

# ARCHITECTURE MINNESOTA

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# ARCHITECTURE MINNESOTA

Official publication of the Minnesota Society of Architects

Volume 1, Number 1

May/June 1975

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*Architecture Minnesota* is the official publication of the Minnesota Society of Architects.

Minnesota Society of Architects, AIA, Executive Director, Daniel J. Sheridan, 100 Northwestern National Bank Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101.

Committee for *Architecture Minnesota*: Edward A. Sovik, chairman, Bernard Jacob, Phillip MacMillan, James, James Lammers, James Lindberg, Milo Thompson, John Weidt, Eric Wheeler.

**Editorial offices:** Bernard Jacob AIA, 404 McColl Building, St. Paul, Minn. 55101.

*Architecture Minnesota* is published by Bill Dorn Associates, Inc., 7101 York Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55435.

**Advertising and Circulation:** *Architecture Minnesota*, 7101 York Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55435.

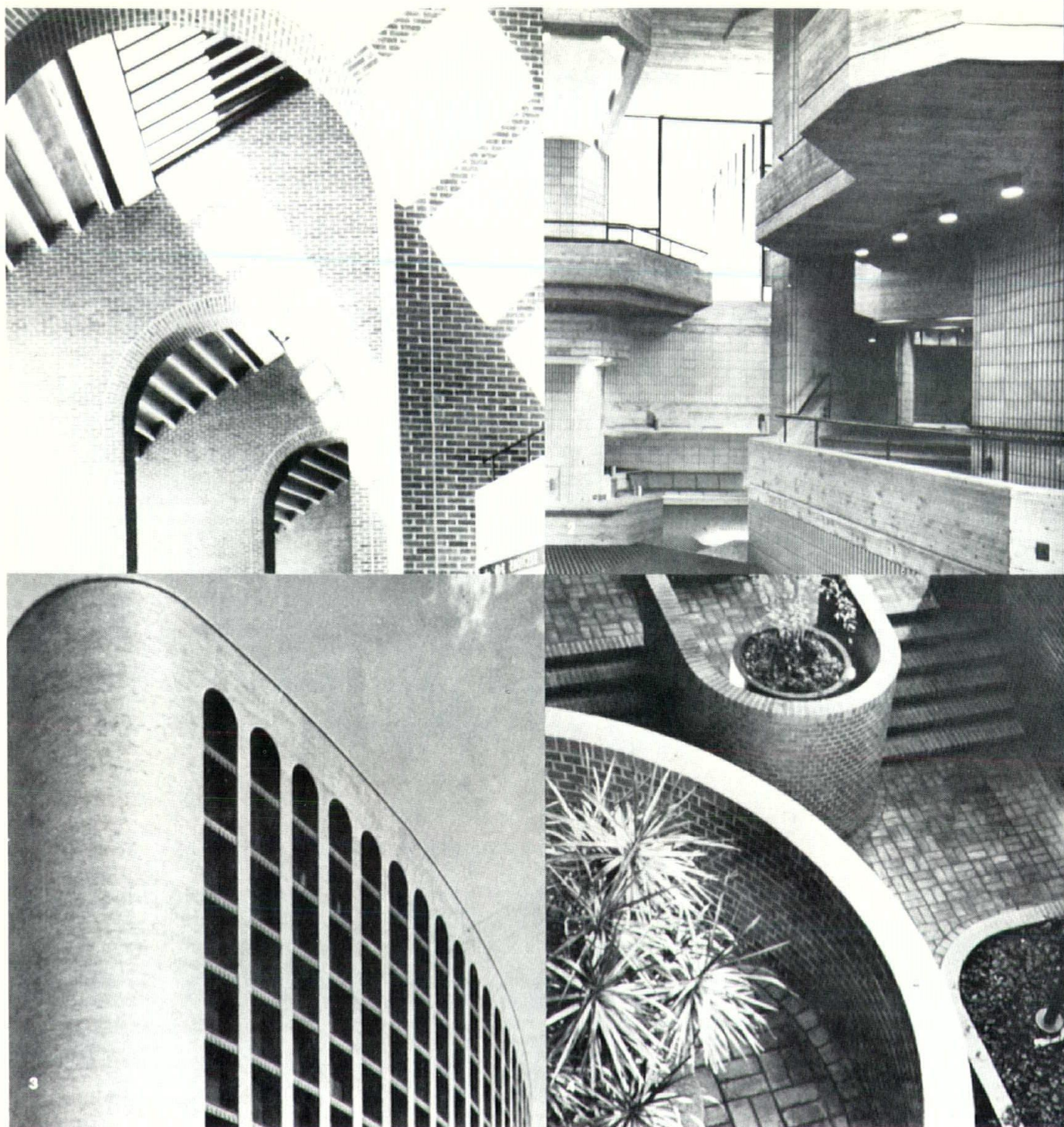
When changing address, please send address label from recent issue and your new address. Allow four weeks for change of address.

**Postmaster:** Send form 3579 to *Architecture Minnesota*, 7101 York Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55435. Application to mail at controlled circulation rates is pending at New Richmond, Wis.

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Cover: Composition from a photo of Charles Perry's "Thrice" by Harvey Lloyd. This sculpture is on the plaza of the Federal Reserve Bank Building in Minneapolis, Minn.





1. Richmond Coliseum, Richmond, Virginia. Architects: Vincent G. Kling & Partners. Photo courtesy Brick Institute of America. 2. Southeastern Massachusetts University, Arts and Humanities Building, North Dartmouth. Associated Architects: Desmond & Lord, Inc., and Paul Rudolph, FAIA. Interior Consultant: Bill Bagnall Associates, Inc. 3. Public Service Alliance of Canada Building, Ottawa. Architects: Schoeler Heaton Harvor Menendez Associated Architects. Photo courtesy Brick Institute of America. 4. Executive Headquarters and Nassau Center Office, Hempstead Bank, Garden City, Long Island. Architects: Bentel & Bentel, AIA.

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## VALUE OF ARCHITECTURE

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MINNESOTA SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS

The Minnesota Society of Architects is proud to present the first issue of *Architecture Minnesota*, its new official publication, successor to Northwest Architect. As the voice of the Minnesota Society of Architects it represents over 600 members active at all levels of the profession.

The Minnesota Society of Architects is a component of the American Institute of Architects with headquarters in Washington, D.C. The Minnesota Society of Architects represents architecture and design professionals employed by more than 200 firms and organizations throughout Minnesota. These organizations account for the design, planning and construction of hundreds of millions of dollars of new and rehabilitated facilities built to meet human needs and strengthen the economic and social fabric of the state.

The practice of architecture, like law and medicine, is a service rendered to the public by trained and licensed individuals. The value of such services is often intangible and often immeasurable. The fee for such services is also most often negligible when set in the context of its long range implications. The long range implications of any construction work undertaken now demand careful evaluation.

Environmental impact, limited natural resources, high material costs and the needs of a dramatically depressed economy are often opposed to each other and force decisions which are

either hasty or expedient. These realities have tended to obscure such classical architectural concepts as beauty, balance and even appropriateness sometimes. Nevertheless, these concepts are still at the core of the build environment and of all building. They provide the human scale, they provide the mood, the feel, the humanity of a living and working space.

The value of this living and working environment is immeasurable in the context of its effect on the happiness, the performance, the enthusiasm and zeal of the user. The architect's work may often seem intangible but his services are indeed very often invaluable. □

— Daniel J. Sheridan



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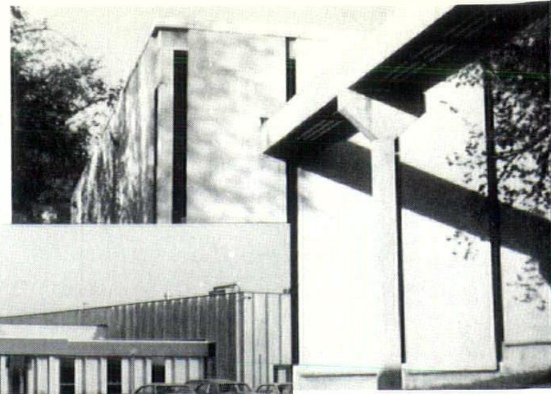
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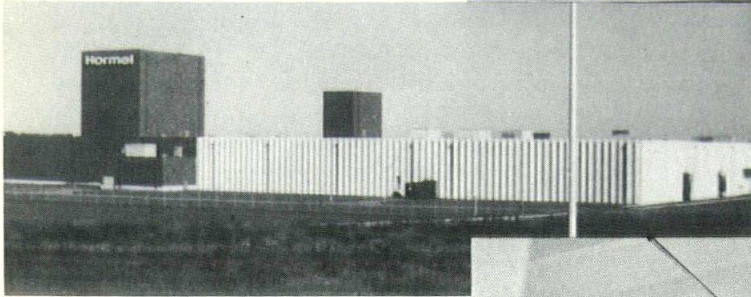
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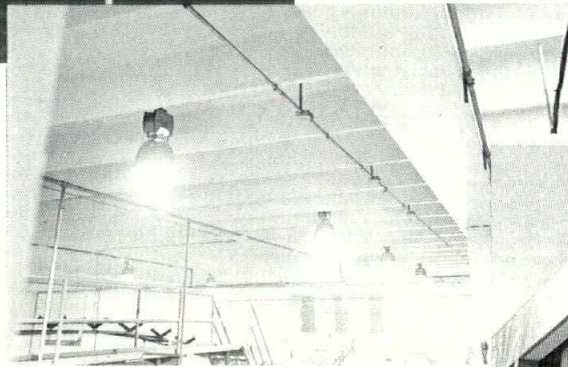


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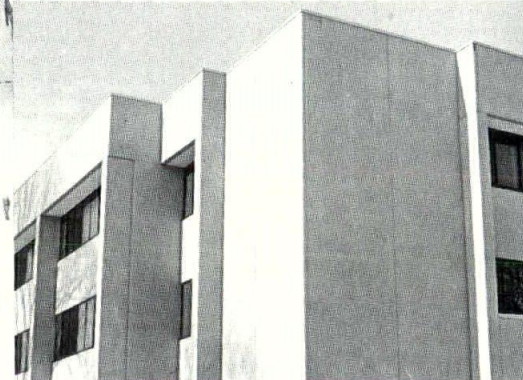


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# ARCHITECTURE AT A GLANCE

"Architect, build me a banana split!" might well be heard in the new Bridgemans Ice Cream parlor at 50th and France. Ron Krank of the architectural firm of Korsunsky-Krank, will take a month off to supervise the grand opening of his firm's newest venture. The firm also owns and operates two nursing homes which they designed.

When **Harold Spitznagel** of the Spitznagel Partners, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, passed away recently, the Upper Midwest lost not only a legendary architect and colorful personality, but an individual who had an immense impact on the built environment of South Dakota during a career which also encompassed joint ventures with Frank Lloyd Wright. Harold Spitznagel, the man, and his firm's diverse and excellent work will be featured in the September/October Convention Issue of *Architecture Minnesota*.

A recent *Christian Science Monitor* poll of outstanding urban affairs experts throughout the country revealed that Minneapolis and St. Paul stand far ahead of most American cities in quality of life. The area's architectural excellence, cited as one of its strengths in the survey, was reaffirmed this spring by the naming of **two local buildings among nine honored nationally** in the annual American Institute of Architects Design Awards: Cedar Square West designed by Ralph Rapson and Associates of Minneapolis and IDS Center designed by Ed Baker and Associates of Minneapolis and Philip Johnson/John Burgee of New York. There were 620 entries. Previous winners include the Walker Art Center and Minneapolis' first skyway.

The occasion of these awards, the annual convention of the American Institute of Architects, held this spring in Atlanta, was also noteworthy for the induction of **Brooks Cavin**, a Saint Paul Architect known for his leadership in historic preservation and his design sensitivity, into the AIA

College of Fellows. This is the highest honor a practicing professional can receive. Cavin joins 13 other Minnesotans in the College of Fellows.

The **Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission** which includes architects, Bill Scott, Brooks Cavin, Roy Thorshov and designer Peter Hall, **has recently had to fight for its life** due to its own courage. The Commission has resisted attempts to erect a giant coke bottle sign in the historic St. Anthony District. Fortunately, the City Council sustained the Heritage Preservation Commission.

The Saint Paul Chapter of the AIA is assisting with a **competition for the design of the 1976 Winter Carnival Ice Palace**. The Carnival will have a Bi-centennial theme, and the competition is expected to be completed in June.

The Minnesota State Arts Council has given a grant to the Minnesota Society of Architects to make available **speakers and other architectural resources to out-state community organizations**. If you need a speaker or need assistance on historic preservation matters, please contact the Minnesota Society of Architects' office.

The Minnesota Society of Architects has also developed an **Urban Design Assistance Team** program, whereby a community with a very specific planning or design problem may request the help of an interdisciplinary urban design team to examine the problem and suggest the planning process that should be undertaken. For further information, contact Jim Mildes, Chairman of the Urban Design Committee, at 870-8341.

The Urban Design Committee also participated in a support role in the University of Minnesota Center for Urban and Regional Affairs' **Project Rediscovery**. This is a **unique Bi-centennial project** in which teams of architectural students, monitored by professionals, go into very small Minnesota communities to assist them in the rediscovery of their community,

identifying planning problems as well as beginning to develop a planning process.

Many communities throughout the state have also used the **Northwest Architectural Archives**, which are located at the University of Minnesota and include several outstanding collections of architects' papers, including those of **Purcell and Elmslie, Buffington and consulting engineer Walter Wheeler**. For further information, contact Al Lathrop at 373-7271.

On the international scene, a **Minnesota architectural firm has been very active in the Middle East**. Ellerbe Architects recently announced a \$900 million-plus joint venture with the Los Angeles firm of Daniel, Mann, Johnson and Mendenhall.

According to Francis Meisch of Zoo Team, the construction of the new zoo, **the Minnesota Zoological Garden**, has to be timed "so that the facilities for housing the great whale are completed in time for the whale catching season". Presently several suppliers are bidding on \$1 million worth of artificial rock. Samples of the rock proposed by the bidders have been assembled on the site. Zoo Team consists of InterDesign, Peterson and Clark and Associates, Inc. and Robert M. Lambert, Inc.

**Apple Valley**, the site of the zoo, also recently announced the dedication of one new elementary school and the beginning of construction of an \$8 million high school, both designed by Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc., Saint Paul. Green Leaf Elementary School is a modified open school, defined by demountable walls and decorated with extremely bright colors. **Nine original walls in crisp bright acrylic by Robert Fontaine**, Minneapolis artist, introduce color relief to the building's concrete block walls. The designs help students identify special learning areas and relate what they are learning to personal experience.

