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What is American Architecture?

What you have in your hands is a new, and we think, improved January issue. It is still our Awards issue, featuring 19 projects premiated by the jury in this, the 42nd year of the P/A Awards Program. But the issue also offers, in the front of the magazine, five thematic articles including 34 projects that P/A’s editors think represent some important new directions in North American architecture and urbanism.

We are publishing these representative projects for several reasons. First, we are responding to what readers have often asked for: a broader look at unbuilt work than the award-winning projects provide. “Why not make the January issue a monograph?” asked one architect not too long ago. “Show the range of things going on.” Second, we wanted to discuss some of what we see happening in design, in part to refute those who claim that design has no direction now, that it is so fragmented that no patterns can be discerned. We have tried here to see beyond that apparent fragmentation to get at some of the underlying commonalities. Third, we wanted the January issue to be more in keeping with what we see happening in design, in part to remain competitive is constantly to reassess what we are doing and to refine what it is that makes our architecture distinctive.

Another point to make about most of these projects is the extent to which they reflect national and regional differences. From the evidence here, the Mexican work tends toward simple forms and bold gestures, the Canadian work reflects a strong environmental and tectonic sensibility, and U.S work covers a broad range including both, with strengths in urban design and formal invention, especially in smaller-scale projects. Even more striking are the regional differences: the highly sculptural and structurally expressive projects in British Columbia, the aesthetically quirky and tectonically low-tech projects in the Southeast U.S. and Eastern Canada, the extreme contrasts between lightness and heaviness in some of the Mexican work. That such regions have retained their identity, and that architecture has remained a vehicle for the expression of that identity are both encouraging signs.

We can consider, as well, the ways in which work that gets built here differs from what North American architects are building overseas. That difference becomes most evident when you compare the projects designed for North American clients with those for clients in the developing countries of Southeast Asia, discussed in the article on export design (p. 25). Huge towers that we might see as contextually insensitive or anti-urban are seen by some overseas clients as icons of modernity or symbols of progress. This raises interesting questions. Are these buildings, for example, non-contextual? Or are they, instead, responding to a cultural context whose values and ambitions are just very different from our own?

It is easier, however, to say what North American architecture is not than to say precisely what it is. Contextual diversity, regional identity, and just plain personal preferences keep getting in the way of any generalizations. But the difficulty of the task should not dissuade us from the effort. In a global economy, where trade barriers are falling and competing trading blocks are forming, the distinctiveness and technical finesse of our architecture will play an increasingly important role in its demand, both at home and abroad.

We have done rather well in this regard, as the large number of overseas projects designed by North American architects and the relatively little competition here from overseas firms both show. But that does not mean that we can rest assured. One of the ways to remain competitive is constantly to reassess what we are doing and to refine what it is that makes our architecture distinctive. And that is the real reason for the changes we’ve made to P/A’s January issue.

This issue, which contains some of the best work being produced by North American architects, raises the question: what, if anything, does this work have in common?

Thomas Fisher
A White Gentleman's Profession?
You are to be congratulated on the feature article in the November issue of P/A, "A White Gentleman's Profession?" which keeps in the forefront an issue that has great consequences to the profession in the future.

As a student at the University of Minnesota in 1949, I was the only African-American in the School of Architecture out of more than 300 students for four years. At that time, there were only two or three females, and about the same number of Asians.

Today, as I look at the first year Design Studio at Carnegie Mellon where I teach, over half of the class of 75 are female, 20 percent are Asian minorities, and still there is only one African-American -- a female. I reported on my concerns about the dwindling number of African-Americans in the profession in 1989 to the American Institute of Architects' College of Fellows -- and my concerns were later made a part of a guest editorial in your magazine, entitled "Black Architects -- an Endangered Species." (July 1989, p.7)

The next year, The College of Fellows convened a Task Force on African-American Entrance Into the Profession, and many meaningful suggestions were made to implement the effort to increase the number of African-Americans in the profession. These suggestions were turned over to the Institute for implementation. The Diversity Task Force is an outgrowth of this. Also, the Committee for Women and the Committee for Minorities were combined.

As sincere as these efforts are, they have lumped together all minorities, and view the problems that minorities face as being singular. In reality, this has diluted the effort to respond to the needs of that minority that is the most disadvantaged -- the African-American. In a recent conversation, one of my colleagues said to me, "You know, I'm gay!" I paused and responded, "I never tell anyone that I'm African-American."

I have been told that I see the glass as half empty, whereas others see it as half full. Obviously, as we look at the progress of African-American architects in relation to the profession, we are still only one percent of the profession, and shrinking -- as the numbers who enroll in our architectural schools continue to decrease. Unless this profession addresses this question with more creativity, it will not be able to serve the needs of this nation in the future, and that should be of great concern to all of us.

There are many more things that need to be done, by the schools, by the profession, by our society, but most of all by individuals like you and me, to change this. Somehow, we must abandon the notion that "I've got mine," and recognize that until the least of us has the fullest use of opportunities available to the best of us, we will not succeed as a profession or as a nation. I only hope that we in the College of Fellows, who represent the supposed elite of this profession, can help you in your efforts to bring about this change.

Robert Traynham Coles
Robert Traynham Coles, Architects
Buffalo, New York

Your article "A White Gentleman's Profession?" (November 1994) focuses on a subject that the AIA Board has struggled with all during my seven years as a member, and long before, I'm sure. While the complexion of the board itself has been predominantly white and male, which mirrors the current membership at large, the goal of the Board overwhelmingly has been to turn the demographics of the profession toward true diversity.

I was heartened to see at the recent meeting of the American (continued on page 14)
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Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) a crowd of people who were substantially more diverse than the profession at this point in time. It prompted me to note to several students that when the AIA grows up, it will look very much like the AIAS.

While I think passage of time ultimately will be the most effective corrective action, we cannot allow ourselves to pretend that time is the only solution. We need to continue to push for diversity for all the moral and practical reasons portrayed in your article.

Three strategies make particular sense to me. The first is to plug away at making the profession financially rewarding to its practitioners in proportion to the value that good architecture creates. As the average remuneration of entry-level architects rises, so will the number of talented minority students interested in the profession, and a more diverse – and talented – community of architects will emerge as a result.

The second is to ensure that the profession doesn't become so closed through restrictive paths to licensure that it curses itself by elitism through inhospitality to the financially underprivileged. Once upon a time there existed a rich apprentice tradition in the profession, and a number of distinguished architects arrived via that avenue. The number was, and I'm sure would always be, small, but these people have over the years enriched the profession, as has the process that permitted their arrival.

The third is for local chapters, and most important, individual practitioners, to address the subject one-on-one. Nothing beats the benefit to a kid that a little sincere attention by a concerned professional can have. That young person might decide on architecture through something as simple as a speech to a high school assembly in an inner-city school by a respected local architect, or a summer mentoring program by a big city firm, or a high school design program prize created by a local AIA chapter.

All this may sound too liberal or non-professional to some of us. It's not. The subject is, quite simply, the future, and the AIA wants to see that we get it right.

Thanks, John, for the article.

L. William Chapin II, FAIA
President, American Institute of Architects
Washington, D.C.
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(continued from page 14) which architects do not seem in a hurry to help expedite, the American experience will soon be little more than news from USA Today, breakfast from a microwave, a drive to work along a beltway, lunch at Burger King, afterwork shopping at Wal-Mart and Macy's, and business trips out of town at Radissons, Howard Johnsons, and Hyatts.

Style is back in style, and architects are nowhere to be found these days. If you're pinning your hopes on a return to vernacular regionalism based on function, time, space, and light as seen from the local planning board, don't hold your breath. The future romanticism is here, and we are not better off for it.

Charles Buki
Project Manager
Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation
Washington, D.C.

The American Academy in Rome
Perhaps a mark of a culture's power, and of its abiding strength, is the depth of fancy to which its detractors plunge in seeking to attack it. If that be the case, the American Academy should carry its mission with renewed passion and commitment into the next century, confident that it is correct, despite the ignorance of the barbarians at its gates.

The "report" on the state of affairs at the American Academy in Rome (October 1994) in which Joseph Giovannini attacks the Academy's right to carry forward its Classicist mission, might be construed as humorous, if only it were not so wrongheaded and tragic.

Why, indeed, study Rome? The mission of an American Academy, as envisioned in the tumult of the 1890s, is no less vital in America in the 1990s. Then, seemingly assured of eternal prosperity and a limitless future, architects like McKim looked to Rome to perfect their inheritance. Today, faced with widespread doubt about the future of our nation and our profession, the example of Rome, of Roman virtues, Roman principles, and the order and clarity of the example of Roman architecture is essential.

Mr. Giovannini questions the relevance of the Academy's fostering of study of Classical antecedents to our modern practice as architects. It is not surprising that there are so many in the "paying public" - our clients (or would-be clients) who no longer consider architects relevant, given the penchant for self-destruction displayed by our colleagues, spurred by "journalists" like Giovannini, to follow the latest aberrant trends. They would have us believe - Giovannini and his ilk - that these anticultural trends are somehow important to the rest of the world.

Curtis B. Wayne, President, Wayne Architects Greenwich, Connecticut

(continued on page 18)
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L.A. Urban Exhibition

Morris Newman's assessment of the MOCA exhibition, Urban Revisions: Current Projects for the Public Realm, as speaking only to "insiders" contradicts our experience of an overwhelmingly positive response to the show from members of the general public who are neither art nor architecture world insiders. Of the many visitors to this exhibition while it was on view in Los Angeles, those who provided direct feedback about their reaction to the show found it engaging, stimulating, and thought-provoking. Apparently both the heterogeneous premise of Urban Revisions and its physical presentation as a metaphor for the complex, polycentric, and polyglot city that is Los Angeles were not lost on an audience that was one of the broadest and most culturally diverse in MOCA's history.

I would like also to correct a glaring error of fact in Newman's review. Although he states that the show provided no explanation of what design problems were being faced by the architect/participants nor what solutions they put forth, each project in the exhibition is in fact accompanied by a major explanatory text that lays out precisely these issues. It is puzzling that these eighteen text panels, each 3' x 4' in size and positioned prominently adjacent to each project, could have been overlooked. In addition to these individual project texts, five major informational panels combining text and images introduce each of the exhibition's main thematic sections, directing viewers to how the projects presented therein might be compared and contrasted.

Urban Revisions is currently touring to venues in the U.S. and in Canada, where it continues to stimulate discussion about and engagement with a variety of design and urban issues geared to the audience of each host venue and city. Conceived to serve as a springboard for a range of community-based public programs and, in university settings as a teaching tool, the exhibition's deliberate departure from a conventionally polemical approach and even from the kind of physical standardization among projects that is common to architecture exhibitions is hardly an exercise in "art-world fashionability." Instead, it seeks to enhance the general visitor's understanding of subject matter and documents of as-yet unrealized urban plans that could potentially make for a dry and uninspired viewing experience by enlivening their presentation to evoke the challenging, competing, and even contradictory nature of forces at work within the contemporary city.

Elizabeth A.T. Smith
Curator, The Museum of Contemporary Art
Los Angeles

Morris Newman replies: I regret the suggestion that the exhibit featured no explanation. It would have been more accurate to say that the text panels to which Ms. Smith alludes were highly inadequate. The panels did not, for example, explain the color codes on the map of the Downtown Strategic Plan for Los Angeles, or the significance of displaying the massive Environmental Impact Report for the Playa Vista project in the same city, and so on. I agree with Ms. Smith that the show was "engaging, stimulating and thought-provoking." I disagree, however, that a confusing presentation is an apt metaphor for the "complex, polycentric and polyglot city that is Los Angeles." I resist the notion that complexity is best represented by disorder.

Correction

Kelly Maiello and Bower Lewis Thrower, both of Philadelphia, were joint venture architects for the Living Learning Center at Lincoln University. We neglected to credit Bower Lewis Thrower in Projects, November, 1994, p. 34.
Progressive Architecture announces its second annual P/A Awards Program for Architectural Research, in collaboration with the AIA/ACSA Council on Architectural Research. The Council is composed of a balance of practitioners and academics. It advocates and disseminates research that supports the design and construction of inspiring buildings and sustainable communities. The purpose of this awards competition is to recognize outstanding research in architecture and urban design, and to help disseminate it for use by the profession.

Awards and citations will be designated by a jury drawn from the Board of the Council on Architectural Research and leading researchers in the field, and will be ratified by the entire Council Board. Decisions will be made based on the overall excellence, innovation, and rigor of the study, as well as its usefulness to the practice of architecture and urban design. The jury will consider the degree to which the research addresses compelling social needs, extends traditional architectural expertise, demonstrates ways to integrate research and design, or utilizes multidisciplinary problem solving. Research methodology appropriate to the nature of the inquiry should be made explicit, as should the application or applicability of the research.

Entrants will be judged in one of three broad categories of research: Energy and Sustainable Design, Behavioral and Social Science, or Technology and Materials. Entrants are urged to interpret the call for outstanding research as broadly as possible to include the diverse subdisciplines of architects as well as diverse modes of inquiry. See reverse for entry form and rules.
Entry Form: Second Annual
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Please fill out all parts and submit, intact, with each entry (see paragraph 9 of instructions). Copies of this form may be used.

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Credit(s) for publication (attach additional sheet if necessary):

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Eligibility

1 Who Can Enter: Architects, environmental design professionals, and academics conducting research and working in the U.S., Mexico, or Canada may enter one or more submissions. Research may be focused on any location, but the study must have been directed and substantially executed in the U.S., Mexico, or Canada not more than five years ago.

