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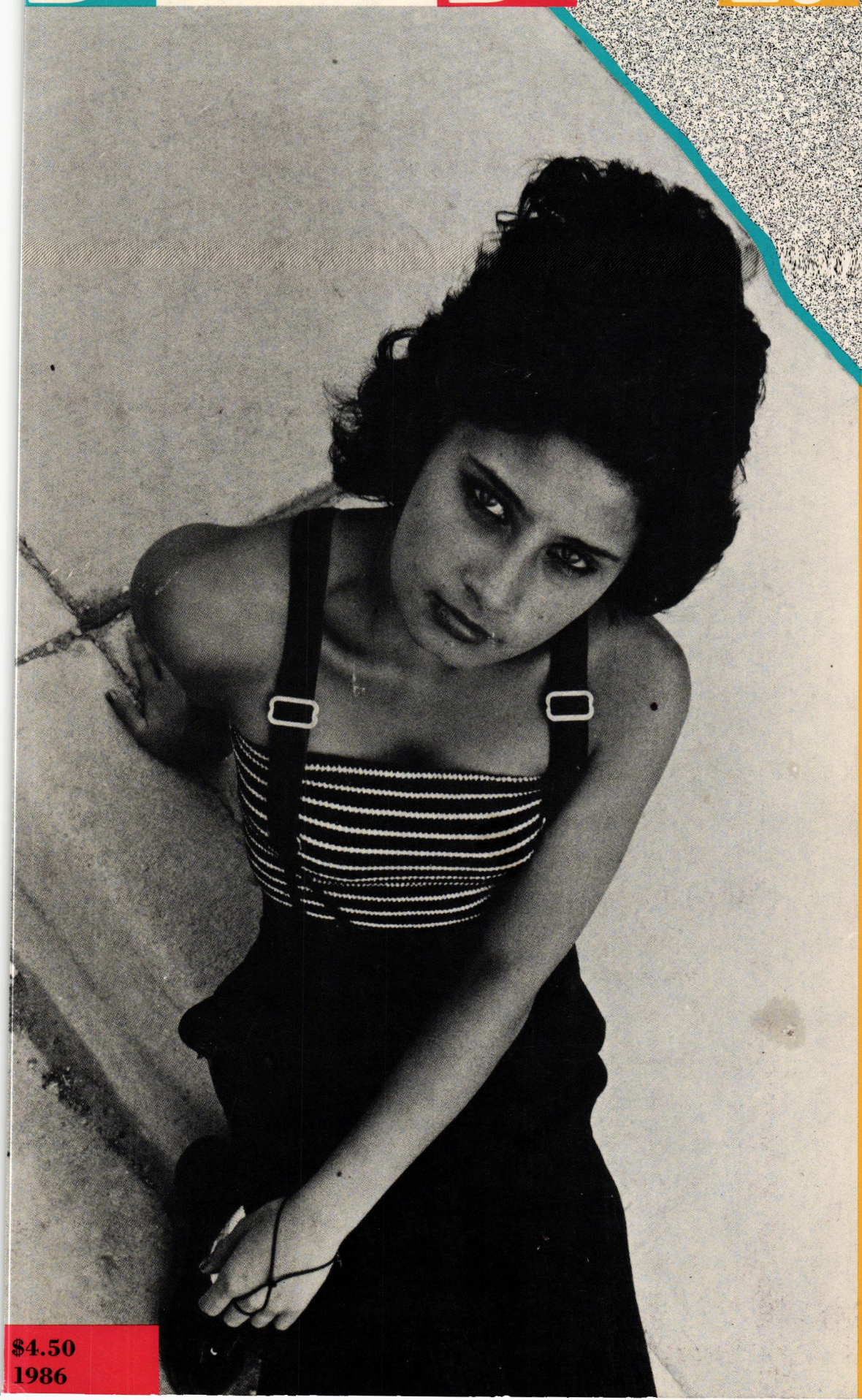

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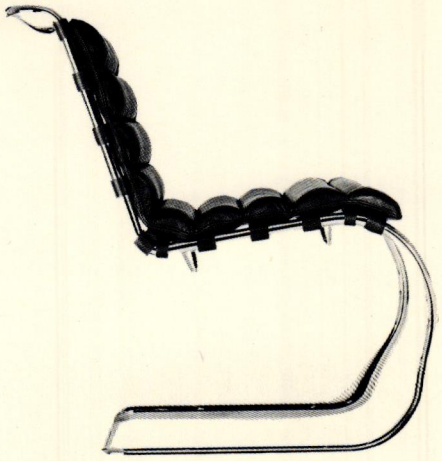

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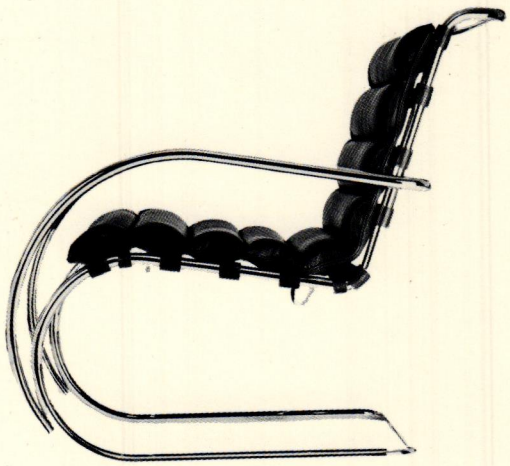

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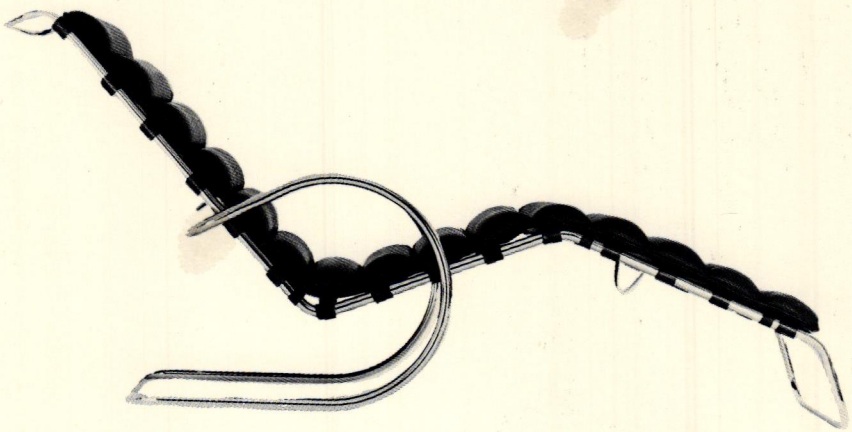

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COVER: *MELISSA ARMIJO, ALBUQUERQUE*, PHOTO BY MIGUEL GANDERT. FROM *THE ESSENTIAL LANDSCAPE*, FROM THE *NEW MEXICO PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY* PROJECT COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO.

A WHIFF OF THE CITY

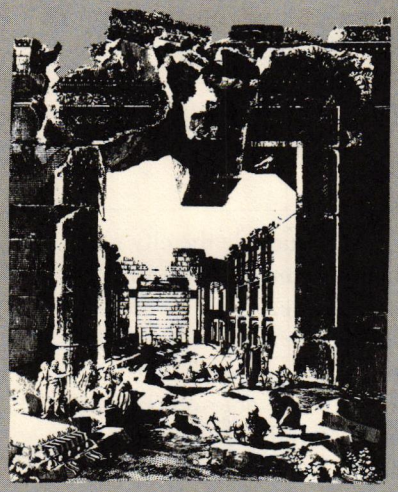
The city is the air of freedom, said medieval folk; the city is the air of contagion, said the Victorians; the air's all gone, say the oncoming motorists. But the late 20th century misses the city, finding it to be the richest matrix of culture. The most convincing argument against the Modern Movement has been not the critique of its architecture but that of its urbanism. Le Corbusier rallied for "the death of the street" in the 1930s, and CIAM prepared us for the "inevitabilities" of a city based on efficient circulation. The carefully scaled city was indeed the baby thrown out with the bath water, and with or without the help of Modern Movement theories, highway engineers and real estate speculators assisted in the dismantling of old, tightly woven cities and the rebuilding of new ones that induce agoraphobia.

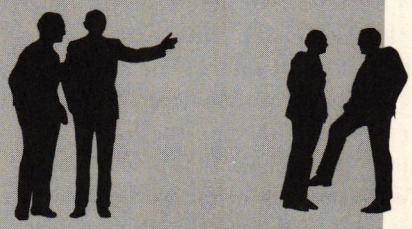
The desire to recuperate human-scaled public environments is not merely a spin-off of the nostalgia that has motivated Post-Modern revival styles in architecture, but part of a deeper search for collective identity. The quest for what has been lost is part of the new urban consciousness that has spawned the outpouring of works on urban history reviewed by Spiro Kostof. In his discussion of the methodological "turfs" in this field, he argues that the production of the city must be given as much attention as its planning if historians are to attain a comprehensive view of the physical artifact. Kurt Forster also points out this urban awareness in his dialogue on historical research: the understanding of architecture as part of an urban whole has perhaps done the most to expand the categories of architectural history beyond their elitist and formalist origins. The awareness of the city is also crucial to David Harvey's critique of J. B. Jackson's theories of landscape: an unwillingness to include the city weakens Jackson's conclusions on what makes "landscape." The willful sifting of architecture from its urban context is part of the problem that Diane Ghirardo has with some recent presentations of Post-Modernism.

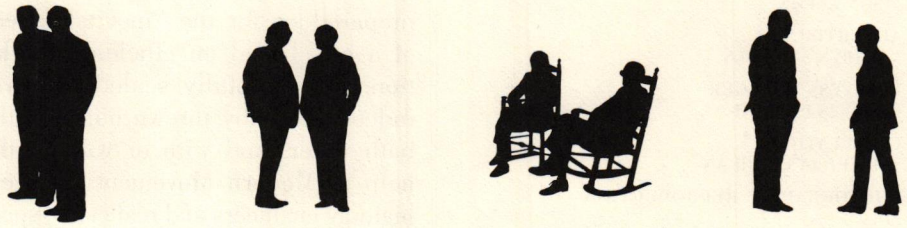
For architectural critics to avoid the complexities of the city is as damaging to meaning as an urbanism that separates functions. But if the city planning of the Modern Movement has ceased to inspire, the architecture of the Modern masters seems ripe for revival. The centenary exhibitions for Mies van der Rohe this year and Le Corbusier next year will no doubt renew an interest in the issues of style and technology so central to their design philosophies. Juan Pablo Bonta in his review of the recent books on Mies shows how far we have to go to get beyond the myth of the masters' work before we can have a truly critical perspective. Mies will probably remain the most polemical figure in the area of architectural language.

The controversy over how architecture lost its signifying function to scientific rationality is the underlying theme of Alberto Pérez-Gómez's portrayal of the Enlightenment, one to which Alexander Tzonis takes strong exception, arguing that architecture never lived up to its scientific brief. Whether or not Post-Modernism will do battle with neo-Modernism, there seems to be some agreement that the city should return to human scale, perhaps learning the lessons of Kevin Lynch's *Good City Form* outlined here by Jon Lang. Then we can once again breathe the liberating air of the city.

Richard Ingersoll







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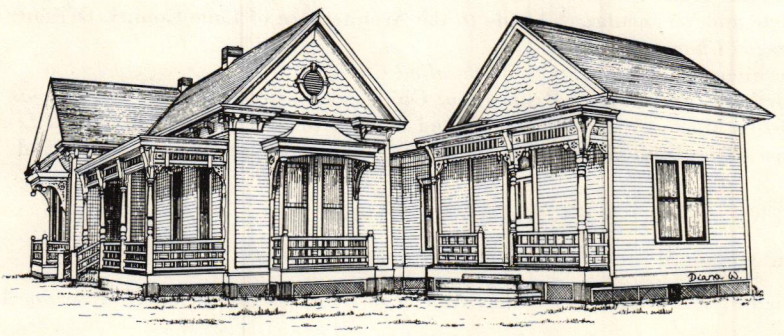
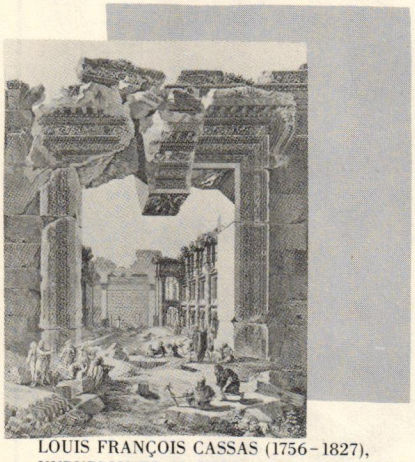


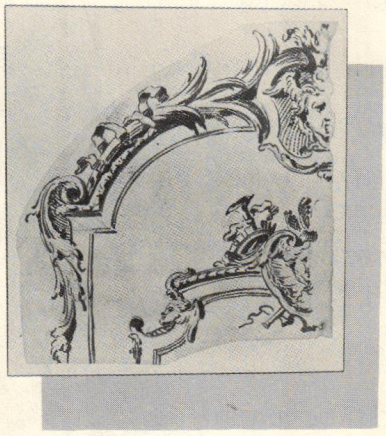
DRAWING BY DIANA WOODBRIDGE

Shaking

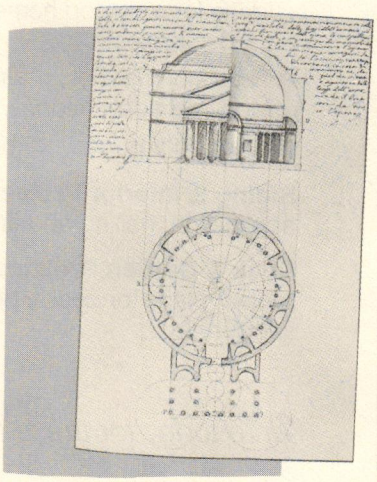
KURT FORSTER TALKS ABOUT



LOUIS FRANÇOIS CASSAS (1756–1827), UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL FOR "VOYAGE PITTORESQUE..." (1799–1800)



GILLES MARIE OPPENORD (1672–1742), DESIGNS FOR ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS, PREPARED FOR THE MARQUIS DE LA VAUVALLIERE, ca. 1720



TREATISE ON THE PROPORTIONS OF THE PANTHEON (17TH CENTURY)

Kurt Forster, born in 1935 in Zurich, is a historian whose physical whereabouts are almost as quicksilver as his intellectual interests. As the director of the Getty Center for Art History and the Humanities in Santa Monica, he is responsible for the fastest growing art and architecture library in the world (acquiring about 100,000 volumes per annum), an equally rapidly growing photo archive, a residence program for visiting scholars, and an impressive documentary archive (which includes a rich collection of art and architectural sources, such as letters, drawings, and lecture notes of Le Corbusier of the 1940s, presentation drawings by Butterfield, the collected papers of Nikolaus Pevsner, and a 17th-century treatise on churches by the Jesuit Briano, as well as the correspondence of Pissaro, Rodin, Ingres, Monet, Marinetti, and many others). Eventually to be housed in a Richard Meier-designed building complex on a hilltop site (scheduled for completion in 1993), this unique program will contribute to highly specialized historical research in the tradition of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes in London, the Hertziana Library (part of the Max Planck Institute) in Rome, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts in Washington, D.C. Since joining the Getty Center, Forster has continued his activities as a tireless lecturer and participant at academic conferences, crisscrossing the globe, raising the status of peripatetic to an aeronautical level.

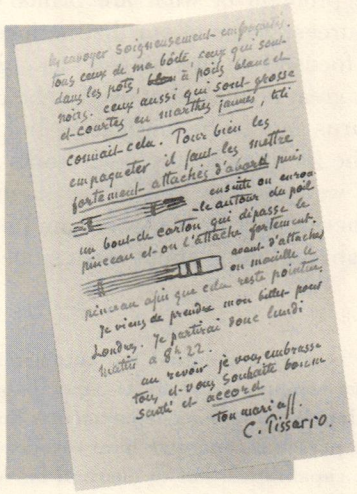
From an early specialization in 16th-century Florentine painting, Forster's research interests have branched out increasingly into the fields of architecture and urbanism. His work on the urban history of Mantua will soon be published in the Italian series La città nella storia d'Italia. *His activities as a historian only slightly outrival his critical involvement with current architecture, and as one of the editors of the now-defunct* Oppositions *he became intimately involved with the most vital issues in contemporary design, including contextualism, typologies, and the "return" to history. In all his work there is a philosophical questioning of the uses of history, which can be seen in a dynamic sway between the stifling occlusion caused by fetishistic approaches and the liberating vision that can be gained by studying artifacts as products of human values.*

Earlier this year DBR *prepared the following dialogue on historical research for Forster, who in between flights from London to New York via California was able to find time to respond (with no apparent traces of jet lag).*

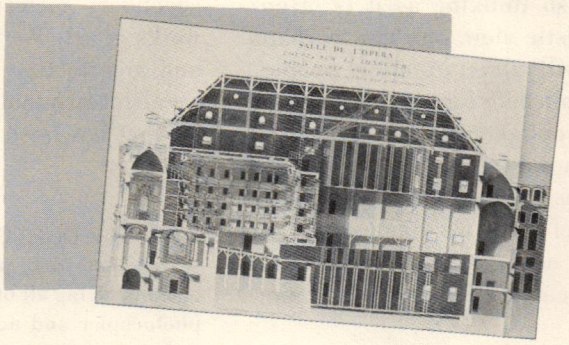
DBR: Before moving on to more theoretical issues, let's indulge the curiosity that any institution with such a healthy endowment might inspire. The Getty Trust not only provides its famously large budget to the J. P. Getty Museum, but also funds the Getty Center for the Arts and Humanities, probably the best-endowed research institute of its kind. You once quoted Aby Warburg's apologies for the use of his own family's fortune for his research library: "We should demonstrate by our example that capitalism also makes the labor of thinking possible on the broadest basis, as only capitalism is able to provide it."[1] Here we have an analogous situation, excepting perhaps the intermediary role of the Getty trustees, and the Getty fortune is now available as only capitalism can provide it. Does capitalism expect any returns from such an operation? Does the elite funding source necessarily mean an elite intellectual production?

The Getty Tree

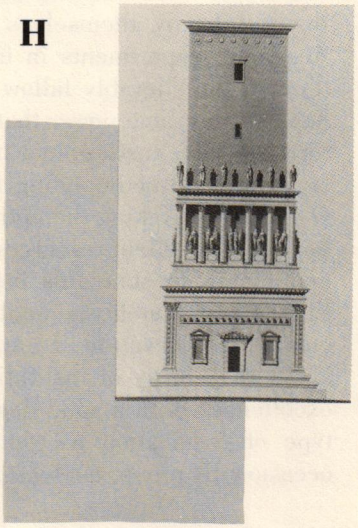
HISTORICAL RESEARCH



CAMILLE PISSARRO (1830–1903), LETTER WITH OBSERVATIONS ON BRUSH STROKES



PRESENTATION DRAWINGS OF THE OPERA AND THE PREMIER COUR OF THE PALAIS ROYAL, PARIS (1765), LOUIS PIERRE MOREAU-DESPROUX



LOUIS FRANÇOIS CASSAS. TEMPLE OF JUPITER AT BAALBEK (1799-1800).

KF: The unusual source of funding, the Getty Trust, has had a happy encounter with an equally unusual president, Harold Williams, who is not bound by narrow professional or academic views. The Trust decided to establish the best possible laboratory for research in the history of art—in all its manifestations—and this effort will consume the energy of numerous people for years to come. It is, next to the plans one frames for one's own life, the largest and longest task I've ever confronted. What we do today and tomorrow will really benefit the next generation more than ourselves. The scope and ambition of the Getty Center oblige us to the sharpest scrutiny of our plans, but they also require a heftier dose of imagination than orthodox institutions are either ready or desirous to accept. Perhaps only the resources of a major trust promise to sustain an effort that will have to last for many years before its quality and results are fully apparent. It may be a rather humbling recognition that today's intellectual efforts depend, after all, on an enormous investment of labor and thought. Just to find the books you need and the photographs you may wish to have in one place, not to mention all the bibliographic ramifications and, most of all, congenial and stimulating company, these desirable circumstances are very hard to create. We have the support, financial and institutional, to try the nearly impossible: create in one generation what has taken several everywhere else. We may be lucky in one essential matter; we set out on this adventure precisely when the entire tradition of scholarly work is rapidly shifting gears. For centuries libraries and archives have been steadily built up along similar lines. To be sure, there were major improvements along the way, but little that compares with the revolution of data automation. Were it not for automation—in many of its applications—we could never dream of growing the way we do. Well on our way toward 400,000 volumes, and deep into our second million photographs, the Getty Center has taken the "automation plunge." This decision makes us no more flat-footed technocrats than a greasy card catalogue will make sensitive intellectuals.

You ask about the expected returns on the massive investment in the Center. The primary result is, of course, that such a center for research will be available to scholars at all, and that it will be able to pursue a singularly free policy, tethered neither to narrowly academic goals, nor to what you might call "art-market forces." We expect to create a unique setting for the pursuit of diverse research agendas, most of them with a healthy dose of critical thinking.

When I arrived at the center, I established the Archives of the History of Art. The main purpose of the archives lies not so much in its collection as in the larger goal of a constant critical analysis of the discipline itself. The records of its practices and its changes alert us to the fact that the study of art is embedded in a project of reflection on the culture at large. We hope to follow in due course with a series of critically edited texts that constitute the historic pilings of our field. Today's art historians are often oblivious to the history of their field and the ramifications of method and interpretation. We've made such an academic industry out of the study of art that many truly cannot see the forest for the trees. . . .

You worry about the quality of intellectual production.

Nothing is more troublesome. Surely you don't think that institutions by themselves are able to ensure quality. Academic departments in famous universities have gone through unbelievably fallow periods, made possible perhaps by the same power that would have been required to turn the tide. Institutional power is deeply ambivalent; it is as capable of impeding fresh thinking as it is of encouraging it. Taking the optimistic view, one may perhaps hope that excellent resources will attract excellent people, and that high standards established for the creation of libraries and archives would oblige new generations to comparable devotion. I am, however, rather pessimistic about the ability of institutions to guarantee intellectual excellence. With a good deal of luck, we may escape the type of ossification to which academic institutions are occasionally prone, not least because we are *not* academic.

DBR: Historical research in the arts is usually based on the study of primary sources, such as artifacts and documentary evidence, combined with an evaluation of secondary sources. Although based in Southern California, the Museum's collecting interests in the past have gravitated to pre-20th-century Europe, and the center's research facilities at this point seem geared to parallel this direction. Although your documentary archive is making acquisitions at a vast rate, you still cannot hope to supply the sort of evidence that one uses at the sites where these works were made, such as the research you have been carrying out on Mantua. Does this mean that the Getty is more interested in research based on secondary sources? Would it not be more logical to focus research and archival attention on local phenomena? What are the anticipated research strategies of people using the center?

KF: Nobody can duplicate local archives or make up for the distance from objects of study. Local collections, such as the Gonzaga Archives in Mantua to which I have returned periodically over many years, have come about through centuries. But I'm sure you've had the same experience I have: at many a moment the Mantuan archives and buildings, instead of holding all the answers, confronted you with questions you could not possibly investigate on the spot. Simply because we're located in Los Angeles, we don't think that research should focus "on secondary sources." And simply because we are located in Los Angeles is not reason enough to study only what surrounds us. We must do both, we must engage in projects that are conducted anywhere in the world, and we must still aim to create the best unified research center here. This aim is no mean feat. If we conduct a photographic campaign, as we did last summer, in Rome and Mantua, or if we collaborate with libraries and photographic collections in England or Germany, we collaborate no less with UCLA.

Perhaps the most valuable opportunity the center can offer is connected to its distance from the many sites of historical interest. We provide a setting for reflection, for the scrutiny and exchange of ideas. Historians need as much time to analyze their findings and test their ideas as they need to dig up and gather information on the spot. This raises the larger problem of what are primary and what are secondary sources. Some of our distinctions may be rash, too narrowly focused on the "object" as opposed to its interpretation. A great deal of what used to be called secondary material turns out to be intimately linked to works of art. We may be inclined to approach works of art and architecture as if we were the first to see them, but we also learn that neither we nor the works remain immune to what has been thought and done about them since their creation.

DBR: The Getty Center is fully committed to "automated" research, providing personal computers for all its participants and computerizing all of the data in its various departments. First the photocopier and now the personal computer have revolutionized the historian's mnemonic capabilities, not to mention his writing style. It seems to be as significant an influence on the technology of scholarship as the introduction of the printing press five hundred years ago. It won't be long before data systems begin to replace scholars' shoeboxes full of three-by-five index cards. Although it seems the logical extension of conventional research methods, and only a Luddite could oppose it, is this computer technology indifferent? Will we be satisfied with the lack of accountability implied by "computer errors," where once we noticed flaws in reasoning? How do you see the undeniable quantitative leap affecting the qualities of randomness and subjectivity that have so often been a characteristic of humanities' research?

KF: Research in the true sense of the term will never be automated; search for information, yes. Altogether too much that is merely search gets to be called research—perhaps because so much of it *is* little more than research, rehash, repeat. Once the pool of data on most any subject has reached a certain quantitative level, conventional methods of capture are simply inadequate. To think that "automated" information is neutral would be as naive as to assume that handwritten entries are error-free. Error, in the end, is error. Automated error is error so many times over.

The use of word processors, for example, always reminds me of something very much more archaic than futuristic. I think the PC is a word-loom. You go on and on, weaving your sentences, picking up a run, tying a thread, changing to a new one, but you totally lose the sense of where you are, what length your text has grown to, how many pages will come out of your printer. One of the greatest achievements of many centuries of writing—the *page*—has disappeared while you're composing your text. Admittedly, this is just the kind of subjectivity you brought into question. Yet I see an increasing, and highly intriguing, manifestation of the scholar's subjectivity in recent research, a *reflected* subjectivity. Possibly the overwhelming multiplication of data has something to do with it, but if anything,

the conventions of our discipline—where it used to be preferable to contort sentences rather than to say I—prevented the reflection of the scholar's own condition in his work of scholarship. This is false neutrality. In fact, it amounts to repressed reflection, damaging in the end both to subject and object.

DBR: Let's move to the subject of research in architectural history. Over fifteen years ago, John Maass pointed out in "Where Architectural Historians Fear to Tread" that the American establishment of architectural historians at that time confined its research within a polite, humanistic rut, rarely venturing to non-Western or non-high art topics, nor was it cognizant of urban issues, nor sensitive to economic and political factors.[2] In the intervening years, this academic myopia has been given some new lenses, and we've seen such things as the legitimation of vernacular architectural history and a flowering of urbanistic studies. Nonetheless the astigmatism remains and it is undeniable that in this country the predominantly individualistic and bourgeois values of historians direct where they focus their attention, accounting for the continued totemic command of masterpieces in our historical field of vision. Do you think the institutions, that is, universities or fellowship programs, in their apportionment of research territory for the architectural historian are so ideologically bound? And, are the boundaries of the field as important as the method one applies?

KF: Mr. Maass suffers a kind of myopia of his own. I, for one, would never make the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* the measure of anything; yet, he had a point and you stated it again. What gets published by the *Journal*, or *The Art Bulletin*, for that matter, is typical of "company journals," organs of a particular cluster of interests. There is definitely nothing wrong with that fact per se; what is distorted, however, is the field as a whole.

The distortions may occur for a number of reasons, some of them rather pragmatic and obvious, others more insidious. You won't be able to change only one thing at will within an institutional/professional framework, while leaving everything else intact. We all know how narrowly and conventionally the various fields and their historical specializations are apportioned in colleges and universities. It is already difficult for people who are neither clearly in the Renaissance nor in the Baroque to qualify for openings in either field, much less will you find a flowering of studies in vernacular building when virtually nobody hires teachers in this field. We do well to work in more than one area of specialization, but, I admit, both might be "wrong." Unless universities break this pernicious habit of dividing the pie along such lines of specialization, and, concomitantly, reform their training of graduate students, it seems futile to clamor for greater diversity of research territories.

Moreover, different fields undoubtedly suggest different approaches and enable scholars to frame some questions better than others. The choice of field clearly transcends logic, too. There's got to be more to an intellectual commitment than the interest of one's teacher, job prospects, or good counsel.

The question you imply, namely, how ideologically blinkered is our approach to a particular subject or field, remains one of the most persistent ones. There's little doubt in my mind that the study of palaces and churches in near exclusivity reflects a socio-cultural *parti pris*, as opposed to the study of urban building in a more coherent fashion, or of ecclesiastic institutions across a broad spectrum. Indeed, it may well be the new commitment to the study of towns that prompted a change of optic. One cannot hope to understand the life of a town by examining building after building, and one would mistake the issues of urban architecture by a single-minded appreciation of places and changes. Similarly, when I turned to the study of rural structures, I did not do so simply in contrast to my examination of grand villas by Giulio Romano and Palladio, but rather in complement to them. One can write more than one history of the Renaissance villa....

This is perhaps the moment to remind ourselves that the historian is not the only one looking at historic buildings. Theoretical agendas may communicate, however secretly, with the architect's agenda of practice. Just as historians have a strategy that allows them to combine disparate historic instances, architects imagine ways of accomplishing the same in their practice. It need not work in parallel either, but it certainly works in some kind of rapport. To explore these rapports between historical thought and architectural practice is quite an urgent matter. I'm concerned with this in my current study of Schinkel. The Berlin architect sought at once a new grounding for architecture in a system *and* a new freedom of invention in design. He made "construction" the basis of his system, historic knowledge the reservoir of his invention. In the former he instituted a trans-historic category, in the latter he historicized imagination. What is more, he acknowledged both: where he is closest to historic models, as in the architectural trim, the friezes, figures and acroteria, he tends to employ modern materials, such as zinc castings; where he is farthest removed from classical precedent, in the widely and evenly fenestrated façades of gridlike design, he adheres to a radical form of trabeation and to the finest distinctions of his historic models. There is a dialectic at work here, and it enables Schinkel to make truly modern what is old, to make architecture over in the nascent terms of modern production. No Graves he, but more inventive in his handling of historically determined forms.

DBR: While some insist on the primacy of investigating the "material" of architecture, others, such as Michael Baxandall, remind us that the historian produces above all language about things, and that this is indeed the major problem.[3] The methods of

architectural history would probably be the least agreed upon matter if they were not so infrequently addressed. The givens are the legacy received from art history, such as the stylistic and formal categories of Wölfflin, the typological categories of Frankl, the interpretive conventions of Panofsky, and the sociological approach of Hauser. These have been supplemented with more pragmatic approaches, such as those used by architects who follow their intuition or particular interests, rather than the inherited system of analysis. What is your opinion of contemporary methods in architectural history, that is, do you see a pattern? What can we hope these attitudes to history will reveal for us?

KF: Architecture, like the performing arts, is largely a *collective* enterprise. I'm not only thinking of the obvious fact that construction, and even design, involves many participants, but also of the larger circumstances in which architecture is thought and practiced: it isn't a one-man affair even with Michelangelo or Le Corbusier. The very idea of building, its schemes and purposes, the technical and organizational dimensions, are all collective and highly mediated. There is a collective matrix to many other individual crafts too, but architecture has always been recognized in the West as one of three primary enterprises of organized society: agriculture, architecture, and—one hates to admit it—warfare, all of them made possible by Prometheus's gift of fire to man.

The history of architecture (really a much more accurate term than "architectural history") has flourished in the last quarter century or so, because many questions raised by historians could be addressed succinctly and precisely in an area of such collective production as architecture. To be sure, historians of painting, such as Michael Baxandall, have discussed the educational and professional underpinnings of artistic practice, but the workings of social and productive transmissions are much more observable in architecture. While social mediation of ideas is, of course, equally at work in painting or literature, it seems to take an often highly internalized form, elusive in its definition and fraught with psychological and circumstantial problems. The technical side of architecture alone offers a view into some of the most complex aspects of a society's production and ideology.

Wölfflin, Frankl, and Panofsky largely ignored these mediations and mechanisms, Wölfflin and Frankl in favor of a much more formal description of buildings, and Panofsky, of an entirely culturally based analysis (Panofsky never invoked any other sources than those of the highest literary and philosophical standing). However, new studies of architecture by Kenneth Frampton, Manfredo Tafuri, Joseph Connors—to name just a few—enter deeply into the archival and physical evidence, and they are now able to *explain* many aspects that remained either puzzling or purely speculative. The traditional obligation to study documentation, sources, drawings, building craft, patron, and purpose is gaining new strength; and the best works transcend the dutiful compilation of facts and reach the level of actual hypothesis. Therefore interpretation ceases to revert to private ideas about the architect's intentions and instead fastens on the mechanisms of invention and building.

Arnold Hauser's *Social History of Art* contributed nothing per se to the study of architecture, to the specific understanding of its production, or its reception. He used a very broad brush to paint his historic panorama, and literature was one of its prime ingredients. Today, we are much more interested in matters of technics and in the complexities of social life. With respect to the latter, perhaps Sir John Summerson's work on the urban history of London, and a spate of Italian studies on individual towns, have done more than any number of social histories.

I would like to return to one central experience: historians of architecture may well feel isolated in what they are doing, but their theory nonetheless connects with practice. My acquaintance with the work of living architects has taught me as much as my knowledge of past practice. Don't tell me that I'm simply a victim of the historian's vice, that I project backward what applies today, that I do violence to the past by looking at it through the distortion lens of the present. The matter is much more delicate. We need to reflect our own conditions in our patient study of the past, just as we have to recognize that history is not simply what happened, but how it looks to us, how we perceive it from our coign of vantage.

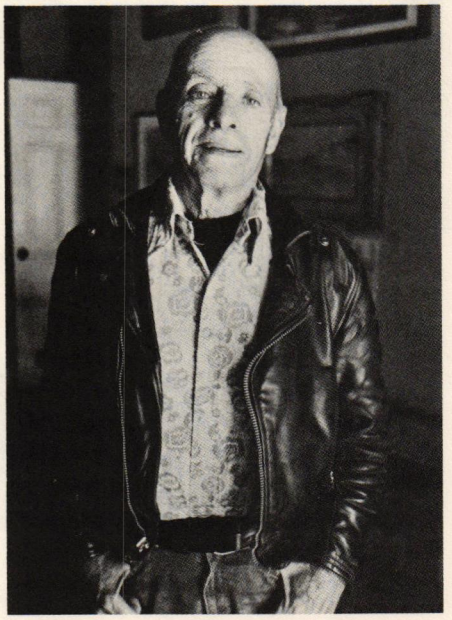
This may be as true in the breach as in the observance. Manfredo Tafuri has turned back to the study of Renaissance architecture after extremely stimulating excursions into modern architecture. This could only be regretted, were it not for the fact that his studies of Venetian buildings are so productive and absorbing. He must have his own reasons, but they seem to give rise to astonishing consequences. If I may differ in my view of theory and practice from Tafuri's, expressed to you in these pages, it would be to cast serious doubt on his assumption that architects ought to build rather than read. This adage—most often invoked by reactionaries who never fail to put people into their place à la "*Schuster bleib bei deinem Leisten*" (the German proverb about "Paint, painter, don't talk")—this recommendation that architects build and historians write history glosses over one of the most productive quandaries in modern times: practice has to be reflected and informed, thinking has its implications for practice. Let's practice thinking architecture in such dimensions.

1. Kurt Forster, "Aby Warburg's History of Art: Collective Memory and the Social Mediation of Images," in *Daedalus*, 1976, p. 170.

2. John Maass, "Where Architectural Historians Fear to Tread," in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 28, no. 1, March 1969, pp. 3–8.

3. Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention*, Yale, 1985.

THE ESSENTIAL AND VERNACULAR LANDSCAPES



J. B. JACKSON, 1983. PHOTO BY ANNE NOGGLE, FROM THE *NEW MEXICO PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY* PROJECT COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO.

The Essential Landscape: The New Mexico Photographic Survey with Essays by J. B. Jackson, edited by Stephen A. Yates, University of New Mexico Press, 1985, 147 pp., illus., $45.00.

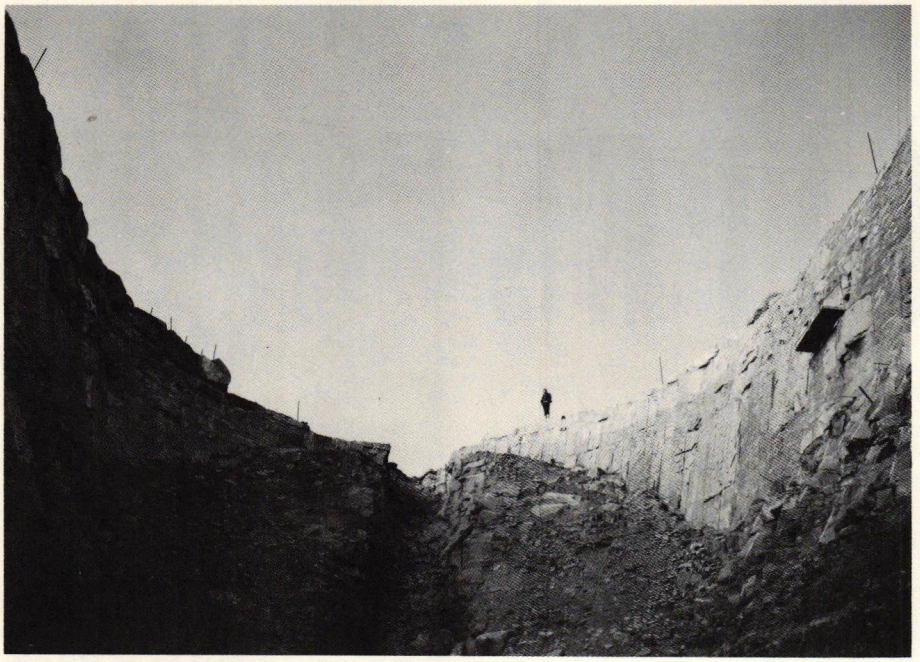
Discovering the Vernacular Landscape, J. B. Jackson, Yale, 1984, 165 pp., illus., $16.50.

Urban Circumstances, edited by J. B. Jackson, Special Issue of *Design Quarterly,* no. 128, MIT Press, 1985, $7.50.

BY DAVID HARVEY

A generation ago J. B. Jackson revolutionized discourse on landscape in a series of short, pithy articles in *Landscape* magazine. The republication of some of these articles in *The Essential Landscape* and a collection of more recent writings in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* are an opportunity to take the measure of his achievements.

The Essential Landscape intersperses Jackson's essays with a selection of photographs by twelve participants in the New Mexico Photographic Survey. Beautifully produced by the Univer-



STAR AXIS, LOOKING NORTH, 1/6/83

sity of New Mexico Press, many of the photographs are stunning in conception and production (though I dearly wished the full catalogue had been printed on a more legible scale). The twelve different lenses record a lot of variation but also impart a dominant impression (the essential landscape perhaps?). Superficially monotonous but infinitely subtle of detail, New Mexico is portrayed as a tough and sharp-edged land churned over by a sequence of ever more brash human activities, the layerings of which form a palimpsest of landscapes for the trained eye to unravel.

It has been J. B. Jackson's lifelong mission to teach us how to read such scenes. The essays by Jackson are, however, quite distinct and complement the prints only in the sense that he provides another set of eyes and a different medium of communication. All of the essays—apart from the introductory "Looking at New Mexico"—are reprints, five of them from the 1950s. These early essays pulse with excitement and vigor, the possessed certitude of the explorer who knows there is something out there to be discovered, if we can only stretch our imaginations and learn to see it right. Take, for example, that brilliant, if occasionally whimsical, essay, "Chihuahua As We Might Have Been," contrasting the landscapes on either side of that artificial line that separates Chihuahua from New Mexico (different senses of time and space yield quite different places in similar natural environments). Or read with joy (and there is no other word to describe the experience) the wonderfully evocative essay on the "High Plains Country." Heady stuff this, born out of an intensity of conviction and lived experience that seems to well up out of the New Mexico landscape itself.

But Jackson is after something much grander and more universal than inspired description. He projects a compelling vision that the study of landscape—if we can only liberate ourselves from the deadweight of convention—stands to reveal something important about society, environment, and our personal relation to both. Through the study of landscape we can, in short, better understand who we are, and that truth holds for all of us, no matter what our class, race, or cultural background. His vision is populist, universal, and quintessentially human.

The early essays vibrate with a certain liberatory and celebratory power. They created a space into which many others (particularly the cultural geographers with whom Jackson increasingly identifies himself) rushed. What Jackson did with the opportunity he himself created is documented in a series of works, *American Space* and *The Necessity for Ruins* being the best known. His more recent essays, collected in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, cover a variety of topics, all the way from urban parks and American country towns to more general comparisons of landscapes from the Old and New Worlds, or from pre-modern to modern times. The search for universals is more explicit, particularly in the introductory and concluding essays. How far, then, has Jackson come in his quest and how far has he fallen short in terms of his initial vision?

My judgment must, unfortunately, be rather severe in this regard. I say "unfortunately" because I find his original vision powerfully valid and the initial essays exemplary. By contrast, the synthesis attempted in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* lacks cogency and verve and all too frequently lapses into tentative and banal generalization. When Jackson takes on specifics (as in "A Puritan Looks at Scenery" or "Country Towns") he proves he still has his old touch. And there are moments in the more general pieces when he seems to have hit on something profound. But the insights are quickly drowned in a tentative meandering that, although sometimes charming, leads nowhere in particular. The problem, of course, is that Jackson desperately wants it all to lead somewhere, to some universal conception of a "prototypical landscape, or more precisely landscape as a primordial idea" of which all landscapes are "merely so many imperfect manifestations." From the summit of that idealist project the descent into banality is precipitate and catastrophic.

So let me try and track down what goes wrong, why the brilliance of particular essays fails to build into

PUEBLO BONITO, CHACO CANYON, 1982

powerful universals. In the process I think we might also come to understand why the failure of the general has something to do with the brilliance of the particular.

Jackson asserts that he has always been able to handle the phenomena of landscape "without much difficulty." His problem has been "how to define (or redefine) the concept landscape." I want ultimately to challenge what appears to me to be a misguided self-evaluation. For the moment let me simply follow Jackson's thoughts. He worries in both the conclusion and the preface about the etymology of the word landscape, as if wrestling with that alone can unravel all mysteries. Coming to a dead end down that path, he fashions a definition of landscape in terms of the combination of two elements—the traditional, the mobile, and the vernacular on the one hand and the "authority of legally established premeditated permanent forms on the other." A landscape is then understood as "a field of perpetual conflict and compromise between what is established by authority and what the vernacular insists upon preferring." This gives a clue to the particular thrust of Jackson's recent writings, for he feels that the vernacular has been little appreciated or understood and that landscapes have been too frequently looked at in terms of the premeditated permanent forms.

Jackson has here committed himself to the idea that there is an equivalence between permanence and authority and that the vernacular is identifiable with mobility and change of a certain sort—"the unending patient adjustment to circumstance" within individualized, irregular, and small spaces. Out of that identity, Jackson spins a threefold classification of landscapes. Landscape One, typical of medieval Europe, is dominated by the vernacular, a devotion to common customs and marked by an "inexaustible ingenuity in finding short-term solutions." It was, however, a landscape without signs of political history, a "landscape without memory or forethought." The Renaissance shaped a very different type of landscape. Power and authority were written firmly into a political landscape dedicated to permanence and continuity—whatever was "temporary or short-lived or movable" was not encouraged. But then Jackson becomes tentative. Maybe, he says, there is a third kind of landscape "which we can see in certain aspects of contemporary America," one which lacks harmony and balance between mobility and permanence. "I do not believe," he says, "that the Establishment—political, intellectual, artistic—is aware of the vitality and extent of that vernacular element" nor "recognizes the danger of having two distinct sublandscapes, one dedicated to stability and place, the other dedicated to mobility." We seem to be drifting back to Landscape One with "its detachment from formal space, its indifference to history, and its essential utilitarian, conscienceless use of the environment" and abandoning the humanist tradition of the Renaissance.

Strangely tentative stuff from someone who claims to handle landscapes without much difficulty. We hit the same tentativeness in the final essay reprinted in *The Essential Landscape* (originally published in 1979) where Jackson explores the metaphor of "Landscape as Theater." That metaphor works well for the Renaissance: "It was then that men first undertook to impose order and design on the surroundings not merely to survive but to produce a kind of beauty glorifying and making visible a particular relationship among men, and between men and nature." I pass by the egregious error (humans have long sought to produce space in an image that says something about their relation to nature and each other—read Lévi-Strauss, Paul Wheatley, Yi-Fu Tuan) to arrive at the arresting image of European Renaissance landscapes as "spectacle in the sense of a dramatic production with a well-defined space, an organization of place and time, and coherent action." The image does seem to capture something important. But what? Jackson merely asserts that human beings (for reasons not discussed) suddenly felt free of environmental influences, able to treat nature as a backdrop of beauty, myth, and magic against which they could play out their own sense of delight and wonder. But all of that gave way—again for reasons Jackson barely hints at (new trading relations, the

consolidation of the nation state?)—and the sense of landscape changed toward the mid-17th century. It "ceased to mean exclusively spectacle and came to mean drama, the analysis and solution of a problem." The myths and magic of place gave way to the functional abstractions of utilitarian space, and the drama was internalized as psychological or political confrontation. "The metaphor of landscape as theater ceased to be useful or appropriate" as our understanding became more rigorously scientific and utilitarian. The search was on for a new and more vivid metaphor. But Jackson lamely concludes, "we are still searching." Looking back, we can interpret the 19th-century landscape in terms "of a metaphor of growth and decay and evolution." But it is "still too early to understand the new twentieth century landscape."

Such an admission, taken together with the failure to be explicit about Landscape Three, is nothing short of extraordinary. And the failure is all the more startling because Jackson's descriptions of particular landscapes are often so compelling they support his claim that he has no difficulty handling them.

But the landscapes Jackson deals with are, it turns out, all of a certain sort. Here lies the first clue to his failure to identify universals of any real power. For example, not a single urban landscape is included in these collections. The closest he gets to urban scenes are country towns (and the transformation of their main streets), trailer camps and mobile homes, and particular houses and parks that may or may not be in large urban settings. The special issue of *Design Quarterly* edited by Jackson under the misleading title "Urban Circumstances" avoids the heart of our modern metropolises entirely and merely brushes at the suburban or small-town fringes.

