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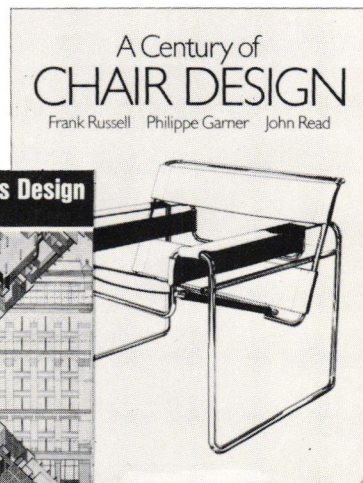
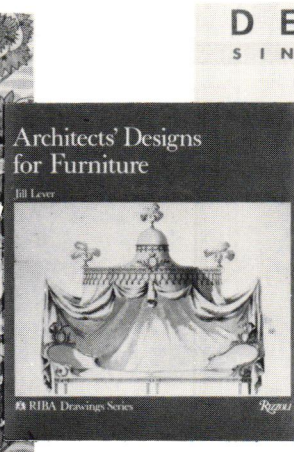
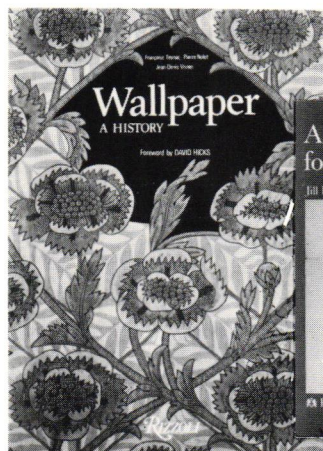
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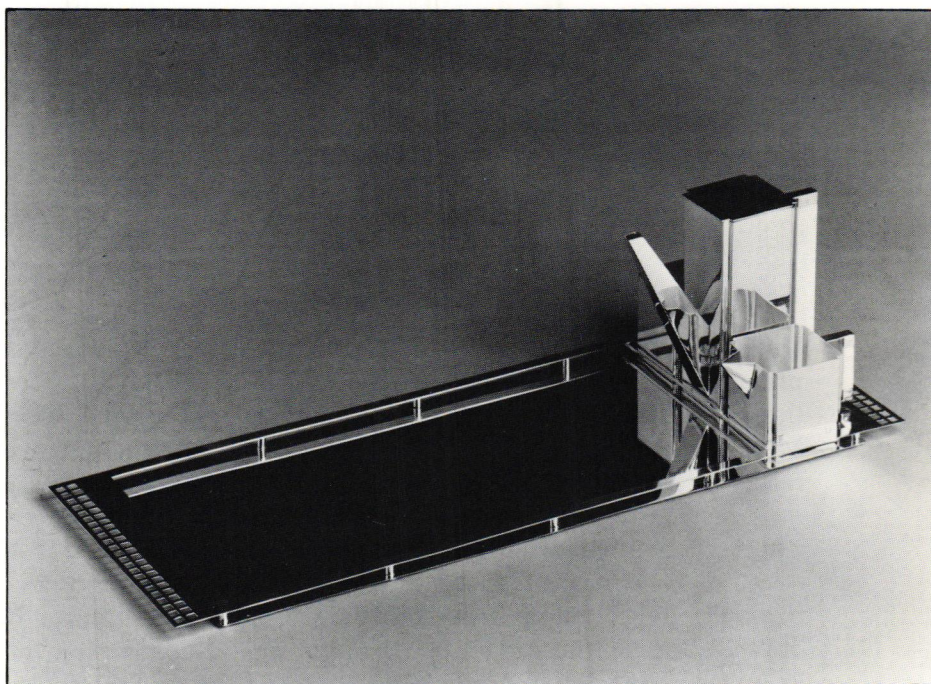
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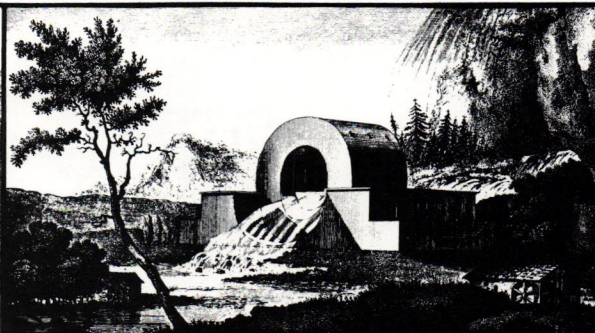
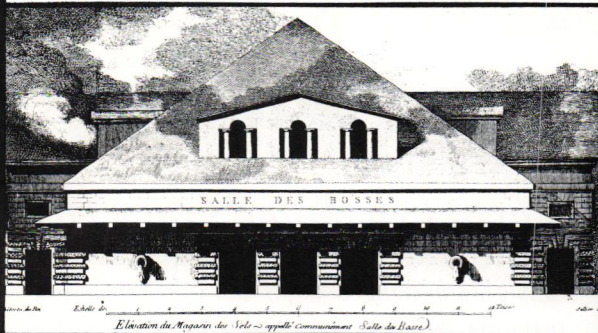
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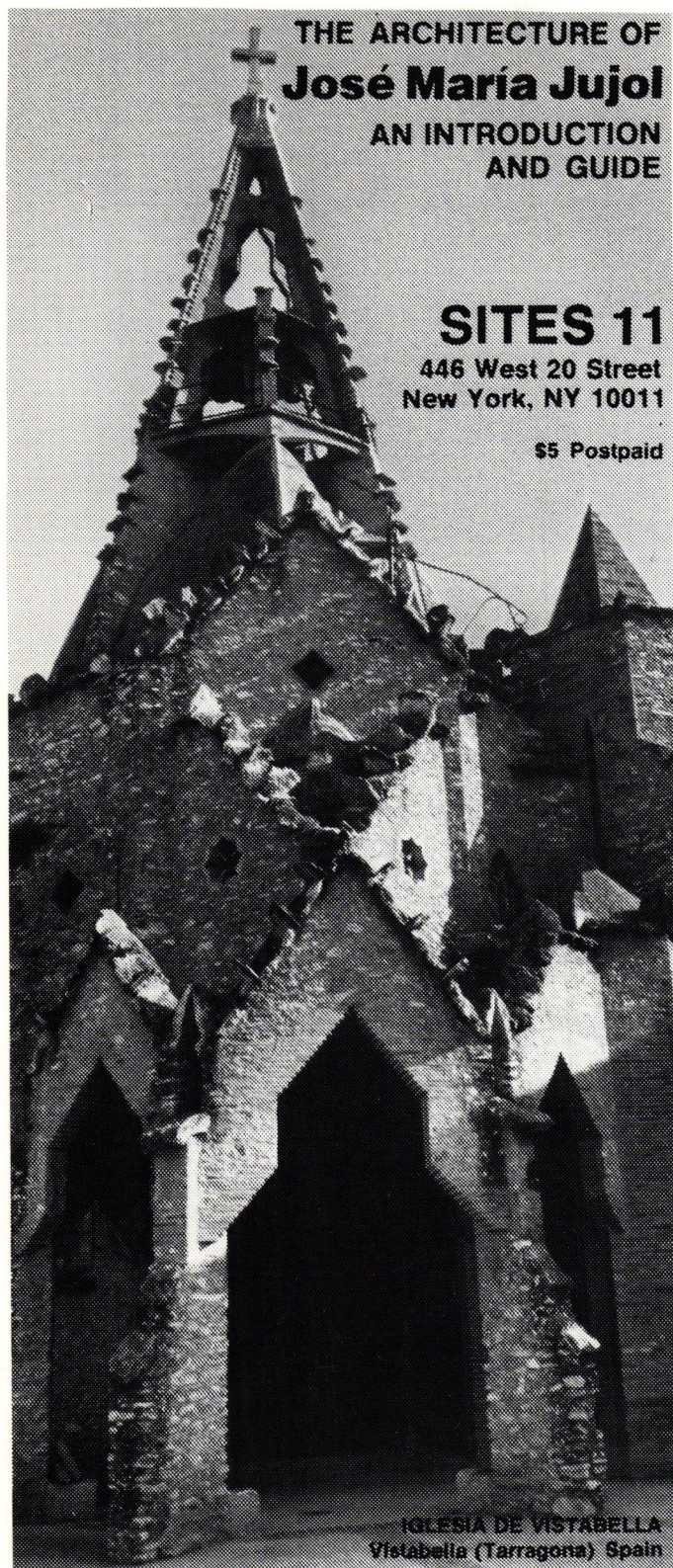
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## COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

THOMAS JEFFERSON, SOUTH TERRACE, MONTICELLO. FROM JEFFERSON'S MONTICELLO, ABBEVILLE, 1983.

## SPRING 1984

This fourth issue of *Design Book Review* marks the conclusion of volume one. We offer thanks to all of you, subscribers and single issue purchasers alike. Charter subscribers—and everyone else, for that matter—are urged to subscribe anew. It is my sad duty to report that, having held the line at \$3.50 an issue, we are going to have to raise the price to \$4.50 with issue five. The subscription price will also increase (to \$15 for individuals, \$18 for institutions).

Is there a way you can hedge against this impending inflation? There is! The enclosed subscription form retains the old rate, and it can get you (and the lucky recipient of your largesse) as many as eight more delightful issues for a pittance.

Having said this, let me welcome several new members of our editorial board: Bruce Burdick, the industrial designer; Frances Butler, professor of design at the University of California, Davis, and co-founder of the Poltroon Press in Berkeley; and Michael Manwaring, the graphic designer. We also welcome as our Japan correspondent Hiroshi Watanabe, the architect and critic.

This issue contains the first of our correspondents' offerings, a "letter from London" by Martin Symes, member of the RIBA Library Board as well as professor at the Bartlett School, University College, London. His assignment was to comment on current publications in England (which he has done admirably), so his letter touches on several books we will be reviewing separately (and some we have reviewed already).

We are expecting a letter along the same lines from our Tokyo correspondent.

We are also expecting to launch a new series of reviews—on computer software useful to designers—as a logical extension of our professional reading section. Lest anyone doubt that software packages qualify as publications, the venerable *Publishers Weekly* recently dedicated an entire issue to the subject. As with our approach to books, we expect to be comprehensive, and, as always, to cast a jaundiced eye on the true value of the goods.

It would be wrong to end this editorial without a second expression of gratitude to all of you—readers, advertisers, contributors, members of the editorial board, correspondents, staff, and creditors alike. Thank you!

John Parman



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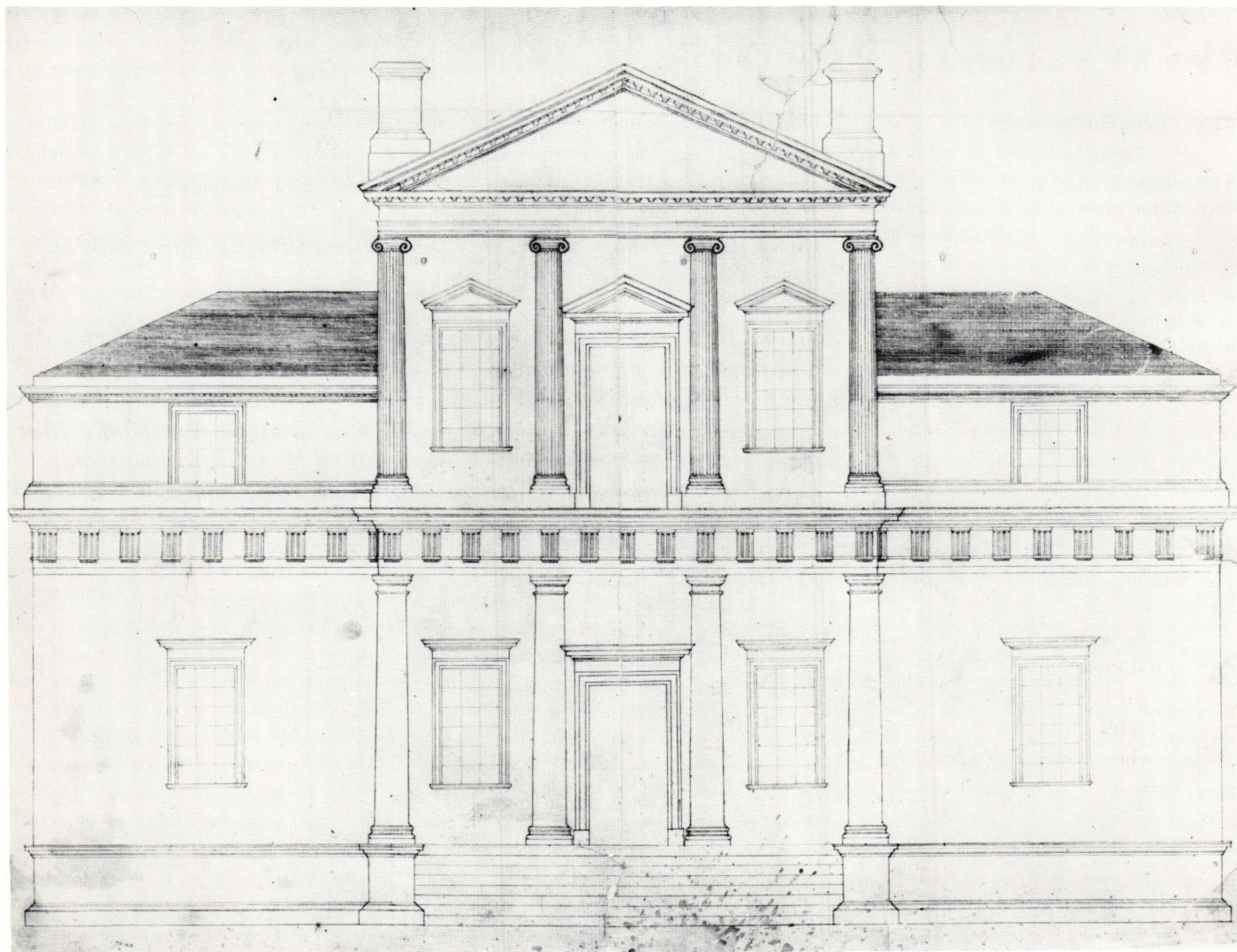


James S. Ackerman:

# JEFFERSON'S MONTICELLO

WILLIAM HOWARD ADAMS

THOMAS JEFFERSON, LAST ELEVATION STUDY OF FIRST VERSION OF MONTICELLO, 1771





This splendidly produced volume has been justifiably hailed in the early newspaper reviews and must have been the favorite of all architectural Christmas presents. But it is much more than just handsome; it has an engaging and readable text by a writer who knows the writings by and about Jefferson thoroughly, who was the chief mover behind the National Gallery's fine centennial exhibition, *The Eye of Jefferson*, and its fascinating catalogue. It gives us an effective insight into Jefferson's life at Monticello and his engagement with its buildings, gardens, and landscape planning. It is lavishly illustrated with reproductions of Jefferson's drawings, excellent color photographs (mostly commissioned for the book from Langdon Clay) of every aspect of the building and its contents, old photographs, and comparative material. The color reproduction is spectacular and the drawings are as well reproduced as they are in Kimball's original facsimile edition of them; I know of no comparable production in recent architectural publication.

Adams tells us in commenting on his approach that he has been influenced by Suzanne Crowhurst Lennard, "who almost single-handedly has identified the subject of architecture as autobiography." I have not read Lennard, but for Adams this means treating the building primarily in terms of Jefferson's engagement with it. Since he knows Jefferson's work well, he is able to follow the evolution of every aspect of Monticello through the accounts of the architect and of the many visitors who reported on their stay on the mountaintop plantation. This gives the book its considerable appeal, but it keeps Adams from distancing himself from his object sufficiently to help us interpret the architecture and planning.

The major sections of the book are headed "The Architect"; "The First Monticello"; "The Second Monticello"; and "The Interior Life" (covering interior design and furnishings). Adams, who published *The French Garden 1500-1800* (Braziller, 1979) a short time ago, is at his best in discussing the landscape design, both of the garden area and the more extended estate of about 5,000 acres, a subject that has not had adequate treatment heretofore. The treatment of the interior, though it has the character of a narrative catalogue, also greatly increases our knowledge of Jefferson as a patron and actual designer of craft objects and furniture.

As might be expected of an author engaging for the first time in architectural history and criticism, Adams is at his weakest when discussing the building and its genesis as distinct from its role in Jefferson's life. The deficiencies show first in interpretation and second in scholarship.

The deficiencies of interpretation are due to an unclear perception of the nature of the tradition absorbed by the architect. Adams has a weak grasp of Palladio and of English Palladianism. He does not help the reader to understand the

import of the fact that Jefferson never saw a building by Palladio, but knew the work only through the editions of Palladio's *Quattro libri* published in the 18th century in England, and through the plates that Bertotti Scamozzi published in *Le fabbriche e i disegni di Andrea Palladio* during the time that Jefferson was redesigning Monticello (Adams wrongly cites the latter as an edition of *The Four Books of Architecture*; it is a corpus of Palladio's work based partly on the cuts in that work and partly on actual buildings, but filled with neoclassical interpolations and reconstructions and without Palladio's text). As a result, the Palladio that Jefferson referred to as a "Bible" was one filtered through the visions of Palladianism and neoclassicism. In the final version of Monticello, Palladio is quite subsumed into 18th-century style, though he is closely followed in the detailing of the orders. The initial façade was much closer to a model from the *Four Books*: Jefferson's first sketch for the entrance façade is based on an illustration of the Villa Cornaro at Piombino Dese (Adams misleadingly refers us only to the garden front of the Villa Pisani at Montagnana [figs. 39 & 41]). The earliest plan, incidentally, is for a wood-frame building, which a writer concerned more with architecture would have considered.

In discussing the English background, Adams seems confused about the admittedly perplexing style distinctions of the 18th century and their political implications. He is not conscious of the distinctions between Gibbs and the strict Palladians, which is important for American architecture. While Gibbs preserved the aspects of Palladio that had interested Inigo Jones in the previous century (as indicated in the design from his *A Book on Architecture* [1728], which inspired the builder of Mount Airy in Virginia), he leaned, encouraged by his Tory clientele, toward the Christopher Wren legacy. I'd place him midway between the "Georgian" Wrenish style adopted in Tidewater Virginia, and the austere and distinctly anti-Wren Palladianism fostered by Lord Burlington and publicized in *Vitruvius Britannicus*, which Summerson has shown to have been adopted by the Whig (i.e., liberal) leadership. Jefferson found the latter more congenial.

Adams's statement that "The victory of English Palladianism, resolutely rejected by Jefferson in his own architecture, was overwhelming, and by the middle of the century it had . . . conquered virtually every aspect of English architectural design" indicates a weak grasp of the situation, which is further muddled by his calling "Georgian" architecture "the dominant English architectural style." First, Jefferson's Palladianism was almost entirely English, and second, neither a Palladian nor a "Georgian" style dominated England.

Adams is on surer ground when aided by Jefferson's own statements, which show that he had a particular animus





SOUTH TERRACE, MONTICELLO

against Tidewater Georgian style, both because of its political implications (association with the British Crown) and because of its lack of respect for the Roman roots of classical architecture. On this last point, it is important to remember that Jefferson's favorite Roman model, the Maison Carée in Nîmes (upon which he modeled the capitol in Richmond, and the only original ancient building he knew well), was of the Republican period. Again partly for political reasons, he appears not to have been attracted to high Roman Imperial design, though the Pantheon was early (simple and reserved) enough to be acceptable as a model for the Library of the University of Virginia (because Palladio had used it too?).

Adams sidesteps the issue of the relation of Jefferson's architecture to that of his American antecedents (especially Harrison, the first proper Palladian in this country) and his contemporaries (although he worked and corresponded with Latrobe and Thornton, and was visited by Mills, who drew the elevation of Monticello reproduced on pp. 96-97). All in all, Adams's conception of architecture as biography, while engaging, does not encompass historical or critical interpretation.

My second criticism of this approach concerns what appears to be an unconscious scorn of the responsibilities of scholarship, which emerges in conflict with the author's acknowledged debt to the scholars whose works made this book possible. It expresses itself in his consistent failure either to document statements of fact or to guide the reader who wants to check on them. A two-page "Guide to Sources" in the rear arbitrarily cites no more than a small portion of the sources employed and quoted; the bibliography even omits books quoted in the text (for example, Karl Lehman's *Thomas Jef-*

*erson, American Humanist* [Macmillan, 1947], the finest study of Jefferson's interest in the classical tradition; and while the author is mentioned, he does not even appear in the index).

Jefferson's drawings, the chief grounds for our knowledge of the history of the buildings, are illustrated without indication of where they are located, and dated without indication of how the date was arrived at and whether it is speculative or confirmed. There is no list of drawings to indicate which are *not* illustrated and whether any of these might be helpful in clarifying the history of the design—an essential consideration for the student of a building that was periodically altered. Had such information been absent from the books of Kimball, Nichols, Pierson, and other predecessors, Adams himself could not have undertaken this project.

I realize that my reservations may seem to betray the territorial resentment of an academic who sees an outsider invading his sacred turf and making a palatable book without the ritual apparatus. But in fact, the apparatus is there—"Guide," captions, bibliography—it simply undermines its apparent purpose by closing off access to essential information. What saddens me is that this elegant book is not the kind of gentlemanly pabulum we are customarily fed by the publications of Batsford and *Country Life*, but rich and intelligent enough to have been the chief resource of information on a great American monument; it did not have to be filled with roadblocks.

Jefferson's Monticello, William Howard Adams, Abbeville, 1983, 288 pp., illus., \$49.95.



Esther McCoy:

## ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

RICHARD LONGSTRETH

The three themes of this book mesh nicely: the spread of an architectural idea, the four young architects who carried it to San Francisco, and the city of San Francisco at the turn of the century. The organization creates a certain tension, although the focus shifts, as it is apt to when some of the chapters have apparently been published separately.

The four architects were Ernest Coxhead, Willis Polk, A. C. Schweinfurth, and Bernard Maybeck. They came to San Francisco in 1889-1890 as crusaders for Academic Eclecticism, a movement whose immediate aim was to dispel "Victorian excesses" and "to restore continuity with the past." The last is somewhat puzzling considering that the country had celebrated its centennial 13 years earlier, and that San Francisco was not joined to the East Coast by rail until 1876. To restore San Francisco's continuity with the past would have meant restoring the adobes of the Spanish period. But even before the Golden Spike was driven (symbolizing the linking of east coast to west by rail), San Francisco was sensitive to architectural winds blowing westward. This wind had gusted up in Paris, center of the Academic Eclectic movement, wafted across the Channel to England, then crossed the Atlantic to blow up a storm in eastern cities before moving westward. It carried to San Francisco the exhilarating sense of identity the centennial had instilled in Americans, which had given rise to Regional Expression—in Philadelphia, the Colonial Revival style, in the west, Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival. Academic Eclecticism, you might say, found San Francisco in wood and left it in



ERNEST COXHEAD, CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, SAN FRANCISCO, 1890-1891; DESTROYED 1906. (COURTESY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY FOUNDATION)

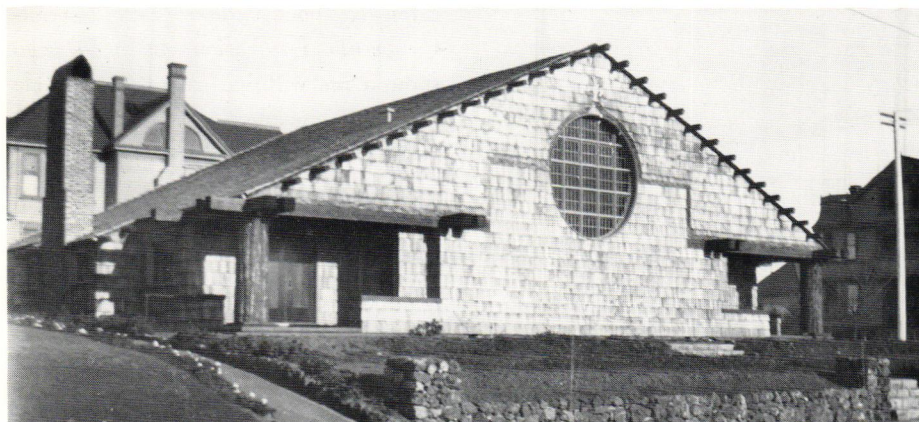
stone (easterners being oblivious to the greater elasticity of wood in seismic shock).

The intellectual baggage of these four architects, and the story of where they acquired it, catalogs the shifting principles of 19th-century design. Maybeck studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the birthplace as well as the deathbed of diverse creeds. One was Viollet-le-Duc's belief that construction was the means, architecture the result; this was tolerated in Jules André's atelier (where Maybeck studied) to the extent that it cleansed architecture of its excesses; but there the ordering device

was composition, not structure. Other influences were Gottfried Semper's alien tenet that architecture consisted of the four irreducible elements of hearth, floor, roof, and enclosure; and Julien Guadet's condemnation of accident and eccentricity in buildings. Maybeck left the Ecole with a reverence for tradition, but so accident-prone that none of the other three young architects took him seriously; Schweinfurth called him "a freak."

Ernest Coxhead acquired a respect for Gothic Revival in his native Sussex while apprenticed to a civil engineer; in London his work for a restoration





A. C. SCHWEINFURTH, FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA, 1898. (COURTESY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY FOUNDATION)

architect led him to document the changes in old churches over the years, which accounts for his ability to combine styles successfully. His employer proposed him as a student for the Royal Academy of Art at a time when the academy was turning from High Victorian to classicism. Longstreth believes that Coxhead moved to America because the Episcopal diocese offered him work in Los Angeles. Here he acquired a sympathy for H. H. Richardson and the shingle style, and his taste for experimentation was whetted. His knowledge of precedent and a freedom of interpretation gave sureness to his style.

Polk, born in Illinois, and Schweinfurth, from upper New York, received their training entirely in architectural offices, and reached San Francisco when their employer, A. Page Brown, moved his office west from New York. Polk, the son of a carpenter, was an office boy at 13 for a St. Louis architect; he left the world of tradesmen when the eminent Boston architects, Van Brunt and Howe, moved their offices to Kansas City. Under their influence Polk was introduced to authority and discipline; he determined to enroll in Columbia College in New York City, and reached the unofficial center of the academic movement when he went to work for Brown. He was in the same building as McKim Mead and White, whose office

was, Longstreth reports, "a council chamber where men could meet and discuss the renaissance of American art." Polk was affected by their commitment to beauty: "From Charles McKim," Longstreth writes, "he learned the clear, logical ordering of form and space, and from Stanford White the spirited manipulation of historical references and decorative details."

Schweinfurth, son of a woodcarver, joined his brother in the Boston office of Peabody and Stearnes at a time when Richardsonian order was replacing the High Victorian. In Richardson, Schweinfurth found his hero, as is evident in the designs he did for the Brown office.

San Francisco offered more freedom of expression than did London, for Coxhead, or the East Coast for the other three men. Polk gained the respect of westerners, who were self-conscious about the frontier culture, with an early project for a Mission church; his writings on the missions, and his unexecuted church, did much to establish a Mission style. In the Brown office Schweinfurth directed the design toward regional expression—more Spanish Colonial, however, than the generally undecorated missions. His last commission was the 1898 Unitarian Church in Berkeley, a superb handling of overscaled elements in a vernacular-

based building: the enormous circular window in a broad gable whose dimensions are borrowed from the Low house, the great unpeeled redwood trunks as columns, suggesting a temple in a forest. It stands at a much-used intersection near the university, a memorial to Schweinfurth's genius.

But it was in small rustic city houses—"sheltering and expansive, humble and grand, worldly in their character and yet attuned to the special qualities of the regional landscape"—that Schweinfurth, Polk, and Coxhead first made their reputations. Coxhead and Polk both found their sources in the English and Northern French vernacular, combining the picturesque with the academic. In Polk's Polk-William house the interiors blend wide redwood boards with classical details; Coxhead's 1893 shingle-walled double house for himself and brother drew from the English Arts and Crafts movement and from Norman Shaw. But the horizontality of Coxhead's interiors contrasts with the high timbered ceilings of Polk's. Coxhead's small low-cost Murdock house is a shingled box with elegant Georgian interiors; his 1896 Osborn house, with the picturesqueness of a 17th-century English tradesman's house, Longstreth calls "the unfolding of grand allusions behind a placid façade."

Maybeck's early commissions were too few to earn him much space in a book that deals with the years around the turn of the century. It carries him only as far as the reinforced concrete Lawson house—designed as a Roman villa, in a material he deemed suitable for an area which had experienced a major earthquake and fire the year before.

*On the Edge of the World*, Richard Longstreth, Architectural History Foundation and MIT, 1983, 455 pp., illus., \$40.00.



Richard Guy Wilson:

## BERTRAM GROSVENOR GOODHUE

RICHARD OLIVER

If you had been an American architecture student in the 1920s or early thirties, the work of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue would have loomed very large, and it is still possible to talk to individuals who remember the high regard in which he was held. He was ranked with Richardson and McKim, and, more important, his work was seen as a middle way between the claims of tradition and the call for modernism. His Nebraska State Capitol, Lincoln (1920-1932), became a primary form-giver for a host of public and institutional buildings from Los Angeles to Miami, a building that combined the two ancient civic symbols of tower and dome in a romantic yet controlled and ultimately classical expression. With his favorite sculptor, Lee Lawrie, and tile designer, Hildreth Meiere, Goodhue created an ornament which escaped the narrow bounds of Sullivan's personalized expression, without becoming either archaic or imitative. His National Academy of Sciences Building, Washington D.C. (1919-1924), was the first of the so-called modernized or stripped classical buildings, progenitor of many of the stripped classical federal buildings of the later twenties and the thirties, and a reticent example of how an architect could design in the classical mode and yet escape the pedantry of the orders. Finally, there was his great entry for the Liberty Memorial competition, Kansas City, Missouri (1921), an unsuccessful design (H. Van Buren Magonigle won), but still the most influential, with large masses of stone, notched and cut back, and lightened with figurative sculptures—a haunting and brooding statement too powerful

for the timid jury.

Some architects and critics saw an ironic twist in these later successes of Goodhue, who began his career with Ralph Adams Cram in Boston in the early 1890s, designing small High Episcopal churches in a medieval idiom. In 1903, against substantial odds, the young firm of Cram and Goodhue (with the addition of Frank Ferguson) won the West Point Military Academy extension competition with a "Military Gothic" scheme. From that point on Goodhue's work became more distinct from Cram's, with Goodhue opening a New York branch office. Still, the bulk of his work was Gothic, with such designs as the great ruin of Saint Thomas in New York, or the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh. In 1914, the offices officially split, and Goodhue went his way, which led increasingly toward such eclectic solutions as the Spanish Colonial and Byzantine. His designs for

numerous houses and for the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego showed his willingness to explore. He retained a decided and outspoken animosity toward classicism and the beaux-arts in particular; he even disliked having beaux-arts-trained employees in his office, preferring English Arts and Crafts-oriented designers. Goodhue was popularly known as a Gothicism, and many of his later works—the Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago (1918-1928) or his proposed Convocational Building for New York (1921)—were at least nominally Gothic-inspired, which made his adoption of classicism in Washington and Lincoln all the more surprising.

His death in 1924 at the age of 54 (ten days after the death of Louis Sullivan) seemed to cut off a talented designer just as he was hitting his stride. The AIA, who had already voted to give

BERTRAM GROSVENOR GOODHUE, CIRCA 1960, VIEW OF THE WEST FAÇADE OF THE LOS ANGELES LIBRARY, 1921-1926. (COURTESY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY FOUNDATION)





the Gold Medal to Sir Edwin Lutyens, agreed to posthumously award it to Goodhue as well.

However the years were not as kind to Goodhue's reputation; while his name was kept alive for a time by some practitioners and students of the 1920s, and the Nebraska State Capitol ranked near the top in a poll of most admired buildings as late as 1948, Goodhue's work seemed of little relevance to most. There was the predictable big book written on him just after his death, and critics discussed him into the late 1920s, but increasingly in terms of such questions as, Was he really modern? What type of modern? For Goodhue not only never abandoned traditional imagery, but his masonry approach seemed to have little in common with the developing "machine age" modernism of steel, glass, chrome, and concrete.

*Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue* is the first comprehensive view of Goodhue in nearly sixty years. It accords well with the new and more ecumenical interest in the American past being taken by both historians and architects. Goodhue represents the attempt just before abstract Modernism won the day to reinvigorate traditional forms and imagery, albeit not in a mimicking or straight revivalist manner. He could, in other words, be a patron saint of the new tendencies of Post-Modernism, much the same as Lutyens has become in England. The author of *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue*, Richard Oliver, is a practicing architect from New York City, who also spent some time as curator of architecture at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. He is sympathetic to Goodhue, without making too egregious a plea for a return to his way of doing things.

Among his book's many virtues is the attractive physical package. It is printed in a Goodhue-designed typeface and the illustrations are well produced. One slight disappointment is the



BERTRAM GROSVENOR GOODHUE, 1947, VIEW OF THE NORTH FAÇADE OF THE NEBRASKA STATE CAPITOL, LINCOLN, 1920-1932. (COURTESY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY FOUNDATION)

*"Goodhue could be a patron saint of Post-Modernism, much as Lutyens has become in England."*

small number of Goodhue drawings reproduced, for he was among the very best of American draftsmen. But, as frequently happens, success spoiled him, and he drew little in his later years, when the more important buildings were designed.

Oliver's text is clear, and he gives a good overview of Goodhue's development and the more important buildings. His description and analysis of the formal design characteristics of Goodhue's buildings is very good. More problematic is the treatment of Goodhue's personality and background, and the core of his development. Goodhue was apparently difficult, easily given to umbrage at the hint of a slight. Since he had been trained as an apprentice, he had an inferiority complex toward his suaver university and beaux-arts-

trained contemporaries. Hints of more complex personality disorders are also left tantalizingly undeveloped.

The whole issue of Goodhue's background is complicated. More could be said about his Arts and Crafts leanings; he was a founding member in 1897 of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, one of the earliest such organizations in the United States, and was proclaiming Arts and Crafts principles as early as 1892. The milieu in which he moved in the 1890s was, to say the least, strange, and better described as decadent or bohemian. His group, part of the Anglo-Catholic High Church revival in Boston, espoused an extreme aestheticism which owed much to Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, and Matthew Arnold, among others. They combined high culture with the exotic and the erotic—the rapturous emotions that belonged to the search for perfect beauty and obscure symbolism. While in time Goodhue would shrug off some of his youthful bohemianism, he did retain an interest in *outré* symbolism and beauty. Richard Oliver very correctly stresses the impact of Giles Gilbert Scott's Liverpool Cathedral on Goodhue, but neglects the strong continental Art Nouveau influence in his later work. The Los Angeles Public Library (1921-1926), for instance, has the air of Darmstadt and the Wiener Werkstaette in its simplified forms, high coloration, and exaggerated ornament.

Of course, to ask that the author unravel all these complexities in a period just coming into view as a topic for serious scholarship is perhaps too much; Mr. Oliver has written a good book and one that makes the period and the individual accessible for our further study.

Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Richard Oliver, Architectural History Foundation and MIT, 1983, xii + 297 pp., illus., \$30.00.



John Beach:

## THE OAKLAND PARAMOUNT

SUSANNAH HARRIS STONE

*The Oakland Paramount* is a book one would like to be able to applaud. It celebrates one of the West Coast's important buildings, and one of its happiest and most unlikely preservation triumphs. Unfortunately the authors' program is simply too ambitious for a small-format, 94-page volume. They attempt to deal with the original building, its significance, its era, and its architect; with the preservation process and its complexities; and with the building's notably successful functioning in its adaptive reuse as concert hall, theater, and home of the Oakland Symphony. The result is an unsatisfactory hybrid, part document, part souvenir.

The dust jacket gives the first indication that certain details have been inadequately considered: the title is neither on the front nor on the spine, but on the back, a device so arbitrary and inconvenient that its only possible function seems to be to reassure the potential buyer that he is getting a "gen-u-wine" designed object. More serious lapses lie inside.

The book is extensively illustrated with both recent and archival photographs, and the period images, from the Gabriel Moulin studios, are superb. The recent photographs are not; Roger Minick, who shot the color illustrations, is a fine photographer, but in this project he overinterprets inexcusably. The Paramount is, as it stands, opulent and exotic; it does not need zooty views through extra-wide angle lenses to make it seem so. The photo of the corridor with peep-hole into the Grand Lobby, in which the walls appear to be made of caramel candy which has just passed the melting point, is a parody



LOBBY LOOKING WEST TOWARD THE THEATRE, PARAMOUNT THEATRE, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA. (COURTESY OF THE PARAMOUNT THEATRE).

of the careful counterpoint of straight edge and curve, of horizontal and vertical, which one actually encounters in the theatre.

Such parallax problems and bizarre extremes of distortion are to be found on almost every page. So is the unnatural and sleazy green/gold coloration. (This may not be Minick's fault: other volumes from Lancaster-Miller have had color control problems.) The color is not merely inaccurate, it is inconsistently inaccurate: a comparison of

the patterned carpet in several photos presents a perplexing range of disagreements, no single one catching the actual color.

The text is also undependable in places. The authors repeatedly assure us that both the restoration and the book about it are totally accurate, but they make no mention of the visually unfortunate and seemingly pointless alterations to the marquee, the removal of a large section of the terrazzo entry paving in a gesture of misguided civic



improvement, or the fate of the handsomely patterned frosted panels of the original ticket booth, replaced with bland, transparent plate glass.

Perhaps the most fascinating part of the Paramount story, the story of public taste, is touched on only perfunctorily. The public refuses to honor, or preserve, any style before its time; and, despite developer allegations of elitism, the preservation movement depends upon public awareness, commitment, political pressure, and financial support. The early 1970s were a little too early to expect widespread enthusiasm for a Deco building, even a major one. During the 1974 protest against demolition of an Oakland building designed by Bernard Maybeck, one preservationist complained in a television interview that such an important struc-

ture should be destroyed while "all that money's being wasted on a piece of kitsch like the Paramount." There were rumors of major donors at the opening of the restored Paramount getting a vague feeling they'd been conned: they had contributed to a symphony hall and here they were in a rather garish movie palace. Whether or not these rumors of donor perplexity were true, it is clear that those responsible for the restoration and concomitant fundraising were quite skillful at either dealing with or avoiding prevailing attitudes of style and taste. Time, the march of fashion, and the practical, economic, and aesthetic success of the Paramount venture have proven them correct. Examination of the process would have yielded a valuable cultural analysis and a guide for preservationists in similar situations.

*The Oakland Paramount*, a book generated by genuine enthusiasm and impeccable motives, is crippled by sins both of omission and commission. The object seems to have been to create a book useful both to the tourist and the professional, the concert-goer and the historian. What is distressing is not that it fails, but that it fails while so very nearly succeeding. With very little additional care, discrimination, and discipline, it could have been a new exemplar of the building monograph.

*The Oakland Paramount*, Susannah Harris Stone, photographs by Roger Minick, Lancaster-Miller (3165 Adeline, Berkeley, CA, 94703), 94 pp., illus., \$11.95.

Alson Clark:

## THE SECOND GENERATION

ESTHER McCOY

This unique book consists of four essays, each about a different California architect. They are, in order of appearance, J. R. Davidson (1887-1977), Harwell Hamilton Harris (1903-), Gregory Ain (1908-), and Raphael Soriano (1907-); all, with the exception of Davidson, nationally recognized practitioners of the late 1930s to the middle 1950s. Each essay includes biographical material until now unobtainable, as well as carefully culled quotations from extensive interviews with the architects, and the author's perceptive critique of their aesthetic and technical accomplishments. The title is *The Second Generation*, period—no catchy thematic subtitle—and the same fastidi-

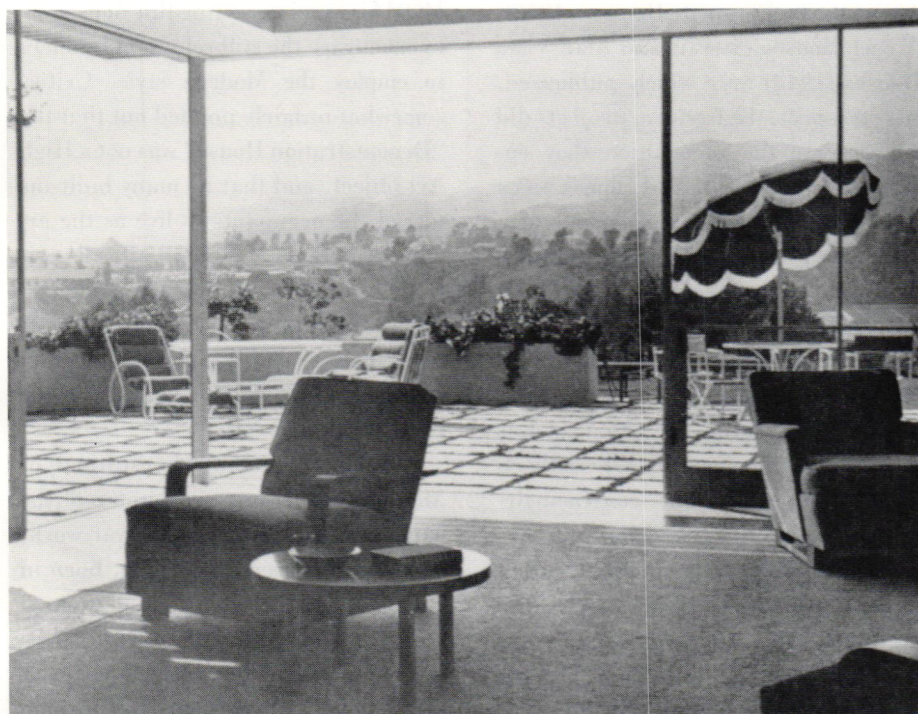
ousness is maintained throughout the book.

The book is bound to be compared to McCoy's *Five California Architects* (Reinhold, 1960), to which it has some similarities. Both are finely crafted and painstakingly researched, and shy away from the scholarly baggage of footnotes (but this time not entirely). *Five California Architects* seemed to look to the future, however. Maybeck's influence was powerful in the Bay Area in the fifties, and the book undoubtedly helped designers understand him. Fifteen years were to pass before another work devoted to Maybeck appeared. *Five California Architects* also virtually introduced Schindler to an international audience at a crucial time. That book would not have been possible without the photographs of Marvin Rand and Julius Shulman, which in some cases were especially commissioned for that work. Neither would *The*

*Second Generation* have been possible without the work of Shulman, Rand, and others, but in this case the photographs (and thank God for them) are mostly old. *The Second Generation* is a stimulating work, but, in contrast to *Five California Architects*, it is a history.

In choosing her title, the author did not mean to imply that this was a generation that had it easy, living off its inheritance. The chief obstacles the first generation encountered were academic conservatism (except in the case of Greene and Greene, whose exotic work gained almost universal acceptance) and changing fashions (which undid Gill and the Greens, but did not affect Schindler). The second generation practiced in an era when government was much larger; they had to contend with the harassment of local as well as the federal government, which in at least one instance behaved like Big





J. R. DAVIDSON, STOTHART HOUSE. (PHOTOGRAPH: ERNEST LUDWICK)

Brother: Gregory Ain's Community Homes cooperative of the post-war period remained unbuilt because some members of the cooperative were black, and the FHA would not lend money to groups which included blacks. Another obstacle the second generation had to deal with was the Depression, which proved, paradoxically, a mixed curse. It cleared the air. While traditional architects were without commissions, the second generation were launching their careers and doing significant work, but work that was of necessity small and inexpensive.

There will be those who feel that *The Second Generation* deals with inexpensive and therefore unimportant architecture. This prejudice has affected our judgment of even such recognized figures as Richard Neutra. Siegfried Giedion, in his introduction to *Richard Neutra: Buildings and Projects* (1951), could not bring himself to talk about anything but Neutra's expensive steel or concrete houses. Arthur Drex-

ler in his 1982 essay on Neutra was more blunt, saying that the master wasted his talents building houses for people who were so poor they shouldn't have been building houses for themselves at all. It would be hard to convince these critics, but Cesar Pelli has tried in his introduction to *The Second Generation*, calling the product "creative pragmatism."

J. R. Davidson was not chronologically a member of the second generation, since he was as old as Schindler and came to California before Neutra. He designed fine furniture and lighting fixtures until 1936, when the music director at MGM asked him to design a house. Ernst Ludwick's photograph from the interior of the living room captures its quality.

Davidson's own house, informally organized, was the epitome of pragmatism. The author's description of just how the good California life was lived at the Davidson's sheds light on why Davidson designed as he did. This

modest man apparently had some misgivings about his approach; the author recounts a discussion between Davidson and the distinguished California traditionalist architect Gordon Kaufmann as to whether form-follows-function made good architecture. Kaufmann maintained that it didn't and Davidson maintained that it did. Looking back years later, Davidson admits that he might have been wrong.

Harwell Harris, the subject of the second essay, was a native Californian who majored in sculpture at college. After graduation he met Neutra, with whom he studied and for whom he worked; this was the kind of training that could be obtained nowhere else in the U.S. in the 1920s. The plan of Harris's first house was so brilliant that he soon achieved a following. His plan for the Lee Blair house of 1938, illustrated and described in the book, combined artistry, imagination, and function. His own house, inspired by the Primitive Hut, was almost literally a primitive hut. After the war Harris became perhaps the country's first Post-Modern architect. Since he did not leave California until he was forty, and since he had never had academic architectural training, the architects whose work he chose to reinterpret were Bernard Maybeck and Greene and Greene. His recent work is still admired by those in the know, and the plan of his own house-office in North Carolina is said to be a masterpiece.

The wisdom of including biographical material is well demonstrated in the chapter on Gregory Ain. Those interested in Ain are no doubt familiar with David Gebhard's *The Architecture of Gregory Ain: The Play Between the Rational and High Art* (1980, University of California, Santa Barbara Art Galleries), a good architectural historian's interpretation, which quite properly limits itself to the *oeuvre*. The McCoy essay complements Gebhard,



and makes Ain's career more understandable. This piece must have been difficult to write, since he was at the same time a designer of houses, a technologist, and a planner of low-cost mass-shelter projects. The academic crutch of footnotes, which McCoy seems reluctant to use, might have made her task easier in this case. Her complete reliance on photographs and plans to illustrate Ain's work is also slightly regrettable. His pre-war designs, influenced by both Schindler and Neutra (he worked for both), were of great interest and high aesthetic quality; his delicate drawings, reproduced by Gebhard, seem to convey his intentions better than photographs.

A Guggenheim Fellowship to study housing in 1940, and a wartime stint as a technologist had a profound influence on Ain, and turned his interest toward mass housing schemes which would incorporate the advantages he had given his individual clients in his pre-war work. To the architectural press and to the Museum of Modern Art this idea had great appeal, and

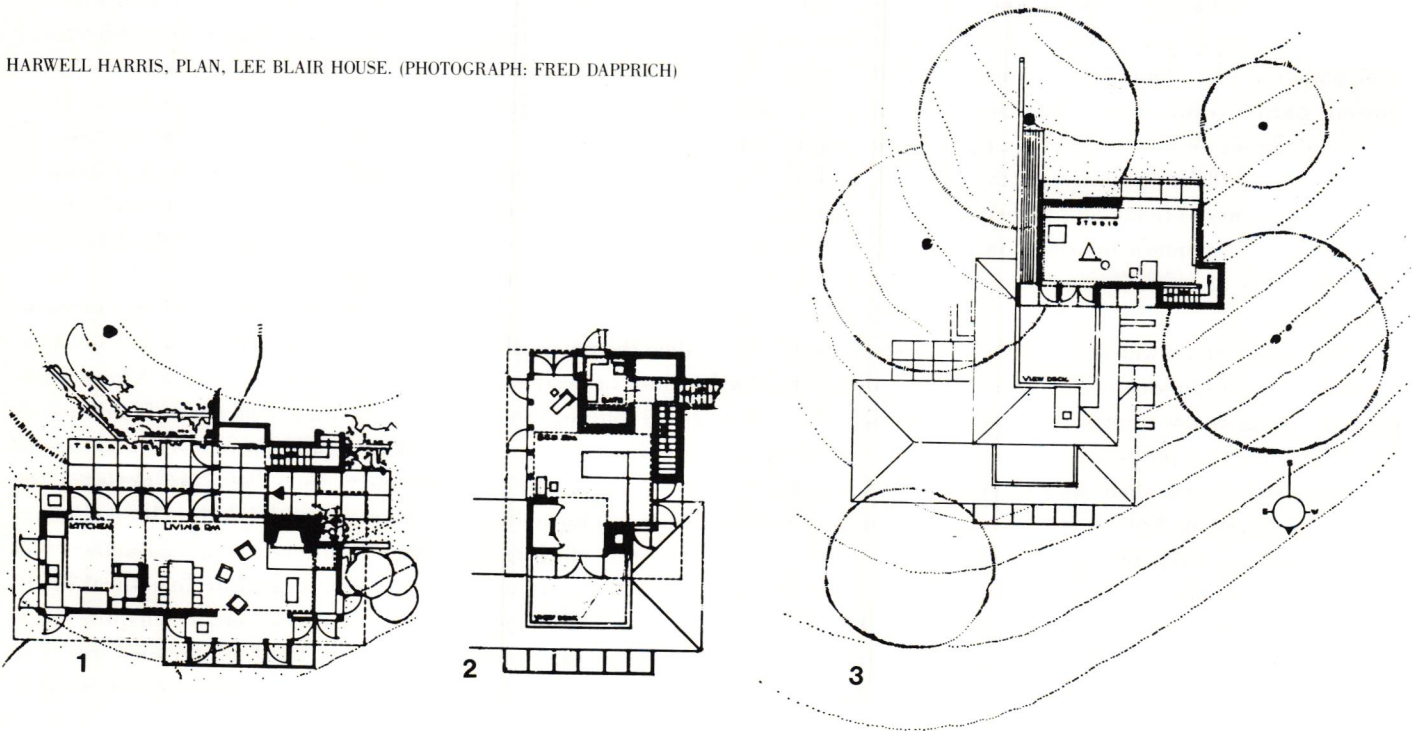
Ain's Park Planned Homes (1946), Avenel Houses (1947), and Mar Vista Houses (1948) were widely publicized. In retrospect, the first two projects did not deserve the recognition they enjoyed. The Park Planned Homes was a new street of houses carved out of a large estate with some mature trees. Ain elected to concentrate on one "perfect" plan, which was repeated with no variation, and let the elevations and relationships of masses fall where they might. The resulting development was to be "planted out," an old southern California device. The convincingly-planned Avenel row housing was marred by a strangely mannered street façade in which service yards were needlessly and dishonestly disguised as part of the mass of the units. Ain finally hit his stride in the Mar Vista project, where rational variation was introduced and Garrett Eckbo's fine landscape plan completely carried out.

The Museum of Modern Art was so impressed with Mar Vista that, in 1951, it accorded Ain the honor of building a "Demonstration House" in its garden.

MOMA's aim in erecting this house was to encourage the still reluctant builders to employ the Modern style. Critics somewhat unfairly pointed out that the "Demonstration House" was not a High Art object, and that its many built-ins forced the occupants to live as the architect dictated. Lewis Mumford's critique was entitled "Not for Internal Use." To add to the complications, Ain's insistence on quality construction in effect put his mass houses out of the reach of the masses.

Raphael Soriano, the subject of McCoy's last essay, encountered the same difficulties in his post-war work. The socially oriented Soriano, born in Europe, had the same attitude toward construction as his mentor Neutra; he wanted to employ the new technology at almost any cost. In the thirties Soriano established a practice in which he put Neutra's lessons to good use. After the war he built a steel pavilion for the Case Study House program. But his pragmatic work lacked the classic quality of the popular Mies van der Rohe, and he was shunted aside. McCoy is far too

HARWELL HARRIS, PLAN, LEE BLAIR HOUSE. (PHOTOGRAPH: FRED DAPPRICH)





wise a writer to "explain" why Soriano did not continue as an important figure. The reader is left to form his own conclusions.

Perhaps writers like Giedion and Drexler were wrong. Perhaps the freshest and most compelling works of the second generation were small wood shelters set in lush California landscapes. Americans have always had a hankering for the Rousseauian and the Thoreauian, and the Depression-era minimal structures struck a responsive chord in people who wanted to simplify their lives. In any event, this book, the result of so much first-hand knowledge and so much careful documentation, will remain a significant appreciation of an era.

*The Second Generation*, Esther McCoy, Peregrine Smith, 1983, 208 pp., illus., \$24.95.

Lawrence Nees:

## THE NORMAN HERITAGE, 1066-1200

TREVOR ROWLEY

The impact of the Normans upon the land of England is the capacious subject of Trevor Rowley's study, *The Norman Heritage, 1066-1200*, the first of the five-volume series, *The Making of Britain*, edited by Andrew Wheatcroft. The author takes a very broad view of his theme, including castles, towns, churches, rural administration and development, royal forests and deer parks in his consideration. He also devotes a chapter to the rather special circumstances of Wales. His range of sources

includes historical documents like the Domesday Book, evidence of place names, archaeological and art historical investigations, and aerial photography, which provides a large part of the excellent and interesting illustrations.

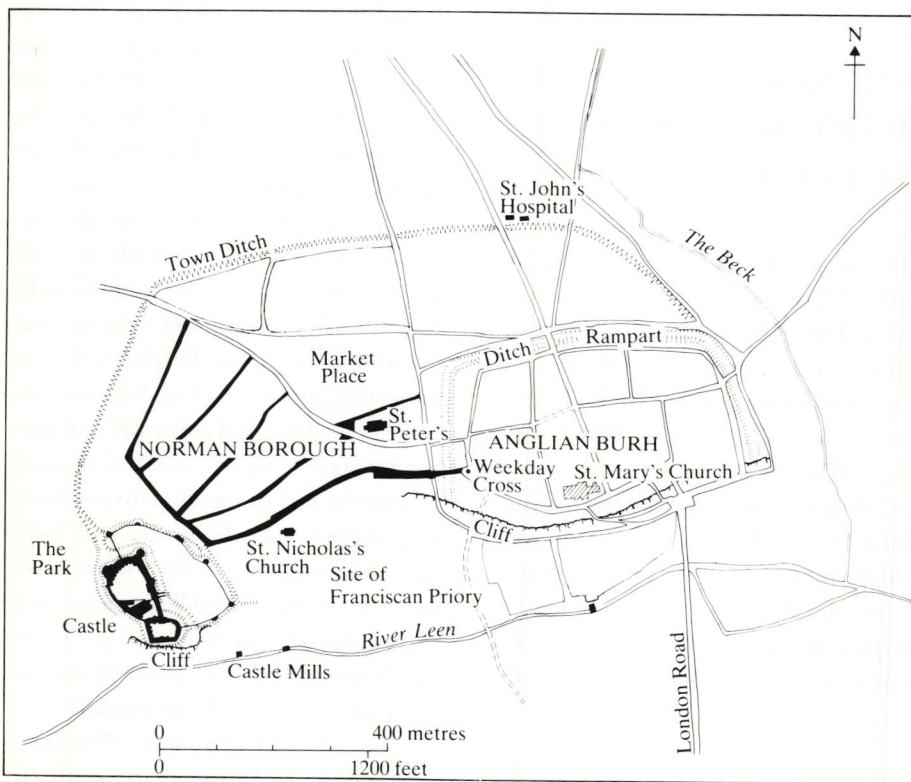
Obviously this is a sweeping and ambitious program for a relatively brief book. It is a tribute to the author's skill that he has been able to organize his often controversial and highly technical materials into a broad synthesis which is concise, clear, and generally quite interesting—even if too frequently marred by bad grammar. Obviously intended for a general audience, and lacking such scholarly apparatus as footnotes and extensive bibliography, it is a very successful introduction to a fascinating topic not previously treated so comprehensively and conveniently.

The Norman conquest of Britain was sudden and dramatic, essentially determined by a single battle, and made brutally effective and permanent over the course of a few succeeding years. The author quotes the estimate that no more than ten thousand Normans established themselves as lords over a subject population of roughly two million Englishmen, who not only spoke a different language, but also followed very different social and cultural traditions. Anglo-Saxons were rapidly and generally removed from all important positions, replaced by Normans as bishops, abbots, and nobles. This sweeping change at the top of an essentially hierarchical society made for a remarkably clean slate, and many opportunities. The creation of a completely new legal system of royal forests that covered roughly one-third of the country bears especially eloquent testimony to the range and effectiveness of Norman royal power. On the other hand, the maintenance of such extraordinary power by a tiny alien elite caste required powerful "security arrangements," to use the currently fashionable

DEVIZES, WILTSHIRE. A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF A CASTLE TOWN.







NOTTINGHAM, SHOWING RELATIONSHIP OF THE NORMAN BOROUGH TO THE ANGLIAN BURH.

phrase for the mailed fist; and for the Normans this meant above all castles.

Castles—powerfully fortified private residences and military garrisons, as distinct from walled towns or cities—numbered at least one thousand in England by the year 1215, but were in fact a radically new feature of European culture, and essentially non-existent in pre-Norman England. Ranging from small hillocks surrounded by ditches, with walls and interior buildings of timber (Pleshey) to enormous stone keeps (Norwich, Richmond, the Tower of London), these great monuments still add attractively forbidding picturesque accents to the English countryside, and have very largely shaped the popular view of the medieval world. Even though nearly all of the Norman castles died in the late Middle Ages, many nonetheless left permanent imprints on the

shape and use of the land. This may be seen in Devizes, Wiltshire where the central market and radial plan still directly depend upon the fortifications of the long-ruined castle lurking at the edge of the town.

The development of Nottingham in the early Middle Ages is a quite instructive example of the nature and impact of the Norman castles. The Anglo-Saxons had established a *burh* here, a walled town designed to serve as a defensive bulwark against the invading Danish armies. It had a basically rectangular grid plan, most likely descended from Roman city plans, like that of Winchester. The Normans preserved this *burh* with most of its physical and social patterns, but planted next to it a colony of Norman settlers in a radially planned new borough. They then enclosed the two quite dis-

tinct towns within a larger circuit of defensive works. These new works reached out to a natural strong point at a cliff face where a powerful castle was built, from which the two linked towns and the surrounding countryside could be dominated. It is noteworthy that here at Nottingham, as in many other towns illustrated in this book (Devizes, Ludlow, and Wallingford, for example), the castle is not in the middle of town but attached to the periphery, rather in the manner of a parasitic tumor. The fortified castle's function—to dominate rather than protect the surrounding population—differed radically from that of the fortified *burh*.

