A neon sign for a motel on Route 66 in New Mexico, featured in "Gas, Food, Lodging," an exhibition of neon road signs from 1920 through World War II, at the Community Focus Gallery at 395 Santa Monica Place. The show runs from November 6 to January 10.
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Upcoming Events at The Gas Company's
ENERGY RESOURCE CENTER
9240 E. Firestons Blvd., Downey
Oct. 11 CHILLED WATER SYSTEMS
Fee: $195
Presenter: Jon Haviland, P.E., Consultant
Practical Understanding of Chilled Water Systems
Oct. 12 DIRECT DIGITAL COWBOYS
Fee: $25
Presenter: Lands & Gyr Powers
Using Direct Digital Controls in HVAC Systems
Oct. 19 INDOOR AIR QUALITY
Fee: $48
Presenter: Simon Turner, Healthy Buildings Int.
Designing and Building "Healthy" Buildings
Nov. 2-3 DOE-2 ADVANCED TRAINING
Fee: $195
Adapting DOE-2 to Special Requirements
Presenter: Martin Addison, Energy Simulation Specialists

To Register or for more information, call 310-803-7881

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The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is better known for sinkholes and dead plazas surrounding transit stations than enlightened urban design. But MTA's "joint development" program envisions mixed-used development and pedestrian activity on and around station areas. The resulting "transit-oriented developments" could be the best thing to happen to L.A. in a long time—if MTA has the will to build them.

Hollywood/Vine Metro Rail Station Master Plan Assessment: The proposed Metro Rail station is envisioned as a catalyst to revitalize the historic, but distressed, Hollywood Vine area. Through the development of entertainment-related uses focused around the station portal's public plaza, a mixed-use, 24-hour, live entertainment district is proposed in this 240-acre area.

Design Team: Urban Innovations Group, (Rex Lotery, FAIA, president; Marc Futterman, director of urban design and planning*); Levin & Associates; Gensler & Associates Architects; Kaku Associates; Halcyon Real Estate Advisors. Client: MTA (*The firm has since disbanded, and both Lotery and Futterman have become principals in their own firms.)

Hill Street Metrorail Corridor Master Plan: The Market Court is an effort to activate pedestrian life on Hill Street between Third and Fourth streets. The plan takes advantage of, and helps connect, several existing attractions on the block: the Metrorail portals, Grand Central Market and the Angels' Flight funicular railroad now currently being reconstructed. The Market Court, oriented on axis with Angels Flight, acts as a visual terminus for the railroad. Part of a wall of the Grand Central Market would be removed, allowing the market to open directly onto the court. This opening would open the market to the view of subways riders emerging from escalators a half block to the south, making the market into a beacon for rail commuters.

BOOK REVIEWS

Rebecca L. Binder. Introduction and text by Eleanor Lynn Neumlin. Rockport Publishers, distributed by AIA Press; $19.95 pb

This is the second in a new series of inexpensive but handsomely produced monographs, and it comprises university and residential buildings, plus four projects under construction, by an architect who graduated from UCLA and has practiced out of Playa del Rey during the past 15 years. In his preface, Stanley Tigerman praises the sureness with which Binder connects forms and materials, giving her work a unique signature. That sureness was evident from the start in the Pacific Townhouses of 1979, a row of four units in Santa Monica that are treat­ ed as a single, bodily geometric composition, and make inventive use of limited space within. They are still among the best of their kind in Southern California. Her UC and Cal State buildings are even bolder, with their expres­ sive, clustered forms and dramatic juxtapositions of steel, wood and concrete block. Binder’s home and offices are tough and taut, but com­ patible with their suburban neigh­ bors. Together with her partner, Kim Walsh, Binder is currently enhancing UCLA’s Ackerman Student Union, and constructing new public buildings that have a frontier-like audacity that seems particularly appropriate in this region. — MICHAEL WEBB

