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A Look Back...
Victoria Reed

Corrections: In my article New Talent: Where is the Next Generation? (ARCADE 23.3, September 2006) the Broadner Gardens Community building authorship was incorrectly attributed. This project was designed by architect Trent Coehlo, and should be fully attributed to him. In 2003 the building was given a Seattle Chapter AIA Honor Award Citation, and its 5.6KW integrated photovoltaic array continues to annually produce more power than the building uses.

Further, in attempting to credit several firms and individuals considered but not included in the same article, I misspelled Rob-Alessandro's name. The correct spelling is Alessandri. Is this an example of the axiom that no good deed goes unpunished?
-David Spiker
Letter to the Editor

In Response to: Goeden Dog Friends of ARCADE (25.1)
Lucky Mr. van der Veen, spending six summer weeks in the land of the high water table. I hear the summer was tropical this year. I spent three months this spring in s’-Hertogenbosch, at the European Ceramics Work Centre, east of Rotterdam with cold weather systems rolling in off the North Sea and out of the Russian plains. Hail in late May is a Rocky Mountain phenomenon, not something expected in a maritime temperate country. Weather aside, Mr. van der Veen makes important points, but there are some interesting issues right under the surface:

1 The Land

We all know the story of the thumb in the dike. The Dutch cultural DNA is formed living at or below sea level. The force of the North Sea demands the cooperative efforts of the larger collective. In the US, the boy with the thumb would be the individual hero—the cowboy riding into the sunset. In the Netherlands, he is the extension of the cultural organism. In the Netherlands individual expression occurs within a context of national support. Maybe this is why Droog Design, Arnout Visser, AMA and others are so powerful in their innovation and thinking.

2 Money, Markets and the Public Realm

The Dutch have historically pursued innovative public funding for infrastructure and market structures. Amsterdam is the home of the first European stock exchange to include a futures market—you think the dot-com run-up was wild, think about betting on a sailing ship coming from China, or tulips. By the late 1660s Dutch towns used the sale of annuities backed by statistically accurate actuarial information to finance infrastructure. The roots of actuarial evaluation are in the laws of probability as conceived by Galileo in the mid 1640s. That is a pretty quick R&D cycle, but why should you care? I posit that the exceptional transportation system and the high quality of the public realm is in part the result of applying smart new methods of financing. We are in the middle of a 30-year conversation about tax increment financing as we wait for the “Big One” to drop Seattle’s seawall, the viaduct and everything east to Western Avenue. The Dutch would shake their heads in amazement. This is another part of the Dutch cultural DNA.

3 The Zone of Excellence

Jet Meus, a national treasure in ceramics, advised me one day following the failure of a prototype, “You are in the zone of excellence—it has failed.” What a concept! The Dutch joke about being practical, but this practical analytical approach is followed by wild, humorous and profoundly innovative ideas. Why is this important? At the core, you do the research, you test ideas and then you implement—you act. You are practical but inventive. In the case of Seattle, you would build a tunnel replacing the Viaduct, you would lid as much as you can, and you would implement a public private partnership to complete the lid with an extension of the Market fabric down to the water. The idea here is to do your homework, but act—your future is walking away as you pluck navel lint, griping about imperfection.

4 Colonialism and the World as Your Oyster

You know the history of the Dutch East India Company and colonialism. This culture is confident and engaged in the world. Everyone knows multiple languages, reads broadly and is generally curious. While small and soggy, this is a nation of exporters of ideas and commerce in everything from architecture, finance and design to submersible boats. (See Breeda’s Dockwise ships in Tacoma.) Get out of the way and pay attention. The Dutch are a force of nature.

5 Privatization

This is a big issue in the Dutch future to watch. The debate around a proposal to privatize national rail systems is underway. This system is the backbone of the country. If a train is later than 3 minutes, there is an announced apology and good information. Can you imagine this from Alaska Airlines or METRO?

Why should this biased view be of interest to anyone in the Northwest? We are the products in part of our comfortable context. The Netherlands offers an alternative view of the world, and I thoroughly enjoy the politically incorrect, diligent, humorous, action-focused approach. The Zone of Excellence is cool.

Sincerely,
Barbara Swift
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Reflections of an Archivist

Last summer I was asked to create a list documenting every article written for ARCADE. I sifted through 25 years of magazines, page by page. When I finished the project, not only had I successfully compiled data concerning over 1200 articles into one impeccably organized and stunningly color coordinated spreadsheet (it was magnificent), but in the process, I stumbled upon several universal truths:

We all like to look at pretty things, interesting things, dangerous, seductive, sexy things. Things that make us feel a bit more blue than we really are. The earliest issues of ARCADE were concerned with creative page design; while this made for a rather mundane visual experience, there was comfort in the read. I knew where to find the title, page number, author. What font to expect, etc. It was like coming home to someone I didn't like very much but knew wasn't going to screw me over. Then...then—I met Volume 17.1. No, the images, type and color weren't anything new, but the way these things were used! A phrase would sink over a corner—In a crease, up an edge, the font impossibly petite, forcing me to get as close as possible to the paper, to the words, in an audaciously welcomed invasion of space. At other times, the type filled the page to a degree of utter intensity.

We are at the brink of reasonable margin, threatening to spill over in a great wave of words straight into the un-page of my trembling hands. Grr. It was exciting. But alas, it was all for naught. As I went about my assignments, I found myself increasingly frustrated. Where the % is the page number? The author? Who wrote the article? Tell me who wrote it! Told me! I realized that what I really wanted was to sit down and to get to know the issue, the past, present and dreams for the fut, to get as close as possible to the paper, to the words, in an audaciously welcomed invasion of space. At other times, the type filled the page to a degree of utter intensity.

Magazines are alive. Yes, they are. They are organic entities, growing and changing and learning just like you and I. As I compiled my list of articles, I realized I wasn't thumbing through pages—I was perusing through a life. I gorged with wonder upon the first issue, sifting through things with messy faces and scraped knees, crying, singing to make a noise, a voice, a space.

A life. I live in the shift into adolescence, the growth in pages. In both breadth and depth of subject matter, the change in format, the shift from personal style the build by indication. If you can contain a transcript titled "What is Seattle's Problem?" and of course, the troubled years there are obvious. I am where we are now. ARCADE is 25. Its sense of self is manifest, its inertia of idealism has merged with reality's rock, but still it grows. It expands, it craves self improvement, world improvement, to make an impact that shakes and breaks and creates.

Erin Kemig
Bring on the butterfly roofs, brackets and brises soleils: 2006 AIA Honor Awards night in Seattle

Clair Enlow

On Monday night, November 6th, 700 architects and others came to the de facto temple of design awards, McCaw Hall, seeking recognition or celebrating the greater glory of Northwest architecture.

Presiding on stage were moderator Daniel Friedman, incoming Dean of the University of Washington College of Architecture and Urban Planning, with jurors Ed Feiner, [SOM, Washington DC], Margaret Helfand (Helfand Architecture, New York), and James Timberlake, (KieranTimberlake, Philadelphia). The AIA Seattle-sponsored event was chaired by Steve McConnell of NBBJ.

