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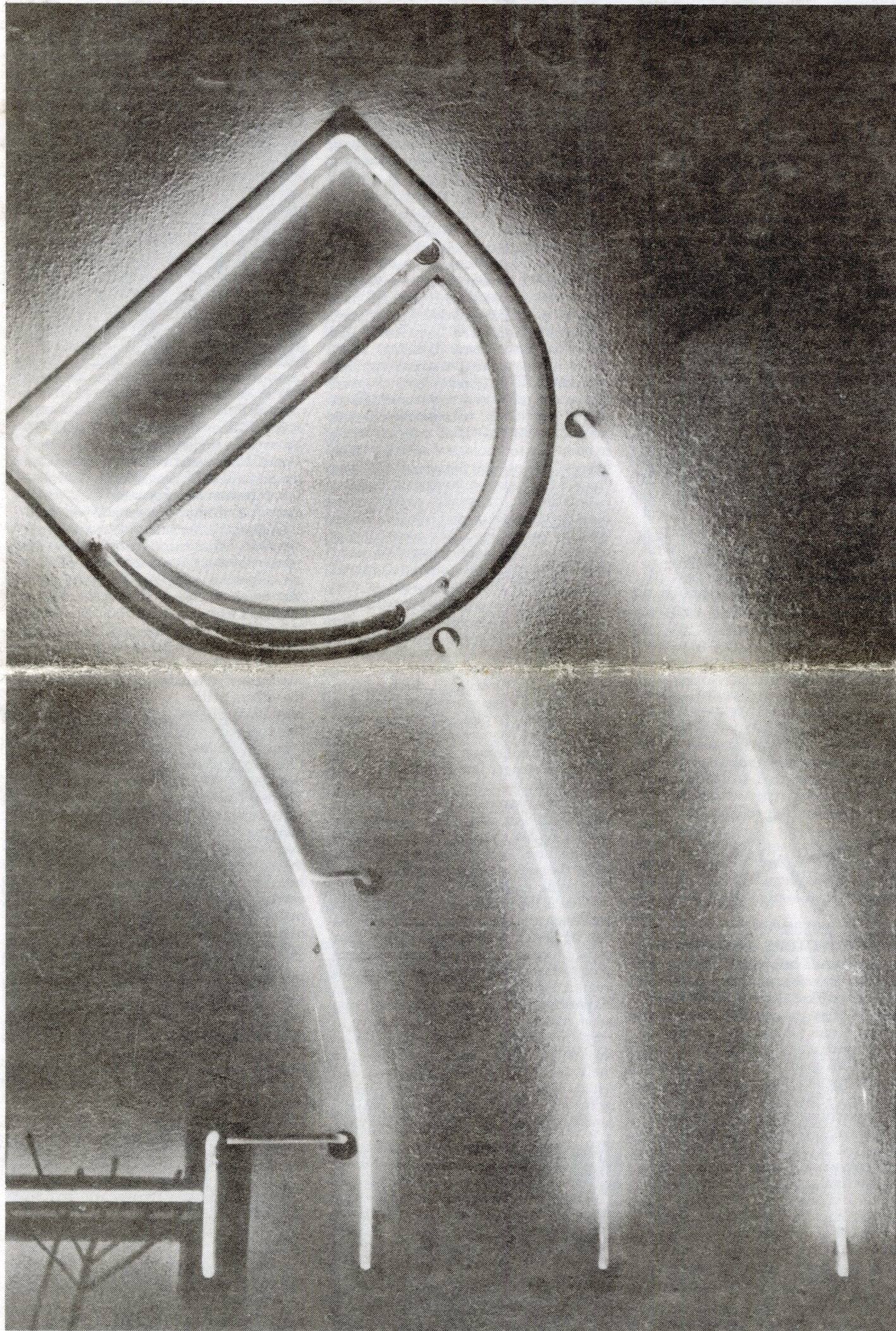
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This issue of ARCADE examines the relationship between architecture and graphic design. The relationship between the two has always existed, although it has remained unacknowledged until recently. Architects and graphic designers now collaborate to produce, for example, a signage system that is graphically pleasing, easy to follow, and compatible with the building's architecture. The advent of graphic design programs in colleges and art schools, as well as the development of the "graphic designer," a descendant of the "art director," has redefined the architect's dance steps in the Design Waltz; the architect no longer dances alone.

— Caroline Petrich

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

ARCADE

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Pete Kuhns

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Pete Kuhns

COLUMN OF MANY ORDERS

Rebecca Barnes

ARCHITECTURE IS KNOWN AS "THE Old Folks' Profession." (Some of you may know it as "The Old Man's Profession.") To a chronologically young person, the term holds promise of an increasingly fruitful working life culminating in masterworks during one's golden years. For the chronically "young" practitioners who continue to drink at the Fountain of Youth waiting for their aging to be acknowledged, the term becomes a taunt, finally suggesting a status attainable only through outliving the preceding generation of young architects. The first time you are called a young architect, particularly if you are encroaching upon thirty, you feel relieved. The next few times, you sense yourself a rightful heir-apparent. But when, with greying head, and tri-focallied eyes, you suspect yourself of rapid hearing loss because again you find yourself catalogued with the young, you may suspect that there is more to this nomenclature than mere self-delusion. Remember, then: In architecture, as in enology, youth is but a means to an end. Too early a trial leaves an unpleasant after-taste. A mature body requires years of lying still to allow the juices to ferment.



Fragment of linoleum rug by AzZ.

ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND DESIGN

Fusion: Catch AzZ before they slip out of Seattle's sweaty palms as they expand to LA in January. AzZ is artist Sheila Klein ("Wants to dress the world"), industrial artist Ries Niemi ("hopes to be able to reproduce every manufactured object ever made . . . in his spare time"), and architect Norman Millar ("the law and order man"). AzZ evolved with the coming of 1984. Millar, formerly with Olson Walker Architects, had worked with both Klein and Niemi on the South Arcade project integrating their work into exterior and interior architectural applications. Prior to AzZ both Klein and Niemi had exhibited their work throughout the United States. Niemi was a member of the design team for Seattle City Light's Creston-Nelson Substation. Most recently, Klein's work has been published in several international art and design publications.

AzZ is a design office, a fabrication shop, and a fine art studio. It is also a design philosophy that is uninhibited by scale and the use of conventional "Made in America" materials: gypsum board, paint, expanded metal, and linoleum. AzZ designs the house, the living room, the couch, the painting above the couch, and the floor in the painting. They will renovate, remodel, or retrofit anything. Furniture pieces in production include such creations as "file friend" and "little buddy," as well as custom-designed linoleum rugs using rare and beautiful tiles from the 50s through the 1980s.

ARCHITECTURAL CRITICISM ON THE hoof, so to speak, is a horse of a different color from the same animal in print. Alan Temko, architectural critic for the *San Francisco Chronicle* demonstrated the differences in two appearances in Seattle recently. At the AIA's November meeting, Temko followed dinner like an after-dinner-mint, flattering nearly every architect in the room, with the exception of those responsible for the new County Jail, and felling reputations of distant designers as variously distinguished as Michael Graves, ("triviality is enlarged into a pseudo-concept"), Yamasaki, and Denise Scott Brown and her husband ("his philosophy is a perfect coverup for his own lousy architecture"). Victor Steinbrueck's Westlake compromise is "a better solution than the city would have had." George Bartholick's Pike Market work was praised for its "light hand." Fred Bassetti's new Federal Building, about which Temko had deep reservations when it was built, looks good today in comparison to the other new towers, "clones of second cut SOMs" because "one sees in the building an individual architect trying to build in a technological age, respecting history." One Union Square by TRA was "opalescent," a good Northwest building with respect to the quality of light reflections by its surface. Even Columbia Center won his admiration. "You have to have mistakes. . . . All buildings are dwarfed by this mad tower. . . . It's an absolutely strange thing. . . . The thing has a kind of mad American vitality; . . . we seem really vital when we're killing ourselves."

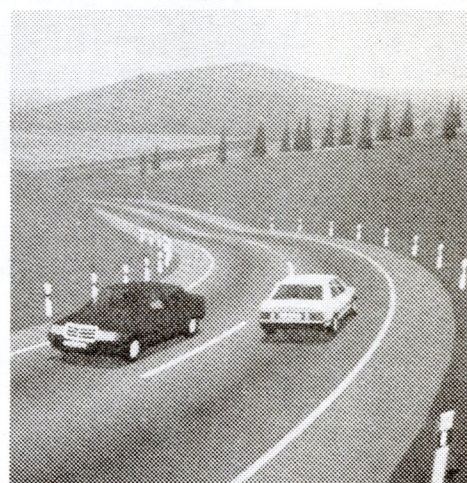
As if leading a pep rally, Temko exhorted the AIA to become a strong advocate for environmental design criticism, noting Seattle's lack of a critic. "Critics are common even in Dallas, where they think planning is a Commie plot." At the University, students were encouraged to demonstrate. "The school is the place to start an environmental movement that is political. That's how you win ballgames. The school has to be the environmental conscience of the area." Activism and influence were the themes of his chat on "The Politics of Architecture," yet it wasn't possible to gauge the enthusiasm of his audience from their polite applause.

What is the bridge between good building design and the conscientious participation by design professionals in the democratic process? Temko's life and his topics of conversation apparently derive from his interest and commitment to both. Yet from his presentations, one goes away wondering what reason an architect would have to cross that bridge, why put future jobs on the line for a large, impersonal cause. To the extent that amusing anecdotes and entertainingly extravagant statements of status-quo appreciation of major projects can move people, Temko's words may yield



"Even a jail should make overtures of a non-intimidating kind to the people who have to go there." (Temko on King County Jail)

local action. It seems equally likely that the only action to ensue would be the movement to the sitting room for an after-dinner liqueur.



Computer simulation of driving conditions by Evans & Sutherland. Are site visits next?

A SOLUTION IN SEARCH OF A PROBLEM was the underlying theme of the third Annual Northwest Computergraphics Conference held in Eugene, Oregon this fall. If you think that bar charts and CAD are all there is to computergraphics, you probably won't be the first architect on your block to commission your own video-version of your firm's portfolio of built and — get this — imagined projects. Actually, no one there was talking about DTV (Design TV), but a video by SOM entitled "Nine Cities" points the way. Boston, LA, Portland, and six other cities were "flown through," their downtowns portrayed as wireframes of buildings, SOM's in white, the others yellow, clearly indicating the magnitude of that firm's imprint on the shape of each city.

For the philosophers, the University of Oregon's Continuing Education Department, as conference sponsor, provided Thomas Linehan of Ohio State, who forecast the automation of the design of the built environment, warning that "automation will determine the look and style of the built environment." His biggest thought, however, was in describing the "true innovation" of "clean space" inside the computer, "as electronic Skinner box, devoid of rules and laws . . . a constructed reality rather than a reproduced reality."

For the technocrats, Donald Greenberg of Cornell summarized the historic evolution of computer images, ending, however briefly, with current efforts to generate information which will replicate the conditions and effects of light reflection independent of the viewer's location, incorporating dynamic sequences of information. Along the way, he illustrated his timeline talk with computer-produced images of dozens of materials and textures, a designer's wildest dreams for instant rendering an electronic reality — albeit an exorbitantly expensive one (however briefly). Jargonists and geographers, scientists and serigraphers, weavers and weary shoppers wandered the multi-media infinite-image production.

Down in the Willamette Valley, in the Land of the Aging Hippies, new minds are being blown, and a new mecca is being born. The vehicle which alters consciousness and stirs pleasing aesthetic sensations, is no longer PCP — it's PCs.

