

# PENCIL POINTS

OCTOBER

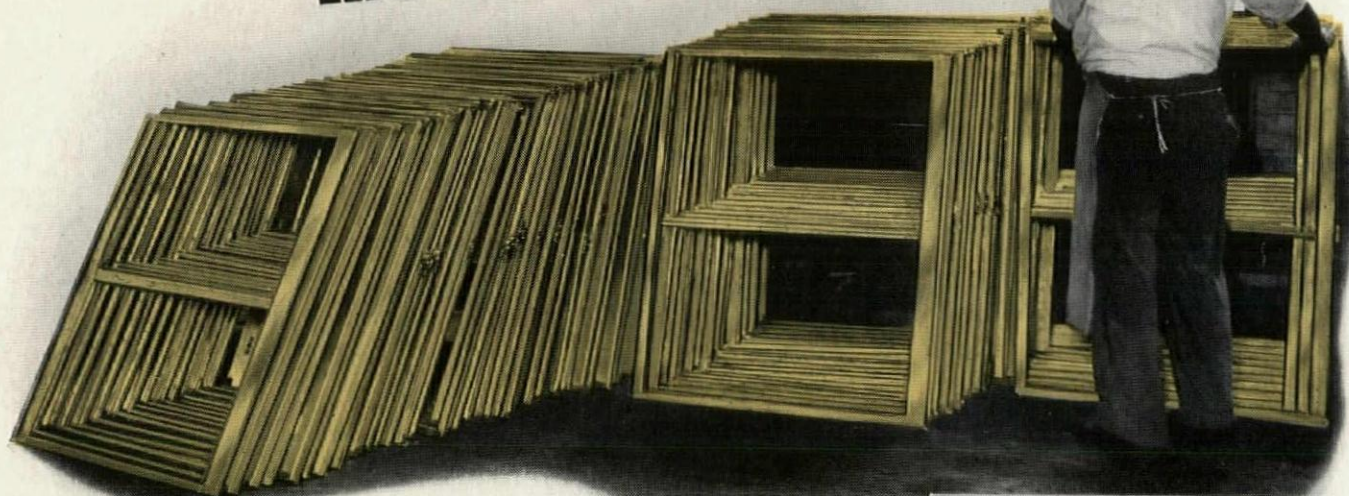
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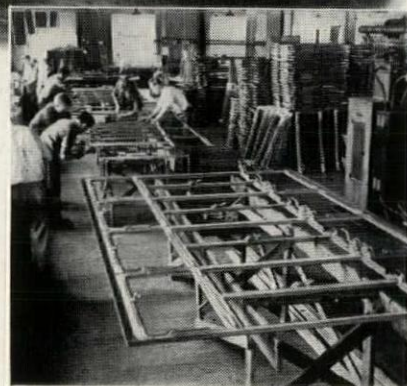
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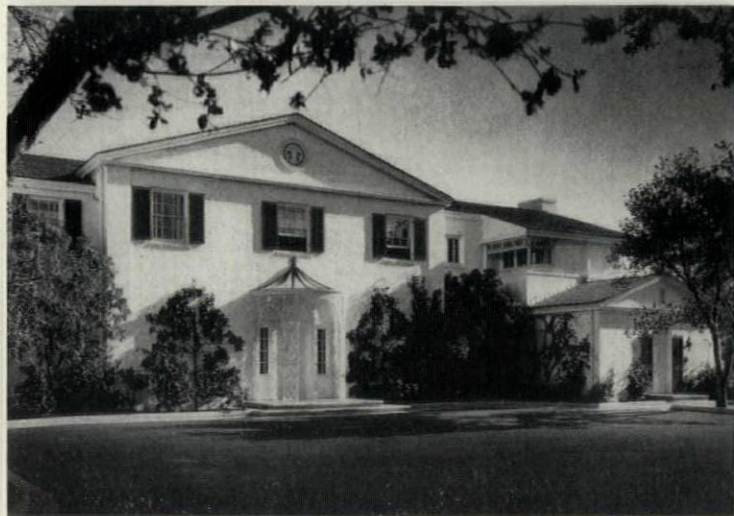
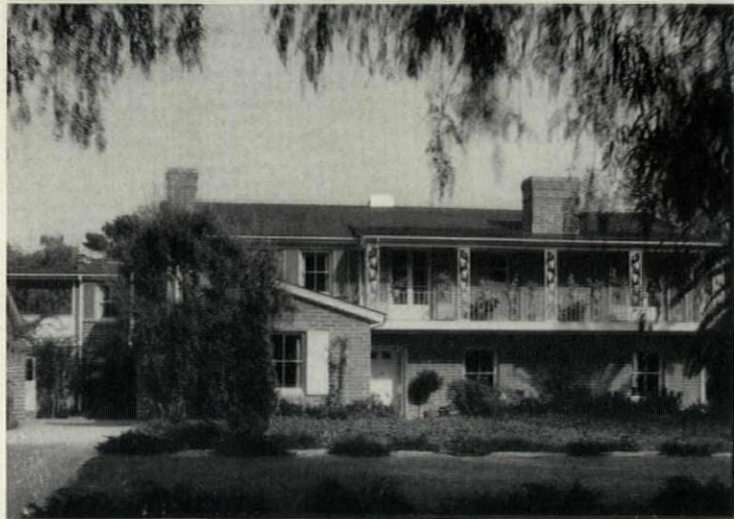
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**FOR WINDOWS**

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ROLAND COATE, OF LOS ANGELES, WHOSE DISTINGUISHED RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE IS WIDELY AND WARMLY ADMIRERD, EVEN BY HIS FELLOW ARCHITECTS, IS THE SUBJECT OF ARTICLE NUMBER IV IN OUR INTERMITTENT SERIES, "THE ARCHITECT AND THE HOUSE." YOU WILL FIND HERE-AFTER FIFTEEN PAGES CONTAINING A BRIEF TEXT BY PAUL R. HUNTER, A NUMBER OF PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS, AND A FEW CHARACTERISTIC PLANS, ALL OF WHICH WILL SERVE, WE EXPECT, TO EXTEND YOUR ACQUAINTANCE WITH COATE'S DESIGN PHILOSOPHY. ON THIS PAGE ARE THREE SMALL PICTURES REPRESENTING THE THREE CATEGORIES INTO WHICH COATE'S WORK MAY BE ROUGHLY DIVIDED. THE WILLIAM CHARNLEY RESIDENCE, AT SAN MARINO, IS OF A GROUP OF FREE ADAPTATIONS FROM EARLY CALIFORNIA PROTOTYPES. THE WILLIAM B. HART HOUSE, AT PASADENA, IS BASED ON EARLY AMERICAN COLONIAL MODIFIED TO FIT THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENT. IT IS OF ROSE COLORED BRICK, RESEMBLING ADOBE, WITH WHITE TRIM. THE DAVID O. SELZNICK RESIDENCE, AT BEVERLY HILLS, STEMS FROM A LATER AND MORE FORMAL COLONIAL PERIOD, AND IS SET DOWN WITH THE THIRD GROUP OF HOUSES, UNCLASSIFIABLE WITH THE OTHER TWO GROUPS. THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE BY GEORGE D. HAIGHT, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA









# THE ARCHITECT AND THE HOUSE

## IV. ROLAND E. COATE OF LOS ANGELES

BY PAUL R. HUNTER

In southern California, residential architecture is of great interest to profession and public alike. As a result, high standards of design prevail. Among the architects of this richly endowed region, Roland E. Coate, as measured by the gracious, charming, and dignified houses which he has consistently produced during the past fifteen years and which have won him many prizes in nationwide competitions, is of the first rank. Several years ago The American Institute of Architects voted him a Fellowship "for distinguished contributions to domestic architecture; the beauty and excellence of his work; and his high professional standards." Completing his collegiate training at Cornell in 1914, Coate worked several years in New York for Trowbridge & Ackerman, then moved to southern California at the beginning of the building boom of the early twenties. His swift draftsmanship and unusual design ability soon won him recognition and he became a partner in the firm of Johnson, Kaufmann, and Coate. With the dissolution of the firm in 1925, Roland

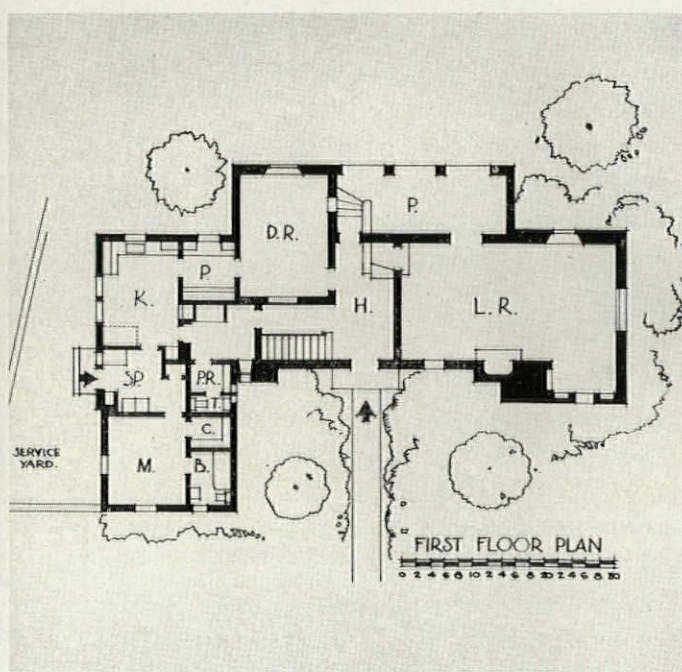
Coate entered his own practice in Los Angeles and gave full expression to his ideas about residential work.

At this time southern California was indulging a taste for romantic Mediterranean architecture which, though of considerable picturesque appeal, was not congenial to the background of most Americans. Coate was among the first to turn from this style and to call attention to the unaffected charm of the simple, early California houses built of adobe bricks with painted wood trim of New England Colonial character. He helped to establish the informal, comfortable, open style house of today, which is regarded by many as the finest expression of California residential work. With the early Thirties came a desire for more sophisticated houses in the American Colonial, Georgian, and French styles. These styles, however, have all been definitely modified and adapted to California requirements and traditions.

Coate has persistently sought out the lasting values in domestic architecture, with the result that each house is a separate and complete expression, rather than a step in a process of forward development. In his earliest houses the plan arrangement, determined by the location and the client's wishes, is still the solution that would probably be arrived at. While style has to a certain extent influenced the character of his houses, it has always been drawn upon for inspiration rather than for unimaginative copying.

NOTABLE FOR ITS SIMPLE BUT REFINED DETAIL IS THE EDWARD H. HEATH HOUSE, AT SAN MARINO. THE MOTOR ENTRANCE SHOWN OPPOSITE HAS EXPRESSIVE INDIVIDUALITY, WITH ITS WHITE PAINTED CONCRETE BLOCK AND WOOD CHARMINGLY PUNCTUATED BY THE GLAZED GREEN TERRA COTTA CACTUS FLANKING DRIVEWAY. PHOTO BY HAIGHT

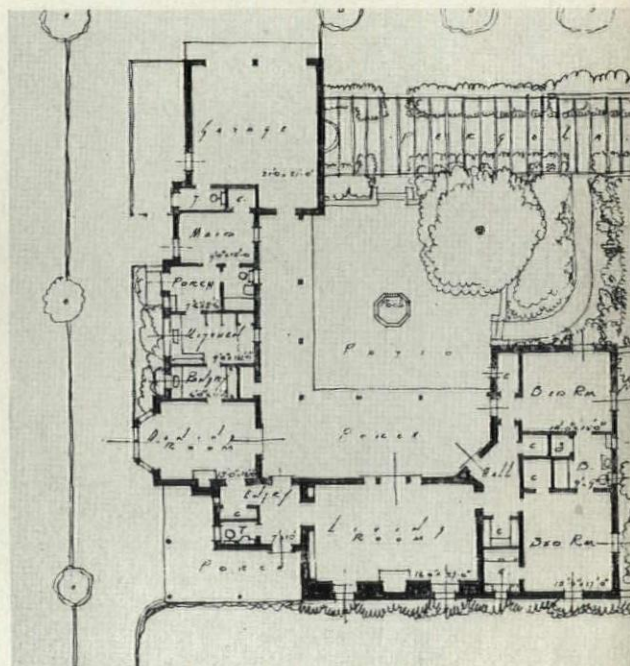








THE S. W. BIXBY HOUSE, AT PASADENA, OPPOSITE, ONE OF COATE'S EARLIER DESIGNS BUILT ABOUT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, WAS AN ATTEMPT TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE THEN PREVALENT SPANISH TYPE TOWARD THE QUALITIES FOUND IN EARLY CALIFORNIA RANCH HOUSES. HANDMADE ROOF TILES AND WHITEWASHED PLASTER WALLS INSIDE AND OUT GAVE THE ILLUSION OF AGE, AND IT SOON SURPASSED ALL OTHER TYPES IN POPULARITY. PHOTO OF LIVING ROOM BY MILES BERNÉ. ON THIS PAGE AND OVERLEAF, AT BEVERLY HILLS, THE BERNARD A. FORREST RESIDENCE HAS A PLAN TYPICAL OF THE ONE-STORY HOUSE OR BUNGALOW AS DEVELOPED TO FIT SUBURBAN CALIFORNIA CONDITIONS. MAXIMUM PRIVACY AND MINIMUM UP-KEEP ARE AMONG ITS DELIGHTFUL ATTRIBUTES BUT ITS SIMPLE, UNPRETENTIOUS ARCHITECTURE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS CHARM. THE PHOTO IS BY HAIGHT







SIMILAR IN STRAIGHT-FORWARD SIMPLICITY TO THE FORREST HOUSE, AT THE LEFT, THOUGH LARGER IN DIMENSION, IS THE PAUL PITNER RESIDENCE, AT PASADENA, SHOWN BELOW. SUCH CLEAN ELEGANCE OF MASS AND DETAIL ARE NOT PRODUCED WITHOUT UTMOST CARE AND STUDY