The Norman castle town is, as the author demonstrates, a remarkable example of the alteration of geography through political institutions, but it would surely have been both useful and relevant to acknowledge that the process was by no means unique to England. Fortified peripheral urban strong points are a natural expression of the needs of a conquering alien military caste, familiar in the Near East from Assyrian Khorsabad to Mameluk Aleppo (the latter roughly contemporary with the Norman works in England). To be sure, Rowley clearly does not aim to elucidate such structural parallels, or even to account historically for the origin of the Norman pattern, being content to analyze its design and effects. However, the absence of any such cross-Channel comparisons is a constant feature of this book and a troubling instance of its most distressing feature, a narrow insularity of outlook. The closing paragraph offers a particularly glaring example:

What would have happened to the Normans if they had failed at Hastings? No doubt they would have gone the way of the other French kingdoms and duchies. We would certainly not have had very much by which to remember them.



Evidently this seems reasonable to a scholar of medieval England; those concerned with the Crusades or with the great Norman kingdom of Sicily or, indeed, with the great French duchy, would hardly agree. Similarly the statement that the Anglo-Norman achievement "laid the foundations for Gothic architecture" dramatically overstates the usual assessment of English claims in this area; while the assertion that "generally speaking it [English Romanesque architecture] was far more inventive and less stylized than contemporary French work" represents a distinctly insular minority view. In general the reader should approach with caution the author's discussion of art historical and broader cultural questions. They can be antiquated and downright misleading. Commenting on the surge of church building in the Norman period, he states:

As soon as a Norman prelate had taken charge of an English see or

monastery a new church was begun. Such was the scale of rebuilding that it prompted a contemporary to write: "One would have thought that the world was shaking itself to cast off its old age and was clothing itself in a white robe of churches" (Raoul Glaber).

The non-specialist reader may not know that Raoul Glaber was a Burgundian monk writing *ca.* 1000, referring specifically to new churches in France and Italy. His well-known metaphor has nothing whatever to do with the Normans in England. Nevertheless such problematic statements are relatively rare and generally remote from the central focus of this book, which is the physical expression of the Norman conquest on the land of England. To that it provides a valuable and generally reliable brief introduction.

The Norman Heritage, 1066-1200, Trevor Rowley, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983, 210 pp., illus., \$19.95.

John Archer:

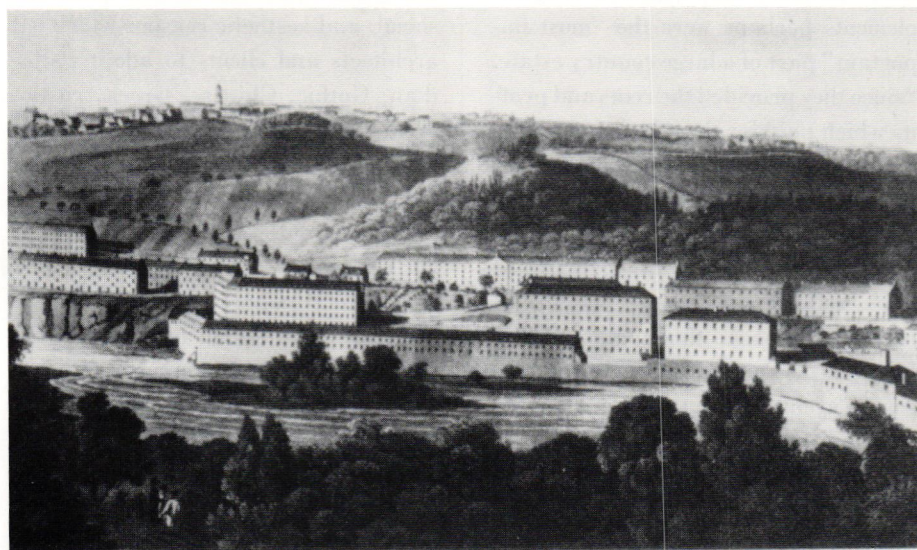
## THE GEORGIAN TRIUMPH, 1700-1830

MICHAEL REED

Happily this is not another chronicle of an apotheosis of British culture in the eighteenth century; such expectations, raised by the title, are unwarranted. It is a work of historical geography, exploring connections between the physical landscape in its various aspects and the beliefs, ideas, and desires that characterized British society under the first four Georges (1714-1830). The book is part of a series—*The Making of Britain*—which examines the history of Britain less in terms of the contributions of individuals, and more as the product of society at large. Thus, major figures one would expect to meet in a book on this period receive scant attention here. The inauguration of George I figures prominently in the beginning of the book, and George IV's "dissolute private life" is discussed at the end, but George II and George III barely appear. Locke is mentioned only briefly, while the philosophers Hume and Reid are entirely absent, as are Adam Smith and his *The Wealth of Nations*. No reference is made to Sir Joshua Reynolds, the most prominent painter of the age, and the architect Sir William Chambers is mentioned only once, in passing.

Michael Reed starts from the premise that the historical fabric of Britain cannot be understood as the work of a handful of politicians, writers, and entrepreneurs. Rather, he considers human beings—whether individually or as members of specific social and economic classes—as agents of change within the landscape, who of necessity reflect "the aspirations, ideals and achievements of a society, however elevated or grubby, noble or sordid, in a

VIEW FROM THE SOUTH, NEW LANARK, SCOTLAND. AQUATINT BY J. CLARK, 1825.





fashion which is brutally frank and impossible entirely to eliminate." This approach, long prominent in British historical and geographical studies, has yet to be fully embraced in architectural scholarship, much of which is organized around the history of architects and styles. Reed's book is therefore useful and interesting because it places architecture, landscape, and urbanism in a much broader, yet highly relevant context.

Unfortunately, the text, which includes 100 illustrations, is only 223 pages long—precious little space to give to the culture of more than a century. It is also entirely without footnotes or other documentation, save a brief, well-selected list of books for further reading. The refreshingly strong emphasis on Scotland in many chapters redresses the dominance of England in most historical studies, but the effect is to leave a seemingly sketchy picture of England and Wales.

These reservations aside, the organization and general thrust of the book are sound, providing a broad introduction to the material and social history of Georgian England. "The Structure of Britain," the first chapter, gives a quick but very readable account of Britain's physical geography, population density, language, political institutions, governmental divisions, social hierarchy, and predominantly agricultural economy in the early 18th century. Subsequent chapters treat in more detail the diversity of agricultural practice, the corresponding diversity of farm building types adapted to local conditions and changing needs, reasons for enclosure, the ensuing changes in farming and husbandry, and the contributions of several important agricultural improvers.

"Country Houses, Parks and Gardens" and "The Urban Landscape" are the chapters most directly concerned with architecture and urbanism. In



AERIAL VIEW OF STOURHEAD, WILTSHIRE, LOOKING WEST

them Reed makes the point that farms, fields, animals, crops, and farming implements perhaps were the "most important" part of a large country estate, "since they provided the rents and profits which paid for the other, namely the mansion house, park and gardens, the pictures and books and dogs, the social standing and the political influence." Such telling analysis throughout the book reflects the cogency of Reed's overall approach; this sophistication, however, does not extend to the discussion of architectural style, which he introduces in a fairly simplistic way, in terms of "two basic themes, . . . classical and Gothic." Many standard histories of the subject accept this stylistic

dichotomy, but Reed's reliance on it distracts him from the host of political, social, and aesthetic reasons which led architects and clients to adopt Palladian, Gothic, Chinese, Greek, rustic, or any other style—reasons very pertinent to the announced goals of his study.

Reed is more astute in the area of gardening; he mentions aesthetic as well as political concerns at Stourhead, Rousham, and Stowe. In all these gardens he notes the importance of carefully composed "pictures" formed of landscape elements and architectural embellishments. At Stowe in particular these were meant to communicate a political message focusing on matters of



liberty and freedom, which Lord Cobham found gravely lacking under the regime of Robert Walpole. Later Reed summarizes the contributions of such major landscapists as Brown, Repton, and Loudon.

Town planning is introduced as a response to needs for economic expansion and social reform and improvement. The Grosvenor Estate is offered as a quintessential example of London development, with particular emphasis on the method of barter by which artisans invested their labor in erecting buildings in return for a capital interest in them. Towns like Nottingham, Edinburgh, Brighton, and Bath are mentioned, but more briefly. Curiously, Reed discusses Bath, with its formal parades and geometrically regular Queen Square and Circus, as John Wood's "symbolic manifestation of the Divine perfection." Although Reed does not indicate the source of his interpretation, presumably he has in mind Wood's book, *The Origin of Building* (1747), in which Wood argued that architecture was actually a Divine revelation. Nevertheless, John Summer-son's analysis of Wood's planning as an evocation of major Roman cultural monuments is more convincing, and more appropriate to the aristocratic, pleasure-seeking clientele for whom these buildings were made (Summer-son, *Heavenly Mansions* [Norton, 1963]).

This is not the only time Reed seems to lose sight of his announced intention of demonstrating the connections between physical landscape and human society. On page 126 he states that "the physical expansion of towns was entirely uncontrolled in any respect," meaning, I assume, that expansion was not controlled by statute. This, of course, is to neglect the Building Act of 1774 and several local Improvement Acts, all of which, ironically, Reed mentions elsewhere; it is also to neglect the

*"The true triumph of Georgian Britain was to accommodate change without the destruction of the society which gave it birth—according to Reed."*

customs, ideals, and economic conditions that helped create such diverse environments as the staid pomposity of Cavendish Square (1717) and the idyllic pastorage of Regent's Park (1811).

The growth of manufacturing, the sources of power on which it depended, and the improvements in transportation wrought by turnpikes, stage coaches, canals, and steamboats were important in the shaping of the Georgian landscape, and Reed gives these topics their due. He understandably stops short, however, of discussing the major transformations, in all aspects of culture, inaugurated in 1830 by Britain's first regular passenger railway service. In chapter 8, "The Secularisation of the Landscape," the ostensible subject is the "moral atmosphere" of 18th-century Britain, but more properly speaking, it is the influence and persistence of popular culture and religion. Reed attempts to demonstrate that changes in the design of churches, schools, town halls, and other buildings reflected changes in cultural attitudes, but his arguments are far too brief. He suggests, for example, that the Birmingham Town Hall (1831), erected in the shape of a Corinthian temple, represents the introduction of "pagan" themes into popular culture and, therefore, the decline of the influence of the established church. This may be; but isn't the larger point that, in a period of urban and industrial growth, the form of the town hall served to evoke visions of the economic and cultural prosperity confidently expected by the

civic leaders of Birmingham?

In his final chapter, Reed returns to many of the topics of the first—topography, demography, government, social relations—but from the perspective of 1830. His concluding remarks encapsulate the strengths and weaknesses of the book. He restates the importance of paying attention to the connections between the physical landscape and human ideals and beliefs, the interdependence of which he has admirably demonstrated throughout the book. But later in the same paragraph he argues that the ability of William Wilkins to work in Greek as well as Gothic style is evidence of a general "fragmentation of artistic ideals" in the early 19th century. Lest the reader be confused at finding this statement at the end of a book called *The Georgian Triumph*, Reed hastens to explain—half-heartedly, I think—that "The true triumph of Georgian Britain was to accommodate that process of change without the destruction of the society which gave it birth." The unstated implication being, of course, that Britain triumphed because, unlike France, it avoided a revolution.

Was Wilkins's ability to work in more than one style really a sign of artistic fragmentation? One might argue rather that it was an expansion and strengthening of the architectural vocabulary. The multiplicity of styles adopted by architects in the early 19th century resulted in a more complex, richer form of architectural communication, in response to the variety of the political, social, economic, and artistic life that Reed describes. Stylistic diversity should be regarded, not as a sign of failure, but as one of Georgian Britain's most important bequests to the Victorian era.

*The Georgian Triumph, 1700-1830*, Michael Reed, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983, 240 pp., illus., \$24.95.



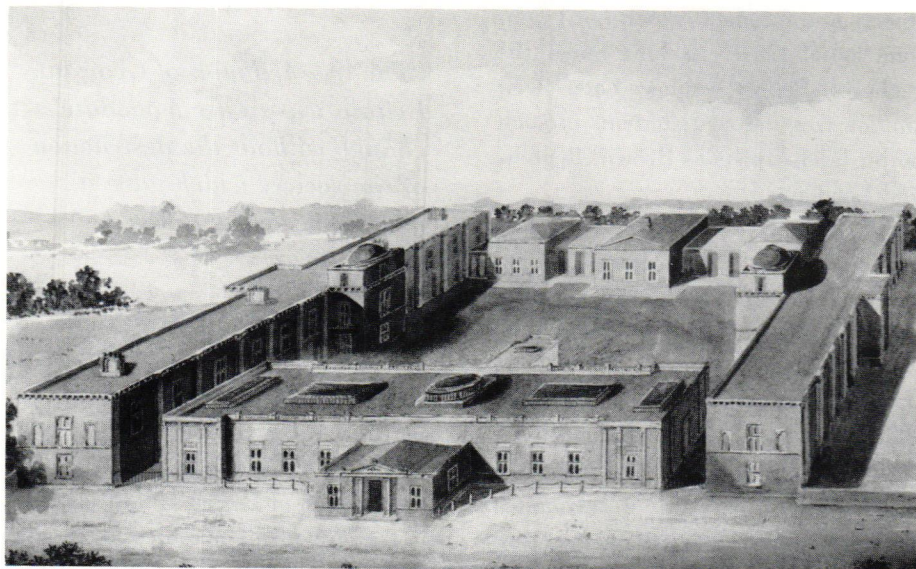
Barry Bergdoll:

## JOHN SOANE

JOHN SUMMERSON, editor

A determined inventor of form who nonetheless maintained a belief in the classical language of architecture, Sir John Soane inevitably attracts great current interest. Yet, despite the legacy of drawings, documents, and inventive architectural set pieces in the museum on which he (be)labored for more than 25 years to represent himself to an increasingly skeptical world, there is still no full-scale monograph on this architect's architect and his innovative, often eccentric style. The best introduction to Soane is still an essay written in 1952 by the man who has served as curator of Soane's museum for as long as Soane himself, Sir John Summerson. Appropriately, a revised version of this essay provides the introduction to the handsomely produced documentary volume on Soane in Academy Edition's Architectural Monograph series, a volume which brings together, in addition to two new essays, a superlative collection of illustrations of Soane's major buildings in both photographs and drawings (many luxuriously reproduced in color and several in large-scale fold-outs); photographic essays on Soane's most famous and complex works—his museum and the Bank of England; and a complete list of works. Only the lamentably cursory and unannotated bibliography invites reproach in this useful Soane reference.

The documentary apparatus is adroitly orchestrated by Summerson's biographical sketch and systematic elucidation of the "Soane style" (which he declares "one of the curiosities of European architecture"), and by an analysis of those characteristic Soanian features, pendentive domes, reductivist orders, and linear incised ornament.



JOHN SOANE, DESIGN NO. 5 OF THE GALLERY BLOCK, DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY, MAY 1811. THE MOST FULLY WORKED OUT OF THE QUADRANGLE PROJECTS FROM WHICH THE FINAL PLAN EMERGED.

*"Despite the most conventional beginnings, the mature Soane style had little in common with contemporary architecture, in England or elsewhere."*

The themes of his analysis are familiar enough: the closeness and reverence of Soane to his master, George Dance, who contributed so essentially to the definition of Soane's mature style; Soane's relation to the picturesque tendency in English architecture from Vanbrugh to Payne Knight via Adam; and his cosmopolitan mastery of advanced French architectural theory. This final theme is the point of departure for David Watkin's panoramic essay, "Soane and His Contemporaries." Watkin at once provides a European-wide context for Soane's *oeuvre*, and insists upon that essential phenomenon of "difference" which he, like Summerson, feels can be understood only as "the expression of personality in architecture."

Despite this defense of a psycho-biographic approach, Watkin turns to Soane's close reading of the Abbé Lau-

gier, and his determination to create something new by a fundamentalist reinterpretation of the classical tradition, to explain the sudden appearance of a mature personal style in the vestibule of Chillington House (1788), and in Soane's masterpiece, the Bank Stock Office (1792). Indeed, it was Soane's way of thinking about architecture and its relationship to tradition and historical models—central Laugierian themes—which set him apart from his English contemporaries and made his work an essential prelude to 19th-century historicism. This conception of style, more than occasional visual similarities to be found in the reductivist vocabularies of certain of his contemporaries such as Latrobe or Schinkel, would seem the most fruitful point of departure for analyzing Soane's personal architectural language.

Watkin concludes that, despite the



most conventional beginnings in the tradition of the grand Italian tour, and participation in the late 18th-century Franco-Italian academic tradition (recently studied in depth by Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey), the mature Soane style had little in common with contemporary architecture, in England or elsewhere. The most intriguing suggestion he offers is of the possible discussions between Soane and Turner over the use of light, particularly the problems of lighting in Turner's London gallery.

The gallery and the museum figure prominently throughout Soane's career and are evidently central types for understanding his highly individual vision of architecture. As Summerson suggests, once Soane had formulated his style he continued reworking and pruning it much as he did the eclectic collection of objects in his private mu-

seum. Yet if Soane's museum is today a major London attraction, the Dulwich College Picture Gallery, recently restored, and the only other complete Soane building to survive relatively unmarred, is remarkably little known. G.-Tilman Mellinghoff's thoroughly documented study of this key building of Soane's mature career (1811) is thus especially welcome. Not only does this focused analysis of the evolution of a single design complement the two general essays, it also offers the first detailed account of this building's complex history. A number of early, hitherto unpublished drawings are included, which offer a rare chance to view Soane at work, and reveal him as an architect of exteriors as powerful and original as the delicately poised interiors for which he is chiefly known.

The curious union of gallery and

mausoleum at Dulwich inevitably reminds one of Soane's own highly personal house/museum-cum-shrine, and this impression is confirmed by Mellinghoff's discovery that the juxtaposition expressly contradicted the wishes of the gallery's benefactor, Sir Francis Bourgeois. Perhaps further study of the relationship of architect and client would illuminate this highly personal work, a building unique at once in its austere reductivism and its haunting presence, and one which seems to confirm the authors' mutual conviction that, in appreciating Soane, the architect and the architecture are inseparable.

John Soane, John Summerson, editor, *Architectural Monograph* series, distributed by St. Martin's, New York, 1983, 123 pp., illus., \$19.95 pb.

## Edward N. Kaufman:

### THE CRAFT ARCHITECTS

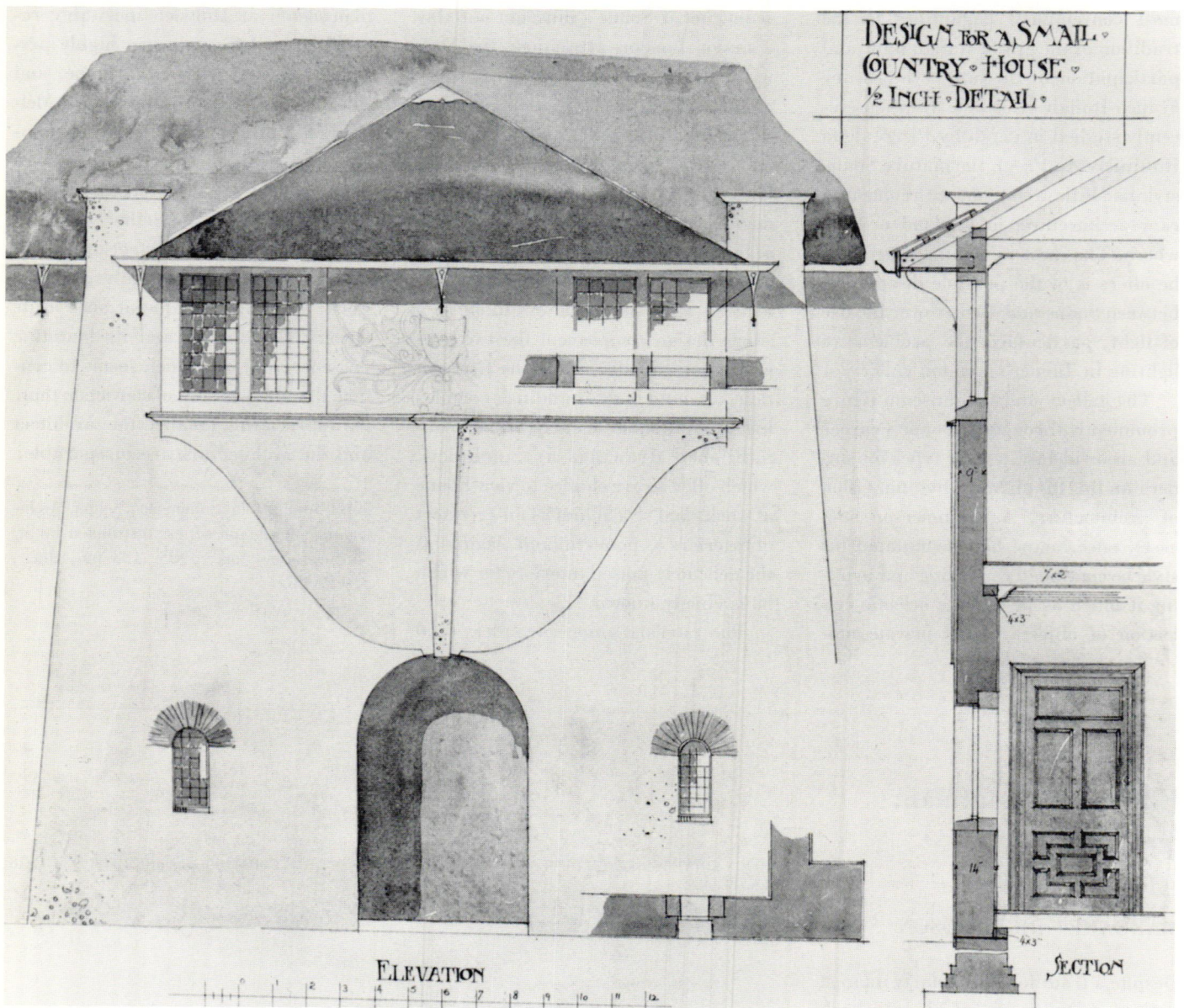
MARGARET RICHARDSON

Despite a tradition of scholarly interest in the Arts and Crafts which dates back to Pevsner's *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936), the architecture of very late 19th-century England has until recently received scant attention. Of general studies there are principally three: Peter Davey's *Architecture of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (Rizzoli, 1980), Alastair Service's *Edwardian Architecture and its Origins* (Nichols, 1975)—a collection of essays—and the same author's handy paperback, *Edwardian Architecture* (Oxford, 1978). These are now usefully supplemented by the book at hand—which is, nevertheless, not really about

EDWIN LUTYENS, SKETCH DESIGN FOR THE HUT, MUNSTEAD, NEAR GODALMING, SURREY, FOR GERTRUDE JEKYLL, 1892







ERNEST GEORGE THEAKSTON, DETAIL OF THE ENTRANCE ELEVATION FOR A SMALL COUNTRY HOUSE, 1899

the Arts and Crafts movement, or even about architecture. It is a book about architectural drawings, one of a series devoted to that great repository of architectural art and information, the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Students and researchers will find it useful as a sort of guidebook to the RIBA, a companion to its multi-volume drawings catalogue, as well as for its valuable references to material in other collections. The general reader will probably

use it mainly as an intelligent picture book—a role it fits well, being amply illustrated with a good mix of design and working drawings, topographical sketches, and finished watercolors.

The general reader ought to be warned, however, that the book's commitment to the RIBA Drawings Collection results in some editorial decisions which would otherwise be hard to understand. The author explains that the RIBA does not have significant holdings of Mackmurdo, Mackintosh, or

MacLaren: therefore these important architects are simply omitted from the book. This (and other editorial decisions) makes the book undependable as a survey of the field. On the other hand, it offers many consolations. Plenty of lesser lights here might otherwise have been outshone—Ernest George Theakston, for one, who marshals a conventionally Voyseyesque repertory of devices into a house of marvelous (and disturbing) physiognomic power. There are also important drawings by such



major figures as Webb, Lethaby, Sedding, Wilson, and Lutyens; and contemporary photographs of two extraordinary models by Prior—one of clay, the other of wax, both exhibited at the Royal Academy. ("Most interesting," was *The Builder's* judicious comment; "Rather bizarre," adds Richardson—again not unjustly.)

The text begins with an introduction which sketches in the larger picture. The formation of the leading guilds and societies is rehearsed, the famous controversy over the nature of architecture (was it an Art or a Profession?) neatly summarized, a characterization of Arts and Crafts architecture attempted. Here the author stresses the movement's dedication to the "vernacular," a concept which I suspect has been so misused and overused in recent years as to have lost all definite meaning. She goes on to remind us, more usefully, of the enormous variety of Arts and Crafts approaches, from Voysey's austere reliance on "essentials" to Wilson's lush Byzantine fusions of architecture and decoration, to Baillie Scott's arty domesticity.

In the body of the book, Richardson organizes this multiplicity by grouping

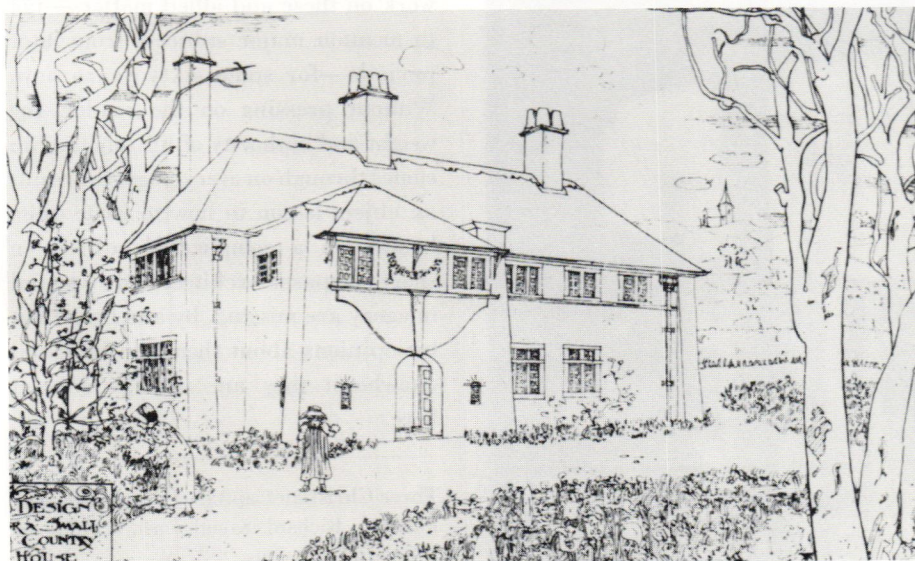
her architects into chapters centered on their teachers: thus we have "The Shaw Office," "The Bodley Office," and so forth. Within each chapter, architects are treated monographically, making the book a valuable reference source, particularly on some of the more obscure architects. This approach also points up the importance of the great High Victorian Gothic masters in the formation of the Arts and Crafts (although the name of G. E. Street, who taught both Webb and Morris, is curiously absent). It has the further merit of making room for a good deal of information on studio practices and individual drawing styles, all of it informative and entertaining. But it hardly makes for a taut exposition; at times the little monographs tend to follow one another like encyclopedia articles, or a second, shadow team of captions—second, that is, to the admirably informative captions which accompany the plates.

A paradox about this book deserves to be noted: the Arts and Crafts architects were, as a group, rather mistrustful of drawings. There was, for example, Bodley, whose method of studying medieval churches was (as

Richardson recounts) to peer at them over the top of a good cigar, studiously eschewing the use of pencil and paper. (Nor did he have any more patience for the preparation of finished drawings.) Or there was Prior, sending his wilfully ugly models to the Royal Academy; or Webb, who wanted to destroy his drawings when he retired; or Robert Weir Schultz, who actually did destroy many of his own drawings. For all of these architects, the drawing represented a deceptive and all too attractive stand-in for reality, one which might end up seducing the architect away from the "real" reality of buildings. They feared drawings and resented them—and they would have every reason to resent a book like this.

We, of course, are under no obligation to do likewise. Quite the contrary, we might even charge the Arts and Crafts movement with the inconsistency of having produced some of the most seductive of all architectural drawings. Whether we are caught up in the breathless expectancy of Temple Moore's sepia Gothic or in the supremely graphic artifice of F. L. Griggs's enchanted world, we stand confronted by a reality which is in some ways more complete than a mere building could ever be. Let us grant that the building's sheer physical presence might ultimately outweigh the attractions of a sheet of paper; it remains true that no building will ever convey the smoky symbolist intensity of Henry Wilson's imaginings as piercingly as his drawings. Nor perhaps will we ever experience the nostalgic pastoral of a Voysey house as purely and poignantly as we do a Voysey watercolor. This could be taken as a critique of Arts and Crafts architecture. It is also the justification for this book.

ERNEST GEORGE THEAKSTON, DESIGN FOR A SMALL COUNTRY HOUSE, 1899



*The Craft Architects*, Margaret Richardson, Rizzoli, 1983, 152 pp., illus., \$25.00 cloth; \$15.00 paper.



William L. MacDonald:

## THREE CHRISTIAN CAPITALS

RICHARD KRAUTHEIMER

The purpose of these lectures, given in 1979 at Berkeley, is to "view the architectural monuments of Christian capitals of the fourth and fifth centuries and their location within the urban texture as reflecting the political realities and ideologies of Constantinian Rome, Constantinople, Milan, and early papal Rome." Krautheimer discusses the reasoning behind the choice of location for imperial and episcopal churches, and its relation to existing pagan monuments, population centers, and martyrs' shrines. This book expands on his earlier work (summarized in his *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* [Pelican Books, third edition, 1979]). If you have found this period heavy going, or are just becoming aware of the burgeoning topic of the architectural topography of politics

and faith, this is a good place to begin. Although the book is technical in the sense that Latin and Greek terms and phrases are used, it is also clear, comprehensive, and well illustrated, and has detailed notes to what for most of us is a somewhat obscure body of material.

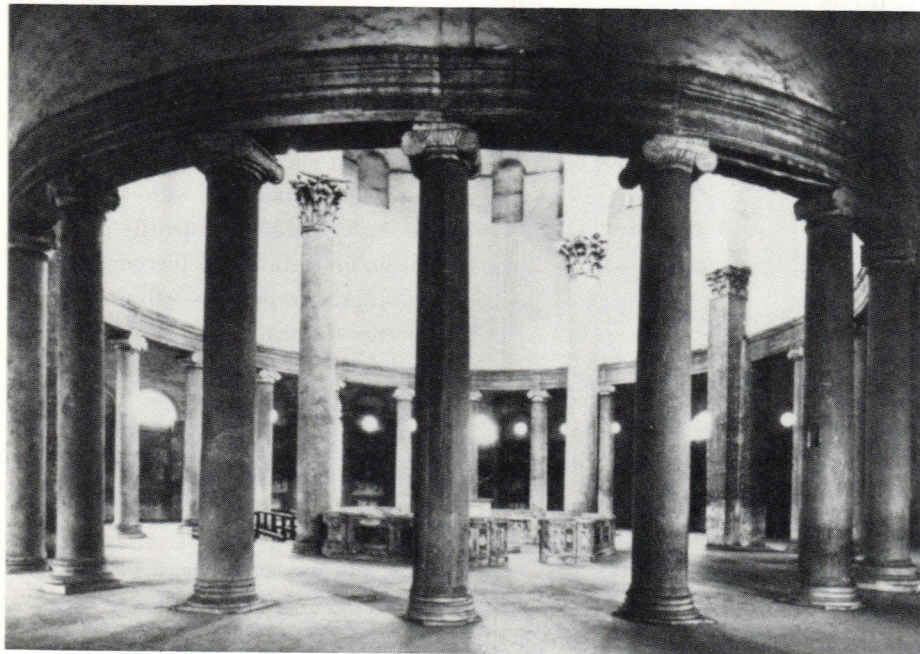
In addition to an exotic religious background—who believed what, and why—the book provides the most accessible description in print of late antique Milan, and a useful summary of what is known about the new imperial capital of Constantinople—both based on the most recent scholarship. The sections on Rome in the Constantinian and early papal periods cover rather more familiar ground, but they also bring one up to date. Krautheimer readily acknowledges his ignorance on some points, clearly labels suppositions as such, and refers to alternate views. Considerable space is given to up-to-date methods of determining building chronology, and to the original appearance of venerable structures long since mutilated or lost. Altogether there is more here than the number of pages of

text (121) would suggest, and anyone, even a specialist, who reads the book carefully will surely learn much from it.

The obvious and concrete transformations involved in the change of major cities from pagan to Christian strongholds—the erection in certain locations of large churches and ecclesiastical foundations—was the result not of haphazard choice but of calculated policy, based on considerable political acumen and social sensibility. In the west, with its imperial paganism, and in Rome in particular, Constantine and his successors (both lay and ecclesiastical) had for a time to tread softly. In the east, where divinity was a less rigorous and exclusive quality, bolder approaches were possible. In Milan (as elsewhere), decisions about church sites were influenced by the claims of church factions that saw the "Truth" differently—the same sort of factions that politicized the early faith. In Constantinople the emperor and the godhead could be seen as allied far more openly, and the artistic and architectural imagery of this alliance became one of the major foundations of later Byzantine forms. Such topics keep the contrasts among the three capitals clearly in focus, giving the book its form and strength.

Richard Krautheimer has been at work on these and allied matters—not to mention major subjects from later periods—for some sixty years now. Without pressing on the reader, the weight and authority of his scholarship comes through on every page, the result an object lesson in how to write quite lucidly on a complicated subject in short compass. Architectural style and imagery are missing, by and large, but his opinions about them can be found elsewhere; they are not the subject here.

INTERIOR, SANTO STEFANO ROTUNDA, ROME



Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics, Richard Krautheimer, California, 1983, 167 pp., illus., \$27.50.



Sheila ffolliott:

## ANTONIO RIZZO, SCULPTOR AND ARCHITECT

ANNE MARKHAM SCHULTZ

During the Renaissance there were no strict boundaries between the professions of architecture, sculpture, and painting, and practitioners of one art form would often venture into another: Antonio Rizzo is generally regarded as the major sculptor of the early Renaissance in Venice, but his experience in stonecutting and in designing large-scale sculptural complexes brought him architectural commissions—as was typical for the period. Ann Markham Schultz's intention here is to investigate the basis for the traditional claim for Rizzo's preeminence as a sculptor. The lion's share of her book—and of Rizzo's *oeuvre*—is therefore devoted to sculpture, but her treatment of his architectural work is equally thorough.

The author brings to this study a vast knowledge of Venetian sculpture of the period, since she set out to write not just Rizzo's biography, but the entire history of Venetian Renaissance sculpture (a task, one hopes, she will eventually accomplish). One result is an accurate account of Rizzo's output: through documentary research and stylistic analysis, she establishes that fifty percent of the works traditionally attributed to Rizzo are not his, while roughly the same number of works attributed to others should be rightfully his.

Rizzo entered the arena of Venetian architecture at the same time as the two major architects of the period, Pietro Lombardo and Mauro Codussi. Rizzo's and Lombardo's careers were similar in that both were trained as sculptors and continued to work in that field while accepting commissions for buildings and decoration. Codussi, on the



ANTONIO RIZZO, SCALA DEI GIGANTI, COURTYARD, DUCAL PALACE, VENICE

other hand, was trained, as far as we know, exclusively in building, and was responsible for some of the most advanced work of the period. Unlike Codussi, Rizzo never actually built entire buildings, but designed important details.

Rizzo's major architectural production was in the Ducal Palace of Venice, a combination of princely residence and government center. After a fire destroyed most of the Doge's private apartments in the mid-1480s, Rizzo, probably because he was already in the employ of a government agency, was commissioned to rebuild that part of the palace. The program was to rebuild the suite according to the traditional layout used for Venetian private palaces; the resulting structure is thus "Renaissance" only in the style of its applied decoration, and remains medieval in plan. Schultz's discussion of architecture is consequently more about decorative details than about space. Schultz carefully reconstructs the building history and tries to define

Rizzo's contribution, with particular attention to its relation to his work as a sculptor—for instance, the stylistic similarity of the façade of Rizzo's new wing of the Ducal Palace to the architectural frame of the Tron tomb.

Rizzo's architectural masterpiece is the staircase of the Ducal Palace, known as the Scala dei Giganti because of the mid-sixteenth century statues now adorning it. The exterior staircase was a typical means of access to the *piano nobile* of the Venetian palace, but Rizzo's Scala, because of its ceremonial use for the coronation of the Doge and other public occasions, is free-standing, unlike its counterparts in Venetian private palaces. In the Scala, Rizzo designed a stage for use in one of Venice's most important public rituals; Schultz compares its form to that of staircases in Venetian paintings of the period which show a ritual use of space. For the purpose she reconstructs the work's building history, describes its ceremonial use, and supplies clear measured drawings.



The Scala has a continuous flight of stairs perpendicular to the *cortile* facade, an intermediate landing almost at the top, and a tripartite opening above the top landing. This rounded arch, which contrasts with the arcade of pointed arches flanking it, functions as a triumphal arch reached after ascending the stairs. The relief decorations are likewise related to the ceremonial function of the stairs through both a stylistic and iconographical analysis. Their Roman inspiration served to reinforce Venice's self-image as an ancient power and legitimize the Doge's authority as head of the Republic.

Rizzo worked at a time when the Renaissance was just beginning to make itself felt in Venetian architecture. Like so many architects of the early Renaissance, he was a decorator of surfaces. To discuss him as an architect is to discuss the designer of surface patterns with antique-inspired motifs, patterns which are always planar and generally follow a grid arrangement where no member reaches beyond the confines of a single story. Rizzo's development from sculptor to architect was not unusual in Quattrocento Italy, and the pattern continued well into the 17th century with Michelangelo and Bernini, as well as Jacopo Sansovino in Venice. Alberti, often considered the most complete architect of the early Renaissance because of his interest in the theory of architecture, was, like Rizzo, occasionally the decorator of surfaces, submerging older buildings under a Renaissance cover.

Schultz's study of Rizzo takes the form of the classic art historical monograph: text, appendix of documents, catalogue raisonné, bibliography, index, and illustrations. The text—five chapters, plus introduction and conclusion—covers the major works: the Adam and Eve from the Arco Foscari, the Tron tomb, and, as noted above,

the works for the Ducal Palace. The extensive catalogue contains individual entries on the sculptures. There is some repetition in the text and catalogue, but this reader at least was pleased to be able to find all the pertinent information on a particular work in the catalogue. The documentary appendix is in digest form, with English summaries of the documents and references to the locations of the originals. The illustrations are numerous and of excellent quality, many having been made especially for the publication.

In recent years, the monograph by the Puppis on Mauro Codussi, and the studies by John McAndrew and Ralph Lieberman on Venetian Renaissance architecture have done much to clarify the subject, sorting out attributions and assessing the field. Anne Markham Schultz's masterful and complete study of Rizzo will also add much to our knowledge of Venetian sculpture and architecture of the 15th century.

Antonio Rizzo, Sculptor and Architect, Anne Markham Schultz, Princeton, 1983, 455 pp., illus., \$75.00.

Thomas Gordon Smith:

## ARCHITECTURAL THEORY AND PRACTICE FROM ALBERTI TO LEDOUX

DORA WIEBENSON, editor

## THE FIVE BOOKS OF ARCHITECTURE

SEBASTIANO SERLIO

Dora Wiebenson's book is a catalogue for an exhibition of architectural treatises which she initiated with the support of the Graham Foundation. As with many catalogues, its value outlasts its association with the exhibition, providing a point of entry to the collections of architectural books to be found in their original editions only in metropolitan centers and universities, and otherwise available through reprints or—thank goodness—on microfilm.

Wiebenson's catalogue is straightforward and unpretentious, produced

ANTONIO RIZZO, LEFT-HANDED VICTORY, FORMERLY, KAISER-FRIEDRICH MUSEUM, BERLIN





in a format similar to that of John Summerson's *Classical Language of Architecture*, and functioning as something of a sequel to it: Wiebenson's introduction and the other contributions provide as gracious and disarming an invitation to the theory and practice of classical architecture.

The contributions—brief essays which provide both an introduction to and a précis of the treatises—appear, refreshingly enough, to have been selected on the basis of their authors' areas of specialization. The contributors include both the well known and the less well known; all are acknowledged on the title page, but there is no table of contents to permit a quick review of the authors or the treatises they cover.

The entries are categorized by subject, and then chronologically. This categorization may have made sense for the exhibition, but it is less useful when the catalogue is used as a reference. There are instances where a single author's works are placed in several categories. Serlio's fourth book, *Regole generali*, for example, which deals with orders, appears in "The Elements of Architecture: Orders," while his sixth book, *On Domestic Architecture*—only recently published (in a beautiful edition by MIT Press, 1978)—appears in the section called "The Elements of Architecture: Public and Private Architecture." Books one, two, three, and five are dealt with in a cursory manner elsewhere. While there may be greater historical accuracy in considering the influence of each of these separately published (or unpublished) materials independent of the others, doing so seems to threaten the premise—put forward by Adolf Placzek in his introduction to the catalogue—that, for architects like Serlio, theory and practice were interrelated.

This drawback is ameliorated by an index which provides an extensive record of references—to Serlio, for ex-

*"It is a tribute to the radical nature of Serlio's work that it provided the raw material for generations of others."*

ample—in other publications, as well as of foreign editions of the treatises. As far as the compartmentalization of various subjects goes, it is convenient to have technical subjects like perspective segregated. Furthermore, by creating headings like "Public and Private Architecture," Wiebenson is able to emphasize such topics as the growth of the "treatise as promotional brochure" in a way that a strictly chronological organization of the material might not have permitted.

The individual essays vary in approach, but generally include descriptions of the treatises and comments on their historical context and influence. Illustrations are provided for a surprisingly large number of the treatises, and these help to convey a sense of their contents and the viewpoints of their authors. Guarini's *Architettura Civile* is represented by his fantastic variations on classical themes, and William Chambers's later *Treatise on Civil Architecture* by his depiction of the prototypical Doric order—symptomatic of his reductive approach to architecture.

The essays provide the dates and profession of the author of each treatise, and a list of the treatise's various editions, including, occasionally, a currently available reprint. There is also

a bibliography, inconveniently subdivided into headings.

The last two decades have seen the reprinting of many of the treatises cited in the catalogue. The excellent publications of Benjamin Blom, Arno, Gregg, or da Capo, produced in the late sixties and early seventies, can still occasionally be found on the remainder table; the less expensive Dover editions—of Vitruvius, Jan Vredeman de Vries, the Leoni Palladio, and now of Serlio—are more widely available.

With a cover price of less than fifteen dollars, Dover's reprint of an early 17th-century English edition of Serlio's *Five Books of Architecture* is a bargain, and its fidelity of reproduction is sometimes superior to the Benjamin Blom edition of the same work. The text, a translation of a Dutch edition, is difficult to read, but valuable as a reflection of High Renaissance (perhaps even Bramante's) thinking about the classical orders. It is the illustrations, however, that give the work its power: their visual impact makes one realize why Serlio was so influential.

This edition combines in one volume a commentary on Vitruvius and antique monuments; a graphic and written canon on the orders; books on geometry and perspective; and designs for buildings, patterns, letters, and decorations. All of the topics which Wiebenson has compartmentalized are drawn together in the art and thought of one man. It is a tribute to the radical nature of Serlio's work that it has provided the raw material for generations of others to develop and intensify.

Architectural Theory and Practice from Alberti to Ledoux, Dora Wiebenson, editor, Architectural Publications, Inc. (distributed by Chicago), 1982, 140 pp., illus., \$25.00 pb.

The Five Books of Architecture: Unabridged Reprint of the English Edition of 1611, Sebastiano Serlio, Dover, 1982, 416 pp., illus., \$14.95 pb.



Christian F. Otto:

# THE BAVARIAN ROCOCO CHURCH

KARSTEN HARRIES

The architectural history in this book is not conventional fare. Karsten Harries wants to know why 18th-century churches in Bavaria were so elaborate and lavish—complex architectural designs overrun with painting, sculpture, stucco, and decoration. To do so, he must get at the motivations that produced the buildings, and it is the effort to comprehend intention that distinguishes his work from most other publications on German rococo architecture.<sup>1</sup> He has another purpose as well—to demonstrate his conviction that this architectural art, and specifically its roccaille decoration, was a crucial initial step toward the making of modern art. Here Harries goes beyond the traditional bounds of architectural history, and leaves us with implications to ponder.

He undertakes his task in a book of nine chapters, which I would divide into three groups of three chapters each. In the first three chapters he reviews some formal properties of the architecture, elaborating upon analyses by earlier scholars. The middle group—to me the core of the book and its most important contribution—explores the motives that produced these buildings. In the final three chapters Harries reflects on the significance of the designs in relation to modern art, an unusual extension of concerns within the discipline of architectural history.

Harries has a vast amount of ar-

chitecture to take into account. By the 1680s, a construction boom was underway in Germany and buildings of all kinds were being put up. Public structures encompassed a range of commissions, from simple parish church and resplendent urban residence to city hall and hospital; practical construction included stores, housing, and fortifications. Architects of the rank of Balthasar Neumann, some of the greatest designers in the history of European architecture, rose to prominence during these years, sponsored by enthusiastic ecclesiastics and avid and knowledgeable patrons like the Schönborns and the Wittelsbachs. Due to an extensive use of roccaille ornament, the architecture became known—disparagingly at first—as rococo. Not an inch of surface, it seemed, was permitted to remain untouched by stucco, sculpture, decorative patterns, frescoes, or ornament. This abundance was intensified by color, a plenitude of pastel pinks, blues, greens, and yellows, creams and porcelain whites, made opulent by quantities of gilding. The architecture was rich literally as well as visually and to the touch.

Harries maintains that geographical limits are significant in defining this extensive amount of exuberant building. To him the Bavarian rococo church is a distinct and different creation from

contemporary architecture in adjoining Baden-Württemberg, the Vorarlberg, and even Franconia. He does observe in a footnote that the concept of Bavarian is “somewhat misleading,” since not all the buildings he discusses were located in 18th-century Bavaria, or even within its (different) 20th-century borders. His assumption about an autochthonous Bavarian architecture has, however, more basic problems than this. The very concept is thrown into question by the great mobility of designers and work crews during the 18th century. Artisans often came from far afield and natives just as frequently travelled to distant places. Harries realizes this, as his observations about the Wessobrunn stuccoers, who worked all over Europe, reveal. Yet he never comes to grips with its implications, presumably because he is attracted to the notion of *genius loci*—a notion as vaguely defined in his work as the term Bavarian.

Harries's implication that the Bavarian rococo church is a building type, in the sense that, for example, the Greek Doric temple may be so considered, is also questionable. These buildings can only be classified as a type by very few and very general criteria, but it is precisely the extraordinary variety of individual responses to church building that distinguishes them and makes them so exciting to experience and study. The few common denominators are minor compared to the range of brilliant diversity.

The initial three chapters of Harries's book are based on positions established by two German scholars 25 years ago. In *Die bayerische Rokoko-Kirche* (1959), Bernhard Rupprecht interpreted the interiors as non-tectonic, indefinite spaces containing decorative architectural elements; complementing this work, Hermann Bauer's *Rocaille: Zur Herkunft und zum Wesen eines Ornament-Motifs* (1962)





INTERIOR, ABBEY CHURCH, ALDERSBACH

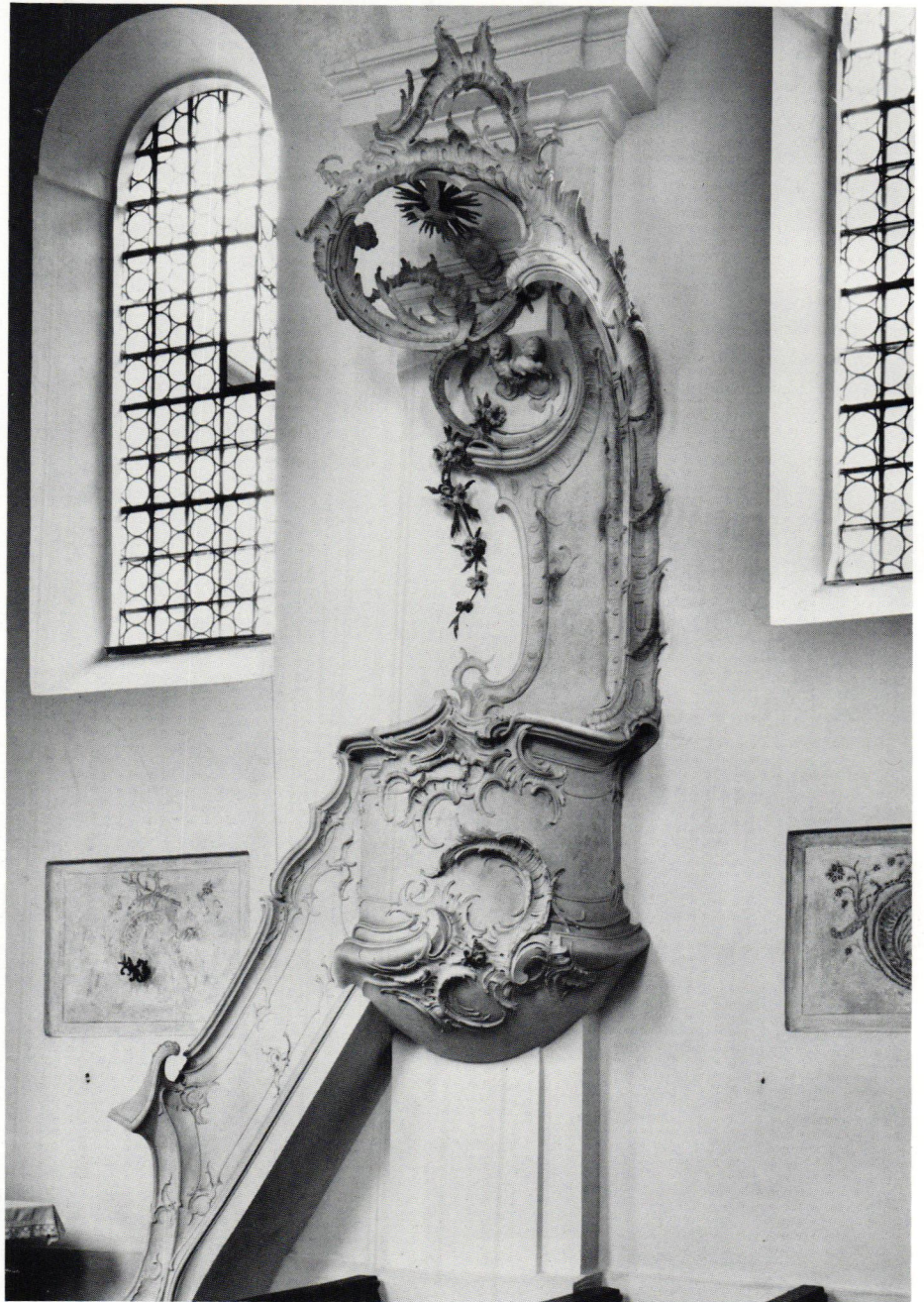


dealt with the role of ornament in creating ambivalent zones and transitions within an interior. Harries draws on both these authors in examining rocaille ornament, stucco frames around frescoes, and transformed architectural elements. He provides especially useful analyses of the various approaches to illusionistic representation in the frescoes, and how the rocaille frames that surround them arbitrate between illusion and the built interior.

Just these issues interest him the most, and consequently he fails to consider the interiors as larger wholes. He is aware of them in their entirety, as his last chapters indicate. And he acknowledges the complexity of the spaces, on this point challenging Rupprecht's assertion that they should be viewed, like a painting, solely from one location:

While it is true that the rococo church places special emphasis on a point of view near the entrance . . . it is equally true that this point of view is usually unable to do justice even to the main fresco, let alone to the fresco scheme as a whole. That discloses itself only to someone who is willing to change his point of view, to walk through the church. . . . The multiple perspective of the large frescoes of Bavarian rococo churches similarly presupposes a moving spectator.

These interiors, furthermore, were often completed over long periods of time by many artists and artisans; rarely was a single artistic director in charge of an entire scheme from start to finish. Despite this, each new part, whether altar, painting, sculpture, or stucco, was inevitably related to those already in place. Every maker assumed a profound obligation to the larger whole, integrating new efforts with existing work. This approach—different from either teamwork or individual expression—produced over time the



PULPIT, ST. JOHANN BAPTIST, OPPOLDING

highly consistent, intricate, interlocked interiors that we experience today.

The difficulties created by Harries's selective focus can be seen in his treatment of the Aldersbach parish church, to take an important instance. Harries considers this building at length in several parts of the book, going so far as to reproduce similar illustrations of the same fresco within 22 pages of one an-

other. Yet his interest in the church is limited almost exclusively to this one fresco and the stucco around it. The sequence of five vault frescoes—three in the nave and two in the choir—is not discussed, nor is the unusual arrangement of altars in the nave chapels (five to a side, and shifted to the east wall of each chapel, rather than facing the nave).

From the entrance into the church,



the altars in the Aldersbach church are successively more elaborate; as an ensemble, they build toward the choir. This hierarchy establishes a counterpoint to the symmetrical placement of the nave frescoes and simultaneously complements the curving, linear composition of its major fresco. The theme of each altar is related both to the frescoes and to the progression of altars. The two altars and the fresco at the entrance, for instance, depict three events in the life of Mary: the Visitation (first altar to the left), the Annunciation (fresco), and the Deposition (first altar to the right). This grouping in turn is connected to the major fresco of the nave, the Birth of Christ. The composition of the fresco begins with St. Bernhard's vision of the birth, just as another vision of St. Bernhard, Mary Releasing Souls from Purgatory, appears as the theme of the fourth altar to the right, matched to the left by an altar of the Guardian Angel, both referring back to the Mary altars and fresco at the entrance. The connections continue, altars and frescoes interacting to build a program of interrelated meanings within the interior.

The decisively longitudinal choir at Aldersbach is distinguished from the nave by its narrower space, raised floor levels, and changed quality of light. Yet both choir and nave are integrated by the iconographical program and by design elements that are used consistently throughout the interior. In plan and section, Aldersbach is a relatively undemanding wall-pier church. The many visual media within the plain shell transform it into a wonderfully complex interior, and the meanings of the church are inseparable from this complexity. The whole of the building can only be comprehended in relation to the multiplicity of parts.

After this checkered beginning Harries comes into his own in the middle third of the book, where he examines

this architecture in a larger context. In pursuing this task, he is clear about his methodological assumptions:

The history of art must be understood against the background of the history of ideas, and beyond that, of history. . . . Only when we keep in mind the limitations placed on an artist's creativity by his historical situation can we gain an understanding of what really is his own.

We must, in other words, assess the purpose of this architecture if we are to better comprehend it:

All art is essentially a more or less successful realization of some purpose or intention. The observer who approaches an object as a work of art has to assume such an intention—works of art, when seen as art, can never simply "be there," but always refer us beyond themselves to a governing intention, to intended meaning.

In establishing this context Harries provides a fresh and persuasive analysis, an understanding of these buildings that cannot be gained from any other source with which I am familiar. He discusses the importance of performance within various social groups of the time, whether in tournaments, passion plays, or the depictions of vault frescoes. These performances differed from the efforts at creating convincing illusions practiced during the 17th century, such as Bernini staging a fire in a theatrical production so realistically that the audience fled, convinced that the stage had accidentally burst into flame.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing of this sort in Bavaria, where spectators were placed in an ambiguous middle ground between convincing illusion and an "objective" distance from it. Often audiences participated in parts of the performance. The church frescoes are not

based on a *quadratura* framework, such as those perfected by Andrea Pozzo, but contain several perspective systems and are meant to be seen from various vantage points. Scenes of an obviously visionary sort are depicted, yet integrated compositionally with the architecture of the church, so that the vision is locked into the actual space occupied by the observer. Altars within choirs are arranged in analogous ways, creating stages within stages within stages.

Many objects in the church, from relics to clocks, were organized to observe and comment upon the passage of time, *memento mori*, and in this way to broach the large questions of death and eternity. Sacred objects, and events of the past depicted in fresco or sculpture, were intended to reveal that "only the divine sacrifice promises to defeat" the power of death. Hieroglyphs and emblems, extremely popular during these decades, linked veneration of the Virgin with the meaning of the church. Following the tenet of Thomas Aquinas that "The house in which the sacrament is celebrated is not just called church, but signifies the Church," the church was seen to signify the Church by signifying the Virgin.

I provide here an extremely elementary outline of Harries's argument, which, like the buildings themselves, must be read in the fullness of its detail in order to convey an understanding of the churches. No other text explains this architecture as ambitiously and successfully as do his middle chapters, which comprise the importance and achievement of the book.

