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ARCHITECT, HAVE A HEART!

by

Milo Baughman

My family and I vacationed in my home country, Southern California, two summers ago and we discovered a new architectural phenomenon there that I shall label The Hansel and Gretel Architecture. We saw unfolding before us tract after tract of houses that looked as I remember fairy tale houses looked in my childhood books. They were decorated with, among other surprising things, a cluster of phony bird holes painted up under the eaves. There must be whole flocks of neurotic birds flying around Southern California, poor frustrated creatures, who at one time or another tried to poke their heads into these painted holes.

But Ah!, you say, this could only happen in kooky Southern California, and what relevance does it all have to us sober folk here in Charlotte? But there is a relevance. The Hansel and Gretel architecture does not merely reflect the bizarre taste Southern California is notorious for, it suggests something more than this, something that has a universal meaning.

Life in this sprawling greater Los Angeles area, like most such urban-suburban areas in the United States, is a fast, pressured, crowded life. It's a life that can perhaps best be described as too damned 20th Century! And I think it is precisely this that drives these people through their quaint little gates and into their quaint little Mother Goose houses. Not to live in this century, but to get the heck out of it! Who wants to be so damned contemporary? Being modern is an exhausting business. Let's find a little respite at least at home. So in this pressure-cooker life we live, home becomes an all important sanctuary. Or, as a friend of mine puts it, home is where you can assume a prenatal position and turn the blanket up to Very Warm. Home, in short, is escape. Home is protection, privacy, an emotional shelter, a place where you can take your shoes off. To the architecturally unenlightened public, what better form can all this take but the cozy cottage look of Hansel and Gretel (or Grand Southern Colonial).

I go into all this because I believe it brings to light two things. The first is the vital consideration that should be given to the emotional or if you will, the psychological needs of people in relation to their architectural environment — the interior spaces of their home in which they live their truest lives. The second thing that is brought painfully to light is how gross our failure has been to meet these needs within the framework of sound contemporary design. Nothing could be further removed from good contemporary architecture than these Hansel and Gretel houses or,

(Continued on page 18)
The house was designed for a middle age couple with a family of three girls and one boy. Entertaining and family living are emphasized. The Owners have a love for the ageless, comfortable, well worn, and obviously quality things of life that get more beautiful with use and asked that the house reflect this feeling. A strong integration of house with site was required. No period architecture was requested but a feeling of growth out of the past rather than a break was thought desirable. The house was designed to require a minimum of servants and to allow areas to be closed off for extended periods as children grow up and leave home.

Two large old trees, a hickory and a post oak, were incorporated to enhance and provide shade, especially on the deck. A slope, and view to the east are enjoyed from the porch and deck as well as Master Bedroom and glimpsed from Living Room, Dining Room and Recreation Room. Most of house, is on one level, but because of slope to the east, part of the house, bedrooms, are on a basement level.
RESIDENCE OF MRS. HARRY VALE
southern pines

architects:
AUSTIN & FAULK
southern pines

general contractor:
Van Thomas, Inc.
siler city

photographs:
Gordon H. Schenck, Jr.
charlotte
The clients are a recently married middle-aged couple whose two principal requirements were an intimate apartment for themselves with entry, private Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen and Master Bedroom, and at the same time, a complete home large enough to entertain frequent weekend guests, including children and grandchildren by previous marriages. Other client desires were to make the Owner’s and guests’ areas easily divisible; to conceal the carport from the drive; to provide a significant swimming pool area; and to provide ample entertaining space indoors and outdoors with privacy from the neighbors.

The raw site was a two acre suburban lot with a beautifully wooded hillside topped with a barren treeless plain. Access to the site is from the narrow public road which winds around the property and through the small valley below. The problem of siting was to allow the residential functions to take advantage of the wooded hillside and to turn the treeless plain into an asset instead of an eyesore.

The entrance into the site was located along the higher level side of the property which resulted in an approach above the cave line. A sculptural play of masonry wall elements was evolved, in order to express the enclosure of interior and exterior spaces and to provide contrast with the flat roof planes.

