

ARCADE

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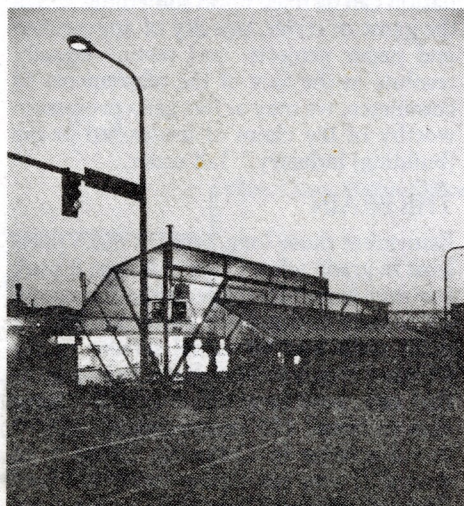


Ke Francis with recent sculpture.

Unfinished architecture is an art-form coming up from street culture, like blue jeans, torn tee-shirts, spikey sweaty hair. It is intended to be direct, energetic, poetic, transient — but not to be polite.

It is hard to feel in control of things seemingly without order.

Architects have begun to experiment with a concept, embracing and exploiting lowbrow materials, and turning the half-baked into the nouvelle cuisine of design. It may taste good. It is definitely interesting. But it is hard to swallow for those raised on a diet of the crafts ethic.



Arnold's née Man Bites Dog. Barnett Schorr Miller Architects.

ON UNFINISHED ARCHITECTURE

Unfinished architecture expresses a process rather than offering an object finished for contemplation. Unfinished architecture is the result of arresting the design process before the traditional point of completion.

Two architects in Seattle have worked with aspects of unfinished architecture in small projects. Both Bud Schorr and Mark Millett were trained in a Modernist mode, and each came from a tradition of design and construction: Schorr, a Hollywood set designer, and Millett, an architect's son. Their work is similar in its exploration of once unconventional materials — industrialized high tech, post-craft goods such as corrugated plastic, fiberglass and steel, chipboard, glass block, exposed hardware and connections — as expressed in Schorr's Gretchen's Of Course and Arnold's restaurants, and Millett's Markovitz/Millett and Farris houses. Millett's houses also have an incomplete quality about their construction.

Unfinished architecture's debt to Modernism is in its emphasis on material qualities, and to the Bauhaus for lessons in looking at a building's structure, the movement of air, energy, and people through it, and to light as a formgiver. These traditions are carried on in the bare-bones functionalism of engineering aesthetics and in the ironic, playful, functional imagery of unfinished architecture.

Modern architects seem to want an austere, finished room as an object for their contemplation and visual satisfaction. Do people go into these rooms? Where do they sit in comfort?

Remember the childhood game where everyone is twirling and moving until someone yells, "Freeze!" at which point we'd hold our shapes, look at each other, and laugh at our odd, still shapes?

When I was a kid, we lived down the road from a family that salvaged junk. Their house was a wreck. They kept old cars in their front yard. Everyone hated this and talked about how their mess affected property values throughout the neighborhood. I remembered this when I read about Frank Gehry being sued by his Santa Monica neighbors over the design of his house.

Concerns shared by the minimalist artists of the late 60s and early 70s have been expressed in unfinished architectural forms. It is easy to perceive a connection between Anthony Caro's steel sculptures, Sol LeWitt's steel cages, Donald Judd's galvanized boxes, and the kinetic light machines of Duchamp and Moholy-Nagy in the 20s and contemporary experiments with minimalist building design happening on the West Coast.

Frank Gehry acknowledges the influence on his work of California minimalist sculptors. From their work Gehry learned to think in unconventional terms of odd proportions, spaces within spaces, bare and barren materials, surrealism, fragments, and spatial illusions. Gehry characterizes his residential style as "cheapskate architecture."

... continued on page nine.

ARCADE

A COLUMN OF MANY ORDERS

What is the press world without a column? How has ARCADE survived so long without one? These questions and many others may be answered here in the Column of Many Orders. YOU may even answer them with YOUR audience participation: send us your old jokes, those secret thoughts you'd never lay claim to (we will), and those nuggets of information you're bursting to tell the world through the media. We may include them with the Motlies, the Derelict, and the Truly Needy Information that makes up the meat of the content in these slender columns.

LETTERS

Dear Editors:

Congratulations on your paper, particularly the August/September issue.

Two small, but important corrections for your "Landscapes of Interest" section:

- 1) The *Fountain Design* at the Westlake Square Bus Stop in Seattle was by Jean Johanson, not George Tsutakawa.
- 2) *Nesler Terrace Public Housing Project*: Name is Jesse Epstein, not Jacob.

Sincerely,

John M. Morse, FAIA

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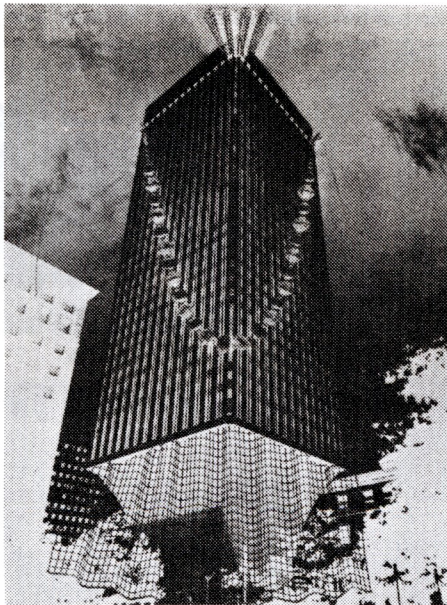
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Piece from "America in A Box" by Sheila Klein.

GOD AND THE ARCHITECT

by Fred Bassetti

The First One took a few neutrons, leptons, hadrons and quarks, some charm and color, and an equal amount of anti-matter. He held it together for the shadow-of-an-instant, using assorted forces ready to hand, and a loud noise occurred, not to be heard for twenty billion years.

Decide up and down, fling time one way so it can't turn back, invent spin, parity, DNA and sex, and all else follows. What chaos, what fun.

God watches and is content. It is interesting, it may even be Art, and as architect I try to do something similar.

But I lack freedom and am kept on a leash. The speculative developer, our local school board, the church committee, functionaries at every level of government — all deal with me as architect, but all have a different notion of how to handle the choke-chain.

While there are extremes, most clients keep a reasonable balance of freedom and control. A standard bell curve fairly describes the spread from the ones who are thoughtless or fearful, who stifle all initiative, to the ones brave enough to throw away the leash. These few know that though some of us in our sudden liberation may tangle it, bolo-like, around our feet, others will bound straight into the arms of our lifelong muse to make beautiful music.

Still, most of our time is spent in a plodding effort to turn hopeful designs into contract documents, fighting off bureaucrats so construction can begin, making sure that wind and rain stay out, wrestling with budget and schedule and builder.

At this routine level, we usually do adequate work. We serve society as best we can, most of the time managing to provide workmanlike quality despite wan fees.

You ask then why we endure seven years of college and graduate school plus an apprenticeship twice as long, knowing that few of us will be trusted with a major commission, and even if we are, our creative spirits will still be held largely in check? Why do we stay with it? Is there a pay-off, and if so, when does it come?

Yes, there is, for some. It is that magic time when we are allowed to play God, when our dreams crystallize, when the endless two-dimensional sketches on napkins, on flimsy, on yellow pads become three, when theory becomes fact, when something that never was, is. And when that happens, God's nature reveals itself. For in acting like God, we learn what He does with His time: He plays.

When we transcend everyday routine through the electric challenge of building design, our work becomes play. For neutrons, hadrons, and quarks, we substitute wood and steel, concrete and bricks; we throw them into the macromixer and whisper "symmetry" or "rhythm." We say "function," "fenestration," "circulation," or invoke visions of arches and vaults; we demand integrity, coherence, and/or symbolism.

Then this, and the contractor's jig done, we pay him his extras while holding off lawyers eager to cash in on the accident we tried to avoid, or environmentalists who think the tumble-down hotel shouldn't have been demolished.

Now we call the photographer to immortalize our creation while we search for that rare chance to play God once more.

THE LAW

Please note that the Application Intake Center of D.C.L.U. (that's Department of Construction and Land Use) will be closed every Tuesday from 8 to 10 a.m. This is a virtual Shut-Down and means you had better just stay away. City personnel will be using the time to update their knowledge of changing codes.

MONEY

Artists, and possibly designers of various ilk, may be awarded up to \$1000 for project proposals made to "and/or" by October 10 or December 2, 1983. The criteria are as open as the ocean, so call and/or for details: 324-5869.

ART

The Downtown Art Plan, a Report and Recommendation on the siting of public art and downtown public spaces, will be available in mid-November from the Seattle Arts Commission. Call 625-4223 for details. This Report was prepared by Architect Larry Rouch and Artist Jim Hershfeld.

"America in a box" is the name of Sheila Klein's new show at the Alcymia Galleria in Florence, Italy. Shown here is a segment of one of the wall pieces from the show. Incidentally, Sheila makes a great substitute for those clear plastic "rugs" that go under the desks of rolling-chair personnel. She has a great collection of linoleum rugs that you might want to peruse when she returns from her trip abroad.

Have you visited the Alexis Hotel yet? If you've been in the new Mark Tobey Pub, you've been pretty close. Next time you're there, take a walk upstairs to the restaurant of the Alexis to view Gloria Bornstein's new work, "Permutations on the I Ching." This artwork is a series of four panels of cast paper relief using handmade rice paper.

BOOKS

Take a look at your secret self. *The Image of the Architect*, a new book from Yale University Press by Andrew Saint, aims right at the heart in its first chapter's reconstructions of Howard "The Fountainhead" Roark and Frank Lloyd Wright, and in its careful and curious dissection of the attitudes toward art and individualism espoused through the one and by the other. "A building is significant or insignificant in so far as it incorporates an idea or ideas conceived by its individual designer, and the history of architecture becomes the web of such significant ideas, worked out in special buildings. This understanding of architecture, long prevalent, shows only limited signs of receding today." From Medieval times to the present, Saint follows the development of the profession, its practices and images, both self and public. He concludes that business has become the principal business of architecture, and finishes with a prayer: "If a generation's imagination can be fixed upon something above the game of styles, novelty of appearance, and paper projects, and remain equally resolute in the face of the allurements of commerce, we may at last get a profession worthy of the claim of leadership in the (building) industry." Tall order.

THE BRAIN

Remember those long, written math problems in grade school? Try this one: It took one man from Metal Specialties Company 2½ months to install the partitions for 272 toilet stalls and 90 urinal screens in the 48-story First Interstate Bank Building. At that rate, how long will it take the same man to install 410 compartments and 70 urinal screens in Columbia Center's 76 stories? If you can figure it out, call Fred Trettevik at Metal Specialties to check his contract estimate.

THE PRESS

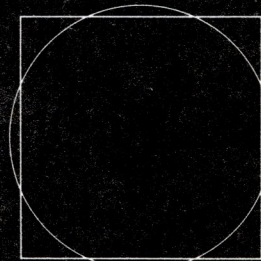
The *Seattle Times* calmly reported on page eight of the Saturday, September 17, Economy section, "UW ADVISED TO REPLACE BUILDINGS IN DOWNTOWN 10 ACRE TRACT," while the *Post Intelligencer* ran top of front page headlines: "UW URGED TO RAZE COBB AND SKINNER BUILDINGS." Meanwhile Allied Arts September Newsletter headlines read, "ANOTHER TOWER WHERE SEATTLE USED TO BE." The story: The University of Washington Regents have been advised by Keith Riely, Seattle appraiser, to consider replacement of the buildings by the turn of the century to maintain the quality and marketability of its Downtown Metropolitan Tract. It is suggested that the Cobb Building (1910) be replaced before the end of the decade while the Skinner Building (1926) be given more time to breathe, until the end of the century. Allied Arts is wasting no time. It is putting together a coalition of those opposed to the destruction of the Cobb Building. "Energetic persons with rolled up sleeves are urged to apply with the office for positions along the battlelines." Call 624-0432 for combat duty.



