LECTURES:
GOING THE DISTANCE FOR MOORE

Enduring a three-hour car ride is not a usual prerequisite to attending a lecture on architecture. The current calendar of the AIA sponsored Lectures on Architecture in Vancouver, B.C. is well worth the effort though, provided you arrive early enough to get a seat. The Vancouver League of Studies in Architecture and the Environment has assembled a series of nine talks by a group of well-received and influential speakers, which are free to the public.

Charles Moore, Architect, appeared November 10 to deliver an oratory entitled "Design with Other People". His obvious reputation preceded him, as the Robson Square Media Center Auditorium was filled to a 350 seat capacity well before the audience packed the plane. This disappointing and unfortunate situation is recurrent, as preparations aren't made to accommodate such a gathering. An overflow crowd of 150 was directed to an adjacent room, where the verbal portion of the presentation was piped in. Though a slide lecture given without slides seemed pointless, the event proved rewarding. But staring blankly at an audio speaker suspended from the ceiling was at best anti-climactic.

Moore, who is noted for his easy, witty manner was true to form. Though not entirely profound, his words were energetic, humane and refreshing, and reflected an enjoyment about the practice of Architecture. The title "Design with Other People," served as a prop to rally his discussion around. The lecture began with a Vincent Scully-like history of architecture, images were recounted, and the Mitchell, South Dakota, Corn Palace. This slyly but gracefully merged into a number of projects undertaken throughout the architect's 21-year career. Strangely absent was any discussion of theories or concepts. His work in Italy provided the chance to study a virtual archive of building types in which natural light was a major determinant of form and of its articulation. His studies are most valuable to him as references for application in his own work as an architect, and in his teachings at the University.

In 1981, 25 fellows, in their early thirties, possess educational credentials which have become standard practice. American students of established proficiency to develop their powers under the most favorable conditions of direction and surroundings. Seattle architect and professor Thomas Bosworth has this year had the honor and privilege in his own work as an architect, and in his teachings at the University.

In 1981, 25 fellows, in their early thirties, possess educational credentials which have become standard practice. American students of established proficiency to develop their powers under the most favorable conditions of direction and surroundings. Seattle architect and professor Thomas Bosworth has this year had the honor and privilege of delivering a second lecture. In his quiet and determined pursuit of personal and professional growth, Tom Bosworth is maintaining the Academy's principles.

The lecture proved to be most stimulating in a way that was no doubt anticipated by the sponsors or the speaker. Sitting in the theater room across the hall, one did not have the visual seduction of slides to accompany the monologue. Mental images were conjured up from past experience, hunches or creative notions. This complemented Moore's approach to design, as by his own acknowledgement, his work draws upon such memories and dreams. Unlike many lectures highlighted by perfect Ezra Stoller photographs, the words were heard.

After concluding his lecture, Charles Moore graciously visited the second floor of the hotel. Encapsulating the first session with his slides, real images joined the subjective ones, with an accompanying sense of surprise, and for those without imaginations, relief.

"Saturday Night Architecture..."

"Design with People" was not a comment on Charles Moore's numerous business associations. Rather it referred to his more innovative techniques to involve the client and the user in the design process. It is over this part of the design role that was found in Moore's words, "to be more exciting, for the client must put energy and joy into a building before anything can be gotten out of it." The architect becomes an "interloper" supplying guidance and encouragement with his expertise. One case study that incorporated this philosophy was the design of the Central Rivertfront of Dayton, Ohio. The public's attention was summoned to the site as Moore hired a gypsy violinist to stroll the banks during a series of brown-bag lunches. With the presence known, the designers established a store-front office complete with a neon sign, and enlisted the help of a local media form available -- the television. Six one-hour prime time telecasts were delivered to an eager community. (Perhaps this was an interesting substitute for "Leave It to Beaver" reruns.) The architects became "short-order cooks" quickly sketching suggested schemes before the cameras. Jerry Lewis would have been proud. Live from Dayton, it's Saturday Night Architecture...

The Episcopal Church of the Pacific Palisades, California, also received a resourceful solution to the ever-present challenge of attaining a group agreement for a design. Armed with bowls of Fruit Loops and reams of construction paper, Charles Moore and Larry Halprin confronted 150 initiate designers from the congregation. Clustered into seven groups, they turned the central, open court into a colorful space, and delivered the schemes, which Moore orchestrated into a single entity. Success was deemed complete, as 83% of the parishioners approved the design. Clearly, this was a miracle, as the minister indicated: "even Jesus had a hard time getting better than a 67% approval from the congregation."

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Gerald Anderson

Ed. Note: The next lecture will be given by Aldo Rossi on December 8. Please consult the calendar for further information.
DATELINE N.Y.C.: THE COMING ATTRACTIONS

COLOR

The overwhelming theme of Designer's Saturday was the total revision of color and color schemes. The "new color palette for the eighties" was visually dominant. Lower chromas ("dusty", greyed), mid-values ("there are no blacks and whites") and revived hues (red-purple, blue-green) are the rule. The color standard has not only penetrated furniture finishes and upholstery fabrics; it dominates street fashion and showroom windows from Macy's to Mercedes Benz. Even the bastions of high chroma primaries Marimekko and Conran's have swung on designer-inspired "dusty", greyed, mid-values ("there are no blacks and whites") and revived hues (red-purple, blue-green). The pervasive switch was punctuated in the one or two showrooms that lagged behind and admitted it by displaying large signs on blank walls which read, "New Colors: The Coming Attraction."