To achieve the desired duality of the client’s major requirements, yet preserve an aesthetic and functional integrity, the plan was conceived with a guest wing sufficiently remote from the Owner’s apartment for privacy but so integral a part of the whole house that guests and Owner can easily move from one area to the other.

In order to impart to the work a quality of continuing visual freshness and interest, the house was designed as a series of gradually revealed views, as the occupant passes through a series of forms, volumes and elements. The house can never be seen completely or fully from any one vantage point. Neither are the principal volumes completely experienced without movement through the space. Example: From behind the concealing landscaped mounds, one is visually unaware of the entrance until, arriving at the overlook, he can see the sunken court and pool. Example: The Living Room is entered, not directly from the Entry Hall, but around the fireplace so that the space opens up vertically and horizontally to the visitor.
RESIDENCE OF
MR. AND MRS. M. L. SECHREST
high point

architects:
WM. F. FREEMAN, INC.
high point

general contractor:
Cagle and Wallace, Contractors,
high point
RESIDENCE OF
MR. AND MRS. W. A. GOFF
southern pines

architects:
HAYES, HOWELL & ASSOCIATES
southern pines

general contractor:
D. M. Rollins
vass
A family of four children whose main interest (business as well as hobby) is horses necessitated a house being somewhat removed from stables, yet near enough for business purposes. An atmosphere for both formal and informal living was provided with areas for entertaining large and small groups. The house was designed to accommodate early American furniture and oriental rugs. Unusually large clothes storage space was required for the hunting apparel used by all family members. Main feature of the house is the open central court accessible to all areas.
House for a Professor of Mathematics and his wife and two small children, with spaces for entertaining with the ability to close off the family area easily on such occasions. Master bedroom, kitchen and living room to take advantage of view.

The house is set on the crest of a hill in 2½ acres of pasture land 600 feet back from the Raleigh/Durham Highway with a fine view to the North of a grove of sycamores bordering Crabtree Creek which screens the house from the highway.

A continuous clerestory window to the South lights the central hallway, dining room and living room allowing direct sunlight to penetrate these spaces from midday to late afternoon.

The approach to the house from the highway is by means of a private road bridging the creek and winding around the site to the crown of the hill to the entrance court on the South side formed by a screen and the carport.

**RESIDENCE OF**
**DR. & MRS. LEROY B. MARTIN, JR.**
raleigh

**architect:**
**BRIAN SHAWCROFT, AIA, ARIBA**
raleigh

**general contractor:**
C. S. Witt
durham

Photographs by Brian Shawcroft
ARCHITECT HAVE A HEART (con't from p. 9)

for that matter, the phony colonial confections of New England and its equivalent in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Where did we go wrong? In a sense we went wrong by becoming modernists in the first place and leaving the rest of humanity behind. We went wrong by too quickly swallowing all the party line thinking without enough heartfelt questioning. We accepted the definition, for example, that Form Must Follow Function without really understanding the total meaning of function. We accepted the slogan, “A House is a Machine for Living” without fully grasping what really living in a house should mean. In short, we put design principles before our people, and somewhat misunderstood principles at that. We intellectualized our own humanness, and our client’s emotional needs right out the plate glass window. Our concern for attaining the right identity in our field — of gaining the approval of the critics and of our fellow designers got in the way. We built cold monuments to ourselves rather than warm homes for our clients.

How are we to understand “function”? However exactly we may define this term it must be understood in its broadest and certainly its deepest sense. To talk only about the mechanical or physical workability, or utility does not get at the meaning of function. These are necessary ingredients but more significant to our discussion is how an object, or a space environment functions in terms of eliciting the right kind of emotional response. The question: Does this chair, or this room in this house really work? can only be answered in terms of the kind of deeper responses the chair or the room have evoked. If these responses are not the right ones, no amount of logical rationalization will make any difference. Such rational thought comes from the level of reason and the conscious and does not reach down to the level where we really live. Think for a moment how little to do with logic the things in life that matter most have to do: Falling in love, religious beliefs, loyalty to causes, and so on. It is difficult to be entirely rational in explaining these most crucial phenomena. Should, then, criteria for the kind of house we should be designing be framed in essentially logical terms? We leave out the heart of the matter, and of the house if we do.