"Permutations on the I Ching" by Gloria Bornstein.

NEWS TOO

And in Portland: Cornerstone Development Company, backed by The Bumgardner Architects and Olson Walker Architects have snagged the golden ring from the Portland Development Commission merry-go-round on the South Waterfront Project. Their competition was a local Portland developer, H. Naito Properties, with SERA Portland architects and Fisher Friedman of San Francisco and 80,000 housing units' experience. The prize is "The most visible image in the city, maybe even in the state," a strip of the Willamette's west bank between Hawthorne and Marquam bridges in downtown Portland, 3 acres in all.

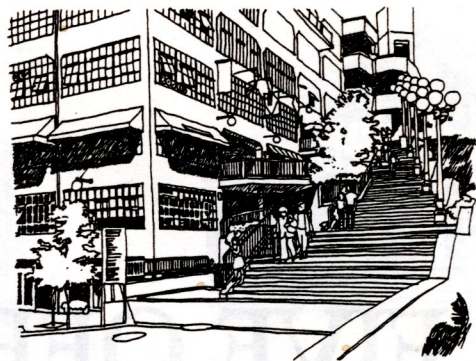


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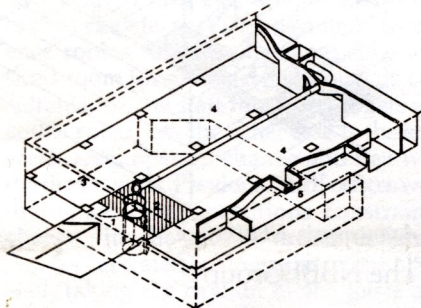
FIVE OFFICES: IMAGES IN ARCHITECTURE



The Fix-Madore Building.

Architects put more than their reputations on the line when designing for themselves. When architects move into their own built designs, they have to live for quite some time with that moment's whim, last year's trend, or traces of the way they used to work. Their offices, perhaps more than buildings they design for clients, must keep pace with changing times.

Lessons can be learned from architects' attempts to express and outfit themselves. Examined here are the designs of the new (or relatively new) offices of five architectural firms in downtown Seattle. Prime sources of information were principals in the firms or the designers responsible for the new offices, and firsthand observation of the spaces and plans themselves. Little attempt was made to verify stories with second sources. All of those providing information had good reason to portray their offices in the best light. As a group, these offices hint at changes in the practice of architecture. By themselves, these offices are solutions to office space planning. Each attempts to freeze its own elusive image in architecture.



Axonometric, Olson Walker Office.

Olson Walker Partners Architects

In December 1980, Olson Walker Architects moved out of the National Building to make way for its impending renovation. To exemplify their support of downtown as a place of work and residence, the partners took a space on one level near the bottom of the Market's Pike Hillclimb stairs, across from Hillclimb Court, one of their current projects. Their intention to buy their own building eventually affected the choice and design of their new, temporary office, yet their temporary stay continues.

They leased a typical raw warehouse space with industrial steel sash windows and exposed, sandblasted concrete columns, floor, and ceiling. The architects decided to contrast the new architecture with the old, "to float everything in the space," according to Bob Wagoner, partner in charge of the move. "We wanted to emphasize the sense of openness and accessibility."

The new office was laid out much like the previous one. Entry, reception and waiting, and conference areas are clustered at the door in a corner retail window over-

looking the Hillclimb, barely separated from each other. "Jim (Olson) and Gordon (Walker) are up in back . . . so they can see out over and gain more privacy," while the other three partners are grouped along the opposite wall. Sandwiched between the two groups of partners and arranged symmetrically between columns, on axis with the entry door and exposed ductwork, are the staff work stations.

Lacking movable furniture and anticipating their next move, Olson Walker decided to put energy and money into a furniture system that could be broken down and moved easily. The furniture's design is based on a 28-inch modular cube which, with a drawing table on top, brings a desk surface up to a workable 30" height. The module doubles to accommodate flat file drawers for large drawings. Stacked cubes for shelving and tackboards at work spaces act as low space dividers.

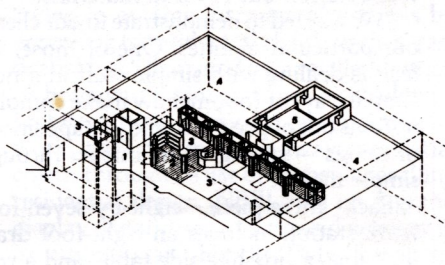
Olson Walker moved into the new space with fifteen people. The original space now appears compact and crowded. "We grew into it, popped the seams, and poked a hole into the basement," Wagoner says. The firm expanded further into the adjoining basement space in a third phase. The basement addition has fewer windows and more fixed, high partitions than the upper room, and a feeling of greater enclosure and privacy.

The open arrangement of the office worked well when Olson Walker had mostly residential and small commercial clients. Now the firm does a greater share of its work for developers of larger projects who tend to be more concerned with privacy, particularly with respect to unannounced plans. The lack of privacy both at the conference table and in the partners' areas has become cause to meet clients elsewhere.

During the office design process, the partners "... held many heated discussions about the right or wrong way of doing things. A couple times we actually sat down and voted on some things." One of the issues voted on was color. There was simply no consensus. What they ended up with was a palette of now-in-vogue decorator colors: lacquered greyed pink on low modular units and pumpkin on the higher shelving units, contrasting with the grey walls and exposed concrete structure. "Market colors." The grey ceiling absorbs much of the light from carefully arranged track and industrial cage lights. Task lights brighten work stations. Jim Olson has said the pumpkin was introduced to balance out the boutique quality the pink gave the office. Shoppers regularly come in to ask directions and find out what is sold there. In a stepped stack of cubes at the entry sit a bicycle wheel, a megaphone, and a couple of models, behind glass. There is clearly a decorator's touch here, albeit tongue-in-cheek. And nearby stands a lifesize papier-mâché horse. Most visiting shoppers want to know if it's real.

The price tag of the new office design

was \$22 per square foot, most of it sunk into the furniture.



Axonometric, Bumgardner Office.

The Bumgardner Architects

Located for ten years in a residential neighborhood on the east shore of Lake Union in a bright blue wood-frame building, the Bumgardner Architects set up a second office in downtown Seattle a few years ago to oversee the nearby six-block Waterfront Center project. Communications became difficult, a growing share of the firm's work was downtown, and the Shorelines Management Act prevented expansion at Lake Union. In February 1982, the firm reassembled its staff at a new downtown location in an old warehouse building on the waterfront, one floor above the office of its largest client, Cornerstone Development Co.

The office occupies about half a floor where heavy concrete columns, large industrial steel sash windows, high ceilings, exposed plumbing, and ductwork were givens. Except for building columns every twenty feet, there is in the space no rigid geometry requiring placement of desks in any certain arrangement. Work stations are composed of movable elements, an unsophisticated system of hollow-core door drafting tables and particle-board furniture. Desks are modified with scrap lumber to accommodate individual needs. "I don't believe in a kind of forced order," says Bumgardner. "Things should be thoughtfully arranged, but should bespeak what has to take place. All the processes aren't necessarily orderly in architecture. The high ceilings and the high glass, to my way of thinking, overwhelm the disorder that may be taking place at the individual work station. Communication among the people working here is all-important, and the open office scheme expresses this. The easiest way to (encourage) communication is to throw everyone together in one space."

There are no private offices. Conference rooms are the only enclosed spaces. Teams working on large commercial projects are grouped on one side of the office with closely associated principals. On the other side of the office, one- and two-person teams work on residential, interiors, and small commercial projects. The two sides are separated by "The Commons," a raised platform surrounded by counters and bookshelves containing technical catalogues, which serves as a lunchroom, reference

library, and Friday cocktail hour gathering spot. The Commons is both divider and connector, a central meeting place designed to keep the large space from feeling like a Boeing drafting room.

The public entry is an historical reference to the firm's work. It is a room more personal than corporate — an eclectic mix of library, exposed ductwork, wingback chairs and project display boards. Al Bumgardner comments, "It's hard to do an entry, because there aren't many functions that take place there." Conference rooms ring this area, screening the rest of the office from visitors, while allowing a glimpse of the colonnade beyond.

The colonnade of tapered, faceted fir columns both divides and bridges the public and private portions of the office and serves as a pedestrian street running almost the length of the office. Fragments of the colonnade appear in conference rooms and the Commons. The colonnade is Bumgardner's partial solution to one of the major design problems tackled in the new office's design: "In what's essentially a concrete and plasterboard-enclosed space, how (were) we (to) recall the historical development of the office (working primarily with wood)?" How to develop an office that expresses the full range of work, including large commercial, in a way "... that doesn't scare off residential clients? The colonnade was one of those things that was seen as changing scale, adding some kind of levity."

Bumgardner looked upon the move as a chance to innovate. A major experiment and investment was indirect metal halide lighting. It provides a no-glare general light which is supplemented by task lights. Three kinds of light in the interiors samples library test materials' colors under different lighting conditions.

Architects put more than their reputations on the line when they design for themselves.

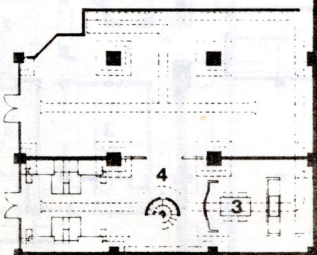
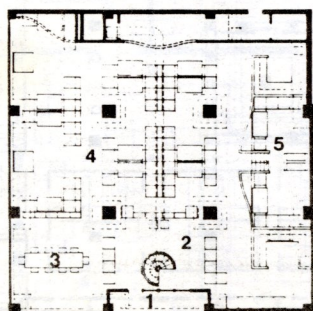
The firm tried to avoid using trendy colors. "I don't like things that can be easily categorized as a style or that date when something was done," says Bumgardner. The office is a sea of greys, with a squall of color here and there. The Unistrut, metal halide lighting support rail "... became red to try to make something of it, rather than pretend that it wasn't there." Oil-finished wood contrasts with the painted wallboard and concrete. The colonnade floor also stands out, a lively pattern in putty, blue, and red vinyl tile.

Although the budget wasn't unlimited, neither was it fixed. The job finally cost roughly \$22 per square foot. "Character — that it not be ostentatious, too designed, or too self-conscious — was most important."

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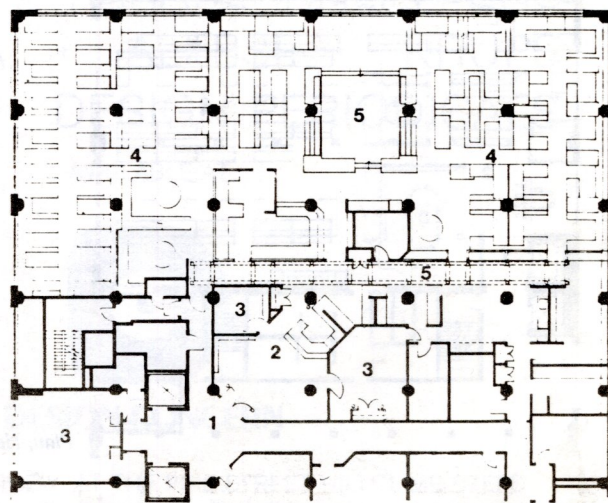
All illustrations by Seth Seabloom.

