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*The staff would like to express its sincere thanks to those officers of the AIAS who put forward a tremendous effort in support of *ARCHITEXT* . Their commitment of time and energy and their perserverence under trying circumstances aided in the continuation of the high quality of publication that *ARCHITEXT* has enjoyed over the past few years. To those AIAS officers and members, and to those other students who participated in supporting *ARCHITEXT,* especially those involved in efforts to raise funds for the publication, we extend our deepest respect and gratitude.

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EDITORIAL

Several people have contacted us at ARCHITEXT to indicate their delight in finding out that such a fine publication like this is being produced in the Detroit area and to pass on their enthusiasm for, and pleasure in, its content and quality. One person who is familiar with publishing and who holds a position in the Metro Area that indicates her high level of scholarship, knowledge, and community involvement in the arts wrote to us to say that

ARCHITEXT is easily the best publication locally and holds up well against any similar magazine in the country. Thoughtful, articulate publications like this one are sorely needed in any academic environment.

We do not quote from correspondence simply for reasons of self-gratification or to convince others about the merits of ARCHITEXT. Many readers have been receiving and enjoying this publication for many years; there is certainly no need to importune those who have been enjoying it--this is worse than redundant. And, for those not familiar with it, such quotations are perfect for marketing; but the editorial page of the publication is one of the least successful locations for a sales pitch--the reader has already gotten a copy of the publication. On the contrary, we bring this up because of the strange circumstances in which this publication finds itself. To be specific, this is probably the last issue of ARCHITEXT.

It came as a complete surprise to the staff of this publication that there was any problem at all. Our first indication was when we inquired about continuing our relationship with a company that had done our printing for free for the past few years. We were told that our funding had been cut off. The information that the staff was able to obtain was twofold: that the Administration had contacted our benefactors, and that they would not offer their services to ARCHITEXT without the approval of the Administration. I leave it to the reader to speculate about the connectiveness of these two data.

In discussing the situation during an emergency staff meeting, everyone was surprised that the Administration had not approached the staff with any questions or problems that they might have had with the publication. In addition, aside from questions of censorship in academia, insensitivity and unprofessionalism, the staff of ARCHITEXT found these actions to be highly out of character for an institution that posed as having at least something to do with higher education. There were many other avenues available to discuss any differences in an academic setting and a professional manner, all of which were not employed. Only later, after requesting a meeting to discuss the Administration's actions, did we discover the reason that the Administration had done what it had done: they felt that the money could be better spent.

For what? And the question is not a superficial one in light of the fact that the Administration, at about this time, was making calls to other faculty to inquire as to their interest in helping produce a publication at LTU. (Fortunately, many of these faculty also did not understand what was going on and simply responded with the inevitable question: 'Isn't that already being done by ARCHITEXT?' or something of the kind).

We were left with the thought, therefore, that the money could be better spent on

another publication like ARCHITEXT.

What?

That's what we asked. It seems, from the little that we can find out, that the money used to publish ARCHITEXT, money that came from sources such as the AIAS, individuals and other organizations, in the eyes of the Administration, could be spent better, apparently, on another publication. Unfortunately, the people involved in ARCHITEXT still don't know all the facts, and so our conclusions are speculative. Communication with the Administration has been difficult, to say the least. And this is not a story that has an end, unless this publication which you hold in your hand is it.

Now, this is not a story that we particularly enjoy telling. It is not a story that is edifying or ennobling, those that we prefer to tell. We think it is important to work for the benefit of people, to find ways to build their character, to help them discover and enrich the ethical and moral values that they have. And this story is just the opposite. Better yet, this is the kind of story that should not even happen in the first place.

But telling this story is important, nonetheless. It is as important as it is difficult to tell. It is important because of the lost opportunity for students to think and respect others' ideas in a virtually 'free' environment. It is, in fact, 'freedom' that has been lost here: the freedom to explore ideas; the freedom to discuss, to debate; and, more importantly, the freedom to succeed, to discover greatly, joyously, rapturously, through those discussions and those ideas that arise in a free environment and that are stifled in censored and controlled environments. It is this invaluable and irreplaceable quality that shapes our lives and is at the heart of academia that has been lost.

Fortunately, however, ARCHITEXT and its spirit live on. We believe in our publication and what it stands for so strongly that we have found a way to publish one more issue, the one you now hold in your hands. If ARCHITEXT will continue after this issue, we cannot yet tell. The signs, however, are not very favorable. The spirit of ARCHITEXT, nevertheless, will surface somewhere in the Greater Detroit Metropolitan Area. Publications like this one are sorely needed in this area and, fortunately, there are people willing and dedicated enough to make it happen. We wish all those who have enjoyed ARCHITEXT through the years the very best in the years to come. Watch for us in the future when we will emerge as a new journal on architecture.

STAFF OF ARCHITEXT

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define it. The same problem arises in deliberations concerning 'terror' as an aesthetic experience, an idea that has come down to us from the eighteenth century in the idea of the 'sublime'. The fact that this subject comes up in the eighteenth century and that it seems such an important problem may be traced to the Renaissance when western cultures claimed for themselves the privilege of knowing and understanding the world. In the Renaissance, western cultures re-enacted the expulsion from the Garden, and, in so doing, found themselves no longer protected by the power of mythology or the comfort of mystery. God was apparently no longer necessary as protection against the unknown and men found themselves face-to-face with infinity. How can that be faced without a sense of awe or terror?

One of the people who took up the question of the sublime was Edmund Burke, a man of letters whose most important claim to fame was as an orator and statesman in England. In his A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful,[5] Burke attempted to distinguish between the 'beautiful' and the 'sublime' by relating each to experiences of pleasure and pain respectively.

Burke's idea of the sublime was that it should be equated with "whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror".[6] Among his critics, and there were many, one defined the 'sublime' as the experience "of delighting in everything that is magnificent" and described it as the result "when any of our passions are strongly agitated, such as terror, grief, rage, indignation, admiration, love, etc."[7] As we shall see, the differences in these definitions are useful in that they offer us the means to distinguish between the architectural production of several contemporary architects.

Although most who debated the issue could not agree on the nature of the 'sublime', they generally agreed on the kinds of experiences that could produce it. In the end most employed the term, 'sublime', to characterize works, whether natural or man-made, that contained large, monumental surfaces or forms. Burke's argument is that it is through such large, unrelieved surfaces and other characteristics that we experience a sense of disturbance, or awe-fullness; we are filled with a sense of awe or terror.

The 'sublime' also has been used in reference to darkness and mystery as the source of fear (such as that in gothic cathedrals),[8] of monotony and excessivety as in continuous rhythms and patterns, and other characteristics that had been investigated in the eighteenth century and afterwards. Indeed, *horror vacui,* the fear of empty space, is a recent art historical concept usually used as a critique of an exuberance for ornamentation; although we might not accept the modernist characterization of the 'need' for ornamentation as a psychological if not a moral failing, the wide-spread arguments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from Horatio Greenough to Adolf Loos[9] against 'irrelevant' or 'false' ornamentation are evidence of the question that is at the heart of the problem of the sublime and the beautiful. It is also a question that lurks in the shadows of Venturi, Graves, Stern, and their kind of post-modernism in general.

With the definition of the 'sublime' provided by Burke's critic, "of delighting in everything that is magnificent" or of an experience "when any of our passions are strongly agitated", we can characterize some of the work of such architectural figures as Boullee, and more recently, Aldo Rossi and Louis Kahn. Not that Kahn or Rossi were interested in generating an architecture of terror. Quite the contrary. Kahn was after an architecture of joy and light, an architecture of the immeasurable, and Rossi of universals. But these very well may be the bases for the 'sublime' responses to their work which imply power and mystery, experiences that have often been correlated with the 'terrible' and the 'sublime'. Certainly some of Rossi's work, like the entrance hall at the cemetery outside of Modena, generates that sense of the surreal that provlokes that sense of terror.[10]

Among others nearly contemporary with Burke who wrestled with this problem, Immanuel Kant addressed the 'sublime' as the experience of "the ordering mind... confronted by an array too complex to be grasped".[10] Given our contemporary problems in an age that struggles with the dilemmas of Heisenberg's "Uncertainty Principle" and Goedel's proof, of uncertainty in the face of a demystified scientific authority, Kant's definition is at least somewhat consolling; it seems to locate and thus delimit the 'difficult' and the mysterious, the unknowable and the unknown, the

Duchamp, "In Advance of a Broken Arm" / Eisenman, floor slot, House VI / Eisenman, upside down stair, House VI / Bronzino, "Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time" / Munch, "The Scream" / Bronzino / Boullee, Newton's Cenotaph / Boullee, Museum / Boullee, Pyramid / Kahn, Dacca / Amiens / Kahn, Dacca / Vasari, Uffizi / Rossi, Gallaretese / Boullee, Metropole / Kahn, Salk Institute / Kahn, British Museum at Yale / Oppenheim, "Lunch in Fur" / Le Corbusier, Beistegui Penthouse / Rossi, Modena Cemetery / de Chirico, "Gare

exotic and the alien. It provides for the surreal and the dada, movements that appear more closely related to the 'real' than we have been lead to believe.

In Kant's definition we find a different perspective from which we can characterize some of Rossi's work: the Modena Cemetery remains mysterious however well it may have been explained as related to rites of the dead. Rossi often has been compared with de Chirico whose work is, at times, considered surreal for the same reasons: the fear, loss, or emptiness that we sense in de Chirico's paintings, we can also sense in Rossi's work. It is the correspondence or congruence in experience that make these similar and not necessarily their particular image correspondence. As Tschumi says in another context, "the excess of rationality is not rational."[11] It is this excessivity in the face of the rational that may produce the surreal sense of unease in Rossi's work; it may be the hint of something familiar that remains elusive. It is precisely the familiar and the expectations that the familiar generates in us that characterizes the surreal experience. The evidence in Man Ray's "Gift", of an ironer that cannot perform its function, in fact, one that would violate the fabric that it supposed to caress, transgresses our expectations. It is grotesque. Such is the case in Le Corbusier's Beistegui Penthouse: a living or sitting room on a rooftop is disturbing precisely because of the associations that are violated.

Other experiences that are disturbing include Venturi's stairway in his mother's house representing Venturi's concern for the 'difficult whole', a proposition that stems from his interest in T. S. Eliot's work on 'difficult' poetry. And, because of the density and obfuscation in his conceptual arguments, Eisenman's work is perhaps the most 'sublime' recent work in the Kantian sense and seems to recast the intellectual gambits and celiberate alienating motivation in the work of Duchamp or Man Ray or the processal experimentations of John Cage.[12]

"One evening I seated Beauty on my knees.
And I found her bitter. And I cursed her."[13]

An architecture of terror, of the grotesque, of assault is one that attempts to imbue architecture with a resistance or a deliberate 'difficulty'. It represents a critical position, i.e., one that attacks the rules of the game and assumes that a responsibility that we cannot or should not avoid is the project of liberation, one in which action in the world should be taken in order to expose, uncover, and critique systems of control and power (political, social, economic) that are assumed in the experience of the world, and the objects and instruments (linguistic, aesthetic, etc., including architecture) in which, and by means of which, these systems become manifest and enact or enforce their power.[14] These are the means of therapy, the instruments of power. They represent some of the ways in which social control and order are maintained. This position, therefore, is concerned with freedom.[15] The means by which it does this is by endeavoring to shock, disturb, disrupt, and de-stabilize, or to imbue our experience with a sense of terror.

If we are to take up the several arguments that we have reviewed too briefly above, terror is that which incites our passions or that which is beyond our comprehension. Although clearly different, they are somewhat similar. What is similar in the arguments concerning the 'sublime' in Burke, his critic, and Kant is that it is an experience beyond the ordinary, beyond normative conditioning or socializa- tion, or beyond our capacity to understand. The assumption is that it is beyond us in some way and that we are not and perhaps cannot be prepared for this. There is an assumption that we are trained or taught to experience the everyday world in a particular way--a way that we see as centered, harmonious, and unified--and that we are repelled by the terrible or disturbed by the difficult. Our world, our 'reality' is the stable referent. Here, more specifically, we must understand the terrible as that which does not correspond to or agree with the horizon of authority or mythology which we accept, in which we believe, to which we submit.

Yet this does not always seem to be the case. At times we seek out the exotic (Disneyland, the carnival, magic shows, etc.). In fact, the terrible is accepted into the mythology as domesticated or controlled varients of anxiety. When allowed into the domain of the paradigm, this kind of terror operates as sublimation; it is the necessary but controlled acceptance of the exotic and the alien, a sort of experiential kitsch, a side-show of controlled horror that allows us to vent this need.

Based on these ideas, let us review some recent and

House VI / Eisenman, upside down stair, House VI / Bronzino, "Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time" / Munch, "The Scream"/ Bronzino / Boullee, Newton's Cenotaph / Boullee, Museum / Boullee, Pyramid / Kahn, Dacca / Amiens / Kahn, Dacca / Vasari, Uffizi / Rossi, Gallaretese / Boullee, Metropole / Kahn, Salk Institute / Kahn, British Museum at Yale / Oppenheim, "Lunch in Fur" / Le Corbusier, Beistegui Penthouse / Rossi, Modena Cemetery / de Chirico, "Gare Montparnasse" / Le Corbusier, Beistegui Penthouse / Man Ray,

historical examples of the sublime or the terrible. Let us try to see in what ways this has been achieved. A brief review of some of the more interesting architecture in the west since the Renaissance indicates a few different ways in which it is imbued with terror. Let us take up a few of the categories. We will only take them up briefly.

Perhaps the easiest to identify are the most literal. These include the literally terrible and excessive, at its most obvious in such works as Bernini's "The Ecstacy of St. Theresa" and "The Blessed Ludovico Albertoni". The second most obvious source of terror is darkness, as in the mystery of gothic darkness or the basement of our childhood as described by Bachelard.

Based on the definitions of the 'sublime' we have from Burke and his critic, the next easiest category is that of a distortion in size and scale or the experience in which scale is difficult to determine. These are clearly important characteristics in such mannerist work as Michelangelo's giant order in the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the Campidoglio, and the attenuation in mannerist sculpture and painting. It is also a part of the gothic experience, such as in the vertical attenuation and continuation of lines, and the exaggerated, Baroque experience as in the scale of buildings and gardens at Versailles. Scale is of central concern in Eisenman's Cannaregio Project which violates our anthropomophic references.

Distortions also occur in other ways, such as in shape, geometry, and orientation. Distorted shape is evident in Bernini's Scala Regia and Michelangelo's Laurentian Library Stairs; it plays a role in Buontalenti's Porta delle Suppliche at the Uffizzi, and in rustication in general like that of Ammanati's Pitti Palace Garden Facade. Distortion of shape is also important in the experience of Gaudi's Guell Park and his Casa Battlo.The manipulation of geometry and orientation is fundamental in most of Gehry's work as in the Spiller Residence and Whitney House. And it is evident in much of Eisenman's work including the projects for Berlin, Columbus, and, especially, in the recent house in Spain.

Terror or the sublime is also possible in the monotonous qualities of excessive repetition such as in Rossi's Gallaretese Housing, Vasari's Uffizi, and several of Le Corbusier's projects from La Ville Contemporaine to Unite d'Habitation where he seems to struggle to overcome this condition.

One of the most powerful of the techniques of terror, as we discussed briefly above, is the denial of expectations with which we experience the world. This is one of the primary characteristics of the dada and surreal experiences as is evident in Oppenheim's "Lunch in Fur" and Oldenburg's "Soft Typewriter". It is also characteristic of some of Eisenman's work such as in House VI in which ploys such as the upside down stairs, the slot in the floor, the door/pilaster, etc. disturb our otherwise somnambulant attention to architecture. Its most powerful presentation in architecture, however, was probably Le Corbusier's Beistegui Penthouse.

And there is always the deliberate creation of an experience or reference to that which is alienating. De Chirico's work, including paintings like "Nostalgia of the Infinite" are ready examples; while John Hejduk's "Good Neighbor House" is an almost humorous illustration of the alienated condition. Yet it continues to haunt us through the use of architecture as a means of materializing and representing the 'real' condition of our lives. At its most extreme, terror and the sublime result from a confrontation with taboos, including voyeurism and, as Tschumi argues, the erotic.

As we reflect on the recent spate of interest in the 'terrible' and the 'sublime' in architecture and other disciplines, we begin to realize more clearly than ever before that the mythology of harmony and unity as the instrument of authority, the propaganda vehicle which creates and maintains the somnambulent society is under siege, an activity that is directed against the power system that creates, as Tolstoy says, "the illusion that beauty is goodness."[16] It is also an activity, however, that defines the 'beautiful' as that which affirms the existing paradigm; in so doing, the 'beautiful' supports the existing systems of control and becomes, as a consequence, an instrument for therapy. The 'sublime', therefore, or 'terror' is all that is left for a critcal endeavor. When it overreaches the allowable levels of sublimation--the extremes of some art in the modern era might be attributed to the undefinability of this threshhold--it becomes the instrument of resistance and the only means of pursuing a project of freedom in the world of the arts and the humanities, including architecture.

Gift / Venturi, stairs, Vanna Venturi House / Eisenman, door, House VI / Eisenman, dining column, House VI / Duchamp, "Fountain" / Duchamp, "In Advance of a Broken Arm" / Eisenman, floor slot, House VI / Eisenman, upside down stair, House VI / Bronzino, "Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time" / Munch, "The Scream"/ Bronzino / Boullee, Newton's Cenotaph / Boullee, Museum / Boullee, Pyramid / Kahn, Dacca / Amiens / Kahn, Dacca / Vasari, Uffizi / Rossi, Gallaretese / Boullee, Metropole / Kahn, Salk Institute / Kahn,

1 Bernard Tschumi, "The Pleasure of Architecture," Architectural Design 3/77, p. 217.

2 Ibid., p. 214. See also Tschumi, "Architecture and Transgression," Oppositions 7, 1976.

3 Peter Eisenman, "En Terror Firma: In Trails of Grotextes", The Fifth Column 7:1 (Oct. '88): 24-27.

4 Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1966).

5 Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, ed. by J. T. Boulton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968).

6 Ibid., p. 39.

7 The Literary Magazine (1757) II, pp. 183-189 as cited in Burke, Enquiry, p. 39, n. 10. There are several other publications with critiques of Burke's work shortly after it came out cited in Burke, Enquiry, including reviews in The Critical Review (1757) III, and The Monthly Review (1757) XVI.

8 A contemporary version of this exploration of darkness as a source of fear can be seen in Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space.

9 Horatio Greenough, Form and Function, ed. by Harold A. Small (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1947). See also Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime", published in many sources.

10 Michael Podro, The Critical Historians of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), p. 11.

11 Bernard Tschumi, "Parc de la Villette, Paris," Deconstruction in Architecture, Architectural Design Profile 72, v. 58, 3/4-1988, pp. 32-39.

12 Some of the early work of Robert Venturi, with its unresolved tension between ornament and form or the erosion of symmetry from the plan center towards the edges, should be reviewed as possible architectural analogies to the 'difficult' of Eliot. In regards to Duchamp, he called art an "illogical labyrinth" and argued that 'beauty' was the last thing that he had on his mind when working on the ready-mades. See the following interviews with Duchamp: Katherine Kuh, The Artist's Voice: Talks with Seventeen Artists (New York: Harper & Row, 1960); Jeanne Siegel, "Some Late Thoughts of Marcel Duchamp," Arts Magazine 43 (December 1968-January 1969); Francis Roberts, "I Propose to Strain the Laws of Physics," Art News 67 (December 1968); and Robert Lebel, "Marcel Duchamp, maintenant et ici," L'Oeil (Paris) 149 (May 1967): 20.

It is interesting to note some early similarities in Eisenman's vocabulary with comments by Duchamp including the use of "other" (his "other convention" is similar to Eisenman's argument about an "other architecture") and, more important, Duchamp's concern for 'deformations' and topological transformations (Eisenman's early work is based on topology and transformation). Some work should be done to explore possible correlations in this regard.

13 Arthur Rimbaud, "A Season in Hell" and "The Drunken Boat", trans. Louise Varese (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1961), p. 3.

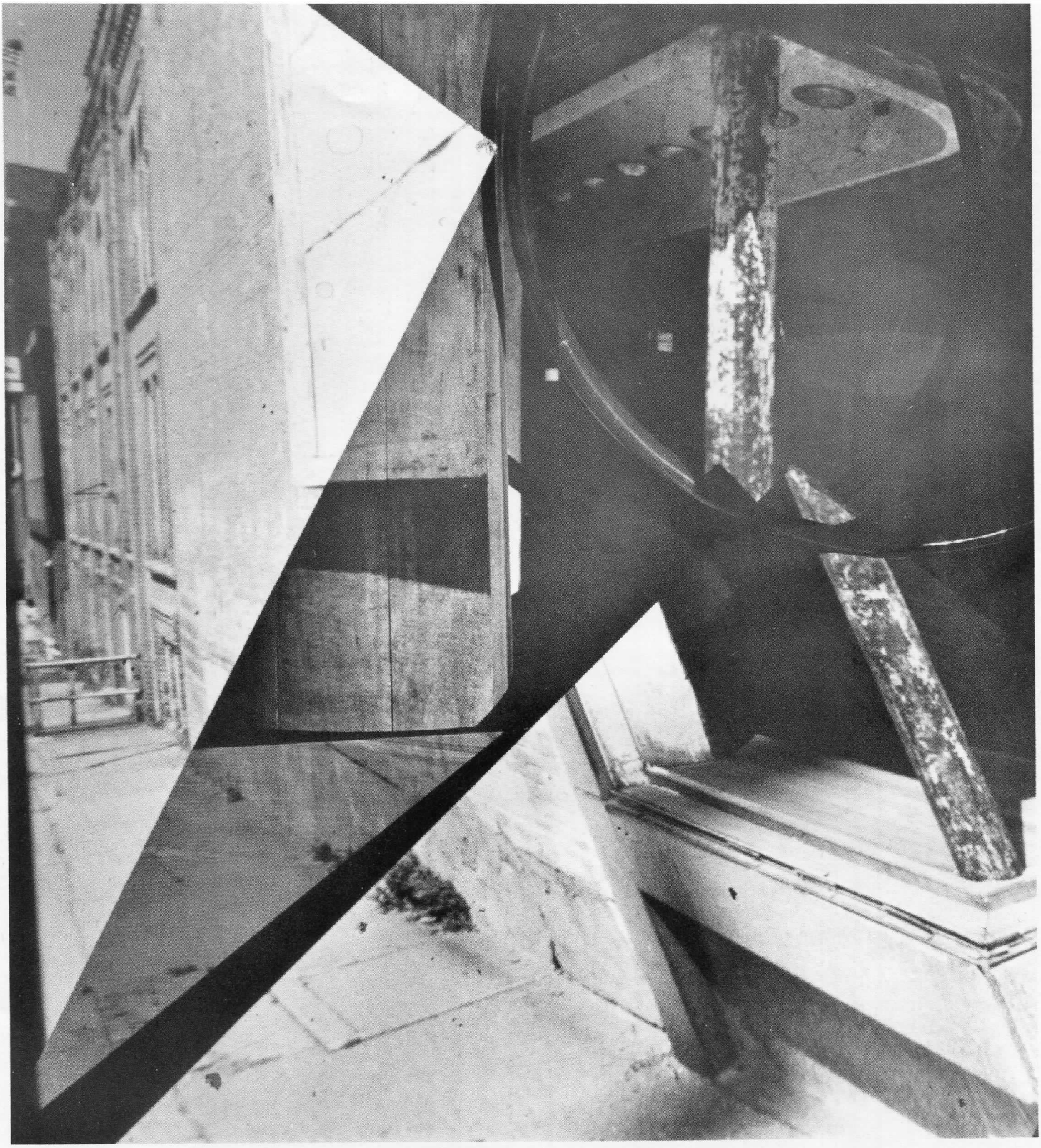
14 My concern for the critical and affirmative is based on the work of Critical Theorists such as Herbert Marcuse who ascribes a particualr nefariousness to the affirmative:

> There is no need here to repeat the familiar proposition that the facile assimilation of work and relaxation, of frustration and fun, of art and the household, of psychology and corporate management alters the traditional function of these elements of culture: they become affirmative, that is to say, they serve to fortify the hold of the Establishment over the mind-- that Establishment which has made the goods of culture available to the people--and they help to strengthen the sweep of what is over what can be and ought to be, ought to be if there is truth in cultural values."

Herbert Marcuse, "Remarks on a Redifinition of Culture," Daedalus 94/1 (Winter 1965): 193.

15 Compare Podro, Critical Historians, p. 13ff. for his discussion of Kant's Critique of Judgement and two ideas of freedom in relation to art.

16 Leo Tolstoy, as quoted in Eisenman, "En Terror Firma," p. 24.



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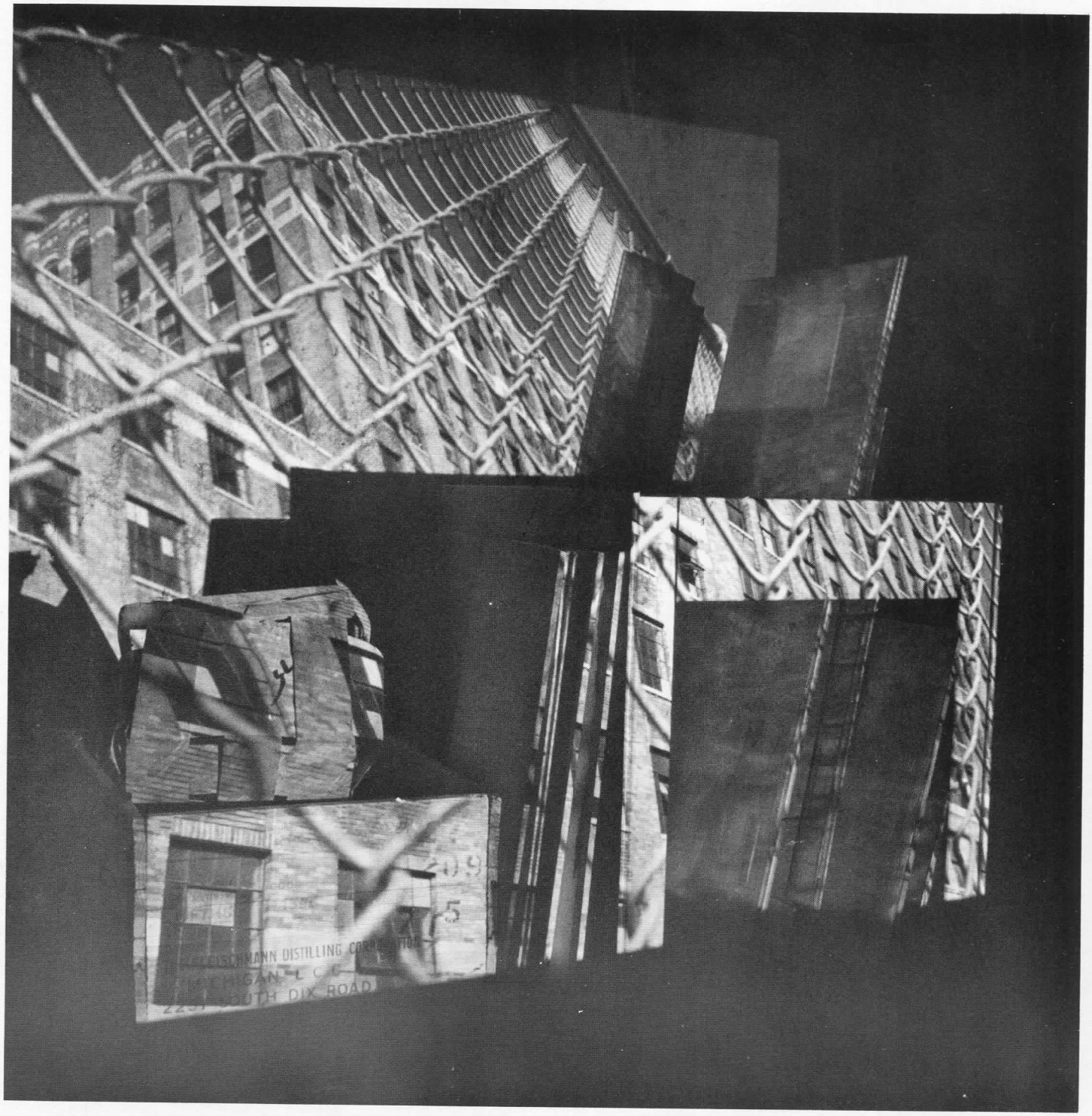
PONTIAC 1



PONTIAC 2

PONTIAC 3

ADAPTIVE REUSE IN URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

by Heather Perry

Photographs by Ronald Omilian

At one time it was most desireable to live in the heart of the city. City dwellers were thought to be more sophisticated and worldly than the country folk. Not so anymore. The growth taking place in the far reaching suburbs has left many vacancies in the urban neighborhoods of yesteryear. These vacancies are both physically apparent and emotionally felt by all who have witnessed the continuing decay of what was once a thriving institution in this country. A second look, a change in perspective; letting go of old expectations and accepting the changes that have taken place over time can perhaps free us to bring a new identity to aging city spaces. This article is about taking a look at the value to be found in revitalizing urban neighborhoods that no longer offer a vital contribution to society. This article is not about gentrification but about recreating liveable spaces for everyone who might choose a life within the city and the consideration of the architect's role in the process.

In the West Village area of Detroit, North of Belle Isle and just east of East Grand Boulevard, stands a neighborhood in need of restructuring. Home of the St. Charles parish (one of the catholic churches scheduled to be closed in the city) its future seems to offer little promise and plenty of abandoned buildings. This scene is not unique to Detroit. Highly developed road systems and the downsizing of industry has opened the way for life away from many industrial cities. Many streets offer only memories of a grander past. Typically crime will increase, good famililes will fear for their loved ones and soon decide to relocate. This will increase the chances that the neighborhood could become another illafforded blemish on the urban landscape. Dedicated citizen's efforts within the neighborhood indicate a courageous beginning to an extremely large preventive effort. St. Charles school, once associated with the St. Charles church, had stood abandoned for some time and Father David of St. Charles church had applied for a grant to demolish the empty building and was denied. The school stood empty until a relative newcomer to the parish had a vision of a renewed purpose for St. Charles school. The school and grounds were purchased for the paltry sum of forty thousand dollars. Thanks to a private citizen's vision St. Charles is now a home/studio for various artists, dancers, a ceramicist and a photographer.

Driving into the neighborhood of St. Charles, the typical suburbanite might have the urge to lock the car doors and wish that they had taken the time to empty their back seat. Rundown houses, empty lots and barely kept small businesses make evident that this neighborhood has seen better days. At second glance you note a few friendly faces and recall how pleasant the approach to the neighborhood was; driving through downtown, the quiet appeal of Belle Isle and its gentle bridge, a few joggers, and suddenly one realizes that much good still exists within this area.

Hidden within the property of the Church, the entrance to the school is less than a convincing example of "defensible space". Once inside, all visions of trendy loft spaces terminate and one sees the reality of an old school house whose empty classrooms now serve as the individual artist's home/workshops and various community spaces. A resident cheerfully admits that everything is great except for the plumbing, heating, and electricity. Due to the tremendous costs of renovation, aesthetic concerns are often outweighed by economic necessity. Each classroom, prior to renovation, had only one electrical outlet (where the teacher's desk had stood) and overhead lights. To reroute the electricity in walls that are approximately two feet

thick would cost more than the initial investment itself. A compromise of new electrical wiring running alongside the walls has been devised. The toilet facilities are community property and consist of two shower stalls installed in the space where the sinks were located in the existing toilet rooms. Currently only one toilet room is in operation, the others are inline for refurbishing. A community room houses the necessary food preparation and storage equipment.

Inspite of its apparent lack of luxuries, the occupants of St. Charles seem to be revelling in the creative environment. Artistic hangings adorn the community area outside one artist's space. Walking into each studio one sees the results of the creative minds and work in the sculpture, raku, and oil paintings. What strikes you most about the building, its supporters and inhabitants is the loyalty these people feel towards the school and surrounding area. Optimism prevails their conversations. Father David, who lives in an older home on the church grounds, prefers this area and feel it safer than his previous home in suburban Warren, Michigan. This spring will bring the gala opening of St. Charles in the form of an art show for the public exhibiting the works of the residents and other area artists. Hopefully this will draw more people into the neighborhood.

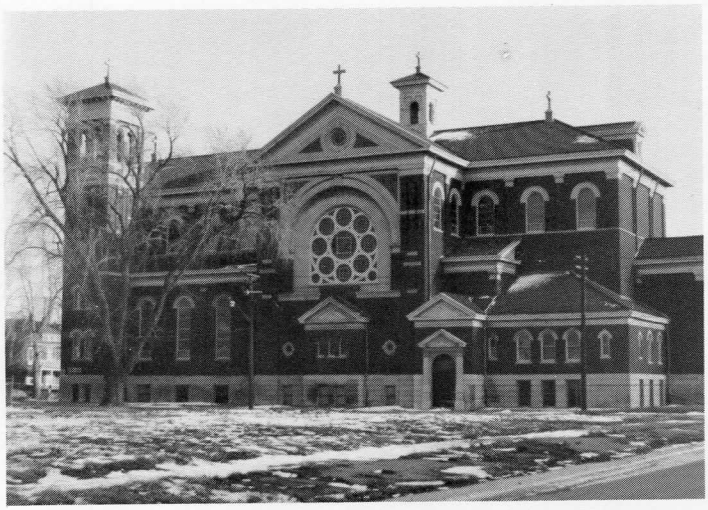
Talk for the future promises continued refurbishing for the building and a sculpture garden for the remainder of the large property. A small store to sell the artists' wares on the property year round with access to such a garden could promote both interior and exterior exhibition of the art but as of yet plans to go beyond the walls of St. Charles and extend the vision into the grounds and the neighborhood have not been initiated. Understandably most private citizens efforts stop at the property line.

Such revitalization, even in its humble form, sets a precedent for the multitude of new identities waiting to be given to many deteriorated buildings and open areas. Regeneration, not unlike the experience of any pioneering effort, starts with a creativity and desire to improve upon what currently exists. The challenge lies in being able to adaptively reuse the existing structure while maintaining its historical, cultural and architectural importance. The intention is not speculation or monetary gain but an honest attempt to rebuild a community.

Typically, most redevelopment efforts are disruptive and incongruent with the existing urban fabric. New housing is often nothing more than "suburban" attempts at complexes linked to the community by address and proximity only. This does not enrich the environment and instead makes evident the dichotomy that pervades the attitudes determining what is necessary to provide new housing within the older neighborhoods. Another trend is the gentrification of loft living. The initial idea to provide living space in abandoned warehouses and commercial buildings is a good one. With the addition of in-house security, and high tech appliances, only the prices remain lofty. Can a more sincere process of regeneration and redefinition be made with less of disruption to the existing locale?

This trend to improve through upscaling, although attractive to investors, if left uncontrolled can serve as another form of barrier to revitalizing an area. The elitest new communities like Harbortown and Riverplace do not contribute to the troubled areas lying immediately outside their pearly security gates. Until we acknowledge that a balance in the juxtaposition of the middle class, poor , and wealthy is beneficial despite the many differences in their life situations, segregation will continue to be the bane of modern urban life.

The social implications of revitalization efforts are great and in need of thoughtful consideration. Many people are affected by changes to a neighborhood. Understandably, there is a dichotomy in the efforts and interests of developers and private citizens. Citizens are coming forward to renew the spirit of the city for personal reasons steeped in sentiment and habit whereas the developers viewpoint is one of investments and returns for monies spent. Today we are experiencing the discomfort of dealing with a vast organism, the city, that is in a major state of transition, and more often than not in the grey area between permanence and change. Rebuilding a neighborhood is a complex and costly undertaking for all involved. Both the private citizen and developer risk further deterioration of the beauty in the neighborhood if poor decisions are made. The risk of change is different for every resident in the neighborhood. The older couple, widow, the young single mother, the artist in her makeshift loft. Each of these people are heavily dependant on their immediate environment and perhaps more affected by change than other more autonomous members of society. The

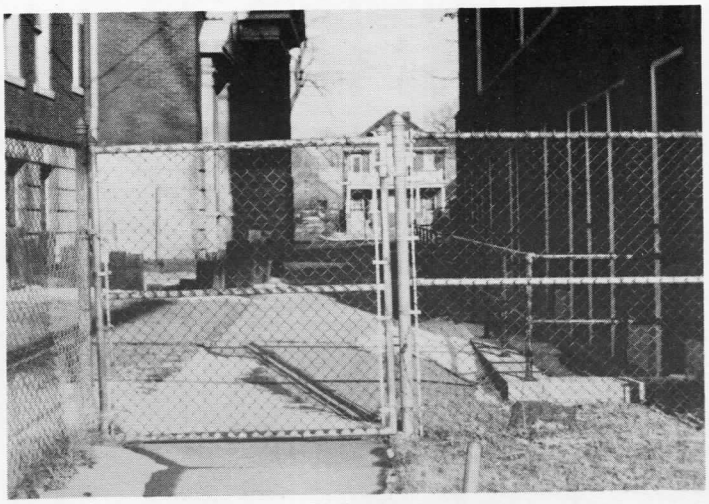


charm of an older city neighborhood is much more than the street pattern and the buildings. It can be found in the cries of children's laughter in the streets and in the comfort of knowing that your neighbor can be called upon in times of distress. These relationships are human in variety and bring a quiet dignity to the most impovershed settlement. As often is the case, the citizens have ideas as to what can improve their neighborhoods but do not have the funds and power to undertake such efforts.

An obvious deterrant to renovation and reinterpretation is the great cost. Not atypical to city development, private citizens who do not have the funding often go "underground" in order to carry out their plans. Rules and regulations, meant to maintain health and safety conditions for all, can be inhibiting. St. Charles school/lofts are a typical example; Officially, the permitted building use is still educational (studio workshops and sessions with the occupants are held on a regular basis) but without adhering to this technicality the taxes and restrictive requirements for residential buildings would make the project an impossibility. Requirements for the physically handicapped would require accessibility to all levels by elevator or lifting device and at about $40,000 for an elevator the return in real dollars could not justify the investment.

It is evident that in cities like Detroit, there isn't a surplus of funds available to develop design intensive plans for all of the neighborhoods in need of help but the results will be far more costly and damaging if nothing is done at all. If the areas immediately abutting the central business district continue to decay both districts are sure to suffer. Although the bane of most city planners, piecemeal development is a realistic alternative to elaborate master plans and offers an opportunity for the variety more typical of a dynamic urban fabric. With a well communicated neighborhood concept and encouraging development guidelines private citizens and investors alike can all take part in the fruition of renewal in urban neighborhoods. Public policy must adapt to the circumstances of the aging city in order to make adaptive reuse an affordable and realistic alternative to total abandonment.

The adaptive reuse of the city is desireable. The architect's role in the redefinition of our built environment should be one of advocacy. Of great necessity is the generation of discussion and increase in public awareness about the implications of rebuilding our existing neighborhoods and their context in a city. The architect can direct his/her efforts to understanding the richness to be found in diversity and in formulating accepted concepts of intervention within the diverse mechanisms of the city. The architects ego for authenticity and authorship can be substituted with the definition of a genuine role in such a vital process.