How, it might reasonably be asked, can anyone hope to come up with a universal conception of or metaphor for modern landscapes while studiously avoiding the modern urban scene?

Jackson's omissions (and there are many equally damaging) would not be so fatal to his quest for universals if he would trust eyes other than his own. But this he steadfastly refuses to do. He is appallingly parochial. What he does not see simply does not count. He knows, for example, that the city is there, but, like Wordsworth, he reduces it to a far-off obnoxious event. His ideal community, he confesses, is one "free from metropolitan domination." He takes that kind of sensibility to extremes in an essay on "Agrophilia." A cultural preference for the horizontal is giving the American landscape a very different tone from the European. "Everywhere the tendency to eliminate the vertical is evident." So what does he say about the skyline of a Denver or a Dallas rising above the plains, New York's verticality versus London's horizontality? No problem. A high rise is simply "another and more complex form of horizontality" because it is "a stack of large uninterrupted horizontal spaces." It is hard to take this seriously. Even if the argument of cultural preference made sense in itself (as opposed to the forces of land rent and the organization of construction and developer industries under contemporary capitalism), the shocking circularity of his argument should be readily apparent.

This brings me to the heart of my objections to Jackson's enterprise. He holds himself in splendid isolation from intellectual currents and debates that have the deepest relevance to his chosen themes. Consider, for example, the debate over modernity and its meaning. Baudelaire interpreted modernity as the institutionalization of impermanence, and was thereby able to grasp the scenes of urban transformation in Haussmann's Paris by fashioning a new kind of sensibility. Walter Benjamin, reflecting on that cultural transition, saw that it had to do with the hegemony of always transitory moments of commodity exchange. And Marshall Berman has recently reminded us, in *All That is Solid Melts Into Air*, that modernity is a universally shared mode of vital experience of space and time, of self and others, "that promises us adventure, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and at the same time that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are." Have these dialectical qualities of modern life nothing to do with Jackson's landscapes? There are moments when he echoes such a sensibility and even dwells upon it (as, for example, in his analysis of the commercial strips of small-town America and of mobile homes). Why, then, does he not even consider the possibility that Landscape Three is characterized by institutionalized impermanence rather than by a more traditional conflict between the permanence of institutional authority and the mobility of the vernacular? For my own part, and coming out of a more Marxian frame of reference, I have long argued that capitalism has been impelled by its own thirst for accumulation to create a landscape in its own image at one point in history only to have to destroy it later to make room for further capital accumulation. Out of that comes a metaphor of "creative destruction" for understanding contemporary landscapes (a metaphor that arose spontaneously out of the rubble of Haussmann's urban renewal and was transformed by the economist Schumpeter into an image of the heroism of the entrepreneur).

My point, of course, is not that Jackson should accept any of these particular interpretations, but that he could pave a more secure path toward the universals he seeks by consideration of them. And he needs that support precisely because he is so selective in the landscapes he chooses to consider. Had he looked at the Bronx, or the rusting landscapes of de-industrialization, he might himself

have coined a metaphor of creative destruction. Had he set himself in Baltimore's Harborplace he might have recognized that the metaphor of landscape as theatrical spectacle is not dead but self-consciously employed, not only in Disneyland, but in almost every contemporary urban renewal project (a habit that, as T. J. Clark recently reminds us in his *Painters of Modern Life*, goes back at least to Haussmann's use of spectacle in the transformation of Second Empire Paris). To be sure, the backdrop is no longer "nature" but the artificially created second nature of the built environment. The metaphor persists but its context and meaning change historically.

Eschewing all such considerations and isolating himself from what other equally perceptive observers might see, Jackson pursues his quest for universal meaning armed only with his own reflective thoughts and his own pair of eyes.

But what eyes! There's the saving grace! For in those landscapes where Jackson does feel at home (precisely, I suspect, because they pose him with no difficulty), his observations are acute and sometimes nothing short of splendid. And here his self-conscious avoidance of a priori canons of visual interpretation seems to help. If the contemporary landscapes of the nonmetropolitan American South and West could speak, it would surely be with Jackson's voice. His observations here are a veritable gold mine to be plundered at will by his readers. Not a little of the interest comes from the way Jackson rapidly rotates his lenses to highlight contrasts, opposition, and difference. The almost dialectical qualities of his method arise from an intriguing struggle within Jackson's conscience and his consciousness as to how he ought to look at landscape. Let me illustrate that facet of his work briefly.

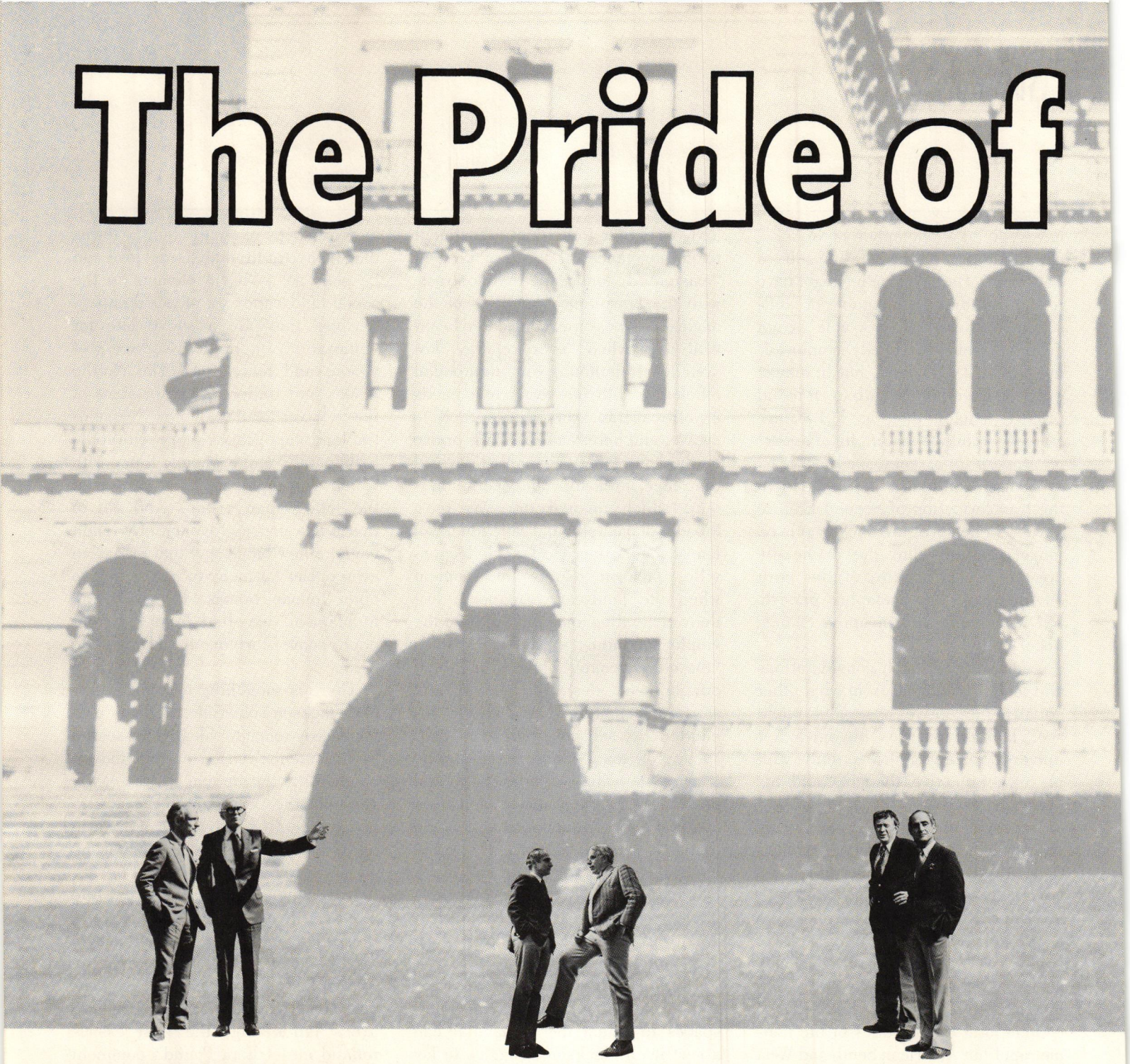
The *Vernacular Landscape* oozes with respect for the vernacular, broadly considered as the mobile but local and particular individual adjustment to circumstance. It forms a kind of "existential" landscape that contrasts with the "insidious" qualities of the engineer's landscape, considered beautiful only when "every energy flow system is functioning with unimpeded efficiency." But the vernacular needs a political framework if it is freely to evolve, and here Jackson heaps praise on the Jeffersonian vision that devised the range, township, and section system, which opened the way to a broadly democratic and individualized landscape in America. Like de Tocqueville, Jackson regrets the moment when the landscape engineers lost their civic allegiance and entered the employ of industry. That step broke "the old covenant" between man and environment, destroyed the ancient sense of community as a space "inhabited and self-governed by a small society of independent farmers" who learned the values of citizenship and piety through obligations to each other and that type of attachment to the land that harmonized human activities to natural circumstance. But the clock cannot be turned back. The American landscape "has destroyed the political organization of space in favor of an economic" organization.

But the engineer's landscape is not without its virtues, and it creates new spaces in which the vernacular can assert itself. Jackson struggles to lay aside romantic reactions and utopian visions, the conventions that eulogize a European or pre-industrial past at the expense of modernity. The engineer's highway, the automobile, and the mobile home, after all, create a new kind of freedom "from burdensome emotional ties with the environment," from communal responsibilities, from "the tyranny of the traditional home and its possessions," and of "belonging to a tight knit social order" in which "entrenched class and racial distinctions," a "disdain for experimentation, and a nostalgic attitude toward a long-vanished past" could all too easily predominate. The commercial strips of small country towns that many traditionalists despise can be seen as a "basic element in the social landscape as a physical entity" because they are a social site for "innovation, interaction, service provision, and recreation." The mobile homes and trailer parks are signs of the new vernacular. A new "existential landscape" takes shape within the technocratic and economic frame with which the engineers have subverted the Jeffersonian vision. And out of that a new sense of community might come, a new landscape that brings an even closer harmony to nature and to other human beings. Romance and utopianism, expelled from the front door, come storming in through the back.

There is something here for everyone. Jackson sometimes appears as a hopelessly romantic idealist possessed by an anarchist's vision of self-sufficient community, but he can just as easily slip into the role of hard-nosed materialist lauding the virtues of modern individualism. At some moments he adopts an elitist stance lauding authority, stability, and custom, while at others he exudes joy at the sight of individual and local subversion of establishment virtues and the creation of populist cultures. Beautifully written, sometimes irritating and sometimes tantalizing, the best essays remind me of Ezra Pound's comment on his experience of conversations with beautiful women—"the tingling of the invisible antennae is both stimulating and delightful." And Jackson should be read for just that, rather than for his labored and painful attempts at stating universal truths.

The *Essential Landscape* contains a portrait of Jackson. He appears as tough and sharp-edged as the New Mexico landscape he loves so well. He exudes an inviolable and rugged individualism, a special kind of isolated frontier wisdom harshly etched but softened slightly by a quizzical humor. That picture, at least, is worth a thousand words.

The Pride of



ROBERT STERN WITH PHILIP JOHNSON

... WITH PETER EISENMAN

... WITH VINCENT SCULLY

Pride of Place: Building the American Dream (A Personal View), Robert Stern, narrator, Murray Grigor, director, Public Broadcasting System. A companion volume, *Pride of Place*, by Robert A. M. Stern, has been published by Houghton-Mifflin, 1985, 365 pp., $34.95.

Although architecture is often the secret subject of films and television, Robert Stern's eight-part series is the first major American TV show to treat it directly. For the great distracted mass of TV viewers the series offers a grand tour of America's finest architecture, filmed in clear heroic strokes. For the more alert observer it proposes an equally clear reactionary version of this country's architectural past and a conservative program for the future that is a true testament of the Reagan era. So while the director, Murray Grigor, with the help of cameramen Terry Hopkins and Rob Orr, has opened our eyes to the glories of architectural form, we can never quite ignore the ideological message of Stern's text (unless of course we turn off the audio). TV technology is supposed to be getting progressively interactive, why not start here? Aside from any disagreements that one might have with Stern's "personal view," he is seriously miscast as the moderator of such a series: his hands fidget incessantly and his timing and delivery kill every potentially poetic line, not to mention his punch lines. Where the TV documentary usually relies on the avuncular manner of an Ali-

Prejudice

By Richard Ingersoll

THE BREAKERS, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

... WITH FRANK GEHRY

... WITH PHILIP JOHNSON

... WITH MAX BOND

stair Cooke-type, Stern appears as a perspicacious nephew.

But there is much of value and much of it to Stern's credit, and we should not let his personality or party line prevent us from seeing the buildings. *Pride of Place*, which outspokenly champions the architecture of the privileged, also gives a privileged view of architectural space, with breathtaking aerial sequences of the major sites visited, caressingly slow pans across the articulation of the walls, majestic tilts to show scale, and brilliantly conceived tracking shots to show spatial sequences. Considering the problems of lighting real buildings and filming in tight spaces, the crew achieved miracles of seemingly effortless movement through space, usually with great respect for the way one's eye would travel to details, only occasionally veering off into pomposity, as in the parting shots of Rockefeller Center or the initial shots of the University of Virginia. Film has the most potential for describing space of any medium, and though there are occasional problems with the editing, this show has the best architectural cinematography that money can buy (and the great number of aerial shots remind us of the generous budget).

The selection of sites is arranged in a typological manner: the campus, the residence, the suburb, the resort, the large interior space, the tower, and the grid. Stern avoids institutional categories, thus sparing himself the task of comprehending housing, hospitals, factories, and government buildings that are less easy to "dream"

about. Nonetheless, within his narrow palette he has chosen colorful examples of an interesting variety. The photography is so good that it is the next best thing to visiting the nearly one hundred sites featured. We travel from Plymouth Rock and Plimoth Plantation (where buildings are being built according to 17th-century methods) to the Johnson Wax Company in Racine, Wisconsin, to Vizcaya, Florida, to Pullman, Illinois, to Kahn's Salk Institute in La Jolla, California. It is an intelligently structured tour of great buildings that anyone sensitive to architecture will find enriching, and will undoubtedly inspire the uninitiated, perhaps even to an architectural vocation. Another compelling reason for architects to watch the show is Stern's guest list, which includes many of his cronies and colleagues from Columbia University, and some of the most visible critics writing about architecture today, including Charles Jencks, Stanley Tigerman, Paul Goldberger, Suzana Torres, and Frank Gehry. The pace of the show allows very few of them to really get out their lines, but there are memorable exceptions. In the first show, wouldn't you know that one of the first prominent women architects in America (Theodate Pope Riddle) was also Philip Johnson's cousin! This allows for Johnson's entry and sets up a strange dynastic relationship that Stern as the TV nephew hopes will rub off. As they visit Johnson's Glass House, Stern recites that it is very American to escape into the wilderness and bring all the conveniences with you; Johnson quips: "Professor Stern, all I wanted to do was a better house than Mies was doing." Stern continues, "But Dr. Johnson, I don't think it was Mies you were taking on, I think you were taking on all of the history of architecture." Johnson retorts, "I think you're reading that into it, I just had to buy a lot."

Throughout the series, Stern is very concerned to get his guests to agree that architecture should return to historic styles. In the first show, while touring Yale, he has no trouble getting Vincent Scully to look at the nice scale of the Gothic-styled buildings and conclude that the reductiveness of modern architecture was really "a vested interest in incompetence." Jaquelin Robertson leads Stern through the gadgets and mannerist detail of Monticello with an aristocratic poise worthy of Jefferson. The radical classicism of one founding father is matched with the more conventional applied classicism at Mount Vernon, which Stern, mixing his cold war metaphors, calls "the Lenin's tomb of American architecture." With Johnson he wanders through cousin Theodate's Avon Old Farms prep school, admiring the Medievalist details. In Theodate's house, Johnson is allowed an indulgent conceit, noting matter-of-factly that her antique desk with the broken pediment top is "like certain buildings." The show will later close with an outtake of the broken pediment of his AT&T building.

Director Grigor has been very skillful at making formal matches, such as the minarets of Graves's San Juan Capistrano Library to Johnson and Burgee's spires on the PPG building in Pittsburgh. He makes the most astonishing visual rhyme in the third program on dream houses. The visit to San Simeon is supplemented with footage from *Citizen Kane*, then a cut to Stern in San Simeon's movie theater. Later in the program, while at Beauport, the Henry Sleeper house in Gloucester, Massachusetts, the camera, which has been scanning the bottles and glass globes that fill the theatrical interior, fixes on one of the globes, then cuts to the crystal snowball tumbling from Orson Welles's hands as he utters "Rosebud." Although this might appear to contain a moralistic message about the vanity of such dream houses, Stern's commentary tells us otherwise, as he revels in the use of historic styles and the grandiose shrines to monopoly capital that used them. A false past is better than no past at all. To test this hypothesis he goes to Peter Eisenman's House VI, where the conscious lack of historical references and the subverting of conventions was intended for another sort of "dream," not the fantasy return to a past that never was, but an analytical confrontation with the self. This exposition Stern hopes will be sufficiently scary to win back his notoriously escapist TV audience to "history."

In the fourth program he enlists Gwen Wright to endorse the new suburbanization of the Bronx, begun at Charlotte Gardens as the solution to all of America's urban problems. The image of the single-family house, as opposed to the collectivized utopian architecture of Modernist theorists, will supposedly transcend the social and economic sources of urban decay. In Stern's eyes the only thing wrong with Charlotte Gardens is the style of the buildings. Without irony he looks at Greenwood Cemetery as Olmsted's model for Llewellyn Park and other suburbs. For many people, the suburb represents a form of living death, since it denies the possibility of public life, and limits the prospects of social relations. The ideology of the single-family house (based pretty much on the scenario of the Cleaver family) actively discriminates against the alternative social structures present in modern America. After looking at the enlightened circulation planning of Radburn, Stern blames its demise on the consumer's love of the car. The more expedient solution of William J. Levitt is exhibited as a populist triumph, allowing every American the chance to fix up his dream home. Stern quotes with admiration Levitt's rather McCarthyite dictum, "No man who owns his own house and lot can be a communist, he has too much to do." In spite of the endless suburban sprawl, which, he admits, is a nightmarish realization of Wright's Broadacre City, Stern insists that planned suburbs are a dream worth keeping and that they are "the glory of Ameri-

can life and American art."

In the fifth program, he enjoins us to escape even farther into Arcadia, leaving New York's Central Park for the log aesthetic of the camps of the Adirondacks, the chateau-styled "cottages" of the robber barons at Newport, and Addison Mizner's Hispanic Renaissance developments at Palm Beach and Boca Raton. Morris Lapidus is given a chance to show us how he satisfied the middle-class clients of his Fontainebleau and Eden Roc hotels with the scenographic fantasies of their dreams, derived from Busby Berkeley musicals. The conclusion at Disney World and EPCOT seems geared to gratifying the average American's idea of a good time, not to mention sense of history. Here you can visit a "scaled-down and scrubbed up version of the world." Miniature historical versions of Paris, Venice, Beijing, and the mythical 19th-century American Main Street are served up as bits of consumable environment that have been effectively cut off from any real history or culture as safe substitutes. All risk of challenging the self has been eliminated by domesticating the foreign or historical Other; it is thus particularly dramatic when Stern, who consistently refuses to analyze escapism, takes Mickey Mouse's seat on the motorized trolley.

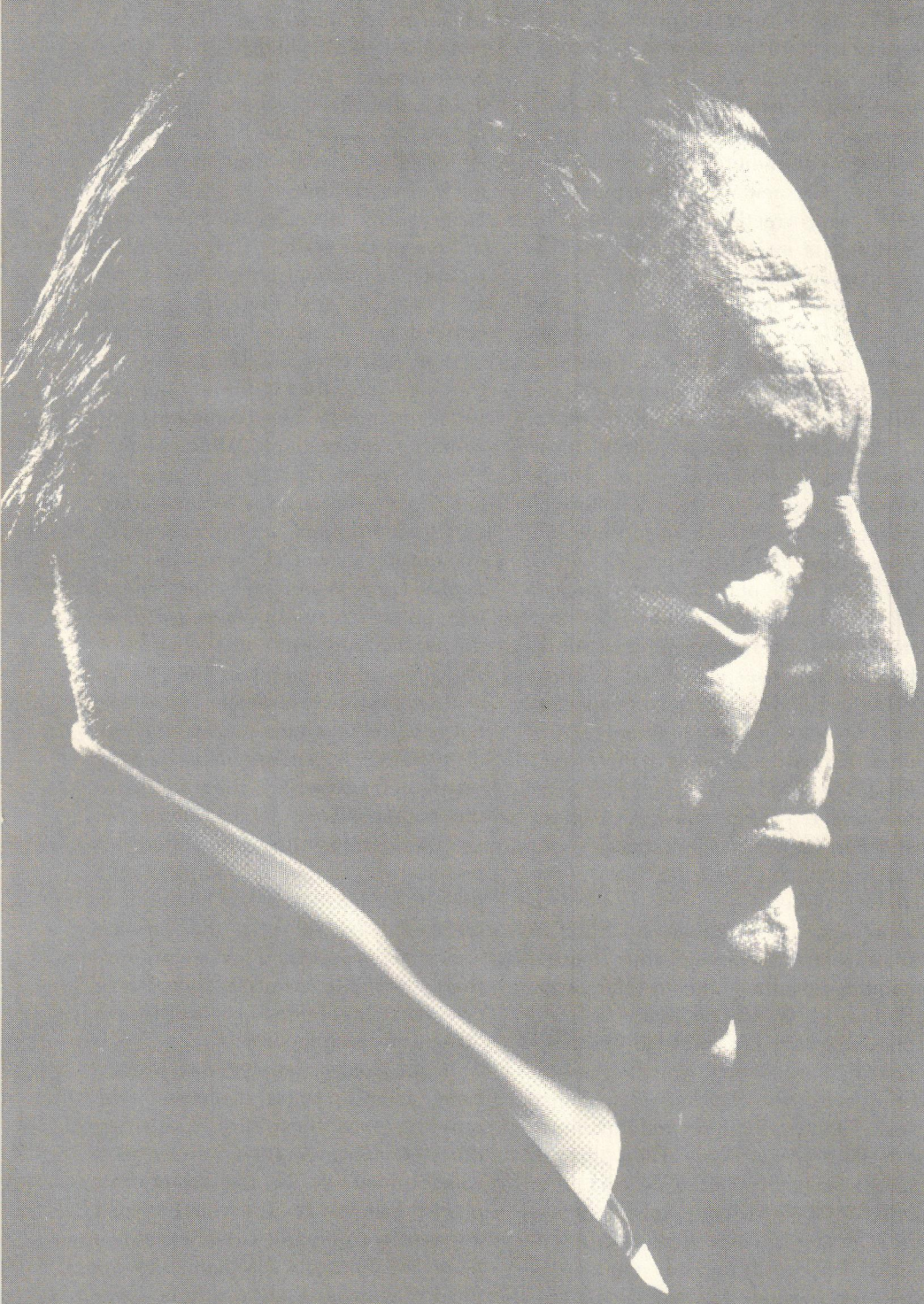
The sixth and seventh programs are intended for corporate clients. Stern begins by quoting one of Reagan's favorite political philosophers, Calvin Coolidge: "the business of America is business." He then takes us from the Capitol rotunda to Houston's Galleria to the Marin Civic Center, with a few digressions to the Philadelphia Academy of Art and the National Gallery, to show the public virtue of corporately sponsored covered space. His point is most convincing when he looks at Grand Central Station, which is studied in loving detail. Likewise, his tour of skyscrapers, with exceptionally beautiful treatments of the Woolworth Building, the Chrysler Building, and the Empire State Building (climaxing with footage from *King Kong*), is meant as a pitch to developers. Gerald Hines is brought on as a modern Medici, sponsoring Johnson and Burgee's new corporate-fantasy towers such as Penzoil, the Republic-Bank, and Transco. These are proposed as contributions to public life, though public life in Houston still seems a contradiction in terms. Gazing over the new windswept piazza at PPG, he correctly observes that the building is an advertisement for the company's product, and pronounces: "We know what to do, we know how to act, its meaning is clear. We can share in the pride of the corporation; it is their place, but is also our place." But let's face it, it's mostly their place.

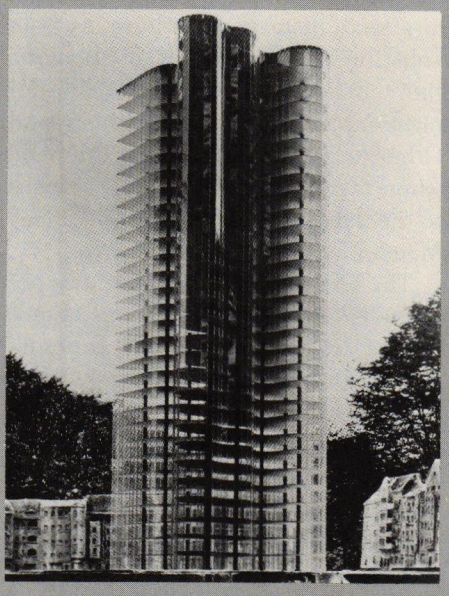
The final program is the most loaded and polemical. It is Stern's manifesto on the use of historical imagery in a city made of gardens and grids. After tracking Burnham's 1873 "White City" plan for the Chicago World's Fair to the white classical monuments of the Washington Mall, he cleverly uses Venturi's Western Plaza to illustrate the grid connected by diagonals of Washington, D.C.'s plan. Up until this point in the series, the favored cultural milieu has been predominantly prep school, Ivy League, and corporate or robber baron elite. During this final hour he trots out the architect Max Bond, who is black, to represent an alternative. Standing in front of the gleaming white marble columns of the Lincoln Memorial, Bond is allowed to say that classicism does not represent every cultural heritage in this country, and the associations with the Southern courthouse make it a particularly painful image for black Americans. Then through media magic they cut to Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech, delivered at the Lincoln Memorial, effectively appropriating this element of resistance, since "dream" is the leitmotiv of the series. TV has an incredible power to equivocate and neutralize all points of view, so that in the end the image becomes the only message. The next image is Maya Lin's Vietnam Memorial, which is a formal alternative to classicism, followed by Rockefeller's Empire State Plaza in Albany, and the Ames-sponsored public buildings in North Easton, Massachusetts, by H. H. Richardson, also nonclassical alternatives.

Just in case we find Stern's view of America a little too chauvinistic, he made certain his last guest, Leon Krier, was a foreigner. Together they wallow in the serious task of selling us Colonial Williamsburg as the model for American planning. In an open horse-drawn carriage, they traverse one of America's favorite tourist attractions, and find it the antidote to Modernism. It has commonsense solutions for readable urban hierarchies: civic buildings are placed in geometric relationships to each other and scaled-up and built of more permanent materials. Although all the houses are detached units, they maintain an urban quality because they are at the front edge of the lot, but still have an independent garden. As a criterion Krier suggests: "you cannot imagine making a tourist spot out of a Modernist environment, people just won't go there." After admiring the archaeological reconstruction of an 18th-century town inhabited by people who dress accordingly and pretend to live in that epoch (a project sponsored by John D. Rockefeller and strictly governed by a corporation), they enter a reconstructed tavern and very soberly toast "truth" and "clarity in architecture."

In the final scene at Stony Brook, Long Island, where Colonial-style buildings have been built ex-novo as the new town center, Stern tosses what appears to be the script into a trash can and recites from memory a passage from *The Great Gatsby*—more to show his allegiance to an ideal of glamour than to resume Fitzgerald's critique of its emptiness. His message to America, like Reagan's, is to keep on dreaming, to avoid the realities of time, history, and self.

M I



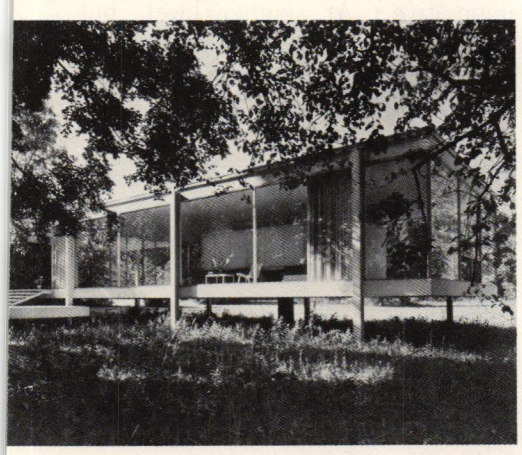


MODEL OF THE GLASS SKYSCRAPER PROJECT, BERLIN, 1922. HEDRICH-BLESSING. FROM SCHULZE, *MIES VAN DER ROHE*.

E S

The Analysis of Mies: A New Language or Old Clichés?

BY JUAN PABLO BONTA



FARNSWORTH HOUSE, PLANO, ILLINOIS, 1945–50. HEDRICH-BLESSING. FROM SCHULZE, *MIES VAN DER ROHE*.

BERLIN NATIONAL GALLERY, PHOTO BY BALTHAZAR KORAB. FROM SCHULZE, *MIES VAN DER ROHE*.

Mies van der Rohe: The Villas and Country Houses, Wolf Tegethoff, Museum of Modern Art, 1985 (distributed by MIT), 320 pp., illus., $55.00.

Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography, Franz Schulze, in association with the Mies van der Rohe Archive of the Museum of Modern Art, University of Chicago Press, 1985, 325 pp., illus., $39.95.

Mies van der Rohe, David Spaeth, preface by Kenneth Frampton, Rizzoli, 1985, 208 pp., illus., $25.00 pb.

Mies van der Rohe did not enjoy letting chance decide matters. Not in his buildings, where he controlled each detail to ensure that it contributed to the overall effect, and not with his life, or at least the public's perception of it. As shrewdly as Capitol Hill and as effectively as Madison Avenue, Mies manipulated the professional press, determining which of his earliest projects would be available for publication, or which photographs of his most recent ones would be released. When the background

for one of his buildings was not what he had in mind, he had the photographs retouched to remove the offending features (as he did in the case of the Barcelona Pavilion) and he made certain that no unretouched copies were published. When he did not wish to have the work of a particular period of his life subject to public scrutiny, he ordered the destruction of the relevant files (he did this, according to one of his assistants, as early as 1924). Even without willful suppression of evidence, many aspects of Mies's early career remain foggy, known only through recollections recorded many years after the fact. Many who wrote about him during his lifetime were eager to conform to his own views. Until recently, the critical evaluation of his life and work was restricted by the selective nature of the information available, and by the loyalty of the dwindling number of surviving relatives and former associates of the master.

This state of affairs started changing in 1965, when the Library of Congress obtained about 22,000 documents on Mies. In 1968 the Mies van der Rohe Archive at the Museum of Modern Art was established, following the acquisition of most of the architect's professional files and many of his personal papers—about 20,000 items. A wealth of material was thus made accessible to scholars. Because of the sheer size and limited accessibility of the material, the public could not benefit directly. Besides, the full significance of the documents was not apparent to the naked eye. A series of scholarly publications was needed to funnel new information and insights to trickle down to wider audiences. The process started with two monographs by Ludwig Glaeser—*Mies van der Rohe: Drawings in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art* (1969) and *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe: Drawings from the Design Collection and the Mies van der Rohe Archive* (1977). Wolf Tegethoff's *Mies van der Rohe: The Villas and Country Houses* (just released in English, but originally published in German in 1981) and Franz Schulze's recent *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* are the first book-length contributions to this welcome new wave of Miesian literature, and are likely to become definitive reference sources in their respective areas.

Tegethoff disapproves of the "few memorable slogans and a superficial tour through the architectural history of the twentieth century" that characterize much of architectural literature today; instead, he advocates "a precise knowledge of the sources and facts," and he proposes "to analyze in depth the buildings themselves." The proper objects for architectural analysis are, in the author's view, specific buildings (or projects); only after having explored them in detail can one effectively consider larger groupings, such as the production of an architect, a movement, a period, or a style.

Such a comprehensive approach imposes "necessarily narrow limits." Tegethoff examines only 21 of Mies's buildings and projects, all villas or country houses, in a loose typological, rather than functional, sense. (The Barcelona Pavilion of 1929 and the Krefeld Golf Club of 1930 were included in the corpus because of their residential scale and organization. The 50-by-50 House of 1951, on the other hand was ignored, for no explicit reason.) Each project is granted a chapter, and all chapters follow a loosely defined pattern, touching upon a series of factual and judgmental issues. The factual information comprises a review of the available sources (plans, photographs, models, documents), circumstances of the commission, contracts, correspondence between architect and client, dating of the project, program description, site analysis, design process, description of the solution, user reactions to the building, history of the building throughout its life span, and review of the literature. The judgmental part includes an analysis of influences on the project, or the influence of the project on other works, importance of the project within the total curve of Miesian work (especially as it relates to the other projects reviewed in the book), and evaluation. Additional issues are considered as warranted, and unknown or irrelevant points are skipped. Factual information is reported for every building, but lengthy evaluations are reserved for the most important projects.

At one level, *The Villas and Country Houses* is a compendium of the best information available about the projects. Its contribution at this level is very important: Tegethoff challenges the accepted dating, and even sequencing, of several of the early works; he reveals previously unreported facts about the physical organization or the program of the buildings. Still, this part does not make for exciting reading; it is meant as a reference source. (As such, an index would have been imperative.) At another level, but requiring sequential reading, the book is a major contribution to architectural theory and criticism, appealing not only to Miesian scholars, but to the architectural community generally.

Intermingled with the two texts are elements for a biography of Mies, of which some episodes may contribute to the professional education of contemporary practitioners less shrewd than him. Shortly after excavation on the Esters House had started, the architect noticed signs of vacillation in his client. Several earlier commissions had vaporized, and Mies wanted no more of that. He quickly instructed his foreman:

> **[The commission] is still hanging by a silken thread, and we must accept the possibility that the whole thing will come to a halt at the cellar level. I beg you to prevent it. It won't be easy but always keep one side higher than the other. One cannot leave it as a ruin if one wants to avoid giving the impression that there has been a bankruptcy.**

The story reveals little about architecture, but much about the architect.

Tegethoff advocates the revision of widely held assumptions about Mies's architecture, and about Modern architecture in general; he also introduces working principles applicable to the analysis of other architects and periods.

Taking issue with the unity often alleged to exist between interior and exterior Miesian space, Tegethoff argues that "Mies—however open and integrated into the landscape his buildings may be—always ultimately managed to give a space its own formal identity and independence." To achieve this Mies used two techniques, both shown in the Krefeld Golf Club:

> Architecture and landscape do not in fact confront each other as two isolated poles, "pure" and unrelated, but are in fact intertwined. While the vines, as part of organic nature, break the sharp-edged lines of the structure and thereby take away some of the rigidity of the crystalline solid, the cubic forms of the architecture force the seemingly uncontrolled landscape into an ordered geometrical shape. This occurs in two ways. On the one hand, the wings fanning out from each other—as in the Concrete Country House and like the radiating wall lines of the Brock Country House—form a rudimentary system of coordinates that provides an orientation for the terrain originally devoid of bearings. On the other hand, the various views through the building's transparent walls direct the viewer's gaze toward a framed, and thus clearly defined, section of the landscape, thereby giving form to "infinite exterior space" and gradually permitting the viewer to comprehend it visually.

The first technique was also used in the Barcelona Pavilion, which "was accordingly no longer an object to look at, but had become itself the point of origin of a system of axial relationships." The second was used in the Resor House, where:

> The deliberate transformation of the landscape into a picture is the necessary prerequisite for the increasing openness of Miesian space. For only this way can the interior maintain its identity and integrity, provide shelter and security, and nevertheless convey a feeling of freedom. Without this scenic backdrop that "closes" the room, it would expand into the infinite, which would be tantamount to its total dissolution.

His careful analysis of the relation between inner and outer space leads Tegethoff to recognize the multiple connections between building and context present in most of the Miesian oeuvre. He reads the Barcelona Pavilion as a response to the site's spatial, symbolic, environmental, and traffic characteristics, rather than a statement about universal space, as predicated in much Miesian literature. Another myth is thus demolished:

> The "ubiquity" of modern architecture therefore proves to be—at least as far as Mies is concerned, less so with regard to his countless followers—all in all a misunderstanding. Bolstered by such generalized expressions as "International Style," by Sigfried Giedion's rather superficial attempts at interpretation, and by Hans Sedlmayr's rudimentary, though incomparably more substantial criticism, it proves to be a myth, perpetuated either consciously or unconsciously, that deserves once and for all to be banned from architectural history.

Along with reevaluation of the spatial context goes rediscovery of the temporal context. Tegethoff clarifies the relationship between modern architecture and the styles of the past, distinguishing the "decadent and vulgar" historicism against which the representatives of Modern architecture were to take a stand, and the more subtle kind of historicism practiced by Mies, that recalls not so much the forms as the arrangements of the older models. The historicism of the Post-Moderns belongs, seemingly, to the first category, but Tegethoff does not care to make the point.

By introducing new critical parameters, Tegethoff departs from the customary ranking of projects. The big winners are the Concrete Country House of 1923 and the Brick Country House of 1924, subjects (along with the Barcelona Pavilion) of the longest and most interesting chapters of the book. Tegethoff assigns the country houses great significance in the evolution of Mies's work and of Modern architecture; he shows, for example, that the layout of the Concrete Country House anticipates Gropius's more famous Bauhaus Building in Dessau of 1925–6. The big loser in the reevaluation is the Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois, of 1945–51, diminished by Tegethoff to a minor role, and given only two pages of cursory analysis.

In terms of method, the book sets new standards for architectural scholarship. By laboriously piecing together bits of information, often working with only the skimpiest data, Tegethoff corrects the record on many aspects of Mies's life and work—not only on dating and attribution, but in terms of the physical characteristics and the program of projects that were either unbuilt, or demolished shortly after construction. By examining the few surviving drawings and photographs of the Barcelona Pavilion, he reconstructs Mies's design process and reinterprets the entire project from a new perspective. His hypotheses about the unbuilt Concrete Country House of 1923, on the basis of only three charcoal drawings and two photographs of a no longer existing model—blown up when necessary—are even more amazing. He deduced the arrangement in the inner walls from the light visible through a window in one of the photographs. He drew a whole string of inferences from an almost invisible blot of shadow in a drawing of the Brick Country House. He dated work according to the format of the drawings—standard American

MIES AT RIEHL HOUSE, ABOUT 1910. FROM SCHULZE, *MIES VAN DER ROHE*.

or German DIN. He deduced from the positioning of a drawing within the sheet whether it was intended for communication with the client, for exhibit, or for publication, and its place in the design process. He even inferred Mies's philosophical stances from the way he drew, as when he notes that Mies "deliberately avoided any differentiation in his manner of drawing between architecture and landscape."

Tegethoff can detect common attitudes and philosophies underlying apparently different formal devices. Conversely, he can discriminate where others see only more of the same. He consistently relates the parts of a project to each other and to the whole, and sees the whole project in terms of other projects, preceding or following it, by Mies or other architects. The four major Miesian projects—the two country houses, the Barcelona Pavilion, and the Tugendhat House—appear in many of the chapters, like leitmotivs in a Wagnerian opera.

Surprisingly, references to Mies's nonresidential projects are absent, except for the three early office buildings of the 1920s. For other architects Tegethoff does not respect such crippling typological boundaries: he discusses Behrens's St. Petersburg Embassy and Gropius's Bauhaus Building as needed. The analysis of Mies's villas and country houses could have benefited from an occasional comparison to the rest of his work. Of Mies's large-scale projects in Chicago, Toronto, and Montreal, and his earlier residential work, for example, Schulze notes:

> **In each instance Mies proposed asymmetrical groupings of towers and pavilions separated by plazas. . . . The superblock thus became the monumentally upscaled equivalent of his 1920s interior spaces, with buildings functioning as free standing walls and space flowing freely through the plazas around them.**

Tegethoff's focus on residential work may have reduced the scope of the book to manageable proportions, but it does not go very far, I believe, as a classificatory principle of the Miesian oeuvre.

Perhaps Tegethoff's most important methodological contribution is his avoidance of such tainted, endlessly repeated, and by now almost meaningless critical categories of "flowing space," "universal space," and "functionalism." Nor does he have recourse to Mies's own ruminations about the spirit of the times, honest construction, or the expression of science and technology. Instead, the author opts for what he calls a "descriptive approach." He not only postulates his observations, he constructs them, laboriously piling up the evidence and the arguments, and often devising the terminology itself. Architectural analysis always entails specific critical stances, certain issues are selected for consideration and others are ignored. Tegethoff knows what he is interested in, and we are indebted not only for his answers but for his choice of questions.

So cogent, so tightly knit, and so convincing are his arguments that his few slips into a more traditional critical discourse stand out. In one such slip he affirms that the structure of one of the houses "has burst its own boundaries"—a claim for the existence of a metaphorical, supra-experiential reality in which boundaries can exist at one moment, to burst in the next. Perhaps the greatest tribute to Tegethoff and to the rigor of his work is to point out how perfectly his closing sentence, about Modern architecture's contribution "toward the realization of an ideal that has defined human spiritual needs since antiquity" would fit into almost any discourse on architecture. In the context of his book, however, it stands out as a cliché.

The intrinsic complexity of Tegethoff's text is compounded by the incompetence of Russell M. Stockman's translation, which shows misapprehension of even the simplest architectural terms. In English, the first floor of a building is the ground floor; in German, *1. Obergeschoss* literally means "first floor," and designates the floor above the ground floor, and should therefore be translated as "second floor." All floor numberings are consistently mistranslated in the book. The eight-story Concrete Office Building is called a "seven-story office building"—a literal but inaccurate translation. The German *Pläne*, "orthogonal drawings," is erroneously translated as "plans." "Plans" is less than *Pläne*, because it does not include sections or elevations, and also more, because it describes the general horizontal organization of the project. A controversy about the ownership of drawings becomes, in the translation, a controversy about the ownership of plans. *Isolierung* ("insulation") is translated as "isolation." *Umkleideraume*, which for any English speaker would be a locker room, is translated (literally) as "changing room." Sympathetic readers may get the meaning, but when *Garderoben und Wirtschaftstrakt* (locker room and service wing) become "changing wing" the strain is too much. Nor does the translator realize that English phrase structure cannot follow literally the more convoluted German original.

The book is carefully designed and produced. The footnotes are well placed, opposite the appropriate text. The same is not true of the plate captions, which are several pages removed from the plates. Inconveniently, but with minimalist elegance, chapter beginnings are marked only by substituting boldface for italic in the running head of the page.

Franz Schulze's *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* captivates from the very first paragraph, in which a 19-year-old Mies opens wide the window of the train taking him to Berlin for the first time, and throws up. The inglorious overture leads to a flashback to his early years in Aachen, which he has just abandoned in his quest for new horizons in the imperial capital. By the end of the first chapter one can understand the young man's stomach problems, which continue unchecked in the taxi ride from the station.

The writer is a skillful storyteller. In his hands, Mies's life acquires the intensity and dramatic progression of a novel. Its central point is revealed in the closing paragraph of chapter 1:

> **Mies's early life was nothing if not average in all respects. The one personal trait of his later years that quite overshadowed all the others of his youth, and without which the rest would hardly have led him to historic prominence, was a will of titanic proportions. . . . To all appearances it was innate. The very fact that it developed slowly and gained force only cumulatively accounts for the fact that it was not especially evident in his green years. How Mies cultivated it and finally turned it into a creative force that altered the course of architectural history is the substance of this story.**

Sometimes warm, sometimes disapproving, Schulze's account is always rich in psychological insight. He shows us a Mies battling adversities, not the least of which were the negative traits of his own personality—"naive or headstrong or both." During the early thirties, a difficult period in his career, he lived "in a state of mind bordering on lethargy," making his living "the best way he could, which was none too cleverly." In 1936, after being humiliated by the Nazis, he was offered the headship of the architecture school of the Armour Institute in Chicago (later to become the Illinois Institute of Technology). Gropius, Mendelsohn, and Breuer had already emigrated. But Mies, like Dr. Jastrow in *Winds of War*, fell into exasperating, interminable vacillations. He considered an accommodation with the regime, or waiting out its downfall, or going to Harvard. In the process he almost forfeited the Chicago invitation and risked a showdown with the Gestapo that could have impeded his flight. In Schulze's elegant wording, "the reasons [for his irresolution] lay largely in his convoluted, even conflicted, perceptions of what he had, what he wanted, and what risks he was willing to take to narrow the gap between the two." For Mies was "distinctively unheroic," as seen not only in his ambiguous relations with the Nazis, and his unwillingness to accept enduring family or personal commitments, but also in a certain duplicity about architectural values and professional matters. In 1924, while proclaiming in avant-garde publications the need for architects to be in tune with their age, and chastising the use of the forms of the past, he was writing solicitations to potential clients citing his own traditional houses of his early years.

Mies's professional relationships are revealingly described. His complex bond with Gropius—slightly older, socially more prominent by birth and education, and better connected in Germany and America, but less talented (at least in Mies's view)—was permeated by rivalry, if not outright hostility. There was also, however, a certain camaraderie in the face of common enemies. Mies's rapport with Frank Lloyd Wright was better, initially. It later soured, not only because of different aesthetic orientations but also because of their contrasting personalities. Two short letters exchanged in 1947 reveal the masters as they are: "Wright warm and aggressive, both in criticism and in fellowship—not to mention vanity; Mies inclined to modesty, distance, and the privacy of his own thoughts.

The most endearing parts of the biography are those devoted to Mies's personal ties, or, one should say, lack

thereof. The tragic figure of Ada Bruhn, his wife, commands compassion. She voyaged through a difficult childhood, a loveless marriage, and single parenthood with responsibility for raising three young daughters in war-ravaged, economically depressed Germany. Her lifelong bouts with somatic illness and depression are recorded here, albeit briefly.