Key to Office Plans: 1) Entry, 2) Lobby/Reception, 3) Conference Room, 4) Studio/Drafting Room, 5) Special Feature.

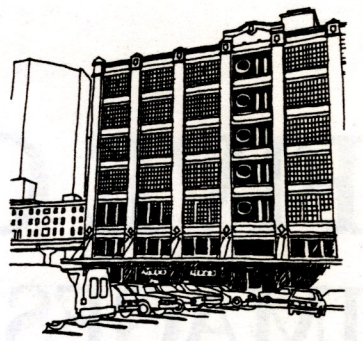


Plan, Olson Walker Office.

Plan, Bumgardner Office.

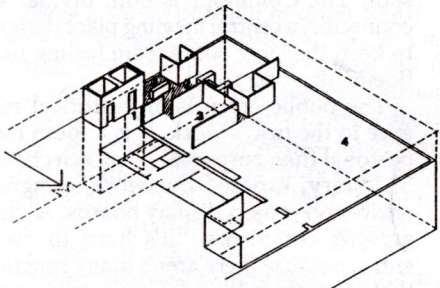


FIVE OFFICES



The Immunex Building.

continued from page three . . .



Axonometric, Hewitt/Daly/Isley Office.

Hewitt/Daly/Isley Architects

Hewitt/Daly's former office space in the Colman Building had been remodeled four times and defied further expansion. In November 1982, having renovated the National Building, the firm, joined by Isley, moved into it, preferring its Waterfront Center location.

What the new office looks like isn't necessarily what it is, according to Dave Hewitt, partner in charge of the move. "Everyone runs in and says 'high tech.' We weren't really trying for a high tech look. When we get some of our hard-core three-piecers in here, really looking for a slick uptown architect, there's enough of that that we can qualify, but we don't overpower the [smaller] jobs. We're not trying to do the ultimate statement that expresses our views on architecture. There's very little architecture here, actually — a few plasterboard walls. If you draw a plan of this place, it's really rather mundane. We like that." The new office is pulled away from the existing structure, working against and contrasting with the rough brick walls, heavy timber frame, and irregular ceiling beams. It has a sleek look.

The entry is notable in that it "... isn't saturated with architectural stuff." This is where two Breuer chairs sit and the firm's growing art collection is displayed. "We certainly want our clients to look toward the artistic nuances of our work," says Hewitt. In the wall opposite the entry, one enters the formal conference room. This room is a theater, with great variety in lighting possibilities. Small theater spots hovering over the table bring home the point. "We've developed over time a commitment to presentation techniques. When we can get someone here, then we've really got them in our territory."

Partners and staff devoted a lot of time to the design of the model work station. "The intention was that the individual work station is the most important piece of the office. That's where people identify some sense of their own worth in terms of coming to work. We felt one of our clear goals was to try to make the working environment as professional and as sophisticated as we could within the budget constraints. Sophisticated means being proud of where

you work and what you're working on, not slick. We were trying to make a Ferrari work station out of Pinto materials.

"We wanted to demonstrate to our clients our particular abilities. One of those, we feel, is dealing with simple stuff in a non-simple way, or to somehow make complex notions out of pretty simple juxtapositions of things — strong visual impact through simple means."

Each three-piece, eight-by-seven-foot work station includes an eight-foot drafting table, a box-like side table, and a rolling storage cart which fits under the side table.

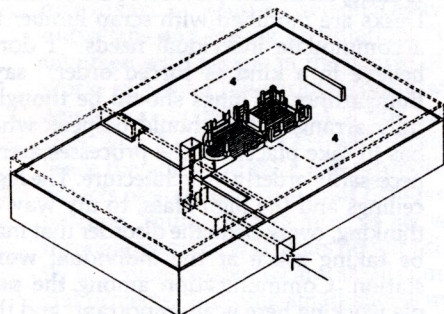
Work station locations are fixed by electrical conduits serving each from overhead wire mesh basket chases, the primary perpetrators of the high-tech look. The chases are designed to hold future service lines for computer-aided drafting. A technical library defines the work area on two sides.

Interior colors blend with the exposed structure. Wall colors range from light to dark values of grey. Work stations are glossy white. Overhead chases and lights are industrial grey. Artworks stand out on walls as splashes of color.

Indirect industrial fluorescent fixtures provide ambient light and incandescent spots brighten art work and countertops, but Hewitt thinks they may have gone too far in avoiding a high intensity general light. Staff depends heavily on task lights.

One result of the decision to hold all walls away from the ceiling is problematic acoustics. Everyone in the office is distracted by what goes on in energized conferences, and neither staff nor clients have adequate privacy.

The final cost of the new office was approximately \$34 per square foot. Hewitt thinks "... it's scary. This is a lot of money."



Axonometric, Callison Office.

The Callison Partnership

The Callison Partnership moved downtown in December 1982, in order to consolidate its growing staff onto one floor and to gain ownership of its building and greater proximity to its clients and consultants. The Kress Building at Third and Pike, in Seattle's retail district, was a personal investment by eleven members of the firm. The building was renovated for short-term use, in anticipation of its eventual demolition for highrise development. The treat-

ment of the exterior of the building was "... not very sensitive," according to Tony Callison, a partner, "but that was purposeful. If we had been too sensitive we would have had a historical project."

One finds the new Callison office by way of a wide, empty entry hall from a mean street scene to a single elevator at the rear of the building. At the second floor, one steps into a very different setting in Callison's entry lobby: a splashy marble-faced fireplace, ceramic tile, marble, and carpet at the floor, contemporary lounge chairs, a low glass table, flowers, and a rendering of recent work. "We wanted a comfortable, residential feel rather than a cold, ultra-modern office space," says Charlene Nelson, partner in charge of interiors.

Where the architect's office once served mainly as work studio, it now also acts as a show-place.

The office is oriented inward, focused on a raised, skylit atrium. Someday, when the budget allows, the atrium will be outfitted with rattan outdoor furniture so that it will have a "... different, fresh feeling from the rest of the office — a relief oasis," according to Nelson. Now home to a few plants, the atrium will serve as a lunchroom for staff, a leisurely place to do code studies and research, or a place where clients can be served lunch and observe the surrounding office without disturbing the staff.

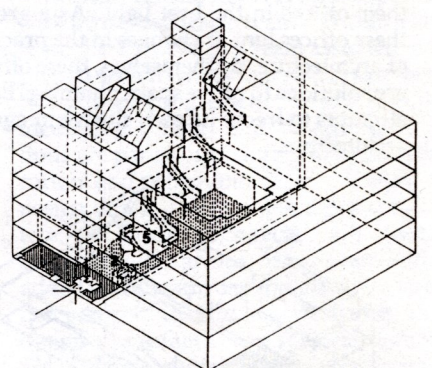
The main studio space is laid out around three sides of the atrium and is itself ringed by the project managers' glass-enclosed cubicles at the building's perimeter. The idea of compartmentalized offices gained favor in the previous office as a way to gain acoustical privacy, in spite of the necessarily diminished flexibility of such an arrangement of space. Low partitions in the open studio are used to provide some visual and acoustical privacy. Staff members are encouraged to use tack boards to personalize their spaces "... in a controlled manner," according to Nelson. About his own space, Tony Callison comments, "I like the enclosure, but I'd like to be more in the main setting of the office, where the action is, so to speak."

On the other side of the elevator lobby from the main studio area are the computer room, computer-aided drafting stations, and an unrented tenant space. The two sides of the office are physically and psychologically separate spaces, contrary to the firm's program goal of allowing everyone to feel as though in one large space. Plans have been made to remodel and incorporate adjacent tenant space in order to tie the two sides together.

The Callison Partnership is the exclusive designer for Nordstrom. In its work for the growing clothing retailer, Callison has tried to keep up with current color trends, which

change on a three-to-five-year cycle. "Color flexibility" therefore became an important criterion for the new office design. The result is a neutral palette of greys for permanent fixtures. "For the more flexible items, such as pin panels at work stations, the four lounge chairs, painted surfaces, we did a current color statement. Then we changed value within that statement so that there are some lighter and darker values for interest working within the space. That allows us to go back at a very minimal cost and reupholster key pieces of furniture, paint a couple of walls, recover a couple tackboards, and you've got a whole different color statement happening." Nelson believes these periodic changes will be an uplift to those working in the office.

Cost was an important consideration. Due to the temporary nature of the plan, the budget was adhered to strictly, at \$33 per square foot.



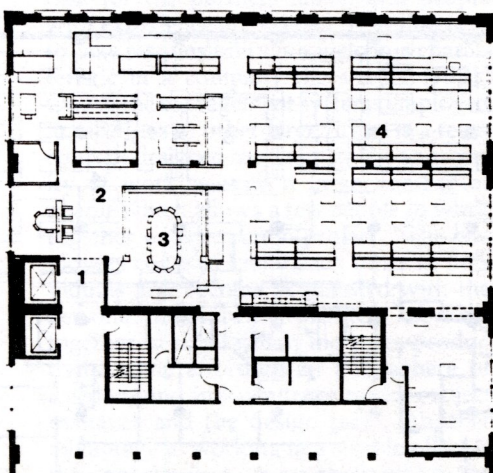
Axonometric, NBBJ Office.

The NBBJ Group

The NBBJ Group (formerly Naramore Bain Brady and Johanson) was bursting at the seams and scattered in several in- and near-downtown locations until the various subsets of the firm reunited in Pioneer Square's Heritage Building on January 1, 1983.

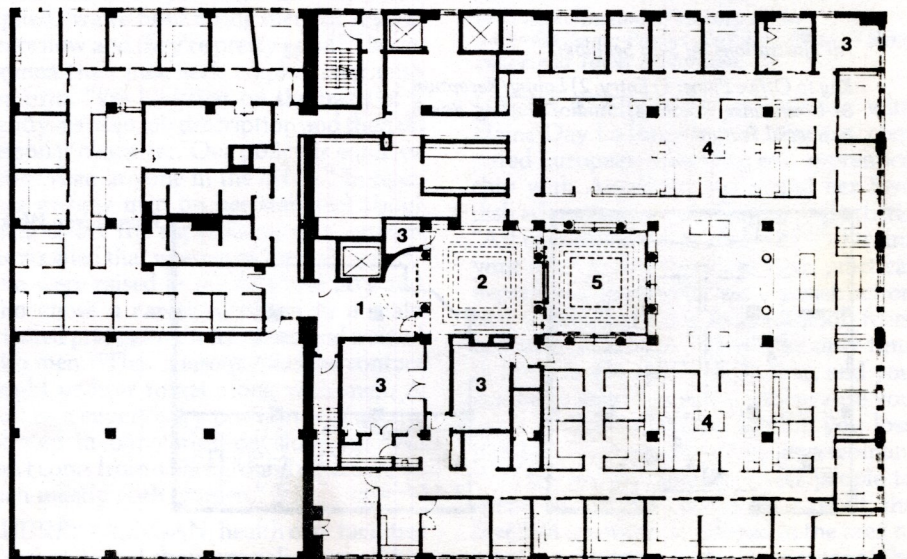
The sandstone exterior of the old five-story warehouse was cleaned, and the brick and heavy timber interiors sandblasted to remove remnants of early fires. The building was gutted and brought up to seismic code; new windows, new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing services were installed. The architects "... wanted to keep it simple — concentrate our dollars in a few places and let the building be what it was beyond that," according to Dennis Forsyth, manager of the team responsible for the design of the new office.