Several Minnesota multi-disciplinary



firms have been active in major planning studies. The firm of EDAW, headed by Vice-President James Mildes, recently completed a **power plant siting study for the Minnesota State Department of Planning**. The study which was an extremely extensive one, also involved the participation of 30 members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

The firm of Bather, Ringrose, Wolsfeld, Inc., working with Delan Cather, recently completed a small **vehicle study for the Metropolitan Transit Commission and the Metro-**

**politan Council**. Unfortunately, the debate between MTC and Metro Council continues and the 1975 Legislative Session was not even able to begin deciding the future of mass transit in metropolitan areas.

1976 promises to be an interesting year architecturally with the opening of the new **Hennepin County Hospital** in April and later in the year, the **Old Federal Courts Building in Saint Paul**. Also scheduled to open is the addition to the **Duluth Arena Auditorium**. The **Duluth Curling Club** must come up with

an additional \$175,000 of cold cash to buy ice and needed facilities. Architects for the arena auditorium are John Ivey Thomas/Thomas Vecchi from Duluth.

Throughout the state there has been a **vigorous approach to the revitalization of downtown areas**. A current example is **Bemidji** which is considering plans for a downtown shopping center housing 15 businesses. The study is being undertaken by Architectural Resources of Duluth.

In **Duluth** the Downtown Development Corporation is actively at work. It has retained several architectural firms for urban design and planning studies, considering among other things the feasibility of a skyway system for downtown Duluth. In addition, a 10 story, 225 room hotel called the **Granada Hotel** has been announced for downtown Duluth. The developer, a firm from Phoenix, Arizona, is also developing a hotel in Rochester, Minnesota.

The City of **Lakeville**, just outside of the Twin Cities, is moving into a redevelopment program marked by major cooperation between business interests and local government. Constructive Design, Inc. and Midwest Planning, both of Minneapolis, are involved in this effort.

**Mankato's** much talked about, long awaited Mall, moved another step forward when Sasaki Associates, of Watertown, Massachusetts, and Wick, Kagermeir, Skaar of Mankato entered the picture. The Mankato Mall calls for enclosing 600 feet of Front Street in a year-round two story Mall, with an extension of the Mall down Front Street. Also announced from Mankato, is a \$4 million 150 room Holiday Inn.

In **Austin**, the city's newest shopping center, Oak Park Mall, is due to open in mid-summer. It is located on the northwest exit of the city.

The **University of Minnesota's Humanities Fine Arts Center in Morris**, designed by Ralph Rapson and Associates, is one of the outstanding facilities to open recently in Minnesota. The building recently won a **Progressive Architecture Magazine Design Award**, one of the most respected architectural awards in the nation.

In **Minneapolis**, \$65 million of housing has been announced for the **Loring Park Area**. This includes four projects in excess of \$13 million. **Regency Hyatt** is presently considering a major hotel across the street from the new Orchestra Hall.

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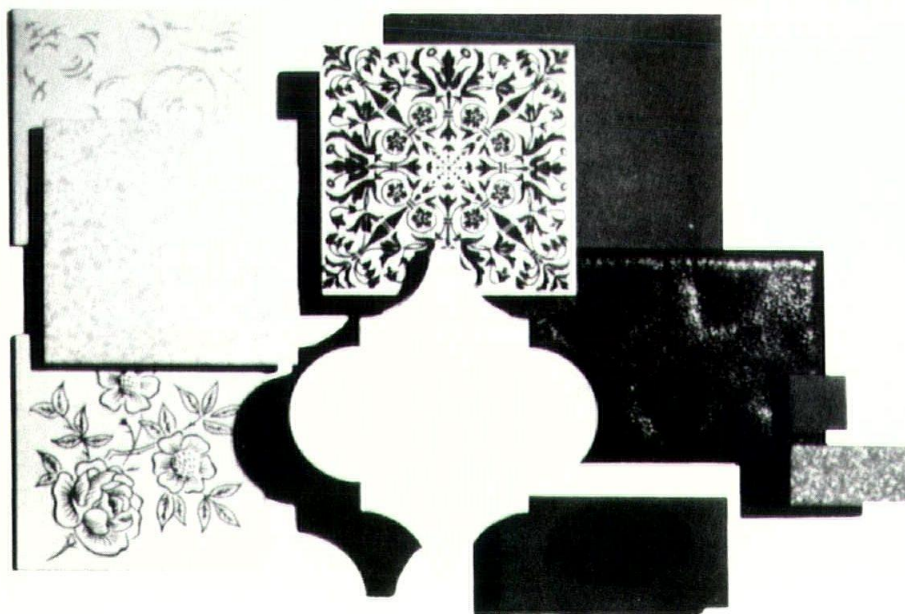
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# WORK IN PROGRESS

## LORING PARK

James I. Lammers

A great deal of building activity has been sparked by the creation of a Development District in the Loring Park area of Minneapolis.

Four housing projects have received letters of intent from the City Coordinator's office:

**Loring Towers West:** A \$13 million, 500 unit project designed by Miller, Hansen, Westerbeck & Bell and sponsored by the Volunteers of America, the Greater Minneapolis Metropolitan Housing Corporation and the Loring Park Development Corporation. This project is all rental with 300 section 8 units and 252 units designated for the elderly.

**Twelve Hundred on the Mall:** Designed by the Hodne-Stageberg Partners this complex will have 331 units of which 137 will be condominiums. Section 8 financing will be used for 40 units. Contractor will be Bor-Son Construction and estimated cost is \$16.5 million.

**Loring Place:** Includes a 25 story tower and lower condominium units along the park. A total of 266 condominium and rental units are planned. Architect is the Cerny Associates; contractor is Gunnar I. Johnson.

**Yale Place:** A \$19 million project with Baker & Associates as architect and co-developer. 299 units of both rental and condominium units are planned in high rise towers up to 14 stories. Townhouses will flank the Loring Greenway.

Also in the Loring Park area are:  
**Metropolitan Community College:** Ellerbe Architects is designing a \$2.5 million classroom-office building including science laboratories as the initial phase of a master plan which will include a theater building and physical education building. The building is 62,000 square feet gross area and will link with the proposed Vo-Tech Institute.

**Vo-Tech Institute:** Presently in the

early planning stages, this project is under study by Bissell, Belair and Green, Architects, Minneapolis.

**YMCA:** Phase I consisting of a 4 story "program" building is under construction with completion date late 1975. Architects are Freeks, Sperl, Flynn. This building will contain gymnasium, pool health facilities, meeting rooms and offices. Phase II is in the proposal stage and is planned as a 24 story tower containing transient, apartment and group housing plus parking on the lower levels.

**Peavey Plaza:** Designed by Paul Friedman of New York, this park will be completed in June.

**Hyatt Regency Hotel:** Presently in the proposal stage, this complex would contain 750 hotel rooms plus convention facilities. Architectural Alliance is the architect and LETOH the developer.

**Booth Manor:** Formerly Evangeline Residence, this project contains 157 units of 236 housing designed by the Architectural Alliance.

**Orchestra Hall Parking Ramp:** Owned by the City of Minneapolis and designed by the Cerny Associates is presently under construction. It will accommodate 650 cars at a cost of \$3 million.

**Eitel Hospital:** Preliminary planning for \$1.5 to \$2 million expansion is under study by Liebenberg, Smiley & Glotter, Architects, Minneapolis.

**Berger Fountain:** Donated by Park Board member Benjamin Berger, the fountain is based on a prototype in Sydney, Australia. Liebenberg, Smiley & Glotter are the architects. Construction will be complete in June. □

*James Lammers is an Associate with Close Associates, Architects, Minneapolis.*

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# CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY NEWS

**Robert Snow**

Some years back when I was working on the "other side of the fence" and had to write some specifications, I realized that the task would have been much easier if I had applied myself more diligently in English classes while in high school and college. This same realization is with me again as I take on the task of writing a column. Of course, it is my fervent hope that many of you who take the time to read this will understand my need for help and respond by sending me items which might be included in subsequent issues.

Members of the local CSI chapter (that's the Construction Specifications Institute) are making plans to attend

the Annual Convention to be held in New Orleans on June 23rd to the 26th. It's always time well spent for both professional and industry members. It is a technical society for *all* people in the construction industry, and its most important purpose is to improve construction specifications. LeRoy Palmquist of Armstrong, Torseth, Skold & Rydeen is the current president of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul chapter.

Iver Johnson, the "son" of Gunnar I. Johnson and Son, Inc., is making news with his "Glascon" fiberglass reinforced concrete. It seems as if fiberglass is continually appearing in more and more facets of our life . . . fabrics, boats, bathtubs, furniture, insulation, automobiles, etc., etc. I wonder if

fiberglass was a chance discovery or the result of purposeful research. So often serendipity (I like that word!) seems to be an integral part of new product development.

All of us in the construction industry should be aware of the challenge to the Statute of Limitations which will be heard by the State Supreme Court later this year. As you know, the trend in the courts today is to name nearly everyone as a defendant, no matter how remote your connection to the matter at hand, and even if you are *not* guilty, it can cost a great deal of money to establish your innocence. If the Statute should be declared unconstitutional, we are all going to lose some vital protection. If you would like to know how you can

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## ARCHITECTURE MINNESOTA

July-August, 1975:

A Guide to Metropolitan Architecture: an illustrated guide to the new architecture in the Twin Cities with descriptive text and comments, including a general location map.

The Movers: the community leaders who make things happen.

Urban Design: when planning pays off.

Life on the Elevated: business boom on the skyways

September-October, 1975:

Convention issue. Major features to be keyed to convention theme and major convention panels.



help, get in touch with the Minnesota Society of Architects office.

On May 5th, we lost a real pioneer when George J. Saffert, founder and chairman of the board of the American Artstone Company, New Ulm, died at the age of 88. He founded his company in 1910 and worked tirelessly to develop and produce high quality cast stone and precast concrete. "For outstanding contributions to the concrete products industry", George received the first and original Award of Merit from the Minnesota Concrete Products Association and, in 1970, he was given the "Construction Industry Award" by the Minnesota Society of Architects. His contributions to the technology of concrete were many and hundreds of buildings throughout the middle west contain examples of his artistry and craftsmanship.

The Minnesota Masonry Institute recently presented its second Masonry Estimating & Construction Methods Workshop at the Thunderbird Motel in Bloomington, Minnesota.

The workshop demonstrated estimating techniques in quantity take-off, pricing materials and labor and construction methods.

Highlights of the new Minnesota "Design & Evaluation Criteria for Energy Conservation in New Buildings" were presented and demonstrated by MMI's Executive Director, Tom Richardson.

C.C. Fladland was named "Outstanding employee of the year" by the International Association of Wall and Ceiling Contractors.

Fladland was chosen from over 100 nominees from all 50 states to receive the award for his dedicated and extensive efforts to further the business interests of the wall and ceiling contractors he represents in Minnesota.

Fladland is Executive Director of the Minnesota Lathing and Plastering Bureau, a statewide organization of lathing and plastering contractors designed to promote the use of genuine lathe and plaster in building.

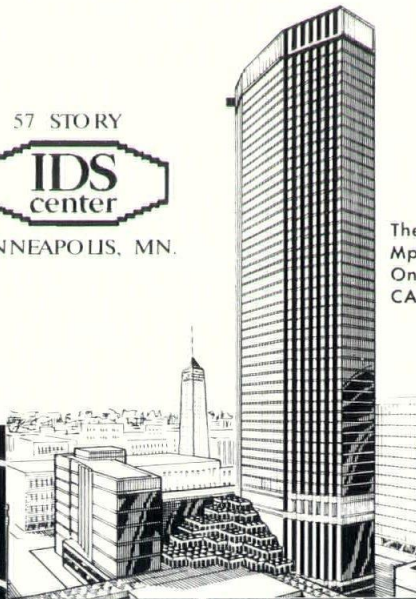
If you have news of people, products, projects or programs which you would like to share, send them to me. ☐

*Robert Snow, head of Snow Larson, Inc., Minneapolis, is also North Central Section Director of Construction Specifications Institute.*

**Bicentennial architectural tour.** Celebrate the nation's Bicentennial on an international scale. Join this unique worldwide tour of buildings built in 1776. You will be guided through each continent by a leading authority and have the opportunity to truly understand the architecture of the time and to appreciate some of the sources of early American design. You will meet some of the nationals in their native costumes, travel by sailboat, steam locomotive, varied carriages and enjoy

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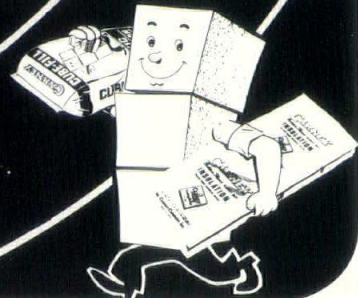
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# GEMINI VARIATIONS I

On April 17, 1975, the Twin City Area Educational Television Corporation, KTCA TV, Channel 2, broadcast Gemini Variations I — a challenging and entrancing work — a juxtaposition of sculpture and architecture in the Twin Cities area.

The show, itself a work of art, was created by Harvey Lloyd, one of the nation's leading photographers, and co-produced by James Mulrooney and Rita Shaw.

The following excerpts of text and photography will attempt — on the printed page — to bring some of the excitement and delight of the show. Ed.