Let me tell you now about a specific house that pinpoints, somewhat in the extreme, this failure of ours to consider carefully enough the more human requirements. It is a house much publicized in the best magazines — a magnificent glass box sitting on concrete stilts overlooking a Connecticut woods. Or at least this is the part one sees in the photograph. Actually there’s more to this house, a kind of stepchild lower level called the Family Wing. We’ll go into this in a moment. But up in the glass box we find a kitchen, but it isn’t really a kitchen, or it doesn’t look like it. It’s all concealed behind flush mitered rosewood cabinetry — very sheer, one catchup bottle left out, however, tends to spoil the whole effect. The rest of the glass box is devoted to what’s designated on the plan as Reception area (something that used to be known as the “Living Room”). Here we find the formula of two Mies Van De Rhoe chairs, his glass topped table and his chaise — that’s a sofa without a back or arms — again very sheer. Now when this reception area is the scene of the almost monthly cocktail party, it is very exhilarating indeed. People seem more clever, or at least they try harder to be in this snazzy environment — It does something to you.

In the meantime, the children are all downstairs in the combination laundry and playroom huddled before the television set. This is the “heart” of the so-called Family Wing and is at best an after thought. The family, incidentally, who lives in this house is composed of a mother and a father, 5 children, a grandmother and assorted dogs, cats and turtles. But between cocktail parties for the mother and father, and for practically all the time for the rest, this dug-out with little tiny windows that hides itself underneath the magnificent glass box is where life goes on. The little kids seem to sense the inappropriateness of their scale in the high ceilinged glass box upstairs, and certainly everyone can see how incongruous their comic books look on the chaste Mies glass topped coffee table. This downstairs catacomb is admittedly a bachelor architect’s idea of a good place to hide the family. After all, the kids and grandma may be just as happy to watch TV amongst the laundry baskets — or they could always go to bed. But for $100,000.00 one can’t help but expect something more. Now why does the family hide away in this dugout below? The architect wasn’t being deliberately mean, he thought he was doing right: Give this perfectly average, though rich, American family an aesthetic experience they will never forget. Lift them off the level of the ordinary. Instead he drove them underground. What important ingredient did he leave out?

I want you to answer this question for yourself; but to suggest part of the answer, certainly it can be questioned whether people want to be so exposed as they are in this magnificent glass box. In the laundry room there were at least three solid walls enclosing them. The ceiling is not dramatically high. A few scattered comic books do not create visual devastation. A chair canted out of place does not upset the aesthetic balance of things. In short, this room truly shelters and makes few demands on its occupants. It serves its occupants and not the other way around. This particular architect failed, though this house, as most of his houses, was heralded as terribly important. But perhaps that’s what’s wrong with it, its importance. A house that is too important a piece of architecture may actually inhibit the life therein. A good house must include, not preclude the ordinariness of living. If it does not, the house exerts a tyrannically stifling influence over its captive occupants. The moral responsibility the designer has to his client’s family is clear.
But to bring this down to the concrete, what are some possible solutions? To begin with we must look as I have suggested, much more closely at our slogans. Let us take the one already mentioned, “Form Follows Function.”

On the one hand we have this: The bauhaus architect Hannes Meyer is reported to have said that “it is an absurdity to talk about the modern style in terms of aesthetics at all. If a building provides adequately, completely and without compromise for its purpose it is ... a good building, regardless of its appearance.” (Lewis Mumford, Roots of Contemporary American Architecture.)

To balance this we have the following comment by the architect Walter Gropius: “The slogan fitness for purpose (that is, form evolved from function) equals beauty is only half true. When do we call a human face beautiful? Every face is fit for its purpose in its parts, but only perfect proportions and colors in a well-balanced harmony deserve that title of honor: beautiful.” (Gropius, Scope of Total Architecture.)

