A MEETING GROUND FOR ART AND DESIGN

A conversation with Martha Schwartz and Richard Andrews, arranged by Barbara Swift, took place in Seattle following Martha's lecture on French and Italian gardens for COCA (Center On Contemporary Art) in early August. The conversation was spirited. It explored issues and questions that surface increasingly as more artists and design professionals work together in overlapped areas of concern. An artist and landscape architect based in New York and San Francisco, Martha Schwartz has been selected to execute three landscapes (one in Seattle) under the National Endowment for the Arts program of Art for Public Places. The Seattle piece will be installed in the King County Jail courtyard. Walker-Schwartz, a firm she formed with her husband, Pete Walker, provides a studio atmosphere in which to explore new forms and ideas in the landscape. Richard Andrews is an artist, and National Endowment for the Arts policy panelist for the Visual Arts Program. He coordinates the Seattle Arts Commission's "One Percent for Art" Program.

Richard Andrews: We seem to be at a point now when the term “artist” is freely used by those in both the design and fine art fields. Yet considerable confusion exists about what is art, design, or whatever. Many who call themselves artists are like the monks who illuminated manuscripts. Are they artists in terms of original ideas and thought? Many are simply translators, mediums for ideas that have been expressed by others. Most of the people are stewards of styles that other people have created.

Martha Schwartz: I love the idea of telling them what they do is not art. In fact, how you judge whether someone is an artist or not is by what they do. Landscape architects, architects should be artists.

RA: The debate over titles — artist, architect, landscape architect, etc. — is really an indication of the confusion over the perceived value of these roles in society. Many design professionals call themselves “artists” in an effort to establish their position in the world of ideas and culture. Sculptors or painters may use the term "designer" because it has credibility in the world of planners. Robert Irwin, for example, doesn’t mind if he is called a designer, but I think he would principally call himself an artist, because his roots are in painting. In terms of the projects he is currently doing, he presents himself often as a designer.

MS: I’ve thought about that a lot. I get asked that question all the time. I’d like to talk to Irwin about his ideas about being a designer versus being an artist. I think designers are people who take into account and solve problems other people pose for them — essentially, a problem-solving stance, where you are in service to others. You don’t have just your own impulse to follow. That is the definition of a designer. Artists set up their own problems to be solved. They, in essence, are designing for themselves. They set up problems of composition, color, etc.

RA: The people with the money often set the definitions. It is not really worthwhile for you to select which cubbyhole you want to put your head in, because it is not particularly germane to your work.

MS: If somebody wants me to be a land-

continued on page eight.
A Column of Many Orders

Rebecca Barnes

**SEATTLE MAY BE A SMALL TOWN, but it's not so small-time.** A recent "Building Design and Construction Magazine" survey identified NBBJ as the 26th largest architecture firm in the U.S., with billings of $19.75 million in '83, and a payroll of 312 (not all of whom are in Seattle). TRA was listed as the 22nd largest architects/engineers firm, and John Graham as the 47th largest. Kramer, Chin and Mayo was 8Both in the engineers/architects group, with 75% of its work industrial in nature. Graham does mostly commercial work, while NBBJ and TRA both do at least two-thirds of their work for institutions.

*"Electrical Abuse!" by Clare Colquitt, at Creighton-Newben Station. Photo courtesy Seattle City Light.*

The ALLIED ARTISTS' HOUSING COMMITTEE

by Michael Jay Brown

Cara Wells and Margaret Sutro, Marsha Bach and I sit around on Tuesdays, when the blinding sun is high. (Shush! Seattle critics; you said literalists, shush!) It's poetry you're dipping in and dip into our mush (Or turpid gruel, or bacon bits, what ever it is we're eating) To give us sustenance so we can make it through our meetin'. The issues we're addressin' and the plans which come up wellin': Are all upon the subject of the "artist's studio/dwelling." The last full set of zoning laws allowed, as use protected, An artist's home to be his shop (no matter how affected His speech or looks, no matter how he buttered poetry, Or if he called the Mercer Island Bridge the Tappan Zee). But mony, mony tekel upharmon and all the rest (And pardon me if you're the sort who likes hansapost) To live and work as artist in a single spot may be As threatened as my Uncle Yakov back in '23. (He sat uncertain in a bar; cigar smoke filled the air A gang of desperados with mustaches was in there. Their demeanors they were varied, but collective was their goal: They were there to steal the folding green which other folks had stole) Because of a mere oversight the zoning code may vary The Mayor's Recommended Plan (plans are always scary) Neglects to mention as a use the "artist's studio dwelling" New zoning's based upon the Plan, which even now is jelling Into a finished product through adoption by the City. If the phrase is not inserted, the outcome may be bad. So direct your calls and letters to correct who choose To make a city what a city is, and thereby lose. The chance to make the luce that it takes to have two places: One to paint and one to sleep and practice social graces. My Uncle Jake said gently when he saw behavior bad, "Relax and have a cup of tea -- you shouldn't get so mad." Was he right? It's clear homogeneity's a curse At the risk of sounding snooty, clasic, retrograde, or worse -- We value and preserve some things in which we are most feckless. Now not to act to keep the "studio dwelling" would be reckless. So help us help you help you help your fellow creatures. And we'll get a Soviet artist to paint you with thicker features. Michael Jay Brown, pianist and recipient categorizes, hasn't even tried to get his novus published. He practices securities and corporate law with Larson & Johnson, in Seattle. You can call him for more information at 624-1230.

