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Images that Motivate



INTER 1998
VOLUME 11 NUMBER 3
\$12 US \$15 CANADA

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Cover image: The dog trot at
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Architecture
affords:
buildings that
are generously
invested
with thought
give generously
to their
inhabitants.

Of course, buildings do not really give, they make available — architecture sets out opportunities for people to use to their own advantage. The thought invested in architecture ensures that its instrumental purposes are served well, then goes on to extend the scope of what a building offers and to whom.

The greatest beneficiaries of architecture are those who are willing to seek out the opportunities it affords — to bring their own imaginations to the place, infuse it with life and association and find lessons and pleasures within it. Truly effective architects are those who play out this process in their minds as they enfold the multiple requirements of building into the delineation of forms and spaces. Their buildings amply reward such exploration, offering fertile ground for the nourishment of daily life.

Architecture is of interest not only to its builders and immediate inhabitants, but also to its neighbors and to those who encounter it within the public realm. Exemplary architecture is of interest to others who would like to build with equal care and vigor. Architecture, it has often been observed, can lift the spirit; it also lays a foundation for social and intellectual encounter.

Tracing the ways in which a building is made we often discover the mind of a person who brings such insight, energy and persuasiveness to the making of buildings that they inspire admiration and emulation.

Most of the articles in this issue were presented at a symposium last spring, “Images that Motivate,” which was organized by the Charles W. Moore Foundation and supported by the University of Texas College of Architecture. It was the first in a series of conferences the foundation will organize to honor the inventive and caring spirit that Charles brought to his life and work — exploring themes that were central to his work and teachings. The articles respond to a call for presenta-

tions that use elements of *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, which Charles and I co-authored, as the basis for a discussion of current work. The authors are all former partners or close collaborators with Charles and so share a legacy of ideas about the making of places.

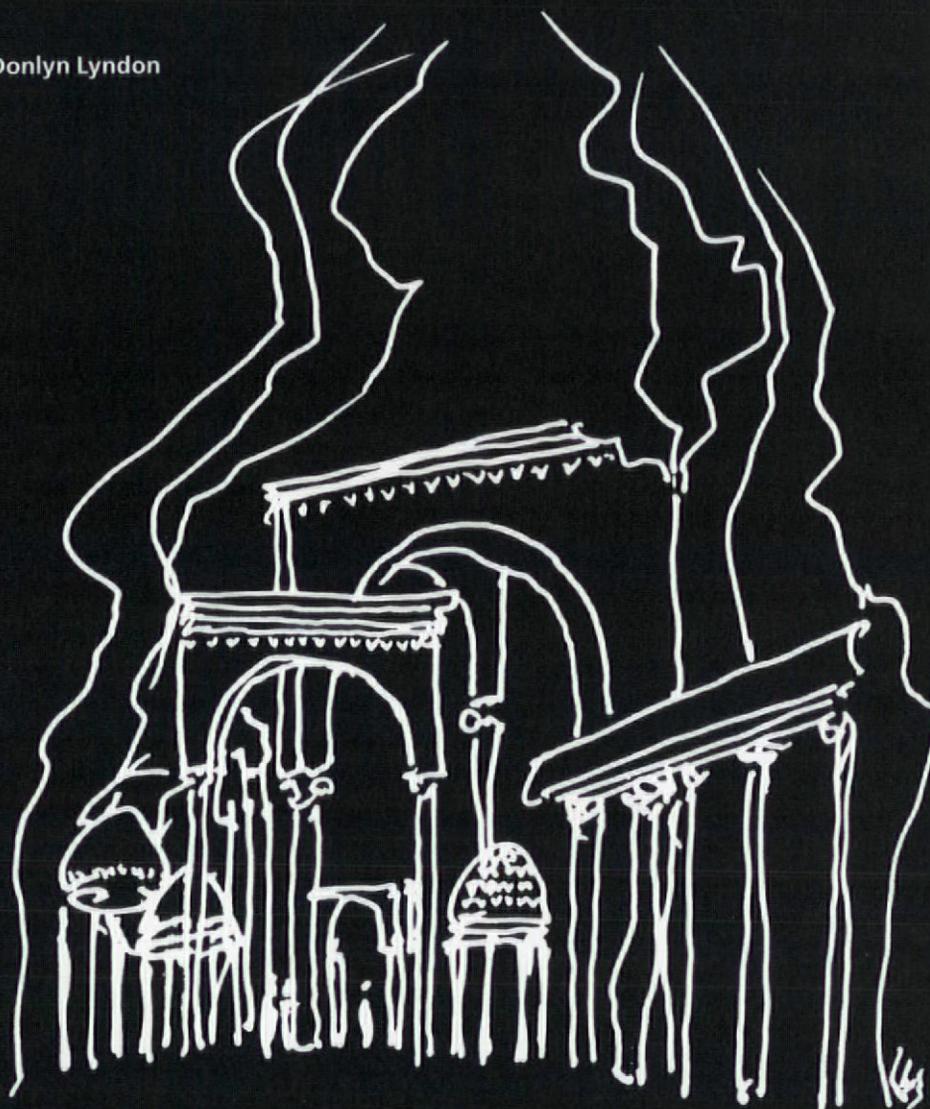
William Turnbull, Jr., a close friend, early partner and continuing collaborator with Charles, was unable to attend the conference. Instead he sent a letter, included among these articles, which was exceptionally moving. Bill, who had successfully battled cancer for many years, was quite abruptly taken by death a short time later. He was a marvelous friend, an extraordinarily gifted architect and a person of profound integrity.

Emerson has written that “the hero is he who is immovably centered.” Bill’s steadfast dedication and intensely held vision come to mind. He never set out to be a hero; indeed it was his fundamental instinct to seek and nurture relationships — with the land, with the city, with the acts of building, inhabiting and tending, and, most importantly, with people, whom he loved quietly and generously and for whom he built places of great compassion and composure.

Nevertheless, his search for a nourishing and appropriate architecture was heroic. He taught us through word and fine example that buildings are a part of the land and that they owe their first allegiance to the people for whom they are made and the places of which they are a part.

— *Donlyn Lyndon*

Donlyn Lyndon



Geode. (Charles W. Moore)

Two images that haunt us are geodes and chocolate sundaes.

*Geodes are magic stones: rough on the outside, but crystalline within,
with sparkling facets around a tiny cavern that the imagination endows
with breathtaking dimensions. It has been honored in Russian Easter eggs
and in such buildings as the Alhambra in Granada —*

rough on the outside, crystalline on the inside.

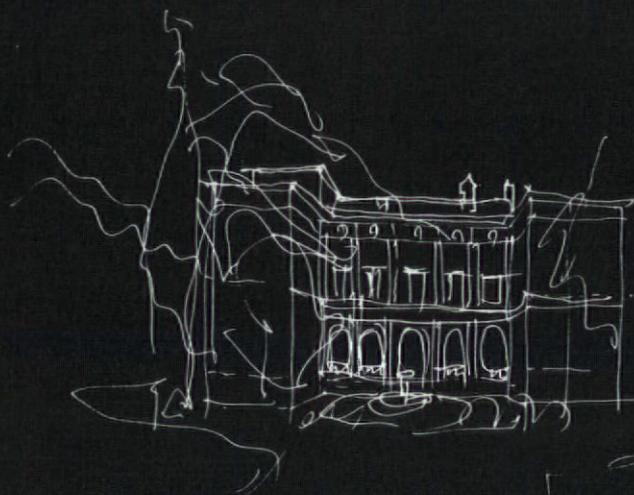
*Geodes remind us that the inside of a building doesn't have to be at all
like the outside, and that the littlest structure can shelter infinities
of space and light. Chocolate sundaes suggest overspilling abundance... .*

— Donlyn Lyndon and Charles W. Moore, Chambers for a Memory Palace

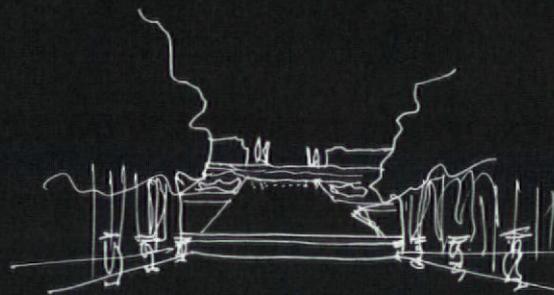
Images, and Why They Motivate

In the last Chapter of *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, Charles Moore and I took on the question of what drives us; what are the threads that keep our peripatetic minds and bodies intact? We only touched on it, of course, no Freudian, Jungian or even new wave Californian analysis was involved; nor did we take the idea very far, except by example. Nevertheless, I think it's important that we took as our final theme "Images that Motivate," both because it touches on our deeper purposes, and because it deals in "images" that motivate; not theories, or formulas, or performance objectives; not even rates of return, long-term capital gains or exit strategies.

Images from Donlyn Lyndon and Charles W. Moore, *Chambers For a Memory Palace*. (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1994). Reprinted with permission.



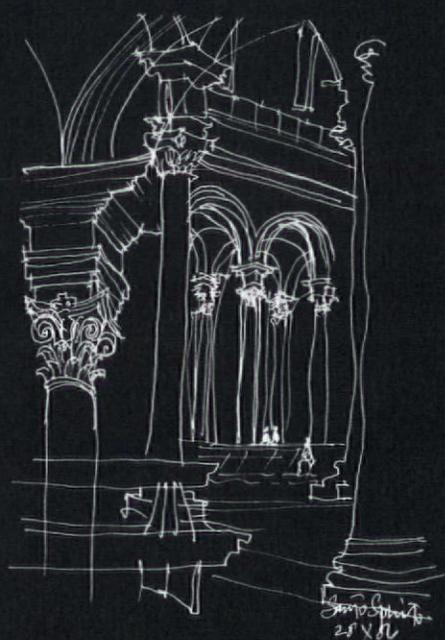
Villa Farnesina, Rome, Italy



Versailles, France.

Sketches by Donlyn Lyndon.

Images — ambiguous but provocative visions that embody relationships — are clusters of attributes gathered together in a form that can be recognized and named, and which may yet hold mysterious speculative implications. Image, unlike formula, is open to speculation, as well as to distortion and reinterpretation. It accommodates and depends on the vagaries and enthusiasms of the human spirit. Images can motivate precisely because they enable us to wish for things whole, to bring together relationships that are not easily joined. Often they bring with them overtones and nuances that elude rational editing, sometimes they bear comment that would not conventionally pass muster.



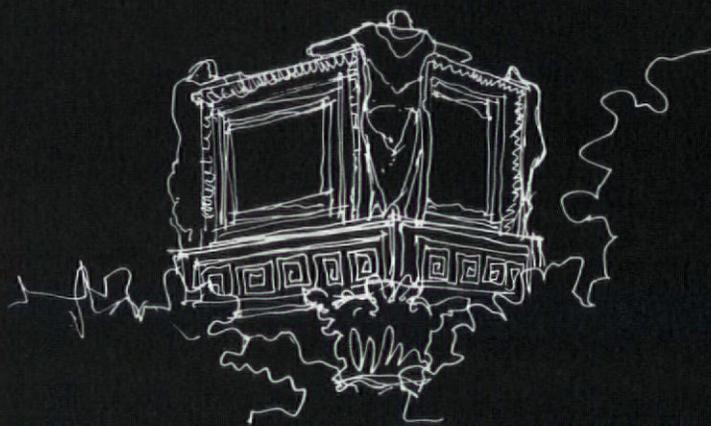
Santo Spirito, Florence, Italy.



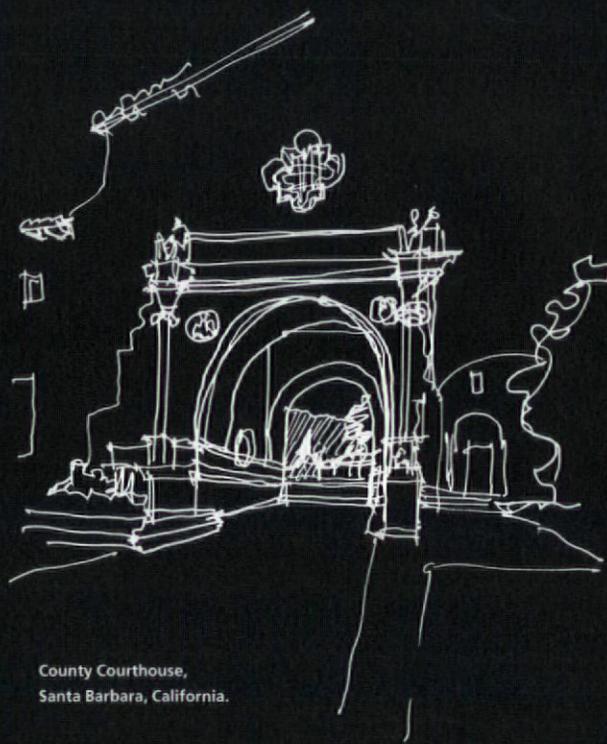
Pazzi Chapel, Florence, Italy.

Images can be traded, exploited, degraded — as the purveyors of our world know all too well. They can be deceiving as well as motivating; phantoms that beckon false pursuits as well as guides to productive exploration. Images must be handled with care, lest they become cartoons, consumable substitutes for genuine thought.

Nevertheless, images beckon, and at some point in the process of making places they will emerge, perhaps in multiples, to rally our interest. If we're lucky, images will become the basis for shared intentions, a device for bringing many people together around the thing that is to be done. They will provide the



Palace of Fine Arts,
San Francisco, California.



County Courthouse,
Santa Barbara, California.

validating reference for client, architect and builder alike; the basis for a community of action.

For architects an image has the virtue of being an embodied set of relationships, it can be used quite directly to begin the act of ordering. “To begin” is the operative phrase here — nothing leads more quickly to the superficial qualities of cartoon than the direct translation of image into building without the modification and elaboration that more extensive information, the fusion of disparate elements and the acts of building bring to the place. Buildings mean something genuine when they reveal that ours is only a part of the story.

Housewarmings for the Chambers: Examples from Charles W. Moore's Colleagues and Collaborators

In *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, Charles and I laid out a set of phrases that we thought could hold many of our ideas about the making of places. We called each of these phrases and their explanations "chambers" then wrote letters to each other describing buildings and gardens that could serve as examples. We chose to write about them in a way that would suggest that they be added to—"housewarmings for the chambers," we called them. We meant our letters as provocation to the readers to find examples of their own. We loved the places we chose to talk about, but did not want to suggest that the organizing ideas applied only to the examples we described.



Participants at "Images that Motivate: The Living Legacy of Charles W. Moore," a conference held April 10-12, 1997, in Austin, Texas. (Courtesy Charles W. Moore Foundation)

The articles that follow are adapted from presentations made at "Images that Motivate," a conference that was held last spring at the Charles W. Moore Foundation and the University of Texas, Austin. That weekend, a group of Charles's friends, partners, co-authors and collaborators were asked to add letters to these chambers—stuffing the mailbox, as it were, with works and musings of their own. Each was asked to use one of the organizing chambers in *Chambers for a Memory Palace* as a basis for talking about some current work, showing how it might be related to the lessons proffered by the book.

The meetings were, of course, also an extraordinary testimony to the impact that Charles had on all of us (and so very many others). In the following essays, we each acknowledge that in some way we have been set on the path towards our present work by contact with Charles's spirit, and by all that he presented to us, in his work, with his collections, through his words and travels, and by his life.

— Donlyn Lyndon

Buzz Yudell

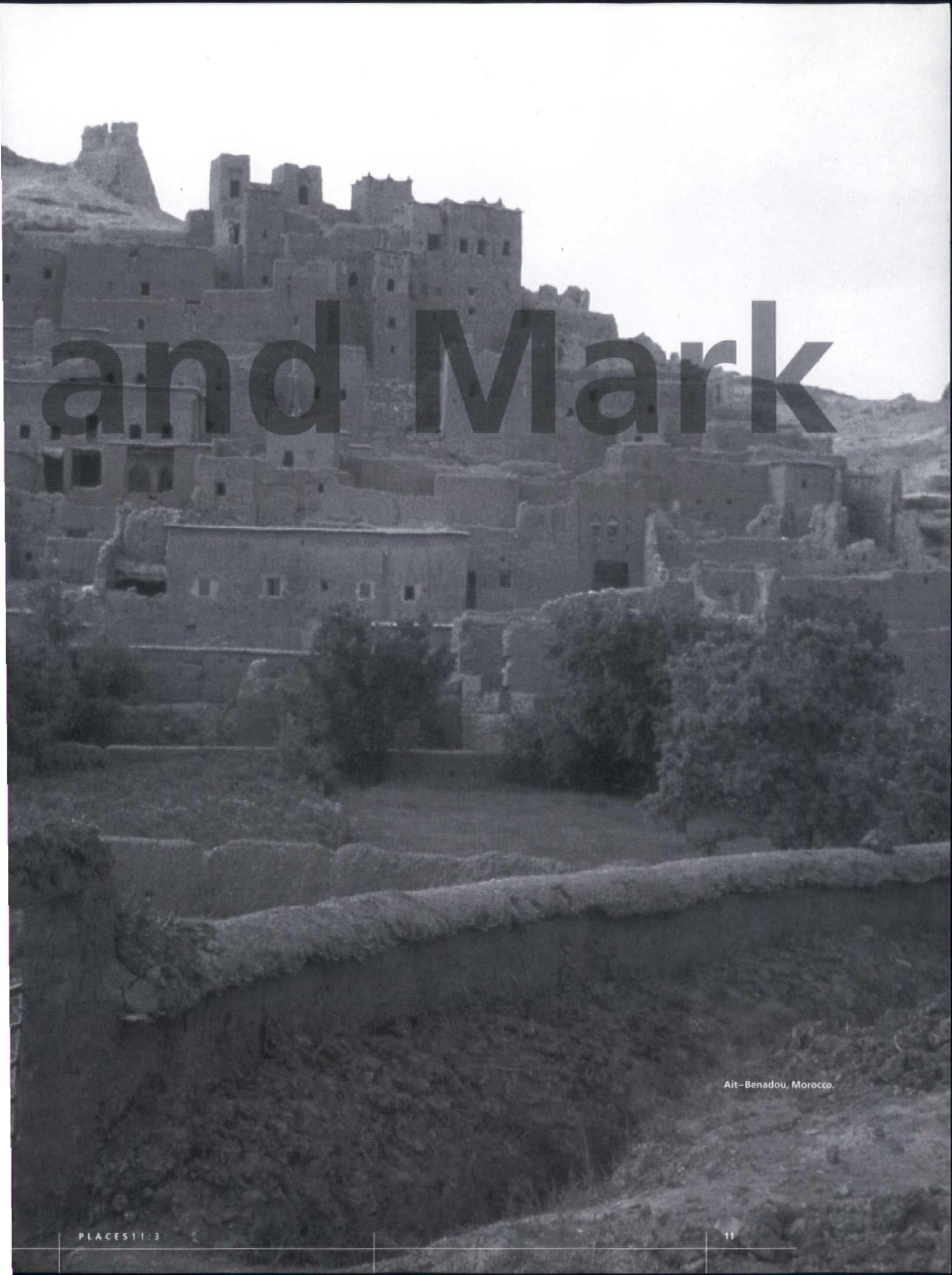
Buildings that Merge

DEAR DONLYN

Morocco is magic. The buildings in the countryside grow out of the earth, deeply rooted yet reaching skyward. The kasbahs of the Atlas mountains are molded from the indigenous earth and ornamented with geometric incisions and crenulations that bear the hand of their makers. These are buildings that, with equal power, merge and mark.

The buildings are composed of archetypal elements; towers, gates, portals, courtyards and streets that have the uncanny ability to be read as a harmonious whole growing with grandeur out of the land or to be experienced as ambiguous collages of form and light experienced in time and space. They fit to the majestic scale of the land and sky and, with equal richness, to the intimate scale of our bodies. This polyvalent nature is achieved with a modesty of means but is a paradigm for creating place and community in close dialogue with a potent natural setting.

Photos by Buzz Yudell.



and Mark

Ait-Benadou, Morocco.

Essaouira, Morocco.

