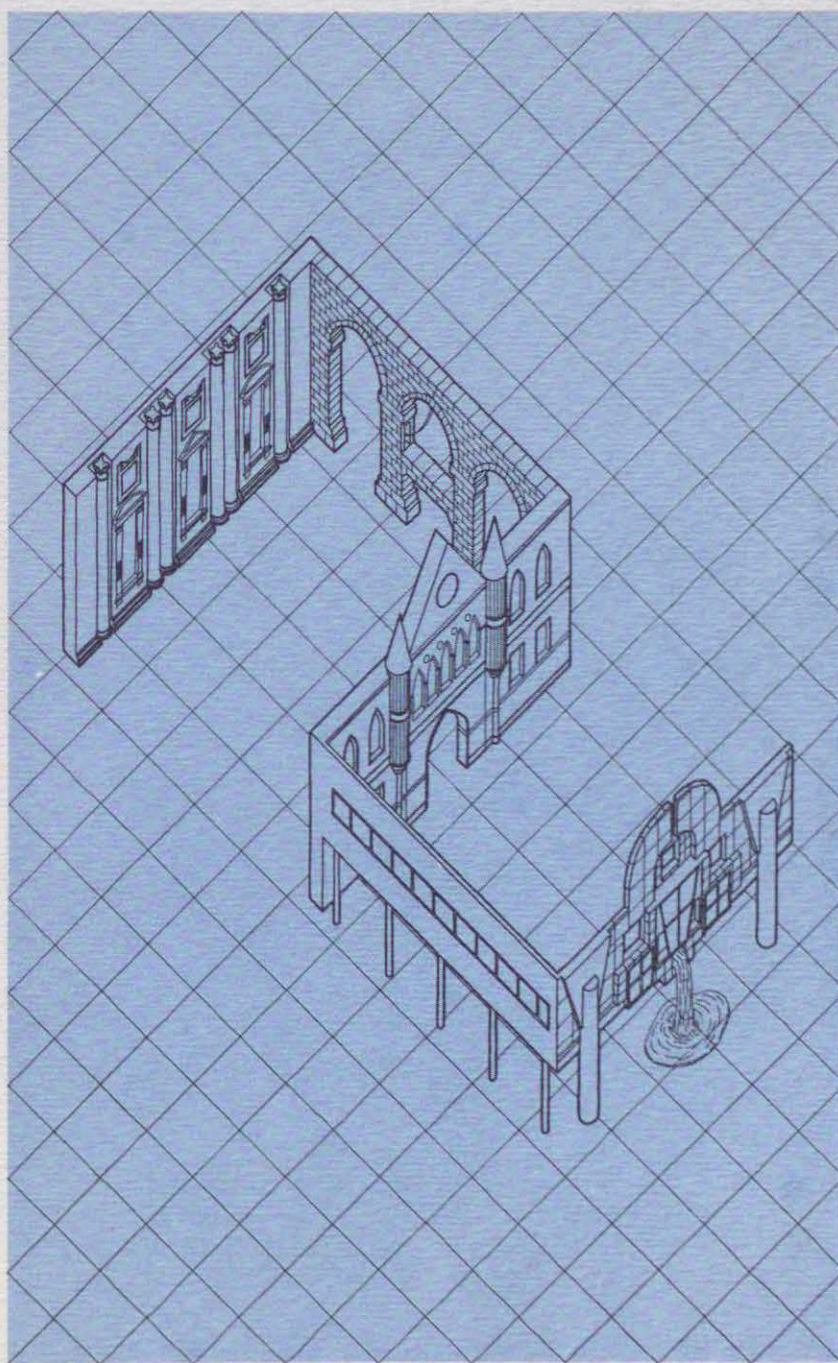


THE FIFTH COLUMN

Volume 2, Number 1

FALL 1981

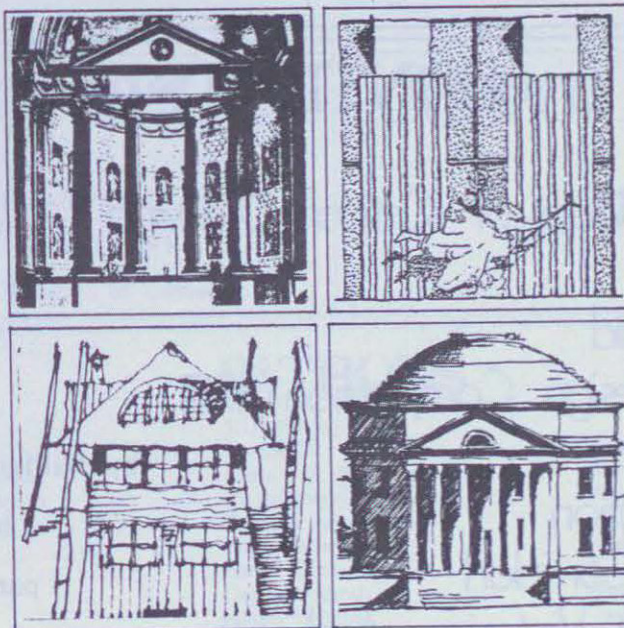


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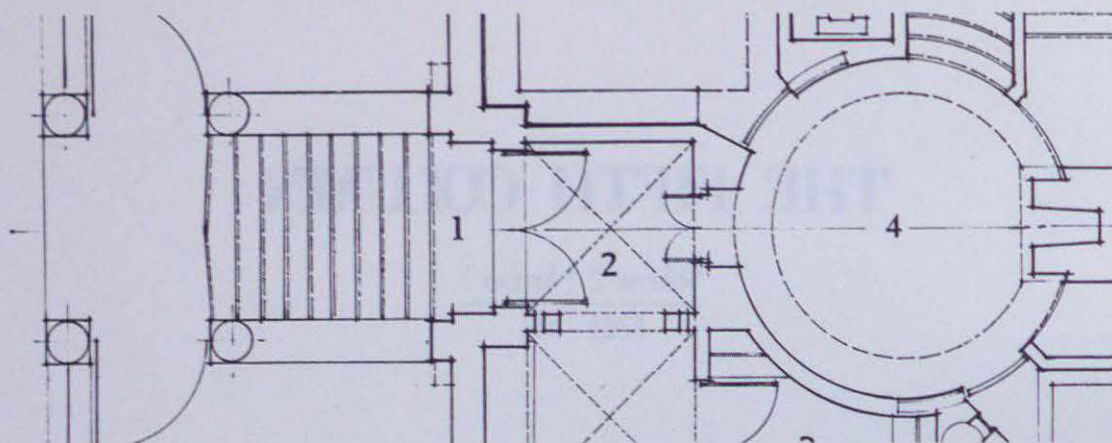
THE FIFTH COLUMN