Robert Doisneau: A Photographer’s Life. Peter Hamilton. Abbeville Press; $75 hc

An exemplary biography of a leg­ endary French photographer, illus­ trated with dozens of 400 classic and unfamiliar images. Doisneau was born in 1912 and died last year. He was a pioneer of modern documentary photography, chronicling celebrities, fashion mod­ els, artists and the down-and-out during his long and prolific career. This book is, in part, a picture his­ tory of France and especially Paris — which makes it especially rewarding to architects who are seeking to enrich the urban land­ scape. Doisneau could verge on sen­ suality — his cunningly staged “kisses” are a little too cute for comfort — but those clever grouped photographs are atypical. More often, his images have a gritty reality, affectionate but unsmiling. They reveal the French capital in all its diversity — grand, petty, ferocious, comforting and melancholy by turns. A real city, that is, lovingly assembled by plan and chance, constantly changing and utterly unpredictable. My favorite picture is of the writer Jacques Prévert; He sits with his dog at a sidewalk table. His face is a mask, the glass of wine before him untouched. Beyond, is a triple row of planes that shade a broad side­ walk, with the traffic held at bay. The image speaks of a quieter, more civilized era, and a triumph of unpretentious town planning. In contrast, one of the few color images in the book shows a sterile freeway overpass and barracks-like housing of the kind too many Parisians have to endure. In the work of this wonderful, human artist you can recapture privileged moments and enduring values, and this book is a treasure in itself. — M.W.

Eichler Homes: Design for Living. Introduction by Sally B. Woodbridge, text by Ned Eichler. Chronicle Books; $29.95

A lively, well-illustrated account of how Joseph Eichler, an idealistic northern California home builder, popularized the stream­line modern aesthetic pioneered by Richard Neutra in the ’30s and by John Entenza’s Case Study House program after World War 2. Working with Anshen & Allen and Jones & Emmons, he simplified the high-art prototypes and marketed varied models clustered in groups and landscaped developments from the late 1940s on. Each was priced at under $10,000 — which even then was a good price for a well­ planned, well-built house. Woodbridge praises Eichler’s com­ mitment to the highest standards of design, and his ability to make the American dream accessible. In his son’s account he comes across as a stubborn, occasionally cantankerous visionary, who fought for his prin­ ciples, campaigned for Adlai Stevenson, and would stop to think of that good design could be prof­ itable. He went bankrupt in 1967, and died in 1974. Today we could use more like him. — M.W.

A GRACEFUL RINK FOR THE DUCKS

The architecture of Frank O. Gehry, FAIA, is a reliable stimulus for controversy. His latest built work, the Disney ICE-skating complex in Anaheim’s civic center, is provocative enough to draw total strangers into conversation. This well-established master, and hockey enthusiast, still knows how to pro­voke. He spent weeks inside a sidewalk table. His face is a mask, the glass of wine before him untouched. Beyond, is a triple row of planes that shade a broad side­ walk, with the traffic held at bay. The image speaks of a quieter, more civilized era, and a triumph of unpretentious town planning. In contrast, one of the few color images in the book shows a sterile freeway overpass and barracks-like housing of the kind too many Parisians have to endure. In the work of this wonderful, human artist you can recapture privileged moments and enduring values, and this book is a treasure in itself. — M.W.

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Letters

To the Editor:

I first registered as an architect on January 30, 1974 and have been practicing as a professional since that date. To the Editor:

January 15 at the Farnese Gallery and have been surprised to hear we have been turned down because we do not have a "certified specification writer," or a "certified roofing consultant," or a "certified cost estimator," or a "certified construction manager," or a "certified value specialist" or a certified whatever. Where do all these certifications come from? Cannot registered architects do these types of work? I have been doing them for the past 21 years, but as I am not "certified," does that mean I cannot do much work in today's world? How can we, as Architects, overcome this dilemma? According to laws, our licenses as Architects qualifies us to do all these things, but the problem is that although we are Registered Licensed Architects, we are not certified. Since the name of the game appears to be certification, how can the AIA help us out of our licenses and get us certified?