A tightly-controlled design process produced a concept in a weekend charette. By Monday NBBJ designers, contractor Jack Rafn, and mechanical and electrical consultants had established the scheme with the location of stairs and elevators. That day they ordered the elevators. "It was a wave-your-arms kind of design, but we actually did produce documents," says Forsyth. The move occurred only seven months after the lease was signed.



Plan, Hewitt/Daly/Isley Office.

Plan, Callison Office.





The National Building.



The Kress Building.



The Heritage Building.

The main design feature and organizing element in plan and section, a skylit five-story open stair, is first visible from the reception area, beyond the entry cubicle. (The new office was not to be showy on the street: "People will have to be looking for it," says Forsyth.) Stepping back into the building as it climbs back and forth, the stair seems somehow mysterious and distant; a prominent reception desk guards the path to the first flight. The ceiling of the stair shaft steps up and back, following the stair, making each successively higher floor larger than the one below. "The stair originally developed as a feature," Forsyth explains. "We were looking at vertical shafts that went the full length of the building. We were trying to figure out how we could firestop a full-story shaft in order to get by the fire codes. We were looking at separating it in pieces on an angle so that you separated two stories and then two more, and voilà! The stair developed!" For code compliance, the shaft is created by fire doors at each landing and a roof exhaust through the skylight.

A fire wall separates the two sides of each floor. To the east is an office for one of the principal partners, two small conference rooms for team meetings, one mid-sized room for meetings with outside consultants, special staff functions, toilets and coffee room. On the other side is the staff work area, open to change and flex with the firm's needs. Previous NBBJ offices were maze-like; many partitions constrained change. In the studio areas, designers "... concentrated on doing the ceiling plane well, taking the rhythm of the joists and letting it create the character, putting a good light fixture in (indirect fluorescent tubes), and concentrating our mechanical distribution to keep it as clean as we could."

Office layout is revealing about a firm's attitude toward its employees.

The program called for a lunch room and adjacent gallery space for large group meetings. In the end, the functions were split, with the lunchroom on the roof and the large gallery on the first floor. The lunchroom is a large greenhouse with a kitchen, eating area, and surrounding outdoor terrace, which had to go through all the Pioneer Square Historical District design criteria. "Because the area has a lot of 'things' on the roof, it's another 'thing' on the roof."

NBBJ is currently a group of 210 people which could comfortably grow to 250 in its new office. The top two floors house the architectural staff; on the third floor are project management, cost estimating, and planning; interiors (Business Space Design) and graphics are on the second floor. Says Forsyth, "There's order just from the building. There wasn't order in the old one. We can work together now." NBBJ is in the process of changing from a hierarchically-

structured, departmentalized operation to one that breaks itself into autonomous units, "modules" of at most twenty people who stay together from project to project, acting somewhat like small firms. Each open-plan floor can hold three modules and is equipped to add CAD stations. Currently, one module has been formed, equipped with four CAD terminals.

Many furniture sizes and styles were investigated for work stations before NBBJ decided to build a custom design similar to an available Italian system. Each includes an adjustable drafting table and layout/shelving/storage unit with integral partitions.

A variety of pastels highlight the grey and white interiors. Gestures, both in the mint green and pale yellow trim, and in forms like the square windowed conference rooms, are vaguely reminiscent of current post-modernist preferences.

The complete cost of renovating the building for NBBJ's office use was about \$40 per square foot, the greatest of the five offices.

These five firms were chosen for this article because of their common decision within the last three years to relocate downtown. By virtue of this decision, they are a select, rather than representative group. While there are strong differences among these firms in size, clientele, style, approach, and image, there are also many similarities.

Each firm relocated near major clients. Olson Walker, Bumgardner, and Hewitt/Daly/Isley each moved into buildings owned by and near to Cornerstone Development Co., a developer with whom they each would like to continue working. Callison is now located two blocks from its major source of work, Nordstrom. The giant NBBJ certainly doesn't stay in business with its Seattle commissions, but it did get another project with the Heritage Group as a result of renovating and moving into that developer's building. Clearly, easy access can aid both parties in an architect/client relationship. Easy access to on-going projects also moved some firms to relocate downtown.

No firm had the resources to build from scratch, a fact which may address the minor profitability of architectural practice as much as the high cost of construction and land values downtown. All of the firms moved into renovated buildings. Four of them chose to work or contrast with the shells of the buildings. Only at Callison is there little sense of the existing building. It is interesting that the firms also unwittingly followed the same basic recipe of emphasizing four elements or uses in their offices: entry/reception, conference rooms, open drafting room, and a special architectural feature.

In each entry, what takes place in the office is not immediately apparent, although many messages are conveyed. Each

office design reveals a lot about the firm's clients. Callison, a commercial architect, is trying to enlarge its range of projects by appealing to residential clients with a "residential feel," tempered by a retailer's notion of homeyness. Bumgardner, a residential architect now doing larger commercial work, tries not to scare away residential clients through its use of elements recalling residential design. NBBJ puts on a grand display of corporate drama and mystery in its austere stair. Hewitt/Daly/Isley's art collection, perhaps too subtly, entices clients to look for the artistic side of the firm's work. Olson Walker gives signals of playfulness in a boutique-like setting and, by doing so, confuses the clear message its more traditional small studio layout might offer.

The firms unwittingly followed the same basic recipe of four elements.

Different offices anticipated change in various ways. Bumgardner and NBBJ have the most flexible drafting areas to allow for fluctuations in staff, team, and project sizes. Olson Walker spent its money and effort designing a furniture system the firm can take with it to a permanent location and used that to give character to the space, while Callison, in a location as temporary as Olson Walker's, used more fixed walls than any of the other offices. Callison, Bumgardner, and Hewitt/Daly/Isley have reserve space in which to expand, but will all compromise their office designs if they do so, a problem already encountered by Olson Walker. Hewitt/Daly/Isley and NBBJ allowed for the future installation of CAD terminals at all work stations, while Callison located its computer division in one confined area. Although all firms used a neutral color scheme (except Olson Walker which has had problems resulting from its colors), Callison alone approached the question of color with a retailer's notion by planning for changes in color trends.

Office layout reveals a lot about each firm's attitudes toward employees. NBBJ distinguishes a hierarchy between partners, specialists, and staff. Callison carries its

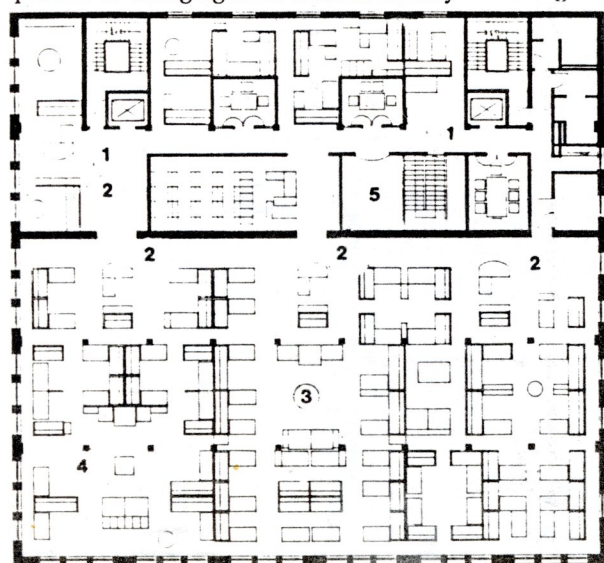
expression of hierarchy further by enclosing project architects and managers, while separating partners in an executive section. Olson Walker and Hewitt/Daly/Isley separate partners slightly from staff in the same open room. The effort with which the latter firm designed its work stations to satisfy staff members' needs is another indicator of its values. Bumgardner seems to distinguish between principals and staff simply by giving the principals round tables.

One of the most interesting phenomena in the design of these architects' new offices is the development of the "feature." Bumgardner, with colonnade and "Commons," and NBBJ, with stair and greenhouse, each have two, one public, one private. Callison has its atrium. Olson Walker's horse might even be counted. Where the architect's office once served mainly as work studio with rows of drafting tables in a big room, it now also acts as a showplace, in the words of Callison's Charlene Nelson, "to illustrate the kit of design skills to our clients." Clearly, a subtle shift has occurred in the role of the architect's office due to the changing nature of architectural practice and more aggressive marketing techniques. Each firm gains expression of some attribute and ultimately grabs attention through use of its special feature, leaving a dramatic and graphic image in a visitor's memory. About NBBJ's already legendary stair Dennis Forsyth says: "People come off the street and look at it just because it's there, which doesn't hurt. As a marketing device for an architectural firm, it has proved to be just that. It appeals to both people who relate to spaces and to the laymen in the street who just like a 'wowee'."

Mark Ashley and Seth Seablom

Mark Ashley is an editor of ARCADE and has worked in three Bumgardner offices.

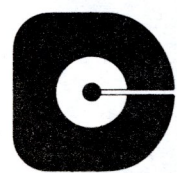
Seth Seablom, an architect and illustrator now at TRA, has worked in previous Callison and NBBJ offices.



Plan, NBBJ Office.

PORSCHE DESIGN + LAMY PENS
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (NY) +
GEORG JENSEN + AALTO VASES
BRAUN + IITTALA + BRIO TOYS
MARIMEKKO BAGS + TERRAILLON
MAXIM + PARAERNALIA PENS
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S M T W T F S

October

Christian Staub retrospective at Equivalents Gallery, 1822 Broadway through 10/25 (but you should see it now).
 "Silent Partners" new works by Mary Ann Peters, at Linda Farris Gallery, through 10/11.

Yankee Doodle first written by Dr. Richard Shuckburgh, 1775.

"America in a box": Sheila Klein and Gale McCall's show at the Alcymia & Zona galleries runs through 10/21 in Florence Italy (not New Jersey, Texas, Kansas, or any of 9 other states that have a town named Florence). (10/2)
 The William Merritt Chase Retrospective Exhibition opens at Henry Art Gallery, U.W. through 1/29.
 Northern California entrants to the Santa Barbara University Art Museum Competition of Display, at Phillippe Bonnatont Gallery, 2200 Mason St., San Francisco through 10/20.

Rolfing your Volkswagen, or In-person Registration for classes at ASUW Experimental College today. Fall Quarter begins 10/10.
AIA Design-Build Panel Discussion, Holiday Inn, Bellevue. Call Dorothy Johnson, 622-4138 for further info.
"Mediterranean Indigenous Architecture," photographs and drawings of vernacular urbanism at A.I.A. Chapter office through 10/15.

Photographs by Elsa Dorfman, at Yuen Lui Gallery, 906 Pine St., through 11/5.
Make your own building uniforms — The Uniform Building Code Course for Architects, starring William P. Justen. Tonight through 12/6. \$150 Fee. Call 543-5280 for details (U.W. Conferences and Institutes in Continuing Education).
Donnally/Hayes Bookstore has new works by Robert Maki on view through 10/18.

Paul Harcharik — Works on Paper, now through 10/15 at Phillippe Bonnatont Gallery, 2200 Mason St., San Francisco.
European Avant-Garde Film Series, U.W., 120 Kane Hall, Wednesdays through 11/30. Tickets for series at HUB.
Downtown Seattle Association Senior Citizen Events, through 11/4, including dance, music, art shows, biking, hiking, and more. Call 623-0340.

Pioneer Square Theatre Art Show and Auction, Greenwood Galleries, 89 Yesler Way, 6:30-8:30 preview tonight, Auction 10/29.
Prints by Fred Wessel and Vicki Scuri, Stone Press Gallery, 91 Yesler Way, through 10/31.
Recent Paintings, Liza von Rosensteil and Kate Wade. Davidson Galleries, 87 Yesler Way through 10/26.
Carbon 14, a Montreal-based surrealist cabaret theatre co., performs "Private Lives" (not the Coward-ly ones). Call On the Boards for specifics, 325-7901, now through 10/8.
Kenneth Callahan's "Figures of Earth" series opens at Foster/White Gallery, 311 1/2 Occidental South, through 10/30.