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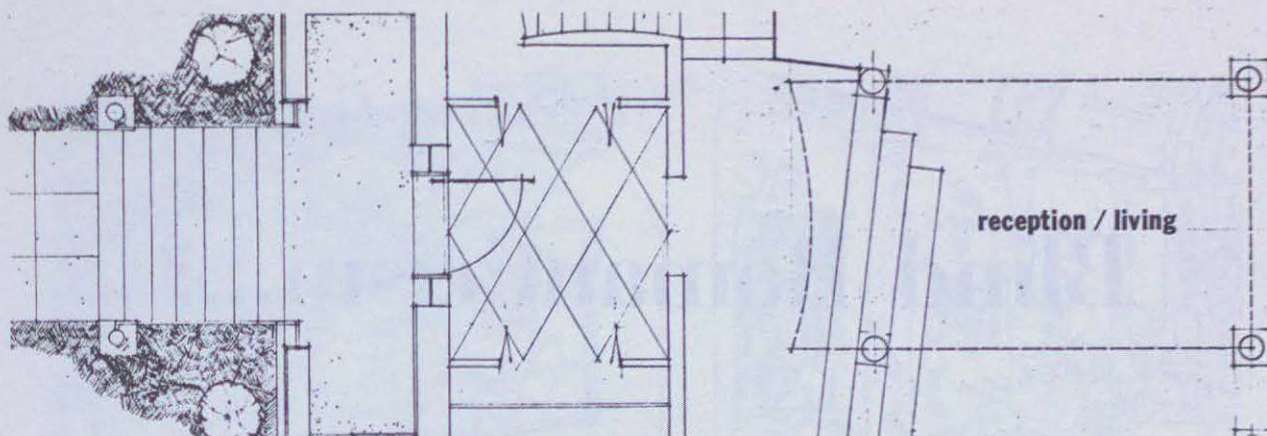
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THE FIFTH COLUMN, 3480 University Street, Montreal, Quebec H3A 2A7.
Please call us at (514) 392-5407.