Architectural Design Engaged In As A Process Of Thought: *towards* Architecture as Meaning *on* concept, context, and continuity in the manner of, and service to MIND

Robert Lynch

Total grandeur of a total edifice,
Chosen by an inquisitor of structures
For himself. He stands upon this threshold,
As if the design of all his words takes form
And frame from thinking and is realized.

from
Wallace Stevens'
"To an Old Philosopher in Rome"

on Constructing a Framework

The essay that follows represents a preliminary attempt at integrating what has developed into an ever widening scope of investigation. As such, it should be looked upon not as the completed formulation of a theory, but rather as the progress to date of the construction of a framework around which a series of related investigations might be assembled.

This framework is constructed of ideas drawn from a range of concerns - including sociology, psychology, philosophy, poetry, and aesthetics. The purpose in drawing upon a variety of disciplines has been to focus on the relationship of architecture to a broader realm of scholarship, and in so doing to underscore the necessity for the architect to be attuned to what these other fields of study have to offer. A further aim is to relate these disciplines to one another in a manner that will promote access to the content of a given discipline, by pointing to the 'continuity' that exists within the entire realm of man's investigations.

At the same time we fully acknowledge that the use of a framework such as this must be seen only as a 'tool' employed to further our understanding, and not to encapsulate it. We must recognize that such tools exist and are created to serve and to promote our understanding, and that if we permit them to replace our understanding, then it is they that will become our masters. When this happens the very tools that we employ to promote understanding yield obstacles to furthering that understanding and our thought ceases to be free.

Theory and Method

The goal of this investigation is to reflect a comprehensive understanding of architecture and of the place of architecture in the world. If we are to secure an understanding of what architecture is and of how to design architecture then we must enter into the broad areas of theoretical and methodological investigations. Theoretical speculations deal with the first of these questions, namely: "what is architecture?"; while methodological investigations deal with the latter question of: "how do we design architecture?".

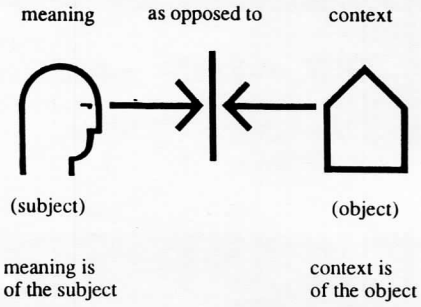
The question; 'what is architecture?' is directed at the formulation of a theory that would establish a basis for what we mean by architecture. Such a question demands a response with a broad foundation in man's history, extending beyond the scope of architecture. Once we establish what architecture is, the second question then becomes,

'how do we achieve it?', i.e. 'how do we design architecture ?'. This asks the question, 'by what process is architecture created?'. It addresses itself, therefore, to the description of a method. Rather than invoking a sense for our history, method takes off in the other direction, defining our means for advancing into the future.

A premise upon which the philosopher Hegel set out to construct his system of philosophy was that in order to be of any use it must somehow demonstrate the necessity of its content. This premise establishes as a goal that the theory be of practical value. Such claims towards necessity and towards practicality in a theory point to the possibility of a link between the idealism found in theory and the pragmatism sought in method. This essay will endeavor to establish the 'context' for a method of architectural design and its attendant theory in the belief that a more thorough grasp of the significance of these ideas can be attained through the understanding of the relationship of theory and method within this broader context.

Meaning vs Context

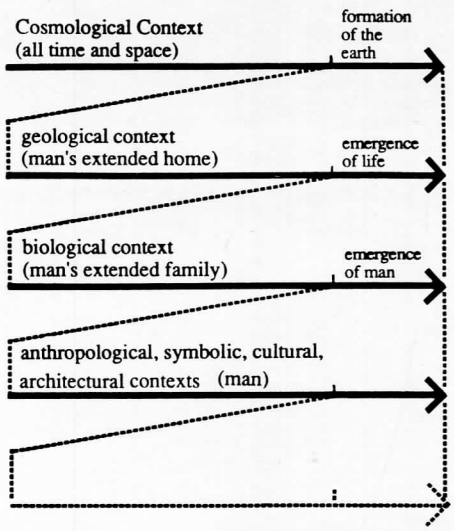
We will introduce our thoughts on both the subject and process of architecture through a brief discussion of the distinction between meaning and context. We'll begin by introducing these terms as they are usually understood so that we may expose certain inadequacies in the terminology. Then, in order to recover their use, we'll propose expanded definitions in an effort to facilitate our larger understanding. The conventional use of these terms in architectural circles sets up obstacles to furthering our understanding. The understanding of these terms, as currently promoted, may even hinder us in our effort to address the very issues that they are intended to clarify. We must expand our definitions, therefore, of these rather broad concepts if learning is to proceed.



Meaning is typically thought to be of the subject or subjective. In contrast, context is understood to be of the object or objective. We think of meaning, therefore, as highly personal, and consequently, often unreliable, while context, on the other hand, is understood to be easily definable, and as a result both objective and verifiable. This way of viewing the world sets up an opposition between subject and object that once established, becomes very difficult to dismantle. Such views have a long and healthy tradition that have only recently begun to be drawn into serious question.

Spatio/Temporal Model of Context

Context - in the narrowest sense of the term, we define it by the most obvious attributes of the existing objects that make up our built environment (size, shape, and color being the most basic). Initially, then, context is seen as being of the object. As we try to expand upon this view of context we come to regard it as both local (in terms of space), and immediate (in terms of time). The more we investigate what context is, however, the more involved context becomes. The local and immediate give way to contexts that are, for us, broader and broader still.



Spatio/Temporal Model of Context

A model of context defined in terms of time and space would, presumably, extend from the two extremes of this very instant in time and space to all time and all space. Although such a description of context would be continuous and unending, we might nonetheless still be able to establish within it certain thresholds that define critical levels and stages. We could continue to demarcate boundaries in time and space beyond the level of the 'cultural context', however, a brief investigation of such an approach reveals the conflicts that arise: while such a time/space matrix allows us to divide up the history of the world into eras and epochs, hemispheres and continents, millenia and centuries, contries and states, and on and on, it also allows for the study of a very small geographic area over a very long span of time, or a much broader area over a much shorter time span. What is more is that we may choose to acknowledge this instant in time and space, i.e. the present moment or we may not. We may, if we so choose, discuss the events of an other time at an other place.

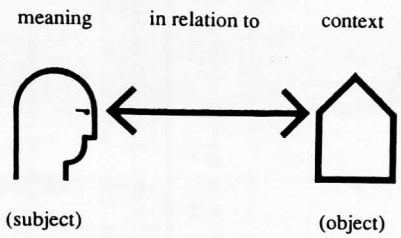
Eventually, we recognize that we cannot define context simply by means of encapsulated events set in time and space - for these events must themselves be described, and we describe events not in increments of time and space, but through their associated meanings. Measurements in time and space are wholly inadequate for this purpose. We discover that the world we live in cannot be divided up so easily: the world cannot simply be cordoned off to meet the needs of our desire to neatly

categorize it for the purpose of taking inventory. The world is not defined by some 'four-dimensional time/space matrix'. Rather we discover that the world we live in can only be defined by... 'how we define it' i.e. by our manner of understanding it. Thus, our discussion of context has lead us from a mere listing of the characteristics of the physical objects that make up the world around us to the threshold of a description of what the meaning of that world is, for us.

Let's turn now to the notion of meaning. It can be said of anything we wish to discuss irrespective of what it might be, that a thing possesses 'meaning' and thereby can be understood only in so far as 'it' relates to other things and 'we' exercise our capacity to witness, acknowledge, and understand the nature of this relationship. Thus the extent to which we may come to understand our own discipline of architecture, for instance, is greatly dependent upon the broader understanding of the world that we project. In architecture we often speak to the importance of context. This broader understanding that we allude to addresses this same notion of context, only on a wider spectrum. Thus, it would appear as though a discussion of meaning leads us to context, as our discussion of context had lead us to meaning.

the Emergence of Meaningful Context

We would like to propose that meaning and context are no more opposed to one another than are other such dichotomous terms as subject and object, or theory and practice. Rather, these sets of terms ought to be viewed in relation to one another, i.e., as forming mutual relations whereby one simply could not exist without the other. Such a proposal seeks to establish a dialogue leading to reconciliation in place of an opposition leading to certain confrontation. In such a system theory is not opposed to practice, rather theory and practice are seen as complements to one another; likewise meaning is seen as a function of context, and context, as well, a function of meaning. We may view context under such a proposal as a 'field of meaning'. Meaning in turn, is understood to be context dependent.

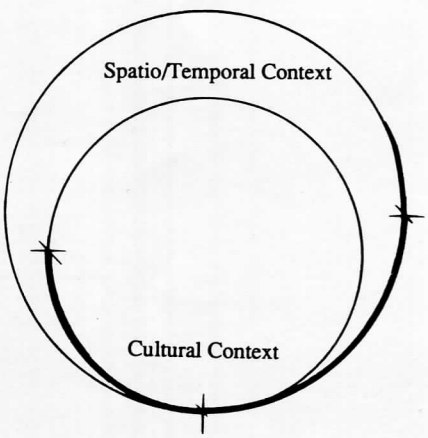


meaning is a function of context

We'll proceed to a definition of a number of nested contexts defined no longer in terms of time and space, but rather with respect to meaning. In this discussion of context, as each new context is introduced it is thought to succeed the prior context in its significance to the individual.

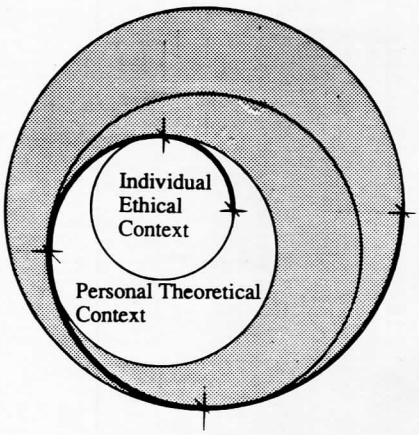
the Unknowing Context - This represents context in man's absense, whether before of after. This context is wholly and only objective. It may be viewed as a blank slate upon which the evolution of the world has been inscribed. Regrettably, however, the unknowing context lacks the capacity to decipher any message from the inscription. It is a context, which does not know itself to be a context and therefore it is, in a manner of speaking, a context without 'brains'. Such a context, devoid of understanding, devoid of knowledge, devoid of content, is for all intents and purposes non-existent.

the Unknowing Context



Spatio/temporal Context - This is the context of science and of the 'objective truth' that it embodies. Man has discovered the 'coordinates' of space and time as the measure of this context. Space and time are described by precise definition of incremental divisions thus allowing for the possibility of a continuous, uninterrupted, 'objectively' definable matrix of events. This context enables man to access a context that predates him, a context that was unknown prior to man (see Unknown Context). Within this context man is able to both identify events in space and time, as well as to confine events to space and time. These events once granted identity and encapsulated in this manner may be further described in their relation to the spatio/temporal context, or to one another within this context.

Cultural Context - The cultural context is the context as conceived by man. It incorporates our two previous contexts within it. This context is defined by mans ability to conceive of a world apart from himself, a world in which he needn't even be 'present'. This ability is a distinguishing feature of man. That which has imbued man with this ability is the symbol. The symbol is man's preeminant tool. Through his use of symbols man has found the means to re-present the world - to present it again; and thereby retain it for himself. Concepts are the building blocks of this world. Through memory man retains these concepts and so sets out to re-construct the world - that is to say, he takes the world and reshapes it, constructs it again for himself. Man has developed a range of unique and varied means to assist him in this quest including



Context for Design

science, art, and myth.

Context for Design

Personal Theoretical Context (the context 'of' thought) - This represents the context of each unique individual resulting from the accumulation of that individual's own personal experiences drawn from his or her cultural context. This is the context of meaning for the individual of that individual's world. Within this context each individual must answer for himself, 'what is architecture?'

Individual Ethical Context (the context 'for' action) - This represents the context of action. This context is the flipside of the Personal Theoretical Context. This context incorporates the individual's ethics and values and so guides the individual's decision making. Confidence in one's own theory surfaces here. Within this context the individual must confront the question, 'how do we design architecture?'.

Architecture as Meaning

Our aim is to define both a theory and a method, and to do so in such a manner as to reinforce their relationship. We'll begin this task by proposing that architecture in any form, from its simplest and most basic to its highest and most complex, need only embody and reflect intention directed at human habitation. Such a definition seeks to establish a broad foundation for further study by incorporating all of man's constructions. Within this broader concept of architecture we may choose to establish designations that make distinctions within the whole. We may then propose levels of distinction drawn from intent; as for instance that in its highest form, architecture has the potential for intensifying human experience and articulating human feeling. This it does through its ability to express and to embody meaning.

We recognize the architect engaged as an artist as someone who has the ability to identify a particular incident within experience and relate it to the whole of experience. The goal of the architect working in this manner is meaning. At the highest level of thought, which Hegel describes as self-consciousness, architecture may be seen as the unity of a knowing subject, which attempts to see itself in its object, and object of knowledge, the highest purpose of which is to reflect the conscious self.

The Self as Method

Man embodies an emerging methodology within himself. There is method in our ability to conceive thought, and even more significantly, in our ability to conceive 'of' thought. Thought describes its method as it emerges. The thought that each of us engages in, the thoughts that each of us shares with others, describes a method that defines who we are. There is perhaps no better way to define who we are than the way we think. We are what we think as we engage in thought. This each of us must define for himself.

This would not be possible were there not an equivalency among the methods that defines each of us. We may identify this equivalency as the 'Method of methods'. The ability leading to our possession of this Method is what most notably distinguishes us as a species. The name that we offer to describe the product of this Method is 'culture'. Any effort to identify and describe a methodology that fails to take into account the manner in which we take in, process, and convey information in the very broadest sense, is destined to be a reductive oversimplification of this larger Method of culture to which I refer. And since this is the case regardless of the particular method being put forth, the great variety of methods proferred in this manner, all become ready examples of just such a reductivist approach.

In the design studio and in design education, it seems that we place either too great an emphasis on following established methods of design, or pay no attention to it at all (when we ought to be devoting more time to understanding the manner in which we think). The process defined by methods are all too often restrictive in their approach and therefore limiting in their result. This leads, more often than not, to solutions that can only be seen to 'work' within the prescribed limits defined by their own reductive approach.

The failure of these approaches stems from two fundamental oversights. First, in proposing a method that it is claimed, "will assist the mind in dealing with the great complexity of the problem", these methods shortchange the capacity of the mind for

thought. The method becomes, in essence, a subtitute for the brain, producing a framework that limits free thought. Such displays of confidence in systems that lie outside the mind over the mind itself, go hand in hand with the mistrust that we possess of the mind and what it is capable of.

The second failing of such methods is in their lack of understanding of the fundamental processes of thought; their failure to recognize the role of concept and the use of symbol; the relation of science, art, and myth; and in their narrow definitions of such terms as subject, object, meaning, and context.

Any attempt to devise a method must take into account the entire development of mankind, including the emergence and evolution of the species. History is our record of an emerging methodology. In the minds of those who concern themselves with the subject matter of such methods the record of history changes daily. And so the method changes too, to reflect these changes.

Gerald White Johnson wrote, "Nothing changes more constantly than the past; for the past that influences our lives does not consist of what actually happened, but of what men believe happened". As history changes, as we alter the record of what has come before us, we come to understand that it is a somewhat different path that lead us to the present. Accordingly we alter the course of the direction we choose to pursue into the future.

The primary function of the method that we seek is as a guide to provide us with a measure of assurance as we venture forward into a future as yet unknown. Our confidence in such a guide is a function of the extent to which, in it's attempt to describe the world for us, the description coincides with the accumulation of our past experiences. Belief is our measure of the degree of correspondence between 'related' (indirect) and 'actual' (direct) experience. Facts are the beliefs we come to accept with the greatest assurance.

History engages method, as reflective thought engages speculative thought. It might even be suggested that history is the master of method. We can accept this formulation and still avoid lapsing into determinism if we heed Gerald White Johnson's warning, and understand that this is so only to the extent that reflective thought is the master of speculative thought. We may then come to recognize that method is a way of permitting intention to act with confidence towards the gathering of experience. In this manner we find that establishing confidence for intention is critical to action, and that man's constructs serve his need for securing confidence in his world.

The answer to the question 'what is architecture?' is to be found through our response to the question 'how do we design architecture?'. In proper Hegelian fashion therefore, this study seeks both theory and method at once. The theory is to be described by the exposition of the method, the method by the unfolding of the theory. Although we employ the use of the term 'method' when we wish to describe a process, and 'theory' when describing a study taken as a whole, neither term should be looked upon as distinct from the other.

Method as Thought

Method* is defined by the manner in which we engage in thought. The question, 'to what end?', addresses itself to the goal of this method, that is to say, 'to the goal of thought'. We direct our thoughts towards understanding as our goal. To understand is to apprehend the meaning of, or to comprehend. Understanding, therefore, is the apprehension of comprehensive meaning. As meaning is the measure of our understanding we may describe it as our goal as well. Thus the title of this thesis, 'Architectural Design Engaged In as A Process Of Thought: towards Architecture as Meaning', where 'meaning' is what we seek to achieve, and 'thought' our means of achieving it.

Design 'is' as thought. That is to say that we design as we think. Design does not just happen, nor is design simply the 'product' of thought. Rather, design is a process, as thought is a process. It advances as thought advances. As method thought leads our way into an unknown future. In so doing it also anticipates that future and thereby allows us to prepare for it. We may not know what the future holds and yet we plan for it nonetheless. The name we give to that aspect of thought which enables us to prepare for the future is forethought. This simply means 'to think ahead'. This is what designers do.

Design embodies the need to anticipate the future, to 'plan' for it and to give shape to it. But our thoughts also shape the future. And so we begin to see that design proceeds into the future not follwoing thought, but in the company of thought. Design is in fact a manner of thought similar to forethought.

"Man is able to form mental images of things and situations that do not exist but which may be found, brought about, or constructed by his efforts. Man can create in his imagination worlds different from the actual one and can visualize himself in these imaginary worlds. Before you build a house, construct a machine, write a book, or go on a vacation, you have already built, constructed, or written them, or gone vacationing in your mind. The adaptive value of forethought... has raised man to the status of the lord of creation."[2]

Design in the broadest sense may be viewed as a means of taking action in the world. Theory in this light becomes, very simply, our means of justifying that action, grounding our attitudes towards design in some larger understanding that we possess of our world and of the place of architecture in that world. This understanding is so basic to our taking action of any kind that an approach that adopts such an attitude can be employed successfully in the design studio at any level of instruction.

The basis for the design under such an approach is the student's own process of thought. If we accept the dictionary definition of theory as "a coherent group of general propositions used as principles of explanation for a class of phenomena"[3], and if we can also accept that a building properly falls under this heading of 'a class of phenomena', then by this definition of theory, we can establish that every designer must possess some kind of theory when he sets out to create a new work of architecture. And furthermore, that this is equally true of the student as it is of the practicing architect; and among the practicing architects it is as true of the architect for whom it seems the theory takes on more importance than the building, as it is of the architect for whom the espousal of a theory is seen as needlessly redundant in light of the actual physical presence of the building.

Theory is not opposed to practice, but is rather an abstraction from practice. As the principle from which practice proceeds it is its necessary complement. Thought of in this manner the process of design is demystified. It is made more accessible to us, and over time more familiar. Eventually we come to view the process as simpler, more straightforward, and more recognizable than we had prior. In this light its propensity towards complexity is understood not as inherent in the process, but rather as a function of its scope. Fortunately we already possess the mechanism in our minds, and the means through concepts for dealing with this complexity.

*Although we refer to this thesis as both a theory and a method, we employ the term method with some hesitation, given the somewhat checkered history of the study of scientific method in relation to architecture. We refer the reader to Runes' Dictionary of Philosophy for a more comprehensive definition of methodology than is typically promoted in architectural circles.

on Concept

(This essay on 'concept' is derived from the introduction to Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind, which represents the larger introduction to his system of philosophy. Hegel's "Phenomenology" is not about architecture. It does, however, concern itself with both subject and process of thought. Our study of architecture deals with its subject matter and process as well. We have adapted therefore, what was essentially a discussion of thought in general, and have applied it to a discussion of thought in the manner of design, with the assumption that the manner in which our minds engage in thought is not dependent upon what our thoughts are directed towards).

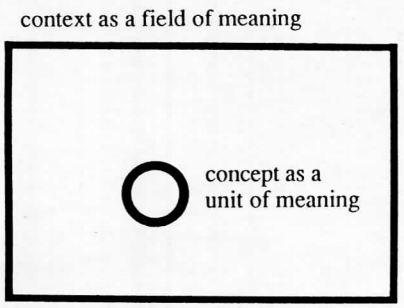
The method by which thought proceeds in its quest for meaning - and therefore, design as thought directed at architecture as the expression of meaning - is through the development of the concept. Development here does not mean development in time, but rather development in expression and coherence of the elements involved in the concept; development in terms of thought towards the goal of continuity of expression. The elements of the design may be taken by themselves and each way in turn be said to be its own concept, but each inevitably calls for the broader concept as soon as its affirmation is seen to be one-sided, because nothing short of the whole concept can preserve the continuity of the expression and therefore express the meaning. One partial affirmation gives rise to another until the concept is fully unfolded and expressed as an

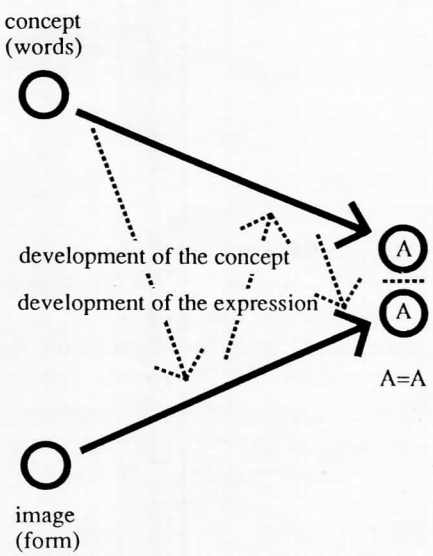
explicit unity of all of the elements. Directing the development towards the coordination of all of the elements within the unity of the whole concept assures the cancellation of all one sided affirmations. The development of the concept is described by Hegel as a process of the concept from abstract to concrete. As the expression of the concept, the development of the expression is likewise, therefore, seen as a process from abstract to concrete. The concept itself determines the stages in its development. Looking at the process as a growth from a lower to a higher degree of articulation of the nature of the whole, it may be described as a process from potentiality to actuality. Looking at the concept as an individual concentration of the highest activity of mind, which is self-consciouness, the process is described as the concept gradually 'coming to consciouness of itself'.

Louis Sullivan in his much misunderstood phrase 'form follows function', was attempting to convey the primacy of thought as fashioned by concepts. A careful reading of Kindergarten Chats makes this point clear. The definition of 'concept' to be found in Runes' Dictionary of Philosophy not only reinforces our understanding, but warns us of the possibility for misunderstanding. In Runes 'concept' is defined as a 'function', either propositional or monadic propositional. The definition then goes on to warn; "The terminology associated with the word function is not usually employed in connection with the word concept; and [concept] may serve to avoid ambiguities which have arisen from loose or variant usages of the word function.[4]. Thus the phrase 'form follows function', at least as Sullivan had intended, would have been more clearly stated 'form follows concept' or 'expression follows idea'.

Taking the concept as a unit of meaning within the context of a larger field of meaning, the identity of the concept as defined by the program, and the relation of the concept to its surroundings as defined by the context are unified under the umbrella of a single concept that unites the program to its surroundings; this through the acquisition of meaning in the form of understanding and the expression of meaning in the form of architecture.

If we are to try to justify our conception of architecture we must emdeavor to embrace a more comprehensive understanding. At every point in the design this same mode of thought may be adopted. In all cases the developent can be addressed as a logical sequence of thought, for only in this manner will the content of the concept be coherent, and its expression in the form of the building appear consistent and continuous. As thought is seen as the means for producing the work, once produced the work will in turn present itself back to the experiencer in a manner accessible to thought. We can see how it comes about, therefore, that in any scheme there are only two questions that need to be considered: what is the concept of the scheme - this we offer through words - and how has the concept been granted architectural expression - this we express through form. The problem of how to do this is the problem of architecture.





Summary

Our interest in design and in design education is summarized by the view introduced earlier which holds that design can be understood as the means by which we take action in the world, and that theory is our means of justifying that action.

We all share in one common goal, and that is 'to make sense of the world around us'. Science, art, and myth all work to this end, pursuing this goal through the particular means defined by each discipline. This activity - which might be better described as an ability - would seem to require that we carry with us at all times a world view subject to reinterpretation with each new experience that we engege in.

This process, which begins before we enter architecture school, before any formal schooling takes place even on the level of grade school, holds the key not for how we 'should' design, but rather for how we 'would' design if only we could refrain from imposing 'methods' upon ourselves; it is how we 'do', in fact, design when we don't take time to define the activity that we're engaged in. This is the basis of any theory of architecture, and as such defines a method for the design of architecture. This process is the 'Process of Thought'. And thus both the theory and method we identify by the title; 'Architectural Design Engaged In As A Process of Thought', and the goal by the subtitle; 'towards Architecture as Meaning'. This goal is related to the goal described earlier - that, to make sense of the world. Here we go beyond merely identifying the

goal and suggest through architecture - and through our ability to seek and to express meaning in the world we live in - a means for achieving it.

The Dictionary of Education defines science as "[an] activity carried on as an effort to make the diversity of our sense experiences correspond to a logically uniform system of thought". The definition then goes on, in an effort to make clear the significance of such activity to the individual, to say that "in the personal experiences of an individual science is an activity by means of which the person seeks to relate his current sense experiences to his total structure of understanding in a manner that is in agreement with all his pertinent observations of properties and behaviors". Whether or not we are aware that this is what we are doing, the fact remains that this kind of behavior is common to us all. The definition concludes, "such activity is believed to be inherent in the behavior of the individual at all levels of maturity".[5] It begins in our infancy and continues on into adulthood, maturing as we mature.

We would like to bring this discussion to a close by invoking once more the original questions - 'what is architecture?', and 'how do we design architecture?' - in order that we may raise one final question, that is 'Why?'. Why not just build? Why be concerned with such questions as knowing why? In response to this question we turn to the playwrite, George Bernard Shaw, and the following excerpt from the play, "Man and Superman"[6]. The characters introduced here are - 'Don Juan', a lover of life and of truth; 'the Statue', representing lifeless art; and the 'Devil'. Here, speaking through these characters, Shaw delivers us to the world's stage.

DON JUAN: In heaven, as I picture it, you live and work instead of playing and pretending. If the play still goes on here, and on earth, and all the world is a stage, heaven is at least behind the scenes...[A] picture gallery is a dull place for a blind man. But even as you enjoy the contemplation of such romantic mirages as beauty and pleasure; so would I enjoy the contemplation of that which interests me above all things: namely, Life: the force that ever strives to attain greater power of contemplating itself. What made this brain of mine, do you think? Not the need to move my limbs; for a rat with half my brain moves as well as I. Not merely the need to do, but the need to know what I do, lest in my blind efforts to live I should be slaying myself.
THE STATUE: ... why [should] Life bother itself about getting a brain [?] Why should it want to understand itself? Why not be content to enjoy itself?
DON JUAN: - Without a brain, commander, you should enjoy yourself without knowing it, and so lose all the fun.
THE STATUE: True, most true. But I am quite content with brain enough to know that I'm enjoying myself. I don't want to understand why...
THE DEVIL: What is the use of knowing?
DON JUAN: Why, to be able to choose the line of greatest advantage instead of yielding in the direction of the least resistance...And there you have the difference: to be in hell is to drift: to be in heaven is to steer.

We spend most of our time in environments that we create. Failure to devote greater time and effort to a more thorough understanding of these environments, the manner of their creation, and our experience of them, is to waste a vital human resource. As we understand science, art, and myth as representing differing means through which we come to make sense of our world, we must acknowledge that architecture too, may contribute to this end. This will happen only when we come to recognize a fundamental reality - that through design engaged in as thought we infuse architecture with meaning.

Endnotes:
1.Dagobert Runes (ed.), Dictionary of Philosophy (1983)
2.Theodosius Dobzhansky, Mankind Evolving (1962), p.338
3.Jess Stein (ed.) The Random House College Dictionary (1979)
4.Runes
5.Carter V. Good (ed.), Dictionary of Education (1959)
6.George Bernard Shaw, "Man and Superman" (1959), p.117-141

CORNERS

by Duane Fuseline

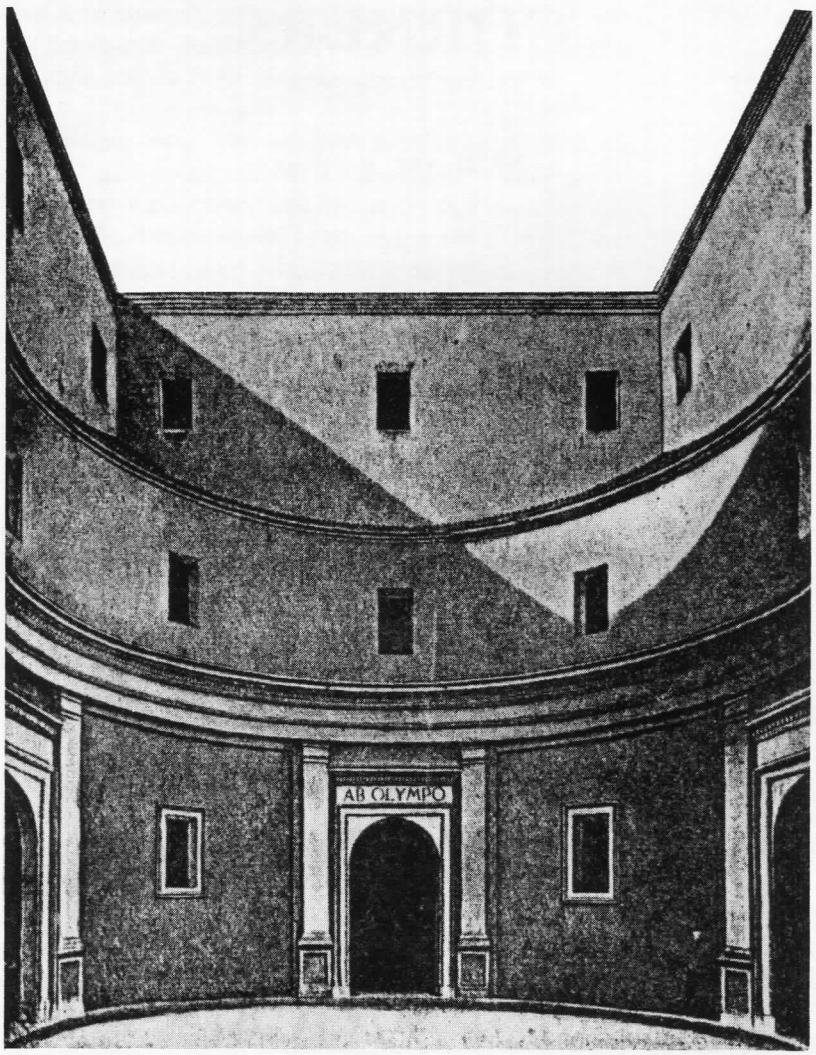
Corners in Architecture are those areas or locations formed by the intersection of at least two surfaces. They are the getting from one surface to another....Except for the ideal world of spheres and mobius strips corners are inescapable.

Corners are endemic to Architecture. They define facades in two dimensions. Essential to Architecture, corners are the cross the Architect must bear!

This thesis defines the problem of getting around the Architectural corner. Specifically we might ask, how should it be, or how should it be built? Is it a problem of Technology or Aesthetics? Additionally what are the solutions and what do corners mean?

TURNING THE CORNER

CORNER, DEFINED
WHAT ARE THEY?

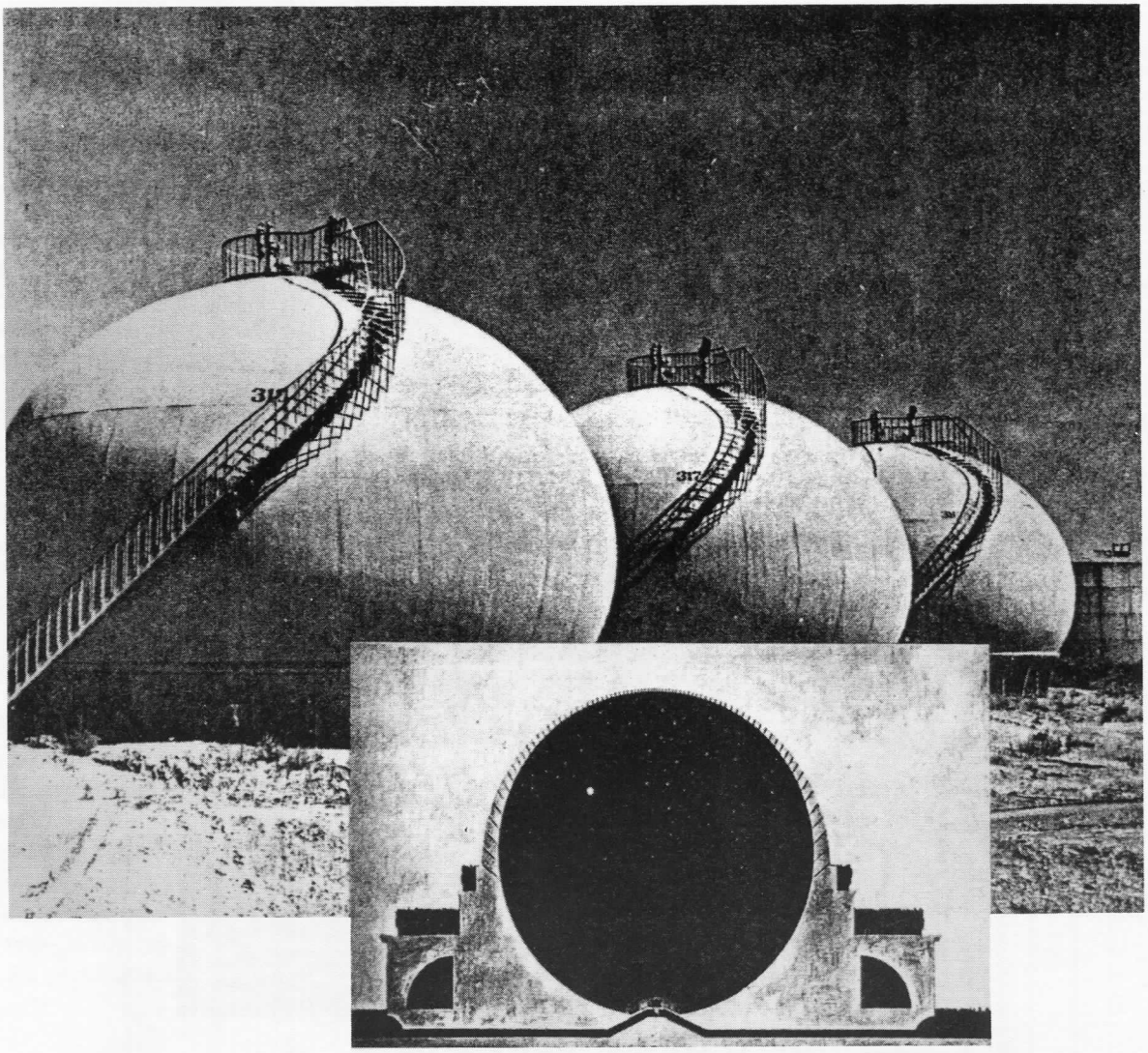


Mantua, Court of the Casa del Mantegna, (L.B. Alberti)

Corner is that place or area where two or more surfaces come together, although formed by them. They are also not the point or line formed by that union. In architecture corners exists both inside a building and outside, and are of two general forms; salient and re-entrant.

TURNING THE CORNER

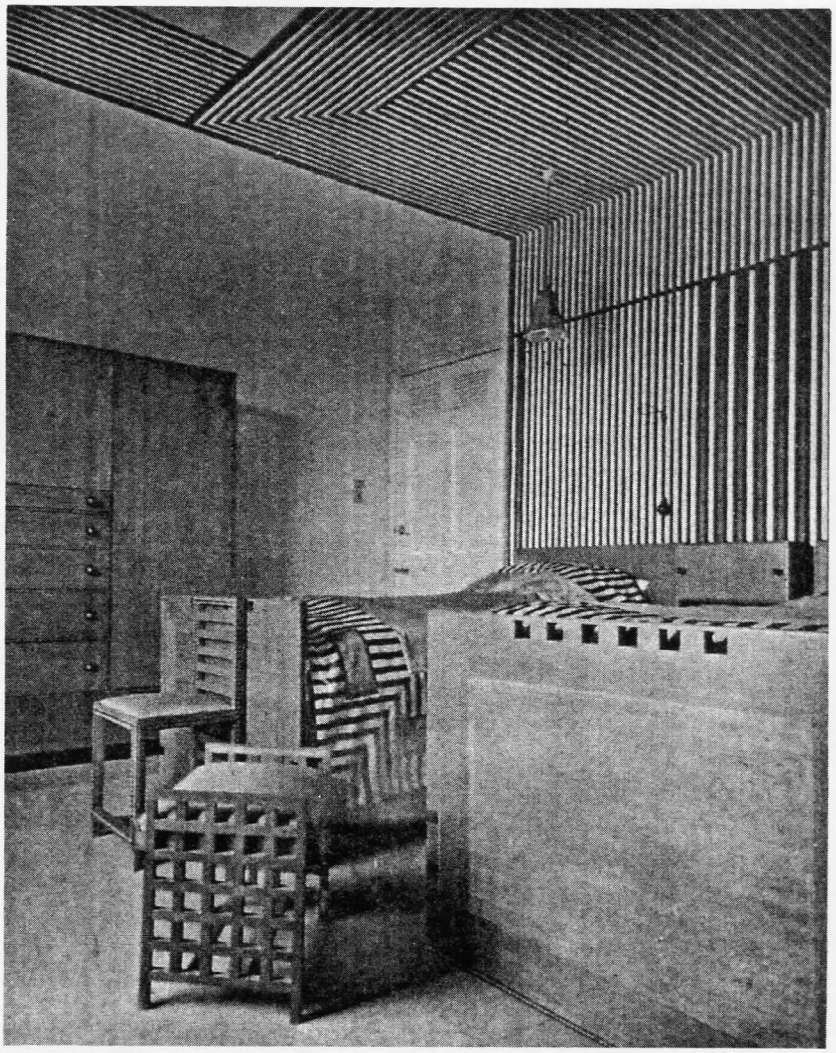
CORNER, DEFINED
THEY'RE INESCAPABLE!