## GEMINI VARIATIONS I

### Harvey Lloyd

*'Gemini Variations are free-form explorations of the American renaissance in the arts. The subject of 'Gemini Variation I' is sculpture under the sun — the powerful expression of contemporary sculptors juxtaposed with the steel, glass and concrete abstractions rearing out of the decaying honky-tonk of our 'decaying' cities.*

*We mean to probe the strange new synthesis of the human condition taking form in our accelerating 'technotronic' society, through the one-eyed glare of the television tube. Are abstract sculptures piles of geometric junk? Are urban steel and glass towers symbols of a civilization divorced from reason, art and beauty?*

*We seek the inexorable growth of the future made manifest in the fecund matrix of the cities and revealed through the coming together of art and technology. The new art renaissance in America expresses and draws vitality from technologic revolution. Contemporary art is seen as a synthesis*

*of past and future in an age where past and future are bound together by electronic access to information and electronic media dissemination.*

*Here is an America in the golden age of accelerating history where Huxley's great idea, 'Man is nothing else than evolution becoming conscious of itself', materializes. The frightening human march into an indeterminate present of quantum and cosmic equations is seen as the beginning of man-machine symbiosis. In the inexorable march of evolution; molecular biology and quantum physics foreshadow a new race of beings. Deum ex Machina and Deum ex Cerebrum!*

*We imagine we can see, but we may be blind to new experience, for routine may make us as ants. Can an ant see or think? We imagine we can hear. Does a bird sing? Or, do we create bird-songs? What is the seeing or hearing and what is the patterned, conditioned response to familiar environment? We see and hear the past. The present and future are often muffled and hidden by the structured necessities of day-to-day living.*

*Art is an encounter with the human condition. Creation is an expression of man's inexorable march toward self-understanding. Growth may be painful, difficult, filled with hazards. We must seek out new experiences and feel with all our senses delight and the shock of recognition that the unfamiliar and strange manifestations of art are really ourselves — a realm of the sensual made spiritual — a realm of ideas given forms that please the eye and touch, excite the ear, stir the heart and enrich the soul. In our capacity to embrace the beautiful we soar beyond the stars, illuminate the black spaces of eternity, make the cosmos inhabitable, and destroy the myths of chaos.*

*What are the strange shapes and*

Associate Producers: James B. Mulrooney  
Rita Shaw  
Director: Paula Harris  
Writer and Still Photographer: Harvey Lloyd  
Cinematographer: Gene Borman  
Videotape Engineers: Jerry Hulting  
Henry Schwartz  
Graphic Art: Victoria Shapiro  
Cameras: Tim Francisco  
Kathy Riley  
Patrick M. Sweeney  
Audio: Jerry Cannon  
Floor Directors: Carol Stoops  
Marjorie Lee





I think that we should have sculptures that last over many generations so that we are able to feed off our heritage and those in the future could feed off of what we bring to them. — Paul Granlund

sounds of contemporary creation? We may no longer be beholders, watchers and voyeurs of other's creations. The second half of the twentieth century shatters the myth of we and they—observer and artist, work and public. Art is our environment.

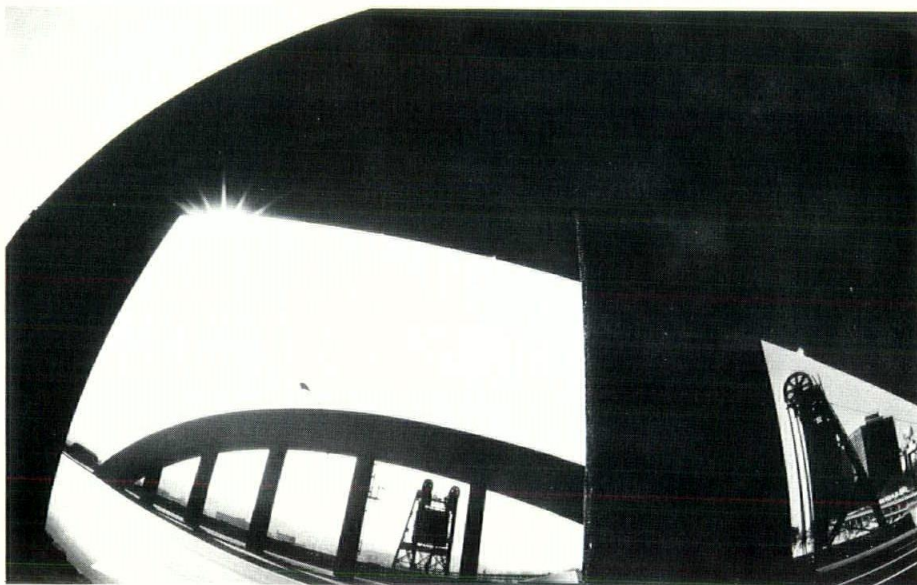
That arts in our time move sharply to the 'abstract' is a function of the technotronic communications revolution. The American civilization, post World War Two, is a homogenous, continental village connected by access to all media, exposed into instant familiarity with the new — therefore demanding constantly newer and deeper experiences.

We live in a new age in this most unlikely of nations — superpower, industrial giant, innovator in technology; creator of computers; in the forefront of nuclear biology, the science of life under electron microscopes; rich and powerful and a little confused; troubled with politics at home and abroad. We are a continent without empire, yet joined by technology and electronic communication, jet transport and satellites into an empire beyond comprehending, 'masters' of the world's resources, richer than Croesus, physically gigantic. And spiritually?

That here on this sinewy land art flourishes is no mystery. Art is an expression of the human heart and soul in eternal quest for self-understanding. We need to become at one with our experience of art. Art is food for the soul. We do not simply look at food and comment on it. We eat it. We must eat art if the experience is to be real. We do not need to be lulled, comforted, titillated and amused by art, though these reactions are pleasant. At one with art, we are put in touch with our deepest selves.

Art is no avocation for whiling away idle hours. Art is the essence and





"Mechanical Mouse"—Claes Oldenburg—Walker Art Center—Minneapolis.



meaning of life. The processes of education and civilization that deaden the senses need to be reversed. We need ten or fifteen years of hard study to learn a profession. Dare we imagine that an art takes less or is immediately accessible?

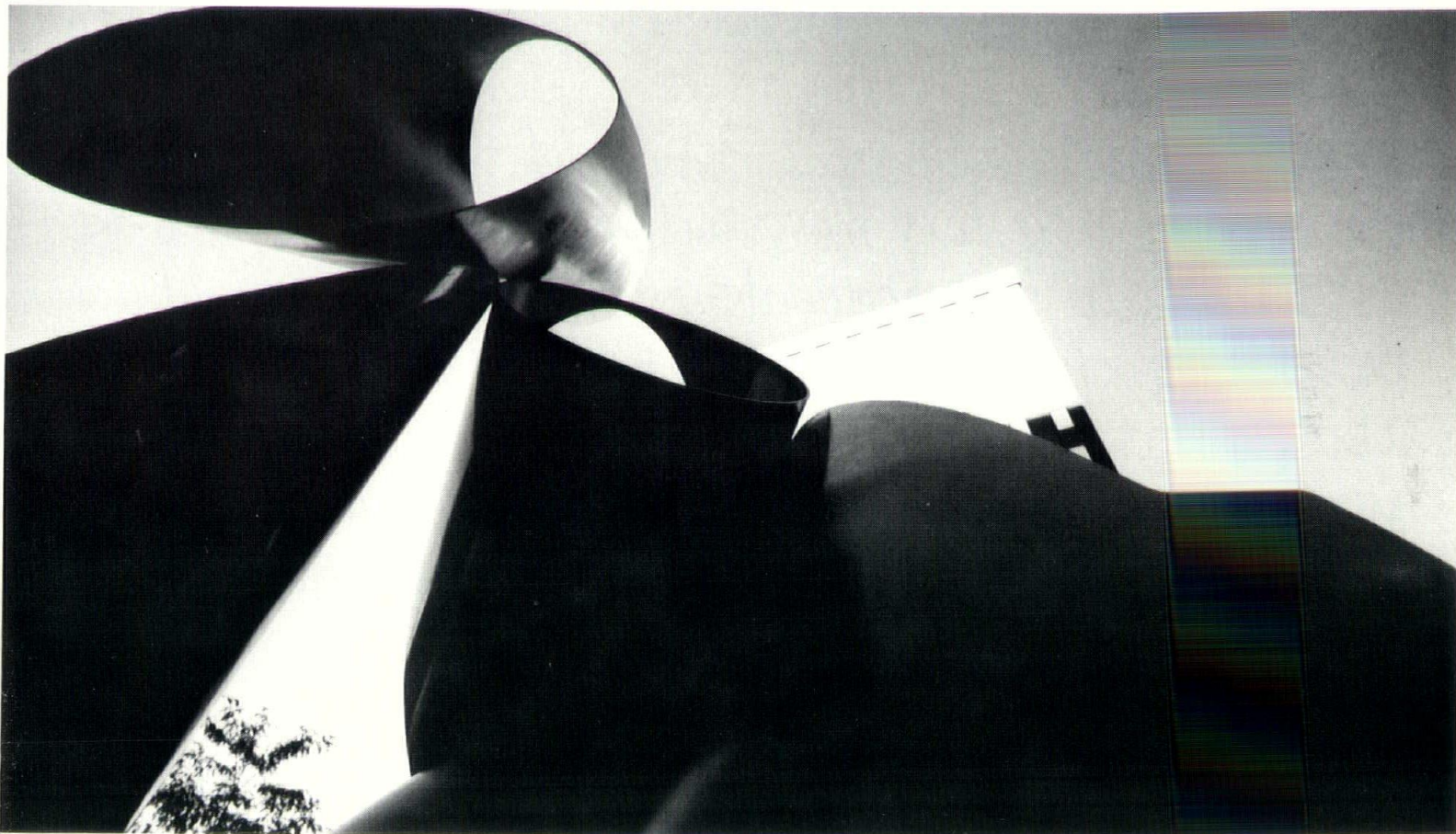
Man is a flux of changing potentials. We are all inheritors of the racial gene pool; each generation free at birth to grow and develop. Man does not inherit the conditioning of his ancestors or parents. Work and pleasure patterns must be grafted on the living, raw psyche. Wrapped like a caterpillar in a cocoon created by society and necessity, the psyche will not undergo the miracle of metamorphosis. The caterpillar lives on in its social cocoon. It emerges at retirement, feeble, wasted and unsatisfied, a drab mummy where a free spirit may have flown.

Our potential is limitless. The art of living as all arts, is an endless pursuit of excellence. Quality of life is the meaning of life. Neither joy nor suffering have meaning to a dead soul. The growth of mind and spirit is eternal. It is not inevitable as is puberty and aging, but a constant renewal in the crucible of creative experience.

Mistakes are symbols of success. What we do wrong disturbs us, rubs raw the nerve endings that stimulate growth and creation. Courage to fail is the basis of growth. The past is done, material and fuel for the future. Art like life, can never be perfect. Perfection is dead. Are clouds, or wind or surf, 'perfect'? We plunge into creating armed with strength, purpose and tenacity, and above all a mind, heart and soul in ferment — ready to snare fleeting glimpses of eternity.

Our creations are moments, fixed images of a flux and a continuum that is alternately beautiful and hor-





"Above, Above"—Alexander Liberman—Osborn Building (Economic Laboratory Headquarters)—Saint Paul.

"I'm very interested in things suspended in light. I think it's a realm that has not been investigated by sculptors. It's a contradiction. Sculpture in the past was involved with mass and volume, and I think with technological developments — even buildings — they're structures that have to be on the ground — and, I think our freedom as sculptors is to get off the ground." — *Alexander Liberman*



Every artist hopes for a total response that is from pure physical to high intellectual or high philosophical — You very seldom get it in one person especially in a new work. It really takes — you know we talk about Michaelangelo and Rodin but they've been around for so long and the tradition of interpreting and the pile up and accumulation of interpreting is also part of our reaction to those pieces. We've learned about them and in contemporary art it's much more difficult. It's fresh and new and people are very often startled by it — but I'm quite happy if people react especially the laymen where there's no particular interest in art. If there's just a good honest gut reaction, I'm quite happy with it. I think that's the basis of all reaction anyway to everything — a good gut! I like it — I don't like it. And, I don't put down people who say, "I don't like it and I don't know why." But, a good honest gut reaction means an openness of mind and a willingness to receive some kind of new experience.

George Sugarman







*rible. Let us affirm the glory of life; exposure to the wind and hail and storms of living; quiet rapture and contemplation of the silence of eternity, the sun in its cycles, the wheeling stars and infinite galaxies, the whirling primordial atoms of the macro-universe, the invisible electromagnetic spectrum that makes energy crystallize into the hour of our existence — our joys, our horrors, our loves and our despairs.*

The program uses images via still photography and film and the live video camera-sound via contemporary, synthesized and transformed sonorities-

reprocessed sounds and sound effects woven into a matrix of unexpected associations.

Gemini Variations I looks for experience rather than a sermon or lecture. An experiment to create meaningful, comprehensible experiences from all the arts, recreated into images and sounds to delight the eye, arouse the senses and provoke the mind.

Art like life, can never be perfect. Gemini seeks to bring an experience one will remember. Its aim, to reach all of us, to open our eyes, and see the miracles around us in everyday things.





# OBJECT & SPACES

Milo Thompson

Most people understand the differences between Art and Architecture. Separating out Painting — an Art which is not dependent on physical, three-dimensional expression — they understand also the difference between Sculpture and Architecture.

I deplore the necessity of differentiating, compartmentalizing, and in other ways separating the Arts to enable a clearer view of what each means but a "one-Art-at-a-time" point of view seems necessary to describe, and comment on the complexity of the relationship between the Arts. While it is unsatisfactory, a compartmental view is often the only way today's Art and Architecture can be understood, since nearly always the work has been generated out of context with other Arts and is self-centered and self-contained. For those who view things holistically that is frustratingly incomplete. In any case, the similarities of the various Arts and their possibilities rather than their differences for complete integration, one with the other, are what interest me most.

If we do not see often enough that Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture are physically integrated, it is due partially to the training of Artists and Architects and particularly because a strong relationship between the Art is not expected by those who commission Architects and patronize Artists. It is satisfying to know, however, that the sensibilities of both Artists and Architects and their approach to their work are similar enough to make an integration possible. The basis of Painting, which is more than illustration, and of Sculpture, which is more than illustration, and of Sculpture, which is more than object making, and of Architecture, which is more than functional problem

solving, is the underlying generating spirit that the final products express IDEAS. Art and Architecture share this foundation.

The extent to which an individual work achieves quality is directly related to the importance and scope of the IDEA it tries to express and the clarity and power of its expression.

A discussion of the similarities of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture cannot be adequately developed here. What follows will try to raise a few general interesting parallels between Architecture and Sculpture, both of which center on a physical and three-dimensional expression to communicate IDEAS.

## IDEAS → FORMULA → FORM

This progression is at the root of the similarity between Sculpture and Architecture. An IDEA (which may in fact be a collection of ideas having a central theme or common denominator) requires a device — a FORMULA — to convert a purely verbal or mental statement to a physical FORM.

The FORMULA is a statement of rules set up by the Artist or Architect to discipline his process and produce the work. If clearly outlined and consistently applied, the FORMULA enables others to participate in the process of design or in the elaboration of the concept and its final execution. In the case of Architecture, modifications to the completed work can be more sensitively accomplished when the intent of the design has been clearly formulated and understood.

