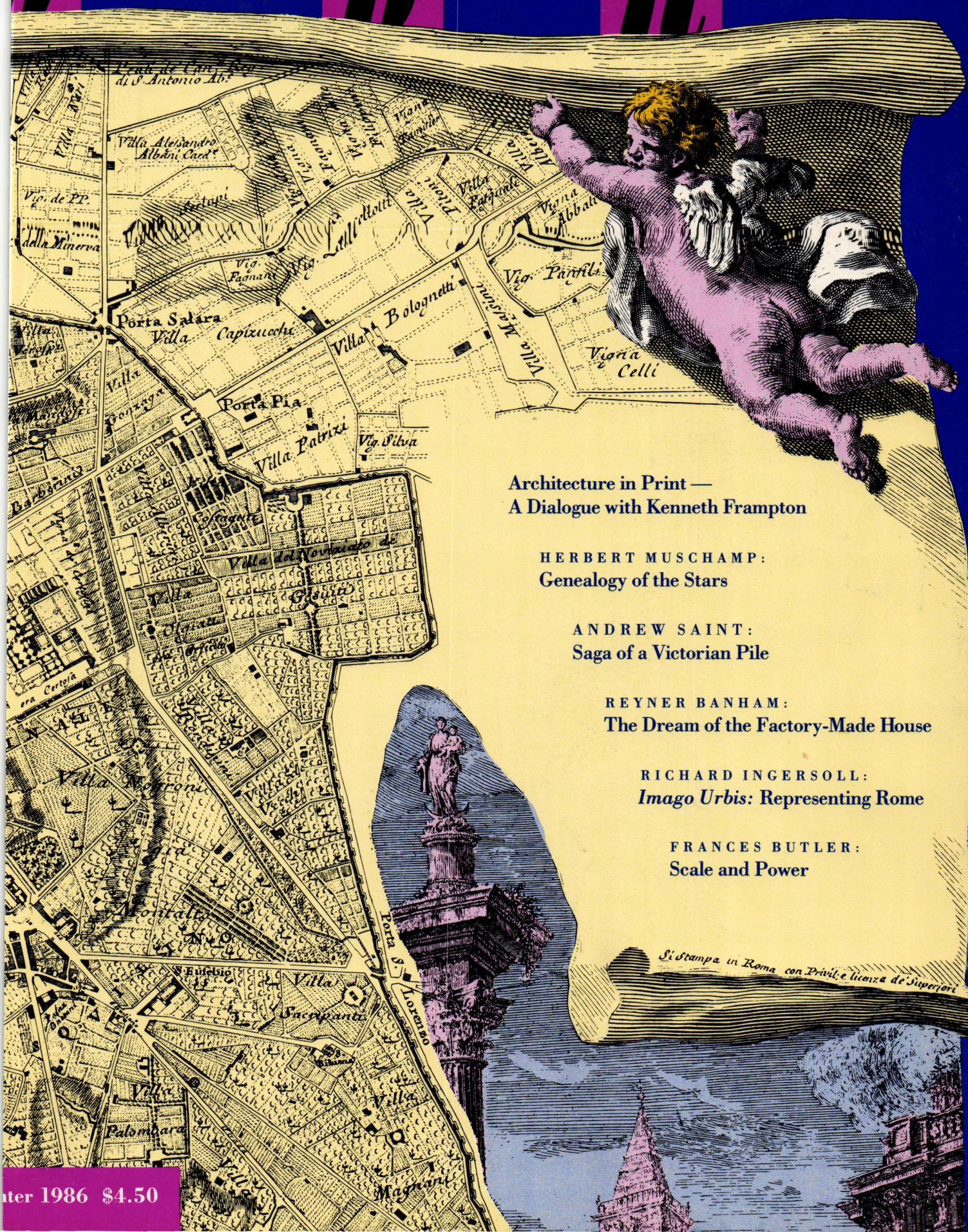


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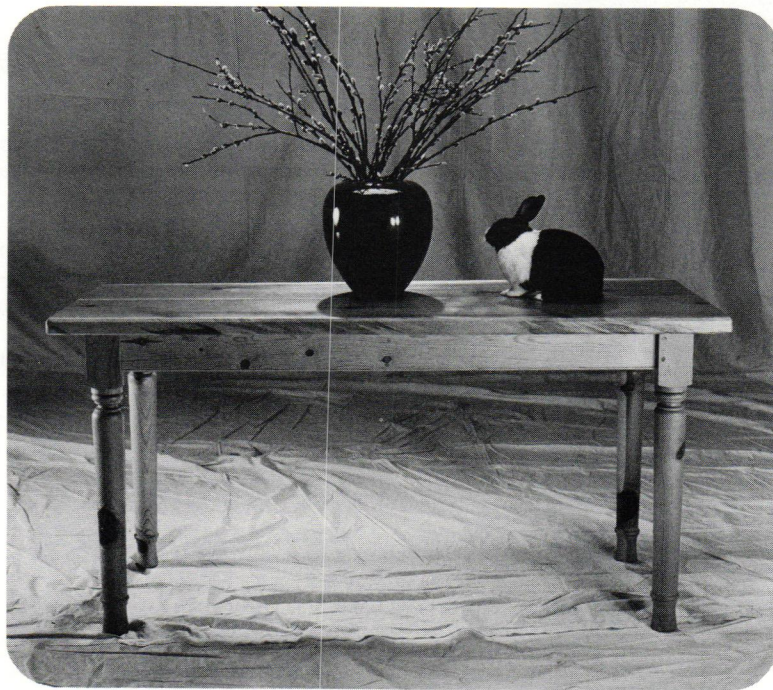
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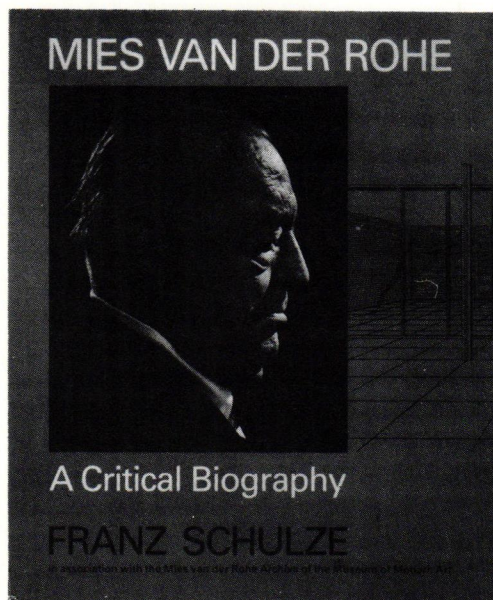
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COVER:

DETAIL OF THE NOLLI PLAN OF ROME, 1748. FACSIMILE BY J.H. ARONSON.

HYPE AND HYPERTROPHY

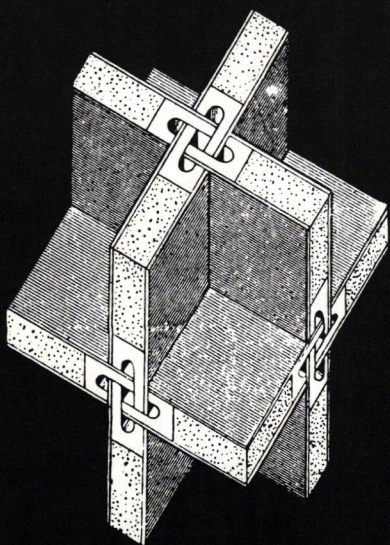
The transition from Nolli's meticulously knit city to the exploded images of the modern media city has required a giant leap in consciousness. Eighteenth-century Rome (and all pre-industrial cities) possessed a visual congruency and spatial harmony beyond our reach, scaled to the human body and walkable distances. The modern media city, one like Los Angeles or West Berlin, is scaled to our McLuhanesque extensions, especially the automobile; the catalogue for the exhibit *The Automobile and Culture* (reviewed herein by Folke Kihlstedt) underlines this fact of life by exposing the iconographic role of the car. The visual and spatial fabric of our cities has been kaleidoscoped by free-ways, parking lots, and advertising, and our sense of coherency is now based upon speed and multiple interpreting devices, starting with the rear-view mirror and ending with the home computer. For over a decade the Venturis have been urging us to accept the idioms of the media city, to stop fighting the fragmentation, alacrity, and glitz of Las Vegas and join the zeitgeist of commercial culture. Unfortunately, by "learning" they did not mean learning by our mistakes, and currently we are witnessing the triumph of the media-architect, foremost among them Michael Graves. Herbert Muschamp, in his review of *Kings of Infinite Space* in this issue, points to a phenomenon deeper than the book's content, namely the franchising of a career.

One wonders if the "dream of the factory-made house" discussed in Banham's review of Gilbert Herbert's book was not in the long run a similar tactic to "learning from Las Vegas." The headstrong ideologues of the Modern Movement, obsessed with and upstaged by the efficiency and logic of industrialized production, felt compelled to join the age of the engineer.

In the name of social justice they theorized mass-produced housing, but never succeeded in doing what industry already did quite adequately without them.

In the context of the burgeoning media city, the architect is going through a role crisis, not exactly an image maker, not exactly a builder, but increasingly a bureaucrat. The profession is suspended somewhere between automation and autoeroticism, still undecided as to which is more satisfying. Dana Cuff in her discussion of Judith Blau's groundbreaking study of contemporary office life presents the current dilemmas in the organization of architectural production. Beyond running the business there is also the problem of making cultural statements. Heterotopia, the reigning "permissive" school of thought, argues for a tolerance of an apparent multiplicity of styles and intentions. Frances Butler in her essay on scale singles out the proclivity for images of "uproar." These somewhat unconscious reckonings with the sublime are found to be vestiges of a nostalgia for authority. Looking at the effects of "value-free" pluralism from another angle, Kenneth Frampton in his dialogue with *DBR* was asked to examine the function of architectural publishing. Among his perceptions he underlines the reductive effect that media is having on architecture and even at one point suggests that the current boom in architectural books may be "some kind of consensus compensation for the increasing brutalization of the actual physical environment." At this point, the impulsive Christmas shopper may be left to wonder which is in fact the better buy, a book or a house.

Richard Ingersoll



Architecture in Print

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Is reading harmful to architects? Kenneth Frampton weighs the causes and possible outcomes of the seemingly endless proliferation of design books.

Genealogy of the Stars

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Charles Jencks proposes Michael Graves as successor to the mantle of Frank Lloyd Wright. Reviewed by Herbert Muschamp.

Saga of a Victorian Pile

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David Brownlee's study of George Edmund Street's London Law Courts—largest and “most uncompromisingly Gothic” of his commissions. Reviewed by Andrew Saint.

The Dream of the Factory-Made House

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Gilbert Herbert's tale of the ill-fated foray by Gropius and Wachsmann into prefabrication, the General Panel house. Reviewed by Reyner Banham.

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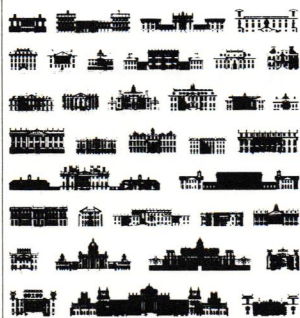
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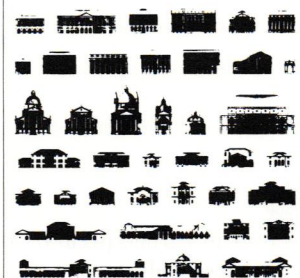
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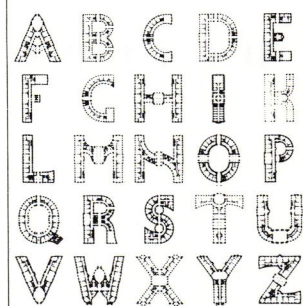
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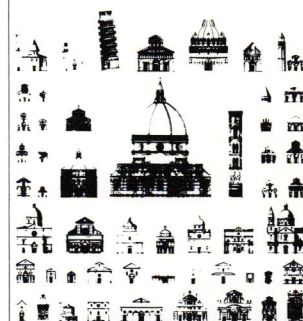
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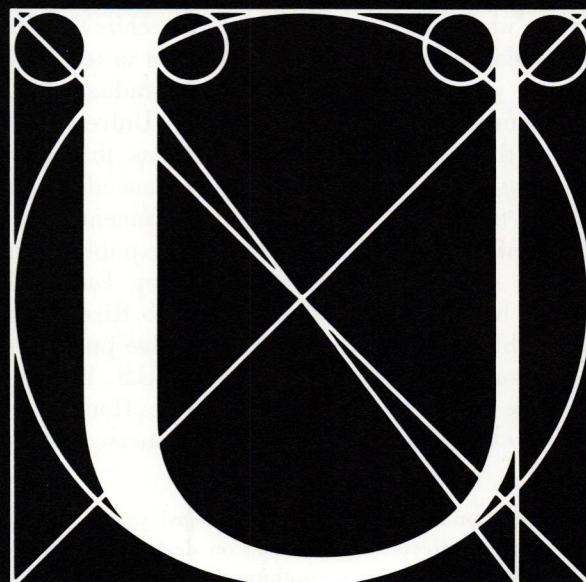


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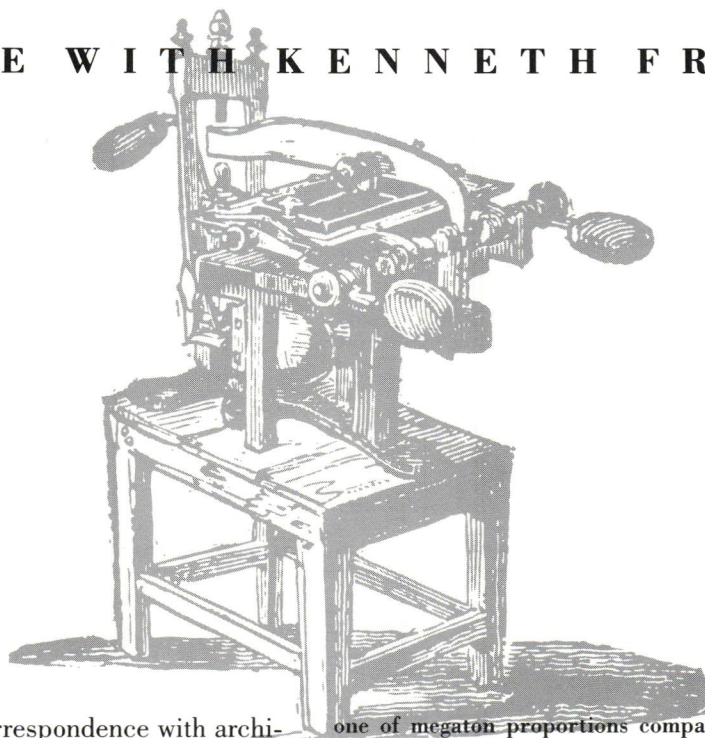
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Architecture in Print

A D I A L O G U E W I T H K E N N E T H F R A M P T O N



The following is the result of a correspondence with architectural critic and historian Kenneth Frampton (the first of what we hope will be many dialogues to appear in *DBR*).

Kenneth Frampton, born in England, 1930, is an architect and intellectual, a combination that always seems to be better suited to the English than the Americans. In England he was an associate, from 1960 to 1965, in the firm of Douglas Stephen & Partners, for whom he designed an award-winning apartment block. From 1962 to 1965 he was technical editor of the English magazine *Architectural Design*. For the academic year 1965-66 he was Hodder Fellow at Princeton University, where he then taught for the years 1967-1972. In 1972 he transferred to Columbia University, where he has taught modern architectural history and theory. He has also been involved in teaching in the second year housing studio at the Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia University. His critical writing began to reach Americans through the pages of *Oppositions*, and in 1980 he advanced an interpretation of the history of the Modern Movement from the point of view of "critical theory," with the publication of his *Modern Architecture: a Critical History*. For the last three years he has served as consultant to Rizzoli International Publishers, perhaps the most active publisher of books on architecture and design in the U.S. In June of this year he was given an AIA Institute Honor Award at the AIA national convention in San Francisco.

DBR: Your position at Rizzoli would seem to give you an advantage for observing the effects of publishing on design. The influence of the book on architecture is nothing new: Vitruvius, Alberti, Palladio, Choisi, Le Corbusier lead a healthy list of those who have sought to direct architecture through their writing. The last ten years, however, have seen a glut of architectural publishing,

one of megaton proportions compared to earlier periods. What does this spree of publishing mean? Is there really a market for all of this? Does the appearance of specialized bookstores, such as the Urban Center in New York and Bill Stout in San Francisco, mean that there is a clearly evolving consumer cohort?

KF: Your opening question raises so many issues it is hard to know where to begin. The exponential expansion of architectural publications in recent years has certainly had an enormous impact on architectural design. Obviously the market has grown along with the production or clearly this escalation would not continue. This expanded output and distribution has of course led to the creation of new outlets, although specialized architectural bookstores existed long before this present boom came into being. Hennessey and Ingalls in Los Angeles is an established specialized bookshop which has kept up with the times, although it has a very different character from the stores you mention, such as Urban Center Books in New York or Bill Stout's remarkable emporium in San Francisco. It is risky to make such claims, but surely Stout's store must be one of the finest architectural bookshops in the Western World. What makes this shop unique is the passion with which the stocking of obscure titles is pursued. Like Hennessey and Ingalls, Stout integrates current works with out-of-print titles, which gives the overall presentation of his "library" a rare depth. Other bookshops may carry secondhand books but usually they are located in a separate section.

That the current publishing boom started almost twenty years ago is borne out by a remark made to me by the late George Wittenborn, in the 1960s, just before his untimely death. After I inquired about his health, he replied, with characteristic irony: "I don't know. I keep treading on the

weeds but they still keep coming up!" This apparently endless proliferation of architectural books provokes all sorts of speculations as to its significance or otherwise. In some ways it seems like the final proof of Victor Hugo's famous prophecy, "*Ceci tuera cela*"—This will kill that, the printed word will kill architecture. How can one not sometimes see this profuse publication as some kind of consensus "compensation" for the increasing brutalization of the actual physical environment; the revenge and triumph of the processal media, so to speak, over the stoic and static mistress art! Abraham Moles surely sensed something of this when he wrote: "The monuments of Europe are being worn out by Kodaks." Clearly the media has had a direct impact on current architecture.

DBR: The abundance of recent books on history, design, and technology might represent an advance of information diffusion and architectural awareness. It also allows a greater degree of tolerance (i.e., lack of editorial discrimination), since just about anything seems to get published—we at *DBR* are perhaps oversensitive to this after dealing with so many griping book reviewers. The printed source is an important agent of cultural transmission: do you think the logarithmic growth of this source in any way transforms the relationship of printing to architecture?

KF: This question seems to boil down to asking what is specifically positive and negative about the exponential growth in architectural publication. You touch on the most obvious advantages, namely, an increased diffusion of information and a general heightening of architectural consciousness and sensitivity. The negative side, of course, is the repetitious and insubstantial quality of much that is produced; hence, I suppose, the "griping book reviewers." All this points to a need for greater editorial discrimination at every level, not only in the publishing houses but also on the editorial boards of almost every architectural magazine, including you yourselves at *Design Book Review*! The present editorial "malaise" prompts one to wonder whether the logarithmic increase in both words and images does not reflect deeper disintegrations occurring at the very roots of our so-called "value-free" society. How else can one account for our hypocritical and ultimately crippling obsession with the virtues of pluralism? Where is the editorial board today which does not superficially believe that it should represent all sides and all constituencies? In my view, this is perhaps the most fundamental "liberal" problem which faces any editor today. Look at the committed and creative architectural and cultural magazines of the past. Where is today's Christian Zervos or our current Jean Badovici? Where can we look for the equivalent of P. Morton Shand or Douglas Haskell? Vittorio Gregotti is the only current architectural editor I know who regularly publishes editorials possessed of erudition, pertinence, and acerbic critical lucidity. Despite your laudable and acutely intelligent efforts we do not yet have an architectural parallel to the *New York Review of Books*. There are, in fairness, many reasons for this, including, above all, fundamentally different levels of comparative discourse between, say, architecture on the one hand and literature and politics on the other. However, this is not the whole story, for clearly Robin Silvers and Barbara

Epstein for a time maintained between them a very clear and critical editorial stance. This, in my view, is what is needed. In an era of repetition, simulation, evasion, and overproduction, current architectural editors should make up their respective minds where they stand and, above all, where they are prepared to place themselves strategically. If we could bring ourselves to take positions and hence to assume risks, certain of the more tedious and dubious aspects of the current situation would begin to change. As far as *DBR* is concerned, I suppose this would mean that the reviews would become longer and fewer in number and with this the house line would grow necessarily more tendentious. Publishers and touchy architects and art historians would no doubt balk at this, because of their vested interests, and some strategy would have to be devised to offset the worst aspects of their unavoidable reaction. As to the general relationship of printing to architecture, I think I have already touched on that.

DBR: The printed source, of course, can never replace the experience of architecture. Not even a film can do justice to the sensation of interior space or the other haptic qualities of a building. Yet, there are ways of accurately communicating the phenomenon: where do you think progress has been made in this direction, and where do you think it needs to be made?

KF: This is the "jackpot" question, for clearly this is the one area in which the greatest amount of degeneration has occurred, particularly if one compares pre- and post-Second World War publications. The prewar British *Architectural Review* is exemplary in this regard. Other paragons clearly exist, Zervos's *Cahiers d'Art*, Badovici's *L'Architecture Vivante*, Terragani's *Quadrante*, and André Bloc's *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. None of these were polemical "little magazines." They were in the main magazines of record and yet in each case editorial lines were unequivocally adopted and maintained over a fairly long period. The immediate postwar era has also had its moments, above all, of course, the discourse of *Casabella* under Ernesto Rogers's editorship. But my citing of these examples is perhaps an evasion rather than a closing around the specific points you raise! As you quite rightly assert, "not even a film can do justice to the sensation of interior space," and who has not either been totally disillusioned or alternatively (and more rarely) pleasantly surprised by the discrepancies that inevitably arise between the photographic record and one's actual experience of the work in question! In my view, the way out of this dilemma has been already demonstrated by the aforementioned pioneer editors, but one cannot begin to apply their "simulation" tactics without first embracing a tendentious editorial policy involving decisive inclusions and exclusions. From time to time (and more frequently than one might think), buildings of canonical quality are achieved, and the question then arises how to represent them. For the reasons that you have already indicated, this representation can only be achieved indirectly, by publishing the one work as completely as possible from many different aspects, that is to say, a full set of design drawings, equally comprehensive initial sketches and interior drawings, together with large-size constructional details and large

format general views, and, above all, large format photographs of the specific details. This fragmented record in depth would then afford the reader an adequate mental map of the work, without providing him or her with an encapsulated "image" of the piece. Our current tendency to reduce architecture to images (along with everything else) has unquestionably had a deleterious impact on the practice of the art, for it has had the effect of changing our *intentions* and with them, of course, our *expectations*, both as architects and clients. Charles Jencks's *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* and Arthur Drexler's *Transformations* show were equally unfortunate in this regard since they limited the representative spectrum to a plurality of images, published, by and large, at the rate of one shot per building. Consciously or otherwise, it is as though the photograph of the work has become a superior substitute for the built reality. This mode of beholding has led to the conscious design of photogenic structures (usually, as with human beings, from a preferred side), or to the design of works so that they literally look like drawings; the actual construction, that is, of a two-dimensional representation. It has, in a word, encouraged the reduction of architecture to scenography rather than the more tactile pursuit of the high tradition of tectonic culture. This unfortunate development has had its consequences at a textural and critical level, where buildings today are usually described and evoked as finished entities, rather than analyzed as the culmative and even as the "unfinished" results of a creative social process.

DBR: This may seem a flippant follow-up, but from your experience with architects and students, do you find that architects read? Or do they just look at pictures? (It appears that Rizzoli understands this.) Or better (this is a *real* California question), do architects need to read? If so, do you find that the language about architecture, both in words and images, goes toward an architect's means of creation? In other words, how integrated is literary language with architectural practice?

KF: Flippant or not, it is the most difficult question to answer, not least for the fact that it is implicitly critical of the general policy of Rizzoli. It is difficult to say how much the professional architect reads. Certainly one gets the feeling that lots of books and magazines are bought for their illustrations rather than their words, although no doubt the latter, however obscure, are seen as adding a certain mythical kudos to the images. As to whether architects ought to read or not, this question is perhaps best answered by its inversion, that is to say, how can architects not benefit and develop by a general raising of their consciousness, knowledge, and critical awareness, even in California? However, indulging in Socratic banter of this order evades the most cogent part of your question, namely, is a sufficiently appropriate language being used today in the discussion and presentation of architectural

material? Mies van der Rohe has perhaps long since had the first and last word about this issue when he opined in 1924 that good criticism is as rare as good art. However, I don't believe that maintaining the level of architectural criticism and documentation is the only decisive factor affecting the resolution of these "linguistic" shortcomings. Aside from any challenge which might be made as to methods used in the presentation of historical material (my own for example!), the question arises as to whether works of architecture are analyzed today with enough care in terms of the different levels at which they have an impact on the society and the environment. Alfred Roth's 1940 anthology, *The New Architecture*, is exemplary of one fairly comprehensive method, where each building included in the anthology is analyzed under separate headings, in this instance, spatial planning, technical considerations, economic factors, and aesthetic aspects. In this case, the language seems well integrated, both formally and substantially, with the graphic and photographic presentation of the architecture. Unfortunately, few people have tried either to replicate or to develop Roth's approach.

DBR: This is the final question, one suitable for Christmas shopping. In calling your book a "critical history" you allude to the neo-Marxian Frankfurt School of social philosophy. The Frankfurt School has been particularly penetrating in its critique of mass culture, and authors such as Walter Benjamin currently enjoy a great revival in their analysis of the alienation in a mass society of both author and audience from a work of art. Mass communication would appear to be the principal agent in this process, and publishing houses like Rizzoli or even little magazines like *DBR* become less than innocent bystanders in the process of consumerizing architecture. Could you situate architectural publishing within the consumerist scheme that is affecting architecture?

KF: It is gratifying to realize that, unlike Charles Jencks, certain people like yourself have taken the trouble to read the "fine print" of the introduction to my history and are thus able to recognize that the critical qualification alluded to in the subtitle is indeed a reference to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School is still there as an influence in the last paragraph to the first edition of the book, part of which I would like to take the liberty of quoting again here, since it has a direct bearing on many of the issues which we have touched on in this exchange:

The veil that photolithography draws over architecture is not neutral. High-speed photographic and reproductive processes are surely not only the political economy of the sign, but also an insidious filter through which our tactile environment tends to lose its concrete responsiveness. When much of modern building is experienced in actuality, its photogenic sculptural quality is denied by the poverty and brutality of its detailing.

Thus we can see, although I don't spell it out in the book, how the demise of letterpress printing and plate camera photography are not just necessary technical changes, made in the cause of progress, but involve as well certain "losses in representational resolution" which it has been difficult to overcome in terms of general practice. I am alluding here to both publishing *and* architecture.

Apart from this, the issues you raise can surely only be approached optimistically, or, if you like, constructively, through some form of dialectical reasoning. In this regard, as the second edition of my history makes clear, I have found the neo-existential philosophy of Paul Ricoeur particularly illuminating, above all, the opposition which he sets up between *universal civilization* and *national cultures*. In terms of our mutual dialogue, I think we have to recognize that mass communication and consumerism are today both inescapable aspects of universal civilization and that this last, in its turn, is inseparable from universal technology. As Ricoeur puts it, no developing nation (and today all nations are developing nations) can afford to forgo the material benefits of universal civilization. On the other hand, how do we sustain our cultural and psychosocial identity in the face of this universalization or, to put it in Marxist terms, how do we continue with the self-realization of the species without falling into the tyranny of a totalizing technological determinism. Culture in such a situation surely means the conscious cultivation of "nonconsumable" values with which to resist or, if you like, balance the processal forces of universal technology. In this context, any publication may serve to resist or to facilitate the reduction of culture to consumerism. Whether it does or not will not only depend upon the critical content of the material published, but also on the format, graphics, etc. Certainly, as you intimate, "little magazines" are no more guaranteed of their innocence in this respect than the practice of the average commercial architect. An unfortunate example of this would be the recent proliferation of "little" architectural school magazines, all of which have followed in one way or another the general model established by *Oppositions* and *VIA*. What is regrettable and possibly retrogressive in this instance is not so much the content *in se*, which may at times be of the highest level, as it is the fact that these magazines tend to compete with each other at the same "star level" instead of building and refining their own content *exclusively* around the work and concerns of a particular architectural school, compounded as it should be equally of the student body and the faculty. For better or for worse, such a magazine would then begin to function as a "critical mirror" of the institution that produced it, rather than competing in the evasive and often oversaturated field of the main-line architectural media market! This example enables me to define more clearly that which

I have attempted to elaborate elsewhere under the rubric of "critical regionalism." By appropriate extension, an architectural school can certainly be conceived of today as a cultural "region"; and it is precisely the self-cultivation of this region which will enable it to resist without falling either into reactionary hermeticism on the one hand or into the media juggernaut of universal civilization. As with architectural schools, so (at least potentially) with the editorial boards of little magazines. In a word, I seem to be putting the ball back in your court, but only on the most friendly and respectful terms. As for my current role in Rizzoli, I do my best, but as you might imagine, it is not easy to maintain a clear line in organizations such as these. There are so many pressures that impinge on a "large" publishing house from all sides and there never seems to be a time or a point at which it is possible to regroup, to establish a clear policy in relation to the available resources.

Books for Architects: What is Selling?

Based on conversations with booksellers in San Francisco, Boston, Houston, and New York, *Design Book Review* has put together a brief survey of architectural bestsellers.

Leading everyone's list are the monographs on the "brand name" architects, although the names vary from city to city: at Boston Society of Architects Bookshop, Frank Gehry, Mario Botta, and Aldo Rossi; at Graybooks in xenophilic Houston, Carlo Scarpa, Aldo Rossi, Mario Botta. At Urban Center Books in New York and Bill Stout in San Francisco the list is eclectic: Rossi, Gehry, Stirling, Graves, Ungers, Stern, Meier. And Builders Booksources in Berkeley is unique in having only one brand name monograph on its top ten—Michael Graves.

Other titles mentioned frequently among the top sellers were the GA House series, Spiro Kostof's *Settings and Rituals*, Tracy Kidder's *House*, Ada Louise Huxtable's *Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered*, classics like Palladio, Ledoux, Letarouilly, and "anything on fin-de-siècle Vienna." The new edition of Terence Conran's *House Book* is also selling well in some architectural bookstores, but not, perhaps, to architects.

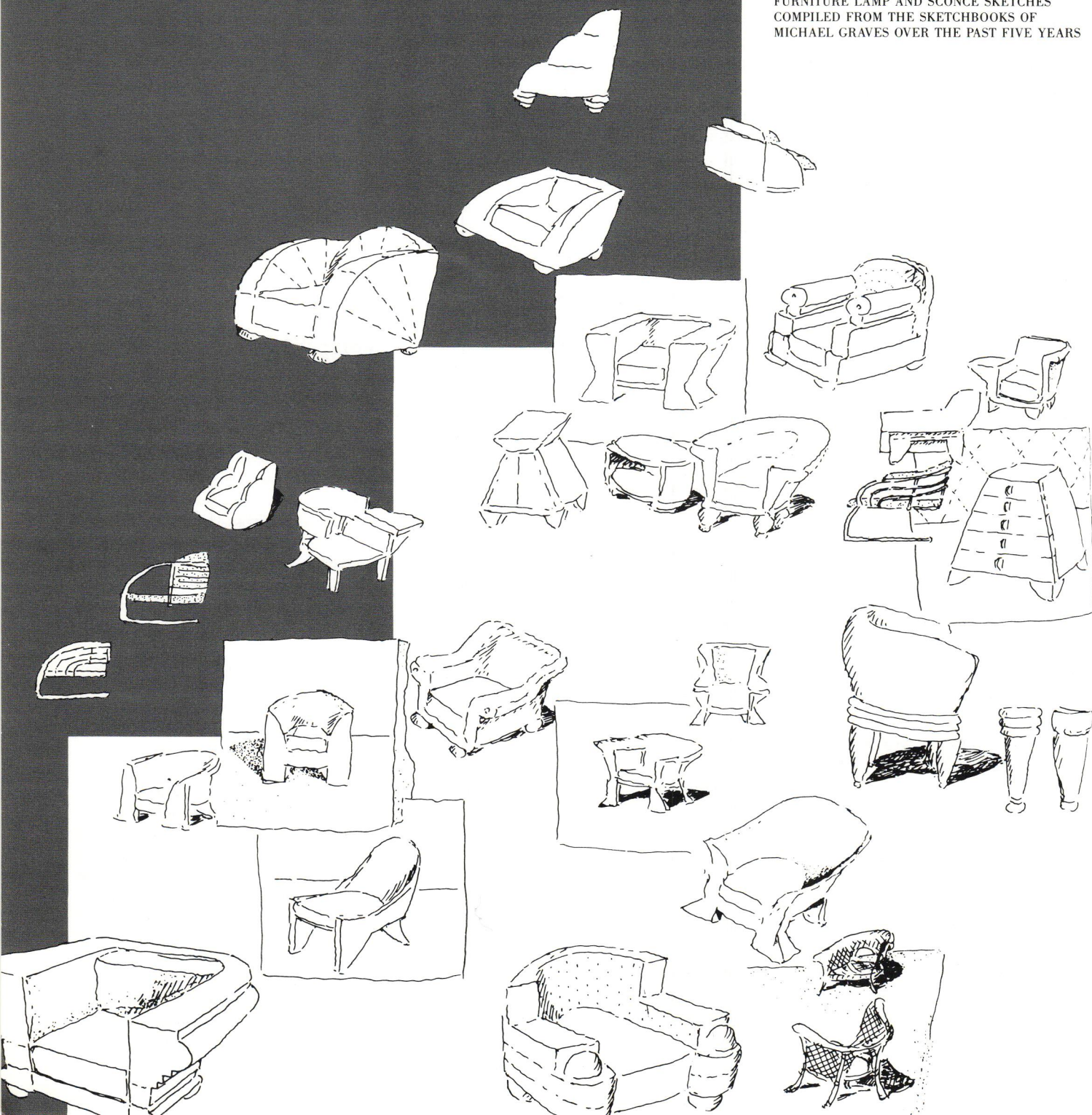
Some trends are clearly regional: at Urban Center Books preservation titles like *What Style Is It?* are popular, while in Houston the market for preservation books is nil, the city being only about thirty years old—although titles on the Edwardian, Lutyens, and on Georgian architecture are currently in favor. And only in Berkeley were brand name monographs edged out of the top ten by such craftsmanly titles as *Bernard Maybeck*, *Greene and Greene*, and *Craftsman Homes*.

(For this information we are indebted to Ray Nadeau of Boston Society of Architects Bookshop, John Frazier of Urban Center Books, New York, Walter Gray of Graybooks, Houston, Karl Killian of Brazos, Houston, Sally Kiskadoon of Builders Booksource, Berkeley, and William Stout of San Francisco.) (eds.).

GENEALOGY OF THE STARS

by Herbert Muschamp

FURNITURE LAMP AND SCENCE SKETCHES
COMPILED FROM THE SKETCHBOOKS OF
MICHAEL GRAVES OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS



Kings of Infinite Space, Charles Jencks, Academy Editions, St. Martin's Press, 1983, 103 pp., illus., \$19.95 pb.

Kings of Infinite Space presents in book form material assembled two years ago for a BBC television program by the architectural writer Charles Jencks. The program was the first in a projected series of eight, "matching eight Pre-Modernists with eight Post-Modernists, with the idea that this would bring the past alive and give the present more weight and substance." Future pairings are contemplated, Otto Wagner with Hans Hollein, Antonio Gaudí with Ricardo Bofill. The aim of the series premier is to propose Michael Graves as "the logical successor to Frank Lloyd Wright."

The text of roughly a hundred pages (an expanded version of the film's narration) consists of two parts: "The Spirit of Tradition," a review of Wright's life and work, and "The Return to the Public Realm," a discussion of Graves's work to date, highlighting Charles Jencks's own role in the development of Graves's career. In a brief introductory statement, "Pre-Modernism and Post-Modernism," Jencks defends his use of these terms as necessary to an understanding of "the continuity of Western culture in a period of disjunction." His commentary is punctuated with snippets of dialogue between himself and Michael Graves, reproduced here in interview form; occasionally the two are joined by Philip Johnson, in whose Glass House the interview portions were filmed and who presumably represents a living link between the Pre- and the Post-.

Jencks is aware that transferring his material from the television screen to the printed page involves certain risks.

There is the risk, which Kenneth Clark noted, of "literary suicide," turning the spoken into the written word, the imprecise locution into a

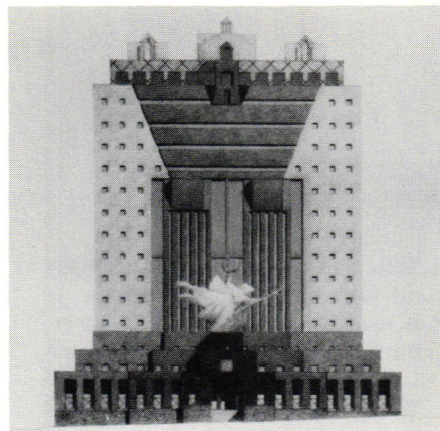
phrase to be pondered slowly in black and white. There is also the risk of broad generalization, a temptation and opportunity of the medium, where one must reach a broad audience with a broad message.

But these are risks Jencks has not hesitated to take on previous, untelevised occasions; without seeing the film it is impossible to determine whether a new medium has substantially increased his odds.

Jencks bases his nomination of Michael Graves as Frank Lloyd Wright's successor on biographical as well as architectural parallels. Wright and Graves were both born in the American Midwest. Their families were not rich; their fathers were often absent; their mothers offered strong encouragement in their choice of profession. Both men had acquired a high degree of urban sophistication at a young age, in sharp contrast to the provinciality of their upbringing. In private life, both could be described as serial monogamists; both responded to situations of personal stress and domestic upheaval by immersing themselves in work.

Like Frank Lloyd Wright, Michael Graves is a gifted draftsman whose renderings are prized by collectors as works of art. Like Wright, Graves seeks an architecture which emphasizes social ritual, especially the rituals of family life that traditionally center about the hearth or kitchen. Graves's buildings, like Wright's, employ a language of symbol, ornament, and color. From a cultural perspective, both architects are seen as inhabiting "a shift [*sic*] in culture, before and after Modernism."

Nowhere in the text does Jencks explicitly defend the claim implicit in his title, that Michael Graves stands with Wright as a master, in the Zevian sense, of the architectural articulation of space. Although the case could probably be argued by a television cameraman with an evocative selection of lenses, neither the black-and-



MICHAEL GRAVES, THE PORTLAND BUILDING. PORTLAND, OREGON.

white photographs in this book nor the firsthand evidence of the senses supports the suggestion that Graves would subscribe to Zevi's conception of space as "the protagonist of architecture."

Wright's most succinct summary of his attitude toward architectural space occurs in a few paragraphs of autobiographical reflection on Taoism, Laotse, and *The Book of Tea*. Some excerpts:

Many people have wondered about an Oriental quality they see in my work. I suppose it is true that when we speak of organic architecture, we are speaking of something that is more Oriental than Western. . . .

[But] the idea of organic architecture that the reality of the building lies in the space within to be lived in, the feeling that we must not enclose ourselves in an envelope which is the building, is not alone Oriental. Democracy, proclaiming the integrity of the individual per se, had the feeling if not the words. . . .

For a long time I thought I had "discovered" it, only to find after all that this idea of the interior space being the reality of the building was ancient and Oriental. It came to me quite naturally from my Unitarian ancestry and the Froebelian kindergarten training in the deeper primal sense of the form of the interior or heart of the appearance of "things". . . .

When pretty well puffed up by this I received a little book by Okakura Kazuko, entitled *The Book of Tea*, sent to me by the ambassador from Japan to the United States. Reading it, I came across this sentence: "The reality of the room was to be found in the space enclosed by the roof and walls, not in the roof and walls themselves."

Well, there was I. Instead of being the cake I was not even dough. . . . It took me days to swell up again. But I began to swell up again when I thought, "After all, who built it? Who put that thought into buildings? Laotse nor anyone had consciously built it."

While Wright, like Graves today, experimented with symbolic ornament applied to a building's structure, his philosophy of organic architecture was embodied primarily in the symbolic shapes he gave to space itself. The open plan of his interior spaces, the thrust of his eaves toward the prairie, the Guggenheim's "dream of open spaces and endless movement," in Vincent Scully's phrase, "drawn out in spite of everything"; these dramatized Wright's romantic view of America's youthful possibilities, a cultural equivalent to the physical extension of Manifest Destiny. His awareness of what space signified to Americans was of a kind expressed in words by the poet Charles Olsen: "I take SPACE to be the central fact to man born in America, from Folsom cave to now. I spell it large because it comes large here. Large, and without mercy."

The littered mid-century American landscape in which Graves grew up did not sustain an awareness of spatial possibilities comparable to Wright's. As Graves reflects, "There was nothing to love in terms of the real landscape, and only a few public buildings of any note: Paul Cret's public library and a few monuments to the war dead." As ceremonial objects in a blighted space drained of traditional ceremony, Graves's buildings rise like billboards begging that the merciless sprawl be civilized. And Graves has made no secret of the fact that he became an architect because the profession of painter involved too great an economic risk. "Unless you can draw like Picasso," warned his mother, "you better become an architect or engineer." And it could be said to his credit that the son has achieved enor-

mous success as a painter by packaging drawings and murals in the form of buildings. His model here, as in the formal language of his early residential designs, is Le Corbusier, whose career began in painting, and it is tempting to apply to Graves the rude remark Wright once made of Corb: "He was a painter. He was a bad one, but he should have kept on. No painter can understand architecture."

Can a journalist understand history? This book is an exact media equivalent of the "double-coding" Jencks so admires in Post-Modern buildings. On the cover, Jencks is described as "the noted historian," and has been photographed wearing an Arthur Schlesinger bow tie. Inside, he is the tireless polemicist, driven to enlist Frank Lloyd Wright for the Post-Modern cause, suppressing a familiar term like "Prairie Style" for his own "Free Style Classicism" to describe Wright's Oak Park work. Such license is partly justifiable as a corrective to the distortions of Modernist ideology, such as Pevsner's declaration that "Frank Lloyd Wright's outstanding importance lies in the fact that nobody else had by 1904 come so near to the style of today in his actual buildings." But Jencks's ideological aims produce distortions of his own.

Chief among these is the overemphasis Jencks places on Wright's public buildings in order to stress Michael Graves's role as a standard bearer in the Post-Modern "return to the public realm." Jencks attributes to a "sad breakdown in culture" the fact that Wright "never received the patronage of the state, church and establishment" essential for major public commissions. But it was one of Wright's most brilliant insights to perceive that not the public building but the individual family home represented the legitimate democratic equivalent to the great public monuments of European culture. Into these, rather than into his public works, Wright poured his most passionate convictions about

the nature of his culture: the sovereignty of the individual, his precedence to the state and all centralized authority symbolized by traditional public buildings. "The little gas station," in Wright's view, had more legitimate claims upon our attention than the massive urban edifice, as it would help bring into being new urban forms more appropriate, so he felt, to democratic culture.

If Wright recognized any authority over the ordinary individual it was the authority of the individual genius—the freedom of "the Adventurer," as he once stated it in allegorical terms, whose liberty could be maintained only in a constant fight against the stagnant conventions of the urban "Cave Dweller." For Wright himself this struggle took several forms: opposition to the American Renaissance (a struggle inherited from Sullivan), attacks upon the central city, and antagonism toward the Modern Movement's closing grasp on architectural practice in mid-century America. As Jencks's discussion of the controversy over Graves's Portland Public Services Building makes clear, this is one of two areas in which Graves and Wright constructively can be compared.

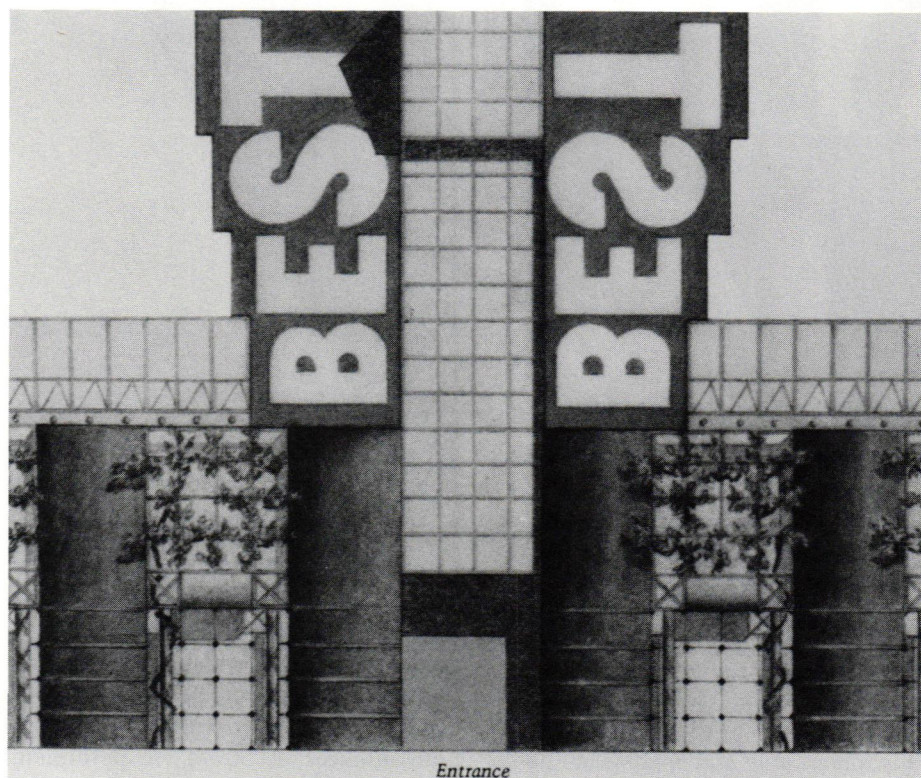
The second (an area in which not only Graves but also Jencks and Johnson can be considered among Wright's successors) concerns the architect's need, skill, desire, and responsibility to communicate with the public. Contrary to Jencks's assertion, "Wright the Sensationalist" was not "the last of his four characters to emerge after the Second World War." In his apprenticeship years, Wright absorbed as much of the stir-men's-blood showmanship of "Uncle Dan" Burnham as the martyr-to-integrity paranoia of *lieber Meister* Louis Sullivan. In the middle years, Wright's victimization by the yellow press further sensitized him to the importance of the media in propagating social and cultural values.

Wright was also quick to grasp the extent to which communications media

had replaced the great civic spaces of the past as molders of social form. Early on, he forecast that radio and television stations would be added to "the little gas station." And in the Marin County Civic Center (a work ridiculed here by Jencks and Graves as the kitsch product of a senile mind), a symbolic broadcasting mast (the only vertical element in Wright's only government building) expressed Wright's view that the power of mass communication exceeded that of government in shaping the culture of the public realm. Acutely conscious of Victor Hugo's famous chapter on the "murder" of architecture by the printing press, Wright understood that architecture in the public realm has always been rooted in communication; its cause and its purpose is communication, and in the 20th century the means of communication has altered the architect's role.

Though Graves's public buildings often resemble de Chirico-like monuments to the kind of vanished civic spaces for which Wright had no sentimentality (one cannot even reach Wright's civic center except by car), Graves, too, has created a public architecture by communicating his ideas through the public to a vast audience who have never seen his buildings firsthand. Indeed, the generation that has responded so warmly to his work may be the first to consider architecture entirely accessible through the media alone. When asked to discuss a building that seemed to them most representative of contemporary architecture, a number of participants in my criticism workshop selected Graves's public library in San Juan Capistrano. What seemed most representative to *me* was that none of the students had seen the building or felt that this limited his capacity to discuss it.

The Graves style is a highly personal synthesis of images bombarded at the collective memory over several generations by double-Carousel projections and glossy print reproductions, a mo-



BEST PRODUCTS BUILDING, NEW YORK. (PHOTO FROM K. WHEELER et al., *MICHAEL GRAVES* (RIZZOLI).

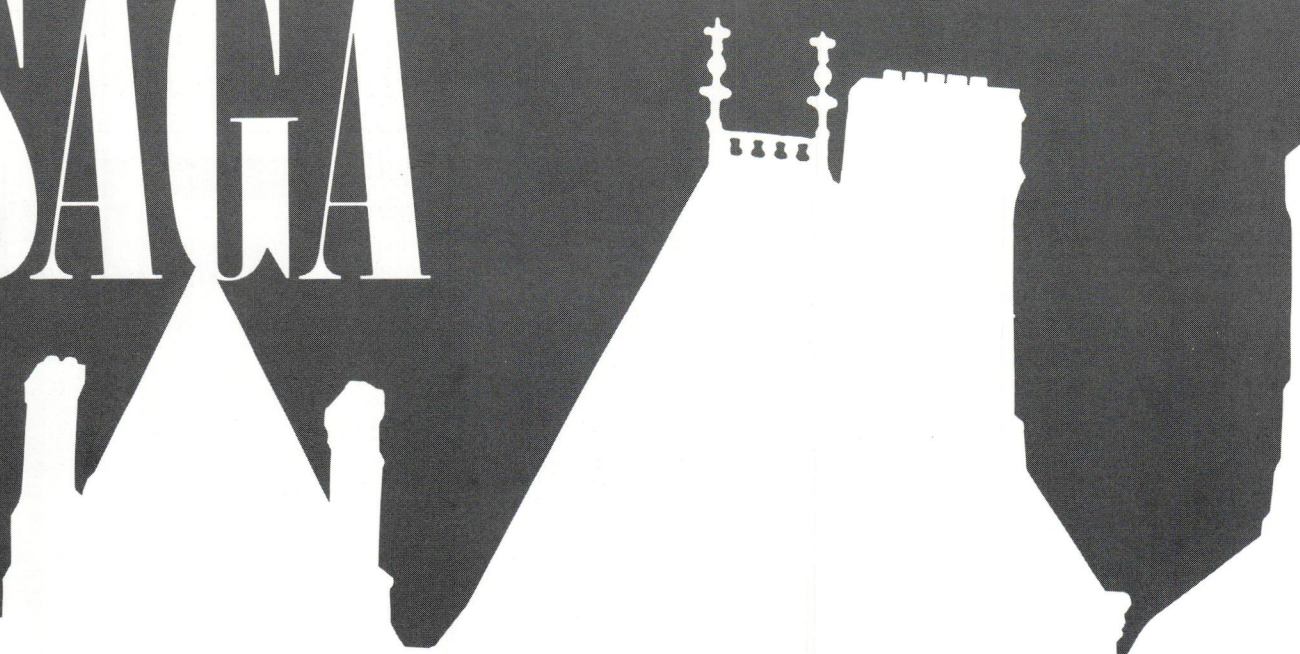
saic of Secessionist grids, Constructivist cantilevers, Palladian arches, Modernist curtain walls, neoclassical Ledoux-dads, vernacular allusions. If the synthesis does not master space, at least it appears to get a hold on the vast accumulation of clutter with which American space is filled. This is the clutter of consumption—cultural, material—over which the media have long maintained curatorial authority (you can carry your share away in your Graves-designed shopping bag). And, as though delighted at last to have an architect whose visual skills can measure up to an art director's, the media responded by turning Graves himself into that most valuable commodity, a celebrity.

Those who see celebrity in a cynical light might say (paraphrasing Leavis's dismissal of the Sitwells) that Graves belongs more to the history of publicity than to the history of archi-

tecture. But isn't publicity one of the major chapters of architectural history now being written? What is publicity but an acknowledgment that the public (that great "premature Post-Modernist") exists? What could provide a more effective strategy for breaking out of the Modernist academic cloister?

Jencks, Johnson, and Graves have each played a major role in "the return to the public realm" by shifting the focus of architectural discourse from the academy to the media, from education to entertainment. Here the three have gathered to honor the memory of an architect who held out against the academy's rise and to celebrate the breakthrough of one who escaped. Not significant as history, Jencks's book is nonetheless noteworthy as a souvenir album of a meeting between three protagonists in a historically significant process.

SAGA OF A VICTORIAN PILE



The Law Courts: The Architecture of George Edmund Street, David B. Brownlee, Architectural History Foundation and MIT, 1984, 430 pp., illus., \$45.00.

This remarkable and magisterial book is perhaps the best piece of work by an American on any topic of British architectural history since the publication of Hitchcock's *Early Victorian Architecture* (Yale, 1954). Amidst the long series of gray, incurious monographs issuing of late from both sides of the Atlantic, it shines out like a light for its intelligence, richness, and felicity of expression.

To write an absorbing book of over four hundred pages on a single building is not easy. David Brownlee's secret is that he has mastered the punishing weight of evidence which survives about the building of London's Law Courts, when others would have been flattened by it. Confronted by the endless controversies surrounding this most uncompromisingly Gothic of British public buildings, he has delved with exemplary clarity and tenacity into the law, politics, religion, economics, technology, and, of course, architecture. The result is of inestimable value for anyone seeking to grasp the complexities of Victorian public building.

At the center of Brownlee's picture lie the personality and persistence

of George Edmund Street, the long-suffering architect to the Law Courts. In some ways the book is a substitute for the biography of Street that the author may have wanted to write, but any future biographer will be hard put to do better. Brownlee is a passionate admirer of Street. A percipient opening chapter assesses him as "the creative and intellectual leader of High Victorianism." That may be too strong a phrase; "High Victorianism," a tag of which we need to be increasingly wary, produced many fine architects of varied abilities and roughly equal stature who needed no absolute "leader." But where Brownlee hits the mark is in casting Street as the representative of this original phase in English architecture most consistently able to articulate his thoughts and principles and to translate moral and religious ideas into bricks and mortar. For that reason anyone intrigued by the Gothic Revival in England is constantly drawn back to Street, as to Pugin.

Street was a church architect. In a prodigiously prolific career he built almost no public buildings, with the single, colossal exception of the Law Courts. How he came into the inheritance of this golden opportunity (or hot potato) occupies over a hundred pages of the book.