2 Substantive Projects: Entries may include only funded research, reports accepted by clients for implementation, or studies undertaken by entrants who have marketed or applied their results. Basis of eligibility as well as the date of the study should be explained in the submission. P/A may contact any of the parties involved to verify eligibility.

Publication Agreement

3 Providing Additional Materials: If the submission should win, the entrant agrees to make available further information and graphic material as needed by P/A.

4 Publication: P/A is granted the first opportunity among U.S. architecture magazines for first publication of the study. However, prior publication does not affect eligibility. The Council reserves the right to publish entries that are not premiated and published by P/A.

Submission Requirements

5 Project Facts Page: To assure clear communication to the jury, each entry must contain a page that lists, in English, the research project facts under the following headings: Project Title; Research Category; Source of Funding; Total Budget; Start and Finish Date; Name and Location of Client; Research Setting; Form of Final Products; Basis of Eligibility; Bibliographic References. Ten copies of this page must be submitted.

6 Narrative: Entries must contain a three-to-five-page synopsis of the project that includes the following section headings: Purpose/Objectives of the Project; Research Design and Methods Used in Research; Data and Analysis Procedures; Major Findings and Results; Significance and Uses of Results. Ten copies of the Narrative must be submitted.

7 Additional Materials: One copy of supplementary graphic or written material may be submitted in 8½" by 11" format, and all these materials must be firmly bound in binders. No slides, original drawings, video tapes, or unbound materials will be reviewed.

8 Anonymity: To maintain anonymity in judging, no names of entrants or collaborating parties may appear on any part of the submission, except on entry forms. Credits may be concealed by tape or any simple means.

9 Entry Forms: Each submission must be accompanied by a signed entry form, to be found on this page. Reproductions of the form are acceptable. Fill out the entry form and insert it, intact, into an unsealed envelope labeled “Entry Form” contained within the submission.

10 Entry Fees: Entry fees must accompany each submission. Fee is $100. Make check or money order payable to Progressive Architecture. Canadian and Mexican entrants must send drafts in U.S. dollars. Fee must be inserted in unsealed envelope with entry form (see 9 above).

11 Entry Receipts: P/A will send a receipt by April 1, which will indicate an entry number to save for your reference.

12 Return of Entries: Entrants wishing return of submission materials should include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Copies of Project Facts and Narrative may not be returned.

13 Entry Deadline: Deadline for sending entries is March 3, 1995. All entries must show some date marking as evidence of being in the carrier’s hands by that date. Hand-delivered entries must arrive at P/A’s offices (address below) by 5 p.m., March 3. In order to assure arrival in time for the jury, P/A recommends using a carrier that guarantees delivery within a few days.

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What follows are five articles, organized around various themes – export architecture, environmentalism, tectonics, social responsibility, and traditional urbanism – each of which is illustrated by six or seven projects that we think best represent the range or depth of thinking on these subjects. These themes by no means exhaust the possible topics that we could have addressed. But in reviewing the diversity of work currently going on, we found that these categories encompassed some of the most interesting projects and some of the most provocative explorations. Whether, in fact, this work and these ideas characterize trends in the coming years is something we will all have to wait and see.
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Although the mix of commissions and locations has been altered by the recession, overseas work is still of critical importance to American architects. Among entries to this year's P/A Awards program, about one-tenth were for sites abroad. Our large commercial architecture firms are now getting few commissions in Western Europe, and the locus of activity has shifted to China and Southeast Asia. In Asian cities where cranes still bristle on the skyline, American know-how about integrating elevators, air conditioning, and industrialized curtain walls into big commercial structures is very much in demand. While much of this growth proceeds with little regard for larger urban patterns, there is some recognition that American urban design skills can make significant contributions (page 27, bottom). Opportunities for internationally known high-design firms haven’t followed economic cycles quite so predictably — although Japan’s demand for high design decelerated as sharply as its economy. The growth areas for the design stars are in Eastern Europe (below), where some cities are eager to rejoin the international community of high culture. And some American firms have expertise in special building types that can be needed anywhere in the world, as when one of the U.S. aquarium specialists is called to distant shores (page 28, top). And finally, American ability to improve the everyday life of developing countries has not totally evaporated: it’s good to know that a few U.S. firms are making such smaller scale contributions (page 26, top; page 27, top).

It would be all too easy, unfortunately, to choose a different set of projects to publish that would demonstrate mainly insensitivity to local conditions — projects that simply caricature the visual warfare of our own cities. But we should be wary of deciding too quickly, on too little evidence, that other nations should not have the skyscrapers or the jet-age institutional buildings they are commissioning. These issues will be addressed in a March article by P/A senior editor Philip Langdon, who would welcome your comments on the subject.

John Morris Dixon

Exporting Architecture

While international markets have shifted, American architectural skills are very much in demand abroad.

Prague/Rasin Office Building

The historic fabric of Prague will be complemented by a nine-story, 55,000-square-foot office building by Frank O. Gehry & Associates of Santa Monica. The site along the Vltava River, rendered vacant by an errant American World War II bomb, is one of three in Prague’s central historic district where new construction is permitted. The building’s form blends in with the existing neighbors at both ends, with façades of plaster-finished concrete punctured by tall windows. Slight curves in these walls and shifts in their window patterns will culminate in two sculptural towers – one solid-walled, one glazed – that mark the street corner. On the office floors, the curvilinear tower rooms will house special offices and conference rooms. There will be a café and shops at street level; a restaurant exploiting the site’s skyline views will occupy the top floor. The building is under construction and is scheduled for completion this year.
For a pivotal site, where the trace of the recent Berlin Wall meets the path of the pre-Baroque city wall, close by Checkpoint Charlie, Skidmore Owings & Merrill, New York, has designed a mixed use complex. Retail, offices, and apartments are housed in a combination of one existing structure and three new ones around it. A conical form marks the key intersection at one end of the site. Within imposed height limits, the complex combines structures that conform to the area’s historic formal vocabulary, with sleeker high-tech components that slash through along curves and diagonals in manner related to Deconstructivism; the more conventional forms will be clad in limestone, the more dynamic ones in metal and glass. The complex is scheduled for completion in 1996.
Xiao Zhao Zhai
Kindergarten,
China

For Chinese living in a large characterless housing development in the city of Zheng Zhou, this kindergarten (an all-day facility, comparable to a U.S. day-care facility) is meant to give some sense of the traditional Chinese spatial organization, as found in the typical courtyard house, which residents would otherwise never experience. Yung-Ho Chang, who is teaching at Rice University in Houston, designed the building for a joint venture of development companies and a local government agency. Each class unit accommodates 20 children and includes an activity room, a nap room, and a lavatory. One unit is a nursery for infants. The construction is of reinforced concrete frame and brick bearing walls. The facility is scheduled for completion in November of this year and is expected to cost about $230,000.

Haikou New World
City, China

Burgeoning Haikou, capital of China’s tropical-island province of Hainan, is expanding into a new landfill area. For two pivotal parcels fronting on a public circle, the New York firm of HLW was commissioned to establish the overall plan and massing for 5 million square feet of mixed uses, including 2,120,000 square feet of office space, three 400-room hotels, 300,000 square feet of retail, and parking for 2,700 cars. Commissioned to design buildings conforming to a previous master plan, envisioning freestanding towers and “placeless” residual open spaces, the firm convinced the private developers that the building forms could help define the perimeter of the circle and the edges of the city blocks, and create a square of open space along the diagonal avenue from the circle to the water. In the process, HLW drafted a master plan for several surrounding blocks, but what will be built on them is not known.
To design a national marine biology institution at the south tip of Taiwan, the government called upon Esherick Homsey Dodge & Davis of San Francisco, whose expertise in marine institutions dates back to their 1985 Monterey Bay Aquarium. Sited on the shore in a national park, the scheme includes a world-class aquarium, a research center, and conference facilities. The aquarium building (shown here) is to be built in two phases: indigenous ecosystems and marine life will be featured in the 260,000-square-foot first phase; tropical reefs and marine mammals will be exhibited in the 120,000-square-foot second phase, which is to be completed by the end of 1997. The major volumes of both phases are to be roofed with curvilinear canopies suggesting ocean waves. Construction will be of concrete, with a steel canopy over the spacious main lobby. The facility is designed to maintain all critical operations through earthquakes, typhoons, and tsunamis.

A 47-story building destined to be the signature skyscraper of Taichung, Taiwan, has been designed by the New York firm of Kohn Pedersen Fox. The site at the north end of a three-mile-long landscaped mall called for a unified architectural form, even though the program is mixed: a 350-room hotel, offices, and a private club with dining and health club facilities. The ballroom and other ancillary hotel functions are in a low-rise plinth from which the curved flanks of the tower rise to an angular, louvered canopy over the two-floor executive suite at the top. The fishlike shape of the tower floors, facing east, was considered a favorable symbol by the owners. Structural framing on an 8-meter grid is adaptable to office, hotel, and parking demands. To make variation in floor heights less conspicuous, the curtain wall will have green stone spandrels, similar in color to the tinted, low-e glazing. The adjoining plaza, part of the private development, repeats the gentle curves of the tower plan in a series of terraced pools. The tower is to be started this spring and finished in the fall of 1997.
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Eco Village Cohousing Cooperative

Eco Village was designed by architect Jerold Weisburd of Ithaca, New York, for a 35-acre site on an abandoned farm in Ithaca. The cohousing scheme, designed with the community's participation, will become home for up to 30 households of moderate income. In form it follows the classic Danish model of cohousing, with clustered individual units and a common house. The cohousing model is itself environmentally sensitive because it promotes shared resources among households. The clients for this cooperative requested a scheme that was energy conserving, with site and unit design incorporating passive solar strategies. The buildings will be superinsulated, double-wall construction. Plans call for the eventual use of photovoltaic cells and wind turbines for generating energy. Much of the site is to remain in its natural state. The clustered village will occupy no more than three acres, and will be criss-crossed with pedestrian paths. Parking is relegated to the north of the housing clusters and will be screened with existing hedgerows. The units will face each other across common areas devoted to playspace and gardens.

Located at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, this 32,000-square-foot academic research building, designed by Matsuzaki Wright Architects of Vancouver, will house offices, classrooms, display areas, and support spaces for the study of Asian culture. The 300' x 60' site determined the building's geometry, which is well suited for natural cross and stack ventilation, aided by the atrium spaces under the scalloped roofs. The building will contain materials with at least 50 percent recycled or 50 percent recyclable content, which will be low in toxicity, gas emissions, and embodied energy. A major recycled element is the building's structural system, a post-and-beam old-growth wood frame salvaged from a demolished 60-year-old building near the site. The building will have no sewer connection; waterless composting toilets will be used, as well as a subsurface constructed wetland to recycle gray water. All rain water will be retained for irrigation or will be absorbed on-site.
For a 32-acre site in the Santa Monica Mountains in Ventura County, California, the Belzberg/Wittman Collaborative of Beverly Hills designed a 4,500-square-foot house for a couple with two children. According to the architect, Ventura County will approve only projects that exert a minimum impact on the environment. The concrete floor slab uses recycled aggregate and is honeycombed for air distribution through the floor. Operable clerestory windows permit natural cooling and ventilation, and their double-paned heat-mirror glazing cuts heat-gain. The roof contains a combination of integral photovoltaic panels and power storage for low-voltage lighting, and there will also be roof-mounted solar collectors. A 750-square-foot guest house has a concrete Trombe wall and a cistern for recycling gray water.

This house will replace one that was destroyed in the Oakland fire in 1991. The site for the 1,600-square-foot residence, designed by Karl Wanaselja of Berkeley, is a small, triangular lot that narrows to the east, with second-floor views of San Francisco Bay to the west and an eight-lane freeway directly south. Along with providing privacy from the freeway and maximizing views of the bay, the design is energy-conscious and draws on sustainable resources and salvaged materials. The foundation and the first-floor walls of poured concrete dampen freeway noise. Solar panels on the roof will provide hot water, and a radiant floor slab economically heats the first floor. Salvaged framing timber will be used, and the 2x8 concrete form boards, sandblasted clean, will be recycled as a ceiling finish material. Other finishes throughout the house will be selected for their low or non-toxicity. At the house's southeast corner will be a cistern to collect and store rainwater for irrigating the landscaping, whose drought-resistant plantings are native to California.
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The 1990s may well be remembered in the history books as a decade in which architects rediscovered the pleasures of real materials and substantial construction. Not that it is any easier to get clients to pay for such things. But what has changed is the interest within the profession in the tectonics of architecture. Evidence of this has been the remarkable increase over the last few years in the number of projects whose form emerges out of the nature of their materials and the methods of their construction or fabrication.

This work is not just a rehash of Modernism; gone are the days when we all marched to the same technological tune. Today, our response to the tectonics of architecture is more ambivalent and more personal, with people taking it in several directions at once. Some architects have moved toward a kind of ad-hocism, treating technology as a found object to be reinterpreted at will. Others are pluralists, using whatever construction material or method seems best suited to a particular aspect of a building. Most of the architects working in this vein, however, are minimalists, in search of the most ephemeral structure or enclosure, the most environmentally elegant form, or the simplest way of accommodating the greatest complexity.

Although this architecture has a common tectonic quality, it is rarely seen as a cohesive body of work or a movement. That may be in part because its adherents are more widespread and diverse than, say, the Post-Structuralist crowd. The lack of apparent cohesion may also stem from the fact that this work does not all look alike, as is evident in the seven projects shown here. Tectonic architecture simply doesn't lend itself as readily as other approaches to categorization as a style. That, however, is also a strength. These projects appeal, in part, because they respond to different contexts and aesthetic sensibilities without loss of a common character. In the 1990s, when respect for diversity counts for a lot, that adaptability is another thing that makes this work real and substantial.