Streets that

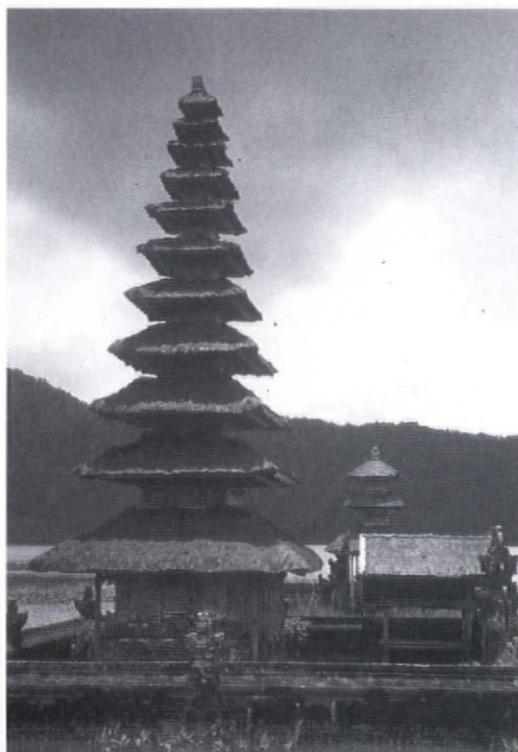
Order and Dance

In Bali the temples, shrines and traditional villages create equally inspiring places with radically different means and materials. The shrines often merge by their use of simple materials, such as thatching, which recalls the vegetation of the adjacent hills. Structures are eloquently framed with wood, bamboo and palm fronds. Shrines are often placed in careful relationship to the views of distant sacred mountains. They merge by virtue of their materials and siting, yet they soar and mark with their vertical and horizontal repetition of the elemental roof forms. The multi-tiered roofs taper as they rise and reticulate, multiplying into the distance like some sacred forest. They merge and mark in a fashion that is consonant with their reverence for and awe of their natural and spiritual surrounding.

As exceptional as are the shrines of Bali, I was even more awed by the power of the traditional village. The sacred axis from mountain to sea becomes the spine of the village. The village comprises houses aligned along this street, terminated at the mountain and sea ends by appropriate shrines and marked in the middle by a communal meeting area. Each house has its own gateway as marker and each has an articulated set of pavilions that progress laterally from the street terminating in a garden of shrines to the ancestors. The street is the village and is the order and collective understanding of the community. It is the everyday and cosmic diagram.

In Morocco, the streets of the kasbahs and medinas literally dance. They are intimate, irregular, intriguing webs of experience, commerce and community. Their tight dimensions press us close to each other and to the earthen walls, but they also protect us from the intense heat and sunlight. Latticed canopies, porches and impromptu canvas swags interact with strong desert light to create washes of brightness, shade and shadow to excite our senses and enhance the life of the streets.

One day in Essaouira, I was thrilled by a distant polyphony of drums and bells. The alluring sounds ricocheted off the close walls of the streets. To my delight the sounds came nearer, though I could still see no source. Suddenly three men in vivid garb turned the corner. They were dancing with drums in hand and bells wrapped around their ankles. The street echoed joyfully. The street was dancing.

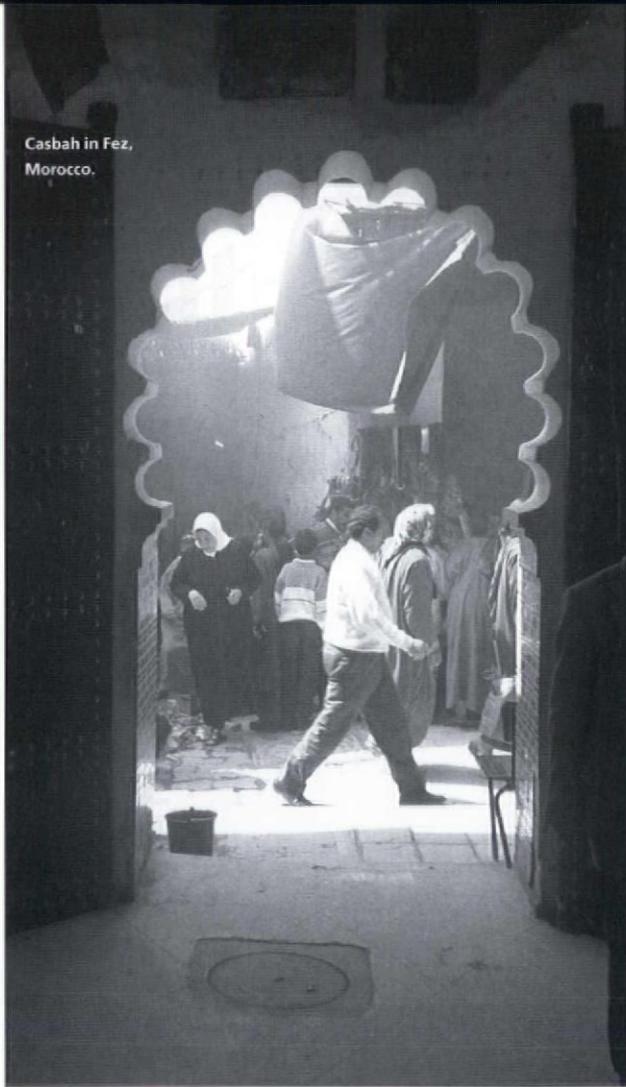


Lakeside shrine in northern Bali.



Courtyard, Ait-Benadou, Morocco.

Casbah in Fez,
Morocco.



The more I travel to and experience other cultures and their architecture, the more I understand the depth of inspiration that Charles absorbed from these cultures and, by extension, passed on to those of us with whom he collaborated. While I had never visited Bali or Morocco until this year, I felt that I recognized many of the lessons of those places. I'm sure this was partly due to the global cross-pollination that Charles had effected throughout his life.

Two of our current projects bear connections to these themes. Our recently completed Schetter House in the Pacific Palisades is a place where much of the character comes from the shaping of courtyards between building elements. We were inspired by the wonderful convent in Patzcuaro Mexico, known as *once patios* (eleven patios). Early on we decided to try for *doce patios*. The house evolved as a set of gardens and courts of varied scale and character. The interiors of all major rooms merge with these courts. The master bedroom and husband's study mark by connecting skyward to trellised porches.

With Tina Beebe's ochre-toned walls and roof countered by Tina's and Mario Violich's lush Mediterranean gardens, the house has a strong duality, merging with the land and marking toward the sky. While clearly not inspired by Moroccan architecture, we discovered underlying commonalities that put this house in the same "memory chamber" as the villages of the Atlas mountains.

Halfway to Morocco from the Palisades we are constructing the new Maryland Center for the Performing Arts. The building is sited at the edge of the campus where three different geometries converge. Here much of the pleasure is in being able to build multiple performance venues in close proximity with new academic areas for music theater and dance.

The 320,000 square foot program presented a special challenge on a pastoral campus landscape. We endeavored to organize each department around a carefully scaled academic courtyard. Each, in turn, links to a spine of performance halls organized along a street. The tensions of three adjacent campus geometries are resolved in the social space of this street. This yields a street where town and gown, students and faculty, and various departments are drawn together. It is a street which by its geometry, location and adjacencies both orders and unites, dances and excites.

I am exhilarated by the wisdom embodied in the vernacular architecture of the Balinese and Moroccan cultures. I am reminded that merging and marking, ordering and dancing, are primal urges that awaken in us and enhance our efforts to make memorable places thousands of years and thousands of miles away.

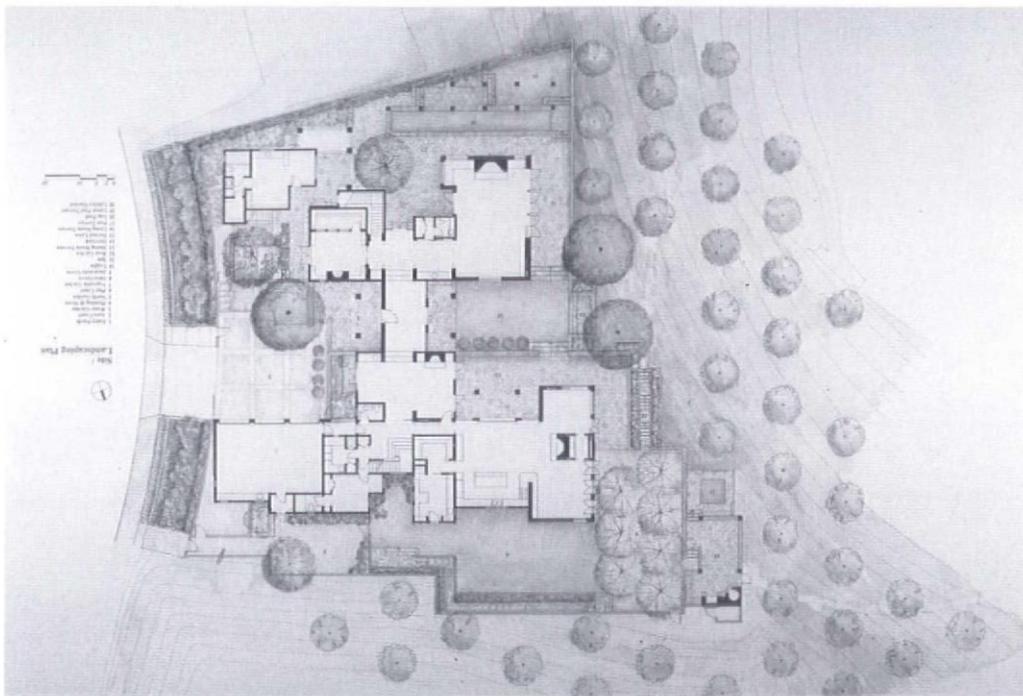
— BUZZ



Traditional axial street between
mountain and ocean in a Bali-
nese village.



Schetter House, Pacific Palisades, California
(Moore Ruble Yudell)



Performing Arts Center,
University of Maryland,
College Park, Md.
(Moore Ruble Yudell)



Images that Motivate:

Villages

DEAR DONLYN

For me, the image that motivates is the image of a village, especially the wonderful sociability that a village can have. It is the image that wraps everything together. Villages have all of those good things that you and Charles write about in *Chambers for a Memory Palace*: “Walls that Layer,” “Paths that Wander,” “Markers that Command” and so on.

A good village responds to the full complexity of the humanity of its inhabitants, not just to a concern for looks and style. Charles started all of us thinking about the essential importance of understanding how humans inhabit a place, and the meaning that can be found in that.

So, I find myself looking at villages and, with a great deal of satisfaction, applying my observations to the single buildings I am designing, as the following photographs show.

— JEFF



Villages show us that many different images can be combined to make a single, cohesive whole. In my house in the woods of Guilford, Conn., I combined the images of my log cabin in Northern Maine, my favorite Parisian buildings along Rue St. Denis and the clapboard-sided colonial houses for which the town of Guilford is known. Left: Riley House, Guilford, Conn. (Norman McGrath) Below: Rue St. Denis, Paris. (Jeff Riley)





People like to feel oriented, to be able to find their way around. Paths can help them do that by providing a structure for organizing the various parts of a building. At the Lender Business School, we designed a very distinctive path. Along the path are small team-study rooms, like porches along a street. There are also little niches, each equipped with a blackboard and a bench where students exiting classrooms can ask the lingering questions they didn't have the nerve or time to ask during class.

Above: Lender Business School, Quinnipiac College, Hamden, Conn. (© Jeff Goldberg/Esto)

Left: Italian townscape. (Jeff Riley)



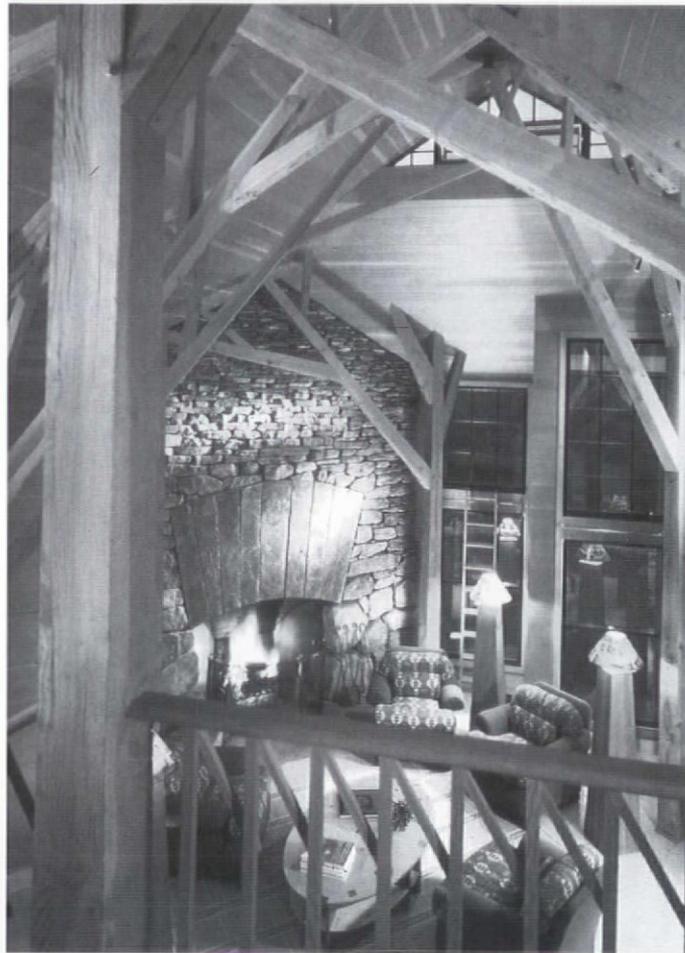
A place can become sociable when there is a sense that it has been built with human hands. We designed this house for an artist who made wonderful rice paper collages of Himalayan mountains and rivers. She etched swirling rivers into the wet cement plaster on a wall, and I collected oak and maple leaves and pressed them in.

Top: Elliot House, western Pennsylvania. (Jeff Riley)

Above: Madras, India. (Jeff Riley)

People love experiencing thresholds and the sense of leaving one world and passing to another, as the bridge and stairs in this Japanese garden suggest. The house pictured at the bottom is on a noisy, high-speed road and is surrounded by houses about twenty feet away on the other three sides. But when you walk through the gateway into the courtyard, you feel as if you've arrived in a far-off place. The birds chirp, the flowers smell good, the grass is wet and green. The passage through the gate offers a remarkable change. Below: Kyoto, Japan. (Jeff Riley)
Bottom: Reid House. (Judith Watts. © 1989 *House Beautiful*/The Hearst Corporation.)





Districts are effective organizing elements. Charles talked about how districts are characterized by ambiances, qualities of space other than physical characteristics, such as the dappled green light under the trees of an oasis. He distinguished between ambiances that are collected in a place, like the morning sun filling an east facing courtyard, and ones that emanate from a source, like the cooling breezes from a fountain or the warmth from a fireplace.

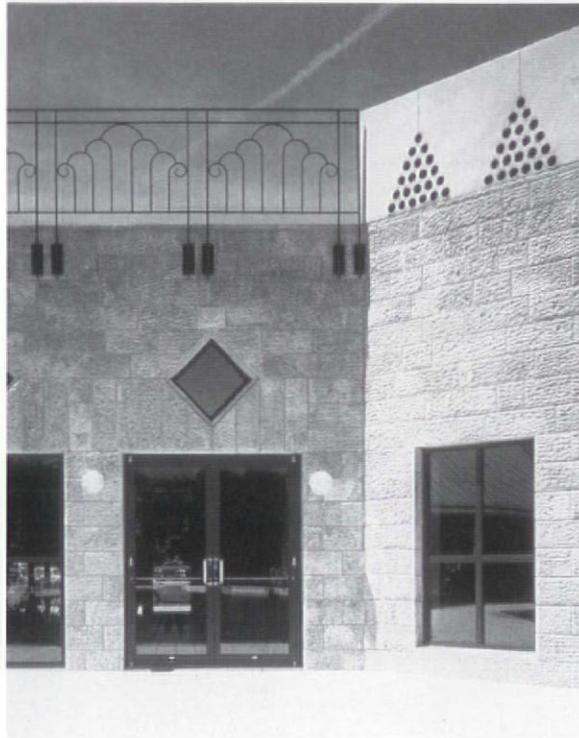
Above: House in the Hudson Valley, upstate New York. (Brian Vanden Brink)

Left: Ravenna, Italy. (Jeff Riley)

Opposite page, top: Piazzetta San Marco, Venice. (Jeff Riley)

Opposite page, right: Reid House. (© Peter Mauss/Esto)





A building's sociability is shaped by the materials from which it is built. We have strong emotional responses to materials that carry meaningful associations. At the Striar Jewish Community Center, our charge was to make a Jewish center without making it a religious center. We suggested quarrying the famous Jerusalem stone—the very same stone used to build the Herodian Jewish Temple, symbol of both the most sacred place on earth for Jews and the Zionist fight to gain statehood for Israel—and building the center's courtyard with it.

Above: Striar Jewish Community Center. (Steve Rosenthal)
Left: The Herodian Temple, Jerusalem. (Jeff Riley)

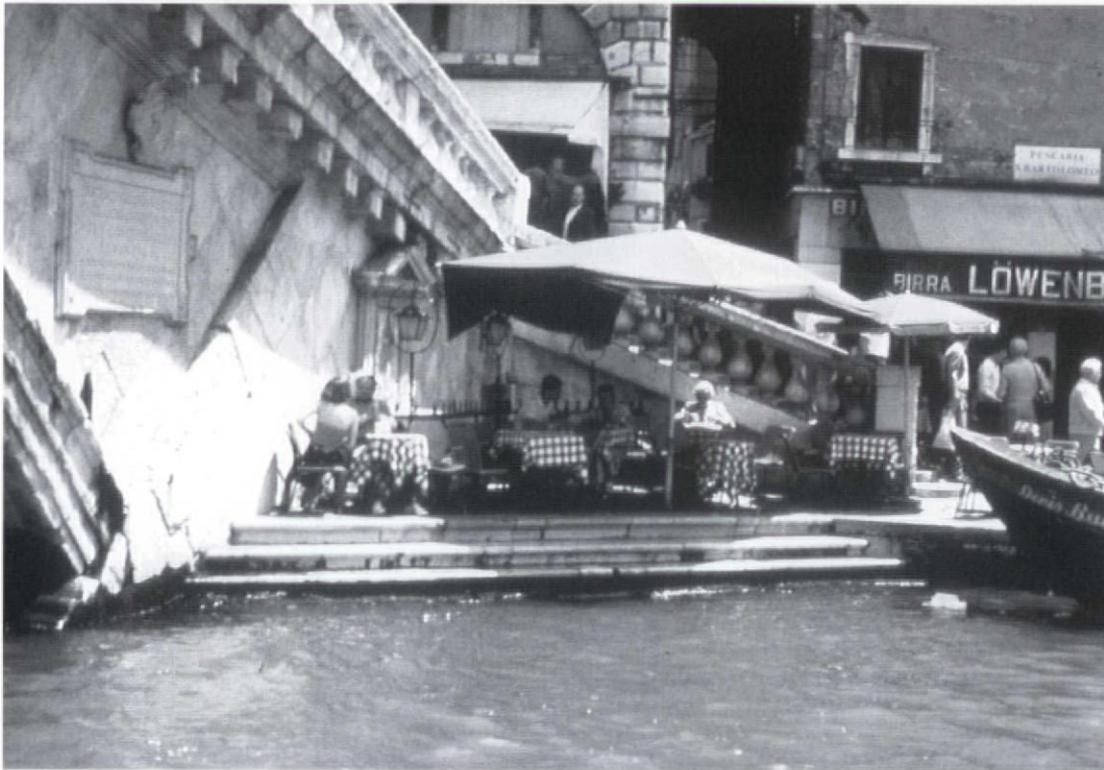




The image of a building can also derive from its climate. For example, the Shattuck House, on the Connecticut shore, responds to its New England climate with an active solar heat system housed on the roof of a small summer cottage. The cottage is separated from the main house at such an angle as to funnel the predominantly southwesterly breezes into the courtyard and house during the steamy hot summers.

Above: Village in Switzerland. (Jeff Riley)
Right: Shattuck House. (Norman McGrath)





Providing places for people to sit is essential. People especially like to sit on the edge of a path, where they can watch the world go by. This lounge at Colby College has double-hung windows that open onto the main pedestrian path, which links residential and academic areas; students sit here and watch their buddies go by. People also like to sit in sunshine. In many villages we have found both large and small sun traps, or places that protect you from the wind and trap the sun. People flock to them.

Above: Rialto Bridge, Venice.
(Jeff Riley)

Right: Colby College student center, Waterville, Maine.
(Norman McGrath)



Muse of the Heart and Mind

It has always been interesting to me that popular descriptions of Charles W. Moore's work are dominated by adjectives like "playful" and "whimsical." In a paradoxical way, Moore's inimitable lightness of touch was made possible by his deep formalism. This formalism was exemplified in his work by his masterful control of space. Moore's spaces are much more than volume given shape by a container; they are muscular forces whose strength is emphasized by the contrast of their lyrical adornment — the effect is as visceral as that of Hercules dressed up in Omphale's peignoir.

In an almost perverse way, Moore loved restrictions. I worked with Charles and Centerbrook on the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College. I can't think of a more difficult context within which to create a new architectural form than the Hood Museum site, which had been sort of a dog run closely bounded on one corner by the campus heating plant, which fortunately resembled a New England mill building; on another by the neo-Romanesque Wilson Hall designed by the nineteenth-century architect Sylvanus Thayer; and on another by Wallace K. Harrison's great, lumbering Hopkins Center for the Performing Arts.