Although corners don't exist in nature, they are inescapable in architecture. "only the sphere is closed and perfect in itself, needing no edgeline to define it. It's contour shows no lines or singular points." Unfortunately once accessed, such as Boullee's Cenotaph for Newton, it is no longer without corners.

INTERIOR CORNER

CORNER AGAINST THE CORNER: ELUSIVE

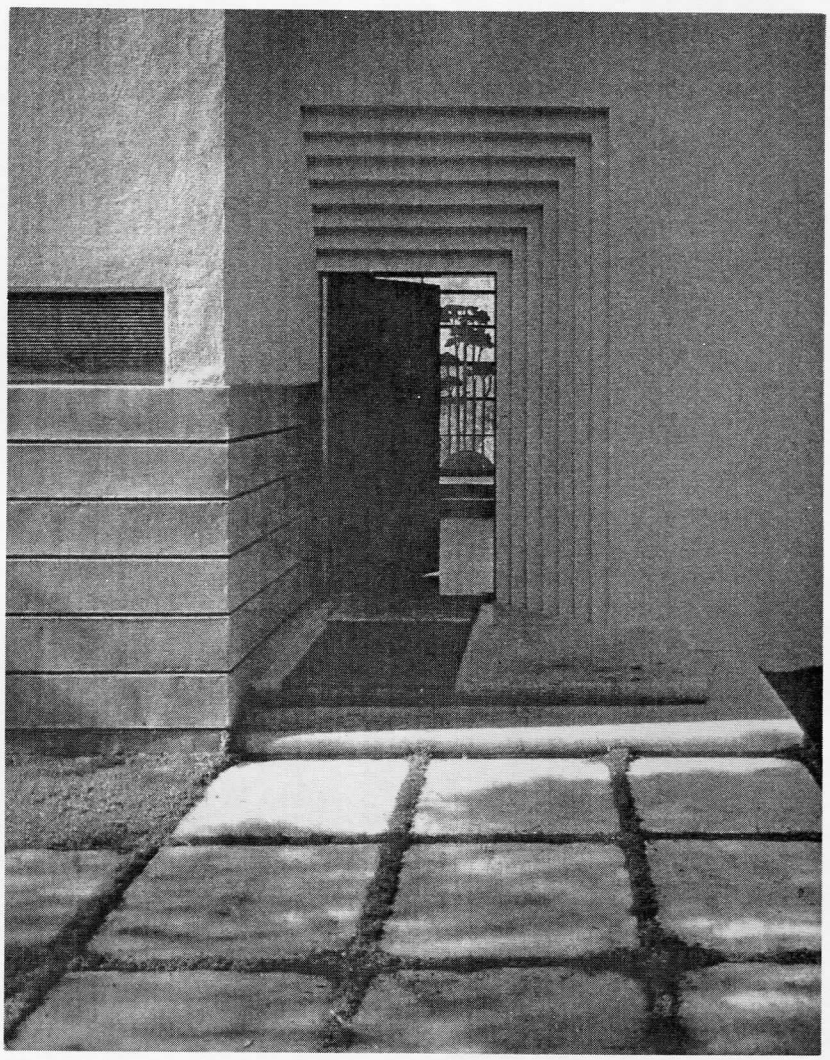


Derngate (1915, Mackintosh) Northhampton, Scottland

Although there is nothing exceptional about the materials used in this corner it becomes elusive due to the patterning of paint.

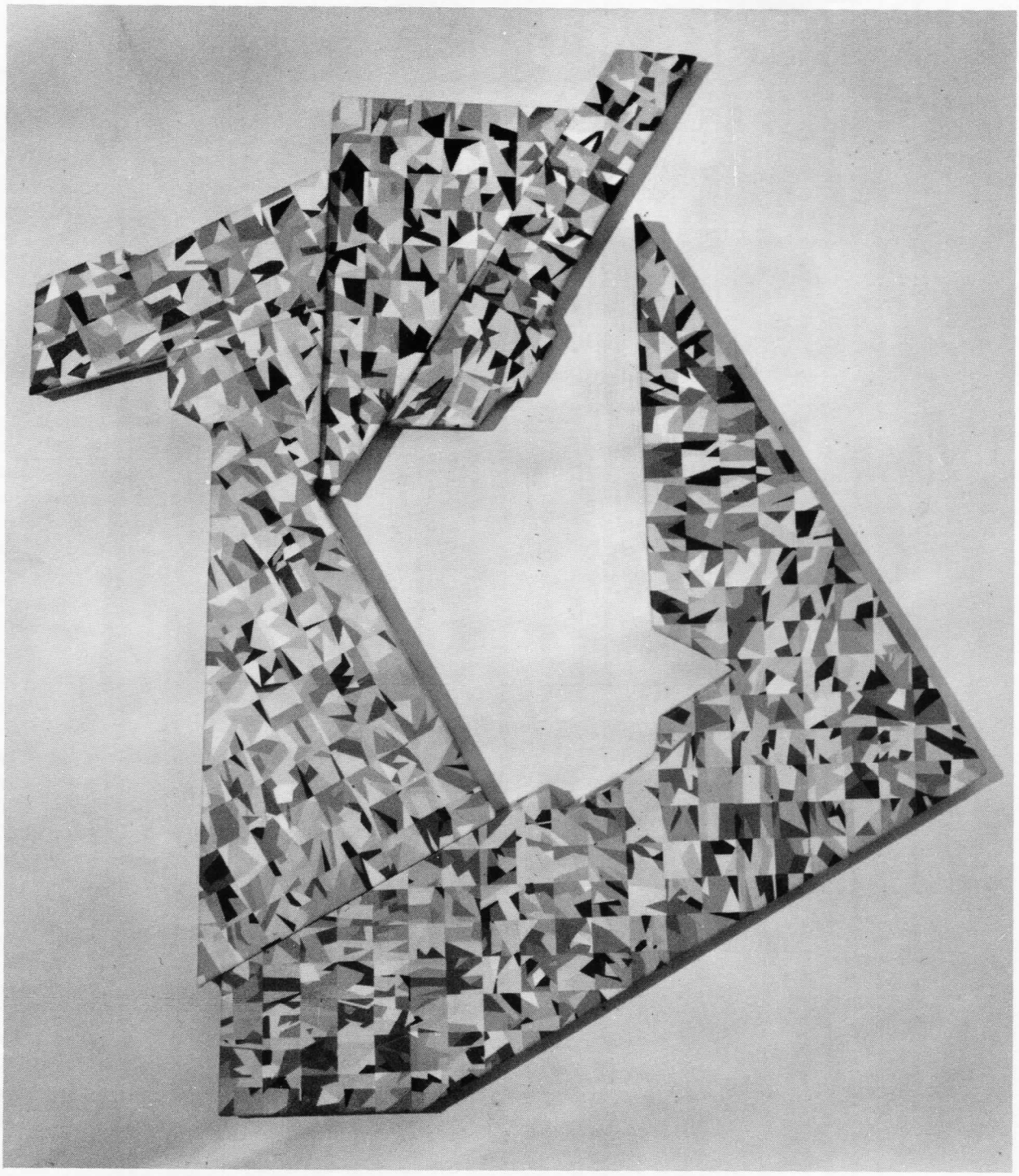
EXTERIOR CORNER

CORNER AGAINST THE GROUND: ARTICULATED



Gibbons house (c.1930, C. Gibbons) Los Angles, CA. USA

This corner is an exceptional example of an articulated corner against the ground. By the use of materials, shadows, varing planes, and geometric abstraction of the ground plane the relationship between the structure and it's site has been carefully articulated.



SCORPION, Harold Linton, 1989
Collection of Hokin Gallery, Bay Harbor Islands, Florida

S C O R P I O N

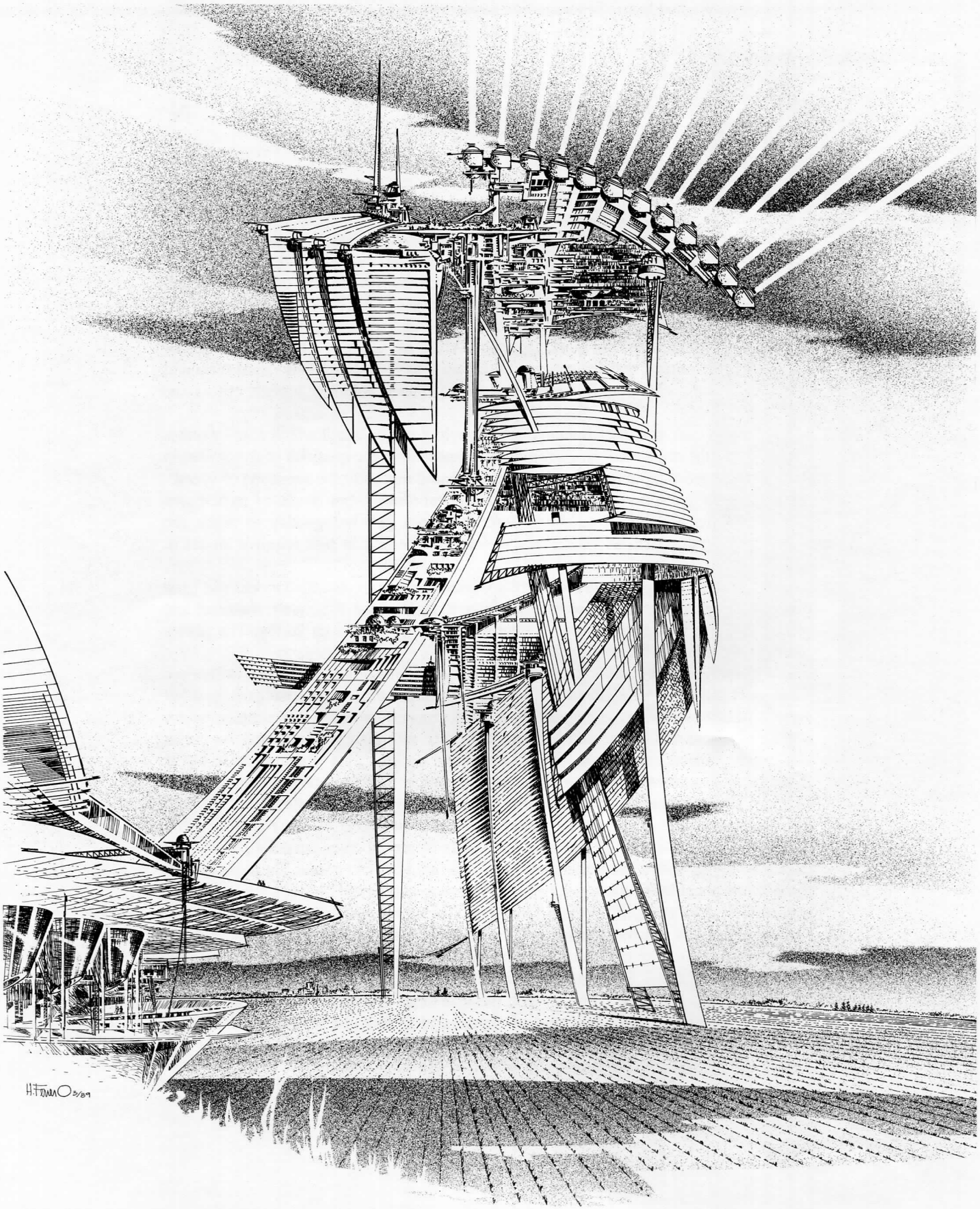
My interest in the early roots of color abstraction in painting have lead to a further exploration and reflection on "futurist conceptions" and "cubist collage construction" indicative of the drawings and paintings of Boccioni, Braque and others. Although refrences to early American Color Abstraction are still present in these works, allusions beyond the repetition (grid) structure to pre-cubist and (futurist) post-cubist painting now resonate throughout the work. Scorpion, 1989, exemplifies a new exploration of the structured "object" and the concept of the work as an independent visual form and ordering of those elements (a complex of lines, planes, volumes, spaces, colors and textures).

As in the later works of Boccioni who sought a single image which could express the fusion of the object and its surrounding environment, the qualities of dynamism in early abstract painting in the twentieth century could represent the sensation of speed - not merely the evolution of states of motion. Accordingly, our tendency to perceive visual patterns as unified configurations is driven psychologically to make the experience symmetrical and complete, and this neccessity in turn requires an act of closure.

My abstract compositions are entirely without a material objective model and exist precisely because forms and colors have value in themselves. Fractured, shattered and refracted, these new representations take the form of a luminous vortex. The planes intersect according to the contrast of forces.

While the cubist's method of disintegrating the image has doubtless influenced these works, the formal element and will to reconstruct the image, disregarding other aspects of representation, is preponderant. This vision is based on the complementary quality of colors and on the relationship of objects with their surroundings. As cubist works paint objects motionless, frozen with related static aspects of nature, these works distinguish themselves and gain meaning through a synthesis of movement, color structure and juxtaposition of three-dimensional planar volumetric forms.

"Aldous Huxley has written vividly of the first phase of his recovery from anesthesia, during which he experienced raw, nonreferential color sensation, or what he calls pure sensa, and of his gradual return to a normal perceptive state. He states that for some moments at least, these patches of color were suspended between sensation and perception. And the philosopher Ortega y Gasset has described with disarming simplicity the way in which artists, as if by an act of aesthetic discipline, delete subject matter from their primary visual experience. This capacity, which he defines as the capasity to see the world, including works of art, as two dimensional mosaics of color, he recalls as artistic vision. If he is right, the structural "object" of the artist may be no more than an extension of this kind of vision, and in its most simple form, a set of relationships in which colors acquire attributes of size, shape, position, and direction."(Color and the Structural Sense by W.C.Libby, Prentice-Hall, 1974)



THE GREAT MIDWEST AGRICULTURE STRUCTURE · CLOUD SEEDERS · WIND DIVERTERS · WORKERS SETTLEMENT


EARTH STUDY INSTITUTE

the unique, non-universal architecture, and also the competition among a large number of firms for a limited number of projects.

Current marketing theories propose three levels in the analysis of a consumable product:

1. Core Product: essential product, benefit, or service
2. Formal Product: packaging, features, brand name, styling
3. Augmented Product: installation, free delivery, warranty

Because the "core" service performed by all architects is essentially the same, and the "augmented" services due to the increased liability problems are becoming routine technicalities, differentiation has to be achieved in the secondary, "formal" realm. In fact, the formal realm is the hearth of our economy which depends on the power of "sign" to reach the targeted group of consumers. Owing much to the market mandate, packaging, style, special features, and brand (designer) names have become extremely important aspects of architectural form.[3]

The primary conveyor of style and image in architecture is the exterior skin of the building which functions as a "package" in the marketing sense. In addition, forms of graphic presentation - the cartoon-like quality in Michael Graves' sketches or Richard Meier's clean and crisp black and white presentation - the choice and repeated use of ornament, color, and material may attain the status of a signature from, e.g., Meier's enamel tiles, Graves' granite facing.

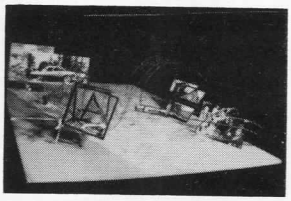
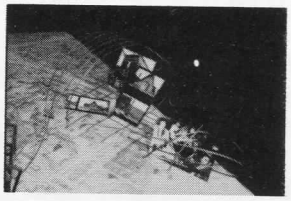
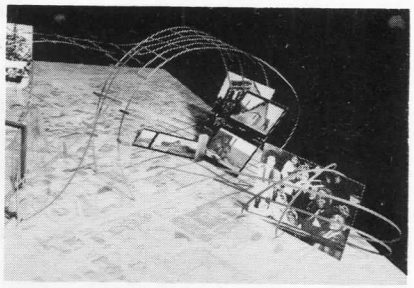
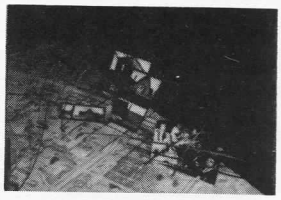
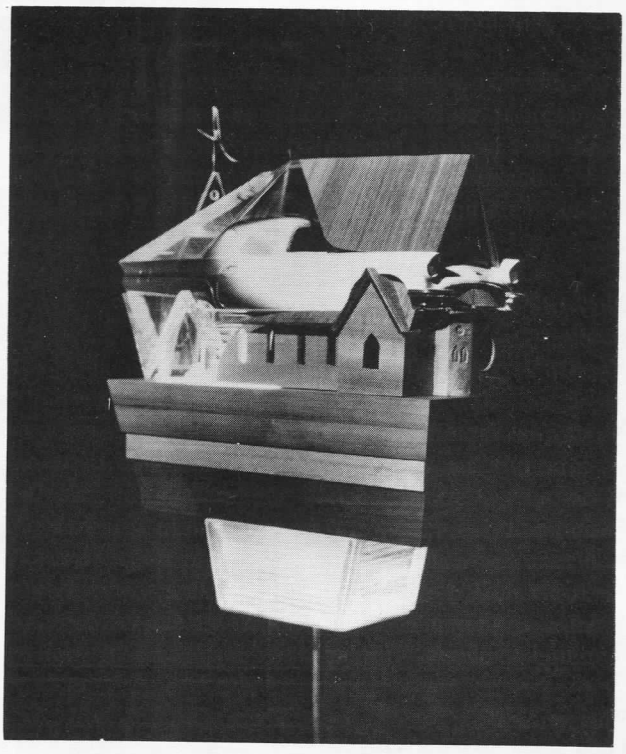
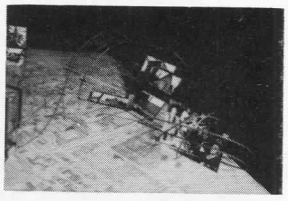
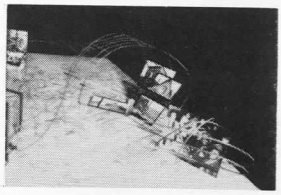
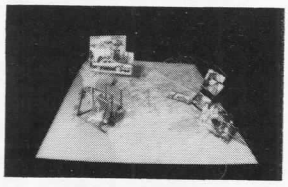
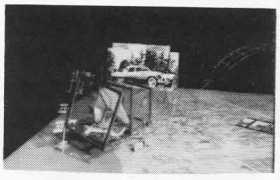
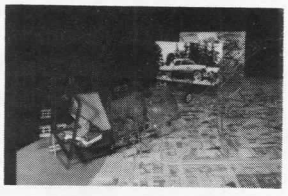
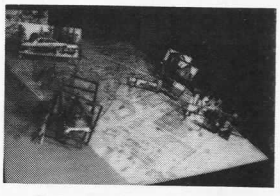
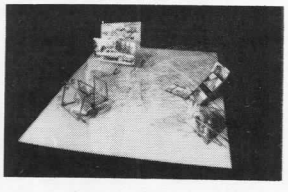
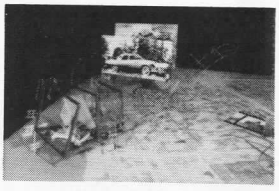
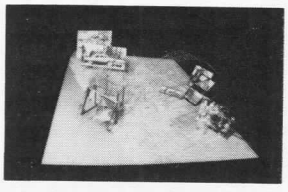
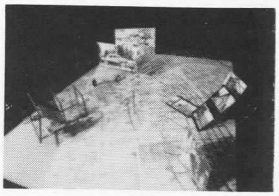
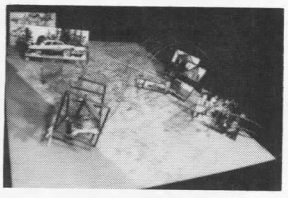
Similarly the names of well-known architects are being used to generate rents and sales above average market prices for buildings of their design. Names not only provide an identity but legitimize and elevate the status of that which is named. Furthermore there is the general tendency to establish a deterministic relation between an artistic expression and a certain style (the "name") as opposed to adopting a more flexible notion which claims that the relation between the sign and meaning is unmotivated [4] i.e., pyramids and gables = Postmodernism, flat roofs and horizontality = Modernism.

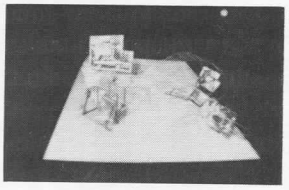
Once an aesthetic deviation is named, it is bound to be the sign of certain style (or VAL) in our economy which depends on the exchange of signifiers. In fact these aesthetic expressions become so dominant as signs that in many cases meaning (and who cares about the meaning in the economics of our postmodern condition anyway) is lost to dogma. Perhaps this is why Michael Graves' "Case for a Figurative Architecture" turned out to be an exploitation of cliche by his followers. Ironically, Charles Jencks' comment on late modernism of the sixties seems to apply to the present state of mainstream architecture; "After all, cliche is what every metaphor quickly becomes in our instant society where communication over communicates."[5]

3. Kieran, Stephen. "The Architecture of Plenty: Theory and Design in the Marketing Age." The Harvard Architecture Review 6. 1988, p. 109.

4. Lane, Michael. Structuralism, A Reader. London: Jonathan Cape, 1970. As de Saussure pointed out in 1916, the relation between the sound and sense in language is for the most part initially arbitrary or unmotivated; this argument can be considered in relation to form and content in architecture.

5. Jencks, Charles. Modern Movements in Architecture. Second Edition, New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1985,p. 195.



"MOTOWN METAMORPHOSIS"

by Kirk & Koskela Architects

"Motown Metamorphsis", a birdhouse designed for the Detroit Artist's Market garden auction, is an exploration of an commentary on the social systems that have driven Detroit society. It has been created to embody the hope that divergent histories can unite, trancend the past, and produce a shining vision of the future. The physical form of the birdhouse results from the strong intersection of complete objects representing cultural polarities. As they are drawn together, these objects diminish in definition and create a new aesthetic, reminiscent of both but more loosely drawn into an abstract, transparent environment for its allegorical occupant; a glowing, lighthearted, colorful environment.

The "Motown Metamorphosis" happens when two timelines become one. When the cultural development of Detriot's black community that began in the 1850s becomes one with the evolution of the American image of consumerism dating from the 1950's - the metamorphosis transpires. Is that now? Or when?

Design/ Poem: J. Michael Kirk
Construction: J. Michael Kirk, David R. Koskela
Collage: Edward M. Orlowski, J. Michael Kirk

Motown Metamorphosis

(A house and home for a sparrow,
and its offspring yet unborn)

Metropolis Detroit, a city with a history
of diversity,
tension,
triumphs,
and unrealized dreams.

Strong, yet disparate, historic icons
intersecting in flight

Historic St. Matthews Episcopal Church
(Detriot, 1851)

Proud survivor of Black bottom's obliteration,
by freeway crossings and urban renewal,
Historic foundation of ethnic societal life.

Historic Ford T-Bird (Dearborn, 1957)

Global reach of anglo-saxon commercial power,
Corporate attitudes and actions imprint
socio-political matrix,
Symbol of consumptive appetites.

Through the sieve of pressures
Borne of social/ business-political/ racial/
religious/ systems

Comes the light...
of a history..
yet unmade.

For the offspring of our feathered friends,
as for our children's children:

a House of Intersection

becomes

a House of Light.....

The seeds of whose beauty are inherent
in all facets
of our historic forms...

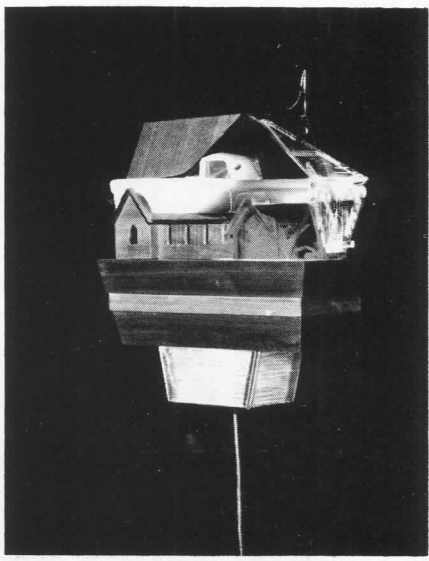
and whose highest transcendence
imbued with the strengths,
colours,
values,
and aspirations
of all peoples...

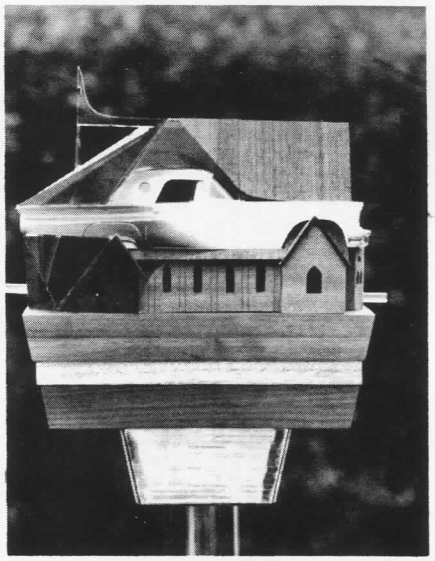
creates a motown metamorphosis
that may become

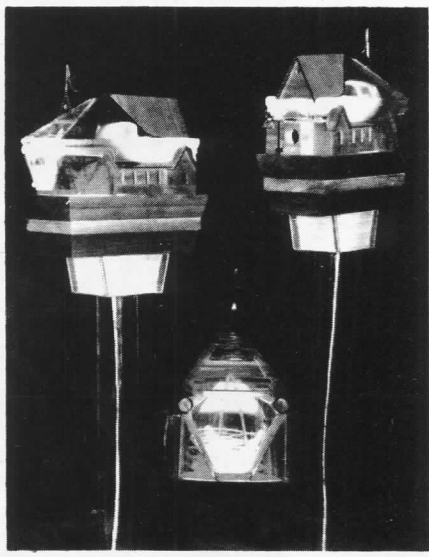
a Home of Hope

at the dawn of our next millenium.

-J. Michael Kirk 1988.







(RE)CENTERING

A

SEARCH

FOR

(RE)FORM

AND

THE

(NON)BUILDING

BY

EDWARD M. ORLOWSKI

Author's note: As I find myself on the verge of commencing my graduate education, I find it necessary to perform an inventory of the factors which have shaped my view of the art of architecture, and to review how these have physically manifested themselves in my work. As ideals and goals are continually re-evaluated and developed, the following discourse should be viewed as a benchmark on one view of architecture, perceived by one man, presented at one point in time.

BENCHMARK

I believe it is the duty of the artist to honestly present and comment upon the human condition, and this holds especially true in the 1980's. Life in the eighties is faster paced, more dangerous, and more insane than perhaps any other "peacetime" period in history. It appears that only in the eighties, an era referred to by Hunter S. Thompson as the "generation of swine," could such concepts as televangelists, highway snipers, and "The Morton Downey Show" exist, and more, be passively accepted.

The artist's role is critical to the recovery of society, for as any counselor or psychologist can tell you, the first step in curing a disorder is to openly admit that one exists. It is up to the artists, therefore, to gaze upon the status quo with an unflinching eye, and report to society both the good and bad: the "points of light," as well as the "irreparable wounds." This is their gift, one which often goes unappreciated.

Architects, however, find themselves holders of these responsibilities and more. It is the architect who shapes space, organizes the flow of daily activity, and creates the most lasting monuments to mankind's ideals and realizations. The psychological impact of architecture, achieved through manipulation of sign, symbol, light, and proportion, empower its creator with not only the ability to comment on the current state of being, but to propose new ways of looking at and responding to contemporary life.

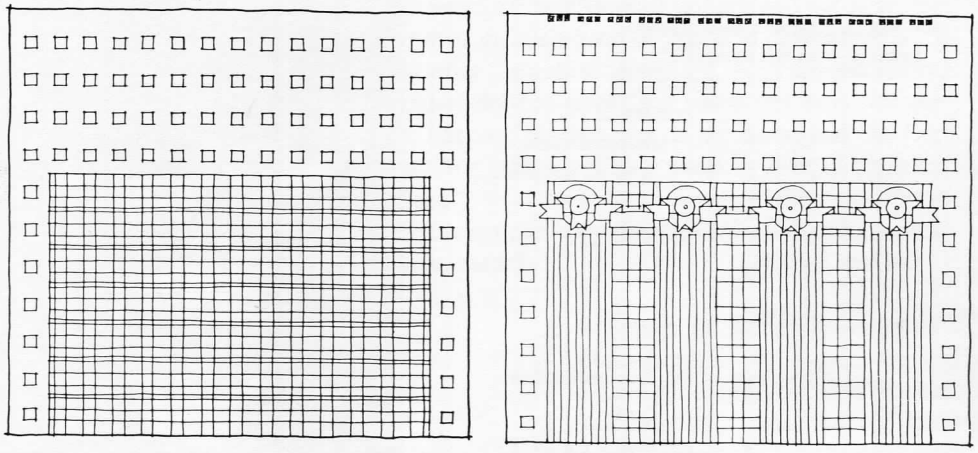


Fig. 1 Modern "basic" vs. Post-Modern "deluxe"

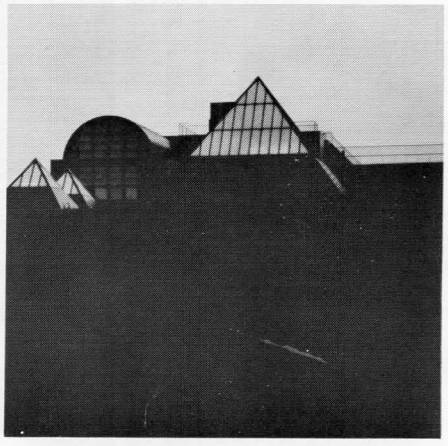


Fig. 2 Museum of Contemporary Art
Photo courtesy of Christopher Mercier

At the beginning of this century, a new spirit was manifesting itself: the Modern Age. Architects comprised many of the leading heroes of this new epoch. A new order was born, a utopian one, and at last man had a fresh opportunity to create order out of chaos. Crisp geometries, regimented structural grids, and open "universal" space became the vocabulary of the new machine-perfect Eden, which man would build himself as an attempt to recover from his original fall from grace and perfection.

The dream, however, soured. For all their good intentions, the fathers of Modernism were unable to see Utopia realized. Their progeny held few of the originators' noble ideals. The machine vocabulary of the Modern became an instrument not of expression, but of economy. While the great masterpieces of Mies and Le Corbusier speak of democracy and vitality, contemporary Modernism had lost its voice: regularity became oppression, openness became exile. A revolution of human endeavor had been drained of its humanism. This message was hammered home in 1972, when several blocks of Minoru Yamasaki's Pruitt-Igoe housing were razed after the inhabitants, who found the structure unlivable, repeatedly vandalized the property.

In the years following Modernism's initial fall from grace, the search for a new revolution was on, but none was to be found. The reasons for this are many, but basically Modernism was a hard act to follow because it gave voice to the zeitgeist, or "spirit of the age," and the spirit of the Modern age was one of new frontiers and boundless social optimism. The Great Depression, the Second World War, and the increasing disharmony between the races and classes put a great deal of tarnish upon the modern age's chromium spirit.

In the realm of architecture today, the majority of discussion and controversy are generated by the movements known as Post-Modernism and Deconstruction (along with its evil twin: Deconstructivism). Neither of these movements carry the weight of social revolution that Modernism did in its heyday. In fact, they appear to be grounded more in reaction than in revolution. Both ideologies (as I shall explain) are endlessly referential to Modernism, and owe their lineage more to the failure of that movement than to any sort of "new spirit."

In the course of its existence, Post-Modernism has come to encompass two basic modes of Modernist reaction: Late Modernism, an effort to carry the modern vocabulary into new levels of meaning, and Post-Modern Classicism, a philosophical denial of the machine language which features a return to historical allusion. In the hands of sensitive creators such as Charles Moore, post-modern classicism is highly successful in sparking human interaction and memory. Its greatest flaw, however, is its reliance upon symbols, which often relegates the vocabulary to mere decoration. As James Wines has said: "Post-Modernism, with its reinterpreted European historical artifacts pasted onto barely concealed Modernist structures, simply doesn't qualify as revolutionary."[1] Post-Modernism has seldom broken from the dogmas of its predecessor, but has frequently covered them with ornament. (Fig. 1)

Deconstruction, which was born out of the writings of Jacques Derrida, has been the subject of more discussion, more argument, and more misunderstanding than any creative or critical movement in recent years. It is (unless I myself am guilty of misunderstanding) a critical method, not a creative style, that challenges the authority of language in the arts. It is based upon the idea that certain parts of language (signifiers) have come to supplant that which the language represents (signifieds). As a result, writers, artists, and architects are guilty of passing along accepted truths, in the form of signifiers, which may or may not reflect the true nature of the reality being relayed.

Deconstruction, however, is a strictly internal examination of thought. In my opinion, a Deconstructionist style does not (and cannot) exist. It would be impossible to point to a work of architecture and define it as the product of Deconstruction, unless one were to observe and analyze the collective works of a single architect before and after this type of inventory of personally held assumptions has taken place. There appears to be, however, an underlying theme of self-knowledge in the Deconstructionist ideal; a request that architects shake themselves from a somnambulistic state and take an honest look at the conventions they use and why they use them.

Something different, however, has mutated from the belly

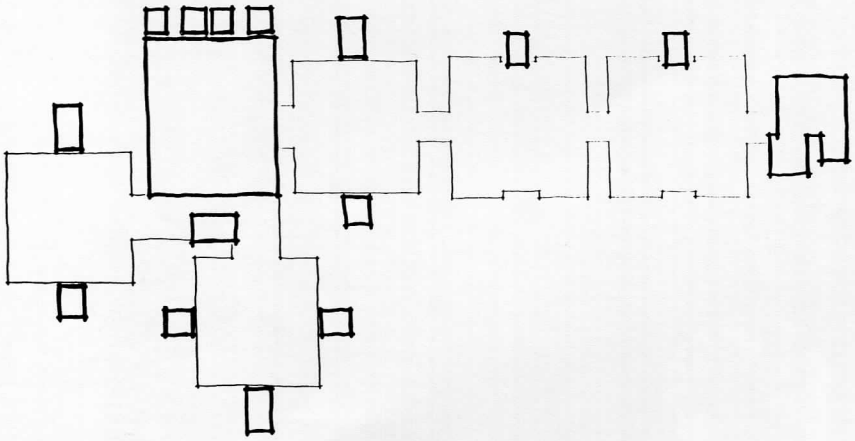


Fig. 3 Richards Medical Research Building, diagram

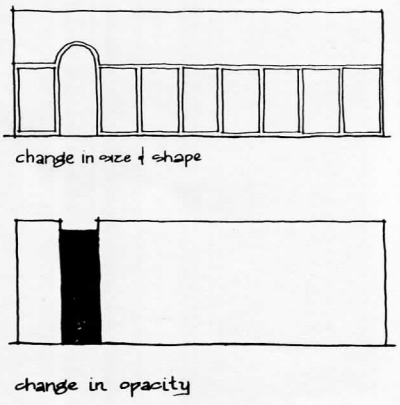


Fig. 4 Definition of "Entry"

and the solid shafts that provide elevator and mechanical service.

Kahn was obsessed with beginnings, and spoke of an imaginary book of history entitled Volume Zero. Loosely interpreted, an architectural Volume Zero would consist of the assimilated understandings of the nature of various signs, symbols, and relationships. This realm of understood realities has equivalents in a variety of philosophies. The Tao, an Eastern philosophy chronicled by Lao Tzu, is based upon an acceptance of the inherent nature of things. A proper Taoist feels at ease with many things because he or she understands them as how they truly are. There is no attempt to alter an object's true nature, or to mislabel it. It could be said that Taoists deal in "signifieds," forgoing the extra step of assigning "signifiers."

The Tao that can be told is not the permanent Tao.
The names that can be given are not the permanent names.[6]

In architecture, the Tao has been cited as a prevailing philosophy behind many "organic" approaches to architecture, where the building is allowed to evolve of its own function and needs. Kahn himself exhibited Taoist tendencies in his fabled "conversations" with buildings and materials to determine what they "wanted to be." While many may consider Kahn somewhat daft for this practice, the idea is quite logical; Kahn believed that to properly use a material, it was necessary to fully understand what opportunities and limitations its use presented.

I believe that Kahn's Volume Zero sits upon everyone's mental bookshelf, personalized by the varying entries which have been recorded over time. Contained within this ledger are understandings of light vs. dark, solid vs. void, and other abstract concepts which need not be reiterated, but are simply understood. An architect may draw upon this to build works independent of signage. For example, "entry" may be defined by differences in shape or opacity (Fig. 4), and does not necessarily rely on upon columns, pediments or other "signifiers." The success of this definition lies in the basic understanding of difference or separation, perhaps something so intrinsic that it lies quoted only in Volume Zero.

To achieve a clarity of meaning, the (non)building must be empowered by its creator to express a concept, either compositional (about the building) or narrative (about an idea). Concept is often expressed through the use of a sort of architectural non-sequitur, an element whose "otherness" causes the viewer to stop and question a previous sequence of visual clues, to see what doesn't follow. Here the reliance is on contrast, which may be used to express hierarchies, sequences, or merely differences. Contrasts allow a multiplicity of readings, and it is this type of liberation from a stylistic vocabulary that allows the architect's message to be more immediate and direct.

One of the firms which has demonstrated the greatest dexterity in using the "non-sequitur" is SITE Projects, Inc. SITE was my earliest influence in architectural school. I was immediately drawn to the novelty of their work, although I understood little of the underlying meanings and intentions. It is only recently that I have come to fully comprehend the narrative irony of their work. Their introduction of expressive art into the built medium, ("de-architecture" as James Wines has called it) has proven highly successful in forcing the viewer to confront established architectural constructs. One of their simplest and most successful works is the BEST Products Showroom in Richmond, Virginia (Fig. 5), in which the facade's brick veneer literally peels away from its concrete block backup. With this simple effort, SITE has taken a long accepted convention -the application of a brick veneer to enliven the face of a cheap concrete masonry box- and exposed the artificiality of the method. While critics may dismiss projects of this sort as architectural "one-liners," at least the gag is a good one, and a thought provoking one.