Thomas Fisher

**The Tectonic Aesthetic**

A growing number of architects are looking to the tectonics of construction for formal inspiration.

---

**Art Studio in Glass and Steel**

This 500-square-foot painting studio and 1,500-square-foot sculpture studio for a brother and sister stand among the abandoned foundations of a structure on a 40-acre site. Designed by Kevin Kennon & Peter Moore, Architects, of New York, the painting studio consists of a maple-floored post-tensioned concrete slab held up by stainless steel cruciform columns and floating within a rectangular glass box that uses Pilkington's Planar glazing system. A concrete-and-steel ramp zigzags up to the studio over the foundations. Set among the foundation walls is the outdoor sculpture studio, further divided by a series of black-granite-clad, steel-framed walls in a pattern that recalls Mies's country house plan. This homage to Mies recalls his obsession with detail and his dual attraction to heavy masonry construction and transparent glass structures.
There is much talk these days about using shipping containers as housing, but this project is the rare case where that technology has been made into architecture. Designed by Jones Partners: Architecture, in San Francisco, these cabins, outbuildings, and guest quarters for two Stanford professors stand on a 360-acre site in a high Sierra forest and meadow. Constructed from 20-foot steel shipping containers, the buildings retain the linearity inherent in those structures. Located at the edge of the meadow, one cabin has containers forming a library tower leading to a study/observatory. Another cabin, located on a rock outcropping, is a horizontal bar that cantilevers at both ends. The containers will be prefabricated and shipped, by either truck or helicopter, to the site, showing that such transportation technology "ensures," in the words of the architects, "that the container-cabins will sit lightly on the land ... in fact, that they get up and walk away."

Located next to an elevated highway in Houston, this project, designed by Interloop Architects, combines a lunch counter, a drive-through convenience store, a beer garden, and a proprietor’s flat. Equally diverse are the forms and construction systems. The lunch counter, which bends around the drive-through behind it, is steel-framed on concrete grade beams, with an aluminum storefront and a built-up roof. A poured-in-place concrete ramp curves up over the lunch counter, wrapping around an inner storage ramp clad in painted metal panels on steel framing. Both ramps lead up to a roof-top, open-air beer garden, with pea gravel on a steel-pan/poured-concrete deck. Along the highway side of the garden is a perforated galvanized steel billboard on steel framing. In contrast, the proprietor’s flat is constructed of painted concrete block on steel framing. Its crazy mix of forms and materials seems just right for its location and function.
Exploring Parallel Bearing Walls

The Rancho Mirage Civic Center in California, designed by the L.A. firm of Arthur Golding & Associates, contains a city hall, a library, and a chamber of commerce in a single-story 75,000-square-foot building. The various departments in the building occupy glassy pavilions that overlook small courtyards and are linked by a parallel series of halls. That flexible and yet highly ordered plan stems from the building's structural system: parallel concrete-block bearing walls supporting light steel trusses and flat roofs. A large forecourt, containing olive and date palm trees, runs perpendicular to the grain of bearing walls, culminating in a fan-shaped council chamber. Trellis-covered walkways define the two sides of this court. As the Berlin Free University showed, this type of plan strikes a fine balance between order and flexibility, remaining legible as it grows. Here, the plan type has been further adapted to an arid climate, with the bearing walls providing an armature for a host of shading and cooling strategies.

Heavy Timber in a National Forest

The visitor center and the restroom facility in the Okanogan National Forest in Washington State occupy a heavily wooded south-facing slope and straddle a path leading to an overlook of the Cascade Mountains. Designed by Kelbaugh, Calthorpe & Associates of Seattle and Einar Jarmund of Seattle and Oslo, Norway, the buildings stand on stone platforms, with layers of Douglas fir columns, beams, purlins, and subpurlins supporting sloped terepoated stainless steel roofs. To accommodate the convergence of the site contours at the visitor center, the architects have skewed its roof forward, causing the turned and tapered wood columns to fan out along the path. Each column is pinned, top and bottom, with galvanized steel connectors. The restrooms, although built of the same precut wood framing, have a roof that follows the slope, providing shade from the sun and a surface for collecting solar radiation. Both structures are elegantly simple responses to a beautiful site.
Recalling California’s Case Study Houses

This three-story house in Point Richmond, California, has a skewed central core and a series of bedrooms that overlook a main living space. Designed by Gerald Horn of Holabird & Root in Chicago for his family, the house has 12-foot-square column bays, forming a nine-square grid supported on 36-foot-long steel trusses on concrete pilings in the water. Back-to-back 8-inch steel channels frame into 3'/2-inch-diameter columns. Rolling steel sun screens, teak windows, and stained redwood siding comprise the exterior cladding. Because the house was built by the architect, his son, James Horn, and his son-in-law, Bruce Ward, every piece of it, down to the location of bolt holes, was detailed and drawn. The lightness of this steel-framed house recalls the designs of Craig Ellwood, with whom Horn once worked.

Lattice- and Fabric-Covered House

This house, located in a remote arid part of Southern California, consists of a linear house raised above a largely open first floor, and an adjacent, two-story ceramics studio. Designed by McCoy & Simon of Los Angeles, the house has concrete shear walls and piers supporting a raised concrete slab, on which the wood-framed second floor residence is built. The roof is supported by 20-foot-long glulam beams, 12 feet on center. The ceramics studio, in contrast, has wood post-and-beam construction with diagonal tension cables. These differences in construction are reflected in the cladding, meant to shelter the living spaces from the harsh sun. Three sides of the house are wrapped in cedar lattice, while the studio is enclosed in fabric with sliding sandblasted glass doors around its perimeter.
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Circle No. 348 on Reader Service Card
“Social responsibility,” has been getting a bad rap these days. Negatively labeled politically correct, the architect’s engagement in the less glamorous corners of the built environment is the subject of much debate. Is architecture a social art or just art?

While pundits argue about the profession’s responsibility and desire to take on work for the impoverished, the substance abuser, the mentally or physically ill, many architects are designing projects with strong social programs. Often such projects are undertaken by young firms with few built works or by architects who have dedicated their careers to designing for marginalized groups. There is also a small, but growing number of practitioners who are proactively pursuing this type of work, sometimes agreeing to reduce their fees or provide pro bono services.

The projects shown here include an inner-city affordable housing development mixed with retail and community services; low-income housing designed through a hands-on participatory process; a residential treatment facility for substance-abusing single mothers; a proactive effort to combine housing, education, and mentorship under one roof; an AIDS/HIV resource center designed through low-fee and no-fee services; and a multipurpose homeless crisis center. Formally diverse, the projects have in common a serious effort to listen to the client and to raise the standards of typically uninspired building types. Michael Pyatok’s Jingle-town project (see p. 45), for example, involved participatory planning for low-income housing; this kind of client involvement is becoming more common, and Pyatok has built his practice on it (P/A, Sept. 1994, p. 64).

The art of these projects comes in the form of contextual response, funding methods, and resolution of planning issues. “Many people argue that there is no place for art in these kinds of projects,” says Christine Killory, architect of the Aztec Hotel for substance-abusing mothers, “but that’s not true.” Perhaps this misunderstanding is one reason—aside from remuneration—that many firms shy away from “social work.”

Despite a backlash against calls for “social responsibility,” many architects are taking on projects for marginalized groups.

As architects Davids Killory of San Diego point out, motels once symbolized freedom and the open road, but are now most often used as “rooming houses” by the disenfranchised. The architects’ transformation of the 1932 courtyard-style Aztec Motel, on Route 66 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, into a residential facility for substance-abusing mothers is an effort to revive the once-optimistic identity of the building type, giving women an opportunity to help themselves and to maintain custody of their children. The project includes the existing motel (unalterable due to its listing on the National Register of Historic Places) and an 8,300-square-foot addition.

Nine two-bedroom units will be added to the 16 existing one-bedroom units. The project will also include a daycare facility, a kitchen and a dining room, a common room, counseling offices, meeting rooms, and a courtyard/play area. The scheme relocates existing parking spaces from the courtyard to a vacant site across an alley, above which the new residential wing will be added. An arc-shaped “bridge building” containing communal facilities spans the alley to connect the residents with the courtyard. Funding for the project is currently being secured, but will include federal, local, and private monies. Construction is expected to begin later this year.
Proactive Programming: Housing and Education

With a grant from the Graham Foundation, Paul Lukes Architecture with Akhtar Badshah embarked on an investigation of education/housing building types that turned into a real project for low- and moderate income immigrant families in Lowell, Massachusetts. Enlisting the help of local and state officials, the Archdiocese of Lowell, the local campus of the University of Massachusetts, community groups, and a private developer, the architects have designed the Moody Street project to complement the education received at local schools. An on-site, after-school program will provide mentors for tenants' school-age children (kindergarten through 12th grade). Mentors from the local university will receive credit for their participation, and residents who complete the program will be eligible for scholarships from the university. The project includes the rehabilitation of two existing brick structures (an abandoned school and a rectory) and the construction of a new building.

Comprehensive AIDS/HIV Resource Center

The AIDS/HIV Life Center and Trinity United Methodist Church, designed by Arke.tek cher, is to be located in the Castro District of San Francisco, a low-rise commercial and residential neighborhood. Providing services and referrals to people living with and concerned about AIDS and HIV, the 35,000-square-foot Life Center will include: office space for nonprofit agencies that offer prevention, education, testing, counseling, and independent living support programs; a small chapel, work space, and office for the church; community rooms; ground-floor retail space for a health-related commercial tenant and for a nonprofit retail store that supports AIDS/HIV agencies. The centralization of resources and services, currently scattered about the city, will make it easier for patients to receive care. To help lower the cost of the new building, many of those involved in the project have reduced or deferred their fees, including architects, landscape architects, and engineers. The $7-million, stone- and stucco-clad building will be completed by June 1996 on a site donated by the church.
Las Vegas has a homeless population of roughly 10,000 according to Hodgetts + Fung Design Associates, Santa Monica, architects of the city’s proposed Crisis and Intervention Center. Offering administrative and social services, the center is part of a 13-acre Mobile Assistance and Shelter for the Homeless (M*A*S*H) project developed in a six-team charrette. Conceived as an “urban village,” the M*A*S*H program will also include a building for women and families, and, when additional funds are secured, a schoolhouse, a dining hall, and an all-weather shelter, all linked by a central walkway. Designed to recreate “a slice of typical street life,” the center is a cluster of three buildings, each with a specific set of functions: admissions screening; administrative offices and health/counseling services; and public services such as a clothing bank, a library, a barber shop, and employment assistance. The 22,000-square-foot complex will be constructed of concrete, steel, and standing seam metal roofing. Lucchesi Galati Architect is the executive architect. Another Las Vegas M*A*S*H facility won a citation in the P/A Awards (p. 72).

Designed by architect Michael Pyatok in collaboration with a group of residents living in a Latino neighborhood of East Oakland, California, the Jingletown Neighborhood Housing project took shape through a series of bilingual workshops. The participants were divided into groups, each given kits for site and house planning; the process resulted in a plan for 53 houses for first-time buyers, plus childcare and community facilities. The architecture “recalls, without mimicking,” neighboring Victorian and Craftsman-style homes. One of the most important issues was the need for future expansion by individual owners: attics in all the units can be converted into two bedrooms and a bath, and some sites will have space for a freestanding garage/bedroom. The residents were also involved in the site’s acquisition: with the assistance of the architect, they won a battle to rezone the parcel of land for both industry and medium-density housing; half the property will be used for this project and the other half, it is hoped, will be developed privately as market-rate, live-work artists’ spaces.
Youth Center for Disadvantaged Kids

Architects Leers Weinzapfel’s George White Youth Center for the George White Fund of the City of Boston, a charitable trust, is located in the Mattapan/Dorchester area of Boston. It involves the partial demolition of an existing hockey rink covered by a shallow vault roof and partially enclosed by a brick headhouse. The project will include a gymnasium and locker rooms built over the foundation of the headhouse; an entry zone containing check-in desk, multipurpose meeting room located in the space created by demolishing the first two bays of the rink; and social and educational spaces (lounge areas, library, and art studio) located under the remaining area of the vaulted roof. Clerestory windows will bring natural light into the new ground-face concrete block gymnasium and emit a soft glow at night. The center’s program was developed through a community outreach process to provide a safe environment where kids could learn and have a good time.

Revitalizing South Central Los Angeles

Designed by Michaele Pride-Wells, principal of re: Architecture, in association with architect Ena Dubnoff, the mixed-use Somerville development is the cornerstone of the Historic Renaissance Project established by the nonprofit, community-based Dunbar Economic Development Corporation in South Central Los Angeles. The project, which includes 41 units of affordable rental housing, 4,000 square feet of retail space, and a 3,400-square-foot Head Start facility, will be housed on three sites: two new buildings will be constructed on vacant lots north and south of the historic Dunbar Hotel and an existing structure will be rehabilitated. To restore the pedestrian scale of the street, storefront commercial space is a crucial component of the project. The residential units of the two new buildings rise in a series of setbacks, breaking down building mass and enhancing privacy. Other features of the project include shared laundry facilities, secure play areas, shaded courtyards, community rooms, and retail spaces as small as 500 square feet to attract local entrepreneurs. The development will be built for $62 per square foot with financing from 19 funding sources, from government agencies to local banks and philanthropic foundations.
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Over the last several years, urban designers have made a remarkably concerted movement toward healing their breach with the past. What comes through in many projects these days is a desire to apply, to today’s circumstances, the traditional urban framework of streets, squares, and pedestrian-scale spaces. The heroic stand-alone buildings that Modernism fostered continue to be built, of course, but rarely are they seen as especially effective examples of urban design. Those who create successful urban places and precincts are gravitating toward the space-making techniques that cities employed for centuries.

