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Volume I Winter 1980 Number IV

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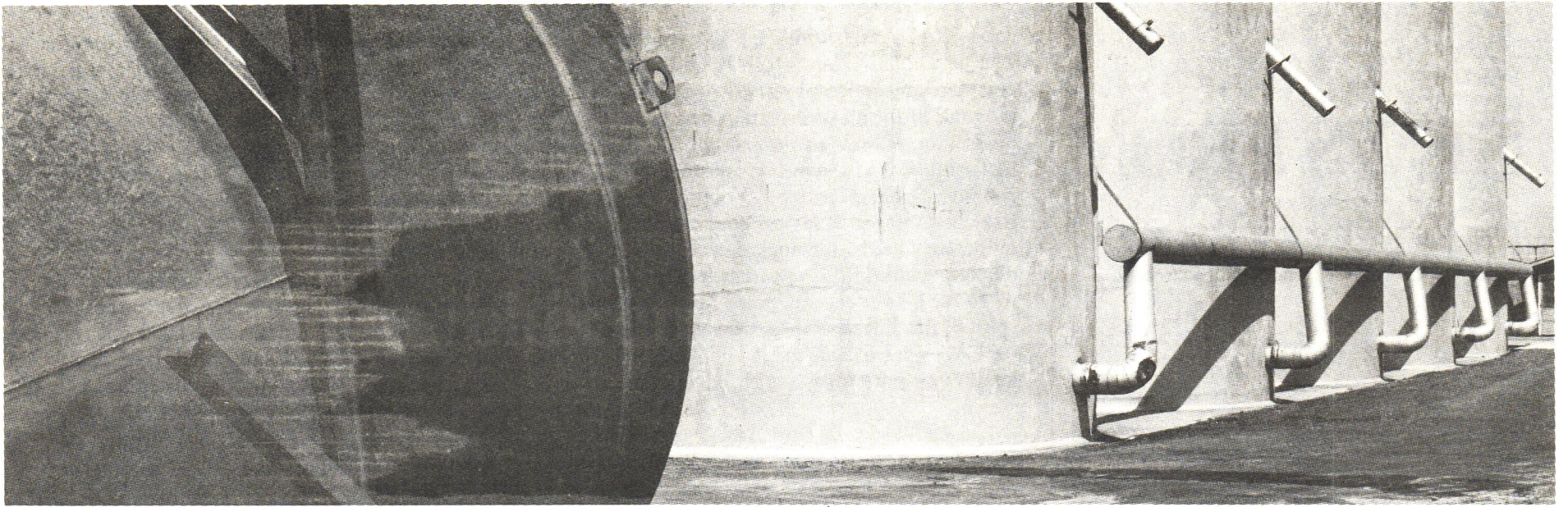
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FROM THE EDITORS

Arising almost spontaneously from the files of *Archetype*, this issue explores the affinities between architecture and literature. This interdisciplinary approach might reflect our own prejudices, or more likely be a product of the current architectural milieu where a deep rift exists between the poetic and prosaic. The Austrian architect, Joseph Frank, offers a solution in his essay "Accidentism" which seeks to absolve architects (and poets) from guilt by pointing out how little responsibility they have for the actual state of things.

The most flagrant "ringer" in this literary issue is a favorite underground building of ours, Villa Malaparte by Adalberto Libera. The villa, a love-child of Architecture and Literature, inspired Libera to write some of the most beautifully descriptive passages in literature about the romantic aspects of architecture. Malaparte, a stylistic writer, and Libera, a taste-conscious architect, share an affinity for rationalist sparseness.

The obvious choice for literary architect is Eisenman. An Eisenman building does not exist by itself. A litany of description, a manual of "how to use it" is necessary to unravel the concepts behind it. Furthermore, an Eisenman building, like poetry, explores metaphor, and like prose, it is experienced sequentially. The parts of an Eisenman building, thus experienced, are fragments which constantly refer to and suggest a larger whole.

Lars Lerup's "Semiotic Architecture" extends this metaphoric relation. He uses the structure of language as an architectural tool; that is, he uses signs and signifiers, the semiotic vocabulary to decode his architecture. Architecture, like language, accumulates layers of meaning so that their continually reclassified connotative meaning masks their original denotative essence. The elements of architecture, then, like words, assume subtle cultural valences which build up as time passes. Thus, the tool of semiotics becomes a necessary instrument with which to probe these connotations or "meanings" so as to arrive at the pure building.

Alice Aycock, who uses cryptic fables and fairy tales to describe her art, uses this form of literature for explorations in another direction. Since her work, or virtually any work of art, deals with an irrational state of being, to describe it in exposition would be silly.

In a manner similar to Aycock, Brancusi explores the visual and the verbal realms. He derives inspiration from Romanian folk tales; similarly, Aycock uses myths. Brancusi's materials derive from the ancient tradition of architecture, stone on stone; whereas, Aycock uses modern materials. Brancusi may be called an "old world" artist; Aycock, like Frank Gehry, is a sheet rock wizard, the sheet rock wizard of art. While it can be said that both artists employ literature in

their visual art pursuits, they differ in temperament.

Finally, Frank's *Literary Architecture* epitomizes our entire issue. Her book was chosen, not only for its relevance to architects (a matter we leave up to the architects to decide), but for its grander scheme which is to connect architecture to literature. Frank turns the equation around; she tries to "build" a book. Like many of the articles covered in this issue, one artistic form is exchanged, or used in conjunction with another. Rather than make more obvious connections between two diverse art forms, we urge you to look at the individual articles in this issue. They do not exhaust the subject of architecture and literature—that was not our intent; but rather to stimulate thought about these ideas and connections. Perhaps you'll come up with some of your own through this open door to the unfinished building-in-progress, *Archetype*. PUT ON YOUR HARDHATS!

We also include an addendum to this editorial, by way of a *Modo* referendum, which points not only to our interest in "underground" art, but immodestly to our foresight.

*Modo*¹, the Italian design magazine, recently held a referendum on "A Hundred Projects Worth Remembering." One hundred buildings from the "Modern" period were nominated by Gregotti, Portoghesi, Zevi, Magistretti, and others. This referendum takes the temperature of the cultural tradition of the Modern Movement in Italy, and examines its present state. Of interest to *Archetype* readers is the winner, the Villa Malaparte, our Building of the Quarter.² When we sent our editor to Capri it was not to uncover a Superstar, but to investigate an underestimated work. *Archetype* did likewise with Frank Gehry's house in Santa Monica: within a month after publication it became a glamour performer, and the shelter magazines all rushed to cover it.

The significance of the *Modo* poll is that it signals the beginning of a shift in the taste of young (25-35) architects and students, and it indicates that they have located new and rather unexpected father figures among the pre-war generation, much more eccentric and unconventional than those adopted by "official" criticism. It marks a shift toward the values of pure invention and monumentality in architecture. *Modo* concludes that the Villa Malaparte must be considered one of the greatest masterpieces of modern Italian architecture.

¹*Modo*, December, 1979, p. 47.

²The top ten projects were: 1. Libera—*Villa Malaparte* (1938); Ponti—*Grattacielo Pirelli* (1956); BBPR—*Torre Velasca* (1957); Terragni—*Novocomum* (1926); Nervi—*Orbetello Hangars* (1939); Scarpa—*Brion Funeral Chapel* (1970); Aymonino—*Gallaratese* (1967); Nervi—*Palazzetto dello Sport di Roma* (1956); Albini & Helg—*Rinascende di Roma* (1956); Figini & Pollini—*House for an Artist* (1933).

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Cover: The Villa Malaparte by Adalberto Libera, 1938-40, Capri. Photograph by Andrew Batey

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NEWS FROM NOWHERE

Archetype begins a new column with this issue. "News from Nowhere" will include reviews of current art shows, photography, design or architectural exhibits, new architectural projects, controversies and just "talk of the town."

We are looking for material, written in a light, discursive manner, which will inform our readers of current happenings in art and architecture. One of our objectives is to amass reports from all over the world and to create a cultural exchange.

We invite you to contribute to "News from Nowhere." If you have something you would like to report on concerning a current event or a controversial project, please write it up in no more than 500 words and/or enclose no more than one pictorial image.

Direct material to "News from Nowhere" editor, Demetra Bowles, c/o ARCHETYPE, 84 Vandewater Street, San Francisco, CA 94133.

Letter from Across the Atlantic

London (Leon Krier)

One of our editors travelled to London last fall where he ran into the architect, Leon Krier. After discussing the current issues of architecture, our editor asked Krier for some input into the magazine. In reply, Krier sneeringly handed over the following letter, and commented: "This will heat up those optimistic Americans." Thank you Mr. Krier.

I have travelled a great deal in the United States, and as an L.A. student justifiably pointed out, only in the car does the North American feel relaxed and at peace. This charming person confirmed, with a grave insistence, that the source of this isolation, this permanent and regular movement (55 mph), was the fact that the American house, cultural places, workplace and recreational facilities (where sports are passionately participated in) are such a nightmare to the North American that peace can be found only when fleeing from one place to another.

The "undeniable" seduction of this lifestyle (4 to 5 hours on the road per day, per person, consuming 60% of the world's annual energy) which so many Europeans feel compelled to love, could convince even the critical visitor for several days of the invariable course and the functionality of this mechanical civilization. And "pourquoi regretter le temps des bergers, la vitesse est une nécessité absolue de la vie moderne" ("why regret the pastoral age; speed is an absolute necessity of modern life": Le Corbusier).

I even met healthy men and women, with one head, two hands and two feet who knew nothing more pleasurable than aimlessly driving around L.A.; I even surprised myself by making long and useless detours

To some intellectuals, the total victory of industrial kitsch stands as the denied incarnation of the spirit of this age (Napoleon depicted after the Battle of Iéna on Walt Disney's mausoleums, probably . . .); whereas it should be a distressing and terrifying revelation to any mind, however unsubtle. The state of aggravated frustration caused by this environment compels a fanatical, almost religious adhesion not only in certain miserable intellectuals, but especially in the new generation educated by commercial television. The denial of necessary satisfactions, the aim constantly denied by futile consumption, seems to have found its redemption in ersatz. Ersatz triumphs over the aim itself. The city, reduced to a system of

commercial signs, becomes the fetish of the unsatiated. The occasional effort which is undertaken to raise commercial iconography and its dimensional void to the rank of the most important bearer of all cultural expression, is only a thinly disguised effort to raise that spirit born of commercial imperialism to a cultural pedestal which, after having polluted the entire earth from the Amazon to (ex) Saigon, its guilty conscience desperately needs. Ideological production and reproduction could, in this apparent state of things, seem to be secure for several generations to come if this spirit of the times and the fetishism willingly accepted on both sides of this great continent were not but another disguise for the crisis of an entire economic system.

I visited a dozen cities where they showed me: recently opened, sterilized and air-conditioned shopping centers; prestigious residential areas where houses in castle-like costumes—clean, fragile and ephemeral—are placed in a falsely familiar and sympathetic nature; and apparently endless costly and idyllic landscapes.

To my inquiry: "what indeed are the good things of North American life?", a member of the Washington planning committee answered me with a slight smile which probably indicated, "all the lights left on in a house when going out in the evening for a visit . . ." In fact, the feeling of insecurity in prestigious residential areas is so strong that merely leaving on the lights is not enough to suggest a human presence; but sophisticated systems, irregular enough so as not to be taken for automated systems, now exist to switch lights on and off: doll houses which in the near future will emit babies' cries, cats miaowing, and noisy domestic fights, all on order from IBM or Bell Company.

Despite a consciousness of the distressed state of things—a society in utter discomfort, in myopic isolation and in unresisting surrender to the commercial terrorism of the media—I had begun to believe what 99% of the white middle-class Americans seem to believe: that the American system of cities could function for generations until oil and other resources were completely depleted.

Like so many others, I began to believe this while in my sad isolation at Princeton, where I was more occupied with turning over the pages of our European past, accumulated at great expense in the vaults of one of the world's finest architectural libraries, than by the project of visiting these "United" States which were still unknown to me and yet seemed without mystery.

While visiting the ancient city of St. Louis on the Mississippi River, I was brutally pulled out of this numbness. About 1900, after having been sold or resold to several nations, this city became one of the largest expanding North American metropolises. After the recent purifications, only a small church remained of this large French city. A European historian friend who settled on the banks of the Mississippi ten years ago reminded me that the psychological walls which guilt constructs in the soul of the ascending classes are more water-tight and probably more lasting than concrete walls. Zoning, in fact, is a planning technique which should be analyzed ultimately as a pathology of power. The speed with which the American city transforms itself results in misery and bleakness in those consumed zones. Cities are transformed into foul dumps three or four years after the white exodus as black misery and poverty complete the consumption process.

LEARN FROM ST. LOUIS—

LEARN FROM THE SOUTH BRONX

A four-hour car ride through destroyed and abandoned neighborhoods where the streets are strewn with burnt automobile carcasses, felled trees, 80% dilapidated houses without roofs or windows, teaches me then that from now on, not only houses, but even large urban structures, highways, great hotels, and

shopping centers will be consumed. The largest railway station ever constructed in stone and bronze on earth, hereafter is to be filled with garbage and rusted scrap iron. Yet, twenty kilometers from here, a new city is being built. Consumed by the whites and completed by the blacks, the great geographic structures, the entire territory, hereafter will be made part of the production and the futile consumption uniquely controlled by the absurdity of profit.

The system of aggravated frustrations assumes here the scale of an endless strategy, a lustreless apocalypse; and if we want to save our European cities from the ravages of this absurdity, it becomes a duty to visit these disaster areas. Beverly Hills/Hollywood is not Los Angeles, Manhattan is not New York, the Regency Hyatt is certainly not Detroit, and Levittown is not Trenton. To learn from South Bronx and to forget Las Vegas, this is not done in order to become savagely anti-North American, but to become savagely anti-industrial.

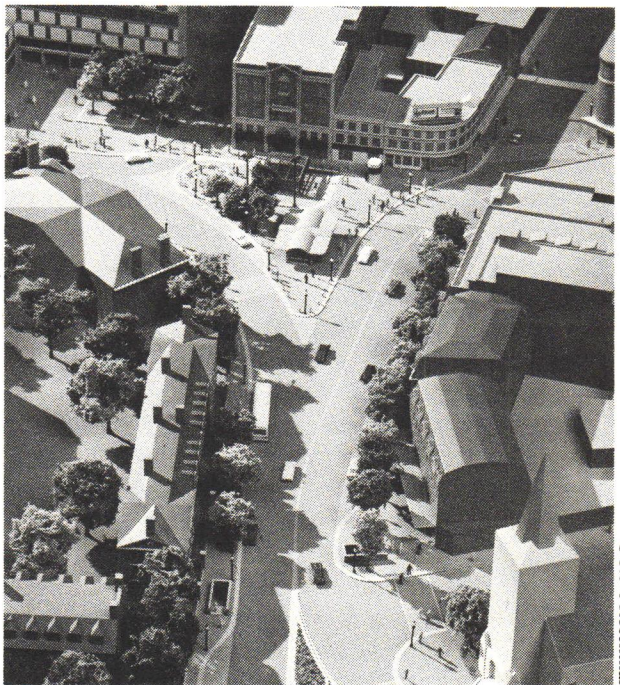
If we do not want to submit ourselves to Hegel, we should at least open our eyes before completely losing our sight and our intelligence.

—Leon Krier, London Translated by Demetra Bowles

Postscript to Krier

Through the smoke of indignation and rambling generality which often envelops loquacious tourists, one point worth noting does manage to surface in Mr. Krier's letter, albeit a point that has not escaped notice in America. And that is that the cities of North America are places of ruin and desolation at their core. The irony is that the message is not for America but for Europe lest the Old World follow the New.

—Henry Bowles



Art on the line

Cambridge (Lois E. Nesbitt)

We've always supported "underground" projects. All our readers should know this by now. A correspondent picks up on this concern and reports—admittedly with a twist—on a new project running "underground" in Cambridge:

Imagine walking into a subway station to the tune of a chiming windmill, descending an escalator plastered with crumpled bronze gloves, and waiting for the train while staring at a mural of life-sized cows. These novel projects, among seventeen others, are scheduled to be installed in subways in Cambridge, Massachusetts by 1984.

The works, recently displayed in an exhibit called "Arts on the Line" at MIT's Hayden Gallery, run the artistic gamut from humorous to grave, from

monumental to miniscule. Although the show captures the ingenuity of the schemes, it cannot convey the experience of seeing them in their future subterranean homes. What we see are four rooms of scaled drawings, meticulous models, and sample fragments; whereas, what we get are four subway stations filled with some pretty outlandish ideas.

Arts on the Line is a pioneer effort in public art. At stake in this effort are public space and public tax dollars. In 1977, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, a federal agency, granted the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority \$45,000 to run the program as a pilot for similar projects in other U.S. cities. Five artworks were chosen for each station along the subway's Red Line extension.

The artists involved in the project go to extremes to adjust their works to the subway environment—most of the art screams for attention. Gyorgy Kepes creates a monumental stained glass window that transforms passing headlights of underground buses. Stephen Antonalos pins neon arcs along an escalator. A windmill makes music when people walk by it, and a metal mobile shatters light through prismatic diffraction. The architects and artists try to integrate their designs, but in most cases, art remains object: the works are isolated appendages tacked onto architecture.

And, unfortunately, the architecture does not rival the inventiveness of the art. Faced with severe limitations (often working around existing buildings, tracks, and roadways) the architects rarely escape conventionalism. All four stations are constructed of red brick (a Cambridge architectural staple which doubles as a coloristic symbol of the Red Line) and all use curves to imply Flow and Movement.

Corporate architecture meets Harvard Square in the station renovated by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill. The station is a well-oiled machine—lots of cold, grey curves and interconnected parts. Kepes's glass wall brightens the interior, but the two outdoor monumental sculptures are simply plunked down on islands of brick.

The Alewife station, constructed of skylights and skeletal white beams, reveals its designers' (Wallace, Floyd, Ellenzweig, Moore, Inc.) determination to diffuse natural light into underground space. Unfortunately, the architects include a conventional multi-level raised parking facility which visually outweighs the station itself. At Porter Square, the Cambridge Seven Associates, Inc. surface the station with a de-railed urban park of bland grey paving and solitary trees.

Subway stations present all manner of aesthetic obstacles. The ups and downs, and the good and bad of this project are the result of artists and architects boldly grappling with the fusion of Art and Life, albeit underground in this case.

Innovation and Functionalism

New York (Livio Dimitriou)

Not only do we provide our readers with *reviews* of art-related happenings, but we also like to keep them abreast of these current events. Brief news comes from an East Coast correspondent who reports on:

An exhibit entitled "Architecture: Innovation and Imagination," organized by David Simon, chairman of the art department at State University of New York, College at Cortland, will open April 10 and run until May 4, 1980, in the Ruth E. Dowd Fine Arts Gallery in Cortland, New York.

Besides works borrowed from major university art museums (the Johnson Museum of Cornell University, the Princeton Art Museum, the University of Michigan Museum of Art) and individual collectors, the exhibit includes the work of Michael Graves, Frederick St. Florian, Emilio Ambasz, John Hejduk, Livio Dimitriou,

and Alberto Perez-Gomez.

•••

A recent phenomenological interpretation of the origins of modern architecture in the late 17th and 18th centuries has been published in Spanish (Editorial Limusa). Among the architects discussed are Guarini, Perrault, Lodoli, Boullée, and Durand. *La Genesis y Suderacion del Funcionalismo en Arquitectura* by Professor Alberto Perez-Gomez, is available from the publisher, or write to the author at Syracuse University, School of Architecture, 103 Slocum Hall, Syracuse, New York 13210.



Derrill Bazzy

Visit by Botta

Blacksburg, VA (Michael Hedgepeth)

A Virginia correspondent writes us that two Ticino architects, Mario Botta and Mario Campi, visited the College of Architecture at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg during October 1979. We wondered why they chose this site for their visit, and he had this to say:

It is not surprising that Mr. Botta made his first appearance in the United States in Blacksburg; nor is it surprising that the students at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University are well acquainted with Mr. Botta's work. He visited this school for a very definite reason: the College of Architecture at VPI & SU is perhaps one of the only schools in the nation which has a direct connection, through Professor Olivio Ferrari, with the architects working in the canton of Ticino. Ferrari, a graduate of the School of Design at Ulm, practiced architecture and collaborated with Max Bill in Switzerland before coming to Blacksburg in 1965 to help build the College of Architecture with Dean Charles Burchard.

The bond between the school and the Ticino architects is very strong; the students themselves annually construct an alliance through the school's twelve year-old summer Study Abroad Program, which is directed by Professors Ferrari and Egger in Lugano, Ticino. In this way, the College of Architecture maintains a refreshing association with the architects of the Ticino and of Europe, a connection which continually grows.

The College of Architecture thus provides the point of departure for the construction of a bridge between the continents—a free span which connects architects and architecture. It was across this bridge that Mario Botta came to VPI & SU.

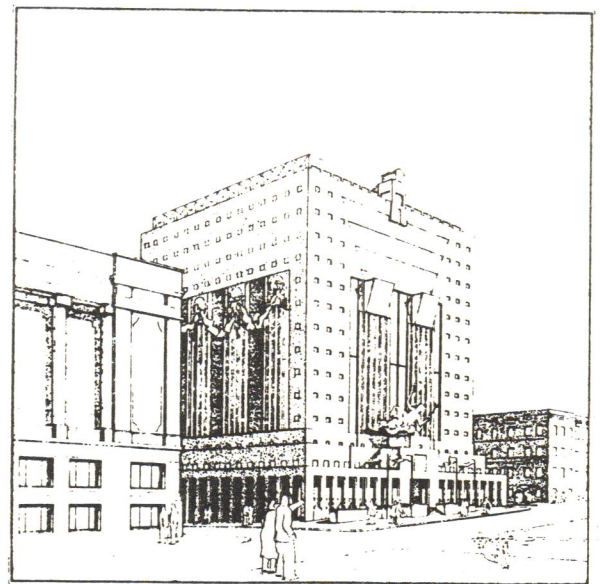
The success which the Mario Botta catalog met with at this school not only testifies to the strength of the

connection but also to the necessity of his visit. One of the links between the students at this school and the architects of Europe was solidified through the completion of the summer program cycle. And it is this visit—which became an assertion of the purpose of the connection itself—that is the exploration of the realm of architecture.

It was particularly encouraging to see such a strong statement about architecture present itself so willfully in the constitution of one man. During his stay, Mr. Botta worked with the students on a sketch project. Through his general evaluation of the work that he saw, Mr. Botta extemporaneously delivered his impressions of architecture as it is practiced today. And one realized that his work and his beliefs are entirely coherent with one another. One may say that Mario Botta is simply an architect, but not a simple architect. Mr. Botta remains an architect who is unaffected by novelty. His drawings are beautifully done, but their strength derives from the information which they carry, not from the drawing itself. It is with the sense of "architecturalness" that Mr. Botta practices. He recognizes the necessity of possessing working knowledge of those tools used to present an idea, but he does not allow the influence of insecure and non-architectural elements to enter into his work. He remains unconfuted in this sense because his experience primarily comes from the building of buildings, instead of unrealized projects. Thus, he practices architecture through an operational understanding of architectural history and this sense of "architecturalness".

For the College of Architecture, Mr. Botta's presentation was a gratifying event, since the purpose of the connection between the continents, the exploration of the realm of architecture was substantially enriched.

The exhibit "Projects of the 70's" by Swiss architect Mario Botta will be on view in Seattle at Blueprint: for Architecture. The exhibit was organized by Professor Livio Dimitriou and is directed at Blueprint by Larry Rouch.



Contest of Giants

Portland (Sandra Fairbank)

Like San Francisco's architectural lecture series, Western Addition, other similar series have sprung up around the country. About a month ago, we received a letter from the founder of Portland's lecture series, who tells us about the current flurry of other architectural activity in Oregon:

Portland, Oregon is buzzing with architectural activity. Canadian developers are proposing 6-block suburban shopping malls in the center of downtown, with architects and laymen alike trying to understand

what to make of this activity. Harry Weese, Joseph Esherick and Herbert McLaughlin came to Portland to advise on the project. Downtown Portland may be blessed with two downtown shopping malls.

The city is also the site of two of the most exciting competitions that U.S. architects have seen in decades. The first competition soon to be resolved by city mothers and fathers, is for a 16-story office building located between the renaissance revival City Hall and the thirties County Courthouse. The second competition, for which participants are now being selected, is for a city square in the middle of Portland's retail district. Paul Friedberg and a panel of citizen-jurists preside.

The Public Services Building competition, which began in the summer of 1979, is a "design-build" competition. Architect-contractor teams work together to design public buildings within a speculative building budget. Philip Johnson advises the 5-member lay jury with Morse-Diesel serving as project managers. Romaldo Giurgola/Broome, Oringdulph, O'Toole, Rudolf, Arthur Erickson/SRG Associates and Michael Graves were the architects selected last summer. They were each given \$40,000 and three months time to prepare schematic designs.

Philip Johnson has claimed that the work produced for Portland is the best he has ever seen in an architectural competition. What made it so good? Who did Philip Johnson and his citizen-jury recommend, and will the city abide by their recommendation? So many competitions end unhappily because the group initiating the competition cannot accept the shock of the most creative design. Will Portland follow suit?

The three competition entries represent the strongest tendencies prevailing in architecture in 1980, and they are executed by masters of these styles. Erickson's entry is a straightforward modernist building; whereas Giurgola's entry reveals his mastery of context and circulation and demonstrates his Kahnian commitment to order and clarity. Graves's polychromatic, highly ornamental building is deeply rooted not only in the history of building in Portland, but in the history of public building throughout the world.

For those whose primary concerns lie outside of trend-setting architecture, Arthur Erickson's building is the favorite. It is exactly the kind of building a west coast city would have been proud to build in the mid-70's. However, its receding body raised high on slender pilotis doesn't speak as much of the rainy Oregon climate as it does of the Mediterranean. Erickson offers a choice of concrete or mirrored glass facades.

Giurgola's building combines paired concrete and glass facades, and places the offices around a high atrium. It masterfully deals with the complex problems of entry and circulation posed by this site and reveals a clear ordering of functional elements throughout the building.

Michael Graves's entry, which has been described as an Egyptian fortress, as a piece of thirties kitsch and as a temple, is the most radical project for an office building since Modernism became the dominant mode. It resolves well problems of circulation, fulfills the programmatic requirements and at the same time makes a statement about public buildings and about high-rise buildings which is reminiscent of past traditions.

Philip Johnson recommends that Portland build Graves's design, which would be "a landmark from inception" and "would be watched and studied by the public as well as by architects around the world." Interestingly enough, Graves's building is the only one of the three which meets the \$22 million budget. The city currently is deciding whether to accept the jury's recommendation that they build Michael Graves's building. It is, of course, an election year, and somehow matters of great aesthetic importance have become political issues, issues to be decided by politicians.



Space, Sign, Subject

Davis, CA (Jeff Nickerson)

The connection between architecture and literature, as explored in this issue of *Archetype*, was the subject of an interdisciplinary conference at Davis. A correspondent writes the following:

The scope of the "Space, Sign, Subject" conference held on March 7th and 8th at the University of California, Davis was broad. It included work on surrealist poetics and medical semiotics; and the talks pertaining to architecture raised similar literary issues, especially a concern for the temporality of space.

Michel de Certeau discussed early medieval maps as narrative versions of space, and pointed to cognitive psychology studies which show that we map our environment as a story, an experiential narrative, rather than from a distanced view from above. The experiential aspects of how we perceive space was discussed by Paolo Fabbri in a talk on the strategy of "secret space". Secret space is hidden and uncertain space: the space behind the person we are talking to, the space we can only partially see through doors and windows. The process of perception becomes a mechanism of power. Manar Hammad emphasized this mechanism of power in the host-guest relationship in the Japanese house; the number of room borders a guest is allowed to pass becomes an aspectualization of the guest's competence.

Donald Preziosi stresses architecture as "an unfolding enunciated over time," and emphasizes architecture as part of a complex multimodal framework which includes the complementary structure of language. Again the emphasis is on process and interconnection. As Preziosi points out, "When you isolate and reify you analyze a dead fish."

Lars Lerup calls for the "triumph of seriality over unity," and his house works as the deconstructor of phantom family power mechanisms. The ultimate object deconstructed at the conference was that of space as "dead fish," an aerial map. When a stairway leads nowhere, as in Lars Lerup's "no family house," we become much more aware of the process of climbing.

Travel Drawings

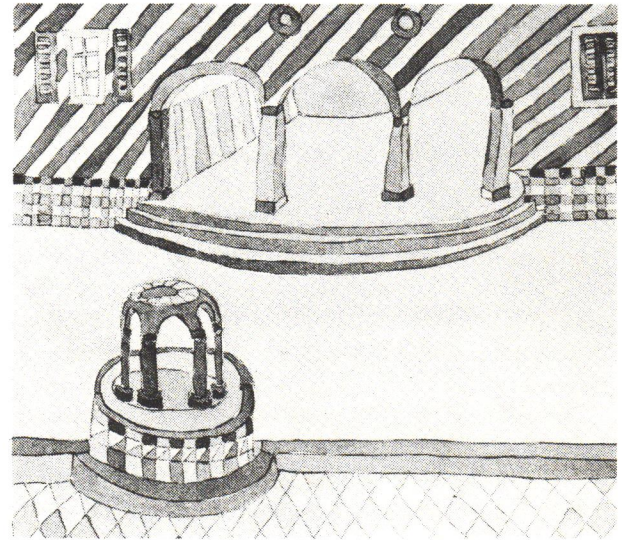
San Francisco

San Francisco hosts two architectural drawing shows in March and April. Richard Meier's work is on display at Modernism, 236 8th Street. Another architect, Keith Wilson, organized a show at Il Balcone Gallery, 478 Green Street, entitled "One Hundred Watercolors" by Wilson, and "Architects' Travel Sketches" which contains work by Laura Hart-

mann, Donlyn Lyndon, Mark Mack, Charles Moore, Richard Peters, William Turnbull. An editor reports his impressions of the shows:

Since architectural drawings hit the respectable art mart in New York (Castelli, Drawing Center, and Protech) and Dallas (Graves's prints for sale at Neiman Marcus), the West Coast too shared tryouts for this somewhat dubious art-market. Los Angeles, Seattle and now San Francisco (as early as 1978 Market Hour Gallery tried lovingly, without commercial success, to promote art by architects) have galleries devoted to architectural expression.

Two generic forms of architectural art fall under the definition of architectural drawings. One is the traditional way architects draw, including travel sketches, color studies, two-dimensional compositions, and commercial renderings of projects—all palatable to most who appreciate drawing as an art form. This first type is both a form of study for architects, and a decorative element found framed in living rooms over centuries. The other, more recent form tries to find an aesthetic within architectural definitions and becomes its own investigative tool. Here, reality and fiction are united and share a life of their own. Sometimes the drawing can live on its own grounds; when it does, the drawing remains the only witness of this investigation and can be regarded as important as any built work.

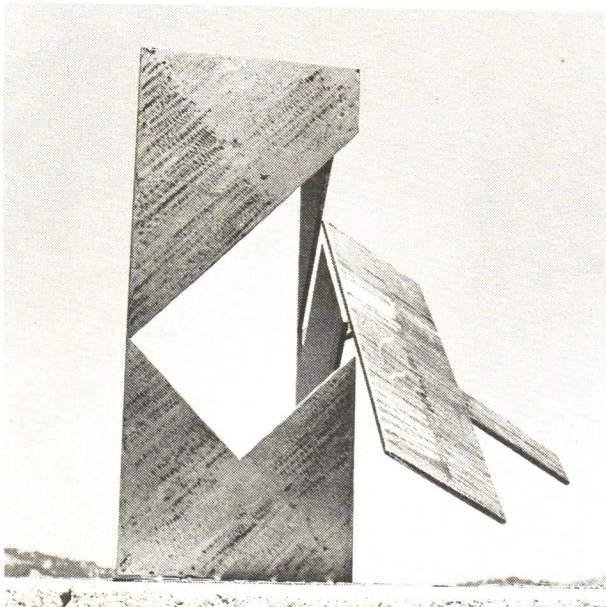


Both of these recent San Francisco shows explore the traditional definition of architectural art. Richard Meier's "Retrospective" at Modernism, an impressive gallery devoted to the celebration of the Modern Movement, explores the many modes in which an architect attempts to work, from collages, ever so slightly political, to furniture conceived specifically for designed projects. Sketches, lithographs, and renderings on colored paper are gracefully displayed and elucidate the architectural realm of expression. Though Meier cannot be praised for his innovative drawing style or his dialectic investigations into the media of two-dimensionality, his work shows the well-rounded discipline and rigor of an architect accustomed to expressing his stylistic ideas.

Keith Wilson's watercolors, small and delicate, reveal the architect's newly found love for history, fantasy, and artistic composition. Along with the travel sketches of local architects, their decorative and understandable presence allows the public, unaware of internal and academic architectural debates, to appreciate the sensitivity and love architects devote toward their own ability to see.

These shows will set an example for the Bay Area. Palatable to a wide range of spectators and not offensively narrow, they set the future for this art form by establishing the foundations on which future varieties of expression can be fostered.

M. Lee Fatherree, ©John Berggruen Gallery



Fletcher Benton's Letters
Oakland, CA

A travelling exhibition of the work of Bay Area sculptor, Fletcher Benton, opened March 4th at the Oakland Museum and will exhibit there through April 20th. In a phone conversation with the sculptor, he told us the following about his work:

The work on exhibit can be divided into two distinct bodies: work conceived four to five years ago belonging to his *Folded Circle* series, circle configurations primarily made of welded bronze; and more current works which deal with another geometric configuration—the square. This latter geometric figure is sculpted out of steel, and in one of its various themes, it focuses on alphabetic letter forms, which, like the letter “F”, are cut from the square—a piece of flat metal which is used in its entirety—material is neither added nor subtracted from the initial square surface. Since the inception of this recent project two years ago, Benton has completed eighteen letters, and he plans to represent the twenty-six character alphabet in this “square notation”. Although this second body of work consists for the most part of the square alphabet configurations, Benton maintains that this group is simply one manifestation of his square work. Benton’s *Folded Circle* series can be seen at the John Berggruen Gallery in San Francisco. The sculpture exhibit currently at the Oakland Museum continues on to the Newport Harbor Art Museum in Southern California.

Blind Love: Building a Sound for the '80s
San Francisco (Irene Dogmatic)

A friend of ours, long known for the dog portraits which won her her name, Irene Dogmatic, is not only a talented and distinct painter, but also a founder of two punk bands in San Francisco, “The Beauty Killers” and “The Kahunas.” We ran into her at a recent Lene Lovich concert at the Mabuhay; and since she is so involved in the San Francisco music scene, we asked her about the new wave in music. She wrote us the following:

“My new building has every convenience, it’s gonna make life easier for me.”¹

What is New Wave? Or No Wave? Or Punk? Or New Music? A couple of years ago the media was pretty hard on it, at least on this phenomenon’s most hard-core element, so-called “Punk.” As with the persistence of a small planet in the desert, this new form of sound has made headway not only by surviving, but also in actual growth and strength.

Back to definitions. *Punk*. Some people insist there is no such thing and never has been. They might be right. Could be it’s a label as insidious as “hippy”

was a decade ago—a derogatory tag to hang on something unfamiliar and threatening. But it does incorporate a look and a sound. The look of something which is rough, street-wise, and not takin’ any shit from nobody, and the sound of anger. What lies behind this stance? Not, as many seem to think, a love of violence. Merely the frustrations which grow out of anger at what is lacking, anger at hypocrisy, and the knowledge that change is not easily wrought or permanently acquired. Consequently, “punks” write songs dealing with injustice, stupidity and confusion, with the hope that perhaps a few people out of the many sleepwalking through the perfect escapes of “religion, sex and TV”² will really hear and attempt to affect a change.

New Wave. A gentler sound is indicated by this term. A rough comparison could be drawn between New Wave and Mod, as opposed to Punk and Rocker. It is often used as a catchall for any type of unpopular popular music which can’t be thrown into the category of “punk” because its sound is too obscure for that category.

No-Wave. Eno produced an album of some of the most “out-there” and innovative “No Wave” called “No New York.” A group in L.A. produced an album called “Yes L.A.” as a humorous answer. Does this mean there is a movement in L.A. called Yes Wave? Could be.

New Music. New Music usually has more obvious historical references than the other new sounds. Philip Glass and Steve Reich transcend earlier “New Music” traditions by providing academically sophisticated experiments in music which go beyond mathematical formulations and enter the realm of sound structures that can be used on a more day-to-day level.

By this time it should be clear that all these terms are somewhat useless, and that this new music is merely a new structure, a new device to create, through popular and less popular modes of music, a type of listening experience which is more relevant for this decade than what has gone before.

The parents, or “Godfathers” and “Molls” of this edifice include: John Cale, Lou Reed and Nico of the Velvet Underground; Iggy Pop and David Bowie; Patti Smith; Brian Eno of Roxy Music; Robert Fripp of King Crimson; Captain Beefheart; and Frank Zappa. They provided a certain framework for things to come.

Much of this new construction is deceptively intelligent. What at first appears simple and mindless reveals itself as well-assembled and solid. The materials used in this form include: emotions, musical styles, old and new technology, non-musical devices, and word-play. Different groups utilize anger and humor, rhythm and silence, cynicism and wit, synthesizers and new types of instruments, amplified and studio-manipulated objects and noises, as well as standard instruments to explore all the various musical idioms of the past and to examine them in such a way so as to provide us with a new place to be.

The sites on which these musical structures are built are often as interesting as the music itself. Some are located on the fringe of established musical districts, but others are placed in the uncertain, but fertile soil of small, artist-run recording studios, clubs and performance galleries. The primary reason for this is the relative ignorance and unwillingness of the music industry to recognize this new form as an important future monument. Consequently, by being largely ignored, the musical designers, contractors and architects of this music are forced to produce it by whatever means they can.

What is freshest and most interesting in this framework will continue to grow and to develop rather than be stifled by money pursuits or easy success. The plans for the sound of the '80s are just now being drawn up. Where this will lead us “only time will tell.”³

¹“Don’t Worry about the Government,” David Byrne, *Talking Heads 77*,

Bleu Disque Music, Inc. 1977.

²“Working Class Hero,” John Lennon, MacLen Music, Inc., EMI.

³“Only Time Will Tell,” John Cale, *Sabotage Live*, UnderCover Music, EMI, 1979.

Selected building blocks:

- Sabotage Live*, John Cale, I.R.S., 1979.
- Taking Tiger Mountain By Strategy*, Eno, Island, 1974.
- Soldier Talk*, The Red Crayola, Radar Records, 1979.
- Queen of Siam*, Lydia Lunch, ZE (Arista), 1980.
- Black and White*, The Stranglers, A&M Records, 1978.
- The End*, Nico, Island, 1974.
- Fear of Music*, The Talking Heads, Sire Records, 1979.
- The Specials*, Chrysalis Records, 1980.
- D.o.A.*, The Third and Final Report of Throbbing Gristle, Industrial Records, 1978.
- Stateless*, Lene Lovich, Stiff/Epic, 1979.
- Nevermind the Bollocks Here's the Sex Pistols*, Warner Bros., 1977.
- The Metal Box*, P.i.L., 1980.
- Armed Forces*, Elvis Costello, Columbia, 1979.
- Blank Generation*, Richard Hell and Voidoids, Sire, 1977.
- Eskimo*, The Residents, Ralph Records, 1979.
- Adventure*, Television, Elektra, 1978.
- Horses*, Patti Smith, 1975.
- Drums and Wires*, XTC, 1979.
- Heroes*, David Bowie, 1977.
- The Modern Dance*, Pere Ubu, 1978.

Cement, Nails, Glue, Blueprints, etc.:

- Mutants, B-People, Flipper, Beautykillers, 84 Rooms, Jars, Cramps, Fleshapoids, Kahunas, Alleycats, Offs, Odds, 8-Eyed Spy, Dickheads, Inflatable Boy Clams, Alterboys, Germs, Psychotic Pineapple, GO-GO's, No Alternative, No Sisters, Contradictions, Swell Maps, The Shirts, The Rudies, The Decoding Society, The Raybeats, The Bush Tetras, Snatch Urban Blight, Circus Mort, Sinatras, The Rave, The Reruns.