Society of Architectural Historians Meeting in The Dalles, OR. For details, call Roberta Deering at 625-4501.
Northwest Oasis — an exhibit of architecturally integrable crafts at Design Center Northwest. Opens tonight 5-7 PM. Through 10/28.
Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking, Chairs show, now through 10/30. 202 1st Ave. S.
New Works by Joseph Palcich at Penryn Gallery through 10/22.

"Regional Crafts; an Historical View," opens at Bellevue Art Museum. Through 12/18.
"A Jury of Her Peers," no-wave short film by Sally Heckel, 913 E. Pine St. 8 PM.
KOMO TV 4 presents "Gl Joe, a Real American Hero." The best-selling boysoldier doll stars as himself in a two-hour animated movie. Miss it and die. 12:30 PM.
Works by Blake Grinstein (Sculpture), Ruby Smith (Something that takes up a whole room), and Michael Ehle (Painting), at Jackson Gallery through 10/19.

Michael Kennedy's stained glass, through 10/22 at Glass Showcase Gallery, 2948 Eastlake Ave. E.
Seattle Design Association's 1983 Design and Advertising show through 10/31 at The Design Concern, Pike Hillclimb.
Oil Paintings by John Siscoe on view at The Boiserie, Burke Museum's Cafe, through 11/6.

"Using Crafts for Design Problems," a Seminar at Design Center Northwest with speakers Fred Bassetti, Jim Olson, and Ed Carpenter, a Portland glass artist. For more info, call Denny Vidman at 236-2469 or Marion Bond at 325-4841.
After this date, DCLU requires that all permit applicants complete a preapplication checklist and plan cover sheet. Call 625-2293 for details.

Pike Place Market Constituency Meeting. Subject: the impact of the Downtown Seattle Plan. Meeting Hall, Soames/Dunn Bldg., 6:30 PM.
Dominic Marti lectures on "Swiss Housing: Low-Rise, High-Density Cluster Developments." At Oregon School of Design, 734 N.W. 4th Ave., Portland, 8 PM.
Andre Duany, of the Miami office Arquitectonica, speaks at University of Oregon, Lawrence Hall, Rm. 177, 7:30 PM.

New Works by Richard Francisco at Linda Farris Gallery, 322 2nd Ave. through 11/6. Opening 6-8 PM.
Seattle Chapter, Society of Architectural Administrators, membership drive and cruise. Call Cathy Webster, Campbell Assoc. 363-0577 for details.
Cornish Institute will present Jean-Claude Grumberg's "The Workroom" tonight through 10/22. Free Admission, Cornish South Theatre, 8 PM.

Laurie Olin, Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department at Harvard, speaks tonight at U.W. School of Architecture. For details call 543-7679.
Ned Rifkin, Curator of the "Outside New York: Seattle" exhibition at SAM's Pavilion, lectures tonight at 911 E. Pike St. 8 PM.
The Pilchuck School's Fifth Annual Glass Auction, 10/29 at SAFECO Plaza Mezzanine 6 PM. R.S.V.P. by 10/21. 621-8422. Fifty Bucks a Head.

6:00 PM deadline for entries, Blueprint's Museum in the City Competition. Turn in entries at Peter Miller Books.
At Francine Seders Gallery: Alan Moen's Rock Slide Series, Paintings by Greg Kucera, Fiber Works by Marilyn Briggs, through 10/30.
A new Education Gallery on Seattle's School History opens at the Museum of History and Industry. Includes a replica of an 1880s one-room schoolhouse.

John Lennon born today, 1940.

Last day to see the Pacific Science Center's exhibition, "The World of Sichuan's Children," the people, life, and scenery of Sichuan Province through the lenses of local Chinese photographers. **FREE**
Watch for the grand opening of the Vancouver Art Gallery in October. It reopens in its new location, the neo-classical Provincial Courthouse, redesigned by Arthur Erickson. The new gallery and its permanent collection of four centuries of art will now be located in the heart of downtown Vancouver in an historically significant building.

Juror Critique and Awards Ceremony for Blueprint's Museum in the City Competition. Volunteer Park Art Museum 8 PM, \$4.

Outside New York: Seattle, organized by the New Museum, New York, features the work of 8 Seattle Artists: Paul Berger, Marsha Burns, Dennis Evans, Randy Hayes, Fay Jones, Alan Lande, Barbara Hoan, and Buster Simpson. Seattle Art Museum, 10/18 through 11/27. Pavilion at Seattle Center.

UNICEF Calendar Exhibition, includes 42 photographs of celebration worldwide, Museum of History and Industry, 10/18 through 12/31.

New York Abstractions: 1940s and 1950s presents some of the best paintings in the Seattle Art Museum's modern collection. Seattle Art Museum, Pavilion at Seattle Center, 10/18 through 11/27.

American Prints of the 1930s and 1940s, collected by Dr. Richard Fuller or purchased by the museum from the Northwest Printmakers' International Exhibitions, documents a broad range of printmaking techniques and aesthetic interests. Seattle Art Museum, Pavilion at Seattle Center, 10/18 through 11/27.

Deadline for Registration, Florida State Chapter A.I.A. Competition for redevelopment of a 6-block area of Miami's Little Haiti district. For more info: FSC/AIA Office, 1520 S.W. 22 St. #18, Miami, FL 33129, Attn: Nancy Dunlap.
Paintings by G. Reel, Stuart Nakamura at Jackson Street Gallery through 11/8.
Paintings and Drawings by Maxine Martell at Donnally/Hayes Bookstore through 11/8.

The Art in Public Places Program of the Washington State Arts Commission announces a competition for artists for New Purchases of Art. The projects available are to purchase works of art for school districts, vocational-technical institutes, community colleges, and state agencies, throughout the state. Artworks in all media will be considered. Submissions are due November 4, 1983. For prospectus and additional information please call or write: Washington State Arts Commission, Attention: Sandra Percival or Beverly Watt, Mail Stop GH-11, Olympia, WA 98504, (206) 753-3860.

Printmaking Techniques Studio Visit, Stone Press Gallery. Organized by Seattle Art Museum, \$2 members, \$4 non-members. Call 447-4796 for details.

Opening night at the new Bagley Wright Theatre. Call Seattle Repertory Theatre for details, 447-4764.

NOAA Artworks opens today, 7600 Sandpoint Way (adjacent to Magnusson Park). Call 527-6064 for details.
Hearing on final appeals to the EIS for Fort Lawton, 9 AM, 4th floor, 400 Yesler Building.

Recent color lithographs and colored etchings by Art Hansen at Davidson Galleries, 87 Yesler Way, now through 11/16.

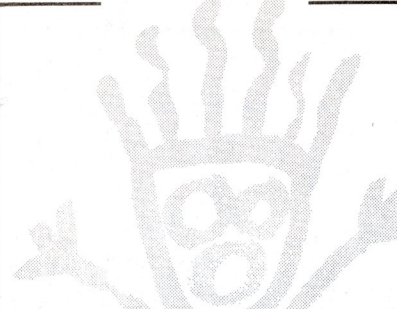
Asst. Professor Dr. Anna Kartsonis, new on the UW Art History faculty, comes to the school as an author and medieval specialist. She offers courses in Early Medieval Survey this fall and Late Medieval Survey winter quarter. For information, 543-4876. 10/26

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A.S.L.A. 1983 Design Awards Banquet 6 PM till midnight at the plaza in Design Center Northwest, Benaroya Business Park. Awards, toasts, hors d'oeuvres, dancing, and an address by Paul Schell. No host bar and reception, 7 PM. \$4.

When in Portland, be sure to see Rich Posener's glass sculpture permanently installed in the Multnomah County Elections Building, S.E. 17th and Morrison Sts.

Pablo Ruiz Picasso's Birthday. "I am only an entertainer who has

 <p>ALL SOUL'S DAY</p>	<p>Open Mondays Gallery presents works by Dick Elliot entitled "Medicine Hut" through 11/21 at 6105½ Roosevelt Way N.E.</p>	<h1>November</h1> <p>BIZART opens back in the Market area again this year, location to be announced. Now through Xmas (only 38 more shopping days).</p> <p>Michael Ehle's 52 artists' portraits on view at Raison d'Etre Cafe, through 11/30.</p> <p>Piranesi Etchings Carolyn Staley Gallery, 313 1st Ave. S., through 11/30.</p>	<p>Allied Arts Studio Tours beginning at Il Cavallo (opposite Linda Farris Gallery) tonight. Call 624-0432 for details. \$15 per person, \$25 per couple.</p> <p>Rosalyn Gale Powell and Thomas Weld paintings at Foster/White Gallery, 311½ Occidental S., through 11/27.</p> <p>Hodges/Banks Gallery Watercolor Show opens, through 11/25. Gallery Art featured.</p> <p>Walker Evans born, 1903.</p>	<p>Contemporary Seattle Artists show continues through 11/16 at Bellevue Art Museum.</p> <p>Prancing They Come: Plains and Plateau Indian art, Burke Museum, through 4/4. Also "American Indian Arts" through 11/16, at same.</p> <p>"Smokey Top; the Art and Times of Willie Seaweed" through 2/29 at Pacific Science Center.</p> <p>"Shelter Tales," constructions by Phillip Edlefsen at Cerulean Blue Gallery, 119 Blanchard St. through 11/26.</p>	<p>Universal Fine Art presents Renaissance Man Evel Knievel's paintings and lithographs at their gallery, 145 106th Ave. N.E., Bellevue.</p>	<p>"European Decorative Arts of the 18th Century" is a 2-day conference 11/5-6 on U.W. campus and includes workshops and 5 speakers. Keynoting is Dr. Carl Dauterman from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For information, UW Conferences and Lectures at 543-5280.</p> <p>Would Sadie Hawkins ask Guy Fawkes for a date? Perhaps today, a day of high hopes and low plots.</p>
<p>50 Years: A Legacy of Asian Art, a year-long exhibition, features the premier works of art from the Seattle Art Museum Asian art collection. Seattle Art Museum, Volunteer Park, through May, 1984.</p> <p>The Box of Daylight: Northwest Coast Indian Art, over 200 impressive works of the art of the major culture groups of the Northwest Coast — Salish, Westcoast, Kwakiutl, Bella Colla, Northern Wakashan, Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit — are presented in this exhibition, continues through 1/8/84. Seattle Art Museum, Volunteer Park.</p>	<p>Moshe Safdie lectures at Berg Swann Auditorium, Portland Art Museum, 8 PM.</p>	<p>Historic Seattle Constituency Meeting 7:30 PM. Call 622-6952 for details.</p> <p>"Portraits of Photographers" exhibit at Yuen Lui Gallery, 906 Pine St. through 12/3. (11/8)</p> <p>Hugh Miller, Chief Historic architect for the U.S. National Park Service, will speak on restoration and adaptation of historic buildings, particularly park lodges. At Lawrence Hall, Rm. 177, Univ. of Oregon. 7:30 PM.</p>	<p>Alcan Lectures on Architecture, Vancouver, B.C. Herman Hertzberger speaks on his own work, tonight, 6 PM, Robson Square Media Centre.</p>	<p>Gallery Artists Group Show, Jackson Street Gallery, 163 S. Jackson St., through 11/29.</p> <p>Photos of artists by Mary Randlett at Donally/Hayes Bookstore, through 11/29.</p>	<p>Handmade and painted screens by S.F. architect Osvaldo Valdes at the Phillippe Bonnafont Gallery, 2200 Mason St., San Francisco.</p>	<p>Photographs exhibited at the Pittock Mansion, Portland now through 12/4 commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Call (503) 378-5001 for further info.</p>
			<p>Stanford White, 1853.</p>	<p>Martin Luther's 500th Birthday.</p>	<p>Kurt Vonnegut, 1922.</p>	<p>Grace Kelly born, 1929. Frank Furness born, 1839.</p>
	<p>Robert Stern lectures at University of Oregon, Lawrence Hall, Rm. 177, 7:30 PM.</p>	<p>Paisley Shawls: Antique and Modern, Museum of History and Industry, 11/15 through 12/31.</p>	<p>4th Annual "Container Show" at N.W. Gallery of Fine Woodworking, 202 1st Ave. S. Through 12/31.</p>	<p>Prints by Taj Worley and Karen Guzak, lithographs by Diane Katsiaticas, at Davidson Galleries, 87 Yesler Way, through 12/7.</p> <p>A.I.A. November Chapter Meeting and Honor Awards Ceremony. Time and location to be announced. Call A.I.A. Chapter Office for details.</p>		
<p>13</p>	<p>Claude Monet born, 1840.</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>Georgia O'Keeffe born, 1887.</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
	<p>Alcan Lectures on Architecture, Vancouver, B.C. Anthony Vidler "Inventing the Ideal City From Carpaccio to Rossi." Tonight, 6 PM Robson Square Media Centre.</p>					
<p>Ian McHarg, 1920.</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>Rene Magritte, 1898.</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>Hoagland Carmichael born, 1899.</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>Those interested in volunteering to help save the Skinner and Cobb buildings, currently being considered by the U.W. Board of Regents for demolition, should contact Miriam Sutermeister at Allied Arts, 624-0432.</p>	<p>Open Mondays Gallery presents works by Cathy Schoenberg, "Self-portrait of the artist at the circus," 6105½ Roosevelt Way N.E., through 12/19.</p>	<p>Copies of two new sections of the City of Seattle's Land Use Code are available for purchase from the Department of Construction and Land Use, Land Use Information Counter, 4th Floor, Municipal Building: the Interim Greenbelt Overlay regulations, effective as of 6/1/83, and provisions governing such major institutions as hospitals and universities, effective as of 6/2/83. Cost: \$4. Cost of the complete Land Use Code: \$14.</p>	<p>Watch for COCA's second major installation exhibit, <i>Public Comments</i>. Seven artist teams, will participate in this show which is tentatively slated to open late this fall. All of the work will be large scale and, in some way, comment on the issues and experiences we all share through contemporary and historical, political, and social influences.</p>	<p>THANKSGIVING</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
					<p>Morris Lapidus born, 1902.</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>Andrea Palladio, 1508.</p>	<p>30</p>	<h1>ARCADE</h1>	

