The Office for Metropolitan Architecture

Plus: Neutra in Vienna,
Frampton in Japan (2),
Interview with Cesar Pelli,
Insider’s Guide to Architecture Schools, and More Emerging Voices
Gwendolyn Wright

It would at least be some compensation to think that, in answering Diane Ghirardo’s rather disjointed and contradictory review of my book (Skyline, April 1982, p. 31), I would be taking part in an intelligent discussion of American housing or the relations between architecture and politics. Regrettably, she has made such an exchange difficult by misrepresenting my book as a “study of ‘dream’ housing” that “centers largely upon middle-class American families.” Judging from her consistent unwillingness to read with any care (rather than from the fact that she is a specialist in Italian Fascist architecture), Ghirardo has scant grounds on which to object, or even to carefully appraise either the material or the interpretation.

First let me set the record straight: Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America (Pantheon, N.Y., 1981) is a presentation of the ways in which Americans have continually tried to give domestic architecture a social significance. The book focuses on a broad range of people, including home economists, industrialists, and politicians, as well as architects and builders, and shows what they hoped—or at least claimed—housing reforms could do. Different groups have used housing as part of a political, taking a stand on what they believed should be the country’s dominant political, social, and cultural ideals, insisting that their proposals were the best way to respond to some dramatic change in American life. Their statements revolved primarily around social issues they related—often quite directly—to architectural design; for instance, the government’s obligation to provide certain social services or to direct the economy; the definition of “good family life”; the possibilities for upward mobility in this country; the benefits of dangers of missing different classes, races, and ethnic groups.

But there is another side to this popular involvement that my history of housing also considers in depth. In their concern with promoting or opposing certain kinds of housing, largely owing to the association of housing schemes with social and political issues, the groups in question—not least of course, not always—tended to evade the real problems of class, racial, and sexual inequality, purporting that there were architectural “solutions” to these problems. This pattern is a critical aspect of architectural reform programs, especially in the American context.

Clearly European traditions, as well as innovations among European architects, have repeatedly played a role in American housing. Building the Dream includes numerous references to how Puritan houses resembled English medieval dwellings, how row-house builders took up English prototypes, how Gothic Revival carpenters studied Ruickin, how apartment architects proudly used the appellation “French flats” for their buildings, and how certain New Deal architects drew from German social housing schemes. But this has never simply been a case of imitation or even Kitchen Invention. As anyone who is even minimally familiar with American history knows, Americans have long been wary of European influence. Hence the formal borrowing was always tempered by efforts to find a distinct native approach to architecture. This is not my naive cultural provincialism, as Ghirardo suggests, but merely an acknowledgment of the strong desire for cultural independence that emerged again and again in American housing and in the texts that sought to direct future housing patterns.

The strains that resulted from conflicting desires for innovation, respectability, and reform were by no means limited to middle-class families and their architecture. Building the Dream compares the housing that was designed and built for the middle class, the working class, and the poor. Although it is true that I conscientiously downplay the homes of the wealthy—and therefore the work of many great architects—this is because such houses are the only ones with which we are generally familiar; it seemed due time to describe the overwhelming majority of ordinary dwellings.

There is also a consistent effort in my book to portray the people who did not fit into the nuclear family, whether they were boarders or single professional women living alone. All in all, I sought to trace the links between philanthropic housing for the poor or industrial housing for workers, middle-class domestic ideals, the development of a home-building industry, and the evolution of architectural styles that have been used for dwellings.

Let me say outright that I am by no means giving a complete picture of early New England towns or immigrant life in industrial cities. While the book does not analyze Purian farming patterns or ethnic demography, it also neglects the dynamics of baseball, the space program, and military tactics in the Civil War. I am not claiming to have taken on all aspects of American culture, but rather to have shown the place of housing in that culture. An interpretive essay does not imply an exhaustive cataloguing. From the cover to the back, each of the chapters in Building the Dream, I have tried to point out the irony, contradictions, and complexity in Americans’ obsession with their housing. These themes have thoroughly escaped Ms. Ghirardo’s opined reading.

Taking an egregious example, she objects to my including a chapter on slave housing, even though she does admit that it is “full of little-known information presented in a highly readable fashion.” Ghirardo should be aware that there has been a major reevaluation of slavery in the past twenty years, centering on the work of scholars like Herbert Gutman and Lawrence Levine. Would she also accuse them of “cruel and somewhat ludicrous” attention to the complexities and subtleties of slave culture? They have shown that blacks were not simply passive recipients of the slaveowners’ norms, without denying the extreme weight of this domination. To present what blacks pleased together under slavery and what white planters tried to impose is not an apology for slavery, despite Ghirardo’s caricature. What is really at stake in her stance is the kind of elitist—and, indeed, racist, in this context—superiority that claims to “protect” people outside the realms of high art, who can impose their lives and their environments with those of the elite.

Similarly, the statement that I don’t discuss household technology is not only erroneous—yet another sign of sloppy or willfully distorted thinking—it is also an important distinction between cataloguing new technology and analyzing its use. I chose to focus on architectural advances into a social and political analysis of women’s work in the house. The chapters on apartment houses, Victorian suburban dwell, and, lastly, eighteenth-century-bungalows are filled with details about domestic technology and the women who used it. It is my opinion, more important than a technological reductionism that assumes that “the house as factory” was a feature of some sort. This phrase has very different meanings to the producers of appliances, the professional “home efficiency experts” who taught home-economics courses, the women who did factory-piece work in tenement apartments, modernist architects, and the middle-class feminists who called for “the house of the future . . . that can be cleaned with a hose.” For a more detailed discussion of these conflicts, one could also turn to my earlier book, Realm and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873-1923 (University of Chicago Press, 1989).

Since Ghirardo herself has not published a monograph on this subject, one is forced to turn to the book she holds up as the main source of my information, David Handlin’s American Home: Architecture and Society, 1815-1925 (1979). While I do not take quite the same line, I do believe that his treatment, in particular, is more thoroughly familiar with the work of other scholars (pp. 96, 102, 116, 122, 129, 147, 156-62, 168-71). In each case there is an emphasis, first, on the sale of new houses by promoters with “All Modern” furniture, and second, on the manner in which such improvements played into the controversies over whether modern appliances would mean less housework and hence greater freedom for women. This connection is, in my opinion, more important than a technological reductionism that assumes that “the house as factory” was a feature of some sort. This phrase has very different meanings to the producers of appliances, the professional “home efficiency experts” who taught home-economics courses, the women who did factory-piece work in tenement apartments, modernist architects, and the middle-class feminists who called for “the house of the future . . . that can be cleaned with a hose.” For a more detailed discussion of these conflicts, one could also turn to my earlier book, Realm and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873-1923 (University of Chicago Press, 1989).

I would be the last person to insist that there is nothing to criticize in my book, but I will insist that such criticisms be accurate. More is at stake than individual reputations and personal grievances. History is relevant to many social, political, and aesthetic issues facing us today, and many architects, as well as historians of the built environment, have come to recognize this. Yet the reviews of architects’ discourse about the past are, in the end, less significant than the consequences of all historians writing, for the historian is responsible for understanding and conveying social complexity, constructing the past, while architects, after all, build. As one of my colleagues in a building—one cannot present a randomly called selection of thoughts and preferences as if this were an integral, representative whole. Whatever one thinks of post-modern architecture, it is pastiche of post-modern historical scholarship, which is exemplified in Ghirardo’s writing, has no visual merit to compensate for its distorted, irresponsible, and egotistical position.

The following was received in response to the review by Diane Ghirardo of Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America by Gwendolyn Wright that was published in the April issue of Skyline.
Westway Waning?

Over the last few years, no project has been more fiercely debated—and fought over—than Westway. Now, the controversial $2 billion, 8-lane roadway and development project is on the ropes, shaken by a strongly-worded court decision and buffeted by growing political opposition.

Since the mid-1970s, Westway's powerful supporters, led by Governor Hugh Carey and including business leaders like David Rockefeller as well as the construction unions, have propelled the superhighway plan forward. But a coalition of mass transit, community, environmental, and other grass-roots groups has long been fighting this vanishing project. Even uncertain will flopped contested failed to bolstered roots groups have tenaciously resisted worded mammoth $2 debated-and Koch appropriations.

Since the requirement that evidence Federal Judge Thomas Griesa blocked Washington Sq" and this year and possibly drag on when Federal Judge Thomas Griesa Corps waterfront, or Rockefeller increasing legal and block the project. The proposed Battery-to42nd-Street highway could rise in the city's trade-in estimated its right-of-way about 10 acres. But estimated members right. Of course, the legal battle is just beginning, and the court's ruling could impact other landmark cases in the future.

In its report, the Interfaith Commission maintained that landmarking of religious structures poses "a threat to religious freedoms," violates the First Amendment, and is often approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) "less for reasons of architectural merit than to block any change or development" in a neighborhood. Noting the conflicting congregations and financial problems of many churches, the report asks that the landmarks law exempt religious structures from the designation.

Such an exemption would give churches and synagogues free rein to seek substantial profits by exploiting the development potential of their properties, regardless of the architectural and historical value of their present buildings. In the case of the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, the congregation sought to sell the property to a highrise developer, who would then have bought the United Methodist congregation space on the ground floor. The LPC designated the church last November, calling it "a major work of the prominent nineteenth-century architect R.H. Robertson." After the Board of Estimate approved the designation, the intersection of the landmarks law, the church filed suit to overturn the landmarking. The LPC is also expected to hold a hearing soon on whether to designate the Second

Landmark Lashback

R.H. Robertson, Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew; 1897, West End Avenue and 66th Street (photo: Andrew Dolbear/Landmarks Preservation)

Church of Christ, Scientist, a copper-domed limestone building designed by Frederick Lambostock in 1900; a campaign in support of landmarking is being organized by Christopher Gray, a private consultant, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy to forestall possible demolition. The possible developer, whose name remains undisclosed, has talked to James Stewart Polshek & Partners about designing a highrise that would replace the Central Park West church. "I have no agreements," Polshek told Skyline. "I am not involved in any formal way at this time," said Polshek, whose restoration and renovation work elsewhere has gained him the confidence of preservationists.

In the unlikely event that the Interfaith Commission's recommendations are adopted, religious institutions would be freed from the review process to which other property owners are subject—even though the churches have enjoyed tax exemption. LPC Executive Director Lenore Norman points out that religious institutions, like other property owners, can ask to be relieved of designation on the basis of hardship; this would be granted if no purchaser for the property were found, or if the city failed to make an offer. Preservers from landmarking would not help most congregations outside Manhattan, since developers win little interest in those properties. If the churches really want to deal with the problem, they should explore alternatives to demolition, possibly including—an Ralph Menapace, Jr., president of the Municipal Art Society, suggests—setting up a low-interest loan fund.

What is most disturbing about the Interfaith Commission's report is its utter lack of sensitivity to the importance of preservation. As Menapace puts it, "I think there is a bankruptcy of moral leadership on the part of the churches to say that in order to carry out their mission, they must cannibalize our architecture and cultural heritage."
Carnegie Hall Cleans Out

Like many cultural institutions, Carnegie Hall has discovered the value of its real estate. The Carnegie Hall Corporation, which leases the landmarked hall from the city, recently put out a request for proposals for development of an adjacent parking lot. The hope is for an office building, or a combination office building and hotel, that would not only generate funds to finish the recently begun $20-million restoration of Carnegie Hall, but would provide badly-needed support space for the hall.

In announcing the request for proposals, Carnegie Hall Corporation President Isaac Stern said, "At a time when government support for the arts is diminishing, Carnegie Hall is looking for practical, businesslike ways to help ensure its future." But a group of about 40 tenants in Carnegie Hall—artists, ballet schools, choreographers, and others who live or work in the institution—contends that the corporation has been too "businesslike" in its dealings with them. These tenants charge that proposed rent hikes will force out residents and arts groups and turn the studio into conventional office spaces. While Carnegie Hall insists it loses "minimal" sums on the studio operation, requiring it to raise rents to market levels, tenants retort that the corporation is inflating its losses. Recently, a tenant lawyer won a court order for Carnegie Hall to produce its records to demonstrate the reason rent increases were required.

Not all the studio tenants are involved in the rent dispute: the corporation says 70 percent of them have signed leases. Carnegie Hall has attracted architectural firms as tenants for a number of years, and they report divergent experiences.

Robert Siegel of Gwathmey Siegel says the firm moved out, not because of any quarrel with management, but because it simply needed more space. Architect Tod Williams, however, says that his rent was increased dramatically, that he was only offered a one-year lease, and that his elevator service was going down. "I'm not sure what the motivation was of which spurred him to find other office space," Williams is still hoping to sign a lease allowing him to remain as a residential tenant in his studio. He says he can absorb a rent increase, but needs a longer-term lease and some assurance that rents will be stabilized.

The Carnegie Hall renovation that began in February—the first step will create a new Recital Hall lobby—has drawn wide praise; the architects are James Stewart Polshek & Partners. While no one knows what kind of building will go up adjacent to the hall, the Carnegie Hall Corporation has established some good guidelines, such as "street level and lower floor uses which reinforce the special character of West 57th Street." The corporation must recognize—in actions, not just words—that the studio tenants are part of Carnegie Hall's tradition. If the artistic community there is forced out by high rents, the concert hall itself will lose part of its character.

William B. Tuchill, Carnegie Hall. Top: at its opening, 1891.

42nd Street Developments

Plans to redevelop the Times Square area (see Skyline, December 1981, p. 3) took a step forward last month when the 20-story 42nd Street West development proposal was approved by the city's Urban Development Corporation. The project will involve the construction of three buildings to carry out a projected $1 billion in construction along 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. While there has been relatively little controversy about the redevelopment so far, construction is unlikely to start before 1984, and it could well be later; leases must still be negotiated with the developers; the Board of Estimate must give approval; and at least some Times Square property owners are certain to fight condemnation in the courts.

The developers selected include Park Tower Realty Corporation, owned by George Klein, which will build four office towers containing about 4.5 million sf. at the intersection of Broadway, Seventh Avenue, and 42nd Street (the firm will also spend $21.6 million on renovating the Times Square subway station). New York Mart, a partnership headed by the Morse family of California, which will construct a wholesale trade mart for garment and non-garment industry use on Eighth Avenue between 40th and 42nd Street (the firm reportedly beat out a partnership of John Portman and Harry Helmsley) and Housing Innovations/Planning Innovations, a minority-owned, Boston-based firm, which will build a 500-room hotel on Eight Avenue between 42nd and 43rd Streets. In addition, eight Broadway theaters, most of which are now movie houses, will be renovated. The Nederlanders Organization will refurbish The New Amsterdam and The Harris for use as a legitimate theater; two more will be renovated for commercial theater use and two for use by nonprofit performing arts groups (none of the operators have yet been chosen); two remaining theaters will be renovated as restaurant or retail space. A ninth Broadway theater, The New Apollo, has already been restored by the Borough President, and is kept operating as a legitimate theater; its future operator is uncertain.

The conditional developers were selected from twenty-six proposals submitted to city and state agencies. Leases must now be signed, which will take several months. The most certain to be scrutinized is the extent of the tax abatements received by the developers, which the city says is "normal" but which one member of Community Board 3 says appears to be greater than usual. Some efforts to purchase properties along the strip to be redeveloped are certain to fail, and when the State Urban Development Corporation confines those sites, the owners will resort to the courts. Nevertheless, the ten-year redevelopment scheme, for which Cooper/Eckstut Associates were the design consultants, is clearly moving ahead. In the press release announcing the developers, City Planning Commission Chairman Herbert Sturz proclaimed, "This project will wipe out the blight and menace of 42nd Street," thereby joining a long list of officials who have made such predictions over the years. Whether the forecast comes true in this latest venture remains to be seen.

Model of Design Guidelines proposal for 42nd Street redevelopment (photo: Bo Parker)

Riverwalk Update

In addition to the two West Side waterfront projects—Westway and the Penn Central yard—that are hot in water, concern is building along the East River. Early this year, the city and the developers of River Walk, a proposed $831-million residential, commercial, and recreational complex, announced a tentative plan for the development of land along the riverfront stretch between 16th and 24th Streets. However, critics are upset by key planning and financial features of the proposal, which must still be approved by the Board of Estimate. And although it is almost two years since Mayor Koch selected River Walk from a group of four proposals, it is still uncertain who will be the architects of the project: The Grauer Partnership, which was hired along with Hooker/Skelton and Associates of Miami, is now negotiating with the developers to withdraw from the project.

River Walk's developers, the Canadian-based Cadillac Fairview Corporation and Related Housing Company of New York, were chosen by Koch after months of politicking and lobbying by a bevy of builders, lawyers, and public relations firms presenting the four proposals. River Walk's plan called for 1800 rental apartments in buildings no higher than 32 stories, a hotel, a marina, retail space, a waterfront promenade, and other public facilities. Community Board 6 was not enthusiastic about any of the four proposals, and after Koch selected River Walk the board voted to seek a 25-percent reduction in its density. This reduction, reflecting East Sideers' concern about the impact on the area's already overburdened services, thus far has not been supported by city officials.

But River Walk raises other, equally important questions. Joanna Battaglia, who heads the waterfront committee of Community Board 6, charges that the Koch administration is not holding the developers "to the promises and conditions that were part of the original proposals" and that initially pledged that the apartments would be rental; now, they have won the option of building condominiums. Developers originally promised to stay with the project after it was built; now they have withdrawn this promise, sparking fears of a buyer who would skimp on maintenance. As one member of City Board 6, River Walk's developers had stated they would seek no tax abatement; now they have turned to the Mayor's Board to seek a special tax abatement, and plan to take advantage of the Section 421 abatement program. While this program is available "as of right" to most developers and was designed to encourage new construction, critics question if it is needed in an area often referred to as "the Gold Coast."