Harries's concluding three chapters are also uniquely his, but they go beyond the architecture as such. His point of departure is the introduction of the Enlightenment into Bavaria. Imported from abroad by a small group of rulers and intellectuals, Enlightenment thought was imposed on a reluctant

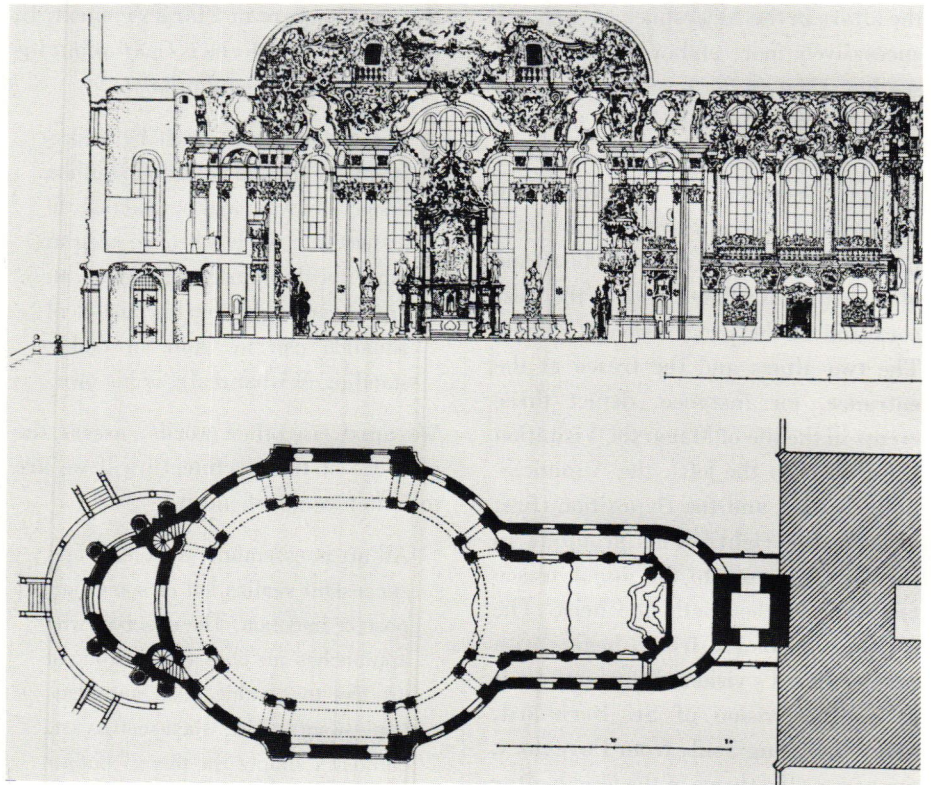


population. The apparent excesses of rococo architecture had no place in the new scheme of things, and the churches that had been so feverishly constructed were abandoned and neglected—except by small groups of local users for whom they never lost their attraction. Rocaille ornament, no longer employed to mediate between fresco and architecture, began to be treated as an independent, self-sufficient aesthetic object, as subject matter in its own right. It became an autonomous aesthetic creation, devoid of the ontological or ethical purpose it had possessed earlier in the century. This transformation in aesthetic sensibility promoted by Enlightenment thinkers from the 1740s on, was, Harries maintains, a necessary prologue to the emergence of modern art, resulting in an “aesthetic approach,” or art for art’s sake. Connections between art and the sacred were lost, and the stage set to release art from purpose.

Harries next argues, following the propositions of Michael Fried, that the “authentic” art of our time aspires to “presentness,” which:

suggests that the aesthetic experience is to deliver us not simply from meaning and representation, but from the burden of time. . . . But we may well wonder whether that promise does not lead a man out of reality. And if his vocation is to realize himself in this world, this would make it a temptation to be resisted.

Applied to reflections on 20th-century art, Harries’s proposal becomes a preamble after the fact to his earlier book, *The Meaning of Modern Art: A Philosophical Interpretation* (Northwestern, 1968). Working toward his conclusion, he provides informative observations about the churches, yet their meaning in their time can be fully understood without this later history: earlier occurrences are not explained



SECTION AND PLAN, PILGRIMAGE CHURCH, DIE WIES

by the chance course of subsequent events.

Two brief observations about the supporting apparatus of the book. The index consists almost entirely of proper nouns, and is useful to this extent, but key words, concepts, and points of discussion are mostly missing. Harries’s notes contain considerable information on the sources he has used, but the lack of a separate bibliography excludes a systematic and inclusive overview of the research materials on which the book was based.

Harries is a philosopher writing about architecture on the basis of painted surface and stuccoed pattern. From this amalgam has emerged one of the best recent books on the history of 18th-century German architecture—a circumstance worth serious reflection.

undertaking research on 18th-century architecture in Germany, emphasizing documentation of the buildings and their histories. The literature in English that deals with these structures is more recent, decidedly sparse, and limited to large-scale surveys and publications on individual architects; the mark for both types of book was set in 1968, when in that one year Henry-Russell Hitchcock published *Rococo Architecture in Southern Germany* (Phaidon, London) and *German Rococo: The Zimmermann Brothers* (Penguin).

2. Ambiguity in illusion was already recognized in the 17th century. Irving Lavin, *Bernini and the Unity of the Visual Arts*, (Oxford, 1980, Vol. 1, p. 157), refers to Emanuele Tesauro’s discussion of the metaphor of deception in *Il Cannocchiale aristotelico* (Venice, 1655), where the viewer is first deceived by the illusion, then recognizes it and is pleased and enlightened.

**The Bavarian Rococo Church: Between Faith and Aestheticism**, Karsten Harries, Yale, 1983, xv + 282 pp., illus., \$37.50.

1. Since Cornelius Gurlitt’s *Geschichte des Barockstils und des Rococo in Deutschland* (Stuttgart, 1889), German scholars have been



Christian F. Otto:

## STUCCO AND DECORATIVE PLASTERWORK IN EUROPE

GEOFFREY BEARD

Architectural stucco, shaped into abstract or representational form and ranging in size from delicate, small-scale pattern to overlifesize figures, has been used extensively inside buildings, and, less frequently, on exteriors, since Roman designers began to work with it ambitiously during the first century B.C. This use of stucco—very different from the smooth surfaces of stuccoed walls and vaults, and different again from repetitive strip moldings, when they are in fact stucco and not wood—has since then experienced periods of wild popularity and others of complete eclipse. Its impact on a building can be as fundamental and as profound as that of light, fresco, or mosaic; to think of it as simply embellishing a building, or of the building as a shell for the stucco, is an error. The issue is one of response and transformation.

Discussion of this extraordinarily important issue has been honored in the breach; Geoffrey Beard's is the first book-length effort to grapple with the matter. His study emphasizes the 17th and 18th centuries, but begins with a brief consideration of the material itself: the means of working it, and issues fundamental to the making of it, such as the training of stuccoers. ("Stuccoist," Beard's word and also his invention, is used consistently throughout the book, for no reason that I can determine.) He next considers the use of stucco from first century B.C. Rome into the 1500s, and, following chapters on the 17th and 18th centuries, rapidly concludes with work from the 1750s up to World War I.



ANTHONY SALVIN AND WILLIAM BURN, STAIRCASE HALL OF HARLAXTON MANOR, LINCOLNSHIRE, 1840s

The history of architectural stucco is long—crammed with glories, a multitude of makers, and the most complex interaction with building mass and space. Can a reasonable synopsis of this amplitude be provided in just over 200 pages of text and 165 illustrations? Beard's text reads like a prosed version, ordered by time and place, of his collection of index card entries. Because he covers such vast chronological and geographical terrain so rapidly, Beard is forced to compress and reduce, and the reader is often left marginally informed and frustrated by the way matters are alluded to but not specified. The problem, however, lies less in the compression than in the lack of a

point of view. It is unlikely that a condensed study of anything can be achieved unless the effort is formed by a clear, purposeful intent. Beard does not provide one; he does claim, in passing, that he intends to document the contribution of stuccoers to their art. What might this mean? Does he refer to the stuccoer's contribution technically and in terms of quality? As aesthetic creation? In relation to the structure stuccoed? According to an artistic or philosophical ideal? And document is certainly a grand term for information derived from secondary sources, though Beard has studied these with great thoroughness.

Other issues are also left dangling.









CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY AND INTERCESSION OF THE VIRGIN, PSKOV, 16TH CENTURY(?)

thedral of the Dormition in Vladimir. His quite proper attention to these and to slightly later works, like the 16th- and 17th-century Monastery of the Caves in Pskov and the 16th-century Church of the Ascension at Kolomenskoe, overshadows other sections (for instance, that on Russian architecture and design of the *fin de siècle*). But this imbalance is shared by most histories of the subject.

One of Russian architecture's most intriguing aspects, in all periods, is the way foreign styles (Greek, Byzantine, Italian, French) were imported, assimilated, and reprocessed. While certain celebrated monuments like the 11th-century Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev, some of the Moscow Kremlin structures, and Rastrelli's Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, remind one of Western prototypes, their paraphrasing of the original is exaggerated and often grotesque. This is a noticeable feature of Russian interpretations of fashionable Western trends, from the Baroque experiments in St. Petersburg

(such as Trezzini's Alexander Nevsky Monastery) to the Neo-Gothic (Bazhenov's Tsaritsyno Palace), from the neo-classical (Cameron's Imperial Palace at Pavlovsk) to Art Nouveau (Shekhtel's Riabushinsky villa in Moscow). Brumfield discusses these Western connections in detail, implying that, far from being a barbaric nation isolated from the cultural mainstream, Russia was *au courant* with Western ideas even before Peter the Great's deliberate and forceful policy of westernization in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

The sequence Brumfield follows is conventional, naming the principal examples of the major styles in order, from the medieval churches of Novgorod, Pskov, Vladimir, and Suzdal to the churches of 16th- and 17th-century Moscow, 18th-century Moscow and St. Petersburg, the rationalism of the 1920s, and Socialist Realism before and after World War II. Consequently, this is not a book which challenges our overall understanding of the principal

developments in Russian art and architecture; but it is, at last, a reliable, well-documented survey, and a single source for the names and dates of Russia's important buildings and architects.

A failing of Brumfield's book, and one common to most histories of Russian architecture, is that it gives us little notion of what common architecture was like. How did the Russian peasant live in the 17th century? How were the 19th-century workers' tenements in St. Petersburg and Moscow planned, and by whom? What was the military architecture (barracks, bunkers, arsenals, hangars) like in the two World Wars? In the same vein, Brumfield might have given more space to the whole question of 19th-century industrial architecture in Russia (water towers, grain silos, railroad stations and bridges), both as it developed during Russia's late, but rapid urbanization, and as it related to Soviet Constructivism of the 1920s.

A third problem concerns the choice of photographic subject. The move-



ADRIAN ZAKHAROV, THE ADMIRALTY, LENINGRAD, 1806-1823



ments of Westerners are severely limited in Soviet Russia, and many zones are off limits. The selection of photographs, and, to some extent, the narrative, was dictated at times by the legal status of the location, rather than by aesthetic and scholarly demands, and the reader should have been given some indication of this. There is another Russian architecture—of the churches and palaces destroyed or mutilated during the twenties, thirties, and forties, of the fine monuments still standing in inaccessible towns and villages—that has yet to be written about or assessed. Still, these lacunae do not undermine the basic value of Brumfield's lucid and intelligent account.

*Gold in Azure: One Thousand Years of Russian Architecture*, William Craft Brumfield, Godine, 1983, 429 pp., illus., \$60.00.

Ron Herman:

## KATSURA

### SHINKENCHIKU-SHA

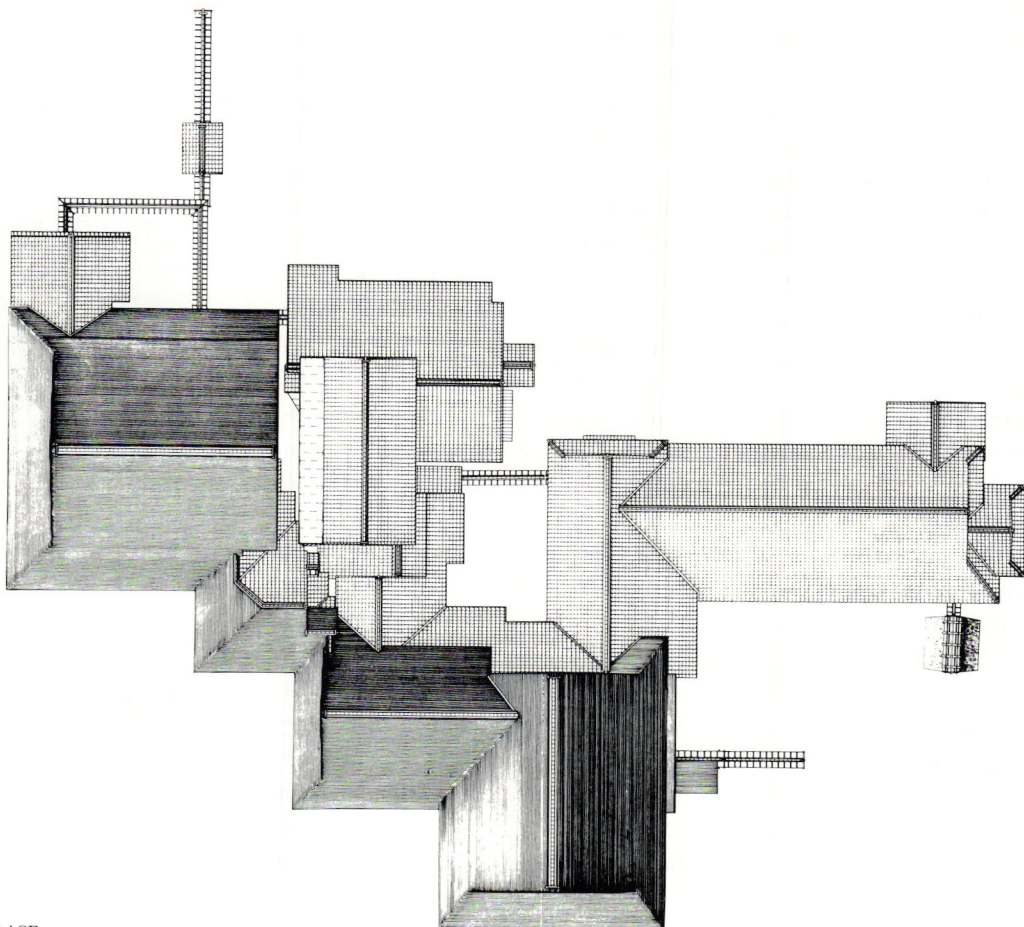
The restoration of Katsura imperial villa was completed in March of 1982. This was the first complete disassembly and reconstruction of the buildings in their 360-year history, the culmination of six years of work. In Japan—a country that looks as much to the past as to the future—all the daily papers carried stories on the progress of the work, and the completion put Katsura on television and on the covers of most news magazines.

Originally the country residence of a prince, Katsura is one of Japan's most famous pieces of architecture, synonymous, for many people, with Japanese

design. The refinement of its elegant buildings, and the harmony with which it blends interior and exterior space, have been elevated by its admirers to near mythic status.

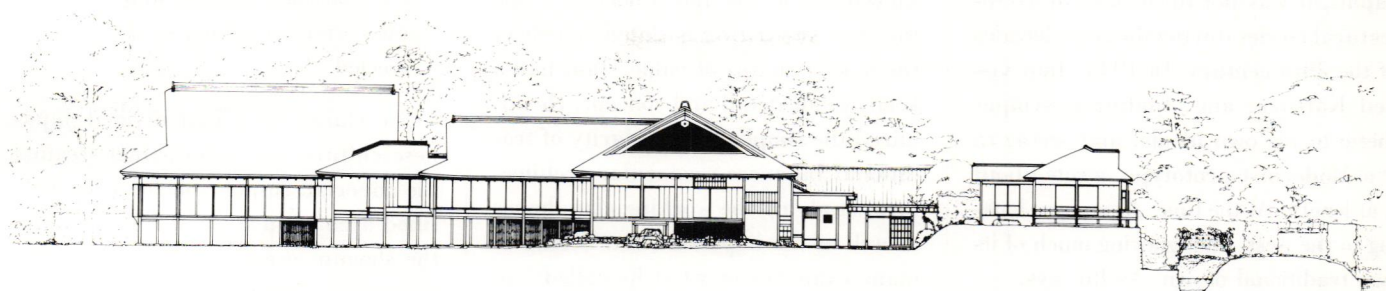
Katsura is also Japan's most famous garden, the prototype of the stroll garden (*Kaiyu-shiki teien*), widely emulated by Japan's ruling elite. Built in the early 1600s, it exerted a strong influence on garden design of the Edo period (1603-1867).

The stroll garden, as its name implies, was meant to be walked through. It is typically large (Katsura, for example, is 16.3 acres) and designed to be toured along a preconceived route that usually follows the perimeter of an artificial pond or lake. The garden cannot be viewed in its entirety from any one point. One has to move through a



ROOF PLAN, KATSURA PALACE





SOUTHEAST ELEVATION, KATSURA PALACE

series of unfolding scenes and vistas, carefully planned to appear as if created by nature. This sequential experience was new in its time, and often afforded the illusion of an endless succession of spaces.

Katsura Villa, because of its consciously non-symmetrical layout, continually changes in appearance as one moves through the garden. Elegantly proportioned and carefully screened by planting, the villa appears and disappears from view, revealing itself fully only when one arrives at the proper point in the garden. The extensive use of sliding screens within the villa allows for myriad different views of the garden from the interior of the *Shoin*. Particular scenes can be framed and isolated, while the complete removal of the screens permits the almost total merging of the interior and exterior. Katsura exemplifies the Japanese ideal of the integration of man and nature. "Into the summerhouse came the garden and the mountains," as the poet Basho put it.

*Katsura*, by the publishers of *Japan Architect*, is a beautifully produced record of the refurbished villa and gardens. In its stunning color photographs and exquisite drawings, the book exhibits the printing and graphic quality we have come to expect from Japanese publications. Although there are some short essays, including a brief history of Katsura, the visual material is of primary interest.

The villa and the surrounding structures are photographed from many viewpoints, both interior and exterior. Katsura was built on the site of an older garden, and its rooms were positioned to offer the best views of the garden. It is therefore not surprising that almost all the photographs (except those of details) include both garden and architecture.

The photographs are accompanied by a large number of drawings that serve as valuable references and help the reader orient himself. These drawings, legible in spite of great detail, include plans, sections, and elevations of all the buildings and gardens, as well as an overall site plan. They contrast the rich variation of tones and textures of the landscape elements with the clear delineation of the buildings. Eiji Musha and his team, who were responsible for this work, were able to view the building as it was disassembled, and document the process in several unique and intricate drawings—including some remarkable dimensioned sections of the villa. There are separate plans of the roof, ceiling, floor joists, sleepers, sills, columns, rafters, purlins, tatami, screens, and other components, along with composite plans, many color-coded. One plan even shows the relative intensity of natural shadow throughout the palace.

Not to be outdone, Makoto Suzuki has drawn axonometrics of all the

buildings—not just downward views, but upward, as well. He says of these drawings:

The optimum drawing representation . . . is one that is at a level representing a horizontal slice directly between these two [the upward and downward views], at a place from which both are visible simultaneously. The viewpoint must be, not one at which things fall into plane patterns, but one from which elements are visible in three-dimensional relations. The axonometric projection system fulfills these requirements since it is non-perspective and permits multiple and moving viewpoints. It gives a stronger impression of spatial movement and flow than one-viewpoint perspective drawings.

These axonometrics are certainly a notation system that can help one "read" the buildings. Whether or not we can see as much as Suzuki tells us we can, they provide a noteworthy look at Katsura.

A short essay by the architectural historian Teiji Ito discusses the German architect Bruno Taut (1880-1938), who is credited with reviving interest in Katsura during the 1930s. The last prince in the original line (Hachijo) died in the 1880s, and Katsura came under the control of the imperial household. While the villa was not unknown in



Japan, it was not influential in architectural circles during the first decades of the 20th century. In 1933, Taut visited Katsura, and, finding it sympathetic to his own ideals, and seeing in it a Modernist prototype, wrote about it at length. At the time, Japan was looking to the west, and ignoring much of its own traditional design. As Ito says:

For it to obtain its full rights as an important part of Japanese architectural history, the Katsura villa had to be introduced to its own homeland by a man from the west.

Taut lived in Japan from 1933 to 1936. The German edition of *Houses and People of Japan* appeared in 1936, with an English translation following a year later. This overview of Japanese architecture and its relation to Japanese society soon became well

known in Europe and America. While the style of writing is dated, much of the book remains of value. Taut had a keen eye for detail and concept. He admired the simplicity and clarity of traditional Japanese vernacular architecture, studying the working class house as well as the imperial villa. Seeing so many examples of what he called "an architecture of function," he lamented the impact of western influence on building in Japan in the 1930s.

Taut is quite explicit in preferring the refined elegance of the Kyoto imperial villas and the indigenous shrines at Ise to the ornate temples such as those at Nikko. About his first impression of Katsura he says:

The wonderful simplicity and purity of the adjoining wings of the palace, which we could see from the outside standing out against the clear sunlit air, conveyed a message of profound peace.

About Nikko he writes:

At the same time as the Katsura palace was built the Tokugawa had

those barbaric and ostentatious temples and sculptures in Nikko erected.

Ito claims that Taut divided Japanese culture into two distinct strains: the imperial, responsible for a more refined architecture, as at Katsura; and the shogun, exemplified by the ornate shrines at Nikko. Ito maintains that both strains stem from the same source and are therefore in essence one and the same. The shogunate was inclined to excessive architectural statements, but the shoguns themselves lived more modestly, in residences that were often reminiscent of Katsura. Moreover, there was a great deal of commingling of architectural styles between the shogunate, the imperial household, and the various Buddhist sects (as Taut himself was aware; his writings allude to this as much as to the division he inferred in the culture).

That Ito is critical of Taut is significant in itself. Taut has been held in considerable respect because of his association with the popularization of Katsura, and only now have Japanese architectural historians grown bold enough to criticize him in print. Ito's essay is refreshing, and his criticism well taken, but it is important to remember that Taut wrote his book five decades ago, in a very different era.

If the rebuilding of Katsura has revived an interest in older theories of its evolution, it has also brought to light new facts about its history. *Katsura* includes photographs of the restoration, but only hints at the important findings made in the course of the work. More could have been included in this regard, but other books will certainly appear as historians sift through the material.

*Katsura, Shinken-chiku-sha* (31-2, Yushima 2-chome, Bukyo-ku, Tokyo, 113 Japan), 1983, 213 pp., illus., 13,000 yen (approx. \$56.00) + 1,500 yen postage (approx. \$6.50).

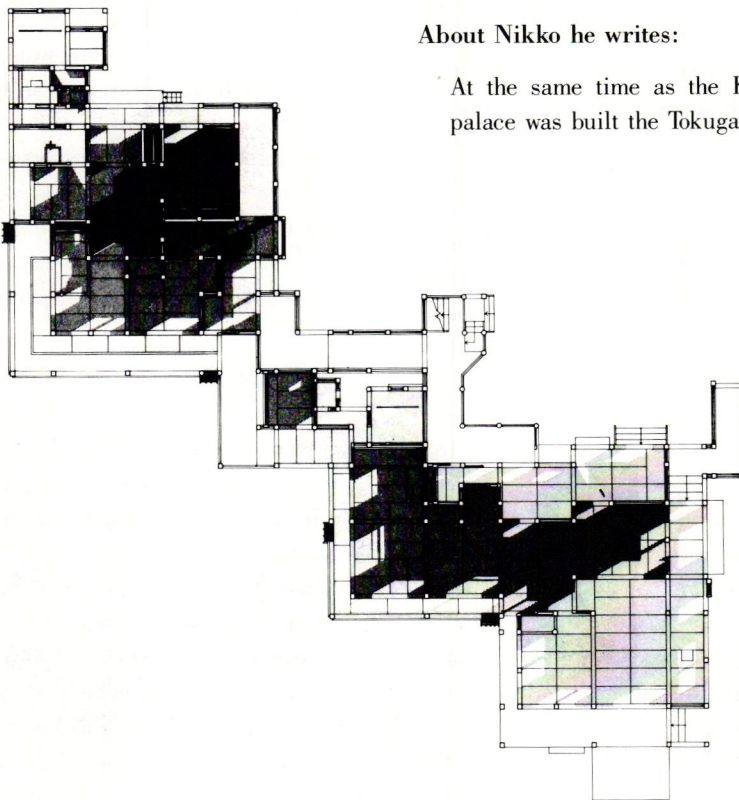


CHART SHOWING THE RELATIVE INTENSITY OF NATURAL SHADOWS THROUGHOUT THE PALACE, KATSURA



Ron Herman:

## KYOTO COUNTRY RETREATS

MICHIO FUJIOKA and  
SHIGEO OKAMOTO

A number of handsome large-format books have been published on Japanese architecture and gardens in the past decade. These excellently produced volumes have become increasingly expensive, many now costing more than a hundred dollars. In hopes of finding a wider audience, Japanese publishers have begun to issue more modestly priced books of two types: those created specifically for the American market (e.g., *A Japanese Touch for Your Home*); and those written for the Japanese market and subsequently translated into English. *Kyoto Country Retreats* falls in the latter category, having first appeared in the Great Japanese Art series put out by Kodansha, one of Japan's more aggressive art book publishers.

The book follows a popular Japanese formula: 24 full-color photographs followed by text. While some of the photographs are keyed to the text, the division of photos and text gives the impression of two separate works, and requires much cross-referencing to use the book effectively. While economy may dictate the format, the stress it places on the images may also stem from the high respect that Japanese photographers command—and deserve. Their work is often a book's main focus, with an obligatory text presented as an appendage. But the text here is informative, fulfilling its intended purpose of discussing the two famous "detached houses" of Kyoto—Katsura and Shugakuin. A history of the sites and personages involved is accompanied by a short narrative giving a sense of the political and cultural atmosphere of the times.



THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT ROOM AND MIDDLE SHOIN, AS SEEN FROM THE NEW PALACE, KATSURA



The design of both villas was influenced by—and took advantage of—their topography. Katsura, the first phase of which was completed by Prince Toshihito in the 1620s, was located on a flat, marshy site which provided no great views. The layout and interrelationship of the garden and the villa—finally completed by others in the 1660s—created a myriad of views and experiences, so that Katsura became a self-contained environment, a model of elegance, reduction, and sophistication.

Shugakuin, built for the Emperor Gomizunoo, consists of three separate villas and related gardens. Its site in the foothills of northwest Kyoto commands an awe-inspiring view of the surrounding landscape. Gomizunoo took maximum advantage of this natural prospect in the upper garden, completed in 1661. It is perhaps the most dramatic example of “borrowed scenery” (*shakkei*) in the country, creating an effect which could hardly tolerate “improvement.”

The text provides a condensed glimpse of these imperial villas and their history. To its credit, the book includes a good bibliography—for it is necessary to know about other contemporary gardens and their precedents to understand how these two fit within Japan’s design history. It would also be helpful to know about the influential landscape designers of the day, such as Kabori Enshu (1579-1647), who designed the buildings and garden of Gomizunoo’s imperial residence in Kyoto.

Many of the concepts used in stroll gardens like Katsura and Shugakuin, particularly the idea of sequential movement through space, evolved from the tea aesthetic. Enshu, an accomplished tea master and Zen priest, was a dominant force in the arts in the early 1600s. He skillfully synthesized the different aesthetic tendencies of his day into a unique and recognizable style of

garden and architectural design, characterized by the pairing of opposites (as exemplified by the intersecting of curvilinear and rectilinear forms in the garden of Emperor Gomizunoo’s residence, the Sento Gosho).

A final word about the translation: more Americans than ever are studying in Japan these days, and there are now competent translators who can deal with the complex terms endemic to the arts. One is Bruce Coats, the young art historian (with a background in architecture) who produced this notable translation of Michio Fujioka’s original text.

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Kyoto Country Retreats: The Shugakuin and Katsura Palaces, Michio Fujioka and Shigeo Okamoto, translated by Bruce Coats, Kodansha (distributed by Harper & Row), 1983, 48 pp., illus., \$18.95.



Doug Suisman:

## MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

BILL RISEBORO

## MODERN ARCHITECTURE SINCE 1900

WILLIAM J.R. CURTIS

When two Englishmen write two historical surveys published in the same year in the same country on the same subject—modern architecture—fast-reading survivors of the great design book flood may worry that this is the kind of redundancy that will finally send them under. Never fear. The two authors don't agree on the nature of architecture, they don't agree on the meaning of "modern," they don't even agree on whether one should call oneself William or Bill.

On this last trivial bit of protocol rest two fundamentally conflicting world views. Bill Riseboro's is expansive, political, and personal; William Curtis's traditional, intellectual, and academic. The two surveys which result are so different that they seem to mark the extremes in the field of historical

JOSEF HOFFMANN, PALAIS STOCLET, BRUSSELS, 1905



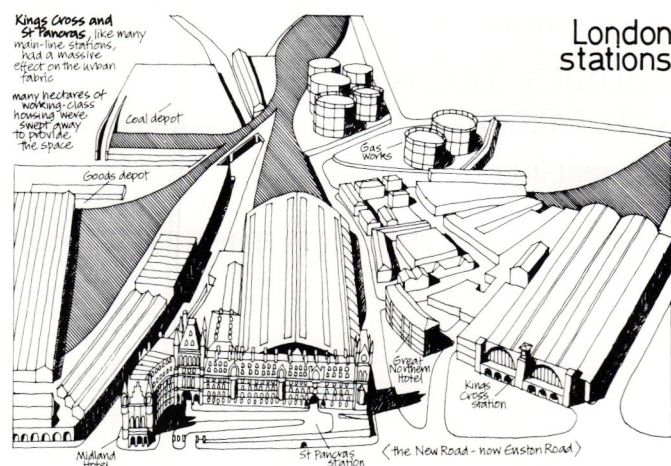


writing, and raise questions both about the uses of survey texts and the function of the historian.

"At this moment, it is the special task of the historian to broaden his field," declared Vincent Scully nearly fifteen years ago, paralleling the broader view that architects themselves were adopting towards history. Architect and planner Riseboro has taken Scully's message to heart in his *Modern Architecture and Design: An Alternative History*. He pushes the usual "modern" chronology backwards to include all of the Industrial Revolution, and devotes fully half his book to the 19th century. He ranges across five continents, assessing developments in more than twenty countries, tirelessly widening the frame around the buildings he observes. Many fields usually considered well outside the realm of architecture are included: military strategy, industrial production, transportation, civil engineering, agricultural production, and demographics, among others. In effect, he outlines nothing less than two hundred years of Western environmental culture. The compression of so much information in a slim text is relieved by the presence of some thousand illustrations, every one the issue of Riseboro's prolific rapidograph.

Such ambitious airborne reconnaissance, and such a tour-de-force of illustrative energy can only be explained by the effect of several galvanizing influences. From Viollet-le-Duc, Riseboro has inherited the desire to "study the past for a keener appreciation of the social factors which had given the buildings birth." From William Morris he has absorbed "a central message that a world of personal freedom and creative collaboration can realistically be achieved, but only through the medium of social revolution." And from Marx and Engels, whose views on the writing of history are the very first words of the text, he has learned that "modern architecture and design must be seen in the context of, and defined by, the modern economic system." All of these forces are at work as Riseboro tries to persuade us that such a sweeping "alternative" approach to architectural history is like a wide-angle lens which clarifies more than it distorts.

Unfortunately, he weakens his argument by trying to cover too much. The cramming of the factual and interpretive material of two centuries into 120 pages produces a text that is often little more than a succession of lists: lists of influential novels and plays, lists of technical innovations, and, worst of all, lists of buildings. In a three-sentence paragraph meant to cover Aalto's early work, the text informs us that Aalto was "classically trained but adopted modernism in the late 1920s," and this adoption was "uncompromising and highly assured." His four major works of the period are then listed, with dates; the accompanying illustration notes that the Viipuri Library plan is "highly functional." Such cursory analysis shows that Mr. Riseboro has fallen into the trap of com-



ST. PANCRAS STATION, 1865-1871, AND KINGS CROSS STATION, 1850-1852, LONDON

binning the comprehensiveness of a general survey with the argumentation of a critical analysis, and as a result the text will not quite satisfy either beginning students or specialists interested in new interpretations of the past. His critical intentions are further weakened by his resort, on occasion, to a somewhat shrill vocabulary: aristocrats are "petty," industrialists "primitive," architects "indulge their bourgeois clients," the bourgeois system contains "profane and dangerous ideas." His illustrative treatments of social and economic conditions are persuasive in themselves, and their impact is only reduced by such rhetoric.

A notable strength of Riseboro's synoptic method, however, is his frequent discussion of architecture as a profession. The unique (some would say extraneous) role of the architect in society is a subject which excites vigorous debate; the legendary split of architecture and engineering in the 19th century still haunts the profession. Riseboro has quite a few ideas about the social usefulness of design, and while you may not follow him all the way to his conclusion that the professional "is exploited by the system as surely as the factory worker or the poor of the inner city," his arguments do challenge narrow conceptions of professional purpose.

Riseboro has demonstrated his "alternative" approach far more convincingly in the illustrations, which are organized into 120 plates, each a kind of independent mini-text, with title, drawings, and explanatory notes. There is no keying or referencing between these plates and the text; the effect is as if two decks of cards had been shuffled together more or less in numerical order. This reader came away wishing that the plates could be unshuffled and sold as a book of drawings—



perhaps with the handwritten notes expanded—because in them the author's broad interests are given enthusiastic and satisfying expression. This may be the only book ever to gather on a single page a portrait of Rossini, a longitudinal section through the Paris Opera, and a scene from *William Tell*, which premiered there. An excellent double plate on British railway travel shows us an interior of Euston Station, a section through a first-class carriage with a note on its significance (heavily padded seats made trains luxurious for the first time), a sketch of the improved signal system, a map of the railway lines as they enter London, a circulation plan of St. Pancras Station, a detail of the structural system at Paddington, and a bird's-eye view of the King's Cross/St. Pancras complex that shows the relationship of coal depot, gas works, hotel, city streets, and station. Railway stations, usually mentioned in architectural histories only for the stylistic developments of their façades and structures, are here laid out in all their technical, structural, historic, urbanistic, and architectural complexity. Riseboro's determination to pull back the camera for the widest view produces unique results.

Yet illustrations and text reveal a troubling contradiction. Riseboro criticizes the tendency to treat architecture as "a matter of individual inspiration"; he prefers to see it instead as a matter of "cooperative effort" and "creative collaboration." At the same time his sympathy with Morris and Marx alerts him to the "vital need to break down the elitist state apparatus in order to restore the creativity of the individual." Which is it to be, the reader may wonder, individual creativity or creative collaboration? Anyone who has worked in the field of design knows the difficulty of having it both ways.

This ambivalence does not seem to disturb the author's approach to the writing of architectural history, in which he reveals himself as a man of the individually inspired, non-collaborative sort. Compared to Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (Oxford, 1980), a book of not antagonistic political convictions whose author chose "to let the protagonists speak for themselves" by devoting nearly one-quarter of his text to quotation, this book is a virtual soliloquy. In addition, Riseboro's insistence on personally creating each of the one thousand images not only denies us the mood and texture of the original documents, but reaches absurd extremes when a sketch by Le Corbusier is re-sketched by Bill Riseboro. The "sketchbook" method is appropriate to a work of personal exploration, but these are not the notes and jottings of an architect on a solitary search for the past; they are a polemical demonstration—both in form and content—of a new way of looking at the last two centuries of building and culture. The breadth of Riseboro's interests opens up new territory for architectural history, but the nar-

rowness of his method hints at a verbal and graphic monomania that seriously compromises his intentions.

Those intentions are nearly opposite to William Curtis's in *Modern Architecture Since 1900*. Rather than widen his survey to embrace the entire cultural setting of modern architecture, Curtis narrows it to focus on "the way ideas may be given form." Instead of Riseboro's wide range of objects and building types, which suggests the full range of building activity, he concentrates on buildings "of high intellectual and visual quality." Far from promoting an alternative view of history, he hopes to establish a "balanced" one, avoiding the narrowness of monographs and the bias of other general surveys. He is, in other words, on a rescue mission: save modern architectural history from the esoterica and polemic of Post-Modern revisionism through the application of sound art historical principles. These must act as antidotes to the "chic cynicism" and "eclectic candyfloss" of current architectural theory and practice; only in this way can the permanent achievements of modern architecture be fairly assessed. While Bill Riseboro is trying to prod architects to new levels of social awareness, Dr. Curtis is simply trying to get them to sober up.

It's therefore no surprise that Curtis succeeds most when he is treating those aspects of architectural history that parallel the history of art, and least when he tackles the features of architecture that distinguish it from painting and sculpture. Among these are its primary function as a social, rather than a personal art, its unique creation of interior space, and its inescapable connection to the disciplines of function, material, and technology. He succeeds when he is tracing the ebb and flow of artistic movements, as in his excellent synopses of Rationalism and the Deutscher Werkbund; when he disentangles the careers of individual artists from the trends of which they were a part; and when he demonstrates the variety of formal antecedents which may be synthesized in a single building.

He handles these complex subjects in a remarkably clear and fluid prose, a welcome change from the dubious obscurantism of much current writing. He achieves this with the help of an almost literary talent for characterization: at the Bauhaus he discerns "a mood of cultivated despair"; he sees in the International Style a sort of "esperanto of expression"; in the Villas Savoye and Mairie, Le Corbusier and Aalto "transformed the rituals of upper middle-class existence into the stuff of a lasting architectural dream." Such evocative phrases as these continually highlight the author's analyses, and serve to illuminate the past at an almost intuitive level.

But when it comes to actually describing, as opposed to characterizing, buildings and the spaces they contain, he



*"While Bill Riseboro is trying to prod architects to new levels of social awareness, Dr. Curtis is simply trying to get them to sober up."*

tends to speak in vague or uncomfortably general terms. His characterization of Hoffmann's Palais Stoclet, for example, as "stern, rectilinear and precise" is not adequately substantiated by his description of "thin stone-slab veneers detailed with linear mouldings." Kenneth Frampton's description of the same building, "thin white marble facing with metal seams," manages to convey in the same number of words a sense of monochromy, the hardness of the stone, the cold thinness of the mouldings, and their function as binders for the marble. Frampton makes us sense that the building is stern and precise; Curtis simply informs us that it is.

The kinesthetic qualities of space are equally neglected. One is too often simply told that rooms are "linked en suite," that plans employ "ingenious changes of axes," that spaces "interlock," with no further discussion as to how or why these particular devices were employed, or of their impact on the spatial experience of the interior. The illustrations, which are of remarkably poor quality, offer little help. Black-and-white photographs lack contrast and are often out of focus; sidewalk views of building exteriors far outnumber all other forms of representation and tend to be poorly selected. The sixteen color plates are technically and informationally weak, and contribute unnecessarily to the cost of the book. Some of the blame must go to the apparent technical limitations of the publisher, but most of it must go to Dr. Curtis. In his zeal to educate those who perceive "only the external mannerisms without grasping the underlying meaning or structure of thought," he devotes all of his energy to telling us what build-

ings mean without first telling us what they are.

The failure of text and image to convey the substance and experience of buildings would be acceptable if the book were presented as a history of modern architectural theory. In that area Curtis's strengths—an intuitive sense of the past, the intellectual agility to trace the complex course of style and influence, the acumen to disengage idea from form—would bear comparison to those of Reyner Banham in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (Praeger, 1960; 1967). But when this conceptual preoccupation is inflated into a full-dress general survey, the emphasis on "high quality" and "idea" seems rather narrow. It means that discussion is limited to isolated masterpieces of design, at the expense of the anonymous and prototypical buildings that often make up our environment; that individual buildings are highlighted at the expense of urban groups—as in the perfunctory treatment of Rockefeller Center. It mystifies the design process as the domain of individual genius, rather than of professional collaboration: architects are "initiated" into the "secrets" of design; by means of intuition the "original mind" produces forms of "staggering invention."

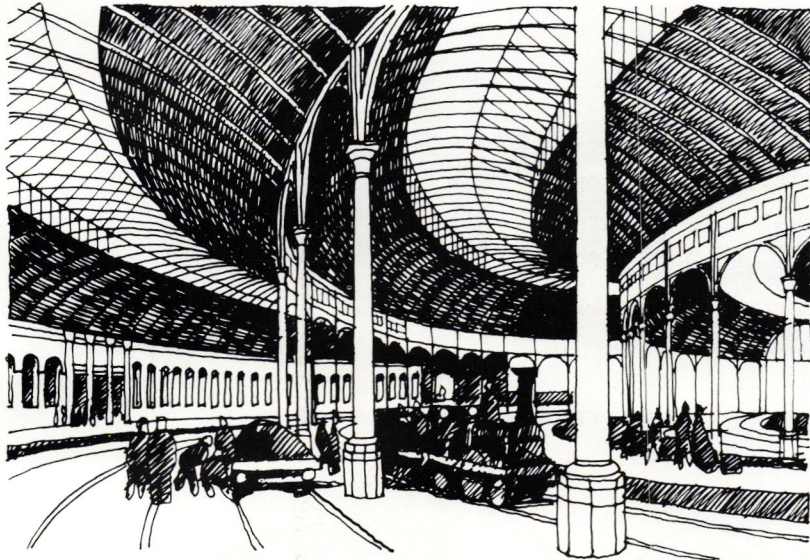
The focus on genius and originality, moreover, virtually precludes the teaching of sound principles of design; certainly the immaterial treatment of buildings will be of no use to students trying to understand how these buildings were made and how they work. Curtis relegates architecture to the exalted realm of high art where "excellence transcends mere period concerns." One detects in this revealing phrase a distaste for the discomfiting issues of today, and a wish to limit the role of the contemporary historian. This is regrettable, since Curtis's formidable powers of analysis could be put to more immediate and better use. Riseboro's closing paragraph is, ironically, a nearly perfect critique of his compatriot's work:

Should we not attempt to define "architecture" and "architectural history" more broadly? Resisting the tendency of bourgeois criticism towards elitism and academism, we should perhaps be discovering a more basic and common culture than is depicted in monumental buildings and purely stylistic criticism. Above all, should we not be concerned equally with the past, present and future? We should perhaps understand that it is only our knowledge of present problems that teaches us what is historically significant.

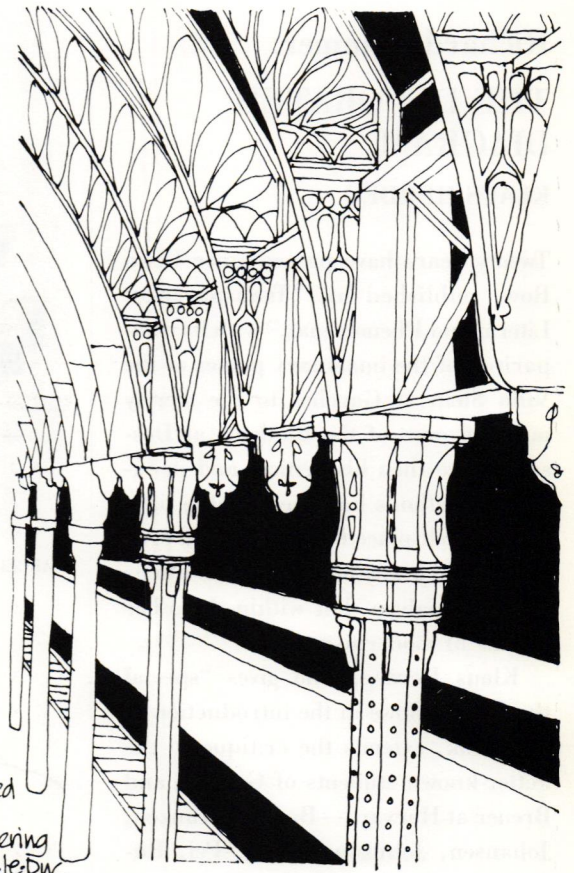
Curtis would no doubt contend that only our knowledge of what is historically significant can help us understand present problems. Such profound disagreement on the very purpose of architectural history naturally casts doubt on its traditional tools—such as the general survey—and may help to explain some of the problems encountered by both writers.



the train sheds too, like Dobson's at **Newcastle Central** (1850), with its great curving roof, and...



...Brunel's at London's **Paddington** (1852-54), with its elegantly designed structure, synthesised architecture and engineering in a way worthy of Viollet-le-Duc



TRAIN SHEDS AT NEWCASTLE CENTRAL, 1850, AND AT PADDINGTON, LONDON, 1852-1854

Nevertheless there do exist surveys on the subject which deftly avoid at least some of its pitfalls. Banham's aforementioned *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* does so by sticking largely to theory, by stopping at World War II, by adopting a compact format with only a hundred illustrations, and by the sheer verbal virtuosity of its author. Leonard Benevolo's two-volume *History of Modern Architecture* (MIT, 1971) remains unsurpassed as a compendium of visual information, a critical assessment of both social conditions and current architectural developments, and an affordable (\$25.00) primary text for students. Frampton's *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* is less sumptuous visually, and verbally less fluid, but its thoughtful treatment of individual buildings and their social context makes it a good, inexpensive (\$10.00) alternative.

The coexistence of these diverse histories of modern architecture indicates a healthy aversion to any single prescriptive attitude toward the past, and represents the current reexamination of the architectural history of virtually all periods. There can be little doubt that the discipline of history benefits from all the new research, but it is difficult to feel as sure about the discipline of architecture. Architects have

always struggled with their professional inheritance, sometimes bowing in reverence, sometimes turning away. One way or another, they have had to come to terms with the past. Hemingway observed that "any young man who wishes to write past his twenty-fifth year must develop the historical sense," reminding us that such coming to terms is not limited to architects, and that it is essentially a process of personal discovery.

Bookstores overflowing with the latest design monographs provide rich resources for that discovery, but they may also invite the substitution of a merely historicist sensibility for a true historical sense. The reduction of architectural history to a catalogue of enticing objects—disconnected from the epochs and cultures which produced them—encourages the disheartening superficiality of so many contemporary projects with ostensible connections to the past.

*Modern Architecture and Design: An Alternative History*, Bill Ris-  
eboro, MIT, 1983, 256 pp., illus., \$17.50.

*Modern Architecture Since 1900*, William J.R. Curtis, Prentice-Hall,  
1983, 416 pp., illus., cloth \$39.95; paper \$27.95.

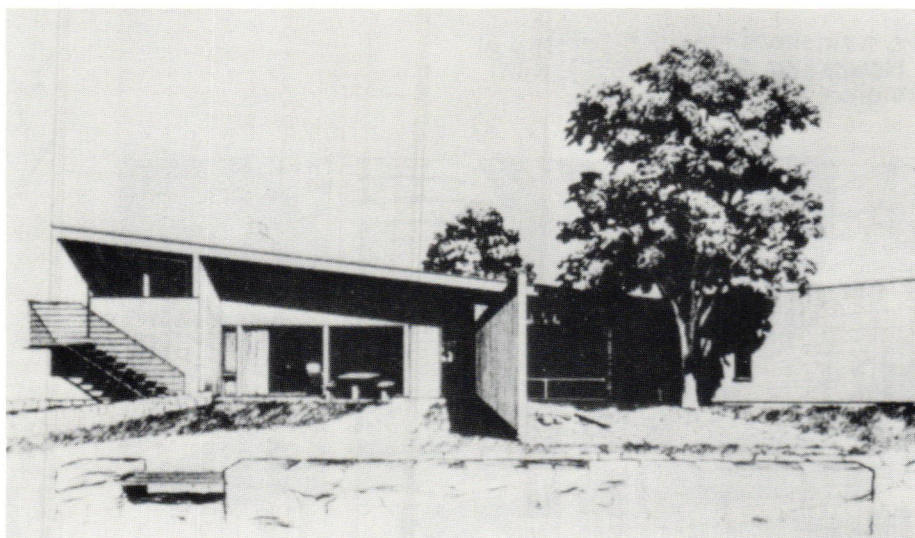


## Richard Pommer: THE DECORATED DIAGRAM

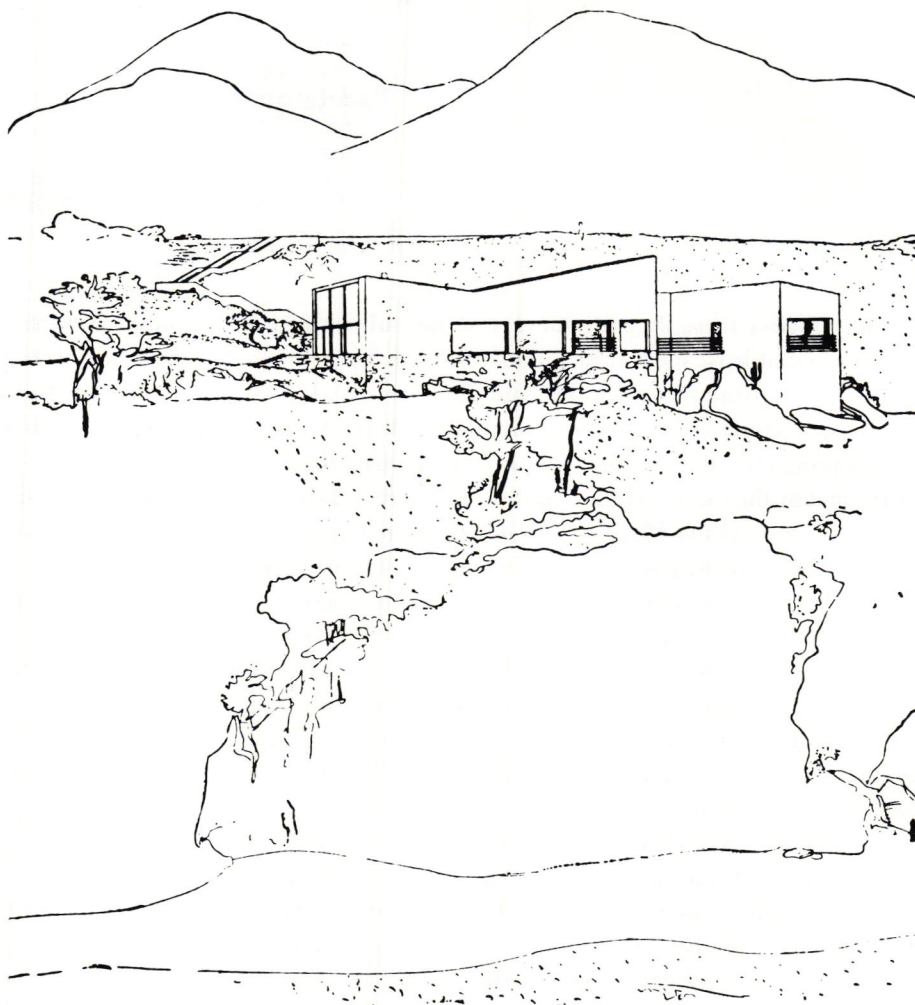
KLAUS HERDEG

Twenty years have passed since Colin Rowe published his "Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal," with its comparison of the imaginary planes of the Villa Stein at Garches to the merely material ones of the Bauhaus at Dessau. Since then his critical and pedagogical methods have become the light of some well-placed architects and critics seeking a way out of the limitations of functionalism, but within the other canons of modernism.

Klaus Herdeg, who gives "special thanks" to Rowe in the introduction to this book, extends the critique to the better-known students of Gropius and Breuer at Harvard—Barnes, Franzen, Johansen, Johnson, Lundy, Pei, Rudolph, and some of the TAC partners. The trouble with their work, Herdeg believes, is that the plans are mere diagrams of the functions, while the elevations are mere manipulations for visual interest, without connection between diagram and decoration, to use his title, or concern for the meanings of space and form. After making his point by a series of comparisons between "good" and "bad" examples—among them the Errazuris House and Breuer's butterfly roof house at MOMA in 1948, the Altes Museum and Johnson's Sheldon Art Gallery, a school by Colquhoun and Miller in London with one by Lundy in Far Rockaway, and the University of Virginia with Barnes's campus at Purchase—Herdeg traces the trouble back to Gropius's teaching as manifested in the sum total of three student problems and a catalogue statement of 1946-47. Herdeg charges Gropius with separating form from function, echoing Gropius's attack on the



MARCEL BREUER, VIEW FROM PATIO, EXHIBITION HOUSE, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART



LE CORBUSIER, VIEW FROM THE OCEAN, ERRAZURIS HOUSE, CHILE



Beaux Arts but reversing the emphasis.

Twenty years ago, or even ten—none of the examples used in the book is later—this critique might have made a splash. The analyses of the “good” buildings are finely drawn, and are less abstract and arbitrary in their assignment of meaning than Rowe’s. The familiar complaints against Gropius and Breuer are sometimes given a new twist. Whereas Vincent Scully, for example, traced the lack of scale in the work of the fifties to an affinity with furniture design—seeing Breuer’s Minnesota church façade as a radio cabinet, in one memorable example—Herdeg blames it on the emphasis placed on texture, color, and surface materials in Bauhaus training, the result of its falling back on visual stimulation in the absence of more intellectual values.

But today this seems to me no more than academic doctrine, which can be as blind as the doctrines it is replacing. It is founded on what I, as an architectural historian, see as a misapprehension. History is indispensable to Herdeg, Rowe, *et al.*, in their critique of Bauhaus dogmas; but they see it purely as a set of visual models. History for them does not take place over time; has no modifications, nuances, or mess; is not about money, politics, or sex. Their history is two slides, two pictures in a text; their comparisons are always invidious. Theirs is a polemic against modernist heresies, a bull of excommunication.

Take the comparison of the Errazuris house and MOMA exhibition building as an illustration. Herdeg points out that the roof of Corbu’s house echoes the mountains, while its valley (Herdeg’s term) descends over a crucial point of the interior. Breuer’s building, on the other hand, was seemingly meant for a flat suburban site, and its butterfly roof came down over a bathroom wall. But Breuer, who was one of the first to pay attention to Cor-

bu’s “vernacular” works, had been experimenting with the butterfly roof in an attempt to develop an American vernacular like New England shed roofs or Wright’s living rooms. In the Robinson house, dated the year before the MOMA exhibition, the roof marks the entrance, separates the parts of the binuclear plan, and aims the house at the mountain near Williamstown. The roof of the MOMA house distinguishes the guest and children’s rooms from the living area and at the same time connects this area internally and externally across the living room to the parents’ room at the other end.

Because of his attitude towards history, Herdeg fails to ask what the American students of Gropius might have been trying to accomplish. I suspect that they were trying to Americanize the European vision of the machine by means of livelier forms. For Herdeg this surface manipulation is not permissible. He likes Colquhoun and Miller’s London school, which is certainly one of the more thoughtful essays on abstract form and architectural space after World War II, but is nevertheless as barren as a tomb. No wonder that the elegant analyses of Rowe, his contemporaries, and his followers, have been increasingly overshadowed by the flashy details of many Post-Modernists. In two revealing sentences of his peroration, Herdeg writes:

it seems quite natural to want to find and emphasize those aspects of architecture which endure, those which most unequivocally represent human behavior and expectations. For architecture, form is the fundamental analog to human behavior and expectations.

Like the Modernists of 50 years ago, he believes that form, space, and design have certain constant meanings. If only architecture could capture them, it too would be eternal. But it would hardly

be part of history, least of all in America. The question this book raises for me is: Do architects want to embrace history now, in its largeness, or merely continue their affair with design?

The Decorated Diagram: Harvard Architecture and the Failure of the Bauhaus Legacy, Klaus Herdeg, MIT, 1983, 136 pp., illus., \$22.50.

Diane Ghirardo:

## INTERNATIONAL OR INTERNATIONALE?

The period from the late 1920s through the 1930s was, in the words of David Dean, “a brilliant age . . . it identified real enemies, pursued with gusto exhilarating causes and extravagant passions, and had more than its share both of idealistic commitment and of fatuous complacency.”<sup>1</sup> Two enormously destructive wars bracketed the third and fourth decades of this century, and the Great Depression clouded the 1930s; yet despite or perhaps because of these circumstances, the interwar period exerts a peculiar fascination on students of the past. Particularly alluring seems to be the artistic and cultural life of the two decades with their captivating names: “the golden age of Hollywood,” “the Roaring Twenties,” “the heroic period of modern architecture.” Great experimentation by a self-conscious avant-garde characterized the arts, and the “pioneers” even made their mark on mass culture. But, while hopes for the future surged after World War I, the “War to end all wars,” the same decade saw the emergence of mod-



ern totalitarian states in many countries.

What role did architecture play? For altogether too long the "style" of Modernism and its most visible practitioners constituted the appropriate vantage point from which to survey the two decades, and for many current texts this still holds true. Subtle changes in the styles of the masters, the progress of their commissions, their diaries and sketchbooks could be classed as primary sources. Beyond these narrow confines few have ventured, Barbara Miller Lane being a notable exception among American scholars.<sup>2</sup>

Over the last decade scholars in several countries have begun to take a harder look at architecture between the wars, although the long shadow of Modern Movement mythologizing still hovers over much of the work. The books discussed here concern architecture in Italy and Poland, neither of which was a primary theater for International Style masters.

The aesthetic which took hold between the wars earned the label "The International Style" in America through the offices of two prominent figures in 20th-century American architecture, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. In their book, *The International Style*, modern architecture in several countries was identified with buildings that had an affinity for ribbon windows, rounded corners, asymmetrical massing, fully glazed and "free" façades, *brise soleil*, nautical imagery, lack of ornamentation, flat roofs, and "pilotis." In effect, Hitchcock and Johnson instituted a new canon beyond which it was impermissible to stray and still be considered a Modernist.

Untold mischief flowed from this little book. First, the photographs made it appear that all of the buildings were white; but, more important, the authors chose buildings with superficial

stylistic similarities, while totally ignoring deeper differences—not to mention other new work being erected. But the decision which had the greatest consequences for the fate of the Modern Movement in America was their emphasis on housing designed for upper-class families. The message conveyed, both to those who visited the exhibit and to American architects at large, was that to produce "Modern" architecture one need only follow an established formula. For altogether too long, American architectural students trotted into their classrooms and learned how to manipulate a few correct aesthetic elements, just as students at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts had learned to do with a different set of patterns in the 19th century.

Hitchcock and Johnson either failed to realize or simply did not care that for many European Modernists—the chief practitioners especially—the "International" aesthetic was not merely a design formula, but a strategy ramified by political and social concerns. The position that the only issues are aesthetic ones simply does not apply to central European Modernism in its youth.

Historians now look back at the manifestoes of European Modernists and recognize in some a certain naïveté and wishful thinking, in others an incipient paternalism, even authoritarianism. At times, architects believed altogether too much in the beneficent results of designing the "right" environments for families and workers. Whatever the limitations of some of their programs, in Holland, Germany, Russia, Poland, and elsewhere, architects believed that to be modern and to create architecture they had to address pressing contemporary social and political issues in their work; not with the irrelevant tools of the old order which had collapsed after World War I, but with full attention to the new materials and techniques developed over the preceding century.

