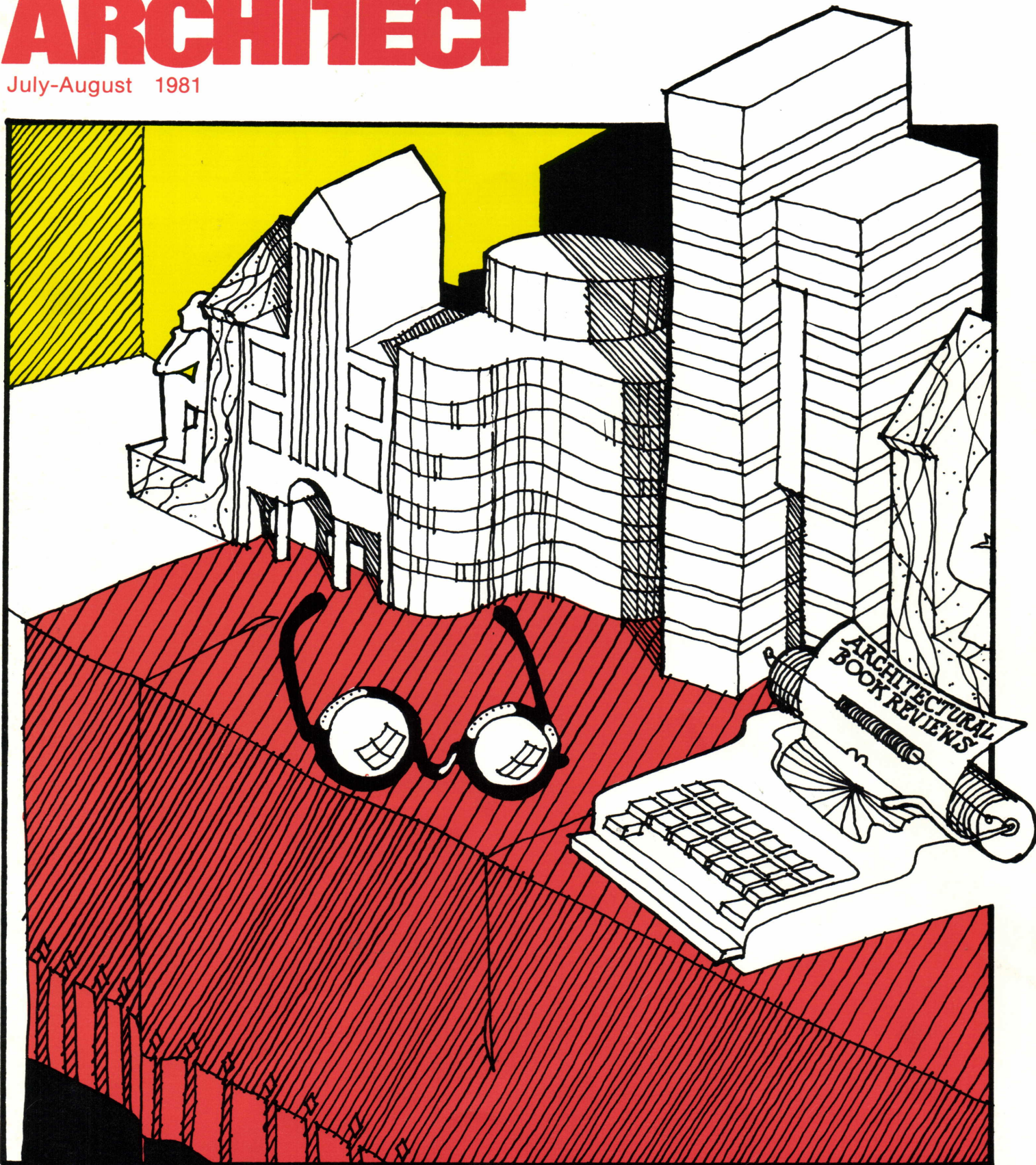


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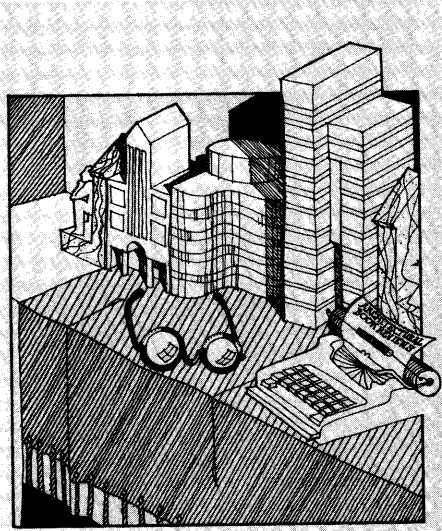
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Architectural Book Reviews Summer Reading Special

5

Selected books about or related to architecture are reviewed: **Modern Architecture: A Critical History** by Kenneth Frampton, reviewed by Robert Burns, AIA; **The Geography of American Cities** by Risa Palm, reviewed by Peter Batchelor, AIA/AICP; **MASTERSPEC II** — Production Systems for Architects & Engineers, reviewed by H. Clay Taylor, AIA; **Analysis of Precedent: An Investigation of elements, relationships and ordering ideas in the work of eight architects** by Rogert Clark, Michael Pause, and 20 students of the School of Design, NCSU; **Urban Open Spaces** edited by Lisa Taylor; and **Lotus International 28 — Architecture in the Town** edited by Pierluigi Nicolini, all three reviewed by Michael McFee.

