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SITES XII

The Big Duck

"The Parthenon is a duck."

Robert Venturi

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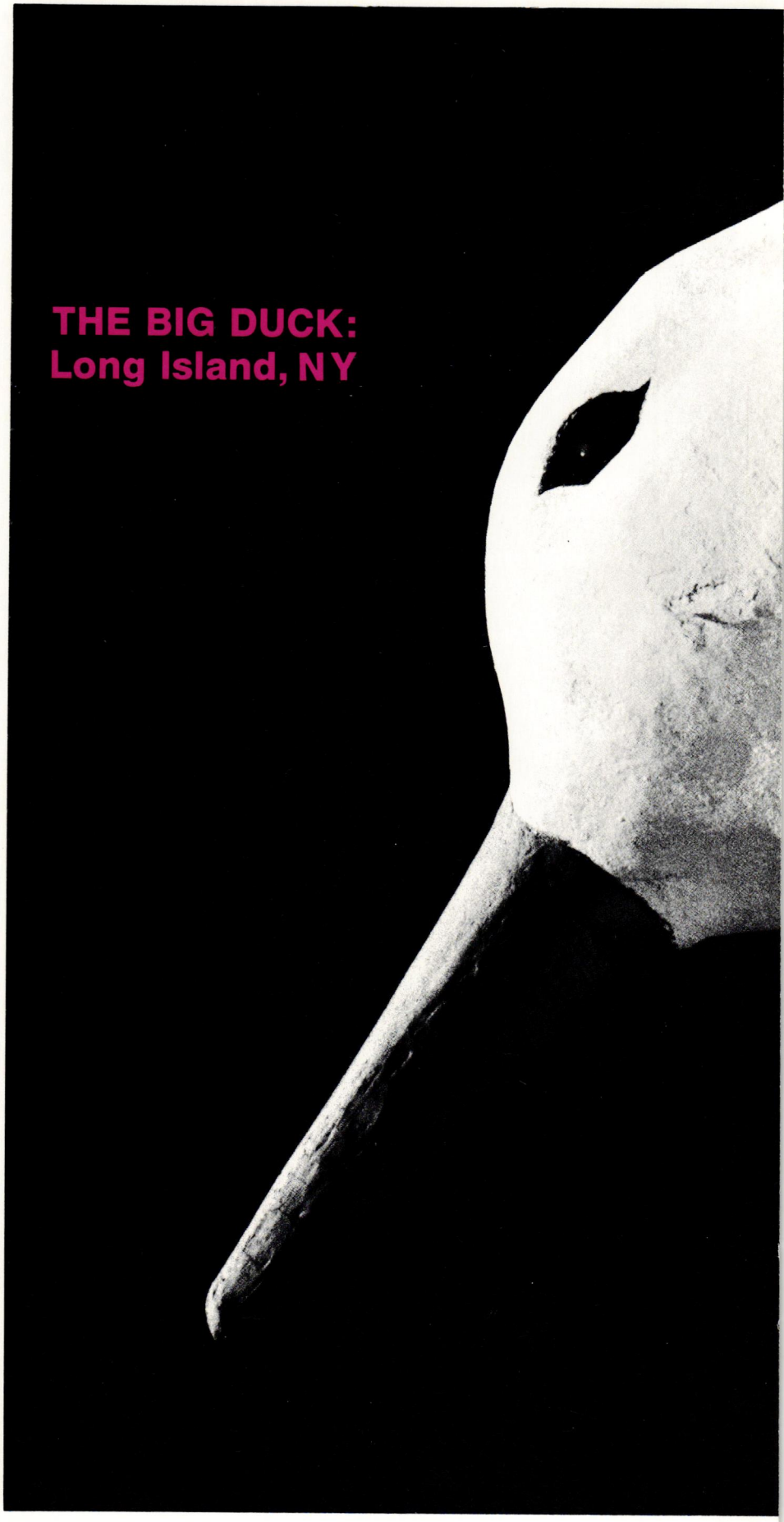

THE BIG DUCK:
Long Island, NY

Photos: Dennis Dollens

The Big Duck
Howard Mansfield

"The Parthenon is a duck."
Robert Venturi

"Why a duck?"
Chico Marx

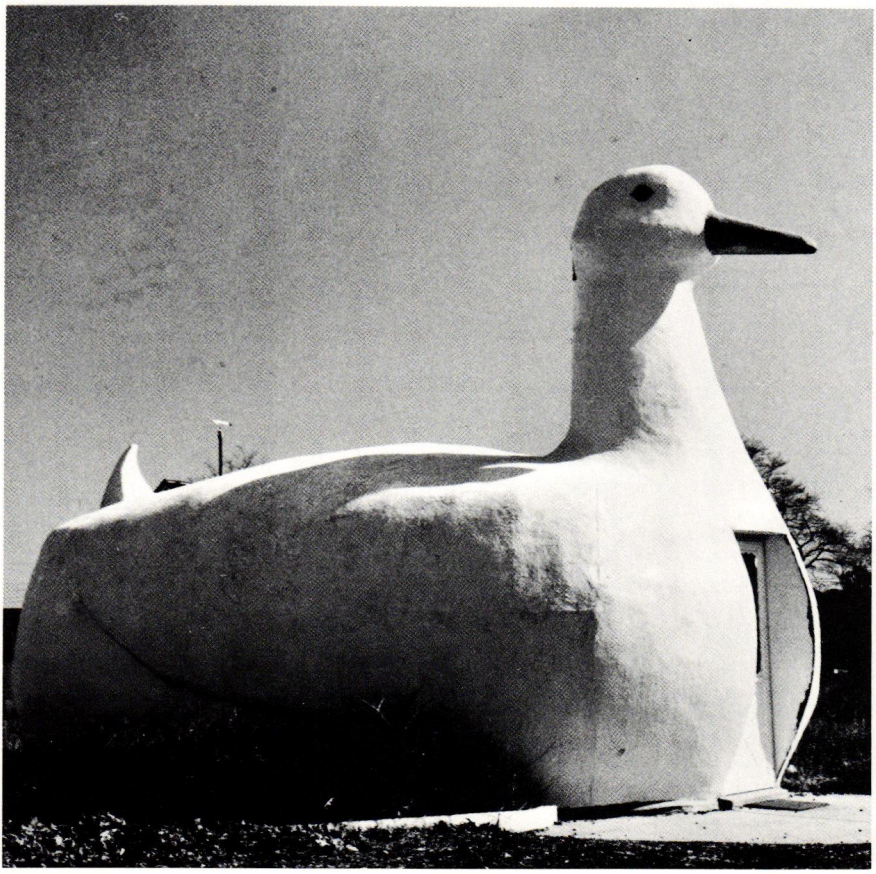
In all the land is there one American building that can stand and be counted with the greats: the Parthenon, Hagia Sophia, St. Paul's, Chartres . . . ? There is. And it is no skyscraper, no prairie house, but a duck of humble origin that squats by the roadside on eastern Long Island.

In fact all these buildings are ducks, but that is getting ahead of ourselves.

We must begin with Marx, and pose the Hegelian dialectic: Why a duck?

The Duck was the visionary quest of one man (as these things so often are). In 1930, Martin Maurer, a duck farmer in Riverhead, wanted to build an enormous duck to serve as a poultry showroom and stir up Depression-lagging business. All the local contractors turned him down; they said it couldn't be done. Until he came to the Collins brothers, known locally more for their drinking than building. They went right to the heart of the matter, tied down a duck and drew full-scale plans. Before coming out to Long Island the brothers had designed props and scenes for the theater in New York. They built the twenty-foot tall duck by gluing a hand-sawed wooden frame together—no nails. This frame was then wrapped with soft galvanized wire to make ready for a cement coat, according to Edna Howell Yeager, one-time history chairman of the Suffolk County D.A.R. Then the Collins brothers, being men who knew their limitations, called in masons.

Smith & Yeager, mason contractors hired for $2,000, rose to their task, applying four coats of pure white Atlas Cement. The Collins brothers supervised the cementing, wiring and the placing of the eyes, which are Model T taillight lenses.



But like the great cathedrals, the Duck is marked by imperfections. Nearing completion of their masterwork, the Collins brothers took off and tied one on. The Duck was still missing one wing. The masons, heirs to the medieval craftsmen, fought adversity, running around to the other side of the Duck to copy the completed wing.

The Collins brothers recovered and finished the interior with rolls of stovepipe tin and, sacrificing anatomical accuracy for purity of form, painted it white.

For their work they received $1,800.

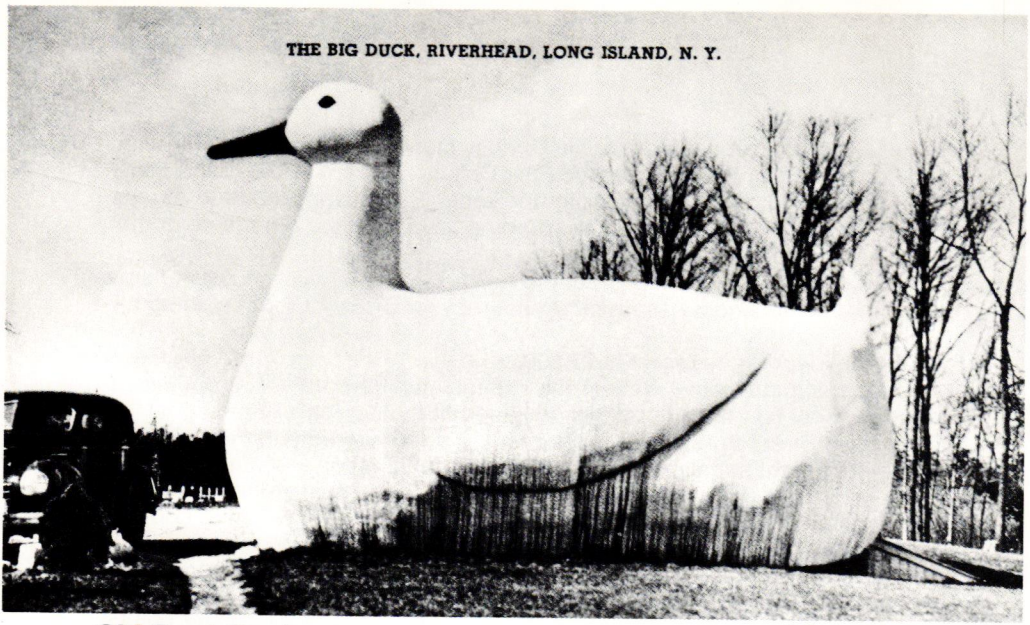
There it sat, gleaming white in the summer sunlight of 1931, a duck measuring twenty feet tall, fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long, standing tall on West Main Street in Riverhead. A symbol of a thriving duck farm industry that at its height supplied seventy per cent of the nation's Peking ducks—or seven million of the birds. It is not recorded if some local architecture critic thought to ask if the Duck's head was too small—or was it that the body was too boxy?

No, upon completion, the world caught up with the duck rancher's vision. *Popular Mechanics* featured the Duck in one of its issues. The Atlas Cement Company sent VIPs out over 100 miles of potato fields to Riverhead to see the masterwork, and used a picture of the Big Duck on its calendar, captioned: "The Most Spectacular Piece of Cement Work for the Year 1931."

Mr. Maurer patented his duck (Trademark #296,767). And the Drake Cake Company paid the Duck the greatest homage in art—imitation. The company built a smaller replica for the 1939 World's Fair, but only under the provision that it would be destroyed after the fair.

Years went by, pictures of the Duck made their way around the world on postcards and menu covers for steamship lines that featured Long Island duckling. At Christmas the Duck wore a twenty-foot wreath around its neck and was decorated with lights. In 1936, Maurer moved his duck about four miles down the road to Flanders, where it sits today beside Route 24. Thousands of weekenders on their way to the Hamptons have passed it.

There was always someone stopping to pose for a picture in front of it, like it was the White House or something. It became a landmark, looming large in the imagination of children. For after all, a twenty-foot duck is just



Old Post Card Collection: Don & Newly Preziosi

"The BIG DUCK is located on Flanders Road in Riverhead, L.I. It is the salesroom of the farm situated on the main highway where thousands of fresh-killed ducklings, mill-fed broilers,—fryers and spring roasters are sold."

the monument a child of eight would build.

This is a modest enough story for a piece of Americana and all would be fine if it ended here, but the Duck was soon the subject of international attention, a symbol in the early polemical wars that saw the turning of Modern Architecture to what is now called Post Modern.

Among the thousands who passed the Duck was Peter Blake, distinguished architect and editor of the now-defunct *Architectural Forum*. He damned the Duck, and just about all of roadside, suburban and downtown America in his 1964 polemic *God's Own Junkyard*. There, on page 101 of this angry outcry against the trashing of America, sits a full-page picture of the Duck, with its unknowning gaze. Above the Duck is a quotation, not from the Collins brothers, but Vitruvius: "Eurythmy is beauty and fitness in the adjustments of the members. This is found when the members of a work are of a height suited to their breadth, of a breadth suited to their length, and, in a word, when they correspond symmetrically." Well, you can imagine sitting under old Vitruvius the Duck looked pretty silly.

That might have been the Duck's obituary, since in the following years America, lead by Lady Bird Johnson, sought to clean up roadside honky-tonk, and these silly-seeming Ducks that stare blankly at Vitruvius.

But along came Robert Venturi. He liked what he saw in Blake's *Junkyard*. He read it not as a roster of shame, but as the modern equivalent to a Victorian pattern book. "The Parthenon is a duck," he declared. A small stir ensued in the architectural world. Venturi and his associates, his wife Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, rose to defend roadside vernacular architecture in their book, *Learning from Las Vegas*, parts of which first appeared as magazine articles in 1968. It was a call for "ugly and ordinary" architecture, not the purity of large glass boxes, for symbolism based in the vitality of roadside America. In the book's peroration, the Venturis wrote that once we learn from Las Vegas, instead of attacking it as Blake did, "Then the architypical Los Angeles will be our Rome and Las Vegas our Florence and like the archetypical grain elevator some generations ago, the Flamingo sign will shock our sensibilities toward a new architecture."

Upon the fat back of the Big Duck, the Venturis hung the sins of modern architecture. There were two kinds of buildings, they said: the Decorated Shed and the Duck. The shed applies symbols—eclectic use of old forms. The Duck is a symbol. Modern architecture, they said, had pursued purity of form, worship of space, over all else, dispensing with eclecticism, producing Ducks. "Ironically, the modern architecture of today, while rejecting explicit symbolism and frivolous appliqué ornament, has distorted the building into one big ornament. In subsituting 'articulation' for decoration, it has become a duck." Modern architecture, while claiming to be above all style, had actually subverted itself to symbolism, "designing dead ducks."

The Parthenon, Chartres, St. Paul's, were all ducks—buildings that had become symbols, like roadside neon signs, of Greece, the Middle Ages, and

Christopher Wren. And so it follows that the Seagram Building is a duck representing Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson, and so on.

The Venturis brought their "roadshow" to the Whitney Museum (itself a duck) in 1971 and published *Learning from Las Vegas* in 1972, and the reaction, it should recalled, was virulent, bordering on the dyspeptic. Ada Louise Huxtable, keeping her cool, dubbed Venturi "the guru of chaos," and explained the reaction by saying that the show "was the renunciation of just about everything the architectural profession holds sacred." She predicted that the Venturis "could be catalytic for the decade." Of their *Las Vegas* work and another, *Learning from Levittown*, she said: "brillant."

Others were less kind. The British hated the idea of the Vegas strip: "Robert Venturi comes on as though he were the Huckleberry Finn of American architecture," wrote a critic in the *Royal Institute of British Architects Journal*. "Should any architect, let alone a professor of architecture be hyping the already amok car culture? The mind reels. . . . I get the feeling that I have been put on." And smiling out at us from the top of the review, that Big Duck, not comprehending the debate. *Architectural Review*, another British journal, declared, "Venturism is a mood not a design philosophy. Treat it as a design philosophy and it will lead you quickly into a welter of rubbish." Perhaps one reason the reviewers reacted so strongly is that by the time they had explained Venturi & Co.'s ideas, they were fast running out of space. (Though the *Architectural Review* did say the Duck building was the "engaging hat peg on which Venturi's argument is hung.")

In America the *AIA Journal* gave the book a good review ("Jackpot"), praising the "beautiful audacity of the concept," and the readers of *Architectural Forum* debated Ducks and Decorated Sheds in a steady flow of letters that split about down the middle, with some feeling running high: "How much longer will the public duck be force fed with Mr. Venturi's self glorification?"

Venturi was the "*enfant terrible*" as *Progressive Architecture* called him, either the Norman Mailer of the architectural establishment or the Andy Warhol of Pop Architecture, depending on how you view it. As Huxtable said in her year-end review of architecture in 1971: "Outrage is the real product, whether deliberately provoked by Venturi polemics . . . or angrily voiced by their opponents who consider the doctrine a deliberate and destructive slap at hallowed values of quality and excellence. Anyone who is anybody has been invited to at least one intellectually with-it little evening to discuss the Venturi menace."

The Duck itself caught on as a popular character actor, winning a following. Referring to buildings as ducks became shorthand slang of the moment, particularly in *Architectural Forum*: Skidmore, Owings and Merrill was called a "duck factory," and Huxtable took on the duck, dropping it in several reviews to describe "buildings straining after symbolism when there is nothing to symbolize."

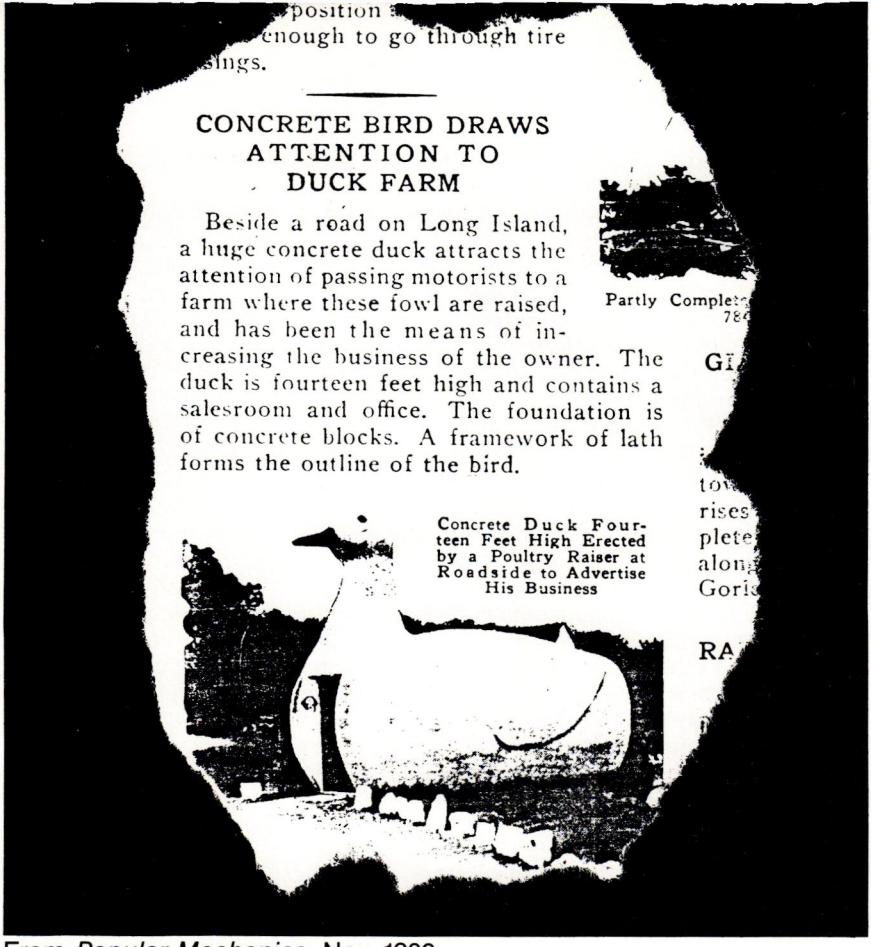
But in this episode in the history of ideas the Duck was playing the heavy. After all, Peter Blake didn't like it. And Venturi and his associates made the Duck accountable for the sins of architects like Paul Rudolph and others, who never came closer to a duck than at the Four Seasons.

Finally, someone came forward to defend the Big Duck. In the April '72 *Architectural Forum*, James Wines, founding co-director of SITE, Inc., (Sculpture in the Environment) presented a lengthy "Case for the Big Duck." And there again sat the Duck with its all-unknowing Model T eyes.

In a "somewhat facetious" article, Wines took the Venturis at their word, heeding their clarion call to examine the highway culture. He closely examined the Duck. "Considering the attention it has drawn, the Duck must have an exceptional capacity to impress."

Wines then wrote the first sensible words about the Duck: it is "a kind of visual pun of perverse example of architectural fowl play. In short, if you have seen it once, you have seen it all. Secondly, there is the question whether form follows function was ever intended to be expressed on quite such literal terms. The scale is also absurd. It is too small for a store and too big for a duck." (Yes, but is the head too small, or body too boxy?)

Wines could have stopped there. He had seen the Duck for what it was. "The Duck is simply a large, awkward, appealing artifact" but he was under the Duck's spell, the polemic-inducing trance brought on by looking into its Model T eyes, and he couldn't stop: "yet perhaps that is not all." Wines, too, saddled the Duck with his own manifesto: "Within our society, fantasy is segregated from the real world by an admission price. People think nothing of parting with their money to enter Disneyland, pornographic films, the cir-



position
enough to go through tire
sings.

CONCRETE BIRD DRAWS ATTENTION TO DUCK FARM

Beside a road on Long Island, a huge concrete duck attracts the attention of passing motorists to a farm where these fowl are raised, and has been the means of increasing the business of the owner. The duck is fourteen feet high and contains a salesroom and office. The foundation is of concrete blocks. A framework of lath forms the outline of the bird.