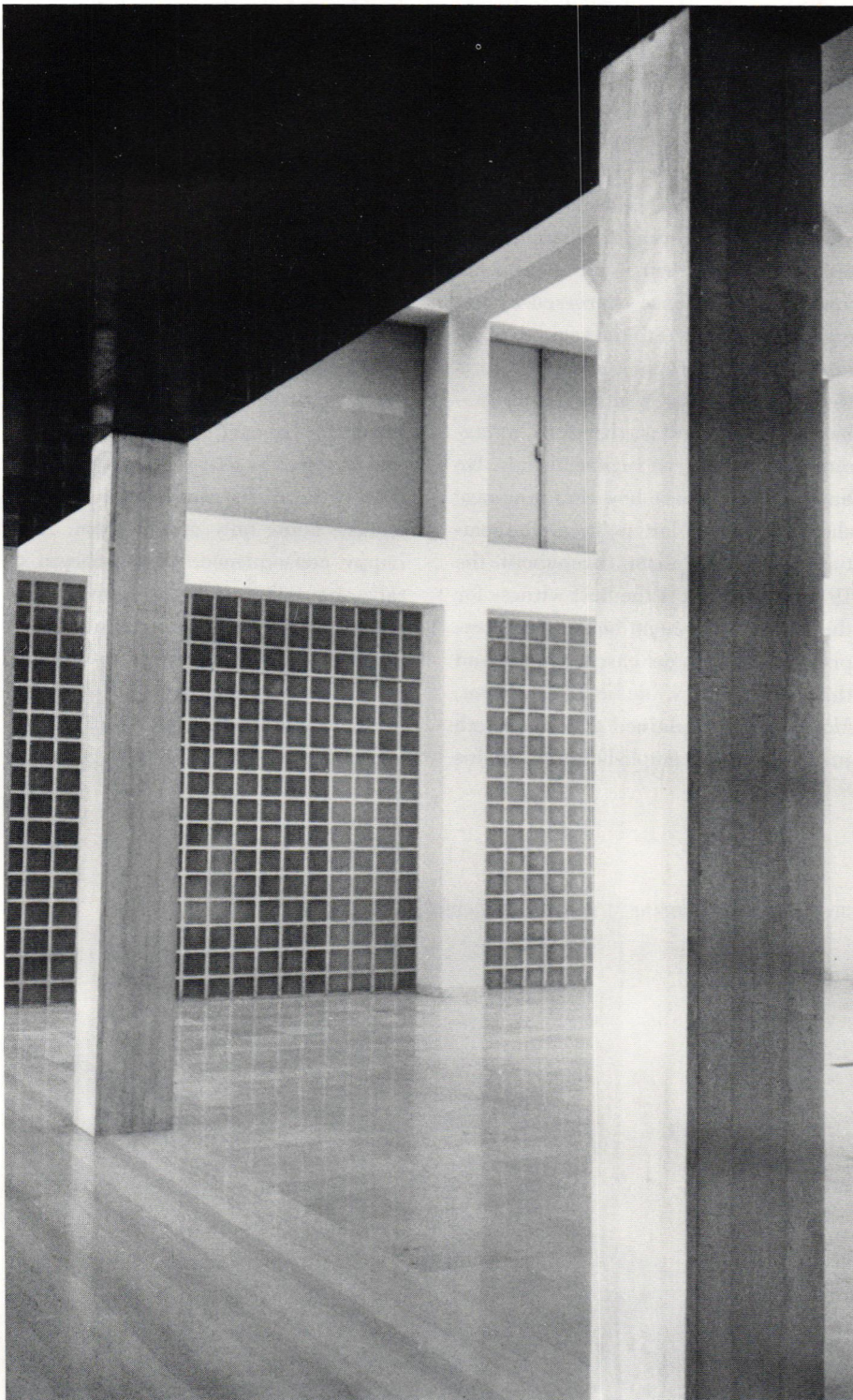
For the first time in a very long time, architects sought to justify their work not by reference to some putatively more noble past, but by its efficacy under contemporary social, political, and technological conditions. The notion was revolutionary, and captured the enthusiasm of a generation schooled in the agonizing destruction of World War I. It held out hope for a better world, and offered architects a prominent place in the fashioning of that world.

To be sure, not every architect directed single-minded energy toward resolving contemporary problems; but on balance architecture in the interwar years reflected an unprecedented commitment to the improvement of living, working, and leisure-time conditions, not merely for the privileged, but for the masses. That this commitment had any concrete results was due to its conjunction with the equally unprecedented (if still insufficient) willingness of some governments to support low- and moderate-priced housing and public recreation facilities. Yet official support of such projects often masked highly conservative goals, including the removal of potentially disruptive masses from urban centers and the recovery of land from slum areas for commercial speculation. The roster of successes was impressive in some countries, and the collaboration of architects with their low-income clients was often full of promise.

Polish architects began to meet with housing cooperative associations to help them plan steel and cement houses, and, as architect Helena Syrkus later wrote,

Our views . . . on the social duty of architecture . . . and on the role of the architect were shaped by day-to-day relations with . . . members of the cooperative. . . . Their problem, the struggle for changes in the living conditions . . . became our concern as well.





GIUSEPPE TERRAGNI, CASA DEL FASCIO, COMO, 1932-1936

Following exhibitions on low-cost housing designs, a modest number of projects were built by the cooperatives and the Social Insurance Institute (ZUS); the Workers' Housing Estates (TOR) built even more between 1934 and 1939. Avant-garde architects worked closely with these groups, but, as the extensive illustrations in *The Polish Avant-Garde* indicate, they also turned their attention to the design of churches, department stores, schools, post offices, health care facilities, and exhibition pavilions. Assessing the extent of this activity is difficult because *The Polish Avant-Garde* provides no information on the relationship of the quantity of public or cooperative building to private residential construction, or to the housing needs in Warsaw during the period.

Although difficult to read in this text's illustrations, on the whole the Polish avant-garde seems to have been inspired by the formal elements of European Modernism. They were involved with CIAM early on, and in continuous contact with other European architects, including the Italian-Swiss Alberto Sartoris. Like Sartoris (who visited Poland and Russia in 1926), the Polish Modernists seem to have been increasingly convinced that form derived from the architect's poetic sensibility, the possibilities offered by new technologies, and the imperatives of society's needs—with the emphasis on the role of those needs as a generator of design.

One of the lamentable shortcomings of the text is its failure to indicate which designs were actually built. When only a drawing appears, one does not know whether this is for lack of a photograph, or because the project was never built. The illustrations do chronicle the social commitment of some three dozen talented and ingenious architects, most of whom worked in Warsaw and were indebted to Le Corbusier and Gropius for



their inspiration. The biographies and full bibliography appended to the text help compensate for the neglect Polish architecture has suffered in the West.

The journey over the Alps found the Modern Movement, or Rationalism, as Italians termed it, undergoing an ideological change of clothes. The novelty of Modernism converged with that of Mussolini's fascism, allowing the Fascist government to patronize Rationalism as a fitting expression of the new political order. Perhaps no other country has subjected the architecture of the interwar period to such extensive scrutiny, and perhaps nowhere else has so much scholarly energy been directed toward disengaging Modern Movement architecture from its embarrassing political associations. Nothing could be more futile.

The orthodoxy which has prevailed in Italy for the last four decades runs thus: architecture that is Rationalist is good, hence not fascist; non-Rationalist and monumental architecture may still be good, but not fascist. The eagerness of the Gucci-Marxist intelligentsia to hurl accusations of "fascist sympathizer" at those who deviate from the party line has certainly helped give this formula a currency it would never have maintained under normal scholarly scrutiny.

Cesare De Seta's *La cultura architettonica* is an expanded and extensively revised edition of his 1972 landmark study of Italian architecture between the wars. Some things in this text have not changed: the wide scope of the discussion, the thorough documentation, and the penetrating analysis. But De Seta has modified his position substantially in a number of ways, taking advantage both of recent scholarship and of his own matured thinking, and the result is a book at once more balanced and more critical. Nonetheless, like most Italian scholars De Seta is reluctant to accept the part

architects played in the political situation of the 1930s. While he now acknowledges that "some of the greatest art . . . of the 1930s came from protagonists who . . . proclaimed themselves Fascists," De Seta argues that architects such as Giuseppe Pagano and Giuseppe Terragni, though Fascists, express in their work "sentiments antagonistic to those expressed by art more closely linked to the regime." The language of Terragni's architecture is the language of the Weimar Republic—he continues—and is, therefore, antagonistic to the Fascist regime in Italy. We have seen elsewhere how that language shed its particular political associations with liberalism throughout the 1930s.<sup>3</sup> Terragni is the best witness for the ideological system he sought to express in the Casa del Fascio, Como, and that was a fiery, dedicated fascism. Moreover, he explained at some length just how he accomplished this in his

building. *La cultura architettonica*, with its newly enlarged format, better quality paper, and illustrations provides an essential introduction to the issues and architects of interwar Italy, despite its sometimes problematical handling of the political matrix.

In 1978 the city of Turin hosted a major exposition dedicated to political, cultural, and social life in that city during the Fascist period; the commune of Milan followed suit in 1981, and both cities recorded the events in massive catalogs. In each exhibit, the organizers tried to assess interwar Italy's culture in all its ramifications, architecture being only one of them. As a happy consequence, we can begin to talk about the role of architecture in Italy, at least, with some authority. As but one aspect of cultural life—though an extremely important and well-publicized one in the thirties—Rationalism can now be seen in all its bourgeois and

GIUSEPPE CAPPONI, BOTANICAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF ROME, 1932





petit-bourgeois splendor: glowing with paternalism, often authoritarianism, and, until late in the thirties, largely indifferent to the grinding poverty all around. Rather than a passive tool of fascism, Rationalism turns out to have been an active collaborator, whether in gutting urban centers and designing monumental new buildings for the Fascist state, in providing buildings to house Fascist leisure and youth organizations, or in designing new towns in the Agro-Pontina to still rural discontent and oversee potentially troublesome residents. Riccardo Mariani's essay offers the first substantial study of the transfer of Italian architecture to newly conquered North African colonies. Mariani, who has studied the new towns in the Agro-Pontina and edited the writings of Edoardo Persico, was also the first Italian architectural critic to perceive the nature of the relationship between fascism and Rationalism.

*Annitrenta* testifies to the deep infusion of fascism into everyday life in Italy, to the vibrance of the arts, and to the particular prominence of an architecture which placed itself at the service of the regime. The catalogue is also a visual and historical feast for those seeking evidence about popular culture, film, fashion, advertising, product design, photography and music; for elegance and energy, Italian design knew no peer in the 1930s. The biographies, massive bibliography and extensive illustration material make it an indispensable reference tool.

What was going on in America? Obscure and not highly regarded government architects and engineers were designing an extremely limited number of low-cost housing projects and subsistence homestead settlements, but the prestige and fame went to—where else?—designers of luxury homes, elegant department stores, and pleasure palaces, or the recipients of major government commissions. With the excep-

tion of people like Joseph Hudnut, Catherine Bauer, and Lewis Mumford, the political and social principles of the Modern Movement made few converts among American architects, and scarcely more stylistic inroads. Corporate America latched onto the "International Style" after World War II and made the style its own.

This International is not to be mistaken for the Communist *Internationale*; they spoke to very different audiences and harbored very different aspirations. As with the Emperor's new clothes, the International Style was what its bearers believed it to be, however incredulous their audience.

1. David Dean, *Architecture of the 1930s*, Rizzoli, 1983.

2. See also *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, by Kenneth Frampton (Oxford, 1980).

3. Diane Ghirardo, "Italian Architecture and Fascist 'Politics': An Evaluation of the Rationalists' Role in Regime Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 39, May 1980, pp. 109-127.

*The Polish Avant-Garde, 1918-1939*, Olgierd C. H. Listowski, compiler, Archives d'Architecture Moderne, Brussels, 1981, 306 pp., illus., FB 605 (\$25.00 in San Francisco).

*La cultura architettonica in Italia tra le due guerre*, Cesare De Seta, Edizioni Laterza, Bari, Italy, 1983, 396 pp., illus., L. 42,000 (\$50.00 in San Francisco).

*Gli annitrenta: Arte e cultura in Italia*, Comune di Milano, Comune di Milano and Gabriele Mazzotta, 1982, 658 pp., L. 35,000 (\$45.00 in San Francisco).

K. Paul Zygas:

## VLADIMIR TATLIN AND THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE

JOHN MILNER

### RUSSIAN CONSTRUCTIVISM

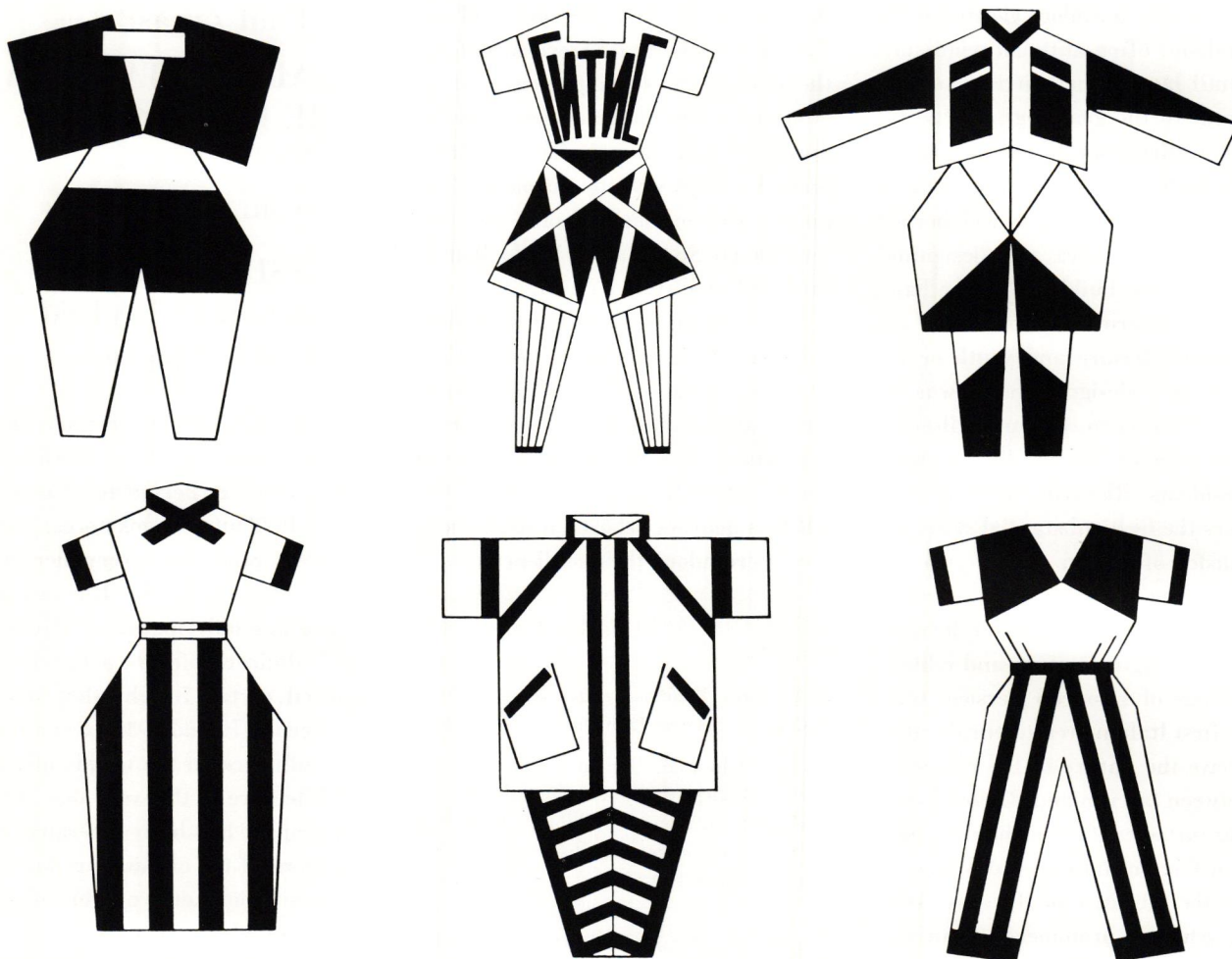
CHRISTINA LODDER

The history of modern art changed dramatically the day Camilla Gray's *The Great Experiment: Russian Art 1863-1922* hit the bookstores. That was in 1962. Since then every increment of knowledge about the Russian avant-garde has only increased our respect and admiration for the artists involved. Indeed, certain insights that they made between 1910 and 1930 exert a refreshing influence on the worlds of art and architecture to this very day. Much of the impact has been generated by exhibitions of the original art works, but no less important are publications like the two under review.

*Vladimir Tatlin and the Russian Avant-Garde*, by John Milner, and *Russian Constructivism*, by Christina Lodder, (both published under the auspices of Yale University Press), are two rather dissimilar, but complementary works. John Milner's is the first major biographical and critical monograph on Tatlin, while Christina Lodder's is the first detailed history of Constructivism. Their occasional errors may be forgiven in deference to the syntheses they achieve.

Vladimir Tatlin (1885-1953), an artist of multi-faceted talent, is remembered today primarily for his megastructural fantasy of 1920—the Monument to the Third International—known familiarly as Tatlin's Tower. But this does his achievement only partial justice. His series of *Painterly Reliefs* and *Corner Counter-Reliefs*—three-





VARVARA FEDOROVNA STEPANOVA, COSTUME DESIGNS FOR THE MEIERKHOL'D PRODUCTION OF SUKHOVO-KOBYLIN'S PLAY *THE DEATH OF TARELKIN*, 1922

dimensional, cubist assemblages of found materials, developed about 1914-1917—are no less intriguing and probably more influential in the long run. For this reason John Milner is right to devote most of his attention to Tatlin's activities up to the early twenties.

Tatlin's lifetime affection for ships, and especially for sailing, is noted early in the text, and seems innocuous enough; we note obvious references in figurative paintings like *The Sailor* and *The Fishmonger* (both from 1911-12). But the range of illustrations shows how this interest was sublimated, and transformations of sails, masts, and rigging suffuse Tatlin's entire *oeuvre* and reappear in his most celebrated creations. In the pivotal *Reliefs*, scraps of sheet

metal are frequently manipulated into miniature sails. Tatlin's set designs, such as for the *Forest* (1913-14), *Zangezi* (1923), and *The Comic Actor of the 17th Century* (1935), display similar formal manipulations. In this light his famous experimental glider, *Leta-tlin* (1919-32), may be seen, not as a new departure, but as a logical extension of an earlier interest in the effects of aerodynamics on pliant surfaces.

Milner gives us a fuller account than we have ever had of Tatlin's circle. Among his earliest Russian friends we find Mikhail Larionov, the Burkiuk brothers, Alexander Vesnin, and Viktor Khlebnikov (of whom more later). These artists and poets were members of the network that generated the ex-

hibitions, polemics, and factions whose astringent ideas and insights were to energize Russian art for the next quarter century. Their names may be unknown to us when we begin reading, but once we are familiar with the history of the Russian avant-garde, we realize that Tatlin, virtually from his student days, was in the fast track of developments. Since the network included painters as well known today as Kandinsky and Malevich, and impresarios as well connected as Diaghilev, Tatlin's horizons broadened rapidly, and he became familiar with movements in Western Europe, French cubism in particular.

Tatlin lost little time in meeting Picasso, the preeminent cubist, in Paris



*"In his attitude to materials, Tatlin was more like the boat-building sailor than the academically trained sculptor."*

in 1913, and even attempted to become his studio assistant. Nothing came of these overtures, but his debt to Picasso is evident in his constructed sculptures—the *Reliefs* mentioned previously. Boccioni's and Archipenko's constructions became known to Tatlin at about the same time.

The relative weight of these European influences on Tatlin can be debated, but there can be no doubt of the importance of his contact with the European avant-garde. It forced him to reassess his earlier convictions and the relationship of his work to the insights being made by fellow Russian artists and writers. When the poet-agitator of Italian futurism F. T. Marinetti visited Russia in 1914, the need for a reappraisal became even more compelling. Tatlin's ultimate response was to explore cubism's initiatives in ways unimagined in Paris but much discussed in Moscow. The experiments of the poet Viktor Khlebnikov, a friend of Tatlin's, showed Tatlin how his own abstract constructions of found materials could be rethought in a fundamental way: "Khlebnikov explored language as material, Tatlin explored materials as language." In his attitude to materials Tatlin became more like the boat-building sailor than the academically trained sculptor carving marble or casting bronze. His exploration of the physical

properties of materials side-stepped aesthetic issues: composition was replaced by construction.

These insights germinated and blossomed in Tatlin's art during the years of the Russian Empire's collapse. After the Soviets came to power in 1917, Tatlin allied himself with the new regime and was quickly given heady responsibilities in Moscow by A. V. Lunacharsky, Lenin's commissar for culture. Evidently, Tatlin fulfilled his duties responsibly and received the commission to design the Monument to the Third International (1919-1920), which brought him lasting fame.

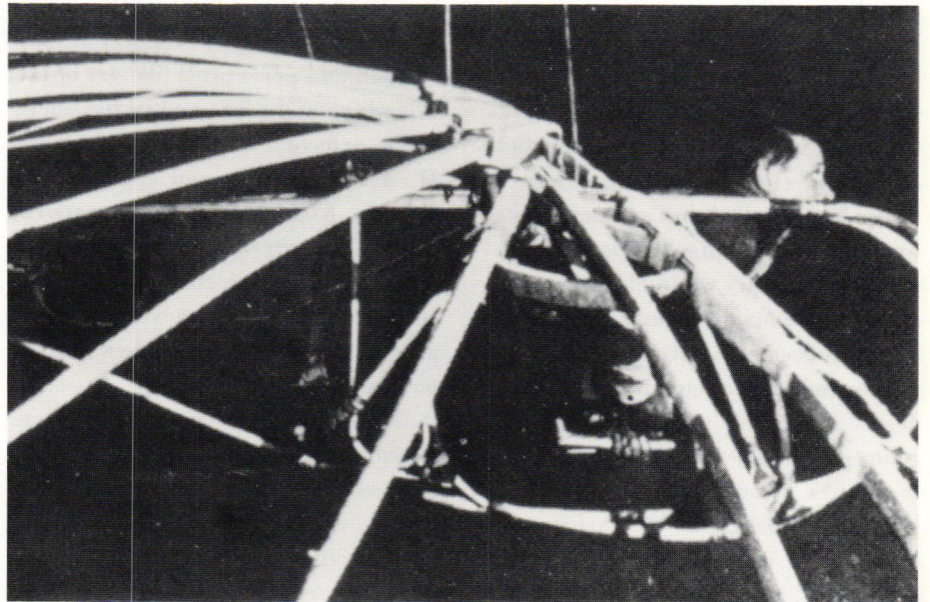
Milner interprets Tatlin's Tower not as some skyscraping, megastructural oddity, but as an image of humanity's evolution, focused on Communism's will to revolutionary action. "Tatlin's Tower" is a kind of clock in which the deliberations and actions of the world of men are related to and regulated by the rhythms of the sun, moon, and earth. The iconography Milner suggests for the tower is one of the richest we have to date; one detects the further influence of Khlebnikov, since even the

mechanistic imagery was actuated by poetic and mystical concerns.

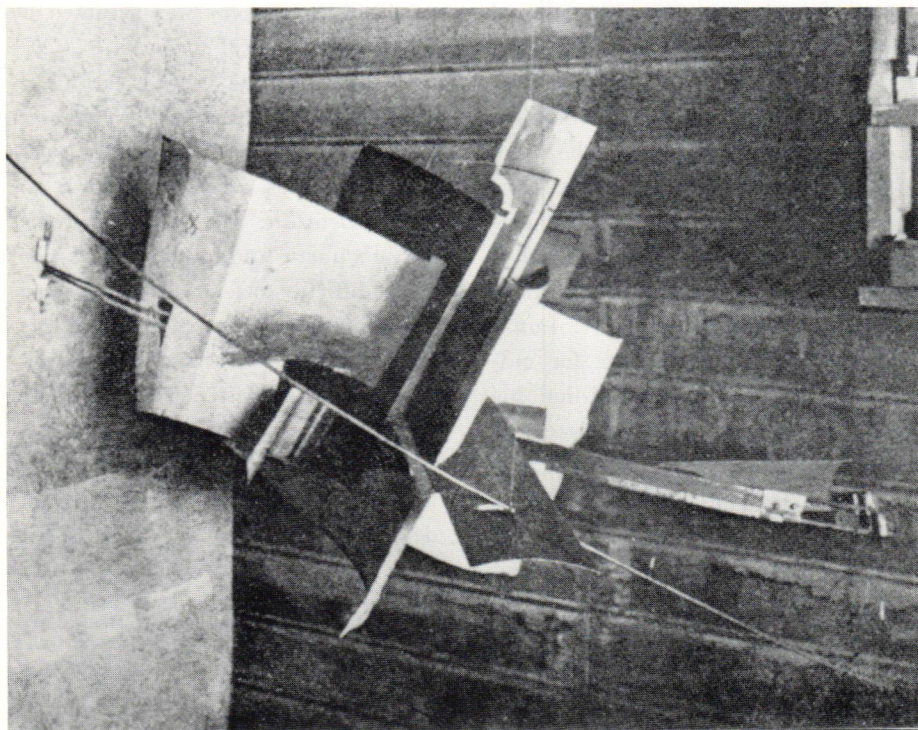
Milner does not neglect Tatlin's efforts in other directions—theater set design, furniture and clothing, anatomical studies, and the glider aptly named *Letatlin*.<sup>\*</sup> But in these activities Tatlin's poetic and mystic bent is a bit more difficult to follow. One reason is the utilitarian nature of the objects: stoves designed for maximum fuel efficiency, clothes designed for maximum freedom of movement. Another reason is that Milner covers Tatlin's activities after the early twenties, through his death in 1953, rather sketchily. To better explain Tatlin's preoccupations with objects intended for everyday use one should turn to Christina Lodder's study, *Russian Constructivism*.

Here the same themes Milner pursues are followed into the early twenties; in the process it becomes clear how and why Tatlin and artists of equal talent became politically committed art activists. Lodder, unlike Milner, focuses not on individual artists but on the plans, groups, and collectives formed by them. She illuminates the central ideas of

VLADIMIR TATLIN, *LETATLIN* WITH TATLIN IN PILOTING POSITION, CIRCA 1932.







VLADIMIR TATLIN, CORNER RELIEF, SUSPENDED TYPE, 1915. FROM MODERNA MUSEET, VLADIMIR TATLIN, STOCKHOLM, 1968.

Constructivism by clarifying the role of key institutions, debates, and works of art in its evolution. She shows why Constructivism is not just another art trend, and why the "aesthetic" conception of it, too prevalent in the West, completely misses its sociological and ideological mainsprings. Put bluntly, the Constructivists were hell-bent on a social and political project—not of their own invention, but to which they dedicated themselves completely—whose logic implied that art and artists were irrelevant anachronisms. Pre-1917 abstract art was looked down on as "non-utilitarian" formal experimentation, redeemable only by its value in propaganda, agitation, and meeting the needs of the new work-oriented environment. Artists no longer considered themselves artists, since the role had become obsolete, but as "artist-constructors," or, better yet, "artist-engineers."

OBMOKhU (The Society of Young Artists) and INKhUK (The Institute of Artistic Culture) were the primary arenas for the theoretical debates which led to this situation. Lodder amplifies the history of these institutions by following the development of the same debates in publications like *Art in Production* and periodicals like *Art of the Commune* and *LEF*, and in the works of the principal critics (B. I. Arvatov, M. A. Tarabukin), and artists (Rodchenko, Klucis, Popova, Stepanova, Gan). The material is organized chronologically and the chapters end with summaries which are very helpful guides in this previously bewildering territory.

VKhUTEMAS (The Higher State Artistic and Technical Workshops), the Moscow school "where the formal, ideological, and technical elements of the Constructivist approach were taught," receives a comprehensive chapter. We

finally have a convenient overview of the school's development, its orientation, the content of the basic courses, and the character of the various departments, which makes it possible to compare the school with its more publicized German counterpart, the Bauhaus.

Both Lodder and Milner use original archival material to synthesize, correct, and augment the earlier work of Soviet and Western scholars. They have established basic biographical facts for the leading members of the Russian avant-garde, as well as the most precise chronology of Constructivism to date. As if this were not enough, they trace the antecedents of the movement, explain its key ideas, illustrate prime objects, and clarify difficult terminology.

The strengths of both books lie in their coverage of events up to the early twenties. Lodder, to be sure, devotes chapters to the Constructivist micro-environment, its non-mechanical aspects (which she labels "Organic Constructivism"), and to photomontage, but these topics deserve extended book-length studies in their own right. The same may be said for her brief treatment of Constructivist architecture. Neither study would be much help in tracing the full impact of Tatlin or Constructivism in Russia throughout the late 1920s, or finding out why Tatlin and the other Constructivists found little fulfillment for their creative energy after the early 1930s. Nevertheless, each achieves a persuasive synthesis in a neglected field, and in my opinion deserves nothing but praise.

\*From Tatlin's name and the Russian *letat'*, to fly (eds.).

Vladimir Tatlin and the Russian Avant-Garde, John Milner, Yale, 1983, 255 pp., illus., \$29.95.

Russian Constructivism, Christina Lodder, Yale, 1983, 328 pp., illus., \$40.00.



Andrew Rabeneck:

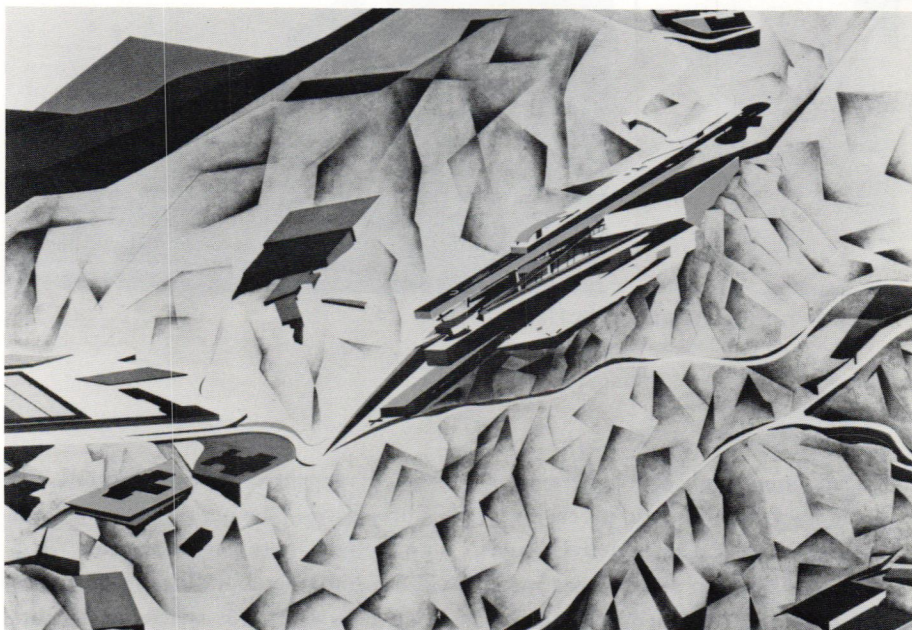
## PLANETARY ARCHITECTURE TWO

ZAHA HADID

Kandinsky used to teach a course at the Bauhaus entitled "The Transformation of a Material Model into an Abstract Image." His method, as always, was to force a totally fresh vision of the commonplace, so that it could find its way back into everyday life imbued with the power to transform the imagination of others.

This has also been the program of a remarkable group centered in the Architectural Association in London, OMA—the Office of Metropolitan Architecture. The very name, or at least the acronym, pays homage to those cryptic groupings of Russian Constructivists, OSA and ARU. Like them, OMA seizes the opportunities of surrounding ideological disarray to put forward a philosophy of jarring intervention in our present "culture of congestion." The dislocations and screechings produced by these architectural interjections aim to alert people to the potential of life in a mass-market culture, to stimulate them, and—like Kandinsky's decompositions—to allow them to experience the commonplace with fresh emotions.

The prototypical medium illustrating the potential power of such interventions is Manhattan, specifically the Manhattan of Rem Koolhaas's *Delirious New York*, the very embodiment of congestion, of freshness and putrefaction, rich and poor, high and low, strange and ordinary. To intervene in



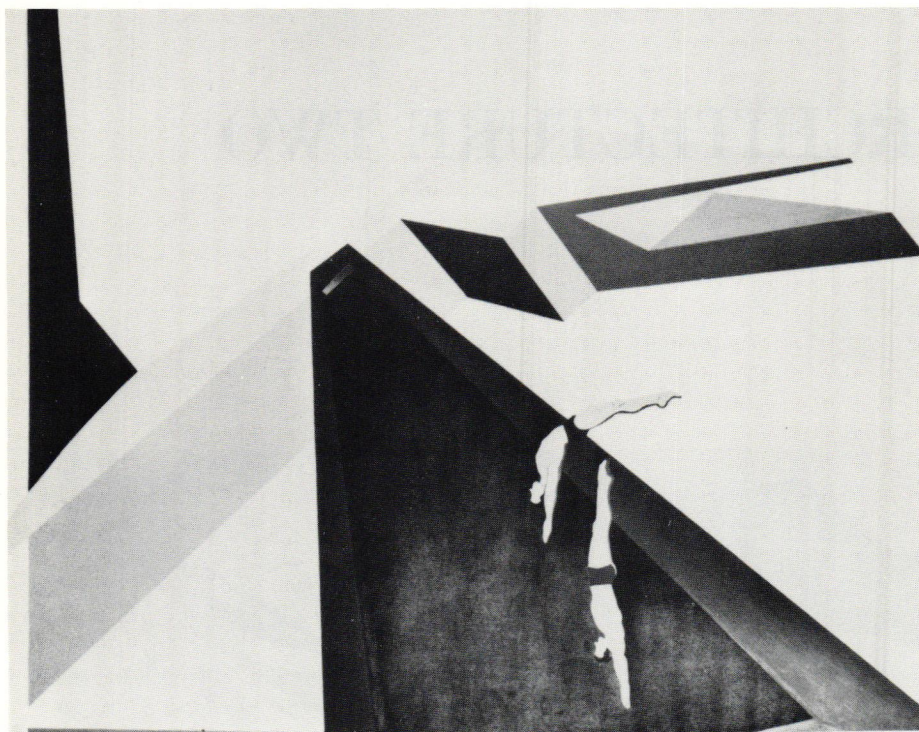
ZAHA HADID, OVERALL ISOMETRIC, THE PEAK, HONG KONG, 1983

such a context requires a sharp tool, and this OMA have certainly developed.

Zaha Hadid, the best student of Elia Zenghelis and Rem Koolhaas at the Architectural Association, has now become the most provocative artist of this particular branch of architectural metaphysics. Since winning the Peak Competition for a club in Hong Kong last year, she and OMA are certain to find a wider audience of admirers and imitators. That success promises a confrontation with reality which may dent the magic of her work, and transform her ineffable imagery into a consumable style. That would be a pity.

The instrument of architectural intervention Hadid has forged has its genesis in the Russian Constructivism of the 1920s. She has always been interested in this period—the work of Malevich and Leonidov in particular. The dislocated forms, the staccato rhythms and smooth, distinctive shapes not found in nature fascinate her. Her drawings, exquisitely precise black-and-white abstractions, slash their way excitedly through tired old London, Paris, or New York, and now chew into and hover above Hong Kong. "Explosion" is a word she uses frequently to describe her designs, conveying the de-





ZAHA HADID, THE DIVE, THE PEAK, HONG KONG, 1983

materialization and contradiction of natural laws and human precedents. She feels that the Constructivist and suprematist painters left a great work unfinished, and that their spirit of infinite possibility opposing grinding habit is, if anything, more urgent today than ever.

This is a revolutionary sentiment, but not in the sense of the traditional Modernists, eager to remove traces of the past and make cities and landscape fit, as it were, for Modern architecture, before erecting the brave new world. Hadid's aim is rather to create a dynamic tension between old and new, between context and intervention. Her work is thus closer to general revisionist trends in planning than is at first apparent.

Her life, too, has been a metaphor for her art. An Iraqi, she says of her early years at the AA, "I was seen as a wealthy Arab lady, waltzing in and

out. I remember Jeremy [Dixon] and Chris [Cross] saying that I looked like an actress between rehearsals." Indeed, until she found her mentor, Elia Zenghelis, in 1975, she was often unhappy (albeit soaking up the rich minestrone of AA ideas). In 1976 she wisely declined to join my own unit at the AA, choosing instead to work with Zenghelis and Koolhaas. I recall her haughty, eager, knowing, yet no-nonsense approach to people, a persona developed to protect herself from disappointment. In their unit, to quote Koolhaas, "Zaha's performance during the fourth and fifth years was like that of a rocket that took off slowly to describe a constantly accelerating trajectory. Now she is a PLANET, in her own inimitable orbit."

The Von Braun/Frankenstein analogy aside, this is an apt description, which conveys her mentors' excitement in witnessing the rapid blooming of an

exotic plant. But, as Koolhaas shrewdly observes, "due to the flamboyance of her work, it will be impossible for her to have a conventional career." That has been true. Teaching now in the unit that nurtured her, Hadid constantly takes risks in her work that would be impossible in the context of a conventional practice. Her winning entry for the Peak competition is exemplary.

Her work has now been published as a boxed set of loose prints (their publication coincides with an exhibition of her work at the AA last summer). These reproduce paintings she has done of her projects—paintings she explains as tests of the concepts they display. All but two are in monochrome, enhanced with dabs of silkscreened color. They evoke, perhaps inadvertently, the murky reproductions of the work of her Constructivist heroes, or the hand poché portfolios of Editions Morance in the 1920s.

The prints do not really do justice to her imagery. No line drawings, similarly "suitable for framing," are offered: they are used instead to punctuate an attractively produced accompanying pamphlet containing a brief encomium by Kenneth Frampton, and a lengthy and informative interview of Hadid by Alvin Boyarsky, chairman of the AA.

This publication has the unfortunate air of a self-conscious attempt to create an instant collector's item. Hadid doesn't really need this kind of Vox Box treatment to authenticate her exciting talent; it's too soon for a retrospective, even in today's overheated architectural publishing market.

Planetary Architecture Two, Zaha Hadid, with an introduction by Kenneth Frampton and an interview of Hadid by Alvin Boyarsky, Architectural Association (34-36 Bedford Square, London, WC1 B-3ES), 1983, boxed set of 18 prints and an unpaginated pamphlet, £15.00 (\$25.00)



Joseph H. Caton:

## ARCHITECTURE IN PROGRESS: IBA BERLIN 1984

FRANK RUSSELL, editor

*Architecture in Progress: Internationale Bauausstellung 1984* is an exhibition catalogue that chronicles and analyzes approximately twenty-five projects by architects from Europe, America, and Japan for the rebuilding of four important areas in West Berlin. The theme of the exhibition is "The Inner City as Residential Area," and accordingly the programmes for the areas of Praeger Platz, Tegel, southern Tiergartenviertel, and southern Fried-

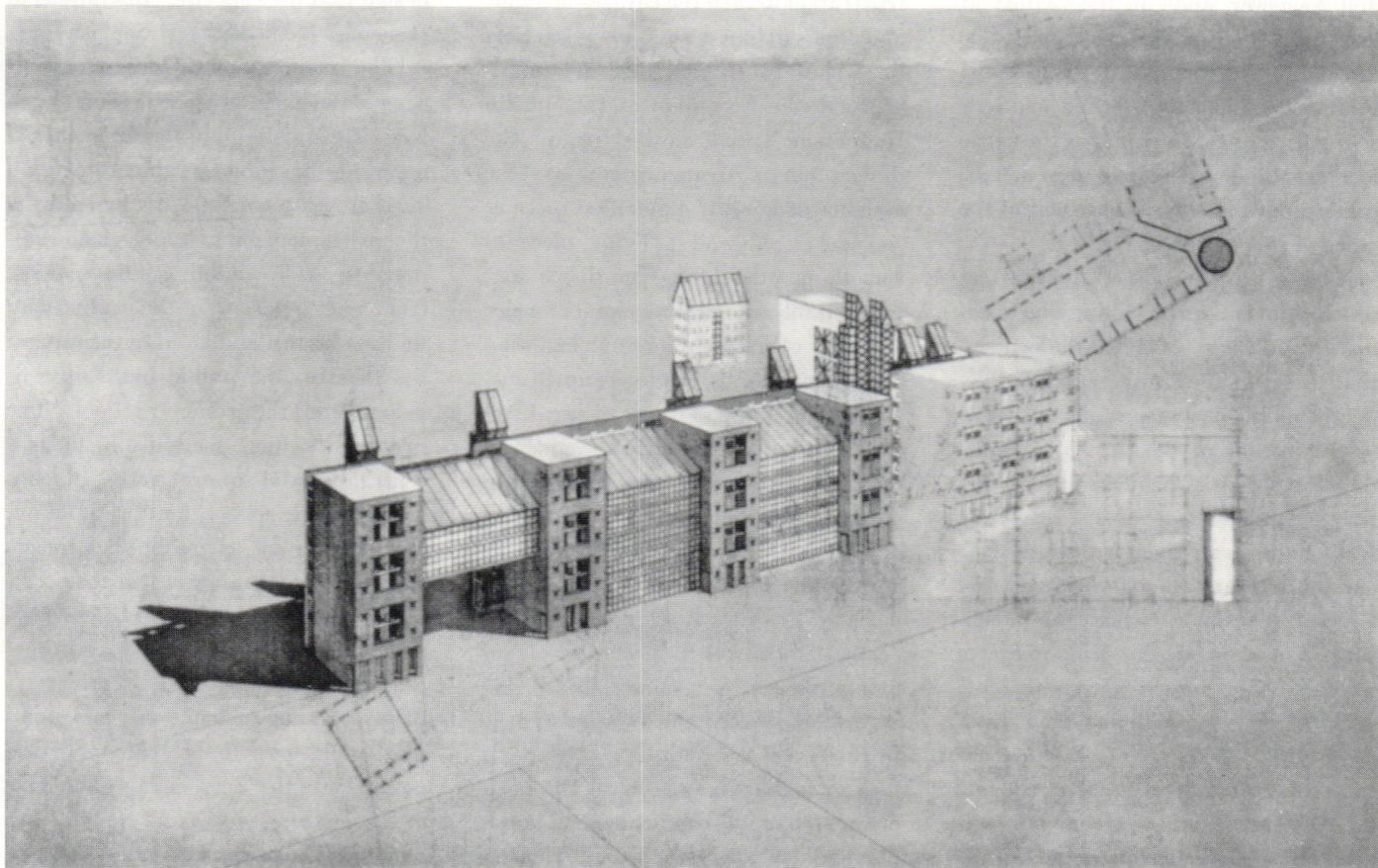
richstadt include provisions for housing, commercial structures, and public buildings. The essays in the catalogue introduce, in a relatively objective way, a heterogeneous group of competition entries that are left to speak for themselves.

As a result of the IBA, the historical city of Berlin has become the stage for a symposium, sometimes rather heated, of the architectural ideas prevailing in the world today. The major dialogue of this symposium focuses on the gulf between the specific social needs of the present and accrued references to the city of the past. While a spokesman for the IBA may argue that the exhibition "sought to establish a concrete and transferrable model which shows . . . that more human cities are

possible in our society and can be built," the introduction to the catalogue concludes, somewhat remorsefully, that "the particular context of Berlin, its history and associations, have acted in some cases as an emotional trigger whose results are neither socially responsible nor in other ways desirable."

The idea of mounting a major building exhibition, a *Bauausstellung*, as a sort of world's fair of architecture is, of course, something that in itself has very important precedents in German history. One of the first real codifications of the Modern Movement was the Weisenhof Siedlung in Stuttgart in 1927, in which housing projects by Le Corbusier, Mies, Oud, Gropius, and Taut, among others, formed a com-

ALDO ROSSI AND GIANNI BRAGHERI, VIEW OF WILHELMSTRASSE PORTAL AND RESIDENTIAL UNITS, KOCH-/FRIEDRICHSTRASSE, BLOCK 10





munity on the hills overlooking the city. In Berlin itself, the history of building exhibitions goes well back into the 19th century to the plans for the World Exhibition Palace of 1879; the tradition manifested itself in the frequent exhibitions of the 1920s and 1930s, such as the Deutsche Bauausstellung of 1931, for which architects such as Mies and Gropius designed projects that responded to the proposed theme of "Building of Our Time."

After World War II, as Wolfgang Braunfels explains in one of the introductory essays, Berlin "more often than any other German city . . . has been preoccupied with itself in exhibitions, symposia, planning commitments, official research, and architectural competitions." Certainly the most important of these was the Hansaviertel in the mid-1950s, in which blocks of flats were designed by Aalto, Gropius, and Niemeyer, and—in the vicinity at least—by Le Corbusier as well. The unifying theme behind all of these exhibitions was something based on a very self-conscious exhibition of avant-garde ideology. Such exhibitions were meant, quite simply, as the embodiment of the cities of the future.

The IBA places itself within this tradition of avant-garde exhibitions, adding the ideology of Post-Modernism, that much of the future can be a reflection of the past, especially in regard to the history of Berlin. As a result, the IBA places its projects in four distinct neighborhoods of the city, and seeks to integrate them with both their environment and the past—in contrast to the Hansaviertel, whose fundamentally homogeneous housing projects were placed as objects on an absolute grid, much removed from their environment and history. As Colin Rowe observes in a postscript to the catalogue, the IBA "has abandoned the high pedestal on which former promoters of exhibitions habitually placed themselves"

in that "it has chosen to embroil itself with the existing city in all its empirical density." Whereas the Hansaviertel was the result of a basically positivistic viewpoint imposed upon an otherwise empty urban landscape, the IBA is composed of a series of remarkably heterogeneous projects that respond to the specific demands of particular areas of the city in a variety of forms.

But the historic city of Berlin exists more in idea than in form: what is left of the historic center lies for the most part on the other side of the wall in East Berlin (including the majority of Schinkel's reconstructed masterpieces). Most of Berlin's urban landscape today is as much a result of the Modern Movement as any city in the world, except perhaps Brasilia. As a result, the Post-Modern architect intoxicated with the idea of history, and anxious to release a certain pent-up frustration toward the ravages of 1950s and 1960s urban design, may find Berlin a spur to architectural overindulgence. Peter Eisenman and Jacquelin Robertson speak of Berlin, in the description of their project, as "the essential fragment: a petrified piece of something old and a living piece of something 'other,' [that] in displaying, unavoidably, the presence of its former self, . . . is nothing more nor less than the memory of its own interrupted history." And Vittorio Gregotti speaks of maintaining "together with the idea of urban unity an ambiguous relationship of incompleteness, of broken memory." What is unclear in such projects is precisely how "memory" and "anti-memory"—to use Eisenman's terms—can realistically be the generator of new urban plans.

One of the central questions posed by the IBA is, therefore, precisely what idea or form can be used as the basis of an urban design project. What is particularly interesting about this exhibition is that so many very different

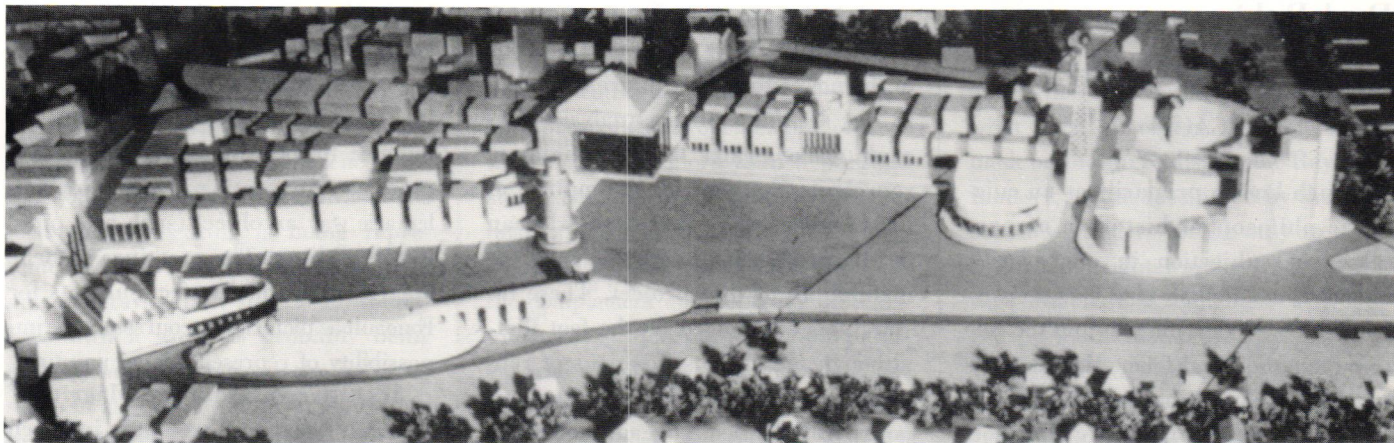
answers or solutions are presented. In contrast to such Modern Movement projects as the Hansaviertel, where designs by several architects were often generated by the same rationalism, IBA 1984 gives us a number of very different projects generated by very different premises.

The history of the city itself is a prevalent theme. Arata Isozaki's plan for Tegel, for example, emphasizes the proximity of the Tegel Schloss, designed by Schinkel in 1822. As he recognizes in the description of the design, "Schinkel's distinguished architectural performance represents a particular contribution for the whole city of Berlin and became a main motif in our building complex." Isozaki's group explains that they "proceeded . . . in a manner similar to architects in the early 19th century, who quoted and reconstructed classical architecture." The result is a design that uses specific "quotations of elements" from the Tegel Schloss.

The interrelation of building typologies is the basis for some designs. Leon Krier's exquisite plan for Tegel, in attempting "nothing less than to develop Tegel into a town," begins by splitting the programme into typological components. "The buildings that emerge from such a design are basically those we have known and loved for centuries: the theatre, the public baths, the library, [and] the grammar school." The proposed project therefore includes a central covered square, baths, library, theatre, high school, market building, church, as well as public monuments and working areas.

Reference to the natural environment forms the basis of the plan in several of the projects. Charles Moore's first-prize design for Tegel, for example, emphasizes the proximity of the new town to the Tegelsee, a sizable lake in the northwest section of Berlin. "We seek to make memorable and attractive centers of activity which relate to the





LEON KRIER, MODEL FOR TEGEL PROJECT

scale and qualities of the existing district," he writes. The site "is within the city, on the edge of a harbour which communicates with lakes, and looks north toward the Tegel forest and south towards an urban neighborhood." The resulting project, based on a desire "to amplify one's awareness of all these special qualities," places housing so that units have south light and views of the harbor, and emphasizes a huge recreational complex built on a ship-like island in the harbor.

Of all the projects, the few that use the street as the focal point are probably the most successful. The street, after all, is often tied deeply to a city's history, and also fills the social demands of the present. The street names, as in the case of the area surrounding Friedrichstrasse particularly, may evoke something of the importance and grandeur of a former Berlin. The project proposed by Aldo Rossi and Gianni Braghieri attempts to "respect the alignment of the street by erecting buildings along the perimeter of the area." Design criteria included "continuity of the street façade; an average height permitting the creation of perspective interrupted by green and the alternation of the old and new without excessive mass; [and] porticoed shops or public spaces." The project makes

reference to the city of the past, yet derives its vitality from its relationship to the needs of the present social structure and its use of mass-produced materials.

Many of these projects are good specific solutions for the particular problems of Berlin—although one wonders how the designers and organizers could contemplate such lavish expenditures for recreational islands, huge covered piazzas, and elaborate Schinkesque neo-classical detail. Since the publication of the catalogue, however, the exhibition has been cancelled and only a few of them will be brought to completion. The question at this point is, if the IBA 1984 represents the same sort of codification of international architectural ideology as its predecessors, what conclusions can be drawn about the state of contemporary architecture?

Compared to those in the Weisenhof Siedlung catalogue, many of the IBA projects seem experimental. In place of the self-assurance—even arrogance—found in the exhibitions of the Modern Movement, they seem to be groping for appropriate forms; the monolithic world view of the Modern Movement has definitely been superseded by the fragmented quality of Post-Modernism.

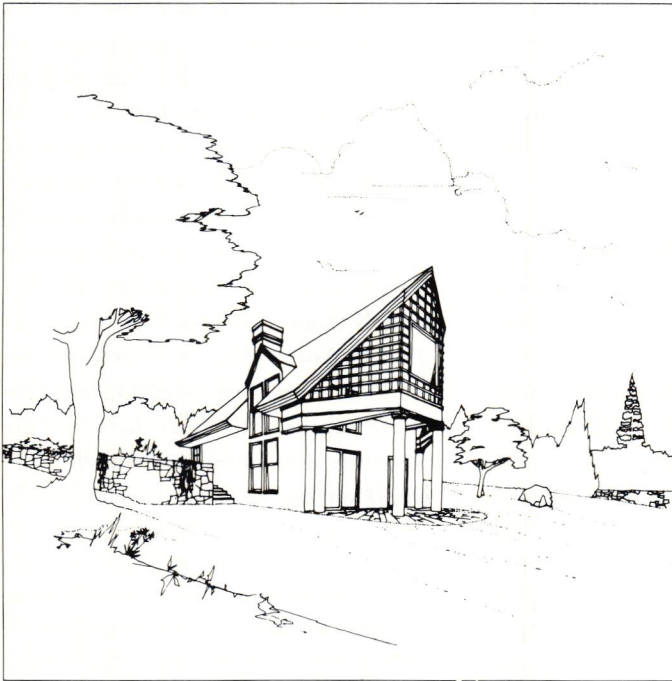
There is also an unevenness that makes generalization difficult. James

Stirling's science center is a remarkably sophisticated building by any standard—one that exists in form as well as ideology—while the basically brutalist project of Alison and Peter Smithson for Lützowstrasse remains basically in the *partée* stage. And John Hejduk's "Berlin Masque," although highly poetic, is still more idea than architecture. But many of these problems are simply characteristic of Post-Modernism, and, like any new ideas, should have a forum. The catalogue for IBA 1984 serves this purpose, even if the casual reader may feel far removed from the heated and often recondite debates taking place on the stage.

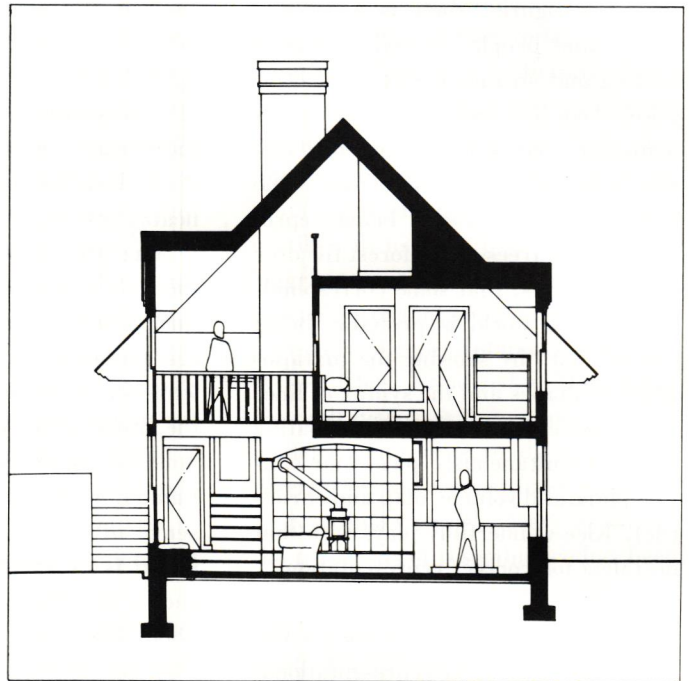
Since the IBA 1984 is also recognizably a competition, certain winners will emerge. While all participants in the dialogue are worth hearing, somehow the arguments of Leon Krier, James Stirling, and Aldo Rossi seem clearer than the rest. The key to their success may lie in their ability—difficult at best in Berlin—to exploit the ideas of history, rather than be subservient to them.

*Architecture in Progress: Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin 1984*, Frank Russell, editor, St. Martin's (Academy Architecture Series), 1984, 127 pp., illus., \$14.95 pb.





J. WHITNEY HUBER, VIEW FROM THE SOUTHWEST, HILL HUT, CHESTER, CONNECTICUT



J. WHITNEY HUBER, SECTION, HILL HUT, CHESTER, CONNECTICUT

inspired peaked roof cottage to an essay in Miesian bridgework. There are only two remodels—perhaps too few given the large number of people remodeling these days.

It must be significant that the editors chose for the cover the modest, Venturi-like cottage by Bentley/LaRosa/Salasky Design, captured at dusk on a snow-bound evening, small rectangles of warmth glowing from within. It's the very image of the Little House in the Woods, an elemental statement of habitation, a "Monopoly" house trucked up to the Maine forests, far away from the corner of Marvin Gardens and Baltic Avenue. In placing this image on its cover, I think *Record* is backing modesty, economy, and a strong but simple image. This seems reasonable given the realities of eighties economics.

With today's increased consciousness of architectural history, one could logically expect an assortment of columns and pediments. The historical ingredients are actually fairly subtle, and

tend more toward the exploration of regionalism than of classical vocabularies. MLTW/Turnbull's tropical dogtrot in Hawaii is perhaps the most original, seeming at the same time new and familiar; the translucent roof turns the house into a magical hurricane lamp.

Overall, the selection is a little disappointing. Dashes of Gwathmey, Graves, and Moore abound, and many of the houses simply are not all that innovative or new. Fresh ideas aren't the only criterion, however (although one expects to see them in this type of publication); elegant reworkings of older idioms are also noteworthy, and the examples in this collection show that the aesthetics of Eames and Mies retain their form-giving power.

Alfredo De Vido's *Designing Your Client's House* is a more useful book, because it attempts to get behind the reasons for making a house look the way it does. It's a kind of design primer for architects doing residential work. Various sections describe the archi-

tect's role, how to work with the client and get him or her to articulate the program, the builder, and cost-saving measures (for example, designing in conformance with the four-by-eight foot dimensions of plywood and sheetrock). A short section offers commonsense advice on such design treatments as contrasting public and private areas, accenting special features like handmade or "found" items, or using elements that characterize the inhabitants.