DESIGN NETWORK: A NETWORK FOR sharing information and coordinating events in architecture and design in the Pacific Northwest held its first meeting in July as a result of the initiative of the Seattle Design Commission. Participants include ARCADE, BLUEPRINT; for Archi- tects, ART-FOCA, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Design Association, the Design Commission, AIA, and the UW College of Architecture. Quarterly meetings will be held to discuss organizations' program plans, to exchange advice and consider collaborations. If you are planning a program of speakers, exhibits, sym- posia, etc., and if you will send a list, the Design Network will add them to a Master Calendar and help publicize them. Address all correspondence to: Seattle Design Commission, 500 Yoder Building, 3rd Floor, Seattle, WA 98104.

GO SOUTHWEST, YOUNG DESIGNER. Because a recent PSMJ survey (that Professional Services Management Journal) found that the firms in the Southwest are doing better than the industry average. This was the good news; the bad news was the trend toward declining profit, which began in 1978 and continues. Architects are spending a steady 9.1% of total rev- nues on marketing themselves; however, since the ratio of full-time marketer to total staff size has decreased, it would seem that marketers are being paid more, or working with larger budgets, or both. Finally, while it is apparently true that public sector jobs require greater marketing expenses, public sector projects are more profitable than are private sector projects — or at least the firms doing public sector projects make larger profits.

IF YOU HAD GONE TO SAN DIEGO at the end of August, as I did, to attend the National AIA Design Conference, you might have learned "How Architecture Speaks to its Public." Didn't. That was the title of a two-day symposium gathered together architects and journalists from all over the country, gathered together in this architectural-sun. What I did learn was something about how architecture speaks to a people, and how people speak about architecture. And there were the buildings. The event was organized as a moving feast: a train ride to San Juan Capistrano to see Michael Graves' new Salk Institute, viewed through the eyes of Dr. Jonas Salk who sprinkled fairy dust over the crowd (or might as well have) and charmed us into believing that Kahn was the greatest, most sensitive and creative architect of all time, and that Jonas — by being the most creative and supportive and sincere client of all time — had a very great deal to do with the very mystical, surely sacred space in which we were sitting at his feet.) Arranged by Gerald Allen, and featuring Douglas Levendusky as a speaker and Charles Moore as a panelist, the conference might have been little more than a private reunion for the The Place of House gang. Instead, it was a well-prepared jamboree of buildings and insights. Gerald Allen seamless note to become in interest in issues of "open-endings / open structures" relationship to the landscape; unfortunately, he is not unlike most architects in believing himself to be all the landscape architect and landscape, with perhaps, a bit of cultural perspective offered by John Adler. The geography was arranged for Pierce Lewis, Geography Prof at Penn, State U., and Larry Ford, Geography Prof at San
Dr. Salk. which was altered to become a gable roof suppose in a sense it’s true.” He exclaimed doors, two curvilinear lattice-work lintels yet his building shows either a lazy produc­tion staff or a formal arrogance in retain­ng the two references it makes to what his “great respect for the (design) process,” tion staff or a formal arrogance in retain­ning the two references it makes to what


Salk's saga. It was an impossible act to follow. Joan Salk was a transitory talent. flowing white hair, a tan face, smooth hands with long relaxed fingers which he uses pressively. He is a bit firm with a quiet voice with simple conviction of the importance of what he has built — archi­ecture and dream. Of the Institute and the building he said: "This was the expression of personal need, a need in which he could live a double life — the life of a scientist... and in retrospect I could say the artist in me." He wanted a “place in­volved with creating the idea of human evolution... to exist, simply to bring the same, the outside, the... the area within which changes can occur which work so well because it invites and welcomes change, ... a place which will be here a long time after the people who built it may be gone and have a lot of turmoil.” He found Kahn through friends in Pittsburgh who had heard Kahn lecture. Salk approached him, intending to ask him how one ought to go about select­ing an architect. During his first meeting with Kahn, the question was never asked, but he’d found himself an architect, one who worked with him to design what Salk referred to as “a crucible for creativity,” and “a very real testimony to the import­ance of architecture." Much more of the institute was designed than has been completed. Salk continues to hope that the visitors’ entrance and housing will move along, Meanwhile, a model and Kahn’s drawings can be seen, displayed in the corridors. At some point, someone will have to say, “That shall be.” This man is a very credibly expert. The extent of our collabora­tion was complete.”