The FORMULA is, I believe, the essentially creative part of Art since IDEAS are not exclusively the property of Artists or Architects, having often been given, borrowed, stated by others, or an integral part of the cultural environment. IDEAS are so many times, simply "in the air".

The FORMULA is a personal con-





*The Great Pyramids, Gizeh* The pyramid of Cheops, 475 feet high, exhibits accurate calculation and measurement as it dwarfs Zoser's pyramid. It is faced with polished limestone.



tribution, being intuitive or deliberate, practical or frivolous, nonsensical, sober, or profound depending on the author's ability and intent.

How the FORMULA is processed to create the final form varies greatly and indeed, whether most Artists and Architects are aware of the application of a FORMULA would be debated. I maintain that consciously or unconsciously a FORMULA is invariably used.

The FORM, a physical presence resulting from the process of applying a unique FORMULA created by the Artist or Architect, is never merely an object. In Sculpture and more obviously in Architecture, FORM can be perceived as "inside space".

#### OBJECTS IN SPACE / SPACE IN OBJECTS

Both Sculpture and Architecture can be conceived and presented in formalistic terms as one or the other or simultaneously both of the above.

The polarity represented by OBJECTS IN SPACE and SPACE IN OBJECTS is not an either/or condition. Most individual works, in fact, involve subtle combinations of the two notions and range considerably in the degree to which one side of the polarity is predominant.

Pyramids in a vast open desert and obelisks placed in public squares represent classic uses of Architecture and Sculpture as OBJECTS IN SPACE. More at hand and more familiar is the American Skyscraper, the IDS Tower being a good example, and most contemporary museum type sculpture, such as the pieces installed on the plaza of the Federal Reserve Bank.

The principal effect from a formalistic and Urban Design point of view, is that OBJECTS IN SPACE dimension the SPACE. If a person knows the size and scale of a piece of sculpture or a building relative to human dimension,

the dimension of the space between such objects is comprehensible.

A high rise building such as the IDS Tower achieves a "landmark" status, indicating to a viewer many miles from the core of the city, a sense of place, direction, and destination.

The largest tower of the Cedar-Riverside housing complex, another example, has provided a new sense of the distance between the urban core and the University area. It provides vistas at street level and dimensions the length of the street.

Sculpture on a plaza or in vast public gallery spaces facilitates an understanding of the size of the setting.

The other formalistic point of view, SPACE IN OBJECTS, can be illustrated with many historical examples, including not only the interiors of buildings but also large interior spaces within cities — urban squares which are, in simple fact, great "rooms" lacking roof enclosure. Medieval cathedrals, Renaissance buildings with their courtyards and the piazzas and plazas of many European cities are obvious examples. All represent a fusion of Architectural and Sculptural forms. Today, separate examples of space in Architecture and Sculpture must be cited since they no longer occur as integrated Arts.

Most good buildings today incorporate the notion of SPACE IN OBJECTS. The vast space of the IDS courtyard, the gallery spaces of both the Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the space between the twin towers of the Hennepin County Government Center, and many malls within contemporary shopping centers are good examples in Minneapolis. Another example, the remodeled Butler Building, is an unusually sensitive design in which a space has been created within a building to provide a focus, an orientation,







and a clarity of interior organization.

Contemporary Sculpture also incorporates the concept of SPACE IN OBJECTS, though to be sure, one cannot be entirely literal about it.

A variety of examples can be recalled: Louise Nevelson's great architectural constructions; the bizarre fur and feather lined, pin encrusted mystery boxes by Lucas Samaras; the elegant glass enclosed spaces by Larry Bell; and others with large scale to allow an actual sense of being within the sculpture.

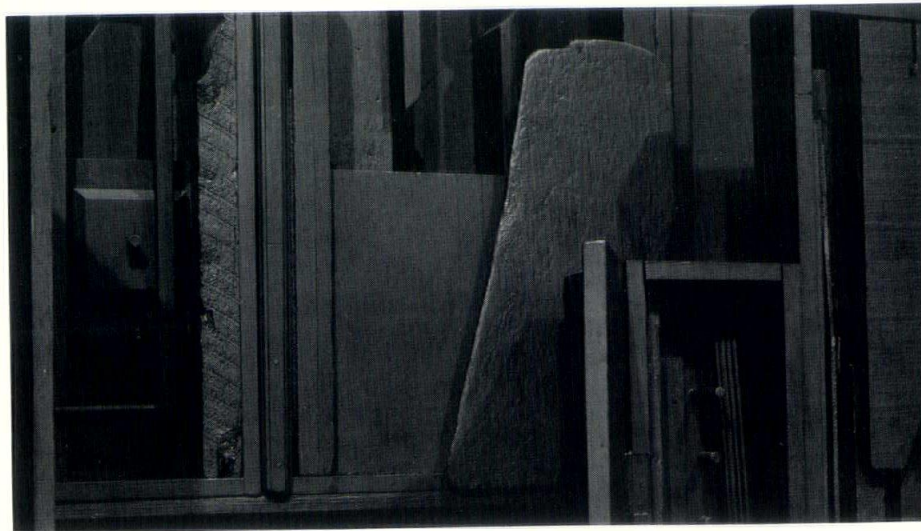
Visualize standing under and within Picasso's heroic sculpture on the Plaza of the Federal Office Building in Chicago or what must be similar, (I have not seen them) the Dubuffet three-tree sculpture at the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York's financial district and Calder's La Grande Vitesse on the City-County Plaza at Vandenberg Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

But I do not mean to oversimplify. Each of the examples above has content and formal qualities too complex to slot it simply into its most representative category. To a greater or

lesser degree they all represent — to their credit — an ambivalence and a combination of ideas which enrich them. That a piece of sculpture or a building can be simultaneously an OBJECT IN SPACE and contain SPACE IN THE OBJECT is an achievement. The Walker Art Center, doing both, does it one better. It places Objects *on* the Object.

The great variable in the set — Object, Space / Space, Object — is the quality of the various parts. The work can range from a clear and complete definition of both Object and Space to a preoccupation with a predominant clarity of one over the other, the latter being more typical of American Sculpture, Architecture, and their larger framework, Urban Design.

The lack of well defined urban spaces to contain examples of otherwise great architectural design is a great deficiency and a source of confusion of American Architecture. The lack is amply illustrated by local example. The Federal Reserve Bank with its aloof relationship to the urban context is only one example of so many in our American cities. These strong archi-



Sky Cathedral Presence (detail) collection by Louise Nevelson: The Walker Art Center. Photo courtesy Walker Art Center — Eric Sutherland.

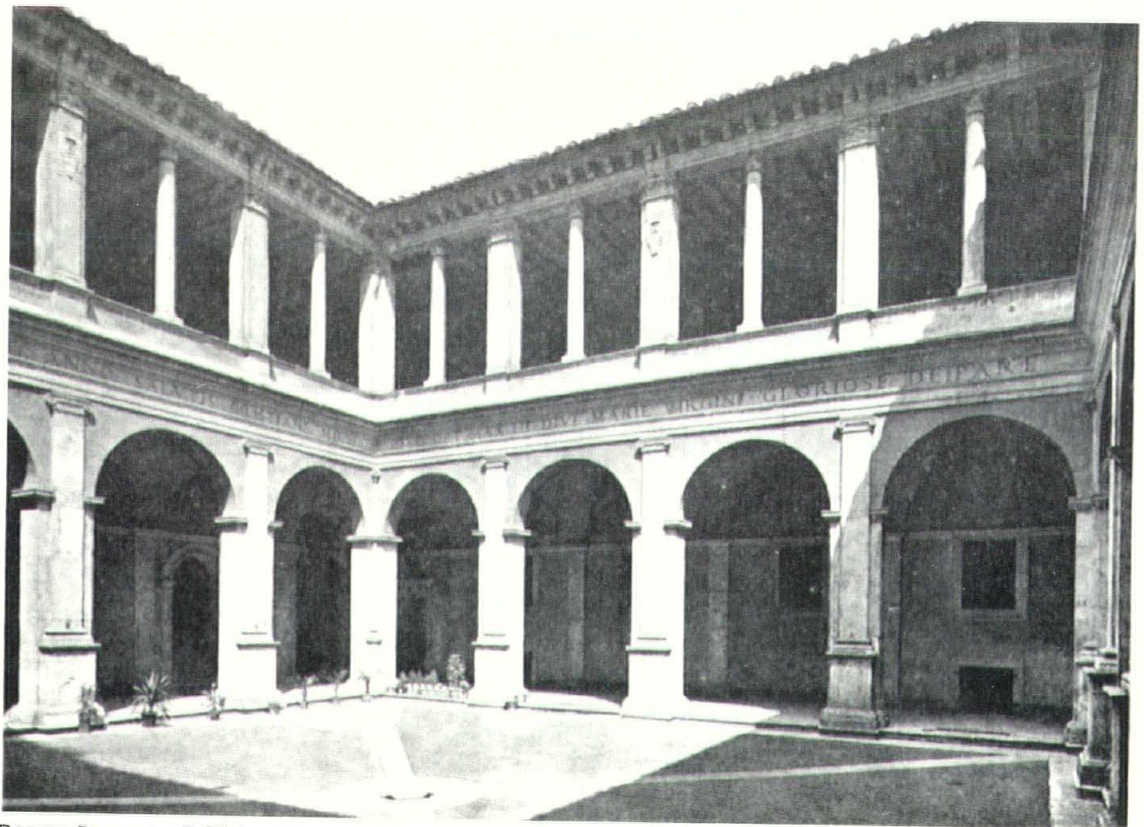
Photo by Phillip MacMillan James





IDS Crystal Court, Minneapolis.

Photo by Philip MacMillan James



Donato Bramante S. Maria della Pace, 1504. View of cloister.



tectural statements seem to be waiting for their surroundings to be regenerated around them and represent, on the part of the building's architect, a deferment of the Urban Design problem for another time and some other client.

The great deficiency of Sculpture, following as a parallel, is the almost invariable lack of outside space as an integral part of the piece. Sculpture for a public audience is today generally installed in a place independent from its conception, usually in a museum or on an open public plaza. Since it is conceived to "fit" no particular conditions, it cannot speak to them specifically and turns instead inwardly to center around a more private and esoteric set of ideas.

The difficulty of defining space to contain both Architecture and Sculpture is understandable. We have no tradition for its design. Our zoning laws and building codes do not generally encourage it. Architecture and Sculpture are private affairs where they should be part of a larger Urban Design effort. Few people care very much that they should relate to one another to enrich both.

Designing buildings, creating Sculpture for outdoor settings or in public spaces, and defining and designing public spaces are, I believe, community problems. We have not set up client or patronage systems which adequately represent the community. Were it possible, we would minimize the differences between the purposes of Sculpture and Architecture and see more clearly that in a simple way Architecture is big Sculpture and Sculpture is little Architecture. □

*Milo Thompson is a principal of Frederick Bentz/Milo Thompson & Associates, Inc., a Minneapolis office with work in the areas of both Architecture and Urban Design. He is also an Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture where he teaches in an Urban Design Studio.*



Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis Kenzo Tange and Parker-Klein Associates, Architects

Photo by Phillip MacMillan James



# FOUNTAINS



Lake Harriet Garden Center including Lake Harriet Rose Gardens. Photo courtesy of Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce.

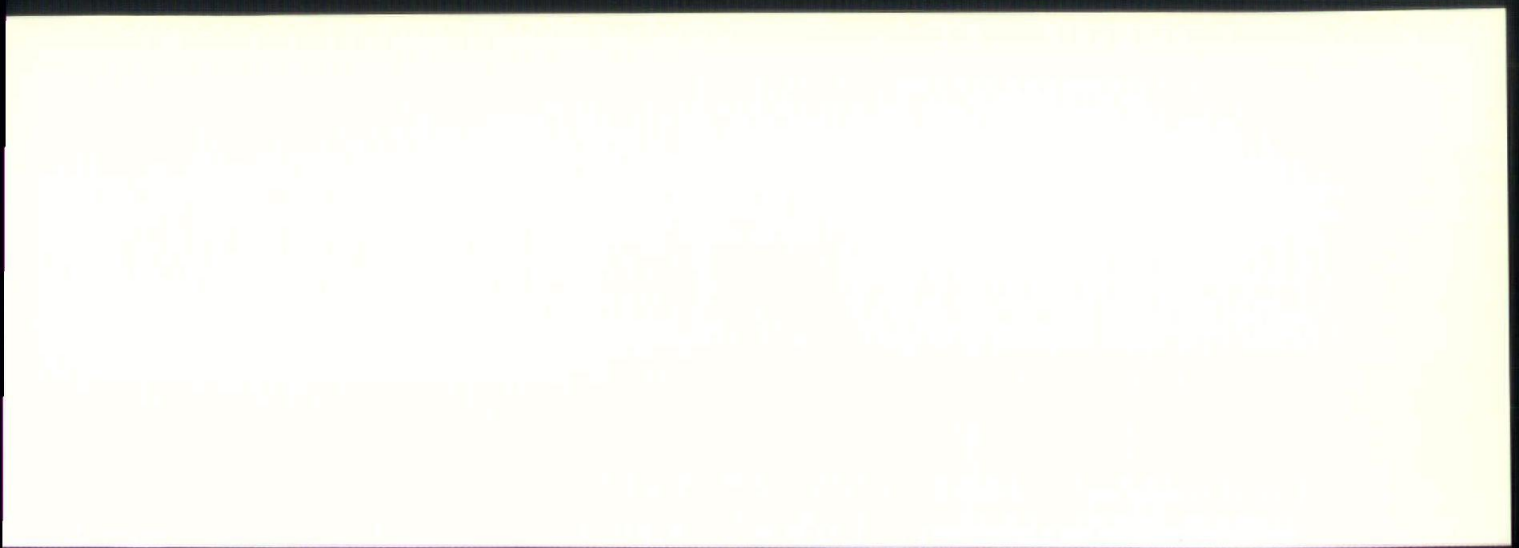
William D. Sanders

Water's limitless variety of expression makes it a uniquely desirable element of design. Unlike any other material, it can constantly change, remain static, adapt to an infinite variety of forms and establish the mood for the surrounding area. Water is complementary to most forms of sculpture and can be either dominant or inconspicuous. It has a unique capacity to stimulate sight, sound and touch. People have always been fascinated by water. They are drawn to the edges of lakes, rivers and streams not only because water is a sustainer of life but because of its beauty and recreational values. Minnesota and the Twin Cities area offer a vast array of natural water features. This abundance of lakes, rivers and streams, however, has not made the people of this area any less appreciative of man-made fountains.