Then there is the question of waterfront access. Although a 10-acre park and promenade are promised, local residents want assurance that it will be a real promenade along the water, not walkways between the commercial spaces—and not set back near the FDR Drive. The developers are giving verbal assurances, but they can't provide detailed plans because none have been drawn up. Jordan Czuren says that "differences relating to the site plan and project management" have impeded an effective working relationship with Hooker/Skelton; he says Czuren ordered them to withdraw if a financial settlement can be arranged. As negotiations continue, the developers are talking to Davis Brody and Associates as a possible replacement for The Grauer Partnership.

Recently, Cadillac-Fairview indicated it was pulling out of the housing field. But the firm says it is sticking with River Walk, and city officials are now negotiating a lease to be presented to the Board of Estimate. Unless the city takes a tough stance with the developers—on planning, design, and other issues—a valuable waterfront opportunity will be lost.
Isozaki’s Museum Designs for MoCA

Joseph Giovannini

In late March, the newly formed Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA) called a press conference that held every promise of being a benign social formality: architect Arata Isozaki was to present the final schematic plans for the museum’s long-anticipated downtown facility. It could only go well: Los Angeles wants its museum, and Isozaki is the type of “world-class” architect that has eluded all the other L.A. museums.

MoCA Board Chairman Eli Broad and Director Pontus Hulten made the requisite pro forma comments, but it was Max Palevsky, chairman of the Architecture Committee—which was responsible for creating the building—who flagged the audience to attention with rather unexpected remarks in this building, he explained, “the architecture should disappear” and be a “neutral backdrop.” “It is not that the exterior is unimportant only secondary,” Palevsky later said, “but people will come to see the art, not the building.”

Isozaki then presented a scheme that admirably met the client’s neutralizing requirements. Sitting pregnantly in the background, however, were three models of previous schemes, each one of which looked, at least from its exterior, more interesting than the final proposal. Isozaki’s presentation dwelled visually and verbally on the museum interior: the public galleries were all conveniently located on the same level, and most galleries received natural lighting through skylights. The building made no particular gesture to the street other than closure and, perhaps, the inclusion of a sunken courtyard; it had no symbolic presence that distinguished it as a cultural institution important to the city.

During an informal conversation later in the press conference, Isozaki mentioned that the proposed scheme was formally static—a seemingly unfavorable description. This comment prompted more questions, and Isozaki’s responses gradually revealed the remarkable fact that the architect did not actually endorse the scheme he had just presented; he preferred the previous one, submitted in January, the model of which was also on view. Isozaki was breaking rank.

In a subsequent interview, Isozaki talked about the long and rather grueling design process that led to the March scheme, which, he said, “had no special character.” Designing the building was problematic for a full eight or nine months because it was given no fixed site within the rectangular plaza area of California Plaza—the billion-dollar, mixed-use development project designed by Arthur Erickson and Associates to wrap around the museum in a shallow "U." Isozaki spent a great deal of effort with an as-yet-unshaped program, trying to define the site by designing the building. During that process, the developers (Bunker Hill Associates) and Erickson required that the museum be sunk substantially below street level so that it would not obstruct sight lines from Grand Avenue to the commercial area deep into the site, along the base of the "U." The architect was required to fragment the museum’s mass so that it did not wall off California Plaza from Grand Avenue. (Both Bunker Hill Associates and the Community Redevelopment Agency had the power to reject the scheme.)

By the fall of 1981 Isozaki was left to design an art institution building with one of the most conspicuous profiles since New York’s Museum of Modern Art, but to design it within an allotted envelope that resembled a broad iceberg split in two. With a backlog of buildings that rise twenty-seven stories high, Isozaki was permitted a visible horizontal lip about twenty feet high. The architects had to submerge the main floor of the building so that people could walk over the museum and enter part of the roof on the plaza level to the shopping area beyond.

Isozaki managed to rescue the museum from this circumstantial setback with a January design which, on the outside, held its own in a permissible highrise canyon: his design called for strong volumes, primary forms—one with a symbolic presence—and a weighty exterior material (Indian red sandstone). A section of the administration block was twisted against the orthogonal lines and elevated above street level to form a gateway. The buildings in the plan had the configuration of a ‘Yin-Yang’ unit separated by the void of a sunken plaza. The spiral—as a form and as a system of organization and detailing—was basic to the concept.

The museum's Architecture Committee, which had been influenced by the opinions of a local artists' group over a long period of time, focused its attention on the interior...
HHPA’s Design for LACMA

Robert Coombs

In the early 1960s, at about the same time as Dorothy Chandler established her "temple to music" on Bunker Hill, the visual arts set decided they had to separate the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History (Hedlund and Musteel, 1913) in Exposition Park (next door to USC). The collection was growing, and the incompaniability of David and Delores with dinosaurs and mummies was evident. After much pushing and pulling they decided on Hancock Park and the Rancho La Brea Tar Pits, on the border between the Mid-Wilshire district and Beverly Hills. The location was not tres chic, but at least it was not there with USC.

And what style did the museum trustees settle on? Another Lincoln Center! The three main LACMA donors—Howard Ahmanson, Arman Hammer, and Leo S. Bing—each wanted their own little temple of art. The museum officials accepted the idea of temples on a podium. The podium raised the art above the tar pits and gave the whole concept some style. William L. Pereira Associates was more than willing to turn out a temple or two for the museum. Pereira Associates designed the new complex in "Dulles Doric," that peculiar style made fashionable by Edward Durell Stone, who used it for American embassies and the like. The LACMA temple complex was at least slightly descended, set back from Wilshire Boulevard and nicely landscaped in relation to Hancock Park, which surrounded it on two sides, and the La Brea Tar Pits next door. Pereira Associates respected the more-or-less lowercase character of the neighborhood. The major problem with the temple-eo-podium design is that the museum-goer is forced to move from building to building in order to see all of the exhibits, thus robbing the podium the like the ball in some Neoclassic pinch machine.

In a crisis of conscience—and with the benefit of tax write-offs—ARCO provided $3 million in 1979 for the new wing, and LACMA set out to gather the remaining $30 million needed to recognize the museum as a more coherent unit. About 75,000 more s.f. were needed to accommodate the growing modern collection and adequate office space.

Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates’ solution to the multiple problems of LACMA is dramatic, to say the least. Their design calls for the creation of a stripped wall some 300 feet long by 100 feet high flush against the sidewalk along the Wilshire side of the museum. The entrance to the ARCO wing is a great 60-foot-high portal. The wall is windowless, completely without openings. The grand portal leads to a monumental staircase to the old podium level, where the three original buildings and the new ARCO gallery still comprise an incoherent space. In plan the HHPA addition is a 45-degree triangle with one of the short sides facing Wilshire and the long side slicing back across the old podium. The gallery will have 40,000 s.f. of exhibition space arranged on three floors that step back as they rise from ground level. The top-level galleries will be naturally lit, while the lower two galleries will have artificial lighting except for several chimney-like light wells here and there. The remaining 35,000 s.f. will be given over to offices and service spaces.

As soon as LACMA raises more money—some $15 million—the second phase of the project will be initiated: a steel-and-glass covering for much of the old podium. In addition, suspended walkways will cross back and forth between the various levels of the four buildings.

The critical response to the new wing has ranged from tepid to downright howl. One major urban design critic went so far as to call HHPA’s project “Mussolini Modern,” though that seems a little harsh. Nearly everyone disparages the placement of the large poured-in-place concrete wall right against the sidewalk. It is a very large wall, and with only one huge opening: it is more than a little, if not overpowering.

If there is any good in Pereira’s original scheme, it is the respect it shows for Hancock Park, the La Brea Tar Pits, and especially Wilshire Boulevard. The podium is pulled back from the street and retains the park’s role as a breathing space. Although in 1965, when the museum opened, this was not terribly important, in 1982 it is. Why? Because Wilshire’s 15-mile march from downtown to the sea is being lined with highrises. At Wilshire is fast becoming an I-80/1, one-block deep, wind tunnel, the open space of Hancock Park is indeed precious.

HHPA’s vacant wall is a decidedly urban statement as it pushes up against Wilshire. Everyone loves to say that L.A. isn’t a city—so why put a “big city” element in the middle of a park? Even the architects are now trying to reduce the impact of the wall. They hope to do this by inserting bands of porcelain enamel to "relieve the enormity of the building and give it some sense of human scale," as Norman Pfeiffer quoted in the January 22, 1982 issue of The Los Angeles Times.

The wall is almost theatrical in its assertiveness. In many ways it harkens back to the exhibition buildings of the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair, “The Century of Progress.” These temporary buildings in stripped-down Deco and a Babylonian basement were then a poseur ofacock hero in a desperate era. Does LACMA have to similarly strut and swagger along the sidewalk to prove its worth? Hopefully, we are now beyond that phase of America’s cultural inferiority complex.

HHPA Model for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s Atlantic Richfield Gallery

galleries, particularly on the conditions of light and circulation. The Committee understandably insisted that the architecture not overtake the art, that is, to keep them the self-referential architectural "statements" like the Guggenheim Museum that do not serve the art of the Museum. When the Committee objected to the January scheme at the press conference, members said it was gigantic, inefficient, too expensive, and too complex. Although Isozaki believed he could correct its functional shortcomings and bring it in budget, he felt forced into producing a more neutral scheme—"like a factory. . . . Otherwise I had to quit, or be fired." In mid-March, according to Isozaki, Coy Howard, Committee member and museum design coordinator, presented his own schematic drawings to the Committee. Isozaki then walked out of the meeting. Howard has made no comment on his initiative other than saying that "this is a highly complex issue."

Without a firm site, with an insubstantial building profile split in two, with multiple client groups each having vocal voices—and with an architecture committee that seems to want a building but not architecture, Isozaki felt embattled. At the press conference he evidenced himself to be in front of a building design he could not call an Isozaki building, and expressed this to the press. The matter became a public issue on March 29, the same day Isozaki unexpectedly submitted to the Architecture Committee a schematic plan—one that combined the plan of the March scheme with the formal aspects of the January scheme, and some new elements as well. The Redevelopment Committee agreed to the new scheme with some qualifications and submitted it by their April 1 deadline to the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and to Bunker Hill Associates for their approval. Isozaki then left for Japan, convinced he could make the new scheme into a workable building. Since then he has been refining the plan and has made no comment to the press.

In the wake of the controversy, the question of Isozaki’s continuing role in the museum’s design now is "under discussion."" Isozaki said—unofficially—because he thought expressed my opinion to the press and partially because the Committee felt; Isozaki had been too long in preventing an acceptable scheme. Pomona Hulten remains Isozaki’s staunch supporter.

The erosion of the architect’s position continues as Pevsney and Committee member Robert Irwin—do doubt with the best of intentions, but without Isozaki—reorganize exemplary museums for suitable architectural details. Said Pevsney: "There are a million problems how to do lighting, what floor materials to use, how to bring walls to the floor, that edge condition..."

At the time of this writing the controversy was continuing. The issue is not only the architect’s responsibility to the client, but also the client’s responsibility to the architect. The issue is especially critical in the case of a museum, where an artist’s autonomy is central to its very meaning: imitating the building is the museum’s first commissioned work and its most visible artifact. The problem unfortunately seems to have placed architecture and art in adversary positions. The issue also presents the threat of dividing the still fragile museum into staff-versus-trustee camps.

The matter will no doubt be taken up in a mid-May meeting of the full MOCA Board of Directors. It has been suggested that Isozaki work in association with an American architect who has experience on large-scale projects and would facilitate Isozaki’s architectural intentions within the context of American building realities. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where Hardy Holzman Pfeifer Associates is directly dealing with the professional museum staff rather than with independent parties, provides another suggestion for structuring a more workable relationship between client and architect.
There was a time when only Kenneth Frampton was known to have a transatlantic plane ticket permanently in his pocket. Nowadays, everyone in London is changing places. Perhaps as a result of this increase in the number of "biocentric" lettering, exhibiting, and teaching on both sides of the Atlantic, architectural London seems lethargic. The most active architects, though busy, await decisions. James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates' Foggy Museum addition survived the on-again, off-again vacillations of the Harvard University administration, but in contractual terms, Stirling claims to be back to square one. Richard Rodgers and Partners' 15-acre Gote Street mixed development project behind the South Bank Cultural Complex has gone through its second Public Enquiry in two years, and the response is due in September.

Even the followers of David Watkin have set aside the shrill jingoistic rhetoric displayed in the "Britain in the Thirties" issue of Architectural Design (AD Special Profiles 24, March 1986), guest edited by Gavin Stamp, to make converts through the calmer efforts of the Thirties Society, a serious preservation group with a useful magazine, learned walking tours, and some influence in saving buildings. Known as the New Right, the Watkinites have also been termed "neo-Fascist" by the Manchester Guardian (3 December 1978), but they have put their black shirts back in the closet, and they now only take out the occasional black tie for events like the marriage of Stemp, their leader, who is very much the man to watch. This is not hard to do, for Stemp appears everywhere, from the pages of the F.L.S. to the A.A.

Nevertheless, recent modernists have an equally omnipresent anti-Stemp in Stephen Bayley, enunciated in a privately funded annex to the Victoria and Albert Museum—the Bollsheizer Project—where the best of contemporary design is exhibited.

At the Architectural Association, which is both school and cultural center, complaints were also heard of a loss of energy and excitement. Last year the A.A. was close to financial bankruptcy. An invitation to A.A. Chairman Alvin Boyarsky to cocktails, at which a "special announcement" would be made, was unexpected. But the Chinese box remains secret for too long at the A.A. and there seemed little need for announcements—and even less cause for festivities. Rumors spread rapidly, since the mysterious announcement remained a well-guarded secret, and by the eve of the event, bets were being laid. When the chairman gave an opening welcome to Lady Geoffrey Howe, wife of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was clear that history was being made—political history. The presence of Lady Howe, who is "related" to architecture through her father, the critic P. Morton Shand, and her sister, Mrs. Mary Shand Sterling, was taken as a sign that the A.A.'s 25-year struggle with various governments has come to an end. Indeed, that day the Honorable William Waldegrave, Under-Secretary for Education and Science, had announced in the House of Commons that A.A. students would henceforth receive the same Mandatory Grants (automatic scholarships) that British university students receive when he is accepted by a university or polytechnic. When architectural education is the subject of a "question in Parliament," there is cause for celebration.

The A.A. styles itself the most democratic architectural school in the world, where the student, who is all-powerful by virtue of his mandate from the entire school—students, staff, and Council alike—has only one policy: to let natural selection act on the many talents in his employ. From the A.A., some teachers (called Unit Masters) join the international circuit for stardom (Peter Cook and the Archigramists, Leon Krier, Bernard Tschumi, Rem Koolhaas, Elia Zenghelis) some students win awards and begin distinguished practices or replace their teachers, other staff, Local Authorities; and, since the A.A. is international, many carry its architecture back to foreign lands. The excellence and experimental approach of its design education is complemented by the seriousness of its theoretical and historical courses, offered in the form of lectures, conferences, and now, exhibitions of museum quality. Flexible, dynamic, and democratic, the A.A. is nevertheless an anachronism and a paradox: as England's oldest architectural school, it is the only one to remain private. In its newly renovated Georgian townhouses, it again has the look of the "Association" or club that it is. Although A.A. tuition seems low when compared to that of American architectural schools (1981-1982:£2250), education can be had at other schools for the price of the Mandatory Grant (£900).

As a result, the A.A. is becoming a school where foreign students predominate. However, Members of Parliament, the R.I.B.A., and many leading architects agreed that the A.A. should remain accessible to British students. In order for this to be possible, government grants were needed.

It was still necessary to convince the government, headed by former Secretary of Education Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, who had threatened to close the A.A. in 1971. Since 1972, all grants have been withheld. The turn of events has been truly ironic. Thatcher's 1971 decision coincided with the election by students and staff of Boyarsky, who is Canadian and unBritish. It seems that they come. Today, Thatcher's government, in recognition of the A.A.'s "distinguished teaching"—which is acknowledged to be the result of Boyarsky's leadership—has granted it the right to once refused. Direct grants to other universities are being cut drastically, making the Conservative government's decision to aid the A.A. the equivalent of support for free enterprise and the school's contribution to English excellence. Yet the grants are to keep the A.A. democratic and nonsectarian.

The Boyarsky "policy of no policy" has achieved a goal that was long thought unattainable: official recognition of the A.A.'s unique independent status. By allowing each Unit to feel that it is the director of its own orchestra, Boyarsky has created—with the help of his international staff—a haven from the "English disease."
People and Projects

Notes on People and Projects

Richard Meyer's design for an office building for Renault just outside of Paris has been canceled. Apparently, between funnelling much money into American Motors Corporation and the new French government, Renault is having to cut back on their ambitious building program. Several other projects are reportedly also in the works for—including one by French architect Jean Nouvel and another for the Arts and Industry in England by Norman Foster—but no information is available on these projects.

Tigerman has received a commission from Knoll International to renovate a building in Houston as a new showroom, and he says, some other things are well.

We understand there are a few other buildings and empty sites in the vicinity owned by the Knoll owners, and ready for development. The SOM Foundation has made an announcement of providing Fellowship awards for graduate architecture students. Grace Kohyabashi of Cornell University was the first-prize winner, receiving $10,000 for work related to club facilities. The firm has been named Walker O. Cain as president of the American Academy in Rome.

William Marlin has left the long-struggling Island Architects. No word on what is to become of him, the magazine.