Sites:

- ClubFoot—2520 3rd Street, S.F., CA.
- A Hole—527 3rd Street, S.F., CA.
- Mabuhay—443 Broadway, S.F., CA.
- Back Dor—1Bartol Alley, S.F., CA.
- Berkeley Square—1333 University Avenue, Berkeley, CA.
- TR3—225 W. Broadway, NYC.
- CBGB—315 Bowery, NYC.
- Squat—256 West 23rd Street, NYC.
- The Kitchen—484 Broome Street, NYC.
- Marquee—90 Wardour Street, London.
- 101 Club—101 St. John's Hill, London.





Livio Dimitriu

Fig. 1: Looking east along the axis toward the Column of Infinity.

Brancusi, The Architect

The Visual and the Verbal

Tirgu Jiu is a relatively small, provincial town, lost in the hills bounding the Carpathian Mountains on their southern flank. A major highway connection passes through the town, linking Bucharest, the capital of Romania, with Transylvania (Figure 1).

In this God-forsaken place, Constantin Brancusi, who was born in the nearby village of Pestisani, built one of the most impressive sculptural complexes of modern times, between January 1935 and October 27, 1938 (Figure 2).

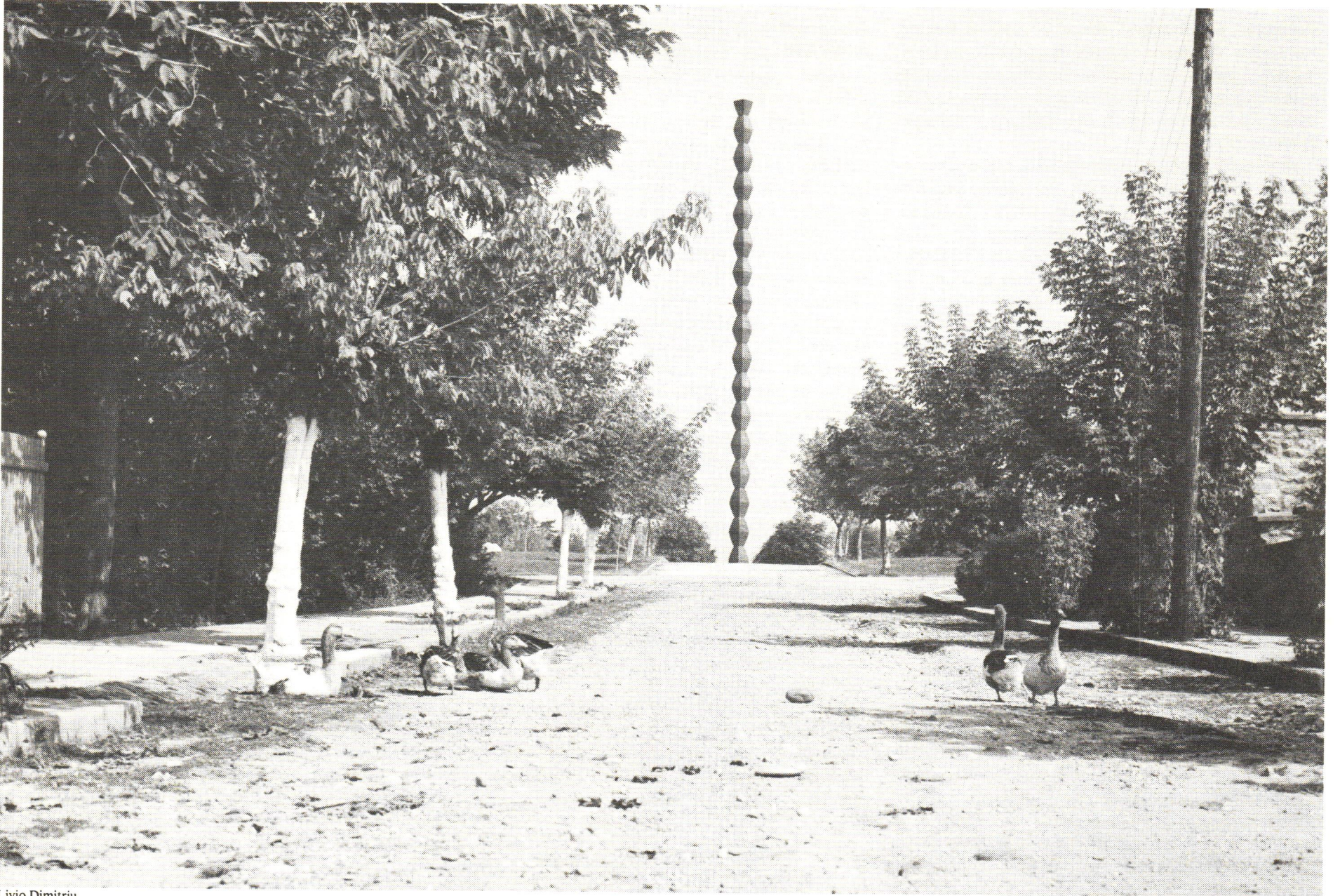
Despite the fact that the Tirgu Jiu Complex is regarded as Brancusi's most important creation, it is perhaps the least talked about. This cannot be merely due to the difficulties of reaching the remote town of Tirgu Jiu, but one may presume that its complexity is indeed overwhelming and difficult to unravel. For besides the themes of reflections, linearity, rhythmicity, mass, flight, and myth, Brancusi in Tirgu Jiu deals with the problem of the gap between sculpture,

architecture, and urbanism, and where it becomes invisible.

In the Tirgu Jiu Complex mirrored reflections, usually encountered in the polished-metal creations of Brancusi, strike a new harmony. Besides the literal reflection there are two other levels at which unexpected relationships are generated. In so far as the objects are concerned, the chairs of the Table of Silence are indeed symmetrical volumetric compositions (Figure 3). One would tend to believe that there is or was, once upon a time, an invisible mirror slicing the objects horizontally. The reflection which it nurtured froze in space and became a twin-phenomenon immobilized in hard rock. While approaching the Table, placed on a slightly elevated mound, one realizes that when still in the flatlands of the Alley of Heroes leading to the monument, one's line of vision constructs a horizontal plane which becomes, in fact, the missing mirror. With the idea of reflection, Brancusi makes

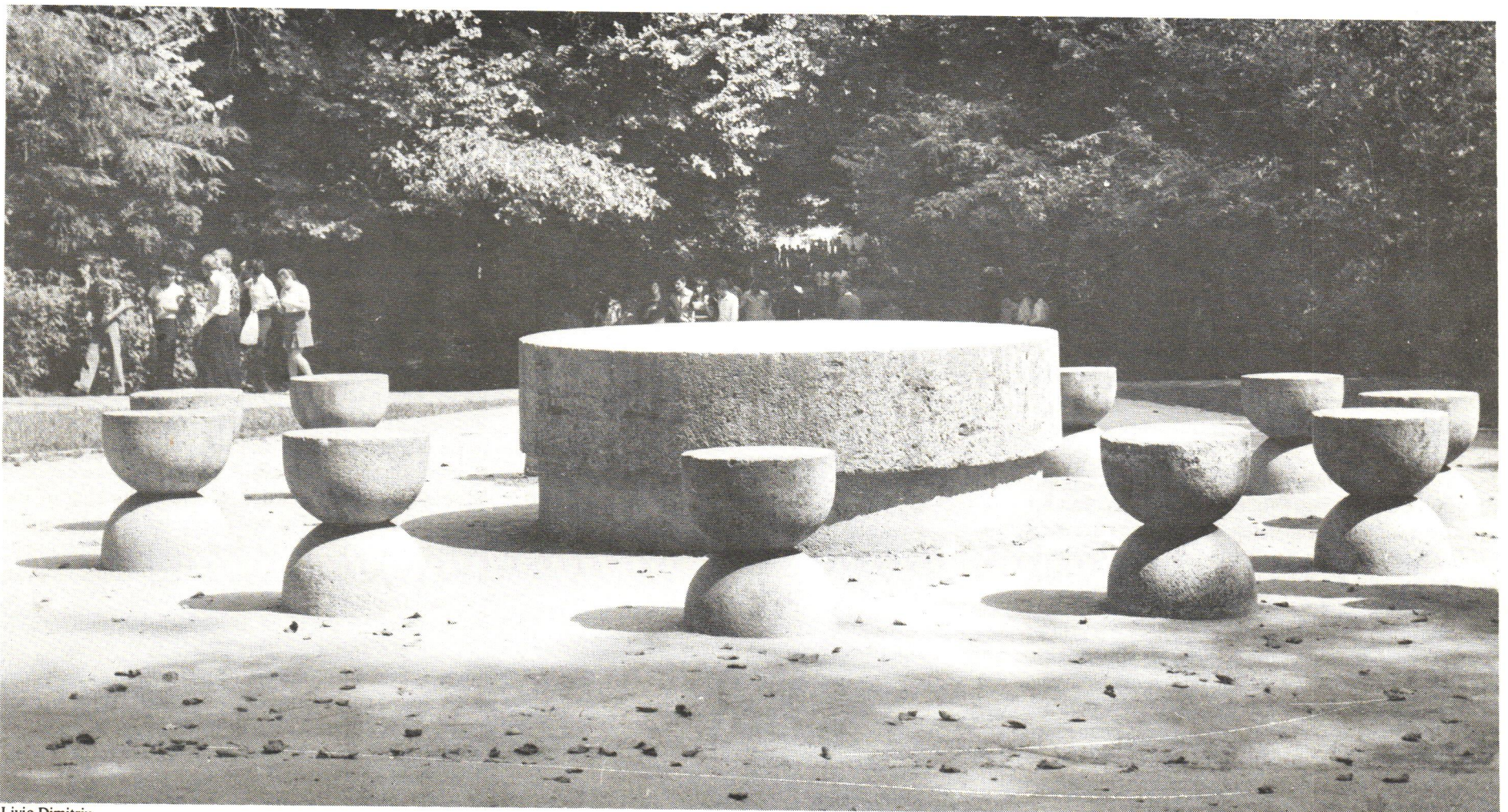
the giant leap from the literal mirroring present in some of his polished metal sculptures to the implied missing mirrors at Tirgu Jiu.

The second level of analyzing the reflections in Brancusi's work is that of the structural constituency of the Complex. After having experienced the range highlighted by sculptures such as the New Born, the Fish, and by his studies of the Chairs and of the Column, the artist was determined to push his gesture of independence from the "tyranny of mirrors" one step further. Brancusi decided to keep his Complex a linear structure and not to mark its end by the use of a second Table of Silence (mirror image of the first Table) as it was suggested at that time. In so doing, the artist preserved an open structure, despite all temptations to build a visual epopeia for the heroes of World War I. This linearity in visual narration is quite in the spirit of the Romanian literary folklore which rejects all closed, immobile, circular and epic



Livio Dimitriu

Fig. 2: *Column of Infinity* view from the Church of Apostles Pavel and Petru (Paul and Peter)



Livio Dimitriu

Fig. 3: *Table of Silence* looking toward the *Gate of the Kiss*.

structures. For Brancusi, the acceptance of folklore transcends the mere assimilation of folk imagery; instead it becomes a serious intellectual operation based on a deep level of understanding of the intimate native structures on which this folkloric vocabulary operates and thrives.

Brancusi's capacity to perpetuate the essence of literary folklore is due to his familiarity and first hand knowledge acquired during his youth in Romania. Yet the artist, like the architect, searches for operational clues in his surroundings. The Axis is the product of a careful site analysis, taking into account the main approaches to the town, its relationship with the river Jiu, and other urban considerations with all their conceptual consequences. Upon scrutinizing the map of Tirgu Jiu one becomes aware that the Heroes' Cemetery, located near the Column of Infinity (Figure 4), presents an orthogonal grid, the principal alley of which is parallel to Brancusi's Axis. The Church of Apostles Pavel and Petru, which Brancusi decided to include on the trajectory of his Axis, emphasizes further the organizational parallel with typical cemetery lay-outs. One must keep in mind that Brancusi had worked previously on several funeral monuments and therefore must have been thoroughly familiar with the typology of French cemeteries, fashionable at that time, and their Roman counterparts. The proximity of the Heroes' Cemetery to the Column, seen as marker of the eastern extremity of the Axis, makes it impossible to ignore their similarity. Thus, the quality of visionary collage which the Cemetery possesses in the context of Tirgu Jiu is further underlined. The Corbusian *promenade architecturale*, in the case of Brancusi's Complex, refers to the topology of an unfolding metaphor. This sequence of monuments is the only instance in the history of urbanism in which a stylistic device conceived synchronically, in one place and by one man, is capable of generating suggestions of a typology for a future city. One can envision a Manhattan grid-iron being born anew on Romanian soil, and growing this time out of different roots, nurtured by the fluids of different circumstances. The Axis is the main alley of the new urban organism, the seed of something about to happen . . .

When exploring how Brancusi exploited the Visual-Verbal dichotomy, one should consider the Tirgu Jiu Axis as having a double parentage: on the one hand, the reality of the urban conditions and, on the other, the presence of structural patterns inspired by folklore. Therefore, it is possible that the outcome of this symbiosis between the physical and the conceptual could itself become a model for a generating matrix, capable of producing regulated urban growth.

Brancusi's awareness of the cultural forces shaping the contemporary world, and his involvement in the artistic milieu of the time can be detected in the interest he lavishes on a wide range of utilitarian objects which are eventually distilled into pure form. Stripped of their traditional usage, various objects such as a peasant drinking cup, a chair, a gate, a table, shed their original meaning and are then free to receive Brancusi's special trademark. In this case, meaning represents the cultural reading of the objects, that is, of the act of drinking, of sitting, of passing through or guarding something. While Brancusi's passion for objects could be traced back to his early training at the Arts and Crafts School in his native Craiova, in Romania, his tendency towards abstracting form and eliminating use for the sake of visual satisfaction (and saturation of the mind with the dream world of the metaphor), parallels, for a few years, the English Arts and Crafts movement and the French Art Nouveau.

During the construction of the Tirgu Jiu Complex, two of its elements underwent significant changes in conceptual structuring. The park of Tirgu Jiu, in terms of site analysis, is the only portion included on the Axis which displays a definite program. One refers here to the act of strolling, sitting, playing, meditating,

as opposed to pure movement characterizing the rest of the Axis. This programmatic input made Brancusi extremely cautious in handling the elements. Consistently avoiding any association with the functionalist or rationalist movements of the 1930's then in full swing in France, Italy, and throughout the world, Brancusi uproots his objects and, regardless of effort and cost, moves them around with a procrustean obstinacy in search of the best metaphoric reading. The most complex decision appears to have been establishing the relationship between the Table of Silence and the Chairs surrounding it (Figure 5). A comparative study of the three known versions indicates an obvious reluctance on the part of the sculptor to generate any functional connotations in the interplay among the composing elements (Diagram 1). The matrix of paired Chairs in the first version encourages interaction between seated people, the resulting place would be perhaps more appropriate for conversation but would drift away from the underlying concept of meditation so dear to Brancusi and so essential to the integrity of the idea behind the Axis. The close proximity of the coupled Chairs to the compositional center implies an active use of the Table. First, Brancusi avoids the possible (Diagram 2) trivial use of the Table by centrifugally projecting the Chairs on a circumference sufficiently removed from the origin. Secondly, the artist eliminates the possibility of words being uttered around the Table by (Diagram 3) spacing the Chairs evenly in their new locus. The name of the Table of Silence is partially the conscious result of formal transformational design gestures, the focus of which tends to enhance the metaphoric reading of the object, separating it further from the functionalist mirage *en vogue* at the time.

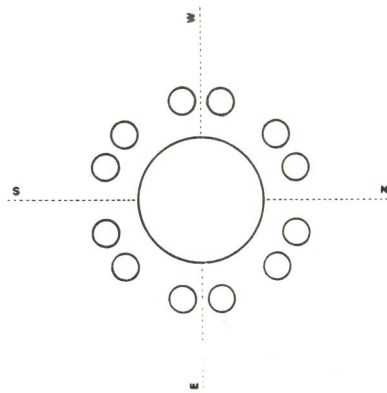


Diagram 1

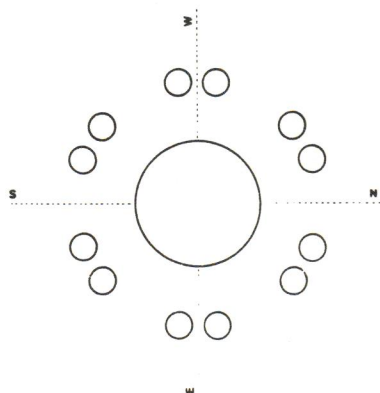


Diagram 2

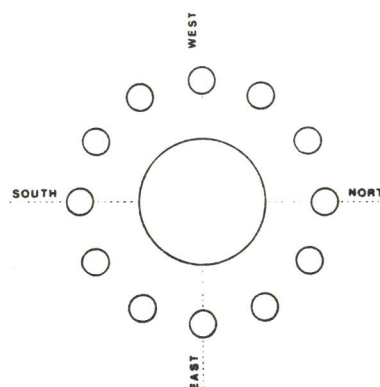


Diagram 3

As a result of this spatial orchestration, an approximately four foot wide corridor materializes between the Table and the Chairs, thus inviting the explorer to experience meditation in the realm of silence and movement. This promenade around the object is organically consistent with the dynamic quality of the Axis in its totality. Furthermore, two of the Chairs are now placed on the physical East-West oriented Axis producing a literal link to the rest of the project. Together with the Chairs located on the North-South axis, they close the constellation of the Table onto itself as well as projecting the visitor in the Alley (Figure 6) of Heroes, through the Gate, and towards the Column of Infinity.

The Gate of the Kiss is a much simpler case. It was initially intended to play the role of an actual gate through which visitors coming from the Heroes' Boulevard would have entered the park. The final placement of the Gate was quite a distance inside the heavily wooded area (Diagram 4). By making this choice, probably against the wishes of the local authorities supervising the project, the artist chose to eliminate the use of the Gate, preserving nevertheless all its typological characteristics and metaphorical connotations. The placement of stone benches around the Gate implies again a circular promenade, similar to the one around the Table.

In retrospect, this lucid response to the conceptual problems confronting contemporary architecture places Brancusi in the forefront of the avant-garde at home, among interesting compatriots such as Marcel Jancu and G. M. Cantacuzino, as well as outside the borders of Romania, making him worthy of friends like Le Corbusier. Through his project at Tirgu Jiu, the Romanian artist transcended sculpture by reaching out towards architecture and chose as his ultimate material the malleable substance of the urban texture.

In the case of both the Gate and the Table, everyday objects familiar to the natives filtered through Brancusi's artistic sensitivity arriving at the reality of built form in the hypostasis of a captured and conquered primordial typology. It was a difficult decision to make, for he had simultaneously to be faithful to his own goals in his search for the essence and to present an end-product which would avoid the element of scandal in such a small provincial town as Tirgu Jiu. For the strollers taking ritualistic Sunday picnics, Brancusi seems to have made a gate, a table, and some chairs . . . For the development of modern art Brancusi produced an exemplary method, leading not into the wastelands of formalistic lucubrations, (Figure 7), but into a private mythology with deep resonances on the notes of which all the hidden gods of our perception dance eternally.

In terms of the cultural context surrounding the object itself the distilled form which Brancusi's interest takes can be examined by investigating the artist's particular view of metaphor.

The metaphor can be regarded as a suppressed taboo, if the word *taboo* were to be considered in its respective social context and not as a metaphor in itself. The metaphor is the modality of expression through which what otherwise would not be allowed to be uttered—the unspeakable, the unarticulable—can be transmitted; the expression of *that which cannot be said* should be regarded always in the light of the social norms in effect at that particular time. Metaphor exhibits the qualities of both shock and scandal; it is a stylistic deviation or, by implication, it is an act of avoidance because it cannot be accepted *in* the sentence by the logic of the sentence itself. Considering the social context in which the concept of taboo is examined, the use of metaphor can be taken as an act of cultural avoidance as well. With respect to the above, Brancusi's Axis in Tirgu Jiu is a possible example of a system of metaphors in which the objects themselves are signifiers and the taboos play the role of the signifieds. During the forty years which have elapsed since the construction of the Axis, the meta-



Fig. 4: View along the axis between the *Column of Infinity* and the Church of Pavel and Petru.



Livio Dimitriu

Fig. 5: *Table of Silence* and surrounding, widely spaced chairs.



Fig. 6: Entrance to the Park, *Gate of the Kiss*.

Livio Dimitriu



Fig. 7: Alley of the Heroes, looking toward the *Gate of the Kiss*.

phoric reading permitted the suppression of a number of aspects contained in the very conception of the urban object, and it allowed the introduction of new valences of meaning through the replacement of old semantic units. These aspects became taboos as a function of taste or historical circumstances. This potential for adaptation is demonstrated by the mere tabulation of the large variety of *names* given to the different parts of the Complex over the years. Mention of the case of the *Table of Silence* with its satellite titles should suffice: the *Apostles' Table*, the *Round Table*, the *Dacian Table*, the *Stone Table with Chairs*, the *Family Table*, the *Table of the Intellectually Famished People*, etc. The word *table* occurs in all the names. It is a common denominator, a binding leitmotiv, preserving intact, at the level of language, the typology of the object. The variable elements in the titles—"of Silence," "Apostles," "Dacian," "of the Intellectually Famished People," "Family,"

"Round," "Stone"—are products of the human necessity to transcend built form solely as an expression of physical needs and to engage in the infinitely richer activity of generating metaphors. The *Column* offers a case even more pregnant with social impact. The full title, *Column of Infinite Gratitude to the Heroes of World War I*, a monument erected in the memory of men and women fallen in the battles against the Hungarians and the Germans for the reunification of Romania, by the mid-1960's (the moment of Brancusi's "rehabilitation" in Romania) has been reduced to the *Column of Infinity*. From this one matrix a multitude of names spreads out like the branches of a vigorous tree; the initial title was only *one* of the possibilities. Of course, the process of reducing the name to a construction which only deals with essences is very much in character with Brancusi's general attitude about the object of his creation. At the same time, the confusion generated

by the dual capacity of the art object to devour meaning and also to be a machine geared toward the production of meaning, served well the official social purpose as it changed and developed in time. It created a nucleus of meanings which are of equal interest for the art historian as well as for sociologists and linguists. By and large, the first group unravels meaning as a function of the object alone, whereas the second is concerned with the revelatory quality of changing meaning when dealing with social change, from mid-1930 to mid-1960.

The meaning of the individual objects composing the *Axis* is enriched after one has perceived the Complex as a whole. Despite the Cubist investigations of the 1930s, the nature of this experience remains by definition diachronic. At this point, the *Axis* undoubtedly becomes architecture (Figure 8) as an object thriving on the passage of time: changing shadow patterns always to be examined in space. The physical

ARCHETYPE



Fig. 8: Motif of the kiss on one of the pilasters of the Gate.



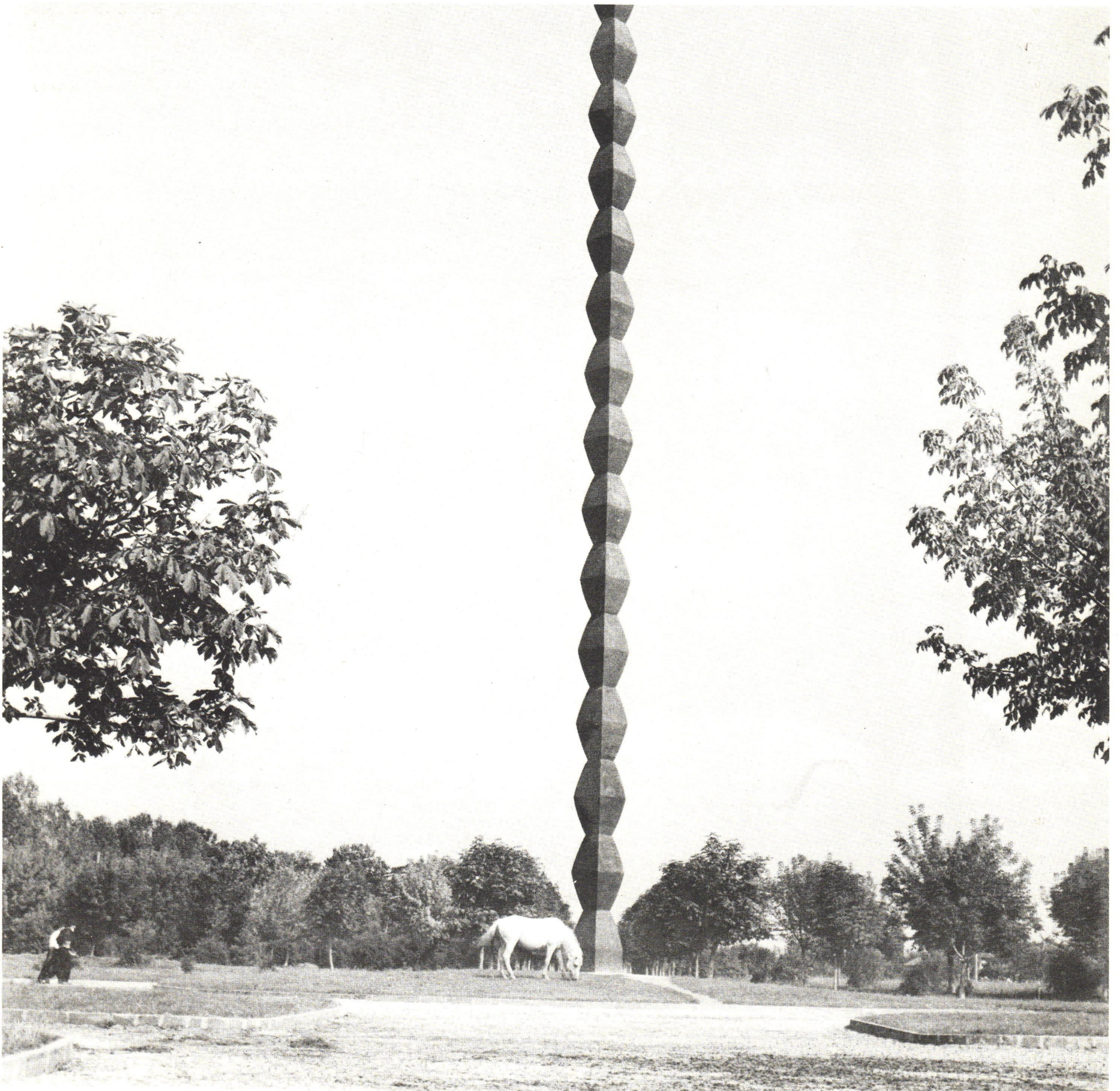
Diagram 4

length of the project (about 1450 meters) and the actual time necessary to cover this distance are imposed on the onlooker specifically to make him conscious of the various changes in the perception of the Complex's elements. These changes would ultimately modify the meaning of the Complex itself.

Brancusi's concern with the siting of his works and its urban implications, his interest in the more general relationship (object-context), his understanding of light as a transformational design tool and his envisioning of sculptural complexes as a compression chamber for expanses of space, and above all, the Romanian artist's passion for the reversible equation "metaphor as generator of object," brings him right into the arena of modern architectural polemics.

—Livio Dimitriu ©

Livio Dimitriu teaches architecture at the University of Syracuse, NY.



Livio Dimitriu

Fig. 9: The dream of the white gypsy horse in front of the Column of Infinity.

The Curious Chinese

This correspondence between two professors of architecture—one in America and the other in China—offers an overview of architectural thought today. Their exchange reveals what Chinese architects want to know about their American counterparts, and it challenges an American professor to make some of the most enigmatic of architectural ideas comprehensible. The process is elucidating to us all.

Galen Cranz has a Ph.D. in Sociology and has been teaching the social basis of architectural design for the last ten years at Princeton University and the University of California at Berkeley. Luo Xiao-Wei has taught architecture and architectural history at Tung-jie University in Shanghai for over 25 years. They met when Professor Cranz was guest of the China Architecture Society in the fall of 1977 as part of the Women's Study Group on Environmental Issues in China.

September 13, 1978

Dear Mrs. Luo:

Despite all the time which has passed I have not forgotten our great talk in Shanghai at the Exhibit Hall.

I have written a short piece on architectural research in China, based largely on my talk with you. Would you please let me know if I have made errors in my understanding? As you can see from the copy of the letter I sent to China Architecture Society in Beijing, I am hoping to get corrections before I publish the report.

Sincerely yours,
Galen Cranz

January 31, 1979

Dear Miss Cranz:

... I've read your paper on environmental design in China with pleasure. I think it was appropriately and nicely written. Congratulations and reverence to you for being able to gather up most of the main points of the subject with understanding in such a short visit. Did the journal accept it and have it published? I wish they did, if not yet, I'm afraid that you have to add something to emphasize the time of your visit. Because things have been changing quite a lot ever since you came, including some of the methods you had mentioned in your paper. Such as the students are no more admitted by recommendation only but by passing a normal entrance examination, about this I think the latter is better than the former. Also is the obsolescence of the live-in research in architectural education; it's not that we don't think it is good, but it is too time-consuming, and there is so much that our students need to learn and to catch up on in the limited four years.

Dear Cranz, you might be glad to know that I read another of your writings right after your visit. That

was a letter to the editor of *Progressive Architecture* in the 'views' about the correct definition of a technical term in architectural theory.¹ By reading it I got an impression that you are a serious and assiduous scholar, whom I would like to talk to and learn from in my studying of western (especially American) architecture. You know we have something in common, you are interested in mine and I am interested in yours Would you agree to help me? Right now I already have some questions, for instance, what is the exact meaning of environmental design in the case of architecture? Or what is the difference between architectural design and environmental design? Also, what is the meaning of advocacy planning? . . .

I'm very happy about the normalization of relationship of our two country, I think that you are too. On the day of Jan. 1st., the first day of the normalization, I was glad that we had American music—Stephen Foster—on the air by the local broadcast station, the first time after some 30 years! There was once (during the time of the Gang of Four) I thought that I'd never hear American music again in my life. Three days ago, that was the first day of our Spring Festival (or Chinese New Year), we had Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess"! I love Foster, Gershwin, Cole Porter as well as Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Duke Ellington, Glen Miller, Harry James . . . all the celebrities in the 40's (do you know them?) I know of nothing since. Yesterday I watched the TV broadcast from the Kennedy Art Center (did you?), those were new to me, I wish that we will hear some more about it from now on.

Yours sincerely,
Luo Hsiao-wei

12 April 1979

Dear Professor Luo:

... I will try to answer some of the questions you asked me. Environmental design is a term that was relied on beginning in the 1960's to cover all of the different scales at which the environment might be designed: an object (product design), a room, a building, spaces between buildings, neighborhood, cities and even regions of the country. Designers realized that the boundaries at the edges of their traditional architectural problems were softening and bleeding over into the micro-level, on the one hand, and up into the urban design scale, on the other. For example, in office planning, much professional work is devoted to what was called "office landscaping". Basically, this boils down to the internal arrangement of chairs, tables, desks, corridors, filing systems, lighting systems, telephones and all other office equipment. In a literal sense, office landscaping is not part of architecture because the shape of the walls are not affected; but when an architect designs

¹The letter discusses the meaning of "post-industrial" and house-as-sign, *PA*, (November 1977).

an office building with a large open plan (an undifferentiated space without walls), he or she may be presuming that it will be subdivided into work clusters using the principles of office landscaping. Consequently, the problem does not end with the design of the walls of the office building, but has to be carried down to a lower level of design.

At the other scale (macro), we have learned that the use of the outdoor spaces immediately surrounding a building can have an important effect on the life within the building and should not be overlooked by the architect. For example, in housing for the elderly, which is one of my areas of expertise, we have learned that the entryway is important, both in the inside lobby of the building, and at the outside entrance where retired people sit and enjoy watching the comings and goings of others. Consequently, landscaping becomes part of the design problem, even though it is beyond architecture, as narrowly defined.

Design at the University of California, Berkeley, reflects this conceptual change which took place about ten years ago. In 1967, the departments of architecture, landscape architecture, city and regional planning and the program in visual studies were combined into one administrative unit called the College of Environmental Design. We are all housed in the same building, although the ideal of integration is not easy to achieve. Because we are still separate departments, we make organizational decisions separately, and as individuals our jobs are defined primarily in terms of our departments. Intellectually, interdisciplinary work has been praised for the last fifteen years, but interdisciplinary publications are less common than magazines and journals within one specific field, and the problems of fulfilling job requirements in relation to a specific group of people, one's colleagues on a day-to-day basis, may contradict the movement toward interdisciplinary work.

Environmental design research is research on any aspect of the physical environment, which includes social considerations as well, since the meaning of the physical environment lies largely in how it is used. Again, within the last ten years the architectural profession has been concerned with figuring out some way to pay more attention to the social aspects of physical design. We have had some notable social failures in the profession, the most notorious being the Priutt-Igo public housing units in St. Louis, Missouri. These won architectural awards in the middle 1960's, but a few years ago had to be destroyed because the crime rate which they fostered was unacceptable. Architects began to believe that if they could incorporate social scientists into the design process, such disasters might be avoided in the future. Consequently, the more progressive departments around the country have hired either psychologists, sociologists, or some other kind of social scientist to help systematize and rationalize the integration of human information into the design process.



Advocacy planning, which you asked about, also comes from this period. Designers of large public institutions (mass housing, hospitals, offices, etc.) realized that they could not design for particular individuals but rather for a general social type. Conversely, the public could not represent their interests in advanced bureaucratic capitalism. So some designers (and planners, here used interchangeably although the term "designer" often refers to the smaller scales of design and planners to the larger—usually cities) decided to bring the interests of less powerful groups into the design process by taking on their point of view. They actively advocated things for them, rather than dispassionately trying to balance the interests of many groups. This strategy has the limitation of not always being able to represent someone else's point of view, especially when the conditions which shape a professional's life are so different from those which shape a poor mother's. As I said in the paper that I wrote after my trip to China, in China the political life is so well developed that a separate person (either advocate or social scientist) to translate the needs of the user (citizen, resident or worker) has not been necessary because representatives of these very people have been involved early in the design process on the 3-in-1 committee.

The program (called the architect's "brief" in England) used to be simply a list of requirements that the building was supposed to meet, usually defined in terms of square footage. Since the beginning of the Modern Movement in Europe, the program has taken on an increasingly important role because it has been expanded to include social goals as well as spatial requirements. Programming research is now a special field that concentrates on the development of the program in several possible ways. Social, psychological, economic, or energy conservation issues might receive special attention. For example, in a recent (1977) design competition sponsored by the State of California, the program was to design an office building which would conserve energy and at the same time be a good place for workers to work. Each team which entered this competition could decide to accept these criteria on face value or to do more programming in regard to these two issues. That is, some groups decided to find out more about what conditions lead to worker satisfaction and to find out more about different kinds of energy conserving devices—windmills, mechanical versus passive systems, etc. A practicing designer has to make the same kinds of decisions about how much time he/she wants to spend finding out more about the goals that he/she is supposed to meet.

The more progressive firms spend more time on this part of the process . . . Programming comes before design development and evaluation research is done after the building is built in order to learn the extent to which a building met its goals after it has been completed and occupied (what you call "re-visiting the site"). The major methods of program-

ming and evaluation research come primarily from the social sciences. Most people feel that environmental design research cannot rely on a single method. One can evaluate what sociologists call an institution (urban recreation, mass housing) as well as a specific building.

I was so happy when your answer to my first letter arrived, and I felt honored to realize that my letter to *Progressive Architecture* was read in China. Thank you for sharing your feelings about American music with me. This letter already may be too long, so I'll save the brief history of rock 'n' roll to a later letter. Sincerely yours,
Galen Cranz

October 4, 1979

Dear Professor Cranz:

Thank you very much, so very much for your long letter . . . And above all, your kindness, sincerity and generosity in helping me to understand the new fields of our profession in your country. By reading those you sent me, I can see that you are a very good teacher: the ability of explaining things in a way that we Chinese call 'profound in and simple out' (can you get it? the 'in' and 'out' here used as verbs); the way of seeing things from both sides and at the same time you have your own ideas—yes, you really are . . .

. . . I'll tell you some news. My university has just become the sister university of two universities in West Germany, one in Bochum, one in Darmstadt. As you know quite a number of the universities in China were set up by the foreigners long before the birth of New China, Tung-jie was set up by a German doctor in 1907. And Tung-jie is the only school in China which has some German tradition. We have some teachers who can speak very good Deutsch, such as our dean, Prof. Fung. I joined Tung-jie after liberation, that was in the fifties. I was from a university set up by one American missionary. It is called St. John's University (ever heard about it?). I don't know Deutsch, and I'm trying to learn it now, in case we import more German books in the library or we have some German professors come to lecture. . .

I have one of the pictures with you in it we took on the night of the farewell party in Shanghai. I would like to have one of you more recent. Do send me one, please . . .

Sincerely yours,
Luo Hsiao-Wei

October 26, 1979

Dear Professor Luo:

. . . My best professional news is that I've just completed one of the chapters in my book on urban parks for *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society* to be included in their special issue on women and cities. I will be sure to send you a copy.

Sincerely,
Galen Cranz

December 10, 1979

Dear Galen:

. . . Yehudi Menuhin is in Shanghai these days. I saw him in the TV, and have his Beethoven's Concerto recorded. We are having some celebrities of classical music coming to visit now. Last month, it was Karajan. But nobody on the Modern side yet, and I doubt that there will be.

[It is] said that Professor Charles Moore is in China. I don't know if he will come to Shanghai or not. I wish that I can meet him, and I've asked the university authority to keep an eye for me. Can you tell me something about Post-Modernism: what do you think about it and what do most of the people think about it? Will it grow up to be a big stream? There are some people, for instance Mr. Philip Johnson, who have included [in their work] anything that is different from the Modern Movement of the 20's, into Post-Modernism; do you think that is alright? If I say that Post-Modernism has two meanings, one is that of a school, which could be represented by professors Venturi and Moore, and the other is a temporary name for a group of people belonging to different schools (eg. C. Pelli and Eisenman), but they have a mutual interest, that is to contemplate that modern architecture is an end and an utterly new era ought to begin, do you think that is all right? Such questions I can't ask Mr. Moore, so will you help me?

I'm looking forward with great interest to your literature on women and cities and women and land use policy. For up to now I've no idea of it. You might open another window for me again. Enclosed is a picture taken last year, next time I'll give you a more recent one . . .

Sincerely yours,
Hsiao-wei

January 2, 1980

Dear Xiao-Wei,

Thank you for your card and letter with your photograph. Thank you too for putting us on a first name basis . . .

I was disappointed with myself for not having mailed this record [earlier] . . . I think this music will seem confusing, because the lyrics refer to aspects of American culture which are popular and not likely to have been written about in China. Nevertheless, the rhythm speaks for itself to some extent . . .

One example of how obscure the lyrics can be is in the first song "at the hop." That refers to a sock hop. Most American communities used their high-school gymnasium to hold dances in the 1950's. In order to protect the hardwood floors for the basketball games which the place was designed for, students would be required to take off their shoes for dances. They had to dance in their socks. Hop is a slang term for dance—because contemporary dancing, as opposed to waltz, polka, or folk dance, looked merely like people were hopping (jumping) up and down, like rabbits hop. So a sock hop is an event where

dancing is done in one's socks. It connotes 1950's style rock 'n' roll music and teenage (that is, high school, 13-18 year old) participants. As I said, none of this really matters because most people, including Americans, just listen to the overall rhythm and never pay attention to the words.

Now about Post-Modernism. First, one has to recall what Modernism stood for—a reaction against the Beaux-Arts practice of assigning a given form to a given building type, no matter what was going on inside it. Banks looked one way, railroad stations another, etc. Modernists wanted to express the interior organization of the building on the outside, rather than always applying the same columns, capitals, window shape, spacing and proportions that came out of established formulae. A dramatic example of a modern building is Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York City which expresses the interior circulation on the outside of the building and actually elevates the significance of the idea of the gallery viewer's movement from painting to painting (in this case down a spiral) by making it the central organizing idea for the building.

A second major idea of the Modernists was that materials should be used honestly. Plaster should not be used as if it were marble; structure should not be covered over and hidden, but rather exposed and revealed as an aesthetic in its own right.

Post-Modernists are claiming that these ideas about expressing functions and structure and materials are too strict or sophisticated for most people to understand without an architectural education. Post-Modernists notice that laymen like many of the details of older nineteenth century buildings—the elaborateness and richness of ornate capitals, pilasters, columns, lintels, etc. They also say that Modernists tried too hard to make architecture timeless, ahistorical, when in fact people like things that remind them of the past. So the Post-Modernists say that architecture can incorporate details and ideas (like false facades) from Beaux-Arts style architecture without returning to old-fashioned methods of construction and design. Elements can be lifted from the past and incorporated into designs which in other ways rely on the simplicity of modernist plans, construction, and materials. Thus, Post-Modernism is noted for its pastiche or stage-set quality. The falseness and illusion which is introduced is not called false, but rather "theatre" because in theatre we accept illusion, and don't feel cheated or fooled but rather entertained.