First comes the story of the movement for the reform of the hopelessly, criminally deficient processes of Brit-

ish civil law, and of the sundry architectural plans that this elicited. All or most of this is quite new. Then follows the oft-told tale of the Law Courts competition of 1866-1867, as comprehensively bungled an event as any such architectural battle ever turned out to be. Brownlee's definitive account of it unobtrusively puts previous authors right here and there, though he goes along with the customary verdict that Burges and Waterhouse in particular were unlucky not to win. Street, we learn, in part owed his selection as one of the competitors to an admiring W. E. Gladstone. One memorable fact that emerges from the long and tangled saga that follows is that Gladstone's unobtrusive support saved Street's bacon more than once in the lean years after the competition. The changes and complexities of government were many, and Gladstone's economical Liberal administrations proved harder for the architect to cope with than the relatively easygoing Tory ones. But Gladstone, one of the original commissioners for the huge project, identified with it and ensured that it did not collapse, as it threatened to do under the weight of architectural and political bickering, legal delays, and sundry episodes of incompetence.

Brownlee disarmingly admits that Street's competition entry showed "terrible planning." He was chosen joint winner on the strength of his

by Andrew Saint



THE BRICK-FACED EAST FAÇADE

elevations, and at first was to be associated to carry out the design with another competitor, E. M. Barry, a much more capable planner. The arrangement soon fell through, but luckily Street had several years in which to learn how to plan a public building before construction started. For most of this time he was being harassed with changes of brief, scale, and even site, since it looked for a while as if the whole building might be moved bodily southward to a position next to the Thames. Brownlee convinces us that Street's design for the riverfront was as splendid as his competition elevation for the Strand. But eventually the Government reverted to the original site, with a reduced frontage. Work on the foundations began in 1871 and, with a perilously shaky builder, on the superstructure in 1874. Street, exhausted, died in 1881, just before the building was completed. He had been unwise enough not to let up on his church work during the period of the Law Courts, but the ceaseless acrimony must also have played its part in his demise. The finishings were left to his son, in collaboration with Arthur Blomfield.

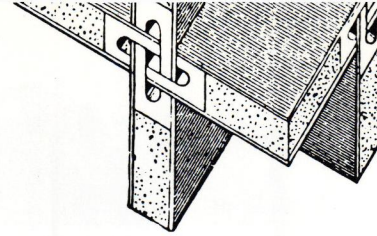
The author contends that the Law Courts as built were as masterful as anything Street ever designed. This is difficult to sustain, and many will fail to be convinced. As Brownlee recognizes, Street's Gothic went through some major changes between 1865

and 1880, sacrificing much of its toughness for a sparer, more astringent quality. It continued to be original and arresting, but lost some of its power and drama. Though this is best seen in the churches, the same process was at work in the Law Courts. Brownlee argues that the endless revisions allowed him to articulate the building better, and to fuse picturesqueness and formality satisfactorily on the Strand front. Certainly much thought went into the front, but whether it ended up right may be questioned; the back, facing Carey Street, is in many ways a happier effort. Inside, the great hall is splendid but insufficiently individual, while the courtrooms have none of the spatial inspiration which Soane had brought to the type fifty years before. The unvarnished truth is that the Law Courts are not Street's masterpiece. Their saga is part of a larger and sadder epic: the failure of the Gothic adventure to deal successfully with great secular buildings. Among Street's contemporaries, Waterhouse alone was able to cope with the conditions for building in Gothic on this scale. Street, like most English architects, was best with smaller buildings—in his case churches.

Minor complaints could be made about some of Brownlee's points of emphasis. He tends too much to depict Street as the victim of an ogreish bureaucratic system. In fact there is

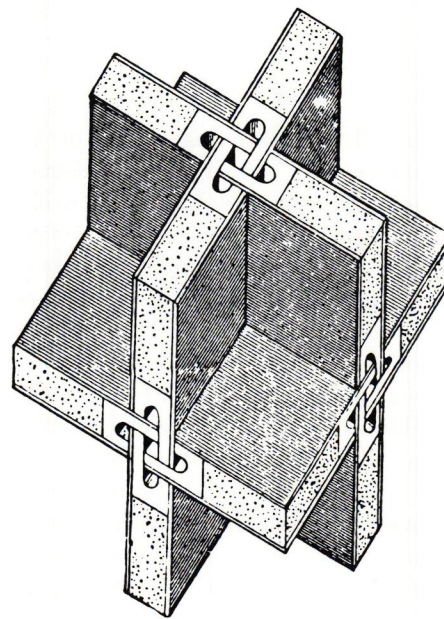
some evidence (which Brownlee does not quote) that he was not a very efficient architect. Occasionally Brownlee overlooks a connection between architecture and politics. The influence of William Cowper, the Commissioner of Works who set up the Law Courts competition, seems to be underrated; his wife was a confidante of Ruskin's, and Cowper brought in William Morris's firm very early in its career to decorate some rooms at St. James's Palace, and employed the young W. E. Nesfield on some small architectural jobs, private and public. Cowper's successor, Acton Ayrton, who insisted on savage cuts in Street's design, gets the automatic drubbing which all historians seem to hand out to him, when a subtler account of his motives and of the relations between the British government and architects in public employment would have been more helpful. In general the "art-architects" like Burges and Street seem always to get the benefit of Brownlee's doubt, whereas the plebeian "architect-surveyors" involved in the story, like George Pownall and Henry Hunt, often capable and considerable public figures themselves, sometimes have their opinions dismissed too lightly.

These are nuances. The book is superb in its execution and production, and deserves to find a place on the shelves of any enthusiast for British 19th-century architecture.



The Dream of the FACTORY-MADE HOUSE

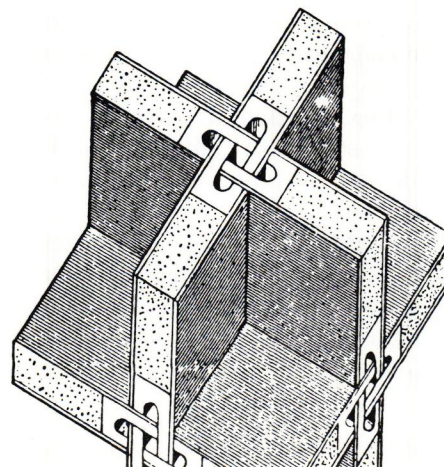
by Reyner Banham



The Dream of the Factory-Made House:
Walter Gropius and Konrad Wachsmann,
Gilbert Herbert, MIT, 1984, 408 pp., illus.,
\$22.50.

If ever there was a doomed concept in the 20th century it must surely be the factory-made house as conceived by architects. Every such system that has failed has had perfect excuses that are nothing to do with the architecture: in nearly every case they are nothing to do with the technology either. But they have failed so consistently that their doom seems like a natural law, and raises questions about whether architects have the first idea what they are doing in this field. Their track record is so miserable, as compared with commercial prefabricators who don't bother with architecture, that an embarrassed silence envelops the whole topic in most histories of the Modern Movement—in spite of the observable fact that “the factory-made house” was an inte-

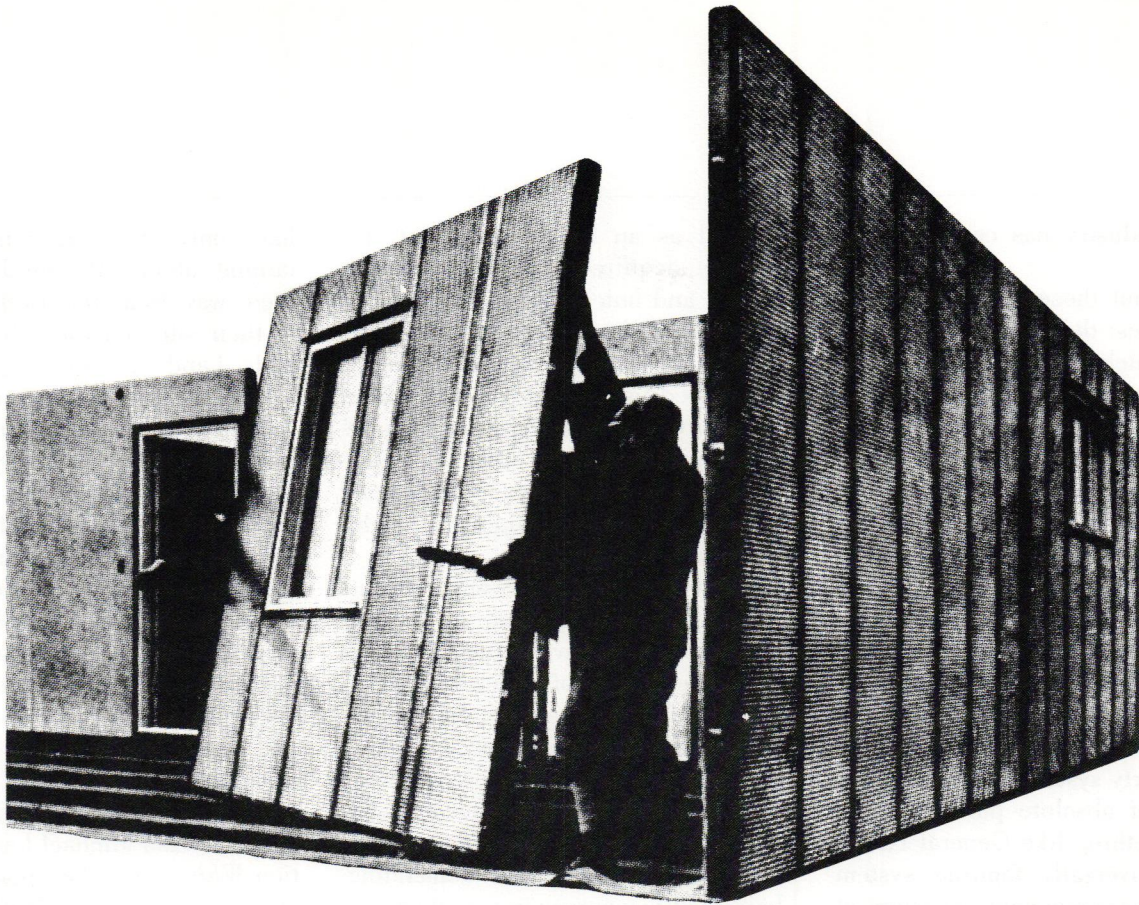
WACHSMANN AND GROPIUS, GENERAL PANEL
OFFICE PARTITION SYSTEM. DETAIL OF JOINING,
1943-44.



gral part of the movement's program even before Le Corbusier's rhetoric about *les maisons fabriquées en serie*.

The silence covers even the few odd systems that have managed to make a modest success in the market place, as if they are almost too embarrassing to the great and the mighty for public recall. What history of modern architecture, or of prefabrication for that matter, ever mentions the Tech-bilt system, which was the brainchild of a respectable architect—Carl Koch—and, largely by keeping a low profile, succeeded modestly where loudly trumpeted projects of the same postwar years died the death.

The more portentous disasters cover a whole spectrum, from Marshall Erdman's failure to mass-produce Frank Lloyd Wright (imagine; Erdman *and* Wright, and it still bombed!) to Gropius and Wachsmann's debacle with the General Panel House. The Erdman/Wright embarrassment may be construed as a fairly private affair, but



WALTER GROPIUS, GROWING HOUSE USING
HIRSCH SYSTEM. ERECTION PROCESS, BERLIN
EXHIBITION, 1932.

the egg on the face of Gropius and Wachsmann, elegantly chronicled in Gus Herbert's long-awaited study of General Panel, is egg on the face of the whole Modern Movement, and proof—if further proof were needed—that the mind-set of the International Style was not the mind-set of successful mass-production technology, in spite of all the high hopes and elaborately detailed drawings.

After reading Herbert, one may be permitted to wonder if the detailed drawings were not part of the trouble. Looking for God in the details may be one of the virtues of high architecture, but Wachsmann's close, focused attention to (infatuation with?) the details of the jointing systems, together with his inability to let them alone after they had been detailed, and/or loss of interest after they had necessarily to be finalized—all that may be part of a fundamentally wrong mind-set. His joints were, of course, marvelously ingenious and almost

mathematically elegant, classics of the application of intellect to design, but they seem to have become a diversion from more general issues that might usefully have been addressed.

As John McHale once enquired, pointedly, "So Konrad has designed a joint? Bucky Fuller has designed a dozen since Christmas!" (Not that Fuller's record with the Wichita House was any better than that of Gropius and Wachsmann!) The product that these amazing joints were to hold together was, in the end, so unbelievably ordinary that one wonders if it was worth trying to market it; especially since closely equivalent accommodations for returning war heroes could be built just as cheaply by conventional means in most parts of the U.S.A., as was soon to become abundantly clear. And the reason for that may well have been that the compatible components of the "meta-system" of which all American building is an unavoidable part—Sweet's

Catalog—already add up to a "standard panel system," dimensionally dependent on the regular four-by-eight sheet of drywall or plywood!

In North America, more than anywhere else in the industrialized world, architects meticulously elaborating philosophically or aesthetically pure systems for prefabricating buildings tend to look like sleepwalkers or autistics who have lost all touch with reality—out there in Real Life Land the market place is full of systems of every sort, and has been for a long time now. Herbert refers briefly to mobile home building, the ultimate factory-made house system, and from there down he could have proceeded through modular units and Butler buildings and prepackaged home kits and Sears catalogue do-it-yourself garages until encountering the diffuse but ultimate systems offered by Sweet's. It has been a very rich scene indeed and embraces practically every known style or approach to prefabrication

that the industry has come up with to date.

The gamut these systems run has two extremes: the "pure" or "closed" systems which utilize a limited range of highly standardized and interchangeable components that are not compatible with components from outside the system; and the "dirty" or "open" systems (like Tech-bilt or the English "CLASP" schools system) that offer a much wider range of less standardized components, often comfortably compatible with stuff from outside the system because many of them originated outside the system anyhow. And if, in that gamut, Sweet's is the ultimate dirty system, then the opposite pole of absolute purity will be either something like General Panel, or that universally familiar system with only *one* component, the Quonset Hut!

The difference between General Panel and the Quonset Hut is that the Quonset Hut is as unpretentious as it is simple, and the simplicity is real, whereas the General Panel house was vastly more complicated than it looked, and came with more pretensions than some major monuments. These were, on the one side, the social hopes and ideological program that came with Gropius; on the other, the obsessive architectural professionalism of Wachsmann. The latter is the more crucial, but ultimately odder aspect of General Panel. Herbert does a very good job of showing how, against the expected theoretical bent, a pragmatic, commercial approach to prefabrication by a number of German companies, up till the time that Nazi politics forced the likes of Gropius and Wachsmann to leave, had produced an industrialized building tradition reaching back into the 1880s in the case of some firms, and—as in nearly all European countries—showing a record of modest commercial success in producing military and other temporary, emergency, or special-purpose structures.

Now it was from this pragmatic side that Wachsmann came. Though not

trained as an architect at first, he rapidly acquired the obsessive instincts and finicky habits of the most fanatical kind of architectural designer, so that his work was increasingly dominated by an almost watch maker ingenuity and the elaboration of those superlative drawings that so often seemed more important to him than any of the actual buildings they might have produced.

From this point of view he was probably the worst kind of partner Gropius could have found in such a venture; instead of counterbalancing Gropius's intellectualism by operational pragmatism, he fanned his predilection for metaphysically satisfying universal multi-purpose panels and "magic zipper" joints, often of the greatest complexity and demanding hairbreadth accuracy in manufacture. The drawings and the joints reproduced in *The Dream of the Factory-Made House* are fabulous, no other word for it, but they would probably have doomed the system anyhow—if faulty commercial management had not done so almost before the production line at Burbank was properly onstream in July 1947.

Of course, it is precisely the fame and High Architecture qualities of Gropius and Wachsmann that make the writing of a book like this worthwhile; in the history of prefabrication General Panel is only a minor incident, but in the history of Modern architecture it is a fairly major debacle, because it marks the failure of yet another of the movement's most cherished dreams. The Wachsmann/Gropius story also has a side issue that makes it unlike all other prefabrication stories, one that Herbert, who has taught for years at Technion, is uniquely qualified to tell. This is the story of the prefab houses, in various German systems, that the earlier refugees from the Nazis were allowed to export for their own occupation after their arrival in what is now Israel.

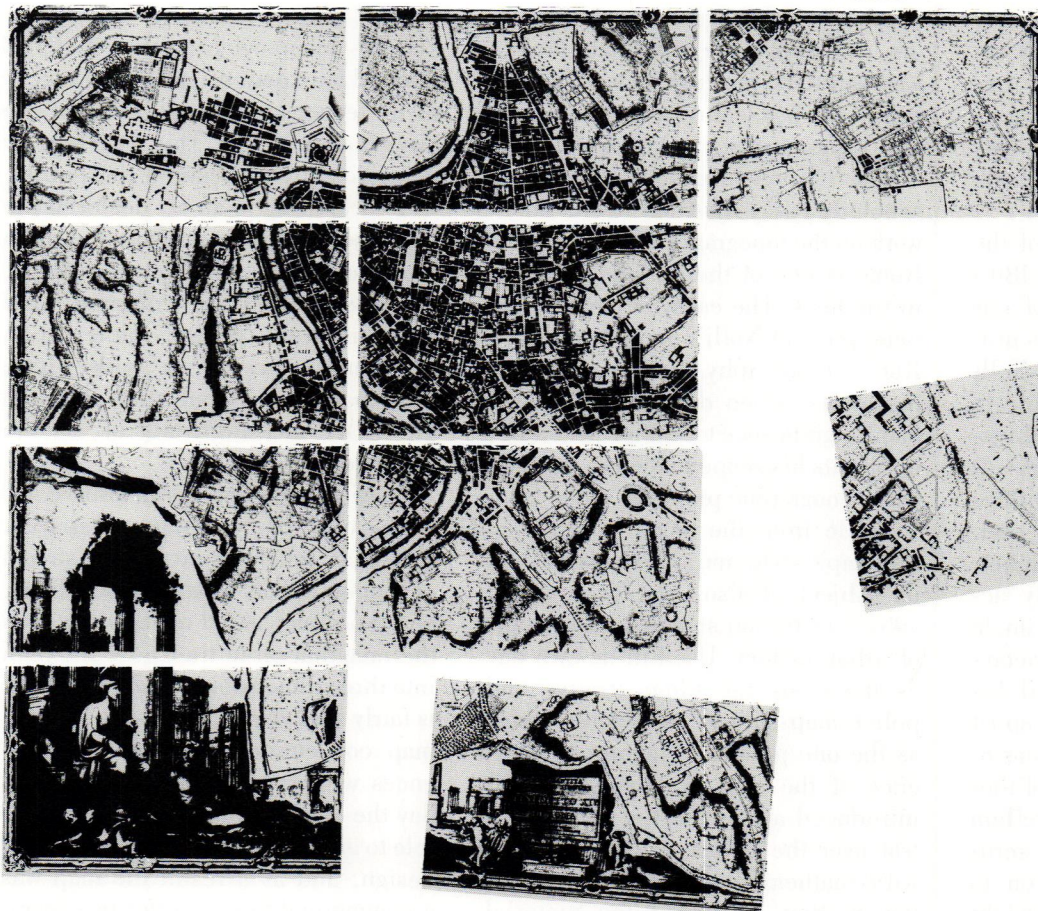
"All in all," Herbert observes, "per-

haps only 20 or 25 buildings containing about 100 dwellings found their way from the Berlin factories to their sites on the hillsides of the Holy Land ... yet as a chapter of history, it is not without significance." Actually, to have shipped that many buildings in barely four years in the teeth of three embattled and hostile bureaucracies (those of Germany, Britain, and local Jewish organizations) must have been quite an achievement, but the significance that Herbert has in mind is that of culture and politics. However, it is not difficult now to think of another and even more striking one from the point of view of architecture: the prefabs' part in the modernization of cities like Haifa and Tel Aviv. Had Michael Levin's exhibition *White City* taken place a couple of years earlier, or Herbert's book been written that much later, both, I think, would have been different. The book could have presented a better sense of the local *Baukultur* into which the prefabs had to fit, and the exhibition would have been reinforced by the revelation of yet another tie that bound local modern architecture to the mainstream of the International Style.

And we would all have been the richer for it; for, as the exhibition (at the Jewish Museum in New York in the Fall of 1984), the catalogue (by Michael Levin himself), and the accompanying album of photographs (by Judith Turner) all made abundantly clear, Jerusalem, Haifa, and—above all—Tel Aviv contain a treasury of International Style buildings and complete Modernist cityscapes whose absence from the general historical record leaves all of us, and the record, significantly poorer in our understanding of the range and richness of "that old Modern architecture." Herbert's book may cover only a rather small topic at face value, but it helps to raise a number of much larger questions, and that of Tel Aviv Modernism may yet prove to be the most provoking of them all.

IMAGO URBIS: REPRESENTING ROME

by Richard Ingersoll



The Nolli Plan of Rome of 1748, Giambattista Nolli, with introduction by Allan Ceen, J. H. Aronson (Box 302C, Highmount, NY 12441), portfolio of 19 sheets, \$75.00; bound in leather, \$250.00 (after 1/15/86, \$96.00 and \$315.00).

For most Westerners Rome has been an idea as much as a place. Its topography is saturated with the archetypes of religion, law, and culture. Freud, who had a private obsession with Rome, at one point considered using the city as an analogue for the human mind, because of its potential for the simultaneous portrayal of past and present.¹ Her hills, public spaces, and monuments are cue cards to the collective memory of western civilization, carrying an associational quality that constantly upstages their phenomenological impact. The strength of this historical code gives Rome a special authority, and, together with the lush

beauty of the city (and in my mind because of an erotic dimension that is harder to pinpoint), has made it one of the most represented places on earth. While artists and architects since Brunelleschi have sought to strengthen their classical roots by sketching her ruins, printed *vedute* and maps from the 16th century onward anticipated the postcard and coffee-table book as important consumer items for pilgrims and tourists. The myth of the city—the ancient city, the holy city, the modern city—was aggressively merchandised for the visitors and became an integral support to what was primarily a parasitical economy.

Without question the most fascinating portrayal of the city, one that paradoxically rejects and promotes the myth of Rome, is Giambattista Nolli's *Pianta Grande di Roma* of 1748. Nolli's map captured the city just as the 300-

year process of its replanning reached its zenith and the scattered projects of individual papal promotion coalesced into a more or less unified image. During the first half of the 18th century, the Rome of the papal restoration was triumphantly completed, with the final urban embroidering of the Trevi fountain, the Spanish Steps, Porta di Ripetta, and the Hospital of S. Michele. Nolli's minute detailing and crisp contrasting of solid and void reveal

the intricate stitching of the *abitato* (the built-up area), and his treatment of the gardens and villas in the unbuilt spaces within the walls shows an equally integrated pattern—like a generous lace fringe on a shock of coarse linen.

Now for a tenth of the cost of the airfare to Rome, we can visit the 18th-century *Urbe* in the comfort of our own libraries. J. H. Aronson has produced a superb facsimile of the Nolli map that is frankly indispensable to Rome scholars, cartography enthusiasts, and architectural dreamers—it goes without saying that every college library is incomplete without one. Aronson, an architect, cartographer, aerial photographer, and highly accomplished draftsman (see for example his aerial perspectives in Ed Bacon's *Design of Cities*), has indulged his passion for the city much in the spirit of Nolli—with rigorous enthusiasm.

The edition has been photolithographed on heavy warm white vellum in the original format and size; scrupulous attention has been given to preserving the proper line weight throughout so that not a single detail has been lost, making it the only accurate, true-to-scale reproduction of Nolli's map (the reduced scale and poor resolution of the reproductions in Frutaz's *Piante e vedute di Roma*, 1956, or the 1977 edition of the Nolli map by the London Polytechnic are indeed a hazard to eyesight). Like the original, the big map is printed on twelve folios; a reduced version of the entire map occupies a single sheet, and a reduced version of Bufalini's 1551 map, the acknowledged predecessor in its ichnographic method of Nolli's endeavor, occupies another. The four other sheets provide toponymic indexes of the buildings, churches, and spaces corresponding to the 1,321 numbers on the map, listed first in numerical order according to city district and then alphabetically. Initially over 10,000 numbers were planned for an accompanying treatise, but difficulties devel-

oped with Nolli's scholarly collaborators, and this more ambitious project was scuttled; nevertheless, it is still one of the best sources for identifying and locating obscure buildings.

The edition is accompanied by a scholarly essay by Allan Ceen, whose work on the topography of Renaissance Rome is one of the best-kept secrets in the field. The essay is particularly perceptive of Nolli's understanding of Roman topography, his precision, and his errors. Ceen does not probe the map's significance to European culture, but limits his scope to the topographic and iconographic problems of the map.

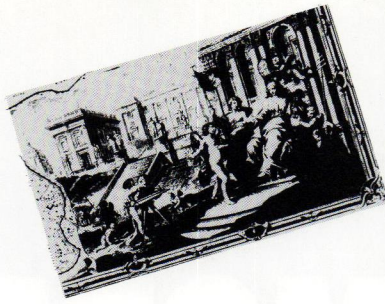
Aside from the sheer pleasure of the map's style and the fascination of its subject, it also begs for attention as one of the outstanding documents of urban history. Used in its own day as the basis for administrative and police maps, it still serves historians as the one precise topographic reference of the city. In other words, it introduced a new form of visual control over the information of the city, with mathematical and rational authority that surpassed the pictorial realism of perspective vision.

Aside from the bottom marginalia of allegorical figures placed in perspective views, the map is presented in entirely two-dimensional terms. Only non-architectural things, such as river-mills, boats, and trees, are shown in three dimensions so as not to be confused with the built fabric. Nolli's map was right at the threshold of the modern abstract map. His conventions for showing hills as shaded berms show that his visual thinking was not quite ready for the purely analytical use of contour lines. Nonetheless, it was an uncompromisingly abstract description of the city, which charges it with a bolt of interpretive tension. It contradicted the myth of the city as a series of landmarks and dynastic celebrations, whose architecture was languidly tangible and engagingly three-dimensional. Nolli was obviously inspired by the Enlightenment's attention to the defini-

tion of differences and categories, and his maniacal precision of detail allowed for a new, scientific awareness of the exact size and location of the city's components. This striving for demystification alienated the public, who, according to an art dealer of the day, "would have preferred a map that showed the structure of palaces, churches, obelisks, columns, and other relevant things, rather than spending money for a work whose principal merit is only that it shows the exact measurements of all the places of the city."²

Nolli established the definitive positions of all the buildings and spaces, giving as much value to the streets and open space as to the buildings. His two-dimensional method required the imagination to transpose the plan into three dimensions. Today everyone is fairly well versed in two-dimensional map conventions from their experiences with road maps, but in Nolli's day the conventions were only accessible to architects or those who followed design, and as a result the map was a commercial failure: after two years, only 340 of the original edition of 1,874 had been sold. The public was more fond of veduta-maps, such as the 1593 Tempesta map or the 1676 Falda map in which the buildings were shown in bird's-eye perspective. These maps were of course highly imprecise in their presentation of street patterns and even in their depiction of façades, but nonetheless appealed to a taste for realism. Nolli's map must be understood in opposition to this pictorial tradition as a dramatic break from the grip of fantasy and myth.

Nolli (1701-1756) was not widely remembered as an architect, having designed only the gardens of Villa Albani, and one small church in Trastevere in the style of Ferdinando Fuga. The art work and engraving of the map were executed by others, and the archaeological research was directed by scholars. His original contribution was the rigorous precision of the surveyor. A playful reference



to this task is found in the bottom right marginalia, where *putti* are demonstrating the use of his surveying tools. His cartographic rationalism was preceded in the 1450s by Leon Battista Alberti, who theorized on the method for precisely surveying the city (for the purpose of plotting the archaeological ruins) and by the aforementioned Leonardo Bufalini, also a surveyor. Bufalini's map was drawn after the 1527 Sack of Rome, when the city's fortifications were being assessed and replanned. It was the first ichnographic map of Rome, printed in rough woodcut technique, and was fairly precise in showing spatial relationships but imprecise in its details. It stands perhaps as the most convincing evidence that the city was thought of as having a unified plan at that early date, i.e., 50 years before the comprehensive plan of Sixtus V. Nolli pays his debt to Bufalini by republishing a spruced-up version of the 1551 map, reorienting it to match his own and using more refined graphic techniques, while preserving the street patterns and errors of the original. This allowed him to show both the changes in the city's plan and also how far the science of surveying and cartography had progressed during the 200-year hiatus.

As Ceen points out, the other major source for Nolli's map was the ancient *Forma Urbis* produced under Septimius Severus in the late 3rd century A.D. In 1742, Nolli was commissioned as part of a team to restore the fragments of this huge marble map, and he appears to have been influenced by some of its graphic conventions; for instance, he uses double lines to show the walls of public buildings and single lines for private. Ceen discovered, however, that Nolli does not seem to have drawn his information for the ancient monuments from the *Forma Urbis*, making errors in the plan and orientation of the Theater of Pompey (shown on a north/south, rather than east/west axis) and the form of the Theater of Marcellus,

which would have been corrected if he had followed the data from the *Forma Urbis*.

Nolli's map was also pivotal to the two greatest art theorists of the Roman Enlightenment: Piranesi and Winckelmann. The map was commissioned in 1736 but carried out mostly under the reign of Benedict XIV Lambertini (1740-1758), who, if not always generous to the project, at least did not obstruct it. The patronage of Cardinal Alessandro Albani was much more sincere and important to the careers of all three men. Piranesi and Winckelmann, though having nearly opposite theories, both began from a new archaeological understanding of antiquity. The former, in his theory of *magnificenza*, valued the practical solutions of the Romans and traced the origins of architecture to the Etruscans, while the latter, in his championing of the logic and clarity of classical forms, gave preeminence to the Greeks. Nolli's map was a tool for both of them and Nolli himself was directly involved with their intellectual progress. Piranesi assisted him with the production of the map, executing the artwork and engraving for the small version (which was dedicated to Cardinal Albani). Winckelmann, who arrived in Rome a year before Nolli's death, was installed in Villa Albani and appointed Prefect of Antiquities. Nolli's map was one of the scientific tools with which he began the more scrupulous ordering of artifacts that has served as the foundation of archaeology and art history.

Despite its rigor, Nolli's map is not without fantasy. The figures in the bottom margins take up about a quarter of the space of the map and provide a gesture to the figurative tradition that helps to mediate his highly abstract work. Much of Ceen's essay is devoted to clarifying the interpretation of these perspective

scenes as allegories of the Christianized Rome and as encomiums to Nolli's patrons. Perhaps the greatest fantasy, however, comes not from the lower figures but from the viewer's absorption into the complex fabric of the street patterns. The city is shown as a work of art in its completed form; the representational conventions give it a homogeneous unity. It bristles with details that make those who do not know the city wonder, and those who do know it sigh with recognition. It registers the slightest jogs of the street, the columnated courtyards, the horse-shoe of box-seats in the theaters, the rhythmic bays of church interiors. If we look at a detail of the Vatican Borgo, we can read from left to right the precise plan of the basilica, the jumbled package of the Vatican palace with its gardens, the columnated oval of the Piazza, the straight trajectory of the central street, the hierarchy of the street system gauged by the width of the streets, the obelisk and fountains, the courtyards of the important palaces, the darker lines of the two sets of walls, the vibrant prominence of the earthwork fortifications, and the massive stature of Castel Sant'Angelo, axially aligned to the starburst of the trident across the bridge. Every place that can be penetrated by human circulation has been left white, while the unpublic solid matter is shown with darker hatching. One is ushered through these white spaces to familiar monuments and places with the thrill of finally understanding the relationship of the parts to the whole. It is a demystifying image of the city that regenerates the myth, a prospect that might have even made Freud reconsider.

1. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, 1930, (Norton, 1961), pp 16-19. About his "Rome neurosis" see: Schorske, Carl E., *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, Vintage Books, 1981, pp 181-207.

2. Clemente Faccioli, "Giambattista Nolli e la su Grande Pianta," in *Studi Romani*, 1966, p. 433 (author's translation).

MODERNISM

THE BRIDE OF BIG BUSINESS

by Liane Lefaivre

The Romance of Commerce and Culture: Capitalism, Modernism and the Chicago-Aspen Crusade for Cultural Reform, James Sloan Allen, University of Chicago, 1983, 336 pp., \$27.50.

How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War, Serge Guilbaut, translated by Arthur Goldhammer, University of Chicago, 1983, 278 pp., illus., \$22.50.

Increasingly, we are observing a shift in the way of looking at post-World War II Modernism, away from criticism, toward history. This is the case with the books under review, *The Romance of Commerce and Culture* and *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*. Both works focus on the rise of Modernism in design and painting in the late 1940s, a major formative period which has been largely overlooked. In addition, both studies provide a "total" view of the topics, placing them in a broad context of cultural, economic, and political developments.

James Sloan Allen examines the role of big business in the creation of postwar Modernism, mostly in graphic design and architecture. Inevitably,

the other side enters in—the role of postwar Modernism in promoting big business.

The author traces the "romance of commerce and culture" to the second half of the 19th century in England, where the early functional designs of Voysey and his circle were such a boon to the English design industry they made it the object of international envy. The journey to England of the German Peter Muthesius, shrouded as it is in an atmosphere of foreign intrigue, has become legendary. Sent by his government, and indirectly by local business interests, his mission was to uncover the key to British dynamism and relay it home. Accordingly, upon his return in 1908 Muthesius founded the Werkbund, an independent association of designers and industrialists dedicated to the cause of functional design easily adaptable to mass production. In the same year, the German electrical appliance company AEG took the initiative itself

and hired Peter Behrens to create a complete design package consistent with the new functionalist aesthetic to be applied not only to all its products, but to its factory and its trademark. The Bauhaus inherited from the Werkbund and AEG the role of promoting Modernist functional design, which it did on an unprecedented scale, although some of its members—notably Moholy-Nagy, as Allen points out—had a strong inclination to curb the entrepreneurial spirit and remold it in conformity with the welfare ideals of the 1920s.

Modern design was late in winning the hearts of the American business establishment. After the initial breakthroughs of such figures as Horatio Greenough and Louis Sullivan, Modernist hopes were dashed. In the wake

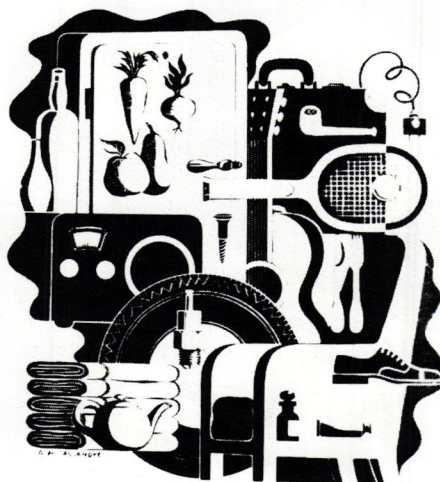


of the Chicago World Columbian Exposition of 1893, the captains of industry became enamored of a revivalist, historicizing, academic aesthetic of forms. With a great deal of rancor but nonetheless remarkable prescience, Sullivan predicted that it would take the country half a century to recover from the event.

Sure enough, now that Babbitt had arrived, he intended to stay. In 1926, an American delegation sent by Herbert Hoover, then secretary of commerce, to the Modernist exhibition of the *Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris returned home with the impression that “as a nation we now live artistically on warmed over dishes” and that, for this reason, the United States lacked the edge on domestic and foreign trade which the Europeans had. It took another ten years for the “streamline” design to start spreading in the country, due in great measure to exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Only after the war did Modernism really take hold of design.

Against this background of broad cultural trends, Allen introduces his principal subject, Chicago entrepreneur Walter Paul Paepcke. As Hoover’s delegation was giving its report in Washington, Paepcke was founding the Container Corporation of America, soon to become the largest corporation in the country. By 1935, he had set up the first corporate art department in America, whose job was to endow the company with a Modernist image. Many classic Modernist design images were born of these efforts, Campbell’s Soup’s, to mention only the most illustrious. During and after the war, Paepcke’s cultural ambitions soared. For his advertising campaigns he hired Cassandre, Herbert Bayer, Fernand Léger, Henry Moore, Man Ray, and Willem de Kooning. One thing led to another; when Moholy, now a refugee, started soliciting the aid of businessmen in Chicago in the early 1940s to set up a design school, Paepcke be-

came his most ardent supporter, providing some funding of his own and helping him secure a Rockefeller Foundation grant. The Institute of Design, absorbed by the Illinois Institute of Technology following Moholy’s death in 1946, owed its existence in no small measure to Paepcke. By this time his cultural ambitions were skyrocketing. He was instrumental in the founding of the University of Chicago’s famous, lucrative Adult Education Program, aimed primarily at businessmen. He also helped promote the related Great Books series, going so far as to house its editorial staff in his



A. M. CASSANDRE, CONTAINER CORPORATION MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENT. FIRST MODERN ART SERIES, JULY 1937. (COURTESY OF CCA)

company headquarters for a while. Through his deepening ties with the University of Chicago and with publishing magnate Henry Luce, he conceived and organized his grandest project of all: the Aspen Conference, founded in 1949, and from then on a permanent Institute for the Humanities. The aim of the conference was to bring together, for intense meetings during the summer, major international figures from the humanities and the arts, and leading representatives from business and politics. The result was the sparking of a second Renaissance—at least in the words of some

of the attendees—with Walter Paepcke as its Cosimo de Medici.

This might seem like one of those rash, superlative-studded pronouncements typical of the late 1940s. But one cannot overestimate the impact of the kind of cultural brokerage practiced by corporate leaders like Paepcke. The International Design section of the Aspen Conference in the early 1950s invited architects such as Le Corbusier, Gropius, Saarinen, Bayer, Yamasaki, Sert, Breuer, Pei, and Philip Johnson—in those days by and large unknowns. Their discussion groups included executives like Frank Stanton of CBS, social critics like Lewis Mumford, journalists like Leo Leoni of *Fortune* magazine, not to mention Luce and Paepcke themselves. Modernist architecture became what it was as a result of the contacts cemented in those days.

What made Paepcke such a devout apostle of Modernism? As the author points out, the Container Corporation stood only to profit by identifying its products with the greatest names in modern art and culture. In addition, Paepcke was the greatest real estate investor in Aspen at the time of the first Aspen Conference. But beyond his personal ambition stood an even greater, more diffuse one, to create what Mills called a power elite. Allen goes into this issue in detail, especially the role of the humanities. As for the role of the architect in this new managerial scheme, it was put quite succinctly by Charles Zadock of Gimbel’s Department Store, an active participant at Aspen: “The purpose of the alliance between design and business is to make America as strong culturally as it is militarily.”

A final note: Allen, a nostalgic admirer of the Modernism of the late 1940s and early 1950s, bemoans what he sees as the current Post-Modern culture of narcissism. To a certain degree, Post-Modernism was a reaction to the arrogance of the architecture of the 1950s and the urban blight it created. But its one-dimen-

sional commercial character, far from being at odds with the Modernism of the 1950s, is a natural outgrowth of it. What Post-Modernism shares with Modernism is the premium it places on the façade alone. If only the problems of our cities could be solved with a facelift.

Serge Guilbaut's book, although primarily concerned with painting—abstract expressionism—is so broad in its treatment that it is most revealing and helpful reading for anyone interested in postwar developments in architecture and design. Richly documented and lively, it contains a wealth of fascinating and sometimes startling passages.

After a visit to the Mellon Gallery one day in 1948, Harry S. Truman confided to his diary that:

Looking at the old masters found in a salt mine in Germany. Some very well known paintings by Holbein, Franz Hals, Rubens, Rembrandt and others. It is a pleasure to look at perfection then think of the lazy, nutty moderns. It is like comparing Christ with Lenin.

In this light, the pessimistic tenor of a letter from Robert Motherwell to fellow abstract expressionist William Baziotes was only natural:

The future of America is hopeless . . . for you there are only two possible courses, to go to France forever (which is what I am going to do) or remain here to be psychoanalyzed.

Henry Miller's outlook was hardly less bleak: "There's no real life for an artist in America—only living death."

It is hard to believe that there was ever a time when the victory of postwar abstract expressionism seemed anything but inevitable. The Ninth Street Show of 1951, which overwhelmingly captured the popular imagination, has tended to overshadow the period immediately preceding, when the very existence of the movement was dubious. Its victory hinged to

a great extent, according to Guilbaut, on the depoliticization of the avant-garde, or rather its realignment with the new politics of apoliticism.

Studies have been carried out on the use of abstract expressionism as a symbolic representation of individual freedom as enjoyed in the West, the United States in particular, during the Cold War of the 1950s. Guilbaut ends where most others begin. He examines Modernism's day-by-day sloughing of older features as it gradually metamorphosed. No one personifies this shift better than Jackson Pollock. He was involved in social



FERNAND LEGER, CONTAINER CORPORATION MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENT. UNITED NATIONS SERIES, JUNE 1945. (COURTESY OF CCA)

realist populist mural art in the prewar years, but, by the end of the 1950s, his artistic rebellion had been redirected into the channels of "creative individualism."

Among the major moments in this metamorphosis was the collapse of WPA support for artists. In 1944, the government sold for four cents a pound all the art it had subsidized during the depression years. This economic blow to political art was accompanied by the psychological disarray of the Left following the disclosures of the Stalinist purges.

Another significant factor in the

depoliticization of art was the postwar affluence and the subsequent boom in the art market. In 1943, Macy's ran this ad in the *New York Times*:

Macy's offers for sale authenticated paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, . . . A 130,000 dollar collection of paintings at our lowest prices. . . . Pay only one third down on Macy's cash time, take months to pay, plus the service charges.

Gimbel's, which had initiated the idea of selling major art works to a mass public, retaliated by offering a Rembrandt at the "typical department store price of 9,999 dollars." Gallery owner and art critic Samuel Kootz was the first to sense the potential of the Modernist art market, featuring artists like Motherwell and Baziotes next to Léger, Picasso, Arp, Braque, and Mondrian.

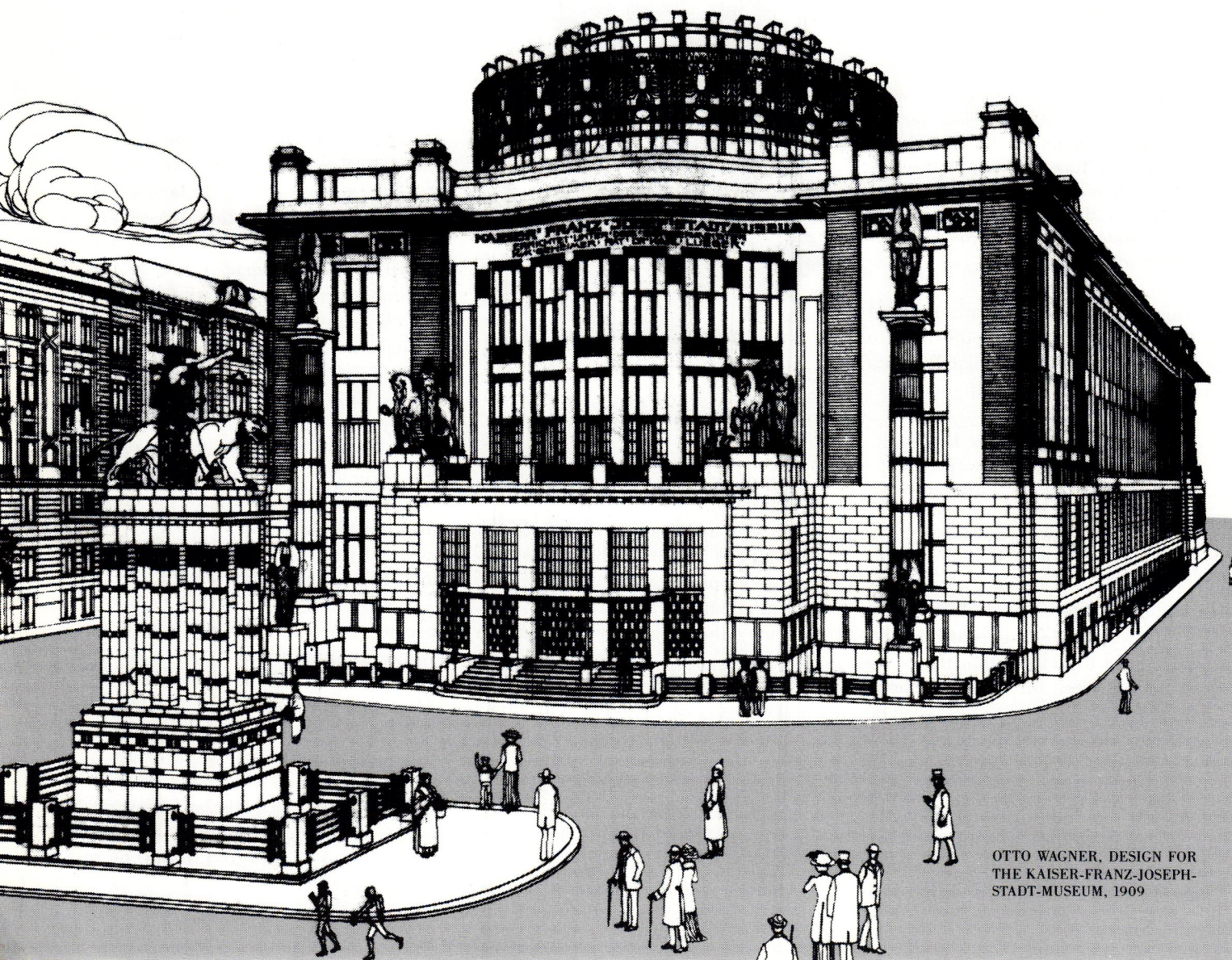
One cannot overestimate the effect of art critic Clement Greenberg's depoliticization on the overall art scene. A pivotal year was 1948. On January 10, in an article in *The Nation*, Greenberg declared himself for the first time satisfied with American art at the Whitney Museum exhibition. In the March issue of the *Partisan Review* he hazarded that "the main premises of modern art have at last migrated to the United States, along with the center of gravity of industrial production and political power." In May, he lashed out at communism and Stalinism on behalf of modern art, forcefully drawing the line which rendered the abstract expressionist style off limits to politics for the next decade.

Both Allen's and Guilbaut's books provide penetrating glimpses into the workings behind a major cultural change whose influence is still strong. They examine not only the way beauty is bound up with power, but the extent to which power depends on beauty in order to thrive. One only wishes, since the authors make so many references to visual material, that the publisher had allotted them more illustrations.

VIENNA 1900

and the Ideology of Gesamtkunstwerk

by Christiane Crasemann Collins



OTTO WAGNER, DESIGN FOR
THE KAISER-FRANZ-JOSEPH-
STADT-MUSEUM, 1909

Wien 1870-1930: Traum und Wirklichkeit, Robert Waissenberger, editor, Residenz Verlag, Salzburg, Austria, 1984, 336 pp., illus., \$50.00 (text in German).

Vienna 1890-1920, Robert Waissenberger, editor, Rizzoli, 1984, 276 pp., illus., \$60.00.

Interest in the cultural totality of a period, where the artistic manifestations can be considered within the social and political context, have made turn-of-the-century Vienna particularly attractive to scholars. Circumscribed geographically and historically, Vienna offers a nearly perfect exemplar for scrutiny. The concentrated physical setting generated a heightened sense of place, and in the course of barely four decades the symbiotic relationship between the arts, philosophy, and science achieved stunning results. It was in Vienna that during the last days of the Habsburg monarchy "the world of yesterday"—to use Stefan Zweig's words—intersected with the world to come, presaging ominously much that would subsequently convulse the rest of Europe.

Historical perspective has sharpened our fascination with, as well as our perception of, fin-de-siècle Vienna's achievements in the arts. Contemporary efforts to obliterate dogmatic compartmentalization in the arts are turning to the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* or "total work of art"—the idea that all parts of a whole should be related in harmonious unity. Philosophically complex, *Gesamtkunstwerk* had certain utopian overtones, and became a controlling, even autocratic force in the hands of the cultural elite of Vienna. *Gesamtkunstwerk* was contextual in the immediate as well as historical sense, accepting the past as part of the present. What interests us today, specifically in the Viennese architecture and design around 1900, are not the breaks with the past that preoccupied the heroic Modern Movement of the 1920s, but the reworking of traditions and historic styles. The critical perception

of regionalism and traditional building held by Adolf Loos, Camillo Sitte, and Josef Hoffmann, for instance, is becoming an important precedent for contemporary architecture as it evolves from dead-end Post-Modernism toward meaningful building for the real world beyond the pages of prominent periodicals.

The current interest in the "Vienna 1900" phenomenon thus has a deeper motive than a mere infatuation with the undeniably seductive glamour of this moment. The surge of international publications and exhibits has lately peaked in a difficult-to-sort-out tangle of books and events with similar titles.

It should be noted that several pioneering Viennese studies originated in this country, predate the current wave, and maintain their importance, while some of the more recent works are clearly the result of long-standing scholarly involvement. Early efforts to use a broad cultural approach are found in Carl E. Schorske's landmark *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (Knopf, 1980), William J. McGراث's *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (Yale, 1974), and *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (Simon & Schuster, 1973) by Alan Janik and Stephen Toulmin. Studies of salient figures—some as yet unmatched by Austrian scholarship—include Eduard Sekler on Josef Hoffmann (German edition 1984, soon to be published in English by Princeton University Press), Robert Clark on Joseph Maria Olbrich, and George and Christiane Collins on Camillo Sitte (1965, Rizzoli 1985). Astonishing numbers of publications on the subject of Vienna 1900, such as *Le arti a Vienna: Dalla Secessione alla Caduta dell'Impero Asburgico*, produced for the Venice Biennale in 1984, have appeared recently, while others have been announced for the coming months.

The two books under review were both published in 1984 as preludes to the major exhibition at the Vienna Künstlerhaus (March 28-October 6,

1985), where a subsequent catalogue has been issued. The show will travel to Centre Pompidou, Paris, in 1986, and the following year to the Museum of Modern Art in New York. New catalogues for both of these events will address different audiences and document exhibitions that are not exactly the same as the one in Vienna. A further volume, *Wien um 1900: Kunst und Kultur 1897-1918*, will also be released by Viennese publisher Christian Brandstätter. Each of these beautiful and expensive books is an anthology of essays by more or less the same roster of authors. Considering the redundancies, one wonders if this surfeit of publishing will not stifle rather than serve the interest it was intended to address.

Both *Wien 1870-1930: Traum und Wirklichkeit* and Rizzoli's *Vienna 1890-1920* have the same editor, Robert Waissenberger, and are indeed very similar. Waissenberger, the director of the Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, was also responsible for the concept of the exhibition and ultimately must be held responsible for any overlappings. Many of the contributors to the anthologies are associated with the Historisches Museum and their essays may be considered groundwork for the exhibition.

Wien 1870-1930: Traum und Wirklichkeit is slightly longer but also the less focused of the two. The 31 essays by 29 authors have been profusely illustrated with 71 full-page color plates and 154 black-and-white illustrations in the text. With the exception of Waissenberger's introductory essay, however, the length of the essays has been limited to an average of six pages, often yielding uneven and fragmentary results. Arranged in a vaguely chronological sequence, the articles float about like feathers escaped from an Austrian feather bed. The color plates are of excellent quality and include a number of unfamiliar works by artists such as Hans Makart and Rudolf von Alt, who were enormously successful in the 1870s and 1880s, as

well as paintings from the 1920s and 1930s, but in general they suggest areas which are not explored in the essays.

The subtitle, "Dream and Reality," refers to the intention to juxtapose the appealing, aesthetic aspects and the harsh social and political environment. Turn-of-the-century Vienna hosted a unique interrelationship between culture and politics. Dream and reality, glitter and stress were present in varying degrees throughout the spectrum of Viennese life. The brief and disjointed essays in this volume fall short of providing a comprehensive interpretive assessment or synthesis of the complexity.

Waissenberger's introductory overview is particularly revealing on the importance of newspapers. An astonishing number of dailies were published in Vienna at that time. Besides covering political events, they featured articles on theater, music, exhibitions, and urban topics. Leading cultural figures from literary, dramatic, and artistic circles participated in these columns. The regular contributors included the architects Adolf Loos and Camillo Sitte. The prominence of newspapers went hand in hand with that other memorable Viennese institution, the café or *Kaffeehaus*. It was here that the newspapers were leisurely read and friends would informally gather for discussion and comment. Each café catered to a special clientele, and particular tables would customarily become the territory of certain groups. This place-consciousness existed in an even stronger form regarding the different residential zones—of enormous importance for class-conscious, hierarchical Viennese society. Reinhard Urbach, in his essay on author Arthur Schnitzler, gives some insight into this aspect by observing the move of Schnitzler's family to the Ringstrasse, which advanced their social status.

Waissenberger's discussion of the role of women in the various social classes furnishes a useful context for

Regina Forstner's essay on fashion. The short format, however, permits Forstner to do little more than outline the transition from the corseted style to the free-flowing "reform dress." The total work of art included fashion as well, and the Wiener Werkstätte was a center for textile design and fashion. Among those who designed dresses in the new style influenced by the neo-medievalist tendencies of the English Pre-Raphaelites were Koloman Moser and Gustav Klimt.

The anthology is sorely lacking an essay on Vienna's urban development in the physical, architectural sense. One would be well advised to consult the *Historischer Atlas von Wien* (Wiener Stadt-und Landesarchiv), which is being published in installments under the direction of Felix Czeike, Renate Banik-Schweitzer, and Gerhard Meissl. It provides interpretive maps for a long-term historical analysis of the socio-spatial structure of Vienna from the 18th century to World War II. The same Felix Czeike, however, has written an essay on Vienna's municipal politics and how they affected planning decisions, such as the development of the Ringstrasse, the regulation of the Donau, and the River Wien. An important contribution on this topic has just appeared in Maren Seliger's and Karl Ucakar's two-volume work *Wien: Politische Geschichte 1740-1934* (1985), an analysis of the emergence of political participation of the various sharply differentiated socioeconomic groups and classes and how their politicization influenced municipal politics and decisions. Between 1870 and 1930, a succession of three political parties shaped the city's government: the Liberals until 1895, the Christian Socialists until 1919, and the Social Democrats until 1934. The latter undertook the socially and architecturally experimental building of the "Wohn-Höfe" public rental housing to alleviate the acute housing shortage after World War I. The better known "Höfe" of socialist Vienna are discussed in an essay by Waissenberger,

and, although there is already a fairly extensive literature on this subject, he provides a useful summary.