Moore, working hard to provide a tran­sition from this near-religious experience to that of academic academizations scheduled for fall, suggested that government would answer, “What do we do about it after we’ve thrilled to things wonderful!”

Moore’s explanation of the stylizing of the Spanish Mission which characterizes much of what is thought to be attractive in the San Diego area; heavy walls or stucco-like finish, red tile roofs, deep arcades, simple roundings and openings, and often, heavy plant­ing. Campbell regretted that, contrary to what he hoped for a few short years ago, the emphasis will not now give the effect of making places look different. He proposed that, in order to accomplish the sense of place that comes from varied styling of built environments, we “must make it dif­ferent via conscious architecture.” This was probably the most intelligent statement of the discussion. Other comments took such forms as, “It doesn’t hurt the past to plun­der it,” per Charles Moore.

The second panel, moderated by Camp­bell, was activated by following Kahn’s Salk's saga. It was an impossible act to follow. Joan Salk was a transitory talent. flowing white hair, a tan face, smooth hands with long relaxed fingers which he uses pressively. He is a bit firm with a quiet voice with simple conviction of the importance of what he has built — archi­ecture and dream. Of the Institute and the building he said: "This was the expression of personal need, a need in which he could live a double life — the life of a scientist... and in retrospect I could say the artist in me." He wanted a “place in­volved with creating the idea of human evolution... to exist, simply to bring the same, the outside, the... the area within which changes can occur which work so well because it invites and welcomes change, ... a place which will be here a long time after the people who built it may be gone and have a lot of turmoil.” He found Kahn through friends in Pittsburgh who had heard Kahn lecture. Salk approached him, intending to ask him how one ought to go about select­ing an architect. During his first meeting with Kahn, the question was never asked, but he’d found himself an architect, one who worked with him to design what Salk referred to as “a crucible for creativity,” and “a very real testimony to the import­ance of architecture." Much more of the institute was designed than has been completed. Salk continues to hope that the visitors’ entrance and housing will move along, Meanwhile, a model and Kahn’s drawings can be seen, displayed in the corridors. At some point, someone will have to say, “That shall be.” This man is a very credibly expert. The extent of our collabora­tion was complete.”

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Stencil pattern lines at perimeter of San Juan Capistrano Library courtyard.
Shedding Light on the Square Window Phenomenon

In fact, the very range of architects using this particular device is impressive, ranging from Robert Stern to Edward Larabee Barnes, from Steven Holl to M. E. W. It was such an old collection of notables that one wonders what sort of common reasons they would have, if any, for using this common element. Another notable feature of the lists of square-windowed projects is the range of building types which they have adorned. Such projects include a grid removal facility, an urban mission, many houses, an office building, a resort hotel, and an industry training campus. In this collection of projects, it is not as though a new and distinct architectural style had swept the practice, eliminating many competitors and replacing them with a generally accepted “look,” as did Art Deco in its many variations in the twenties and thirties. Square windows showed up in single-story mansions, in International Style homes, in neo-classical revival school buildings, each relatively consistent within a recognized vocabulary. This phenomenon of square window-making is quite different from the generation of a new style.

An Outline History

Some of the historical sources for square windows are fairly clear, although the relationship between earlier uses and their current application is often muddy. The Renaissance neo-classicists, it seems, were to a large extent, fascinated with the possibilities of mathematical and geometric relationships, and often relied upon them in the construction of their facades as well as in their plans. The square was often used as a fundamental starting point, as evidenced in the diagram of Alberti’s Novella facade. But the square windowed, as such, was relatively rare. The radical French architects of the revolution (Ledoux, Boullée, and the lot) were prone to use pure forms, square windows among them.

The square window seems to have been a common element among some of the idiosyncratic architects who were in part responsible for the first departures from traditional practice. At the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, square windows show up in the work of Wagner and Loos in Austria, and in the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright in this country. Alvar Aalto often used the square window as an element in his composition.

The square window also appeared during the stripped neo-classical revival which joined aspects of the Beaux-Arts school with the purified aesthetic of the Modern movement. In Europe, the Italian fascist architects employed vast fields of square windows in their large government projects. Sultanic heirs to the constructivists in the Soviet Union used the same notation on their facades. In this country and in Great Britain, square windows in large projects became standard in Depression-era architecture, most often appearing in governmental or institutional buildings which represented a large portion of the constructed projects. Seattle’s Federal Courthouse is an example of this widespread phenomenon.