JAMES K.M. CHENG, ARCHITECTS:

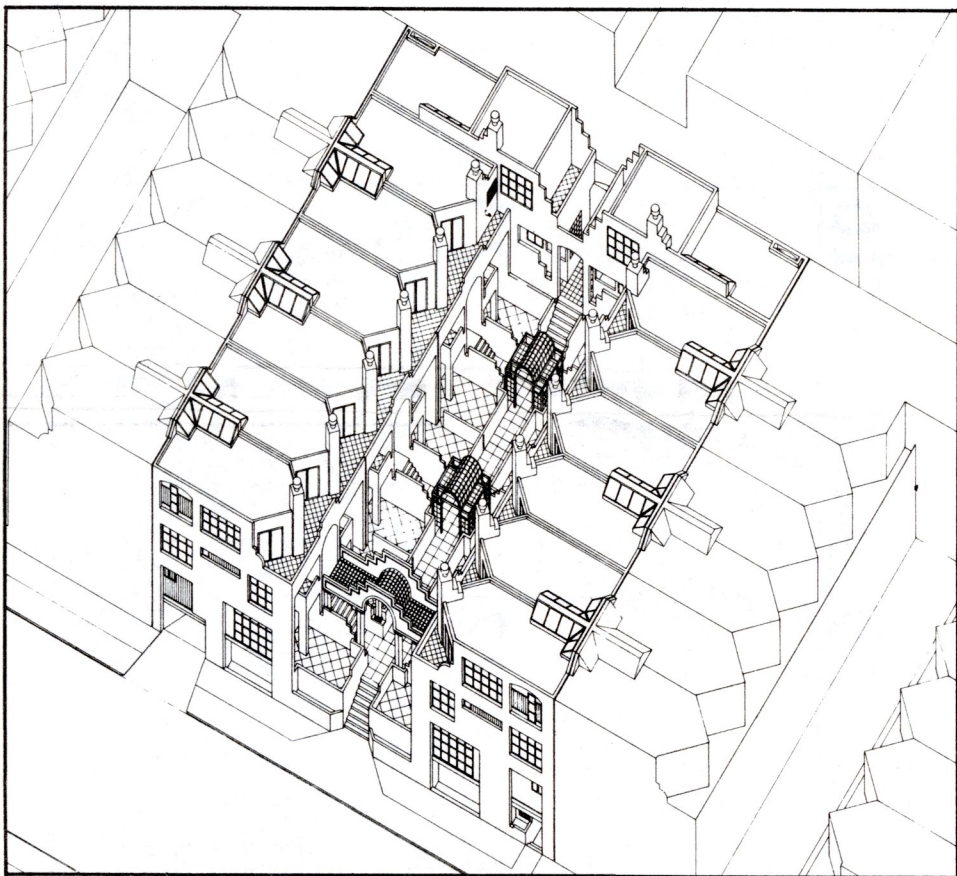
A CONSISTENT ATTITUDE

The firm, located in a retired fast food restaurant sitting in a sea of asphalt on a decayed business strip, makes little impression at first glance. But James K.M. Cheng's office near Granville Island is in a neighborhood rapidly being rebuilt, and the impression inside of quiet professional competence expands with each further observation. The twelve person office, working at all scales from residential additions to high-rise office buildings, is not yet five years old, and the proprietor is just 35. The surprise, and the pride of Jim Cheng, is the uniform high quality of the work.

Jim Cheng was born in Hong Kong and educated at the University of Washington's School of Architecture where historian Herman Pundt and photographer Christian Staub were major influences. Fred Bassetti's office provided initiation into the practice of architecture and Cheng credits the office

vision of the Corbusian derivative, manages to accommodate people, and is endearing.

Regarding his own work, Cheng maintains he is still experimenting. For a young office, Cheng believes developing a consistent attitude is far more important than external style. The absence of a dominant style, single material, or system of detailing is noticeable in his work. In conversation, Cheng frequently refers to maximizing the use of Northwest light by layering facades and interior walls, providing multiple surfaces to catch and disperse light from relatively modest openings. The effort is toward maximizing the effect of small quantities of carefully placed light. The influence of Meier is intellectual, rather than stylistic. The rigid separation between and opposition of services to served and public to private in his work derives from Kahn.



Willow Arbor axonometric. Courtesy James Cheng Architects.

with helping shape his own abilities to design. Later he worked for Omer Mithun as a project architect before practicing in San Francisco for several years. He returned to the Northwest to work for Arthur Erickson for three years before attending graduate school at Harvard where Richard Meier's studio made a particular impression. While still at Harvard, Cheng was published in the 1977 edition of *Record Houses*. In the same year he participated in winning two major competitions: The Alaska State Capitol Competition as a special consultant to Bull, Field, Volkman & Stockwell of San Francisco, and the Chinese Cultural Centre in Vancouver, B.C. as a joint venture with Romses, Kwan & Associates. Partly as a result of winning the Cultural Centre competition, Cheng returned a second time to the Northwest and opened an office in Vancouver while also teaching design at the University of British Columbia.

Cheng admires architects with the intellectual discipline to think through a building. When asked, he cites Le Corbusier's Maison Jaoul and Louis Kahn's Kimbell Art Museum as examples of much-admired buildings. Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier are particular favorites and he sees the work of Kahn and Meier as "Vernacular" and "White Heroic" derivatives of Le Corbusier. More recently, the early work of Michael Graves has made a strong impression. Graves, says Cheng, has a unique

As with layering, this aspect of Cheng's work may best be seen in his private houses.

Cheng acknowledges the influence of Bassetti and Erickson, but visible evidence is difficult to find. Willow Arbor, the housing project illustrated, features careful, traditional masonry detailing which may speak of the years spent in Bassetti's office, though masonry is hardly a common denominator in Cheng's work. But when Cheng comments on the role of architecture in creating places for people and enhancing the human spirit, one hears the romantic humanism of Fred Bassetti. Traces of Erickson's influence are more difficult to find, a fact which Cheng willingly admits is not entirely unintended. This seems appropriate in a city full of Erickson's own best work and that of many inferior copyists.

The office produces a large number of perspectives, axonometrics, and study sketches for each project. Cheng points out that the drawings go beyond normally needed detail for good reason. In Vancouver, the City has broad discretionary zoning powers. To build, one must satisfy not only the client, but also the City and community of the desirability of a particular project — not just in principle but also in design. Cheng stressed that to establish a track record with the City and smooth the way for future projects, one must demonstrate in advance just how the building will look, and build it precisely that way. City



Willow Arbor entry. Courtesy James Cheng Architects.

officials then come to trust the architect. Having established this trust, much of Cheng's work comes second-hand, from developers whose initial architect was unable to satisfy the requirements of both City and developer simultaneously.

The project illustrated, Willow Arbor, is one of three similar courtyard housing schemes located on adjacent parcels in the neighborhood overlooking False Creek and city lights from the south. Seven two- and three-story townhouses face each other across an elaborate, even ritual courtyard. The entire structure is elevated above a street level parking garage. The change in elevation is used to generate a complex ceremonial entry. From the street one immediately steps up a flight of stairs to a large landing surmounted by a column-borne, arched and trellised arbor. Three broad stairs carry the traveler up to units at each side or on to the courtyard walk ahead. Two more less ornate arbors indicate entry axes for adjacent units.

Part of the complexity of the walk is owed to the generosity of the private terraces in front of each townhouse. Most townhouses have a large ground floor terrace adjacent to the master bedroom, a small balcony off the second floor bedroom, and a large deck with a spectacular city view in front of the third floor living space.

The effort is toward maximizing the effect of small quantities of carefully placed light.

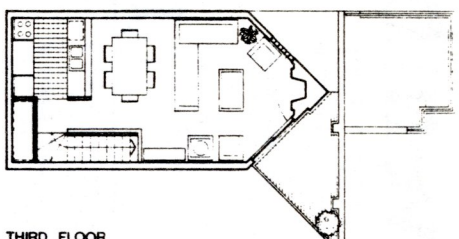
Entries to paired townhouses share landings, and each townhouse has a "front door" on the upper second floor landing a "back door" on the first floor below. Entry at the second floor is into a small hall facing a stair floodlit from a skylight in the roof above the third floor. The angled geometry of the third floor living space allows both fireplace and view to share the focus of the room. The view beyond the balcony deck is reason enough for the curved glass

guardrail. Triangular decks between units are made private by glass block windows on the non-view side. At the courtyard grade, a master bedroom suite looks out on the outdoor terrace planted with the willow trees which lend their name to the building.

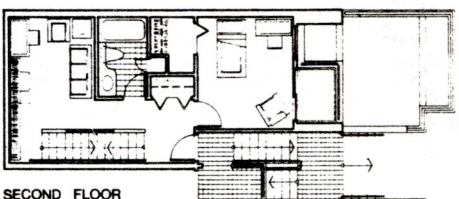
What is exceptional about this structure is not found in any particular detail or feature. Willow Arbor succeeds by not failing in its parts and by assembling the parts into an understandable and cohesive whole. The carefully thought out, if unremarkable elements fit together in a methodical, organized, and hierarchical manner which in its complexity offers richness, variation, and relief, but whose repetitive elements produce a quality of repose.