More attention is devoted to Lilly Reich, Mies's professional and personal partner in his European career, who remained devoted to him until her death, well after he refused to let her share his American life. Mies's repudiation of her acquires greater dramatic impact in the structure of the text than his separation from his wife. His volcanic relationship with Dr. Edith Farnsworth—successively his client, mistress, and finally opponent in a lengthy, bloody, and conspicuous lawsuit—is portrayed in equally eloquent terms. But the highest level of intensity is reserved for his relationship with Lora Marx, his companion for 27 years, who walked first into and then out of alcoholism to remain near him, who accepted his harsh terms without question, and who nursed him during his lengthy final illness. Their conversation at Mies's deathbed, when Lora finally gathers enough strength to ask him why he never married her, is one of the emotional highlights of the book.

Mr. Schulze's information about Mies's personal traits is intriguing at times ("for a brief, ill-considered spell he wore a monocle"), slightly freakish (in Berlin he moved his bed into the bathroom), or outright ghoulish (he clothed his daughter's corpse in his own academic robes). But the writer can also be light and good-humored:

> **The Messerschmidt people talked to Mies about designing the interior of a small airplane, conversations that led nowhere but to Mies's first plane ride, a quick spin above the streets of Berlin, from which he returned . . . visibly green.**

Occasionally the narrative becomes gossipy (Mies's amorous life is a legitimate concern, but is it also necessary to disclose the extramarital adventures of Ludwig Hilberseimer?). Generally, however, Mr. Schulze writes with elegance and good taste:

> **Mies and Lora seized the day. It was the 1940s, the most boisterous period of their romance, by consensus of all associated with Mies a decade awash in booze. For a while the excuse was the war and later on, the victory after the war. Mies drank and Lora drank. The students at IIT drank, and the architects and artists, Americans and Europeans, residents and visitors and friends.**

The book is richly illustrated; more remarkable than Mies's well-known portraits, or the numerous photographs of his work, is a series of personal photos. An extraordinary snapshot of Mies with Lora Marx the day they met tells volumes about their relationship. Georgia van der Rohe, Mies's daughter, contributed not only information but also an alluring portrait of herself. A frame with Mendelsohn, Peterhans, Hilberseimer, and Mies in their European-styled overcoats, chatting (presumably in German) on a Chicago street reveals the personalities of the emigrés: Mies's rumpled lapels, Peterhan's out-of-place collar and tie, in contrast to the elegant attire of Mendelsohn, who had emigrated a few years earlier.

Mies as a human being is not always favorably portrayed. Yet it is a measure of Schulze's skill that we finish the 325 pages of the story captivated by the master's powerful personality. Artfully the writer intertwines the death of the architect with the death of Modern architecture itself. Cultural history and personal destiny are made one; the master's heroic struggle to complete the design of the National Gallery in Berlin, working from his hospital bed, traveling to the site, crippled, to witness the laying of the first stone, but too debilitated to take part in the ceremonies, becomes a metaphor for the cracking of the edifice of Miesian architecture, starting at the very moment of its smashing success.

The social and cultural background of Germany throughout the Wilhelmine, Weimar, and Nazi periods is capably portrayed, as are the influences on Mies's own philosophical outlook (St. Thomas Aquinas, Oswald Spenger). Regrettably, Mr. Schulze's depiction of the American cultural environment is less perceptive. Statements such as "The Americans had a special fondness for technology, believing . . . that they were the people most advanced in it," or "The Americans in their now-dominant world position . . . were eager to learn about art" seem shallow in the context of the book. It is not much more enlightening to learn that "Atomic energy was a fact. So was corporate capitalism, American style," or to read perfunctory references to Vietnam and the emergence of the Third World.

Schulze's book is not exclusively, or even primarily, about Mies's life. His architecture is discussed at length, often revealing its connections to his life. An intriguing aspect of his career was his early commitment to Modern architecture, especially in exhibits and publications, at the same time as he nursed a more traditionally oriented practice. Schulze's insightful analysis of the man and his professional, artistic, and philosophical environment makes the paradox understandable, for the first time. Equally fascinating is his analysis of Mies's curriculum for the architectural program at the Armour Institute, as "a formalization of [Mies's] own heterogeneous education, an autobiographical curriculum, as it were." In spite of their claims for "objectivity," educational curricula, like architecture, are shown to be a reflection of personal values.

The book has many inspired passages of architectural analysis; they

are, however, also a source of weakness. As an architectural critic Schulze is predominantly derivative; he can articulate elegantly what others have said before. His presentation of the Weissenhof Apartment House as a triumph not of functionalism, but of an image of functionalism, is unimpeachable; however it follows a line argued before by Reyner Banham. The same is true of other observations.

Unlike Tegethoff, Schulze is caught in the web of imprecision and half-truth that mars much of Miesian critical writing. He often refers to the polarity between the so-called "objective" and "subjective" elements in architecture. "The objective order would eventually dominate Mies's architecture in the United States"; on the other hand, "the play of subjective and objective orders would take on the character of a critical struggle in his work of the 1930s." But the opposition between the two orders is ill-defined, and of limited use as a critical tool. "Objectively justifiable" order is associated with regularity, as in the skeletal framework of the Barcelona Pavilion and the Tugendhat House; "subjective planning," on the other hand, is asymmetrical or irregular, as in the walls of the same two buildings. But such links are untenable. "Objective" considerations related to site or program can lead to irregular or asymmetrical designs; likewise, regular arrangements can be endorsed for purely subjective, even capricious, reasons.

In discussing the amoeboid plan of Mies's Glass Skyscraper, Schulze observes, disapprovingly, that "the geometry itself collapses into irregularity and all trace of rational order is lost." Irregularity is incompatible, it follows, with rational order. But what is the connection between rational order and objective order? Are they the same, or are they different? Either way, the argument is flawed. If objective and subjective are subcategories of the rational, irregularity (subjective) would be compatible with rationality. The Glass Skyscraper could not be dismissed for its irregularity. If, contrariwise, rational order and objective order are the same, subjective order would have to be lumped along with the irrational. The Glass Skyscraper could then be legitimately despised, but the Barcelona Pavilion and the Tugendhat House could no longer be revered because of the subjective arrangement of their walls!

Schulze's debt to Tegethoff is formidable. Punctilious scholar that he is, each time Mr. Schulze deals with a building analyzed by Mr. Tegethoff, he inserts a footnote advising us to see Tegethoff "for an extended discussion." If the building was not discussed by Tegethoff, the footnote most likely reads "For a technical summary ... see Carter, *Mies van der Rohe at Work*. The difference in wording, consistent throughout the book, suggests his opinion of his sources. But Schulze's problem is unsolvable, no matter what he does with the footnotes: his book cannot be conceived merely as a companion to Tegethoff's, nor can he transcribe all of Tegethoff's "extended discussions," nor is he always inclined to produce independent architectural evaluations of his own.

The *Critical Biography* is handsomely produced. My lone objection is to the lack of orientation arrows in the plans—an exasperating feature when the text often identifies building parts and views in terms of the compass.

David Spaeth's *Mies van der Rohe* is a lovingly put together, richly illustrated tribute to the architect. Perhaps its biggest drawback was the timing of its publication: in the shadow of Schulze's book (150,000 words) and Tegethoff's (120,000 words), there is not much room for Spaeth. With its 50,000 words and paperback format, it seems targeted for the student market.

The ostensible goal of the book is to introduce Mies to a new generation of students and scholars. It is not readily apparent, though, how the new generation's introduction will differ from that of their elders.

Spaeth explains that he relied on commentaries of contemporary critics and historians as well as on Mies's own remarks, rather than on his own firsthand experience of the buildings. The book delivers what it promises, and therein lies the problem. It is a glossy, well-printed catalogue of Mies's work accompanied by a text based largely on Mies's own aphorisms and dicta, accepted uncritically.

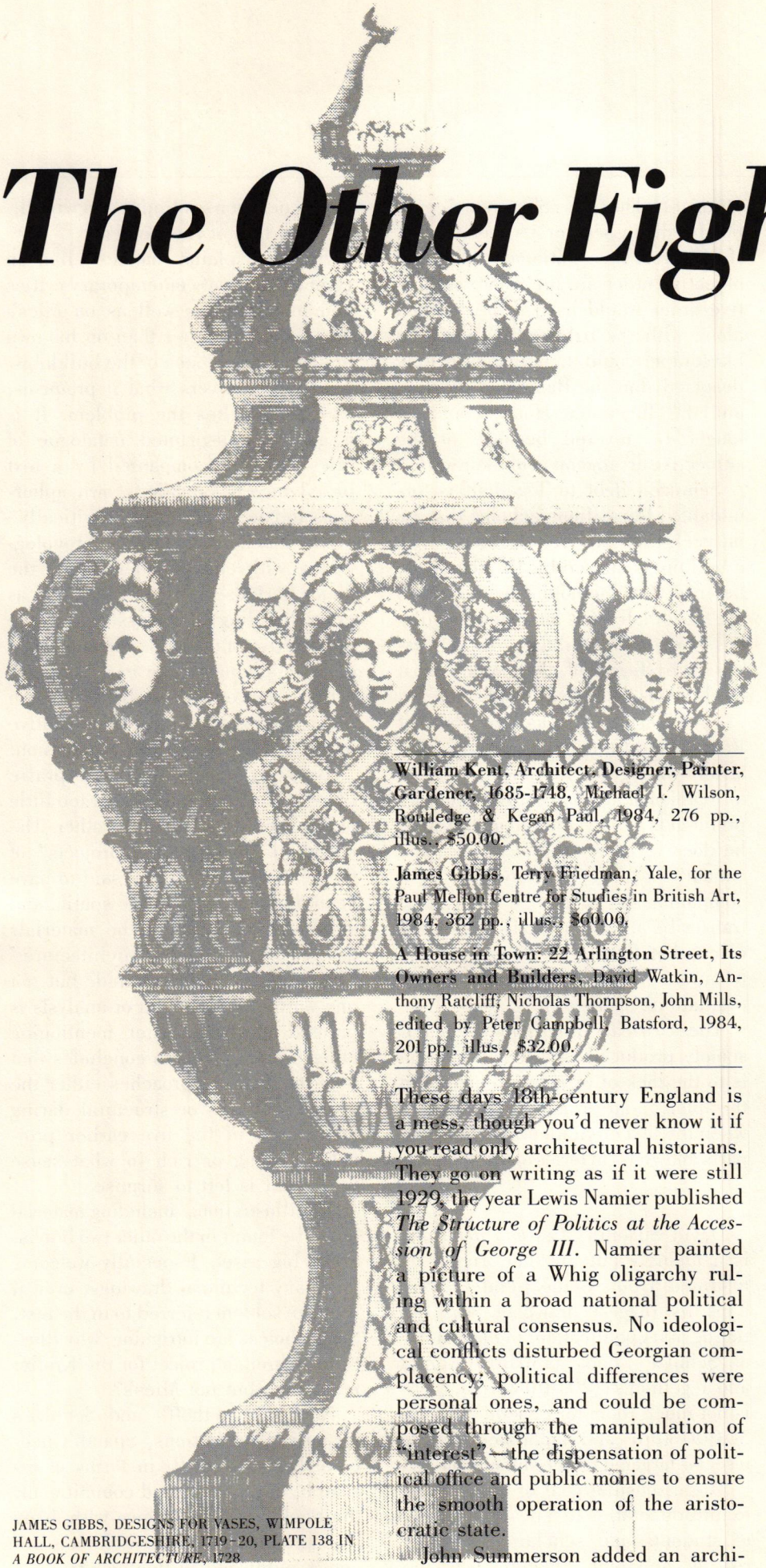
The book is organized chronologically, with chapters devoted to the major periods in Mies's life. Still, as every building is discussed from the perspective of orthodox Miesian criticism, applying to the early projects criteria that only crystallized later in the architect's career, the narrative has little sense of dramatic progression.

Between description and praise there is a certain imbalance: too little of one, never enough of the other. The so-called "five seminal projects" of the years 1919–1923 are said to have "clearly demonstrated the spatial and structural potential of the materials associated with Modern architecture." The projects are illustrated, but not one word of description or analysis is granted to them. After mentioning other projects, Spaeth concludes that none of them "approaches either the spatial richness or structural daring articulated in the five earlier projects." Daring or rich in what sense the reader is left to surmise.

The illustrations, including material not to be found in the other two books, are a big asset. Especially welcome are many technical drawings, even if they are seldom referred to in the text. Some choices are intriguing: why illustrate Behrens's project for the Kroller residence, but not Mies's?

Next to Tegethoff's and Schulze's gigantic contributions, Spaeth's necessarily pales. Still, in terms of research, dedication, and commitment, the book can hold its own with many monographs on single architects recently published in this country.

The Other Eighteenth



JAMES GIBBS, DESIGNS FOR VASES, WIMPOLE HALL, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, 1719-20, PLATE 138 IN *A BOOK OF ARCHITECTURE*, 1728

William Kent, Architect, Designer, Painter, Gardener, 1685-1748, Michael I. Wilson, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, 276 pp., illus., $50.00.

James Gibbs, Terry Friedman, Yale, for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1984, 362 pp., illus., $60.00.

A House in Town: 22 Arlington Street, Its Owners and Builders, David Watkin, Anthony Ratcliff, Nicholas Thompson, John Mills, edited by Peter Campbell, Batsford, 1984, 201 pp., illus., $32.00.

These days 18th-century England is a mess, though you'd never know it if you read only architectural historians. They go on writing as if it were still 1929, the year Lewis Namier published *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*. Namier painted a picture of a Whig oligarchy ruling within a broad national political and cultural consensus. No ideological conflicts disturbed Georgian complacency; political differences were personal ones, and could be composed through the manipulation of "interest"—the dispensation of political office and public monies to ensure the smooth operation of the aristocratic state.

John Summerson added an architectural setting to this picture. For him, Whig dominance achieved material expression in Palladianism, which was taken up by Whig aristocrats like Lord Burlington just as the 1715 Jacobite uprising was discrediting Toryism and with it the Stuart-tainted baroque architecture of Christopher Wren and his followers.[1] Artistic acclaim came to those who, like William Kent, toed the Palladian line and cultivated Whig connections, while architects like James Gibbs, unfortunate enough to be a Scot, a Catholic, and a baroque designer, operated on the fringes of architectural and social power. More recently, Mark Girouard has come along to explain the spatial function ing of the Palladian country houses—the "power houses" that were prerequisites of Whig political stature—in the 18th century's politics of personality.[2]

This line of argument suggests a tidy connection between architecture and the larger society, one as straightforward and "regular" as a Palladian country house. It remains largely unchallenged among historians of architecture, including those whose work is discussed here. Indeed, this point of view is so powerful that its tenets

Century

By Dell Upton

are assumed more than argued in the three books under review—*William Kent*, by Michael Wilson, *James Gibbs*, by Terry Friedman, and *A House in Town*, by David Watkin et al. The problem with this tidy structure is that for twenty years historians of every ilk (except architectural) have been busy undermining its foundations. The 18th century they have erected in its stead is a confusing one, its rulers split by ideological divisions, their political dominance challenged by the mercantile electorate and the urban mob, neither of which was disposed to accept aristocratic rule unquestioningly. To these rulers town life—a London as energetic and unruly as ever it was in Victorian times—was as important as country life. Mobs frequently gathered at the doorsteps in aristocratic Arlington Street, Nicholas Thompson writes in *A House in Town*. Even larger crowds collected frequently for vast "hanging matches" in nearby Tyburn, events that often culminated in battles between the authorities and the felons' friends, who fought to keep the bodies from being turned over for dissection. Industrial and commercial life loomed large in this new England, and aristocratic patrons increasingly gave way as creators of taste to newly minted professionals and entrepreneurs.

James Gibbs and William Kent, as designers based in London, inhabited this reconstructed 18th century. They were contemporaries, born in 1682 and 1685, respectively. Both were outsiders—Gibbs more so, for his Scottish origins and Catholic background. Kent, too, was from the North, from Yorkshire, and originally apprenticed to a coach painter. Both found their vocations in Italy. Gibbs went to Rome in 1703 to study for the Catholic priesthood. Unable to embrace that calling wholeheartedly, he studied architecture with Carlo Fontana until he returned to England in 1708. A year later, Kent embarked for Rome to study painting. He became a pupil, though never a very good one, of Benedetto Luti. Kent managed to form connections with a variety of minor English patrons and was able to hang on in Rome for ten years. He finally returned home in 1719 in company with young Richard Boyle, the third Earl of Burlington, whose hospitality and patronage he enjoyed for the rest of his life.

Kent's story fits the traditional interpretation in many respects. Having formed an association with a powerful patron, he enlisted enthusiastically in the new Palladian army: Michael Wilson tells us that he put himself in the hands of Burlington and other gentlemen with "a better gusto, than that dam'd gusto that's been for this sixty years past." He was rewarded with court posts and commissions from England's most powerful politicians. These included several from the Pelhams, the family of the Duke of Newcastle, controller of political patronage in Whig England.

Kent was involved in all the visual arts. Trained as painter, through Burlington's encouragement he branched out into interior decoration, furniture and decorative arts, funereal monuments, architecture, and landscape gardening. Both Wilson and David Watkin, in *A House in Town*, believe that his greatest contribution lay in gardening, although Kent clearly regarded himself as a painter first of all.

Kent's "Palladianism" seems distinctly 18th century, but to the extent that he was a protégé of an aristocratic patron and worked for other aristocratic patrons, Kent stood for an old order. He catered to an elite who often

built beyond their means—many of their houses were unfinished when they died, and many were demolished by their immediate successors. In relationships with his aristocratic clients Kent relied on gratuities for remuneration, and could only plead when a displeased patron stiffed him, as the Duke of Newcastle did near the end of Kent's life.

But Kent's career was more complex than the customary account suggests. If he worked primarily in a traditional aristocratic context, he was affected by the new ways as well. Although the same men acting in different capacities often commissioned both private and public works, this should not obscure the extent to which Kent, like Wren before him and the neo-classicists after him, lived as a public employee. He might rely on patronage for the many public offices he held, but, unlike other placemen, Kent was not a sinecurist; he was expected to work at his jobs. He made paintings in Kensington Palace, restored the Rubens ceilings in the Banqueting House, was at least partially responsible for the Treasury and Horse Guards buildings at Whitehall and the stables at the Royal Mews, and made unexecuted designs for a royal palace at Kew and a new Palace of Westminster.

These projects suggest another Kent than the traditional one lurking in Michael Wilson's study, though to understand him we'd need to know more about him. In John Summerson's words, the traditional Kent is a man of "remorseless, self-imposed confinement to consecrated sources—mainly Palladio and Jones."[4] Wilson doesn't question this explicitly, but in passing shows us a Kent whose devotion to a dominant architectural ideology is less constant. This other Kent was a Palladian by convenience, working in other styles—baroque and Gothic, in particular—as the occasion demanded. However, Wilson never explains clearly the aesthetic standards and theoretical commitments that did bind Kent.

Though ideologically not so pure, this other Kent understood marketing, the production of a recognizable commodity through uniform packaging. He is believed to be the first in England to have designed architectural fittings and furnishings as a coordinated ensemble. He anticipated the creation of goods in matched suites that were so much a part of the strategy of men like Josiah Wedgwood and Robert Adam, purveyors of the fashionable to the new upper- and middle-class consumers of late 18th-century England.

This other Kent was not very good at painting, the only thing he actually *did*. Most of his other design work was largely carried out through intermediaries, like his architectural assistants John Vardy (often mentioned but never introduced until the end of Wilson's book) and Stephen Wright (discussed in *A House in Town*, but never mentioned by Wilson). Wilson drastically reduced Kent's role in "his" best-known building, Holkham Hall in Norfolk, reattributing its concept to a collaboration of Burlington, Kent, and the owner, Thomas Coke. The final realization and detailing, however, were the responsibility of clerk of the works Matthew Brettingham. Wilson casts similar doubt on Kent's other well-known building, the Horse Guards; construction was supervised after Kent's death by his assistant Vardy, who was probably responsible for much of its final design. We learn that Kent hated to visit distant commissions, and did so only under duress. We must conclude that the development of many of Kent's ideas was the work of assistants and craft workers, yet they have no part in Wilson's treatment. *A House in Town* acknowledges the builders, and even names some, but it has little insight to offer into their contribution to the work.

This other Kent, the darling of the Whig aristocracy, hated to visit their "power houses." He lived in London at Burlington House, though Burlington himself was fonder of Chiswick. Kent worked on a number of urban projects, and probably helped with Burlington's development of Savile Row. Near the end of his life, Kent designed two conspicuous city houses, at 44 Berkeley Square and at 22 Arlington Street. Arlington Street, done for then-prime minister Henry Pelham, is the subject of *A House in Town*.

The houses at 22 Arlington Street and 44 Berkeley Square have attracted the attention of architectural historians for their sumptuous decoration. Both Wilson and the authors of *A House in Town* devote considerable attention to the task of fitting Kent's urban houses into Palladian formulas more appropriate to country houses. In this context, the town houses must seem like minor works. Visually, however, 22 Arlington Street hints that we should seek its meaning among the speculatively built squares of the Earls of Bedford's London estates rather than in rural England.

Over the course of the 18th century, increasing amounts of political business were transacted in urban houses like these. In fact, as suburban development in Bloomsbury engulfed the Bedford country house, a late 18th-century Earl demolished it and moved to Arlington Street.[5] Horace Walpole described Arlington Street as a ministerial street, and jokingly attributed one resident's political fall to his having moved from there. Like some of its neighbors, 22 Arlington Street was a fortified house, set back from the street line, behind a courtyard, connected by an arcade to a two-story front building. The reason for this arrangement is clear from the memoirs of Horace Walpole, who lived on Arlington Street while his father was prime minister. Walpole was awakened one day by a mob outside his window. When he asked the servants to disperse them, he was informed that the rioters were besieging someone else's house.

If William Kent seems less comfortable in the old 18th century than we once thought, James Gibbs was

never happy there. Summerson called him "a delayed fulfillment of Wren, . . . a brilliant continuator of a chapter closed about 1692."[6] The Palladian-Whig thesis makes it difficult to imagine how Gibbs could have survived after 1720, when he was described as the most fashionable builder in England, but he seems to have thrived throughout his long life. He worked in nearly every medium that Kent did—architecture, furniture and decoration, funereal monuments—except for landscape gardening (though he did garden buildings) and painting, and he matched Kent in his stylistic diversity. We might explain Gibbs's success by his Tory connections, but he was employed by staunch Whigs like Viscount Cobham, for whom he built the politically charged Temple of Liberty at Stowe, and he worked not only at Tory Oxford, but at the old Puritan stronghold of Cambridge. In fact, as there is another Kent, so is there another Gibbs, one who seems to have succeeded as much by assiduous application to his professional practice as by aristocratic connections.

Terry Friedman shows us more of Gibbs's practice than Wilson does of Kent's. He tells us that Gibbs achieved a reputation as an early expert in villa building, and that he flooded his clients with alternative designs for the commissions they brought him. Gibbs cultivated long-term relationships with favored craftsmen and was willing to collaborate with other designers. He attempted to regularize his relationships with his clients as well, writing to one that "I am generally payed . . . five per Cnt of the total expence of the Building whither great or small, and if there are any extraordinary drawings made they are payed for." Most important, Gibbs had strong ties to the middle-class popular culture of his day. Writers like Batty Langley commented on his work, sometimes favorably and sometimes critically, and lifted ideas from it for their own publications. Gibbs in turn endorsed popular publications like Francis Price's *The British Carpenter*, and contributed two books of his own—one on drawing, the other his renowned *Book of Architecture*, a compendium of his own designs that was not an aesthetic treatise but a piece of promotional literature. More than anything else, *A Book of Architecture* transported Gibbs from the old 18th century to the new. Though it probably brought little work into his own office, it packaged Gibbs's ideas as recognizable commodities for public consumption in a way that the more austere Palladian treatises did not. The efficacy of Gibbs's book is evident in every 18th-century settlement in the English-speaking world.

What is the measure of architectural significance? Is it the adherence to intellectual tenets decreed by elites? Or is it the effect on the physical environment? If the former, even the quintessential Palladian William Kent doesn't measure up, for he strayed often and significantly from the prescribed course of Whig Palladianism. If the latter, then James Gibbs no longer seems out of place. If our 18th century is Namier's tidy top-down model, then perhaps Kent is the more important figure, even though it is difficult to identify his precise contribution to many of the projects with which he is associated. If we prefer the more difficult but more vital 18th century of recent historians, then Gibbs deserves pride of place. His professional demeanor equipped him to deal with the new urban commercial classes on terms they could understand, to offer the urban merchants who served on parish building committees and who sought new residences for themselves a recognizable product for their money. The result is evident in the countless versions of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Marylebone Chapel that embellish Britain and its colonies, and in the ubiquitous two-story house with pedimented central pavilion that accompanies the churches wherever they appear. The "pure Kent" often mentioned but never described by Wilson is much less evident in the landscape.

We mustn't exaggerate. Gibbs, like Kent, profited from aristocratic patronage, and neither man worked in the entrepreneurial architectural world of the 19th and 20th centuries, or even the world of Adam and Chambers. Yet their careers had much more to them than country houses and Palladian or baroque design. If we ignore the elements of the new 18th century in their careers, not only will we misinterpret them, we will be at a loss to understand figures from the second half of the century like Adam and Chambers, whom John Wilton-Ely has described as the first of the new breed of professionals.[7]

Although the other Kent and the other Gibbs lived in an urbanizing, commercializing, professionalizing England, there is little proof that Wilson, Friedman, or the authors of *A House in Town* are even aware that this other England exists. Wilson's and Friedman's books are both prime examples of and-then-he-did historiography, which for too long has dominated architectural history. And-then-he-did historians (by definition, it's always *he*) believe that to list the great man's achievements is to explain them, and that chronology, or, for a few daring scholars, typology, is its own structure. Friedman and Wilson make gestures toward explanation and context. Friedman's are segregated in a few chapters at the beginning of the book, where he discusses Gibbs's life and training and explains his manner of working. Wilson's are distributed throughout the book, and contain genuine insights, such as his explication of the significance of mural painting to the Stuart order and its replacement by architectural painting in Hanoverian England, or his assessment of Kent's contributions to landscape design. Yet these are buried in masses of gossip. Wilson lovingly chronicles the nicknames, the little jokes, and the squabbles that passed among Kent, Burlington, Pope, Handel, and others

in their circle. We learn of Kent's taste in music and Handel's preferences in painting. In the end, however, both biographies are airless catalogues that tell us little that is really illuminating about the 18th century and little that goes beyond earlier biographies, notably Margaret Jourdain's of Kent (1948) and Bryan Little's of Gibbs (1957), in either method or analysis.

Perhaps it is the fault of the form. Individual biography posits a transcendent importance for the single figure that serves the purposes of the connoisseur and the collector better than those of the historian. Particularly in a medium like architecture, and in eras before the middle of the 19th century, it does violence to history to credit individuals with what are by definition collective accomplishments. Yet, with a few honorable exceptions, the historiography of architecture constitutes an attempt to define the social process of architectural creation as an unfortunate aberration.

These are, nevertheless, biographies. Friedman's book, though more pedestrian and less ambitious than Wilson's, is at least a complete and well-illustrated catalogue of Gibb's work (though several of the color plates are very bad). Moreover, it is easier to find the new 18th century in the Gibbs study, even though it is of little interest to Friedman himself. He pays considerable attention to builders' books, and his last chapter even surveys buildings derived from the *Book of Architecture*. But the effort is half-hearted; the information comes from secondary sources (sometimes outdated ones for the American examples), and, in classic and-then-he-did fashion, they are treated not for what they tell about the 18th-century architectural landscape, but for how well each local builder respected the great man's vision. Wilson gives us more of Kent's personality (not necessarily to Kent's advantage), but makes no pretense of giving a catalogue, and the structure of the narrative is often convoluted. His illustrations are inadequate; major works are discussed but not shown, while minor drawings or book illustrations receive several plates. Neither author has much time for plan or function; we learn that Holkham Hall was celebrated for the convenience of the plan, but not what was convenient about it.

Of the three books, *A House in Town* comes off best, partly because its subject, a town house, forces its authors to confront some of the issues that the two biographers do not. It's a puff piece for an insurance company that recently did something to the house, the correct term for which escapes me. *A House in Town* contains an essay by David Watkin, surveying Kent's career, and one by the company's chief general manager, a Kent fan, on the great man's work. The difference between work and career is as difficult for these two authors to specify as it was for me to grasp. Both essays are straightforward stuff, staunchly old-fashioned in their emphasis on Palladianism, Whig lords, and the rest. Nevertheless they are clear and unpretentious, and manage to make most of the points that Wilson does, more clearly and in less space. Three chapters by Nicholas Thompson survey the architectural and social history of 22 Arlington Street from its construction through progressive enlargements until it was purchased by the insurance company in 1947. The physical development of the largely demolished house is carefully detailed and well illustrated. All the aristocratic owners were fine fellows, we learn, but we also learn something about the planning and use of an aristocratic city house, and about the political and social maneuvering that took place inside and sometimes outside in the street.

The last two chapters, by company surveyor John Mills, are curious. One attempts to confuse us about some apparently questionable negotiations between the insurance company and the local planning authorities over the preservation of the house. The second describes the "restoration" that began in 1977. Most of what stood in 1947 was demolished, and the random collection of rooms retained seems to have been chosen more for its usefulness for company entertaining than for any architectural or historical reasons. The house was replanned to "achieve the Palladian ideal of a circuit of interconnecting rooms without passages, something which neither Kent's original house, nor the house in any of its later stages had managed." Readers will be gratified to find that the new air-conditioning grilles were faithful copies of heating grates at Holkham Hall, and the floorboards were numbered for proper reinstallation. The 18th-century remains of the structure as it now stands consist of one spectacular ceiling, much of the stair hall, and about half of the front exterior wall, with some other odd bits. Twenty-two Arlington Street has been renamed William Kent House. Wilson and Friedman would understand.

1. John Summerson, *Architecture in England, 1530-1830*, 5th ed., Penguin Books, 1970, pp. 317-319.

2. Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History*, Yale University Press, 1977.

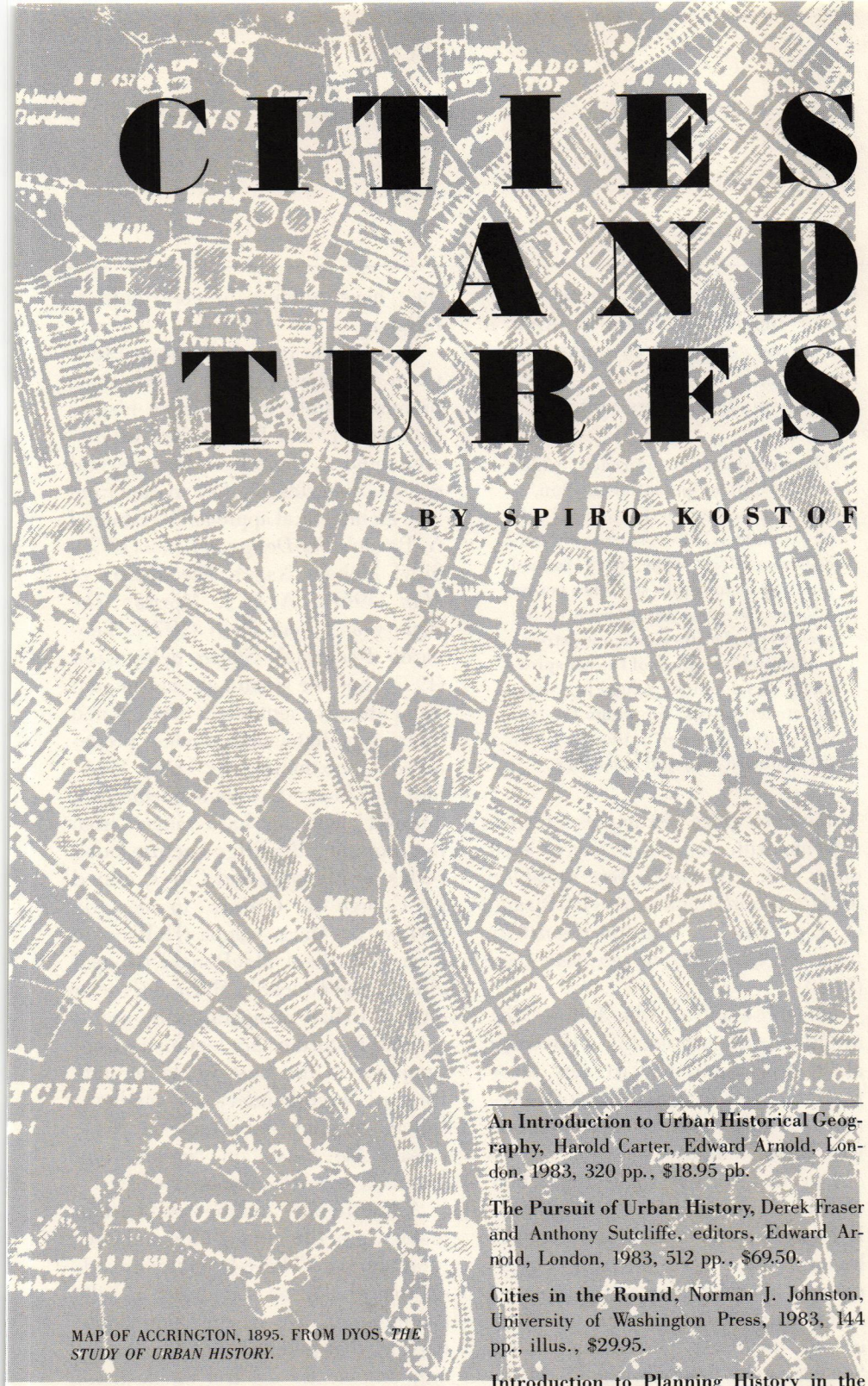
3. For examples of the reinterpretation of 18th-century English society, see the work of George Rude and E. P. Thompson, as well as Douglas Hay, Peter Linebaugh, John G. Rule, and Cal Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Pantheon, 1975) and Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Indiana University Press, 1983). More recent historical studies are surveyed in Lawrence Stone, "The New Eighteenth Century," *New York Review of Books* 31, no. 5 (March 29, 1984): pp. 42-48.

4. Summerson, p. 357.

5. John Wilton-Ely, "The Rise of the Professional Architect in England," in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, Spiro Kostof, editor, Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 188-191.

CITIES AND TURFS

BY SPIRO KOSTOF



MAP OF ACCRINGTON, 1895. FROM DYOS, *THE STUDY OF URBAN HISTORY.*

An Introduction to Urban Historical Geography, Harold Carter, Edward Arnold, London, 1983, 320 pp., $18.95 pb.

The Pursuit of Urban History, Derek Fraser and Anthony Sutcliffe, editors, Edward Arnold, London, 1983, 512 pp., $69.50.

Cities in the Round, Norman J. Johnston, University of Washington Press, 1983, 144 pp., illus., $29.95.

Introduction to Planning History in the United States, Donald A. Krueckeberg, editor, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers, 1983, 315 pp., $12.95.

The American Planner: Biographies and Recollections, Donald A. Krueckeberg, editor, Methuen, 1983, 434 pp., $29.95.

The Ideal City: Its Architectural Evolution in Europe, third edition, Helen Rosenau, Methuen, 1983, 210 pp., illus., $30.00.

The Model Company Town: Urban Design Through Private Enterprise in Nineteenth-Century New England, J. S. Garner, University of Massachusetts, 1984, 240 pp., illus., $25.00.

Metropolis, Eighteen Ninety to Nineteen Forty, Anthony Sutcliffe, editor, University of Chicago Press, 1984, 458 pp., illus., $40.00.

Storia dell'urbanistica, Il Novecento, third edition, Paolo Sica, Laterza, (Bari and Rome), 1981, 890 pp., illus., approximately 70,000 lire.

For the practice of urban history, it would seem, these are the best of times. Never has there been so much written about cities, and from so many angles. Local and international conferences are too common now to be newsworthy; they aspire to be interdisciplinary, and their papers are routinely collected and published. *The Pursuit of Urban History* presents the deliberations of a conference held at the University of Leicester in 1980 to honor the memory of the late H. J. Dyos and his Urban History Group, and *their* landmark conference of 1966 at Leicester, which put British urban history on the map.[1] Several journals devoted exclusively to this subject—the *Journal of Urban History*, the *Urban History Yearbook*, the *Urban History Review*, *La Vie Urbaine*—are diligently churning out articles. Other journals of established disciplines open their pages on a regular basis to historical research on cities. These include the *Journal of American History*, the *Town Planning Review*, *Landscape*, the *Geographical Review*, the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, and most architectural magazines. Laterza is currently publishing a series of monographs on Italian cities, and also an ambitious city planning history, which includes Paolo Sica's volume on the 20th century (published less than ten years ago, and just reissued in a third edition). Dissertations are being written under many different academic auspices, and a number of them, including J. S. Garner's *Model Company Town*, are being cast into books.

But a veritable epidemic of soul-searching besets all this humming industry, an obsessive, self-absorbed round of debate about the methods

and the future of urban history. What is urban history—a separate and distinct discipline? Is it a subcategory of social history? of geography? of economics? Or is it, as Dyos insisted, a convenient field of knowledge that serves to bring together a number of these converging disciplines? Can you, in fact, speak of something called urban history, the worriers ask, when cities are so fatally wedded to the countryside, when they are locked in regional patterns and the landscape at large? What, to be exact, is a city, and when did it begin? And so on, without end.

To the uninitiated the historiography of urban history is bewildering. An avowedly young field, it is often said to have stirred, in this country at least, only after Arthur M. Schlesinger's 1940 essay, "The City in American History," and in England not until the Dyos conference of 1966. There are schools and approaches, heretics and mainliners. There is a "new urban history," officially launched at a Yale conference in 1968; its trademark is the manipulation of computerized data gleaned from sources like manuscript censuses, city directories, tax rolls, and building permits. But its once mighty priests are already being derided as "quantificaters," or, more witheringly, "the accountants." The editors of *The Pursuit of Urban History* allow themselves to say things like "the Althusserian schism had made Thompson's empirical marxism respectable," and they expect us to follow what they mean. In their introduction we meet a random selection of the pursuers and hear about their troubles: there are social anthropologists, who deal in "timeless patterns of behavior in kinship groups and localized communities"; structuralists, who deal in the relations of urban space and physical form to behavior; intellectual historians, who deal in the perception of cities; functionalists, who struggle with urban typologies; and social historians fired up about the exercise of community power, who find their easiest format to be urban biography. There is even a brief, sad reference to architectural historians.

Of them, the editors write:

> **The architectural approach, which seemed full of potential in 1966, is now represented [in this volume] only by [Donald J.] Olsen's urbanely perceptive analysis of the visual. Indeed building history now stretches across a spectrum from the purism of the architectural historians at one extreme to the intellectualism of the conspiratorial social-control school [meaning the structuralists, for whom the city is a source of power in the service of its dominant class] at the other.**

A footnote gives "examples of each extreme with nothing to say to each other": D. Linstrum's *West Yorkshire: Architects and Architecture* (1978); and G. Ciucci et al., *The American City from the Civil War to the New Deal* (1980).

For those of us who follow "the architectural approach," who write about cities as physical artifacts, these revelations are extremely mystifying—and, after the effort to come to terms with them, tedious.

Our involvement with cities, first of all, is not a recent enthusiasm. It is at least as old as architectural history, since from the very beginnings of that enterprise we have considered urban design a natural part of our birthright. J. Stübben's *Der Städtebau* was first published in 1890, six years before Banister Fletcher and *père* came out with their *History of Architecture on the Comparative Method.* Stübben's book was commissioned for the great *Handbuch der Architektur* series, initiated by Eduard Schmitt, and formed a segment of part 4 of the series entitled "The Setting, Layout, and Arrangement of Buildings." And we have not stopped since. To hear that we have nothing much to contribute to urban history these days is as acceptable to us as the news would be to the College of Cardinals that they have nothing to contribute to religion.

Just for the record, between 1966, when we apparently showed some promise visible to the urban history consortium, and 1983, when we disappointed it, there have been several general histories of cities written from "the architectural approach"—Edmund N. Bacon's *The Design of Cities* (1967), Sibyl Moholy Nagy's *The Matrix of Man* (1968), A. E. J. Morris's *The History of Urban Form* (1974), Leonardo Benevolo's *Storia della Città* (1975), and the grand Laterza compendium already mentioned. They joined their immediate, and famous, predecessors, the surveys by Lewis Mumford and Pierre Lavedan. Specialized "period" histories have ranged from the popular Braziller picture-book series on Planning and Cities, edited by George R. Collins, to masterly reviews by Mario Coppa (Hellenistic cities), William MacDonald (Roman cities), and Riccardo Mariani (Fascist cities). Urban monographs by architectural historians are legion; a recent sampling of the best would include Richard Krautheimer's on medieval Rome, Stephen Tobriner's on Noto, Cesare De Seta's on Naples, and Norma Evenson's on modern Paris.

As for the why and the how of urban history, practitioners of "the architectural approach" have been unmarked, on the whole, by the *angst* of self-examination. We assume, no doubt naively, that people know what cities are, and we do not fret much about theories of origin or definition. Speaking for myself, there are a lot of good questions that can be asked about cities, and it does not seem too terribly important who asks them as long as they are considered and answered, ideally by more than one kind of historian. I applaud, therefore, Bruce M. Stave, who pleads in his piece in *Pursuit* that urban historians become less self-conscious and show less self-doubt, "give little heed whether they plow field or subfield or discipline, and more attention to pursuing their

subject matter intelligently, analytically and gracefully."

On the other hand, it is certainly of interest to assess what particular contribution is made, or should be made, by historians of different stripes. Since until recently most urban historians were self-trained, they have the methods of their mother discipline to apply to the study of cities, a task they are likely to do better than others. And the issue in this essay is precisely what architectural historians can do better than others.

Our prime target has always been the physical form of cities. It is true that until recently this has mostly meant pedigreed urban design—grand plazas and avenues, city plans, ideal city schemes done by name architects, that sort of thing. This basically formalist literature is still being produced, and in healthy doses. At its least enlightening, it merely collects things that look alike. N. J. Johnston's *Cities in the Round* is a collection of planned round cities padded with informational tidbits. Mr. Johnston is an architect who enjoys circular urban forms. He allows that their language "goes beyond the rational, employing a vocabulary that is emotional, collective, and archetypal," but he believes that the patterns alone "are feast enough for the senses to merit their being brought together for our pleasure."

Helen Rosenau's *Ideal City* is more studious about motive, but the social side of the discourse does not go much beyond introductory assertions that "the desire to attain a perfect physical environment and a more satisfying way of life is characteristic of Western European civilization," and "it presupposes emphasis on freedom, and a willingness to strive for progress." At any rate, the scaffolding of the book is preponderantly art historical, complete with a "Mannerist Phase" between Renaissance and baroque, even though the relevance of the traditional style designations to the study of urban history remains questionable. The discussion itself, which was scholarly enough in 1959 when the book was first published, is in this third edition dusty and dated. A lot happened to architectural history in those twenty-five years. In the realm of cities, the appreciation of utopian socialists like Robert Owen and Charles Fourier, for example, is much subtler than it was in the days when names like these were rarely evoked by the art historical establishment, for whom they were *hors de discours*.

What did happen is that we lost our innocence. We became more adroit with the underpinnings of form. We developed a sophisticated curiosity about the political, social, and economic context of urban design, to which we had always paid lip service, but little more: we started to write a fuller urban history. In France and Italy especially, architectural historians displayed a commendable urgency to go beyond the urban forms to the society and the power structure that gave them shape. They introduced an anatomy of urban spaces and probed its meanings. The work of Françoise Choay, Françoise Boudon, Cesare De Seta, and Valter Vanelli sent us on exciting adventures which should engage us for a long time.

This was possible because architectural historians were willing to seek documentation for city form in an array of archival repositories outside the hunting ground of their field's traditional historiography. It was also possible because sister disciplines had ventured earnestly on their own into the study of cities, pouring out quantities of new, nourishing information. All we had to do was range beyond our familiar bibliographic rounds, and cull from this fresh material what we needed to perform our primary task: to explain the physical and visual dimension of the urban artifact.

The busiest disciplines, broadly speaking, were history and geography. Historians took on questions of demography, of economic and social structures. They worked on crime and policing, on social mobility, on urban politics, on the history of the working class. In this country, books by Richard C. Wade, Sam Bass Warner, Richard Sennett, and Stephan Thernstrom liberated those architectural historians who cared from the dry academicism of plats and interventions.

But there was some frustration for us in all this wealth. With few exceptions—Warner's *Streetcar Suburbs* (1962) was one—these books were not particularly rooted in the physical fabric of the cities they engaged. They treated the city as a passive setting—the mute backdrop of the processes they described. It was up to us to find the specific fit between the social and political analysis we were offered and the urban configurations on the ground.

The geographers were more assimilable. Urban configurations were, in fact, precisely their métier. Their concerns included the origin of cities, urban "sites," land use, transportation systems, the size and status of cities, work and housing relationships, the industrial structure, the development of the central business districts and suburbs. They moved about freely in our chartered domain. Two chapters in Harold Carter's *Introduction to Urban Historical Geography*—"The Diffusion of Urbanism" and "In Whose Image Is the City Made?"—are standard fare for our own approach.

And here the geographers went us one better. They were taken with *irregular* city forms which we had conventionally dismissed as amorphous or unplanned, and therefore outside our care. Of course, we had given "organic" or "geomorphic" cities the benefit of visual appreciation. At least from Camillo Sitte onward, the cult of the twisted street and the residual public space, of "spontaneous" or "instinctive" growth, has had our attention. Our Gordon Cullens and Kevin Lynches and Kriers have trained sharp eyes on the vagaries of urban patterns

and drawn prescriptive design lessons from their scrutiny.

That, however, is not history. History must document how such vagaries came about. Nothing about city form is unplanned; even neglect and laissez-faire are a kind of planning. Nothing about city form is natural. Cities don't grow like plants from errant seeds, or seek the least course of resistance like running water. Streets are not blood vessels. Behind the most relaxed of urban dispositions is a strong formative will—ambition, the calculated and complex art of survival.