There are further accounts of the Social Democrats by Norbert Leser and of the Christian Socialists by Rainer Stepan, and both Jonny Moser's piece on anti-Semitism and Ruth Burstyn's on Theodor Herzl and Zionism are excellent. (There is a superb recent publication, *The Jews of Vienna*, by Marsha L. Rozenblit [State University of New York, 1984] on the same subject.) The prominence of Jews in Viennese culture, their great intellectual contribution, and their role as receptive supporters of avant-garde art and ideas runs like a thread through the entire anthology, but especially comes through in Bernhard Denscher's essay on the writers connected with the Jung-Wien group that met at the Café Griensteidl.

The influence of theater, opera, and scenography on the visual arts is given much attention, especially the application of Richard Wagner's ideas and the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Major buildings along the Ringstrasse served the performing arts, and indeed the whole Ringstrasse was at times used as a stage for "corsos" and festive parades, coinciding with Camillo Sitte's analysis of urban spaces as scenographic settings for human activity. Scholars such as Werner Hoffmann have pursued the connections between the arts, finding that dissonance in modern Viennese music had its correspondence in the visual arts.

On the personal level, the cultural and artistic scene was very intimate. Everybody who was somebody knew everybody else who was somebody—even if they were avoiding each other. Various cliques and circles certainly tried just that. The most strident nonconformists were Karl Kraus, Adolf Loos, and Peter Altenberg. Walter Obermaier gives an informative overview of Kraus's work as journalist and writer, one whose language expressed a commitment to ethics that verged on the puritanical. Ludwig Wittgen-

stein's scientific approach to language and logic was new and prophetic, and Friedrich Wallner explains his ideas and their repercussions far beyond the "Wiener Kreis" of philosophers and mathematicians. Wittgenstein, Kraus, and Loos have emerged as central figures for the theoretical underpinnings of historical and critical studies of early modernism, especially for those using semiotic methodology.

Wien 1870-1930: Traum und Wirklichkeit has the appearance of an art book, attractive in format and generously illustrated, yet the essays devoted to the visual arts—13 of the 31—are precisely those that fall short of our expectations. Several are by authors of major recent studies, all well qualified, yet their effectiveness

is frustrated by the nearly impossible task of producing more than an encyclopedia-type entry.

Eduard F. Sekler draws on his definitive study of Josef Hoffmann to provide in a few pages an impressive synopsis of Hoffmann's long life and career as architect, designer, and moving force of the Wiener Werkstätte. Hoffmann had the rare luck to find the perfect client in Adolphe Stoclet of Brussels, who shared and supported his ideal concept of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* villa. Written with grace and clarity, yet packed with essential information, Sekler's essay could have served as a model for some of the others.

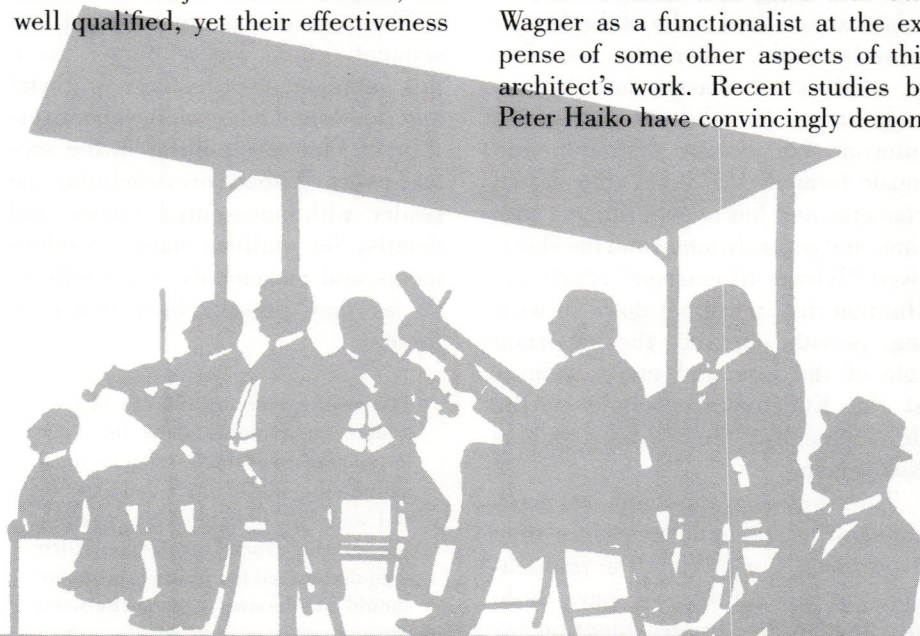
Otto Antonia Graf deals with Otto Wagner as a functionalist at the expense of some other aspects of this architect's work. Recent studies by Peter Haiko have convincingly demon-

strated Wagner's ingenuity in evolving a new aesthetic, and even ornamentation, based on modern technology, that often went beyond its practical application. Graf's (and also Schorske's) interpretation of Otto Wagner as anticipatory modernist in terms of the International Style reduces his stature and is somewhat passé, doing injustice to his highly complex reworking of historicism into a new design vocabulary.

Kollo Moser's position in the Secession and Wiener Werkstätte has undergone a major revision thanks to the thorough and perceptive study published last year by Werner Fenz. It established Moser as a versatile and original artist/designer, who excelled in graphic and furniture design. His ingenious desk and chair, reproduced in this volume, are a play on the Secessionist square ("Quadrat"), which in this case is proposed as a cube, and two-dimensionally when the chair nestles snugly into the desk's knee-hole.

Elisabeth Schmuttermeyer discusses other figures associated with the Wiener Werkstätte. Founded in 1903 by Josef Hoffmann and Kolo Moser with the financial backing of Fritz Wärndorfer, it was an association devoted to producing quality crafts and drew its inspiration from Charles Robert Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, and, less directly, from the ideas of William Morris and John Ruskin. Contrary to the English bias, the machine was accepted as a tool in the effort of elevating the artistic level of objects for everyday use. In the craft-shops or studios ("Werkstätten"), fine crafts were produced according to artists' designs. The original intention of bringing well-made, attractive objects to all homes proved illusory. The products carrying the distinctive "WW" were luxury items, and only the social elite could afford to place them in the total design environments for which they were intended.

Adolf Loos was highly critical of applying aesthetic and artistic principles to everyday objects, whose



appearance, he professed, should respond to function and material. Many of his brief, incisive writings advocate a division between art and craft, architecture and building. Roland L. Schachel's article summarizes many aspects of his ideas, work, career, and restless life. Loos's rejection of surface ornament, and his exploration of interior spaces as empathetic settings for his clients have yet to achieve the influence they deserve.

The Austrian Werkbund was founded in 1913, five years after its German predecessor, in a setting that had witnessed several efforts to update design from the standpoints of aesthetics and manufacturing. It sought to strengthen the ties to the long-established crafts industries, such as Gmundner Ceramics, Lobmeyr Glass, and Thonet Furniture. The essay by Astrid Gmeiner and Gottfried Pirhofer is most informative on this phase of early modernism that has remained in the shadow of the achievements and exhibitions of the Deutscher Werkbund.

A third essay by Waissenberger is entitled "Der Zeit ihre Kunst," after the inscription on Joseph Maria Olbrich's Secessionist Building (1898), which can be translated: "To every time its art, to art its freedom." The author brings clarity to the various artistic circles and associations that sprang up in Vienna to advance the cause of the avant-garde and freer exposure to international movements. The Secession included painters, sculptors, architects, and writers; its active exhibition program was truly interdisciplinary and international. It was never without factions, however; splinter groups were always forming as when Gustav Klimt, the first president of the Secession, left in 1905 with a group representing the "stylists." Another group, the Hagenbund, also staged important exhibitions, although it had to borrow space for them.

There are short essays on the painters Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Oskar Kokoschka, but the truly original and

fascinating contribution is Wanda A. Bubriski's essay on Franz Cizek (1865-1946), a hitherto overlooked pioneer of art education, whose experimental approach anticipated Bauhaus methods. Based on extensive research in Austria and the U.S.A., Bubriski picked up the faint tracks of his long career and compares his work with that of other great educational innovators. Cizek developed quite early an intense interest in children's art and a faith in their innate creative ability, which is capable of wonderful achievements if allowed to flourish unhampered by rules. His search for alternative methods in art education paralleled the Secessionists' striving to break new ground. In 1903, he was asked to join the faculty of the Kunstgewerbeschule, where he was free to conduct art classes for children and courses for adults that achieved international renown. Rhythm and music formed part of his educational concepts and led to experiments with line- and color-dynamic and the short-lived "Wiener Kinetismus" (1920-24). His theories, never set down in writing, provide clues for the important role of the arts and crafts training at the Kunstgewerbeschule in the development of "fine" artists such as Kokoschka.

This anthology contains as many ambiguities and opposites as the time it portrays. Considering the implications of its subtitle, it pays little attention to the serious scientific exploration of dreams and the imagination; Freud is seldom mentioned. Ultimately it leaves unanswered the question of whether it is the dream ("Traum") that harbors reality, truth, and meaning, or further, whether rational, logical reality is indeed real at all. Robert Musil perhaps best capsulized this problem in his novel *The Man Without Qualities* (Coward-McCann, 1953) when he states: "One has to grasp unreality once more; reality no longer makes sense."

English language readers are fortunate to have access to much that is

covered by the Austrian anthology in Rizzoli's *Vienna 1890-1920*, which, in its more structured organization and editorial approach is in some ways superior. Its thematic sections are carefully crafted and informative, and the result is a survey of sufficient depth to satisfy aficionados already versed on the individual personalities or topics.

The 320 illustrations (both color plates and black and white) have been taken mostly from the rich collections of the Historisches Museum. The captions provide fairly extensive information to supplement the essays. Their text is a translation of a Swiss edition and unfortunately is often inept and in spots even unintelligible.

The eight essays are arranged in a sequential flow. Waissenberger has in this anthology kept his foreword brief and developed a knowledgeable overview of Viennese politics in the second essay. Without overwhelming the reader with unessential names and details, he outlines major developments and movements, especially as far as they presage later historical events:

The years prior to 1890 are of particular importance, since they saw the emergence of the German national movements and of the Christian Social and Social Democratic parties. Among the crucial problems which then dominated the political scene we should cite the stark contrast between the new plutocracy and the urban poor, the activism of the German Nationalists, the growing tension between the nationalities and, last but not least, anti-Semitism. It is difficult to underestimate the importance of the latter in the Old Austria where it was exceptionally rife—so much so that, among wide sections of the population, a politician could only succeed by professing some degree of anti-Semitism.

We get the impression that Vienna as the capital of the tense multinational Habsburg monarchy was anything but peaceful. Demonstrations,

strikes, and other upheavals erupted frequently, while life on top of the volcano went on unperturbed as long as Emperor Franz Josef was alive. Waissenberger's chapter summarizes what in the other book is discussed by a half-dozen different authors in essays that necessarily repeat and overlap.

The Rizzoli publication gains immeasurably by opening with an essay on the urban form of Vienna. While the story of the Ringstrasse is by now common knowledge, it is nevertheless impossible to talk about Vienna without considering this enormous intervention in the city's political and cultural development. Even in contemporary Vienna, the Ringstrasse dominates as boulevard, monument, and place of collective memories. Günter Dürig, in "Portrait of a City—Configuration and Change," describes the various steps in the progression of the anachronistically confined city that expands beyond its several lines of medieval fortifications yet retains a concentric ringed shape. The social upheavals that went hand in hand with the changes in the urban context, the shifts in residential quarters, the regulations of the Danube, the Stadtbahn, are all reviewed and illustrated with period photographs.

While Dürig discusses the Ringstrasse from the point of view of an urban historian, it also figures prominently in later essays on the visual arts by Hans Bisanz and on architecture by Renata Kassal-Mikula. In these areas the Ringstrasse achieved its greatest impact, stimulating architectural design, the building trades, and a revival of traditional crafts, while eliciting much theoretical discussion both in Vienna and abroad.

The architecture and urban projects of Otto Wagner, in particular, are closely tied to the surge in possibilities that Vienna offered at that time. Kassal-Mikula comments interestingly on Wagner's artistic and entrepreneurial sides, as well as on his close cooperation with other talented archi-

itects in his office, including Olbrich, Hoffmann, Max Fabiani, Leopold Bauer, and Josef Plečnik. The well-known "Wagner-Schule" reminds us of Wagner's special gift as a teacher and stimulator of fresh ideas. His exquisite drawings tend to emphasize the Beaux-Arts and historicist aspects of his work, while photographs of his bridges and canal projects show his functionalist side, as does his star building, the Postal Savings Bank. Considering Wagner's many unbuilt projects, one can only grieve for Vienna's missed opportunities. Aside from discussing Wagner, Hoffmann, and Loos, Kassal-Mikula also features the work of less familiar architects, who, judging from the illustrations, deserve to be better known.

The historicism of the Ringstrasse buildings and sculptural monuments involved a great number of artists. Many came to Vienna from the provinces to partake in the opportunities for commissions. Post-Modernism has made us more receptive to the innovative and even original characteristics of the various phases and faces of historicism and has resulted in fresh insights on the works of artists who emerged from the awkwardly called "Ringstrasse Art." Among these artists are several associated with the Secession, such as Klimt, Heinrich Leffler, and Kolo Moser; Bisanz's essay is particularly interesting on the "pioneers of the Secession," such as Rudolf von Alt and Hans Makart, who were respected by the coming generation for depicting reality in terms of their personal experience. From the beginning, the Secession harbored two conflicting tendencies: the naturalists and the stylists. The latter are more closely identified with the *Gesamtkunstwerk* concept and a commitment to the crafts as a fine art.

The versatility of the Viennese artists is truly remarkable. They used different media with utmost ease and skill. Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos, Josef Hoffmann, Joseph Maria Olbrich, and Kolo Moser, to name just a few, were

creative as architects and as designers of furniture and decorative objects; others, like Kokoschka, were active in graphic design, and Olbrich even designed pianos. Gustav Klimt designed gowns for his long-time friend and companion Emilie Flöge, who owned a couturier. Several of those mentioned designed textiles, and the interest in overall pattern, as in textiles or tiles, is also apparent in their other work. The intermingling of the arts and crafts, the facility with which visual artists also contributed to the theatre and the opera, and the respect in which this mutuality was held left a singular mark on the period.

The other essays in the anthology address developments in music, literature, and the theater. One of the few women mentioned in the entire book is the pacifist Bertha von Suttner, whose novel *Die Waffen nieder* (also published as *Ground Arms!* and *Lay Down Your Arms*, A. C. McClurg & Company, 1892), was an international success. She was the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The role of women and the movement toward their emancipation are an integral part of the cultural developments of this period and should have received wider attention in both the publications reviewed here.

Although in much of the literature and visual arts of turn-of-the-century Vienna one can discern a preoccupation with psychological themes, the group of scientists and intellectuals in Sigmund Freud's circle remained somewhat aloof. Harald Leupold-Löwenthal stresses in "Vienna and the Birth of Psychoanalysis" Freud's interest in establishing international contacts because he felt Vienna was hostile to psychoanalysis as a science. On the other hand, it was the unique Viennese atmosphere that led to new approaches in the treatment of nervous disorders. Freud's concern for dreams has, directly or obliquely, given title and theme to many subsequent considerations of his time in Vienna.

SCALE AND POWER

Miniature Rooms: The Thorne Rooms at the Art Institute of Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago and Abbeville, 1983, 168 pp., illus., \$29.95

Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840, Barbara Maria Stafford, MIT, 1984, 646 pp., \$39.95.

On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection, Susan Stewart, Johns Hopkins, 1984, 216 pp., \$25.00.

The present fashion for the uproar motif in architecture, whether called deconstruction by James Wines, or historical eclecticism by Michael Graves, marks the debris-strewn path of the recent encounter between the language model and architectural form. The attempt to stretch form on the Procrustean bed of language has now passed, but a wealth of discarded architectural marginalia remains for our consideration. James Wines exploits the inverse of normal architectural spatial terminology, manipulating buildings as though they were work-

ing drawings. Michael Graves exploits that which was kept at bay by the mid-twentieth-century refusal of historical narrative. Both readings leave architecture where they found it, in the school of the materialists, who assume that human beings use objects to anchor the symbolism with which they create an orderly world. But the analytic emphasis has shifted lately, following the pattern outlined by Michel de Certeau, from a taxonomy of form to a taxonomy of practices.¹ The reconsideration of the margins of spatial practice has turned to the symbolic usage of extremes of scale, miniaturization and gigantism, exemplified by Ricardo Bofill's gigantic structures or the deminiaturized tea-caddies of the Post-Modernists.

The irreducible program of all of this speculation is still the scale of the body. Even before Dean Swift used the human body for his critique of the "political body," it provided a natural ruler against which to measure and judge cultural institutions for their fit or misfit. Intermittently, the cry for attention to the scale of the body floats out from the architectural

grandstand, of late so frequently that Fredric Jameson felt the need to question the myth of "body-scale" in architectural ideology:

The body's limits but also its needs are . . . appealed to as ultimate standards against which to measure the relative alienation of older commercial or industrial spaces, of the overwhelming sculptural monuments of the International Style, or else of the postmodernist "megastructure." Yet arguments based on the human body are fundamentally ahistorical, and involve premises about some eternal "human nature" concealed within the seemingly "verifiable" and scientific data of physiological analysis. If the body is in reality a social body, if therefore there exists no pregiven human body as such, but rather the whole historical range of social experiences of the body, the whole variety of bodily norms projected by a series of distinct historical "modes of production" or social formations, then the "return" to some more "natural" vision of the body in space projected by phenomenology comes to seem ideological, when not nostalgic. . . .

Yet if the body ceases to be the fundamental unit of spatial analysis,



FAUJAS DE SAINT-FOND, SPHERICAL LAVA AMID IRREGULAR PRISMS. FROM STAFFORD, *VOYAGE INTO SUBSTANCE*.

at once the very concept of space itself becomes problematic: what space? The space of rooms or individual buildings? Or the space of the very city fabric itself in which those buildings are inserted?²²

The use of extremes of architectural form represents an attempt to answer these questions, by making scale visible through defamiliarization. Perceived scale is so closely related to everyday experience that it is a chief component of "common sense," and exaggeration is essentially a questioning of common sense, revolution couched in triviality. The miniature and the gigantic are not just the small and the large ends of the spatial continuum; the miniature is a reduction of the full scale, whose small end disappears into the realm of that which is too small to be made, held, or seen. It is incomplete, and can be "taken back"; like the architectural model, it traditionally serves as a rehearsal for the real. Giant form on the other hand is too big to be seen all at once. In architecture only the outline or details of its texture are

visible. The gigantic can serve as a model of power too large to be comprehended, but it can also be viewed as chaotic, fragmented, and uncontrolled fecundity, presaging the end of its kind.

While both extremes emphasize limits to human power, both empower the human being at their center by asserting the primacy of human vision. The eye follows the miniature into its lair as far as possible, until the moment when the miniature diminishes into invisibility, a visual shield that smooths the flaws of the Lilliputians' skin into silk or hides the germs of disease. The gigantic, by its vast size, also escapes the control of the human body, but it is fragmented and incapacitated by the limited cone of human vision. The 18th-century Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich made the control of the gigantic exercised by the miniature point of view explicit in his drawings of huge natural monuments observed and framed by tiny figures in the foreground. But even when joined in the same picture the gigantic and the miniature are incomplete,

and their juxtaposition is grotesque. Both hold reservoirs of untapped information that can be exploited in the rehearsal for future culture. Since each defines the other, their meanings are reversible and ultimately similar, but there are differences in their historical relationships to human power.

Today the miniature is associated with children, and with the model, that is, with tentative essays into action. But the history of the miniature trails an aura of privilege, or, according to art critic Carter Ratcliff, "connotations of preciousness, luxury, unearned privilege and even secrecy." It recalls *Schatzkammer*, where the miniature "Baby House" served as a record of a prince's possessions. The tantalizing possibilities for visual possession offered by the miniature are perfectly displayed in one of the few "Baby Houses" we have in the United States, and only slightly less perfectly documented in a recent book, *Miniature Rooms: The Thorne Rooms at the Art Institute of Chicago*. Here the association of the overview with visual control jostles with the thwarted eye, which, held in a body too big to enter

the miniature room, cannot see around its corners. The Thorne Rooms reflect the enthusiasm of the 1920s, when they were made, for the furnishings of the 18th century, as well as Mrs. Thorne's own preference for the homes of the wealthy of all periods. The book's photographs skillfully represent the experience of looking at a miniature room, the point of view being too high to be that of a normal person in a full-size room.

Appearance—a joint product of the camera's acuity, four-color printing, and our habit of trusting the reality of the printed page—is thrown into question since the very purpose of the miniature is to exaggerate the skill required of the hand and eye not only to make it but to comprehend it. But the audience for this book, surely made up for the most part of people buying it as a souvenir at the Art Institute of Chicago, where the Thorne miniatures have been the single most popular exhibit since they were permanently installed there in 1954, will not be disappointed. Everything about it, from its production to its cost, is designed to allow the viewer to indulge in the same avid voyeurism evoked by the Thorne miniatures themselves.

Once only the rich could afford the baby house. As miniaturization moved into popular culture, it lost much of its persuasive force. Architects use the model for the purposes of their trade, but their model utopias are taken no more seriously than the wishful, miniature scenarios of the socially marginal—children, artists, women, the sick, the naive, and the retired men exiled to backyards by territorial wives. These *isolati* use the miniature to rehearse their entry or reentry into the world, or to create a substitute for it. Amateurs and entrepreneurs have exploited the longing to visually control a world at three-quarter scale, in Disneylands, shopping malls, and the even smaller Medurodams or Leggo Lands.

Some architects in the 20th century continued to cast form into mannerist

exaggerations. Ernest Coxhead manipulated the same repertoire of ornament that had proved so amusing to the 16th-century Mannerists, the scale of doors, fireplace overmantels, pediments, or stairways. Frank Lloyd Wright, Bruce Goff, and Goff's student Bart Prince played both with exaggeration of architectural elements and with variation of scale, expanding and contracting the same motif so that the building itself slips in and out of miniaturization. But architecture is usually associated with gigantism, either monolithic enormity or enormity fragmented into hierarchies, as in the museum.

Susan Stewart, in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, tries to define scale as a social metaphor for political or subjective power, and to identify the inversion of extremes as a rehearsal for cultural change:

The miniature is considered in this essay as a metaphor for the interior space and time of the bourgeois subject. Analogously, the Gigantic is considered as a metaphor for the abstract authority of the state and the collective, public life. . . . If authority is invested in domains such as the marketplace, the university, or the state, it is necessary that exaggeration, fantasy, and fictiveness in general be socially placed within the domains of the anti- and non-authority: the feminine, the childish, the mad, and the senile, for example. In formulating the loci of authority and exaggeration in this way, we necessarily and nostalgically must partake in the lost paradise of the body and the myths of the margin, the outside.

Stewart believes that extremes of scale derive their power from memory, which holds the object in fixed position in the play among differences. She believes that the miniature operates as a souvenir for the real body, recalling a sense of visual power over nature. Souvenirs often commemorate a natural body too big to buy, like

Niagara Falls, or a historical economy which is no longer accessible, like handmade furniture. Suburban fencing made of Conestoga wagon wheels serves the same function for the middle class, and miniature villages such as those in Disneyland embody the widespread longing for the symbols of a past determined by labor, in which objects were useful, not picturesque.

On the other hand, the collection, a group of souvenirs, moves memory from the fragment to gigantic, infinite schemes of classification, by which humans attempt to understand their history. These limitless classifications cannot ever be complete, and are therefore transformed from simple accumulation to the simulation of a historic moment. The removal of objects from their context has always been closely associated with architecture, particularly museums ("Palaces of Decontextualization" in Burton Benedict's words), which tell the population the official story of its culture. It is therefore interesting that many of the most recent museums do not give form to the orderly Theater of Memory—a structure of knowledge which has been with us since the late Middle Ages—but have given way to a jumble of pavilions, exemplifying both the national preference for non-narrative architectural structure and a certain naive impatience.

Both souvenir and collection are byproducts of the search for material equivalents—as opposed to the verbal—as authentication of symbolic meaning. This search is of recent origin. The rise and evolution in the 18th century of the quest for substance is documented in the recent book by the art historian Barbara Stafford, *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840*. This longing for a real body and a real world arose from discontent with the dregs of the medieval analogic mode of cognition, and led from travel to the development of the natural sciences in the 18th and early 19th centuries:

The serious, scientific traveller was determined to break out of the metaphorical mode of simply "seeing as." The expanded physical universe forced him to focus; he was goaded into observation by so alien a natural scene.

The search for linguistic, aesthetic, and ontological authenticity took place within an enormously expanding physical world. The first metaphor used by the explorers themselves was of the blind man who could suddenly see. The continued investigation of the singularity seen in extremes of size, of height and depth, of rocks and caves and mines, the softness or changeability of the air (newly accessible in balloons), of enormous bodies of water or endless deserts, led at first to energetic spatial metaphors of tearing, crossing, immersing, or penetrating into substance, which continued the tradition of the Promethean overview developed by descriptions of 16th-century circumnavigations. The metaphor of personal power reflected the explorer's effort to conquer space by assuming the complete legibility of the full scale of the natural world, from the atmosphere to the molecule. These early travelers even believed that the natural world left a material trace of its processes in a "real character." They also believed that social practices could be faithfully rendered in words as well.

The separation of the observing individual from nature, and the conception of natural legibility took place over the course of the century. Shock and surprise at the extremes of the natural world gave way to the need for a convincing language, parallel to human space and time, with which to differentiate these wonders from the inventions of medieval allegory. Bishop Sprat, historian of the Royal Society, called for careful observation and plain speech. He urged the development of a paratactic style, like the additive sentences of oral societies, in which:

men deliver'd so many things almost in an equal number of words . . . bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness as they can; and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants before that of Wits or Scholars.

The assumption that plain sight and plain language could describe natural wonders testified to a belief in human control, even over the infinite. But with the dissemination of Newtonianism and Leibnizian dynamism in the 18th century, matter came to be viewed as permeated with trans-material and fugitive effects, forcing the scientific gaze away from substance and back into concepts of the mind. Eventually the manifestations of subjective interaction with the world were identified. The sublime and picturesque were measured and classified. Ironically, the scientific gaze detached itself from matter to concentrate on the mind just at the moment when objects asserted themselves as sources of evidence independent of man, a process which led ultimately to the extremes of modern relativism.

Finally, Stafford connects the perception of natural phenomena, the efforts made to assimilate startling new material into new modes of understanding, and the impact of these efforts on the material forms taken by architectural symbolism. The 18th-century belief that the universe was made of stunning contrasts translated into a gigantic melodrama of solidity and fugacity in art and architecture. The Romantic landscape enclosed the ruins of the gigantic in the ephemeral haze of the forces of their disintegration. Boullée's theories and projects, presented in the treatise *Architecture, Essai sur l'art*, reflected this longing to integrate colossal stone monuments, sunk in the ground, with the changeability and primitive vitality of natural forces, especially those of the atmosphere. Ledoux's *L'architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des*

moeurs et de la législation (1804) conjoined forms based on the cave with the chimeras of haze, fumes, phosphorescence, sunlight, and gas. This French preference for extremes of height and depth, light and dark, continued the Mannerist or Romantic passion for deep shadow and sparkling light, the sublime chiaroscuro, but at such an enormous scale that they were scarcely visible—as in Boullée's cenotaph for Newton.

Stafford has previously written about immateriality as well as substance, and this book about the perception of extremes makes clear the connections between the scale of substance and the development of symbolism and other devices for thinking. In fact, by its careful gathering of the habits of sight, the nature of attention, and the modes of verbal description in the mid-17th to mid-18th centuries, it provides a model of the expanse of information that should be brought to bear on the question of the social, economic, and epistemological relationship of language to objects that now plagues architectural criticism.

The story of miniaturization and gigantism continues into the 20th century, when the state and the corporation, nexus of the gigantic and the paternal, have joined with technology to build museums of gigantism. Corporate headquarters immerse their directors in the sky, ultimate symbol of the gigantic. Too big to be seen except in fragments, these surrogate giants visually represent unconstrained procreative and destructive energy, the *prima materia*. Once symbolized by an enormous woman filling the sky, suckling a baby at each teat and surrounded by a whirlwind of tattered clothing, symbolic creative gigantism gradually moved from nature to culture, and the fat woman was divided up. The symbolism of chaos remained housed in the "morcellated" images of the female, their bodies or lipstick- and mascara-covered facial details floating through the air-waves, their potential for uncontrolled repro-

duction moved from power to the realm of silliness. The masculine clown took over the creative role, in the image of Gargantua or the Winnebago trickster, making everything and, significantly, destroying everything, but becoming ever tinier and tidier, less funny, finally reduced to the vestigial disarray of IBM's Little Tramp. This clown figure is the embodiment of the American self-image of innocent power. However shrunk, the American clown still acts with the impatience of habitual riches, speaking in tongues that do not have to be organized into a refined narrative. Americans did not assimilate the tradition of the

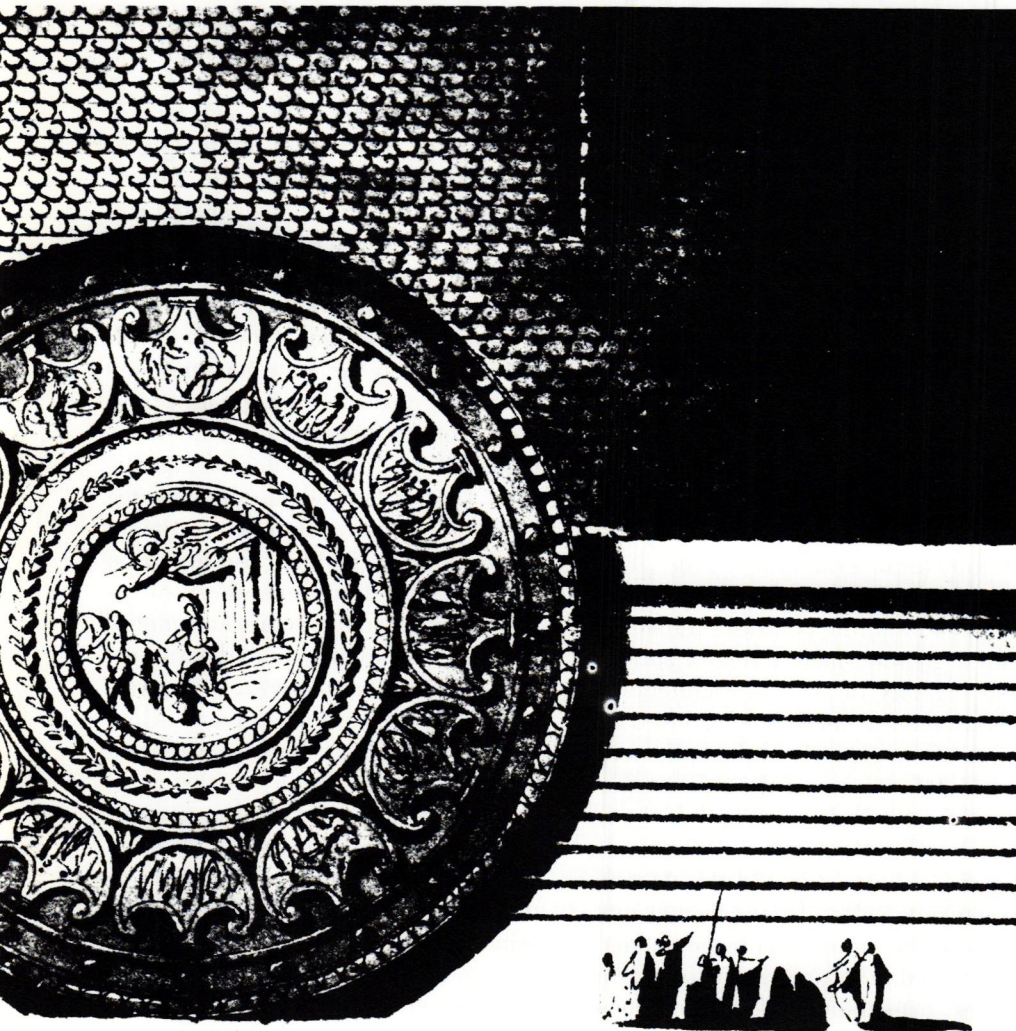
Harlequin, or the *faire valoir* clown who carefully abstracts his tatters into a patterned tale, and our incompetent patterning has slipped into our architecture. The static ineptitude of the fenestration of the American Modern glass box suggests an unease with the constraints of the *multum in parvo*, much in little, style of the Miesian grid. It suggests further that the style of a truly American gigantic has yet to be defined.

For the moment the American gigantic has turned from the monolithic to the good-humored chaos of the playpen, where scale play now flexes its oversize dimensions. The deminiatur-

ized Duck continues as Jersey Devil's helmet or football house. Robert Man- gurian's chunky fortress appears to be constructed of enlarged wooden building blocks, and R. A. M. Stern's obese Egyptian Revival bathhouse is festooned with toy trees—paralleling Caspar David Friedrich's drawing of an iceberg observed by two well- turned-out gentlemen, who constrain its gigantism with their minute human point of view. This kind of juxtaposition could be called grotesque control, the substitution of control of the extremes for the control of the normal scale built into codes and building supplies. In the architectural grotesque the norm disappears in a bizarre marriage of categories, as in, for example, Coxhead's grandiose tiny doors and overmantels, or Frank Gehry's houses, where the walls are strained by the windows or the surface swamped by the structure.

But the interesting question is not just whether it works, this tactic of recasting worn-out certainties, some of them architectural, as exaggeratedly stated differences, but when and how and what amount of uproar is necessary before one can say that the tactic of excess has become a prime element in the processes of social change. Walter Ong, Jacques Barzun, Philip Fisher, and Mikhail Bakhtin, among others, have discussed the chaotic and intriguing encounter of the vernacular and the official Latin tongue at the end of the Renaissance. Recent archaeologies of knowledge have focused on the cultural incorporation of the extremes of the microscopic gaze and the belief in gigantic systems of classification in the mid-eighteenth century, and their collapse into Romanticism and revolution at the end of the century. Today extremes of scale associated with power, individual subjectivity, and the corporate state are constantly invoked in discussions of the nature of and longings for authority (the word oozes from the ground like swamp gas at every step).

The moment is one of sharply com-



BOULLEE, DETAIL OF FORT. FROM *VISIONARY ARCHITECTS*.

peting ideologies. On one side the materialists advocate the concept of webs of culture holding material objects and symbolism together, even extending from materiality into subjectivity (the phenomenologists did not die, they were just temporarily knocked out). Shorn of psychology, the materialists also appear in the dominant-project empiricism of cultural geography or material culture studies. This class-based model of society competing and communicating by means of objects celebrates conflict, most visible now in the nostalgia for gigantic power manifested in many contemporary practices besides the election of Ronald Reagan or the bodybuilding craze (although the trend toward what Aby Warburg called "muscle rhetoric" is accelerating). The last two decades of earthwork art have focused public attention on the tradition of the gigantic natural sublime. Popular books and articles, which once sentimentalized dwarfs, now sentimentalize giants (see Victor Chan, "Rebellion, Retribution, Resistance, and Redemption: Genesis and Metamorphosis of a Romantic Giant Enigma," *Arts*, Summer 1984, or Karal Ann Marling's *Colossus of Roads: Myth and Symbol along the American Highway*). The hottest products on the art market, the memorialization of physical struggle, torture, and death between men, women, and animals, is framed in terms of giant flying fragments of bodies in the enormous paintings of Robert Longo, Melissa Miller, Leon Golub, Sue Coe, and the Italian and German neo-expressionists. Robert Longo even reuses the image of the trickster-clown.

On the other side from the materialists are the logocentric mystics, the radical taxonomers who operate in an economy of the coded signal, and their cousins, the Brahmins of the new hermeneutics like Lacan or Derrida. Another splinter group, the economic semioticians, see the social body as a parapolitical, paralinguistic wall, intransigently refusing to be

moved by any form of cultural production but the spectacle. This mass enthusiasm for the spectacle leads Baudrillard, like another nervous Frenchman before him, de Tocqueville (who said that the masses were always changing, but to no effect since to no fixed purpose), to a theory of anomie and a world in which differences are annihilated.

The lines between materiality and idealism are clearly drawn in architecture as well, although in this context exaggerated scale is but a pale material echo of the possibilities offered by the exploration of oppositions. Although the grotesque differences in scale and the flailing chaos of Post-Modernism's childish gigantism prevail at the moment, such extreme extensions and contractions of form never have a long life.

Undeterred, Susan Stewart, in *On Longing*, has taken a position for excess. She has also moved from the fairly legible prose of her first book, *Nonsense*, to the conventions of the new hermeneutic style. While *On Longing* investigates the collapse into laughter of the extremes of physical scale, it offers little humor and still less reading pleasure. It is an interesting compendium of the symbolic implications of the miniature and the gigantic, but one that may be largely inaccessible to designers. It is a symbol of its time, a question that raises more questions.

So what use can the designer make of this book? It prods one on to an investigation of the assumptions about which still determine much architecture and urban planning. The limitation of the miniature to symbolic or actual rehearsal continues, but the identification of gigantism with innocent power has turned into a nostalgic souvenir. Proportions are deliberately puffed up, and hung with bits of symbolic tatter, to substitute the image of chaotic power for its reality. The ancient identification of the giant with oppression has resurfaced as well, raising further questions. Do we still

have the resources to play the same impatient game, throwing all of the symbols of our national excess, like the nail clippings and beard combings Gulliver brought back from the Brobdingnags, in the air to fall down in intriguing patterns? Whose image of America is represented in the style of playpen gigantism or the stage sets of deconstruction? Is the architectural uproar game moving away from traditional object-based symbolism, where scale and size have social meanings, into disoriented anomie, producing a jumbled museum of buildings that are as decontextualized as the collections they house? Or will this symbolic reversibility produce the occasional "counterintuitive" solution so admired by enthusiasts of computerized "52 pick-up?"

The mode of continued questioning is an American ideal, based in a positive evaluation of novelty and a rejection of an economy of fixed goods; but mannerism in the past looked both ways, to old questions and to new answers. Despite some verbal concern, building at present does not reveal an exploration of all the implications raised by the uproar style; it stops at the question. Contemporary architectural monuments do not reflect the expectations of personal or state and corporate power. Perhaps this reflects discouragement over the failure of Modernism's social program, or intransigent anomie, but the nature of the symbolic representation of power through architecture is not really something that should be allowed to wander unattended through the fields of culture.

1. Just as signifying practices, which concern the ways of putting language into effect, were taken into consideration after linguistic systems had been investigated, spatializing practices are attracting attention now that the codes and taxonomies of the spatial order have been examined.

2. Joan Ockman et al., *Architecture Criticism Ideology*, Princeton Architectural Press, 1985, p. 51.



THE TROUBLE WITH



The World's Second Oldest Profession



Architects and Firms: A Sociological Perspective on Architectural Practice, Judith R. Blau, MIT, 1984, 189 pp., \$19.95.

In 1982, architecture's profits dropped to a paltry 2.9 percent of revenues. Just at this time the New York arm of the American Institute of Architects identified low wages as a major problem in the profession, deterring creative young recruits from entering the field. The AIA recommended its members increase starting salaries. From this we gather something about the dilemmas facing the profession, but the cure seems a bit like prescribing tea and dry toast for a broken leg. Somehow, it's agreed that the ar-

chitectural profession isn't as healthy as it ought to be, yet we lack a sound understanding of what's going on in the professional body. Remedies under such circumstances are at best Band-Aids, and at worst create new problems. When the problem of low salaries is addressed, one voice recommends wages that will be more attractive to recruits. Another suggests reducing the supply of architects by cutting enrollment at architecture schools. A third diagnoses the problem as residing in the public at large: they don't place a high enough value on our services; they need basic design education.

This discussion can be heard in offices, schools, and professional organizations across the country, yet

the fundamental problem remains: We don't really have enough valid and reliable information about the architectural profession to know what our problems are, let alone how they might be addressed. Enter Judith Blau, a sociologist from SUNY at Albany. Her recent book, *Architects and Firms: A Sociological Perspective on Architectural Practice*, is without question the most comprehensive and enlightening report on architecture since the AIA's mid-century study of the profession. In terms of the analysis and interpretation of data, there is no work to surpass Blau's investigation of architecture; Blau debunks our myths, shows us why firms succeed, fail, or merely survive in economic crises, and describes the characteristics of

offices that produce quality work. Moreover, she demonstrates the significance of structural conditions that provide the context for our aesthetic visions.

While studies of professionalism have taught us a great deal about law and medicine, architecture has remained a mystery. Research in progress by Robert Gutman, Magali Larson, Roger Montgomery, William Ronco, Donald Schon, Francis Ventre, and myself will eventually chart some of architecture's unknown territories. In the meantime, the history of the architect (and to some extent, firms) is recorded in three texts, the first being the most significant: Kostof's *The Architect* (Oxford, 1977), Briggs's *The Architect in History* (Da Capo, 1974), and Jenkins's *Architect and Patron* (Oxford, 1961). There are also three recently published works which point to a growing interest in criticism and research on the profession: the scholarly studies presented by Blau and associates in *Professionals and Urban Form* (SUNY, 1983); Andrew Saint's *The Image of the Architect* (Yale, 1983), an uneven but intriguing collection of essays; and Niels Prak's recent *Architects: The Noted and the Ignored* (Wiley, 1984), a critique of the role of heroes and followers in the profession. There are also a number of elementary guidebooks to architectural practice written primarily by practitioners speaking to potential clients or architectural students, the most recent of which is *Architect?* by Roger K. Lewis (MIT, 1985). None of these works, however, contributes to our understanding of contemporary architectural practice as significantly as *Architects and Firms*, which provides a rare glimpse into the workings of architectural offices and into the culture of architecture. The text should be considered required reading for any architectural practitioner or student, as well as scholars interested in professionalism or organizational theory. The material will also enlighten those readers working in the

architectural domain who may lack design training—environmental social scientists, planners, and even clients.

Blau tells us about architects and firms in straight talk, without statistical smokescreens or sociological jargon, while presenting an analysis that is anything but simplistic. Her basic premise is in fact that models of linear development are inadequate for architectural firms. Instead, she adopts a model of dialectical change in response to situations that incorporate a structure of risk: the architect is continually confronted with contradictions between intentions and social and material conditions.

Blau is armed with a sound understanding of the architects' fears and dreams. For this book, she surveyed 152 New York architectural firms in 1974 and then again in 1979. She asked over 400 individuals about a wide range of issues including the structure of power, voice in office affairs, convictions, productivity, clients, services, profits, awards, and heroes. The timing of her surveys coincided with a severe economic recession, so that in 1979 a full 40 percent of the offices had gone out of business. The survivors were asked a new series of questions about how they weathered the storm. By statistical analysis, Blau establishes connections between phenomena that initially appear independent; some shake our beliefs, others confirm them. For example, she shows that a loyal clientele has no significant effect on an office's success, and that firms which produce quality work fare better than their less noted counterparts in an economic downturn. Because this book contains so many important findings about architects and architectural practice, it is worthwhile reviewing each of the seven chapters to introduce the types of information which can be gleaned from the text.

The book begins with an explanation of dialectical change, a construct from Marx that Blau brings home by means of the legend of Icarus and

Daedalus (who was, after all, an architect). "The Daedalean Risk" describes the structures of risk that govern architecture. Some dilemmas are intrinsic to the profession, such as the weak distinction between architecture and building, and the disparate goals of architecture as commerce and as a profession. Like the son's demise and the father's escape, most situations that confront architects embody contradictions which, when resolved, create a new set of opposing conditions.

The author's analysis of architectural practice is more informative than standard organizational theories—which do not take professionalism into account—or models of the architect-artist. As Blau demonstrates, the latter is only one aspect of financial or aesthetic success. To explain why a firm might be profitable, meritorious, or productive, Blau argues: "It is not the strength or even the coherence of the set of [architectural] intentions that determines whether they are consequential but rather their initial relationship to social and economic conditions." After introducing the basic constructs of her study, Blau proceeds in the next four chapters to assess the nature and significance of several key issues in design practice: voice, commitment, convictions, and merit.

Chapter 2 is a discussion of voice, "the exercise of power over one's own work, over the work of others, and over the allocation of resources." Rank-and-file architects report they have little voice and much alienation, largely due to the fragmented specialization of tasks and responsibilities in professional offices. As expected, Blau finds that architects are likely to have more voice in small firms than large ones, and that managers have more voice than designers. In a large office, an individual with an esoteric specialty (e.g., energy, computers) will acquire voice not only in her or his own area, but in other domains of the firm's work as well. The author also discovers that democratically organ-

ized firms (where voice is distributed among staff) tend to produce higher quality work than those in which power is concentrated among a few individuals. These findings begin to outline one particularly successful model for practice: the large firm with a team approach to projects.

In the discussion of commitment, or the architect's "zest for work," Blau finds the predictable: the chief frustration and cause for low commitment among architects is lack of opportunities to do creative work. Commitment among practitioners stems from opportunities in the office and the structure of one's job, not directly from characteristics of firms. In the absence of opportunities to participate in design, residual gratification among architects derives from opportunities to exercise voice and to have diverse responsibilities. Although many of the findings correspond to practitioners' intuition or to general analyses of professionalism (e.g., the gap between expectations and realization described by C. Everett Hughes), Blau's formulation of the situation provides new clarity. She concludes that frustration among architects and the source of related problems (for example, attracting young talent to the field) is due to the exclusive and increasingly narrow significance placed on design creativity in architecture. Artistic activity operates as a "master value" even while opportunities to act in that domain are few, and she faults the profession for devaluing alternative activities such as restoration, building technology, advocacy architecture, or interior design. The ring of truth in this assessment is undeniable; Blau clarifies the issue, demonstrates its deleterious effects, and suggests a direction for change.

Although important issues are addressed in chapter 4, "Convictions and Agendas" is not as informative as other sections. Perhaps the primary drawback is that the topic could easily make a book of its own. The architect-reader may also be put off by certain

slips that show Blau to be an outsider to architecture, although she is well informed on the majority of issues. To think that Venturi designed the duck is somewhat humorous; to attach the labels "formalism" and "subjectivism" to certain convictions among architects is unfortunate, since formalism (ascribed to those who admire the work of architects like Yamasaki, Lapidus, and Speer) has a strong but qualitatively different meaning among designers. In this same section, Blau uses a questionnaire of 36 aphorisms to uncover currents of thought among architects (less is more; the nature of space reflects what it wants to be; form follows function). Although certain recognizable types do emerge—the pragmatist, the humanist, the technician, the expressionist—the relevance of these convictions for architectural practice is ambiguous. She shows that such convictions among rank-and-file architects tend to be idealistic, in contrast to the pragmatic agendas of firm heads. However, the typology of convictions does not appear consequential, since it is not related to other analyses.

Such shortcomings recede as the remaining chapters delve into architecture's more pressing dilemmas. "The Eccentricity of Merit" is Blau's report of a difficult but important analysis of design quality and the influence of firms' and architects' ideas. Ideas alone, she demonstrates, do not great buildings make: they only become significant when examined in conjunction with characteristics of the firm. So, for example, the agenda of satisfying clients is inversely related to quality in highly rationalized, bureaucratic, large offices. An aesthetic agenda is instrumental in creating good buildings in autonomous, professional offices, but not corporate or business-oriented offices. The author draws a significant conclusion from the study of merit: offices fail to live up to professional standards of quality when they espouse market principles *and* have structures con-

sistent with those principles. Large firms tend to win more awards, but primarily large firms with a high proportion of designers on the staff and simple, undepartmentalized structure. Small firms (less than eight full-time staff) also tend to produce high-quality work when they have large firm features (characterized by bureaucratization and rationalization evident in complex organization, personnel regulations, and comprehensive services). Thus, when architecture firms acquire characteristics that they should *not* have according to organizational theory, they are more likely to produce outstanding work, hence "the eccentricity of merit."

The sixth chapter, "Dialectics of the Marketplace," gets down to some pragmatic and meaty questions of practice. Once again the sophisticated analysis and interpretation of the data verifies some common knowledge and produces some startling results. The dramatic economic shift between 1974 and 1979, even more severe in New York than in the rest of the nation, gave Blau ample material for studying the effects of the marketplace on architectural practice. Fortunately, she found that design quality helps both large and small firms through the bad times. Unfortunately, she also discovered that none of the methods offices employed to survive the economic downturn was particularly consequential. Though offices tried staff cuts, reorganization, new leadership, and the pursuit of new markets, the only effective strategy in 1979 was the addition of energy-related services. Blau's findings indicate that characteristics of the office, not strategies for riding out the hard times, are the best predictors of success, failure, and mere survival. Those offices seemingly buffered from the effects of a recession by ties with large corporate clients, with corporation-type organization in the office, high productivity, and high profits, are not advantaged but are likely to barely survive. Granted, these firms can eke a way out of

financial ruin. However, it is the small, unaffiliated office with few corporate clients which sits on the "fulcrum of risk"—in economic recession they either surge ahead to increase profits and productivity, or fail miserably. Thus, those characteristics that normally create relative advantage merely define a zone of safety in unusual economic circumstances; those characteristics that normally create relative disadvantage are conditions of risk—permitting great success or failure—in abnormal economic circumstances.

Upon finding that certain small firms actually turned the recession into an asset, increasing productivity, profit and quality, we ask ourselves: Who are these guys? But the reader receives no further information about these uniquely successful firms, about their strategies, convictions, or agendas. This reflects a problem inherent in survey research: it sacrifices depth of understanding for the broader overview. *Architects and Firms*, as an early text on the subject, is directed toward a general understanding that will provide the foundation for subsequent "thick description" of the profession.

The book's focus on the contradictions of architectural practice is summarized in the final chapter. Although in the preceding sections the findings are not always easy to locate, this chapter provides an excellent summation of the different conclusions and their interrelation. Blau's picture is complex, but it is not unintelligible or without hope. It is exactly the contradictions inherent in the dialectical process that permit innovation and change in architecture. If architects are the "slow radicals" Blau describes, the current eclecticism and frustration felt in the field may offer a context for peripheral enterprising young firms to emerge as new lights for the profession.

Those whose intuition runs counter to her findings will probably begin by criticizing Blau's methodology. But the extensive and informative foot-

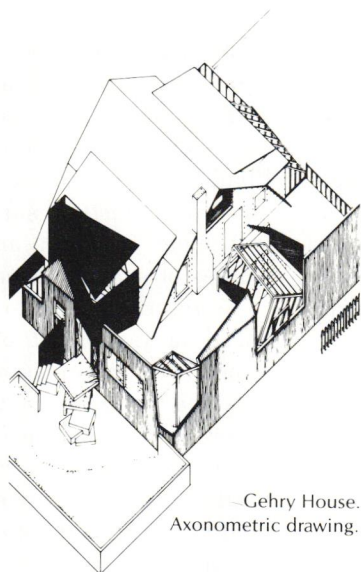
notes, which disclose the statistical operations underlying the analysis, reveal very little room for such criticism. In general, constructs such as voice, commitment quality, and productivity are each comprised of a number of measures, which insures their validity. Only occasionally do the methods incorporate problems that may lead to misinterpretation (such as using the number of awards received by firms that vary in size, rather than the percentage of an office's work that is award winning). All in all, a close reading finds Blau's methods and analyses to be sound, and for the most part, respectful of professional values.

Some may argue that what happens in New York is not like what happens in other parts of the country, but the differences would seem to be a matter of degree rather than kind. It is also possible that what happened in the seventies cannot be generalized for the eighties and beyond. Whereas the recession becomes part of the investigation, there may be other factors external to the study that had an unmeasured impact on the results. Response to this criticism will require long-range study and tracking of firms in the coming decades. Given the significance of *Architects and Firms*, we hope that Blau will continue to study these and other offices.

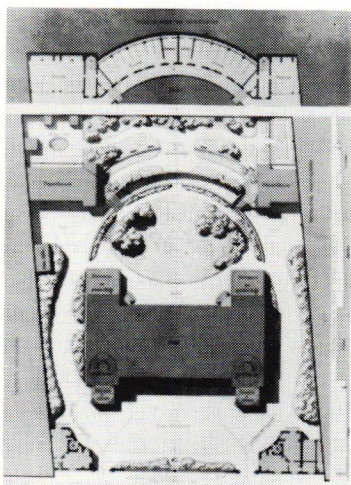
My criticisms of this text are few, the primary disappointment being, as with a novel that I wish wouldn't end, that the book is not 100 pages longer, covering more issues in greater depth. Without qualification, this is a seminal text that every architect and architectural student will benefit from reading. Not that Blau provides definitive recommendations for how to make more money or achieve greater job satisfaction—though some are implied. But if we expect to deal well with the problems that will most definitely confront our profession in the coming decades, this work more than any other establishes a sound basis for understanding what we are doing. The

book also initiates the study of architectural practice into scholarly research, which can have significant implications for the profession. With Blau's book as a base, we can look forward to further survey research, and more in-depth and long-range studies of specific issues and firms.

To return briefly to the dilemma posed at the outset of this review: armed with information from *Architects and Firms*, we know the solutions to low starting salaries are not going to be simple or static. First, we could fruitfully study how firms in times of relative economic prosperity might become more productive and profitable (to provide greater economic resources for salaries). A small firm is advised to grow in size, place increasing importance on design quality, increase the diversity of projects and services, use advanced technologies, and formalize operations. However, these recommendations must be altered under adverse economic circumstances. Given the earlier implication that salaries were the chief means to attract talent to the field, Blau demonstrates that in fact the chief source of career contentment is opportunities to participate in design. This is most likely to occur in small firms, and in large firms that are democratically organized around a team approach to projects. It seems reasonable to assume that restructuring offices will increase possibilities for contentment, which will help attract talented recruits. Finally, at a more general level, as long as the architectural profession ascribes value only to creative design, rank-and-file architects will not have enough opportunities to participate in satisfying ways. As a whole, architects must develop a new philosophy about alternative means to participate in the profession, and ascribe worth to those activities. Blau makes our understanding of the problem and possible solutions more sophisticated and complex, our diagnoses and remedies more reliable.