Charles Moore's Italian pavilion in New Orleans, which you probably saw in *Progressive Architecture*, is a good example of assembling symbols into an environment which is more important for the ideas and moods it evokes than for the clarity of its organization. A Modernist was a kind of educator in that he/she hoped to de-mystify buildings for the user. The user was supposed to be able to "read," that is, to understand, the building, to know where to go, how to enter, what parts would house which activities,

just by looking at the building from outside. The approach was highly moralistic in its assumptions that no one should be confused and that people could be educated about architecture by experiencing a building. The Post-Modernists are much less moralistic, in that they feel that buildings need not be didactic. They don't want to use buildings to teach people, but rather to delight them, to entertain them, to surprise or fool them. Sometimes they want their building to become a landmark in the city, so they try to make it memorable by making it different than any other building in the city. They abandon all the rules about good taste, fitting into the urban context, and they apply enough symbols in unusual enough ways to get people to talk about it. In some ways America has always had relatively "post-modern" attitudes especially in our commercial culture where buildings have had to serve as advertising. On a simple scale, a hot dog (sausage) stand might be built to look like a giant hot dog. On a larger scale, Moore's Italian piazza is meant to help the tourist trade of New Orleans. San Francisco's Transamerica building with its strange clothespin shape has become both a useful landmark for orientation and a symbol of the company which built it which they use in their advertising. Philip Johnson's chippendale skyscraper will function in much the same way.

Post-Modernism is not really a school of thought yet—it's not well enough organized, not enough books have been written about it, the main proponents do not teach together. Venturi, Moore, Eisenman, and Pelli share the belief that architects should not be so strict as Modernism was regarding honesty of materials and expression of function. In other ways they are very different from one another and deviate from Modernism in different ways: Venturi takes inspiration from the vernacular (folk) architecture, whether Las Vegas neon gambling signs or Cape Cod wooden houses. Pelli works with the latest industrial materials and glorifies commercial and technological culture. Eisenman explores the extent to which the conventional relationships between architectural elements—such as doors, windows, floors, ceilings—can be distorted and still used and perceived as a house; Moore and others play more with the idea of false facades and layering of elements to evoke a sense of stage set or theatre.

The same criticisms can be made of Post-Modernism as of Modernism. That is, that the public probably doesn't understand the latest architectural symbols and the rules governing their relationship any more than they understood the "honesty" of exposed heating and ventilation ducts. The latest issue of *Progressive Architecture* raises this very point in an article by D. Cantor and Linda Groat which shows that non-architects of equivalent educational level (they used accountants) don't necessarily understand the same things as do architects about buildings. In their study they included examples of both modern and post-modern buildings. Implicitly and sometimes explicitly



Judith Edelman

each group tries to claim that its approach will be more easily understood by the people than its predecessor. Modern buildings will explain and announce themselves to their users; post-modern buildings will use more decoration, be closer to what people know about and like from the past, be less strict and therefore more accessible. So far, I see no evidence that Post-Modernism will do a better job.

I don't know how long Post-Modernism will last. Its chief competitor is Neo-Rationalism which takes Modernism one step further to make buildings ever simpler and more elemental. Aldo Rossi of Italy is one of the chief proponents of this attitude. It probably will not have wide spread appeal because it is not decorative.

In the same issue of *Progressive Architecture* with the article "Does Post-Modernism communicate?" is an article about Hans Hollein, who in some senses is a post-modernist in that he uses symbols decoratively and evocatively. Its author is also one of the editors of a new magazine called *Archetype*, a copy of which I'm sending. The column called "archi-puncture" (a pun on Chinese acupuncture, in this case meaning poking holes in "arch" which is short for architecture) is strongly anti-Post-Modern. Most serious scholars in architecture have negative feelings about Post-Modernism because it picks from history so freely without understanding the era from which the style was copied. Thus, while it refers to history it is ahistorical in the sense that the particular content and the particular point in time do not matter to the Post-Modernist.

. . . I'm sending this photo of me in Beijing from 1977 . . . as a tai chi player. I do the Wu style, taught to me by a Shanghai man here in Berkeley.

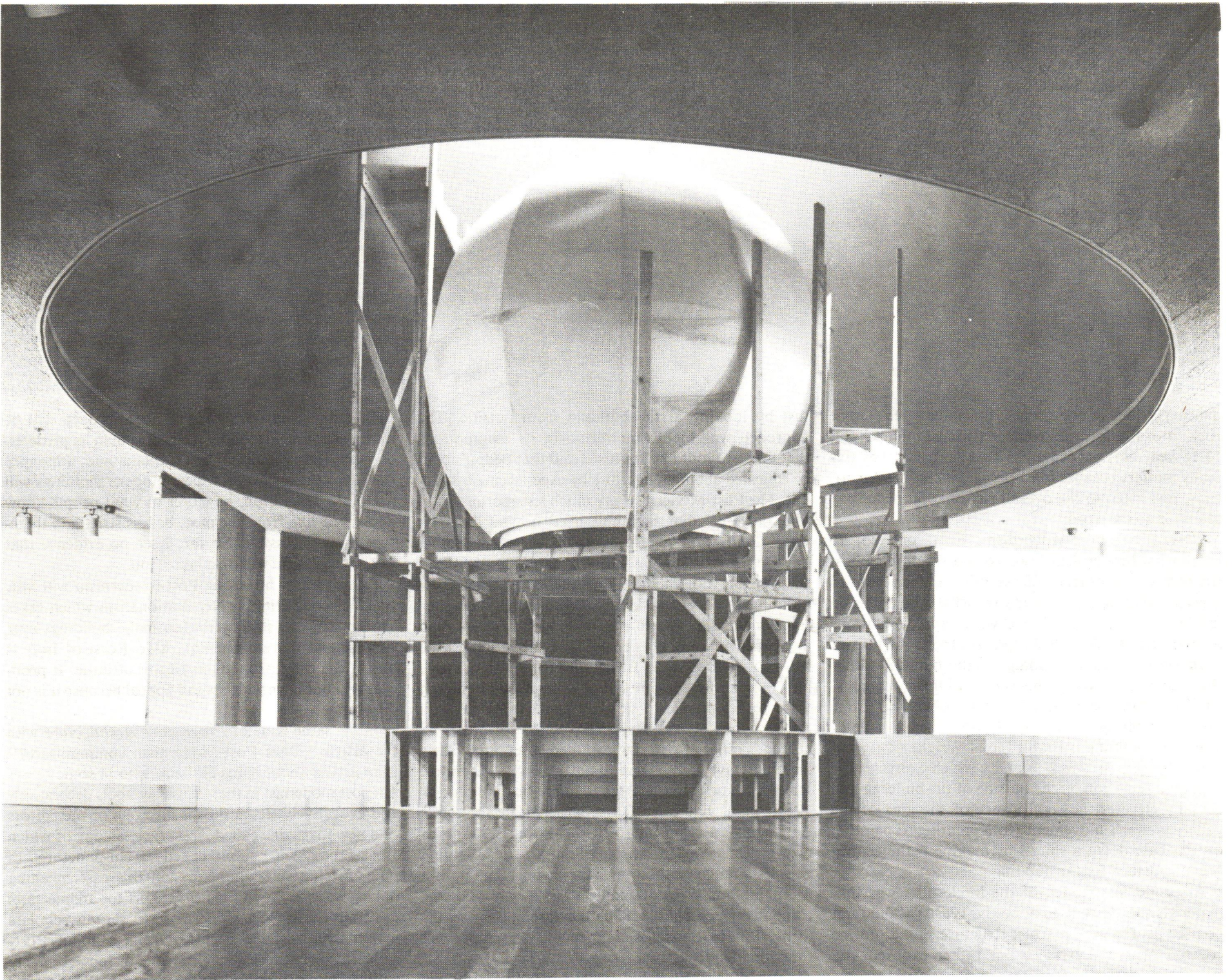
Happy New Year and best wishes,
Galen

February 14, 1980

Dear Galen,

Thank you for your letter, your photo, the record [An Anthology of Rock & Roll from 1950s-1960s] and the *Archetypes*. About the record (you have opened another window for me), yes, I like it. My husband Li, my daughter I-Hong and my son Ah-yue all like it. Music is a better international language than anything; just after the first round we all say that we love it. I especially appreciate the individuality and originality of the singer and player . . .

As before, your letter is both interesting and educational. The picture of Post-Modernism you had drawn for me is not only clear and brief but also complete. I will look into the articles you recommended when the new *P/A* comes. I hadn't heard of Aldo Rossi, but I will have him in mind when I read (a new window for me again). Thanks for the *Archetypes*. The character of it is new to me, I mean it is different from *P/A* and even more different from *A/Record* . . . Yours sincerely,
Luo Xiao-Wei



Explanation, An, Of Spring and the Weight of Air, 1979. Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati.

Alice in Aycockland

The long series of projects by Alice Aycock which lead to the ones shown here have increased steadily in complexity and mythic implication. They dramatically reinstate, through the use of the most functional and mundane of materials, the lost connection between art and architecture. This connection is made not only through construction methods and the architectural typology of the pieces, but more fundamentally it is made ideologically.

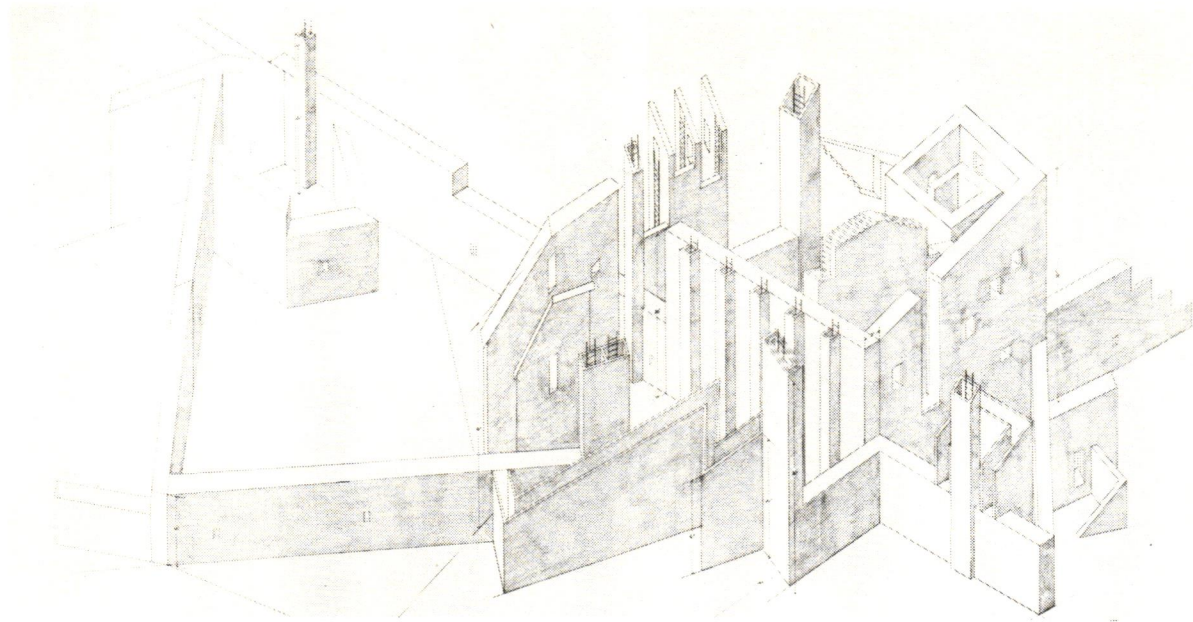
While recent architectural ideology (Post-Modernism) retreats into an eclectic and derivative interpretation of history, Aycock struggles for a more general reference to man's history and culture. Her work resonates with the urge to find a stable and sanctified place for restless man in a confused and fragmented world. Aycock's crafted world is itself a place of difficulty and ambiguity. But the option for participation and understanding is always open because the structure is exposed for examination. This process in a piece like *Flights of Fancy, Arc and Upside Down Stairs* which has a definite front (mythic, illusionistic,

emotive) and back (constructivistic, mechanical, referential), allows the viewer to "wake-up" from the illusion. The metaphoric connection to dream and waking characterizes much of Aycock's work in which various impossible desires are encouraged and denied. In *The Game of Fliers* the desire is to climb the immense ladder and leave Washington, D.C. by air, or to board the giant, motive wheel and be hurled by centrifugal force through the fire into the air.

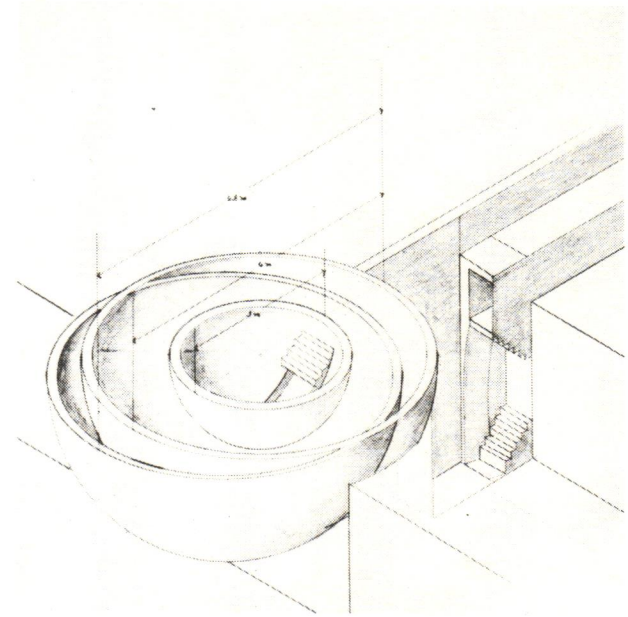
A recent trend in the fine arts has been toward an anthropological and neo-primitive expression loaded with symbolism and metaphorical references. This tendency is evident in Europe and in America, with different results as a consequence of different subconscious tendencies. Like Walter Pichler in Austria (cf. Mark Mack's "Sacred Realities," *Archetype II*, 1979), Aycock transcends cultural and religious boundaries. As it was important in the late '60s to comment directly on society through its own cultural products, it has become increasingly important today to relate to the archetypal tendencies in man. Pichler,

working within the confines of Judeo-Christian symbology, is obsessed by guilt and the prospect of salvation, while Aycock is confined within American Judeo-Protestant symbology where guilt is replaced by anxiety and where salvation is restricted to one's own judgement of one's higher self.

Her work is created in a reality mysteriously intertwined with beams of light out of her primordial memory and with sounds of unfulfilled desires. The work becomes especially edifying for architects who are often wrapped in their own "reality cocoon." Without an understanding of the primeval and idealized nature of their role in society with its obsessions and primordial longings, they will be lost in the glitter of immediate historical interpretations and eclectic decoration.



The City of the Walls, an Incomplete Plan, 1978. Detail. Pencil on vellum.



The Paradise Romance (After Kepler's Mysterious Cosmology for Ptolemy), 1979. Pencil on vellum.

EXPLANATION, AN, OF SPRING AND THE WEIGHT OF AIR

(An Account of the Substances Which Have Been Used to Describe Events Up To and Including Eunice Winkler's* Dive into a Pool of Water) excerpt from *The Angels Continue Turning the Wheels of the Universe Despite Their Ugly Souls, Part III.*

He who travels in the early morning shall look carefully to the east. He will see there something like letters marching in the sky, some rising, others descending. These brilliant characters are the letters with which God has formed heaven and earth. . . .

The Zohar

REPEAT AFTER ME

- A is for Hoop-la
- B is for Razzle-Dazzle
- C is for Over-the-Tops
- D is for Hanging and Oscillating
- E is for Wheel-'Em-In
- F is for Spinning Tops
- G is for Rock an' Roll
- H is for Slip the Slip
- I is for the Mystic Swing

ONCE MORE REPEAT AFTER ME

A place called Ar-ma-ged'-don

AND AGAIN

A place called Ar-ma-ged'-don

(The Vision or a Case No One Wanted); December 17, 1903, 10:35 A.M. while Orville lies prone. . .

Dear Irene,
For the past month I have had the same dream. All I can remember is that I am in a big house in a certain room with wooden walls. Each night there is a friend or relative with me in this room and then suddenly a beast-like gorilla appears.

The Sequel

As she waits for Daddy to come back to earth, she turns to a friend and says, "So let's have no more of these feather-weight giants." (Duration 59 minutes)

Erratum

*Winkler's should read Winkless's

THE CITY OF THE WALLS:

"Famines were multiplied throughout Europe, sometimes in one province and sometimes in another, (and an) inadequate system of communications . . . increased still more the opportunities, for those who knew how to make use of them, of getting rich. A few timely sacks of wheat, transported to the right spot, sufficed for the realizing of huge profits. For a man, adroit and sparing no pains, Fortune then held out the prospect of fruitful operations. It was certainly not long before nouveaux riches made their appearance in the midst of this miserable crowd of impoverished, bare-foot wanderers in the world."

—Henri Pirenne, *Medieval Cities*

A Narrow City; A Thin City; Out of Walls, Thin Houses Grow, An Italian Version of *Midsummer Night's Dream*

THE CHARACTERS. The main character is Sadie who used to live in the City of the Dead outside of Cairo. About six months ago she traded out of there for a city in the Middle Ages where she runs wind and water machines in the courtyards daily from 9 to 5. Sometimes, she longs for Mugattam City which is now beyond the blue horizon. Sadie is approximately six years old, wears a striped pair of pajamas, and carries a white, flannel blanket. Three days ago she was hit by a stone on the inside of her forearm just above the wrist. She now has a blue bruise with small cuts around it. It is very tender.

THE SCENE. Paris, Tokyo, Munich, Athens, New York, Buenos Aires, Los Angeles, Cairo, London, Manila, Bagdad, Canton, Addis Ababa, Moscow, Toronto, Marseilles, Havana, Warsaw, Johannesburg, Lisbon, Venice, Cordoba, Zanzibar, Adelaide, Reykjavik, Istanbul, Calcutta, Sarajevo.

THE CHARACTERS. Five progenitors names Ulysse, Michel-Ange, Venus, Cleopatre, and Cusanus. They loved one another, that is, as one turned to another one who in turn moved in the direction of the fourth one who was in turn moving toward the fifth . . . or rather just as #1 began to have a deep neolithic longing for #3, the presence of #5 stifled/sated that longing and this in turn roused #5's passion for #2 who had for the time being sought oblivion by sucking her left thumb. By the way, it is Cleopatre who is fond of running a smooth cool cloth between her fingers.

FROM THE PLAN OF THE CITY it is apparent that there are no curves, no circles, only angles, sharp turns of every degree. And so Cusanus becomes obsessed with moving circles, expanding circles, circles without centers, circles whose circumferences are here and there and everywhere. He thinks once again

of Sadie and her wheel-like machines. He thinks that just this morning as he bent down to erase a line in Cleopatre's plan and the blood rushed to his head that he had dreamed Sadie in the courtyards the night before. But then he thinks that perhaps he is only now this morning because of some accidental physio-chemical action, his bending and the blood rushing and a cell being triggered, that perhaps he is only now remembering a dream he had ten years ago. And then he thinks that perhaps he has dreamed Sadie every night since that hot day in 1908 in the top story of the cotton mill when he and Venus were fucking behind the cotton bales and turned to watch as Sadie turned impatiently from her machines and posed for the photograph.

For Sadie there is no question. Cusanus is a dream. She remembers the day he appeared in the empty streets of the City of the Dead and stood for hours watching behind his telescope as she watched her father spinning on his wheel.

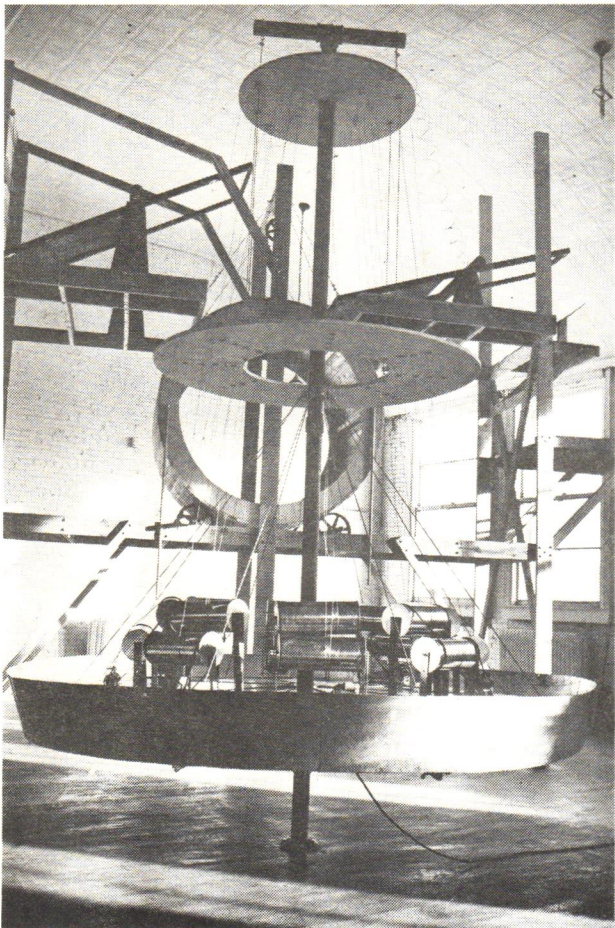
THE REST OF THE SCENE. Etamin, Castor, Alpha Centauri, Arneb, Alhena, Betelgeuse, Hamalm Markab, Gienah, Antares, Denebola, Rastaban, Sadr, Naos, Canopus, Beta Corvi.

THE PLAN OF THE CITY. The city has been generated by five people who loved one another. They wore the paths, that is the outline of the walls as they moved each in turn from one to the other. When they realized what they had done, they tried each in turn to draw the pattern they had made, that is, to construct a city in which the "measurements of its space" developed out of the "events of its past." And so there were five separate plans, each superimposed on the other. In some places one plan obliterated the other, in many places the plan changed while the city was under construction. For instance, the day after he finished his plan, Ulysse gave Michel-Ange a rubdown in the men's room in a suburb of La Paz.

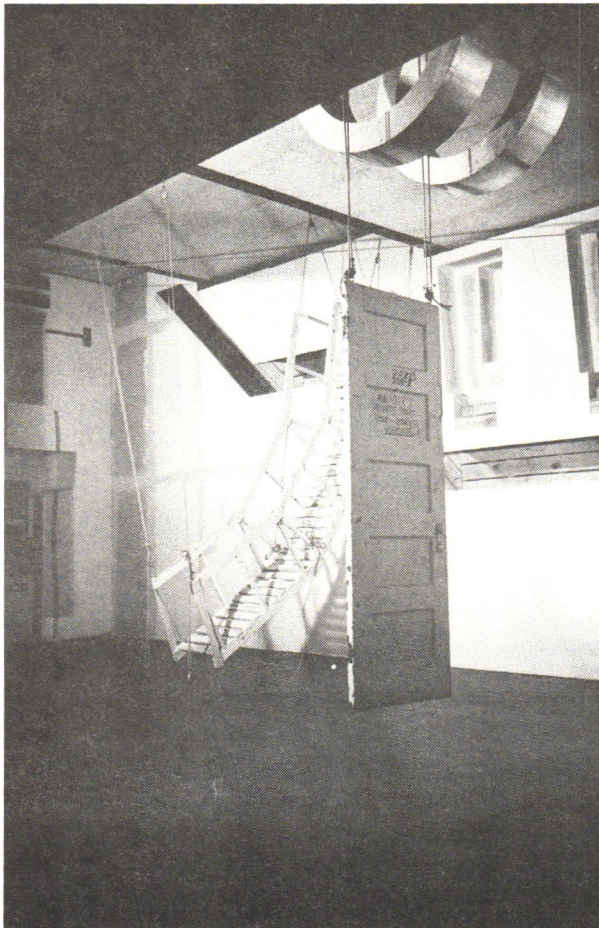
THE ACTION. Most of the action is a secret. However, they did squabble about who did what, where, and when. There were erasures of each other's drawings, and some old grievances were relived, like the time Venus was abandoned by Ulysse at a dance party in Bloomfield, Indiana or the time Venus begged Cleopatre to come to Sarajevo and when Cleopatre finally arrived having paid an excess baggage charge . . . But never mind about that. Basically the walls are red herrings.

THE THEME SONG.

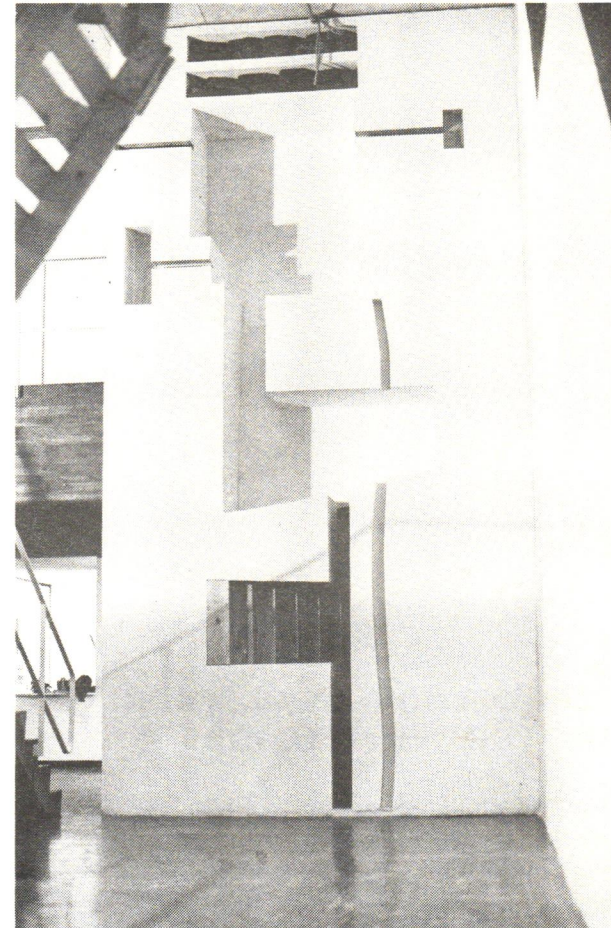
Don't know much about the Middle Ages
Look at the pictures and I turn the pages
Don't know much about no Rise and Fall
Don't know nothing about nothing at all
But I do know if you loved me
What a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful world
this would be.



“The Rotary Lightning Express,” (An Apparatus for Determining the Effects of Mesmerism on the Terrestrial Currants), 1979. From the series, *How to Catch and Manufacture Ghosts*, New York City.



“Flights of Fancy,” 1979. From the series, *States of Desire*, San Francisco Art Institute. Detail: Bridge/Suspended Celestial Wheels and Doors.



“Flights of Fancy.” Detail: Hanging Room.

THE PARADISE ROMANCE

(After Kepler’s Mysterious Cosmology for Ptolomey)

NOTES

Materials:

reinforced concrete cast in place or preformed as structurally necessary: exact thickness of concrete walls should depend on structural strength: bowl walls should be as thin as possible.

Description and Dimensions:

two concrete bowls, one encircling the other, each 6 meters in diameter: one center concrete bowl 3 meters in diameter in which a stepped door .6 meters wide and 1 meter long is embedded. The center bowl is suspended on steel rod as structurally necessary. The rod should run through the concrete walls but not through the interior of the concrete bowl. There are openings of the same dimensions in the two larger bowls directly below the opening in the center bowl. Immediately adjacent to the bowls is a shaft approximately 4.74 meters deep and 1 meter wide in which a door/step configuration has been inset. The exact depth and length of this shaft is subject to change depending on technical and financial considerations. The depth the bowls are set into the ground relative to the existing grade is also subject to these considerations. A drainage system should be designed for the bowls and shaft.

DREAM 1

September 12, 1957

Dear Irene,

Many years ago I had a dream about traveling to the moon. “The initial shock is the worst part of it for (one) is thrown upward as if by an explosion of gunpowder. When the first part of the journey is completed, it becomes easier because on such a long journey the body . . . escapes the magnetic force of the earth . . .

At this point we set the travelers free and leave them to their own devices, like spiders they will stretch out, and contract, and propel themselves forward by their own force . . . (Moon creatures) have no fixed and safe habitations: they traverse in hordes, in a single

day. The whole of their world, following the receding waters wither on legs that are longer than those of our camels, or on wings, or in ships”

—Johannes Kepler

DREAM 2

September 12, 1957

Dear Irene,

Several months ago I dreamt that I was walking along a road. Suddenly I saw a sphere approach the earth at high velocity . . . It became possible to discern the markings on its surface which were lines of longitude . . . As we gazed, another and yet another sphere emerged from the horizon and sped towards the earth. Each sphere did in turn crash much as a bomb would crash . . . These spheres, then, were falling at intervals all around, but all of them . . . well beyond the point at which they might annihilate us. There appeared to be a danger of shrapnel.

—C. G. Jung, *Flying Saucers*

DREAM 3

September 12, 1957

Dear Irene,

Last week I dreamt that a flying saucer floated into view, passed at eye-level before me and lay there, clear and shining in the sunlight. It did not look like a machine but like a deep sea fish, round and flat.

—C. G. Jung, *Flying Saucers*

DREAM 4

June 7, 1979

Dear Irene,

Last night I dreamt that I was coming up out of the underpass with a friend and my dog, Jack. As we walked along the highway we came to an opening in a fence in an abandoned lot. We were on a hill and could see the whole city below. I recognized the color of the night sky as Giotto blue, the color in the fresco in which Halley’s Comet appears. Suddenly a silver plane came across the sky trailing an old car painted white. The car was tied to the plane with a rope.

My friend turned and said to me, “You’re the kind of person that would try to fly a kite at night.”

THE ROTARY LIGHTNING EXPRESS

The Rotary Lightning Express is composed of a stepped wooden platform, 20’ high × 20’ wide × 30’ long on which selected people stand and slam steel plates in frames back and forth in a see-saw fashion. Immediately in front of this platform is a suspended galvanized steel pan, 10’ in diameter, containing spools which are threaded with steel cable. These spools spin. The spinning spool construction is suspended from a center pole and connected to a rectangular glass jar containing another smaller glass jar. This, in turn, is connected to a galvanized steel drum, 5’ in diameter and 7’ high containing a smaller steel drum which can be hoisted up and down on pulleys. The project also contains a specifically made rheostat in which a person can lay and be mechanically turned around. This project is from a series of works entitled *How to Catch and Manufacture Ghosts*. This specific work is intended to be a machine or instrument for retrieving and recharging the mind of a 100 year old woman.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY

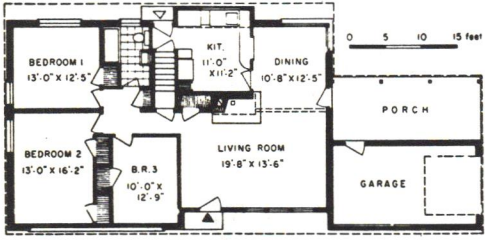
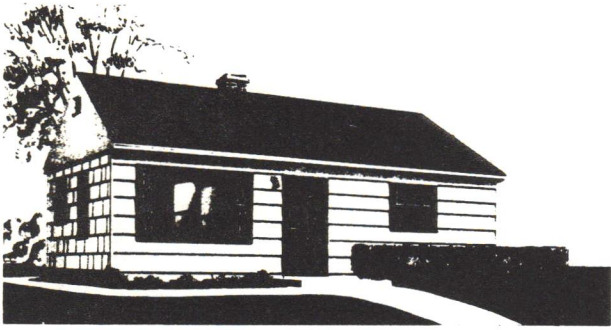
This woman under a spell of some kind jumped about even on the cornice of the altar. Some months later she suddenly fell rigid to the ground as if she had been thrown down by some strong hands. She was able to get up immediately but only to fall again. “clickety-click, clickety-clack, wish, wish, wish . . .”

Alice Aycock was born in Harrisburg, PA. and was educated at Douglass College, NJ. and Hunter College, NY. She lives in New York City and has exhibited her work extensively, indoors and outdoors, in America and abroad.

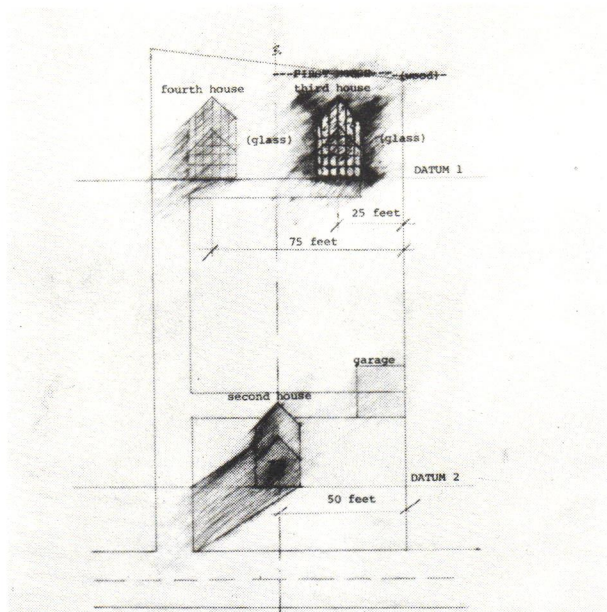


"The Game of Fliers," 1980. From the series, *The Story of the Industrial Revolution*, corner 12th and 6th Streets, Washington, D.C.

ARCHETYPE



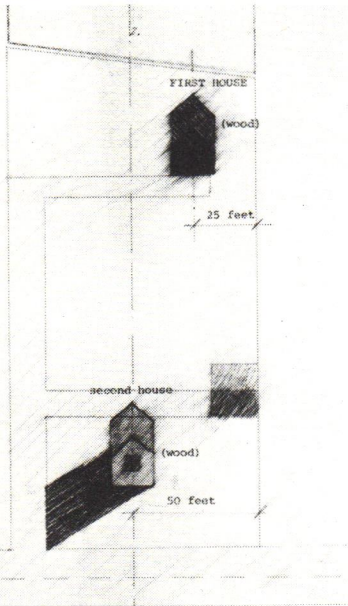
The "home": plan & view



Beginnings: The first house is erased; the second house remains; the third house (a glasshouse) replaces the first house; the fourth house mirrors the third house. The two new glasshouses reflect the old "home".



Man & Woman Space: now erased

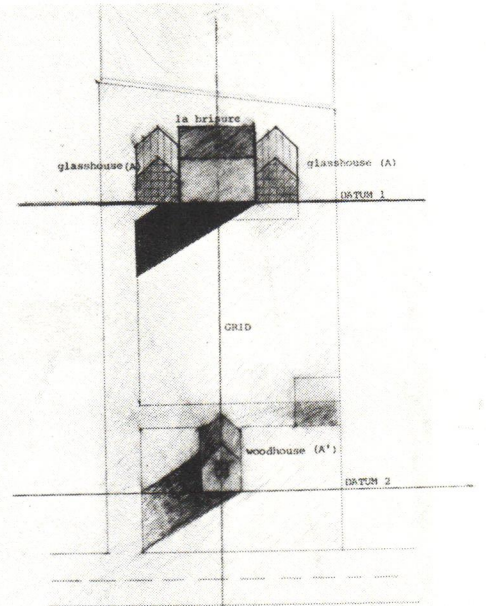


Existing Conditions: The first house (top right) is in miserable condition; the second house is habitable.

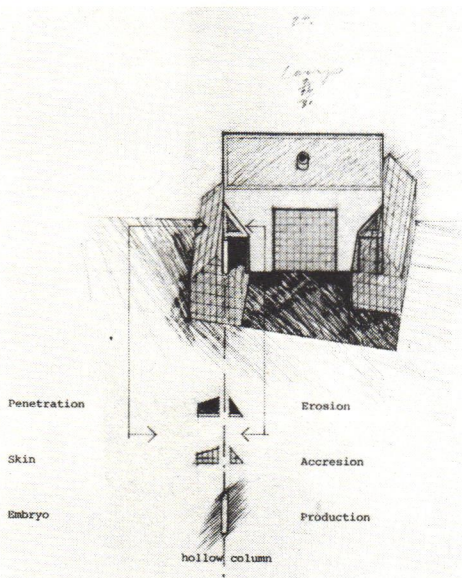
NO FAMILY HOUSE

Lars Lerup

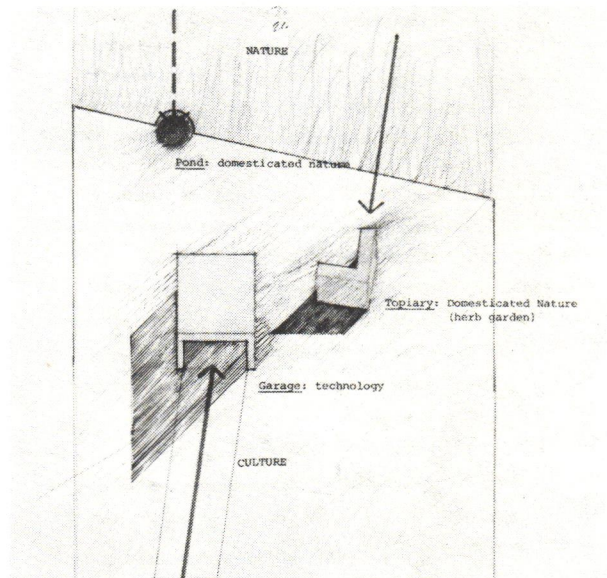
Lars Lerup teaches architecture at the College of Environmental Design at U.C. Berkeley.



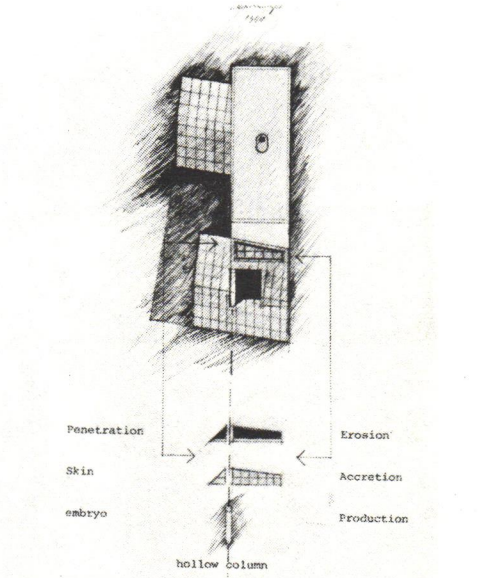
The Insertion of Architecture: The body of architecture blocks/links the two "homes".



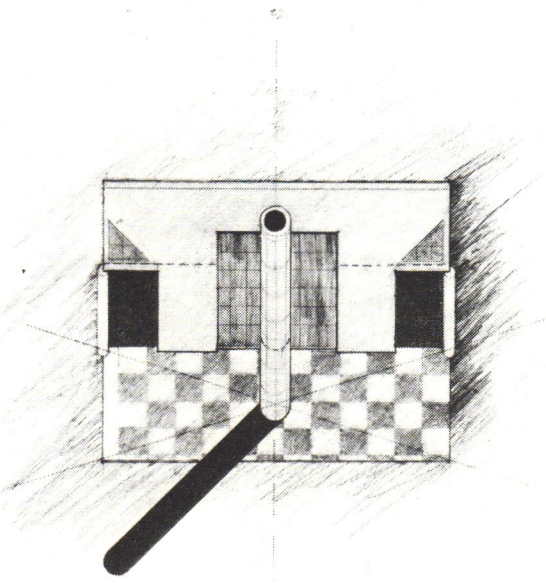
Zone of Passion.