John W. Hyland, Jr., vice-chairman of Wirtburg Paribus Becker—A.G. Becker, the international investment banking firm, has been named chairman.

Susana Toro, in association with Wex Adams Stavon Associates, has landed the prestigious commission to do the partial renovation of Schermerhorn Hall for the Art History and Archaeology Department at Columbia University. The renovation includes an art gallery, classrooms, offices, and a collection of 60 works by 30 artists.

By all accounts Toro is also in charge to accept the responsibilities for organizing Barnard College's first undergraduate program in architecture.

Changing the Guard

New stationery and a new sign will soon be seen at 375 Park Avenue. The firm: John Burgee Architect (Philip Johnson, Designs Consultant).

Competitions

An invited competition for the Portland Performing Arts Center will directly involve the public. The three "finalists" are: Gedes Breecher Qualls & Cunningham; Benton Myers in association with ELS Design Group and Burt Moorhead; and Johnson/Burgee Architects in association with James Stewart Polshek & Partners. Each competing team will go on to Portland for a six-week exhibition and make a presentation to the client-selected "jury" about design attitudes, after which they will discuss their ideas in a public hearing. At the end of the three-week session, the jury will decide who will get the $600,000 to $1 million job, which will be the renovation of the existing crap building. This will then be joined with the new structure to form a single unit.

The directors of O.L.S. Holdings, Ltd., have invited designs from all qualified architects for the redevelopment of three adjacent office sites at the Park on Long Kong. The competition brief indicates a luxury residential development with two sites planned for the site; and one for offices; and Johnson/Burgee Architects in association with James Stewart Polshek & Partners. Each competing team will go on to Portland for a six-week exhibition and make a presentation to the client-selected "jury" about design attitudes, after which they will discuss their ideas in a public hearing. At the end of the three-week session, the jury will decide who will get the $600,000 to $1 million job, which will be the renovation of the existing crap building. This will then be joined with the new structure to form a single unit.

On Monday, March 22, the urban horror began at 9:30 a.m., word came that the U.S. Supreme Court had refused to hear an ultimate appeal. Within minutes wreckers went to work on the remaining landmark-quality theaters on the site of the Portman Hotel on Broadway, despite a demonstration led by Joseph Papp in which 200 people were arrested. (photo: Martha Suop)

Kevin Roche photographed recently in her office. Project is unidentified.

Kevin Roche Wins Pritzker Prize

American architect Kevin Roche was named on April 14 the fourth recipient of the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize. In making the award, the sponsors cited Roche as "an innovator who does not worship innovation for its own sake... a professional uncommitted with trends; a quiet, humble man who renounces and executes great works; a genuine master of the strictest standards for his own work."

Kevin Roche, born in Dublin in 1922, came to the United States in 1948. After doing graduate work at the Illinois Institute of Technology, he founded the firm of Eero Saarinen & Associates in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. When Saarinen died in 1961, Roche, who was a partner in Saarinen, John Dinkeloo, completed Saarinen's projects and proceeded with their own practice as Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates in Hamden, Connecticut.

Roche and Dinkeloo (who died last year) have been responsible for more than fifty major projects over the last twenty years, including the Oakland Museum (1961), the landmark Ford building in New York City (1963), the Knights of Columbus building in New Haven (1965), the Denver Center for the Performing Arts (1975), and the master plan and expansion of the Metropolitan Opera Art in New York (1967-81). Some of the projects currently under construction are headquarters for Union Carbide in Danbury, Connecticut, and General Foods Corporation in New York. Roche is also working on designs for the Central Park Zoo and a second building for CBS, also in New York City; the DeWitt Wallace Museum of Fine Arts in Williamsburg, Virginia; and an office park in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Pritzker Prize was established in 1979 by Jay A. Pritzker and the Hyatt Foundation. Conceived to be a Nobel Prize for architecture, the Prize is "given annually to a living architect or architectural group whose work demonstrates a combination of talent, vision, and commitment that has produced a consistent and significant contribution to humanity and the environment."

This year, 465 nominations for the award were received from 40 countries. After these were screened by Arthur Dexter, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design at The Museum of Modern Art, the final selection was made by the jury—J. Carter Brown, Lord Clark of Shrewsbury, Artana Isakiazi, Philip Johnson, John J. Irwin Miller, Gere Pols, and Thomas J. Watson, Jr. The prize carries with it $100,000 and a sculpture by Henry Moore, created specifically for the award. Previous winners of the Pritzker Prize were Philip Johnson, Luis Barragán, and James Stirling.

When asked how he would spend his prize money, Roche stated that he planned to establish a fund to subsidize a chair at Yale University in memory of Eero Saarinen, whose reputation, he said, "has been in hiatus in the last twenty years.

Press Notes

In case you missed it, Jacques Robertson, Dean of the University of Virginia's School of Architecture and a partner of the New York firm of D'Inkisnée Roberts and Price, IP's IN Breeding pages in the beginning of March. And in case you were not on a TWA flight in March you missed cover boy Michael Graves and the lead story on the "New Architect." We hear you can get back issues from Peter Eisenman who did ride TWA a lot that month.
As the “Emerging Voices” series continued this spring at the Architectural League, eight young architects presented their work in four evenings, each to standing-room-only audiences. The following criticism on the presentation must be understood within the context in which it is made: that is, the commentary about the work is based on impressions formed through the medium of the presentations themselves. A critique, then, is occurring at a certain remove from the work, a remove that is rather unusual and that derives from the particularities of the situation.

If anything links most of the eight architects, it is a "modernist" reductionism evident in their work and an apparent preference for stripped-down buildings that emphasize abstraction and somewhat eschew pictorial effects. Speculation as to the reasons these architects prefer the buildings they do can perhaps be focused on four issues: drawing, history, craft, and metaphysics.

Architectural drawings have become a pervasive phenomenon of late-twentieth-century American architectural practice: they are shown in museums, sold in galleries, and projected on lecture circuits. There is even an assumption—although an incorrect one—that an architectural drawing is a valid surrogate for architecture itself. In the "Emerging Voices" series, most of the drawings shown were small-scale plans, sections, and axonometrics. The first two types of drawing are time-honored methods of showing architecture. The third, however—a fashionable type of drawing—presents an abstracted view of an architecture in order to stress the conceptual aspects of a building, while it poses as a pictorial view. In this series, one rarely saw a perspective, which does give a more pictorial impression of a building. Most of the work shown in drawing form was portrayed in a manner and at a scale whereby the secondary and tertiary aspects of architecture—so important in an actual building—usually don't register. Thus, the actual choice of drawings shown in this series suggests something about the aesthetic intentions of the architects who spoke.

The second issue linking many of the speakers is what this observer would call a "horror of history." This "horror" seemed focused on three related fears: first, that use of historical forms in the design of a new building is somehow to rob that occasion of the opportunity for invention; second, that the incorporation into a contemporary building of historical forms such as a classical column—however serially and coherently achieved—undercuts whatever claims the building makes as an artistic achievement of our own time; and third, that the forms of the past come to us tinged with social, cultural, political, and technical meanings that are either unacceptable, irrelevant, or trivial. These fears may be legitimately felt by young architects today, but the basis on which they are founded is highly questionable. There is, however, a poignant irony in this fear: much of the work shown in the series involved additions to or renovations of existing structures. Nevertheless, this "horror of history" is another possible impetus for the specific aesthetic intentions of these "emerging voices."

The third issue linking the majority of the participants in this series is that of craft; or, the process by which a building is built. Among the eight speakers, there was nearly unanimous endorsement of sound and thoughtful construction, and an awareness that the craft—or the craft of construction—are a fundamental aspect of the expressive nature of architecture. Contemporary architecture continues to be affected by the ongoing debate regarding methods of production: Should a building be "machine-made" or "handcrafted?" Should it be made "simple" or of "natural" materials? Should its facade be an "organic" or "tectonic" expression? What is often overlooked in this debate is that none of the positions is necessarily more valid than any of the others, and all are aesthetic responses to the process of construction. But, here again, the majority of the work shown in the series represented only a narrow range of expressive possibilities arising from craft—that which tends toward "modernist" reductionism.

In calling attention to drawing, history, craft, and metaphysics, it is important to observe that—like many of the decisions required in the making of a building—these concerns deal with expressive issues, and therefore involve some degree of choice. Other decisions are mandated by clients, codes, and conventions. It is important to observe this because during the "Emerging Voices" series, buildings of a
Tod Williams

particular chases stylistic persuasion were occasionally presented not so much as a matter of selection from among many valid options, but as something of an aesthetic imperative. To the degree that these—or any other buildings—are presented as the appropriate building art of our time, they are presented with a dogmatic certainty that seems untenable at this time. Buildings should be presented and evaluated more as individual works of art and less as emblems of certain stylistic preferences.

In his presentation on March 16, George Ranalli showed his own work, the “First of August” boutique (1976-77), a “Canal House” (1979-80)—which he termed “a theoretical work”—and the recently completed renovation of a brick schoolhouse into six condominiums in Newport, Rhode Island (The Callender School renovation; 1980-81). The setting for each of the built projects is the found space of an existing structure. Ranalli stressed his concern with materials and the process of building, but because of budget limitations he often was required to use painted sheetrock, which gives his work a distinctly planar quality.

Ranalli’s “First of August” store is very well known, and therefore the Newport condominium project best shows his current direction. In the six units, large three-dimensional forms—painted in gorgeous colors and containing kitchens, bathrooms, and bedrooms—are inserted into the brick volumes of the schoolhouse, thus allowing for high, spacious living rooms. To this observer, the sheetrock forms resemble miniaturized Art Deco buildings, although they display none of the decorative richness and scale-giving devices of such a model—in fact, Ranalli’s structures display the same reductionist aesthetic shared by many of the “emerging voices.”

Ranalli concluded his talk by referring to “an English architect’s statement” (i.e., James Stirling’s) during a fall 1981 lecture, which claimed that the architectural revolution of the twentieth century was over. Ranalli strongly disagreed, a sentiment that—based on the work he showed—struck this observer as a bizarre non sequitur. Ranalli’s work is currently conceived, carefully made, and very handsome, but it is not revolutionary, in either a political or an artistic sense. In terms of program, his work is designed for the laissez-faire bourgeoisie, and artistically, the basic ideas in his work have been seen before.

On the same evening, Tod Williams gave a thoughtful presentation, posing a number of literal and metaphorical questions that affect his work: “What is a room...a window...a chair?” He claimed to be a “slow learner,” a modestly realistic admission for one whose work—like that of many young firms—is uneven in quality, sometimes disappointing, and often promising. His most successful works to date are his largest and his smallest projects; those in the middle range are rather uncertain.

A large tennis building in New Jersey designed with Stephen Peters (1975-76) was treated appropriately by Williams as a “dumb box,” with clearly composed circulation and service elements attached to the sides. Even more appealing are two small works—the highly successful and lovely Sontu shop (1980-81) and a set of custom chairs for the Asia Society (1981), in which all the elements and surfaces have been treated in a refined and thoughtful way.

In sharp contrast, a house on Long Island in which the volumes are placed at an angle between two parallel encompassing screen walls (1979-80) has the appearance of having gone directly from early schematic design to final working drawings without any intermediate steps; that is, the house displays a diagrammatic clarity, but little else. Every perceptual aspect of the completed building derives from the decision to intersect two skewed planning grids, and from the apparent subsequent decision to have the completed house
Lauretta Vinciarelli


Emerging Voices

Lauretta Vinciarelli

emulates as closely as possible the plain simplicity of a chipboard model. This house shows architecture reduced to a diagram; the Sontta shop illustrates that better results can be obtained when more of the aspects intrinsic to architecture are brought into play.

On March 23, Lauretta Vinciarelli presented her work in the form of a series of drawn projects. The first was a public parks project for southern Italy (1982) in which a set of elements and parts are composed in a series of particular designs. These elements include small reflecting pools, areas of greenery, trellises, posts, and barrel vaults. The second project was the much-published garden for a house in Marfa, Texas (1977), and the third a house in Marfa (1978) for the display of painting and sculpture. The fourth project was a series of analytic studies for a courtyard house in the same region, culminating in a proposal for a building to display the work of artist Donald Judd, also in Marfa (1980). The various studies reflect a determined and methodical sensibility: Vinciarelli establishes a palette of elements and relentlessly develops every significant variation in an attempt to define the characteristics of a "type.”

Vinciarelli's work benefits from being presented in ravishingly beautiful drawings. But, to this observer, the drawings seem to be too much an end in themselves, masking the apparent lack of a will to build. Not once did Vinciarelli indicate whether any of the projects had been built, were under construction, or even were slated for construction. Furthermore, despite the richness of her drawings, each one shows only a diagrammatic view of a building—or is it a real view of a diagram? The early projects rely almost entirely on axonometrics and the recent ones use perspectives based on the vantage point of a helicopter pilot. None of the drawings shows what it would be like to be in one of Vinciarelli's projects or suggests the detailing of the pergolas or other elements. These aspects of a building may perhaps be peripheral to the sort of analytic study she undertakes, but they would be crucial to the enjoyment of the stripped-down aesthetic of the actual courtyard house, were one to be built. Her drawings are evidently used to track down a "type," rather than to portray architecture.

Steven Holl

Steven Holl began his presentation on March 23 with examples from his pamphlet, The Alphabetic City (1980), a catalogue of building plan types in the shape of letters. He then showed three projects. An office addition completed in Millville, New Jersey (Wyble Advertising office addition; completed 1978) is made of stucco-covered concrete block—a technique favored by Holl for its evocation of "fundamentalism." A studio and residence for a painter and a sculptor proposed for Staten Island, New York (1980) is conceived as a fragment of an urban townhouse now placed in the forest. Consequently, it has a "street facade," a courtyard, and two side walls painted black to evoke the idea of a "party wall." Holl confided that this is a "city" building placed on a rural site, partially because he loves city forms so much. It seems, however, that such a gesture is much the same as building a thatched cottage on Park Avenue because one loves "country" forms so much. This Staten Island studio and residence borders on being a one-liner: once the dramatic effect of the black-painted party walls has been absorbed there is the possibility that they will come to seem a bit oppressive, for so many other options of color, materials, and outlook are possible on such an open site.
Holl concluded his presentation with his recently completed pool house (1981) in Scarsdale, stressing its basic, low-budget, "fundamentalist" qualities, which was a disingenuous way to present such a crisp, handsome, and refined building. Built of concrete block, it is covered with a beautiful shade of gray stucco. A marble-lined shower, marble beam ends, windows with iconography sand-etched on glass, and careful detailing throughout belie a low budget, even as those elements enhance the expressive qualities of the tiny building.

On March 30, Frank Israel of Los Angeles showed a series of ten projects, and his verbal presentation was accompanied by a musical tape of selections geared to the projects. The effect was that of driving down Melrose Avenue in a Mercedes while tuned into a perfect FM station with Frank as the "announcer/guide," in what was an enchanting metaphor of being in LA. In fact, the presentation was so charming and theatrical that it almost entirely disguised the fact that Israel's oeuvre is a bit sparse. Nevertheless, what he showed and what he said about it had, I think, an important message. He confessed that he saw no consistent idea or polemic that linked his ten projects. What he felt to be the consistent conditions of his work were: the input of the client, the particular setting, and the general environment of Los Angeles. The work confirmed this, and showed a certain consistency of approach and a broad, undogmatic catholicity with regard to style, which seems to be one significant feature of the inheritance of the generation of architects born since 1940.

On the same night Susana Torre began her talk with a quick succession of slides of her well-known completed works, and to this observer they remain as impressive as ever. These were followed by slides of axonometric drawings that purport to show the deeper, more conceptual aspects of her work. She then concentrated on two recent projects—the Clark House renovation (Southampton, New York; 1979-80), and the Ellis Island project (Proposal for an Urban Park on Ellis Island; 1980-81).

Torre's splendid Clark House is a renovation of a stable that was originally designed by Grosvenor Atterbury. Torre explained that the key to its transformation into a "modern" house lies in its "modern" spatial configuration, that is, the insertion of a partial "open plan" into a set of traditional rooms, plus the use of admittly place windows to produce effects of transparency. She concluded with her project to restore Ellis Island in New York Harbor as a monument to the sixteen million immigrants who passed through it. Perhaps the crucial aspect of the project is her manipulation of the landscape to recall the historical shape of the island (which changed over time with development), and to recall in metaphorical terms the American landscape the immigrants confronted. But what she termed "monuments" are closer to being "miniatures," and the effect seems not unlike that of Disneyland or other theme parks. What was not entirely clear in Torre's presentation—and what would be essential for the success of the completed work—is whether the landscape elements form a coherent architectural experience in their own right apart from any "meaning" the parts might individually evoke. On the basis of the work she showed, one suspects the coherence would be there; but without it, her project would be little more than a nostalgic rehash of American landscape forms.
In both the Clark House and the Ellis Island project, it is readily apparent that Torre has entered into an uneasy truce with “history”: she is holding the inheritance of the past at arm’s length emotionally and intellectually, even as she has engaged it artistically. In looking at her Clark House as an integrated, artistic whole, one cannot see the “modern” spaces apart from the “traditional” shell. Moreover, her landscapes for Ellis Island would have no historical meaning if they did not also have artistic meaning as an integrated ensemble of plant forms. More important, however, is that both projects do have meaning as artistic achievements of our own time, precisely because they combine elements of the present with elements from the historical and imagined past, much as architecture has always done. On the other hand, Torre posed an important aesthetic problem: What would she design if, instead having to respond to fragments of the existing environment, as she has had to do in all her work to date, she were faced with a tabula rasa? At that point, “history” might turn out to be a welcoming ally instead of an unwelcome intruder.