Concrete Duck Fourteen Feet High Erected by a Poultry Raiser at Roadside to Advertise His Business

Partly Comple

GI

RA

From *Popular Mechanics,* Nov. 1932

cus or to provide a TV for every room. Yet they would emphatically resist the same funds being spent to improve the visual environment." Americans, he went on to say, were wary of anything beyond the functional in their daily life.

The Big Duck to the rescue. "The Big Duck represents an exceptional individuality in a country pervaded by a business-as-usual esthetic." (And he didn't mean the Collins brothers' individuality.) And, as if standing up for rugged individualism weren't enough, Wines added the defense of the free world aganinst totalitarianism. The cities of our country are boring, he said, due to greed and neglect, leading to a dull and oppressed people, and "any student of totalitarian governments knows the best insurance against a self-assertive populace is to surround the people with a non-stimulative ambiance. . . ." Aganist the "panorama of dull, pragmatic and oppressive architecture . . . the Big Duck suggests a very special kind of threat."

In short, can the Big Duck, this fifteen-by-thirty-foot poultry store, save the free world?

Wines, tongue-in-cheek, says it might, and he proposes the Duck Design Theory—D.D.T.—part of which says: "Form follows fantasy not function," for "architecture that cannot offer fantasy fails man's need to dream."

"It is probably too early for civilization to embrace so benign and genial a message," he wrote. "Long before D.D.T. sweeps the country there must be a general condition of well-being, a decline in the mania of technology, and some indications of a national sense of humor."

Until then, the Big Duck stands on guard. "Without the congenial presence of the Big Duck, the Technological utopias predicted for the future may end up with all answers and none of the people."

After that, there were a few more letters in the Forum and even a poem to the D.D.T.:

> To freeze a duck in building form
> To stretch a point to ponder
> Hardly an accepted norm,
> Is yet a passing wonder.

And so on, for six more stanzas. And then the Duck swam out of sight. Peter Blake's *Architectural Forum* folded, Bob Venturi & Co. got many more commissions. The shock had been produced and in time the attack on the Modern made its way to what is derisively called the popular press and best-seller lists.

But a question remains: Was Venturi serious when he said the Parthenon was a duck?

Peter Blake doesn't think so. Some ten years after the Great Duck Debate, he says: "Bob Venturi is one of the wittiest people I know, and he said that tongue-in-cheek – 100 per cent."

And the author of *God's Own Junkyard* says of the Duck: "I'm not as angry as I once was. I like that part of Long Island a lot and hate to see that kind of crap that Bob Venturi likes to see. This was a nice country and it is increasingly junked up by those who only want to make money and those who justify it with intellectual double talk," as in *Learning from Las Vegas*. "One sounds terribly pompous if one talks about the country Bob Venturi came from. But I would hate to see Tuscany, Lombardy defiled by vulgarians. . . . I certainly don't think Bob Venturi is right and I don't think Bob Venturi thinks he's right. He can't be—serious."

Bob Venturi says: "I was very serious. I wasn't saying that the Long Island Duck was as good as the Parthenon. Buildings over the centuries were sculptural images and had symbolic content. And buildings like the Parthenon became an elemental image for shelter. And so it was a duck—we said a duck was a building with a sculptural quality that is highly symbolic. Mt. Vernon is a duck standing for the father of our country."

As for Blake's opinions: "The landscape is not junk because there are a lot of billboards and ducks. But because of the quality of what's done. The actual idea can be beautiful, if not done poorly. That doesn't mean it's not the right thing to do."

For all its trouble in this, being billboarded with manifestos, the Duck can claim status as a footnote (webbed, one assumes) in the history of taste: "It's an early sign of saying symbolism is an important ingredient of architecture, which modern architecture had left out, especially historic symbolism," says Venturi. "By calling the Duck a vaild piece of architecture, a charming piece of folk architecture of our time, we were partly saying our architecture should include symbolism."

Fine. But is the head too small? "I can't criticize it so much. It's sort of a gesture and you can't take it too seriously. It's like saying an eye on a protrait by Picasso is too big."

And what of the Duck itself, the building itself, free from theory, squatting down to the daily business of selling roasters and stuffers?

In 1981 the Duck went up for sale. Mr. Kia Eshghi, an Iranian twenty-one years in this country, bought the Duck along with the ten acres it sat on and eight other buildings. The land fronts on Flanders Bay. The package cost $200,000. Mr. Eshghi was then offered $50,000 by someone else just for the Duck. (How much a pound would that be?) But he held on. The Duck was a favorite with his children, and Mr. Eshghi too, like the Duck's builder, is a man of vision. He says he put $50,000 into renovating the mother Duck and a nearby house.

Eshghi is an artist with a studio in Hampton Bays (large canvases) and he is a businessman. He wants to franchise the Big Duck. He bought the patent. He started a new company for it, "The Big Duck Landmark, Inc." He sees Big Ducks being built in places like Queens, selling take-out ducks and chickens ("Not eat-in—the Big Duck is not big enough.") As of this past fall, though, the Duck was closed, looking forlorn, the glass in its storm doors smashed, small cracks in the left wing. Eshghi is looking for a good family to run the farm and the Duck. And soon, if he succeeds, the Big Duck after fifty years and many architectural tracts, will finally hatch offspring, and the landscape, for better or worse, will be filled with Duck-Parthenons—small head, boxy body—staring down with Model T eyes on franchises with less pedigree.

And there it is: the Big Duck and the Parthenon. The Big Duck and Picasso. The Big Duck as villian in *God's Own Junkyard*. The Big Duck as an early foot soldier in the battle against Modern Architecture. The Big Duck as a Maginot line of silliness against totalitarianism. The Big Duck and fast-food franchises. That's a lot for one humble duck.

Sail on, O poultry by the roadside.

Lewis Mumford

Barbara Probst Solomon

I was just starting out, this was in the 1960s, and a magazine editor suggested that I try my hand at interviewing, he wanted a piece done on Lewis Mumford. But when I reached him, Mumford, somewhat frosty on the telephone, declined. "I never give interviews."

"Well, I've never written one — I'm not sure where one is meant to go for the facts, so maybe it's just as well."

"You don't sound like you come out of city planning?" Suddenly he sounded friendlier.

"I don't."

"I've changed my mind — in that case, come up. Don't worry about the facts, the New Yorker taught me how to handle them." Before I had a chance to tell him I would be driving up by car to Amenia, Mumford briskly gave me train information and hung up.

When I called back Mrs. Mumford answered, and she gave me specific directions. "Lewis thinks everyone takes trains, the railroad is his favorite form of trasportation."

Sharp New England late fall weather that day; their white house was set back off a dirt road, its shape molded and dominated by the rolling farmland hills and Amenia in upstate New York. Mrs. Mumford came to the door — *the beautiful Sophia Wittenberg*. Before coming up, I had immersed myself in the world of Mumford and had learned of the romantic story of their courtship. They had met in 1919 in the Village, both of them worked for the old *Dial* magazine.

While the Mumford's gave me a tour of the grounds — I was shown the red oak planted by his daughter Alison for his birthday, the asparagus beds — I was aware that Lewis Mumford was not a person to allow himself to be passively interviewed without doing some sizing up of his visitor. He said he had never granted a personal interview, and, obviously, he was undecided about this one. He threw out a test question, "Now, about Ernest Boyd — but, of course, you wouldn't know who he was?"

"No." Looking for a way in, trying to reassure him that I was on some speaking acquaintance with American cultural history, I mentioned that the grounds of my folk's summer home had been landscaped by Olmstead.

"From New England and you don't know your way to the Taconic Parkway?"

Clearly he had quizzed his wife about my second telephone call. While feigning casual aloofness, he scrutinized each detail of his interviewer's personality. This time, while presumably showing me a grove of trees, he mentioned his phamplet, *Aesthetics*. Again he waited for my reaction.

Mumford seemed almost jarringly separate from his chosen landscape . . . a man whose eyes were more visionary than visual . . .

I had done my homework, "Wasn't it published in the 1920s by Joel and Amy Spingarn in Troutbeck press?"

Mumford pointed in the distance, "The Spingarns live over that hill."

"The 20s were the heyday of the little magazines, it must have been a wonderful time to have started out as a writer?"

"Perhaps . . . or perhaps Troutbeck press was just a rich man's whim." He seemed vexed, some bitterness in his voice, as though he had just remembered an ancient unpleasantness.

Of the two, it was his wife who struck me as more at ease in her relation to the trees and shrubbery. Mumford seemed almost jarringly separate from his chosen landscape, his relation to nature, to land, struck me as abstract, a man whose eyes were more visionary than visual, more morally committed to the *idea* of nature than connected to it physically. It had often been said that Mumford hated the city and loved the country. My

impression was that he was passionately committed to the city, and therefore appalled by it, and therefore made do with the country.

We went inside and Mumford named the way I should perceive his home. "An austere place —" The large yellow kitchen, hand-adzed beams, abundance of books and good view of the trees struck me as pleasant. Perhaps Mumford meant it was more of a writer's environment; Thoreau, Emerson could have lived there, not an artist's place. One sensed that its owners had an internal, moral spatial vision — there was no room for lush, gratuitous objects of beauty.

. . . Mumford was in danger of being judged by the values of the breed he most despised, the specialists and technicians.

The most spartan part was Mumford's study. He characterized it as disorderly; I thought it unusually neat. Angled on the desk was a photograph of his son in soldier's uniform, Geddes, killed in World War II.

After we returned to the living room Mrs. Mumford excused herself. We sat down, almost formally facing one another, Mumford waiting for our conversation to begin. What had fired my imagination had been his book on Herman Melville. He wrote it at twenty-nine. There was an inner music, a quality of passion and personalness which was absent in his earlier work. "You wrote a book on Melville —"

Mumford's formal, severe graciousness vanished, suddenly he looked like a delighted small boy, and amazingly vulnerable. "I didn't realize anyone still remembered it."

I was silent. The pioneering book certainly existed for poets, writers — but perhaps not for urbanists and architects. In Mumford's salad days, good writers and vervy intellectuals aspired to become generalists; but now Mumford was in danger of being judged by the values of the breed he most despised, the specialists and technicians. He had already pointed out to me that he was neither an urbanist nor an architect. "I like to remind people that a person who investigates a crime is not a criminal. I couldn't have written my books on architecture had I been one."

"There is a quality of inner urgency both in your description of Melville, and of his novels, *Pierre* and *Moby Dick*. Were there parallels, for you, concerning your own childhood?"

Mumford was unusually wary, "I didn't read Melville until I was twenty-one — yes, perhaps there were certain parallels."

In Mumford's earlier work — *The Story of Utopias, Golden Day* — in which a pre-Civil War, more generous America is celebrated, his writing struck me as static, simplistic. We had the good society, past and future. I suspected Mumford must have been the sort of lonely child who would have preferred identifying with an imagined paradise past, rather than cope with the sullen present. But, beginning with the Melville book, he found his voice. Utopia was replaced by a prophet's darker vision: man's struggle against evil.

"What happened to you after you worked on Melville? What changed your style, your thought?"

Mumford was pensive. I had been impressed by the special vividness with which he described Melville's rage at the loss of his father, of the humiliation of being cast out in the world, constant witness to his mother's economic deprivations and his anger at being denied his birthright, an education. There were the hopeless poor, the immigrants, and the genteel types, like Melville's family, who were down on their uppers, and once had known better; proud rather than optimistic, money for them was a hidden, embarrasssing subject. With Melville in mind, I asked, "Did you have any brothers or sisters?"

"No," he hesitated, "there were some differences — I was an only child."

"Yes, that part puzzled me, because in your book you described him as though he had been one . . ." Something was askew. "You didn't have a father?" The phrase had awkwardly tumbled out of my mouth, or perhaps my unconscious had leaped ahead.

Mumford gazed at me, surprised. After a long pause he said, "Yes, I had a father." Again he hesitated, "He died before I was born." He thought over his answer, then gave me a slightly different explanation. "He was separated from my mother before I was born."

Then it flashed through my mind that the only possible explanation for all of this round-about was that Mumford had been born out of wedlock. I was disconcerted; it certainly wasn't a point I would press with a man of Mumford's stature and aloof manner. I wasn't even sure whether he was aware what I was thinking, and what had stopped me.

Mumford shifted slightly in his chair, and went back to Melville, as though we needed his presence in order to continue our conversation. "But there was no blackness in my early life — I had to imagine that part, which made it harder for me to write on him."

"Oh?"

Mumford deftly sketched in some cheerful details — walks through the city with his grandfather, a chipper Irish nurse — but if there had been no blackness, neither did Mumford convince me of plentiful happiness.

"Did you feel alienated as a child?"

"Alienated is a word of your generation," he fielded.

I said nothing, but I remembered, in Melville, he had used that work to describe Shakespeare's and Melville's relation to their time.

"No," he continued, "we were never lonely, the city was a friendly place." In that abrupt shift of tone I had come to expect when Mumford had reached a personal decision to become more direct, he added, "the city seemed drab."

"And summers?"

"Vermont," now his voice became more authentically warm, "those were meaningful summers . . ." again he hesitated. "About Melville — I did sympathize with his lying about his age during his time as cabin boy." He explained his own dislike of his job as copy boy from the *Telegram* — a job he had held when his interest had been in philosophy, and though he later had been offered other jobs on newspapers, he never again worked for the daily press.

We spoke of his own education — he had zigzagged back and forth between night and day school at CCNY. During that period he had bouts of T.B. and often had to work at odd jobs — an investigator in the dress and waist industry, a laboratory assistant with the United States Bureau of Standards. Although he took some courses at Columbia and The New School, he never got his degree. "The present emphasis on acquiring knowledge as an end in itself makes no sense. Knowledge is useless unless it is put to intelligent use. Now we have a new kind of knowledge, knowing how to get foundation grants. I see the present foundation system as essentially corrupting."

"You've done so many things, what was your real dream? Did you want to be a novelist?"

Mumford thought about that one, "A playwright."

"Did you write them?"

"Yes — long ago. I felt very akin to Hart Crane. I was also interested in the Brooklyn Bridge and I wanted to capture its symbolic quality in the theatre."

Mumford had that complicated shyness which frequently emmanates from quirky, overly intelligent people. I was quiet for a moment because I was aware that in a certain sense Mumford was reversing the truth. I had heard from poets who had seen Crane's correspondence that it was Crane who had been influenced by Mumford in his poem, and it was Mumford's book on Melville which had inspired Crane's interest in the novelist, causing him to write his memorable poem to Melville, *Elegy on a Tombstone.*

Robert Moses hardly rated a shrug, Le Corbusier he saw as authoritarian, the imposition of personal will against human needs . . .

We both had avoided a necessary part of my visit; a long list of questions on city planning. Robert Moses hardly rated a shrug, Le Corbusier he saw as authoritarian, the imposition of personal will against human needs, Patrick Geddes became trapped inside his own philosophic system, and Jane Jacob's theories were wrong. Mumford paused over Gaudi, "Overpraised — but an interesting rebellion against the mechanism of modern society."

Later, when he walked me back to the car, he admitted, "your questions on city planning bored me. But when you started out with Melville — I was touched, that meant something to me, we should have continued on him."

"On Melville? But you seemed to want to shift away from him."

"Did I do that?" He thought matters over, then replied, obliquely, as though we had been dealing with a puzzle. "Yes, but with Melville, you were on the right track." Then we said goodbye and I drove off.

Mumford's final caution impressed me. Certainly his spiritual connection was with the poets of America, Crane, Whitman and Steiglitz. Unlike the expatriates — Hemingway, Stein, Fitzgerald — men like Mumford had chosen to rebel against the aridity of the American creative climate by rediscovering our native past, taking from Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman the idea that the primary aim of society was the cultivation of the individual.

To separate the literary Mumford from the man who wrote on cities is false. In Melville, Mumford had started to develop the thesis for his subsequent major trilogy.

He wrote about *Moby Dick*: "In another sense the whale stands for practical life. Mankind needs food and light and shelter, and, with a little daring and a little patience, it gains these things from the environment: the whale that we cut up, dissect, analyze, melt down, pour into casks and distribute in cities and households is the whale of industry and science." He viewed the city as a living, traveling organism, as alive and as moving as the white whale itself.

But I was stuck, at the heart of the interview, with Mumford's passionate identification of Melville as his alter ego, and the problem of Mumford's father. Attempting to clear up the haze, I contacted several people close to Mumford and, pointblank, fired the question. By their Jamesian circumlocutions, I became convinced that my hunch was right. But the matter was not mine to pursue, and in censoring out the emotional center, my piece made no sense, and, eventually, I put it to one side. Then, this spring I read Mumford's own autobiography, in which he states he was the illegitimate son of Lewis Mack, to whom, it turned out, his friend and neighbor, Amy Spingarn, was distantly related. I remembered our walk near the shrubbery bed of red myrtle, Mumford had explained how he had bought the ajoining fourteen acres from the Spingarns because he was afraid they would be selling it to the quarry people. And I recalled his frown when he referred to Troutbeck

press as "perhaps just a rich man's whim." Had Mumford already begun to suspect that he was connected, in some vague way, to the Spingarns? And, for a moment, I remembered him quoting a phrase from *Moby Dick*: "All are born with halters round their necks. . ." He then was already at work on his autobiography. I realize, now, I must have walked in when the older man was struggling to set the young man free.

Megalithic Tables

Mario Satz

Translated by Helen R. Lane

That sacrifice is the first encounter between man and the godhead is proved by Brahmanic rites, the Christian mass, and the Aztec offering of human hearts, as well as by the offering of doves to Aphrodite at Paphos, on Cyprus, her native island according to local legend. Sacrifices, moreover, require a base, a support, usually a table, a tripod (Eleusis), or an Asiatic stupa: a structure, that is to say, sufficiently solid to permit the celebration of the ceremony whereby the finite and the infinite meet.

In this sense, the famous *taulas* of the island of Minorca (on the eastern tip of the Balearic archipelago off the coast of Spain), megalithic monuments whose mystery has yet to be solved, first made their appearance in approximately the third millenium B.C. Contemporaneous with Ur and Nineveh, these tables, nearly three meters high and carved from solid stone, constitute masterworks of sculpture, at once simple and imposing. This reference to Mesopotamian cultures is not gratuitous: corresponding to the famous seven-stage ziggurats are still-extant edifices closely associated with the *taulas*: the *talayots*, spiral structures resembling snail shells that measure up to ten meters in diameter and are nearly twenty meters high. In the wine-red Mediterranean twilight, as the cicadas intone their continuous electrical *om* and the fig trees are powdered with a fine ocher dust borne on the north wind, the visitor is quite likely to feel overwhelmed by the hidden meaning of these massive, rather bizarre monuments. What a close resemblance to the menhirs and dolmens of the European continent, and at the same time what a unique style! Of the Mediterranean islands, only Sardinia has similar megalithic remains. Here the Pelasgic gods dined, the seafaring demigods who celebrated Gaea, the Great Mother, then as now watched over by goshawks and graceful falcons outlined against the blue sky like ideograms in slow flight. Here the feet of priests — drunk on sunlight and still dripping with sea-foam — trod, in days when bronze still shaped the cultures of classic antiquity.

Did they eat human or animal victims? One of the names of the island, Melousa (Greek for *rich-in-cattle*) may perhaps be an indication that the sacrifice consisted of cows and oxen, but the fact remains that human bones have also been discovered amid the *talayots*, thus leading certain scholars to believe that such sites are necropolises, hypostyle halls which in conjunction with the tables, formed urban complexes, centers of death and resurrec-

Photos: Mario Satz

tion: cemeteries and Panic theaters perhaps. There is no need to recall the relationship between the word *mesa* (table), from the Latin *mensa*, and Latin *mens* (intelligence, mind). "I, Brahma, eat myself when I eat," says one of the *Upanishads*. Jean-Jacques Rousseau maintained that it was by way of fire, used to cook food, that mankind passed from nature to culture — an idea that has been taken up once again in our own century by the brilliant anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. In like manner, man passes from the human to the superhuman by way of sacrifice, experiencing death before the fact, giving himself a foretaste of it amid altars and stone enclosures, as though it were imperative to leave the trace of an ascent, of a flight, on the permanence of stone (as did Mohammed in the Mosque of Jerusalem, for example), to serve as a reminder that man's posture as a species is a proudly erect one.

The *taulas* or tables are doubles of man, symbols of his biological cross. On them the remains offered to heaven were left, borne upward to the sun by birds of prey in swift, powerful claws. There are no letters, numbers, or notches to corroborate our impression, but do not the climate, the hour, the moss that forms little whorls in the pores of the stone suggest this? Although no ashes or charred remains were found here, the recurrent theme of bones is curious: they also appear in the *navetas*, the third element of the Minorcan megalithic triad. A sort of low house, with narrow openings, as a general rule they are not found together with the *taulas* and the *talayots* and yet they reveal the same style. The discovery of traces or signs of fire would suggest a parallel with the funeral pyres of India, but to entertain such a conjecture would be to venture too far from the known facts, even though the Pelasgians or primitive Greeks were also Indo-Europeans.

The Tables of the Law, the Knights of the Round Table and the Grail, the Smaragdine Table of Hermes Trismegistus, and by extension all the tables of the earth, evoke and prolong the memory of these megalithic tables, bringing us together round the mystery of food and sacrifice, life and death. Contemplating these *taulas*, the traveler thus contemplates remains of his own self, the prehistory of a dream that is not yet ended.