That is what the geographers began to investigate—how irregular cities in antiquity and the Middle Ages and the early phase of the Industrial Revolution got to be that way. The English especially set about to dissect their historic urban fabrics. One successful technique was the use of town plans, that is, maps detailed enough to show the pattern of land parcels or plots and the arrangement of buildings. Blessed with the exceedingly particularized Ordinance Survey plans that reach back to the mid-19th century, these English scholars could decipher the piecemeal composition of their medieval towns. In the process, they taught us that "functionally and genetically street system and associated plot pattern belong together; they cannot be considered in isolation."[2]

The words are M. R. G. Conzen's; his 1960 study on Alnwick, Northumberland, is the classic illustration of this technique. A German parallel is E. Keyser's work on towns of northwestern Germany, which uses the same method.[3] We are slowly catching on. Boudon's studies involving the patterns of real estate parcels in old sections of Paris, for example, and a few others like it, are staking out a new area of research for architectural historians.[4]

For the medieval period at least, more help was forthcoming after 1960 from urban archaeology. A great amount of physical evidence was unearthed in Europe, fleshing in the sketchy outline of the origins and continuity of European towns. The reports of this activity from many countries, presented at a conference held at Oxford ten years ago and published shortly thereafter, brought forth a wealth of specific information which architectural historians will have to digest before they attempt the next urban survey of the Middle Ages.[5]

As a result of these shifts, new directions, and overlapping interests, academic boundaries are blurred. There is now a general similarity between a geographer's and an architectural historian's treatment of *bastides*, between a social historian's and our own account of Pullman. You can read about the Chicago Fair, a formative event for the history of city planning, in *The Incorporation of America* by Alan Trachtenberg, professor of American Studies and English at Yale. Sam Bass Warner, who teaches history and social science at Boston University, writes convincingly about New York's skyline in his contribution to *Pursuit* entitled "The Management of Multiple Urban Images."

Still, we are no closer than we were twenty years ago to a cohesive view of urban history, and I am not at all certain that we should be. If there were to be a common ground for this field of knowledge and its multidextrous practitioners, however, I believe that we should agree to the need for keying our research to the artifactual reality of cities. This position is finding some support from historians of various persuasions. Roy Lubove defines urban history quite simply as "the history of city building over time," and for Anthony Sutcliffe, one of the most prolific of the lot, it is mainly "the history of physical form and its interaction with social processes." Stave, who reports on these assessments, believes that city building and planning "may well carry the burden of urban history—however defined—in America during the 1980s."

Whether or not such predictions come true, the place of the architectural historian in the future of urban history remains central. How well equipped we are to do our share, how full our agenda is, I cannot presume to say. We have done fairly well with the history of planning, in the sense of premeditated urban design attributable to professional effort. We have had plenty to say in the past about Hippodamus and Filarete, Haussmann's Paris and Oglethorpe's Savannah, the Law of the Indies and the City Beautiful Movement. Sica's book for Laterza demonstrates our comprehensive grasp of city planning since 1900, when this branch of design came to be recognized as a legitimate, discrete modern profession. The history of that profession has spawned its own literature, of which *The American Planner* and *Introduction to Planning History in the United States*, both edited by D. A. Krueckeberg, are recent examples.

City *building* is another matter. We will need to lift our eyes from aerial photographs and maps more often, to look *into* cities and not *at* them. There is, for example, no general history of the street written from our viewpoint, not even of the simple, formalist kind Paul Zucker did for plazas, which would talk about issues of street design—sidewalks, tree-planting, or the ways in which row-houses relate to street channels. There is as yet no architectural history of the Roman colonnaded avenue, of Elm Street, or Millionaire's Row. We have hardly begun to explore the city edge as a theme, or the urban skyline and who designs it. (For this last, Wayne Attoe's *Skylines, Understanding and Molding Urban Silhouettes* [Wiley, 1981] begins the discussion from the architect's perspective.)

We will also have to become more deeply involved with the history of urban form that is not the product of urban design in the professional sense, but of urban process over time. If the geographers are interested in *synoecism* as a stage in the history of urban development, we should analyze the physical process through which sev-

eral villages came together to create the urban core of Athens and Rome, Siena and Novgorod. If the urban archaeologists record for us the overlapping of Roman towns and their medieval successors, we should unravel the steps whereby a formal Roman grid is raveled into an organic pattern of broken streets, alleys, and cul-de-sacs. We should undertake hundreds of fine-grained studies of "organic" cities, both in the West and elsewhere, in the manner of Nezar Al Sayyad's *Streets of Islamic Cairo* (1981), and push them beyond this analytical stage to a discussion of historical circumstance. We should contribute our own informed interpretation of non-Roman settlements as they are being documented for us by archaeologists and historians, and so do our part to end the neglect of urban experiments beyond the classical pale.[6] And while we are at it, we should intensify our efforts to end the dualism of town and country, since the proper study of urban history cannot patently stop at city gates, even when they exist. Greek colonial towns are inseparable from their surveyed and divided countryside, as Guy Métraux has shown, and Roman centuriation is as much a rural-urban schema as the majestic Land Survey grid of the United States.

Perhaps the most distinctive service we can render is to insist on the interdependence of buildings and the public spaces they border, as Sitte urged us to do one hundred years ago—in other words, to suspend altogether the academic boundaries between architectural and urban history. There is surprisingly little being written along these lines. In all the material here under review, only one essay, Lars Olof Larsson's in *Metropolis*, specifically addresses architecture as an integral condition of urbanism. The question is not simple. As Larsson says about "metropolis architecture," the problem is "more specific than just architecture in a metropolis or even architecture serving typical metropolitan demands, such as mass transport, warehousing and big offices." What is at issue is the character bestowed on linear urban patterns—a grid plan or a baroque avenue—by the abutting structures and spaces. It should be obvious that no two grid systems are alike, not because the grids themselves cannot be identical, but because what is done with them in three dimensions will create an individual presence in each case. We cannot continue to study settlement form without including the internal texture of the settlement in the same study. To waste talk on grids being monotonous or disorienting is to imply that Tacoma and Manhattan are univalent.

At the same time, architectural historians have to stop pretending that they can study space but not people, since cities have always been defined by the interaction of the two. That is what makes Kevin Lynch's last book such a wise charter for urban history, as well as being the sanest theory of urban design we have been given since the Second World War, perhaps even since the First World War. Lynch focuses on the connections between human values and the spatial, physical frame of the city, and insists that "city forms, their actual function, and the ideas and values that people attach to them make up a single phenomenon."[7]

For us, this neglected truism summons a range of attitudes. At the very least, it should tell us to stop treating urban patterns as if they were independent of human intention. Similarities between L'Enfant's plan of Washington and the absolutist diagrams of Versailles or Karlsruhe are academic, and so are those between Burnham's Chicago and Haussmann's Paris, unless we elaborate on the nature of the content that was to be housed within each, and the social premises of the designers. In cities as in architecture, form is neutral until it is appropriated. So it is that the ubiquitous grid can accommodate without embarrassment the inalienable holdings of a territorial aristocracy in Greek Sicily, the cosmic vision of Joseph Smith for the setting of the Second Coming, and good old speculative greed.

Then again, an appropriated form is always open to adaptive reuse. It is not the business of the historian to lament the erosion of formal purity: the job should dictate the evaluation of the eroding process. Penn's grid for Philadelphia was indeed handsome; the chopping up of the expansive blocks with alleys was decried by the architectural historian as a crime against primal form, until others could point out that this same impurity extended homeownership to many who would not otherwise have been able to afford it, and so spared Philadelphians the miseries of tenement living.

A final attitude may be the most important of all. Cities exist for the staging of public ritual and the resolution of social conflict. That is why books like Edward Muir's *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, 1981) or more recently Mark Girouard's *Cities and People* (Yale, 1986) should be the envy of urban historians who profess to take "the architectural approach." That we can claim Girouard as our own is a good omen on the road to redemption.

1. *The Study of Urban History*, Arnold: London, 1968.

2. *Study of Urban History*, 122-124.

3. *Stadtgrundungen und Städtebau in Nordwestdeutschland im Mittelalter, der Stadtgrundriss als Geschichtsquelle*, 2 vols., Remagen, 1958.

4. See her "Tissue urbain et architecture: L'Analyse parcellaire comme base de l'histoire architecturale," *Annales* 4, 1975, 773-818.

5. M. W. Barley, ed., *European Towns, Their Archaeology and Early History*, London, 1977.

6. For example, B. Cunliffe and T. Rowley, *Oppida in Barbarian Europe*, Oxford, 1976.

7. *Good City Form*, MIT, 1984, p. 36.

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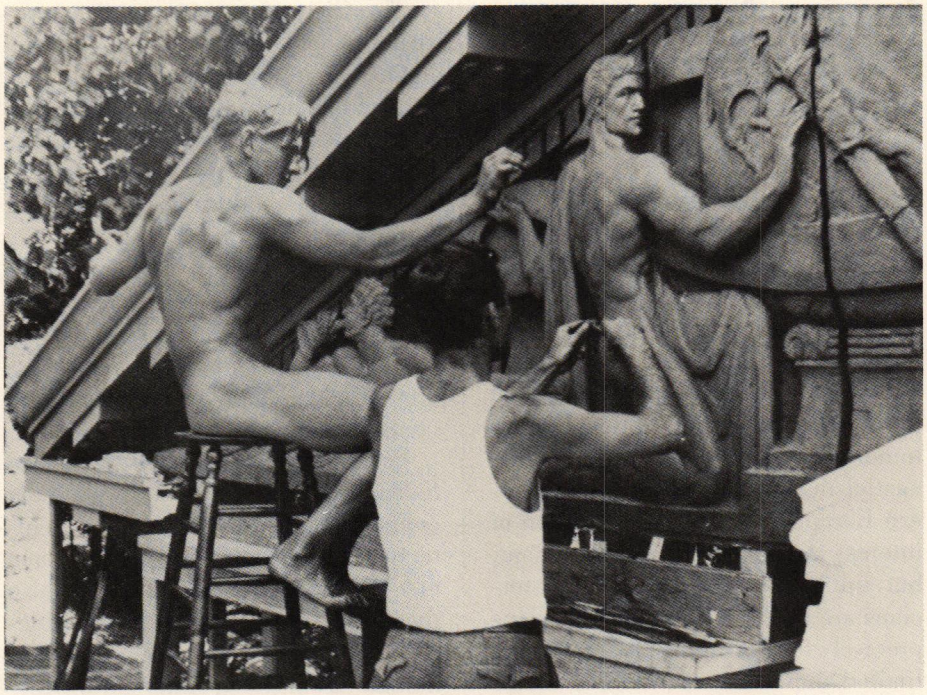
Karal Ann Marling:

SCULPTURE AND THE FEDERAL TRIANGLE

GEORGE GURNEY

The Federal Triangle was begun under the direction of Republican Secretary of State Andrew Mellon in the waning days of the Coolidge prosperity and completed by the Democratic New Deal during the calamitous Depression. This complex of glistening white buildings wedged into the angle formed by the convergence of Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues in the District of Columbia still defines the oversize, earnestly rhetorical, quasi-classical, stodgily marmoreal, and demi-moderne architecture we associate with the works and pomps of the U.S. government. Although that Monticello-out-of-Mussolini style has translated readily to federal courthouses and HEW outposts in the provinces, the sculptural fillips added to those rather bleak façades in FDR's first and second terms have not always survived the trip to the nether regions.

And more's the pity. For, as National Museum of American Art historian George Gurney shows in this meticulously researched and lavishly illustrated volume (where the pictures, *mirabile dictu*, actually appear right next to the text describing them), this thirties statuary is pretty good stuff. And indeed, statues like Michael Lanz's* huge image of a musclebound roustabout subduing a fiery horse, sited outside the Federal Trade Commission and titled "Man Controlling Trade" look even better when one contemplates the arcane assemblages of spare I-beams that pass for sculpture on the windswept plazas so often annexed to federal office buildings today. The theme may seem dated but the man and horse still aim at a certain public legibility, a didacticism that, if the recent addition of a realistic group of bronze soldiers to the abstract wall of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial is any indication, the public still relishes in its monuments.



WALKER HANCOCK WORKING ON A HALF-SCALE MODEL FOR *THE BOND OF POSTAL UNION* (1933). PHOTO COURTESY OF WALKER HANCOCK.

The late Joshua Taylor, in his trenchant introduction to *Sculpture and the Federal Triangle*, discusses the "stylized" admixture of abstract and archaic elements that lends a genuine panache to the overdoor reliefs and decorative aluminum grillwork on the Apex Building, to the massive pedimental groupings over the portals of the Labor Department, and to the worthies sitting solemnly on plinths flanking the entrances to the National Archives. Mr. Gurney tells the story of each of these commissions, and others besides, in great detail, beginning with the often convoluted processes by which sculptors were selected, and proceeding through the vicissitudes of design, and redesign, and execution, to a variety of weary conclusions—some of them, nonetheless, happy. We learn a great deal about the difficulties of making art for the people in a pluralistic society, in a day when elected officials took citizen objections a good deal more seriously than they have of late (although citizen revolts in New York and Washington have recently forced removal and modification of uncommunicative objects).

Mr. Gurney is at his best, however, when he explains the incredibly complex techniques of making large-scale architectural sculpture from tiny models—never done by the ostensible sculptor, but by unsung firms of skilled craftsmen, the Piccirilli Brothers, for example, who emerge as the real heroes of the tale. If the author is less interested in the obscure but always intriguing subject matter of these works, his zeal for celebrating the "forgotten men" of New Deal art more than compensates. This is a first-rate book. It should be required reading for any bureaucrat with a yen for things artistic and any designer tempted to accept that bureaucrat's commission.

*Yes, the younger brother of cartoonist Walter "Woody Woodpecker" Lanz.

Sculpture and the Federal Triangle, George Gurney, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985, 464 pp., illus., $39.95.

Laurence Nees:

ARCHITECTURE OF SOLITUDE

PETER FERGUSSON

The last few decades have seen intense interest in the 12th-century art and architecture of the Cistercian Order. Four of thirteen articles in a recent collection devoted to "Monasticism and the Arts" focus on the 12th-century Cistercians, even though the book spans the entire fifteen-hundred-year history of Christian monasticism, in both Eastern and Western Europe.[1] Such a concentration of interest is not only disproportionate, but initially perplexing; the Cistercians are best known to art historians precisely for having insisted upon the limited importance of art and architecture. Indeed, the irrelevance to and even incompatibility of art and architecture with the Cistercians' central aim of mystical communion with God was a prominent feature of their writings. The order specifically prohibited churches of large size or with "superfluous" features such as towers, and banned colored glass and almost all figural art from their churches. The well-preserved monastery of Fontenay in Burgundy (founded 1119, but with surviving work only from the 1139–1147 complete reconstruction) appears to embody many of these ideas in physical form. This touchstone of virtually all discussions of Cistercian art and architecture remains in fact as the only Cistercian building illustrated in nearly every history of medieval or indeed of Western art and architecture. Its simple, pure volumes, shapes, and surfaces, its overt and strikingly geometrical design and construction, and its nearly complete lack of ornament have appealed powerfully to 20th-century viewers, and indeed correspond to many of the characteristics sought by the Modernists, at least until this preference was challenged by the style oxymoronically labeled Post-Modern.

The Cistercians attempted to construct a physical environment that both embodied and supported an ideal form of human life and human society, and thus Cistercian architecture seems to foreshadow the utopian visions of such diverse modern designers as Le Corbusier and Albert Speer. At the same time, modern scholars have seen in the Cistercians a salient early attempt to effect such all-encompassing societal reforms on the basis of rules and prototypical plans, devised and controlled by centralized authority.[2]

Peter Fergusson's *Architecture of Solitude*, whose very title evokes the connection between Cistercian architecture and spirituality, shares some of these modern interests. It is also the first book in English to pay adequate attention to the diversity of the numerous surviving 12th-century Cistercian buildings. Less dominated by modern aesthetic and historiographical presuppositions, this book achieves a far richer, more complex, and manifestly more sympathetic and accurate view of the aims and achievements of the 12th-century builders.

Architecture of Solitude is a concise and scholarly introduction to Cistercian architecture. Fergusson's opening chapter provides the reader with essential information concerning the establishment, early history, aims, and organization of the Cistercian Order, placing special emphasis upon those features relevant to building. In the five following chapters, he turns to his central topic—Cistercian architecture in England—concentrating respectively upon the earliest foundation at Waverly (1128), the great northern establishments at Rievaulx (1132), Fountains (1133), and Kirkstall (1152), the "advent of Gothic" at Furness (ca. 1160) and Roche (ca. 1170), the "transformation" of Cistercian building represented by the extraordinary second campaign at Byland (1170s) and finally the churches of the West country, notably Buildwas (1150s) and Abbey Dore (ca. 1190s). Many others among the 64 successful 12th-century establishments in England are mentioned, and all are treated in the summary catalogue at the end of the volume, which includes documents, secondary literature, and reports of site excavations that will be very useful to scholars, albeit of little interest to the general reader. The provision of such a catalogue is, however, beneficial for the nonspecialist, since it has allowed the author to concentrate upon the most significant and best-preserved monuments. Fergusson spares the reader the lengthy descriptions of architectural details that frequently mar studies in medieval architecture. Indeed, the book's exemplary organization and lucid and rect prose make it a genuine pleasure to read.

One cautionary word, however, concerning its scope: although its title promises a study of the architecture of English Cistercian abbeys, and although it is abundantly clear that the author is master of each stone (and all the extensive literature) from every building at each site, the study is in fact strictly limited to the architecture of Cistercian abbey churches. Where chapter houses or refectories or other conventual and service buildings are mentioned and illustrated, as they frequently are, the purpose is solely to elucidate the chronology or influences operating in the churches. Although I do not really mean this observation as a criticism, since the author is certainly entitled to define his own subject, I wish he had been more explicit in stating the purpose of such a concentration upon churches alone, and I suspect that many other readers might join me in wishing that more had been said about the development (or lack of it) of the forms and arrangements of the entire monastic complex. It is astonishing that the book does not include a single complete plan of any Cistercian monastery or of any building other than a church, whether in England or elsewhere, so that the reader not already conversant with these complexes will need to

consult another book for enlightenment.[3]

Also, the reader who has not visited a Cistercian monastery site will find it difficult to understand the special character of these wonderful buildings from the photographic record made available here. The only color illustration—not particularly well selected—is on the dust cover, and only a single photograph (of Rievaulx) can possibly be described as "scenic." Yet, as Fergusson repeatedly and quite correctly points out, the siting of Cistercian monasteries was not only a decisive factor in their development, it was seen by contemporaries as an essential element of the life and spirituality of an order which adamantly insisted that its members undertake agricultural work.

Fergusson's book is avowedly limited to the Cistercian abbeys in 12th-century England, but his outlook is not insular. Indeed, one of the most important contributions of his study is the persuasive demonstration that the order's English buildings were predominantly and at times almost exclusively influenced by the order's earlier and contemporary works in France, a conclusion that puts Fergusson at odds with the heretofore common view that English Cistercian architecture was powerfully affected by local tastes and building traditions. In the process of developing this argument, Fergusson necessarily devotes considerable attention to French developments, and he has almost inadvertently produced what seems to me the most balanced and provocative discussion of several important problems relating to French Cistercian buildings. For example, he suggests that the third building campaign at Clairvaux, in the mid-1150s, which produced an enlarged new choir with apsidal end, ambulatory, radiating chapels, and spire—all breaks with customary Cistercian practice—must be related to the burial of St. Bernard in front of the altar in his abbey in 1153. This new plan was not adopted, he believes, in imitation of recent French Gothic buildings such as St. Denis, but rather reflects the traditional means of emphasizing and providing access to a major pilgrimage site. This observation is a good example of Fergusson's skill in seeing beyond purely stylistic developments to take into account changes in function, patronage, and historical conditions. Although he argues persuasively for a rough division of 12th-century English Cistercian architecture into four chronological phases with different general characteristics, he avoids the temptation to oversimplify and schematize the buildings. He is consistently able to see each abbey not just as a necessary stage in a development but as an individual monument, powerfully affected by a wide range of factors—not only those just mentioned, but also the affiliations of the abbeys (each Cistercian abbey was closely linked to the particular abbey from which its founding abbot and twelve monks were sent out) and such personal and almost accidental details as the background and friendships of abbots and overseers.

Architecture of Solitude is a mine of information and of perceptive comments upon a wide range of problems, and in the space of a short review I cannot begin to do justice to the variety of new insights he has achieved. As an indication of the quality and originality of his work I offer instead a more detailed discussion of his treatment of a single complex of problems, the form of the earliest Cistercian churches in France—those erected during the first thirty years of the order's history, from its founding in 1098 to the dramatic changes of the 1130s—and the common theory that the observable similarities among preserved Cistercian buildings reflect an authoritative early prescribed prototypical plan. Fergusson is the first to effectively address the diverse and problematic evidence for Cistercian architecture *before* the mid-1130s. He shows that the English Cistercian buildings, never before effectively adduced in connection with this problem, offer critical clues to the structure and appearance of the two most important and influential of the early 12th-century Cistercian foundations, the now almost entirely lost buildings at the mother house of Çiteaux and at St. Bernard's Clairvaux. For example, he argues that the unvaulted timber roof and several other features of the great early church at Rievaulx in Yorkshire, founded in 1132, probably reflect the first large-scale Cistercian building program; the rebuilding of Çiteaux commenced two years earlier, and reveals a significantly different and earlier version of what scholars now call "the Bernardine plan," exemplified preeminently by Fontenay. He then proceeds to observe not only that Rievaulx and probably Çiteaux II (ca. 1132) differ significantly from the later Fontenay type, but that the small aisleless church of the Cistercians' first English foundation, at Waverly in 1128, differs from both of these later types, representing an even earlier and more austere Cistercian plan.

From this new vantage point Fergusson is able to grasp the full implication of the well-known but generally disregarded fact that "what little is known about the earliest churches, like Çiteaux and Clairvaux, indicated that a wide variety of buildings was used," and that standardization emerged only in the 1130s to replace the "loosely defined and often quite idiosyncratic form of the early buildings." On the basis of the available evidence he comes to the apparently obvious but nonetheless novel conclusion that initially there was no Cistercian "type" of architecture, if by this one signifies not just an emphasis on simplicity but a particular set of forms or a particular plan: "Çiteaux and Pontigny were aisleless and longitudinal in plan, but Clairvaux was aisled and square in plan; Ourscamp ended in an apse, but the other churches had square ends; Çiteaux was vaulted, but Clairvaux was wooden roofed." He concludes

that although "from their early days the Cistercians instituted a system of government and discipline based on standardized practice ... this [standardization] did not at first include architecture," which begins to evince such a concern only a decade or more later. Fergusson himself refrains from underscoring the decisive, indeed revolutionary conceptual departure from the common historical interpretation that his conclusion represents. The reader can perhaps grasp this point by comparing Fergusson's analysis to that put forth in the influential study by the great scholar Wolfgang Braunfels, who sees "centralism" as a conspicuous and indeed essential feature of the Cistercians and their architecture: "Since life in Cistercian monasteries was supposed to obey the same laws day by day, all their monasteries should theoretically [!] have looked the same. Most of them were indeed alike in their basic units. For this reason it is possible to set out for the Cistercians alone a binding schema on which all executed monasteries were variations." Braunfels then proceeds to reproduce a plan of the "ideal Cistercian monastery" as earlier designed by Marcel Aubert (1143) and Anselme Dimier (1162), this despite the fact that the abundant Cistercian records provide no indication whatsoever that such a plan ever existed, despite his own citation of the quite irregular form of the early structures at Clairvaux, and even despite having provided in an appendix his own translation of large portions of the contemporary document revealing St. Bernard's strong and many-grounded opposition to large-scale rebuilding of any sort, a position difficult to reconcile with his supposed sponsorship of a particular detailed plan.

It is quite clear that Braunfels's "theoretical" observation, shared previously by most scholars, that standardization *should* characterize early Cistercian architecture, has completely overshadowed the observable fact that it does not do so. This contrast between modern theory and medieval practice is firmly grasped by Fergusson, and should certainly be noted by others working in this field. Fergusson comments, perhaps defensively in view of the sharp contrast between this assessment and the uniform view of previous scholars, that "the time lag [between centralizing standards for Cistercian life, and the development of anything remotely approximating standard building plans a full decade or more later] is hard to understand." But is it really so hard to understand?

"Since life in Cistercian monasteries was supposed to obey the same laws day by day, all their monasteries should theoretically [!] have looked the same," according to Braunfels.

The obvious conclusion is that architecture, or at least the particular *form* of architectural work, was not deemed of great significance by the founders of the order. Indeed, one looks in vain through the abundant and frequently mentioned Cistercian statutes concerning buildings for prescriptive standards of any sort, as opposed to proscriptive condemnations. Cistercian churches were not to have towers with bells (banned in 1157, and in fact the only specific architectural prohibition of the 12th-century statutes), but no mention is made of whether the nave of the church should have aisles or not, and a survey of the early material shows substantial variation even in so basic a feature. Cistercian churches were to be devoid of all but a simple candle (ornament was banned in 1119), but no statute concerns the number, form, access to, or construction, of the chapels, which once again show wide variation among the surviving buildings. Wooden buildings adequate for the needs of the first monks were to be erected by the new abbey's founder prior to the monks' arrival at a new establishment, and the buildings' functions (oratory, refectory, dormitory, guest house, and gate-keeper's cell) were carefully specified (1119), but the form of these new buildings seems to have been left to the lay founder's description. Various statutes of the 1130s and the 1150s "regulate the diet, apparel and attendance at certain offices" of hired work crews engaged in building, but nothing is said of how or what such crews are to build. The new church at Vaucelles in France was condemned by the Cistercian General Chapter of 1192 as "too costly, and superfluous" and "shocking many," but its architectural form was not mentioned.

It is certainly true that most of the Cistercian churches in England and elsewhere share a certain family resemblance, a cohesion that distinguishes them from many earlier monasteries, especially marked among the "Bernardine" group of the middle decades of the century, but such similiarities can be explained in many ways. First, Fergusson demonstrates through a number of specific comparisons that in design and construction the Cistercian churches are closely related to those of other new orders of the 12th century, such as the Premonstatensian canons. The similarity of design and ethos may in some cases be attributed to the influence of Cistercian buildings, but manifestly cannot be explained by reference to Cistercian "standardization" of prototypical plans. He also offers information and insights which make possible other explanations for the strong resemblances among many of the Cistercian churches.

The rate of expansion of the Cistercian Order was stupendous; between the papal consecration of the new order in 1119 and St. Bernard's death in 1153, the order grew from 10 houses to 339—an average of ten new foundations each year—and this does not take into account the startling figure that in England fully one-half

of the houses had to be moved after their original foundation, in some cases as many as five times, and that others were founded only to be dissolved within a few years. Experienced builders were sent from one house to another to aid in this prodigious task, and in a fascinating appendix to his book Fergusson concisely presents what is known of "the Builders of Cistercian Monasteries in England." The few Cistercian building masters whose careers are documented appear to have traveled widely and had a hand in the design of one abbey after another in rapid succession. To take the most abundantly documented example, Adam of Meaux became a monk at Fountains in 1132, and was very likely trained by the French master Geoffroi of Ainai, who had been sent to Fountains by St. Bernard in 1133 to aid in the building, and who is also known to have worked at several other sites, including Fontenay. Aside from Adam's certain involvement in the construction of Fountains after Geoffroi's departure, we know that Adam was also sent to oversee work at Kirkstead (1139), Woburn (1145), Vaudey (1147), and the house at Meaux of which he became abbot (1149), and it seems likely that he would have had some involvement with the planning of some others among the ten direct and indirect foundations from Fountains during this period.

It is scarcely surprising that, faced with the task of designing, laying out, and beginning construction of a complex of major buildings with such rapidity, Adam of Meaux and other Cistercian builders employed the same concepts repeatedly, though introducing variations in detail. Hence the close similarity among Adam's monasteries, and their similarity to Fontenay and to others known to have been designed by Adam's teacher, Geoffroi, can be explained as the product of a kind of "school" faced repeatedly with similar conditions and requirements, without necessitating recourse to a hypothetical "prototype plan." Modern experience tends to confirm the plausibility of such a history. The considerable similarities among suburban shopping malls established during the last decades across the United States are not the product of centrally controlled planning or descent from an authoritative "prototype plan" of the sort envisaged by modern students of Cistercian architecture. This parallel, or rather unparallel, case should warn of the dangers of reading back from an extant family to a single lost authoritative progenitor. In his careful handling of this and similarly vexing but critical problems, Fergusson's *Architecture of Solitude* makes an important contribution to medieval studies, and deserves thorough study and a wide readership.

1. Timothy Gregory Verdon, ed., *Monasticism and the Arts* (Syracuse, 1984).

2. Perhaps the best-known recent instance of such an interpretation of a medieval monument is Walter Horn's study of an earlier, ninth-century monastery plan, whose subtitle reveals the direction of the author's argument along these lines. See Walter Horn and Ernest Born, *The Plan of St. Gall: A Study of the Architecture and Economy of, and Life in a Paradigmatic Carolingian Monastery*, 3 vols. (Berkeley, 1979). I have reviewed this aspect of the Horn publication with further remarks concerning the contemporary interest in and bias toward seeing central governmental direction in such projects, in "The Plan of St. Gall and the Theory of the Program of Carolingian Art," to appear in *Gesta*, 25 (1986).

3. For a relatively recent and well-illustrated example, refer to Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe: the Architecture of the Orders* (Princeton, 1973), especially pp. 67–110, which states the "standard evaluation of Cistercian buildings which Fergusson's study thoroughly casts into doubt, a point to which I will return.

Architecture of Solitude: Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England, Peter Fergusson, Princeton University Press, 1984, 188 pp., illus., $70.00.

Alexander Tzonis:

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CRISIS OF MODERN SCIENCE

ALBERTO PEREZ-GOMEZ

The aim of Alberto Pérez-Gómez's *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science* is to trace the problems of contemporary architectural practice to the limitations of architectural theory as they have evolved historically. The book is grounded in the historico-epistemological method associated with both Nietzsche, on the one hand, and the neo-Kantian phenomenologists on the other. Pérez-Gómez is closer to the latter. In his search for the roots of modern architectural thinking, he makes no reference to context, institutions, or socio-economic factors; no reference, in other words, to power.

Pérez-Gómez tries to demonstrate the transformation of architecture from its archaic to its modern state. He equates this transformation with the abandonment of architecture as a symbolic activity and, in his words, a "privileged form of reconciliation between man and his world." In its place he identifies the search for "functionalization" and the conversion of architectural theory to a set of operational rules and technologies.

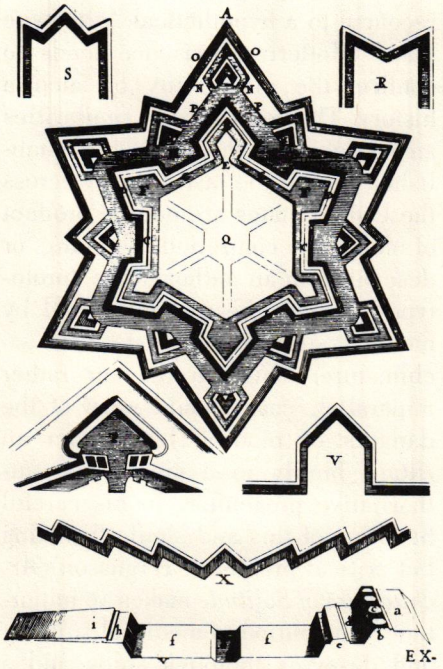
Linking this development of architectural theory with parallel changes in science, Pérez-Gómez tries to combine the history of ideas as it relates to architecture, engineering, technology, and science from the early 17th to the early 19th century. Aside from being a large and comprehensive book, referring to almost every theoretician of the period, *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science* is also the only recent book on this subject. The scholarly apparatus is present, with a twenty-page bibliography and numerous illustrations, and the writing is relatively clear and to the point—a welcome relief from the turgid prose

so frequently found in current architectural writing.

There is, however, much to complain about. Most annoying is the author's obsessive effort to discredit the idea of progress and the development of science. He resorts to vast generalizations, such as: "Once life itself began to be regarded as a process, whether biological or teleological, theory was able to disregard ethical considerations in favor of applicability." This viewpoint is common among post-modern critics of rationality, and it has been shared by anti-modernists since the Counter-Reformation. The trouble is that the weight of the data accumulated by architectural and engineering historians, especially since World War II, is against this anti-modern argument. The repetition of these well-known neoconservative ideas does little to make the data more coherent. Although obviously inspired by the encyclopedic feats in the history of ideas by authors like Gusdorf, Tatarkiewicz, and Cassirer, Pérez-Gómez only appears to be thorough.

It would be hard to deny, in terms of pure history of ideas, that the norm of building in "an efficient and economic manner" was not always opposed to the "reconciliation of man and his world." Yet Pérez-Gómez tends to remain silent about the architectural literature since the Renaissance, in which efficiency and economy have been linked with the humanistic ideals of human dignity. Ironically, the very epistemological and ethical framework of his critique of late Renaissance humanistic rationalist science is itself a product of the open mind of that same school of thought.

Despite the erudition of the author and his scanning of countless sources, his arbitrary conclusions could have been reached without all the documentary evidence. He rehashes, for example, the familiar speculative and conservative romantic notion that science is the result of the economization of life, which historians of science



HEXAGONAL FORTIFICATION, PLAN AND DETAILS, FROM FELIBEIN'S *PRINCIPES*, 1694 (FROM *ARCHITECTURE AND THE CRISIS OF MODERN SCIENCE*)

and technology have repudiated during the last 25 years. Copious historical and anthropological evidence from China, North Africa, and Medieval Europe indicates that quantification and analytical thinking in fact preceded economization and were applied in archaic divination and rituals. Galileo's and Stevin's preoccupation with numbers derived from the archaic tradition as much as from the modern concern with accounting. The "epistemological break" associated with modern thinking was a result not so much of the introduction of abstractions, relations, and equations as it was of the new uses to which these analytical tools were put —that is, their subordination to the norm of profit.

Pérez-Gómez's notion of archaic societies is equally speculative. Sadly, and unromantically, to be sure, archaic cultures are more dominated by "instrumental thinking" than one would suspect. It just happens that their perception of what is "instrumental" differs from ours. The author's definition of archaic culture as anti-instrumentalist is more a reflection of his own anxieties about the contemporary lethal effects of science and technology than of the reality of archaic societies. If they chose not to exploit the potentials of their science, it was because they preferred to acquire goods through slave labor and looting, not exactly a nice alternative to increasing production through rational thinking.

The author correctly stresses the contribution of the 17th century and in particular of the Perrault brothers toward the modernization of architecture. He does not, however, explain why the developments of this period took place. These were times of major power struggles and shifts, and the Perraults were highly political animals roaming in the jungle of intrigues. Power and its legitimation were key issues, and references to Machiavelli and Hobbes, to put it schematically, are indispensable to any effort to understand the changes in architectural theory at that moment. It is also difficult to conceive of this key moment in the development of the scientific representation of architecture without relating it to parallel developments in the representation of space in painting and cartography.

One might also object to Pérez-Gómez's inattention to the development of functional designs for hospitals, prisons, and other social institutions. He also totally ignores the work of Ackerman, Argan, Eugenio Battisti, Chastel, Fortier, Horst de la Croix, Tzonis, and Vannetti on the rationalization of design, leading to a very eclectic and partial view of the modernization of architecture.

The study ends with the somber generalization that, because of the functionalist, scientific mode of thought applied by Durand and Viel, architecture could no longer remain a "privileged form of reconciliation between man and his world." An alternative reading of the data, however, reveals quite a different picture, because it was also at the end of the 18th century that architecture became

preoccupied with antiscientific, antirational, and antifunctional thinking. This development ran parallel and in opposition to the architecture of efficiency put forth in the theories of Durand and Viel.

Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science is a polemic against rationality and science as they apply not only to architecture but to the study of architectural history as well. A so-called "interpretative" work is seen as preferable to a "neutral scientific or objective fact-finding operation." While justified as a critique of the often devastating uses of science in the name of "neutrality" and "objectivity," such an attitude cannot be applied to the whole endeavor of science, architecture, and architectural history. A more exclusive investigation of the development of architectural thinking would have led to different conclusions about what happened in history, and to a different critique of the scientizing of architecture. It would have revealed that architecture was the result of a complex process with many nonscientific facets and that elements of modernization were intricately caught up in the stream of social change and emancipation. It would also have disclosed that, despite their enormous constructive potential, science and rationality have caused destruction and waste because of the way they have been applied and administered.

If there is a crisis in architecture, it is not due to its scientific character, but to the fragmentary manner in which scientific methods have been introduced to architecture and the superficial, illegitimate, and often merely rhetorical use of scientific concepts to justify dubious practices. The trouble with modern architecture, as with modern science, is not with its modernity, but with the parodies that have been presented in its name.

Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, MIT, 1983, 400 pp., illus., $32.50.

James D. Kornwolf: CITIES BUILT TO MUSIC

MICHAEL BRIGHT

The poetic title of this book, taken from Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, provides a fitting clue to its interdisciplinary nature. The book embraces literature and aesthetics, as well as architecture, but author Michael Bright, professor of English at Eastern Kentucky University, has made architecture his principal focus. Bright contends that a sufficient number of art historical studies exist on 19th-century British architecture, but because they "tend to ignore the theoretical principles," his work helps fill the gap. Poets, philosophers, architects, and critics from Shakespeare to Le Corbusier are cited. Emphasis is clearly on the period of the so-called Early and High Victorian Gothic (1840–1870), on architects like William Butterfield, A.W. N. Pugin, G. G. Scott, and G. E. Street, and on poets or critics like Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Ruskin, Alfred Lord Tennyson, and William Wordsworth. Yet the author's themes lead him to make frequent references to Alexander Pope and Sir Joshua Reynolds, who lived before the Victorian Gothic Revival, and to Ralph Adams Cram and William R. Lethaby, who came later. No architect is cited more frequently than Pugin, no critic more than Ruskin: it is surprising more attention was not paid to William Morris, the greatest interdisciplinarian of them all.

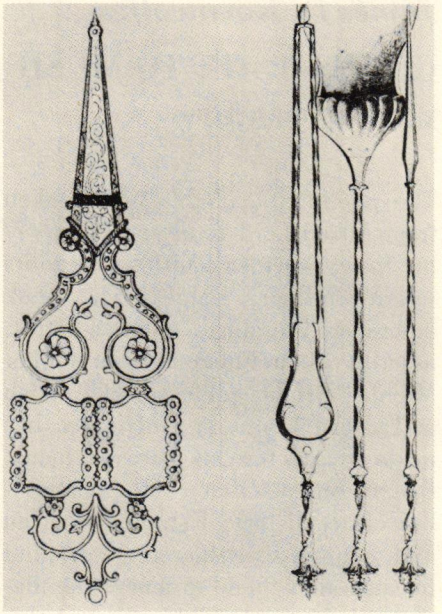
The book is organized into seven sections, with a brief, but vital, introduction and conclusion. The first section, "The Aesthetic Motive of Revivalism," is concerned with problems Victorian architects faced in finding a style for the time. The ascendancy of the medieval and Gothic over the various classical languages of architecture is convincingly identified with the search for principles, not rules and form. Here, as elsewhere, there is a tendency to lump together the entire Gothic Revival without satisfactorily distinguishing its differing phases. Practitioners of the mode from Christopher Wren to Pugin had very different aesthetic motives than the architects of 1840–1870. Similarly, architects associated with the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts movements in the period 1870–1914 developed new motives when they called, like Frank Lloyd Wright, for a return to "the Gothic spirit."

The ensuing section, "Architecture as Music, Painting, and Poetry," is meant to convince the reader that most artists, critics, and aestheticians of the Gothic Revival believed in "the interchangeability of principles between art forms," and that the author is justified in deriving his methodology from their viewpoints. This is quite acceptable, but because these statements are made six pages into the chapter, the reader is obliged to reread the preceding five pages, which focus on the pros and cons of such an approach using a detailed comparison of writings on Laocoön by Gotthold Lessing, Matthew Arnold, and Irving Babbitt, among others. Given the title and stated intent of the study, issues addressed in this chapter are probably treated too briefly, and the points scored are made mainly with critics and aestheticians, not architects.

Part 3, "Expressionism," is the clearest, most original, and most convincing section of the study. Bright is both firm and correct to maintain that the earlier "mimetic concept of art as a mirror gave way during the Romantic age to the expressive concept of art as lamp," and, further, that expressionism has both an objective and a subjective dimension. The subjective, referring to "thoughts and feelings," pertains to a building's historical or symbolic associations; the objective, referring to "essences," pertains to a building as expressed in its function. The author successfully develops further characteristics of expressionism.

The preference for collective rather than individual expressionism led architects away from the classical role of artist as hero to artist as representative of society. Expressionism also led to the view that sincerity was more important than morality, that substance mattered more than form. Here, Bright concludes perceptively that imperfection in art, at times seen as deliberate ugliness, was most essential to the theory of the age and of the Gothic Revival.

The expressionist thesis—that the era heeded Wordsworth's definition of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" far more than Hamlet's view that the purpose of drama was "to hold the mirror up to nature"—finds a logical sequence and further defense in "Mimesis" (part 4). Victorians saw the Gothic as dynamic and organic, the classic as static and mechanistic. Bright agrees with Edward Lacy Garbett that architecture, unlike the other arts, does not imitate "natural forms" but "natural principles." Herein lies the aesthetic of the Picturesque, with its asymmetry and sense of surprise, overpowering the Beautiful, with its symmetry and sense of order. Attentiveness to natural principles eventually produced Frank Lloyd Wright's notion, made real by curtain walls and plate glass, of "the etherealization of architecture," of buildings—as Bright puts it—"assimilated by nature." Such theory inspired *l'art pour l'art*, and allowed Oscar Wilde to dissociate art and nature, claiming that nature followed art. Here, Bright's argument becomes confusing; Ruskin, whose views on architecture would seem expressionistic, is cited as being mimetic because he found Turner's paintings true to nature. Wilde was credited with overturning the mimetic tradition. This makes no sense, for if Wright's architecture is expressionist and anti-mimetic, it is also a manifestation of Ruskin's and Morris's Arts and Crafts Movement, just as it owes much to the seemingly antithetical



FIRE IRONS AND SCISSORS IN THE CRYSTAL PALACE EXHIBITION CATALOGUE. FROM *CITIES BUILT TO MUSIC.*

Aesthetic movement.

The final three sections of the book are entitled "Pragmatism: Pleasure," "Pragmatism: Instruction," and "Pragmatism: Function." "Pragmatic" is used in its ordinary philosophical sense, and as M. H. Abrams defined it in *The Mirror and the Lamp.* Bright writes:

> **The pragmatic theory of art . . . is that which is directed to the audience, and which regards "the work of art chiefly as a means to an end, an instrument for getting something done, and tends to judge its value according to its success in achieving that aim."**

This definition it is agreed works well enough for the Arts and Crafts Movement, not so well for the Aesthetic movement. Bright's view of the Gothic Revival as forming a consistent whole from the late 17th into the 20th century has led him to the quicksands of these sections. For example, he is unable to understand how Henry-Russell Hitchcock could find Pugin and the Victorian Gothic "anti-Picturesque" when earlier Gothic Revival had been intrinsically Picturesque. Bright's unified view of the Gothic Revival also prevents him from observing the increasing return to Picturesque principles after 1870, evident in the Queen Anne stylism, Arts and Crafts Movement, and Morris's visions of garden cities. Moreover, the Romantic period 1780–1840 can hardly be characterized by the pragmatic philosophies true to the mid- and later 19th century.

One regrets Bright did not develop his earlier discussions of an aesthetic of the ugly. His attempt to force Victorian Gothic into Picturesque and to suggest further that these Goths wanted to make it Beautiful is unacceptable. Picturesque theorists from Pope through Humphrey Repton believed in and brought about "the mixed style," an architectural theory well presented in Richard Payne Knight's *Principles of Taste* (1805). With the Romantic revolt all styles became the style or, better, state of mind. The main alternative was the "no style" proposed by Jeremy Bentham's proto-pragmatic utilitarian theory. These attitudes are clearly the ones Pugin despised; they are most clearly seen in his 1836 book, *Contrasts*, a plate from which is used as an illustration in Bright's book. Similarly, Bright should have referred to John Stuart Mills's essays (c. 1840) on Bentham and Coleridge, wherein Mills maintained that henceforth one could follow the views of either Bentham or Coleridge but not both. This, too, implies the new anti-Picturesque stance of the Victorians. The author's own discovery and acceptance of Victorian Gothic beliefs in the importance of imperfection in architecture could have spared him the effort to make them Picturesque or Beautiful.

It is perhaps not surprising that Bright's greatest problem arises when he deals with Victorian aesthetics and the Victorian's search for pleasure. His attempt to look at both through their eyes is impaired because the Victorians themselves had the greatest difficulty with these matters. He returns to firmer ground in the sec-

tions on instruction and function, because the Victorians were on firmer ground in these areas. The didactic function of art is well grounded in Britain, particularly in the mid-19th century with the Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts and Crafts Movement. The claim that architecture can and does teach, still widely accepted even today, owes much to the Gothic Revivalists. Similarly, ever since functionalist theories of architecture were seriously posited by Pugin, Ruskin, Morris, Wright, and others, "fitness for purpose" has largely guided modern architecture. For those who try to understand and admire 19th-century architecture, it is reassuring to know that a generation before Le Corbusier, Lethaby thought architecture should be "as efficient as a bicycle"; yet he was a major theorist of the Arts and Crafts Movement, and perhaps not as muddle-headed as Reyner Banham pronounced him in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*.

There are some problems with the scholarly apparatus of Bright's book: footnotes often amplify the text, but the source of quotations is not always made clear. For example, M. H. Baillie Scott is first quoted on page 156, but the note on page 281 provides only the page number of an uncited work. Similarly, the reader is not told explicitly that the phrase "cities built to music," is taken from Tennyson's *Idylls*, and furthermore, neither the poem nor its author figures prominently as the thesis is developed. The interdisciplinary bibliography is useful, although there are some surprising omissions—important studies on the subject by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, Roger B. Stein, and Dyos and Wolf's two volumes of essays, *The Victorian City*.

Despite the flaws of conception, organization, and occasional technical shortcomings (more the responsibility of the publisher than of the author), Bright's original essays are a welcome addition to the now greatly expanded literature of 19th-century British architecture. Any scholarly effort to integrate the arts of the 19th century is noble, especially since that century destroyed the intense unities of the preceding baroque era. Although Bright largely fails at this task, no other author has succeeded. Efforts like Bright's are needed because until we achieve greater consensus in understanding 19th-century architecture, the architecture of our own century can not be rightly or adequately understood.