Gehry House.
Axonometric drawing.



Henri Labrouste: Hôtel de Mr. L. Fould,
site plan. 1850. From *Revue Générale*, 1858,
v. XVI, Pl. 5. Fogg Museum.



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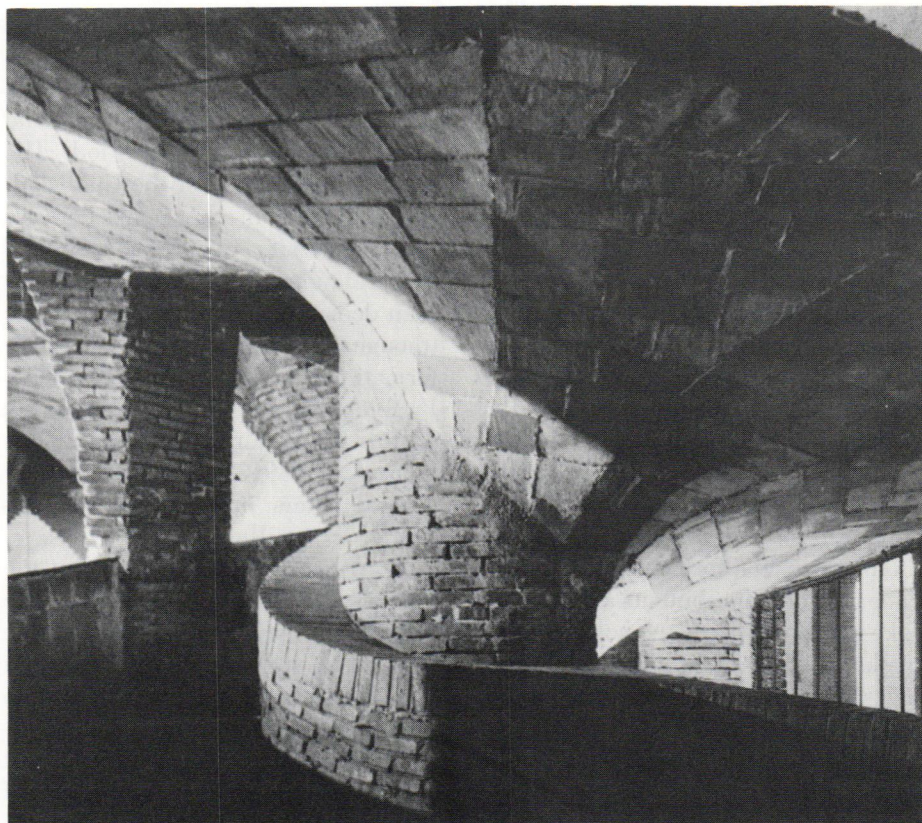
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John Beach:

GAUDÍ

When, in 1957, New York's Museum of Modern Art published a small monograph on the work of the obscure Catalan architect Antonio Gaudí y Cornet, the venture must have seemed odd, even risky. In fact, MOMA was getting in on the ground floor of what was to prove quite a nice little growth industry. In the years since, new Gaudí books have rolled off the presses at regular intervals—a happy phenomenon, but a puzzling one. The body of actual work is quite small, and unsupported by the theoretical or polemical writing that propped up the similarly small oeuvre of Mies van der Rohe or Le Corbusier. Outside his native turf, Gaudí's influence on designers (of his day or our own) has been negligible. Nevertheless, the 1984 *Books In Print* lists nine Gaudí entries, and more have since appeared.

Given the small number of artifacts, it would seem that the subject was exhausted. On the contrary. *Gaudí Diseñador*, a collection of detail photographs, published in Spain in 1978 but only now being distributed in America, draws our attention to the specifics of the sumptuous surfaces and complex ornamentation of Gaudí's buildings. The wooden railings of the Güell Palace, so complicated that they appear to have been crocheted, not carved or turned, and the ominous, Darth Vader-ish doors to the chapel in one of the other Güell houses are long overdue for comprehensive publication. While it would be helpful if the photographs were larger in format and crisper in quality, the collection is valuable both to the Gaudí enthusiast and to anyone following the current confusion about the relationship of the architecture of the past to that of the present. The



BRICKWORK ON DESCENDING RAMP AND COLUMNS, PALACIO GÜELL

book makes very clear—if such clarification is still needed (and apparently it is, cf. any recent issue *Progressive Architecture*)—that cut-out fragments and two-dimensional metaphorical references to traditional forms, however interesting or amusing in their own way, do not provide the qualities of solidity and power we so admire in the buildings of earlier eras.

In *Gaudí Diseñador* one sees Gaudí's buildings beginning to disintegrate and contort at their verges in a series of overtures to the observer, creating out of their own fabric, at a more comprehensible scale, explorations and variations of the formal, intellectual, emotional, and narrative themes the buildings embody. This type of elaboration, most architects complain, can't be done anymore, because there is no one to do it, the craft skills have evaporated. Actually the architectural crafts are very much alive, as is

obvious to anyone who reads *Fine Homebuilding*, *Fine Woodworking*, or any of the periodicals devoted to historic preservation and restoration. As modern design abandoned the crafts, the crafts abandoned modern design for the guardianship of history's built legacy. What has been lost is not the ability to produce ornament, but the ability to design and deploy it. Any one of the details from *Gaudí Diseñador*, which were a natural, almost casual efflorescence of the design process of their period, would require a good two weeks of research, design, and time in the contemporary architectural office—time which neither the office nor the client could afford. This book emphasizes that ability which is no longer at our command, and which must be relearned if the current age is to evolve (as it seems to want to do) an appropriate ornamental repertoire, and to manip-

ulate that ornament as a tool of scale. The text of *Gaudí Diseñador* is a collection of aphoristic inanities and unfinished sentences, but at four and a half pages, it is mercifully brief and may be skipped with impunity. The value lies in the images.

It is more difficult to determine where the value is secreted in *The Designs and Drawings of Antonio Gaudí*. The book is conceptually rudderless, the format that of a coffee table book, the design dreary rather than eye-catching. It has some of the apparatus of a research tool, but is too disorganized for convenient reference use, and the contents are erratic. Like some of Charles Jencks's insta-books, it appears to have been swept together from whatever was lying around unclaimed.

Apart from two prefaces (one from each author), it has a list of illustrations; a biographical sketch; two essay chapters, "Gaudí and the Building Styles of his Day" and "Gaudí's Drawings and Manner of Working"; a very miscellaneous collection of Gaudí sayings; a chronology of his life and works; a catalogue raisonné of Gaudí drawings; and a selection of examples. Some of this material is useful, but a certain amount is redundant, either within the book itself or within the available Gaudí literature; much of it has little or no specific relation to the drawings of Gaudí. The drawings themselves, the book's come-on and its one potentially interesting feature, take up considerably less than half the volume, those by Gaudí even less.

George R. Collins notes in his preface that most of Gaudí's drawings were destroyed, and those remaining can convey only a small part of the richness of the buildings. Consequently the originals have been augmented by measured drawings, mostly student work, which are intended to supply the missing information. This may be justifiable in the case of Bellesguard,

for which no original drawings survive. In the case of the Güell Palace it is pointless, since extensive material survives, both original drawings and reproductions from the period. The longitudinal section of the Güell Palace included in the book conveys the complexity of the spaces and their relationships much more clearly than does the 1970 cutaway isometric (though the isometric gives more information about the service stair). Preferable to this superfluous drawing would be material on the Clapés house, an 1899 project which, like several others in the catalogue raisonné, is not illustrated.

The shoddy reproduction, not the uneven selection decisions, is the book's gravest disappointment. The pages are a yellowish off-white, meant to lend a quaint, old-timey quality to the illustrations, but the primary effect is to reduce black-white contrast and to obscure delicate gradations of line and shade in the pencil drawings. Many of the drawings were photographed with inadequate filtration of the background, so that they float in a rectangle of fuzzy gray. The drawings themselves, particularly those whose originals are in pencil, are frequently printed in grays ranging from muddy to murky. In many cases the lighting is so uneven that the drawing fades into darkness, or shadows and reflections cause distracting irregularities in the surface. One drawing, of gates and fencing in the Parque de la Ciudadela, was not flattened before being photographed, and the shadows cast by the creases in the paper obliterate much of the detail. The result of this compounded carelessness is infuriating, especially in a book of such potential importance.

For those desiring a slightly posher product than *Gaudí Diseñador*, and too wise to pay the price for the empty pretensions, lackluster design, and lousy graphics of the Collins and Bassegoda book, Rizzoli's recent *Gaudí*

is a satisfactory compromise. The introductory text recounts the relevant personal and professional facts. They are few enough. Gaudí led an uneventful life, giving rise to anecdotes and legends through the strength and quirkiness of his personality rather than through any involvement in dramatic event. The style is somewhat marred by the concatenated phrases and clauses, and the intricately contorted sentence structure that frequently afflicts those who write about Gaudí—as if this were the literary counterpart to that distortion of the expected found in Gaudí's work. But Rizzoli continues to provide lots of color illustration for what is, in today's book market, a moderate price. In *Gaudí* this more than compensates for the minor textual lapses. The photographs are grouped by major project, chronologically, with an informative mix of exterior, interior, and detail shots. A selection of student projects and early commissions form the background material; some were also published in *Drawings and Designs of Antonio Gaudí*. They are smaller in the Rizzoli book, but tend to be more legible. Two drawings printed in gray and gray by Collins and Bassegoda are presented in color by Rizzoli, with important differences in the clarification of intent.

More elegant and complete compendiums of Gaudí's work exist, but they are also much more costly. Rizzoli's *Gaudí* is satisfactory and sensible, a good first Gaudí book and a good browsing and lending copy for those who wish to keep their expensive coffee table versions free of their friends' fingerprints.

Gaudí Diseñador, Cesar Martinell, Marta Ribalta, editor, Editorial Blume, Barcelona, 1982, 127 pp., illus., \$12.95 pb.

The Designs and Drawings of Antonio Gaudí, George R. Collins, and Juan Bassegoda Nonell, Princeton University Press, 1983, 240 pp., illus., \$135.00.

Gaudí, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Rizzoli, 1984, 128 pp., illus., \$14.95.

Andrew Rabeneck:

VIEW FROM A LONG CHAIR

JACK PRITCHARD

This anecdotal chronicle of interesting people at an interesting time has been reviewed with affection in Britain. Pritchard was a patron of architecture, furniture, and graphic design in the 1930s, and books written by patrons are rare enough to merit attention, yet this one disappoints. Ironically, it is Pritchard's quintessentially English qualities of tact, understatement, and self-deprecation, the sources of his charm, that leave the reader too often dangling, wondering, speculating, or simply irritated. We hear much of his remarkable "good luck," nothing of his setbacks; all about the virtues of those he encounters, little about their vices.

Jack and Molly Pritchard were patrons of Le Corbusier, Wells Coates, Marcel Breuer, Walter Gropius, Maxwell Fry, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, and others, at a remarkable moment in history. Comfortable middle-class intellectuals in the Hampstead of the 1930s, they epitomized a very English vision of Modernism. The atmosphere is usefully characterized in Fiona McCarthy's long introduction to the book. She describes the Pritchards as combining the old English middle-class tradition of service with their enthusiasm for progressive modernism, for the wedding of art and industry, a romance in the tradition of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The activism of English intellectual elites, their passionate modernism, and their frightening confidence in rational planning were irresistible to the European prewar refugees who came to visit or live in the Pritchards' Lawn Road Flats, designed by Wells Coates. These were "service" flats, with a central kitchen and maid service, an echo of *existenzminimum* ideals, yet for intellectual transients.



FIRST BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR LAWN ROAD FLATS. BREUER, AND ISE AND WALTER GROPIUS WITH ONE OF THE TENANTS.

The tenants would meet in the "Isobar" designed by Breuer to talk art and architecture.

Pritchard's contribution as a catalyst for Continental Modernism in England is what assures his place in the annals of architecture. Yet his professional interests lay in furniture manufacture. Starting in 1925 with Venesta, an established plywood product manufacturer, he experimented with door and furniture design as a way of increasing sales of plywood, commissioning Coates, Le Corbusier, and Lubetkin along the way to design exhibit stands and products. During the depression he got heavily involved with the radical economic utopians of PEP (Political and Economic Planning), Max Nicholson and his Techplan, Julian Huxley, the educator Henry Morris, and others. Inspired by Keynes and depressed by economic and political stagnation, these crusaders for a just and rational world exemplified the benign activism of British interwar intellectual life. It is the sensibility that made Britain prominent in later optimistic initiatives such as CIAM and the homegrown MARS group (Modern Architectural Research).

In 1935 Pritchard formed the Isokon Furniture Company (for Isometric Unit Construction—the terminology was Wells Coates's) with Gropius as controller of design. Gropius, in turn, suggested that Breuer should design a long chair in plywood. Hence the

Isokon Long Chair was born into a family of furniture that included dining and side chairs also by Breuer and the "Donkey" by Egon Riss, a paperbook storage rack that appealed to Allen Lane enough to market it through leaflets inserted in his Penguin books.

During and after World War II Pritchard became a civil service mandarin in many capacities, eventually overseeing the establishment of British standards for furniture manufacture based on scientific testing, and the establishment of the levy-supported Furniture Industry Research Association doing basic research for the industry as a whole, which continues today. The latter chapters of Pritchard's book peter out amid a welter of names of people and organizations, enlivened only by anecdotes of little general interest.

As a memoir, this book is important for those who wish to understand more than the general histories allow about one facet of the advent of Continental Modernism to British shores. Yet Pritchard's reserve and his lack of candor invite the reader's caution. It's not too much to ask, I hope, that his contribution will soon be put in truer perspective by the scholarly historians of the Thirties Society.

View from a Long Chair, Jack Pritchard, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, 190 pp., illus., \$30.00.



Patrick J. Quinn

GEORGIAN DUBLIN

KEVIN CORRIGAN KEARNS

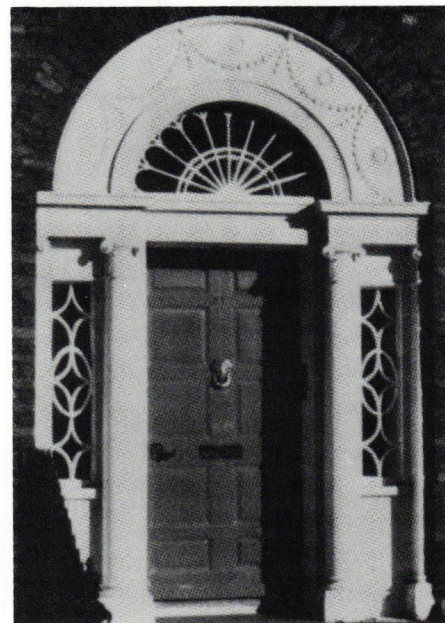
It seems odd that two of the most beautiful 18th-century cities of Europe—Noto and Dublin—should have been virtually ignored by historians of the city. Leonardo Benevolo in his *History of the City* does not deem them worth a mention, but then neither did Lewis Mumford in *The City in History*. The last major work on urban history to mention Dublin was probably Frederick Hiorns's *Town Building in History*, almost three decades ago. It is not surprising that, while Europeans are increasingly preoccupied with American history, Americans should be the ones to call attention to some of Europe's urban riches. (Almost half of the Irish Georgian Society's 3000 members live in the United States, and its work is well known through the lectures of Desmond Guinness, that remarkable champion of Irish Palladianism.)

Stephen Tobriner's recently published book on Noto, twenty years after Joseph Baird sang its praises,

is a fine study, well researched, but probably destined to appeal only to scholars. Kevin Corrigan Kearns, a Colorado geographer, presents a much more vivid and immediate portrait of the other gem of the 18th century, Dublin. Noto is Baroque; Dublin is Georgian, even Palladian. The contrast could not be greater between the two as urban structure. Noto's delight rests in variations (of extraordinary architecture) within a tight orthogonal grid, with few piazzas other than street-edge openings. Dublin's wide and gracious streets, elegant squares, crescents, and cul-de-sacs offer the perfect northern contrast to the Mediterranean intensity.

It surprises even the modern Irishman to hear that Dublin in the late 1700s was considered by many the most beautiful city in Europe, and that the 19th-century squalor which earned the name "Dear Old Dirty" Dublin, lasting well into the mid-twentieth century, represented an extraordinary decline in the wake of the Act of Union in 1801, when the Irish Parliament was voluntarily dissolved, and the social set moved to London.

Professor Kearns outlines the city's physical evolution with precise factual information in the service of a strangely exciting book. Yet this is by no means his main thrust. His chief purpose is to describe the contemporary attempts to salvage what is left of that grandeur, and he gives a concise lesson in historic preservation. Although the Sicilians have preserved much of Noto's core intact, Dubliners have allowed their city to suffer some of the most tragic environmental pillage of any city in Europe. The situation, pithily outlined by Kearns, also contrasts starkly with the efforts of, say, Warsaw, devastated by World War II, yet with much of its architectural heritage rebuilt and restored. Dublin, which suffered only two light bombing incidents (probably accidental), was luckiest among European cities, yet, as the author points out, developers can be much more



effective than bombers. Kearns is careful to document the efforts of both the activist preservationists and the numerous scholars and professionals who, often unwittingly, have combined to awaken the populace to its losses, past and pending.

In this he does a service not only to scholars in the field but to those interested in achieving a balance between progress and preservation everywhere. The model he chose might be criticized as irrelevant to larger American or European cities, yet the opposite is true. Dublin, because of the vision of its Georgian planners, its Wide Streets Commission (not unlike Baroque Rome's *Magistri di Strade*), is comprehensible as a whole, and this comprehensibility allows Kearns to document the processes of change in clear context, past and present. Like Rome Dublin has a ringed core. Rome has the Aurelian Wall, Dublin its circular roads and canals. Like Rome it has the most appalling suburban sprawl surrounding a central structure that is being eroded by traffic and new construction. Rome has a new Council, headed by Aymonnino, whose goal is to reverse that pattern. Dublin has mainly its civilian volunteers, whose achievement in the face

of both administrative and commercial ineptness is admirable.

Perhaps the most compelling of all Kearns's efforts is his patient documentation of individual citizen attempts to reclaim historic architecture. The efforts of young professionals, middle-class families, and ordinary citizens to reclaim historic architecture are described in a series of poignant case histories.

Mountjoy Square, whose elegance I once overlooked from my desk in the Dublin Housing Architect's office, is slowly losing its south side to urban decay. A lone family works against lack of money and support to restore and preserve a four-story terrace house in the middle of that side. The John Molloy family's endurance is matched by the Caseys of Henrietta Street. The Caseys' house, once lived in by wealthy upper-crust Dubliners, is a mere shell which Kearns describes as "rather like the set for a Gothic horror film":

Indeed the Caseys' house has been used as a site for several movies. The highly acclaimed *Strumpet City* was filmed in part in the stark, sullen chambers, depicting the grim days of Dublin tenementation and poverty. . . . But there is also another practical side to the house's rawness. Sections of exposed brick and timber throughout the interior have proved valuable to scholars studying eighteenth-century architectural materials and techniques.

Having spent some five years of postgraduate practice in remodeling just such buildings (and indeed doing my share of insensitive "modernization" to such beauties as the Gate Theatre of the renowned Rotunda complex) I find it odd to read that scholars "study" Georgian construction. Then I remember that most of what we took for granted had not in fact been documented. Craftsmen knew how to do the work. A new generation of craftsmen has to be trained, with the painstaking efforts of contemporary professionals and even

amateurs slowly supplying the need.

In recent years my visits to Ireland have involved less and less time in my native city and more in the bleak beauty of the west. The horrors perpetrated by my erstwhile colleagues, the architects, were too much for me. Arthur Gibney's great monumental bank on Dame Street, like a tank coming through a garden hedge, has riven apart the gentle approach to Trinity College whose Georgian grace was so well portrayed in the film

A "new" community has arisen on North Great Georges Street, which in my youth I knew as a slum, and where I first saw a knuckle-duster slash open a man's cheek to the bone.

Educating Rita; Gibney's equally insensitive ESB offices on Fitzwilliam Street, once the longest, and some would say the most lovely Georgian street of all, are almost as cruel. Then there are Boyle & Delaney's great lump for the Sugar Company at the corner of St. Stephen's Green and other examples of environmental crassness on the west side of that so-civic square. The list of destruction is long, but the reclamation efforts are slowly gaining ground, and Kearns documents both with patient understanding. More than that, he documents the political and administrative planning processes, historical as well as contemporary.

The divided interests and separate routes of well-meaning groups contribute little to the establishment of overall environmental policy. So the gains for architectural sanity have

been small, despite the rational approaches of well-publicized writers like Neil Downes and J. H. Craig. (How extraordinarily similar to the hydra-headed creature that conservationist and preservationist movements have become in America!)

Some collaborations are worthy of note, however. Led by Harold Clarke, a Trinity College professor, a "new" community has arisen on North Great Georges Street, which in my youth I knew as a slum and where I first saw a knuckle-duster slash open a man's cheek to the bone. Gentrification has happened there, at the hands of Clarke and others attracted by his superb example, but it has included the older residents as well as families with small children. Street furniture has been carefully thought of and the street is becoming a graceful but vital pedestrian enclave only a short walk from the city center.

Future American Joyceans who make the annual Bloomsday pilgrimage may find little left of the seedy aura that permeates *Ivy Day in the Committee Room* or *Ulysses*. O'Casey's tenement settings for *Juno and the Paycock* and *Shadow of a Gunman* may be then found only on stage, when a few years ago they were everywhere.

Jane Jacobs's *Death and Life of Great American Cities* called attention to the emasculation of public life in Boston's urban places. Tübingen, Annecy, Freiburg, Warsaw, and numerous European towns have succeeded in maintaining that vital mix of public and private life that occurs when people live in and "own" their city places rather than give them over to tourism and commerce. Dublin may yet salvage and restore enough of itself to regain its once-vaunted grace as a livable city. Kevin Corrigan Kearns's book will have contributed to that process.

Georgian Dublin: Ireland's Imperilled Architectural Heritage, Kevin Corrigan Kearns, David and Charles, 1983, 224 pp., illus., \$26.00.

Norma Evenson:

VICTORIAN PUBS

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

MARK GIROUARD

Mark Girouard's books have become notable for a combination of sound scholarship and entertaining writing. He has a talent for uncovering subjects somewhat outside the beaten path of architectural history, and his perceptive illumination of the social aspects of design has given him an unusually wide readership.

Two of his works, both well received when first published, are now available in paperback. The first to appear was *Victorian Pubs*, published initially in 1975. To a foreigner, the English pub often appears as an intimidatingly complex series of oddly designated rooms in which, during arbitrarily defined hours, food and drink are dispensed according to a system of highly esoteric rules. To the British, of course, the pub is a beloved institution, and just as they cherish home and hearth, they cherish the pub as a home away from home. As a focus of sentimental regard, the pub would seem to provide a natural subject for nostalgic coffee-table volumes. Mr. Girouard's book, however, while abundantly and attractively illustrated, is no mere pictorial survey. It is a solidly researched study tracing the history of the pub as both an architectural and social phenomenon. The emphasis is on London, although brief consideration is given to other localities.

The pub had its origins in the 18th-century tavern, often a slightly modified private dwelling. By the mid-nineteenth century it had evolved into the baroque splendor of the "gin palace," to be augmented toward the end of the century by the subdued taste of the "improved" pub and coffee



A BAR OPPOSITE THE ROYAL VICTORIA THEATRE, WATERLOO ROAD, 1859

house. In its heyday, the pub provided a ubiquitous and garish ornament to the London street scene. Glowing without, the pub interior often surrounded the patron with a dazzling array of gleaming fixtures, carved wood, and engraved glass as intoxicating in its way as the spirits dispensed.

Mr. Girouard's book provides a detailed analysis of the evolution of pub design, and is particularly helpful in clarifying the functional logic of this building type. Readers who may have supposed the pub to exemplify the anonymous folk vernacular will learn that pubs were often the work of architects, indeed of architects who specialized in pubs. Shifting attitudes toward alcoholic consumption, as well as artistic styles, have influenced the form of the pub, and both social and aesthetic questions are discussed.

Although American readers may not possess the same emotional attachment to the pub as Britons, anyone who has visited the United Kingdom is likely to have some familiarity with this now-venerable institution. The pub is presently in a state of decline, and Mr. Girouard begins his study with the observation that "London is full of dead pubs." In addition to its value as a historical chronicle,

Victorian Pubs provides a guide to some of the best surviving specimens of pub design, and creates a heightened appreciation of the richness they have imparted to urban life. As to the descendants of the pub, Mr. Girouard observes:

the vagaries of ye Olde and Brewers' Tudor, and the doubtful pleasures of their successors or rivals, the jazz-modern cocktail bars, the streamlined roadhouses and the neo-Georgian lounge, have still to find a historian to chart their unexplored seas and draw what moral he can.

Let us hope, in any event, that this historian will apply the same degree of talent to the subject that Mr. Girouard has exhibited here.

Sweetness and Light, focusing on the Queen Anne movement, is broader in scope than *Victorian Pubs*, and better known. First published in 1977, it exhibits the sound research and graceful writing common to all of Girouard's books. The architectural movement on which it focuses produced so much delightful building that one immediately wonders why historians so long neglected it. One reason may have been the hybrid nature of the style. Historians of 19th-century architecture have often preferred to discuss the major revival styles, with their abundant theoretical underpinnings, consistent visual imagery, and manifestation in major monuments. At the same time, historians of the Modern Movement, when viewing the 19th century, have restricted their attention to technical advancements and the functional forms of industrial building. The Queen Anne style fits neither within mainstream revivalism nor within the realm of Modernist prototypes.

Queen Anne design employed an eclectic assemblage, including references to the English Renaissance, the rural vernacular, and Flemish design, with touches of Japanese and Tudor motif. Included in the identifying signs

of the style were exposed red brick walls, multiple gables, white classical trim, abundant fenestration, and the repeated use of the sunflower as a decorative motif. Stylistic references drew heavily on the 17th century which, according to Girouard, supplied architects "with gables, whether straight or Flemish, brick pilasters, brick pediments, ribbed chimney-stacks, and prominent plaster coves; from the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came sash windows, and wrought-iron railings." The 19th-century predilection for picturesque composition prevented the style from becoming simply a form of classical revival, and it permitted a wide range of formal and decorative mixtures. By the close of the 1860s, the Queen Anne style had developed its basic vocabulary, and by the 1870s had achieved public recognition. The eclecticism of the style was such that "Queen Anne" became a convenient and popular designation rather than an accurately descriptive term.

Queen Anne was initially derided by some, and described by hostile critics as "a bastard style," "a contortion of every feature of architecture," and "excessively ugly, a disgrace to the country." Such terms seem undeserved for a style created with no intent other than beauty. The Queen Anne style grew from the aesthetic movement, a reaction against the strident, heavy-handed forms and moralist rhetoric of the Gothic Revival. Some of its practitioners were regarded as "simply deserters from the Gothic school." The goal of the aesthetic movement was art for art's sake, and its architectural manifestation in the Queen Anne style reflected the talents of such notable designers as Richard Norman Shaw, W. E. Nesfield, Philip Webb, J. J. Stephenson, and G. G. Scott. Enthusiastic patronage for the style was provided by artistically enlightened and socially progressive members of the middle class. Queen Anne, as summarized by Mr. Girouard, was



THE GRAPE VINE, MILE END ROAD, 1940

"gentlemanly but not aristocratic, middle-class but not bourgeois, eclectic but not uncouth, pretty but not frivolous, unassertive but chic, reminiscent of the country but adaptable for the town. They took it for its sweetness, and used it for the spreading of light."

Mr. Girouard traces the evolution of the Queen Anne style, analyzing its relation to the Arts and Crafts Movement, and discussing its varied architectural manifestations. The lightness and delicacy of Queen Anne gave it a natural application to domestic design. Appearing first in individually designed houses, the style flourished in London's Chelsea district, most notably on Tite Street and Cadogan Square. Particular consideration is given to the creation of the London suburb of Bedford Park, deemed by the author "the best-known symbol of both the aesthetic

movement and of 'Queen Anne.'" As a focus of innovative design, Bedford Park became a pilgrimage point for architectural students, and was initially famed not only for its novel and picturesque building, but for its equally picturesque and eccentric inhabitants. Other buildings included for analysis are the London Board Schools, Newnham College, Cambridge, and several town halls. A chapter on the "architecture of enjoyment" considers applications of the style to seaside buildings, shops and pubs. As might be anticipated in a study of an important domestic style, a chapter on house furnishings is included, as well as a section on "old fashioned" garden design. Although the principal focus of the book is on the architects and buildings of the Queen Anne movement, one of the most delightful sections deals with picture books, and includes the work of

such illustrators as Walter Crane, Kate Greenaway, and Randolph Caldecott.

A final chapter deals with the Queen Anne in America. In his discussion, Mr. Girouard seeks to demonstrate links between American Shingle Style and Colonial Revival design, and the British Queen Anne movement. This connection has been previously discussed by Vincent Scully in *The Shingle Style*. Although there are obvious formal differences between the red brick of the Queen Anne and the textured wooden buildings of the Shingle Style, Girouard sees a strong similarity in intention. As he puts it,

The patrons of both styles were reacting from contemporary cities, but in different ways. The English were thinking in terms of eighteenth-century merchants or gentleman farmers, the American in terms of eighteenth-century pioneers. Both were probably supported by comfortable dollops of urban money; they were both play-acting, but playing different roles in the same kind of play.

Because of the wide range of material covered, *Sweetness and Light* of necessity presents a general survey of its subject, rather than an intensive examination of individual designers. Many readers, however, may be inspired to pursue further study of some of the architects cited. All in all, Mr. Girouard's work presents a balanced synthesis and a perceptive analysis of an important artistic movement. The book is of value not only to members of the design professions, but to social and architectural historians.

Victorian Pubs, Mark Girouard, Yale, 1984, 232 pp., illus., \$16.95 pb.

Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, Mark Girouard, Yale, 1984, 272 pp., illus., \$16.95 pb.

Diane Favro:

ROMAN CITIES

PIERRE GRIMAL

The ancient Romans were overtly urban. Despite early ties to the land, the greatness of Roman culture revolved around cities and city making. Romans of the Republican period reworked existing settlements and established new cities as a means of acculturating conquered territories. In the Imperial period, Roman *urbs* proliferated throughout the Mediterranean basin. From Spain to Turkey, a citizen could be assured of finding cities with the same physical components. *Urbs et orbis*, the state's power focused on Rome as a world city and the Empire as a world of cities.

The formal cohesiveness and undaunting order associated with Roman cities have a great appeal to modern urban dwellers. Trapped in undisciplined, sprawling environments, they admire the Roman legacy of broad streets and orthogonal layouts still evident in the downtowns of many European cities. Despite widespread interest in Roman urban development, there is scant published information; what exists is generally superficial and often dated. The puzzling lack of good sources on Roman urbanism is especially troublesome for undergraduate educators in English-speaking schools. This is what prompted G. Michael Woloch to translate and expand upon Pierre Grimal's *Les villes romaines*, first published in 1954. The translation is accurate and readable, with updated information on the sites, a new bibliography, and a glossary. *Roman Cities* is more focused than the other standard works on the subject, but still leaves much to be desired.

A review of this new work must, like Janus, look in two directions: backward to the original text and forward to the expanded translation. Grimal's book was commissioned for the *Que sais-je* series, which serves

up information in a compact format for the lay reader. It was necessarily abbreviated in scope and generalized in content. Grimal limited his examples to the western half of the Roman Empire, including North Africa and Europe, and, not surprisingly, emphasized settlements in Gaul. While the examples from the west may give a purer view of Roman urbanism, the reader must constantly be mindful that the book gives a distorted view of the Roman experience as a whole.

Similarly, Grimal's generalist approach and short format posed other serious limitations. The text was choppy and unsatisfying, with little historical or architectural background and only the barest chronology, emphasizing the apogee of Roman urbanism during the first and second centuries A.D. The content was predictable and selective, using familiar examples and reiterating familiar generalizations. Grimal rightly stressed the individuality of Roman cities rather than a false monotony of repeated building forms, yet he did not discuss distinctions in the political status of different townships nor in regional building techniques. An uninformed reader might mistakenly believe identical concrete construction and ordered urban forms could be found throughout the entire Roman empire. Grimal's treatment of city planning focused on Roman orthogonal configurations, ignoring more free form, individualistic urban solutions, such as the hill towns of Italy or the tribal capitals of Gaul. One yearns to learn of a grid plan city other than Timgad, and to move beyond description into analysis.

An untempered faith in the supremacy of Roman orthogonal planning also marred Grimal's chapter on Rome. Laboring to identify a *cardo* and *decumanus* in the capital's organic layout, the author forced the evidence. When a regular grid did not readily appear, he inferred the existence of a star-shaped plan with streets radiating from the central forum. Anyone who has studied the ancient city will be

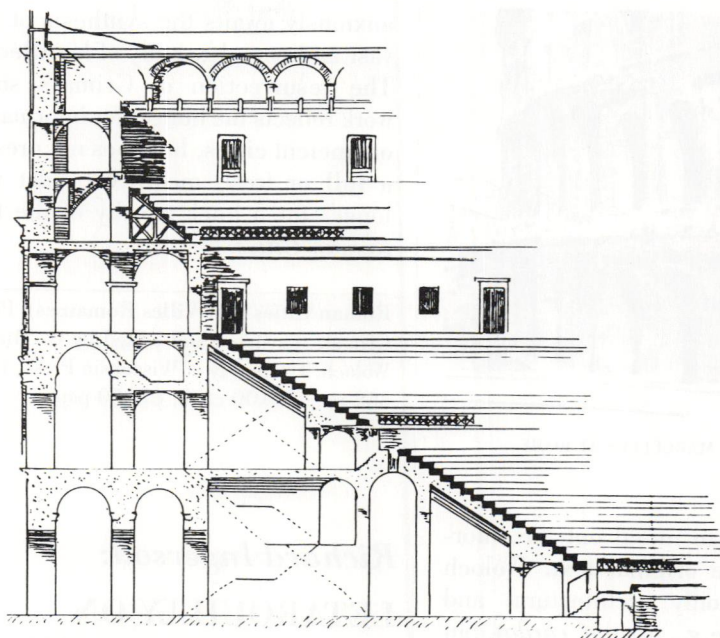
hard pressed to agree with the author that Rome's urban plan was "remarkably clear and coherent."

Grimal also erroneously asserted that the ancient capital was subject to a master plan, first articulated by Julius Caesar and updated by subsequent rulers. To impose modern notions of comprehensive urban planning on an ancient city is inaccurate and misleading. Rome was, indeed, a model for colonial cities, but only in the matters of opulence, scale, and select building forms, not urban planning.

Despite a chauvinistic preference for French examples, Grimal provided some good insights into regional variations of urban structures. Provincial architecture imitated that of the capital, but could welcome local forms when necessary. The author stressed that the success of architecture in different climates was due to the flexibility and pragmatism of the Roman system. Sadly lacking from his compact text were explanations of diverse residential and commercial structures, circuses, libraries, bridges, highways, tombs, and gardens. Among the best discussions was that on Roman theaters. Typically his only mention of variations in theater types was drawn from Gallic examples, which were in reality demi-amphitheaters, serving as both theaters and amphitheaters.

Like other scholars at mid-century, Grimal analyzed urban building types formalistically. He rarely considered context, ignoring such things as the approaches to fora, the interaction of open urban spaces with the rest of the cityscape, and the impact of the surrounding landscape.

Grimal's book offered a broad overview of western Roman cities, but one that was decidedly French in flavor and fraught with misconceptions. Small wonder the book rarely appeared in major bibliographies on Roman city planning. Woloch attempts to solve some of the major flaws by providing additional sources and extensive footnotes with updated commentary and corrections. In the notes he places



CROSS SECTION OF THE COLOSSEUM FOLLOWING RESTORATION

information glossed over in the original text. For example, here Woloch discusses those building types ignored by Grimal and clarifies such cloudy points as the computation of Rome's population and the misinterpretation of Rome as an *urbs quadrata*. These additions are certainly helpful, but the placement of this supplemental information in the footnotes is a challenge for the reader, who must continually interrupt the flow of the text to read lengthy commentaries.

In a new descriptive catalogue Woloch consolidates data on the 78 cities mentioned by Grimal. Here each city is listed along with a brief history, references to the original text, and an updated bibliography. The historical section includes useful background information and source material not easily placed elsewhere, including inscriptions such as the municipal charter of the Spanish colony Urso (Osuna), a site not mentioned by Grimal. The lengthy bibliography focuses on works in English but includes the most important foreign works, and only a few references to valuable ancient sources. Sources with good plans and illustrations are carefully marked. Here again

the reader will find the additional information useful, but difficult to retrieve. References are frequently repeated. A better means of organizing would have included an initial annotated bibliography of the most referred to sources, with only the major works on specific cities in the descriptive catalogue.

The expansion of Grimal's work presented an ideal opportunity to improve upon the scant, low quality images of the original. Although Woloch provides some better illustrations, including eleven additional drawings in the descriptive catalogue and some regional maps, their quality and format vary greatly. Some plans show topographic lines, others do not; some show isolated buildings, others represent them in context. The drawings are uneven and frequently lack any scale references. The regional maps show anonymous numbers floating on the European continent with no evidence of connecting roads or topography. Sadly, the names keyed to the map numbers are not always the same as those in the headings of the descriptive catalogue (e.g., Augusta Raurica/Augst).

The most useful addendum to Grimal's work is the glossary, which



THE THEATER OF MARCELLUS AT ROME

greatly helps to round out the information in the original text. Woloch defines not only architectural and urban terms (e.g., *atrium*, *cardo*), but also tribal names (Alamanni), and geographical features (Apennines). He also explains general topics such as "building methods" and "city finances." Some references in the main text are keyed to the glossary, but in general readers are expected to use their own initiative to find supportive information.

As it now stands, Woloch's expanded version of *Roman Cities* is still incomplete. It would have greatly benefited from introductory chapters on Roman history and construction, and planning in the eastern Mediterranean. Many students will justifiably complain that the book is cumbersome to use, yet it contains valuable data and references, providing a condensed, inexpensive mini-encyclopedia of cities in the western Roman Empire.

Ancient cities are valuable laboratories for modern scholars and practitioners. The high density, complex building laws, traffic jams, expansive gardens, mixed populations, and diverse architectural forms of Roman urban environments are relevant and intriguing. In the last fifty years, research on Roman cities has been somewhat fragmented, focusing on separate issues, such as urban morphologies, specific complexes, selected building types, urban legislation, and racial distribution. A large audience

anxiously awaits the synthesis of this vast and complex body of knowledge. The resurrection of Grimal's small work reflects the hunger for information on ancient cities, but does not present a full or fresh meal. We must wait longer for a book worthy of the title *Roman Cities*.

Roman Cities (Les Villes Romaines), Pierre Grimal, translated and edited by G. Michael Woloch, University of Wisconsin Press, 1983, 358 pp., \$30.00 cloth; \$12.50 paper.

Richard Ingersoll:

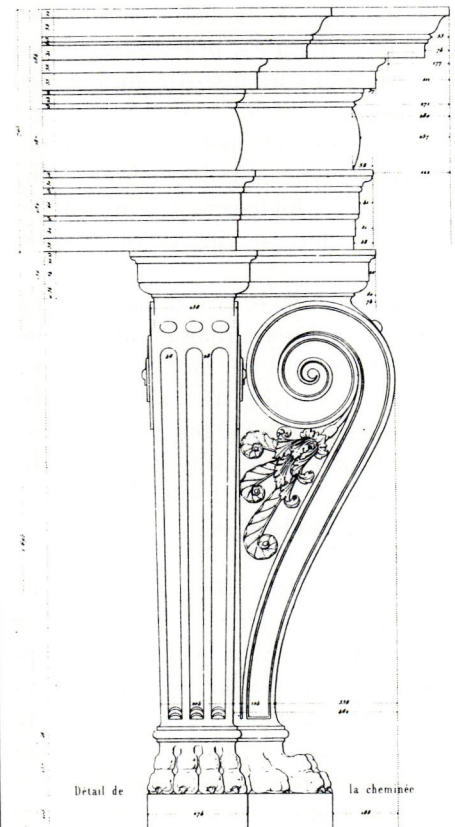
LETAROUILLY ON RENAISSANCE ROME

JOHN BARRINGTON BAYLEY

Subtitled *The Student's Edition of Paul Letarouilly's Edifices de Rome Moderne and Le Vatican et la Basilique de Saint-Pierre*, this small tract is yet another attempt by the Classical America Series in Art and Architecture to bring back the good ol' days of classicism and, in Bayley's words, revive the "Vision of the Golden Age." Bayley was the founder of the series and the architect for a few important classical additions, such as the the New Wing of the Frick Collection in New York. He was most of all a fanatical promoter of classicism: "One should never say no to any possibility of striking a blow for classical beauty and majesty." His use of Letarouilly's prints, first published in 1860, is purely propagandistic. The crisp, rationalizing draftsmanship of the French scholar is used only minimally to teach about Renaissance Rome; the real purpose is to supply a prescriptive pattern book. The tone of writing is avuncular, with several erudite observations but no scholarly coherence. The chapters are arranged by building type: squares, courtyards, palaces, villas, domes, and St. Peter's. Amid

Letarouilly's work is an occasional photograph of an American counterpart—the escutcheon on the U.S. Customs House in New York, the foyer to the Getty Museum in Malibu—to serve as an example of the right application of classicism. The book is unclear as a presentation of the scope or intention of Letarouilly's original work and is at best a descriptive appreciation without analysis. The lesson it offers students is not "look at" but rather "look like."

Letarouilly on Renaissance Rome: The Student's Edition of Paul Letarouilly's Edifices de Rome Moderne and Le Vatican et la Basilique de Saint-Pierre, John Barrington Bayley, Hastings House, 1984, 369 pp., illus., \$35.00.



CHIMNEY DETAIL, FROM LETAROUILLY ON RENAISSANCE ROME

Paul Groth:

GRAND HOTEL

MARC WALTER, editor

The dustjacket of *Grand Hotel* glows with a photograph of an elegant dining room. Late afternoon light reflects off marble-paneled walls, sumptuous tableware, and lambent chandeliers. Do not let the amber mood beguile you at the bookstore. This large, showy book offers 700 photographs, most of them historical and half of them in color, and boasts essays by five authors, including the serious architectural historian David Watkin. It is at best, however, a mere coffee-table book, a triumph of haunting illustration and clever graphic design. Marc Walter, the designer and producer, has flushed talent and money into a vapid and empty book whose subject deserves better treatment.

Europe's huge and exclusive palace hotels of the period 1880-1930 were important city centerpieces and landmarks. As Joan Didion has written, "great hotels have always been social ideas, flawless mirrors to the particular societies they service." Indeed, the grand hotels of Europe, unlike their more socially mixed predecessors and counterparts in America, were the stage for the public decline of much of Europe's aristocracy.

Despite its subtitle, promising an "architectural and social history," *Grand Hotel* is neither. The authors give us no plans, sections, or garden site plans of the grand hotels and their grounds. Even David Watkin's witty and suave list of architects and projects reads like a pocket guide to opera: the characters are listed, but we can't see the main events. The four other essays, written by French novelists and travel writers, include an exceedingly silly introduction, a fond tribute to Cesar Ritz and to the several great hotels where his management genius made kings and queens feel at home, and an essay on pomp

and circumstance which must pass for what Marc Walter thinks is social history: gossip column anecdotes about great parties and long lists of celebrities who "reshaped history between minuets."

Odd facts dropped here and there do nonetheless begin to suggest a social history. We observe the growing importance of rich Americans and arms merchants, who were at the hotels to mix with potential marital or business partners. Hotels also functioned for establishing social image, such as the case of the third-rate film producer at Cannes, who tipped the bellman to page him ten times a day. Frederick Grendel offers an essay about the servants and staff: in 1880, as many as 100 servants to one guest; it is still common in Great Britain's palace hotels to have four staff to one guest.

In photos and in text, the book's underlying theme becomes the sadness that the golden age of grand hotels has passed, that no longer can we see hotel life as a replacement for private palace life. The authors collectively display no critical sense about aristocratic architecture, economics, politics, lifestyles, or what the conspicuous consumption of grand hotels meant. Whatever Walter and company set as their goal, they fail to effectively entertain their readers, let alone illuminate the history of Europe's grand hotels. In short, this is not even a good coffee-table book.

Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels—An Architectural and Social History, Marc Walter, editor, with essays by Jean d'Ormesson, David Watkin, Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd, Pierre-Jean Rémy, and Frédéric Grendel, Vendôme, 1984 (distributed by Viking), 268 pp., illus., \$45.00.

Michael Corbett:

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURAL GUIDES GET LOST

For anyone collecting paradigms of the collapse of western civilization in the last thirty-five years, a discouraging comparison can be made between three recent efforts at nationwide architectural guidebooks and the standard 1949 *American Guide*.^{*} For the sincerely pessimistic, the comparison might suggest, among other things, the decline of literacy, the rise of aliteracy (the aliterate are not completely uninformed, they just aren't accustomed to learning much from reading), the decline of curiosity about the world at large, an increased interest in isolated details at the cost of an understanding of cultural and geographic relationships, the shift of travelers' interests from self-education and awareness to the ephemeral fix, the increasing influence of marketing strategies in book publishing, the rise of graphic packaging over content, and even the decline of papermaking. The three books in question total 460 pages less than *The American Guide's* 1,348 but occupy more space. After the tremendous amounts of information generated by the movements for local history and preservation, and in spite of the availability of computers to sort it all out, the new information in these guidebooks would barely justify an appendix in the old *American Guide*.

Guidebooks should be taken seriously because they are one of the principal means for architects and architectural historians to reach a general audience. They are important instruments of public education and as such have a higher purpose than casual entertainment or reinforcement of architects' prejudices. Indeed, they can involve a special effort to help people see architecture and the landscape for themselves, instead of browbeating them or resorting to insider's

jokes addressed to one's peers.

To this end, guidebooks must not only be accurate, they should also be consistent and comprehensive. If, for example, a guide gives short shrift to a category—Victorian architecture, Beaux Arts, or the Modern Movement—because of the author's prejudices, the uninitiated user is deceived and ill-served. If a guide to modern architecture in a particular city omits some buildings of equal quality to others because of a publisher's limit on pages, the compromised result is of diminished value.

Guidebooks must conform to special obligations. They are a little like public utilities; like the gas company they should at least give the appearance of being fair. While they should be critical, their criticism should be set within a framework of thoroughness and comprehensiveness. Guidebook writers should be aware that, even if they don't intend it, their products are often used as shelf references, sourcebooks for public policy, and important (even when undeserving) arbiters of public taste.

There are good guidebooks for different audiences and purposes, ranging from the illustrated or annotated list to the multi-volume encyclopedia. The three books under review introduce a new type: the single volume guide to the architecture of the entire country. One promises to cover all aspects of architecture, while the others devote themselves to particular areas.

William Dudley Hunt, Jr.'s *American Architecture, A Field Guide to the Most Important Examples* is the most ambitious of the three. It is the only one that purports to be a guide to the whole country in all periods and the only nationwide guidebook to architecture ever published. The book possesses an aura of objectivity in its sparsely illustrated pages of run-on entries (only 125 photographs for the 2,000 entries). It is one of the few guidebooks to highlight buildings whose interiors are accessible to the public. Up to a point, it is sensibly

organized for the traveler of today, who presumably flies some place for a few days and rents a car. It has the virtue of being small enough to easily carry.

Unfortunately the book falls far short of meeting the promise of its title. Like so many other guidebooks, it is not organized alphabetically but by region, so that before you can look anything up you have to figure out if, for example, New Mexico is considered a Rocky Mountain or a Southwestern state. Within the regions each state is introduced by a series of categories whose contents are puzzlingly meaningless and self-evident.

This introductory material is followed by brief entries on buildings typically consisting of name, date, and architect with an occasional brief comment or an adjective like "interesting" (are some of the entries uninteresting?) or "famous," in reference to an architect, in a manner that makes the book's sparseness seem wordy.

Judging from the general introduction, and from the selection of the guidebook entries, the author takes the viewpoint of the Modernist of 1960 who admired pre-1900 buildings and post-1945 buildings, and not much in between. In the introduction he describes common architectural styles, showing his prejudices and lack of understanding by lumping the Beaux Arts with the Victorian period under "Eclectic Architecture," and by making this attack on Post-Modernism: "in their use of distorted pseudo-historic forms and decoration, these buildings cannot seriously be considered ahead of their time." In fact, the selection of entries is so inconsistent and arbitrary that it cannot be attributed simply to an overenthusiasm for orthodox Modernism. A random sampling of entries shows Austin, Texas, a modest city architecturally, receiving as much space as Buffalo, which is very rich. Even so, one of the most distinguished concentrations of architecture in Austin, the Univer-

sity of Texas, is not listed. In Buffalo, the City Hall, the U.S. Post Office, the McKinley Monument, and the Joseph Ellicott plan are not mentioned, to name a few. The Tarrant County Courthouse, which is to Fort Worth as most state capitol buildings are to their cities, is omitted, but the author includes the Harris County Courthouse in Houston, which is a less distinguished, far smaller, and far less imposing monument.

In downtown Houston there are only two postwar office buildings listed in one the richest concentrations of such buildings in the country; in the same city, Rice University is overlooked. The small city of Palos Verdes Estates, California, is in the book but not its highly conspicuous centerpiece, Malaga Cove Plaza. The Federal Triangle in Washington, D.C. has been left out, while there is so little listed in Newark, New Jersey, that one wonders if the author thought users of the book would be afraid to go there. The same kinds of observations could be made about virtually every city across the country with which I am familiar. In other words, the omissions and imbalance are not the unavoidable exceptions, but the routine character of coverage.

Alice Cromie's *Restored America, A Tour Guide: The Preserved Towns, Villages, and Historic City Districts of the United States and Canada* is a reissue of a book published in 1979 as *Restored Towns and Historic Districts of America*. This is a curious book, just as inconsistent as Hunt's, and muddled as to its basic purpose. It is, however, amiably written and full of the sort of brief histories and anecdotes about well-known and off-beat places that make helpful and entertaining reading as you approach them in the car. Unfortunately this is not enough.

As a guide to "major restorations and historic districts" it omits uncounted examples of both, and has no discussion of the term "restoration." Restorations and rehabilitations of

varying success are listed without differentiation. At the same time, if a building has never been restored, it does not by definition belong in this book, and many buildings one might look for in a book which concentrates on 19th-century historic houses and districts are not listed because they are not restored. If a listed building has been restored, there is rarely a mention of the date or agent or quality of the work. For example, in San Francisco, the Civic Center is not listed as a historic district, nor is Mission Dolores, an important early restoration, but Ghirardelli Square is called a restoration—this adaptive reuse project might be called a rehabilitation or anything except a restoration. The Haas-Lilienthal and Whittier Houses, which were never restored because they have always been maintained, and which are open to the public, are not included. For Jackson Square Historic District, whose buildings are largely restored, there is no mention of the almost universal sand-blasting of brick walls, which every beginning student of restoration techniques knows is disastrous. Small cities with notable historic districts, like Vicksburg, Mississippi; Chillicothe, Ohio; Fort Larned, Kansas; Hot Springs, Arkansas; and Taos, New Mexico, are conspicuously omitted. Among the larger cities excluded are Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Trenton, and Buffalo. Some of the obvious major restorations that have been left out are the state capitols in Carson City and Sacramento.

The book is organized by geographic region, and there is no index, compounding the difficulty of locating a potential destination. All in all, this book would be helpful to the tourist who happened to be in one of the cities it includes, but it is so unreliable that it would not be worth cluttering up good space.

Guide to U.S. Architecture: 1940-1980, by Esther McCoy and Barbara Goldstein, ought to be a good book. It no doubt will appeal to a large

audience of architects, students, and travelers, and has been written by well-qualified observers. But between the idea and the realization not much happened. It is almost as if the authors had produced an illustrated list of their favorite buildings which happen to be scattered around the country. With its short introduction in English, French, and Japanese, it might have been the perfect thing for the foreign traveler seeking quick guidance to the major monuments of the period of American architecture that is of most interest to the rest of the world. It might also have been a handy guide for the American flying on business to Seattle or Pierre, South Dakota, or driving his kids from New Jersey to Yellowstone. Unfortunately, none of these users will be happy when he gets home and finds out what he missed after lugging this book all over the country.

The 500-odd entries are remarkably arbitrary and, although the introduction teases the reader with the depth of knowledge the authors have about the buildings, there is not one word of text, beyond the name, location, date, and architect, to explain why each building is important. It is particularly frustrating for the reader when well-known buildings and buildings by famous architects have been omitted while others have been included out of deference for some invisible and forgotten structural innovation or a concern for geographic fairness. A visitor to the Kimball Museum in Fort Worth is not told that Philip Johnson's Amon Carter Museum is visible across the park, nor is mention made of Eliel Saarinen's First Christian Church made in the entries for Columbus, Ohio. The authors beg off by referring the user to a bibliography of local and regional guides, but even this list is rudimentary and the citations often incomplete.

I have carried these three books with me on a number of trips during the last year, and I have also brought along *The American Guide*, which was

produced by an army of editors and writers as a spinoff of the defunct Federal Writers' Project of the WPA. It soon became apparent that the other three books were of little use in the company of this book, except, of course, for buildings built after 1949.

The long out-of-print *American Guide* is well organized, clearly thought through, and written with consistently high standards for style and literacy. Although not specifically an architectural guide, it presents an abundance of information on architecture and the history and structure of cities. Moreover, the organization of its material along major highways extends its reach to the whole landscape and offers information about even the smallest towns in a comprehensiveness which acknowledges the intelligence and depth of curiosity of the reader. Modeled on the 1910 Baedeker guide to the United States, it surpasses anything else that has been attempted, and it ought to be reprinted, with or without revisions. In the meantime, I recommend finding a used copy rather than dealing with any of the new guidebooks.