Roger Ferri and Giuseppe Zambonini spoke on April 6. Ferri came right to the point, claiming there were three themes in his work: the reintegration of the built environment and Nature; attention to the inner rhythms of architecture, such as ornament; and the integration of image, space, and structure, which he regarded as the true medium of architecture. This was without doubt the clearest statement of artistic intention given by any of the speakers thus far, and furthermore, one could see the evidence of Ferri’s concerns in the work itself.

Ferri’s work falls into two categories: the unbuilt of theoretical projects, and the built works. Among the former, he showed two schemes for a dining room for the restaurant Lutèce (1976), the “garden skyscraper” for Madison Square (1976), and his magnum opus, the Pedestrian City (completed 1979-80). The Lutèce schemes show a concern for imagery, materials, and craft: one has vertical moldings of extruded steel spaced with sand-etched glass, and the other has two rows of large-scale terra cotta rosettes. The Madison Square skyscraper is a glass prism with a stepped natural landscape of streams, cliffs, and fields rising up the western facade as both an extension of Madison Square below and an insertion of Nature directly into the city and onto architecture. This project, portrayed in lavish and convincing drawings, remains one of the most striking skyscraper images of recent times.

In contrast, however, Ferri’s Pedestrian City is all too aptly named. This project for a city set in that most ambiguous of areas—the American Southwest—is surprisingly facile, derivative, and even reactionary, although it is exquisitely portrayed. The city is a circle with precise boundaries set in the center portion of a nine-square agricultural pattern—the surrounding land is to supply the produce for the city at the center. Inside the city, housing built by developers follows a pattern similar to that first proposed by Christopher Alexander in his important book Housing competition of 1969. At the center of the city is a hexostyle hall shaped like giant flowers and at its heart is the Dome of the Three Rivers, in which three human figures link arms to encircle the oval at the top. The strength of the Pedestrian City is its exploration of valid critical questions regarding the nature of architecture, urban form, and public space; the integration into architecture of meaningful iconography; and a general vitality in the built environment and its relation to Nature. Ferri’s forms are less convincing visually; they are too obviously a reprisal of precedents from the 1930s and earlier, and politically they share the failure of all naive attempts to conceive of the city as a finite work of art—even in idealistic terms—for a pluralistic, democratic society. Nevertheless, the forms and ideas explored in this and the earlier theoretical projects are of critical importance because they appear in appropriately transformed ways in his built work.
Of the works Ferri showed, four are highly successful and appealing. An East Hampton house (Blum Residence; completed 1983) is conceived as a village compound of miniature houses and gardens nestled into its site; a beach house on Water Island (Blum Residence; completed 1981) is conceived as a single stepped, sculpted volume poised high above the sand facing out to sea. In each of these, a definite image of form and space is expressed at the scale of structure and refined at the scale of ornament. A restaurant in the Americana Hotel in Fort Worth (Reflections Restaurant; completed 1981) provides an opportunity to realize the large-scale flowers from the Lebbe scheme; and the walls of the hotel ballroom (1981) are covered with a beguiling and large-scale pattern of intricate curves. In these two projects, an element of decor has been transformed into something more "architectural."

Ferri concluded with a series of studies for decorative arts objects and accessories, which, significantly, employ the human figure. But here, as in the Pedestrian City, Ferri's ideas somewhat outstrip his ability to embody them in fresh, unacknowledged forms. Nevertheless, these studies show that—almost alone in this group of "emerging voices"—Ferri is concerned with the art of architecture at all scales, including the largest and the smallest.

Giuseppe Zambonini began his presentation with a series of drawings of a project not intended for public consumption—a set of private notations (The Refurbary, 1979)—and a project to his mentor, Carlo Scarpa (House in Bardolino, Italy; 1981). He then went on to show three Manhattan lofts that embody his current approach. Two of these (Left for a musician, Chelsea, 1980; Loft in Tribeca, 1981) employ the 45-degree angle as the dominant planning motif, with most of the new construction consequentially skewed to the bounding walls of the loft. As is often the case with this approach to planning, the resultant spaces—they cannot be called "rooms"—appear jumbled and incoherent. A third loft (Broadway Loft; 1981) is composed around a series of four major rooms en suite, and although the planning employs many irregular angles, the effect is more coherent and "spatial."

Zambonini not only designs these lofts, but also builds them as part of what is a somewhat idiosyncratic endeavor. This allows him to more easily introduce special elements into his work which require greater control in fabrication, such as a fountain made of marble chunks, or special pieces of furniture. The importance of the craft or the process of construction is almost always crucial in the final assessment of a work of architecture, as anyone from Phidias to Frank Gehry would surely agree. In contemporary work, high-quality craftsmanship is just as important as ever, as the lofts by Zambonini show. But craftsmanship must be linked to a broader vision that is essentially architectural, that deals with spatial and structural themes. When craft is not integrally linked to a vision of architecture, the specially fabricated elements appear merely as fancy objects of art used as foil to distract the beholder from design and construction of an ordinary sort—which Zambonini's lofts also show.

Amidst all of these stimulating presentations, one disappointment lingered for this observer—one that dealt with the composition of the series itself. All the speakers thus far fit into a reasonably narrow range of architectural expression, which belies the fact that there are other points of view about aesthetic expression today that are of interest as well. Two such alternate points of view come to mind: first, there are many young architects today who do not fear history, who admire the forms of the past and the distant past as well as the traditional forms of various places, and who use these as a springboard to a fresh and personal art; second, there are the "radical traditionalists," who see the continual evolution of the traditional languages of architecture—as such classicism—as a steel-caged field of endeavor. The inclusion of these two points of view, and perhaps others as well, would have given the series as a whole more resonance and depth as a forum for young architects.
The Evolution of an Architect

Thomas S. Hines

Richard Joseph Neutra lived his first quarter-century in a time and place of remarkable cultural richness—imperial Vienna, 1892-1914. And, as long as innocence allowed, he savored that place and time—the Vienna of his youth—with unashamed fervor and delight. "We who were born in Vienna and grew up there," recalled the music critic Max Graf, "had no idea during the city's brilliant period before the First World War that this epoch was to be the end and...this time was destined to decline. We enjoyed the splendid city which was so elegantly beautiful and never thought that the light which shone above it could ever be that of a colorful sunset." Others viewed it with a darker irony. The dramatist Arthur Schnitzler remembered the city as "a place...where we lived long enough, every lie related about us would probably become true..."

To the critic Karl Kraus, "Sezession Vienna" was "the research station for the end of the world."

But however exquisitely decadent the "city of dreams" would appear in retrospect, it was for Neutra's generation primarily a source of generative stimulation. As the capital of the overripe, fading Habsburg empire, it was a center and source of cultural and economic achievement. In art, architecture, music, opera, literature, philosophy, science, technology, and medicine, it not only nurtured institutions of an old established culture, but tolerated and fostered in all those areas generative dissent, opposition, and change. Frequently the new trends were pilloried or extolled as heretical, but in the avant-garde quarter, the writer Bertha Zuckerkandl remarked that "with few exceptions everything deserving attention was generated in Vienna"...something Neutra had modeled of our age. Mysterious links were forged connecting language, colours, forms, tones and attitudes to life.6

For a youth as sensitive and as talented as Richard Neutra, Vienna—and especially the city's district of Favoriten—was "a city that...grew up with me, that...shaped the models of my style. In Neutra's generation, institutions of the arts and architecture were part and parcel of the everyday life of Vienna's youth, as an already internationally recognized figure, Wagner would have more impact on Neutra than any of his actual teachers at the Technische Hochschule. Except for Adolf Loos, in whose studio and circle Neutra would take his first steps, Otto Wagner was Neutra's most significant early mentor...It was Wagner's series of rail stations of the late 1890s that attracted Neutra and that made Neutra's oeuvre an important transition from his early "classical" architecture with minimalist forms and abstract and stripped-down later buildings would increasingly reflect in him two core-architectural axioms: Wagner's of their materials as well as their programmatic intentions and functions,..."

Aside from the modular, geometric, steel-framed Stadtbahn stations of the 1890s, the building of Wagner's that interested and influenced Neutra was the Postal Savings Bank (1904-12), the first "modern" building to be granted a place among the architecturally historical Ringstrasse..."There it was, even in the Vienna of its time."

Though it contained certain abstract classical vestiges in its pyramidal profile, its tripartite vertical composition, and its overall symmetry, the bank moved farther than any of Wagner's buildings toward the ethic and esthetic the new century would call modern...In the Postal Savings Bank, the triple-steel-nailed and glass banking room, a stunningly "vaulted" steel-framed glass ceiling brought in beautiful light on a glasped ceiling, the floor carried the light to the rooms below. The sophisticated furniture and fixtures, all designed by Wagner and his Machine-Age designer, would harmonize with an equally simple functional sophistication. The aluminum "heat-blowing machines" suggested strange, otherworldly, futuristic space travel and the original student in 1913, Neutra noted, in his diary of the building's measurements and design parameters. He included the building among the most promising suggestions of prefabrication and the overall effect—especially in the great banking room—of beautifully engineered machine-partsemble. His diary note on the building's sublime proportions was punctuated with three emphatic exclamatory marks....

Wagner's professorship at the Academy of Fine Arts had included the establishment of his own design studio and the teaching of master classes in what came to be known as the Wagnerschule. The Wagnerschule graduates whose work Neutra most directly was Joseph Oehlrich, Josef Hoffmann, and, ultimately, Rudolph Schindler. Visiting Oehlrich's 1896 Vienna Szecession exhibition building, Neutra later remembered, "was one of the great experiences of my young life..." As a student, he thrived, "everyone in my surroundings was aware of...the comprehensive effort at Darmstadt," the state-supported "artists' colony" that Oehlrich directed and built...8

Despite Neutra's admiration for the Wagnerschule, he applied for admission in 1911 not to Wagner's Academy of Fine Arts, but to the Technische Hochschule or Imperial Institute of Technology, founded in 1853 as the Vienna Politechnische Institute. After his eight years of liberal arts training at the Gymnasium, then, he felt the need for a more professionally and technically directed curriculum to prepare him for his career in the military service in 1910-11, and in 1911-12 began his first year at the Technische Hochschule...He would have finished in 1915 had the war not begun, instead of 1916 after active duty...
Richard Neutra, ca. 1919

Above and below: Richard Neutra, Scholastic Advertising Agency, Los Angeles, 1937 (photoLuckhaus)

"organic" architecture, designed "from the inside out," growing out of the site and the building program and the nature of the building materials, Wright confirmed and extended many of the ideas Neutra had encountered in the work of Wagner, Sullivan, and, in certain ways, Loos. Neutra made rough sketches in his diary of the plans of Wright's Oak Park "Wohnhäuser" for the Hentschel, Martin, and Gale families, the house for Susan Dana in Springfield, Illinois, and the Darwin Martin house in Buffalo, New York. The Wasmuth presentation of Wright's work revealed to Neutra "the fantastic living culture of some unknown people. It was just like seeing pictures of houses for people in another world..." He hardly knew how to place these so-called Prairie houses, though he imagined something "like the pampas of Argentina, but still inhabited by red Indians, with tepees as a backdrop, and in the distance a thundering herd of bison. In this untouched flat, level, and far-reaching paradise, Wright was creating low buildings with tremendous shading roofs and long ribbon windows, like those of the venturedome transcontinental trains which looked out on a free breezy landscape... I made up my mind that I would have to see it with my own eyes; no one in Europe was doing anything like it. Whatever he was, Frank Lloyd Wright, the man far away, had done something momentous and rich in meaning. This miracle man instilled in me the conviction that, no matter what, I would have to go to the places where he walked and worked."  

Neutra's friend Rudolph Schindler, whom he had met in 1912, had been similarly inspired by Wright and his teacher-mentor Sullivan and, along with Neutra in Los Angeles studio, had imbibed enough enthusiasm for the United States to prompt him to make a pilgrimage there. Schindler answered an advertisement for a position in the Chicago office of Olschteren, Stein and Rechert and in early 1914 left the Old World for the New. "Schindler is going to America in a few days," Neutra noted in his diary on May 3, 1914. He must have enjoyed his older friend's adventure, and apparently planned to follow him in 1915 upon completing his degree at the Technische Hochschule. Yet before Neutra could finish his schooling and visit the expositions and other events, World War I exploded in Europe, and the Great War began—taking Neutra deep into the maelstrom and delaying for nine years his journey to America. In June 1914, following the assassination by Serbian nationalist of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Neutra was called to active duty and sent to the Balkan front. But even by August, when the fighting began, Neutra could hardly have known how painfui and lasting the war and the subsequent peace would be—to himself and to the world that had shaped his development.


6. Ibid., Neutra, Diary, September 13, 1913, book 3, pp. 21-23.
7. Richard Neutra, official transcript, Technical Institute of Vienna (Technische Hochschule) the record of Neutra's attendance, professors, and examinations was summarized in a letter of February 2, 1979, to Walter Jakobske from Alfred Lechten, a staff member at the Technical University, as the Technische Hochschule was renamed. Copy in possession of author.
8. Ibid., Neutra, Life and Shape, pp. 79-89; Neutra, Diary, June 8, 1912, book 1, p. 120; November 15, 1913, book 2, p. 99.
9. Ibid., Neutra, Life and Shape, pp. 79-89; Neutra, Diary, June 8, 1912, book 1, p. 120; November 15, 1913, book 2, pp. 60-84.
The Ironies of Metropolis: Notes on the Work of OMA

Anthony Vidler

The idea of a "Modern" architecture—at least insular as it was consciously identified with the idea of the avant-garde—held two dominant themes in precarious balance: The first, stemming from the demand for cultural revolution and a sense of the exhaustion of traditional academic forms, stressed the need to remake the language of the art, to explode aesthetic conventions, and to construct out of the debris a manner of speaking adequate to the modern moment. The other, tied to the tradition of utopian and materialist attempts to refashion the social world, called for a political and economic transformation that would precipitate a utopia into a life of harmony in the new industrial epoch. Both themes were permeated with historicist notions of progress, of inevitable development, and of the utopian, which for a brief period served to hold them in tandem without perceptible contradiction. Whether its modernity was Corbusian and idealistic or Marxist and materialistic, their common cause was to reformulate language and society together: as Le Corbusier wrote to Karel Teige in 1929, "We are all at this moment at the foot of the same wall."

The assumed interdependence of formal and social change was so strong that, in the decades since the collapse of the fragile treaty that linked them beneath the sign of post-World War I reconstruction, the mere promise of a new aesthetic language has been considered politically threatening. However, successive attempts to postulate political utopias have all questioned the existing language of forms. As Roland Barthes noted in his Inaugural Discourse for the Chair of Literary Semiology at the Collège de France (January 7, 1973), "To change language, that Mallarmian expression, is a concomitant of 'to change the world,' that Marxian one."

When technique is used in and for itself, as Clement Greenberg perceptively pointed out in the late 1930s, it is inevitably academic, and very quickly becomes kitsch. Equally, the isolation of programmatic concerns, whether they are reformist or revolutionary, tends to create a kind of social positivism, which—whether embodied in zoning codes or five-year plans—divorces art from social change with a finality that seems to preclude any possible connection between the two. Certainly the last ten years have demonstrated the distinct separation of these two concerns, which were held in unity so dearly by modernism. Any attempt to "work on the language" has, despite its own best intentions, been consumed along with every other type of imagery. Any political stance with the slightest pretension to positive effectiveness has been forced to deny its "aesthetic" potentiality.

Architecture, seemingly caught between the endless play of formal images and the economic determinisms of property and space allocation, has responded uneasily to this condition. On one hand, investigations committed to exploring the internal dimensions of certain carefully defined...
languages—both White and Gray—have proceeded. On the other hand, those who recognize only the centrality of social democracy—or at least democracy—forces that predetermine the both, and, ultimately, the form, have been sustained within the profession. No matter how the divide is bridged—whether by idealism, hermeneutics, or economics—the gap between modernist form and modernist ideology appears to have been reaffirmed and to be a part of the inevitable conditions of a so-called post-modern era.

The work of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture—named as if to confront the modern crisis fearlessly and head-on—has always resisted this great divide between program and form, between social text and artistic technique. From the first narrative paintings of Madelon Vriesendorp and their accompanying texts, the "conceptual project" of OMA at least has tried to weld text and image in a reciprocal dance, a dance that in its various steps mirrored the lusts, aspirations, hopes, and horrors of the modern metropolis par excellence—New York. This project has had obvious—and too often repeated—links to well-known modernist themes. The surrealists and the metaphysicians are unmistakable here. They differed, however, from such avant-garde movements by virtue of a persistent irony that undermines both the positive and negative avant-garde positions of the 1920s in an almost endless play of disruptions and subversions. In the work of OMA, these techniques, borrowed from the avant-garde, were in a very real sense deployed against themselves.

Against the youth and fitness cults of the 1920s, and with full understanding of the desperate need for Constructive utopias to leave their homeland after 1952, the Floating Pool and its indefatigable swimmers (1977) move, stroke by stroke, toward the center of capitalist corruption. This is a center of realized dreams (but it has been changed in the realization) that affords in itself no salvation for the unavenging hopes of modernism. Against the pale ideals of the Gemeentie program stands the Welfare Palace Hotel (1970). It is indeed a place for the characters of William Burroughs, but one that they would abhor out of scorn; it is a Grand Hotel criticized even by its guests. Against the mass housing projects of the 20s and the rental speculations of the more recent past is a gigantic enigma—The Hotel Sphinx (1970-76), dedicated to the delivery of cosmetic bliss, and composed under the sign of the "need and the impossibility of escape" as in the Welfare Palace Hotel.