Fountains have been an important feature in the urban environment of the Twin Cities area for nearly 100 years. Water, and fountains in particular, were almost always part of the design vocabulary of urban parks developed in the late 1800's and early 1900's, and it was during this period that many urban parks were developed in Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

Rice Park, Mears Park (formerly Smith) and Irvine Park in Saint Paul were typical of the urban parks of that era. At one time, all of these parks had rather elaborate fountains that were the dominant focal point of the formal park plan. Although there is very little information available, it is thought that during the depression of the 1930's, all three of the fountains mentioned above were removed due to lack of money to keep the fountains operating. These fountains and several others that were once

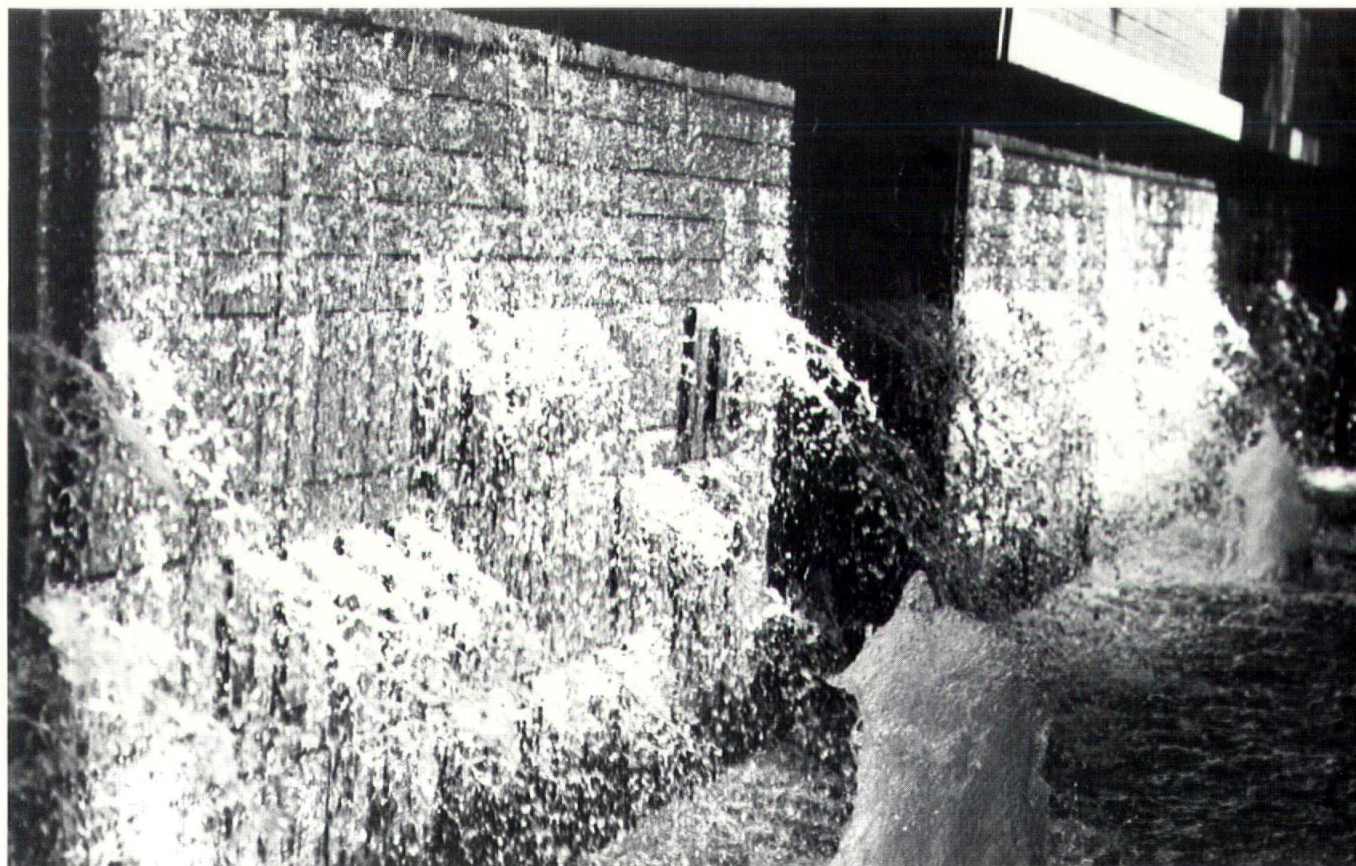








*Mears Park, Housing and Redevelopment Authority* The central pool serves as an internal focal point for the multi-level park. The shallow depth is ideal for children to romp through on a warm summer day while parents watch in envy. On a still and quiet day the reflective quality of the pool encourages contemplation. The wall of water behind the canopy provides dramatic sound, a cooling breeze and some sense of mystery as the water splashes down the random pattern of brick.





part of the Twin Cities landscape have since disappeared and efforts to locate some of the old fountain parts have been unsuccessful. The metropolitan area was virtually devoid of fountains from 1930 to 1960 when redevelopment of the downtown areas began. During the past decade, the use of fountains in the urban environment has been revived, with fountains occurring not only in parks and plazas, but in shopping areas, corporate offices and residential developments.

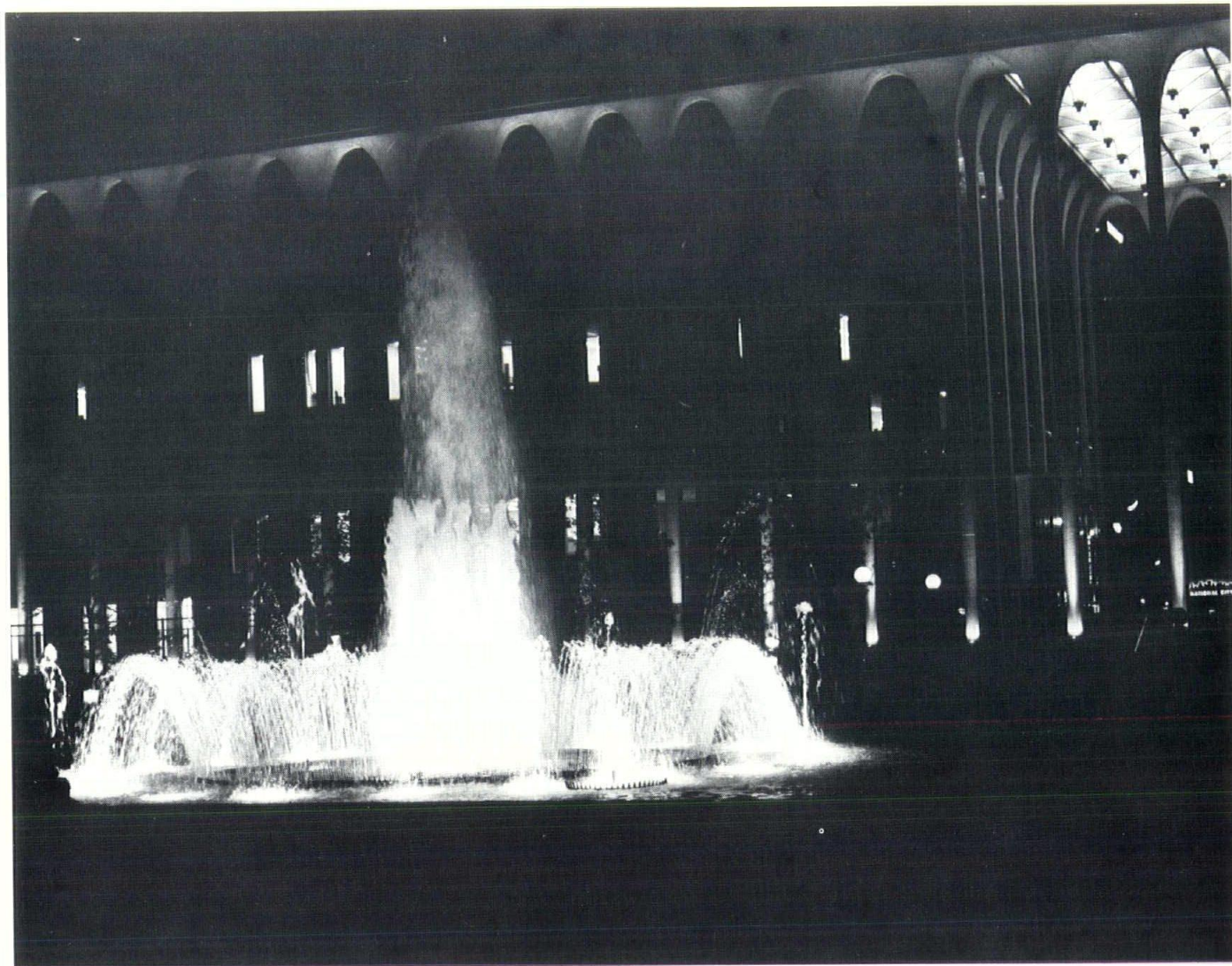
Water, either moving or still, provides a needed contact with nature, with the natural elements in our world. It is a counterpoint to straight lines, hard surfaces and the confines of our cities and structures. On the other hand, water must be kept in motion or it will stagnate. Water lying in a pond or pool must either be organically balanced with a natural system of plant and animal life or be sterilized, emptied and cleaned regularly.

The specific effect that water has



*Rice Park, Hammel, Green and Abramson, Architects* The fountain serves as a focal point for the concentric circles of steps and benches that form the basic design of the park. The "Morning Glory" fountains sparkle effectively in the bright sun while the water gently overflows from one pool to another. The fountain is an effective foreground to the Old Federal Courts Building.





*Gateway Fountain* An effective use of programmed water pattern changes in a graceful, animated performance lasting several minutes before repeating. Combines multi-color lighting with changes in pattern.

depends on a number of factors: the material that is used to hold the water and the material that the water moves over or through; its volume, depth and velocity; artificial lighting and natural effects of wind and sunlight.

Still water in ponds and reflecting pools, conveys a feeling of serenity. Shallow pools and dark surfacing improve the reflective quality of water. Moving water suggests activity, excitement, mystery and drama. Direct sunlight on moving or turbulent

water improves contrast and makes water action more visible.

These and other characteristics of water present a unique and interesting challenge to the imagination of the designer. The fountains that are now a part of our urban environment express many of these qualities. □

*William Sanders is a landscape architect and principal designer with the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Saint Paul. He was also the designer of the award winning Mears Park Fountain in Saint Paul.*



# SUPERGRAPHICS

Dan Fox

Supergraphics are two dimensional, large scale designs applied to interior or exterior surfaces. The term itself suggests the decade of the Super Sixties, when it appeared in an architectural context.

From the first recorded man-made environments, i.e. the primitive cave paintings, through the turn of this century, decorative enrichment had been an integral part of architecture. The cave paintings were certainly more than an aesthetic response, as they were simultaneously communication and the recording of history. As one explores the centuries of architecture of various civilizations, the integration of painting and sculpture is evident.

Perhaps the last great synthesis of these elements were in the works of Antonio Gaudi in Barcelona from 1882 through 1910. His buildings and

furnishings were not only the creation of an iconoclastic genius, but also a culmination of the Art Nouveau period. By the turn of the century, the Industrial Revolution and the new materials and technology of steel and concrete had left their imprint and ushered in a new aesthetic.

The European modern movement eliminated all vestiges of eclecticism and decoration, to evolve a new taut and lean architecture. Although Frank Lloyd Wright in this country influenced early 20th century architecture profoundly, by the time of his death it was evident that his "integral ornament" and aesthetic, generally, were the result of one man's vision and did not merge, ultimately, into the mainstream of the mid century modern movement. The classicizing influence and intellectual order of Mies van der Rohe's architecture was dominant until the middle fifties.

As is usually the case in stylistic



Hoerner Waldorf Corporation, St. Paul. Designer: Ellerbe Architects, Inc. Graphics in this example served a two-fold purpose: to update a corporate image without incurring the relatively high cost of physical renovation; and to bring unity and continuity to a sprawling campus of diverse buildings. The campus, when completed, will represent one of the most comprehensive graphics programs in the country, in terms of scale.





Palace Playground, Saint Paul, St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority—William Sanders, Principal Designer, Joan Strommer, Graphic Designer.



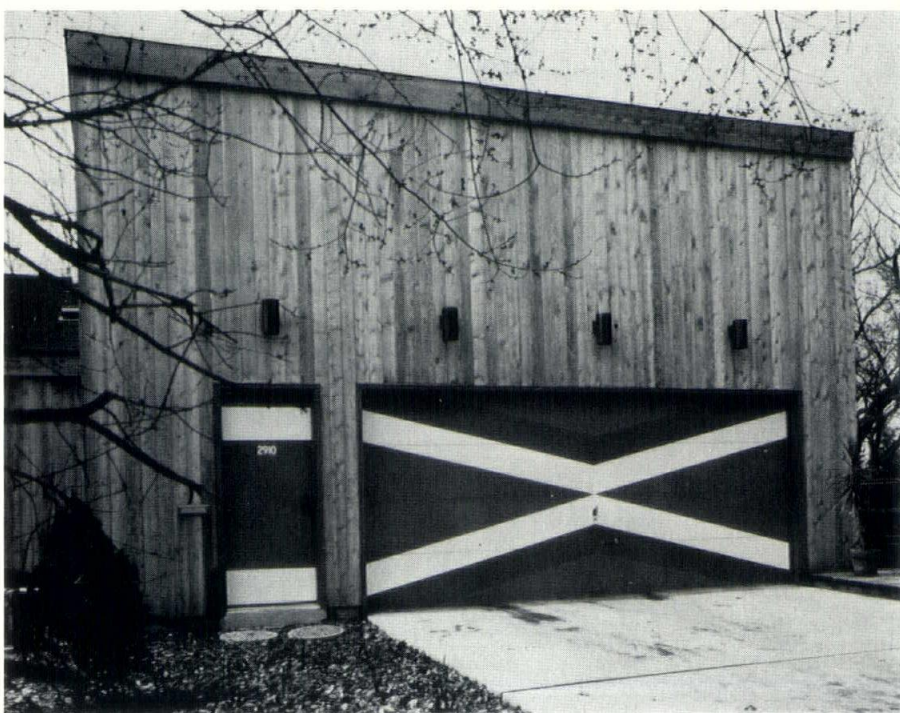
cycles, the architecture of the late fifties and sixties started to discard many of the formalistic rules, and established several new directions. At this writing, some prominent architects are incorporating historic and eclectic references in their work. Another indication of changing sensibilities is the current interest in the Art Deco period of the thirties, until recently overlooked as irrelevant. The pendulum returns. Supergraphics may be seen as one aspect of a broader attempt to provide enrichment that had been absent for decades within the structure of a modern architectural language of bold scale and minimal detail.