Blind Romanticism...?

THE FIFTH COLUMN is now one year old and, like a young child, it has developed greatly in its first year of life. We can take this opportunity to examine its growth and its emerging personality, as well as to make some plans for its future.

Looking back to the beginning, we see that THE FIFTH COLUMN was born of idealism and of frustration. Its ideal was the perceived potential of Architecture as a visual and social art; its frustration was with an architectural community of students, professors and professionals, all who seemed to lack both concern about what they were doing and the motivation to discover what was happening outside of their seemingly closed worlds.

THE FIFTH COLUMN's aim was to open up the eyes and the ears (and maybe even the minds) of all of these people, so that they would become better educated by learning to observe, and who would therefore have a greater awareness of their physical, social and historical contexts.

Setting out with these lofty goals, THE FIFTH COLUMN has been fortunate in its first year. Infused with the raw energy that only a student environment can generate, the magazine has achieved some of what was hoped, and more than many had expected.

It has come to provide an outlet for the publication of original writing and graphics, featuring the work of dozens of students, professors and architects which would not otherwise have come to light.

It has begun to rectify the lack of written discussion on Architecture in Canada, predating other recently started magazines such as Trace, The Independent Study, and ARQ.

It has managed to improve with each issue in terms of the quality of the

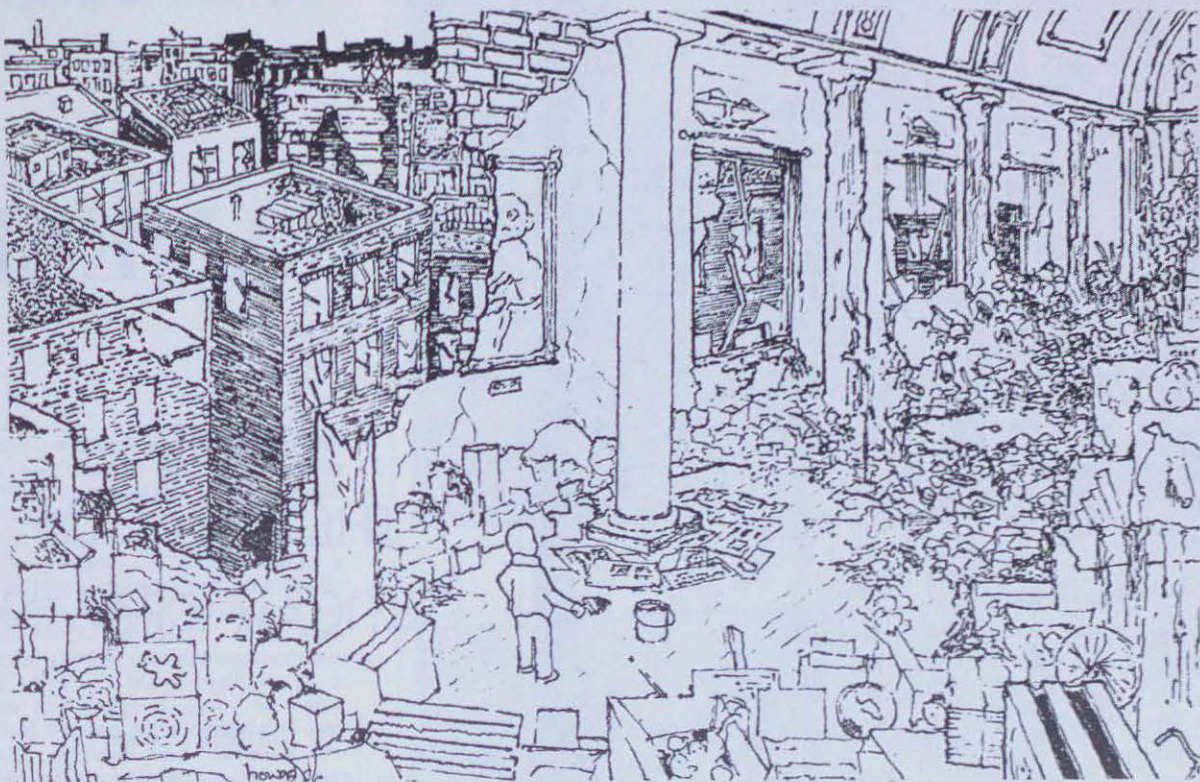
writing, the graphic expression and the technical production, coming all the way from the days of justifying columns on an IBM typewriter to computer-typesetting.