Irony is a rhetorical figure that in its common definition operates by means of mocking—whether pleasantly or seriously—the subject; in the words of a nineteenth-century rhetorical theorist, "it seems to belong most particularly to gaiety; but anger and contempt also use it sometimes, even to advantage; consequently it can enter into the sallie style and the gravest of subjects." As a dominant figure of speech and mode of thought throughout the modern period, irony, whether naive or subtle, has permeated almost every

Projects by the Office for Metropolitan Architecture 1972-1982 was held at Max Protetch Gallery, New York, from March 11-April 3, 1982. Office for Metropolitan Architecture: Toward a Modern (Re)construction of the European City—Four Housing Projects, an exhibition of recent projects by Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis, opened on March 12 at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, and will be on view until May 28.
Irony is certainly the figurative mode of OMA's early works and of the specific work that, more than any other, served to give these works a coherent "program" of their own—Rem Koolhaas' *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (Oxford, New York, 1978). This book, with its unabashed postscript of OMA's images and texts, is equally unabashed in its choice of subject and in its formal strategies, both of which are borrowed from a long tradition of modernist work on the metropolis. In it is displayed sophisticated knowledge of all the techniques by which the modern city, as a term of art, functions to engender belief in the "madness" of civilization itself and to inspire a Mandarins-like disdain for those seeking to grasp the nature of social reality in either science or art.1

OMA, Rem Koolhaas with Stefano de Martino and Kees Christiaanse. Two structures for Rotterdam; project, 1980-81. Silkscreen triptych, detail

Interior of tower

Rem Koolhaas

View from an apartment

Photo-collage showing context

discourse—including that of architecture. The most hopeful utopias, from Charles Fourier to Le Corbusier, were at base saturated with an ironic defense against their possible—perhaps inevitable—failure. As a technique, irony would appear empty of philosophical convictions and open to employment by almost any ideology. In itself, however, due to its unique structure—the way in which it operates on texts and images—irony is deeply antipositivist. As the historian Hayden White has noted, "In its apprehension of the essential folly or absurdity of the human condition it tends to engender belief in the 'madness' of civilization itself and to inspire a Mandarin-like disdain for those seeking to grasp the nature of social reality in either science or art."
“resolution” of a problem: the questions of “relationship” between people, ideas, and buildings that arise in the normal design problem are not overcome here in any positive way. In the scheme for 16 villas on the island of Antiparos in Greece (1981; Elia Zenghelis, principal), the environment of Greece is not overtly protected by an appeal to roots, to the vernacular, nor is it deliberately shadowed by the imposition of a modern object. Rather, what in experience seems to be the innocent result of contextualism becomes in plan, as painted by Zenghelis, a powerful exercise in suprematism.

In this series of projects, the references to Constructivism, to the vocabulary of the late Modern Movement, are even clearer than in the earlier parodies; but the measure of their difference is that they do not in themselves provide any explanatory key. Style, in the art-historical sense, is immanent as an analytical device the projects might look like this or that modernism; however, they are not, for all that, repetitions—or even extensions—of the modernisms of the 1920s and ‘30s. The explanations, insofar as such ironic devices allow of any, is to be found more than ever in the “nature of the project.” In its idea, its fundamental aim to disrupt all previous positive “natures.”

Perhaps a key to reading these projects might be found in the apparently obvious scheme for the renovation of a “figure” to effect, calculated but unexpected, to produce results—“negatively.” This was, of course, one of modernism’s utopias, as it attempted to reveal the reality behind appearances. But the dominance of irony was perhaps not fully realized until these utopias too had been proved barren.

OMA: Elia Zenghelis with Ron Stein and Katerina Traigerides, 16 villas for Antiparos, Greece; 1981. Site and concept plan.

Cesar Pelli and Peter Eisenman

P.E.: This is the first in a series of interviews that I am doing with architects who are also educators—professionals who are seen by the public at large to have a dual role. The questions I would like to cover fall into four basic categories: First, what is the education of the architect? Does it involve the discipline of architecture as we see it in the training of students? Second, is this so, what is the relationship between the theory of architecture and the practice of it? Third, what is the relationship of theory and practice to what can be called "cultural power" and what is the Yale School of Architecture's relationship to the cultural power structure? Fourth, what has been the relationship between your practice, which can be termed an "ideological" practice, and your role as an educator?

Let us begin with point one: How would you define graduate education in architecture at Yale? Can it be categorized as both the training of students for the profession and the definition of the discipline of architecture?

C.P.: Of course. It is both of those things and many others. As is the case with building, there are primary and secondary responsibilities, primary and secondary purposes. At Yale, clearly our primary purpose is to help the students to become the best architects they could ever be. I do not like the word "training"—it is really a much more complex process.

Let me make a couple of clarifications here that are very important: First, I am not an educator who happens to practice architecture—I am an architect who happens to be involved with education. I am involved in this because my love for architecture tells me that it is not only about building—it is also about the making of other architects.

Secondly—and this is a very simplified way of presenting the process of architectural education—I believe that there are four things that should happen in school: First is the acquisition of knowledge of all types—not only historical or structural, but knowledge about design, including scale, composition, and the organization of forms. This is easy—you study, you are taught, you learn. Next, there is the development of all of the skills necessary to function as an architect—learning to draw, to organize plans, to make beautiful buildings. Third, for me, is an understanding of and immersion in the architectural culture—sharing with others the jargon, the architectural thought, the language that other architects have learned to understand, and that allows for abbreviated and more precise communication between professionals as a group; sharing the personas one admires as models—until eventually you develop the feeling that you can be part of the subculture of the larger culture.

Fourth, and most important, once you feel that you have the knowledge about what makes architecture, that you have developed the skills and that you have become infused with the thoughts, ideas, and language of architecture, you may, sooner or later, within yourself, become an architect; that architecture is worth the best effort of your life. This last is essential; until that inner conviction takes place, you are never going to become an architect. For me, in a simplified way, this is a kind of乩에서, where architecture is the place to go.

At Yale, we feel that the School is there to help the students develop in all of their diversity. That is very important. We try to expose our students to truly committed people who will really fire them up and show them what that commitment means. We try to bring individuals to the school who represent a wide range of students, interests, and approaches to architecture. In this way most students are given a chance to find echoes of their inner thoughts, inner concerns, and inner hopes in those persons whom they respect and admire and they will also sense some of the joy and fire of that inner commitment. Since they are near the fire, they may themselves catch fire.

P.E.: I get a sense from what you have just said that this is based on a very selective admissions policy, otherwise you may get a lot of disappointed people.

C.P.: There is some disappointment, but not so much as you might think because we do not teach only design. We have tried to increase the range of offerings so that students can interpret their own function within the profession in different ways. For example, we have some of the best management courses in the country, and, even though they are elective, they are well attended. Our students recognize that even if they do not become star designers, they can still occupy very important and influential positions in architecture. That is very important to me—to make them feel that there are other options.

Architectural education is interesting because what the school does is only a portion of a long process, which does not start with the school or end with the school. I always tell my students that before they can be architects on their own, they really need at least another ten years of learning, preferably in an apprenticeship to somebody whom they respect.

P.E.: You have said that you are an educator who is primarily an architect. It seems to me that very few offices offer enough of that sort of continuing education. Would it be better for the architect-educators to offer apprenticeships, that is, to be an architect in their offices rather than to be involved in the formal education process? If you took all of the architects interested in teaching and put them into the schools, very few would be left in practices to be involved in an atelier form of education. Why not return to an atelier system that is operative and let the schools teach only skills and the organization of basic data? Then the fire would be provided in the offices.

C.P.: Unfortunately, I do not know enough about what is happening right now in the other schools, so it is difficult for me to make a fair comparison. I believe that we do put greater emphasis on the student as an individual. We also have a system whereby the students are exposed to a greater range of attitudes and ideas about architecture. In a sense, our school is defined by the bringing in, the accommodating, the integrating of the best minds we can find to be part of that process—while at the same time leaving them quite free. You have been a professor there; you gave a studio as you were quite free in your vocation. At the same time, you became an integral part of the whole educational process of the school. You were more than just the frosting on the cake—you were an essential piece of the cake.

P.E.: That leaves a lot to the selection of faculty and critics.

C.P.: That is one of the most important things I do.

P.E.: But there is a chance of getting all frosting and no cake.

C.P.: If one is not careful, that could happen; if one is careful, that should not happen at all.

P.E.: That leaves out the manufacturing of knowledge, something with which I do not feel Yale is involved. Many other educational processes define their goals not only as the training of the students, but also as the manufacturing of knowledge. The university in general sees its role as the manufacturing of knowledge.

C.P.: In my opinion, this is not something that architecture should consider a primary responsibility. In some ways it may be an essential byproduct, but it is clearly a byproduct.

You have been part of our juries and so you know that juries at Yale are structured to be primarily a discussion of architectural issues and only secondarily a criticism of students' work. That, to me, is the manufacturing of architecture as a culture. It is one of the reasons that I enjoy teaching; it forces me to deal with issues that I think I should not encounter as clearly in practice. It allows me to use the forest instead of just looking at the trees; I find it to be very revitalizing for my practice.

P.E.: Do you think that the fact that you are now an educator while still a practicing architect has changed your practice?

C.P.: In some ways I do. But it is very difficult to know here which is the horse and which is the cart. I definitely felt that for me to keep on developing it was important to be in a more intellectually demanding environment. When the opportunity arose in 1976 to become dean at Yale, to come to the East Coast from Los Angeles, it was very tempting—in a number of ways. I felt that I was at a moment of change. In the last couple of years on the West Coast I had a chance to see how other people were doing new ideas, but the means at hand were much too limited.

P.E.: Do your practice and the way you conduct your practice inform the attitude you have toward education at Yale?

C.P.: Probably. Not in a very strong way; the school affects my practice more than my practice affects the school; but, yes, unquestionably, it flows both ways.

P.E.: Therefore, the school of architecture at Yale will be influenced by those changes occurring in your practice, those shifts within the continuing development of your ideology?

C.P.: Yes, but I also happen to believe that I have no business imparting my ideology to anybody. The students take it as they will and I will not offer them any form of indoctrination to the students. I think that is harmful for the students and will only stunt their development. Consequently, I get concerned when some of the work of the students in my studio starts to look like mine; I prefer it if the work does not look like mine at all. That also comes from my beliefs about education. Also, at Yale, for me, social responsibility and public service are paramount concerns.

Peter Eisenman talks with Cesar Pelli, dean of the Yale School of Architecture, about educational and architectural philosophies.
"I enjoy teaching; it force me to deal with issues that I tend not to encounter as clearly in practice."

Cesar Pelli (photo: Timothy Alexander)
Interview: Pelli and Eisenman

"For me, an important thing is trying to make architecture of a piece with my vision of the world; skins happen to be a very specific application of one part of that vision."
Skyline here provides an "insider's" view of Dean Cesar Pelli's institution. This report was prepared by students at Yale.

In a recent lecture at the Yale School of Architecture, Philip Johnson stated that he had not detected a dominant design strategy at Yale, and that his students would be graduating with "a tabula rasa." He further added that this was, in fact, "good," and that the heroes of a new architecture for a new age would probably emerge from among the graduates of Yale.

Mr. Johnson's praise was rather generous. However, his perception of the school—if not of its graduates' fortunes—was fundamentally correct. The school's goal, according to Dean Cesar Pelli, is the integration of artistic creative and the professional practice.

Yale's attempt to promote "the difficult unity of inclusion"—to borrow a phrase from Robert Venturi—is visible in most of its official policies. Yale accepts students with all types of educational and professional backgrounds, ranging from architecture (both professional schools and liberal arts majors) to the social and pure sciences, the humanities, and the fine arts. The extracurricular interests and activities of the in-house critics and faculty members vary widely. Faculty concerns range from form-follows-function and geometric manipulations to strict notions on the "buildability" of student projects and interest in solar power and alternative energy sources. Local architects, almost all of whom are Yale graduates, make up the design faculty for the school's primary architecture, Philip Johnson, has been a strong advocate of the "tabula rasa" approach to architecture. His students, he believes, should be free to develop their own ideas without being constrained by preconceived notions or established styles.

For me, that is a turning upside-down of the primary intentions of the Modern Movement. As an architect, I see the Modern Movement in architecture as starting in the early twentieth century. It represents the efforts of a number of architects throughout the Western world who were trying to reconnect with their architecture, and the image of their architecture, with the reality of their buildings. In the canonical period of Gropius and Le Corbusier the process continued in a similar vein, but the priorities shifted—instead of the forms being made to connect with reality, they were purposefully used to change that reality. These are the two conditions that are represented. If you call one a "pragmatic" ideology, the other would be an "idealist" or "utopian" ideology. Clearly the work of Mies represents the utopian or idealistic ideology and the work of Raymond Hood or William Van Alen represents a pragmatic ideology.

P.E.: Would you say, therefore, that your latest work represents a change in ideology from the utopian to the pragmatic.

C.P.: No.

P.E.: Putting hats on buildings is not symbolic of a change in ideology. Your ideology is the same in Battery Park City as it was in the Pacific Design Center?

C.P.: Yes.

P.E.: Therefore, your world view has not changed—or the world view has changed, and is no longer a still view a world.

C.P.: But you do claim a world view.

C.P.: The "world view" is simply my interpretation of what is around me—in all of its complexity.

P.E.: Isn't that what Mies thought he was doing?

C.P.: No; Mies was trying to capture a will, an essence, a power, or an outside force, which was all of one piece. I do not know if the world is of one piece; actually, I have a strong feeling that you do not know that. In terms of the avant-garde, I am a true agnostic. Just as I believe that you cannot know if God exists, I believe that you cannot know if there is such a will. It is a complete waste of time even to try to find it. That is why I am most concerned about the simplest things—how buildings are actually used, what our clients' needs are. I think those concerns are extremely serious because they are the things about which we all know something.

P.E.: In your terms, then, does your architecture now conform to this reality? Does it confirm this reality? Or, does it change or critique the reality?

C.P.: If anything, it critiques the reality—but not necessarily in a negative way. It comments on reality.

C.P.: Architecture for you, therefore, is to critique and not to comment on reality?

C.P.: To some degree; the relationship is not really of that order. Architecture really should respect reality. In that way it would put it.

P.E.: Do you mean "confirm" reality?

C.P.: No. "Confirms" is very different. "Confirms" implies an acceptance of all the goals of society as it exists, which we do not necessarily share. I am not saying that this is determined by architecture: the art of architecture is more autonomous than that. It is based on an understanding of—a respect for—reality. At that point the art starts.

Cesar Pelli (photo: Dorothy Alexander) core program. Notables in the core program are architect Kent Bloomer, co-author with Charles Moore of Body Memory and Architecture (New Haven, 1977), and Everett Barber, president of Soméruck, a company that manufactures solar equipment. The illustrious guest-critics need only be illustrative guests—who come to teach a studio for one term—over the past few years have included Aldo Rossi, Charles Gwathmey, Frank Gehry, Robert A. M. Stern, John Hejduk, and James Stirling, who has just accepted a permanent professorship in the school of architecture.

The curriculum includes design studios, a structures sequence, a history-theory sequence, a not-so-good environmental control systems course, a freehand drawing course (but no drafting course), and approximately three semesters of elective courses that may be taken in any department of the University. The concerns of these courses—historical, technical, or artistic—are often reflected in the students' design work, an influence as far stronger, in fact, than that provided by the varied backgrounds of the student body.

In terms of design criticism, the school is without dogma. The stylistic, philosophical, and aesthetic inclinations of individual students are rarely discussed (or attacked), even by guest-critics with well-defined preferences of their own. The fact that there is a "core program" (the required "core program" sequence), for instance, focuses separately on general concepts such as form, urbanism, building, and function. The faculty critics concentrate on the respective focus of each studio, whereas theoretically the students explore the personal ramifications of architectural design on their own.

Students spend their second year and a half in the "upper studio" of their choice, arriving from twelve to fifteen students per studio. There, if one is lucky enough to have a good studio, the studio is conducted with the semester's "big-name" critic. The remainder of the upper studios are taught by full-time faculty, or by lesser-known—but not necessarily incompetent—visiting critics. A new lottery is held each semester; a small percentage of each studio is chosen via a lottery followed by a half assistant, allowing some students to skip the lottery altogether. This group of students changes, consequently being chosen once is no guarantee of being chosen again, although some students do get selected repeatedly. The lottery system is in such a way that every student can run at least one semester in one of the "hot" studios. As one of Yale's most attractive, the "big" studios generally live up to their reputation; however, in the past, they have rung in quality from excellent to poor. The failure of the star system lies in the fact that simply because one can do something well does not mean that one can teach it well. One cannot totally blame the critic, however, since the "personality" of the student can play an important role. The success of a given studio as easily as the teaching ability of its critic.

Although this approach to architectural education definitely invites unrestricted expression, it can also be confusing. Dialogue between critics and students is often tentative, since most of the critics seem to shy away from expressing personal belief in favor of general statements that are more in line with their conception of the pluralistic attitude of the school. (If Mies' aphorism is "Less is more" and Venturi's is "Less is evil," then students at Yale sometimes feel that their critics' should be "Less is nice, but more is O.K. too." I) Nonetheless as architects we should be "taught" or "learned," it is done through the repetition of design projects and contact with architecture critics. It is important to note in this regard that critics are chosen, and protects individuality and that systems can be pluralistic, but individuals cannot (this applies to both critics and students).

The Yale School of Architecture needs a structure strong enough to contain the philosophy it promotes. It must allow all participants to express their interests and convictions (assumptions, of course, that they exist) and to encourage the dialogues that truly benefit an educational institution. Pluralistic education eliminates the confusion and provides an aim to promote its aims and ensure its success. It is the lesson of the individual and protects individuality and that systems can be pluralistic, but individuals cannot (this applies to both critics and students).