Berliner Chronik

Juan Goytisolo

Translated by Helen R.Lane

To the outsider, even a brief stay in Berlin is above all an invitation to engage in fruitful reflection on space. Razed by the war, divided in two by the irregular and obsessive trace of an absurd wall, the former capital of the Reich and of the more modest and interesting Weimar Republic has lost its center of gravity and, in the western sector at least, offers that outsider's eye a vista of vacant lots, woods, surfaces overgrown with weeds and brush, empty, deserted areas: a bizarre ecological paradise. From the elevated train crossing Kreuzberg — crowded with punks with coxcombs or hedgehog hairdos and manifestly prolific Turkish immigrants — the reader of Alfred Doblin, Walter Benjamin, or the young Nabokov discovers to his amazement that meadowlands and open country have emerged in areas once densely populated and full of life and activity. The memorable hustle and bustle and effervescence of the Anhelter Bahnhof seem to have vanished like a mirage: vegetation has covered the railroad tracks, the immense lobby and the train platforms have become sand pits, and the nearby river port is now a garden. Like Pompeii or Palmyra, the Tiergarten and Potsdamerplatz districts in the center of town are insidiously turning us into archaeologists and scholars. But its ruins do not go back two millennia: however unlikely it may seem, they are not even half a century old.

To arm ourselves with a map of the old Berlin, take the open-air elevator up to the lookout tower built next to an anti-atomic shelter, and from there — in a Rockers' bar where beer and hashish are consumed together in prodigal quantities — survey the panoramic view that takes in the gray line of the wall and the two halves of the devastated city is not only a direct invitation to mental breakdown and schizophrenia: it is a motley, dreamlike spectacle that epitomizes, without the need for hallucinogens, the prodigious historical unreality in which we live. We will search in vain for the buildings and monuments that figure on the grid squares of the map: the Air Ministry; the Gestapo Headquarters; the hotels and residential blocks around the station. We will find only expanses of grass and sand, the face of a ruined, blackened colonnade, lots full of parked trucks, trailers, and jalopies, plots of ground used to train novice drivers, buildings left miraculously unharmed and today occupied by communes, and beyond the wall that will not heal and the motionless nightmare of its searchlights, lookout posts, and mine fields, new neutralized spaces and monotonous cubes of glass and cement that, to the left of Unter den Linden, follow one upon the other in the direction of the Alexanderplatz.

The war and the postwar period have cleared out the teeming mass of street people that once inspired wonderful Berlin chronicles: the fecund chaos of their gestures, their endless turmoil, their pitiless struggle for life. The street as described by Döblin and Isherwood was not only their refuge and vital element, but also, as in every city not "cleaned up" by the boss-state or by a sudden, gigantic hecatomb, that "womb of life in creation and movement" from which, as Elie Faure astutely observed, spirituality and artistic and literary invention always spring. On top of this intricate, imbricated, precarious, expressive space there lies today another one, vast and uninhabited, left to become a lonely wasteland: ruins, rubble, excavations that lay bare the swampy land on which the city was built. The well-known slogan of Paris students in May of '68: "Down with paving stones — a beach instead" is here a reality. After a walk through the now-vanished topography traced by Benjamin, the frustrated reader returns home with fine sand all over his shoes.

Strolling along the edge of the gardens and heavily wooded areas of the Tiergarten toward Potsdamerplatz is a notable and more or less unique experience. Time has covered the defunct official Berlin, like a drunken Noah, with a green carpet of compassion and oblivion. On the façade of the headquarters of the Spanish diplomatic mission, above the front balcony — an ideal setting for charismatic appearances and vertical salutes —, the yoke and arrows of the Falange and an ugly Francoist escutcheon are still visible, and the visitor gratefully contemplates its rows of windows, blind and gummy with sleep, its stained and pockmarked walls, symbols indifferently declining and falling amid the vegetable splendor. Following a footpath half overrun with grass — alongside useless water faucets and ridiculous drains —,

the Berlin literary stage set succumbs beneath the impact of the incredible real image: the shabby Japanese Embassy and its courtyard are now used as a humble sheep farm; the solid structure of a bunker barely resists the asphyxiating embrace of a tangle of brush, ivy, and ferns; creeping vines and trees thrive on the balconies of a jungle-like Greek legation in which the only credible ambassador would be Tarzan. The work of deciphering the urban palimpsest results in a fragmented, distorted vision of reality: at times it is sheer Surrealism.

I remember that years ago, in Tijuana, I had a similar impression: I had walked for hours in the rectilinear streets lined with an endless conglomeration of bars, cockfighting pits, jai alai courts, shows topless and shows bottomless, taxi-dance places, offices of shyster lawyers specializing in divorces and tax evasion, amid a crowd of hustlers, prostitutes, mariachis, and bleached blondes from the high society of San Diego and Los Angeles disguised in mantillas and high combs to attend a *corrida* in which El Cordobés was fighting, when I suddenly came upon a genuine Marxist-Leninist bookstore, well-stocked with the works of Mao, Fidel, and Che. I went inside — the door was open and there was not a soul in sight — and as I was struggling to make some sense out of the layout of the place, a pink-cheeked individual suddenly appeared, as in "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" — cheerily singing in Catalan. Seconds later, before I had had time to recover from my shock of surprise, two young *mestizas,* with long braids and melodious accents, peeked in to ask the owner of that incredible establishment "if he had any little prints of Mesopotamia." I confess that when I stepped back out into the street, I felt as dizzy as though I had drunk, on a stupid bet, an entire bottle of Chivas Regal.

I was overcome by the same feeling of *dépaysement* and unreality as I walked back to my apartment in Kreuzberg when, on going past the only intact building in a wild, rustic expanse, I heard through an open window a voice well-known to me, that of Abdelhakim Hafez, singing "Risala men taht el ma": a sentimental Egyptian ditty resounding in the heart of a central European residential district that had first been transformed into a huge vacant lot and then into a forest preserve. Such a concatenation of improbabilities and absurdities could happen only in the delirious and paradigmatic setting of a Berlin at once forever gone and tangible, prehistoric and postnuclear.

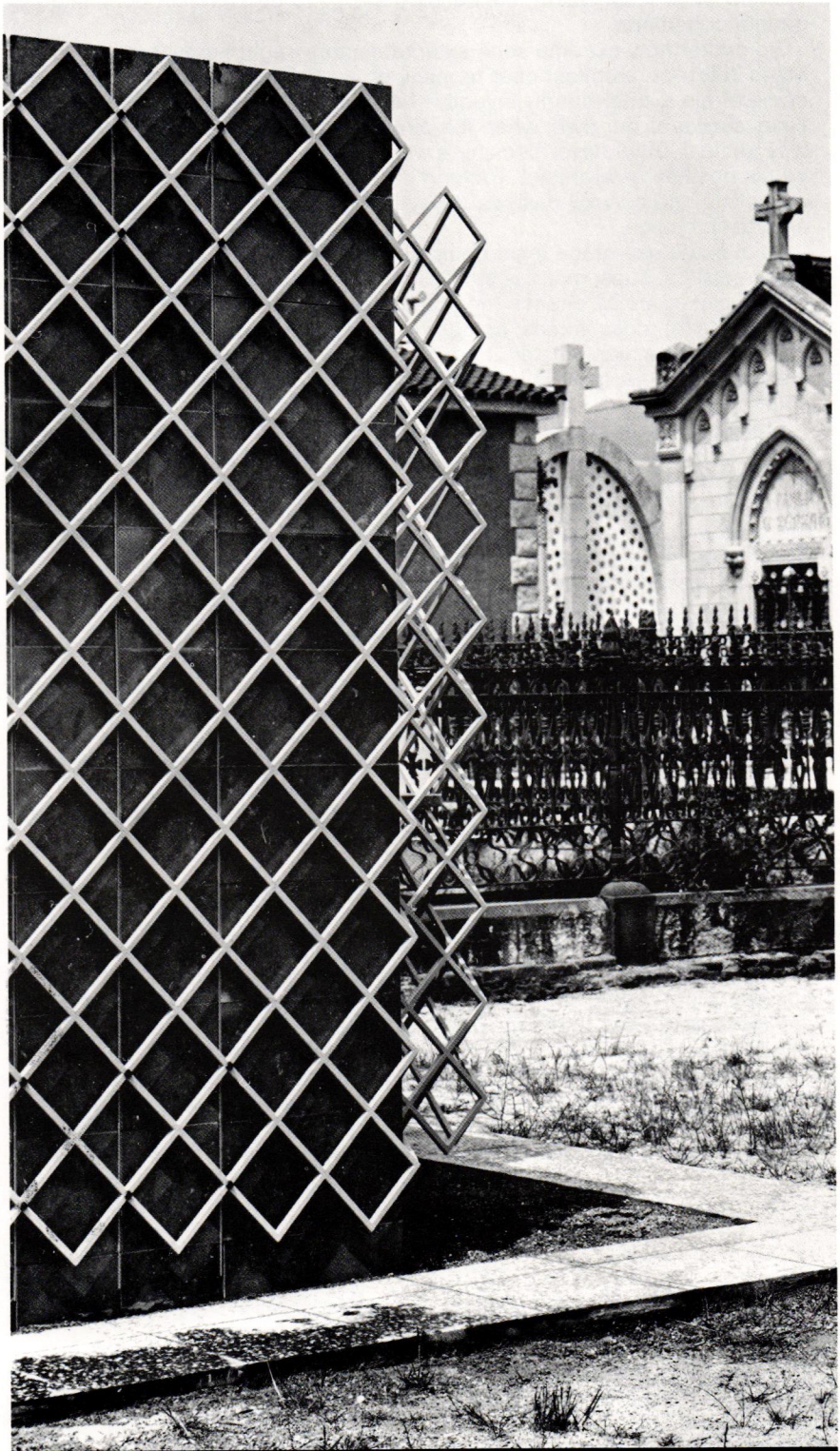
Kreuzberg is in point of fact a microcosm that in its own way illustrates the universal absurdity: alongside the dazzlingly lighted buildings housing the Springer press group the dividing wall zigzags past, completely covered with subversive daubings. Buildings occupied by anarchist communes — recognizable by the posters hanging from their windows, their gaudy murals, and occasionally black flags with skull and crossbones — overlook the watchtowers, barbed wire fences, ditches, and chevaux de frise of the sanitary cordon that surrounds the eastern sector of the city. In similar fashion, a bunch of immigrant children have recreated an Anatolian décor for themselves and are piling straw on a cart in a little meadow surrounded by barricades, half a dozen yards distant from the frontier drawn as a consequence of Yalta and Potsdam. Here, signs written in Turkish warn the unwary that the oil-streaked waters of the Spree belong to the other side: anyone who ventures to swim in them runs the risk of being met with bullets fired by the guards of the "popular democracy" that rules on the opposite shore. Over there, mysterious streetcar tracks emerge as though by magic from the sand and disappear, with stunning unreality, at the foot of the wall.

The space of Berlin is a rigorous superposition of strata: the lively and the exuberant world of Frank Biberkopf — the culture broth in which it lives — remains buried beneath that razed, aseptic territory in which the dethroned capital is today encamped. The present belongs to ecologists and city planners: green belts, open spaces. The alternative-life-style communes and immigrant neighborhoods have cropped out on the surface like an after-effect of the cataclysm: the survivors of this catastrophe look upon them as through they were inhabitants of another planet. The chaotic, creative, feverish Berlin of the '20s would seem today to be a mere fabrication had the admirable narrative art of that era not taken upon itself the task of picturing its existence for us, and had it not, through its chronicles and novels, successfully laid claim, in the face of history and its miseries, to the ultimate victory of literature.

New Work—Barcelona

José Llinás

Translated by Ronald Christ



"The fence becomes the strongest part of the composition . . . in determining the tomb's appearance by concentrating the composition at its own limits, my design corresponds to that of most older tombs in the cemetery."

An architect might be defined as a professional whose ultimate goal is to endow a building with perceptible identity or to make that identity emerge from among the sum of variables that come to bear on it: the construction, use, history, economics, etc. Many times, however, a building is overwhelmed by these pressures, inevitably becoming an instrument of one or all of them. With no other justification, the building seems to be a project dominated by certain conditions.

No matter how extreme such external factors might have been for José María Jujol—an architect dear to many of us—the result was always the outcome of his extraordinarily inventive talent and his personal character. In times similar to our own, when the direction that architecture ought to take was unclear, Jujol never became a wonder-struck spectator, never abdicated his position as architect. Lacking or hardly equiped with even a minimum of stylistic and cultural devices, he built—and he transformed building into an artistic choice.

Jujol made use of the most unusual materials in order to embody his ideas—dishes, cups, matress springs (as reinforcement in walls), soot, stones picked up by chance (he could inspect them on the way to a construction site), dolls' heads, cardboard boxes, strips of gauze soaked in plaster—and he manipulated them all with the ease of a child playing with meaningless objects, only to transform them into something imbued with spirit and life.

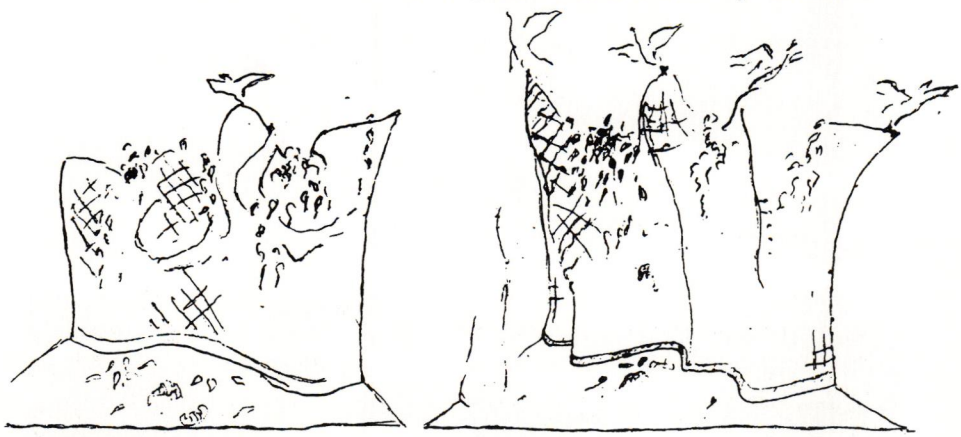
Erasing the interval between conception and execution—when the drafting paper either winds up elaborately blotted or, just the opposite, returns to its initial blankness—Jujol was able to suspend the passing of time and this may be what distinguishes and empowers his architecture. In that interval, like the flash from a camera, he could fix on the earth a complete image—petrified, frozen and smiling. As a result, some of his wrought-iron railings look like wind-tossed ribbons suddenly stilled; Casa Negre's gallery like a carriage surprised in its journey across the building's facade; and Casa Planells, half way between dream and reality, like a building that you expect, at the next turn of your head for another look, to have changed shape.

Finally, when examined from today's point of view and considered within the economic limitations within whose compass he had to work (given his usually modest commissions), Jujol's architecture and professional attitude—heterodox and idiosyncratic, basically centered in the concrete and immediate—make us realize that as someone charged with molding the formless and giving visible shape to architecture through human means, the architect and his effort are still worthwhile, still possible.

II

I have a special affection and admiration for both the work and professional attitude of José María Jujol. I don't understand the lack of attention paid to him, the slight regard or carelessness with which his buildings are treated, any more than I can understand why Barcelona isn't almost entirely filled with houses designed by Jujol, or by architects like him.

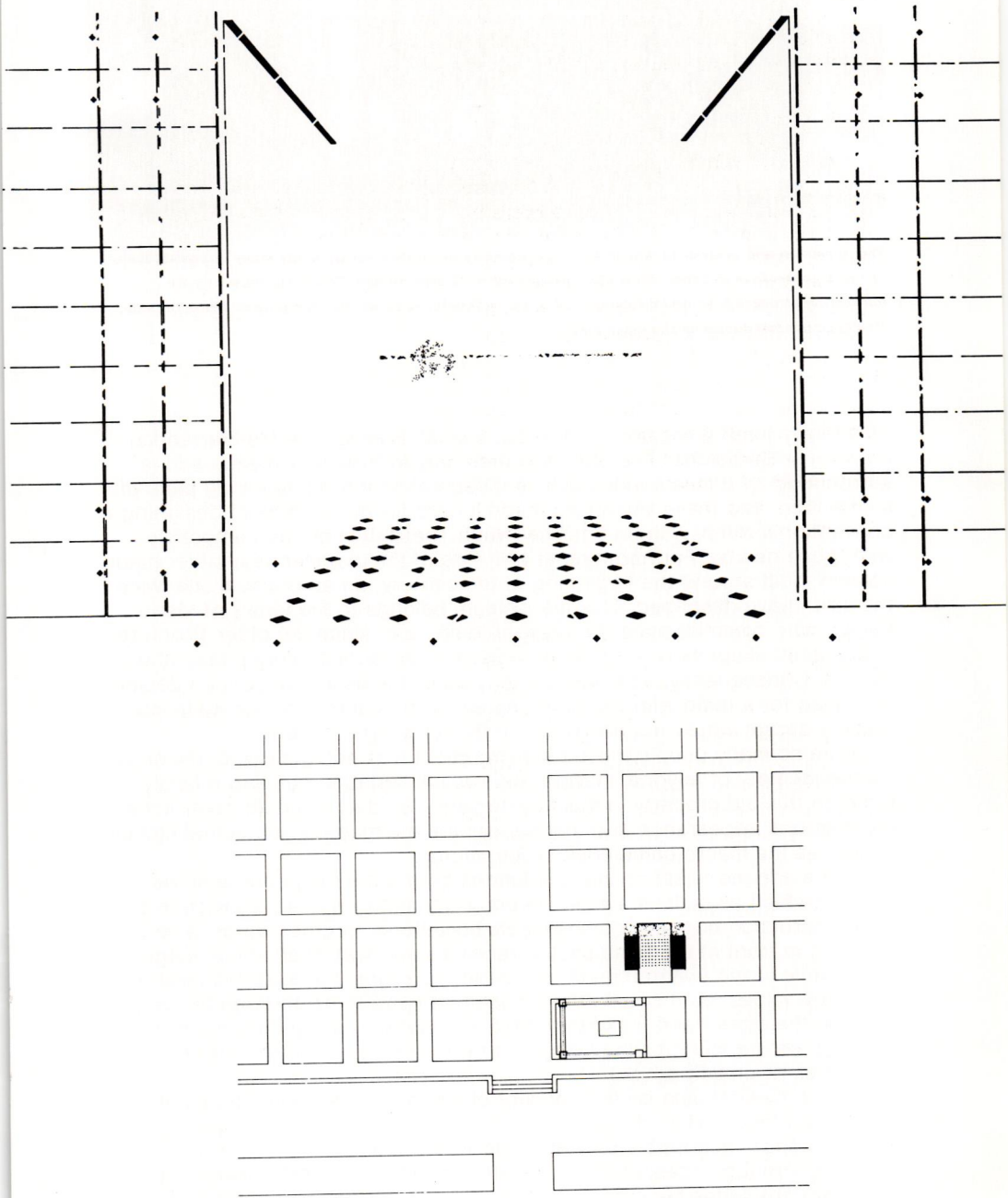
But in spite of my great love for Jujol and his work, I'm certain that he has little bearing on what I do, specifically on this tomb. Jujol had a special quality, a kind of astonishing innocence, that let him work with a minimum of cultural interference. In contrast, the greatest difficulties in my work—and



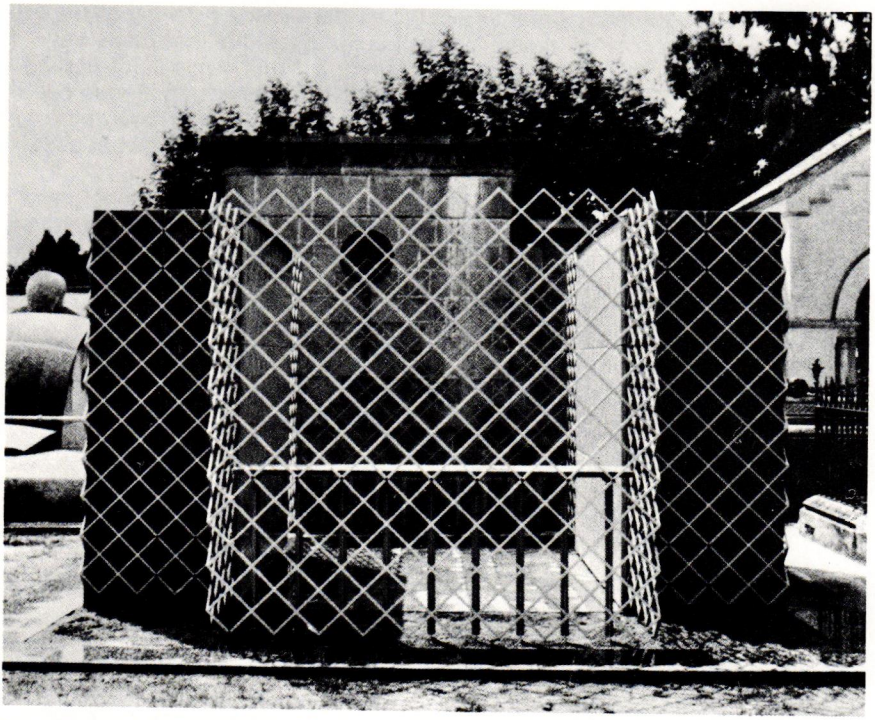
Early sketch for Page's tomb

this may be true for many other architects as well—result from my attempt to rise above, to shake off all those layers of cultural residue that come between reality and our created representation of it. Thus, while Jujol worked from a cultural base that left him free to develop his surprising artistic capability, in my situation (which, again, may correspond to that of many others), ninety per cent of the work I do focuses on determing precisely what base from which to work.

In this sense, the reproduced sketch is only one among many that I drew while working out a sort of ingenuous symbolism and, for that reason, it may have a certain Jujolian character; but I'd say that it doesn't have any particular signifiance for the final result. I only wish there were some connection between Jujol's architecture and this family tomb, but I tend to think, that on the one hand, it's more of a surprising coincidence for those who take an interest in Jujol as well as the tomb and, on the other, it's that I, as the tomb's designer, also have an obvious admiration for Jujol.



