Celebrating "Modern Architecture" at 50
In Memoriam: John B. Bayley

John B. Bayley died on December 21, 1981, at the age of 67. Born in San Francisco, Bayley's interest in modern architecture was strong from childhood. He spent there, where his father, Guy Bayley, was chief engineer for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and in Japan, Rhode Island, New York, and Chicago, following Guy Bayley's engineering career.

The following is excerpted from a memorial pamphlet on John Bayley written by Henry Hope Reed, president of Classical America.

John went to Harvard College, graduating in 1937, and, after a year in the architectural firm of Pennington, Lewis, Churchill & Mills, he became a student at the Harvard School of Design, class of 1942. The school at the time was in the vanguard of modern architecture with Walter Gropius in charge. Among John's fellow students were I.M. Pei, Edward Larrabee Barnes, Philip Johnson, and other lights of the Modern Movement. A year as construction superintendent in North Carolina for Sanderson & Porter followed. From 1943 to 1946 he was a student at the University of Pennsylvania, stationed much of the time in Paris, working on the adaptation of civilian buildings to military uses.

George Lewis, executive director of the AIA New York Chapter, recalls John's laying-out a formal garden with axes, when axes were anathema for a modern house. In addition, he had gone on expeditions while at school to look at old towns and buildings along the eastern seaboard. Stationed later in Paris, not only had he rejected the modern, he had also begun acquiring his extraordinary knowledge of classical art. In 1946 he began work for Mrs. Archibald Manning Brown of McMillen, Inc., interior decorators. One of his projects was the décor of the Opera Club in the old Metropolitan Opera House. A young man, he was a true American in Rome on the G.L.I. bill, where he was to remain for four years. By then modern art was well behind him, and he was on his way to becoming the authority on the classical that was to distinguish him among the architects of our time.

While in Rome he supplemented his income by working for George Howe on a new United States consulate for Naples, and undertook other work for the State Department.

On his return to the U.S. in 1951 he went to live in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was typical of him that his first reaction to his native land was to exclaim, "There are six-foot egg-and-dart moldings in New York!" He believed that the classical skyscraper and the classical apartment building were the natural forms integral to the American tradition. Perhaps his most important work at this time was the design of the Long Island (on canvas), as well as drawings and photographs, for "Arts in Urban—the Noble Style in Civic Design as Revealed and Created by Artists Past and Present," an exhibition at the Yale University Art Gallery. Organized in 1953 by Christopher Tunnard and Gustave Loew, it was the first strong pro-clasical statement of the postwar years. (Of course, it was manhandled by the critics.)

In 1954 he moved to New York, and resided at Hunter's Point, Queens. From 1954 to 1958, John worked in the office of Robert Venturi & John M. Bell. From 1959 to 1961 he worked in the office of Eggers & Held, where he was associate. His first major project was the memorial pamphlet for Washington and Jefferson College. He was the result of selecting, photographing, and describing buildings and historic districts and submitting this information to the commissions fell to him. He also designed the Susan B. Theodoros Wanger Wing of Graice Mansion under the supervision of the firm's director, Professor James Grote. Vandervelde and the project was accepted, with some alterations by the official architect, Mott B. Schmidt. In 1967 he worked on the restoration of the Fransces Tavern block in lower Manhattan, and in 1968 he designed a country house to be built in Greenwich, Connecticut. Other activities at the time included a restoration of Holy Trinity Church and Parish House on Lower Manhattan.

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In September 1961 the first Modern Architecture was published, and in 1973 he designed and built a room for Chauncy D. Stillman at Amenia, New York.

His most important commission in these years was the new wing of the Frick Collection, completed in 1977. He was the designer, assisted by G. Frederick Pohlner and Harry Van Dyke (the latter being the architect-of-record). Adhering closely to the French classical style of the original structure, he successfully incorporated the addition and the garden enclosure into the whole. It was the outstanding classical building built in recent decades. In 1976 and 1977 he worked for Ceci, Thompson & Paiute, architects, and in 1977 and 1978 for DeWitt, Poor and Shelton, architects and consultants for the proposed new West Front of the National Capitol. It was to be his last and most important project.

In these years he had found time to join with several friends to organize Classical America, the society dedicated to encouraging the classical tradition in the arts of this nation, and to serve as its first president. He moved to Newport in 1978 occupied his giving up the presidency, but he continued to be active, notably, participating in two symposiums—one in 1980 at the Smithsonian Institution devoted to our classical heritage, and the other in 1981 at the University of Texas at Austin, "The Classical Tradition: The Wave of the Future."

At both John Bayley on the subject of classical Washington. Also in 1981, an exhibition of his New York photographs, entitled "The Classical Flourish," was held at the Urban Center, under the sponsorship of Classical America and the Municipal Art Society. He contributed introductions to William B. Wray's The American Vignola and Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman, Jr.'s The Decoration of Houses, published in the Classical America Series in Art and Architecture by W.W. Norton and Company.

At the time of his death, he was working on a student's edition of Paul Lautenski's Edifices de Rome moderne and Le Vatican, both to be published by the Architectural Book Publishing Company.

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Apologies to Pat Tine for not having credited her photograph of the second year class and studio of the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture on page 28 of the January Skyline.
Hugh Cosmon

The remarkable battle to save the Morocco and Helen Hayes theaters—landmarks that would be torn down to make way for John Portman's gigantic 50-story, 2030-room convention hotel—continues to be waged in Manhattan Federal Appeals Court. On January 6, a three-judge U.S. District Court of Appeals panel instructed Federal District Court Judge Kevin T. Duffy to hear charges that "undue influence" had been brought to bear on the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation by the developers. This influence resulted in a speedy approval of a plan to raz the theaters in a manner that precluded adequate consideration of alternatives. The court issued a preliminary injunction blocking demolition on the site until it has heard the arguments.

Although Portman and his associates have denied the charges, the court deemed them "sufficiently serious" to establish a "fair ground for litigation." Judge Duffy was told to expedite the matter, and a decision is expected in three weeks to a month.

Taking Sides

The movement to save the two theaters has been led by an Actor's Equity Committee and the Save Our Broadway Committee (J.M. Kaplan Fund), working in conjunction with lawyers from the Natural Resources Defense Council. They have always contended that they are not against the Portman project per se, but that it is possible to build a hotel on the site without destroying the two landmarks—by building the hotel over the theaters.

In August of 1981 the preservationists enlisted the help of architect Lee Pomeroy, who took a look at the "build-over" alternative. He came to the firm conclusion that it is structurally feasible to incorporate the Morocco and Helen Hayes into the Hotel's 45th Street and 46th Street sides, respectively (Skyline, November 1981, p.5). In September the opponents to the existing Portman plan presented the Pomeroy build-over scheme and brought a number of legal actions to secure its adequate consideration. These actions resulted in the signing of a stipulation between the Committee plaintiffs and the Portman EVAC City defendants. This agreement required, among other things, that the U.S. Department of the Interior consider the National Register eligibility of the Morocco.

Winning the Fed's for a Day

On Tuesday, November 17, Jerry L. Rogers, writing as delegate for Secretary of the Interior James Watt, declared the Morocco eligible. He concluded that the theater is an excellent example of theater design in terms of its scale, sightlines, and particularly notable acoustics.

But after 48 hours, Secretary Watt decided that he didn't agree with his delegate. On Thursday, November 19, he "recommended" (as the initial reports put it) that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation draw up a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Morocco. The next day the Council acceded.

White House Pressure

This is a procedure that usually takes weeks or even months. In his affidavit, an employee of the Council, Jack Goldstein, quoted the Council official in charge of cultural resource protection, Thomas King, as having told him that two Council members received phone calls from Lyn Nofziger, a top political aide to President Reagan. Nofziger was reported to have told the two members, Robert Garvey, the executive director, and Alexander Aldrich, the chairman, that "either the Council rolls over in this matter or it is out of business immediately."

Other affidavits state that Secretary Watt, through a representative, made a similar demand on the Council. The Council ruled that there is "no prudent alternative to demolition," and told the city to compile a history of the Morocco to serve as a kind of preservation.

The Helen Hayes came to a similar Historic Preservation battle when it was designated as eligible for listing back in 1978: The Helen Hayes, the Council said, could come down as soon as a set of detailed architectural drawings were made and submitted to the Historic American Buildings Service.

Too Late, Just Fate

The Portman plan for the Helmsley complex was blessed with such long delays—argue that the preservationists have come in too late. The plans are all drawn up. The buildings—with the exception of the Piccadilly Hotel, which occupies a portion of the 45th Street side of the site—are all bought and paid for. Glenn Isacson, Portman's project director in New York, says that "from the start" they tried to find a way to incorporate the theaters into the scheme. "Believe me, we would save them if we could," he stated. Since Portman gets extra floor area under the city's existing zoning bonuses for including a new theater, one must wonder about their salvation efforts. Isacson's comments must have come as news to James Hunter of the Urban Development Corporation, who told Actors Equity in the summer of last year that a build-over had never really been explored by Portman. It was at Hunter's behest that Equity got in touch with an architect. The city of New York, for its part, however, has been solidly Portman's corner. Mayor Koch is known to be an ardent supporter of the project, called the "linchpin" of Times Square revival efforts. Through its Director of Midtown Planning, Kenneth Halpern, and others, the City fought landmarking of the theaters every step of the way. Four years ago Halpern dropped his objections over the Helen Hayes only after being given assurances that MOA would be drawn up with great dispatch. In the case of the Morocco, a city attorney seconded the MOA requests. The City's big worry is that much further delay might stop the Hotel from being constructed once and for all, thanks to inflation and potential unraveling of the financing package.

There's Always Tomorrow

It is curious that the Court finally agreed to hear the case on the grounds of accusations of political pressure on the Council. There are so many other questions: For example, how could the City have given the project final approval before its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was submitted? How could the project, similarly, qualify for an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) before completion of its EIS? There are also questions about the validity of the EES—that it unfairly denigrates the existing theaters and the build-over alternative. There are questions about the legality of the Hotel's Broadway side, which has enclosed escalators running down onto the sidewalk from the third story. It also cantilevers a nine-story structure 23 feet out over the street, which may be in violation of the city Charter. Finally, there is the historic preservation question: the ruling on the Morocco materially affects the Helen Hayes MOA, now that there is another building of historic preservation quality on the site. The drawing, in theory, should no longer be enough. But theory and practice rarely seem joined when it comes to the Portman.

The Pomeroy study clearly indicates not only that it is possible to save the Helen Hayes and the Morocco, but that such a battle could make as much improvements in the functioning of the Hotel. Rotating the center portion of the Hotel and eliminating the 1,500-seat theater over Broadway improves the building's relationship with the street, something that Portman is, apparently, oblivious to. In New York, unlike Atlanta, the streets are people at all hours of the day. Buildings in New York must relate well to pedestrian considerations and not simply automotive requirements. Within the Hotel, Pomeroy's study showed that some important pedestrians and activities are being problems could be ameliorated. The retail opportunities—something that has plagued Portman's more recent projects—are made much more attractive.

From an urban standpoint, from a design standpoint, and from a functional standpoint, the architectural possibilities are enormous when the new theater above Broadway is removed. All that is required is the will to do it.
James Terry

The idea of creating a pedestrian plaza in the heart of Times Square was first proposed in the early 1970s. Last fall, fortified with $35.5 million in federal grants, the city finally decided to go ahead with the $7.5-million project, which was to be known as Broadway Plaza. City planners Tippeets Abbott McCarthy Stratton, and design consultant M. Paul Friedberg came up with a scheme to solve the problem of putting a public plaza at the "Crossroads of the World." As Friedberg explains his design, he chose not to compete with the "glitzy exuberance of the place," or to "sanitize" it, but instead to create a relatively anonymous receptacle, an empty bowl: "From the first I figured the less I did, the better the project would be," Friedberg says.

The plaza is now slated to occupy 41,000 s.f. of Broadway, from 45th and 47th Sts., and city planners see Broadway Plaza as a complement to John Portman's proposed Times Square hotel, which would front the plaza between 55th and 56th St. To create the pedestrian space, vehicular traffic would be rerouted down Seventh and Ninth Avenues

Friedberg's design is not entirely devoid of amenities. Under his plan, the monumental statues of George M. Cohan and Father Francis Duffy would be relocated from their present sites in Duffy Square and incorporated into the new plaza. The brick-paved, tree-lined space would also feature information kiosks and colorful banners. The existing "TKTS" booth, which distributes half-price theater tickets, would be demolished and rebuilt at the new plaza site. The building, to be designed by the firm of Mayers & Schiff, would also house a tourist and theater information center.

One notable feature of Friedberg's design is the absence of benches, clearly intended to discourage "undesirables" from loitering in the plaza. Friedberg asserts that "you cannot solve special problems with civic design," but he believes that the plaza, in conjunction with good management, would prevent any increase in public nuisances and crime in the area.

The Temptation of St. Barts, Second Verse

Hugh Cosmon

The figures associated with the proposed development on the site of St. Bart's Community House are enough to give anyone pause. Howard Rosen, the British real estate financier, has offered a sum of $11 million in up-front money, a sum which would practically double the church's present endowment. Then there would be more than $500 million in rental payments over an initial 40-year lease—$3 million a year for the first 3 years and after that $9.25 million a year, with a 20-percent increase every 10 years to cover inflation. Then there 20-year licenses, under which St. Bart's would become owner of the building. Construction costs are currently estimated at being "in excess" of $110 million.

St. Bart's present endowment is larger than that of all but a few churches in the country; it's bigger than St. John the Divine's. It yields well over $2 million a year. The Vestry report, however, claims all sorts of capital needs—like $5 million more for landscaping and $7.5 million repair schedule. An independent engineer, hired by the Committee to Oppose the Sale of St. Bartholomew's Church, examined the Community House, for example, and found it to be in excellent condition, needing only a sprinkler system costing about $50,000. The Vestry Report states it is in need of rewiring, among other things, at a cost of $740,000.

But then, in a complete turnaround, the Vestrymen said that they had voted on—and adopted—a bylaw that made a vote by the members of the church binding. Judge Greenfield gave his approval and set the date for a membership vote on the lease plan for December 18.

The Board of Estimate has already granted Portman authorization to extend his hotel well past the property line. Current plans from the architect call for part of the 15-story, high-brow facade of the hotel to encroach onto Broadway. In addition, the set of escalators, designed to connect the third and fourth floor retail spaces to the street, would project out even further (see plan). Once Portman builds out into the roadway, he will present Broadway Plaza's opponents with a fait accompli. Even if the plaza turns out to be a fiasco, it would be virtually impossible to return vehicular traffic to Broadway. In an editorial this fall, The New York Times termed the plaza proposal "misguided." That was an excellent choice of words. Too many issues are being summarily dealt with because of the link to the Portman hotel. Only at the final huddle has this connection been discussed for all its implications. However, now the mail is not being presented to the public as an option, but as a necessity, specifically because of the tie-in deal with the hotel. Whether the design is good, bad, or indifferent—the public has reason for complaint.

Broadway Plaza's Mixed Reviews

Critics of the project are not so sure. Lee Silver, a spokesman for Broadway theater owners, expressed some reservations about the design. Specifically, he points to the three-step, 15-foot grade in front of the planned TKTS building. These steps, he says, would attract pedestrians, peddlers and prostitutes, drunks, and three-card monte sharks. However, Friedberg insists that the steps are necessary, both aesthetically and functionally.

The proposal to divert traffic around the plaza has also stirred controversy. Ken Halpern, director of the Manhattan Borough Planning Office, says that the city's plan to widen Seventh Avenue from 30 to 60 feet and to adjust turn regulations and stoplights will minimize traffic disruption. But Richard Newhouse, traffic safety manager of the Auto Club of New York, claims that the city's Environmental Impact Study "grossly underestimated the capacity of the midtown cross streets to handle the increased traffic volumes which will be created by the plaza." He foresees Broadway Plaza turning already congested midtown into a rush-hour disaster area.

Despite all the doubts surrounding Broadway Plaza, at least one man is sure to be thoroughly pleased with the project. If the plaza is constructed as planned, Atlanta developer John Portman will have a publicly funded "front yard" for his Times Square hotel—paid for by the city, state, and federal governments. Assuming Portman will win the legal battles he is waging by the renovation preservationists against the hotel, city planners foresee the plaza and hotel proceeding this spring.