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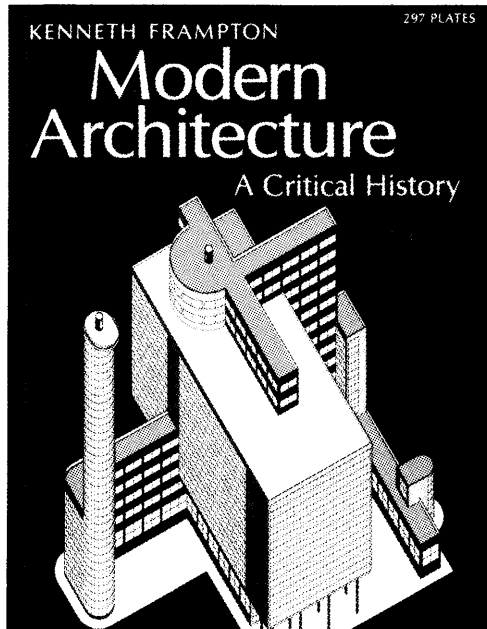
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Exploring An Evolution

Modern Architecture: A Critical History. By Kenneth Frampton, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. 324 pages. Hardcover: \$17.95; paperback: \$9.95.



In this period of reawakening sensibilities and expanding architectural opportunities, Kenneth Frampton's new book offers a surprisingly pessimistic forecast for the future of architecture. By tracing the evolution of architectural theory and practice from the mid-1700s to the present, he is able to find only two promising, if flawed, courses of action open to today's generation of architects. The first is the "less-is-more" school which seeks to reduce architecture to the status of industrial design on a colossal scale. While receiving high marks for its technologically progressive structures, it stands accused of ignoring the building context and with it the subtleties of formal richness.

The second approach is preoccupied with the specifics of place and the relationship of man-to-man and man-to-nature. The "introverted" adherents of this view tend to be indifferent to the realities of contemporary economics and production. The only hope for significant progress in the immediate future, in Frampton's estimation, lies in "creative contact between these two extreme points of view."

If this prognostication, set forth in the Introduction and amplified throughout the book, seems overly gloomy considering the richness and diversity of contemporary practice, or merely simplistic in the narrowness of its proffered options, **Modern Architecture: A Critical History** provides other, more felicitous attractions for those with a serious interest in the historic evolution of contemporary architecture. Billed by its author as

an attempt to be both comprehensive and concise, **MAACH** almost succeeds in this nearly impossible double play. There is one distressing bobble, however: American readers will probably feel that some important individual and collective efforts on this side of the Atlantic have been unjustly overlooked, notably the West Coast romantic tradition of Maybeck, Greene and Greene, Wurster, Harris and Charles Moore.

Frampton, after all, is an English architect and historian; and, while currently teaching at Columbia University, he cannot help but reflect most strongly his British and Continental heritage. The American role, for this reason, is overshadowed by the lengthy chain of European developments extending from French and German Neo-Classicism to the Neo-Rationalism of Aldo Rossi.

MAACH consists of 34 chapters which are interrelated but capable of standing alone. The author indicates, in fact, that the book was written to be read either in a sequential fashion or at random, by dipping into a subject of particular interest. Each chapter opens with an extended quotation, usually by the architect-subject, which establishes the premise of the piece, and the chapter titles pose provocative juxtapositions: "Frank Lloyd Wright and the Disappearing City," "Adolf Loos and the Crisis of Culture," "Mies van der Rohe and the Significance of Fact."

Chapters in turn are organized in three major sections. Part one, entitled "Cultural Developments and Predisposing Techniques 1750-1939," forms a prehistory of what we know as modern architecture. In his search for the beginnings of modern architecture, Frampton looks beyond the mid-19th century starting point set by most earlier historians to establish its origin a century earlier when architects began to question the Classical canons of Vitruvius and to examine firsthand the architectural remnants of the ancient world. What they sought was a precise reappraisal of antiquity "not simply to

by Robert P. Burns, AIA

Mr. Burns has been a Professor of Architecture at the N.C. State University School of Design since 1965, and is a principal of Burnstudio, Raleigh, N.C. He worked in the office of Eduardo Catalano for several years in Cambridge, Mass., and has published a book review in Progressive Architecture. Another article of his will appear in an upcoming issue of the North Carolina Bar Quarterly.



and spatial ascendancy, architecture students paid a stiff price in environmental and psychological discomfort.

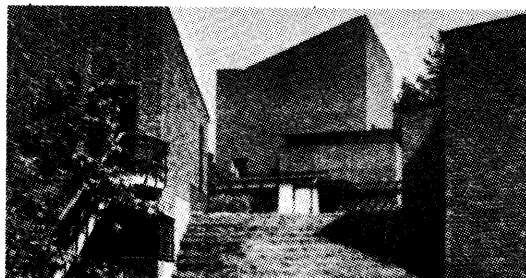
Of all the major figures of the 20th century, Alvar Aalto comes closest to the author's ideal. In his rich, perceptive essay, "Alvar Aalto and the Nordic Tradition: National Romanticism and the Doricist Sensibility 1895-1957," Frampton analyzes the foundations and achievements of Aalto's career. He sees in Aalto an unusual sensitivity to those particularities of people, place and local traditions which mark his work as organic to its context. At the same time his buildings were shaped subtly by the rational-constructivist ideals of 20th century modernism.