Site plan and schematic drawing, Masnou Cemetery



The pavement and exterior facing of the crypt is made from slabs of gray, sandy stone quarried locally at San Vicente. In both cases, the slabs measure 22 × 22 centimeters. The fence bounding the tomb is constructed from metal tubing in 14 × 14 millimeter squares. Painted gray on the outer side, the fence is deep purple on the inner side.

III

This family tomb is located in Masnou, a small town on the Mediterranean coast near Barcelona. The plot measures only four-by-four meters and is surrounded by a meter-wide pavement separating it from adjoining plots of similar size, and these limitations made it hard for me to think of designing a conventional tomb, with an enclosed vault, that still might be compatible with those nearby. Furthermore, at one side of the plot stands another mausoleum, built around the beginning of the century, on an unusual site twice the size I have described. This mausoleum belongs to the family of Mario Pagés, who commissioned the present tomb; and, since the older structure is beautiful, I kept its relation to my work in mind during every phase of the project. Consequently, after taking many other things into account, I decided on a plan for a tomb with a vacant interior, with neither roof nor walls, so that my design would not encroach on that existing structure.

Unlike so many people these days, my client was not looking to immortalize the memory of anyone. Instead, he was interested in building a family tomb on this old property in this tiny cemetery so that he could control the architectural appearance and thereby escape the massive sepulchral niches as well as the macro-cemeteries of Barcelona.

What made me reject so many solutions during the long course of the project (which, as built, is almost absurdly elemental) was my conviction that the construction ought to *communicate* something. In other words, a visitor standing in front of the tomb should receive some sort of affecting image. For a while I tried (without much conviction) designs that asserted symbolic or stagey values, but I couldn't see myself carrying those through to completion. On the other hand, I experimented with designs using devices or elements of architecture for the living, but these seemed fated to look like mockeries or ghastly smirks.

I based my final plan on the concept of demarking the boundarues of a space, and this is what characterizes the structure as a tomb, a space in whose interior—accessible only at the time of burial, locked afterwards—occurs that strange, indescribable phenomenon which is death. Defining this boundary, the fence becomes the strongest part of the composition. Yet, I really mean it when I say that in determining the tomb's appearance by concentrating the composition at its own limits, my design corresponds to that of most older tombs in this cemetery.

Affective Gravity

On an Unassuming Exhibit in the Ontario Science Center

Richard Mikita

When we came around the corner there were two, perhaps three, people already caught in the orbit of this peculiar exhibit. Maybe the sound pulled us in or the seeming simplicity of the thing.

> *One by one from a track at the lip they come, like babies out of the birth canal, mirroring metal spheres, looping around an eggshell-white funnel for long seconds — when another comes, and coming closer acts momentarily as the other's axis, until they kiss and flee into eccentric orbits only to return to the nearest of missed contacts.*

Standing around, sideling by and between strangers, we peered down through clear plastic at something that looked the same from all sides and scarcely exciting from any. Yet the sound of the metal balls was so strangely compelling that from behind you I noticed your head beginning to sway just slightly to the throbbing.

> *Continuing their relationship, conserving the effect of their brief encounter, they spin as if there were really some intent in their coursing, some personal force guiding their movement and not something apart and abstract.*

With so much to see here at the Science Center, we began to feel restless standing in this corridor spending time over something placed, like the unremarkable paintings in a gallery's stairwell, simply to suggest what one has really come to see. So we moved on into the wider space, more varied light, more crowded, contending sights and sounds of the main floor.

> *Before long many are whirling across the whiteness, and there no longer seems to be any special relationship between the two that touched.*

The tour around the Center makes a good day and carried us from amusement to amazement to boredom and back more than a few times.

> *Apparently under their own power, the spheres loop lazily along the face of the slope, gradually nearing the bottom of the funnel. From outside the plastic sphere that encloses all of them and their motion, but not all of their sound or reflected light, they are following the same fate, giving example — as the little card implies — to the inexorable effect of gravity.*

Down covered walkways wide with windows and alive with miked-in sound from the squirrels and birds outside, we traced our way from exhibit to exhibit, following our separate inclinations, expecting to meet sometime later.

> *Yet as the spheres gradually near the opening at the bottom of the funnel, they seem to cling sadly, madly to life. Like a family in crisis, they orbit around a fixed point — the unspoken focus of their energetic anxiety. So close do they come, but almost never now do they touch. Faster*

and longer than seems reasonable, they whirl around the opening that is the end of their spinning, until one mindlessly whips itself into mercury, spreads over our eyes, and is gone.

Now she was nowhere in sight, and there was no message at the desk. The exhibits which had seemed small islands of wonder — like that one with water spilling through a strobe's light to slow in mid air, stop, and even rush impossibly upward — now moused me in a maze. I spun around in the crowd searching faces, rushed down one aisle, turned into another to trace a path I thought she might have taken.

Friction, like the abrasive awareness of time passing,
proves insufficiently adhesive to stop the spinning,
stay the moment, support the spent body against
the discredited force of Newtonian gravity
or stand it above the indifferent opening
sloped in the accepted
but ungraspable
Einsteinian
spacetime
continuum.

Finally, I opened a door onto a narrow corridor and found her following the last sphere into the bin. She said she had been waiting for what seemed like a long time.

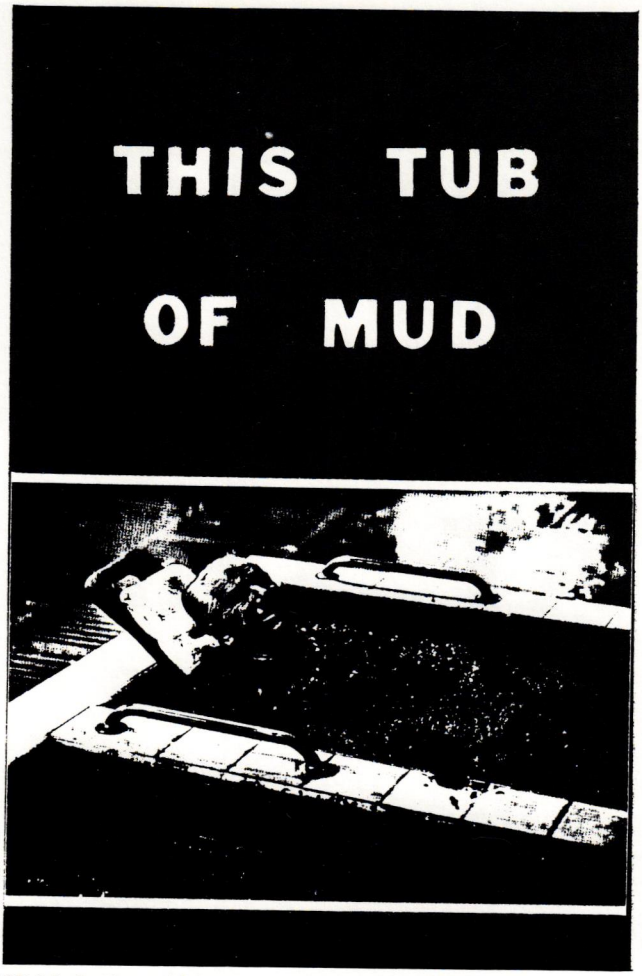
Paul Zelevansky

SHADOW ARCHITECTURE AT THE CROSSROADS

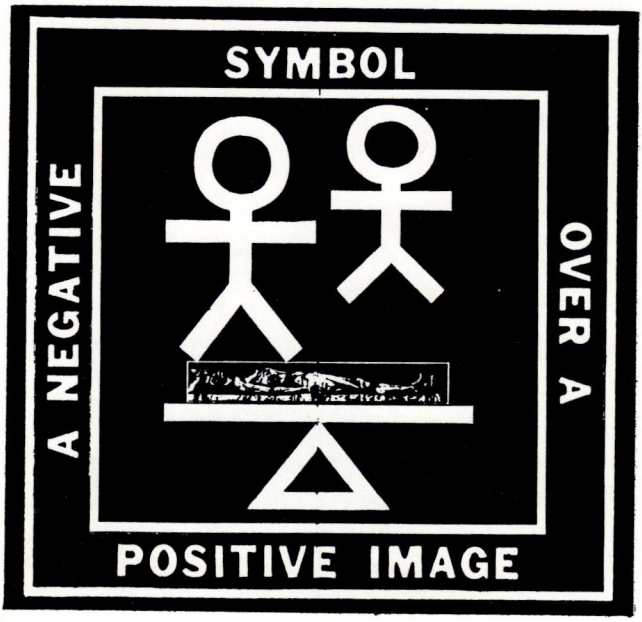
An Informal Tour
of The Crossroads:

9:00 10:00 11:00 A.M.____

3:00 4:00 5:00 P.M.____

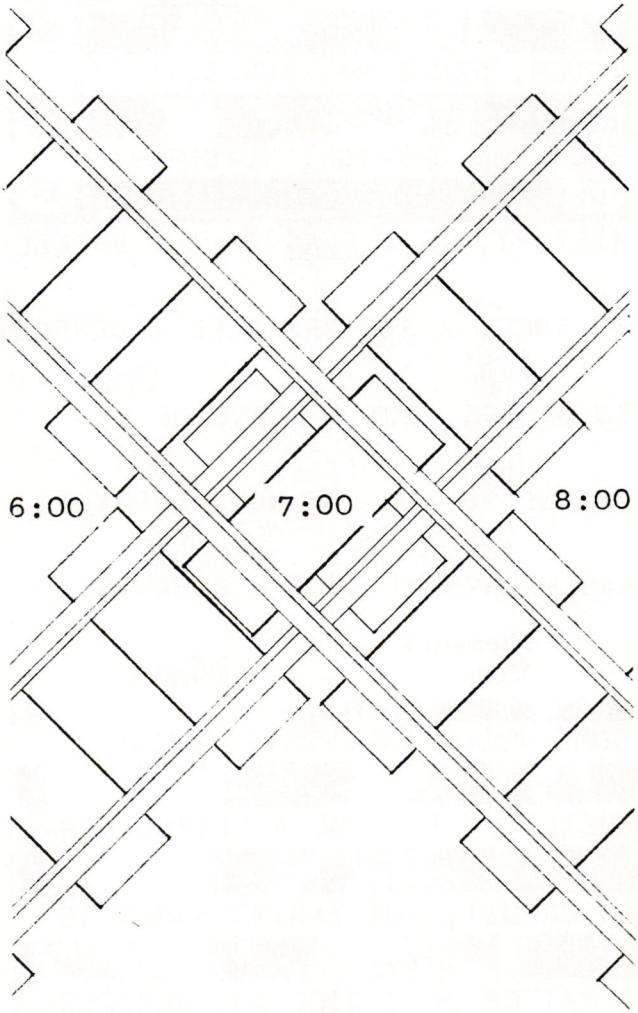


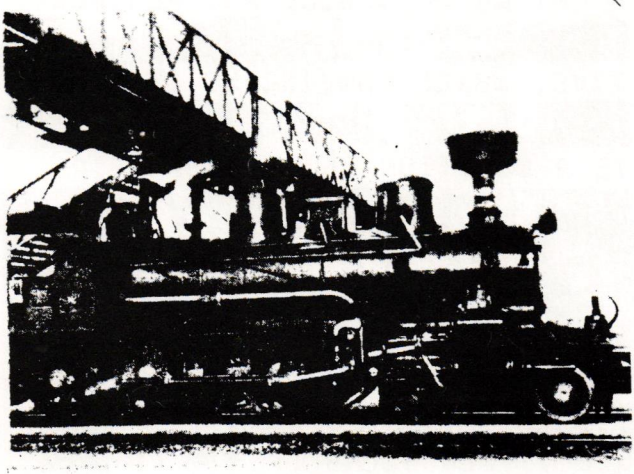
THIS TUB OF MUD.
HOW TO DESCRIBE IT?
A LITTLE DISGUSTING,
A LITTLE GOOD FOR
YOU. JUST LIKE LIFE,
YES?



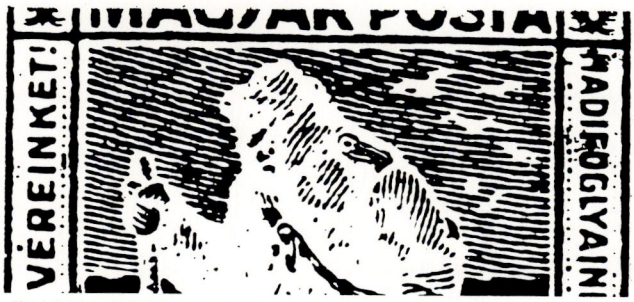
THE CROSSROADS

THE CROSSROADS IS A CITY WHICH RIDES THE RAILS OF A SPECIAL DESTINY.
LYING AT THE CENTER OF A VAST CONTINENTAL RAILWAY SYSTEM, EVERYONE WHO TRAVELS BY TRAIN, FROM THE MOUNTAINS IN THE NORTH TO THE SWAMPS IN THE SOUTH, FROM THE CROWDED CITIES OF THE EAST TO THE CROWDED BEACHES OF THE WEST, EVERYONE MUST PASS THROUGH AND BE COUNTED.





SIGHT



THIS CITY, LYING AS IT DOES AT
THE INTERSECTION OF SIGHT AND
TOUCH, SENSE AND SENSIBILITY,
FACT AND OPINION, RUMOUR AND
HISTORY, IS A FLAG IN THE BREEZE

TO SOME, A RUG TRAMPLED UNDERFOOT
TO OTHERS, BUT A MEANS OF EX-
CHANGE TO ALL. BY NOW, EVERYONE
HAS NEWSPRINT ON THEIR HANDS.

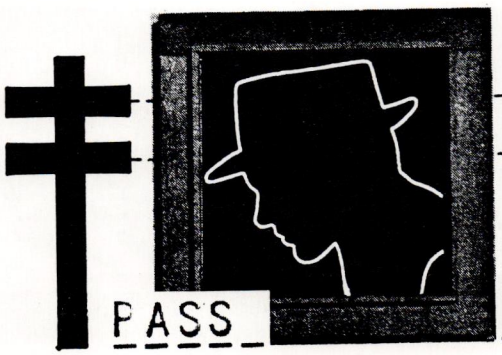
Plusieurs
Viele
Many

SOME WOULD CALL THIS SOCIAL
MOBILITY, TO RIDE A FLYING CARPET
ON CREDIT, BUT TAKING SIDES IS
A MATTER OF CHOICE AND PERSPEC-
TIVE, WHILE CONVINCING OTHERS
IS A QUESTION OF SALESMANSHIP.

SEE IT FOR YOURSELF.

THE TELEPHONE GAME

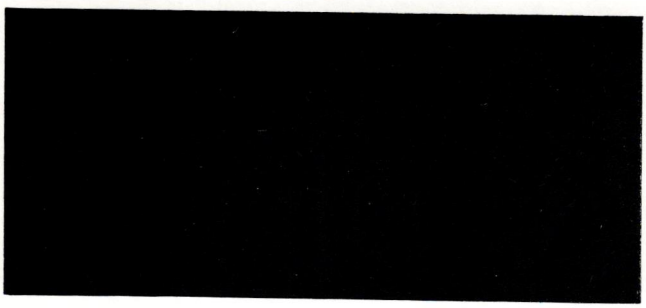
IF AT THIS TIME, AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION, EXPERIENCE BEGINS TO FUNCTION LIKE A VERSION OF THE TELEPHONE GAME WHERE THE MESSAGE CHANGES IN DRAMATIC AND SUBTLE WAYS ON ITS WAY AROUND THE CIRCLE, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT PEOPLE WOULD WANT TO PASS WHAT THEY HEAR, THROUGH WHAT THEY SEE, THROUGH WHAT THEY SAY, SINCE THAT IS THE FORM OF WHAT THEY REMEMBER.....



PASS IT ON.

WE ARE
THE PIPELINE
FROM COAST TO COAST.

THERE ARE TWO ENDS TO THIS PIPE-LINE: ONE OPEN, ONE CLOSED. THE PEOPLE LIVING IN THE CLOSED END SPEND THEIR TIME STUDYING THE WALLS AND IMAGINING THE SURFACE ON THE OTHER SIDE. WHILE THE PEOPLE AT THE OPEN END MOVE PLACIDLY TOWARDS AN APPARENT SPECK OF LIGHT PROMISED IN THE DISTANCE. IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE SPACE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IS SO VAST AND FULL OF MISUNDERSTANDING, WHEN ONE SIDE'S OUTLET IS A SOCKET IN THE WALL (CALLED THE MEDIA) AND THE OTHER'S INLET, A MOMENT OF CALM ALONG AN ENDLESSLY ERODING EDGE (CALLED THE BEACH).



IT IS THE THUNDER OF THE COVENANT VERSUS THE STILLNESS OF THE COVE; A RAT RACE IN A LABYRINTH, OR A TIGHTROPE WALK ACROSS THE VALLEY. AND WHEN THE FRUSTRATION AT ONE END POLLINATES THE VOID AT THE OTHER, OR A SHAFT OF SUNLIGHT IN THE OPEN DIVERTS THE DIGGING ON THE OTHER SIDE, THERE IS DANGER OF COLLAPSE IN THE TUNNEL AT LARGE. BUT THAT, GIVEN TWO ENDS, IS THE WAY IT GOES.

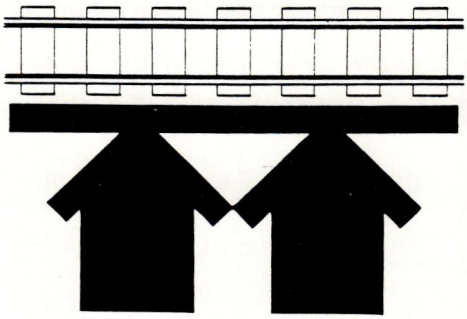
THE UNIVERSE

12:00 1:00 2:00

THE METAPHORICAL SHAPE AND CONTENT OF THIS TOUR, THIS CITY, THIS UNIVERSE IS NEITHER ROUND NOR FLAT, BUT A TEST TUBE FULL OF CIRCULATING MICROBES HEATED BY A BURNER ON THE BOTTOM END. LIKEWISE THERE ARE TWO EXITS TO THIS PIPETTE-- ONE AN ESCAPE, THE OTHER A TRAP (A CUL-DE-SAC)-- WHICH IS ALL A LITTLE BITTER, A LITTLE TASTY. JUST LIKE LIFE, YES? BUT, WHILE TAKING SIDES MAY BE A MATTER OF CHOICE AND PERSPECTIVE AND CONVINCING OTHERS THE TRUE HEART OF SALESMANSHIP, THIS IS NO SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY. THERE IS NOTHING BUT TIME, RISING AND FALLING DEPARTING AND ARRIVING, TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

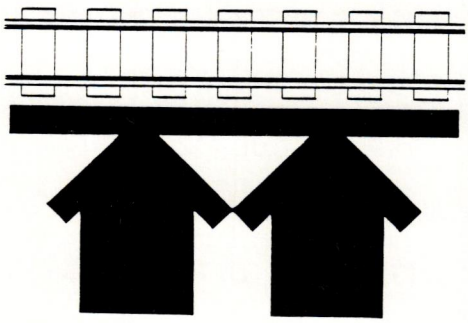
IF YOU GO . . .

After reaching the Continent in the standard way via the private carrier of your choice, you will be ready to begin your trip.



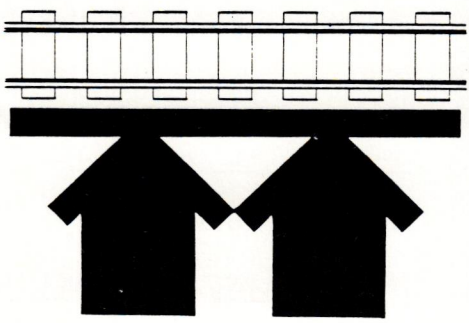
Hotel de Encrucijada

Consult your guidebooks and the previous tips, but beyond that the details of the itinerary are up to you.



Albèrgo di Crocìcchio

Try and remain open to the distance between sentiment and caution, leaving the door slightly ajar and you will enjoy your stay. For additional information contact Crossroads Travel.



Hotel Eisenbahnkreuzung

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Arpilleras:
Free Spaces in a Country Called Chile

Ricardo Willson A.
Translated by Adrienne L. Martín

Right now I'm recalling a story by Julio Cortázar (apparently autobiographical, but it doesn't make any difference) whose protagonist returns to France after a long trip to Nicaragua. He settles down in his Paris apartment with cognac in hand and slippered feet. Something about the drawn curtains blocking out most of the light reminds him of the slides he took of paintings done by the peasants and villagers of the island of Solentiname. The protagonist had been lured there by the invitation of a priest who, besides officiating at masses where prayers consisted of the parishioners' accounts of daily experiences, also writes poetry and is known to some as Ernesto Cardenal.

But now our protagonist is submerged in, or, better yet, plumbing the depths of his memory with the help of a slide projector that casts colors and lines onto the wall in the shape of cows grazing on vast countryside . . . almost like a constellation of stars. In the next slide a dark-skinned man with a machete is glimpsed between stalks of sugar cane. The hand presses the button once again to show a group of men in white pants, naked from the waist up, sharing bread and wine as in *The Last Super.*

The hand reaches for the button again, and the protagonist emerges from the darkness of a picture into the flat light on the wall. This tells him that he needs to load more slides into the machine, and that it's a good opportunity for his wife to refill his glass of cognac. Then he settles down again in front of the scenes projected on the wall.

The hand innocently presses the button. The images on the wall incorporate the greens, blues, and pinks of bucolic countrysides with the beginning of a blood-red sunset overhead. No more countryside after that as the figure of a boy begins to emerge, wearing a white shirt and tennis shoes, running through the streets of Buenos Aires. The men in the customary car close in on him from behind. Then the car disappears leaving a cloud of burnt gasoline, uncertainty, and expectation in the street, or rather on this attentive spectator's wall.