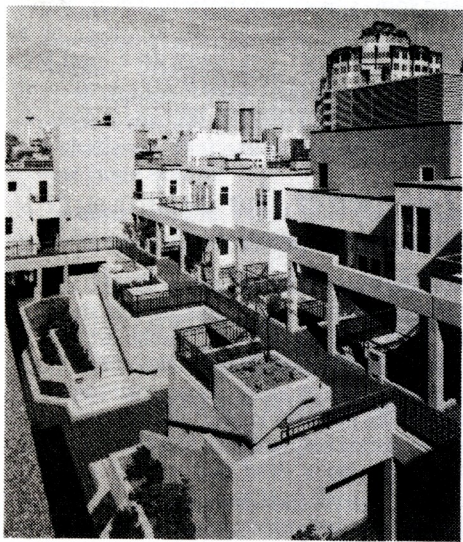
PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN GLASS HOUSES

Department: A recent AIA mailing quotes Philip Johnson as saying, "Architecture . . . has its own validity. It needs no reference to any other discipline to make it 'viable' or to 'justify' its value." Supposing that "viable" is in the eye of the beholder, one might wonder how the AT&T Building would stand up under the scrutiny of an engineer . . . or a banker.

Freeing neon from the bondage of sign-making and the connotations of its traditional presence will be an important first step in making it accessible as an architecturally creative medium. (From *Let There Be Neon*, by Rudi Stern)



AN ECLECTIC JURY SELECTED AN eclectic group of buildings to honor at this year's AIA Honor Awards. The combination was Robert Cioppa of Kohn Pederson Fox, a New York firm known for its office towers and business-like attitudes; Susie S.H. Kim of Koetter-Kim Associates of Boston, an academically-based medium-sized firm; and Eric Owen Moss of Santa Monica, the Dick Cavett of the jury, principal of a small, growing firm of stunt-architects. More important to the interest of the event than the resume-variety of these three was the range of attitudes their work and words expressed, first at a presentation of their work at the U.W., and later at the Awards ceremony in the Seattle Art Museum. Cioppa showed tower facade studies; his office is doing twenty-two jobs presently. Efficiency of plan, stylish signature of elevation, and, one would guess, agreement with the client's budget and schedule comprise this businessman's architect's palette. In contrast, Susie Kim was mystical, at least esoteric. Her firm's ideas "come from the situation. We allow ourselves to be conditioned, to feel the situation as it is brought to us." Presenting three projects, Kim appeared to be reading them with new interest in front of the audience. Eric Moss was the climax act, the intellectual athlete, throwing ideas and dashing around a field littered with complex constructs. In explaining his program he offered physical images: "It is our fundamental intention to find a way to end run the conventional language of architecture ... not to lean on Italy too hard, but to find experiences that are of America, to find something that is personal and belongs to me."



"So stupidly simple and so great; Lou Kahn used to make buildings like that." (Susie Kim on Waterfront Place Building) Photo: Robert Pisano

In two days, this trio sifted through sixty-two entries, sixteen of which they toured, attended by David Fukui, the Seattle architect responsible for dreaming them as a team. The three projects which they agreed to recognize for design merit comprised a trio as unlikely as their own: Olson Walker's Stewart Brothers Coffee Shop in the Post Alley Market; TRA's Tacoma Sheraton Hotel; and Bumgardner's Waterfront Place Building mixed-use project, the latter two both owned by Cornerstone Development Company. Assessments of each winner varied according to what was offered by the designer and the program. Stewart Brothers "transcends the importation quality ... longlasting, tough, without being harsh ... 'I like hardware stores' kind of language ... shows a knowledge and sense of materials." The Tacoma Sheraton, not on the original tour, but noticed during a tour of adjacent buildings, represents "an interesting type of local archetype: buildings which are an amalgamation of different components mixed in elevation so the building is legible as a single entity and as a compilation of pieces ... A complex site

with a clear solution, quite inventive." Waterfront Place Building, a retail base with parking, offices and housing topping it, was noted for "commingling of new and old with a playfulness of consideration. ... The obvious is so clear ... it is so stupidly simple that it is great. ... The individual pieces are not so extraordinary, what is convincing is the ability to put all the pieces together and give it a reading of its own." Awards abounded: Paul Thiry and Paul Hayden Kirk were awarded Seattle Chapter AIA Medals to honor their contributions to Northwest architecture. The AIA recognized developer Paul Schell of Cornerstone, structural engineer John Skilling of SWRB, and artist George Tsutakawa by giving them honorary memberships. It was both Schell's and Skilling's birthday. (If you've never heard a hundred architects sing together, you've never heard a hundred architects sing together.) Returning the compliment, and articulating the secret hope of many in the room, Paul Schell proposed that it is architects who breathe life into cities.

ONE REASON FOR USING A DESIGN competition to solve a public design problem, according to Ed Wundram, the Portland architect responsible for coordinating the Bellevue Park competition, the Tacoma Dome, and Portland Building competitions, is to know what you're going to get. Another reason is that, by adding another level of politics — public participation — to the equation, politicians' decisions are less the target of criticism. And, in terms of creativity, he says, "I think it's under competition conditions that designers get the greatest motivation." Semi-finalists in the Bellevue Park Competition may have gotten more motivation than they bargained for. The jury tied, 6-6, in voting for the Beckley/Meyers versus the Jongejan Gerrard McNeal/Miller Hull schemes in October. More information was necessary to help the jurors reconsider their votes, so questions were designed for the teams, and the designers were given until November 20 to respond. No fees were to be paid for this additional phase of work, so it is at the designers' discretion that any additional work be done.

On the basis of the questions asked, it seems that the JGM/MH scheme's architectural style bothered the jury. Wundram reported that they were not happy with the "high tech approach," wanting structures "more compatible with the layout" (a Victorian, English landscape-derived design). That team was asked to provide additional details to explain the forest, the pond, and cross-site sightlines.

Beckley/Meyers' scheme, on the other hand, sparked questions concerning basic programmatic elements: the need for parking, the desire for shelters in the first phase, a grading plan, treatment of the "setts" marking the existing buildings, the canal edge detail, a stronger entry from the south, a basketball court. The jury also questioned the working relationships with the local consultants (MacLeod Reckord and CHM Hill).

Differences between the schemes go beyond their basic design approaches. Although both were estimated to cost almost precisely the \$5 million budget in the first phase, B/M's had a total price tag of nearly \$16 million and included significantly more land acquisition than JGM/MH's \$9.5 million complete project.

Wundram commented that although this additional phase is not part of the original concept, it is not uncommon to encounter unanticipated problems. The final decision in the Park competition, by a jury of 13, should come late in November or early December, following presentations to the jury by each design team. A jury report documenting the entire process should be available in early 1985.

URBAN ARITHMETIC: QUEEN ANNE VISTA + AIRBORNE BUILDING = 0

Buildings are not the problem with American cities. We're enormously skilled at making individual projects, and they don't ever seem to add up to much.

— Jacquelin Robertson, architect and University of Virginia Dean, commenting in the *Design Quarterly* #125, "City Center Profile," 1984.



Those who walk or drive down Queen Anne Avenue have a new vision at the bottom of that street's long axis — a building now sits at the very end where the city used to meet the water. The Airborne Building, at Western Avenue and Denny Way, is a new office structure by developer Martin Selig. It is an eight-story building, noticeable from several well-trafficked streets, and noteworthy because of its semi-circular plan and grey-and-black striped glass curtain wall. In plan, the building's east side is a continuous curve; a longer flat plane faces west toward the water. Along the vehicular street there is a curved, tinted-glass recessed entry behind a landscaped porte cochere, featuring enameled steel columns and granite paving stones. The building's workmanship and materials are refined: precise, tight reveals and joints, and windows flush with their frames.

Of the Airborne Building, architects might say to other architects, "It's really well-detailed." And it is. These architects might also ask, "Can fine craftsmanship compensate for the lost opportunity of the

site: its special relationship to the surrounding urban street grid, and its prominence in views from Queen Anne Hill?" The siting of the Airborne Building and its rounded monolithic upland facade are like the guy in the front row at the ballgame who stands up for a better view. No one should complain that he shouldn't have a good seat for his high-priced ticket, but it's fair to say, "You're not made of glass, buddy." The Airborne Building is made of glass, but its effect is the same as that of a massive barrier from Queen Anne Hill. What is perceptible from the east is minimalist banding — no notch, no transparency, no formal or poetic reference to the water beyond, nothing to mark the dramatic axis of Queen Anne Avenue, as precise as a Luis Barragan waterfall which now runs smack into a visual dam.

As Robertson suggests, architects tend to design in imagined isolation, one building at a time, focusing within a site rather than on the site within the surrounding city. Given the strength of Queen Anne Avenue and its termination at the Airborne Building site, it is a shame that the architects didn't respond in their work to contextual clues to provide additional drama, poetic qualities, and a landmark purpose to the building design. In spite of its curves, its owner's desire to maximize views for his tenants, or the lack of adjacent contemporary development, this building could have made a gesture toward the larger whole, but it didn't.

Contextual urban design isn't simply a domestic nag that knocks the fun out of architects' creativity by insisting on replication. In some cases, as with the Airborne Building, we could discover new ways to animate our designs, to make connections between our buildings and their sites, and to give something special to the city.

Susan Boyle

Susan Boyle is an architect practicing in Seattle.

Wundram has been able to devote his business completely to competition design and management since 1978, which was about the time the FTC disallowed mandatory rules for selection processes, ruling that participation in competitions could no longer be restricted. What had been AIA rules concerning architects' activities, became merely guidelines. Wundram credits this change (and the general trends of deregulation of professionals) and consumer education to be contributing factors to his growing business.

THE ROMANCE OF ARCHITECTURE (the view from "out there"): Sweet's Director of Technology, Harry Mileaf, believes that by the year 2000, as many as eighty percent of American architects may have been "dislocated" by computers. He told the Congressional Technology Board that "Overall, the trend will be toward smaller numbers of larger firms, reduced labor requirements, and a growing dominance of the building owners as the major influence in the construction design market." What do you want to be when you grow up?

FOR THE DESIGNER WHO HAS EVERY thing: Peter Miller will have entries for BLUEPRINT's next competition, Seattle's Waterfront, in mid-December.

THIS SEASON'S PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS confused appearance and substance on a national scale. Perhaps some Post-modern political pundit will take advantage of the opportunity to write the necessary sequel to *The Greening of America*. *The Jading of America* ...

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CONVERSATION

ON GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

The dynamic relationship between architecture and graphic design is a part of the growing trend among design professionals to work together and share each other's expertise. To explore this relationship, ARCADE took part in two separate conversations. In the first, David Fukui of Hobbs/Fukui/Davison Architects was spokesman for the architectural viewpoint, and Cliff Chung of Hornall Anderson Design Works, a graphic designer with a background in architecture, represented the "environmental graphic design" viewpoint.

Architect and designer agreed that architectural projects benefit from collaboration; in fact, quite often their services overlap. Rather than consider the overlap a hindrance, they see this working relationship as a valuable opportunity to discuss ideas and options with another designer whose slightly different angle of expertise may help point the way to the best design solution. Cliff Chung finds his architectural background has great advantages, especially when he's designing an exhibit — or what he calls a "three-dimensional brochure." David Fukui cites his firm's work on Pier 48 as an example of an architectural project where graphic design had the major role: a great deal of information had to be communicated clearly and concisely to the public. Ellen Ziegler, also interviewed by ARCADE in this issue, was the graphic designer selected to put the message across.

Bonnie Duncan is a UW MBA student and assistant editor for this issue of ARCADE.

Caroline Petrich is a freelance writer and an editor for ARCADE.