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Japan Diary: Summer ’81—Part 2

Kenneth Frampton

Monday, June 29: Kyoto—Osaka

Early morning journey to Katsura Palace (1620–45). It is dry, but still humid. Arata Isozaki talks about the concept of being “on the way,” ultimately, of course, to one’s death (as this is represented in the traditional Kabuki theater form). Once again, we encounter the impossible bureaucracy of the Imperial Household, but finally after passport inspection we set off on the by now familiar and tedious line of always subservient, but restless, camera-clicking tourists. The Palace seems to have a more intimate and delicate garden than either the Hiran Shrine (1605) or Shugaku-in (1659). Arata points out a square stone lantern by a bridge, which he says was a secret Christian symbol at a time when Christianity was forbidden in Japan. After completing the formal tour we manage to gain unofficial admittance to the interior of the palace, which is still in the process of being restored. This is clearly an extraordinary privilege since it is unlikely that anyone will ever enter this space once the restoration is complete. The Katsura has now been in a state of reconstruction for over four years; a restoration that has involved copying paintings at the rate of one square inch per person per day.

Each successive “house” that was added to the original Katsura Palace became progressively less formal. Perhaps the most singularly strange feature of the whole complex is the “secret” entry for flat boats under the low bridge and the fence. In the taxi after leaving Katsura we talk of Junichiro Tanizaki’s book In Praise of Shadows. This book, written by a famous Japanese novelist, was originally published in 1933 at the time when Taft first came to Japan. In essence, it is an unentimental appraisal of the impact of Western technology on Japanese culture in general, and on traditional domesticity in particular. While Tanizaki acknowledged the impossibility of sustaining superseded methods, he nonetheless praised the subtle, erotic, and elusive quality of the Japanese interior. Isozaki said that this book had exercised a great influence on him. In retrospect I think of the Katsura Palace as essentially a gradation of shadows. I remember its inner volume as being hallucinatory; above all it conveyed a seductively destabilizing sense of varying size and relative distance: the subtly changing heights and levels; the ever-recording, endlessly unfolding sets of volumes; the shifting, sliding screens of translucent versus opaque and plain-versus-painted surfaces; the kaleidoscopic changing light and the enforced kneeling position, graciously assumed by Atko Miyawaki as though she were the appointed occupant, only to be followed by clumsy Western efforts to simulate the same posture, and then—from cramps and embarrassment—to resume, however momentarily, the upright position. Katsura reminded me of my childhood, when, with sudden uncountable perceptual shifts in the apparent size constancy of objects, one had the sense of being frighteningly small or large, a sense that was accompanied by illusory changes in the relative size of the environment, which became correspondingly colossal or inexplicably small.

En route to Osaka, we cross over the mountains near Otsu, which was briefly the capital of the country before Nara and Kyoto. In Japan, such peak-top passes are regarded as “gates,” as markers of boundaries. We stop in Otsu at one of Arata Isozaki’s latest works, the Employees’ Service Building for the Nippon Electric Glass Company (1978–80). A glass tube factory built of reinforced concrete with anti-seismic steel-cable bracing. (It was this firm that spearheaded the undermining of the British TV tube industry.) The surface of the building is finished in two-tone crystallized glass, complemented by two-tone painted concrete-and-glass blocks. It is clear that Arata likes to be involved in the development of new materials, such as the opalescent, tinted, anti-sun-penetration glass blocks or the crystallized glass used on both the entrance and the staff dining room—beige in one instance, gray and white in the next. Perhaps the most impressive space in this building is the large gymnasion, with its yellow roof trusses, blue connotas, green-gray end walls, and glass-block flanks. One realizes that the architect did not have full control over the furnishing of the interior. This is most evident in the workers’ canteen, or even the staff dining room, where the client seems to be incapable of finding an appropriate use for the flower troughs that line the perimeter of the space.

We arrive at the airport situated on a peninsula in Kyushu after a heavy shower of rain. The humid air smells sweet; the sea is like steel, the sky gray, the lush countryside absolutely
A trip sponsored by the Committee for the Year 2000 permitted a close look at the work of architects in Japan today. The following is the second in a series of excerpts from the journals of Kenneth Frampton.

saturated. It is still not quite dark as the taxi makes its way around Beppu Bay, where there once was an island named Isozaki that sank in a mudstrom. Arata finds this an amusing portent of his destiny. As the taxi rises out of Beppu, steam starts to issue from innumerable fissures in the landscape like vaporous ghosts glowing in the dark. We pass through Isozaki's hometown of Oita City, hidden in darkness, skirt Mount Takasaki, and, steadily ascending, eventually arrive at the Yufuin Hotel close to Mount Yufuin. Our arrival is followed by a hot spring bath and a meal of Roman proportions.

Tuesday, June 30: Oita City

The next day it rains without stopping—not the best conditions under which to see the newly reinforced concrete buildings of Isozaki. These structures dating from his Metabolist period are rather crude; in fact, surprisingly so, when one thinks of the refinement of his later work. We visit the Oita Prefectural Library (1962-66), the Iwata Girls' High School (1963-66), the Oita Medical Center (1963), the Oita Branch of the Fukuoka Mutual Bank (1966-67), and finally Dr. Nakayama's residence (1964). Of all these, the last, in my view, is the most sophisticated and successfully resolved. Arata's obsession here is with the theme of the square—in this instance, a square plan with four smaller cubes, one at each of the four corners, and four cubic top lights over the central space. The boarded framework of the cubes is also arranged in a square around a central square window.

Although the most sophisticated work we see on this day is Isozaki's Fajimi Country Club (1972-74). I am surprised by the rough plaster on the interior and the felt floor. On the one hand, Isozaki's intention in using plaster seems to have been to evoke the feeling of Spanish Colonial rusticity. The felt, on the other hand, is employed as a temporary floor covering which will be replaced at intervals. Other details stand out: a red-stained wooden handrail; Otto Wagner-like horse's head; painted yellow; token fireplaces; somewhat Looisan in their detailing. Certain elements are not quite successful, such as the upper mezzanine bar and the sun-control system, which often seems to be a weakness in Arata's work. In general, the building seems to have been indifferently maintained.

Wednesday, July 1: Kitakyushu City and Fukuoka

After a protracted journey we visit all of Isozaki's buildings in Kitakyushu City: the Kitakyushu Central Library (1972-73), the Kitakyushu City Museum of Art (1972-74), the West Japan Exhibition Center (1972-73). During the long taxi journey from Beppu to Kitakyushu City we talk of many things. We discuss Hiroshi Teshigahara, who made the film Woman of the Dunes from Kobo Abe's novel. Teshigahara has inherited the Sogetsu School (of flower arrangement) from his father and now, like his father, teaches flower arrangement in Tokyo. It seems that flower arrangement is related to the poetic technique of Haiku. In any event, the tea ceremony dates from approximately the same time—the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries—and both the tea ceremony and flower arranging are communal art forms. Arata likens the historical-cultural structure of Japan to an elaborate stratification with Shinto as the original bedrock. This religion was later overlaid by Buddhism, which came from China, followed by Buddhism, and later Zen Buddhism, which came to Japan from India. This multiple strata has since been overlaid by Confucianism, and, of course by Industrialism. The point is that in Japan nothing is ever eclipsed and all six competing themes exist simultaneously.

We talk of recent research on the structure of the Japanese language which shows that, unlike Western languages, the vowels in Japanese have significance: I don't fully understand this argument, but the conclusion seems to be that due to the structure of the language in Japan, the left-hand side of the brain—the side usually dedicated to logical processes—becomes mixed with the right-hand or emotional side. We also talk of Bata Mura, the philosopher whose cosmological diagrams constitute the theme for the large stained-glass window in Arata's Kitakyushu Central Library.

We finally arrive at this building, which is extremely powerful, perhaps one of the best of Arata's designs to date despite the coarseness of the aluminum fenestration. The building's grounds are excellently landscaped. The most impressive part of this building is the repetitive use of prefabricated concrete ribbed vaulting throughout. The design shows a witty use of color in the so-called "rainbow."
corner, where there are seven colored columns, one for each band of the spectrum. The library obviously has been well received and sensitively and fully used, unlike the Kitakyushu City Museum of Art. Although the Museum is a very fine building, it is spoiled by the fact that it is underused and should have been finished to a higher standard. Arata is trying to persuade the authorities to at least finish the present concrete entrance of the Museum with marble.

Once again, I encounter Isozaki’s penchant for using unusual materials, for cast aluminum is used here to face the long box-like forms of the Museum. In this case Isozaki has made the basic mold from a flat-stored stone, which when rotated and systematically repeated simulates the surface of a larger stone. One notes an influence of Viennese culture, particularly in the elegant marble facing of the interior stairs. A Wagnerian spirit colors the detailing of the metalwork throughout. However, the excessive volume of the interior is disturbing and Arata now has the idea of reducing the height of the side galleries with a suspended ceiling. Kitakyushu is plagued by the usual problem of a provincial culture, for while sufficient money was raised to build the Museum on a spectacular site, no intelligent policy was evolved for the development of the collection. It is clear that Arata designed this Museum for large pieces of contemporary art, which have yet to be acquired. Instead, there is insistence on purchasing small-scale, “safe” examples of nineteenth-century Western art.

We leave Kitakyushu City at 5 p.m. for Fukuoka, where we finally arrive at around 9:20 for a visit to Arata’s Shuko-Sha Building (1974–75). This is an elegant structure, beautifully finished in travertine with elegant fenestration. No photograph can fully capture the strong sculptural impact of the Bolton-like apsidal entrance with false doors, above all perhaps because of the height spot lights, which, arranged in pairs on chromium metal base-plates, illuminate the upper part of this nearlyjc space with a strange, luminous light.

By far the most successful interior in the Shuko-Sha Building is the upper reception volume—a space that should carry the title “Eyes = 5/4 p.m.” since 5/43 was the hour of the inauguration of Shuko-Sha. This is, in fact, the title of Aiko Miyawaki’s two-part brass sculpture placed on top of a tiered abstract orthogonal form separating the main reception space from the partners’ offices to the rear. At this hour, as the light fades, the opalescent light fittings at the edges of this barrier change their tone in relation to the general ambient quality of the light. The effect is a Whistler-like ambience rendered in shades of white and gray—white steel, aluminum blinds, gray carpet, gray furniture, white steps, brass highlights, all enriched by rectangular opalescent lamps.

After seeing Shuko-Sha, we stroll through the streets of Fukuoka, encountering a mime on a bridge over one of the many tributaries of the river. This diminutive figure dramatically illuminated by the fierce light of a kerosene lamp constantly sways and pirouettes in his endless satire of Kabuki dance form, while a scratched recording played on faulty equipment cracks out a continuous stream of nostalgic music. The mime bows effusively to the appreciative audience, only to leap back with mock alarm and surprise when applauded. One is reminded irresistibly of Joseph Hylwerto.

In the street Arata encounters the vice-president of the Fukuoka Mutual Bank, a silver-haired epicurean accompanied by a gruha. We repair to a basement where we are tentatively welcomed by the ample figure of the bank president. Other bank executives stand loosely in attendance. General confusion reigns at the awkward intrusion of English-speaking aliens into an intimate Japanese situation. The gruhas are alternately irritated and embarrassed. After a while the executives depart and we are left in the tranquil space of this small bar attended by “Mamasan” and four charming young figures—three female and one male—who are designated to assist Mamasan in gratifying the wishes of her clientele that is to say, they help to keep her customers piled with alcohol, food, warmth, and the occasional moment of fleeting physical contact. Mamasan speaks fluent English and is a woman in her early forties, of apparently inexhaustible vitality, generosity, and charm.

“Once again, one encounters the typical Isozaki use of ‘new’ materials.”


Thursday, July 2: Fukuoka—Hiroshima
We visit Arata’s Fukuoka Mutual Bank Head Office (1968–71). My first reflex on seeing this building is to be reminded of Ragnar Ostberg’s Stockholm City Hall (1911–23), not because of any formal similarities, but primarily because the overall warm, dark, reddish-brown sandstone, together with the red granite and the Cor-ten steel, are reminiscent of the color tone of the Ostberg masterpiece. Other similar elements are the general texture and richly incidental detailing. Later I remark how certain aspects of the detailing disturb me; above all, the absence of clearly marked mortar joints on the four large round columns supporting the giant cross beam that serves as an “entablature” to the principal street facade. Another feature of interest is the white marble entry, with a chromium base for the clock panel entry screen. Inside, a white marble “scroll” contrasts strongly with the sandstone wall on which it is mounted. The grandeur of this banking hall has been spoiled by the chaos of the graphics added by the client.
Once again, the typical Iwazaki use of “new” materials in the executive suite: black cloth wallpaper inset with silver, vinyl tiles simulating marble.

We take the train to Hiroshima, where we visit Kenzo Tange’s Peace Center (1952), now somewhat changed since the horizontal layers of the original design have been removed—due apparently to the perennial pigeon problem! It is difficult to accept the fact that this marks the epicenter of the first atomic bomb dropped in August, 1945, and that the whole of this vital, built-up city has been constructed in the last 25 years! The exhibition in the memorial emphasizes the fact that the Americans gave no warning whatsoever, but only cautioned in general terms about the danger of future air raids. It is clear, as the exhibition implies, that a demonstration bomb could have been detonated over an area of Japan which was less heavily populated. The on-the-spot post-blast photography indicates that the U.S. military regarded the whole thing as an expedient experiment. After this visit to Togo Murano’s Chapel for World Peace (1952), Murano—the virtuoso eclectic—all too often is a disappointing architect. The detailing of this church is such that it could have been designed by a moderne French architect in the early 1990s.

Friday, July 3: Kurashiki
We visit Kenzo Tange’s still magnificent Kurashiki City Hall of 1958, which, apart from the fact that itynot has been superseeded as a city hall, is surely a masterpiece of contemporary Japanese architecture. There is something almost Italian about the internal layer in the center of the volume with its monumental stair and interior facades. It says something about the incapacity of Japanese society to value urban continuity that they did not choose to expand to the rear of this truly remarkable building to meet space requirements for offices. Instead, they have built an entirely new structure (Kurashiki Civic Center, 1972) in a new quarter of Kurashiki—an absolutely third-rate work, fashionably designed by Shinzo Urabe with Western historicist trappings. It is commonly regarded as yet another example of the Meguro-Emperor or “love-hotel” style.

Saturday, July 4: Yomauoue Hotel, Tokyo; Hiroo
We accompany the elegant Fumihiko Maki on a visit to a number of his buildings: the Daikanyama Terrace Houses (1960–78), the Royal Danish Embassy (completed 1979), and the absolutely spectacular Mitsubisi Bank Building (1981) in Hiroo, a suburb of Tokyo. This building is executed in concrete and glass block and finished in ceramic silver tiles with chrome steel facings. We also visit the new library that Maki is building at Keio University in Tokyo. We have lunch at Le Poisson Rouge, where we dined with Aiko and Aiko on our first evening in Tokyo.

In the afternoon we go to Arata’s office where we talk about the history of Japanese modern architecture in the 1920s and ’30s. Arata shows me the drawings for the cultural center in Teshiba. After dinner we walk through the crowded, neon-lit disco streets of Roppongi. We end this evening in the Aoki House and Metal Factory, designed by Arata in 1979, with its high, cross-vaulted living room on the top floor. A typical metropolitan evening follows when Aiko arrives with an old Francophile Japanese sculptor and a young Belgian dancer named Bertrand.
Ruskiniana

Ross Miller

John Ruskin (1819-1900) is too often remembered only as a fussy Victorian eccentric. His tireless traveling, precise drawings, and extensive writings are seen, in retrospect, as the product of a thwarted man. Unable to consummate his marriage because he found the realities of a woman's uncompromisingly inferior to the sculpted female form, Ruskin lived out his life through various enthusiasms for very young women. Carnality was all to human and not to his taste. Ruskin's passion for the Virgin, Gothic architecture, and the struggle for a fresh way to see the world, as he reflected on the Roman cathedrals, was an attempt to create new worlds as realms as he tried to interpret, "the bond between the human mind and all visible things." Yet because he lived for such a long time—he died at 81 in 1900—he also became a rather soporific, often wordy, driving force behind the current interest in the work of Ruskin.

Ruskin—succinctly sensitive to the past and aware of an unstable future—is particularly interesting due to the diverse influence he has had. Some of the stereotypes about the Victorian have been brilliantly negative of his nature. From his mother, a rigid Protestant moralist, he inherited a strong evangelical voice and from his father, the successful scion of a wine-importing business and a frustrated artist, he received a large dose of worldly unsuccess. The characteristic moral behavior of Ruskin's architectural criticism, his unyielding championing of Gothic as opposed to Renaissance art and architecture, and the obsessive diligence with which he pursued his passions were Ruskin's mixed patrimony. His father, John James, wrote to him on the passing of his eighth birthday: You are blessed with a fine capacity and even genius and you owe it as a Duty to your Author and Your Being and the giver of your Talents to cultivate your powers and to use them in your Service and for the benefit of your fellow Creatures. One thing however you must not do and that is to debase to or demean those. By your Wisdom and to adorn an age by your Learning. This inbred sense of mission in the writer's secular calling formed Ruskin's underlying purpose. He moved in 1848 without his father's permission ("doomed to enlighten"), for in truth he was a passionate advocate of an older contemporary, J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851). He saw in the painter Turner the same naive devotion to detail that had been practiced by the Medieval architects at Torello and Murano and by Ruskin himself in his painstakingly rendered Stones of Venice. Ruskin admired the Turner's "organic" connection to the natural world, and all visible things, the world of Nature, in the same way that God had created the world of Nature, in the same way that God had created man. Unlike Ruskin's own aestheticism, it was a particular spiritualism, and a form of reverence that became a godly exaltation to the spiritualism of man's cooperation with God. Ruskin's faith was reinforced by his own considerable spiritualism, which he received from the example of Turner's modern spirituality and his refusal to engage in mock piety. Ruskin collected the British artist's works because it gave him the commercialism of nineteenth-century Britain (represented to Ruskin by his own father's failure) a godly exaltation to the uncommercial ideals of Turner's canvases. To Ruskin, Turner was the worldly counterpart of the early Victorian artist's transcendental vision.