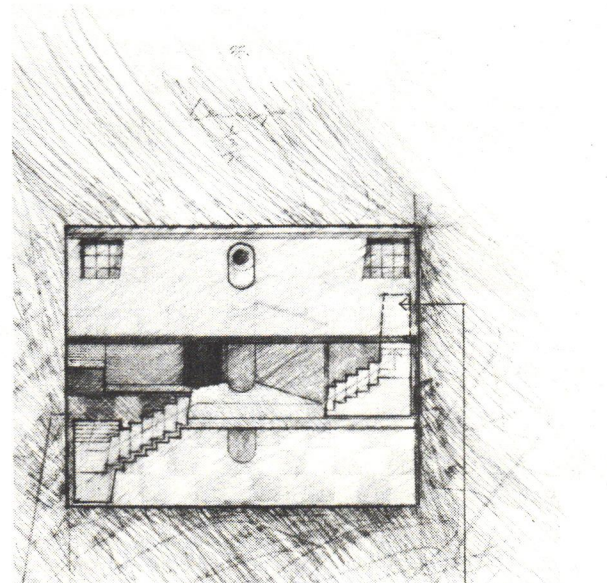
Adjacencies: Garage, topiary & pond



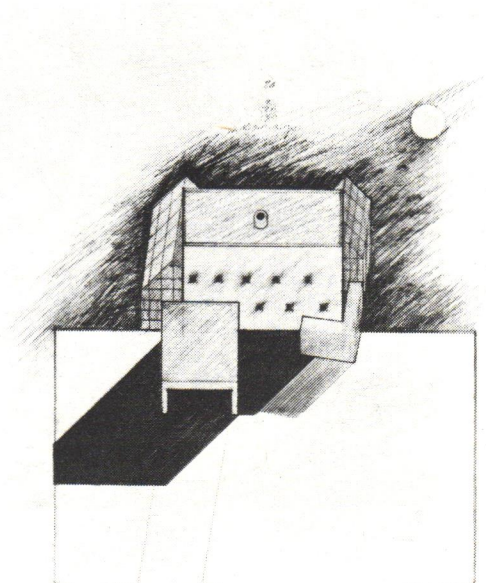
Architecture versus Home: Erosion, Accretion & Production,



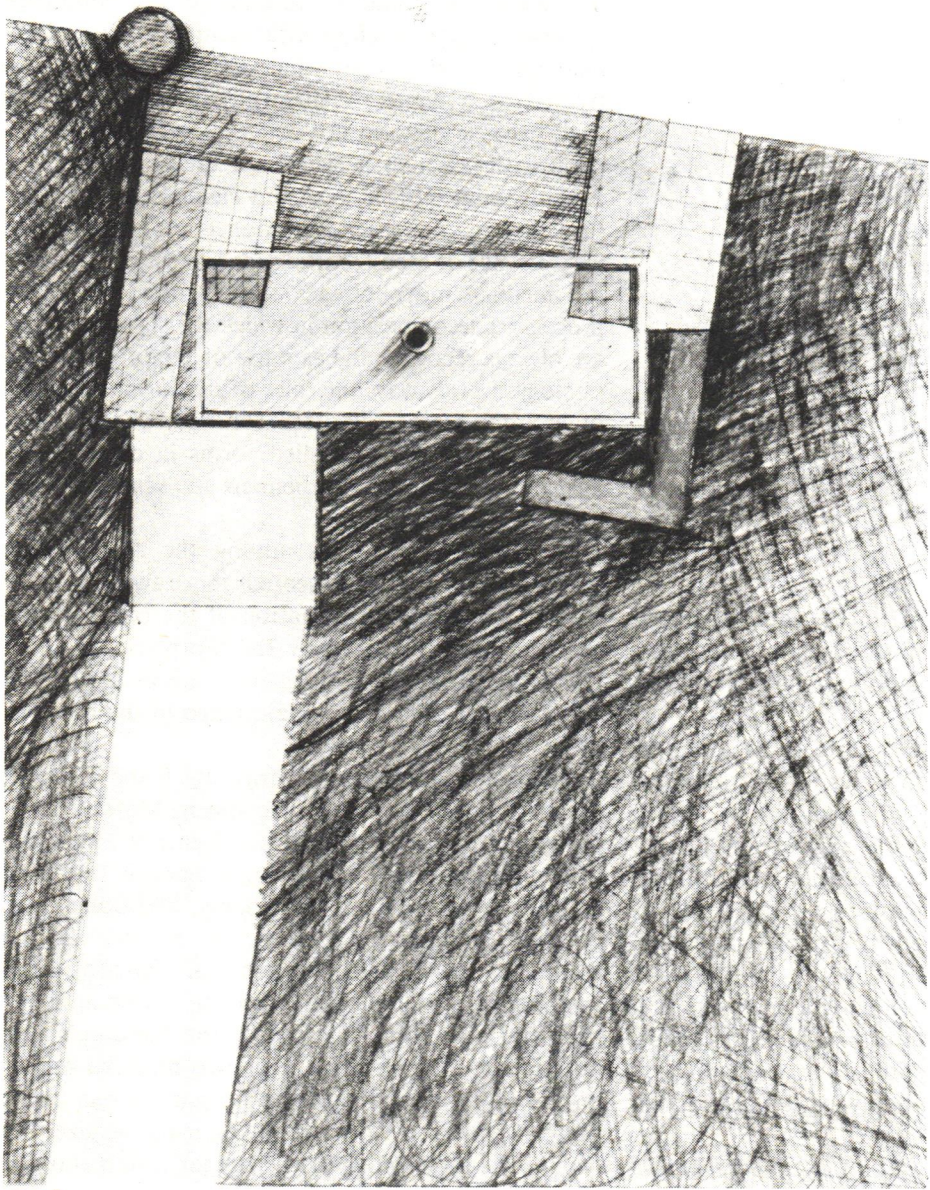
Housetrap #1: No center for the family



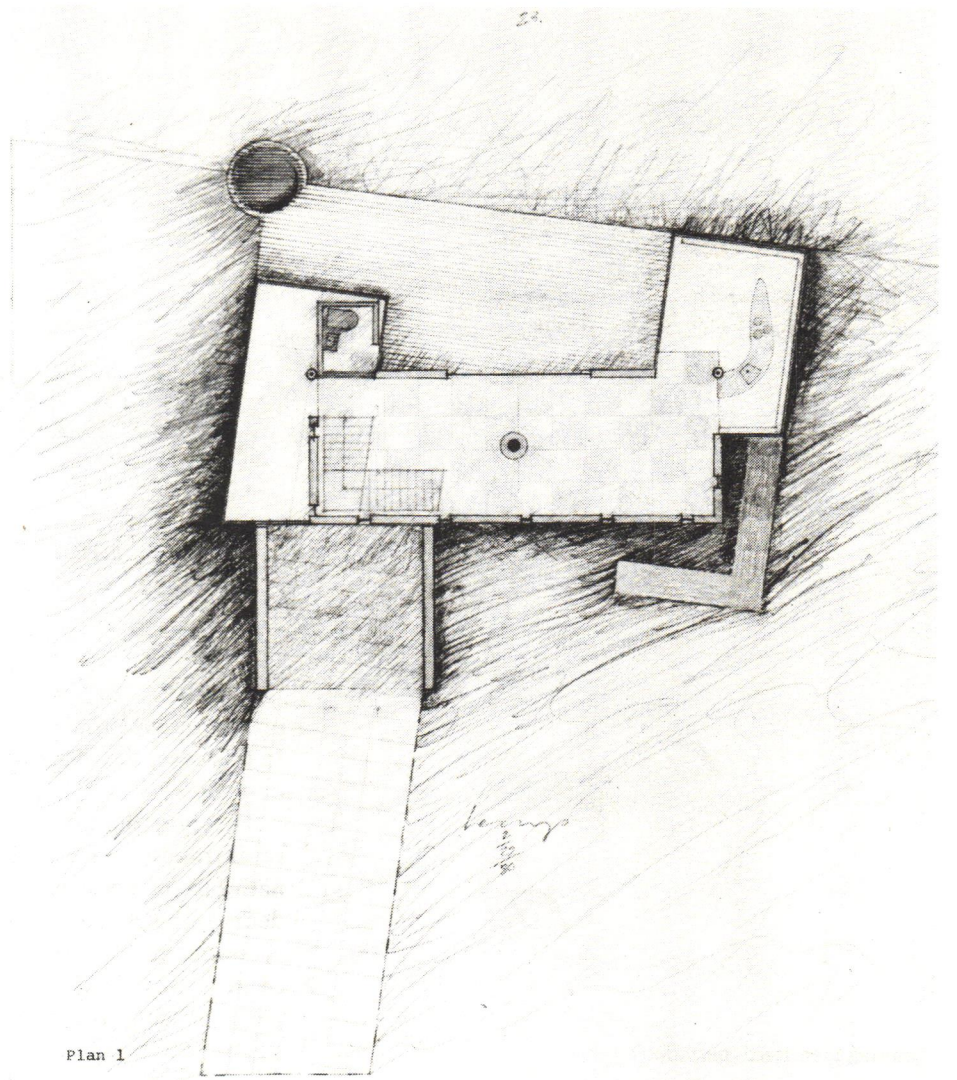
Housetrap #2: Stairs lead nowhere, redundant openings, no family "rooms".



The Nofamily House a. view, b. omelet view

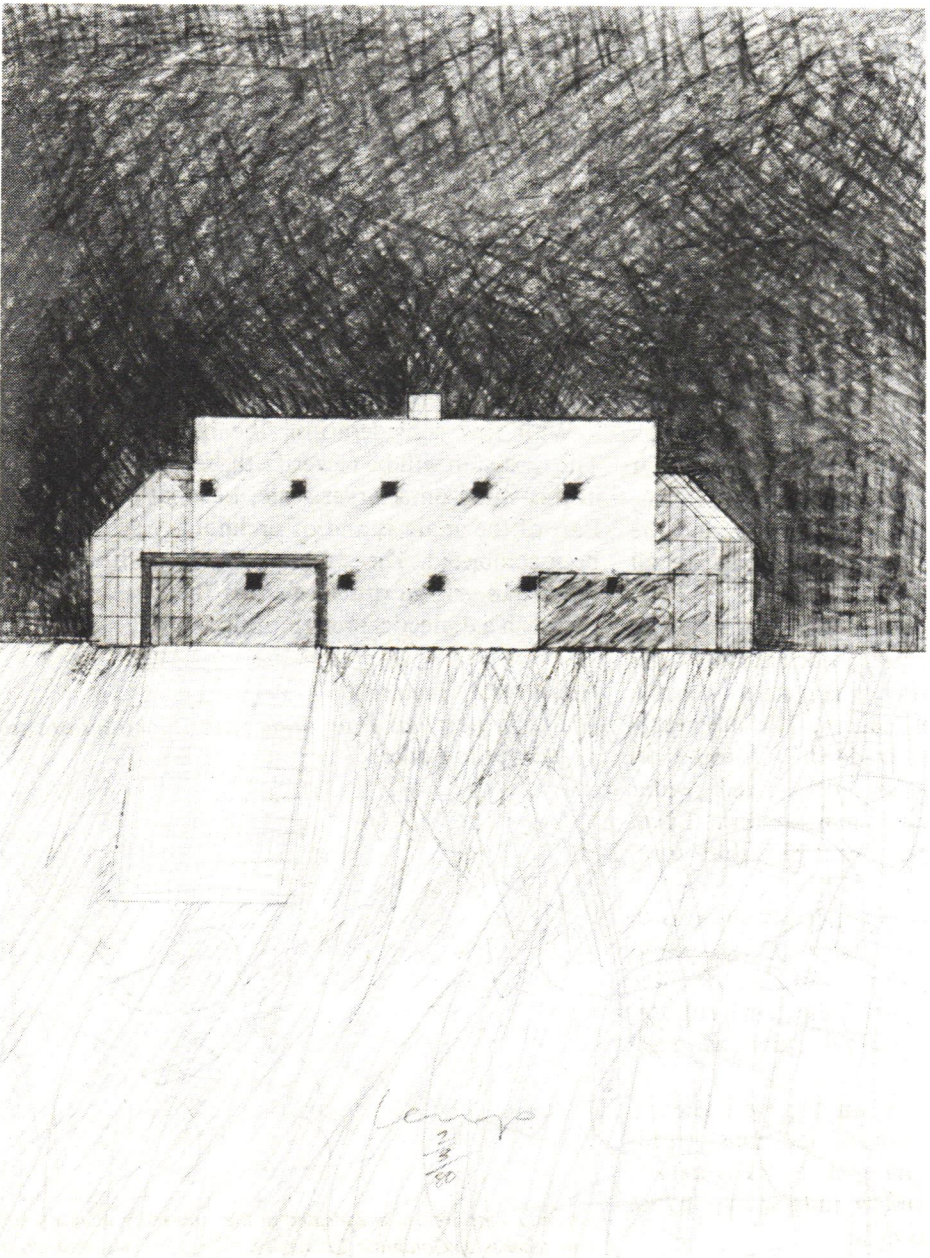


Roof

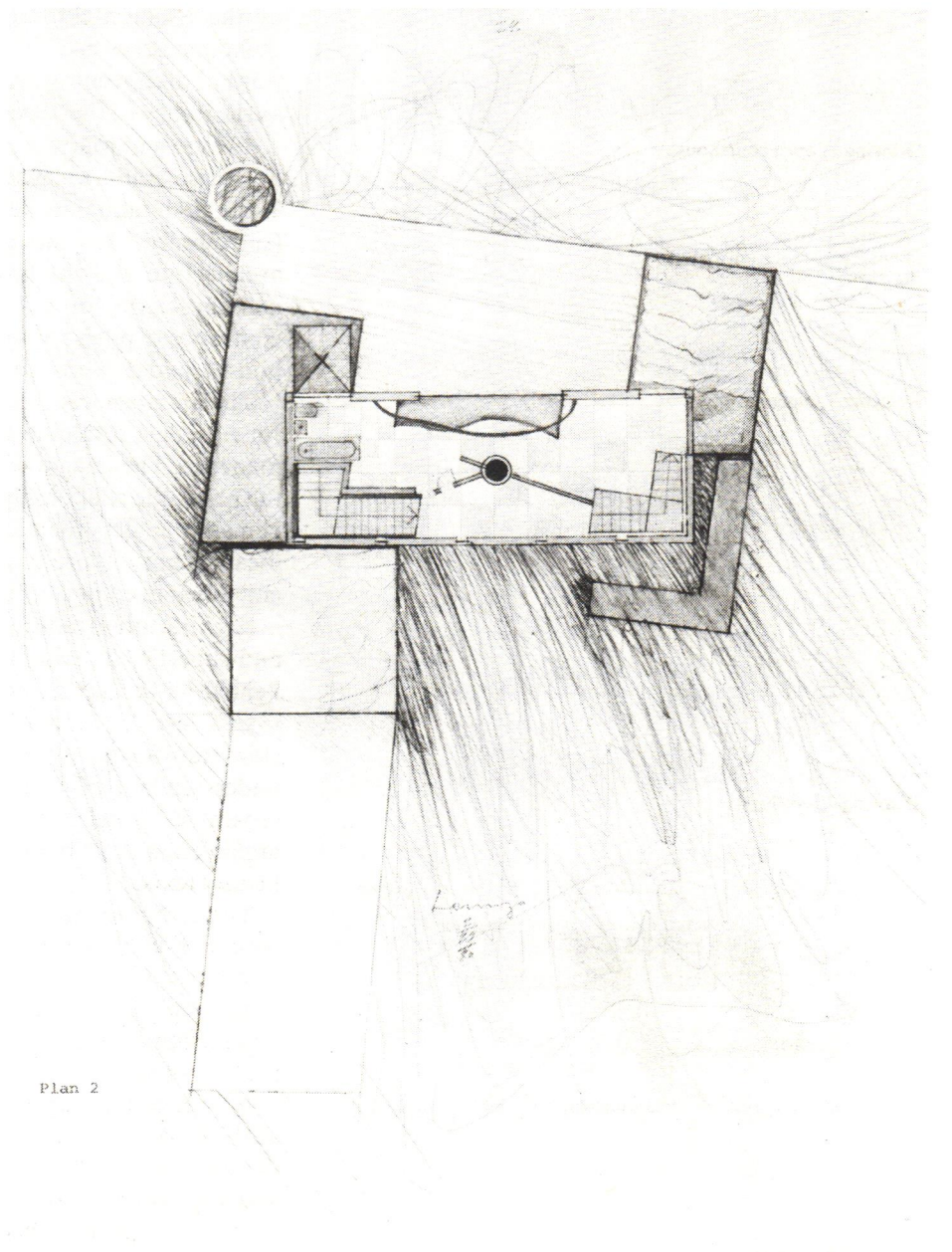


Plan 1

Lower Floor



Facade to Street



Plan 2

Upper Floor

from the observation of local models, are analyzed in drawings 1, 2 and 3. An analysis was conducted by describing the architectural elements. The goal of analysis is to single out what is typical (space is not treated as a neutral element). Diagrams were not used because they do not convey spatial qualities or specificities, which derive from the connection between spatial morphology and elements of architecture. In analysis, when this connection is broken the very essence of architectural space is lost.

The three morphologies are described through a process of decomposition in which the spatial portions are always recognizable as parts of the original morphology. In this way, the roles of the various elements of architecture are clarified. The morphologies are represented in the embodied forms in court-houses and hangars, and not in the inert state in which they appear in catalogues.

Examples of synthesis among the three spatial morphologies are represented in drawing 4. The growth and the transformation of the original morphologies are regulated by the morphological laws which are obtained through the analysis so that the specificity of each one is maintained in the new synthesis.

The project illustrated in drawings 5 and 6 is not a design solution for a specific site in Marfa. It is a blow-up at a precise scale (1m. = 1cm.) of a synthesis that could have been in drawing 4. Specific functional areas, like the kitchen, bathrooms, bedrooms, etc., were left undescribed because the project was not composed from considerations of function. The synthesis of two domestic morphologies with an industrial one posed the problem of the building's connotation as a house. This issue was resolved by balancing the dimensions of the hangar, in relation to the other parts, without reducing it to the size of a room. The dimensions of the hangar reflect those of the court, which, in the court-house, is the public space. The hangar, maintained free-standing, enters in the fabric-like logic of the court-house without losing its specificity.

Nevertheless, non-domestic functions could be performed in the house. It could be a small museum or a small hotel. A tension between specificity and flexibility of use, between private and public use, is the logical outcome of a synthesis between court-house and hangar. The presence of a free-standing form, the hangar in a fabric, the court-houses resolved in a complex fabric, and the hierarchy among the parts imbue the project with urban qualities. The house can be interpreted as a microcosm of a town.

With this consideration, the investigation ends. The next step will be to verify those notions gathered in this study on a larger scale, i.e. that of the town. Part of the analysis and of preliminary synthesis has been completed. The results should be verified against the urban grid in order to see if the new fabric can establish a dialectical relationship with it.

—Lauretta Vinciarelli

—The project has been done with the collaboration of Leonardo Fodera.

MARFA IIa

Lauretta Vinciarelli

“MARFA 2a” is part of an on-going research project on the problems of transforming urban fabrics. In this case, the focus is on certain architectural facts or givens.

The possibilities of transforming local architectural traditions are studied in order to pose an alternative to the present ideology of urban renewal, which defines whatever does not suit the exigencies of present economic policies as obsolete. A notion of the urban context was developed which stresses the value of permanence in the collective memory of a place and stresses the predominance of the role of architecture as an urban element. The context is interpreted as a specific stratification of architectural facts in a place, as an artifact which appears in precise forms in time and which can be observed, analyzed, and evaluated in its transformations.

As research on the language of architecture, this study attempts to expand the limited formal referents of the Modern tradition. Nevertheless, social and economic issues and the concern for rational explanations of architectural facts are preserved in this study as the legacy of the Modern Movement.

The town of Marfa, in southwest Texas, was selected as a case study because of its size (it has less than 3000 inhabitants), its beautiful geographical position (surrounded by a mountainous desert to which the architecture and the layout of the town is related), and the clarity of its architectural tradition which contraposes pitch-roofed houses to Mexican court-houses, and domestic buildings to industrial hangars.

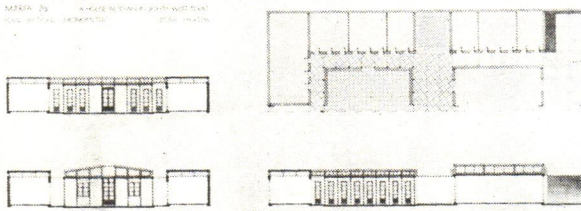
The architectural tradition in Marfa is not studied for nostalgic or picturesque reasons, but for its permanence. The images which qualify the specificity of the place, the relationship between architectural forms, climatic factors, the socio-political context, and the local means of production of architecture, are all embodied in context of the town.

Architectural tradition is often borrowed partially and superficially without investigation into the logic behind its forms and materials which risks debasing it to a level of picturesque imagery. The inherently slow transformation in local traditions promotes an understanding of them as parts of a fixed realm, separated from the cultural mainstream. Local architectural traditions rarely appear in architectural history texts.

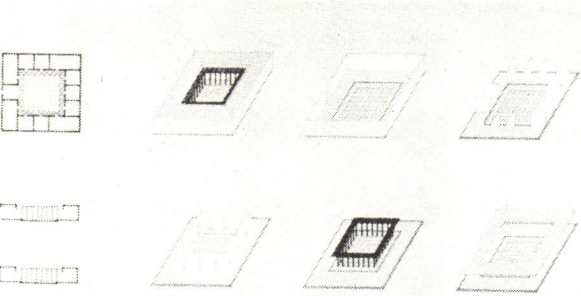
The difficulty of working on a local tradition is to decode it within an appropriate analytical framework. The strategy used in this work was to interrelate traditional and contemporary architectural culture, and the apparent fixity of local architecture and architectural theory.

In Marfa, three spatial configurations were selected as the urban material to be analyzed and transformed: the enclosed court-houses, the opened court-houses, and the hangars. A preliminary judgement on the context is implicit in this selection.

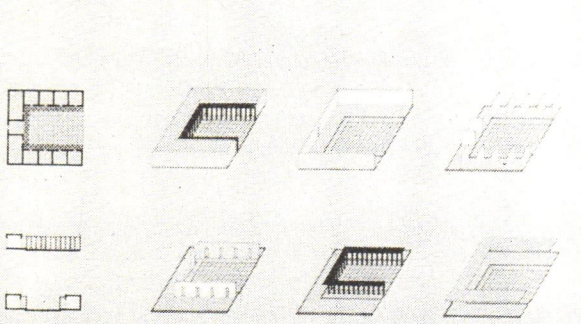
The three selected spatial morphologies, deduced



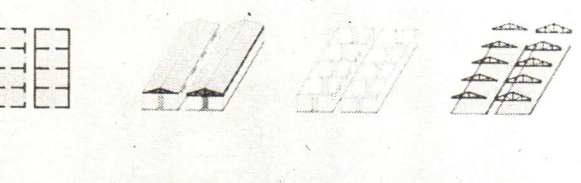
Drawing 6, synthesis



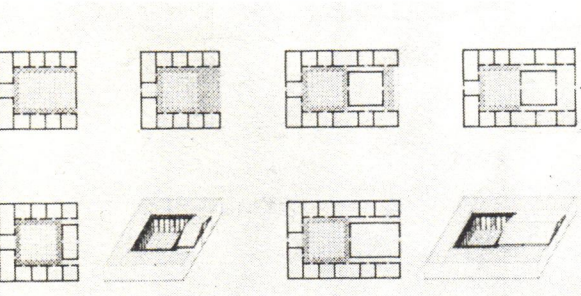
Drawing 1, enclosed courthouse



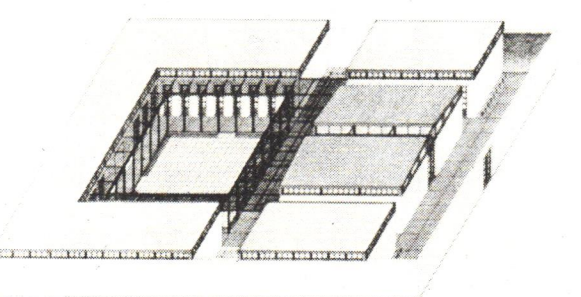
Drawing 2, open courthouse



Drawing 3, hanger

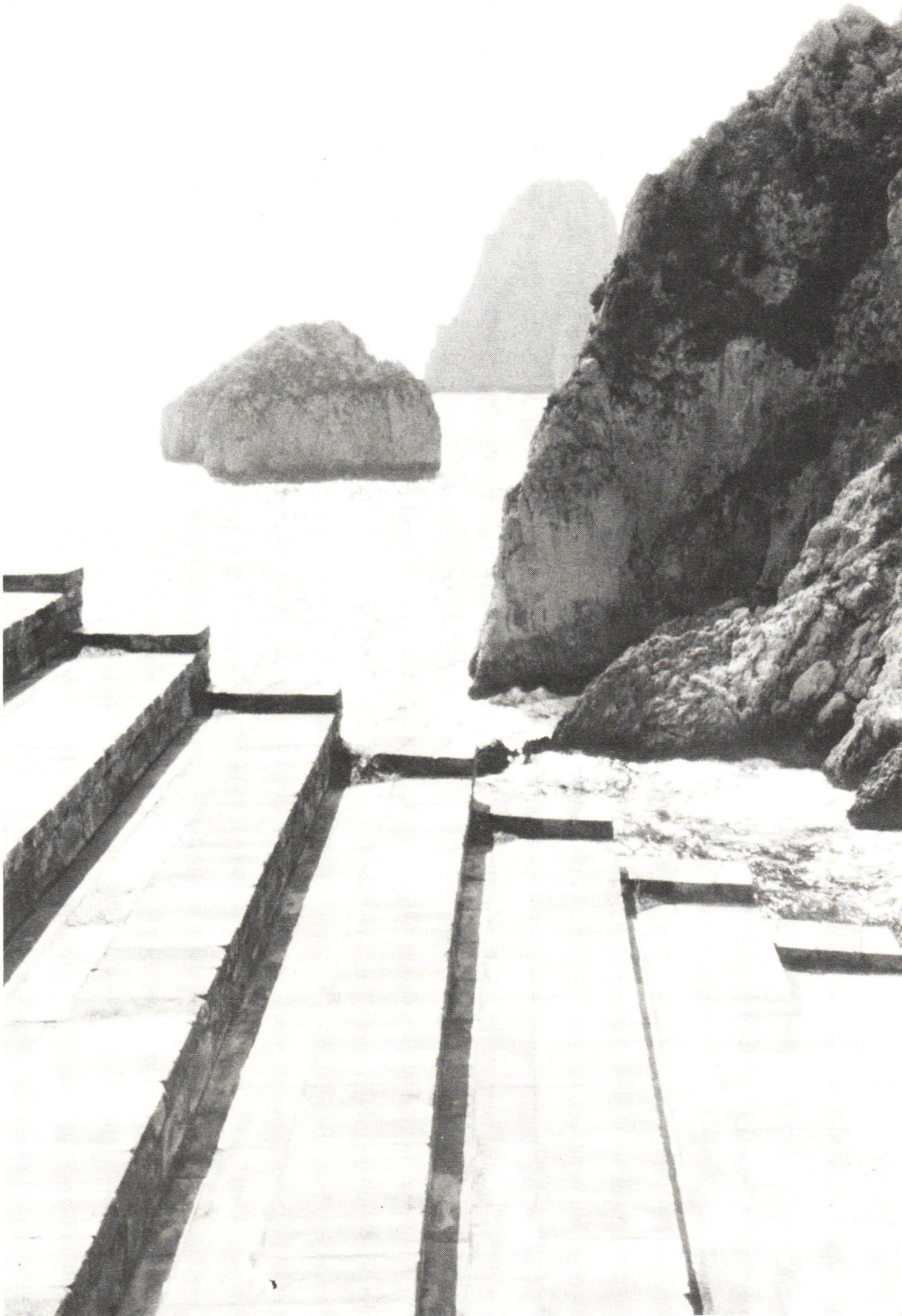


Drawing 4, synthesis



Drawing 5, synthesis

Lauretta Vinciarelli was educated at the University of Rome and now teaches at Columbia University, NYC. She practices architecture in Texas and in New York.



Andrew Batey

The Faraglioni from the steps

Building of the Quarter
VILLA MALAPARTE



Andrew Batey

View of Villa from the footpath

"I accompanied him (General Rommel) all over the house, going from room to room, from the library to the cellar, and when we returned from the vast hall with its great windows, which look out on to the most beautiful scenery in the world, I offered him a glass of Vesuvian wine from the vineyards of Pompeii. 'Prosit!' he said, raising his glass, and he drained it at a single draught. Then, before leaving, he asked me whether I had bought my house as it stood or whether I had designed and built it myself. I replied—and it was not true—that I had bought the house as it stood. And with a sweeping gesture, indicating the sheer cliff of Matromania, the three gigantic rocks of the Faraglioni, the peninsula of Sorrento, the islands of the Sirens, the far-away blue coastline of Amalfi, and the golden sands of Paestum, shimmering in the distance, I said to him: 'I designed the scenery.'"¹

In fact Curzio Malaparte did build his house on Punta Masullo and Adalberto Libera designed it. This took place from 1938 to 1940. Malaparte was one of the first Fascists in the 'Disparata' troops in Florence. His Fascism was literary as well and he became one of the most brilliant journalists of the new regime, editor-in-chief of *La Stampa*. But after he criticized Mussolini's taste in ties and made an enemy of him forever (Mussolini's ties were, in fact, hideous) he spent 1933 to 1935 imprisoned on the island of Lipari. During the war he travelled about Europe with the Italian Alpine Regiment and after the arrival of the allies in Italy, Malaparte (at Capri) became liaison officer to the U.S. Army. His villa became his headquarters and a social watering place for the American conquerors, as well as the young sibyls and wrinkled nymphs of Capri, as it had before the war when Countess Edda Ciano and her court replaced the resplendent golden age of Marchesa Luisa Casati and Mimi Franchetti.

"During the days that he spent at my house on Capri General Cork used to rise at dawn and go for a solitary walk in the wood situated near the Faraglioni, or climb the craggy precipice which overhangs my house on the Matromania side; or if the sea was calm, he would go out in a boat with me and fish among the rocks under the Salto di Tiberio. He liked to sit at my table with a glass of Capri wine before him, pressed from the vines of Sordo. In the evening, after supper, we used to sprawl in front of the chimney piece on the chamois skins that cover the stone-paved floor. It is a vast chimney piece, and built into the back of the fireplace is a representation of Jena in quartz. Through the flames one discerns the moonlit sea, the Faraglioni rising from the waves, the crags of Matromania, and the forest of pines and holm oaks that lies behind my house."²

Malaparte was one of the first Italian writers to contribute to *Unità*, the communist daily, signing himself with the pseudonym, Gianni Strozzi. Strozzi is the name of a ducal family in Florence; the mythical journalist was supposed to sound like someone open-minded and young (Gianni—Johnny, not Giovanni), with a noble past behind him (Strozzi), who realized that the world was changing and that one had to be a communist in Italy in 1944, just as one had to be a liberal in 1870, a war enthusiast in 1914, and a Fascist in 1919, all so as not to be forgotten or left by the wayside. Later Malaparte realized that the communists were simply not going to make it in a democratic Europe. What mattered, he decided, were the people, the public.³ So he flung himself into everything that belonged to the masses—large circulation newspapers, the cinema, the theatre. He wrote two international best-sellers, *Kaputt* and *The Skin*. He found refuge in the Chinese revolution and went to China, coming back to Capri in 1957 to die. His will left his villa to the Chinese Communist Writer's Union.

The villa sits on Punta Masullo and can be reached by foot from the village of Capri by way of Corbusier's Punta Tragara (1937) or by boat.

"As soon as the promontory of Masullo emerged from the sea, and my house, situated at the very tip of the promontory—came into view, a boyish smile would light up the face of General Cork.

"Ah, I see why the Sirens made their home here," he would say. "This is the real country of the Sirens."⁴

The house is an extension of its site and the steps leading to it. These steps mount the house and climb over it to a solarium which is the tile-clad roof. Steps also lead down from the landing on the edge of the rocky point to the Tyhrennian sea and a boat mooring. The landing beside the grand steps forms the entry before a rather inconspicuous door with a marine lantern above it marking the entry to the house. The structure is of local stone quarried from the cliffs and brought down from above. The cement and lumber was delivered by boat. The stone is stuccoed over and the smoother finish is painted a Mezzogiorno rose color. Regrettably into the plaster are windows which are minimally detailed, the operable ones having their hinges clamped to the glass surround. All interior walls are plastered smooth and painted white, contrasting with heavy wood trim carved and stained in an almost alpine manner. The floors are stone.

Malaparte furnished the house sparsely and it remains close to the original scheme today. Upholstered sofas and armchairs covered in white linen slipcovers are scattered about with carved tables on fluted stone column bases beside them. A fireplace with a glass-backed fire box is centered in the hall so that one can see the sea through the flames. The bedrooms are spare and have built-in cabinet beds of dark-stained oak. The floors are tile, as well as those of the bathrooms where sunken tubs are hollowed out of the tile. Toilets and basins are carved out of fluted stone col-



The house from below

umns with appropriate holes and drains in their centers. These rooms are heated by old porcelain stoves. There are a few pieces of Italian Risorgimento carved furniture about.

The plan of the house is a simple progression from the entry vestibule and stairs with service rooms (kitchen, pantry, maids) below, to large hall, to smaller private spaces (bedrooms, baths), and finally to the end which is a study. The penultimate rooms have small windows, the study rather larger ones and the Hall huge (8 feet \times 16 feet) ones which look upon the island cliffs and the sea beyond, framed by pine trees along the edge of the point.

There is no garden, and except for the small entry terrace, no space on terra-firma besides the steps themselves. The exterior space is entirely experienced on the solarium-roof. This platform has no railing and is edged by a mere extra tile. A curved plaster wall acts as a visual barrier to the foot path above the villa and is the only sanctuary in this sky room.

The Malaparte House now belongs to the Chinese Communist Writer's Union and is administered by them as an institute, open to rare public visitors. It is a fitting solitary tribute to the end of the thirties, Italian Rationalism, Adalberto Libera, and Curzio Malaparte.

THE ARCHITECT

Adalberto Libera was born at Villa Lagarina, Trent, in 1903. He studied at the School of Architecture, Rome from 1926 to 1928, and there was a member of Gruppo 7. In 1929, he authored "Del Razionalismo in architettura" in reply to Piacentini and his traditionalism. Although a leader of the new Rationalism in Italy, Libera was consistently a loner. He seemed to manage a classicist based rationality while flirting with Romanticism and Naturalism. As Vieri Quilici points out in his article on Libera in *Lotus 16*: "His research centered around a traditional concept of the architectural 'object,' . . . the symbolic object of a new 'mediterranean' order, as metahistorical and metaphysical as Fascist ideology may have been, but functional in relation to itself" . . . "Libera's purism is of a classicist origin, distinguished by an individual adherence to the world of objects, by a need for order in relation to their various natures and material collocations." In other words, Libera was a subjective experimentalist.

The Malaparte house is a unique artifact, born of the site and the client, and his remark that, "the structure springs from the idea that a building by the sea must not rest upon a forest of columns as two quite separate and different things, but the construction must issue in its structure out of the sea as an organism," describes its rationale. Quilici defines this tendency: "the formal structure of a single architectural event tends . . . to state the inward, individual essence of the 'type' proposed, and to become the eloquent image of an unrepeatable condition of the site, and its transformation by a 'violent' act of architectural design."²

In some respects, Libera and his client, Malaparte, were alike. Libera remarked upon Malaparte's belief that all was highly spiritual and romantic, and said

of the architect's task: ". . . The modern way of confronting the objective world is to make things emerge from within, that is, to understand the facts which must be resolved and to do so little by little, until the various exigencies are manifested and finally, one sees the architectural result."¹

Libera is a much more culturally representative architect than Terragni or Piacentini, and he survived the vicissitudes of architecture before, during, and after the war. He continued to produce significant designs throughout the post-war years until his death in 1963.

—Andrew Batey

¹Vieri Quilici, "Adalberto Libera, Roman Rationalism between Wars," *Lotus 16* (1977): 63, 70.

²*Ibid.*, p. 74.

³Adalberto Libera, "La mia esperienze die architetto," *La Casa 6* (n.d.):171.

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¹Curzio Malaparte, *The Skin*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), p. 204.

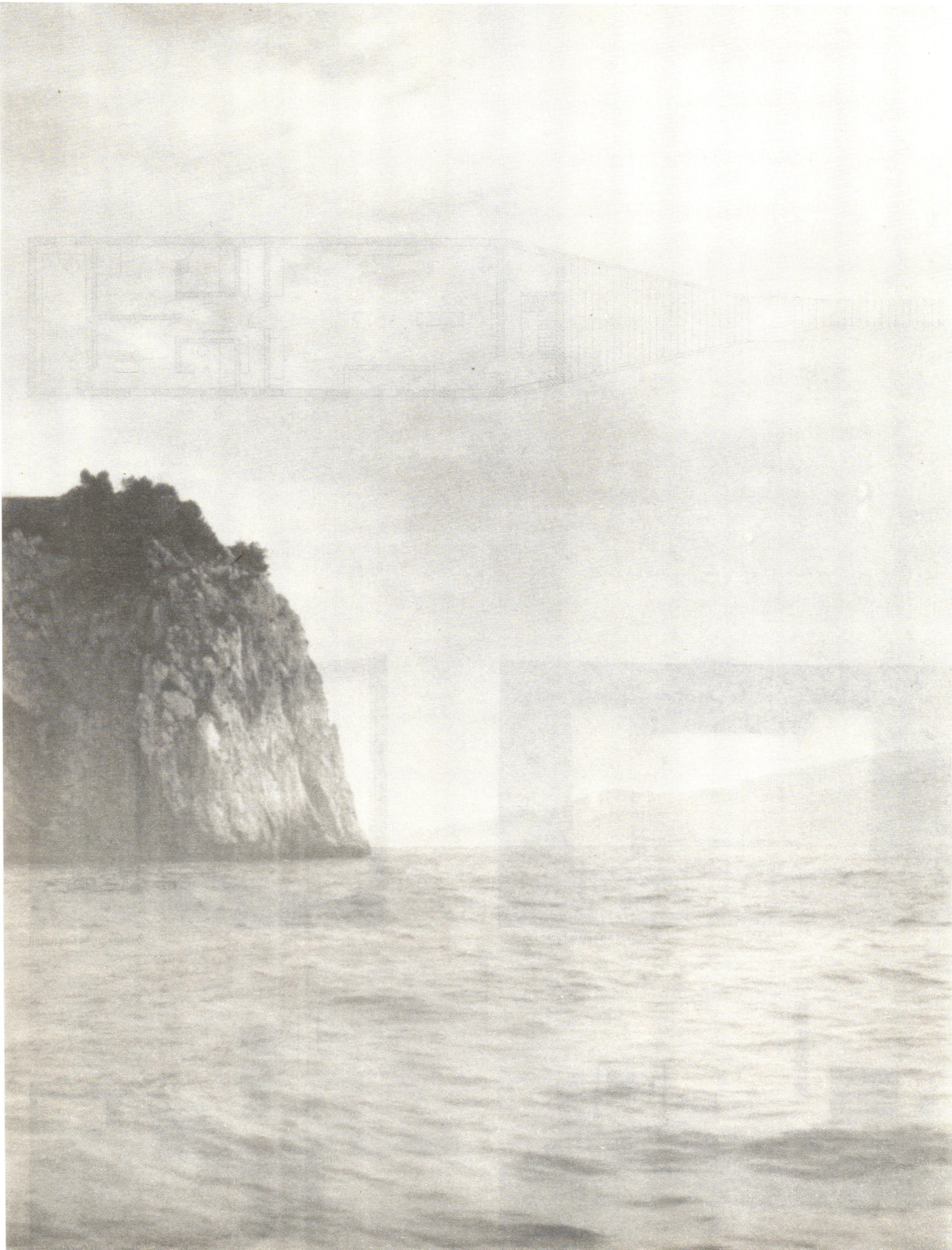
²*Ibid.*, p. 201.

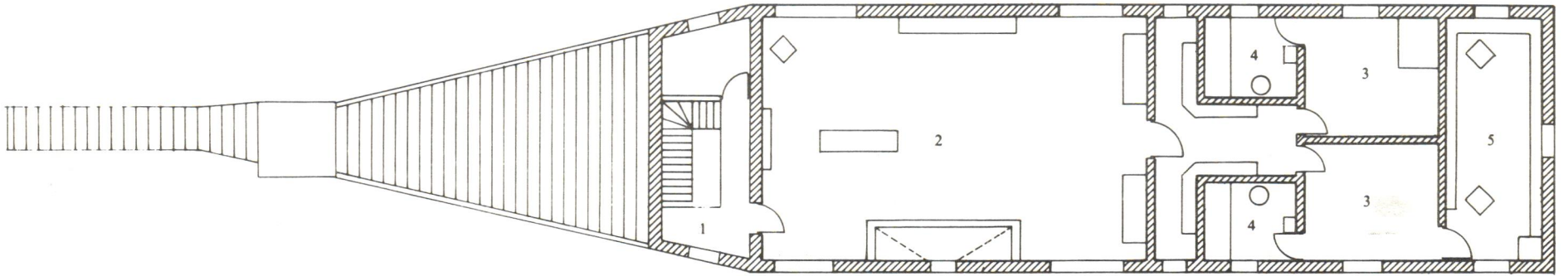
³Luigi Barzini, *From Caesar to the Mafia*, (New York: The Library Press, 1971), p. 48.