Cliff Chung: Any time an architect wanted to use a graphic designer as a consultant, it may be that the firm felt it needed a graphic designer for designing an environmental exhibit. (However,) many times architects feel that they can do the same thing (as a graphic designer).

David Fukui: I think, generally, architects feel they are good graphic designers, largely because of their education. They've been given a very broad design education and think they can do graphics. That's the problem.

Bonnie Duncan: How would a *real* graphic designer be able to improve on the graphics an architect might design?

DF: I think it's very clear to us that we want a graphic designer when we want good graphics, such as for signage or for our project at Pier 48. (The Pier 48 exhibit) is more than just signage, because we're trying to put information across.

CC: We call them three-dimensional brochures: an exhibit that is providing information to you in a three-dimensional form.

DF: If you were to take that project minus the periscopes, and concentrate more on the interpretive, information dissemination parts of it, it would be something that a graphic designer could do entirely. It's just that we were hired as architects, be-

cause the (Port of Seattle) didn't have that in mind primarily. They had the idea of a small building, where we would have a graphic designer to help us rather than the other way around.

CC: Usually we work with an architectural firm as consultants, or with an interior designer as consultants.

Caroline Petrich: You mentioned earlier that Jack Anderson (of Hornall Anderson), was a rarity in his time as a graphic designer.

CC: I think that (his uniqueness) was basically stemming from education. Different schools have different thoughts about how to train graphic designers. Where he was from (Montana State University), their design curriculum required exposure to architecture, and provided you with a complete design background. Whereas at

... Signage is not a very developed field. People generally aren't willing to spend money on signage, or really don't care to.

— Cliff Chung

Cornish Institute or the University of Washington, you're not required to take architectural design classes or appreciation of architecture as an elective. Sometimes you do find that graphic designers are architects; especially when you find graphics in a book on architecture and think, "That's neat. I wish I could do that."

DF: That's the way I've always felt about graphics. I appreciate good graphic design work and I know what my limits are as far as the knowledge as well as the creativity involved. There's a difference between three-dimensional graphics and print graphics. The thing that's always fascinated me about the profession is the turn-around time. We used to be in a building with a graphic designer who was primarily involved with advertising graphics, which is a fresher, quicker situation where you get a call at 9:00 in the morning and are expected to have something out by noon. It's incredible. It's a really exciting, vital area to be involved in.

CC: That's a little bit faster than environmental graphics. It's what a lot of people think graphics is in the purest sense, but it is definitely advertising graphics. That's another world altogether. To get back to the point about graphic design in architecture, I think we both admire each other's work, each wishing that one could be the other. Being a hybrid, I can understand why the architects think one way while the graphic designers think the other way. Just at TRA I saw that the graphic designers made little tile blocks and made our drawings look good. There was the attitude that "We'll give you guys the little fun projects once in a while to keep you happy, but you aren't doing anything to make money." Then they realized, "Hey, we could make some money doing the signage system for SeaTac airport." That was just one small factor of a multi-million dollar building, but there was quite a lot of money involved.

CP: How did your architectural education influence your work as a graphic designer?

CC: I found it an advantage, especially in the area of environmental graphics. I had acquired skills, like drafting, model making, and sketching, to help me understand and solve a design problem. I would have a thought and be able to sketch it out in 3-D and say, "I think it's going to look like this." To study an elevation, sometimes you would want to draw an axonometric of a part of the building in order to understand it — as a study model. My experi-



Cliff Chung

ence at an architectural firm — actually working on architectural projects — developed my organization and management skills on projects of varying scale.

BD: What sort of considerations do you have for a signage project?

CC: Circulation is one aspect: how to get from Point A to point B. The second aspect is the architecture: what kind of elements are involved; how we can play off the building. For our purpose, though, it's still strictly boxes or rectangles, and the only things we deal with are shape and color. For example, we're doing the signage systems for the Pacific Medical Center. It's a nice Deco building, and we've played off that by doing a layered sign shape.

CP: So you try to incorporate the style of your signage with the style of the building?

CC: We try to make it look like a part of the building, not like a painting just stuck there to make it look good. It has to blend in to function.

CP: The only time people, not graphic designers, notice signage is when it doesn't work. So, how do you put yourself in the place of the little old lady who comes to the airport once a year to pick up her daughter? How do you get yourself into the mindset of the public?

CC: I walk through the building and put myself in different scenarios to see how (the flow) works, making sure that once I've gone someplace, I can get back. Sometimes by doing this, you'll discover problems in the structure and can tell the architect, "Hey, this doesn't work!" But sometimes the building is already done and you have to deal with that problem.

DF: There's a fine line between under-signage and over-signage. If you put a sign at every possible opportunity for the circulation, you're probably over-signing. Obviously, if you undersign, you're getting into a situation where you're not going to be able to get the information across.

CP: Could you elaborate more on graphic design in architecture, other than signage? For example, when a shopping mall is being designed, would an architect say to the graphic designer, "Here, create some imagery" to identify the different shops?

CC: What we did at Bellevue Square was to focus on the identity of the Square itself to develop a directory. Rarely do you need directional signs in a shopping mall. Sometimes the signs for the shopfronts are worked out with the architect because you have to know the building standards; if you can only build within a certain area, you have to be careful not to put the sign out too far. And the shop owner will probably come together with the architect, interior designer, and graphic designer to create what I call "labeling" for a shop.

... Signage is not a very developed field. People generally aren't willing to spend money on signage, or really don't care to. Another thing that's difficult to explain to people is the standard of signage. For it to be successful, it has to be a good standard. The quality is important. You have to make the signmakers live up to the quality of their samples. That's another thing you



David Fukui

have to worry about with signage in public buildings. We deal with hospitals where vandalism is a problem. People want to touch the signs: "Wow, what's this? Hey, I can take this off!" It's important to convince a client that maintenance is a central factor in the success of the signage. Signs don't take care of themselves; someone has to take care of them.

CP: I'm curious, David, how do you, as a self-proclaimed closet graphic designer, feel that graphic design influences architecture?

DF: If it does, it's indirect. I like to keep up on other design fields: fashion design, graphic design, industrial design. But my interest is pretty superficial because all I do is look at periodicals. (Doing this) gives me a broader sense of what's happening throughout the world as far as cultural influences, forms, colors, textures, shapes.

I wouldn't be able to talk specifically about direct influences because it's all shook up in my head; some of it rises to the top and some sinks to the bottom. I don't think any designer, whether an architect or a graphic designer can really do a total job, have total capabilities and create without having a knowledge of what's happening elsewhere.

The better the design architect, the better the graphic design of the building. There's a sensitivity there that goes throughout related to the design solution.

— David Fukui

The better the design architect, the better the graphic design of the building. There's a sensitivity there that goes throughout related to the design solution. ... There's a consistent high quality where there have been good consultants. There's a good sense of balance between consultants. In my opinion, a successfully designed building doesn't have the sense of one discipline jumping out over another. There's a nice melding of all the disciplines that come together in making a successful building.

Ellen Ziegler's background is in fine arts, but she has often worked with architects both as a consultant and in search of advice for one of her own jobs. She sees this collaboration as mutually beneficial in every instance where an architect and a designer come together — from signage to shop fronts, and from planning a color scheme to creating a brochure. Ziegler is a self-taught graphic designer who worked with a printing company to learn the basics, became *The Weekly's* first art director, and more recently worked for a brief period with an advertising agency. She has had her own firm in Seattle for ten years.

Bonnie Duncan: The impression I get is that the graphic designer is more closely related to the public than the architect is.





Ellen Ziegler

Ellen Ziegler: The graphic designer is trained to see things in terms of the public. We are primarily concerned with how any design element communicates, especially upon the first impression. But I don't mean to take away from the architect's point of view, because architects are extremely perceptive people in areas outside of their own expertise. The architects I've worked with are very open to input from outside their field. Collaboration is always the best arrangement. When I worked with Dick Hobbs and Rich Wilson on (the Pier 48 Viewpoint), they encouraged me as a designer from outside their field to give them as much response as I wanted to in any area. You can't have enough creative input, especially when you're trying to do something that's innovative. It's quite a magical process sometimes.

BD: When would an architect hire a graphic designer?

EZ: I've been fortunate to be asked to be in on the creative process from the very beginning in all the projects that I've been involved with. Personally, I would not be interested in a project that had reached the working drawing stage and then needed some signage. What I am interested in are projects that are one of a kind, that present a challenge, that are unlike anything I've ever done before.

Caroline Petrich: What was particularly challenging about the Pier 48 project?

EZ: The first and most wonderful thing about it was that Dick Hobbs and Rich Wilson came up with an idea that had actually never been done before. The periscopes were in response to the problem of not having the budget to build an elevator to comply with handicapped access requirements if they had built a viewing tower. The budget was such that they could build the tower or the elevator, but not both! So they said, what the heck, let's bring the view down to the pedestrian level. The periscopes were the last in a series of four proposals and they didn't really think the client would even consider it, but the Port people loved it!

So here they were with a completely new approach to a viewpoint, and that left me with the challenge of matching the quality of that remarkable idea with my work on the interpretive material. However, I was faced with an extremely complex body of information. The Port wanted me to include everything known about container shipping in Puget Sound. The amount of information was very dense.

CP: And had the potential of being somewhat dull.

EZ: Oh yes! I still worry about that... there's an awful lot to read out there. What we decided to do was to divide the information into four sections: first, the history of the Port of Seattle (which is different from the history of Seattle itself); second, the development of shipping technology in Seattle only (not the entire world), beginning with Yesler's mill and three-masted schooners; third, the interpretive information for what was visible to the viewer — silhouettes of ships and their uses, ships'

insignias and their origins, and so on; and finally, a complete overview of container shipping in the Puget Sound.

Mind you, I knew nothing about shipping or containerization when I began. That is a very common situation for a graphic designer to be in. You're faced with a completely new body of information every time you start a project, and you'd better be an expert, relatively speaking, by (the time of construction), because you have had to explain it to a public who knows even less than you do — and explain it in an interesting way.

I got panicked at one point because the information for the project was so unwieldy, and (I) asked Larry Rouch, an architect not involved with the project, for his feedback. One of the things he suggested was to use (an) axonometric perspective, which turned out to be invaluable in reducing all of this very complicated information to a uniform way of looking at it. This provided visual continuity all the way through the exhibit. He also helped me write a schematic outline.

When we began the project, we knew that the public had very little idea what it was they were seeing when they drove down the viaduct and saw those big orange cranes. Now we may have more information than *anyone* would want to know. But people do go out to the Viewpoint more than once. You see people who read through the whole thing and you see people who walk straight past it to the periscopes. There is a lot of information, like the economic impact of foreign trade on the region that is fairly dry stuff, but there is always going to be someone who is interested.

BD: Who came up with the color scheme for the Pier 48 park?

EZ: I got there first. I had designed all the exhibits and had the palette of colors, so Hobbs/Fukui ended up accepting my recommendations for painting the periscopes and the container frame. Now that again is a collaborative situation... Since then, I've done a lot of color consultation with architects. That is work that I enjoy very much.

BD: How do you make decisions about color? What are your criteria?

Stylistically, the marriage of architecture and graphic design is very effective. Because you have these two professional areas working — one in three dimensions and one in two — when they come together, they have a lot to say to each other.

— Ellen Ziegler

EZ: There are certain criteria that are givens. For example, a gelateria versus an insurance company. There is a vocabulary for color just as there is a vocabulary for form in architecture in terms of shape, style, and detail. Color can contribute greatly to the *spirit* of a building, adding another layer of meaning and symbolism to the architecture. It contributes in a more intangible way, almost as if there were music playing as you look at a building or move through it.

CP: Aside from the Pier 48 project, how much work have you done with architects?