Most important to us, though, has been the wide acceptance of THE FIFTH COLUMN, whose circulation has increased four-fold since Issue 1 and which has found a home in the hearts of its many readers.

THE FIFTH COLUMN thanks all of its readers, especially those of you who encouraged us last summer by supporting a magazine which didn't even exist on paper yet. If one of you is reading this piece, it must mean that you have liked us enough to renew your subscription. (If you haven't re-subscribed, we've sent you this issue by mistake and you should stop reading now or rush your check in right away.)

Over the year certain aspects of the magazine's personality have emerged. It is interested in architectural education, both from a student and an educator perspective. It is also interested in the work of current outside architects and in recent developments in our cities.

However, THE FIFTH COLUMN also seems to have betrayed a fascination with the past, with many articles on historical architects and on our lost architectural heritage. Perhaps this has been because of the recent admission that history forms a continuum, and that the past **does** have an influence upon the present in architecture as well as in other aspects of society. Perhaps it is more simply because of a need to share our personal joy of discovery of men, ideas, and buildings which have long been forgotten and which provide us romantic glimpses of a different way of life - of a time when architects had time to produce an Architecture that combined all three Vitruvian ideals of utility, solidity, and beauty, and when those ideals were truly



valued by society.

THE FIFTH COLUMN has also taken on a definite 'look', one which has evolved over the past volume. This evolution can be partly ascribed to an increasing sophistication in the production of the magazine and to the pressures of standardization to increase its efficiency. However, perhaps the magazine's appearance also reflects an attitude among today's students, an appreciation of elegance and order in the face of a perceived chaos in the outside world. It is this apparent order which has, in spite of variations within the set format, led to accusations of **stodginess** from certain quarters. Though we certainly do not feel stodgy yet, it is certain that the format of the magazine will continue to evolve, as personalities change and as it continues to be a medium for expression and experimentation.

As THE FIFTH COLUMN looks ahead, we realize that much remains to be done and that our lofty goals continue to be just as distant as ever. Many still do not read about Architecture and do not expose themselves to new ideas. Many have not yet learned to observe the lessons of the past and those of the present. Many still think that Architecture is just **building**, while forgetting that it is really a

complete attitude towards life, affecting (and reflecting) man's physical, social and intellectual well-being.

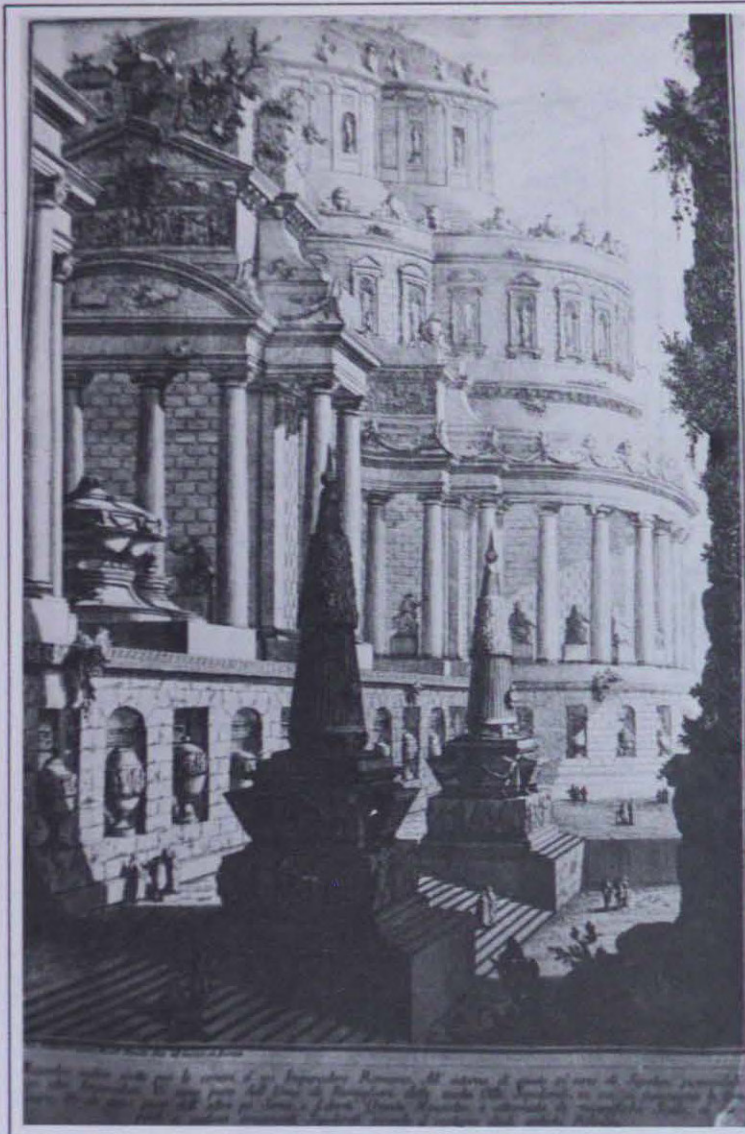
Therefore THE FIFTH COLUMN reaffirms its original premise: "that architectural learning" (which ought to continue throughout an architect's life) "cannot be an **insular process**, but rather one which thrives on varied informational stimuli." (Editorial: Volume 1, Issue 1). We are also retaining our format of loose themes, which will continue to allow for a variety of articles on education, current architecture, and our heritage.