At its best (his) was a discreet yet highly responsive mode of building, one which continued the essential Nordic tradition of fusing the vernacular with the Classical — the idiosyncratic with the normative — through fifty years of unbroken development...

Sprinkled throughout the middle section are revealing and occasionally amusing revelations. The admirable Scots architect, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, we discover, was part of an avant garde group known as the "Glasgow Four" (shades of the "five," the "seven," and the "twelve"!). Fallingwater is reported to have been designed in a single day! And the despairing statement, "Architecture is drifting towards decadence; towards a veritable cacophony," is directed not at today's Post-Modernists but was written a century ago in reaction to the extravagances of Gaudi and others.

The concluding section is a four-part examination of the political and ideological developments of the last 50 years. It is titled "Critical Assessment and Extension into the Present 1925-1978" and includes chapters on the International Style, New Brutalism, CIAM and Team 10, and a final summary of the author's ideological propositions. It constitutes the most "critical" section of this "critical history," and it seems to be the least satisfactory part of the book.

Frampton's theoretical premises correspond closely with the original principles of the modern movement: architecture as an agent of social reform, modernization and revitalization of the city, and the production of buildings through systematized, economical processes. On these



Aalto's Saynatsalo Town Hall, 1949-52, from **Modern Architecture: A Critical History**.

terms, he concludes that the goals of modern architecture have not been realized and have now been entirely abandoned by its most prominent practitioners. Nor does he see much cause for optimism in the emergence of Post-Modernism which he believes tends to glorify the mediocre and ordinary and posits values that are out of touch with the social and technical realities of our age.

MAACH is not wholly satisfying. Its critical position is hardly novel. It is crotchety even in its assessment of recent developments. Additional illustrations would lessen the frustrations one experiences when unpictured buildings are discussed at length (although a large number of exquisite new drawings — sections, plans and axonometrics — have been prepared by the author's students for this edition). Some readers will no doubt have difficulty with the frequent untranslated French and German phrases.

And yet *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* is highly recommended. First of all, it takes its subject seriously, avoiding the twin pitfalls of glossy, superficial rhetoric on one hand and incomprehensible pedantry and pretension on the other. Highly readable, it provides a wealth of information in a scholarly, well-conceived format. Frampton's language is literate, at times passionate, and is never stuffy.

Most importantly, the book seeks comprehensiveness and, in so doing, brings into the chronicle of modern architecture a broader range of creative ideas and contributors than did such earlier polemicists as Giedion, Pevsner and Banham who lacked the perspective offered by time. If it does not entirely fill the need for an ideal, concise history of 20th century architecture, it is a valuable addition to the growing literature of the modern movement. (Professor Frampton, incidentally, will present a public lecture at N.C. State University's School of Design in the spring of 1982.) ■

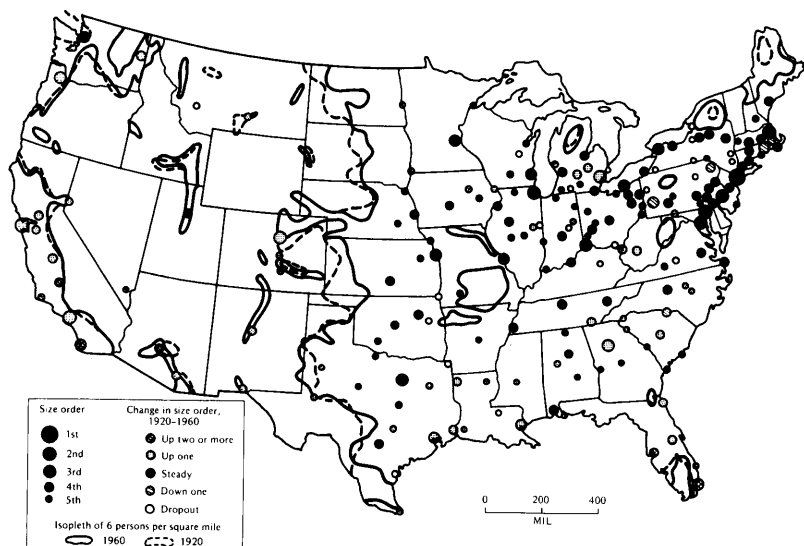
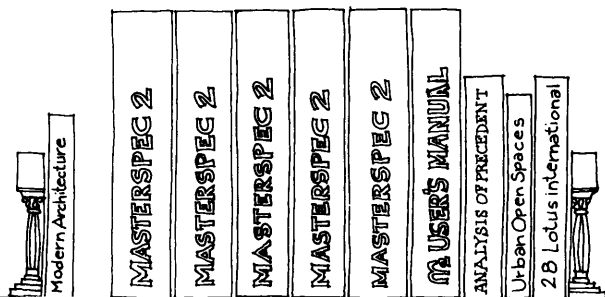


Figure 5.5 Changes in city size, 1920-1960. The "auto-air-amenity" epoch witnessed particularly rapid growth of cities in resort and retirement areas such as Florida and Arizona, as well as in areas related to automobile development such as petroleum-rich Texas and southeast Michigan. (Redrawn from the *Geographical Review*, Vol. 57, 1967, with permission of the American Geographical Society.)