EZ: I've done a lot of work with architects through the 3% WBE (Women's Business Enterprise) requirements. It helps me, as complete outsider with no real knowledge of architecture, to understand their work

and how I might be of some use to them... We certainly need each other. If an architecture firm wants a distinctive approach to graphics, there is rarely someone on their staff who has been keeping up with contemporary graphic design. There are certainly people who could do a passable job, (but) to do something that is as innovative graphically as it is architecturally is another thing... That's why collaboration works so well. I've also done a considerable amount of promotional material for the architects themselves — capabilities, brochures, visual identities, RFP formats, etc.

BD: It sounds as though you work with a few other disciplines besides architecture.

EZ: Always — as architects do. We have our trades: the printers, color separators, photographers, the people who do camera-work, the typesetters. They are all experts in their fields, and we couldn't live without them, as much as we all like to swear at each other while the project's going on.

BD: But you give the direction to bring it all together?

EZ: Yes. That's the most rewarding part of any project, to be the conductor of the orchestra. I can't play the violin or the oboe, but I know what I want them to do.

CP: Since becoming a graphic designer, you must have noticed the growing relationship between graphic design and architecture. Why do you think that is occurring, and how far do you think it will go?

EZ: There are two ways of looking at it. From the functional and the stylistic points of view. As architects design buildings and graphic designers design signage systems, they learn more about what functionally makes a successful communication system for a building, or an exhibit. (T)here is a growing body of work for graphic designers and architects to look at in order to say, "The client wants a waiting area in the hospital with pictures of the Board of Directors. Why not use the space to show off their innovations in medical care and their involvement in the community?" Once projects like this are built, the new clients then become interested in implementing them as part of their own project.



Stylistically, the marriage of architecture and graphic design is very effective. Because you have these two professional areas working — one in three dimensions and one in two — when they come together, they have a lot to say to each other. Architects and graphic designers generally get along very well, because each understands what the other is trying to do. I have never had more fun than when I've worked with architects.

CP: Perhaps the combination of graphic design with architecture over the past twenty years continues to grow because of commercialism — that it's been found very useful for marketing purposes.

EZ: It's effective. This gets back to the functional aspect. Architects find that their buildings work better and have more of an impact when the knowledge of a graphic designer is incorporated into what they do.

BD: Have you noticed a general trend in the style of graphic design, in the same way that there's a trend in the style of architecture from one decade to the next?

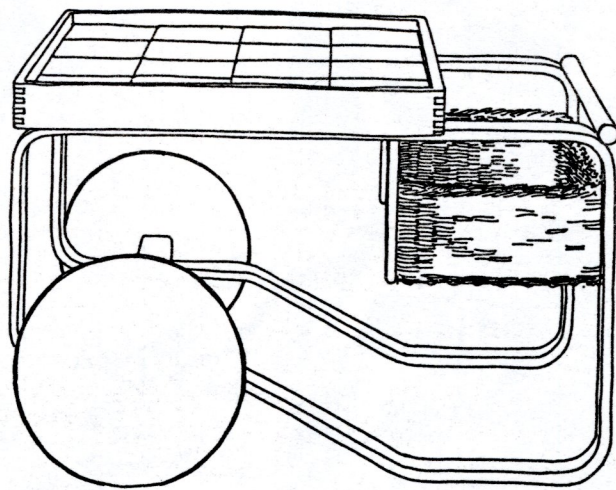
EZ: Certainly. There are always fashions for the times. Graphic design sometimes seems overly style-conscious at the expense of the message. The best graphic design is never like that of course, no matter what the style happens to be. But the general body of work that's being produced seems to be striving for a fashionable look, which is a superficial approach. Any design field is very fashion-oriented, and sometimes designers don't have enough time to think something through carefully, and they try for whatever is easiest... To pick up a style that's popular at the time is sometimes an easy way to please.

Some designers develop a personal style, and you know what to expect when you hire that person. You hire Sam Smith, you get a Sam Smith look. Other designers try to let the client's needs influence their design decisions, formally and stylistically. In my opinion, that is where communication really happens. That is the kind of designer I try to be.

All photos this article by Caroline Petrich.

artek

ALVAR AALTO FURNITURE



1001 Western Ave
Seattle WA 98104
Tel. 206.622.2433

1

Exhibit: "A glazed terra cotta district for Portland" by Virginia Guest Ferriday, The Architecture Gallery, 615 SW Park Avenue, Portland. 11/1-12/7.

Mixed media works by Paulene Goldstein at the Virginia Inn, this month.

Crafts '84 invitational at the Bellevue Art Museum through 12/31.

Deadline today for submissions to the Women's Cultural Center's 1985 Exhibit Program. Contact WCC Gallery, University YMCA, 701 NE Northlake Way, Seattle, WA 98105. (206) 632-4747.

Phinney Neighborhood Winter Festival.

Max Benjamin. This exhibition features over 40 works by this important contemporary regional painter. Bellevue Art Museum through 12/16.

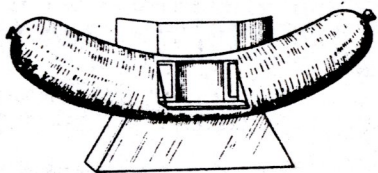
1985 Tucker Architectural Awards program. Sponsored by the Building Stone Institute. Contact BSI 420 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10170. (212) 490-2530.

Washington Chapter — American Planning Association Awards. Contact Roger Wagoner, AICP, 301 116th Avenue SE #170, Bellevue, WA 98004. 455-3571.

Holiday group show of gallery artists at the Clay Occasion Gallery, now through 12/31.

"Moonlight Swims and Other Underwater Diversions," a show of weavings by Alice Van Leunen, continues at the Cerulean Blue Gallery through December.

D'ART's art installation window will be featuring the ceramic sculptures by local artist Kristin Nelson from 12/1 to 1/3/85. They can be seen 24 hrs. a day at 105 Stewart St.



2

"Pilchuck Glass Exhibition": over 40 internationally-known glass artists at the Traver Sutton Gallery. Also at Traver Sutton, jewelry by Kiff Slemmons and ceramic sculpture by Eric Nelsen. Both shows run through 12/29.

Neon Plus — a kinetic fantasy at the Jackson Street Gallery, 163 S. Jackson, Seattle. 11/8-12/5.

City of Seattle incorporated, 1869.

3

National architectural photo contest cosponsored by the AIA and its St. Louis Chapter: submit (5) 35mm color slides with the \$10 entry fee and you may win the \$1000 top prize. For info, AIA Photo Contest, c/o St. Louis Chapter, AIA, 919 Olive St., St. Louis, MO 63101. (314) 621-3484. Deadline: 3/1/85.

"Grids on the Port of St. Francis" at the Philippe Bonnafont Gallery, San Francisco through 12/28.

4

City of Seattle Land Use Committee meeting. City Council chambers, Rm. 1101, Seattle Municipal Building, 9 am.

Seattle Design Association Board Meeting. Call 828-7439.

5

Deadline for citizen proposals for map changes to new Neighborhood Commercial zones for Southeast/Central Seattle. Send proposals to Seattle City Council, Municipal Building.

Last day to catch Christopher Rauchenberg exhibit at Blue Sky Gallery, Portland.

Last day to catch Liza von Rosenstiel, at the Davidson Galleries, 87 Yesler Way, Seattle.

City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board meeting at the 400 Yesler Building, 4th floor conference room, 3:30 pm. For agenda, call 625-4501.

6

Also at Jackson Street Gallery, "A Holiday Sampler," the sixth annual group show featuring gallery artists and newcomers.

"Flora and Fauna," natural history prints, a special Christmas show at the Carolyn Staley Gallery through 1/17.

"Surface/Material/Structure," an invitational show of 14 area artists at the Hodges/Banks Gallery now through 12/29.

Mixed media works by Tlingit artist Edna Jackson at the Sacred Circle Gallery, now through 12/21. Also at Sacred Circle: "Saturday Afternoon Christmas Indian Markets," every Saturday from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

At the Foster White Gallery, through 12/30: paintings in powdered pigment, and oil on canvas, by Larry Gray. Also, photos of waterfalls of Washington by Jim Ball and a select showing of Classic Realist Masterpieces.

At Davidson Galleries through 1/9: Portraits in low relief by Portland artist Anne Storrs. Also, a selection of new works by Gallery artists.

"Tell it to the Park Board": town meetings on the Seattle's Parks and Recreation Policy Plan. Bitter Lake Community Center. 7:30 pm.

The Los Angeles AIA hosts a dinner to honor Carl Maston. AIA telephone (213) 659-2282.

Your firm's name in lights at the market? Call Marlys Erickson, 625-4764.

Color photographs by Austrian photographer Alfred Seiland and black and white photos by German photographer Phillip Scholz Ritterman at the Equivalents Gallery, now through 12/31.

Hand-colored photographs by Francesca Lacaganian at the Silver Image Gallery through 12/29. Also at the Silver Image, humorous SX-70 photographs by Fred Auden.

Drawings, paintings, and wall reliefs by Laddie John Dill, at the Linda Farris Gallery through 12/30.

Thirteen free brass ensemble concerts at various downtown locations. Noon, 12/6-24. For info, call Downtown Development Association, 623-0340.

9

"Paintings," recent works by Paula D. Griff, also paintings by Wattana Wattanapun and prints by German artist Andreas Grunert at the Francine Seders Gallery through 12/30.

Art of the Olmsted Landscape, a collection of photographs and landscape plans of Seattle's parks and national parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and his sons. Museum of History and Industry, through 12/31.

A Christmas Carol at Pantages Theatre. 3 pm and 7 pm, 901 Broadway, Tacoma. Call 591-5890 or 858-7446.

Richard Tuttle at the Portland Center for the Visual Arts, through 12/9.

10

Illustration in the third dimension: Maurice Sendak's theatrical art is on view at the SAM Pavilion at Seattle Center through 1/27.

Adolph Loos, Czech-Austrian architect, born 1870.

11

AIA Chapter Meeting presents Harry Weese, architect of D.C.'s subway system and more recently in the news as the designer of a 200-story office tower, and who probably will speak to the controversy the latter has generated. At the Olympic Hotel. 622-4938.

Public Hearing held by the Urban Redevelopment Committee on the Downtown Housing Preservation Ordinance, in City Council chambers, Rm. 1101, Seattle Municipal Building, 7:30 pm.

12

The design awards submissions of the Portland Chapter AIA will be on display through 12/15, The Architecture Gallery, Portland.

City of Seattle Transportation Committee meeting, in City Council chambers, Rm. 1101, Seattle Municipal Building, 9 am.

13

Prints and sculpture by Joan Ross Bloedel, at Donnelly/Hayes Books through 1/8.

A Day in the Life of Washington, photographs by professional press photographers from Washington state, depicting Washington state on September 23, 1983. Sponsored by the National Press Photography Association. Museum of History and Industry through 12/31.

BLUEPRINT: for Architecture's general meeting at Maximilien-in-the-Market, 5:30 pm.

IDSA's Christmas party. At the Aquarium, 7 pm. \$10. Industrial designers, their friends, and Jingle Fish.

14

City of Seattle Land Use Committee meeting, in City Council chambers, Rm. 1101, Seattle Municipal Building, 2 pm.

The Urban Redevelopment Committee will hold a public hearing on the proposed zoning of the Pioneer Square and International Districts, in City Council chambers, Rm. 1101, Seattle Municipal Building, 8 am.