One of my more vivid memories from that time is accompanying Charles on a tour of the project for a group of donors, almost all of whom were dedicated Dartmouth alumni who loved their campus. Quirky, charming Wilson Hall was easy to love. But what, I wondered, would Charles say about the Hopkins Center? "I feel about Harrison and Thayer like a kid might feel about his father and grandfather," Charles began. "I have my problems with Harrison; but I think Thayer is just wonderful." Of course! No need for angst — it's all just generational.

But I believe Charles liked having to work through his problems with Harrison. Having to

grapple with the difficult physical reality of a place really got his creative juices flowing. In *The Unsettling of America*, Wendell Berry wrote: *There are, it seems, two Muses: the Muse of Inspiration, who gives us inarticulate visions and desires, and the Muse of Realization, who returns again and again to say, "It is yet more difficult than you thought." This is the muse of form. . . . It may be . . . that form serves us best when it works as an obstruction to baffle us and deflect our intended course. The impeded stream is the one that sings.*

I thought of Charles when I read those words, of how he thrived on formal challenges and of his generosity when some problem arose or a client changed his mind and Charles got to do it again. He knew that he would somehow do it better, doing it again. This quality was not patience, though Charles could be very patient. It was more an expression of his childlike, or perhaps Zen, attitude toward life. Everything Charles did, he did for the first time. It is this quality that I attempt to emulate in my own work, work that is quite different from Charles's. Nevertheless, in an odd way, he was my most important mentor.

I wonder whether, in thinking about the letter format of *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, Charles ever thought of the Epistles of Saint Paul. I wouldn't put it past him. The book brings to mind a passage from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians: "You are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; . . . written not with ink but by the Spirit, . . . not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart." Good architecture, like all good work, comes from the heart. That is the real legacy of Charles W. Moore.

John Ruble

Roofs that Wander,



Potatisåker housing, Malmö, Sweden. (Moore Ruble Yudell)

Lanterns that Levitate

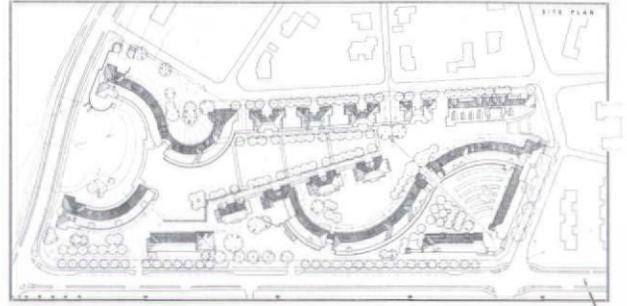


DEAR DONLYN

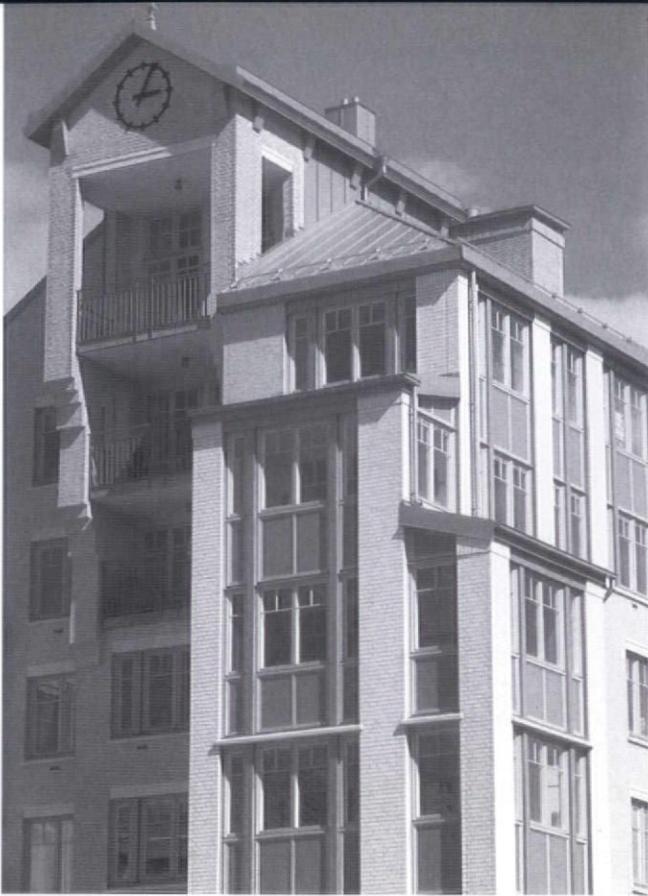
Today we crossed the sound from Copenhagen to Malmö — Öresund, it is called, Golden Sound, a name that must have come from the color of its light and air on a summer day, just like this day. All the way I kept thinking about our last conversation, which had to do with memory palaces, and how their many chambers are held together in the mind. What kinds of images might inform the sequence, the connection?

As you said, the palace itself is the very form that gives the memory a framework, and it probably works because it is not very subtle. You start with an entry hall, then a grand stair to a gallery with niches and pictures, then on to more halls on either side — symmetry helps you remember, doubles your RAM, as it were — and finally onto the wings, adding as many rooms as you need. Palladio is the obvious answer, but could other forms apply?

Peek & Cloppenberg store,
Leipzig, Germany.
(Moore Ruble Yudell)



Potatisåker housing, Malmö,
Sweden. (Moore Ruble Yudell)



When we arrived at Malmö harbor we were greeted by Bertil Öhrström, our Swedish colleague, who took us directly to Potatisåkern — The Potato Fields — to see our housing project, which is nearly complete. Walking through the site, it struck me that the whole design is about movement and connection between places, very much the issue we talked about, and I began to ask what it was that holds the whole collection of gardens and courts together. I have decided that the roofs are playing that role, as, it seems, they often do in our work. At Potatisåkern, the roofs seem to move around on the site so much that they remind me of Charles's "Paths that Wander."

At Potatisåkern there is an interesting dynamic balance between places that have a certain shape and building forms that move around too much to be pinned down. The series of places, no one of which is quite complete, is such that each space leads on to the next one, always leaning over to the next space, eventually taking you out to the surrounding neighborhood. The buildings twist and bend, reach out to grab a corner, or march along in a series, giving shape to gardens and terraces. The roofs, as they're wandering around on the buildings, really start to take on a life of their own: they don't seem to know how to stay in their

place. As you can see, they start climbing down onto the sides of the building, as if yearning towards the ground. The weathered zinc connects to and extends the soft blue sky, and the light of Golden Sound is picked up by brick walls of a light ochre.

The rooftops meander around, climbing down the sides, reaching out and becoming houses in and of themselves, trying to form alliances with the yellow bricks coming from the ground up, sometimes getting carried away and making too many chimneys, and generally trying to upstage everything else that's happening in the building. As they do this, they also lead the eye on a grand tour of the courts, gardens and sky.

Our Peek & Cloppenburg store in Leipzig has a roof-wall complex as well; we liked the copper roof so much that we decided more was better. Bay windows, with their folded copper spandrels and colonettes, drop down the facades to land on limestone walls and buttresses. It all builds up to a corner tower with a glass lantern on top. The nighttime picture shows the Peek & Cloppenburg lantern floating over the street like a still fountain of light.

Leipzig's old commercial buildings have a spirited, almost civic-minded quality, which is helped by having lots of gold-leaf details. We hope the



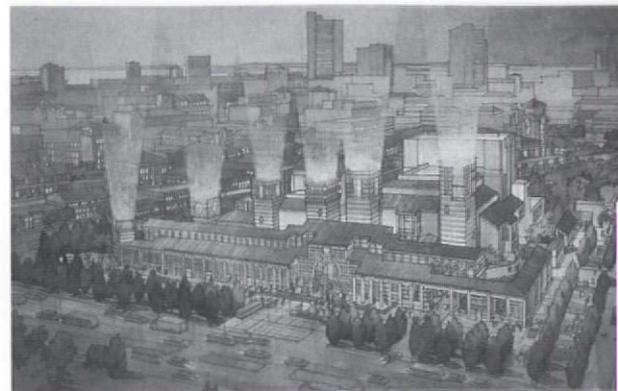
Above: Peek & Cloppenburg store, Leipzig, Germany. (Moore Ruble Yudell)
Above left: Potatisåkern housing, Malmö, Sweden. (Moore Ruble Yudell)

Shanghai Grand Theatre,
competition entry.
(Moore Ruble Yudell).

Peek & Cloppenburg lantern, with its amber-hued light, makes a modern contribution.

The image of the floating lantern reminds me of our competition design for the Shanghai Grand Theatre. The theatre was to be located in Shanghai's new Civic Center, on the site of the old race track. Substantial buildings remain from the pre-war years, when the racing grounds were Shanghai's major social center, but the track itself has been replaced by a park, and the whole area is dominated by the brooding hulk of the new City Hall.

Our proposal for the theater included a full opera house and three other performance halls, standing behind a long vaulted gallery. Here we thought of Chinese gardens, in which you move from one place to another through a moon gate, as if passing between different worlds. From the lobby gallery, theater-goers would cross a narrow garden

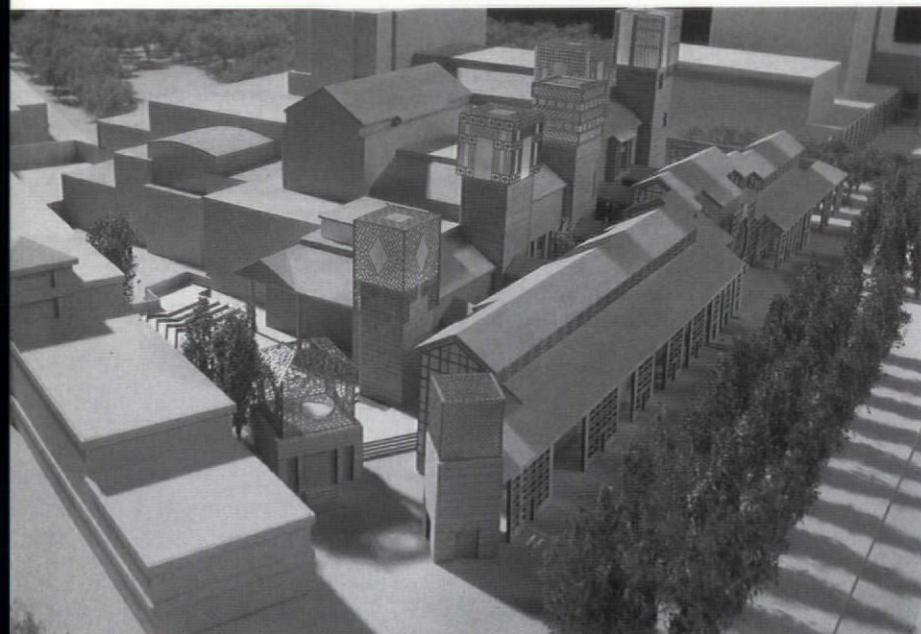


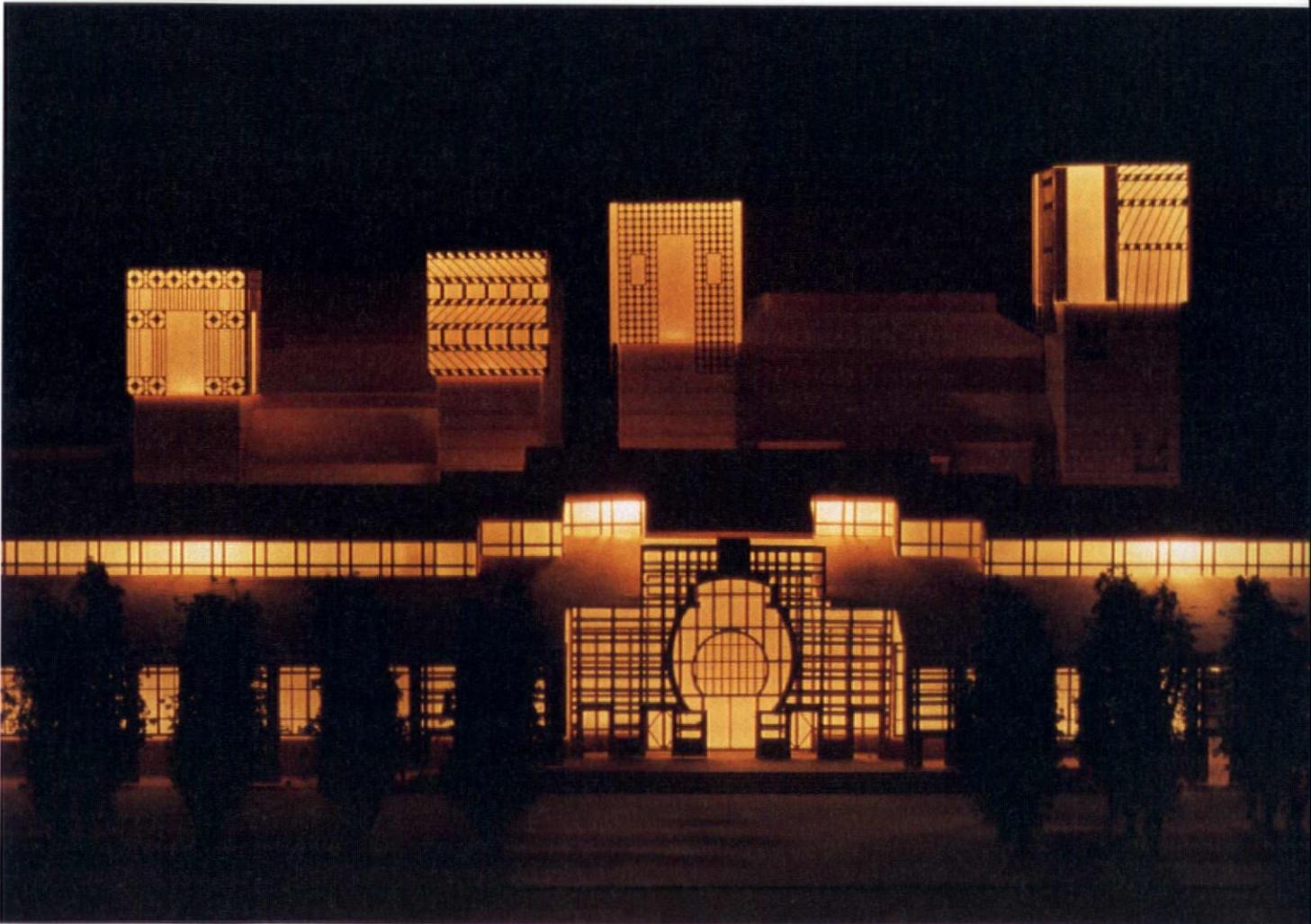
by bridges into each theater space, heightening the sense of leaving the ordinary world behind.

We thought lanterns would provide a sense of festival — an image we all remember from Chinatown — and we decided to make them really big. The glass and steel lanterns are each as big as a house. Mounted on towers at various heights, they seem to float over the gardens, thrusting their beacons up into Shanghai's dusty night sky to announce the theater's place in the city, which is fast becoming a wilderness of dreary new high-rise buildings.

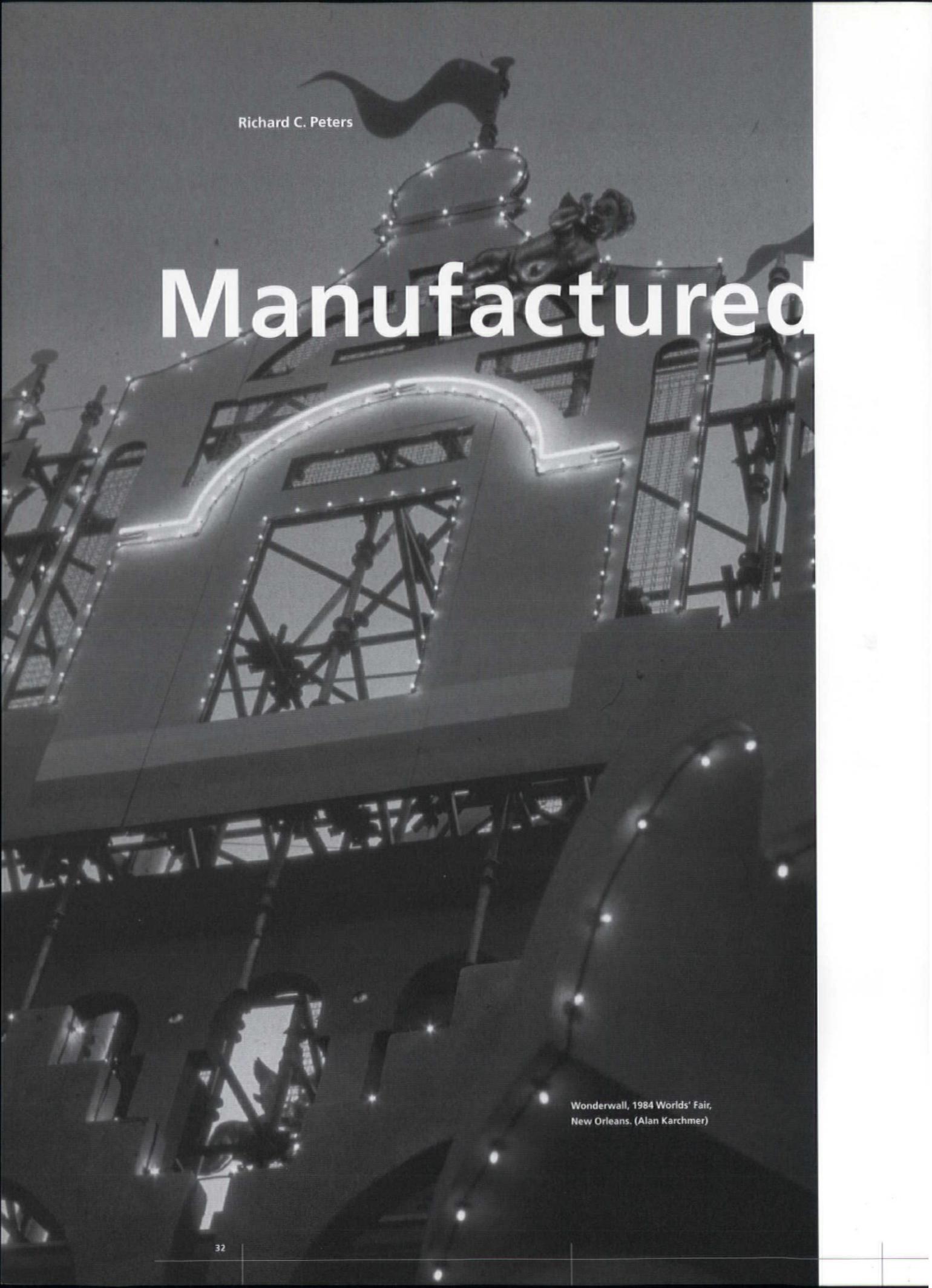
While we didn't win the competition, the intrigues of our two trips to China were an unforgettable experience — enough at least for a teahouse-sized memory palace, or our next chat in the airport lounge.

— JOHN





Shanghai Grand Theatre, competi-
tion entry. (Moore Ruble Yudell).



Richard C. Peters

Manufactured

Wonderwall, 1984 Worlds' Fair,
New Orleans. (Alan Karchmer)

DEAR DONLYN

My favorite chapter in *Chambers for a Memory Palace* is, for obvious reasons, “Light that Plays.” In his letter to you, Charles writes, “Light defines space and the accounts of space are phrased in terms of light,” and describes three kinds of light: “Pagan Light, Mystic Light and Light that Plays.” In your reply, you write, “Light in all its subtle modulations is exhilarating.”

Both of you are writing about light from the sun and about the interplay between architecture and the subtlety of sun’s rays, including shadow, shade, reflection and even sparkle. I would like to add to the discussion by focusing on the role of man-made lighting, or “manufactured light,” as Jean Labatut, our professor at Princeton, used to call it.

light



Above: Faculty Club, University of California, Santa Barbara, MLTW/Moore Turnbull. (Richard C. Peters)

Below: Centennial Pavilion, 1984 Worlds Fair, New Orleans. (Alan Karchmer)



The intermingling of people, places and ideas is made relevant in architecture, and for me the language of lighting is what makes architecture memorable, and what has sustained my work. This language begins with the relationships between what I call the “three S’s” – sources, systems and surfaces. The sources are the lamps, the systems are the various ways to illuminate the spaces and the surfaces are the planes receiving light. An understanding of these three elements is fundamental to every space under investigation. They are inseparable; one cannot be explored without the others.

These elements, coupled with “ambient luminance, focal glow and sparkle of brilliance,” to use the words of the late Richard Kelly, dean of American lighting designers, have always been a major influence on my work. There is another idiosyncratic element I recognize and that is “WACKO,” or lighting effects I like but don’t quite understand why or how

powerfully they work. Taken altogether, these elements are integral to my lighting design approach, as the following projects demonstrate.