There were no sermonettes on practice, art or regionalism from the jury that night, as there have been in previous years. But unlike some previous years, the panel seemed genuinely impressed and even moved by what they saw, and offered cogent and convincing responses.

It was a very satisfying package—13 awards in all. There was a kind of natural balance between the houses and the rest. Houses, because that is where bold ideas can be tried and perfected. The others, arguably, are the project types that matter the most.

And the houses were moving indeed. Meadow Creek House in North Seattle by Eggleston Farkas Architects (Merit Award) was presented as “a bento box for living—so refined it makes you want to cry.” According to the jury’s onstage comments, Cutler Anderson Architects’ Wang Eckles Residence in Hawaii is serenity itself, a symphony of lightness and openness (also a Merit Award). Zig Zag House (with eponymous plan) by David Coleman/Architecture also won the jury’s affections (Commendation).

Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen—along with Miller/Hull—reliably seduces jurors with visions of Northwest modernism. This year, OSKA has produced another jewel of a cabin, a simple vernacular shape with open fireplace, in a natural setting near Skykomish. Also with a Merit Award is “Delta Shelter” in Wintrop, a tall box that opens to the surrounding scenery, yet rigidly fends off the weather like “an industrial item in the landscape.”

Miller/Hull received a Merit Award for a very successful recaptulation of Seattle’s 1210 East Union: 156 West Superior. Perhaps this new mid-rise infill typology has found its correct scale in Chicago.

With its muscular cross-bracing combined with frontal transparency, it was deemed “urban and urbanite by the jury.”

Mithun was recognized for their not yet built Home Plate, a large, mixed-use project planned for the underused land between Safeco Field and the waterfront. And Bohlin Cywinski Jackson garnered a commendation for the Ballard Library, with its richly topographical green roof and transparent walls.

LMN came away with three projects recognized, a coup that I can’t remember seeing before in over a decade of awards programs. LMN keeps reinventing the big box (convention centers) by riffing on perceptions of surface, light and pattern. In this groove, the jury awarded a commendation to the Duke Energy Center, Cincinnati, with its panoply of reflective brises soleil and open structure. There were also two Merit Awards for LMN, each for public arts venues connecting college to street: the McIntyre Hall Performing Arts and Conference Center for Skagit College in Mt. Vernon, and Seattle University’s Lee Center for the Arts.

The big winner that night—and a surprise one at that—was Mahlum Architects. Mahlum delivered two winning feats of design this year—projects of such unlikely contrast that the jury remarked upon their great surprise to find they were submitted by the same firm. One was an as-yet-unnamed building in Nome, a heroic concept both massive and sharply rectilinear, but chiseled into human scale and connected to the town by a spectacularly straight walkway. The other was Benjamin Franklin School in Kirkland, equally striking for its modesty and its aura of effortless, corridor-free openness.

The school was given the only Honor Award of the evening.

There is always some thematic padding for these events. This year was no exception, with a series of presentations based on Pecha Kucha, a Tokyo-based forum (originating at Klein Dytham Architecture) intended to reach across design disciplines. The highlight was a slide series of dream-like, pointillist pencil drawings, presented by artist Li Tao, that blur the perception of object and field, surface and space.

As in every program, there were lots of good projects in which architects were doing what they do best. As the program concluded, Friedman provided his own homage to Northwest architecture, beginning with a long list of features that began with “expressed structural” and ended with “no disturbance of the conventional relationship between structure and enclosure.” In between were splisheds, brackets, butterfly roofs, and brises soleil. “I’ve never seen this done better anywhere than by Northwest architects,” he said.

Clair Enlow writes about architecture, urban design, planning and landscape architecture. She is currently the associate director of the School of Architecture at the University of Oregon.
(We Decided To Let Them Say “We Are Convinced” Twice. It was More Convincing This Way.)

A project by Walid Raad

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The temporary “architectural double” of Hill’s mansion was among the most powerful installations of conceptual art in the Northwest, not because of its size, but for the questions it successfully raised about the nature of place, architecture, regional culture and, of course, art itself.

When I was teaching architectural design, people would often ask how I liked it. I replied truthfully that working with “good” students was like coming out of a therapy session—questions were raised, solutions discussed, and everyone knew more and felt better than when they went in. After working with “bad” students, however, I admitted being desperately in need of the local mental health hotline. With that analogy, teaching Annie Han and Dan Mihalyo many years ago was like having Carl Jung himself take a look under the hood; both were possessed of exceptional intelligence and design skills, fuelled by a compelling curiosity that pushed them beyond normal boundaries of building design. While many of us activated these qualities as students, the exigencies of paying the ever-increasing rent lead most architecture graduates into safer territories of design. Not so Annie and Dan, who for the past nine years have operated together as Lead Pencil Studio in Seattle, mixing installations with architectural design at a variety of scales.

One of their largest projects to date—Maryhill Double, weighing in at 6,000 square feet—was erected on the Oregon side of the Columbia Gorge this summer and fall. The eponymous piece—constructed about a mile south of its progenitor—was a full-size volumetric replica made of scaffolding and construction netting reflecting the building across the Gorge that houses the Maryhill Museum of Art.

As most Northwest residents know, Sam Hill began construction of the original Maryhill around 1914 on several thousand acres of land. Hill, a study in paradox—wanted to establish a Quaker community, keep his wife in this desolate area (she left after six months and never returned), was obsessed with the nascent technology of the motor car, constructed the Northwest’s first 3.6 miles of demonstration pavement on his property, turned his unfinished mansion into an art museum, built a full-size concrete replica of Stonehenge, erected the Peace Arch at the Canadian border crossing in Blaine, and was somehow involved with the Queen of Romania, among other notable women.

The temporary “architectural double” of Hill’s mansion was among the most powerful installations of conceptual art in the Northwest, not because of its size, but for the questions it successfully raised about the nature of place, architecture, regional culture and, of course, art itself. Conceptual art is an odd beast, in that its attributes and purposes are so varied and wide-ranging, it’s nearly impossible to pin down. Often, the quality of the “thing” that the art is of minimal consequence, and only the issues it provokes become, as it were, the “art.” Here, both components were fully engaged, a distinct physical presence in a very real and particular landscape, and a theoretical presence related to the so-called original. Like the work of Rachel Whiteread in the mid-nineties, sculptures that are buildings yet not buildings hold a particular fascination for us—it’s easy for us to fill in from our own imaginations.

This lightweight architectural inversion was a template for numerous ideas; for example, the hollow emptiness within the scaffolding of the Double pointed out identical qualities in the absurd hollow shell of the historicist architecture of the Maryhill mansion. Like the temporary Double, Hill’s concrete construction is itself an empty double of some Renaissance fantasy remote from either his or our own place or time. And in the same way that Lead Pencil’s Oregon doppelganger bears no direct relationship to the powerful topography it rests on, so does the “original” building ignore its context. The faux Renaissance box is oblivious to the physical intensity of the Gorge. Carried further, the Double—as an art object whose only purpose is a tourist destination—drives home the original structure’s continuing function as an artificially supported theme park in the midst of an agrarian landscape. And so on.