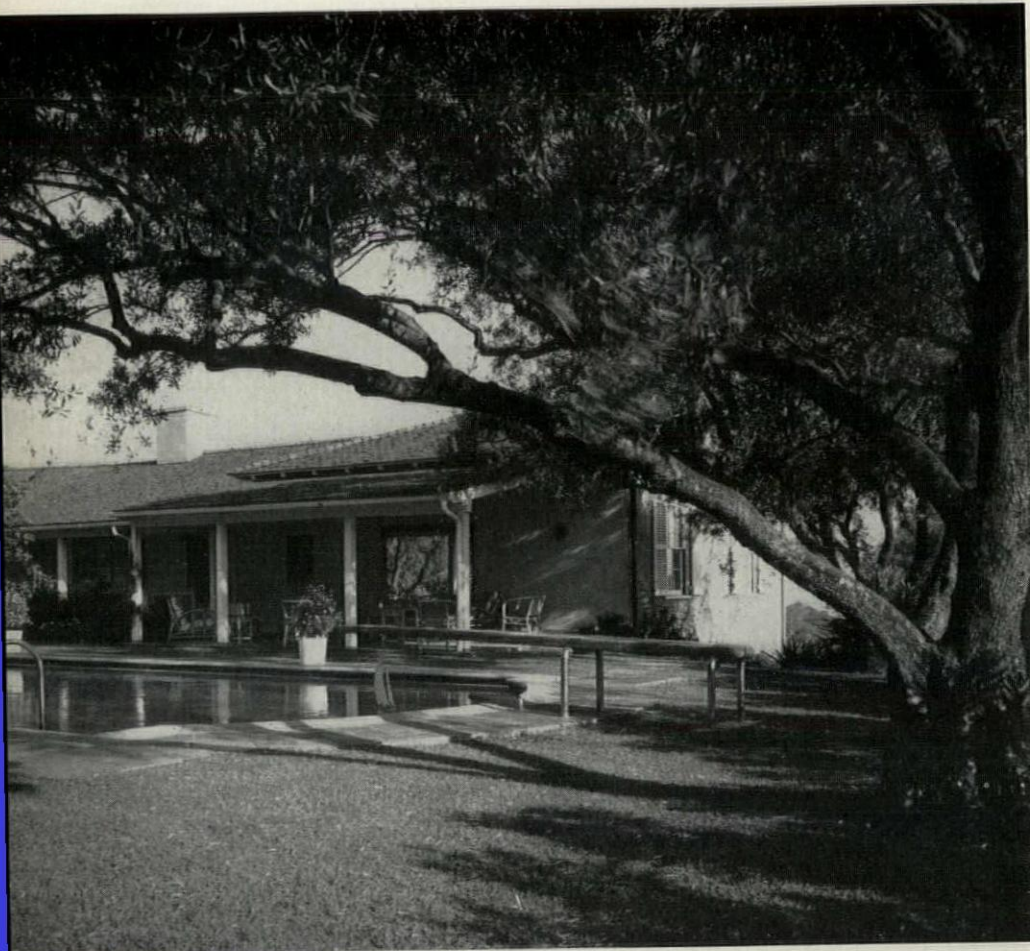


HERE ARE TWO VIEWS OF THE H. W. O'MELVENY HOUSE, AT BEL-AIR, CALIFORNIA, WHICH COATE FITTED INTO A RUGGED SITE IN A MOUNTAIN CANYON. STONE WALLS, HAND-SPLIT SHAKES, AND ROUGH SIDING ADD TO THE INFORMAL QUALITY DEEMED APPROPRIATE. PHOTOS ARE BY HAIGHT





IN THE MELVYN DOUGLAS RESIDENCE, AT LOS ANGELES, COATE ENJOYED THE COLLABORATION OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT HAROLD W. STECK AND INTERIOR DECORATOR EVERETT SEBRING. ONE EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE MASTER BEDROOM WING AND AN INTERIOR OF THE ROOM ITSELF SUGGEST THAT THE THREE ARTS WERE WELL COORDINATED. THE ROOMS ARE SIMPLE AND AIRY. THE EXTERIOR IS STRIKING, WITH DEEP BLUE STUCCO WALLS AND WHITE TRIM. PHOTOS ARE BY FRED R. DAPPRICH

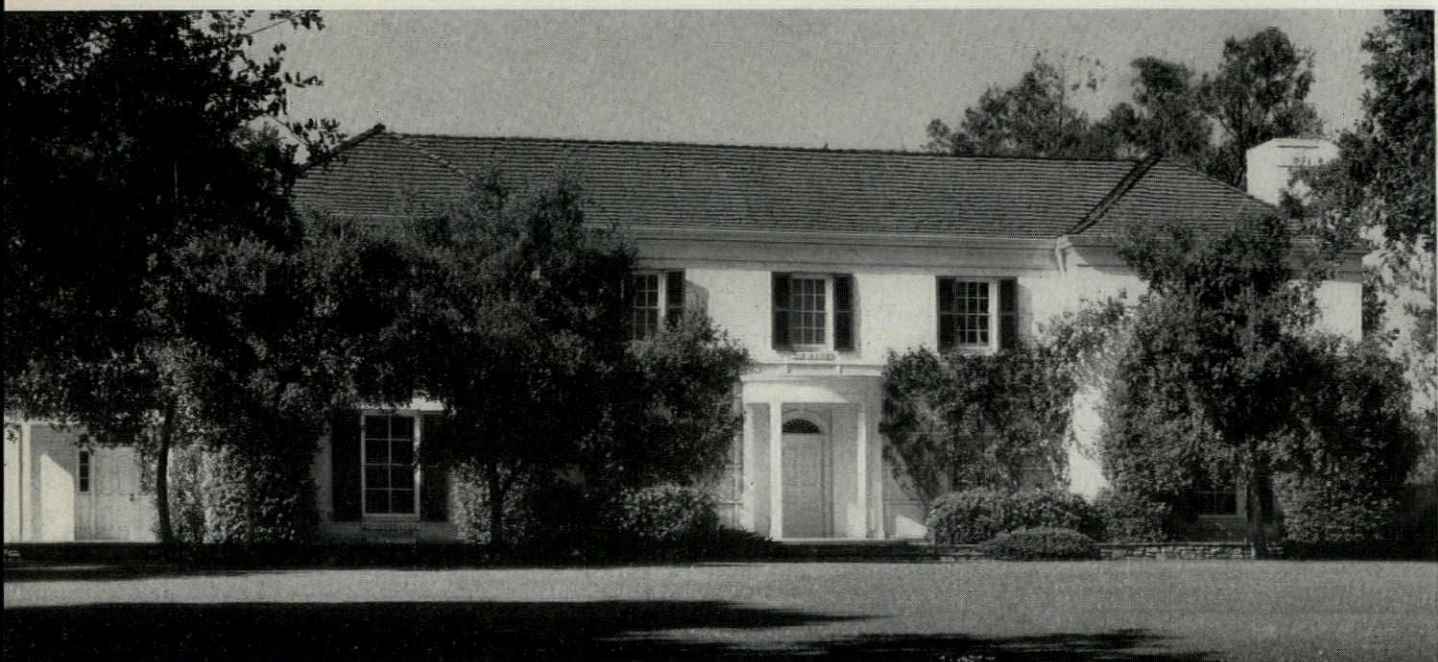


OPPOSITE IS THE ENTRANCE PORTICO OF THE FRANK CAPRA HOUSE AT BRENTWOOD. ALTHOUGH DIGNIFIED, IT IS A FREE INTERPRETATION OF CLASSIC FORMS STUDIED TO PRODUCE THE PLEASANT INFORMALITY THAT EXTENDS THROUGH THE WHOLE RESIDENCE. PHOTOGRAPH BY DAPPRICH





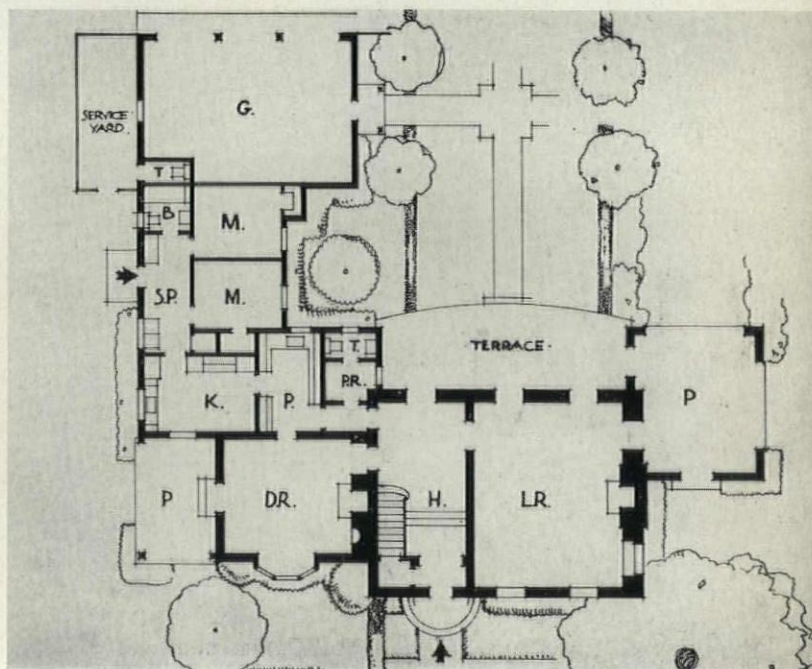








TWO OF COATE'S ADAPTATIONS OF EASTERN AMERICAN TYPES TO CALIFORNIA APPEAR OPPOSITE—THE CHARLES EDWIN DAVIS HOUSE (ABOVE), AT PASADENA, PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAPPRICH, AND THE GUY WITTER HOUSE (BELOW), AT SAN MARINO, PHOTOGRAPHED BY HAIGHT. SIMPLE TRADITIONAL MATERIALS, ABLY HANDLED, DISTINGUISH THEM BOTH. ON THIS PAGE, THE HOUSE OF ROBERT GROSS, AT BEL-AIR, SHOWS A KNOWING COMBINATION OF WARM GREY STONE AND HAND-SPLIT SHAKES, WITH AGREEABLE DETAIL NICELY BALANCED IN THE SORT OF ENSEMBLE THAT IS OFTEN TRIED BUT SELDOM ACHIEVED AS ADEQUATELY AS IT IS HERE. THE ENTRANCE IS SHELTERED BY A SEMI-CIRCULAR WROUGHT IRON HOOD. KATHERINE BASHFORD, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT



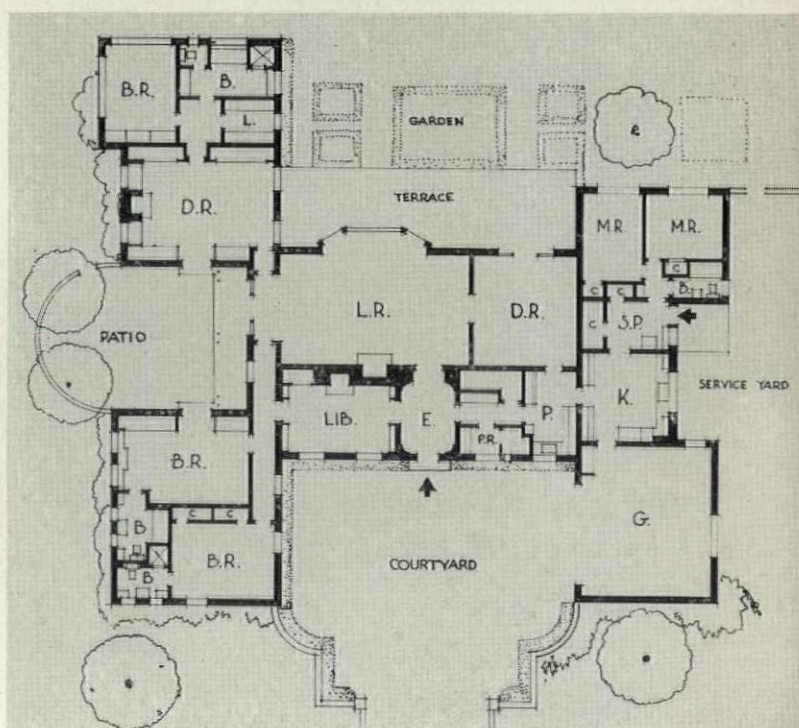








IN THE LIPPIAT-TAYLOR RESIDENCE, AT LOS ANGELES, OF WHICH A DETAIL APPEARS OPPOSITE, COATE ADAPTED THE ORNAMENTAL CAST-IRON BALCONY, FAMILIAR IN PICTURESQUE SECTIONS OF THE SOUTH, TO THE CALIFORNIA SCENE WITH EXCEPTIONAL VIGOR. THE PHOTO IS BY HAIGHT. ABOVE IS A HOUSE FOR F. H. RUPPEL, AT SAN MARINO, IN WHICH FRENCH PRECEDENT WAS MODIFIED WITHOUT IMPROPRIETY. THE FRONT COURTYARD SERVES ALSO AS THE ENTRANCE DRIVE TO THE GARAGE LOCATED TO THE RIGHT. ROMAN BRICK PAINTED A SOFT PINK WAS USED AND A HIGH SLATE ROOF OVER THE CENTRAL PORTION DOMINATES THE FLAT-ROOFED WINGS. THE PHOTO IS BY DAPPRICH. THIS HOUSE AND THE RESIDENCE SHOWN ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE CLASSIFIED BY THE AUTHOR SEPARATELY FROM MR. COATE'S AMERICAN ADAPTATIONS