My first much publicized lighting design was the faculty club at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Lighting the soaring Piranesi-like spaces was like playing jacks with lights. Fantastic, heraldic neon banners sparkled in the ambiance of the surrounding surfaces, glowing in lights from the chromed wall brackets and the string of lights etching the arches celebrating the dynamic interior. This was crowned by a glistening baroque chandelier (a gift), which hangs over the regal stair, adding brilliant sparkle to the effect of lighting the magnificent dining room.

The Piazza D’Italia in New Orleans became a lighting landmark. Doric light columns and neon Acanthus leaves were woven together with neon light arches, uplighted, glowing entablatures and colonnades with flutes of water and light to animate the night color of this civic plaza. It was this project that first introduced me to the realization the overall effect was “WACKO” – it could not have been predicted, much less completely designed.

The 1984 World’s Exposition in New Orleans, on which I collaborated with Charles, Bill Turnbull and Perez Associates, gave me a chance to explore my language of lighting even more fully, by using night color or “painted light” (ambiance) and “syncopated light” (play of brilliants) to enhance the vivacity and luminosity so necessary to the life of places. The Centennial Pavilions were softly etched in light with sparkling light banners reflecting in the water and surrounded by the glowing lanterns of the Empress Walk, which also reflected in the lagoon. The Wonderwall was a 2,500-foot long fantasia of moving and pulsating light – sparkling strings, neon lines, glowing arches and domes, and shimmering stainless steel leaves in “light trees,” all culminating in the fiery alligators chasing laughing pelicans to ethereal heaven.

I worked on three churches that offer stark contrasts in how the lighting of interior spaces enhances the liturgical requirements. St. Matthew’s Church



Wonderwall, 1984 Worlds' Fair,
New Orleans. (Alan Karchmer)

Right: Nativity Catholic Church, Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. Moore Ruble Yudell. (Timothy Hursley)
Below: Gethesmane Cathedral, Fargo, South Dakota. Moore Ruble Yudell. (Timothy Hursley)

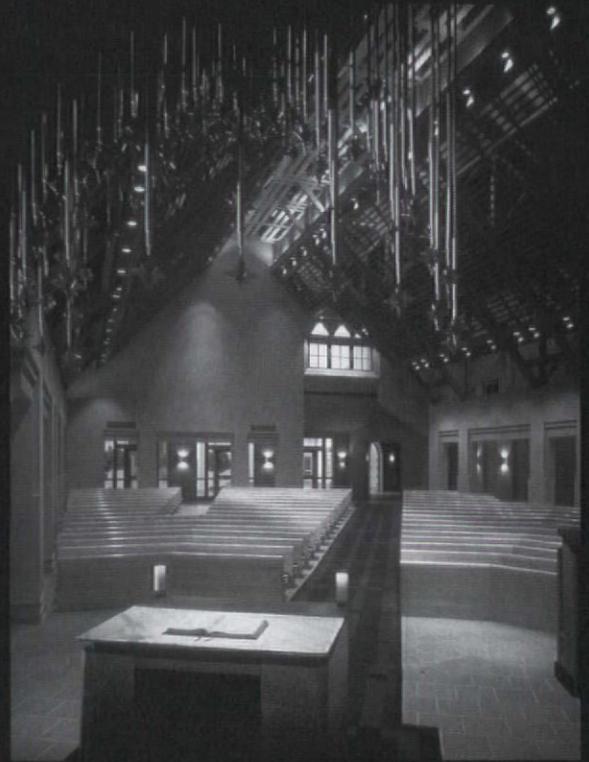
in Pacific Palisades, Calif., provided my first opportunity to involve the community in a collaborative effort for the lighting design. The “light rings” follow the arc of the pews and provide the necessary light for readings; ambient light enhances the classic nave and articulate transept. The “tree of life” behind the altar glows as the centerpiece of the church interior and the surrounding walls are softly bathed by light sconces etched with liturgical symbols providing sparkle in the surrounds.

The Nativity Catholic Church in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., has a longitudinal nave with a single transept. Semi-circular seating is softly washed in pools of light from concealed lighting in the tracery ceiling and the focus is on the glowing altar under the sparkle of the shimmering baldachino above. The surrounding walls are defined by the back light sconces which delineate the visual boundary of the church interior.

The heraldic lighting in the soaring, Gothic spaces of the Gethesmane Cathedral in Fargo, North Dakota, act as ceremonial symbols for the cathedral interior. Providing both task light and ambient light, they accentuate the use and the solemnity of this traceried interior. The simple austerity of the surrounds is embellished with the sparkle of light from wall brackets. The brackets also mark the ceremonial boundaries terminated by the glowing altar and the stained-glass window, which act together as the focal point of this magnificent interior.

Large public buildings have very complex and diverse lighting functions. The Humbolt Library in Tegal, Germany, incorporates a formal use of a variety of lighting strategies to enhance the different requirements in this library. The double-vaulted interior spine is washed with two systems of direct and indirect lights, in contrast to the surrounding individual reading spaces, called “light rooms,” each of which has its own lighting identity. The central desk in the entrance hall is crowned by a “light ring” that announces its importance in the space and provides the appropriate level of lighting for the tasks. The main curving library hall is surrounded by book-shelf niches, which are illuminated by “light lines” that reinforce their importance in the space among the multiple layers of lights.

The Mountain View Civic Center, in Mountain View, Calif., is a civic complex comprised of an administrative building and other public functions including a civic theater. They are organized around a public plaza. Each building has its own rotunda, each of which is a focal point at night with an internal illuminator marking its importance. The entrance stairs from the



street to the plaza are delineated by light strips for safety and to announce the formal entrance to the complex. The overall ambiance of the exterior illumination is one of subtle demarcation in light, providing a soft palette of light for circulation and public comfort in the exterior garden setting.

The main administrative wing contains a two-story atrium with a grand stair leading to the second-floor gallery and offices. This is crowned by a skylight that is etched with light and has large suspended chandeliers over the stairs, providing focal light and task light to this grand atrium. Wall- and column-mounted light brackets illuminate the circulation system and serve as markers for the glass-enclosed offices.

The American Club in Hong Kong is a large social club set high on a hill overlooking the harbor below. The night lighting of this complex accentuates the many facilities and lush garden setting of pools and outdoor sitting areas. Color of light and layers of light were used to enhance and define the different facilities and to give continuity to the experience of the whole building.

The main dining room, which overlooks the harbor, is a regal, flag-bedecked space crowned by a clerestoried rotunda. Each facet of the entablature above the windows has glowing light panels, which define the geometry of the soaring interiors and set the ambiance of the dining area. A webbed light pendant acts like a large lantern and its soft light gives focal drama to the vaulted room. Internal task lighting accents the serving areas. The entire room is coordinated by lighting controls to set the moods for all modes of entertainment and dining. The color and the furnishings were coordinated with the lighting to give a sense of grandeur to the multiple activities which take place in this beautiful room.

For more than thirty years, I have had the opportunity to fully explore the language of lighting through the many projects I have done with you, Charles, Bill Turnbull and others. My wonderful adventure in lighting could have never been accomplished without everyone's unequivocal commitment to collaboration. To me, authorship was never important as long as the buildings and places were wonderful for people. As Bill Turnbull once said, "it doesn't matter who supplies the idea as long as it is there."

— DICK



Above: Mountain View Civic Center. Turnbull Associates. (Timothy Hursley)

Below: American Club in Hong Kong. Turnbull Associates. (Lincoln Potter)



William Turnbull, Jr.

The Sites We

Build On

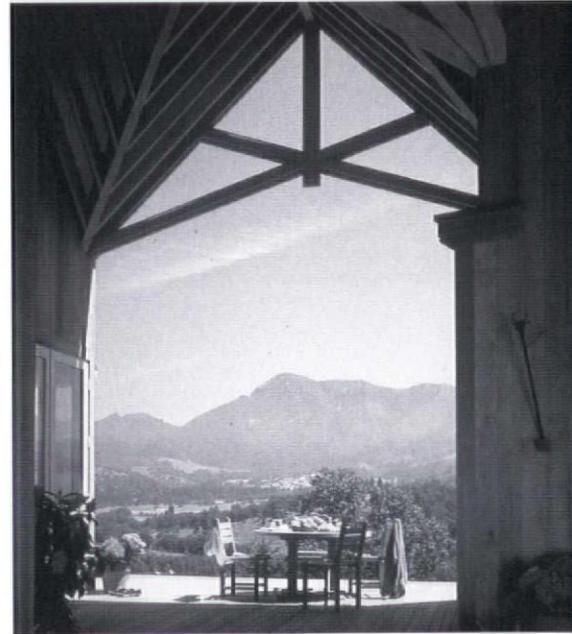


The author at Teviot, his home and vineyard in Knights Valley, Calif. (© Mark Darley/ESTO)

DEAR DONLYN

I am writing in response to your kind invitation to comment on “Images that Motivate,” the legacy of Charles W. Moore. In my zeal to uncover a compelling answer, by literally digging in my garden I have managed to throw my back in a painful fashion and have been grounded by my doctor. “Grounded,” of course is a good image in itself for me, but not one I had wished to prevent my presence at the symposium.

Thinking about this particular chapter in *Chambers for a Memory Place*, it seems to me that the last project I did with Charles and Arthur Andersson was indeed a chocolate sundae or, more specifically, a whole table full of them. The variety of buildings, from gymnasium to astral space to art museum, all with attendant residences, added up to complex with a level of complexity that rivaled the college campuses we all have been involved with. After working on the project for years, I found myself suffering the inevitable malady that comes from over-indulging in rich foods and I began to yearn for more simple fare, perhaps mashed potatoes?



Above: High Ridge Ranch, Sonoma, Calif. (Christopher Irion)
Left: Teviot, Knights Valley, Calif. (© Mark Darley/ESTO)

Kitchen, Teviot, Knights Valley,
Calif. (© Mark Darley/Esto)



Looking back, the 1980s in general seemed to be a time of surfeit. The Mountain View Civic Center and Arts Complex, which was a competition we actually won from Charles, is another example of excessive form. The site plan, with its three inter-related courtyards is the best part, relating from the busy commercial street through to the quiet green park adjoining the library. The building committee, under the spell of Michael Graves, held us too closely to historical forms and Mediterranean colors, and the quality of the internal space and light are not sufficient to overcome the stylistic excesses.

The Foothill dormitories at University of California, Berkeley, also tried to solve too many problems in too limited a space with too little money. The building has its moments, as in the marker towers for the dining complex and the wonderful resolution of frustration when the earthquake fault setback line was moved, yet again, during working drawings and we reacted by just slicing an arc out of the building and celebrating the cut with red paint and battens. These were small moments of pleasure in the frenzy of deadlines and committee demands.

By the 1990s, I yearned for what Dan Gregory, the California architectural historian, calls the complex problem of simplicity. The church that my wife Mary and I did for St. Andrew Presbyterian in the Sonoma Valley begins to achieve the serenity of place and circumstance that is fundamental to quality architecture. The little caretaker's house on the Swift Property in Franz Valley, nestled in among century-old oak trees, also accomplishes this. Both projects talk about land and landscapes as motivators.

It occurs to me now when we talk about images that motivate, mine are not abstract or metaphorical but overwhelmingly concrete and tangible. They are the sites I build on, which are always distinct one from another. The shape of the ground,

the view, the quality and type of tree cover, the sun and the wind all have voices that I listen to and learn from.

Our own little house complex in our vineyard in Knights Valley gives me incredible pleasure in this way. Sited under the wind protection of the heavily forested hillside, it is a very simple composition dominated by 60-foot-square lawn. The stone retaining wall at the seat level establishes the grass plane and the gentle rise to the stand of trees across from the way creates a declivity in the rolling landscape that becomes a place that the tiny buildings celebrate as home. The wood we used to frame the structures was milled from trees on the property that were felled by the wind, so the houses are a rebirth of the landscape in the architectural form. All the sheltering roof construction is exposed and the act of shelter takes on a visual importance, as it did at the condominium so many years ago.

There is no excess here. The dog trot divides the functional spaces of the house and converts into a porch with sliding doors to invite or deflect the wind. It becomes a place to eat, a winter mud room and a place where the dogs sleep. In the old words of Jean Labatut: "The maximum effect with the minimum of means."

This interest in where we build leads onwards into interests of how we build. Maybe this is the great circle route to Princeton and the lessons of Louis Kahn. We are now finishing off a new winery now made of pisé, which is cement mixed with earth and sprayed like gunite against steel reinforcing rods and form boards. There is an elemental pleasure that comes from making a building from the very ground you walk on. Another interesting building, which has yet to start construction, is a straw-bale studio whose building bricks are bales from the Central Valley rice fields. (I'll bet when Kahn asked what brick wanted to be, he never thought of rice straw!) Recycling



Above: Teviot, Knights Valley, Calif. (© Mark Darley/Esto)
Right: Northern California hills. (William Turnbull, Jr.)
Below: Dog trot, Teviot, Knights Valley, Calif. (© Mark Darley/Esto)





Fort Ross chapel, Fort Ross,
Calif. (William Turnbull, Jr.)

waste materials to shape usable spaces seems wonderfully basic and emotionally rewarding.

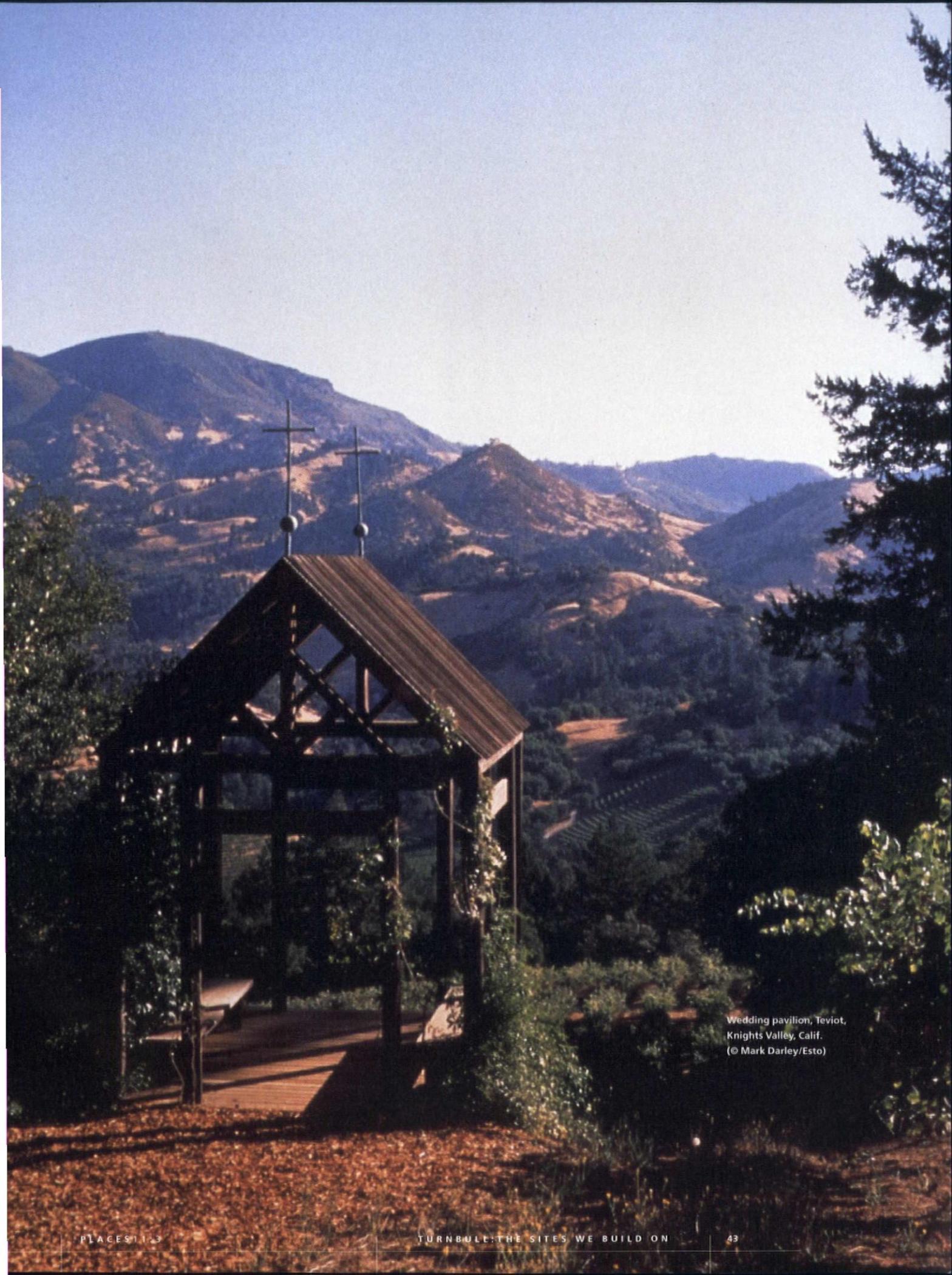
Charles talks about the maturing, or aging, architect's conundrum of whether to focus energy on limited fields of endeavor or cast a wider net. As I build more, I really want to build less, but invest in those structures a special spirit that resonates with the user, visitor or inhabitant.

You asked at the beginning for images that motivate; I stumbled across an image that surprised me. That image is of the marriage ceremony: two entities coming together to make a new whole. In a way, this is how I perceive architecture, especially the good architecture of the vernacular, which deals with common sense and the satisfaction of needs, both physical and emotional, and marries the land with the thoughtfulness and craftsmanship of the architect-builder for the use and pleasure of the inhabitants.

You talk about creating places that have the qualities of deep history, exhilarating presences, fundamental lawfulness, cyclical change, sparkling light and infinitely surprising detail. That image describes the cove by Condominium 9 at the Sea Ranch, but it could equally describe a Shaker community — such as New Ephram, Pennsylvania. Marry the two and you have a timeless record of human inhabitation respecting the natural world.

As I drive through our landscapes, the places that lift my soul and delight my eye give me a motivating imagery for tomorrow's complicated demands. May I have the wisdom to follow the star of simplicity, respect the geodes and chocolate sundaes of complexity, and enjoy making my landscapes in garlic mashed potatoes and gravy.

— BILL



Wedding pavilion, Teviot,
Knights Valley, Calif.
(© Mark Darley/Esto)

Alice Wingwall

DEAR DONLYN

Platforms that what? Charles and you said “separate,” but for me that has a negative connotation. The word itself means “flat form,” but a platform almost always involves a level change. We step up or down; we are allowed to congregate on one level; we may step up to glory — for viewing the sky or singing or talking.

In Other Words,

For at least twenty years, in my photographs, I’ve been looking for found platforms, platforms as stage sets — in other words, platforms that direct. I have been intrigued most, perhaps, by minimal platforms, where the level change is barely perceptible but pro-

Platforms that Direct

found. An Ionic capital on the Palatine Hill in Rome is such a minimal platform. Both eye and foot perceive this small fragment as making a change, a profound change in my view. Just having that piece lying in front of me made a big difference in my comparison of many compositions throughout the Forum and on the Palatine Hill.



"Capital Foot." Palatine Hill,
Roman Forum, 1977.
Photos by Alice Wingwall.

Similarly, I am absolutely charmed by a row of stones at the Mission San Antonio of Padua in the Hunter-Liggett military reservation, on California's central coast. The stones keep cars and trucks away from the front of the sanctuary. This is another minimal separation between the profane and the sacred space. It is a kind of annunciatory, thought-provoking, breathing space that is preliminary to the minimal, two-step stone platform that provides entry to the church itself.

Who knows, maybe one person put these stones down, but it seemed like a communal activity to make a platform to keep the



Above: "Platforms and Platforms." Mission San Antonio of Padua, Hunter Liggett Military Reservation, San Antonio, California, 1997.

Below: "The Hand Directs the Columns." Sproul Hall, University of California at Berkeley, California, 1996.