In a powerful environment like this section of the Columbia Gorge, anything looks good. I once collaborated on an art installation there, a proposal for a gigantic black box perched on the edge of the cliff. A truly meaningless and completely self-Referential object, but of course the presentation was stunning with a montage of the Gorge in the background. That said, Lead Pencil Studio, by metaphorically attaching their object to the Maryhill object building, demonstrated the power of conceptual art at its best, rousing us from our daily torpor to think, to question, and to become more aware of our world. That’s all the therapy I’ll ever need.

1 The Maryhill Museum of Art
2 Maryhill Double

photos courtesy of Lead Pencil Studio

JM Cava is an architect in Portland, where he teaches, writes, and designs buildings and gardens.
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Art Matters

Vito Acconci, Mur Island, Graz, Austria, 2003
The structure is an organic fusion of shell-shaped spaces that invite one to explore the patterns, shape and motion of water within the urban center of Graz.

Jumpei Osada, Witness Trees, Seattle, WA, 2004
Osada symbolically morphs wooden posts in downtown Ballard into the “trees” they once were, imbued with cultural, geographical and archeological subtleties.

Buster Simpson, Growing Vine Street, Seattle, WA, 1997 (ongoing)
This project presents an artificial solution to issues of stormwater runoff in the urban fabric. Working collaboratively with architects, residents, neighbors and water from various sources, Simpson provided a masterful artwork that benefits the city and its residents daily.

Herbert Bayer, Earthworks Park, Kent, WA, 1992
One of the first artworks to address environmental degradation, Bayer’s sculptural and functional landscape set the stage for future artists to work in this way.

Alice Adams, Sonya Ishii, Jack Mackin, Vicki Scari and others, Downtown Seattle Bus Tunnel, Seattle, WA, 1990
The art for the tunnel is the model for incorporating art into tunnels, and a great example of collaboration across disciplines. The art program touched almost every visible element of the tunnel, and artists were included in most of the tunnel’s design.

Frank Gehry, Guggenheim, Bilbao, Spain, 1997
This building piece, channels, analyzers and renders space with a purely sculptural technique. Its iconography has brilliantly transformed the world’s image of the Basque people and their capital city.

Anish Kapoor, Cloud Gate, Chicago, IL, 2005
This amazing work creates a new image for an established city. Its shape and reflectivity captivates people, drawing them close and revealing the entire skyline at once.
We all possess the basic human need to explore and, at least, an idle curiosity about the place where we each stand. Too often our need to explore is acted out in detriment to the landscapes we desire. Public artists are graced with the power to draw attention to and raise awareness of our surroundings.

*Art Matters* asked four artists and a curator to identity five works of art in public places, completed in the last 25 years, that resonate with them. These selections are not intended to be a “top 25” list, but instead a snapshot of the ideas that have captured artists’ imagination from 1981 to 2006.

### Ann Hamilton, EW Floor, Central Library, Seattle, WA, 2005

The 7,200-square-foot floor in the Literacy, ESL, and World Languages (EW) section of the Central Library was the first sentences in ten languages, written on books found in that part of the library. The words are represented as if they were lines of wooden type on a printing press. As dirt collects in the grooves the type appears brushed by ink.

### Patricia Johansson, Fair Park Lagoon, Dallas, TX, 1995

Johansson transformed a polluted, dangerous obstruction of a waterway into a healthy, highly aesthetic ecosystem, intertwining land and water.

### Dan Corson, Electric Gallery, Seattle, WA, 2002 (ongoing)

As a public city light artists-in-residence, Corson used new technologies of computer image printing to develop a platform for artists to create temporary 100 x 10 artworks. This giant "murial" masks an electrical substation, reinvigorating an otherwise "dead" space with images that provoke thought, visual beauty and an uncompromising "art" moment to passersby.

### Tim Hawkinson, Bear, University of California, Stuart Collection, San Diego, CA, 2005

*photo: Philipp Scholz Rittermann*

Bear is a playful teddy constructed out of giant boulders. Hawkinson's process demands complex and virtually impossible work of himself and his assistants to create a bearskin that, in the end, is a sculpture and a moment to be remembered.

### Lorna Jordan, Waterworks Gardens, Renton, WA, 1996

The scale and conception of this series of outdoor rooms redefines boundaries traditionally associated with art in the environment.
Art Matters

Suzanne Lacy, The Crystal Quilt, Minneapolis, MN, 1987 (Performance)
Simultaneously broadcast on public television, this public performance incorporated 150 women over the age of 60, in a bittersweet affirmation of the power and untapped potential of the elderly. The work freely blended music, spoken word, visual art, video, political action, sociology and feminism.

Maya Lin, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, DC, 1982
Lin transformed the public's view of what a memorial is by creating a powerful, lasting symbol to honor the "everyman." Rather than treating war as heroic through portrayal of narrative figures, she created a "container" for the country's collective grief.

Alex Schawender, Sunflower Walls, Tacoma Trade and Convention Center, WA, 2004
As the role of the artist continues to evolve in public space, notions of that space will be challenged. Here a commonplace ritual is reconsidered through the unexpected happening of art in a public restroom.

Lawrence Weiner, NYC Manhole Covers, New York, NY, 2000
The text on Weiner's cast iron manhole covers reads, IN DIRECT LINE WITH ANOTHER & THE NEXT. The (sculpture) work comments on the walking patterns and gaze of the pedestrian, and provides an animated definition of gridlock.

David Mahler, Washington State Centennial Bell Garden, Seattle, WA, 1989
Mahler, a composer, collected a bell from each of Washington's 39 counties, installed them along the facade of the convention center, and then composed "ringing" to celebrate their diversity in sound and tunefulness.

James Turrell, Roden Crater Project, 1978 (ongoing), northern Arizona
In its vast scale, comprehensive iconography and emphasis on the experience of the individual viewer, James Turrell's earthwork complex defines a distinctive category of permanent public art—one that stipulates a pilgrimage...and rewards it in this lifetime.
in a fishpond, Beijing, China, 1997 (performance)

In Chinese tradition a fish symbolizes sex and water is the source of life. This work expresses water as a social cosmology. Participants raised the water level of the pond one half-meter—"a sight-action revealing the dynamic power of togetherness.

Alexis Smith, Snaka Patu, University of California, Stuart Collection, San Diego, CA, 1992

This inventive work knits together a vast indoor/outdoor space, creating a spectacular occasion of the viewer's presence. It represents a beautiful negotiation between the popular and poetic.

Kate Krisson & Max Ziegler, Camouflaged History, Spoleto Arts Festival USA, Charleston, SC, 1991

The artists painted a home outside of Charleston's historic district in a camouflage pattern using 72 commercial colors deemed "authentic" by the Charleston Historic Society, such as "confederate uniform gray" and "iron scrollwork black."

Superflex, Biogas in Africa, Rural Tanzania, 1997

This Danish collective sustains and harvests what is disappearing from the natural environment. The superproduced biogas balloons which the local population use to produce fuel from human and animal excrement. The gas units can run a gas lamp and support gas cooking for a family of up to ten members.