**The American Guide, A Source Book and Complete Travel Guide for the United States*, Henry G. Alsberg, editor, Hastings House, 1949, 1,348 pp.

American Architecture: A Field Guide to the Most Important Examples, William Dudley Hunt, Harper & Row, 1984, 337 pp., illus., cloth \$19.95; paper \$9.95.

Guide to U.S. Architecture: 1940-1980, Esther McCoy and Barbara Goldstein, Arts + Architecture Press, 1982, 167 pp., illus., \$9.95 pb.

Restored America, A Tour Guide: The Preserved Towns, Villages, and Historic City Districts of the United States and Canada, Alice Cromie, American Legacy Press, 1984, 384 pp., illus., \$17.50.

Richard Ingersoll:

THE ATLAS OF EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURE

BRIAN SACHAR

American architects and lovers of architecture do not always have an easy time tracking down their favorite buildings while touring Europe. Brian Sachar's *Atlas of European Architecture* is only partially successful in helping them. Packaged in the oblong format common to many travel guides, it covers ten western European countries, listing several hundred buildings per country. The buildings, arranged chronologically for their respective cities, are presented with telegraphic expediency—only the essential data of title, date, address, architect, and sometimes a postage stamp-size photograph are included. Sachar's most original, but unfortunately least satisfying contributions are the regional and city maps showing the positions of buildings. The maps are too few, poorly executed, not much use without auxiliary sources, drawn in very light, unrulled lines, with no indication of street names, foci, visual hierarchy, or any other aids to orientation. The reader will be better off taking a taxi than relying on these maps. Another potentially useful feature, an attempt to identify the architectural institutions and bookstores in the major cities, is not consistent throughout, missing, for instance, the excellent architectural bookstores in Rome and Berlin.

Although there are some omissions and factual errors, the essential standbys of architectural history and many of the most admired recent buildings are surveyed. Sachar's treatment of Berlin is the least complete, while on the other hand he has done a good job on Rome, including 40 modern entries with the 110 pre-1900 favorites. He has paid attention to the works of revived heroes like Lutyens,

Loos, and Terragni. From the last two decades he features in particular the works of Stirling, Bofill, Utzon, Jacobson, Scarpa, and Hertzberger.

The atlas is a fine idea, and with better maps, more comprehensive information, and more consistency it could become a very useful resource. As is, it is disappointing and will probably cost the reader a lot in cabfare.

The Atlas of European Architecture, Brian Sachar, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 396 pp., illus., \$35.00.

Michael Starenko:

THE ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF HEDRICH-BLESSING

ROBERT A. SOBIESZEK

In the fall of 1981, the George Eastman House in Rochester mounted an exhibition of the black-and-white photographs of Hedrich-Blessing, one of the oldest and largest architectural photography firms in the world. Established in 1929 by Ken Hedrich and Hank Blessing, the firm was staffed by three generations of Hedrich's family as well as other photographers. The modest catalogue for the exhibit reproduced in "authentic" glossy ferrotype twenty-one of the firm's famous images: Wright's Kaufmann Residence ("Fallingwater"), Holabird and Root's Chrysler Building for the Century of Progress exposition, Kahn's Buick Plant, Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth Residence, and Saarinen's North Christian Church. The new book is essentially an expanded, hardbound version of the initial catalogue, with nearly five times the number of plates, the matte reproductions of which are noticeably inferior. Sobieszek, who wrote the essay for the catalogue, has revised it for this edition, adding a bit more biographical information about this unique, family-run operation, and pad-



MORTON MAY RESIDENCE, LADUE, MISSOURI. DESIGN BY SAMUEL MARX, PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEN HEDRICH, 1942.

ding it out with some ill-founded speculations about the relationship between photography and architecture. He seems genuinely to prefer viewing architectural photographs to experiencing architecture, but shows little interest in the issues behind what he terms "a mutually protean relationship" between photography and architecture. How has architectural photography affected the work of practicing architects? What role did Hedrich-Blessing play in the popularization of the International Style? How did Hedrich-Blessing photographs make their way into architectural journals, and which of these were seen by architects? These questions go unanswered. Like Richard Pare's recent book *Photography and Architecture, 1839-1939*, *The Architectural Photography of Hedrich-Blessing* is yet another attempt to cordon off more terrain for the art history of photography.

The Architectural Photography of Hedrich-Blessing, Robert A. Sobieszek, editor, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984, 92 pp., illus., \$25.00.

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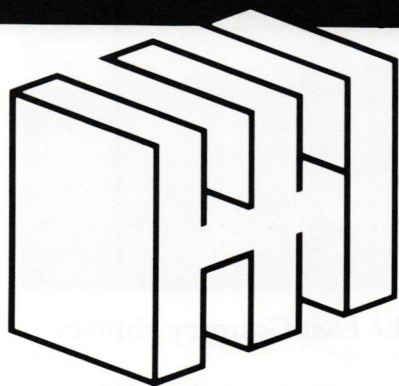
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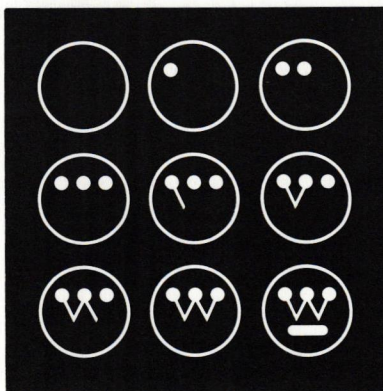
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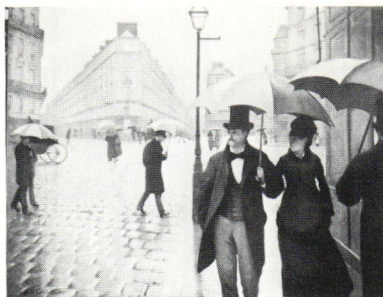
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Peggy Deamer:

ARCHITECTURE IS NOW

COOP HIMMELBLAU

Coop Himmelblau, the "Blue Sky" Cooperative, consisting of Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky, belongs to a generation of Viennese architects that sprouted in the late sixties in the wake of Walter Pichler and Hans Hollein. The anti-object-making happenings of Pichler ("Architecture makes ruthless use of the strongest means available to it at any given time") and Hollein ("Everything is architecture") were transformed by Himmelblau ("the city is everywhere"), Missing Link ("detachment architecture"), Hans-Rucker-Co ("provisional architecture"), and others into a full-scale critique of urban form. Projects such as Himmelblau's "Feedback Vibration City" (1969) and Missing Link's "Goldenes Wiener Herz" (1970, "a transformable multi-purpose apparatus for transforming a neighborhood") typified an attitude in which the formal "packaging" of a city produced by traditional planners and architects was rejected in favor of the use and exposure of more significant urban realities such as billboards, television, traffic, and machines.

While the rest of this generation began to modify this early anti-object, anti-formal stance in order to explore how nonquantifiable forces such as memory, history, romantic yearning, and alienation actually do shape form, Himmelblau has remained true to its critical conviction that all conventions of consciously designed form link the maker to "the Biedermeier architecture of democracy based on opinion polls and complacency." The early pneumatic, wearable, and portable architecture has been replaced by permanent, space-occupying constructions, such as "Temperature Wing" (1980, a 40-meter steel "wing" moved by expanding and contracting wires) and "Open House" (1983, "Drawn



THE BLUE ANGEL BAR

with eyes closed. Undistracted concentration on the feeling the space will have"). These later projects consistently eschew conventions of architectural design.

What distinguishes this work from that of other European avant-garde studios nurtured in the iconoclasm of the sixties, such as Archigram or Superstudio, is the depth of the critical metaphors and the beauty of the

work that shines through almost in spite of the rhetoric. The concern for the divorce of the aesthetic "packaging" of our environment and the less seemly reality it hides has a particularly rich history in Vienna. Himmelblau draws strength from a line of architects—the Secessionists, Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos—who rallied against a heritage of the pomp of Hapsburg Baroque, the historicism of

the Ringstrasse, and (as Loos alone realized) the social housing of Red Vienna. The architects of fin-de-siècle Vienna understood that the divorce of form from content, rhetoric from fact, required the suppression of the rhetoric; but their real insight was in understanding that this did not imply the denial of the architectonic language as well. If Loos and Himmelblau replace the formal mannerisms of Architecture-with-a-capital-A with respect for ordinary building, they do so with a near reverence for the tactile resonance inherent in a building's materials and detailing. Just as Loos's "ornament is crime" did not prevent him from doing the most luscious marble and wood interiors, Himmelblau's "architecture of dissolution" does not prevent them from using steel, wire mesh, and concrete in ways that are truly elegant and do justice to the angelic imagery that underlies much of their work.

The real problem with Himmelblau's work is that, unlike Loos, who so subtly avoided the avant-garde position and perceived that no amount of respect for the architectonic language could push it beyond its self-referential limits (hence its "silence"), Prix and Swiczinsky believe in the power of their projects to convert, transcend, and endure. Adopting the position that "Architecture cannot be Past, because at the instant of conception it becomes Future," they trumpet out prophecies that dominate the more interesting aspects of what the work could quietly demonstrate. Loos's profound ironic stance vis-à-vis his own place in history has been replaced with a self-importance that blinds them to the contradiction that their "now" architecture, because of this pretension, can become instantly passé.

Coop Himmelblau: *Architecture is Now: Projects 1968-1983*, the Himmelblau Group, Rizzoli, 1984, 200 pp., illus., \$25.00.

Chris Arnold:

BUILDINGS AND IDEAS 1933-83

LESLIE MARTIN

Modern architecture in Britain, that land of brilliant and stifling literary tradition, has always been intellectual and prosey. The quantity and quality of architectural magazines has always been a source of amazement to Americans, and the poverty of architectural writing in the U.S. (until recently) a source of dismay to visiting Brits. Leslie Martin, subject of this monograph, is a good example of the practicing British intellectual.

Martin was a professor of architecture at Cambridge University from 1956 to 1972, and during his regime the Centre for Land Use and Built Form Studies became an influential leader in the application of mathematical concepts to issues of building shape and function. Prior to his appointment at Cambridge, Martin was Architect to the London County Council (head of the largest architectural office in Europe). He also ran the architectural department for one of the U.K. railroads, and before the war was head of the School of Architecture at Hull. In addition to his distinguished career as academic and public architect, his private office maintained a steady flow of projects, of which this monograph is a retrospective.

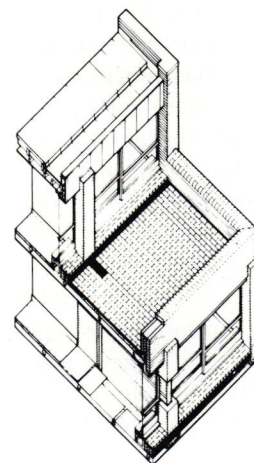
The book recalls for me the argument and persuasion of Le Corbusier's *oeuvre complète* rather than the glossy, less inspired publications of today. Martin admires Le Corbusier and has been among the leaders of the British generation of "Modern" architects of the thirties who fought for an architecture of social content and freedom from style. These days, when the modern architecture that the pioneers strove for has itself been diluted to the point of being a style worthy of rejection, it is hard to understand the

force and dedication of the Modern Movement's participants. Modern design in Europe was highly politicized and architecture was considered a social force, with a parallel political movement.

Martin's monograph is thematic in organization. Three building types—university residences, libraries, and auditoria—are discussed as developments in form, with theoretical studies leading to complete buildings. Also discussed are university plans, developments in Glasgow, studies for small-scale infill and renovation in London, and two of the architect's own renovated farm buildings in which he lived and worked. Martin has not designed many projects for a busy practice, nor has he written much for a full-time academic, yet he has had a productive private practice. His buildings are not spectacular, but this is a thinker's architecture.

Stylistically, the major influence seems to be Aalto, not only in the buildings themselves, but in the style of drawing and presentation—the natural wood models for example. There is a consistency in his work that I find very appealing. I wish there were more thoughtful architects who could present their life's work in this fashion.

Buildings and Ideas 1933-83, Leslie Martin, Cambridge University Press, 1983, 264 pp., illus., \$89.00.



Alexander Tzonis:

CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

STEPHEN GRABOW

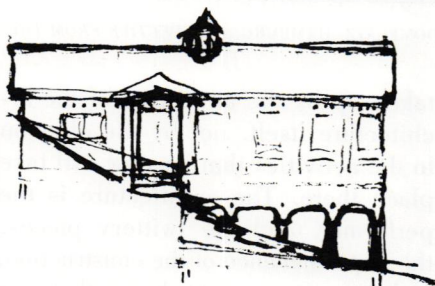
Since the 1960s, Christopher Alexander's thinking has shifted from extreme analytical scientism to an equally extreme participatory populism. He nonetheless remains one of the most innovative theoreticians and influential writers in architecture since the Second World War. Compelling and controversial, rich in rhetorical force and poetic ambiguity, his writings have always pointedly expressed the current mood.

Alexander's style is that of an inspired polemicist working in an atmosphere of urgency. He rarely refers to other efforts, except implicitly. As a result questions always emerge from his writings, to remain unanswered. Therefore any book dedicated to Alexander's work is welcome in the hope that it will help clarify his approach.

Stephen Grabow has chosen to write a biography of Alexander rather than

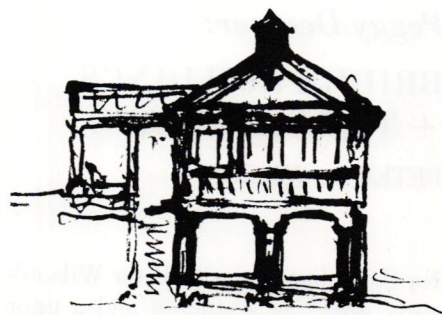
a theoretical inquiry. In the manner of traditional intellectual biographies, the book is structured chronologically. First come the origins of the hero, then the challenge, followed by the struggle. Everything ends in triumph, from the early years at Cambridge to today, with special emphasis on the California period. The prose is fluid and the style unpretentious. Grabow allows quotes from his subject to occupy about a third of the text. There are about one hundred illustrations, many of them candid shots of Alexander's private world. Also included is a complete bibliography of Alexander's writings.

Experienced biographers know how precious, but also how dangerous, the



SKETCH FOR LA LOMA HOUSE, BERKELEY,
1978

moments of intimate contact with their subject can be. The special tips to the author can be very misleading, and it is important that he keep a critical distance. In the case of Grabow, we have a sympathetic, intelligent, and occasionally inspiring interviewer, who serves as a catalyst in the production of a new discourse by Alexander. The interviews, however, reveal little, and Grabow himself provides scant new information, not even one good summary of Alexander's work. More important, he hardly gives any clue to the background and context within which Alexander's ideas were born and developed. While Alexander is presented as an adversary of

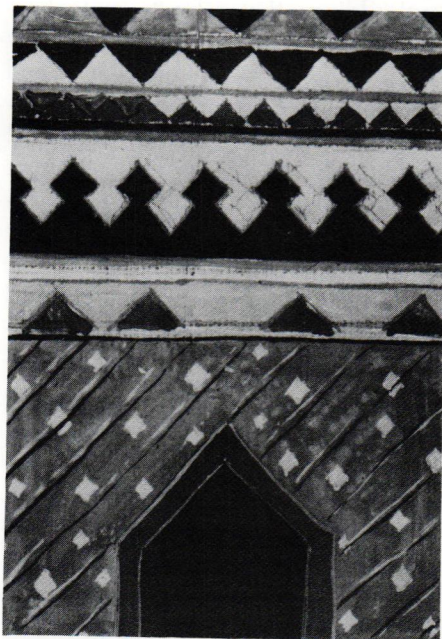


SKETCH FOR LA LOMA HOUSE, BERKELEY,
1978

his Cambridge colleagues in England, no effort is made to show who his close ties were with and how he borrowed from their work. His association with Serge Chermayeff at Harvard, with Marvin Mannheim at MIT, and his membership in the renowned Harvard Society of Fellows are not explored. Alexander's more recent participatory, anti-technocratic approach is presented in a vacuum. The work of John Turner and of many others who preceded Alexander in his current ideas is ignored, as are contemporary efforts around the world, such as those presented in Richard Hatch's *Scope of Social Architecture*. One would have hoped to learn of the link between Alexander's world and parallel efforts, in order to assess his contribution, but alas this is not possible.

Although the book is not a historical study, the expression "paradigm shift"—a ponderous term from the history of science—is used profusely and often impressionistically and inaccurately. It runs counter to the overall spirit of the book. The "hundreds of hours" of "continuous consultation" with Alexander over a six-month period in Berkeley have yielded, rather than a clear exegesis, a book imbued with mystifying, oracular, hagiographic pronouncements.

Christopher Alexander, *The Search for a New Paradigm in Architecture*, Stephen Grabow, Oriel Press (distributed by Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1983, 306 pp., illus., \$30.00.



PAINTING ON WOOD PANEL, BLUE, YELLOW,
AND BLACK WITH TOUCHES OF MINOR COLORS,
1978

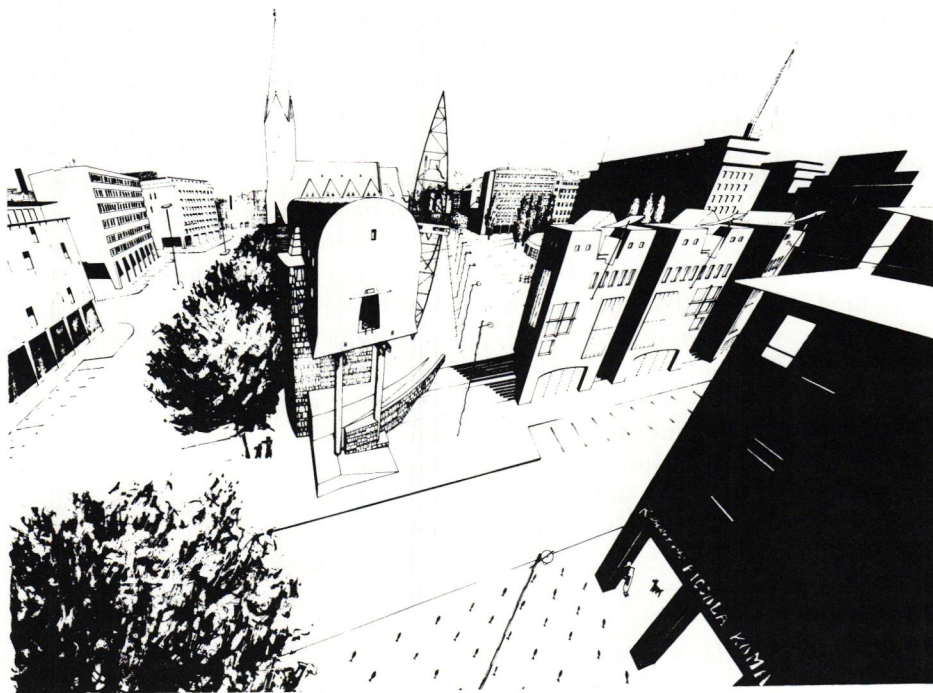
Peggy Deamer:

BRIDGE BUILDINGS + THE SHIPSHAPE

PETER L. WILSON

For those familiar with Peter Wilson's early work, as a student and a tutor at the Architectural Association, the projects in this folio will come as a surprise. The early work was a model of what the AA's eclectic educational system could produce, combining the action-oriented scenarios of Bernard Tschumi, the metaphorical concerns of Koolhaas and Zenghelis, and the rationalism of Leon Krier. The new work, packaged in the AA's new box set series of folios, abandons both the deceptive straightforwardness of the architecture and the emphasis on the activities it housed. "Shipshape" (or pointed paraboloid) buildings, trusses, and platforms mingle with bent planes, exploded boxes, and awkwardly constructed timber frames in a manner that virtually precludes the possibility of containment or ritualization. The drawings—scratchy, linear, and flat—prevent visual inhabitation. One initially takes this as a sign of creative insecurity, an acquiescence to the strong influence of Zaha Hadid, formerly Wilson's student and now his colleague at the AA. Her work, known principally through her winning entry to the Hong Kong Peak competition, is characterized by its antigravitational planes and its refusal to conform to a priori geometry. A closer look at Wilson's projects, however, reveals that he has bent this new vocabulary to test his own consistent conceptual aim—the exploration of architecture's narrative ability. While a convincing synthesis is not achieved in the shipshape projects, the bridge buildings succeed in allowing the new aesthetic to transform the narrative method while conversely allowing the method to transform the aesthetic.

In these projects, the narrative is



DOMPLATZ, HAMBURG, PERSPECTIVE FROM THE FISH'S EYE

taken up by the animation of the architecture itself, not by the allusion to the activities that have or will take place there. The architecture is the performer, and the twittery pieces, the impermanence of the construction, and the nongeometric shapes that give it life also portray the willful and eccentric behavior. Wilson's entry to the Paris Opera competition consists of a "shipshape" that appears to be beached on its site near the Seine, where an entourage of "personalities" are displayed as its cargo. Architectural fragments, variously labeled "prima donna," "castrati" [*sic*], and "extras" occupy the site as if the neighborhood were a stage. Wilson refuses to allow one to believe that architecture is an innocent or mute entity, and in this case architecture, not opera, has artistic priority with regard to performance. But the conceptual and metaphorical abilities of such characterization do not overcome the fact that these "actor"-oriented schemes use architecture representationally and do not explore its own essential tectonic character; the issues of physical materialization,

sensuous inhabitation, and subjective appropriation, so convincing in Wilson's earlier work, are here sacrificed along with the subtlety and the emphasis on detail.

In the bridge buildings—some of which are actual bridges and some outbuildings that refer to metaphorical bridging or transition—the new vocabulary of fragmented planes and oddly disposed pieces still contributes to the making of an architectural personality. In this case, however, it is the tectonic quality of the structures that becomes the method and subject matter of their characterization. These buildings, whose every member and joint is articulated, avoid the objective and logical criteria for construction and appear to follow their own whimsical rationale, constructing their own personalities, their own problems, and their own scenarios as they go. In the most peculiar and nonstraightforward manner they add weight where it should be lightened, working members in compression when one expects them in tension. Adding to this sense of willful independence is the fact that these bridge buildings are in-

tended to be located on an Irish estate but are rendered with a Japanese background, bespeaking forms that fantasize about their own ideal location and proper Zen interpretation. While the viewer does not identify with the would-be inhabitant of the architecture, he nevertheless identifies empathetically with architecture itself, envisioning life with, not in, these structures. While the drawings are less beautiful than Wilson's earlier work, they nevertheless succeed, in their flatness and sketchiness, in convincing us that the buildings and not the architect are documenting their own spontaneous and naive story.

Wilson and his contemporaries at AA, including Hadid, Liebeskind, and Koolhaas, must be seen in the light of the romantic and picturesque tradition which characterizes English architecture. Wilson alone, however, takes the freedom and arbitrariness of the tradition as his starting point, and then indulges in the confusion that occurs when his position meets structural reality. Indeed, his precise but illogical structures poke fun both at Hadid's antigravitational aspirations and at the older generation, including Stirling, who romanticized new materials and modern technology with often less than functional success. Unlike his contemporaries who believe that architecture's primary obligation is to prepare us for a post-modern culture, Wilson believes that architecture moves along another axis: its responsibility is first to the conceptual link that binds object and audience in a system of behavior and patterns of perception. He is at once more nihilistic and more fun than his colleagues. Wilson has successfully put the stereotypical view of English art—as literarily sophisticated but visually inept—to work for him, showing that such a heritage is not a bad one for architecture to draw upon.

Bridge Buildings + the Shipshape, Peter Wilson, Architectural Association, London, 1984, 26 plates, catalogue, £18.00.

Stephanie White:

CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE: CROSSING AN OPEN BORDER

Modern architecture in Canada, as everywhere else, has been heavily influenced by the Modern Movement, yet there are signs that a regionalist alternative is developing. The competition for the Mississauga City Hall in the summer of 1982 perhaps changed the way Canadian architects think about architecture, opening the discourse to things beyond Modernism. It was entered with great gusto by 246 firms—a tremendous response for such a small country—and was won by the newly formed Toronto partnership of Jones & Kirkland: Michael Kirkland, late of New York (1978), and Ed Jones, even later (1983) of London.

The book on the competition, *Mississauga City Hall*, is one in a series of competition documentations prepared by Arnell and Bickford for Rizzoli. This sort of attention might come as a surprise to Canadians, since, beyond Arthur Erickson, Canada's architectural scene is mostly about local heroes. The country is sparse, cities are small, and architectural discourse at an interprovincial level practically nonexistent. It is symptomatic of Canadian culture in general, especially in literature, to favor a strong, emergent regionalism, underlaid with a critical relationship, usually negative, to the U.S. Mississauga's jump across the border in this book is a reversal of the usual Canadian isolationism. One suspects this is due to the presence of George Baird, the original competition adviser, who is adamantly international in his connections.

The competition brief, written and assembled by Baird, is an interesting example of Canadian rural/suburban dialogue. It called for the creation of

a town center to serve the fusion of regional districts. Mississauga was only incorporated in 1974 as an amalgamation of several rural districts and villages at the edge of Lake Ontario, 23 km from Toronto. The city hall was to be the first building constructed under the 1979 City Center Secondary Plan. The brief specifies the design scheme should "exemplify the principles of the plan and ... clearly establish a departure from existing suburban building forms."

Yet, in its location next to a shopping center, in a fundamentally suburban relation to Toronto, the city hall can only be secondarily urban. The competition brief exposes a crucial issue: what is urban suburbia actually going to be like, how is it to be ordered? Baird has definite answers to this, proposing rigorous guidelines that include enclosed squares, street walls, and scenes and structures of ritual order.

Mississauga City Hall: A Canadian Competition provides a straightforward documentation of the competition process, including the brief, a listing of all the 246 entries with postage stamp-size illustrations, drawings and texts for the six finalists, and the winning scheme. The jury included two Mississaugans, two pillars of the eastern Canadian architectural establishment—Jerome Markson and Phyllis Lambert—and James Stirling.

In his foreword Baird discerns eight major themes in the collected projects: evolving mainstream Modernism, expression of building modularity, regional vernacularism, expressionist symbolism, architectural historicism, rationalism, ceremonialism, and architectural narrative. One can more grossly categorize them as Modernist, historicist, and narrative entries. This last category is obviously seen as an escape from the hegemony of the other two and is where the Jones & Kirkland scheme and several of the runners-up can be found.

Modernist solutions, however, were by far the most evident, cellular organ-

ization and chamfered tops abounding. The Modernist approach is definitely not suburban, nor does it address Mississauga's own sense of place, but rather seeks to heroically make that place from scratch. The history-loving, formal set-piece piles, on the other hand, present another problem. Whether they look to Canadian railway hotels, 1930s moderne, or inter-war rationalism, they simply are too anomalous in the suburban environment. What is needed (and is missing from Mississauga) is the fine-grained support of city streets to accompany the bulk and command that these traditional forms of urban domination—parliament buildings and city halls—imply.

The architectural narrators build grain into their projects as part of the Colin Rowe argument for space definers rather than space occupiers. Despite their different approaches to scale and type, there was a common theme: the presence of architectural speech about Mississauga as a place, as a site, and as a location. The key to the program was to do a building that ameliorated suburban scale and initiated a new kind of urbanism; these assemblage schemes seem to do this without sabotaging the ideal of suburbia, at the same time avoiding an inappropriately traditional urban set. The jury chose projects that were symmetrical, non-historicist, and used walls or a sense of walling as interventions in the city hall site.

Jones & Kirkland, as representatives of this aspect of narration, speak in their essay of their dissatisfaction with Modernism:

Matters of hierarchy and social ritual that still exist in our institutions, whether they be courts of law, schools, city halls, etc., have been seen as antipathetic to the "democratic" process. To this end, architects have attempted to diffuse or oppose these form giving characteristics hoping to bestow on their buildings some inevitable egalitarianism. In an attempt to minimize the authority of hierar-

chical form, modern architecture has neutralized the associative power of built form. The metaphysical power of physically described public ritual has been lost. This tendency has its roots firmly bedded in the social polemics of modern architecture—new forms for a new society or no forms for no society.

This was, however, the underlying ethic of many other entries, revealing perhaps the range of architectural ideas au courant in Canada. James Kirkland also discusses the sources (southern Ontario agrarian buildings) for their scheme. For a country that has never known any other state than general democracy and whose pre-modern buildings reach no farther back than quirky Gothic revival, the farm buildings are a more convincing source of imagery: the universal quality of rural ensembles is beyond memory and culture, nationality or style.

Trevor Boddy in his postscript review of the Jones & Kirkland scheme considers the project in terms of its rural consciousness, its connections to Krier and Asplund, and most importantly its position as the leading edge of a new regionalism. It seems, however, that at the time of the competition (1982) regionalism was not a significant issue, and that the strongest influences came from the recently completed Portland Building and the winning entry in the Calgary City Hall Competition, a mirrored, late Modern flying wedge. One is reminded how much Canadian architecture has learned from Mississauga in three short years—most important, that Canada as a place has major prerequisites for producing critically significant architecture.

The architectural atmosphere prior to the Mississauga competition has been captured with a Modern Movement bias in Leon Whiteson's *Modern Canadian Architecture*. The author has produced a survey of 60 significant post-1945 buildings. The book appears to have been rushed into pro-

duction with an uneven mix of both good and terrible photos, unsophisticated type, and interesting but meandering essays. There is little criticism of the Modern Movement, which is routinely described as heroic, pure, and clean, with Canadian architecture assuming its most humane aspects while leaving the excesses of style to other, less sensitive places. Whiteson actually appears to treat the Modern Movement with some ambivalence, yet in the final analysis finds it transcendent, noble, and of moral excellence.

A disturbing attitude that recurs throughout the book, often in the section essays by prominent Canadian architects, is the smug assumption that Canadians do not jump on bandwagons, that they are conservative by nature, and that Modernism came late to the country because the Canadian psyche does not engage in frivolous fads. By such reasoning, the original resistance to Modernism has been replaced by an equally strong commitment to it in the present. One tires of the claim that Canada's isolation is actually to its architectural advantage. Neither does this isolation excuse the author from ignoring the context and cultural meaning of the buildings.

While the buildings selected are conservative, generally more Brutalist than Miesian, the themes of Modernism, expressionism, vernacular referencing, and historicism are also present, but unjustifiably tied up in a Modernist straitjacket. The West Coast, for example, has been influenced tremendously by Japan, and the prevalent horizontality and wood technology have as little to do with the pure Modern Movement as has the expressionism that appears to characterize the Prairies. Toronto and Montreal are closest to the mainstream, but the primary inclusion of Habitat as an example of the Modern Movement is rather less instructive than Whiteson's interesting discussion of its structural determinism, and why it was such a famous failure. Peter

Rose's multi-gabled, clapboard Bradley House, drawn directly from vernacular Quebec, is rather surprisingly included, with the equally surprising statement: "Good architects feel free to choose whatever element of style they fancy, whatever dogmas dictate."

There is a lot of good material here—interesting architecture, some good photos, a telling slice cut across the country—but no focus. This is perhaps appropriate, given that the Canadian architectural scene, spread out over 5,500 miles, is widely varied and not particularly focused. However, an acknowledgment of the connection between architecture and the rest of Canadian culture would perhaps have been more relevant than stretching the tired thread of Modernism.

Mississauga City Hall, A Canadian Competition, Peter Arnell and Ted Bickford, editors, Rizzoli, 1984, 120 pp., illus., \$14.95 pb.

Modern Canadian Architecture, Leon Whiteson, Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, Canada, 1984, 272 pp., illus., \$50.00.

Vivien Arnold:

AS IN DS

ALISON SMITHSON

This odd little book is shaped like a car seen from the top. It is the outline of a Citroen ID DS 19 (thus "DS") belonging to British architect Alison Smithson ("AS"), who kept a diary while driving around England from 1972 to 1973. This "diary of car-movement," as she calls it, is also described more obscurely as a "sensitivity primer." If this means that it will help us to learn to be more sensitive to the landscape as we travel through it, then Ms. Smithson just barely succeeds, even on her own particular terms, and at great cost to the reader's patience.

Expectations are set up that are not met. The book's shape, for example, is not readily identifiable as a car, until one notices inside the architectural plan view of the interior.

This leads one to expect a discussion of the car as abode that does not ensue. Serious, rather pedantic manifesto-style introductory remarks, and chapters entitled "The Graphics of Movement" and "The Private Room on Wheels" nourish this vain hope. In fact, it is all beside the point; the clue is the word "diary." The bulk of the text is Smithson's verbatim, undigested entries, ramblings, and, with rare exceptions, impersonal observations, written in an entirely personal style ... vaguely related phrases ... unhampered by upper-case letterings ... connected by dots ... obscure use of syntax: for emphasis ... over-use of hyphens to indicate a describing of sensation-giving observational information ...

a cloud of buff smoke is tree-formed
in the back-garden of a house by the
roundabout ... the air so still ...
the sky is pearly, and as unblemished
as it has been all day long.

Endless weather, endless flashing lights: short doses are palatable enough, but an entire book of it is astonishingly difficult to absorb, especially as there is no connective tissue to speak of. The text often seems unrelated to the chapter titles. It is illustrated with sketches, photographs, children's drawings, and unconnected bits of maps, which help break up the prose into more edible chunks. I would have liked one map or diagram of the places visited in relation to each other. The result is a scrapbook, meaningful to the author but not to the reader. What saves all the endless description from being merely ludicrous is that the manner of expression is so consistent throughout, so unselfconscious, that I have no doubt it is indeed the author's true voice. Nevertheless, it is unbelievably repetitious, consequently boring, and the interesting parts are just lost in the haze.

AS in DS, An Eye on the Road, Alison Smithson, Delft University Press, 1983, 164 pp., illus., Dfls 25.00 (About \$10.00).

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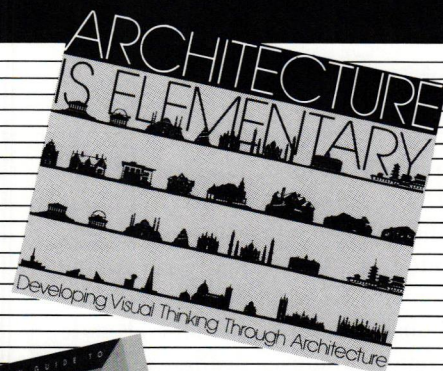
—HOUSE AND GARDEN

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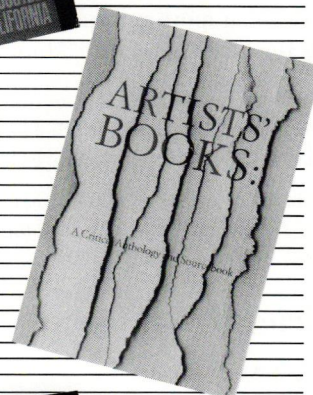
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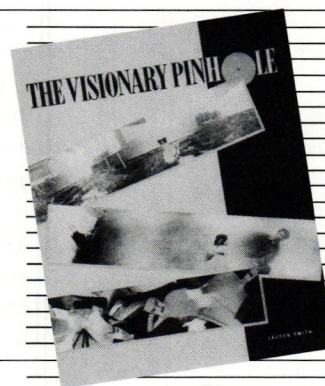
272 pp.; 6 x 9; 120 photographs; ISBN 0-87905-207-4; \$19.95; cloth.



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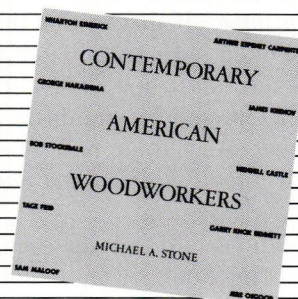
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208 pp.; 9 x 9; 222 photographs, 40 in color; ISBN 0-87905-098-5; \$29.95, cloth.



John Beach:

ICE PALACES

FRED ANDERES
and ANN AGRANOFF

With a depressingly sparse handful of exceptions—Charles Moore's wacko *Wonder Wall* at the New Orleans World's Fair being the most notable and the most gleeful—the public architecture of recent decades has been conspicuous for its lack of festivity. The nature of our loss is indicated by *Ice Palaces*, a recent book which takes a fond look at what can happen when architecture's resources are placed at the service of impermanent frivolity.

The nature of the material limited the range of the ice palace in North America to Canada and the northernmost United States. The material also limited the structural repertoire: extensive cantilevers, for instance, were out of the question. But the possibilities were wielded with real audacity. Some of these structures attained a height of nearly two hundred feet, and the forms were varied and fanciful. The styles changed over the decades. There are imposing Art Deco examples; surely one of the unlikely adventures of FDR's New Deal was the WPA funding of St. Paul,

Minnesota's ice palaces in the late 1930s and early 1940s. There are more recent incarnations at military bases in the Arctic, and in the mammoth ice and snow sculptures of the Sapporo, Japan, Winter festival. Those who find modern architecture cold will feel smugly justified by the inclusion of the rigidly orthogonal, International Style winner of a 1976 Minnesota competition for the design of a Bicentennial ice palace. Joyless despite the balloons and fluttering pennants in the rendering, its inclusion among more vigorous designs makes an eloquent if superficial anti-Modernist statement.

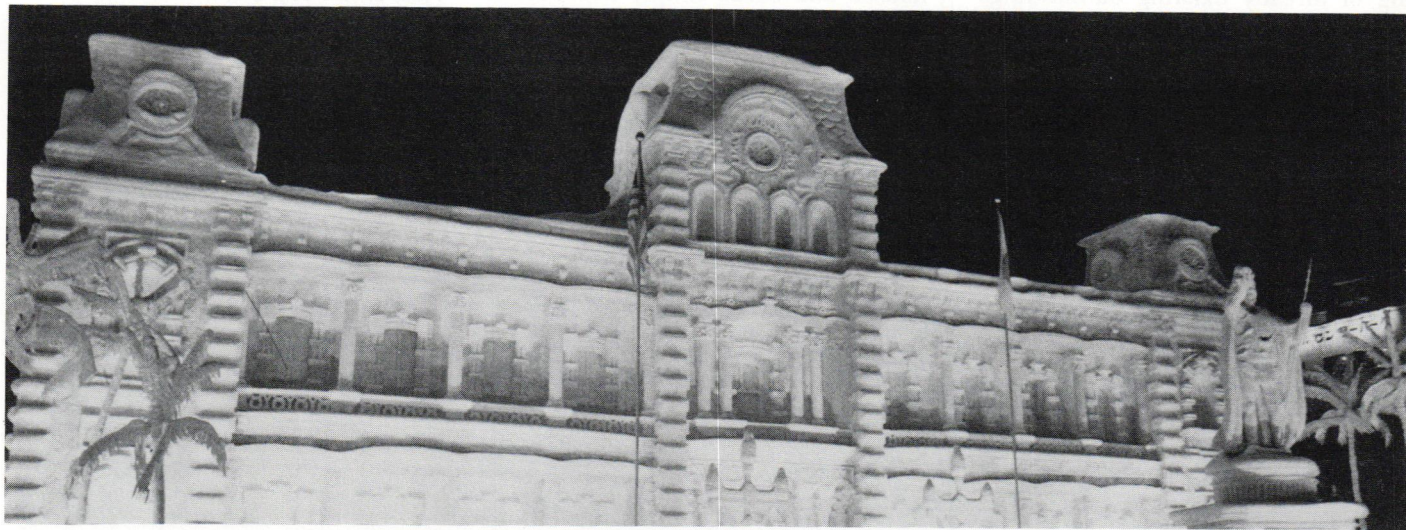
The real heyday of the ice palace, aesthetically, and as an object of public enthusiasm, was the latter part of the 19th century. The artifacts this book primarily celebrates are crenellations, machicolations, turrets, and exuberance. The winter festivals of which these creations were the focus usually climaxed with a Storming of The Ice Palace, something of a cross between a snowball fight, a pagan solstice ceremony and the Super Bowl.

The ice palace phenomena is meticulously documented in this book with photographs, period graphics, newspaper descriptions and even working drawings. The genre's masters, its functions and escalating costs (some

things never change) are chronicled, as well as the erratic climatic occurrences which contributed to its decline. The inclusion as an ancestor object of the American ice palaces of an 18th-century baroque wedding palace built of ice in St. Petersburg seems a little farfetched. It is unlikely that a 19th-century designer from Minneapolis or Montreal was *au courant* with the capricious behavior of the Russian Empress Anna. But the building itself is so improbable and lovely, and the stories surrounding its inception so bizarre, that one is grateful to the authors for risking reader incredulity to include it.

Ice Palaces is a fine piece of esoterica which should have an unexpectedly wide appeal in an era when the environment is becoming increasingly bland, and even McDonald's and Jack-in-the-Box have gone respectable on us. Human endeavors and institutions tend to ape their makers, and this book reminds us that we forget it to our peril. To remain fresh, fertile, energetic, and adaptable, architecture, too, needs a vacation from time to time.

Ice Palaces, Fred Anderes and Ann Agranoff, Abbeville, 1983, 132 pp., illus., \$29.95 cloth; \$16.95 paper.



KING KAMEHAMEHA IN FRONT OF IOLANI PALACE, SAPPORO, 1982

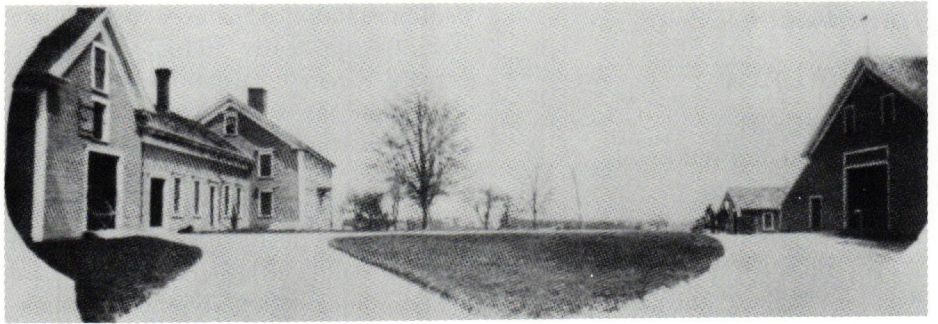
Gerald L. Pocius:

BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE, BARN

THOMAS C. HUBKA

Thomas Hubka's book on the New England connected farmstead is an important contribution to vernacular architecture scholarship. Based on fieldwork primarily in Maine, the book, with its healthy graphic accompaniment of hundreds of isometric drawings, floorplans, and photographs, lays to rest many of the simplistic explanations surrounding this particular building configuration.

Hubka examines the major components of the connected farmstead complex—the dwelling house, back kitchen, storage shed, and barn—and provides detailed histories of the development of each particular architectural form in the area. He also places these buildings in the spatial context of the typical farmstead and outlines how each building type was stylistically decorated and used. By selecting several farmsteads as case studies, he points out that the impulse to connect buildings on the farm was primarily a 19th-century phenomenon, often involving the moving of already existing outbuildings to be connected to the dwelling house.



DOORYARD, WILLIAM WALKER FARM, ARUNDEL, MAINE, CIRCA 1880

He finds that this rearrangement was primarily a response to agricultural reforms of the time, coupled with reformist strains in the local culture. Farmers felt compelled to modernize their agricultural operations to compete with the more successful farms of the developing West. The alteration of the farmstead configuration was one of many means by which they hoped to renew success.

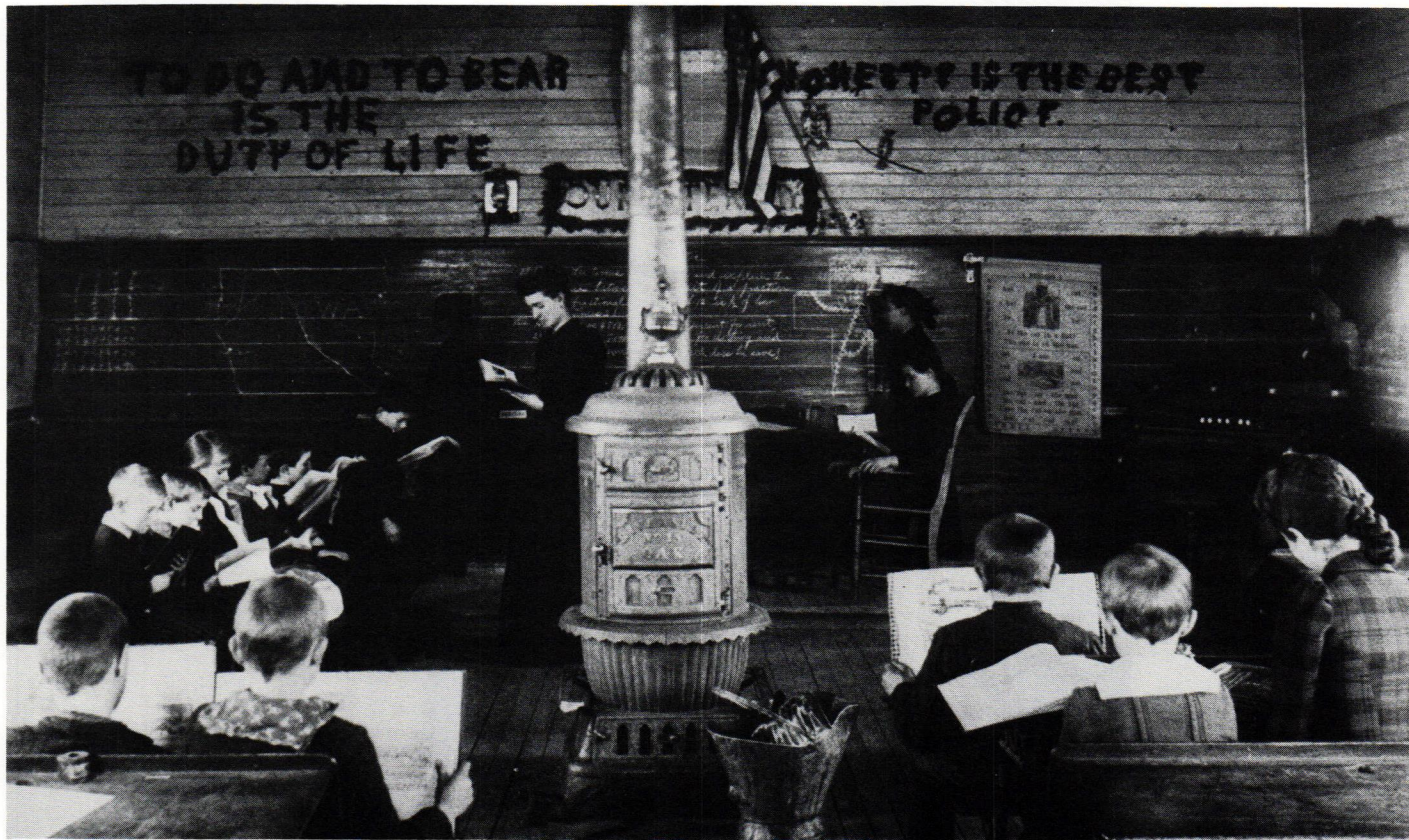
The book is a superb example of the use of case studies, combining the author's architectural training with the concerns of a cultural historian. The drawings alone make this study invaluable. Hubka has advanced the scholarship on the vernacular architecture of this region considerably, demonstrating, for example, that the "Cape Cod" house is only one form of a more complex building tradition, and that farmers did not connect their houses and barns simply because of climate.

Hubka has masterfully clarified the complex forces that governed a particular building configuration; the local farmers were not simply following elite trends or replicating ideas from the past. New England farmers, like all designers, had somehow to contend with their era's notion of progress; the connected farmstead was their thoughtful response. This book should become one of the standard sources on American vernacular architecture, an important contribution to our understanding of how ordinary people built the common structures that still dominate much of the landscape.

Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England, Thomas C. Hubka, University Press of New England, 1984, 226 pp., illus., \$29.95.



A FARMSTEAD WITH MAJOR BARN AT EITHER END OF THE CONNECTED COMPLEX, BRIDGTON, MAINE



ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PRESERVATION PRESS)

John Fraser Hart:

AMERICA'S COUNTRY SCHOOLS

Andrew Gulliford

The one-room country school was a distinctive feature of the rural landscape, and it holds a hallowed place in the country's romantic mythology. On the frontier it was usually the first community structure, and often it doubled as the meeting place or place of worship. Its straight, gable roof covered a simple rectangular box, no more than 30 by 40 feet, which was the practical limit of voice and vision for teacher and pupils alike. Constructed of the local building materials, be they log, sod, stone, brick, adobe, or—most commonly—wood frame, the schoolhouse could usually be identified by its conventional use

of three or four high windows on either side.

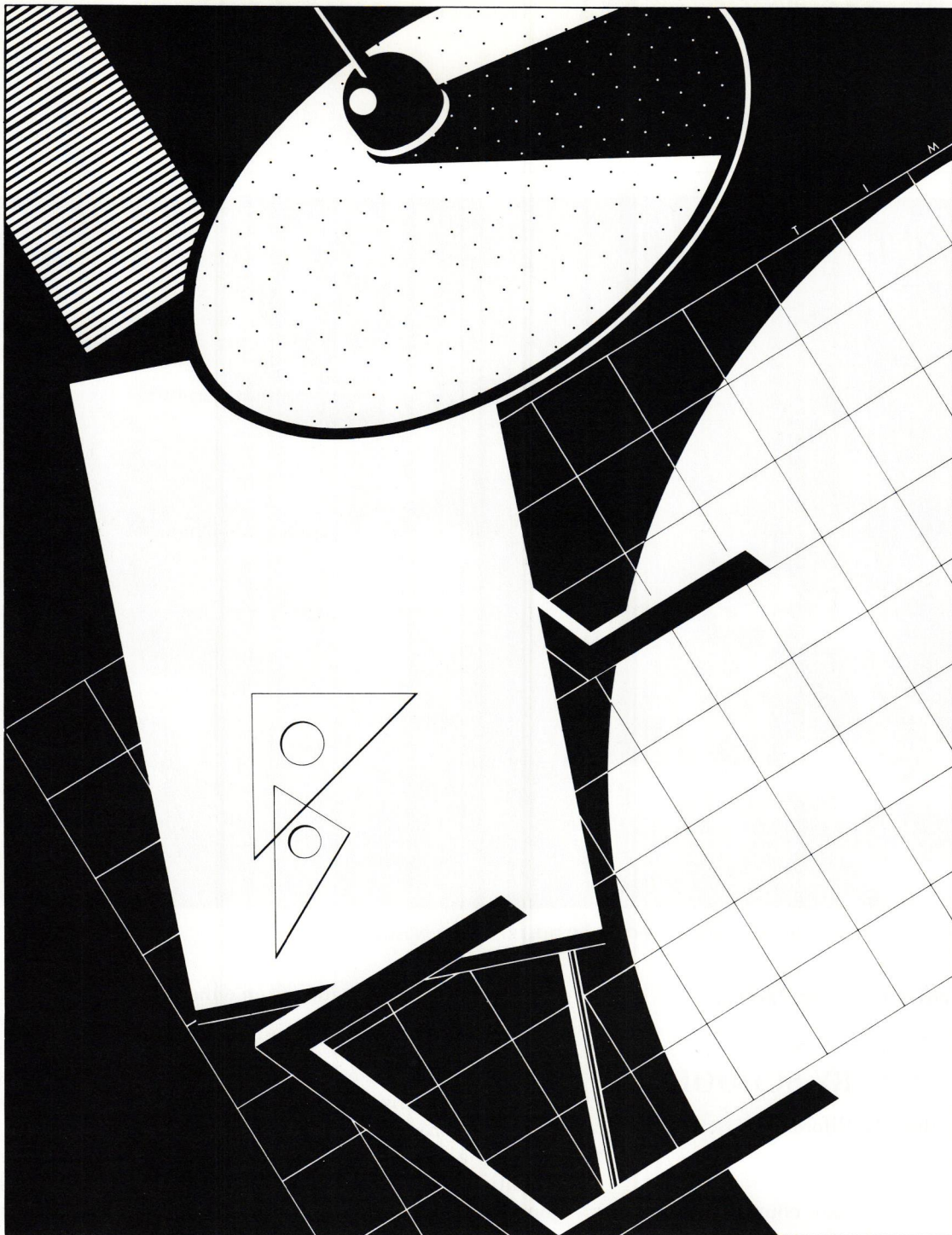
Andrew Gulliford's study of the country schoolhouse in an eight-state area bounded by Nevada, North Dakota, and Kansas is a nostalgic exercise, a catalogue of a vanishing tradition. Of the estimated 200,000 one-room schools in use at the beginning of the century, only 12,000 remain, and less than 850 are actively used. The author's method reminds me of nothing so much as a strip of flypaper, where all manner of things are stuck with little rhyme or reason. The enormous collection of period photographs, anecdotes, and miscellany is roughly structured into chapters on the evolution of American education, school curricula in the 19th century, the arduous lives of teachers, the role of the school as a community center, the architecture (the least satisfying chapter), and a useful concluding chapter concerning the general

principles and case studies of schoolhouse preservation.

The book is the work of an earnest and enthusiastic amateur rather than a careful scholar—long on sentiment and short on objective analysis. Despite statements to the contrary, it implicitly assumes that primitive is noble, that the past is heroic and romantic. Gulliford even clutches at straws to support his belief that the one-room school may be making a comeback in urban areas of America. Behind him is an attitude that seems to have marked too many historic preservation efforts, the idea that everything old, quaint, or personally appealing should be preserved—which certainly leaves a lot of room for a better theoretical rationale.

America's Country Schools, Andrew Gulliford, The Preservation Press, 1984, 292 pp., illus., \$18.95.