From *The Geography of American Cities*.

journal have been exposed to the three "classical" descriptive theories of American city form — concentric ring, sector and multiple nuclei theories. While they represent the most universally accepted and generalized constructs of city form based on residential development, these tired theories are like clichés, and they are irrelevant as explanations for the complex urban environments of our age. However, Palm gives them a position in the development of structural theory and extends our understanding of the residential structure of cities by including descriptions of factors such as social class, social ranking, family status, and ethnic distribution. In other words, the book has a finely timed approach to the historic development of theory in urban geography.

Closely related to the major strength of the book is its pervasive weakness. After covering 350 pages of clearly written and organized theories, issues, and observations, the reader is frustrated by a lack of physical understanding of cities. We are told that the book will provide the reader with a "contextual understanding of spatial patterns and environmental relationships," yet there are very few mappings of these spatial patterns. Cities are treated as dots in frequency distribution graphs, as circles in classifying systems, as histograms, and as tables, yet only in very rare instances do we see an actual city with a specific factor mapped as a geographic phenomenon. One wonders if Palm assumes prior knowledge about city form and

structure. If so, this is a truly dangerous assumption because even scholars of the city will have difficulty in conceptualizing accurate spatial constructs of urban physical and non-physical phenomena. Given the plethora of mappings of factors such as density, land value, household composition, travel zones, and so on, Palm could have drawn upon the vast resources of her own field to build our imagery of the theories of urban geography. This deficiency extends down to the micro urban environment. The book has such a generalized view of the city that the reader cannot develop an understanding of those small scale textures and activities by which the parts of cities are differentiated. Architects are especially sensitive to the small scale environment because it is an extension of their own professional arena, but they will be disappointed in Palm's total lack of both description and analysis of sub-urban physical environments.

The best section of the book is Part IV which deals with the metropolitan area and its spatial organization. These are five fine chapters covering land values, locational decisions in the public and private sections of the economy, the residential structure of American cities, mobility, and the changing metropolitan area. Information in the section seems to deal with specific issues of current urban development, and one suspects that Palm has a better grasp of empirical aspects of theory than in the other sections. The worst section of the book is

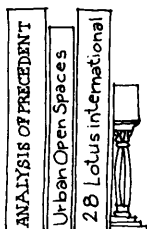
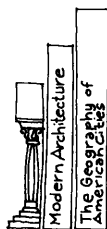
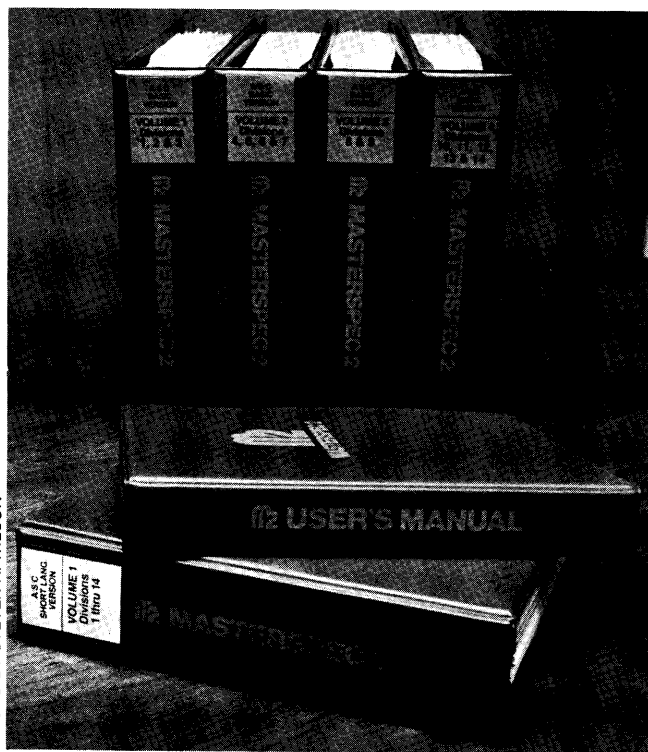


PHOTO BY STEVEN A. WILSON



I had been aware of, and looked into MASTERSPEC for some time. I was also familiar with a newer system sponsored by the Construction Specifications Institute. Both systems seemed much too lengthy, cumbersome and expensive. However, as "old copperplate" was giving out, **MASTERSPEC II** was introduced. The cost was down, it was less wordy, and it had the experience of the old MASTERSPEC behind it. It was exactly what I had been looking for.

The system comes in three versions: the "Basic version," the "Short Language version," and the "Narrowscope version." The Basic version is a must. It is the prime stand-alone version while the other two are add-on options.

I added on the Short Language version. The Narrowscope version can be ordered by section as needed for very special specification requirements.

The first thing you notice about the format is that there is no numbering or lettering of paragraphs and major parts of sections. Deletions and additions can be made easily without the worry of changing all those other numbers and letters. You can cut and splice at will.

Each Basic version section uses the five-digit numbering system established in CSI's MASTERFORMAT and conforms to the three-part

arrangement also developed by CSI. They are accompanied by an evaluation sheet of the different material choices contained in the section being edited, and a sheet of drawing coordination information. The evaluation sheet alone is worth the cost of the system.

The language is very clear and concise: sentences are normally written in the imperative structure; numerals are used rather than words for numbers, as well as commonly accepted symbols contained on the typewriter for such things as feet (').