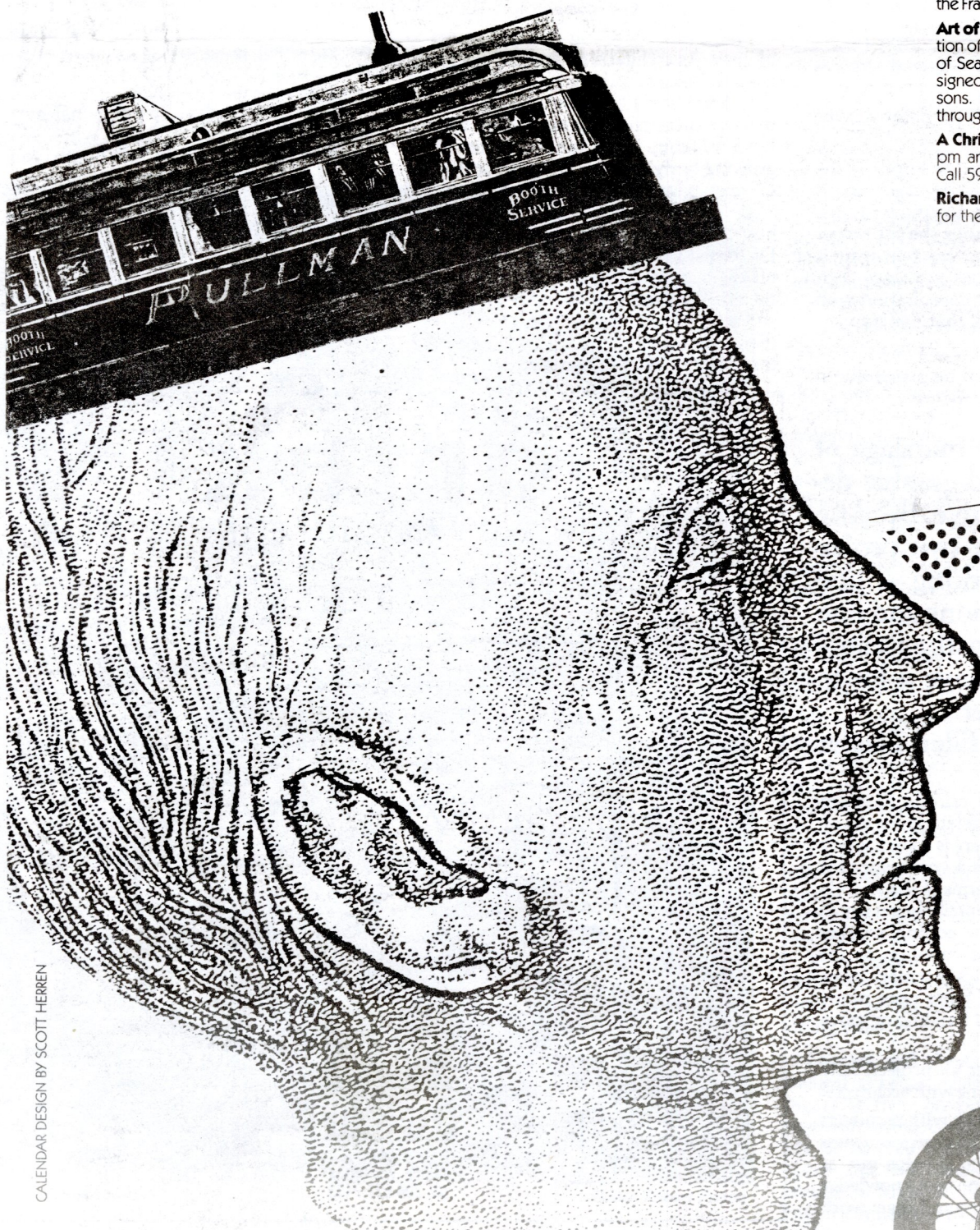
ARCADE wishes a happy birthday to Victor Steinbrueck.

18

The Department of Architecture of the University of Oregon seeks new faculty. Deadline, 2/15.

Free-software-to-share will be the database at the Christmas meeting of Architects/Engineers/Planners User Group meeting, Seattle AIA office, 5:30 pm.

Posters and program for BLUEPRINT's "Waterfront Competition" on sale at Peter Miller Books. Due date for entries, Monday, 2/25.



19

City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board meeting at the 400 Yesler Building, 4th floor conference room, 3:30 pm. For agenda, call 625-4501.

First Day of Hanukkah.

20

"Tell it to the Park Board": town meetings on Seattle's Parks and Recreation Policy Plan. Denny Park, 100 Dexter Avenue. 7:30 pm.

The Portland AIA is having a big shindig! A party and silent auction of art by architects. Live music, hors d'oeuvres at the Blackfish Gallery, 325 NW Sixth Avenue. Admission, \$3.

Calvert Vaux, co-designer of New York's Central Park with Frederick Law Olmsted, born 1824.

21

Deadline for artists to submit applications for public art projects to be included in the Washington State Convention and Trade Center and the State's Corrections Facilities. Send entries to: Washington State Arts Commission, Attn: Sandra Perceval, Mail Stop GH-11, Olympia, WA 98504-4111; (206) 753-3860.

First Day of Winter.

24

"Erotica," an exhibition of erotic art on porcelain and stoneware platters and plates by Canadian artist Lillian Broca, at the Jackson Street Gallery now through 12/24.

Ice skating at Westlake Mall. All proceeds benefit Northwest Second Harvest, through 12/24.

"Not a creature was stirring . . ."

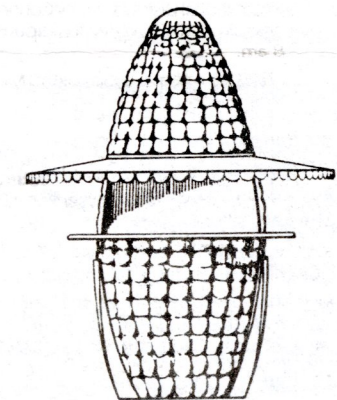
25

Christmas Day

31

First Annual Kitchen Design Awards. Contact ICF, 305 E 63rd Street, New York, NY 10021, or any local ICF showroom.

"Think of people you like and want to share your beer." — Phoebe Snow



JANUARY

1

New Year's Day

Strange, works by contemporary American artists who create richly imaginative images. National and Northwest Galleries. Henry Gallery, University of Washington, through 1/20, 1985.

Portraits by Kelley Wise at the Yuen Lui Gallery, through January.

Alfred Steiglitz, born 1864.

"When you're having fun, it's January one!" — Phoebe Snow

2

At the Equivalents Gallery now through the end of the month, photographs by Czech photographer Jan Sandek and by Seattle artist Michael Gesinger.

Paintings, lithos, and etchings by gallery artists at the Stone Press Gallery, through the end of the month.

City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board meeting at the 400 Yesler Building, 4th floor conference room, 3:30 pm. For agenda, call 625-4501.

3

Contemporary Native American photography at the Silver Image Gallery, through 2/3.

At the Traver Sutton Gallery now through 1/26, sculpture installation and drawings by Dianne Katsiaficas.

At the Sacred Circle Gallery, now through 1/26, a show of ancient Peruvian textiles from the Dan Slavin collection.

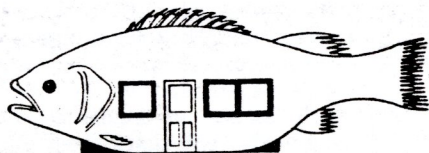
"Tell it to the Park Board": town meetings on Seattle's Parks and Recreation Policy Plan. Rainier Beach Community Center. 7:30 pm.

6

Oil paintings by Merle Martinson at the Francine Seders Gallery through 1/27.

Paintings by Denise Anderson at the Virginia Inn, through January.

Seattle buried under six feet of snow, 1880.



9

Opening reception for the exhibit "Drawing and Constructions" by Steve Gianakos at the Philippe Bonnafont Gallery in San Francisco. 6-8 pm, through 2/9. See this one if you can; it's the only gallery on the West Coast dedicated to the art of architects.

10

Acrylic paintings by John Edward-Rajanan at the Linda Farris Gallery now through 1/31.

At Jackson Street Gallery, "Images of Seattle, 1925 to 1985," historic and contemporary views of the city in painting, sculpture, and photographs. Show runs through 2/9.

Now through 2/2 at the Hodges/Banks Gallery, sculpture by Robert Maki.

Black and white photos by Mark Ruwedal at Donnelly/Hayes Books now through 2/5.

The Twelfth Anniversary Exhibition of drawings by Kenneth Callahan at the Foster White Gallery through 2/3.

12

"Outside New York," works on paper by University of Washington artist Jene Pizutto, at the Bellevue Art Museum through 2/24.

15

Kick-off meeting on proposed Neighborhood Commercial Map Changes for the Southeast/Central Region of Seattle; that's south of Madison, east of I-5. At the West Seattle Golf Course Clubhouse Restaurant, 7:30 pm.

Public Hearing held by the Urban Redevelopment Committee on the Urban Harborfront Environment of the Shoreline Master Program and portions of the Downtown Land Use code, in City Council chambers, Rm. 1101, Seattle Municipal Building, 7 pm.

Martin Luther King Jr., born 1929.

16

City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board meeting at the 400 Yesler Building, 4th floor conference room, 3:30 pm. For agenda, call 625-4501.

17

P/A Fifth Annual International Furniture Competition. See October P/A, page 15.

"Tell it to the Park Board": town meetings on Seattle's Parks and Recreation Policy Plan. Laurelhurst Community Center. 7:30 pm.

Return of the Young Architects. AIA Chapter Meeting goes a second round with what was last year's most successful program, now on its way to becoming a regular item on the AIA calendar. 622-4938 for details.

20

BLUEPRINT: for Architecture's general meeting at Maximilien-in-the-Market, 5:30 pm. 1/20

22

Deadline for submitting requests for Neighborhood Commercial map changes to Seattle City Council, on proposed Neighborhood Commercial mapping of Seattle's Southwest region. 1/22

28

Main Street Architecture: A discussion of traditional and contemporary storefront architecture by John Margolies, sponsored by the Contemporary Art Council and the Education Department of Seattle Art Museum. At the Volunteer Park Seattle Art Museum Auditorium. 7:30 pm. Members \$5; non-members \$7. 1/28

John Baskerville (printer and typeface designer), born 1706. 1/28

29

Public hearing on proposed Neighborhood Commercial map changes for the Southeast/Central Region of Seattle; that's south of Madison, east of I-5. At the Mt. Baker Community Club, 7:30 pm. 1/29

31

Park Board public meeting at Queen Anne Community Center, 7:30 pm. Call 625-2977 for info. 1/31

25th Annual Reynolds Aluminum prize for Architectural Students. Contact AIA, Attention: Reynolds Student Prize, 1723 New York Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20006. 2/4



THE TRAIN TO CONTINUUM

Carl Sagan, in his book and series *Cosmos*, deals with the marvelous connectedness of all things; his beautiful descriptions of the physics and chemistry of the solar system (of "star-stuff") speak eloquently about continuity in our universe. To be sure, the following comparisons are more earthly, but viewing design as part of a "continuum" I believe to be a valid analogy — one which lets us put the art and science of environmental graphic design into perspective in our culture and in our lives as designers.

Sometimes we forget that all forms of design are directly related to the culture in which they persist. Nothing in the designed world happens without being spawned by the social and environmental factors surrounding the situation. The aerodynamic shape of cars arising from the '70s energy crisis and the proliferation of tiny portable smoke alarms after the MGM Grand Hotel fire are examples of the way in which the design of objects in our culture is related to what's happening in many other areas. Often, designers separate the world into two parts: things carefully designed by them and things which a tasteless world somehow bumbles into existence. In reality the very commissions which designers receive are almost always the result of some larger economic or social force at work — before they ever pick up a pencil.