Supergraphics also seem derivative of the art movement of the Sixties. The most noticeable influence is the effort to expand the scale, starting with the large abstract expressionist canvases of Jackson Pollock in the

late Forties. Following this trend, through Red Groom's walk-in environments, Christo's wrapped buildings, and Michael Heizer's earth sculptures of the Sixties (so immense that they are best viewed from the air), a concern for expansive size has been prevalent.

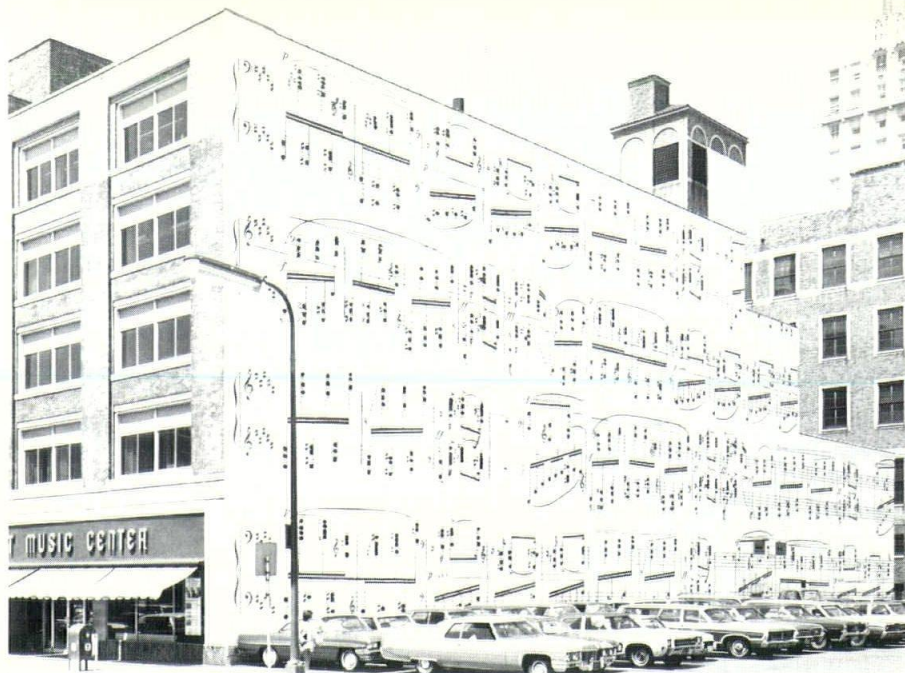
Another influence was the "hard edge" linear geometric orientation, as exhibited by artists like Frank Stella, together with the tendencies toward minimalism, as perceived in the works of Walter Judd. Include the element of whimsy exhibited by the Pop Art Movement generally, and Andy Warhol and Claes Oldenburg specifically, and you have some of the basic ingredients that have provided the context and vocabulary for the Supergraphics phenomena.

The return of decorative enrichment is a result of the necessity to humanize our urban environment and per-



Dan Fox, Designer





*Schmitt Music Center, Minneapolis. Designer: Jill Sprangers* The content of this graphic is obvious reference to the firm which commissioned it. By simply enlarging a musical score (Ravel's 'Gaspard de la Nuit'), an abstraction is created which does not rely on color for impact. The delicate calligraphy against the white surface offers visual relief to an otherwise dreary urban parking lot.

sonalize our interior spaces. Supergraphics, when well executed, tend to energize bland spaces, and make the occupant more aware of his movement

in space in relation to others. In general Supergraphics are a positive reaction to a passive anonymous environment, encouraging participation.

The first emergence of Supergraphics relating to a non-commercial environment was perhaps the publication, in the June 1966 Progressive Architecture issue of Barbara Stauffacher's exterior logo, executed for the Sea Ranch Condominiums, in California, designed by Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, and Whitaker. The concept of super-scaled signage as art and counterpoint to architecture was new in context, if not in content.

The following March 1966 issue features Mrs. Stauffacher's graphics for the Sea Ranch bathhouse. Stauffacher's imagery was admirably suited to Charles Moore's whimsical architectural style. The graphics, in this case not only enhanced the interior, they created it. This publication generated widespread interest in the architectural profession and greatly influenced the work that followed. □

*Mr. Fox is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and heads the Interior Design/Space Planning Department at Ellerbe Architects/Engineers/Planners, Bloomington, Minnesota.*

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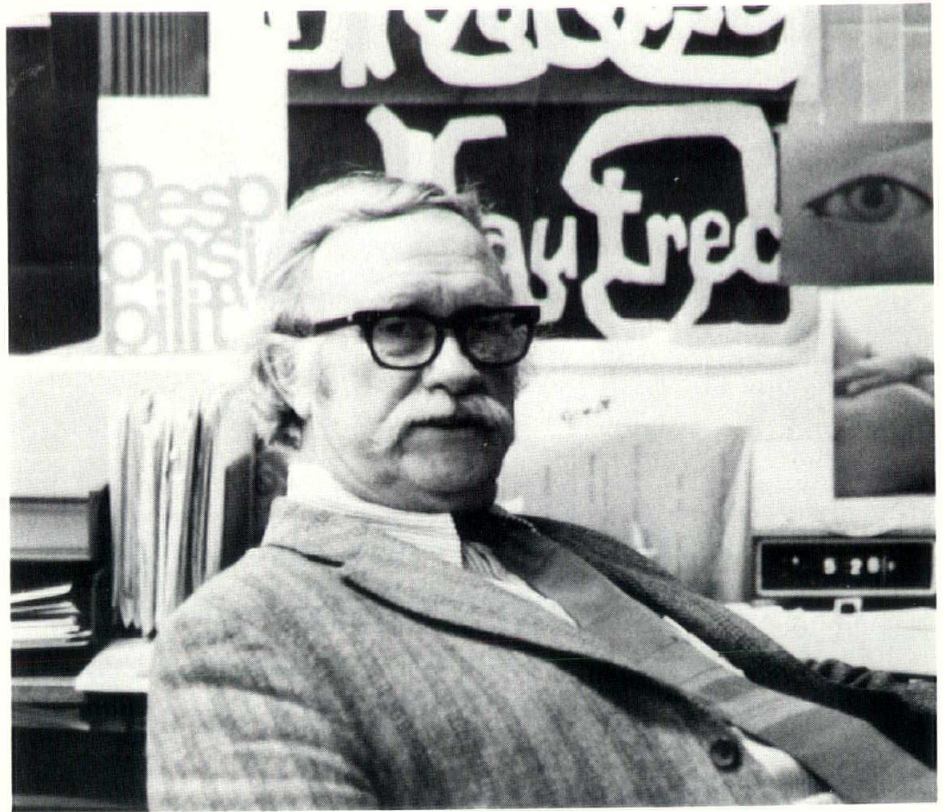
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## RALPH RAPSON

### Artistic Virtuoso



#### Mike Wilkinson

An architect is "a fascinatingly frustrated creative long-hair passing as an artistic and aesthetic virtuoso, yet possessing an exhaustingly inaccurate amount of technical know-all while posing as a practical building expert on the basis of being able to develop, in an impossibly short interval of time, and after innumerable changes, an infinite series of incomprehensible answers calculated with the usual slide rule and computer accuracy from

extremely vague assumptions based on debatably documented data taken from ill-informed apprehensions and painstakingly produced with instruments of problematical precision by a pleasant peasant of dubious reliability, indeterminate integrity, but, of course, monumental mentality for the avowed purpose of beautifying, amazing, and confounding a defenseless and unsuspecting citizenry who are unfortunate enough to have asked for the obvious conclusions in the wrong fashion in the first place."

This definition is Ralph Rapson's



and it raises an important question. Is the area's most prominent architectural figure, a man known for his outspoken nature and staunch defense of principles and professional integrity, really describing himself in this verbose definition?

It is far more interesting to have Ralph Rapson describe himself rather than expound on the general architect whom he likes to label "a scientist and an artist." Ralph Rapson in the local arena, has perhaps better than anyone established the architect as both creator and teacher. He personifies what John Ruskin once said in speaking of buildings and men: "They should do two things of goodness. First, do their practical duty well, and second, that they be graceful and pleasing in doing it."

Rapson has two reputations. The general public knows him for his

Guthrie Theatre, Cedar West project and the Rarig Center for the Performing Arts.

Professional insiders know him for his tenacity, candidness, hard-line positions in protecting what he believes to be professionally and morally right, and impatience with those laymen who think they can design a building as well as, if not better than, any smart-ass, quick-tempered bumpkin from the Midwest.

The latter reputation may be well and good for architecture certainly. Rapson's mettle has been a key ingredient, not only in the design and development of his famed works, but also in seeing that the University of Minnesota School of Architecture he has headed for 21 years has become one of the country's finest.

In both the professional and academic fields, Rapson has been a cutting

edge over the past two decades in a new approach to architecture.

"As an architect," says long-time associate Kay Lockhart, "there is no question that he has raised the level of excellence in this area. Academically, he brought to the University a strong commitment to modern architecture, a progressive staff that he gave a great deal of freedom, and a keen interest in the students with whom he spends over half his time."

Rapson himself displays none of the gruffness or impatience one might expect in a man reputed to be something short of an ogre.

"I tend at times to get hot-tempered," he does confess.

The truth undoubtedly lies somewhere in between Rapson and Rapson's reputation. He certainly displays no reticence in discussing himself, his works, the education of tomorrow's

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architects or where our success or failure has been in meeting urban and architectural needs.

"I think we can achieve a nice balance between architecture as a theoretical art and a realistic one," he says concerning the profession in general terms. "We are often accused of turning out architect graduates who don't produce enough work; they're too busy, we're told, in theoretical types of work. I've always felt that if architectural firms and building planners want that sort of thing they should turn to the vocational-technical schools for their people."

As a practitioner of the art, Rapson enjoys the best of two worlds, his time split between the school and his own firm. He likes that because one complements the other, but readily confesses that if forced into a choice between the two, would probably rather practice than teach and administer. "I'm afraid my urge to create would win out, although I'd certainly be bored as hell if I wasn't in the academic arena." His dual role is advantageous all around, each domain benefiting from the other.

As a result of this, both students at the school and his clients are fortunate enough to benefit from the guidance of this man who has become one of the world's renowned architects. He provides them a storehouse of not just practical experience but also the advantage of having been on the inside of the modern movement in architecture for nearly 40 years. In addition, the vast majority of the school's faculty also have private practices, so their everyday experiences are of great value to the students.

A graduate of the University of Michigan and Cranbrook Academy of Art, Rapson worked for several firms from 1940 to 1942 before becoming head of the Department of Architecture at Chicago's Institute of Design for four years. He then took a faculty position at MIT where he did his first famous works, among them the Eastgate Apartments in Cambridge, Mass. and several European embassies for the State Department. He came to the U of M in 1954. He has served as an architectural consultant for numer-

ous public and private agencies, has extensive experience in urban planning, judges works for international architectural competition, is a member of nearly every professional society in existence and has won well over 50 awards for various works throughout the world.

Rapson's mixed bag of teaching and practicing hasn't, according to Lockhart, caused any of his work to suffer. "Ralph's a very tenacious guy who sticks with a project and who hasn't diverted his interests into other things like business ventures."

Lockhart believes that Rapson's talents as a designer lay in his ability to conceptualize something from its very beginning through its development and into the final stages. He also can quickly translate any abstract idea into three-dimensional drawings." His talent as an illustrator is simply great."

Rapson's works cover a breadth of subject matter from single family resi-

dences to churches to large complexes like Cedar West. Neither Rapson nor any of those close to his work believe there is a single project which best exemplifies his style or approach. Rapson, however, takes satisfaction in certain ones, sometimes more for political and personality obstacles he negotiated than for their inherent problems in design and development.

"I've been satisfied pretty much with everything I've done. I don't think I've designed any 'bombs'. But I guess the Guthrie is a particularly noteworthy accomplishment in my mind because its asymmetrical design was an innovation in theatre and because of the sonofabitch I had to work with."

Rapson's battles with the late Tyrone Guthrie are legendary.

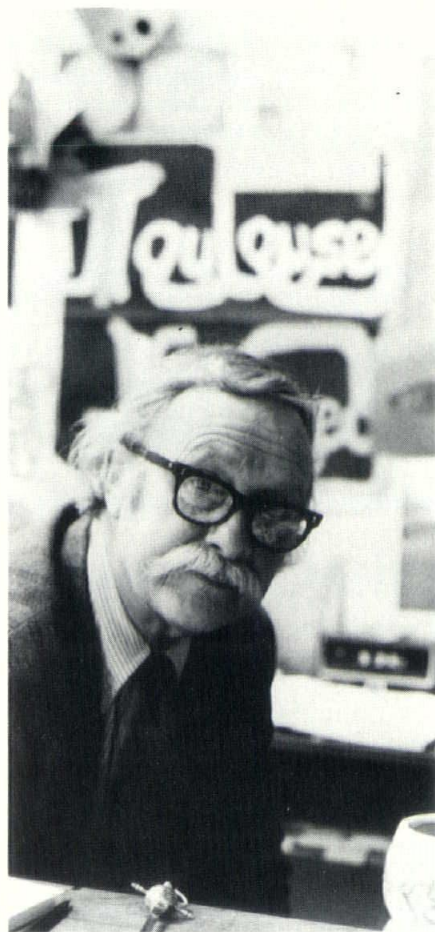
"I got an ulcer doing that job," Rapson recalls. "Dealing with Guthrie was always an uphill battle. He never accepted anything you presented right away. You had to prove it and reprove it. He once told me to keep on drawing and he would let me know when I came up with something right."

Rapson wasn't Sir Tyrone's choice for the project architect. He felt that a theatre which would be a living shrine to him should be designed by him and that Rapson should simply be content to act in the role as draftsman.

"I personally enjoy a good fight and I got it in Guthrie, but was a bit disappointed in him. He had no appreciation of what an architect was. Since architects and theatrical people are both in the field of creating, I expected him to be more appreciative of the architect's role as designer."

Today, Rapson still shakes his head when thinking about that unlikely alliance a decade ago.