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Morality and the Law

The Vestry Report calls the lease plan a "moral and Christian imperative." If that is the case, certainly the Church leaders shouldn't have to engage in "disingenuous" arguments, but that is what State Supreme Court Justice Edward J. Greenfield thought of some contentions made by the Church at a hearing on November 17, 1981. The previous month, another Supreme Court Justice, Charles S. Whitman, found St. Bart's to be in violation of the Religious Corporation Act. He directed the church to hold a vote on an amendment of its bylaws that would decide whether the parishioners wanted to have a binding vote in any sale or lease of church property.

A vote was scheduled for November 17, but it turned out to be a vote on the lease plan, and not on the amendment to the bylaws. "Thus, any vote prior to the changing of the by-laws will be a mere public opinion poll," Justice Greenfield said it would be "an advisory opinion to which the Vestrymen could point as indicating support if the majority indicated approval, but which they could legally ignore if the vote were adverse. This court will not sanction such an empty or meaningless vote." Justice Greenfield ordered the ballots impounded and a new vote — on the bylaws amendment — scheduled.
The Biennale in Paris

The architecture section of the 1980 Venice Biennale, which was directed by Paolo Portoghesi, has started to move west. The first stop—from October 15 through December 20, 1981—was the chapel of the Hôtel de Salpêtrière in Paris, designed by Librair Brutant in 1670. As a result, the French capital became the scene of one of the most virulent rhetorical battles since the controversy generated by the competition for Les Halles in 1978. Here the Venice Biennale presented itself as a paradigmatic statement of the post-modernist style.

The Biennale in Paris departed from the original Venice exhibition in two ways. First, the facades were placed in the space of the chapel, disregarding entirely the original idea of a street formed by the juxtaposition of facades designed by different architects. This new "spatial arrangement" enhanced the visual confusion and illegibility of the show. Second, the Paris show presented two additions to the set of facades that formed the original post-modern street—one by Fernando Montes and the other by Christian de Portzamparc. Montes' facade, very much "in line" with the propositions presented first in Venice, was a very individual and personal gesture, which, once placed within the variety of the exhibition, paradoxically became neutralized, and, in the end, appeared anonymous, as if it did not force our gaze necessarily upon it. Portzamparc's "object" separated itself from the rest, and immediately attracted our otherwise drifting attention. Portzamparc refused to design "just one more doorway" and presented instead a fragment (from one of his projects, I suppose). This action did not mean that this work was entirely successful. Within the chaotic context of the exhibition, one would have expected a less ambiguous statement, a clearer sign of fragmentation understandable to any outsider to the French architectural scene.

Paul Chemetov led the reaction against the show and initiated a polemical attack, which developed through open letters, articles in important newspapers, and strong replies, accusing the promoters of cultural imperialism and the architects of playing artistic caricature instead of concentrating on real problems, such as building for the masses.

Once more the post-modernist ideological constructs have helped to produce confusion and to regenerate old discussions—such as art versus building—that obscure the important issue underlying the superficial ideas on which the Biennale has been based: the question of the visual realm defined by architecture and its place in the modern city. I.M.T.
Other Settings

Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown's Realist Approach

David Slovic and Licia Rave

"Contemporary American Realism Since 1960," presented at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, has been their most ambitious, widely discussed, and well-attended exhibition in recent memory. Curated by Frank H. Goodyear, Jr., and designed by the firm of Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown, under the direction of Steven Izenour and Christine Mathieu, this show has had the gift of excellent timing. The present exhibition represents a synthesis of many shows of the recent past, during which time the movement has gained momentum. 152 pieces in the show represent the work of some 104 artists. All the pieces are included in the catch-all term "Contemporary American Realism."

Included in the exhibition are artworks as diverse in technique and method of representation as Sidney Goodman's evocative charcoal drawings, Jack Beal's mind-like scenes, and Richard Estes' coolly photographic depictions. As a major effort, a traveling exhibit of this dimension deserves serious consideration from many viewpoints. However, for the purposes of this review, only the installation for the show mounted in Philadelphia will be discussed, for it highlights crucial issues that curators and their installation designers face in presenting art to the public.

The setting for the Philadelphia show was Frank Furness' High Victorian Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, completed in 1876. Still retaining its sheen from a recent restoration, the building is an extraordinary example of inventive design. Furness' orchestration of the passage from public street, through the grand stairhall and on up to the second-level gallery floor is itself worth the trip to Philadelphia. The brightly lit, well-proportioned rooms, along with the character and colorful quality of the building provided an apt background against which the vitality of the Realist sensibility supposedly would emerge.

But the curatorial approach to the organization of the work on display was overly didactic, geared as it was to teaching the viewer, not merely engaging him or her. The rotunda at the top of the stairs formed the orientation point; from here one could walk into each of the four side galleries containing work classified according to distinct categories: "Still Life," "Landscape," "Figurative," and "Narrative." A painting from each category hung in the rotunda to identify the various classifications. Along with these paintings were a boldly designed room title and a quotation selected from several artists' commentaries. In addition, two mini-exhibits were juxtaposed within the side galleries, each announced by their own titles, "Realism and Tradition" and "Realism and Modernism." No single path threaded through the exhibit, nor was there a beginning or an end; visitors walked from room to room and back again, retracing earlier steps.

At the starting point in the rotunda one was greeted by the title/logo "American Realism" floating above an introductory panel set on the floor on a raised platform. This panel contained script lettering rendered with shadows and receding in perspective, which was similar to the opening sequence of Star Wars. This "American Realism" logo, conspicuously absent from the official publications, was the only element of the installation that caught the spirit of the art. The placement of Chuck Close's painting Mark—a singularly huge face on the far wall, terminating the axis opposite the grand stair—proved equally dramatic; but the rotunda, filled with simplistic instructions and artistic homilies, seemed like a public classroom.

From the introductory message, through the quotations on each category of work and the references to "Tradition" and "Modernism," the show was laden with a deadening didactic pall. The viewer was continually directed to read and understand the work from a primarily art historical or "formalist" vantage point rather than to address the art directly. A quote such as Neil Welliver's statement—"I want to make a natural painting as fluid as a de Kooning"—only served to maintain art history's closed sense of intimacy. The didactic approach is inappropriate here: Realism's strong appeal is the accessibility of its imagery, which is available to the average viewer in a way that "abstract" art is not. Viewers of Realist work identify their own responses to recognizable scenes and ascribe meaning to figures and objects. In assessing this type of work, the spectator's interpretation becomes as valid as the private intention of either artist or curator. Even the categories proved forced at times: What criterion distinguishes John Baeder's Yankee Clipper diner as a "landscape" and Ralph Goings' Amsterdam Diner as a "still life"?

The architects for the installation—Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown—were brought in three years after the show's inception, and followed the direction established by the curatorial approach. While certain of their ideas proved effective, their approach to the painting and sculpture was carried out with much finesse, generally the design suffered at the hands of the overall concept. At a time when the relationship between architecture and society is so confused, it is particularly difficult to evaluate the design of an art installation.

Which decisions are the province of the curator and which are that of the architect/designer? Who has the real say? Among the varying considerations about the art, the institution, the public, and the spaces, who establishes the priorities?

The answer in this case was the Academy, and its attitudes toward presenting art to the public. The presentation was typically academic. It was rigid, cold, didactic, and severe, with four quotations, four categories, four rooms. The work was catalogued and displayed with no imagination or emotion, limiting the possible approaches at the level of the art itself. The paintings, meanwhile, were installed as if they were dinosaur bones.

The design of an installation has to allow for individual relationships between viewer and art, fostering a unique experiencing of art. The installation's purpose is to define an attitude toward the personal vision of a piece, while establishing an appropriate context for the whole exhibition. If the curator deals with the art, the designer deals with its context; the academic treatment of the overpowering American Academy prevented the viewer from seeing it in its reality. The exhibit could have been direct and insightful, as is the best of the Realist work. Instead, it was ponderous in its instructional purpose; it showed the work, but it missed the point.
Hockney's Painterly Set

Calvin Morgan

The 1981 Metropolitan Opera Season made an innovative and courageous departure from the usual classical repertory by presenting a triple bill last spring that consisted of Eric Satie's short ballet Parade and two operas, Les Mamelles de Tiresias by Francis Poulenc, and Les Enfants et les Sortilèges by Maurice Ravel. All three were staged by John Dexter and designed by David Hockney, a collaboration hailed as a critical success both at the box office and in the press. Presumably to build on that success and coincidentally to celebrate the Stravinsky centennial, the Met announced a second triple bill this winter with Dexter and Hockney once again collaborators. The bill: Stravinsky's ballet Le Sacre du Printemps; Le Rossignol, a lyric tale; and Oedipus Rex, an opera oratorio. The evening, unified visually by the thematic use of masks and a Matisse-like show curtain, opened with the Sacre du Printemps. First conceived by Stravinsky in the spring of 1910, the early version of the ballet (1913) includes sets and costumes by the painter Nicholas Roerich, a friend of Stravinsky's who specialized in pagan images. Sergei Diaghilev was the producer of the ballet, and Leon Bakst proposed the French title. In his version, Hockney placed a flat, circular disc upstage center, painted in the style of Synthetic Cubism to depict trees and mountains. The full stage, curtained in black, held randomly placed primitive masks reminiscent of Hockney's Glyndebourne Magic FLute. Hockney has often said that he thinks of his sets as large pictures, but as the three-dimensional rather than the two-dimensional kind. The set for the Stravinsky ballet sadly lacks that third dimension.

The poetic Rossignol, originally written for the Moscow Free Theater, but never realized, was presented by the Ballet Russe at the Paris Opera in 1914. Diaghilev engaged Alexander Benois, who had originally worked on the unrealized Free Theater production sets, to design the sumptuous decor. The first Russian performance in Petrograd at the Maryinsky Theater in 1918 was staged by Vsevolod Meyerhold and designed by Alexander Golovine. In his Rossignol set, Hockney further explores ideas first seen in his earlier works for the theater. His startling use of color, saturated blues with which he creates a parallel to the mood of the music, is almost more remarkable than the spatial sensation created by the linearly distorted perspective. The playfulness and spontaneity of Le Rossignol show a willingness to engage in games of style and technique and a sense of experiment evocative of the exhilarating eclecticism of his work of the early 1960s. The design has an air of constant surprise and discovery. Architecturally, the decor is strictly post-modern chinoiserie, with a touching homage (again) to Matisse. The reference, however, is not made for the sake of style, but grows out of a need to find the most correct form in which to clothe the mood of the music. Matisse is well-served and so is Stravinsky.

Oedipus Rex, Stravinsky's Handelian oratorio, was first performed in 1927, but not actually staged until the 1928 Vienna production. Hockney was no doubt inspired by Stravinsky's statement that "Oracles and crossroads are not personal, but geometrical, and the geometry of tragedy, the inevitable intersection of lines, is what concerns me." The set, reflecting the current interest in Russian Constructivism and Suprematism, is created "geometrically" out of a strong vertically fluted gold column intersected by a massive horizontal dais. A semicircular red disc punctuated by two triangulated openings was placed at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical planes. The red disc "spills" over the elevated plane on which the acting takes place, onto the backdrop, in front of which a male chorus is seated on a lower level. But architectural massing of this set, with its neoclassical proportions, results in a fascistic monumentality. Hockney's white archaic character masks for the actors seem unrelated stylistically to the architectonic content of the set. While Oedipus demands both formalism and monumentality, qualities so sensitively handled by Hockney in Magic FLute, one would have hoped for a more contemporary, less derivative mode.

While Hockney exhibits an intrinsic style of his own, in Oedipus he shows much less of a feeling for Constructivist architectural ideas than he does for the figurative, painterly mode in Rossignol, Magic FLute, and Parade. For this reason, his design for Oedipus Rex fails to show Hockney at his best. Like that of Sacre du Printemps, the Oedipus set came out ultimately as an unresolved attempt to adopt a vocabulary that had nothing to do with Hockney's personal aesthetic sensibilities.

Behind the Scrim at Satyagraha

In his ambitious opera Satyagraha, produced last fall at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the composer Philip Glass, in collaboration with Constance De Jong, Robert Izenel, Richard Riddell, and Hans Nuenenhuys, explored the extremes of stylized action and staging. Focusing on the theme of nonviolent resistance as developed by Gandhi during his years in South Africa, the opera presented a series of tableaux with performers in simple Eastern and Western dress, made of off-white and gray fabric. The costuming, along with the highly ritualized movement, minimized the sense of individuality, turning the characters into emblems of a highly abstract spiritual struggle.

The most significant element in this presentation was the use of a scrim dropped in front of the entire stage, dividing the actors from the audience. Its diaphanous character lent a fantastic aura to the performance, as if one were viewing events through the mist of memory, or experiencing a prophetic vision. At the same time, it transformed the stage into a two-dimensional picture plane, giving a static quality to the action—forcing us to see the opera as allegory—part history, part mythology, part of the eternal struggle between good and evil. Glass' music, full of cyclical patterning and repetition, underscored the hypnotic effect of the staging. Even the full orchestra performed under a net of black mesh. While too many parts of the production were slow—nearly deadening—the attempt to integrate plot, themes, music, and staging was bold and often rewarding. — H.C.
Pedinums and columns proliferate, historicism is an issue to be faced in daily practice, and the war monument has reappeared as a competition program. Monumentality, however, still remains a subject that is infrequently discussed. Thus it is newsworthy that the theme "Monumentality and the City" was chosen for the conference and further discussed at the latter end of the student-run Harvard Architectural Review. The subject, like the day, was very much the students'. They selected the speakers from the Graduate School of Design faculty. They also chose the panelists, including show-stoppers: Romaldo Giurgola, Michael Graves, and Philip Johnson; as well as recognized scholars James Ackerman, George Collins, and John Jacobus; and Henry Cobb, chairman of the Department of Architecture at the GSD.

The morning's speakers represented two antithetical modes of analysis and interpretation. Val Warner, a young architect, chose to remain within the sacrificial precinct of the past, analyzing the uncomfortably joined Campodoligo and Monument to Victor Emmanuel: Using historians' tools, he furthered an architect's position: internal architectural coherence of the monument provides the meaning. And he implied that the monument, like the heart, has reasons that reason cannot know. His attack on scientific planning, which leaves nothing to poetry, and its architects was extremely well received.

The historian, William Curtis, known for his impatience with semiological interpretation -- and thus with Warke's approach -- courageously unveiled his nine-point program for establishing that historic monument. The program included: understanding/relationship to the institution; use of the tradition of signs/symbols; emphasis on size; and a program that was also strengthened by the treatment of space as a monument, the irrelevance of style in monumentality, and the possibility of monumentality in vernacular architecture. James Ackerman, speaking as a theorist, developed his opposition to monumentals in our society, here as it is of culture and of an ancestral certainty in its identity. He defended social relevance and a transactional process of design that includes the client. Michael Graves was not expected to be sympathetic, and, playing the much-abused poet who is attacked over the experience of death, by subjegating it to words and forms that express sentiments from the survivor, not excluding a redemptive for some future, similar death, equally unnoticed. The monuments that evoke death by virtue of their form are rare, and those for the most part are fragments -- such as the cement blocks laid in the manner of railroad ties, which represent tehribal's sidestep, and where perspective provides the illusion of some future meeting point; a conclusion that is invisible, like the amputation that lay waiting.

Upon reflection, it was clear that each architect and scholar had allowed us a glimpse of his practice, his modus operandi. Unfortunately, however, "Monumentality," in the end, was never adequately defined and, more disappointing, the subject of the city was woefully neglected. Nevertheless, as the debate gave way to personal conflict, the apparently spontaneous conflagrations satisfied both audience and speakers. Members of the Review board proved themselves to be adroit admirants and it will be interesting to see how they transform the heated passion into essay form for the forthcoming Harvard Architectural Review 4 devoted to the subject.

Borrowing Bormmini over Safdi, Graves over Ackerman, and Koetter's type of Null-map spatial transfiguration of the Prudential Center over Bealtty, Johnson declared himself ready to serve even Mammon, if there was a building in it. As temps heated up, the art historians rushed to the defense of architecture as one of the arts, and the arguments wound down to the unresolvable oppositions of beauty and use; invention and function; expression and shelter--Graves: "Must we always say architecture is to live in?"... Cobb: "Yes." -- all variants on the old Ruskinian dualism of architecture and building.