The analogy of "continuum" in design comes partially from the philosophy of Eliel Saarinen, father of the architect Eero Saarinen. Eliel came to the U.S. in 1924 as a visiting professor at the University of Michigan, met a publisher/philanthropist named George Booth, and ultimately established the Cranbrook Academy of Art near Bloomfield Hills. Although Eliel is often remembered as an artisan because of his beautiful designs in wrought iron, I am

very impressed with one of his thoughts on design: "Always consider the next larger and next smaller thing." This belief in the unity of all elements in architecture, interiors, furniture, and crafts was a working philosophy at Cranbrook. The idea that the hand of the artist could influence all aspects of life was a precept that was central to the Arts and Crafts Movement. Saarinen's inlaid wood chair designs, gilded ceramics, wrought iron sculpture, and open plan architecture are wonderful examples of design as part of a continuous fabric — a continuum formed of threads from each discipline of design. His chairs are somehow related to the rooms in which they sit; the railings and ornament are integral with their architectural home. So it is with graphic design in the architectural setting. Banners should reflect the mood of public spaces, murals should testify to the cultural purpose of the building, and signs should answer questions which people ask as they move through each type of lobby, corridor, and mall.

As long as designers recognize good spatial development, graphic clarity, and pathfinding functions as being part of a project's greater design direction, environmental graphic design can have some real substance and meaning.

A Place for EGD Along the Way

This leads to the question: where does environmental graphic design fit along this grand "continuum"? It's not a "craft" in the way Saarinen thought of design — technology, new materials, and manufacturing processes have taken it from the hand of the artist to the hum of the machine. If we consider scale alone, it fits somewhere between architecture and graphic design with thanks and apologies to each. It's a very young profession; *ID Magazine* has said that graphic design, especially print, is little more than 25 years old. What began as architects searching for enrichment of large architectural spaces probably evolved into the graphic treatment of architectural spaces by hybrid types of designers whose interests and talents lay in architecture and graphics. Soon after, the practitioners of interior architecture probably evolved their own version of environmental graphic design using art programs and murals to develop the architectural design theme. And with the link-up of the print designers and their expertise in typography being applied to signing, the continuum was complete.

Yet our place is not completely secure. Although we can trace a history of sorts, environmental graphic design is not yet a venerable profession like law, finance, theology, or architecture. It's not a life or death kind of service, as any doctor or stockbroker will quickly tell you — you probably won't keel over from lack of graphics in your diet. (I once imagined this outrageous scene: A "Design One" emergency truck comes to a screeching halt near a man lying on the sidewalk; frantic on-lookers scurry around as the medic deftly leaps from the vehicle, deposits his hi-tech gear beside the crumpled form and races through his diagnosis: advanced hemohelvetica, a near-fatal blood disease in which people are only able to correctly identify one typeface: Helvetica Medium. The medic quickly administers 24 points of Garamond Bold Italic intravenously and the man miraculously recovers.)

Absurd dramas such as this remind us that people don't die from viewing a hand-made sign with too many arrows; they don't gasp for air if forced to read an annual report set entirely in 8 point Souvenir Medium. But good signing, exciting spatial graphics, and well-designed printed materials can bring to architecture a richness which is second only to the building itself. Graphics can be the "cuff-links" on the design that make it formal or casual, suggesting many subtleties of character, heritage, and culture.

Who's Running This Profession Anyway?

If we attempt a definition of environmental graphic design, we get all hung up in the names of other professions: "The art and science [waffle-words to acknowledge aesthetics and technology] of visual communication [sounds like Dan Rather and CBS] in the context of environmental space, often associated with architecture, interior design, advertising, design of printed materials, etc., etc.," and pretty soon everybody's in the act.

If we ignore for a moment the typical definition and look at who's active in the field, we get the following picture of who's doing what:

Owners and clients dabble in environmental graphic design because it adds pizzazz to their project. They call up the tent and awning company and order a couple of colored banners to "enliven" the space. But this band-aid approach often insults the architect and has no real meaning or connection to the project.

Some architects themselves try environmental graphic design for precisely the same reason as the client: to improve a dull program or compensate for a lack of money for more permanent architectural materials. They usually try to make the public space evoke the same kind of richness found in the Italian towns of Sienna or Florence with their heraldic banners, flags, and family pageants. But this rarely works, because today isn't the twelfth century and the Florentines weren't very big on directional signing. So the historical resource is inappropriate.

Interior Designers get into environmental graphic design because it lets them leave their carpet-bound world of furniture and instead work on the spatial aspects of the project — something many architects are resistant to allow them to do — even when the project could use the help! (This relatively new practice of "interior architecture" stresses the integration of architecture, interiors, and graphics concepts.)

Industrial designers feel that objects such as sign cabinets, directories, and kiosks often associated with environmental graphic design should be *their* territory, since most of them spent four years in school designing hubcaps and learning the manufacturing techniques to make such objects. Besides, they know how to put all those nifty zaps and sparkles on the renderings of chrome and stainless steel.

Graphic designers from the world of print see the obvious connection between typography and signing and claim much of the domain for themselves. They add to the soup their expertise about composition, history of typography, and a sense for the current trends in the country. These are the folks who revived the '50s look, with its triangles and offhand composition, and made some annual reports look like Punk manifestos.

Now that I've offended just about everyone, let me say that it is just this sort of "cosmopolitan" richness that gives environmental graphic design the great potential that it has. The "connectedness" of all the design issues from architecture to print is ensured because environmental graphic design seems to touch so many different areas. The profession of environmental graphic design today has many followers and is just beginning to find its place beside some of the more traditional design issues of the last thirty years. And as long as designers recognize good spatial development, graphic clarity, and pathfinding functions as being part of a project's greater design direction, environmental graphic design can have some real substance and meaning.

Two Examples

To illustrate how this interdisciplinary effort can pay off, here are two examples from the work of TRA. In each case, close coordination occurred between the various designers, thus allowing the central design vision to affect all parts.

Sheraton Tacoma Hotel, Tacoma, Washington

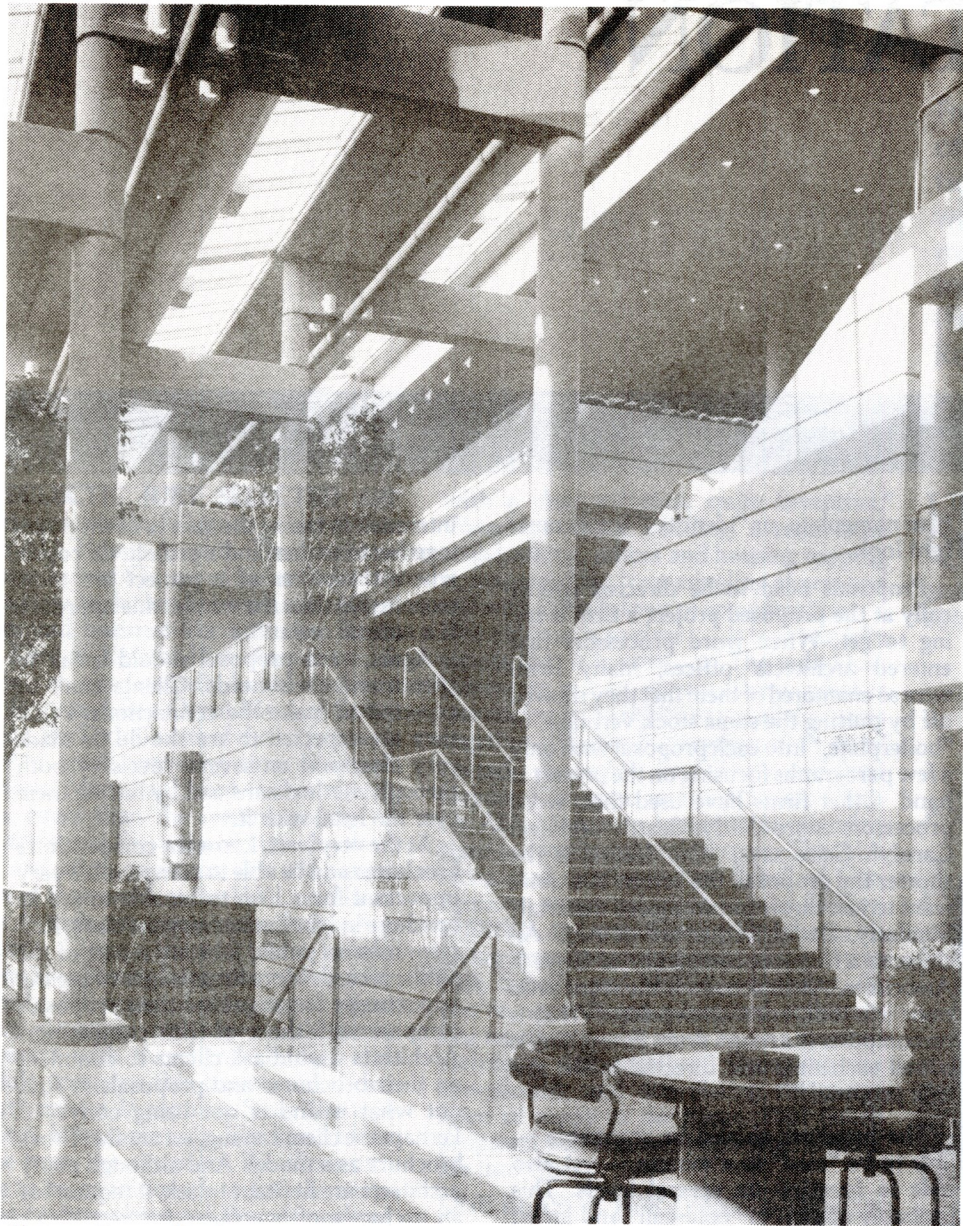
The client was the beginning of this particular continuum, with an energetic project manager from Cornerstone Development Company as the driving force behind the project. So convincing was her description of the elegant style the hotel should possess that virtually every design decision was made in light of it.

The architects saw the difficult site in a then-depressed part of Tacoma, and virtually lifted the building and its high interior lobby above the ordinary street. Warm grey concrete, exposed between many glazed openings, and a mottled beige marble floor provide a bright and open stage for the hotel's guests.



Sheraton Tacoma Hotel

Photo: Robert Pisano



Sheraton Tacoma Hotel

Photo: Robert Pisano

Graphic designers should ask themselves what is at the very core of the design problem and consider the next larger and smaller implications of their work.

The interior designers responded with an upbeat group of furnishings which echo a light Oriental influence but address the utilitarian needs of a busy hotel as well. Soft mohair fabrics, smooth lacquered tables, and crystalline appointments grace the piano bar area of the lobby and mark the guest's initial impression of the hotel.

The graphic designers added subtle signage in the black lacquer of the furniture, and placed it in a secondary place in the guest's perception of the whole. Polished copper letters mark the meeting rooms and match the miles of copper handrails which wind up from the entry to conference rooms and on to the Wintergarden Cafe. Wall plaques in beige recede into the wall color and take their proper place. In addition, the extensive printed materials program takes inspiration from the interiors, resurrecting a Deco typestyle and coordinating it with the corporate graphic standards imposed by the Sheraton Design Manual. The use of copper and black foils to imply the quiet elegance of the hotel's style of service was a key element in the graphics program. Here the concept of continuum is very convincing — one concept from which all the solutions draw their inspiration.

McCarran International Airport Signing, Las Vegas, Nevada

Here the client's concept of Las Vegas disarray with the typical tourist image of "Glitter Gulch." Las Vegas is a conservative, small American town with a City Council, PTA meetings, and typical middle-class concerns. The design team responded by relying less on the neon and more on the desert for their inspiration. The soft red rock, dusty soils, and intense desert flowers play an important role in the color scheme.