The author tells us that "'Cities built to music' is intended to mean primarily that Gothic Revival buildings were erected from aesthetic motives ... and chivalric ideals." If by chivalric ideals Bright means ethical motives of a society that saw piety, bravery, loyalty, and honor as virtues, he is right. The disappearance of these values makes it more difficult for us to understand the 19th century. Bright is also correct to identify aesthetic motives as the overpowering concern—finding and justifying a style for the times. Victorian architects were forced to wrestle with new and difficult needs in form, function, and structure. It is largely through their efforts (which resulted in the early deaths of many an architect) that architecture today still remains an art.

"Cities built to music" were never realized by Victorian architects, nor in Tennyson's *Idylls*. They remained ideals in part because of the theory of imperfection in art, what Baillie Scott alluded to (Bright observes) when he debunked the "mechanical ideal" as one that could be realized if it was taken to mean making "all surfaces smooth and all lines mathematically straight." To Baillie Scott, "the only goal worth striving for in art is that which can never be reached." For Bright, such ideals "retain a permanent value for all time."

Cities Built to Music: Aesthetic Theories of the Victorian Gothic Revival, Michael Bright, Ohio State University Press, 1984, 310 pp., illus., $20.00.

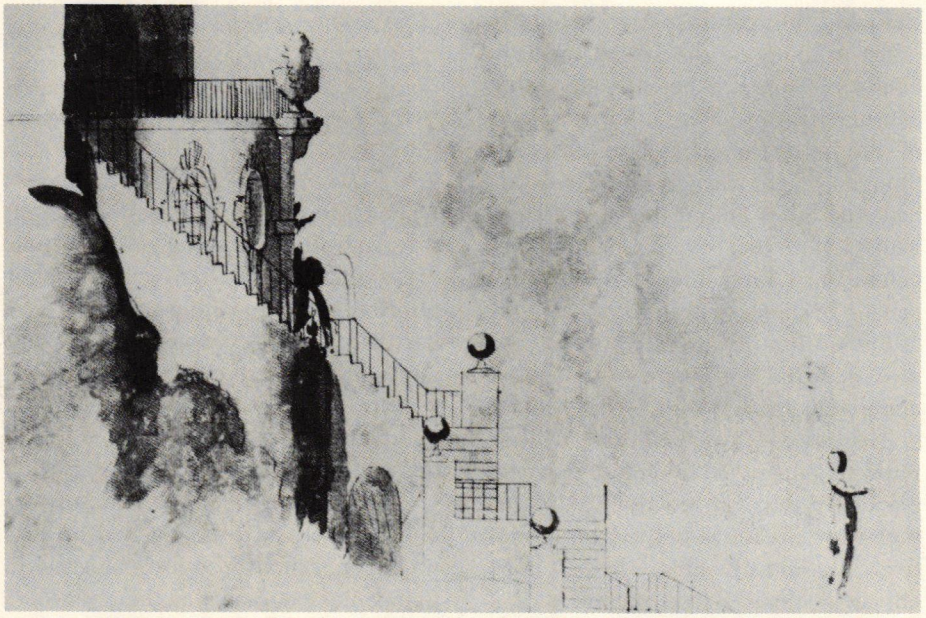
Anthony and Jacqueline Cowan: PALLADIAN IRELAND

About fifteen years ago we found ourselves strolling in a neglected section of north Dublin, past great disheveled 18th-century townhouses, until the narrow street was closed at an oblique angle by a large, stern, masculine building of great refinement. Beyond, open ground expanded into a quiet dreamlike park.

The building was the Kings Inns; only recently have we learned, in Edward McParland's superb biography, that James Gandon was the architect. Gandon is the preeminent architect of 18th-century Dublin, one of the great urban landscapes of Europe. His major buildings have evolved into symbols of Irish identity and nationhood. The Customs House, his acknowledged masterpiece, stretches along the Liffey in the center of Dublin. Up the river stands his most audacious building, the Four Courts, topped by an enormous classical stone drum. The Irish Parliament (now the Bank of Ireland) presents Gandon's stately portico to the great axis which crosses the river by a prominent bridge—also in its original form by Gandon.

Gandon was born in England, of French Huguenot stock. He was brought to Ireland at the age of forty by the Earl of Portarlington and other influential Irishmen, and received commissions amounting to almost a replanning of Dublin. He also designed some country houses, notably Abbeville in county Dublin, now the home of Charles Haughey, former Taoiseach and present Leader of the Opposition.

James Gandon: Vitruvius Hibernicus is a subtle and elegant work, possessing the same virtues McParland praises in the architect: no gratuitous adornment nor misapplied rhetoric. It is the first book about Gandon since



SLANE CASTLE, CO. MEATH, IRELAND, UNEXECUTED ELEVATION, SOUTH TERRACES, ca. 1783. FROM *JAMES GANDON*.

his death in 1823, when his son wrote a rather inadequate biography. As biography, scholarly monograph, and inquiry into fundamentals of design, the book is impressive; the casual reader might find it almost oppressively complete. Scores of photographs, diagrams, and renderings of work executed and unexecuted accompany the carefully organized text. It is an important step in the current effort to piece together Ireland's intellectual history.

Perhaps Georgian architecture has not been justly celebrated until recently within Ireland because of ambivalent attitudes among the Irish themselves. The 18th century, the time of Gandon's great achievement, saw revolution in America and France and sharp social conflict in Ireland. In 1807, Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington, reported to his superiors in London:

> **We have no strength here but our army. Ireland, in a view to military operation, must be considered as an enemy's country.**

This perspective contrasts vividly with the confident and expansive rebuilding of Dublin in the 1790s, when the Protestant Ascendancy strongly asserted a national independence for Ireland. Rebellion and the threat of intervention by France obliged Irish leaders to rely on a closer English connection, and political union in 1800. (Critically minded Americans must remember their own government's character in this period as a refuge of liberty for all except those enslaved legally.) Late 18th-century Ireland supported a genuinely accomplished aristocracy, accustomed to unashamed domination and privilege. A confident restatement of the architectural heritage of imperial Rome was quite appropriate.

The structures we see today have a strong presence, with nothing false or petty about them. Like the Customs House, the Four Courts were severely damaged in Ireland's civil war sixty-five years ago and rebuilt following most of Gandon's original construction. Today this stone complex is startling, with a scale and daring evocative of Piranesi. As McParland observes:

> **One is surprised at its very existence, at the fact that this visionary scheme is not merely conjured up in paint or ink, but realized in granite and portland stone.**

Directly across the Liffey are two recent, monstrous government buildings signifying, one supposes, the ascension of a tasteless new bureaucracy. Such architectural crimes are still rare in Ireland (perhaps the perpetrators might someday stand trial in the Four Courts).

The pertinent question is, of course, what makes a building imposing, rather than merely an imposition. Here McParland's contribution has great potential value for contemporary architects. The heart of his analysis directs us to the means Gandon used to achieve such inspiring effects of grandeur and sober dignity. Neoclassicism involved more than the imitation of classical motifs; it implied "the imaginative and personal transfiguration of fully comprehended antique ideas." For all the complexity of his compositions, Gandon was a minimalist, a seeker after ideal forms. Effective restatement of such themes requires a mastery of proportion, light, ornament, and material. McParland achieves a careful reenactment of Gandon's problems in composition, as well as his solutions, from which practicing architects can learn much.

Ireland, though culturally rich, is an uncluttered country. Neither *Gandon* nor another recent publication, *Irish Houses*, can show us one of the principal advantages of architectural study in Ireland, which is the impressive absence of pretentious and derivative building that disfigures so much of America and Europe. There are no drive-in Colonial or Second Empire banks in Ireland. This restraint (which the Irish, with characteristic self-effacement, put down to economics) is one's greatest ally in seeing Ireland's precious building heritage. In Ireland, architecturally at least, things are what they seem, and often achieve greater coherence in a smaller theater.

Irish Houses is principally a collection of very good photographs of

Irish country houses. Although a book to enjoy with a glass and a good fire, its best use is as a stimulus to visit these pleasant locations in person. *Irish Houses* reveals intimate views of ornate domesticity. The exteriors are grand and severe, the interiors rich and slightly idiosyncratic. Its scenes have none of the museum about them: a traveling circus camped within a Great House deer park; man-sized Palladian dollhouses; chinoiserie and medieval kitchens. An aura of personal opulence graces this coffee-table book—as one of its sponsors modestly called it. Less self-conscious than collectors or connoisseurs, the inhabitants are custodians of a very precious part of Irish culture. Many of the houses are open to the public, and many of the inhabitants are descendants of the original builders. There is very little sense of alienation in *Irish Houses*.

James Gandon: Vitruvius Hibernicus, Edward McParland, A. Zwemmer Ltd., London, 1985, 222 pp., illus., $90.00.

Irish Houses, Klaus-Hartmut Olbricht and Helga M. Wegener, photographs by Gunther von Voithenberg, Gill and Macmillan, Ltd. (Goldenbridge, Dublin 8), 1984, 274 pp., illus., $40.00.

Eric Sandweiss:

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE

DAVID P. HANDLIN

David Handlin's new survey of American architectural history, part of Thames and Hudson's World of Art series, has a readable style and a moderate price tag that make it especially suitable for nonspecialists. Handlin—author of *The American Home, Architecture and Society, 1815–1915*—has taken on two challenges inherent in the survey format: to write a general reference work and to bring some interpretive vision to the question of what architecture shows us about our culture.

American Architecture takes a frankly conservative approach to both challenges. Although Handlin introduces his subject with the sweeping language of a cultural historian (enticing us with "the haunting image of a virgin continent" and "the promise of the empty land"), he quickly gets down to business. His intent "is not simply to uncover a past that time has obscured," not to study buildings merely as keys to understanding our history, but "to show how, through a compelling rendering of the elements of architecture and their assembly, vital ideas become transmuted into vivid and memorable form." In other words, this book is about American buildings, not about America, and only about *some* American buildings. Handlin's "principle of selection" is his belief that "some buildings demonstrate the art of architecture more forcefully than others." And what is the "art of architecture"? By inference, the art of transmuting vital ideas into memorable form.

This approach seems simple, even tautological, and reflects an emphasis on the studied, the mannered, the monumental. It explains the author's special interest in architects who wrote about their buildings and left clear evidence of a link between those vital ideas and memorable forms. Architects from Thomas Jefferson to Louis Kahn, from John Root to Robert Venturi, make ideal subjects for Handlin and take up a good share of his attention along the way. In their buildings they have left explicit evidence of an effort to articulate the ideas expressed in their writing. The translation from ideal to object is fascinating.

Were the author truly limiting his scope to the work of such writer/architects his approach would be airtight. But this is a comprehensive study of American architecture. The intellectual evidence left by a handful of architects cannot be presumed to speak for all of their colleagues. Thus architects after the Civil War tried to "articulate a language of architecture that could do justice to the emerging institutions they were called upon to accommodate," California architects at the turn of the century had to "come to terms" with the "legacy of the past," while other architects were busy with the "taxing problem" of "how to give expression" to train stations or hotels. Handlin assumes that architects worth their salt have always shared this urge to "express" either social or structural ideas in a clear consistent manner. The work of an architect like Raymond Hood, however, who "had no firm opinion about whether a skyscraper should be treated 'horizontally, vertically, or cubically,'" is summarized as "aimless superficiality."

The conviction that an "important" building is one that successfully expresses important notions leads Handlin to neglect buildings whose significance comes from their place in everyday life. We learn that there was a "lack of significant buildings in the American colonies" primarily due to the "uncertain attitude of the settlers toward the fine arts." But how significant an "artless" farmhouse must have been for the family staking a claim in a foreign wilderness! How important those structures dismissed as "no more than simple parish churches" were to the community establishing its social and moral order! Similarly, the Gothic and Georgian university campuses of the early 20th century dismissed by Handlin for their lack of "any deep conviction about the appropriateness of these styles" have nevertheless had a tremendous influence on our image of the place of education in society. The presumption seems to be that architecture's power lies more in the circumstances of its creation than in

the circumstances of its use. The "great buildings" approach into which Handlin sometimes falls encourages a sense that architecture is designed for architects and their critics, not the general public.

That sense is sometimes accurate, of course. Nowhere are in-jokes and infighting within the architectural community more obvious than in the theatrics of Post-Modernism. Handlin's concluding insights on design today show conviction and insight. Concerning the waywardness of architectural thought after the Modern Movement, he writes that "with the predictable failure to generate a compelling architecture from program and technique alone, it was all too easy to conclude that architecture only began when these issues were left behind." The remark sounds canny because it is an intellectual critique of an intellectual movement. Where this correspondence between subject matter and critical method breaks down, the subject is either ignored or forced to fit the method. It is then that the "principle of selection" seems a principle of exclusion, and the reader begins to wonder if he's really heard the whole story.

American Architecture, David P. Handlin, Thames & Hudson, 1985, 288 pp., illus., $9.95 pb.

Ralph Lerner:

TREASURE HOUSES

The American passion for things English, products as well as social institutions, is rooted in an England of the past, where the country house was a seat of great power and privilege. Two exhibitions have recently closed in Washington, D.C., which, along with their two catalogues and a companion text, have contributed substantially to our knowledge of the possessions of country house owners and to our nostalgia for a lost England. The Treasure Houses of Britain exhibition at the East Wing of the National Gallery, and the Architect and the British Country House exhibition at the Octagon focused on aspects of the development of the country house from the end of the Middle Ages through its demise and destruction in this century. To judge by the long lines and advance bookings, Treasure Houses of Britain was an overwhelming popular success, yet its focus and physical design raised several important questions, regarding both the choice of scope of the exhibition and the superficial presentation of beautiful objects out of context. The British Country House exhibition was by comparison almost embarrassingly modest: narrowly defined, simply produced, and probably without broad public appeal.

The first and most obvious question about Treasure Houses was about the title: the exhibit concentrated almost entirely on treasures and paid little attention to houses, or even to the patrons and art collectors mentioned in the subtitle. The exhibition contained more than six hundred art objects from a wide range of collections, yet failed in a space of 35,000 square feet to provide much insight into the architectural development of the country house, the personalities and inspirations of the patrons and collectors, or the role of the houses and collections in society. To gain a general understanding of the context in which the objects on exhibit were created and appreciated, one must read the excellent essays in the catalogues.

The exhibition began on the mezzanine level of the East Wing, included one of the museum's corner spiral stairs, and continued through the upper level in a sequence of about twenty period rooms. (I say "about" because the distinction between room and mere open space was not always clear.) The sequence was chronological, with single rooms or suites of rooms representing various periods. At the entry to the exhibition stood a huge photo-mural of the entrance elevation of Blenheim Palace by Sir John Vanbrugh, which signaled a much greater interest in the houses than the rest of the show warranted. Exhibition design was carried out by the National Gallery's Chief and Assistant Chief of Installation and Design, Gaillard F. Ravenel and Mark Leithauser. Their strategy was to develop a simple geometric figure as the plan shape for each room (which stood in clear opposition to the complex plan geometry of I. M. Pei's design) and a decorative scheme evocative of the period on display. Having entered the sequence of period rooms, the visitor was meant to be oblivious to the architecture of the present.

The period rooms were intended to be connected en suite, while accommodating the awkward angles of the allotted space; but fulfilling both these design ambitions was not always possible. The designers had to resort to a number of very inelegantly planned little transitional spaces slipped into the greater sequence of rooms; these complications and adjustments are unfortunately unlike design typical of any period of country house planning. The pattern is close in spirit to the planning of urban palaces, perhaps reminiscent of 17th- and 18th-century Parisian hotels, which often had to sacrifice the simplicity of classical planning to the cramped situation of small urban sites. The archetypal country house had plenty of room on the site to spread out and avoid awkward angles. Since creating a more typical sequence of rooms for the exhibition, or employing a clearer hierarchy of size was not possible, one must question the choice of design strategy.

The Jacobean Long Gallery and the Waterloo Gallery were the only two rooms identifiable in the tradition of the country house. In the Jacobean

Long Gallery the narrow dimension of the room, the lighting through the obscured glass of windows on one side, and the large number of ancient portraits evoked the character of long galleries like those at Knole House. The Waterloo Gallery also clearly established its type: the overly grand room with additional spaces beyond a screen of columns, like the Picture Gallery at Attingham by John Nash. Identifying the period of the other rooms was somewhat difficult without examining the objects for some idea of the date of manufacture or acquisition.

Having chosen to identify each room by its decoration and chronological position in the museum sequence rather than by other qualities more inherently associated with country houses, the designers were surprisingly halfhearted in their decorative endeavor. An additional problem was the accommodation of modern exhibition lighting. In the first room in the sequence, that of the Tudor Renaissance, the oddly pinched center and lack of a high ceiling, together with materials that more closely resembled the rest of the gallery than a late medieval hall, produced a room with only the vaguest pretensions of its type. Only the objects conveyed a substantive message. Past the Jacobean Long Gallery was the room for the "Triumph of the Baroque," whose decoration also conveyed only a very general sense of the period. A more ambitiously designed room, in the manner of Vanbrugh or Hawksmoor, might have been extremely effective in relation to the stair beyond.

This decorative approach, which trivialized each period by substituting generalization for authentication, also characterized the remainder of the exhibition. Most perplexing were the three rooms displaying the objects of "The Romantic Vision." Although this period (1830–1914) marked the decline of the country house and the ascent of the house in the country, it nonetheless offered many superb examples of collecting and housemaking, like Scotney Castle by Anthony Salvin, and Castle Drogo by Edwin Lutyens. Architecture in Britain was returning to its national origins, particularly medieval building traditions, as sources for design inspiration. The best rooms of the period were small and intimate, like those by C. F. A. Voysey, but not so the exhibition spaces. Instead the organizers presented merely three "areas" of contemporary design and a bit of William Morris wallpaper. These rooms followed the Waterloo Gallery in the chronological sequence; had they represented the late 19th-century more accurately, they would have provided a wonderful contrast, and illustration of the fundamental change in architecture during the rise of industrialization.

The vast array of paintings, furniture, sculpture, porcelain, and other objects in the exhibition was dazzling. Nevertheless, the lack of truly memorable sequences of rooms and of a rigorous attitude toward appropriate period decoration conspired with the intrusion of modern lighting and the crush of viewers to produce spaces that contributed to a sense of inauthenticity and spectacle, more befitting a film production than an institution of the National Gallery's higher aspirations.

Perhaps a design approach neutral to country house architecture would have worked better for the objects, given the decision not to display much of the country house itself. It is hard to know whether the great number of pictures in the exhibition required the invention of the period rooms for sufficient wall space, or a sequence of rooms with so much wall space mandated an expanded number of pictures. A different method of display might have offered more balance, and an organization less dependent on chronology.

While the National Gallery's exhibition was concerned to a large extent with entertainment, its catalogue is a scholarly and educational introduction to the history of the country house. It begins with seven essays covering aspects of the development and transformation of the country house, changing attitudes toward collecting and patronage, and efforts to preserve the remaining country houses with their collections and traditional ownerships intact. The remainder of the the catalogue (which is rather hefty at nearly seven hundred pages) is a detailed, object-by-object description of virtually all the items in the exhibition. The color photographs are superb and alone are well worth the price.

The editor is Gervase Jackson-Stops, Architectural Advisor to the National Trust in London, and author of the first essay, "Temple of the Arts." This essay and "The Power House," by Mark Girouard, trace the development of architectural and collecting interests, as well as the significance of the country house as a seat of social power. The two essays are well written and accessible, and together make a good general introduction to the term "country house."

It is curious that Mr. Jackson-Stops, as curator of the exhibition, did not undertake to find visual counterparts for the seven essays, or a method to display the objects without the heavy-handed reliance upon chronology. A similar disparity between the clarity of the printed work and the visual confusion of the exhibition is evident in Mr. Jackson-Stops's companion book, *The English Country House, A Grand Tour.*

The last two essays in the National Gallery's catalogue—"The Backward Look" by John Cornforth and "The Last Hundred Years" by Marcus Binney and Gervase Jackson-Stops—trace the idea of pride in one's family and in the national heritage as the justification for contemporary ideals. Translated into the present, the ideals require that a method be found to ensure the continuing preservation of country houses and their contents, and, one that most curiously would

enable their aristocratic owners to remain in them and prevent their decline into mere museums. This is a subtle plea for the maintenance of a privileged way of life, one which provides society with a class capable of discerning the finest and best objects of art. The appeal is clearly addressed to a society like our own, which puts a high premium on possession of objects as a measure of social status. Visitors to "The Treasure Houses of Britain" are overwhelmed by the authenticity of six hundred objects, but asked to think very little about the people and society who collected them and then sold them to preserve their way of life. The exhibition, and, to some extent, the catalogue are ingenious pleas for the maintenance of a privileged class, rather than straightforward celebrations of architecture and the collections it houses.

A clearer understanding of the architectural development of the country house was to be gained from the exhibition at the Octagon, and the very nicely produced catalogue, both the work of John Harris, Curator of the Royal Institute of British Architects Drawing Collection. The exhibition contained 95 drawings of country house designs, beginning with Inigo Jones's work and continuing through the start of this century. The drawings tellingly depicted both changing stylistic preferences and the accompanying changes in the nature of the view in the drawings. The survey began with four works by Inigo Jones, a façade and three details for interiors. They show Jones as a superb draftsman, capable of the tightest measured drawing or the loosest and most elegant sketch. The drawings were all elevational orthographic views, with depth provided through subtle shading. They continued in this manner through the end of the 17th century —including a sketch by Christopher Wren—until the baroque came into full flower with the work of John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor. An early drawing of the entrance court of Castle Howard provided the first example of a drawing with perspective and full rendering. The draftsman's interest in overall composition, and in depicting space and light, marked a distinct break with architectural and drafting traditions.

As the baroque in English architecture drew to a close in the second decade of the 18th century, so did the interest in pictorial drawing, which gave way to flat orthographic views with some shading to indicate depth rather than sunlight. The drawings of the remainder of the century, neoclassical and Gothic Revival, presented a detached view of the architect, as an arbiter of taste more concerned with planning a house than with the problems of building or the spatial possibilities of moving through it. The drawings by Robert Adam, William Chambers, James Gibbs, James Wyatt, and others, together with an extraordinary drawing by William Wilkins, demonstrated the culmination of the neoclassical period. Wilkins's design for the east front of "The Grange" was a perspective view of a building more mausoleum than house. Perspective and sunlight began to overcome the flatness of the previous drawings in this somber view at the end of an era.

As the drawings of the 19th century developed, there was a renewed interest in pictorial effects and in the rendering of sunlight and materials. One could already sense the trend in the late drawings of Robert Adam and James Wyatt, but it was in the hands of the great 19th-century figures such as John Soane, Anthony Salvin, Charles Barry, and Norman Shaw that the architectural interests of the picturesque, Gothic Revival, Arts and Crafts, and finally Edwardian architecture were vividly portrayed as buildings rooted in the landscape. The drawings of the Edwardian period brought this transformation to a point where interest in drawing overshadowed all sense of the architect involved in the building process. The drawings by Henry Wilson and Philip Armstrong Tilden were set not in the world of the architect, but in a perspectival world closer to that of the art director. Only Edwin Lutyens managed to address the architectural preferences of his age, the Arts and Crafts and the reemergence of classicism, maintaining qualities of draftsmanship which indicated architectural thinking rather than perspectival splendor.

The catalogue's brief history of the country house examines all of the significant houses in the three-hundred-year history depicted by the drawings, with quick glimpses of individual architects and expositions of the changing attitudes toward design.

The two exhibitions and their catalogues leave the viewer in a bemused kind of limbo. They have raised rather than seized the possibility of understanding the influence of an important building type and the interest of its occupants. We have been given a vast amount of imagery and some textual insight, along with a suggested link between its development and the American consciousness. In contemplating the five-hundred-year-old tradition of the English country house, we may further uncover the unexpected connection between our own attitudes toward pride of possession and the American passion for houses in the country.

The Treasure Houses of Britain: Five Hundred Years of Private Patronage and Art Collecting, Gervase Jackson-Stops, editor, Yale, 1985, 680 pp., illus., $60.00 cloth; $24.95 paper.

The English Country House, A Grand Tour, Gervase Jackson-Stops and James Pipkin, New York Graphic Society with Little, Brown, 1985, 238 pp., illus., $29.95.

The Architect and the British Country House: 1620–1920, the American Association of Architects with Trefoil Press, London, 264 pp., illus., $29.95 cloth; $19.95 paper.

James Elkins:

PERSPECTIVE IN PERSPECTIVE

LAWRENCE WRIGHT

Linear perspective is a rich, diverse, and unsystematic subject encompassing not only "how-to-draw" books but aspects of mathematics, psychology, biology, and optics. It has been used to design gardens and visualize the orbits of spacecraft. But a growing body of literature questions its ability to accurately record what we see.

This self-critical vein is suggested by the title of Lawrence Wright's new book, *Perspective in Perspective*. Most of Wright's books have short, catchy titles with more explicit subtitles—*Warm and Snug: The History of the Bed*, and *The Wooden Sword: Glider-borne Forces in World War II*. A good subtitle for *Perspective in Perspective* might have been *An Anecdotal History of British Architectural Rendering*. The full span is here, from van der Wijngaerde's *Long View of London* (ca. 1543) to the author's own drawings for an urban-renewal project (1966). In chapter 11, on the 20th century, the reader will find names missing from most modern histories of art—Cyril Farey, J. D. M. Harvey, William Walcot, and Muirhead Bone—for reasons tied to the intensely conservative character of architectural rendering and of the Royal Academy in particular. The first picture of a "simple curtain-walled building" was hung in the Royal Academy Architecture Room as late as 1956; Wright records Sir Albert Richardson's response: "So we have a *glass* in the Academy!"

Chapters preceding and following this history are more diffuse and perhaps not as successful. In the preface Wright confesses to "feeling that Euclid is a bore," and this indifference to the mathematics of perspective hampers his discussion of its early history. He seems to have read few of the classic perspective treatises or the art historical monographs on them. Among others he mentions Alberti, Piero della Francesca, Viator, Dubreuil, and Pozzo. He has read the beginning and the ending of Ruskin's treatise, and justifies the briefness of his summary by quoting Ruskin's conclusion, which expresses his hope that the reader is "thankful, as I am myself, to get to an end on any terms."

The closing chapters are concerned with hints and problems of architectural drawing, common misconceptions, and interesting sidelights. Why do the rays of a sunburst appear to diverge, instead of remaining parallel? Why does the water seem lower in the wake of a ship? Why does the moon viewed from a moving train sometimes appear stationary and at other times seem to move backward? This is a good miscellany of the kinds of problems that occur to "perspectors," but it is neither systematic nor exhaustive.

Only in his first chapter does Wright raise the self-critical questions his title suggests. It is a collection of examples intended to show, in an informal way, that perspective is "a highly refined convention which should neither claim nor attempt to simulate reality." Wright accepts spherical perspective—a kind of curvilinear perspective—as the "natural" version. "Natural" perspective is, in his view, in the best possible accord with our vision (a debatable point), but it usually has to be laid aside because of our propensity for drawing on flat surfaces. Linear perspective is "correct" only when the angle of vision is sufficiently small and the point of view "normal": "Perspective, taken from a normal point of view and carefully constructed to avoid distortion, can produce a factual result wholly devoid of creative effort or imaginative quality." In this view, only misuse of linear perspective will produce results not in accord with our vision. Beginning a movie shot with a telephoto view, and then zooming out, is not an acceptable "standard procedure" since "the eye and brain do not normally work that way."

There is a contradiction here—if perspective can produce a "factual result," then how can it be only a convention? What is a "convention" in this sense? *Perspective in Perspective* is an instructive example of a common dilemma: authors choose their own version of "natural" perspective (hyperbolic curvilinear is a current favorite), and use it to claim that linear perspective is a convention. At the same time, a book like the present one would have no purpose if linear perspective were merely a convention.

Some small errors might be confusing. Wright's training as a British "perspector" affects the definitions in the technical appendices, which will be unfamiliar both to American draftsmen and to mathematicians. His definitions of "shade" and "shadow" do not follow the traditional definitions of sciography, in which "shade" is the volume of space not struck by sunlight, and "shadow" is the area of the objects not struck by sunlight. His definition of "trimetric" is new to me: the term usually refers to parallel projection in which the three axes of the object are each foreshortened in different ratios (to Wright it means only two axes are foreshortened, in the ratio 1:3). The cornices in Pannini's magnificent interior of the Pantheon are called ellipses, although they are actually hyperbolas. A typographical error sets Euclid back one thousand years to 1300 B.C. Wright corrects Panofsky on an error which he himself retracted in 1960, in *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*. Contrary to what is implied on page 92, there is a subsequent history to the "body born of the perspective of Leonardo da Vinci": it includes Barbaro and Escher. Pozzo's book, which Wright says "deserves a facsimile reprint," has had one since 1971.

Perspective in Perspective, Lawrence Wright, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, 386 pp., $35.00.

New

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Diane Y. Ghirardo:

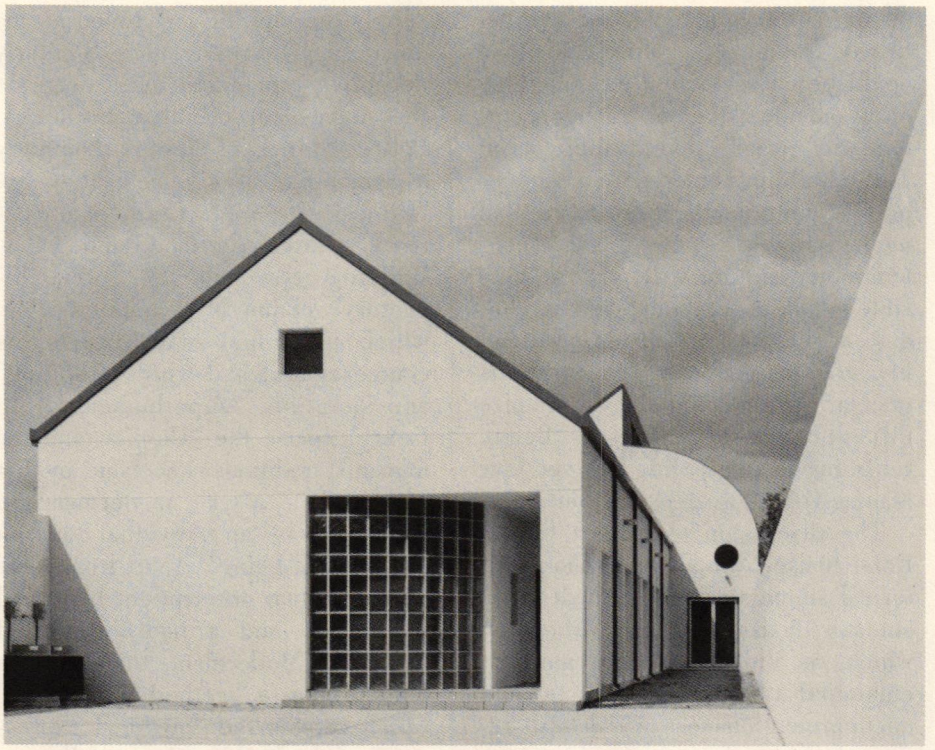
VISIONS AND REVISIONS

When Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson published their book on the International Style in 1932, they identified the stylistic elements that seemed to unify a new architecture emerging in several countries. Hitchcock had already advanced his historicist predictions in *Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration* (New York, 1929). Subsequent critiques appropriately challenged their determined search for stylistic unity, their suppression of contrary evidence, either in materials or in stylistic tendencies, but most importantly, their emphasis on style to the exclusion of other issues. Not only did Hitchcock and Johnson misunderstand or disregard the broad forces which influenced the growth of European Modernism, they effectively endorsed a style which lent itself to mass appropriation by corporate America in the immediate post-World War II years. Not least of all, their study tacitly bestowed approval upon an architectural discourse which gives primacy to description.

Mainline architectural discourse still suffers from the legacy of *The International Style*—nowhere more powerfully than in the glossy monthlies and the criticism columns of local newspapers. To this mass we may now add Gavin Macrae-Gibson's *Secret Life of Buildings: An American Mythology for Modern Architecture*, a glorified stylistic analysis which, coupled with naive history, grandiose pronouncements, and poeticizing reflections presented as universal absolutes, makes for a curious and idiosyncratic "criticism" that is ultimately unsatisfying and often downright irritating. But the book is seductive, so I want to explain in some detail why I find it troubling.

Macrae-Gibson proposes to bypass function, physical structure, and politics in favor of a study of the "secret lives of buildings," the "mythical knowledge" which specifically addresses the ambiguity and mystery of human life. He identifies our current era as one of "lyric modernism," in which the meaning we seek in our "empty cities" can "only be achieved by songs sung in architecture about the search for value and meaning in a material world." Instead of the better world that early 20th-century Modernists believed Modern architecture promised, it would seem that Macrae-Gibson's lyric modernism offers a more "meaningful" world. He suggests that this "secret life" can be found in all buildings of all eras, but he has selected seven recent designs to examine in detail. Not surprisingly, the architects turn out to be luminaries of the current architectural world—Frank Gehry, Peter Eisenman, Cesar Pelli, Robert Stern, Michael Graves, Robert Venturi, and Alan Greenberg. Apart from their prominence, nothing unites this group, which Macrae-Gibson indicates will enhance the truth-value of his method: it can be applied to radically different forms and types of buildings. Of course, the prominence of the architects guarantees the book a certain audience, which may be why he did not elect to follow potentially more interesting courses: examining only mediocre buildings, or only exceptional buildings, or only lesser known but often equally competent work. Instead of Robert Stern's Bozzi house, for example, why not a house by William F. Stern—a design at least as sensitive to the region, its urban context, and tradition, and certainly far less pretentious. Or why not the industrial building of another young Houston architect, Carlos Jimenez, which stands in relation to its neighborhood much as Gehry's house does to Santa Monica?

The criteria for his selections never become clear: They are "recent," they "embody distinctly different interpretations of the effects of late twentieth-century culture on the human spirit."



CARLOS JIMENEZ, INDUSTRIAL BUILDING, HOUSTON.

Of the seven architects, six are distinctly fashionable, while Eisenman could be characterized as something of an outsider. Macrae-Gibson seems to justify his selection by implication: These buildings emerge from contemporary culture, therefore a critical method which situates them in contemporary culture will make it possible to talk about them together. How one might accomplish this without investigating contemporary culture is unclear; as a methodological premise this notion has its weaknesses. Before returning to this point, let's see how Macrae-Gibson assesses the buildings.

The discussion of Robert Stern's Bozzi house begins with a short historical summary of the Shingle Style summer housing in East Hampton which, as Vincent Scully remarked, embodied a "yearning for roots" and an unpretentiousness which also reflected a new interest in American traditions. Macrae-Gibson outlines the basic formal elements of these designs in what might be called an exercise in sustained description, and notes the reappearance of the Shingle Style late in the 1960s and 1970s. While Stern had also taken up the style earlier, the Bozzi house uses the formal elements in a stronger, richer fashion—including extra roof slopes, chimney placed to the side rather than interpenetrating the roof, an "ironic" porch, and so forth. Stern rejects the Romantic rationalism and "organic wholeness" of the monumental Shingle Style and instead harks back to a late 18th-century view of the picturesque as a "matter of associations." Somehow, this leads the Bozzi house into becoming "actors and subject," and "truth is no longer a universal, moralistic expression in space and structure but compassion for the multiplicity of everyday life acted out in architectural form." A not insignificant conceptual gap has been bridged here: Macrae-Gibson leads us from picturesque assemblages of formal elements to an idea of truth, but conveniently leaves it to us to supply the missing and by no means obvious logical connections. Similarly deceptive conceptual leaps occur in the discussion of other buildings: Pelli's Four Leaf Towers "embody a sensibility of silence"; they are "witnesses to the fact of human existence." Graves's Portland Public Office Building represents the "twentieth-century version of the sublime," in which individual man "charts his course alone," and with "forboding" considers his "superhumanity." In Gehry's house the "Utopian and the humanist traditions cancel one another and produce a lyric modernism" in which man is "an individual adrift in an ocean of being." Apart from some careful formal description, historical references, and a badly contorted history of Modernism, this is being offered up as a "method of criticism" which reveals the "mythical expression" of the buildings' secret lives.

Beyond the tenuous links between Macrae-Gibson's formal elements and the conclusions he draws, some of the observations along the way are irritating. For example, Stern's "playful use" of old Shingle Style forms "comments . . . on how fragmented modern life is compared to the solid Victorian family structure of the late nineteenth century"—solid no doubt because it depended upon limiting alternatives for women. Elsewhere, the modern city is a "lifeless container of merely material existence." Macrae-Gibson does not identify any such cities by name, but it is the kind of popular utterance likely to gain assent in the architectural community, although it applies to none of the American cities I have lived in.

Even if we accept some of Macrae-Gibson's points, there are flaws internal to his discourse which resist any accommodation. There are no logical or even obvious poetic connections between the forms—that is, the buildings—and the meanings Macrae-Gibson imputes to them. There is no "secret" internal to the structures which awaits the acute talents of a specialist to unmask. The larger argument implicit in this text, as in others, is that the current discourse on architecture finds itself at an impasse due to the poverty of criticism and analysis. Sophisticated formalist descriptions clearly lack substance and fail to satisfy, and the same is true of assessments based on highly personal taste. On the whole, the architectural community endeavors to keep its products free of the contamination of other disciplines—especially politics and broad cultural and social concerns.

According to many critics today, architecture itself suffers from a loss of meaning. Wherever one places the blame for this condition—on "capitalist rationality" (Tafuri), "mathematicization" (Pérez-Gómez), "sterile forms of modernism" (Venturi, Portoghesi, Jencks)—the condition seems to impel architects and critics to invest architecture with "meaning." Discourses on "meaning" in architecture are always troubling to me, because they are always proposed as if there were a pure immanence to architectural meaning rather than simply the question, "meaning for whom"? Macrae-Gibson neither asks nor answers that question; rather he offers his interpretation with all of the assurance of a stalwart guardian of architectural Truth. Let me illustrate the kind of conundrums this leads him into.

In the discussion of the Portland Public Office Building, Macrae-Gibson cites as a precedent Claude-Nicholas Ledoux's Propylaea of Paris, "the toll houses that ringed Paris before the revolution." Specifically, the Barrière d'Étoile (1785) "forms peaks in the landscape that announce Paris to the approaching traveler," which in turn serve as a source for Graves. This, it appears, is the "meaning" of the *barrières*. To Parisians at the time, however, they meant a great deal more: the last gasp of a bloated monarchy, the last desperate attempt to squeeze every ounce of revenue to support the luxurious life of the king

and queen and their retinues. So powerfully did they "mean" this to Parisians that their designer barely escaped the gallows after the revolution, and in any case languished in prison for years. Macrae-Gibson's bland comment that they "announce Paris" to visitors hardly captures the powerful impact the *barrières* exerted on contemporaries, and is at best an inadequate account of their "meaning."

Which brings me to my most serious objections to the book. Macrae-Gibson forthrightly announces at the outset that he will omit function, physical structure, and politics from his discussion. It is not clear that any serious critical analysis can be conducted without reference to these matters, nor is it at all clear why one would elect not to discuss them—Macrae-Gibson offers no justifications, not even any feeble ones. He exalts an architecture composed of discrete objects of aesthetic experience, draining them of functional, social, or political content or relevance, and then serves them back up to the reader as autonomous and, I would argue, denatured artifacts. So completely does he sever these buildings from their moorings, so uncontaminated must they be, that he even omits his own employment in Robert Stern's office while the Bozzi house was underway. Such a critical approach does not eliminate the "contamination" of reality, mind you, it simply refuses to acknowledge it.

Macrae-Gibson interviewed the architects, recorded what they had to say, dressed it, and dished it up uncritically; he has not offered any serious criticism at all, but he has simply served as a mouthpiece for the architects. To be sure, this kind of "criticism" nourishes an entire architectural culture industry which survives by according special status to judgments based on taste, so Macrae-Gibson certainly finds himself with lots of company. The new architecture museum in Frankfurt manifests some aspects of this culture industry in its collection of drawings, collages, and models by architects, now celebrated in a fat book, *Postmodern Visions: Drawings, Paintings, and Models by Contemporary Architects*, and a thinner version in the *AD* special issue, *Revision of the Modern*. The main reason to glance at the *AD* is to read pages 14 and 16 of Charles Jencks's interview with Heinrich Klotz. Jencks scolds Klotz for not having published or collected any of his work (Jencks singles out his pathetic "Garagia Rotunda") and Jencks—while he does not "want to say that [he] invented [Robert] Venturi," credits himself with giving Venturi his ideas and again chastises poor Klotz for failing to give him his due. It is Jencks at his most tasteless, most embarrassing, most obnoxious.

FRONT ELEVATION, HOUSE BY WILLIAM F. STERN

The museum's collection includes neither working drawings nor working models, but rather works clearly intended for display, works to be seen as art. I have no quarrel with the drawings themselves, many of which are quite beautiful and evocative. But that they bear any relation to architecture is highly questionable. Like photographs, they can be duplicated and displayed more easily than buildings, so they seem to be essential for the architect's self-promotion, but unlike professional photographs of buildings, they are self-consciously "art" works. Here too we are offered an architecture at two removes from real buildings, an architecture free of the messy reality of building codes, structural problems, power, and special interests. Architecture is by no means the only academic field whose practitioners attempt to isolate and purify it, but it is perhaps the one which most exudes "impurity." In the end, I can only conclude that there *is* no "secret life of buildings," at least not in *this* book. What we really encounter is the "secret life" of Gavin Macrae-Gibson masquerading as criticism, which is of relatively little interest.

The Secret Life of Buildings: An American Mythology for Modern Architecture, Gavin Macrae-Gibson, MIT, 1985, 206 pp., illus., $25.00.

Postmodern Visions: Drawings, Paintings and Models by Contemporary Architects, Heinrich Klotz, editor, Abbeville, 1985, 360 pp., illus., $55.00.

Revision of the Modern: The German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt, Heinrich Klotz, editor, *AD* 55, 3/4, distributed by St. Martin's, 1985, 88 pp., illus., $14.95.

Liane Lefaivre & Alexander Tzonis:

THE ANTI-AESTHETIC

HAL FOSTER, editor

This book, a collection of essays written since 1980, is an important contribution to the debate on Post-Modern culture, and one which manages to escape at least partly the intellectually complicated and claustrophobic packaging that one might expect from such an anthology. It is an attempt to define the various cultural expressions of the past two decades which have been commonly grouped together under the name Post-Modernism, and at the same time offer a new identity and new directions for this cultural phenomenon.

The selection of writers is excellent: Kenneth Frampton on architecture, Rosalind Krauss on sculpture, Douglas Crimp on painting, Craig Owens on photography, Gregory Ulmer on painting, music, and postcard art, Fredric Jameson mainly on literature and cinema, Jean Baudrillard on communications media, Edward Said on journalism, and a penetrating introductory essay by Foster himself.

Architecture has a central position in the book, making its key role in the development of the Post-Modern movement obvious, if it were not by now. One of the earliest uses of the term was in a 1945 article by Joseph Hudnut,[1] then Dean of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard—considerably before the historian Arnold Toynbee made it popular in *A Study in History*.[2] More recently, thanks to the blessings of Philip Johnson, the prolific writings of Charles Jencks, and the propitious editorial policies of such mass-circulation magazines as *Time*, Post-Modernism has continued to enjoy a privileged relation with architecture. In these forums it has been presented as a reaction against the radicalism, both cultural and social, of the period between the world wars and immediately following World War II, against the "hard" manifestos for "change," "newness," and "progress" that have dominated Modern architecture.

But Post-Modernism in architecture, like Modernism, reflects deeper movements in society. In the opening essay, "Modernity, An Incomplete Project,"[3] Jurgen Habermas remarks on the architecture section of the 1980 Venice Biennale as a most significant expression of Post-Modernism. He equates the idea of Post-Modernity—in architecture and other pursuits—with anti-modernity. He relates the emergence of Post-Modernism to the current neo-conservatism in politics, society, and culture, and to the rise of the new right, just as he associates the modern with progressivism. In this short essay, Habermas tries to sketch a history of the modern phase, and, following the example of historians of the state and economic historians, locates its roots in the 12th century and as far back as the period of Charles the Great. Habermas not only criticizes Post-Modernism, he proposes a continuation of the campaign for modernity in culture and society:

> **instead of giving up modernity and its project as a lost cause, we should learn from the mistakes of those extravagant programs which have tried to negate it.**

Because the "project of modernity has not yet been filled," there is a need to "relink modern culture with everyday practice."

Frampton's essay, devoted to architecture but acknowledging broader cultural issues, seems like a response to this call. He denounces Post-Modernism, but he is discontent with Modernism too. He indicts contemporary architecture, Modern and Post-Modern alike, for its failure to provide places for interaction, identity, and community. The "instrumental reason" of triumphant capitalism, according to Frampton, has suppressed such fundamental human needs. The architecture which evolved between the two world wars, referred to as "avant garde," has been unable to "transform the existing reality," a task which Frampton sees as impossible because of the mounting intensity of the class struggle today. The present scale of the strife would doom any effort by architecture to participate in the process of social change and would force it to become part of a repressive machine far removed from the humanistic function of culture. Architecture is gradually withdrawing, therefore, to the pathetic role of "entertainment" or "commodity," a task to which the "gratuitous, quietistic" images of Post-Modernism have confined it. As society disintegrates, so does architecture. Since World War II, architecture has not only been incompatible with human needs, unable to become so, and helpless to arrest the disintegration of social relations into commodity transactions; it is also loosing its identity as a critical agent.

Like Habermas, Frampton goes beyond criticism and suggests an alternative cultural strategy. An architect himself, his proposals are more concrete than Habermas's and backed by a close observation of developments in architecture around the world. As an alternative to the contemporary crisis, he proposes Critical Regionalism, which he qualifies as an "architecture of resistance."

Critical Regionalism is a term coined by us in reference to the work of a group of Greek architects, Antonakakis and Associates.[4] We developed the notion, on the one hand, based on Mumford's writings on regionalism as a critique of the path taken by American architecture in the name of Modernity. It also served to categorize the efforts of Stirling and Giancarlo di Carlo in the early 1960s, in which regionalism was used to criticize the limitations of "big bluff" Modern architecture.