Michael Graves
Photos by Lilian Kemp

James Ackerman

Monumentality Symposium at Harvard

Helene Lipstadt

Only Henry Cobb could make sense of it all for the rest of us. Apparently troubled by Warke's analysis of the Campodoligo, which art historians declare a fragment, he could only conclude that its literally "fragmentary" nature is precisely the ingredient that renders it conceptual whole. Thus the Victor Emmanuel monument remains a conceptual fragment due to its overwhelming "wholeness." Cobb extended the argument by a neat parallel, drawn between Koetter's remake of the "Fru" and the ancient example. Koetter's redosul will break up the whole into a literal "fragment," and thus achieve character as a place of the city. Cobb's elegant discussion of the effect of fragmentation on meaning and expression in architecture, including a suggestion of its impact on the city, is itself a fragment. Its substance becomes apparent when one compares his discussion with the conclusions of the "plain" historian, Reinhard Koseleck, who has studied the political significance of war monuments in several articles, most recently presented at the May 1980 Architectural Association Conference, "Architecture as a Symbol of Power."

War monuments, by their lacunae, by their lack of a specific reference to death, and despite a vocabulary that is remarkably similar from country to country, have come to symbolize victory. Since Canova's Monument to Maria Christina in Vienna (ca. 1800), the political function of the memorial has been to affect the living by glancing over the experience of death, by subjegating it to words and forms that express sentiments from the survivor, not excluding a redemptive for some future, similar death, equally unnoticed. The monuments that evoke death by virtue of their form are rare, and those for the most part are fragments--such as the cement blocks laid in the manner of railroad ties, which represent the tribal's sidestep, and where perspective provides the illusion of some future meeting point; a conclusion that is invisible, like the amputation that lay waiting.
The exhibition *The Strange Genius of William Burgess: Art-Architect*, 1827–1881, was held at the Yale University Art Gallery, from November 18, 1981 to January 17, 1982. Directed by J. Mordant Crook, the exhibition originated at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, September–October, 1981.

William Burgess: Designs for Cardiff Castle, was held at the Gelfoye Museum, London, through January 17, 1982.

| The catalogue The Strange Genius of William Burgess: Art-Architect, 1827–1881, for the exhibition of the same title, is by J. Mordant Crook, with entries by Mary Axon and Virginia Glenn; published by the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Illustrated. $43.50.


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**Burges in London: Rediscovering the High Victorians**

**Barry Bergdoll**

"Enjoying Burges—like enjoying Tennyson or Rossetti," J.M. Crook wrote in his lavish new monograph on that peculiar High Victorian Goth, "involves a willing suspension of disbelief . . . ." Indeed, in the overstuffed treasure trove of his architectural drawings, furniture, stained glass, and metalwork exhibited at the V & A, one can only view the ornate, often dizzying, worlds of the High Victorian "pioneers." Edmund and never international pious, to chronically some Victorian exhibitions mimic-encrusted furniture organized, his furniture box-like to the Geforye-Museum-London, exponent the Burges. This view Aggressively almost a court-architect and jester of the richest mid-Victorian was leaders of the High Victorian movement in the 1820 and 1860s and architects of international repute—continually favored in competitions and never without commissions. While the church architect C.E. Street (whose career was commemorated in a small but exemplary exhibition at Hull in November) typifies our view of the mid-Victorian practitioner—poor, earnest, and handworking; an amateur historian and inveterate traveler—William Burges remains an intriguing paradox. The designer of two of the most robust and boldly scaled churches of the nineteenth century—at St. Stephen Homba (1870-75) and Skelton (1870-76), in Yorkshire—Burges was not a religious man. An amateur archaeologist and collector, he declared the Middle Ages to be his religion—"I was brought up in the 18th-century belief, and in that belief I intend to die"—yet he created some of the most startling original successes of medieval, Islamic, and Byzantine sources, all served up with a generous admixture of the bizarre. Chubby, jovial, charmingly unhinged, rambunctious—indeed, almost childlike—Burges broke nearly every convention of the Victorian Gothic. The Catalogue, called him "the prophet of his own generation." Like Laytens, Burges found in a handful of fabulously wealthy and delightfully eccentric clients, such as exotic elements and appreciate carte blanche to realize some of the most expensive and lavish buildings of Victorian Britain.

In keeping with the V & A's established policy of granting exhibitions to the marketplace, the visual appeal of Burges' sparkling watercolors and painted, mirror-encrusted furniture takes full precedence over historical presentation. Nearly every surviving piece of his furniture and a majority of his architectural drawings are included; yet the exhibition is overwhelmed, poorly organized, and insufficiently documented in terms of textual explanation. As in one of the hermetic, box-like buildings Burges created as retreats for the escapist aristocracy, all is calculated to overwhelm in its brightly colored abundance and opulence. There is little chance to detach oneself from the intoxication of this "most dazzling exponent of the High Victorian dream" in order to place Burges in context, to consider the meaning of that "dream," or to understand his development from one of the least promising and engaged architects of the 1860s to the court architect and jester of the richest man in the realm. Lord Bute, for whom Burges created his most extravagant building, Cardiff Castle, is as much the hero of this view as Burges.

Yet this very juxtaposition of Burges' diverse creations serves to demonstrate the unity and distinct personality of his work. It is claimed to have inspired the architects of the Arts and Crafts movement. Whether creating a chalice for a high Anglican altar or a country seat for a Devonshire magnate, Burges commanded the same robust archetypal forms and sense of massive scale. Aggressively composed and brilliantly painted, the furniture is the highlight of the show. Like miniature realizations of the architectural projects on the walls, it almost seems to muscle its way out from the confined exhibition space. As in the buildings, the rich decor—much of it created by Burges' Pre-Raphaelite friends—is whimsical and often amusing comment on the function. The bright red washstand of 1865, for instance (which achieved subsequent renown for its menacing role in the novel by its owner, Evelyn Waugh, *The Ordal of Cibert Pinfield*), is decorated with the Narcissus legend around the mirror and features fish inlaid with gold and silver in the marble basin. Burges' architectural drawings partake of the same robust quality seen in his furniture and built work. Reprising prettiness in all things, he emphasized the simplicity and expressive awkwardness of Villard de Honnecour's medieval drawings. Yet no style could better evoke the muscular strength of his buildings than these thick lines counterposed against luminous watercolor details. While the V & A show may leave us in the dark about the profile and meaning of Burges' career, it leaves no doubt about the unity of his vigorous personal language of form.

The show's emphasis is on the life fantasy world made possible by Lord Bute, whom Burges met in 1865 and in whom he found a kindred medieval spirit and admiring patron. From 1860 until his death in 1881, Burges worked at transforming Bute's properties Cardiff Castle and Castel Coch into exotic stage-sets in which the Duke could retreat from the grim reality they had created in modern Cardiff. Indeed, Bute's patron's successor, the fourth Marquess of Bute, put this most succinctly in 1926 on the eve of the General Strike, when, retreating into Cardiff Castle, he ordered his porter to "raise the drawbridge!"

It is, however, all too easy to relegate Burges, like Bute, to the position of a fascinating but ultimately inconsequential eccentric, an architect whose own wealth and privileged sponsorship let him retreat into a private fantasy culminating in his own outlandish house in Kensington. This "strange genius" demands a more searching analysis and interpretation, something proffered in Crook's book, but sadly lacking in the exhibition. Burges, for all his seemingly light-hearted abandon, was deeply perplexed by the dilemma of his talents. His rich personal mixture of medieval, Arab, and Byzantine sources was based on a belief in the possibility of eclectic synthesis as the generator of a modern architecture. Nor were his buildings impractical, however unorthodoxly ambitious in conception. Like Ruskin, Burges felt that architecture began where the functional problems of building ended, but he did not neglect accommodation of function for its expression. In many ways his rejected plan for the Law Courts Competition of 1867 was the most well considered, although the elevation would have the City of London into a bureaucratic Camelot centred on a 335-foot gothic record tower crowned by a recording angel. No less fantastic in scale was his project for Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut (1872), which was realized in a fragment and still forms the core of that college.

If "The Strange Genius of William Burges" offers little in the way of an assessment of Burges the architect, it establishes for the first time his key role in the development of modern furniture design as a link between the late furniture of his hero, A.W.N. Pugin, and the early painted furniture of William Morris and Richard Norman Shaw. If the elephantine forms, often derived from the manuals of Viollet-le-Duc, were rejected by the aesthetes of the 1880s, his painted furniture offered techniques and a model of cooperative craftsmanship emulated repeatedly by the creators of the "art furniture" of the next generation. An individualist and an eccentric no doubt, Burges was by no means a mere Victorian curiosity.
Tschumi at Protetch

Hal Foster


> Bernard Tschumi addresses the present architectural discourse only obliquely; he does not argue for purity versus historicism; indeed, he regards both modernism and post-modernism as essentially formalist. His architecture is not another example of "style" in a history of "styles"; it is explicitly a manifesto, a call to rethink architecture not in terms of form but in terms of transgression — architectural limits and social laws.

> For Tschumi architecture embraces a paradox: it is both a conceptual space and a sensual experience. "To question the nature of space and at the same time make or experience a real space" — that is the impossibility that constitutes architecture. In recent essays in *Arthropod*, Tschumi has posed ideas about a "pleasure" and a "violence" of architecture — not to resolve the concept and the experience of architecture, but to conceive of a new form of architectural thought.

> To begin the new, one must transcend the limits of the old. Architecture is commonly thought of in terms of structure, or a functional type, but for Tschumi "architecture" only occurs when structure and/or type are somehow exceeded. That is, a building only becomes "architectural" when its space is invaded by an event, or as its use changes in time. Such a concept of architecture has prompted him to inject bizarre narratives into his own designs and to value changes in historic uses. For example, in one of his *Advertisements for Architecture* (a series that uses ad devices "to trigger desire for architecture"), a photo of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye (ca. 1935—before its restoration and after it had been used as a barn) appears under this heading: "The most architectural thing about this building is the state of decay in which it is." Below the photograph one reads: "Architecture only survives when it negates the form that society expects of it. Where it negates itself by transgressing the limits that history has set for it." For Tschumi this moment of "érotisme" excess is the moment *extraordinaire* of architecture.

> In the past he has addressed this in performance. Then, in 1977 in *Imprints*, and in 1978 in *Screenplays*, he went so far as to suggest that narratives could actually direct spaces: in these works he proposed that fiction, not function—a story by Kafka, say, or a Frankenstein movie—be the pretext of architectural projects. This concern with event and limit has reached its most extreme form in *The Manhattan Transcripts*.

> In his text Tschumi explains: "Three disjointed levels of 'reality' are presented simultaneously in the Transcripts: the world of objects, composed of buildings abstracted from maps, plans, photographs; the world of movements, which can be abstracted from choreography, sport, or other movement diagrams; the world of events, which is abstracted from news photographs." There are four transcripts, each a broken series of episodes. The drawings of "The Park" juxtapose the plot of a murder with the architecture that witnesses it. "The Street" presents a rite of sorts—a passage across the social and architectural borders to be found on 42nd Street. "The Tower" transcribes the fall of an inmate through an institutional space—an event that affords a criticism of the programs and types of such spaces. Finally, as do the others, "The Block" presents a particular space (an urban courtyard) acted on/in by a strange cast of acrobats, soldiers, etc.; here, new movements invent new spaces.

As Tschumi writes, the transcripts are "neither real projects nor mere fantasies," but "frame-by-frame descriptions of an architectural inquest." In critical terms they exist somewhere between Antonioni's Blå-Il and Foucault's spatial critique *Discipline and Punish*. They may draw us in, as does the former, by a murder story, only to deliver us, as does the latter, into an analysis of social institutions. The critique takes as its subject all "humanist" architecture that restricts space to specific types and uses. The general tactic of the critique is simple: "To transcribe things normally removed from conventional architectural representation." The results are of enormous interest.

My one contention concerns the nature of the transcription. The actions described, Tschumi writes, "are real actions." But this is not strictly so: like film scripts, the transcripts exist to be enacted. Just as they are based on fictions, not functions, they transcribe representations (maps, movie stills, etc.), not reality. These representations transgress reality and, again, for Tschumi this transgression is architecture. It demands a language that would describe space (with the help of a movie plot or a news story) as a situation. Ideally such architecture would allow rather than repress personal desire and public action. In *The Manhattan Transcripts* Tschumi has both espoused such an architecture and devised the method of its notation.

Abraham at Yale

Ross Miller

Raimund Abraham's drawings, models, and projects shown at Yale's Art and Architecture Gallery are provocative as autobiography — the development of an unyielding modernist — and as a comment on the current state of architecture. The show's potent theme is "violence," and there is an unmistakable urgency or violence in the work. Abraham's forms are severe, tentative, whether in metallic models or chalk drawings, where his pioneering use of color excises rather than decorates the line. Although the materials are serious, they are meant to be felt only after they are seen and understood. Here, there is none of the current mania to "entertain." Raimund Abraham, who teaches architecture at Cooper Union and Pratt, uses each piece to make an argument.

Seven Gates to Eden is the most extensive of these projects, and illustrates Abraham's method. In a series of seven models and eight drawings done for the 1976 Venice Biennale, the architect explores the idea of a "suburban alternative." As a European living in the United States, he is still intrigued by the suburb's unintended cultural iconography, without a Venturi-like celebration of it. Note that all the models maintain a head-on perspective with the family automobile out front. Abraham fashions a serial deconstruction or demystification of forms, warning us at the end, with his blank piece of drawing paper, that at the end of all analysis there is silence.

This implicit warning against the rational deconstruction of architecture is also a part of Abraham's work, an architecture that is based on intellectual control, that appears to purge all nostalgic images. Only the family car, albeit truncated or swallowed by the mass of the garage, remains an object of purely human affectation. His *In Memoriam Kongresshalle Berlin: Monument for a Fallen Building maintains just this kind of tough-minded stance. Abraham begins with a rather witty impulsion to memorialize a building that was built in 1957 only to collapse on May 21, 1980. He has drawn a hard cube around the delicate, Saarinen-like forms that could not
Everyone at Cooper Union

Gerald Allen

"The First Curtain Wall Building (New York, 1932)"

"The Maundering on the Wallpaper"

"A Premonition: The New Post-Modern interior, or Philip redescibes..."

Window Room Furniture is only one example, albeit a particularly admirable one, of the fad of assembling an amazingly diverse spectrum of architectural ideas under the rubric of a single theme. Tod Williams and Ricardo Scofidio, who organized the show, invited a group of architects, artists, and writers to render their responses to these three elements of architecture on one or more eight-by-eight-inch boards. Just over a hundred participants actually did, and all of their efforts were put on display, as well as being included in the handsomely designed catalogue published by Rizzoli—along with intriguing and tendentious commentaries and cryptic epigrams. Photographs, pros, cons, words, and drawings of just about every conceivable kind make up the collection, and it is—as one always feels compelled to say about these things—rich.

Creating a wave of current interest in their art, architects once again have the temerity to restate the case that architecture, like philosophy, is an enterprise with a broadly humanistic bias. Architecture is a "language" (to use one buzz word) in which "discoveries" (another one) can be carried on—not just about buildings, but also about the nature of things in general, and the nature of our understanding of them.

This assertion is arguably dead-right, and it is, in any case, honored by practitioners of well-informed opinion. But faced with a variety of utterances like those in Window Room Furniture, one is at first very hard-pressed to know whether all the talk actually makes any sense or whether it is just a lot of palaver.

One perfectly good way to find out is to apply the scientific method to these questions. And so, here is a hypothetical, fragmentary grammar—called the Metaphysical Tenses of Contemporary Architecture—which is offered in the manner of the little summaries in the front of phrase books for forbidding languages like Finnish and Vietnamese. To this linguistic hypothesis actual observations may be compared to confirm or deny its validity.


Skyline February 1982

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The Manhattan Transcripts by Bernard Tschumi was shown at the Max Protetch Gallery in New York from December 5, 1981, to January 2, 1982. A complete edition of the work has been published by Academy Editions, London, and distributed by St. Martin's Press, New York (1981). The text is 64 pages, including 54 black-and-white drawings; $9.95, soft-cover.

It is a long time since a group of architects has attracted the attention of the press like this one. It is also the first time that architects have been brought together on such a large scale in New York to present their work in a single exhibition. The exhibition Raimund Abraham: Collisions, curated by George Ranalli, was shown at the Art and Architecture Gallery, Yale School of Architecture, New Haven, Connecticut, from October 26 to December 4, 1981. The accompanying catalogue, Raimund Abraham: Collisions (24 pages, black and white illustrations, soft-cover, $3.00), includes an introduction by George Ranalli, an interview with Abraham by Kenneth Frampton, and an essay by P. Adams Sitney.

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Moving ahead in San Francisco is a low-rise waterfront project by I.M. Pei & Partners, for Continental Development Corporation, focusing on the renovation of the historic Ferry Building; associated architects will be Gensler Associates. Originally designed in 1892 by A. Page Brown, the Ferry Building—with its landmark tower modeled after the Giralda Bell Tower of the Seville Cathedral—sits at the foot of Market Street, at the heart of an area undergoing extensive revitalization.