The influence of SITE was manifested in my first architectural design project in college, a guest residence for a visiting professor on the campus of Lawrence Tech (Fig. 6). The main objective was the expression of a concept, i.e. the use of architectonic forms and elements to convey a narrative message. I chose to convey the aspiration of the educated being set against the stagnant plight of the uneducated man. A library/study served as the programmatic representation of our scholarly hero, and was raised in a sleek, glazed tower. The remainder of the spaces were arranged around the tower's base

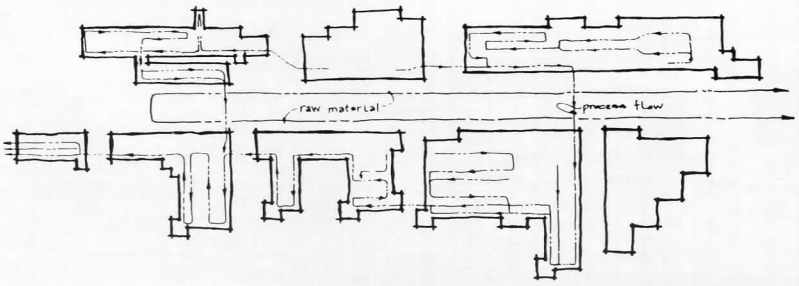


Fig. 7 "Factory of the Future," diagram

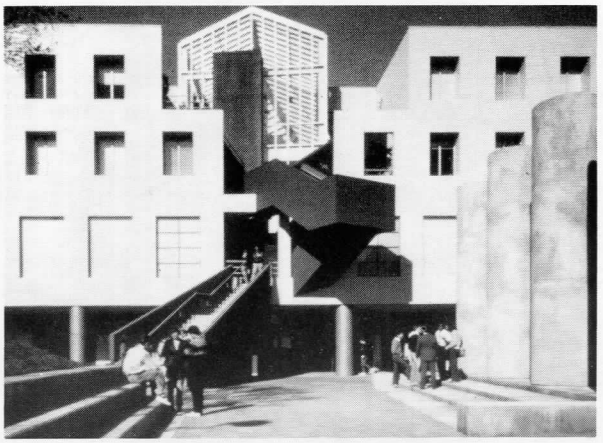


Fig. 8 Loyola Law School
Photo courtesy of Frank O. Gehry & Assoc.

and faced with dilapidated brickwork. While the symbolism and philosophy presented are admittedly heavy-handed (not to mention unfair to the working class), the goal was to express, and if exaggeration was necessary, so be it. The influence of SITE is obvious in the use of the indeterminate brick, although fitting with the superficial understanding of the firm's work which I had at the time, said brickwork is used for its most obvious visual and symbolic effect, and says nothing about the state of "building."

Another source of the (non)building's clarity comes from the idea of "polycentricity": the concept of architecture as a collection of activity zones as opposed to one static mass. In his theories on urban planning, Leon Krier has often cautioned against overexpansion, pointing to a multi-centered community as being more humane in scale. An example of polycentricity can be seen in Lawrence Institute of Technology's winning entry in the GM/ACSA "Factory of the Future" competition (See diagram, Fig. 7). The goal here was to avoid the oppressive scale of typical factories by dividing the program's 3 million square feet into a collection of "small factories," each housing a specific process (assembly, painting, etc.). The product was the result of allowing the building's activity, unbound by architecture, to expand and occur naturally. Once the internal workings of the factory had reached an optimum configuration, architecture was introduced to house, light, and enhance the activity.

This "organic" type of form/function dialogue is Taoist in nature, as the needs of the process are allowed to direct the realization of the space. Louis Kahn spoke of the impact of this dialogue on the plan: "I think that a plan is a society of rooms. A real plan is one in which the rooms have spoken to each other."[7]

Perhaps the foremost creator of polycentric (non)buildings today is Frank O. Gehry. Gehry's work features colliding volumes, clever ad hoc materials, and a variety of textures and techniques. But their somewhat shocking appearance aside, the buildings of Frank Gehry succeed -nay, excel- in arenas in which other theorists merely speak. Gehry's work has been categorized, often uncomfortably, with every movement from Post-modernism to Deconstructivism, yet Gehry remains ideologically as slippery as the fish which often appear in his buildings. The works of most Deconstructivists pale in comparison to those of Gehry simply because he succeeds in questioning conventional architectural constructs while building delightful works of architecture (all this without excess verbal baggage).

Gehry has displayed an understanding of sign, symbol, and volume as objects which modify space, as demonstrated at the Loyola Law School (Fig. 8). Comparison of Gehry's use of freestanding columns at Loyola with the "columns" applied to the facade of the Point West Place (Fig. 9) in Framingham, Massachusetts, by the firm of Robert A. M. Stern demonstrates this. While Stern has merely applied classical ornament to a standard speculative office building, Gehry has truly captured the spirit of the Greek agora, testified by the fact that the columns have become a popular meeting spot amongst Loyola students. The fragmentary nature of Gehry's work at Loyola and elsewhere demonstrates one of the most basic tenents of the (non)building: expression of the parts of a compositional whole.

The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art (Fig. 10) is an example of my work which expresses subdivisions within a building's program. The plan features a tripartite organization with admistrative/educational, social, and gallery components. I have expressed each of these as a cubic volume, with variations in their articulation. My intent was that each "building" should have its own identity, while relating contextually to the others. A glass atrium captures the common space shared by these three components. The almost diagrammatic clarity with which the elements can be read was my most basic goal in this project, and was an attempt to allow the user to relate to each volume at a more comfortable scale.

My "Wall House" project (Fig. 11) is another example of program-driven expression. The parti of this house is simple: the separation and contrast of public and private space. Towards this end, I have catagorized the program elements with the great room comprising the bulk of the public space, and the remaining spaces deemed private or semi private. The public spaces feature floor-to-ceiling glazing, while the punched fenestration of the private spaces make them appear more introspective.

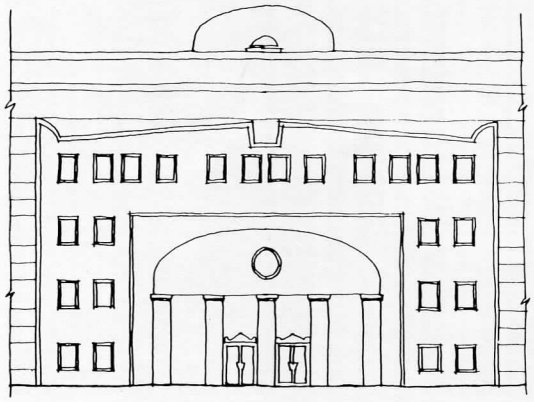


Fig. 9 Pointe West Place, Facade

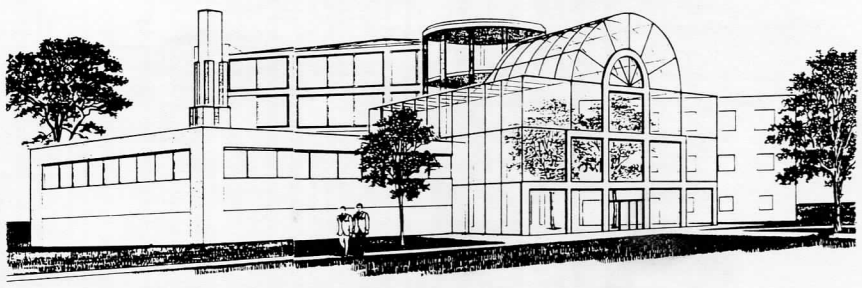


Fig. 10 Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

I attempted to achieve separation of the public and private spaces through the use of a wall which bisects both the house and its site. This wall stands as an object unto itself, its finished tone and texture are intended to be markedly different from the rest of the house. The pedestrian circulation pattern is defined by (and bounds) the wall, which is penetrated only by those openings necessary to allow the passage of people and light from space to space. The modulation of these openings adds to the walls sculptural nature. Near the road, the wall seems more like a processional colonnade. It solidifies as it approaches the house, beginning to open sporadically once inside, until it finally crumbles as it passes through the house's exterior. While the wall may appear to some to have come crashing through the house, dividing it beyond reclamation, the expressive intent is not one of violence, but of definition. The wall (non-sequitur) is meant to order and enliven the form of the house, not violate it as a Deconstructivist approach would.

While the planning and articulation of the previous examples deconstruct "building" at a large scale, the (non)buildings of the California firm Morphosis take this effort to a more intimate realm. The work of Morphosis is very "constructed." There is present in many of their creations an abundance of autobiographical details, which feature art crafted from technology, rather than the old Modernist dogma of technology labeled as art. Louis Kahn once said: "The Pyramids try to say to you, 'Let me tell you how I was made.'"[8] So too do the works of Morphosis, which include -I believe- the first example of an "architectural overture;" a stylus which rises in the midst of the Kate Mantalini Restaurant (Fig. 12), constructed of many of the materials and elements found in the building, appears to have inscribed a section drawing of the building into the floor. Thom Mayne of Morphosis has described this as "an element of the building which describes the building," and it displays a self-awareness which I feel to be very healthy in architecture.[9]

The final example of my own work is an incomplete project, inspired in part by the self-awareness of Morphosis' work, which I call the House of Cards. I am using the development of this project as an exercise in the further deconstruction of basic compositional elements. In it, I am attempting to define geometric elements as colllections of repetitive "building blocks" that compose them. In this way, volume becomes plane(s), plane becomes line(s), and line becomes point(s) (Fig. 13). In architectural terms, the house's cubic volume breaks down to a series of structural frames and planar sunscreens, as shown in the conceptual diagram (Fig. 14). The next step would be to allow many of the traditionally planar elements to be expressed as clusterings of linear elements, and so on.

The fragmentary nature of many of the (non)buildings which I have shown make them receptive to user participation and involvement. Elements presented as "ruins" or fragments" may be viewed as individual objects, or as part of a greater (not readily apparent) whole. This last factor is important, as it allows the viewer to use the signs and clues provided for him to mentally "complete" the image to his liking. Architecture is thereby placed in the public realm by presenting a specific entity which extracts a variety of meanings from a variety of psyches.

The works of the aforementioned architects, and many others, have helped in many ways to shape my view of what constitutes good, expressive design, and what forms a (non)building can take. One thing to keep in mind is that the architecture of the (non)building is based upon a philosophy of expression, not upon a style or vocabulary. Constructivist, Neoclassical, or Modern structures may all be (non)buildings. A good architect does not exclude styles, but rather evaluates a work of architecture within the realm of a style -weighing the achievement against the standards of its own ideal. It is crucial for architects, and those who teach them, to realize that a great wealth of stylistic modes exist, and to be intolerant of any one of them is a disservice to the art of architecture.

(RE)FORM

"Form is the realization of the inseparable parts of something." Louis Kahn[10]

"An edifice that reveals its own biography in public has a greater possibility of generating interest than a structure that exposes only the established rituals of service." James Wines[11]

Fig. 11 Wall House

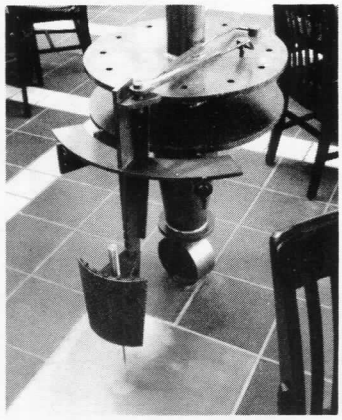


Fig. 12 Stylus, Kate Mantilini Restaurant
Photo courtesy of Tim Street-Porter/Esto Photographics

I spoke at the beginning of this discussion about the complex and frightening existence of today, and mentioned the architect's role in reflecting and shaping lifestyles and circumstances. The (non)building, with its programmatic separations and constructive self-consciousness, is an attempt to do for architecture what man needs done for his life: To break down an occasionally intimidating whole into expressive parts, allowing the viewer to feel at ease within these parts as a way of finding himself or herself within the large scale of the world. While many architects today talk of de-centering, the purpose of the (non)building is to (re)center -not for the sake of the architect, but for the sake of architecture. The search for this ideal is assymtotic; one is constantly approaching, yet never arriving. It is, however, in spite of this -or perhaps because of it- that I choose to continue my search for (re)form and the (non)building.

Endnotes:

1. James Wines, De-Architecture (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 38.
2. Mark Wigley, "Improprieties of the Deconstructivists: An Interview with Mark Wigley," Architectural Record. July 1988, p.55.
3. Jacques Derrida, quoted by Charles Jencks, "Deconstruction: The Pleasures of Absence," Deconstruction in Architecture, ed. by Dr. Andreas C. Papadakis (London: Academy Editions, 1988), p.24.
4. Wines, p.165.
5. Louis Kahn, "From a Conversation With Jamine Mehta, 22 October 1973," What Will Be Has Always Been, ed. by Richard Saul Wuman (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), p.221.
6. Lao Tzu, quoted by Amos Ih Tiao Chang, The Tao of Architecture (Princeton University Press, 1956), p.3.
7. Louis Kahn, quoted by John Lobell, Between Silence and Light (Boulder: Shambhala Publications, 1979), p.36.
8. Louis Kahn, "On order and Design," What Will Be Always Has Been, p.1.
9. Thom Mayne used this phrase while discussing his works in a presentation at the campus of the Lawrence Institue of Technology in the Fall of 1987.
10. Louis Kahn, "The Profession and Education Address to the International Congress of Architects; Isfahan, Iran," What Will Be Always Has Been, p.95.
11. Wines, p.125.

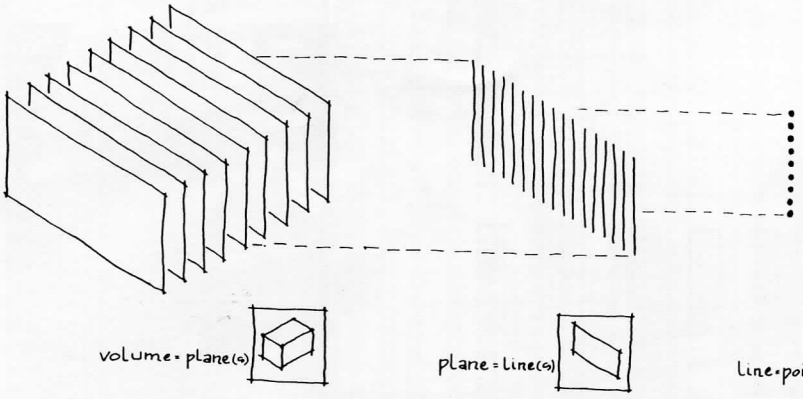


Fig. 13 Elemental Decontruction

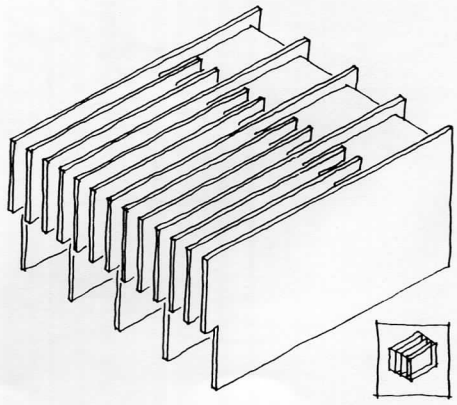
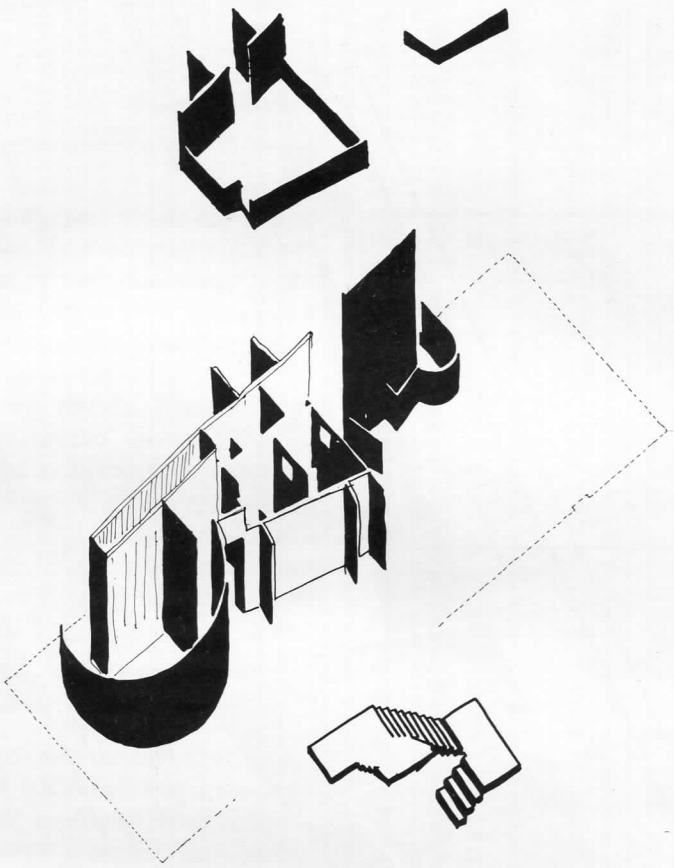


Fig. 14 House of Cards, diagram

ANTHONY CHAUDHURI RESIDENCE
ANN ARBOR MICHIGAN

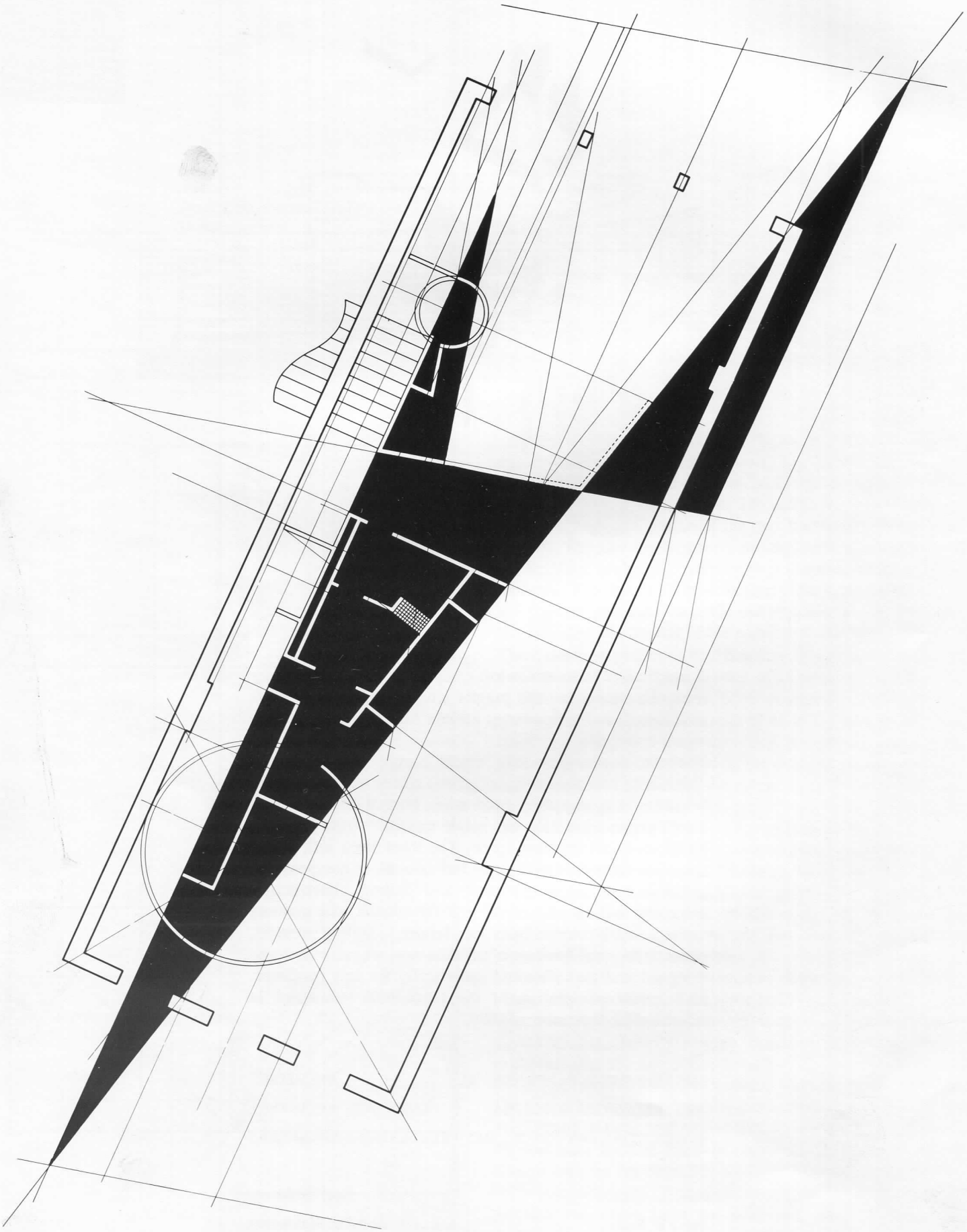


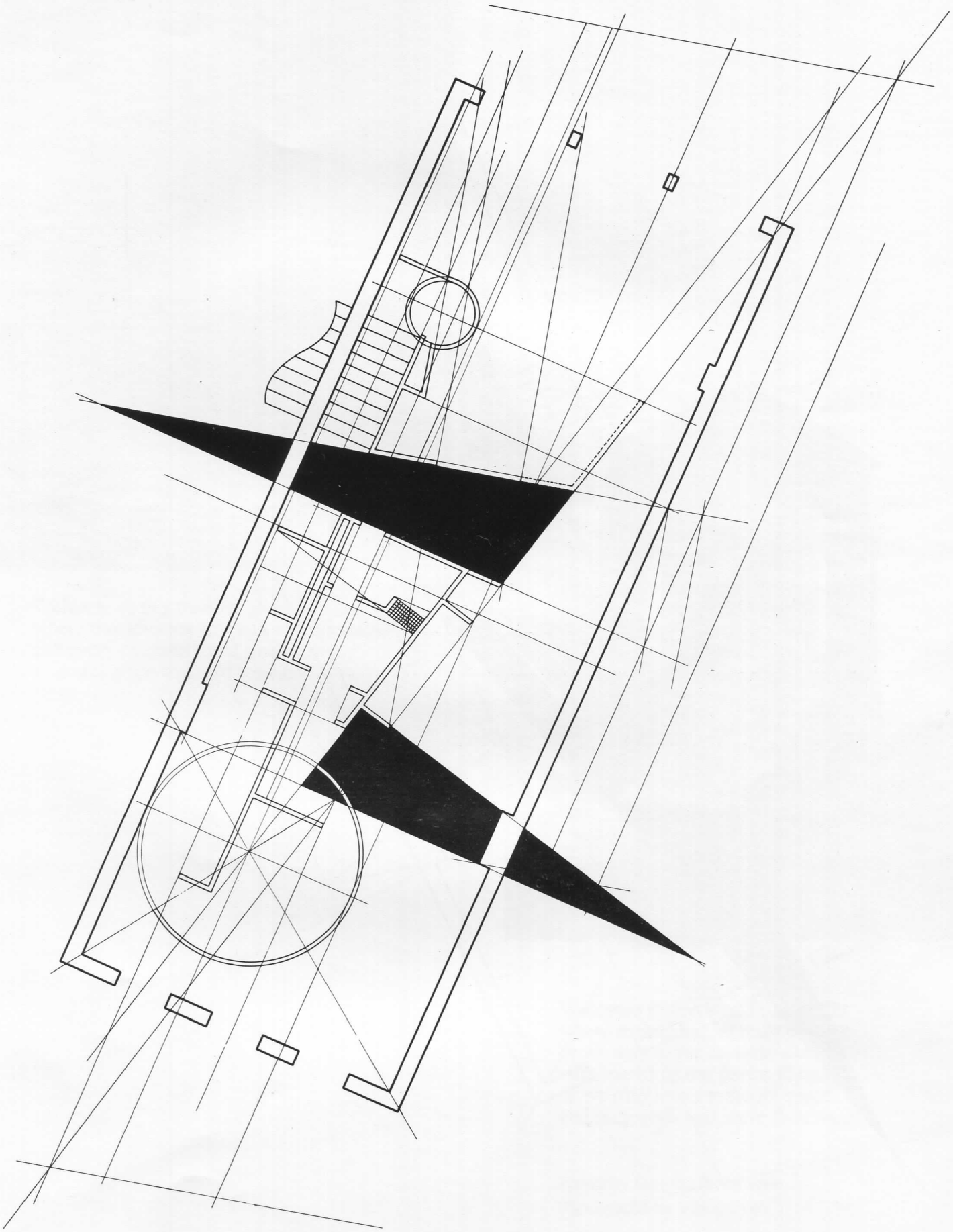
A residential / performance loft space designed for a nationally recognized magician and juggler who occasionally displays selections from his significant African Art Collection.

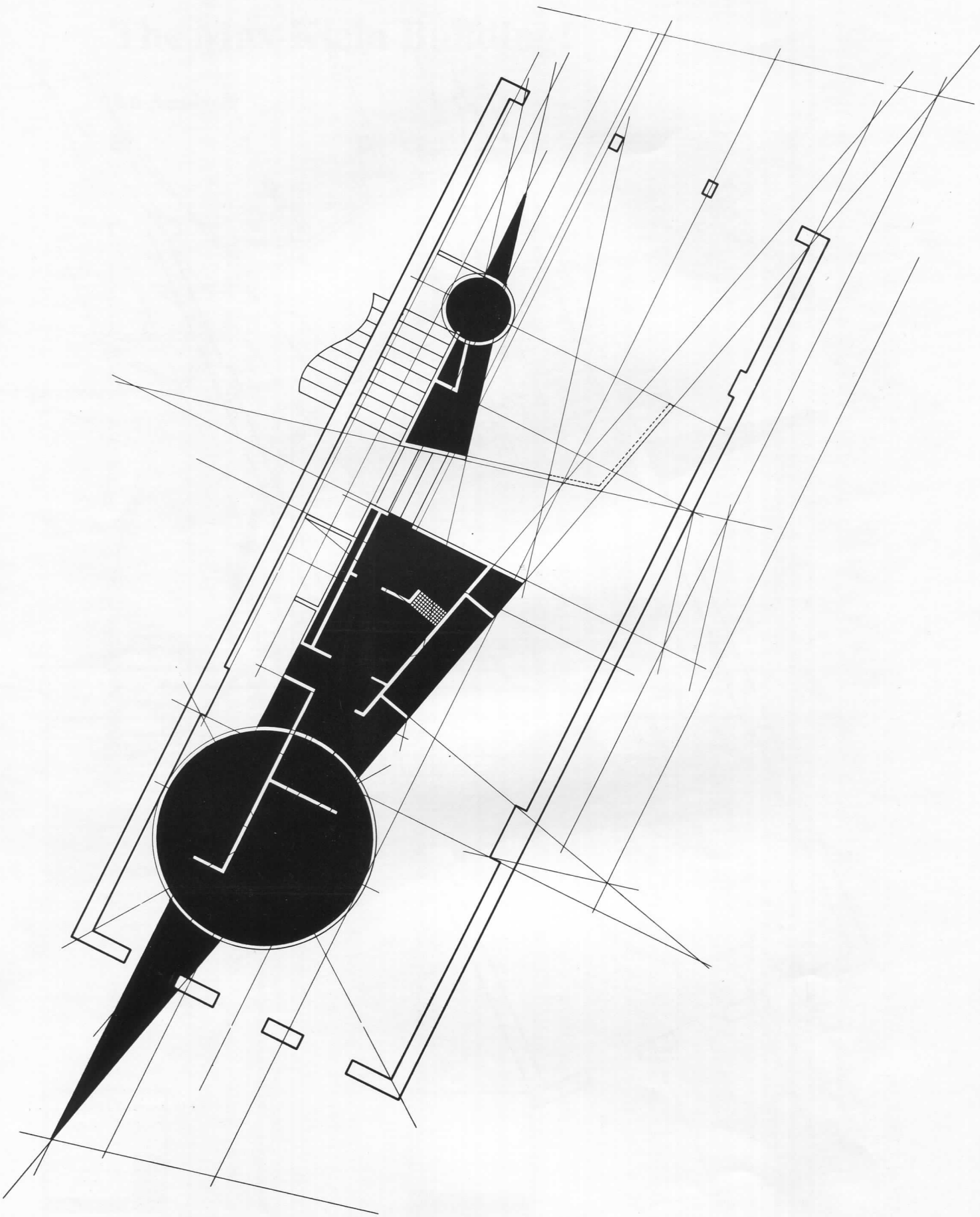
The client, who primarily would occupy the loft alone, specifically requested compact private spaces without doors to be enclosed by expansive open areas. Formal elements alone would create separation and subtle transition from public to semi-private to intimate space. The third floor loft, which measures sixty feet by twenty feet overall, is composed of gypsum wall board partition and ceiling construction suspended in distance or reveal from the original brick masonry exterior walls. A kitchen, loft ladder, juggling screens, entrance door and furniture of stainless steel are currently being designed and manufactured specifically for this residence. Anticipated completion of the Chaudhuri Residence is scheduled for September of 1989.

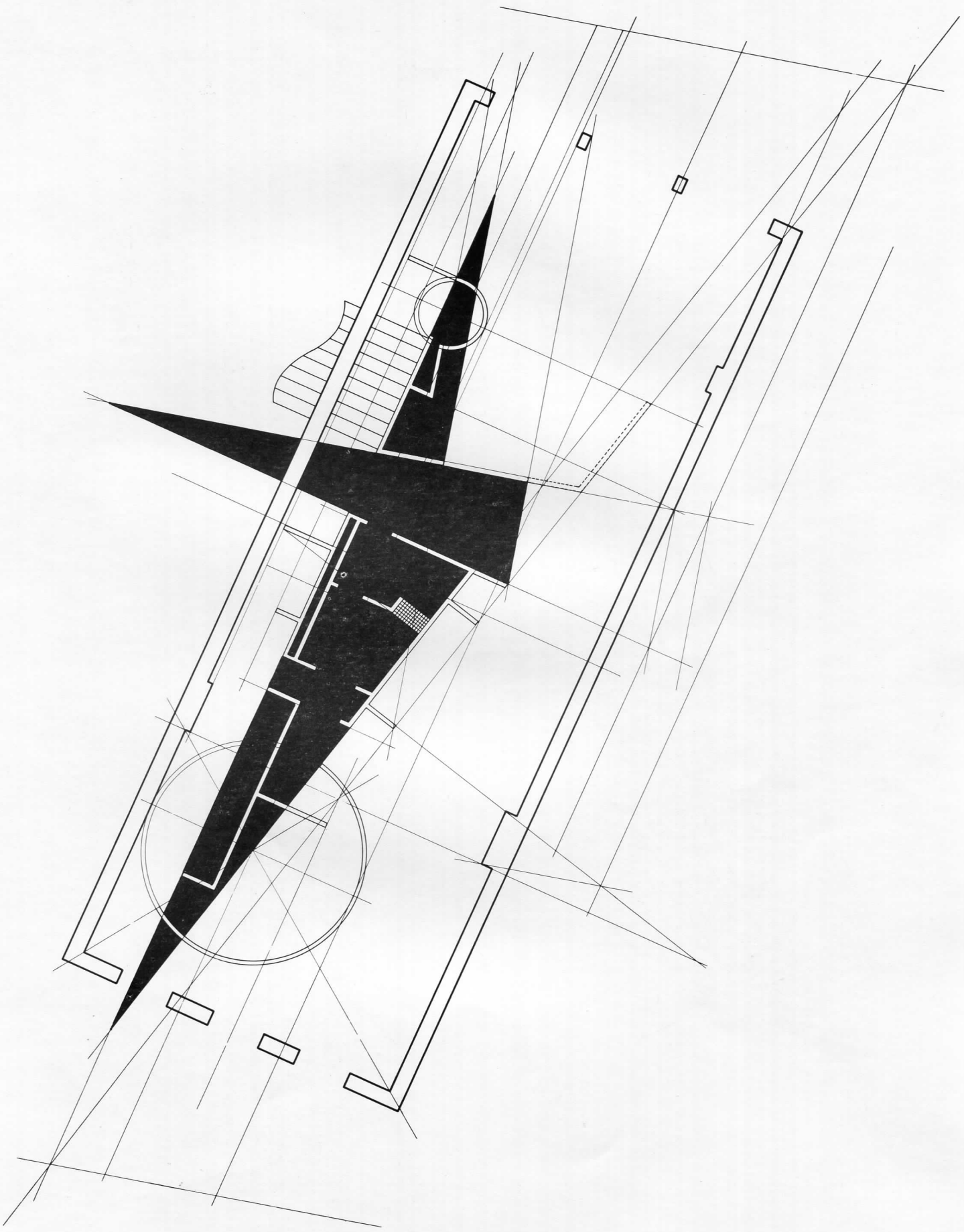
IAN FREDERICK TABERNER AIA — ARCHITECT
J. STERLING CRANDALL RA — ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT
ROBERT DARVAS ASSOC., P.C. — STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

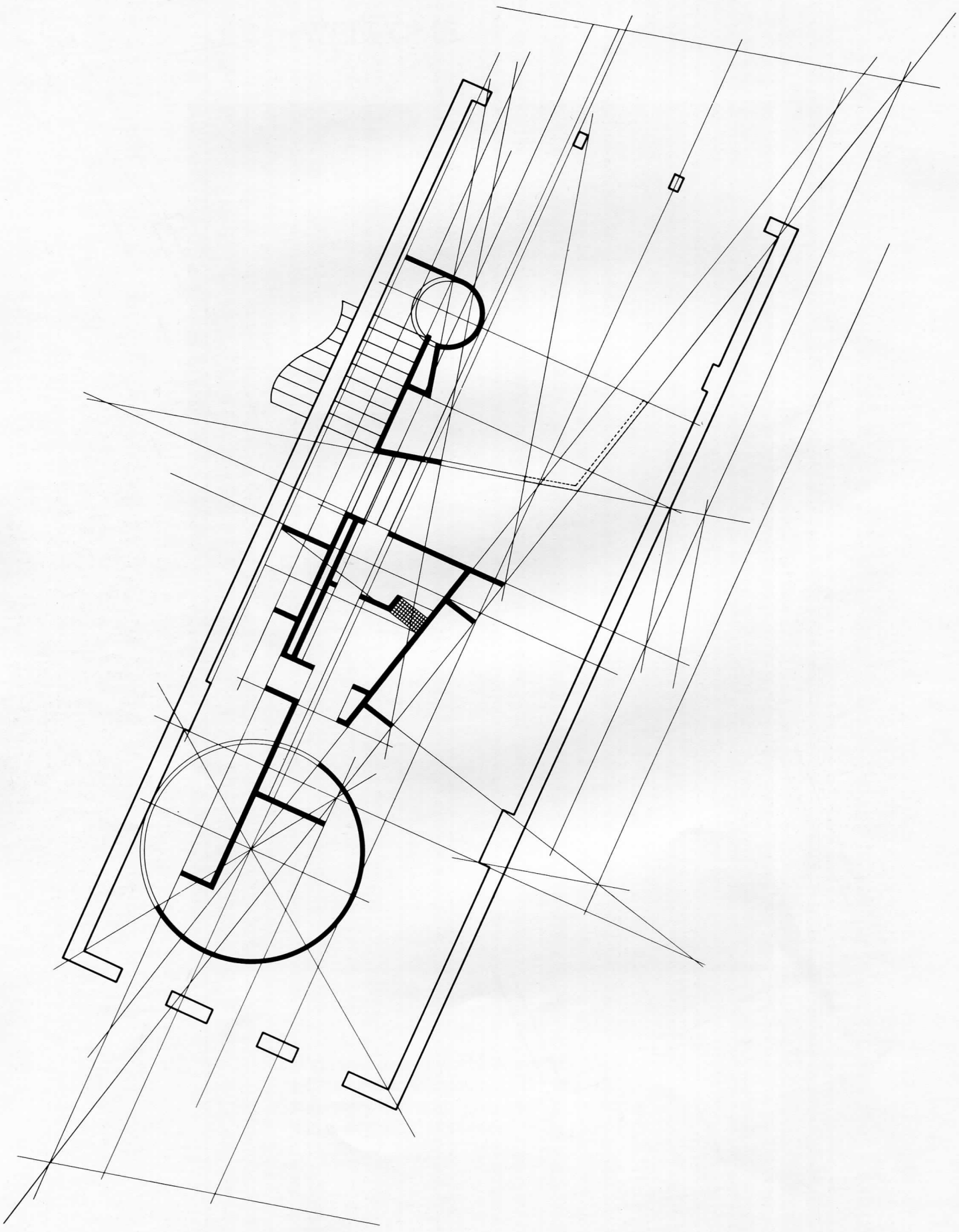
John B. Abela
Steve K. Butts
John T. Krasinkiewcz
James P. Kurko
Geoff Makstutis
Abdullah Mohtasham
Y.C. David Nieh
Amir Sidharta