Clark Wiegman, Tree, Federal Way, WA, 2006

Wiegman deconstructs a Pacific Northwest icon and calls into question our systematic tendencies toward natural resources.

Brian Tolle, Irish Hunger Memorial, New York, NY, 2002

This work asks the viewers to consider the historical landscape of hunger in a contemporary context.

Contributors:

Lisa C. Brown is a Chief Curator of the Henry Art Gallery and has a particular interest in contemporary art that pushes boundaries and conceptual ideas.

Stuart Keeley is an artist and independent curator of public space who combines work in the public realm with ephemeral studio works and conceptual interventions.

Perri Lynch explores the relationship between human perception and sense of place through public art, live performance and studio work.

Norie Sato has been creating works of art in the public realm around the country for over 25 years.

Ellen Sollod creates large-scale site-based works and intimate works for an audience of one. Social, political, historical and environmental conditions inform her work.
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or twenty-five years ARCADE has provided a public space for the critical exploration of architecture and design. From its base in Seattle the magazine has opened up issues of scrutiny and debate, has published individual portfolios, and has drawn our attention to the art and contestation generated by design practices. During that time the magazine has provided an idiosyncratic encyclopedia on architectural and design topics compelling to a region with its own particular history, and photography has deftly drafted, illustrated and diagrammed the conversations.

The special anniversary edition, this feature celebrates the visual and offers a gift of contemplation: the possibilities of architecture as idea, typography and attitude that photography—its medium literally born in silver—capably describes. Although much has changed about the photographic object with the advent of digital technologies, the symbiotic relationship of architecture and photography persists. It is aptly rendered in tared planarities and open volumes: the architectural fact clearly delineated for study in photography's continuous tone and descriptive efficacy.

The photographic works in this section were selected by ARCADE's editor Kelly Walker. As a group they constitute a varied portfolio that allows the viewer to wander through different structures and places: each one outlines or implies an idea of architecture, sometimes specific and sometimes barely, suggestively. Many show little or no architecture; they suggest human construction, rather: human activity. The role of landscape is the generation of architecture, and of photography as the drawing of architecture where none exists, is a lovely gesture the portfolio makes; in the Northwest where the landscape is the foundational, even ar, experience for most citizens and visitors. This group of photographs acknowledges its location even as it celebrates photographers and architecture both familiar and far.

Robert Polidori's image of the enclosed courtyard at the British Museum designed by Norman Foster captures both a pure abstraction whose agency allows nature to become learning and the sensual appeal of the lacy canopy structure that, strangely, uncovers a new interior space with its channeling of light. Paul Warehol's image of New York City from the deck of the Rockefeller Center cooly reminds us just how much structure and convention informs our touristic looking. The images of the Seattle Art Museum addition by Lara Swimmer document the construction of this new civic project; each of the four interiors contains a plane as evident as a canvas awaiting the first brushstroke. Michael Burns, a six-foot, 210-pound pitcher, independent filmmaker, soccer player, actor, or agent of "disambiguation"—depending on how you Google him—has, in a life's project of images, created a visual landscape architecture that iterates the rational organization of space with structure. The figures in Stephen Shore's "vernacular landscapes" grid out space in a premonition of architectural formation, while Tony Law's meticulous photograph of a Beijing shopping street shows a swelling architecture and a scale of advertising that dwarfs the people below, and reminds us of the image world that surrounds and suspends most urban dwellers. The final image, by Dutch photographer and graphic artist Monica Schookkenbroek, portrays a "natural landscape in the Netherlands" in which nature, in the trees' vertical forms, meters the artificial feature of the canal.

In the best architectural photograph structure is revealed as idea, an animating measure of human relationship to place. Over the last twenty-five years, photography has enlivened the pages of ARCADE, illuminated the hypotheses of its writers, and informed and inspired its readers. While this portfolio of images is but one particular capsule view, the ideas contained in it are the potential germ of intellectual and actual productions for the next twenty-five years.

**Happy Anniversary.**

Sheryl Conkelton

Sheryl Conkelton is director of Exhibitions and Public Programs at Tyler School of Art, a program that includes the Temple Gallery in Old City, Philadelphia.

All photographs courtesy of the photographers and the Aperture Foundation for Stephen Shore.
Paul Warchol

Top of the Rock Observation deck at Rockefeller Center
Gehry Shopfhard Associates NYC
House in New Mexico by Steven Holl
Steven Holl Architects NYC
Seattle Art Museum Expansion
Allied Works
Feature: Silver Anniversary

1. Northwest Gallery, Modern and Contemporary
2. African Galleries, fourth floor
3. Connection to Venturi, north to south building
4. Ancient Art Galleries, fourth floor
Michael Burns

Landscape Architecture
White Sands, NM, 1983

Seattle Architecture
First & University, 1979

Landscape Architecture
Schuylkill, NV, 1984
Seattle Architecture
Second & Yesler, 1980

Landscape Architecture
Windust, WA, 1983

Seattle Architecture
First & Marion, 1980
Stephen Shore

Merced River, Yosemite National Park
California, August 13, 1979
S. 97, South of Klamath Falls
Oregon, July 21, 1973

West Ninth Avenue, Amarillo
Texas, October 2, 1974

Residio
Texas, February 21, 1975
Tony Law

Chunxi Road
Chengdu, China, 2005
Monica Schokkenbroek

The River Meuse
At the Town of Overasselt, The Netherlands
Landscape Architecture & Site Planning

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F/206.285.0644
www.beltcollins.com
seattle@beltcollins.com
Recently I illustrated a little book explaining (simply) the type of work that is going to be done at a new scientific research center.

Turning neurological and genetic science into simple drawings isn’t simple. Lots of trial and error is involved. Of course none of this appears in the book in the end.

Illustration: Failed (but fun) experiments

BY A FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR CALLED PETER ARKLE, WHO LIVES IN NEW YORK

"UNLESS WE WANT TO DEPICT MASSIVE MUTATIONS IN DNA, THE BASE PAIRS SHOULD ONLY BE: A TO T (OR T TO A) G TO C (OR C TO G)."

"CONCERNING THE HAND: THE CLIENT THOUGHT IT TO BE WAY TOO BIG... PERHAPS REDUCE BY 20%? WHAT DO YOU THINK?"

"IT'S A CUTE IDEA, PETER. THROUGH I THINK THE CLIENT WOULDN'T REALLY GO FOR IT..."

"THE MOUSE HASN'T CONSERVED GENES THAT ALLOW IT TO HAVE WINGS."

"THEY JUST WANT TO CONFIRM THAT YOU DID MAKE THAT STRAND GO AROUND 40 TIMES EXACTLY."

"MOUSE TOO BIG, IT'S SCARY ENOUGH TO A SMALL MOUSE."

"WHY DOES THE SCALE MAKE THE ADULT HUMAN LOOK ONLY IM TALL?"

"AS FOR THE MUTANT FRUIT FLY SLEEPING, THEY WEREN'T TOO Sure ABOUT IT..."