The program—a total of 600,000 sq. ft.—involves not only the restoration of the dormant Ferry Building to include shops, retail showrooms, offices, and a few restaurants, but reconstruction of the nearby Agricultural Building—built in 1915 as part of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition—for use as a Food Hall. Also planned is a three-story World Trade Center on Pier One.

Under the partner-in-charge, James Ingo Freed, the project has reached the final stages of preliminary design and awaits approval from various city agencies and community groups to proceed.

In January, Olympia & York unveiled the most recent design developments by Cesar Pelli for the Battery Park City Commercial Center, the 14-acre core of the development on the 92-acre landfill along the Hudson River next to New York’s World Trade Center. Pelli’s design includes four 33-to-50-story office towers, two nine-story octagonal buildings, a winter garden, and a four-acre landscaped garden. The towers are sheathed in reflective glass and a Canadian granite known as “polychrome;” the designers are hoping that it will be possible to use copper for the distinctive geometrical shapes that crown the tall buildings, but they may be stainless steel or an industrial plastic. The Commercial Center provides six million sq. ft. of office space, retail, and recreational space. Olympia & York say that the first occupants will be able to move in 1983.

Waterfront—San Francisco Style

Waterfront—New York Version
On view through January 1982 in the Kings Road house are presentation drawings from the Schindler archives at U.C. Santa Barbara. These drawings demonstrate that between 1914 and 1930 Schindler had a very painterly graphic style. A 1944 rendering for a semi-liberated Darmstadt-style summer house is executed in the manner of Japanese wood-block prints. But in a 1915 study for a large house at Taos, New Mexico (which never built), Schindler used a calligraphic, linear style reminiscent of the techniques of American illustrators of the period. For commercial prospects of the 1920s, Schindler employed tough, hard-edged graphics embellished with metallic gold and silver. However, renderings of his Kings Road house and the Pueblo Ribera house complex (1923) are loving, impressionistic carvings of pastel. The same technique is combined, almost perversely, with de Stijl-like forms in renderings of his Wolfe Summer House on Catalina Island (1928) and of an unbuilt beach house in Venice. By the 1930s, Schindler had abandoned these painterly techniques for no-nonsense statements of what would be constructed.

In addition to these gallery activities at Kings Road, Arts & Architecture, the reborn quarterly edited by Barbara Goldstein, has taken up residence in one of Schindler's "sleeping baskets." The space is tight, but at least the walls have been closed in against L.A.'s winter chill.

Another house that has been salvaged is the 1934 Buck House at 8th and Genesee Streets in the mid-Wilshire district. A fine example of Schindler's all-white planar interplays with transparency, it was restored between 1976 and 1978 by Hordhan, Gammill & Trumbo, a Berkeley architectural firm. In this largish house with two courtyards on a corner lot, Schindler played his de Stijl game to perfection. However, his predilection for almost-daily changes of design during construction raised havoc with the structure. Floating headers hoisting a pane of glass may look pure and minimal, but they do present problems over the years. In spite of these Schindlerian refinements, the house was lovingly brought back to its original conception for its recent owner, collector Lew Hine. Sadly, he died recently, and the future of the Buck House is an open question.

As for Neutra's legacy, his elegant Lewin Beach House in Santa Monica is being restored by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates. Constructed in 1937, this stud-and-stacco house displays Neutra's customary precise, thin-plane approach to form, with, however, several unique features.

Curves rarely play much of a role in Neutra's designs; thus the semicircular floor-to-ceiling window/wall of the living room is startling. That motif is repeated in the main staircase, and, if a bit burly and thick, as a flattened barrel vault in the corridor of the servants' wing.


Held among Los Angeles' besmogged palms, macramé hot tubs, and mock-Tudor condos is America's best collection of International Style architecture and it is the real thing—not just nostalgic remnants. Preciosely intimated by Irving Gill in the decade 1910–1920, the International Style was brought to fruition by Rudolph M. Schindler (1887–1953), Richard J. Neutra (1892–1970), and their followers in L.A., where it flowered until the early 1940s.

Though this superb collection is endangered by developers, major monuments are being saved and restored. For instance, the Schindler/Clyde Chase Double House at 833 North Kings Road in Hollywood (Schindler's own house, constructed 1921–22), is undergoing such a process, due to the efforts of the Friends of the Schindler House (FOSH). In this one-story, tilt-up, slab-and-reeded structure, Schindler introduced the primary feature of today's "California style" of living—a fluid relationship between inside and out-of-doors. With distant echoes of Wright and "Japanese" detailing, Schindler created a unique environment for his family and for the Chase family, who helped build this experiment in communal living. The two "L-shaped" living quarters are linked by a common kitchen, in which the semi-liberated wives alternated on KP duty. Only sliding canvas doors separate the large open interior spaces from the outdoor "living rooms" replete with fireplaces. Following current health theories, Schindler built year-round, canvas-colored "sleeping baskets" (porches) above the two corner entrances, which served as the only bedrooms for a number of years.

In 1980, Mark Schindler, the architect's son, needed money, but, like his mother, wanted to preserve his father's design by building his own. While a condo developer worshiped $600,000 under Mark's nose, FOSH scrambled for funds and finally landed a $160,000 grant from the California Office of Historic Preservation. In addition, Mark Schindler got a good tax write-off. Thus the house was saved, but it sorely needs more work. In his enthusiasm to get it up, Rudolph Schindler had neglected to put a deep foundation around the perimeter, and today the slab is cracking. Poorly repaired fire and earthquake damage is prevalent, but Robert Sweeney, executive director of FOSH, is preparing exhibitions and other events to entice big contributions to contributing restoration funds for the house.
Interview

P.E.: This is my first interview with an architect. As you know, I have done a series of three with critics. I intend to do a series with three developers, with three educators, and with three architects. We have chosen you for two reasons: because it happens to be the fortieth anniversary of the International Style exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art and because you represent the architectural leadership in this country.

We should begin with the International Style exhibition. What is never very clear, given your personal history, is what first attracted you to the International Style. Given your interest in Classical architecture—and there was certainly enough German neoclassical architecture around at the time—you must have argued about what was called "modern architecture"?

P.J.: Well, my interest was nonarchitectural. It is composed, as most things are, of hundreds of different threads; one thread with me has always been to go against the grain. If everyone else became a Communist, why, I would become a Nazi. I thought that was only natural. So, everybody was doing watered-down Classical—the architecture of the post-office system under Roosevelt—naturally, I couldn't stand Classical. A Doric column or a Corinthian column would send me into paroxysms of rage. Then I ran across a book in which I found an article by Henry-Russell Hitchcock on J.J.P. Oud, who was my first passion. The book was so fresh, so entirely revolutionary, so different from anything I had ever seen, that I decided it was good. I went out and bought the latest book on modern architecture—the Plata book, Baukunst der Neuen Zeit—and fell in love with another architect: Mies van der Rohe.

At the same time I met Alfred Barr. Within six months, I had met Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and Barr had asked me to do a show at the Museum of Modern Art, even though as an undergraduate I was not working in architecture—I was in Classical Greek and Greek philosophy. So, I switched; day-to-night, just like that. I began my immediate turnabout as well as immediate revolutions.

Then I went around Europe with Hitchcock, researching a book that we had just in the back of our heads; it was entitled The International Style by Alfred Barr. Of course—this is something that most people don't realize—the International Style was almost over in 1932, but I was not conscious of that. History you can be conscious of, but you can't possibly know what you are doing as you go along.

P.E.: The original energy of modern architecture was gone by that time. Alfred Barr had already called it "post-functionalism." What he was interested in was something other than German positivism.

P.J.: That's right. That is why the last sentence in our book is the only important one—"We have an architecture still"—because the functionalists denied it. We wrote that book in a fury against the functionalists, German Social Democratic workers' approach to architecture as a part of social revolution. We thought that architecture was still an art; that it was something you could look at; that, therefore, architects should not be worried about the social implications, but about whether the work looked good or not. In that sense we had only three allies in the Modern Movement: Le Corbusier, Oud, and Mies. Talking to Capirossi was a dead-end because he would still mouth the Giedionese platitudes of social discipline and revolution; that is, in Corbusier's phrase, "if you have enough glass walls, you become free.

P.E.: It seems to me that the whole notion of always justifying the avant-garde side is a political, but not an intellectual attitude. That is the way you create a dialectic, if you want, or the way you subtract the way you move—by creating opposition. Certainly this is what you had in mind. Because what bored you, or must have bored you, was the absence of moral and ethical basis that had crept into modern architecture. 

P.J.: We knew that in 1932 architecture was not a question of morals—especially not German political morality. We were anti-social, anti-democratic to the core, but we never made that into an overt intellectual position. It wasn't necessary, because, as Hitchcock and I have always said, it makes no difference what the architect believes. One of the very best of the intellectual architects was Hannes Meyer, who was also the best Communist, and we were not pro-Communist.

P.E.: Ada Louise Huxtable argued in The New York Review of Books that the International Style exhibition was, in fact, an ideological parade. That is, it was against the social, and ultimately Marxist, implications of modern architecture; it was a conscious gesture. Given your ideological position at the time, do you think that was true?

P.J.: It certainly was not. We were very careful to get Mumford to work on the catalogue with us because we realized that not only the social implications of the Modern Movement, we would be too outside any streetwise definition of this. We knew that the best architecture would be social housing. That was so much in the air. It is all very well for Barr to label me a "post-functionalist," but I wasn't.

P.E.: But don't you think that people misunderstand your recent movement away from modern architecture as being a kind of denial or rejection?

P.J.: I would like to make one thing clear: that it is not a rejection. To me architecture exists in time; certain buildings are valid at certain times for certain periods. The International Style lasted longer than the Renaissance—you do have to give it that. It was a very long period, if you talk about my glass house [1949] as being its total exhaustion. That's forty years.

P.E.: Is there, even as late as 1952—when I was being educated, students and architects, people who were building, believing in what they were doing. Call it idealism, whether ideological or political, there was somehow a belief that what they were doing was right. One got up in the morning with the sense that there was a certain morality that animated one's activity. Certainly the International Style exhibition was part of this animating spirit. Do you think that there is a need for some kind of moral commitment in architecture? How do you think the International Style influenced that kind of moral commitment, and how and why has that changed today?

P.J.: Those questions are all mixed up. The sense of idealism is gone, if you ask me why I answer, "Why?" There is no way of explaining why a series of beliefs disintegrate. You could not know the feeling of excitement in 1932. I know that thirty years later it was still felt; think how much more intense it must have been when we wrote the book. That faith shows very clearly in the prose of the International Style book.

Also, you cannot discuss why people have faith. You might say we have lost it, but what caused that faith in the first place? In the nineteenth century there was no such faith. They were tossing ideas around—whether Pugin was right or the Classicists were right—and building buildings on that. The Modern Movement came along—then we shouldn't call it if that for the purposes of this discussion, we should call it the Modern Movement, because it goes back to moralism, moralism, back to the eighteenth century. It grew and grew until finally Le Corbusier could say you couldn't be a moral man, or live well, without being surrounded by glass walls. He may have believed it at that moment, but it created a whole generation with this faith in a goal that was mixed in its morality. All we stressed in our exhibition were the aesthetics, but it had a great deal more content than that. We believed—even Mumford believed, although he didn't like the International Style—that good architecture made good people and good people would make better architecture, and so on into a limitless future where the sun always shone. We never discussed it, because it was a common belief.

Now, this did not turn out to be the case. Progress did not progress. At that time you connected faith in architecture with faith in the culture. Who believes today that sitting around a green bain table at Versailles is going to help people live better? In 1932, it was a moral argument, and the backlash in 1955. I had given up on modernism already, of course—as you can easily seen by my speeches in 1955, the "you-cannot-not-know-history" business. In discussions today a lot of us see this historicism as a sign of total disintegration and total freedom, rather than a loss of faith and a nostalgia for a period when we wanted to be better. I don't see why students should feel that the search for architecture should somehow overcome the search for individuality and chaos, but they do. People want rules. I have always taught someone would not know how to teach architecture today, where there are no rules.

I think I agree that the whole thing has disintegrated in the most alarming way. My own work illustrates the alarmingly of it; I can't say why one thing is better than another. I notice that you have trouble with Paul Goldberger [Skyline, January 1982] trying to figure out what makes architecture "better." You try for a category, you interpret it semiotically—in the old days, functionally—and want to say it is better because it is easier to walk in the front door; Mr. Chernyaff, Senior, didn't like my glass house, because, he'd say, imagine living in a house where you have to carry the garbage out the front door. In other words, he could use functionalism as a criterion for measuring the varying qualities of the architecture he was looking at. You could defend Le Corbusier on functional grounds if you wanted to. It is much better to do as Mr. Colquhoun does, however, saying he is a failed Classicist. Without it, it was the faith was there, and I could give a series of pegs on which critical judgments could be hung. That is what Hitchcock and I were up to, in the most arbitrary way.

P.E.: Are you saying that faith allowed for critical judgments? If this is true, do you then mean that without critical judgment, the architect does not know what to do; that is, if you cannot make a critical commentary, the artist cannot perform? Is that what you mean?
"The International Style, of course—this is something most people don't realize—was over about 1932, but I was not conscious of that. History you can be conscious of, but you can't possibly know what you are doing as you go along."

Philip Johnson Photograph by Dorothy Alessandr

P.J.: I don't believe that at all.

P.E.: You just said that faith led to critical judgment, which then allowed for good architecture.

P.J.: No. You made the conclusion that that allowed for good architecture. I just said it allowed for critical judgment, which depended on what he could pick good architecture—but it gave him a series of standards on which to base discussion. Goldfinger is hot today, as you are; as I am. Where are we going to find among our criteria one that says that one building is better than the other?

It was terribly amusing to read which of my latest skyscrapers Goldberger focused on. He zeroed in on Trancos, which is recklessly taken from Bertram Goodhue. Others zero in on a PPG because it's urban; it has a Place Vendôme in front of it and it uses the latest materials; false, naturally, from a "moral" point of view.

P.E.: The false morality about materials in the Modern Movement would make Ruskin turn over in his grave. Le Corbusier tried to make buildings look like cardboard by building them out of stone and then plastering over them. The morality of materials, which is a nineteenth-century notion, was lost in the 1920s. The morality of function, which also came out of the nineteenth century, has also vanished.

There are several things to be said about this disintegration, this freedom, and the question of morality: A poet, for example, cannot write blank verse unless he knows what free verse is, unless he knows the sonnet form to write sonnets. He has to have read poetry and have an ear for it. There is a discipline of poetry, as there is a discipline of the canvas which a painter can always refer to—what we would call the rules. In architecture, every building that goes up— as long as it stands up and provides shelter—is a building, but what makes it architecture?

It seems to me that without some sort of discipline—call it language or rules—but with, instead, a merely capricious freedom, you may never be able to know how to make architecture, because no one will be able to speak or write, and no one will be able to understand what is written. Therefore, we may have to find some way of defining architecture other than through absolute freedom. Many Classical buildings are bad buildings, despite the fact that there is a feeling in the air that all Classical buildings are good; a lot of glass buildings were good, despite the fact that people today believe they are all bad buildings. Without a discipline, how do you yourself know that you are making architecture?

P.J.: I don't. That is why I look back with great nostalgia to the days when you could take two buildings facing each other—like Lever House and Seagram—and point out the differences of proportion, of the section, the fact that the column at Lever House is of-center by four feet. That bothers me really as a believer in rhythm as one of the rules; you cannot have that rhythm and then make a hiccups in the middle of a row of columns. It has not bothered people since. Now there are no rules; you put the columns in afterward. Having that belief enabled me to analyze and use the rules at the time of building Seagram; but you could not have had the poetry of Seagram without Mies' final imaginative leap.

The rules, you could say, would only get you to a certain level. There are just as many had International Style buildings as there are bad Classical buildings. How could you tell them, then, why Le Corbusier was better than Andrea Palladio? As a matter of fact, there was a moment in Paris when one did not know that. I have a letter from Alfred Barr in which he said he did not know that the rue Mallet-Stevens was any worse than a Lurcat building, or a building by Le Corbusier. In other words, it takes a little while. The one question we are going to use today for criteria, as practitioners, critics, teachers, or students.

P.E.: Going back to the question of belief for a moment—what does he believe, free verse, free form, or a set of rules? The morality of function, which also came out of the nineteenth century, has also vanished.

P.J.: In that case, is our generation doomed to not do good architecture? You see, none of us can believe that and be practicing artists. We have to believe we have a discipline.