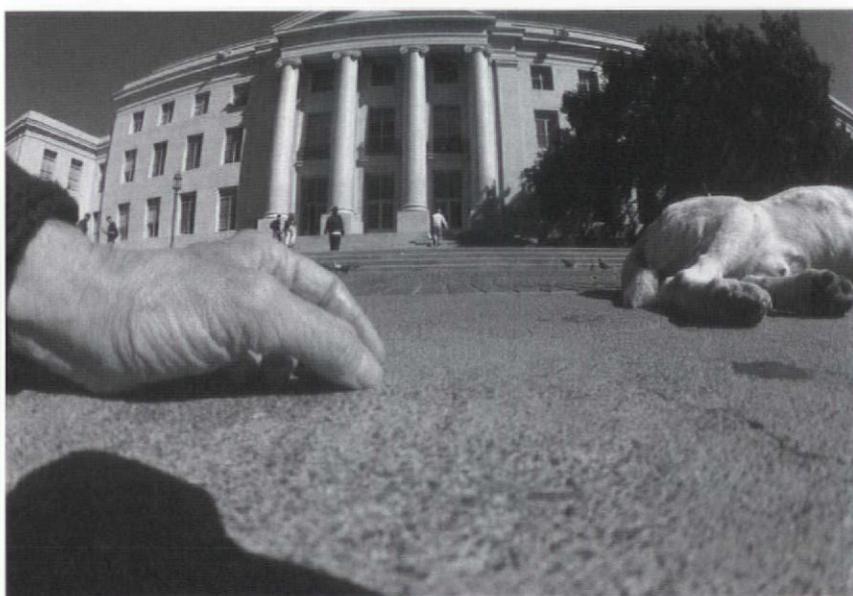
cars away from the church area. I imagine a line of people putting down stones as a kind of spiritual ritual. Or maybe there was a truck and somebody just dropped them down in a row. In Italy they would call such a place a *sagrato*. It is a space in front of the church, which is already becoming sacred with the church, but it is also a place of hesitation and thought. To me that's a platform of some consequence, however it happened.

A sidewalk becomes a platform at Sproul Hall at the University of California, Berkeley. With a few steps this walkway platform unites pedestrians and the columnar facade. I am really fascinated by

how people walk across it, walk into the building and walk along the sidewalk to the front. In the photograph neoclassic columns, Ionic at the top, are integrated with the syncopated rhythm of students passing or entering the building, and the flank of a sleeping dog and a probing hand.

Sometimes platforms are constructed as real elevators of the building, as in the base of the little temple of the Vestal Virgins, which sets the columns of that elegant temple up high for near or distant viewing among the larger fragments of the Roman Forum.

Another major platform is that of the little





Egyptian Temple of Dendur in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Until 1994 the platform on which it is placed was an actual separator, since you were not allowed to step onto that level; that platform was exclusive. You could only walk around the room and look at the temple at a "hands off" distance. There was a pylon gate in the front and then the temple behind, but you could not get near them.

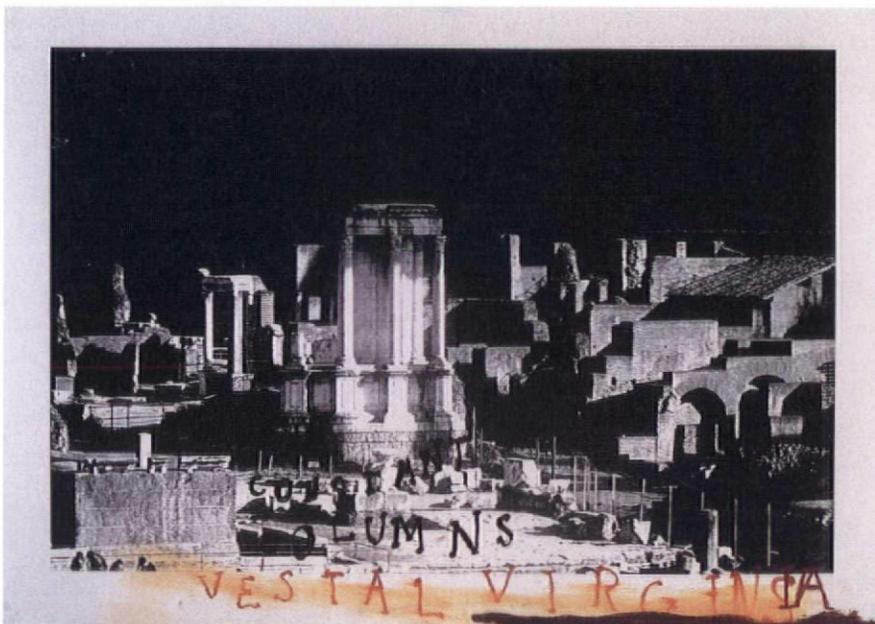
In January, 1994, the museum changed its policy and allowed people to go up on the platform and enter the building. That completely changed your relationship to the temple; after that you could

actually walk into, and look out from, the sacred space along the axis to the pylon. You knew you were elevated, part of the temple compound.

I have a love for the missions in California, New Mexico and Texas. New Mexican missions have walls around front courtyards that are constructed as distinct platforms. The photograph of the church at Trampas shows the beautifully shaped gate, modest steps and firm wall that completely bound a *sagrato* platform in front of the church.

The Mission of St. Francis of Assisi, in San Francisco (popularly called the Mission Dolores), seems to me to bear a schematic platform on

Above: "Hand Over Dog,"
Temple of Dendur, Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New York, 1994.
Below: "Constant Columns,"
Temple of the Vestal Virgins,
Roman Forum, 1995.





Above right: St. Francis of Assisi, Trampas, New Mexico, 1995.
 Below left: "Pragmatic Porch," Mission Dolores, San Francisco, 1996.
 Below right: "Stairbreak," New Mission Church, San Francisco, 1996.

its facade. There is a base that goes up rather high, about halfway up the door itself, and then above that there are engaged columns. The front wall may be seen as a diagram of the *sagrato*, or space in front — a remembrance of the courtyards of Romanesque pilgrimage churches in Spain, or the entry platforms of Roman buildings. The simple forms of the engaged columns also refer to classical order, as do some other pilasterettes that are just hinted at in the upper reaches of the pediment design.

I don't know if this has always been the design of the mission, but this facade seems to me to say,

"here's the scheme and how it might have been." The church now faces a very urban situation, with a busy street going directly in front of the entry. The facade diagram seems to me a fantastically nice way of referring to the platforms and *sagrato* without taking up space on the sidewalk.

Next door to that is the new church, which is set back a bit with a beautiful stair connecting the sidewalk to the main elevated entry floor. The steps are undercut in a way that makes them especially notable in themselves. They're not very comfortable to sit on, but people always do and I have. They form a grand passage to the





church itself and a platform for viewing the street below. I think this combination of forms in the old mission and in the newer church is an enticing lesson about platforms and stairs, about the idea of ascending into sacred space.

Porches and stairs are platforms that civilize. One of my favorite places in the Roman Forum is along the Via Sacra, where the columns of an old Roman Temple have lot of steps going up to them. Tucked in behind them is a baroque church, so you see volutes flying over the top. (I'm sure that the church was there before they excavated the steps).

The fantastic thing about the Roman Forum is that you can always make something else when you see a part of the ruin. When you're across the way, and you see these big pieces of stone lying about, you imagine how they could be different. The location in the photograph is next to the Temple of Vesta, which I discussed earlier, so you are in a niche of ruined fragments. You can not only see the stairs climbing to an important monument but also imagine how it would be if you reconstructed those stones right beside you. It's platform, platform, platform all around you—at least in my imagination.

Some of us have rented a small Palladian Villa a couple of times, the Villa Saraceno. It doesn't have columns, but there is a loggia with a flight

of steps in front. Each time we have ritually photographed the whole group on the stairs. But in this individual photograph there is a compelling spatial tension created by a single person and a white dog descending the steps: Where is our Heroine in the Magenta Dress Going? Can She Pay the Rent? Will He Guard the Treasures?" These stairs, like so many others I have found, directing as they go, are a sublime stage set.

—ALICE



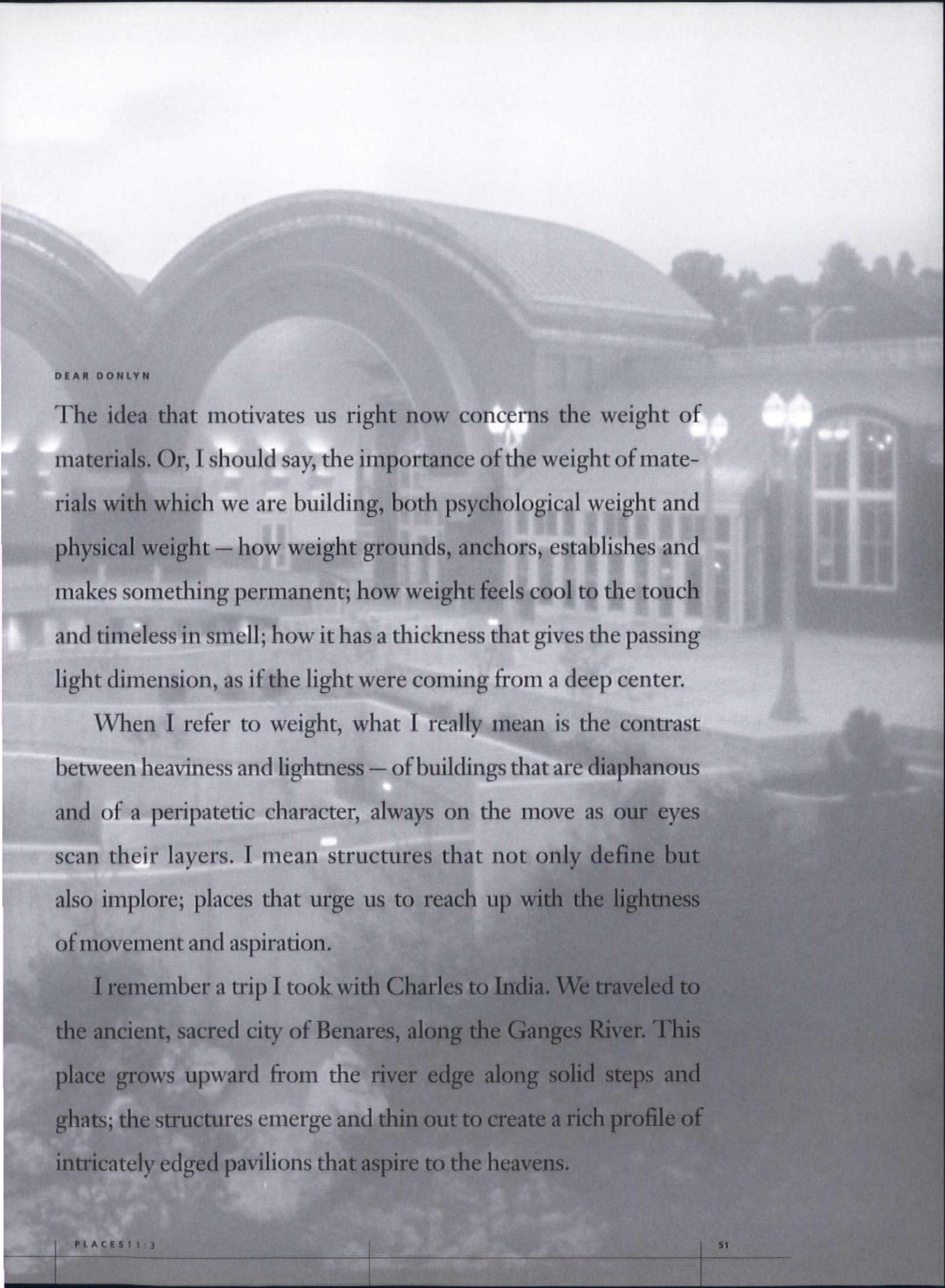
Above: "Columns Thinking About Wings." Roman Temple with Baroque Church, Roman Forum, 1994.

Below: "The Magenta Dress Act II." Villa Saraceno, Agugliaro, Italy, 1996.

Arthur Andersson

Profiles that Encourage

Washington State History
Museum, Tacoma, Wash. The
silhouette extends the rhythm
of the vaults of an adjacent
train station, but the profile
also reaches downward into an
amphitheater. (Timothy Hursley)



DEAR DONLYN

The idea that motivates us right now concerns the weight of materials. Or, I should say, the importance of the weight of materials with which we are building, both psychological weight and physical weight — how weight grounds, anchors, establishes and makes something permanent; how weight feels cool to the touch and timeless in smell; how it has a thickness that gives the passing light dimension, as if the light were coming from a deep center.

When I refer to weight, what I really mean is the contrast between heaviness and lightness — of buildings that are diaphanous and of a peripatetic character, always on the move as our eyes scan their layers. I mean structures that not only define but also implore; places that urge us to reach up with the lightness of movement and aspiration.

I remember a trip I took with Charles to India. We traveled to the ancient, sacred city of Benares, along the Ganges River. This place grows upward from the river edge along solid steps and ghats; the structures emerge and thin out to create a rich profile of intricately edged pavilions that aspire to the heavens.



Above: Benares, India.
(Arthur Anderson)
Below: Stone House, Tucson,
Ariz. (Arthur Anderson)

This trip to India happened after Charles, Bill Turnbull and I finished our work at the New Orleans World's Fair, but somehow it foreshadowed that project. The base of our Wonderwall was not the sacred bank of the Ganges but a ten-foot-wide boulevard with nineteenth-century warehouses on one side and a very large convention center on the other. Within our ten feet, we presumed to invent an architectural world of fantasy, part sumptuous backdrop to the rest of the fair, part stage set for it.

From its precariously narrow base, the Wonderwall took shape with paper-thin layers. The composition of the half-mile-long Wonderwall — full of stacking, layering, resting, reaching and, sometimes, soaring — demonstrated the difference between the space we inhabit on the ground and the space above us, space that is in sight but out of reach. The profile created by the top of the Wonderwall served both as an edge and as the beginning of something beyond, a window to the sky. Could the sky be a room for us, or are those comfortable reclining shapes in the clouds solely for the Gods?

Like the steps and Ghats of Benares, the Wonderwall's heavy, concrete, columnar base was an armature built to accommodate the layers above. The lesson in profile was one of seeing and feeling the difference between heavy

simplicity on the ground with the soaring and shapely complexity of the upper reaches.

A house we recently built in Arizona desert also illustrates the ideas of aspiration and of making a connection to the landscape by the shape of a profile. In the desert, the mountains and the vegetation are hard edged. Even the light is hard. At night, the crisp air supports a sky the color of black onyx.

The Sabino Mountains comprise one of four ranges that surround Tucson. It is a dry, rocky, layered and tightly packed set of mountains distinguished by its buttes and small sharp peaks. The narrow canyons between the peaks are cool, sometimes green, and provide a shaded refuge from the Arizona sun.

Inhabiting this place involves two things, one is claiming territory, the other is protecting what you have claimed with shade. As with the Wonderwall, profiles can be made legible by emphasizing the relationship between the base of a building and what is above it. In Tucson, we made a profile





Carrillon, School of Engineering,
University of Michigan, Ann
Arbor, Mich. (Arthur Andersson)

by draping a roof between adobe towers as a kind of tent — albeit a wooden one, setting into and rising out of the desert rock.

Some of the rooms within are cooled by an evaporative cooling system; other rooms (living, dining and sitting) are protected by the shade but open to gardens on each side. The gardens, one of water and the other of fragrant plants, provide primitive but efficient cooling for these outdoor rooms.

At the North Campus of the University of Michigan, we faced the opposite situation. This final project with Charles, coincidentally at his alma mater, involved the same reactions that brought about the Sea Ranch condominium so many years ago. As the Sea Ranch responded (philosophically) to the scaleless order and generic imagery of the modern movement (while really responding to its rugged site), our charge from the engineering school at Michigan was to make a welcoming and memorable place within the context of the many generic modern buildings that had been built over the past thirty years, creating a campus that was more like an industrial park than an academic center.

While designing this new place it occurred to us that the idea of form following function could be reinterpreted to consider the rooms of the program as worthy of fantastic or even incredible form. Rather than organizing the disparate pro-

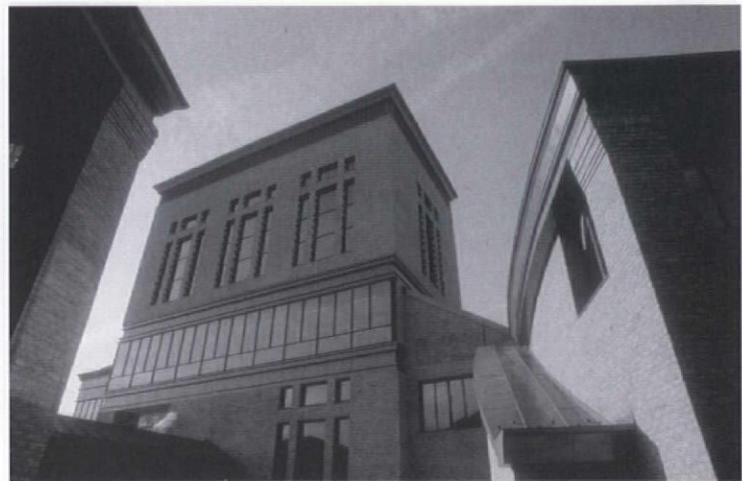
gram of admissions, faculty offices, counseling rooms and classrooms into a rationalized box, we irrationally pulled the program apart making distinct buildings for each use and, in the process, creating the kind of residual space of a scale and character we hoped to be memorable.

The resulting profile is complex, with a towering structure open on three sides and roofed with a traditional four-sided hip shape. This tower encloses a large ballroom, elevated into the sky with views across the campus. Just as important are the small spaces close to these buildings, inviting one to look almost vertically along the edges of the towers and to feel their presence.

Charles was perennially fond of using food (mostly desserts) as analogies for buildings. He would say, I suppose, that we are in the realm of the chocolate sundae when speaking of a delight in profiles. But my colleagues and I see it somewhat differently. Delight is found both below and above in buildings: perhaps a hot apple pie with two scoops, the combination of the crusty base with the smooth dome of ice cream, is what we are about. Rhubarb may even be closer to the mark, for what is under the ice cream is possibly more tangy than apple.

— ARTHUR

School of Engineering, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. (Gary Quesada)



Hardly an architect in modern times has nurtured such a wide and dedicated following as Charles W. Moore did. The depth and breadth of his influence are difficult to summarize; does one start with his contributions as an architect, a writer or a teacher? All were enormously important and inextricably linked.

Moore had an uncanny ability to extend this influence beyond the constraints of time and geography, uniting those who worked with him in far-flung places through the power of ideas, images and enthusiasms. When he died in 1993, he left behind those who worked with him at the firms he helped create (MLTW, Centerbrook, Urban Innovations Group, Moore Ruble Yudell and Moore/Andersson), taught with him at various universities (Utah, Princeton, U.C. Berkeley, Yale, U.C.L.A. and Texas) and co-authored some of his many books (*The Place of Houses*, *Poetics of Gardens* and *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, to name a few).

After

Yet these collaborators had never all assembled during Moore's lifetime to reflect on his legacy. Even after his death, there were five memorial services with five sets of people in the five places Moore cared about most: Los Angeles, New Haven, Monterey, Austin and the Sea Ranch. A recent symposium at the Charles W. Moore Foundation provided a rare opportunity for these people to come together.

The foundation was established to preserve Moore's house in Austin — the only house Moore had designed for himself that was left as he had inhabited it, filled with his books and his legendary collection of folk toys. It is part of a compound of two homes and two studios, where Moore and Arthur Andersson established Moore/Andersson Architects after Moore began teaching at the University of Texas in 1984.

Discussions about establishing the foundation recognized that Moore would have been uncomfortable with any effort to aggrandize his accomplishments and, certainly, dismissive of any rote attempts to perpetuate his design ideas; indeed, his approach to architecture would have implicitly impeached such an effort. Consequently, the foundation decided to preserve the Austin compound as a vital center of architectural exploration and scholarship, not as a house — museum frozen in time.

What better way, asked Donlyn Lyndon, to inaugurate this new forum than to gather Moore's

colleagues there to discuss the new work that extends from their common legacy? The symposium was not meant to be an opportunity merely to reminisce or exchange anecdotes, but a fruitful working session to share how Moore's lessons were being reinvested with new ideas and images.

Lyndon asked participants to talk about their current work using one of the chapter themes from *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, the book he co-authored with Moore. This approach allowed participants to define their own chambers (which many did, such as John Ruble with "Lanterns that Levitate") and was wholly in keeping with Moore's hope that his enthusiasms would be sign posts to which others could add, subtract or multiply, even divide or rearrange.

Nearly thirty of Moore's colleagues came to Austin, spanning nearly forty years of collaboration. As they gathered in the living room of Moore's house, which had been emptied of its furniture and transformed into a theater for the occasion, there was a sense of camaraderie and shared belief. The discussions were electric, charged with two alternating currents of thought: that architecture is fundamentally about place and that collaboration between architects and inhabitants enriches places.

Moore had no wish to impose his views on anyone or make his own lessons canonical. His ideas were not forced from a single, pre-

world

disposed point of view; rather, he sought to direct challenges into the path of solutions and coax out the best ones possible. Jacquelynn Baas explained it best, quoting Wendell Barry: *There are, it seems to me, two Muses: the Muse of Inspiration, who gives us inarticulate visions and desires, and the Muse of Realization, who returns again and again to say, "It is yet more difficult than you thought."*

Involving people and rallying ideas, including those generated by inhabitants of the places being designed, would enrich the creative process, Moore believed. Moore gathered ideas and images through teaching, lecturing, travel, collecting, studying and writing, all of which he fed back into the design process.