"A number of times I thought about telling him to go to hell and walking out. In fact, part way through the project I threatened to do just that. At a meeting involving us and the building committee, he had the gall to openly suggest that a New York architect be hired to come in and do the elevations (building exteriors). I went through the roof. I told them all that if they even contemplated it, I was through. I stood up, rolled up the drawings we were looking at, and







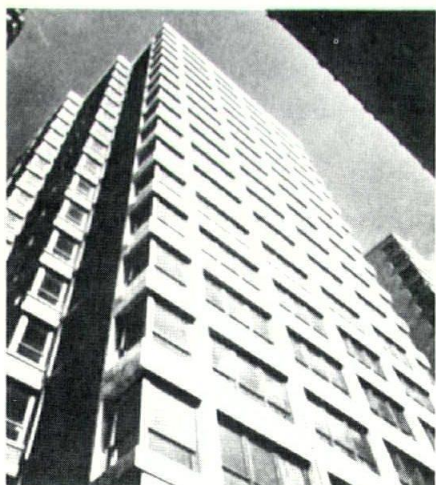
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started to leave. They called me back, I calmed down, and the matter was dropped then and there."

Such occurrences are really uncommon for Rapson. Whatever notoriety he has gained as a result of confrontations with a few well-known public figures, has been offset by far more amiable relationships with the vast majority of his clients and colleges. Rapson's work on smaller projects, like private homes or small churches and chapels, have been highlighted by cordial relationships between himself and the clients.

"One piece of work of which I am very proud is the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church for the Deaf in Saint Paul. It was as much the relationship with the people there as it was the end product which gave me a good feeling." Rapson fondly recalls how the mute parishioners would express their appreciation of his work by a hearty slap on the back.

On all the projects done by the firm, Rapson handles the initial work while a great deal of the development work is handled by associates. "Nothing really goes in and out of the office that I am not aware of," he answered frankly when asked if two positions

forces him to relegate a great deal of authority to subordinates.

As the private practitioner, he feels he has a duty to protect the relationship between the architect, client and builder. He sees a threat to the profession as more and more "package builders" over the past several years "have eroded away at the traditional role of the architect. There also have been several intrusions made into the architect's domain by urbanologists and cost manager types."

However, he does see a trend developing whereby architects are starting to broaden their copes, in part to protect themselves. "Larger and larger firms are being formed, firms that provide greater services for their customers. Today's architect is becoming more of a generalist. Consequently, we are under more pressure as teachers to provide instruction to students in an increasing variety of non-architectural subjects. That is next to impossible because the technical course load is demanding enough. With the trends going in that direction, I sometimes wonder if we will ever see future development of the Renaissance man."

What needs to be taught, Rapson argues, is process, giving the student

an idea of the procedures involved. "The difficulty become one of teaching all that and having it apply to the student's creativity. I'm not certain that we do that. Based on the historical role of education, I'm not certain whether we really ever give students a full chance to develop their natural creativity."

The School of Architecture has been recently criticized by some local architects for not providing students enough instruction in areas of business. "That is tough to do at the academic level," Rapson responds. "Those kinds of experiences can really only be gained once in the profession."

Whatever criticisms have been leveled, there is no denying the important role the school has played as a training institution.

"I certainly believe we are one of the top design schools in the country. When I came here and we started putting things together, we were accused of too much in-breeding when it came to filling staff assignments. I really don't see that it has made a difference in the caliber of teaching simply because most of our staff is

*(continued on page 43)*

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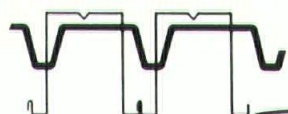
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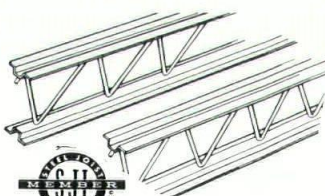
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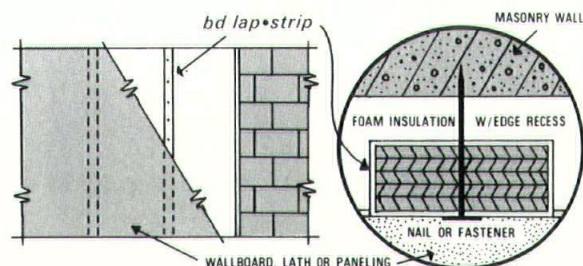
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# RAPSON,

*(continued from page 41)*

from this school. The staff is design-oriented because that is our basic philosophy. But they still provide capable leadership in other areas."

The students who are the recipients of this guidance are, Rapson believes, more inquiring than a few years ago. "They certainly are less willing to accept dogma. I don't know if the architects we are turning out now are more intelligent or necessarily well-trained. I look back to when some of our present staff were students and I recall how good they were back then. Today's students certainly arrive here with good backgrounds, particularly in the sciences and math. That isn't critical however. A lot of architects, including myself, just got by in math and science."

He says there still is an anti-establishment feeling among many students despite the move away from the provocative nature of the late Sixties and early Seventies. "But I don't get very excited about it," he smiles.

He finds it interesting to watch the trends develop in architecture as each new generation makes its influence more strongly felt. He avoids making forecasts as to what we can expect to see develop in design in the years ahead.

"Architecture has taken in the role of being somewhat of a social science in that the populist movement is developing and moving towards creating structures which convey an understanding of people. I'm not certain as to whether that philosophy is all that new because I think architecture has been trying to achieve that all along. I notice a bit of insecurity on the part of some architects as they become frustrated in trying to look for a panacea which will lead urban society out of its problems."

Rapson sits pretty much atop the local scene, his involvement with Twin Cities architecture including several years of work with local housing, urban renewal and planning agencies. He basically is pleased with what is happening here, adding that Minneapolis and Saint Paul are somewhat of a mecca of good American architecture. "Among the five or six best. Certainly in the Midwest, this area is tops. Let's face it, you don't go to Milwaukee to see good design."

"Several years ago, before his

death, I bumped into Eero Saarinen in an airport. We had some time to kill and sat down for a drink. He told me he felt the Twin Cities had reached a high level of accomplishment in architecture. He said it wasn't great, but good. I think we have risen from the level he talked about then. We have a natural setting here with the parks and lakes that lend themselves to planning a sound urban environment. But at the same time, I get irritated with some of the locals who are forever bragging that we are doing such marvelous things. Christ, if you took away the

trees, we'd have a couple of pretty ugly cities on our hands."

"The planning of the freeway system has been terribly shortsighted and the park system hasn't really been expanded to any degree since it was first built. Still, I think we are ahead of the vast majority of cities in the way we plan and carry out our overall building program. Basically, we are doing a good job."

One thing Rapson sees happening, albeit a bit late, is the move to preserve historical buildings in the area. The

*(continued on page 46)*



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# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Peter Rand

Have you had several questions pent up inside just waiting to be sprung on the first architect you meet? With *Architecture Minnesota* you now have the opportunity to ask. The purpose of this column will be to let you, the reader, sound off on matters related to the architectural profession in general and specific building problems in particular. By sending us your questions, you're plugging in to a source of over 600 design professionals capable of serving you.

If you're wondering what kind of questions to ask, let me illustrate. There are essentially two types: those dealing specifically with practical, down-to-earth, "how to" problems and

those related to the more abstract questions of goals, new directions, and attitudes within the architectural profession.

First, let's look at some examples of the practical type of question.

"What is the best insulation for my house?"

"Can anything be done to design apartments with better security?"

"Does Minnesota offer any unique construction materials I can use in making an all-Minnesota house?"

"How do I select the right architect for my company or community project?"

"How does one build and maintain a sod roof?"

Now let's look at some of the more abstract questions we'll discuss period-

ically (emotional questions to many architects, I might add).

"Is there a "Minnesota school/style of architect?"

"Is good design really a necessity or can we survive without it?"

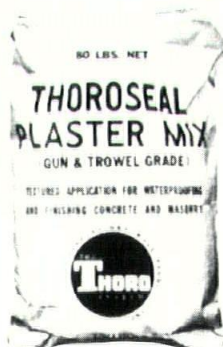
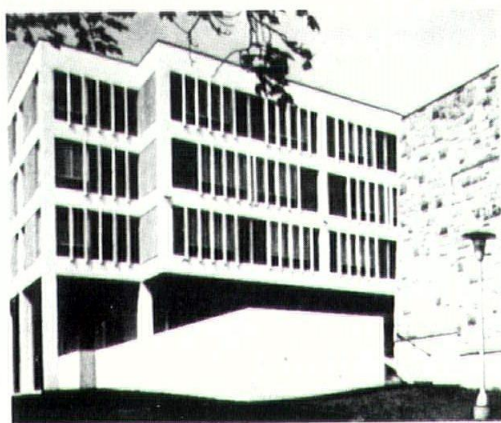
"Why are individuals rather than firms registered to practice architecture?"

"What are some of the cliches or marks of style that will allow us to identify today's architecture fifty years from now?"

"Why is out-of-state architectural talent so often used to design buildings in Minnesota?"

"Is there any building that does not really need the hand of an architect?"

Hopefully you've got questions like these which need answering. If so please



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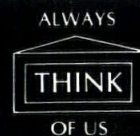
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send them in. We'll try to respond to each one with an answer or directions on how to get the answer.

Since this is the first of a question-and-answer column, it is my plight to anticipate future reader questions by offering one of my own. (If you want your reading of future issues to be lively and fun, be sure to send in your own questions.)

Let me illustrate how this column will function in the future. You, the reader, may ask, "What with the high cost of energy today and all the new fangled ideas I've heard about solar energy, can I put solar energy to use in my house today?"

Yes! The details of the how and the cost are too broad for extensive discussion here, but let me briefly describe one system and how you might proceed.

The technology to capture and utilize the sun's power has been around for quite sometime. Today we are at the point in mastering and refining this technology as we were in making computers in the 1950's. You can be the first one on your block to own one but improvements and cost savings will accelerate for several years to come.

Nevertheless, you can purchase and install a solar collector today. This device is essentially a sandwich of glass, piping, and a dark, heat-absorbing panel. The sun's heat is absorbed by the dark panel and transferred to water in the piping. This water is circulated for use in a hot water tank or for domestic heating. The solar energy absorbed may also be transmitted to storage in a rock bin, water tank, or the earth itself.

Various other conversion systems exist today as do numerous manufacturers of equipment. Several large companies like GE, Honeywell and Westinghouse are currently involved in research, development, and manufacture of solar energy products. These are joined by a myriad of other smaller firms and research groups.

The following contacts might be helpful if you wish to proceed post haste.

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*Peter Rand is Director of Public Relations for Setter, Leach and Lindstrom, Inc., Architects and Engineers, in Minneapolis, and Chairman of the Minnesota Society of Architects' Public Communications Committee.*

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# RAPSON

(continued from page 43)

fight has been difficult and he gets upset with his colleagues who fail to put their beliefs on the line.

"When the plans were revealed to demolish the Metropolitan Building, we tried to get local architects to commit themselves to moving into it so as there would be the tenants

necessary to save it. Only five or six volunteered."

He supports the concept of select high-density housing in the cities. His Cedar West design has won national acclaim and despite the problems now surrounding the project, he believes the original intentions were good.

"Cedar Riverside Associates has been maligned to some extent. I think the concept is a noble one and the results show a good socio-economic profile concerning the inhabitants. I wouldn't argue for high-density hous-

ing in most places. But this site is a very good one. The land cost and the proximity to downtown Minneapolis and the University are a plus."

Rapson says the developers backed themselves into a corner without realizing it, including an original plan of setting rent levels and never raising them. "They got caught in a bind and had trouble getting out of it once that approach became totally unrealistic."

He places a large share of the blame for the failure of new community projects on the federal government, arguing that strong bases of support for such projects dwindled at the federal level, particularly during the Nixon years. That lack of support simply helped drive nails into the coffins of most projects.

While criticism of Cedar Riverside has grown over the past several months, Rapson has pretty much remained out of the firing line. In fact, he recalls, architectural critics have given him few problems over the years.

"I have had very few run-ins with them. If anything, I think on the whole we could use far more of them. Certainly on the local scene." He does feel many critics often lack the background he thinks necessary to do critiques on architectural projects. "Too often they seem preoccupied with only the visual aspects of a building and don't take into consideration some of the original problems like the cost

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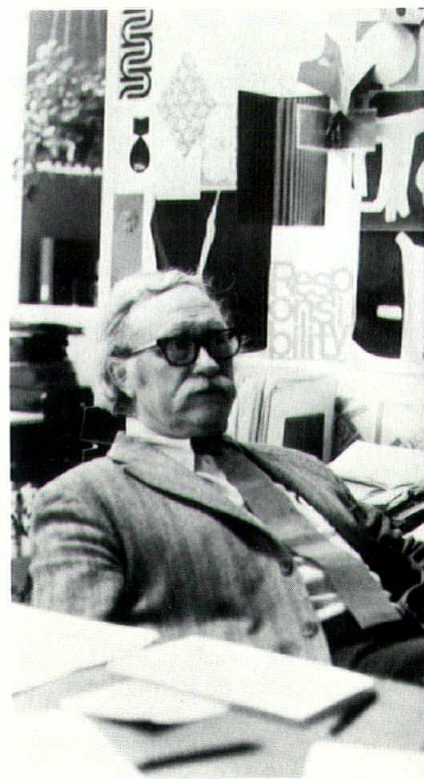
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factors, the building site and the client."

Rapson spends little time exploring the work of others, at least for getting ideas for future projects.

"I try to respond naturally to each project," his approach being to try to resist cliches and to strive towards something that isn't tricky or mannered.

"When initiating a project, I do what seems to be an endless series of drawings in an attempt to work out the bad crap on the thing and to move towards simplicity."

Sometime back, Rapson formulated a presentation entitled "Ten Commandments of Environmental Design" in which he discusses what he believes to be the major aspects of sound design development. They are: 1) Need for Historical Continuity; 2) Concern for Regional Context; 3) Site Considerations; 4) Functional Integrity in Planning; 5) Structural Integrity; 6) Integrity of Technological Advantage; 7) Creative Space; 8) The Need for Architectural Expression; 9) Understanding and Utilizing the Potential of the Period; and 10) Totality of Concept and Totality of Act.

"I make little claim to their

originality or their inclusiveness. In my own work I try to do work with integrity and vigor within this general framework. Admittedly, one or another of these points, depending upon the nature of the project, will take precedence in a specific situation. It is nonetheless basic to my philosophy that creative architecture is all inclusive and all engrossing."

As a man at the forefront of modern design, Rapson displays "an honest appreciation for my own limitations" when it comes to predicting emerging philosophies of design, saying simply he is not "sufficiently wise" to do so. But he does display a philosophy which nicely sums up one of the underlying reasons to his great success.