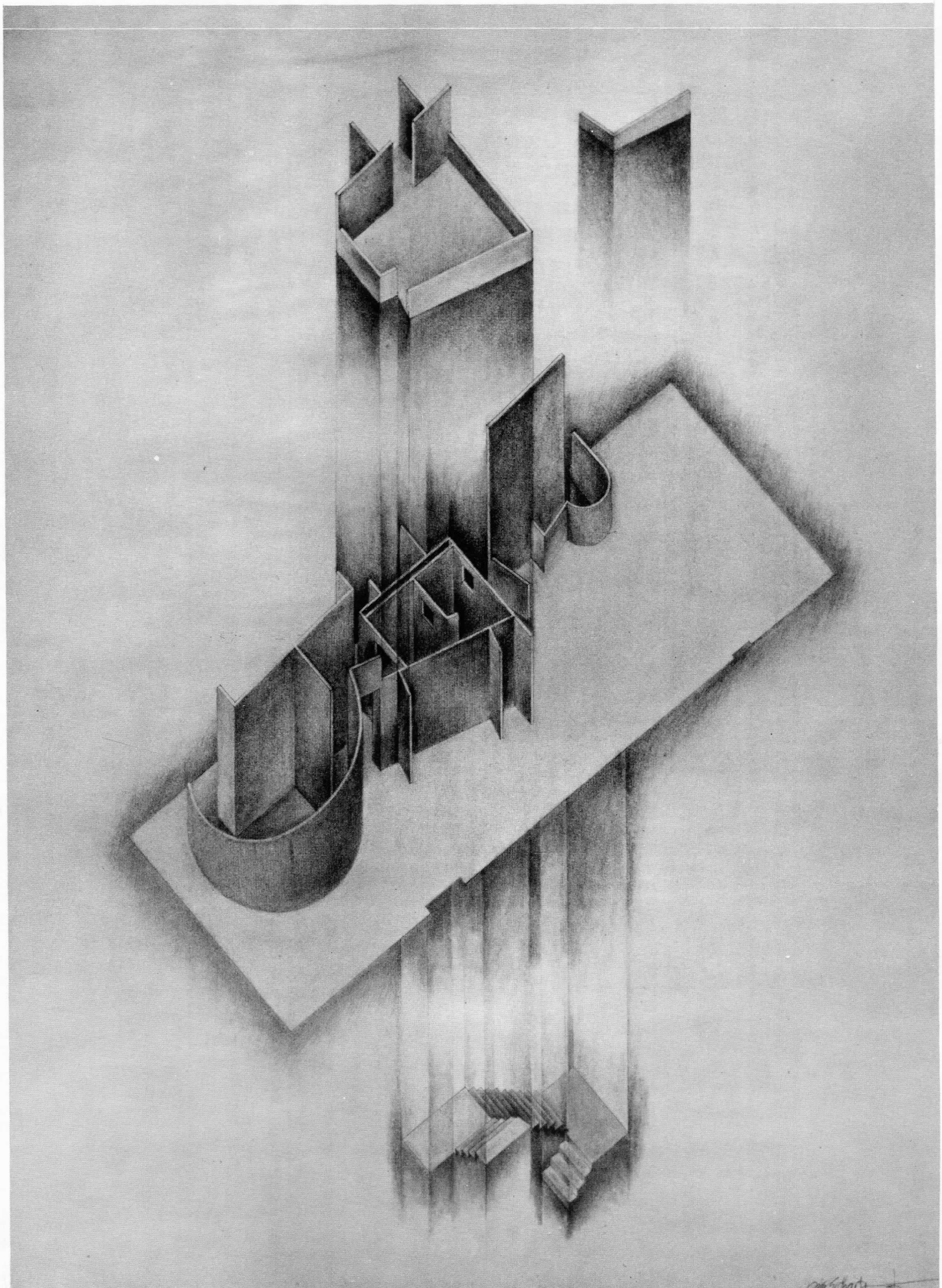




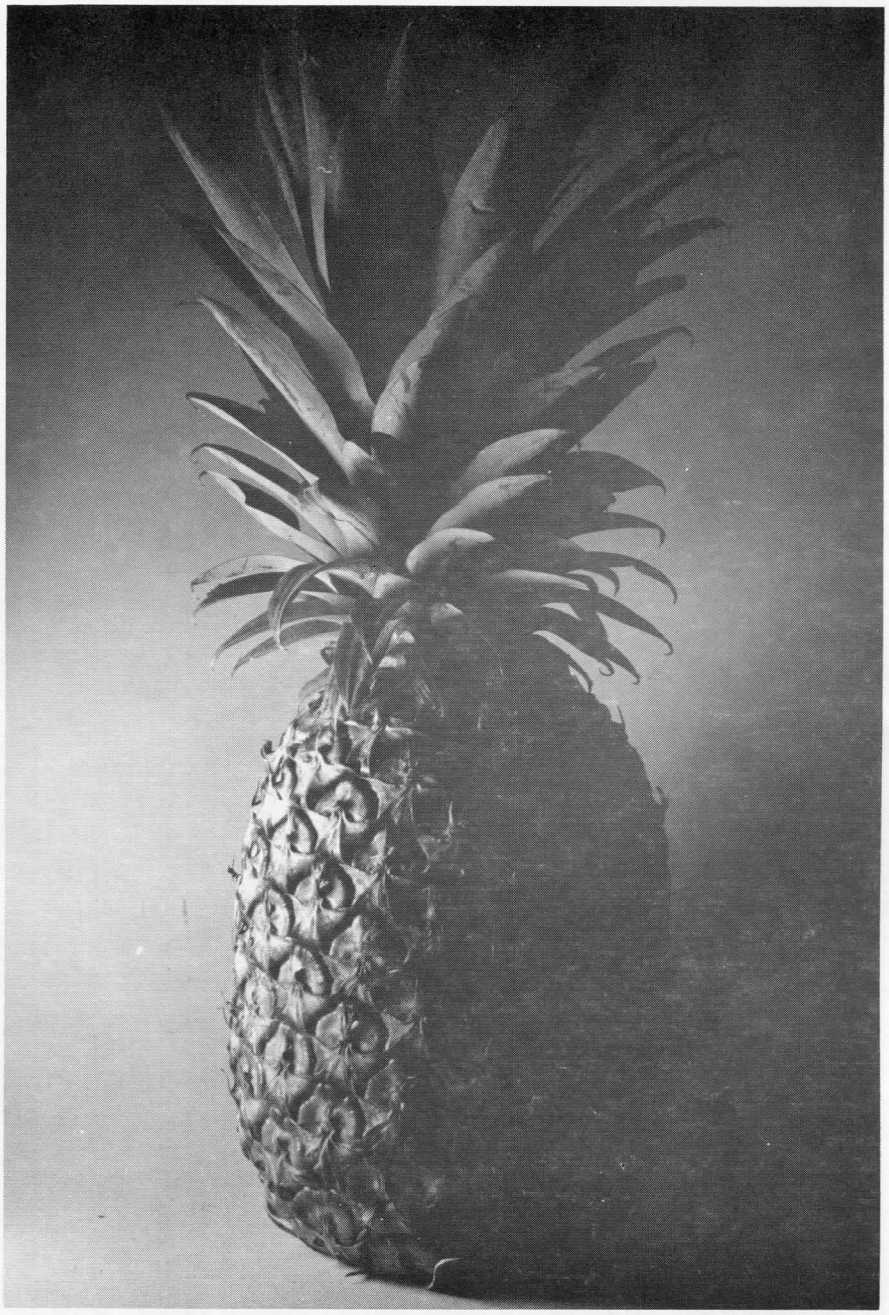




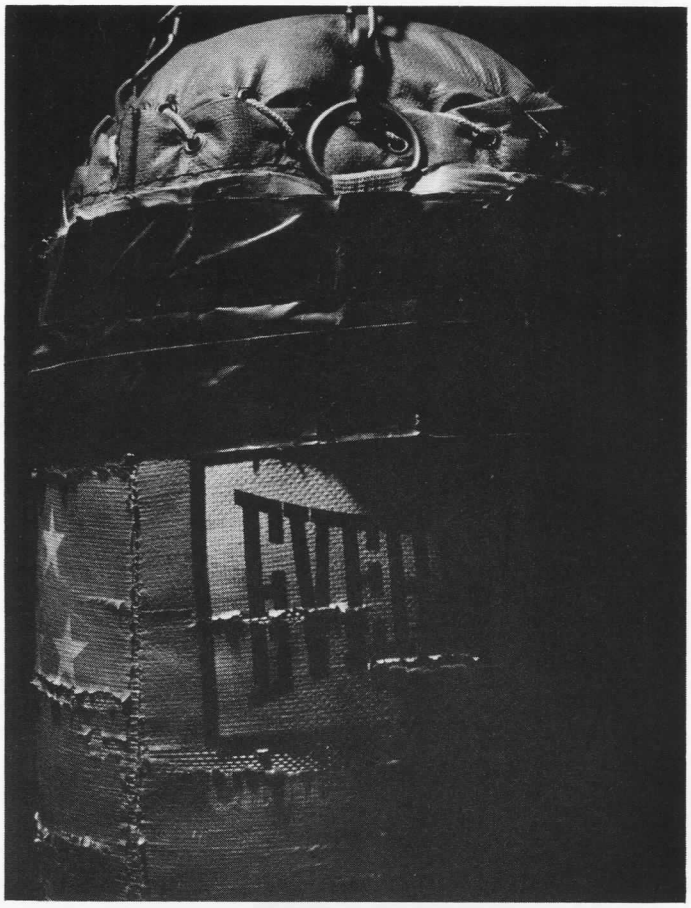




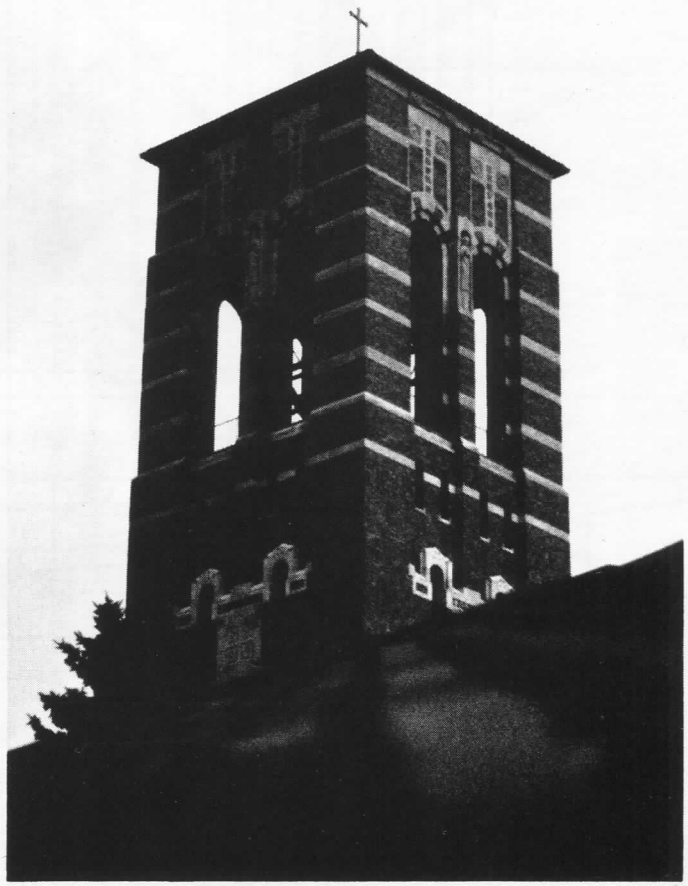
WELCOME



Welcome to this world of unrest
where everyone must pass the test
and every line must give itself to meaning
and every mind is silenced in its pleading



Welcome to this training ground
where thoughts are lost and visions found
and every cautious mind must take
a careful guide to guard their fate

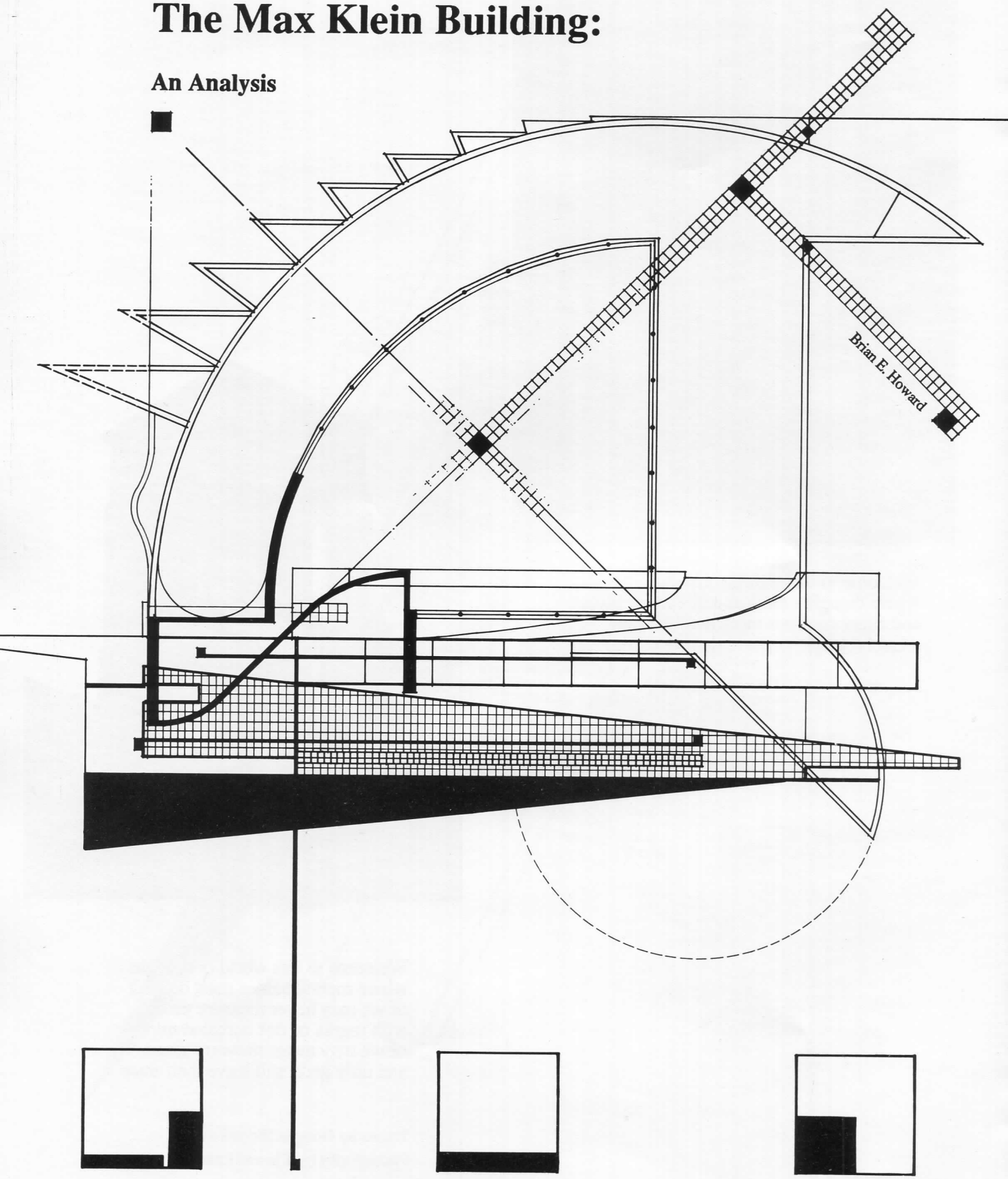


Welcome to this world of thought
where mental battles must be fault
or we may never measure time
with marks of our unrested minds
or we may never measure space
and only gods will leave their trace

Poems by Douglas Woodward
Photographs by Vincent Law

The Max Klein Building:

An Analysis



Sean O'Brien

The arrangement of a building in space and its appearance affects all of us in one way or another. To experience a structure evokes varied emotional responses in our relationship to the built environment. What causes us to react certain ways to a particular building, or more importantly, what causes a building to react certain ways to a particular environment?

The Max Klein Building by Harvey Ferrero is an important work of architecture in the Greater Detroit Metropolitan Area. It has been praised by Bruno Zevi, author and publisher, as 'organic' and published with that label appended to it. Nevertheless, the building has remained unexplored; it is still 'undiscovered' in many ways. What did Ferrero assume when designing the building? What were his concepts and his process? Why does the building look like this?

It is the purpose of the architect that is often lost. Not often is it that we ask questions about the origins or ideology that exist within the architecture. The architectural lessons inherent in a structure can be rediscovered through a method of visual and verbal analysis. The Max Klein Building is the focus of such an analysis which is designed to offer an insight into the principles and process of Ferrero's work, to explore the 'layering' of ideas beneath the order and function of the building, and to understand the rational and emotional tendencies that form the basis of the design.

The analysis will be broken into two sections. First, the building will be dissected graphically and explained verbally to uncover its genesis and process, to reveal its geometry and relationships; and secondly, to uncover the layering of perceptual effects that creates an orchestrated and unified synthesis.

Located in Southfield, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit, the Max Klein Building was completed in 1984. It sits along a major highway among low-rise apartments, party stores, and office buildings. It appears unusual and ambiguous in form, material, and color against the backgroud of suburban sprawl. Its context is the sun, traffic, and scale. There exists no definitive frontality. The building must be explored in by moving around it.

In a recent discussion, Ferraro indicated an interest in how building forms are derived or what determines their form. An analysis of the Max Klein Building gives us some insight into Ferrero's responses to these questions in a specific building.

The plan of the building and its form are derived internally using geometry as the genesis for organization. The plan is divided into two squares with an inscribed semi-circle; the size of the double square is determined by the approximate required programmatic area (fig. 1). All of the initial geometry, however, is organized around the entrance to the building which is located along the bases of the two squares and is the source for the primary semi-circle and other radii (fig. 2). The offices that follow the quarter circle are defined by such relationships. The

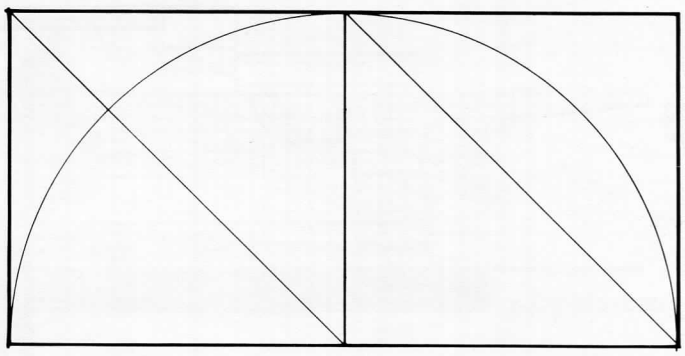


fig. 1

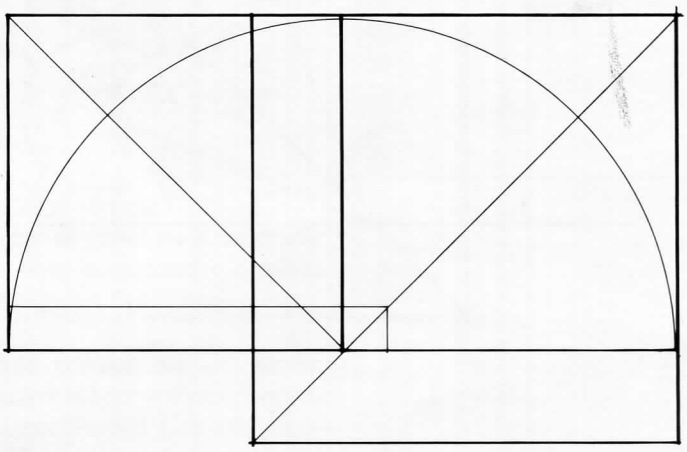


fig. 2

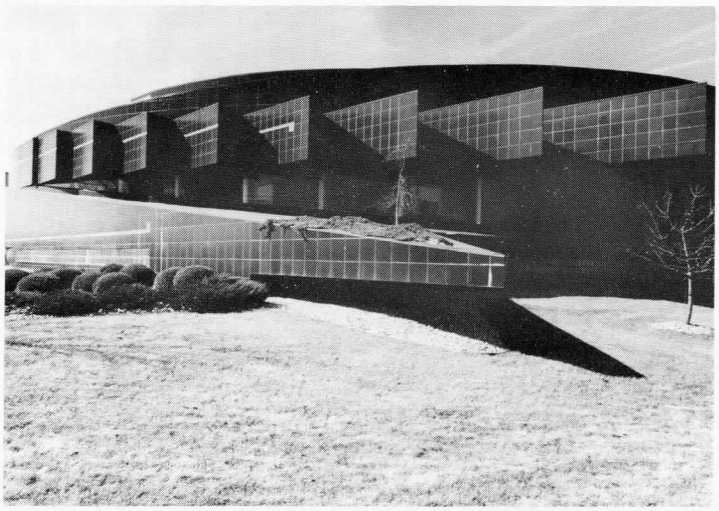
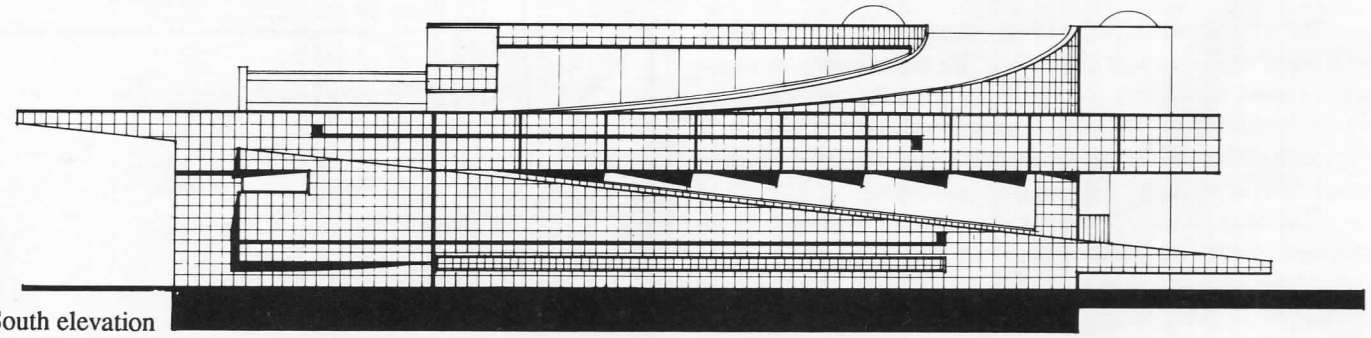


fig. a



South elevation

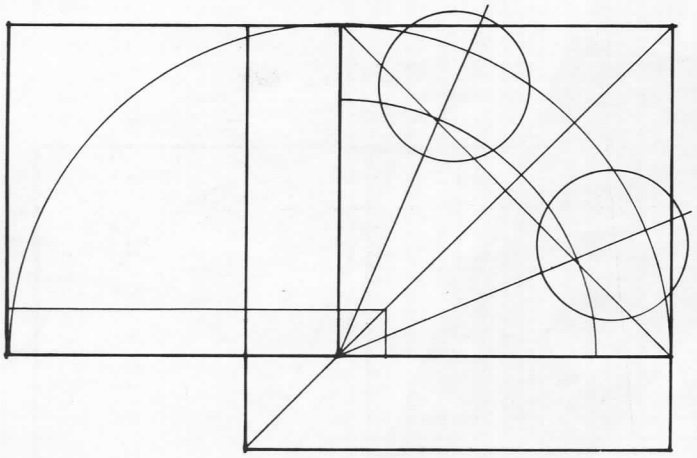


fig. 3

quarter circle is divided into 22.5 degree increments that define the approximate size of the rooms. The intersection of these lines with the diagonal of square "b" locate the interior partition as well as the clerestory above. The entrances to the offices are defined by the intersection of the two diameters with this plane (fig. 3). The saw-tooth pattern, so important to the exterior of the building, is also generated by lines projecting from the main entrance. The fins of the saw toothed pattern, spaced equally at 7.5 degrees, penetrate the circle and return to the intersection of the radii and the quarter circle parallel to the highway (fig 4). These elements perform a dual function, as a shading device, and as a means of creating an illusion of an evolving building (fig. a). The diagonal of square "b" is extended to accommodate programmatic requirements as well as to achieve an increased space that will house the main lobby. A pathway, one-half the width of the extension created by the diagonal, is removed from the rectangle to allow for the entrance to the building. The vertical plane of the entrance is then turned 45 degrees to adjust the relationship of the person to the building (fig. 2).

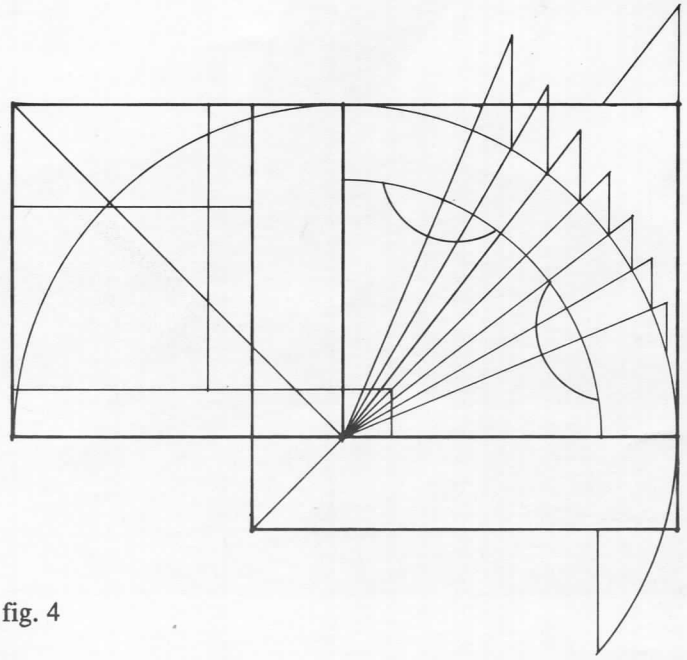
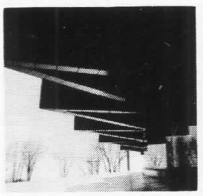
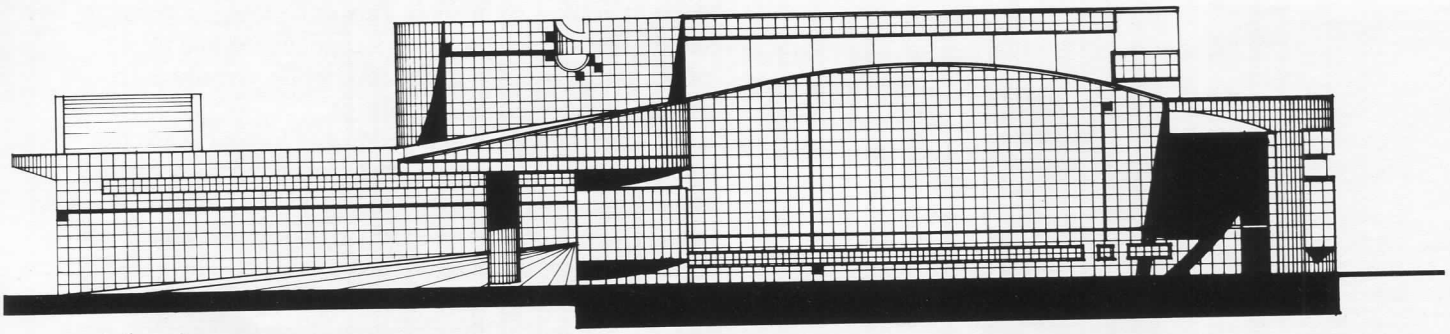


fig. 4

The adjustment of the entrance plane is not unusual in Ferrero's work. He believes that the geometry serves as a basis and does not have to be adhered to absolutely. Ferrero varies from the initial geometry of the plans in favor of the requirements of the program and for important formal and perceptual considerations. Max Klein's private office, for example, protrudes in an attempt to demonstrate visually the hierarchical importance of the space and to conclude the sweep of the curve. This departure, however, is imperceptible because the planes do not abruptly change direction to accompany this expansion (fig. 5).

The rear overhang and studio is another, similar example. The studio has evolved from the geometry of the square and the overlapping of three new circles (fig. 5). The studio glass line is derived from a circle equal in radius to the extended square tangent with the entrance. The studio is enclosed with a smaller circle intersecting the other circles at a point. The large overhang protects the studio from the west sun, while allowing for daylight from the north.





west elevation

The appearance of the building lends little support to its origins. The ensemble of projections and planes appear spontaneous and at times chaotic. The radical formal nature of his architecture results from Ferrero's search for an appropriate architecture for our time, a search that stems from his disapproval of typology and eclecticism as appropriate solutions. In the twentieth century, man has developed technology at a pace unparalleled in history. Ferrero contends that this phenomena effects the experience of architecture. It is this experience that is the dominant influence in his design, an influence that results in two fundamental concerns: the exterior of the building and its relation to the site, and the interior as one progresses through the space.

On the exterior, movement is manipulated by the play of surfaces. From the road, the building either peels away from you, or you are confronted with an abrupt pattern that recedes into the curved frontal plane as an overhang leads you into the site. This perception is achieved by the curved facade that includes a series of projecting fins which extend logrithmically from the surface as they fade away to the rear of the building. The triangular base below the fins remains stationary giving reference to their shared point of departure, the point of tangency in the initial geometry of the plan (fig. a). The unresolved tension that this produces can be traced back to the square with the inscribed circle in the floor plan and therefore, to the geometric origins of the building. It is here that we are able to see how this initial geometry has been controlled in the massing; it is also here that these relationships are most successful.

The frontal plane along the road also has been alternately sliced horizontally giving the illusion of triangular segments in slippage. Each triangular plane alternates in material, solid to transparent, in an effort to give buoyancy to a material that would otherwise appear ponderous (fig. b).

The roof line continues in each direction: at the low end, this line is continued along the inscribed circle as it cantilevers beyond the plane defined by the bases of the two initial squares. This line travels upward concluding in a cylindrical form: the

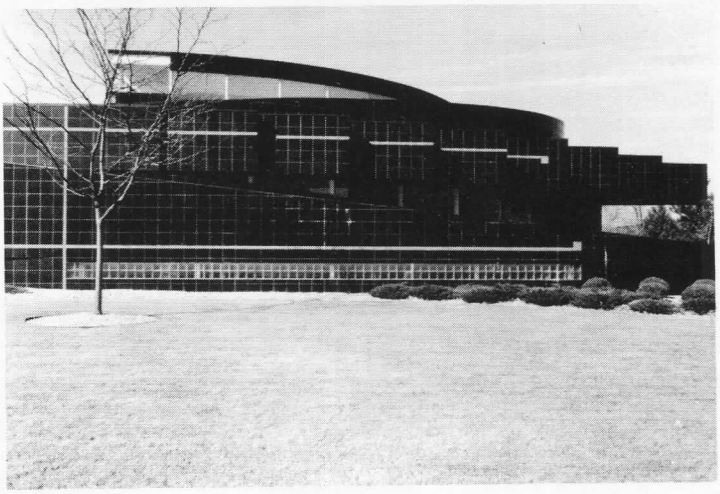


fig. b

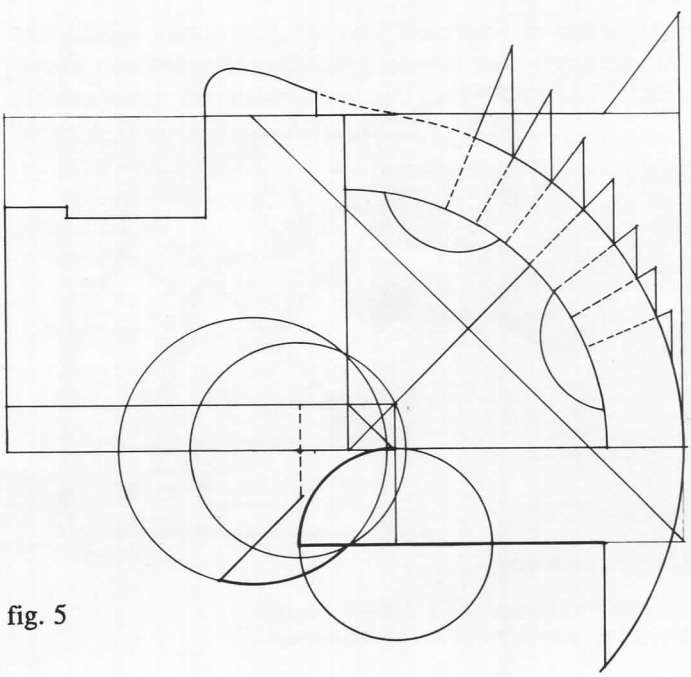
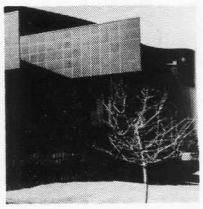


fig. 5



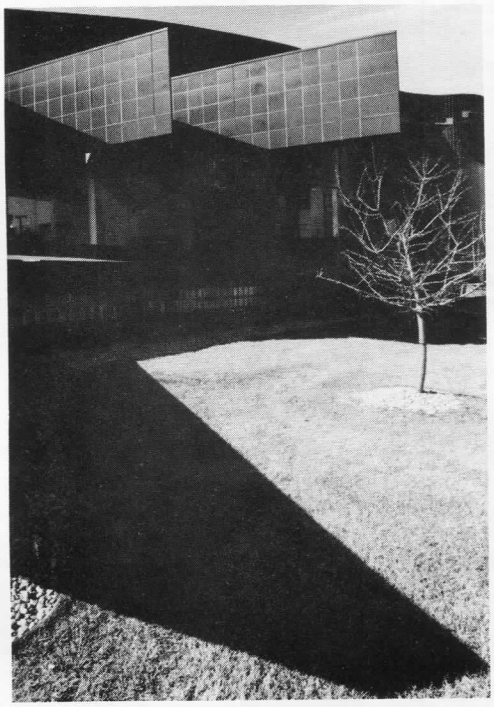


fig. c

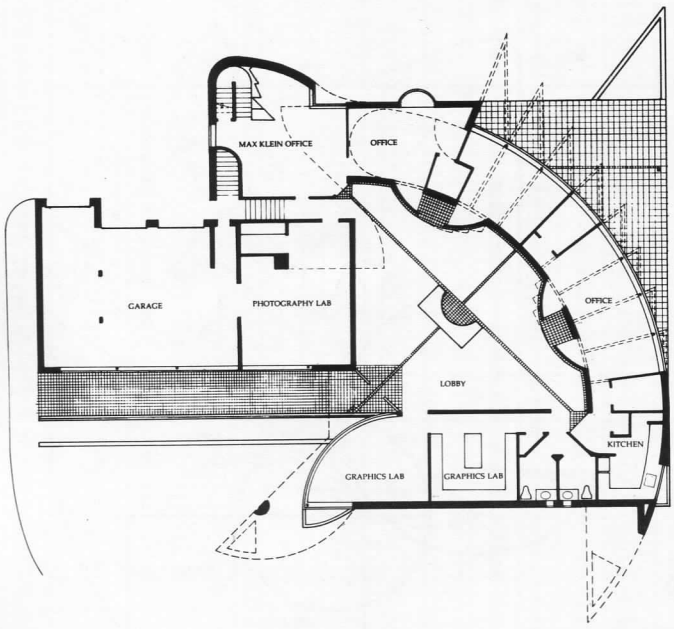
point of vertical circulation. This wall plane is a departure from the theme. It can be seen as a continuation and the conclusion of the thrust initiated in the fins, while visually anchoring the private office of Max Klein (fig. c).

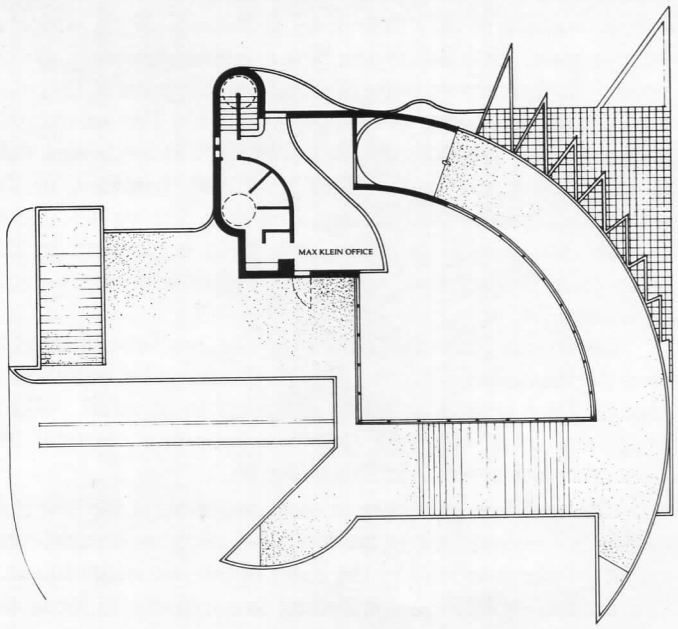
The entrance to the building is located at the rear of the site in an effort to complete the experience from confrontation to rapprochement. The ramp leading to the entrance is set into motion with a gradual rise and the plastic treatment of the rails. This movement is reinforced and contradicted by a wall running parallel to the ramp with level bands of glass block and red tile (fig. d). The bulk of the clerestory above the entrance, however, overpowers this effort and results in a stoppage of movement.

Entering the building, one discovers that the interior space is defined by the juxtaposition of planes, voids, and transparencies set in constant motion. The lobby is based on a symmetrical plan composed assymetrically in elevation; the plan is unique in that its progression from one room to the next creates a spatial 'continuation'. This unique sense of space is the result of Ferrero's concern for space as the basis for form. Spaces are thought of as an interior experience and the exterior as a reflection of the development from inside out. As Ferrero states,

> I would like to think, if I could, that I wouldn't need any structure at all. If you could construct a membrane that was thin enough, you could carve the space on the inside, and the outside would just cover it. That's what I think architecture should be.

This concept is evident when one discovers the relationship between the inside and the outside in the Max Klein Building. A section through the structure reveals the intentional





effort to carve the space. The structure and ceiling are kept parallel to each other, even though the plane may be parabolic, to express the internal space on the exterior of the structure (west elev.). The ceiling and the roof line in the conference room, for example, ascends to the main office and the radial beams remain parallel to the floor plane giving notice to this departure while maintaining an intimate scale (south elev.).

The significance of the interior/exterior correlation is alluded to in the architecture through the use of marks or ornament. Markings are used to indicate elements of the building that would otherwise be unnoticed: the inside from the outside, for example. Horizontal red bands of tile represent the floor lines, and vertical lines represent the partitions inside, although some are added without internal reference (fig. e). The selection of which floor line, partition, or column is represented is arbitrary, with aesthetic preference providing the basis for final solution. The diagonals of the intial plan are also 'marked' in the floor; their intersection locates the receptionist's desk.

In general, it is possible to relate all of the above concerns about architecture to an interest in perceptual effect. The form of the structure, for example, is the direct experience of place; it establishes a progression or movement through space, and challenges our perception of architecture. The use of rhythm and the control of light shape the environment, while the spatial continuation within the structure and the markings establish an unexpected and non-traditional definition of space. The tactile quality of the material is also employed in new and unexpected ways (from linearity, concavity, and transparency to hardness and elasticity). Walls and geometric forms are treated with materials that defy our experience; hard materials seem to become soft and elastic.

The ideas that are represented in the design of the Max Klein Building are many and complicated. Ferraro's work seems to evolve in a process which integrates mutually contradictory concepts into a comprehensive synthesis resulting in a structure that eludes identifiable language. Ferrero's opposition to architecture in a typological or historical sense is based on the fact that such architecture used carelessly does not relate to the conditions or the attitude of contemporary society. We live in a world of increased communication and accessibility to materials and information that makes eclecticism and therefore, Postmodernism, inappropriate. In opposition to the superficiality of this Postmodernism, Ferrero is concerned with the immediacy of experience. He attempts to respond to his vision of an architecture of our own times by employing certain compositional techniques to control the perceptual impact on the observer. And, perhaps, the legitimacy of architecture depends, as Ferrero implies, on its correspondence with the world that we live in.

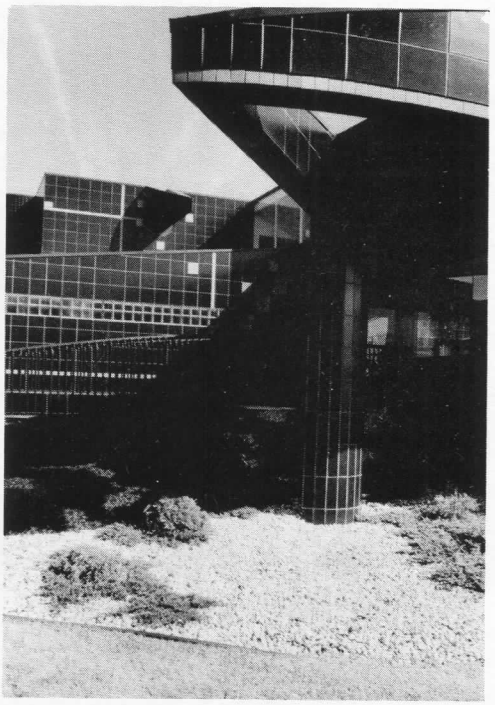


fig. d

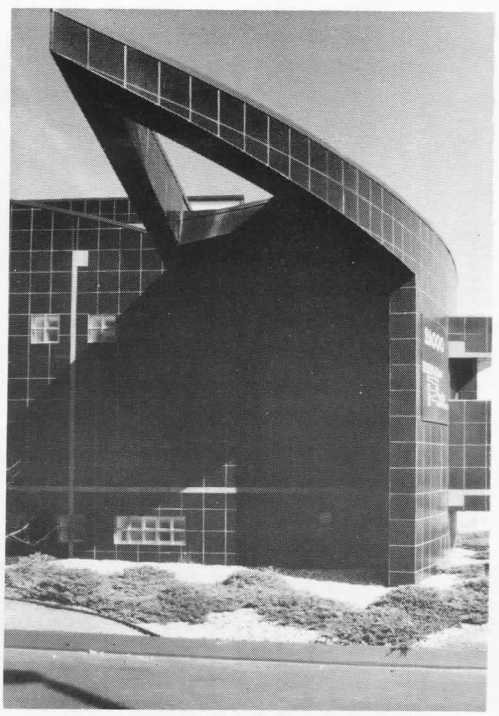


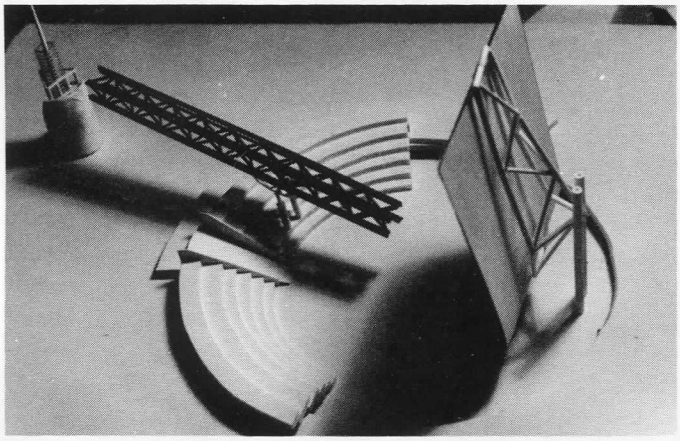
fig. e

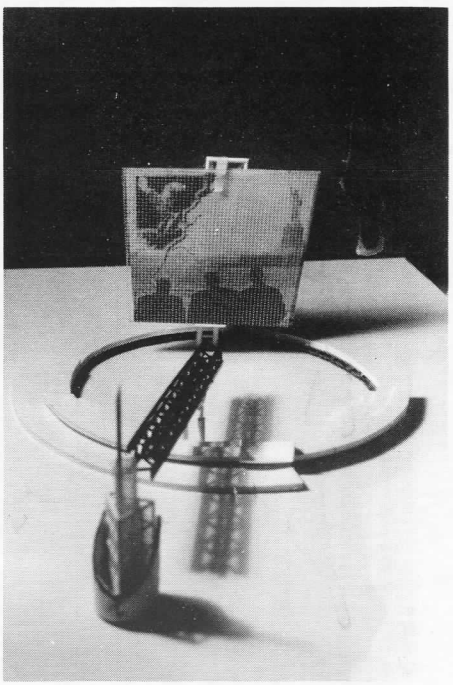
This competition/exhibition seeks to unite the two Diomede Islands of the Bering Strait. Simply stated, the only request is to unite two islands, two countries, two days - the sphere of nature, state and time.