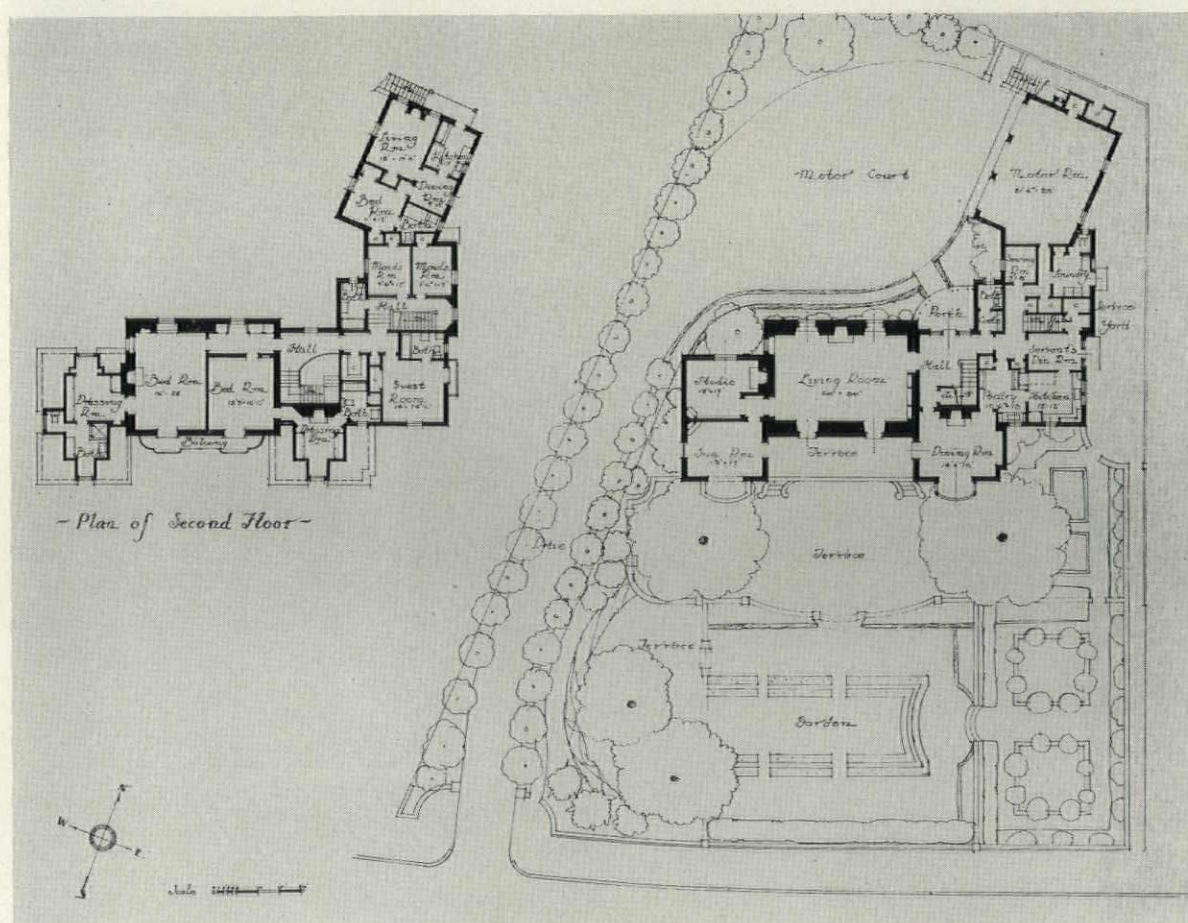




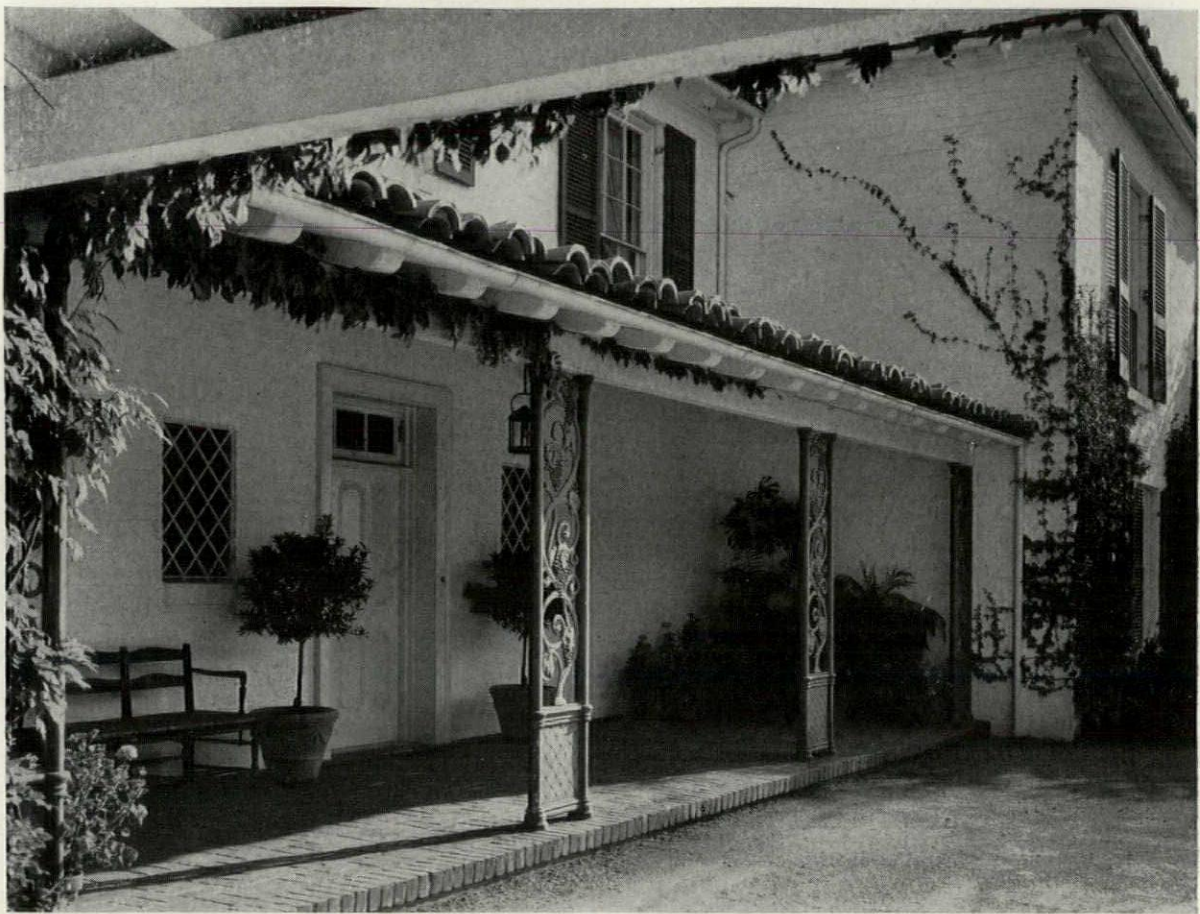


THE RESIDENCE OF MRS. RICHARD B. FUDGER, OF BEVERLY HILLS, HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS A GEM BY MANY AN ARCHITECT WHO HAS STRIVEN TO EMULATE ITS CLEAN PERFECTION. THE ENTRANCE COURT ABOVE IS UNCONVENTIONALLY PLACED AWAY FROM THE STREET OR SOUTH SIDE, SHOWN ACROSS PAGE, WHERE THE GARDEN AND TERRACES ARE ARRANGED. THE LITTLE PORCH, AT THE LEFT, IS AN EXTENSION OF THE SUNROOM INTO THIS OUTDOOR LIVING AREA. CAREFUL PLANNING HAS EXTRACTED A MAXIMUM OF UTILITY AND LIVABILITY FROM AN ODD-SHAPED PLOT. YOCH AND COUNCIL, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS. PHOTOS ARE BY HAIGHT









It is worth while to inquire into the manner of practice by which such consistently fine work has been produced. Long an admirer of Coate's houses, I had the good fortune of working in his office for several years and of observing first hand his approach to architectural service. Coate, except on rare occasions, is the only one who interviews clients and supervises construction; so that all information and details clear through him alone. He prepares the initial plan, adapting the requirements to the site and orientation and laying out accurately all the rooms and services. This plan is accompanied by sketches of one or more of the principal elevations, which determine the character and spirit of the house. These sketches are then turned over to the drafting room for further development and conversion into working drawings. An experienced staff handles the minutiae of working drawings and detailing, but Coate passes upon all drawings. While Coate's residential experience has included all the variations from very small and simple houses to very large and elab-

THIS TYPE OF ENTRANCE PORCH, LARGE AND SUBSTANTIAL IN ITS CONSTRUCTION, HAS BEEN ONE OF COATE'S FAVORITES. THE EXAMPLE PRESENTED IS FROM A COUNTRY HOUSE FOR WILLIAM CHARNLEY, AT SAN MARINO. THE HOUSE IS THE MONTEREY TYPE, BUILT OF LARGE SIZE BRICK AND PAINTED WHITE. PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIGHT

orate ones, a single spirit has pervaded his work: beauty. It is not a mere beauty of elevation sought after on paper; it is a quality that has grown out of plans well solved, materials honestly and skilfully used, and a taste that is mature and sure. Coate bases his design upon the forms and proportions that he has found satisfying, yet combining new and old materials in fresh and interesting ways, and utilizing all developments in mechanical equipment. He regards with interest the development of modern work and feels that its advance is not only inevitable but desirable. For him it is another page in the long story of architecture, the comparative value of which is still difficult to judge.



# SOME FAIR COMPARISONS

BY TALBOT F. HAMLIN

The United States is continent-wide: one country, but many regions, and between the regions there is sometimes as much difference as the difference between adjoining countries on other continents. One country, but many regions—it is not strange then, in two cities at opposite ends of its long diameter, on oceans fronting different continents, that the differences between the two Fairs should be almost greater than the similarities. Both are international, but only New York may lay claim to being a true World's Fair. Despite the exhibits of, and even a few buildings built for, the European countries, the whole emphasis of the San Francisco Exposition is on the Pacific—its interest points westward.

Perhaps it is this — that San Francisco is over three thousand miles from the Atlantic, and the savage rivalries and demoniacal wars of Europe seem far away—which accounts for something of the air of quiet serenity in the San Francisco Fair, a serenity which contrasts violently with the dynamic excitement of the one in New York.

The entire purpose of the two Fairs is different too. New York calls itself the World of Tomorrow. In the files of the Avery Library lies a tragic document—the report of a committee of architects, industrial designers, and city planners who submitted to the Fair Corporation three years ago a scheme for a creative and revolutionary Fair. It was a scheme which should not merely show the industrial developments of today, which should be not merely a sort of

department store on a world scale; but which should show the possibilities for the people inherent in science and the power at our command, which should be in fact an exposition of the potentialities of the future, a true World of Tomorrow. The Fair Corporation is said to have been much excited by the report and to have taken from its suggestions the name and certain ideas for the subdivision of space. But that was about all. Except for a few of the industrial exhibits, like General Motors, the promise of the World of Tomorrow was forgotten in the turmoil and profit-seeking of the world of today. The result has been a basic confusion, which shows in the architecture, in the designing of the exhibits, in the administration. Such a Fair as the committee had in mind was, alas, not a good commercial proposition; and most of the things which have hurt the New York World's Fair, artistically and from the point of view of its educational possibilities, have been the result of over-commercialization.

The San Francisco Fair attached to itself no such promising name, aroused no such anticipations. It was content to be merely the Golden Gate International Exposition and, trying for goals less difficult of attainment, it has achieved its ends with a greater, a more complete consistency. It is international, but also, as its name implies, it stresses its locality and makes the most of its situation—an artificial island in the middle of San Francisco Bay. One cannot approach it, whether by ferry or by car, without hav-



ing before his eyes that superb breadth of blue water, with the green mountains of Marin County on one side and the steep slopes behind Berkeley on the other, with the incredible silhouette of the San Francisco hills and buildings behind, and the bridges to give vivacity and scale.

Both Fairs thus become expressive of the localities which produced them. To understand them, one must understand something of the controlling spirit of New York and of San Francisco. New York is the essence of America in some ways; yet it is a town Westerners delight to call "foreign" and "un-American." Cosmopolitan, confused, straggling at the edges; piled up and congested in the center; with queer contrasts of the over-formal and systematic (as in the street plan of Manhattan) with the under-planned and erratic (as in the street plans of Queens or Brooklyn or Richmond); commercial-minded, creator of arrogant dreams, at times strangely sentimental and tender, at times cruel and harsh, boastful; always ready to give a show; and above all dynamic—that is New York, and each one of these qualities may be found vividly incarnated in some part of the New York Fair. It, too, is confused, suffering from over-formalism in the center and straggling out to undistinguished and formless edges; it, too, is brutally aggressive, as in the enormous over-scaled pylons which disfigure some of the buildings of the Transportation Area; it, too, set its ideals and dreams, which reality could never complete, built buildings which could not sell, developed a plan of great formality and then erected on the sides of its formal diagonal avenues buildings of such different plans, ideas, constructional systems, decorative schemes, and orientations that the formal avenues—except for the main axis and the one cross-axis between the Perisphere and the New York City Building—seem to take one merely through a series of architectural backyards. Except for the planting and banners, the effect would be more disastrous than it is.

San Francisco has a spirit essentially different. Like New York it is cosmopolitan, but

unlike New York its cosmopolitanism and its Americanism seem to have reached an agreeable and tolerant integration. It is energetic without seeming driven or harassed; it expresses neither the brutality nor the sentimentality of New York; it has an impartial, skeptical realism almost Parisian. Sometimes it seems to me to be the one city I know in the United States to which one could apply the term *Renaissance*: there is a kind of æsthetic sensitiveness combined with a lack of self-consciousness which I have found nowhere else, and the whole architecture of the town expresses this. A lot of it is terrible, but somehow pleasant; it's hard to get mad at. Perhaps it's the climate! The cool fogs of night and morning, the bright sun of afternoon, the strong west wind; perhaps these hypnotize one's critical faculty. At any rate there is a definite creativeness, a kind of freedom in doing what one wants to do without worry, without undue rationalization, which runs through San Francisco as its great unifying power. The classic buildings of the town are more lushly and prettily classic than almost anywhere else, and the modern things which are gradually taking their place have the same free, unstrained expressiveness.

This is the spirit of the San Francisco Fair. And to understand how its silly orientalisms, its childlike play-acting quality (as in the design of the "elephant trains"), its pseudo-classic, its occasional Spanishisms, and its occasional fresh and modern designs can all be combined into one compelling and charming unity, one must, I think, understand this San Francisco spirit as well, this new Renaissance quality of life. The San Francisco designer is not afraid of the pretty. Mere superficial loveliness is to him no sin, even if the result does not express the technology of the time, in which he is little interested. Therefore the designer is able to produce the pretty and the superficially lovely with perfect simplicity of conviction and no loss of integrity whatsoever. This quality gives a strange, almost nostalgic beauty that has its own magic and seems somehow its own excuse for being.