THE FIFTH COLUMN hopes to promote this variety by encouraging communication between the whole architectural community. It is important that this channel of communication is an active one, and we therefore hope to improve it in the coming year. We are excited that more and more different types of people in different places across the world are becoming part of our readership. We are also excited that students in the various Schools across Canada will now be part of THE FIFTH COLUMN through their RAIC Chapters, providing it with sources for new ideas and opinions. Welcome to you all. You are important in giving THE FIFTH COLUMN a national

dimension and infusing the magazine with a new dose of students' **raw energy**. THE FIFTH COLUMN will become a truly **Canadian** student magazine, with interested students in each School acting as Regional Editors, collecting material and having input into the Editorial policy.

All of these new sources will help provide the variety of ideas that is basic to THE FIFTH COLUMN's objectives. However, now the ball is in your, our readers', court. You can help to develop THE FIFTH COLUMN into a magazine of true communication, of response and reaction, of point and counterpoint. We need to look more at current developments in the worldwide architectural community, and we depend upon you to send in your comments and to open up issues of concern. It is important. For THE FIFTH COLUMN remains the last resort of the **blind romantics** of Architecture. Unfettered by the daily world of Developers, Big Offices and Big Money, it remains to preserve that idealistic notion of our profession: that Architecture is an **art**, shaping our society and its way of life, and that we must therefore practice it only with continuing observation, awareness and concern. □

S.W.



Critical ideas on perspective and architecture
as a part of a complex conceptual notion...

PIRANESI

AND THE IDEA OF CRITICAL DRAWING

by James Aitken

*Jim Aitken is a graduate architect
working in the Montreal office of
Peter Lanken.*

THE EARLIEST examples of architectural drawing in the 'modern' era date from the Thirteenth Century and the sketchbook of French gentleman designer Villard de Honnecourt. Regular use of architectural drawings as we now know them, however, does not occur until the Italian Renaissance of the Fifteenth Century. Since then the notion of 'architectural drawing' has undergone several transformations. In each transformation the 'revolution' is never complete and traces of *l'ancien regime* persist. Consequently 'architectural drawing' stands today as a complex conceptual notion with layers of accrued rhetoric. Precise analysis then is possible only through an archaeological unravelling of drawing's constituent concepts.

Colin Rowe tells us that "the artistic process is not the impressionistic record of the thing seen; but is rather

the informing of observation by a philosophical idea". Drawings may be considered a trace or graphic record of this idea. Drawing transformations are thus predicated on changing philosophical ideas.

Historically, the first philosophical idea informing architectural drawings can be characterized as 'symbolic-iconic'. The representative image is created as a substitute for the object which it intends. Thus, for the purposes of the author, which may or may not require visual likeness, the image is the intended.

The next 'idea' distinguishes between the image and the intended object, and sets up analogical relations between the two. These referential relations are of two types which may be characterized as 'pictorial-empirical' and 'rational-abstract'. Pictorial-empirical drawings cater to

the visually accessible world while rational-abstract drawings appeal to the intellect of the observer and depend upon a conceptual understanding of the intended object. In both cases the idea of 'form' is reduced from its metaphysical iconic 'essence' to more empirical 'shape'. The drawing still derives its form and structure from its subject but is more conscious of itself as a representative image. Referential drawings in general promote a consciousness of design and thus a conscious awareness of the idea informing the drawing. In symbolic-iconic drawings on the other hand, the 'idea' is relatively transparent to its users.