⁴Malaparte, *The Skin*, p. 197.

ARCHETYPE





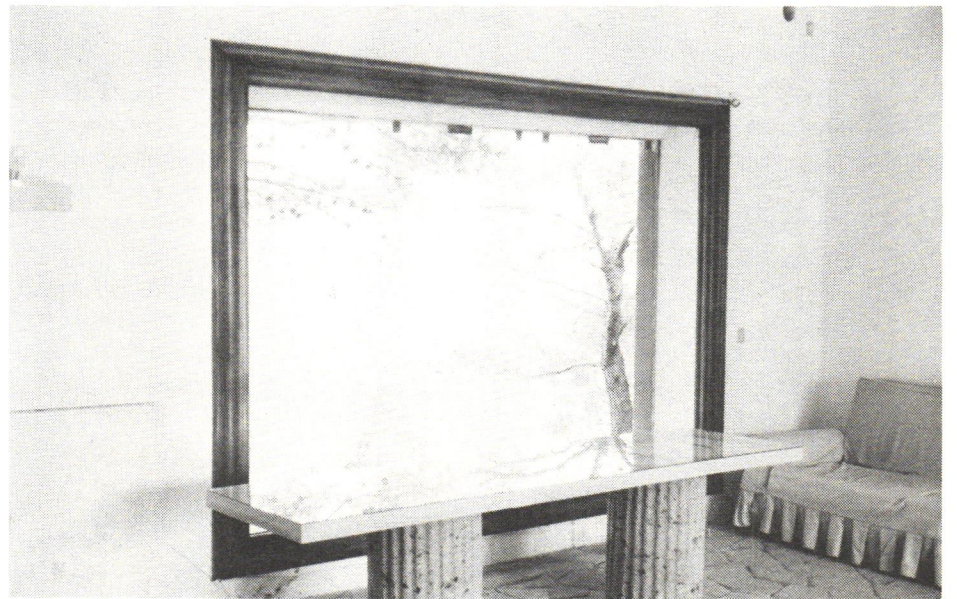


PLAN

- 1 Vestibule
- 2 Great Hall
- 3 Bedroom
- 4 Bathroom
- 5 Study



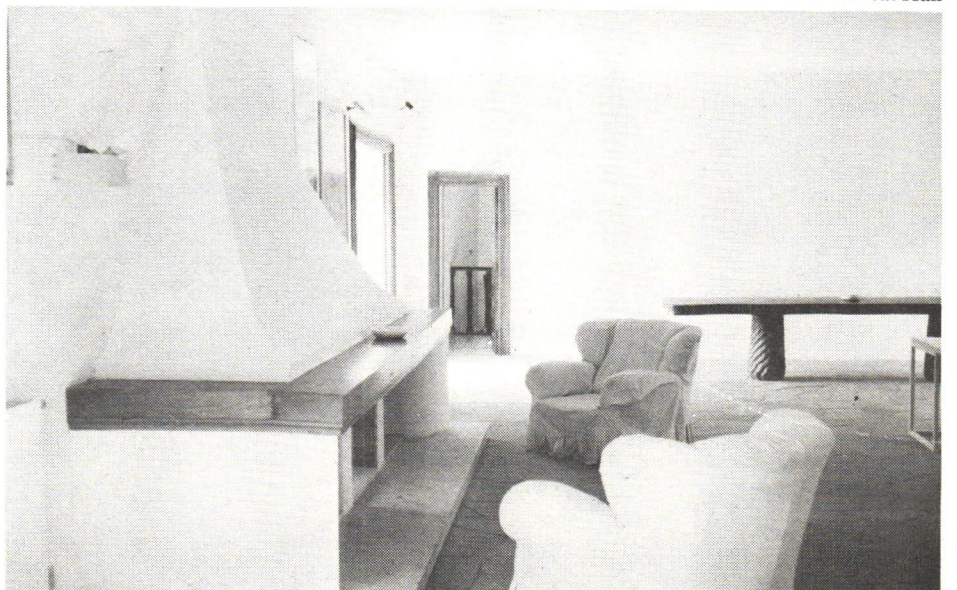
Fireplace with glass-backed firebox



Window in the Great Hall



Bookcase-lined study



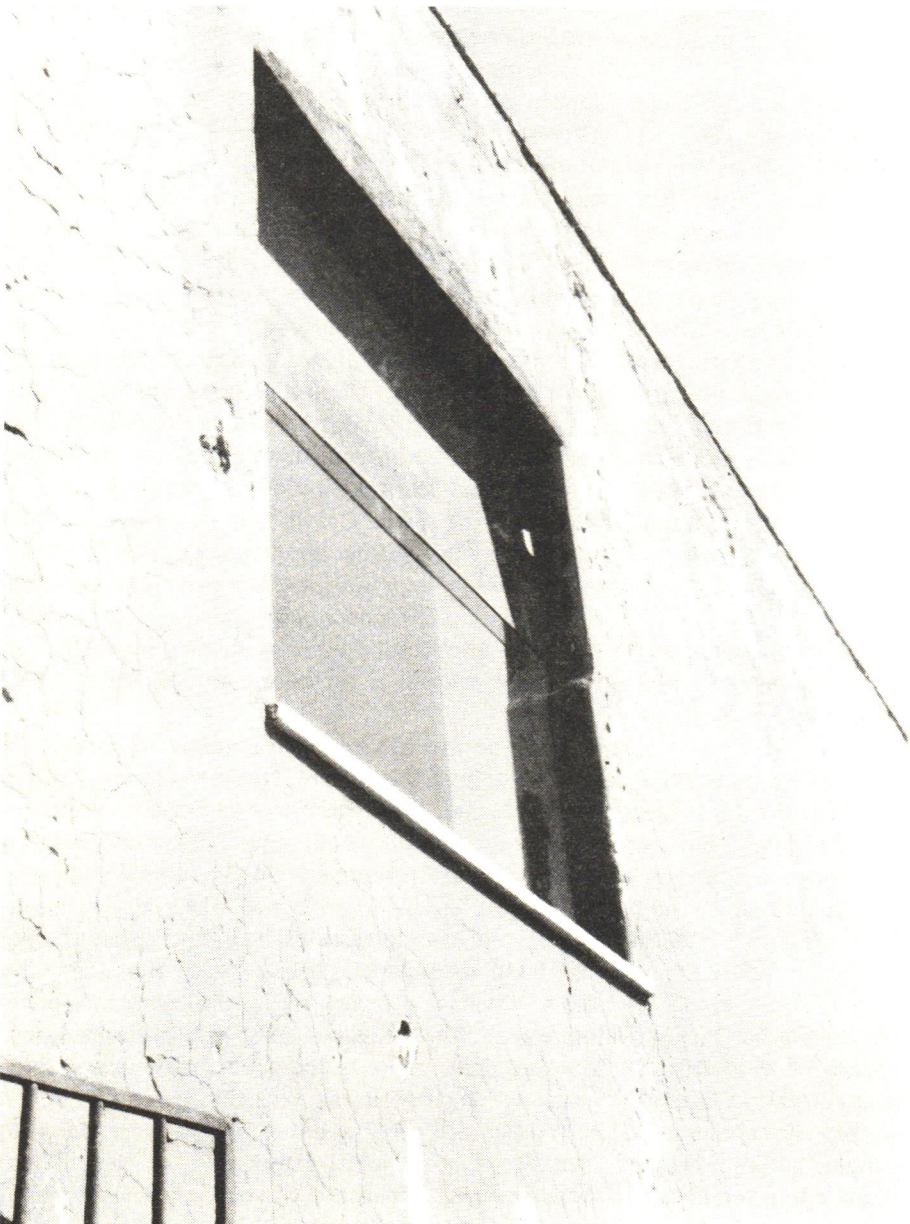
Great Hall and fireplace



The steps leading to the foot path



Gate from Path



Window



Landing and entry

Interview:

Peter Eisenman

*Peter Eisenman, architect, is Director of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York, an editor of the architectural journal *Oppositions*, and an editor of *Oppositions Books*. Equally important, *Progressive Architecture* named him the most controversial architect published in its pages during the 1970s (December, 1979). The following interview is a good indication of why this is so. Eisenman has had a far greater influence on architecture than one would suspect simply by counting the number of works he has designed in the last 15 years. Although often difficult, he is always interesting, and is certainly the most articulate and provocative American architect of his generation.*

This interview was conducted by Diane Ghirardo and Mark Mack in San Francisco on August 3, 1979.

Eisenman: What is the purpose of this interview? Why did you want to interview me, since *Archetype* is a magazine for the West Coast; I find it strange, although I am pleased because I like your magazine.

Archetype: We just want to interview outstanding architects.

E: But is the mission of your magazine West Coast enlightenment?

A: No. We try to be more than West Coast. Given that we are on the West Coast and have more access to West Coast material, we also want to get away from the kind of regionalism which is still prevalent. We are interested in continuity between different interviews. In the interview with Frank Gehry, we asked him about his travels to various schools; he commented that juries were an absolutely impossible process, that the student was lost, especially on a jury with Eisenman, Moore, Gwathmey, Gandelsonas. . .

E: Frank Gehry was lost.

A: . . . that it was the biggest load of verbal dysentery he had ever heard.

E: I never realized how articulate Frank was; perhaps he ought to stick to interviews, even writing, and leave the juries to architects. Personally, I would rather be on a jury than give a lecture. Because to come in, do a show and tell, and leave is gratuitous. The students make no contact with you, and you make no contact with them. For me, the jury is the best way of communicating with the students because you are not reacting to your work, but to theirs. For example, I have been on several juries of Michael Graves's recently. Even though I disagree with the direction of Michael's work, it is self-contained and has enough content to raise general issues, which makes for a debate not only between the jurors but also between the jurors and the students. The student then participates in the process of criticism, as does the critic.

A: That reaches only those students who are directly involved in design. What about other people who are interested in architecture, but who are not designing it? Doesn't the lecture serve something for them?

E: What I find so problematic about the lecture format is that it reduces both architectural thought and the architect to a condition of consumption. The marketing and consumption of ideas is the first step

toward the homogenization of thought, and with it a loss of the ability to differentiate between ideas. People on the lecture circuit become amusing, witty, and above all entertaining; performance becomes primary. While performance is obviously involved in a jury, the crucial difference is in the way one can bring a student's idea to a level of generality so that he can see the relationship of what he has done to a general condition. In that sense one is not talking about the consumption of ideas, but about uncovering ideas and seeing their relationship to the general architectural condition. The way to talk to architects is to talk about their work, not about one's own. I am not interested in people following my work. In fact, my work has no general relevance in that sense. It is not consumable by other architects. It is not possible for me to have a school of followers, and so for me it is more interesting to talk about the work of others.

A: Do you ever give lectures, and do you become entertaining?

E: Oh, absolutely. I have to earn a living. There is no tenure at the Institute and thus, no way to earn a living teaching there. So we all have to go out and lecture. But I prefer the kind of discussion we had last winter at Western Addition with Giorgio Ciucci and Kurt Forster, where there was a small group of people and no money was involved. Also, I rarely teach at the Institute because, since I direct it, I do not want my ideas being diffused through the Institute.

A: You said that you do not like the consumption of ideas. But then the Institute and you have been involved in the publication of a number of different things, and don't you see these as the consumption of ideas?

E: Anyone will tell you that *Oppositions* is neither a current magazine nor is it consumable either in a marketing sense or in terms of its content. Taken as a whole, it stands as the skeleton for a theory. The first number is as current today as the 12th number.

A: It is an attitude one buys.

E: That's right. An attitude about architecture. Take *Oppositions Books*, the new series we are doing. I don't think they will be consumable either. These books will be texts not presently available in English but which should be for anyone who is seriously interested in the study of architecture. There is no reason why Loos, Ginsburg, Van Doesburg, Sedlmayr or Persico should not be available in English. These books will generate the same kind of idea structure as *Oppositions*. Perhaps the only consumable item that we publish is *Skyline*, which is very different from our other publications. It is definitely oriented to the public in the sense that it is neither hermetic nor esoteric nor intellectual, but essentially attempts to create a market for reading criticism on a more popular level. There is no question that it is a consumer magazine.

A: How do you resolve your scholarship with your art, and do you find any difficulty balancing the two? Are you inclined to keep them in balance or to do them both?

E: I have had a problem with it. I believe that at one time I became too involved with theory. I don't feel myself to be a historian or a theoretician, but an architect, and I do not think I do enough architecture. Most of what you might call scholarship eludes me. My writing uses other people as vehicles for ideas that I could not express myself or do not relate to my own architecture. My Stirling article, for example, is not about Stirling, it is my *misreading* of Stirling. The Graves article is about my idea of Modernism. The Rossi text is about my ideas on architecture and death. I have decided not to use these surrogates any longer. The same is true of Terragni; he becomes an invention of my misreading. I am going to do less writing and more architecture.

A: My next question is about Graves. Gehry com-

mented that he thought Michael Graves was doing the most exciting work in America today. But in *Oppositions 12* in "The Graves of Modernism," you panned Graves's work.

E: I wouldn't say I panned it at all. I merely suggested that Michael had changed from when I first knew him as a person who believed in a *zeitgeist*. His whole life was that way: the way he dressed, the way he lived, his furniture, his clothing, everything was of the present. And his architecture was that. Michael is without question one of the most talented architects in America today. I cannot deny that. His movement toward eclecticism, or historicism, implies that we can now choose Moderne as well as Modern. This is merely a stylistic choice. It brings the architect back to being a kind of aesthetic arbiter, deciding what is good and what is bad. Michael has changed his whole attitude toward his architecture. He will be more successful and even more consumable. I merely called him to task on what was present in his earlier work and what I think he has lost. Michael is going through a phase; I would hope when he has a chance to reflect there will be some sort of synthesis between where he is now and where his earlier work was.

A: Are you also criticizing Graves because he departs from your idea of what architecture should be?

E: No, I don't think so, because I am not interested as a critic in telling people what they should do or how they should do it. I think that what I do is all right for me and what Michael does is all right for him. My criticism was merely that it seemed to me that Michael had done an ideological about-face with respect to his earlier architecture, and my question was, what must we now think of that earlier architecture? Is it merely to be seen as stylistic? I challenge Graves to answer that. I think it is important that there be a certain ideological tone or consistency to work, and if we believed one thing about the earlier work and another about the current work, what are we to think of the earlier work?

In a more general sense, I believe that one cannot simply say, "Well, Modernism is dead." Since 1945, after the Holocaust and Hiroshima, the conditions of life are such that the relationship of man to object has changed. Modernism proposed just such a change in the arts prior to 1945. Science made it a fact in 1945. There can be no avant-garde; the concepts of new and progressive have disappeared. We are all in a situation of being survivors rather than heroes. There is an ideology in the culture which architects have not yet recognized. It is not something that I am prescribing, I think it's there. I think it enfeebles the work of the historicists. In one way their work is like the last death rattle of the Humanist hero.

A: One thing about Graves's work or Stern's work is that it is ingratiating. But you are saying that there is another ideology in the culture that these architects have not yet seized upon, and I am not so sure. I think that they are responding to what they see in the culture, and appealing to the escapist tendencies they perceive.

E: But the escapist tendency merely manifests the deep anxiety in the culture. It reflects the loss of the hero. After all, Modernism was an heroic enterprise—whether individual or collective. The heroic act today is survival. Survivors pretend that everything is all right; but this pretense is a syndrome of the survival ethic. Modernism attempted to bring about an alienation of man from his bourgeois life. But now that alienation exists. Michael Graves, for example, is no longer interested in the position of abstraction or alienation. My argument is that his choice is made in a context which no longer permits such a choice.

A: You said the other day that you were going to "get dirty" and build. How will you handle that same problem, because if you are going to be building or designing more, you will face that too.

E: I agree. I have no easy answer for that. If I find

it is too much of a corruption, I may stop. I don't know if the corruption exists *a priori*, that one has to be corrupted to build. I do feel, for example, if you compare Rossi's design, say, for the Segrate monument and the landscape that he projects around it and what actually is built, there is no question that the building is less than the drawing. If he builds Modena [Cemetery], the root of the imagery is such that the building can only be less than the imagery. If you compare a Stirling and a Rossi drawing, clearly you have to build Stirling. The message is not in the drawing. The drawing is only a medium to the building. Rossi's drawings for me are architecture in themselves. They do not need to be built. Rossi's drawings are not paintings of architecture, they *are* architecture. My own drawings represent another charge, they do not have the metaphoric resonance of a Rossi. However, my drawings in a way are concerned with another aspect of architecture, like the axonometric model I made of House X where the only reality of the axonometric is in the photograph, because the reality of the model is distorted by moving around it, and the only view of the model which is real is the monocular view of the camera. House VI is an artifact which exists to be deconstructed and understood in drawing. It is a film; the only way you understand the drawings is by taking them apart in a series of stills. The object is not the result of the process, it is the process—a kaleidoscopic object. Whether one will be able to continue to develop these ideas in practice is another question. I will certainly make the separation between my own future work which may be consumable and the non-consumable work. I no longer feel the need so strongly for either the hermeticism or the purity.

A: Graves's works or the whole post-modernist strategy seem to me more consumer-oriented and apolitical in that they give in to an existing condition. Usually architects in the modern period were more politically oriented; the difference between Rossi and Graves is that Rossi has a strong political message, which is one reason he does not sell, whereas in Graves it is completely diluted.

E: I would disagree with one point. The notion of the political content of work now as opposed to the work of the Modernists is very different. The Modernists, whether as the Dada critique of culture or the work on the language of, say, De Stijl and constructivism (as the two poles of Modernism), according to Tafuri both led to bourgeois consumption, merely changing the individual hero to the collective hero. But it was still a consumer attitude, whether political or not. You are speaking as a romantic in saying that architects should still have that political ideology. Rossi's drawings are political in the sense that they talk about the survival of architecture. Tafuri would argue that there is an end to architecture and no longer any hope in purely architectural alternatives. But Rossi is saying no, that is not the case, there can be an architecture of survival. Perhaps Rossi is as politically and ideologically motivated as Graves and Stern are not, but the nature of the political gesture is very different from the one that could be made in the '20s and '30s. I would agree that the debate is not whether we should have Post-Modernism or historicism. I think Post-Modernism is the dying gasp of the old ideology. What we must discern now is an ideological condition outside of hermeticism which can speak to the condition of man and object today. This has always been one of architecture's roles. Rossi is attempting to do this. He and John Hejduk are among the few who make these kinds of commentaries. I do not feel there are many others, perhaps Leo Krier. But Leo's political ideology seems naive in the sense that it uses the same avant-gardist notion—whether the images are avant-garde or not—that architects used in the '20s and '30s. That is a romantic attitude which is no longer viable. History always makes a commentary. These historicists do not read history carefully.

A: Here in California we have architects who claim to be politically oriented in self-help or community organizations, alternative resources, etc. But it seems that this kind of thrust from the late '60s has died. The shift now in the schools is back to hermetic architecture. Do you think this is a phase we always have to pass through?

E: History is not moving as fast as we think it is. Very little work has been done on the primary sources of modern architecture and exactly what it was in relationship to the society. Few people are willing to do that kind of work; they are looking for the culture of the new, something America has always been interested in precisely because America never had a history and a culture of architecture as they had in Italy or England. What we see in America for the first time are students, across the country, who are not interested in the easy solution, but rather in looking at what architecture is and what it could be.

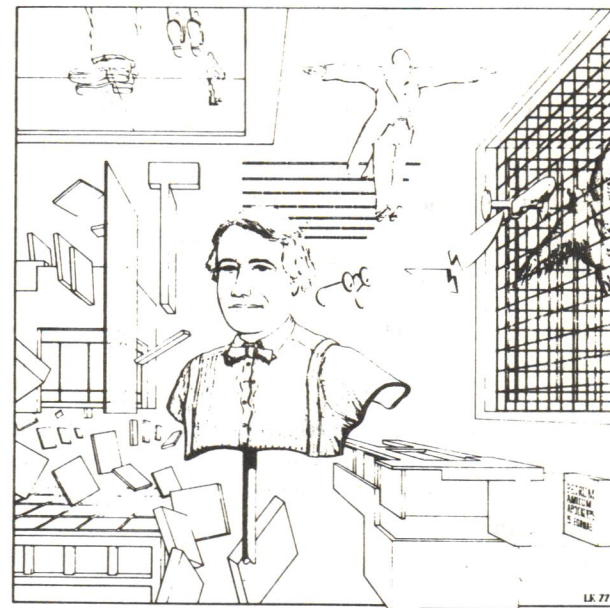
We must acknowledge that American mass production was able to produce the steel frame and the curtain wall, a Modernist artifact, and America did it better than anyone else. The free facade was really made in America. To run away from a part of our cultural heritage that nobody wants to acknowledge, is a mistake. We should look at architecture in light of new technological and environmental problems, even though this light is no longer symbolizing rationality and technology. This has some moral, social, intellectual and cultural relevance to America. The fact that Western Addition exists, the fact that *Archetype* exists, that these kinds of things are happening all over America, not just in New York, is significant. What you are doing is not so much regional as it is bringing energy to problems as you see them from your geographical position, and it does not have to take a regional viewpoint. Things are happening in Seattle which are interesting, and in San Francisco, Dallas, Los Angeles, Houston, St. Louis, which will make this a different country. A country with one cultural capital, say as Paris is to France, is vanishing, as opposed to a country like Italy, which has always had several cultural capitals. I believe America will finally realize its potential to contribute to architectural culture when it is not a one-city culture. Whether it will lead to an architecture of consumption or not, as do most things in America, I cannot say. But I am not a futurologist. I have no belief in the future. The influence of Los Angeles on Frank Gehry or the influence of Chicago on Stanley Tigerman is of no interest to me. What is of interest is what is the influence of architecture on them and their work.

A: That leads to another question. You mentioned Italians a number of times, and almost every issue of *Oppositions* has an article by one of several Italian scholars.

E: So does *Archetype*.

A: Why is there so much Italian criticism? And what is the particular interest that you find in the Italians as opposed to the Germans or others?

E: Italy has had a history of ideas and criticism in architecture; their architecture has always involved the display of criticism and ideas, and it has a long history of journalists discussing architecture in newspapers, popular press, and magazines. It is in their culture. There was also a Modern Movement in Italy, even though it was obscured by the politics of the time, which was probably the most intellectual and architectural of all the Modern Movements. One is just beginning to realize that Italy has resumed its cultural position, which was eclipsed for 20 or 30 years during the '20s, '30s, and '40s. I look to Italians because they are the most interesting and intelligent people writing about and doing architecture in the world today. It is quite natural to look to such places. I know of no other culture with that kind of heritage and continuity. *Oppositions* is going to move away from relying on Europeans and Italians. It did so in the past because it took some years to seed the idea



of an architectural culture, the idea of reading architecture. Now that such a culture is somewhat established, we can mine our own culture and be a magazine that represents a cultural condition and a particular attitude toward artifacts which is our own.

A: Do you think it has something to do with the fact that more people teach and study theory and history in America today?

E: In the past theory was not thought to be a significant problem; it was hardly taught. It is not required by the registration boards, but the major change is that the schools are beginning to see architecture as a discipline rather than as a profession. A discipline requires theory.

A: Why do you think New York is the cultural-architectural capital even though there are fewer examples of good architecture on a percentage basis?

E: I don't think only the building of architecture is what we have been talking about. Certainly I would be disingenuous if I told you that the Institute did not have a role in developing that architectural community. People now are not only willing to talk and listen to ideas, they are beginning to have an appetite for them, which they never had before; and, there is a greater mass of people to sustain such a community in New York.

The other thing that is important to understand about New York is that if you want to avoid a condition of consumption, you have to have patronage. New York, fortunately, has patronage. It is fortunate to have Philip Johnson, who has been one of the few architects (1) interested in ideas, whether you agree with them or not (2) interested in helping young architects. His patronage is enormously important because of his cultural position and he is able to help influence others to patronize architecture. We also have a museum with a department of architecture. The Institute has also been a factor; it has been a unique place where building, ideas, teaching, exhibition, work, publication were united in one agency, and patronage was necessary to support it. That is why the Institute could exist in New York and probably not in Chicago.

A: I often hear that all the publishing houses are in New York and that is why everything out of New York gets published, because of the media link to New York.

E: Oh, I think that's true! But I see no reason that there should not be other magazines in other areas that are not regional. Regionalism only confirms a hierarchy with New York as its apex. Our country can be a network rather than a hierarchy. That is why I applaud *Archetype* as a venture because it is only going to make *Oppositions* better, just as *Oppositions* has made *Progressive Architecture* better. I would be much happier to have other viewpoints growing out of a cultural climate which sees the world differently because of the physical distance between us, rather than the places themselves.

A: I want to ask you another question which goes back to what you said earlier when you spoke about architecture as non-hermetic. . .

E: I didn't say it was non-hermetic; I said that it did not have to be.

A: OK. And your discourse, especially earlier in this interview, was morally concerned; you used the phrase 'moral and social relevance.' But I do not see this in your work. I don't see this kind of engagement with these broader cultural concerns in your work. How do you do this? How do you bring the ideas to the work?

E: I have always maintained a separation of my public life and my private life. What I do in my private life as an architect may not be what I believe I should do in my public life, and I see no conflict in that. My private work is for my private consumption and my private enjoyment. Tafuri would argue that the hermeticism is in fact a political act. He tries to bring me out into the political world in that way. I disagree. It is merely the way I work. I cannot change what I do. I cannot change my art. Art and life are always separate and always will be, and I am not trying to marry my life with my art. What I say about life and what I see around me has something to do with my concern as public citizen. My art has nothing to do with that at all.

A: But you just talked about ideas. You said that architects do not relate their ideas to broader cultural concerns; you said this in such a way to indicate that this is a problem, a gap you wanted to see bridged, and yet. . .

E: I did not say I wanted to, I said it could be bridged. I do not believe that to be a good doctor you have to be curing cancer patients. That may be a moral act, but I think you can be doing research on the nature of cancer and be equally as moral. My work is research on the nature of architecture. That is a moral act. I do not see it as any different from people who are research doctors.

A: How is it a moral act?

E: Is studying the causes of cancer moral?

A: Cancer and architecture are two different things.

E: Studying the makeup of the brain and the way energy passes between cells is a way of dealing with life; it may not be progressivist, it may not be helping the world today, it may not be relevant to the particular condition of the world today, but I would say that work on the language—what it is, how it exists—is an act, and not an immoral one. What's wrong with merely working on the language of architecture?

A: I didn't say it was an immoral act, but I am not so sure that it is a moral act.

E: I don't care to have it judged as a moral act. It's my act. It's what I do. I can't do anything but what I can do. There is a difference between my life and my art. I act one way as a moral person in life. And I act another way in my art.

A: Gehry makes the same argument for Post-Modernism. He says basically that there is no relationship between art and politics; art is art, self-contained and separate from the world, and yet you just criticized post-Modernists and the historicists for. . .

E: I think that there *is* a difference; I think there *is* a relationship between art and politics. I'm merely saying there's no relationship between *my* art and politics.

A: How do you pull that neat trick?

E: That's what I say. You may disagree with it, as Tafuri does, but I do not think of my art consciously as a political act or an idea.

A: But you know, that. . .

E: . . . is ideological. . .

A: and American. . .

E: I'm American.

A: Tafuri and the other Italians will criticize you precisely on these grounds. . .

E: That's right.

A: . . . because they think Americans believe that there is such a thing as being non-ideological.

E: But I don't believe that my work is non-ideological. I can't tell you how it is ideological, but I do not think it is non-ideological. I wouldn't argue that. Mario Gandelsonas has just written a piece saying that my work is ideological; critics can do that, I can't. I get up and do my work. An artist works, he doesn't say now I am going to set out to be ideological. An artist does his art.

A: But there is still a problem; in your work, you almost inevitably address the single family home.

E: Those are the commissions I received.

A: But you just said a while ago that you don't want to be corrupted by the commissions you get. You want to do your architecture. Couldn't you just as well address your aesthetic and intellectual energies to problems that engage somebody besides the wealthy. . .

E: I don't know anything about the wealthy. I don't design for wealthy clients. I just happen to have patrons who allow me to do my own work. I believe that I work better at a smaller scale. If it is small scale, it has fewer functional constraints; while there are constraints in architectural language when you design a road, a bridge, a theater, hospital, etc., there are few in a house. My last house for Kurt Forster came from a program devised by him, and the house responded well to that program, which did not ask for a conventional house. In that sense my work is ideological because it talks about the condition of the non-nucleated family, the notion of house not as a happy home. You can see that the house is no longer vertebrate in my work, and therefore not mimetic of man. It says that man is no longer dominant. Many ideological issues enter into my houses, which allude to the present condition of man in relation to the object world, issues which are not ideological in the political sense, but perhaps in an intellectual sense.

My houses make a commentary on the loss of center that Foucault talks about, that man's conception of the world is no longer anthropocentric as it no longer is theocentric. We may be in a non-centric, non-hierarchical condition. The houses the Post-Modernists design still reflect a belief in anthropocentrism. They are mimetic, man-centered, vertebrate. My houses are ideological in the sense that they deny the anthropocentricity of man. And in that sense they are polemical houses—they deny the humanist and enlightenment narrative. In their non-narrative condition, they are very much Modernist in the true sense of the word.

A: Do you think your ideology has changed since the days of the New York Five? Without a narrative such as the one you just gave, it would be difficult to see this kind of shift in your ideology in your houses.

E: I think the shift is very clear. If you move from House 6 to House 10 to House 11a, the shift is most pronounced. It has gone from a columnar architecture and architecture of what could be called the formalist tradition, where space was deployed in a certain Euclidean way, to an architecture where space and meaning are detached. Space is no longer seen as only Euclidean, it is topological, and topological geometry is a geometry which distances upright man from the object. House 11a is a pure topological inversion. It is now surface rather than spatial architecture. It may look stylistically the same, but the notion that it is a distortion of a surface rather than the manipulation of space and three dimensions is very different. It conceptualizes another distance between man and object. The relationship of man to his architecture has changed in House 11a. In the houses which follow I am working with the problem of scale, with the edge between architecture and sculpture. Modern sculpture was scale non-specific. A model was obviously involved in a sort of scale-specificity. In modernist sculpture it became non-

specific; for example, what is the size of a Brancusi? But architecture, even in its Modernist phase, was always scale specific; you always had to have a door, people had to get in, you had windows and rooms of a certain size because it was occupied by man. I am now working with scale non-specific architecture, to push to the limits of an object which does not relate to man in any way. It can be used by man but also exist for itself. My next series of houses deals with that condition of non-specific scale. They may look like my earlier houses, but there's a great deal of difference, not only in their physicality, their spatial condition of being, their object quality, but also in what they signify. All of my past architecture was hermetic in the sense that the signification was to its own condition of being. The signification now may be moving to a more extrinsic signification; this reflects a fundamental change in the work.

A: Do you ever find it frustrating that you need an interpretation of your house for the public? Post-Modernism usually needs less interpretation.

E: Now are you asking me whether I mind not being easily consumed?

A: Yes. Do you find it personally frustrating that there is this kind of barrier not only to the public, but also to the client?

E: I am not interested in the public. When Anton Weber wrote a piece of music, he was not writing for the public, he was writing for himself. Whether the public understood it or not did not matter to him because he was interested in the expanding universe of music itself. When William Gass writes a book, or David Shapiro writes a poem, they are not concerned with the reader. Art throughout history has never been concerned with public thought. Only recently in this media and consumption world have people abused art to such a point that only accessible and consumable art is thought to be valid. I am not interested in whether or not it is consumable. I do not believe that art is judged on its accessibility; I think it is judged on its own condition of being. I have no problem with the fact that nobody understands my architecture. It certainly makes me less of a threat to most architects. As long as there is one person who can understand it, then it communicates. If I communicated to no one, it might be my problem, but the fact that I do communicate means that it is the other people's fault, not mine.

A: Are you planning to build more?

E: I hope so. I like to build. I am getting myself psychologically ready to have a second career at the age of 50. I no longer desire to be a polemicist or a theoretician or a journalist or a manager of education. I am not interested in doing what I have already done; what I have not done much of is build. But I am going to do it again.

A: You mentioned earlier, when you were talking about Terragni, that you were interested in Terragni not. . .

E: Surrogate, he is a surrogate for me.

A: Yes, I wonder if you could explain that a little more. Why?

E: Because I see my own ideas clearly acting as an outside agent. Since I cannot be my own critic, I can criticize my own work acting as a critical agent only using other architecture as a vehicle. When I write about Terragni, I am not writing about Terragni at all. His work only interests me as a critical vehicle for my own critical need, and I work this way dialectically. I go through a synthetic phase of my own work, and then an analytic phase and a critical phase by using another architect.

A: What is the House of Cards?

E: It is a book of essays I have been working on with Kurt Forster, an idea we had together; the title is self-critical. Houseless cards, something that does not stand up, that's air. It is a dialogue between a critic—Kurt Forster—and myself. I am also finishing a book

(Continued on page 36, col. 3)

On Eisenman: House I to VI

"Syntactic structure has two parts: . . . the first concerns formational rules and the second transformational rules; neither of which have been developed. A fourth aspect of my work deals with the application of the theory to actual building; it is called Cardboard Architecture . . ."
(Eisenman, *Casabella* #344, p. 24.)

Peter Eisenman has said that his work is divided into four parallel activities: an analytic-historical aspect focusing on the Renaissance, principally the work of Palladio, Vignola, Scamozzi, Giulio Romano, and on the Modern Movement, specifically LeCorbusier and Giuseppe Terragni; the second aspect, the theory of Conceptual Architecture; the third aspect concerns itself with syntactic structures, consisting of a discussion and elaboration of the rules which underlie the theory; the fourth aspect is Cardboard Architecture, a specific application of the theory of Conceptual Architecture to his own architectural design process.

This article analyzes the congruence between basic notions of Conceptual Architecture and Cardboard Architecture for their syntactic meaning and implications rather than the actual surface manipulations which operate. The purpose of this essay is to understand the ideas behind this aspect of Eisenman's work and to suggest directions for further investigation.

Eisenman's work addresses problems associated with the development of a more precise and significant syntactic component in architecture. He has attempted to strip his work of all cultural aspects and semantic value, striving for physical and conceptual purity, and a vocabulary of theoretical, universal elements and sets of relationships among elements. He has attempted to shift the primary response to architecture from the perceptual, object-oriented level to the conceptual, relational level.¹

Eisenman claims to have removed from his work cultural references and conceptions which have traditionally been used as generators of form, primarily the notions of function and its relation to form, as well as the iconographic impulse in form generation. He is, nevertheless, working within ideological constraints.² Despite his assertion that ". . . I use traditional elements in unorthodox ways . . .",³ Eisenman's work seems to depend on the Modern Movement with respect to form, surface, and mechanisms of relationships between elements. Cardboard Architecture as cliché demonstrates several fundamental discrepancies between Eisenman's Theory of Conceptual Architecture and the work as a specific application of the theory.

The extent to which the non-verbal world is shared by language is obscure but no more so than the effect of human artifacts and technological environments on language. We are taking for granted that there is at all times interplay between these worlds of percept and concept, verbal and non-verbal. Anything that can be observed about the behavior of linguistic cliché or archetype can be formed plentifully in the non-linguistic world.⁴

The removal of function as a generator of form has caused much controversy and is the basis for much of the criticism leveled at Eisenman's architecture. It is clear, however, that function and concerns related to function have much to do with the initial design process and the redesign of a "house." The size of the house is determined approximately by what should

be included, such as how many "rooms," how many baths, general cost per square foot, etc. Eisenman in fact does not design in a vacuum, with no notion of scale, size, arrangement of space, or cost.

For, if the program is to sustain such an emphasis (the source of unity in modern architecture is in the social sphere, the architect's program), it would presume to be able to specify and distinguish what the fact of a particular situation were, and, except for certain physical laws, facts in a programmatic sense are in reality a series of value judgments. Much of the *oeuvre* of modern architectural theory is involved in this basic dilemma precisely because it has refused to distinguish between problems of fact and problems of value. And more specifically, because it has refused to recognize problems of form as predicated by anything except ideas of social change, new technology, or as a matter for stylistic and aesthetic speculation.⁶

As to his questioning of function and the configuration of functions—those bourgeois, or at least culturally conditioned notions of architecture—Eisenman's inquiry reduces to a denial of the existence or import of such functional considerations. Rather than consciously regarding possible antithetical situations to a particular consideration,⁷ Eisenman "accommodates" not only size requirements, but orientation, enclosure, amount of glass, and other traditional concerns of architects. In relation to function then, Eisenman's attempt at contradiction or dialectic, in comparison with his concern for dialectic relationships between architectural forms, is accidental, unconscious, or underdesigned.⁸ After initially sizing the space or spaces needed for each function, whether in square feet of area or by acknowledging that the living area requires a larger space than the kitchen or the bath, Eisenman designs the building or processes it and then "fits" the functions back in. The house is approximately the right size, accommodating the intended functions.

The "classic" example of the role of function in Eisenman's work occurs in House VI,⁹ designed as a small, one-bedroom house with a double-story living area. A combination of factors, among them the client's need for more room, more floor space within the house, as well as Eisenman's realization of the double-height living area as a cliché retrieved from the "heroic years of the Modern Movement," has led to the addition of floor space on the second level by reducing the two-story high living area to one story. "Consistency" with the remainder of the house, with respect to the rules of the surface structuring, is accommodated by strategically located slotting in the new floor in order to indicate the conceptual continuation or flow of space or completion of the void. While it would be difficult to ask for a redesign of the house with the new information (the requirement of more floor area on the second level), this "instant" solution must remain in the mind as an architectural "slip of the tongue" on Eisenman's part.¹⁰ The implications of this "last minute move" consolidate various objections to the application of the new theory, specifically the following: 1) discrepan-

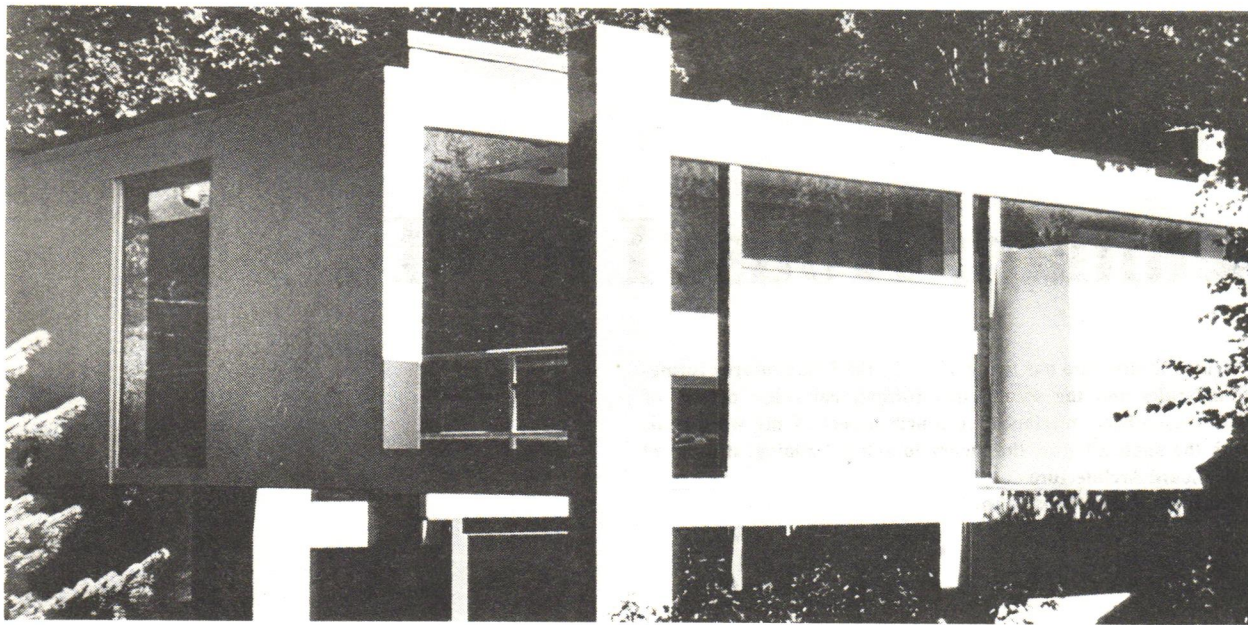
cies concerning the role of function, 2) the notion of conceptuality in relation to the horizontal plane, 3) the question of cultural input into architectural choice, 4) the problem of arbitrariness and 5) the problem of the generative nature of the systems used.