David Schraer

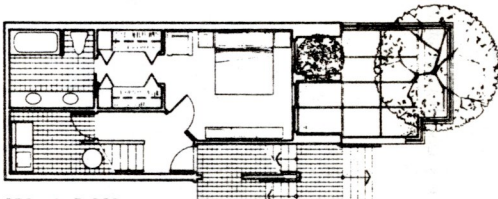
David Schraer has worked in architecture in Seattle for four years.



THIRD FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

Floor plans from Willow Arbor. Courtesy James Cheng Architects.

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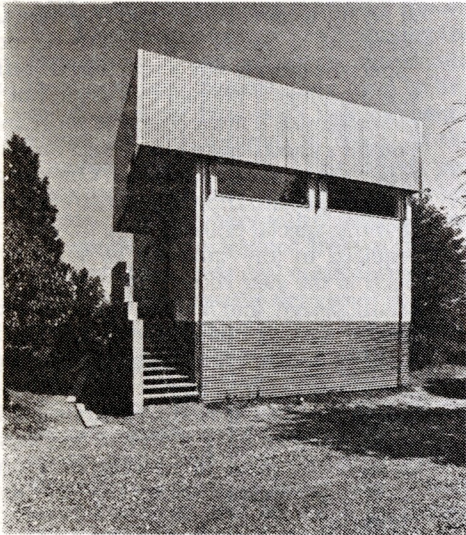
THE SUNCO

UNFINISHED

Why are we all drawn to construction sites? Unfinished architecture is a process momentarily stopped and observable. The building in process is made of observable things, plain, ordinary stuff, and human labor.

There are so many mysteries: for example, how does electricity work? Too often the answer is a glib response: "Electricity is in the walls ... it's safer there." Yet-to-be-completed architecture reveals its process and its parts, allows us to focus on elemental things, and sheds some light on a mystery.

continued from front page . . .



Farris House by Mark Millett. Photo by Barry Wong.

Mark Millett talks about "gross space" in the sense of being the maximum space for the money. The Farris House is finished in that all the detail designed was constructed, and it is gross in that the building volume and materials were selected to maximize the budget. Its artfulness is in the treatment of the frame-box: multiple floor levels of Swedish-finished particle board inside, and the composition of stock aluminum windows and corrugated metal siding on the pink plywood exterior. Space in the Markovitz/Millett house is more truly unfinished. Like an architect's house, there is no door or window trim and no base yet. The owners, two artists, collaborated on its design, and they will finish it.

Unfinished architecture defies criticism. We just cannot tell if it is good or bad. We have been taught that it is unfair to judge that which is not yet complete, so we cannot know if what may appear to be a lack of rigor is temporary or true. There are no rules, no proportional standards, no industry criteria, and no accepted standards of taste by which we can measure the success of a work of unfinished architecture. We have to respond without preparation, and without knowing what we think in advance.

"Krueck & Olsen's approach to architecture can most accurately be termed obsessive. Every detail, material, finish, color, surface, joint, juxtaposition, and assembly has been considered, reconsidered, and then considered yet again, until it's perfect. The architects' domination over the environments they create is absolute — even the furniture is bolted to the floor. Though some may feel that the long arm of Krueck & Olsen Architects leaves precious little room for personal participation, Celia Marriott, their client, does not resent the extent of their involvement in her apartment: 'If everything has been thought through at every conceivable level, you don't have to think about it anymore.'"

From *Architectural Record*, September 1983

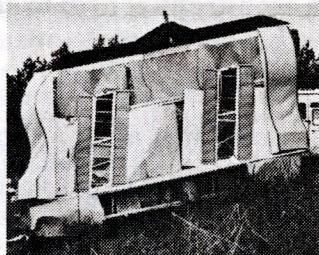
Is unfinished interior design merely messy housekeeping? Last April, *House and Garden* published a film celebrity's New York loft apartment showing an unmade bed and switched-on TV in the bedroom.

Artist Tony Smith's description of a New Jersey car ride at night: "When I was teaching at Cooper Union the first year or two of the fifties, someone told me how I could get onto the unfinished New Jersey Turnpike. I took three students and drove from somewhere in the Meadows to New Brunswick. It was a dark night, and there were no lights or shoulder markings, lines, railings or anything at all except the dark pavement moving through the landscape of the flats, rimmed by hills in the distance, but punctuated by stacks, towers, fumes, and colored lights. The drive

was a revealing experience. The road and much of the landscape was artificial, and yet it couldn't be called a work of art. On the other hand, it did something for me that art had never done. At first I didn't know what it was, but its effect was to liberate me from many of the views I had had about art. It seemed that there was a reality out there that had not had any expression in art.

from "Art and Objecthood" by Michael Fried, *Artforum*, June 1967.

As unfinished architecture expresses the construction process, it can also express the energy and force of destruction — construction and destruction being intimate relatives. Southern artist Ke Francis recently documented the ravages of Mississippi tornados for exhibit at Seattle's Donnelly/Hayes Gallery. His photographs showed a vernacular response to nature's explosions: shelters pushed into the ground; mounded, earthbound forms; a panel truck driven into a hillside. His images of destruction were fascinating in the same way that deliberately uncompleted buildings are captivating. Something has been done to the material we have never seen before.



Tornado debris: inverted mobile home. Ke Francis.

"We knew if we asked the contractor to line everything up, it would cost more ... but, sure, I wish they'd been more careful."

Susan Boyle

Susan Boyle is a Seattle architect.



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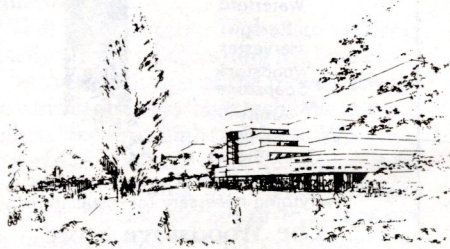
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9

EIGHT PERSPECTIVES ON PRACTICE

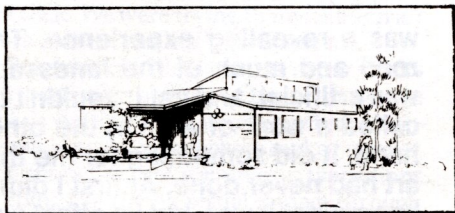
A move to a new city or a decision to leave a stable position in order to expand one's professional horizons can be unsettling in architecture, where jobs are few, competition stiff, and security virtually non-existent. Conversations with successful practitioners can amass much useful information about the nature of their work, their office policies, and their perceptions of the current market. Such an effort on the part of this author resulted in a roundtable discussion among eight Seattle architects: Sue Alden, Lottie Eskilsson, Carolyn Geise, Jane Hastings, Elaine Day LaTour-elle, Audrey Morgan, Audrey Van Horne, and Jean Young. These architects were invited to participate in a roundtable discussion because of the important characteristics they share: all have been successful in developing their careers in architecture, they represent a diversity of approaches toward the practice of the profession, and all are women.



Bagley Wright Theater - NBBJ.
Project Manager: N. Sue Alden
Sketch: Bill Evans

SUE ALDEN, Project Manager with The NBBJ Group, opened the discussion by describing experiences leading to her choice of becoming managing associate in a very large firm as opposed to opening her own firm or becoming a partner in a small office. Alden stressed the fact that she had not actually made a choice for her present position. "At the outset, my only goal was to do very good architecture and serve the client." Her business-oriented family hoped that she would follow the family tradition and open an office of her own. Being a strong-willed, self-proclaimed member of the "counterculture," Alden reacted by setting her sights on large firms rather than on owning a practice of her own. "I wanted to concentrate my efforts on design without the responsibility of taking charge of the business aspects of running one's own firm." Ironically, at NBBJ a substantial part of her day includes business management rather than design.

In response to the question of whether working for a large firm limits one's variety and responsibility Alden pointed out that "... while in small offices the partners carry much of the load, and positions of responsibility are already established, in a large firm this responsibility is too great a task for the partners alone, and people with experience are needed. A willingness to take responsibility is a welcome characteristic in a company the size of NBBJ." One of the management systems employed at NBBJ, as in other large firms, is a team concept designed to minimize the anonymity of working with a large number of people which allows a few people to work together on a common project. "The employees come to know each other as individuals and become acquainted with the personalities of their co-workers. Working together in this fashion increases productivity while affording an atmosphere of freedom and independence to the project manager and the design team. Another advantage to working in a sizable office is the opportunity to move about within the company rather than moving out when a desire for variety occurs."



Farrell-Johnson Dental Clinic
Kennewick, WA, Jean Young, Architect

JEAN YOUNG has practiced architecture in a variety of ways and found that working independently best fits her personal needs. Once she had married and started a family, she found that children were not her sole interest. She continued her career throughout the years of child-raising by working out of her home. "One of the greatest difficulties of raising a family," she admits, "is that you've got to have that something else on an adult level."

(Carolyn Geise interjected that having tried working out of her home when her child was small, she found that she disliked the fact that there weren't people coming and going, nor team members with whom she could discuss projects and share brainstorming sessions. She found this personal contact a valuable design tool and, as a result, made the decision not to work alone.)

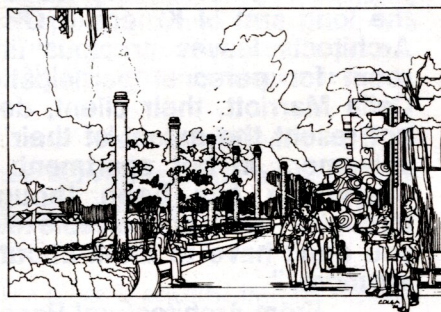
"There is more diversity from one architectural firm to another than between a male-owned and a woman-owned firm."

A woman who enjoys independence, Jean Young finds that the freedom of being able to take a day off for personal activities outweighs any feeling of isolation. "I am involved with people in the course of my work, including the various consultants I employ on a contract basis. If you have a staff, you have to market and promote." Since the administrative and promotional aspects of architecture are not her favorite pastime, Young obtains most of her work through referrals, and limits herself primarily to private residential and small commercial projects. "Keeping small allows me to control all aspects of a project from start to finish and to devote time to detailing, which I enjoy. I get busy, and sometimes I get behind schedule, but I try to keep one project in the design stages, one in documents, one in construction and supervision. It gets a little hair-raising sometimes, but if I want to make a commitment to get a project out in a hurry, I may work till two in the morning, but that's my choice."

Jean finds an occasional job shopping spree a good way to make money fast. "The pay depends on experience, but is usually handled on a per diem basis. It's educational, it's fascinating, and it served the purpose at the time," she said of her experience at the Bangor, Washington submarine base. "If one is footloose and fancy-free, without domestic ties, job shopping provides an outstanding opportunity to travel, even to other countries. If the opportunity had come up to go abroad to Saudi Arabia, I would have gone."

AUDREY VAN HORNE, partner and majority owner of Van Horne & Van Horne, represents another approach to architectural practice. She and her husband set up their joint practice in 1956. "The shop talk is terrible," complains her eldest daughter. "That's what happens when your partner is your husband," Van Horne responds. The arrangement has been "exciting and pleasurable. When you find a person to do architecture with, that person is somebody who would share the problems that relate to the project." That the Van Hornes share

problems openly and honestly is not a luxury one enjoys with all one's staff. "Some people become defensive when a project is discussed, because this is their project, and you're saying something about it. If you can approach the problem in a positive, productive way without fear of hurt feelings, you've got something that is a very dynamic and growing thing. You work as a partner in the daytime and a spouse in the evening; perhaps you apply different facets of your personalities." Van Horne feels that building her career has been made easier by having a spouse as a partner.