A key to the traditional city was its pedestrian orientation, and urban designers are energetically reaffirming this shoe-leather view of community structure. Many schemes now heading toward fruition are organized around the five-minute walk, trying to make it easy for people to hoof it from their home to a park, neighborhood services, and in some instances to their jobs. Even in the suburbs, it is common to find projects aiming for compactness, at least in comparison with suburbs built in the past 50 years. Numerous suburban projects are designed to be served by bus or rail transit systems.

To make environments walkable, urban designers are paying close attention to the character of streets and gathering places. Buildings are looked upon as enclosers of public space, making public areas feel like outdoor rooms. Care is being taken to make ground floors appealing to those walking by. Streets are being defined more tightly, whether in new suburbs or in old public housing projects. Municipal housing authorities are continuing to convert large, anonymous grounds around highrises into more controllable back yards, front yards, and narrow streets, lined with low buildings. Nature is being threaded into urban districts through tree-lined streets and small parks. On this and the following three pages are urban design projects that exemplify current thinking.

**Learning from the Traditional City**

Recent urban design work emphasizes streets, squares, and tightly defined public spaces, in settings large and small.

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Mixed-Use District in a Toronto Distillery

For Allied Domeq Pension Funds, Roger du Toit Architects, Toronto, is aiming to adapt most of the Gooderham and Worts Distillery, probably the best-preserved complex of 19th-Century industrial buildings in Canada, into a collection of ground-floor shops and upper-floor offices and to add housing, a daycare center, an arts center, and more offices, largely in new construction. An intimate network of courts and lanes will be retained, as will much of the distillery’s machinery, which visitors will be able to examine on self-guided tours. New buildings, mainly to the east and west of the distillery, will step down toward the old buildings in the center to avoid dominating the historic district’s appearance. The new structures will be composed with base, wall, and top, helping them to harmonize with the old ones; trellised attics will distinguish the new from the old and at the same time will animate the skyline. The result should be a pedestrian-scale environment that looks cohesive yet varied.
North Valley Plan, Alameda County, California

A comprehensive system of open spaces and neighborhood focal points distinguishes the plan for North Valley, a community intended to house 50,000 people on 11,000 acres north of Livermore, California. Urban designers William L. Clarke and Arun Jain of Piedmont, California, laid out the development for a consortium of property owners led by Shea Homes and Jennifer Lin, basing it on a network of fairly regular, interconnected streets, which it is hoped will reduce the need for driving. Schools, parks, and other facilities are placed in neighborhood centers. At the core is a town center containing civic institutions, stores, moderate- to high-density housing, and other facilities, possibly including a transit center. Employment is booming in nearby parts of the Bay area; bus and electric vehicle shuttle services are planned to connect the community to job centers outside the development and to the Bay Area Rapid Transit system. Much hillside land is to be left undisturbed.

Federal Courthouse Area Master Plan, Boston

Downtown Boston is beginning to expand across the Fort Point Channel into the Fan Pier, where a new federal courthouse is being built. David Dixon/Goody Clancy, a division of Goody, Clancy Associates, working for the Steering Committee for the Federal Courthouse Special Task Force, had to determine how to tie the developing area into the existing central business district, across the old Northern Avenue bridge, and how to compensate for the fact that a security-conscious federal building is unlikely to function as a major public attraction. One part of the designers' answer is to make the bridge itself a magnet, filled with shops, restaurants, a Harbor Islands Visitors Center, and other facilities. Another part of the strategy is to develop the area as a series of gateways to the harbor. Among the plan's features are parks, walkways, and departure points for water transportation and harbor cruises. Overall, the plan aims at creating what the task force calls "an enhanced public realm."
Hawaiians look upon high-density urbanization as "paradise lost rather than urbanity gained," observes ELS/Elbasani & Logan Architects of Berkeley, which had the task of strengthening the general plan of the Kakaako Makai area of Honolulu for the Hawaii Community Development Authority and preparing a development strategy. "What is needed is a better model for tropical urbanism, one that accommodates increased densities yet embraces the advantages of a benign climate and informal lifestyle." The designers decided to accomplish this by establishing an extensive system of interconnected, open-air spaces at ground level, including courtyards, arcades, passageways, lobbies, and most important public streets. "As the distinction between outdoors and indoors is blurred, the continuous open ground plane becomes the forum for public life as well as a link to nature for tropical city dwellers," the designers say. From a large but heretofore isolated waterfront park, fingers of nature will extend into the downtown. Some light industry will be relocated to accommodate the changes.
An explosion of office and apartment towers and other development in Flushing, Queens, led city officials and a citizens' group, The Coalition For A Planned Flushing, to have Weiss/Manfredi Architects and Peterson/Littenberg Architects draw up an urban design plan that would impose a measure of order on a chaotic part of New York. Among the elements in the designers' voluminous plan is a system of public spaces, including a tree-lined boulevard and light rail on College Point Boulevard and ideas for a market, outdoor movies, and other activities in Public Square (a community center to be established on what has been a parking lot). The designers produced studies showing how blocks in the Town Center area could be developed with mixed uses – a concept the designers emphasize – including housing, offices, and manufacturing. Much of the plan focuses on connections, such as restoring links to the waterfront and to Flushing Meadows Corona Park, where the radial layout of the 1964 World's Fair still exists.

To replace most of a 1950s collection of high-rise towers and three- to four-story walk-up apartment buildings that degenerated into one of the most dangerous areas in Baltimore, CHK Architects and Planners of Silver Spring, Maryland, has proposed that the Housing Authority of Baltimore city redevelop the 21 acres on the east side of downtown largely as a traditional urban neighborhood, with row houses and front yards facing the streets. An open square, envisioned as a social center and a symbol of the neighborhood, will be created one block removed from northern and southern streets that carry substantial traffic. From the square, a street will connect to a daycare center and a recreation center. The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development is supporting the undertaking, which seeks to provide features residents prefer, including front doors, back yards, and public streets, all of which were commonplace before the Modern era of towers and superblocks.
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This year's awards jury recognized work that valued tectonic rigor and sensitivity to place.

Despite the worry in Washington about an overheated economy, architects have not entirely left the hard times behind. One measure of this is the number of projects submitted to the P/A Awards Program: for the second year in a row, there were just over 500 entries, down 25 percent from two years ago and 45 percent from the mid-1980s. The low number of entries,
Merrill Elam holds a B.Arch. from Georgia Institute of Technology and a Masters in Business Administration from Georgia State University. She is a principal of Scogin Elam & Bray Architects, Atlanta, a founding member and past president of the Architecture Society of Atlanta, a past president of the Georgia State Board of Architects, and a member of the board of directors of Art Papers. She has held visiting professorships at the University of Illinois and the University of Virginia and has been a visiting lecturer at Rice University. Her most recent complete projects include a daycare center in Corning, New York, and the Arizona State University law school in Tempe.

Michael Dennis has been in private practice in Boston since 1981, and prior to that, practiced in Ithaca, New York, from 1970. His present firm, Michael Dennis & Associates, has won P/A Awards recognition for plans for three campuses: Carnegie Mellon, University of Virginia, and University of Southern California. The buildings executed according to the Carnegie Mellon plan have since won AIA honors; while building continues there, the firm has completed a music building at Arizona State University. Dennis received his B.Arch. from the University of Oregon and has taught at Cornell, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Rice. He is now a professor at M.I.T. His writings include the book Court and Garden: From the French Hotel to the City of Modern Architecture.

Richard Fernau earned a B.A. in philosophy at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and an M.Arch. from U.C. Berkeley. Following work as an art director for movie director Jonathan Demme in Hollywood and with Steiger Partner Architekten in Zurich, he started his own practice in 1978. In 1980 he joined in a partnership with Laura Hartman. He has been a professor of architecture at Berkeley since 1981. The firm’s collective housing in Mendocino, California, won a citation in the 41st P/A Awards program.

Nicholas Grimshaw graduated with honors from the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. He has been in private practice ever since, and his present firm, Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners, of which he is chairman, dates from 1980. Grimshaw became known in the 1970s for his buildings for such design-conscious companies as Citroën, Zanussi, BMW, and Herman Miller. The firm’s recent work includes the British Pavilion at Expo 92 in Seville and the International Terminal at Waterloo for the Channel trains; the Terminal received the 1994 Mies van der Rohe Pavilion Award for European Architecture. Grimshaw has been a judge in many competitions is named a Commander of the British Empire.

Emanuel Kelly holds a B.S. in architecture from Drexel University and a Masters in City Planning and Urban Design from Harvard. After working with Mitchell/Giurgola and Stull Associates, he became co-founder and president of the firm of Kelly/Mailllo, Philadelphia, which maintains a varied practice notable for institutional buildings and inner-city housing. Since 1976, he has been a professor at Temple University, and in 1993 he was the first African-American president of the American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter.

however, was more than compensated, in the opinion of the jury, by the diversity and quality of the work they saw. Many architects, it seems, have been putting the bad times to good use.

Michael Dennis: Often in juries like this, people use the excuse that "the work is not good enough," which really means that they can't agree or aren't broad enough to accept various kinds of things. I think there's an amazing amount of good work in this room.

Richard Fernau: The one thing that's always said about the P/A Awards is that it's the usual club: it's small, cliquish, and stylistic. I think one of the biggest messages we could send is that there are a lot of good people working right now and a lot of humble programs where people are doing great work as well as very rarefied commissions where people are continuing to develop their signature styles.

Merrill Elam: It's easy to say right now that everything's going wrong, that everything is hard, and that there's nobody out there making architecture. But Richard is right. What we've seen here is a great number of people doing very modest projects and doing them very well.

Rootedness in a Place

The number of projects overseas continues to grow as a percentage of the entries. However, the jury thought that many of these works looked out of place in or disconnected from their settings; in the end, the jurors selected only one project for a site beyond the boundaries of the U.S., Canada, or Mexico. What impressed the jury most were those projects that seemed well suited to their location.

Nicholas Grimshaw: One of the things I liked was the fact that nearly everyone led in with very sensitive photographs of the setting and ambience of a project, which showed much more response to place than to fashion.

Elam: The personal development of an architect is somehow always touched by the region or location of that person. That makes the work even more diverse, but it also makes it harder for us to understand what people are doing and what restriction or expansiveness a person might feel by being in a certain location.

Emanuel Kelly: In looking at the best work, what really comes out is a search for identity as individuals explore things in a region, within a local place: its culture, setting, and vocabulary of architecture. Some projects are very vernacular, some are exploring Modernist history, and some are about the personality of the architect, but all seem to be searching for an identity of some sort.

Dennis: Someone once said that a dictatorship is like a clipper ship that sails fast at high speed for a short period of time, but sooner or later it's bound to crack up, while democracy is like a raft that's almost unsinkable, but your feet are always in the water. Architecture is like that. If you're doing it for real, your feet are always in the water, engaged with society and embedded in a culture.

One of the encouraging things for me about this batch of work and this jury is that there is a kind of optimism about the condition of architecture. I am greatly relieved that this work is not based on the kind of style-mongering that the Awards Program has been accused of in the past, of people doing a few one-off wacky houses that happen to be in this year's favorite color. The work we are dealing with here is encouraging because it gets around that. If there is a message in it, it is that we live in a different kind of world today and we should, as
architects, behave as well as we can, but differently.

Fernau: Another critical point is that this work doesn't seem embarrassed about what it is. Sometimes when you travel, especially to smaller towns, you have a sense that many practitioners in those places are embarrassed about where they are, about the programs they're offered, and about the sort of milieu they operate in. I don't feel that at all here. These projects are not wanting to be somewhere else. They are optimistic and also rooted, with a point of view about being in a place.

The Problems of Scale

Related to the matter of context is that of scale. The jury found much to admire both at the urban scale and at the scale of the relatively small building, but not a lot in between. To some extent, this is a problem in most architectural juries, since larger complex buildings can be difficult to grasp in the time constraints of judging. But this jury felt there were some inherent problems in the larger buildings they saw. The jury also responded best to those projects that got down to the details, whether the details of the thought process behind the work or the details of the project itself.

Dennis: We didn't see many good-sized buildings, especially good-sized urban buildings, that were well done.

Kelly: That may have a lot to do with how the awards have been perceived by the profession: if it's not flashy or easily perceived, then forget it. The larger projects are not so easily perceived, and so people don't submit them.

Dennis: As a category of buildings, though, it seemed to be light. It is, I think, extremely difficult to do such buildings; it's also because a lot of the things you get as an architect are suburban, not large-scale urban buildings.

Grimshaw: And yet, I must say that I'm encouraged by the level of creativity here at all scales. That is perhaps a function of the hard times. People seem to raise themselves to a higher level, maybe because they have more time, without a lot of work pouring through their offices. A greater level of real care and thought goes into things.

But I would have loved to see more detail in the submissions. In that sense, the individual architectural projects didn't match the urban design ones. The rigor and care with which the urban design projects took you through their thinking, step-by-step, was absolutely terrific.

Elam: With the urban design submissions, though, what you're seeing is a completed product, while the architectural projects, in most cases, are in the schematic phase. If you revisited the architectural work in a year, you would see that level of detail.

Grimshaw: But it depends upon when you start thinking about details. That's a difference between American and British architecture, which is much more rooted in detail.