John Ruskin, in Jan Morris' handsome edition of *The Stones of Venice*, chronicles the city's architecture with the scientist's precision of a cataloguer and evaluates each detail. For example, he draws and describes "the "Leaden of the Vine Angle" at the Ducal Palace in order to understand, as would the scientist (botanist) studying the living plant, the underlying creative principle. There is no least attempt to inform the spectator of any facts about the growth of the vine; there are no stolons or tendrils—merely running bands of leaves emergent from them, of which nothing but the outline is taken from the vine, and even that imperfectly. This is design, unregarded of facts. . . ."

Ruskin, in Morris' version, is the passionate, the moralistic, the moral exaltation to the spiritualism of man's cooperation with God. Ruskin's faith was reinforced by his own considerable spiritualism, which he received from the example of Turner's modern spirituality and his refusal to engage in mock piety. Ruskin collected the British artist's works because it gave him the commercialism of nineteenth-century Britain (represented to Ruskin by his own father's failure) a godly exaltation to the uncommercial ideals of Turner's canvases. To Ruskin, Turner was the worldly counterpart of the early Victorian artist's transcendental vision.

Ruskin, a reader's Ruskin, was the Victorian artist's counterpart to the writer's Turner. Ruskin was the first great reader of Turner. His faith was reinforced by his own considerable spiritualism, which he received from the example of Turner's modern spirituality and his refusal to engage in mock piety. Ruskin collected the British artist's works because it gave him the commercialism of nineteenth-century Britain (represented to Ruskin by his own father's failure) a godly exaltation to the uncommercial ideals of Turner's canvases. To Ruskin, Turner was the worldly counterpart of the early Victorian artist's transcendental vision.

Ms. Abie's John Ruskin: The Passionate Manor in *The Stones of Venice,* the city's architecture with the scientist's precision of a cataloguer and evaluates each detail. For example, he draws and describes "the "Leaden of the Vine Angle" at the Ducal Palace in order to understand, as would the scientist (botanist) studying the living plant, the underlying creative principle. There is no least attempt to inform the spectator of any facts about the growth of the vine; there are no stolons or tendrils—merely running bands of leaves emergent from them, of which nothing but the outline is taken from the vine, and even that imperfectly. This is design, unregarded of facts. . . ."

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Buffalo Architecture: A Guide

Jill Weber

An early photograph of St. Giorgio Maggiore from the Ducal Palace, Venice

Therein, it is with curiosity about Ruskin's personal struggle that one turns to Jay Fellow's work. Unfortunately, Ruskin's Maze and the earlier and more accessible The Failing Distance lack the clarity and good sense of Joan Alice's biography. Both Mr. Alice and Mr. Morris (in her introduction to the nicely illustrated The Stones of Venice) correctly recognize that Ruskin's failing sense of self and moral purpose were tied to the gradual decay of cultural authority in nineteenth-century Europe. In both books, Mr. Fellowes conflates Ruskin's life and work, thereby interposing at will his own rather confusing narrative into Ruskin's words. What we would like to know is the exact relationship of Ruskin's work (his public life) to his "autobiographical impulse." In The Failing Distance Mr. Fellows tells us all the ways Ruskin avoids talking about himself without directly confronting the reason Ruskin's reliance becomes so pathological. Instead, the text is filled with snappy phrase-making, such as in the chapter subhead: "The Camera Lucida and the Optics of Intervening Space." "The Moral Retina and the Optics of Affection." "Meiosis: The Dangers of Corruption." Mr. Fellowes is at his best when he analyzes a particular phenomenon in Ruskin's work, such as the critic's interest in the metaphor of the eye as a camera lucida, or Ruskin's preference for visual images over the Renaissance's love of words. Unfortunately, Fellowes cannot seem to resist the opportunity to catalogue and classify. It is not surprising that Ruskin's tortured life is a veritable treasure-trove of possibilities for critical interpretation. However, like a forgetful surgeon, Mr. Fellowes cuts every segment of Ruskin's corpus, and lovingly probes each organ, but fails to sew the body back together.

Ruskin's, involved and erratic as it often appears, is not really suited to the "deconstructionist" criticism employed by Mr. Fellows. The reader—at least in this case—would be better served by a more straightforward approach. Perhaps a book like Ruskin's Maze is stimulating when one already has a sense of Ruskin firmly in mind. The following passage is taken from the preface of this text: Penultimately, Ruskin's consciousness (and even Ruskin himself) might be considered a double labyrinth—a three-dimensional space of cutting edges, where the double use itself doubles. Earlier, he will be concerned with a single Maze of recoiled Lucent Verdures: it is as if, close to an "overlapping." Circumference, under the pressure of an impacted and exploding repletion, that single Maze had doubled in a necessary accommodation that is part of an almost final disintegration. Understand? The tendency to make the work of a writer who was tragically struggling for clarity more opaque is a peculiarly modern perversity.

L'Enfant—and Frederick Law Olmsted's park and parkway system, which, in Olmsted's opinion, made "Buffalo the best laid-out city, as to its streets, public places and grounds, in the United States," Charles Beveridge, editor of the Olmsted papers, has contributed an excellent history and descriptive essay on the original character of those plans, their "'as built' nature, and the subsequent, and often unaltered, forms of the pastorial plans for Delaware Park to those along the river and within the central and southern portions of the city. Olmsted provided places for different activities and changing landscapes as an alternative to and interruption of the stresses of city life. Although never completed according to his original schemes, and divided, filled in, or otherwise aborted, Olmsted's parks still provide the city with its much-needed green lungs, while the broad parkways graciously link it together.

While the well-known landmarks by Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, R.H. Richardson, Daniel Burnham, and Richard Upjohn are, of course, given good coverage, the book includes much of the housing stock described by Henry-Russel Hitchcock in a hitherto unpublished 1940 essay as "rich and turgid," rising in striking contrast both to the severe and yet romantic forms of the new grain elevators and to the more archaeological work of imported eastern architects.

During his brief three-year tenure at the SUNY/Buffalo School of Architecture, Reyner Banham became immersed in "Buffalo Industrial." Banham relished describing the "fantasy" architecture: those high-quality buildings designed by architects and engineers whose names would never make the history books or the coffee tables, but whose "immeasurable engineering" standards established a consistent high level of quality.

For those interested in the grain elevators—the concrete dinosaurs collected along the river—the guide provides a map, directions for finding the "next round-up," and a chart on "roads in Buffalo," and minimally technical, concise captions. The nearby Larkey Company Complex, considered one of this country's most significant industrial groupings, and harboring vestiges of Wright's Larkey Administration Building, forms the centerpiece of the book's unabashed admiration for the functional design and rational detailing of Buffalo's industrial construction. This enthusiasm spills over to include R.J. Reispath & Son's Alling and Gory Building (1900-11), Lockwood, Green and Company's Pierce Arrow Motor Car Company (1904-07), and Buffalo Motor Company (1903), and Albert Kahn's Ford Motor Company (1913). A helpful series of brief architectural biographies outline the work of lesser known but influential firms.

Filled with excellent photographs of individual buildings, details, and, most significant, of the contextual quality of neighborhoods, the guide captures the excellent yet often melancholy quality of Buffalo's past and present.

Elk Street, Buffalo, New York

Buffalo Architecture: A Guide is a modest title for a remarkable body of work. While its thoroughness and accuracy are excellent—the bottom line for any guide of this sort—it goes further, and in more depth, than others of its type.

Not only does the guide discreetly and describe the architectural soul-searching and fragmentation experienced by this essentially industrial city, but it deals in a scholarly yet accessible way with the prime influences of Buffalo's "push-me, pull-you" architectural mentality: the partial execution of early city plans, the importation of Eastern and Midwestern architectural, the turning away from the waterfront, and the out-of-scale and often unsung growth of powerful industrial structures.

The book makes it "impossible," as Reyner Banham explains, "for anyone who cares about architecture to say, 'We drove by Buffalo on the Thruway, but decided not to stop because there's nothing there to look at—is there?' All 336 pages are dedicated to the unending variety and frequent excellence of places and buildings in the city on the eastern shore of Lake Erie—a variety of scale, style, and substance that still forms an essential framework for a fragmented sense of changing neighborhoods.

Buffalo is a city of neighborhoods overlaid by the successful combination of plans by Joseph Elytic—which radial visions reflected his Washington work under Pierre Charles L'Enfant—and Frederick Law Olmsted's park and parkway system, which, in Olmsted's opinion, made "Buffalo the best laid-out city, as to its streets, public places and grounds, in the United States," Charles Beveridge, editor of the Olmsted papers, has contributed an excellent history and descriptive essay on the original character of those plans, their "as built" nature, and the subsequent, and often unaltered, forms of the pastoral plans for Delaware Park to those along the river and within the central and southern portions of the city. Olmsted provided places for different activities and changing landscapes as an alternative to and interruption of the stresses of city life. Although never completed according to his original schemes, and divided, filled in, or otherwise aborted, Olmsted's parks still provide the city with its much-needed green lungs, while the broad parkways graciously link it together.

While the well-known landmarks by Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, R.H. Richardson, Daniel Burnham, and Richard Upjohn are, of course, given good coverage, the book includes much of the housing stock described by Henry-Russell Hitchcock in a hitherto unpublished 1940 essay as "rich and turgid," rising in striking contrast both to the severe and yet romantic forms of the new grain elevators and to the more archaeological work of imported eastern architects.

During his brief three-year tenure at the SUNY/Buffalo School of Architecture, Reyner Banham became immersed in "Buffalo Industrial." Banham relished describing the "fantasy" architecture: those high-quality buildings designed by architects and engineers whose names would never make the history books or the coffee tables, but whose "immeasurable engineering" standards established a consistent high level of quality.

For those interested in the grain elevators—the concrete dinosaurs collected along the river—the guide provides a map, directions for finding the "next round-up," and a chart on "roads in Buffalo," and minimally technical, concise captions. The nearby Larkey Company Complex, considered one of this country's most significant industrial groupings, and harboring vestiges of Wright's Larkey Administration Building, forms the centerpiece of the book's unabashed admiration for the functional design and rational detailing of Buffalo's industrial construction. This enthusiasm spills over to include R.J. Reispath & Son's Alling and Gory Building (1900-11), Lockwood, Green and Company's Pierce Arrow Motor Car Company (1904-07), and Buffalo Motor Company (1903), and Albert Kahn's Ford Motor Company (1913). A helpful series of brief architectural biographies outline the work of lesser known but influential firms.

Filled with excellent photographs of individual buildings, details, and, most significant, of the contextual quality of neighborhoods, the guide captures the excellent yet often melancholy quality of Buffalo's past and present.

View of the Buffalo River and grain elevators from the Ohio Street Bridge, Buffalo, N.Y. (photos: Patricia Lynsay Bazelon)
Gwendolyn Wright At Princeton

In a lecture on April 6 at Princeton University, entitled "Public and Private Space in the United States," Gwendolyn Wright, a social/ architectural historian and design critic at the University at California at Berkeley compared the issue of housing in the 1920s and in the 1980s, suggesting parallels between the attitudes of Presidents Hoover and Reagan. Drawing from material in her recent book Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America (see Skylines, April 1982, p. 31 and this issue p.5), Wright discussed Herbert Hoover's faith that the home-owner family unit would ensure a sound economy and a rational society. The government was not to interfere with the free market system, but would merely induce active cooperation among certain "right-thinking" civic groups. Ronald Reagan has adopted a similar approach through his dismantling of government subsidies, asking business to take up the slack, and endorsing state and local governments with more responsibility in the allocation of funds.

Wright suggested, however, that the government could not function as an impartial mediator. Various groups often used the idealistic guise of "home and family" as a vehicle for more sinister ends, from sexual and racial discrimination to economic exploitation. Thus Hoover's zoning laws, designed to isolate single-family homes in stable residential areas, cleared the way for restrictive covenants that excluded Mexicanos, Jews, and other minorities from certain neighborhoods. "Better Homes in America," organized around the belief that good homes build character, became a quasi-political forum for the discussion of everything from Commies to racial strife. The Moral Majority of the '60s similarly translates its fears into architectural terms, although today, when the "typical household" comprises only 13 percent of the population, opposition is more outspoken.

Wright's discussion of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau of the 1920s pointed out the profession's somewhat ambivalent attitude toward the housing problem. The bureau was established to provide modest, affordable homes based on stock plans and using mass-produced materials. At first the AIA supported the bureau, but, according to Wright, professional defensiveness eventually led architects to reject the mildly populist organization, which advertised its stock plans as if they were ordinary consumer items. Wright also argued that historically American architects have proved reluctant to deal directly with the public, preferring to serve the wealthy, the business community, or governmental agencies, rather than to engage in the "awkward business of clients and the vulgarity of public taste." Today, Wright continued, "post-modern" architects overlook the social dimension of architecture, and, she stated, the architecture of withdrawal leads to the reduction of architecture.

—Lois Nesbit

Fernando Montes, Istituto Roland Barthes, Venice

Fernando Montes At Princeton

The much-hailed failure of Modernism was the subject of a recent lecture by Fernando Montes, who is now a professor at the Unite Pedagogique d'Architecture 6 in Paris. Reiterating the theories of Aldo Rossi and the Italian Rationalists, Montes argued that European Modernism, with its call for revolutionary change, eventually succumbed to the force of the history that it tried to erase. The city, the repository of the architecture of past eras, became the focus of this crisis.

But Montes remained optimistic about the move away from Modernism: "Architecture has been liberate..." restored," he stated. In turning to history, designers can make use of "the incredible capital accumulated in architecture," the formal richness forbidden during the Modern period. Montes did not mention, however, that architecture's "autonomy" has been gained, in most cases, through a refusal to confront social, political, and economic issues. Nor did he acknowledge that the resurrection of historical forms does not necessarily result in relevant and accessible design, and that much recent architecture is still self-referential, comprehensible only to those well versed in the history of architecture.

With regard to his own work, Montes' designs reveal a sensitivity to scale and form lacking in the machine-like modernism of many of his contemporaries. Montes began practicing in France at a time when designers were being commissioned to develop large-scale urban and suburban housing complexes. The projects he presents are primarily urban in character, consisting of agglomerations of forms organized around spatial nodes. Individual elements reflect familiar typologies: the palazzo and its square courtyard; the crescent of terraced houses.

Elements cohere through shared motifs of Montes' relatively abstract, Rationalist vocabulary, and by means of geometric or proportional schemes that act as rules regulative for the complexes. His 1975 project for Les Halles derives from two conflicting grids determined by the orientations of existing monuments. The proportions of the Egyptian triangle— which, Montes discovered, governed the plans and sections of many surrounding buildings—lie the scheme together. Montes also makes use of literary sources to generate designs: a project for a resort complex translates Flinn's description of his villa into modern leisure facilities: a tennis court; a television room; a miniature golf course.

The values that Montes outlined as important today inform much of his effort: the geometric and proportional systems aspire to universality; the familiar typologies refer to history; the pragmatic and multifocal groupings recreate or respond to the context of the city. —Lois Nesbit

Lecture Notes

The Other Night

The Other Day

Architecture and Ideology At the IAWS

The current concern (might one term it an obsession?) with ideology as applied to the analysis of architecture lies in the examination of architecture—both on the part of practitioners and historians—was reflected in the symposium "Architecture and Ideology" sponsored by the Revisions group at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in the fall of 1982. The symposium examined the relationship between ideologies and the ways in which they connect architecture to social and political concerns, and the symposium included presentations by Greek architectural historians Domeni Porphyrios; Spanish art historian, critic, and former professor of

Demetri Porphyrios, Fredric Jameson, and Thomas Llorens at the IAWS

esthetics Thomas Llorens; and literary critic Fredric Jameson. Each speaker discussed their particular concerns regarding the relationship between ideology—and defined as the sociopolitical program consisting of assertions, theories, and aims of our "late capitalist" society—"critical" history—the examination of history in the light of its distortion or "subjection,"" by individual and collective political ends. An examination of the manner of thinking characteristic of capitalist societies today was seen by the Revisions group and by the speakers at the symposium as essential to the discourse on architecture today, but the ideas presented at the symposium left it up to the audience to sort out the implications of these theoretical concerns regarding the practice of architecture. Regardless of the open-ended quality of the day's discussions, however, the symposium successfully engaged the topic in question: ideology architecture—architecture from the standpoint of three individuals practicing three different disciplines: architecture criticism; aesthetics; and literary criticism.

Porphyrios' presentation, entitled "History as a Project of Critique," outlined a methodology of critical history, reviewing point-by-point the steps necessary in the analysis of the rules, postulates, and principles of a so-called "critical" history. "Critical" history, Porphyrios maintained—as opposed to traditional for noncritical historiography—is concerned with the "deanonymization" or decoding unmaking of ideologies and "mythos" that shape our conceptions of history. Stressing the possible pitfalls or problems inherent in attempting to view history critically, Porphyrios asserted the value of approaches to history which are concerned with the structure rather than with the chronological order or "linear" view of history. Critical history, Porphyrios stated, is a tool with which "de-historicize," or penetrate the camouflages whereby our present political and economic "narratives" are made to seem "natural" and "eternal"—if we need not be put to the test of critical examination, Porphyrios' comments were logical and clearly presented, although his analyses left some members of the audience desirous of an amplification of the way his methodology could be applied to the practice of architecture.

