Architecture is turning again, with the announcement of a renewed search for a dean. Current Dean Victor Regnier, FAIA, has said he intends to resign in June 1991.

Regnier, who holds joint appointments in architecture and urban studies, wishes to return to research, according to Carol Gustin, the dean's administrative assistant.

The school started a search process in the fall of 1991 for a successor to former Dean Robert Harris FAIA, who left USC in July 1992. A budget crisis, however, prompted the school to call off the search, and Regnier agreed to serve as dean for one-year period, which was later extended to three years.

Budget problems have eased somewhat in recent months, partly due to new policies of offering continuing-education courses to practicing architects, as well as opening courses to non-majors.

Davis Resigns

Carl Davis has resigned as both the chair and as member of the L.A. Architect Editorial Board, due to nearing professional commitment.

Davis took over as Board chair almost two years ago. He brought his responsibilities very seriously, and devoted considerable time and effort to the financial health and the editorial content of the publication. His in-depth involvement in the very important May '94 Convention issue primarily contributed to its critical and financial success.

The L.A. Architect Board sincerely regrets this decision; his leadership and contributions to the publications will be very much missed. Donald C. Axon will serve as the interim chair and will also continue in his current role as treasurer until January '95, when a formal election of officers will be held.

Korean American Comp.

Christopher Lee, chairman of the organizing committee of the Korean American Museum of Art and Cultural Center, has announced a major design competition for a new building to house the center in the mid-Wilshire district of Los Angeles. Members of the organizing committee plan to form a major center and civic symbol for the six-hundred thousand Korean Americans of Southern California. Its mission will be to promote Korean art and culture in addition to serving as a community center and will represent an $6 million dollar investment in the City of Los Angeles. Prize money will be $50,000. The registration fee for the design competition, which is open to Korean and American citizens, is $275.

The deadline is December 1, 1994. Submissions must be made by February 22, 1995. Information may be obtained by contacting the center at 4403 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 325, Los Angeles, California 90010 or by fax at 213/937-4766. The registration fee is $75.00.

LA Forum Comp.

The Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design has announced a competition to address some of the everyday problems and challenges we confront in the city and its public places. Overflowing garbage cans, unattractive street furniture and fixtures, the lack of urban sidewalks, and the general clutter of urban amenities are examples of the issues which this competition challenges: "Civic Innovation: ideas and projects that can transform the city, making it more livable.

The competition is open to architects, students and individuals. The deadline for proposals is November 15, For more information, see inside L.A. Architect or call 213/852-7146.