ILLUSTRATION: TIM CLARK



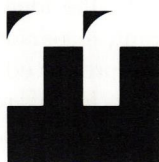
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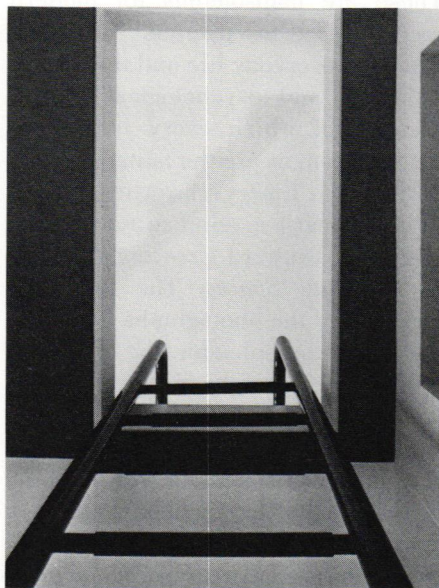
SIMONETTA SPADA

My first reaction to such books as *Styled for Living* is to commence a ritual purification by carefully burning the volume on a pyre made of carpet and paint samples. Yet, as a professional involved with the teaching of interior design, I am also compelled to flip through the glossy glibness of their pages to find out what is going on "out there," what my prospective clients and perhaps my students have been told is "elegant, yet manageable," or "daring, but practical," or "luxuriously livable." And I can always compare the designer lofts, pieds-à-terre and condos culled from the pages of *Interior Design* with the memorable collection published each fall by *Architectural Record*. Flipping through that compendium one finds the rarified balance of irony and monumentality, ridiculous formality and willful kitsch that makes a designer feel truly distinct from the uncouth masses.

The designer is, after all, a professional, with a judgment supposedly informed by rigorous training and highly developed critical abilities for the manipulation of three-dimensional forms in a spatial configuration. The designers collected in the two volumes mentioned above exhibit equal skill in this; the question is rather, Why? In that realm, *Interior Design* magazine makes by far the clearer case for itself.

The criterion for the selection of the designs in *Styled for Living*, according to editor and self-proclaimed

guru of good taste Sherman Emery, is that they are all "residences executed by a professional interior designer." These are not thrown-together living arrangements which unconsciously reflect the daily lives and personal histories of their inhabitants. Nor are they alien orders imposed on those lives by architects. These designs all emerged, according to the captions, from conversations between clients, who want comfort and control, and designers, who contribute good taste. The descriptions next to the lavish and carefully staged photographs highlight the process of design. Yet almost



LOFT AREA IN STUDIO APARTMENT DESIGNED BY ALESSANDRO COLBERTALDO

all the clients disappear into yuppie clichés, demanding places for their VCRs, IBMs, and Ralph Laurens, and the designers become effeminate fanciers of mauve and marble, builders of chintzy character. Client and designer each have a role, and each is acting out conspicuous consumption in a theater of sexual or professional masks. The worst (and most successful) theatrical masters exhibited are Michael de Santis and the firm of Patino/Wolf. Their work features spotlights, marble, brass bands, oversized furniture, and a use of color determined by the season in which the house will be

used. One wonders why the inhabitants do not get headaches after ten minutes of trying to survive in these overblown environments. Perhaps they don't live there: only their characters do.

The designs collected in *Architectural Record* are much more ambivalent about their function, even though this collection is couched both in a host of advertisements for the building blocks that go into the creation of the designs and by a lengthy roundtable discussion of the role of the interior designer in the office space. The sense of reality is soon lost when one realizes that few of the goods advertised have been used in the projects highlighted, and that the discussion leads nowhere. All participants in the talk lament the paradoxical oversupply of elements and choices for designing office interiors, and the total dearth of flexibility in the actual working out of these spaces. An office interior must, after all, reflect not only the functional needs of the clients, but also the unspoken needs and nature of maker and made environment. It seems American business does not have much to say except that it is willing to experiment with different ways of arranging the rungs on the corporate ladder—given the constraints of the market.

As a result, the offices shown in this magazine are all extraordinary in every sense of the word. The cover shows a scene from the new home of SITE, where workers sit half-screened behind partitions made from unplastered metal lath. The effect, enhanced by surreal photography, is a shimmering environment which rejoices in its ambivalence. Even more surreal is the precious jewel box created by Emilio Ambasz for a Belgian bank in New York: the walls are covered in two layers of silk, behind which trompe l'oeil views of Manhattan try to hide the economics of a corner office behind floating, dark planes. In larger and more "normal" offices—the Duffy Group's design for the Continental Company or Peter Rose's design for a

law firm—one is struck by the lavish, exquisite and alien nature of the architectural hardware which tries to transform these bland office floors into magnificent palaces of architectural and cultural potential. They are only offices, and both architect and client again play roles, this time by claiming to either revel in or disdain their roles.

More successful are such lavish exercises in idiosyncrasy as Diane Lewis's Les Tuileries and Steven Holl's private apartment. Both are fitted into spaces where the constraints of the structure and site weighed heavily on both client and architect. Neither, however, wants to admit either to their surroundings or to any roles they might have to play inside them. Instead, the restaurant catches one's attention by planes that then deny themselves around the corner or float

above the floor. Nothing is certain in this environment, not even that this is a humanistically determined world where top is top, where feet are on the ground and some human activity takes place. Holl's apartment is even more an essay in willful contradiction: a quarter of a million dollars was spent illustrating the qualities of point, line, and mass in fragments of furnishings which "explore architecture" by creating "dialectical counterpoints" and thus allow both players in this design game to escape into a world where any synthesis achieved will automatically create another thesis. These are mausoleums for modern architecture, as divorced from the cycles of everyday life and the social, political, and psychological contradictions of which every interior is a microcosm as are the fantasy worlds of Sherman Emery's favorites.

It is almost a relief to turn to the slim and awkward *Creating Interiors for Unusual Spaces*. The title, the layout, and the photographs here lack the grace and splendor, the economic and physical weight of the other two volumes. Fewer objects are deployed, yet most of the designs make up for the lack with austere self-control. None of the lofts, houseboats, or converted towers in the Italian countryside strike one as particularly practical, nor as masterpieces of coherent, innovative, and captivating design. Almost all pose elements of modern technology, transformed by artful and usually Italian design, against preexisting structures exposed in all their glory. Whereas the antiques in *Styled for Living* have to fight against the ceiling lighting cones and white plaster corner joints, emphasizing the artificial nature of their placement, the architectural fragments in *Record* bask in their own ironic iconography; here the Breuer and Rietveld chairs, the spindly lighting fixtures and the light industrial rolling stock mark and fix places of inhabitation in a world both well defined by traditions of living and living structures, and open to

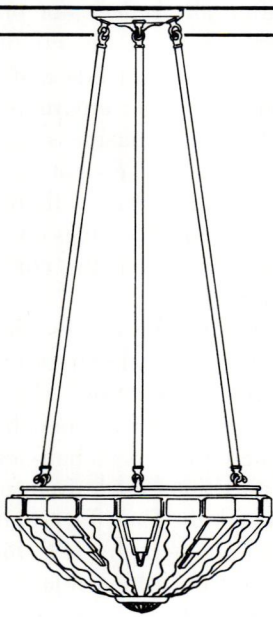
continual exploration and redefinition.

The results are neither startling nor always attractive, but two projects stand out. They are both by architects, and both are becoming icons among the students with whom I am involved. One is the Veranda House by Mario Botta, a small house in the grip of a monumental geometry that somehow modulates light and daily rhythms into ritualistic splendor. The other is the Spiller House by Frank Gehry, an essay in exploring the edges of the box of modernism and the planes of modern living by cutting their edges and revealing the structure that makes them, allowing light and activity to be measured by the very materials which create their framework. Such triumphs of inner clarity are rare, even in this volume. Authors Mirko Mejetta and Simonetta Spada had to find all but two of their projects in Europe, and their sparse text and indifferent photographs evidence no rationale for choosing these particular projects. Yet I would rather be unsatisfied with modern gestures at making sense of the private history and social realm of the everyday environment than see myself, my students, or their clients overwhelmed with the heavy-handed operatics of either architectural or interior "design professionals."

Styled for Living, Residential Interiors from Interior Design Magazine, Sherman R. Emery, editor, Interior Design Books, 1984.

Building Types Study: Record Interiors, the editors of *Architectural Record*, 1984, Volume 172, no. 11, 240 pp., illus., \$795 pb.

Creating Interiors for Unusual Spaces, Designs from Around the World, Mirko Mejetta and Simonetta Spada, Whitney Library of Design, 1984, 127 pp., illus., \$32.50.



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Howard Junker:

MID-CENTURY MODERN

CARA GREENBERG

Never trust any writer on period furniture who tells you up front that at the height of the era under discussion she was in a "crib painted with yellow duckies." Or concludes her study with a list of four retail stores in California, one in Chicago, and twelve in New York City that carry the goods in question.

False nostalgia and its cousin, cynical nostalgia, are not really inappropriate attitudes, they are just inadequate to deal justly with that great moment in American furniture design, the Postwar period, which Cara Greenberg correctly locates in 1947-1957, although she has apparently forgotten the term itself, which understandably fell out of favor during Vietnam.

In a sense, though, we are still in the Postwar period. Consider not so much the continued absence of global warfare, but the number of classic pieces of the era, especially chairs,

still in production: nine of Greenberg's "ten best chairs"; Noguchi's movable-base, triangular plate-glass-top coffee table; Saarinen's pedestal table; Lovett's firehood fireplace; Henningsen's PH-5 lamp. (Will connoisseurs of the next century be able—or want—to distinguish between a 1956 Eames lounge chair and an *echt*, but 1986, "original"?)

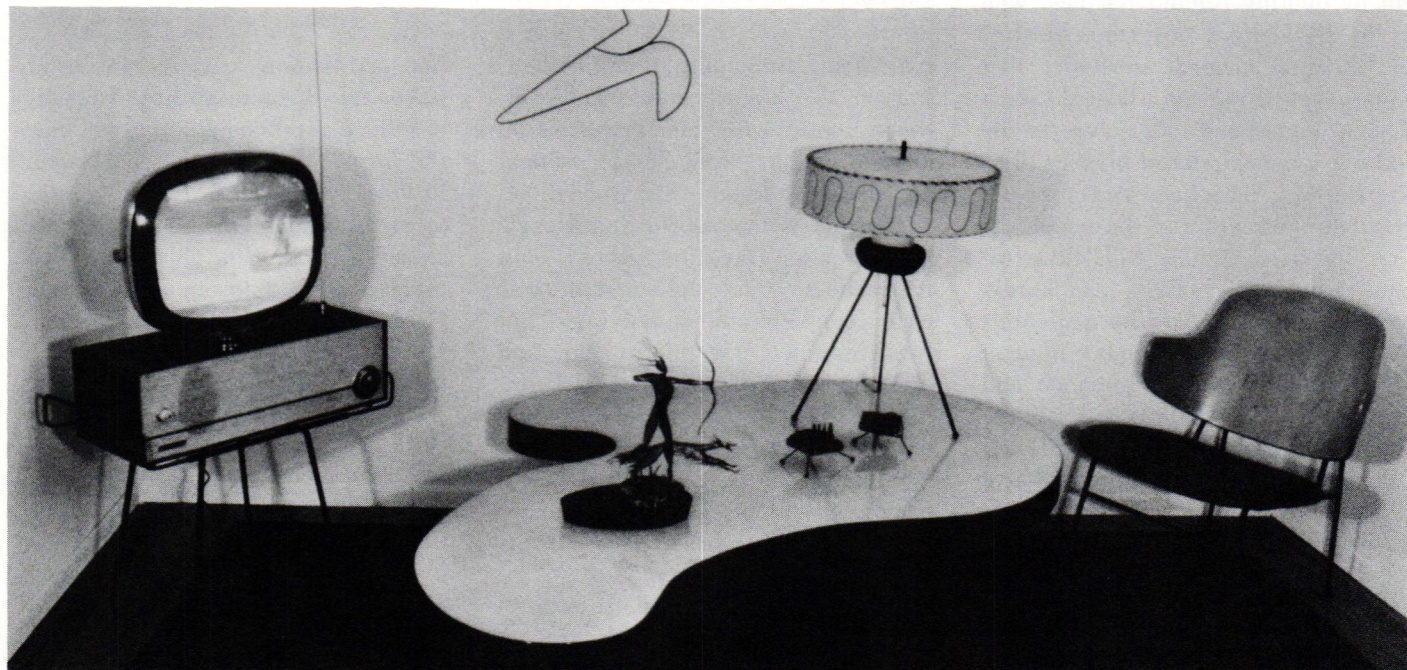
Greenberg herself is not particularly interested in making quality distinctions. She is in favor of all the received ideas. She is slightly troubled that at a certain point bad taste became good taste, but, as a true post-modern child, she rather enjoys the confusion that results from an aesthetic in which anything goes. This is thrillingly evident in the half dozen current residences she studies under the rubric "living a fifties fantasy." (She and her editors seem unable to decide between "fifties" and "'50s." Need I say more?)

At first, Greenberg seems to think the trickle-down theory accounts for the glories of mid-century: the legacy of the Bauhaus, wartime technologies, Postwar affluence. But then came the

bastardization of rip-offs, possible because the courts refused to allow patents on furniture design. And there was also a "brain drain" as the superstars were lured into industrial and contract furnishings; Sputnik dented America's dream of invincibility; and the same year, "furniture sales in California topped those of New York for the first time." That is, the center of taste moved away from "Northeastern havens of sophistication." The positive contribution of popular taste, of Detroit taste, of atomic and drive-in and Vegas taste, is beyond Greenberg's competence to assimilate.

Tim Street-Porter's photos of mid-eighties versions of period rooms help relieve the catalog odor of much of this book, but they also emphasize the extent to which it is, after all, not much more than a quickie guide for young trendies eager to do up their "pads" in a "retro" style that seemed quite modern in the early eighties.

Mid-Century Modern: Furniture of the 1950's, Cara Greenberg, Harmony Books, 1984, 175 pp., illus., \$30.00.



CURVACIOUS COFFEE TABLE BY PLYCRAFT, DANISH CHAIR, FIFTIES WIRE WALL SCULPTURE, AND PHILCO PREDICTA TV

Sarah Bodine & Michael Dunas:

PLASTICS

In 1966 Dustin Hoffmann as the Graduate was offered the elusive key to success in a word: "Plastics." It was ironic that such a commonplace panacea should be reduced to a whisper.

Plastics is a prodigy of industrial society. With no heritage nor palpable personality, its social identity has been molded by the infinite power of modern science and the insatiable appetite of consumerism. Plastics is a debased material, often characterized as "cheap," "imitation," and "kitsch." Its potency is anomalous in a society that values art and commerce. A plastic society offers a religion of the prosaic in defiance of the sublime and ordains as its prophet the modern scientist with the opportunity to remake the natural world in his image.

The entrancing image of plastics pervades both *Plastic: Common Objects, Classic Designs*, by Sylvia Katz and *Art Plastics, Designed for Living*, by Andrea DiNoto. Both authors begin by quoting Roland Barthes, who in his *Mythologies* describes plastics as "the first magical substance that consents to be prosaic." It would seem that by immersing themselves in the seductive appearance of plastics they, like Barthes, have been moved by the enigmatic attraction of the material.

A formless matter, with little innate resistance, plastics can hardly be called a substance. Its malleability renders its shape a mere imprint of manufacture. The resonance and texture of objects made of plastic are alien to our natural sensibilities. Their color perpetrates only the aggressive side of plastic's character. Expressions in plastic proliferate, yet appear disingenuous and evoke little empathy with the condition of the material.

To the designer, plastics offers freedom of invention and the accompanying pressures of responsibility.

Unshackled by the traditions of craftsmanship and "truth to materials," plastics offers no recalcitrance in manufacture nor allegiance to historical precedent.

To elevate this prosaic substance to a level of greater social value, both authors have trimmed their sails with the commercial wind. Here the euphemistic collector's market acts as a barometer of commercial value for objects with no other criteria than supply and demand. This is not to say that the assignment of relative worth does not occasionally lead to more serious inspection—as in fine art, where age, style, aesthetics, prove-

J. Harry DuBois (Mr. Plastic), whose *Plastics History U.S.A.* (Cahners, 1972) charts the prodigious achievements of pioneers in the plastics industry, from the exploding collodion billiard ball (1963), which caused John Wesley Hyatt to discover celluloid, through Bakelite, vinyl, melamine, Tupperware, Lucite, nylon, and formica.

Andrea DiNoto, editor of the Time-Life *Encyclopedia of Collectibles*, attempts to extend her consideration of plastics beyond technological developments when she interjects the notion of "art." She makes clear that in this case art is the "art of the machine," good design rather than



FROM DINOTO, *ART PLASTIC: DESIGNED FOR LIVING*

nance, and authorship inform collecting on the highest level. However, these books, with their emphasis on appearance and their lack of critical analysis, offer little further evaluation.

Plastics is the rubric that signals the direction for both books, but materials are rarely collected for their own sake. We collect not wood but furniture, not clay but pottery, and even our most precious natural materials, diamonds and gold, are hardly collected in a virgin state. Therefore to consider the material plastics as a basis for collecting proves a major obstacle, since at best it is defined as a formless substance that can be molded or modeled. It is left to these authors' essays to extricate the subject from this ontological thicket. Both Katz and DiNoto owe a great debt to

fine art. However, she never establishes the discrete ability of plastics to induce good design, nor explicates the formal qualities that posit value in its expression. She attempts rather to ascribe value by inference, as if to say, "Look, this object has been praised as good design and it is made of plastic!" We are left longing for a more exact criteria to ascertain the value of preserving this transparent, elusive material.

The organization of DiNoto's book parodies the prosaic quality of plastics with chapter headings—"Vanities," "Necessities," "Pastimes," "Playthings," "Comforts of Home"—reinforcing the underlying ambiguity of novelty, ubiquity, and caprice that has characterized the popularity of the product. DiNoto attempts to pro-

vide a broader social perspective by describing the cultural and artistic climate in which plastic was developed. However, observations such as "the streamlined style continues to fascinate collectors of plastics because the material is so well suited to the style" beg deeper examination. This does not diminish the informative and readable text of the book, but reveals an inability to come to grips with the efficacy of the plastics phenomenon. Why plastics? What is plastics really? The glossary and identification guide that conclude the book further obfuscate the issue by suggesting that a degree in chemical engineering,

embrace plastics as the product of the "present" infers a modern ethos serving a transitory function, with no intrinsic value. Nonetheless, the preservation of a time and period mnemonically through a product is of ultimate value in a modern society losing its capacity to retain a sense of the past. Our society lives in the perpetual present, with constant change eschewing the traditions that former societies had striven to preserve. For this reason it has become as meaningful to collect artifacts of the sixties, seventies, and eighties as to collect 19th-century antiques.

Though Katz and DiNoto both em-

monplace object, is evident in the extensive duplication of work shown in the two books.

Both Katz and DiNoto adequately represent the early years of Bakelite, celluloid, shellac, gutta-percha, ebonite, and so on, and are on firm footing with the history of the material, its effect on product color and form, its social ramification of "imitation" and the proletarian attitudes of "cheapness," novelty, and fun. Where they begin to editorialize is in their consideration of post-World War II design. The introduction of modern plastic design marks a disconcerting visual and intellectual break in plastic history. Like modern art, modern design is often self-referential, no longer subservient to material or method. Freed from its historical restrictions, the material is sublimated to concept. Although both authors have clearly identified the value of design to plastics, they have difficulty maintaining the lineage with modern examples that are appreciated not primarily for their use of plastics but for their artistry or design. When we are confronted by a Braun radio, a Stanley Lechtzin brooch, or Sottsass cabinetry, we are in the presence of an artistic sensibility that has very little in common with celluloid fans, Barbie dolls, or polyethylene pineapple pitchers. It seems in the plethora of recent books devoted to furniture history, 20th-century period styles and industrially designed products, design's self-referential use of plastics finds a home in a legitimate tradition. By failing to segregate the two traditions of plastic—the "inventive" commodity and the "design" expression—the authors do a disservice to the value of both.



FROM DINOTO, *ART PLASTIC: DESIGNED FOR LIVING*

rather than an eye for style, authorship, or aesthetics, is the key to appreciating plastics.

Sylvia Katz, a British art historian, collector of plastics, and author of the previously published *Plastics, Designs and Materials* (Eastview, 1978), like DiNoto justifies the earlier "imitative" periods of plastic, when it was used to replace bone, ivory, and tortoiseshell, by subsequent postwar design achievements which exploited plastics as self-referential. The heart of her book is a chronological portfolio.

Two points must be made about Katz's organization and point of view. As an art historian, she predictably presents work within "style" decades. However, the "period" pieces also evoke a feeling of nostalgia, a common motivation for collecting plastics. To

phasize the design value of plastic products, Katz supports her claim with purely visual data, without benefit of an explanatory text. One can only assume that she considers the aesthetic value of plastic design perceptible without extensive contextual knowledge or scientific acumen.

These are books of primarily visual appeal, and the production of both is sumptuous and lavishly colorful. Though no book on plastics could purport to be comprehensive, DiNoto's collection is by far the best catalogue on the subject. Katz's material, on the other hand, is culled primarily from her own collection, and is consequently more idiosyncratic. The paradox of collecting industrial design, where the historical criteria of discrete value is applied to a mass-produced, com-

Art Plastic: Designed for Living, Andrea DiNoto, Abbeville, 1984, 228 pp., illus., \$45.00.

Plastics: Common Objects, Classic Designs, Sylvia Katz, Abrams, 1984, 160 pp., illus., \$25.00.

Mary Hunt Kahlenberg:
TEXTILES IN AMERICA
1650-1870

FLORENCE M. MONTGOMERY

Florence Montgomery's second book on American textiles is informative, well written, and, in view of current trends in interior furnishings, timely. Divided into two basic sections, the

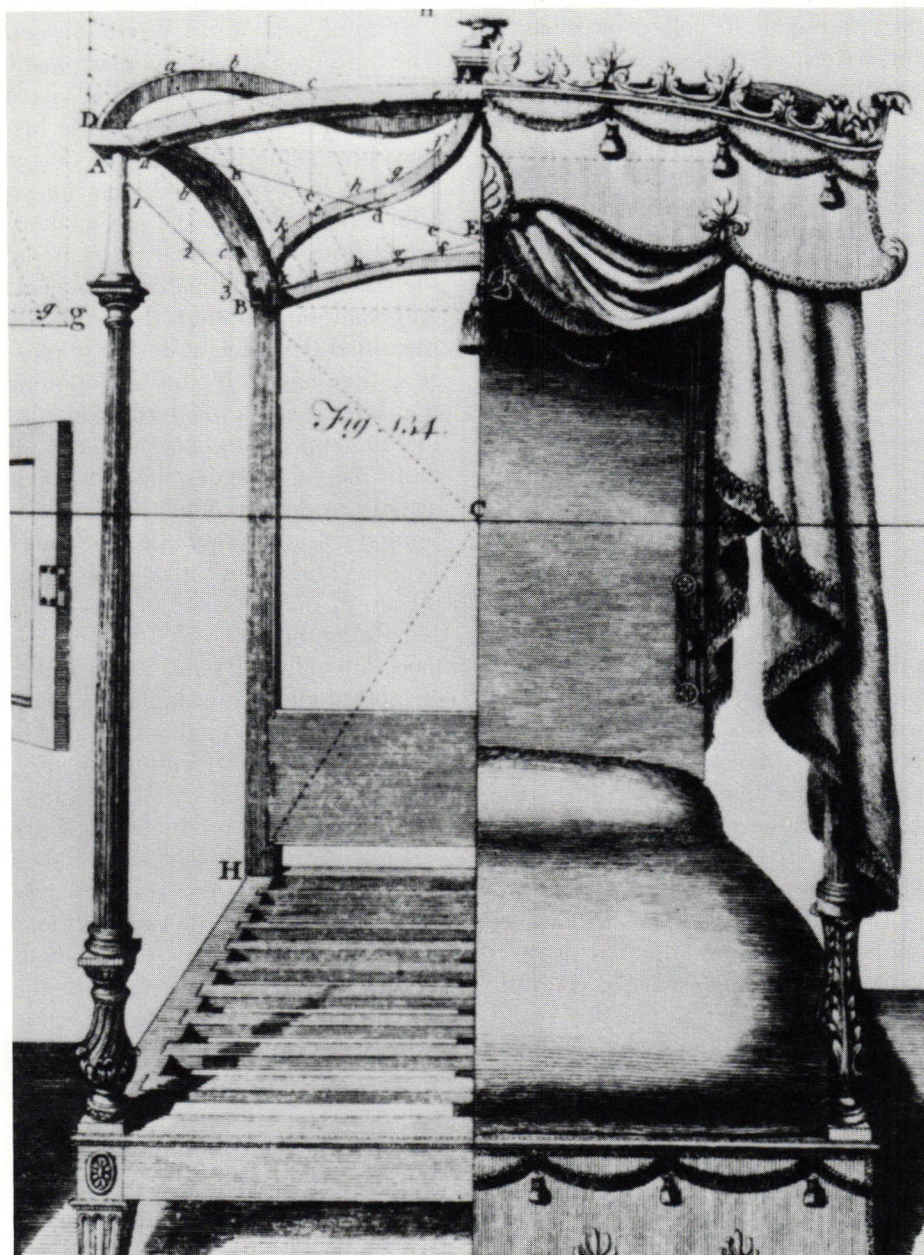
book covers in the first part the development of different furnishing types, showing their chronological changes. Detailed chapters are devoted to bedhangings, window curtains, and upholstery. The second part is an exhaustively researched dictionary of fabrics used during the 17th through 19th centuries, a feature that makes the book a definitive reference work. The transition between the two sections is made by a chapter on period

rooms, and given perspective by a discussion of how attitudes to the period room have changed since the twenties. Montgomery's concern for authenticity in historic houses and museum period rooms stems from her work as curator of textiles at the Winterthur Museum and as a consultant to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her many illustrations of draperies and furniture treatments will doubtless influence the refurbishing of historic houses, and, considering that the elaborate use of 18th- and 19th-century fabrics is back in style, the book might also serve designers.

Montgomery's sources include catalogues from the early trade practices, prepared in some cases by British agents acting for American merchants, in others by government officials trying to promote textile manufacturing. From an Achermann's of 1810 she produces the admonition that "For Eating Rooms and Libraries, a material of more substance is requisite than for Rooms of a lighter cast."

Furnishing fabrics were fashionable items, and new fabrics with new names kept business flowing; if it wasn't flowing, a new name for the same fabric might help. The dictionary of these fabrics is sensible, usable, and interesting. It leads us to imagine what samples such as "shagreen" must have felt like: "a spotted silk taffeta made in all colors, especially black. The pebbled surface resembles shark-skin." Several fabrics changed their meaning along the way. "Drugget," for instance, referred in the 1700s to a loosely woven woolen material often supplied to slaves or servants for coating, but by 1830 it signified a mean carpeting fabric or carpet lining. While the dictionary is not meant to be read from "adatais" to "zanella," it would be a shame to wait to read it until you needed information on "prunella."

Textiles in America 1650-1870, Florence Montgomery, W. W. Norton (a Winterthur Museum Book), 1984, 412 pp., illus., \$39.95.



FOUR-POST BED FITTED WITH CURTAINS WHICH COULD BE LET DOWN. FROM THOMAS MALTON, *A COMPLEAT TREATISE ON PERSPECTIVE* (LONDON, 1778, WINTERTHUR MUSEUM LIBRARY)



PRIMARY AUDIO COMPONENTS FLUSH-MOUNTED
IN A CUSTOM CABINET

Lois Wagner Green:

THE MEDIA DESIGN BOOK

PHILIP MAZZURCO

We no sooner master the woofer when along comes the digital disc. We get down with tweeters and there's the computing turntable. Thank heaven for the audio-visual consultant. In fact, the most valuable words proffered in *The Media Design Book*, one of the first works to focus on electronic installations in professionally designed interiors, is the advice to plug into the expertise of the sight and sound specialist.

That recommendation appears to be well taken by the 32 mostly Manhattan designers represented in this assemblage of mostly residential installations. High tech meets high flash in a range of inventive built-in solutions that triumph over intimidating galaxies of buttons, levers, and dials. Control panels that seem adequate for intergalactic travel are worked into flush decorative wall friezes, mirrored walls, stainless steel columns, or are impassively and utterly concealed in artful cabinetry.

There are also solutions with sociological implications too depressing to contemplate: a square coffee table with television screens built into each side of the apron, or a horizontal row of three television sets, each equipped with its own headphones—both instal-

lations intended for separate, albeit companionable, viewing.

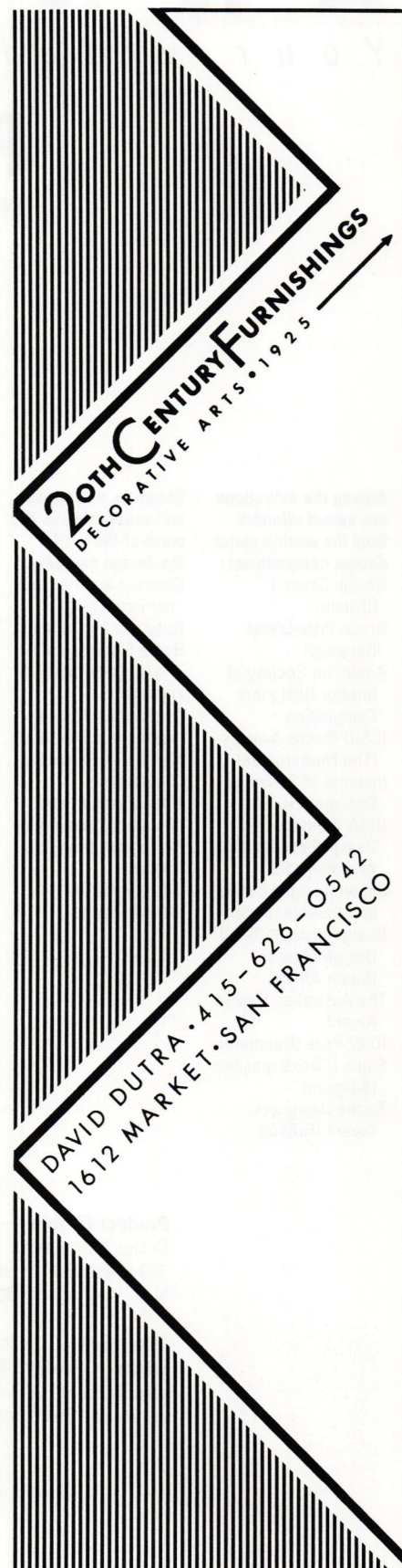
One way or another, this collection certainly works to raise our consciousness to the possibilities of integrating sight and sound equipment into interior design.

But still, this is a book that inevitably suffers from the built-in obsolescence inherent in a field where state of the art lasts about five minutes. Indeed, author Philip Mazzurco advises that all installations be equipped with access panels, not only for repair but also for inevitable replacement and upgrading of equipment. It is this constant technological flux that limits the usefulness of the sections on "Media Basics" and "Design Basics" that begin and end Mr. Mazzurco's book.

It should be noted that a number of the installations in *The Media Design Book* have been previously published in various periodicals. Moreover, despite the promise of its subtitle—"Ideas and Projects for Audio, Video, and Computer Components for the Home and Office"—only two home computer tie-in installations and only one rear projection television installation are included, and the smattering of corporate installations may flesh out the book but hardly the subject. Certainly the electronic office is too vast and complex a subject to be approached in the few pages that Mr. Mazzurco devotes to office installations.

It would also have been a convenience as well as a courtesy if the author had seen fit to include among the "Useful Addresses" of the designers, photographers, and equipment manufacturers represented in the book those of the audio-visual consultants for the illustrated installations who may rightly prefer not to be the unsung heroes.

The Media Design Book: Ideas and Projects for Audio, Video, and Computer Components for the Home and Office, Philip Mazzurco, Macmillan, 1984, 175 pp., illus., \$29.95 cloth; \$14.95 paper.



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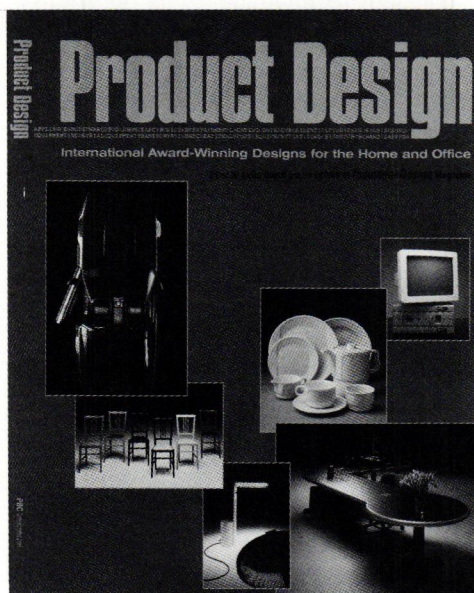
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AUTOMOBILE AND CULTURE

GERALD SILK

CAR DESIGN

JAN P. NORBYE

An automobile culture has been emerging since the first decade of this century. The early literature on the automobile focused mainly on the industry itself, in the form of popular histories and reminiscences by the "captains of industry," or on the mechanical development of the car. Not until the 1970s did the car receive more serious historical attention.*

Car Design is a contemporary manifestation of the older school of car history, while *Automobile and Culture* partakes of the more recent tendency to look at the automobile in its larger social and cultural milieu. Although intended as a self-sufficient text on the impact of the automobile on American and Western European culture, *Automobile and Culture* also catalogues a show held through January 6, 1985, at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. It is a collaborative venture of art historians and designers, coordinated by Gerald Silk.

By far the most cogent of the essays (although unmentioned in the contents), are those by Elizabeth A. T. Smith, one of the assistant curators. Her essays, except for one on Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Car, deal with architectural responses to the automobile. In "The Drive-In Culture" Smith emphasizes the work of Richard Neutra, who recognized earlier than most architects the need to design for the car, and saw the car as a symbiotic component of Modernism. But he was far from alone, and I cannot agree with her on the primacy of his Norwalk Service Station design of 1947 as a "typological form that persists to the

present day." This form, with simple enclosed office and pit area, its roof cantilevered transversely over the pumps, does persist, but it was developed in the previous decade by industrial designers such as Walter Dorwin Teague for Texaco and (independently) by Italian and German architects. The essay on Fuller could have ventured into architecture as well, since the context for his car was his larger "utopian" vision of a dymaxion world. In it, Smith errs slightly by claiming that Fuller's dymaxion vision of 1933 also included geodesic domes. He didn't develop his dome principles until the 1940s and didn't patent any until December 1951; but when he did, the geodesic fit right into Fuller's ideas of adapting mass-production to facilitate a post-urban world of people who would make their shelters as freely as they took to the road. Smith also contributes focused and informative essays on the strip and the factory response to the assembly line at Highland Park and River Rouge.

Silk's keynote essay, "The Automobile in Art," is based on his 1976 Ph.D. dissertation from Columbia University, which analyzed the influence of the car on the content and form of modern art. He sees the car, an embodiment of speed, dynamism, and personal freedom, as altering artists' perceptions and aiding in the development of new visual languages.

The mere quantity of illustrative material—over 160 paintings, sculptures, photographs, and posters—documents the wide range of artistic responses to the automobile. Occasional literary references underscore the cultural roots of this new aesthetic, as Silk does nicely in his coverage of Futurism. The material is copious, but in view of the lack of footnotes to enable the reader to pursue specific references, Silk should have selected fewer works of art and analyzed and interpreted them more thoroughly.

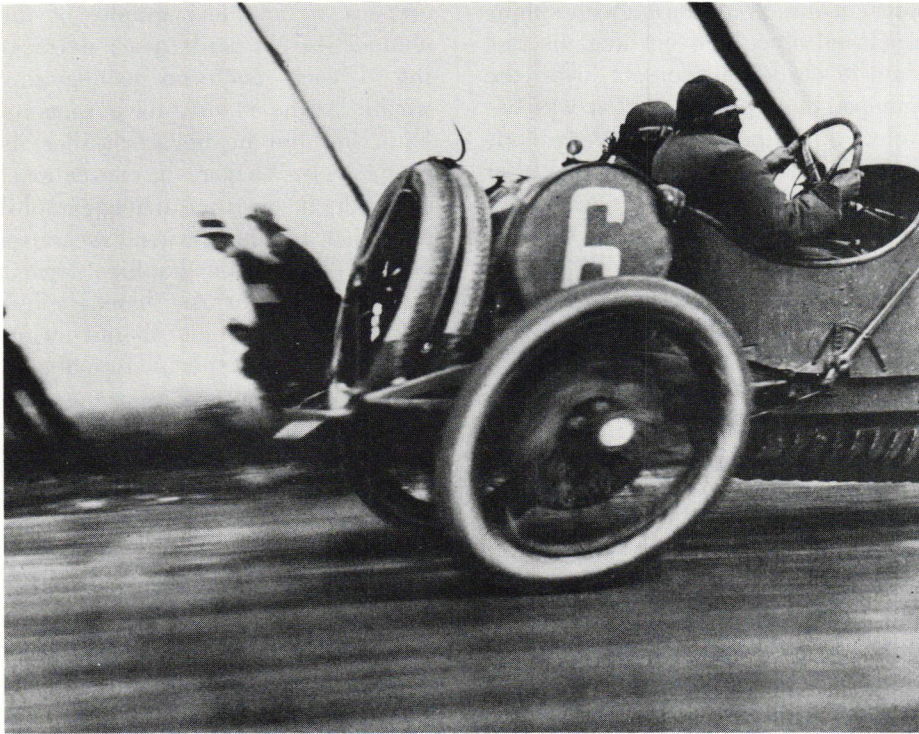
More particularly, I find Silk's ref-

erences to an "iconography of the automobile" in modern art perplexing. Clearly such an iconography would, as he states, have roots in Futurism, but he never clarifies its components. What are the conventional signs which constitute an iconography, and what are the intrinsic meanings behind certain iconographical forms? Silk seems not to use "iconography" to describe culturally shared meanings embodied in specific formal configurations; rather, he uses the term loosely to refer to the specific meaning intended by the artist or read into the work by the viewer—whether or not artist and viewer hold the same meaning.

An organization based on either typology or culture would have served Silk better than the chronological one he chose. For example, the chronological organization plays down the crucial differences between the French Dadaists, Italian Futurists, German Dadaists, and American Modernists in the manner of representing automobile imagery. The title of the book, after all, is *Automobile and Culture*. But rather than adopt a broad, anthropological concept of culture, Silk focuses on the narrower sense, the specific ways in which artists articulate their individual experiences.

The conclusion is disappointingly noncommittal: "As long as the car is with us, providing emotional experiences, taking lives, changing the environment, and altering perception, art will comment on and be influenced by this most inspirational of modern inventions." Silk has mined a rich new vein of material but misses an opportunity to forge it into something more precious.

Henry Flood Robert, Jr., the director of the Joslyn Museum of Art in Omaha, deals with what might be termed popular culture in "Hot Rods and Customs." It will take readers back to their adolescence, to a time when they would have seen no irony in personalizing the well-designed, mass-produced object and transform-



JACQUES-HENRI LARTIGUE, GRAND PRIX OF THE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF FRANCE, 1912. (COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATION DES AMIS DE JACQUES-HENRI LARTIGUE)

ing it into something unique. He gives an unforgettable description of 1950s hot rodders “primping” their cars before the block-long “mirror” of the glass wall of the Corvair factory in San Diego—a bit of fortuitous symbiosis between car and modern architecture at its best!

Robert mentions the customizers behind the fashions of dragster and “lead sled” and introduces the reader to the aesthetic purposes of chopping, channeling, raking, sectioning, radiusing, decking, shaving, frenching, and filling. If a cultural phenomenon is measured by its new jargon, then customizing merits a closer look.

This attention to unofficial automobile design is matched with a section on official design by the highly respected consultant and design teacher Strother MacMinn. “American Automobile Design” follows the progress of the automobile before mass production imposed new demands on its design. Until the 1930s (in America at least) independent coachbuilders designed and built bodies on to

specific factory chassis. The coachbuilder disappeared as the automotive corporations became more fashion-conscious and took on large in-house design staffs. Not long thereafter the customizer emerged, to modify the finished product for a different clientele. The cultural shift behind this transition is ripe for investigation.

MacMinn delineates such early figures of American automobile design as Dodge, Olds, Ford, Durant, Leland, Chrysler, the Fishers, and Edward Budd, and places them in the milieu, connecting them to the larger developments of automobile design. He examines the role of the coachbuilders, such as Brewster and company and LeBaron Inc., and gives credit where due to such corporate designers as Harley J. Earl, Gordon Buehrig, John Tjaarda, Holden Koto, and Virgil Exner.

In another instance, he sees production technology, quality control, and craftsmanship as casting the automobile in the 1930s in the role of a “true art form.” “Every designer

treated the period as one of challenge and opportunity; optimism and progress were the bywords.” One may ask how such optimism flourished during the depression. MacMinn doesn’t, yet indicates the designer’s role in the 1930s as one of reinvigorating American culture by creating a visually and functionally coherent environment through the marriage of art and industry. Style and marketing worked in concert to develop an aesthetic that was no longer the simple functional beauty of engineering, as a “mystified Henry Leland” still held; a fresh, dramatic statement was needed, and designers such as Harley Earl “emphatically established styling as a dominant factor in automobile marketing.”

Unfortunately, the article by Italian design specialist and historian, Angelo Tito Anselmi, “Automobile Design on the Continent,” lacks MacMinn’s clarity. Anselmi begins with some polemical questions about automobile aesthetics and the constituents of “good design” which are almost totally incomprehensible, full of skewed logic and lapses of coherency. He sees the automobile as conflicting with “official aesthetics,” as threatened by unnamed designers and architects who tried “to ostracize it,” and as attempting to “escape the treadmill of transience” or “aesthetic consumption” (whatever these demons may be).

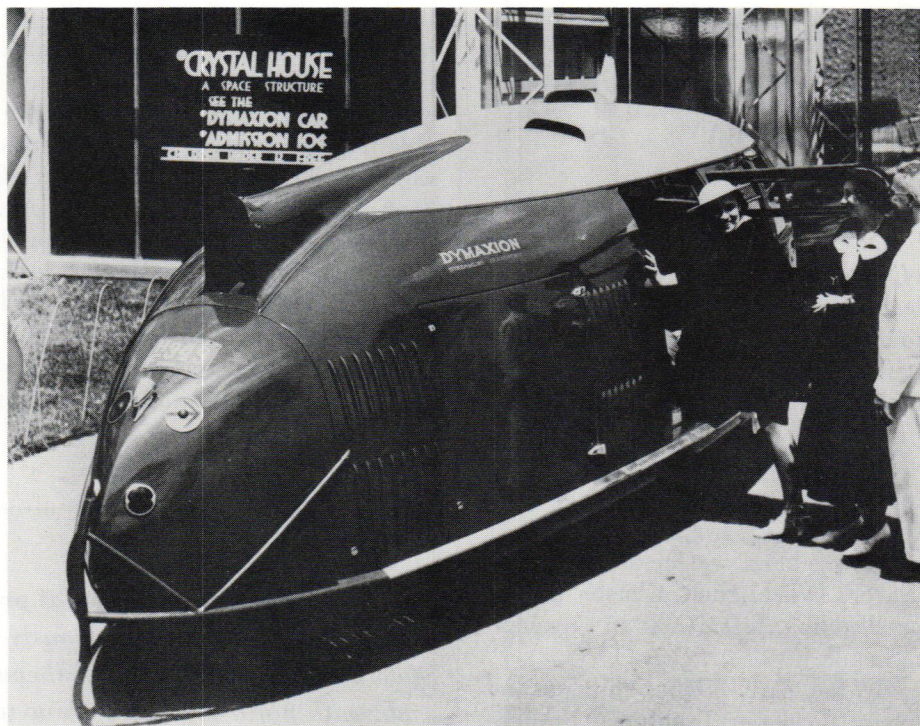
Once he leaves theory behind and takes up the actual history of European automobile design, Anselmi becomes quite readable. We learn, for example, that coachbuilders still survive in Europe. In America, the car rapidly moved into mass production, while in Europe it remained an elitist product. “Middle-class cars” did not emerge in Europe until the 1920s, and he notes these cars first embodied recognizable national characters: “French cars of the period look very French, and English ones English.” I find this a curious irony since the same period witnessed the expansion of the International Style in architecture in which

national characteristics were subsumed under a universal Modernism.

Anselmi's historical focus is narrow but interesting. He concentrates on the "aerodynamic idea" which he sees dominating European design from the early 1930s onward, leading to the "granturismo" movement of the later 1940s and the wedge shapes of today. He notes that the major American attempt, the 1934 Airflow, so disastrous to Chrysler's marketing, "spawned an entire family of Peugeots" with the help of the transfer of our technology of body panel pressing and assembly. He sees the absence of this technology in the early 1920s as the force behind the faceted "coffin shape" of the influential Lancia Lambda, causing "the first great industrial face-lifting in history."

If the history of automotive design in *Automobile and Culture* is necessarily selective, some of the missing pieces can be found in Jan P. Norbye's *Car Design: Structure and Architecture*. Norbye makes no attempt to place automotive design in a larger social or cultural context. He writes in a straightforward, nuts-and-bolts manner with sections on the necessary considerations of car design, the history of car designing and designers from its beginnings to the present, and on selected state-of-the-art proposals over the past decade. He covers both American and European developments, interviews numerous practicing designers, and offers insights into the various corporate approaches to design.

Particularly intriguing is his observation that the advent of computer-aided design has made drafting "more like a process of 'composition,' known as 'packaging,' than like traditional drafting." Does this mean that some car designs will or already have begun to look different in kind, just as sculpture has taken on a new look with the advent of the process of assemblage (equivalent to the computer's stock of previously drawn lines, curves, scales, and components to be assembled by the designer)?



BUCKMINSTER FULLER, DYNAMAXION CAR

The impact of the computer on the design process as well as the visual product should be examined.

Norbye never delves deeply into such issues, preferring description to interpretation; yet, if his book is a bit dry, it also is informative. His outline of the evolution of the steel frame from ca. 1900 is helpful to one's understanding of car types; his focus on the role of Edward G. Budd and Joseph Ledwinka in the development of the first all-steel bodies (ca. 1923) is long overdue; his clarification of the role of coachbuilders is also welcome. Where *Automobile and Culture* sparks a nostalgia for the beautiful designs of the past, Norbye makes us yearn to see automobile production attain the state of the art exhibited in his final chapters, such as the GM XP-511, the Ital Design Medusa, the Ford/Ghia prototypes, the Fiat VSS, and the West German student-designed Uni-Car.

Very possibly, the most distinctive aspect of *Automobile and Culture* is its wonderful collection of photographs of cars taken by Henry Wolf. One

cannot easily forget such images as the 1913 Mercer Raceabout, the 1933 Pierce-Arrow Silver Arrow, the 1938 experimental Phantom Corsair, or the 1934 Fiat Balilla Sport. The alluring sensuality of these cars may be equaled by the state of the art illustrated by Norbye, but Norbye's illustrations are all halftones. There is no substitute for superb color photographs except the real thing, and since Mercers and George Berris's early custom jobs can't be found, this book is a marvelous substitute.

* See for example John B. Rae's *The Road and the Car in American Life* (MIT, 1971), James J. Flink's *The Car Culture* (MIT, 1975), and David L. Lewis's *The Automobile and American Culture* (University of Michigan Press, 1981).

Automobile and Culture, Gerald Silk, et al., Abrams, 1984, 319 pp., illus., \$45.00 cloth; \$29.99 paper.

Car Design: Structure and Architecture, Jan P. Norbye, Tab Books, 1984, 372 pp., illus., \$20.50 pb.

David Goines:

THE TYPENCYCLOPEDIA

FRANK J. ROMANO

Well into this century, the printing buyer entrusted the nuts and bolts of typography to a professional who had learned his trade through a long, comprehensive apprenticeship. Thus, the bereaved widow could order 250 Announcements of Demise, giving the printer the names of the parties involved, and would infallibly receive a printed sheet of heavy white paper, 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " \times 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", with a $\frac{5}{32}$ " (no. 2) mourning band, set centered in Engraver's Old English, Cloister Black, or Wedding Text, with an envelope to match.

By the early 1970s, this was no longer the case. Traditional printers and typographers were all but gone. Designers, who previously only selected a face and specified a few things like column width, page dimensions, and general budget, suddenly found themselves in charge of the whole damn' job, with not a clue about how to make it look nice. The happier designs resulted from strict emulation of 525 years of typographic tradition, and the less fortunate were the result of ignorance of those traditions. We were in a whole new ballgame, and the mediums of press type, strike-on type, computer-generated type, phototype, Xerox, and photo-offset created their own aesthetic, not always attractive or effective, but free from the restrictions of hot metal. Where is one to look for help?

Find a need and fill it. Mr. Romano's *TypEncyclopedia* is the latest in Bowker's Graphic Library, the profusion of which gives some clue to the contemporary designer's thirst for information.

Let me begin by revealing, right out front, that I dislike a great many things about this book. I was trained in the old school, in an apprenticeship environment, by rigid, fascistic, au-

thoritarian bastards who shook the hand that shook the hand that shook the hand of Gutenberg Himself. In consequence, I have a certain unshakable respect for tradition. New things worry me a little bit. The title of *TypEncyclopedia*, which makes one word out of two but leaves a capital letter in the middle, makes my teeth itch. I think the design is ugly and an impediment to comprehension. I really hate to see things gratuitously set at an angle, bleeding off the page

return from the grave to blast your soul), Baskerville, Century Textbook, News Italic No. 9, Cheltenham Light Condensed, Stymie Medium, Holland Seminar, Garamond Italic 18, Bem 18, Century Light Italic, News No. 6, Univers 47, and California. This selection is bizarre in the extreme. My advice to those in need of typographic counseling is that which I learned at my mother's knee: "When in doubt, set it in Caslon." You may also use Times New Roman or Bembo.

By the early 1970s traditional printers and typographers were all but gone. Designers, who previously only selected a face and specified a few things, suddenly found themselves in charge of the whole damn' job, with not a clue about how to make it look nice.

or into other parts of the text. The body copy (a term not found in the *TypEncyclopedia*) is set in something strongly resembling Palatino, the official Junior College Textbook Face, which of all typefaces on God's green earth I like the least, except for Helvetica, which the author has selected for the running heads. Palatino, an overworked, trendy, high-contrast, low-legibility, sharp, spiky, Germanic face, is unsuitable for text work; it is marginally acceptable for display work. Its few virtues shyly reveal themselves only when the type is set in hot metal and printed by letterpress. Perhaps a clue to the author's attitude toward text faces can be found in those he lists as suitable for body work: Helios, Souvenir Light, Univers 55, Mallard, Baskerville 18, Oracle, Garamond No. 49, News No. 4, Futura Book, News No. 9, Paladium, Avant Garde Medium Condensed, News Gothic No. 49, English Times, Serif Gothic Regular (set a book in this face and I will

A number of familiar faces are presented in unfamiliar knock-off versions. "Helios" stands in for Helvetica, "Oracle" for Optima, "Paladium" for Palatino, "Mallard" for Melior. Imitations, good or bad, should not be presented without comment. The section "Type Cross-Reference" tells which similar faces have been given different names by various manufacturers. This is useful if a face looks familiar but not quite right, and you want to find the original. The list does not, however, give any clue as to which face is the original.

The book does not discuss the effects of different printing processes on the appearance of type, or which faces reproduce best under what conditions.

The text in the *TypEncyclopedia* is set ragged right, which is fine in poetry and cookbooks, where the text needs to go on single lines, but is an annoying obstruction to legibility when used simply as an aesthetic device or to avoid word spacing. It

becomes particularly pointless when the letters are set too close together (which the author uses to excess and calls "white space reduction"). Minus setting of body work is probably the greatest single crime against the laws of good typography. Frederic W. Goudy has said all we need to hear on this subject: "Anyone who would letter-space lowercase would steal sheep."

To increase my irritation, the book employs grid-system design in its worst form. That is, the rigid and pointless application of a uniform format to each page without regard for the effect this might have on legibility or the appearance of the book as a whole. Recto and verso are identical, rather than mirror image grids, leaving insufficient room for your thumb on the right-hand page. Illustrations run off the page and into the gutter on both recto and verso. The pages are cluttered and frantic, defeating the idea of a grid as an orderly framework.

If the book is badly designed, how far can the author's opinions on related matters be trusted? The Greek alphabet, for example, which significantly precedes the Roman alphabet and has its own, slightly different, sequence, is presented on page 56 in the sequence of the Roman alphabet, as though it were no more than a heap of broken crockery to be tidied up and modernized. Despite a wealth of interesting, correct, and useful information, there are enough crashing errors and eccentricities of this sort to instill a deep suspicion of the author's reliability on any given matter. Footnotes and a bibliography would have helped winnow the wheat from the chaff. The book will perhaps be useful as a supplemental reference when used by an experienced designer or printer; for the novice or student it is a minefield of potential misunderstanding.

The TypEncyclopedia: A User's Guide to Better Typography, Frank J. Romano, R. R. Bowker, 1984, 188 pp., illus., \$24.95 pb.

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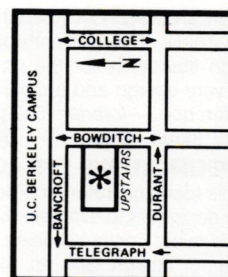
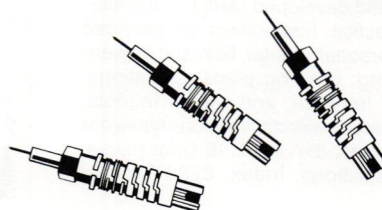
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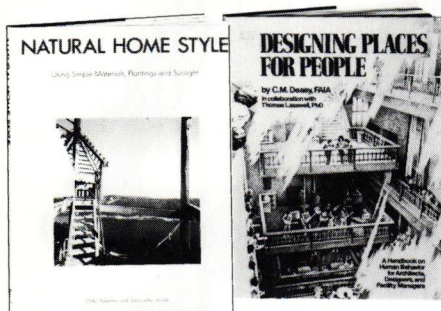
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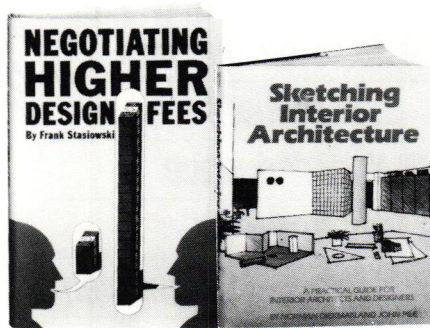
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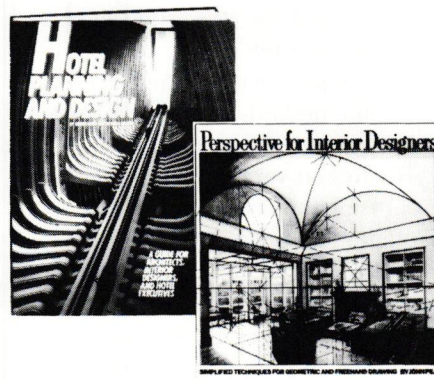
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David Goines:

DESIGNER'S GUIDE TO COLOR

JAMES STOCKTON:

We cannot think what we cannot say.