Incessant travel around the world deepened Moore's understanding of the human occupation of places. While this fluency in the languages of architecture and habitation seemed so natural for Moore, it did not come automatically; it required relentless absorption. John Ruble and Buzz Yudell remarked upon learning from Moore, only to grasp the full richness of his lessons later, when they themselves visited places that had so inspired him. Peter Zweig and Simon Atkinson, both of whom taught with Moore, spoke about the necessity of encouraging students to be as active in their own investigations — to remain alert and continually seek out new sources of ideas.

Moore reveled in places where cultures mingled, producing new images with hints and quirks of the old still evident, such as the Spanish in the Americas or the English in India. This cross-fertilization of patterns of habitation, deeply embedded in human memory like fractals encrypted in chaos, rules out any one prescriptive way of designing for places. Mark Simon chased this idea by exploring his fascination with images that blend to produce new ones, the end result being architecture that speaks to people as being like something, of having tangible images to which everyone can relate, however differently people they may view it.

Buzz Yudell spoke of the of the trans-cultural layers of architecture in Morocco and the resulting abundance of details that made people sense that they were members of a place. The fundamental parts of architecture — stairs, platforms, portals, roofs — have meaning for people, and they make buildings understandable and sociable. Alice Wingwall records this in her photographs of platforms, whether a sidewalk on the Berkeley campus, a flight of stairs leading to a Palladian villa or a walled churchyard laid out in front of a New Mexico mission.

Even more fundamentally, Moore probably would have regarded the assumption of any one truth as presumptuous, given the complexity of the world and the wide range of valid attempts

to make places. Moore preferred cycles of journeys, finding glimpses of joy amid all of the passions of life. Jeff Riley related the importance of using architectural elements that relate movement to a sense of being somewhere. A threshold, for instance, provides “the sense of leaving one world and passing through a gate and entering into another world,” he said.

Moore believed that there is no inherent reason that pure geometry or formalism should be the only prescription for making place; this is architecture into which civilization is forced to fit, when things should be the other way around. As many of the presentations demonstrated, architecture is marked by place and time, by memory linked with human anatomy and movement, so that while an underlying geometry can provide a framework for order, corruptions of the larger geometry can accommodate the eccentricities of humanity.

Richard Peters remarked that the gathering was extraordinary and would probably never be repeated again. He was right for several reasons. William Turnbull had hoped to come, but illness prevented him, and some months later he passed away. Fortunately, he participated vicariously by sending a letter (read to the gathering by Lyndon and published here) filled with words of integrity and searching and with the humility and joy of making places in beautiful landscapes.

One reason for the success of this symposium was that it was so unlike a symposium. Moore’s dazzling house propelled the discussions and stimulated them with an exotic energy quite different from the caffeine charge that so many conferences in cavernous auditoriums or hotel banquet rooms seem to require. There was the added thrill of hearing a sublime Kronos Quartet concert that could not have been more fitting; the ensemble collaborated with the Austin vernacular yodeler Don Walser and his True Texas Band, a perfect allusion to Moore’s zeal for juxtaposing seemingly incongruent but equally vibrant forces.

What was most rewarding however, was the chance for the architects and teachers to show not only how their work has flourished in Moore’s absence, but how remarkably rich and diverse the work is. Despite all of these architects having shared a common legacy, Moore’s example of openness, absorption, layering and the thrill of the search has propelled each of them in their own direction. Call it the dogma of anti-dogma; it is pluralism at its best.

The exchange will kick off a series of annual conferences, the next ones to be centered on themes Moore cared about, such as the landscape or dwelling or education, but opened to new ideas and faces. These forthcoming gatherings, I am sure, will be as stimulating. To use a fitting metaphor, the stone has hit the water at the Moore Foundation, now the ripples spread outward.

Heritage and the Cultural Politics of Preservation Ned Kaufman



Citizens contesting plans for the Audubon Ballroom brought various concerns—the impact of a large institution's expansion, the proper way to memorialize a place significant to African-American history, and an opposition to biotech research. (Ned Kaufman)

If a single word could express the dominant social values of historic preservation, it would be *heritage*. As preservationists have expanded their focus from architectural excellence to a widening range of social and cultural values, the concept of heritage has been redefined in new and sometimes more inclusive ways, while avoiding sustained critique.

Themes of social diversity are prompting new demands on preservation — demands to broaden the heritage canon, to empower new groups. Preservation is forging new alliances with community planning, public history, folklore and tourism promotion. Yet much preservation practice continues along traditional lines, which are, as often as not, built upon the concept of heritage.

What does *heritage* mean? *Heritage* is what one inherits, and the word is thereby freighted with familial solidarity, generational connectedness and ownership. Family, inheritance, goods and possession define a profoundly conservative set of values, and when historic preservation rhetoric invokes the word *heritage*, it is also bringing these values to bear.

To speak, for example, of a “national” or even “world” cultural heritage is to assert metaphorically that all Americans, or all people, belong to a single family and share a single cultural inheritance. Family members who disagree in identifying, valuing or apportioning this inheritance — or who challenge the testator’s fairness in doing so — risk being accused of unseemly squabbling. This metaphor works therefore to support an essentially conservative ideology of cultural harmony, and whenever historic preservation adopts this metaphor, it is likely to be doing so too.

A great many public heritage policies are based on just such an ideology of cultural harmony, and they frequently encode a heavy measure of class bias. The lists of important heritage sites issued

by organizations like the World Monuments Fund typically emphasize royal or princely palaces or major religious complexes. When sites of special relevance to working-class history are included, it is often by virtue of assimilation to other values: association with a war of national liberation (a flour mill near Dover that was used to feed the troops fighting Napoleon) or a movement of national expansion (a frontier mining town), exemplification of upper-class ideals of charity or paternalism (model housing complexes and settlement complexes), esthetic or technological merit (Victorian loft buildings), or conversion into luxury condominiums or marinas (dockside warehouses in Liverpool).

These biases are also reflected in official interpretations. When New York City’s Landmarks Preservation Commission declared SoHo, New York’s largest surviving ensemble of nineteenth-century cast-iron loft buildings, a historic district, the commission’s official report emphasized the buildings’ owners, architects, styles and materials. Hardly a word was said about the work that went on in them, and nothing about the economic and class relations that defined that work. A tremendous resource for interpreting New York’s labor history and class relations was redefined as a monument to entrepreneurship, technical innovation and aesthetic skill. Nowadays these magnificently gloomy lofts have been reborn as fashionable apartments, art galleries



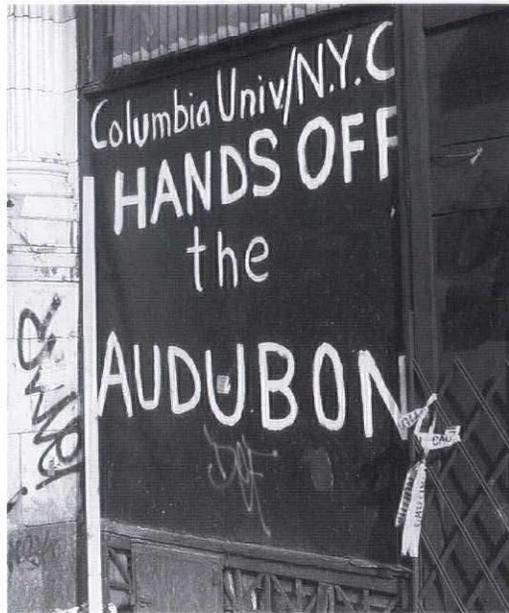
and shops. Their future as architecture has never looked brighter, yet their value as carriers of a working-class cultural heritage has never been more deeply compromised.

Can a non-traditional preservation practice evade or subvert the underlying ideology of heritage and present a more genuinely inclusive, or even oppositional, cultural inheritance? One way to do so might be to oppose historic preservation's celebratory tendencies by focusing attention on some of the deplorable episodes of injustice in our past. This is something that a responsible public history program must from time to time attempt.

The potential of this approach, important as it is, is limited, partly by the tendency of any object placed on exhibit to incite admiration. People understand very well that work hanging in a museum is there to be admired, and this expectation carries over to work that is placed on display within the streets. It is very hard to counteract this effect of enframement. For example, historians and preservationists have placed the Nazi legacy on display at Auschwitz and elsewhere; such places are preserved for their capacity to arouse outrage and to keep alive the memory of atrocities. Yet their success depends upon maintaining a level of negative interpretation so intense and pervasive that it completely enframes the site and fixes the visitor's attitude long before he or she arrives there.

In everyday public spaces like streets, critical commentary is generally relegated to the margins and is completely unable to compete with the enormous ideological weight of the urban environment.

The problem is compounded by the very success with which preservation advocates, seeking to gain and maintain support for the movement, have linked historic preservation with civic celebration. Instinctively accepting this linkage, many people will resist the application of historic preservation in situations where they feel celebration to be inappropriate.



Many New Yorkers, for example, will oppose overt attempts to preserve tenement buildings because they sense instinctively that this would be tantamount to signifying admiration of poverty and overcrowding. (On the other hand, they will enthusiastically support the preservation of tenements where they are part of an architecturally admired streetscape).

The National Trust for Historic Preservation manages Kykuit, a Rockefeller country estate; tour guides celebrate the Rockefellers's taste, philanthropy and family life. Would the trust permit outside groups to lead tours that emphasize the Rockefellers's accumulation of wealth, their relationship with labor unions and the impact of their real estate dealings? Probably not. When powerful social forces are brought to bear on the celebration of heritage, whether through the trust or New York City's preservation movement, truly critical commentary is pushed to the margins. Radically critical interpretations may well be beyond the reach of historic preservation.

Another strategy for evading the ideology of heritage is to co-opt preservation's celebratory tendencies by extending them to new subjects that expand society's cultural inheritance. This is quietly happening in many instances. "Quietly" is the important word here: as long as the historical themes in question do not challenge majoritarian views of what deserves celebration (Duke Ellington, the Underground Railroad), upset the balance of the historical record or threaten impor-



Foundations are laid for the new federal office building, all burials having been cleared from the site, while archaeological excavation proceeds on the annex site under a tent visible at left of photograph. (New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission)

tant political or economic interests, this sort of progress gains the support of preservationists and the general public.

What happens when one of these conditions is not met? A comparison between two recent campaigns in New York is instructive.

New York's eighteenth-century African Burial Ground, located just north of City Hall, originally covered about five acres and held perhaps 20,000 burials, mostly of slave and free blacks. In 1989, planners for a new 34-story federal office tower first came across the historical evidence of its existence. That the burial ground had been there during the eighteenth century was beyond dispute the question was, had it survived under Lower Manhattan's heavily disturbed surface? If it had, it would be a unique archeological and cultural find.

The federal government made a less than painstaking investigation and found nothing. Site work proceeded. In summer 1991, excavators began to uncover well-preserved skeletons: by December, 95 had been removed and opposition to the construction project was mounting. The government persisted, ultimately removing well over 200 skeletons. Against this juggernaut, protest seemed hopeless.

The coalition to save the burial ground began with a few local politicians, archeologists and black activists. It attracted civic and professional organizations dedicated to minority issues, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, a few celebrities and a small number of white-shoe civic

organizations like the Municipal Art Society of New York.¹ Eventually it expanded to include virtually every local politician from Mayor David N. Dinkins on down (most of major national politicians stayed away until very late in the game) and much of New York's civic establishment.

This broad coalition voiced several consistent themes, most notably the desire of the African-American community to be included in the picture of history. Public hearings and meetings provided many opportunities for black community leaders to speak eloquently on this subject, and they regularly cited both the rightness of inclusion as well as its beneficial effect on disaffected young people and society as a whole. White liberals and progressives had no difficulty accepting these arguments or the undertones of guilt that frequently accompanied them. Yet the federal government continued digging and building.

Help finally came from an unexpected quarter. A lame-duck black congressman from Illinois, Gus Savage, headed the committee that oversees the federal agency responsible for the project. He held a hearing and subsequently made clear to the General Services Administration that its funding would be in jeopardy if it persisted in violating the burial ground. Work stopped.

By this time, however, a large part of the site had been cleared, and the tower was on its way up. Only the adjacent annex site remained incompletely excavated. This was filled and leveled with clean soil, planted in grass and fenced; the annex was canceled and the remaining skeletons were left to rest underground. The federal government promised to install an interpretive center and artwork in the adjacent office building and to build a permanent memorial on the annex site.²

In the meantime, the site — indeed the entire precinct of the original burial ground, covering several blocks — has been declared both a city historic district and a National Historic Landmark.

The human remains, as well as associated artifacts, have been shipped to the anthropological research facilities at Howard University. An educational office has been established in New York and is actively interpreting the site and its archaeological remains. The site has become a place of study, pilgrimage and the observance of various traditional religious and cultural rituals.

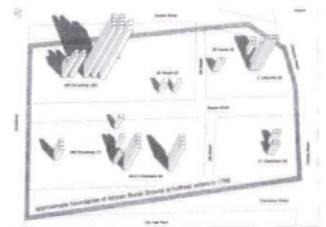
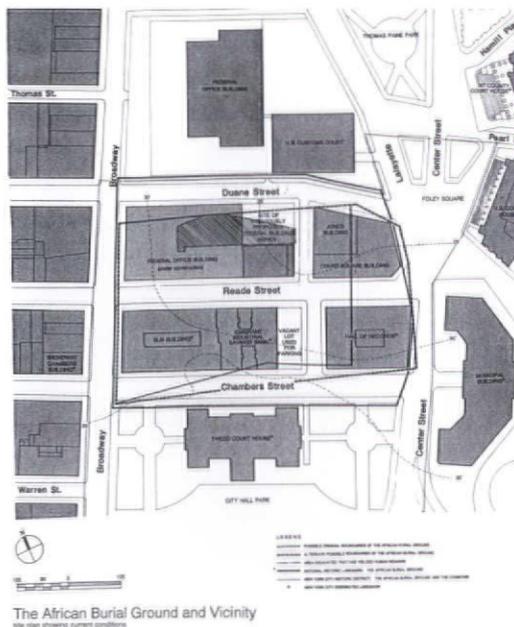
Lifted as it was by the urgency of struggle, the burial ground's rediscovery has had a profound impact on the way people think about New York's history. The African and African-American presence in that story is both bigger and clearer, among white as well as black people, than before. The African contribution to Dutch New York has been described and discussed, as have African-Indian relations. The debate over slavery in New York's past has sharpened. The bones and artifacts are yielding archaeological information of national interest about African cultural traditions and living conditions in eighteenth century America. The fact that this part of Manhattan, once known as Little Africa, is

now the city's official civic center has made this historical reinstatement all the more meaningful.

Preservation's celebratory power has worked well at the African Burial Ground to reinsert a forgotten piece of history into the canon. But the lessons can be more complex, as the case of the Audubon Ballroom shows. The Audubon Ballroom and Theater, located in Washington Heights, a poor neighborhood north of Harlem, would have qualified for an all-out preservation effort on almost any grounds. The building's Broadway facade is a masterpiece of early terra cotta decoration. The vast, ornate theater was one of the earliest designed expressly for film. The ballroom was once the largest dance floor in New York and was a powerful social magnet for decades; it was where Mike Quill organized the Transit Workers Union. But the historical event that galvanized people was the assassination of Malcolm X, which took place in the ballroom.

The fate of the ballroom became a public issue in 1989, when New York City, which owned the building, announced that it had reached an agreement with Columbia University to demolish the building and replace it with a center for commercial biotech research. Both the city and the politically powerful Port Authority would contribute public funds to the project, which was heralded as essential for New York to retain its leadership in this field. Even if the center failed, this would be a marvelous deal for Columbia, which would gain five square blocks of free and rezoned land directly opposite its vast, overcrowded medical complex. At the time, the ballroom had been largely vacant for almost two decades and wasn't much to look at. Yet every valuable architectural and historical element was still in place and there was little doubt that the facades and ballroom could be restored and reused.

The strategic issues raised by the campaign to save the Audubon were complex. Many



Above: Annex site. (U.S. General Services Administration) top: "Fifty-three Elevators." Proposal by C. Neville for an African Burial Ground memorial. First place winner in competition sponsored by a coalition of civic and preservation groups. (African Burial Ground Coalition, Committee for Fifty-Three Elevators) Left: Boundaries of burial ground and local and national historic districts. (African Burial Ground Coalition)



Audubon Ballroom before development of the research building. (Ned Kaufman)

community residents opposed the biotech project not only for historic preservation but also for health and environmental reasons. They also resented what they saw as Columbia's imperialistic attitude, remembering other, often notorious fights with Columbia. This faction opted for a strategy of uncompromising opposition.

Others, meanwhile, were counseled by political pragmatism, which suggested that uncompromising opposition would be futile and that winning something would be preferable to winning nothing. The Municipal Art Society was in this group, along with some Harlem politicians and preservation groups. The members of this group accepted (some with great reluctance) the inevitability of the biotech project yet opposed the demolition of the ballroom to accommodate it.

Problems soon developed within the latter group. The Municipal Art Society assembled a pro-bono architectural team and put forth a proposal that would restore the ballroom and the terra cotta facades while consigning the theater to demolition. The group showed how Columbia's biotech project, as well as various promised public services, could be accommodated through a combination of adaptive reuse and new construction, arguably better and more economically than in Columbia's own proposal. Within its own terms it was an intelligent scheme, yet it ignored the op-

position of much of the community to biotech research (and to Columbia), and while it saved the ballroom it sacrificed the theater.

Columbia's opponents, properly insisting on the integrity of the historic space, also opened the question of just what that space was. Though Malcolm X had never been associated with the theater, it was an architecturally distinct portion of the building, and it became difficult to hold the moral high ground while allowing the theater's destruction. Some who had initially supported the society's pragmatic proposal later backed away from it. "They want to carve it up like a Thanksgiving turkey," remarked one disappointed former supporter.

Valuable support for the proposal came from one of New York's most consistently progressive politicians, Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger, who endorsed the scheme and fought hard for it. Incurring bitter attacks from the mainstream press, overpowered and out-manuevered by the formidable bureaucratic powers at her opponents disposal, Messinger was nonetheless able to negotiate a brave, though somewhat unsatisfying, compromise: some 60 per cent of the terra cotta facades and 40 per cent of the ballroom itself would be saved and incorporated into a redesigned biotech facility. A community health clinic and Malcolm X exhibit would be installed in the building.³

At the time, Messinger's solution pleased few people. It did violence to the building. It mocked history. It reeked of political compromise. And it offered nothing to biotech opponents. Yet in the real world, it was all that a courageous politician could win. Looking at the result now, it is possible to feel that even the partial preservation of the Audubon's facades and ballroom is so far preferable to their complete loss that the result constituted an important victory.

The solution reached at the Audubon Ballroom is strikingly similar to that achieved at the

African Burial Ground: partial destruction of the historic site, partial restoration, and the installation of public art memorials and interpretive exhibits. But while many advocates of the burial ground left that battle with a feeling of uplift and accomplishment, advocates of the ballroom left feeling bitter and defeated.

The civic establishment and local governmental hierarchy enthusiastically joined the movement for the African Burial Ground. Reporters covered it avidly. It became virtually impossible to be against the Burial Ground. By contrast, the civic establishment largely stayed away from the Audubon Ballroom, Mayor Dinkins (along with much of the local political establishment) sided with Columbia, press was unfavorable, no savior rose up from Illinois and even some prominent African-American voices opposed the ballroom's preservation. Why these divergent responses?

The symbolism of the two campaigns was partly responsible. Twenty years after his assassination, Malcolm X was still deeply troubling to many white New Yorkers, and to some black ones as well. Even some of his admirers questioned whether he could best be remembered at the site of his martyrdom. These were challenging issues that split the community.

The African Burial Ground, by contrast, was rather unproblematic. The eighteenth century was a long time ago, and more than any particular political stance, the burial ground stood for the simple "thereness" of black people. One could concede this without in the least endangering the stability of current political and economic arrangements, and in the 1990s, a great many white New Yorkers were prepared to admit African Americans to the historical picture on these terms. Moreover, while the Burial Ground stirred up potentially troubling themes of guilt and recompense, it also offered a relatively painless way to address them. These



Audubon Research Building.
Davis Brody Bond.
(© Peter Aarons/Esto)

themes thus served on a sentimental level to unify, rather than divide.

The contrast in the line-up of opponents is also revealing. At the burial ground, the federal government — a distant, faceless bureaucracy that inspired little love locally — offered an excellent target for attack, one that could unify New Yorkers of many different stripes. At the Audubon, by contrast, the mayor, Columbia University and the Port Authority together commanded an extensive network of local allegiances within the power elite; they were much more difficult to attack. Also, they had very substantial political and economic interests at stake. Thus while the federal government ultimately folded, the mayor and the university fought for every inch.