Fernau: Yet, I think that the work we've identified is thinking about architecture as a constructed, material thing, so much so that I start to make details for them.

Grimshaw: But they're the ones we've chosen, aren't they? I think it is quite interesting that, as a group, we've gone for the projects that are understandable constructionally and that fit their place well.
Mill Road House

Project: Mill Road House, Madison, Alabama. Site: A 132' x 80' lot on the border of a historic district; one of five lots to be developed with single-family houses. Across the street are 1950s-era ranch houses, while the rear of the property opens onto the large gardens of a turn-of-the-century mansion.

Program: This project was commissioned by a developer as a speculative three-bedroom house of no more than 1,600 square feet.

Solution: This single-family house is arranged as a conventional “builder” house might be, with living and dining spaces on the first floor and three bedrooms and two baths on the second floor. But the similarities with conventional spec houses end there. The first floor is a rectangular, open plan, 16' x 48'. The only vertical interior elements are a utility enclosure for a half-bath and laundry, and a skylighted, plywood-clad stair that occupies what is traditionally the place of the hearth, acting as the focal point. From the exterior the stair element reads as a fireplace mass. Approximately three-quarters of the open plan is wrapped with a glass wall. A second layer of cladding — clapboard and wood screen — provides shading and privacy. To the west is a tall screened porch, accessible through a glass wall, with views of the adjacent gardens.
The house's proximity to the historic district is recognized in its wood cladding, which recalls the frame construction of the older buildings. The cladding is not a static wrapper but a dynamic sheath. The fixed clapboards on the north elevation appear to open from a vertical to a horizontal position as the wall meets the grade, offering a glimpse of the glass-walled interior. This side faces the street and gives the house its public scale. The south elevation's wood folding doors (right), combining tongue-and-groove and board-and-batten panels, give the south wall a constantly changing aspect of open and closed elements, of texture and shadow. An element that is conventionally flat and aspatial here acquires depth and a unique identity.

**Jury Discussion:** The jury had high praise for this project. Richard Fernau commented on the house's combination of poetry and practicality. "It's wonderfully inventive," said Fernau, "and clearly a place that you could inhabit in a lot of different ways. Its invention is helping it as a dwelling, as opposed to hindering it." Merrill Elam noted that the canted clapboards "are evocative of a farmhouse in disrepair, where you see through the wood siding, and I find it extremely fascinating."

Emanuel Kelly appreciated the design's understatement: "It doesn't shout, but speaks quietly. The different elevations really begin to reveal themselves differently." Nicholas Grimshaw praised the house for its low cost. "It's economical not only monetarily, but also in the general approach." Michael Dennis summed up the discussion by observing that the project had what the jury had been seeking in all of the projects, "which is a kind of authenticity, a consistency of conviction or idea about something. It's thorough and convincing."

**Designers:** Office dA, Boston (Monica Ponce de Leon, Nader Tehrani, principals).

**Client:** Frank Nola, Madison, Alabama.

**Modelmaker:** Philip Walker (coordinator);

**Model photographer:** Mario d'Artista, Brandon Gamble, Yeong La, Rusty Walker (model team).

**Renderers:** Monica Ponce de Leon, Nathaniel Skerry, Nader Tehrani.
Belkin Art Gallery

Project: The Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

Site: Between the Main Mall of the campus and the Fine Arts Precinct consisting of the architecture, fine arts, music, and theater buildings.

Program: A 15,000-sq-ft gallery divided equally among three functions: exhibition space, exhibition handling and holding, and public programming and administration.

Solution: Because all sides of the site are exposed and equally important, the architects treated each face of the gallery as a front. The basic organization of the building has a linear bar, containing art storage and handling on the first floor and offices on the second, against which stand the spaces for viewing art: the main gallery, print gallery, and archives. Entry to the building is from two directions – the Main Mall and the Fine Arts Precinct – to a point midway along the building, between the main gallery and the print gallery.

The foyer is part of a two-story, skylighted spine that runs the entire length of the structure, connecting the gallery spaces and overlooked by the administrative offices and program areas. Along the spine are also large rolling steel doors, easing the movement of art and equipment to and from the first-floor art storage and handling areas. In the high-bay main gallery, large hinged walls enable the space to be reconfigured easily, with each hinge itself acting, says the architects, "as a reference object mitigating the anonymity of space often associated with this level of flexibility." The use of the spine for both the public and art circulation is repeated at the entry from the Fine Arts Precinct, where a raised platform under a glass canopy functions as both a public entryway and a loading dock.

The building's form closely reflects its structure. The steel bents that frame the linear bar, for example, are apparent in the asymmetrically pitched zinc-clad roof at each end of the building. Likewise, the steel framing of the main gallery, with its cable-braced steel trusses, are revealed in a glass clerestory that runs on top of the glazed brick and block outside wall.

Jury Comments: Most of the jurors commended this building for its modesty and straightforwardness. "I like this project because it is modest in its plan and organization," said Emanuel Kelly, "and yet its section celebrates its different parts. It's also quite expressive of its structure and the way in which it brings light in." "I agree," said Richard Fernau, "I liked its flexibility and the clarity of its planning. At the same time, it is a terribly artful building, but the artfulness doesn't get in the way of its function." Michael Dennis also admired the "fit between the space and the structure. It's the sectional and three-dimensional ideas that elaborate and modulate a very simple plan."

The jurors debated whether or not the building broke enough new ground. There was a question of whether, as Merrill Elam said, "it's a bit nostalgic or derivative. I think it's very sweet, very beautifully done," she added, "but there's not much adventure here. It's a vocabulary that we are comfortable with. There's a Hejduk-like quality to some of the forms, for example. Not that I believe that everything always has to be original in an ostensible sense." "It's a fair point," said Nicholas Grimshaw. "It's a quiet, simple little building. It may not reach the height of great international architecture. "But not everything here has to," added Fernau, "or can."
Architects: Peter Cardew Architects, Vancouver (Peter Cardew, Marc Boutin, Janne Corniel, Don Kasko, project team).

Client: The University of British Columbia (Dr. David Strangway, president; Dr. Donald Paterson, associate dean of arts; Scott Watson, director, fine arts gallery; Tim Miner, director, campus planning and development; Henry Ahking, project manager, campus planning and development).


Model makers: Peter Wood, Tom Bessai, Tim Newton.

Model photos: Simon Scott Associates.
AWARD: BELKIN ART GALLERY

MODEL SHOWING COMBINED BUILDING ENTRY AND LOADING DOCK

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1 FOYER
2 RECEPTION
3 PRINT GALLERY
4 GALLERY
5 STORAGE
6 SHIPPING/RECEIVING
7 LOADING
8 HOLDING
9 STORAGE
10 WORKROOM
Lower Manhattan Plan

**Project**: Lower Manhattan Urban Design Plan, New York.

**Site**: An area of more than one square mile, from Chambers Street and the Brooklyn Bridge approaches south to the tip of the Battery, which constitutes the third largest downtown business district in the nation.

**Program**: To propose physical improvements that will address long-term weaknesses of the area as a setting for business activity, which are underscored by the current 28 percent vacancy rate in its commercial real estate.

**Solution**: The plan identifies three major physical limitations of the area, which will limit its future prosperity, regardless of "conventional solutions such as better lighting and signage, more trees, more parks, or even revived commercial development." These limitations are:

1. A flawed street network, confusing and discontinuous, which the plan would alter with new rights of way and public open spaces that would yield "a coordinated street network, without losing the character of the different districts."

2. Restricted transportation connections, with no direct connections for suburban commuters, to which the plan would add a new centrally located Long Island Railroad terminal and ferry terminals with service to other suburbs; there would also be new continuous east-west routes to improve automobile circulation.

3. Insufficient housing to support round-the-clock use of the infrastructure and commercial services, a need which would not be met by expanding housing solely in Battery Park City and Tribeca, at or beyond the edges of the area; the plan proposes 6,000 new dwelling units in reused office buildings and 10,000 units of new housing to be located around – and stimulated by – new residential squares carved out of the existing fabric. (The area now has only 6,800 units, 4,500 of which are peripherally located in Battery Park City.)

The plan also proposes changes in the plan for the northern portions of Battery Park City, where thousands of housing units are to be built, that would integrate the area more effectively with the existing street grid.

The documentation behind the plan includes thorough inventories of vacant and underutilized land and buildings and of landmark structures, officially designated and otherwise. The plan was developed with representatives of public agencies, and it has been presented to community leaders and government officials in conferences and public meetings. It has been accepted by the clients who commissioned it, but the process of implementing it is only beginning.

**Jury Discussion**: The jury's reaction touched on the sheer audacity of redesigning Lower Manhattan. As Michael Dennis put it, "If you asked someone what they were doing and they told you they were working on a plan for Lower Manhattan, you would think they were on something pretty strong." The term megalomaniac comes to mind," added Nicholas Grimshaw. But the discussion soon focused on the plan's persuasive qualities. An enthusiastic Richard Fernau felt, "It's just terribly intelligently written and clearly laid out. Someone once said that master plans have to be clear because when the planner goes away, if the principles aren't apparent and can't catch the imagination of folks who are less involved, it will just disappear." Michael Dennis agreed: "The way they have gone in and found exactly which buildings are good and which are vacant and made a strategy for transforming and boosting that area of the city - knitting together relatively small things - is almost miraculous. What really blew me away was the adjustments to the upper parts of Battery Park City, where the actual plan calls for yet another piece that is disjointed from the city. They make three moves and integrate that piece back into the city." Merrill Elam cautioned that they had rejected another urban design entry because too little was said about implementation strategies; all the jurors agreed that putting this plan into effect could be a long and convoluted process, but they were convinced that it had exceptional power to attract public and official support. Fernau attributed this in part to its lack of the usual verbiage: "It has a confidence that cuts through and says, This is what I'm doing, and this is why, I think it's brilliant."
EXISTING PROPOSAL FOR BATTERY PARK CITY NORTH

PROPOSED BATTERY PARK CITY NORTH WITH NEW TRIBECA SQUARE

EXISTING URBAN FABRIC

PROPOSED FABRIC CENTERED ON NEW SQUARES

AWARD: LOWER MANHATTAN PLAN

January 1995
EXISTING BATTERY PARK WITH ILL-DEFINED EDGE AND AWKWARD ROADWAYS (ABOVE). PROPOSED BATTERY PARK WITH STRONGER EDGES AND SINGLE PARKWAY ARC (BELOW).
M*A*S*H Schoolhouse

MODEL LOOKING TOWARD ENTRANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE AREA

MODEL AND SURROUNDING DESERT TERRAIN, LOOKING TOWARD NORTHEAST
Project: M*A*S*H Imagine-One-Room Schoolhouse, Las Vegas.

Site: A slightly sloped corner lot east of downtown with native desert vegetation, part of a larger master plan for a "Mobile Assisted Shelter for the Homeless" (M*A*S*H) that includes housing and meal service for the homeless.

Program: An 8,200-square-foot school and childcare facility serving the children of homeless families living there temporarily, with different areas for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and elementary (K-5) students. The building also includes an office and a library.

Solution: Because of the school's need for flexibility, the architects employed the idea of a "one-room schoolhouse." A main room with a gently curved roof houses all but the infants; a low wall separates the preschool from the K-5 area. The infants and the administrative area are housed in a linear building next to the main room. A second-floor loft library overlooks the main room. A fragment of the roof stretches across the edge of the playground, offering shade and creating a thick wall for storage, cabinets, and sinks. The architects say the school is a place "of the ground, not in the ground, a place which protects, but does not isolate, a temporary place of respite and learning for young minds whose transient view of the earth has left them groundless." This building consists of concrete masonry walls, steel primary roof beams, and prefabricated plywood joists. Construction is expected to begin in 1995 or 1996.

Jury Discussion: Jurors admired the project for demonstrating that social conscience and adept form-making are not mutually exclusive. Nicholas Grimshaw called it "almost pure art, with absolute precision in the working out of the plan." The jurors were also glad to have a project of this size among the winners. Said Merrill Elam: "It's nice to be able to find a single-room project you can feel good about."

Architects: Morphosis, Santa Monica, California (Thom Mayne, principal; John Enright, project architect; Erik Andersson, Magdalena Glen, Blayne Imata, Brad Johnson, Jelena Mijanovic, Martin Krammer, Kinga Racon, project team).

Joint Venture Architects: Lucchesi Galati Architects, Las Vegas (Craig Galati, principal; J. Denise Cook, project manager; Rudy Starks, Jr., Dwayne Eshenbaugh, project team).

Client: City of Las Vegas, housing division.

Consultants: Ove Arup & Partners, Los Angeles, engineering (Alan Locke, principal; Bruce Gibbons, structural engineer).

Model Photographers: Erik Andersson, Jelena Mijanovic.
Jury Discussion: "What this is is a modest resistance document," said Merrill Elam. "They're trying to resist bated this year. Many buildings residential guidelines are currently being used volunteered to be out of production by the year 2036. And the shapes and materials of its rural buildings. From these the designers have developed studies of how tourism oriented toward agriculture and vernacular architecture can be used to preserve buildings, landscapes, the farm economy, and ultimately a way of life. One study proposes an agriculture and tourism center that would function as a market and meeting hall. Another sets forth landscape design guidelines that would regulate placement and massing of residential, commercial, civic, and religious buildings. A third, called "rural architectural guidelines," prescribes, with easy-to-understand illustrations, the proper shapes and materials for roofs, walls, porches, windows, doors, and gates. Guidelines would be incorporated into a zoning overlay ordinance. Other studies analyze possibilities and design concepts for bed & breakfasts and a bike shop/gas station and show how to restore buildings damaged by Hurricane Andrew. Many buildings have been restored since the project began. The residential guidelines are currently being used voluntarily. A county ordinance is to be drafted and debated this year.