In a less simple sense, the competition calls for proposals that mark the end of infinite territorial frontiers and the true acceptance of our human existence on a fragtile and finite globe."

DIOMEDE

Frank Panici





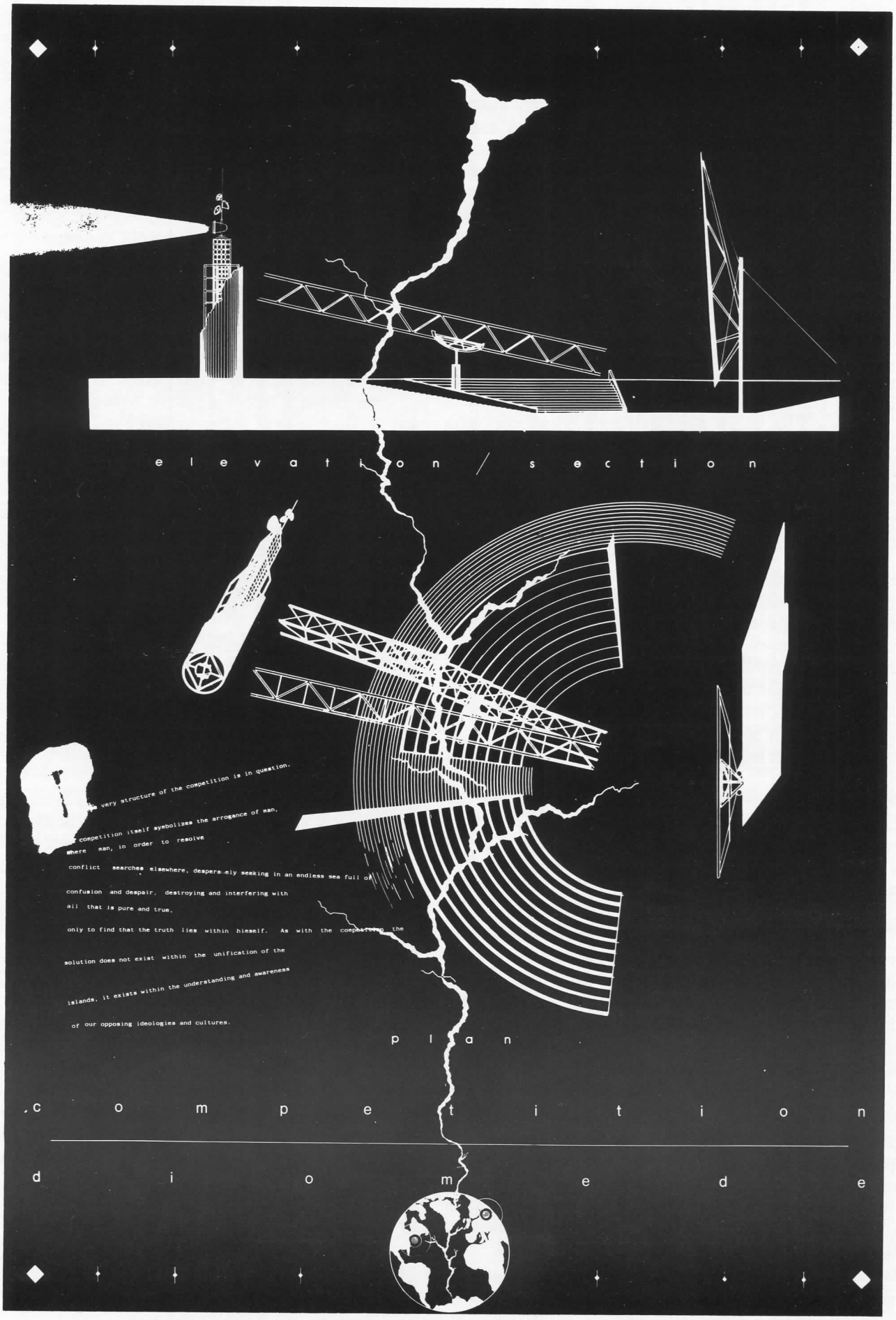
It is within human nature to question the very existence of man. As with architecture we question it's existence in order to confirm our various truths and beliefs. Therefore, it is only through the context of discourse and inquiry that the discovery of truth is achieved. As with the Competition Diomede we must question its premise in order to arrive at this truth.

The very structure of the competition is in question.The competition itself symbolizes the arrogance of man, where man, in order to resolve conflict searches elsewhere, desperately seeking in an endless sea of confusion and dispair, destroying and interfering with all that is pure and true, only to find that the truth lies within himself. As with the competition the solution does not exist within the unification of the islands, it exists within the understanding and awareness of our opposing ideologies and cultures. For it is only through the understanding of our cultures and barriers that divide us.

An awareness of the differences that divide our two worlds, our cultures, our existences, must be created. We must divert attention and energy away from the premise of the competition in order to truly unite our two countries. Therefore, it lies within the realm of architecture to provide a vehicle in which to embody the spirit of unity.

Architecture, unlike painting, sculpture or music, is a functional art, where the participation of the experiencer and the object is essential. Yet architecture transcends the realm of pure function. It acts as a tool with which to question, bring attention to and criticize man's ideologies, culture and existence in order to create a better society. Yet architecture is entering into a different realm of space and time. It is possible with the advent of new technologies to alter the perception of space and time. Telecommunication allows for instant interaction, where the importance of place is no longer important since "every place" is "one place". Therefore, we must create an atmosphere of information and cultural exchange that will increase the awareness between our two countries.

The Competition Diomede has raised questions concerning the very premise of uniting the Diomede islands. Is it an appropriat competition? Should so much attention be placed on two islands that obviously do not need the destructive touch of "foreign" hands or is it more reasonable to concentrate the energy of the competition towards the two countries itself, where the ultimate goal will be in the understading and appreciation of our great lands? How can we unite the islands when we cannot unite ourselves!


e l e v a t i o n / s e c t i o n
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p l a n
c o m p e t i t i o n
d i o m e d e

SHOUTING to be HEARD amidst the outcries of a MORBID WORLD

The Clamor of a Morbid World

Pietro Ferrari

Concept:

The Diomede Islands are united, have always been united and shall continue to be so in their presence and their absence. Their unity is not something that can be imposed and dictated at will by man. Their unity is within themselves; it is the world around them, the world which man has so arrogantly and ignorantly rendered into a serious state of decay, which is in need of unification. The islands themselves stand strong amidst a darkening world in which man no longer forms part of a meaningful totality, and has become a stranger to the world and himself. Man finds himself in a deeply felt crisis, lacking of fellowship, of care and, of meaningful expression. This global crisis is general, regardless of political system, and is one in which existence has become void of meaning. Man is losing his own identity, and along with it his much needed sense of community and participation.

The Diomede Islands stand as monuments to this world in which they exist and remind us of our finite quality for they represent time and space -a continuum.

The Diomede Islands have stood strong throughout the ages despite what man has managed to achieve with the world of which they are. All else is decaying around them, and it is through their strength, grandeur, and spirituality that they render the opaque somewhat less opaque and enable the reality to shine through.

We need a rediscovery of this world that maintains our existence. A rediscovery of the world as a totality of interacting, concrete qualities. The world has become one large object of man's consummate desire; a world of passivity and content. The Diomede Islands do not represent but rather PRESENT this fact to us. They serve as a temple, that makes all of the things of the earth "visible". A temple that reveals a world and simultaneously places that world back on earth. As temple they achieve this by simply "standing", "resting", "towering" and "radiating" a spiritual poetic language. Man's access to the reality in this world and in his fragile, finite existence is through listening to and responding to the language.

All within this universe is intrinsically united, it is only man's wretched ideologies which render him blind to this, and create a barrier between himself and his environment which renders opaque the significance of that essential relationship.

The Diomede Islands are united. Perhaps in the understanding of why this is so, man will finally realize what is not united. He must listen closely to the message of Diomede, shouting to be heard above the clashing sound of conflicting ideologies; shouting to be heard amidst the outcries of a morbid world.

Man can still save this world and himself, for it is a morbid world and not a moribound world.

In order to do this we must understand and learn from the significance of the Diomede Islands. They shall infinitely stand side by side, shoulder to shoulder. Their demise will come only at the hands of man if he continues so arrogantly and irresponsibly to destroy all that is nature in his environment and in turn bringing about the extinction of his own species.

The Diomede Islands are united, have always been united and will continue to be so in their presence and their absence.

Proposal:

The proporsal consists of a man-made monument which illustrates the morbid and decaying state of man's world, in sharp contrast to the instrinsically united Diomede Islands. The proposal calls for a number of this monument to be realized in prominent locations within the cultural capitals of the world's nations, rather than the political.

The Sick

The Seven Columns of the Seven Continents are fractured and crumbling as the harmony, strength and stability of its encircling sanctuary simultaneously is in a state of decay, as well as all paths leading to it. This structure is no longer able to illuminate itself and a new structure is built to bring light upon this state of existence.

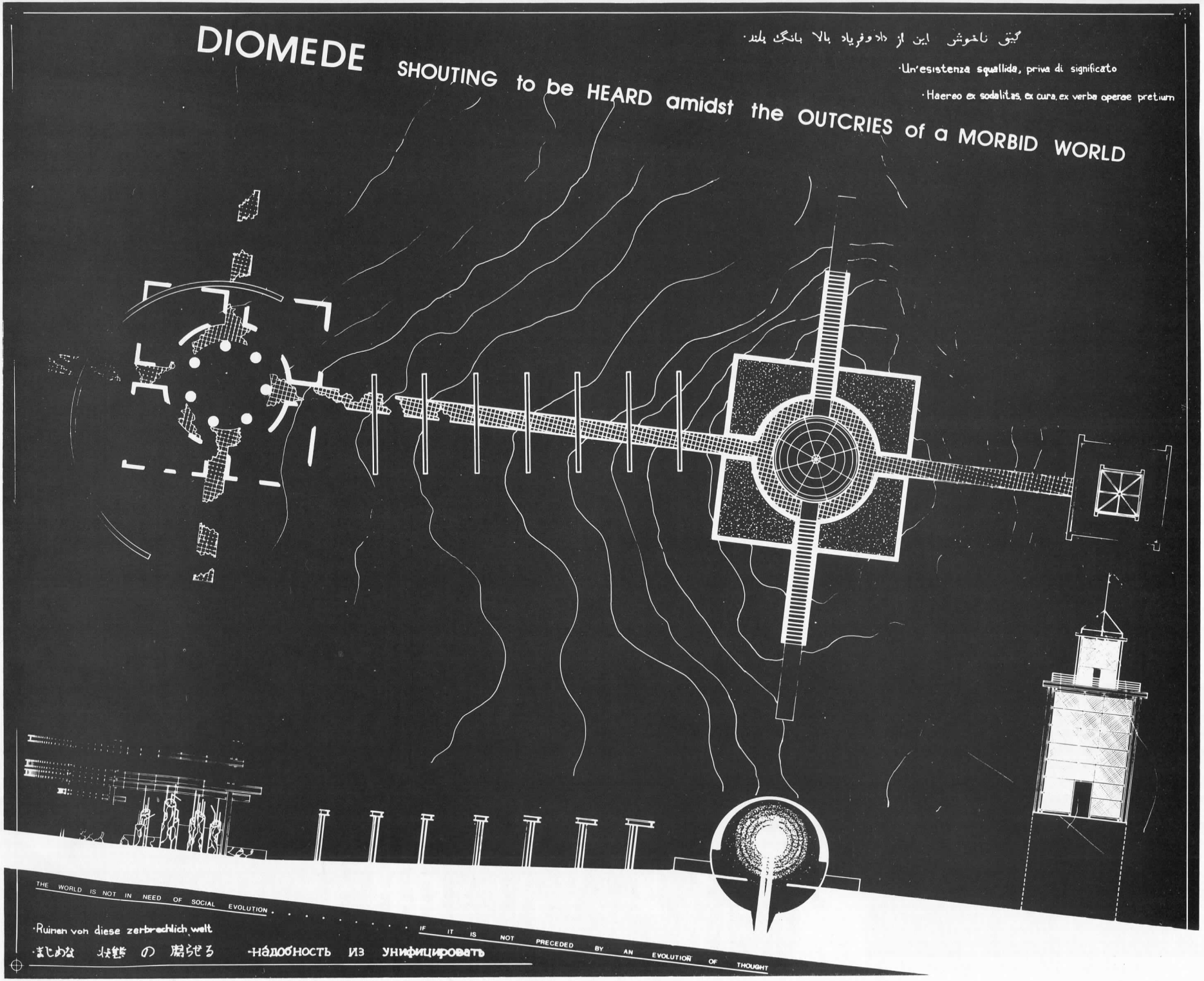
The Healthy

The path solidifies as it passes under the Seven Gateways in its approach to the Sanctuary. We find a healthy, intact and stable structure, in the midst of which a spherical envelope reflects the strength, grandeur and unity of that which it encloses; the Columns of Diomede. They are strong and powerful; part of the earth and at the same time reaching for the heavens in triumph.

The Observation

The Tower enables the Evolution of Thought to be completed. It is a cage structure consisting of four steel columns at each corner with chain-link stretched between each of them. Within this cage we find the rubble that has resulted from The Decay, and a stairway which rises at the centre of this Tower of Rubble. The stairway leads to an observation level which rests on the rubble beneath it. From this point, one can see the monument from an elevated viewpoint. Man stands on the decay he has created in order to finally realize and come to grips with the state of his world.

The world is not in need of social evolution if it is not preceded by an evolution of thought.


DIOMEDE
SHOUTING to be HEARD amidst the OUTCRIES of a MORBID WORLD
·گیتی ناخوش این از داد و فریاد بالا بانگ بلند
·Un'esistenza squallida, priva di significato
·Haereo ex sodalitas, ex cura, ex verba operae pretium
THE WORLD IS NOT IN NEED OF SOCIAL EVOLUTION
IF IT IS NOT PRECEDED BY AN EVOLUTION OF THOUGHT
·Ruinen von diese zerbrechlich welt
·まじめな 状態 の 腐らぜる
·НАДОБНОСТЬ ИЗ УНИФИЦИРОВАТЬ

Untitled

Christopher Mercier

"It is simply to ask questions about another relationship between what are called, problematically, sense and meaning."[1]

The dictionary is a reference book which contains, among other things, the meanings (interpretations) of words, and if one were trying to find what a word meant, what a thing was, it would be from here, the dictionary; a logical departure (arrival) would begin. So being interested in something, wanting to know about it, the question one formulates is, what is it or how is it defined? The question then for this paper (word arrangement) becomes, because of my (your) interest, what is architecture?

Architecture:

1: The art or science of planning and building structures
2: Method or style of building [2]

The first definition, being ranked of higher or more valid importance over the second definition (secondary), is by its very structure confusing. First of all being in the dictionary, so as it being a definition, and a definition being a form of clarity, it should clarify. Although the first part of the statement "The art or science" [3] is itself unclear. The word "or" is "used as a function word to indicates an alternative" [4] either or. So it is, or better yet, is it the art or the science?

Art:

1: Skill acquired by experience or study: KNACK
2: Systematic use of knowledge or skill in making or doing things
3: The use of skill and imagination in the production of things of beauty: also: works produced.[5]

If the question were asked of the meaning of art or what is art?, to the average (exceptional) person the answer most often given would probably be in the form of an art object. That is to say art might be explained by reference to a sculpture or famous painting (art work). Yet notice in the three definitions of art provided, the subject (art) is never referred (deferred) to as an object until the third definition; futhermore, it is done in such a way as to add that defintion, as secondary to it, of a lesser importance. So, in the three statements (definitions) ranked in such an order, it seems that the least of the least important is how most people would probably under-stand art. This is because of understanding, standing under which only allows parts to be seen and never the whole.

It is often, however, that from the whole, or within the hole, the origin or original can be unburied, uncovered, unconcealed as is Heidegger's technique when he reveals the Greek word "techne".[6] He defines this word as "neither craft nor art, and not at all the technical in our present day sense; it never means a kind of practical performance," [7] and he goes on to say "techne never signifies the action of making."[8] In another essay, Heidegger, again using the term techne, defines it as "the name not only for the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts."[9] It is from this word techne ("art first meant anything made by man as opposed to nature; then, the skill in its making")[10] which technikos and then our word technical, can be derived. This word technical, as opposed to simple (natural), is now part of, or within the field of science (man made).

Science:

1: A branch of study concerned with observation and classification of facts and especially with the establishment of verifiable general laws
2: Accumulated, systematized knowledge, especially when it relates to the physical world.[11]

The first statement (definition) to the meaning of science seems to be lacking completion or fullness. This is because of the second word within that definition, branch, which tells of its incompleteness, selectivity or specialization, for a branch is only a part of something much larger, a tree (physical world) for instance. A branch, being only part of something, and having its own identity, goes off on its own or in its own direction, yet for it to survive, it must stay connected to its stem, trunk. This branch of study belongs to, grows from the stem or the trunk of the tree of knowledge? ("sciens, scient of L. scire, scit-, to know").[12] So it is from this tree that science is a branch and its concerns are to observe (from above?) and classify to establish ("to make firm or stable")[13] laws. This establishing of laws in science (means to an end) is quite different ("diffe'rant, differ'rance")[14] from the producing or making found in the definitions of art ("techne").[15]

So architecture is "the art or science of planning and building."[16] The word "and" is "used to indicate a connection or addition of items within the same class or type, or to join words of the same grammatical rank or function." [17] At first glance the use of the word "and" seems to be appropriate but, if planning and building are not within the same class, type, rank or function, then this definition is also of an unclear nature (science).

planning:

1: To form a plan of: DESIGN
2: To devise the accomplishment of
3: Intend [18]

"To devise the accomplishment of"[19] is to devise a plan and to devise a good plan (section, elevation, etc...), one must know what is to be achieved (goals). So in the process of planning, or planning in itself, (as opposed to outside of), or in setting up a plan, (planning a plan), a process of "observation and classification of facts is used to establish laws" [20] which guide decisions to achieve the desired goals. In many ways planning does not seem to be much different than science, and science being a branch of knowledge (tree), it is possible that planning is a branch (twig) of science, and from this analogy a tree (lumber) is grown from which building will proceed.

building:

1: To form or have formed by ordering and uniting materials. Also: (to bring into being or develop)
2: Establish, found
3: Increase; enlarge, also: enhance
4: The art or business of constructing buildings

"To bring into being or develop"[22] is a form of letting something be seen, to let it come forth;. this letting "come forth into presencing [An-Wesen] is a setting free to that place and so start it on its way, namely, into its complete arrival"[23] (being). This process or presencing of building, namely construction ("the art, process or manner of building")[24] is a way, path (logos) to being. This path needs to be followed to that completion and an appropriate method or process adapted to allow for this. The direction this path takes depends solely on its type of construction or possibly how it is planned, adapted and should be combined (confused) with skill and imagination along the way. Furthermore, it is from such a path, built in such a way, using such and such types of construction that the business of constructing buildings, as the occupation of a builder, can be determined. He, that is the builder, or is it the "overseer of construction"[25] (architect), uses his, or is it her, knowledge of the construction process, within the realm of the art, that is building. Finally this brings us to the last word (definition), the word upholding the sentence in which it "is".

structure:

1: The manner of building: construction
2: Something built (as a house or dam)\Also: something made up of independent parts in a definite pattern or organization
3: Arrangement or relationship of elements in a substance, body or system.[26]

It is here at the very end, near the closure of this paper, that we get to the heart, key. The first real glimpse of something that could be architecture emerges. No longer are we speaking ("writing, pharmakon")[27] of the making or the classification or the accomplishment or the uniting of, for it is at our present point that it is "of." It is at this point along the path of the definition, that the "is" of the question appears to be structures. The defintion clearly states (though it is only spoken) that architecture "is" "the art or science of planning and building structures,"[28] and if we allow the statement through (as we have), all of the words are used to describe the final word structures. So it seems that this is the place, site, "locus," [29] the goal of our journey until we place the first real step, as in foot, upon this sinking soil (soul). Then it is obvious that no structure can stand here without providing it some sort of good "footing", and so here at the "x" on the treasure map (site plan) we must dig. As the golden shovel cuts the earth's crust (ground breaking) in search for the ground of architecture, we find those first piles of dirt, heaped to the side, as the celebration begins, that this word structure (structurua, from structus or struere - to heap up, build)[30] is only itself another appendage. So taking the shovel, we dig deeper and deeper still hoping to uncover, unearth, to find the real (unreal) key, or is it lock. The digging goes on as we reach lower (higher) and soon this digging (hole) encases us, this digging is becoming building and then it is obvious. It is, the "is" of architecture. This unknowable thing (?), "even if we keep within an understanding of this 'is,' still we are unable to fix conceptually what it signifies."[31] It is the part of the question that this lengthy definition assumes, it is this "unpresentable"[32] which like always , is forgotten, removed, erased and replaced by the unwanted ("architecture"). A word not even written (spoken) within the definition, and with this the building, the making, the production of architecture is, without seeing that possibly "architecture" "is"n't.

"That is, about the unity of sense and the word in the "is:" which in principle could promise the recasting of all language only by having already, teleogically promised all sense to meaning."[33]

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18. Woolf, Dictionary, p. 530.
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20. Woolf, Dictionary, p. 620.
21. Woolf, Dictionary, p. 103.
22. Ibid.
23. Heidegger, The Question, p. 9.
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25. Woolf, Dictionary, p. 52.
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REFLECTIONS ON FACADES

by Rochelle Martin

Once a back-lot for film making at Twentieth-Century Fox, it is now a popular shopping mall on the west side of Los Angeles called Century City. Old western streets, alpine villages and sound stages have given way to shops, services, restaurants and movie theaters. Echoing the location's past life of make believe, plastic palm trees and manufactured aromas as well as a variety of seductive facades entice customers to consume. In this competitive circus of mall architecture, fact and fantasy merge as one.

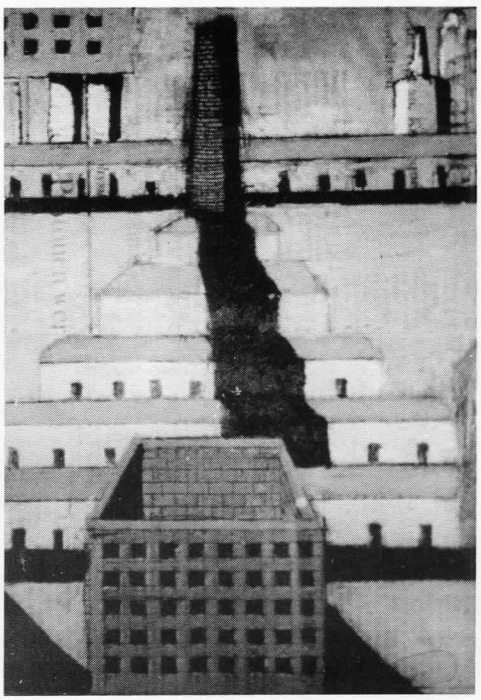
What are the impulses that bring fact and fantasy together? One source is ambiguity, the other is appropriation. For me, the meanings of both these terms stem from the work of Marcel Duchamp, in which ambiguity results from the tension between illusion and reality, and between image and context. Where ambiguity exists, multiple meanings emerge. Appropriation occurs when borrowed or found objects and unexpected contexts are juxtaposed in new, formerly unthinkable, unperceivable forms. Duchamp takes a urinal, turns it upside down, calls it a fountain, and alters our perception; the object is charged with new meaning.

My position is that ambiguity and appropriation are present in current architecture as both conscious and unconscious elements. As a conscious statement intended to support and enhance the established power structure, they mask the reality of the structure. As an unconscious design expression, the playful use of eclecticism creates a benign world of fantasy and illusion. In contrast, ambiguity and appropriation can be useful critical tools in the form of irony, parody, or a new way of looking at worn out themes. Robert Venturi has written that "a valid architecture evokes many levels of meaning and combinations of focus: its space and its elements become readable and workable in several ways at once." [1]

I view the facade as the locus of this intentionality. In The Elements of Architecture, Rob Krier describes the facade in terms of its public role and its public expression. He writes,

> The root of the word 'facade' stems from the Latin 'facies,' which is synonymous with the words 'face' and 'appearance.' Therefore, if we talk about the 'face' of a building, the facade, we mean above all the front facing the street.[2]

The facade becomes the privileged point of transition between exterior space and interior space. Beginning and end, past and future are suggested by a double exchange which distinguishes and opposes inside and outside as well as creates a place where these worlds communicate. "Since the inside is different from the outside, the wall -- the point of change -- becomes an architectural event."[3] Openings on the facade, such as windows and doors, serve to express both interior and exterior, visible and invisible. They tempt the imagination with shadows, reflections and transparencies, hinting at the unseen possibilities and unknown realms of experience that take place



beyond our immediate perception.

By allowing contradictory situations to exist simultaneously, the facade functions on many levels. Expressed as a threshold, the facade is at once a limit and a passage. As a curtain, the facade acts as a screen, to mask, to conceal, while at the same time it hopes to tempt, to attract. As a partition, the facade acts to seperate, to divide while simultaneously forming a connection, an arrangement, a set that links the spatial order and the social order. Appropriating imagery and symbolic content from other sources, the facade forms a nexus of associations that is visible and articulable.

All of this finds potent expression in the contemporary shopping mall. Together the shops form a collage that subverts experience through borrowed contexts, and the symbolic imagery of nostalgia and wealth. By reproducing a setting that simulates shops in London's Mayfair or the Right Bank of Paris, the facades imply that shoppers can enjoy a comparable experience without leaving their own neighborhood. It is symbolism and imagery used to make us comfortable in order to take advantage of us. This is seduction. It is aimed at undermining reflection on the quality and content of our experience. In a simulated environment, "truth, reference and objective causes have ceased to exist."[4] Thus, the architectural sign becomes a commodity to be consumed rather than a meaning to be experienced.

In a different way, the faceless facade of the glass-box of modern architecture expresses unintentional ambiguity. This ambiguity is achieved by the tension between our assumptions about the nature of a wall which signifies strength, support, and thickness, and the perception of the curtain wall which creates transparency and the uninterrupted flow of space. At other moments in time, this transparency is transformed into a reflective quality. By blending with its context to the point of extinction, where sky and wall appear continuous, the glass curtain wall conflicts with our expectations of a wall as a solid structure. The curtain wall is literally a mirror reducing the world to an object while annihilating its own objectivity.

Traditionally, churches, public buildings, and other architectural monuments were the most important buildings in the urban environment. Today because of its size and monumental versus vernacular scale, the curtain-wall-clad glass box challenges these expectations. Through the use of glossy materials, repetitive elements, and a vocabulary of abstract forms, the glass box has appropriated cultural connotations of high-technology and progressiveness as a way of enhancing its image and power. Although still dependent on hand construction and human involvement, the high-rise building assumes an aura of pristine, machine-like perfection divorced from everyday life and a concern for human scale. The conscious purpose of this type of construction, in addition to its symbolic message, is to profit through functional and economic efficiency. Ironically, the ephemeral quality of the structure as it is perceived is constantly at odds with the particularized kind of monumental icon desired by a corporation. What we are talking about is a non-monument, a monument that depends entirely on a perceived notion of importance, dominance and power.

A more critical approach to ambiguity appears in the work of Aldo Rossi. At the San Cataldo Cemetery in Modena, which Rossi designed, the use of irony yeilds several different meanings. It is, at once, a house, a monument, and a cemetery. Rossi has stated that "the emergence of relations among things, more than the things themselves, always gives rise to new meanings."[5] Composed of geometric forms such as a cube, a truncated cone and rectangular ribs, the composition is dominated by a roofless, hollow building whose facade displays

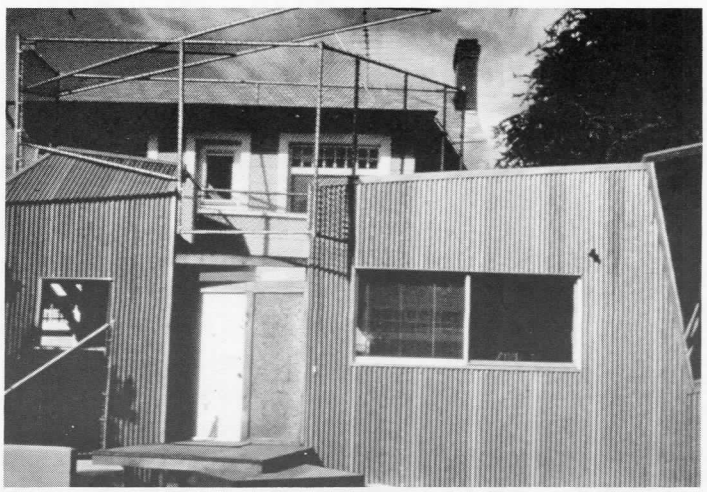


Photo courtesy of Frank O. Gehry & Assoc.

empty openings instead of windows and doors. The building functions symbolically on one layer as a reminder of death, absence, and interrupted situations. On another layer it evokes the presence of modern emptiness. At Modena, the use of history, encompassed as it is in time, memory, and place, is quite different than the nostalgic application of pastiche as practiced in much of current architecture. Through this blend of formal structures and poetic images, Rossi creates a potential for critical awareness.

The architectural work of Frank Gehry provides an amusing but pointed critique of the middle class suburb where campers and boats are often parked in driveways, fences seperate but do not provide privacy, and a variety of materials and textures are randomly juxtaposed in the environment. By creating an unexpected confrontation between material and building type, Gehry calls into question traditional notions of permanence and consumption. The most familiar example of this technique is his use of materials usually associated with mundane applications; in unfamiliar usages, materials such as chain-link fencing, plywood siding, and corrugated metals become social commentary. Gehry said,

> I became interested in chain-link fencing not because I like it, but because I don't. The culture seems to produce it and absorb it in a mindless way, and when we proposed to use it in a way that was decorative or sculptural, people became very upset. 6

As conscious critical tools, ambiguity and appropriation provide a commentary on society rather than merely reflecting its values. In fact, these may be two of the major means by which meaning in architecture changes. These approaches introduce nuances where anything is possible, and all possibilities exist simultaneously. Thus, architecture is never complete; it is always changing.

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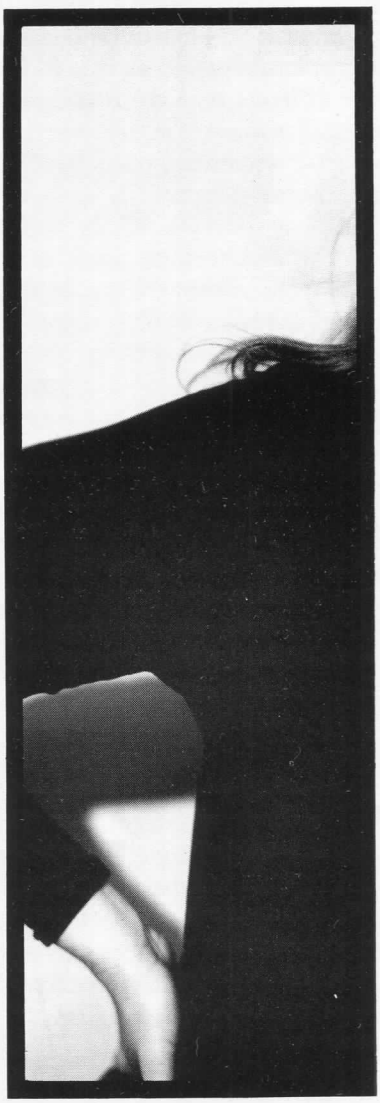
by Andrea Eis

I
CAN

I
WILL

I
MUST



I HAVE MADE MY CHOICE

YOU
CAN NOT

YOU
WILL NOT

YOU
MUST NOT

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE

HISTORY: A DEFENSE

by Dane Johnson

Many students of architecture are baffled when they are asked to study architectural history. Studying design makes sense, studying structure makes sense - therein lies the essence of architecture. Even the protracted study of literature and world history draws little argument, chiefly because we are forced to do it when we are too young to argue. But when asked to study the history of architecture, the student draws a mental line, far too frequently responding with a scornful "Why?"

Well even if architectural history lacks the moral complexities of God and Country and the lust for power that world history represents; even if those hands itching to diagram bubbles and punch calculator buttons are shackled; there are certainly issues to be explored within it that are valid, compelling and necessary for the complete architect. Exploring all of these would result in a magum opus, something beyond the scope of this forum. Instead, the focus here will be on an issue of significance within architecture and of all culture: Style. Style is one of the most discussed concepts in architectural education. Architecture school is when you begin to develop a personal style; new works are discussed as being reminiscent of someone else's style; people explain architecture in terms of its style. Unfortunately, whether in the classroom or the press, people work too hard to classify architecture, and not hard enough to understand what makes it good or bad. Style is not the issue; quality is the issue, and mediocrity is the enemy.

Style is a misunderstood concept, its relative significance shifting in relation to issues like meaning and precedent. Regrettably, we find ourselves immersed in a period in which style has to a great extent supplanted substance. Some think this phenomenon began with disco music; some can pinpoint the date - January 21, 1981 - the beginning of the Reagan era; and still others will make a case that the oh, so substantial rise of neo-intellect in architecture, represented by de-construction, has brought us back to consciousness. Whatever one's personal beliefs, it is probably fair to say that in response to the thought-ridden 60s and the dreary 70s, we decided to stop thinking and match colors instead.

This is, however, nothing new. We stopped thinking in the 1880s, the 1920s and the 1950s also. We followed war with growth, and poverty with spending; and architecture tagged along. Exuberant Victorian buildings replaced the somber Federalist facades of post civil-war America. Longer, lower, wider modernism replaced the thinking man's modernism of the early 1950s. In the 1980s, we evolved a user-friendly architecture to replace all modernism. All of these represent societal corrections, re-adjustments, and each of these represents a point when the architecture of the moment moved from the avant-garde to the mainstream.

Architecture is always a mirror of its culture, as are music, literature and painting; and, simply put, the best in architecture represents the best of the culture. But being can be an onerous thing, especially for Art, where mass acceptance is rarely the rule. Art has to explain itself; Art costs too much; Art does not "go" with anything around it. So art changes, and quickly makes more sense, costs less, and fits in better. More people relate to Art now - Art therefore has come to represent the common denominator, the cultural average. Art has sacrificed some of its substance and has become a style.

What this leads to is the idea that any movement in architecture can go through this transformation. It is non-specific with regard to form or content. As evidence of this, compare the modern and post-modern movements; not with regards to the specifics of their aesthetics, but as historical cycles. Important modern buildings began to appear in this country in the 1930s, and the movement blossomed in the 1940s. Buildings designed for the Illinois Institute of Technology by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in the late 1930s had a powerful impact on our notion of a campus. The Lake Shore Apartments in Chicago, also by Mies, and the Crow Island School by Eliel and Eero Saarinen helped change the face of housing and education in this country. These, along with Lever House of 1952, were the revolutionary buildings of American modernism. With the General Motors Technical Center by Eero Saarinen and the Seagram Building by Mies van der Rohe with Phillip Johnson, intellectualism and populism were combined into glittering works which spoke volumes about America in the 1950s.

In the 1960s, however, two things happened that pulled modernism into the mainstream of popular style, and in a sense destroyed it. The first of these phenomena is seen in the work of Phillip Johnson, who worked to combine the modernist integration of structure, form and ornament with a sinuous, more richly textured sensibility. The apex of this is Johnson's work in the Shelden Art Gallery at Lincoln, Nebraska in 1963, wherein he creates an arcaded facade in which the arches become the shapers of space, opening rooms up and allowing their crisply defined curves to fashion a new kind of modern language.

Johnson made modernism warmer, more involving, but he understood the lessons of restraint, precision and proportion that Mies taught. Other architects did not learn as well, and greedily borrowed the texture and richness that Johnson re-introduced, forgetting the other, more valuable lessons. Edward Durrell Stone, who had created some of the best early modern buildings in this country, outdid Johnson when he applied graceful curves and dense texture to his Huntington Hartford Gallery in New York in 1964. Unfortunately, these features highlighted an otherwise featureless, scaleless blob of marble, rendered utterly without finesse. Stone had forgotten the principles that had led him to a point where he was able to create a building this abstract. He had substitute effect for poise, quantity for quality, and aggression for reserve. In one fell swoop, he had drained some of the dignity from modern architecture by reshaping it to be more appealing to a broader audience.

An architect named Morris Lapidus took this last notion to an extreme in his design for a series of hotels in the 1950s and 1960s. Lapidus did much to shape the look of Miami Beach, and in turn to shape the image of the high life in America. He used the spare image of modern design as a frame, to call even greater attention to the swooping curves and gilded lilies, which the public ate with a spoon. The Lapidus look can be seen locally in buildings like the Fisher Theatre, Ford Auditorium and the Northland Theatre - entertainment palaces aimed at the same audience as the Lapidus hotel - the fashionable, up-to-the-minute, but curiously uneducated. The soul of modernism, its perfection and openness, were given over to a breezy notion about fashion and style.