A woman tied onto a stretcher appears behind the car that has swallowed up the boy at a street corner. She's surrounded by several men who obviously are not doctors. The protagonist skips over this scene quickly, knowing it so well that he finds it abominable. He pushes the button again, trying to erase the horror from his mind.

But it's impossible. All the images conjured by his "imagination" reveal the terrifying tableau of several Latin American countries. While the paintings of the Solentiname peasants show the diaphanous, everyday, pastoral, and concrete surface, like the prayers in poet-priest Ernesto Cardenal's masses, other truths circulate underneath at the same time . . . well, we really already know what circulates underneath these lands—something very similar to death. Something like a spell that makes the protagonist jump from his chair to vomit up his disgust before his French wife's perplexity. She can't understand what's is going on in her husband's mind and stomach, and says something like: "Your slides are very nice, dear."

With this brief journey, this superimposition of images viewed from the mental perspectives of two such different imaginations—one Latin American and one European—I wish to enter into the two dimensions reached in our country by one single product: ARPILLERAS.

Perhaps it isn't so unusual, in a rigid and authoritarian system like the one reigning in Chile today, to see how something "so simple" can provoke two such different attitudes in one country's imagination. For some, arpilleras are "slices of life," "pieces of cloth embroidered with a painful reality," "folk art into which peoples' truths are poured." For others they constitute a part of "subversive politics" destined to "discredit the government"—especially abroad—as stated recently in a Santiago newspaper. It's clear that both attitudes coincide on one point: the arpilleras don't go unnoticed. At present nobody is immune to them; what inspires admiration in some causes indignation in others. However this may be, and perhaps because of it, arpilleras continue to be a living manifestation of our common sensibility. A free space opened by female artists within their confines. Chronicles of solidary and deferred truth. Remnants displaying women's popular creativity. In short, there

are as many definitions as there are motives for arpilleras in Chile. One thing is certain: what they mean to some is diametrically opposed to what they mean to others. This is precisely what makes arpilleras so prodigious they show us two realities in a single "illustration". It's as if we were speaking two different languages in a single cultural-linguistic space. And, as in the case of the protagonist and his wife in Cortázar's story, here the arpilleras change some people's reality while representing and giving dimension to that of others.

FRAGMENTS OF A SINGLE HISTORY

We would have to delve very deeply into our grandmothers' memories to learn how far back we can trace the origins of this women's art. This would be the equivalent of finding out whether or not their great-great-grandmothers made arpilleras. Seeing that this is most likely of secondary importance, it should be pointed out that arpilleras are an art form without a precise history, a form that travels from the country to the city, without preferring either. In other words, a form as semi-urban as it is semi-rural. Arpilleras are done in cities, in the outskirts, and beyond: in Isla Negra to be exact, facing the Pacific where Neruda lived until his death. And where his house with its great masks, locomotives, and bells became famous, where the most traditional arpilleristas (arpillera makers) live.

Photos Miguel Sayago

Seeing as we're talking about the arpilleristas of Isla Negra, we should mention another famous poet who also lives there: Nicanor Parra, who claims to have been the one who baptized this folk art when it didn't even have a name. He says that when his sister was gathering pieces of fabric and sewing them onto a piece of rough cloth with a needle and woolen thread, she asked him: "Nicanor, what would you call these 'things'?" And without thinking about it very much he had said: "Arpilleras, I guess."

So this is how the cultivation of this "art without a history" is linked to a woman who is indeed a part of our national history through her poetry and songs: Violeta Parra, author of *Gracias a la vida* (Thanks to Life), and the wise sister-mother of the poet Nicanor.

These multicolored tapestries, known today by everyone as arpilleras—their name deriving from the Spanish word for burlap or sackcloth—were exhibited by Violeta Parra in the Louvre when this art born within the "most hardened segments" of the population provided less curiosity in Chile than in France.

It was precisely in Isla Negra in 1972, when the arpilleristas had practically abandoned their work, that the Chilean painter Nemesio Antúnez, then Director of the National Fine Arts Museum, arrived to explore not the sea, but the villagers' houses. Afterwards he urged them to display their works in the museum. For the first time the arpilleras broke out of their confines and entered the salons of academic art.

In spite of their timid appearance in the galleries, the arpilleras continued to develop. No longer could they be admired only in Neruda's Isla Negra. They traveled to the working class neighborhoods of the great Santiago, where many women began to find more than sufficient subject matter for their arpilleras in their and their husbands' joblessness.

NEEDLEWORK THAT SUFFERS

It was after September 11, 1973 that arpilleras became most widely known. With the Catholic Church's creation of the Pro-Peace Committee in 1975, and of the Vicariate of Solidarity Workshops afterwards, a new impetus was given to these means of expression as they provided unemployed households with alternate means of subsistence. Many women joined in to pour their realities directly onto these fabrics, which became both a means of communication and a source of income at the same time.

The base is simple and very inexpensive: a piece of rough, durable, sackcloth-colored fabric. This acts as a background and supports other pieces of more delicate and colorful fabrics that are sewn on, preferably by female hands, using a needle and woolen thread. They can depict the town square, the prison where the women visit friends or relatives, a woman alone in a room awaiting the return of her missing husband, the recurring image of the mountains or the sea with embroidered words stating the right to return and

live in the homeland. In short, her circumstances and her direct experiences unfold on these mural tapestries.

Arpilleras are also dedicated to themes such as incomprehension, solidarity, happiness, and love. In sum, the women pour out their hopes as well as their sufferings.

THREE MARYS AND A ROSE

During an interview in the Chilean cultural magazine *La Bicicleta*, one woman declared: "The arpillera is a source of work . . . But when I don't sew I feel desperate. That's why, if things were to change and we all had enough to eat, we would still make arpilleras. We would show all the wonderful things that were happening. The arpilleras would be done in pink . . . maybe in the year 2080."

But because we're not in 2080, one of them says: "When the arpillera's motif is sad, we have to make it grey . . . just like the weather is now".

Precisely to get away from the color grey, brightly colored arpilleras were exhibited a few years ago in the Paulina Waugh Art Gallery in Santiago. "But," one of the exhibitors confesses, "they bombed poor Paulina's." It was the grey time of bombs.

Ariel Dorfman recalls that time in an extensive study of our cultural reality: "On January 13, 1977, also during the quiet night of military patrols, another

bomb had exploded, leveling the Paulina Waugh Gallery. Hundreds of sinful paintings by professional artists were burned, among them works by Matta and Antúnez. Workshop 666 was destroyed, where drama, music, and sculpture classes were given. Also liquidated was an exhibit of arpilleras: large multicolored tapestries made by women residents of Santiago's outlying districts from remnants of fabric and bits of thread collected outside textile factories, which they sell to feed their families during the catastrophic economic crisis. The arpilleras tell the daily story of what it means to be poor and a woman in Chile today: besieged by unemployment, no home, no husband, no food, no guarantees or security; a transient, hand-to-mouth existence with the opposition in jail."

In that one instant, as if sealing a symbolic pact, Antúnez's paintings and the arpilleras were united in flames' embrace. One art cultured and academic, the other popular and rustic; but both subjected to the same pressure, the same threat. Bombs, fire, and then ashes for those who in 1972 had recognized and respected each other, journeying and making a way through their respective spaces: from the periphery to the downtown salons of the Santiago Fine Arts Museum.

But the fire certainly didn't extinguish the arpilleras' voices. On the contrary, it ignited them in such a way that Sergio Fernández himself—current Minister of the Interior—requested the Courts of Justice to bring suit against the women who were sending abroad "handcrafted fabrics with evident anti-Chilean political content." In August 1978, the courts were forced to admit that the accused were "innocent".

While artists joined together in the Chilean-North American Cultural Institute to help the owner of the razed gallery through the sale of their paintings and works, another group of artists began to concern themselves with the arpilleristas. The TIT (Theatrical Research Workshop), directed by David Benavente, began to search Santiago's peripheral districts for "creative materials." Out of this experience *Three Marys and a Rose* was born: a theatrical piece based precisely on the arpilleristas and their vivid portraits.

The Vicariate of Solidarity of the Chilean Catholic Church also began to print greeting and Christmas cards bearing the arpilleras' messages and human colors in recognition and support of these women's work. The cards, clothed in stamps, then traveled the globe carrying the greetings of friends and family from this corner of the world called Chile to our compatriots scattered all over the planet. They, in turn, would see from a distance a fragment of their country of today and always.

The nation of the arpilleras would greet them in the speech of working class neighborhoods. The language was so direct that it was more than a nuisance to those who had decided to keep peace and order by dint of their fellow citizens' silence, and who didn't even have the good humor to say: "What pretty plazas there are in these arpilleras!"

In this way Chileans living abroad were greeted by their country's plazas and neighborhoods. And as in the case of Cortázar's attentive spectator, truth was revealed to them in the very fabric of the arpilleras.

Jujol Update
SITES

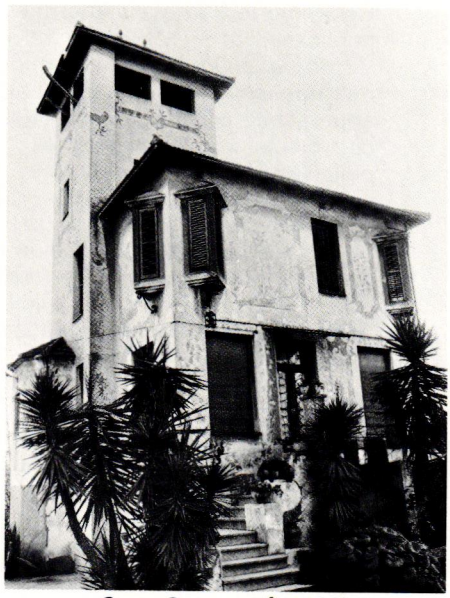
Returning to Barcelona after the publication of SITES 11, *An Introduction and Guide to Jujol*, we not only verified the itineraries but also approached some of Jujol's smaller projects, ranging from small pieces of furniture to elaborate wrought-metal religious items. These works illuminate periods of Jujol's life when, for one reason or another, he had few architectural commissions; they provide a link between his structural and decorative vision.

After *El Pais* published an article reviewing SITES 11, officials of Sant Joan Despi (the city Jujol served as municipal architect) expressed an interest in the project. With the assistance of the city's mayor, Sr. Lausin, his son, Francisco Lausin and especially Enrique Camats, of the Consejo de Cultura, we gained access to the municipal archives and studied original drawings for many of Jujol's unbuilt projects. On other visits Sr. Camats arranged tours of Torre de la Creu, which currently serves as a psychiatric out-patient clinic, as well as Casa Negre, which is now being restored by the city, with the aid of the regional government, for use as a cultural center and a small museum featuring Jujol. It's gratifying to report that the nearly completed first phase of the restoration—the structural stabilization of the entire building as well as the reconstruction and decoration of the main facade and the first-floor interior—has been executed in a manner appropriate to one of Jujol's masterworks: fitting materials shaped by fine workmanship.

Drawings for Jujol's chairs from Tienda Mañach

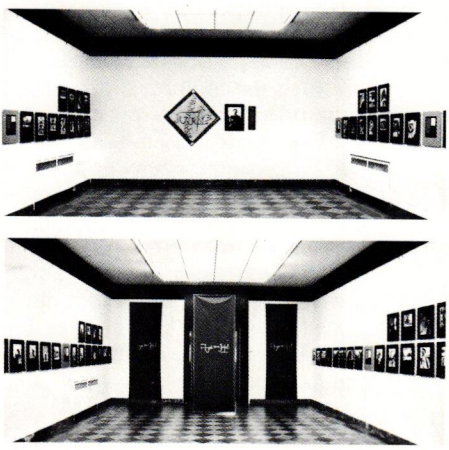
Retracing SITES 11 itineraries, we collected local stories and private recollections of Jujol. Kindly *porteros* let us enter closed buildings, priests, nuns, and custodians guided us through chapels (and waited patiently while we took photographs); local historians recounted and verified regional history. Everywhere, someone had known or worked for Jujol and provided stories and anecdotes.

With the aid of José Maria Jujol, Jr., we were able to trace a spectacular table and two chairs Jujol had designed for Tienda Mañach in 1911. Beautifully restored and cared for by the architect Jorge Llorens, the table and, especially, the chairs are extremely important examples of Jujol's spatial manipulations on a small scale. This furni-



Casa Camprubí (1928)

Professor George Collins (right) and Sr. Carlos Flores during seminar on Catalan arts and architecture.



The Architecture of José María Jujol, *a photographic exhibition presented by SITES and The Spanish Institute.*

ture is closely related to Gaudí's Batlló furniture and may serve as an important pivot in the debate over the two architects' exchange of ideas and designs.

On a short walk from Jujol's works in Sant Joan Despí we met the owner of "Casa Camprubí" (1928), a little-discussed building. Sr. Cebrià Camprubí, who was born in this remarkable structure commisioned by his father, generously supplied an oral history of the house, originally raised on stilts (later filled-in for additional room), its faded pink facades engraved with Jujol's delightful and sometimes beautiful scraffiti.

A further project, planned and initiated during this period is a video documentary focusing on Jujol. Interviews with scholars, building owners, and people who knew Jujol will constitute portions of a voice-over and historic photographs will be edited into new footage of the existing projects. The tape will be a collaborative effort between SITES and the Catalan video artist Antoni Muntudas.

The photographic results of this trip appeared in the exhibition—The Architecture of José María Jujol—first in the United States to present more than a single Jujol building. Organized by SITES for the Spanish Institute in New York, the exhibition opened the Institute's week-long seminar Jornadas Catalanas on May 1 and continued through May 31. Consisting of approximately 50 photographs, supplemented with text and plans, the exhibition concentrated on six of Jujol's most important works built between 1913 and 1930—Casa Planells, Casa Negre, Casa Bofarull, Torre de la Creu, Santuario de Montserrat, and Iglesia de Vistabella—and is designed to travel. As part of the Jornadas Catalanas, Professor George Collins moderated a panel on Catalan arts and architecture at which Carlos Flores, author of *Gaudí, Jujol y el modernismo catalán*, discussed "The Influence of José María Jujol on the Evolution of Gaudí."

Building the Poem

Diane Ackerman

Fuse the invisible
angles of life's Rialto;
build a jetty from the actual boardwalk
out into the dumb, ambiguous Atlantic;
make a landmark of love in a fen of misgiving;
steer a caravanserie of small, daily marvels
through the architecture of annihilation,
and you will have a poem:
a Siberian town in the long margins of snow,
a fixed point where veering angles
collide like nomads,
for an orderly moment, to feast,
despite the stale gaze of the tundra.

In this unrequited poem, there is a gazebo in a Japanese garden in, say, St. Louis. From its bench, you can see a shag-barked hickory, blunted off at ten limbs, putting forth a spray of new branches. It's inevitable; the Spring, you see. There you imagine the quiet shocks of vision you know to be possible.

For example, the lacy black twigs of the hickory, each noded and razory clear against the blue sky. For ten years, you've been trying to capture their rigid frilliness. Something in that delicate, black collar lace imprinted on a sky blue as mosque tile, fills you with such tenderness for the condition we, in chauvinistic shorthand, call human. Something in the high contrast precision of the twigs, which you can't seem to pinpoint.

But when you do, the front door of the gazebo will close, the latch marry the lock and, inside, a dozen circling dogs will lie down, for a slender moment, serene, beneath the blue aerodrome of the sky.

And you go on building the poem, maybe in prose, whose rafters are longer, or, perhaps, in the clipped precision you began with:

A gazebo in a Japanese garden
in St. Louis. From its bench,
you see a shag-barked hickory,
blunted off at ten limbs, putting forth
a spray of new branches . . . .

Generously supported
by a grant from the
Witter Bynner Foundation for Poetry,
these poetic sites
have been landscaped by
Diane Ackerman.

Parable with Bison and Pits, or the Poem as Image

Octavio Armand

Translated by Carol Maier

> And certainly, if we were to use only the most widely known principles, if we were to make deductions from them only on the basis of mathematical consequence s, and at the same time if what we deduce d in this manner were to coincide exactly with natural phenomena, we would seem to do injury to God if we suspected that the causes of the things we found in this way were false, as if he had created us so im perfectly that we deceived ourselves by u sing our reason correctly.
>
> R. Descartes

At Niaux: a bison with three pits/ and three arro ws, pointing. But there is no wound. Only pits/ a rrows/ and a bison, in agony. And nevertheless, t he wound alone exists, erased/ repeated through c enturies instantaneously recreating the sequence: there is a bison/ there are three arrows, pointin g/ there is a bison, wounded, that falls carved i n the floor and agonizes, in the stone. A wound, instantaneously. Since there is no bison, no arr ow, no pits. Only wound, desire, which has draw n and again draws back the arrows that (will) kil l the bison already in agony, pitted. Instancy/ i nstauration. At Niaux: instant carved bison in a gony in the floor falls wounded in the stone/ ins tant three arrows, pointing/ instant bison, with pits. Zero. The shooting explains everything, of course. Except that there is no shooting in the s equence. There is no sequence. Only image, (re)fr actions. Three pits in the floor/ three arrows, i n the stone/ and a bison, pointing: at Niaux, zer

o.

Another Arrow for the Bison at Niaux

Octavio Armand

When I read Moorhouse's description of the drawings at Niaux ("the arrows and the wound-marks were not later additions to the artist's work, but an integral part, if not the chief part, of his conception"), I remembered the Chinese archer, who closed his eyes as he shot the arrow: in those days there was as much nobility as marksmanship in the art of war. I remembered the view of Toledo that appears in Góngora's *Las firmezas de Isabela*: "That mountain which, precipitant,/ has been collapsing for so many centuries." And I remembered Zeno and the Eleatic paradoxes. One of the arguments Zeno used to deny spatial movement, that of the arrow in flight which really remains stationary, is the exact reverse of "Parable with Bison and Pits or, the Poem as Image," in other words, of the scene drawn more in prospective than perspective by the artist at Niaux. More convinced of the reality of movement than the reality of space— one learns something after two exiles—, more willing to fall into the parodoxy of a hunter and a poet than the puzzles of a philosopher, I wrote this poem in which reading itself, as homage, re-creates one of the sharpest and most stirring instants in the history of writing: the sudden fall of a bison, wounded but already carved in the floor, around the millenial pits soon to be opened by arrows that are on the point of arriving, that never arrive but nevertheless always kill. Arrow, signal, sign, design: a question of arrows shot by the wounds themselves. A perspectivism closer to Einstein than to Piero della Francesca. A perspectivism founded more on the virtuality of movement within the illusion of space than on the virtuality of space framed by the illusion of movement. A *ready-made* always about to be made. A *ready-to-be-made-ready-made*. The only thing that happens is the instant, the vertiginous movement of a few arrows shot constantly toward wounds that attract them, demand them, giving them direction and meaning. The arrows are as much a document as an instrument, as much a code as a weapon: they designate the wounds they have made, which are about to be made. The wounds themselves are also signs: deeper, wiser, and of course aimed much better. They designate the arrows, which give additional depth. And they designate themselves. Thus, reading occurs in a space held aloft by the imagination. I believe that. At least that is what I affirm.

Translated by *Carol Maier*

Translator's Note

Carol Maier

When I first saw photographs of the carving in the cave floor at Niaux, I had worked for some time on the English version of "Parable with Bison and Pits or, the Poem as Image." My reaction was one of dismay, for Octavio Armand's poem did not "fit" the site in precisely the way I imagined. After reading the text many times, I had decided that the arrows were drawn outside the bison, pointing toward and approaching a wound they had already inflicted. The photographs showed, however, that the arrows were drawn on the bison's body; they point to some pits formed by water dripping from the ceiling, and make them wounds. It occurred to me that Octavio Armand had not seen either this cave or a photograph of it, and a letter confirmed my suspicion. Armand wrote that he had indeed imagined the arrows in the air outside the bison. His poem had been occasioned by a paragraph from A. C. Moorhouse's *Triumph of the Alphabet*; the book does not contain a photograph of the cave, and the author explains rather ambiguously that there are three pits (or holes) in the bison's side, "and arrows pointing to them." As I considered this citation, my original reaction altered. In fact, Armand and I were both pleased by the correction, which did not invalidate but heighted the poem by drawing together all of its elements in one figure. We also found it appropriate that the preparation of a translation for *SITES* had incited a new perspective on the poem for the poet himself, and that the new sighting involved place as well as language.

This coincidence was particularly important to me as a translator because the poem's visual coherence is such an integral part of its "meaning." I realized from the first reading that its typography would have to be preserved

and that the final line would present a special challenge. I knew that in order to approximate in English the convergence of visual and verbal experiences that is at the center of the poem in Spanish (or that *is* the poem in Spanish), the translation would have to end with the letter "o." I would also need a word that rhymed with Niaux, because the relation of sound to sight and to significance is essential in the poem. A literal translation, then, would be impossible, for *por supuesto* translates as "of course." It was clear that in order to translate the poem faithfully, I would most likely have to lose that literal equivalence.

Even before I began a thorough evaluation of the few English words that end in "o," the "zero" occurred to me. For a long while I held it in abeyance, rather fearing its powers of negation; this is a poem of affirmation, and I was reluctant to risk erasure or nothingness. It was quite by chance that "The Invention of Zero," a poem from the *The Lone Woman and Others* by Constance Urdang, reminded me that "zero" suggests both a plurality and a dearth of possibilities. It is, as she writes, an "egg of being," a completion of beginning as well as end. It is also related to the cipher, and thus — as Ernst Robert Curtius explains in *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* — to literature, in particular to Spanish Golden Age literature where "cipher" refers to "the pictorial part of the *impresa* or emblem." As I read Urdang's poem and Curtius's discussion of "The Book as Symbol," I recalled many other associations of cipher and realized that, with the exception of the literal meaning, "zero" filled all the requirements of "Parable with Bison and Pits." And what is perhaps more important, it seemed inevitable in English, for it seemed to represent and release the poetry in this poem, drawing together aspects of absence and presence, chronology and simultaneity; shooting and summarizing at the same time.