Lately, I have been reading in various AIA publications about Learning Units. How about issuing a certificate when an architect accumulates the required number of learning units, giving us the means to prove to our clients that we are certified interior designers, certified estimators, certified specification writers, and so on. I think it is a good idea and we will be able to cover up our licenses with the certificates, and, when the time comes to renew the licenses, we will let them expire and start a new practice with certificates. Just think how much money we will save on professional liability!

Norberto R. Martinez, AIA Principal Martinez Amador Architects Inc.

To the Editor:

In response to the Tom Whitlock's critique of Culver City's new City Hall (L.A., Sept. '95), designed by CHCG Architects Inc.: Like much discourse in and about the public sphere today, the critique largely ignored the shaping forces of time and nature, anticipating in the urban environment, to borrow the words of a poet, "enormous changes at the last minute." City Hall's central square is neither "large," "vanished," not "granite." These descriptions, as everything else in the critique, is readily legible as a judgement made during a drive-by on Culver Boulevard. The question therefore arises, both ideologically and literally, whether Mr. Whitlock ever got of his car to look at the building.

David Goodale AIA Design Principal CHCG Architects Inc.

Sam Lunden Remembered

I first met Sam Lunden in 1981, when he was already well into his eighties. He was at that time principal and part owner of Lyon Associates, a Hawaii-based firm that had purchased Sam's practice along with another L.A. firm. I was assigned to be the project architect for a project on the campus of the University of Southern California, which was one Sam's favorite clients. Working with Sam was truly an uplifting experience for everyone around him. He was highly professional, humorous, upbeat and energetic, and very interested in all kinds of issues and things that were going on around him. I loved going to lunch with Sam, usually to a Mexican restaurant near the office in downtown L.A. to hear him talk with passion about architecture, his early days of practice in L.A. in the late 1920s, his involvement with civic organizations like the Town Hall of California, some of his former partners, such as the noted Pasadena architect Reginald Johnson, politics and his grandchild.

When my wife and I were in Cape Cod, Mass., on our honeymoon in the summer of 1981, we visited Sam and his wife, who spent one month of every summer in a small cottage they owned there. Sam energetically rowed the small boat carrying us from the shore to the small island where the cottage was located. Sam's energy and vitality never ceased to amaze people. For me, he was above all great role model of a highly professional architect, a civic leader, an involved and lively person, a gentleman, and a great example of how to live in a full and active life in one's eighties. Sam gave a lot to the AIA. He held various local and national offices for the Institute. He introduced me and sponsored me for membership in the Los Angeles Chapter, and was proud not to have missed an AIA National Convention for several decades. His passing is a great loss to Los Angeles, the profession and the AIA.

Mehrdad Farivar, AIA Former AIA/LA President Sam Lunden died in August at the age of 97. —Ed.

NEW MEMBERS

AIA:
- John T. Friedman
- Mary S. Bohn
- Masaaki Kishimura
- Cristina M. Fagio
- Nathaniel S. Wilson
- Byung Kook Cho
- George de la Nuez
- Geoffrey A. Sibbons

Associate:
- Van N. Pham
- Shawn P. Burke

Professional Affiliates:
- Fred Wettinisch/Piper West Inc.
- Patrick Burke & Associates
- Paul Santangelo/Centex Golden
- Terry Hillesten/Westly-Thomas Enterprises
- Carl F. Westly/Westly-Thomas Enterprises
- Amy C. Phillips/Chi Little International
- Robert E. Weissman/Millie & Severson Inc.
- Javen Robertson/TSL
- Merchant Design Group
- Philip F. Reid/W.E. O'Neil Construction

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President's Message: Boom, Bust, and the Future of the Profession

What kind of future can we expect for the architectural profession in Los Angeles?

Recent economic reports suggest substantial growth in California as we approach the year 2000. Only Atlanta excels Los Angeles in white-collar job creation expected in the decade from 1994 to 2004. According to James Flanagan of the Los Angeles Times, the state "contains more producers of electronics, software, computer networking, biotechnology and advanced scientific goods and services than any other state. Its basic business is brainpower, a commodity unaccounted for in government statistics but at the heart of every industry today." At the same time, we're seeing the collapse of small and mid-sized architectural practices.