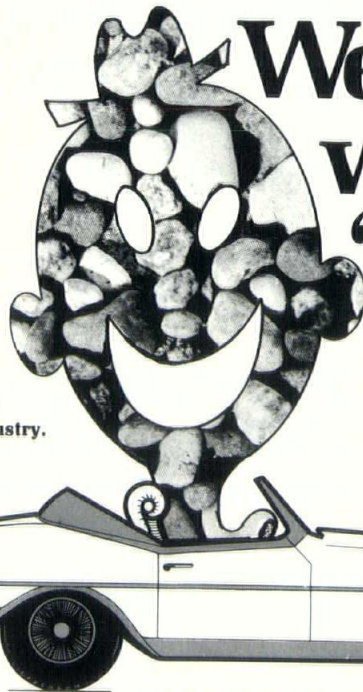
"One of history's most positive lessons is the lesson that at any narrow dogma, whether political, technical or aesthetic, gives way because it results in more and greater problems than it solves." □

Mike Wilkinson is a freelance writer and public relations consultant. He is also the Twin Cities' correspondent for Building Design and Architecture.

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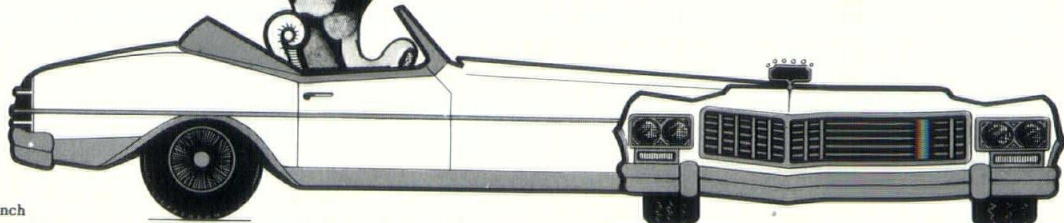
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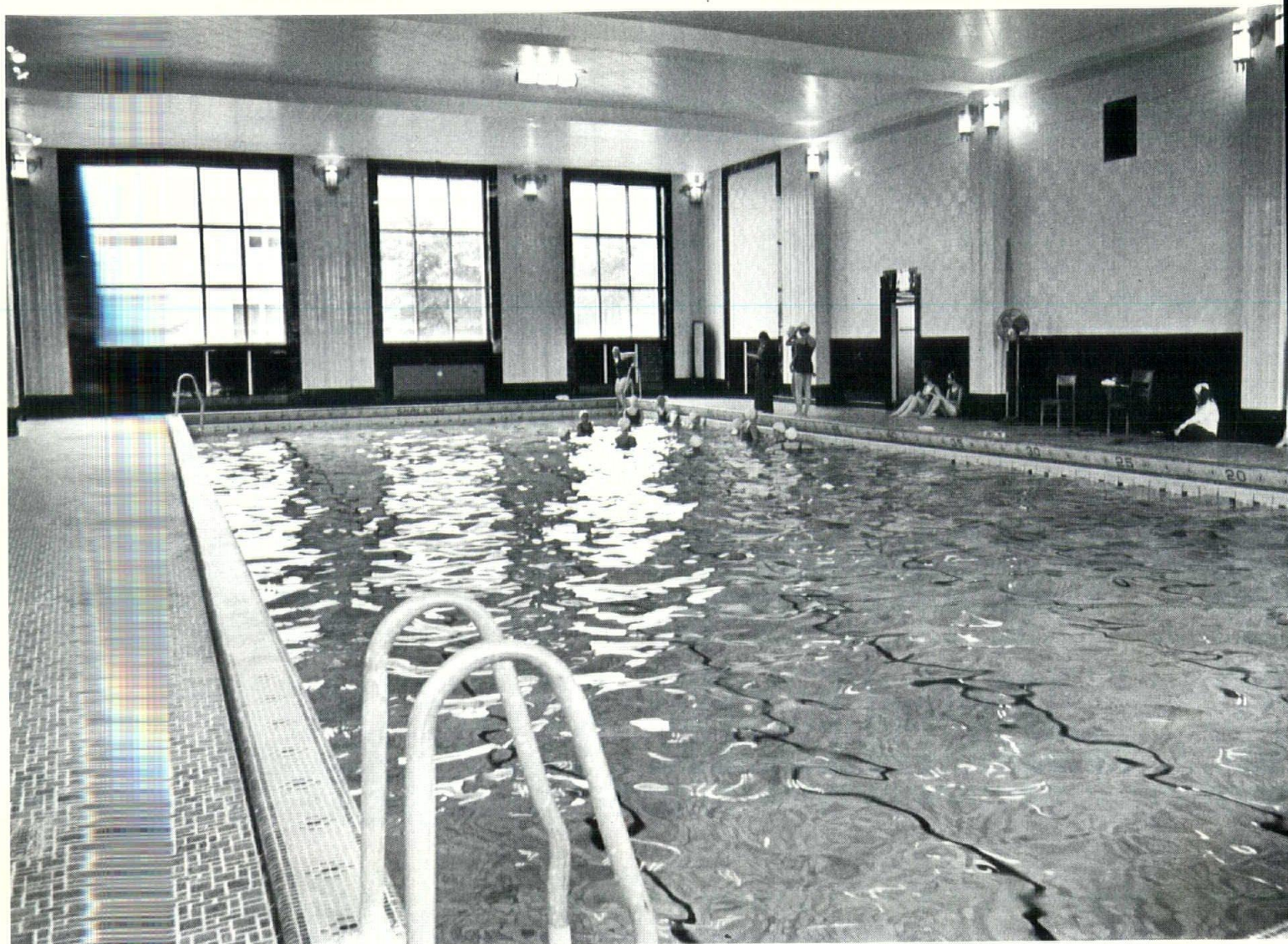
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# BOOKS

*Recollections in black and white* by Eric Sloane. N.Y., Walker & Co., 1974. \$10.00.

Sloane contemplated a book on black and white drawings when he first began his career as a pen and ink artist. Now, five decades later, he has published that book, and seasoned it with the nostalgic autobiographical observations of a lifetime as an artist. Neither particularly impressive nor exceptional, the drawings, coupled with the text, manage to evoke a tender, though fleeting, charm.

*The great houses of San Francisco* by Curt Bruce. N.Y., Knopf, 1974. \$12.95.

This is a wonderful photographic exploration of one of America's most

enchancing cities, accompanied by a lively text. Both public buildings and private dwellings are sampled, and one of the primary delights is the emphasis on architectural detail. All pictures are black and white with the exception of eight magnificent stained glass windows.

*Urban Spaces* by David K. Specter. New York Graphic Society, 1974. \$15.00.

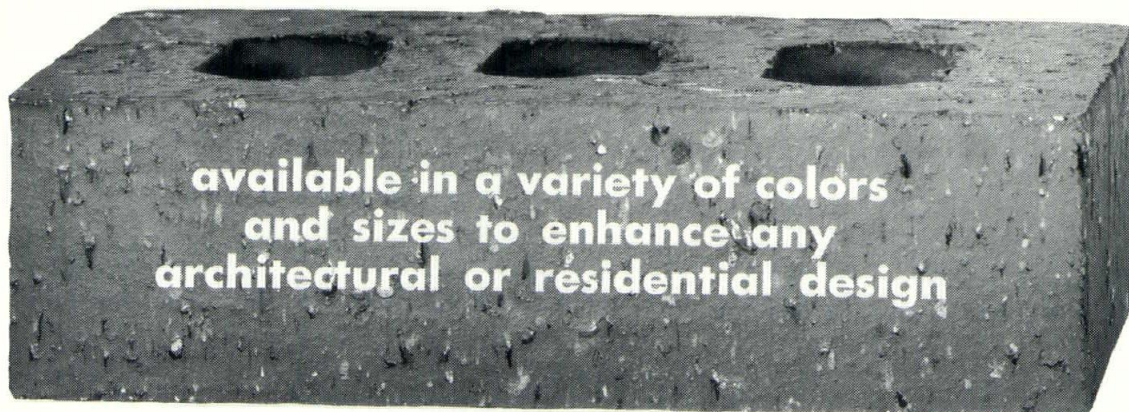
This book of mostly excellent, sensitive photographs is not something to add to the coffee table collection and forget. Its purpose is not only serious but urgent: the essence of a city is determined by its graciousness, comfort, and beauty as well as its functionality.

*The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright* by William A. Storrer. A complete catalogue. M.I.T. Press, 1974. \$9.95.

For the first time, all the buildings designed by Wright that have been constructed are documented in one publication. Furthermore, the book includes a short commentary and picture of each extant structure, a unique name (usually that of the original client), the date of conception, location, and even a catalogue number. (Future students of architecture may refer to Wright's buildings as "Storrer 209," or "Storrer 117.")

*Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture* by Charles Jencks. Harvard University Press, 1973. \$13.95.

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One of the first truly dispassionate studies to appear since Le Corbusier's death, this book is both fascinating and accessible. It contains a great many direct quotes from the architect as well as numerous photographs never before published.

*The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* by Robert A. Caro. Knopf, 1974. \$17.95.

This is an enormous, thoroughly-documented biography about the brilliant, arrogant, cunning, vastly energetic man who wielded enough power and influence to be labeled the "creator" of New York.

*Architecture in Italy, 1400-1600* Ludwig H. Hendenreich and Wolfgang Lotz. Penguin, 1974. \$49.50.

A descriptive, rather than interpretive work, this book is probably the most comprehensive and reliable introduction to Italian Renaissance architecture available. It contains 360 plates and an extensive bibliography.

*Observations on American Architecture* by Ivan Chermayeff. N.Y., Viking Press, 1972. \$16.95.

Basically, the observations are a series of splendid photographs, many in color, with sparse commentary. Buildings range from seventeenth century churches to the glass towers of the seventies.

*Barns: Their History, Preservation, and Restoration* by Charles Kalmkin. N.Y., Hawthorn Books, 1973. \$11.95.

A rather dispiriting collection of decaying and collapsed barns opens this photographic essay, but the outlook brightens in each succeeding chapter. The last half deals with finding a barn to remodel and examines three actual renovations. Some of the pictures seem slightly fuzzy or over-expose, possibly a consequence of their being reproduced for this fairly inexpensive publication.

*A History of Architecture on the Disparative Method* by Forrest Wilson. N.Y. Van Nostrand, 1974. \$2.50.

Whimsical line drawings, dreadful puns and double entendre are the most delightful feature of this little book. The text, a satirical imitation of Sir Banister Fletcher's *History of Architecture on the Comparative*

*Method*, is sometimes disappointing but occasionally hilarious.

*How to Decorate Model Homes and Apartments* by Carole Eichen. N.Y. House and Home Press, 1974. \$24.95.

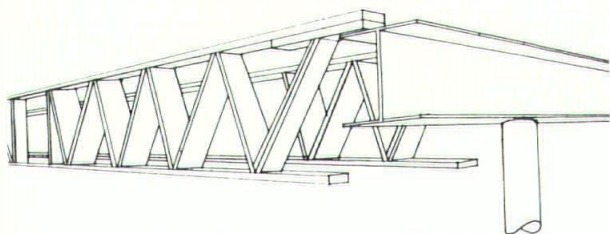
It's like paging through a very expensive *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine, but thousands of clients all over America are begging to live with exactly what this book contains. It offers nothing exciting, nor intensely personal, nor outrageous, not even high kitsch.

*Woodstock Handmade Houses* by Jonathan Elliott. N.Y. Ballantine, 1974. \$5.95.

Some of the houses in this book are truly beautiful while others are best described by the cliché "a nice place to visit..." Nevertheless, the pictures, all in color, are worth the price. □

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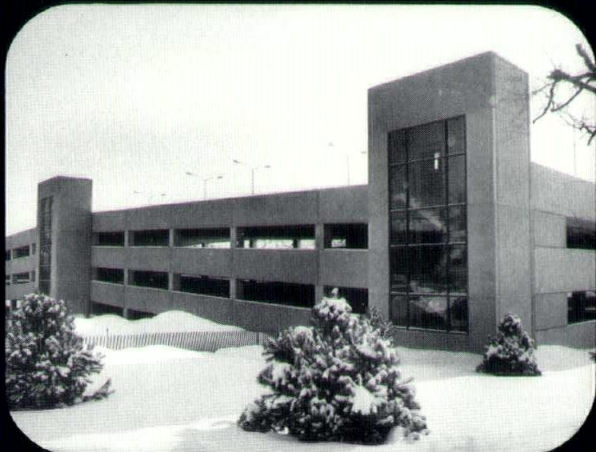
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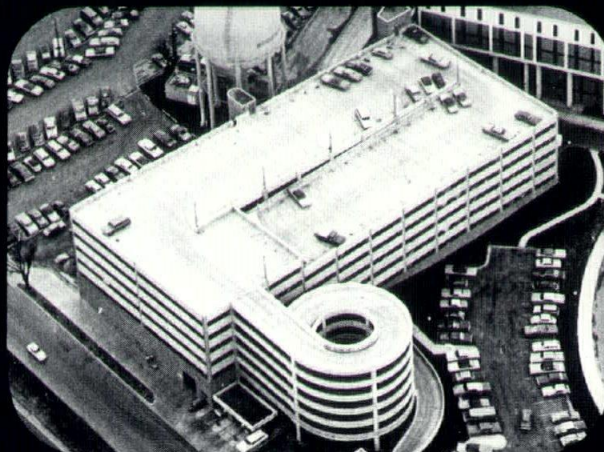


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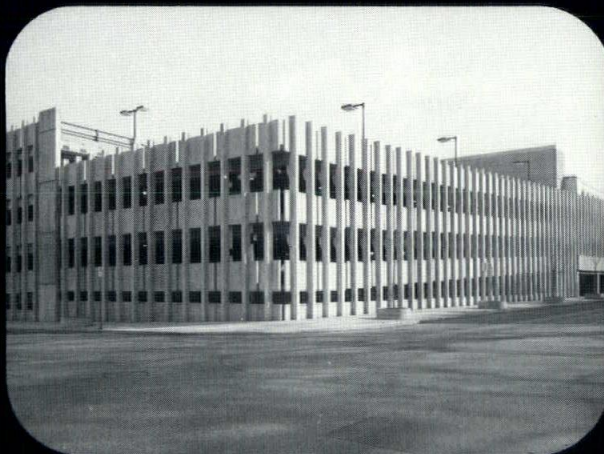
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