One further comment: the reader who knows something of both Spanish and English will see that the English version has been altered so as to anticipate the poem's final utterance: there is an extra "zero." My explanation cannot, of course, be merely that the alteration was made with the poet's consent (although his consent does provide a certain reassurance or legitimization). In order for the final word, and especially the final "o," to occasion the necessary visual and semantic synthesis, it could not come as a complete surprise for the reader. Hence its appearance earlier in the text. It is, I believe, not an addition, but a necessary element of the poem's structure in English, as essential as the Spanish "o" and as central as the pits around which the ancient cave dwellers drew their bison.

The Three Gardens

Laurence Goldstein

I

I walked in the Huntington Gardens, that bower
where the most popular species of rose
are cultured by the noblesse oblige of power.

New Dawn crept up a trellis; Good News,
Peace, Mischief—each clearly named—
sought the eye with care-charming pose.

A great house stood nearby, in which famed
"Blue Boy" hangs, a pretty bloom
whose native ardor Gainsborough tamed.

Perpetuals within stone walls have room
to show forth inward delicacy;
so handiwork baffles doom

when millionaires like Huntington decree,
a man of cultivation and high caste
who had reason to fear mutability.

What he chose to shelter may outlast
dynamos he sent into the world
and their damage to the brittle past.

I wandered by foxglove curled
into healing quivers of calm,
powdery flags Spring had furled.

Not heeding these scrolls of heart's-balm
passers-by gazed upward, one by one,
at *bleu celeste* above the towering palm.

"The vault on high" is no longer heaven-haven
but still the fierce realm of welcome rest
we fly at like Icarus challenging the sun.

Daedalus has bound us all to this quest,
beguiling the greatest magi into the skies;
even Leonardo secretly confessed

in the Notebooks of his desire to rise
by his own strength, an airborne sorcerer
and overwhelm the world's daunted armies.

Against the will of such a "necromancer,"
Leonardo wrote, impeaching his soul,
humanity must yield to force, and cower

at "impetuous storms" until control
of governments passes into his hands,
his appetites gratified upon the whole

society of nations suffering his demands.
And how would the Huntington Gardens thrive
when this Pharaonic lord of the air disbands

the rights of man, enslaves all things that live?
What shelter will formal beauty find
when will itself ordains which forms survive?

II

Strolling the wide avenues lined
with miscellaneous greenery of many acres
I tried to fix this destiny in mind,

this holocaust foretold by the makers,
ravages we must endure in decades to come,
billions of coal chips pounded by breakers.

No wonder I entered the Japanese Garden numb
with loathing for Man, incomparable fool
who strikes the angel inside him dumb.

But once beside the goldfish-glinting pool
I relented somewhat, by nature being
unwilling to type Homo sapiens as cruel

or nugatory, more fond of seeing
the art of gardens, the caretaking of verse
as humanity's essential show of meaning.

Watery island in a sea of moss,
the pool cast myself back to my eyes,
soothing the strain of nightmare like a nurse.

Fragrance of cherry unclenched me, bird cries
from cypress columns raising their holy sign
offered the votive pledge of deities.

By the overarching umbrella pine
I kneeled to bathe my face in my face
which reassembled near the sun at meridian.

As above, so below: even in this artful place
the cosmos lay upon the earthly mirror,
the garden borrowed the scenery of space.

And space is our escape, one seer
has written in his cult-inspiring guide:
"The opening of a new, high frontier."

Colonies of bold scouts will ride
thousands of miles from a launching site
secure as mummies in their pyramid,

waxing on unlimited sunlight
let through shields to nurture crops
unvisited by bugs or germinal blight.

A "Hawaiian climate" where temperature never drops,
and strong governments prescribe harmony
so that the hive of plenty never stops.

In that immense machine, "Blue Boy"
would find the *vis inertia* that would suffice,
civilization no change would ever destroy.

And it is promised for this great artifice
that rose and foxglove and every other flower
will help restore, in all seasons, our Paradise.

III

Spellbound by this vision one hour
as if fixed in place like the gingko tree
I thought again of beauty's claim on power,

how Masters bait their line with imagery
culled from pastoral figures of our desire
to involve us in eschatology.

Flatlanders, they say, look higher!
Enter with flying machines the blue void
where blessed spirits dance in the primal fire;

anchor in space or homestead an asteroid;
by sorcery shut down Thanatos!
for as Leonardo's scholar, Freud

wrote in a monograph, it is Eros
we make into the body, motor and wings
of instruments to turn away loss.

But passions made into aerial things—
do they not in history harden
like Pharaoh's heart into thunderings?

Almighty laws that never bend or pardon
ravage the mellow Agape of this manicured
and most lovely imported garden.

Now this world of a Creator's measured word
must yield to a tougher kind of nurture:
The Cactus Garden be our symbol of concord.

Huntington made it his prize culture,
the main attraction for all visitors,
who find these forms dreamlike and sinister,

a comic iconography of horrors!
Carnegiea Gigantea, Organ Pipe, Old Man—
these resilient if grotesque reservoirs

through several human lives ripen
on sunlight and far-spreading roots
collecting drops of manna as they can.

I thought, a poet should sing these mutes,
these prickly hosts content with the minimum,
rather than praise his rank above the brutes.

It is time to disown a superlunary emblem,
the aspiration to grow a metal skin
and jet by force of will to kingdom-come.

He should praise native succulents, green
barrels of salvation the exile knows,
survivors hardy and still flowering.

I stayed to admire these fit imagoes
placed like characters to show my station
between the lowliest pink and the pride of Pharaohs.

The Triangle Fire

Grace Schulman

(On Saturday, March 25, 1911, 146 workers died in a fire that demolished the Triangle Shirtwaist Company, which had occupied three floors of the Asch Building, located on Washington Place and Green Streets. A bronze sign on what is now the Main Building of New York University marks the scene.)

Washington Place. Once this was Potter's Field,
ground of the unclaimed dead. Later, an augur,
Asch Building, for ash, the end of fire.
I see Asch Building's ash. The doors are sealed,

only one exit, three floors packed with women
in gauzy dresses, cutting, fitting, sewing
shirtwaists. Jews in tenements are chanting
Havdallah, blessed is the great division

of light from dark; then suddenly, the women
hang from ledges, leap from windows, comets
plummet and crash through glass squares on paved stone.
A Gibson tintype in a wide-brimmed hat

balances on a ledge, equilibrist,
and topples. Then a man, sleepwalking,
holds a figure, leads her to a landing,
and lets her drop. Another falls; her dress

wafts upward. And below, the crowd moves slowly,
in a dream. Black hoses are red lilies.
Firemen's horses rear at blood-soaked bodies.
The fire turns amber, garnet, ocher, ruby.

Fire's Triangle: heal, change, destroy.
Sun's fire is all earth's energy, the source
of all that alters. Fire that feeds the stars,
kills. Out of the far reach of my eyes,

in Washington Square Park, I see the same
sun that plays on maple leaves strike fire,
turning unseeded earth to such amber flame
as fire makes of all things it devours.

Excavations

Laurence Lieberman

Caterpillar tractors (fat CATs) gnaw the fields. Graceless
As tanks, slack-jawed, they flatten weeds, trees
And debris to corn flakes. Bulldozers
Gouge trenches (truck square GIs
Scooping front-line dugouts)...incisor
Gnash of steel on rock. The cab operators, faceless
As militia or three-time losers
Serving *life*, freeze
Behind glass
Visors. *In their dreams, small mice,*
Caught in the gearshift, shriek. No survivors.
We rape the thousand forests. America's wilderness
Succumbs—as cheek of negro to the razor.
Her farms, rivalled by factories
And used-car lots, vanish like dinosaurs.
Tract homes outnumber the graves in County cemeteries.
Stucco wraps bodies like mummy-cloth. Souls keep in asbestos.

After the Fogs

Laurence Lieberman

After the fogs, nine or ten months
of drought and scores of lavish
brushfires (half-a-dozen

a year threatening to become quenchless
firestorms), the rains, advancing
like tortoise, hesitant,

behind three of four weeks of turbulent cloud-
forms, empty like a sea falling,
the sky, an immense

bathtub that overflows its sides,
at first. But after (shortly
after) the Bather

pulls the plug. All Heaven lets loose
on parched farmlands (weed-choked,
the color of iron rust),

on oil fields, so many more obsolete
than in use, abandoned oil-pumps
erect like sentinels,

a few still pumping at nothing, in refusal
to become unvalued relics;
alike on tract homes,

golf links, shopping centers, funlands, zoos,
on the opulent corporations,
flooding the land

and all man-made paraphernalia, all gadgets
that supplant the life of the land,
interrupting the balance

of sea and continent, for a season, with a pattern
of inland lakes. Suddenly,
the rain quits.

Stonewall Jackson at Manassas

Bruce Dearing

Stonewall still stands on Henry House Hill,
Secure in his Euclid and God,
Ignoring the snipers, rock-steady to kill,
Intent upon staining the sod.

In the five-sided building I labor,
Unsure of God, Euclid, or swords,
Constructing my ramparts of paper
To turn aside volleys of words.

The First Battle of Manassas (or Bull Run) was fought in July of 1861. These verses were written 90 years later by a Reserve Officer recalled to duty during the Korean Action, who had just visited the battlefield on weekend leave. At Manassas Thomas J. Jackson earned his famous sobriquet. The Confederate Army had been thrown back in disorder through a skillful maneuver by General Pope. Perceiving the situation, Jackson took up a position on high ground, sitting on his horse in monumental calm a few paces in front of Confederate reserves drawn up in orderly ranks, directly in the path of the Federal advance. Confederate General Bee (not Lee), galloping about the field in a desperate effort to rally his confused and demoralized troops, shouted: "There stands Jackson like a stone wall! Rally behind the Virginians!" An impressive bronze equestrian statue now commemorates Jackson's position and this episode.

Prior to the outbreak of the War Between the States, Jackson had been Professor of Mathematics at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia. Like other West Pointers of both armies, he had been trained in military science on principles laid down in a standard textbook which still advocated fixed positions, massed ranks, and geometrically calculated maneuvers. He was also a notably pious man, a habitual reader of scripture, and well known for his singular serenity under fire. When he lay fatally wounded at Chancellorsville, his dying words were, "Let us cross over the river and rest beneath the trees."

In his exposed position at Manassas, Jackson was an inviting target for Federal sharpshooters, but his "charmed life" at that moment is credited with turning an imminent Federal victory into an ignominious defeat for Pope's ill-trained northern army. Jackson's obliviousness to personal danger in assuring that the engagement came to clear issue also assured that the sod would be stained in a bloody battle costing more casualties than suffered at Tarawa in World War II.

The immutable Jackson is in the second stanza contrasted with another professor in uniform in a less clear and heroic situation. Working in the Pentagon, a Euclidian monstrosity not far from Manassas, he has little of Jackson's certitude. In a modern undeclared war, geometric simplicities have little place, and however significant their contribution to staff work, civilian soldiers in desk jobs have problems with self-image.

Sites
Albert Goldbarth

According to the Tosefta, *the synagogue should be built on the highest ground in town. In the Middle Ages, many a synagogue had a pole on the roof technically to comply with the admonition that the synagogue should be the highest building.*

arranged from *Judaism in Stone*

Whenever orgasm's faked, there
is this technical
compliance. And so in the genre studio

photograph of the honeymoon
afternoon, so many years ago, Niagara
is a painted backdrop giving Columbus,

Ohio the minimal qualifications for letting
it all commence. Sites do this
—say us, for us, when we can't admit to

saying ourselves. Beyond chemotherapy
even, a father is plugged in to his final
sustaining machine, and a daughter

dry by now of tears, who cries in public by secret
application of onion q-tipped once
below each eye, stands in the darkness

of his private ward, in the flickering blue
of the monitoring device, and lets the regulated
intravenous tapping of saline solution say

her grief. I think we've all,
for instance, felt we were the token
sign of happiness a marriage put forth, that

squabbled, incessantly, bitterly, at home; but
at the circus, there they were, with
you between their overt beaming—and so the clowns

are greasy cheesewedge smiles around whatever
other mouth they keep, the seals are outfitted too
gewgawed for any training-welts to show, and

the central bigtop pole meets everyone's
minimum expectations for what an idea
of axispoint, upthrust, and aspiration

might be. Looking back at it now, I think it
worked—that is, our cheers and gasping honestly
did ascend. I think that earlier

pole worked too, and by its easy meeting
of rabbinate criteria, allowed the amassing of prayer
on a synagogue roof, enough above

the stink- and rubble-cluttered Empire streets
to be doves at roost, the doves in a funnel rising
around the pole, an electircal

cobalt-blue bolt-charge of birds, on
efficaciously up to His ear with their implorations.
And I think it isn't for me or for you

to question the glue a bogus lovemoan
wets around its drynesses, so a man and a woman
continue in this world. It could be she

loves her son, her husband. She's a
daughter, though, too; this wearies her
will and energy. I think she's walking with them

past the carnival midway, the tent and most rides
in dismantlement now, and deciding
yes, she'll bribe the doctor, plead with him,

anything, only turn off that goddam mechanical pump.
And the roller coaster the only thing
left on the lot: last brain wave

the legal system calls life.

Moving Houses

Margaret Sayers Peden

On a recent trip to South America I had the good fortune to meet the Uruguayan writers Amanda Berenguer and José Pedro Díaz, husband and wife, she a poet, he, author of prose fiction. On our first meeting, Amanda gave me a copy of her book of poetry constructs, *Composicion de lugar* (Montevideo, Arca, 1976). That night in our hotel room I could not resist immediately playing with these mathematical word problems, wondering—as transematicians[1] do—how much one might capture of a problem with such severe constraints. Following is one of Amanda's (simpler) untitled poems and my re-construction in English.

If one thinks of the three "verses" of this poem as representing three "houses" in a row, facing a street, an interesting cultural phenomenon is immediately apparent, actually visible. The Spanish American *casas* turn in on themselves. They are built in rigorous symmetry around central patios, and a massive wall with a spacious intervening *zaguán* protects them against the street. In contrast, the North American houses turn outward, toward the street, each with its large North American front lawn. The outline of these houses is less formal, and architectural projections, perhaps the retaining walls of further landscaped yards, continue the lines of the houses toward their neighbors.

There is an obvious grammatical explanation for this phenomenon: English lacks the common feminine adjective and noun endings that allow the Spanish words to meet in neat, sharp "corners." But in my discussion the following evening with Amanda, we agreed that on a non-scientific plane, it was satisfying to believe that for one brief instant some force intrinsic in language was allowing the words to conform to the realities they represented.

Reading the poem as an entity, we know the houses are not real, and that, in fact, each of the three houses represents a period of time in the life of *one* house: the smaller print forming the upper and left "walls" represents movement that results in the static conditions defined by the right and bottom "walls": *presente/perdida* leads to a *casa sola; recuerdo/renuente* leads to a *casa luna;* and *memorial/menguante* leads to a *casa ninguna. Presente/recuerdo/memorial,* states and activities captured in a "now," are diminished by the eroding qualities of *perdida/renuente/menguante*—nouns borne by their qualifiers into a receding past. Though *recuerdo* and *memorial,* especially, refer to the past, they exist in the present. The adverbs that modify them ease that present into a vanishing present—the past. The adjectives describing the static condition of the house, *sola, luna, ninguna,* are progressive, leading from an attribute that exists (*sola*), to a qualifier that removes the house from the real world (*luna*), to one that removes it both from the real and the astral worlds to deny totally its existence (*ninguna*).

Similarly, if not identically, in English: "present", "vision", and "reminiscence" exist now, while the qualifiers "passing", "vanishing", and "receding" dilute and melt the present into the already experienced. A movement similar to that in Spanish also occurs in the adjectives that describe the house, a progression from "lonely" (of the earth) to "heavens" (not of the earth) to "never" (not of anything). To this degree, the English is relatively successful in conveying the semantics of the poem.

The least successful element in the transemantic game remains, however. That is the section dealing with the "street side" of the "houses." In Spanish this wall makes clear that the poet *is* referring to a single house in three aspects: *aquella casa.* It is, in English, *that* house, that house lonely, then that house unreal, then that house non-existing. Nothing in the English family of demonstrative pronouns coordinates with the word "house" in the physical and semantic space determined by the poem. "Ever the house" is, if not in the world of poetry, at least in reality, in direct contradiction with "never house" at the end of the poem: they exist simultaneously. I excuse this seeming contradiction by pointing out that the house does not exist, but memory of that house, though receding, is real.

In this case, culture is for once made visible in language: a "house" and a *casa* are not the same thing. Each, properly, assumes its own space within its own language.

1. We translators are defeated before we even begin. The very words that define our art, at least in the languages in which I work—translation and *traduccion*—propose a concept "encompassed between the two poles of languages," the former "retaining only the metaphoric, and second the metonymic" functions. (See Jean Paris, "On Translation", *Latin American Literary Review,* Vol.III, No.5, Fall-Winter 1974, pp. 65-79). I would like to propose a new term, *transemation,* to represent the process, and *transematicians* as a more accurate description of those who perform the *transemantic* art. Given the root of "semantics", *meaning,* getting meaning across, or through, describes perfectly the ultimate goal of transferring, or transporting, or translating, but *not* traducing, a literature in movement between two literatures.

This essay first appeared, in a longer version, in *Translation Review 12.*

Tulum

José Emilio Pacheco

Translated by Thomas Hoeksema

If this silence could speak
  its words would be of stone
If this stone were to move
  it would become the sea
If these waves were not prisoners
  they would be stones
in the observatory
  They would be leaves
transformed into circular flames

From a darkened sun comes the light which burns this
  fragment of a dead planet

Here everything living is foreign and all reverence profanation
  and all commentary sacrilege

Because the air is sacred like death
  like the gods
venerated by the dead in this absence

And the herb takes root and prevails over the sterile stone
  eaten by the sun—
house of time father of the ages fire in
which we present offerings to our age

Tulum stares at the sun's face
  It is the sun
of another planetary order
  The nucleus
of another universe founded by stone

And it spreads its shadow over the sea

  The shadow that goes back and forth
until it changes into stone

Tulum

The ancient Mayan city of Tulum—which was originally known as *Zama* or "Dawn" because the city faces east—was built during the Classic period (A.D. 317 to 987) and was a major port of trade of the Mayan Empire on the Yucatan peninsula.

Invasion by the Itzá tribe and internal warfare preceded the Spanish conquest of the Yucatan in 1541. Following the conquest, most Mayan cities were abandoned and eventually enveloped by the encroaching jungle. It was not until the early 1900s that archaeologists excavated the site of Tulum.

From a cliff overlooking the Caribbean, Tulum's most prominent structure is the castle, which, like most Mayan buildings, was constructed in successive stages. On top of a four-room base, two temples were built which flank a steep stairway that leads to a beautiful view of the ocean and surrounding landscape.

Among Tulum's principal structures are the Temple of the Descending God, Temple of the Initial Series, and Temple of the Frescoes. The Mayans worshipped many gods and the special temples were usually built in the center of the city.

Much of Tulum's history is recorded and preserved on carved stelae which were erected every twenty years as part of an ancient religious custom. Hieroglyphics carved on the stelae serve as documents of Mayan history, rituals, and mythology.

The crumbling ruins and talking stones of Tulum combine to give thoughtful witness to the elaborate ceremony and complex mythology of the Mayan empire.

TULUM has appeared in translation in *The American Rag* and in *Signals from the Flames* (Latin American Literary Review Press, 1980).

Coop Himmelblau: Architecture Is Now.
by Coop Himmelblau
Rizzoli, 1984, paper, $25.00

Holdouts and continuums exist. Not all architects have fallen victim to the new romance of the worn-down past, knuckled under to employ—poorly—entablatures and pediments frosted with soft and vacillating pastel stucco, or cowarded coral alligence to a Post-movement. The Austrian Coop Himmelblau certainly hasn't. Their alignment—their philosophy and intention—has great historical precedent, but if they have looked to history, it has chiefly been theirs and recent. They have shielded themselves from withering historicism by obliquely peeking into, through, and away from an inherited design lineage, taking neither method nor material, only spirit. And if from this familial past they have in fact ingested some basic tenets of modernism, Coop Himmelblau transfigures those tenets in universal elements of air, fire, and blood expressed in today's materials and material possibilities. This, for architects, almost necessarily promotes projects more than buildings, leads to visionary acts as well as architecture.

Consequently, Coop Himmelblau's book *Architecture Is Now.*—and note that period!—embodies more of their production than most books *about* architecture, for Coop Himmelblau urges toward a modern-day *gesamtkunstwerk* in which cafes, stores, criticism, sculpture, prose poems, urban plans, minfestos, "projects, (un)buildings, actions, statements, sketches, commentaries" all comprise the group's intention and achievement, whose range is enormous, ranging. True, a film or video might better record the work by adding the element of motion—both speeding and still, conceptual, even comic—but, for the present, a book will more than do. And this impressive book, representing projects from the Coop's founding in 1968 by Wolf Prix, Helmut Swacxinsky, and Rainer Michael Holzer (who later dropped out) through 1983, respects the variety of their work with 180 drawings and photographs in addition to a bilingual presentation of their own texts, beautifully translated by Jo Steinbaouer and Roswitha Prix. Introduced by Frank Wener's exceptionally useful and intelligent forward, this jolting Rizzoli volume, no posh look-to-imagine and read-to-forget showcase, displays major accomplishments for anyone who reads or looks—or cares about today.