Jury Discussion: "What this is is a modest resistance document," said Merrill Elam. "They're trying to resist a little bit of a greater Dade County master plan which allows certain development linkages going through the zone of Redland, and widening of roads. They would like to preserve the idea of a rural community and the agricultural landscape as well. The study is beautifully done." Jurors praised its thoroughness, noting that the booklike document provides a historical overview of the people and the agriculture, even telling "how many avocados were grown," and identifies who owned which house and how it was damaged. "This is terrific," said Michael Dennis. Richard Fernau praised its "intelligence and clarity." Of the "graphlike tabulations of building features," Fernau said, "I've never seen that done quite like that before, and it's terribly useful. They're sort of bringing it home in a way that is absolutely clear and inventive and useful," with the result that they can "communicate very complicated material quickly to people who may or may not be versed in this."

"So what they're trying to do is tie together agriculture and tourism as a kind of educational force," Elam said, citing the tourism center. "They've designed a little building, and it's very much in keeping with the place that they've made the proposal for." She pointed out that the designers understood that in a rural landscape "the distances between the structures are as important as the structures themselves." A misgiving cited by Elam was that, as in preservation programs generally, the plan may not be "open enough to keep the place from becoming a museum area."

"It's a highly intelligent piece of work by any standard" and "gives you a marvelous sense of the place," Nicholas Grimshaw said, but he remained troubled by the question "Is it viable? That's what I couldn't quite get to the bottom of." Emanuel Kelly said he too wondered whether the steps laid out in the plan are enough. "In a sense it's a passive document, isn't it? It says 'Let's sit here and hope,' to a degree." On the other hand, he said, the plan "does come forward and shows you what the features and characteristics of that place are" and he argued that it resists market forces in Dade County. "So I saw it as being active."

Urban designers: University of Miami School of Architecture, Coral Gables (Assistant Professor Rocco J. Ces, principal designer/author/editor; Assistant Professor Erick Valle, computer maps coordinator; students Mohamed Abe Razak, Claudia Bancalari, Stuart Baur, Alisa Block, Hector Fernandez, Rebecca Freund, John Garcia, Robert Herrick, Nancy Hills, Sheila Iglesias, Markus Keltiah, Thuy Kieutran, Marcelino Marrero, Christine Marzouca, Dan Negas, Jorge Planas, Albert Rodriguez, Kevin Storm, David Rosenblum, Miriam Trapp); Metro Dade County Historic Preservation Division, Miami (Director Margot Ammidown, co-principal author/editor; Teresa Van Dyke, historic surveys coordinator); Anhinga Design, Inc. (Maria I. Nardi, designer/research and publication coordinator). Consultants (essays): Associate Professor Ted Baker, Florida International University School of Design; Robert Carr, Metro Dade County Historic Preservation Division; David Copps, The Trust for Public Land; Brent Probinsky, Tropical Fruit Advisory Council, with assistance from Bob Usherson and Reginald Walters, Metro Dade Planning Department. Client: John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Miami.
Strawberry Vale School

Project: Strawberry Vale Elementary School, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.
Site: A gently sloping site bounded by Rosedale Park to the south and single-family houses to the east, west, and north. There are also small-scale agricultural plots and natural wetlands in the area. The site includes an existing school building, which will be demolished, and a one-room schoolhouse, built in 1893, to be relocated on-site and used as a preschool facility.

Program: A 35,446-square-foot elementary school for 448 students, with classrooms, special education rooms, a computer applications classroom, a library with a media retrieval technology center, a gymnasium, a multipurpose room, a recycling room, and administrative offices.

Solution: The architects' organization of the site was designed to document the history of education there: the relocated one-room schoolhouse will mark the site's entry point; the foundations and possibly some columns and beams of the existing school will be retained as raised outdoor play, planting, and gathering areas, marking the midpoint of the site's history; and the new school building will be located on a newly acquired parcel of land between the existing school and the park, and will represent the current status of the site's educational function. The siting is also intended to play a role in mediating the new school's environmental impact. Biodiversity and hydrology, for example, have been developed as part of the overall program. Rainwater from wall and roof surfaces is collected in concrete trenches located below roof overhangs and funneled to a shallow marsh to be filtered and cleansed by natural microbial growth. The orientation of the building, too, is driven by the natural environment. Placed on-grade, all of the classrooms are oriented to the south to optimize natural illumination of the interiors and to maximize visual connection to the park. To maintain the orientation and keep the length of the school within the site's limits, the classrooms are grouped in pods of four, creating a series of usable interior and exterior "in-between spaces"; a variety of movable carts, holding materials for art, science, and cooking lessons, are designed to be "plugged in" to these common areas. A meandering circulation spine provides access to each pod of classrooms and to the school's other components (library, gym, etc.). The spine, like the building at large, is characterized by exposed construction systems. Steel columns and beams act as the primary support structure; the foundations and floors are reinforced concrete. The walls and the aluminum-coated steel-clad roofs are framed and sheathed in wood. Mechanical systems, including ductwork, have been left exposed for easy maintenance. Occupancy is slated for January 1996.

Jury Discussion: The jurors felt that this project was a "virtuoso" synthesis of form, function, and context. Dennis thought that the project transcended the Bauhaus-like diagram typical of school design, "to be a kind of blending of cellular and public spaces that has a funky, idiosyncratic nature" appropriate for children. The jury also admired the inventive and rigorous logic of the plan, particularly the design of an irregular circulation spine to give a unique identity to each of the uniformly sized classrooms. For Kelly, the rhythm of the roofline, the sunlit interiors, and the exposed ductwork create a "celebration" of place.

Architects: Patkau Architects, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada (Grace Cheung, Michael Cunningham, Michael Kothke, Tim Newton, John Patkau, Patricia Patkau, David Shone, Peter Suter, Allan Teramura, John Wall, Jacqueline Wang, project team; Tim Newton, John Wall, modelmakers).

Client: Greater Victoria School District, Victoria, British Columbia.

Consultants: C.Y. Loh Associates, structural; D.W. Thomson Consultants, mechanical; Reid Crowther & Partners, electrical; Moura Quayle/Lanarc Consultants, landscape; Gage Babcock & Associates, fire protection; Barron Kennedy Lyzun & Associates, acoustics; Dr. Ray Cole, Environmental Research Group, School of Architecture, U. of British Columbia, materials; B.T.Y. Group, quantity surveyor; Susan Morris Specifications, specifications; Vaitkunas Design, signage.

Model photos: James Dow.
Boston Children’s Museum

Site: Boardwalk and Fort Point Channel, adjacent to the existing Children’s Museum.
Program: 5,900-sq-ft lobby; 7,400-sq-ft bridge and barge containing exhibition area, water play area, observation decks, and workroom; 10,900-sq-ft renovation of museum.
Solution: Responding to the museum’s desire for a lobby with greater presence on the boardwalk, the architects designed a copper-clad, heavy-timber “wave” form for the space, with entry under a solid and woven free-form sheet-metal canopy. A second sheet-metal canopy behind the wave marks the entry to an existing steel-and-glass elevator. A balcony and a ramped gallery in the wave lead to a steel-and-glass articulated bridge that connects the existing museum to new water-related exhibition space built on a pontoon in the Fort Point Channel. Constructed of stainless-steel-clad forms, framed in steel and concrete, the “barge” features a free-form climbing structure, large windows through which visitors can observe and control experiments related to the channel, and a large exterior observation and activities deck facing Boston’s financial district.

Jury Discussion: The jury liked the way the form of the building related to both its function as a water-related exhibition space and to its site in the Fort Point Channel. “In many children’s museums,” said Michael Dennis, “there is a lack of connection between the exhibits and the form of the building. Here, the architecture is related to the exhibition and its site.” The dynamic and expressive form of the building also appealed to the jury because of what it might teach children about architecture. “These children may grow up with the idea that buildings can actually be different shapes,” said Merrill Elam. Two other jurors praised the functionality of the building. “It seems eminently habitable,” said Richard Fernau, “and appropriately sited.” “I voted for it for the same reason,” said Emanuel Kelly. “Its forms seem appropriate to its playful program. And it makes you feel the sense of coming from one kind of structure to another, with the regular loft building in the background as a foil.” The one note of skepticism was that its form tended to be excessive. “The wave has a clarity of form,” observed Nicholas Grimshaw, “but then you get this little piece of wire mesh off the front of it.”

Architects: Frank O. Gehry & Associates, Santa Monica, California (Frank O. Gehry, design principal; Randy Jefferson, project principal; Edwin Chan, project designer; Bruce Biesman Simons, project architect/manager; Jonathan Davis, Lisa Towning, Patricia McCaul, Michael Gale, Kristin Woehl, Philip Rowe, project team).
Executive Architects: Schwartz/Silver Architects, Boston.
Client: The Children’s Museum, Boston.
Consultants: Boston Building Consultants, structural; T.M.P. Consulting Engineers, mechanical; Lottero & Mason Associates, electrical; Childs Engineering, marine; Barr & Barr Builders, preconstruction services.
CLOSE-UP OF MODEL SHOWING BRIDGE CONNECTING THE LOBBY TO THE EXHIBITION SPACE

SECTION THROUGH LOBBY
1 VESTIBULE
2 LOBBY
3 RAMP TO BRIDGE
4 OBSERVATION

UPPER FLOOR PLAN
1 RAMP
2 BRIDGE
3 CLIMBING STRUCTURE

ENTRY LEVEL PLAN
1 LOBBY
2 ELEVATOR
3 EXHIBITS
4 OBSERVATION DECK
Project: 18th & Arkansas, San Francisco.

Site: A 1.48-acre wedge of land with an 85-foot grade change on Potrero Hill, a mixed-use neighborhood.

Program: A residential development aimed at providing housing for a cross-section of the community, including one single-family house (2,100 sq ft), 24 flats (1,000 to 1,150 sq ft), 10 townhouses (1,200 to 1,500 sq ft), 30 live/work loft units (900 to 1,200 sq ft), 29 subsidized artists' live/work lofts (500 to 1,100 sq ft), and communal performance and work spaces.

Solution: In a highly specific response to the immediate context, the architects have placed the townhouses and flats on Arkansas Street, across from a block of traditional San Francisco row houses, while the loft buildings and live/work units face the commercial and light industrial buildings of 18th Street. The single-family house is placed at the top of the hill, farthest from the industrial area. The housing forms an L on the site, enclosing a triangular semi-public courtyard, accessible to the street via open routes through the buildings. Within the courtyard is a building housing the communal spaces of the live/work lofts. Inside, the live/work lofts have ceilings up to 16 feet, with variable floor plans and both north and south exposure. The complex is of standard wood-stud construction reinforced with steel framing: stucco, wood, and corrugated metal comprise its cladding. Construction is under way, with completion expected in March.

Jury Discussion: The jurors were split on this project, with Michael Dennis and Emanuel Kelly voicing strong support for its contextualism and citing the project to argue for stylistic diversity among the winners. Nicholas Grimshaw found the project "a nice scheme and a nice idea, but architecturally banal," adding that "the planning ideas here are fairly simple ... that's not a highly intellectual kind of exercise." Merrill Elam, too, was unimpressed, criticizing the off-axis stairwells of the live/work lofts as "arbitrary" and "forced." Richard Fernau also had reservations, but supported the project's aims. "I've seen so much in San Francisco try to be San Francisco," said Fernau, "and this does a satisfactory job."

Architects: David Baker Associates, San Francisco (David Baker, principal; Peter Mackenzie, project manager; Rita Burgess, Nancy Whitcombe, Anne Torney, Marcos Ancinas, Buddy Williams, Jeff Burris, Charles Trapolin, Jane Snyder, Christine Kiesling, Simon Smith, Louis Abel, Jane Martin, project team).

Client: McKenzie, Rose & Holliday, a private developer, working with an artists' collective that will fund and own the live/work component.

Consultants: Peter Culley & Associates, structural; JYA, mechanical; Miller Company, landscape; Geomatrix Consultants, geotechnical; BEC, energy.


Modemakers: Marcos Ancinas, Buddy Williams.
FIRST-FLOOR PLAN OF ARTISTS' LIVE/WORK LOFTS

A COMPOSITE OF TYPICAL APARTMENT, LOFT, AND TOWNHOUSE FLOOR PLANS
Televisa Mixed-Use Building

**Project:** Televisa Mixed-Use Building, Mexico City.

**Site:** A trapezoidal, full-block lot in a dense urban area on the edge of Mexico City's Colonial district.

**Program:** An 80,000-square-foot facility containing parking, office space, and a dining area for employees and executives of the Televisa television network, which occupies an adjacent eight-story office building.

**Solution:** Responding to what they call a “fragile context,” an “island of space,” the architects created two distinct forms, each exposing a hard protective face to the street. The parking garage is a dark rectangular masonry volume with only two openings, tucked into the less public east and north façades. The cafeteria volume above is covered by a silvery metallic shell — elliptical in section — that presents “a hard exoskeleton to the main vehicular artery” to the west. On the east side, the shell opens up to expose views of the company’s existing building. Separating the two volumes is an office floor with recessed glass curtain walls that define a continuous outdoor terrace along the building’s perimeter. The building has concrete seismic walls and concrete slabs on steel joists, with a steel-framed cafeteria enclosure. Construction is under way with completion expected in May.