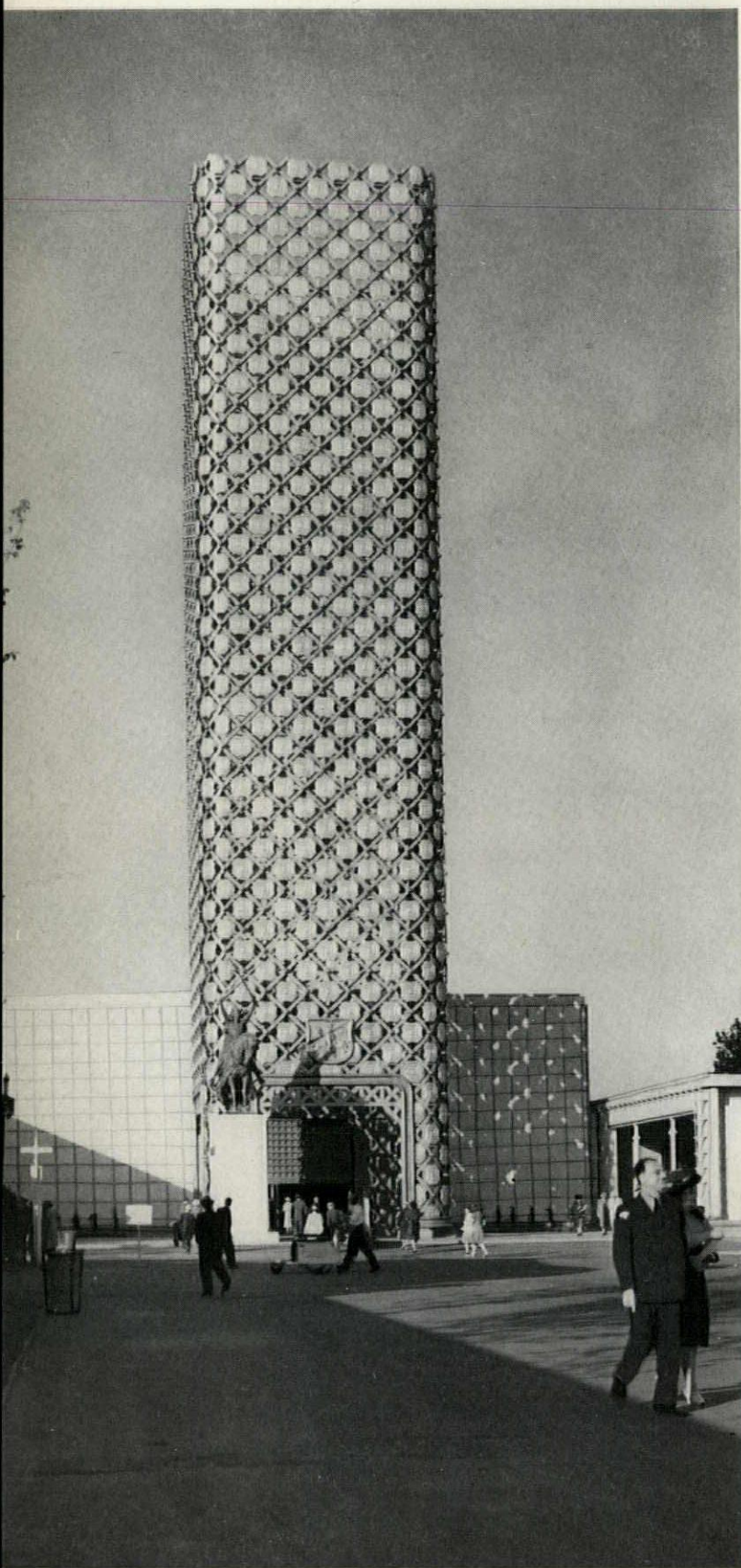


Vaguely, even when the New York designs have tried to produce something of this same quality, as they did in some of the houses of Tomorrow Town, in the Gardens of Tomorrow, and in details of the landscape work in many parts of the grounds, one has a feeling they have done it with fingers crossed, enormous effort, some fear, and a kind of guilt sense. Naturally the result is confused. This is not of course to say that the striving for the new and logical, the fear of merely superficial good looks, the elaborate analyses, all of the arguments for or against radicalism in design which trouble and confuse the New York designer are not necessary and may not in the long run work out for a sounder, a more deeply based attitude than the simple and impulsive attack of the San Francisco designers. What one can definitely say is that the intellectualizing æsthetic controversy of New York has expressed itself, in the New York Fair, in work that is basically confused and seems somehow to express a kind of neurotic self-consciousness, as though in the face of potential beauty the designer had a violent inhibiting inferiority complex. So much in New York seems effortful; seems to have been ground out with the maximum possible birth pains.

There is another element in this difference. Again the geographical position of the two cities may have something to do with it. New York has been troubled too deeply by the conflict of imported opposing æsthetic ideals—functionalism as interpreted by different personalities. All the various rallying cries of different schools of modern design, shouted loudly by different critics, have produced an architectural atmosphere not conducive to simple, personal design. San Francisco, on the other hand, though it knows of these theories and often delights in them and uses them, has managed to digest them. Out there, beyond the Rockies, many of the æsthetic slogans of European and eastern American discussion seem in some way to lose their compelling and emotional quality. The result is a quieter æsthetic approach, and it still remains fun to design.

Nothing reveals this fundamental difference of attitude more clearly than the house exhibits of the two localities. New York grandly announces the Town of Tomorrow and shows a series of structures some of which are obviously unlivable and mere exhibition machines, and some of which are as conservative, as unexciting, as any suburban house of twenty years ago. The San Francisco Fair had little space for houses and little disposition to give more than official recognition to the whole principle. So the San Francisco architects, builders, and real estate developers, not content with that, erected some thirty-one different houses in various suburban subdivisions of the town, calling them the Fair Houses. No pretense was made that these were "houses of tomorrow"—it seemed enough to try to build the best and the most livable houses for today. The result was clearly not exhibition machines; and, although some of them were as conservative as any in New York, the greater number were fresh, free, creative, and eminently desirable as homes, and some had in addition vivid and poetic architectural character. New York enunciated and half-heartedly sought for the nobler, the more experimental, the more important ideal; but the idea withered under commercialism. And the crowds of people who pass through these houses must gather the worst possible education in the future potentialities of domestic architecture, forced as they are to choose between the completely familiar, pretty-pretty Colonial, the tricky fandangoes of the Bride's House, and the impossible plan and utterly unreal sham of the House of Glass. Surely these are not the way to build a sound taste in what houses might be! On the other hand, the visitor to any one of several of the California Fair Houses could find in the sure and simple wood and glass detail of Wurster's designs, with their ample rooms and serene simplicity, or in the magnificent yet refined elegance of Gardner Dailey's work, or the quiet, assured unpretentiousness of the Clark house at Leland Manor, more lessons in good design and develop a greater, a more





ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR IS THE BRILLIANTLY DRAMATIC POLISH BUILDING, ABOVE, DESIGNED BY JAN CYBULSKI. THE PHOTO IS BY SOZIO

demanding, taste in shelter than all the Town of Tomorrow in New York could give him.

Of course, a few of the New York houses have quality. Those of Cameron Clark and Electus Litchfield have a certain livable charm that illustrates the best that conservative work can give; yet both show also the inherent sacrifices that go with the style—small windows, over-dark rooms, and so on. Kocher's Plywood house and Churchill's Double-Duty house both have plans of great ingenuity, but in both commercial sponsorship has damaged the clarity of the original conception, forcing changes in material and scheme, using certain materials where common sense would dictate the use of others, and so on. Verner Johnson's house has comfortable open spaces and pleasant room relationships, but its exterior is prettified with silly applied wood detail, and there is about it some sense of its being more a statement of principle than a house pure and simple. Evans, Moore & Woodbridge's Dollar-a-Day house has something of the quality of simple and direct use of materials one associates with much of the best summer house work. But for the plain, crude ineptitude of detail to be found in some of the other examples it is difficult to find any reason whatsoever.

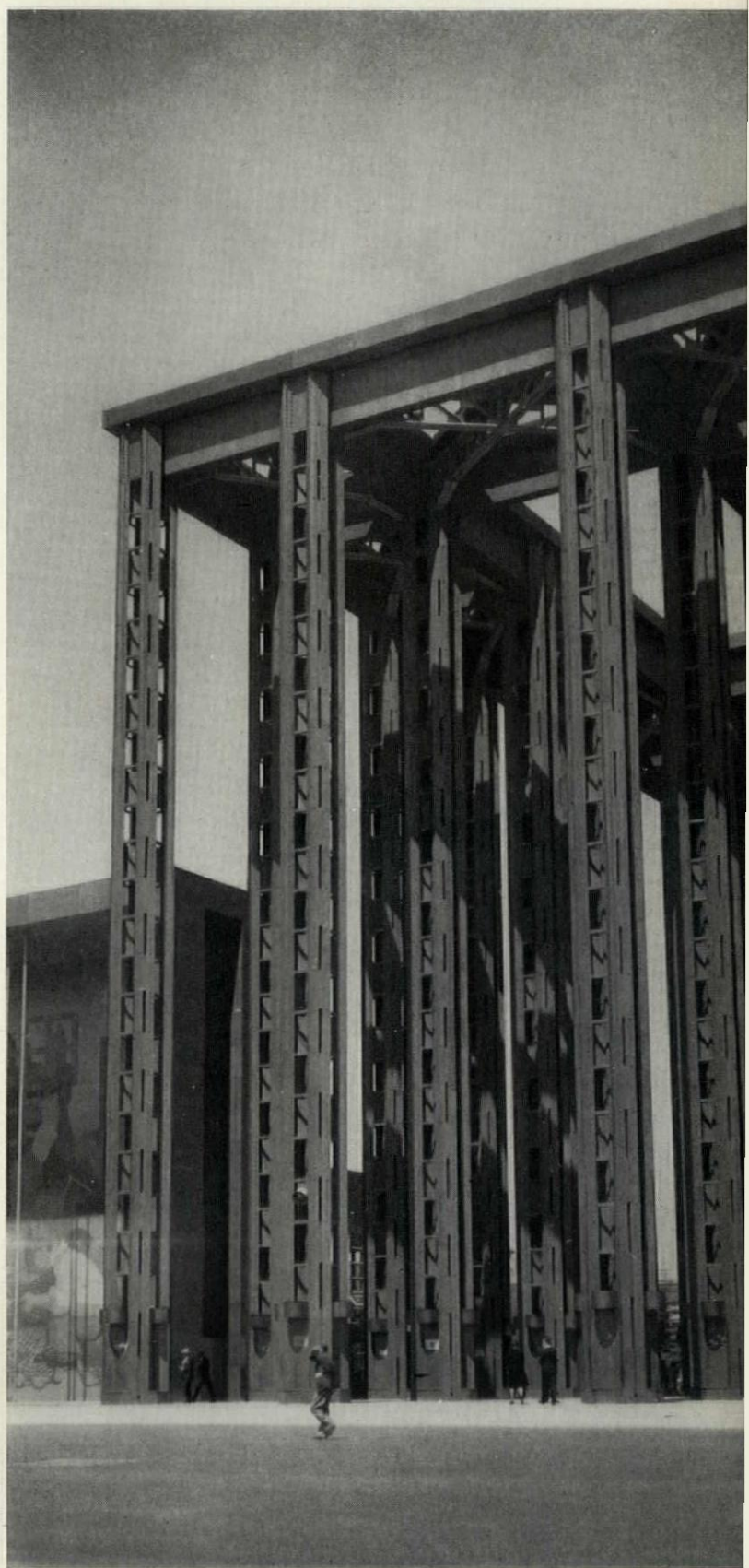
One thing, alas, is to be found in both sets of houses—terrible furnishing and decoration. Not one of those which I saw in either Fair showed any but the vaguest sense of that quality of repose and quiet comfort which comes from the fitness of the means to the end. Everything seems to have been done in the most complicated, most stunted, most vulgarly ostentatious manner, and this goes for the houses which were theoretically modern as much as for those in the "styles." It all seemed painfully lacking in the creative touch; all the interiors seemed more like the over-full show windows of a not too high-toned shop rather than the environment for human living. Again and again a kind of false *chic*, a sort of shoddy smartness, was the governing idea, not only unpleasant in itself but frequently vitiating the



proportions and destroying the basic design which the architect had provided in the room.

If these Fair houses in New York and San Francisco unite on teaching one lesson, it is the terrific need in this country for a new attitude towards the furnishings that go into a house, as well as a completely new set of furniture design standards, as simple, as straightforward, and as pleasant in line and proportion as the best of our modern architecture. Such furniture need use no more material than the other, need entail no more joints than the old; should, in fact, be cheaper to make and to sell. Why is it so impossible to get?

The plans of the two Fairs are as different as their aims. Two different things seem to have controlled. In New York it was the problem of traffic and of distribution. In San Francisco it was the wind—that constant westerly breeze, sometimes of gale force, that charges in over the hills from the Pacific, often bringing with it a damp and chilly fog, especially at night. The distribution problem in New York, as I have already pointed out in an earlier article, has been solved at the sacrifice of purposefulness and coherence. Its one great merit, that formal simplicity which is at the basis of the “grand manner,” is allowed to count only along the main axis, across the great spaces of the Court of Peace and up the pools and the mall to the Perisphere and Trylon. Here was a magnificent conception; yet even this was obscured and its effectiveness largely wrecked by the addition of superfluous and disturbing elements. Those who saw the mall before the statues were in place know its real greatness. Now, sadly enough, in the finished Fair, the enormous bulk of a characterless and gigantic Washington statue in the middle, the ungainly out-of-scale quartette of Freedoms at the bottom, and the frivolous filigree of the sun-dial at the top all combine to spoil the effect. The silhouette of the Washington even disturbs the fine simplicity of the Perisphere from one end, and the huge rectangles of the United States Building from the other.



THE TOWERING WOODEN COLUMNS OF TIMOTHY L. PFLEUGER'S U. S. GOVERNMENT BUILDING AT THE GOLDEN GATE EXPOSITION, ARE MONUMENTAL. PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR



In San Francisco, the wind led to the decision to make the Fair a matter largely of interior courts completely surrounded by walls; hence the simple T-shaped plan of the main elements, with all the pleasant concentration and unity which this scheme entails; hence, too, the large surfaces of continuous wall which tie the elements together so firmly; and hence, necessarily, the surface treatment of the walls. In order to make this sense of continuity complete, the great entrances to the courts are handled like the wings and backdrop of an old-fashioned stage set. The result is extraordinarily dramatic. One sees crowds of people pouring into what seems at first merely an ordinary recessed court. Magically they disappear; no door, no opening is visible. The psychological effect of this kind of entrance is definite and adds not a little to the sense of wonder, the sense of separation from the world, the sense of being in something precious and beautiful which the San Francisco Fair so definitely arouses. The great fault of San Francisco is that this idea was not carried far enough. To find a wide triumphal arch at the outer end of the vertical bar of the T is a definite shock. It denies somehow the whole intimacy that has been built up elsewhere; and, once through the arch, into the great plaza on which the United States Government Building faces, the winds come tearing down upon you. In the long broad avenue, past the national buildings and the open streets of the amusement concessions, it is even worse; and at night as you walk, struggling against the force of the gale, you become blind to anything except its strength and remember with nostalgia the quiet atmosphere of the enclosed courts.

I hope I have given the impression that the beauty of the San Francisco Exposition is largely a matter of atmosphere, of spirit; for the visitor who comes seeking for new, for fresh, architectural ideas, that open new vistas of what building might be, is going to be disappointed. Nothing there compares to the daring of the Perisphere and Trylon, the human and elegant unconventionality of

the Swedish Building, the brilliant drama of the Polish Building, or even the monumental rhythmical continuity of the Court of Peace. Architecturally, the T-shaped court at San Francisco is pure picture-book design; taken by themselves, its arches, its mouldings, its ship prows, its grilles are all derivative, certainly not expressive of their material—lath and plaster—and in style completely neutral; the piled forms of the elephant pylons flanking the gates are sentimental and unreal; and the tower which rises at the intersection of the T is definitely ugly, with a top portion completely unrelated to its lower part, too slim to be impressive, too high to be a mere central motif, yet too low to be truly aspiring.