So, if things are going well, what's happening to our profession? Do you find your clients' expectations rising, while the time to meet those expectations is shrinking? Can you afford new technology? Can you find the time to learn about new services or develop a specialty? Are you able to provide the minimum level of services today? Are your drawings well coordinated? Are the details thoroughly developed? Are you finding opportunities and partnerships to meet the demands of the market?

Focus, Focus, Focus. Just as 'location, location, location,' is the byword in the real estate business, so should 'focus' be a maxim among architects who want to survive. Don't try to do all things to all people. In those so-called 'strategic alliances,' look for other people who can do certain tasks better, freeing you to focus on what you do best.

Do the last years of this century spell boom or bust for our region and our profession? Can the Institute help us with these matters? I suggest solving our own problems, then sharing our success with the Institute. By so doing, we could elevate the entire profession.

LANCE BIRD, PRESIDENT

Mutual association and partnering. Sole practitioners can work under the umbrella of a corporation, gaining liability protection while sharing resources. Each individual in the association could focus on a different specialty. Job prospects outside your specialty could be referred to your associates in the appropriate specialty. If you're a small-to-medium size firm, consider associating with other firms with complementary skills. Sharing the cost of administrative services, including marketing, can reduce overhead.

Outsourcing. A popular word in business, outsourcing can also apply to small architectural practices. Outsourcing involves developing a task better, freeing you to focus on what you do best.

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LANCE BIRD, PRESIDENT

Committees

L.A. Architect is seeking a new ad salesperson.

Would you like to supplement your income by $800 a month, or more, in your own time? If so, L.A. Architect is seeking a person with contacts in the construction field. Interested candidates should submit advertisements sufficient to meet the publication's monthly production costs. There are minimum requirements as to what a salesperson may earn, but the maximum is up to you; the more ads you bring, the more you earn. Applicants must be organized and motivated self-starters. Telephone and fax machine are a necessity. No one meeting the above conditions need apply. Further information can be obtained by calling (310) 476-4593, 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

LANCE BIRD, PRESIDENT

People and Projects

AIA/LA Chapter President Lance Bird, AIA, and his firm, La Canada Design Group, received the International Facility Management Association's Affiliate Corporation of the Year award at the World Workplace '95 Conference on September 19 in Miami Beach, Fl. The award recognizes the firm's exceptional contributions to the association for creating a model educational and informational newsletter and for actively promoting greater understanding and cooperation among members.

Bird was editor of the IFMA newsletter during 1993-94, and was responsible for improving the quality of the publication, expanding advertising and lowering costs. IFMA has 14,000 members in 31 countries.

RTKL Associates Inc. has recently completed work on two regional malls in the San Fernando Valley. The firm has designed the masterplan for a new "entertainment anchor" to the Promenade, a regional mall in Woodland Hills. The 370,000-square-foot project features a 16-screen AMC theater, multi-level gourmet food court and space for 250 retail tenants. Norm Garden, AIA is vice president in charge of the project. In Northridge, an RTKL redesign of the earthquake-damaged Northridge Fashion Center was opened in September after having been closed since January 1994. According to the architects, fast-tracking compressed into 18 months work which otherwise could have required 30 months.

Ronald Gentile Architects designed the recently opened Jackson's Farm, a restaurant and retail development in Woodland Hills. The 120,000-square-foot development features retail space, restaurant, offices, and entertainment. The project is being featured this fall in the show, "10 Years Out," at the Yale University School of Architecture.

Michael Gruber is the most recent winner of the prestigious 10 Years Out award. The SCI-Arc gradate was most recently the director of the Model Studio for Richard Meier & Partners. He's now designing the new residence for the metalsmiths of the Academy of Rome.
AIA/LA Bestows Design, Presidential Awards

The Los Angeles Chapter of the AIA recognized design innovators and civic leaders alike in its annual design awards ceremony on October 17 at the Biltmore Hotel.

Dan Garcia, senior vice president of Warner Bros. Studios and chairman of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency received the President’s Award for his “extraordinary leadership in the development or urban and economic policy.”