Function, in the sense of being able to move through the house, to circulate and "use" space, in Eisenman's Houses corresponds as in most architecture, to the necessity of the horizontal plane. The quality that makes the object a house, in addition to protection from the natural elements, is the horizontal plane. People are approximately six feet tall, and have a difficult time walking up vertical planes and steep inclines. In a house, space and cost limitations keep horizontal planes that can be used and walked on (with ceilings at least the height of a person) at a premium, and care must be taken not to "waste" space, even if it is "meaningful". From a practical point of view, the horizontal plane is not to be hindered from performing its anti-gravitational duties, while the vertical planes may be used as architectural elements.

In House II and House IV, Eisenman attempts to infuse meaning into the horizontal by manipulating the horizontal planes in a manner similar to the manipulations of the vertical planes. The operations on the horizontal, however, are clearly secondary, dealt with in swift and generalized solutions. The purpose is to state the second level horizontal as the reference datum plane, along with the ground and roof planes. The vertical planes intersect and pass through this datum system. Volumes, solid and void, penetrate the horizontal and are indicated by markings which are additive and subtractive of the plane.

In House II, the horizontal datum, marked as the same white flooring material, is set up at mid-height of the building. In House III, there is an "actual" rotation in the horizontal plane¹¹ that results in fantastically fragmented and ambiguous elevations, while the second level plane is left as residue of the entire reference plane, portions having been deleted as markings for the vertical slottings of volumes. The roof plan, glass skylights over the volumetric slots, is a covering for this basic plan. In House IV, the major breakdown in the height of the building is, again, a division of the box into two, in order to set up the horizontal datum along which volumes "slide". While the roof and the ground planes, together with the second level plane, form a horizontal referential system, the complexity of the operations performed on and through these planes is not of the same "quality" as the fine tuned operations performed on the verticals. These moves are general and gross in effect, as opposed to the finely detailed markings and manipulations on the facades.

The manipulation of the vertical plane in Eisenman's work indicates a contradiction between what Eisenman has to say about using traditional elements in unorthodox ways and the separation of the conceptual from the perceptual. The contradiction is in



House I



House II

addition to its potential for delivering syntactic information, the vertical plane apparently receives emphasis *because* it is visually accessible and because of its capacity to provoke a “gut reaction” related to awe, beauty or spatial complexity rather than solely for conceptual reasons. While it is true that Eisenman uses the vertical planes as framework for the markings, and in dialectic relationships with each other, why is the horizontal plane clearly the secondary, almost incidental carrier of the syntactic messages and conceptually relevant information? If the architecture is conceptual, then boundaries and limitations, even possibly gravity, are arbitrary and outside the configuration, in, perhaps, another conceptual realm. Thus, “conceptuality” is manifested in Eisenman’s architecture as the dialectic between vertical planes, and the implications of the markings structured primarily by the vertical, to the near exclusion of the horizontal plane and its potential for expression of syntactic meaning.¹²

For Eisenman, as he has stated repeatedly in lectures, and as can be deduced from his concentration on the facade treatment in Renaissance and modern architecture, the vertical plane is the essence of architecture. This view is based on the notion that the vertical plane, which is perpendicular to the line of sight and lends itself to frontal examination, transmits or has the potential for transmitting information more rapidly than any other plane, oblique or horizontal. But it may well be that Eisenman is simply acknowledging that the vertical dimension is more likely to provoke a “gut reaction,” or it may be some combination of these two conceptions of the vertical plane at work. It follows logically that Eisenman then underplays and underestimates the horizontal plane and its potential for syntactic manipulation. In a sense, Eisenman’s architecture deals with a system of vertical planes and the implied space or depth described by these planes, a conception of space closely associated with Cubist painting and the Modern Movement in architecture rather than with purely conceptual matters derived from an unbiased, “scientific” evaluation.

From a different vantage point, despite whatever cleansing mechanism is asserted, the vertical plane bears historical references to the Renaissance and Cubist-Modern Movement, “where layering is only partially systematized and remains partly related to the physical experience.”¹³ “While Eisenman may use spatial constructs that are specifically familiar, they are not used for their physical implications, he says, but rather as constituents of a specific architectural system of relation.”¹⁴ Eisenman’s use of layering is clearly systematized as to the syntactic information delivered, yet remains partly related to the physical experience. The semantic link-up, much in line with similar historical references used by architects,¹⁵ lends support for the contention that Eisenman’s architectural statement is different from, and

in fact, in opposition to the theory of Conceptual Architecture.

Eisenman’s architectural statement insists upon “privileged conceptuality,” in which the vertical plane is clearly primary rather than in a state of conceptual equivalency with the horizontal plane. This hierarchy exists in a supposedly conceptual framework, fully present in the mind and free from all constraints. The statement is semantically loaded and fundamentally ideological in its use of devices and vocabulary of limited and specific historical references to the Modern Movement, rather than to a universal, syntactic notion. The limiting, by choice or conditioning, of one’s devices and tools to a particular set may be indicative of the dreaded notion of “style,” ideology rather than theory.¹⁶

*The archetype is a retrieved awareness or consciousness. It is consequently a retrieved cliché—an old cliché retrieved by a new cliché. Since a cliché is a unit of extension of man (physical and mental faculties), an archetype is a quoted extension, medium, technology or environment.*¹²

“In fact, whenever we ‘quote’ one consciousness we also quote the archetypes we exclude. . . .”¹⁸ These statements apply at many points in the analysis of Cardboard Architecture, in that the train of thought or “quotings of consciousness” is in reality a wholesale retrieval of interconnected and embedded systems of logic, a matter of simultaneous rather than sequential or partial appropriation. As another example of this retrieval, consider Eisenman’s use of the grid:

*. . . modern technology provided architecture with a new means for conceiving space. . . in a sense, space was no longer necessarily limited or defined by structure, and this was especially true with respect to the use of the load-bearing wall; the column became both the primary structural and the primary formal element. With a diminishing of these structural constraints, it was possible to examine the column and the wall in a capacity other than in the solution of pragmatic problems. . . . LeCorbusier’s Maison Domino was paradigmatic in this respect.*¹⁹

Implicit in this reference is the conception of space as a continuum specified by a particular, regularized gridding, the Platonic ideal of spatial continuum where any specific segment is represented as physically gridded space. Within the specific segment, the “free plan” occurs. Nevertheless, the retrieval is bound up with the column and wall rather than with the more generalized spatial equivalents of vertical, horizontal and depth.

Along with this retrieval, Eisenman has “archetypically” rediscovered a basic *formal* structure, as opposed to one dependent upon the arrangement of function, of those architects upon whose work his own is to be developmental rather than ideological. This formal structure is diagrammed as *actual-conceptual sparse center and dense edge*. In other words, there is a one-to-one correspondence between an actually or physically sparse center and the conception

of that center being sparse. The same is true of the density of the edge.

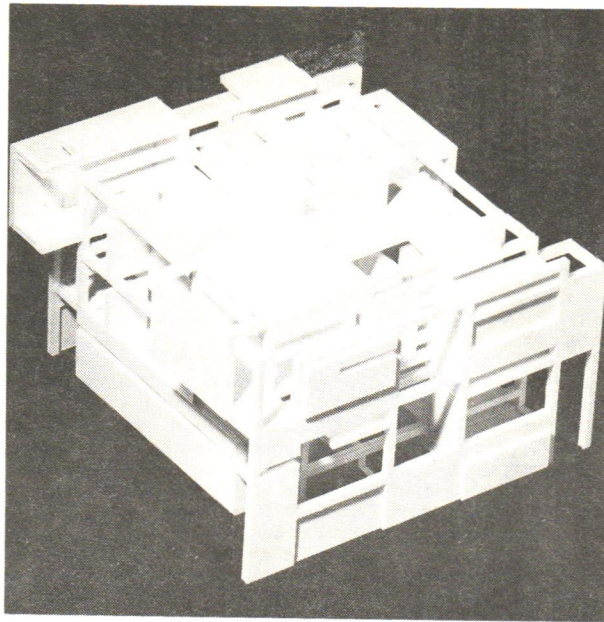
In House I and House II, the basic underlying structure is the actual-conceptual sparse center and dense edge. That is, the periphery of the plan is layered or striated in depth, parallel to each of the four respective frontal planes. In House III, there are two actual-conceptual sparse center, dense edge plans superimposed on each other, one rotated with respect to the other. In House IV, Eisenman first attempts to dissipate the rigid configuration, or at least to create a dialectic between these notions of underlying structures, between sparse center, dense edge, and dense center, sparse edge. This particular experiment is accomplished primarily by setting up the “usual” peripheral layering of planes along the four sides of the square, or near square (since becoming a cubic volume is to be considered an operation of the structuring process), then “pulling” a pair of planes outward from the center of the volume, creating a longitudinal axis, and then finally compressing, or pulling in toward the center, the remaining pair of planes, creating the shorter axis.²⁰

The manipulation of the physical elements of the frontal planes by a surface structure at one level creates an ambiguous situation in which the center-edge could be understood as both dense and sparse, in both the actual and conceptual realms. On another level, it attempts to examine the potential of a possible syntactic configuration. This process exposes the fact that the syntactic component is stylistically neutral and that a syntactic approach to the investigation of form and universals allows one to break away from certain pre-conceived, pre-conditioned notions of form and architectural space. It is important to note that in addition to the rigorous systematization of layering as a device for notating the conceptual framework in his architecture²¹ (as well as raising the consciousness level from the perceptual to the conceptual), Eisenman’s contribution lies in the recognition of the potential of any formal configuration to imply its opposite: sparse center, dense edge taken together as a pair forming a syntactic configuration imply dense center, sparse edge as a possible point of departure.

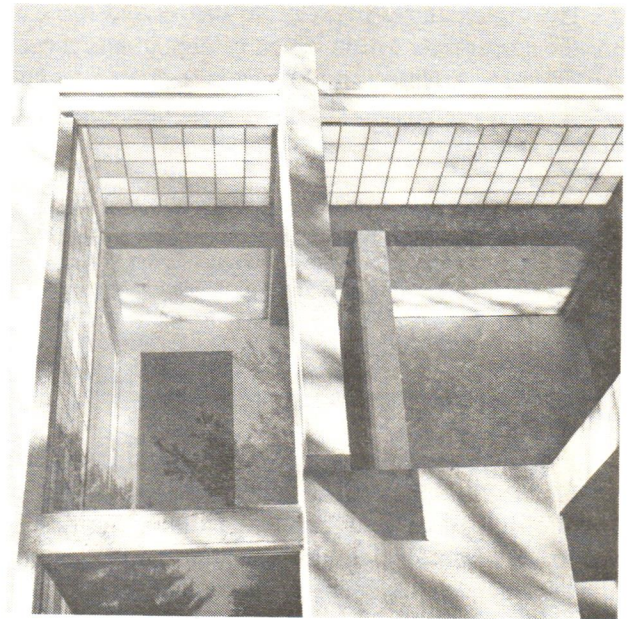
Developing this notion of thesis-antithesis, along with the freedom derived from an awareness of certain architectural-stylistic tendencies, Eisenman processes House VI. This processing begins with the notion of a box turned inside out, thus with an actual and conceptual dense center and sparse edge. The house is also conceived in a space where up and down are equivalent. The actual-conceptual dense center of House VI (so diagrammed even though the center is not the actual measured center of the house), is marked by the intersection of the two sets of major planes representing the spatial gridding of the two grids.²² In what Eisenman calls the transformation to surface structure, the major perpendicular planes are interchanged to create a conceptual interlocking of space, a warping of the



House III



House IV



House VI

space defined by one grid into and through another gridded space.

The move described above expresses a fundamental notion of Conceptual Architecture which has been latent; that is, the capacity for a configuration to imply its opposite as well as its first conceptual level (actual-conceptual). For example, House VI is centrally dense and peripherally sparse. This is a configuration where, in a series of conceptual shifts, the formerly dense edge (House I, House II, House III), has been drawn and substituted for the sparse center, implying the continuation of gridded space (marked by columns, walls, and painted column markers) past the outer boundaries of the faceted edges.²³

By shifting the actual center diagonally, the exchange creates a situation which completes the thesis-antithesis dialectic, and attempts to shift the conceptual reading of the center, the entry area, located at the intersection of the now interchanged grid, from conceptually dense to conceptually sparse. In other words, a dialectic: actual-conceptual dense center and sparse edge, and conceptual-conceptual sparse center and dense edge.²⁴

House VI attempts to separate actual and conceptual notions. The actual representation is *not* necessarily the sole prerequisite for a conceptual reading. A first level conceptual reading simultaneously implies a potential second level reading. The clearest example of the lack of distinction between the actual and the conceptual in Eisenman's previous Houses comes from a comparison between House III and Terragni's Casa del Fascio, particularly with respect to the handling of the notion of rotation, one "actual," one conceptual.²⁵

In House III, Eisenman rotates, translates, and divides a cube "occurring" in the same space as that described by the initially undisturbed cube. This superadjacency, three-dimensional in nature, is the juxtaposition of two physically and conceptually complete systems.²⁶ The columns of the initial reference grid are doubled along the diagonal of the plan, as a representation of the diagonally shifted or slipped apart grid. Thus, in relation to the rotated cube-object, there is an indication of "actual" rotation of elements of one grid with respect to the initial grid; one grid is at an angle of 45° to the other. In this sense, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the actual and the conceptual.

By contrast, consider the rotation implied in the Casa del Fascio, indicated by the "solid" four corners as each facade is frontally viewed.²⁷ When these four corners are conceived in plan they imply a rotation of the periphery about the center. More important, however, is the conceptual rotation derived from the ambiguity of the markings on each facade which anticipate the structuring of the adjacent facade. The rotation is not actual, nor are the markings themselves "rotated" in relation to the reference grid, but rather they indicate a rotation by means of the configuration's

capacity to imply a relationship that is understood as rotation. In House III, the primary reading is of a volumetric rotation, creating an object, a contradiction, or infusing into "the object two conceptual readings, so that the object can never be held in the mind as a single entity."²⁸

The separation of the conceptual from the actual, and independence of the conceptual from the actual, is a problem Eisenman toys with, consciously or unconsciously, throughout his work. In other words, Eisenman asserts the possibility in architecture of a virtual as well as an actual experience, a contrast or dialectic in which both virtual and actual experience have been predetermined.²⁹

It is clear that sparse edge, dense center is a dialectical condition, existing in a continuum from actual to virtual, and that one implies the other. Physical markings indicate the existence of such an implied condition. The potential in the system is for information to be delivered through conceptions of virtual as well as actual configurations; i.e., the conceptions related to the implication that the grid continues beyond the faceted edge of House VI. If the individual has the capacity to conceive of virtual states and relationships between objects which are marked by physical elements, then there is potential for conceiving of virtual states as markings for relationships among relationships. This produces a second level conceptual reading, completing the dialectic.

Closely associated with the distinction, or lack of distinction, between the actual and conceptual, is the narrow and predetermined use of the conceptual aspect in architecture which is tied to the predominance of the vertical plane over the horizontal as mentioned earlier, and also, to the literalness of the relationships between actual and conceptual. This is exemplified by the limiting factors in the generation of House VI. Eisenman's assertion that House VI is conceived in space is restricted immediately by a corollary notion of the interchangeability of up and down (in relation to gravity). The conception of the house, then, is not conceived in "free space," fundamentally three dimensional and neutral, but rather the house is conceived, conditioned by an *a priori*, culturally or ideologically oriented notion of what constitutes architectural space. There is a linear system of two possibilities: up is up, or up is down (where up and down are conceptual equivalents). This is notated by the use of the red and green staircases, which conceptually neutralize to gray at the mid-level horizontal datum plane. One staircase is right-side-up, the other, for notational reasons, is upside-down.³⁰

In House II, the conceptual aspect is unmasked with the aid of the axonometric drawings showing the transformations from what Eisenman calls the deep structure into the surface structure.³¹ These transformations explain the relationships between elements and also express the relationships among relationships as dependent upon the "sharing" of a physical object,

rather than by the capacity of one virtual state to imply another, dialectical, virtual state. In other words, what is investigated is ambiguity, "creating a dialectic between what exists and what is implied,"³² rather than the relationships among relationships and the potential of relationships as markers.³³

Thus it is House VI which begins to explore the deeper structure of Conceptual Architecture. Both the weakness and strength of House VI appears in the analysis of this house as an architectural "slip of the tongue," unmasking the pragmatic, ideological, and cultural impositions upon the initial design process, the actual working-through of the process (decision-making mechanism), and upon the written material about the house. House VI exposes what the other Eisenman houses lost sight of or never fully dealt with, because of the implicit constraints. House VI implies a development of the conceptual realm in architecture, free from certain constraints of perception related to the physical object. Further, the implications for the generation of form are to minimize the perceptually accessible environment by focusing on the relationships among architectonic relationships and to constrain and notate the role of ideology. A basic notion of Conceptual Architecture is expressed by the dialectic between what exists and what is implied, between the perceptual and the conceptual:

There are three reasons for doing this: one, so that our essential experience of architecture is more complete, the reality of space becoming intensified through the opposition with the implied; two, so that the meaning derived from these non-conventional aspects, the syntactic meaning, which is no less active or present merely because we are unaware of it or because it is undesigned, becomes more precise and therefore more accessible; three, so that we can see design and interpretation as an extended phenomenon of these particular conditions and qualities of space which up to now have remained more or less metaphorical in their use and interpretation.³³

Eisenman's work attempts to study this dialectic, but in so doing, certain constants have been assumed, implicit and, to some degree, automatic constraints. The purpose of these assumptions is to retain control, so that the restrictions are understood and predictable much as the environment is controlled in scientific experiments. This allows one or more variables, sometimes arbitrarily selected, to act on the environment so that eventually the variable, after close scrutiny, may be incorporated into knowledge of that environment, and also to permit the variable to be coded and its behavior predicted.

This analogy to a laboratory situation is implied in Eisenman's methodological mixture of known and unknown quantities. Each house is a testing ground for certain predetermined, arbitrary conceptions of potentially syntactically relevant information derived from historical analysis and experience. Architecture then is relegated to a probe "which promises information but very often provides mere retrieval of old clichés."³⁴

The discrepancies between his theory and work lie in the constraints within which Eisenman has chosen to operate. Architectural choice is restricted by cultural or ideological constraints, inescapable even in Eisenman's work:

Ideology can be seen as a certain set of representations and beliefs—religious, moral, political, aesthetic—which refer to nature, to society and to life and activities of men in relation to nature and society. Ideology has the social function of maintaining the overall structure of society by inducing men to accept in their consciousness the place and role assigned to them by this structure. At the same time it works as an obstacle to real knowledge by preventing both the constitution of theory and its development.³⁶

The extraneous inputs range from the function and size of the building to the particular mechanisms of relationships and generation of building form. The presence of an ideology in Eisenman's work cannot be denied, even though he proposes that these "traditional" elements of architecture be conceived of in new, unorthodox, or more precise "syntactic" ways.³⁷ While he theoretically proposes this, his work is caught up in its own network of interconnected, interwoven heroics. The careful and complex systematization of traditional concepts, relationships and mechanisms is proclaimed "new," much as any other product is advertised as "new and improved". In fact, the conceptual underpinnings of the theory are not new but the self-consciousness and rigor of the conceptualization are. Although Eisenman's architecture is not "new," the implications of his work for a conceptual architecture are clear and powerful, requiring further experimentation, analysis and building.

—Lawrence Kutnicki

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³⁶See Eisenman's article "Notes on Conceptual Architecture: Towards a Definition," in *Casabella* #359-360, Milano, 1971, pp. 48-57. My discussion is limited to House I to House VI.

³⁷See Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas, "Semiotics and Architecture: Ideological Consumption or Theoretical Work," in *Oppositions I*, September 1973, pp. 93-100.

³⁸Eisenman said this in a talk when he was discussing the difference between his work and the work of John Hejduk. (Spring 1974, Cooper Union).

³⁹McLuhan, Marshal, and Watson, Wilfred, in *From Cliche to Archetype*, New York: the Viking Press, 1970, p. 20.

⁴⁰The "redesign" occurs in House VI. This will be discussed later on in this article.

⁴¹Eisenman, "House I," in *Five Architects*, New York: Wittenborn and Co., 1972.

⁴²See, for example Anatole Kopp's *Town and Revolution: Soviet Architecture and City Planning 1917-35*, New York: G. Brazilliar, 1970. Alternatives investigated by the Urbanists and Disurbanists in Russia.

⁴³See Eisenman's House IV, (*Architecture and Urbanism*, Vol. 5, No. 39, pp. 89-92), where the "meaning" of kitchen and dining rooms, as well as other functions, are questioned and criticized (or the cook is merely inconvenienced having to walk a run of stairs to get to the dining room from the kitchen). This questioning appears to be inherent in the design process by initially disregarding functional aspects.

Also, the membrane quality of the waterproof silicone paint used to cover all joints, taking the place of flashing, falls nicely into Eisenman's conception of "Cardboard Architecture" or "which is the real house, the real house or the model." (See *Casabella* #334 p. 24). Some of the conflicts are implicit in the basic assumptions, and are to some extent accidental, undesigned, perhaps superficial. The conflict with actual building techniques is obvious: the anti-gravitational tricks of the facades; the ineffectiveness of the silicone paint needs to be corrected as it is prone to stain and peel. To return, the Eisenman approach to the problem is simply to deny the existence of, or take care of after the fact, the problem, rather than approaching the problem with how a condition (kitchen, patio, etc.) can be questioned, criticized, and a response designed.

⁴⁴House VI is sometimes called the two-thirds house because, rather than the 12'-0" on center grid used in Houses I and II, a system of two interlocking smaller grids was used—a 9'-8½" grid and a 7'-5" grid. These numbers were taken from the red and blue series of the Modulor. Also, the house probably had to be smaller because of cost limitations.

⁴⁵Sigmund Freud introduces psychoanalysis, in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, through an analysis of the "slip of the tongue," an unconscious phenomenon. It is curious that this particular architectural "slip" should carry within it the key to several fundamental questions concerning Eisenman's architecture and its relation to Conceptual Architecture.

⁴⁶The "actual" rotation here is meant as a qualitative difference between the rotation expressed in House III (called "actual") and the rotation in Terragni's Casa del Fascio (a conceptual rotation). This idea will be further discussed in the body of the paper. (See note 25).

⁴⁷One need only examine the relative simplicity of the plans of Houses I, II, III, and IV, in relation to the heavily marked and "dense" corresponding elevations.

⁴⁸Gandelsonas, Mario, with David Morton, "On Reading Architecture—Peter Eisenman: the syntactic Dimension," *Progressive Architecture*, March 1972, p. 82.

⁴⁹Gandelsonas and Morton, *Progressive Architecture*, March 1972, p. 85.

⁵⁰For example, the retrieval of Ideal Villa in the form of Villa Malcontenta,

by LeCorbusier for Villa Stein at Garches. Or Mies and Palladio, or Schinkel. See Colin Rowe's articles in *Oppositions I*, Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, September, 1973, pp. 1-26.

⁵¹See Agrest and Gandelsonas, "Semiotics and Architecture," *Oppositions I*.

⁵²McLuhan, *Cliche*, p. 21.

⁵³McLuhan, *Cliche*, p. 21.

⁵⁴Eisenman quoted by Gandelsonas and Morton, *P/A*, March, 1972, p. 80.

⁵⁵In House IV (see *Casabella* 344, p. 28) the deep structure is transformed into a surface structure which dictates that all notations are to be markings of the opposite notation (a conceptual "warping" of space in that what is solid becomes void as it passes through the building, much as the warp of the grids from the north facade through to the south facade of Terragni's Casa del Giuliani-Frigerio. See *Perspecta* 13-14, Figure 13). That is, what is actually-conceptually (simultaneously) "edge grain" of a volume is "marked" as "end grain," and the reverse is true also. The actual center is marked as conceptual periphery and the periphery partially marked as center. Also, one facade is notationally the opposite in certain aspects (what is solid on one is void on the other, etc.) of the other facade rotated 180° in the horizontal plane.

In House VI, the structuring of the "house" begins with the conception of the house in space (therefore the obvious break in the ground plan in the drawing versions, the house sits in a tray in the earth; the house sits on a flat site in the built version). The breaking into quadrants is due to the choice of actual-conceptual dense center and sparse periphery (thus the faceted outer edge and appearance of non-containment (as opposed to an outer unbroken surface), the quadrants are also a result of the intersection of two grid systems (the red and the blue grids based on the Modulor, and thus involving the explanations of LeCorbusier as to the relationship of the Modulor to natural orders and universal phenomena). While the rules, the surface structure, applied to each quadrant thus developed are arbitrary, it is important to note that they are consistent with the qualities and conditions, specified, ordered and rewritten. Some of the rules applying to the quadrants are: in one quadrant no manipulation occurs, while in another, one specific type takes place, and in yet another, the inverse and reverse of the rules of another quadrant applies.

⁵⁶It is questionable whether the layering specifically generates the spatial oppositions. "...the notion of layering refers not only to the actual manifestation of explicitly layered elements, but to implicit relationships between relational elements..." (Gandelsonas and Morton, *P/A*, March 1972, p. 85.) Layering can be considered a rewriting rule of elemental juxtapositions, and thus a part of the surface structure, in the sense suggested in an earlier paper (June, 1974). In itself, layering is not generative, but only a device in a repertoire of possible surface modulators, which together with the deep structure defines a generative model.

⁵⁷The two grids based on the numbers 9'-8½" and 7'-5" belong to the red and blue series of the Modulor. The 8" measurement of the blue series is used for walls and columns. In other words, the walls and columns are conceived of as either solid or void, placed as it were, between bays of the grids. See the diagrams of House VI by Eisenman.

⁵⁸This move is also represented by the gradations of gray used on the surfaces. The house begins as a conceptually white box, the exterior surface, with a conceptually black center. After the exchange of center and edge, the black surface becomes the actual exterior surface, but because of it being black, retains a conceptual reading of center. The similar situation is true for the white surface brought in the center. The grays basically show the conceptual distances from the exchanged center to edge.

⁵⁹The actual-conceptual dense center and sparse edge simply means that the actual, physical markings imply a conceptual reading of the center as being dense and the edge being sparse. The conceptual-conceptual sparse center-dense edge means that the conceptual marking, or the implications derived from a conceptual reading, implies a further conceptual reading, in contradiction to the first conceptual level reading of sparse center and dense edge. The conception of sparse center, dense edge as used here is based on the notion of peripheral tension-flattened center usually associated with Cubist painting and Modern Movement architecture. The perennial example: LeCorbusier's Villa Stein at Garches.

⁶⁰'Actual' rotation occurs when physical angles are made or created between elements although there is no rotation in the sense of, say, a merry-go-round, as opposed to the implied rotation derived from the configuration of elements within the same reference system.



⁶¹Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966. Specifically, p. 65, fig. 138, which is a picture of the inside elevation of Gloucester Church "...the superadjacency is contradictory in scale and direction: the enormous diagonal buttress crosses the plane of the delicate order of arcades in the transept's wall," p. 64.

⁶²See Casa del Fascio in Eisenman's analysis in *Perspecta* 13-14, New Haven: Yale University Press. See House II in *Five Architects*.

⁶³Eisenman quoted by Gandelsonas and Morton in *P/A*, March, 1972, p. 85. This article is in reference to House I.

⁶⁴Eisenman, Peter, "Notes on Conceptual Architecture II" manuscript dated May 1972, p. 20.

⁶⁵This up-down dialectic filters into the operations of the surface structure performed in the individual quadrants of House VI: a topic of another article. This particular dialectic is present to a lesser degree in House IV. In simple terms, it is impossible to conceive of a "staircase" on its side as well as upside down?

⁶⁶In an earlier paper (Cooper Union, June 1974), I discussed the fundamental misconception of the linguistic model (Chomsky's in particular) inherent in Conceptual Architecture's appropriation of terms such as deep and surface structures. These terms simply signify vastly different concepts in both the linguistic and architectural models.

⁶⁷Eisenman quoted by Gandelsonas and Morton, *P/A*, March, 1972, p. 85.

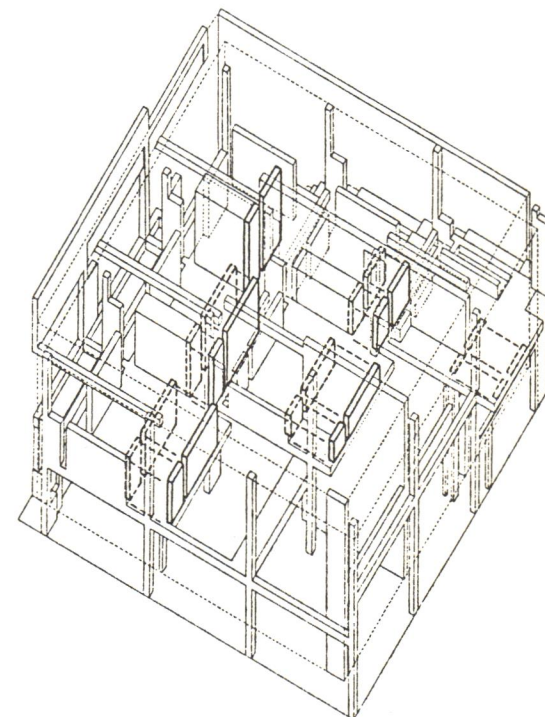
⁶⁸The dialectic proposed is created by "providing" within the object a double deep structure which allows different readings of the object." (Eisenman quoted by Gandelsonas in *P/A*, March, 1972, p. 85) This is both essential and restricting. While this idea infused two conceptual readings "so that the object can never be held in the mind as a single entity, but rather (as) in a state of tension." (Eisenman quoted by Gandelsonas in *P/A*, March, 1972, p. 85) the object is restricted to the primacy of these readings, and the readings in turn are restricted, attached to physical objects. In contrast, consider the dialectic between the actual flat plane of the canvas and the implied depth associated with Cubist concerns. The dialectic, among other reasons, results from the implications derived from the virtual structuring and restructuring of the objects or elements in the actual plane of the painting. See Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky, "Transparency," in *Perspecta* 13-14, New Haven: Yale University Press.

⁶⁹Eisenman, *Notes II*, Concluding notes.

⁷⁰McLuhan, *Cliche*, p. 55.

⁷¹Agrest and Gandelsonas, "Semiotics and Architecture," *Oppositions I*, p. 94.

⁷²Eisenman, *Notes II*, Concluding notes: "In bringing them (the qualities and conditions) into some sort of construct, I would like to think that they could become an effective part of the design process. And by putting them into this particular construct, one is perhaps creating a new conceptual framework for the design and understanding of our environment and for the generation of not good or better environments, because these terms are rather elusive, but rather more adequate environments with the potential to accept a new and greater range of meanings."



(Eisenman Interview: Continued from page 32.)

with Bill Gass on House 6. It is a book which pretends to predate House 6 as if the building never existed and the book called it into being. I am also doing a House X book. It is an object book which again would be conceptually the same as the house. I never want to write another long narrative book like the Terragni. I can't write at that scale. I find it very difficult to sustain a thought that would make a theoretical book. I can't sustain the narrative because I start at one position and then I work in a stream of consciousness, so that by the time I am finished I am working on another book. It is essentially a book of architectural fiction. Terragni becomes my invention. Perhaps I should publish the five different versions of Terragni that I have written in the last ten years. It would be like Rashomon.

A: Last question: What happened to the Five?

E: Well, there never was a Five.

A: But you published the book on the New York Five, didn't you?

E: Yes, we published 500 copies.

A: Was it for a show?

E: No, it was from a meeting of a group called Case, like Team Ten. The book was originally called Case Seven. But the Five architects thought that the title sounded as if we were a group. The only neutral title that we could think of was Five Architects, it wasn't *The Five*. Journalists and critics picked it up as *The Five*. Thus began the consumption of The Five Architects. But there never was a group. I have been trying to get myself out from under that label because I felt that my work was being absorbed and given a wrong reading in the context of the Five. I am very happy that Post-Modernism came along because it has allowed a new group to form. Stern is heading the Post-Modern Biennale this year. He has the Post-Modern Five—Stern, Gehry, Tigerman, Graves and Greenberg; I think that's marvelous. Stern asked me to join. I said absolutely not. My work will be more accessible outside of the context of the Five, and also out of the context of the Institute because the Institute again is not my work nor is *Oppositions*. In the next five years my work will at least be able to be judged for what it is.

The work of Josef Frank provides a continuation of Austria's specific contribution to modern architecture historically associated with Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos, and Josef Hoffmann. Frank in particular extends Loos's thought; one can in fact state "that Frank's way establishes a synthesis between Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffmann, which in their own time seemed irreconcilable" (*Kurrent/Spalt*). The original Austrian development in modern architecture, separate from the main stream of the "International Style"—with which it was often in polemical confrontation—has not yet been described thoroughly.

Josef Frank was born July 15, 1885 in Baden near Vienna, a town that still bears the impression of Josef Kornhaeusel's Biedermeier classicism. He received his architectural education at the Technical University in Vienna, at the time dominated by Karl Koenig's strict historicism. Frank's dissertation (1910) was entitled "On the Original Appearances of Leon Battista Alberti's Sacral Buildings."

His classical education remained a determining force for Frank; he was later also convinced that our tradition is founded on the forms of classical antiquity, and that the works which are part of this tradition were "through all time the only ones that are always understandable and that can move us, around which no national or structural enthusiasm can help us".¹ Like Loos, he saw traditional forms not as an exhaustive scheme but as material for usable quotes which had the advantage of being universally comprehensible. "The question of why the modern style that has supposedly been invented for the lowest classes has not been welcomed by them with enthusiasm has been debated often enough... Possession of power and representation are tightly interwoven. And the worker is mistrustful of the symbols given to him as long as others exist and the new ones belong basically just to artists living outside of society, who are viewed as fools by both sides."

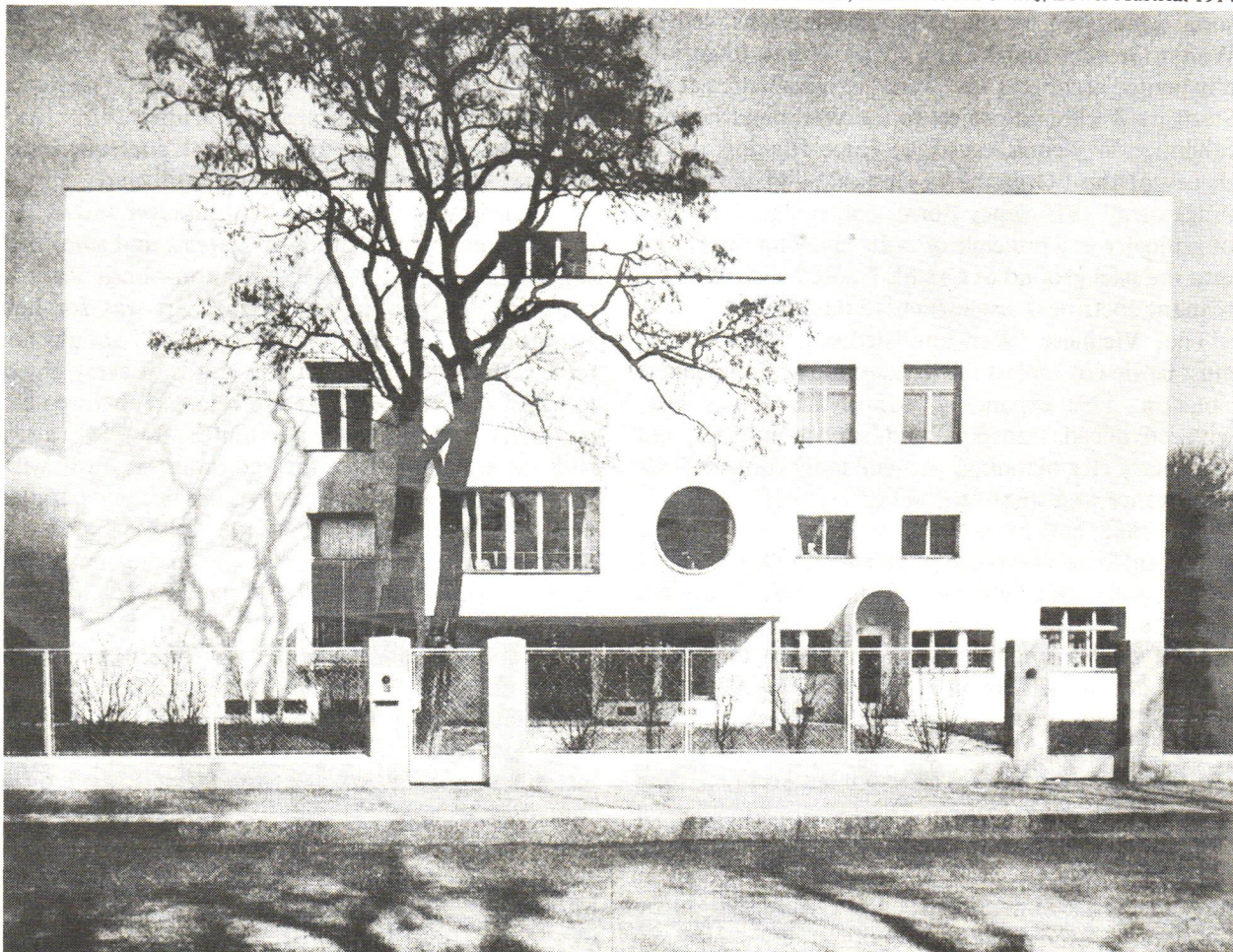
Frank worked together with Oskar Wlach and periodically with Oskar Strnad. For Frank, the single-family house represented more than the natural beginning of an architectural career; it became the core of his conception of architecture. The radical difference between a work of art and a commodity that Loos wished to accentuate—"the work of art wants to tear one out of one's comfort, the house should serve comfort" (Loos)—was taken up by Frank with certain conciliatory modifications: "The argument about the house as a commodity which admittedly it is not, is a cause for today's confusions. I think it useless to try to decide this question definitively." In any case, the house should not make demands based on an aesthetic morale. "The architect must have the ability and the will to produce something beautiful that is not a work of art." Frank dismissed the introduction of a new morale under the auspices of functionalism: "It is thoroughly inappropriate to employ the eighteenth century commissions for chastity now in the judgement of facades and chairs."—"Everything that can be used, can be used." The house became for him the "most important although most purposeless building," the very "building idea of our time." It "does not exist... to serve something foreign to it, to be a place of production or of money-making, it is an end in itself and through its existence it should make people happy and in every one of its parts add to their pleasure". Frank's numerous sketches and designs—often composed without any prospect of realization—in addition to the dozen or so executed houses—exhibit an undogmatic multiplicity of ideas and solutions.

Frank was professor at the Vienna School for Applied Art (1919–1925) where he taught building construction. Although he did not have his own design class, as did Hoffmann and Strnad, he did influence

JOSEF FRANK



Josef Frank, *Residence in Pernitz*, Lower Austria, 1914.



Josef Frank, *Residence in Vienna*, Austria, 1929/30.

¹Unidentified quotations and references come from Josef Frank, *Architektur als Symbol: Elemente neuen deutschen Bauens* (Wien, 1931), Akzidentismus," and unpublished manuscripts.

his students. With the intention of rationally producing the furniture for his commissions, he later founded the interior decorating firm "House and Garden" with Wlach.

Arts and crafts was a central issue in Frank's thinking. Production and consumption of applied arts was primarily a lovable superfluity, a sentimental compensation for a rationalized working life. On the other hand, Frank viewed the attempts to renew life and form and to submit them to a "modern" uniform system as typical arts and crafts endeavors. "To replace art by what a slogan now indistinctly calls 'Neue Gestaltung' is not a new idea. . . The old art is the new art, the 'Neue Gestaltung' is the old arts and crafts. . . It is very easy to reform the world from the standpoint of applied art. A work of art needs personality, invention, it needs the idea. Applied art needs none of these. It needs a system. . . ." It is understandable that Frank's estimation of such reform experiments as the Bauhaus is extremely skeptical. He formulated his ideas in several articles and most explicitly in his book *Architecture as a Symbol* (1931), with the subtitle *Elements of New German Building* which in many respects was to be taken ironically.