Frampton sees Critical Regionalism as more than just a historical phenomenon. For him, it is a strategy for

architecture now. He specifies in detailed design terms the characteristics that might bring about "placeness"—the architectonic conditions conducive to human interaction which Post-Modernism, in its adoration for decor, and commercialist design, in its mechanistic utilitarian approach, have suppressed. The essence of Critical Regionalism is not the preservation of an architectonic dialect, but opposition through architecture to the loss of the collective bond in society. In this respect, Frampton comes close to Mumford's original position, avoiding the possible folkloristic and chauvinistic implications of the idea of region. This is one of the most welcome efforts today to bring architecture back to a socially accountable role and a critical function.

Architecture plays an important role in "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," by Rosalind Krauss, editor of the Freudian-Marxist review *October*. She sets out to "map" the "structure" of Post-Modern sculpture as it intersects with architecture and landscape in such "not architecture/not sculpture" works as those of Christo and Sol LeWitt. Not surprisingly she comes up with *the* ubiquitous *topos* among post-modern disciplines, namely that deconstruction was invented in the 1960s and 1970s. But "Agh, it tain't like that," to quote Ezra Pound. What Krauss dubs the "historical rupture" of these decades simply did not occur. The flight from Western humanist forms of rationality, of which this type of "notness" deconstruction is merely one manifestation, belongs to a long line of *anti-rinascimenti* almost as old as Western humanist rationality itself. In fact, recent exercises in deconstruction only pale in comparison to those of Montaigne, Erasmus, and Michelangelo. But one need not hark back as far as 16th-century radical skepticism to find major deconstructive cultural statements—the 1920s will suffice. Krauss, however, dismisses this period sweepingly with the claim that its sculptor/architects intended their works "as visual proof of the immutable logic and coherence of universal geometries ... denoting a universe held together ... by [the] mind," rather than as deconstructive attacks against a canonical set of rules or values. The documents would reveal a different picture, and the Russian Constructivists to whom she imputes such pious notions, or any of the European modernists for that matter, would have trouble finding the slenderest trace of consensus to support this claim.

Most of the authors in the book belong to a younger generation than their post-modern mentors, Foucault and Derrida, and are still committed to the rejection of postwar Modernism, cultural and social. Following the example of the older generation, they still embrace deconstruction of some kind. A few, like Frampton and Said, cultivate a certain tradition and historical memory. What is new in their approach is a dawning belief in the possibility of bettering the human condition, a belief inherent in the humanist tradition since the birth of the modern world. This has super-

seded the "non-realist position," the "self-defeating cultural relativism" (Hilary Putnam),[5] the "flight from reality, and from history," the "extreme skepticism and even nihilism," (Rene Wellek)[6] so typical of the work of Post-Moderns.

Because each essay presupposes a different context of cultural expression—art, architecture, literature—or of philosophical approach—Marxism, phenomenology, existentialism, Nietzscheism—problems of inconsistency do arise. A common language has yet to be found for communication between different cultural domains. This is one of the first attempts in the direction of one; that the picture is occasionally unfinished is only natural. It is in fact much to Foster's credit that he took all the risks in proposing a framework, and he has to a great extent set the tone for the debate of the 1980s.

In sum, new approaches seem to be drifting away from the Post-Modernist tendencies of freewheeling pluralism, regressive historicism, and hermetic formalism which have dominated culture in the advanced industrial democracies for over two decades. There is an effort to seriously reengage cultural activities with campaigns of social emancipation—hence the title of the present book, *The Anti-Aesthetic*. Its critiques of Post-Modernism are polemically opposed to the aesthetic dogmatism to which Modernism has been reduced at times, as in Philip Johnson's writings on the International Style. This is not a replay of the radicalism of the 1960s, either. The thinking is more analytical, reflective, more conscious of history, but also less given to enthusiasms. It reflects maturity and also the difficulties of the historical moment. From the point of view of the geography of ideas it is interesting to note that social criticism of culture is no longer as European-dominated as it has been since World War II. The American contribution is increasingly strong and visible as younger thinkers come to the fore.

What are the possible paths for architecture as a critical activity? Critical Regionalism is one; but there are other alternatives, including even classicism—not in the escapist, fabulistic, regressive sense in which Post-Modernism has cast it, but as a means of reflecting on the humanist tradition from which it springs, as an art of tragedy, of collective representation and catharsis.[7] Even more, there is the possibility of revitalizing the optimistic rigor of the periods immediately following World War II or the early 1930s, both moments of modernity and promise cut short by wars, hot and cold.

1. "The Post-Modern House," *Architectural Record*, (May 1945), pp. 70-75.

2. New York: Oxford University Press, 1954-58. For an extremely informative overview of the uses of the term Post-Modern with special reference to architecture see Robert Stern, "The Doubles of Post-Modern," *The Harvard Architectural Review*, Volume I (Spring 1980).

3. This article was originally a talk delivered in September 1981, when Habermas was awarded the Theodor W. Adorno Prize of the city of Frankfurt, and given subsequently in March 1982 at New York University.

4. "The Grid and the Pathway. An Introduction to the Work of Dimitris and Susanna Antonakakis," *Architecture in Greece 15* (Athens, 1980); reproduced in *Atelier 66*, ed. K. Frampton, Rizzoli, 1985.

5. *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 123, 158.

6. "Destroying Literary Studies," *The New Criterion*, Volume 2, Number 4 (December 1983), pp. 4, 8.

7. See Tzonis and Lefaivre, *Classical Architecture, the Poetics of Order*, MIT Press (forthcoming, Fall 1986).

The Anti-Aesthetic. Essays on Post-Modern Culture, Hal Foster, editor, Bay Press (3710 Discovery Rd. North, Port Townsend, WA 98368), 1983, 159 pp., $8.95 pb.

Caroline Constant:

A VIEW FROM THE CAMPIDOGLIO

ROBERT VENTURI
and DENISE SCOTT BROWN

It is now twenty years since the appearance of Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) and thirteen since that of *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972), written with Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour. Each book has made a significant mark on American architecture, despite the inconsistencies of their respective themes. Venturi and Scott Brown's new book, *A View From the Campidoglio*, is a collection of seventeen previously published essays, written (except for a portion of Venturi's Princeton MFA thesis) between 1968 and 1982. Rather than formulate new themes, the authors use these essays to elaborate the evolution of their polemic and expose its "messy vitality."

The collection includes tributes to architects who have inspired their work (Lutyens, Furness, Aalto); responses to critics; theoretical musings ("Learning From Pop," "Functionalism, Yes, But...," "A Definition of Architecture as Shelter with Decoration on It ...," "Learning the Wrong Lessons from the Beaux Arts"); project analyses (National Football Hall of Fame, the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin, a postscript from the Vanna Venturi House); and theoretical recapitulations establishing connections between early projects and more recent designs. An extensive bibliography cites their complete writings, articles written by members of their firm, and critical evaluations of their work.

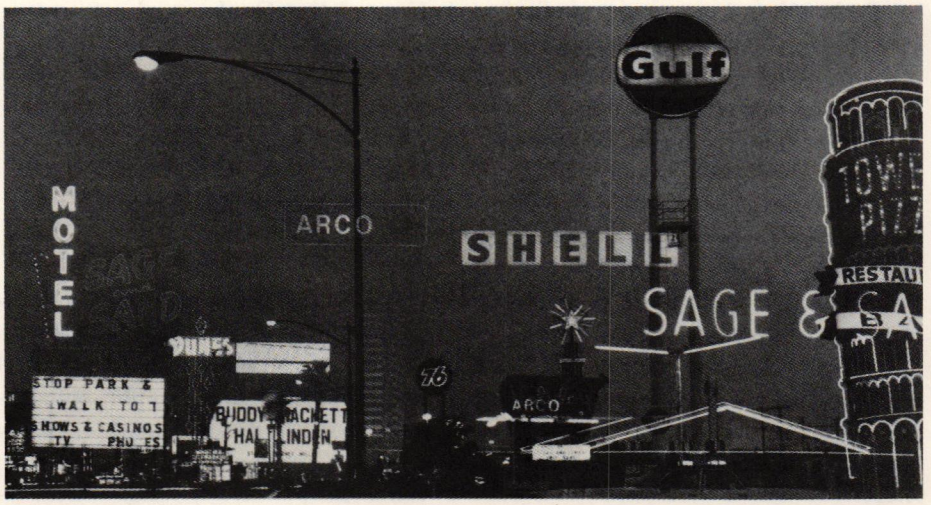
Moving from Rome to Las Vegas and back, these essays explore an architectural dilemma that Venturi and Scott Brown have continually addressed in their work: the relationship between the classical architectural

tradition and the vernacular building tradition. The issue is not style, but rather the accessibility of architectural meaning. Their argument for a "non-doctrinaire, humanist, late twentieth-century architecture" is replete with complexities and contradictions, stemming from the diverging themes of their earlier books—architectural symbolism and populism.

The essays reveal the emerging conflicts in the authors' theoretical position and the role of contradiction in their ideology. In "A Billdingboard Involving Movies, Relics and Space," Venturi analyzes their first project to challenge the repertoire of architectural forms through the use of signage and elements of the commercial strip; its meaning derives both from ambiguities inherent in the symbolic nature of architectural form and from contradictions arising from the juxtaposition of disparate symbol systems. In "Learning From Pop," Scott Brown formulates the social and aesthetic arguments for submitting elements of popular culture to architectural scrutiny, while in "The RIBA Annual Discourse," Venturi distinguishes the depiction of meaning through sign from the construction of meaning through symbol.

Through the sign, meaning derives directly from representation, rather than symbolically from the language of architecture. Their argument, initiated in response to the reductive tendencies of modernism, seems to be approaching its own reductive limits. By appropriating methods of the commercial strip to enhance architectural legibility, do they render architecture a mere shadow of itself, a reminder of a lost idealism? Is it possible to maintain the resonance of meaning inherent in its symbolic dimension?

Their use of architectural form divorced from its cultural matrix was influenced by the literary criticism of Cleanth Brooks (*The Well Wrought Urn*), whose analysis of poetic structure parallels many of Venturi and



LAS VEGAS STRIP. FROM *VIEW FROM THE CAMPIDOGLIO.*

Scott Brown's methods and conclusions. For Brooks, poetry transforms our view of the ordinary to "show that . . . the common [is] really uncommon, the prosaic . . . really poetic." Poetic unity relies on "a structure of meanings . . . [uniting] the like with the unlike, . . . [not] by reduction and simplification [but through] a pattern of resolved stresses." He recognizes that modern poetry relies on the active participation of the reader in the reconstruction of its meaning, an aspect overlooked in Venturi's Las Vegas analogy. Populism is achieved only at the expense of the plurality of meaning available through traditional architectural symbolism.

Their analysis has provoked Venturi and Scott Brown to use the vernacular, not as a value in its own right, but dialectically with the classical, to enhance the vitality of architectural expression. In the National Football Hall of Fame, a "billboard" façade with projecting buttresses is annexed to a nave-like, vaulted gallery. Movies projected on the interior surfaces render a dissolution of form reminiscent of the effect of Gothic tracery and stained glass. The pairing of dissimilar ideas (façade/billboard and gallery/nave) and the deliberate lack of formal resolution in their juxtaposition yield a "pattern of resolved stresses" that defies conventional aesthetic unity.

At the Brant house in Greenwich hints of Palladian idealism are overlaid on the American suburban dream; the critique of both traditions subtly interwoven in this building should secure for it more importance in the history of residential architecture than is commonly acknowledged. Its style —"ugly and ordinary"—provokes reactions similar to Venturi's own response to the work of Frank Furness, an acknowledged local hero. Belying its overt stylistic qualities, the Brant house resonates with meanings that are neither ordinary nor easily grasped. The Brant House expands on ideas initially set out in the now canonical Vanna Venturi house, where abstracted classical forms are contradicted in a Mannerist fashion and given a materiality that grounds the project in its suburban setting. In the concluding essay Venturi reconsiders this early work, significant for the manner in which it "admits contradiction within the ideal order and thereby enhances the ideal quality of that order through contrast with it. To perceive the ideal you must acknowledge the real."

Rather than impose a prescriptive world view, Venturi and Scott Brown treat each design as a unique response to a particular problem. Their anti-heroic stance aligns them not with architects such as Palladio or Gunnar Asplund, whose works integrated vernacular and classical forms, but with Sir Edwin Lutyens, who relied on their mutual juxtaposition. Unlike Lutyens, who remained aloof from the avant-garde debate of the early 20th century, Venturi and Scott Brown have consistently challenged orthodoxy in its many guises to become the anti-heroic heroes of their time.

Despite their acknowledged debt to literary criticism, to Pop Art, and to sociology, the authors seek to understand architecture as an art, grounded in its own area of competence: "Achieving essence is our ultimate aim in using symbolism in architecture." They view architecture as a problem-stating discipline, rather than a problem-solving one; it achieves artistic status not through aesthetic unity, but through dialectic confrontation.

By arguing that architecture must both reflect modern culture and act critically within it, Venturi and Scott Brown force us to see the dilemma of our own situation. They react to this paradox with wit, for their argument may be subtle and evolutionary, but their rhetoric is self-consciously insistent and engaged ("like letters from a battlefield"). Just as *Complexity and Contradiction* was a reaction to functionalism (the prevalent ideology of the 1960s), so *Learning From Las Vegas* was a reaction to elitism. Indeed, their next target could be Post-Modernism; as Venturi notes, his next book may be titled "Modern Architecture is Almost All Right."

A View From the Campidoglio: Selected Essays 1953–1984, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Harper & Row, 1984, 155 pp., illus., $25.00.

Franklin D. Israel:

ARCHITECT: THE LIFE AND WORK OF CHARLES W. MOORE

DAVID LITTLEJOHN

David Littlejohn begins this provocative and insightful study of Charles Moore with an analysis of the present state of architecture. Emphasizing the break with Modernism made by many architects in recent years, Littlejohn concludes that "the writings and teachings of Charles W. Moore and the design projects in which he has been involved have formed the single most important positive influence in shaping new attitudes toward architectural design in this country during the last twenty years." The author recognizes the place of Kahn and Venturi in his discussion, and links them closely to Moore at Princeton and later at Yale; but it is Moore whom Littlejohn proceeds to single out as the most influential and important American architect as teacher, writer, and designer "since Frank Lloyd Wright." He answers the question, "Who is Charles Moore?" with a series of detailed studies of Moore's projects, of his career as architect and teacher, and of his complex vision of architecture, "a vision which firmly rejects the modernist's vision of architecture as pure art." One of the problems with architecture as art, the author points out, is that "it tends to begin with a form—perhaps a beautiful form—and then imposes that form on human users, who unfortunately come in all shapes and sizes."

Through detailed studies of specific projects, Littlejohn succeeds in explaining how "a Moore design will begin by attending to, somehow yielding to, its environment, whether natural or man-made; then proceed by allowing the user's needs, peculiarities, and fantasies to shape the emerging form, as the actions of a caterpillar or bird determine the form of a cocoon or a nest." Quite a remarkable achievement; I can only be reminded of Lou Kahn (one of Moore's teachers at Princeton) deploring the use of the word "environment" in discussions of site planning and the concept of contextualism in the late sixties at Pennsylvania. The memory makes me slightly apprehensive here of the author's deification of Moore, a fear later calmed when Littlejohn attests that "Beneath the international accomplishments and celebrity of Charles Moore, there remains a surprising degree of self-effacement." Littlejohn continues by discovering for the reader "a colorful and idiosyncratic designer, aware of his skills and jealous of the privileges they have earned him . . . a non-egoist architect, . . . the very opposite of the Architect as Hero," who listens to clients "rather like a good psychiatrist." One expects Littlejohn to commend Moore for not raising his fees for this extra-added service.

The discussion of Moore's life begins with a description of his dramatic preparation of the designs for the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition. We are presented with an insightful and masterful view of the architect as designer and collaborator. After a descriptive study of the houses Moore has built for himself over the years, from Monterey to Pine Mountain near Frazier Park, California, comes a biography of "the late twentieth-century architect closely tied to the past and untainted by Modernism"; not to mention a "psychobiography" of this "creative genius, one who dreams of and designs 'places to be.'"

The most provocative and exciting part of the book is the discussion of the early sixties, when Moore teamed up with Donlyn Lyndon, William Turnbull, and Richard Whitaker. In 1961 they joined forces and shared a converted garage office in a small Berkeley apartment building. During that time they exchanged ideas and worked on projects together. Lyndon describes the work process: "Someone would

draw something, someone else would work it over.... There was a lot of this drawing together, a collective search for forms.... It wasn't always cheerful ... one of the reasons we were able to do all the things we did is that we spent so much time together. Most of our designs started as drawings on napkins over dinner at Kitty's on College Avenue and after dinner we'd go back and work till two in the morning." These descriptions of the early days of Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, and Whitaker are particularly important in the context of each man's work because they describe the process which led eventually to Sea Ranch, to date their most brilliant work. In their carefully articulated words the reader senses the deep conviction and dedication of each to the spirit of his craft. In the opinion of Lyndon, Turnbull, and Whitaker, Moore is the guru; Turnbull refers to him as the "marvelous free spirit" of the group, "filled with whimsy and fantasy."

By carefully dispersing direct quotations throughout the book, Littlejohn conveys a sense of intimacy unique in this form of biography. Moore's singularity is far more evident in direct discourse than when Littlejohn lauds him and his talent. For example, in discussing a project in Los Angeles for a friend, Moore admits: "Part of the problem may have been that as it went on, I was getting increasingly busy running around to various faraway places," and later on when discussing another job in L.A.: "I have had my losers! Evil people, crazy people"; or "If I get pissy with John and Buzz, it's because they don't show signs of picking up any adjacent sticks to wave around in the air themselves, just to see what might work."

The discussion of Moore's "works" forms the second part of this book. Here, the early days of MLT&W are again recalled in some of the most exciting and revealing sections. Using Moore's words Littlejohn transcribes as best he can the atmosphere of these times and how it affected Moore's

FACULTY CLUB DINING ROOM, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA (1968). FROM *ARCHITECT.*

specific work: "Something was happening. I was aware that something was happening. And it never happens to any of us more than once." Littlejohn describes the mood of the time as "revolutionary," suggesting perhaps that "the atmosphere ... allowed Moore to break the residual membrane of propriety that had kept his work, until 1960, essentially similar to that of other men." In these days he was "pushed, challenged, and supported by his partners-to-be, living in the fresh air of Berkeley 1960—free to forget what other people were doing and to return—in the manner preached by Lou Kahn—to his first principles."

The works that followed, the Bonham cabin, the Jobson cabin near Big Sur, are beautifully described as part of Moore's "breakthrough." Other houses in Northern California, such as the Slater House near Stinson Beach and the Boases' house built three years later, are carefully analyzed with respect to the architect's attitude toward client, program, and site. Littlejohn searches for the unique quality in each project. In discussing the Slater House, he refers "emotionally and visually" to the roof as its "greatest thing." The descriptions here are charged emotionally and aesthetically because the author venerates the man so deeply—although he is keenly critical and careful to point out the work's failings. For example, in his description of the Santa Barbara Faculty Club with its "futuristic bridges" and flying stairways in "clashing cultural innuendos," he concludes, "fond as I am of Charles Moore's life-enhancing space-and-light games, I have come to share some of my Santa Barbara colleagues' resistance to this supermannerist fun house, which makes no effort even to pretend to be part of a conservative university's way of life." Or later on, describing the Phelan house, which united the original partners of MT&W for an encore in Winnetka, Illinois, Littlejohn is less than impressed. "Apart from the many-leveled splendors of the central stairs, and a few probably satisfying nooks, the spaces of the house seem to be uncommonly ordinary."

Those analyses are more objective and instructive than Littlejohn's discussion of the man and the way he works. When he attempts to understand Moore's psyche he is overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of Moore's mind and his accomplishments. When forced into an encounter with Moore or one of his colleagues, Littlejohn gives way to the force of Moore's manner, which is both natural and invented, both instinctive and analytical. Direct dialogue provides the reader with greater insight into the man than any analysis of his life or philosophy. Some of his vignettes are clubby and inbred; only those who know the cast could fully appreciate and understand them. I would be curious how successfully Littlejohn conveys Moore's laid-back style to a reader with no previous exposure to Moore.

Architect: The Life and Work of Charles W. Moore, David Littlejohn, Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1984, 356 pp., illus., $22.95.

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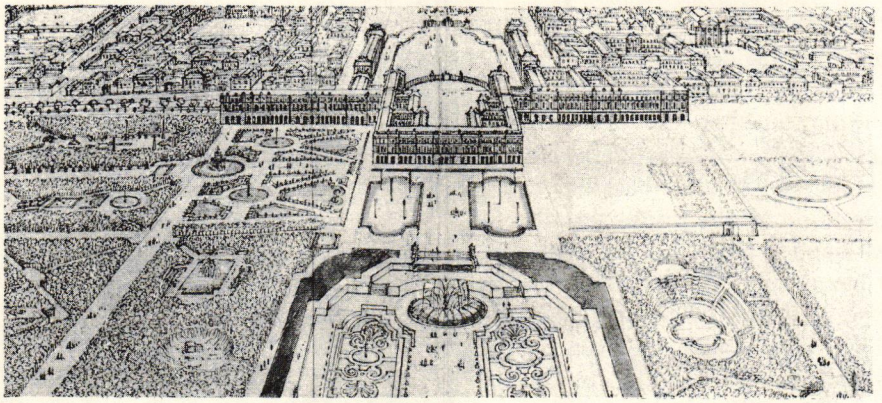

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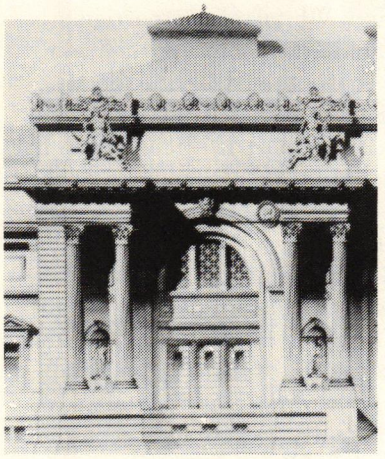

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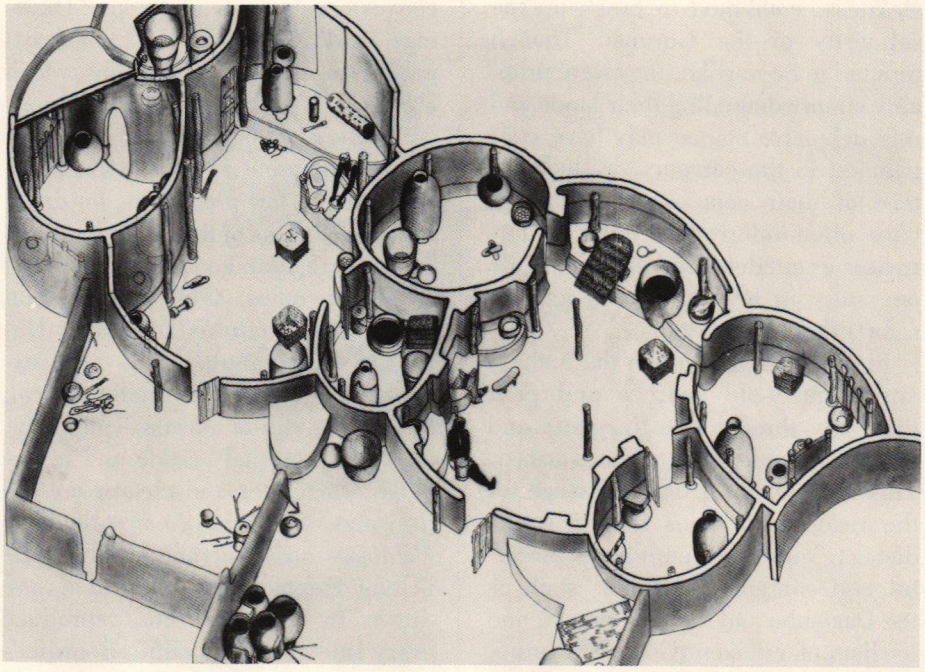
Paul Oliver:

AFRICAN SPACES

JEAN-PAUL BOURDIER
and TRINH T. MINH-HA

Although a few anthropologists over the past century have given due attention to the architecture of the peoples they have studied, an examination of the literature of anthropology will confirm that serious consideration of buildings, their construction, functions, and meanings is rare. The small number of thorough studies hardly disturbs the incessant flow of papers on, say, kinship patterns. The Lowie Museum exhibition, "Dwellings of West Africa" and even more so the related book, *African Spaces*, are thus significant contributions to a nascent anthropology of architecture.

"Dwellings of West Africa" exhibits the drawings, photographs, slides, and models of Jean-Paul Bourdier (an assistant professor of architecture at the University of California, Berkeley), illustrating his research on traditional architecture in Mauritania, Mali, Benin, Togo, Senegal, and Burkina Faso, with an emphasis on the latter two states. For *African Spaces*, coauthored with Trinh T. Minh-ha, he has narrowed the field, concentrating on vernacular building in a band of southwest central Upper Volta, roughly between the Black Volta and the Red Volta rivers, south to the border with Ghana. (It should be noted that the state changed its name from the colonial Haute Volta/Upper Volta to Burkina Faso while the book was in production, and so throughout is referred to as Upper Volta.) By narrowing the subject the authors have gained many advantages: they can draw their ten case studies from one broad cultural group, they can make comparisons between these examples when appropriate, and they can avoid the charge of overselectivity which a more scattered representation over a larger area might attract. However, there are also disadvantages: the similarities and dissimilarities of the illustrated compound types to other built forms in adjacent regions and states may not be clear, while the reader with no specialized knowledge of West African architecture may be unaware of the distribution of forms and technologies, let alone peoples and cultures, in other parts of the subcontinent. By specifying "African" in the title, the authors have implied a scope very different from their concentrated focus.



FROM *AFRICAN SPACES*. DRAWING BY JEAN-PAUL BOURDIER.

African Spaces is a serious work of scholarship. Bourdier and Minh-ha have read extensively, and their contribution to the anthropology of this region includes detailed kinship mapping, occupancy and space use, and the plotting of the construction phases of the compounds. They have also catalogued the indigenous terms for rooms and details and their transliteration in phonetic symbols. This labor of scholarship is also a labor of love: the authors' enthusiasm for these vernacular environments, from the storage of pots to the access to a domestic interior, to a section through a device for curing fish, is everywhere apparent in their drawings, photographs, and descriptions. They may have been biased, however, in finding particularly fine examples to illustrate the differing traditions, and it is not easy to determine how representative the chosen compounds are. The selection does exhibit diversity, whether a dispersed settlement like Valiou, a Nuna compound of rectangular units without linking walls, or the maze of strap-like walls of Zingè's Puguli homestead, the buttressed walls of a Sissala house, or the exquisitely molded and richly decorated forms of a Kassena compound. Of the ten case studies, at least one, Dakui's Sissala compound, shows evidence of deterioration.

Between the Volta rivers live the Gurunsi, a general term for somewhat dispersed groups of people speaking the Mole-Dagbane and Grusi languages of the Voltaic family. Centuries of conflict with other groups, notably the Mossi, along with the holy wars of expanding Islam, the partition of their territories by colonial powers (part of the Gurunsi cluster live in Ghana), and the debilitating effects of diseases such as river blindness and sleeping

sickness, combined to break up the solidarity of the Gurunsi. Though reputed to be warlike, they were probably simply defending their lands and this defensive stance may have contributed to the compact, walled pattern of their compounds. Travelers have often referred to them as fortresses or citadels, and though mainly one story in height, they do project a fort-like appearance.

In a brief introduction the authors cite century-old sources and pick their way through the linguistic and historic complexities of the Gurunsi. This is no doubt a tough passage for the reader who does not know the district, with its references to powerful and contiguous peoples such as the Dagomba and the Mamprussi, and its lists of villages (Goundi, Kordié, Konkouldi, Ninyon, Birou . . .) which do not appear on any map in the book. One is left uncertain which information is necessary for an understanding of the main text. Good maps would certainly have helped, and the two simple and crudely drawn maps in the introduction are quite unsatisfactory and frankly perplexing, in light of the remarkably good quality of the drawings of the compounds.

Structurally the authors have followed a model established by Labelle Prussin in *Architecture in Northern Ghana, A Study of Forms and Functions* (UC Press, 1969). Prussin's study places the Gurunsi in a slightly larger context, studying six communities, including the Dagomba, Konkomba, and Tallensi, who are neighbors of Bourdier's subjects. Bourdier's condensed introduction precedes the ten case studies, and the book is concluded with an afterword that corresponds to Prussin's "Comparative Summary." Expanding upon Prussin's use of photography and plans, Bourdier relies on more fully developed drawings "made to carefully record the subject, measuring it down to its smallest details. The same does not, however, apply to the text, since verbal language is, by nature, fictional and the meaning it conveys is always tendentious." Drawings, however, can also be fictional, especially axonometric projections, which are used extensively and which nonarchitects often find deceptive because of their apparent aerial perspective.

There are few precedents for drawing up the plans of the organic, curvilinear, irregular compounds of West African peoples: those in Jean-Paul Lebeuf's *L'Habitation des Fali* (Hachette, 1961), perhaps the most exhaustive study of a single African building tradition and its symbolism, are disappointingly crude and insensitive. Far better and clearer are the drawings for Jean-Pierre Beguin's *L'Habitat au Cameroun* (Editions de l'Union Françaises, 1952), which were drawn in ink and thus reproduce every line at its full value. Bourdier's drawings, though of great size, are tone drawings, often in pencil. The originals are works of beauty and sensitivity, but are difficult to reproduce—many in the book have almost totally lost their details. The problem of the illustrations is heightened by the inclusion, apparently at a later stage, of ink-line diagrams reproduced at 1:1. Their cartoon-like conventions sit uncomfortably beside the delicate delineations of forms, textures, and decorations so lovingly portrayed in the elevations and sections.

By choosing "Spaces" rather than "Compounds" for their title, the authors have stressed the space-defining, space-enclosing quality of architecture rather than its material substance. This is an effective antidote to the penchant for physical description of the structure which passes in many texts for the "attention of anthropologists." Unfortunately it also introduces an abstract concept of malleable space that is very much a part of modern architectural thought, but has had a limited history even in the West. Such a conception of space does not appear to be shared by the Gurunsi, but is rather a projection of the authors' own precepts. While Bourdier and Minh-ha recognize this, some questions arise. For instance, they make many references to the privacy of the internal spaces of the compounds, though the compounds are by their nature private. They claim that in a Lela complex a visitor can be observed without the occupants being seen, but is this not more a reflection of the authors' own sense of intrusion? Isn't the screening effect of the many granaries more likely a product of their functional disposition rather than a system of "passive visual surveillance"?

The discussions of the anthropomorphism of the dwelling, such as the male and female doorways among the Kusasi, the symbolism of spatial use, the structural details, and decorative motifs among the Kassena and Nankani settlements are extremely informative, backed up by linguistic and terminological evidence. Unlike Griaule and Dieterlen on the Dogon, or Lebeuf on the Fali, Bourdier makes no attempt at diagrammatic interpretation of the dwellers' beliefs. Instead, we are left with the impression of societies whose dwellings display a profound interweaving of religious and symbolic lives as the material expression of their beliefs.

African Spaces is a book with a message, one of a "body of works that aim at undermining the cult of progress lying at the root of our market-dependent society." The case studies "display an infinite range of variation on a theme" in contrast to the "platitudinous and sterile repetition of some of our industrialized housing." Such lessons in the afterword may seem simplistic, but few would not respect and profit from the main substance of the book. It is without question an important work on architecture and will no doubt attract the attention of anthropologists as well.

African Spaces: Designs for Living in Upper Volta, Jean-Paul Bourdier and Trinh T. Minh-ha, Holmes & Meier, 205 pp., illus., $59.50.

Natalie Shivers:
THE STRIP

RICHARD P. HORWITZ

FROM *THE STRIP*

The Strip: An American Place offers an insider's view of the strip—or rather a particular strip in Coralville, Iowa (pop. 8,000), just outside Iowa City. Author Richard P. Horwitz hopes to present an alternative to what he considers the usual critiques which are primarily visual and, as he sees them, elitist (cf. Peter Blake's *God's Own Junkyard*, 1964, and Robert Venturi et al's *Learning from Las Vegas*, 1972). His intention instead is to examine the connection between a typical roadside development and the place from which it springs. Enlisting the people who work there and patronize it as "informants," Horwitz attempts to counter condemnations of the strip with a look behind the scenes at the particulars of one specific strip. A reasonable premise, no doubt, but one that ultimately seems self-evident and not especially enlightening—at least not as it is treated here.

Richard Horwitz and photographer Karin E. Becker, associate professors of American studies and journalism, respectively, at the University of Iowa, have produced what they describe as "more like a guidebook and personal journal than a textbook," aimed at neither the popular audience nor "the Specialist" and touching "most of the humanities and social sciences but never [becoming] attached." The noncommittal nature of these introductory remarks reveals the book's flaw: the lack of a rigorous structure, method, thesis, or route of inquiry. Horwitz's stated intention of helping us only "to make better sense of the strip" becomes a low-risk proposition for the author and a low-gain one for the reader.

The book has three basic parts: an overview of the strip and its role in American history and experience; an examination of a specific development and its participants; and an assessment of the lessons of the strip. The most valuable aspect of the book is its commentary on the American work culture and the changing nature of American enterprise. As Horwitz describes the Coralville strip, it is on a cusp—still a product of local initiative, conceived by natives who continue to have a stake in its prosperity, but now dominated by franchises of large chains. Not just in Coralville, but throughout the country, their mass-production and mass-marketing capabilities are overwhelming mom-and-pop operations in economy and efficiency. Meanwhile the appeal of universally known and guaranteed products attracts more and more customers. According to Horwitz, fast-food chains increased their share of the market from 2 to 31 percent between 1967 and 1972, while independents' share of the receipts dropped from 72 to 55 percent. In 1978 fewer than a dozen companies gained control of more than half the strip sites and sales. Horwitz's description of the transformation of the Best Western motels from a loose coalition of locally owned and operated California enterprises into a nationwide business, with standardization and centralization the keys to its billion-dollar annual gross, is informative and worth reading.

Unfortunately, the same is not true of the rest of the book. The opening summary of the vast range of strip data is superficial, subjective, and ultimately uninformative. Encompassing such diverse subjects as the growth of the strip, its legal history, planning and zoning controls, architectural and graphic conventions, the evolution of the American aesthetic, popular responses to and intellectual critiques of the strip, arguments of aesthetics versus economics—each of which deserves its own volume—the synopsis is so skimpy as to become banal.

The chapter on the Coralville strip, the core of the book, comprises a series of interviews over a four-year period (1978–1982) with workers at the Carousel Inn, a Best Western affiliate. The meaning of the strip to its participants, Horwitz claims, "is most clearly amidst the minutiae of daily life." Consequently, we learn much about these workers' preoccupations—juggling room reservations,

housekeeping chores, accommodating customers. The managers responsible for marketing and operating decisions offer some useful comments on their involvement, motivations, and perceptions of public needs and tastes, and how these govern the look and operation of a typical strip establishment. We may be frustrated, however, that the desk clerk has nothing more to offer than the comment, "the better days are just when no one complains about anything," and one maid summarizes her impressions with, "the place has improved.... We got new vacuums." While these are probably accurate reflections of the workers' perceptions and the author cannot be faulted for their lack of eloquence, nevertheless the meaning of the strip becomes mired in such minutiae. Unlike Studs Terkel's *Working*, in which we learn as much about the people as their tasks, we have to rely on Horwitz's commentary in the next chapter to tell us the significance of what we have learned and why we should be interested.

The lessons of *The Strip* are not specifics for improvements in planning aesthetics or consumer services. These are not the sources of the problems, as defined by Horwitz finally in the last chapter. He contends instead that workers' lives suffer as service for consumers improves with the automation of roadside establishments. Neither beautification, nor obliteration, nor preservation—common prescriptions for the strip's problems—address the issue of the alienation of the worker in the process of the road's enfranchisement. While this is undoubtedly a valid consideration one can't help but wonder just who this book is intended for and to what use the reader's "better sense" of the strip can be put.

The Strip: An American Place, Richard P. Horwitz with photographs by Karin E. Becker, University of Nebraska Press, 1985, 188 pp., illus., $14.95 pb.

Carolyn Torma:

AMERICAN VERNACULAR DESIGN, 1870–1940

HERBERT GOTTFRIED AND JAN JENNINGS

Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings have written a glossary for those with limited architectural training who require a guide to the visual elements of vernacular structures. For their designated audience of architectural surveyors, real estate brokers, planners, and designers, they have produced a well-illustrated and thoughtfully organized book. In contrast to other standard dictionaries and glossaries, which use an alphabetical arrangement and few illustrations, this book is organized by logical groupings of elements—doorways, windows, roofs, surface building materials. Even a reader with a limited architectural

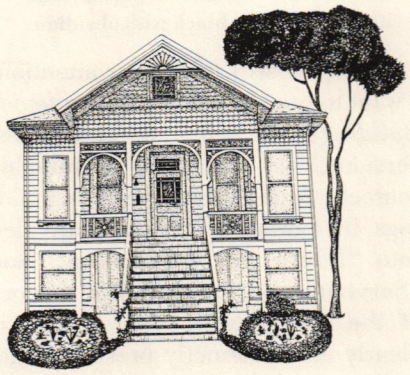
vocabulary will find his way around the book quickly and easily.

Decoration and exterior surface are the focus of the book. Given Gottfried's and Jennings's experience as urban surveyors, this may be understandable, since many urban architectural inventories record only the front façade of a building. However, it creates two problems for the authors. First, the glossary emphasizes exterior details and ignores interior, often structural features. Such terms as plates and sleepers are missing entirely. More important, however, this constricted view deeply affects the second half of the book, the analysis of buildings as types. The floor plans (except in a few rare cases), overall shape, and the arrangement of side and rear façades are largely ignored, with the result that a satisfactory definition of the form of buildings eludes the authors. This problem is demonstrated clearly in the discussion of churches. Church architecture has a well-developed vocabulary for the discussion of design elements and, most especially, floor plans. Yet the authors adhere to a discussion of the front façade, ignoring the primary space (the apse containing the altar or holy space) and its attendant features such as the choir, nave, and aisle. The ultimate symbolic meaning of the design is never acknowledged or discussed.

The temptation to create architectural typologies has been irresistible to many scholars and surveyors. Indeed, the literature describing these efforts is extensive. Regrettably, Gottfried and Jennings have not been especially successful in creating a new typology of American vernacular buildings of the 1870–1940 era, but their shortcomings are by no means unique. The task requires the writer to digest an immense amount of raw data. Despite the authors' claim to a wide sampling of data, the archival and field work they mention in the introduction has concentrated primarily on the Great Plains and the western edge of the Midwest. Although the bibliography is quite lengthy, it shows a lack of knowledge of the numerous architectural survey catalogues, reports, and multiple format Register nominations produced by many state preservation offices each year. Finally, although Gottfield and Jennings readily admit to a variety of sources for the names of their typological categories, the result is still a deep confusion in the reader. In some instances, the significant detail in the category is an accepted architectural style (Italianate, Romanesque), while other times it is a roof shape (mansard), or part of the country (Cape Cod, Plains), use (two-family), overall shape (rectilinear), an accepted building type (shotgun), or a term of nature (organic). If the internal structure, floor plan and shape are not significant analytical elements for the authors, then it remains unclear exactly what is.

Despite these criticisms, the book succeeds as a glossary. It will be welcomed and used extensively by many field surveyors, and no doubt by others who need to identify and name architectural components of the vernacular building landscape.

American Vernacular Design, 1870–1940, Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985, 270 pp., illus., $25.50.



DRAWING BY DIANA WOODBRIDGE

Sally B. Woodbridge: THE OREGON TRAIL

Architectural history often seems like a vast construction project, with historians assuming the roles of architects and contractors in the erection of an edifice of knowledge designed to endure—like the Parthenon—through the ages. Even the litigious quality of disputes over styles and authorship fits the analogy. The Bicentennial so effectively stirred our consciousness about the nation's architectural heritage that the whole country has become what might better be called a re-construction site.

The architecture of the Northwest, like that of other regions, has become more familiar in the last ten years as it has become better published, and of all the northwestern states Oregon is the best published. Of the six books reviewed here, five deal with Oregon. The sixth, Daphne Reece's *Historic Houses of the Pacific Northwest* (subtitled: *A Directory of Restored Historic Structures You Can Visit in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia*) includes minimal histories and descriptions of a selection of reasonably well-known buildings with their addresses, phone numbers, and hours. About ten years ago such a book would have been novel; by now there are enough real guidebooks, offering background history and maps with exact locations, to limit the usefulness of this cursory selection.

Lane County has a book all to itself, but not because of the primacy of its architectural heritage. *Style and Vernacular, A Guide to the Architecture of Lane County, Oregon,* is the product of several years' work by members of the AIA's Southwestern Oregon Chapter. The book is not an in-depth study of the history of the county's built environment, and this is a disappointment. But it is a pleasantly pictorial presentation of representative buildings in eight geographical areas, with

brief contextual histories and maps showing their locations. Eugene, the major city, is divided into nine sections, each with an introduction. Such books have served well to raise the consciousness, as they used to say in Bicentennial days, of the local residents. In the absence of preservation ordinances and official surveys, these guides have contributed more to the cause of preservation than to scholarship.

Architecture, Oregon Style, by Rosalind Clark, presents in handsome photographs, buildings from all over the state. That it was written for laymen perhaps explains the absence of building plans, but, as always, omitting them limits the scope of the buildings to the two-dimensional format of the photograph. (All of the books reviewed here suffer from the exclusion of the plans which help to document buildings, if only schematically, in space.)

Architecture Oregon Style provides brief histories of the periods, the characteristics of the styles, and thumbnail sketches of the buildings in a show-and-tell format that admirably serves to promote pride in place. Although one finds a stronger consensus on style names than ever before, there is still some experimenting, as in Clark's use of the term "half-modern" (half-baked?) for architecture of the 1930s. The book makes one appreciate the stylistic comprehensiveness of Oregon's architecture vis-à-vis national trends, at least for the post-pioneer periods. Indeed, the homogeneous character of our architecture across time and continent is far stronger than its regional distinctiveness.

Portland, an Informal History and Guide, by Terence O'Donnell and Thomas Vaughan, is a revised edition of a 1976 pocket history incorporating nine tours. The first seventy pages offer a portrait of the city in a jocular style that is readable and engaging. This is popular history, as often tied to buildings as to people and events, but steering clear of issues of styles. It is a refreshing approach, since so many factors make up urban history. But the building-oriented tours are woefully inconsistent in giving dates and architects, particularly for buildings from the last three decades—which is odd when the information is so readily available.

By contrast, *Frozen Music, A History of Portland Architecture*, by Gideon Bosker and Lena Lencek, is most admirable in providing not only dates and designers, but also veritable genealogies of Portland's architectural firms. The book is enhanced by the use of many architects' original presentation drawings, which often point up nuances of style more provocatively than photographs.

An introduction by Pietro Belluschi and an afterword by George McMath bracket the text. McMath renders a useful service in surveying the previous books on the history of Oregon's man-made environment. He and Belluschi have left no building block unturned; unhappily for the reader, they have also left few adjectives unused. One passage will suffice to capture the purple essence of the prose:

> **Spanked by the tepid breeze of a summer night, one can stand at the south rim of Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square, and experience the vacant stillness of ancient temples—at Athens or Delphi—with their worn, mottled façades of dismembered stones and sunbleached columns slicing into Mediterranean skies black with obsidian.**

Now, if I still have your attention, I want to praise *Last of the Handmade Buildings*. The author, Virginia Guest Ferriday, has produced a valuable sourcebook on glazed terra-cotta buildings in downtown Portland, divided into "History," "Preservation," and "Surviving Buildings." The history of the glazed terra-cotta district is clearly and succinctly presented and well mapped. A wealth of informative photographs, including a number from the records of Gladding McBean (the terra-cotta manufacturers who supplied most of the ornament for buildings in the West), show pieces of architectural ornament and how they were produced in the factory. An excellent chapter on "Complementary Features and Materials" deals with stone, brick, wrought and cast iron, sheet metal, bronze work, glass, mosaic tile, and terrazzo. The author discusses preservation of the district as lucidly and logically as preservation of the material. A chronological inventory of surviving buildings completes this carefully crafted portrait of a versatile material and its role in buildings which are part of the city's history and continue to add to its luster.

Ferriday's book surpasses the limitations of style books, guidebooks, "how-to books," and preservation manuals to give us a solid, well-illustrated reference work in a modest, affordable format. As an approach to reconstructing the past, it has a promising future.

Historic Houses of the Pacific Northwest, Daphne Reece, Chronicle Books, 1985, 120 pp., illus., $8.95 pb.

Style and Vernacular, A Guide to the Architecture of Lane County, Oregon, Southwestern Oregon Chapter, American Institute of Architects, Western Imprints (Press of the Oregon Historical Society), 1983, 159 pp., illus., $9.95 pb.

Architecture Oregon Style: Architecture from 1840-1950, Rosalind Clark, Professional Book Center, Portland, 1983, 238 pp., illus., $29.95 cloth; $19.95 pb.

Portland, an Informal History and Guide, Terence O'Donnell and Thomas Vaughan, second edition, Western Imprints (Press of the Oregon Historical Society), 1984, 176 pp., illus., $6.95.

Frozen Music, A History of Portland Architecture, Gideon Bosker and Lena Lencek, Western Imprints (Press of the Oregon Historical Society), 1985, 331 pp., illus., $39.95.

Last of the Handmade Buildings: Glazed Terra Cotta in Downtown Portland, Virginia Guest Ferriday, Mark Publishing, 1984, 149 pp., illus., $22.00.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSPACE 1987 COMPETITION

Goals of the Competition
Far-reaching changes in the nature of employment in the late twentieth century call for changed work environments. The International Work Space Competition is intended to assist this evolution. The Competition aims to be a catalyst in the emergence of improved work space, both by challenging designers to produce innovative work and by aiding the discovery process of designer to manufacturer.