—Ludwig Wittgenstein,

Tractus Logico-Philosophicus, 1921.

To name a thing is to know it. The very first job that God gave Adam was the naming of the animals. The naming of things creates orderly systems out of disorder.

The dictionary definitions of colors sound like this: "Taupe: A brownish gray that is paler and slightly yellower than chocolate, duller and slightly redder than mouse gray, and duller and slightly redder than castor." I invite you to use this description when speaking with a printer. The only people who take this sort of talk seriously are those who "practice to deceive," like interior decorators and the nice lady who does your colors. The verbal description seems clear, but isn't really useful, and can mean almost anything. An obvious refuge for the charlatan.

The trained eye can clearly perceive millions of distinct colors. There isn't really an adequate language for color, and we find ourselves reduced to cave-man grunts and squeals.

By printing screen tints of four basic colors, the illusion of a wide range of colors can be created. A clearer, if less poetic, taupe recipe would go something like this: "30 percent yellow, 20 percent magenta, 10 percent cyan and 30 percent black." In reality, it is difficult to control printed screens, which are made of small dots, to tolerances of less than 7 percent, and 17 percent is considered acceptable. Although beyond the pale of good printing, a gain of 25 percent is often seen in cheap four-color work on uncoated stock. To keep the dot crisp, and as close as possible

to the ideal original, the printed thickness of the ink is kept within strict limits. Although greater density yields an increase in saturation, it also creates an unwelcome increase in the size and shape of the dot. In addition, if a first pass of ink is too thick, succeeding colors will not adhere properly, and the final printed piece will look muddy and weak. Thus the number of colors attainable by four-color process is not actually infinite, but is more on the order of two hundred thousand colors using screens

There isn't really an adequate language for color, and we find ourselves reduced to cave-man grunts and squeals.

of 5 percent increments. This is a reasonable fraction of the perceptible colors and is enough to satisfy anybody.

In his book *Designer's Guide to Color*, James Stockton has made a delightful stab at the language of color using 90 basic screened colors, each combined in ten or twenty color schemes, yielding 1,134 combinations. Each color is broken down by 10 percent tints, and can be approximately reproduced by any good printer. The quality of printing is comfortably within the limits of good commercial standards, which gives the viewer a clear idea of what can be expected from following these formulas.

The Pantone Matching System has been around for a long time, and provides a language of five hundred colors based on mixtures of basic colors of known values. It is limited and inaccurate, but better than nothing. Almost everyone in the graphic arts uses it. A major complaint against the PMS system is that the printed

result often does not match the swatch in the sample book. The exotic printing process used for the samples, the rapid deterioration of the colors, and the lack of precision in mixing from the formulas conspire to disappoint most designers, most of the time. The usefulness of the *Designer's Guide to Color* would be greatly increased if future editions were to clearly relate its 90 basic colors to existing PMS colors. When using this book in specifying printed tints, the designer is probably going to have to do this anyway, so Mr. Stockton can save his audience a bit of trouble by doing it for them.

The illustrations are reproduced in interesting two- and three-color combinations that are stimulating to the eye and will assist the designer in pursuit of new ideas. The text discusses the differences in printing and inks that can be expected from printer to printer, and gives useful clues to help the user avoid the usual snares and pitfalls.

Since the text is secondary to the illustrations, I will refrain from blowing my stack about the truly pitiable, illegible typography. Wrestling with a page of inadequately leaded Stymie Light, letterspaced too tight and justified ragged right, makes this reviewer break out in a bad mood. Fortunately, the text is brief, entertaining, well written, useful, and can be taken in small doses. The typography does no harm to the meat of the book, which is page after page of stimulating color combinations, each with a key to effective printed reproduction.

Designer's Guide to Color, James Stockton, Chronicle Books, 1984, 135 pp., illus., \$9.95 pb.

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Introduction by Jaquelin Robertson. In November 1982, an extraordinary architectural conference was held at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. Twenty-five leading architects participated, including Johnson and Burgee, Ungers, Moneo, Meier, Rudolph, Ito, Roche, Graves and Aymonino. Each presented a previously unpublished project for evaluation by his colleagues. "The intensity and deep involvement of the participants make the book read almost like a play. The result is vital to everyone concerned with the quality of the built environment."—*Architectural Record*. 224 pages. 9" x 13" 100 illustrations. Paperback: \$25.00

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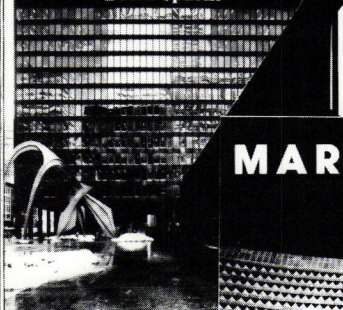
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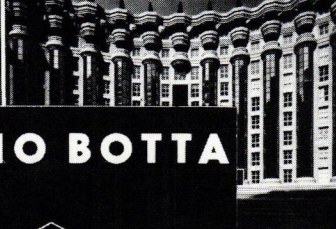
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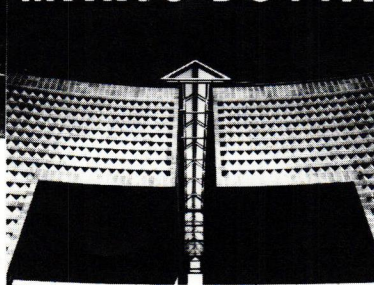


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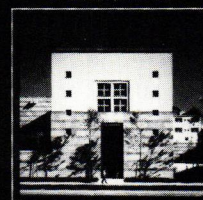
MARIO BOTTA



James Stirling

Buildings and Projects
James Stirling, Michael Wilford and Associates

Introduction by Colin Rowe



RIZZOLI

597 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017

John Woodbridge:

LEGACY OF MINNEAPOLIS

JOHN R. BORCHERT, et.al.

CENTER CITY PROFILE

DESIGN QUARTERLY #125

Minneapolis is in many ways the model of a middle-sized U.S. city: clean, cultured, well-governed, with an enlightened view of its past, present and future. Of course, many loyal Minneapolitans would take issue with parts of that statement, and in fact the centerfold of *Design Quarterly* #125, with its expanse of parking lots and discordant towers in the background looks pretty much like your typical ugly U.S. city of today. But fortunately there is more to Minneapolis than that, and a significant part of it is a built environment that adds up to more than the sum of its parts.

Legacy of Minneapolis is a laudable attempt to document that built environment, and present it to the city's inhabitants in terms that will encourage them to take an active interest in its preservation and future. It is not an inventory like San Francisco's *Splendid Survivors* (California Living, 1979),* but rather a combination of history and social-environmental survey that grew out of a city-commissioned study of architectural resources. "This book is about buildings and districts in Minneapolis that merit preservation, and why. But we want to examine preservation in the larger context of the building, maintenance and recycling of the city, and the continuing stream of individuals who have passed across the stage," say the authors. A tall order, if an eminently praiseworthy one, and therein lies the difficulty.

The book starts off well enough with a history of urban development:



CROWELL BUILDING, MINNEAPOLIS, CIRCA 1888. (PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID GEBHARD)

"Legacy of the Working City" gives a clear picture of why Minneapolis was built, what fueled its development, and how it grew. The next chapter, "Legacy of the Neighborhoods," is less coherent, especially for an outsider, because it does not deal with the neighborhoods on an individual basis but rather as a generalized phenomenon of residential growth. It is here that the book's problem becomes clear: It speaks with a committee voice addressing an amorphous audience of "the public." It would have been far more informative to me, a frequent and enthusiastic visitor, and I think to an interested citizen to learn about the neighborhoods and their architecture in as much individual detail as time and space permitted. After all, there was a block-by-block survey on which the book was based. I want to know more of the history behind David Gebhard's tantalizing and quirky photographs.

"Legacy of Design," which follows "Neighborhoods," is useful but frus-

trating in that it is neither a detailed architectural history for the scholar nor a lively primer on styles for the layman—again the problem of audience identification. The final chapter, "Preservation and Change," is equally fuzzy in direction, just where I would expect a clear call to arms.

Admittedly, these are complex issues, and I would be the first to decry a simplistic approach. But I find myself saying, "Look, for crying out loud! You've got a wonderful, vibrant livable city, and what you need to do is make people excited and enthusiastic enough about it to take good—and better—care of it." This book comes across rather colorless—saying, "Here it is folks, a nice place with some sort of interesting history, a few pleasant old buildings, and some problems of growth and change, like anywhere else." Maybe because I am such an avid sightseer, I would have preferred a survey catalog introduced by a brief history, like *Splendid Survivors*. I really think it would be a

more useful document as well. Certainly *Survivors* has been invaluable in San Francisco. Alas, I don't quite see *Legacy of Minneapolis* having such an abiding value, although I very much hope it does.

Design Quarterly #125 is one of a series put out by Mildred Friedman at the Walker Art Center—probably the best museum magazine in the country. This issue is about recent building in downtown Minneapolis, in the form of a symposium of visiting critics. It starts out with an “inspirational piece” by Rem Koolhaas on skyscraper design, focusing on Leonidov's scheme for a Ministry of Heavy Industry in post-revolutionary Russia and on Rockefeller Center as a multi-themed design. Then the panelists, Adele Chatfield-Taylor, Michael Dennis, Joseph Giovannini, Martin Krieger, Robert Maguire, and Jacquelin Robertson take over, looking at four recent major high-rise projects in Minneapolis. As is usual in such public debates, they tend to be too polite to each other and to the buildings, but some telling points are made, particularly about how contemporary buildings do or do not “meet the street.”

As always with *Design Quarterly*, the graphics are exceptional. The photographs are if anything more eloquent than the panelists on the failures of late 20th-century architecture as urban design. What becomes glaringly clear in them is how poor we are, even with the help of a strongly urban-design-oriented City Planning Department like that of Minneapolis, at making our buildings relate to each other and to people.

*Now available from San Francisco Heritage.

Legacy of Minneapolis, Preservation Amid Change, John R. Borchert, David Gebhard, David Lanegran and Judith A. Martin, Voyager Press, 1983, 195 pp., illus., \$14.95.

City Center Profile, Mildred S. Friedman, editor, *Design Quarterly* #125, Walker Art Center, 1984, 32 pp., illus., \$8.00 pb.

K. Michael Hays:

URBANISM

LIVING IN THE CITY

Comparison of two recent journals on urban architecture, *Architectural Design's* Profile 51, *Urbanism*, and *Lotus International* 41: *Living in the City*, involves us in discussion of a dichotomy between the “traditional” and the “modern” conceptions of the city that has something of a stranglehold on critics and architects today. The *AD* tends toward the position that traditional forms and the immediate context—however vaguely defined—together provide the only “authoritative basis for design,” while *Lotus* documents a few projects that reveal the inadequacy of this dichotomy to explain—or generate design for—the contemporary city; the projects themselves suggest that such previously rejected conditions as fragmentation and heterogeneity may have a positive value.

The common benchmark against which *Urbanism* and *Lotus International* 41 align their discussions of current urban architecture is the Athens Charter, which emerged from the Fourth Congress of CIAM, that celebrated voyage between Marseilles and Athens in 1933 during which issues of the “functional city” were addressed. The feature of the Charter (or better, of the syndrome it promoted) attacked once again here is what might be called its inductivist functionalism. The Charter distinguishes among different functional aspects of the city, which is not in itself a problem. The problem is that the categories which constitute this functional analysis came to be taken as the physical components that should make up the new city. The tenet commonly advanced in defense of modern urbanism asserts that a careful description of the programmatic intent of any plan and a systematic adherence to that program in the design process should result in

a direct transposition of functional demands into built form. A sufficiently minute description of the requisite functions would therefore allow a formal solution of singular correctness, free from the mediating and arbitrary dialectic of alternative formal organizations. In short, a way of analyzing the city became the city itself. Function was seen as the cause and content of architectural form, an intrinsic architectural and social value that could be made manifest in architectural form. This presumed straightforward correlation between form and content is what characterizes inductivist functionalism.

An alternative conception of the city—proposed by Barry Maitland and David Gosling, editors of *Urbanism*—invokes a polemical document pitted against the Athens Charter, the 1978 publication of the Archives d'Architecture Moderne, *Rational Architecture* (in particular Anthony Vidler's essay, “The Third Typology”). In an attempt to formulate a theoretical ground against which to set their selection of recent urban projects (most published here for the first time) the editors construe Vidler's essay (incorrectly I think) as an argument for the legitimizing authority of traditional, typological configurations derived from an analysis of the city before Modernism. However encouraged we are by an attempted return to traditional urban values embodied in elements like streets, blocks, courtyards, and squares, we must nevertheless feel some uneasiness with this by now fashionable palliative for our contemporary city. Our uneasiness arises from two sources. The first is the effort to provide a *restored authority*—a means by which new ideas, values, and forms achieve a hegemony analogous to, but strictly outside of, any truly rooted building culture by surreptitiously reproducing the closed and tightly-knit hierarchies and formal configurations of past cultures. The second is the fact that this effort encloses architecture within the same general definition as the func-

tionalist program it seeks to criticize. For even if the Modernists' deterministic bond between form and function is broken by an attention to formal types, the expectation of some direct, even deterministic correlation of form and ideological content is nevertheless retained in the presumption of the inherent value of configurations produced by past cultures less fragmented, discontinuous, and contradictory than our own. There is at least the tacitly held belief that certain privileged forms are self-evident; and, moreover, that they will represent, support, and promote the prescribed ideological conditions of unity, continuity, and harmony. Once again, a way of analyzing the city—this time typological rather than functional—has been misunderstood as the way to make the city. Once again, constructs derived from an analysis of contingencies have been hypostatized as formal absolutes.

Given the theoretical orientation of its editors, it is not surprising to find in this *A.D.* Profile projects by Robert and Leon Krier, by the students of the Royal College of Art and the Polytechnic of Central London, and by the Archives d'Architecture Moderne. Of course, some of the projects, like those of Bruno Minardi and O. M. Ungers, refuse to be constrained by the explications of the editors. Others fail to rise to their descriptions. It is disappointing to find two naively literal, "decayed" projects by SITE referred to by Maitland as "essentially a representation of history." A more pleasant surprise is a project by Richard Rogers and Partners to restore the banks of the Arno to pedestrian use, though our excitement comes more from the thought of implementation than from the drawings presented here. Especially frustrating is the presentation of Walker and Barker's Rotterdam project; the plans at 1 cm = 400 m are quite impossible to read. And without photographs of the model, Emilio Ambasz's project for Houston Center Plaza loses

its magic.

Lotus International 41 begins with Bernard Huet's essay, "The City as Dwelling Space: Alternative to the Charter of Athens," but the alternatives presented in this, the first of a new series of *Lotuses*, seem less concerned to redress the ruptures of Modernism with attempts to achieve formal unity and historical continuity than they are to explore an architecture that can accommodate discontinuity, fragmentation, and heterogeneity. Rather than reaffirm the authority of existing contextual or past historical systems, Pierluigi Nicolin suggests that "perhaps we would do well to doubt the 'reality' of the city in which we work." This need to doubt may be sponsored by the particularly difficult contexts (sociopolitical and physical) of Berlin and suburban Paris in which the projects selected are located, contexts that refuse easy analysis into unambiguous categories. The completed projects for the Internationale Bauausstellung-Berlin by Alvaro Siza and for the Place d'Italie in Paris by Christian de Portzamparc, for example, most especially seem to recognize that the distinction between planned urban centers and the periphery of disrespectful objects can no longer be easily maintained. Siza's building, which should be seen as part of his overall Kreuzberg project (published in *Lotus 32*) is invested with an intensity that could only come from the conscious syncretism of non-corroborating tendencies—fragmentation into discrete objects versus geometrical continuity; an inversion of the hierarchy of use between the street and the interior of the block versus the continuity of property lines, walls, and fences; in general, the struggle to make whole the city that forever refuses reduction to a unity. In this project, well-documented and superbly photographed by Giovanni Chiaramonte, old dichotomies have lost their hold.

Antoine Grumbach, in "The Art of Completing the City," sharply and

passionately criticizes the "empty eloquence of classical composition, which became perversion and mortification of social habitation," as well as an uncritical respect for the context.

The project which, it is claimed, is inserted into context without violence is in fact an act of cultural barbarity and this must be confessed without shame. The bigots and hypocrites of protection and conservation cloak themselves in so-called respect for the surroundings so as to avoid seeing, short-sighted as they are, certain buildings, particular structures. But, for me, nothing must be rejected—a supporting rod, a dirty factory, a garage, shacks, and rampant posters, such is the material one will have to work with.

Grumbach's Paris projects and O. M. Ungers's Berlin Lutzowplatz housing both work with juxtapositions of images of "high" and "low" culture, and Grumbach's works especially with dissonance and fragmentation as positive conditions.

The purposeful tolerance, even pursuit, of fragmentation, discontinuity, and incommensurability; the sensitivity to differences, to the gaps between and fringes around the false normality of unopposed conventions; and the concomitant challenge to the architectural canons of the European capitals and to the status quo of the existing context—these sensibilities constitute a criticism of received views of urban architecture that is only beginning to emerge. One hopes that the critical enterprise can be sustained—by architects and by the publications that record their activities.

Urbanism, David Gosling and Barry Maitland, editors, *Architectural Design* Profile number 51, distributed by St. Martin's Press, 1984, 88 pp., illus., \$14.95 pb.

Lotus International 41; Living in the City: Paris and Berlin, Pierluigi Nicolin, editor, distributed by Rizzoli, 1984, 130 pp., illus., \$20.00.

Jack Schafer:

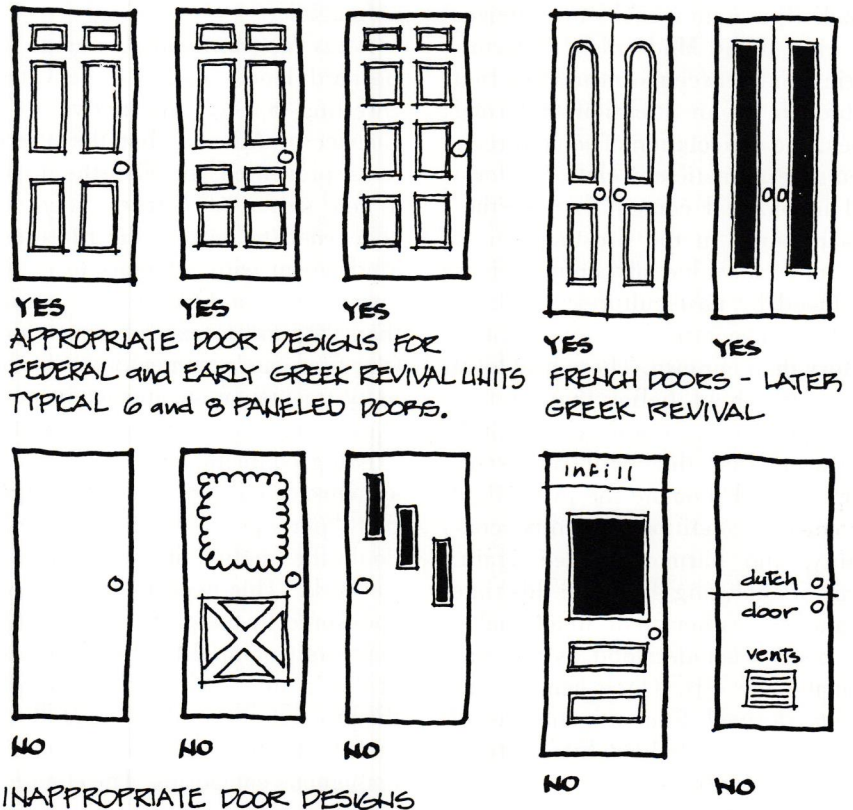
HOW TO MAKE CITIES LIVEABLE

GARY O. ROBINETTE, editor

One should be wary of books that start out by proclaiming what they are not; invariably the book will turn out to be precisely what it has disclaimed. This book is no exception. The editor explains in the preface that it is not "about townhouses, architectural styles, façades, window openings, environmental or site design ... or even about Baltimore," and then proceeds in the text to discuss townhouses, architectural styles, façades, window openings, and the like in two Baltimore neighborhoods.

The book is a composite text of two earlier reports prepared by the staff of Land Design/Research, Inc., of Columbia, Maryland. The initial studies, prepared for public and private entities, focused on two inner-city Baltimore neighborhoods, Otterbein and Barre Circle, and provided planning and design guidelines related to rehabilitation and preservation of existing housing units in these areas. The new book is an attempt to shuffle the parts of the two earlier texts into one, which, due to the similarity of housing types in the two neighborhoods, is not as problematic as it might sound.

The principal error is the belief that the simple presentation of a product (the contents of the initial reports) will inevitably lead to an understanding of the process through which it was created. If this were true, life would certainly be a lot easier. To be truly helpful the text needs to provide some explanation of the local significance of the various elements addressed by the design guidelines. It also should provide some insights on how to identify these elements in other locations and situations. The book provides none, however,



FROM ROBINETTE, *HOW TO MAKE CITIES LIVEABLE*

and the reader is left to surmise alone the relative importance of, say, door or fence designs in this Baltimore neighborhood—not to mention his own neighborhood in Fond du Lac or Harrisburg.

The book needs to get outside of itself to explain its contents and methods, which could easily have been done by adding instructive sidebars or highlighted paragraphs to the existing texts. Without this perspective, the book will be dismissed by professionals as being too site-specific and not applicable to rehabilitation and restoration projects in cities with different housing types. If well-meaning nonprofessionals apply the guidelines presented in this volume too literally to the urban housing stock across the nation, we can expect the inevitable Frankenstein results.

How to Make Cities Liveable, Gary O. Robinette, editor, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 153 pp., illus., \$27.50.

John M. Woodbridge: WASHINGTON D.C. ACCESS

RICHARD SAUL WURMAN

This is the fourth of Richard Saul Wurman's *Access* guides to major U.S. cities. With the first, *L.A. Access* (1982), he established a formula based on a breezy, "in-the-know" style, colorful graphics, and many Michelin-inspired ideas on format that make the guides immediately appealing. Comprehending architecture and history, as well as hotels, restaurants, and shopping, they will probably out-sell their rivals; yet the quick, "inside" look implied by the style and format is born out by closer inspection. As a fellow guidebook author, I find problems with *D.C. Access*.

The guide's colors turn me green, red—even purple—with envy, as I have never been able to afford even

two, but their use in maps and to set off categories (blue for Museums and Architecture, green for Parks and Open Space, red for Restaurants and Nightlife) does not always clarify things for the user. The homogenization of all categories into a more or less geographical sequence demands a good cross-referenced index, which unfortunately does not exist. If I want to find restaurants in the "Georgetown, Northwest" section, I am forced to leaf through all the pages looking for red entries. The ten pages lavished on maps of the Chesapeake Bay, while handsome, are largely useless, an extravagant waste in a 168-page guide covering not only Washington but Baltimore and the surrounding area. The architectural entries are generally well chosen and captioned, but there is a tendency to play current favorites, and some glaring omissions, such as Latrobe's Baltimore Cathedral, one of the great monuments of American architecture. Crediting SOM's Dion Building to the office's senior Washington partner, David Childs, rather than to the office is not good editorial practice, and leaving out George Patton, the landscape architect of Venturi, Rauch, and Scott-Brown's Western Plaza, seems unfair. Next door, M. Paul Friedburg's far more popular Pershing Park goes unmentioned.

I have mixed feelings about mixing the entries for all categories. I would like to make a plea (which, given the success of the series, will probably go unheeded) that Wurman take a critical look at all aspects of the *Access* guides—editing, graphics, especially the use of color—to make a good thing better. What we have now are guides that look better than they work; they could look and work equally well.

Washington D.C. *Access: The Capital Guide to the Capital City*, Richard Saul Wurman, Access Press, 1984, 167 pp., illus., \$9.95 pb.

David Lewis:

LIFE AND ARCHITECTURE IN PITTSBURGH

JAMES D. VAN TRUMP

The national image of Pittsburgh is not inaccurate. It is a tough city, for generations the powerhouse of American industry. Its three broad rivers, winding between steep valleys, are still lined with the black steel mills whose chimneys poured forth a potpourri of sulfurous pollution. This was the "hell with the lid off" to which immigrants were drawn in droves in the second half of the 19th century. They clustered by language and religion, giving each of the small mill towns a predominant nationality—Russian, Polish, Italian, Serb, German. Metropolitan Pittsburgh still has over 150 separate political jurisdictions.

At the other end of the social scale, Pittsburgh became a city of enormous wealth, producing the 19th-century industrial and financial fortunes of Westinghouse, Carnegie, Mellon, and Frick. In the 20th century, the multinationals have prevailed, and U.S. Steel, Gulf, Alcoa, Westinghouse, Pittsburgh Plate Glass, Dravo, North American Rockwell, and Koppers are part of a long list that shows Pittsburgh to have the third largest concentration of Fortune 500 corporations in the nation. And they have all built buildings.

James Van Trump's collection of writings, spanning thirty years of observation, covers both the proletarian and capitalist aspects of the city's architecture. He is a local, non-academic historian—the best of the breed—from whose special perspective the city resembles an extended family of builders and people; his brief pieces are like letters home, full of gossip, musing, and the insights of intimacy. His achievement has been to make the city sensitive to its

heritage, to its tree-shaded neighborhoods and wide porches, to its cathedrals and parish churches, to the 19th century romanesque of its wealthy patrons and its mill town frame houses. His work is a passionate reminder of Pittsburgh's quality of life at a time when, due to the demise of the steel industry, the city is transforming its 19th-century industrial base into a 21st-century hub of technology and banking. Van Trump takes everyone to task—not just the politicians, planners, developers, architects, and bankers—for the defacing or demolition of historic buildings. Some of the pieces done for radio and television are delightfully breezy, while others are careful building descriptions; every word bears his love and engagement with his native city. Take for example the discussion of sculpted lions by Richardson, Burnham, Isaac Hobbs, and other 19th-century architects:

The streets of Pittsburgh . . . are guarded and attended by beasts, some fabulous, some real. They do not impede our journeys, nor do they hazard our peace; we can neither hunt nor harry them, and they are food only for contemplation or thought. We cannot, however, avoid them where, in stone or metal, wonderfully or indifferently formed by the sculptor's hand, they are uplifted in crowded public places and solemnly displayed in parks.

Life and Architecture in Pittsburgh, second edition, James D. Van Trump, Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, 1985, 396 pp., illus., \$12.95 pb.



New

The Critical Edge

Controversy in Recent American Architecture
edited by Tod A. Marder

The Critical Edge identifies and presents case histories of the 12 most talked about buildings of our times. No other buildings of this era have so aroused the public, so divided the profession, and so stimulated the press as those that are discussed here. Introductory essays are by Tod A. Marder, Robert Brueggemann, and Martin Filler. Copublished with The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum of Rutgers University.
9 x 12 200 pp. 140 illus., 12 in color \$25.00

New

Photography and Architecture: 1839–1939

Richard Pare

Introduction by Phyllis Lambert

A study of world architecture as seen through the eyes of ninety great masters of the camera, this magnificently produced book includes some of the earliest and finest photographs of architectural subjects. "It is an extraordinary assemblage . . . the images here are uniformly impressive—there is literally not a single photograph that is not of serious interest, and there are many that are classic."
—Paul Goldberger

Originally published by The Canadian Centre for Architecture with Callaway Editions, now distributed by The MIT Press.

12 x 9 3/4 282 pp. 148 full page tripletone photographs with 4 panoramic 3-page foldouts \$50.00



New

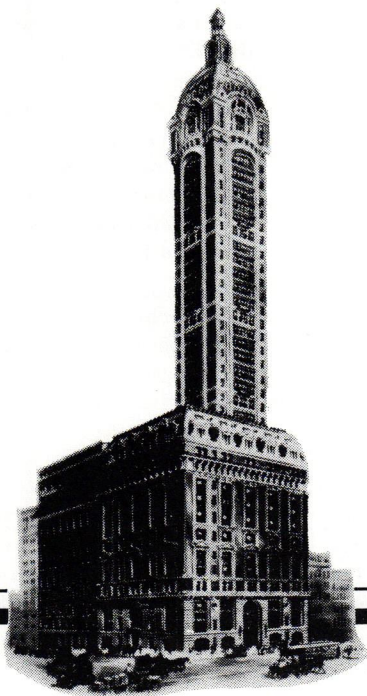
The Architectural History Foundation
American Monograph Series

Ernest Flagg

Beaux-Arts Architect and Urban Reformer
Mardges Bacon

Architect of the United States Naval Academy, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Scribner Building, and model tenement houses, Ernest Flagg (1857–1947) advanced the cause of classicism while demonstrating a deep concern for architecture's social responsibility. This study of one of the most innovative practitioners of the Beaux-Arts Movement in America covers Flagg's early training and Beaux-Arts works, his town and country houses, his commercial and utilitarian buildings, the Singer Tower (which established a new height record while setting a precedent for New York City skyscraper restrictions in scale and density), urban housing reform, and his small houses of modular design.

7 x 10 400 pp. 150 illus. \$40.00



The MIT Press

28 Carleton Street, Cambridge, MA 02142

William Lake Douglas:

CLASSIC GARDEN DESIGN

ROSEMARY VEREY

THE AMERICAN WOMAN'S GARDEN

ROSEMARY VEREY
and ELLEN SAMUELS

Rosemary Verey follows in the English tradition of William Robinson, Gertrude Jekyll, and Vita Sackville-West, writing books that satisfy both the active gardener and the armchair enthusiast. She is known to most garden lovers for her recent books, *The Englishwoman's Garden*, *The Englishman's Garden*, and *The Scented Garden*. Of her latest offerings, the first, *Classic Garden Design*, is subtitled, "How to Adapt and Recreate Garden Features of the Past," and might initially appear to be a how to book. Adequate instruction is certainly given on topics such as how to design knot gardens, clip topiaries, and lay out herb gardens. Reinforced with documentation from sources of the 17th to the 19th century, each chapter is an essay on its subject. A reading list is provided for the curious (although, in an unfortunate oversight, the author does not mention the historical sources now available in Garland's monumental English Landscape Garden series). Both plant selections and construction methods have been included, and there are copious illustrations in both black and white and color, though a few are too small to be of much value.

The American Woman's Garden, co-authored with Ellen Samuels, is more of a "garden-club" person's book. Illustrated with color photographs in a large coffee-table format, it provides first-person accounts of the design and origin of some thirty gardens.



"RED-STEMMED DOGWOOD ADDS SUBTLE COLOR TO THE WINTER LANDSCAPE WHILE FORMING A BARRICADE AGAINST THE AGGRESSIVE LYTHRUM."

The examples are drawn heavily from the ranks of those who used landscape architects and could afford continued maintenance. That some of the gardens were important to the careers of their designers (Eulalie Wagner's in Washington state, by Thomas Church, and Peggy Rockefeller's in Maine, by Beatrix Farrand) is a fact lost in the text. It is ironic that in a book about women's gardens nothing substantial is said about women in the profession of landscape architecture, since many of the famous landscape architects of the early 20th century were women: Beatrix Farrand, Ellen Shipman, Marian Coffin, Francis Yoch, Marjorie Sewell Cautley, and Annette Hoyt Flanders. Most of their clients were women as well. Despite this lost opportunity, the book provides a unique picture of the gardens and how they

developed. The descriptions are personal and revealing in a charming way, without pretension or ostentation. Landscape architects will be disappointed, however, by the absence of garden plans; *Herb Garden Design* (University Press of New England, 1984) is an example of the simplicity and artistry with which these plans can be drawn. These complaints, however, will not dampen the enthusiasm of those for whom this book was written. And it will whet the appetite of the garden historian with its hints of the work to be done in documenting the 20th-century American garden.

Classic Garden Design, Rosemary Verey, Congdon & Weed, 1984, 160 pp., illus., \$24.95.

The American Woman's Garden, Rosemary Verey and Ellen Samuels, Little Brown, 1984, 191 pp., illus., \$29.95.

Barbara Meacham:

THE GARDEN BOOK

JOHN BROOKES

The making of a garden is driven by intuition, feeling, intellect, and a compulsion for order. Gardening itself is an inexplicably gratifying act, whose result may represent both the creator and the creator's vision of paradise. John Brookes's *The Garden Book* addresses what goes into the making of a "place," but is best on the act of gardening itself. The book presents an encyclopedic survey of garden features and plans for small spaces, lushly illustrated throughout, and predictably ordered around site considerations, space planning, typical plans, construction, plants, and maintenance. The most outstanding feature is the section on planting, where the author's erudition leads to lively editorializing on the species; it is complemented with excellent drawn and photographed plant illustrations.

Design professionals will be intrigued with the 50-page section of comparative garden plans, in which each realized plan is shown with a photograph and accompanied by two isometric views of alternative schemes for the same place. Cumulatively this collection shows the way that plants form space, the means for manipulating mass and void, and the variety that is possible. Designers, however, will probably find that the even-handed treatment of solutions lacks decisiveness: all three are presented as inevitably subliminal, like three recipes for chocolate cake. Each is functional, practical, and focused, but matters of portrait-making, of wit and caprice, of intellectual content, are hushed. The implication is that the reader will be equally satisfied in any case since his real ambition is to garden, not to create a place of meaning and spirit.

Traditionally gardens have been built on the idea of contrast—art imposed on wilderness. Now that the man-made order threatens to efface the wild, the vegetable itself assumes

more importance than the place it grows in. The plants take on more meaning than the plan, which loses its potential to represent something. The result is usually a ferociously landscaped plot. Brookes, who advocates restraint, order, and the study of successful garden compositions, is a welcome antidote. The drawback to his book is that of the whole genre—it instructs the reader how to do something well he will presumably only do once. Such books attempt to teach the art of landscape by shrinking it, making it manageable but no longer artful. When an individual sets out to create a garden for himself, fancy ordered by judgment is perhaps the only advice not likely to interfere with the intuition and feeling that will make the garden true. Brookes is quite successful in getting us into the act, without reminding us of the garden's role as a desideratum.

The Garden Book, John Brookes, Crown, 1984, 288 pp., illus., \$22.50.

Richard Ingersoll:

GARDENS & GARDENERS

ELIZABETH SEAGER

Part of the Small Oxford Books series, *Gardens and Gardeners* is a lilliputian-sized offering that seems best suited for the bedtime reading of passionate gardeners after a hard day tilling the soil. It is a collection of over one hundred literary excerpts about the joys of horticulture and the appreciation of gardens. Ms. Seager has plucked her unfamiliar quotations from a variety of sources, including a few antique works, like Genesis and Pliny the Younger, and one or two obscure foreigners, such as Czech playwright

Karel Capek. The lion's share, however, have been drawn from the English literary lions—Wordsworth, Trollope, Eliot, and Dickens of the 19th century, and the Sitwells, Vita Sackville-West, P. G. Wodehouse, and George Orwell of the 20th. Some of the most amusing comments come from the transplanted English lady, Countess von Arnim, who in 1898 wished intensely to be a man so that she could do all the garden work herself, because "it is dull work giving orders and trying to describe the bright visions of one's brain to a person who has no visions and no brain, and who thinks a yellow bed should be calceolarias edged with blue." The readings are never longer than a page and are mostly devoted to the contemplative, experiential, and literary aspects of gardening. The enthusiastic and mor-

alistic epigrams on the virtues of gardening, sanctioned in a particularly nationalistic way in Rudyard Kipling's "Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made / By singing 'Oh how beautiful' and sitting in the shade," are tempered with a good dose of satirical and cynical views on gardening. Before the inspirational celebration of gardening advances too far, Colin Wilson is allowed to remind us: "The state of mind of the confirmed gardener seems to me as reprehensible as that of the confirmed alcoholic. Both have capitulated to the world. Both have become lotus eaters and drifters."

Gardens & Gardeners, compiled by Elizabeth Seager, Oxford University Press, 1984, 112 pp., illus., \$9.95.

Elizabeth Meyer:

THE YEARBOOK OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

RICHARD AUSTIN, editor

The landscape architecture profession has few periodicals to communicate contemporary research and design in the field to other design professionals and the lay public. *The Yearbook of Landscape Architecture*—an annual publication dedicated to a specific theme or topic—has a format suited to present theoretical essays and specific case studies in greater depth than *Landscape Architecture* magazine and to a broader audience than the *Landscape Architecture Journal*.

"Private Spaces in the Landscape" is the theme of the second volume in the series. The essays, by practitioners and professors of landscape architecture, community development, psychology and architecture, are organized into "Theories and Philosophies" and "Implementation." While the main vehicle for discussing private space in both chapters is the residential garden or neighborhood, several attempts are made to define privacy relative to other landscape typologies, including the American hotel, the corporate park, the urban plaza, and the pedestrian walk.

In the preface, coordinating editor Richard Austin does not succeed in either satisfactorily defining privacy nor in explaining why it is timely, nor in placing these essays in a broader cultural context. He offers the yearbook only as "food for thought."

The vagueness of the preface is all the more curious given the presence of a unifying idea in the articles themselves, the theme of creating privacy through enclosure. The prototype for the contemporary private enclosures discussed in the *Yearbook* is the traditional walled garden. Yet only one essay discusses the significance of

this model, Pinfold's "The Solitary Garden: The Source of Barragán's Imaginings." There, Barragán's house and garden compositions are placed within the context of both the traditional Mexican walled garden and the contemporary "imported" open plan. Barragán created innovative, memorable houses and gardens by adapting contemporary ideas to local custom. He understood the cultural meaning of enclosure and the need for solitude and privacy. Most 20th-century designers were not so sensitive to these needs; the model of the walled garden is a fitting late 20th-century response to modern architecture's interpretation of the landscape as an open, undifferentiated space.

The most provocative and enlightening of the 16 articles explores cultural references that are literary as well as formal. "Within Walls Without Walls," by Suzanne Turner, an associate professor in landscape architecture at LSU, should be the first in the yearbook. Turner alone defines "privacy" beyond the limits of the walled garden, acknowledging that privacy is not only physical but existential and perceptual. She surveys the literature of behavioral psychology, philosophy, and history for observations on privacy in "modern urban society." Particularly noteworthy is the segment on the role of literary images of gardens as design informants, illustrated through passages from D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The powerful imagery with which the characters' emotions imbue the setting is as much a matter of private landscape context as of actual surroundings.

If society's images of landscape can be determined by literature, memory and association, the dilemma presented in Lane Marshall's "The Shrinking American Dream" is a serious one indeed. Marshall defines an economic future that will preclude the traditional "single family house," the suburban ideal. In this scenario, the private residential garden, while smaller, will be more intensively used. Higher

densities will then be required in both undeveloped and previously developed areas. The garden as integral living space and part of the house is then applied to a timely scenario—the infill of existing suburban neighborhoods.

Gene Paul Herbert's entry in "The 7th International Design Competition for the Misawa Homes Institute" offers a residential prototype, based on the traditional Japanese house garden, that is hierarchically structured around exterior spaces: enclosed gardens, private streets, and play areas. It is a provocative counterpoint to Marshall's solution to increased residential densities, an innovative approach that applies existing knowledge to a new situation.

Half the authors define privacy in nonresidential terms, relative to the hotel, the national park, the urban space, the corporate park, the pedestrian path. Their explorations of privacy as a relative state—outside the walled garden—continue the traditions established by Chermayeff's *Community and Privacy* (Anchor, 1965), Hall's *The Hidden Dimension* (Doubleday, 1966), and, more recently, the studies of Claire Cooper Marcus. In "Private Spaces for Public Access—The Vernacular Landscape of the American Hotel," Betsy Boehm relates the evolution of the hotel from a place of private respite along the road to a destination in and of itself. The modifications to the hotel's site plan over time reflect changing cultural attitudes toward travel, transportation improvements, and privacy. Tourism and travel are also central to Joseph Volpe's case study, "Private Spaces in Public Places: The Path System and Gardens of Mount Cook Village." Despite an initial gratuitous reference to "complexity and contradiction at Mount Cook Village," this article illustrates the impact of clear spatial articulation between public and private spaces. The path system developed in the national park visitor center is more than the two-dimensional layout of walks between existing buildings; its three-

dimensional section defines the edge of the public domain as well as the extent of the residential gardens beyond. The path structures the public and private spaces with playful and meaningful environmental sculpture.

Privacy in the corporate or urban landscape is addressed in case studies of "The Boeing Linear Park," "The Campbell-Taggart Courtyard," "The Xeriscape Garden," and "The Duncan Plaza Aviary." While these four may illustrate perfectly acceptable design solutions, they do not describe innovative answers to contemporary problems of private space as do Herbert, Marshall, or Volpe.

The Yearbook of Landscape Architecture could be a timely, substantive compendium of professional accomplishments if the topic chosen were of substance, the contributions significant, and the text and graphics keyed to a specific audience. The landscape architecture profession needs this *Yearbook* and should support the editor's requests for contributions. Three-quarters of this year's articles come from the four institutions represented by the four editors, hardly a fair sampling of any profession. What is a fair reflection of the profession today is the *Yearbook's* lack of conviction and direction. One must disagree with the editor's premise that answers cannot be provided, that definitions are elusive because "the artistic ingression of the landscape architect is a creative impulse that can only come from within." Design, while creative, is a conscious, rational pursuit based on principles and theories. The aimless musings of this book do little to dispel the image of the landscape architect as more technician than theoretician.

The Yearbook of Landscape Architecture: Private Spaces in the Landscape, Richard L. Austin, coordinating editor, Thomas R. Dunbar, Lane L. Marshall, Albert Rutledge and Frederick R. Steiner, editors, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 208 pp., illus., \$30.50.

James R. King:

WATER CONSERVATION

GARY O. ROBINETTE

If the public mind has grown numb from images of what a mean nature has wrought in Africa, this summer's plea for water discipline in our Northeastern cities should offer a profound reminder: our water resources are precious, finite, and threatened. A plethora of evidence from water managers proves that, as per capita water consumption has skyrocketed with our affluence, water shortages have become chronic in widespread reaches of the country. The design community, grounded in the infrastructure, has taken notice in recent years, developing a water-conserving creed for planning and managing outdoor space. Gary Robinette chronicles this movement in *Water Conservation in Landscape Design and Management*, a practical, encyclopedic guide to the resource dilemma and strategies for living with it. As in his previous works on the bedrock nuts and bolts of the landscape design field, the author illustrates his concepts through graphics and an exhaustive assembly of technical data. Relying extensively on promotional materials from government agencies, trade journals, and lobbying organizations, Robinette defines the issue using a complete set of references, and explores methods for using water sparingly.

The layperson and professional alike will appreciate Robinette's focus on the areas of greatest potential: site design, irrigation technology and timing, and appropriate horticultural techniques. The specifications provided are clear and useful. Professionals concerned with the planning of new areas will note that the important concept of affecting water conservation through land use policy and regulation is overlooked, as is the promising new trend for applying land reclamation techniques to urban open

spaces such as industrial parks and informal recreation areas. Given the level of attention to other topics, these issues warranted mention.

While the book succeeds as a primer for the field it is conceived in an aesthetic and historical vacuum and contains serious stylistic flaws which may frustrate the critical reader and bore the uninitiated. An excess of excerpts are linked in a loose anthology, diminishing the potential impact of the text. In an advocacy guide for the professional certain principles may warrant emphasis by the judicious use of outside sources. Yet, to perform a clearinghouse function and at the same time avoid tedious repetition requires superior craftsmanship and an attention to detail which is lacking here.

The book's omissions and stylistic flaws do not mar the author's achievement in providing an overview of a developing field. It simply needs a *raison d'être*, a rallying cry—not one based on limits which the public does not perceive, but grounded in images which invoke a reverence for water. A look back at water conservation in the history of design, the Islamic traditions of Persia and Spain, the Buddhist gardens of the Far East, and the landscape vernacular of Latin America could give definition to an evolving American form, but the subject is given scant attention. While technical detail is critical, water, like other elements of the infrastructure, must be viewed in terms of aesthetics. Water-conserving forms that evoke the universal attraction to beauty will be the most effective force for putting water conservation in its proper place on the American agenda. But as far as the technical aspects go, for creating new designs and retrofitting old ones, Robinette's work is a valuable guide.

Water Conservation in Landscape Design and Management, Gary O. Robinette, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 258 pp., illus., \$27.50.

Fred Stitt:

INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

ALFREDO DeVIDO

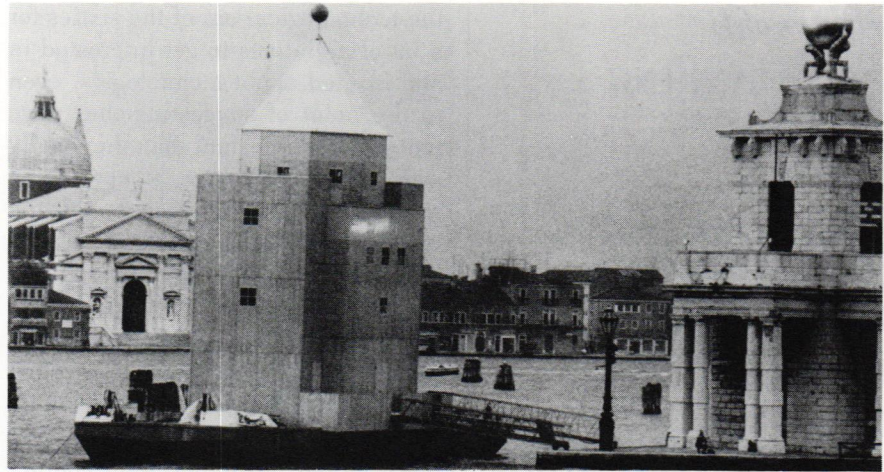
At first glance this looks like a vanity publication, the kind that architectural talents sometimes pay to have published. But it isn't—never mind that the author's work gets considerably more play than any of the other 24 architects in the book. And never mind that the book makes an excellent brochure for the author's work and ideas.

The book consists of brief case studies, complete with constraints, problems, solutions, and more problems. Real-life innovative architectural problem-solving is illustrated throughout in unusually concise and readable fashion.

The book is loaded with inventive design ideas and construction techniques that respond to circumstantial constraints and problems: stenciled patterns, for example, as a low-cost way to enrich existing wood floors; design-as-you-build to push ahead small but complex buildings; and sensitive uses of industrial building materials like galvanized sheet metal roofs and ceilings to achieve economical but striking results.

Prefab construction, water jet spray for roof cooling in a hot climate, factory glazing, fabric banners, etc., are very much the stuff of this book. So too are owner-builder projects, architect-builder, and multiple and mixed contracts of all sorts. Low-cost materials, original finishes, and novel approaches to getting the job done all reflect the determination of the makers of each building to build, regardless of the constraints of circumstance.

The "innovation" of the title is there all right, but how much of what goes on in these projects could be called "management" in the sense of



ALDO ROSSI, THE FLOATING THEATER, 1979

fully professional managerial technique is a wide open question. Chances are that many architects, due to the lack of training in real management in the architectural schools, will not notice that most of the activity described here is as ad hoc and seat-of-the-pants as a hippie picnic. From a managerial point of view, consider the irony of the following:

Construction Scheduling Management:

The unusual construction approach dictated by the design was intended to speed construction. Unfortunately it had the reverse effect because the builder was not used to an unconventional approach.

Construction Cost Control:

There was insufficient time for thorough planning and analysis prior to the construction phase, and unanticipated structural problems occurred.

Nitty-Gritty Get-Down Cost Control:

Since the owner provided his own labor and obtained many favors through contractor contacts, the cost was kept to a minimum.

Construction Management (CM):

The crew (architect and staff) camped on the site, and the client furnished

all their food—mostly lobsters, clams, and pies. . . . The design was entirely worked out in a simple model that required a half a day to make. After the client approved a Polaroid shot of the model. . . .

Design/Build Cost and Quality Control:

I was unable to see that pier footings that were needed to support the house had not been poured—and I went ahead with construction. It was not until framing of the second floor began that alarmed carpenters reported the vital missing link.

And finally:

The owner sued the architects when costs exceeded the original budget by \$12,000 over the original target of \$48,000. However he dropped the suit when he sold the house for \$248,000.

That's the pleasure of much of this book. It may not be management, but it is certainly *REAL*, and fun. Which is what most of us wanted when we decided to get into the business in the first place.

Innovative Management Techniques for Architectural Design and Construction: A Guide for Architects, Owners, and Builders, Alfredo DeVido, Whitney Library of Design, 1984, 208 pp., illus., \$32.50.

Chris Arnold:

UNDERSTANDING BUILDINGS

ESMOND REID

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY IN ARCHITECTURE

DAVID GUISE

DESIGNING BUILDINGS THAT WORK

FRED STITT

It is paradoxical that just as fashionable architecture moves toward the stage setting, relegating structure and construction firmly to subservient roles, we are finally getting textbooks that properly relate design to the technical systems of building. For a generation since buildings really started to become complicated, writing on architectural technology has circled around and generally evaded this issue. Graduates left school and went to work, only to realize with a rude shock that the type of mechanical system and the location of the mechanical rooms were more a determinant of design than the semiotics of place. In the first painful years in the office, in puzzling encounters with structural and mechanical engineers, the pieces were put back together, and the designer began to understand the whole thing. But the personal and professional cost was high. The engineering consultants generally did not explain concepts very well, and none of the textbooks seemed to help. The choice was *Graphics Standards*, with hundreds of pages of unrelated details, or engineering text books full of formulae, one line diagrams, and photos of steam radiators in places like Rochester, New York.

It was probably in the engineers' business interests to keep their methods mysterious and dull, and it took

the technological era of the sixties for a lot of architects to get interested in and excited about technologies, even to the point of suggesting they were much more important than they really were. This imbalance is now being redressed with a vengeance, but the residual benefit is apparent: twenty years later, people who understand complete buildings are beginning to write about them in an interesting way, giving us books that pull together the image-making, problem-solving, engineering, and environmental issues that, in our turbulent 20th-century architectural practice, have vied with one another for ascendancy in our hearts and minds.

So there we are, at this dawning of the new age of façadism, surprised to see the books pile up that we needed twenty years ago. Perhaps it's just part of the present glut of architectural publishing. Perhaps it represents frustration on the part of the technologists—if you can't build it, write about it. I happen to think it's a very healthy sign. An important educational gap is being filled, for without the literature, teaching is very difficult. There is currently a groundswell of desire for interesting and relevant technological teaching in some of the leading architectural schools, and, architectural magazines notwithstanding, a strong core of professionals who are trying to design complete buildings that work—as images, structures, and environments.

These three books are fairly modest offerings—looming in the rear is the long-awaited AIA sponsored tome on building systems that should add the other dimensions that *Graphics Standards* lacks. Modest offerings, however, have the virtue of being inexpensive and more likely to be read. These three books are not equally successful, but they are full of ideas and understanding, and are complementary rather than competitive. There is nonetheless still room for many more.

Understanding Buildings is the most

comprehensive: a cool survey from the U.K. of the major building systems, including their engineering fundamentals, design, and construction. *Design and Technology in Architecture* talks mostly about structure as a major design determinant and focuses—perhaps unfortunately—on the high-rise office building type. *Designing Buildings That Work* is a confident guide to a method of programming and design technology that is more in the style of a self-improvement book on Diet, Divorce, or Financial Planning.

In its planning, design, and organization, *Understanding Buildings* is the best of these books. Now that architects are starting to explain engineering, we are beginning to see how interesting structures can be, and Reid does a fine job of this. I could have done with less on shells and hyperbolic parabolics—these have an undying fascination for U.K. architects—and more on some of the common variations of steel and concrete frames, but his transitions from structural theory to practice are very good.

Each chapter starts with a worthwhile explanation of principles, and then moves into practical solutions. The book covers the main physical systems—structure, enclosure, environmental services, utility systems, lighting, and acoustics. A useful chapter deals with planning principles for fire safety, now recognized as an important aspect of the technology of design.

My one complaint about this book is a rather important one: its descriptions of practice are, not unnaturally, derived from the U.K. The U.K. must be one of the last frontiers of a truly weird regional construction technology, based on the brick cavity wall, and this, combined with its climate, has ensured the spectacular rise of architectural practices for dealing with renovation of rather new buildings. This issue is particularly apparent in the discussion of small residential construction in this book, in which the whole U.S. technology of wood

frame is ignored, except for a small sketch of a wood frame house that in no way represents U.S. practice. Other regional issues show up in descriptions of electrical systems and plumbing, and the insulation examples all show U.K. assemblies. I would like to see a ferocious editing of this book for the U.S. market, and the addition of a good chapter on U.S. wood-frame construction. As it is, I think any student or young professional would be really put off track by many of the examples shown.

Design and Technology in Architecture covers some of the same ground as Reid's book from a U.S. vantage point, but with a much narrower focus. It provides some information on engineering fundamentals but in a more conventional $\frac{1}{8}$ way than Reid's book. Structure is really the central theme, primarily in relation to high-rise or other large framed buildings. Methods of framing, alternative structural systems, the location of cores, and the technology of life safety are discussed. Some extracts from the National Building Code are thrown in. Wood framing is illustrated by the familiar axonometric of a "balloon" frame: do they still do balloon frames in New York? This drawing would really puzzle a student from the West Coast.

Most of the book, 175 pages out of 265, is taken up with "case studies"—including descriptions of sixteen well-known buildings—including Seagram's, U.S. Steel (Pittsburgh), CBS (New York), and Richards Laboratory, showing the structural framing plan, the mechanical plan and section, some framing details, and a lot of statistics on lengths, areas, HVAC zoning, exiting, and similar topics. These descriptions look like class work, and take up much more space than the information justifies.