**Jury Discussion:** Richard Fernau, a supporter of the project, said he found it “a sort of audacious – the character of its face and its iconic quality.” Nicholas Grimshaw thought the bold form had “charm” and said it would make “a nice contrast” to its “non-descript” surroundings. Merrill Eman was reminded of the era when “radio stations all built buildings, and they were always fascinating new buildings.” Emanuel Kelly voiced reservations, but added that “in terms of looking at an exploration of form, I support it.”

**Architects:** TEN Arquitectos, Mexico City (Enrique Norten, Bernardo Gomez-Pimienta, principals; Blanca Casañeda, project coordinator; Gustavo Espitia, site supervision; Raul Acevedo, Jesus Alfredo Dominguez, Héctor Gámiz, Rebeca Goldin, Margarita Goyzueta, Robert Steinberg, Maria Ceballos, project team).

**Client:** Televisa S.A. de C.V.

**Consultants:** Ove Arup + Partners, New York, and Colinas de Buen, S.A., Mexico City, structural.

**Contractor:** PYC S.A.

**Construction management:** Ricardo Pasarelas.

**Modelmakers:** Gustavo Espitia, Jaime Cabezas.

**Model photography:** Luis Gordoa, Armando Hashimoto.
...sketch have proposed this form of understanding the urban space of Mexico City. The housing complex created by ... different way of solving the problem of social interest housing. Norman's remarkable solution is 'taking over the most elementarybourgeois' ... spatial events has been created, within which the arrangement of the traditional 'ive...
West Main Street Corridor

**Project:** West Main Street Corridor Urban Design Plan, Charlottesville, Virginia.

**Site:** A scruffy corridor a mile long and 150 to 500 feet wide, running from the edge of the University of Virginia to the downtown. Its existing buildings include restaurants, stores, auto and tire dealerships, offices, and churches. Empty stores and vacant lots testify to the area's deteriorated condition.

**Program:** Bring vitality and prosperity to the corridor by constructing university-related buildings on vacant land, increasing commercial development, and linking varied uses into a continuous and coherent streetscape. The plan calls for the university to place two or three residential colleges of 250 to 350 students each in new buildings on West Main, and it envisions a community recreation center, a community learning center with day and night care, a community park, 70 units of community housing, a medical hotel, a new train station connection to West Main, and new parking areas.

**Solution:** The plan fills gaps in the streetscape with new buildings that offer variety and liveliness at ground level and provide "eyes on the street." Open space will mainly be in well-defined forms such as courtyards facing the street. The architects call their approach an "incremental growth/nodes of intervention" strategy, which recognizes that diverse urban settings today do not lend themselves to the imposition of a single "total vision," as in a conventional master plan. The Charlottesville plan operates on a scale small enough to accommodate neighborhood-based developers. By carefully selecting sites for development, many of them vacant lots, the plan keeps what already functions well, such as historic buildings, and avoids displacing current residents or businesses. The residential colleges reinforce a three- to four-story scale for the district. One of the colleges is to contain a "spine" linking the street to the University Hospital. The plan aims to give students and faculty members a more urban experience and at the same time bolster Charlottesville's declining downtown. City Council approved the plan in June 1993. The city, the university, and community organizations are using the recommendations in continuing discussions about projects to be undertaken.

**Jury Discussion:** Jurors commended the project for the example it sets of a university working with the local community. Merrill Elam described the plan as "outreach of a university campus which normally stays fenced in, and seemingly an enterprise that would benefit both the university and the neighborhood. And they've involved both segments in their process." Emanuel Kelly said the Charlottesville project "shows a role of the university" in offering leadership to the local community. "There are a lot of places where that doesn't exist and ought to happen. That's the thing that makes it special." He added that "it knits together and tries to foster new relationships." Jurors noted that in addition to student housing, the plan includes market-rate and subsidized housing and is expected to accommodate university employees and others.


**Consultants:** Halcyon Real Estate Advisors, Ernst & Young, economic consultant; Real Estate Enterprises, Inc.

**Modelmakers:** University of Virginia architecture students (Martha Stockton, director, and Victor Liu, Ann Stokes, Edith MacArthur, Chris McAless, Adonica Inzer, Mary Ruffin Hanbury, Dave Williams).

**Renderer:** Wesley Page.
Project: Leeper Studio Complex, Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, Florida.

Site: An existing arts center campus threaded into 350 acres of dense jungle less than half a mile from the busy strip of U.S. Highway 1. Existing structures are pole-supported wood frame buildings and include housing, an administration building and gallery, a workshop, and an outdoor theater. The 100-year flood elevation is 7 feet above grade and the maximum building height is 40 feet.

Program: To serve “artist in residence” programs that bring in known artists on three- to six-week residencies to teach younger colleagues, the new structures include: a black box theater; dance rehearsal space; painting, sculpture, and recording studios. The total of programmed spaces is 10,630 square feet; the total square footage, including boardwalks, is 16,713.

Solution: The several new buildings will be arrayed along a boardwalk laid out in an irregular arc. The intent is to “heighten the visual and sensorial effects” of the indigenous growth and maintain the labyrinthine effect of moving along a jungle path, so that the complex is seen only a little at a time. The boardwalk itself is seen as “at once theater, street, and informal gathering area.”

The design of individual buildings was based on research of construction in similar latitudes, observing ways to temper climatic conditions with structures using readily available materials. Each programmed activity will occupy a simple volume, with building framework exposed on the interior to provide a sense of layered enclosure. The envelopes of these buildings will incorporate a variety of louvers, north-facing glass walls, light monitors, hopper windows, and wind scoops.

Construction will be a hybrid of wood frame and heavy timber systems, supported on concrete piers. Stained cypress cladding will be fastened with exposed stainless steel screws; roofs will be of lead-coated copper. There will be adjustable louvers of cedar and glass.

Construction cost is estimated at $1.5 million and will be met by contributions from individuals, the Jenkins Foundation, and the Florida Council for the Arts. The complex is under construction and is scheduled for completion early this year.

Jury Discussion: There was much enthusiasm for the way the buildings relate to their jungle setting. Richard Fernau observed that “it was terribly good about making architecture out of the requirements of a place. It’s on piers, and it deals with ventilation and shading.” Emanuel Kelly admired the way “each little pavilion is similar in construction, but its orientation and size is different.” Merrill Elam observed that “it is closely related in the way it handles building forms, roofs, and so on, to the school we saw in Canada” (p. 80). Nicholas Grimshaw was more concerned about what he saw as a lack of discipline: “I think what is good about the school in Canada is that it’s got more rigor than this. This is more playing with things.” Michael Dennis pointed out the difference in the two programs: “The school has a more rigorous program to begin with. Here there is an inventiveness and something like arbitrariness, which may come from the fact that it’s a series of simple volumes with very simple requirements; that’s both its strength and its weakness. I guess I would tip the balance in favor of inventiveness.”
Architects: Thompson & Rose Architects, Cambridge, Massachusetts (Charles Rose and Maryann Thompson, project designers; Michael Grant, Joseph MacDonald, Warren Van Wees, Michael Breau, Francisco Thebaud, Carrie Alice Johnson, Frank Dill, Patrick Maguire, Lisa Iwamoto, Michael Rose, and Tim Downing, project team).

Client: Leeper Studio Complex, Atlantic Center for the Arts; Ted Potter, Former Executive Director; Suzanne Tetscher, Current Executive Director.

Consultants: Ocmulgee Associates, structural engineers; Jerry K. Finley, civil engineers; M-Engineering, mechanical and electrical engineers; PSI-Jammal Associates, geotechnical engineers; Cambridge Acoustical, acoustical engineers; Epoch Properties, construction manager.

Modelmaker: Michael Grant

Model photos: Craig Scott

Renderers: Lisa Iwamoto, Joe MacDonald

P/A January 1995
Redevelopment of Eustis, Florida

Project: Redevelopment Plan for Eustis, Florida.
Site: A Florida Redevelopment District covering over one square mile of Eustis, a town of 14,000 people 30 miles north of Orlando. The district includes Eustis’s downtown, its lakefront, and a low-lying, blighted ethnic neighborhood east of downtown.
Program: A redevelopment plan to manage the flow of storm water, protect wetlands, and encourage the revitalization of downtown and East Eustis.
Solution: The planners looked to two public works projects already under consideration—wetlands and storm water management—to guide their efforts at revitalization, arguing that the future of the public realm is tied to "the utilitarian yet performative logic of infrastructure." The plan turns these infrastructure requirements into public amenities. In East Eustis, the plan calls for the creation of a linear public park in the protected wetland. Instead of extending the street grid of Eustis into this part of town, the planners used the wetlands and the storm water channels to shape streets and pedestrian corridors. On the lakefront, a public park will include four treatment basins for storm water runoff, in accordance with new state laws requiring municipalities to treat storm water before it enters state water systems. These basins will treat the water organically, with plant life and aerating fountains, obviating the need for a mechanical treatment facility on this valuable site. The East Eustis portion of the plan has been adopted as part of the city’s comprehensive plan; design and construction should take five years. The lakefront proposal has received some approvals but is currently being delayed by a dispute over permitting.

Jury Discussion: Merrill Elam said, "It seemed to me that the basic problem here was a small town that didn’t know how to move or how to continue its de-
development because of the sensitive water table. This study is about how to reconsider the water table and the wetlands and make a balance so that you can then continue to build in the city itself." The jurors were impressed with the plan's design aspects and the way it integrated ecological and urban design issues, but had reservations about their own lack of understanding of its technical points. Said Richard Fernau: "It's so right-minded, one hopes it works." Elam said, "The other thing I appreciate about this little study is that it actually extends into the design of the park itself and is really very handsome."

Architects: Stephen Luoni, University of Florida, Gainesville (Stephen Luoni, project director and designer; Matthew Sullivan, project assistant; Jim Busbee, Rick Penza, assistants).

Client: City of Eustis (Michael Stearman, city manager; Alton Roane, director of development services, Alvin Jackson, Jr., director of human services division).

Consultants: Department of Urban and Regional Planning, College of Architecture, University of Florida, redevelopment and planning guidelines; William Weismantel, director, Community Redevelopment Center, College of Architecture, University of Florida, planning; Conklin, Porter & Holmes Engineers, storm water treatment.


Model photographer: Robert Blatter.

Aerial photographer: Porter's Photo.

Context photographer: Joanna Doyle.
Huron Wendat Museum

**Project:** Huron Wendat Nation Museum, Wendake, Québec, Canada.

**Site:** A 40m x 50m lot bordering the Saint Charles River, just upstream from Cabircoubat Falls.

**Program:** A reception area, exhibit and interpretive spaces for cultural artifacts, and storage indoors and outdoors.

**Solution:** The 1,500-square-meter museum takes its design and construction cues from the elongated, traditional lodgings of the Huron Wendat people. The site, formerly occupied by a gas station, marks the start of a path to the falls near the museum. The density of three clustered buildings is akin to that of the village's urban fabric.

The museum is structured as three buildings, with the visitors’ entrance adjacent to an interpretive gallery space that stretches along a cemetery to the east. This wing also houses a gift shop, visitor services, and a conference room. Visitors then proceed west to the main gallery, a single, high-ceilinged space over which hovers a dramatic shed roof, supported by columns independent of the gallery enclosures. From the gallery visitors can ascend a flight of stairs to a covered roof terrace, to enjoy sweeping views of the river. A second, smaller gallery is found farther west, and it too has a roof terrace, partially covered with a shed roof. The terrace roofs of both exhibit wings provide protection for outside displays. The museum exhibit wings are wood-panel construction, with wood roofs. The reception wing is of rubble masonry with a wood roof.

**Jury Discussion:** Juror Richard Fernau praised the design for its affinity with the vernacular architecture. "I think it has a sense of where it is," said Fernau, adding, "I would be delighted to be going through a small town and find something like that." Fernau was also intrigued by its formal suggestion of a common vernacular form, "this notion of creating a roof and then pulling trailers and different things under it." Nicholas Grimshaw was not as convinced, citing the roofs as not entirely authentic: "It's a device which has been planted for visual reasons." For Emanuel Kelly, the museum's power comes from its context, "its symbolic contrast to the church and the town."
Architects: Pierre Thibault, Architecte, Québec City, Canada (Pierre Thibault, principal designer; Chantal Douville, Jean-François Fortin, Eric Thibodeau, project designers).
Client: Museum Arouāne Corporation.
Consultants: Marcel Leblanc, structural; J.H. Consultant, mechanical and electrical.
Model Photographer: Brigitte Ostiguy.
Modemaker: Jean-François Fortin.
Renderer: Julie Lafrenière.
Richard Allen Homes

Project: Redevelopment of Richard Allen Homes, Philadelphia.

Site: Eight superblocks with 1,324 public housing apartments completed in 1941, in uniform three- and four-story buildings, structurally and mechanically obsolete, crime-ridden and 20 percent vacant, located only 12 blocks north of City Hall, in an area that has been decaying but is very convenient.

Program: Conversion of the 1,324 apartments to yield 724 rowhouse units. Unit mix is now 83 percent one- and two-bedroom units, many of which are vacant because the number of potential tenants who can legally live in such units is very low; after remodeling, 85 percent of units will be three-bedroom or larger.

Solution: New streets will be introduced to restore the grid pattern that was interrupted to create the eight superblocks of the existing project. The new street pattern will establish planning continuity with surrounding rowhouse neighborhoods, reducing the public housing isolation and stigma. Unit entrances will be reoriented toward the streets, since the midblock courts through which residents originally entered have long since become much more dangerous than the streets. Portions of the existing open space will be fenced off as private back yards. The units will be converted from the existing duplex-over-flat configuration to three-story rowhouses with entrances from existing or reinstated streets. Premanufactured wood-frame additions to the concrete structures will add space for additional bedrooms, and gabled roofs will change the image of the building, save on maintenance, and eliminate illegal access via roofs.