The appearence of the square window on the recent international scene is part due to its use by several influential architects. Michael Graves in this country began using punched square openings in a neo-classical vocabulary in some of his houses at about the same time that the Swiss architect Mario Botta’s work was beginning to receive some press attention. Ricardo Bofill and Taller de Arquitectura in Spain began using them as their work took on a more neo-classical turn. Aldo Rossi’s projects in Italy were influential, as were Arata Isozaki’s in Japan.

It may be possible to trace precise lines of influence among these current stars in the architectural field, a task beyond the scope of this preliminary investigation. However the image of the square window took hold, it was swiftly published, recycled, republished, and has reached a level of common acceptability. It is this general use of the square window which is most interesting. Since it has now become a local phenomenon, it seemed appropriate to ask several local practitioners about their particular reasons for using them.

Aldo Rossi’s Residential Unit in the Galateahe, Milan. When asked about the use of the widespread adoption of many of his pure images, Rossi responded that he did not accuse him of all. After all, he said, I like these forms.

Perhaps one shouldn’t pick on square windows alone. Any number of other architectural elements are equally good candidates, from grids to keystones to colonnades to pedimented sheds. So many elements have quickly come into style that looking through P/A 1 feels a little like checking a Q – are skinny ties now passé, or stil de rigueur? The square window is most difficult to ignore, because it is still a relatively rare commodity in the built environment, and because its equalitarian character deserves a compositional response. In other words, they begin to drive the design decision.

Documenting Popularity

In order to begin empirically assessing this issue, I have undertaken a somewhat empirical study to document the popularity of square windows. A look at the number of square windows was taken by architects at both the number of square windows appearing in award-winning projects. We also added gridded curtain walls, which seem to represent another stylistic departure.) The results are shown in the accompanying graph, the sort of “square curve.”

The results confirmed the hypothesis. Square windows are “in,” showing up nowadays in about half of the award-winners. The rise has been fairly steady in terms of the proportion of projects with squares, but the total number of squares has ballooned. This seems to be in part, due to the success of some of the earlier pioneers using the square window – Michael Graves, for example. But it is mostly due to the adoption of the square window by the larger and more established firms with large commercial and institutional projects in the S.O.M.s and the Perkins and Will’s architectural world.
Clayton R. Joyce was a partner in the firm that was an early user of the square window in Seattle, when the office of Joyce/Nordfors designed the CX Corporation Building on the old Sick Stadium site. In the Lake Washington School Administration Building, by Clayton R. Joyce, Architects, completed last year, the use of the square window grew out of a general interest in proportioning geometries for buildings. Mr. Joyce explained that there are naturally pleasing, aesthetically correct ways of proportioning buildings which improve their appearance, and that the square as a pure form is particularly well suited to the innate qualities of the square as his reasons for their use. He noted that the large commercial projects that make up his workload often require standardized planning grids to improve efficiency, and that the large asymmetrical facades implied by these projects require a standard, repetitive feature to hold them together — why not the square window? He had a thought that vertical windows imply bearing walls, that horizontal windows lend themselves to frame structures, but that square windows were "non-structural," ambivalent. Finally, he admitted a personal preference for the square.

David Rutherford of ARC, with Donald Frothingham, designed a cube-shaped house spattered with square windows for a client in Seattle. Mr. Rutherford is convinced that the generation of the square windows in this project grew out of its incidental program geometry. Initial square footage and relationship diagrams for the house developed a square plan in three stories with four symmetrical facades. The square plan was then rotated to allow the most advantageous site relationships in terms of simplicity. Having established the square as a modular generating shape, the design team fenestrated the entire house with them in patterns designed to provide specific views and lighting to the spaces. At one point, the rigid application of the geometry began to bother Don Frothingham, who, in a somewhat legendary fashion, decided to twist the main picture window in the living room. No generalized notions about the square window were offered in this interview.

Michael Canatsey of Canatsey/Veinstein talked of an office commitment to determine geometries in the generation of project plan and elevation. These geometries trust historically-demonstrated preferences for ordered and proportioned forms, and seek to reduce arbitrary choice of design elements or their location. It is this sort of ordering which is evident in the elevation of the recently completed Mt. Baker Bathhouse for the Seattle Parks Department. For Mr. Canatsey, this interest in geometries derives in part from his own fascination with graphic design in general and with the graphic design systems using primary forms and grids used in the Swiss educational system with which he is familiar. Beyond this, he admitted that he likes squares and square windows, and that influences from contemporary architects are, to some extent, inevitable.