The system can be used in several ways: as a reference only, direct editing of the text by office personnel, or establishing one of the following methods of text production for final reproduction: (1) manual typing (the one I chose); (2) automated means using data processing or word processing equipment.

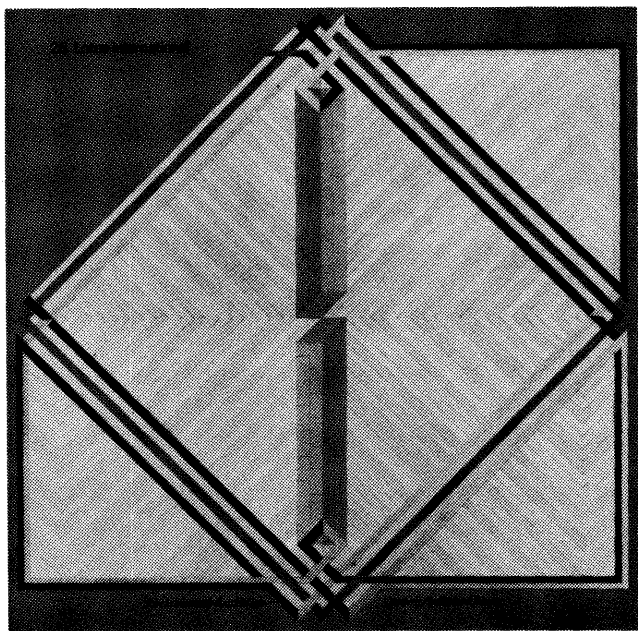
Editing should be done only one way — that is, by marking up copies of the section originals each time a specification is prepared. Updates are being issued all the time to subscribers of that optional yearly service. Unless copies of the section originals are used, you may not be up to date in information and references to standards. The expense of making copies for each editing has been the only negative comment I have heard of the system. I find the benefit of using up to date information to far outweigh a cost of perhaps \$15 to \$20.

If you have a word processor or access to one, the system is now available in disk form for most equipment.

As you may gather by now, I am enthusiastic about **MASTERSPEC II**. One major benefit to us all would be a broad use of the same system, even though it may be modified to each professional's "standards." I would encourage your investigation. ■

by H. Clay Taylor, AIA

Mr. Taylor is one of the founding partners (1970) of Shawcroft-Taylor Architects, in Raleigh, N.C. He has subscribed to — and enjoyed — MASTERSPEC since its appearance on the market over a year ago.



All this as part of a preface to a feature of his "House for one-parent families in Amsterdam" — a colorful and sensitive piece of work indeed, but perhaps not the cultural milestone one might expect of such a prophet.

So I finally had to settle for the illustrations. They are numerous and very handsome — sketches, plans, elevations, sections, photographs, both black and white and color. Some of the studies, apparently in colored pencil — the Giudecca boatyards, the Berlin Friedrichstadt project — are gorgeous. The production of *Lotus* can't be faulted: it's a beautiful handful.

I did manage to read the article about the international competition for the Arts and Crafts Museum in Frankfurt, especially since it was won by the prominent American architect Richard Meier. The text seemed to degenerate into philosophical public-relations blather, describing Meier's proposal as "a step on the way to idealistic realism" ("The finely chiseled architectural jewel is an important contribution to that part of contemporary architectural culture that has learned not to be afraid of silent paradoxes"), but the dozen pages of different submissions were fascinating. I think the Frankfurt fathers should wait until Meier's curious design is placed in its setting before *they* call it a jewel.

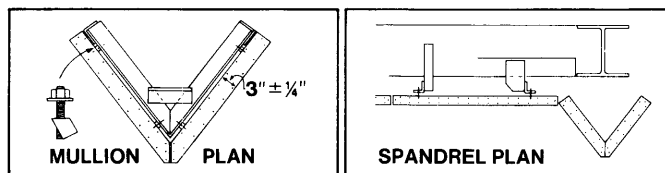
All in all, *Lotus International 28* was not quite the review I had hoped it would be. But even in its desultory way, it provides a balance to *Urban Open Spaces* and *Analysis of Precedent*. All three books represent some attempt to come to terms with our architectural history — to understand it, to preserve and yet enjoy it, to absorb and transform it into the vital idiom of the present and future. ■