The bulk of the book provides essential data on 43 recent houses, a good cross-section of the work of a number of first-rate architects from all over the country. The material on each house includes photos and drawings, a general statement of the program, and a detailed statement of intentions for all aspects of the design: general conditions, sitework, concrete work, masonry, metals, carpentry, thermal and moisture protection, doors, windows, glazing, finishes, specialties, plumbing, HVAC, electrical. Though briefly stated, these details



help the reader reconstruct the parameters governing the major design decisions, and thus understand more clearly the background of the final design.

In many of them the potential of economy as a creative design tool comes through. Of a house by Kelbaugh and Lee, De Vido says:

Some rooms are better left unfinished until the owner can better afford to complete them properly. Economy in the use of space is important; if rooms are to be seldom used, the firm proposes minimum sizes for them, shifting the difference to rooms that are more important to the lifestyle of the occupants.

Similarly, the firm of Booth/Hansen "views economic constraint as a spur to design quality." The only odd note here is the inclusion of Frank Lloyd Wright's Zimmerman House in Manchester, New Hampshire, built in 1951.

It's wishful thinking to imagine, as De Vido seems to imply by dropping it among the case studies, that it could be duplicated today for less than a few trillion. As an example from history of a response to design constraints, it deserves its own chapter.

The concept of creative economy is the very basis for the third book under review, *The Compact House Book*, which showcases 32 designs for houses of a thousand square feet or less—entries in an awards program for innovative small house design organized by the publisher. Making the selection were Canadian architect John Hix, California architect Barry Berkus, solar author Don Watson, National Association of Home Builders' president Ralph Johnson, and New Hampshire architect Don Metz (also the book's editor).

Written for the prospective house builder, the book marks an important beginning. Builder's pattern books have been around for a long time, but

*"The process of house design remains a popular test of creativity, even as it grows less frequent."*

here is one that zeroes in on the problem of the small house by harvesting the design ideas of a whole raft of the nation's younger architects.

The winners of the first, second, and third prizes are shown at the beginning; the rest are arranged alphabetically by designer. Each entry runs several pages, with statements by the designer, technical data, and comments by the jury. There is a good variety in concepts and presentation styles. Significantly, most of the sites for these houses are rural, although there are some exceptions (for example, the designs of Thomas Haskell or Brian G. Swier and Michael Constantin for subdivision and infill sites).

One of the most interesting aspects of the book is the variety of devices used to give small houses a feeling of spaciousness and scale. J. Whitney Huber uses a lath and columned portico with strength and style to break out of the confines of the box. David Leash extends the frame of his house to enclose three outdoor rooms in a simple but very effective gesture. The book is full of this sort of thing—designs that are distinctively modest, but which say, in effect, that living with less can be a lot of fun.

Record Houses 1983, *Architectural Record*, McGraw-Hill, 1983, 182 pp., illus., \$7.95 pb.

Designing Your Client's House, Alfredo De Vido, Watson-Guptill, 1983, 192 pp., illus., \$27.50.

The Compact House Book: 32 Prize Winning Designs, Don Metz, ed., Garden Way, 1983, 193 pp., illus., \$10.95 pb.

BENTLEY/LA ROSA/SALASKY, THE GARRET LOFT, HOG HILL HOUSE, EAST HOLDEN, MAINE





Dell Upton:

## HOME SWEET HOME

CHARLES W. MOORE, KATHRYN SMITH, and  
PETER BECKER, editors

When an eastern friend of mine learned of the Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum's plan to sponsor 15 concurrent exhibitions on American vernacular architecture at nearly as many institutions in that city, he wondered where else but in Los Angeles anyone would think of mounting a museum show that required a car to see it. As a newly transplanted easterner, I have similar feelings. I am in awe of the project's ambition, and bewildered by a loose-jointed quality I am not accustomed to finding in museum productions. *Home Sweet Home* accurately mirrors the strengths and weaknesses of the approach; it encourages us to look widely, to appreciate omnivorously: that is exciting. But it also fails to give us much help, and that is disappointing.

The 19 essays here treat not only familiar house types—bungalows, ranch houses, and log houses—but exotic, eccentric, and slightly disreputable ones, like Northwest Coast Indian housing, homemade castles, houseboats, and trailers. They examine popular styles and materials, characteristic elements like porches, color preferences and other elusive elements of regional identity, as well as the approaches of artists and children to buildings. Most of the essays have a West Coast focus and most of the au-

thors are Californian, drawn from a variety of academic, museum, and design backgrounds.

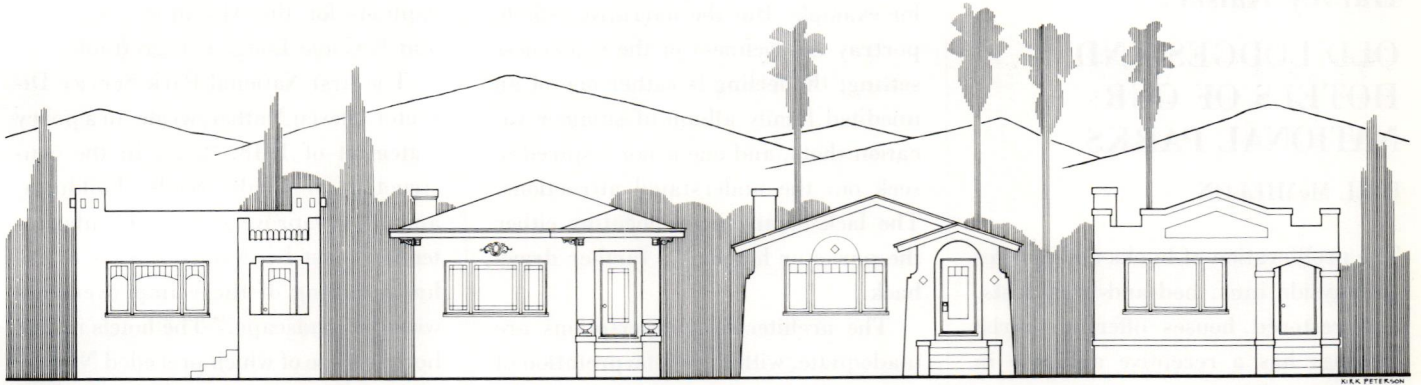
American vernacular architecture scholars differ from their European colleagues and predecessors in defining their purview much more broadly. Most European scholars restrict their investigations to rural peasant architecture, often to rural peasant architecture built before 1700. Americans take in industrial architecture, urban architecture, and much of the popular housing and commercial roadside architecture of the 20th century. Even those generous bounds are too constricting for the planners of the *Home Sweet Home* project, who found a place for Hearst Castle in their book and in their galleries. I endorse this inclusive and difficult order enthusiastically. Its rationale is set forth in Charles Moore's brief but perceptive introduction which deftly, if a little glibly, distinguishes the social scientists' approach from that of architects and designers. The academics, as Moore understands them, look for large patterns in order to organize great amounts of information about buildings in the aggregate. The architects seek out the quirky, the unique, the ingenious, and the "charming," as well as the characteristic. Academics wish to narrow the scope of vernacular architecture studies and make them

more precise, while architects try to draw in every building that entertains them.

The way around this dichotomy may be to ask, why define? What really interests the editors and authors of *Home Sweet Home* are the responses to time and place embodied in architecture, as well as its possibilities for the expressive realization of the "dreams" of individual builders. The same qualities, put in somewhat different terms, interest academic students of vernacular architecture. Why worry, then, about what fits into any definition of vernacular architecture and what doesn't? Why not just call it all architecture, and study those qualities that attract us wherever they might appear? This is in fact what the organizers of the exhibit have apparently done, choosing the term vernacular for its trendy connotations, and for lack of a better one (somewhat like the musician who, when asked why he called what he played country music, replied that it was because "it ain't city music").

If we accept the distinction between the academic and design approaches to vernacular architecture as Moore defines them—academics organize, designers celebrate; academics seek to understand people in groups, architects, to find in individuals the absolute originality that they are taught to value but





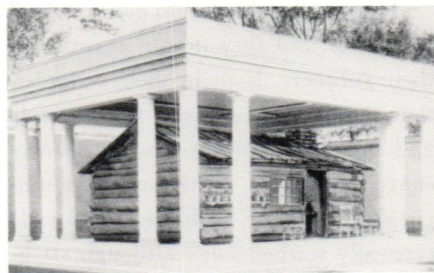
"TYPICAL ONE-STORY STUCCO HOUSES." DRAWING BY KIRK PETERSON.

that can never exist—we can see the limitations of both approaches. However, it is fair to ask which of the two groups gives the best account of itself in these essays. The answer is clearly the people who, whatever their professional affiliations, take the path of the academic. The essays on houseboats by Roger Scharmer, on ranch houses by Esther McCoy and Evelyn Hitchcock, on Spanish Colonial Revival architecture by David Gebhard, and on Northwest Coast Indian plank houses by Bob Easton, succeed by carefully sorting and organizing a well-defined body of material. As a group, they give evidence of the long-term engagement of the authors with their subjects, of careful and extensive looking at buildings, of an understanding of the material.

This is not to say that there is no place for celebration, or that we couldn't learn from a thoughtfully done appreciative essay; it's just that not many of the celebratory essays here have that thoughtful quality. Many seem to have been spur-of-the-moment productions, their observations impressionistic and offhand. The photographs in many cases were not taken by the authors and are not recent, which always suggests to me that a writer didn't do much active looking on his own. The appreciations, as a result, offer us few insights that we couldn't

have arrived at ourselves by strolling down a street or paging through a book. They take on the quality of an informal show of someone's favorite vacation slides, a type of production at which architects seem to excel.

How might one classify *Home Sweet Home*? It is not an exhibition catalogue in the orthodox sense, yet many of the essays refer more or less directly to the exhibits and to the intentions of the curators. Neither does the book stand on



FIRST HOUSE BUILT IN UTAH, SALT LAKE CITY, 1847. (COURTESY OF THE CRAFT AND FOLK ART MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES)

*"Academics wish to narrow the scope of vernacular architecture studies and make them more precise, while architects try to draw in every building that entertains them."*

its own as a collection of essays on vernacular architecture. It can best be called a souvenir of the *Home Sweet Home* project; its greatest value will be to the lay person who has an interest in architecture and who has visited the exhibits. None of the essays presents any new information or striking interpretive theses that scholars will want to consult, but the best succeed in encapsulating the gist of their exhibits succinctly and memorably—Carla Fantozzi's essay on Hearst Castle, Arlan and Barbara Coffman's on children's architectural toys, and John Chase's and John Beach's on the stucco box (in addition to those mentioned above).

Finally, one might wish for a more careful production in a slim paperback costing nearly \$20. Many of the illustrations in the essays are related only peripherally to the texts, and none of the figures are numbered or referred to in the essays. Many of the illustrations are of poor quality; Scharmer's good essay on houseboats, for example, is sabotaged by small, fuzzy photographs, taken in 1965, that are nearly impossible to make out. For me, this sums up the spirit of *Home Sweet Home*.

*Home Sweet Home: American Domestic Vernacular Architecture*, Charles W. Moore, Kathryn Smith, and Peter Becker, editors, Rizzoli and the Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum, 1983, 150 pp., illus., \$17.50 pb.



Harvey Kaiser:

## OLD LODGES AND HOTELS OF OUR NATIONAL PARKS

BILL McMILLON

The proliferation of books and articles on wayside inns, bed-and-breakfasts, and restored houses offering tourist lodgings has a receptive audience in travelers seeking a respite from neon-advertised motels and plastic laminate furniture. Against the background of the national interest in architectural preservation, what better destination for the discerning traveler than accommodation in the magnificent settings of the national parks?

The National Park Foundation's *America's National Parks* and the Conference of National Park Concessioners' *National Parks Visitor Facilities and Services* provide the basic information, but a complete, well-illustrated history of the hotels and lodges, with architectural descriptions, would be useful to those planning visits to the parks, and as a memento. *Old Lodges and Hotels of Our National Parks* tries to fill this gap, but is a disappointment.

The challenge of visiting the 22 hotels described in the book is certainly a testimony to the author-photographer's perseverance; but to live up to every one of the claims on the book's jacket would require the eye for detail of a Paul Theroux, the architectural epigrams of a Brendan Gill, the scholarship of a Vincent Scully, Jr., and the camera skills of an Ansel Adams. The book's strengths are its anecdotes, which reflect the desire of the author to communicate "the gentility of these old lodges": the story of the opening of Glacier Park Hotel with a celebration of railroader James J. Hill's 75th birthday, and the traditions of the Brace-

bridge Christmas dinner at Yosemite, for example. But the narrative fails to portray the richness of the wilderness setting; the feeling is rather one of an unedited family album of summer vacation shots, and one is not inspired to seek out the understated attractions. The lack of any maps locating either the parks or hotels is a further drawback.

The architectural descriptions are inadequate, with little interpretation of plans, structure, or details, and the treatment of the character of the buildings and their compatibility with their wilderness sites is inconsistent. The drama of the transition from exteriors to soaring interiors in Many Glacier Lodge and the Old Faithful Inn is completely lost. Architects Reamer and Colter are sparingly acknowledged, but one hears more about the interior decorator of the Ahwahnee than its architect, Gilbert Stanley Underwood, who is in fact completely omitted. The designer of the famous faux timber interiors at Yosemite and the Lodges at Zion, Bryce, and Cedar Breaks deserves a better fate.

The photographs could have rescued this book, but they do an injustice to their subjects, both in their composition and focus of interest. Foregrounds and important details are not always sharp; rendition of the color photographs is uneven, with blues and reds generally washed out—although strikingly good results were achieved for the Furnace Creek Inn and Prince of Wales Hotel. Black-and-white photographs lose detail in shadow or glare; one wonders if the photographer used the same 35mm color film throughout, and if he had access to a tripod. Where captions could have added information, they distract by their triteness: "The dining room isn't fancy, but no one skips a meal" (LeConte Lodge); or, "The lobby is crowded but guests still find a place to sit near the old stone fireplace" (Lake

Crescent Lodge). The transposition of captions for the Ahwahnee, Wawona, and LeConte Lodge is regrettable.

The first National Park Service Director, Steven Mather, wrote, in a policy statement of 1918: ". . . in the construction of roads, trails, buildings, and other improvements, particular attention must be devoted always to the harmonizing of these improvements with the landscape." The hotels in this book—some of which preceded NPS by several decades—include structures that set the standard for what we know as the NPS rustic style. Did they derive from the Adirondack rustic inventions or were they the creation of their designers in response to special environments? The question of the suitability of any structure to the splendor of Yosemite, Yellowstone, the Smokies, and the other parks also goes unanswered. Are these hotels examples of buildings compatible with the environment, or are they intrusions in the landscape? Do the accommodations enhance or detract from the visitor's enjoyment and experience of the park? An introductory section, and some interpretive analysis beyond the anecdotal approach would have enriched this material; as it is, there is still a challenge for an ambitious author-traveler with curiosity and a camera.

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*Old Lodges and Hotels of Our National Parks*, Bill McMillon, Icarus Press, South Bend, Indiana, 1983, 250 pp., illus., \$24.95.



Raymond Lifchez:

## RACING ALONE

NADER KHALILI

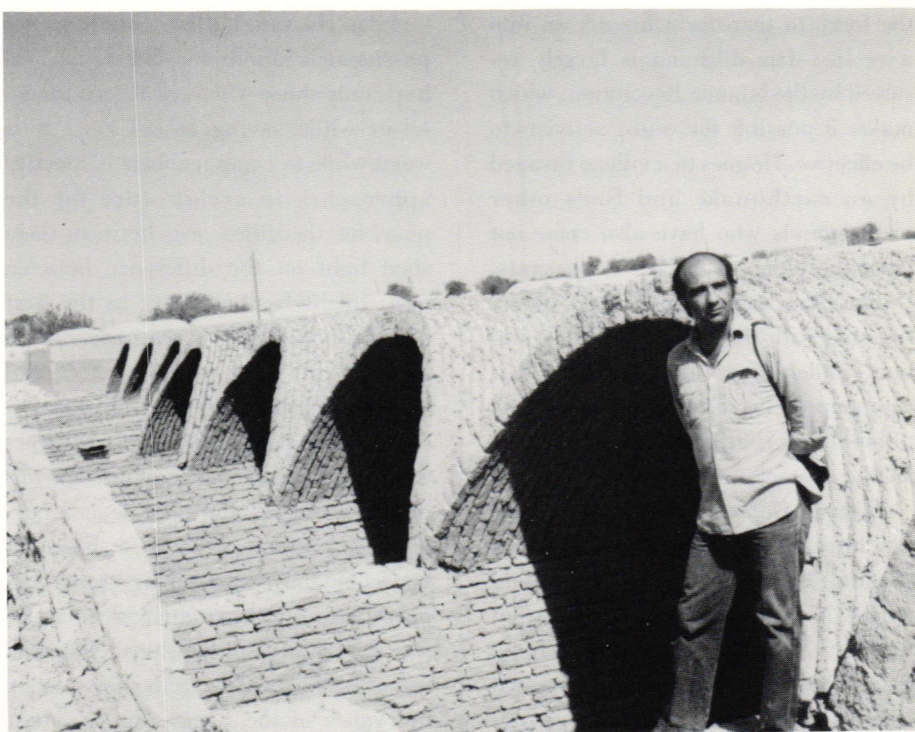
Nader Khalili is an Iranian architect who assists people in traditional societies—peasants in Iran, Native Americans in the Southwest—to build their buildings. In *Racing Alone* he records his first years in practice, when he sought to express in his architecture his social commitment to his country's poor, by improving the technologies they have used to build their villages since time immemorable.

Khalili sees the use of indigenous technology in the construction process as critical to the production of dwellings acceptable to those who seek to preserve their traditional culture. Dwellings built by other means are bound to fail, as experience in Iran and elsewhere proves:

The greatest single problem with all housing projects in the rural areas of this land has been the villager's acceptance. Hundreds of prefab houses, those well-planned and well-finished dwellings built for the villagers, especially after disasters such as floods and earthquakes, have either been occupied by the villagers' animals or left useless, while they build and live in the flimsy and unsafe, but familiar spaces and materials of their own.

His approach, therefore, is to give people the means to do what is best done by themselves.

Like the Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy (*Architecture for the Poor* [Chicago, 1973]), he abhors the effects of an "imported culture" foisted on the poor in the name of progress. The shah's exhortations to the people to modernize he rejects as "fatal propaganda that results in the blind copying of the ways of the capital city [Teh-



AUTHOR KHALILI STANDING BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING. (PHOTOGRAPH NOT FROM BOOK).

ran].” Traditional architecture, on the other hand, is affordable and technologically appropriate. It “has evolved around the need of people to live in harmony with their surroundings.”

Khalili's concern about the impact of imported culture has been previously, and more eloquently, stated by Fathy:

Tradition among the peasants is the only safeguard of their culture. They cannot discriminate between unfamiliar styles, and if they run off the rail of tradition they will inevitably meet disaster. Willfully to break a tradition in a basically traditional society like a peasant one is a kind of cultural murder.

Khalili's idea was to improve upon the technique of making mud buildings by introducing an intermediate step in construction: after completing the form of the building, he would bake it into stoneware, like a giant ceramic pot. He

had observed the effect of fire on mud construction while examining old kilns used in the manufacture of bricks and tiles: the kilns were hardened and thus stable in earthquakes (of which Iran has plenty); they were also impervious to the seasonal rains, which could otherwise weaken or destroy a building, often with loss of life. As part of his plan, he wanted to revive the celebrated Iranian art of ceramic glazing to decorate buildings, an art so greatly debased in recent times that the formulae for even the commoner glazes have been forgotten.

Initially, Khalili's attempts to build a prototype are thwarted by his ineptitude—symbolic of the cultural gap between himself and the peasants—and by the suspicions of the bureaucrats whose support he needs. But the real obstacle is his lack of a socially and politically sophisticated world view: he operates from the position of good intentions, morally correct but lacking



the force to transform his dream into a reality. His dilemma is largely resolved by the Islamic Revolution, which makes it possible for young activists to be effective. He goes to a village ravaged by an earthquake and finds other professionals who have also come out from the cities to teach the peasants. Unlike him, they are politically indoctrinated with the ideals of the revolution. Under their influence, Khalili is empowered: he seizes the opportunity to build and is at last able to overcome all the obstacles.

*Racing Alone* is a memoir, reflective and introspective. Khalili reveals himself and the forces that drive him, and trusts in our acceptance. We see that his social consciousness has been formed and nourished in a traditional Iranian family reflecting Islamic values: the belief in the community as the locus of a socially rewarding life, and the practice of charity, by which the injustices of life visited upon some are ameliorated by the benevolent acts of others. We glimpse the influence of this background in incidents like the following one, which occurred shortly after his return to Tehran from architecture school in Los Angeles.

One afternoon at rush hour, Khalili rides his motorcycle through the hectic and brutalizing city traffic toward the suburb. For the first time since his return he is going to the cemetery to visit his mother's grave. Once there he spends some time observing the rituals of prayer and charity, and noticing the many people who, following an Islamic folkway, use the tranquility of the great public cemetery for meditation and social diversion. For a rare moment Khalili feels at home in a world he comprehends and approves of, and he laments what is happening elsewhere, outside this sacred precinct. In this situation and others like it, his architectural idea slowly takes on the aspect of a moral imperative.

Like Hassan Fathy, Khalili writes passionately about his quest, as perhaps only those who seek to save themselves while saving others can. It is worthwhile to compare their respective approaches to architecture for the poor, for the differences between them shed light on the difference between what might be thought of as the first and the second generations of architects to share this commitment.

Fathy has been prevented by his own sophistication from achieving in practice what he espouses in print. His upper class origins and his role as an architect favored by the Farouk household have worked at cross purposes with his imaginative ideas about making traditional buildings. The true test of his ideas came in the desert near the Valley of the Kings, Egypt's most important archaeological site. Here, Fathy built a new village—an idealized version of the village the peasants might have built for themselves. The local people were to be resettled here, away from their traditional dwellings in caves dug into the same hills as the tombs of the kings—where, unobserved, they had for generations looted antiquities to great advantage.

Fathy's village, dropped *deus ex machina* into the Egyptian landscape, was supposed to improve the lives of those relocated, but the peasants refused to move in. What Fathy didn't understand was that traditional architecture can't be faked—its essence lies in the collective process of conception and construction by which a people affirm the patterns of culture that bind them together. It is the recognition of this fact that distinguishes those who first turned their professional attention to the peasantry from those who, coming later, learned from them. Khalili's book is important because he writes so well about the learning process.

He starts out with a vision worthy of Paolo Soleri: an entire landscape

filled with his buildings. But his real success is in an entirely different direction: people using his construction technique to create buildings of their own. He comes to accept this, not as compromise but as the correct way.

The first house made with earth and fire was nearly completed; all that was left was to wait for the form to cool down so that, like a kiln filled with ceramic pots, the house could be opened and entered. This would take several days, and Khalili decided to spend the time in the city. Returning, he found that the little building had already been opened and apparently vandalized—by the same villagers who had so enthusiastically helped him make it. Inspired by what Khalili promised—a building like stone—they were anxious to discover if this had happened, and did so in the most direct manner, taking hammers to the walls and openings, ruining the built-in shelves and cupboards, and driving huge nails through the roof. They discovered that they could deface the building, but not destroy it; “it had truly become brick.”

At first stunned and resentful, Khalili softened when he heard what the peasants, the first few who dared to approach him, had to say:

Seven people slept here last night because they were scared to death of the hard rain we had all night. They didn't sleep in their own houses because they were afraid their roofs would collapse. . . . a house collapsed the night before last and luckily the family was at our house. . . . [The building] is God's miracle, it is all brick, even the mortar. It is a great thing God has made you do.

*Racing Alone: A Visionary Architect's Quest for Houses Made with Earth and Fire*, Nader Khalili, Harper & Row, 1983, 242 pp., \$14.95.



Jean-Paul Bourdier:

## SPECTACULAR VERNACULAR

JEAN-LOUIS BOURGEOIS and  
CAROLLEE PELOS

## DOWN TO EARTH

JEAN DETHIER

The advantages of mud as a construction material are becoming increasingly apparent: using local materials, requiring no highly specialized skills, the architecture made of unbaked earth is adapted to its environment both physically and socio-politically. There is a current widespread resurgence of interest in the material, both in the non-Western and Western world, which makes these two new publications, *Spectacular Vernacular* and *Down to Earth*, particularly timely. Both books were conceived to accompany traveling

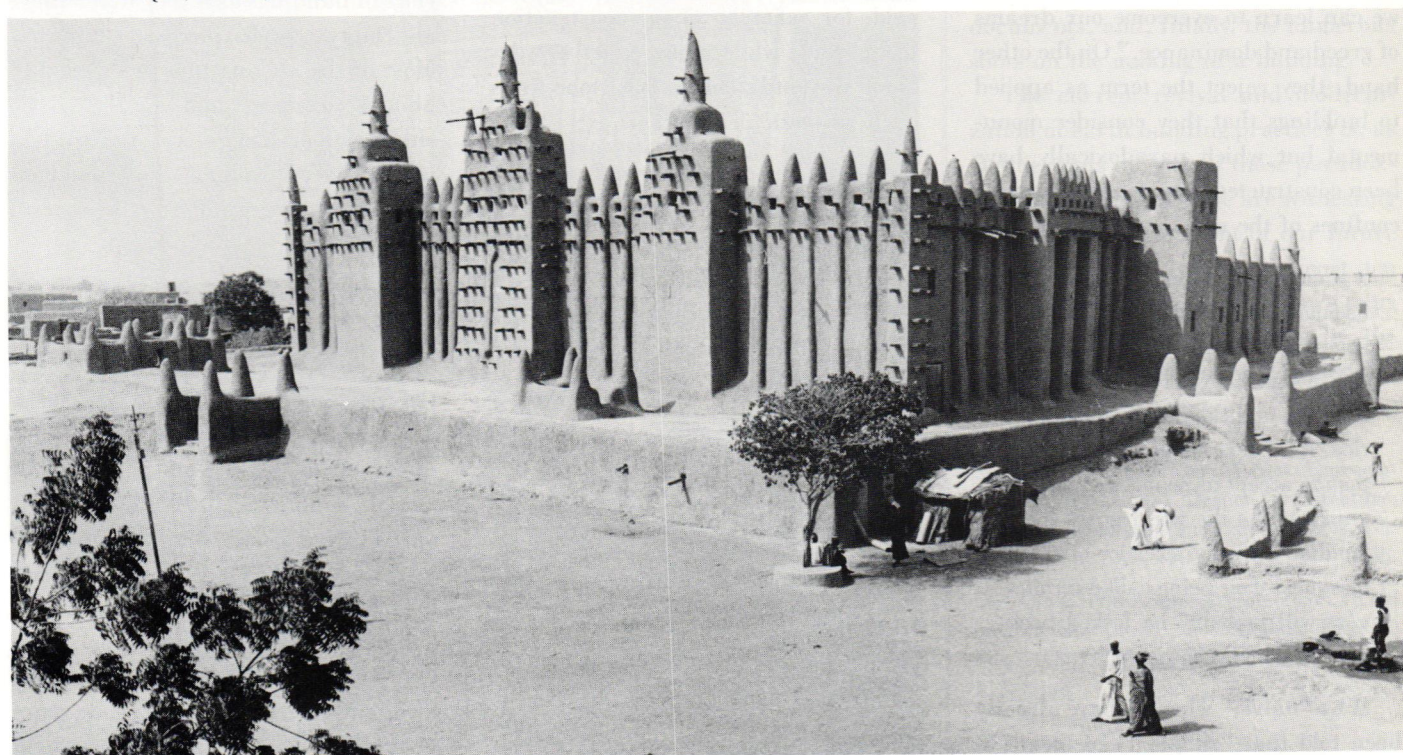
exhibitions, and, while they offer a wide range of examples of earth building throughout the world, they are more suited to the purposes of exhibiting than to giving deeper insights into vernacular reality.

*Spectacular Vernacular* by Bourgeois and Pelos displays a number of photographs taken during their meandering trips in Africa and Asia. They focus mainly on the vernacular dwellings, mosques, and shrines of Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, and Afghanistan, with scattered examples from Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, and India. The playful title reflects the spirit and style in which the book was written. It depicts, as Bourgeois suggests in one of his arguments on traditional desert architecture, "the feelings of a Westerner first glimpsing (for example) the Great Mosque of Djenné in Mali—the shock, the disbelief, the awe at such monumentality in such a perishable material, mud."

By juxtaposing the spectacular and the vernacular, the authors apparently meant to subvert the notion of vernacular architecture, which is defined in the preface as "local, folk, or popular . . . in contrast to the tradition of high-style, formal monuments designed to display the power and taste of a ruler or elite." The difference, as delimited here, is a matter of power and taste: the elite versus the people. "Local, folk, or popular" implies non-impressive (low-style or no-style), non-monumental, and non-oppressive buildings, yet by saying that the vernacular can be spectacular, Bourgeois not only places the emphasis upon the visual, but on the intention of dramatic public display, something exhibited to be viewed as unusual and notable (the literal definition of "spectacular").

The effort to raise the vernacular to the rank of the remarkably uncommon contains its own contradiction, because

THE GREAT MOSQUE, DJENNÉ, MALI, 1907. FROM BOURGEOIS AND PELOS, *SPECTACULAR VERNACULAR*.





Frances Butler:

## THE LESSON OF THINGS:

### PART 1—THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY

Fabric, often ignored in the discussion of world trade goods, which tends to focus on cars, computers, and automatic weapons, has always been one of the principal products of human labor, of such critical importance to human life that it provides the metaphor for civilization. Fabric offers protection, and this meaning was almost immediately extended to political protection. Mongolian Khans were crowned *tra feltro e feltro* (between felt and felt), and umbrellas or wallhangings continued to denote both religious and lay leadership long after the chair (the cathedra or throne) became the marker of power. Extensive purchase of silks from the Orient undermined the Roman Empire before the Goths did, while, on the other hand, both the Venetian and the Florentine Renaissance were founded on trade in fabric. Oriental fabrics continued to dominate world trade at all levels of manufactory—woven brocade, knotted carpets, dyed batik or ikat, and printed plain weaves—until the mechanization in the 18th and 19th centuries of virtually all of these techniques produced the first mass market goods of the industrial revolution, and the first attempts at defining the social value of goods as markers of newly extended power.

In Rosalind Williams's *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late 19th Century France*, the documentation of changing philosophies of consumer response to mass production begins with a quotation from Emile Zola's *Au Bonheur des Dames* (1884) which celebrates the democratization of luxury through the new cheap silk (formerly six hundred francs a meter, now three). The explosion of scientific knowledge, technical innovation, and products forced a reevaluation of the role of goods as ritual markers of power. The lesson to be learned, often called the Lesson of Things, was the social benefit inherent in this unprecedented intellectual and material progress, and especially in the social harmony which would presumably result from the equal possibility of owning silk fabric or other luxuries. Some welcomed this; others feared that this equality of cheap goods would only camouflage inequality of power and, labeling it a fraud, eventually rejected all mass-produced goods as possible indicators of



CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH, PENCIL AND WATERCOLOR DESIGN FOR WAVE PATTERN (GREEN, BLACK AND PINK)

personal identity. (Huysman's dandy hero, des Esseintes, considered even food too banal for self-definition.) Both the democrats and the dandies were caught up in the identification of personal character and ideology through the display of goods, and both groups were ultimately unable to assign value to the products of the industrial revolution.

In "Pins, A Table, Works of Art" (*Representations*, volume 1, no. 1), Philip Fisher discusses the failure of the public vocabulary to assign value to something like the pin, too



small to see as the manifestation of the scope of human will or capacity, and made to be consumed, not kept. The table, an object of indefinite but prolonged life, which represented a visible, reasonable amount of labor, and a smooth transition from material through process to product, continued to provide the conceptual outline for an object of value. New theories of worth were advanced to replace Adam Smith's value through time and material with value through demand or desire. But the nature of that desire, though never adequately plumbed, seemed demonstrably not for goods that shammed luxury, but for equality of respect and equal access to political, decision-making power. By the mid-nineteenth century there were already critics who felt that all aspects of the consumer audience, rich or poor, were so alienated from the goods that made up the content of their daily life—"intruders in the life we've made for ourselves"—that a return to older materials, methods of production, and product appearance was in order. One such critic was William Morris, who shifted from an early avocation for the priesthood to a life dedicated to the reaffirmation of the value of the object. Through both his theories and his workmanship practices he identified the object with the scope of human will, and he was able to win support for his products among the wealthy even though they were more costly than mass production goods.

Linda Parry's book *William Morris Textiles* is an excellent discussion of all aspects of his fabric production: the procedures used in weaving, knotting, tapestry, embroidery, printing; Morris's sources and design preferences; his humane working conditions; his merchandising schemes. The book recounts his investigations of outmoded techniques in embroidery, natural dyeing, printing from wooden blocks, and of the possibilities of knotted rug design to make use of the lesser skills of English workers. It covers his use of industrial techniques in enough detail to illustrate the impact of production options on the product appearance, and the discussion of his imagery, sources, and comparative skill level are also appropriate in that respect. To note that Phillip Webb's superior drawings translated less well than Morris's into the final embroidery is to bring to the discussion exactly the aspect of visual imagery useful to the design field, since translation of instruction is the crucial step to be understood on both sides of the design/production equation.

The history of product acceptance, from popularity to the scrambling efforts to hang on in spite of changes in taste, is also an important aspect of any study of design, and one not often covered. The illustrated catalogue of all the known repeat designs and some machine-woven carpets will be useful to collectors and curators. The photographs are clear and well printed where possible, while those from faded and battered originals are still informative.

If William Morris attempted a direct connection between the human component of skill, happy working conditions (his Merton Abbey workshop was described as "a colossal kindergarten for adults"), and historic preparation techniques to invest goods with value, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, as presented in Roger Billcliffe's book, *Mackintosh Textile Designs*, relied solely on the capacity of his designs to elicit visual interest, and eventually found that this was not enough to sustain his own interest in them. Some of the approximately 120 textile designs he did from 1915 to 1923 were related to



WILLIAM MORRIS, ORIGINAL WATERCOLOR DESIGN FOR *HONEYSUCKLE* PRINTED FABRIC, 1876

*"The lesson of consumer originality is that each person is unique while being exactly like everyone else."*

specific projects—the rooms designed for W. J. Bassett-Lowke (1915-1919), or Miss Cranston's final venture in Glasgow, the Dug Out (1917). Most, however, were simply commissioned by textile manufacturers, and bear little evidence of his concern for their final use. Apparently none survive: the only actual printed fabric is shown in a smudged photograph, implying that the photo rather than the fabric exists.



Mackintosh seems to exemplify the inadequacy of the philosophy of labor to compensate for work not commensurate with the will or ability of the artist. Edward Kaufman noted (in "Thoughts on Victorian Architecture and Decoration," *Design Book Review* 3, Winter 1984) that neither William Morris nor the wealthy William Burges had to consider work which set a lower limit than their ability, while the poorer Pugin had to make what he could of each project and its financial resources. Mackintosh's affinity to these grand Victorian models as well as his own previous projects disinclined him to be satisfied with only one aspect of what he conceived to be a larger project. In 1923 he left for France to pursue painting.

This book had its genesis in the contemporary Mackintosh cult, especially the interest in his late proto-Deco work, which is so close to the scale of ornamental composition in current favor. It says nothing about the relationship of his designs to other work of the period, either the parallels to the Dutch reworking of Indonesian motifs, or to the cross-influence on Mackintosh's own work of the Viennese he so influenced—Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser, Gustav Klimt. But it fills the purpose of its publication adequately.

While Mackintosh's designs were interesting mainly in the context of his other work, the fabrics in *Revolutionary Textiles: Russia in the 1920s and 1930s* demonstrate the use of images on mass consumption goods for propaganda purposes: supporting collectivization, industrialization, mass literacy. At first, the Constructivist textile artists produced non-figurative geometric designs with no particular symbolism beyond the celebration of abstract formal perception over historic subject matter. At the 1925 Paris Exposition, however, the similarity of the Revolutionary Design of the Russian worker Varvara Stepanova to the aristocratic designs of the French designer Sonia Delaunay made it clear that the Constructivist artists were more knowledgeable about International Art than about the iconography of the masses, and thereafter fabric design in the Soviet Union began a steady move toward figurative symbolism and, ultimately, Soviet Realism.

Most of the designs in this book are examples of the interim Constructivist-Symbolist hybrid; they feature geometric tractors and electric light bulbs in a fragmented style which owed much to the popularity of the Gestalt-based closure figures, and to the necessity for wide-tolerance print registration that made allowances for poor workmanship.

Presumably the American publisher expects the audience to be charmed by the naïveté of the political scenarios chosen for these fabrics—sateens praising the mechanization of the Russian army, or flannelette featuring the campaign against

illiteracy. But fabric is still used world-wide for similarly direct ideological statements; contemporary American fabric copies army camouflage and Cracker Jack packaging. Yard goods have given way to fabricated items—designer jeans or head scarves—as the fabric medium for prestige consumption; but this level of value assertion, not through the object itself but through its printed message, continues to fill a slot in the hierarchy of consumed goods as ritual markers.

Rosalind Williams documents the views not of consumers, but of writers who took it upon themselves to speak for them. As she notes in her dedication, "The consumer has yet to find a historian." Moralists of the late 19th century were concerned about the role of the object as a definition of personal worth, fearing that the masses would abandon ethics for objects. The 20th-century consumer shows some evidence that these fears were justified, but the tenor of object use has changed. The current anthropology of consumption can best be understood by substituting for the 19th-century models outlined by Rosalind Williams the one proposed by Mary Douglas in *The World Of Goods*. Her thesis is that in industrialized, literate societies, goods are acquired not as definitions of personal character but as markers of social hierarchy—specifically designed to facilitate information exchange to the end of attaining a voice in decisions about the allocation of resources. "Commodities are good for thinking"; they are used as ritual adjuncts in the process of making sense of the constant flux of events and personal configurations. Even while mass literacy has removed the need for reiteration of information, it has placed a premium on originality, and originality requires great speed, much research, and a wide field of social exchange in which to find its most advantageous use. The contemporary bourgeois consumer, who is often the generator of information as well, needs to fit more and more research into a fixed time slot—his lifetime. Thus the harried consumer makes use of a shorthand graded hierarchy of goods for a quick presort of those who may or may not have the information necessary to his survival. The naming of things and their distribution into graded sets, shared throughout a given society, is the basis of civilization (and also of the area of inquiry called material culture). While the number of ideas inherent in any one graded set of goods is limited,<sup>1</sup> the total configuration of goods can be very revealing.

The contemporary use of graded sets of things as markers of information is democratic—as *People* magazine put it, "Preppies are born but Yuppies [Young Urban Professionals] can be made." Anyone who gets together the money can buy a Mercedes (in Los Angeles) or a BMW (in San Francisco). Furthermore, there is extensive popular testimony that the





L. RAITSER, *MECHANIZATION OF THE RED ARMY*, SATEEN, 1933



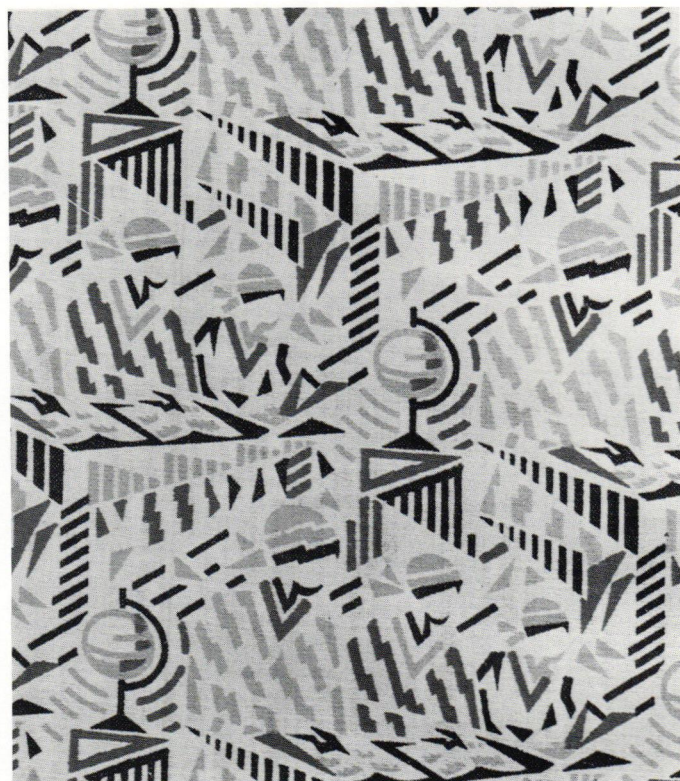
practitioners of consumer-good identity are aware that the reasons for ownership of the coded goods vary, that consumer practice is wildly irrational, and that the detail of dress which seems "unspeakably significant" (Balzac) may in fact be irrelevant. Finally, the relative banality of even the operative identity kits is well understood. The dilemma of the dandy consumer emerges in the end, because, try as one might to evade banalization, large-scale imitation of even the most recondite product allows only a very short breathing space for the unique ownership of social identification through that object.

The contemporary bourgeois consumer's understanding of the Lesson of Things is more varied and sophisticated than the 19th-century *moralistes* ever expected. It extends even to the understanding that, while individual competition for originality and information is ever more fervid, meaning, knowledge, and personal identity are still locked in the context of social exchange; the lesson of consumer originality is that each person is unique while being exactly like everyone else.

Of the possible responses to this plight, the one that seems to be emerging in the literature of popular opinion is a gradual lowering of the value placed on originality and individuality, and an emphasis on social structures as the source of definition for everything from language to sex. (Or, similarly, the phenomenological definition of meaning as human intention expressed in social context.) In the visual arts this phenomenological bias has popularized Norberg-Schulz, caused the reappraisal of vernacular culture—from Las Vegas to the folk artist Harold Finster (whose *Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained* will be included in the next Venice Biennale)—and spurred collectors of anonymous textile art—quilts, for example. Mary Douglas states this new philosophy simply:

The individual human being, stripped of his humanity, is of no use as a conceptual base from which to make a picture of human society. No human exists except steeped in the culture of his time and place. The falsely abstracted individual has become sadly misleading to Western political thought. . . . But now we can start again at a point where major streams of thought converge, at the other end, at the making of culture. Cultural analysis sees the picture as a whole, the picture and the weaving process, before attending to the individual threads.

The "fabric of society" metaphor, applied here to the solidarity of human expression, is translated to public policy by the calls for restraint in the consumption of goods, and redirection of resources to the dispersal of knowledge freed from the barriers of consumer markings. Recent austerity polemics, backed up by the institution of the 55-mph speed



DOWN WITH ILLITERACY! COTTON PRINT FOR THE SOVIET REPUBLICS OF CENTRAL ASIA, LATE 1920s-EARLY 1930s. DESIGNER UNKNOWN.

*"The Lesson of Things was the social benefit inherent in this unprecedented intellectual and material progress, and especially in the social harmony which would presumably result from the equal possibility of owning silk fabric or other luxuries."*

limit, may be largely generated by fears of an increasing national deficit, but there is some greater understanding that the big consumers cannot indefinitely say to those whose resources they spend and often squander, "Your end of the boat is sinking." The exchange of information without ritual marking has not yet found its model, although the business lunch has to some degree been replaced by the conference call.

Both Rosalind Williams and Mary Douglas end their books with a call for the reassessment of the idolatry of individualism, and its replacement with an ideology of social solidarity, an idealization of the fabric of society as the apogee of the hierarchy of desire. Designers, whose livelihood is made in the making of things, will find both these books pertinent to their own construction of the Lesson of Things.



## PART 2—THE INTENTIONAL FALLACY

In *Handmade in America: Conversations with Fourteen Craftmasters*, Barbara Diamonstein guides these 14 craftmasters repeatedly onto the reefs of the question of the differences between art and craft. Dale Chihuly and Sandi Fox are uncomfortable or unhappy being called artists, Ron Nagel and Mary Shaffer insist on being called artists, and Robert Arneson and Ken Price refused to be included in the book. The derogation of craft, half-hidden among art marketers and art teachers, is thus given the breath of public life.

What is the purpose of this presentation? Surely it gives names and a voice to those who contend that making and meaning are separate, that, as Mary Shaffer says, "Craft is how, Art is what." The protestation of Penelope Hunter-Stiebel, curator of decorative arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, that "future generations will decide whether to consider these works major aesthetic expressions of our time. It just doesn't matter what the label of the person is," goes unheeded amid the bulk of talk devoted to retroactively explaining craft by defining the intentions of the maker—the intentional fallacy.

The intentional fallacy (an offshoot of the phenomenological stance in philosophy) sets the individual squarely in a social context, treating knowledge as a joint social constructive enterprise. If the maker of the object names or describes it as expressing certain intentions, and the viewer of the object (who may also make up the intentions himself) finds them to be of interest, the object is valued for the intentions associated with it.

In fact objects are inert, mute, and survive only as forms which will be reinterpreted by each age and each individual in the context of his society; all the linguistic waffle and syrup around them "just doesn't matter." But the gastronomy of popular art criticism has found one slice of the intentional fallacy, the mind of the maker, to be more succulent and saleable than the more legitimate, socially determined adjuncts of formal description.<sup>2</sup> What then is the purpose of the presentation in *Handmade in America*? Is it that, as Sheila Hicks notes in the book, *People* magazine is the last repository of the sacrosanct? No: this book exemplifies, in the format of the conversations and the choice of the craftmasters, a time-worn technique for introducing a new perceptual framework to the public view. It is also evidence of new interests and habits of perception which, like most shifts in something as pervasive as the perceptual framework of a society, go unnoticed.



SAM MALOOF, BROWN OAK CONFERENCE CHAIR. FROM MALOOF, SAM MALOOF, WOODWORKER.

Donald Lowe has just written a hasty outline of the last major change in perceptual habits (fittingly called *A History of Bourgeois Perception*) in which he notes the 20th-century fragmentation of accepted conventions of thought at every level—physics, language, visual form. He notes also some of its consequences in the appearance of designed things: cubism, surrealism, and the breakdown of the space box in painting; the shift from the use-value to image-value in graphic design; the impact of both image-value and multiperspectivity on contemporary architecture. One response to this deconstruction of the conventions of knowing and representing has been the new emphasis on phenomenology and its definition of meaning as human intention in the social context, and on the material qualities of the perceived world. This nostalgic attempt to regain the sense of connection to other people and to the physical world attributed to preliterate societies could be called neo-primitivism. Certainly in the United States much has been published which longs to identify



with the harmony between man and the natural world ascribed to native American Indian life. These 14 craftsmen do stress the "physicality" of their work, the material rather than the idea. They even parallel or parody the group self-definition of the oral society member: a remark by Ron Nagel ("Ask that guy, he'll tell you what to call me") echoes one by an illiterate Khazakstani in the 1930s, recorded by A. R. Luria: "How can I talk about my character? Ask others; they can tell you about me."<sup>3</sup> Nagel's work, ironically, is a high-gloss example of sophisticated formal preoccupations, differing from conventional formats for art work only in his expanded repertory of material appreciation.

Robert Arneson provides a much more consistent picture of the neo-primitive. Not only are all of his plot lines jokes that mock art conventions, the material presentation of his work is also a parody of skill, a celebration of stiff working which emphasizes the clay rather than the illusion.

The expansion of the range of materials considered interesting to look at, and the new perceptual emphasis on full body appreciation of material as well as ideation, threaten both the owners of previous art goods and their understanding of art. This collation of new information is therefore not presented through the ideology of formal analysis but obscured by the chatter of the intentional fallacy—obfuscation being a standard tack for the introduction of new ways of thinking. Steven Mullaney, in "Strange Things, Gross Terms, Curious Customs: The Rehearsal of Cultures in the Late Renaissance," (*Representations*, volume 1, no. 3) cites the "gathering of curiosities" from around the world (bones, birds' eggs, textiles) and their housing in cabinets or *Wunderkammern* by Renaissance collectors, as a rehearsal for new patterns of thought. Jacques Barzun, too, notes the use of "gross terms," or vernacular language, as a tool for the exploration of new modes of thought and consciousness. Art aimed at the adolescent market today continues this exploration of options, trying out the wild or the weird, as shown by the packaging of Boy George. Ron Nagel, as a new wave musician, is closely allied with this aspect of the presentation of what Mary Shaffer calls "new looking"; and Sheila Hicks cites the tradition of the *Kunstskammern*, filled with wonders, as the origin of her own interest in textiles.

*Handmade in America* must be reviewed as a *Wunderkammer* of curiosities, examples of work with new emphases on all perceptual capacities—touch, sound, posture, as well as vision and imagination—applied to a much wider range of stimuli than those offered by oil paint or core-ten steel. It is for this reason that the craftmasters in this book are paraded past us with as much local, personalized detail as possible. They are personalities, like TV actors, who enact the "new looking" for our consideration, a rehearsal in which

the craft objects, which are the real subject, slip by, unnoted but powerfully visible, as mute signs that will develop their meaning for each viewer when the sound of the words has died away.

All of these books address the same phenomenon—a growing public enthusiasm for handicraft. *Hand-made in America*, a book of talk about the act of making, undercuts anything but the cursory glance at the super-charged photography (saturated color on luminous backgrounds), because there is no critical apparatus to focus attention on the work. It lacks both delineation of the formal qualities that unite or separate these contemporary works, and discussion of the social context that supports them—although the subject cries out for a discussion of the politics of culture.

The work ranges from traditional skills—violin repair, vernacular quilting, the miniaturization and *trompe l'oeil* in pottery and wood, never very far from that area of popular culture called kitsch—to work which, like John McQueen's basketry or Mary Shaffer's glass slumping, continues a fascination with the trace of process which has dominated the visual arts for the last thirty-five years. Some of the work is

DALE CHIHULY, *UNTITLED*, BLOWN GLASS. FROM *DIAMONSTEIN, HANDMADE IN AMERICA*.





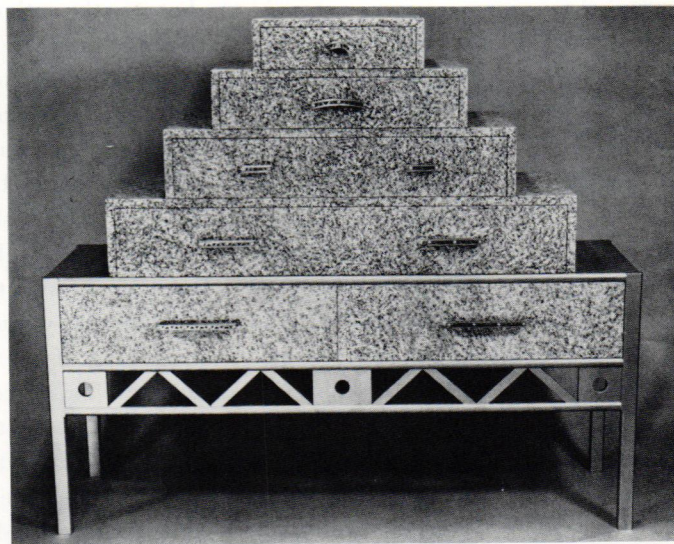
skillful, some is not—as is visible even through the high MSG of the photographic sauce. Some (Mary Shaffer's glass) is witty; some (Dale Chihuly's glass) gains from profusion of color and repeated form. Other work is *retardataire* (Mary Ann Scherr's is neither as skillful nor as interesting as the German jewelry from Pforzheim in the sixties which is its closest parallel), or flaccidly redundant, like Sheila Hicks's later work. All are homogenized in the chatter about personal anxieties and in the commercial images (which closely resemble the dark and shiny advertisements for perfume or whiskey in sophisticated weeklies).

The text of this book is not good enough, either for the price, or for an audience which has, after all, turned from the aridity of the ideational diagrams previously called art (finding the quickly exhausted visual image inadequate) to activities involving full-body perception, like performance art, dance, and sports. Their attraction to handwork is aptly characterized by Sheila Hicks as a combination of "leisure time and panic."

*Sam Maloof, Woodworker* is a book in the same mode but much more satisfactory. It maintains the fiction of personal conversation persuasively, although ramblings or interruptions have been excised. Descriptions of Sam Maloof's lifestyle are not offensive, since this is an autobiography, not a propaganda tool. His process of design and workmanship are fully described; one feels that, while this is not a how-to book, it might be possible to begin furniture woodworking from the information in the illustrations.

The photographs are clear, and illustrate the point that his designs are variations on about fifty basic models. This makes the detail photographs useful; in fact more would be welcome. The book design, by Dana Levy (who often works for Kodansha and is best known for the book *Bamboo*) provides both continuity in text layout and clear differentiation between the sections through changing photo layout. Quite aside from any judgment of the current visual excitement of Maloof's work, this is a useful book, worth the \$50 price.

*Fine Woodworking: Design Book 3* offers a wide survey of contemporary woodwork, from carving to furniture, in a gamut of styles from early Wendell Castle-style Art Nouveau to the exuberant reruns of De Stijl and zig-zag Moderne (now called, with terminal certainty, Post-Modern.) It should attract the historian of style as well as the woodworking population, of which there are now more than 200,000 subscribing to *Fine Woodworking* magazine alone. Despite editorial assurance about the careful selection, the photographs are uneven; many pieces are not adequately shown, and the layout is crowded. But this unpretentious little book illustrates the difference between a book of real use and one with the look of usefulness.



EDWARD ZUCCA, *MIDDLEBOY*, BASSWOOD, PAINT, ERECTOR SET PARTS, 1981. FROM *FINE WOODWORKING: DESIGN BOOK THREE*.

1. Oscar Wilde, who was unusually sensitive to consumer goods, complained of the narrow range of expression possible through the choice of waistcoats and cravats; his last words were "Either that wallpaper goes, or I do."
2. Some of these adjuncts might be: iconography as practiced by Panofsky and the Warburg school, ideology as phrased by Hadjinicolaou, or Norman Bryson, or description as outlined by Svetlana Alpers.
3. A. R. Luria, *Cognitive Development*, Harvard, 1976, p. 149.

*Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth Century France*, Rosalind H. Williams, California, 1982, 451 pp., illus., \$25.50.

*William Morris Textiles*, Linda Parry, Viking, 1983, 192 pp., illus., \$24.95 pb.

*Mackintosh Textile Designs*, Roger Billcliffe, Taplinger, 1982, 80 pp., illus., \$25.00.

*Revolutionary Textile Design: Russia in the 1920s and 1930s*, I. Yasinskaya, Viking, 1984, 106 pp., illus., \$15.95 pb.

*The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*, Mary Douglas, Norton, 1979, 228 pp., \$4.95 pb.

*Handmade in America: Conversations with Fourteen Craftmasters*, Barbaralee Diamonstein, Abrams, 1983, 224 pp., illus., \$49.50.

*Sam Maloof, Woodworker*, Sam Maloof, Kodansha International (dist. by Harper & Row), 1983, 224 pp., illus., \$49.95.

*Fine Woodworking: Design Book 3*, the editors of *Fine Woodworking*, Taunton Press, 1983, 216 pp., illus., \$13.95 pb.



Christopher Wilk:

## FURNITURE BY ARCHITECTS

MARC EMERY

*Furniture by Architects* is a very lavish and expensive coffee table book that will be of only limited interest to readers of this magazine. Its only possible audience would be those who know virtually nothing about 20th-century architect-designed objects on the market today. Professionals who have access to manufacturers' catalogues or design magazines will have little use for it.

Written by the editor-in-chief of *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, the book consists of a very brief and superficial "historical" introduction, and a long, alphabetically arranged, illustrated listing of 527 objects, from Aalto to Witzmann. Despite the title of the book, these objects include not only furniture but also lighting, textiles, glassware, silver, metalwork, plumbing accessories, door hardware, the odd mailbox, kitchen fan, ceramic bell, flower pot, and even a "bathroom mixer" (whatever that is!).

Nowhere does the author bother to explain the disparity between the book's title and its content, the reason why the specific objects illustrated were chosen, or anything about their historical or contemporary significance. It is, in short, a book devoid of ideas or a point of view.

Even if one accepts the proposition that a picture book need not explain anything in words, *Furniture by Architects* does not succeed as a coffee table book for the general reader because of its poor organization, the mediocre reproduction of the black-and-white illustrations—unforgivable considering the price—and its uselessness as a "resource" book.

It is exceedingly inconvenient to use

because the author or designer has decided to segregate the captions from the photographs by arranging lists of captions at the beginning of each "chapter." The chapters correspond to the letters of the alphabet: if you want to look at Mackintosh furniture, you conveniently turn to the "M" chapter; however, if you wish to identify any of the photographs you must turn back to the beginning of the chapter to find the caption. This becomes rather cumbersome and is certainly unnecessary. Caption information consists of the name of the object, the name of the manufacturer, and sometimes the measurements. In the caption lists, each designer is introduced with a two- or three-line summary of his or her career.

The photographs have all come from the manufacturers, and many look as if they were inexpensively printed, or were merely copy prints. Considering the higher quality of the color plates, this indicates that the publisher did not care enough to secure the best-quality prints.

Even the appendix, which is supposed to justify the subtitle of the book—*Where to Buy Them*—is poorly conceived. It does not tell the reader where to buy, it is merely a list of manufacturers. Since the majority of the firms are European, this is of little help to the general audience the book is trying to reach. And since the appendix does list American "distributors" for some firms, the reader must assume that products of companies listed with only a European address can only be obtained directly from overseas. In fact, many American outlets exist for companies such as Venini, Stilnov, Stelton, Sunar, and Wittmann. There are other errors too, which is remarkable, since the list is only three pages long: Scandinavian Design is listed as the U.S. distributor of Artek, when the correct distributor is ICF. The list is of little help to the consumer compared to

the useful ones in other recent "resource" books, *Hi-Tech*, *American Country*, or even *Ornamentalism*.

All of this typifies the casual, one might say cynical, attitude of publisher and author. The book was clearly put together with minimal thought or concern, in response to the often-heard publishers' request for a "package" that will require little effort or pre-production expense. Like many recent Abrams books it signals the triumph in the publishing industry of the marketing department over what used to be called the editorial staff.

*Furniture by Architects: Five Hundred International Masterpieces of Twentieth-Century Design and Where to Buy Them*, Marc Emery, Abrams, 1983, 264 pp., illus., \$49.50.