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Judges
- Emilio Ambasz: Principal, Emilio Ambasz Design Group, New York. Architect and industrial designer.
- Bruce Burdick: Principal, The Burdick Group, San Francisco. Architect and product designer.
- Robert Harvey: Vice President of Design, Herman Miller, Zeeland, Michigan.
- Masayuki Kurokawa: Principal, Masayuki Kurokawa Architect & Associates, Tokyo, Japan. Architect and product designer.
- Jeffrey Osborne: Vice President of Design, Knoll International, New York.

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Judging will take place in San Francisco in June of 1987.

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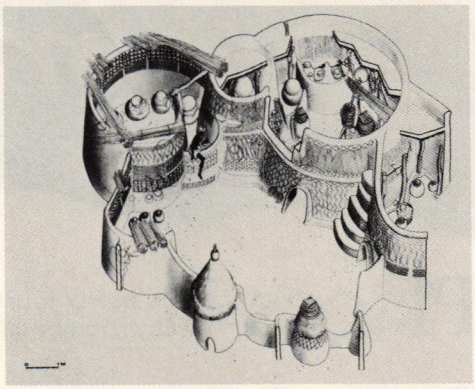

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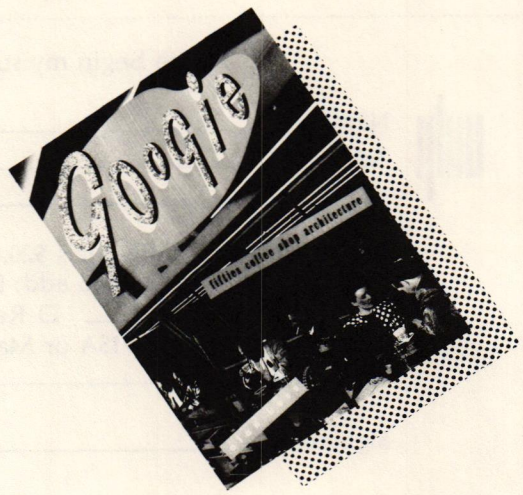

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Andrew Rabeneck:

RUHLMANN

FLORENCE CAMARD

The pharoahs built their pyramids outside town for the best effect, and the effect endures. President Mitterand and his culture minister, Jack Lang, are building theirs in the Cour du Louvre, to the consternation of most thinking Parisians. But the brouhaha over the Louvre's expansion plans has eclipsed another major event within the great complex: the reopening in 1985, after three years, of the renovated Musée des Arts Décoratifs, entered from the Rue du Rivoli.

The riches of this museum have always reflected Parisian taste, in a remarkably intimate way, through a succession of small rooms celebrating the art of the great *ébénistes* and decorators, a succession that used to peter out in what seemed to be a careless collection of 20th-century furniture. Now, to mirror the revisionist history of recent years, at least the early 20th century has been dealt some justice in a suite of rooms designed for couturier Jeanne Lanvin by Armand-Albert Rateau in 1920, and rescued from the demolition of her home in 1965. The rooms are a fitting prelude to a simple display of the museum's best examples of individual pieces by Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann, many of which, though not on show prior to the renovation, have become familiar through recent books on Art Deco.

That they should be exhibited within a chronology of *ébénistes* starring André-Charles Boulle (17th century), Jean-Henri Reisener (18th) and Percier and Fontaine (19th) is fitting indeed.

Ruhlmann clearly (and justifiably) saw himself as this century's heir to the muse of these great artists, as did many contemporary critics and furniture designers, who hailed him as "the Reisener of the twentieth century." Florence Camard's handsome book provides an excellent basis for understanding Ruhlmann's art through her thoughtful text, careful documentation, and a visual feast of new color photographs showing virtually all the great pieces. Though published in the United States by Abrams, this volume originates with the French Editions du Regard, who have given us indispensable volumes on Fortuny, Jean Michel Frank, and Jean Dunand.

Ruhlmann was born in 1879. After military service, yet with no formal training, he entered his father's building and decorating firm in 1901 and began to design furniture. By 1913 he was exhibiting at the Salon d'Automne. During the war he made few pieces but his style and repertoire of forms, the slender legs, the bombé and fluted shapes, the inlay and use of rare veneers, evolved through sketches, some of which are reproduced in the book. To finance the production of his furniture, he went into partnership with Pierre Laurent in 1919. Together as REL (Ruhlmann et Laurent) they challenged Sue et Mare to become the biggest renovation and decoration contractor in Paris, with 600 employees. By 1925 Ruhlmann could afford to mount an exhibit at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs, the *Hotel du Collectioneur,* a complete house fully furnished and decorated (including 60 side chairs and 90 armchairs). The investment was phenomenal, considering that a Ruhlmann piece cost about as much as a modest house. But the 1925 Exposition assured Ruhlmann's reputation with critics, rivals, and clients alike. There followed eight years of prodigious creativity before he died suddenly in 1933 at the young age of 54.

Two things of lasting importance stand out in the life of Ruhlmann. One is the sober refinement and artistry of his output, the furniture and designs themselves. The other is his position and his ideology vis-à-vis the Modernist stance exemplified by Le Corbusier's contributions to the 1925 Exposition. Ms. Camard rightly lights on the differences between the two champions to help explain the enduring significance of Ruhlmann.

France after the Great War was demoralized and in need of artistic and cultural regeneration. The trauma of war was seen by Le Corbusier as an opportunity to set new standards for modern life and the "equipment" essential to it. The dogma of primary needs depends on designers for appropriate inventions. Le Corbusier and his friends would create original "model objects" and "beautiful equipment." The aristocratic model of taste diffusion was eschewed as socially irrelevant, if not irresponsible. Of course the corollary, that the designer was to take the place of the aristocrat, was seldom put in such terms. Fifty years later, now that the mass production of functionalist "equipment" can be accused of contributing to the depersonalization of home and workplace alike, a fresh interest in a different program emerges. The program might be that of Ruhlmann, which he himself summed up as "rationalism, comfort, progress." Though this sounds like Le Corbusier, a difference lies in the view of progress, which Ruhlmann saw as evolutionary rather than revolutionary. His approach was governed by "twenty years of detailed research governed by a desire for perfection, by an aristocratic taste and absolute resistance to the extravagances and pendulum swings of fashion," according to a 1934 appreciation by Claude Roger-Marx.

In a 1925 interview Ruhlmann told Guillaume Janneau that "so far I have never even thought of mass producing my furniture. My own view is that first we have to win an elite which is still the arbiter of taste over to the new spirit, which is not to say we should be thinking only of the elite."

His was an attitude born of necessity, not of snobbery. His personal taste was that of an educated bourgeois, and like many today, he wanted to reconcile tradition with modernity.

His art was very expensive to produce; he needed a clientele who could both appreciate and afford his creations. Despite the high prices of his pieces, margins were always slim because costs were so high.

The caustic polemicism of postwar design debate has improperly cast Ruhlmann as a simple traditionalist, leaving him in the wilderness too long. Ms. Camard's text shows us that he was in fact no less modern than his functionalist rivals, but he used different tools. Elegance was his way of "fulfilling needs as naturally and simply as possible." Though his technical accomplishments were considerable, technical perfection remained subordinate to aesthetic significance. In Ruhlmann's own words "there is more to an object than its purpose, and it is that excess presence that gives it its prestige significance."

As Ms. Camard points out, in the twenty years following the 1925 Exposition, "Ruhlmann's elitist strategy succeeded, whereas Le Corbusier's ambitious project of abolishing art as an aristocratic form of creation met with failure." Modernism's revenge after 1945 was to obliterate the memory of Ruhlmann and Art Deco, now ironically rekindled by the great cycle of fashion. Let us hope that the intervening years have not left our aesthetic judgment so dulled by ugliness that we fail to grasp the wonderful subtlety of our century's greatest furniture designer, indeed true heir to Reisener. Ms. Camard's instructive text and exceptional illustrations—the best since Badovici's 1924 *Harmonies: Intérieurs de Ruhlmann* for Editions Morancé—are a valuable guide.

Ruhlmann: Master of Art Deco, Florence Camard, Abrams, 1984, 312 pp., illus., 49.50.

Aaron Betsky: HIGH STYLES

Style is our mark of being. It has replaced class, race, and sex as the prime validator of individual action in a social context. The self-validation conferred by the consumption of cultural products is the oracle that structures our reality. The exact moment and line of our pose is all that is left of the reality of our bodies, and the refractions of the self in our choice of mass-produced goods has become our only soul. Through the same process the aura of art has lost its value and been replaced by the art of cultural manipulation. The high priests of image management—the museums, mass market journalists, and advertisers—are able to assemble their own history and cloak the mannequin of modern manners in the dress of historical inevitability. A clear example is found in *High Styles,* an exhibit and catalogue produced for the Whitney Museum of American Art by six such definers of the past and present of styles. The objects chosen to represent 20th-century American design have been overwhelmed by the critical discourses on the function of style in our society; it is more interesting to examine the institution showing them and the scholarly essays explaining them than the objects themselves.

To put Michael Graves's proposed addition to the Whitney on exhibit at the same time seems a gratification of the *High Styles* exhibit and catalogue. His collage of historical styles is treated as a statement of chosen ideology divorced from material content. This new temple would be an assembly of forceful images devoted to the manipulation of thought through associative imagery. The Whitney is subtle enough not to present their Gravesian shrine as the apotheosis of the 20th century contained in the art inside. Rather they have expanded the myths of Modernism beyond the utopias of architecture to the mundane miracles of everyday life, thus setting the stage for the proper imprisonment of Breuer's enigmatic and tragic monument to the self-doubt of urbanism, architecture, and design. The new museum would abandon its looming Piranesian posture for a new order, piled up neatly in line with the priceless condominiums. Similarly the optimism, promise, and ideals of the self-transformation of American design have been ironized in *High Styles* until they become either advertisements for indulgent retreat or triumphs of connoisseurship.

Robert Venturi's installation for the show embodies this ironic spirit, opening up vistas from arts and crafts furnishings across to Eames chairs, covering exhibition cases with exquisite silk. His contrived architectural promenade through the history of American design reaches an apotheosis in the concluding, quasi-monumental hall exhibiting current work, and is mirrored in the six chronologically organized essays of the catalogue. The authors of these essays, who were also partly responsible for selecting the objects, have taken approaches widely differing in ideology and quality. The catalogue design attempts to discipline these divergent essays with a stylishness all its own. The introduction and concluding essay by organizer Lisa Phillips have been carefully designed to fit into the current mode of referential slashing and abstracted design. In their adventuresome layouts they bracket the scholarly essays whose texts are more carefully framed and reframed on every page.

The first essay, by David Hanks, is, like most of his work as a commercial curator, a mere cataloguing of representative works from the first decades of this century. He establishes their place in a movement according to the stylistic traits of these by now expensive pieces. The article will serve well at the next auction. Hanks ignores the way style and styles represented a set of self-conscious choices to Americans at the beginning of the decade. The pre-

occupation with designed objects—found both in the abundant clutter of the Victorian environment and the studied revolt of reform decoration—was, in the negative sense, an apology for the full flower of conspicuous consumption. The connoisseur became the high priest of capitalism, Edith Wharton and Elsie de Wolfe his handmaidens. Yet the significance of designed objects—and their manipulation—in terms of social status and expression gave designers a chance to engage in direct social criticism and experiment. The Arts and Crafts workshops, the housing experiments of Irving Gill, and the early writing and work of Frank Lloyd Wright were integrated attempts to work a profound reform through design in the infrastructure of American society, and American design has been shadowboxing with this promise ever since. Design reformers were coopted by men, architects, and visionaries; they begat the visionary City Beautiful movement, then the modernistic urban reform movements, which succeeded only in exalting the consumption of objects over their production and use.

The retreat of women decorators and reformers into home and past is fully and polemically documented in David Gebhard's essay. In the houses and objects he has selected, the increasingly functional organization of the home is denied by its encapsulization in neo-Colonial and other historical styles. Focusing on the recurrent images of escape embodied in models of sailing ships bottled in Colonial homes, Gebhard points out that the rationalization of everyday life was presented to the consuming public as an escape from the constraints of work (for the man) and family life (for the woman) in capitalist society.

Although Gebhard denies the role of Modernist polemic in mass-produced designed objects, Rosemarie Haag Bletter points out models for liberation through the literal designing of a better world. The car wound up confining the family in isolated suburban environments and mass-produced goods only enslaved consumers in prepackaged designs, but the experimental houses and world's fairs of the interwar years presented a different vision: here style meant the rejection of all lines and forms added onto designed objects, from toasters to houses, because they inhibited the possibility of freeing the consumer, mind and body, from the burden of past fashions or imposed cultural visions. Designers such as Josef Urban, Walter Dorwin Teague, Raymond Loewy, and Norman Bel Geddes sought to give form to the confrontation between machine and man, which in American had taken on heroic proportions. Their adaptations of the polite European approach to the confrontation were given the drama and excitement equal to the magnitude of the American faith in economic growth and technocratic solutions.

CHARLES EAMES WITH HIS EXPERIMENTAL MOLDED PLYWOOD FURNITURE, ca. 1942. FROM *HIGH STYLES.*

Once again, however, the structure of our society turned even the promise of liberation through the ultimate style of reductionist design into a romantic vision. It became an unattainable ideal because of the demands of continued, unquestioning consumption. The streamlined forms of Raymond Loewy became, as Esther McCoy points out here, the perverse polymorphous indulgences of the biomorphic forms of Noguchi and Eero Saarinen. The dread of self-destruction through the reductionist rationalization of modern life engendered a fascination with the dehumanization of the designed environment. The kitchen became an engineering triumph of which the housewife was a mere appendage and the most stylish object on the horizon was the atomic bomb. Such dread became the expressionist battle cry, and still provides one of the most potent reminders of the negative forms of design lurking in the shadows of Breuer's Madison Avenue.

Faced with the threat of the designed void, postwar design turned to defensive wit and irony. Martin Filler draws a brilliant analogy between post-Reform Italian Mannerism and the tortured forms of Pop Art. Anything became possible, and style as a consumer object, blasted of meaning by technology, effortless in both its production and its consumption, became a self-referential icon for a healthy and powerful body without mind or control.

The transfer of power to the designed object as the repository of pleasure and control is still in effect. The taste for bibelots reflects the desperate search for control through craft, memory through acquired education, and self-denial through abstraction. Style is indeed what you make it, but, as Lisa Phillips aptly quotes Clement Greenberg, kitsch, novelty, and ersatz design are the mirrors of capitalism. Despite her provocative association of every cur-

rent incarnation of style with every aspect of our military, male-dominated, and consumer-oriented society, Phillips does not ask the final questions: to what purpose is style to be put, and can such an encyclopedic revealing of its roles in the modernization of our culture act as a designing critique?

Surely the Whitney is not the place for such a critique, nor is an exhibit the medium. In the end, none of the essays answer these questions. Graves's act of retreat into mythological noncommitment in the face of the reality of urban form and structure will smother the articulation of forms as surely as the high-gloss presentation and mass marketing of this exhibit smothers its all-too-representative objects. It is up to designers to pick up the broken mirror of stylish poses and turn them into framed construction of cultural self-definition. Style is all that is left, and style has no reality or critical function but that which we consciously make.

High Styles: Twentieth Century American Design, Whitney Museum of Art, Summit Books, 1985, 212 pp., illus., $35.00.

Lois Wagner Green:

MACKINTOSH FURNITURE

ROGER BILLCLIFFE

As architects in this country once again enter the residential interior and product design markets they have ignored for a generation, it is constructive to contemplate the virtuoso interiors and their components designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh during three decades, beginning in the 1890s. They startle in their immediacy.

Mackintosh Furniture by Roger Billcliffe, the foremost scholar of the Scottish architect's work, comes at a most fortuitous time. You've seen the Post-Modern parodies. Now here's the real thing.

A spin-off of Mr. Billcliffe's exhaustive catalogue raisonné on Mackintosh's furniture and interiors, this scrupulous verbal and visual chronology documents an amazing oeuvre. Mackintosh's inventiveness and stylistic sophistication emerged seemingly full-blown in his early work and never stultified. His career was a continuum of invention and development in successive projects until the commissions sadly trailed off in 1922.

Mackintosh rarely repeated himself in the hundreds of elements he designed for his interiors—the series of stunning Glasgow tearooms and the Glasgow School of Art as well as the residential work. And these components included not only the scores of signature chairs and cheval mirrors, tables and chests, but also the wardrobes and washstands, pianos and organs, billiard tables, clock cases, mantels, chandeliers and pendant fixtures, curtains and carpets and wall decor. No object in his interiors was unconsidered. (The umbrella stands alone!) And always, Mackintosh designed from the inside out, regarding each element as an aspect of an organic whole, and modulating interior space architectonically and with furniture that he created to delineate space as an aspect of functional performance.

Indeed, through all the progressions in Mackintosh's furniture design, there remained in his interiors the overriding constant of a highly disciplined delineation of space, a Japanese-derived spareness. In rooms of the most subtle tonal variations, in black or gray green or even drop-dead silver, as well as the all-white interiors, the dynamic he created with his plays of scale, his masterful placement of a dramatically contrasting element—the occasional black chair in a white setting—are hallmarks in the history of modern interior design.

During his career Mackintosh came almost full circle in his furniture design. He commenced with a discrete fluidity of line in his early work, which chronologically coincides with Art Nouveau but is only philosophically incidentally related to that overt romanticism. Particularly in his astonishing all-white rooms of those years, he played the ascetic off the sensuous, garnishing the attenuated lines of his furniture with leaded or opalescent glass inserts, ebony or mother-of-pearl inlays, panels of silvered copper or beaten brass. The effect was an austere exoticism that presaged the most glamorous work of the Arts Décoratifs designers a generation to come.

A decade later Mackintosh was deep in his exploration of the square—in solids and voids, cut-outs, incisions, inlays, lattice work, and checkered patterns, including his characteristic motif of four squares in square formation. Wall decor and carpets as well as furniture were incorporated in architectonic elements, anticipating his occasional collaborator, Josef Hoffmann, and becoming a direct and prime influence on students of the Vienna Secession.

In his last commissions, Mackintosh returned to the curve, translating the ogee line of his earliest work into wavy top rails and splats in chair design that also, for the first time, reveled in natural wood graining. Who knows where, at age 52, he might have gone from there.

With most of the black-and-white illustrations reproduced from contemporary photographs, and the placement of illustration captions apparently left to the convenience of a perverse paste-up person, *Mackintosh Furniture* is not easy going. But it is worth it.

Mackintosh Furniture, Roger Billcliffe, E. P. Dutton, 1985, 218 pp., illus., $19.95 cloth; $10.95 paper.

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Margaretta Darnall:

THE ENGLISH FLOWER GARDEN

GRAVETYE MANOR

WILLIAM ROBINSON

William Robinson (1838–1935) dominated English gardening from the 1880s until his death. *The English Flower Garden*, his most widely read and influential book, went through 16 editions between 1883 and 1956. Though long out of print, it was still in demand by gardeners and landscape designers throughout the English-speaking world. This reprint is of the 15th edition (1933), the last supervised by Robinson and the only one published in the United States.

The English Flower Garden remains one of the most valuable gardening books. The first part of the book is a series of essays on the principles of gardening, design, and planting. Topics extend from "Hardy Bulbous Flowers" to "Evergreen Trees and Shrubs" and from "Beauty of Form in the Flower Garden" to "The Wild Garden." The second part is a comprehensive listing, with cultural instructions, of plants hardy in the British Isles. A foreword by Henry Mitchell and an introduction by Deborah Nevins provide new readers with background on Robinson and his times in England.

The first edition of *The English Flower Garden* (1883) was a compilation of initialed chapters by different authors. Each successive edition changed to reflect Robinson's current enthusiasms. Critics and adversaries were always countered in the chapter on recent writings on garden design. Many editions included an essay on color by Gertrude Jekyll. The dictionary of hardy plants and their care increased with new plant introductions and with Robinson's own research and experience. By 1933 it had expanded to over four hundred pages, and still remains a practical base for today's gardener, when coupled with a knowledge of regional growing conditions. From the historical standpoint, however, the 15th edition is less interesting than the earlier ones and differs substantially from the book that tried to revolutionize English gardening in the 1880s.

Robinson was notoriously bombastic and argumentative; he held strong opinions about right and wrong in gardening, and the full force of his personality is apparent in his writings. Whether or not one agrees, his arguments are always worth reading. Two of his most energetic campaigns were waged against the widespread high Victorian practice of carpet bedding with brilliantly colored hothouse flowers and against architects designing gardens. It was a source of amusement to Robinson's detractors that he was almost always inconsistent in his dogmas. For example, although he loathed carpet bedding, one of his favorite planting schemes was a carpet of pansies under his tea roses.

CHRISTMAS ROSE, FROM *THE ENGLISH FLOWER GARDEN*

Robinson has never been as well known in America as Gertrude Jekyll or Vita Sackville-West, but both women acknowledged his influence. Robinson was the first to popularize the herbaceous border and the cultivated woodland. He preferred the herbaceous border in front of a garden wall covered with climbers rather than against a background of a clipped hedge. Other characteristic plant combinations he promoted were rose beds edged with pinks, and masses of daffodils through an apple orchard. He was a champion of the daffodil in other settings as well, and planted over 100,000 in his gardens in 1897 alone.

Many of the illustrations in *The English Flower Garden* are of Robinson's own gardens at Gravetye Manor, the Elizabethan house and thousand-acre property he purchased in East Sussex in 1885. The pictures complement the text and exemplify the wide range and enduring quality of his ideas. In 1911 Robinson published a handsome volume, *Gravetye Manor*, which described the development of the gardens between 1885 and 1908. This, too, has been reprinted and makes an ideal companion to *The English Flower Garden*. The folio format with elaborate illustrations provides a close look at Robinson's private domain.

The text of *Gravetye Manor* was abstracted from Robinson's own tree and garden book, and the style is gentler, more personal, and without the proselytizing of his other works. Clearly, Gravetye Manor was a labor of love. After 1908, the gardens continued to evolve and the plant collections grew, but their outlines were well established. Since the 1950s Robinson's home has been a luxury hotel and restaurant; thirty acres of the gardens have been restored, including the circular walled kitchen garden. The British Forestry Commission manages the woodland. Both gardens and woodlands continue to foster the spirit set forth by Robinson in *The English Flower Garden* and *Gravetye Manor*.

The English Flower Garden, 15th edition, William Robinson, reprinted by Sagapress, 1984, 720 pp., illus., $35.00.

Gravetye Manor, William Robinson, reprinted by Sagapress, 1984, 159 pp., illus., $60.00.

John Field:

THE MALLING OF AMERICA

WILLIAM SEVERINI KOWINSKI

Mr. Kowinski writes about the development of American shopping centers more as a Moral Majority theme song, sung by the Greypanther chorus, than as an analytical study of the culture that these complexes reflect. For Kowinski, society seems to be guilty of betraying a greater moral teaching. The guilt should be his own. Each chapter is titled with an elaborately cute headline, as in today's slick consumer publications, with coined puns like "Mallingering" or "Mallkatecture" or "Mall de Mer," reflecting simultaneously his condemnation of our consumer society and his own complete entrapment in the journalism that is such an essential part of it. Mr. Kowinski has used his subject without illuminating it. His style studies condescension as he tries to remove himself from the society that he describes.

As Jane Jacobs did in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Kowinski has used his personal experience and that of his friends to express values that he then extends to society at large as generalizations on American attitudes. It is this personal view that seems to destroy the seriousness of his study in his "Mall Odyssey." More distance from his sociological material might have given greater weight to the discussion and, in fact, a great deal in this book is worthy of serious consideration. However the book is primarily Kowinski mourning the loss of traditional American values which he admits he was too young to have known.

This becomes more ironic when you discover, in his analysis of the evolution of newer shopping centers, that he feels the trouble with the more sophisticated ones is that they hark back to historical themes. They are too pleasant, he says. They aren't real, but merely "Paradise Enclosed," and the simulation of only the good parts of nostalgia is untrue to our heritage, reducing history to simple entertainment. He does, however, admit that the hometown he left wasn't much when he was a youth, and there was usually nothing to do. The connection between the reality of that pre-shopping center hometown and his escape eludes him in his eulogy for the lost community he remembers.

The organization of the book seems to be geographical, as if he got the idea and then used it to take a tax-deductible trip across the country. The issues crisscross the text, since very little is unique to any one center. Place by place, he gradually fills out the notion of the interrelationship between shopping centers and the rest of contemporary American life. The symbiotic tie between shopping centers and television and the other media, as well as the obvious importance of the American investment in its vast road system and the expansion of the credit industry are all examined in relation to one center or another. Kowinski bemoans the inevitable uniformity of centers as an obvious by-product of a controlled environment where what you see, what you hear, and what you smell is as controlled by the mall management as the climate in the mall. Malls have the same level of unreality as the television programs the mall patrons watch at home.

Life without poverty, without the homeless and the jobless, is no more real than Disneyland, which is still the model for success for any contemporary mall. But then the suburb is not real either. It is unfortunate that Kowinski didn't extend his own idea that shopping malls are the "signature structures" of our age. Therein lies the really interesting issue in the phenomenon of this modern building type. One has to wonder how different it was in Trajan's Forum, which was also a multilevel shopping arcade. If Mr. Kowinski's trip had included Rome, he could have shown us a more reasonable time span of two thousand years with a less emotional perspective.

The thirty years of shopping center evolution charted in this book suggest that the form has now arrived at a significant point. Indeed, the malls have already become many cities' Main Streets and more and more American Main Streets are becoming mall-like. The process appears very similar to what we have seen in many older European towns where there is a continuing cyclical change. Growth and prosperity are followed by decline and sometimes the death of a community. Years later it can revive and become a viable commercial entity, but perhaps one totally different from the original. This, of course, is over a period of one thousand years, not a mere thirty. Cities are more like organisms than they are fixed designs and it is their own life and death that give them reality.

Mr. Kowinski's point of view seems to be that our society is in a hopeless decline, exemplified by the overwhelming importance of shopping in our new downtowns. But a longer view reveals some positive signs in his research. Just as the shopping centers are growing and becoming the social focus in our suburban communities, the suburbs themselves are changing from a rural to a definitely urban setting. Suburban residents may deny the change, but statistics confirm it—just as their communities are changing, so are residents becoming older and the greenbelt isolation which was so ideal for a young family now seems lonely for many after the children have grown up and gone. Not only that, but the promise of the perfect world without poverty, drugs, or other ills turns out to be as imperfect as the urban core they fled. Social ills are part of reality. Neither the city nor the suburban dweller wants to face that by themselves, and both have sought out an idealized community to

which they can belong—the shopping center. People seem to need people, and, even if the mall is a purely commercial place, it is still a focus where there was none.

So Mr. Kowinski is right, the malls are too perfect; no bag ladies, no one panhandling, not even any political causes being preached. Those "real" elements will probably come in time, but for now we can be reassured that the egocentric 1960s have passed. Self-sufficiency seems inadequate for the 1980s, and the need to belong to a greater community is becoming important again.

The social focus of that community, logically enough, is the shopping center. That is all there is and what's more, it is ideal—safe and "a clean, well-lighted place." It may be mostly shops now but the trend is clearly toward more diverse uses. Office buildings, medical clinics, and hotels are becoming components of the remodeled malls where the shopping center has already established itself as the new Main Street. All that is left to come is a more diverse rent structure which can accommodate the small independent merchant or service.

Mr. Kowinski failed to chronicle the architecture of shopping and its evolution. The changes in attitude about belonging to the shopping center community carry with them changes in the mall designs which reflect how the patrons feel about themselves. Sophistication, theatricality and elegance are expected. No more prototypical malls that look like men's rooms with carpets. Reminiscent of the era when the great movie palaces were built, the new malls are fantasy. But at their best these retail palaces are more popular when they seem genuine; some of them are even outdoors with real trees. The grandeur and elegance of a mall's center court fills the public need for entertainment and escape, somehow giving hope and confidence to our society as the movies' fantasy did for the twenties. After all, people don't really believe the designer's fantasy; they just like to be there.

The Malling of America: An Inside Look at the Great Consumer Paradise, William Severini Kowinski, William Morrow, 1985, 352 pp., $17.95.

H. Alan Hoglund:

COMMUNITY OPEN SPACES

MARK FRANCIS, LISA CASHDAN, and LYNN PAXSON

Neighborhood parks often typify the day-to-day frustrations of inner-city life: vandalism, graffiti, litter, unresponsive bureaucracies, institutional design, drug dealing, shoddy maintenance, barren landscape. In cities across the country, block associations and community organizations are grappling with these problems, and one of the significant vehicles is community-controlled open space—small parks and gardens initiated, designed, built, managed, and, increasingly, owned by neighborhood groups.

Community Open Spaces chronicles this growing movement particularly as it is happening in New York City. The authors are environmental psychologists, architects, and landscape architects. The book stems largely from their studies in 1979 and 1980 (with updates) of ten small community-built green spaces in New York neighborhoods as diverse as the South Bronx and Greenwich Village.

Their message rings loud and clear: traditional city parks and playgrounds are often unused, unsafe, inappropriately designed, and resented. Many neighborhoods would rather provide open space amenities on their own terms and through whatever resources are readily available—vacant lots, scrounged materials, modest grants, and donated technical assistance.

In this respect, *Community Open Spaces* is perhaps most useful as a resource book (though not quite a "how-to" manual) for those who have been eyeing a garbage-strewn lot on their block and fantasizing about what it might become. The authors provide a useful array of information on technical assistance organizations in New York, both public and private, and what they offer, from free seeds and garden tools to advice on fund-raising and acquiring ownership of property. Moreover, the ten case studies provide a realistic picture (sometimes encouraging, often exasperating) of just what to expect. In one project, for example, a community group finally succeeded in getting broken glass and dangerous rubble cleared from a city-owned lot only to have its proposal for the lot rejected because a desired rubber-tire play sculpture was declared unsafe according to Parks Department design standards!

The case studies (comprising more than half the book) are supplemented by a short history of related community open space efforts throughout the U.S. and Europe. Also included are chapters on how to improve these New York projects and on the future of locally initiated open space planning in general.

Unfortunately, *Community Open Spaces* promises more than it delivers. Part of the problem is repetition: it is

one of those books that tells you what it's going to tell you, tells you, and then tells you what it's told you. But more important, material of value and interest is treated skimpily. The final chapter, "The Future of Community Open Spaces," is less than four pages long and much of it has already been said.

Also, I was hoping to hear more about the precursors of this current movement. Mentioned only in passing, for example, are adventure playgrounds—the "junk" playlots that emerged in Europe, literally from the rubble of World War II. These do-it-yourself projects revolutionized attitudes and theories about how children play. And their creative use of "indigenous" building materials makes these playgrounds close cousins of the New York projects analyzed and advocated by the authors. Also unmentioned are the pioneering neighborhood open space projects of Jacob Riis on New York's Lower East Side at the turn of the century, and the extensive vest-pocket park programs in Harlem and other communities during the 1960s. Much can be learned about this subject from past experience.

In fact, lack of historical perspective is one of the problems with the projects selected and studied by the authors: the projects were generally too new (only one had been in use for more than three years at the time the original research was conducted). As the book stresses, permanence is a key criterion for evaluating the success of this kind of neighborhood effort. Yet, from reading *Community Open Spaces* we cannot know whether these projects will be as successful and far-reaching as the authors hope and want us to believe. Clearly, there is still much more to be studied and written about this intriguing subject.

Community Open Spaces: Greening Neighborhoods Through Community Action and Land Conservation, Mark Francis, Lisa Cashdan, Lynn Paxson, Island Press, 1984, 204 pp., illus., $24.95.

Marjorie Miriam Dobkin:

ALL THE WORLD'S A FAIR

ROBERT W. RYDELL

In *All the World's a Fair* historian Robert Rydell analyzes American expositions between 1876 and 1916 as instruments of the power of their corporate elite sponsors. His thesis is a provocative and difficult one:

> **In a period marked by industrial depression and class conflict world's fairs were "triumphs of hegemony" for American capitalists. Their highly visible role as exposition sponsors helped restore public confidence in corporate leadership of an emerging industrial society. More specifically, businessmen's control of exposition Boards of Directors enabled them to shape the ideological content of world's fairs, and thus communicate and legitimize a ruling class vision of economic progress and white supremacy. Sponsors were particularly anxious to establish racial solidarity with white working class fairgoers, in hopes of defusing the revolutionary potential of labor, socialist and anarchist movements.**

The clarity and unity of purpose Rydell attributes to business leaders somewhat distorts the complexity of their motivation. Much more might have been made, for example, of their goals for urban development. Sponsors were drawn from local business communities, and their concerns took shape in the context of the local, as well as national and international economy.

Rydell's extensively researched case studies thus present a useful, if partial, reconstruction of capitalist ideology. But he fails to establish that the sponsors' class interests developed into a formal and clearly articulated political program of the kind he describes.

Rydell's book also falters in its effort to trace the dissemination of

ideology through the medium of expositions. He follows a determinist logic in arguing that world's fairs, as monumental and extravagant displays of the prestige of their sponsors, persuaded nearly one million fairgoers nationwide to render "spontaneous consent" to the sponsors' "blueprint" for the future.

Rydell's theoretical models—"spontaneous consent" and "reader-response schema"—are inadequate to the burden of analysis placed upon them, and preempt the possibility of a critical role on the part of fairgoers. Rydell argues that the fair environment and its class perspective were internalized through a process akin to the "reader-response schema" by which readers absorb the message of a book. It is a perilous analogy and simplifies current literary debate on the dynamics of the relationship of author, text, and reader.

In the intensity of his focus upon fair sponsors Rydell relegates all exposition collaborators, including fairgoers, to a passive and supporting role. He assumes that exposition architects, for example, were merely agents through whom the sponsors' ruling class ideology of progress and white supremacy came to be embodied in the "symbolic universe" of world's fairs.

The weakness of Rydell's analysis is apparent in his discussion of the color scheme of buildings at the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo in 1901. He argues that colorist Charles Y. Turner and supervising designer John M. Carrère, under the direction of exposition management, designated buildings housing "primitive" man and nature in strong primary colors, contrasted to light and delicate colors for buildings such as the Electric Tower, which represented the highest achievement of Western civilization. Rydell believes that this color scheme conveyed the racist and imperialist message of exposition sponsors, but it is never clear whether the architects shared the ruling class ideology of fair sponsors, or were manipulated into presenting these values in their architecture. Even if one were to accept the first two points of Rydell's interpretation—that sponsors sought to impart a racist and imperialist ideology, and succeeded in communicating it via exposition architecture—it remains to be proved that the mass of fairgoers visiting a particular building or exhibit understood and internalized this ideology.

Rydell is on firmer ground when he argues for an explicit and unmistakable ideology of white supremacy in the ethnographic exhibits featured in government buildings and exposition midways. Longstanding racial and cultural prejudices were reflected, and conceivably strengthened, in Filipino Villages, Darkest Africa, or Old Plantation concessions, which displayed human subjects in native or period costume and stage-set environments. But once again Rydell pushes his argument too far, by claiming that racism and imperialism at world's fairs provided an "ideological scaffolding" of public support for foreign and domestic policies favored by American capitalists, such as the exclusionary immigration policies of the 1920s. He must offer more direct evidence to be persuasive on this point.

In spite of its weaknesses, Rydell's book does contribute to our understanding of late 19th- and early 20th-century corporate elites. His focus upon exposition politics highlights an important and relatively neglected area of world's fair scholarship.

Architects will be particularly interested in Rydell's analysis of the power structure of collaboration between designers and business sponsors, although they may take issue with his belief in the sponsors' overriding role in determining the ideological content of expositions. Sponsors played a major role in the creation of world's fairs, but did not constitute a "corporate autarchy." Their ideological and practical contribution was mediated by a host of collaborators, exhibitors, and interpreters (newspapers, guidebooks, etc.) representing a variety of interests, and by the active participation of fairgoers themselves.

All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916, Robert W. Rydell, University of Chicago Press, 1985, 328 pp., illus., $27.50.

Jon T. Lang:

GOOD CITY FORM

KEVIN LYNCH

During the last thirty years Kevin Lynch was a major—some would say *the* major—contributor to our understanding of urban form and design. His analysis of the imageability and legibility of cities in *The Image of the City* (MIT, 1960) was an early example of empirical research enhancing the functional, or positive, theoretical basis for design decisions. It was also a substantive contribution to the development of cognitive psychology. Lynch's *Site Planning* (MIT, 1971) provided a set of guidelines for design, while the preface to its second edition initiated perhaps his most significant contribution to the design fields—an investigation of the very nature of their theoretical bases. Here Lynch observed that the theoretical basis for his suggestions about site planning would probably remain the same in the future but that the details might be further developed. While he was right about the details, he also went on to make major changes at the theoretical level, laying the groundwork for his final treatise on urban form.

Good City Form (originally published as *A Theory of Good City Form*) has two goals: to clarify the nature of theory, and, from this position, to suggest a general normative theory of "good form."

Lynch begins by defining a framework for thinking about the nature of "theory" in the design professions, distinguishing between "planning theory," "functional theory," and "normative theory." His investigation of planning theory deals with the processes by which self-conscious public decisions about changes in urban form are made. He asserts that a comprehensive theory explicitly intertwining the three categories is necessary to prevent single decisions from having negative side effects, because planning and urban design decisions are made on a piecemeal basis. For functional theory he describes and explains the nature of form and the purposes it serves, supplying (in Appendix A) the most succinct overview of the theories of city form ever compiled. His final presentation of normative theories makes assertions about the "goodness" of both urban form and—although he does not dwell on it at great length—the decision-making process.

Anyone attempting to build a theory—planning, functional, normative, or otherwise—must recognize, as social scientists have, that theories of function cannot be divorced from theories of goodness. Functional theories are not value-free, nor can theories of form deal with the layout of the environment in isolation. By "form" Lynch means the interrelation between spatial arrangements of people "doing things" and the spatial arrangement of the physical features which modify the way these things are done. While this is akin to Roger Barker's analysis of the city as a set of behavior settings, Lynch focuses even further on "form as place" and form as a component of mental life, to include aspects of imagery and aesthetics. He also tries to comprehend the nature of changes in form over time.

Theories of urban form abound, each based on perception of a problem and advocacy of a solution. The labels for these theories—Garden Cities, the Radiant City, the City Efficient, the City Tax Solvent—have subsequently influenced the way we look at cities. Lynch has marshaled these theories into three comprehensive metaphors: the cosmic order of the city, the city as practical machine, and the city as an organism. In contrast, his own normative theory is based on a value position of how cities should "perform." While his concerns have cross-cultural significance, he admits that their social and formal manifestations will probably vary from culture to culture.

For purposes of evaluation, Lynch identifies five performance dimensions of urban spatial form, specifying what the performance of each should be. First, a good city should have vitality; second, it should make sense; third, it should have a good fit between its form and the customary and desired behavior of its people; fourth, its components should be easily accessible; and fifth, the city should be controlled by its users, the workers and residents. All of these dimensions should be achieved with justice and internal efficiency—two meta-criteria for evaluating the quality of cities. Finally, quality must be seen not only in terms of people but also in terms of the "health and genetic diversity of species which are economically useful to man and the present and future stability of the total ecological community."

Vitality, Lynch admits, is dealt with anthropocentrically in his work. He is concerned with how well the city supports people's biological needs. Anne Spirn's book *The Granite Garden* (Basic Books, 1984) extends this concept to other species. That a city should "make sense" means that its users can perceive it clearly and that it is mentally "structured in time and space" in harmony with their values. "Fit" refers to the desired congruence of behavior and milieu. "Access" means people should be able to reach a wide variety of other people, services, and places. "Control" refers to the ability of people to repair, modify, and manage their city.

As Lynch acknowledges, different people will value different aspects of these five dimensions, and the contingent criteria of justice and internal efficiency. He illustrates how he believes these five dimensions would/should be applied, taking into account city size, the neighborhood as a planning concept and as a place of political action, issues of growth and conservation, and of urban textures and networks. He rounds out his discussion with a review of city models, urban design, and the presentation of a possible "place utopia."

I cannot do justice to the richness of Lynch's discussions, but only give an idea of their scope. For him, city size is not as important as the rate of change of size. Different urban functions need to be related to some sort of hierarchy because they depend on different population sizes and require particular spaces to make them viable. While cities should not stagnate, changes should maintain continuity. Neighborhoods can provide desirable, easily legible, pleasant, homogeneous social environments, but are not really effective in determining form development, although they can affect specific local issues. The internal structure of the city is determined by density, grain (a measure of the distribution of services, uses, and places), and access systems, all having a great impact on the quality of life. At this point Lynch might have pursued Roger Barker's concept of "manning of settings," which considers the impact of the appropriate complement of people on places and activities. This is probably a more valuable design criteria than analyzing the density of dwellings as a measure of urban quality.

Not content with analysis, Lynch attempts to visualize his "good city." He carefully acknowledges that his own concept of the "good city" has in a circular fashion biased his criteria for identifying what makes a good city. His "modest ... place utopia" accurately reflects the philosophy that

permeates the book. City form should be generated from an understanding of how people relate to their surroundings rather than "out of a self-absorbed technical fantasy . . . or . . . as a mechanical consequence of a social prescription." His city would be an urban countryside, neither urban nor rural, but a fine-grained mix. It would be regional in scope, stretching across all types of terrain, with the land entrusted to, rather than owned by, its users. Specialized buildings and monocultures would disappear, and each territory would maintain its own identity through architectural and landscape styles. There would be access to diversity and variety in the lives of its people: transportation systems, with the noise and pollution "bred out of them," would be geared to different scales where necessary. The city would have special places for ceremonies and public events. The old urban cores would be retained but rebuilt to be ecologically sound. Accessibilibity for all would be stressed, and the environment treated as an open book for all to read.

In many ways Lynch's concept of good city form falls securely inside the Anglo-American tradition. It is a regressive vision that draws its inspiration from the past rather than from some imagined technological future. It is, however, progressive in foreseeing or demanding the social innovations necessary before his view can be implemented.

The four appendices are integral to the book's arguments, containing, among other things, a description of the variety of city patterns possible, and the potential value systems for evaluating urban form.

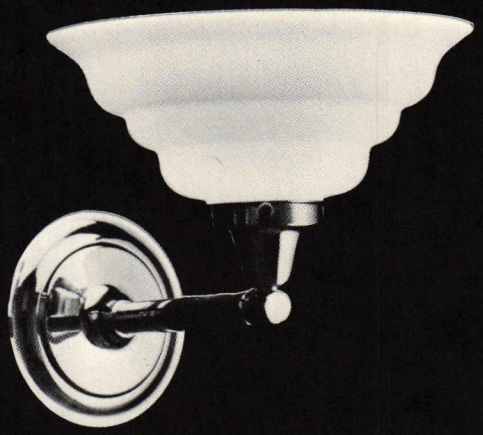
Above all, Lynch constantly brings our attention back to the inhabitants of the city—its residents, users, and workers. He is scrupulously alert to stages in the life cycle, the diversity of cultural backgrounds, and the need for plurality of places and values. He advocates considering the city in other than purely formal terms, which limits the discussion to the specialized realm of designers.

Kevin Lynch's ideas and writings have a clarity and incisiveness seldom matched in design literature. He brought to our attention the variables of design, the details so important to the quality of life and too easily forgotten under the pressure of deadlines or the perceived realities of the market. Many of his ideas are immediately workable and belong in any argument about how to formulate urban design problems and their solutions. He reminds us how much systematic research is available for developing our normative positions, and how foolish it is not to use it; he points out, conversely, how many "truths" of design professions may in fact be highly speculative, biased observations.

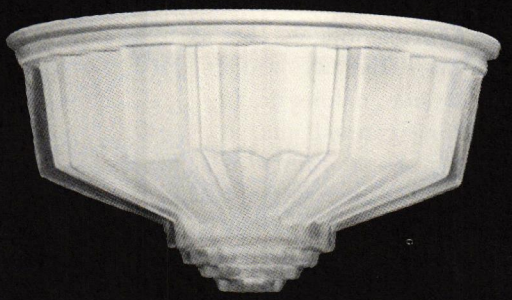
If *Good City Form* were read by everyone concerned with environmental quality and urban development—designers, students, politicians, bankers, developers, and community activists—the quality of the debate over the design of cities and urban places would rise to a new level.

Good City Form, Kevin Lynch, MIT, 1984, 528 pp., $10.95 pb.

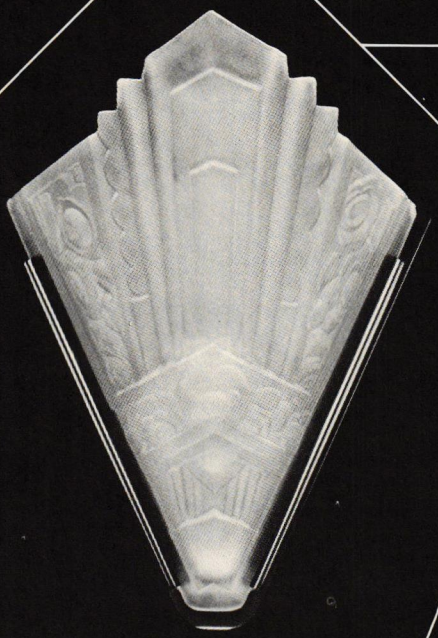
Neo Classics



1935-1 Deco inspired contemporary wall sconce, shown with the 225 WS shade. width 9½", depth 12", height 9".



1937-1 Geometric styled glass wall sconce. width 12", depth 6", height 6".



1933-1 French Deco designed wall sconce with etched shade. width 9", depth 5", height 12½".

1936-1 Inverted geometric styled ceiling fixture with etched glass shade. diameter 12", height 12½".

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Michael Tatum:

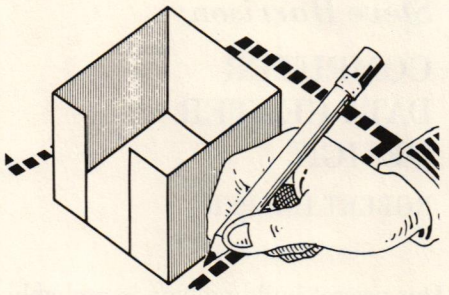
USING OFFICE DESIGN TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

MICHAEL BRILL and BOSTI

This is a very important book. To understand its import we must consider the events that have shaped our beliefs as designers of office buildings and their interiors.