There is almost no information on mechanical systems—three pages on the location of mechanical equipment. This book really presents a rather outdated view of the high-rise build-

ing as a structural system, with a deferential nod to life safety and the mechanical system.

Designing Buildings That Work is a bouncy book of useful advice addressed to young designers or principals of small design firms. It is a combination of programming techniques—bubble diagrams, proximity matrices and the like—together with a lot of design rules of thumb about planning and preliminary structural design. Some twenty pages are devoted to environmental design failures.



All this down-to-earth information is structured in a methodical way that models a linear design process. The tone of the book is that of a self-improvement handbook, with a confident and hustling voice but, as in most of these books, there is a hard core of common sense and practicality that more elegant scholarly works often lack.

I could have used a lot more rules of thumb and advice, but unfortunately almost half the book (120 pages) is taken up with a "predesign and planning checklist," consisting of a listing of the headings of the CSI specifications format, together with a procedure for recording decisions about each item on the list. The system can be explained in five pages, and the printing of the complete list is sheer padding. It is thus an uneven book, with a lot of good advice but also a lot of flatulence. The only illustrations are a few pages of computer printouts which are not relevant, and not explained in the text.

The unevenness of these books does not negate the fact that they represent a most welcome trend. They may, to some extent, be victims of an

environment in which apparently almost any architectural book can get published, so that the differences between a real book and a reprint of magazine articles or undergraduate lectures might go undetected. Certainly Reid's book is a thoroughly professional piece of writing. The others are not, but a little more effort by the authors, and more control and questioning by the publishers, would have made them so.

Understanding Buildings: A Multidisciplinary Approach, Esmond Reid, MIT, 1984, 213 pp., illus., \$25.00.

Design and Technology in Architecture, David Guise, Wiley, 1985, 272 pp., illus., \$50.00.

Designing Buildings That Work: The Architect's Problem Prevention Sourcebook, Fred A. Stitt, McGraw-Hill, 1984, 240 pp., \$32.50.

Marcy Li Wong:

STRUCTURES FOR ARCHITECTS

B. S. BENJAMIN

There are so many books with titles like this that the tendency is to refer to them by the names of their authors—*Parker, Cowan, Salvadori*, and so on. Fortunately, *Benjamin* does not have to rely on its official title to distinguish itself from the pack—Dr. Benjamin succeeds (where many have failed) in making his subject palatable to architects.

The topic of structures for architects is inherently interdisciplinary, and to teach it effectively requires that the teacher—and textbook—address several critical issues. The first of these is the question of why structural theory is relevant to architectural practice. Benjamin understands that learning, reader interest, and relevance of subject matter are more closely tied together in a professional than an academic field, and has therefore taken pains to discuss structural

concepts in terms of architecture and construction (while avoiding getting bogged down in endless descriptions of construction details). He maintains a balance between general description and specific mathematical analysis, thereby avoiding the two most common textbook pitfalls, those of trivializing the subject through overgeneralized prose, and alienating readers by submerging them in too many equations and numbers.

Benjamin treats building structures architecturally, as systems, rather than as isolated components. Yet he recognizes that one must at some point break these systems down in order to analyze them. To achieve this, he devotes roughly an equal amount of space to concepts of materials and systems and to the analysis of isolated elements. His discussion proceeds logically from systems to components, and then back to systems—an approach which works well in terms of reinforcing the reader's understanding.

One of the hardest tasks in writing a textbook is to put oneself in the position of the beginner. *Structures for Architects* displays an applaudable empathy for the beginner, undoubtedly a reflection of the author's experiences as a teacher of architects at the University of Kansas, an activity for which he has won several awards.

In architecture, as in other creative fields, the teacher's ultimate job is to provide principles that will serve as the basis for solving a large and diverse set of problems. Many architecture students, however, emerge from their classes in structures knowing how to look up beam sections in the load tables of their wood or steel handbooks, but with no appreciation of the interplay of architectural design and structure. Benjamin's goal is to produce not ersatz engineers, but architects able to work intelligently with engineers.

Structures for Architects, second edition, B. S. Benjamin, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 484 pp., illus., \$38.00.

Steve Harrison: PERSPECTIVE DRAWING BY PROGRAMMABLE CALCULATOR

DAVID YUE

I still vividly remember the magic of the first time I successfully constructed a perspective in school. To turn a real dimensional thing into a correct image, and to be capable of doing it predictably, was a whole new world. To simplify the mathematical description of perspective, architect David Yue has developed a complete suite of computational tools. His book, generously illustrated with large, easy to understand diagrams, takes the calculating artist through increasingly difficult problems, including compound curved surfaces, such as shadows cast on a sphere. All of the examples are variations on the same idea: to draw a line by mathematically calculating its end points on Hewlett-Packard Scientific Programmable or Texas Instruments TI 58 or TI 59 calculators.

The building must be properly known from plan and elevation to be properly plotted on a Cartesian coordinate system (x , y , z —remember those?). After the programs listed in the Appendix are entered in the calculator, values for the x , y , and z coordinates are fed to the calculator, and it returns the x and y locations of the points for the perspective. The points are then manually laid out on a drawing. The user must have a pretty good idea of the perspective's layout to establish the view and plot those lines on the visible side of the building. Although all the line locations could be calculated, most architects would use this system for general layout and estimating the location of façade elements and other details.

For those with a good algorithmic sense and who learn best by example, the book can be a very valuable learning tool. The math and the method

are interchangeable. I suspect, however, that many objects simple enough to easily use the formulas would be simple enough to sketch manually, while those more complex objects (like curved surfaces) will be so intimidating that the calculation will be skipped.

I would question the decision to print the book in hardcover. Most computer books acknowledge the fleeting nature of the technology and are in softcover or loose leaf for easy updating. This leads to my major criticism: the inappropriateness of the calculator for such a task. Most architects who have programmable calculators probably have not taken the time to enter any program as complex as the ones in the book. Furthermore, personal computers have rapidly invaded both office and home, providing a great deal more computational power than calculators, easier programmability, and greater range of application. In fact, comprehensive perspective drawing programs that generate images equal in quality to those in the book are already available on some of the most modest equipment. These programs have the additional feature of showing the perspective on the screen and allowing the user to alter the view without having to reenter all the data. Small desktop plotters that transfer the images to paper are available for the price of a fancy programmable calculator.

The book is equivalent to computer software except that it does not come with a guarantee. Unlike software, it gives an excellent description of the methodology, so the calculations are seen as a servant of the process and not as the process itself. Manual perspective drawing provides a magician's bag of tricks, and this book adds the reality of a precise mathematical universe whose laws the architect can use to compute a drawing.

Perspective Drawing by Programmable Calculator: A Method with Graphic Aids, David Yue, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 220 pp., illus., \$29.00.

Thomas Kvan:

INSIDE AUTOCAD

DANIEL RAKER
and HARBERT RICE

In the past two years we have seen a proliferation of small, powerful personal computers, fueled by the availability of cheap, easy-to-use software packages. The enormous success of the IBM-PC, for example, can be attributed in large part to the existence of spreadsheet and word-processing programs like Lotus 1-2-3 and Word-Star. In the graphics world, the program which has had the most impact has been AutoCAD (produced by Autodesk), which is now used on over 40 percent of all microcomputers applied to drafting tasks.

Vendors of software to personal computer users face an intractable problem—how to educate the purchasers of their programs. A major component of software costs in more traditional computer environments was the cost of support, but a vendor selling a package for \$50 or \$1,000 obviously cannot provide the level of support expected with a \$50,000 system.

Most vendors address this problem by trying—not always successfully—to make the software simple and intuitive to use. Extensive manuals attempt to convey in layman's terms the operation of the system. Often the novice is provided with a tutorial, an elaborate program which monitors his progress, with corrections and comments along the way.

Most of these vendor-produced training aids, if they are provided at all, have not been too successful. A major secondary service industry has sprung up to fill the gap, with experienced users across the country offering classes to novices on the intricacies of particular programs. The book reviewed here, *Inside AutoCAD*, addresses the acute need of novice users of microCADD systems for general, rapid, and comprehensible education.

The authors have obviously thought through the role of the text as an educational tool. They have laid out the book in a consistent format which writers of technical educational texts would do well to study. Illustrations, liberally used, guide the reader through each step. Text runs down the right-hand side of each page, with illustrations set out on the left; several examples of finished drawings clearly show appropriate uses of the drawing system. (Although, as with all standard formats, at times the standard fails.)

The authors first take the reader through the start-up of the software, familiarizing him with the terms. A very rapid foray into the systems follows, concluding with the satisfying completion of a finished, albeit inconsequential, drawing. The authors then introduce the fundamentals of drawing tools and describe capabilities in the system which make drawing easier. Finally, the reader is introduced briefly to some of the more powerful concepts and potentials of data attributes. The book also includes a glossary of common terms and appendices which address particular technical issues (configurations and plotters). One appendix presents all the menus offered in the AutoCAD system, a very useful reference.

The authors have commendably resisted the temptation to make computer "hackers" out of their readers, who are expected to be interested in creating drawings using the AutoCAD systems, but not in learning computer terminology or abstruse technical issues. While the point may appear trivial, the texts all too often try to convert readers into amateur computer scientists.

Perhaps the most important omission is the failure to discuss the appropriateness of CADD tools to particular drawing tasks. In choosing to use a microCADD system, the user constrains the kinds of drawings he can produce, just as much as if he had chosen to use a graphite pencil and

vellum, or a cold chisel and granite. In a CADD system, each component (the displays, the plotters, the software) imposes its own limits on the convenience of drawing. Users need to learn these limits quickly or frustrate themselves attempting to execute unsuitable work. The issue of the effect of the medium on the drawing has never been explicitly addressed in computer graphics, although the authors implicitly address the issue here by providing examples of drafting completed on AutoCAD, showing how complexity of drawing and density of lines work with each other to dictate suitable drawings.

A number of other criticisms I mention only because this is an educational text, on which the reader will depend completely: typographic errors should have been caught (for example, on page 52 readers are instructed to type APERATUR instead of APERATUR), as should inaccurate cross references (in chapter 2 readers are told a discussion of text editing is forthcoming, but this is not the case), and chapter summaries and illustrated menus are not consistent.

If the book had been spiral instead of perfect bound it would not be impossible to keep open as you practice on the keyboard; also aggravating are the inconvenient page breaks and the chronic shortage of white space. While it is a matter of personal taste, the authors' style may make some readers cringe; computer texts have long suffered from excessive dryness, but I found this one too familiar for comfort ("Could you do the exercise? Still not, huh?").

Overall, *Inside AutoCAD* is a good introductory text for the novice—not the "constant reference" the publisher fondly claims, but more than adequate as a quick training guide.

Inside AutoCAD: A Teaching Guide to the AutoCAD Microcomputer Design and Drafting Program, Daniel Raker and Herbert Rice, New Riders Publishing, 1985, 309 pp., illus., \$27.95 pb.

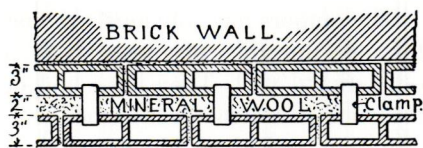
Robert Brady Williamson:

DESIGNING FOR FIRE SAFETY

E. G. BUTCHER
and A. C. PARNELL

Ignition, fire severity, fire spread, fire effect, services, and fire insurance are dealt with in the first, more theoretical part of this book. The authors explain how fires start, how they grow, and how they spread inside and outside buildings. A typical illustration of fire growth in a room shows cold air flowing into the bottom of the fire compartment and hot gases flowing out the top. The authors define special terms, such as flashover, clearly, with technically correct caveats as well as simple illustrations that schematically show the progress of a fire.

They explain how building shape



FURRING BY HOLLOW BLOCKS, AS OF TERRA COTTA, WITH DEAFENING: A VERY ELABORATE SYSTEM.

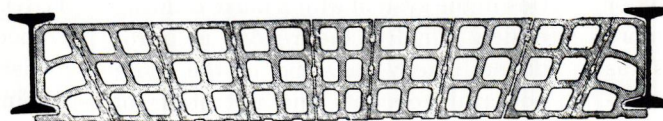
and size can affect fires, the role smoke plays, and briefly describe the high temperature behavior of concrete, steel, and polymeric materials, followed by the "standard tests" drawn up for the U.K. Two very short chapters cover fire protection and emergency services requirements and the basic prerequisites and rules regarding fire insurance.

The second part of *Designing for Fire Safety* takes up the practical aspects of incorporating fire precautions as an integral part of the building design, from the original concept through the finalized design. The approach is

to illustrate design choices and compare them to the British codes and standards. Most American readers will not find this section of much use, since the building codes in the United States and Canada take other approaches, and many of the design illustrations make no sense outside of the United Kingdom.

All in all, the book is focused on British design practice with background material taken from the Fire Research Station publications and other sources of fire research. *Designing for Fire Safety* might be interesting for American readers who wish to understand the nature of fire, but basically falls short for those involved with the fire safety problems of buildings in the United States or Canada.

Designing for Fire Safety, E. G. Butcher and A. C. Parnell, Wiley, 1983, 372 pp., illus., \$55.00.



Ned H. Abrams:

CONSTRUCTION DETAIL BANKING

PHILIP BENNETT

According to Mooer's Law, "an information retrieval system will tend not to be used whenever it is more painful and troublesome for a customer to have information than not to have it." Phillip Bennett's book, a compendium of systematic storage and retrieval for architectural details, is devoted to eliminating the effects of Mooer's Law. The first few chapters deal with selection, source, and approach, advancing to preparation and evaluation, with the inevitable feedback process. Several charts are used to illustrate relationships of the various facets of

development. Chapters 4 and 5 introduce the language of the field in names and numbers, with instructions on how to place data so that it can be retrieved. Chapters 6 and 7, though they conclude the book, might have more usefully come at the beginning, since they summarize the development of a master system, the Boolean retrieval system, which through the use of "descriptors" is proposed to obtain "improved design, increased performance of materials, products and facilities."

This reviewer, having initiated "Systems Design" over 35 years ago, recognized that even with a very small office some sort of detail banking retrieval and reuse was desirable. The problem has been one of both scale and technology. Those with access to proper reproduction facilities will be directed to the categorization of the recovery system. In small offices the variety of details may not be that

great and human memory may be as good a way as any to recover past efforts. In the large office it is not merely a matter of the retrieval of details, but of production efficiency, and the reduction of liability by avoiding the use of details that have no history of success or a potential for failure. Likewise the system prevents the reinventing of the same wheel in minor variations to satisfy someone's vanity. Bennett's book, especially the last two chapters, will be of great benefit in eliminating errors and confusion from the coordination of details and specifications. The commonality of the languages can even be applied to the assimilation of pure design research.

Construction Detail Banking: Systematic Storage and Retrieval. Philip Bennett, Wiley, 1984, 174 pp., \$32.50.

Reid Condit:

THE PRACTICAL SPECIFIER

WALTER ROSENFELD

Readers of *Progressive Architecture's* "Specifications Clinic" page will recognize its writer as the author of this book. Some twenty of the chapters appeared first in that format; another three originated in the *Construction Specifier*, and the balance, similar in style and approach, appear to have been written to round out the collection.

Consistent with the "Specifications Clinic" format, these pieces are brief, rarely longer than five pages, and limited to a single topic. These topics the author has arranged under three general headings: "The Project Manual," "The Context," and "The Specifier's Role." An appendix includes sample documents and an excerpt from the still-relevant 1967 CSI research study of automated specifications by Charles Diehl. Finally, ten pages of chapter notes explain terms or references which appear in the text, but oddly enough the text contains no references to these notes.

The subtitle is misleading: this book is not a "manual of construction documentation for architects," although it may have a limited reference value. Its discussions assume the availability of literature of the manual type such as the *CSI Manual of Practice* and packaged specification masters. Rosenfeld's treatment of topics such as Time Clauses and Add-Only Unit Prices might qualify for inclusion in a manual, but much more would be required. (We probably don't need another manual anyway since a revised *CSI Manual of Practice* is due for publication this summer.) What is valuable about this book is the opportunity to eavesdrop as an experienced architect/specifier confronts the practical issues of specifying in the context of this literature and today's design and con-

struction environment. The specifier seldom has a professional consultant with whom to consider the force and direction of his own activity amid the vectors of owners, bidders, designers, drafters, consultants and other players of the construction game whose decisions impinge on him so relentlessly.

Those chapters which deal with automation may have the greatest claim on the reader's interest. They provide a historical background for today's specifying and remind us that change is subtle, but insistent. Almost twenty years ago automated specifications became a real possibility for many and the *modus operandi* for a few. We are now at a point where automation has been broadly implemented for specification production independent of other tasks of the design process. Its integration with those other tasks would seem to be the next step. How this is to be done and what it may mean for the specifier is not yet clear. Rosenfeld offers no plan, although he does suggest that a study along the lines of the 1967 CSI research would be appropriate. In the last chapter, "Specifier's Nightmare," he reflects on the future of the specifier's activity. While not entirely convinced that this activity will remain in the hands of one person, he concludes that the functions of the specifier will survive as long as there is diversity of owner, architect, and building site.

This is recommended reading for the specifier given to reflecting upon his role, and for anyone else on the design team who must take some responsibility for that milestone event in the construction process, the publication of drawings and specifications.

The Practical Specifier: A Manual of Construction Documentation for Architects, Walter Rosenfeld, McGraw-Hill, 1985, 181 pp., \$29.95.

Ken Garrison:

MANAGING CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

ROBERT D. GILBREATH

Unlike other books in this area, this book discusses not only control procedures for the period subsequent to the award of construction contracts but the period previous to the contracts as well. The author reviews the process from project conception to project completion. The second half of the book is particularly valuable both to the initiated and the beginner in defining Construction Administration as traditionally performed. The issues of roles, meetings, reports, standard forms changes in the work, claims, and project closeouts are addressed concisely and supported by believable examples.

The author makes it clear that innovation is limited to the private sector, and that private owners have the right to develop almost any procedure that benefits their interests. Perhaps the best audience for this book is among the emerging owners who need to have careful control over the procedure. A successful manager will no doubt already be familiar with the information on the complex business of construction and attentive to potential conflicts of interest in the monitoring procedures and the legal relationships.

Managing Construction Contracts: Operational Controls for Commercial Risks, Robert D. Gilbreath, Wiley, 1983, 281 pp., \$32.50.

John Rutherford:

ADOBE AND RAMMED EARTH BUILDINGS

PAUL GRAHAM McHENRY, Jr.
with GERALD W. MAY

To those who design and build in steel and concrete, wood and plastic, the topic of dirt, adobe, and rammed earth may appear trivial. Yet, as McHenry notes, 50 percent of us still live in earth buildings. The preponderance of modern earth construction becomes even greater when engineered fill and earthfill dams are included—two classes of earth construction ignored in *Adobe and Rammed Earth Buildings*. The topic is important, and mud remains the most variable, least understood, and most interesting of all construction materials.

That said, does the book meet the claims of its jacket as “the first book that presents comprehensive treatment of the engineering and architectural principles involved in the design and construction of adobe and rammed earth buildings”? It comes respectably close if you are an architect, contractor, or ambitious do-it-yourselfer living in the American Southwest. McHenry surveys the history of mud brick and earth building construction, presents photographs of ancient and modern examples, discusses manufacturing and construction techniques, and shows typical design details. The chapter on the heating, cooling, and ventilating characteristics of earth-walled building is particularly useful. Sections on structural design and restoration of earth structures, an appendix of present building code provisions, and a recommended model code for earth building conclude the volume. Sufficient information is presented to enable an architect to design a buildable earth structure, or a contractor to build one in a region free from earthquakes, strong winds,

and climatic extremes.

Along the way, McHenry deals honestly and effectively with several myths still clinging to mud brick construction:

MYTH 1: A mud brick or rammed earth wall more than a couple of stories high will collapse of its own weight.

FACT: A reasonably good mud brick wall will withstand a compressive stress of at least 250 pounds per square inch (1724 kPa), yielding a wall height of 327 feet (100 m) before collapse, or more than 55 feet (17 m) with a safety factor of 6.

MYTH 2: Clay is the most essential and desirable soil component of mud brick.

FACT: Decent mud brick can be made with clay-poor soil. Granular material can be mixed with silts, straw, manure, or other fine-grained material to make perfectly adequate mud bricks or rammed earth material.

MYTH 3: Earth walls have excellent insulating qualities.

FACT: Earth is a relatively poor insulating material. The thermal mass effect of thick earth walls does create a lag in temperature differentials across the wall, but one inch of polystyrene has a lower steady state heat transmission coefficient than a 10-inch thick earth wall.

The disastrous performance of unreinforced brick and earth buildings during severe earthquakes is no myth, however, and the book's treatment of this grave problem falls short of comprehensive. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed by collapsing brick and earth structures during earthquakes; someone has estimated that chances of surviving an earthquake are 200 times better in a wood building than in an unreinforced masonry structure. A step-by-step detailed earthquake analysis of a simple mud brick or compacted earth structure would call attention to the problem and suggest solutions in the form of roof and floor anchorage, diaphragms, ring beams, all of which are mentioned but not analyzed. A comprehensive bibliography on earth

construction would be welcome, and—one last quibble—the relief of mud brick manufacture (Fig. 1.7, p. 5) is not from the tomb of Queen Hatshepsut as captioned. Neither her Biban-el-Maluk tomb nor her cliff tomb in Wadi Sikket et-Taqa es Zeide is decorated.

Adobe and Rammed Earth Buildings: Design and Construction, Paul Graham McHenry, Jr., with Gerald W. May, Wiley, 1984, 217 pp., illus., \$42.95.

Ed Arens:

BUILDING SCIENCE FOR A COLD CLIMATE

NEIL B. HUTCHEON
and GUSTAV O. P. HANDEGORD

This is a very useful textbook and reference manual on thermal and moisture behavior in buildings. Its authors have been senior scientists for over thirty years at the Division of Building Research (DBR, not to be confused with *this* publication) of the National Research Council of Canada. They have also been longtime contributors to the technical committees and handbooks of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). The book reflects their background in its heavy reliance on DBR and ASHRAE research work and publications, and in its thorough but strictly compartmented approach to presenting information.

A few words on the DBR are in order. It is one of a small international group of research institutions dedicated to studying buildings. Compared to most, the DBR has developed an unsurpassed expertise in the performance of building envelopes (as opposed to, say, the mechanical equipment that goes into buildings), and has rather naturally concentrated on cold climate conditions. As in most such institutes, its research is performed by scientists and engineers working in depth on isolated problems. The

findings are usually transmitted to the building community in technical research reports and through the close cooperation of its researchers with the professional societies and government agencies that write building standards and codes. There is relatively little attention given to synthesizing results for direct application to architectural practice; this work is left to outside authors, and often comes years after the research is done.

Building Science for a Cold Climate presents its information in a technical, engineering-oriented way. The first two chapters are a cursory discussion of the relationships between people, buildings, and climate, introducing a lot of Canadian government information sources in these areas. A clear and concise series of chapters on fundamental processes follows: "Molecules, Gases, Heat, and Radiation"; "Thermal Radiation in the Environment"; "Water in the Environment"; "Air and its Water Content"; "Fluids in Motion"; "Heat Transfer"; "Solar Radiation and Buildings"; "Wind on Buildings"; "Air Leakage and Ventilation"; "Water," and practical building related details. It is nice to have all these in one place. Following these are "The Indoor Thermal Environment"; "Requirements and Characteristics of Occupancies"; and a summarizing chapter on "Buildings for a Cold Climate"—each a useful reference on its subject. Taken all together, the book is an exhaustive collection of DBR and ASHRAE literature and serves as a guide to the densely packed contents of the ASHRAE handbooks.

One minor quibble: there should be a consolidated list at the front or back of the book for times when one is not reading sequentially through the chapters. A somewhat more major problem is that, when the book departs from its main interests, it often becomes a barely annotated bibliography. (See the wind-rain penetration section in chapter 10, where the issue is identified and assigned a few num-

bered references, but not discussed at all. The subject is covered again in more detail in chapter 12, but there is no way a reader in chapter 10 would know this.) The authors seem very concerned to mention every possible building science concern (they even fit in a discussion of supersonic air flow), but this breadth should not be at the expense of giving important subjects some interpretation. Finally, one should be warned that transient heat transfer and solar design are barely discussed—probably a cold climate prejudice.

Still, this is a major book in the climatic design field. It compares with Givoni's *Man, Climate and Architecture* (London Applied Science, 1976) and Markus and Morris's *Buildings, Climate and Energy* (Pittman, 1980) for its fundamental treatment of building science topics. Like these earlier works, it is primarily an engineering book: nongraphic, with only a few architectural details. It is in SI units. Koenigsberger's classic *Manual of Tropical Housing* is successful in covering both principles and design within a restricted scope. Books stressing design applications—notably Watson's *Climatic Design* (McGraw-Hill, 1983), Mazria's *The Passive Solar Book* (Rodale, 1979), and the original *Design with Climate* (Princeton University Press, 1963) by Olgyay—are by contrast profusely illustrated with graphic climate and energy flow patterns, design procedures, and example buildings and their details. They have immediate suggestions at all levels of design and are still in English units. Generally speaking, they do not cover the fundamentals in detail. Designers serious about this field are left to bridge for themselves the substantial stylistic and informational gaps between these different types of books.

Building Science for a Cold Climate, Neil B. Hutcheon and Gustav O. P. Handegord, Wiley, 1983, 440 pp., \$58.95.

Richard M. Shapiro:

LAW AND ARCHITECTURE

"Know thine enemy" may be the best way to describe the design professional's motivation for reading books on the law. Other motives exist—the desire to understand the nature of available rights and remedies or the tools of power in society—but are rarely so strong as to make a design professional voluntarily read this type of material. Law often seems a discipline which buffets the design process rather than informing or contributing to it. Even so, it is a force which will affect even the most academic design professional's work, for example, in the form of copyright issues. In the worst of circumstances, in connection with construction disputes or malpractice claims, it can disrupt both one's career and emotional tranquility.

A book on the legal aspects of design practice can have various objectives. It can provide a broad view of the legal system and its relationship to the design profession, assuming in the reader no prior experience with the legal system and a generalized and unfocused interest in its relationship to design practice. On the other hand is the literature intended to serve as a reference in connection with specific issues as they arise. This can be difficult, as issues which are relevant change over time and legal solutions or doctrines may differ from state to state.

A recent example of the first type of book is *The Architect's Guide to Law and Practice*, by Robert and Karen Greenstreet. The book is intended to give the reader a "basic legal overview of the wider principles affecting the profession, and concentrating on the more specific procedural aspects of the architect's duties." The treat-

ment of legal subject matter is so generalized and broadbrushed that the book accomplishes neither goal adequately. Probably the most useful section is the first chapter, which attempts, perhaps too briefly, to provide a general overview of the law and the legal system—including such “sources” of law as statutes and court decisions—and the nature of the legal machinery from the legislature to the courts. (This is an area of far more confusion and misinformation than most people realize, as designers can attest who have subsequently attended law school and recall their amazement at the revelations of the introductory classes.) The book then races through descriptions of bases for liability, insurance, forms of association for practice purposes, relationships with owners and others involved in the construction practice, as well as professional ethics, office administration, and building and land use permits and controls.

The intended audience for this book is unclear. Basic topics are not well enough developed to inform the student, while the treatment of specific practice issues is too summary to be of much use to the practitioner. The relevance of some topics is doubtful—for example, forms of deeds and ownership, tree ordinances and the bases for nuisance claims. These may be areas where little knowledge is more dangerous than none at all. Zoning and land use issues and procedures receive two pages, a discussion neither specific enough to be of use in formulating strategies for processing applications nor general enough to address the interesting constitutional issues raised by zoning as a use of the police power. According to the book, the most common type of zoning is known as Euclidian. One is left with the impression of something to do with geometry, when in fact the moniker refers to one of the parties in the first United States Supreme Court case upholding the validity of a zoning ordinance, the City of

Euclid, Ohio.

The book is designed carefully, full of different type faces, indentations, and emphasis bullets. In addition, simplistic flow charts have been generated to describe every process, no matter how complex and unsuited to this technique. It does have two features which the beginning practitioner may find useful. The first is a series of action-required sheets in the form of hypothetical correspondence and memoranda posing practice and legal issues. These are inserted at the end of each chapter and followed by more sample memos and correspondence providing suggested responses. The other feature is a number of AIA standard forms, including the Owner/Architect Agreement and various applications and certificates, filled out as samples. Unfortunately, even these samples may be dangerously misleading, as they are unaccompanied by any suggestion that amendments or modifications may be necessary to accommodate the special requirements of charts or projects.

All of this material is relevant and should be familiar to all practicing architects and most other design professionals. The book is a distillation and simplification of other, more generally useful sources, in particular the *AIA Handbook of Professional Practice*, which is far more valuable than the Greenstreet book.

A much more informative work is *Avoiding Liability in Architecture, Design and Construction*, edited by Robert F. Cushman, a collection of articles which serves to expand awareness of liability areas and critical issues, and is at the same time a useful reference for those faced with particular legal issues. The audience for this work is quite clear—design professionals forced to deal with the business and legal aspects of architecture, engineering, and the construction administration process. The organization of the book reflects a concerted attempt at relevancy, the discussion being divided in three

areas: 1) “Am I Responsible? Risks and Exposures,” 2) “How do I Avoid or Limit Liability?,” 3) “When Crisis Strikes.” The chapter headings then serve as a very useful checklist of legal issues which should be familiar to all practicing design professionals. There are chapters on such important issues as the liability of the architect to the contractor for delay damages, liability arising out of discussions with bidders, providing construction management services, or the architect’s reuse of his own documents on another project. These are articles which should be read by anyone with responsibility for loss prevention and project management. Other topics are more arcane and will only be relevant when the particular issue arises—for example, the status of a designer’s liability in states like California with comparative negligence statutes or doctrines; or whether it is possible for the design professional who has been sued to initiate a counterclaim against a client or other plaintiff and their attorney for having brought a “frivolous suit.”

The book suffers from the frequent unevenness and redundancy of edited collections. The range of contributors is excellent and a number are clearly very experienced in the areas or issues they describe, but the depth of treatment varies widely. More intensive editing would have produced a shorter and more efficient presentation. For example, the concept of indemnification, an issue always relevant when multiple parties are involved in a common enterprise, is discussed in at least four chapters: first in two chapters concerned with standard contract forms and possible amendments, and then again in a more general discussion of managing legal risks and protecting the architect from the errors and omissions of consulting engineers and other independent contractors. The concept is relevant in all these contexts, but each author has to reintroduce the topic rather than build on the earlier dis-

cussion.

A number of chapters are particularly well organized and informative. For example, "What Can I Do to Prevent Others From Misappropriating or Infringing Upon My Drawings?" by Alan Stover, general counsel for the AIA, contains an excellent discussion of the importance of copyright and ownership and control of the documents. He reviews the provisions made for ownership in reuse in the standard AIA forms, and then proceeds to discuss possible arrangements between designer and client when the designer has provided only design services or when the owner desires to reuse construction documents for postconstruction additions or on duplicate structures. This discussion flows easily between a presentation and explanation of standard clauses and suggestions for language to address other specific issues. The discussion is clearly focused upon the design professional and makes no reference to case law or statutes.

Another excellent chapter, "What is My Liability As Construction Manager?" by William R. Snead, an attorney in private practice, is presented in far greater technical detail, with footnote citations to other articles and court decisions, but this does not detract from its usefulness for any design professional. Mr. Snead starts by reminding the reader of the range of possible definitions of construction management and then proceeds to discuss construction management liability in six basic areas: liability for design and selection of materials, for cost estimates, safety, scheduling and coordination, supervision and inspection, and certification of progress payment. The discussion reviews the approach reflected in the most widely used standard forms, GSA and AIA. It covers not only what is known concerning liability but also those areas which have not been addressed in judicial decisions and where significant uncertainty remains concerning allocations of liability.

Other chapters address topics which should be recognizable to any experienced design professional: sources of vicarious liability—that is, liability resulting by or through the acts of others, including clients or the contractors and suppliers who implement the designs. The information presented is not based upon court decisions but rather upon the author's extensive practical experience, and the result is provocative, common sense advice. The chapter, "How Do I Avoid or Limit Liability Resulting From . . ." discusses the problems arising from an excessively cost-conscious owner, substandard subcontractors, the owner's choice of a shakey or flaky general contractor, not hiring the architect to observe construction, an unsafe construction site, delayed completion, defective construction, and claims by adjoining landowners for construction damage.

A chapter by Roger S. Mertz, another private attorney with extensive practice advising architects and engineers, deals with the concept of limiting the designer's monetary liability in the agreements, something which has been encouraged in recent years by malpractice carriers and strenuously resisted by owners. It is a step-by-step discussion of the areas of liability that should be covered, the appropriate limits, the arguments to be used in negotiation, and the language which should result. The discussion covers related considerations such as limitations on scope of work and the language contained in agreements prepared by clients as well as a full discussion of the arguments against using limitation of liability clauses.

Even with the inherent problems of a loose collection, this book is probably, after the *AIA Handbook of Professional Practice*, the most useful presentation of legal issues related to professional liability for the design professional. The issues raised should be familiar to anyone who intends to provide these professional services,

and the advice and information could be very useful when and if these issues become relevant.

The Architect's Guide to Law and Practice, Bob Greenstreet and Karen Greenstreet, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 158 pp., \$23.00.

Avoiding Liability in Architecture, Design and Construction, Robert F. Cushman, editor, Wiley, 1983, 415 pp., \$65.00.

Margot Wellington:

BUILDING FOR THE ARTS

CATHERINE R. BROWN,
WILLIAM B. FLESSIG,
WILLIAM R. MORRISH

The business of obtaining and operating a large physical facility, whether gallery, auditorium, theater, dance workshop, rehearsal space, or large cultural complex, can be difficult for an arts group that knows a lot about making its art but not much about real estate development. *Building for the Arts* presents a real alternative to the trial-and-error method of building or renovating an arts facility. It is a clearly written handbook that takes the subject apart and puts it back together in a step-by-step way that even a neophyte nonprofit organization can grasp and use.

The first half of the text is devoted to research and analysis surrounding the decision to proceed. Checklists, careful definitions, and worksheets address such questions as, Who will direct the project for the two or more years required? Who will raise the money? Who will make the decisions? How will community support be obtained? The worksheets point out conflicts and problems early in the process, and the checklists outline the kinds of communication likely to resolve them. The book is especially attentive to the relationships among the board, staff, architect, design consultants, funding sources, govern-

DESIGN BOOK REVIEW

QUIZ

Match column A with column B:

A

I express modern times, is that a crime?

There is no country in the world where machinery is as lovely as in America.

The modern architectural drawing is a work of art, the photograph is magnificent, the building an unfortunate but necessary stage between the two.

The state of mind of the confirmed gardener seems to me as reprehensible as that of the confirmed alcoholic.

B

Oscar Wilde

Le Corbusier

Colin Wilson

Goodhart-Randall

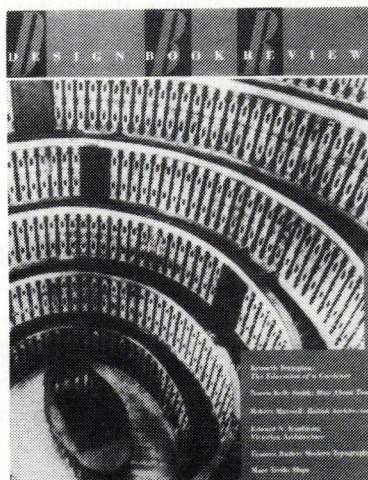
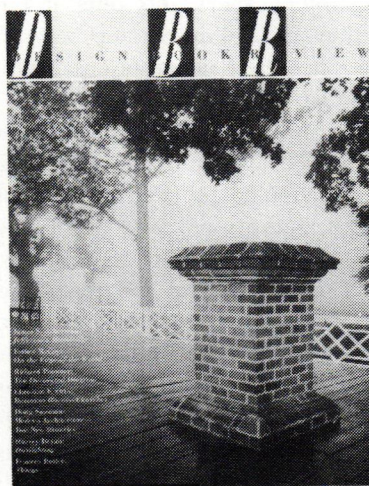
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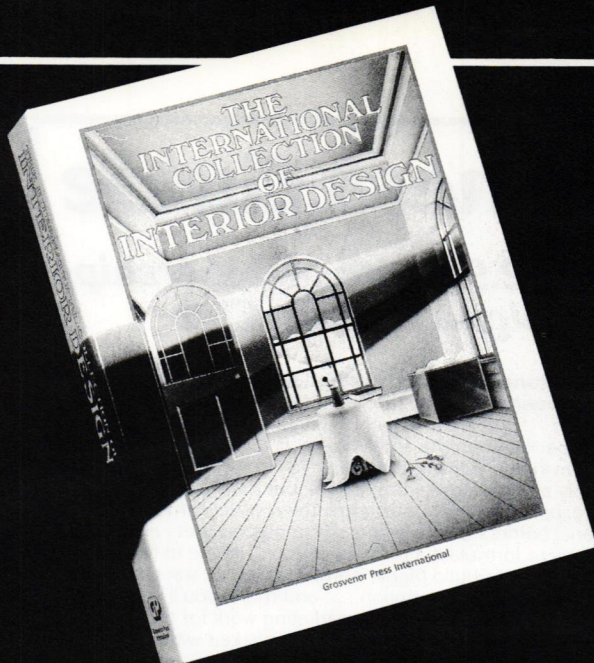
mental agencies, press, contractors, and the public.

One section is devoted to the many real estate options available, including building or leasing an independent structure, finding space within a new or restored commercial building, or even developing a project that allows for a mixture of cultural and commercial uses. The politically complex case of the Museum of Modern Art's condominium apartment project in New York, however, is perhaps not the clearest example of the tactic of leasing space to commercial entities to help support the cost of the facility.

The design phase is handled in two sections, one for the visual arts and one for the performing arts. Clear line drawings and checklists are used to address issues such as security, food service, storage, internal circulation, gallery lighting, sight lines, and acoustics. Emphasis is placed on the use of highly qualified design professionals and technical consultants, and the book gives advice on how to get the best performance from these experts. The appendix contains valuable information for projecting operating budgets and for establishing design competitions. It also lists cultural facilities around the country to be used as case studies.

The information may be superfluous for major organizations, and beyond the range of small groups, but any medium-size arts group will benefit from this book and its message, which is not to let the process of creating a physical facility undermine the group's artistic purpose.

Building for the Arts: A Guidebook for the Planning and Design of Cultural Facilities, Catherine Brown, William B. Flessig, William R. Morrish, Western States Press (Western States Arts Foundation, 207 Shelby, Santa Fe, NM 87501), 1984, 272 pp., illus., \$13.95.



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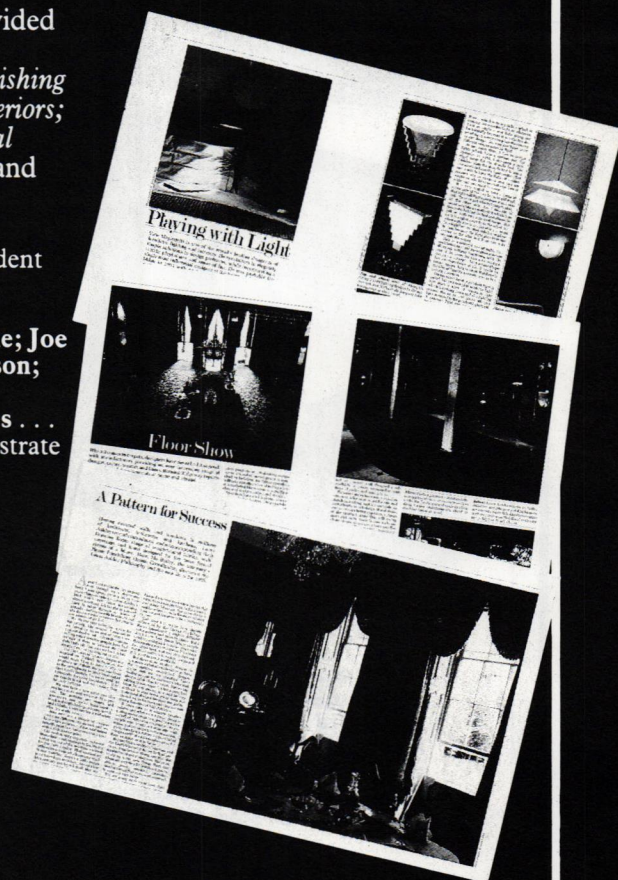
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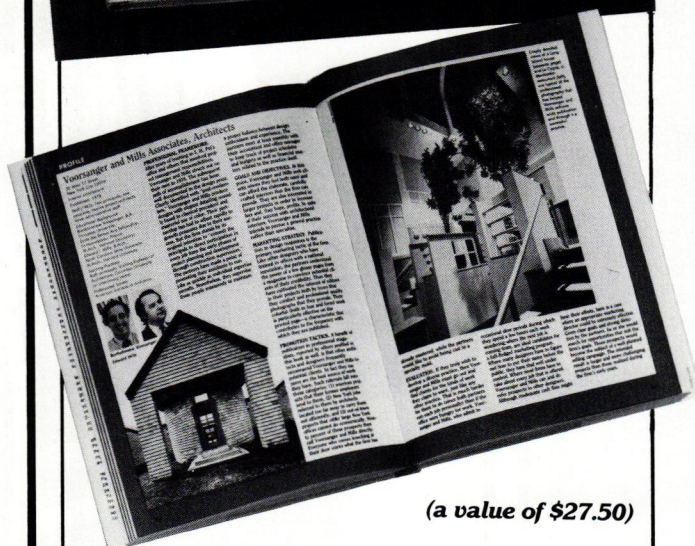
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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Ned H. Abrams is an architect who has had his practice in Sunnyvale, California, since 1948. He teaches seminars in reprographics and other topics relating to the profession.

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Vivien Arnold studied architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, and video at Boston University.

Reyner Banham teaches architectural history at the University of California at Santa Cruz. His most recent book is *America Deserta* (Peregrine Smith, 1982).

John Beach is a designer and architectural historian living in Berkeley, California. His articles have appeared in *Architectural Digest* and *Fine Homebuilding*.

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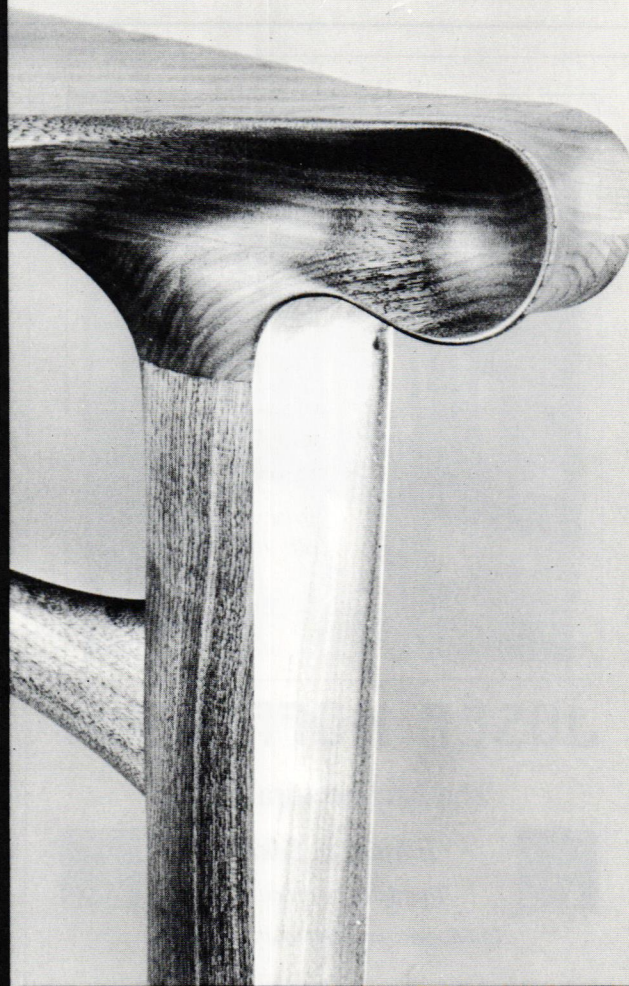
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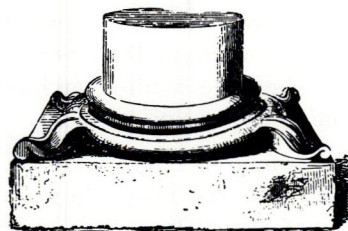
Margot Wellington is now a consultant to nonprofit groups in reorganization efforts connected with board development and cultural facility projects. She was in charge of establishing The Urban Center in the landmark Villard Houses, New York City.

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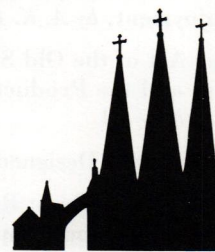
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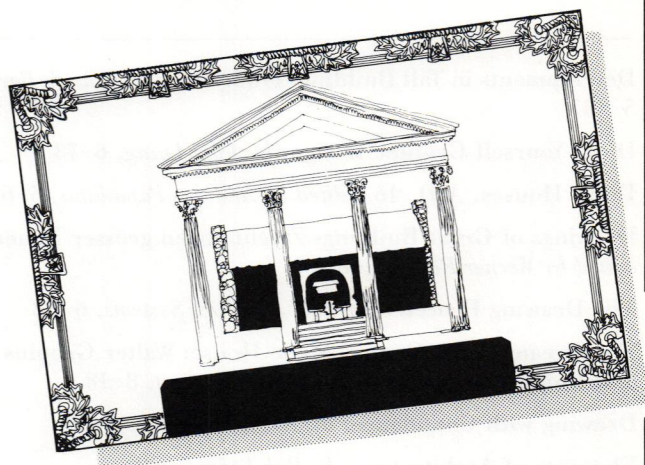
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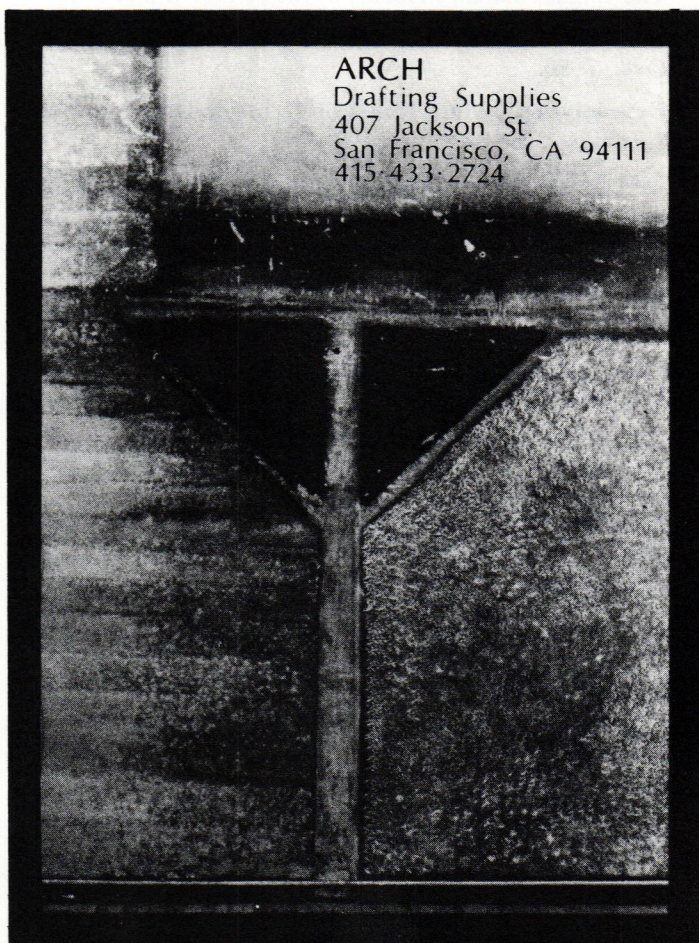
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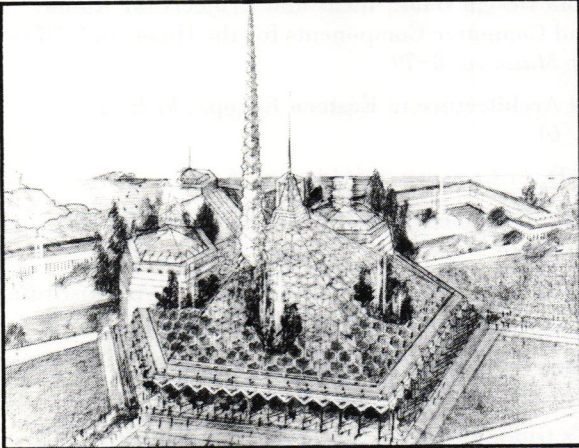
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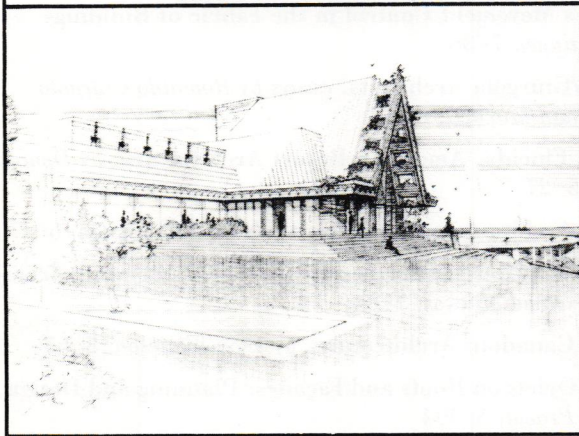


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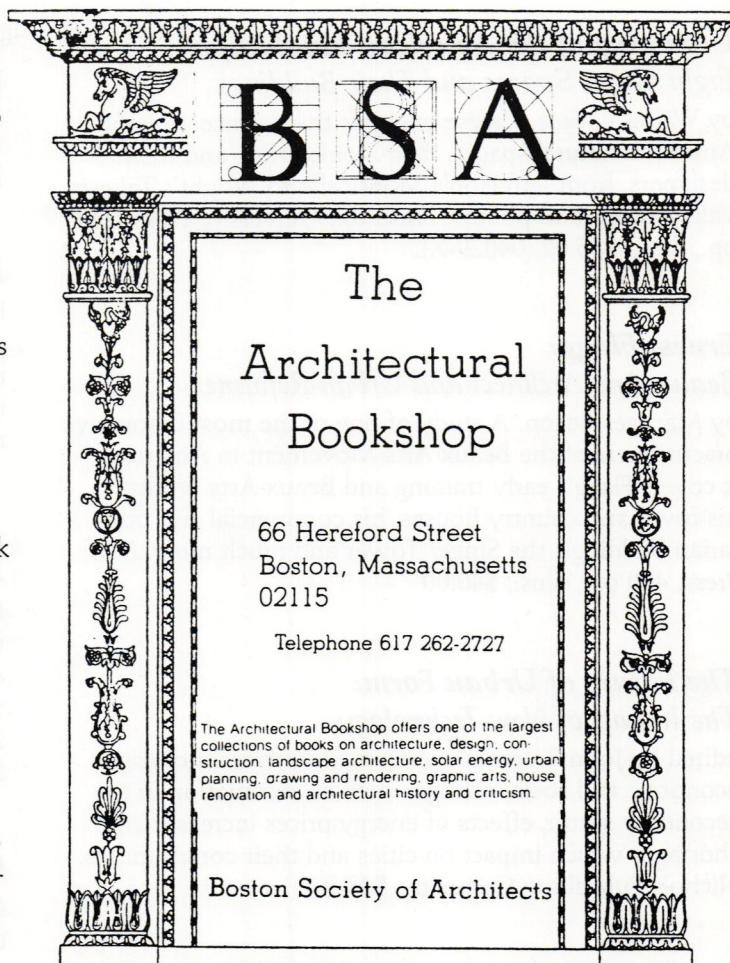
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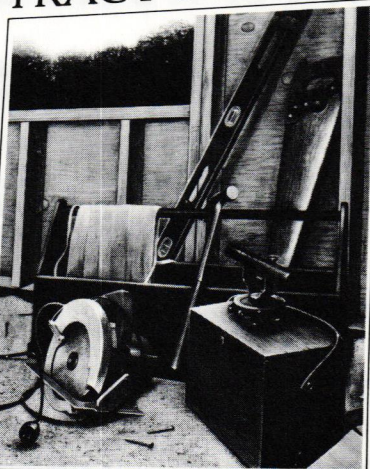
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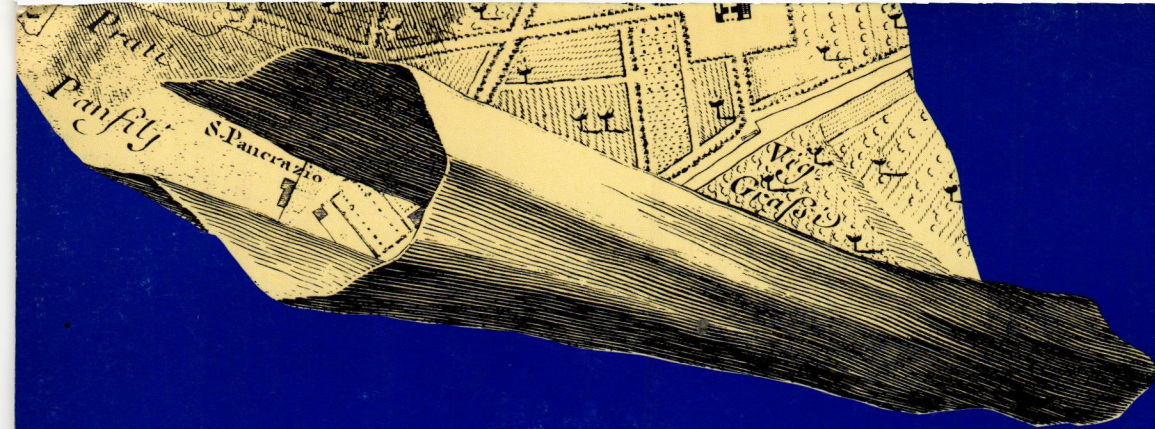
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