We can understand this principle to include, within the scope of the total meaning of function, the purpose to please. This is accomplished in various ways. To take but one example, the emotional need for certain decorative refinements, even pure ornamentation, and sometimes even a frank look of richness should be met. Occasionally, the very structure can supply this need, and thus, ornamentation is achieved directly and integrally. But this is not always possible — and here is where the purist designer must unlimber some of his more rigid attitudes. Sometimes the form must become more ornamental, rather than less, for this might be the more appropriate and more deeply satisfying note to strike. Such a decision must not be arrived at too easily. Ornamentation must never be superficially applied to disguise a basic poverty in the form. It must always be valid and necessary to the purpose of the design. Thus, seen in this more total way, “Function” encompasses far more than mere utility. This broader understanding of function, or purpose — from which form is evolved — can be seen, if you will, even to include accommodation of at least some of the minor needs of the soul.

I would like to add this comment by Rudolph Arnheim, “The endeavor of an architect and his clients must indeed start with a commitment to the purposes of the building — but not just as a useful object whose usefulness deserves to be shown, but as an object whose function translated into a corresponding pattern of visual behavior will enhance the spirit of our existence and conduct as human beings.”

A building, a house, in other words, that brings out the best in us, that does not overawe us and does not starve us emotionally, a house in short that does not leave us cowering in the corner, but makes us feel at home. *(From an article in the Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Fall 1964, by Rudolph Arnheim.)*
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NCAIA FALL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR SOUTHERN PINES

The annual fall meeting of the North Carolina Chapter of The American Institute of Architects will be held at the Mid-Pines Club, Southern Pines, on Saturday, October 23, beginning at 10:00 A.M.

At this time officers and directors of the Chapter will be elected to take office, January 1, 1966. Also included on the program will be a committee workshop for the various Chapter committees.

Tentative plans call for a luncheon speaker from the headquarters of The American Institute of Architects.

RALEIGH COUNCIL ELECTS OFFICERS

At the regular monthly meeting of the Raleigh Council of Architects, held at the YMCA on Thursday, September 9, the following were elected to serve as officers until September 1966: C. Frank Branan, AIA, President; William C. Correll, AIA, Vice President; Bob C. Rogers, AIA, Secretary; and Truman L. Newberry, AIA, Treasurer. Ralph B. Reeves, Jr., as outgoing President will serve as a member of the Board of Directors.

N. C. CHAPTER, AIA, SPONSORS CONTEST

Between 30 and 40 young Tar Heel bricklayer apprentices are expected to compete for prizes and trophies in the 12th annual N. C. Apprentice Bricklaying Contest to be held at the State Fair in Raleigh on Monday, October 11.

The N. C. Chapter, American Institute of Architects, is among the several public and private agencies which serve as sponsors of this annual contest, which is held to stimulate interest in training young people in the skilled construction trades.

Macon S. Smith of Raleigh, Vice-President of the N. C. Chapter, AIA, is a member of the contest steering committee which met in the Capital City recently to plan this year’s bricklaying competition.

Smith said the contest will feature bond prizes of $200, $100, and $50 for the three contestants winning first, second and third places in the event. The competition will be limited to registered apprentices training under the State Apprenticeship Training Program, who have completed not more than 4,000 hours of their training.

One of the judges for the contest will be an official of the N. C. Chapter, AIA, Smith stated. Other judges will include leading contractors, builders and masonry experts.

In addition to the bond prizes, the top contestant and his employer will be awarded engraved trophies from the Carolinas Branch, Associated General Contractors of America, and the first place contestant will receive a Certificate of Merit from the N. C. Chapter, AIA.
REPORT ON SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

In the fifteen Great Cities of the United States there are 621 separate schools still in use which were built prior to the turn of this century; 889 built between 1901 and 1920, or a total of 1510 separate buildings — more than 36 per cent of all existing school buildings — built before 1920. These figures are part of a report just issued by The Research Council of the Great Cities Program for School Improvement on the problems connected with the updating of outmoded school buildings.

The 100-page book titled “New Life for Old Schools” is the first formal report from the Educational Facilities Laboratories of the Ford Foundation. The fifteen member cities are: Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C.