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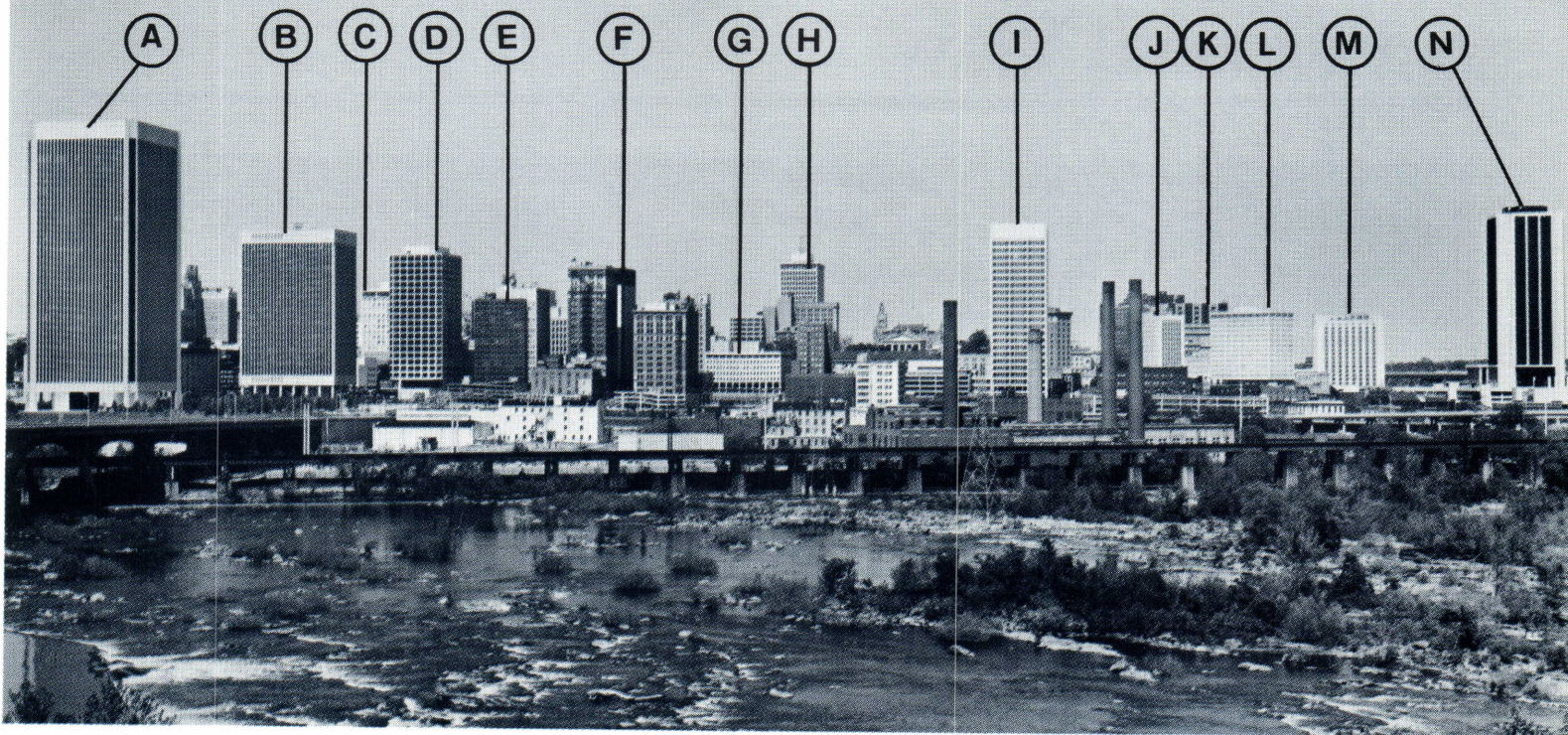
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in 1972, we abandoned the prohibition of fee competition by agreeing to a consent decree with the Justice Department. So, what do we have today? In a tight economy, when few commissions are to be had, we cut one another's throats by fee cutting to the extent that each year our average income decreases on a percentage basis when compared to other professions.

We are not only hurting each other, we are also establishing the very image with the public we don't need. Our firm was asked to provide a proposal for services on a project recently. (It was to include a proposed fee.) Another member of my staff and I spent several days deciding what was fair, both for the client and, more importantly, to us. We carefully outlined what services we would provide, what documentation, etc. The potential client met with me

and patiently reviewed our proposal. At the conclusion, he reached in his pocket and presented to me a proposal by another architect, one paragraph long, concluding with a fee proposal one quarter of our proposal. I explained how we had arrived at our fee proposal and that there was no way the other architect could do the same job for the lower figure. But as much as I felt hurt at not getting the commission, I felt embarrassed that another professional would sell himself for such a sum. In talking with other professionals in our area, I found many other examples of such practice by members of our organization, some of whom are the first to cry about the "state of the profession."

So let's volunteer to give up some more ground the next time we are challenged by "the public or client." The most we have to lose is a profession. ■

Letters

In the Areopagitica (1644), John Milton argued for the "free marketplace of ideas." If all ideas were freely published, he believed the best ones would win out. Therefore, North Carolina Architect offers this space as your "marketplace" for response to "A Personal View." Agree, disagree — but let your opinions and ideas be known. Send letters to: North Carolina Architect, Spectator Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 12837, Raleigh, N.C. 27605.

Fade Away

For brevity, this letter responds to a limited number of the inconsistencies in Mr. Kamphoefner's "A Current Appraisal" appearing in the May-June issue.

1. It is my observation that certain self-styled "critics" do not concern themselves with any sort of analysis of a building's requirements, mandatory functions, budget, or — especially — client desires, all vital to architectural services (versus only the development of an "art form").

2. Reference was made in the article to demolition of the Minoru Yamasaki award-winning, classical Corbusier, Pruitt-Igoe project at St.

Louis. Perhaps, some benefactor might have bought this as a "museum piece," but it was actually a housing project which, however, the local worker population for whom it was intended avoided as if contaminated with plague germs. A spate of "task forces" and millions of dollars for modifications failed to correct the situation, thus the decision to demolish.

3. I am not acquainted personally with the individuals, but from what I have read and heard, Robert Venturi is more counterpoint than "guru" to the so-called "New York Five."