So many elements have quickly come into style that leafing through P/A feels a little like checking out QJ.

Ed Weinstein suggests that what we have here is a fashion, and that fashion is distinctly from style. In this view, fashion is short-lived, a creature bred by the professional media — perhaps inevitable, but not to be taken very seriously. Style, on the other hand, represents its best applications a consistent set of accepted elements that express an underlying attitude about architecture. For example, the movement-oriented plan and emphasis on space of the International Style movement implies fenestration that is active, dynamic, program-oriented. Regimented, punched square openings would likely be wrong in such a setting. A good project successfully combines elements within a stylistic construct, regardless of the popularity of any constituent element. This valuable distinction explains my dissatisfaction with projects that seem merely fashionable — there is little intellectual consistency, and designs seem erratic and unresolved. It also begins to explain how a Single Style practitioner can throw square apertures at a facade as easily as can a Mayan eclecticist. This idea begs important and related questions. How does one choose the correct style within which to establish internal consistency? What become the higher level criteria of choice? Or does one have to fall back on an "arbitrary" personal preference again? And is this bad? But such heavy questions deserve another discussion.

It is more positive to look at the square window phenomenon as a distinct rebellion against the Modern movement aesthetic. The early modernists threw out the notion of building design by formula and, in the process of destroying the Beaux-Arts credibility, let the professions with understandable ordering devices for composition. Perhaps the profession is restablishing common ordering techniques, and has seized upon the grid and the square and the compositional exercise of the square window as an early, elementary exercise in the business of rule-making.

Perhaps the profession is restablishing common ordering techniques, and has seized upon the grid and the square and the compositional exercise of the square window as an early, elementary exercise in the business of rule-making. As a proportioning device. He noted that the planning grid and the square window unit had actually become an important ordering device, a means of reducing the number of decisions, and thereby simplified the task of design. He acknowledged some inspirational sources, among which Mario Botta figured prominently.

Michael Whalen of the Callison Partnership is a designer whose recent work includes numerous square windows — the Frey Museum Addition is a recent example. Mr. Whalen pointed to a project for the 328-room San Francisco Airport Hotel as a more representative example of his work in that regard. (This five-story suburban hotel is in the process of design.) Mr. Whalen, though not unaware of the popularity of the square window in current publications, looked to his experience in Dan Solomon's office in San Francisco and

Clayton R. Joyce's Lake Washington School Administration Building.

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It may also be a sign of our post-modern times that designers are looking back to architects who stood on the ill-defined borders of the Modern movement as sources of inspiration. There may be some help there in the attempt to integrate the lessons of the Modern movement with wider design goals, and the use of specific design elements from their past cannot hurt.

Somehow these positive reasonings about the square window phenomenon still leave me scratching a bit. It is demonstrably clear that, no matter how justified square fenestration may be in individual cases, there is a strong element of fashion that is involved in its widespread use. There is perhaps nothing fundamentally wrong with this, except that it seems to be taken all too seriously in the architectural press and by architects themselves. Fashion is intellectually (and often aesthetically) unsatisfying except as a cultural phenomenon; it substitutes convention for thought and experimentation. So it is important to the credibility of Post-modern conceptions that fashions like this be acknowledged, examined, and criticized.

Steve Cecil

Steve Cecil, an architect with ARC, has yet to see a square window in any of his buildings, but he's thinking about it.
MARTHA SCHWARTZ AND RICHARD ANDREWS

CONVERSATION

who deals solely with structure and function, in terms of a continuum of grays that go from darkest darks to fullest lights. Is a continuum between artists and designers, going both ways. Like Frank Gehry, I suppose on one far end is someone who has not had the experience of the "overlap." Those who have not had the experience of working with and developing comfort with this kind of relationship. Artists have traditionally also used narrative and metaphor. That is where is gets interesting, because that is where the art comes in. You try to communicate directly with people, not just with their rear ends, but with their minds and hearts. That expands the number of variables. The artists are now using function as a way to construct a relationship with audience. Artists accustomed to working with "site specific" goals never had anything to do with "audience specific" goals. They may be aware of their work's relationship to topography, but not to sociological conditions.

MS: So the functional aspect is what separates the designer and the artist.

RA: No, it is a device. A metaphorical chair is different from a functional chair. Robert Wilson and Richard Artschwager make chairs. You can't sit in them; you are aware of the idea of chair. You wouldn't call them sculptures. Scott Burton makes chairs that are sculpture, but they are not useful and aren't successful to him unless they are useful.

BS: The overlap, where someone can be both an artist and a designer, is an area where the greatest richness can be developed. It is vitalizing to work in a situation where you go beyond function.