I have been trying to analyze our mission—all those different forms of skyscrapers that John Burge and I do. What do we feel is the difference each time another form comes along? I do not know; it seems absolutely inevitable at the moment.

P.E.: I am not saying here that I hold the sword of truth. In one sense Robert Venturi's Complexity and Contradiction was basically a new moral position, an attempt to overturn an outworn morality—that is, modern architectural and a belief in progress with another morality. Post-modernism, if you read Robert Stern very carefully, is a desperate attempt to create a discipline, a set of rules that one can believe in again; it is not for free play and the disintegration of rules. If anything, it means an attempt to get an integrated architecture, at least. Stern is for the reclamation of morality. That is what is so marvelously retroactive and topsy-turvy about his position. For example, the contextualists attempt to find this morality by keeping the history of the city intact—by preserving the context. In other words, new form comes from within the existing fabric of the city. From your latest letter I would have to say that you are little interested in the morality of contextualism.

P.J.: I have talked about this on several different sides—because there are more than two sides to contextualism—and I do whatever is convenient. I applied James Stirling's addition at Rice University. You can hardly find it, because you just notice a few little oddments and a few little improvements on the Cram & Ferguson design—it is good; that is contextual. I also applaud Johnson/ Burgee's Republic Bank—a Gothic thing; exactly the opposite of the pure modern, all-glass, monolithic Pennzoil building next door. Our first design for the Republic Bank was one that would accommodate part of Houston, one that would be a good neighbor to Pennzoil. The bank said, "We don't want to be a good neighbor; we've got to beat them." I said, "Well, isn't that as good a reason as any to do something different?" Then Stern gave it a name, which makes me feel better—he called it "the Manhattanization of Houston." Who's to say that we can't have battling styles clustered together on one grid?

P.E.: Then you are saying that context is not necessarily the extent of the nationalistic or monolithic city. We are talking about the kinds of context you find in a medieval city, where there is the cacophony and sense of odd shapes and angles. Is that a valid context for the late twentieth century?

P.J.: That is a very sophistical argument; I would not know what to say about it.

P.E.: Why is that a sophistical argument? There is no question that when you fly over Manhattan and see Wall Street, that jumble of towers, it is a very exciting view, but it is not a neoclassical view of the city. It is an Italian hill town; or Mont-Saint-Michel.

P.J.: There is no sense in carrying that any further. The medieval town had a texture—a very strong one—much stronger than Lower Manhattan. I would never call Lower Manhattan medieval; I would call it twentieth century. It is a twentieth-century type of jumble that is a context all its own. You can use the word "Manhattanization" as well as any other for putting it together.

Yet I will swear to heaven that other buildings I have done are very much contextual—by their height, windows, and size. I mean by trying to use the same sense of scale as you go from building to building.

P.E.: But there is also the contextualism of the World Trade Center; it begins to form a new context. If you saw a series of twin towers placed on Manhattan Island you would see a new context. That is contextualism. I would argue, however, that it breaks the essential nature of Park Avenue—that is, its facade—the Seagram Building is not a contextual building. When a context or a public building breaks the existing context, that is one thing; but when a liquor company does it, it is quite another matter. Isn't that a question of morality?

P.J.: Seagram was elevated from a commercial building into a monument simply by being designed by a great architect who justifiably broke the line. We don't have the Church; we don't have that faith. A liquor company is just as good as any other company to break the line. We have broken it in the AT&T Building. We did not have as much chance as we would have liked, but we certainly broke the context of the all-glass buildings that surround it. That was another break we felt was justified by the hulks of the architects—or the fact that it is the largest company in the world.

P.E.: What follows from saying that because Mies was a great architect he should be allowed to do Seagram and disrupt the context, is that some other architect thinks he is the great architect, and so on, until it gets right down to a student who says, "I can do anything." This leads you to a dead end, because then the student says, "Anything goes"; that whatever the teacher says does not matter because he does not know any more than the student. So, you are back at square one: the student pays his money.
and not only is there nothing to teach him, but he does not really believe in being taught. So, what is he getting for his money? In an era where there are no rules and there is no belief, why not return to the atelier?

P.J.: The atelier may be the answer. We are not teaching a technique. You could have a school divided, as the Beaux Arts was, into a technical side and an atelier side. In the atelier is the “guru.” How could you have learned anything at Pennsylvania if it weren’t for Kahn’s personality? I would like it if I had time to run an atelier. I think it would be very interesting to have students following the way I think and being free to leave at any time. Teaching becomes a personal thing — as all art always has been.

P.E.: This idea of doing something different, the “Me Generation,” is symptomatic of the collapse of a kind of collective morality; a public order.

There is another, similar problem with the “Me Generation.” It is what can be called “the architect’s Oedipal complex.” Harald Blobel talks about it in his book The Anxiety of Influence. What can be argued is that suddenly, because we are in a social and psychological culture, architects in particular are more aware of the influence of their “fathers.” Schnickel did not worry too much about who went before; Palladio certainly did not worry about Brunante or Brunelleschi; Le Corbusier did not worry about anybody; nor did Mies van der Rohe. But certainly Philip Johnson worries; I.M. Pei must worry; Cesar Pelli, Robert Venturi, Robert Stern, Michael Graves, Richard Meier — even Peter Eisenman — all are worried about their “fathers.” They all suffer from an Oedipal complex that has now been passed on to the next generation.

P.I.: I think it is one of your little ticks to worry about Oedipus. It never bothered me too much. On top of that, your history isn’t very good. All those people you spoke of did indeed look at those who went before them. If you take Schnickel, you have to take Friedrich Gilly; if you take Gilly, you go right back to Boullee; and it is well known that Palladio changed his style completely when he first went to Rome. No, everybody has this feeling. My big switch was, of course, my revolt against Mies; nobody denies it. But is that so unusual?

P.I.: I am not talking about influence. I am talking about the anxiety of influence. Today, because of what you call an “Oedipal tick,” everyone must do something new. I am talking about the fact that people do not want to follow. I think it is a persuasive problem, owing to the fact that we live in an era of psychological man. The consciousness of an Oedipal complex, of narcissism, and of repression did not exist before our present psychological culture.

P.J.: The words were brought to our consciousness, but nothing has actually changed. Freud was somebody I had never heard of until people like you tried to explain him to me. Today does not strike me as an anxiety situation at all. I would find it interesting if there were a “crisis,” because I have been through two very interesting periods: a period of faith and a period of nonfaith. I think architecture perhaps is going through a sad stage. Just take my oeuvre, which is so diverse that it is hard to know

P.E.: But Philip, you know history better than all of your colleagues and all of my colleagues. Therefore, you know how and when to turn history upside-down. You are always the first one to jump. You are a kind of Pied Piper figure who, just when everybody is following you down one path, jumps over the fence. You take things from the past as architectural relics, but without the faith that sustained their former existence. This is why I call you “anti-ideological.” Once having been burned ideologically it is not possible for you to be ideological again. Once having lost faith, or having had faith taken away from you, there is no way for you to exist but to be antifaith.

P.J.: That is a very interesting analysis. You may be absolutely right, but I do not think it makes any difference. There were periods of architecture made of faith, like that made in fifth-century Athens, or the great Gothic cathedrals in France or there was the nineteenth century, when you had Pugin, Ruskin, and Lutyens all at once. It was just a complete melange — as it is now. Either way, you can have better or worse architecture. Who is to say which?

You have to admit that it is not something you can easily pick up; nor do I know among my own works which ones are good. It is much easier in the case of Richard Meier. There is a man who has taken a deliberate stand on a particular period of the past and has commented with the greatest thought and with a bag of tricks that you can almost count on — the stairways, the railings — but he is developing the way he combines those and uses them. His latest building, the High Museum in Atlanta, is his best. His peculiar methods — which don’t amuse me very much in most of his buildings — are beginning to gel and to make sense. His is a post-Corbusian imitation world — not one that I want, but I still think that a critic could look at Meier’s works and come to some conclusions about which are better than others. You see, one can talk about other architects — whether they are better or less good — on their own terms. Aren’t we making judgments, then? So there must be a basis for those judgments.

P.E.: I have always called you a “nouveau” architect, in the sense that you are interested in the individual building, in the individual architect. The trouble is that our cities are built largely by developers. If somebody does not educate them, the fabric of the cities will decay, in spite of the fact that we will have these individual monuments. Your arguments sound like something out of the eighteenth century, before the French Revolution. Unfortunately, we are in a situation today where it is not just the monuments and the great architects that matter.

P.J.: I think you have brought up something that is an entirely different subject — that is, the question of urbanism. I do not think there is a single architect who would not trade his whole practice for one little bit of urbanism. That is why I am so pleased to be able to work on a large enough scale in Pittsburgh. To do a part of a city, or a park, or a little bit of a palace like Versailles . . . . For one of those jobs, you would throw everything else out the window; but that is not what has happened; we have followed the power line, if you will.

You talk often about “the power structure” — who is that? It is the developers. Now, that may be right or wrong. I can’t imagine that it is a good way to build cities, but it is the way we do build them. A practicing architect has to work for the Devil himself if the Devil is the one around giving out the jobs.

P.E.: But the Devil is giving the jobs not to the creative geniuses, but to the ordinary architect.

P.J.: Sometimes. Then sometimes you run into a Gerald Hines, who picks the very best architects; other developers will try to do the same thing.

P.E.: So, let us assume that the developers are building the cities. They are building for their own private economic gain. The question is, then, What about the public good? This brings us back to the question of morality. A developer works on a project-by-project basis. It seems to me that urbanism deals with programs and plans. What you are saying is that a collection of ad-hoc projects is just as good as beginning from a plan or program.

P.J.: You are using the word “good” again, which indicates a moral point of view. There is no “good” or “bad” about it. I just stick to the realm of the possible. If someone gives me a rather poor site, do I say, “I’m sorry. Go down the street and get another architect?”
that the same architect built that building which built that other building. This is a terrible accusation; it may be proof that the work is no good. If consistency is going to be one of the criteria, it would wreck everything."

P.E.: Yes! You said you would not take the St. Bart’s job if it were offered.

P.J.: That’s right—you just brought me back into the realm of morality. You got me! I think perhaps there is more morality around than I give myself credit for. For me, it is saving architecture—which comes ahead of my own personal work. What I am saving is what’s left of Park Avenue and one of Goodhue’s better buildings. I don’t think the minution of open space is helping New York City.

P.E.: So you do have a morality about saving architecture—which for you is the saving of a culture, or the vestiges of a culture.

P.J.: That is why I protested in front of Pennsylvania Station—to save it, because it was as near to a great monument as we had in this country.

P.E.: So, ultimately you are trying to do “good” architecture—besides the narcissistic or individual pleasure of doing it—because you do have a faith in the culture and a belief in morality. But you can also turn the argument around again and say that the anxiety of students comes from the fact that they may not believe in the culture that you believe in. Rather than arguing that you do not have a morality, what they are probably confronting is the fact that they do not believe in your morality.

P.J.: The students do not believe that the urban context is something worth saving?

P.E.: They would probably take the church down.

P.J.: Take the church down and at least make a buck.

P.E.: That is what is interesting.

P.J.: It is hard for me to think that art isn’t still the most important and that money just has to be secondary. Perhaps students no longer believe in art; it is perfectly possible. There are a lot of things I do not believe in, but I sure as hell believe in the necessity of art, whether it’s architectural or graphic.

P.E.: We were presented with the similar question. We were given a site at the Berlin Wall and told to build housing on it. You stand there and you feel like you are on the wrong side of a concentration camp, and you say, “Who wants to raise a child here?” Now, they need housing in Berlin, but what does one do? Does one put housing on that site? It is a big commission and you can argue that someone is going to do it and you feel you can do it better than somebody else. That becomes a moral question. You could argue the same way on St. Bart’s. If you felt that you could do it better, perhaps it would be a moral gesture on your part to take the job—because someone is going to do it.

P.J.: I think that is a specious argument—but I use it, of course: “You had better hire me because I can make a failure here more palatable than anyone else can.” The reason one can’t use that argument for St. Bart’s is that there is some chance that we can stop it from being built at all. If I thought it was going to be built, I should certainly take the job—I can certainly do it as well, as the architects they selected.

P.E.: That is an interesting comment, because now we have come full circle. You have brought ideology back into the discussion, but only in terms of individual quality. This ties in with something you said earlier that I cannot let you get away with: It is about the interchangeability of the terms “International Style” and “Modern Movement.” For me, this issue has always divided us. My argument is that the International Style is not the Modern Movement, but an attempt to drain its ideology; to reduce it from a belief to a fashion. For me, ideology does not carry the same political flags that it does for you. The Modern Movement was an ideological movement; it was a movement of the Left. The International Style attempted to eliminate the political content; to have aesthetics without ideology.

P.J.: That was the idea.

P.E.: There is no question about that! Then why do you continue to say the International Style and the Modern Movement are equivalent? Is it because you would like it to be that way?

P.J.: No. “The Modern Movement” is a much more inclusive term; that is why I wanted to use it—the fundamentals of the Modern movement go further back. The International Style is restricted to the aesthetics of 1922 to 1932, and that is about all. But if you want to talk about more important . . .

P.E.: No; ideological.

P.J.: That word, as you know, I feel is loaded.

P.E.: Okay; moral.

P.J.: Moral. Then you have to go back and find the roots, back before Ruskin; but the International Style was merely an appearance thing. Colquhoun can say it was an upside-down Classicism; Hannes Meyer would say it was just the result of functional activity.

P.E.: But, for me, Oedipus, anti-Oedipus, ideology, anti-ideology, morality, antimorality, are part of the same dialectical condition.

P.J.: Unfortunately, I don’t understand the whole dialectic—any more than I understand semiotics, or structuralism, or deconstruction. To me, there is a good building, and there is one that is not so good; if it has been influenced by so-and-so, or if you have taken another influence, would it have come out differently? It is the kind of analysis that I inherited from Hitchcock, of course, that interests me.

When it comes down to morality, it is not architecture—it is the morality of life in the city. I have just as much moral concern about workers’ housing as the next man; I am as good as Albert Meyer if you start me off on my workers’ housing soap box. That is, I feel that one can have a high morality about the state of the world, but as long as I am doing art, I leave all that behind. I think as did Mies: Give the workers more money, then we’ll give them a Llewelyn Park suburb to live in. That’s what Frank Lloyd Wright did. He was moral; he did Broadacre City, so help me God. I can separate the morality in my mind. When Gropius said that I do immoral architecture—that’s what I don’t like.

P.E.: A young architect, Gavin MacCrae-Gibson, is writing a book that has a chapter on the seminal architecture of Philip Johnson and Peter Eisenman. I have often thought that it was very difficult to find any connection, in the sense of architectural influence, between you and me. He calls us both “amoral.” While you would say—because of what you see as my “ideological” tendencies—that I am ultimately a moralist; I would say conversely that, because of your Anglo-Saxon belief in David Wakin’s position in Morality in Architecture, it is you who are the moralist.

P.J.: No, I think you are just as amoral—that does not mean immoral—as I am. You have a strange idea of yourself. Of course, that comes from too much self-analysis; you know all these long words, and I don’t. I am just a simple farm boy.

P.E.: Businessman?

P.J.: That is not a bad term. I never thought of it. The fact that I am successful is proof that I am not a bad businessman.
The International Style Turns 50

Suzanne Stephens

Fifty years ago, on February 10, 1932, the show "Modern Architecture: International Exhibition" opened at the Museum of Modern Art. Since then the show increasingly has been referred to as "The International Style Exhibit," which, considering some of the works in the show, is something of a misnomer. The substitution occurred chiefly because the book The International Style: Architecture Since 1922, (Norton, N.Y., 1932), written by the organizers of the show, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, appeared the same year. Many of the works in the MoMA show were included in the book; many were not.

The majority of works in the show, however, shared characteristics of this new style that employed an abstracted, planar, two-dimensional vocabulary of forms. Emphasized were the expression of materials and regularity of composition and proportion, instead of the mass, symmetry, and ornamentation of traditional architecture. Hitchcock and Johnson isolated and unified the manifestations of this architecture appearing in countries as diverse as Japan, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and the U.S. While they avowedly were attempting to establish a "framework of principles" loose enough to allow inclusion of a wide range of responses that could be considered part of this style, a process of condensation was inevitably underway with the organizers' classification. It is this condensation that is strikingly in evidence in the book The International Style: Architecture Since 1922, and that would soon emblemize "modernist" architecture itself—for this style was to provide the canon against which "modern" work would be measured. On the route from the show to the book, an ideology took shape that was to color later interpretation of the Modern Movement and of what constituted its essence.