Thomas Llorens' presentation, "On Making History," centered on the definition of the term "making history." This inevitably involves, according to Llorens, a distortion of "objectivity" facts or "truth" by ideological assumptions and by the selective process of remembering. Instead of directing the symposium toward practice, Llorens' philosophically oriented presentation propelled the discussion in a more abstract direction. To describe the process whereby ideology distorts and makes impossible the "objective" or "real" nature of history, Llorens used a compelling analogy of a set of stage curtains parting to reveal inner curtains, which are parting to reveal a third layer, and so forth, in infinite repetition.

—Lois Nesbit

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Skylines May 1982

The Other Night

The Other Day

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—Lois Nesbit
Following a classical Marxist rhetorical structure, whereby a seemingly disparate or opposed pair of ideas are explained and then demonstrated to have common structural features, Fred Jameson's "Architecture and the Critique of Ideology" came closer than did the two previous presentations to addressing the connection between theory—as seen through the analysis of ideology—and practice—as seen in the work of contemporary architects. Evincing the work of Manifesto, in Tafuri would insist his book Architecture and Utopia—Jameson distinguished between the history of architecture and history of the theories of architecture, or historiography, as practiced by Tafuri. Jameson characterized the work of Tafuri as the prime exponent of a historiography based on the Marxist principle of "reversal," or unmasking underlying assumptions or ideologies that shape our perceptions of the world. In an unqualified conclusion, Jameson argued that although Tafuri rejects the work of the "post-modernist" architects as neither progressive nor revolutionary, both Tafuri and the post-modern architects such as Robert Venturi share the common target of high modernism and late capitalism.

The shared elements of the work of Tafuri and Venturi, however, Jameson stressed, are not in the nature of their ideas or the quality of their work, but in the relationship of their attitudes toward modernism. While both Tafuri and Venturi believe that there can be no such thing as a truly "progressive" architecture within the context of late capitalist ideology, and that architecture is truly at an impasse, Venturi holds that it is still possible to build, using the fabric of the urban vernacular, Tafuri's position may be seen as nihilistic, negative, or pessimistic; while Venturi appears to remain "optimistic." Jameson did not imply that either attitude was totally consistent or that the two positions were equivalent in terms of the work of their work or any underlying common philosophy. His linking of both, however, had the effect of a jarring gestalt—two distinct positions that, when examined at this level, seem to intersect briefly.

Jameson ended his argument with a question: whether it is possible to have a "Neo-Gramscian" architecture, an architecture that is not "pedagogical" and "lacking a substantive basis," they made clear the often tenuous and conflicting connection between architecture and ideology. The definitions of analytic or critical processes of the historian and history as elucidated by Peirce's and Llorenzo, for all their interest, can only be useful if, when turned upon the present, they can be seen to further our understanding of architecture, politics, and society.

"Architecture and Ideology" amplified current concerns with Marxist critical methods and philosophy in examining architecture. What was left unexamined—at least in the public or formal discussion at IAUSS on March 13—was how architecture can remain to any degree autonomous or even slightly independent of the force and strategies of ideology. Informal discussions by the Re-Visions group and panelists following the formal symposium, however, brought this concern to light and explored the possibility of this "autonomy"—a question that would provide material for an unlimited number of symposiums. One would hope that future discussions will address this question—MN/MGJ
# Baltimore

"The Row House: A Baltimore Style of Living"

Through May 1986 Installation on the changing history of the row house during two centuries, including period rooms, artifacts, scale drawings, as well as explanations of development and construction. Peale Museum, 225 North Holliday Street, Baltimore; (301) 396-3521

# Buffalo

Buffalo Architecture

May 7-8 27 In conjunction with the publication of Buffalo Architecture: A Guide—a show of plans, photos, and artifacts relating to Buffalo architecture, the film A Fair Place To Build in The Architecture of the Empire State will be shown on May 7. May 8 A symposium with Brendan Gill, Robert Campbell, Michael Brill, and Robert Truax


during and construction.

Brendan

Moshe Safdie

Gill, Robert

Franz

Avenue; Buffalo Architecture

May

Brendan

Thomas

Onion Street, Baltimore; (716) 822-4701

Chicago

Chicago Construction

May 11-August 14 Canadian artist/architect Melvin Charney will create a "new facade" for the Museum of Contemporary Art. Drawings for this project and others will be on display. Museum of Contemporary Art, 237 East Ontario Street (312) 280-2660

Exhibits

# Los Angeles

Architecture ‘70-’80 in Switzerland

Through May 15 An exhibit of work by Fritz Haller, Werner Blaser, Jean-Marc Lamuniere, Max Schupf, and many more. School of Architecture and Urban Planning, UCLA (213) 825-2525

San Juan Caipistrano Public Library Competition

Through June 20 Schemes submitted by Michael Graves, Moore Ruble Yudell, and Robert A.M. Stern. The Schindler House, 835 North Kings Road; (213) 651-1510

# Miami

Miami: The End of the Road

Through May 29 color photographs of vanishing highway movements. Carus Gatey taken by John Margolies. Bass Museum of Art, 2100 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach; (305) 673-7330

New York City

OMA Exhibit at I.A.U.S

Through May 28 "Office for Metropolitan Architecture: Toward a Modern (Re)construction of the European City—Four Housing Projects." Projects by Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis include two for the Internationale Bauausstellung in Berlin, as well as one each for Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 8 West 40th Street; (212) 996-9474

Moshe Safdie

Through June 7 An exhibit of his recent work co-sponsored by the N.Y. Institute for the Humanities and Hebrew Union College. Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, Brookdale Center, 1 West 44th Street; (212) 596-2074

The Right Light


Felix Del Marie

Through June 12 A retrospective of work by the French artist who contributed both to the Futurist and De Stijl movements. Carus Gatey, 872 Madison Avenue at 71st Street; (212) 879-4660

Giorgio de Chirico

Through June 100 paintings and drawings executed between 1909 and 1935. Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 54th Street; (212) 956-7501

Preservation in Progress: The Seaport District

Through July 5 An exhibit illustrating the philosophy and technology of the architectural preservation underway at the South Street Seaport. South Street Seaport Gallery, 213 Water Street; (212) 766-9520

Richard Meier

May 3-14 An exhibit of work by the architect. Pratt Institute, Higgins Hall Exhibition Gallery, St. James and Lafayette Streets, Brooklyn; (212) 666-3407

Historic Preservation: The Curatorial Management of the Built World

May 3-29 An exhibit on the "what, where, and how" of preservation based on a book by James Mason Fitch. Municipal Art Society, Upstairs Gallery, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; 123 735-1722

Lilbeth Mitty

May 16-June A Poured acrylic paintings of domestic interiors. Rosa Eman Gallery, 29 West 57th Street; (212) 421-9490

The Goetheanum: Rudolf Steiner's Architectural Impulse

May 4-June 20 An international exhibit of drawings, model, photographs, sketches, and texts of Steiner’s two Goetheanums in Dornach, Switzerland. The catalogue is by Dr. Hagen Biesantz. There will be guided bus tours to Steiner-influenced buildings near Spring Valley, New York. National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Avenue; (212) 269-4080

Chairs and Tables

May 6-29 Vintage modern and recent designs by Scott Burton, Max Protetch Gallery, 37 57th Street; (212) 838-7436

Columbia Student Work

May 11-Sept. 12 Photographs, drawings, prints, watercolors, and paintings of New York City buildings covering a period of over 100 years. Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Avenue at 105th Street; (212) 534-1672

Ada Louise Hutzal

May 24-26 An exhibit celebrating her work at The New York Times. Municipal Art Society, Upstairs Gallery, Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 735-1722

Grand Central Terminal: City Within the City

May 27-Oct. 3 Photographs, drawings, slides, vintage film clips, and a multilevel model exploring the development of Grand Central Terminal and its influence on the physical, economic, and social life of New York City; curated by Deborah Nevens and designed by HHFA, New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West; (212) 875-3400

Armenian Architecture

May 25-June 21 Photographic exhibit of Armenian architecture from the 4th to the 18th century. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 33rd and Spruce Streets; (215) 243-4000

Purchase

Robert A.M. Stern: Tradition of the New

Through June 20 Drawings and models emphasizing the incorporation of classical and vernacular traditions into an architectural vocabulary for the present. Neuberger Museum, SUNY, College at Purchase; (914) 253-3575

Mies van der Rohe

May 16-Aug. 22 Barcelona Pavilion and furniture designs. Made possible through the support of Knoll International. Neuberger Museum, SUNY, College at Purchase; (914) 253-3575

San Francisco / Bay Area

Kandinsky in Munich: 1896-1914

Through June 20 A major exhibition that examines the artist’s formative years in the context of the artistic, social, and intellectual ferment in turn-of-the-century Munich. Paintings, drawings, furniture, decorative arts, and textiles will be drawn from the collections of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Villa Meidinger House, and the Seeparkhaus. Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich; (89) 154-2050

Lawrence Halprin

Through May 29 Drawings for projects such as the Crocker Plaza, Portland Pioneer Square, Jackson Place Plaza, and the Old City, Jerusalem. Philippe Bonnafoit Gallery, 2200 Mason Street, San Francisco; (415) 781-8986

Berkshire Exhibit

May 3-28 Modern architecture in Mexico. Room 106, Wurster Hall, University of California, Berkeley; (415) 642-4942

The Presence of the Past


Washington, D.C.

De Stijl, 1917-1931: Visions of Utopia

Through June 27 Paintings, drawings, architectural models, furniture, and graphic designs by the De Stijl artists. Hirshhorn Museum, 8th and Independence Avenue S.W.; (202) 357-1300

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

60-80 'Attitudes/Concepts/Images


Kassel, Germany

Dokumenta 9

June 19-September 26 International exhibition of artwork from 1980-82. Over 100 artists are represented along with Frank Gehry, Aldo Rossi, and Bernard Tschumi in "Dokumenta Urbana" section

Frankfurt, Germany

Richard Meier

Through June 7 Drawings and photographs emphasizing the incorporation of modern and classical traditions into an architectural vocabulary. Amerika Haus, Staufenstrasse 1

London, England

Sony Design Exhibition

Through June 3 Display includes Japan’s first transistor radio, the first miniature television, and the Mavica Camera. Boilerhouse Project, Victoria and Albert Museum; 01-301-2011

Rome, Italy

A.A.M./C.OOP Architectura Arte Moderna

From April 26 Italian work exhibited at the Internazionale Bauausstellung. A.A.M./C.OOP, Sede di Piazza del Gesù 47 From April 26 Architectural Prints From May 17 Architecture by G.R.A.U. From June 7 Built projects by Giuseppe Vattoccio A.A.M./C.OOP, 12 Via Del Vantaggio
Events

Boston / Cambridge

Harvard Lecture
May 4 John de Monchaux, 4:30. Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, Gund Hall (617) 495-3564

Chicaco

University of Illinois Lectures
May 3 Jeronym Kozak May 10 James Ackerman May 21 Peter Eisenman. 3 pm. A-1 Lecture Center, School of Architecture, U. of Illinois at Chicago Circle, (312) 996-3350

Graham Foundation Lectures
May 5 Neil Levine May 12 C. Douglas Lewis May 19 John Mastrom-Graham. 8 pm. The Graham Foundation, 4 West Burton Place (312) 267-4971

Cleveland

Junior Council Lecture Series

Los Angeles

UCLA School of Architecture Lectures
May 5 Waldo Farnsworth May 13 Nicholas Adams May 18 Francesco Dal Co May 20 Michael and Leslie Harris
June 3 Michael Fane in and David Cooper. 8 pm. For exact location call (213) 825-5752

UCLA Planning Lectures
May 13 Dolores Hayden, "Dream House or Ideal City? The Urban Built Environment and the Politics of Gender in America." May 27 Michael Storper, "The Controversy Over the California Water Project: An Argument for a NO Vote on Proposition 9." June 10 Jane Jacobs, "Politics will introduce the film What's Good for General Motors..." 5:30 pm. Room 1102, GSAUP, UCLA; (213) 825-5752

Private/Public Partnership: New Models for Developers
June 3-5 Seminar in response to recent changes in federal spending priorities and the resulting new rules for cities, developers, and designers. Speakers include Edward Hefeld, Kanga Kumaegi, Sam Kaplan, Robert Maguire, Geri Bachman, $250 for members, $300 nonmembers. Sponsored by the Institute for Urban Design and to be held at USC School of Architecture, (714) 253-5327 for information

Minneapolis

Visions of the Future
Artists, writers, and intellectuals speculate on the future of art and culture May 3 Carol By May 10 Herbert Schiller May 17 Kygoro Kenpy. 8 pm. Walker Art Center, Vineland Place (612) 230-7760

New York City

Lectures on Rudolf Steiner
May 4 Walter Letter. "Organic Dynamism in Architecture" at the National Academy. May 25 Dr. Hagen Bosassa, "The Artistic Achievement of Rudolf Steiner and Early 20th-Century Modernism" at the Guggenheim Museum. Both lectures are at 6:30 pm and are free. Call (212) 369-4880 for information

Club Mid Lecture
May 5 Elizabeth Barlow, "Central Park for the 1980s and Beyond." May 12 Lina Canciani, "Greening Urban Open Spaces." May 19 Victory Thompson, "City Farming." May 26 Tim Steinhoff, "Consolier Plants for City Gardens." All lectures are supported by the Information Exchange Foundation, 160 East 68th Street, 6:30-1:30 pm. Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 490-1297

Discover New York: The Financial District
May 5 The 5-cent subway to be held May 9, 22, and 23. Lecture 6 pm. Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue. Tours meet at the Old Customs House, Bowling Green. 2 pm. (212) 935-9360

Cooper-Hewitt Classes
Lectures in the following classes are open to the public at 10 per event: Gardens, Gardeners, and Landscape Designers—May 5 "Gertrude Jekyll and the Art of the Victorian Garden." May 12 "Shanghina: A 20th Century House." May 19 "The Art of the Chicago Garden." May 26 "French Country Gardens." May 30 "Dutch Country Gardens." All classes are supported by the Information Exchange Foundation, 160 East 68th Street, 6:30-1:30 pm. Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 490-1297

Richard Meier
May 6 The architect lectures on his recent work, 6 pm. Pratt Institute, Higgins Hall Theater, 36 East 25th Street, New York. (212) 636-3407

Wimopole, Bickling Hall, Ickworth, et al.
May 13 Lecture on East Anglia country houses by Freya Stark. Smithsonian Resident Program. 1 East 72nd Street, Reservations are required; (212) 861-0529

Review of Reviews
May 18 Six critics discuss their intentions; Charles Gandee, Victor Gruen, Forrest Bess, Robert Estes. 7 pm. Smithsonian Institution, 1299 East 60th Street, 6:30 pm. Architectural League, 457 Madison Avenue; (212) 753-1722

Comming

To the Whitney from June 24 through October 10. "New Musseums in America," an exhibit of plaus, renderings, and models of new museums and museum expansions. Helen Searing, professor of art history at Smith College, is the guest-curateur. Projects to be shown include Dallas Museum of Fine Arts/Edward Larrernor Barnes; Hugh Museum, Atlanta Richard Meier; Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College Charles W. Mauer; Museum of Contemporary Art, L.A./Art Institute; Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.C. Kevin Pelli; Joseph Price Collection, Bartlesville, Ok; Bruce Goff; Portland Museum of Art/Terry Kohl of L.M. Pri & Partners; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts/Malcolm Holzman of HIPA.

To the Metropolitan Museum and the National Academy of Design, from mid-July through mid-September, "Buildings on Paper," drawings of Rhode Island architecture between the years 1825 and 1945, curated by Christopher Monkhouse. The 24-page, illustrated catalogue will have a text by Christopher Monkhouse and William Jordy.

Design 1925

New York's Hidden Designers: The Developers
June 5 A mini-exhibition with a lecture by Donald Altschul, George Klein, Melvin Kaufman, and Henry Macklowe, with Suzanne Stephens as moderator. Co-sponsored by the Architectural League and the World Monuments Fund. 6:30 pm. The Japan Society, 333 East 47th Street; (212) 753-1722

San Francisco/Bay Area

Berkeley Lecture

Washington, D.C.

Conversations on the City: Architecture, Planning, Politics
Through June 8 Discussions with Mayers Marion Barry, Max Berry, Carter Brown, David Calih, Benjamin Forgey, James G. Gibson, George Hartman, Arthur Cotton Moore, Wolf Van Eckhardt, and Congressman Frank Wolf. Smithsonian Resident Associate Program. (202) 357-3300

The Architecture of the American House
May 6 Arthur Cotton Moore May 13 Bernardo Fort- Buonasonni May 20 John Himmel May 27 Stanley Tigerman. Series continues through June 17, 8 pm. Smithsonian Resident Associate Program. (202) 357-3300

Visions of Utopia: De Stijl, 1917-31
May 8 An all-day seminar in conjunction with the De Stijl show at the Hirshhorn. Seminar participants are: Abram Lerner, Hans Jaffit, Nancy J. Troy, Joost Jopp, Kenneth Frampton, and Doreen Wolf. Smithsonian Resident Associate Program. (202) 357-3000

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These people were making conversation at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies on March 12 for the opening of the OMA exhibition there. Photographs by Dorothy Alexander.

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