The French Building at San Francisco has, to be sure, a certain *chic* and simplicity; the Italian Building is a characteristic and dramatic example of contemporary Italian design, with a marble facing of great richness that makes effective use of enormous projecting letters; the Japanese Building, a clever pastiche of castle, temple, and palace forms, is extremely picturesque and attractive across its lake; Norway has a rather charming reproduction of a wooden peasant house; and French Indo-China's building has a court exquisite in its correct Chinese richness. Yet these are details, and in general the San Francisco Fair, considered critically as architecture, is with two exceptions dull. One of those exceptions is so superb, so daring, so large in scale, and so well carried out in detail that it makes one forget much of the rest. It is the United States Government group—two U-shaped courts facing each other to form one larger court, and through the center, separating them, a tremendous monument, a sort of nave and aisles of forty-eight colossal wooden posts supporting an interesting open-work framed roof. The side buildings are faced with redwood slabs, and on their fronts—under delicate metal-columned porticoes—are magnificent murals, bright with pure spectral colors in large masses. Similar colonnades and murals equally large but in more subdued tones, with less contrast, flank



the plaza on either side, one against the wall of the large theater auditorium and the other against the interesting California State group. The whole plaza and the United States Government Building are by Timothy Pflueger, and form one of the most successful single units in either Fair, rich in color, interesting in form; and the Government Building, both as a monument and as an exhibition machine, is almost perfect. Fortunately the exhibitions which it contains are equally effective. Especially exciting are the Indian Division on one side, designed by René d'Harnoncourt, and on the other the superb exhibit of all the social activities of the United States Government, designed by Kastner and Berla, with its vivid and humorous statistics and models, its stimulating use of diagram, text, and diorama. The California buildings are arranged by counties and groups of counties, and the festal interior of the San Francisco portion by Clarence Tantau has a real elegance.

The other outstanding building at San Francisco is the exquisite Yerba Buena Club, by William Wurster, which stands just outside one arm of the T, fronting on its final fountain. It is an unassuming building, obviously of wood construction, with walls of natural-finished plywood and a broadly projecting flat roof. What gives it sparkle and character and Fair expression is the repetition of the pattern of the plywood panels and windows in a free-standing grille of two-by-fours, gilded and set a foot or so outside the actual wall. The result is a sort of lace-like delicacy, to which the planting adds just the right note of informal formality. Inside, the Club is a complete phantasy, almost surrealist in tone, a kind of dream interior in which rich blues, the sharpest possible reds, and black and white are the colors chiefly used, except in the dining room. Ornaments are made by nailing real shells in clusters to walls and furniture, and painting them white. It is perhaps decadent; its frankly baroque or even rococo notes are certainly in the opposite extreme from anything we usually call modern; yet the whole is as fresh as it could possibly be, gay, in-

souciant, almost the ideal place to have a cocktail—or several. The large dining room, with its walls hung almost solidly in draped blue and yellow, combines vivacity and dignity.

One thing welds together all of these various buildings in San Francisco, good and bad—the perfectly superb gardening, and it is especially distinguished by one character that I at least find painfully absent in New York—the closest possible liaison between foliage and buildings. On Treasure Island the eucalyptus trees, for instance, planted close against the walls, become literally for the eye as much part of the architecture as the breaks and the mouldings and the beauty of the result is one of the reasons why again and again even those who are most severely critical of the banality of much of the San Francisco architectural detail are completely won by the charm of the whole picture. In New York one feels that the basic plans were made, the roads laid out, the buildings erected, and then the planting put in, as entirely separate and distinct activities of entirely different individuals, with different ideals and purposes. In San Francisco, on the other hand, one feels almost as if building and tree and flower and shrub had all grown together at the same time as essential parts of one conception. The amazing effectiveness of the result is a lesson which all of our landscape architects and most of our architects as well might take deeply to heart.

Another stunning quality in which San Francisco, it seems to me, far outstrips New York is in its night illumination. By the use of colored floodlights artificially disposed, as night falls the whole Fair springs into carefully composed, exquisitely colored harmony. Each court has its different color, each section of the wall its different tone. Especially lovely is the Court of the Moon, which leads in past the Yerba Buena Club. The lower walls are purple-blue, the upper walls green-blue. A rich gold illuminates the arching jets of fountains that border the long lagoon in the center, and the same golden color floods over the statue at the inner end, while a single high vertical jet



at the entrance is cold and diamond white. Over the whole Fair at night, too, and acting as a background to its rich color, shoot the rays of a great fan of brilliant lights, a fan of continually and gradually changing color, a sort of vast artificial aurora, subtle and dim in comparison with the brilliance of the nearby courts, but uniting, as it were, the night sky itself to the Fair. This night effect is thrilling nearby and from a distance as well; and, when one looks down and across from the hilltops of San Francisco and sees the Island shining there in the Bay, it looks indeed a lovely jewel.

Yet New York at night has one spectacle which nothing in San Francisco can touch—the color-fountain-fireworks-music displays in the lagoon of the Court of Peace. These deserve to be called examples of a new art, and the best of them—especially *From Clay to Steel*, the *Garden of Eden*, and *The World and the Cathedral*—are as emotionally moving as they are visually exciting. The *Fontaines Lumineuses* at Paris in 1937 showed some of the possibilities for beauty in the controlled motion of water under changing color, but there was about them something basically indecisive and unsatisfactory; one felt a lack of rhythm in their changes, a lack of inner artistic cause. The addition of music has, in the New York displays, superbly filled this need and given firmness and structure to them. The architect Jean Labatut, who conceived their design and directed them, and the composer of the music both deserve a great deal more credit than they have received. They have not only created a new art, but also have produced stunning examples of the new art form; they have given to the New York Fair its most unique and perhaps its most artistically memorable element.

In the subsidiary decorations at the two Fairs, there is perhaps less contrast. In neither are the murals or the sculptures outstanding. Generally speaking, the paintings at San Francisco are more vital in color, better composed, and more easily read than those in New York. The sculpture in both Fairs is undistinguished, but whereas San

Francisco probably has no pieces as good as the best in New York and is even more derivative, especially of Bourdelle and Maillol, nevertheless there is in it nothing as completely and discouragingly amateurish and inept as some of the figures around the Court of Peace in New York, nor as completely soft and characterless as our monstrous Washington. The year 1939 hardly seems a good year for sculpture, whether on the shores of the Atlantic or the Pacific!

The two Fairs, taken all in all, are so different that no real relative judgment is possible. Much that one lacks the other has; they are really complements to each other rather than rivals. New York is a confused melting pot, enormous, impersonal, but withal dynamic, exciting, and magnificent. San Francisco is small, human in scale, unified, thoroughly consistent, personal, warm, gracious, and emotional. I am sure that Botticelli's *Venus*, who hangs in the art exhibit, feels much more at home there than she would in New York. America needs the qualities of both Fairs; and, though we may feel that in the long run the daring and dynamic quality of New York may be historically more important, nevertheless we need also always to remember that warm and human, beautifully composed form is real and has validity and value of its own.

\* \* \*

Museum of Modern Art. My attention has been called to an egregious error in one of my statements last month about the Museum of Modern Art. I said that behind the great thermolux panel of the façade there were one floor of offices and two of museum. This is of course wrong; the two floors of offices are lighted by the two rows of strip windows, and the top of the thermolux panel begins at the ceiling of the museum. The panel does, however, cover both the exhibition areas and the stair element without differentiation, so that the front may still be called, as I called it, "pure façade design." I apologize to the architects and the museum for this error.





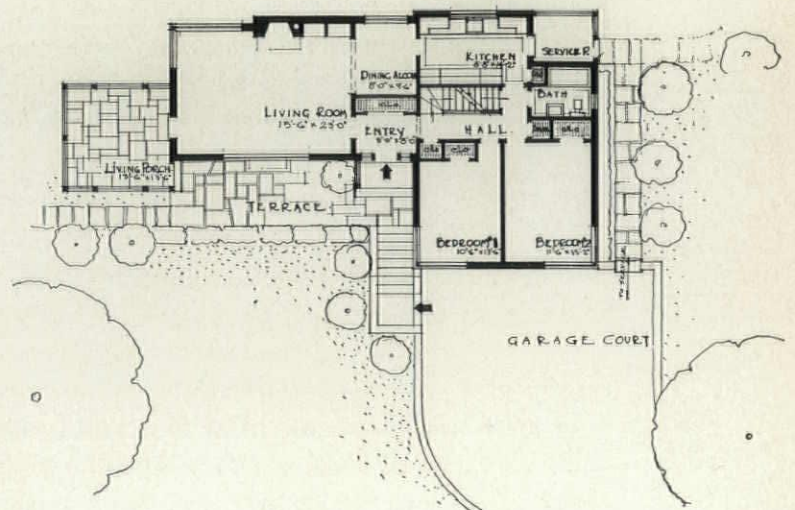
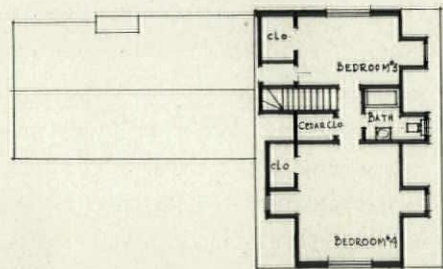
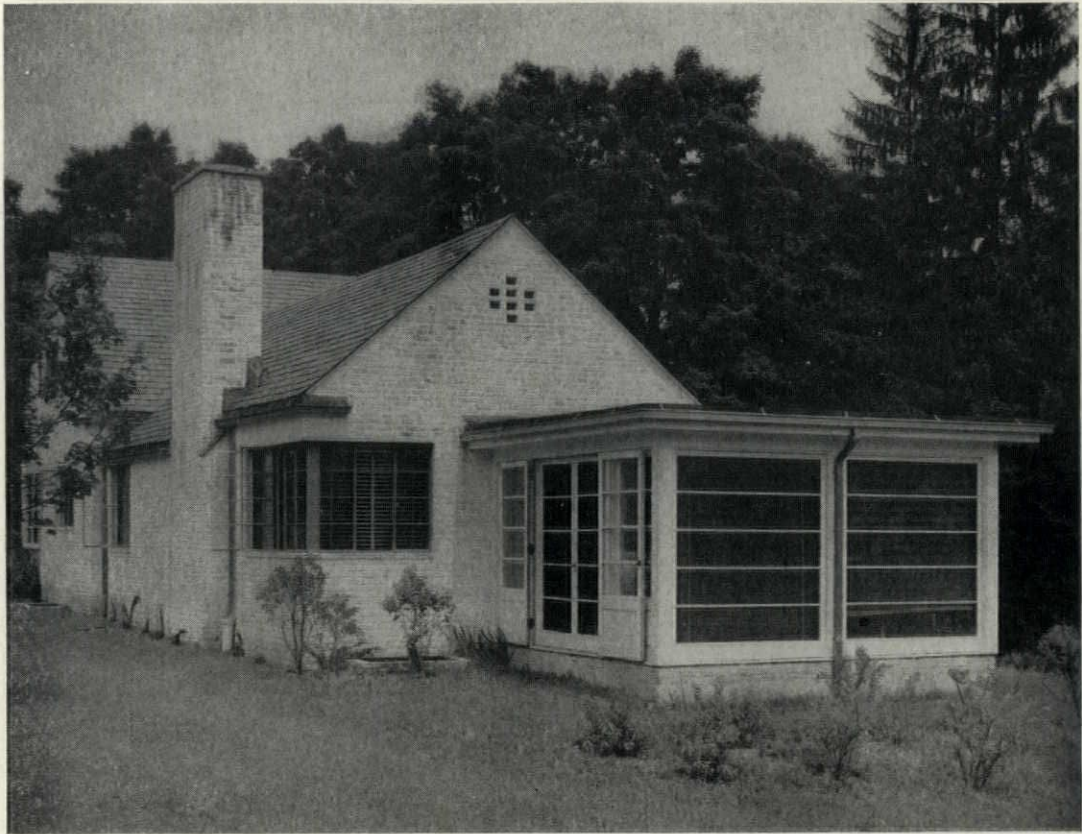
THE ENTRANCE OF THIS HOUSE AT LAKE PEEKSKILL, NEW YORK, EXEMPLIFIES THE SKILL WITH WHICH ARCHITECT SAUL EDELBAUM, OF THE NEW YORK FIRM OF EVANS, MOORE & WOODBRIDGE, HAS ACHIEVED GREAT SIMPLICITY OF DETAIL, IN DEVELOPING AN ATTRACTIVE HOUSE WHICH EXPRESSES A FUNCTIONAL PLAN WITHOUT FLAUNTING THE ESTABLISHED TRADITIONS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE. THE DOOR IS PAINTED A DARK GREY-BLUE, AS ARE THE METAL WINDOWS, TO AFFORD A STRIKING CONTRAST WITH THE WHITE-WASHED BRICK WALLS. THE ROOF IS OF DARK GREEN VERMONT SLATE. THE PHOTOS WERE MADE BY ARTHUR MURAY





THE PLEASANT, COMFORTABLE CHARACTER OF THE HOUSE IS APPARENT IN THE ABOVE VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE SIDE AND IN THE REAR VIEW, ACROSS PAGE, FROM A POINT BACK OF THE LIVING PORCH. NOTE THE CLEAR EXPRESSION OF THE PLAN IN THE EXTERIOR DESIGN. COMPLETED IN THE SPRING OF 1937, THIS HOUSE OF 36,000 FEET CUBIC AREA COST \$12,500. ACCORDING TO ARCHITECT EDELBAUM, HIS OBJECT WAS TO PROVIDE "A MODERN, FUNCTIONAL PLAN WITHOUT BECOMING TOO STYLISTIC IN EXPRESSION." THE SIMPLICITY OF DETAIL DISTINGUISHING THE EXTERIOR WAS CARRIED OUT IN INTERIORS, AS WELL. THE WALLS OF THE ROOMS ARE PAINTED, WITH EXCEPTION OF THE LIVING ROOM WHICH HAS AN END WALL OF PICKLED PINE AND A BEAMED CEILING. LIGHTING FIXTURES THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE ARE OF A MODERN DESIGN WHICH DOES NOT IN ANY WAY ACCENT THE SUBTLE DEPARTURE FROM THE STYLE OF OLDER HOUSES IN THE SAME NEIGHBORHOOD. THE GARAGE IS LOCATED UNDER THE BEDROOM END. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERIOR TREATMENT ARE INDICATED IN THE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE STAIR HALL WHICH IS REPRODUCED ON PAGE 652