The show, traveling throughout the United States for three years, did display the achievements of Am Hood and Howe & Lescaze, in addition to the work of Mies, Gropius, Johnson and Hitchcock also took a close look at what hadn't built much, such as the Bowery Housing Project. The organizers boldly displaying their projects. They were the only featured architects who dissolved their practice in 1936, and Nevertheless, their work presented the distinct and anticipatory of work.

The exhibit, conceived to combat the "functionalist" doctrine, was quite opportune. Despite the fact that Johnson and Hitchcock were being aesthetically oriented in their effort to promote a housing scheme for New York City and Forsyth Streets in New York City. While the catalogue made the social context of housing officials were given an advantageous display of models, photos, and plans for the exhibition, and the inclusion of Lewis Mumford's early essays occasioned several celebratory events:

Since the show, however, the process of indexing that it produced the heterogeneity of the International Style, and the ideology of the International Style as well, has been increasingly in evidence. As the Modernist effort. It was indeed fertile.

Suzanne Stephens

Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson's landmark "Modern Architecture" show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932 has occasioned several celebratory events:

This month Progressive Architecture is running articles examining its impact; Harvard is sponsoring a symposium and exhibit on the show in April. Skyline attempts on these pages to summon up some of the specifics surrounding the exhibition's installation and reception by the critics.
Modern Architecture


an architects like Raymond to Wright, as emphatically us, Le Corbusier, and Oud. face on young architects who Brothers of Chicago, by mwan Brothers turned out to appeared,” for they e moved to West Virginia. he show remains remarkably others to follow.

ductivism inherent in the in its scope and diversity. Incock have been accused of section, the show also l concern. Its prominent housing in the U.S. and inford’s essay on housing in at all the more noticeable. e tour of the exhibit in an Howe & Lescaze for Chrystie

f making the International history has itself reduced the hat can be remembered, words, its “look.” Within the exhibit itself took on review it again, when many own, is instructive; for there demonstrate a broad range of round.

926-28. (MoMA)
Looking Back at “Modern Architecture”

Nine architects or partnerships—Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, J.J.P. Oud, Mies van der Rohe, Raymond Hood, Howe & Lescaze, Richard Neutra, and the Bowman Brothers—were featured prominently in the 1932 MoMA exhibit, through models, photos, and plans of several of their works. They were the only architects whose work was illustrated in the catalogue accompanying the show.

Frank Lloyd Wright

- Project for a house on the mesa, Denver, Colo.; 1932.
- DJ. Roberts House, River Forest, Ill.; 1907.
- Robie House, Chicago; 1908-09.
- Taliesin, Spring Green, Wis.; 1911-25.
- Millard House, Pasadena, Calif.; 1921.

Walter Gropius

- Fagus Factory, Alfeld, Germany; 1910-14.
- The Bauhaus, director’s house, Dessau, Germany; 1925-26.

Le Corbusier & Pierre Jeanneeret

- Savoye House, Poissy-sur-Seine, France; 1929-30.
- Double house, Willebadessen, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart, Germany; 1927.
- De Beistegui penthouse, Paris; 1931.

J.J.P. Oud

- Siedlungen Krefeld, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
- Siedlung Krefeld, shops, church, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
- Workers’ housing, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
- Shop, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
- Row of houses, Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart; 1927.
- Project for a house at Pinehurst, N.C. (For mother of Philip Johnson); 1931.
- House in Noordwijkerhout, Holland; 1917 (in collaboration with Theo van Doesburg).
- Project for a row of seaside houses; 1917.
- Spangen, Blocks 1 and V, workers’ dwellings, Rotterdam; 1918.
- Garden village, Oud-Maathes, Rotterdam; 1922.
- Workers’ housing, Hook of Holland; 1924-27.
- Siedlung Krefeld, Rotterdam; 1928-30.
- Project for a house at Pinehurst, N.C.; 1931.

*Included in list by the Director of the Exhibition, Philip Johnson, dated February 19, 1932 but not indicated in catalogue or “Exhibition 15” photographic files at MoMA.

*Included in “Exhibition 15” photographic files, but not listed elsewhere.
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<td>PSFS Building, Philadelphia; 1931–32.</td>
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<td>Garden apartments, Los Angeles, Calif.; 1927.</td>
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<th>Bowman Brothers</th>
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<td>Plan of Lovell House, Los Angeles; 1929.</td>
<td>Project for a business block (Billboard Restaurant); ca. 1931.</td>
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Looking Back at “Modern Architecture”

The “Modern Architecture” show was installed in five rooms at 730 Fifth Avenue, and made use of models, photos, plans, and drawings. The Bowman Brothers shared the first room with Walter Gropius; housing projects in Germany and America occupied the second room; Wright, Mies, Le Corbusier, and Oud, the third room; Hood and Neutra the fourth; and an international survey, the fifth room.

Works represented in the form of models in the exhibition included Otto Haesler’s Rothenberg Housing at Kassel, Germany; Frank Lloyd Wright’s “House on a mesa” project; Mies van der Rohe’s Tugendhat House; Le Corbusier’s Savoye House; J.J.P. Oud’s “House at Pijnhurst, N.C.” project; Richard Neutra’s “Ring plan school” project; Raymond Hood’s “Apartment tower in the country” project; the Bowman Brothers’ Lux Apartments project; Walter Gropius’ Bauhaus; and Hood & Lescaye’s Christie and Forsyth Streets housing project.

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### Housing Section: International Exhibition, Installation, 730 Fifth Avenue: 1932. Room B: (MoMA)

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Looking Back at "Modern Architecture"

Newspaper items heralded the events and controversy surrounding the MoMA show. The reviews—some negative, others positive—established the lines of the debate.


Housing on Stilts is Shown in Model

Apartments, 14 Feet Off Ground, With Play Space Beneath, Suggested for East Side

Part of Modern Art Show

Radical Plans Seen at Preview by Group Seeking Improved Living Conditions in City

Kassel Community of Long Rows of Flats, Two Rooms Wide, Presented in Miniature at Museum

The adaptation of modern architecture to the housing problem of persons of moderate means was illustrated in two models shown privately yesterday at the Museum of Modern Art, 730 Fifth Avenue, to a group interested in better city living conditions. This was a preview of a part of the architectural exhibition that the museum will open next month.

One model shown in miniature a community of 550 dwellings already built in Kassel, Germany. The other, made from plans by Howe & Lescace, New York and Philadelphia, Architects, is a suggested housing development at Chrystie and Forsyth Streets, to occupy the now vacant area formerly covered by tenements. The plan suggested in the model calls for twenty-four buildings arranged in a somewhat U-like formation. These would accommodate 8000 to 10,000 persons.

The buildings would have no basements or ground floors. They would be of steel skeleton construction standing fourteen feet above ground on their columns, leaving all the space beneath for covered playgrounds for rainy weather. This space would be available in addition to large open areas between the buildings.


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Architects' Show Bars Two Moderns

Howe and Lescaze Quit League to "Fight Alone" Rather Than Compromise With "Crowd"

Hailed at Exhibit Nearby

Museum of Modern Art Lists Their Work as Pointing Way for Better Design

However insignificant a distance of two blocks may be to the pedestrian, it constitutes a wide gulf in the world of architecture, it seemed here yesterday, when it became known that the work of two architects of advanced modern ideas who were featured in the current exhibition of architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, 730 Fifth Avenue, had been rejected at the Architectural League's annual show at 215 West Fifty-seventh Street.

As a consequence of their rejection, George Howe and William Lescaze have sent in their resignations to the Architectural League, Mr. Lescaze said last night. He expressed the opinion that the refusal of the League to show their work in its annual exhibition, which was opened to the public yesterday, was based on objection to the modern character of their designs.

"We stand for clarification of architectural principle," said Mr. Lescaze, "We are perfectly willing to fight alone rather than make compromises to be with the crowd. The issue is too serious to be treated lightly. An architect must be able to practice his profession according to his individual convictions rather than the convictions of the group."

Exhibition of Modern Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art

Catherine K. Bauer

(Creative Art, March 1932, pp. 201-206.)

This exhibition has style . . . And the proof of it is (1) that the exhibition makes sense when considered as a whole, and (2) that some of the least successful designs achieve a degree of sense merely by being related to the rest of the show. Which is to say that, whether one likes it or not, here is legitimate material for exhibition—and more intrinsic matter for judgment than any league or other hodge-podge has presented to American eyes.

Style in this sense implies the common acceptance, conscious or unconscious, of a basic norm of design. It predicates common beliefs and common purposes in a large number of contemporary people. But more than that, it defines architecture, fast and last, as the social art—as the expression of those forces that keep people together and not those that separate and individualize. Architecture is not a medium for expressing individual personality.

If we have nothing to lose, then surely style—such style as may be seen in this exhibition—is desirable. We ought to accept it. But a question remains: Can we accept it? For we can only achieve good architecture if we have something ourselves to begin with—a desire for the qualities implicit in style, for order, harmony, a clear statement of reality.

The most important people of all who are here are the town-planners, the housing experts, the scientifically-minded scientists, the scientifically-minded socialists, the men who have revolutionized the possibilities and actualities of low-cost dwellings—from Stockholm to New Jersey; from Russia to Frankfurt the Lower East Side.

For any free-standing modern mansion, however handsome, however luxurious, however cunningly planned, is somewhat outside the most important practice of modern architecture. Building has become seven-eighths planning. And the very qualities that produce style in this exhibition—the economic and aesthetic use of modern materials and mass-production processes, the elimination of surface ornament, the emphasis on simple forms, clean lines, human living requirements, the substitution of an ideal of direct, simple affirmation for the old one of picturesque variety—are the qualities that create a new possibility for architecture in large-scale housing and community planning . . . and therefore, for new cities and a whole new background for our civilization.
Looking Back at “Modern Architecture”

The exhibition emphasized the American contribution to modern architecture. However, it contained numerous examples of the International Style.

Architecture
The Turn It Is Taking Under Modernistic Hands
Royol Cortissoz
(New York Herald Tribune, February 14, 1932.)

The exhibition just opened at the Museum of Modern Art is one of the most useful thus far organized by that institution. It is truly educational in that it gives a comprehensive view of so-called “modern” architecture, the architecture that abandons verticality as well as ornament and that both here and abroad is supposed to be ushering in a new heaven and a new earth. This promised land, to be sure, may turn out to be nothing more than a rather dubious suburb, but at least this exhibition shows what it is designed to be by certain European and American practitioners. The richly illustrated catalogue is also an aid, if not in propaganda, at any rate in its biographies and general documentation. In short, every aspect of the subject is made available in the show, and the inquirer may learn all the essentials of it.

A Simple Revelation
There is nothing obscure about them. The matter is greatly simplified, to begin with, by the disappearance of one of the most important factors in the usual exhibition of works of art. That is, individuality in respect to style. Amongst a lot of paintings or sculpture one recognizes personality at once. The original strain is unmistakable. This modern architecture marks the abdication of the architect as artist and his subjection to a mode of international standardization . . .

[Many] look very much alike—and very depressing. These architects are evidently unaware that architecture is a thing to contemplate as well as to use, and what is ordinarily meant by “beauty” is mysteriously absent from their productions. Even Mr. Wright’s Jones House has for us very much the air of a penitentiary. Nor does functionalism, we gather, include the definition of a building’s purpose in its facade. J.J.P. Oud exhibits a church in Rotterdam which might, from its appearance, be a cinema. But the grimmest reflection evoked by the new architecture has to do with its fitness for the daily use of human beings. Now and then, as in the German workshops and schoolrooms of Walter Gropius, we can appreciate the virtue of their abundant supply of light. But more often, as we survey the various schemes in metal and stucco with their positive acreage of glass, we wonder how much comfort they would leave to the inhabitant, exposed to the glare and the heat of our pitiless summer sun. These are bleak-looking buildings, and the problem of temperature that they raise is one of the bleakest things about them. Somehow, taking into consideration both the practical and aesthetic issues, we do not envision modern architecture as getting a very lasting foothold in the United States.

Architecture
Important Current Shows—Architecture, International Style, at Museum of Modern Art
Edward Alden Jewell
(The New York Times, February 14, 1932.)

A few years ago much enlightened procedure was spoken of as functionalism. The International Style men like to refer to their projects as “post-functional,” and since it is so easy to get into fruitless quibbling when it comes to definitions of this sort, we may as well accept whatever terms they choose to offer. The post-functional proofs now assembled for your inspection at the Museum of Modern Art under the aegis of Philip Johnson, who is the exhibition’s director, are so altogether convincing that by any other name they would rival the name of the proverb . . . In the space at our disposal we cannot venture upon detailed analysis of the beautiful models and photographs, which deserve on the part of the public long and careful study.
International Architectural Style

Harold Sterner

(Architecture Chronicle, Hood & Horn, Vol. 5, No. 1, April–June, 1932, pp. 452–460.)

It matters not what the architecture of the future looks like. It may well choose to dress itself in more conventional clothing and sew once more in the past for methods of adornment, so that by comparison the rudimentary examples which at present constitute the only evidence of the International Style may seem almost grotesque. But whatever happens, the break has been made. It will be impossible for architects of the future, whatever stupidities they achieve, to commit the errors of the nineteenth century, and this purging will have been largely due to the men whose work is on view at the Museum of Modern Art.

It is good architecture to the extent that it has cast off many of the evils of its predecessors, but it is not yet good architecture if that term implies an unwrung eye for fine proportions and the degree of assurance which enables the great artist to appreciate the authority of an understated vision.

The first great architect of the International Style will be one who is worldly enough to take the modern idiom for granted and show that the style can be made practical. Yet it is on the practical side, strangely enough, that most of the work shown in the exhibition appears weakest.

The architecture of Mies van der Rohe is the most distinguished in the exhibition. It is marked by a restraint and beauty of proportions that are lacking in the work of most of his contemporaries. He is the least prone to caricature or to advertising the technical methods by which he obtains his results; he has accepted the modern idiom more calmly, as though he understood that radicalism per se offers scanty nourishment to the artist, however excellent it may be as a stimulant.

When Le Corbusier writes, he is the master of his ideas; when he designs, they master him. The Oenland House, the Houses at Boulogne-sur-Seine, and the Double House at the Werkbund Housing Exhibition are all unjustly in one sense or another. The cantilevering in this latter house results in a particularly disagreeable sense of insecurity and equally unfortunate proportions. In the Stein House at Garches, there is more repose, but the slanting marquise with its concrete tension members is difficult to forgive either as engineering or aesthetics. The plan of the Savoye House is in many ways highly impractical. All kitchen supplies must be carried through the main hall on both floors to arrive at their destination, while the bedrooms are so arranged that the utmost publicity is given to their occupants when they are washing or carrying out even more intimate physical duties. The garage is planned so that even the most prodigal of New York taxi drivers would have difficulty getting a car into it, let alone out of it, and this diagonal placing of the garage has so distorted the plan of an adjacent guest room as to make it absurd. It is difficult to discern in many of these ugly and impractical features anything but the affections of a propagandist.

Let us turn to the American work that is exhibited. The inclusion of Frank Lloyd Wright is best explained on the grounds of courtesy. The courtesy due any brave man—free and independent enough to face almost alone—through a whole lifetime—an opposing army of architectural styles and ideas that seemed to him (and he was not much mistaken) vicious and meaningless. Small wonder that the present leaders in Europe’s architectural revolution have nearly all paid homage to him. As an artist and as a technician, he belongs to his own generation, a generation unwilling to admit that man could get along quite nicely for a while without the handicrafts; he has never submitted to a strict intellectual discipline as have Mies or Oud, and accordingly his work is set apart from the rest of the exhibition. The House on the Mesa is certainly tangential to the International Style if not within it, but the other work of his that are shown here almost so relation to it. The scale of both the Millard House at Pasadena and the R.L. Jones House at Tulsa is extraordinary, although in the former, the elaborate surface pattern acts as a disguise... It is almost impossible to believe that the house is twenty feet high. At first glance it looks eighty.

The Empire State Building is the only modern skyscraper in New York. The proselytizers of the International Style have taken such alarm at the “Modernistic” mooring tower and a few irrelevant dabs of ornament that they have completely overlooked the virtues of this building, and, in so doing, left out of the exhibition the first structurally new skyscraper that has been built in twenty-five years. It has been called “theatric” and “fule,” compared to it, the Daily News Building is stage scenery... One of the rooms in the exhibition is devoted to the subject of housing. Mr. Numbert’s comparison of Lower East Side Slums and Park Avenue Super-Slums is in no way exaggerated and the European Housing Developments of J.J.P. Oud, Ernst May, and Otto Haesler help to expose the barbaric conditions prevailing in America.