The architects selected exterior wall panels in a sun-resistant metal finish. Vast vaulted spaces were added to the passenger esplanade to house shops, restaurants, and stores. Here too, the red metal finish was used to refer to the desert rock.

The interior designers followed with a series of light and dark wall colors evocative of the desert soils and playful metal palm trees to hint at the desert character.

Rather than compete with the high-energy neon and gambling equipment, the graphic designers selected a refined signface with a beige background and only the typography illuminated. Only a simple accent stripe was used to recall the flower analogy. The neon that was designed for the project is carefully managed and subdued. The total effect is one of a modern airport which has a clear sense of the community and the area's natural beauty.

The Very Nature of Things

I feel that graphic designers should ask themselves what is at the very core of the design problem and consider the next larger and smaller implications of their work. Only when this sort of universal attitude becomes commonplace will the solutions to environmental graphic design problems become truly integral with the culture within which they arise. Accomplishment of a continuity in our design may be a tough goal, but awareness is not. Using this approach to structure our design responses also helps ensure that solutions come from real problems rather than merely the visual dalliances of the isolated designer. Only the profession itself can improve the quality of design issues with which it is concerned. Hopefully, as the public becomes more sensitive to the graphic nature of the world there will also be an increased public value placed on environmental graphic design.

Kelly Brandon

Trained as an architect and working in environmental graphic design since 1970, Kelly Brandon is the Graphic Design Manager of TRA in Seattle and is interested in the dynamic relationship between graphic design and architecture.

All photos this article courtesy TRA.

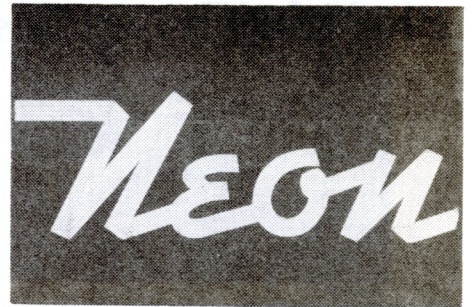
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Las Vegas . . . was the only architecturally unified city I ever saw in my life other than Versailles, and the unity was created by the signs.

— Tom Wolfe



Peter Kohn

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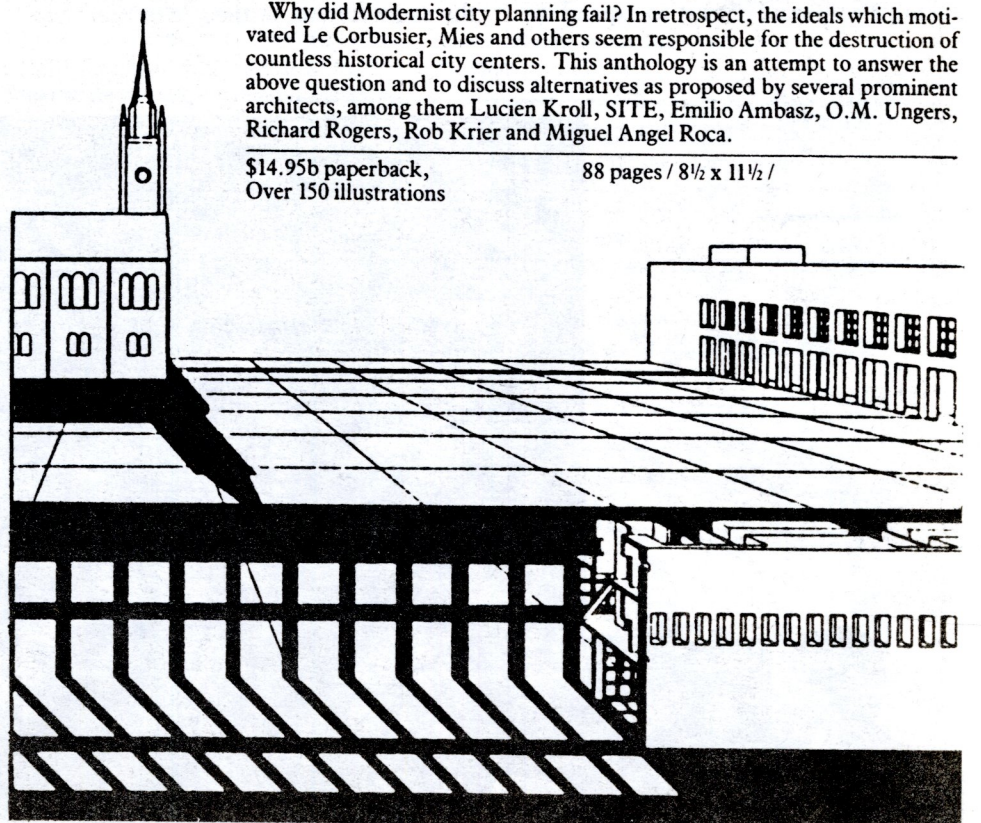
Guest Editors: David Gosling and Barry Maitland

Why did Modernist city planning fail? In retrospect, the ideals which motivated Le Corbusier, Mies and others seem responsible for the destruction of countless historical city centers. This anthology is an attempt to answer the above question and to discuss alternatives as proposed by several prominent architects, among them Lucien Kroll, SITE, Emilio Ambasz, O.M. Ungers, Richard Rogers, Rob Krier and Miguel Angel Roca.

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PETER MILLER BOOKS

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN BOOKS

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For years architects have believed that the quality of their work is self-evident, that the work need not be promoted. Many architects have prospered while waiting for clients to seek out the designers. Typically, architects have relied on personal contacts and clients' word-of-mouth referrals rather than on any sort of formal advertising. Like doctors and lawyers, they have felt advertising to be crass and, if not completely unethical, certainly unprofessional.

While they have different uses and audiences, proposals and brochures are fruits from the same marketing tree. Brochures are simply glossy advertising of a firm's past work, selling the architects' wares, gaining attention among new, potential clients, and refreshing the memory of past clients. Most firms, particularly smaller ones, develop their brochures gradually, via refinements of their proposal formats and Request For Proposal responses. Proposals certainly contain some amount of advertising, but also, ideally, some concrete ideas about accomplishing a proposed project. And while each proposal and brochure may vary widely according to each firm's needs, there are a few points a firm needs to consider during their development.

The firm needs to know specifically who it intends to address with the brochure. This should define substantially the focus and look of the brochure. The Callison Partnership's 1983 brochure, designed by Seattle graphic designer Ellen Ziegler, looks like a corporation's annual report. It is the sort of thing which should appeal to a corporate developer. The firm clearly is seeking a corporate market to expand on

Brochures and proposals should be consistent with the firm's size, reputation, and/or sense of direction. A gold-plated brochure will scare away a two-bit client, and conversely, a two-bit brochure will only insult most potential patrons. There is a tightrope to walk here. A brochure or proposal may well be costly to produce (and inconsistent with the firm's economic situation); it undoubtedly should radiate care, attention to detail, quality — but it ought also to appeal to the search by typical clients for not-too-extravagant architects. It should make very clear through subliminal cues, as well as through obvious drum-thumping, that the firm knows itself, its strengths, its place.

On the other hand, the brochure can be a means toward achieving a change in a firm's direction. Tim Girvin designed a brochure for Rutledge Chaney Architects in Bellevue that is intended to indicate a sense of transformation, helping the architects "to move out of a perception of their firm by others as doing a single type of work — where they were sort of forced to stay for some time — and to reposition them as being capable of more than that."

Ideally, brochures and proposals are flexible, for use with a variety of clients. Few firms can afford to produce new brochures at the two- to three-year intervals recommended by marketing consultants. For most such firms, the brochure/proposal format is going to have to last for a long time and through many different circumstances. Pre-printed project sheets, like Tonkin/Koch/Architects', can be mixed and matched or added and deleted with the same format as their letterhead and

Proposals need to be directed specifically at the proposed project a firm is trying to get. When word processors first entered architects' offices, many firms were so enamored of them that they showed off by putting the same stock verbiage, or "boilerplate," into each proposal with only a few paragraphs focusing on the project at hand. Other firms have used their word processors more deftly. Seattle architect Carolyn Geise says, "Our feeling is the shorter the proposal, the better. You don't want to just throw in extraneous material." Similarly, David Rutherford of ARC Architects, a frequent competitor of Geise & Associates, Architects, feels the word processor is a tool, not a showpiece. "What is on computer is a rough draft. Everything is edited each time and directed at the specific proposal."

The brochure should be scannable — able to be “read” in a minute — yet also able to function on several levels. This probably applies to “cold-call” and juried situations more than proposals for specific projects, but the principle still applies: keep the writing short and to the point, the graphics simple and clear. Still, proposals and brochures don’t have to be simplistic. While one can leaf through Tim Girvin’s brochure for Olson Walker and quickly get a sense of the firm’s work by looking at photographs and skimming captions, one can also read at greater depth the written philosophizing of the partners or sketches and plans of illustrated buildings.

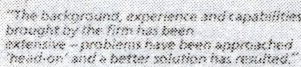
ARC's project sheets do things differently. Whereas the big-time full-color brochures of Zimmer Gunsul Frasca and The NBBJ Group come on strong with, at most, a couple beautiful color photos for an overall, but distant view of a building, ARC uses photos to "zero in on a detail," according to David Rutherford. Their project sheets try to give a sense of the whole building by showing pieces: elevations, plans, photos, sketches. Rutherford also likes the idea of using *New Yorker*-like illustrations taken from early sketches of a building, to insert in the middle of a paragraph or scatter on a page. This is appealing to an architect undoubtedly, but it seems likely that many clients wouldn't be

Again, each proposal should speak to clients and their needs. Clients can't be expected to make the connections. What they are expected to see should be made very clear and on several levels — both through subtle means and by hitting them over the head with it.

At the very least, know the competition's brochures and be able to compete. It's very important for a firm to be able to see its brochure in relation to everyone else's. RFP responses on public jobs are a part of the public record. More firms ought to use the opportunity to gauge how their proposals compare with those of their competition. Architects should ask clients to comment on their brochures and proposals to find out what is and is not being conveyed. Perhaps the client can suggest another firm's brochure as a model. And although many architects are hesitant to ask, a request for an exchange of brochures between firms will seldom be turned down. A library of other firms' brochures is a good source of ideas.

If at all possible, hire a graphic designer. A good graphic designer will probably play psychologist to partners and project managers, doing a lot of investigation into the firm, its targeted market, and the competition's brochures. A graphic designer is much more "in tune" with the various signals and subtle meanings of different graphic styles and formats. Ellen Ziegler comments: "It was a battle over the last five years to convince architects that they don't know graphic design. They think they can design their own 'identities.' It's the same thing as a client coming to an architect and saying, 'I have designed a house — can you draw it up?' It's very difficult for anyone in a design profession to be a client. . . . Until architects perceived that their competition was doing it, they wouldn't hire graphic designers themselves. Now there's a lot of competition."

Mark Ashley, in charge of ARCADE's production, is a marketing and promotional writer for The Bumgardner Architects.



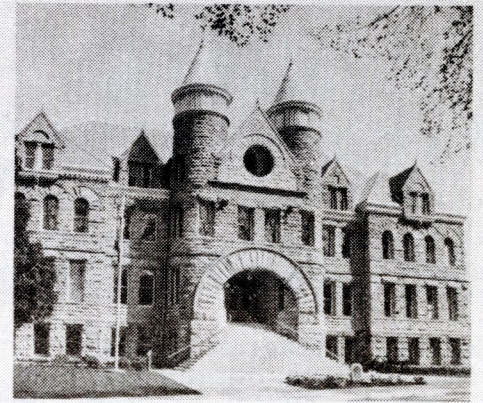
Laurent Stiller
 President and CEO
 Laurent Stiller and Laurent Stiller

The Callison Partnership tried to work with several graphic designers to arrive at a brochure that pleased the partners. Finally, the firm decided to select a graphic designer in an unusual and enlightened way: a closed competition. Callison paid three graphic design firms to come up with ideas, make a presentation, and present a budget. At left, two typical pages from the full-color Callison brochure, designed by Ellen Ziegler. Callison's proposal format, letterhead, and other graphic materials are coordinated with the brochure for a consistent look.