Receiving Service to the Community awards were Richard Koshtalek, director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, and David Laventhol, MOCA board chairman, for the museum’s many exhibits and educational events addressing architectural and urban-design issues.

The same honor went to Ken Williams, senior vice president of Sony Pictures Entertainment, in recognition of his firm’s work in preserving the historic character of the Sony Pictures headquarters in Culver City.

Huell Howser, KCET producer and host of the television series “California’s Gold” and “Visiting with Huell Howser,” accepted the Community award for his “down-to-earth optimism” about the people, places and cultures of Los Angeles.

The Design Awards will be published in the December issue of L.A. Architect.

New Deans For USC, UCLA

The two largest schools of architecture in Southern California each have a new dean:

Houston-based architect Robert Timme, FAIA, is the new dean of the University of Southern California School of Architecture. He is currently dean of the University of Houston College of Architecture, where he has taught design and design theory since 1972. His appointment becomes effective on January 1, 1996. He succeeds Victor Regnier, FAIA, who plans to return to full-time teaching and research.

Timme is a partner in the Houston-based firm of Taft Architects. As Dean, Timme will continue to direct the Centre d’Etude d’Architecture et D’Urbanisme.

At UCLA, Daniel M. Neuman has been named acting dean of the School of Arts and Architecture. Neuman joined UCLA last year as visiting professor in the Department of Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology. He succeeds Dean Robert L. Blocker, who has been appointed dean of the School of Music at Yale University.

Rubio Named

AWA Prez

Ethel G. Rubio, Associate AIA, assumed the presidency of the Association for Women in Architecture on October 19, at a ceremony at the New Otani Hotel in Little Tokyo.

Rubio plans to focus on creation relationships between AWA and the civic community. She is currently assistant project manager with HNTB Architects Engineers and Planners. Rubio is past president of the LA/AIA Associates, and was recently elected an honorary member of the Filipino-American Chamber of Commerce.

AWA is primarily concerned with fund raising for student scholarships, professional development for members and programs to enhance the visibility of women in architecture and related professions.

Winners Scratch Surface in UCLA Competition

UCLA School of Art and Architecture announced six winners on October 8 in its competition entitled “reForming Social Space.” The intent of the competition was to address issues in “our changing public realm.”

The first place winner was “The Hanging Gardens,” by Dan Pitera and Michelle Sornabi, both of San Francisco. Placing second was SCI-Arc instructor Mary-Ann Ray and Team for “Public Cladding.” Third-place winner was “Boktrums,” by Ante Liv and Joe Day, both of the Venice-based firm, Hedge.

In fourth place was “Architecture-Theater: proMЕTHEUS,” by Ben Ledbetter, principal of New Haven, Conn.-based Ledbetter Architects. Fifth ranked was “Sparse Parts,” by Kevin Tyrell of Los Angeles. Sixth place was “Sydney Harbor Project” by Robert Allan Dorgan of Blacksburg, Va.

The competition was conceived by the staff of Surface, a new magazine published by the school. The design jury included Coco Fusco, Daniel Libeskind, Lars Lerup, Mary Miss and Susana Torre.

Nat’l Kudos for Coliseum Preservation

A group of Los Angeles-based architects and engineers were honored in October for their work in the preservation of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. National Preservation Awards went to a team that included HNTB Corporation, Cordell Corporation, Tutor-Saliba Corporation, Naibh Youssef & Associates, the Los Angeles Conservancy, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Historic Resources Group and John Ash Group. The award was given by the National Trust for Historic Preservation during the National Preservation Conference in Fort Worth, Texas.

The team of architects, contracts and engineers collaborated with the Los Angeles Conservancy, the State Historic Preservation Officer, OES and FEMA in reviewing strengthening alternatives and design decisions throughout the process. The Coliseum’s landmark status, as well as the use of public funds, required the team to follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. The Coliseum reopened in September 1994.

New Landmark at Loyola

The Conrad N. Hilton Center for Business at Loyola Marymount University opened in August. The $21 million structure was designed by Arthur Golder AIA & Associates.