"PROTEIN: LET'S GO SIMPLE ON THIS"

"WHERE DID YOU GET THE REFERENCE FOR THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS? THEY WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT BACK BIT OF THE BUILDING, BEHIND THE TOWER, ACTUALLY BELONGS TO THE LIBRARY."
Have you been watching Project Runway? It's kind of embarrassing, but I can be classified as a hard-core addict—along with most of the design students at the University of Washington. (In case you don't know, Project Runway is a reality show where fifteen fashion designers compete for a chance to show their collection at New York Fashion Week.)

For the students (especially the men) I also think that the appeal was the hip girls who were voted off of the runway (admittedly, most of the clothes are remarkably improved by the proportions of a 6-foot, 110-pound, fresh-faced twenty-something.) But I was wrong. Students don't gossip about the models. They're actually more interested in the brutally candid critiques delivered by a rotating cast of fashion aficionados: Michael Kors, Nina Garcia, Vera Wang, Diane Von Furstenberg, Zac Posen, Francisco Costa and Richard Tyler, to name a few.

Of course, I should have realized that a televised critique would be the draw. After all, what event has more impact on the hearts and minds of young designers? In the university setting, the weekly critique has its own transformative powers. If your work shines, you'll be, however briefly, the belle of the ball. You'll feel the comforting envy of other students. You'll be picked first for team projects. You'll be sought out for private, peer-to-peer counsel.

But what if you wind up on the losing side of the equation? There's always a group (that, well, makes the top 10 percent of any class possible. In the worst case, your creative soul will be crushed by public humiliation. Your motives, logic, visual language and working methods will be questioned and found wanting. Your ideas will be derided as "cliche," "literal" or "obvious." And, you'll have the uphill slog of starting over, behind schedule.

However gripping this may be as entertainment, as someone on the other side of the fence (the critic, rather than the critiqued), I have to believe that human drama isn't the only aspect of a critique that appeals to students. I prefer to believe that design students are drawn to Project Runway because they value what a good critique can be—an active, engaging learning experience.

In a good critique, students have a chance to articulate their ideas and get immediate feedback. The very act of articulation helps students develop more rigorous, in-depth thinking—and subsequently, stronger design solutions. Additionally, critiques give students the opportunity to scrutinize other responses to the same problem. In this way, they experience several alternative approaches and can absorb what works, as well as what to avoid. Most importantly, critiques give students a chance to view their work with a fresh perspective. Often students discover that what they were attempting to communicate is not what others perceive.

Unfortunately the critique method, like any other teaching tool, isn't perfect. Observe the various breakdowns that have occurred on Project Runway:

1. Critics declare that traveling outfit is unsuitable for travel (linen wrinkles). Designer insists that wrinkles are part of the desired look/aesthetic.
2. Critics note that dress construction (long narrow skirt) prevents model from walking. Designer says he loves the dress.
3. Critics observe that designer has failed to complete project (the model and a small dog were to be dressed as a set). Designer states that dog clothes are ridiculous, and that the dog looks better naked.

These examples illustrate the central flaw of the critique method: it's very hard to listen to criticism about your own design work. Students instinctually protect themselves with a range of defensive strategies: they complain about the project parameters/restrictions, attack the taste and persona of the critic, or simply ignore the criticism.

Unfortunately, in order to receive any benefit from critiques, the subject must defy natural inclinations. That is, designers must lower their guards and absorb all input, without protection or argument. It's a bit easier if one prepares in advance by mentally distancing oneself from the work. The goal is to observe the design dispassionately, using objective criteria and rational argument. In fact, if critics would learn to follow similar guidelines (commenting only when they can support their suggestions with reason and logic), critiques might be far more pleasant and productive—albeit, perhaps, less popular on TV.

Karen Cheng is a professor of Visual Communication Design at the University of Washington and the author of Designing Type (Yale University Press, 2006). Karen is also a practicing designer whose work has been recognized and published by the AIGA, Communication Arts, Print, Critique, J.D. Magazine and the American Center for Design.
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Home theater
Whole house audio and video
Customized lighting control
Automated window shade control
Residential computer networks
Audio/Video furniture
The Problem of the House
French Domestic Life and the Rise of Modern Architecture
Alex T. Anderson
Explores a group of designers in France, the architects-décorateurs, who, like Le Corbusier, believed architecture should focus on everyday life and produce housing that is “made for living in.” They envisioned an environment conceived by architects, in which the traditional decorative arts would be replaced with domestic equipment, often standardized and mass-produced, and with works of art selected by the occupants themselves. Alex T. Anderson is associate professor of architecture at the University of Washington.
2006, 240 pages, 97 illustrations $60 cloth

Frank Lloyd Wright’s Palmer House
Grant Hildebrand with Ann Eaton and Leonard K. Eaton
Profiles one of Frank Lloyd Wright’s late houses, and one of his finest, located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The client-architect relationship is a key feature of this story, buttressing the author’s assertion that demanding clients spur architects to do their best creative work. Grant Hildebrand is emeritus professor of architecture and art history at the University of Washington and author of The Wright Space: Pattern and Meaning in Frank Lloyd Wright’s Houses.
January 2007. 120 pages, 65 illustrations, 45 in color $30 paper

Arthur Erickson
Critical Works
Nicholas Olsberg and Ricardo L. Castro
Analyzes Arthur Erickson’s best work and situates it as a distinctive body of ideas within the mainstream of international architecture in the last half of the twentieth century. Nicholas Olsberg draws on Erickson’s own discussion of ideas to present a thoughtful and illuminating reassessment of his most important work.
2006. 208 pages, 226 illustrations, 85 in color $75 cloth

The Seattle Bungalow
People and Houses, 1900–1940
Janet Ore
“Janet Ore’s subject—the origins, marketing, development, and legacy of working-class housing in Seattle—offers an opportunity not only to explore architectural history but to characterize the economic, aesthetic, moral, and social dimensions of such housing.” — Dennis Andersen, co-author of Distant Corner: Seattle Architects and the Legacy of H. H. Richardson
2006. 216 pages, 38 illustrations $24.95 paper
Long before the personal computer paraded itself as the “universal machine,” and present-day product confusion turned a telephone into a camera and a fax machine into the office copier/scanner/printer, the multipurpose Swiss pocketknife crept forward, spaying out the landscape of the post-professional era.

I have donated enough Swiss Army Knives to airport security checkpoints to equip a small regiment of the Swiss Army. When one is confiscated at the departure gate, I buy another upon arrival. The tiny objet is indispensable—with its decidedly non-lethal 1.35” blade, ineffectual nail file with torque-less screwdriver tip, pair of useless manicure scissors, tweezers that don’t tweeze and toothpick I would certainly never put in my mouth—and we all know why. The multipurpose Swiss Army Knife is an emblem, a powerful spring-loaded metaphor for the multiplicity of our modern identity.