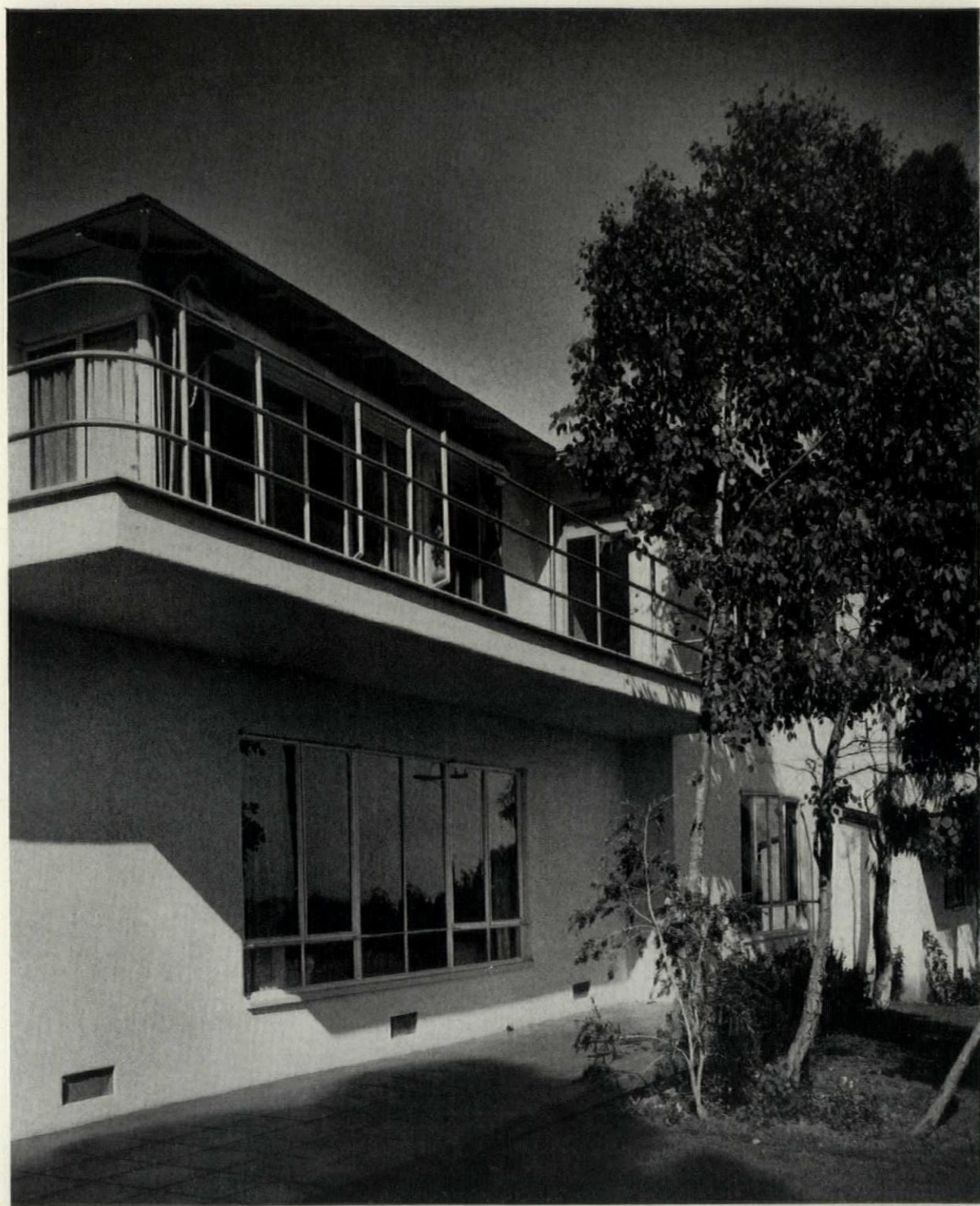






THE UNUSUAL STAIR TREATMENT AND MODERN LIGHTING FIXTURE MERIT ATTENTION IN THE STAIR HALL OF THIS LAKE PEEKSKILL HOUSE DESIGNED BY SAUL EDELBAUM. THIS VIEW IS FROM THE FRONT DOOR AND WELL ILLUSTRATES THE COMPACTNESS OF THE PLAN, AS THIS UNIT LINKS THE BEDROOMS AND BATH WITH THE LIVING ROOM AND THE SERVICE AREA





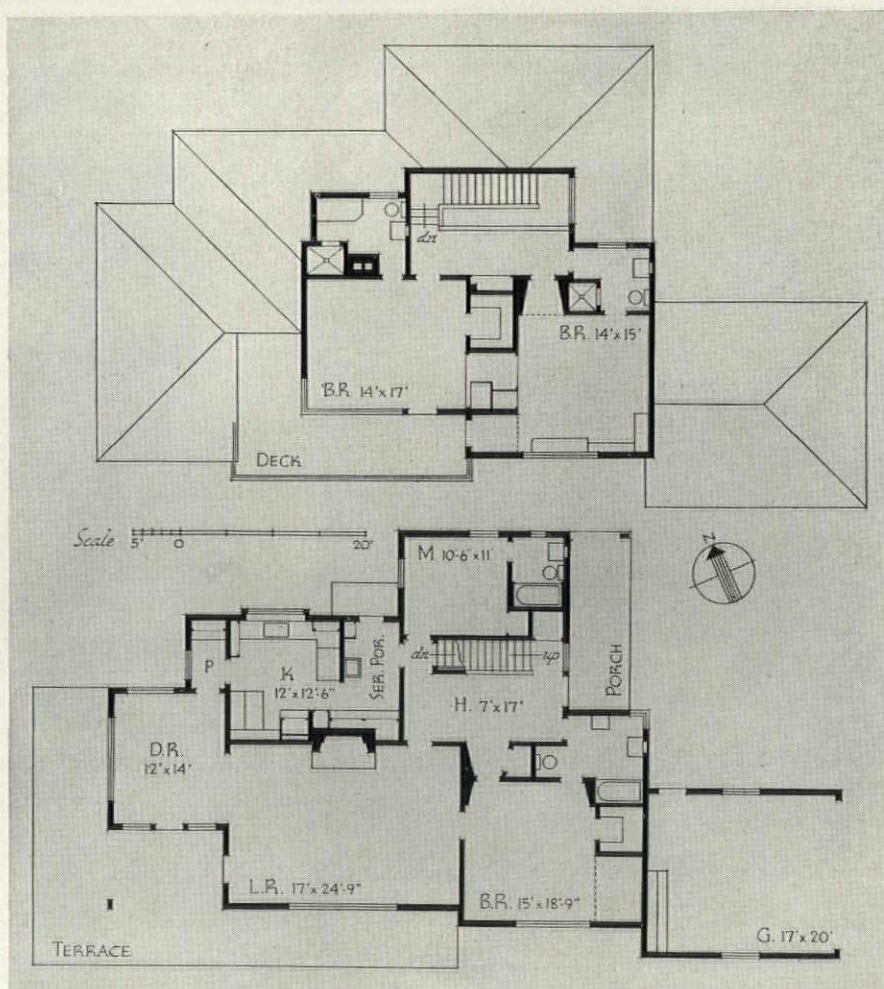
SHOWN ABOVE IS A DETAIL OF A CALIFORNIA HOME DESIGNED BY PAUL LASZLO, OF BEVERLY HILLS, FOR A SITE IN SANTA MONICA CANYON. THE WORK OF THIS DESIGNER IN CENTRAL EUROPE—AND HIS ARRESTING DESIGN FOR A GREAT FESTIVAL THEATER FOR MAX REINHARDT, IN OUR DECEMBER, 1938, ISSUE—WILL BE RECALLED. PHOTOS BY MAYNARD L. PARKER



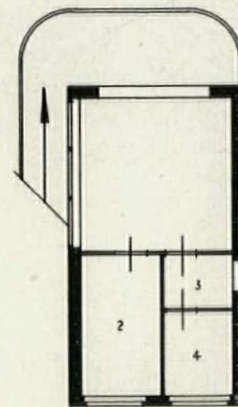
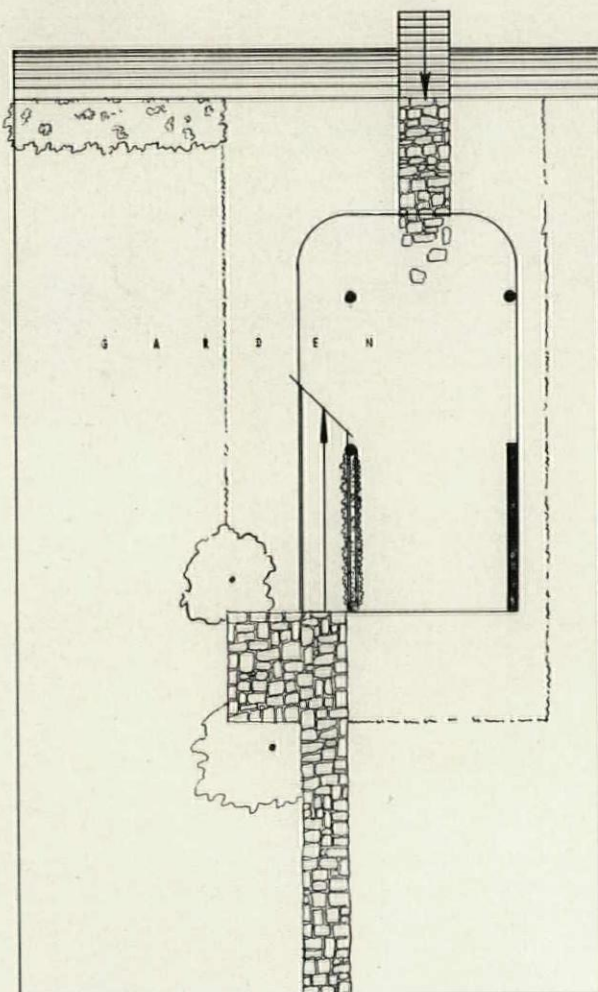
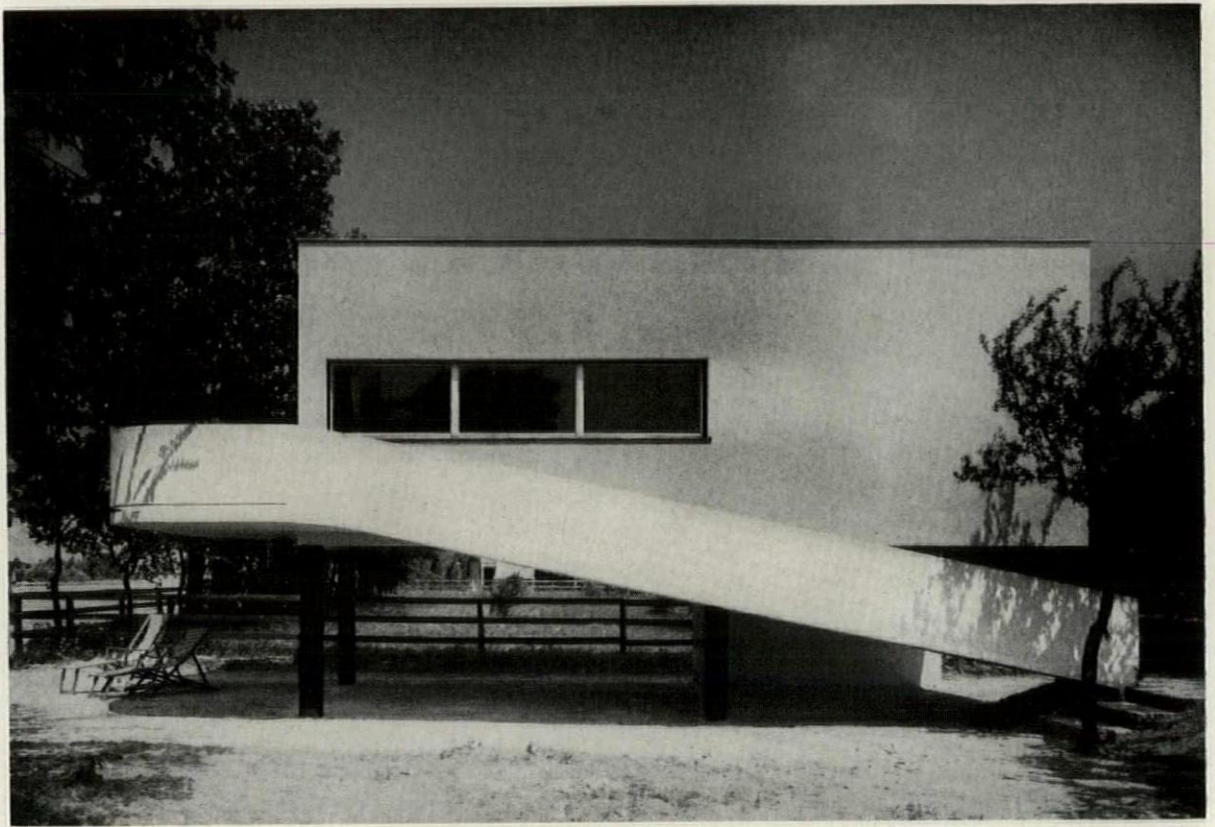


OTHER VIEWS OF THE "LIVING FRONT" OF THE SANTA MONICA CANYON HOME ARE SHOWN HERE AND ACROSS PAGE. THE PLANS EXPLAIN MANY OF THE CHARMS THE HOUSE OFFERS ITS OCCUPANTS. WORTHY OF NOTE ARE THE UNAFFECTED DETAILS BY LASZLO, SUCH AS THE COLUMN AND PORCH BEAM SHOWN AT THE LEFT. OPENINGS AND BROAD SURFACES ARE SIMPLE AND RESTFUL









THIS WEEKEND HOUSE BY ANDREW R. FARKAS AND GEORGE B. FARKAS, NEW YORK, WAS BUILT ON A LITTLE ISLAND NEAR BUDAPEST, WHERE HOUSES MUST BE FOUR OR MORE FEET ABOVE THE GROUND TO ESCAPE THE RISING WATERS OF THE DANUBE DURING THE SPRING THAW. THE BRICK AND REINFORCED CONCRETE STRUCTURE IS WHITE WITH BLACK WINDOW FRAMES AND BLACK COLUMNS UNDERNEATH. IT CONSISTS OF A LIVING ROOM, (2) BEDROOM, (3) KITCHENETTE, AND (4) BATH. UNDER THE HOUSE IS A COOL RETREAT FROM THE SUN





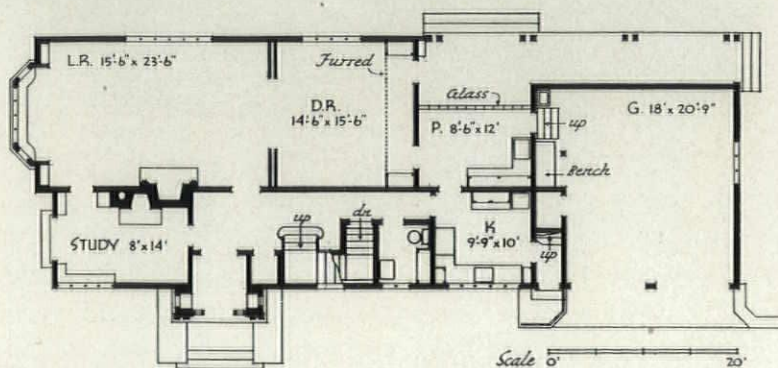
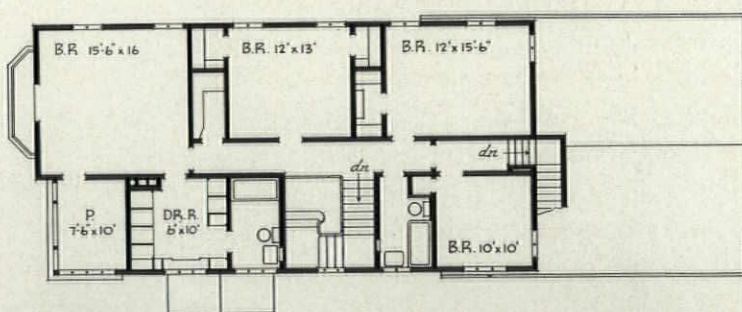
IN PLANNING A COUNTRY HOME FOR UP-TO-DATE LIVING, IN A COMMUNITY WHICH IS STEEPED IN THE HISTORY AND TRADITIONS OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, VAHAN HAGOPIAN, NEW YORK ARCHITECT, SOUGHT TO DEVELOP A "LOGICAL SOLUTION OF THE REQUIREMENTS WITHOUT ANY ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPEDIMENT." THE PRINCIPAL ENTRANCE, ABOVE, OF THE RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. J. EDWARD HAWES, AT SCARBORO, NEW YORK, INDICATES HIS TREATMENT OF THE HOUSE. PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE HOUSE BY AMEMYA