RA: I think one interesting thing is that artists, architects, and landscape architects are rediscovering content. It has been absent from the design fields for fifty years. To a certain extent, it has been absent from art for the same period.

URBAN DESIGN: A Poor Cousin

MS: I was thinking about Buster Simpson's fantasies and streetscapes. I love the spontaneity. They are really great ideas. I was wondering, "Why wouldn't a landscape architect do that? Why couldn't they do it?" Well, the answer is that the landscape architect would never be called upon to do that. It seems to me that designers have been trained to respond to what they perceive to be an audience and a market. They are trained to fit into a market. They are afraid that if they don't perform the way the market wants, they are not going to have any profession. What has to happen, in order for landscape architects to be called upon to do something artful, is to create a market of people who know landscape architects can produce artful things. That is really what my interest is: to create a new clientele of people who, expecting something of artistic merit, can call some one who is a landscape architect and get that kind of quality.

BS: That applies to all the design fields.

RA: I think that artists and some design professionals have recognized that there has been a complete failure in urban design. The American streetscapes are deliberately characterless and the most dull, boring, and vacuous in the world. What artists do is make something that is unique. Think of Buster Simpson, Jack Mackie, and Paul Raphael creating those benches on First Avenue. Putting street trees and one of a kind benches in an irregular row now calls your attention to the vacuum. (See photo in Column of Many Orders.)

BS: I agree with you, and I am sure I am not the only one who is feeling cramped when I come out to Sausalito. The SWA is run the school based on giving a problem and saying, "Here is the art? Where is the art? Why would I ever want to go to art school? That turned out to be a disaster.

MS: As I recall, your undergraduate work was in landscape architecture. I got totally turned off when I came out to Sausalito. The SWA was out of the window. I knew I did not want to be an architect. That was full of constraints. I knew it was going to take too long to build the buildings, and I didn't want to deal with holding things up and all the 90 degree angles. It was too cumbersome. I figured landscape is a little more plastic, easier, you can do things faster, and more could be done because the materials are less rigid. The last thing I wanted to do was start working on someone's house. That was low on the totem pole. There is always regional planning; I was groping around.

EDUCATION: Source of Attitudes

MS: It was in 1973 or 1974. So I ended up in landscape architecture. I didn't do it because I was interested in it. I came out to Sausalito. The SWA Green钞, a landscape architecture planning firm, has a self-supported school there in the summer. They would choose a half-dozen people from across the country to run the school based on giving a problem every year, then maybe someone would get a job. Do you remember the first problem, the courtyard? That was a turning point.

BS: I came from the University of Washington, where the emphasis was on pragmatism and students. We were all sitting on the lawn. Wilson turned around and said, "This is the art project, and I'm [][] you better who the users are." My tools spilled all over the ground.

MS: The first problem was a diagnosis, to see where everyone was at, without input from the office. The lesson for that first week was, "When you work on plans, you presented our use diagrams and these pleasant courtyards. Pete got up and said, "Where is the art? Why would I ever want to go to this place? If this place wasn't worth talking something about, why do I do it?" I thought, you know, I hadn't heard anyone speak about art for a year. I was in landscape architecture. Anyway, from that time on, I thought they are a unique design means that people are focusing on something that is minute. They are surprised by it, and they pay attention to it. But that was a complete failure in urban design. The trouble is that the application of the teaching has resulted in a fifty year experiment in urban design that is a disaster.

BS: It isn't just the larger market; it is the audience within the profession. I was going through old periodicals over the weekend, and the sense was of a group of people that were nervous about anyone working on the edge. They were uptight about it. There is a tendency to close the blinds.

RA: I think you are right worrying about change and what change means. Change can be a way of evaluating what you have done in the past. The kind of things that are doing is localizing — being particular and making.
The dance steps on Broadway and the manhole covers artists have done are trivial in terms of their scale of presence in the urban landscape, yet they are more important than their scale suggests.

—Richard Andrews
**The Art in Public Places program was established by a City ordinance which sets aside 1% of City capital project improvement funds for the purchase, commissioning and installation of artworks in City-owned public places. Where applicable, these funds are used to include artists on design teams for City construction projects.**

Design teams are not familiar territory for most artists. They generally design, modify, and construct their artwork without the input of others. The team concept is new to architects, however. They regularly work with engineers and landscape architects, pooling their skills for a more successful product. Still, the word "team" can mean different things to different people, and the degree of integration of the various disciplines involved inevitably varies from project to project. Whether the result is a true collaboration, in which the team's voice stands out and individual contributions are not clearly defined, or is a product of cooperation, in which individual voices are recognized but are related to one another, the team approach enhances the resulting work.