As our professional roles have become more specialized, we have tended to trade the versatility of, say, the quill for the productive capacity of the linotype machine. The multipurpose pocket knife may be assembled by robots, but it is a link to an irretrievable past: a time before the Information Age’s devotion to multitasking and the Industrial Age’s division of labor.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 offers historians of design a bifocal view of the pre-industrial world, as it faded into oblivion and the modern world, as its outlines were coming into focus. Visitors to the famous Crystal Palace could see, among its multitude of socio-technical anachronisms, a “Sportsman’s Knife” with no fewer than 87 blades. The proliferation of edge appendages sprouting from this grotesque bit of Victoriana reflected the proliferation of tasks the middle-class Englishman might be called upon to perform in the course of his working day.

With the precedent set, Karl Elsener organized a cooperative venture in 1884 in the Canton of Schwyz, Switzerland. Their business was steel and they called their company Victorinox (a combination of Elsener’s mother’s name, Victoria, and the European designation for “stainless,”inoxable). Today, from its hyper-modern factory in Ibach on the shores of Lake Lucerne, Victorinox turnts around 100 distinct models ranging from my ritualistically confounded seven-function Swiss Army Knife that commands my attention. It portends the end of the classical period of design specialties: “transpo,” “telecom,” “medi-cal,” “lifestyle,” “industrial.” The culture of postmodernity has returned us to the ancien régime of multifunctionality and interoperability that was supposed to have vanished with the Industrial Revolution. Now these old categories will no longer do. Automobile manufacturers are snooping around to find out what’s going on in healthcare and entertainment: furniture designers are worrying about mobile communications; biology is showing up in the curricula of design schools and even among a few of the more venturesome consultancies. Long before the personal computer paraded itself as the “universal machine,” and present-day product confusion turned a telephone into a camera and a fax machine into the office copier/scanner/printer, the multipurpose Swiss pocketknife crept forward, spaying out the landscape of the post-professional era.

The Swiss Army Knife—whether the platinum Série 1, (encrusted with 800 Bonfort diamonds it sells for about $113,000), or the entry-level My First Victorinox (rounded blade and no corkscrew make it perfect for kids)—remains the definitive emblem of an era which has seen us pass from sequential to concurrent careers, where the boundary between home and work has all but vanished, and in which each individual has become the manager of a complex network of barely overlapping social roles (a condition once known as schizophrenia).

The innovators in Ibach can no longer be content to turn out one new combination of blades after another in hopes of sliding into the next, ever-smaller niche. The inevitable trajectory is toward user groups of one—the dream (or nightmare) that has been widely heralded as the coming age of “mass-customization.” Rather than wait for the knife designed for stamp-collecting professors with persistently high cholesterol who bike to work and enjoy sushi, why not let me design it myself over the Internet, and perhaps allow for it to be altered as my needs change? Will Victorinox rise to the challenge? Will its shiny blades remain at the cutting edge of innovation?

Barry Katz is Professor of Humanities and Design at the California College of the Arts and Consulting Professor at Stanford University.

“Sportsman’s Knife,” 1851

SwissMemory™
The Architecture of Happiness
JM Cava

Ever since Vitruvius penned his infamous—and indeterminate—triumvirate essential to create beautiful buildings, deciphering the mysterious alchemy of architectural form has inspired many thousands of pages; how is it that mere assemblies of material can transform into Von Schelling’s “music in space”? Yet after centuries of exploration, we’re no closer to knowing why certain buildings—from cottages to castles—elicited powerful emotional responses, resonating deeply within us and dignifying our world, while others leave no impression or, worse, diminish both ourselves and our habitat. Architecture, we presume, must have a set of rules that determine beauty, for unlike the fine arts it’s tethered to simple constructional facts of life; even Zaha Hadid eventually had to reckon with Newton’s falling apple.

Alain de Botton, a Swiss native living in London, joined the search with his publication this fall of The Architecture of Happiness, whose little derives from Stendhal’s evocative comment, “Beauty is the promise of happiness.” De Botton has published several “essayistic books,” among them Essays In Love (1993) and How Proust Can Change Your Life (1997). His quivery mixture of personal reflection and analysis—indeed, he acknowledges, to Roland Barthes—is here focused on the chaotic mess that is 20th-century architecture, and why there is so little of what we call “beauty” in its wake.

Though not the first book to examine this question, it’s possibly the most thoughtful and intelligent, in part, because de Botton

The CDC has yet to determine how many architects are afflicted with the financially debilitating architecture-book-buying disease, but those of us so affected are familiar with the four basic book types: 1. The Architect’s Monograph—many pictures, plans, and fetishized doodles with few words (excepting Reni); 2. The Typology Monograph—many pictures (of barns or hotels or gnome houses) with many words read by no one; 3. The History-Theory text—many words with blurry black and white pictures to avert frequent narcotic attacks; 4. The Coffee-Table Book—many lavishly produced building porn photos, no plans and a few nonsensical captions. Though no self-respecting architect purchases anything in the latter category, these books can penetrate the best book-screening defenses, smuggled in by well-meaning but ill-informed friends and relatives as birthday or holiday gifts.

But every now and then even the most seasoned bibliophile is fooled by crossover productions defying the stereotype. Pier Luigi Serraino, a San Francisco architect of high intellectual caliber (a Type 3 author) teamed up with Chronicle Books (a Type 4 publisher) to produce an in-depth History-Theory book, cloaked in the garb of a handsomely printed coffee table adornment, NorCalMod: Icons of Northern California Modernism. The outcome of this unusual pairing satisfies the visual faculties with beautifully printed black and white photographs from the mid-century architectural photographers on the West Coast, and stimulates the gray matter with a highly readable text illuminating a forgotten pocket of California’s the 20th Century, in particular on Lewis Mumford’s contentious use of the term “Bay Area Style” epitomized in the press by the restrained vernacular-influenced residences of W. W. Wurster. He rightly points out that this was only one of two major aspects of the region’s modernism. The other—highlighted in this book—was more closely related to the Southern California Case Study modernists like Ellwood, Koenig and Soriano. Confirming this are several detailed interviews with the Bay Area architects, a feature of the book that grounds its theory in everyday practice.

The second journey Serraino undertakes is how photographs influence, or effectively write, the history of architecture. How such images are produced and distributed; how available they become to the press, scholars and public over time can make one building iconic and another extinct. Without funds to archive and index their work, architectural photographs of many buildings vanish from the world forever, for immortality in architectural history is given by the presence and accessibility of these photographs. This is original and thought-provoking material, only touched on elsewhere, to my knowledge, in Beatriz Colomina’s Le Corbusier and Photography.

So when Aunl Esther sends you this book at Christmas, don’t be disappointed by its coffee-table looks—hidden alongside its luscious photographs is a rich history and critical examination of the relationship between the architectural edifice as three-dimensional thing-in-the-world and the photograph as its two-dimensional mask.

Arthur Erickson
Crablal Works
Trevor Boddy

A mess from cover to cover, the colour photography are muddled and the writing is muddled. Given the long lead times and restricted funding for architectural publishing, this is likely to be the last summary of Erickson’s brilliant career to be published while he lives, amplifying the folly of this visually ill-focused and textually too-easily distracted book.