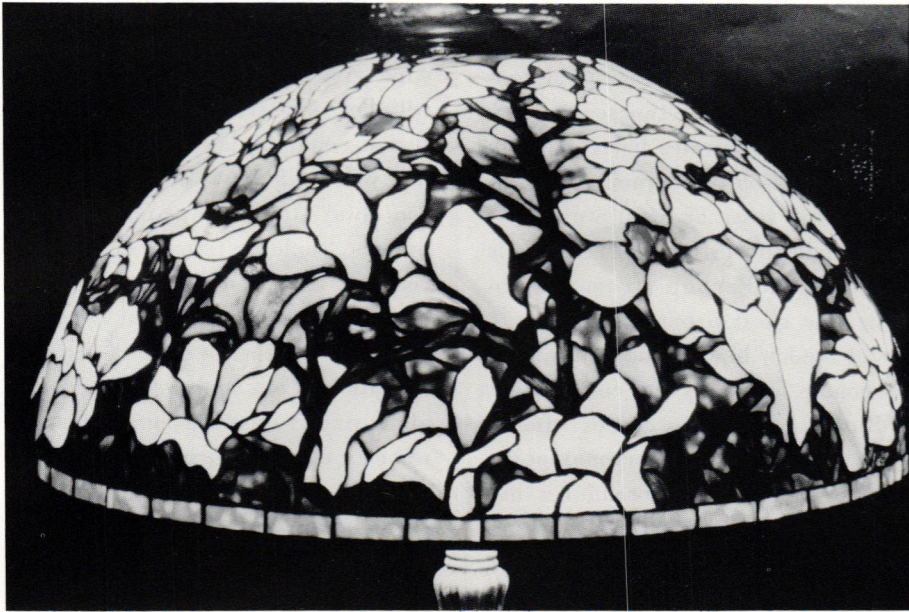
Wade McCann:

## THE LAMPS OF TIFFANY STUDIOS

WILLIAM FELDSTEIN, JR.,  
and ALASTAIR DUNCAN

Louis Comfort Tiffany is the genius *nonpareil* of the American Art Nouveau movement. As the founder and director of Tiffany Studios (1899-1933), he produced works of art that suggest nature's forms and secrets, using polychromatic glass colored with metallic oxides as his palette. Trained as a painter, skilled as a decorator, Tiffany's first interest was in the design of leaded-glass windows, soon followed by leaded-glass lampshades. As his preoccupation with glass grew, he established glass furnaces and manufactured over five thousand different types of glass sheets. It is the glass that makes the approximately five hundred lamp de-





MAGNOLIA LAMP, TIFFANY STUDIOS

signs produced at Tiffany Studios outstanding; their special appeal is in the beauty of the glass when illuminated. There was no shortcut to this effect, and Tiffany received international recognition for his work in the production of Favrite glass, and the execution of his designs.

The lamps were instantly successful when they were introduced in 1899, just at the end of the Victorian era. For the next twenty years no fashionable home was without its Tiffany lamp. In competition with thirty or more producers of leaded-glass lampshades and windows, Tiffany was often imitated but never duplicated. He was adept at marketing—a skill he inherited from his father Charles Tiffany, founder of Tiffany & Co., the silver firm. He enjoyed the reputation, and the rewards, of a successful artist-turned-businessman.

Art Nouveau was popular in the first quarter of the 20th century. Then Bauhaus and Art Deco design were introduced, and Tiffany viewed them with

disdain. Unwilling to adapt his own designs to them, he lived to see his work go out of fashion as quickly as it had been received, and the once successful Tiffany Studios face bankruptcy.

Today, however, the lamps are back in favor, with no decline in sight—to the point where newly manufactured lamps have appeared on the market, copied from original Tiffany designs, and often carrying the forged embossed bronze signature tags. The authors of *Lamps of Tiffany Studios* have compiled a group of the best models, with many unusual and rare examples. The widely recognized purple-blue Wisteria lamps share equal position with the Maple Leaf, Butterfly, Lotus, American Indian, Iris, and Cob Web, and the Wisteria adapted to laburnum design. The cast bronze bases, at times pierced, inlaid with glass mosaic tiles or jewels, and filled with blown glass, complement the shades, and transform the lamps to sculpture. The pictures of blown Favrite glass shades and bases

in Peacock and Dandelion patterns justify the position the blown shades share with the leaded-glass models.

The integrity of the 85 full-page photographic reproductions should be applauded; each is captioned with title, size, shade and base identification numbers, original price when known, and provenance information when available. Feldstein and Duncan make an important point by emphasizing the need for provenance information. As the lamps fell out of favor in the thirties, forties, and fifties, most changed hands; few are known to be in the possession of descendants of the original purchaser today.

*The Lamps of Tiffany Studios* also pays homage to the three known Tiffany Studio albums. These, with their brief captions, inventory numbers, and price information, were a compilation of original full-page black-and-white photographs of the shades and bases, for use by salesmen. Today they are invaluable references, particularly when one has the opportunity to study the same examples in full color.

Unfortunately the authors give us no text in addition to the captions. The lamps and bases illustrated are so rare and fine that a more detailed description would have strengthened the book's focus. Mr. Duncan did as much in his book *Tiffany Windows* (Simon and Schuster, 1980), a standard reference work. For more information on the lamps, one must turn to *Louis C. Tiffany, Rebel in Glass* (Crown, 1964), and *Louis C. Tiffany's Glass-Bronzes-Lamps* (Crown, 1971), both by Robert Koch, and *The Lamps of Tiffany* (Fairfield, 1970), by Dr. Egon Neustadt, the most comprehensive book on the lamps to date.

*The Lamps of Tiffany Studios*, William Feldstein, Jr., introduction by Alastair Duncan, Abrams, 1983, 180 pp., illus., \$120.00.



## Lois Wagner Green: SENSUOUS SPACES

SIVON REZNIKOFF

As one begins reading *Sensuous Spaces* one has reason to be hopeful: "If you have always associated 'erotic' with something sexy and perhaps even naughty, it may be difficult to start thinking about erotic spaces as very normal outward displays of a universal human need," the author explains. How many memorable works of pornography have commenced with almost those same promising words!

But no. In vain one ruffles through the illustration-packed pages, looking for the good stuff. Alas, in most of this flashy mish-mash sexy simply means flamboyant. *Sensuous Spaces* is the Mae West of design books, in which a number of reputable designers may be dismayed to find themselves.

Is author Sivon Reznikoff exploitive (the book is ostensibly addressed to a lay public) or merely naïve? We know only what the book jacket tells us—that she is "a professor of interior architecture at a large southwestern university" with an M. A. from Louisiana State University; that she is also the author of *Specifications for Commercial Interiors* by the same publisher; and that this current dubious product had its origin in an exhibition, in the late sixties, of "her three-dimensional motorized structures noted for their incisive social commentary on eroticism." If only Reznikoff had seen fit to include illustrations of those works—perhaps amid the furniture and faucets in her section on furnishings—we might be closer to revelation.

Although she explains and explains, diagramming with organization charts, bar charts and tables, so that we can master the subtle distinctions between Romantic, Sensuous, and Seductive, her major categories, somehow the cen-

ter does not hold. When the professor writes, "Passionate sensuality removes visual distractions to allow total concentration on one or two sensual elements," she illustrates her contention with a black-on-black room in which ornaments, vases and sculptures ricochet endlessly in the reflective walls and ceiling. Perhaps from vertigo alone, the guest drops unresisting to one of the low black couches on which passionate sensuality can commence.

But let us not skip ahead. After a preliminary section on orientation-to-the-exotic, Reznikoff introduces us, first, to Romantic Interiors, opening with a full-page color illustration of a dining room in hot pink at the Madonna Inn, with tufted plastic banquettes and "nostalgic Victorian-style furnishings." Here we learn that "Entry-level erotic spaces" such as this "nurture the beginning phases of human relationships." "Romantic Settings are shaped by the yearning to find an ideal partner," the author elucidates.

The section on "Seductive Interiors" begins, disappointingly, with an unfocused scattering of disco interiors and upholstered seating from the erotic likes of Stendig and Thayer Coggin. But we're soon into "Seductive Settings for Busy Singles," such as a bedroom draped in "garnet-colored satin from floor to ceiling" and a "bachelor apartment designed for two" in which the satin-upholstered bed "was meant to be caressed." This is as close as we come to kinky in *Sensuous Spaces*.

Still, in "Seductive Sensuality" (as distinguished from "Passionate Sensuality," class), there's a room in which "the desert valley is viewed through erotic tusks arched over a sculptured female bust. Though this room appears low-keyed," the caption continues, "its ceiling of swirling light, primitive sculpture and erotic black vases are clues to its seductive intent." After that, "Aphrodisiac Environments" is rather

a let-down with its publicity pictures of Kohler baths and Jacuzzis—although what appears to be a cocktail party with hors d'oeuvres *sur l'eau* seems to be going on in the latter. Later, we learn that your basic white Mombasa net that you always thought was to deter mosquitoes "could be fitted over a bed or couch for the ultimate seductive effect."

One could go on and on; *Sensuous Spaces* is a treasure trove of delicious quotations. Let's not hear another word about dry-as-dust academics. Just tell whoever does the hiring at your place to watch out for interior architecture graduates of "a large southwestern university."

*Sensuous Spaces: Designing Your Erotic Interiors*, Sivon Reznikoff, Watson-Guptill, 1983, 204 pp., illus., \$27.50.

## Lois Wagner Green: INTERIORS IN COLOR

MIRKO MEJETTA and  
SIMONETTA SPADA

*Interiors in color*: we are saturated with them—glassy-eyed from the gloss alone—in an international cornucopia of periodicals and coffee table books. And yet, this latest entry stands out in the distinction of its examples and the intelligence of its text and graphic design. These pointedly selected, contemporary interiors stimulate with spin-off possibilities; indeed, with the endless potential of white alone.

Each of the mostly residential interiors in this intoxicating array makes a distinctive point in its palette and in the visual mission of its color application. Presented in four sections—"Color as Decoration," "Designing in





FLAVIO ALBANESE AND MARIA LUISA TUORTO MENEGUZZO, RECONSTRUCTION OF 19TH-CENTURY VILLA, VICENZA

White,” “Color and Technology,” and a mixed bag of “New Directions”—the examples range from the indelible architectonic contrasts of saffron, red, and black in Mathias Goeritz’s Cuernavaca villa to the drifting, evanescent neutrals of Laura Bohn’s Chelsea loft—with excursions into such fashionable currencies as the “natural” color of industrial materials.

Frequent historical references, verbal and illustrated, as well as asides to the vernacular, such as Italian fishermen’s huts, put contemporary color explorations in perspective: the marble mosaic flooring in the Basilica of St. Mark, suggesting antecedents to contemporary color pattern in a 19th-century Venetian villa; the current use of contrasting intense colors for architec-

tonic emphasis related to the purist primaries of Rietveld’s furniture; the author’s reminder of Le Corbusier’s “Architecture is a knowing, rigorous, magnificent play of volume arranged in light.”

The lucid layouts by Simonetta Spada in the 9" x 12" format work to reveal fresh facets even of familiar interiors, as interpreted by an international roll call of photographers. And the emotion of much of the photography is matched by Mirko Mejetta’s evocative text, translated from the Italian by Anthony de Alteriis. The poetics of the descriptions, as often as the illustrations, are infused with provocative possibility: “Color is distributed carefully throughout the transparent space, helping the eye unravel the network of open joists and distinguish one element from another. It does not indulge in rhetorical flourishes to glorify the engineering value of the building.” Or, “Stiffened by the pervading whiteness of the various spaces, the columns, stairs, and sloping overhanging roof all seem to be as two-dimensional metaphysical bodies, lines and surfaces, harmoniously set out . . . to recreate, deepen and amplify the silent light of the Arctic night.”

Although Mirko Mejetta’s words are ostensibly addressed to a lay public, the incisive choices of illustrated subjects is such as to intrigue an audience of design students and professionals. *Interiors in Color* makes good on its subtitle, *Creating Space, Personality and Atmosphere*. This is a splendid demonstration of the creative potency of color in interior design today.

*Interiors in Color: Creating Space, Personality and Atmosphere*, Mirko Mejetta and Simonetta Spada, translated by Anthony de Alteriis, Watson-Guptill, 1983, 96 pp., illus., \$27.50.







thrust of cubist collage was to "highlight the arbitrary nature of all representation" seems both sweeping and exclusionary in light of her perceptive reading of several cubist collages in which the texts used as collage fragments are linked to images represented in the work (an approach mapped out by Robert Rosenblum). Collage was introduced at a stage when cubist art had become spatially flat, highly abstract, and difficult to "translate" in reference to recognizable objects. For the cubists, the incorporation of actual objects into the work had several consequences: it opened up the space in front of the picture plane; it reintroduced a certain legibility into art; it allowed contrasts of a new range of forms and textures; it promoted witty textural, formal, and verbal-visual puns and deceptions; and, moreover, it posed provocative questions about art as representation, construction, signification, and decoration.

Because of its exploitation of onomatopoeia and because as poetry it was often meant to be read aloud, *parole-in-libertà* was well-suited to evoking the din of the modern environment. Jane Sharp's essay explores the Futurist interest in synaesthesia as it relates to the expression of noise and smell in the visual and verbal arts. Although she discusses the importance of intuition, speed, Divisionist color theory, and the ideas of Hermann von Helmholtz for Futurist multi-sensory pursuits, her essay might have benefited from considering the widespread, international involvement with synaesthesia that included Symbolist art and poetry, the music of Scriabin, aspects of the art of the Post- and Neo-Impressionists, the Synchromists, Picasso, Matisse, Kandinsky, Klee, and Kupka.

The essay by Linda Landis, a provocative piece entitled "Futurists at War," deftly draws connections between *parole-in-libertà* and topo-



FILIPPO TOMMASO MARINETTI, AFTER THE MARNE, JOFFRE VISITED THE FRONT OF AN AUTOMOBILE, 1915. IN *LES MOTS EN LIBERTÉ FUTURISTES*, 1919.

"Collage was introduced at a stage when cubist art had become spatially flat, highly abstract, and difficult to 'translate.'"

graphic maps of battle regions and troop movements. She reads free-word works as one reads maps, diagrams, or, better yet, architectural plans. Just as Landis suggests a literally new perspective for comprehending Futurist *parole-in-libertà*, she also adds a new dimension to the understanding of the most famous of Futurist militaristic works—Carlo Carrà's *Free-Word Painting-Patriotic Festival*—comparing it with Marinetti's later work, *The Propellor*.<sup>1</sup> Like most scholars of the subject, Landis skirts the nagging problem of the ethical issues involving Futurist militaristic works of art.

The two remaining essays, Ann Temkin's "Luce Futurista: Art for an Electric Age," and Bernard de Grunne's "Boccioni and the Futurist Style of Motion," treat subjects other than the verbal-visual liaison in Futurism. Temkin, in a well-written piece, considers the interrelation between Futurist attitudes toward light and theo-

ries of Divisionism, Unanimism, and the notion of progress. This last concept perhaps could have been interpreted as a variation on millennialism, as the "dawning" of a new light-filled, electrically energized age. Boccioni's motion theories as exemplified in his art are discussed in de Grunne's essay, which is more of a summary of his art and theory than a forum for advancing new interpretations. Possibly de Grunne was hampered by the fact that Boccioni's most powerful motion works are in sculpture, a medium not included in this exhibit (except for Balla's flowers).

The catalogue does not pretend to be comprehensive, which accounts for the omission of major *parole-in-libertà* by Corrado Govoni, the absence of Balla's "Plastic-Noise" pieces, and the limited bibliography that excludes key writings on the subject. As a reference work, it supplies good quality reproductions that unfortunately are marred by a cumbersome and faulty numbering system. As a whole, however, the catalogue contains fresh observations and establishes itself as an important English source on Futurism.

1. In this context, it might have been appropriate to note the relationship between Carrà's *Patriotic Festival* and other potentially influential contemporaneous works, especially certain *parole-in-libertà* illustrated in the catalogue. Carrà himself recognized parallels between his work and Severini's *Serpentine Dance*; Marianne Martin has suggested the possible influence of Ardengo Soffici's work on this Carrà collage; and Alan Windsor has argued, in an important article in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1977, that Carrà's piece may well have been affected by Apollinaire's 1914 calligramme "Lettre-Océan" and perhaps by Marinetti's *parole-in-libertà* "Pallone Frenato Turco."

The Futurist Imagination: Word + Image in Italian Futurist Painting, Drawing, Collage and Free-Word Poetry, edited by Anne Coffin Hanson, Yale University Art Gallery, 1983, 118 pp., \$8.50 pb.



Laurie D. Olin:

# LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

JOHN ORMSBEE SIMONDS

This is an ambitious book, in which Simonds attempts to summarize the experience and practice of thousands of years. In addition he offers guidance to the future planners and designers of the outdoor spaces of our communities, from small gardens and parks to civic spaces and transportation networks, to the very disposition of parts for entire cities. The book is a self-proclaimed "manual of site planning and design," companion to another book by Simonds entitled *Earthscape: A Manual of Environmental Planning* (McGraw-Hill, 1978). *Landscape Architecture* is described on its own dust jacket as:

[the] best one-volume course ever written on the *theory* and *practice* of landscape design and site planning. Immensely readable, it has long been regarded as the bible of *landscape architects* and is a favorite also with *architects*, *planners* and *engineers* who seek a systematic approach to the creation of better outdoor space.

Any author would have trouble living up to such hyberbole; it probably should not dismay us that Simonds does not.

Simonds has made a conscious attempt to produce a classical treatise that is philosophical, practical, and canonical, and the result is a book that is rewarding and disappointing in almost equal measure. Like Alberti in his famous *Ten Books on Architecture* (1485), which surveyed the literature of the previous fifteen centuries (the writings of Vitruvius and Varro especially), Simonds acknowledges the past, outlines methods, and gives examples. Like Alberti he is not concerned merely with proper siting and design of individual buildings and gardens, but with entire cities and regions, and with broader relationships such as those between community and region, or climate and society. Like countless other writers he constantly elaborates upon descriptions of and responses to what might constitute the "spirit of a place."

I began this book hoping that it would live up to its promise, and continued with sinking heart. The introduction reduces ecology to emotion and a series of scenic photos; modern

science has indeed informed planning, but in ways and to depths unrevealed here. The hundreds of photos throughout the book, identified in the back, provide a running identification quiz which further underscores the predominantly visual interpretation of nature and culture. Beautiful though many of the scenes are, and excellent though many of the photos are, designers—especially those responsible for spatial, physical, and biological structures—need to get beneath surface appearance and pictorial composition. One notes, in this connection, Simonds's direction to the reader (in the section boldly entitled "Land") to "*Learn to read the Landscape*, to comprehend the grandeur of its geologic framework." He never attempts to explain how or to what purpose, and alludes to geology only twice more in the remaining two hundred ninety-odd pages.

His handling of natural phenomena is both too thin and too dogmatic, whether one approaches the subject from an ecological point of view, or from that of a formally or horticulturally trained person. This is most dramatically illustrated in the section on plants. His sketches, which pervade the book, have a cloying quality that gets on one's nerves—even when, as often happens, he is saying something obvious or good.

Parts of the book are not merely inaccurate or out of date, but woefully wrong. On pages 90 and 91, he offers a view of the town of Thera in the Aegean as a theme-setting image for Chapter 6 ("Site"), along with the dictum, "For every site there is an ideal use—for every use there is an ideal site." This may be one of the greatest examples of irony in recent professional journalism. The photo is certainly picturesque; it depicts the remains of a community, a site popular with tourists, perched on the rim of the great crater of the active volcano of Santorini. Those with a modicum of history will recall that this is the volcano which probably ended one phase of Minoan civilization, spawning the Atlantis legend. As recently as ten years ago portions of Thera plunged into the sea as a result of earthquakes. As an example of site planning





EERO SAARINEN, ARCHITECT; SASAKI, DOWSON & DEMAY, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, DEERE & COMPANY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER, MOLINE, ILLINOIS

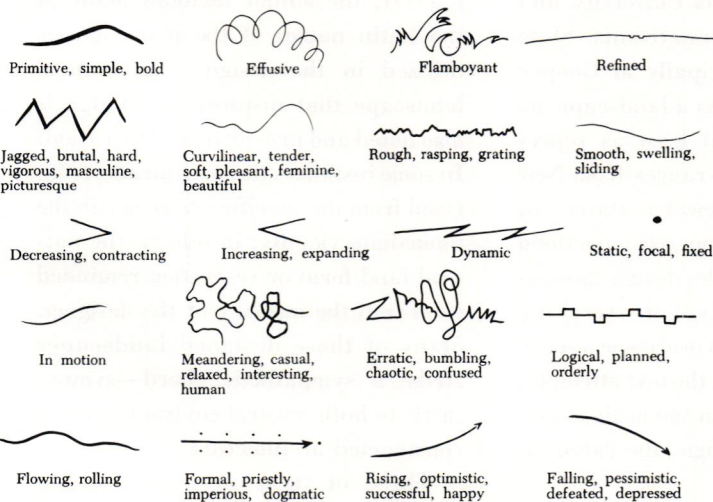
the town of Thera must be one of the worst in human history, and its survival as a resort is due as much to our morbidity and the frisson of perpetual danger, of "life on the edge—literally," in the balmy sun of Greece, as to its scenic grandeur, which is that of a shattered and deadly landscape.

A thoughtful teacher could use this book to good purpose, sifting out the defensible parts. An instructive afternoon could be spent discussing the 48 pathetic fallacies on page 150. But for someone looking for help in a field as diverse, complicated, and important as landscape architecture, this book is a mixed blessing. One cannot approach it with a problem and find a

solution; like McHarg's *Design with Nature* (Natural History, 1971) and Kevin Lynch's *Site Planning* (MIT, 1971), it is a personal work, bound to frustrate those seeking a design cookbook. Books which do attempt to be compendiums of design solutions—like Christopher Alexander's well-meaning but unusable *Pattern Language* (Oxford, 1977)—are doomed to unwieldiness, since physical problems can almost never be categorized by a single issue; and attempts to arrange, cross-reference, or combine issues have yet to succeed. But books with the intensely personal orientation of *Landscape Architecture* have their own generic weaknesses: Simonds surveys the world and its history and passes on a scrapbook of wise quotations, photographs, and an enormous amount of fact, wisdom, opinion, personal belief and taste, some of it as dated as anything ever could be. How on earth could anyone, especially a beginning design student, sort it out?

The strengths of this book are in the examples of built work and of the thoughts of others through time, and in its eclectic introduction to the enormous range of problems faced by landscape architects. My fear is that the weaknesses that irritate me will be sensed by others, regardless of background, who will then form an opinion of landscape architecture as a field that is well meaning but technically and critically soft and out of date.

*Landscape Architecture*, revised edition, John Ormsbee Simonds, McGraw-Hill, 1983, 331 pp., illus., \$37.50.



"PATHETIC FALLACIES." FROM SIMONDS, *LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE*.



Marc Treib:

## ART INTO LANDSCAPE; LANDSCAPE INTO ART

ARTHUR EDWIN BYE, JR.

The creation of a landscape is hardly an easy task. The creation of a landscape that serves its intended purpose while evoking an intended feeling or "mood" is yet more difficult. Landscape architect A. E. Bye, Jr., includes the evocation of mood as one of his goals. His "Definition of Landscape Architecture," as presented in the book *Art into landscape; Landscape into art*, first considers only the characteristics or the capabilities of the designer:

The landscape architect must consider the relationship between a building and its surroundings, the topography, orientation, walks, road, and planting. He [*sic*] must be aware of the influence exerted by climate, and the relationships of earth, plants, water and building materials in space to create an architectural landscape integrated with the natural and man-made environment.

Yet in his "Philosophical Statement" that follows later in the book, Bye suggests that the quality of the landscape derives from more than pragmatic concerns alone:

To create effectively, the landscape architect must work outdoors to "feel" each rock and stone, the trees and vines, sand and earth, the sky and water, reflecting light and shadow, the mist, the snow and ice, the rain, the wind and the odors and noises that are all about us.

In this sense, Bye appears in sympathy with photographer Edward Weston's dictum: "Photograph a thing not for what it is, but for what *else* it is."



A. E. BYE, WATER TROUGH, GAINESWAY FARMS, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Bye is a practicing landscape architect and a fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects. His practice has included a wide variety of project types with a diversity of locations and site conditions. As an educator, Bye has taught at the University of Kentucky, Columbia University, and his alma mater, Pennsylvania State University, but principally at Cooper Union in New York. As a landscape architect, his work—at least as represented in this book—ranges from New England to the Tidewater states. In some ways the book is merely a portfolio of Bye's considerable design accomplishments over a period of several decades. It is difficult to overcome a sense of this limitation. But the text attempts, in addition, to explain the feelings and ideas behind the design, the rationale behind the form.

Each of the book's twenty projects is presented with an introductory text,

a photographic essay, and, in most cases, a plan. The text deals primarily with the pragmatics of the project, its scope, perhaps a word or two about the client, and of course the characteristics of the site. For the professional, or the reader with a developed horticultural interest, the author includes many of the Latin names of the plant species utilized in the design. The natural landscape that inspired the design is also noted and provided an illustration. In some instances these inspirations derived from the specific site or one in the immediate vicinity; in others, the natural land form or vegetation reminded itself into the memory of the designer. Many of these designed landscapes strike a sympathetic chord—sympathetic to both natural environment and constructed architecture.

Three of these projects resonate with particular significance. The first is a bog landscape (the Stein Bog) in



New England. The clients had requested that Bye drain the bog in order to form a pond from the existing groundwater. Bye reasoned to the contrary, in conformance with the earlier landscape planning ideas of Jens Jensen and his preference for native plants and terrains, and built instead on the systematic irregularities of the site as a source of variation and pleasure. The clusters of plants and Tussock sedge reinforce the natural conditions, yielding a bog landscape at once natural and artificial, in which the act of making or remaking provides insight into the “genius of the place.” Alexander Pope would be proud.

In his garden for the Soros estate in Southampton, New York, Bye drew an imagistic analogue of New York’s Amenia hills—smooth, soft undulations of continuously grassy surface, dappled with clumps or a gentle cover of woods. Metamorphosed into a garden, the land still appears natural, though the undulations seem too many and too regular, clueing us to the act of construction. Like many of these projects, the Soros garden is photographed in winter, when the structure of the planting is rendered more easily. Under partial snow cover the crowns of the hillocks’ sinuous lines emerge as a curving bridge that invites us into the landscape. This garden exemplifies the strengths found in the best of Bye’s work: first, his understanding of seasonal change and the potential it offers for a variety of aesthetic effects; second, the inducement of movement *through* a garden, as the only way to appreciate and understand it fully. These are not places of static vistas.

The most memorable of the designs, suitably set in the book as a sort of visual crescendo, is the series of landscape plans for the Gaines estate and Gainesway Farms in Lexington, Kentucky. The surrounding countryside is rolling yet manicured, well tempered by centuries of occupation. To this pol-



A. E. BYE, GAINES HA-HA, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

ished elegance Bye added a stone dividing wall, a ha-ha on the English model, intended to allow the view in while keeping the horses out. The wall’s serpentine form wanders across the landscape, physically enclosing on one side, vaporizing into the contours on the other. This graceful and simple gesture simultaneously recalls Thomas Jefferson’s walls at the University of Virginia, and the planar work of sculptor Richard Serra, whose rectilinear planes oppose and graph the contours of the hillside. In the Gaines ha-ha, the inherent appeal of the fieldstone and the craftsmanship with which it was worked have produced a winding ribbon, fascinating and beautiful in and of itself.

The Gainesway Farms—or as much of them as we can see in these photographs—emerge as a sympathetic collaboration of landscape and architectural design. The stables were designed by Theodore C. Ceraldi as simple shingled buildings, with peaked gables, dis-

posed in a regular order. The stallions raised there, which Bye described as the “king of horses,” suggested the use of an *allée* of beech trees, the “king of trees.” The complement is well taken. The focal point of the scheme is the watering trough, a linear stone sarcophagus filled to the absolute brim with water for its charges; offering a surface transmuted into a reflecting dagger that strengthens the conceptual bond between earth and sky. It is a feeling for stone and water and their respective positions in the landscape that recalls the planar strength and frightening appropriateness that marks the work of Luis Barragán.

Appropriateness and feeling derive more from intuition than conscious planning, the author notes:

I must admit that ideas come from me more intuitively than intellectually when I design a project. The intuitive way is valid, yet the intellectual process also plays its part. The client’s needs and desires, the



budget, the restraints of law, the restraints or opportunities of ecological conditions and the environment must all be considered.

But in the end, creation escapes conscious process:

Students have asked me how long it takes me to see, in my mind's eye, an idea for a garden. When I reply "about two or three seconds," they are astonished, but I go on to explain that I have visual imagination, I can "see" a landscape all completed, not down to details, but to the general outlines and forms.

In its best moments, Bye's work suggests the power of the simple but convincingly appropriate gesture, such as the complex simplicity of the Japanese garden or of the American earthwork sculptors. The stone wall informs us of the act of construction *and* the existing

land contour. The *allée* informs us of the architectural order *and* the nature of growing plant material. The contrast of stone, water, and earth, the greenness of a meadow, or the irregular texture of a bog provides us with insights into the nature of place, and how we react to these found conditions. The best of these landscapes are indicative of the harmonic relationships that vivify our perception of the land as it was, and as it is now.

The landscape, unfortunately, is one of the most difficult sets of phenomena to portray in the fixed view of a camera. While the photograph easily communicates information, only rarely can it capture and convey the character of a place. This is due in part to the nature of the western graphic tradition in general; in part to the particularities of nature. The images presented here objectify many of the limits of landscape

representation, while raising other questions about books as a medium for the presentation of landscape architecture.

By nature, the photograph isolates a fragment of reality, no matter how wide the angle of the lens. As a sweeping panorama, the photograph investigates the overall contour of the land, and the development of the design as an entirety. But the particularities are lost in the process. Thus the closeup becomes essential, to complete the missing information about those detailed aspects—the feeling of the leaves and the stems, the textures and colors, and the balance of element to element. We are left to piece together clues to the environment, to extract a conception of the place and, not incidentally, the significance of the design. The process is in some ways analogous to the solving of a crime, adding bit to bit in order to reconstruct the motives of the perpetrator of the act. We, too, might seek the motives behind each of these design acts, to decipher its meaning or derive greater pleasure from it.

We are not helped in this task by the photographs we find here. Color images are included, but the photographs are not exceptionally good. By reducing the number of variables, and stressing the appropriate ones, the black-and-white photos actually do a better job, particularly in conveying mood. Vegetation may be the most difficult of all subjects to photograph. Its identity and nuance stubbornly elude reproduction on film; only under the most perfect lighting conditions are both the mass and detail of the landscape structure legible—and even then only when the best photographers can capture them.

While the majority of the book's images are not bad in themselves, their reproduction is often *miserable*. It is almost inconceivable that a book which relies to such a degree on photographs can be issued with an entire signature

A. E. BYE, WATER TROUGH AT NIGHT, GAINESWAY FARMS, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY





or more printed out of register. The resulting images give an impressionistic quality at best, and the suggestion of impaired vision or failing eyesight as the more likely explanation. This is hardly comforting to the reader.

Certain critical pieces of information are lacking, and this, too, can be annoying. The date of the project is in most cases not provided, nor are the dates of the photographs. Knowing what the conditions of the site were before the planting commenced—also missing—would at least imply the level of maturity displayed in the photographs.

As a sort of epilogue to the portfolio of work, *Art into landscape; Land-*

*scape into art* concludes with a photographic essay on landscape "moods." These are natural examples, rather than the work of the landscape architect, but they are meant to suggest the range of possibilities and qualities that good landscape architecture should embrace. The titles, neither explicit nor forming a rigid typology in themselves, include mystery, dazzle, cleanness, complexity-intricacy, delicacy-fragility, elegance, and brittleness. They suggest the work of a landscape architect whose concerns clearly extend beyond the rote praxis of the office, or the altruistic preoccupation with behavioral factors alone.

This is a provocative book, but one

which ultimately delivers incomplete satisfaction. While interesting in its discussion of a poetry beyond the program, and in its utilization of the natural landscape conditions as both source and inspiration, the book provides neither a basis for selection nor any rationale for implementing the inspirations chosen. As a portfolio of work by an accomplished designer, the book is useful and merits considerable interest, but the poor quality of the reproductions of that work leave us wanting for more information, better presented.

*Art into landscape; Landscape into art*, Arthur Edwin Bye, Jr., PDA Publishers, 178 pp., illus., cloth \$26.00; paper \$19.75.

Richard Guy Wilson:

## METROPOLITAN CORRIDOR

JOHN R. STILGOE

*I like to see it lap the Miles,  
And lick the Valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at Tanks;  
And then, prodigious, step  
Around a Pile of Mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In Shanties by the sides of Roads;  
And then a Quarry pare.*

This poem by Emily Dickinson conveys the impact, physical and metaphorical, of the railroad on the American landscape—urban, suburban, rural, and the in-between zones of shanties, quarries, and factories. Unfortunately, critical historical analyses of this impact have been few and far between; only a few, such as the pioneering works of Carl Condit and John White, exist for

those interested in design. John Stilgoe's book is a welcome addition, and rises far above the usual pop buff trivia that passes for railroad history.

Essentially Stilgoe's thesis is that between 1880 and 1935 a new spatial environment developed in America, girding the country and creating a mind-set he labels "Metropolitan Corridor." From the "high iron" of the tracks across the plains to the trolleys of New England, from the smoky industrial centers of Pittsburg and George Babbitt's Zenith to the great inter-city terminals like Grand Central, from the carefully landscaped commuter depot to the "RR Crossings" everywhere, Americans were exposed to a futurist ethos, and became attached, romantically and otherwise, to the ideas of machinery, power, and movement. The passenger, lapped in the plush luxury of the Twentieth Century Limited or the Orange Blossom Special, or poking along in a local, developed a new attitude towards the landscape, a

cinematographic approach to the world flowing by, disconnected and removed. And the train flashing by brought dreams of escape to the most remote outpost, to the child holding a hand by the tracks. *Metropolitan Corridor* is not a history of railroad development, nor a technological history, but an attempt to reconstruct the significance of the vision from the passenger car window, the depot, and the right-of-way. In its attempts to define the new spatial environment created by the railroad, it forms a sequel to Stilgoe's previous book, *Common Landscape of America, 1580-1845* (Yale, 1982).

Stilgoe breaks down the American involvement with the railroad into a number of facets, which become his chapter headings: "Gateway" (terminals and yards), "Elegance" (travel by express), "Zone" (manufacturing areas), "Generator" (power plants), and so on through "Ruins." He offers fresh and provocative insights at every turn, from the "Railroad Beautiful





AN EMERGING TROLLEY CORRIDOR, 1908

Movement," the turn-of-the-century concern with the landscaping of depots and right-of-ways, to the particular fascination the emerging industrial zone had for many Americans. He explains, I think accurately, how American industry became so dispersed, and how Americans became so enamored of the new hero, the engineer—not simply the driver of locomotives, but the individual who understood mathematics and science, who constructed and controlled this new environment. His handling of disparate forms of research data is impressive; he shows how the Lionel Company's model station, complete with "a terrace which contains beautifully landscaped flower beds," reflected the beautification craze, and he marshals a broad array of American authors, from Henry James and Thomas Wolfe to the pulp writers, for their perspectives on the railroad experience.

While I admire Stilgoe's book greatly, it has its problematical points. His reading and bibliography are vast and impressive, but the narrative could have been more integrated; at times it is just a rather tedious reportage on various articles. The book is handsomely produced; the illustrations are

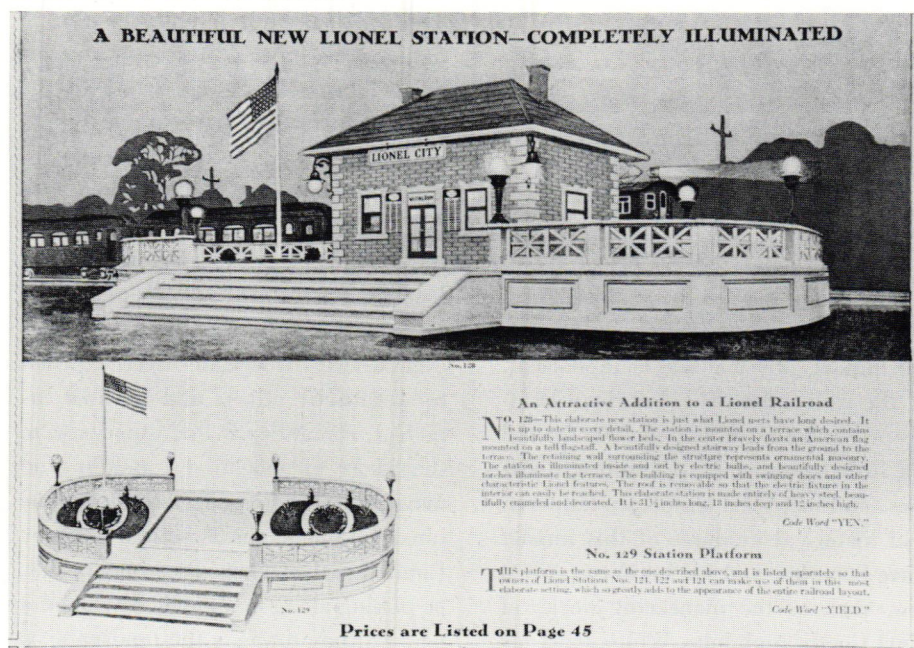
generous, and drawn from a variety of sources including calendars, timetables, and magazines. Yet far too many are labeled imprecisely or not at all as to location, date, and source. The term "Metropolitan Corridor" has a certain snappy catch but is not totally accurate. It implies that embedded in the railroad-created environment were the values of the big city; yet, as Stilgoe

acknowledges, the railroad was a landscape of events, a new spatial ethic; the big city was part of it, but so were the industrial zone, the countryside, suburbia, and the trains themselves. "Corridor" is appropriate, but the term "metropolitan" belies the special nature of this environment.

Those who know and love the subject as he does will have other minor cavils: more description and analysis of the industrial zone and less on hobos would have been preferable to me; and, though Stilgoe does not deny the polluted atmosphere of much of traintom, the overall impression he gives is of a better, vanished age. He has a certain romantic passion for the railroad (even offering at the end the hope that it may rise again), and in that spirit has written a perceptive, readable book on a unique aesthetic that for a time conquered the landscape and the American imagination.

*Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American scene*, John R. Stilgoe, Yale, 1983, 397 pp., illus., \$29.95.

LIONEL MODEL STATION AND GROUNDS





Andrew Rabeneck  
and Mai Arbegast:

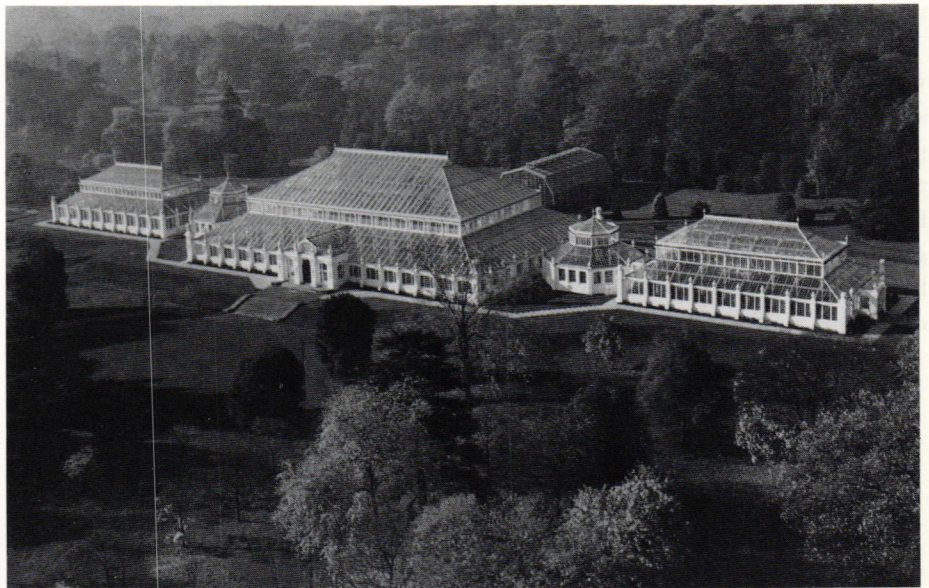
## KEW: GARDENS FOR SCIENCE AND PLEASURE

F. NIGEL HEPPER, editor

So much of modern science is unpleasant in its application that Kew Gardens, the world's leading center for economic botany, becomes an increasingly precious marvel of civilization. This book, a reprint of a 1982 volume from Her Majesty's Stationery Office, is a fascinating introduction to Kew, of interest to anyone with an inclination to botany, landscape architecture, or the history of science. Its chapters cover every aspect of Kew, from botanical research to the fifty thousand species of plants found in its gardens and glass houses, to its longstanding aim of making the gardens an attractive curiosity for the public, who visit it in great numbers.

Kew is most noted for its eminence in botanical research and horticultural teaching. This includes plant classification and naming, and the search for useful plants—useful, in particular, to Asia and the tropical areas of the world (for example, the rubber tree and the *Cinchona*, from whose bark we obtain quinine). Today, it also involves helping to save species of plants threatened by the encroachment of human habitation—an effort that includes seed and gene banks, and a vast collection of living plants. This collection (much of it lodged in the glass houses that simulate climates ranging from the tropical to the alpine), and Kew's library have provided the raw material for many outstanding dictionaries, encyclopedias, books, and papers.

Kew began as a summer residence for Princess Augusta, mother of George III. It was then developed by successive



THE REBUILT TEMPERATE HOUSE, THE ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS, KEW

members of the royal family, using a variety of architects (including William Chambers, Henry Muntz, and others, working in a variety of styles), botanists, and landscape gardeners. Its interest to architects is primarily in the works by William Chambers, most

notably his 163-foot-high chinoiserie pagoda of 1762. It also contains some wonderful glass houses, the most famous of which are Decimus Burton and Richard Turner's Palm House of 1848, and Burton's 48,000-square-foot Temperate House, started in 1860 and

PALM HOUSE, THE ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS, KEW





recently restored.

The text was written by scientists working at Kew, which is both its strength and its weakness. These people know what they are talking about, and are able to temper their huge affection for the institution with their genuinely fascinating accounts of its botanical work. On the other hand, because this is the official book on the

subject, many of its chapters have been edited into lifelessness—informative, but dull.

If you know Kew and therefore carry about a private vision of its magic, the deadpan tone need not matter, but it could be disconcerting to the would-be visitor. It is as if the scientists are shy of commenting on the overpowering richness and beauty of the place. If you

find the text wearying, then concentrate on the magnificent photographs and the selected botanical illustrations, drawn from every period. The book is no substitute for a visit, but an excellent primer and souvenir nonetheless.

The Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew: Gardens for Science and Pleasure, F. Nigel Hepper, ed., Stemmer House (2627 Caves Rd., Owings Mills, Md. 21117), 1982, 195 pp., illus., \$24.95.

Pat O'Brien:

## THE ENGLISHMAN'S GARDEN

ALVILDE LEES-MILNE and  
ROSEMARY VEREY, editors

An English garden brings to mind a variety of images: a burgeoning cottage garden of blowsy, overblown flowers; a vast green meadow with a stand of trees; silent green hedges marching across an undulating landscape. But whatever the immediate picture, there is rarely a question of thoroughness. The English landscape is a well-structured and thoughtful whole—an imageable place. So it was with a certain sense of familiarity and expectation that I turned to Alvilde Lees-Milne and Rosemary Verey's *The Englishman's Garden*.

Their new book is a companion volume to *The Englishwoman's Garden*, which came out several years ago and had a large English audience. Interest was soon expressed in a volume that would look at gardens designed and maintained by men. The editors had many to choose from but limited themselves to 33 examples in which the present owner was also the designer. Each owner/gardener presents his garden in a short article that is structured like a casual ramble through the grounds on



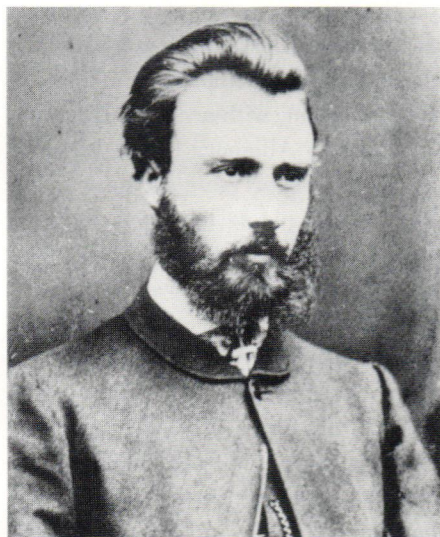
TOPIARY CREATED BY NATHANIEL LLOYD, GREAT DIXTER, NORTHAM, SUSSEX

a Saturday afternoon. Chatty and charming, the book lacks any real substance beyond a too-brief glimpse of 33 gardeners.

It both frustrates and disappoints; who is meant to read it? As a book for the amateur gardener, it has bits and pieces of folksy wisdom, but not enough information to be of any benefit. For someone interested in the design of these gardens, the ideas behind them—which their owners could relate—are

not gone into in any depth. As a series of interviews with 33 people on a subject of obvious importance to them, the articles are too short and undirected to give the feel of any one personality. The only sensual quality about a garden that a book can deliver is a good pictorial representation, but, as another book of pretty pictures, this one is a loss, since many of the photographs are either overexposed or taken in the rain. It's difficult, moreover, to appreciate





WILLIAM ROBINSON AT TWENTY-SIX

three harmonizing colors of roses against a sandstone wall when the photographs don't coordinate with the text.

The articles themselves could have been salvaged had each gardener been asked a direct question about why his garden is composed as it is. What is the mood of the garden as he sees it? To read is to imagine, and the book will not allow that. It offers no overall photographs of any of the gardens, no garden plans, no map locating the house on the property, river, or street; there is not even a north arrow. Since no one took the initiative to sketch the character of any of the spaces, the reader is left with a thumbnail representation of the front façade of each house, and a number of photographs of small parts of each garden, taken at odd angles.

Poorly prepared books on gardens are too often accepted because we don't expect more. A serious discussion cannot take place because gardens are seen as more fluff than structure—tended by silly people in baize coats. This book only lends credence to that image.

*The Englishman's Garden*, Alvilde Lees-Milne and Rosemary Verey, editors, Godine, 1983, 154 pp., illus., \$27.50.

## William Howard Adams: WILLIAM ROBINSON: 1838-1935

MEA ALLAN

## A CENTURY OF GARDENERS

BETTY MASSINGHAM

The one thing that Catherine the Great and Thomas Jefferson had in common was their love of the English garden. By the end of the 18th century, the English garden phenomenon had captured Europe, bringing about at least the illusion of a return to nature, in reaction to the formalism that had prevailed for so many centuries.

By the middle of the 19th century, the private garden was threatened by the uncontrolled spread of cities and industrial areas, but the English nevertheless remained preeminent. From 1883, when William Robinson's *The English Flower Garden* was published, to the death of Gertrude Jekyll, the private garden was the center of professional concerns—a phase of garden history Miles Hadfield has called the Robinsonian world.

A biography of Robinson would therefore be a welcome addition to the field of garden history. As a plantsman, garden journalist, and critic, Robinson brought about many improvements in the fussy Victorian garden, and almost single-handedly introduced that most English of all garden elements, the herbaceous border.

As a personality he was difficult, eccentric, and highly opinionated, detesting greenhouses and the Linnean system of nomenclature, but passionately concerned with cemeteries and the new invention of cremation. All this would suggest that a lively biography



EDWIN LUTYENS, DRAWING OF GERTRUDE JEKYLL, CIRCA 1896

could have been constructed.

The book by Mea Allan falls far short, sad to say, in both content and style. The book is littered with English garden writers' jargon at its worst: "What he had so far glimpsed, . . . even along the sides of the railroad as the train climbed up into the Sierras was promise enough. . . . Far away, on a gravelly hillside, they could see vivid red tufts, and these proved to be another equally beautiful eriogonum, with leaves of deep blood colour." For melodrama, one entire paragraph is given over to the "choke-muddle shrubbery where the poor flowering shrubs dwindled and killed each other, supporting a few ill-grown and ill-chosen plants disintegrating in summer to wide patches of bare earth in which, in better hands, pretty, green things might crowd." Choke-muddle aside, the book misses Robinson's essential importance. The influence of John Ruskin's writings on him is ignored almost entirely. What few references there are can only be described as painfully superficial.

A concise but limited biographical sketch of Robinson can be found in Betty Massingham's *A Century of Gardeners*. Miss Massingham, who has



written for *Country Life* and *Homes and Gardens*, has compiled her own, by no means comprehensive selection of homegrown garden personalities, from the years 1850 to 1950. There is a useful bibliography and a few nice line drawings, although the photographic reproduction is inexcusably bad—as it is in *William Robinson*. Massingham's style, like that of Allan, is in the modest, old-fashioned garden journalist tradition, although Massingham is the more felicitous of the two, and her choice of subjects is original.

William Robinson, 1838-1935: Father of the English Flower Garden, Mea Allan, Faber & Faber, 1983, 255 pp., illus., \$19.95.

A Century of Gardeners, Betty Massingham, Faber & Faber, 1983, 288 pp., illus., \$24.95.

## Mai Arbegast:

### THE CARE AND FEEDING OF TREES

RICHARD C. MURPHY and  
WILLIAM E. MEYER

### THE COUNTRY JOURNAL BOOK OF HARDY TREES AND SHRUBS

HARRISON L. FLINT

### HEDGES, SCREENS AND ESPALIERS

SUSAN CHAMBERLIN

*The Care and Feeding of Trees* is a simply written "how to do it" book for the homeowner and, possibly, the beginning arborist. It covers such issues as how to select a tree, how to fertilize, how to prune, how to identify and con-

tend with the problems of trees, and how and when to get professional help. Charts laying out basic tree data (size at purchase and at maturity, rate of growth, disease and insect susceptibility, etc.) accompany the discussion.

The book is very good as far as it goes. Although it includes a section describing the trees most commonly found in gardens, it is best suited for readers in the northeast and midwest. It does not cover trees that do well in the sunbelt (i.e., Florida, the Gulf Coast, southern and coastal California), or the tree problems of that region. Trees indigenous to the Rockies are also omitted, the bias toward trees in colder climates notwithstanding.

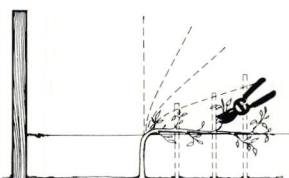
*The Country Journal Book of Hardy Trees and Shrubs* is another book directed primarily to gardeners in the northeast and midwest (a popular focus—very few books concentrate

on the warmer parts of the U.S.). It describes the best landscape plants for these areas in a thorough and interesting fashion, with accompanying line drawings by Allianora Rosse that do a good job of expressing the basic character of the plants in question. It includes a short explanation of how to lay out the planting and select and maintain the plants correctly, followed by good, sensitively written discussion, by plant category, of a palette of plants typical of gardens in the northeast and midwest (many of which can also be found, happily, in gardens of the sunbelt).

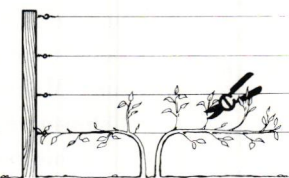
*Hedges, Screens and Espaliers* is an important new reference book, as useful for the professional designer as for the home gardener. The authors use color photos and line drawings very effectively to show the reader how to achieve a variety of aesthetic and func-

HORIZONTAL, BRAIDED AND ARCURE CORDONS. FROM CHAMBERLIN, *HEDGES, SCREENS AND ESPALIERS*.

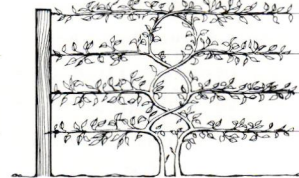
#### Horizontal and Braided Variations



1. Horizontal: Plant whips and bend trunk gradually down, using stakes as necessary. Shorten all side shoots to spurs. Train leader as long as desired along wire.

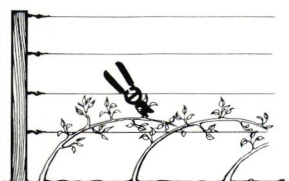


1. Braided: Plant two whips and bend trunks gradually down. Allow two side shoots to develop. Shorten all other shoots.



2. Braided: Train original two shoots to braided pattern over the seasons. Train single side shoots as horizontals along wires. Shorten all others to spurs.

#### Arcure Variation



1. Arcure: Select whips that are 3 to 4 feet tall. Plant at a slight angle. Allow new growth to begin, then bend and tie whips to form arches. Leave only one new shoot for each plant at top center of arch.



2. At end of first growing season, bend top center shoot down in opposite direction of arch and tie in place. Remove all but one of its top center shoots.



3. Repeat process to develop successive arched branches. Shorten all side shoots to spurs. Prune regularly to maintain pattern. There will be little increase in length of oldest shoots growing at an angle.





FLOWERING CRABAPPLES. FROM FLINT, *THE COUNTRY JOURNAL BOOK OF HARDY TREES AND SHRUBS*.

tional effects. The functional uses of hedges and screens, for example, range from privacy and screening to the altering of the microclimate. There is a separate section on dealing with problem sites. The discussion of espaliers, whose use is entirely aesthetic, gives a wide variety of possible patterns.

Each of these discussions includes elaborate lists indicating likely planting choices, with a regional breakdown. The chapter on planting and care is quite good, and an "encyclopedia" describes in detail the characteristics and uses of many of the plants in question. Thorough, concise, and interesting, this is probably the most complete guide to its subject to appear in the last 20 years.

*The Care and Feeding of Trees*, updated edition, Richard C. Murphy and William E. Meyer, with illustrations by Clara May Hankins, Crown, 1983, 160 pp., illus., \$5.95 pb.

*The Country Journal Book of Hardy Trees and Shrubs*, Harrison L. Flint, with illustrations by Allianora Rosse, Country Journal Publishing Co., Brattleboro, Vt. (distributed by Norton), 1983, 164 pp., illus., \$10.00 pb.

*Hedges, Screens and Espaliers: How to Select, Grow & Enjoy*, Susan Chamberlin, HP Books, Tuscon, 1983, 176 pp., illus., \$9.95 pb.

## Charles Burger: ENERGY EFFICIENT SITE DESIGN and A GUIDE TO ESTIMATING LANDSCAPE COSTS

GARY O. ROBINETTE, editor

In the most recent edition of his text, *General Climatology* (Prentice-Hall, 1974), Howard Critchfield points to a trend quite relevant to environmental designers:

The former strong emphasis of atmospheric studies on daily weather has shifted noticeably toward *climate* during the last half of the twentieth century as we have begun to realize that decisions affecting our future on this planet require a broader perception of time and space. . . . We cannot ignore climate. The prudent alternative is to seek understanding of its causes, its spatial and temporal variations, and its effects as an active element of our environment.

*Energy Efficient Site Design* is a recent work which focuses on the principles underlying a process of physical development respectful of land, energy, and climate. The book is adapted from a 1978 Department of Energy report, "Options for Passive Energy Conservation in Site Design," prepared by the Reimann-Buechner-Crandall Partnership, Syracuse, New York.

Like Robinette's earlier *Landscape Planning for Energy Conservation* (Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977, reissued 1983), co-edited with Charles McClennon, this book first provides a basic discussion of "climate and its varying effects." The text is somewhat brief, but to good effect; well-chosen

encapsulations of climatic phenomena—temperature, moisture, and air movement—are linked clearly to their consequences at the site. The concepts presented are accompanied by quantitative data on such issues as the thermal consequences of site modifications. A generous number of illustrations help to make the material understandable.

The book then addresses "climate control options"—those physical elements and materials the architect and landscape architect use to control climatic phenomena at the site level. This is discussed on several levels of detail, focusing first on selecting a site with favorable orientation to its microclimatic characteristics (considering landforms, vegetation, and bodies of water), and then on arranging spaces and solid objects to influence radiation, convection, air movement, and possibly air moisture. Some nifty "tricks of the trade" are shown, such as how to design a fence and its slats to control the wind.

The rest of the book consists of "regional site design guidelines" that address the energy/design variables designers are likely to encounter in different parts of the United States. Design criteria and gross site selection guidelines are offered for four climate zones: cool, temperate, hot humid, and hot arid. The guidelines provide consistent, well-annotated comparisons between the design factors most likely to prove critical in every climate. Examples, some of which are also in *Landscape Planning for Energy Conservation*, are put to good use, and the natural and man-made features shown seem genuinely characteristic of these climate zones. The authors also recognize the value of dealing graphically with such "ephemeral" influences on design as sun, wind, and moisture, and in both books the illustrations clarify the concepts as well as the facts.

The recently reissued *Landscape*



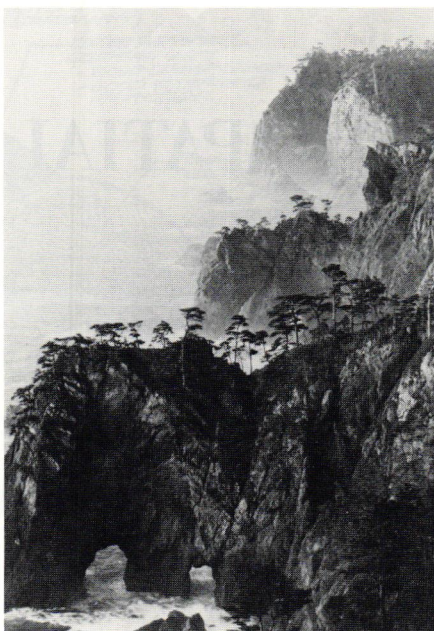
exploded compositions of the Chicago Lakefront scheme of 1923.

The line continued with the *Architectural Review* analyses of Gordon Cullen, whose 1961 publication, *Townscape*, could be viewed as an illustrated version of Sitte, with an expanded breadth of concern that included the particularities of vegetation, paving, and texture.