Architecture is Now. heralds an architectural statement, not in metaphor, as the phrase usually flies, but in mated words and images, an unforgettable chorus on pages reflecting literal pyrography:

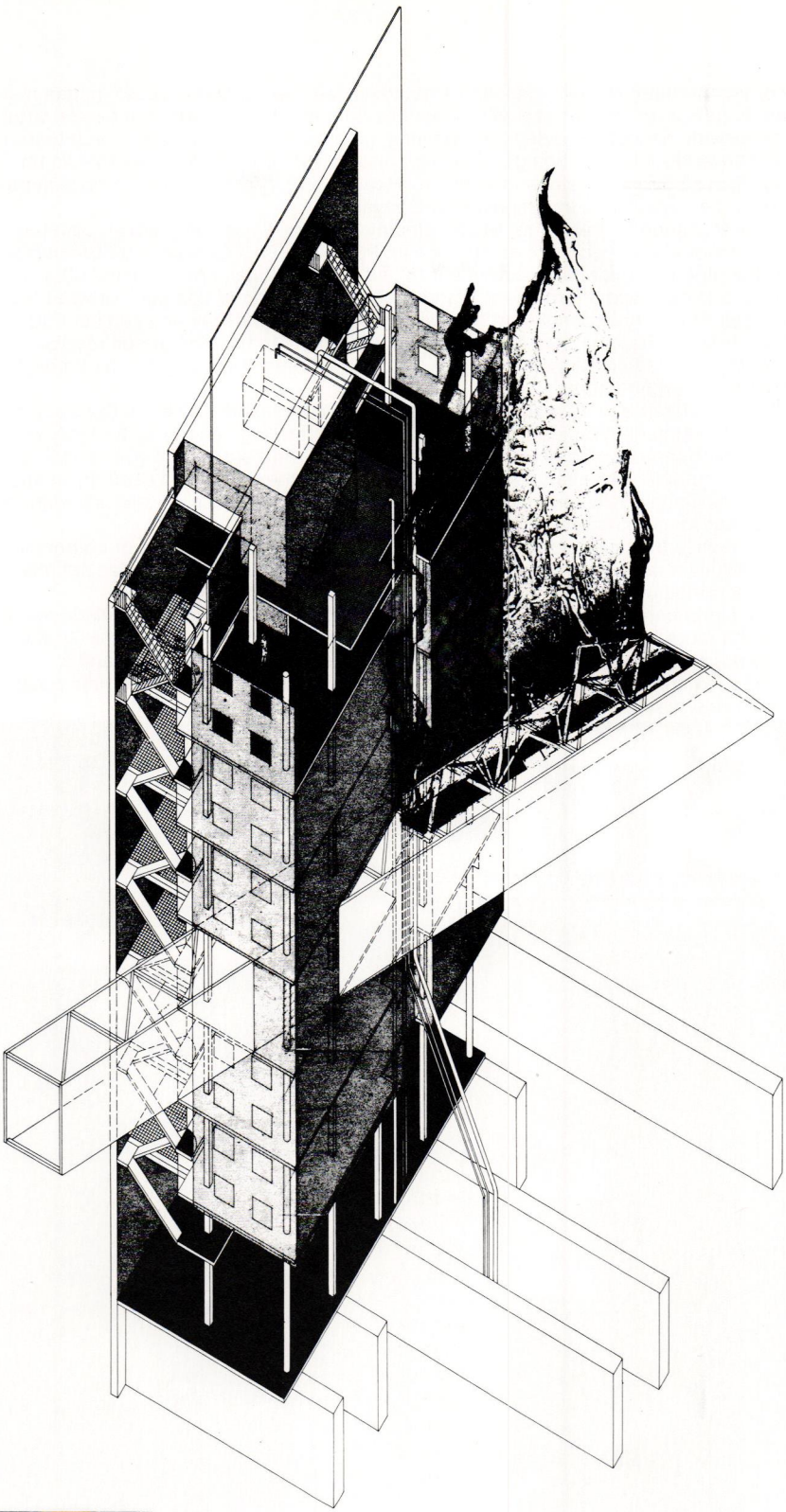
Architecture Must Blaze (1980)

You can judge just how bad the 70's were when you look at its super tense architecture.

Opinion polls and a complacent democracy live behind Biedermeier-facades.

But we don't want to build Biedermeier. Not now and at no other time.
We are tired of seeing Palladio and other historical masks.
Because we don't want architecture to exclude everything that is disquieting.
We want architecture to have more. Architecture that bleeds, that exhausts, that whirls and even breaks. Architecture that lights up, that stings, that rips, and under stress tears.
Architecture should be cavernous, fiery, smooth, hard, angular, brutal, round, delicate, colorful, obscene, voluptuous, dreamy, alluring, repelling, wet, dry and throbbing. Alive or dead. Cold—then cold as a block of ice. Hot—then hot as a blazing wing.

Architecture must blaze.



Hot Flat (1978-)

Also writing by constructing, the coop erected, "The Blazing Wing" (1980) in the courtyard of the Technical University in Graz. A structure like a space-frame, this 1½ ton distorted mesh wing hung from cables and shot flames from liquid gas burners as amplifiers transmitted the firey message over loudspeakers and water curtains shielded nearby walls. Detached as sculpture in that manisfestation, the wing concept figured prominently in the earlier "Hot Flat," a buildable apartment plan with ten units providing only enclosed space and hook-ups to the city's media, truly liberating tenants with informed flexibility. In "Hot Flat," which dates from 1978, the triangular wing form slashes into the "rough structure," thawing the cold of urban architecture with many ignited gas jets at night.

Coop Himmelblau, whose name literally translates as Sky-blue Coop, thus takes the *nature* of the so-called built *environment* seriously: beginning by wanting to

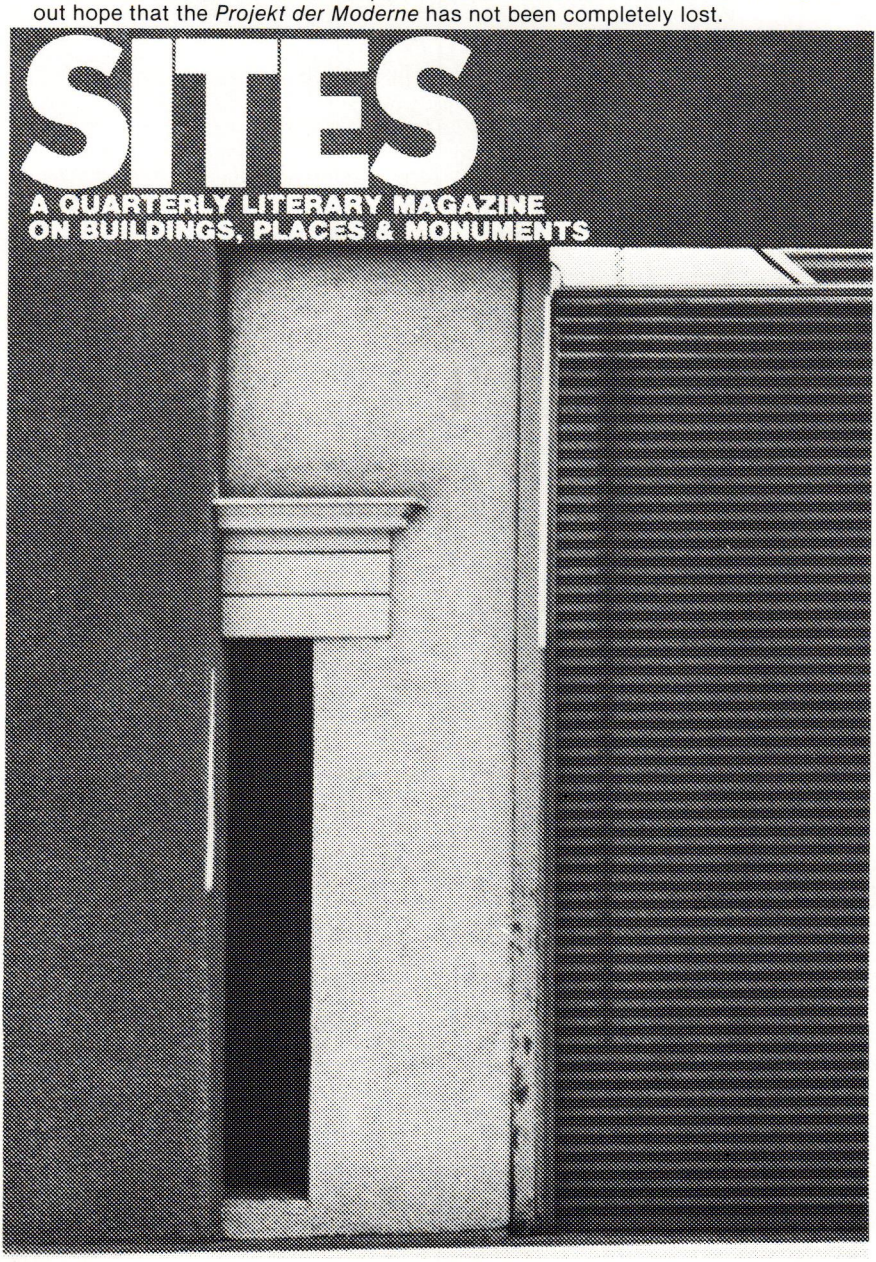
aerate contemporary buildings with a bouyancy as "variable as clouds" (hence their name), turned air into motion with "Restless Sphere" (1971), in which a person within a pneumatic balloon propeled it by walking; incorporated fire in blazing architecture; and converted a human being's heartbeat into pulsating light within a tent-like ribcage that also made the beat audible in "Heartspace" (1969). In brief, Coop Himmblblau is the metaphysic and media of the physical.

If all this sounds dreamy as newfangled pipesmoke, Coop Himmelblau counters with a revolutionary purpose as staunch as Percy and Paul Goodman's *Communitas* by choosing to adjust the environment to suit the individual, not the usual other way round, and develops a remarkable "architectural aesthetic of damage" or what they also call "a poetry of desolation" based on the inevitable decay and neglect that result from habitation. "Hot Flat" is only one example in this line of non-utopian planning, best summed by the Coop in their own phrase "the toughter the times, the tougher the architecture."

But *architecture* in its usual (and unusual) denotation shrinks before the Coop's actual experiment in building, writing, drawing, performing, recording, and reporting *space,* both internal and external—inside your body and out, inside your dwelling and out, outside your head and in. While the cant of the street is "I need my space, man," the Coop busily redefines and literally creates that space so that not even the street any longer knows itself—or should.

Meanwhile the book before us, foolishly lacking an index and a list of contents, wonderfully imagines a text and an urban heiroglyph of the highest order, satisfactorily summed up in the concluding words of its own forword:

> The significance of this book lies in its vital, substantial and antiformalistic relation to the roots of modernism. It is already a remarkable critical contribution to the European architectural development of the closing twentieth century and a historical manifestation which exposes lost chances but at the same time holds out hope that the *Projekt der Moderne* has not been completely lost.



American Picture Palaces
by David Naylor
Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1981, $29.95

Paul M. Sachner

There is something at once fascinating and horrifying about America's great movie houses, the remarkable group of buildings created by a handful of architects and entrepreneurs working between 1913 and 1936. The fascination comes when one realizes that these luxurious structures, found everywhere from small crossroads villages to major urban centers, consistently provided the highest level of architectural experience to more people than any other building type in American history. The horror lies in the fact that so little remains of this early 20th-century architectural legacy, and what is left has often been badly mutilated. Although they were conceived as places of joy — pleasure palaces for the rich and poor alike — the movie houses of the 20s and 30s more often than not have led lives that can only be characterized as bittersweet. Designed in an exotic hybrid of historic architectural modes during the go-go years of the 20s but sometimes completed after the Great Crash of 1929, many palaces were, in a sense, stillborn — enormous, 4,000-seat white elephants that could turn a profit only in the short time between the end of the Depression and the late 1940s. The decades following the Second World War clearly sealed the theaters' fate: during the 50s American movie-goers discovered television (and the suburbs), and the 60s saw urban renewal attack downtown business districts everywhere. Victims of changing tastes and new attitudes toward urban life, the movie theaters were among the first to go, replaced by office buildings, hotels, or, in the worst cases of destruction in the name of progress, parking lots. Brief lives, indeed, for structures that brought the glamor of Europe, South America, and the Far East to Atlanta, Austin, and Aurora, Illinois.

Written to accompany a recent exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York, David Naylor's *American Picture Palaces* offers a complete history of the most spectacular houses, from such early "proto-palaces" as the Regent (1913) in New York and the Ringling (1916) in Baraboo, Wisconsin, to the final glorious fling with Art Deco design at Radio City Music Hall (1932) and, less grandly but still compellingly, at the little Washoe Theater (1936) in Anaconda, Montana. Throughout the period theater architects selected from a mind-boggling stylistic palette that included Thomas Lamb's Adam-inspired designs; the French and Spanish Renaissance-influenced creations of the Chicago firm of Rapp & Rapp; John Eberson's "atmospherics," where the point was to create an illusion of sitting outdoors in some faraway land; and the Oriental and Near-Eastern "exotics" that seemed particularly popular in the West and South. Every city had its palace — many had several — but it was in the movie centers of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles that theater-builders really took hold. New York in particular boasted its series of five Wonder Theaters, a project begun by the Paramount studio in 1926 and completed by Loews in 1929 that included the 175th Street and Paramount in Manhattan, the Kings in Brooklyn, the Paradise in the Bronx, and the Valencia in Queens. Of the five, only the Paradise still exhibits film, although in an environment that has been much compromised by the division of the auditorium into a "quadraplex." The 175th Street and Valencia are now churches, the Kings lies vacant on Flatbush Avenue, and the Paramount has been demolished.

Naylor tells the story of these and many other palaces in a format that is more or less chronological and exhaustively detailed. His writing, however, lacks the exuberance of his subject matter, and there is an overabundance of sodden architectural description. Moreover, in his attempt to categorize every theater along stylistic lines, an almost impossible task given the freedom with which architects often adapted historic modes, he occasionally goes astray. What saves the volume is the glorious photography, most gathered from theater archives but much by Naylor himself. There is a visual richness here that is best savored in small doses. The theaters, after all, were meant to be seen only once or twice a week at most and, like the frothiest Viennese *schlag*, images of these lavishly decorated structures can be overpowering if consumed too greedily.

Included in Naylor's study is a rundown on some of the ways that obsolete theaters have been altered over the past 20 years to suit contemporary needs. Admitting that the results of adaptive re-use are decidedly mixed, the author shows us the Beverly in California as Fiorucci's boutique, the Brooklyn Paramount as a gymnasium for Long Island University, the Palace in Chicago as a convention center, and, in one of the most egregious alterations imaginable, the Michigan Theater in Detroit as a parking ramp. The last example is almost laughable in its irony: that a city best known for the production of automobiles would allow one of its finest buildings to be converted into a facility housing that famous product, only to witness a few years later the decline of the auto industry, and the abandonment of its downtown — and the parking garage — by the very cars it created. One wonders if the remaining patrons of the Michigan ramp can detect the smell of popcorn mingled in with the gas fumes. And is that the roar of a faulty muffler they hear or the ghost of the MGM lion?

To be sure, there are several recent instances where movie palaces have been successfully restored to house facilities for the performing arts. The conversion of the very fine Art Deco Paramount by the Oakland Symphony Orchestra is the most nota-

ble example, and other sensitive theater rehabilitation projects can be found at the Fox in Atlanta, the State in Providence, the Stanley in Utica, and the Memorial in Boston. Citing these cases, Naylor contends that the worst of the slaughter is now past. Maybe so, but the architectural and civic loss has been enormous, and the vacant movie theater, its marquee drooping and its ticket booth crumbling, remains a metaphor for the decay of American downtowns. In the end it is difficult to dispute Naylor's claim that "aside from the skyscraper, no building type is more clearly representative of twentieth-century American architecture than the movie palace;" it is equally apparent, however, that the movie palace today often symbolizes premature obsolescence, the fickleness of American taste, and the complete waste of urban resources. They are a lingering visual reminder of an age that is gone forever.

The Birds of Manhattan
Street Paintings by Dan Witz
Forward by William Zimmer
Skinny Books, New York, 1983, $9.95
(Available from Printed Matter,
7 Lispenard St., NY, NY 10013;
include $1.00 for shipping)

"The Birds of Manhattan is a project I undertook from early spring to late fall of 1979. I painted over 40 life sized hummingbirds on exterior locations throughout Lower Manhattan." Dan Witz

Spotting a live hummingbird in Manhattan is not impossible although I believe that at the locations Dan Witz chose for his paintings the occurance would be very rare. And, today, if the live bird is scarce, so too are the Witz birds. Nearly five years after he undertook the project, many of Witz's paintings have disappeared. Last winter, when any live hummingbird would have been thousands of miles from New York, avoiding the freezing temperature, I took *The Birds of Manhattan* and began a walking tour—guided by its rather vague map keyed to the photographs. At the six locations I searched out, only one surviving bird rewarded me. On Lafayette, just north of Canal Street, there, perpetually fluttering, was a hummingbird. Slightly subdued by the splatters of melting ice, dimmed by city grime, the Witz bird nonetheless shimmered. Beautiful. The life-size painterly bird of muted and pastel colors was irridescent.

If the birds relate to other city graffiti tenuously, because of their style and execution, they are nevertheless painted on pirated spaces—and illegal. Yet to my eyes, the Witz birds, like the Haring babies and Hamilton splatter-men, are a welcome misdemeanor. In graffiti lingo, these birds tag their locations and inform the viewer that Witz is *getting up*.

If you're not in Manhattan, or if you don't care to try hunting down these birds, Witz's book will still provide you with a document of the year-long project. The 20 photographs, 11 in color, capture the delicate birds in flight, surrounded by spray-painted graffiti, hovering behind chain link fences, perched in mid-air above mail slots or trash. One picture shows a bird respectfully "caged" after its wall was painted with a new coat of bright yellow that frames the tiny flyer. The Witz birds are accompanied by William Zimmer's informative forward that gives details of the project and a bit of biographical data about Dan Witz. Bill Mutter designed this ruby-throated hummer of a book, which was beautifully printed by Open Studio. D.L.D

A Theory of Good City Form
by Kevin Lynch
The MIT Press, 1981, $25.00

Richard Mikita

A Theory of Good City Form is as deeply felt as it is reasoned. Kevin Lynch is not indifferent to actuality, impatient with the constraints of practicality, or insensitive to differing points of view. He is animated by the potential usefullness of good theory in all circumstances, particularly in the press of the moment. His is a theory which he hopes will help us decide how to act on city concerns in ordinary, extraordinary, and hypothetical circumstances.

Not shy about claiming ground and clearing it, Lynch takes as his terrain that bounded by the relation between human values and the physical city. Because "the modification of settlement is a human act, however complex, accomplished for human motives, however obscure or ineffective," he begins his book by exploring those motives throughout history, categorizing them according to dominant metaphor — the city as magical model of the universe, as machine, as organism — and disclosing the ground values from which each metaphor rises. While probing into these metaphors, Lynch observes that the vocabulary for describing a city and the conceptual model embodied in that language have shaped both the form and function of early, late, and lasting settlements.

Still, no metaphor, no model, and no theory at this time provides an adequate statement about the form of cities for Lynch. He finds dogma and opinion, but "no system-

atic effort to state general relationships between the form of a place and its value." Lynch makes that effort, and it is fascinating to watch him earnestly struggling and ably making his way. For him, a city "can be a deep and comprehensive education." And he deftly demonstrates how that is so with a book which is itself a deep study and a delight.

Human values and city form are the magnetic poles around which the lines of force — the contingent, complementing, and contradictory — are carefully measured by Lynch and made to mean. Admitting that it may not be possible to create a "connected normative theory," Lynch advances and opposes some of the key objections and arrives at the conclusion that "performance dimensions," that is, "certain identifiable characteristics of the performance of cities which are due primarily to their spacial qualities and which are measurable scales," might serve as the foundation for such a normative theory. Within this complex field of relations, Lynch finds that he can cluster the qualities of good cities around five "magic words." These words establish the dimensions within which the performance of any settlement can be assessed and into which our questions about city form can be cast and considered: *Vitality*, how well are the biological needs of the species (ours and others we depend upon) supported; *Sense*, to what degree is the structure of the settlement apparent and to what extent does our perception of it match valued environmental and cultural constructs; *Fit*, how nearly does the form and capacity of spaces, buildings, roadways coincide with the desired and actual uses to which they are put; *Access*, how easily can one reach other people, places, services, information; *Control*, to what extent are the creation, repair, modification, and management of spaces controlled by those who use, work, or reside in them? Lynch would calibrate each of these five measures according to two "meta criteria:" Justice, which balances the gains among persons; and *Efficiency*, which balances the gains among values.

How one finds or designs a place which performs well within these dimensions is the subject of Part III of *A Theory of Good City Form*. Lynch presents some possibilities, some applications related to city size, growth and conservation, urban "textures and networks," city models and designs, as well as a richly imagined "Place Utopia," a city one may or may not want to inhabit, but which is certainly worth exploring.

Throughout *A Theory of Good City Form*, Lynch moves between the closely observed particular image and the well formulated general idea, between the concrete occurrence and the informing abstraction, quickly and with assurance. This volume, a *work*book in the best sense, includes four generous appendices covering functional theory as it contrasts with Lynch's normative theory, the language used to describe city patterns and its effects on those forms, some of the sources of city values out of which the performance dimensions developed, and a fascinating catalogue of the models of city form, along with an extensive bibliography.

Although he sees his theory at present as "hardly more than a group of related hypotheses," Lynch ends the expository section of this work by saying that "a useful, intellectually engaging theory of city form is quite possible." And on the evidence of his book, we've hope to agree.

Out of My Depths
by Paul West
Doubleday, 1983, $12.95
Paul E. Hutchison

Sluicing the mind is not a casual undertaking, not merely the manhandling of experience in the rough, lopping it off in lengths like so much pulp wood and then punching it down the rhetorical flume. No. This is delicate work, like birling on a toothpick in high seas white-capped with 40-foot breakers. Style, finesse, a deep lungful of courage are the prerequisites for this endeavor, and Paul West brings these qualities to bear in *Out of My Depths*, the chronicle of his fight toward an equal floating with the aqueous environment.