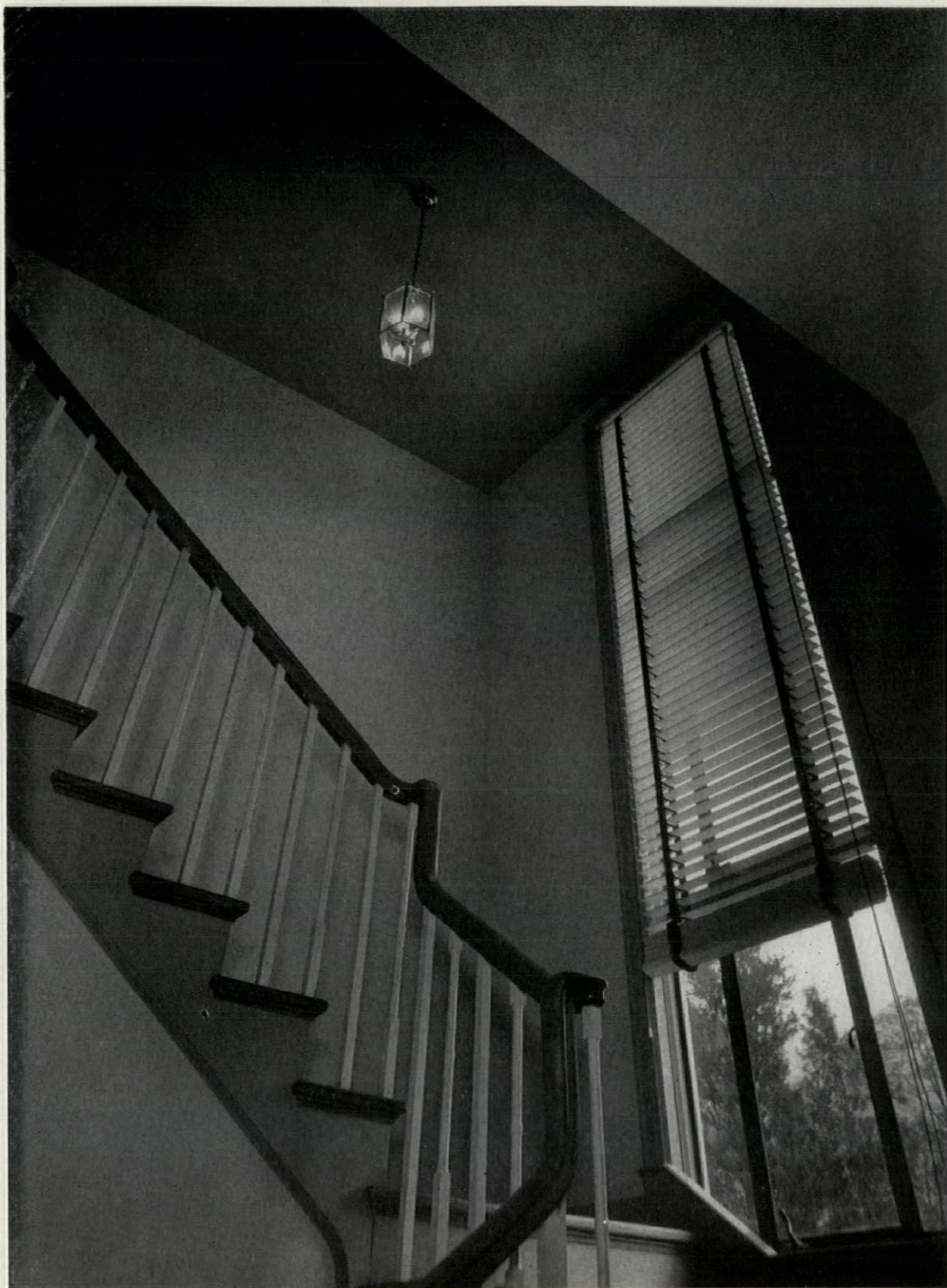


ACCESS TO THE HAWES HOUSE, WHICH IS BUILT ON AN ACRE PLOT WITH AN UNUSUAL VIEW OF THE HUDSON RIVER, IS FROM "REVOLUTIONARY ROAD" AND A PRIVATE DRIVE CIRCLES THE BUILDING. THE OWNERS ARE MODERN IN THEIR TASTES BUT CHERISH THE TRADITIONS OF THE COMMUNITY, AS BOTH ARE INDIGENOUS BY BIRTH AND HERITAGE. THUS, A CONSERVATIVE EXTERIOR APPEARANCE WAS DESIRED AND THE TRADITIONAL CLAPBOARDS, WITH CORNICES, SHINGLED ROOF, AND A RATHER FORMAL ENTRANCE WERE USED. BUT THE USUAL COMPACT COLONIAL PLAN WAS DISCARDED TO SPREAD THE PRINCIPAL ROOMS OUT FOR THE VIEW; METAL CASEMENT WINDOWS, WITH THE TRIM MUCH SIMPLIFIED OR ELIMINATED AND WITHOUT THE SMALL "COLONIAL" PANES, INVITE ONE TO LOOK OUT; AND A BAY WINDOW AT THE SOUTH END OF THE LIVING ROOM IS ARRANGED AS A MINIATURE GREENHOUSE. THE PLANS, ACROSS PAGE, SHOW HOW THE PROGRESS, ON ENTERING THE HOUSE, IS TOWARD THE LIVING ROOM AND DINING ROOM WITH THEIR INVITING "PICTURE WINDOWS." PRINCIPAL BEDROOMS ARE ON THE SAME SIDE



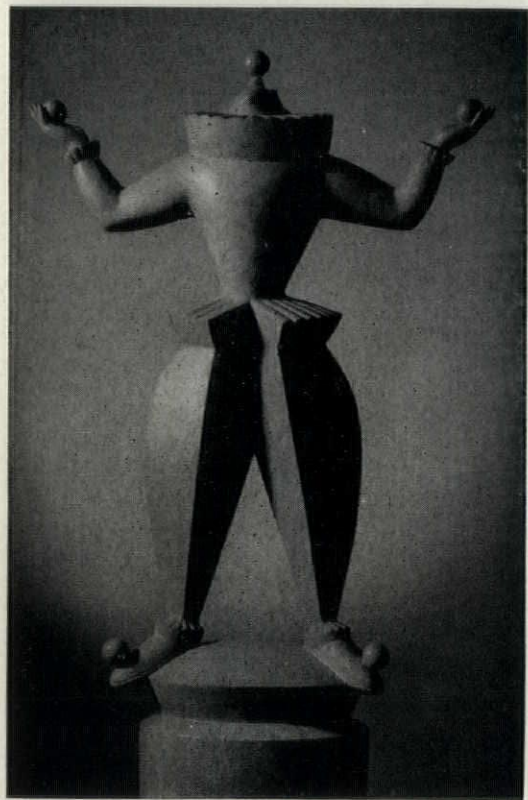
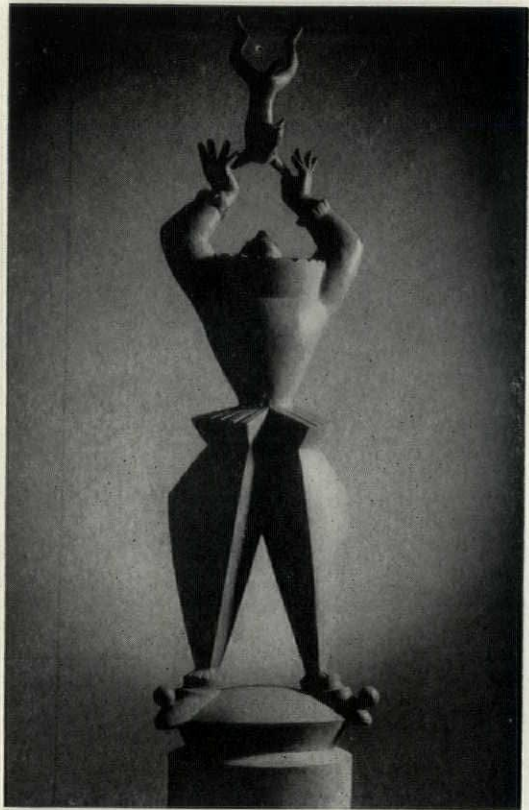






THE PHOTOGRAPH ABOVE SHOWS THE EFFECT OF THE TALL STAIR WINDOW, WHICH SERVES TO LIGHT THE UPPER AS WELL AS THE LOWER HALL. IN SIMPLIFYING THE WINDOW TRIM, HAGOPIAN LEFT THE CORNICES ON THE GROUND FLOOR WINDOWS, TO SHED WATER IN CASE THE CASEMENT SASH WAS LEFT AJAR DURING A RAIN. WINDOWS WITH INTEGRAL SCREENS ON THE VENTS WERE USED ON THE HOUSE, TO INSURE BEST VISION AND FACILITATE CLEANING



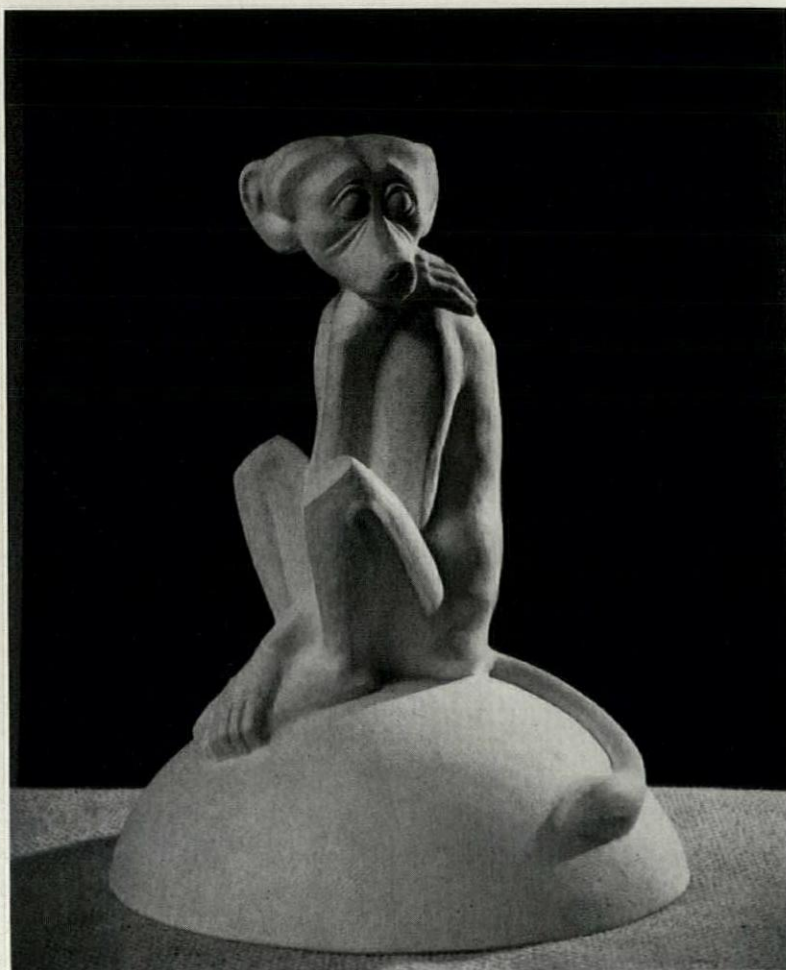


TWO CLOWNS, "ACROBAT" AND "JUGGLER," IN BRONZE REVEAL AN INTERESTING FACET OF THE TALENT OF MARSHALL FREDERICKS, SCULPTOR, OF THE CRANBROOK ACADEMY STAFF