The problems in Arthur Erickson: Critical Works begin with the exhibition co-curators and book co-editors, former Canadian Centre for Architecture director, Nicholas Olsberg, and McGill architecture professor Ricardo Castro. While Erickson’s post-and-beam houses influenced a generation of designers From Alaska to Martin County, this curatorial duo chose to focus solely on Erickson’s large concrete buildings; we are never told just why.

Olsberg’s meandering text lacks focus, falling to frame the work of an architect he clearly admires greatly. He mentions countless un-built minor projects, but his essays slight the downtown Vancouver projects in particular. He dispatches with the McMillan Bloedel tower’s dramatic, unprecedented concrete frame in two paragraphs, and the complex architecture and urbanism of world-famous Robson Square in three. However, Castro’s appaling colour photography in the crucial “Portfolio” section is the book’s biggest calamity. Exterior views of the Helm Umbach house
vision. It’s as if the reader is visiting the author in his Lenoir study—pipe tobacco, leather-bound books, tea—listening with no precise goal, experiencing only an acute awareness of subtle new ways of regarding architecture. De Botton infuses his thinking with a healthy dose of empathy—for buildings and humans—backed by solid research, an intellectual disposition and a simple love of buildings. Though the end result is sometimes reminiscent of a public television special (which it soon will be), the journey is refreshingly open-ended, following Stendhal’s further remark that, “There are as many styles of beauty as there are visions of happiness.”

Unlike other writers covering similar ground, de Botton is no traditionalist or historicist; unabashedly modern buildings are praised with the caveat that contemporary architecture ground itself in modern interpretations of traditional styles, so it can “hold on to our own precedents and regions while drawing on the modern and the universal.” In this, he is closer to Michael Benedikt’s succinct little book of reflection, For an Architecture of Reality, than to Witold Rybczynski’s more sentimental essays in Looking Around or Christopher Alexander’s massive 2,000-page, 15-pound Nature of Order, taking on not just architecture but the entire cosmos. In a tenth of that space and with none of the bombast, de Botton modestly suggests both a diagnosis for our constantly changing architectural tastes—humans generally find beautiful that which they lack in their lives—and a prognosis and cure for today’s architectures—abide by general rules of order such as harmony, simplicity, and refinement, yet “flirt with confusion”—as the German writer Nowalis’ observed, “in a work of art, chaos must shimmer through the veil of order.”

A tremendous range of architectural and aesthetic ground is covered here by de Botton with clarity and grace. This beautifully written book should sit on every architect’s nightstand; a reminder of what it was that once made architecture so important to us, a remembering—for many like a lost dream—of the wonderment and great pleasure that design can bring to our lives.
Richard Henriquez
Selected Works 1964-2005
Trevor Boddy

Richard Henriquez: Selected Works 1964-2005 is an impressive package, featuring buildings ranging from Water Street’s Gaslight Square to New Westminster’s Justice Institute of British Columbia, to such quirky West End condo towers as the Eugenia and Presidio. While bearing the imprint of Douglas & McIntyre, much of the book’s design, layout and colour management were done by Henriquez and his architectural staff. As is true for most of his buildings, the attention to detail here is exemplary. The book’s sumptuous design is an appropriate match to Henriquez’ allusive, symbol-driven buildings and artworks. The only design gaffe here is the two-page spreads that introduce each project. A single photograph of a building like Granville Street’s Sinclair Centre continues across the spine of a book to distorting effect. Smaller, unsplit photographs would have worked better, especially since so many are crucial urban or aerial views, showing designs in their entirety.

This is a very personal book, about the work and persona of Richard Henriquez, not his firm, Henriquez Partners—firm partner and son Gregory is doing a book of his own this fall, and dad did not include anything designed by his offspring. Winnipeg arts journalist Robert Enright’s 1989 biographical interview provides the background on Henriquez’s youth, family and ancestry. He grew up in Jamaica and his family roots trace to a Sephardic plantation family, which had centuries earlier fled the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions. Henriquez never knew his father—shot down in WWII combat over Poland—and was raised by his uncle, an architect. The Jamaican lad arrived in icy Winnipeg in 1957 to study architecture. Here he got a thorough grounding in structural engineering and the poetics of construction, soon going off to complete a Master’s in urban design at M.I.T.

Richard Henriquez: Selected Works 1964-2005 discounts the architect’s prairie and early Vancouver work, but more problematically the book skims aside his constructional and urban successes to instead read them solely as art and literature. This take is evident in all the book’s writing.

Howard Shubert essentially parrots Henriquez’s own view of his work in the essay, “An Architecture of Writing,” but through the filter of an art historian. Geoffrey Smedley, prominent sculptor and professor, continues along this same critical track. He takes a heady whack at Henriquez’s “mytho-poetic” method: “Understanding facts as plastic and mutable means that their significance derives from the narrative context rather than from some unexamined idea of objectivity. Poetically understood facts are at the root of Henriquez’s working method—one embracing his architecture and sculpture alike.” Smedley goes on to cite the Vancouver Art Gallery’s 1994 exhibition “Memory Theatre” and Henriquez’s ambitious ongoing “Genome Project,” a cultural history of his Post-Diaspora family, which has yet to find a gallery home.

For those of us who admire him as the crafter of well-made buildings and as a public-minded urbanist, the book’s artiness in chosen texts and illustrations sometimes detracts from the truth, latent on these pages but apparent on our streets—Richard Henriquez is one spell-binding architect.

Architecture critic Trevor Boddy is a Vancouver urban designer, architecture curator and historian. He offers his opinions about buildings in the city and the building of the city and welcomes yours at treboddy@hotmail.com.

(Continued)

Quebec City’s Georges Teyssot to indicate they devoted more than a long weekend or two visiting Erickson’s actual built works. Their rambling, equivoquing prose is bereft of the incidental insights and embodied glosses that arise when writers actually get to know buildings, as opposed to merely reading about them.

The best writing in Arthur Erickson: Critical Works is its many quotations of Erickson’s own writings. And the black and white images supplied by his office are superb. The cumulative effect of this makes a strong case for a book that should be published as soon as possible—a project-by-project collection of his writing matched with apt visual documentation, something to unite his thoughts with imagery of his art.

The real question is how senior managers at the Vancouver Art Gallery and the publishers at Vancouver’s Douglas & McIntyre in association with the University of Washington Press could have signed off on such a flawed take on this important artist, especially after delaying the whole project for two years (book and exhibition were originally scheduled for 2004, but got bumped to make way for Bruce Maul’s Massive Change flaky design extravaganza)?

Arthur Erickson is the accidental poet, the aging but impish diplomat of place-making who trusted his legacy to a gallery and book team clearly not up to it. His buildings have set the datum for architecture and urbanism in Vancouver for a half-century, and one day there will be a book and...
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All this talk about ARCADE’s 25th anniversary has got me a bit nostalgic. Over the last few weeks I have been reflecting on where I was in 1981, when this magazine was launched.

At my age remembering anything past a decade is a stretch, but 1981 is different. That was the year I graduated from architecture school and started my career. Let me take you back to a time when architecture was a bit less complicated, tainted and frankly... the pits.