This memoir of the chlorinated abyss is yet another bravura performance by a writer as averse to the strictures of genre as an erstwhile Gulliver to the bondage of Lilliputians. Poet, essayist, reviewer and novelist, West defies classification by the sheer vigor of his mind, producing works as widely divergent as the nonfiction bestseller *Words For A Deaf Daughter* and his most recent novel, *The Very Rich Hours of Count von Stauffenberg*, evoking in this latter text the fascinating first person narrative voice of his dead protagonist. Such technical virtuosity is strictly the rule by which readers gauge this writer's development, but even those initiated by his earlier works will appreciate the extension of awareness achieved in *Out of My Depths*. And for those readers encountering West for the first time in this volume, the cover should bear the simple instructions: Take a deep breath, then dive in.

One's struggle to swim might at first seem a paltry subject for such book-length attention, conjuring apprehensions of doleful plodding through inevitable commonplaces, exciting distasteful expectations of a text as dull and lifeless as an aged swimming instructor striding the slick spit gutters shouting, "Stroke, kick, kick," while wondering if the morning's dollop of zinc oxide will keep his nose from peeling. Don't be fooled. Between the diving board and the deep end lies the cosmos of infinity, and West sails this region like a Cousteau of the consciousness, riding an imagination atremble with entelechy, helping us see things anew. The trick is in the structure.

Rhetorical ontogeny recapitulates aquatic phylogeny, and you are there, suffering the pain of a displaced center of gravity, sinking with legs held rigid at 45°. But this problem gives way to intimations of adequacy trailing clouds of hoary bubbles while afloat above the flounder. Miracle of miracles. "Frog spawn floated at least as well as I."

At last "a swimmer in the universe," West explores his new medium as if backstroking through the Lagoon Nebula in Sagittarius. This unfamiliar world spins on its axiom: "If the absurd exists, we are it." But far from daunted, West sings his new independence, sinks, hums a few more bars, snorts a bubble, then bites it in half. Encouraged thus to attempt extremes (What else matters?), he expands his metaphor of water and mind like controlled fusion in a neutron flash, letting it grow till time and experience are cheated of their personal affront and open with moist willingness to imaginative penetration. This astrolunging is exhausting work, this learning "not so much to swim, as how to break the habit of assuming a stance and saying there it is, that part of me will never change." Yet the realization is the reward, and the swimmer earns his rest, plopping down on the deck, a limp Icarus in an asbestos wet suit.

Style is the hallmark of every true craftsman, and *Out of My Depths* could be Paul West's masterpiece. If you have read his earlier books, you will hear echoes from *Alley Jaggers* and *Colonel Mint*, as well as recognize the irrepressible imagination that in *I, Said the Sparrow* led to speculation on the taste of snot. "The secret was there to find, built into the nature of things, along with radium and mc2 and pi," and this secret energizes West's writing with a passion that is infectious. To speculate is to fly. Mental freedom is just a thought away, and he pursues it with a style which "thwacks the H from its O," and invites us into the gulf to look around. Ranging from Beckett to DeQuincey, from Barnard's Star to Mr. Microphone ("Hi, good looking, we'll be back to pick you up later"), this writer teaches us that "Truth is . . . the most blessed contaminant of all," and he leaves us itching for another fix. In short, *Out of My Depths* encompasses the anarchic joy of primordial discovery, and serves it up dripping with exponential rewards.

The Well-Built Elephant and Other Roadside Attractions, A Tribute to American Eccentricity

by J. J. C. Andrews
Congdon & Week, Inc.,
1984, paperback, $16.95

"Architecture that cannot offer shelter is remiss in its obligations for man's need to be protected; architecture that cannot radically change has defeated man's need to aspire; architecture that cannot offer fantasy fails man's need to dream. The difference between Form-follows-function and the Duck Design Theory might be compared to the choices between sex exclusively for procreation or sex for enjoyment. Both can produce the same results; but only the later makes life worth living." So reads James Wines' last point in his "Duck Design Theory," referred to elsewhere in this issue. James Andrews, who quotes this manifesto in *The Well-Built Elephant*, swerves definitely in favor of enjoyment, distraction even, although compiling his book led him closer to utilitarian, if not puritanical concerns.

After architecture school, where he preferred the "visual, special, offbeat," Andrews entered show business and discovered his first heraldic building while on tour: Charlie's Burger House, built in the shape of a huge burger and intended to show business with architecture you can read, like a rebus. Already an enthusiastic photographer, Andrews began taking pictures of all such buildings. Logically, he started in Los Angeles, and his book loosely follows the pattern of *California Crazy* (see SITES 6), which he credits. Where that book restricted itself, however, to the state with the greatest concentration of rebus buildings, James scans the entire country and more; where *California Crazy* presented a historical and theoretical panorama in David Gebhard's introduction, James focuses on the individual buildings. (He went inside, talked with their buildiers, owners, or renters, and prints elemental floor plans and elevations for many of the structures. Conversely, Gebhard has written a brief, bird's-eye forward for this survey.) The first book is scarcely "crazy"; the second much more "California"—right down to a last-line acknowledgement in the form of an Oscar speech. Anyone who wants either, should have the other too.

Among the mostly useful, mostly commercial buildings that Andrews includes in this album, The Big Duck, Lucy, the book's title Elephant, (see SITES 5), and The Turtle deserve special attention. All three are located in the eastern portion of our continent; The Turtle is Canadian, serving as the Native American Indian Center. Lucy attracts Andrews' customary yet most comprehensive treatment: six pages, eleven photos (some historic, all undated), and nearly a full page of plans. Sketching its background and stating the building's intended function, Andrews also records in simple detail Lucy's impressive dimensions and allocation of space as well as structural materials: "Her ears are 17 feet long, her tusk 22 feet, her tail 26 feet. The trunk which was used as an ash chute, is 36 feet. The basic structure is a timber-box form. . . ." (Oddly, Andrews ignores Lucy's feature-film debut at the beginning of Louis Malle's *Atlantic City*.) The historically important Big Duck earns less interest: two pages, three photos, half a page of text, no plans, mention but no discussion of the vociferous controversies that centered on the dumb duck. *The Well-Built Elephant* is an informative, perky though slight seer's guide.

In many ways the most provocative structure in the book, The Turtle provokes Andrews not at all. Noting that it was built for non-commercial reasons, Andrews does not say when as he itemizes his usual list of *size*: 63,000 square feet, 3 stories high; *substance*: concrete walls supporting a geodesic dome; *space*: "The head and neck area contain a restaurant and a dining galley (in the turtle's mouth). . . ." (Form often appropriates function in these buildings as Andrews light-handedly reveals.) The Turtle is the most inclusive symbolic structure in the book, designed to invoke the mythology and identity of a people, some of whom, as Andrews rightly points out, believed that the earth rests on a turtle's back and called our continent "the great turtle island." Designed by the Arapaho architect Dennis Sun Rhodes, The Turtle does not ask us to chuckle nor does it invite consideration as a fantasy. With its circle in the floor representing the cycle of life and its compass signifying the four winds, the Turtle rejects rebus architecture as provincial lunacy or "American eccentricity," which Andrews' subtitle hails. No, the Turtle insists on its centricity. It is fair architecture, but in the universal circus. Neither Andrews' book—breezy and delightful as a roller coaster ride with an ice cream cone—nor *California Crazy* heft many of the questions that The Turtle raises. Among them, these: when we look at such buildings merely as fantasies, quaint aberations, what do we say about ourselves, about the tabu we have placed on totem, about the significance of our significant? Or, as Wines says, about what makes life worth living? Second, how is it that we have no esthetic criteria for such architecture, no premises for comparison? Casual inventorying is fine—fun too—but when and how do we learn to know the bad, the good, or at least the better?

Finally, is the work of Gaudí a partial answer, larger and previous to such questions?

R.C.

SITES
Back Issues

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The Bayard Building
Short essay by Dennis Dollens on Louis Sullivan's only building in New York. Illustrated with 3 historic photographs. 1979: 6 pages. OUT OF PRINT

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Poem by Octavio Armand printed in its original Spanish and translated into English by Carol Maier and into Hebrew by Matti Megged. Accompanied by Richard Mikita's essay discussing the history and three sites of this cemetery founded in 1682. Illustrated with 5 B&W photographs and a map. 1980, 8 pages, pamphlet format. $1.00

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Paul West describes his visit and tour of the Vehicle Assembly Building at Cape Kennedy in this essay full of his personal observations as well as standard tour and tourist information. Illustrated with 5 B&W photographs. 1980, 8 pages, pamphlet format. $1.00

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Wall St.
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Lucy, The Margate Elephant by Donna Hildreth; *Campus Cemetery, Cornell University (poem)* by Diane Ackerman; *Ithaca's First Cemetery—A Note* by Ingeborg Wald; *Roofscapes of Manhattan* by Percival Goodman, FAIA; *Jujol's Casa Negre* by Dennis Dollens; Reviews

Illustrated with 19 B&W photographs. 1981, 20 pages, OUT OF PRINT

SITES 6
An Azur Triumph—Frank O. Gehry's Santa Monica Place Sign by Ronald Christ; *Photocopying a Melrose Avenue Building* by SITES; *Interview: Robert Sweeney on the Schindler House; In the Home Arcade, Lisle, Illinois, Gottlieb's Humpty Dumpty (1942)* by Paul West; *Why I Have Chosen to Live in Paris* by Juan Goytisolo; *Jama Masjid, Delhi (poem)* by Agha Shahid Ali; *Houses Like Machines, Cities Like Geometry, Worlds Like Grids of Friendly Feelings: Doris Lessing—Masterbuilder* by Ann Snitow; *An Open Letter (a free-will offering) to St. Bartholomew's Church* by Percival Goodman, FAIA; Reviews

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SITES 7
Special Artist Issue
MEDIA SITES/MEDIA MONUMENTS
Muntadas
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12 pages with 2 B&W illustrations, 8 color detachable postcards. 1982, staple bound. $3.00

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The Bond Sign by Kerry Tucker; *A Great Collaborator of Gaudí* by José María Jujol, Jr.; *Jujol's Casa Planells* by Dennis Dollens; *The Cast-Iron Bridges of Central Park: A Walking Tour:* by Margot Gayle; *Interview: Joseph Bresnan* by SITES; *Dreamland* by Roger Cardinal; *To the Buddha of Chinatown* by Severo Sarduy; *Ice Dragons, Central Park West* by Diane Ackerman; *The Most Decorated Village* by Joyce Crain; *Kafka's Prague* by Matti Megged; Reviews

Illustrated with 29 photographs, 1 map; 44 pages (with 8 page foldout designed by Catalina Parra). 1982, staple bound. $3.00

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SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE PORTLAND BREAKWATER LIGHTHOUSE.

Issue includes a paper model of the lighthouse to cut out and assemble. *Introduction* by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.; *The Portland Breakwater Lighthouse* by Peter D. Bachelder; *A Note on the Design of the Portland Breakwater Lighthouse* by Dennis Dollens; *Cape Hatteras Lighthouse* by Kitty Beasley Edwards; *A History of Lighthouses* by Alan Stevenson; *Paper Model: The Portland Breakwater Lighthouse* by Neal Mayer; *New York's Little Red Lighthouse* by SITES; Reviews

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Illustrated with 78 B&W photographs and drawings, 1 map. 1983, 84 pages, perfect bound. $5.00

SITES 12

The Big Duck (Long Island, NY)

The Big Duck, Howard Mansfield; *Berliner Chronik,* Juan Goytisolo; *Lewis Mumford,* Barbara Probst Solomon; *Megalithic Tables,* Mario Satz; *Affective Gravity,* Richard Mikita; *Arpilleras,* Ricardo Willson A.; *Shadow Architecture,* Paul Zelevansky; *Building the Poem,* Diane Ackerman; *Stonewall Jackson at Manassas,* Bruce Dearing; *The Three Gardens,* Laurence Goldstein; *The Triangle Fire,* Grace Schulman; *Parable with Bison and Pits,* Octavio Armand; *Translator's Note,* Carol Maier; *After the Fogs and Excavations,* Laurence Lieberman; *Sites,* Albert Goldbarth; *Tulum,* José Emilio Pacheco; *Moving Houses,* Margaret Sayers Peden; *New Work—Barcelona,* José Llinás; *Jujol Update,* SITES; Reviews.

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All postcards are black and white photographs.

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2. *The Bayard Building* (photographic detail of Louis Sullivan's only New York building)
3. *The Portland Breakwater Lighthouse* (cast-iron lighthouse, Portland, Maine)

Jujol postcard series

4. *Casa Negre* (view of the mirador) Sant Joan Despí, Spain
5. *Torre de la Creu* (general view) Sant Joan Despí, Spain
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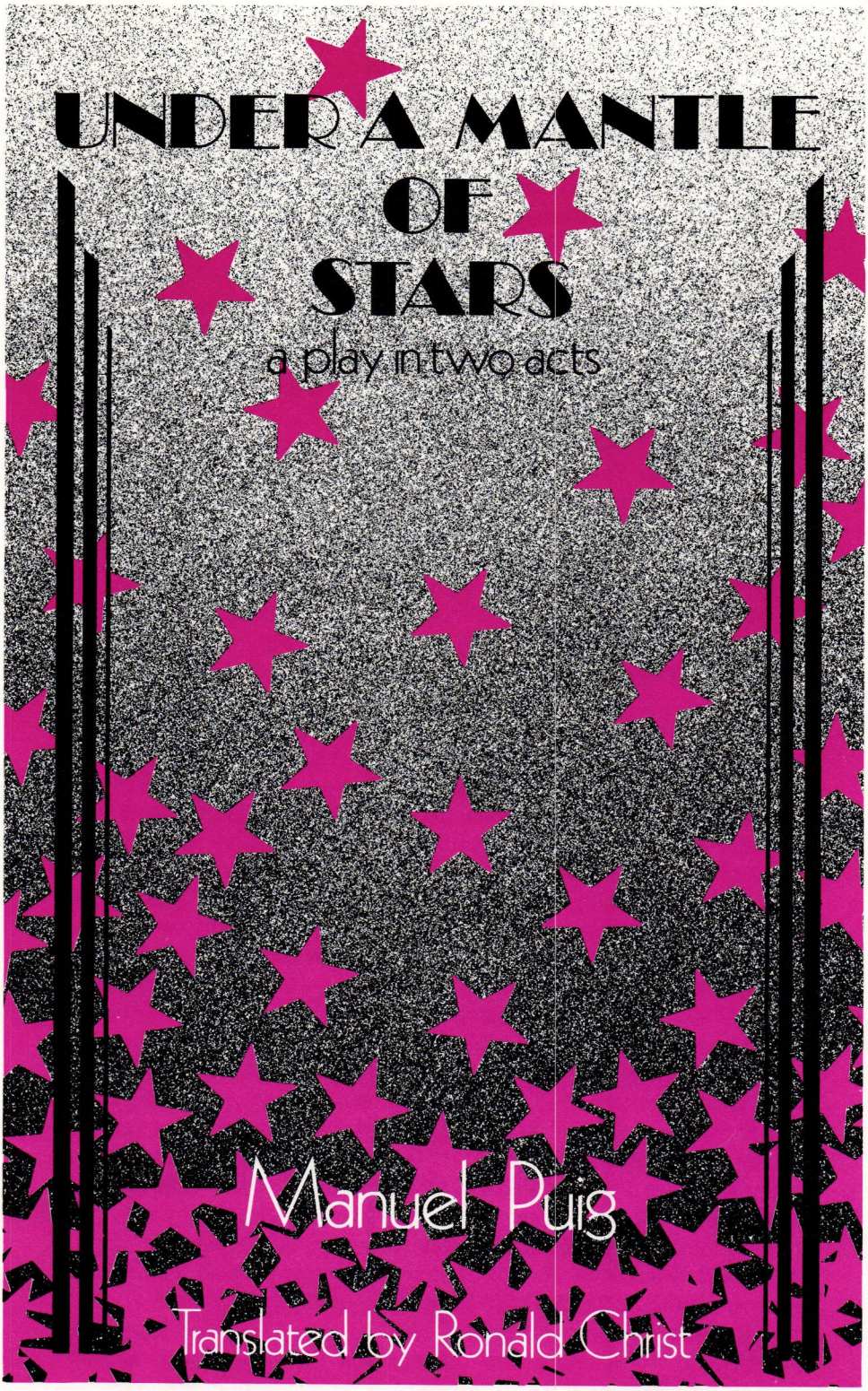

Inverting life's hourglass by means of memory and imagination, "Under a Mantle of Stars" tilts past into present, wish into fulfillment, and identity into role, only to flip them back again in a shocking conflict of passion, fantasy, crime, and comedy where "everything is legitimate, including our desires." Readers accustomed to Puig's dramatic novels will find here a play that reads like a novella. They will also find everything from voyeuristic, Oedipal sex to domestic farce in this hilariously stylized drama that pits the psychology of nostalgia against personal politics—the absurdly pathetic and terrifyingly funny world of Manuel Puig.

$4.50 (tentative)

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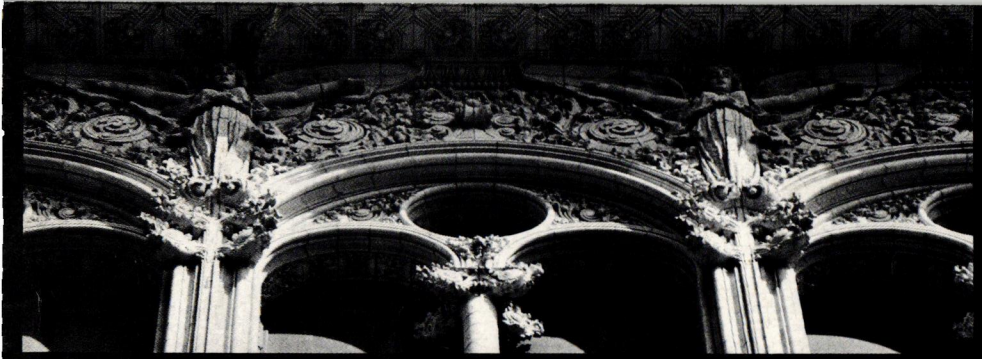
DIANE ACKERMAN teaches at Washington University; her most recent book of poems is *Lady Faustus* (Morrow). ■ **OCTAVIO ARMAND** is a Cuban-born poet who lives in New York where he edits *escandalar;* he recently published *With Dusk* (Logbridge-Rhodes). ■ **BRUCE DEARING** teaches at the State University of New York Upstate Medical Center ■ **ALBERT GOLDBARTH** just finished a Guggenheim Fellowship and is preparing to return to teaching at the University of Texas. His most recent book is *Original Light: New and Selected Poems 1973-1983* (Ontario Review Press). ■ **LAURENCE GOLDSTEIN**, who edits the *Michigan Quarterly Review,* is just finishing a book on the flying machine and modern literature to be published next year by Indiana University Press.

■ **JUAN GOYTISOLO**'s most recent novel translated into English is *Makbara* (Seaver Books). ■ **THOMAS HOEKSEMA** has published essays, translations, and reviews in the field of contemporary Latin American literature. ■ **PAUL E. HUTCHISON** teaches at The Pennsylvania State University. ■ **HELEN LANE** is is an American who has drifted on cultural winds to Southwest France to live and work. ■ **LAURENCE LIEBERMAN** recently published a book of poems entitled *Eros at the World Kite Pagent* (Macmillan Co.); his next book, *The Mural of Wakeful Sleep,* will be published in 1985. ■ **JOSE LLINAS** is a practicing architect in Barcelona where he also teaches and freqently contributes to *Quarderns.* ■ **CAROL MAIER** teaches Spanish language and literature at Bradley University. She has published numerous translations of Octavio Armand's poetry and essays, most recently *With Dusk.* ■ **ADRIENNE L. MARTIN** is a translator working in Massachusetts. ■ **HOWARD MANSFIELD**, author of several children's stories and the forthcoming *An American Castle* (American Life Foundation,) frequently writes on architectural subjects. ■ **RICHARD MIKITA** is a computer poet living in Bloomington, Indiana. ■ **JOSE EMILIO PACHECO** is a contemporary Mexican poet, novelist, editor, critic, and translator. ■ **MARGARET SAYERS PEDEN** is the translator of Carlos Fuentes' *Terra Nostra,* among many other works. ■ **MARIO SATZ**, the Argentine born author of *Sol,* is currently living in Spain. ■ **PAUL SACHNER** is an architectural writer, historian, and Associate Editor of *Architectural Record.* ■ **GRACE SCHULMAN**'s books of poetry include *Burn Down the Icons* and *Hemispheres* (forthcoming from Sheep Meadow Press). ■ **BARBARA PROBST SOLOMON** has just published a new memoir-novel, *Short Flights* (Viking). Her essays have appeared in the *New York Times,* the *New York Review,* and *El País.* ■ **RICARDO WILLSON A.** is a Chilean writer and poet. ■ The artist and poet, **PAUL ZELEVANSKY,** recently received a NYSCA special grant to design a computer game based on an earlier book *The Case for the Burial of Ancestors.* The "Crossroads Travel Brochure" is from *Shadow Architecture at the Crossroads, a Visual Novel in Progress.*



Next

THE BAYARD BUILDING

SITES 13 focuses on Louis Sullivan's only building in New York City, featuring "The Bayard Building: French Paradox and American Synthesis" by Narciso G. Menocal. In this three-part essay Menocal discusses the meanings Sullivan attached to the elements of the building's facade; the parallel between Sullivan's architectural theory and those held by the French romantic architects; and the comparison between Sullivan's and Victor Hugo's beliefs concerning the function of the language of architecture. A reprint of "The Tall Building Artistically Considered" will bring Sullivan's voice to the issue, and to illustrate the building SITES 13 will contain a portfolio of new photographs.

SITES 13

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