FURNITURE

Open interior spaces and freedom from stylistic restraint have generated more flexible and diverse furniture forms. The dogmatic adherence to proper settings for residential versus commercial, office versus lounge furniture has been relaxed in recent years. Most of the one hundred and fifty (plus or minus) contract furniture manufacturers have created some kind of office working system. Usually these chair, desk and panel systems are designed anthropomorphically and/or as component sets; two determinants first considered on a production scale by European designers in the Sixties. In the event that catalog descriptions and graphics are overlooked producers and importers have created a descriptive marketing language for us. The message is clear with names such as "Bio Chair", "Body Chair", "Ergon Chair" and other variants: two determinants first considered on a production scale by European designers in the Sixties. In the event that catalog descriptions and graphics are overlooked producers and importers have created a descriptive marketing language for us. The message is clear with names such as "Bio Chair", "Body Chair", "Ergon Chair"

(after "ergonomics", the science of anthropomorphic furniture design), "Quantum System", "Intra-System", or "Tri-mode". This new trend has happily provided a much more comfortable, functional working environment for specific task oriented people such as computer programmers, secretaries, CRT operators and typesetters. Given the direct relationship between the dimensions of the human body, its motion range and support artifacts it is apparent that all task furniture must be functionally similar. In fact, after two days of gaping, sitting, turning, ejecting, etc. one's eyes and buttocks become indifferent to subtle variations.

There is an older tradition of furniture designed by architects, including but not limited to: Hoffman, the Bauhaus designers, Corbusier, Aalto, Saarinen, Eames and recently: the Italians, Graves, and Gwathmey/Siegel. Works by these architects remain influential. In both situations the use of functional context, or a working situation, with the furniture as the dominant visual artifact.
"Don't touch anything inside the gallery" is more than a possessive warning at the door of the Rubin/Mardin gallery. Herman Staton's works in glass on exhibit there, last month through December 5th, is literally the cutting edge of its medium.

Glass is shattered, plates lean against plates, slivers are glued piece to piece. Soft cones and cups embrace threatening, disappearing and sharp edges are thrilling. Staton's exploration of glass is physically overshadowed by the Fourth and Vine Building and by the Fourth and Blanchard (Pentozil) Building, visible beyond the windows of Rubin/Mardin's loft. This new architecture in the Denny Regrade intends innovation in its use of architectural glass ("it's black... it's mirror-like... it ends and slices the skyline... "). Observers who wish to see and experience a truer, resonant quality of glass as art should turn instead to the work of Herman Staton.

-Susan Boyle

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EAT ARCHITECTURE
THIS CHRISTMAS

A premier experiment using chocolate construction techniques was recently conducted here on the West Coast. Dana Davenport of the Dilettante was asked by I. Magnin in San Francisco to make a chocolate castle which they could use for display during the Christmas season and as promotion for the sale of his celebrated chocolates. Dana agreed to construct a castle 42" high on a 30" square base. To insure accuracy in construction, he enlisted the services of a local architect, Catherine Barrett. After discussing several themes, they settled on that of a Russian castle to emphasize the link with Dana’s ancestor who served pastry to the Czar Nicholas II.

Dana gave the architect a quick review of the raw materials available, which included chocolate slabs, bricks, nipples, molds, vermicelli, among many others, and she went home to draw. The drawings were done full scale and represented a hybrid Russian style church/castle with six onion domes, arcades, loggias, and winding stairways.

The Dilettante crew worked four days and nights to build the castle, with some help from the architect and Arcade editor Maryanne Perkowski. For three days it progressed slowly. The walls were made of chocolate bricks in three colors and of varying hardnesses for the sake of experimentation. Great pots of chocolate and cocoa butter were poured onto stainless steel cooling slabs to solidify. They were then cut into bricks as they reached the right degree of hardness. The chocolate castle was composed of cocoa powder, cocoa butter, lecithin, milk solids, chocolate liquor, cream, butter, chocolate vermicelli, various flavoring and nuts. A variety of chocolate was used to create flavor and color variations. The bricks were set with mortar of liquid chocolate, which had to be tempered on a marble slab as it must cool sufficiently to provide a good bond and not discolor. The tempering is done with the bare hand, stroking the chocolate continuously in a circular fashion. Solomonic columns were carved from the hardest white bricks, and arches were cut from chocolate slabs, as were some of the roofs. Once the basic structure was completed, the imaginations were cast loose. The palette of decorative elements provided by the Dilettante factory is unlimited, and the talents are considerable, so after one day and one night the castle seemed magically transformed into an orgy of chocolate. There is a form of chocolate to satisfy every chocolate lover’s fantasy in this creation!

-Catherine Barrett