At the time of Sitte's book, and for decades thereafter, the study of psychology was integral to the study of philosophy, and psychology did not really emerge as a distinct discipline until the turn of the century. The question of perception remained primarily a philosophical or aesthetic one. Cognition and its relation to spatial perception thus were treated qualitatively in terms of theory.

One of the important aspects of Sitte's original study and publication, and of many of the works which followed, is that each tried to examine, understand, and systematize the extant environment, translating isolated perceptions into a coherent body of knowledge, with the added intention of producing a theory of action by which the spirit if not the form of past urban conglomerations could be quantified. Even Higuchi adheres to this purpose; his underlying theme is still the attempt to create a conscious and coherent order for design, by which the unconscious sensibility of ages past can be regained.

The Ames experiments in the perception of distorted spaces, and the work of J. J. Gibson in the fifties (and presented in his *Perception of the Visual World* [1960]), contributed significantly to our knowledge of spatial perception, but the discipline of psychology, though separated now from philosophy, remained rather divorced from the consciousness of the design professions. Enter Kevin Lynch. Lynch's epoch-making *Image of the*



RIKUCHU NATIONAL MARITIME PARK, IWATE PREFECTURE. FROM HIGUCHI, *THE VISUAL AND SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF LANDSCAPES*.

*City*, first published in 1960, enhanced the notion of urban spatial design, and in that sense—intentionally or unintentionally—provided both the precedent and a key prototype for the fields of environmental psychology, cognitive mapping, and an urban design which could accept if not celebrate the variations in individual and group perception.

Lynch's book explored the memorable characteristics of place at the neighborhood and even at the city scale: how places differed from non-places; how they were perceived and recalled. While using case studies, interviews, questionnaires, and graphic records (cognitive mapping) to obtain his data, he presented his results as graphic representations, based on the now-famous categories of node, path, edge, district, and landmark. Almost every study since has drawn on or included *The Image of the City* in some way. It is a debt acknowledged by both Tadahiko Higuchi and Yoshinobu Ashihara in

their respective texts.

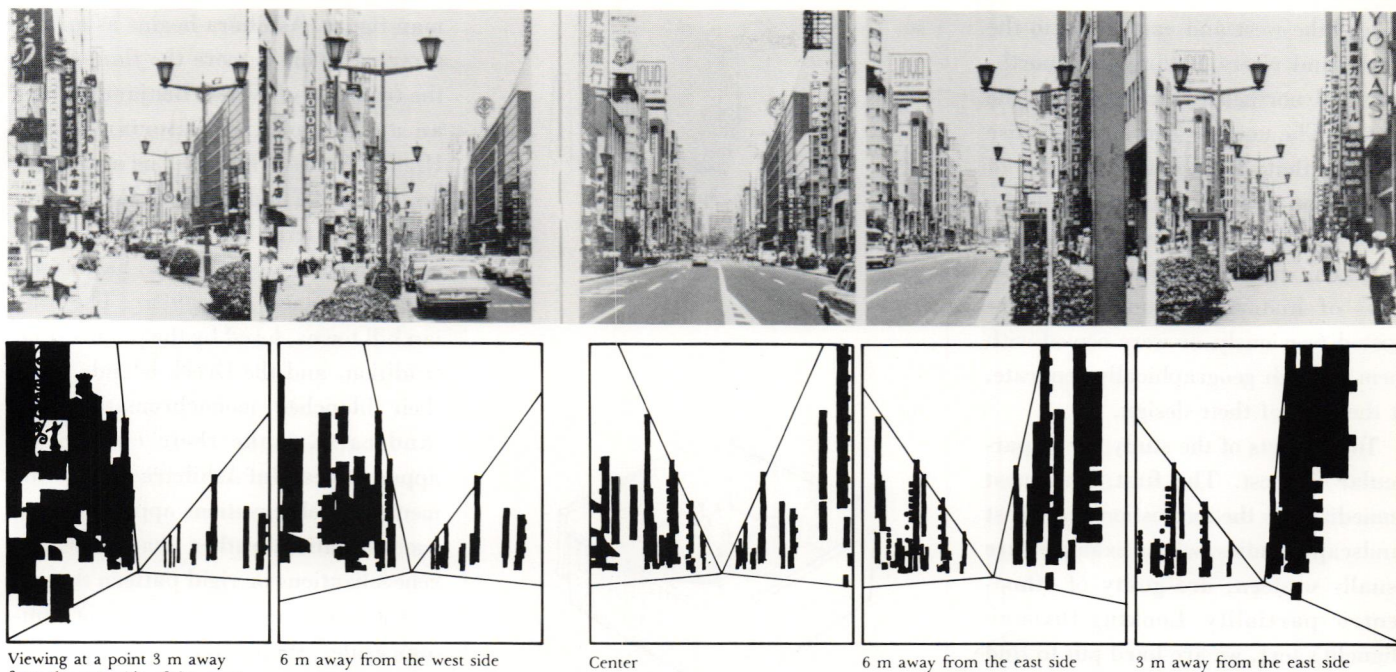
Higuchi's *The Visual and Spatial Structure of Landscapes* is an important book. In a sense, it is really *two* books: in the first section, he attempts to apply Lynch's concept of perceptual analysis—not to the city, but to the landscape; in the second section, he advances a typology of historical landscape, and explicates its role in Japanese history and spatial design.

It is easy to be critical of Higuchi's sweeping typology, which is undermined by possible exceptions, but the systematization of the landscape is admittedly a rather difficult task, and one which has met with only moderate success. Unlike the city, the order of the landscape remains elusive, with elements that appear—at least in formal visual terms—rather disordered. (This contrast is especially strong in the case of American cities which followed, to some degree at least, a preconceived plan.)

But Higuchi appears unconcerned with the precise order of the landscape; his interest lies with our perception of it. His discussion of standard conditions, such as the apprehension of depth, height, and atmospheric distortions, suggests that they bear heavily on the way that we design or should be designing. The object is less critical than its background, and the relation between the two informs the percept. His intention is not observation *per se*, but observation in the service of design.

To many readers, this first, theoretical section may seem at times tedious, overworked, or even trivial. Numerical charts and mathematical analyses disrupt the flow of the text, but disregarding this, can we really accept such a system when its variables seem too great in number for any sense of uniform evaluation? Again, though, acceptance is perhaps not the issue here: the book—both parts of it—is more concerned with turning our at-





PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PROFILES OF GINZA AVENUE. FROM ASHIHARA, *THE AESTHETIC TOWNSCAPE*.

tention to this aspect of landscape perception than with providing convincing prescriptions for any single part of it. As Higuchi states in the first chapter:

Consciously or unconsciously, we all distinguish between various types of views, and it is instructive to consider the conscious or unconscious criteria we employ.

There follows a list of eight primary “indexes for determining the visual structure of landscape”: visibility or invisibility; distance; angle of incidence; depth of invisibility; angle of depression; angle of elevation; depth; and light. These are applied in turn to “areas or sites that have long been valued for their scenic appeal.”

And yet the reader, attempting to decipher the many formulae for angles of depth perception and the like, and understand their basis, may be a bit disappointed. In the chapter on “Space-Position Relationships,” Higuchi determines empirically that “lakes ought to be viewed from points where the nearer shore has a depression angle

of 10 degrees or more.” While the argument appears logical in the context of the discussion, one also looks for the multitude of other interacting variables which affect and bias our pleasure of landscape.

Though not every aspect of the formulae advanced will be immediately acceptable to all readers, there is a sense of truth to almost everything Higuchi presents. More problematic, and typical of fragmented analytical studies, is the lack of integrative structure to explain how the various pieces fit together. What is the interaction of formula A on situation B under conditions C? Thus, in spite of the specific vocabularies, there remains a role for the designer as qualitative synthesist.

In some ways it is unfortunate that the order of the book puts the analytical first, and the discursive, historical view second. The numerical nature of the first half—the product of a dissertation—may discourage the average reader from continuing. In this event, I would suggest skipping directly to the second part; the rewards will be ap-

parent. Though certainly related to the first part (although even this is questionable at times), the second depends upon it in only minor ways.

The second half of the book is important and makes interesting reading for the designer or historian. For those familiar with the classical Japanese landscape—the landscape of the castle, the city, the mountain temple, the shrine, or the dry garden—the Higuchi theory will strike a harmonic chord. The Higuchi *corpus* extends beyond the particular “noted” places to examine the generic historical landscape types—the kinds of places honored in wood block prints. The seven categories Higuchi proposes include: the mountain-surrounded valley, its mountains rising in layers; the eight-petal lotus; the river flowing through the mountains, particularly at their base; the secluded valley; the plain in accord with cosmic forces; the sacred mountain; and the domain-viewing mountain.

The cities of Nara and Kyoto neatly fit the geomantic demands of the fifth type, with “mountains to the north,

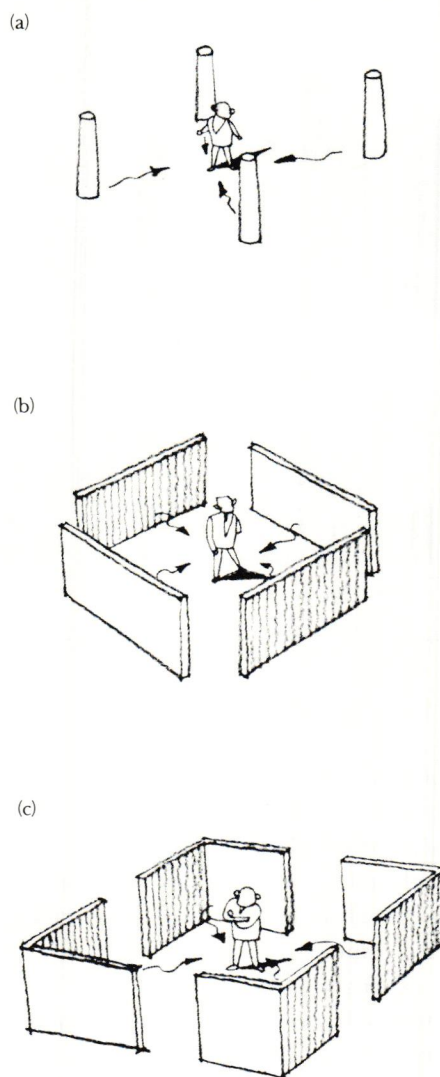


hills to the west and east, open to the south, and rivers flowing from northwest and northeast, converging to the south." The notable Zen and paradise gardens that distinguish the city of Kyoto (and draw in many ways on the historical types Higuchi proffers) are, we learn, mere evocations or recreations of historical landscapes that existed previously, or were coeval with them, though geographically separate, at the time of their design.

Two aspects of the study are of particular interest. The first, and most immediate, is the suggestion that most landscape studies, whose examples are usually western, are guilty of ethnocentric partiality. Looking through Higuchi's text, we are hard put to find western examples, and yet the model seems to suggest itself as worthy of application to the western landscape. The second point is that Higuchi, like Sitte and Lynch before him, by proposing a revised means of examining generic cultural landscapes, extends the impact of his study beyond its immediate Japanese context. He provides an analytical framework for observing and interpreting (or projecting meaning *onto*, if you will) those landscapes which are familiar to us.\*

*The Visual and Spatial Structure of Landscapes*—its second part, at least—is, to my mind, a classic work that bears reading and studying by those involved with landscape from a design or from a historical/interpretive point of view. Its value is less in its attempts to codify the percepts of the landscape, and more in its impact on our perception—on our "way of seeing," as John Berger puts it.

Yoshinobu Ashihara's book, *The Aesthetic Townscape*, as the name itself implies, is a more gentle and personal view of the urban environment. Each observation is made with a photograph, diagram, or charming sketch—the last always including a hu-



DEGREES OF ENCLOSURE. FROM ASHIHARA, *THE AESTHETIC TOWNSCAPE*.

*"The traditional Japanese environment is centered on the interior of the house, the linearity of the street, the density of the district, rather than the focal point of the plaza."*

man figure. Ashihara begins as an observer, but his is more the *flâneur*, in the tradition of Walter Benjamin, than an anthropologist/historian of the Higuchi variety. He takes us on a journey through a multitude of places, eastern and western. Many of these—towns and squares—are what we have come to expect: places *de rigueur*. The Italian hill towns, loved by the picturesque tradition, and the Greek islands, with their blanched monochromatic stone landscape, make their customary appearances. But Ashihara offers comments and observations appropriate to each situation, rather than sweeping generalizations or rigid pattern theory.

He comments on questions of "human scale," though the particularity of group size is often lacking. He is concerned with daytime and nighttime perception of buildings, and how transparency is reversed. He examines building profiles and their first and subsequent reading. In all, paralleling the Gestalt applications of Rudolph Arnheim, but not rigidly adhering to them, Ashihara seeks the psychological/physical structure behind the places we have found comfortable and rewarding.

While there is a definite structure to the observations witnessed in the procession of section titles (from "Wall versus Floor" to "Views from Within and Views from Without" to "Primary and Secondary Profiles"), these strike the reader less forcefully than the lessons of particular situations, as if the book were a collection or scrapbook of urban situations seen.

Ashihara notes in his introduction that:

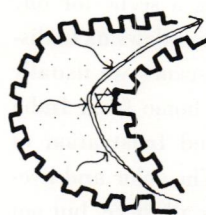
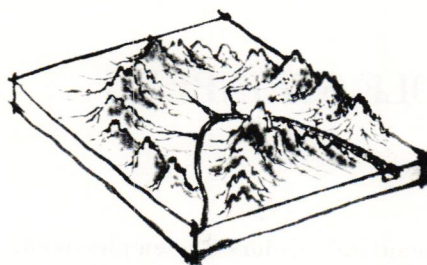
After observing architecture and cities around the world, I am convinced that the key explanation for the great diversity in basic perceptions of space lies in the nature of the boundary that distinguishes internal from external space and in the treatment of territorial space.



The text elucidates his collections of edges, boundaries, floors, walls, signs, and profiles seen; and in this he has been successful. The book contains many bits of information that are potentially useful for design, but also others that seem less applicable beyond the immediate situation cited. As with his *Exterior Design in Architecture* (1970), Ashihara is interested in public spaces. This is somewhat curious in that the traditional Japanese environment centered on the interior of the house, the linearity of the street, or the density of the district, rather than on the focal point of the plaza. Ashihara notes that even the castle created minor interior spaces, and stood only as an object in the landscape, in contrast to the entirety of the European medieval castle town. And he describes his theory of positive-negative space, that links the collective interior spaces of structures to the common exterior space.

Clearly, Ashihara is deriving a new, mid-Pacific (though perhaps more western) prescription for urban public space in Japan, mixing aspects of both western and Japanese urban or architectural traditions. The several examples he uses from his own large body of design work suggest the insertion of the western plaza tradition into the inward-focused Japanese spatial tradition. In a few images the building seems to reject the space, like an unwanted or superfluous organ. In others, such as the Dai-ichi Kangyō Bank plaza in Tokyo, the marriage appears more harmonious.

The lesson of *The Aesthetic Townscape* is that perception is a human activity, residing in the individual, though often culturally conventionalized. We can attempt to ascertain height-to-width ratios of closure, formalize viewing angles, or idealize cluster configurations, but ultimately it is the quality of the design as an entity