The second phenomenon which contributed strongly to the downfall of modernism can be understood with a quick drive along Northwestern Highway starting at Eight Mile Road. As the trip begins, one's view is highlighted by Northland Shopping Center of 1954, by Victor Gruen, and the Reynolds Metals Building of 1959 by Minoru Yamasaki. Both are buildings which feature a profoundly modern sensibility and exceptional attention to detail. Further along the route is the Michigan Bell Northwest Office Center, a well-rendered campus which demonstrates the influence of the Mies van der Rohe IIT campus. Some of the best local modern architecture is compressed into this tiny corner of Southfield.

Unfortunately, these striking buildings are surrounded by the rest of Southfield;

In reality, in the early and mid-1980s, affection for the past was not a factor in architecture alone. Ronald Reagan struck a chord in the American psyche by asking us to remember, oddly enough, the honey-glazed days of the Depression. New versions of popular songs from the past dominated the radio, and people began dressing in poodle skirts and chinos, and later mod paper minis and nehru jackets. It was a period which was in a great sense obsessed with the past - not specific moments from the past, but the past as a concept; as something better than the present. So, once again, architecture was reflecting the culture in very specific ways.

One factor that greatly enhanced the evolution of post-modernism as a significant cultural force was the impact of mass-media. By the late 1980s in America, mass-media had developed a power unlike anything that had existed during the rise of modernism; and the glaring spotlight of fashion managed to include architecture in its path. Architecture, specifically post-modern architecture, was hip, marketable; architects were celebrities in ways they had not been since Stanford White was shot. When people said they had a teapot by Michael Graves or dinnerware by Richard Meier, people actually knew who these men were. The result of this publicity and marketing was that the notion of post-modernism swept the country fully and very quickly.

Quickly enough, in fact, that by 1984 post-modernism was already the most popular style for strip shopping centers; little buildings with brick veneers and limestone veneer keystones, or better yet, dryvit shaped to resemble classical arches and pediments. Throughout metropolitan Detroit, those nasty little modernist buildings got new owners and new depreciation schedules and suddenly were covered in new post-modern veneers with no more integrity or sense of permanence than their previous curtain walls. Odds are good that in fifteen years we will be treated to the spectacle of leaky, creaky palazzos falling over to reveal those old glass boxes.

Post-modernism could not solve the problem of the opportunist who uses architecture as something to increase the rent. In this, it reveals itself to be as fleeting as modernism, and equally flawed as a universal solution. If only good post-modern buildings were built, we would be blessed with a diverse and appealing landscape of color and texture. But post-modernism might never have happened if only good modernist buildings had been built. The content of a movement is at some level less significant than the quality with which that content is manifested. The demise of post-modernism has been much quicker than that of modernism not because it is intrinsically worse, but because the glut of media exposure it underwent brought it to the level of the cultural average much more quickly than had been the case with its predecessor. This desiccation by the media, plus the fact that in the 1980s the spirit of opportunism has been much more aggressive than in the past, renders the urgency of development much greater. Similarly, the need for quick return is greater, and the realization that mediocrity pays is even more respected. Never has there been a greater need to learn from the past the ways in which architecture reflects culture if architecture is to be saved from continuing its decline into the form of a marketing tool.

A significant factor in understanding architecture is understanding it as a social phenomenon. Buildings are not mere objects, but an extension of the life force of a culture, and as such must constantly be re-interpreted. It is unlikely that we will ever evolve a particular style that tells us, "That's it, we finally got it right." Style is, in a sense, a trap, because any attempt to be a slave to it can divert us from the real goal, which is the creation of good buildings that serve the needs of people. This is not intended to be a reductive point of view, because the needs of people include learning and spiritual enrichment. Only those mediocre practioners mentioned earlier define the needs of people as being simply shelter and safety. These practioners have evolved a sense of the world as a place in which people are purely functional entities that do not appreciate challenges or uplift. They use style to solve a problem in a marketable manner.

The issue of style versus quality plays a significant role in the classrooms of architecture schools across the country, due to the unique combination of ego, sociology and art. Despite their assumed erudition, architects are as susceptible as anyone to the bruising battle of youth vs. wisdom. In architecture, as in many other academic endeavors, faculty and students bring to their relationship certain polarities. But unlike many other disciplines these polarities are expressed in terms of style, and the fire is fueled.

Although architectural education in America dates to the 1860s, it was dominated by the Ecole de Beaux-Arts in Paris well into the twentieth century. The first two generations of professional architects in this country were essentially products of the Beaux-Arts, and therefore, so too were the first generations of architectural educators. In the late 1940s, however, the recent arrival of Euorpean masters like Mies and Walter Gropius on American campuses began to stir up trouble. A new generation of architects, excited by the modernist architecture they saw emanating from Europe, was butting heads in schools with its Beaux-Arts instructors. Two generations of architects with education as their goal, and style was the bone of contention between them.

The younger generation, of course, won. The windows were opened, curricula redesigned and a new freedom swept architecture schools in America. The influence of the Bauhuas was now dominant and modernism was the style that architectural education was cloaked in. By the 1970s, Bauhaus-inspired education was as entrenched in the system as the Beaux-Arts had been. So when post-modernism began its emergence, the tables were turned, and the Bauhauslers were suddenly the old guard on the defensive; and again, style was the issue.

Style has been a leading motivator in architecture in this century. The debate has raged too long about why one group of aesthetic principles is superior to another; and not long enough about what our goals are in shaping architectural principles. The advantage in pursuing these questions from an historical point of view lies in the presumed objectivity that time gives us. We can truly learn from the past because there is unquestionable evidence that the past repeats itself. In our lifetime there will be lessons learned painfully because we ignored the legacy of knowledge left by those who came before. Avoid the possibility of a third stylistic life for those little modernist buildings: Look around you, think about what you see and how it got there, and not just how it looks.

Detroit's Tall Buildings

by Robert M. Arens, A.I.A.

"The towers of Zenith aspired above the morning mist; austere towers of steel and cement and limestone, sturdy as cliffs and delicate as rods. They were neither citadels or churches, but frankly and beautifully office buildings." [2]

Sinclair Lewis
Babbit, 1922.

Figure 1
Fisher Building, Albert Kahn (1928).

Figure 2
First Federal Building, Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1965).

"The rushing streams of commerce have worn many a deep and rugged chasm.... Each is closed in by a long frontage of towering cliffs, and those soaring walls of brick and limestone and granite rise higher and higher... as the work of their erosion goes onward. The leading avenues of activity promise soon to become little more than obscure trails half-lost between the bases of perpendicular precipices."[1]

Henry B. Fuller
The Cliff Dwellers, 1893.

1883 was the first to make use of an independent steel skeleton for all of its ten stories.

Jenney's accomplishment touched off the Functional Phase of tall building construction, characterized by a straight forward response to engineering concerns, and this phase culminated in the work of Louis Sullivan. By using poetic liscense in the interpretation of his own dictum that "form ever follows function," Sullivan managed to push functionalism to its artistic edge. This small phrase, when taken out of context, is one of the most over-simplified and misunderstood locutions in architecture, rivalled only by Loos' "ornament is crime," and Mies' "less is more." The dangerous one-dimensionality of Sullivan's quote becomes evident when considering a passage from the same essay:

> It demands of us, what is the chief characteristic of the tall office building? And at once we answer, it is lofty. This loftiness is to the artist-nature its thrilling aspect. It must be tall, every inch of it tall. The force and power of altitude must be in it. The glory and pride of exultation must be in it. It must be every inch a proud and soaring thing, rising in proud exultation that from bottom to top it is a unit without a dissenting line.... [4]

Unfortunately, the early skyscrapers of Detroit, the first being built in 1890, did not subscribe to Jenney's pragmatism nor Sullivan's lyricism and will therefore be discussed as part of the second, or Eclectic Phase of skyscraper design. The spirit of the Functional Phase, or Chicago School as it has come to be known, may be witnessed in many of the four-to-six story commercial structures which line Woodward Avenue between Jefferson Avenue and Grand Circus Park. These structures exhibit a clear delineation of structure and an attempt to maximize fenestration, although their historical value has been hopelessly deminished by the removal of the cornices and the addition of anachronistic storefronts. One of the finest remaining examples of the influence of the Chicago School is the Rayl Building (now Meyer Jewelry, figure 3). Completed by Baxter, O'Dell and Halpin in 1914, its cladding of finely patterned terra cotta tiles recalls the aesthetic program pursued by Sullivan twenty years earlier.

Figure 5
Dime Building, D. H. Burnham (1910).

The Eclectic Phase

The Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, signalled not only the beginning of the city beautiful movement, but also clearly marked the end of the Functional Phase of skyscraper design. Architects, awash in the Beaux Arts tradition exhibited at the Exposition, abandoned the struggle to reconcile form and technology for the stylistic concerns of architectural composition. The Eclectic Phase would continue until the beginning of the Great Depression and the Empire State Building would serve as its swan song. This phase may be characterized by designers drawing from mainly academic or historical sources and using the classical column with its base, shaft and capital as its prototype for tall building organization.

Figure 6
Michigan Central R.R. Station,
Warren and Wetmore (1913).

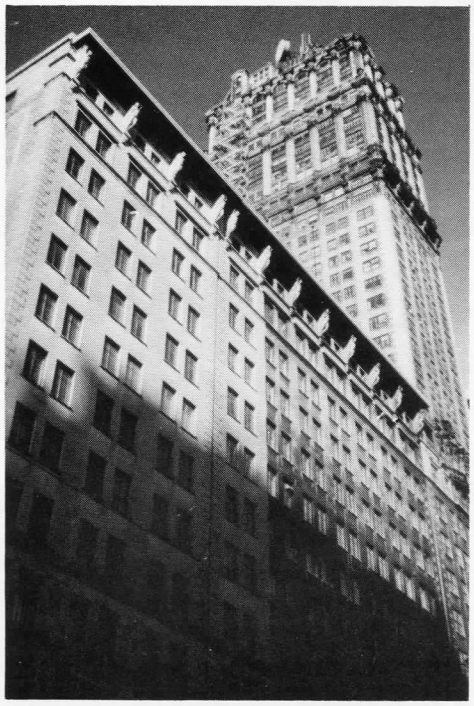


Figure 7
Book Building and Tower,
Louis Kamper (1917, 1926).

Figure 8
Book Tower (1926),
Industrial Arts Building (1924), Louis Kamper.

It should be noted that there were architectural investigations of more original idioms being conducted during this time. Certainly modernism was in full swing in Europe in 1922 when the very influencial Chicago Tribune Tower Competition was held. But the strikingly modern proposals of Gropius, Taut and Duiker were overwhelmed by the Gothic, Renaissance and Romantic-inspired schemes, and this retarditaire tendency would soon appear in tall buildings across the country, Detroit included.

The first skyscraper in Detroit was the ten-story Hammond Building of 1890 by the architect Harry Edbrooke. Athough it was not a metal-skeleton structure, it incorporated iron columns and girders above the first floor which were entirely fireproofed. Of it, W. Hawkins Ferry writes:

> To be sure, the old canons of proportion were observed in the division of the wall surfaces into base, shaft and cap, but for all intents and purposes the piers, spandrels, and windows formed a uniform grille of brick and glass. A degree of Romanesque flavor was retained in the solid rock-faced brownstone piers of the ground floor and the carved capitals at the eigth floor level...[5]

Two buildings of 1895 did incorporate a metal skeleton which supported both interior and exterior walls. They were the Union Trust Building by Donaldson and Meier and the Chamber of Commerce Building by Spier and Rohns. The latter, at twelve stories, was Detroit's tallest until topped in 1896 by the Majestic Building by Chicago's Daniel Burnham which rose fourteen floors above street level. The last remaining of these is the Chamber of Commerce Building (figure 4), which stands at the corner of Griswold and State streets. Once festooned with a Renaissance character, it now stands stripped of its cornice and ornament, giving it a misleading Romanesque appearance.

The teens and twenties were truly great decades of tall building construction in Detroit due to the ascendency of commerce surrounding the automobile industry. Detroit often turned to Daniel Burnham for many of its tall buildings, he having the largest architectural firm at the time as well as the reputation for being the kingpin of the Columbian Exposition. After the Majestic Building of 1895, he contributed the Ford Building (1909), the Dime Building of 1910 (figure 5), and the David Whitney Building of 1915. All exhibit a somewhat restrained taste for the Renaissance mingled with a Chicago sensitivity for delineating the structure, it being clad with glazed terra cotta or masonry.

Another out-of-town firm, this time from New York City, built the Michigan Central Railroad Depot in 1913 (figure 6). Warrren and Wetmore, architects of Grand Central Station, designed a grand waiting area to front a very efficient study in transit management. Both its ornament and its function bespeak a bygone era, and the building's current existence is threatened by the obsolescence of passenger rail service through Detroit as well as its hopelessly remote location in the Southwest quarter of town predicated on the Detroit-Windsor tunnel gradient.

Louis Kamper, a German who made his home in Detroit after apprenticing in the office of McKim, Mead and White, designed the exuberant Book Building in 1917 (figure 7), complete with cornice supported by full-size caryatids. The equally bombastic Tower added in 1926 (figures 7 and 8), was originally intended to be eighty-one stories, which at 873 feet would have made it the world's tallest building. Between these two commissions he designed the Book-Cadillac Hotel and the Industrial Arts Building (figure 8). The Book-Cadillac, currently vacant and awaiting a redevelopment grant, possesses all of the stateliness of a grand hotel sorely absent in the current spate of new buildings of that type.

The prolific theater designer C. Howard Crane, whose contributions include the Fox Theater and Orchestra Hall, designed the Palms Building (figure 9) as a supersized Renaissance palazzo in full dressed stone. Its restrained exterior contains an exuberantly decorated theater which may soon be restored as part of the now resurgent Theater District.

George D. Mason, of the venerable Detroit firm Mason and Rice (architects of the Grand Hotel at Mackinac among other buildings), designed the secular gothic Masonic Temple in 1928 (figure 10). Mason made the building's stonework a testament to the Order of Masons it housed, and in doing so gave it a civic dignity which, within the context of Cass Park, makes the building appear much larger than it actually is.

The Barlum Building (now the Cadillac Tower, figure 11), is a slender, straightforward design which relies mainly on color for its decoration. Its green and gold glazed terra cotta seem more appropriate for ornament on a tall building than does the intricate detail employed by Kamper on the Book Tower (figure 8). Its architects were Bonnah and Chaffee, completing the work in 1927.

Another building which makes effective use of color is the David Stott Building of 1929 (figure 12). Its slender brick profile, rising from a granite base, is broken by setbacks at the upper level, each accented by terra cotta banding. It represents the mature work of Donaldson and Meier and displays little of the overt historical references found in their earlier work for the Murphy family (the original Penobscot Building of 1905 and twenty-four story second phase of 1916, seen middle ground of figure 15).

The well-established Detroit firm of Smith, Hinchman and Grylls secured a number of important commissions during this period. The Fyfe Building of 1919 (figure 13) overlooks Grand Circus Park and is an example of the secular gothic style popularized by Cass Gilbert in his Woolworth Building in New York City (also the architect of the Detroit Public Library, 1921). The Michigan Bell Building of 1923 is most interesting when contrasted with its addition executed fifty years later by same firm.

Smith, Hinchman and Grylls employed during this period a very creative designer by the name of Wirt Rowland, whose production, if examined alone, is a convincing indication of the

Figure 9
Palms Building, C. Howard Crane (1925).

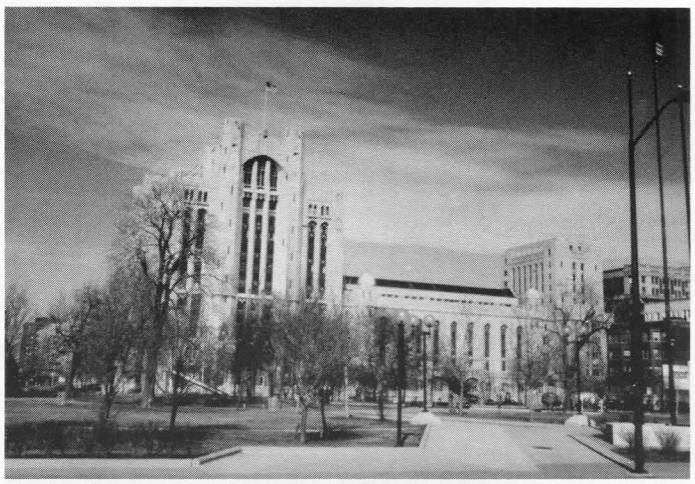


Figure 10
Masonic Temple, George Mason (1928).

Figure 11
Cadillac Tower, Bonnah and Chaffee (1927).

Figure 12
David Stott Building,
Donaldson and Meier (1929).

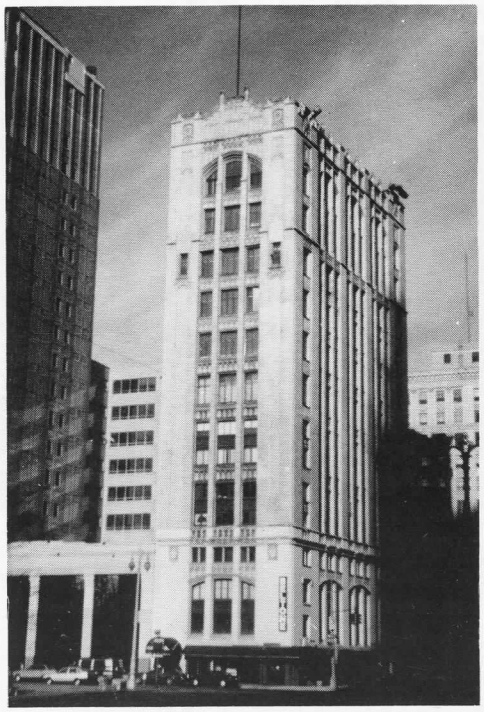


Figure 13
Fyfe Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1919).

Figure 14
Buhl Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1925).

eclecticism which was flourishing in the 1920's. Rowland's Buhl Building (figure 14), completed in 1925, is very successful in its use of a cruciform plan which diminishes the mass of any singular building face. Its overall effect is Gothic, Rowland deciding to forego a cornice to achieve added verticality, but this effect is lessened by Renaissance details which he chose for the base and lobby. Three years later, Rowland pursued a restrained aesthetic for the Greater Penobscot Building (figure 15), a forty-seven story tower which remained Detroit's tallest until the late 1970's. An H-shaped plan rises 30 stories with flat walls which maintain their visual bulk before stepping up to the radio tower topped by its distinctive red orb. In 1929 Rowland designed the Union Trust Building (now the Guardian Building, figure 16), with its base of Mankato stone peppered with polychromatic glazed tiles (used also in the vaulted lobby). The main body of the slab-like building is executed in orange brick, and the entire composition culminates in the unmistakable gold-trimmed polygonal tower. Rowland's decorative program, probably springing from an early decision to utilize the inherent qualities of brick and tile, might be expected more in a movie palace than in the headquarters for a bank.

Figure 15
Penobscot Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1928).

Albert Kahn, unarguably Detroit's finest architect, had begun producing industrial complexes for the burgeoning automotive industry at the turn of the century and they were recognized internationally for their functional and aesthetic innovation. His buildings for commerce, however, do not portray this same search for style but rather a reliance on historical models to capture the necessary civic dignity. He travelled extensively and developed a vast knowledge of and fondness for classical detail clearly evident in the questions he asked of the modern movement:

> Is all that is proven of merit in the past to be abandoned and replaced with crude vagaries? Must the grotesque be substituted for the beautiful? To the dyed-in-the-wool modernist the work of the past is a closed book to be forgotten and never to be referred to. But is progress in architecture or any art not to be sought as is progress in science or any other field? Are basic principles, developed through unending experiment and thoroughly proved, to be done away with, untried forms to take their place? Our ultra-moderns would have it so, but their hypothesis is unsound. [6]

Figure 16
Guardian Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1929).

Kahn's early commercial works exhibit a simple expression of structure clad in glazed terra cotta or brick and indicate that he may have been influenced by Sullivan. But the Boulevard Building (1910), the Kresge Building (now the Kales Building, figure 17), and the Woodward Building (1915) rely on Renaissance motifs where Kahn felt ornament was necessary rather than the more original decorative programs of Sullivan.

Kahn's encyclopedic knowledge of history allowed him to reference Italian palazzi for his Detroit Athletic Club (1915) and Police Headquarters Building (1923), while his Detroit News Building (1916) and Detroit Free Press Building (1923) recall German commercial architecture. For his commission to design

Figure 17
Kales Building, Albert Kahn (1914).

Figure 18
General Motors Building, Albert Kahn (1922).

the General Motors Building in 1922 (figure 18), he drew from Renaissance sources but transferred them to a very large scale. He surrounded the building, an enfilade of fifteen-story slabs, with a continuous glazed arcade of civic proportion and crowned the composition with the Corinthian order at the same scale.

The year 1922 represented a turning point in Kahn's career as he was greatly influenced by Eliel Saarinen's second place entry to the Chicago Tribune Tower Competition. His subsequent commissions, such as the Kresge Administration Building (now the Institute of Technology) and the Maccabees Building (figure 19), as well as the Fisher Building of 1928, displayed less of a reliance on academic sources. Kahn favored in their design a more vertical emphasis, a sculpting of mass by use of setbacks, and a more original decorative program recalling both the Arts and Crafts movement and Saarinen's Romanticism.

The Fisher Building (figures 1 and 20) marks the end of Detroit's first great skyscraper age. The buildings of the period, with their explicit ornamental and symbolic programs are testament to the commercial power which this city wielded as it flexed its economic muscles alongside Chicago and New York. But the Great Depression put an end to large commercial construction and it did not resume for twenty years until Detroit's second sky-scraper age began in the late 1950's. By this time modernism will have replaced historicism as the banner being flown by corporate America, and the building industry will have synthesized the new materials and production methods, and, of course, the infamous decentralization of Detroit's population will be in full swing.

The High Modern Phase

Initially, modernism was considered the testing ground of the avant garde and much of the experimentation was conducted by Europeans on their continent. By mid-century, however, with several of the leading modernists firmly established in this country, modernism came to be not only accepted by corporate America, but actually embraced as a "rich and profitable formula" perfectly suited for commercial use on a large scale. One should recall that similar reasoning initiated the skyscraper phenomenon in the 1880's - both were ideas ready for exploitation by the boardrooms of America.

High Modernism was based on the belief that an artist must originate the form and subject matter of their art, and the insight employed in this process will discover an order of art which may serve as an order for society. Because history was considered to be in flux, art and architecture were viewed as having to change with it: older styles which relied on representation and narrative were bound up in a lost social order and had to be abandoned. As Edward Mendelson puts it:

> The High Modernists' task was not merely to instruct their audience in the art of the future, but also through the vision and power of art, to shape the new order and bring it into being. [7]

This idealism, this belief in the special authority to affect

social change, resulted in a skyscraper style which was both strict in its geometry and abstract in its form. Although High Modernists socio-aesthetic ideals were ultimately unrealizable, it's product, ironically was, and the modern glass skyscraper proved a subtly elegant and, more importantly, cost-effective haven for corporate America.

The modern glass skyscraper advanced the Chicago-New York debate which began prior to the start of the century. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe conceived of the tall glass building with his astonishing projects of 1921 and 1922 while still in his German homeland. His immigration in the 1930's took him to Chicago where he began to develop the curtain wall on small institutional projects on the IIT campus. New York, however, provided him with the opportunity to test his ideas on a large scale. With the commission for the Seagrams Building in 1954, Mies attempted to take structural symbolism to the level of art in a technological age. This was preceeded by the Lever House (1952) by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill which did not stress structural symbolism so much as it emphasized the refinement of the glass curtain wall as art.

Detroit is fortunate to have very fine examples of each of these architect's work. Mies completed the Pavillion (along with the surrounding town houses) in 1959 and followed with the Towers in 1962, both projects in the Lafayette Park area of Detroit (figure 21). These buildings illustrate Mies' intention of allowing their surroundings to interact with them at their base by pulling the ground level in behind the structure, thus creating a modern arcade above which the structural cage repeats itself as needed, but always within the limits of flawless proportion.

The Ford Motor Company, like Chrysler and General Motors, chose for its headquarters a location geographically close to its manufacturing facilities, in Ford's case, Dearborn. Upon the decision to move from Highland Park in 1956, the firm of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill was asked to design the Administrative Building (figure 22), and they responded with a timeless design which employed a vertical frame supporting an elegant curtain wall of green vision and spandrel glass which had been developed for the Lever House project. This building arguably captures in the modern idiom the same quiet dignity sought by Albert Kahn for the General Motors Building of thirty years earlier.

Several other buildings of the 1960's attempt with varying results to carry on the tradition established by these seminal works. Gunnar Birkerts' 1300 Lafayette Building (figure 23) successfully employs the same operatives used by Mies: residential units enclosed in a well-crafted curtain wall and raised on piloti to sit in Lafayette Park.

King and Lewis, architects of the Pontchartrain Hotel (1965), utilized a faceted form to acheive better views of the river while thoughtfully orienting the narrow dimension of the tower towards Jefferson Avenue. The building's unfortunate base, however, provides a very dissappointing entry sequence unbefitting a hotel of its stature.

Figure 19
Maccabees Building, Albert Kahn (1927).

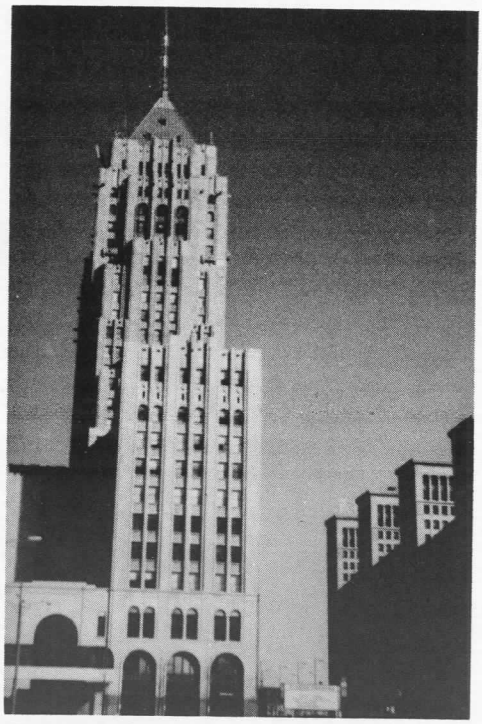


Figure 20
Fisher Building, Albert Kahn (1928).

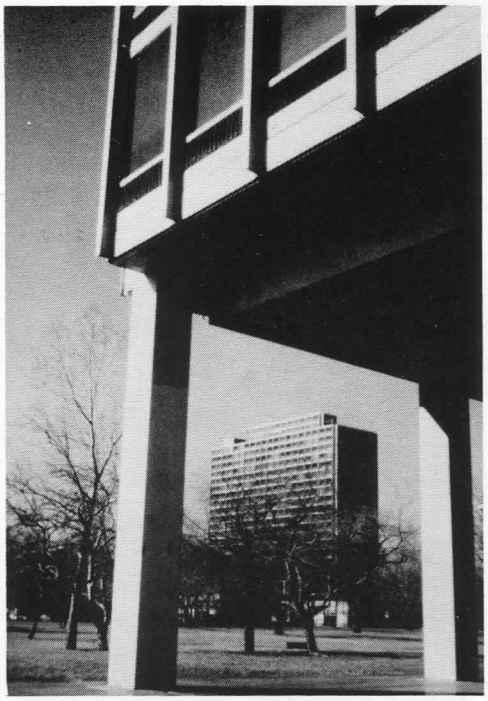


Figure 21 Lafayette Pavilion (foreground, 1959), Towers (1961), Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

Figure 22
Ford Motor Headquaters, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (1956).

Figure 23
1300 Lafayette East, Gunnar Birkerts (1964).

Two other buildings of this period worth noting are beautiful towers, but sit on sorely deficient bases thereby diminishing their overall effect. Both the Gas Company Building (1963, figure 24), by Minoru Yamasaki and the Detroit Bank and Trust Building (now the Comerica Building, figure 25), by Harley, Ellington, Corwin, and Stirton, rely on precast and prestressed concrete to create well proportioned, lacy walls of glass. The manner in which these towers meet the ground, however, is symptomatic of the flaw suffered by many modern skyscrapers. The building-in-a-park concept successfully employed by Mies at Lafayette Park, when applied to an urban setting, served to isolate these modern towers from downtown activity and disrupted the urban street-wall. Street-level retail space was omitted for functional purity but detached these buildings from their surroundings and discouraged use by the public, thereby contributing little to the urban environment.

A much more successful solution is the First Federal Building completed in 1965 by Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (figures 2 and 26). Its prominent triangular site, at the intersection of Woodward and Michigan Avenues, resulted in a three-part massing of two gridded office towers and a slim, solid service core to link them (this solution owing much to the Inland Steel Building by S.O.M.). This building also denies any public retail functions at its ground level, inexcusable for a building fronting on Woodward Avenue, but it manages to maintain an established building edge by allowing its mass to continue to the ground, creating a skillful entry in the process. Its cladding is a well-articulated and very elegant granite and glass curtain wall.

The Low Modern Phase

The 1970's proved to be one of the most active periods of tall building construction in Detroit's history, but much of the activity was centered on Detroit's outlying communities in the style which may be termed Low Modernism. Its architects adapted what were by now older and popular forms of High Modernism to the common needs and purposes of the suburban landscape. In doing so, these designers claimed no special authority to change the views of its audience.

Detroit's residential exodus was soon followed by the retail sector in the mid-1950's when the suburban shopping center began to proliferate, these malls being based on the prototypical Northland Center by Victor Gruen and Associates. With the population largely decentralized, the commercial sector began to follow the shift, and skyscrapers began to appear in the bedroom communities of Dearborn, Southfield and Troy. Low Modern architects took High Modernism and applied it to the substantial need for commercial office space in the automobile-based landscape. This represents a further transgression of Modernism which initially saw art and architecture as the instruments of social change, first stripped of its social program by large-scale American architecture, now further reduced from an aesthetic and technological exercise to a mere style.

Local tall buildings of the Low Modern phase further severed their physical relationship with their surroundings, and life could occur only within them, never between or outside them. Within, life was carefully controlled with mandated areas for parking, eating, shopping, and working. Designers, themselves yearning for a sense of urbanity, perversely organized these activities on "interior streets", introducing the very thing they had displaced.

Construction in Southfield's Prudential Center began in 1974 and continues to the present under the direction of Neuhaus and Taylor (figure 27). It epitomizes the shortcomings of what may be called "suburban vernacular": form for form's sake, absurd mass and scale in relation to context, and a complete lack of connection to site or place. The original building, completed in 1976, is the most successful of the growing ensemble by virtue of its simplicity, but the potential aesthetic strength of the diagonal bracing is diminished by its ill-crafted reflective curtain wall. Subsequent buildings have abandoned mirrored glass but have resorted to less substantial manipulations of form and scale.

The IBM Building (1978) in Southfield is interesting in its attempt to reverse the usual ratio of transparent-to-solid wall area. Gunnar Birkerts, in an attempt to save energy without diminishing either the amount of daylight to the interior or the occupants' awareness of the exterior, reduced the fenestration, and pulled it within the building envelope. Other notable buildings of this period are the Fairlane Towers (figure 28) and Top of Troy Building (figure 29), both by Rossetti Associates, as well as the American Center (figure 30) by Smith, Hinchman and Grylls.

There were several large projects built in the downtown area during this period and they curiosly follow the suburban prototype of their predecessors. The McNamara Federal Office Building (figure 31) and the Michigan Bell Building (addition to 1923 building, figure 32) are two projects by the firm of Smith, Hinchman and Grylls completed in 1970 and 1973 respectively. Situated across from one another at the intersection of Michigan and Cass they represented a rare design opportunity to provide a coherent western portal to the downtown area on one of Detroit's great diagonal Avenues. As constructed, however, they stand as singular objects disjointed both from each other and from their respective sites.

Across town the Murphy Hall of Justice (figure 33) by Eberle, Smith Associates is one of the few attempts to be expressive in terms of interior function manipulating exterior form. The complex program is virtually mappable in the massing which is clad in precast concrete lending it a brutalist aesthetic. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Building by Rossetti Associates (figure 34), on the other hand, completely subverts all possible form-determinants: structure, function, view, context, etc.

There is no untold story on John Portman's Renaissance Center of 1977 (figure 35), its vagaries now well understood and documented twelve years after its construction. Clearly, the

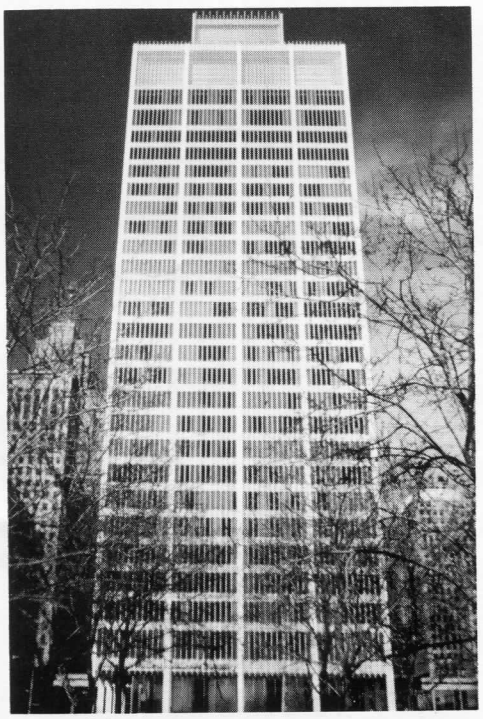


Figure 24
Gas Company Building,
Minoru Yamasaki (1963).

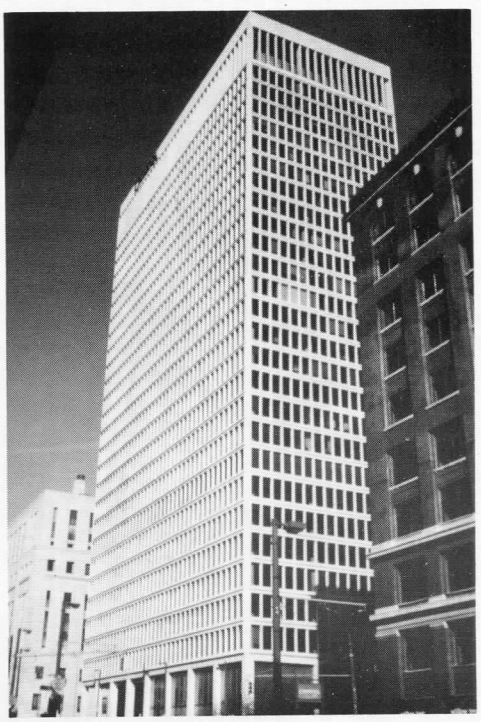


Figure 25
Comerica Building,
Harley, Ellington, et al. (1962).

Figure 26
First Federal Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1965).

Figure 27
Prudential Town Center (1976-1989).

Figure 28
Fairlane Towers, Rossetti Associates (1972).

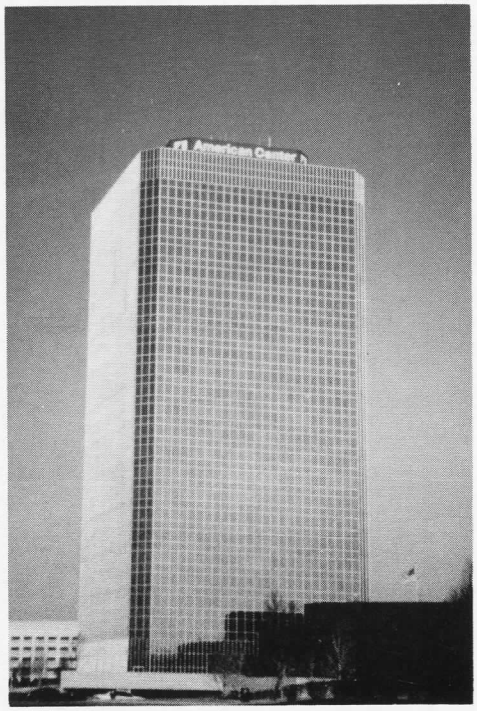


Figure 30
American Center,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1976).

Figure 29
Top of Troy Building, Rossetti Associates (1976).

inherent delusion of attempting to apply a suburban solution to a prime urban site on the riverfront, the difficulty of planning a quatripartite scheme around a circular building, and the overwhelming mass and scale of the complex has doomed it to being a flawed symbol of modern architecture's attempt to save a city center in decline.

The Postmodern Phase

Just as the Low Modernists found ways to stretch the rigid principles that created the beautifully abstract glass skyscraper, the Postmodernists managed to break the rules completely. Huxtable observes:

> What is clear now is that from the 1960's on, the stylistic dicta of modernism were being manipulated to even greater extremes, until they finally reached a point of rupture where the rules no longer held at all. The debasement of Mies' minimalism was bearing a bitter and boring fruit; commercial abuse had reached a point of terminal mediocrity. The sins of modernism are many... but the real crises, and the final, unforgivable sin, was the loss of style. [8]

Robert Venturi's seminal book, Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, both summarized and sparked a growing sentiment that the modernist vocabulary was simply too abstract and minimal. Consequently, the non-dogmatic modernism based on simplified form and a restrained expression of materials and structure was slowly abandoned. In its place developed Postmodernism, or what might also be called the New Eclecticism, based on complex forms and details which are often derived from historical sources.

The Postmodern Phase may be characterized by a return to narrative and representation in architectural expression, an expanded palette of materials, and redirected attention to a buildings relationship with both ground plane and sky vault. Unfortunately, it is also characterized by skyscrapers based on arbitrarily chosen stylistic models rather than on actual circumstances such as structure, site, construction methods, etc. which would ultimately give these works more substance.

What Detroit did get when large-scale building resumed mid-decade were out-of-town architects designing buildings void of any physical or historical context seemingly created in a distant vacuum. Riverfront Apartments (figure 36), by the Gruzen Partnership of New York, ironically celebrates the return of upscale housing to Downtown Detroit as it buffers itself from that same downtown with Joe Louis Arena and Cobo Hall. The ongoing Harbortown Development, begun in 1985, exhibits the same siege-mentality as the Riverfront Apartments by defining a capsule between Jefferson Avenue and the river and effectively sealing it off from its surroundings. The apartment buildings are clumsy tip-ups of glass and brick with paper-thin gables serving as symbols of the depth of design from a Chicago firm which should know better: Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.