Book Review of
The International Style: Architecture Since 1922.

(Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., and Philip Johnson. New York: W.W. Norton. 1932. $5.)

Henry C. Churchill

(Creative Art, June 1932, pp. 489–90.)

One is inclined to give this book more serious consideration than it deserves, because it deals with a phase of architecture which is unquestionably important. A book of sound criticism and analysis of the movement headed by Le Corbusier, Gropius, Oud, and Van der Rohe is sorely needed. Unfortunately, The International Style is just another volume of propaganda; and considering that the authors are the self-appointed high-priests of the “Style,” not very good propaganda.

Of Wright it is sadly said that “Instead of developing some one of the manners which he has initiated, he has begun again and again with a different material or different problem and arrived at quite a new manner.” It does not occur to the authors apparently that different materials require quite different uses, or different problems different solutions. And while the essentially organic character of Wright’s growth is thus misapprehended, Mr. Hoo, who has never initiated anything, but has played along with the fashions, is commended for the very lack of architectural principle that is so roundly condemned in other American architects who give their clients what they want—even though this giving the client his wants is later referred to as an important function much neglected by European “functionalists.” But Hoo evidently has accepted the “discipline” and is now a monkey in good international standing.

The principles underlying the work of the major European (and some American) architects are exceedingly important and of great influence in shaping the future of the art. It would be well if architects and laymen were given a reasoned explanation and evaluation of them. But nothing except harm to architectural progress can come from such superficial and misleading digna as is contained in the volume under discussion. The attempt to lift a current phase, interesting and valuable as Cubism was interesting and valuable, to the level of a great formed style, should be combated by all who have the future of architecture at heart. What is vital in its ideas will survive and grow; but a great new architecture can never reach maturity by fixing it in the infantile mold of The International Style.

The photographs are most excellent.

(The Henry Churchill is not to be confused with Henry S. Churchill of Thompson & Churchill who designed the office building at 57th Street and Lexington Avenue that was exhibited in the MoMA 1932 show, (see Skyline January 1982 p. 30.—Ed.)
Crown of the City

The Seagram Building Reconsidered

Kurt W. Forster

Tarnished it may be, and aloof it always was; but even now, the Seagram Building would still remain New York City's crown jewel. It is a dream come true: the sudden reality of a vision first formulated after World War I by Mies' Kunsttäube ("crown of the city"), which secularized the Gothic cathedral as a new symbol of collective identity, and was conceived in technical terms by Mies and the Rohe for his Friedrichstrasse towers in Berlin. If this vision could foresee tall shafts of glass towering over the grimy city, only structural and economic ingenuity would bring about their realization. There is more than irony to the gap between plans of the 1920s and the buildings of the 1950s. This BRÜCKNER's of Expressionist vision acquired the skeletal frame from the tall buildings of Mies' first American hometown—Chicago —and the utopian community took the shape of business corporation. Taut's declaration—"The Gothic cathedral is in the process of becoming the model architecture of glass"—yielded to Mies' technical definition of modern buildings as structures of "skin and bones."

Skyscraper Revealed

Mies preferred the publication of his skyscraper projects of 1919-21 with the observation that "skyscrapers reveal their bold concept only during construction, when they overwhelm by the sight of their towering steel frame. This impression is completely destroyed by the addition of walls; the constructive idea which is the necessary basis for artistic creation is disfigured by a medley of meaningless and trivial forms." According to Mies, the new buildings should show precisely that which formerly had remained hidden within them. Since the introduction of the skeletal steel frame, the skeleton separated itself from the face and fill of the building. Mies wanted to avoid the simple side-by-side juxtaposition of traditional architectonic building materials that could be seen everywhere in Berlin at the turn of the century, especially in the larger department stores' new use of glass. However, the purpose of these commercial buildings was not to bare their architectural structure, but to exhibit consumer goods temptingly tight and close at hand. These new examples could still only accent the conflict between the modern materials of steel and glass and the traditional idea of an internally and externally multilayered, ornate architecture.

Moreover, it was less a question of the gradual exposure of their inner structure than of the inclusion of purely functional buildings among the higher categories of "Architecture." While the new reality of building technology could be acknowledged in the construction of commercial buildings, it was adamantly rejected for the more exalted categories of institutional and residential ones. Walter Benjamin detected the psychological hurdles inherent in this process when he stated that "construction announces the role of the sublimacious." The power of the modernizing world—one might say its "libido"—sprang from industry, which provided not only raw materials but also ready-made models for the new.

When Mies entered the office of Peter Behrens in Berlin, the principal projects for the AEG factories were being developed. In the Small Motor Factory, for which the plans were completed in the summer of 1910, Behrens and Mies achieved a significant refinement of the construction of the earlier transformer factory in cutting the glazing along the Voltastrasse through the full height of the facade, framing it only by unbroken steel mullions. In structural terms, the facade was fully separated from the wall-envelope, allowing complete glazing of each bay. The condition later called "skin and bones architecture" by Mies had been realized; however, the structural framework of the building appeared on the exterior in the form of massive pillars as an expression of its monumentalism.

Prototypes

Gropius and Le Corbusier had direct knowledge of these developments and both carried them to an important stage closer. Like the skyscrapers on the Friedrichstrasse, rises freely on pillars and is composed of uniform stories? Obviously the supports gain a primary role, and the facade must be defined in its dual function as both transparent membrane and solid envelope. Gropius' new exuberant piloting slabs of his first Berlin projects, soon turned to the cladding cubic block, in which pillars rise either through or directly behind the facade. At the Seagram Building, the pillars stand free on the podium, for the height of the facade they are enclosed by the window wall. At the corners the facade is not simply wrapped around the pillars—in the less rigorous fashion of the nearby Lever House—but appears as a thin plate. The outside edges of the corner pillars come forth, but no columns on the facade express what is the building's structural framework disclosed.

The window wall was, as in the residential skyscrapers in
The Seagram Building is generally considered to be an exemplary masterpiece of the Modern Movement and a refinement of principles underlying the International Style. This analysis yields further insights.

The significance of the Seagram Building cannot be separated from its urban site, whose singularity bears the stamp of Miesian ideas as much as the skyscraper itself. The Seagram works beautifully with McKim, Mead, & White’s Racquet Club across the street—providing the Renaissance square the palace form never had, and responding to the Racquet Club’s rather hackneyed grandeur with the true article—much more successfully than compliant contextualists would ever imagine.

If the complete glowing of buildings was originally intended to better illuminate the interior and to make its structure transparent, Mies also realized a complementary idea: the lighting of the Seagrm Building was installed in such a way that at twilight it begins to shine. 12 As the unveiling of the building finally discloses its own emptiness, its nocturnal illumination lights up nothing but itself. The two pools reflect infinity in the shallowness of a wading pool; the office building, vacant at night, radiates its own emptiness. With involuntary logic the Seagram Building becomes the high industrial realization of the utopian “city crown.” As a cathedral of commerce—in which the mere building materials are a bare monumentalilty—it is also a Merzbau of industry. 13


4. Mies, In Frühlicht, reprint in Ullstein Bauwerk Fundamente (Berlin, 1963), p. 213. This, and all subsequent translations are my own unless otherwise credited.


8. Later, the pillared front of Behrens’ Small Motor Factory greatly impressed Philip Johnson, who adopted its facade—including the very color of its brick facing—with some modifications for his K & E Science Buildings at Yale.


11. In an architecture of post and floor, the “corner solution” is crucial and ought to be discussed in coherent fashion from Gaudi to Mies.


13. Given the nature of Miesian architecture, it is perhaps ironic that Mies appreciated above all the paintings and collages of Paul Klee and Kurt Schwitters. Collages by Schwitters relieved the sparseness of his Chicago apartment. What Schwitters (from the debris of the modern world) was to Schwitters’ surreal imagination, industrial manufacture (a synthetic new world) was to Miesian rigor.
The general conviction among architects that the Museum of Modern Art sold the International Style to the American public in 1932 places too much credit on the power and influence of (high) cultural institutions. By overlooking American "talkies," contemporary architects fail to see that by 1932 Hollywood, in its own inimitable way, had already introduced modernist designs by some of the architects who were to be featured at the MoMA exhibition. For example, in Paul (1930), MGM borrowed heavily from Otto Haesler's school in Celle, Germany; and in the musical comedy Palmy Days (1931), Goldwyn Studios adapted for its set America's first International Style skyscraper, the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society Building by Howe and Lescane. Palmy Days also satirized the health-conscious fervor of the new architecture by having its protagonist, a progressive industrialist, insist that his employees exercise in the building's rooftop steel-and-glass gymnasium. Such anticipations of modern architectural trends were to characterize Hollywood designs for the next two decades.

These film designs were based on the perceptions of the International Style held by Hollywood studios attempting to keep in step with the expectations of their vast audience. Many film producers, from the same working-class and middle-class origins as the majority of their audience, previously had backgrounds in fashion: Sam Goldwyn was a glove salesman; Paramount's Adolph Zukor, a furrier; and David O. Selznick's father, himself also an early film producer, became a jeweler. As Robert Sklar notes in Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies (Random House, 1975), this background taught Hollywood's moguls the financial value of design packaging. Modern design gave their films "class"; it permeated every facet of Hollywood's output—from advertising layouts to moviehouse design. And Hollywood's initial success at influencing fashion through its costume was a major factor in moviestudios' attempts to set architectural trends.

Spurred by an audience eager to see alternate lifestyles, the studios used the International Style as an emblem of their audience's—and perhaps their own—upwardly mobile aspirations. The new architecture portrayed the milieu of the wealthy who were living outside the poverty of the Depression. After the 1929 Crash, for instance, many films recaptured the freeliving flappers of the "Jazz Age" as secretaries, fashion models, or "kept" women. These female character types were always preyed upon by lecherous executives, typified by Adolph Menjou, in ultramodern offices and penthouses. More positive connotations of "modern" design, latent at that time, became prevalent by the mid-1930s. Well before the International Style reached its cinematic apotheosis in The Fountainhead (1949), modern architecture was aligned with the progressive businessman— like Walter Huston in Dodsworth (1936)—or free spirits such as Myrna Loy and William Powell in The Thin Man series (for example, in After the Thin Man, 1936) or Irene Dunne in The Awful Truth (1937).

The studio system and its widespread filmic use of modern design beginning in the mid-1920s required staffs of full-time designers who had been nurtured from birth, as it were, within the studio's fortress walls. These designers were a blend of artist, craftsman, technician, and businessman assigned the task of creating the distinct "look" of MGM Modern versus RKO, Paramount, or Goldwyn Modern. Whereas established designers created most of Hollywood's Art Nouveau or Art Deco designs until the mid-1920s, the International Style came from movie designers who were often not architects and were never partisans of the Modern Movement. They usually absorbed the style's repertoire second-hand, through reproductions in books, magazines, and exhibitions; the Modern Movement's more iconoclastic or radical elements that were not communicable through these media were left behind. Certainly the uninhibited climate of Los Angeles in the 1920s shaped these designers' bold inventiveness, as it did the architecture of Richard Neutra and R. M. Schindler.

Cedric Gibbons, who supervised the art department at MGM for three decades, was the Hollywood studio designer par excellence. Gibbons' father, Austin Patrick Gibbons, practiced architecture in Dublin until the family moved to New York around the turn of the century and he established a successful practice there. It was assumed that Cedric would continue the family business—his grandfather had also been an architect—but Cedric had a stronger interest in painting and sculpture than in architecture, and he enrolled in the Art Students League. He became a draftsman in his father's office after graduation around 1911, but soon resigned to work for Hugo Ballin, a muralist and designer for theater and film. Gibbons then relocated to California and rose to head of MGM's art department in 1924. Until retiring in 1956, all MGM films gave screen credit to him. This fact, combined with his artisticocratic demeanor—he supposedly wore white gloves throughout the day—has caused critics to relegate Gibbons to a purely supervisory role. Yet the modern house he designed for himself and actress Dolores del Rio in L.A. displays a brilliant modern architectural sensibility that belies this harsh dismissal.

As head of the art department of the world's leading film studio, Gibbons inevitably became a prominent figure on the Los Angeles cultural scene and even exhibited with Neutra and Schindler. With a propaganda outlet no architect could ever attain, Gibbons viewed himself not as a slavish imitator of his more exalted brethren, but as an equal partner in the promulgation of modern architecture in the United States.

Under Gibbons, MGM's sets of the early 1930s combine the glass walls, flexible planning, and symmetry of the International Style with the robust, cubistic massing of the de Stijl aesthetic. Interlocking solids and voids also suggest the movement of gears or pistons, a reference to the machine aesthetic of Art Deco that was scorned by the practitioners of the International Style. Unfortunately, within a few years Gibbons diluted this "ultra-modern" design with mannered reworkings of classical pediments and pilasters. More symmetrical planning returned, and the nontactile, machine-made materials were replaced by...
How the Public Learned about Modern Architecture

Palm Days, Goldwyn, 1931; sets: R. Day and Willy Pogany. (Courtesy Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences)

L’Inhumaine, 1924; laboratory by Fernand Léger. (MoMA Film Stills Archives)

Le Vertige, 1926; sets: Rob Mallet-Stevens. (Cinémathèque Française)

After the Thin Man, MGM, 1936; sets: Cedric Gibbons. (Robert Collection)


Television. All Rights Reserved

wood and stone. Tubular furniture, banished to the kitchen, was replaced by upholstered “tuxedo” chairs and sofas in traditional fabrics. One can only speculate that these later sets by Gibbons were executed to respond to MGM’s middle-class audience, for whom eclecticism was meant to appear stylish, retaining a WASP-ish respectability.

In contrast to MGM under Gibbons, other Hollywood studios absorbed the styles of the German and Austrian designers flooding Hollywood in the 1920s and 1930s. These emigres had as pervasive an influence on Hollywood’s International Style design as Neurev, Gropius, Breuer, and Mies van der Rohe were to have on American architecture in the 1940s. The German influence was strongest at Paramount Studios under the direction of German-born architect Hans Dreier, who supervised a retinue of emigres, including two Southern California modernists, Kerl Weber and Joe Peters. In 1932 modern architecture gave a grand tour lecture to Lubitsch’s scenes of upper-class Europeans in Paramount’s Trouble in Paradise (1932)—an important element in the “Lubitsch touch.”

By the late 1930s modern architecture, according to Dreier, was appropriate for film versions of skyscrapers, broadcasting stations, steamships, factories, warehouses, and other structures of an industrial and impersonal nature, having few ties with the past. These designs have the unadorned surfaces, horizontality, and feeling of repose that are hallmarks of the International Style. Their most remarkable feature, however, is a diffused lighting that gives these Paramount sets an incomparable glow.

This effect, created with the diaphanous, translucent “wall” of, say, Artists and Models (1937), is similar to that achieved in Pierre Chareau’s Maison de Verre in Paris. Diffused lighting also characterizes the modern house in The Black Cat (1934), directed by German-born Edgar G. Ulmer. Ulmer, who deserves as much credit for the film’s design as its credited art director, Charles D. Hall, recently described the film as “very much out of my Baushaus period.” (From an interview with Peter Bogdonovvich in 1970, published in Film Culture #56-60, 1974).

Whatever influence the movies exerted on modern architecture resulted largely from their having created an acceptance of the new architecture through its positive association with the great screen stars. For instance, Gibbons’ interiors for Garbo were as closely associated with her glamorous persona as were her silver gowns created by Adrian, MGM’s leading couturier. Some stars actively sought the aid of modern designers. Gloria Swanson, for instance, was no stranger to trend-setting or to modern design. A patron of Sonia Delaunay’s clothing boutique in Paris, she was the Hollywood clotheshorse of the 1920s. To enhance her image of the sophisticated modern woman, she employed the architect Paul Nelson to design the sets for her film What a Widow! (1930). Nelson was an American-born Princeton graduate and alumnus of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Shunning the school’s outmoded architectural principles, he advocated the modern art and architecture of his friend Le Corbusier and his mentor, Auguste Perret. (He was represented in the MoMA show by a design for a pharmacy in Paris.) When he arrived in California, Nelson attacked the film’s design with the evangelical zeal of a true modernist convinced he was bringing modern architecture to the American screen. His designs for Swanson’s Paris townhouse in What a Widow incorporate the free-standing columns, flexible planning, roof terraces, and long horizontal windows of Le Corbusier’s villas, in addition to displaying reproductions of the Cubist paintings of Braque and Picasso.