- ☆ Center: Shrine
- ~~~~~ Boundary: Mountains and hills
- Boundary and directionality: River
- ↘ Directionality: Slope of ground
- Domain: Fields, basin

STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE SECOND MIKUMARI SHRINE SUBTYPE. FROM HIGUCHI, *THE VISUAL AND SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF LANDSCAPES*.

*"Perception is a human activity, residing in the individual, though often culturally conventionalized."*

that governs.

Both these studies exhibit a distinctly Japanese view of the landscape. The Ashihara book appears less systematized, presenting a more humanistic, impressionistic take on urban environments and the social situations within them. The Higuchi book, on the other hand, largely omits reference to use as a collective function. It deals with the transaction between the perceiver and the place, and implies the importance of the cultural matrix in which the individual exists. In this sense the two volumes are complementary, and dovetail their concerns; the one treats the individual and the landscape, the other the individual as part of a social unit and the architecture which surrounds it.

\*One is reminded of Claude Lévi-Strauss's notion of structuralist method as an anthropological periodic chart: suggesting as yet unknown relationships in kin structure; offering a predictive system for possible relationships, a reworked means of looking at what might already be known; or suggesting what might possibly exist.

*The Visual and Spatial Structure of Landscapes*, Tadahiko Higuchi, translated by Charles Terry, MIT, 1983, 218 pp., illus., \$22.50.

*The Aesthetic Townscape*, Yoshinobu Ashihara, English edition revised by the author, translated by Lynne E. Riggs, MIT, 1983, 183 pp., illus., \$20.00.



Bonnie Loyd:

## DEAD TECH

MANFRED HAMM and ROLF STEINBERG

In one of the most unlikely publishing events of the year, Sierra Club Books has joined a German photographer and two writers to publish an English edition of *Dead Tech*. At first glance the book is a stylish collection of photographs that would recline gracefully next to *Architectural Digest*. The large paperback is attractively produced with nearly a third of the reproductions in color. The photographer leans toward a palette of pale blue with accents in rust.

But what is the book really about? The photographs capture technological ruins, the debris of our industrial society. Auto junkyards, collapsing piers, gutted aircraft, decaying steel plants, and neglected aircraft carriers fill the pages. The photographer Manfred Hamm, and his collaborator the German journalist Rolf Steinberg, traveled for more than a year in the United States and Europe documenting industrial archaeology; although they were searching for society's discards, they drove past the abandoned gas stations and the broken chain link fences in search of monuments. They went to Verdun, New York harbor, the Ruhr, Cape Canaveral—sites distant and mythical to most of us, which have acquired a cloak of majesty through their fame and large scale.

The camera often heightens the sense of monumentality by framing the object, isolating it from the surrounding evidence of real life. The camera also tends to make ordinary objects look

beautiful. Colors are emphasized, shapes simplified, colors brought into harmony. By freezing a scene for our inspection, the camera allows us to discover the beauty in scenes we usually ignore. The traveler home from India knows the delight and frustration of Ektachrome slides. The color and liveliness of the bazaar is all there, but not the heat, dust, stench, and confusion of life on the street.

Photographers who focus on scenes of destruction must therefore grapple with an especially troublesome problem: showing horror in the landscape

is difficult, especially when there are no people in the scene to register emotion. Manfred Hamm has partially succumbed to the camera's inclination to make things beautiful. In *Dead Tech* the images of crumbling towers and factories take on, if not outright beauty, at least elegance. Hamm has even helped the transformation along by catching a dusting of snow here, a flock of sheep there, the softness of a field of grass, the smooth contours of a sandy beach, the gleam of wet pavement. His photographs of the pier at Brighton highlight its eccentric Victorian charm;

EUGENIUS BIRCH, WEST PIER, BRIGHTON, CLOSED AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER 1975.





the rusting steam locomotives at the great train graveyard in South Wales project strength and dignity.

The shots of Brighton and the steam locomotives—even the bleak remains of Cape Canaveral—remind me that these were glorious experiments in architecture and technology, the grandparents of the architecture and machines in my life. I'm taken aback by the ingenuity and audacity that went into them. The suburban child of an engineer and an accountant, I grew up believing in progress. I was always aware of machines, conscious of their limitations but sure of their possibilities. The photographs touched some of those feelings.

But this is not the reaction the Sierra Club had in mind; the four-page introduction by Robert Jungk sets up a completely different line of thought, one the Sierra Club must have liked. Jungk is a German writer known particularly for his essays on the dangers of atomic power. Although he avoids addressing the threats of atomic power and nuclear war directly in this essay, the specter is there. Jungk sees the ruins in the book as ominous reminders of our inability to control technology, evidence that man "probably never will be able to control those forces that exceed his mental, psychic, and biological capabilities." The translation may sometimes be rough, but the message is clear; words like "destruction," "crisis," "shambles," and "chaos" flood his prose.

Rolf Steinberg's text is of a different kind; he supplies an introduction to each of the nine chapters, and his experience as a journalist in Berlin and Paris is evident. He gives us background, facts, dates, but, unlike Jungk, not many opinions. Not, that is, until he reaches the section on automobiles, where he tosses in comments about "automobile capitalism" to point out how Americans have become enslaved by their adoration of the auto.



GUN CUPOLA, MAGINOT LINE

But most of the time he lets us draw our own conclusions. And yet, the photographs, which should carry the book's message, are strangely silent. They present no real horrors, and stop short of presenting real beauty. They lack the edge that would make them challenging.

The book is admirable as a collection of unusual photographs, and impressive as a new version of an urgent environmental warning. Together these make a strange amalgam, yet in a surprising way the uneasy alliance of text and photographs makes the book work. The contradictions help it do exactly what a book should do, make us think.

*Dead Tech: A Guide to the Archaeology of Tomorrow*, Rolf Steinberg, photographs by Manfred Hamm, introductory essay by Robert Jungk, Sierra Club, 1983, 132 pp., illus., \$14.95 pb.

**M. Christine Boyer:**

## **THE AMERICAN CITY: FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE NEW DEAL**

GIORGIO CIUCCI, FRANCESCO  
DAL CO, MARIO MANIERI-ELIA,  
MANFREDO TAFURI

Since the first visit of European architectural critics to America, for the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876, the reaction of European architects and urbanists exposed to American cities has been one of continual astonishment. Returning home, these first visitors filled their journals with commentary and criticism, impressions of a young country that lacked mature aesthetic sensitivities. The anarchy of the American streetscapes revealed for them an ardently anti-urban philosophy. They marveled at the brashly self-confident American architect, who built on a colossal scale—as witness both the spectacular plans and forms of American



expositions and the great expense and outspokenly commercial character of the American skyscraper. There were other sources of amazement as well: the fact that proficiency in the mechanical arts was valued more highly than aesthetic sensitivity, the way secluded single-family suburbs naturally retreated from the evils of crowded tenement cores.

The reissue of *The American City*, a set of essays by four Italian historians and critics, in a relatively inexpensive format, revives these same impressions. Its particular value, in fact, is its presentation of the mirror image of American cities reflected in foreign eyes. Whereas the American urban historian tends to focus on practical issues, such as the functional requirements embedded in city plans, the professional interests of city planners, or the pragmatic forces of economics and politics impinging on them, the specific emphasis of this book is the urban context that prefigures spatial form and limits and contains the architectural object.

Manieri-Elia's essay studies two of the major forces that fundamentally influenced the form and plan of the early 20th-century American city: the architectural impact of the classical models seen at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, and the economic and political influences of American imperialism. Dal Co's essay examines the role that natural American scenery held as the metaphysical source of spiritual joy, physical health, and democratic values, and how this in turn influenced the creation of the American park and regional plans. Ciucci focuses on Frank Lloyd Wright, investigating the impact of his anti-urban and back-to-nature philosophy on the creation of his utopian town plans. A final essay by Tafuri celebrates the commercial skyscraper, calling it the "enchanted mountain" and finding it to be the only architectural object able to mediate between the

American love of nature and fear of metropolitan existence.

These foreign critics of the American city draw our attention forcefully to the severed dialogue between American architecture and American city planning. They show us our inherited tendency to view the building as an architectural object divorced from its urban context, and remind us that, in fact, the city is the context that provides architecture with its meaning. They tell us that both the architecture of the city and the city form are manufactured objects, and thus the focus of architectural criticism should be on the structural forces—the relationships between economic conditions, governmental institutions, regulatory laws and legal concepts, social and cultural customs, scientific statements, and moral proclamations that, along with architectural forms and city plans, generate this architectural situation.

The rift between architects and city planners has had deep consequences for the form of the American city. During most of the 20th century, architects erected buildings with little relationship to the urban streetscapes, or to the ornamental façades of adjacent buildings. These new structures were free-floating forms, often leaping over established street patterns, set apart in their own open plazas. City planners, intent on securing control over the city through legislative reforms and governmental processes, turned their backs on the physical appearance of the cities. In this void, preservationists struggled to save the remnants of the 19th-century city from both architects and planners. Their efforts, however, have gone mostly toward salvaging structures that were stereotypical, or focuses of nostalgia. The more important dialectic between permanence and change—the overlaying of traditional forms on emergent new shapes—has always been ignored. The debate this

book encourages, on the historical forces and constraints responsible for the demise of physical planning in our cities and our schools of architecture and planning, is long overdue.

*The American City: From the Civil War to the New Deal*, Giorgio Ciucci, Francesco Dal Co, Mario Manieri-Elia, and Manfredo Tafuri, translated by Barbara Luigia La Penta, MIT, 1983, 580 pp., illus, \$17.50 pb.

## M. Christine Boyer: ARCHITECTURE AND THE URBAN EXPERIENCE

RAYMOND J. CURRAN

The title of this book leads one to hope for an important debate on "contextualism," for new lessons on the unresolved tensions between revival movements, eclectic styles, and the pressures for historic preservation, on the one hand, and new building, new design theories and creative forces, on the other. Instead we are offered yet another populist methodology on how to make the city "supportive" for the people. The urban experience is proclaimed as "the collective experience of places and spaces conceived for the linkage between people and for social interaction." All this is heavily documented with dark blurry photographs, cartoon-like drawings and diagrams, and a methodological vocabulary of visual forms used to evaluate numerous case studies. The inevitable conclusion is that the more the public domain resembles the medieval town plan, the more successful it will be.

Our current attempts to revitalize historic city centers and main streets, and to develop village-like residential



areas, have produced many sites which serially replicate each other from Boston, Massachusetts, to Oxford, England; these sites seem intentionally to eradicate any meaning from the sense of place. Too many historic centers have become elaborate stage sets, perhaps supportive of the perennial tourist, but devoid of authenticity. In the end we must ask the urban designer—currently so intent on defining those qualities of urban form which will subsequently be of use in reorganizing and managing selected parts of the city—to consider instead the distinction between the sense of place and the meaning of site. Shouldn't the sense of place evoke a common imaginative response that is unique and non-replicable—a memorable illusion? Is not site, on the other hand, generalizable, replaceable in the abstract, a space to be managed and supervised, but not capable of producing an authentic experience? These are serious problems, and ones which this book fails entirely to address.

Architecture and the Urban Experience, Raymond J. Curran, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, 221 pp., illus., \$32.95.

**Roger Montgomery:**

## OWNER OCCUPATION IN BRITAIN

STEPHEN MERRETT  
with FRED GRAY

This book so splendidly demythicizes the idea of owner-occupied housing that it should interest all those concerned with critical analysis of environmental sacred cows. Beyond that, however, the sober political-economic tenor of *Owner Occupation in Britain* makes it hard to tout to architects and their brethren.

In this volume Stephen Merrett con-

cludes an analysis begun earlier in *State Housing in Britain* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979). Together these two books document and analyze the startling transformation in housing tenure between 1914 and the present throughout England, Scotland, and Wales. Seventy years ago only one household in ten owned the dwelling in which they lived; the rest rented from private landlords. Today about half own their homes, about half of the remainder live in public housing, while the private rental sector is rapidly disappearing.

Merrett's newest book opens with a quick historical account of this transformation, followed by a wide-ranging, often technically pathbreaking account of the present owner-occupied sector of the British housing economy. For instance, his treatment of home finance under the category of effective demand is unprecedented (but logical: mortgages are after all the manner in which demand is made effective). Coauthor Fred Gray adds key chapters on market institutions and their behavior, and Merrett concludes with a look at current contradictions in the system and a set of recommendations for maintaining a more equitable home ownership policy in his hoped-for socialist future.

For designers perhaps the meat of the book lies near the end, in Fred Gray's chapter, "Owner Occupation and Social Relations." Here the junior author, picking up a theme put forth earlier in the book by Merrett, decries the "fetishism" of most mainstream views of homeownership, views which make this tenure somehow responsible for the social behavior of individuals, and of societies in which it occurs. Gray distinguishes three versions of the fetish. The first he calls the status quo view, as captured perfectly in a 1920 *London Times* quote of Neville Chamberlain, then Tory Minister of Health: "... every spadeful of manure dug in,

every fruit tree planted converted a potential revolutionary into a citizen." The second view Gray assigns to Marxist urban political economists, who take the same view of the effects of home ownership as those who subscribe to the status quo view, but with the values reversed. Marxists decry homeownership because it "fragments the working class and [gives] the individual workers a stake in the [capitalist] system." Finally, the third, or, in Gray's lexicon, Weberian view (after sociology pioneer Max Weber), holds that different housing tenures provide the material base for stratifying people into housing-defined social classes.

Gray carefully demolishes these three views, citing empirical studies that show homeowners can rise up against the status quo; that, contrary to Marxist theory, homeowners are often more active in social movements than renters; and, finally, that substantial empirical evidence shows that the Weberian view puts undue emphasis on the economic value of property in establishing behavior patterns.

Gray and Merrett argue that particular historic conditions having to do with opportunities for maximizing housing quality at certain junctures in time and space lead to high levels of homeownership. It does not result from deep-seated drives or needs, nor does the fact of homeownership determine the structure of needs and social relations. Both elites and proletarians can be homeowners at particular junctures. The British class structure has in the last two or three generations survived the shift to homeownership, a shift that has come as a result of incremental changes in the housing economy, largely independent of ideological or cultural forces. This conclusion runs counter to accepted architectural theory, which makes deterministic ties between dwelling and culture. The skepticism Merrett evokes, with Gray's



invaluable help, ought to be good medicine for myth-prone environmental designers, if they will but wade through this political economy of housing.

*Owner Occupation In Britain*, Stephen Merrett with Fred Gray, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982, xvii + 392 pp., \$35.00.

Andrejs Skaburskis:

## THE POLITICS OF CANADIAN AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT

ELLIOT J. FELDMAN and  
JEROME MILCH

This book, a comparative study of three airport planning and development ventures, examines the relationship between the Canadian federal government and its citizens, and between the federal and provincial governments themselves. It also assesses the federal government's ability to enunciate and efficiently pursue a coherent policy.

The starting point is a brief history of airport development in Canada, from which the authors proceed to case studies of the three projects in question: Mirabelle airport, built on an assembled land mass twice the size of the city of Montreal; Ontario's abortive New Toronto Airport, which was to have been built on expropriated land valued by the local equestrian crowd and neighboring gentlemen farmers; and the indefinitely postponed plan to add a runway to Vancouver airport (a project requiring infill in an estuary, which would have imperiled salmon breeding grounds and upset the owners of the million dollar homes overlooking the water).

These case studies show the Canadian federal government to be unfair to

its citizens both in accepting their participation in decisions, and in compensating them for expropriated land. Interagency conflicts seem to prevent the federal government from developing and clearly articulating consistent policy on infrastructure development projects, and Ottawa comes across as opportunistic in its dealings with the provincial governments. Canadian citizens, it is clear, have good cause to be suspicious of the federal government's abilities and intentions. In its inability to plan rationally and equitably, Feldman and Milch suggest, the federal government has become a non-cultural factor contributing to Canadian disunity.

The thoroughness of their research makes Feldman and Milch's book a valuable one for readers with an interest in Canadian affairs. But it has a more general value, as well, in providing a rich set of illustrations of the theoretical issues of planning. Airport planning involves assessment of the demand and the need for public facilities. This raises a series of attendant issues: setting technical standards and balancing them against broader societal goals; recognizing the legitimate and the insidious imperatives of technology and technical agreement; reconciling the politicians' objectives with the rational planning process; balancing the citizen's right to participate and contribute to decisions against the broader public interest; defining the public interest; bounding open systems; avoiding bureaucratic failures, and establishing comprehensive planning processes that reconcile conflicting objectives.

The book does not deal with planning or political theory as such, nor does it develop theory or even attempt to structure the case studies along lines that would best illustrate the theory. Feldman and Milch conclude that:

[the] Canadian federal government had countless choices at every phase

of these projects and with remarkable consistency chose the most offending tactics and strategies. Yet even as federal officials proved they could be mean, their behaviour derived more from the structure of government than from the spirit of the governors. Both, of course, could benefit from honest reflection.

But they do not convincingly demonstrate that the problems they describe are due to the structure of the government. Nor do they even develop specific recommendations as to the steps to be taken to avoid future problems. The main normative conditions regarding citizen participation, interagency conflict, and intergovernmental relations have to be developed by the reader, although this is not that difficult once one has read the case studies.

Honest, consistent, comprehensive, rational planning processes would surely advance the public interest. This book provides material for "honest reflection," as the authors put it, which can yield nothing but future benefits.

*The Politics of Canadian Airport Development: Lessons in Federalism*, Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch, Duke University Press, 1983, 261 pp., \$28.50.



# John Rutherford: COASTAL DESIGN

ORRIN H. PILKEY, SR., *et al.*

Many of us dream of living at the water's edge, gazing at the line where sky meets sea, listening to the waves break and hiss on the sloping margins of the land. Blue-skied, sandy-beached vacation resorts are advertised in the newspapers; television ads feature attractive young women prancing in the surf. The authors of *Coastal Design* claim that their intent is not to discourage these fantasies, but their dominant theme is nonetheless bad news for those who dream of a home on the shore. Those lovely white-maned waves can reach out and snatch away our beach dwelling. Gentle sea breezes can overnight turn into a hurricane that rips off our roof. The face of that massive sea cliff may one day slide into the water, carrying with it our home. The authors estimate that between 1900 and 1982 major hurricanes alone have caused at least 12,927 deaths and at least \$12.9 billion worth of damage in the continental United States. As taxpayers, we are encouraging loss of life and paying a major share of the bill for property loss by our short-sighted subsidy of coastal development. Clearly, the subject addressed by *Coastal Design* deserves close attention.

The book is written for would-be coastal developers and potential purchasers, builders, and renters of residences on or near the beach. It is announced as the introductory volume of a series of books entitled *Living with the Shore*, with a volume for each of the coastal states. Considering the infinite variety of coastal conditions, the authors are wise to narrow the geographical area as much as possible. Dwellers along the northern California coast are witnessing a struggle between a rising ocean and a coastal land mass pushed upward in many places by the Pacific Plate, awaiting in the meantime the earthquake that may ruin their homes long before the ocean wets their feet. If prophets of the "Greenhouse Effect" prove correct, dwellers in the southern flatlands will be fleeing inland within twenty years, as the ocean wells with glacial melt water—if a hurricane doesn't get them first. An introductory volume to coastal design must therefore deal in generalities and avoid specific remedies which may not be appropriate for all areas along our thousands of miles of



WAVES HITTING AQUARIUM PROJECT, FEBRUARY 1983. (MBA PHOTO: KATHLEEN E. OLSON)

shoreline. God, after all, is in the details, particularly in coastal design, and the layman can easily be misled.

On the whole, the authors keep to the straight and narrow. They describe the dynamic forces shaping the coast—wind and water—and list the problems of siting a home in this ever-changing environment. There are chapters on building a beach house, buying an older beach home, placing a mobile home in a beachfront park, inspecting highrise coastal buildings, studying coastline retreat, and preparing for storms, as well as an excellent concluding chapter on the politics of coastside development and the National Flood Insurance Program, well worth the design professional's perusal. The general problems of shifting sands, sliding bluffs, rising waters, battering storm waves, hurricane tsunamis and floods are addressed in competent and often admirable fashion.

There are a few points missing, however, and two or three false notes. Except for some comments scattered within the text, the book does not address the pervasive, relentless, and



destructive phenomenon of saltwater and salt air corrosion, which may well cost more in maintenance and repair than all the coastal catastrophes in history. Even the residence that is reasonably secure from wind and wave may fail when a few bolts are destroyed by rust or a vital metal strap disintegrates from atmospheric corrosion. The word corrosion does not appear in the index, yet in a treatise on coastal design this topic deserves a full chapter. The book also contains a few details which engineers might find heretical. These fall into two categories: misleading illustrations which require editing, and specific details which in actuality can be applied to only a very limited range of real conditions.

An example of a misleading illustration is the detail (figure 1) used to illustrate an overturning condition, where the wall anchor shown may be in tension. The masonry units appear to be standard 4" by 8" concrete block, giving an anchor embedment of less than eight inches. Current code requirements, shown in figure 2, call for thirty bar diameters embedment, or over eleven inches for the minimum permitted size of deformed reinforcing bars. Sixty diameters of embedment would be required to develop the full allowable tensile capacity of the bar. The authors understand this, of course. Elsewhere in the book details for similar conditions are properly drawn.

Figure 3, an example of a detail which appears in the book, but which would be poor practice in many locations, is used to illustrate one type of shallow foundation for a wood

post supported residence. In this detail, the end of a wood post, presumably preservative-treated, rests directly on earth, with concrete backfill poured around it. Such a procedure would expose the highly vulnerable end grain of the post to decay, in many soil conditions, and should be used, if ever, with extreme caution. The detail shown in figure 4 represents an alternative attempt to mitigate potential wood decay by completely enclosing the post in concrete. Caulking is provided to check entrance of water into the crack created between wood and concrete due to inevitable wood shrinkage, and the top of the concrete pier is raised above the surrounding earth and sloped to minimize contact of wood with both earth and concrete. Even this detail can cause trouble in many locations.

Fortunately, such lapses are few. The book has a healthy approach to coastal design and should be read by every layman tempted by the mermaids singing, each to each. For those who cannot plug their ears against the sirens' song and insist on living at land's edge, *Coastal Design* has generally sound advice: choose the site of your possible folly with care; and, when and if the ocean forecloses on your property, don't ask the rest of us to bail you out.

*Coastal Design: A Guide for Builders, Planners, and Home Owners*, Orrin H. Pilkey, Sr., Walter D. Pilkey, Orrin H. Pilkey, Jr., and William J. Neal, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, 224 pp., illus., \$25.50.

FIGURE 1

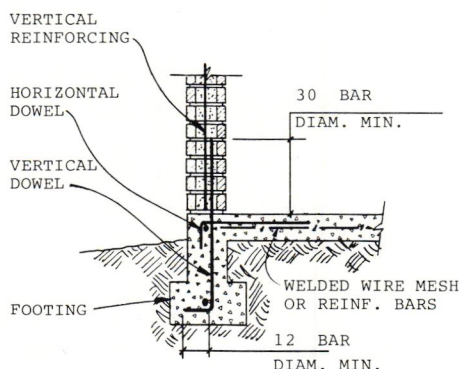
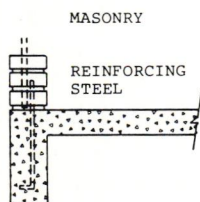


FIGURE 2

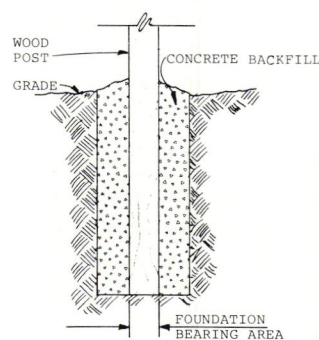


FIGURE 3

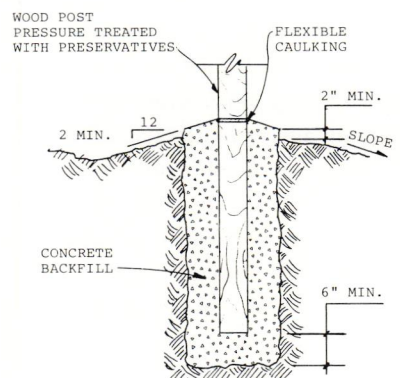


FIGURE 4



# Harvey Bryan:

## DAYLIGHTING

Daylight has traditionally been integral to the design of the vast majority of our buildings. Candles, kerosene, and gas lamps were used only at night, and their lighting quality was very poor. Buildings thus tended to be narrow, with high ceilings and large windows to take the best advantage of daylight. With the development of artificial lighting and sophisticated HVAC systems, deep bay building form appeared, and for the first time daylight was neglected as a source of illumination during the daylight hours. Today, with our renewed interest in pre-Modernist origins of building form, and our concern for energy conservation, daylighting is being "rediscovered" as an important criterion in building design. The three books reviewed here exemplify the field: they run the gamut from the timeless to the opportunistic.

*Daylighting*, written by three of the most prominent individuals in the field, combines the theoretical and technical aspects of the subject under one cover in the most comprehensive discussion that can be found in the literature. Much of the material presented here is based on the work conducted over many years at Britain's much-acclaimed Building Research Establishment. Although published in 1966, it is still the preeminent reference, and the starting point for any serious student of daylighting.

The emphasis is on the qualitative aspects of daylighting design rather than on strict adherence to quantitative design standards. The authors begin by grounding the reader solidly in the

basic principles of daylighting. With this as a foundation, they present two methods used in successful daylighting design: the Daylight Factor Method, an internationally recommended measure for determining the quantity of daylight within a space; and the Glare Index, a qualitative measure of the degree of visual discomfort a design is likely to produce. The reader is taken step-by-step through a concise discussion of each, so as not to be overwhelmed. Presentation of both these methods together makes this book one of the few integrated approaches to daylighting design. The Daylight Factor Method is not only broken down by way of its three physical components (Sky Component, Internally Reflected Component, and Externally Reflected Component), but also in terms of the tools that best determine the daylight factor at each stage of the design process (e.g., diagrams, tables, graphs, and protractors).

The authors cover a number of other daylighting subjects: photometry, use of scale models, standards, use of daylighting in town planning and interior design, its integration with artificial lighting, and design for regions where sunny conditions predominate. Again, the treatment is not narrow; scale modeling, for instance, is presented not as just another means of obtaining physical measurements, but in a way that illustrates its potential for generating important qualitative information through subjective appraisal. Where the authors feel they have not treated a subject in adequate depth, extensive references are given for further inquiry.

The numerous tables and charts are well placed within the text, and an extensive glossary appears in the appendix. The final chapter includes several worked examples of the calculations presented in the text.

Overall this is a fine and creative contribution that collects much previously scattered information on daylighting into one coherent volume. The clear and complete discussion, with its emphasis on grasp of underlying principles, gives the subject a lucid quality and leaves the reader with an almost classic understanding of it. If the book has any shortcomings, they rest with its age, and its stress on understanding daylighting under the cloudy maritime conditions of northern Europe. A new edition or companion volume would be in order, one that would extend the range of this classic to climates where brighter skies prevail, and incorporate recent advances in the field—especially the interaction of daylighting design with the very important question of energy performance.

*Daylight in Architecture* is, by comparison, not a very ambitious undertaking for someone as uniquely qualified to write on the subject as Benjamin Evans. Although the reader would never guess from his casual treatment of so many technical issues, he helped prepare the excellent technical studies responsible for the attention paid to daylighting in the design of a whole generation of post-war Texas school buildings. Unlike the authors of *Daylighting*, who take on the technical questions in an engaging and lively manner, Evans



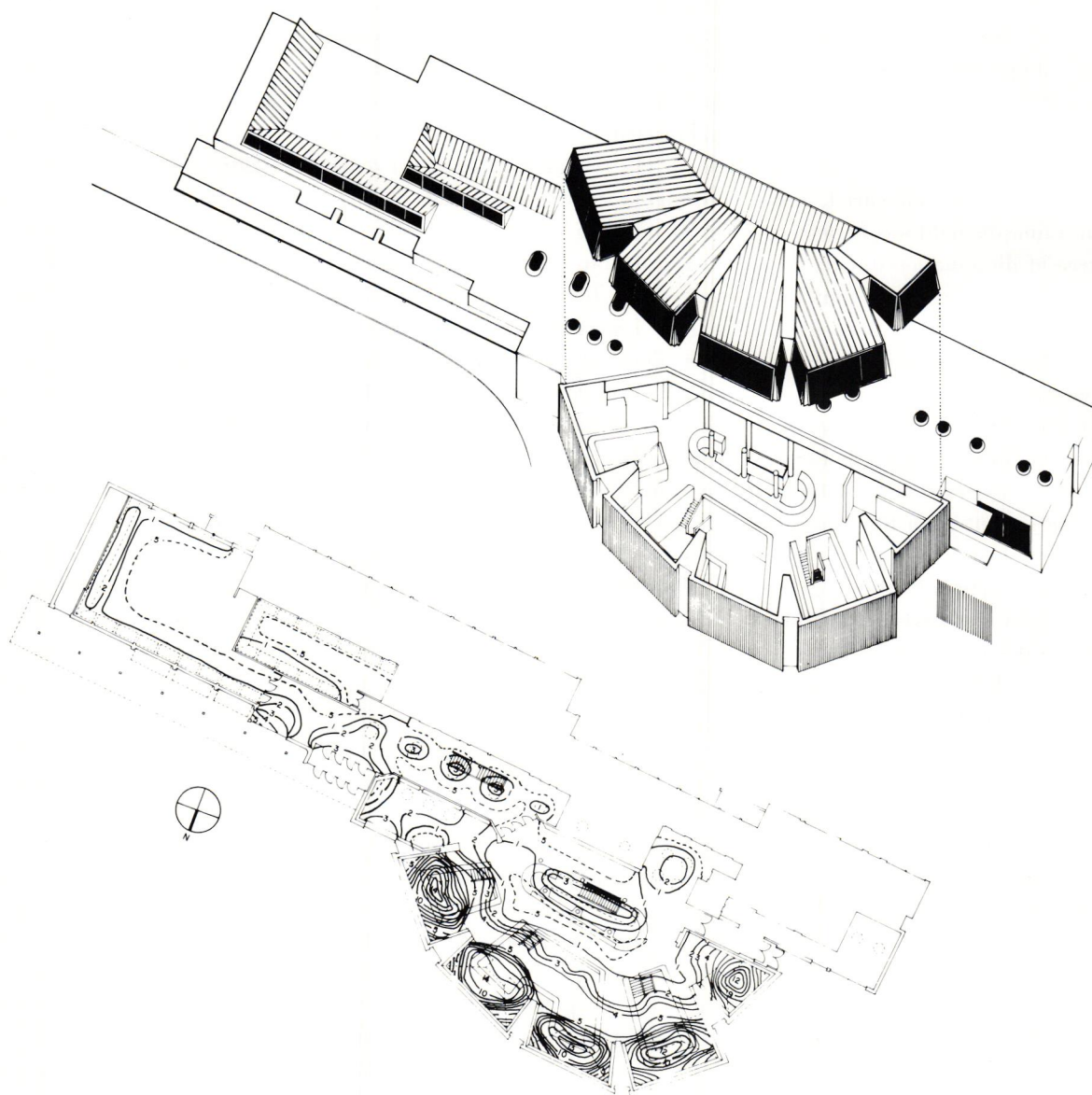
tends to avoid them as if he were afraid of losing his audience. His book is an excellent reminder of the risk an author runs of making his subject flaccid by patronizing the technical abilities of his readers.

The first part of Evans's book covers the whys and hows of daylighting design, while the second documents 18 case studies—a format reminiscent of the one adopted by William Lam in *Perception and Lighting as Formgivers for Architecture* (McGraw-Hill,

1977). Unfortunately he has not duplicated Lam's success. For instance, both authors begin by arguing for a perceptual rather than a cookbook approach to lighting design. Lam, however, builds his argument on some very lucid personal experiences, whereas Evans uses the work of others, which makes his case more detached and less convincing. As the book shifts to specifics, he presents a series of "rules of thumb" (many illustrated by freehand sketches) as to the behavior of daylight within a

space, and its relation to other design considerations. Most of these rules of thumb just do not carry the weight they should, because the author has failed to put the reader in possession of the principles underlying them. While the freehand sketches aid his presentation, they cannot overcome the soft foundation that Evans seems to have deliberately created.

The book is at its best in its discussion of scale modeling. Here, Evans not only argues the case for the use of





models, but also presents the subtleties of model-making, a survey of light-measuring equipment, a step-by-step procedure for model testing, and a discussion of how to properly photograph a scale model. He concludes with a case study of a model he built and tested himself for a client.

The enthusiasm Evans is able to muster for modeling quickly dissipates as he moves on to the cost-effectiveness of daylighting. Here the reader expects a disquisition on the much-heralded energy and cost savings associated with daylighting design, but is given instead seven pages of very general discussion, laced with references to several hard-to-find studies (three of the six references in this chapter are unpublished). Further problems arise when the reader attempts to follow the two related life cycle analysis examples that appear in the appendix, from which several figures are missing.

Of the 18 relatively short case studies, Evans was actually involved in the design of only three—as compared to the 55 case studies in Lam's book drawn from his own work. Evans's case study descriptions in general seem short on words (one has only 52) and long on pictures. By neglecting to discuss how daylighting issues were integrated into the design process in these examples, he misses an important opportunity to illustrate the theoretical material of the first section.

For the most part, Evans is content to explain the simplifications while avoiding the complexities of his subject. He is entertaining at times but, on the whole, his lack of courage shortchanges the reader, to whom daylighting and its application in architecture remain as opaque as ever.

*General Proceedings of the 1983 International Daylighting Conference*, is, like the conference itself (held last February in Phoenix), a remarkable undertaking. The conference or-

ganization in general, and the editor of the *Proceedings* in particular, have undertaken the ambitious task of synthesizing an enormous amount of information and have made a most noteworthy contribution to the field. The overall quality of the 83 papers in the *Proceedings* is extremely high; although they vary in the level of sophistication required of the reader, the vast majority can be understood by any well-informed designer with no previous knowledge of the field. The *Proceedings* is not only noteworthy for its contents, but for its contributors. Rarely do we find under one cover individuals representing research, education, architecture, and engineering, all sharing information and speaking more or less the same language, in an attempt to find a common ground. Gone are the protective barriers that frustrate interdisciplinary dialogue which the more established fields have created for themselves. These proceedings are in a strange way reminiscent of the spirit of the early EDRA (Environmental Design Research Association) conferences. The challenge for the next International Daylighting Conference, planned for 1985, will be to maintain this spirit.

One can piece together a nearly complete picture of what is going on in daylighting from the 13 topical headings of the *Proceedings*. The technically oriented reader will most likely find the headings of Resource Availability, Calculations, Instrumentation, and Energy Performance most interesting, while designers will enjoy "Design Tools," "Case Studies," "Physical Modeling," and "Occupant Response." In addition, the number of papers and scale of issues addressed gives a considerable diversity under each heading. "Case Studies" illustrates in considerable detail the application of daylighting in some dozen buildings (many actually built) which range in scale

from a small post office to a 600,000-square-foot high-tech office building. There is, in other words, something for everyone, presented so as neither to overwhelm the newcomer nor bore the expert.

One problem is, unfortunately, not initially apparent to the reader (although an errata was circulated at the conference). The *Proceedings* contains two different types of papers: the completed conference papers, and an extended abstract of manuscripts submitted to a special conference issue of the journal *Energy and Buildings*. One can sympathize with the conference organizers' desire to separate the general from the more technical papers, but the confusion created by their solution diminishes the importance the *Proceedings* should have had as a self-contained document appearing at or near the time of the conference. (The first special conference issue, in fact, as of this writing has yet to appear.)

In summary, the *Proceedings* is eminently readable and conveys the extraordinary excitement that now pervades the field of daylighting. It also serves as an excellent model for anyone planning a conference, or who wants to organize information as diverse as this into a coherent whole. It is, for the time being, that much-needed companion volume to *Daylighting*, and as such is essential for serious students of daylighting, as well as highly recommended for all designers.

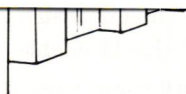
*Daylighting*, R. G. Hopkinson, P. Petherbridge, and J. Longmore, Heinemann, London, 1966, 606 pp., illus., £12.50 (\$26.00 in Cambridge, Mass.).

*Daylight in Architecture*, Benjamin H. Evans, McGraw-Hill, 1981, 204 pp., illus., \$29.95.

*General Proceedings of the 1983 International Daylighting Conference*, Thomas Vonnier, editor, AIA Service Corporation, 1983, 422 pp., illus., \$30.00.

material covered in the technical chapters, and a fine bibliography.

Saxon suggests that atria might be





## Christopher Arnold: TECHNICAL BOOKS

*Simplified Design of Structural Steel*, *Architectural and Engineering Calculations Manual*, and *Environmental Systems* are three good books on the technology of building which raise a number of questions: Who uses technical information, and how is it best presented? What level of detail is appropriate, what is the relationship of rules of thumb to research, and how does technology become dated?

To take the last point first, these three books are all to some extent dated—which is a matter of style, as opposed to being out of date in the sense of factually wrong or culturally irrelevant. An advantage of technology is that it does not date, the laws of physics, at the level of building design, not being subject to fashion. But the ways we present them are. Since we currently seem to regard useful information as boring, and most readers as unmotivated, textbooks have moved toward a chatty style, everyday examples in place of theory, and a lot of high-style graphics. For big-time subjects, such as astrophysics, the history of science, or the physiology of the body, the textbook has been superseded by master communicators like Bronowski, Sagan, or Miller, hosting phenomenally well-conceived, well-photographed, and well-produced television mini-series—which then form the basis for an expensively produced souvenir book.

*Simplified Design of Structural Steel*, by Harry Parker and James Ambrose, celebrates the days when those who picked up a textbook were thirsty for education. It cuts the cackle, and moves right in, with hard-hatted engineering directness, to the subject at hand. The book is like an engineering lecture of the thirties. And yet, supposing a reader who actually wants the

information in this book, there is much to be said for clear succinct description, and explanations that have been precision-honed through decades of experience.

Who is the audience for this? First and foremost, engineering and architectural students—it will enable them to put steel structures to rest, and to pass their state boards. Its use beyond that is limited. The design engineer will probably not refer to it; an architect with a particular affection for steel structures might use it as a reference for member sizes, connection concepts, and to recall structural formulae grown rusty from disuse. But for its purpose it is about as good as it could be; it has been around a long time, and will stay around: the use of computers does not eliminate the need to understand the basic principles of engineering mechanics.

Robert Butler's *Architectural and Engineering Calculations Manual* is also of a classic genre: the pocket manual of facts and figures, that gives little or no explanation, only formulae and procedures for all that is numerical in design. The genre has long been out of fashion; perhaps this fat little volume will revive it. It gives evidence of the extent to which design is still based on a body of accumulated and accepted wisdom that can be expressed with the precision of a mathematical formula. Researchers may quibble at the rules of thumb, but their job is to test and improve them, not sneer at their use.

Butler says in his introduction: "for small projects this volume may replace nearly all consultation with other professionals." I think this is true. He continues, "on large projects during the preliminary design phase, the examples given in this book may be used to clarify the nature of the architecture quickly and accurately. During design development, this book should enable the architect to comprehend more easily

his or her consultants' calculations and thereby expedite all phases of the work." Also true, and the last comment is a very good statement of the architect's relationship to his consultants.

This book assumes a solid level of knowledge, but provides all the formulae and reminders that we no longer carry in our heads. It gives all the familiar tips—structure, plumbing, heating, electrical illumination, acoustics. It is also very good on climate—sun, water, wind, earthquakes—and has a lot of useful and not too well-known design formulae. For example, the formula for the height of readable lettering for signage is  $H = \frac{D}{25}$  when H is the letter height and D is the distance of the pedestrian viewer from the sign. Each item is provided with an example, the language is clear, the graphics spare but always there when necessary. This is a great browsing book, and a reassuring one for the designer's desk or bedside. It gives a sense of how much we do know unequivocally about design.

*Environmental Systems*, by Henry Cowan and Peter Smith, is the most conventionally ingratiating, with a combination of simple writing, good graphics, and many photographs. Most of the buildings used as examples are Australian, but that only serves to emphasize the universality of the topic. This is primarily a textbook, but it can be read comfortably without the support of a class or a teacher: useful for architecture students approaching the state exam, and for practitioners who want to brush up on the environmental sciences.

Cowan and Smith do not deal with structure at all (except as it sometimes impinges on environmental issues), but their definition of environmental systems is commendably broad. They cover the traditional areas—water supply, thermal environment, HVAC, the luminous environment, daylight, arti-



ficial light, noise control, and acoustics. They also have a short, and good, historical introduction, and climate, as in the Butler book, is a major section. It is interesting how in these two books the whole issue of energy conservation has assumed a reasonable place among environmental design issues, instead of being promoted as the only significant problem. This book also covers fire, as well as—in a section called “People, Space, and Communications”—such topics as stairs and elevators, arrangements of services, conduits and ducts, anthropometry, accidents in the home, and wheelchair access. It has nothing, however, on the electronic environment and indoor pollution, the next two big environmental subjects.

This book comes out of the department of architectural science at the University of Sydney, and is well re-

searched. Research provides only the context, however; the information is down-to-earth and usable, and each chapter has a good, short bibliography. The graphics tend toward giant sketches of very simple things, but are for the most part helpful.

Metrification, a perennial problem in this type of book, is dealt with differently in each. Least satisfactory, for U.S. readers, is Cowan and Smith's use of S.I. units throughout, with a conversion table at the back to American. Academically okay, but rough on us backward Yanks. Fortunately there are surprisingly few places where this hurts, but the calculation of insulation values, based on material thicknesses, is useless to us in metric units. The Butler book, straightforwardly intended for day-to-day use, takes the opposite tack: all units are American, but

metric conversions are provided on the inside covers. The Parker/Ambrose book goes all the way, providing all measurements in both units. An exception, of course, has to be the extensive extracts from A.I.S.C. handbooks, providing properties of sections, so who knows what a W24 x 117 would be in millimeters and kilos?

All three books are designed to be used with a simple eight-digit calculator—or a slide rule, if you find one at an antique dealer's.

*Simplified Design of Structural Steel*, Harry Parker and James Ambrose, Wiley, 1983, 401 pp., illus., \$27.95.

*Architectural and Engineering Calculations Manual*, Robert Brown Butler, McGraw-Hill, 1984, 464 pp., illus., \$19.95.

*Environmental Systems*, Henry J. Cowan and Peter R. Smith, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, 240 pp., illus., cloth \$27.50; paper \$19.50.

## Kenneth D. Garrison: CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION MANUAL FOR THE DESIGN PROFESSIONS

ALAN N. CULBERTSON and  
DONALD E. KENNEY

The authors of this manual are an attorney who has been house counsel to a large international engineering firm, and an engineer and former contractor who is now a contract administrator with another large engineering firm. Their book:

. . . is intended as a manual for working construction contract administrators and as a primer for students in the design professions and public administration . . . related to contract administration.

To clarify further who their intended reader is, the authors go on to define a contract administrator as a “consulting engineer, architect, owner's project manager or project engineer, or even construction manager.” Perhaps the experienced will understand that, while all these titles may refer to a contract administrator, none imply that role. The vagueness of the definition may stem from the authors' having gained their experience in certain parts of the country, or from their association with larger engineering firms.

This lack of clarity is noted for the benefit of students who may use the manual as a primer. The student of architecture, under the illusion that the architect “controls” the destiny of the project, may be encouraged by this book to go on to commit the cardinal sin of architectural practice—getting involved in the means and methods of a project's construction. *A Manual for*

*Professional Contract Administrators in Construction* would have been a more appropriate title, and avoided this pitfall.

The preface further confuses the issue by stating that:

it is also clear that contract administrators are intelligent people who . . . presumably have the talents necessary to bring . . . projects to successful conclusions; others rely upon them to control those projects.

A contract administrator working under a traditional agreement with an owner is not normally in a position to “control” a project (construction managers are a possible exception). If an owner wants a point of control between himself and the contractor, he has to find someone to act in that specific capacity, under the terms of an agreement



which requires and allows this "control." Without making it clear that they have in mind this particular service, the authors proceed to discuss, clearly and in no little detail, the duties it entails.

In the section entitled "Establishment of Contract Controls" they deal with such topics as the division of responsibilities, the contract documents as mechanisms of control, and methods for reviewing and annotating the documents. Procedures for "controlling" the cost estimate, schedule, and payments to the contractor are also discussed. "Systemization" covers clarifications, modifications, claims, and change orders in a rather traditional manner, and prescribes systems for "control" of subcontractors, manufacturers, and vendors, as well as inventory, unit-price items, cost, and quality. That these latter are the particular responsibility of the contract administrator is not obvious; their being seen as such could bring him or her into conflict with the contractual responsibilities of the building contractor. "Monitoring of Controls" sets out the documentation needed to assure that these systematic controls work effectively.

Someone who is engaged as a contract administrator certainly needs a manual if he is not already aware of the procedures described here. And if the authors are correct that there is "no other book like it," then I suppose he needs this one. Architects and engineers performing traditional basic services during the construction phase of a project should also be aware of the situations discussed here. Given an understanding of the limitations of their role, they can also benefit from the advice it offers.

Contract Administration Manual for the Design Professions: How to Establish, Systematize, and Monitor Construction, Alan N. Culbertson and Donald E. Kenney, McGraw-Hill, 1983, 329 pp., illus., \$34.95.

Kenneth D. Garrison:

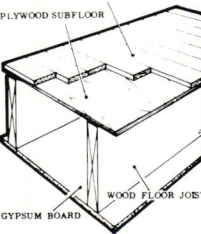
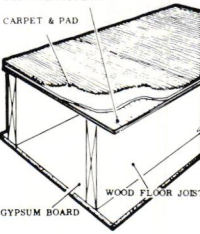
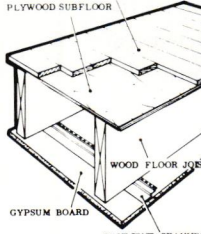
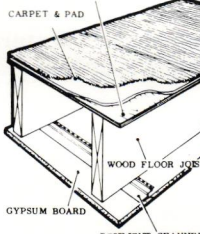
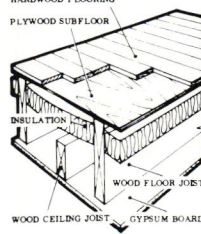
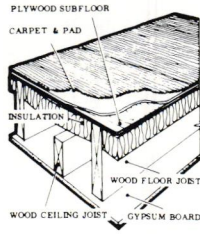
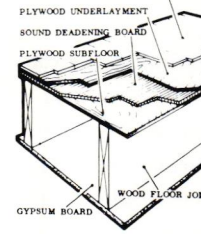
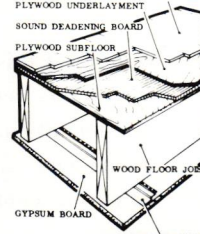
## CONSTRUCTION PRINCIPLES, MATERIALS & METHODS

HAROLD B. OLIN, JOHN L. SCHMIDT, and WALTER H. LEWIS

The introduction to this substantial book states that it "is the result of more than 19 years of research and editorial effort costing several million dollars." The contents bear this out.

The book's 1,300-odd pages and 48 topical sections are organized to allow the reader to find specific information easily, and to provide it in more or less detail, depending on his interest. Each section has a "main text" and a "work

### FLOOR/CEILING SYSTEMS

Hard Surface Flooring <sup>2</sup>	Carpeting	Hard Surface Flooring <sup>3</sup> Resilient Ceiling	Carpeting Resilient Ceiling
<b>STC 38 to 42</b> (No Ceiling STC 25) 	<b>STC 38 to 42</b> 	<b>STC 46 to 51</b> 	<b>STC 46 to 48</b> 
<b>INR -19 to -16 IIC 32 to 35</b> (No Ceiling) <b>INR -28 IIC 23</b>	Carpet Only <b>INR -10 to -9 IIC 41 to 42</b> Lightweight Carpet & Pad <sup>4</sup> <b>INR -5 IIC 46</b> Standard Carpet & Pad <sup>5</sup> <b>INR +8 to +10 IIC 59 to 61</b>	With insulation <sup>6</sup> <b>INR -13 to -9 IIC 38 to 42</b> Vinyl Flooring <b>INR -5 to -3 IIC 46 to 48</b> Wood Block Flooring <b>INR -1 IIC 50</b>	With insulation <sup>6</sup> <b>INR +15 to +16 IIC 66 to 67</b> Lightweight Carpet & Pad <sup>4</sup> <b>INR +7 IIC 58</b> Standard Carpet & Pad <sup>5</sup> <b>INR +18 to +20 IIC 69 to 71</b>
Hard Surface Flooring <sup>2</sup> Separate Ceiling Joists	Carpeting <sup>5</sup> Separate Ceiling Joists	Floated Hard Surface Flooring <sup>3</sup>	Floated Hard Surface Flooring <sup>3</sup> , Resilient Ceiling
<b>STC 50 to 53</b> 	<b>STC 51</b> 	<b>STC 46</b> 	<b>STC 50 to 52</b> With insulation <sup>6</sup> <b>STC 51 to 53</b> 
With insulation <sup>6</sup> <b>INR -6 to -2 IIC 45 to 49</b>	With insulation <sup>6</sup> <b>INR +29 IIC 80</b>	<b>INR -13 IIC 38</b>	<b>INR -3 to -2 IIC 48 to 49</b> With insulation <sup>6</sup> <b>INR +1 to +2 IIC 52 to 53</b>

1. INR values are based on tests performed in accordance with ISO Recommendation R-140, "Field and Laboratory Measurements of Airborne and Impact Sound Transmission," January, 1960. IIC values approximated by adding 51 to original INR test values.

2. Ranges include value for 1/2" and 3/4" thicknesses of gypsum board finish.

3. Hard surface finish flooring i.e., stripwood, wood block, vinyl and vinyl asbestos; generally perform similarly in isolating impact sound. Unless otherwise indicated, ranges given include values for construction with any typical hard surface finish flooring.

4. Lightweight carpet and pad having pile weights of 20 oz. per sq. yd. and 28 oz. per sq. yd. respectively.

5. Standard weight carpet and pad having pile weights of 44 oz. per sq. yd. and 40 oz. per sq. yd. respectively. Ratings shown are based on standard weight combinations unless otherwise noted.

6. A minimum thickness of 2" to 3" of insulation can be used effectively as performance does not increase with increased thickness in floor/ceiling systems.

7. Ratings vary with thickness of concrete slabs. The low end of the range indicates value for 6" thickness; high end, 8" thickness.



file" on the same subject, and the book is voluminous in part because of the redundancy of this approach. Once the reader is used to the dual format, however, it works quite well.

The book joins John Callender's long-established text, *Time Saver Standards* (McGraw-Hill), and the earlier *Architectural Graphic Standards* (Wiley) as college-level course material in architecture and building technology. The three books are complementary, this one going beyond the other two in treating the theoretical aspects of construction. These discussions comprise the "main text" in each section, and provide a compendium of the physical characteristics, chemical struc-

ture, manufacturing principles, selection criteria, and, in some instances, the effect on human life of particular building products and processes.

The "work files" provide a further summary of the topic, with accompanying tables and diagrams useful for understanding and dealing with construction problems. Included are moisture control, heat and sound control, building products, methods and systems, passive heating and cooling, barrier-free design, codes, and metrication, among other topics. There is also a description of industry standards, brief enough to encourage reading, and adequate for a better understanding of those innocuous references reiterated in

construction specifications.

*Construction Principles, Materials & Methods* is not really a "how-to" book. It addresses itself to those who determine, rather than perform, the various activities of building. Anyone with an interest in the design and construction of buildings is likely to find it of value, if only for casual browsing or for data on why and how certain operations are performed in the building process.

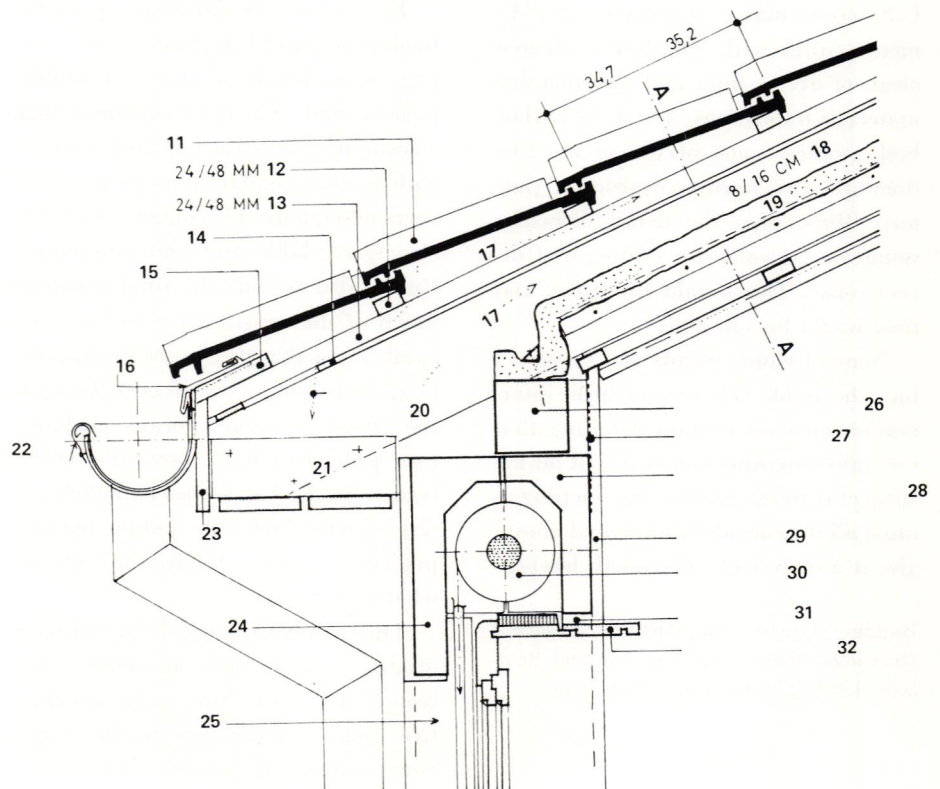
*Construction Principles, Materials & Methods*, Harold B. Olin, John L. Schmidt, and Walter H. Lewis, Institute of Financial Education/Caroline House, Inc., Aurora, Illinois, 1983, 1,300 pp. (approx.), illus., \$59.95.

## Fred A. Stitt: BUILDING CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

HANS BANZ

There's less than meets the eye in this paperback collection of outline construction details. The basic idea looks good: outline details deliberately left somewhat unfinished so they can be copied and completed to meet special case design detail needs. Unfortunately, although the book looks to be full of potentially useful information when you browse through it at the bookstore, only about twenty percent of it turns out to have much value.

The first chapters, which deal with perspective and geometrical forms, either duplicate what's already widely available (as in *Graphic Standards*) or have no discernable use at all. The chapters that follow—foundations through wall construction through



PANTILE ROOFING, EAVES DETAILS



roofing—are extremely mixed, although still the most useful part of the book. Most of what is shown does not match U.S. construction. Some of the stair outlines, window frames, and door frames are useful as drafting guides, and some of the roofing, drain, and gutter details are as good or better than those to be found in books published here. The outline cabinet details are pretty complete and directly usable, and there are lists of keynotes on every detail page which are fairly comprehensive. However, the European elements are ubiquitous, and make even the best pages worth far less than they would be if the book had been designed to U.S. construction standards. Novice drafters using this book would have to be warned that some of the terminology—“dragon beam,” “dilatation sheet,” “lip timber with cocking”—just won’t go over in U.S. working drawings. And all the dimensioning is metric.

If this book had been published to U.S. construction standards and dimensioning, with the details drawn clean of arrow lines and questionable materials indications, and if the author had avoided some of the overly fine linework and hard-to-reproduce pattern films, then the detail drawings would be copyable for editing and direct reuse. *That* would save time, and *that* would be valuable.

None of which means you shouldn’t buy the book. There’s so little information on construction detailing that virtually anything you can find on the subject is worth getting. So, keeping in mind all the considerations cited above, give it a close look. It’s worth having.

**Building Construction Details: Practical Drawings**, Hans Banz, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, 272 pp., illus., \$14.95 pb.

**Fred A. Stitt:**

## **BEST OF ARCHITECTS’ WORKING DETAILS**

COLIN BOYNE and  
LANCE WRIGHT, editors

When I first looked through the two volumes of this set, I couldn’t understand why so many of the designs and details had such a strangely antiquated appearance. The reason came to light in the explanatory text on the back cover: this particular collection of details is taken from a fifteen-volume series published in Great Britain between 1953 and 1971. The details do not look dated simply because they are British, but because they are, in fact, as much as thirty years old. The original detail books were called *Architects’ Working Drawings*; these two volumes purport to be the “best” of the old collection, hence their dubious title.

Each detail or detail group in the book is displayed in photographic context on the left-hand side of a double-page spread. The construction is then shown in scale drawing and notation with various combinations of plan and vertical sections. This makes the details clearly readable and understandable. But it also reveals the final result of much of the construction to be so visually tacky that the reader would avoid many of the details at all cost. Imagine the standard contemporary architecture published in *Progressive Architecture* in the late forties and early fifties—particularly the public housing projects—and you’ll have some idea of what to expect.

The details vary widely in technical quality. Some—such as those taken from Neutra and Mies—are informative. Some information on the simple construction of louvers, handrails, gates, and outdoor seating is worth filing away in your reference file. But

much of the construction shown is totally inapplicable to U.S. practice, due to the extreme differences in building procedures between the two countries—differences which are in many cases exaggerated by the relative age of the details.

These volumes could best be used as “tear out” books. Peruse them, tear out the potentially useful pages, and file them as reference details. Although not particularly good as detail books, they do have a saving grace or two: the details are drawn at actual scale, which expedites direct adaption of those that are worth using, and the great majority are in English measurements instead of metric.

**Best of Architects’ Working Drawings** (Volume One: External; Volume Two: Internal), edited by Colin Boyne and Lance Wright, Nichols, 1982, 239 pp. and 200 pp., illus., \$35.00 each, pb.

**Betty Bird:**

## **THE RESTORATION MANUAL**

ORIN M. BULLOCK, JR.

*The Restoration Manual* by Orin M. Bullock, Jr., was an invaluable tool when it was originally published in 1966. While it may still be helpful to some, the newly published paperback edition offers more insight into architectural preservation in the mid-1960s than practical guidance for rehabilitating buildings today. No attempt has been made to revise *The Restoration Manual*. The information it presents on building restoration technology is particularly dated and should be read with caution.

As the title denotes, this is a restoration, not a preservation or rehabili-





TAVERN GUEST HOUSE, APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK. RESTORED TO CIVIL WAR PERIOD RATHER THAN PRESERVED AS IT WAS WHEN BUILT, CIRCA 1819.



tation manual. In his introduction Bullock defines restoration as follows:

Restoration, used architecturally, means putting back as nearly as possible into the form it held at a particular date or period in time. Its accomplishment often requires the removal of work which is not "of the period." The value of a restoration is measured by its authenticity.

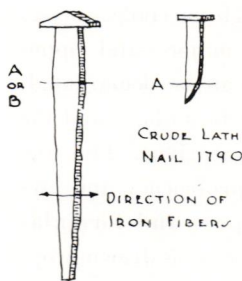
Bullock adheres to this definition in explaining methodology used to approach historic buildings. His manual covers the architect's role in a restoration project; the development of restoration programs for historic buildings; the selection of the date to which the building is to be restored; historical, archeological, and architectural research; the execution of the restoration; and the development of on-going maintenance programs for restored buildings. The appendix includes brief articles, by other professionals in the field, on architectural photogrammetry, measured drawings, photographic documentation, climate control, and masonry restoration. The manual also provides a bibliography and a reproduction of an 1853 British glossary of architectural terms.

Although *The Restoration Manual* was written for architects, its chief audience today may be students of ar-

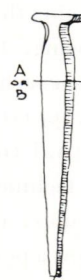
chitecture, history, and preservation. It should be of particular interest to those wanting to learn more about restoration as an occupational option within the preservation field. Furthermore, *The Restoration Manual* re-

minds us of how far preservation has come in the last twenty years. Bullock addresses his book to architects entrusted with the restoration of historically significant buildings on the order of Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

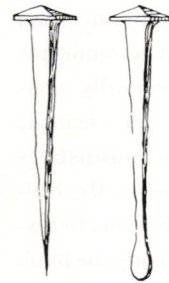
HANDMADE HEAD/  
1790✓ TO 1820✓



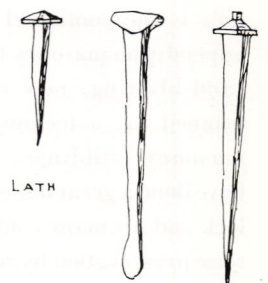
MACHINE HEAD  
1850-1830



ROSE HEAD✓

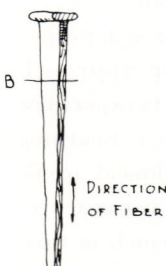


"T" HEAD (CAST)

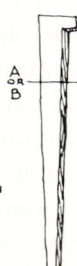


FINE DRAWN FLAT

MODERN  
FROM 1820s



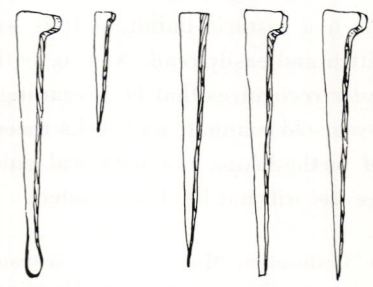
CUT SPRIG  
AFTER 1810



"PERKINS NAIL"  
c 1799



"L" HEAD✓ OR SPRIG✓



TRIM NAILS.

FLOORING NAILS.



The clients for such projects include museums, historical societies, and the government, for whom restoration was once approached as a cost-plus endeavor. Since 1966, when the book was first published, rehabilitation has become more widespread than restoration as a technique for preserving old buildings. Legislation like the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 has affirmed the value of our architectural heritage. Interest among the general public has grown, and architecture schools now teach both history and preservation courses. Manuals like Bullock's are thus not the essential source of information that they once were.

*The Restoration Manual* suffers greatly from being reissued without editing. Preservation technology has made great advances as concern with preservation has increased. Unfortunately, *The Restoration Manual* offers no mention of newer techniques such as dendrochronology for dating and non-destructive testing for reading architectural fabric. Particularly inexcusable is the continued inclusion of an appendix on masonry that recommends sand-blasting, now universally condemned, as a technique for cleaning masonry buildings. The publishers have done a great disservice to Mr. Bullock and his many contributions to historic preservation by releasing the book in this form.

Despite these problems, *The Restoration Manual* is still as useful as ever in teaching architects how to approach a historic building. It is well written and easily read. As long as the reader recognizes that he is reading a 17-year-old manual, and seeks theory and methodology, not technical guidance, he will not be disappointed.

*The Restoration Manual: An Illustrated Guide to the Preservation of Old Buildings*, Orin M. Bullock, Jr., Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, 182 pp., illus., \$10.25 pb.

Ralf Weber:

## DRAWING AND PERCEIVING

DOUGLAS COOPER  
WITH RAYMOND MALL

## DRAWING AND MODELMAKING

ALEXANDER RATENSKY

The average architecture department library is blessed with at least two yards of books on drawing and the teaching of drawing, and every year new authors offer the architectural educator more advice on the subject. The reason for this may be twofold: all previous approaches are apparently considered failures, being incomplete in some way, so that the time is (always) ripe to present a better approach; and drawing must seem an easy enough topic to earn some points for the academic merit race.

Browsing through the endless books on drawing, two major—and opposite—approaches can be demarcated: the conceptual (or formulaic) and the perceptual (or creative). The one teaches technical proficiency and lays down rules, recipes, and formulas about how a perspective is drawn properly, how a shadow is cast, how fat a line has to be, and how a word is lettered and spaced neatly. Usually this kind of book also tells us what a tree (or a person, or a car) should look like, and how to achieve this through proper line weight. The other approach stresses drawing as a way to experience our world more consciously. Learning to see brings about technical proficiency in a natural way, because seeing facilitates drawing, which in turn invigorates seeing. Imagination is stressed in this approach, because drawing and imagining also stimulate

each other.

Two new books, each at first glance representative of one of these approaches, have recently been published: Douglas Cooper's *Drawing and Perceiving*, and Alexander Ratensky's *Drawing and Modelmaking*.

Cooper's book at first appears to be an example of the creative school. It consists of a series of exercises from his drawing course at Carnegie-Mellon, starting with several ways to analyze and understand the shapes of the visual world, investigating solid and void, movement, deep and shallow, the shape of the air within and between solids. Similar in approach to Kimon Nicolaidis's *The Natural Way to Draw* (Houghton Mifflin, 1975), these exercises stress contour and gesture drawing, to enable the student to loosen up, get rid of the deadwood of previously acquired drawing conventions, and concentrate on the dynamic activity of the objects perceived, rather than on their "exact" representation.

The aim of these first chapters is to awaken the student's visual sensitivity—to make him aware of the curvature and cubature of the things of the visual world through contour drawing and keen observation. This is echoed in the third part of the book, in which surface, texture, material, light, and shadow are analyzed in a sensible way through various exercises. But the middle section, "the projection of the visual world," seems to be at odds with this objective.

The sterile, mechanical drawings in this section look like eclectic illustrations from the 19th century (indeed, Cooper uses as a source *The Complete Encyclopedia of Illustration*). Plan, elevation, paraline drawing, and perspective are explained with illustrations of pseudo-classicist or Renaissance interiors, in which one finds meticulously drawn dissected bell pep-



pers, or a box of Tide or Brillo, all being observed by the frontal portion of a somewhat enigmatic face, anchored either to the ceiling or to one of the walls. These drawings have become so engulfed in a style of rendering that they have lost the necessary clarity to communicate perspective to a beginner. A student needs more than just an explanation of technical terms and an introduction to the various methods. To know why a perspective looks small or distorted, the student has to understand how the picture plane, station point, and cone of vision work together, and how changing these variables affects the resulting drawing. Cooper's text is insufficient in this respect, and will be difficult for anyone without a background in perspective to comprehend. Cooper also discusses methods of drawing the world as if through Escher's eyes, to create distortions, and curved and split projections. The usefulness of this material for an introductory course in drawing is doubtful, and its inclusion underscores the book's unevenness.

In general, this book is a good visual resource, not overloaded with text. To the extent that it addresses the teacher, it would be more useful if it explained the exercises more specifically, rather than simply presenting the results.

Ratensky's book, *Drawing and Modelmaking*, deals with "tricks of the trade." In his introduction, Ratensky calls architecture an apprenticeship profession, and the book addresses the drawing skills necessary for survival in an architecture office. Basic drawing tools are introduced and their uses explained, and conventions for architectural rendering shown. One learns how to crosshatch a site plan and to place dimensions correctly. The paraline and perspective discussions are less pretentiously illustrated than Cooper's, and easier to comprehend. Modelmaking,

unfortunately, occupies only ten percent of the book, and only a few basic tricks are explained.

The book is a well structured and sufficient source for its audience (i.e., draftsmen). It is also definitely a formula book—a book which teaches how to do something, and suggests that there are "right" ways to draw, to represent the visual world. The danger here is that the student can come to perceive (and design) the world through the lens of a particular drawing style. As Nietzsche said (in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*), "What does he like? He likes what he can draw!" And he designs what he can draw, as well.

There is an opposing conviction, shared by some of the great drawing teachers, that technical proficiency will naturally result when drawing is understood as a process of discovery, of having—and testing—an idea about something, rather than simply turning to ready-made solutions. This is not to say that we can approach drawing with an innocent eye. As Ernst Gombrich has argued convincingly in *Art and Illusion* (Princeton, 1961), we have to acquire a stock of basic schemata, formulas of representation, to produce a likeness of reality. These may come from drawings we have seen or grow out of our own work, through trial and error.

Two classics of drawing—Nicolaides's *The Natural Way to Draw* and Chaet's *The Art of Drawing* (Holt Rinehart Winston, 1978)—still seem to be the most helpful sources for a sensitive and creative approach to introduce the beginner to the world of visual representation.

*Drawing and Perceiving*, Douglas Cooper with Raymond Mall, Information Dynamics, 1983, 221 pp., illus., cloth \$17.50; paper \$13.75.

*Drawing and Modelmaking: A Manual for Students of Architecture and Design*, Alexander Ratensky, Watson-Guption, 1983, 160 pp., illus., \$19.50.



## Bruce Corson: YOUR AFFORDABLE SOLAR HOME

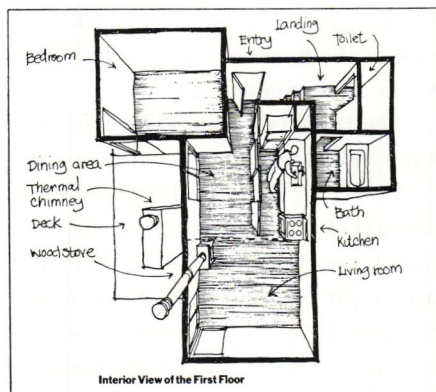
DAN HIBSHMAN

For a small town to sponsor a housing design competition is novel. For it to require that the entries be affordable and solar is both commendable and daring; the further stipulation that they be buildable for \$20,000 really forces one to ask, Where is this town?

In December of 1980, Cotati, California, announced such a competition, "to encourage the development of housing designs which offer alternatives to conventional housing types." The announcement called for innovative design submittals, the six winners to be built on a city-owned parcel and held open for public inspection for a period of one year. While encouraging the "creative interpretation" of local building codes and the use of passive heating and cooling systems, the sponsors also requested the contestants to "decrease as many amenities as possible and to make use of recycled materials." These constraints, however, paled before the \$20,000 construction cost ceiling, which included city permit and building inspection fees.

Cotati officials were already negotiating with the Yollo Bolly Press for the production of a book to publish the winners, the objective being to prove to both the casual reader and the tradition-bound building industry that a \$20,000 solar home was, in fact, buildable.

The book that emerged was *Your Affordable Solar Home*, by Dan Hibshman. One of Sierra Club Books "Tools for Today," it offers "innovative strategies for living well in challenging economic times." Its particular service is to "reevaluate . . . the nature of the 'dream home' and, exploiting the econ-

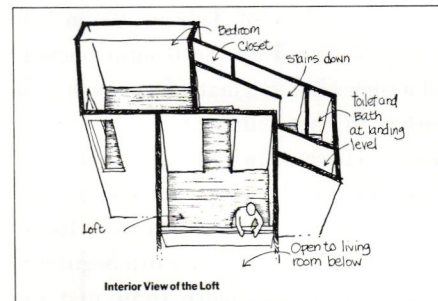


BRUCE JOHNSON, INTERIOR VIEW OF THE FIRST FLOOR, THE GANGNAIL HOUSE, COTATI, CALIFORNIA

omy of solar principles, discover new ways to put home ownership within easy reach of many."

Following a brief but engaging discussion of the factors that contribute to high housing costs, the author presents the six winning designs, making effective use of cut-away perspectives and sketched sections. Specific design and construction details are points of departure for the three themes that run through the book: 1) the need to re-evaluate our concept of "house"; 2) the need to rectify the costly inefficiencies of contemporary building technologies; 3) the need to understand and apply passive solar principles.

The case for the first is the most successfully made: analysis of core functions, expandability, multi-use spaces, privacy, and other factors that affect livability will lead most readers to reassess their approach to unconventionally "small" housing alternatives. The "costly inefficiencies" of the building industry, however, are discussed with no reference to that industry's monumental efforts of the last few years in the direction of efficiency, affordability, and alternative systems. Some readers will undoubtedly conclude that the competition in Cotati has sparked a revolution—a conclusion which the triumphant style of the prose does nothing to discourage. Such claims as that made for a framing



BRUCE JOHNSON, INTERIOR VIEW OF THE LOFT, THE GANGNAIL HOUSE, COTATI, CALIFORNIA

method "that exceeds or out-performs stick-built construction in strength, ease, time, and cost," are unsubstantiated by anything but the enthusiasm of the designer, and do a disservice to everyone involved.

Even flimsier, however, is the front cover contention that the winning designs can actually be built for \$20,000 or less. The simple cost breakdowns required of the entrants were accepted on good faith, subject neither to standardized format nor scrutiny by professional estimators. That abundant good faith notwithstanding, not one of the winning designs has been built in Cotati to date. The competition has proven nothing about the "new methods" proposed nor the reality of building a house for \$20,000.

Nor does the book give one a feeling for the economic reality of solar options. As many builders and designers have found, with such radical budget constraints it is critical to determine the most effective solar options possible, and it is also very difficult. The analysis required to reliably estimate the cost effectiveness of a design demands sophisticated design tools, extensive understanding of the installed costs of the solar options being considered, and, most importantly, thorough knowledge of the user and his needs. The problem is not susceptible to solution by a novice.



In view of the additional complexities created by the terms of the competition, the inclusion of a "Solar Primer" in this book is a little ironic. The primer is aimed at that average person who, "stripped of working knowledge of natural principles . . . is denied a personal sense of universal creation as it sustains daily life and . . . [is] therefore vulnerable to the global forces which control high technology."

In its attempt to present every passive solar option suggested in the past ten years, the primer is rather difficult to follow. One's "working knowledge of natural principles" is not enhanced by the scientific misstatements ("long light waves bounce around and become short heat waves") and technically debatable claims ("An incidental benefit from the hot tub is its heat storage capacity, contributing to the overall efficiency of the convective loop.") that are uncomfortably frequent. This book, like the competition, will strike many as terrifically exciting and many others as terribly naïve. They could all perhaps agree, however, that these houses "would be, for millions, a sufficient beginning."

Your Affordable Solar Home, Dan Hibshman, Sierra Club Books, 1983, 124 pp., illus., \$7.95 pb.

## Douglas E. Mahone: ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS ENERGYWORKS

Every practicing designer has the continuing problem of keeping up-to-date product information close at hand. In the heat of the design process, there is seldom time for exhaustive product research, and selections must be made quickly and correctly. This can be a problem in the case of the more specialized building components, unless the designer has established a regular discipline of collecting, organizing, and updating product literature—an effort for which few firms have either resources or enthusiasm.

*Energy-Efficient Products and Systems* attempts to fill the need for a catalogue of summary information in its own rather specialized product area. The authors have developed a rigid and rather limited format for displaying the basic information about a company's products, and have organized the information by product type. Each product is presented on the two sides of a single page; the pages are bound in a loose-leaf binder with dividers, ordered according to a product category numbering system. Within each numerical category, the pages are arranged alphabetically by manufacturer. The product pages are also given the applicable Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) code number.

Despite the limited scope of the catalogue, it covers a lot of ground. A wide range of building shell products, such as windows, insulation, and sealants is included. Mechanical systems are heavily represented, with everything from primary heating and cooling equipment to controls. Lighting and electrical systems have their sections, and

there are more exotic chapters on specialized energy conservation equipment like energy recovery systems. The products are also cross-indexed by manufacturer, product name, and type.

This catalogue fills a gap that many would not have known existed. On the one side are the widely known product catalogues, such as Sweet's and the ASHRAE publications—the old standby, catch-all compendia which are relatively undifferentiated in the area of energy-efficient products. They differ from this catalogue in that they only distribute the manufacturer's literature in an organized fashion. *Energy-Efficient Products and Systems*, while based on manufacturers' literature, does not reproduce it in any direct way; the information is repackaged into the standard, more neutral format. Still another approach is taken in the *Solar Specification Guide*, published by *Solar Age Magazine*, whose authors have deliberately confined themselves to renewable energy products. The authors of *Energy-Efficient Products and Systems* draw the line at renewable energy products, and limit themselves to more conventional equipment and applications.

So how useful is this catalogue? First, its strong points:

1) Nearly all energy conservation areas are covered, even if there is only one product to meet the need. This is useful because it shows you new ways of saving energy. I had not, for instance, realized that furnaces that burn waste crankcase oil and hydraulic fluid were available.

2) All the products are presented concisely. Once you become familiar with the format, you can quickly locate a product description, along with a name and phone number to call for more information.

3) Three six-monthly updates are included in the price of the catalogue. Two



are already available (although not seen by this reviewer); all you have to do is insert the new pages as they come along.

The shortcomings are, unfortunately fairly serious:

1) Product listings are quite spotty in the first edition: strong showings from some manufacturers, and very weak ones from others. For instance, under "Controls" are numerous listings of Johnson Controls products, with a few from Honeywell and other manufacturers interspersed. I assume this is because Johnson's was more cooperative with the authors, but I suspect a lot of products that do the job are not included in the catalogue.

2) Many sections are surprisingly sparse; the chapter on cooling towers has one entry, probably due to the same reasons given above.

3) The product listing format is rigid and limited. About fifty percent of each

page is format, with the real information squeezed into the remaining space. The descriptions of some products shine through the format well; others seem forced by it, and as a result are not too helpful. Many listings do not provide an illustration of the device.

4) There seems to be an East Coast orientation to the listings—not a problem for nationally distributed products, but many of these are made by small companies with limited distribution. For most building applications, designers depend on and want local manufacturer's representatives and suppliers, especially for newer, less proven equipment. West Coast designers will still have to search out local reps, or manufacturers on their coast who have not yet made it into the catalogue.

In sum, this is a useful starting point. It pulls together a large set of energy-efficient products in one place, saving a lot of trouble in the early stages

of product selection. It will help identify classes of products that are new to you, and will give you names to call. It is not yet complete enough to save you all the effort of product research, but for practitioners who are in the business of saving energy, it is probably worth the investment.

The real test will come with the updates. If they fill in the gaps and keep the catalogue current, it will become an extremely valuable tool in the right hands. If not, it will remain a rather blunt instrument for slicing through the confusion of new products and services in this increasingly important area of design.

Energy-Efficient Products and Systems, A Comparative Catalog for Architects and Engineers, Energyworks, Inc., Wiley, 1983, approx. 1,000 pp., illus., \$125.00.

ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS	
<p>by Energyworks, Inc. Copyright © 1983 John Wiley &amp; Sons, Inc., Publishers, New York</p> <p>First Edition, 1983</p>	
<p><b>TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS</b></p> <p><b>Operating Characteristics:</b> Input rate 12 lb/hr. Output capacity 92,400 MBH. Air flow capacity 800 CFM</p> <p><b>Performance Data:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combustion efficiency 90%</li> <li>Net output efficiency 62%</li> </ul> <p>Efficiencies are rated at 60,000 BTU output capacity</p> <p>*Data developed in laboratory test. Variations in fuel, installation and operation will cause variations in performance</p> <p><b>Materials:</b> 18 ga. (0.049) mini cold rolled steel combustion chamber; cabinet: 1" thick foil-faced cabinet insulation</p> <p><b>Feed Door Size:</b> 13-3/8" x 9-3/4"</p> <p><b>Flue Size:</b> 6" diameter</p> <p><b>Electrical Requirements:</b> 115 Volt, 60 Hz, Single phase</p> <p><b>Duct Attachment Size:</b> 14"x15-1/2"</p> <p><b>Cabinet Size:</b> 37"H, 21-1/8"W, 45"D</p> <p><b>Shipping Weight:</b> 348 pounds</p> <p><b>Codes/Standards/Certifications:</b> UL 382 (All features)</p>	<p><b>FURNACES</b> Type: Wood-Fired</p> <p><b>ASHLEY FURNACE, KING FURNACE</b> Martin Industries 301 East Tennessee Street P.O. Box 128 Florence, AL 35631 Contact: Van E. McHaffey (205) 767-0330</p> <p><b>5.2MRT</b></p> <p><b>PRODUCT DESCRIPTION</b></p> <p>A wood-fired central furnace for residential or small commercial space heating. The furnace is complete with a blower and combustion air control activated by a remote wall-mounted thermostat. Heat sensing switches provide automatic blower operation and safety control</p> <p><b>Applications:</b> UL listed only as an independent furnace. With optional RFD-1 kit can be installed parallel to an existing gas, oil or electric furnace where UL listing is not required</p> <p><b>Major Types:</b> Ashley brand wood burning furnace (F8100), King brand wood burning furnace (K7250B)</p> <p><b>Standard Features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1250 CFM blower</li> <li>Burns wood up to 24 inches long</li> <li>Cast iron feed and ash door</li> <li>Cast iron flue collar</li> <li>Internal filter rack</li> <li>Insulated cabinet</li> <li>Seam welded firebox</li> <li>Cast iron grates and firebox liners</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials Not Provided:</b> Must be attached to a listed factory built, residential building and heating appliance chimney or a masonry chimney constructed to N.F.P.A. standards</p> <p><b>Special Installation Requirements:</b> Enclosure must provide adequate spacing between furnace, furnace chimney connector and combustible materials. Combustion air ventilation required. Installation and service available through dealer network</p> <p><b>CSI 15810</b></p> <p><b>5.2MRT</b> page 1 of 2</p>

This information is provided by the manufacturer, who is responsible for its technical accuracy.

- Generic product type and descriptive subcategory
- Brand name identification
- Manufacturer contact person, address and phone
- Manufacturer code
- Outline number
- Construction Specifications Institute five digit code
- Alpha-numeric system of pagination



Martin Symes:

## LONDON LETTER

"Le roi est mort, vive la princesse." Sir Nikolaus Pevsner's death has robbed us of an heroic figure, apologist not only for the Modernist Movement but also, to our great surprise, for English architecture. His *Buildings of England* was a monumental creation and has forever enshrined so much of our heritage that we can only marvel that we hardly knew we had it before he arrived on our shores. The 47th volume in the series (there is one at least for each county, new volumes appearing regularly for the last twenty-five years) is, however, the first to throw into prominence the name of Bridget Cherry, who worked behind the scenes with Pevsner for much of this time, and will no doubt continue to revise and rewrite the series as the years go by. *London 2: South* covers that part of the capital beyond the River Thames, area by area, building type by building type, in great detail. It includes material written by Pevsner himself for earlier, slimmer, and shorter volumes, as well as new entries in Ms. Cherry's hand. It has useful maps and good photographs, but the real joy of the book is the old maestro's text: accessible, terse, witty in a subtle way, and remarkably perceptive. Of the Royal Festival Hall, for example, he wrote: "It must be regarded as a milestone . . . [but] how can the bare functionalism of 1930 be overcome without a return to period ornament?" This as early as 1952! And then there was "the curious stone apron in the middle of the top storey—an afterthought." How could any gentleman say anything else about it? And, it has indeed been removed since. Luckily, Ms. Cherry has tampered as little as possible with these gems, adding text only where major alterations have taken place or for new buildings which are worthy of mention. Interestingly, where Pevsner's tendency was to comment adversely on the artistry of buildings he disliked, our new editor enjoys practical criticisms. For her, the Hayward Gallery is "a thrilling experience, if the weather is fine and you are at leisure, but what if it rains, what if you are late?" Generally, though, the tact is maintained and the values hardly altered. This is an extreme example, the authors might have written had they been asked to review it, of those books without which no one, of whatever station in life, can see London properly.

Less taxing to the intellect is *Sir Hugh Casson's London*. The text is anecdotal and great fun, copiously and beautifully illustrated with Sir Hugh's now widely admired sketches. But for a view of London as Landscape, it is still hard to beat Rasmussen's classic, *London, the Unique City*, reissued last year. Finally, *The London Encyclopaedia* should be mentioned—a comprehensive and potentially marvelous work of

reference, had it not been roundly criticised for inaccuracies. Let us hope for a revised edition.

A central position in the development of modern architecture in this country has been claimed for Sir Leslie Martin, time and again, and many would say that the appearance of his own book on his work is a major publishing event. Unfortunately the language of the text falls sometimes into the same obscurity as that of those who claim to have rejected his philosophy. The importance of Sir Leslie's ideas is that they show that function and form can be seen as interactive, that it really never had to be a question of the one following the other, either way around. In this book he sets out to demonstrate a "developing process through which architects have taken problems of use and structure and have resolved these to create a new sense of order, coherence and harmony" which a whole generation of British architects have admired. This book is heavy and thick, produced in a landscape format, illustrated with elegant line drawings and black-and-white photographs, and very expensive. The text is logically structured and makes clear and well-argued points. There are generic building types: courts, auditoria, libraries; and patterns of built form which occupy the land in certain ways and with certain consequences. Research is a "necessary extension of architectural thought," and so on—all familiar but half-forgotten news, of which we are well reminded. Sir Leslie was deeply involved in greeting the Bauhaus exiles when they came here in the late 1930s; his work as chief architect to the London County Council set a standard for design in public offices which has hardly been equalled since; he ran a school of architecture in Cambridge in the 1960s—attended by Rowe and Eisenman as well as Bruce Martin (building standards) and Alex Hardy (environmental control)—the fruits of which are only now beginning to be seen in built form; and he helped to establish architectural research in the universities. But many of his buildings, shown here, are half-forgotten: a kind of nemesis surrounds their committal to print. Is it that the world has really moved on, that there is no continuing tradition after all? Or is it that he put it all so nicely, so politely, in such an English way that his work has not yet been noticed for what it is?

This is a far cry, then, from Douglas Stephen's lecture series at the RIBA, in which some of the lectures related to recent publications. Amos Rapoport with his scholarly book on *Meaning in the Built Environment* seemed, to me at least, to confuse this interesting issue. In writing, eloquently as always, about the relations between architecture and culture, he almost missed the point of today's concern, which is that a gap appears to have arisen between the architect's culture and the culture of those who have to live with the environment he designs. Andrew Saint introduced his own *Image of the*



*Architect* by stressing, throughout the history of the profession, the conflict between the aims of art and those of good building. The need to take sides on this issue is surely at the root of today's professional confusion. In *The Reflective Practitioner* Donald Schon helps to get us straight by showing how even the smallest act of design requires synthetic judgment and artistic and technical thought combined.

In the field of pure monographs one must presumably place *Michael Graves 1966-1981*, another book I wish I could afford. The Portland building turned out less ornate than it once promised to be, but it does illustrate the remarkable precision with which Graves judges his market. For many an architect these days only the base of the tower and the skyline can escape developers' (realtors') norms; here we are shown that not only those two inches of external skin but also the interior outfitting can be given as much attention and loving care. Pictures predominate, rightly I think, and the text is minimal. Indeed, not much more actually needed saying than that Graves already was a talented and inventive architect in the 1960s and has recently learned to be more demonstrative about our debt to classical tradition.

Meanwhile the writers continue to produce. It is hard to keep up with all the exhibition catalogues, magazine reprints, rewritten lectures and so on which appear on booksellers' tables at this time of year. One by Rosemary Ind on Emberton caught my eye, a fascinating cameo of the early days of modern architecture in this country. Another book which should interest amateur and professional alike is Mark Girouard's *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House*—an expanded version of one of his first books, recently out of print. Smythson's work at Longleat, Corsham, Corfe, Woollaton and elsewhere was bold and eclectic, an expression, perhaps, of the rising confidence his patrons developed in our Golden Age.

Moving over to the technical side, this year has had a bumper crop of books on law, contracts and marketing—such are the concerns of the struggling traditional practice. Many of those which have come my way, however, are quite inappropriate for architects, for they are either much too specialised or too simplistic. In both cases little effort is made to relate the problems of architectural practice to design issues and choices, rather than just to questions of business practice. Weld Coxe's *Marketing Architectural and Engineering Services* seemed good of its kind, but pricey, as did Cornes's *Design Liability in the Construction Industry*. Robert Elliott has produced a good text on *Building Contract Litigation*. Only the first of these would be of interest to practitioners outside of Britain. In contrast, Richard Saxon's *Atrium Buildings* survives the Atlantic crossing well—perhaps because it deals with novel technical problems for which set

solutions have not yet emerged, or perhaps due to the good, clear diagrams that explain existing buildings.

Many will find it a pity that, in general, writings on architectural techniques have become so removed from works on theory and criticism. One idea for bridging the gap is that of reviving or rewriting classics from a time when no distinction was made between construction and design. Atkinson and Bagenal's *Theory and Elements of Architecture*, last published in 1926, has been proposed as a possible standard-bearer for such a trend. Banister-Fletcher, too, will have a new edition, produced at the Bartlett School under the Chairmanship of John Musgrove. But would it not also be wise to write case studies of *current* good building practice, in such a way that readers could understand not only the practical issues but also the artistic intentions which it attempts to embody? At his best, Pevsner was able to do this, and his contribution will be greatly missed.

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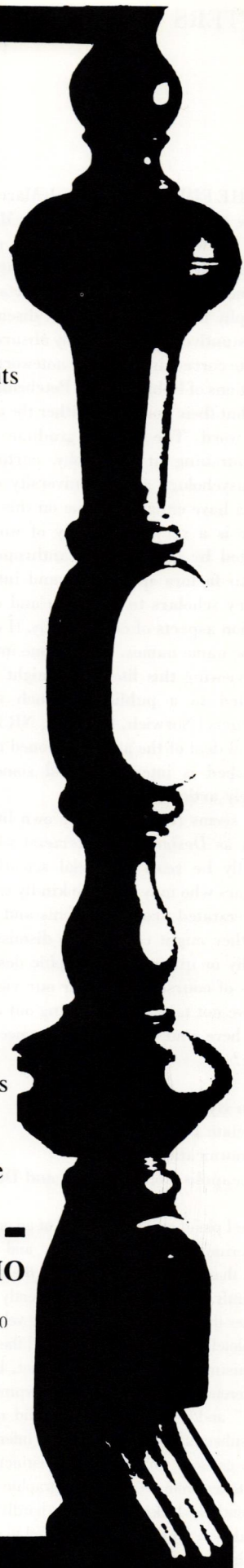
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TO THE EDITORS: Although Marc Treib's review of the Southworths' book *Maps* [in *DBR* 3] was good reading (his opening paragraph was especially eloquent) his statement about conceptual aspects of cartography having "rarely been discussed in a substantive way" is patently absurd. Treib is quite correct in citing the noteworthy contributions of Robinson and Petchenik to this area but their book was neither the only nor final word. The current graduate studies I'm pursuing in geography, cartography, and psychology at the University of Minnesota have enlightened me on this matter. There is a very large body of work contributed by geographers, anthropologists, human factors specialists, and interdisciplinary scholars to cognition and communication aspects of cartography. (I could of course name names. But anyone interested in reviewing this literature might best be directed to a publication such as *Geo-Abstracts* [Norwich, England, NR3 3AP].) A good deal of the aforementioned material published is interesting and some is extremely articulate.

It seems to me that our own literature (such as *Design Book Review*) will occasionally be read by social scientists and scholars who may not take kindly to skewed or overstated pronouncements and as a result they might continue to dismiss design as silly or quaint art. Graphic design theorists of course need to air our views. But can we not take care—editing out a hyperbole here and adding a reference or two there?

Kevin Byrne  
Associate Professor of Visual  
Communications  
Minneapolis College of Art and Design

While I plead guilty to the use of an occasional indiscriminate hyperbole here and there, I think that Mr. Byrne's employ of the hyperbole "patently absurd" is, well, patently absurd. Neither the verbal nor the graphic vehicle lives completely without ambiguity, and the cause of the misinterpretation could, in fact, be due to a difference in our respective interpretations of "rare" and/or "substantive." I did not claim that substantive study—which I inferred to be taken as work which focused distinctly on the map taken from the stance of graphic theory—was entirely lacking, but was hardly in great abundance. This was not intended to slight the insightful works by members of other disciplines that treat the map as cognitive, cultural,

or other sort of artifact. Perhaps the culmination of Mr. Byrne's current graduate studies will ultimately reveal the definitive investigation on the subject of mapping. I, for one, would be pleased at the prospect.

Marc Treib

TO THE EDITORS: I have a slight disagreement with the review of *Project Management for the Design Professional* [John Parman, *DBR* 3]. He implied that it followed the Haviland book(s) and therefore improved upon them. The truth is the Stasiowski/Burstein book flowed out of the project management seminar started by *PSMJ* in April 1976 and given to over 4,000 attendees since then. Actually, the Haviland book drew heavily on the concepts developed by the *PSMJ*—both in the newsletter itself and in the seminars. I have never pursued this but a reading of the 1975-1979 issues of *PSMJ* would prove my contention.

Keep up the good work.

Michael R. Hough, President  
*Professional Services Management  
Journal*

Michael Hough is correct about the origins of the Stasiowski/Burstein book. I realize that I knew this, but failed to remember it, when I wrote the review—the librarian of one of my clients had mentioned that she wondered if the book would duplicate material in the workbook of *PSMJ*'s project management seminar. The point I wanted to make, however, is that the Stasiowski/Burstein book is considerably better than the AIA's project management series, edited by David Haviland—hence the comparison.

John Parman

[The following letter from the author of *Microcomputers in Building Appraisal* (reviewed by Thomas Kvan in *DBR* 3) was passed on to us by the publisher:]

The problem with a book of this nature is that in aiming for the novice it simplifies issues to avoid confusion and this can alienate the expert. However, I do believe Mr. Kvan has been unfair in several respects:

(i) "we omit to mention that tasks can be integrated." In fact we give a substantial

part of the book to data bases which illustrate this very point. We were on the other hand pointing to other applications which do not provide an extensive source of information and therefore do not allow for integration.

(ii) There was no intention to "make design professionals into part-time programmers etc." In fact we make the point that it is more efficient to use a specialist programmer on a number of occasions. What we are trying to do is to give a better insight into the working of the machine through building problems in order that the professional understands the potential and limitations of computing and can therefore brief his programmer more coherently.

(iii) The question of U.S.A. being in advance of U.K. is nonsense. The book was aimed at a particular market at a particular time. Since completing this first edition things have moved on but not to such a degree to have invalidated the text. Sixteen-bit and 32-bit machines are much more common but the principles remain the same.

It is always difficult to see one's own work from the point of view of another, particularly from another country, but in this case bearing in mind the object of the book I feel the review has been unfair. . . .

Peter S. Brandon  
Portsmouth Polytechnic

*Microcomputers in Building Appraisal* is a text whose stated aim is to address the novice in computer applications. There are, however, several aspects of the book which will make it impenetrable to this audience. While the author claims that the intention is not to make a programmer of the reader, fully one half of the text focuses on the issues of generating very specific applications programs in BASIC. For any fundamental algorithmic or professional issue to surface, the reader has to plow through, and understand, the rather tortuous encoded instructions. It should be, and is, fully possible to instruct readers in these issues without once lapsing into a computer language. For example, the concerns of database integration are more clearly illustrated to a layman by references to commonalities of construction and maintenance operations than by discussions of file structures, sequential or random.

I am very familiar and sympathetic with the task which Brandon faces in bringing to a novice audience a technically complex subject. I continue to disagree with Brandon, however, that the best way to instruct an architect to



drive to a site visit is to teach him about pistons, compression ratios and spark plugs. So it is that design professionals should not have to know about programming to understand conceptual and practical issues in computer applications.

The contention that there is no difference in the rate at which computer applications have developed either side of the Atlantic is debatable and will not be pursued further here. As Brandon notes, the book was written for a specific market at a particular time. It can be contended that this particular market has had its time, at least in the United States. More of issue is that professional purchasers of systems should no longer have to concern themselves with BASIC, FORTRAN, 8, 16, or 32-bit issues.

Thomas Kvan

## REPARATIONS

*The Almighty Wall: The Architecture of Henry Vaughan* (reviewed by John Woodbridge in *DBR* 3) is, like William Morgan's *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue* and Richard Longstreth's *On the Edge of the World*, a co-publication of the Architectural History Foundation and the MIT Press. We apologize for the omission of AHF in our citation for *The Almighty Wall*.

The photograph of the collapsed stair-tower B, Olive View Hospital, that accompanies the review of *Building Configuration and Seismic Design* in *DBR* 3 (p. 105) was run reversed, to the confusion of our readers. We thank Glenn A. Vander Sluis for pointing out the problem.

"Pages for *Westvaco Inspirations*," (an illustration from Frances Butler's article, "Modern Typography," *DBR* 3) was run upside-down.

The correct name of the American distributor of *The Victoria and Albert Museum: The History of its Building* (reviewed by Edward N. Kaufman in *DBR* 3) is the Merrimack Publishers Circle.

Christopher Arnold and Andrew Rabeneck's 1978 article in *Architectural Design* was called "Mirror Building," not "Minor Building," as claimed in our footnote to Mr. Rabeneck's review in *DBR* 3.

LATE NOTE TO REVIEW OF *ART INTO LANDSCAPE* (*DBR* 4, p. 94): The duotones mentioned by Marc Treib as out of register have been corrected in a subsequent printing.

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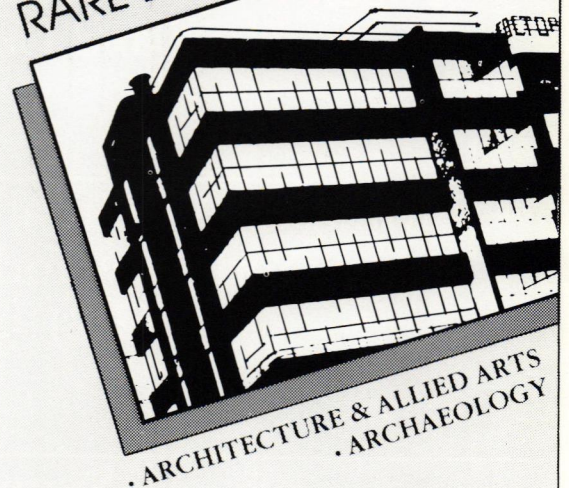
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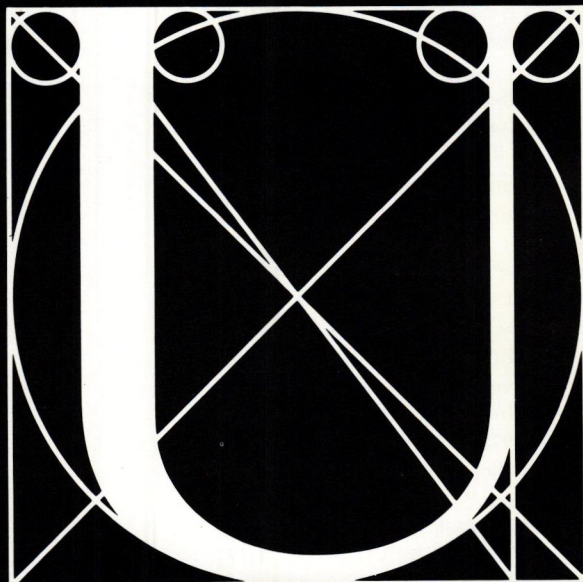
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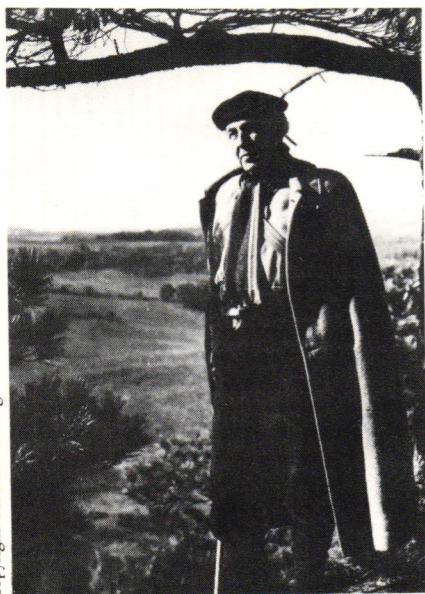
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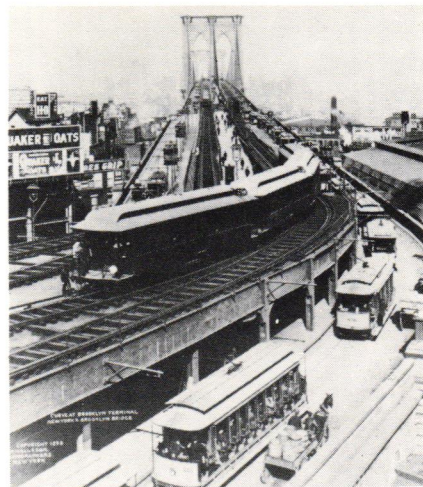
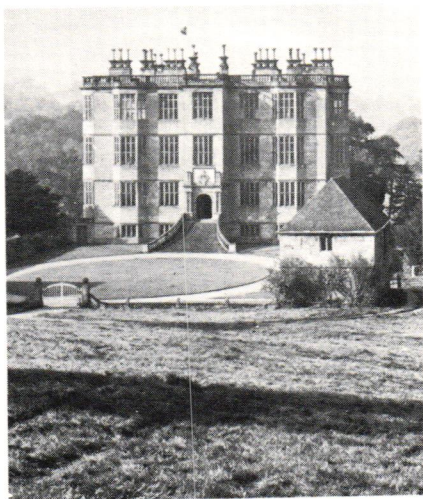
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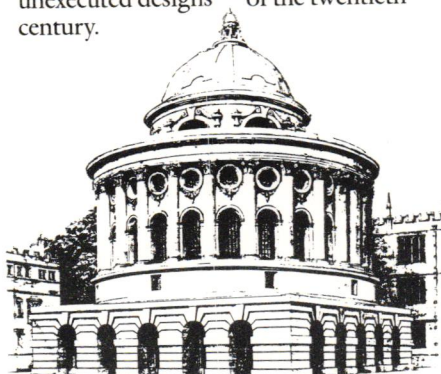
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