Jon Gierlich, artist on the west Seattle bridge project team, points out that the union of a variety of disciplines is not a new idea. "We were integrated — the artist, engineer, architect — for thousands of years, and all that happened in the last 150 years we've been disenfranchised. I don't understand why we couldn't have had a cultural memory so short." Richard Hobbs of Hobbs/Pukoko Architects feels that artists should be an integral part of the design process, and was the first architect to include artists on the design team for a City of Seattle construction project from the beginning of the project (Viewland-Hoffman Substation). He did not see this inclusion as being particularly bold or unusual, although it was the first attempt to carry the idea through in the design process. Hobbs explains his reasons for including artists early in the project: "When we were selected by City Light we were told that artists will be involved in the project at some point, because the program was designed for 1% of the Art fund. I mentioned to Bob Bishop (City Light architect) that the way we work is that if you're going to work with somebody on a body of work you bring them in at the beginning of the project, and then you work things out. I guess the architect and the other designer have preconceived ideas. That seemed very realistic to us. We thought in any case the process was not to do it with this. The resulting substation won seven design awards. Although Hobbs admits that there were some trying times during the design process, he considers his idea was at least partially satisfying projects I've ever been involved in. It's one of the most challenging things we've done."

The alteration of a site does not have to be done to be successful. It is the design team's responsibility to discern the needs of the audience and fulfill those needs. For Hobbs/Pukoko Architects, their goal is not to be the first successful design team, you need to have a basic philosophy that says that you're the 'keeper of the flame' and that's what the design team was her toughest audience. On the Broadway LID project, she says, "it was a Collaborative project, and the idea of the communication process: Equally important are the roles of the art and the architect. In a way it had its own design process. There was a general consensus that when I had to say, 'Listen, I've thought about the design a thousand times, I've done it a thousand different ways, and I'm just going to have to work with it,' because I had really done my research."

Due to the unique makeup of each design team, the experience of the team can be different. This is mainly due to the fact that architects, artists, engineers, and landscape architects have different skill sets. While they may all be open to working as a team, there is a tendency to draw different conclusions. As artists, the first difference they see when they join a design team is that, because they are the artists, the role of the artist on a design team is different. Keating explains, "When you go into it, the architect's role is to design; the landscape architect, engineer, and other consultants as well. The artists are in such a pivotal position, but also at the bottom of the ladder, and there's nothing really defined about the role." He describes the team as a "random element. How's the team going to work? Let's hope we remain the random element, because we're being used for that purpose.

**In most cases, even design team members who are open to the challenge of working as a team approach feel the need to carve out their own niche. The process of working with non-artists is sometimes frustrating. Andrew Keating wishes that at the beginning of the project, "the whole thing could be an open book." He advises bringing all the key people together at the beginning of the project, and how important it was to them. They were always accessible."**

"What I wish," said Jon Gierlich, "is that we have a basic philosophy that says it's the team's idea, not mine, it's the team's, but it came through." The team's idea of the design team is that, "When you go into it, the event is going to take on." For artists, the first difference they see when they join a design team is that, "Because they are the artists, the role of the artist on a design team is different. Keating explains, "When you go into it, the architect's role is to design; the landscape architect, engineer, and other consultants as well. The artists are in such a pivotal position, but also at the bottom of the ladder, and there's nothing really defined about the role."

Carolyn Law, who is currently working on a design team for the expansion of the Broad Street Substation, has found the expertise of City Light engineers, and particularly engineer George Daleo, invaluable in designing a complex fence for the station, she faced many technical questions which were out of her realm of knowledge. She went to City Light for technical advice and got emotional support as well. She describes City Light, her client for this project, "as more than just a help. They did troubleshooting at the beginning (for engineering problems) and were very generous in lending me their time and expertise. They were good at clarifying what their desires were in terms of art being a part of the project and how important it was to them. ... They were always accessible." Emotional as well as technical support is essential for a design team project to work well, whether one's strongest supporter is the client, architect, or other artists on the design team. Barbara Swift, landscape architect on the West Seattle Bridge team, believes that "it helps for the artist to have somebody who is a real advocate, or have access to some kind of support," and finds that willingness to be open minded is also a great help.

Often, artists get their strongest encouragement from other artists, since they can easily understand each other's needs and problems. Their collaborations bring out the best in each other, particularly important on a design team project because it gives them the opportunity to clarify an important figure in history of electricity, to an "electrical abuse" sculpture which teaches, with humor, about the use and abuse of electrical connections. In staying clear of the architect's and engineer's areas and creating their own work, the artists worked to build a spirit of cooperation than collaboration, still benefiting from the input of other team members.