This skepticism also differentiates the development of the Austrian Werkbund, in which Frank played a leading role between the wars, and that of the German Werkbund (which had served as its model when founded in 1913) for the "refinement and spiritualization of labor through the collaboration of art, industry, crafts, and commerce." Karl Kraus and Adolf Loos engaged in polemics against the notion of "art at the service of the businessman" as early as the First World War—"industry should. . . neither employ artists nor deliver cripples" (Kraus). Frank formulated his skepticism most pointedly during a joint conference of both Werkbunds in Vienna (1930) and cites the components of the supposedly "new expression of the times" as being applied art and militarism. As early as 1927 he published a catalogue explaining his house at the Stuttgart Werkbund-Siedlung entitled "Der Gschnas fürs G'mut und der Gschnas als Problem" ("Frippery for the Soul and Frippery as a Problem").

Frank represented Austria at the first international congress for modern architecture (CIAM) in La Sarraz (1928). The organization that was to join the forces of modern architecture and clarify its goals was soon dominated by the rationalist factions, led by Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier. Frank intentionally invited architects who were not represented at the Stuttgart Werkbund project to the Werkbund housing exhibition in Vienna, especially Hugo Haering, whose theory of the "Organhafte Gestalt" and the "Leistungsform" (Efficiency Form) contradicted the idea of geometry as a principle of order and who was forced into the background at CIAM. Frank's dislike of the regnant doctrine is also evident in this choice.

The Viennese Werkbundsiedlung (1929-1932) must be viewed against the background of the Viennese situation. This expanding turn-of-the-century city, with advanced transport and service utilities and exemplary city planning, was suddenly robbed of its importance and impoverished after the First World War. Frank and Loos were members of the group that wanted to solve the problem of mass housing with low-rise housing, i.e., in the form of rational single-family (row-) houses with gardens. Frank himself built a small worker's settlement in Pernitz (1920) and the settlement Hoffingergasse in Vienna. The Siedlungsbewegung (settlement movement) however, failed to take into consideration the urban problems involved in providing utilities and procuring sites, and the municipal government was soon forced to use a building form of higher density on sites better integrated into the city to make use of the given services. The "Superblocks" are a continuation of the late Gruenderzeit metropolitan concept—e.g. that of Otto Wagner—and were in many cases built

by Wagner pupils. Frank disagreed with the notion of the "Volkswohnungspalast" ("People's housing palace") although he himself built several large, sensitively articulated mass housing projects for the municipality without resorting to bays, pediments, or similar motifs for romantic effect. The fact that he remained true to his opinion "that the single-family house is the basis of our entire modern architecture and city planning" is proved by the Viennese Werkbundsiedlung which under his direction and his initiation, again expressed the idea of urban single-family housing.

In 1933, the unity of the Austrian Werkbund was torn by the formation of a "New Werkbund." The leading architects of the new formation were Clemens Holzmeister and Josef Hoffmann; the conceptual background was national in the sense of Austro-fascism. The goal was rejuvenation of applied art; the first exhibition bore the title "The Liberated Handicraft," and the last exhibition organized by Frank for the Werkbund was "The Good Inexpensive Item."

These controversies and the increasing danger of National Socialism persuaded Frank to emigrate. The firm Svenskt Tenn (Swedish Pewter) had already approached him in 1932 because they had started to include furniture in their program. Frank designed furniture, textiles, and occasionally china and other items for this firm after 1934. He continued what he began in Vienna with "House and Garden": to create models for a general standard of living. During the war he held lectures at the "New School for Social Research" in New York.

The last period in Frank's life undoubtedly bears signs of a certain resignation. In a letter (1949) he wrote that "the ideals of that time are in fact no longer (nor should they be) those of the present and therefore they are also not good models. I think that all the veterans of modern architecture of that time think basically the same thing, but just keep muddling on, because they don't really know what one should do now, which I by the way also no longer know." Apart from his work for Svenskt Tenn, where his textile designs are particularly noteworthy, Frank created numerous aquarelles of notable quality. He continued to write and design, but gave only occasional lectures and wrote few articles. He developed a series of theoretical writings, based on his New York lectures; he also composed political satires condemning the American belief in progress and its missionary role ("The Four Freedoms" and "The Peace Conference") and a satirical artist's novel.

The style and perspective of Frank's later writings became broader. He saw freedom and culture threatened on the one hand by *mysticism* and *superstition*, and on the other by *systems* and *rules* that supposedly should replace tradition—both lead to hate and destruction; and applied art was for him symptomatic of both. Architecture itself should not force people "to make moral demands of every object to which aesthetic demands also belong. What we need is variety. . . Away with the universal styles, away with the equalization of art and industry, away with the whole system of thought that has become popular under the name of functionalism. This new architectural system. . . I would like to give a name in the manner that is currently fashionable. . . I will call it AKZIDENTISMUS (ACCIDENTISM) for the time being, and by that I mean that we should design our surroundings as if they had originated by chance." This claim has been realized in numerous fantasy designs. They are the most important components of his still unpublished work. Josef Frank died on 8 January 1967 in Stockholm.

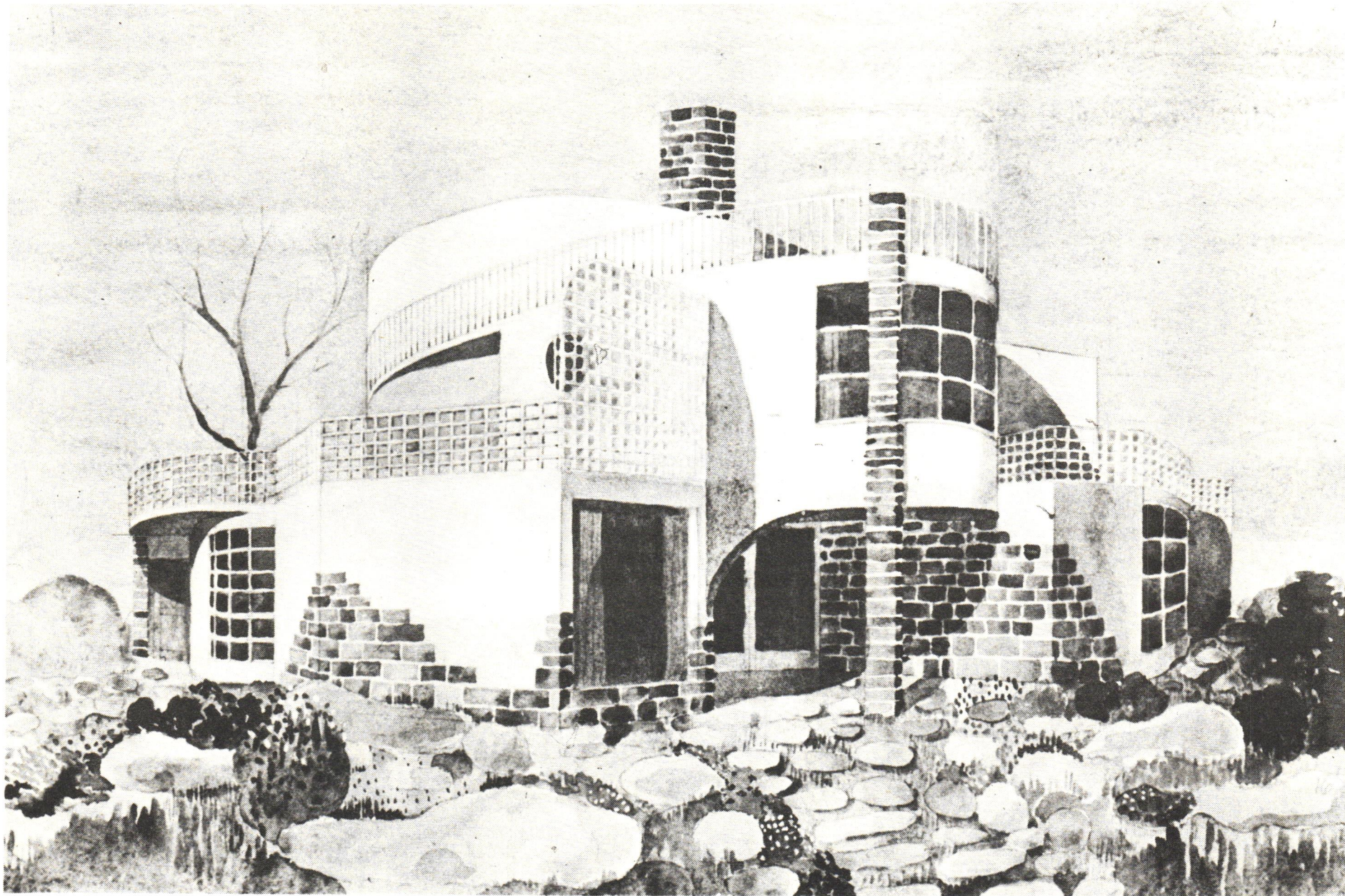
—Hermann Czech, authorized translation by Michael Loudon, Vienna.

Hermann Czech is an Austrian architect and author (Das Looshaus, Joseph Frank 1885-1957, Locker Verlag, Vienna).

Accidentism

. . . I use the living room here as an example because I want to arrive at an architectural principle by means of it. The living room is, so to speak, the ultimate goal of architecture because it is the most important component of the house for us; for this reason, I find it more suitable to start with this flexible detail and to expand its principles than to adopt the reverse method and to view the living room as a kind of consequence of a particular architectural style and to shape it in accordance with it.

The conditions valid for making living rooms comfortable are likewise valid for houses, streets, and cities whose present rigid forms are making their inhabitants homeless. This inflexibility is not the result of particular necessities, but is due primarily to aesthetic demands which aim at thoroughly fulfilling some principle. What we need is a much greater elasticity, and not rigid formal laws, a demonumentalization, without therefore falling back onto historical styles. These styles are and will remain dead. What I in the long run call modern architecture (not that which has been modern in the first half of 1958) differs completely from every historical architecture. The essence of those styles existed in the application of sculptural forms such as capitals, cornices, and so forth, which visually explained the statics of the structure. Sculptural representation of the harmony between bearing and non-bearing building components was considered a primary task of architecture. These structural symbols were formerly necessary; without them one did not feel secure. For us, they no longer represent a necessity, because anyone thinking scientifically has faith in structural calculations even if he does not understand them. With the omission of these structural symbols, sculpture has been abolished as an important organic element in architecture; architecture has been reduced to its own means, that is, to the arrangement of components, and only by means of such an arrangement



Josef Frank, *Accidental house*, Project 1947. Collection of the Albertin, Vienna.

can one attain the sculptural qualities that are so important for the image of the city and its variegating expression. I do not mean to say that all sculptural decor on buildings has become impossible because of this, but that it is no longer an organic element, rather something added that can no longer characterize the building itself; in some cases such decor can be very desirable in lessening the effect of uniformity.

The three fine arts are separated from one another now that there is no more co-operation within the framework of architecture as was the case in the times of the historical styles. Now every art form can go its own direction. It was formerly often the symbolic plasticity, that is to say the sculptural work, especially on facades, that made architecture a work of art. We no longer have the ability to make anything near a work of art out of a building serving primarily a practical purpose by means of such additions. Architecture can only be art today when the function of a building is simple in comparison to the meaning of its form, as for example churches. . . .

The popular success of modern architecture is not due to its expediency. Every modern house can be built just as well in every one of the historical styles without its suffering any loss of usability. It is the new aesthetic effect, in combination with the symbols of our time, of our scientific thinking, which can be produced with the help of new materials and methods of construction, that are so persuasive. Modern architecture has its own symbols as well, although they are no longer structural. To name just one of the most important, I have chosen the flat roof, whose practical advantages are not always as significant as to evoke the impassioned discussions that took place in the battle for the new architecture. Today, however, it is a symbol for scientific thought; it concludes the house on the top, there where its function is terminated, without the ingredient of the unclear, irrational attic with its mysticism. . . .

Every human needs a certain degree of sentimentality to feel free. This will be taken from him if he is forced to make moral demands of every object, one of which is the aesthetic demand. What we need is variety and not stereotyped monumentality. No one feels comfortable in an order that has been forced upon him, even if it has been doused in a sauce of beauty. Therefore, what I suggest are not new rules and forms but a radically different attitude towards art. Away with the universal styles, away with the equalization of industry and art, away with the whole system of thought that has become popular under the name of functionalism. This new architectural system which is to replace the present one I would like to give a name in the manner that is currently fashionable, explaining its tendency. I will call it ACCIDENTISM for the time being, and by that I mean that we should design our surroundings as if they had originated by chance.

Every place where one feels comfortable—rooms, streets, and cities—have originated by chance. Buildings of all epochs stand harmoniously next to one another in cities that have grown organically. Something of this nature of course cannot be attained today, but I am convinced that uniformity is not the result of necessity but of an ideology that is not even our own. The architectural symbols of statics that used to provide for variety no longer exist. Therefore, we need other, much stronger means today to have an effect on our mass production of houses. Architecture is sculpture, but its effects must now be attained with architectural means. The aesthetic value of the individual house is therefore today no longer of as great an importance although we should not underrate it. Display windows and silhouettes are what we now see in a street. For that reason, city planning will be the most important problem in architecture. That which can offer us variety is not general good taste but individualizing character. A

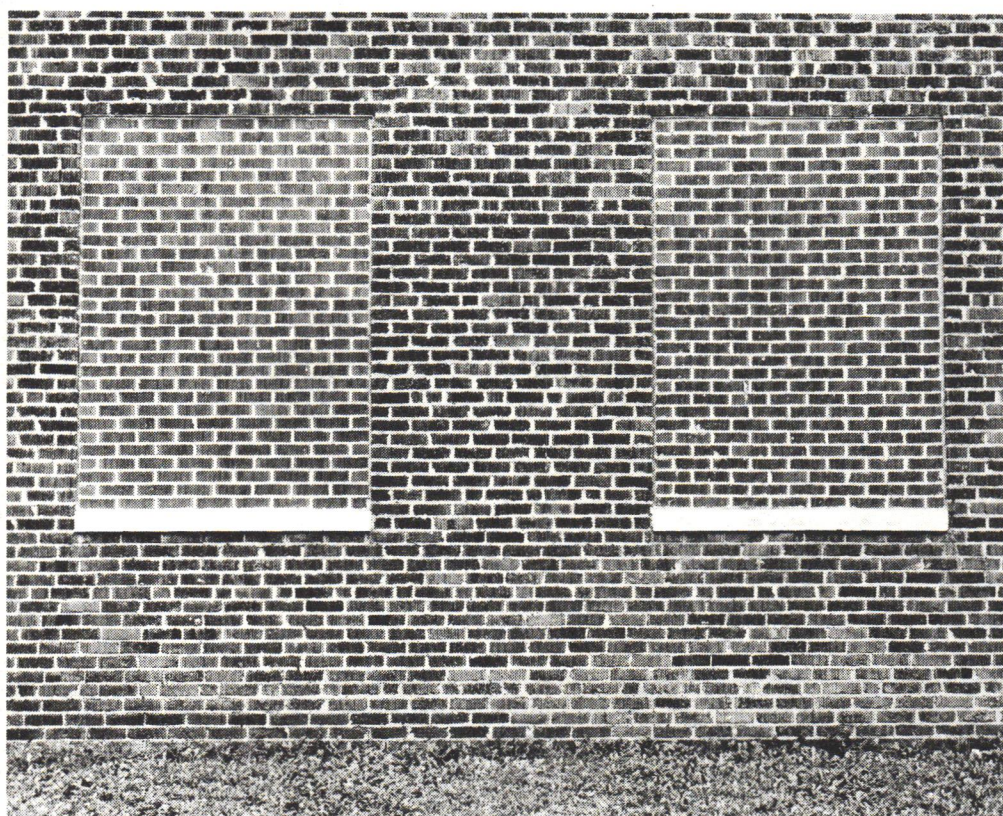
theater does not have to look like a factory and the hall of a bank like a pastry shop.

The idea of "raising" everything to the level of a work of art is tempting. But we should not forget: even if we cannot define what a work of art is, one of its essential attributes is that it is something unchangeable and that it can serve no other purpose than to be contemplated. By that it places its demands on man, and I do not think that one can feel comfortable in the long run in surroundings that everywhere and continually set such demands.

I have spoken here of works of art; but it is even worse when one is confronted with objects that pretend to be art without possessing its values!

—Josef Frank

Written in 1958. First German publication in: "*Baukunst und Werkform*," Stuttgart, nr. 4/1961. Translation by Michael Loudon, Vienna.

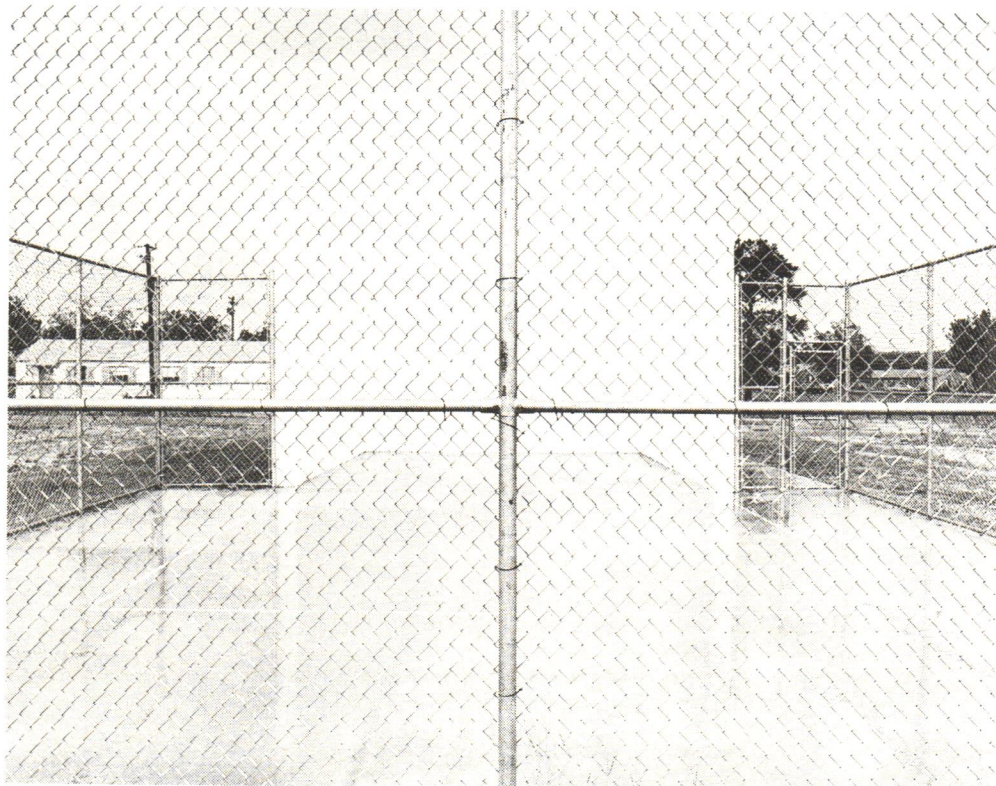


Ironic Acceptance:

Ben Simmons sent us a brief statement to accompany the photographs shown here. "These photographs are/were part of my response to the environment, my environment. The response is ambiguous, even to me. That seems appropriate." His images represent exquisite formal arrangements of the ubiquitous materials of industrial landscape: walls and fences. Simmons's aesthetic ambiguity is evidenced by his acceptance, on the one hand, of his environment with its formal elements intact and his rejection, on the other hand, of his role as passive observer. Hence the thrown brick.

The work of Jeff Nickerson, a Bay Area photographer, also deals with the ordinary elements of the urban environment, but with a purpose. Nickerson states: "These photographs play off dichotomies, typical of structural/linguistic thought. Part of what makes these spaces interesting is contrast and tension . . . In some cases the tension is a product of design and at other times it is accidental." The kind of tension shown here which is the result of chance juxtapositions, illuminates, as Jeff has pointed out, the essay by Joseph Frank, "Accidentism" also in this issue of *Archetype*.

ARCHETYPE



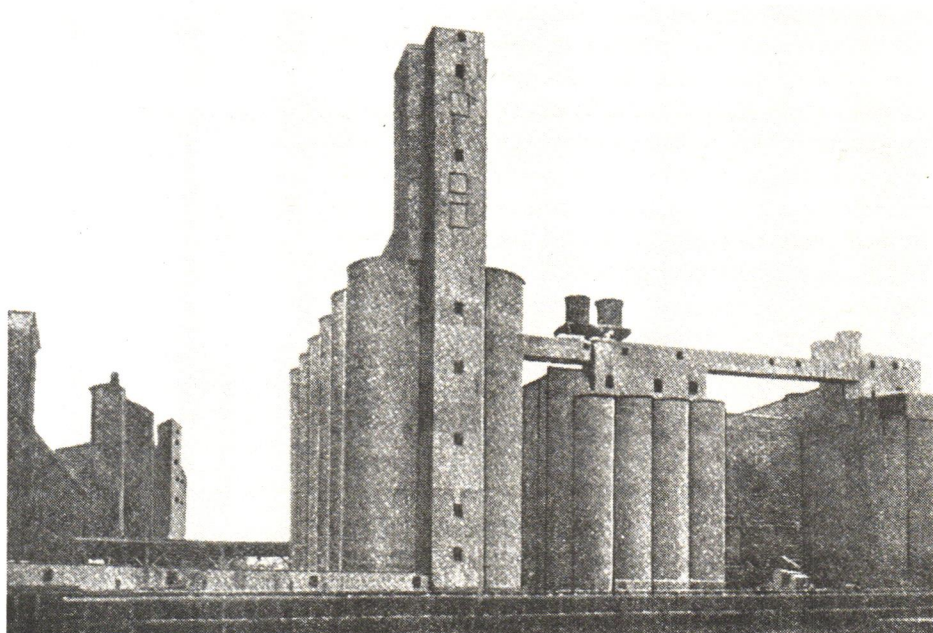
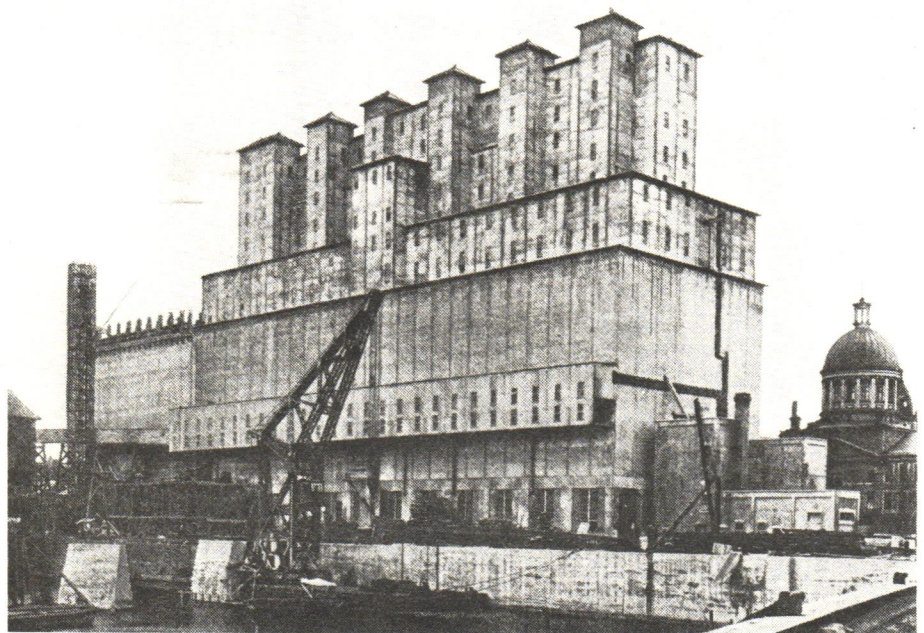
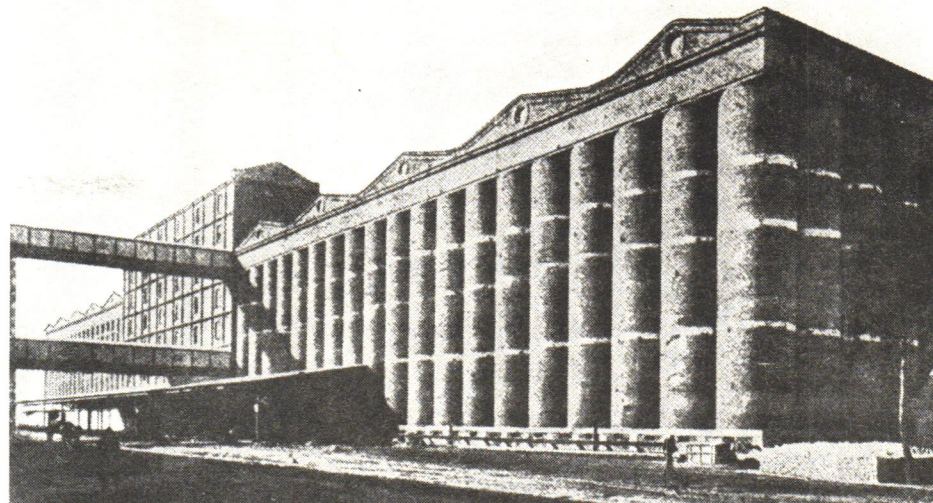
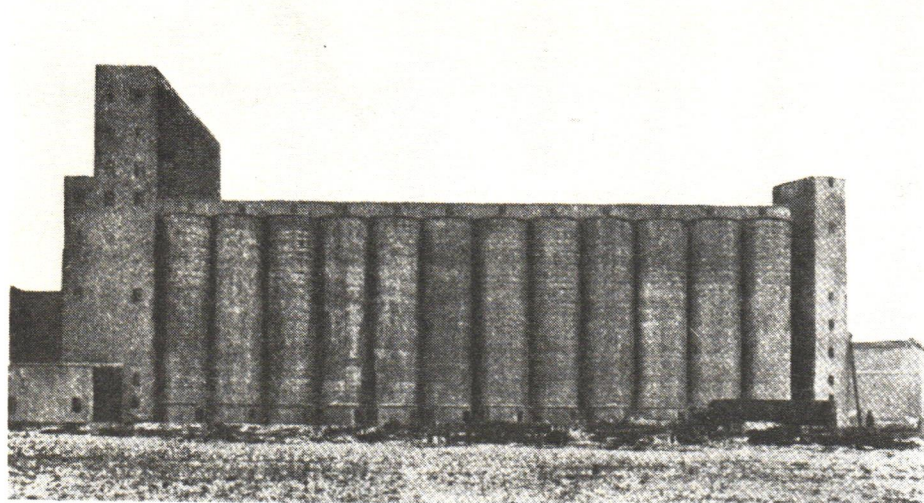
Ben Simmons

ARCHETYPE



Jeff Nickerson





European architects' first view of American elevators; the illustrations to Gropius' article of 1913.

CATACOMBS OF THE MODERN MOVEMENT

Grain elevators in myth and reality

HOW TO MAKE A MYTH

When Walter Gropius introduced American grain-elevators to the thinking architects of the world, he described them as “almost worthy of comparison with the works of the Ancient Egyptians,” but explained neither how they worked, nor what they were made of, nor exactly how gigantic they really were. The nine photographs of elevators which were the majority of the illustrations for his 1913 article *Die Entwicklung Moderner Industriebaukunst*, have only vaguely geographical captions, occasionally name the operating company, but leave everything else to the imagination or polemical inclinations of the reader.

Imaginations were certainly fired; in less than a

year from publication, grain elevators had become touchstones of modernity, talismanic forms for all those who hoped to overthrow the mouldering architecture of the academies. Italian futurists, German expressionists, French rationalists and above all Le Corbusier, fell into the thrall of these “silo dreams” as Erich Mendelsohn called them. And their power remained undiluted for half a century, for Vincent Scully used one of the Gropius pictures in *American Architecture and Urbanism*, instead of going out and getting one of his own; the printed ikon outweighed the concrete reality—except for Mendelsohn, who went to see for himself and make his own, even more powerful pictures.

Sadly, however, scholars seem to gravitate irresist-

ibly toward the spurious. Some of the pictures used by Gropius (who had not been to America at that time) had been tampered with before publication or even before they came into his hands. Two of the Gropian images used by Corbu in *Vers Une Architecture* had been adulterated even further, so that those who know those elevators only through the illustrations in *Vers*—which adds up to about four successive generations of modern architects—received a fraudulent version of the truth. Notoriously it was one of these fakes which Scully used—but in that he had been preceded by no less than the great aesthete Wilhelm Worringer in the Twenties, in an essay on Egyptian art praised by Lewis Mumford—yet another guru who fell under the elevators' spell.

So it was an unreal and corrupted vision of American elevators that the Modern Movement followed. What had started out as utilitarian structures designed by (and for) hard-nosed operators who raided the world for cost-cutting technologies (neither Gropius nor Corbu seem to have known that the concrete construction systems were all European in origin) were promoted to the level of romantic symbols of a mythical industrial promised land to the West, about as real as the crystal towers of the legendary island of Hy Brasil that had lured credulous Irish voyagers to Atlantic dooms in the Middle Ages.

HOW TO MAKE AN ELEVATOR

Historically and technically, the fascination of elevators lies in their rock-bottom simplicity, their enormous scale, and their unnoticed refinements of economical construction. An elevator is, usually, a row of cylindrical concrete bins or silos (or several rows) each bin some 25 feet in diameter, 100 or more feet high, made of slip-formed concrete which is commonly eight inches thick at the base, but may be much thicker. The reinforcing rods run in horizontal loops at about 10-inch centers, wrapped around the vertical bars. The horizontal reinforcing loops first appeared in the mid-nineties in the patented Johnson-Record tile-built bins out of Minneapolis, but in the perfected concrete version they belong to the grand old French Monnier system. That system had, by the Nineties, been taken over by the equally grand old German Wayss und Freitag company, from whom it was imported (in the first instance to Minneapolis, once more) in 1900. The first American cylindrical concrete bin—famously known as Peavey's Folly—still survives outside Minneapolis, but now serves to advertise the Minnesota Vikings!

But to describe elevators in these purely constructional terms is to fall neatly into Gropius's functional/formalist trap. As Melvin Charney pointed out in his crucial revisionist article of 1967, an elevator is not a monument, it is a *process*. What makes it an elevator rather than a simple silo is the mechanical device which raises the grain to the top of the bins, and the other mechanical installations that move the grain from bin to bin or dump it out into ships, trucks, barges or rail cars.

The principle of the mechanical elevator (realized in his case by a steam driven bucket conveyor) is due to Joseph Dart of Buffalo, New York, who introduced it as early as 1843, just to raise the grain to the top of the bin, which in those days would have been a square wooden structure, not unlike the familiar shed-roof type still to be seen in part of the Middle-west and in the Canadian wheat-belt. In other words, the monumental ranked cylinders admired by Gropius and everybody else are not functionally necessary to the structure being an elevator, merely one way of holding the bulk grain as it passes through, an intermediate function which has been served at various times by bins of wood, brick, steel boiler-plate, hollow tile and other materials in various appropriate forms.

There is another way in which Dart is important but was not known to elevator-fanciers. Dart introduced mechanical handling primarily because he needed to get the grain out of the deep holds of ships—Buffalo was a terminal or transfer port, where grain was taken out of Great Lakes ships and put in canal barges (later, railcars). All the elevators illustrated by Gropius, borrowed by Corbu, visited by Mendelsohn are of this terminal type, which is different from the inland type seen by travellers in Oklahoma and the Texas panhandle, or in the evocative photographs of Frank Gohlke.

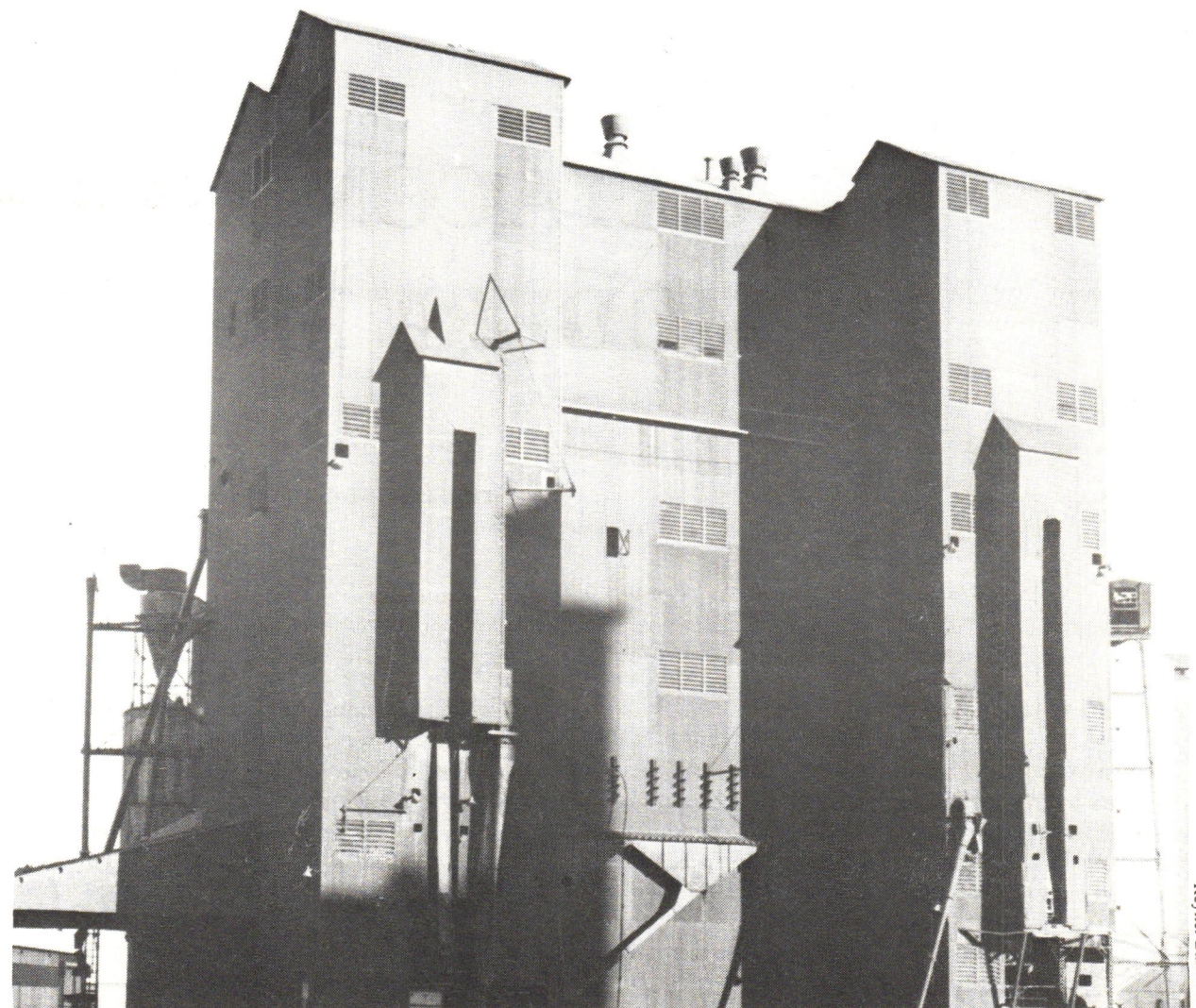
The difference of the Terminal type, whether in Buffalo, Montreal or Buenos Aires, or on the Canadian Lakes, was not only sheer size (until after World War II they were the biggest in the world), but more crucially in their being provided with these "marine towers"



Henry Bowles

Confusing Cylinders: what appear to be simple cylindrical containers of grain can deceive the unwary observer—not only do the windows indicate the presence of machinery, not grain, in the

upper part of the central cylinders of this elevator in Patterson, California, but there is no room for the lower part to be a full cylinder—it is an *interstitial*.



Reyner Banham

Pioneering Legs; The Electric elevator had two marine towers (or legs) for lifting grain from ships' holds. That on the left appears to be the first rail-mounted "mobile leg" ever built, the equivalent of an eight-story building on wheels. 20 is a classic

"stiff leg", an immovable concrete cylinder which uses storage-bin construction and form-work to produce a non-storage-bin, to house the machinery for a vertical conveyor.

or “legs” for scooping grain out of ships. The Gropius photographs, which were almost certainly provided by a cement company, tend not to show these legs (since they obscure the view of the concrete work) but on the ground in real life they are among the most impressive features of terminal elevators, since they are the equivalent of twelve-to-fourteen storey steel-framed towers, one or more of which can move along the face of the elevator’s bins on rails—given the technology and the crowding of the classic grain ports, it was simpler to move a fourteen-storey building to get at the next hold, than it was to warp the ship along for the equivalent distance.

This, then, was the kit of parts for the classic elevator as presented or misrepresented by the Fathers of Modernism: a ranked set of cylindrical concrete bins, two or more marine legs on the quayside, rubber-belt conveyors along under the bottom of the bins and sometimes in the head-house on top of them, and spouts for delivering into barges or trucks. Whether anyone, except Mendelsohn, among the Fathers of Modernism had the faintest notion of all this is seriously to be doubted: Gropius’s statement that “the meaning of the structure becomes overwhelmingly clear to the passer-by,” seems no more penetrating or informed than Corbu’s proposal that their designs “ring in harmony with universal order,” since *neither of them had ever seen the functional side of an elevator.*

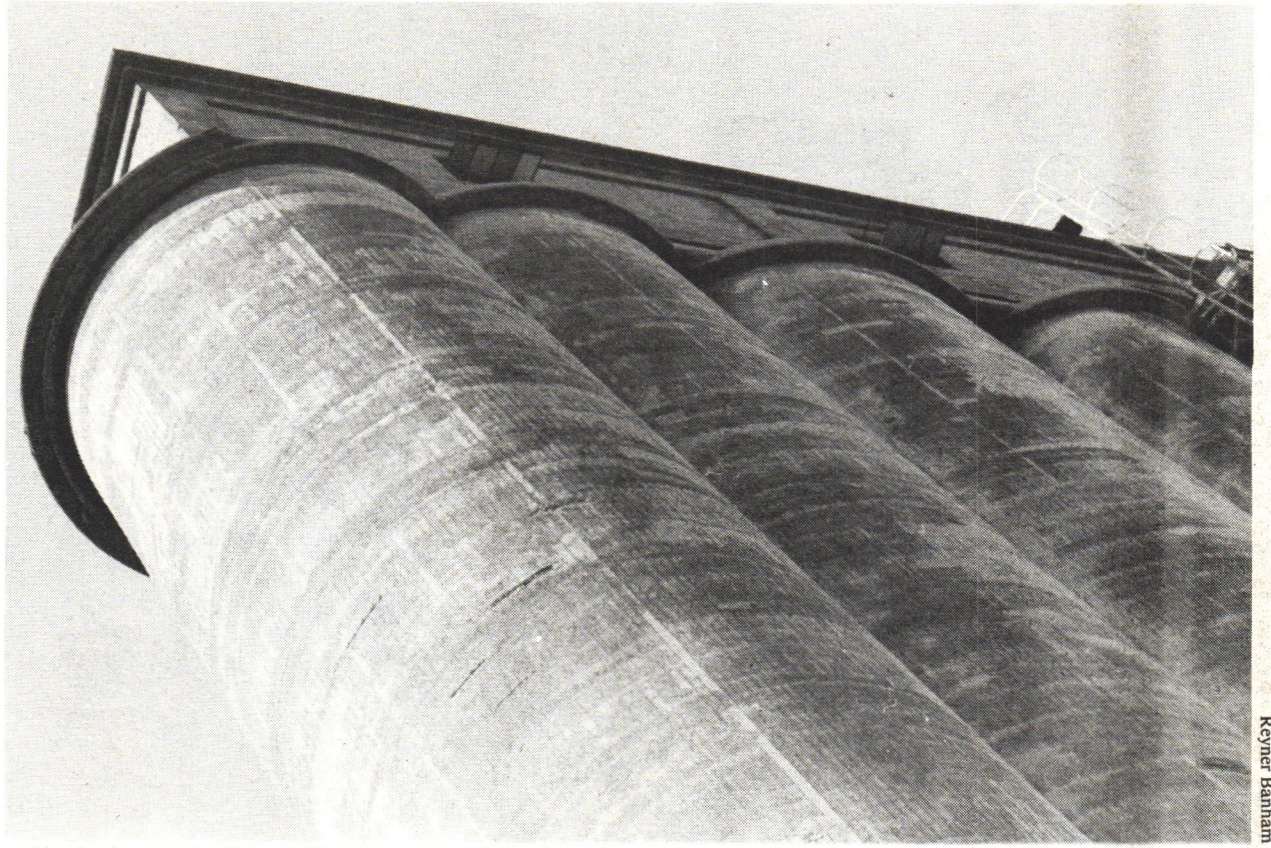
HOW TO MAKE A CHEAPER ELEVATOR

The reason why the cylindrical concrete silo prevailed in elevator work was not that it bore comparison with the works of the Ancient Egyptians, or that it reminded Corbu of the columniation of Greek temples, but because it was cheaper. However, it presented some operational problems, because it was simple enough to elevate the grain and pour it in the open top of the bin, but how were you to get it out of the bottom?