The communities of Washington Heights and Harlem are not rich or powerful, and the politics of money and power were not favorable to their cause — another important difference between the two campaigns. At the burial ground, where few compelling local interests were threatened, the heritage canon opened to include the celebration of new material, and proponents went away feeling empowered. At the ballroom, where the financial, political and ideological stakes were high and where the preservation coalition was fragmented and relatively weak, the coalition's power was inadequate to open the canon, and advocates went away feeling defeated.

Notes

1. I was involved in this issue, and in the debate over the Audubon Ballroom, as an employee of the Municipal Art Society and continue to work for that organization.
2. As of 1997, the on-site interpretive center, memorial and art projects have not been completed.
3. As of 1997, the biotech facility is up and running; the historical elements of the ballroom and facade have been restored and incorporated. The community health facility is operating and several artworks on the subject of Malcolm X have been installed in the building. The historical exhibit, however, has been stalled for various reasons.

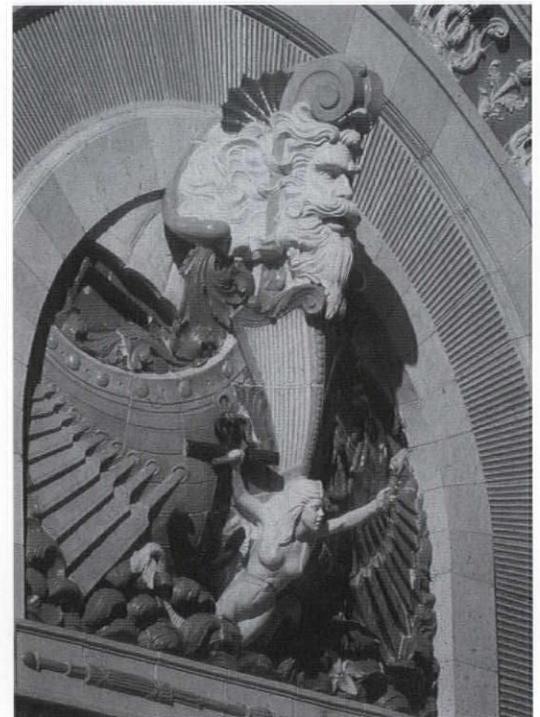
Correcting the historical record has its own rightness and is an important goal. Yet these two contrasting stories should give pause to those who argue that being included in the picture equates with empowerment. Heritage victories, unless accompanied by significant victories in the area of property values and political power, are likely to be essentially symbolic. When a preservation victory not only opens up the canon of heritage celebration but also changes the balance of wealth and power (even in a small way), then heritage politics will have achieved a real measure of empowerment.

Unfortunately, the heritage concept is problematic within the politics of empowerment, for it is an intrinsically conservative force — not only when it is used to mask and defuse societal differences, but also when it is used to highlight distinct traditions and values. This is so in two ways. First, by emphasizing inter-generational and family ties of property and belief, the heritage concept enforces continuity with the past: those fighting for recognition now are in some essential way the same as their historical forebears. Yet we are not necessarily what our great grandparents or even our parents were, and to imply that we are, under the guise of an admirable solicitude to tradition, is to risk reinforcing stereotypes and diminishing important opportunities for personal betterment and social change.

A second threat is the divisive effect heritage politics can have when the emphasis on specific ethnic or racial experiences masks shared historical experiences — and shared interests in social change — that could unite disparate groups. There is perhaps no better way to promote the continuance of the status quo than by dividing those who might otherwise unite to change it. In times when progress on economic and social issues is at best slow and difficult, heritage battles may provide an attractive outlet for frustrated energies. But is a shift from economic and social issues to symbolic

ones the best way to move forward, or does it weaken the movement for social change?

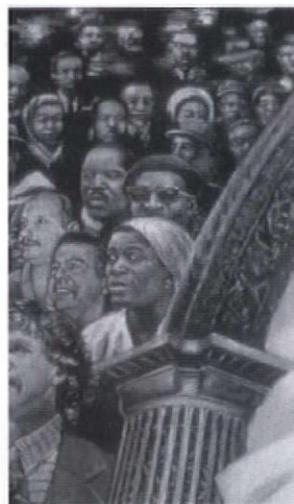
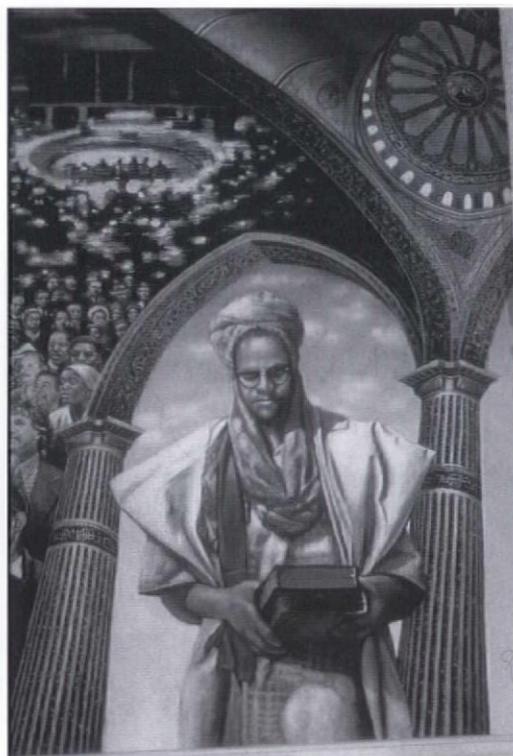
The effort to correct the historical record is intellectually right in its own terms, shifts public awareness and may provide valuable underpinnings for future social change. It must be recognized, however, that heritage politics rarely offer a direct route to social, economic or political change; victory in the fight for historical inclusion rarely leads directly to economic or political empowerment. If anything, the levers are more likely to work in the opposite direction: economic and political empowerment will lead directly to greater and more meaningful victories in the arena of heritage politics.



Restored ornamentation on ballroom facade. (Davis Brody Bond)



Left and below: "Homage to Malcolm X," Daniel Galvez, 1997. Mural recently installed in Audubon Ballroom. (New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Percent for Art Program)



City of Words Patricia Fels

There is a time for everything, and this is the time for living.

Palermo, beautiful and tormented, has known a time of silence.

Has known a time of humiliation.

Has known a time of violence. Has known a time of mourning and of rage.

Now is a time for justice.

— Leoluca Orlando

Leoluca Orlando, mayor of Palermo, speaks and writes eloquently of Sicily's capital city. No ordinary mayor, he writes poetry and philosophizes about the meaning of community, inspired by the old city's architecture. He believes Palermo can be wrested from Mafia control, its citizens freed from intimidation by renewing their sense of the city. Orlando has taken on the task of guiding the city into a return to normalcy.

After decades of emergencies and outrageous scandals, Palermo badly needs a respite if it is to flourish again. Palermo has been silent for years; fear kept people from the streets and general deterioration followed. Today one hears a renewed dialogue on the streets, between vendor and buyer, mother and child, friends and acquaintances. The stone, stucco and marble surfaces reverberate with voices — a real step on the road to normalcy.

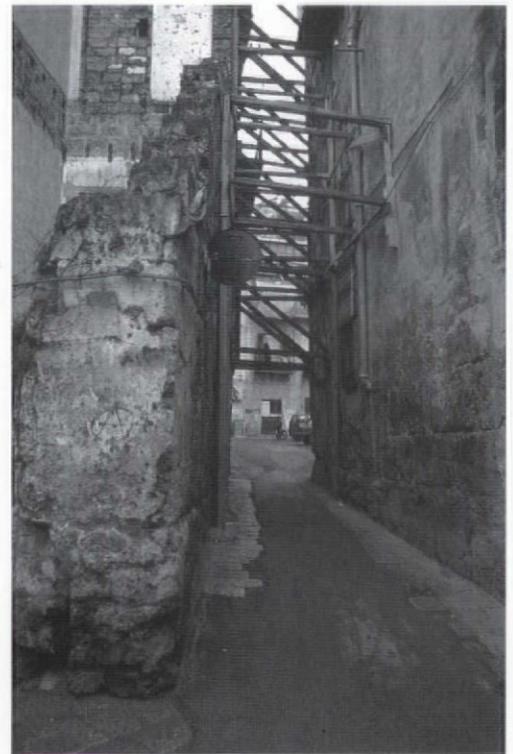
Palermo boasts a unique history and an exquisite Mediterranean setting. The Phoenicians, Arabs, Normans and various European royalty have all ruled the city. The *centro storico* is graced with a wealth of buildings that reflect the arts of its many conquerors, and the Palermitani have been known for their tolerance of diverse religions and cultures.

For centuries, wealthy citizens built a myriad of palaces, churches and roads that form the framework of the *centro storico*. But by the end of the nineteenth century Palermo had begun to grow out beyond its traditional center. Wide avenues led away from the city to areas of newly

constructed villas, which brought with them a change in the way people lived.

Previously, the rich, poor and middle class had shared buildings and courtyards. The landed aristocracy built their palaces in the city, settling on the main floor, leaving the other floors for a mix of everyone else. Every street displayed a wide range of incomes and backgrounds.

But the villas outside the city, built as homes for the new bourgeoisie, were never intended to house a cross section of people. Thus Palermo changed from a city in which all classes rubbed shoulders to



one in which a large group of people removed themselves from the mix, leaving the center for the poor and remnants of the aristocracy. While the mono-class neighborhood remains typical in the U.S. and many parts of Europe, Mayor Orlando sees no reason it should be the rule in Palermo.

Fifty years of neglect in Palermo's *centro storico*. Photos by Patricia Tusa Fels.



After World War II, a combination of events gave the upper hand to the Mafia. Ironically, the Fascists hated the Mafia and before the war Mussolini had succeeded in breaking its grip on Sicily. But after the Allies bombed Palermo and retook the island, the Mafia (enemy of Fascists and friend of the Americans) became entrenched in the new Italian government.

The Mafia saw money to be made in speculative building for the new suburbs, so it had no interest in repairing the war-damaged center. While the turn-of-the-century villas had brought some urbanization to the outskirts of the city, the building boom that started in the fifties destroyed Palermo's rural surroundings and brought an end to the dominance of the old center. Buildings were erected with little quality and no communal services, and they were intended only for middle-class buyers.

Meanwhile, millions of dollars that had been sent from the national government in Rome to restore the historic center were pocketed by the Mafia. Scaffolding was erected around major buildings and left to sit for ten, twenty, even thirty years. War damage was never repaired.

Palermo, the city of so many words, became silent. The architectural wealth of the center darkened and crumbled. Buildings stood empty, roofless, their windows bricked up. Streets seemed to hold only memories of violent deaths.

Finally, after fifty years, the scandals, massacres, corruption and unemployment became too much for the people of Palermo. A wave of reform hit all of Italy. Leaders, from the Prime Minister to local councilors, were shown to have been part of the criminal element. Elections brought to power a new generation of incorrupt

and educated citizens. Palermitani elected Orlando, an attorney, a lover of the city and the joys of urban life. He set out to banish the Mafia, its secretive ways and its anti-urban bias.

Just as a war-torn city feels a youthful giddiness when the fighting stops, so the citizens of Palermo returned to their streets with a sense of wonder. It is hard not to notice that the whispers of the last fifty years have been transformed into increasingly boisterous songs.

Today, Palermo's greyness is still much evident; stones that once must have glistened are covered with soot and grime. Building facades are obscured by layers of dirt, with a wealth of sculpted fruit, faces, crests, bodies and ornament left out of focus. Plants grow in crevices; ferns and vines reach out, up and down buildings. Many structures are nearly invisible, hidden behind scaffolding and netting; others have decayed to the point at which their roofs are gone, permitting one to glimpse the sky by looking through the shuttered, glassless windows.



Above left: A successful renovation next to a deserted palazzo. Above: Innovative restoration using bombed ruin with new construction.



Scaffolding where new work is underway.

Yet there are signs of returning life. Each of the center's four neighborhoods has a thriving street market, located on the winding, medieval streets of the oldest part of the center. In fact, the markets link up so that one can wander for miles from vegetable stalls to olive stands to hawkers of socks and underwear.

Walking the neighborhoods, one still finds workshops for wood, marble, metal and stucco;



The Spassimo neighborhood—an area that was heavily bombed during World War II and where renovation projects have just now begun.

recently there has been a reawakening of trade confederations. Public structures have been restored, painted, revitalized; the quality of work lavished on some projects is breathtaking. Massive roof beams have been saved, decorated ceilings cleaned, fine stone work revealed.

The most important work is that being done in private homes. A typical *palazzo* has twenty to thirty separate owners, many absentee. Sometimes only a small group of owners in a building have restored their apartments; sometimes an entire building has been renovated. But slowly the face on the street is lightening.

One of the mayor's first steps for a "return to normalcy" was an effort to reassert the importance of Palermo's *centro storico*, whose population had decreased to only 30,000 of Palermo's 700,000 residents. Palermo, as in much of Italy, has literally zero population growth; thus demand for housing can be met by rehabilitating existing structures rather than building new developments. In 1993 Palermo adopted a new urban plan that curtailed expansion into the countryside and established methods for restoring and reusing the center and allocated funds for the work.

The plan offered incentives to those who would restore and then inhabit apartments. The plan's creators hope to bring back the middle class into the center. The poor are already there and the rich still own apartments. If the wealthy see a vibrant center they will invest in restoring their property. If developers notice renewed interest in the center, they will redirect their energies to the great number of derelict buildings.

Much of the center's real estate is in private hands. But Palermo is a city where inaction is habitual, where a belief in cooperation is rare, where trust in government is nonexistent. Palermitani have become so used to nothing happening that they expect nothing to succeed. Moving back to the center entails much more than a change in scenery. It will require a deep attitudinal shift, a major change in the habits of the last half century.

Mayor Orlando believed that what was lacking in modern Palermo was "a conviction to live together in a community." He saw the building forms of the pre-industrial city — courtyards, common staircases, sidewalks leading to neighborhood piazzas — as forms of urban civility. Restored and re-inhabited buildings would celebrate the physical components that had sheltered that communal life in the past.

Palermo's plan of action is quite different from that which an American city in decline might take.

It has involved a more philosophical look at what a city is, what it means to live together, what is needed to create a place worthy of the name *citta*.

American politicians often speak of safety, civic pride and the attractiveness of their cities. But when an American mayor speaks of safety, he usually wants to hire more police. When he speaks of pride, he is selling a new skyscraper in the downtown.

Palermo's mayor is offering the renewed physical structure of the old city and the activities that follow as a model for safety and a source of pride. Since Palermo had an extremely serious crime problem, the city's renewal rests on the citizens believing in the safety of the center and its desirability as a place to live. The idea is that there will then follow an actual cessation of violence because of the active presence of citizens and the government's continual anti-Mafia activities. This process will take time; perhaps at least another decade before the benefits will be obvious.

Conservation, to Mayor Orlando, means saving the culture of the city itself, not just restoring brick and mortar. The old city is the best location for a renewed Palermo because it holds both the tradition of a communal life and the city's ongoing institutions: markets, university, theatres, civic buildings. Orlando believes pride in the city will translate into care for it. The people, with the help of Mayor Orlando, have rediscovered their voices.



Neglected jewels waiting for attention.



Neighborhood workshop creating traditional light displays.

The Dismal Science Todd W. Bressi

"Circling the Wagons: City Planning and Design in an Age of Risk," sponsored by the American Planning Association, National Capital Area Chapter and the Washington Architectural Foundation. Sept. 18-19, 1997

Crime rates in American cities may be plummeting, but Americans' preoccupation with crime, especially their fear of victimization, apparently is not. So-called reality-based crime shows like *Cops* fan the paranoia that disaster lurks in every apartment complex or mall parking lot, that every buzz-cut, baggy-jeaned, body-pierced teenager is a drug dealer, gang member or worse.

Not surprisingly, a new cadre of planners and urban designers who cast themselves as public safety experts has quietly emerged. These designers, who have burnished Oscar Newman's edgy catch-phrase "defensible space" into the respectably phrased "crime prevention through environmental design," often team up with local police agencies or retired cops-cum-security consultants. Their prescriptions are trickling into zoning codes and design standards throughout the country.

Last September's conference, "Circling the Wagons," included a series of sessions that provided a basic primer on CPTED and examined the application of CPTED in public housing, neighborhood design and gated communities. There are two ways to control behavior, explained John Hayes, a security consultant to the Charlotte Housing Authority. "Punitive control" is meted out by the criminal justice system and "self-control" is enforced by social norms and other people's behavior. "The environment gives you clues on how to behave," explained Michael Downie, of the Neighborhood Design Center. "The proper design and maintenance of places can reduce fear and criminality."

CPTED takes the latter route, advancing several design strategies for sending signals to influence people's behavior and sense of safety. "Natural surveillance" means maximizing visibility, so law-abiding people feel more comfortable about entering a place and troublemakers know they will be noticed. "Territorial reinforcement" means reclaiming unused spaces, clarifying who is responsible for

which spaces, and marking buildings and spaces with signs of activity. "Natural access control" means identifying clearly where people should and should not go, thereby increasing an intruder's sense of risk. "Target hardening" means designing features that inhibit entry or access.¹

The basis offered for these theories is Newman's decades-old research on open space in New York City housing projects, glazed with common-sense slogans from writers like Jane Jacobs ("eyes on the street") and James Q. Wilson ("broken windows"), and capped by a swirl of anecdotes, like the hyped claim that "in some CPTED communities, criminal activity has decreased by 40 percent."² Unfortunately, this is about the level of argument one would encounter in an Internet chat room.

In fact, the evidence is ambiguous at best. In the 1970s, follow-up studies of projects redesigned according to Newman's principles found positive short-term impacts but neutral long-term impacts;³ even New York City's housing authority is revisiting the issue in a current research project. Newman's latest book, *Creating Defensible Space*, "is not the ambitious defense or scientific examination of Newman's hypotheses that is needed," one reviewer wrote. "It is time to consider the authors' hypotheses systematically... [and] time to add to the analysis the variables of tenant demographics, project location, security and management practices."⁴

Zeroing in on public housing projects as crime hot spots is also problematic, Harold Holtzman, a criminologist with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, asserted at the conference. "We don't know how much crime is in public housing because police don't usually measure it directly. And even when we have some impression about crime, we don't know how it compares to what goes on across the street." At the other end of the spectrum, there is no evidence

that gated communities are safer than others, reported Mary Gail Snyder, co-author of a recent book on gated communities.

The CPTED projects described at the conference ranged from discouraging to absurd. Mt. Rainer, Md., police chief John Thompson recounted how he used a series of access control, surveillance and enforcement strategies to successfully eradicate a drug dealing hot spot in his town. Now this activity takes place in the adjacent community of Brentwood and just across the Washington D.C. border, he acknowledged.

Peter Smirniotopolous, of the Alexandria, Va., Housing Authority, argued that planners can design safer communities by heeding market forces. His agency is replacing a dilapidated low-income project in the city's historic core with a mix of market-rate and public housing. The new development won't have a playground, though; such places can attract noisy teenagers (or worse) at night, scaring off home buyers and depressing market values, he explained.⁵

Ironically, the most thoughtful advocates of CPTED are undertaking a serious reconsideration and rediscovery of the principles of good place and community design. "What is the secret to CPTED? Design that ... encourages people to 'keep an eye out' for each other," one guidebook begins.⁶ But CPTED initiatives often fall back on narrow, formulaic, prescriptive approaches and fail to take the next step — investing in stable communities where people are involved with each other. This process, of course, is harder to chart, takes more time and offers no guarantees — and it requires a much more optimistic outlook.⁷

Consider that the resident manager, community police officer and landscape designer for a crime-plagued housing complex in Seabrook, Md., came to exactly the opposite conclusion as Smirniotopolous did. They placed a new tot lot directly in the center of their troubled neighbor-

hood so it would be a constant reminder of their effort to reclaim territory, a statement that would give residents confidence that their participation really would make a difference. That act, coupled with tough policies for evicting drug dealers, has started to turn the community around.

Beyond the questionable research foundation for CPTED design prescriptions, beyond the tunnel vision that can result in dismaying, destructive projects, comes a more fundamental critique. Designing places that make people feel safer while ignoring underlying social and economic problems is outright unethical, charged designer Linnaea Tillet. CPTED may eliminate, thankfully, the blind spots where criminals are able to lurk, but it remains blind to the disintegration of the places and institutions that undergird American civic and community life.

Notes

1. City of Orlando, Planning and Development Department, *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design: Your Guide to Creating a Safe Environment* (Orlando, FL: City of Orlando, n.d.)
2. *Ibid.*, 1. As for anecdotes, crime has fallen just as dramatically in New York City, where a host of policing, prison construction and legislative initiatives in the tradition of "punitive control" have been credited — not CPTED.
3. Edward Krupat and Philip Kubzansky, "Building Against Crime," *San Francisco Chronicle This World Magazine* (24 January 1988), 15.
4. Richard E. Lloyd, "Review: Creating Defensible Space," *Journal of the American Planning Association* (Autumn 1997), 524.
5. Kids can go to playgrounds in the surrounding neighborhood or play in the tiny backyard behind each unit, Smirniotopolous added (but not in the front yards, which have been given over to parking pads).
6. City of Orlando, 1.
7. See, for example, Raymond L. Gindroz's discussion of the Diggstown project in Norfolk, Va. Raymond L. Gindroz, "Cross Section of Address," *Places* 11:1 (Winter 1997).