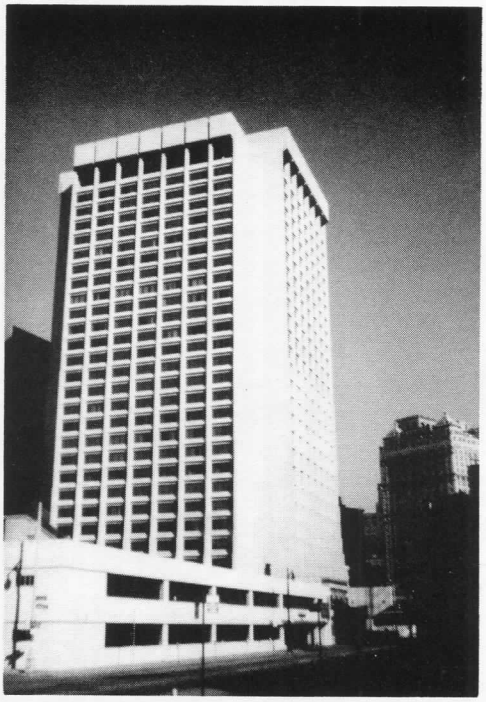


Figure 31
McNamara Federal Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1970).

Figure 32
Michigan Bell Building,
Smith, Hinchman and Grylls (1973).

Figure 33
Murphy Hall of Justice, Eberle, Smith Associates (1968).

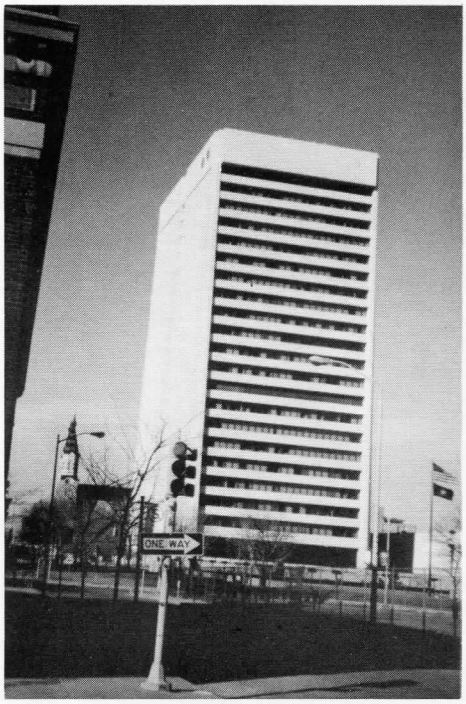


Figure 34
Blue Cross / Blue Shield Building, Giffels and Rossetti (1971).

The Millender Center (1985) by the Ehrenkrantz Group, of New York (figure 37), takes a prime site and very appropriate program, that of hotel, apartments, retail and parking and turns it into a scaleless exercise in cheap materials. Its massing is woefully ill-conceived; its largest mass is weighted towards the venerable Wayne County Building, serving to dwarf one of Detroit's most significant structures.

The as-yet-completed 150 West Jefferson Building (figure 38) by the San Francisco firm of Heller and Leake appears to have loftier aims for its prominent downtown site. It attempts a certain civic dignity emblematic more of the original Civic Center Plan of 1925 by Eliel Saarinen than the follow-up Plan of 1947 by Saarinen and Swanson. Its massing and materials recall the skyscrapers of the Eclectic Phase, those of the 1920's, but one wishes it could portray also some of the lessons learned in the sixty years which have transpired; lessons about the vertical organization of space, structural advancements, and cladding and glazing developments. In the final analysis, 150 West Jefferson exhibits East Coast design tendencies rather than the more regionally appropriate objectives of the Chicago School.

Conclusion

By viewing Detroit's Tall Buildings in their entirety it becomes clear that their architects were less concerned with the race for height, or technological advancements, or even the human environment as they were about finding suitable and memorable ways to enclose the structure. As mentioned, the skyscraper was shaped by a complex set of influences: economic, technical, legal, and aesthetic; but certainly not in equal measure and so became predominantly a search for style.

In using the term "style" (that moniker which is often taboo in architectural discussions), it is not intended to signify fashion nor a means to categorize the artistic products of periods in social history. Style is the manner in which a culture renders a vision of itself:

> Every style is a symptom... a style is a vocabulary. It may well be the most sensitive and explicit vocabulary of any society. If style is a vocabulary, it is also a syntax; and syntax expresses the way a society feels, responds, thinks, communicates, dreams, escapes.... Syntax is conditioned by the structure of the world in which we believe we would live; and the whole organization of the artist's sensibility is a screen through which appears the world he represents. [9]

Having recognized and defined style, it must be noted that architecture, more than any other art, must represent a culture's technical climate if its production is to have substance as well as style. Throughout the history of the skyscraper, a building-type reliant on technology for its very existence, technical issues have been largely subordinated to other concerns and most architects have been unwilling to embrace their conceptual and tectonic potential.

The challenge for those who wish to build tall is to reconcile the seemingly unreconciliable: form and technology. This struggle, unarguably difficult, is basic to the act of architecture. If these factors can be expressively synthesized at the level of art then technology can begin to advance architectural style.

Endnotes:

1, 2. Compiled by John Pastier for "The Skyscraper in Literature and Art," Design Quarterly 140, p. 25.

3. Ada Louise Huxtable, The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 11.

4. Louis H. Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Reconsidered," Kindergarten Chats and Other Writings (New York: Dover Books, 1979), p. 206.

5. W. Hawkins Ferry, The Buildings of Detroit (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1968), p. 135.

6. Albert Kahn as quoted by Ferry, op. cit., p. 332.

7. Edward Mendelson, "The Rise and Transformation of Modern Style: A Polemical History," Precis, Fall 1984, p. 94.

8. Ada Louise Huxtable, op. cit., p. 64.

9. Willie Sypher, Four Stages of Renaissance Style: Transformations in Art and Literature 1400 - 1700 (Garden City, N.Y. : Doubleday and Company, 1955), pp. 16 -17.

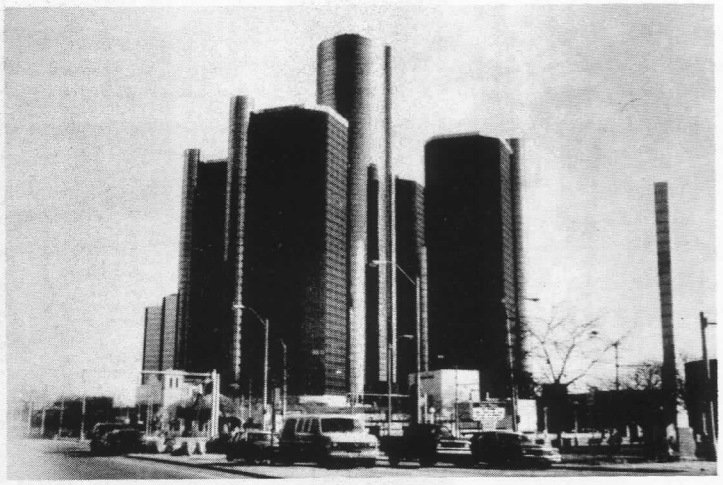


Figure 35
Renaissance Center, John Portman (1977).

Figure 36
Riverfront Apartments, Gruzen Partnership (1984).

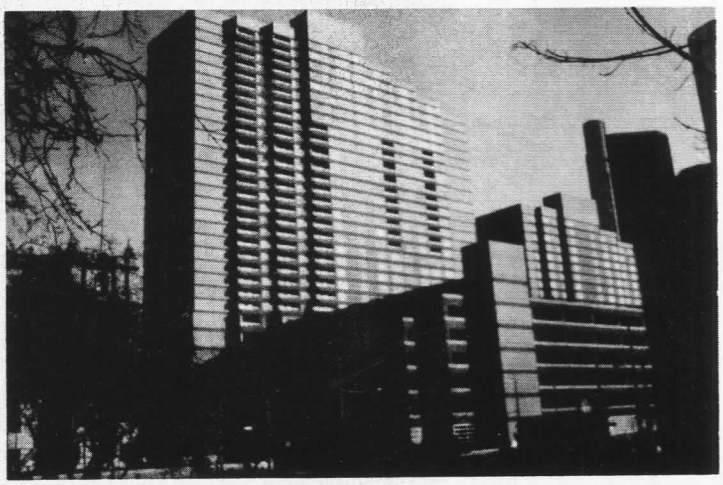


Figure 37
Millender Center, Ehrenkrantz Group (1985).

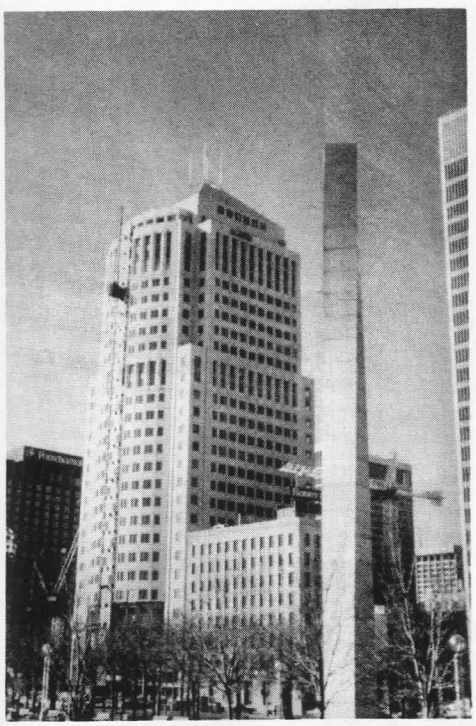
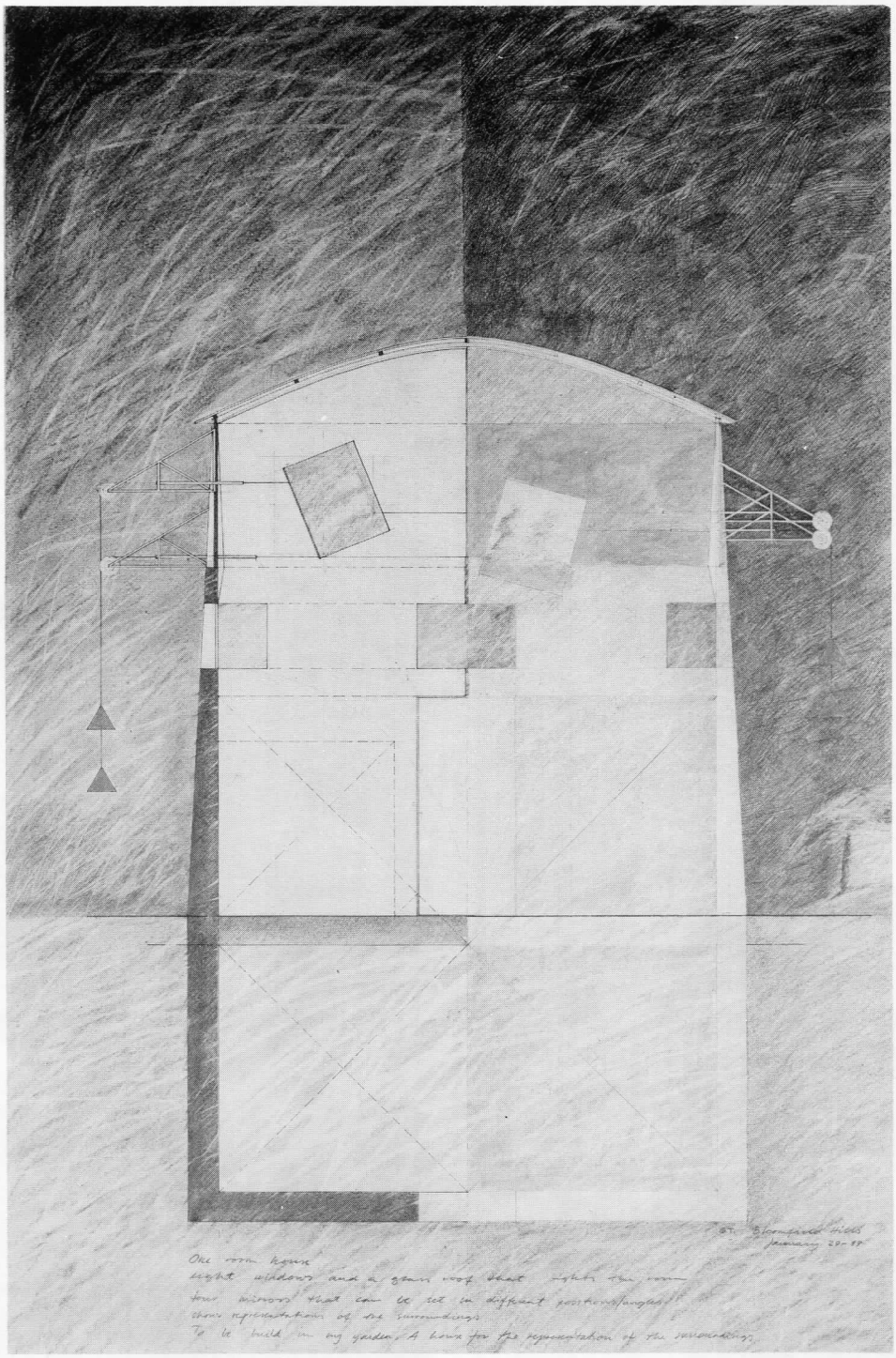


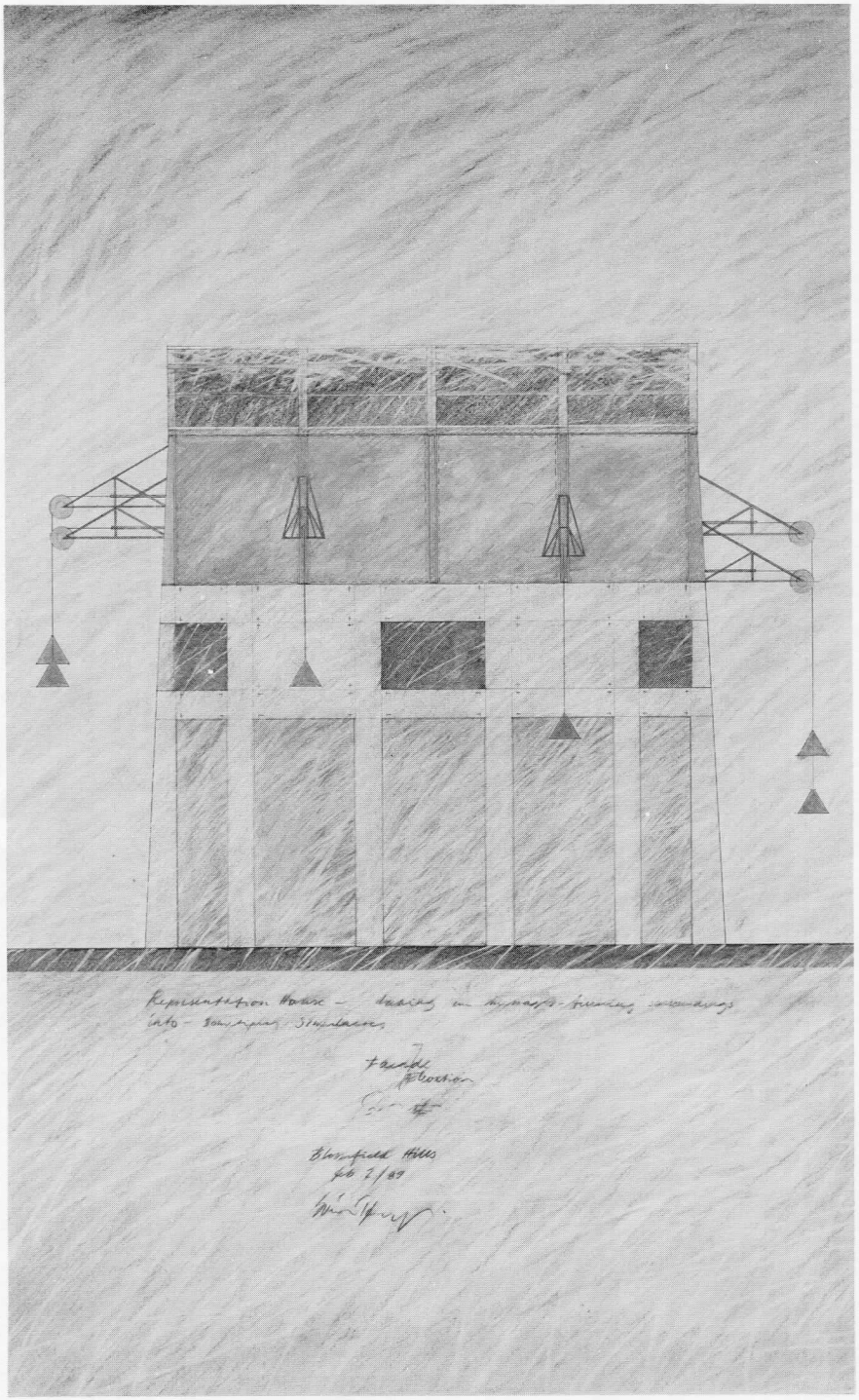
Figure 38
150 West Jefferson Building,
Heller and Leake (1989).



SVEIN TØNSAGER: archiTECToNICS by Jean La Marche

As these drawings illustrate, the architecture and drawing style of Svein Tønsager are quite sensitive and alluring while fitting in well with the autobiographical content of much contemporary art and some of the most recent

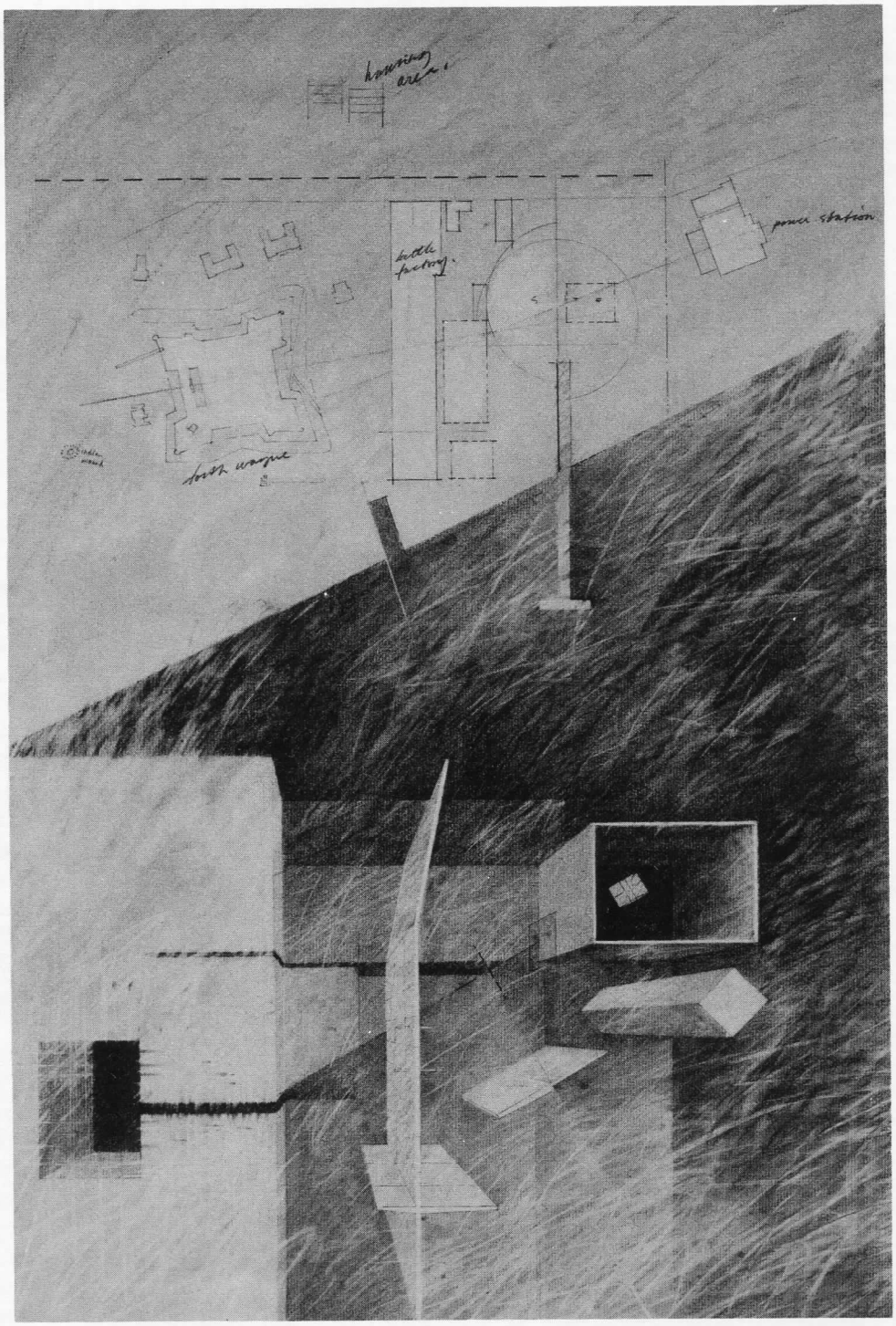
***House for Representations**: An architecture that speaks of control and lack of control, of freedom and imprisonment. It is an architecture of today. The house is made up of one room with high windows and moveable mirrors which are controlled from the inside; the weights and trussed supports on the outside give materiality to the architecture of manipulation. The inhabitant of the room/house adjusts the mirrors to better see the views out*



architecture. He brings together such diverse representational techniques as engineering and botanical drawing from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and his own tonal layerings of graphite, erasure, and graphite, a signature technique that brings a special life to his work.

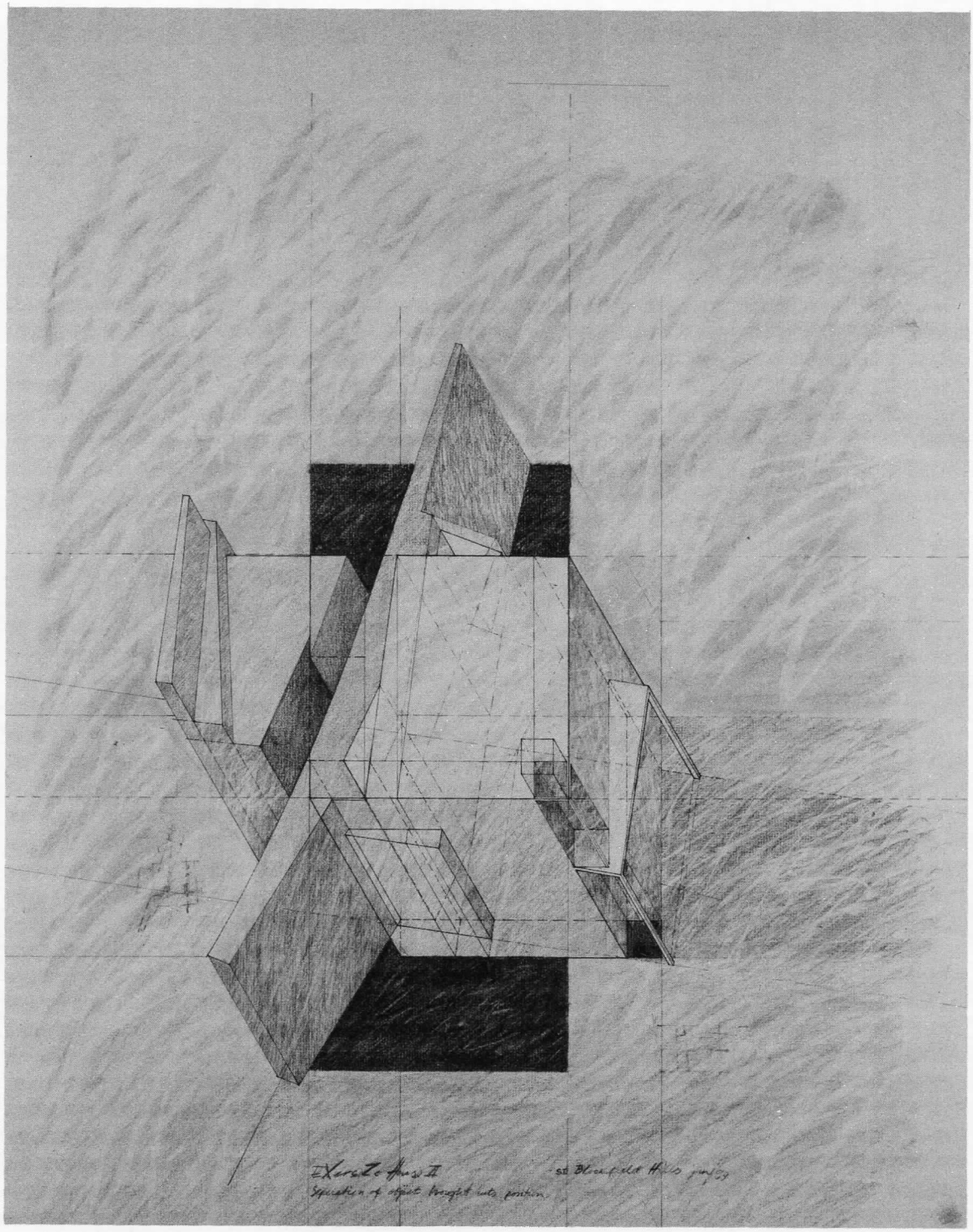
Tønsager's architecture is as palimpsest, as layered as his drawings. The technique of application and erasure

the windows which are otherwise unavailable. This a house of circumscribed freedom, of qualified imprisonment. It is a building that represents the condition in which we often find ourselves today. It expresses that narrow line of liberty which we are allowed to walk. The mirrors can be manipulated to see the world outside or to see ourselves, either voyeurism or narcissism.



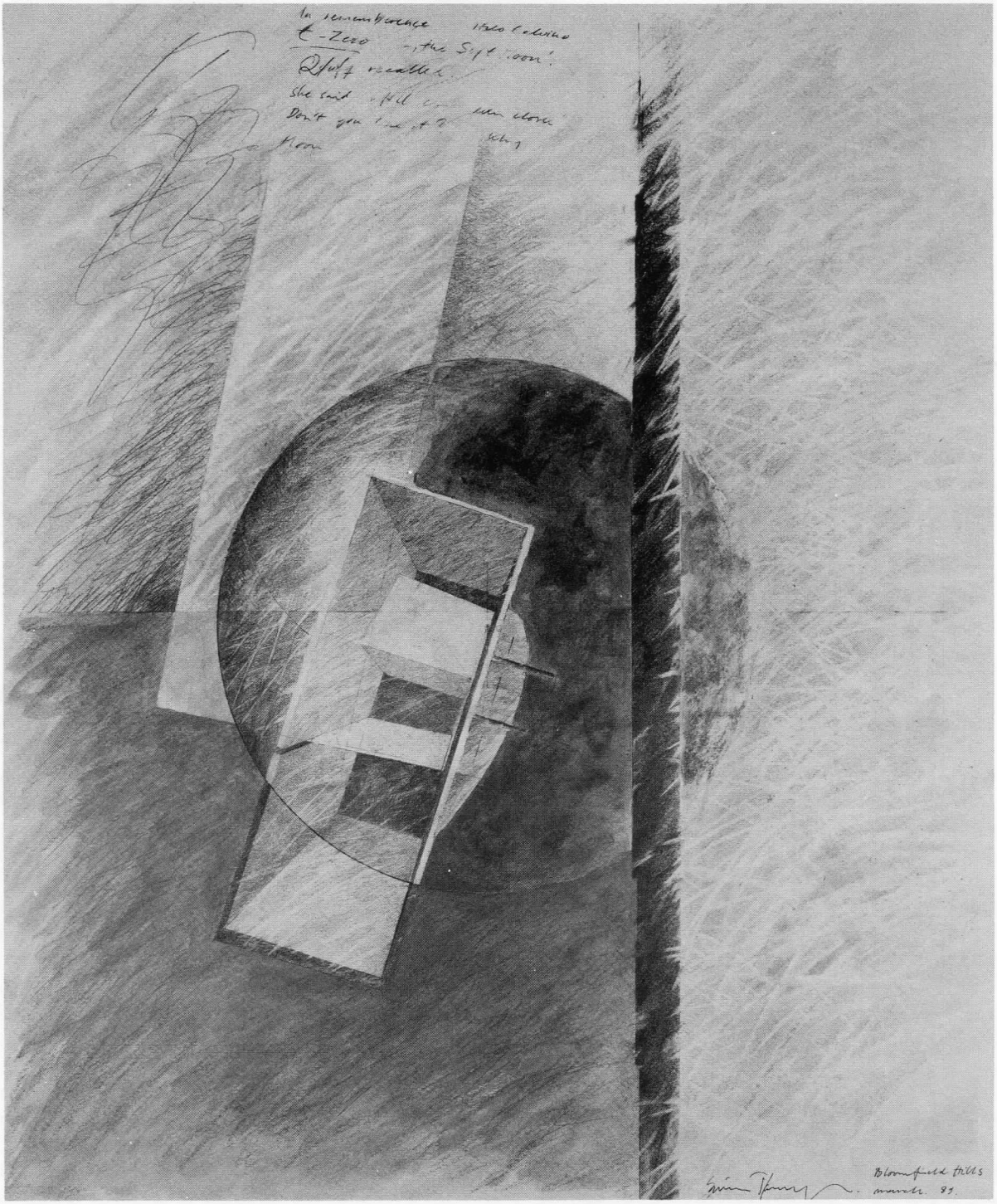
evident in his drawings is also apparent in his designs and conceptual strategies. We, as spectators, wander through a maze of ideas, all of which remain intentionally open and allow us into his work in a way that resembles some of the most important and interesting contemporary work such as deconstructivism, postmodern performance, and postmodern criticism. Like these works, Tønsager offers us a complex set of events or pieces; and, like these works, he refuses to

***Detroit waterfront**: Fort Wayne, industry, ruins. This is an unfinished 'working' drawing of marks, pentimenti, palimpsest, layers which have to do with what has been done on the site before. It is the historic information of the site that has the power to shape the contents of the site in the future; an archeology of the future through the uncovering and archeology of the tectonics of the site.*



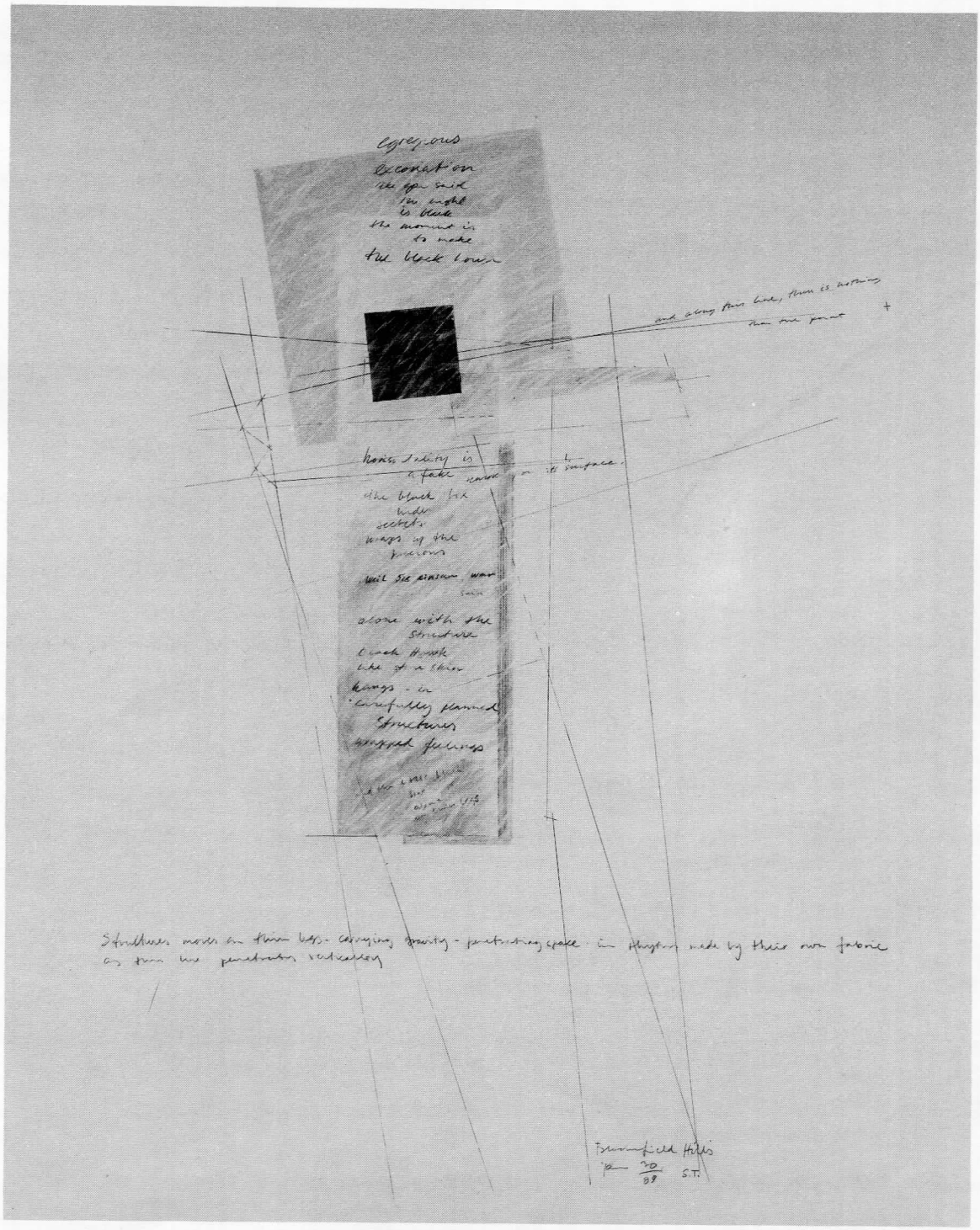
impose an order--refuses, therefore, to dictate how the spectator should or must respond. Such an openness is evident throughout his work. He invites us to see small pieces of his world--a world of his own creation but one not unlike our own. In fact, in revealing his own world he reveals ours to us; we share the same questions, the same quest; yet the work retains a strong sense of mystery and ambiguity. His work is like a set of short essays into the world of

eXersiZe House II: An exercise is something which one repeats. This house continues the eXersiZe House series which investigates systematic distortions that attempt to destroy the power of geometry by attacking its completeness and rigidity. One of these strategies is the x-form which crosses out and cancels. The House is an attempt to uncover domains of freedom at the very edges of total submission.



architecture, a series of short stories about the life that Tønsager lives. As a tome of pieces, it offer us possibilities of interpretation and re-interpretation, of finding and recognizing ourselves in his work which, in the end, we make our own; Tønsager's tectonics, his drawn and designed constructions, become part of our biography, one enriched by having been let into the world of someone as sensitive and creative as Svein Tønsager. (Professor Tønsager is an

***T-Zero Suprematism**: This project has to do with the book by Italo Calvino, T-Zero, (with the soft moon, the moon that drips) and with an exploration into suprematist elements and composition: the cut-up circle, the room that intersects the circle, volume. It is a piece of memory, of biography. It is a story about other stories as of yet unconnected until brought together here in one single piece.*



architect and Professor who heads up the Department of Architecture and Urban Design at the School of Architecture in Aarhus, Denmark. He is the first Fulbright Scholar ever at Lawrence Technological University and the 1989 Visiting Professor at the School of Architecture).

***The Black House**: The Black House is a black box with a thin stone skin wrapping of black stone standing on thin legs, about to collapse. It is about words half erased. It is about the delicate and sensitive condition of our own egos where Architecture stands for our selves and words are our contributions so easily lost. The Black House is about a poetic dissatisfaction with one's work .*

Arens, Robert M.	B.S.Arch. 1981, M.Arch. 1984, University of Michigan; AIA; Design instructor, University of Detroit.
Bengisu, Bilge	Born and raised in Turkey; B.Arch. 1986, 9-Eylul University, Turkey; Currrently enrolled in the Bachelor of Architecture program, Lawrence Technological University (LTU).
Eis, Andrea	B.A., Beloit College; B.F.A., Minneapolis College of Art and Design; M.F.A., Cranbrook Academy of Arts; Practising artist and special lecturer at Oakland University.
Ferraro, Pietro	Born in Toronto, Canada; B.Arch.Sci., Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto, Canada; Currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Architecture program, LTU.
Ferrero, Harvey	R.A.,B.S.ArE. 1955, LTU; Partner, Ferrero-Maricak Architects; Design instructor, University of Detroit.
Fueslein, J. Duane	B.Art 1977, Spring Arbor College; B.S. Arch. 1981, LTU. Currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Architecture program, LTU.
Johnson, Dane A.	R.A., B.S.Arch., B.Arch. 1983, LTU; Member of AIA; Lecturer, College of Architecture, LTU; Currently employed at the office of Kirk & Koskela, P.C.
Kirk, J. Michael	B.S.Arch., M.A. 1977, University of Michigan; Principal, Kirk & Koskela Architects, P.C., AIA.
LaMarche Jean	B.S.Arch. 1980, B.Arch. 1981, LTU; Doctoral studies, University of Michigan; Associate Professor, Coordinator of Sophmore Design, LTU.
Law, Vincent	B.S. Physics 1986, University of British Columbia; Currently enrolled in the B.S. Architecture program, Lawrence Technological University.
Linton, Harold	B.F.A. 1969, Syracuse University; M.F.A. 1979, Yale University; Practising artist; Professor and Director of Pre-College and Freshmen Design programs, LTU.
Lynch, Robert	B.S.Arch. 1979, University of Illinois, Urbana / Champaign; M.Arch. 1983, University of Michigan; Assistant Professor, LTU.
Maricak, Gretchen	R.A., B.S.Arch., B.Arch. 1977, LTU; Partner, Ferrero- Maricak Architects; Design instructor, LTU.
Martin, Rochelle	B.A. 1957, M.A. 1969, Wayne State University; B.S. Arch., B.Arch. 1977, LTU; D.Arch. 1986, University of Michigan; Design instructor, LTU.
Mercier, Christopher	B.S.Arch. 1987, LTU; Daniel Liebeskind's Architecture Intermundium 1988, Milan, Italy; Currently participating in the M.A. Arch. program, SCI-ARC, Santa Monica, California.
O'Brien, Sean	B.S.Arch. 1989, LTU; Current president of the AIAS.
Orlowski, Edward M.	B.S.Arch. 1987, LTU; Entering the Masters program, University of Michigan; Former editor of Architext (1985-1986); Currently employed at the office of Kirk & Koskela, Architects, P.C.
Pancini, Frank R.	B.Arch.Sci. 1988, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto, Canada; Currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Architecture program, LTU.
Perry, Heather	Born in Windsor, Canada; B.S.Arch. 1987, LTU; Currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Architecture program, LTU.
Rost, Steven	B.S., B.A., University of Denver; M.F.A. 1982, Cranbrook Academy of Art; Practising artist, Assistant Professor of Freshmen Design and photography, LTU.
Taberner Ian F.	Taberner is an architect, Frederick is an assistant professor at LTU, and Ian is the father of John Keo.
Tonsager, Svein	Diploma 1973, School of Arch., Oslo, Norway, Sverre Fehn's dept.; Associate Professor, Co-chairman, Dept. D, Architecture / Urban Design, School of Architecture, Aarhus, Denmark; Co-editor of the magazine SKALA; Fulbright Scholar in Residence, LTU 1988 - 89.
Woodward, Douglas	B.S. Arch 1989, LTU; Practising artist, SIR; Currently employed at Albert Kahn Associates.

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