“There are hundreds of these schools worth saving, and it is obvious that we must save some of them as long as the children keep coming and we have to house them some place,” says Ben E. Graves, the project director, in the opening remarks of the report. “This is one of our problems. Too often school boards in the past felt it would be possible to replace certain buildings, and they were put on replacement lists. They are still on these lists for replacement, but too often no one will hazard a guess as to when the replacement will occur.”

The report points out that this has meant the schools will continue to deteriorate as they have in the past, which compounds the problem. Then, too, according to the report, age alone is not the determining factor in obsolescence. Many schools built twenty-five, fifteen, or even ten years ago are obsolete in terms of today’s educational requirements.

The purpose of the study, according to Graves, is to begin to think in imaginative and creative ways to update these hundreds of buildings. The study hopes to develop guidelines for “why, when, and how” to make use of these presently outmoded educational plants, he says.

“New Life for Old Schools” is based on preliminary surveys and a workshop conducted in New York on May 1 during the Spring Conference of the Great Cities group. At the May meeting various resource persons spoke on the subject, including: Harry Gillies, Vice President, Castagna & Sons, contractors, White Plains, New York; Anthony Nassetta, Weiskopf & Pickworth, structural engineers, New York; Bernard Reisman, H. Sands Company, New York; and C. W. Brubaker, The Perkins & Will Partnership, architects, Chicago. The remarks of these experts, as well as reports from each of the fifteen cities, are used in the report to define the problems, as well as point to positive actions presently being taken in each of the cities.

A series of architectural competitions, one in each city, is being considered as a way to turn the “creative spotlight” on the problem. The results of the competitions, details of which are still to be worked out, would be published as completed in each individual participating city as part of an “idea library” on the subject of old school updating.

Another phase of the study will be a series of regional field trips by representatives of the school administration staffs of the participating cities with the first scheduled in mid-July for Milwaukee and another for November in Los Angeles in conjunction with the Fall conference of the Research Council.

The Research Council was organized in 1956 and incorporated in 1961 as a not-for-profit organization to study and find solutions to problems peculiar to the member cities and to use the results to aid in the continuing improvement of education in the Great Cities. The officers include Dr. Benjamin C. Willis, general superintendent of schools of Chicago, president; Dr. Samuel M. Brownell, superintendent of schools, Detroit, vice president; Dr. Eileen C. Stack, associate superintendent of schools, Chicago, secretary-treasurer; and Dr. Frederick Bertolaet, executive secretary. The central offices of the Council are located in Chicago.
AIA TO RECEIVE PFOHL MEMORIAL

Gerald Nordland will visit the Winston-Salem Gallery of Fine Arts on October 9 to serve as its 21st jury. Works accepted by Mr. Nordland will be taken into the Gallery’s stock for exhibition, sales and rentals.

The Winston-Salem Council of Architects Purchase prize in memory of Cyrill H. Pfohl, AIA, is to become a part of the permanent collection of the North Carolina Chapter, The American Institute of Architects, at their headquarters building, "The A.I.A. Tower", Raleigh, N. C. The prize is to be a print selected by the juror.

The Wake Forest College Union will select a work or works from those recommended by the juror and award the artist a purchase prize of up to $400. The Annual $250 Thalhimer purchase prize will be selected from works recommended by the juror.

Mr. Gerald Nordland is the Director of the Washington Gallery of Modern Art, Washington, D. C. Prior to June 1964 Mr. Nordland was Dean of Chouinard Institute, Los Angeles, California. Mr. Nordland is presently the Editor of “Arts Forum”, and has written for many national arts publications.

Artists from North and South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia are invited to submit paintings, sculptures, drawings and graphics. All works must reach the Gallery, 612 South Main Street, no later than Monday, October 4th.