4. In North Carolina, the majority of architects in practice, or in major design positions, studied at NCSU's School of Design at some time during the past 20 years. If the article's author finds shortcomings in their work, it is significant that he was *dean* of that very school at the time they received their formal education.

5. It is true indeed that few currently practicing architects are versed in the design elements of English and French Renaissance

buildings, obviously because the previous study of fundamentals and details of historic architectural periods has been dropped from the curricula. As a result, a client seeking a "traditional" building has to deal with (a) an architect with no vocabulary of pertinent elements, or (b) an amateur draughtsman.

6. The author's identification appearing with his name implies that he speaks for the NCSU School of Design, and I query this.

7. Apropos of his comments regarding the commissioning of substantial work to "C" students, there is a hoary adage that "The 'A' students teach, and the 'B' students work for the 'C' students."

Finally, there was an impressive listing of well-known architectural names, possibly for verisimilitude; however, in my opinion, the article is irrelevant, inconsistent, and without substantive purpose.

It is said that old soldiers never die, they just fade away. Unfortunately, old deans do not even fade away.

—Ralph Reeves, AIA



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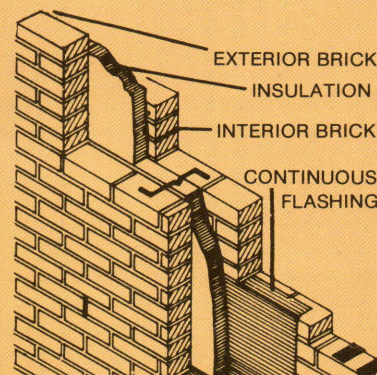
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Chapter notes

Legislative News

A special legislative session will be held in the fall of 1981 to consider state budget matters, including several bills of interest to the NCAIA. (NCAIA members have been previously advised of these bills.) The following is a summary of the bills and their status:

Senate Bill 120. Amends the six-year statute of limitations to apply to more parties involved in the construction process, to start the time running on the later of substantial completion or specific last act or commission giving rise to the injury, loss or damage, and to make other clarifying changes. NCAIA supported. *Ratified, June 22, 1981.*

Senate Bill 140. Changes the membership of the Capital Building Authority (CBA). NCAIA urged appointment of an architect, engineer and contractor to the Authority to make it more representative of the industry. *In Senate State Government Committee, June 30, 1981.*

Senate Bill 141. Brings University system under jurisdiction of the CBA. NCAIA expressed concern about the centralization of power in the CBA and the loss of local identification and control by individual institutions. *In Senate State Government Committee, June 30, 1981.*

Senate Bill 142. Brings Community Colleges within the jurisdiction of the CBA. NCAIA expressed concern as stated above (Senate Bill 141) but supported where state funds are involved. *Passed Senate; reported favorably by House Higher Education Committee, June 30, 1981.*

Senate Bill 143. Authorizes Legislative Research Commission to continue to study the design, construction and inspection of public facilities. NCAIA supports. *In Senate Appropriations Committee, June 30, 1981.*

Senate Bill 144. Raises the monetary limits for requiring an architect or engineer on public jobs to \$100,000 on repairs not involving

major structural changes and to \$45,000 on new construction. NCAIA supports. *Ratified, June 25, 1981.*

Senate Bill 145. Requires payment to subcontractors within three working days after general contractor receives payment from owner unless contract provides otherwise. NCAIA supported fair and timely payment to all parties involved. *In Senate State Government Committee, June 30, 1981.*

Senate Bill 146. Requires the Office of State Budget and Management to study rules covering state construction and report its findings to the June 1982 session. NCAIA supported and offered to assist with industry committee to participate in study. *Ratified, June 17, 1981.*

Senate Bill 147. Allows claims to be settled prior to completion of contracts. NCAIA supported. *Ratified, June 15, 1981.*

Senate Bill 520. Incorporates Building Code (Section 1008 of Chapter X of Volume 1) relating to safety requirements for high-rise

buildings into general statutes. NCAIA expressed concern about the safety of occupants, the costs of making safety improvements, and the need for the Building Code Council to retain some flexibility in the application of the regulations. *Ratified, June 24, 1981.*

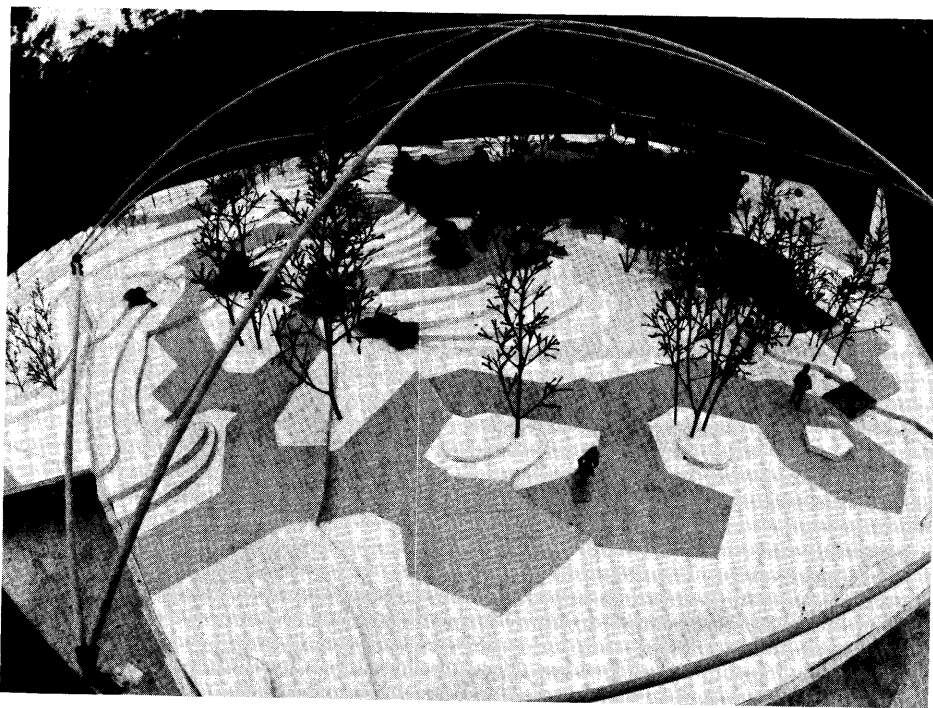
If any member of the NCAIA desires more information concerning a particular bill or bills, please contact the Chapter office.