The earliest routine solution to this functional dilemma was to raise the bin on a base tall enough to accommodate a hopper-bottom and a conveyor belt below that. Originally each bin had its own, usually octagonal base, with windows, and the total elevator complex was assembled additively, base by base. Rationality soon dictated, however, that the bases be unified into a continuous basement, an architectural feature which early elevator architects like A. E. Baxter of Buffalo, seized upon as a place to exercise architectural skills. (Some early Wayss und Freitag elevators in Germany before World War I had *rusticated* basements, yet!) and when modern architecture came in in the 1930’s, Baxter modernized his basements by running the windows together into a single International-style strip.

Architect that he was, however, he had missed the point. The pure engineers had long since abolished the basement, taking the cylinders straight down to the foundation slab, and accommodating the conveyor belts by including blocking shuttering in the first couple of lifts of the slip-forms, in order to make openings between one cylinder and the next, and inserting a steel or cast-in-situ hopper—bottom up inside each cylinder. Not only does this create weird sequences of circular and segmental rooms that Corbu would have given his eyes to have designed, but it also meant that the supposed functional legibility that made the meaning of the structure overwhelmingly clear to Gropius’s passer-by had been compromised out of existence: the same cylindrical form that you thought contained bulk grain, might also contain conveyor belts, motor-rooms, even offices and toilets!

The aim, of course, had never been functional legibility, but just the faster buck—and the process of diversifying the uses of the regular concrete cylinder had begun even earlier. On the 1910 extension of the old Washburn-Crosby elevator in Buffalo, visible

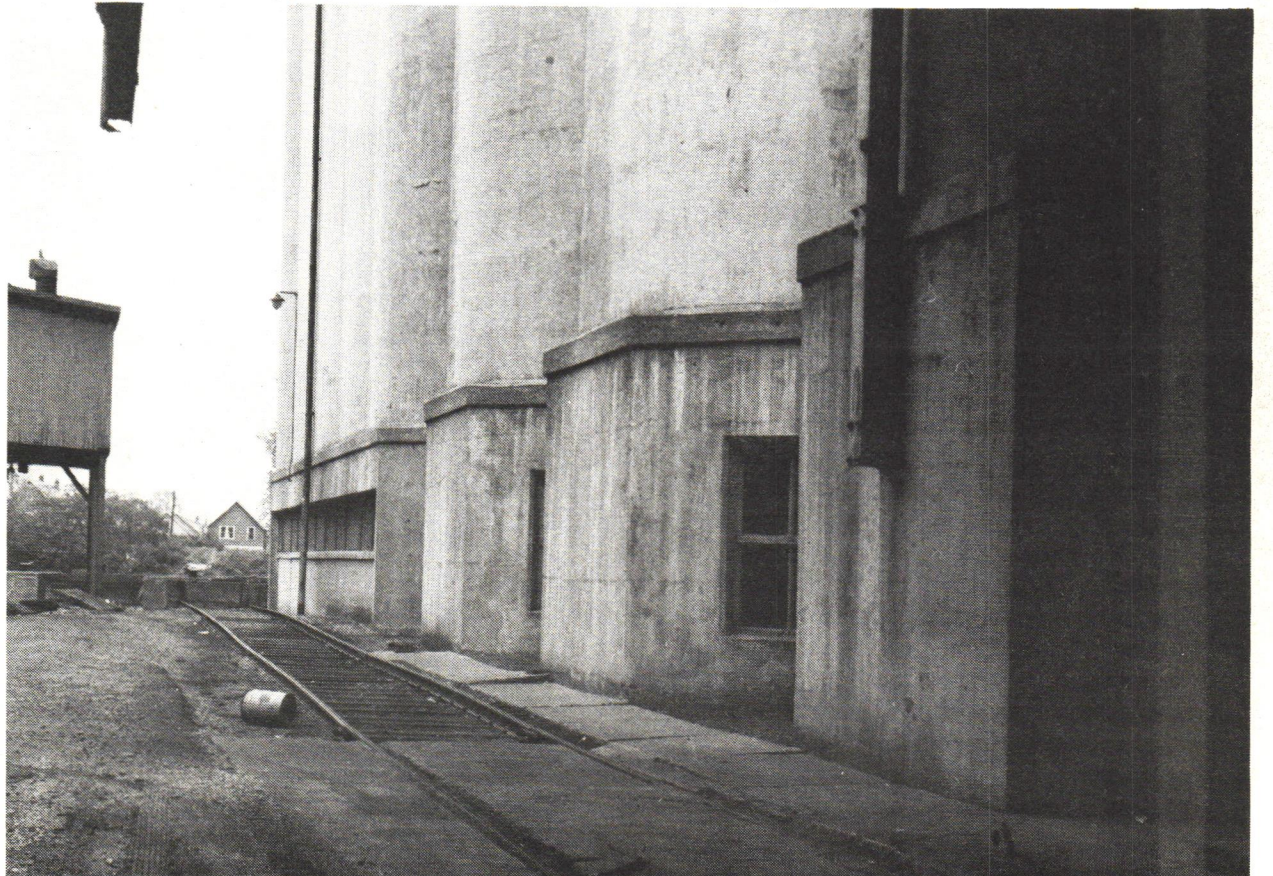


Classic elevator detailing; the headworks and bin-heads of a regular 1927 elevator. The daily “lifts” of the slip-form shuttering can be seen as well as patches of spalling where reinforcing bars were too close to the surface.

Reyner Banham



A gropian monument as it stands today: the Ex-Washburn-Crosby elevator in Buffalo, greatly extended on the left, but the dark “marine tower” (center of the three) is the same tower as shows in Gropius’s illustration



“Touch of the architect’s pencil” dept.; the 1909 bins of the Perrot elevator had separate bases to house machinery, but the 1933 extension (background) had an unified base, into which A. E. Baxter designed an International Style window.

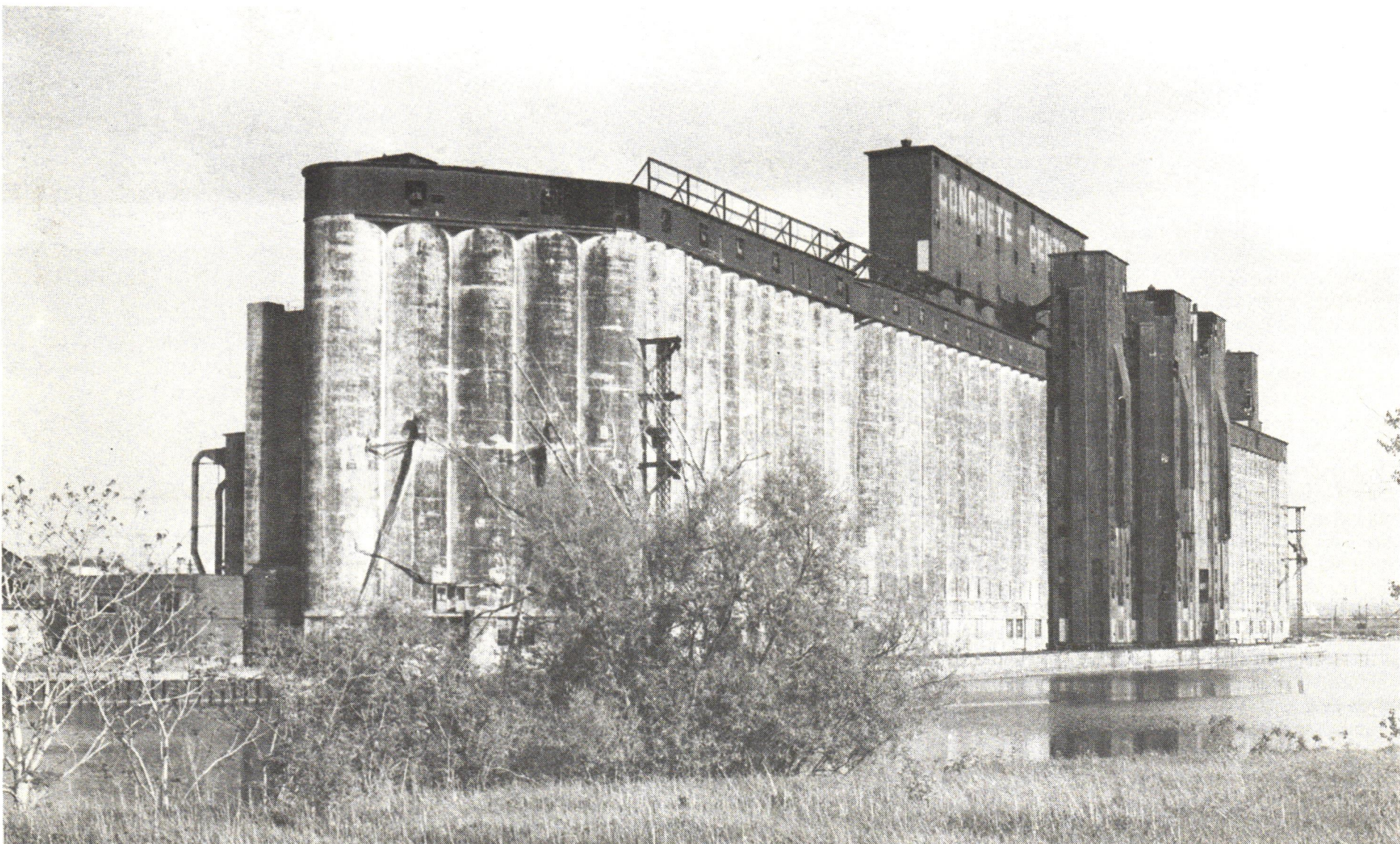


Reyner Banham

Elevators as urbanism; terminal elevators do not occur singly, but as components of elevator scenes. The “flat-iron” prow of the Lake and Rail complex in Buffalo, shows not only a piece of urbanism that should make Leon Krier eat his heart out, but also

“the best historical collection of elevators still standing in North America”; above from left to right: the Perrot (with A.E. Baxter’s architectural touches), the Peavey (unchanged since photographed by Erich Mendelsohn in 1923), the black-corrugated-clad marine

towers of the pioneer “Electric” elevator (1897), the “Electric’s” deceptive concrete extension of 1940, “pretty little Huron Cement” (not all elevators handle grain!) behind the bridge, and on the right, the Standard Elevator of 1928–42.



Monument to a lost civilization; Concrete Central, illustrated by European writers like Bruno Taut (1929), with its three marine towers and five-million bushel storage capacity housed in a struc-

ture twice the size of Centre Pompidou (those marine towers are fourteen storeys high, remember) is now abandoned and almost totally inaccessible except to the most determined Buffalonians

and elevator freaks. The metal parts are rusting away rapidly, but the concrete bins may stand a thousand years or more, since no one can afford to demolish them.

in Mendelsohn's 1923 photograph but not in Gropius's (which must have been taken about 1908), there is a free-standing bin which is not a bin at all, but a fixed marine leg, its windows and the long slot for the bucket conveyor made by blocking up parts of the regular cylindrical shuttering.

But if that is a bin which is not a bin, what happens to the overwhelmingly clear message to the passer-by when the visible cylinders are not even cylinders? An early economy in elevators with more than one rank of bins was to store grain also in the left-over volumes or "interstitials", between each bin and its neighbors. By the late Teens, already, the habit was well established of making extra "interstitials" on the *outside* of the elevator by casting segmental diaphragm walls between one cylinder and the next, producing a wavy wall of apparent quarter cylinders.

And sooner or later, someone had to come up with the idea of leaving out all those messy cylinders behind that wavy wall—and there is *no way* the passer-by can tell what has happened. For months I regularly scrutinized the old "Electric" Elevator in Buffalo because it is historically important (first with all-electric power, and the first with a rail-mounted mobile leg, in 1897) and because its naked steel boiler-plate bins are a deviant form for the period, but without realizing that the concrete extension built on to it in 1940 must be the cruellest accidental joke ever played on simple Romantic functionalists like you and me. What appears to be a straightforward, if unusually large, cluster of over a hundred slightly squat bins has been opened up inside into six gigantic rectangular granaries, walled externally by ranks of three-quarter cylinders with their open sides facing inwards, separated from one another internally by rows of cylinders which do not contain grain, but services and vertical circulation. Magazine publications of the time note that the designer was H. G. Onstad, but none comment on its extraordinary interior spaces, which I myself discovered only by accident by climbing in one of the usual steel inspection doors, expecting to find myself in the usual kind of circular catacomb only to discover instead some kind of pitch-dark cathedral or Ancient Roman cistern! Truly "the architecture of the bottom line!"

HOW TO LIVE WITH A GRAND OLD MYTH WHEN YOU KNOW BETTER . . .

The inside of the Electric extension was one place where the ruined and abandoned elevators of Buffalo came near to matching the works of Ancient Egypt for me, but most of the time, having to live with these brute concrete facts of life and economic death in Buffalo is much less like living with the ruins of Ancient Rome, however often one self-deceivingly uses the word *Piranesian*, than one might imagine.

In Rome, the mouldering hulks of brick and marble are invested with the majesty and romance of real historical personages who happened to be creating western civilization and the outlines of some of Shakespeare's best scripts at the time. Something similar is true of earlier and more exotic ruins from Aswan to Mesa Verde and Angkor Wat. It is even true of the earliest monuments of Industrial archaeology in Britain and the USA; the names of the people who created and operated them are part of the general historical record, they are—like James Watt, for instance—culture heroes of bourgeois industrial society.

But whoever heard of H. G. Onstad, Haglin and Heffelfinger (who built Peavey's Folly), or A. E. Baxter, outside a tiny coterie of *real* elevator-buffs. Their names have no general historical import, and were never connected to their works in the days when the elevator myth was being created in Europe. As a result, elevators known only from doctored photographs almost *started* life as ruined monuments of a "lost civilization," inscrutable in their lack of explana-

tory inscriptions or familiar architectural details. So they became a kind of marvelous but empty category in architectural culture, waiting to be invested with human significance of a sort that could be understood.

Given the temper of the times—times in which Adolf Loos and F. T. Marinetti were mythologizing engineers as the primitives of a new civilization—the elevators became the temples of the cult of the new noble savage, the American engineer. "American builders have preserved a natural feeling for large form fresh and intact," said Gropius. Everybody knows that noble savages are closer to nature than we are—their work produces "the most beautiful forms" because it "rings in harmony with universal order," said Corbu—and everybody knows that primitive people have this cosmic sense of the universe and a terrific sense of beauty, etc.

The only person who really cut through all this hogwash was Wilhelm Worringer in his book *Egyptian Art*, which came out not long after *Vers Une Architecture*. Even though he fell for Corbu's faked photo, he did not fall for the accompanying verbiage; and using American industrial architecture to cut down the creative abilities of the ancient Egyptians to their proper size (and Gropius with them) he laid it straight on the line: "What you regard as the ultimate metaphysics of form, is merely the Americanism which you otherwise despise!"

But we are the children of the Modern Movement whether we like it or not. We were brought up in a world where Gropius and Le Corbusier were held in apostolic awe, their words preferred to observable facts, their graphic devices more powerful than mandalas or pentacles. We may know that their myths are pathetic fallacies, their silo dreams broken romances with an America that never was. We may even find the facts of the case, the veritable steel and concrete, more interesting than these ancestral myths, but the myths still have their power—otherwise why spend time, effort and risk life and limb exploring these mighty ruins and their living counterparts, if they are just cheapo constructions designed to catch a quick buck?

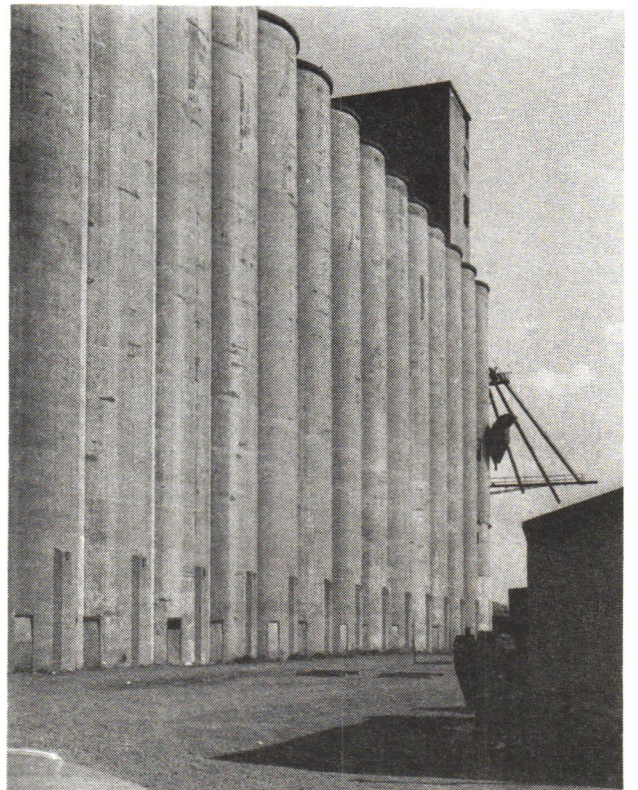
For anybody who has grown up with the architecture of the present century the elevators still present one of the possible metaphysics of form. When we look at their exteriors as they tower above prairie or lake, we know it, but the fact that we also know the whole thing is a wishful myth may be the reason why their insides are now even more affecting than the celebrated outsides. To stand in the Electric's echoing vastnesses, to perambulate the circular rooms and interstitial vestibules of other abandoned monsters is to visit the catacombs of the Modern Movement, places haunted not by the men who built them, but by figments of the tribal superstitions of architecture, by a race who never existed, and for that reason had to be invented to satisfy a longing . . . for what? Hugh Casson once identified the source of that longing that so persistently causes us to make myths: "Architects are not interested in facts, they are interested in *certainties*."

—Peter Reyner Banham

Reyner Banham, renown English architectural historian and author, (New Brutalism, Architecture of the Machine Age, Los Angeles), teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Colloge V.



Marine towers and headworks: rusting corrugated-metal cladding visually (but economically!) distinguishes the operational parts of Cargill-Superior elevator from the purely storage volumes in the concrete bins.



Pure classic elevator; the concrete bins rise direct from the foundations without basements; machinery and work-spaces being accommodated in the bin-bottoms themselves, hence the doors and the external buttresses.



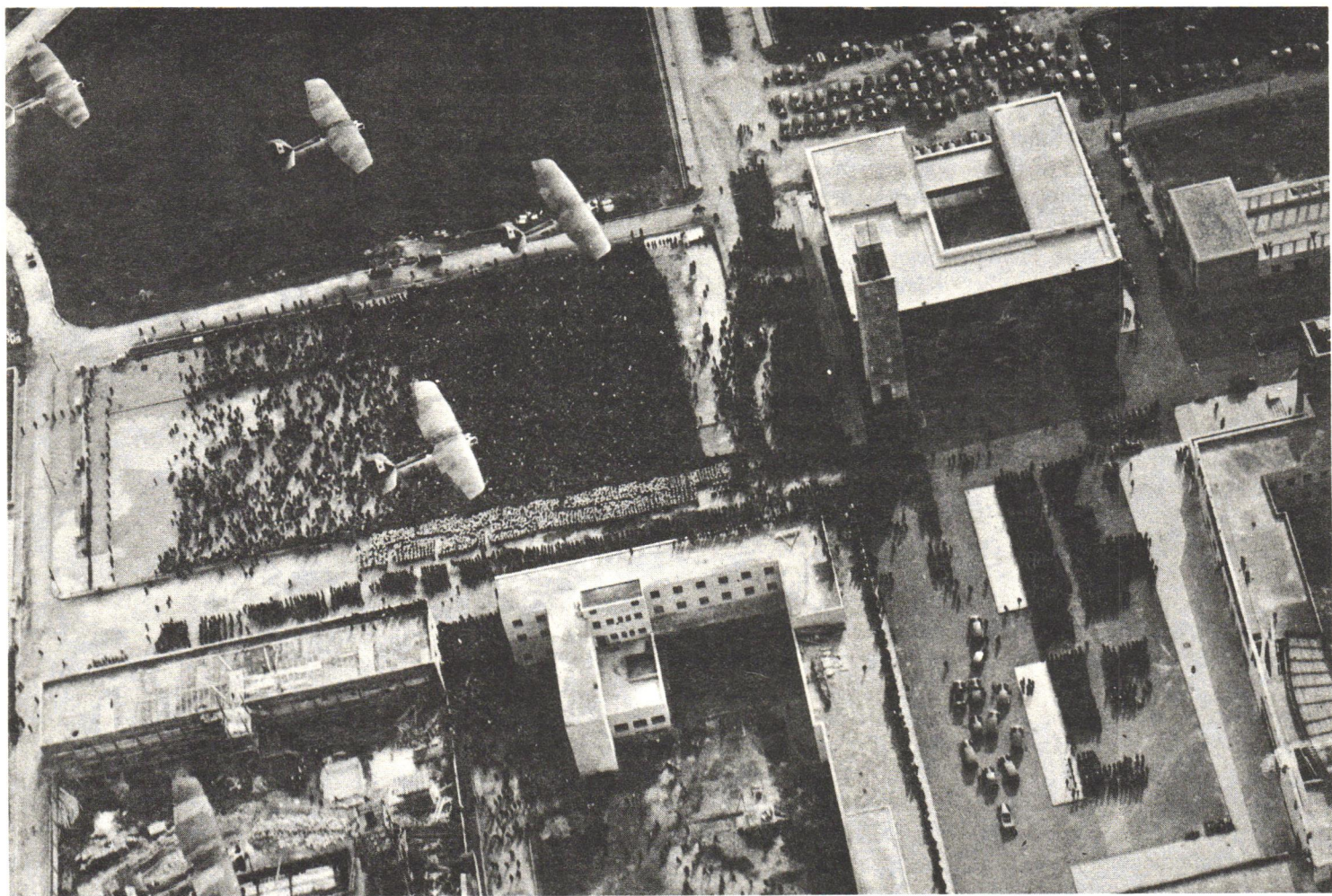
Reyner Banham

Catacombs of the Modern Movement; the circular rooms and segmental "interstitials" that housed conveyors and spouts in the bin-bottoms of the 1925 Marine-"A" elevator in Buffalo; secret spaces that Le Corbusier could have designed, but didn't.

ARCHI LOCUS

"Architecture as politics is a myth by now so consumed that it is useless to waste words on it."

Manfredo Tafuri
Oppositions 17, 1979



Sabaudia. View of the Palazzo Comunale.

Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics. Henry A. Millon and Linda Nochlin, eds. MIT Press, 1978. pp. 382, \$35.00

Architectural historians over the last several years have begun to recognize that whenever a government, an Emperor, a Pope, or a municipality commissions a building project, an explicit or implicit political message lurks somewhere behind it. The contributors to *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics* investigate structures as diverse as Constantinian basilicas and Fascist New Towns in an effort to identify the patron's political goals as manifested in architecture. Their studies mark a decisive shift in architectural history from the study of the style of a succession of monumental buildings to a far greater awareness of the ways in which patrons, politics, and ideologies condition the built environment.

Of the 17 essays, seven concern architecture. Three treat pre-1800 topics: Richard Stapleford's study of Constantine's development of the atrium basilica, C.W. Westfall's discussion of Federigo da Montefeltro's Palazzo Ducale in Urbino, and Stanislaus von Moos's analysis of Pope Julius II's building campaigns in Rome and Bologna. Building on the earlier work of Richard Krautheimer and Suzanne S. Alexander, Stapleford demonstrates how Constantine grafted imperial, semi-public domestic architectural elements onto religious architecture. The addition of rhetorical, imperial motifs to the basilica came at a time when Constantine was working to shift loosely organized groups of believers into an institution. The attempt succeeded, as the shape of Christianity for centuries indicates: the solemn and splendid atria are emblematic of the distance Christianity traveled from the doctrines of simplicity and poverty espoused by its earliest believers.

The essays by von Moos and Westfall treat the building programs of two Renaissance lords. Both Julius II and Federigo da Montefeltro sought to ratify rule with major structures at their seats of power as well as at their provincial outposts. Westfall provides a lucid, thoughtful discussion of the Ducal palace in Urbino and its connection with Federigo's view of himself as a "virtuous" ruler. In a brief article it would be difficult to accord similar attention to the secondary seat at Gubbio, but feudal outposts comprise important material for architectural historians. Renaissance lords gave physical testimony to their dominion over smaller cities precisely through architecture; von Moos's Study of Julius II's scheme for the present day Palazzo Comunale in Bologna is but one example. Others come to mind immediately, such as Michelozzo's face-lift of the Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano, where he recreated a Florentine palazzo and topped it with a battlement and

central tower to signify the town's new status as a feudal outpost of Florence.¹ The Gonzaga design of Sabbioneta and the architecture and *sventramenti* by Lodovico Sforza in Vigevano are equally telling instances of the ratification of political control through building.² Later manifestations of the same impulse surface in British colonial plantations, for example, in the West Indies, as well as the Fascist settlements in North Africa. Often the political message is more direct and unambiguous in these secondary seats of power than it is in the home seat.

Von Moos emphasizes the imagery of fortified castles with a vertical articulation as icons of feudal sovereignty in the programs of Julius II and later, of Paul III. He links the projecting corners and the campanile with archaic military architecture, and in the examples discussed, he identifies them as images of papal sovereignty.

Although accorded only passing mention in this essay, the Tuscan Medieval communal palace (with large internal meeting hall, crenellated and unfenestrated tower, and battlements) served as an equally compelling model for many of the palaces commissioned by Papal and feudal lords during the Renaissance. Through its association with autonomous communal rule, the Palazzo Comunale, suitably systematized and rendered symmetrical, could be adapted by Renaissance strongmen in order to legitimize and to emphasize visually their control over formerly autonomous towns: Montepulciano is a case in point. Where battlements and scarps are incorporated into the design, communal and military architectural elements intersected to convey unambiguously that the building housed a particular political authority.

The remaining four essays treat topics from the last century. The authors depart from the domain of privileged architectural monuments and consider buildings which, as Eberhard Schroeter says of the Finance Ministry in Rome, may not be great architecture, but still carry messages about how a government patron uses architecture to give physical shape to political schemes. Indeed, the Finance Ministry hardly merits the extended descriptions and examination Schroeter gives it; architectural decoration is not the primary representational feature of the structure. The chief merit of Schroeter's thoughtful essay lies in the discussion of Minister Quintino Sella's role in developing the project, his theories about the new Italian government, and the way in which the structure is rooted in Sella's notion of an expanding capitalist system. Sella influenced not only the shape of the new Italian capital of Rome, but also of Italy itself: his campaign to keep industry (and potentially radical masses of workers) only in the northern provinces and out of Rome spells out the tragedy of southern Italy and Rome since unification.

Helen Searing carefully sets her study of public housing in Amsterdam between 1915-1923 into the political, social, and cultural context, and as is true of Schroeter's essay, this orientation is one of the best features of her text. Some very poor photographs mar this otherwise informative article—the only such failures in the book, I might add.

The final two essays by Henry Millon and Spiro Kostof both consider separate building programs undertaken by the Fascist government. Although at first blush the *sventramenti* and reconstruction of the Piazzale Augusto Imperatore do not resemble the program for New Towns in the Agro-Pontina south of Rome, in fact they do share certain fundamental features. In his exhaustive study of the plans for liberating Augustus's mausoleum from a crust of houses, Kostof reveals the close connection which Mussolini perceived between himself and Augustus, and how this prompted a massive urban redesign scheme to monumentalize the Emperor's mausoleum. Traffic concerns were secondary to rhetoric in the program, and Mussolini's personal intervention at

several points during planning and construction further complicated matters.

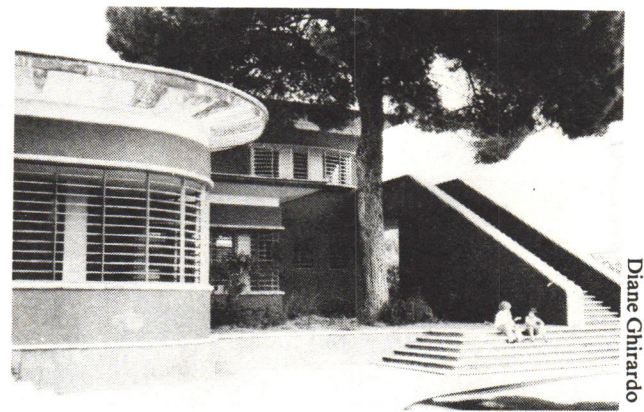
Millon's discussion of the New Towns centers on a perceived shift in architecture and urban planning policy after 1935. He argues that while the first three New Towns were relatively large, later ones were smaller because after 1935 the Fascist State wanted to activate a program to de-urbanize Italy; commentators such as Luigi Piccinato foresaw a nation of small burghs, with cities which would no longer be centers of consumption but administrative support centers for agricultural and industrial activity.

The government building enterprises in Fascist Italy are important for what they reveal about the politics of the time; Mussolini's attempt to stem the depopulation of the countryside was already underway by 1930, and had been articulated even prior to that, but this program went hand in hand with an effort to enhance Italy's industrial capacity. More important themes barely touched on in these essays include a broad program of institutional architecture, the demolition of densely populated zones and the removal of inner city residents (usually artisans or small shopkeepers) to peripheral zones, and, when possible, to New Towns or hastily built suburbs. The faces of many Italian cities underwent dramatic surgery, and the aims were almost always twofold: to give dignity to new Fascist monuments or old ones revered by the Fascist State, and to clear out crowded central areas. Architecture and urban planning could and did render Fascist notions about social order and hierarchy strident and unambiguous. As the Fascist State consolidated power in the late '20s and early '30s, it engaged in a building campaign designed to insinuate the major Fascist institutions directly into the civic reality of Italian towns. Archaicizing tendencies did not erupt suddenly after 1935, but indeed animated most institutional Fascist structures from the earliest years. Much like Renaissance strongmen and Popes, Mussolini realized that words and occasional visits would be insufficient if Fascism were to recast the structure of daily life and to become an omnipresent reality for Italian citizens. This realization coincided with a need to support the sagging construction industry, to provide employment, and to promote an image at home and abroad of a vital, rejuvenated Italy. But the image of youthfulness (*giovinetza*) was rooted in an antique notion of statecraft and planning: new town plantations for veterans echoed those for veterans founded under the Roman Empire, and a youthful modern architecture donned the seductive garb of ancient institutional arrangements. The Medieval Palazzo Comunale type co-opted by Renaissance strongmen gained a new lease on life in its reincarnation as a Casa del Fascio; with its campanile *cum* Torre Littoria, it aimed to sweep *campanilismo* into the shadow of a new, pan-Italian authority.

The New Towns were important props for Fascist propaganda theatricals; rapidly fabricated with much fanfare and colonized as hastily, their physiognomy and operation disclose untapped information about how Fascism saw itself and wanted to be seen by others, as well as what shape it wanted to give to civic life. Most of the towns have been objects of scorn for commentators over the last 40 years, with the exception of Sabaudia. But the ritual praise for Sabaudia is unfounded; the tower of its Palazzo Comunale is more immodestly rhetorical than towers in the other New Towns, the buildings in the urban center are less intelligently and meticulously conceived than those of Guidonia, and the housing is less coherent and well-executed than Giuseppe Nicolosi's for Littoria.

In different ways, each of these essays verifies the often elusive connections between architecture and politics, Tafuri's off-hand remark notwithstanding. To the extent that they unveil (albeit sometimes only partially) the informing political motifs and are firmly

situated in careful considerations of contemporary historical conditions, they help to clarify the way in which a political program influences an architectural one. But the story does not end here. The two are often reciprocal, as we have seen with Fascist programs. In fact, architecture's response to the patron's program effectively begins when it is built. One could approach an analysis of architecture and politics and ask a different set of questions: if the building is rhetorically loaded and functions mainly as propaganda or celebration, to whom is the message addressed and does it do the job? If the architecture is part of a social program—low-income housing, new towns, recreation or educational facility—what is the character of the program, and how does it operate within the construction? This is not the only relevant way to interrogate architecture, but where the enterprise in question is commissioned by a political body, such considerations cannot be ignored. In her analysis of Utopian communities, Dolores Hayden has demonstrated that the interest of such communities lies not only in the plans or the buildings, but the ways in which the built environment operates to pro-



Post Office, Sabaudia

Diane Ghirardo

mote or hinder social programs.³ The Florentine outpost in Montepulciano, the Gonzaga construction of Sabbioneta, and the Fascist New Towns or *sventramenti* in old towns certainly merit examination along these lines. This is an aspect of the relationship between architecture and politics that architectural historians tend to ignore in favor of exhaustive studies of the building's genesis, the politics of the patron, and its architectural historical roots. But the story of a building no more ends on the day it is completed than it begins on the day the patron commissions the architect to undertake the project.

—Diane Ghirardo

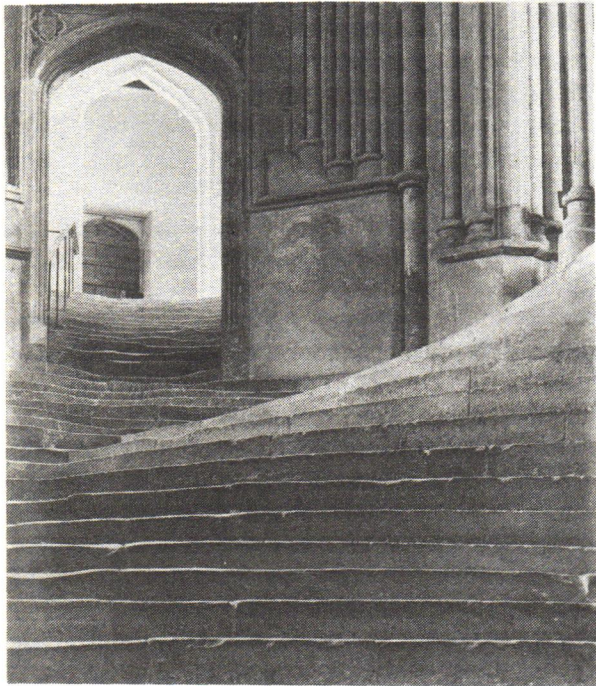
¹Howard Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, XXVIII, 1/2, 1965, pp. 1-46.

²Kurt Forster, "From 'Rocca' to 'Civitas': Urban Planning at Sabbioneta," *L'arte*, 5 (March, 1969), pp. 5-40.

³Dolores Hayden, *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790-1975* (Cambridge, MA, 1976).

Literary Architecture

**Literary Architecture:
Essays Toward a Tradition**
by Ellen Eve Frank
University of California Press, 326 pp., \$18.00



Philadelphia Museum of Art

“The Architectonics of Literature”

. . . as I slepte, me mette I was
Withyn a temple ymad of glas,
In whiche ther were moo ymages
Of golde, stondyng in sondry stages
And moo ryche tabernacles,
And with perre moo pynacles,
And queynte maner of figures
Of olde werke then I sawgh ever.
For certeynly, I nyste never
Wher that I was.

—Chaucer
House of Fame

Ellen Frank's *Literary Architecture* seeks to establish an analogical tradition for the use of architecture in literature. In a critical study which focuses on the architectonics of literature, Frank argues that literary

references to architecture and the symbolic creation of architectural spaces in the fictive piece enable the writer to add spatiality to the otherwise temporal plane of literature. Literature, then, assumes spatio-temporal dimensions. Words, she argues, can be used to build three-dimensional metaphoric structures in literary art, to imbue a temporal art form with amplitude, mass and weight. This “conversion” or “translation” of architecture/space into literature/time constitutes “literary architecture.”

Literary Architecture consists of five chapters or “rooms,” four of which are devoted to a different literary figure who employs architecture as an art analogue in his work from the aesthete/creator of the phrase “literary architecture” Walter Pater, to the stylized refiner of this tradition, Henry James. The final chapter, “The Analogical Tradition of Literary Architecture,” draws four significant parallels to architecture: architecture and the body, the mind, memory and a rarely explored parallel to literature.

These “essays toward a tradition” are more than a mere exegesis of architectural imagery in literature. They reveal a rich tradition of “literary architecture” which Frank proceeds to define as a marriage.

What I have called literary architecture in itself, and inevitably, proposes to make a connection of a very audacious sort. This is the larger connection of correspondence or equivalence between the two arts themselves, architecture and literature, the one whose characteristic form spells time. Correspondence is actually active: it is a process of conversion obeying the laws of conservation in which there is no loss. Writers who select architecture as their art analogue dematerialize the more material art, architecture, that they may materialize the more immaterial art, literature. In this way, architecture and literature relinquish an analogical relationship to marry as literary architecture.

So words can be used to build. And Frank not only demonstrates how four prominent writers employ architectural imagery in their works, but she proceeds to build such a spatial structure of her own. Frank parallels *Literary Architecture* to an architectural structure: the book itself becomes an inhabitable edifice, and the five chapters are its rooms—filled with the furnishings of its subject matter—which the reader enters and experiences on his “tour-reading,” metaphorically speaking, of course. But the architectural *metaphor* is more than viable. Words accrete a significance beyond their existence as mere vehicles for expression; they carve structures into which the reader can enter and “look around.” These spatial constructs symbolize and evoke beyond the power of the written word, as in the epigraph from Chaucer. Plucked by an eagle from his home, Geoffrey, the poem's narrator, is taken to Fame's house. There, the house assumes symbolic proportions since “housing” the allegorical Fame, it teaches Geoffrey her lesson. Thus, it exists as a touchstone in Geoffrey's edification process which is initiated by his eccentric instructor-guide, the eagle. Once he walks through her house, which Chaucer adeptly reconstructs with words, he learns its lesson. Just as the tour through

Fame's house edifies and assumes mythic import, so too, Frank argues, does that of most writers who employ architecture as an analogue, including herself.

And Frank's is an admirable work of architecture. Not only is it an intelligently built structure, but it is also beautifully constructed. Nicely reproduced photographic images—by such architectural photographers as Alvin Langdon Coburn (specifically commissioned by James to recreate architectural images for the frontispiece of the New York edition of his collected works)—punctuate the entryway through this “house.” Extensive explanatory notes along with graphs also add to its rich texture.

Although her edifice makes altogether interesting touring, it is not without its cracks, possibly as a result of its double purpose. It is, of course, a literary critique (Pater, Hopkins, Proust and James being its nominal subjects). But this purpose is subordinated to the book's more extensive effort, that of discussing architecture as an art analogue in literature, and for the subsequent tradition which its author hopes to reveal. This gives rise to difficulties which Frank is at pains, not always successfully, to resolve. One problem arises as to her choice of these four literary figures. Why not select Beckett, to whom she frequently refers, or Chaucer, Yeats, Faulkner, or even Poe who brilliantly employs literary architecture in “The Fall of the House of Usher”? Each of these literary figures, as well as numerous others from “Plato to Samuel Beckett,” employ the comparison between architecture and literature. Frank justifies her choice of subjects somewhat weakly by virtue of a “spatial” correspondence.

Another problem arises from her failure to develop fully the reciprocal analogy between literature and architecture. What, after all, is the significance of literature to architecture? Surely architects since Pericles have read and been influenced by literature, and inadvertently employed it in their architectural work. Libera's inspiration drawn from the Italian writer, Malaparte, is a relevant example considering the focus of this issue. Frank, unfortunately, ignores the architect in her book. *Literary Architecture* is strictly a literary critic's approach to the issue of architecture's function as an art analogue in the literary work. And moreover, in its difficult prose and ideological stance, it is written for her academic colleague, the fellow literary critic, but certainly not for the architect. Although she takes a creative stance, the book is riddled with abstract jargon and philosophic tropes which obfuscate rather than illuminate: “. . . ‘critical distance’ becomes/is the physical space-relation between viewer and viewed (di-stance)”.

Despite its difficulties, Frank's journey through *Literary Architecture* remains a brilliant one. The tour is not easy, for it requires patience and concentration, but it is one well worth taking.

—Demetra Bowles

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