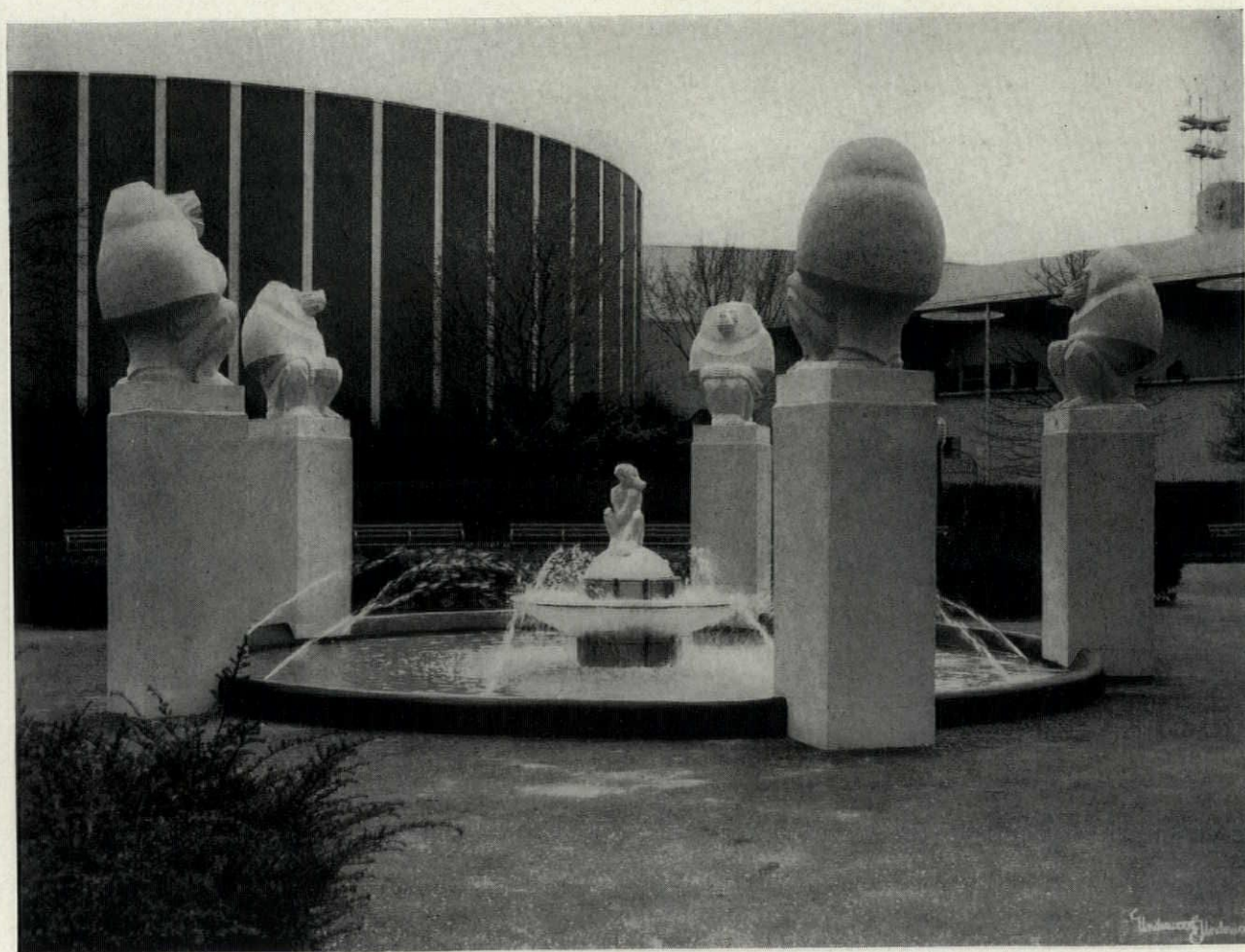
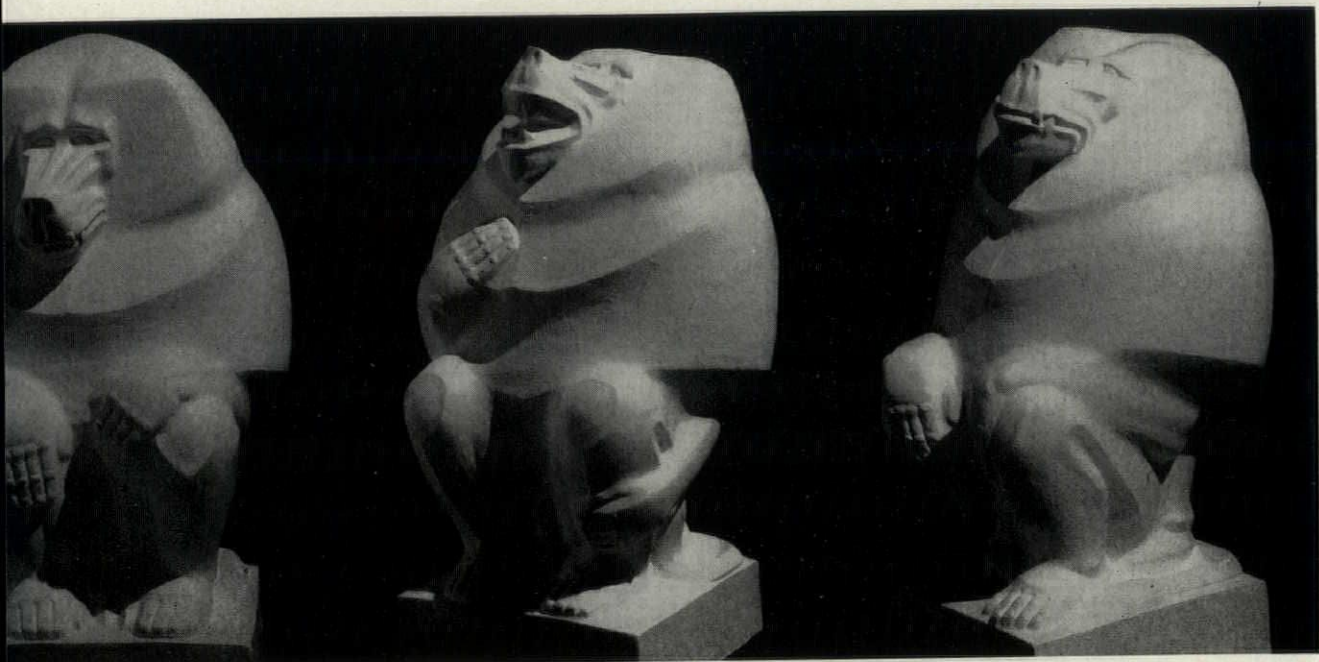




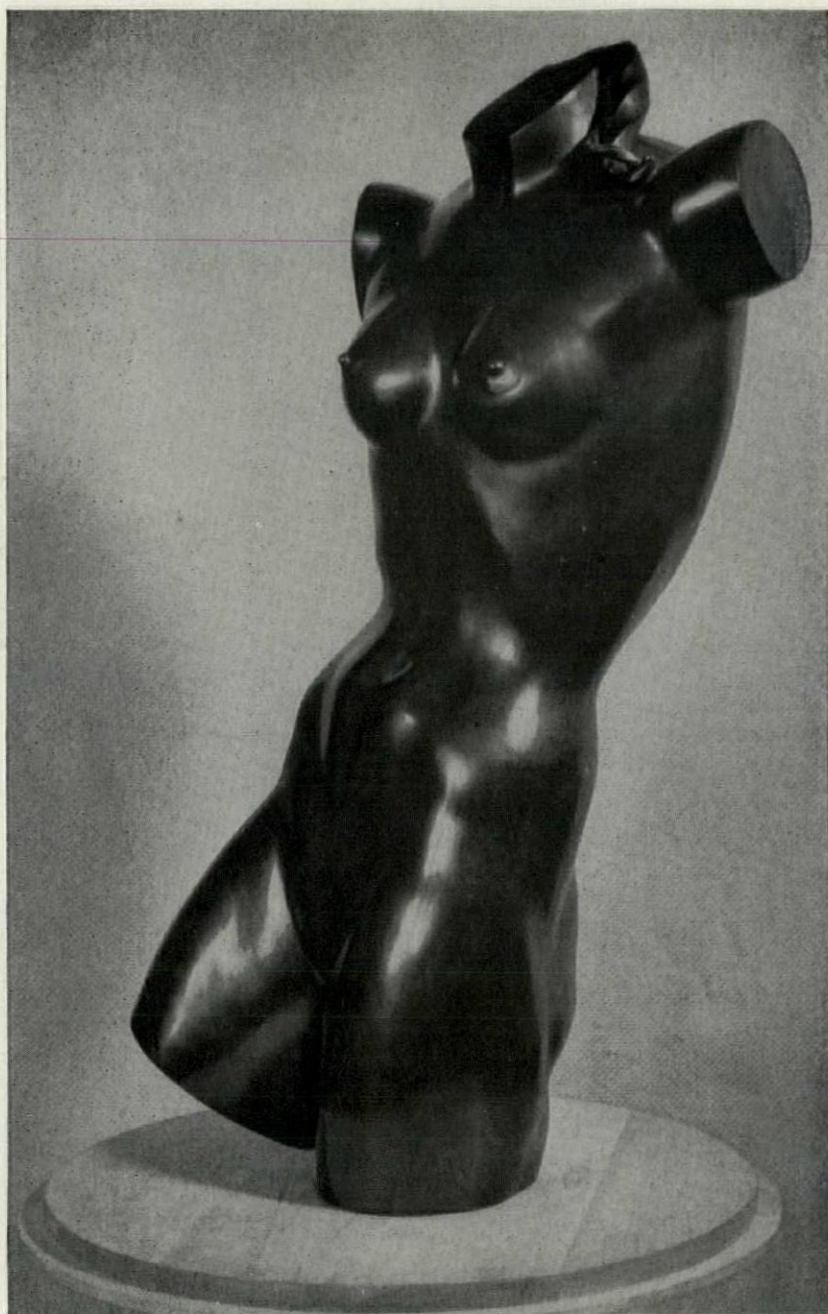
THE BABOON FOUNTAIN MODELED BY FREDERICKS FOR THE GARDEN BY THE GLASS CENTER AT THE NEW YORK FAIR WILL BE REMEMBERED BY COUNTLESS SIGHTSEERS. AMUSING ARE THE FACIAL EXPRESSIONS DENOTING THE REACTIONS OF THE FIVE "OLD MEN," ON PEDESTALS, TO THE PLIGHT OF THE YOUNG BABOON STRANDED IN THE POOL. THE STYLIZED TREATMENT WAS MEANT FOR GRANITE, AND AS A DECORATIVE UNIT WHICH WOULD COMPOSE WELL IN THE AREA, YET CONTRAST WELL WITH MORE SERIOUS SCULPTURES. ONLY THE PHOTO OF COMPLETED FOUNTAIN BY UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD, OF NEW YORK





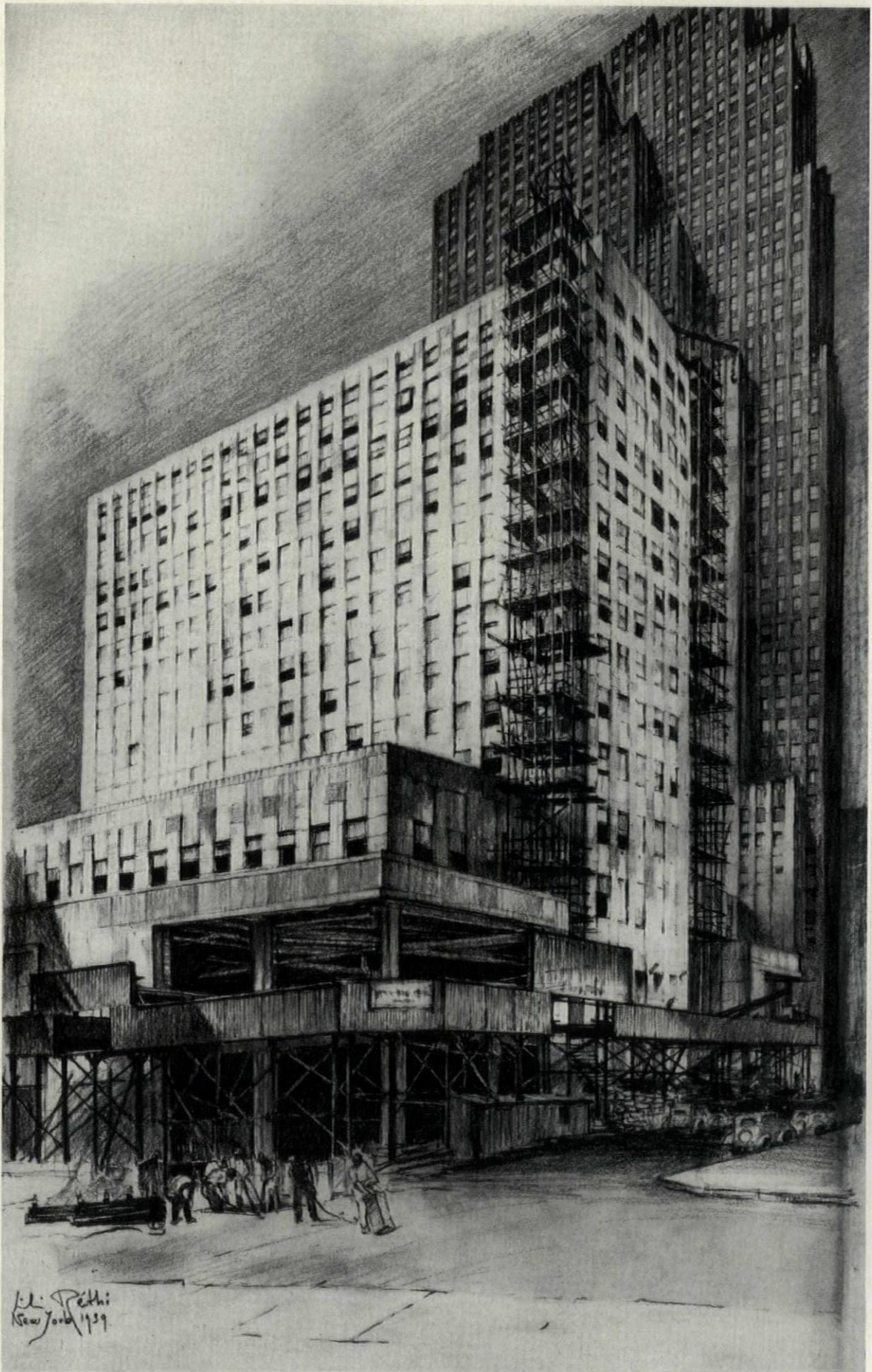






ALSO BY MARSHALL FREDERICKS IS THIS TORSO IN BRONZE, WHICH WON THE SCULPTURE PRIZE AT THE MICHIGAN ARTISTS' ANNUAL SHOW THIS YEAR AND LATER WAS CHOSEN FOR DISPLAY IN THE "AMERICAN ART TODAY" EXHIBITION AT THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS BUILDING OF THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR. THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE BY RICHARD G. ASKEW, OF CRANBROOK ACADEMY









THE DRAMATIC PENCIL DRAWING OVERPAGE MADE DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF "HOLLAND HOUSE" AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER IS BY MISS LILI RETHI, TALENTED VIENNESE ARTIST WHO CAME TO NEW YORK TO EXECUTE A SERIES OF DRAWINGS OF THE FAIR FOR THE LONDON ILLUSTRATED NEWS. ONE OF HER LATEST DRAWINGS, OF THE ENGINEERING SOCIETIES BUILDING IN NEW YORK, APPEARS ON THE SEPTEMBER COVER OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING. SHOWN HERE IS ONE OF HER EFFECTIVE POSTERS MADE SEVERAL YEARS AGO FOR THE DANISH RAILWAYS

#### A C O R R E C T I O N

Statements in an article by Frank Chouteau Brown concerning "The Lindens," at Danvers, Massachusetts, contained in the last paragraph on page 179 of the December issue of *The Monograph Series* as included in PENCIL POINTS for 1938, have been construed as reflecting unfavorably on some of those involved in the purchase and resale of the house and its rooms and appurtenances. We assure our readers that the tone of that paragraph was pitched only to express regret at the removal of the house from its original setting and that no reflections on either the buyer or seller were intended.

The statement that the reproduced room paneling was "(so rumor hath it) sold again" was very

possibly misleading and we wish to correct any inference that the new room was sold as an original. No implication to that effect was intended. The description of the sellers as "second-hand furniture dealers" was inaccurate. They should have been called "dealers in antiques." The sentence, "It was up for sale, piecemeal or wholesale, over several years," refers to "The Lindens." As a matter of record, this property was sold in three parts. Subsequent investigation does not disclose that any attempt was made to sell separately any portion of the house other than the room removed. Ambiguities in the original paragraph were wholly unintentional and we regret that any of the parties to the transaction have been offended thereby.

REINHOLD PUBLISHING CORPORATION