In contrast to the Creston approach, Jack Markowitz worked very closely with the architects and engineers on the Broadway LID project. He considers the Bronx dance steps a product of group thought. "The idea is not mine, it's the team's, but it came through me. It was the team's idea of things in regard to pedestrians. The architect looked at how to make people move in one fashion, the traffic engineer was doing it with people and with cars and with movement, I was doing it in another form of movement. We're all talking about the same thing."

****In the same way that artists depend on each other for constructive criticism, they also find the other members of the design team to be a valuable resource for their ideas. On the Broadway LID project, Keating says, "We were doing it in another form of movement. It was the team's idea to do things in a way that I think really done my research."

"Due to the unique makeup of each design team, the experience each may be different. This is mainly due to the fact that architects, artists, engineers, and landscape architects have different skill sets. While they may all be open to working as a team, there is a tendency to draw different conclusions. As artists, the first difference they see when they join a design team is that, because they are the artists, the role of the artist on a design team is different. Keating explains, "When you go into it, the architect's role is to design; the landscape architect, engineer, and other consultants as well. The artists are in such a pivotal position, but also at the bottom of the ladder, and there's nothing really defined about the role."

Besides the difference in design team, there are important differences in working with the language of artists and architects is different. Artists are often not able to express what they are going to do. Keating says, "I think it works out well. It worked, does not believe that artists should necessarily yield to the architect's request to have the designs presented to the team in an architectural format. "I feel it's important, not necessarily to them in their own terms because that's the way they see it, or what I mean is, it's a collaboration, both have to." Architect Gerald Hansmire agrees with Keating. "You can't let the language of one team member is only part of the communication process. Equally
One important consideration in design team projects is the extra time involved in working with a team. Architects are used to recognizing the extra time required to coordinate with artists, and incorporating that into their budget. Richard Hobbs discovered this the hard way. "When we estimated our fee for City Light, we knew artists would be involved, but didn't realize the total involvement. After the very first meeting, we saw that it would be much more time than we had figured on, but we were committed to it, so we plowed ahead." When Hobbs spoke with the architects for the following substation project, he advised them to be sure to figure the costs of coordinating with artists into their budget. City Light is now aware of the time and work involved in including an artist to the design team, and gives the architect additional funds to cover these costs.

There are great opportunities, as well as difficulties, inherent in including artists on design teams for construction projects. For architects, artists present a fresh viewpoint. For the design team, the opportunity to approach an overall site or program in a new way is highly valued. Artists are used to having the freedom to make changes and are willing to take a chance.

"When you hire an artist for a design team process, it's every time different. We're the random element. Let's hope we remain the random element because that's what they're hired for," says Laurie, director of the center's artist-in-residence program. - Burt Simpson

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Nancy Joseph
Nancy Joseph is a staff Program Assistant with the Seattle Arts Commission.
Finding It

Seattle's One Percent for Art ordinance allocates one percent of the construction funds from City-financed capital improvements for the purchase of art. Both the Seattle Arts Commission, who administers the ordinance, and the Seattle Design Commission, who advises on the design quality of publicly-funded projects, have stressed their interest in the design team concept, where, from the beginning, artists are involved in the design of a project with architects, engineers, and bureaucrats. As a result, there is a growing number of projects in Seattle designed by such teams. The map below shows you where to see them.


2 Woodward/Hoffman Substation Andrew Keating, Sherry Markowitz, Lewis Simpson (artists), Hoff/Keating/Innes (architects), 1979. Five nationally recognized artists were selected on the basis of their ability to design an environment which engages the water's movement and the visitor's several senses. Keating's work, which he built with his own hands (as did Hollis and Puryear), allows the viewer a close encounter with Lake Washington. Moving close to the interface of land and water, and with the simple materials of steel and timber, he has created an environment which engages the water's movement and the visitor's several senses.

3 NOAA Site Saib Armajani, Scott Burton, Doug Hollis, Martin Puryear, and George Trakas (latter uses Jones & Jones landscape architects). The artists were included as an integral part of the design team for the first time on a major City capital improvement project. Working from the conceptual stage, they influenced the overall design as well as created specific art elements such as the mural, signage, and the Emil Gehrke sundial compound, at N. 103rd and Fremont N. 4 Cable Substation Barbara Noah (artist), Burns and McDonnell (engineers and prime consultant), Bremner Dements (architects), in progress at 10th and NW 40th.


7 Southwark Art Projects David Oehler, Ann Gardiner, Steven Roth, Michael Sweeney (artists), 1980.fanoten N. to Fremont N. at N. 40th.


12 First Thinking Park Choes Young (artist), 1980. Entranceway sculpture at 50th N. and Meridian N.

13 Wind Chimes" installation by Doug Hollis. These weatheroanes sing. 1983. Photo by Colleen Chartier.
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