Seattle Center Amusement Park
Elaine Day LaTour-elle & Assoc.

ELAINE LATOURELLE addressed the issue of the woman-owned firm. Principal in Elaine Day LaTour-elle & Associates, she discussed the effect being a woman-owned firm has on the types of projects, clientele, and employees her office attracts. She quoted Natalie Boulanger who, in 1939 when asked her reaction to having been invited to be the first woman to direct a great symphony, the New York Symphony Orchestra, said, "Well, I've been a woman now for almost fifty years, and frankly, I've gotten over the astonishment." Seattle, after getting over its astonishment, has been in the forefront of legislation for women's rights, as exemplified by its Women's Business Enterprise regulations. LaTour-elle feels that although there are some unresolved issues, especially in the streamlining of paperwork, the program provides certain benefits, among which is the opportunity to form professional contacts. "When a young architect is just starting out and is in the process of establishing credibility, making contacts, and accumulating a track record, public work is the easiest arena for women to enter, since most public agencies have established procedures and rules requiring that a certain percentage of contracts be awarded to women and minority businesses."

LaTour-elle commented about the public perception of women architects: "There is more diversity from one architectural firm to another than specifically between a male-owned and a woman-owned firm. There are relatively few woman-owned firms, and the public feels that there must be a difference."

To the question of hiring male staff members, she laughed, "Someone asked the other day, do you hire men? 'Oh yes,' I replied, 'we've been hiring men for several years now and they're pretty good!'" More women than men seek employment with her firm. "We hire first on the basis of a tightly-written job description and then on personal character. Our policy is equal or better than anyone in the office." In reference to how men on her staff feel about being under the supervision of a woman, she recalled that women of the "old guard," who were raised in the 40's and 50's and who chose a career direction in a male-oriented profession, were raised and trained with men. "That consequent close contact taught us how to get along with men. A shift to a supervisory position was a natural step in our career development. We don't come from a background where we've been mostly with women."

AUDREY MORGAN, health care facilities architect, talked about specialization within

a large firm, on the basis of her experience at NBBJ, John Graham, and the State Department of Social and Human Services. "Specialization is not a function of office size, nor does it happen by design, but by happenstance. If in the course of your career you do a good design in a certain building type, you become a specialist. One danger of such specialization is that there is a risk that this special building type may not be required in any quantity at some time. Such is the case today, for example, for school design, and it could come to be the case in nursing homes, theaters, or office building design. With changing technology, this is less likely to happen, as in hospital design. Even so, it would be advisable for an architect to have a diverse and varied background prior to concentrating on a particular specialty within the built environment."

Morgan described her typical experience with a hospital design team. "Within a large firm, there would be a team assigned to the project which would increase in number as the project progressed. Project direction, medical planning, and design considerations are paramount during program verification and schematic design. During the design development phase a project architect, technical architects, job captain, drafters, and various consultants will be added to the team, dependent on the size of the project. Ideally, all decisions as to design, equipment, and medical planning are finalized during design development, which then becomes the firm basis for contract documents."

(The discussion of specialization brought up the issue of the public's perception of the architect as a specialist. "The public doesn't know what an architect does or why, or they would know that it isn't necessary to have done many of the same building types to be competent," said LaTour-elle.)



Whatcom Museum of History & Art.
Lottie Eskilsson; Project Architect, Phase II Renovation and Tower Restoration.

LOTTIE ESKILSSON, an architect with Elaine Day LaTour-elle & Associates, compared European schooling and apprenticeship with American and found her Swedish education more technical and artistic. "Art classes should be mandatory; it trains your eye." In Sweden six months practical experience, preferably on a construction site, is required prior to graduation from architecture school. "That's the only time in life you can afford to do that, and you can be as stupid as you want because you are a student. After graduation you lose that luxury, especially if you are a woman."

"The Swedish climate forces people to spend more time indoors. As a result, the Swedish are more developed in the area of interiors. They have a stronger sense of the

three-dimensional, of color, and of light. The emphasis in the U.S. is on outdoor life, resulting in larger building scales."

Despite her feeling that Swedish education was the most difficult in the world, Eskilsson admitted that contract documents are not well-taught in Sweden and that she had to learn to draw in the U.S.



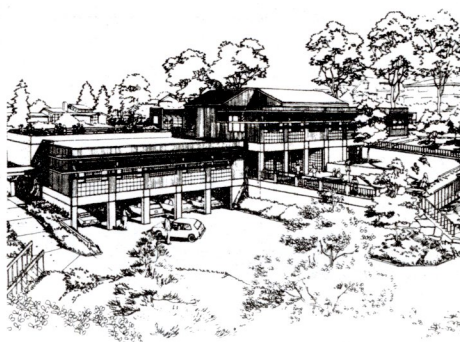
Stevens Residence. Architect: The Hastings Group. Photo Robert Nixon.

JANE HASTINGS, owner of The Hastings Group and Northwest Regional Representative to the national AIA, spoke about her experience as a traveler. Although Hastings has done the majority of her work in

this area and is particularly noted for her Northwest regional residential work, she has been widely published internationally, including in two Japanese publications. Despite widespread journeying, Hastings contests that, although one picks up certain details to file away in the mind for future use, her travel has not had a great effect on her own design philosophy. "Travel enriches you, but one designs to fit the circumstances. Regionalism comes from the existing climate, materials, and light."

Concerning opportunities for work in other countries, Hastings pointed out that job mobility is greater for Europeans than for Americans, because they have a broader range of language skills and a facility with the metric system. Many Europeans come to the U.S. to work. "In Communist countries the professions are strictly controlled, and in any foreign country you need connections to secure employment. The problems of obtaining work permits are paramount, especially in Canada. We can't even bring drawings or models over the border into Canada. Such restrictions are not placed on Canadians entering the U.S. Furthermore, taxation on an architect's fee is so heavy that one can't afford to work there."

Of approximately 4,000 architects in Washington, about 2,600 of whom are actively practicing, only 80 are women.



Seattle Children's Home
Geise & Associates - Architects.

CAROLYN GEISE, owner of Geise & Associates, described the inception of another Seattle firm, ARCHITECTA. Geise, along with LaTourelle, Eskilsson, and Hastings, formed ARCHITECTA in the spring of 1980. "All of our individual firms had already been established when, during a slump in the economy, we found ourselves among the women and minority-owned businesses receiving a request to do the King County Jail." Based on that background, Geise "felt the challenge to respond. So over dinner one evening we decided to put together a proposal to demonstrate that we had a competent group of people to do the King County Jail."

Although ARCHITECTA failed to make the short list, it was asked to consult for another short-listed group. "This experience put ARCHITECTA in its present role of providing a responsible, stable board of

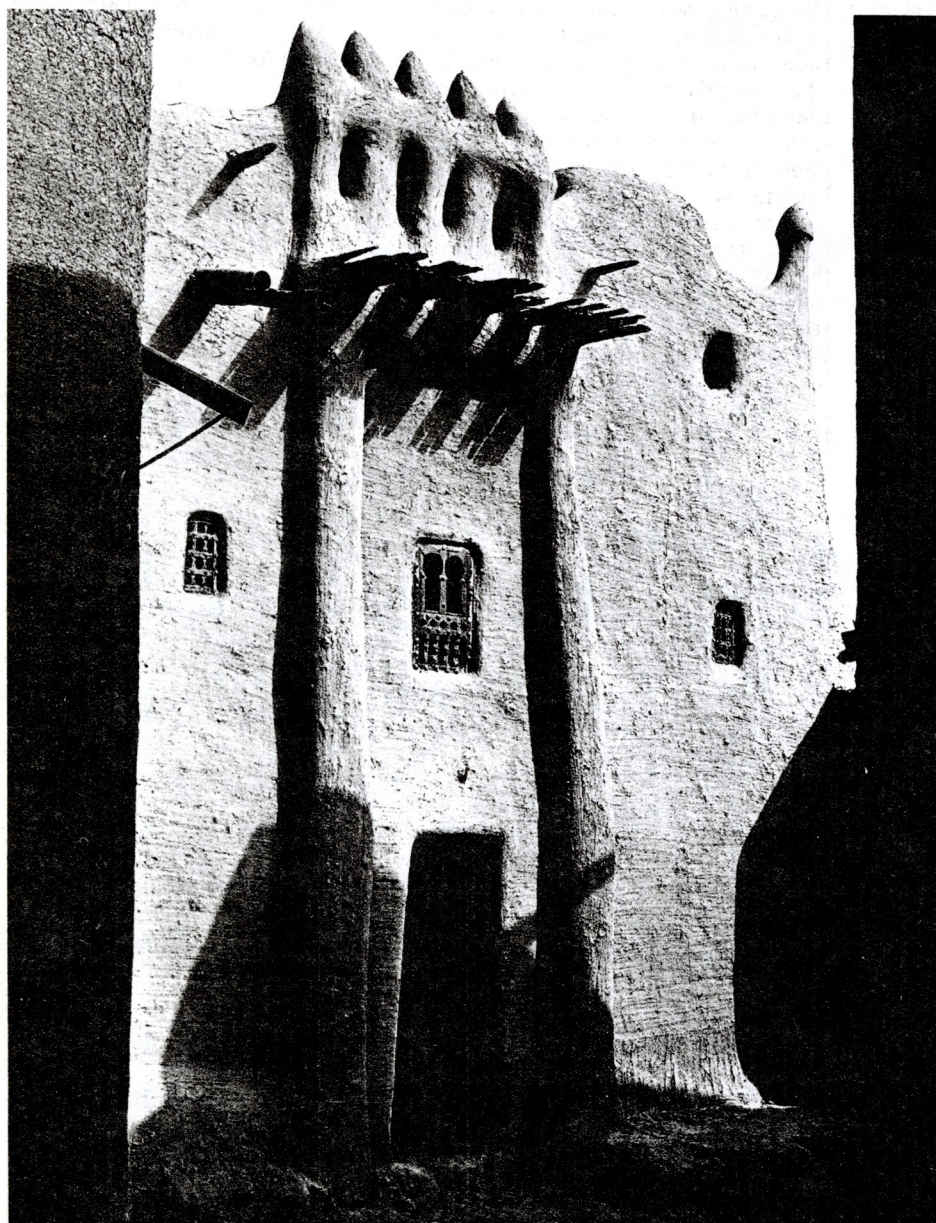
directors who would stay together and would act as consultants and as an information pool to be used in marketing other projects."

Geise & Associates has developed considerable skill in residential work over the years. "Lately, however, our firm has been rapidly expanding in the area of commercial jobs. We enjoy the balance of the two, and would never depart from residential work." Geise's firm, in business since 1977, also provides services to the University of Washington, the Seattle Parks Department, the City, Public Library, King County, and a number of private clients.

Geise has been keeping a list of women registered as architects in Washington state. She reported that through 1979 there was a total of 42 women registered in Washington. In the following three years, 16 joined the ranks. In the first half of 1983, 13 more were added. Of the approximately 4,000 architects in Washington, about 2,600 of whom are actively practicing, only 80 are women — and ten percent of them were at the table. Geise concluded the conversation by wondering "... just how long a group of women architects will be just us. There are so many coming that are working in very responsible positions that this is an end to a whole era, and this gathering is an historical occasion."

Alix Anne McDonough

Alix Anne McDonough is currently employed by Stickney & Murphy Architects in Pioneer Square.



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