The planning process included resident interviews and a game in which residents could state their preferences by apportioning a fixed number of points among price-tagged amenities for the interiors and exteriors of their units. An interactive decision-making process yielded hard-won consensus among residents, neighbors, and local and federal agencies. The design concept did not conform to local zoning, which has been revised accordingly, or fit any existing HUD programs. HUD has since recognized the scheme as a national model and has approved $50 million in funding. The first half of the development is funded and scheduled for construction from fall 1995 to early 1999; the second half is to be constructed from 1998 to 2001.

Architects: Wallace Roberts & Todd, Philadelphia (Gilbert A. Rosenthal, partner-in-charge; Richard W. Huffman, planning principal; William Cline, project director; David Stembel, Joe Salerno, Joe Sorenson, Randy Stephens, Mark Clearwood, Debbie Tevlin, staff).

Client: Philadelphia Housing Authority.

Consultants: Environmental Research Group, programming; Phoenix Design, data gathering and policy analysis; S. Huffman Associates, marketing; Paul H. Yeomans, Inc., MEP engineering; Wittes & Associates, structural engineers; Designworks, graphics).

Modelmaker: Robert Drummond.
1 PROVIDE FENCED BACKYARDS
2 FACE ALL UNITS TO STREET
3 CREATE THREE-STORY TOWNHOUSES
4 ELIMINATE SHARED STAIRS
5 REMOVE WALLS FOR ADDITIONS
6 REMOVE INTERIOR PARTITIONS
7 PRE-MANUFACTURED ADDITIONS
8 ADD STOOPS AND PORCHES
9 ADD GABLE ROOFS
10 SEPARATE MECHANICAL ROOM FOR EACH BUILDING

EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC SHOWING NEW ELEMENTS ADDED TO BUILDINGS

EXISTING SITE PLAN INDICATING UNIT ENTRANCES

PROPOSED SITE PLAN, SHOWING NEW STREETS AND FENCED BACKYARDS
Fresco Chapel

Project: Byzantine Fresco Chapel, Houston, Texas.
Site: A 27,135 square foot lot with large deciduous trees, in a residential neighborhood that encompasses the city's museum district.
Program: A small votive chapel that would return two 13th-Century Byzantine frescos (a dome and an apse) to their original spiritual function. These art works were stolen from a chapel in Cyprus after the Turkish occupation in 1974 and "ransomed." In the late 1980s the Menil Foundation of Houston restored the frescos, and they are now on a 20-year loan to the foundation from the Church of Cyprus.
Solution: As a secure setting in which to display the frescos, the chapel is not unlike a building-sized reliquary. The site is walled with fieldstone and concrete block. Within this precinct the 4,000-square-foot chapel divides the lot, with parking to the south and a private courtyard to the north. The interior spaces consist of the chapel's central volume, a sacristy, a lobby, a vestibule, and storage. The central volume will be constructed of precast panels and cast-in-place concrete. Within this box is an exposed steel structure that supports the roof and allows a continuous perimeter skylight. The other spaces will be constructed of burnished concrete block and precast concrete panels. The building's precast exterior will be accented with vertical strips of lead-coated copper.

The frescos will be displayed on a metal and glass framework recalling the interior form of a Byzantine church. This "glass" chapel will be an intricate welded steel-rod frame suspended from the building's steel structure. The steel rods will hold 1/4-inch laminated glass infill panels upon which the frescos will be mounted. Slotted light fixtures flush within the floor will illuminate the translucent glass walls, lending the frescos and the interior an ethereal quality.

Jury Discussion: Juror Michael Dennis was impressed by the design's directness, "by the thoroughness of the large volume that contains the chapel, the indirect lighting, and the attention to the craft of the way things fit together." Nicholas Grimshaw found the scheme "very intriguing" and distinctive in the context of the awards submissions. Richard Fernau questioned the technique of lighting the chapel's glass walls, but concluded that "it does create a mood for the church and may be appropriate."
Seattle Commons

**Project:** Seattle Commons, Seattle.

**Site:** 470 acres immediately north of downtown Seattle and south of Lake Union, sloping gently toward the north and toward the site's center. The area is given over mainly to one-story light industrial, warehouse, retail, office, and auto dealership buildings, along with approximately 1,200 housing units. Many buildings are empty. More than 40 percent of the site consists of surface parking and vacant lots.

**Program:** A 74-acre public park centered in a new mixed-use residential neighborhood containing up to 19,000 residents and 50,000 employees.

**Solution:** The plan aims to establish a neighborhood where people can live, work, and play without needing a car. A mixed-use residential zoning classification is proposed, with design guidelines permitting a combination of residential, office, retail, and light industrial uses. Primary organizing elements will be boulevards and "green streets," whose features will include rows of trees, wide sidewalks, special paving, and street-level shops. A promenade will carry pedestrians and local vehicular traffic over the Mercer Street Throughway, making the currently hard-to-reach lake easily accessible from the park and downtown. Street improvements will offer better links between Seattle Center (site of the 1962 World's Fair), Queen Anne Hill, and the rest of the city. Hundreds of volunteers and private donations of more than $3.5 million have bought the project forward; a local businessman has lent $30 million for park land acquisition. The City Council is expected to adopt a final plan in mid-1995. Park construction will start in 1996 and be completed in 2000 years. In 2006 a lid is to be built over Highway 99, a chief obstacle to ease of access. Private development of the neighborhood will occur over 30 years.

**Jury Discussion:** Merrill Elam sparked vigorous discussion when she said she was having difficulty identifying a unique design strategy in Seattle Commons. "It's good sound planning; it's a big park, it's infill, it's a diverse program, but this is just good, sensible thinking. There's nothing that sets it apart as far as I can tell." Michael Dennis responded that housing and large urban projects "don't lend themselves easily to avant-gardism." He continued: "When you say that it brings people back in the city, it makes a great urban amenity, it connects one side of the city to the other, and it does all these great things, but other than that, it's not very inventive, I mean, do you have to crawl to Alaska on your knees to win?" "Absolutely," replied Elam. Richard Fernau said he was impressed by "the magnitude of potential change" promised by a project that may include thousands of new jobs and urban residents. "Part of what these things are saying to me is that we don't continue to just sort of spread out and build new stuff, but we have investment" in the city.

Dennis said the plan addresses "a very big problem" of getting from one side of the park to the other. "That's invention, real invention," he said, "and to me it comes out of convention, not just off the top of one's head." Emanuel Kelly found merit in the strategy of using public investment to accomplish some objectives – depressing a highway, clearing land, and building the park down to the lake in stages – after which private investment will begin to build the housing.

**Architects:** Committee for the Seattle Commons (Paul Mortensen, director of design; Carla Swanson Thieme, director of planning; B. Gerald Johnson, president, Board of Directors; Phil Sherburne, chairman, planning committee; Tom Byers, chairman, park committee).

**Client:** City of Seattle.

**Modelmaker:** Callison Architecture.

**Model photographer:** Callison Architecture.

**Renderers:** Callison Architecture and Paul Mortensen, Steve Cox, Tom Nychay, Terry Findeison.
Ince Theater

Project: Ince Theater, Culver City, California.

Site: A new public park (currently a parking lot) bounded by film production facilities, a graphic design studio, and a bookstore, and located across the street from a major film and music entertainment corporation in a downtown redevelopment area.

Program: A 450-seat theater for live performances and cinema, a rooftop amphitheater, a pedestrian bridge, and a below-grade parking structure totaling 20,421 square feet.

Solution: The centerpiece of a group of four buildings with various arts- and design-related functions, the Ince Theater will have a projection screen (from a soon-to-be-demolished drive-in theater) on its roof so that films can be viewed from a rooftop amphitheater and from surrounding offices and the park; the screen will also be visible from a planned shopping district nearby. Physical access to the theater is also an important issue: there are interior and exterior stairs to the roof, making it possible to "climb all over the theater"; a pedestrian bridge connects the theater’s roof to the entertainment corporation’s new project across the street. The theater’s form originates with the conjunction of three spheres. The construction system includes steel wide-flange beams and ribs (used in various configurations) with concrete infill. A large folded glass storefront system encloses the entrance. Construction is to begin this year.

Jury Discussion: The consensus was that the project offered an important "new vision of an outdoor theater" as Fernau put it. The idea of taking the outdoor theater beyond the drive-in to a pedestrian-oriented level was considered by the jury to be an inspired rethinking of the building type, a celebration of theater-going within the car-oriented, freeway culture and the entertainment industry of Los Angeles. "I am so sick of seeing theaters in shopping centers with plastic signs on them, and very pleased to see a theater celebrated," exclaimed Elam. The jurors also concurred on the project’s inventive sculptural qualities. Grimshaw, who initially thought the project was just "a playful sort of thing," eventually found "an underlying seriousness about it."

Architects: Eric Owen Moss Architects, Culver City, California, (Eric Owen Moss, principal; Scott Nakao, project architect; Austin Kelly, Paul H. Groh, Gervik Hovsepian, John Bencher, Augis Gedgaudas, Mark Przekop, Chris Wegscheid, Scott Hunter, Todd Conversano, Warren Young, Frank Meyl, Stephanie Busch, Marlies Bruess, Cheen Lin, project team; Austin Kelly, Gervik Hovsepian, Chris Wegscheid, modelmakers; Paul H. Groh, computer modeling.)

Client: Frederick and Laurie Samitaur Smith, Culver City.

Consultants: none.

Model photos: Paul H. Groh.
Project: Saigon South Master Plan, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
Site: 1,050 acres of rice paddies in a tidal delta south of the existing core of Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), along the proposed Binh Thuan Roadway.
Program: A new city for one million people.
Solution: Exploiting the existing system of waterways in this delta area, Saigon South will be a "city of islands," with walkable, identifiable neighborhoods defined by the waterways. Besides providing a sense of place, the preservation of these waterways (and the extension of a major east-west canal) and their vegetation will protect indigenous wildlife and help maintain air and water quality. A "cultural and leisure parkway," located to serve both the new and existing cities, will connect two new universities, a zoo, a racetrack, botanical gardens, and other facilities. The plan also calls for a grid network of roads connecting to improved roads in the existing city. A new mixed-use city center, with greater density than other parts of the development, is planned for the eastern end of the site, its density, street framework, and parcel size modeled after such Asian cities as Hong Kong and Singapore. The center is composed of eight distinct districts, each with its own defining features and identity. An "International Financial Center" with the city's tallest buildings will create a recognizable skyline for the city. The master plan was approved in August; the first phase of road and utility infrastructure are now being designed.

Jury Discussion: Emanuel Kelly praised the plan for its thoroughness, saying "I commend it on a large scale and a very particular scale." Michael Dennis expressed what he said were "reservations about barbaric Westerners going in and telling other people how to organize their cities," but he said the plan "seems to stand up" because of the planners' efforts to find models in local and regional culture. Nicholas Grimshaw and Richard Fernau voiced similar reservations, especially about the high-rise buildings. Merrill Elam noted that the plan "was most fascinating in its approach to climate and geography." Of the regional and new city projects submitted, it seemed the most worthy of recognition.
Confluence Point

Project: Confluence Point Ranger Station/Interpretive Center and Pedestrian Bridges, San Jose, California.

Site: A triangular piece of park land formed by the confluence of the Guadelupe River and the Los Gatos Creek in Guadelupe River Park which abuts the west edge of the city's downtown core. Located within the Corps of Engineers' Guadelupe River Flood Control Project, the point's riverbanks are overgrown with a dense riparian landscape and punctuated by retaining walls and culverts.

Program: A public orientation center/park ranger office, two bridges connecting the downtown to a new arena across the point, and public restrooms.

Solution: The project's three components were conceived as pieces of "equipment" to be operated by park rangers and visitors. The ranger station is sited at the street edge of the park to connect it to the city and to afford a visual overview of the landscape beyond; it will be constructed with steel framing, wood infill, and EIFS cladding, and will be built on the concrete abutments of the flood control project. The bridge on the west side of the site will include factory-built weathering steel trusses, applied weathering steel, and EIFS. The bridge to the east will be a post-tensioned concrete beam box. Construction is to begin this spring with completion expected by the end of the year.

Jury Discussion: The jury admired the way the pieces of the project celebrate the landscape and connect the city to its natural resources. At the same time, they questioned whether the architect's highly graphic drawing style was intended mainly for the jury. Richard Fernau, who with Nicholas Grimshaw would have liked to see a more explicit presentation, argued that the project embraces "a civil engineering vernacular," eschewing Romanticism for a mechanistic language. The project, said Fernau, is "revelatory of the landscape," adding that the "stretching out of very simple architectural elements" emphasized the natural spaces in between.

Architects: Holt Hinshaw Pfau Jones (now Holt Hinshaw Architects) and Jones, Partners: Architecture, San Francisco (Wes Jones, principal in charge; Scott Arford, Bernard Chang, Richard Curl, Tony Duncan, Chase Fenton, Michael Gough, Paul Holt, Doug Jackson, Jean Young Jones, Ute Knippenberger, Wing Lan, Chris Palumbo, Bob Shepherd, David Willette, Robert Yue, project team).

Client: San Jose Redevelopment Agency.

Consultants: George Hargreaves Associates, park design; AN West, civil and structural; G.M. Lim & Associates, mechanical; MTH Engineers, electrical.
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