First of all, in 1981 the country was experiencing a full-fledged recession, the likes of which we haven’t seen since. These young bucks coming out of school over the last two decades have no idea what simultaneous double-digit inflation AND unemployment is like.

My biggest mistake after graduating from the University of Oregon was deciding to stay in town. At 15 percent, Flint, MI, and Eugene, OR, had the highest unemployment rates in the country. But I had big hair, big glasses, a pastel sweater tied around my neck, really short shorts and plenty of confidence that I could land a design job. Much to the surprise of my down trodden colleagues, I quickly found work drafting for a homebuilder. Now it wasn’t Frank Gehry, but at $5.00 an hour I felt like my newfound wealth would mitigate my longing for high design. I soon learned that, even in those days, that kind of money didn’t go far.

My next task was buying a car. Ever the slave to image, I had to find a set of wheels that would compliment my paisley ties, pink dress shirts and unabashed attitude. I settled on a Ford Pinto Station Wagon with imitation wood paneling on the sides. You chuckle, but even a Pinto looks good when Rick Springfield’s “Convo” REO Speedwagon’s “Keep on工作经验” is blaring on the AM radio at full volume until your dashboard speaker blows out.

Even though my career didn’t start out as I had expected... it soon got worse. The economy was so bad that I was laid off within three weeks. I stubbornly decided to eke out a living in Eugene come hell or high water. With no architectural work around, desperation finally drove me to go door-to-door offering to sketch homes. Though I barely made enough to support my electronic habit of Space Invaders and Pacman, I actually became a pretty good, and fast, renderer. But all this lasted only a few months until I ran out of rich neighborhoods to canvas.

From this inauspicious start, I eventually traveled the world and finally landed in Seattle, where I have been practicing architecture since 1985. I’ll leave that story for another time, but I do hope you youngsters can appreciate the sweat and heartache us architectural pioneers went through to secure this profession for future generations. I was reminded recently that in 1981 not only had email not yet been invented, we didn’t even have fax machines. (We did have Xerox machines though, you smart ass!) In those days architects actually had to communicate by talking and writing letters.

Ah, the good old times—the sound of the Mayline desk pencil sharpener being rescued from nostrils by喘息加拿大吧ammonia while making endless blueprints, Rayograph pens that constantly clogged, how about coloring with markers until you had what was the equivalent of a meth high, or working with grizzled veterans who smoked at their drafting desks during working hours?

Kids now complain about CAD. You might think hand drafting is somehow more dignified until you spend all day drawing a reflected ceiling plan with 2″ x 4″ acoustic ceiling tiles. Your boss (that’s what we called them in those days) comes by at 4:30 in the afternoon and decides to move the whole ceiling over a half a tile.

In 1981 women were still vastly outnumbered in the profession and routinely discriminated against. In one of my subsequent jobs we had one woman architect on staff. As a way of showing his empathy our boss gave her flowers every National Secretary Day. But he did rely on her heavily—to pick furniture, select colors and make coffee.

I have numerous other memories that I’m sure resonate with those who have been in the profession as long as ARCADE: Kroy machines, Pounce, chiseled pencil edges for lettering, Whiteout, mixed drinks for lunch, pin bar drafting, bathroom templates, kneaded erasers, Macs, and the list goes on...

Probably the worst thing about those days was really the architecture. To help me prepare for this article, a buddy dug through his basement and found an old copy of the 1981 design awards from Progressive Architecture (remember that magazine? Looking back at the honored work, I was embarrassed by how comical the projects now look. It was during this period of time that the profession was beginning to embrace Postmodernism (only now can I begin to admit that I dubbed it a bit). The movement went on to create probably the worst body of buildings in the history of American architecture.

This leads me to a final incriminating reflection on where I was in my architecture career when ARCADE was launched. In 1981 I actually believed that the Michael Graves’s Portland Building was cutting edge.

Happy anniversary ARCADE! (I can’t wait until pastel sweaters come back into style!)

Ron van der Veen is an architect and long time contributor to ARCADE. Over the last few years he has been wracking his brain trying to come up with funny new articles for Side Yard. This has been especially difficult because architects aren’t very funny people, and the profession is a bit somber. If you have an idea for a humorous look at the design profession, please get a hold of him quickly. Ronv@mitun.com.
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A Look Back...
Victoria Reed

ARCADE often had periods when it exhibited a certain...irregularity. I had been a subscriber for some years, even a one-time contributor. To me ARCADE was an infusion of real-time spirit-of-place, like an archeological slice of the Seattle design "mind" that happily came in the mail every...once in awhile. I looked forward to it, and like a lot of people, had certain issues "stashed" away as examples of can't-get-that-anywhere-else. Then, one day, there were no more. And when, after a time, there really were no more, I picked up the last issue, volume 12, number 3 (Spring, 1994)—a beautiful, black and white portfolio-sized magazine put together by Ted Mader and Brian Pelton Johnson, a graphic artist and architect, respectively—and headed for Mader's office to see if there was any way to get it going again.

Why me—the non-architect, non-journalist architectural groupie? There is one easy answer: there was nobody else. I had an informal two-pronged Plan. One prong was Ted Mader, who for several years had generously given space, advice and talent to ARCADE. I was hoping he could continue to help. And the other prong, although she didn't know it, was Vanessa Greaves (our recent AIA president Peter Greaves' wife) who had been volunteering with others, like Sian Roberts and Scott Wolfe (now both at Miller Hull), trying to keep the magazine alive. Vanessa had worked in Los Angeles on the West Coast edition of W Magazine in marketing and advertising. With her help and with Guest Editors for each issue, I thought we could keep the magazine going until it could right itself and start flying again. Ted Mader said yes; my lunch with Vanessa was not as fortuitous. Understandably, she did not want to take on a time-consuming, uphill volunteer project. She looked at the paper fortune that had come in her fortune cookie and handed it to me saying, "Here, I think this one is yours." It read: Be Realistic. Expect a Miracle. I guess the rest is history.

The existence of ARCADE has often reminded me of what they say about democracy—as a practical matter it shouldn't work, but because of the people who hold the same idea, the same value, the same commitment...it does. When we started up in 1996 we benefited from the advice and the "communal zeitgeist" of the people who had carried the magazine before. Their inspiration kept us trying to do better—the spirit they had given the magazine attracted other kindred spirits. But still for me, the best example of describing what the magazine means, what it is, came from comments sent to me by Rebecca Barnes, a former editor, as I started up the project. She said: "Plant a seed or two and nourish it and see what grows. Stay open and expect and look forward to change and development. Leave room for lots of unknown participants to join in and take the team to uncharted and stimulating places. Don't compete with existing or past journals; give it its own head and ride it."

She also said, and I join her in this wish: "Good luck."

Victoria Reed developed an appreciation for architecture as a result of climbing up, onto or into, just about every historical structure in Western Europe and Greece and as an undergraduate at Stanford in Italy. The fascination remains. Victoria was Managing Editor of ARCADE magazine from 1996-2001.
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