Tonkin/Koch/Architects' proposal pages were designed to avoid graphic fashion, in keeping with the firm's architectural design approach. Staff member Phil Schmidt developed a strict grid-system for a consistent format. The letterhead and proposal covers coordinate graphically with the black and white offset litho project pages, one of which is shown at right. The systematized proposal takes half a day to assemble and send out.

OLD CAPITOL BUILDING

Exterior Renovation & Repair



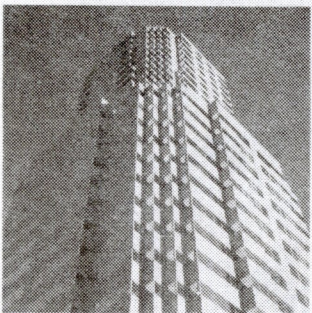
The exterior renovation of the Old Capitol Building involved the building's structural system, masonry, and exterior finish.

- Cleaning and Repairing the Old Capitol's exterior finish.
- Replacing the exterior finish on the Old Capitol's exterior finish.
- Replacing the exterior finish on the Old Capitol's exterior finish.
- Replacing the exterior finish on the Old Capitol's exterior finish.

The exterior renovation of the Old Capitol Building involved the building's structural system, masonry, and exterior finish.



The embossed and gilded firm name on the blue box folder contains the unbound full-color project pages in the Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership brochure, at left. Lavish and eye-catching color photography is bound to impress.



In developing the design for Olson Walker Architects' brochure, graphic designer Tim Girvin proposed two alternatives: a brochure which would fold out to form a large structure, and one in a traditional style of Japanese "Orihon" binding. The latter approach became the 11" x 15' Olson Walker brochure, accordion pleated and bound in a box. Tim Girvin says of graphic designers, "We come from a very different kind of design (than architects). We don't really concern ourselves with whether our brochures will support 3,000 pounds on the corners. We're more concerned with coming up with an expression of the firm that really sells."



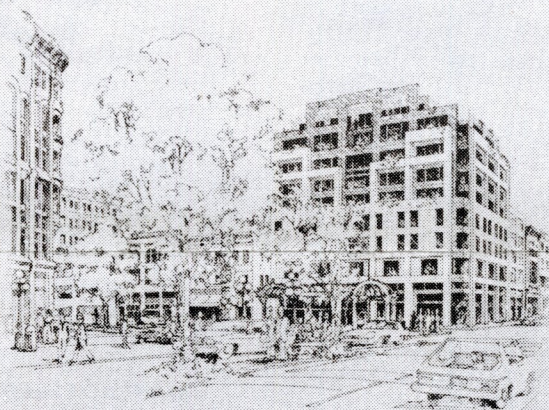
Hillside Court
Seattle 1982

This modern apartment complex is located in the Hillside Court urban renewal project in downtown Seattle. It features a unique design with a central courtyard and a variety of apartment units.



The materials, the structure of the building and the shape of the building are all important. The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy.

The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.



Olympic Block
Pioneer Square, Seattle 1982

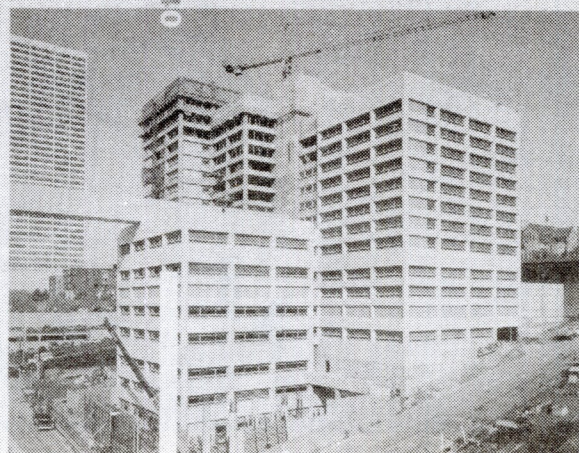
The Olympic Block is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.

We're interested in the design of the building and the shape of the building. The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy.

The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.

King County Jail Correctional Facilities

Seattle, Washington



The King County Jail Correctional Facilities are a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. They feature a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes them a standout in the city.

The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.



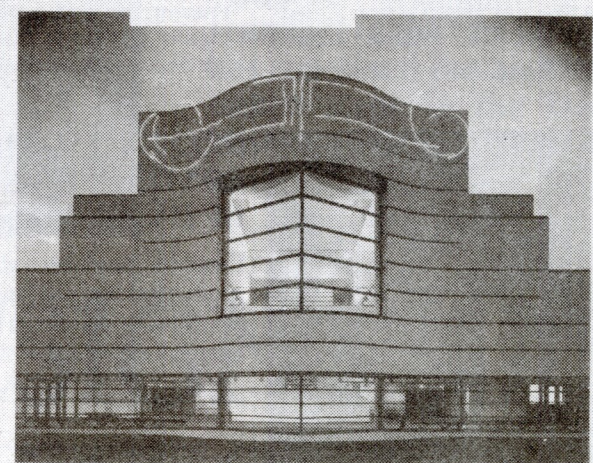
Criminal Justice Architecture

Bagley Wright Theatre at Seattle Center

Seattle, Washington



Public Assembly Architecture



The Bagley Wright Theatre is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.

The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.

The building is a unique expression of the firm's design philosophy. It features a variety of materials and a unique structure that makes it a standout in the city.

The NBBJ Group's newest brochure celebrates the large firm's fortieth anniversary with some punchy graphic acrobatics and the numeral "40" cavorting on every color page. The firm's project sheets and proposal pages will be redesigned to achieve the same graphic bounce. At right, two pages of the NBBJ brochure, designed by staff graphic designer Chris Spivey.

40

WASHINGTON ARCHITECTS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Washington Architects for Social Responsibility (WASR) is a chapter of Architects, Designers, Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR), a national organization of architects, related professionals, and students. Originally established to develop solutions to problems affecting the quality of life in our communities, ADPSR's primary goal is to mobilize the profession to assist in finding means to end the development, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons.

Since its establishment in 1983, the Seattle-based WASR has sponsored public lectures and meetings, inviting spokespersons from organizations such as Physicians for Social Responsibility, Ground Zero Center for Non-Violent Action, and Performers and Artists for Nuclear Disarmament. Congressman Mike Lowry and State Representative Al Williams also have spoken on and initiated discussion of the military, political, and economic aspects of the arms race. WASR sponsored six Town Meetings during Target Seattle week in the fall of 1983 and also was involved in the Northwest Peace Festival. A Graphics Assistance Program was established in the spring of 1983, whereby members of WASR donated their time and talents to produce posters and brochures for other Peace groups in the area.

Presently, WASR's primary focus is the Peace Park Project. In close cooperation with Ploughshares, the program, schedule, and statement of purpose are being defined in a brochure to be published and distributed to potential project sponsors and Advisory Board members. Participation in the Peace Park Project will continue to be a primary focus for WASR throughout 1985. Lectures and meetings are also planned for the coming year and will be announced to members and students through the WASR mailing list. Those interested in becoming members of WASR/ADPSR or in planning and participating in these lectures and discussions are asked to contact WASR by mailing their inquiries to:

Washington Architects
for Social Responsibility
Post Office Box 131
Pike Place Station
Seattle, WA 98101

—Mauri Tamarin

The Washington Architects for Social Responsibility (WASR) and Ploughshares, an organization of former Peace Corps volunteers, have announced plans for a Peace Park Project involving the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Peace Park Project results from a growing feeling of urgency and awareness that there is a need for group action aimed at increasing Soviet/U.S. communication and understanding.

The philosophy behind the Peace Park Project is based on the assumption that mutual agreement and joint action by the United States and the Soviet Union can prevent nuclear war resulting from miscalculation or accident, and from the spread of nuclear weapons to unstable government and terrorist groups. To achieve mutual security, the super powers must conquer the mutual fear and mistrust that is the fuel and the consequence of an unwinnable arms race. The Peace Park Project is designed to lessen that fear and mistrust by increasing understanding and by creating a symbolic statement of respect and common humanity.

A detailed proposal has been presented to the Soviet government describing the concept behind the Peace Park and outlining the major steps to bring it to fruition. The next step is for the USSR government to issue a formal statement of support and to participate in discussions to identify an appropriate site.

Upon commitment of a site, a nationwide design competition will be conducted. A jury of distinguished U.S. and Soviet architects, landscape architects, and planners will select a winning design, which will then be refined by the designers into technical drawings. A construction team of U.S. Peace Park volunteers will be organized and trained and the necessary equipment and materials collected. The construction team will build the park in the Soviet Union. The park will then be presented to the Soviet people in a public ceremony. It has been estimated that the project will take approximately 26 months to complete, culminating in the park's construction, tentatively scheduled for the summer of 1986.

Perhaps the best statement of the ideology behind the Peace Park Project can be found in the writings of Dr. Louis Thomas, Chancellor of the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, when he says:

... It seems to me that the greatest danger lies in the easy assumption by each government that the people in charge of the military policy in any adversary government are not genuine human beings. We make this assumption about the Russians all the time, and I have no doubt that they hold the same belief about us. We know ourselves, of course, and take ourselves on faith: who among us would think of sending off a cluster of missiles to do a million times more damage to a foreign country than was done at Hiroshima, for any reason? None of us, we would all affirm. But, there are those people on the "other side" who do not think as we do, we think.

Arthur Rice

Arthur Rice is an assistant professor of landscape architecture at the University of Washington and a member of the Washington Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility.



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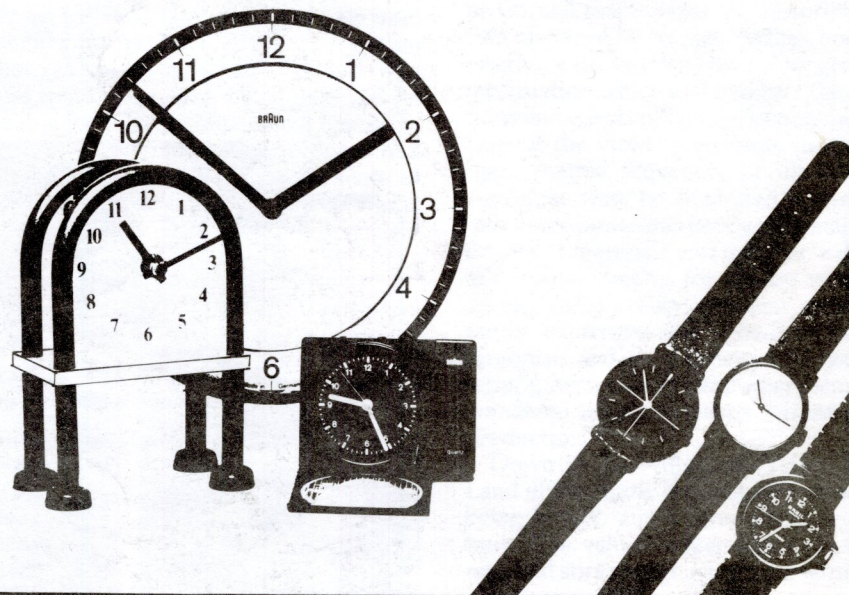
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