ROBERT L. CLEMMER
APPOINTED TO BOARD

Governor Dan Moore announced recently the appointment of Robert L. Clemmer, FAIA, as a member of the North Carolina Board of Architecture to serve until 1970. Mr. Clemmer, a partner in the firm of Clemmer and Horton Associates of Hickory, has long been active in the North Carolina Chapter AIA. He served as President in 1960 and was on the Board of Directors for a number of years. In 1964 Mr. Clemmer was made a Fellow of The American Institute of Architects, the highest honor bestowed by that organization.

Clemmer replaces F. Carter Williams, FAIA, of Raleigh, on the Board of Architecture. Mr. Williams’ term of office expired this year.

RALEIGH WOMEN’S AUXILIARY ENTERTAINS

The Women’s Auxiliary of the Raleigh Council of Architects entertained their husbands at a Harvest Moon Party on Friday evening, September 24, at the Milburnie Fishing Club near Raleigh. An informal barbecue supper was followed by dancing to combo music. Approximately 100 people were on hand for the festivities.
WILLIAM V. E. SPRINKLE

William Van Eaton Sprinkle, AIA, of Durham died Friday, September 10, at the Duke University Medical Center.

He was born in Elkin and graduated from high school in Greensboro. He received his B.A. degree in 1927 from Duke University, and a B.F.A. degree from Yale University School of Fine Arts in 1931. He had lived in Durham since 1935.

Mr. Sprinkle was a member of the Hope Valley Country Club, Durham Engineers Club, Durham Council of Architects, and the North Carolina Chapter of The American Institute of Architects.

Mr. Sprinkle was married to Miss Rebecca Kirkpatrick who died in 1953. Surviving are two brothers, Thomas W. Sprinkle of High Point and Dr. Henry C. Sprinkle of New York City.

A memorial service was held on Sunday, September 12, at the Lakewood Methodist Church, Durham, of which he was a member.

SLIDES REQUESTED

Mrs. Harrye Lyons, librarian in the School of Design, and the Dean are interested in extending their collection of slides on the best of the new architecture of North Carolina. They request, therefore, that architects who have received State, Regional or National Honor Awards for buildings in North Carolina give to the Design Library from five to ten slides of their buildings including interiors with sufficient coverage to adequately explain the building, both inside and out. Kodachromes please.

PIEDMONT SHOWBOAT

Piedmont North Carolina will have a showboat dinner theater designed by a Greensboro architect.

This announcement was made by Robert H. Murray, manager of the new venture which is being constructed one mile south of the High Point-Greensboro airport just off the road that goes between High Point and the Airport, Route 68.

"Mary, Mary," a Broadway comedy hit by Jean Kerr, will be the first production to be seen around October 15.

In addition to that play, a special celebration in observance of the opening to be known as Ten Nights at the Landing, will be seen by those who attend the premiere.

Located in a tree-lined "Mississippi" simulated beside the East Prong of the Deep River, the Showboat will be built of fire proof materials but will appear to be afloat.

The designer is Alfred C. Davis, AIA, of Greensboro.

The Showboat will have the decor of a Mid-Vic- torian river "palace" such as used to bring the art of the Eastern stage to the pioneers of the Mid-West.

Broadway productions which have made hits are scheduled to be changed each four weeks.

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Calendar of Events

October 6: Charlotte Section, N. C. Chapter AIA, Stork Restaurant, Independence Blvd., 12:30 P.M., John C. Higgins, Jr., AIA, President

October 6: Durham Council of Architects, Jack Tar Hotel, James A. Ward, AIA, President

October 7: Raleigh Council of Architects, YMCA, 12:15-1:30 P.M., C. Frank Branan, AIA, President

October 8: East Carolina Council of Architects, Whispering Pines Motel, Southern Pines, Harry K. McGee, AIA, President

October 12: Greensboro Registered Architects, Ivanhoe's Restaurant, Walter E. Blue, Jr., AIA, President

October 19: Winston-Salem Council of Architects, Reynolds Building Restaurant, 12:00 Noon, James Clyde Williams, President

October 23: Annual Fall Meeting, North Carolina Chapter AIA, 10:00 A.M., Mid-Pines Club, Southern Pines

January 20-22, 1966: NCAA Winter Meeting, Sir Walter Hotel, Raleigh

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