Hollywood Mode

Although Hollywood’s designers didn’t absorb the International Style until 1930, their subsequent adoption of its vocabulary is as masterful as that of the French film L’Inhumaine of 1924. Created out of aspirations more enlightened than even I’Inhumaine, the cinema’s first use of the International Style, was a conscious effort to promote modern French art and architecture two years before the “Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs” in Paris. It was conceived by its star, Georgette Leblanc, who thought that modern design would enhance the film’s popularity. This intention accorded with the high-minded aspirations of its director, Marcel L’Herbier, who surpassed even Gibbons in lacature. L’Herbier treated the screen as the painter would his canvas; he explored the cinema’s formal possibilities through experimentation in modern decor and dazzling photographic techniques such as superimposition and soft-focus. L’Inhumaine represented a synthesis of L’Herbier’s earlier efforts at modern decor in its assemblage of a renowned team of designers: the architect Robert Mallet-Stevens designed the exterior; Fernand Léger, the laboratory interior; Alberto Cavalcanti and Claude Autant-Lara, the villa interiors, which have furniture by Pierre Chareau and Michel Dufet. Lalique, Puiforcat, and Jean Luce provided the decorative objects; Raymond Templeier, the jewelry; and Paul Parent, the gowns. Mallet-Stevens’ designs for L’Inhumaine and those for Le Vertige, 1926, another L’Herbier film paraphrase his contemporary, cubist-inspired architecture. (He too was represented in the landmark MoMA show with a villa design in Hyeres, France).

Contemporary modernists were members of the class audience for which L’Inhumaine was created. Scanning Hollywood and its mass audience, these modernists were blind to Hollywood’s International Style designs, which are all the more remarkable considering that they were created under conditions vastly different from those of L’Inhumaine. Ironically, when L’Inhumaine had its American premiere under the aegis of The Film Associates, Inc., which included modernists like Sheldon Cheney and Friedrich Kiesler, it was promoted as “a moving picture holiday for those who are weary of Hollywood.”

Skylane February 1962
John Montague Massengale

The good American buildings that E. C. Kidder Smith doesn't like couldn't fill a book. Unfortunately, the first published guide to the architecture of the United States includes only his personal and incomplete selections. Touted by its publisher as "an illustrated three-volume guide to American architecture of all regions and all periods" that provides a "panoramic view of architectural development in the United States," the guidebook should have been written by an historian instead of a modernist architect with a strong personal sense of the "right" and "wrong" principles of design. Smith's three volumes are no more a panorama of the architectural development of all periods than was Sigfried Giedion's spacial, Time and Architecture. At $45.00 for the three paperbacks, or $75.00 for the hardbound volumes, one deserves a more balanced survey.

It does have major strengths, however. Smith drove 135,000 miles through all 50 states while preparing these books. He visited all 1386 buildings discussed, photographed each one, and researched them well. For every building listed, there is an informative appraisal written by Smith, as well as an entry supplying the name of the architect, date of completion, location, and visiting hours. Anyone going to a section of the country new to him/her can undoubtedly learn a lot from the guide.

On a recent trip to Vermont Smith's guide introduced me to two wonderful churches -- the Congregationalist churches in Bennington (1804-05) and Middlebury (1806-09), both by a local architect named Lavinus Fillmore -- and told me how to get to Henry Hobson Richardson's ex-library at the University of Vermont. Since I couldn't find any other architectural guide to Vermont, I would have missed all three without Smith's book. On the basis of Smith's overall selection for Vermont, however, I came away with the sense that the state had never progressed from its early Federal style architecture in the same way as its neighbor New Hampshire, with which I was more familiar. Doesn't Vermont have any great Federal buildings like the Pierce Mansion in Portsmouth, or the Portsmouth Athenaeum? Didn't the Greek Revival make it as far as Vermont? And what about all the Victorian buildings that we passed on the road?

When I turned to the chapter on New Hampshire, I found that it gave a similar impression of that state. Twenty-five entries were given for New Hampshire, but only two were for structures built between 1820 and 1867 -- one was for two very elementary covered bridges, the other for a simple nineteenth-century mill village too poor to be attractively up-to-date. The high-style Federal buildings of Portsmouth were ignored, like the town's fine examples of Victorian Italianate, the U.S. Customs House and Post Office by Ammi Burnham Young (1827-50), and the City Hall (William Tucker, ca. 1856). The nearby Wentworth-by-the-Sea Hotel (1874-ca. 1881), the only great Victorian summer hotel still standing on the New England coast north of Boston, was left out, as were its inland counterparts in Jackson -- Wentworth Hall (1881-87), Gray's Inn (1885), and Eagle Mountain House (1915-16, 1925-29) -- and near Mount Washington, the Mountain View House (1906-22) and Mount Washington Hotel (1901-02). The omission of all the fine Richardsonian Romanesque churches, libraries, and train stations built by vacationingBostonians was a serious oversight, as was the lack of any reference to the Gothic Revival and numerous Greek Revival buildings, or the later academic classicism. The only building Smith lists in Concord is the old Merrimack County Bank offices (1826), attributed, although not by Smith, to the local architect and contractor John Leach. The sociological State House, the oldest American state capital in which the legislature meets in its original chambers (1816-19, 1864-66, 1930-11); Goy Lowell's neo-Grec New Hampshire Historical Society (1909-11); and the many Gothic Revival buildings at Saint Paul's School by Henry Vaughan, Bertram Goveau Goodhue, Ralph Adams Cram, Russell Sturgis Sturges, and James Gamble Rogers are all outstanding examples of public buildings in Concord. But Smith probably objects to their eclecticism.

Smith's biases are less pronounced in his New York City selections, where a more balanced list includes some of Manhattan's great monuments, such as Trinity Church (Richard Upjohn, 1841-46); Grace Church (James Renwick, Jr., 1858); the Flatiron Building (O.H. Burnham, 1901-03); and Grand Central Station (Warren & Wetmstra, Reed & Sten, 1903-13). However, twenty-one of Smith's fifty-two entries for New York were built between 1960 and 1980, and he seems remarkably kind to them, often giving summaries without any critical evaluation of what is, in effect, the architect's intentions. Smith calls I. M. Pei's University Plaza (1966) "one of the few civilized answers to urban living that one will encounter in New York," although many today would call the town-in-the-park solution that Pei used antipathetic. He goes on to say that the towers "rise above a neighborhood that is already well occupied... Yet the neighborhood looked fine before Pei opened long vistas to small buildings that were never intended to be seen from a distance, leaving the row houses looking unwittingly demoted. The entry on Richard Meier's Bronx Developmental Center (1970-77) commends the appearance of the silver panels "perfected for airplanes and advanced engineering" without discussing whether or not the image is appropriate for a mental hospital intended to help patients move back into normal community life. Lincoln Center and the World of Birds Building at the Bronx Zoo are unanimously choices for a limited list.

Eleni Constantine

America’s dreams and ideologies come in large part from the romanticized notion of American history. They lie at the heart of some of our nation’s greatest tragedies. The Civil War, the Dust Bowl, the burning of Los Angeles can all be read as conflicts between those who sought the ideology of landed power and those who could not. These concepts pervade today’s mundane reality as well. The physical embodiment of the American dream of self-made independence and middle-class mobility reinforces the idea of progress and frontiers in its years before and behind.

In Land in America, planner Peter Wolf contends that these powerful dreams and beliefs now blind the public eye to the real problems that they themselves have largely created. Specifically, Wolf argues that these outdated myths have rendered the public unable to see the large-scale societal changes that have taken place with the ways “big money” has found to manipulate the determination of land’s use and value. Wise up, Wolf says.

Wolf feels that such eye-opening is particularly crucial today. His thesis runs as follows. For the first time in American history, public policy has abandoned the public interest for the average citizen. “The public” that goes with the ways “big money” has found to manipulate the determination of land’s use and value. Wise up, Wolf says.

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Exhibits

Boston / Cambridge

Drawings of Andrea Palladio Through Feb. 28 Over 100 drawings from the Royal Institute of British Architects and 15 other collections. The catalogue has an introduction and text by Douglas Lewis, curator of the exhibition. Fogg Museum, Harvard University; (617) 495-2397

Charles Moore Feb. 22 - March 12 "Works," from 1966 to the present. Harvard Graduate School of Design; (617) 495-5964

Chicago

Architecture: Sequences Through Feb. 21 An exhibition of drawings, photographs, models, and little books by Philippe Guerrier, Jenny Low, Loma McNeur, Deborah Oliver, and Peter Wilson. The catalogue will have an introductory text by the exhibition's curator, Bernard Tschumi. Bergman Gallery, Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, 5811 South Ellis Avenue; (312) 753-2866

Los Angeles

Rudolph Schindler Through Feb. 28 Drawings of residents, commercial structures, tall buildings, and large housing schemes done by Rudolph Schindler between 1914 and 1950. Schindler House, 853 North Kings Road; (213) 651-1310

Otis-Parrsons Through Feb. 28 An exhibit of drawings by designers, architects, and illustrators, including Leon Krier, Helmut Jahn, Frank Gehry, Cesar Pelli, and Ivan Chermayeff. Work will be auctioned on February 4 at the Bilmore Hotel and then returned to the Otis-Parrsons Gallery for the exhibit. Otis-Parrsons Gallery, 2401 Wilshire Boulevard; (213) 387-5288 ext. 205

Minneapolis

De Stijl, 1917-1931: Visions of Utopia Through March 28 Paintings, drawings, architectural models, furniture, and graphic designs by the de Stijl artists. A 260-page book with 12 essays by prominent scholars has been published to coincide with the exhibit. A concert, symposium, and film series are also offered. Walker Art Center, Vineland Place; (612) 375-7600

New York City

McKim, Mead & White’s New York Through Feb. 12 Photographs, drawings, and models by this distinguished firm, sponsored by Classical America. Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

Landmark Decisions Through Feb. 12 Photographs and background information on buildings that will be considered at the Landmark Preservation Committee’s public hearing Feb. 9. Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-3960

Gilbert Rohde Through Feb. 15 Display of furniture by this designer, made for Herman Miller. Herman Miller, Inc. 600 Madison Avenue; (212) 935-9490

SOM Through Feb. 20 Examples of recent work by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Avery Hall, Columbia University, School of Architecture; (212) 853-3414

Cast Iron in Central Park Through March 31 Drawings, restoration documents, photographs of cast-iron structures in the park. The Dairy, Central Park, 65th Street between the Zoo and the Carousel; (212) 360-8144 for information

Robert Adam and His Style Through April 11 Drawings, furniture, and silver by this celebrated Scottish architect and his circle. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 880-6968

Preservation in Progress: The Seaport District Through April 18 An exhibit illustrating the philosophy and technology of the architectural preservation underway at the South Street Seaport. South Street Seaport Gallery, 215 Water Street; (212) 766-9020

Andreas Feininger Feb. 1 - 28 Vintage photographs of New York City architecture from the 1940s through the 1950s. Daniel Wool, Inc. 30 West 75th Street; (212) 966-8432

Jackie Ferrara Feb. 11 - March 6 Maquettes for courtyards, walls, and landscapes. Max Protetch Gallery, 37 West 57th Street; (212) 638-7436

Will Inley Feb. 11 - Mar. 6 Cross-section and drawings of a building from "ONECITY." Max Protetch Gallery, 37 West 57th Street; (212) 880-7436

Landmarks that Aren’t Feb. 15 - March 11 Photo exhibit of outstanding buildings in New York that do not yet have landmark status. Urban Center, 457 Madison; (212) 900-1297

Architectural Fantasy and Reality Feb. 16 - May 9 80 drawings from the late 17th to mid-18th centuries, made as entries for the annual architectural competition at the National Academy of St. Luke in Rome. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street; (212) 660-6966

Avant-Garde Photography in Germany, 1919-1939 Feb. 18 - March 21 A gallery of 25 photographs by Moholy-Nagy, Herbert Bayer, Martin Munkacsi, and Erich Salomon, among others, in a setting designed in the Constructivist style of the day, including original publications, posters, and film material. International Center of Photography, 1135 Fifth Avenue; (212) 219-1373

Columbia Faculty Work Feb. 22 - March 12 Exhibit of projects by the faculty of the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning. Avery Hall, Columbia; (212) 853-3414

Stanley Tigerman March 2 - 27 Architectural drawings. Rosa Esman Gallery, 29 West 57th Street; (212) 421-9490

Philadelphia

Louis I. Kahn: Working Drawings Through Feb. 27 AIA Gallery, 117 South 17th Street, Philadelphia; (215) 569-3186

Princeton

Craig Hodgetts / Robert Mangurian Feb. 21 - March 11 Victoria Landmarks: City Hall; (212) 900-1297

Bernard Tschumi Feb. 16 - March 11 Excerpts from the Screenplay drawings: some architectural devices toward a New Modernity. Princeton University School of Architecture; (609) 452-3741

Rem Koolhaas / Stefano de Martin Feb. 23 - March 10 (tentative) An exhibition entitled "Renaissances of a Panoptic Prison." Princeton University School of Architecture; (609) 452-3741

St. Louis

The City in the 1990s Through March 14 An exhibit on the city's architectural heritage from 1980 - 1991. Washington University Gallery, Art, Steinberg Hall; (314) 889-5293

St. Paul

Prairie School in Minnesota, Iowa, & Wisconsin Feb. 14 - April 10 Photographs, drawings, furniture, stained glass, decorative objects designed by Louis Sullivan, Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahony, Percy Dwight Bentley, George Mahler, and Frank Lloyd Wright. Minnesota Museum of Art, Landmark Center, 75 West 5th Street, (612) 743-4400

San Francisco / Bay Area

Halprin/Cityscapes by Young Artists and Architects Through Feb. 27 Design sketches of new projects by Ehrlich, Gehry, Koenigsberger, Kezin Martin, Bruce Thom. Bphilip Bonnafont Gallery, 470 Greene Street; (415) 701-8956


Seattle

James Turrell Through July Light environments in carefully controlled architectural space. Lippy Building, 108 First Avenue South; (206) 624-6394

Washington

125th Anniversary of the AIA Through Feb. 21 A recreation of architectural offices from 1857 - 1982 exhibited to celebrate the AIA's anniversary. The Octagon, 1799 New York Avenue, N.W.; (202) 638-3105

Naples, Italy


Next

In the spring at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, April 16 and 17, a symposium, "The International Style in Perspective," marking the 50th anniversary of the "Modern Architecture" show at MoMA in 1952. Papers answering the International Style and its influence will be presented by David Handlin, Kurt Forster, Robert A.M. Stern, Rosemarie Blatter, Anthony Vidler, and Neil Levine. There will also be panel discussions, along with an exhibit including photographs and models of material from the 1952 MoMA show. A special section will provide documentation on how the traveling exhibition was received in other cities.
From Outhouse to Kinderhaus

In these days of technical progress, post-modern invention, and commission shortages, there appears to be a resurgence of interest in two generally overlooked building types. Last summer Architectype sponsored an Outhouse Competition under the aegis of Philip Johnson. Hundreds of 8"x10" prints were received (but reportedly "few from the big boys") indicating that they had been created in the hearts of architects everywhere. Selections were made by Mr. Johnson last November and results will be published in a forthcoming Architectype (February or March, they say).

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New Architecture Books from MIT

The Beaux-Arts and Nineteenth-Century French Architecture
edited by Robin Middleton
“This book goes beyond what is normally associated with the École des Beaux-Arts to present what is possibly the best collection of essays on 19th-century architecture in France.”—Henry A. Millon, Dean, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art
272 pp., 202 illus., 11 in color $29.95

Experiments in Gothic Structure
by Robert Mark
Using computer models to apply the analytical techniques of structural mechanics to Gothic cathedrals, this book provides surprising answers to puzzles that have long confronted architectural historians. The author is a professor of architecture and civil engineering at Princeton and chairman of the Program of Architecture and Engineering.
232 pp., 78 illus., 4 in color $15.00

The Art of Building in Yemen
by Fernando Varanda
“...a comprehensive study of a complex, rich, and beautiful architectural style—so different from what most Americans or Westerners know.”—Dr. Carl Brown, Director, Near Eastern Studies Program, Princeton University
290 pp., 800 illus., 16 pp. in color $50.00
in paperback

London: The Unique City
Revised Edition
by Steen Eiler Rasmussen
“Rarely has any planning work combined keen insight, comprehensive knowledge, good writing and sensitivity as effectively as does this classic... Profusely illustrated with photographs, maps, and sketches, this is a book to be enjoyed not only on first reading but repeatedly.” In print and updated since 1934.
512 pp., 32 illus. $9.95

Buffalo Architecture:
A Guide
by Reyner Banham, Charles Beveridge, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and the Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corporation
352 pp., 262 illus. $9.95

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