The success of Bauhaus-influenced Modernism in postwar America was due to relentless evangelism. The Word was spread by an ever-expanding (through the late 1970s) group of zealous believers among architects, interior designers, graphic designers, industrial designers, and design educators. They, or we (and if you are a practicing designer over 30, it's probably "we"), appealed articulately to the captains of industry to support Modernist dogma, and Minimalist Modernism prevailed, to the exclusion of most aesthetic alternatives.

Modernist dogma rests upon the perfect essence of materials, their form and processing, manufacture and assembly. It is rooted neither in humanistic considerations and business effectiveness, nor in any degree of popular acceptability. But designers dealing with business clients could not totally ignore these issues, so myths concerning humanistic, business, and acceptability issues emerged to support the aesthetic dogma. These myths were vigorously sold to business leaders and design students until they became the "truths of Modernism." Major design projects were based on inadequate information and massive misinformation because statistically reliable data to refute the myths was not available. And most available design-relevant behavioral research was very difficult to translate into action. So the myths continued to prevail, as they still do in many cases, though Modernism itself may be declining.

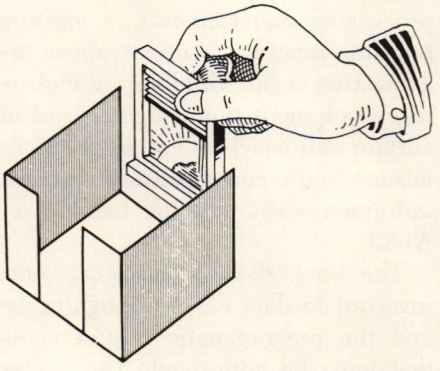


Enter Michael Brill and BOSTI, a group of environmental researchers with a mission. Their aim was to provide statistically reliable samples of objective data about the ways office design (not office styling) might or might not increase both the environmental satisfaction and the working effectiveness of occupants. Another goal (a tall order, indeed) was to make this research easy for designers and business organizations to use.

Five years, thousands of workers, dozens of sites, numerous sponsors, countless hours, and almost three million dollars later, the data began to emerge. With the publication of volume 2 of this 701-page work in 1985 (seven years after its inception), the initial project is essentially complete.

The following is but one example of a sample "truth of Modernism" and its wide divergence from the actual facts, as revealed by reliable research in *UODTIP.**

Truth of Modernism: In component-system "open office" environments,



panel heights and quantities should be restrained as much as possible. This makes more daylight available to more people, enhances communication, improves productivity-enhancing visual supervision, and maintains a spatial expansiveness which people enjoy.

Truth of Reliable Research: In component-system "open office" environments, panel heights and quantities should be increased as much as reasonably achievable. This provides greater privacy, which enhances both productivity and communication (yes, enclosure enhances rather than retards communication). Visual supervision has no productivity-enhancing effect in itself. Apparently only architects, designers, and executives inhabiting large private offices are thrilled by openness in office space. Office workers, regular folks, and aesthetic civilians strongly prefer rather heavily partitioned space, not only for their personal work area but in other surroundings as well.†

The books include a vast amount of relevant, useful, detailed information but the way the information is consumed and digested could make a substantial difference in the reader's perception of the work.

Volume 1 describes the research and its statistical findings in detail. Volume 2, the "how to" section, restates the essence of the important findings in volume 1. Volume 1 is useful in supporting and defending volume 2's recommendations against the protestations of stylists, reactionary managers, and one's own mythic foundations.

For practical, day-to-day use, start with volume 2. Its clearly stated goals are to provide "durable" information; to provide useful information for a variety of users and purposes; and to support a rationale for more appropriate design and facilities management.

I believe that the book meets those goals with strength, clarity, and objectivity. It is an excellent basis for discussion and agreement upon de-

sign principles among user groups, executives, facilities managers, and consulting designers. Such mutual agreement, based on discussion of reliable research data, will provide a quantum leap toward more supportive office environments.

Both volumes are commendable for their clarity. The writing, like the graphics, is simple, expressive, and direct. Both however lack the otherwise irrepressible wit and style of primary author Michael Brill, one of the most entertaining and engaging personalities in the design business today. In person, he presents this work with great style and a humor conspicuously absent from the book. Considering the number of potential beneficiaries of the work and the fact that a reader may review parts of it over a period of time, the somewhat antiseptic presentation is probably well conceived. I rather long for *Using Office Design to Increase Productivity —The Movie*. Maybe a video?

I know of no other single source of information which could so positively affect the productivity of America's office workers. It is essential reading if you are involved in the designing of offices, and claim to be interested in the productivity of those who occupy them. Multiple copies should be in the libraries of every design school. No facilities management group or design organization should be without it.

*Brill will love the acronym.

†N.B.: Both the above are generalizations, subject to the shortcomings of all generalizations. But then, book reviews are generalizations, so cut this reviewer some slack.

Using Office Design to Increase Productivity, Michael Brill and BOSTI, with Stephen T. Margulis and Ellen Konar, BOSTI, volume 1, 1984, 400 pp.; volume 2, 1985, 302 pp., illus., $100.00 set.

Steve Harrison:

COMPUTER DATA CENTER DESIGN

ROBERT HALPER

Our newest building type is probably the Computer Data Center—the box that houses the information base of the modern corporation. Often mistaken as merely office space for *prima donna* programmers, it is the electronic nervous system that drives the administrative and operating functions of most large organizations. The data center is a collection of spaces and interrelated systems characterized by unclear and indeterminate responsibilities; any help for the designer and project manager in sorting this out (and there is precious little in print) is most welcome.

The big message of Halper's book, that computer data center design is complex and requires the full-time attention of a manager, is conveyed in the introductory chapter, "The Great Computer War Story." ("war stories" are a vital part of the culture of computing. It is interesting to speculate on the embattled self-image that the phrase connotes.) In "War Story" we follow an expensive design fiasco drawn from Halper's accumulated experiences with actual computer centers. The problems are predictable: insensitive corporate management (a common theme in the literature of data processing management), a shifting building program, a client whose organization is rife with internal bickering, equipment requiring removal of curtain wall panels before installation, mismatched communications systems, untrained staff, and the breakup of AT&T.

The book discusses typical roles involved in data center design/usage and the programmatic requirements that must be addressed. The center described is a large, highly centralized computer operation filled with mainframe computers and lots of operational and programming staff that keep the systems running and "stoked" with data—the kind of data center image promoted by IBM. Although this type of center will continue to be built for the foreseeable future, it is definitely becoming less typical as systems become more decentralized, knowledge workers begin to have more direct access to information through terminals or desktop computers, and computing hardware—especially data storage—gets smaller, cheaper, quieter, and cooler. The book misses this technological shift that planning must address.

Halper does not deal explicitly with managing change; planning is emphasized for the known components of the facility, but is not applied to potential future systems. As the title states, it is aimed at everyone involved in the process, client as well as designer, which gives a useful, holistic view of the project's management. The informed designer will not only be able to ask cogent questions about the user's needs, he will also find out who is the right person to ask.

The last third of the book is an appendix labeled "Project Activity Matrix," which itemizes tasks by responsiblity and provides duration and expected labor hours. Another appendix organizes the same list into a "Completion Schedule" with target dates. This is the most frustrating part of the book since it reports from a "typical" project without showing an overview of it, what the assumptions were, or how the various tasks interrelate. Since the project appears to be based upon some computerized project management system, it should have been very easy to provide a PERT-like network of activities or a Grant bar chart. The Project Activity Matrix also needs to be cross-referenced to sections and/or page numbers in the prose portion of the book. It is not clear whether the labor hours are for first-timers or experi-

enced staff, how large a data center they pertain to, and how they should be adjusted for the unique conditions of each project. However, for someone approaching the problem for the first time, it gives some sense of the relative order and magnitude of tasks.

When Halper suggests that the facility be encircled with a moat for security, is he serious? A moat would cause no end of moisture problems, especially to sensitive equipment located in basements—a recommended place for computing equipment. Most security concerns are not in the physical plant (although this is not to suggest that they should be ignored), but the data communications connections to the facility—telephone lines, systems of passwords, data encryption techniques.

The book's information can only be accessed by reading it in serial fashion. Although it does have a workable index, the text needs more subheads to make it useful as a reference work. More illustrations would be helpful—those that do appear only diagram a "typical" condition and do not show any case studies of real facilities. Most of the illustrations, while clear, do not have an "architectural look," which may put off some designers.

On a more positive note, the book has an approachable appearance and the type size makes for easy reading. The writing style avoids obfuscating jargon.

Although it would be impossible to manage the construction of a large data center using only the material presented in this book, it is nevertheless useful for the person entering into such a project for the first time. It should, at the very least, be augmented by the latest article in *Datamation* computer magazine on designing and building data centers, and the future direction of computing.

Computer Data Center Design: A Guide for Planning, Designing, Constructing, and Operating Computer Data Centers, Robert Halper, Wiley-Interscience, 1985, 189 pp., illus., $25.95 pb.

Charles C. Benton: LIGHT BOOKS

Professor David Egan has struck again with *Concepts in Lighting for Architecture*, the latest volume in his building technology series. While lighting practice doesn't necessarily make perfect, *Concepts in Lighting for Architecture* is clearly the best of the lot. Like the other Concept books, this lighting primer selects a diagrammatic tableau. This format limits the range of topics to those that can be succinctly described, although the result is a clear, easily assimilated package. The capsule explanations, condensed from a dozen classic architectural lighting texts, cover vision, perception, light sources, lighting systems, and daylighting. Direct references are clearly cited and useful suggestions are offered for additional reading.

Light: Effective Use of Daylight and Electric Lighting in Residential and Commercial Spaces, by Jane Grosslight, also provides a distillation of architectural lighting issues, but in this case they are reduced to mush. The book, aimed at the "how-to" market, promises that "you too can light up your life," and proceeds to diagram a lengthy series of commonplace residential and commercial lighting techniques.

The book, to its credit, presents a comprehensive roster of lighting perspective possibilities; unfortunately, the oversimplified, two-tone perspective diagrams reduce the complexities and subtleties of light to a cartoon. Unless you need the appendix that translates the professional term fenestration to the everyday term windows, the book will probably leave you disappointed.

Solar Energy Planning, a well-written and well-illustrated book by Phillip Tabb, would have been well received indeed if it had been issued in 1976, when Bruce Anderson wrote the *Solar Home Book*. In the mid-1980s it is redundant; the mysteries of Mesa Verde, the bioclimatic chart, and sun path diagrams have received enough exposure to make even the most ardent energy enthusiast wince. The buildings used to illustrate the book, predominantly Colorado examples by Tabb and his students, do not represent the full range of activity in solar building. On the bright side, *Solar Energy Planning*, unlike many previous passive solar books, does cover neighborhood scale planning issues. Development at a larger scale is presented in a series of hypothetical projects with emphasis on cluster housing. All in all, it is a competent book, of particular interest for the natives of Colorado.

In the *Superinsulated Home Book* authors Nisson and Dutt suggest you forego passive solar energy in favor of exaggerated levels of thermal insulation, and they make a thorough, organized and reasonable case for the proposition. Detailing of thermal and infiltration barriers is critical to a design's success, and Nisson and Dutt provide a clear discussion of envelope detail objectives, and a library of typical detailing solutions. This is supported by excellent figures and a thorough discussion of the physical principles affecting the structure. The book's cover seductively displays houses decorated with annual heating bills on the happy side of $200. On the other hand, one of my colleagues defines superinsulation as "insulating beyond economic reason." The text unfortunately omits a treatment of the most difficult issue, superinsulation economics.

A third residential energy book on our roster, the *Solar Energy Handbook: Theory and Applications*, primarily addresses the design of active solar collectors and photovoltaic arrays. It covers these two topics in commendable manner with a tightly edited presentation of moderate technical detail. Though written for "architects, contractors, homeowners, and businessmen," the handbook has more the feel of a technical community

college text. The book takes an engineering systems approach to describing the components and assembly of these rooftop mounted collectors, and consequently becomes too specialized for general appeal. There is no meaningful discussion of solar collectors in an architectural context, or of conservation as an alternative to expensive collectors.

Energy and Habitat, edited by Vinod Gupta, is the published proceedings of an international workshop held in New Delhi in 1982. The hopelessly vague title does not specify that these papers specifically address energy consumption and conservation in Third World countries. Primarily by Indian authors about energy research in India, they give an interesting glimpse of the challenges peculiar to developing countries. Technically, India has lagged behind the United States in energy research and the contents of *Energy and Habitat* reflect this. The thin, poorly printed collection is of little use as a source of current technical knowledge, but it does offer a perspective on energy-related activities in India.

Katherine Panchyk's *Solar Interiors: Energy-Efficient Spaces Designed for Comfort* describes a different world entirely. I am reminded of a sci-fi scenario where visitors from another galaxy visit the earth, quickly glean what they can from random encounters, and depart with a curious portrait of mankind. In this case, the earth is passive solar design and our visitors are from the planet of interior decoration. Though explicit references are few, the book appears to compile fundamental passive solar principles from existing solar books and literature from the American Solar Energy Society conferences. Missing from this collation of facts is a critical assessment of the issues germane to interior design, and recommendations of useful techniques for the design of thermally effective interiors. The illustrations are perhaps the worst I have seen in a published book. Interior designers interested in passive solar design should visit the planet personally by reading a well-crafted introductory book such as Edward Mazria's *Passive Solar Energy Book*.

Concepts in Lighting for Architecture, David Egan, McGraw-Hill, 1984, 270 pp., illus., $38.00.

Light: Effective Use of Daylight and Electric Lighting in Residential and Commercial Spaces, Jane Grosslight, 1984, Prentice-Hall, 208 pp., illus., $24.95 cloth; $14.95 paper.

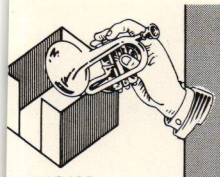
Solar Energy Planning: A Guide to Residential Settlement, Phillip Tabb, McGraw-Hill, 1984, 272 pp., illus., $34.95.

Superinsulated Home Book, J. D. Ned Nisson, Gautam Dutt, Wiley, 1985, 316 pp., illus., $19.95.

Solar Energy Handbook: Theory and Applications, Ametec Incorporated, Chilton, 1984, 268 pp., illus., $37.50.

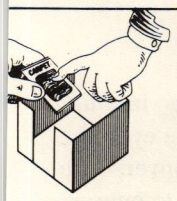
Energy and Habitat, Vinod Gupta, editor, Wiley, 1984, 94 pp., illus., $29.95.

Solar Interiors: Energy-Efficient Spaces Designed for Comfort, Katherine Panchyk, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984, 162 pp., illus., $25.50.

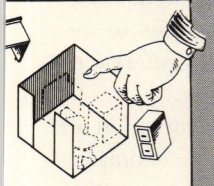


NOISE

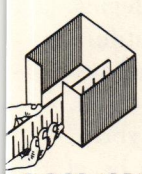
OCCUPANCY



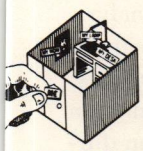
PARTICIPATION



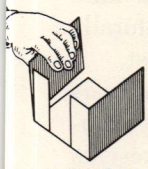
LAYOUT



FLOOR AREA



DISPLAY & PERSONALIZATION

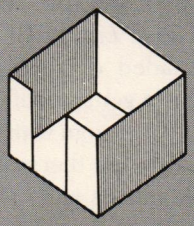


PHYSICAL ENCLOSURE

Using Office Design to Increase Productivity

SEE REVIEW THIS ISSUE.

The first research to link office design to productivity and quality of work life.

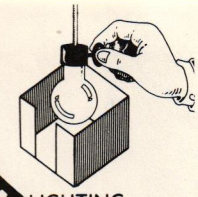


Now available as a two-volume hardbound set, heavily illustrated, for use by designers, managers and users of offices. Written by Michael Brill, Volume I presents results of the research of BOSTI's rigorous 6-year nationwide study, while Volume II presents research-based design guidelines, prototypical office designs and offers many practical applications for enhancing worker performance in any office. The book won two awards in 1985, from Progressive Architecture magazine and from Industrial Design magazine.

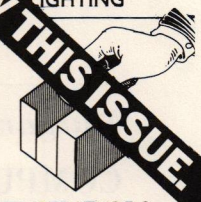
The books contain information which:

- ☐ **Quantifies** the effects of office design on productivity and quality of working life, and shows how these effects are caused by specific design characteristics.
- ☐ **Presents** economic analyses of the dollar value of appropriate office design for all job types...managers, professionals and clerical workers.
- ☐ **Develops** research-based design guidelines for three levels of design concern: the workspaces for each of 11 functional job types; the multi-person workgroup; and for large office areas.
- ☐ **Tests** the esthetic implications of the guidelines by having three of America's best design firms develop prototype designs.
- ☐ **Presents** a more effective and more people-oriented design process which emphasizes environmental evaluation, user orientation and training, and user participation in the design decision process.

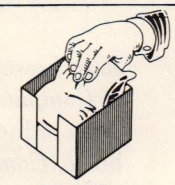
Please return this order form with your check.



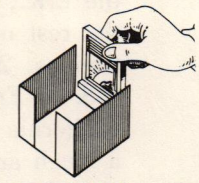
LIGHTING



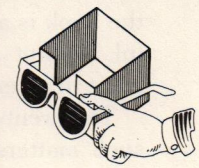
TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY



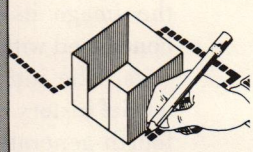
COMFORT



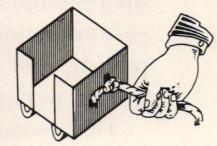
WINDOWS



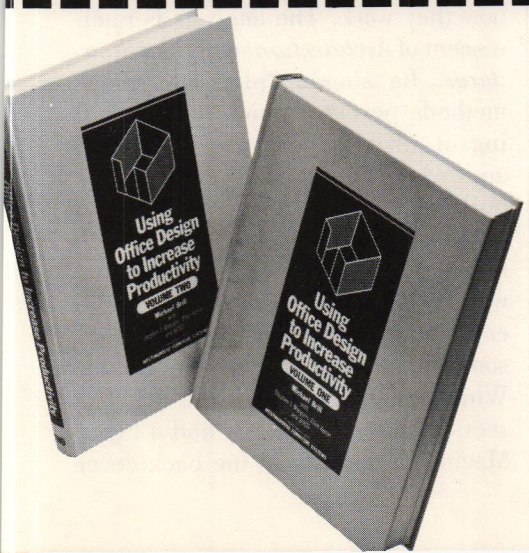
PRIVACY



PATHFINDING



FLEXIBILITY



The two volumes are available as a set for $100 from:

WORKPLACE DESIGN AND PRODUCTIVITY
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Margaret Dhaemers:

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

JOHN LEWELL

John Lewell, lately West Coast editor of *Computer Pictures*, is now its European editor, based in London. His book, *Computer Graphics*, is a survey of computer activity in the U.S. and the U.K., almost to the exclusion of the rest of the world. Of 216 illustrations, 202 examples are from the U.S. or England. Those who live in California near Silicon Valley have a much greater awareness of Japan's contribution, at least, than is evident in this book. Given these parameters, the book is an ambitious and successful attempt at covering the development in an endlessly fascinating field.

The twenty-page introduction covers such matters as interactive and non-interactive graphics, dividing users between those who are interested in the image itself and those who are concerned with the information it conveys. The introduction also includes a brief history describing first- through fourth-generation computers. Lewell discusses the growth of the field and the research and development involved —introductory material essential to putting the rest of the book into proper perspective.

The second section, "Techniques and Hardware," is comprehensive and illuminating. Everything you ever wanted to know about computers and graphics systems is well explained here: basics such as binary counting, bits and bytes, languages and programming; and more complex issues such as logical ideas and physical reality. Necessary hardware for graphics systems and input and output devices is covered. Display systems discussed in detail are vector, raster, plasma, Direct View Storage Tube, and LCD, as well as subjects like 3-D modeling, rendering, and texture mapping. Only the sciences are inadequately covered. The offerings are particularly skimpy in medicine, and leave out categories as remarkable as computer-augmented thermography.

Lewell warns of the dangers to be encountered when users, viewers, or operators of computer graphics lose the ability to discern the difference between reality and non-reality.

In the appendix, relegated to an area of supplementary material, is the final major offering, "Computer Graphics in the Fine Arts." Lewell, an explainer, describer, and reporter in every other field, elects here to be an art critic, using criteria not yet supported by a body of accumulated output. It is not a comfortable role. The reader, while impressed by the examples, gets the impression that there must be a variety of creative endeavors he is not allowed to see.

While the book is not intended to be a historical piece, whatever is written about computers is history from one year to the next. (This pace is reflected in the prices, which have a remarkably unsettling way of plunging in a matter of months.) *Computer Graphics* addresses itself with detailed and careful explanation to people with all levels of interest and knowledge in computer graphics. It is, without prejudice, a marvelous picture book.

Computer Graphics: A Survey of Current Techniques and Applications, John Lewell, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985, 160 pp., illus., $35.00.

Kalev Ruberg:

SUN, WIND, AND LIGHT

G. Z. BROWN

The pen and ink drawings in *Sun, Wind, and Light* will seduce even the most jaded energy book buyer. The book is a general reference to energy-conscious design with a coherent structure that ties thermal analysis to design examples and includes references for more advanced reading.

The book offers a description of thermal analysis methods, examples of relevant buildings, and an outline of mechanical means to supplement "natural" energy design strategies, both clearly written and beautifully illustrated. However, mechanical systems are not discussed in any detail, and the last section, on "hybrid" design ideas, is too simple to be of much practical use.

The book's dual character as analysis reference and pictorial architectural source makes it ideal for students. There is enough analysis information for simple and direct application during design, and there are examples of how commonsense approaches have contributed to successful, naturally responsive buildings in the past.

The breadth of subject matter is impressive. The first part, an introduction to analysis methods, presents a series of designs, each with comments and illustrations that indicate how they work. The analysis is reminiscent of *Architectural Graphics Standards*. Its simple "plug and chug" methods permit a quick understanding of what is occurring thermally, and why. The overall approach to building envelope design is based on human thermal comfort—an approach similar to Victor Olgyay's. This method works well in academic design studio environments, but may be too cumbersome for professional design offices. While laboring through the analysis section, I kept hoping to find a PC or Macintosh diskette in the back cover

that would do all of those nice things for me. Because of the clear structure Professor Brown has provided, this next step would not be too difficult to achieve.

The architectural examples are pre sented in order of decreasing scale of decision making. Site issues are followed by form issues and surface treatments. Because of the interdependence of decisions during the design phase, the text must reference other sections frequently. Although inconvenient, this points out the problems entailed in making design decisions based on energy criteria.

For each analysis method and example shown, references are cited. It is a pity that Professor Brown has not seen some of the examples—he might not have used them. Architectural design articles in the references he cites often relate the intent of the architect but not the reality of the building's performance. These articles also describe what the building looks like when new, or even as imagined. Unfortunately, they rarely analyze the physics of the building, or how well it suits the occupants. Some of the architectural examples in Professor Brown's book are really examples of how *not* to design energy-efficient buildings. For example, Ralph Erskine's design for Resolute Bay, Canada, is illustrated as a good response to the arctic microclimate. Fortunately for the intended occupants, not all of Erskine's Resolute Bay project was built. The housing project was a disaster—not only because of its thermal behavior due to siting, but also from its lack of detailing. These "microclimatically sensitive" buildings now sit abandoned, boarded up after their first winter because of snow drifting into the kitchens. Erskine's design for Svappavaara, Sweden, incorporating many of the same microclimatic approaches, suffers from similar problems brought on by the lack of a better understanding and analysis of site and building physics. The architectural press, and works which reference it, continue to support the myths until they are accepted as facts. Given the failure of some of the known examples cited as "good design," I wonder how many others really work as described.

Unfortunately, common sense and indigenous examples do not always provide the right answer. On the other hand, finding the right answer by in-depth analysis of thermal behavior is also not practicable because of the pressures of time in the design office. A balance must be sought between in-depth analysis and energy-conscious design by "rules of thumb." Brown's book makes this trade-off. Rules of thumb and common sense are applied in liberal doses. Although occasionally dangerous, they lead to better results than no consideration at all.

Both the analyses and the examples must be viewed as guidelines. The bioclimatic chart may lead the building envelope designer astray, and air does not really flow as the arrows show. But these are concepts that students must grasp in simple form before they can even consider designing a building envelope sensitive to climate and comfort. If design teachers and mechanical engineering instructors are looking for a solid, basic book to introduce energy sensitive design approaches to architect, then *Sun, Wind, and Light* is highly recommended.

Sun, Wind, and Light: Architectural Design Strategies, G. Z. Brown, Wiley, 1985, 176 pp., illus., $15.00.

LETTERS

TO THE EDITORS: Things don't usually go to my head. I operate most effectively from the highest level of insecurity. If one believes the good press, one has to believe the bad press and that is intolerable.

Thanks for the book . . .

Frank O. Gehry

TO THE EDITORS: I was glad to see some attention given John Barrington Bayley's *Letarouilly on Renaissance Rome*. It is the first original title in the Classical America Series in Art and Architecture and, for that reason, a fresh effort for Classical America.

One part of your comment puzzled me, your calling the book "purely propagandistic." As part of the series our titles have to offer a certain point of view. In addition we tell the reader, on the page opposite the title page, that the aim of the society is the encouragement of the classical point of view in American art.

Also, if you glance at the other books on the list, they all . . . state a case for the classical. The Wharton-Codman book on the decoration of houses takes a strong stand, even going so far as to condemn the notions of Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc. Would you call it propagandistic? That also goes for Geoffrey Scott's *Architecture of Humanism* and for Cox's *Classic Point of View.*

I wonder what you will think of my forthcoming book on the New York Public Library. It is a guidebook to the building, to be sure, but I take some means in trying to explain what the classic tradition is.

What would you have us do? Would you have us drop Ware's *American Vignola* simply because it states the classical case for architecture and tells the reader how to draw the basic elements of the tradition?

I would be very curious to have your thoughts.

Henry Hope Reed
Classical America

The word propaganda came into modern usage with the missionary institutions of the Counter-Reformation. I still maintain that the late Mr. Bayley's book is propaganda, as I suspect would be your "encouragement of the classical point of view." I have nothing against classicism per se, I only object to its rote application, and the promotion of blind faith, in missionary fashion. If Bayley had displayed the dialectical reasoning of Scott's classic text, I would have urged us to take his book more seriously.

Richard Ingersoll

TO THE EDITORS:

This is just a note to express my thanks for the generous inclusion of SITE in your Spring issue. This exposure was a marvelous boost for the Architectural Criticism program at Parsons/New School that Herbert and I are launching in the fall. Thus far, by the way, we have received over 450 inquiries and many applications—quite a few of the responses via *Design Book Review.*

I would also like to compliment you in general on the extraordinary vitality and high quality of *Design Book Review.* It is truly among the very best publications on architecture and ideas that I have seen anywhere. In this country it is at the top of the class. Many congratulations. . . .

James Wines, President
SITE

TO THE EDITORS:

There's a garbled citation of a publication in the review [of *The Urban Edge*] by Bonnie Fisher and Boris Dramov (Spring 1986) that might preclude anyone interested from finding it. To wit: The "Heritage Conservation and Development Service's *Practical Guide to Improving the Waterfront*" is in reality *Improving Your Waterfront: A Practical Guide*, Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 108 pages, free.

It's still available from the department (3300 Whitehaven St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20230) and from the Waterfront Center, 1536 44th St. NW, Washington D.C. 20007.

Not that anyone should care, but the defunct agency Fisher-Dramov were trying to recall was the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, now known to us all as the National Park Service.

We enjoy the publication. Congratulations!

Ann Breen
Dick Rigby
The Waterfront Center

CORRECTIONS

In Norma Evenson's review of *Cities and People* by Mark Girouard (page 84, *DBR 9*) a line was inadvertently dropped. The sentence reading "It does not deal with architecture in terms of building types" should have read:

> It does not deal with architecture in terms of style or with regard to the careers of individual designers, but as an outgrowth of certain social conditions. Although some discussion is given to individual buildings, architecture is considered primarily in terms of building types.

The publisher of the *Le Corbusier Sketchbooks* was given incorrectly in the caption on page 49 of *DBR 9*. The *Sketchbooks* were published jointly by the Architectural History Foundation and MIT Press.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Charles C. Benton is an assistant professor in the College of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley, teaching building science and daylighting.

Aaron Betsky is an architect and architectural writer working in the office of Frank Gehry and Associates.

Juan Pablo Bonta is professor of design at the University of Maryland, visiting professor of architecture at the University of Cincinnati, and a member of the International Committee of Architectural Critics. His latest books have been translated into Spanish, French, Russian, Italian, and German, and he is currently working on *American Architects and Architectural Texts*, funded by the Graham Foundation (forthcoming, MIT).

Caroline Constant is an architect in Cambridge, Massachusetts, assistant professor of architecture at the Graduate School of Design, Harvard, and author of *The Palladio Guide* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1985).

Anthony Cowan studied architecture and design at Harvard and the University of California, Berkeley.

Jacqueline Cowan is a native and part-time resident of Ireland. She and Anthony Cowan design and make furniture in San Francisco.

Margaretta Darnall has taught the history of architecture and landscape architecture at several universities. She recently published *Il Sacro Bosco di Bomarzo: Its 16th Century Literary and Antiquarian Context* (the January 1984 issue of the *Journal of Garden History*), and is completing an anthology of literary gardens.

Margaret Dhaemers is a professor of design at the University of California, Berkeley.

Marjorie M. Dobkin contributed an article to *The Anthropology of World's Fairs* (Scolar Press, 1983). She was assistant curator of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition exhibit at the Lowie Museum and is currently completing a manuscript of edited letters of San Francisco pioneers.

James Elkins is a Ph.D. candidate in art history at the University of Chicago. His article, "Art History Without Theory" is forthcoming in *Critical Equity.*

John Field is chairman of the board for San Francisco's Field/Paoli Architects and is recognized as one of the country's premier designers of retail, institutional, and residential projects.

Diane Y. Ghirardo has taught at Stanford University and Texas A & M. She now teaches architectural theory and history at the University of Southern California, and is on the editorial board of the *Journal of Architectural Education.*

Lois Wagner Green, a Berkeley-based design journalist, has been managing editor and West Coast editor of *Interiors*, California editor of *Interior Design*, and a writer for a variety of publications, including *Architectural Digest.*

Steve Harrison received his M.Arch. from the University of California, Berkeley. He was the data processing manager at Skidmore, Owings and Merrill and is currently a member of the research team at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center.

David Harvey teaches geography, urban studies, and Marxian political economy at Johns Hopkins University. He is author of *Social Justice and the City* (1973), *The Limits to Capital* (1982), *The Urbanization of Capital* (1985), and *Consciousness and the Urban Experience* (1985).

H. Alan Hoglund is an urban planning consultant and director of the Public Environment Center in New York City.

Richard Ingersoll, design and theory editor for *DBR*, has a Ph.D. in architectural history from the University of California, Berkeley, and is currently a scholar in residence at the Getty Foundation in Los Angeles.

Franklin D. Israel is an architect and interior designer practicing in Los Angeles.

James D. Kornwolf is professor of fine arts at the College of William and Mary. He is the author of numerous articles, reviews, and books, including *M. H. Baillie Scott and the Arts and Crafts Movement* and *Modernism in America 1937-1941.*

Spiro Kostof teaches architectural history at the University of California, Berkeley. His most recent book is *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (Oxford, 1985); a series based on it will be aired on public television in 1987.

Jon T. Lang is the chairman of the Urban Design Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

Liane Lefaivre studied comparative literature at McGill University. She has been working on problems of cultural history and criticism and, in collaboration with Alexander Tzonis, has published many articles in architectural magazines.

Ralph Lerner is a lecturer at the School of Architecture, Princeton University, and practices architecture in Princeton. His articles have appeared in *AJ*, *Progressive Architecture*, and *Bauwelt*, among others.

Karal Ann Marling is professor of art history and American studies at the University of Minnesota, and author of several books on American popular art and culture. Her forthcoming book will concern the changing image of George Washington, from 1876 to Super Bowl XIX.

Lawrence Nees is an associate professor of art history at the University of Delaware and the author of the forthcoming *From Justinian to Charlemagne: European Art, A.D. 565–787.*

Paul Oliver is the Associate Head of the Department of Architecture at Oxford Polytechnic. He was a visiting professor at the University of Science and Technology, Ghana; the University of Kenya, Nairobi; the Middle East Technical University, Ankara; and the University of California, Berkeley.

Andrew Rabeneck is studio director of the San Francisco firm of Kaplan McLaughlin Diaz. He was a consulting editor with *Architectural Design* from 1973-1977.

Kalev Ruberg is a research officer in the Building Services section of the Division of Building Research for the National Research Council of Canada.

Eric Sandweiss is a coauthor of *The Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California* (Peregrine Smith, 1985).

Natalie Shivers is the author of *Those Old Placid Rows* (Maclay & Associates, 1981), a book on Baltimore rowhouses. She is currently working with Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates in New York.

Michael Tatum founded the HOK Interiors Group in 1963 and now serves as its Corporate Design Director. He has written for *Corporate Design & Realty, Interior Design, Contract, Designers West* and others.

Carolyn Torma is the Historical Survey Coordinator for the State Historical Preservation Center in South Dakota. Her published work has focused on the historic landscape and ethnic folk architecture.

Alexander Tzonis is Crown Professor of Architectural Theory at the Technische Hogeschool Delft. His two latest books, coauthored with Liane Lefaivre, are *Classical Architecture: The Poetics of Order* (MIT, 1986) and *The Roots of Modern Architecture: A Documentary History* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1984).

Dell Upton teaches architectural history at the University of California, Berkeley. He edits the *Vernacular Architecture Newsletter* and is coeditor of *Common Places* (University of Georgia, 1986).

Sally B. Woodbridge is the author of several guidebooks and West Coast correspondent for *Progressive Architecture.*

PUBLISHERS ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Architecture:** From Prehistory to Post-Modernism*
Marvin Trachtenberg and Isabelle Hyman. This stunning new book is a remarkable history and synthesis of Western civilization as it is mirrored in the art of architecture. The authors bring their subject to life in the most comprehensive and extensively illustrated volume yet seen on the subject. Abrams, 608 pp., 1,001 illustrations, $49.50.

***The Design Dimension:** Product Strategy and the Challenge of Global Marketing*
by Christopher Lorenz. Extensively illustrated, this is a fascinating look at the design revolution in international markets. Basil Blackwell, Inc., 160 pp., $17.95.

Federal Furniture
by Michael Dunbar. Federal furniture, light, graceful, and sturdy, developed about the time of the American Revolution. Dunbar describes the historical and social context of the style, and examines 20 pieces from his collection, with measured drawings for each. Taunton Press, 150 photos, 100 drawings, 192 pp., $18.95 paperback.

***Gardens of the Gilded Age:** Nineteenth-Century Gardens and Homegrounds of New York State.*
by M. Christine Klim Doell. Explores the history, design, and social function of ornamental gardens and homegrounds in New York state from about 1860 to 1917. Syracuse University Press, 119 photos, 200 pages, index, $24.95.

Gustav Eiffel
by Henri Loyrette. *"Superb archival photographs and a thoughtful, well-illustrated essay on the Eiffel Tower as a cultural artifact."—The New York Times Book Review.* Rizzoli, 232 pp., 212 illustrations, 12 in color, $35.00

Irish Walls
by Alen MacWeeney and Richard Conniff. A delightful look at the people of Ireland and the miles of stone walls that are an enduring feature of this most beautiful landscape. Stewart Tabori and Chang, 120 color photos, 144 pages. $24.95 cloth, $14.95 paper.

Italian Baroque and Rococo Architecture
by John Varriano. With nearly 200 illustrations, half never before published, this book is the first comprehensive study in English of the important works that emerged from the Italian Renaissance. Oxford University Press, $27.95 cloth, $16.95 paper.

Japanese Castles
by Moto Hinago, translated by William Coaldrake. A solid reference for architects, designers, and medievalists. Explores the evolution of the Japanese castle, combining cultural insights, social history, and clear explanations of architectural style. Kodansha International. 30 color, 109 black-and-white illustrations. $24.95.

Landscape Design . . . Texas Style
by Howard Garrett. A pictorial garden tour with more than 400 color photographs of unique landscape design. Taylor Publishing, $24.95 cloth.

Louis XIV's Versailles
by Guy Walton. In this superbly written study, Guy Walton considers Versailles in detail. He has examined thousands of original drawings and related documents as well as architects' plans, views of Versailles in prints and paintings, and written accounts of occupants, guests, and house artists. Over 150 rare illustrations. University of Chicago Press, 256 pp., illustrated, $24.95.

***Louis Sullivan:** His Life and Work*
by Robert Twombly. A major biography of the founding father of American architecture, complete with drawings and photos of Sullivan designs and buildings. Viking Press, $29.95. *"Robert Twombly, architecture scholar, has in this work explored virtually every important aspect of Sullivan's triumphant and tragic career."—The Chicago Tribune.*

NEW SUMMER TITLES

Metropolitan America: *Urban Life and Urban Policy in the United States, 1940–1980*

by Kenneth Fox. This first comprehensive history of U.S. urban development and policy shows how in the years 1940–1980 the metropolitan area became the dominant form of American community. University Press of Mississippi, 274 pp., illustrated, $27.50.

Minka: *Traditional Houses of Rural Japan*

by Chigi Kawashima. Goes beyond the outward visual charm of these traditional dwellings to present complete details about their structure, materials, and building techniques, all thoroughly illustrated with photos and drawings. Kodansha International, 264 pages, $60.00.

Packaging Design in Japan

by Japan Package Design Association. The cutting edge of consumer packaging design in Japan. Includes information on the market success of each design, with numerous illustrations. An essential reference guide and inspiration for designers. Kodansha International. 300 pages, 800 color plates, 200 black-and-white, $80.00.

Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, II

edited by Camille Wells. This volume treats such topics as diagnostic characteristics of building types, geographic and social contexts of architecture, and the influence of technology on structures. University of Missouri Press, 256 pages, illustrated, $35.00 cloth, $14.00 paper.

Richard Neutra:
Promise and Fulfillment, 1919–1932

Selections from the letters and diaries of Richard and Dione Neutra. Compiled and translated by Dione Neutra. Southern Illinois University Press, 264 pp., illustrated, $19.95 (1228-X).

Sustainable Communities: *A New Design Synthesis for Cities, Suburbs, and Towns*

by Sim Van Der Ryn and Peter Calthorpe. Two leading-edge architects offer a practical vision and model systems to show how American communities of every size can increase self-reliance and improve their quality of life. Sierra Club Books, 256 pp., $25.00 cloth (ISBN: 0-87156-800-4).

Traditional Japanese Furniture

by Kazuko Koizumi. The first thorough guide to the history, aesthetics, and techniques of hand-worked Japanese furniture of the 17th to 19th centuries—not only the development and styles, but the significance in society and in the home. Kodansha International, 224 pages, 200 illustrations, 60 in color. $70.00.

Treasures of Taliesin: *76 Unbuilt Designs of Frank Lloyd Wright*

by Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer. "A visual treat . . . 106 color drawings of 76 buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright but never built."—*Chicago Tribune*. Southern Illinois University Press, 164 pp., $60.00 (1235-2).

Using Office Design to Increase Productivity

by Michael Brill. Volume I presents results of the research of BOSTI's rigorous 6-year nationwide study, while Volume II presents research based design guidelines, prototypical office designs, and practical applications for enhancing worker performance. Distributed by Workplace Design and Productivity. $100/set.

Viennese Design and the Wiener Werkstätte

by Jane Kallir, foreword by Carl E. Schorske. An excellent introductory guide to the arts and crafts of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. Publication will coincide with the opening of *Vienna 1900: Art, Architecture and Design* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. George Braziller, 144 pages, 55 color plates, 195 black-and-white. 8″ x 11″, $25.00 cloth, $14.95 paper. June.

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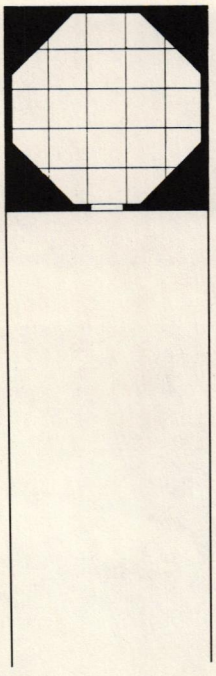
Dreaming the Rational City:
The Myth of American City Planning

MIT Press, 344 pp., illustrated, $9.95.



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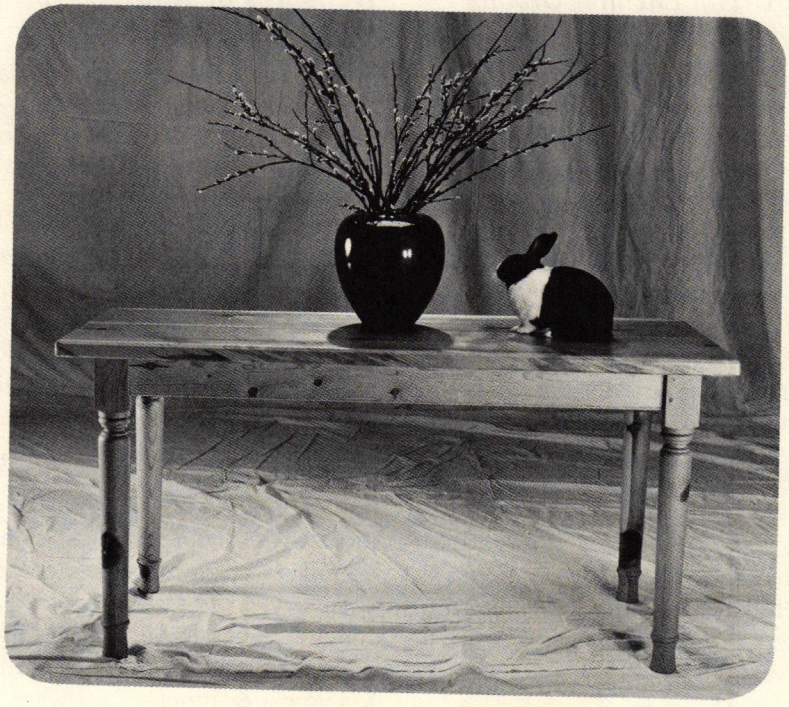

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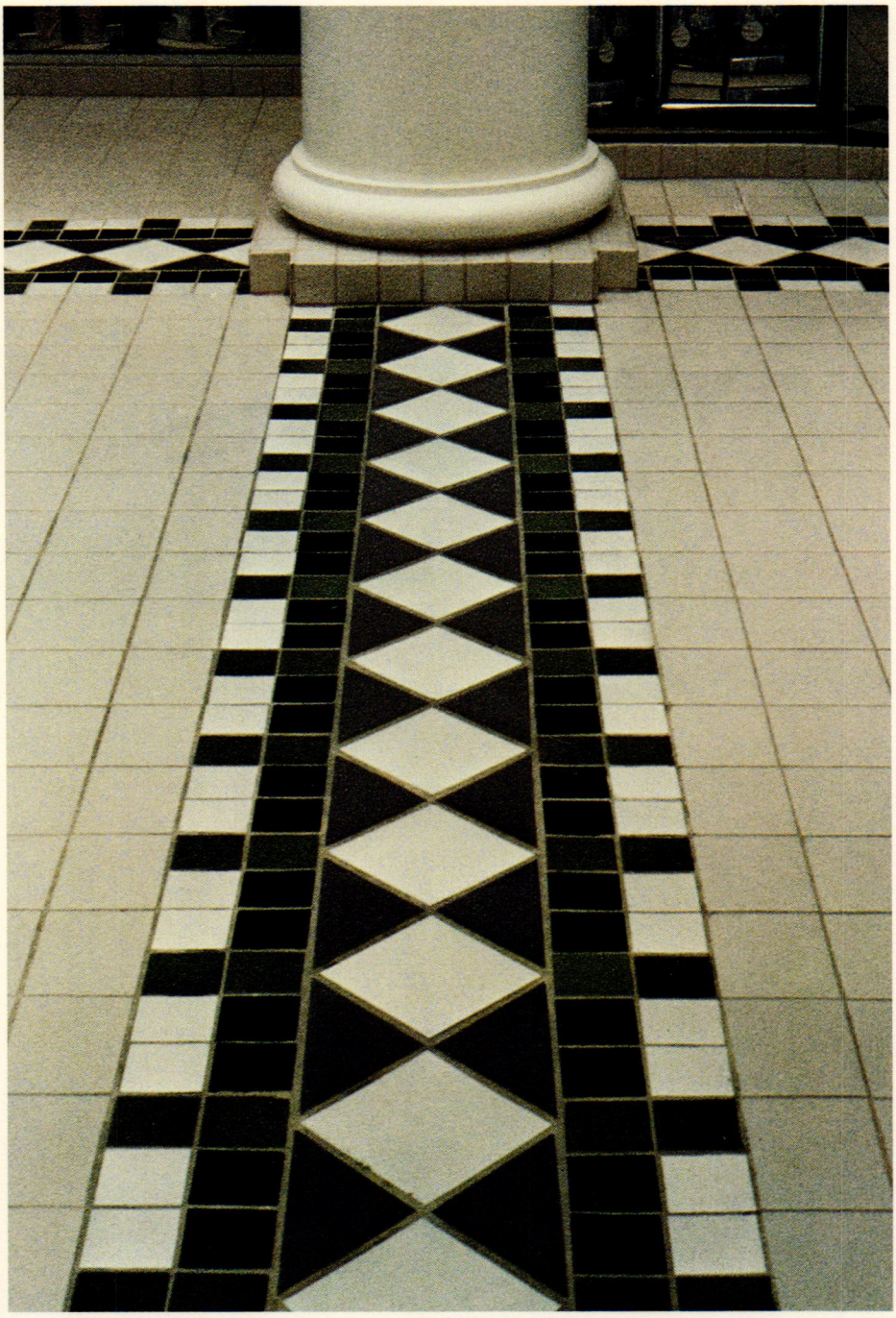

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