Common Places: Finding a Framework Todd W. Bressi

Common places are woven into our cities and our lives in a variety of ways. Some are incidental, like a riverfront cafe that we discover with delight. Others are casual, like the neighborhood playgrounds that anchor children's routines and social networks. Still others are monumental, like the civic parks or cultural institutions that we visit only occasionally, but with anticipation or even fanfare. Such places are most effective when they are anchored within a framework — a system of infrastructure like streets or rivers, a network of public institutions like schools, or a set of civic expectations. These frameworks help determine which places become lodged within our experience of and image of the city, which places receive the attention they need to thrive, which places are carried forward in visions for the future.

Like San Francisco (which the RUDC visited last spring), Chicago is making vast investments in its common places. The fall forum in Chicago explored a range of common places — through tours and presentations by designers, public officials and community leaders — always searching for the frameworks that fix the position of these places in the city, in citizens' everyday lives, and in people's expectations.

Streets as Common Places

Downtown, State Street is undergoing a remarkable revival. A century ago, it embodied the best of this brawny metropolis, emerging as a choice location for wondrous new skyscrapers, shopping palaces and civic life. But after World War II it began to decline. Suburban growth competed for retail and office activity; its architectural landmarks were becoming functionally obsolescent; local businesses that had proudly viewed State Street as a front door were being acquired by remote owners. In 1979, the street was turned into a busway.

Two frameworks have been essential to State Street's revival: the history embedded in its architecture and in people's memories, and civic groups that have refused to let it die. The planning and design strategies have rested on several principles, which generally seek to recognize the complexity of the street and activities along it, and to strengthen connections to businesses, institutions and other common places downtown:

Make a mixed-use street. The busway was reconfigured to handle both bus and auto traffic; sidewalk space was reduced to concentrate pedestrian activity next to buildings; subway connections were emphasized with new entrance kiosks; space was reserved for a possible downtown light-rail connector.

Cultivate a variety of activities along the street. Entertainment, retail and educational uses already anchor three distinct segments and generate activity at least eighteen hours a day. Planners hope for more housing, which could give State Street life around the clock; already, several buildings have been converted to student housing and live-work lofts.

Establish ownership. "Who's minding the store?" asked Gregory S. Baldwin, FAIA, of Zimmer Gunsul Frasca. When State Street was a bus mall, the perception was that it belonged to Chicago's transit authority; now a civic group, the Greater State Street Council, has taken clear leadership in managing the street.

State Street must still anchor itself more firmly into surrounding frameworks. First, it must integrate better with the downtown street network. Cross streets should serve as gate-

ways, and the connection to North Michigan Avenue (two blocks east) via walkways along the Chicago River could be improved. Second, it must connect better, architecturally, to activities in buildings along it; recent projects like the Chicago Theatre renovation and the DePaul Center (which includes retail and educational space) are improving matters. Third, finding new uses for mothballed buildings while conserving their historic qualities is essential for maintaining the memories that have sustained interest in the street.

“State Street brings back a heartbeat and feeling for the city, a whole new concept about what city life should be,” Chicago Mayor Richard Daley told the forum. “Now we are applying the same idea to small retail streets throughout the city that also went through decline.”

Indeed, other projects are exploring how local streets can be common grounds for the communities they serve. The reconstruction of the Sunnyside pedestrian mall, in Uptown, involved installing new lighting, street furniture and art to make the mall more engaging. But the biggest accomplishment was reconciling the interests of the two communities that shared the space yet distrusted each other, and creating a civic framework that would take care of the mall, according to Monique Barwicki, of the city’s cultural affairs agency.



Another project involves 35th Street, a struggling commercial strip that links historically Black Bronzeville and the Illinois Institute of Technology, and will be the site of Chicago’s new police headquarters. A joint IIT–Harvard studio examined how this investment, coupled with the community’s ambition to be a center for African-American culture and tourism, could change the street. The studio staged charrettes involving nearly twenty community groups and offered site-specific proposals for shops, jazz clubs, a hotel and small public spaces.

The plan served as “a motivator and inspirer,” architecture professor Dirk Denison noted, and is one of several projects exploring how IIT and Bronzeville can forge a common vision for neighborhood revitalization. “Now we need a plan for building community from a capacity point of view,” community leader Carroll Lucas said. “How do we build our ability to advance this agenda?”

Regional Landscape as a Framework

Chicago’s regional landscape — Lake Michigan, the forests and the prairies — has long been a powerful inspiration and anchor for the city’s common places. “The idea of lakefront park has been deeply implanted in Chicago” since the federal government gave the city lakefront land in the 1840s, observed Lawrence Okrent.

Indeed, Grant Park, where the Loop meets Lake Michigan, has been a work in progress since then. Chicago Park District director Edward Uhlir, FAIA, described how it has inched



Left: Recently opened riverfront cafe. (Todd W. Bressi)
Above: State Street.
(© Steinkamp/Ballogg Chicago)

forward through a series of breakwater and fill projects, deals with railroads and legal battles, not to mention visionary plans. Now the goal is to connect Grant Park north past the Illinois Center to Navy Pier, and south to Burnham Park and Northerly Island. This three-mile chain will link a range of gathering places serving the entire region: Navy Pier's promenade, beer gardens and exhibition halls; Grant Park's marina and green; event facilities like Soldier Field and McCormick Place; and institutions like the Art Institute, Field Museum of Natural History, Shedd Aquarium and Adler Planetarium.

The southward connection has been facilitated by the recent relocation of Lakeshore Drive, a high-speed arterial. Burnham Park is likely to change dramatically when the park district closes Meigs Field (an airstrip built on the site of the 1933-34 World's Fair). The district has proposed creating a "museum campus" with spaces and programming related to natural science themes.

Filling in this lakefront framework will require careful compromise, several presenters acknowledged. Cultural institutions are growing and becoming more entrepreneurial, straining their historic buildings and settings, aquarium planner Daniel Bluestone noted. The park district is also programming facilities like Soldier Field more aggressively to keep them from losing money. Access, parking and expansion space are critical; but citizen groups are demanding more green space, and Lakeshore Drive and rail lines inhibit east-west pedestrian and transit connections.

Chicago is also beginning to use its regional landscape as a framework for common places at a local scale. Like many cities, Chicago is rediscovering its riverfront, in large part because improvements to sanitary and stormwater treatment systems have improved water quality. In 1991, the city adopted downtown riverfront design guidelines, requiring projects to set back from the water and provide amenities.

Some changes have occurred already, including a waterfront cafe at one new hotel. City planner Joseph Zehnder described six more projects — including cafes, docks, fishing platforms and street-end plazas — that could be built with city funds or through development agreements. Planners are also working on guidelines for the entire 41-mile river, including public access requirements in industrial and shopping areas better connections to the river where it passes through regional forest reserves.

Plans as Frameworks

Chicago offers a powerful example of how a planning vision can serve as a framework for the evolution of common places. Daniel H. Burnham's 1909 plan is still a fundamental reference point for many projects, even though the city's physical structure and economic and social composition have changed dramatically since then. Just as important, the city seems imbued with a can-do spirit, which is exemplified by Major Daley's insistence on making public works projects accountable to the public.

A convincing case of this is the evolution of North Michigan Avenue. In Burnham's day it was an ordinary street in a tenement zone, but he proposed turning it into a grand boulevard, both to connect the Loop to the north lakefront and to establish property value. "Burnham thought Michigan Avenue would be a great street, and Jules Guerin drew it with trees, commotion, people, bustle," explained Howard Decker, FAIA; indeed, as State Street declined, it emerged as Chicago's premier shopping and architectural address.

Despite the persistence of Burnham's vision, the city clearly needs to establish new planning frameworks. Chicago's streets, boulevards, lakefront and river serve as powerful elements of urban form and armatures for common places, but the city needs something more. For example, Bronzeville's Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, part of a boulevard system designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, received a \$10.5 million spruce up with new

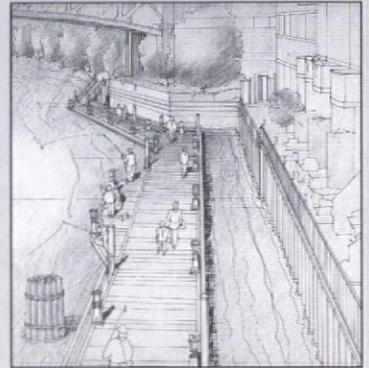
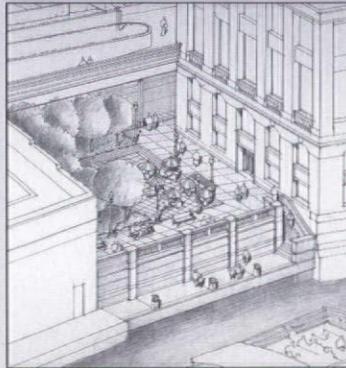


"Museum forecourt" connecting Grant Park and Burnham Park, showing the Shedd Aquarium (left), Field Natural History Museum (right) and terraces that are now under construction; Teng and Associates. (Chicago Park District)

landscaping and public art. Yet the street is primarily a regional traffic artery, while 35th Street, which crosses the boulevard struggles to emerge as a framework for community life.

Another issue is a lack of useful open space. Two-thirds of Chicagoans live in areas where parks are too crowded or too far away, and the city's open space system has neither kept up with recreation demands nor managed to set aside sufficient habitat for plants and animals. Consequently, Chicago is actively adding to its public open space inventory, thanks in part to \$1 billion in funding from a city bond issue.

Chicago's CitySpace Project, begun in 1993, includes initiatives to revive decrepit playgrounds, turn vacant lots into parks and develop riverfront open space. For example, eighty percent of the city's 557 schools have land that is in bad shape or severely underused, according to planner Patricia Gallagher; the project seeks to create 100 new parks at schools. The project also seeks to establish organizational and funding frameworks to ensure new parks can be maintained. The opportunism and local scale inherent in each intervention make this important plan quite different from Burnham's grand vision, yet it is probably more appropriate for our time.



Common Places: Directions for Investigation

This year's forums concentrated on two broad themes — how common spaces are addressing increasingly complicated agendas, and how they are connected to a city's physical frameworks, social networks and expectations for itself. The forums also raised several issues for further consideration.

The forums focused largely on common places in central cities. What types of common spaces, and what frameworks, are relevant at the metropolitan scale? Even in cases where regional frameworks exist, such as rail systems in the Bay Area or Chicagoland, or the trails that encircle the bay and ridgelines in the Bay Area, how are the local and regional scales mediated in urban design and architecture?

The forums generally addressed common places that exist within an urban texture, such as downtowns or older, denser neighborhoods. At least two other textures are equally relevant — the campus and the suburb. The forums examined, all too briefly, how campuses like Levi's corporate headquarters and the Yerba Buena Gardens cultural center were integrated into San Francisco's grid, and Don Miles, FAIA, described the meshing of Los Angeles' Exposition Park with the surrounding city.

The forums tended to focus on places that are traditionally public, such as streets and parks. Yet more and more common places — coffee shops, health clubs, bookstores, shopping malls — are not explicitly public. How can planners and designers knit these all into a diverse landscape of common places? Can common places be linked not only to public institutions but also to civic groups and nonprofit organizations, which are assuming an increasingly important role in civil society?

The shifting roles of common places, and the complex ways in which they are becoming embedded in our communities, pose countless design questions. It may still be true that one must pay for the public life, but the opportunities for cultivating common ground seem richer, more challenging and more laden with potential than one would first imagine.

— Todd W. Bressi is Executive Editor of *Places* and teaches urban design at Pratt Institute.

Proposals for new downtown waterfront public space. Left: Rush Street Park. Right: North Beach Boardwalk. Wolff Clements and Associates. (Chicago Department of Planning and Development)

This article reports on the fall, 1997, forum of the American Institute of Architects' Regional and Urban Design Committee, held September 25-28 in Chicago. The forum was organized by Phil Enquist, AIA (Skidmore Owings Merrill LLP), Monique Barwicki (Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs) and Kevin Pierce, AIA (Lohan Associates). Join RUDC and the AIA Committees on Design and Housing for a joint spring forum, Celebration and Central Florida: Cross Sections in Time and Space, February 19-22, 1998. For more information, call 800-242-3837.



A Common Language of Urban Design **Andres Duany**

The Congress for the New Urbanism is organized around nine task forces. One of them, chaired by Andres Duany and Stefanos Polyzoides, was chartered to establish a common nomenclature. This group originally proposed to complete a lexicon, conceived as an alphabetized list of useful terms accompanied by their definitions.

This straightforward conception soon foundered, however, as it became apparent that most of the elements to be defined could only be understood properly in relationship to others. It seems that with authentic urbanism, no less than with true environmentalism, a tug on anything rustles something elsewhere. Rather than alphabetical order, urbanism calls for its terminology to be grouped within taxonomies of related terms.

This established, it seemed natural to classify these elements according to their most common attributes. For example, it is possible to range open spaces according to size or by environmental performance; thoroughfares could be grouped by relative traffic capacity and building types classified by function or arrayed according to the frontage that each occupies.

Such disparate taxonomies however, do not support the integrated conception that authentic urbanism requires. They tend instead, to confirm the nomenclature of the specialists — that babel of planners, traffic engineers, environmentalists, urban designers, landscapers, architects, preservationists, land use attorneys, developers, bankers and marketing experts — that is the current language of suburbia.

This characteristic of suburbia is the origin of its failure. Despite being designed through a process that engages all these specialists, the product is rarely blended properly. Each profession is permitted to impose its perquisites, with the result usually being a collection of urban elements rather than urbanism itself. The streets are designed exclusively for traffic flow; the natural environment is circumscribed and disruptive to pedestrian connectivity; shopping centers, office parks and residential areas are conceived in isolation; self-referential buildings ignore streets while fantastical landscaping ignores buildings. Such collections may well demonstrate all the elements of towns and cities statistically, but they are really just cartoon versions of the real thing.

The search for a unified taxonomy yielded the chance discovery of the Transect. This term is defined as a system of classification deploying the conceptual range of “more rural” to “more urban” to arrange in useful order the typical elements of urbanism. The transect quickly proved to be a natural ordering system, as every important element easily finds a place within its continuum. For example, a street is more urban than a road, a curb more urban than a swale, a brick wall more urban than shingled one, an allee of trees more urban than a cluster. Even the character of streetlights can vary from metropolitan to rustic, depending on whether they are fabricated from cast iron, extruded pipe or wood posts.

Beyond being a system of classification, the Transect has the potential to become an instrument of design. The correlation of the various elements by a common rural-to-urban continuum can be the basis for a system of zoning. No more than five sections are necessary to calibrate the transect to the neighborhood structure (which is the precondition of authentic urbanism at any density). These are the Edge, General, Center, Core and District Zones.

These forum pages are produced under an agreement between the Design History Foundation and the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU). CNU, which has no direct affiliation with *Places*, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, receiving support from membership dues and sponsors, including the Energy Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Inquires about CNU membership should be made to:

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The first three zoning categories follow the natural internal structure of the neighborhood. The Core is assigned to the intensification that occurs where several neighborhoods conjoin. The District accommodates those specialized places that are necessary to a complete community, but must be zoned away as they would be disruptive within the neighborhood fabric.

There are two benefits to an integrated system of zoning like this one. First, it would make impossible the isolated prescriptions of specialists. Second, each zone would be an immersive environment, a place where all the component elements reinforce each other to create and intensify a specific character. Several such immersive environments within a single neighborhood would provide a certain variation of lifestyle, this in contrast to the vast, homogenous tracts of suburbia.

The evolution of this document into a proactive instrument has made the original title obsolete. "Lexicon" is too static a term to describe this extension of capability. The more representative "Operating System" is now provisionally applied to describe it.

The most important contribution of the Operating System may be to implementation. Experience shows that new urbanist projects are technically difficult to permit. The codes and manuals now in place, despite the appearance of objectivity, recognize only conventional suburban programs. To introduce a new urbanist project into such a system is akin to running a computer application on an incompatible operating system, a condition requiring great effort to create an interface which is destined never to run optimally anyway.

The current North American standard is a suburban-based operating system that does not process authentic urbanism. To succeed in its mission, the Congress for the New Urbanism must create and propagate an alternate standard. The proposed transect-based operating system will be neither imposed nor protected, but confirmed in this role through empirical success. It is as comprehensive as the current standard, it is easier to use and it results in better places to live.

— *Andres Duany is a board member of the Congress for the New Urbanism and principal of DuanyPlater-Zyberk, Architects and Town Planners.*

Arthur Andersson is principal at Moore/Andersson Architects in Austin. His design work has ranged from houses to urban master plans; current projects include the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art at Kansas State University and the Chihuly Bridge of Glass, in Tacoma. He has taught at Tulane, the University of Texas, Austin, and the University of Houston, and studied architecture at the University of Kansas and the University of London.

Jacquelynn Baas is director of the University of California, Berkeley, Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. She received her B.A. in art history from Michigan State University and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. From 1982 to 1988 she was chief curator and then director of Dartmouth College's Hood Museum of Art.

Patricia Fels runs her own architecture practice in Seattle. She has lived and worked abroad, primarily in Italy and Malaysia, and recently completed a book about cities and change.

Ned Kaufman directs preservation issues for the Municipal Art Society of New York, a not-for-profit advocacy organization. He has taught in the historic preservation and architecture programs at Columbia University and at the University of Chicago and co-curated the Canadian Centre for Architecture's inaugural exhibition. His *History Happened Here: A Plan for Saving New York City's Historically and Culturally Significant Sites* was recently published by the Municipal Art Society.

Kevin Keim is director of the Charles W. Moore Foundation. He studied architecture at Notre Dame and worked with Moore on research and writing projects. He is author of *An Architectural Life: Memoirs and Memories of Charles W. Moore*.

Richard C. Peters, FAIA, is a former architecture professor, at the University of California, Berkeley. A noted lighting consultant, his recent projects include the Walter Haas Business School in Berkeley and the Washington State Historical Museum in Tacoma. His firm, Peters and Myer, Illumination Design Collaborative, is currently working on the lighting master plan for the new city, Bonifacio, in the Philippines.

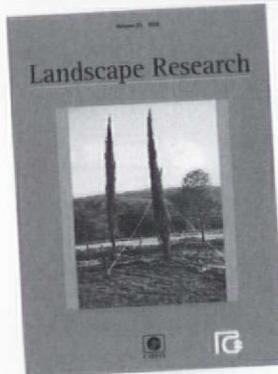
John Ruble, FAIA, is a principal at Moore Ruble Yudell in Santa Monica. He studied at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Virginia and served for as a volunteer town planner for the Peace Corps in Tunisia. He has been a visiting critic at Cornell University and U.C.L.A.

Jefferson B. Riley, FAIA, is a principal at Centerbrook, in Essex, Ct., and was a founding partner of Moore, Grover, Harper, the firm that preceded it. His projects have received more than forty national and regional awards and have been published in numerous books and publications.

William Turnbull, Jr., was principal of William Turnbull Associates (now Turnbull Griffin Haesloop), a San Francisco architecture firm, and best known for projects that evoke a strong connection to the Bay Area's landscape. He died last summer, shortly after writing the letter published in this issue.

Alice Wingwall is an artist whose fervent interest in stones, buildings and the stirrings of the imagination leads her to make photographs, words and sculpture. She is a consulting editor to *Places*, and several of her articles on photography have appeared in earlier issues. In 1995-96 she was a Fellow at the Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College, working with Wendy Snyder MacNeil on the film *BlindSight*. She resides in Berkeley, California.

Buzz Yudell, FAIA, has been active in architectural education and practice since graduating from Yale in 1972. He collaborated extensively with Charles W. Moore—as a project manager in Moore's Connecticut office, as a co-teacher at Yale University and as a principal at Moore Ruble Yudell. He currently teaches at the University of California, Los Angeles, and has been involved in a number of participatory planning projects.



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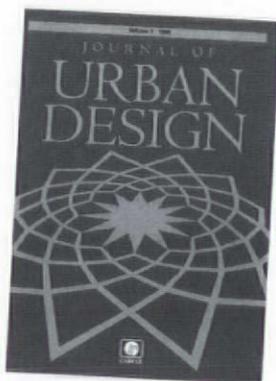
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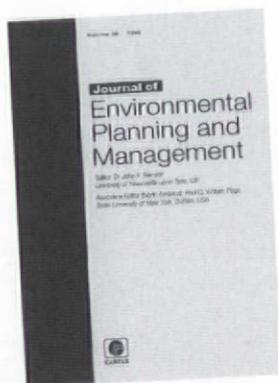
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