—Betty Silver, Hon. AIA
Executive Director, NCAIA

Asheboro

Work is now in progress on the \$1.6 million R.J. Reynolds Forest Aviary at the North Carolina Zoological Park near Asheboro, designed by O'Brien/Atkins Associates of Chapel Hill. Scheduled to open in the summer of 1982 in the zoo's African section, the forest aviary will house over 250 exotic birds, small mammals and reptiles from around the world.

The aviary structure will be



A model of the R.J. Reynolds Forest Aviary now under construction at the North Carolina Zoological Park near Asheboro, designed by O'Brien/Atkins Associates of Chapel Hill.



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Chapter notes

criticized her hometown for its "lack of progress." Her hexagonal house was an expression of her desire to remedy and improve upon older building designs. Within the six walls, there were three principal rooms and three smaller rooms entered from any of three entrances. It was designed to include a basement and one or two upper floors, plus many windows for ventilation.

(The *N.C. Historical Review* is available from the Historical Publications Section, N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources, 109 E. Jones St., Raleigh, N.C. 27611, for \$2.50 a copy plus 50¢ postage.)

Research Triangle Park

Ferebee, Walters & Associates of Charlotte has opened an office in the Research Triangle Park to assist its clients in the Triangle area and eastern North Carolina. Architect R. Wayne Roberts, AIA, will head the four-person staff at 200 Park Office near the Governor's Inn.

A few of the firm's most recent projects in the Piedmont and eastern part of the state have been: the School of Veterinary Medicine, N.C. State University, Raleigh; a research facility for Union Carbide Agricultural Projects, R.T.P.; and Brightleaf Square shopping/office complex in downtown Durham in what were two tobacco warehouses.

According to firm president S. Scott Ferebee Jr., AIA, the R.T.P.



R. Wayne Roberts, AIA

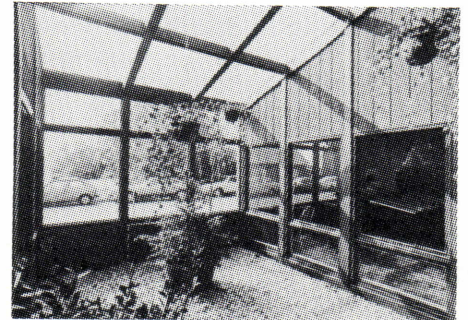
office will directly coordinate architecture and design, receiving specialized support in engineering, landscaping, interior design and energy management from those departments in Charlotte. "Our project manager at R.T.P. will be able to provide personalized on-location service and supervision and will be very accessible to our projects in that area," he added.

Winston-Salem

The solar office building designed and owned by J. Aubrey Kirby Associates, Inc., of Winston-Salem, has been included in the AIA's recently published booklet, *Ten Buildings That Save Energy—By Design*, as one of ten buildings throughout the United States the AIA feels is an example of excellent

energy-conscious design.

The "solararchitecture" firm also has been commissioned to design a private residence which will be totally independent of non-renewable fuel for heating and cooling. "We are tentatively planning a solar, energy efficient structure with perhaps a wood-burning furnace," Kirby said.



The solar office building of J. Aubrey Kirby Associates, Inc., Winston-Salem.

Southern Houses, Southern Cities

Southern Living magazine needs help from North Carolina architects. Says Senior Design Editor Louis Joyner, "For a major color feature next spring, we are trying to find and photograph some outstanding examples of small (Southern) houses. We are looking for new (built within the last five years) primary homes of less than 1500 square feet heated area (preferably 900-1200 square feet). The homes should be detached, single-family residences. They

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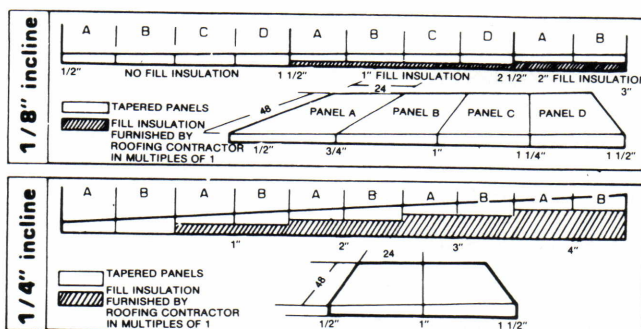
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