The third transformation renders the drawing completely independent of the subject it graphically recreates. The drawing is now a fully self-conscious image. As a work, the drawing stands

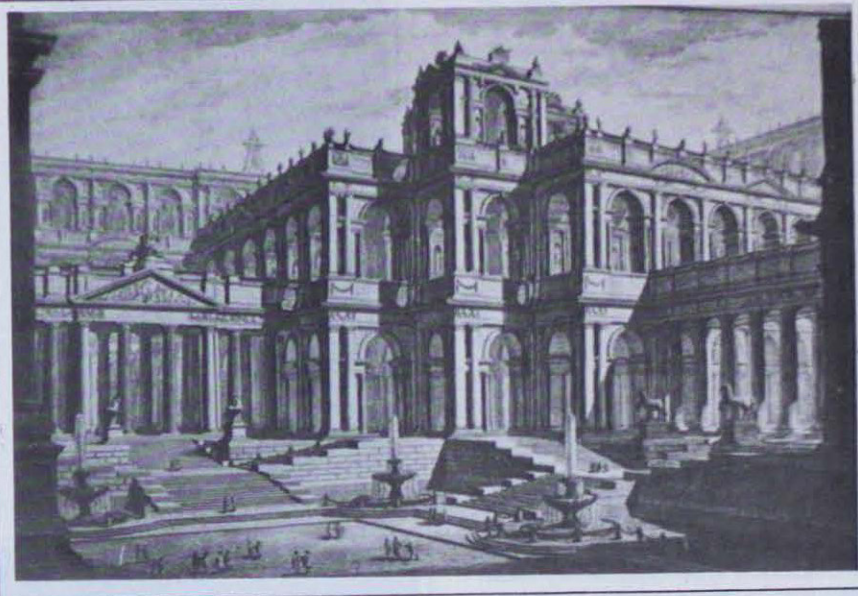
left: Ancient Mausoleum
 top right: Ancient Roman Forum
 bottom right: Ancient Roman Capital

on its own, independent of all external worlds, and capable of sustaining its own internally coherent virtual world. The drawing is a fiction and, as fiction in literature, it is **not** reality but is **like** reality. It thus becomes a meta-reality: a second and potentially valid reality which is similar to but removed from the first. It is thus capable of passing critical commentary on the first. Meta-reality, as a metaphor (an image designed to 'carry (the idea) beyond' the immediate) can critically extend and develop the meanings of the system or work upon that which it is operating. Drawings of this type, which deal with issues independent of the subject, can be characterized as 'critical-atmospheric'.

Manfredo Tafuri has traced the development of drawings as critical images from the first illustrated architectural texts by Sebastiano Serlio through Peruzzi to Palladio. It was Palladio's refinement and canonization of graphic conventions that led to the development of the first fully coherent architectural meta-language. Montano provides an early aberration to the classical ordering principles with his series of church plans that challenge the notion of centrality. He provides exceptions to the rule that test it in **a consistent manner** and thus establishes a counter metalanguage: mannerism. Piranesi's *Prima Parte d'Architettura e Prospettive* provides much the same challenge to perspective as a space ordering concept and to linear perspective as the fiction that recreates conceptual perspective on paper.

Piranesi published the "Prima Parte", his first text, in 1743. His purpose was stated in the introduction to the plates.

"These speaking ruins have filled my spirit with images that accurate drawings, even those of the immortal Palladio, could never have succeeded in conveying, though I always kept



them before my eyes. Therefore, having the idea of presenting to the world some of these images, but not hoping for an architect of these times who could effectively execute some of them... there seems to be no recourse than for me or some other modern architect to explain his ideas through his drawings and so to take away from sculpture and painting the advantage, as the great Juvarda has said, they now have here over architecture...".

G.B. Piranesi
Prima Parte d'Architettura e Prospettive, 1743.

These drawings - fanciful constructions of antique Roman building types - reveal Piranesi's early critical preoccupations. Examining the publication as a set of plates clearly reveals their critical value. There are at least four themes or parameters internal to the work which are experimentally controlled and varied.

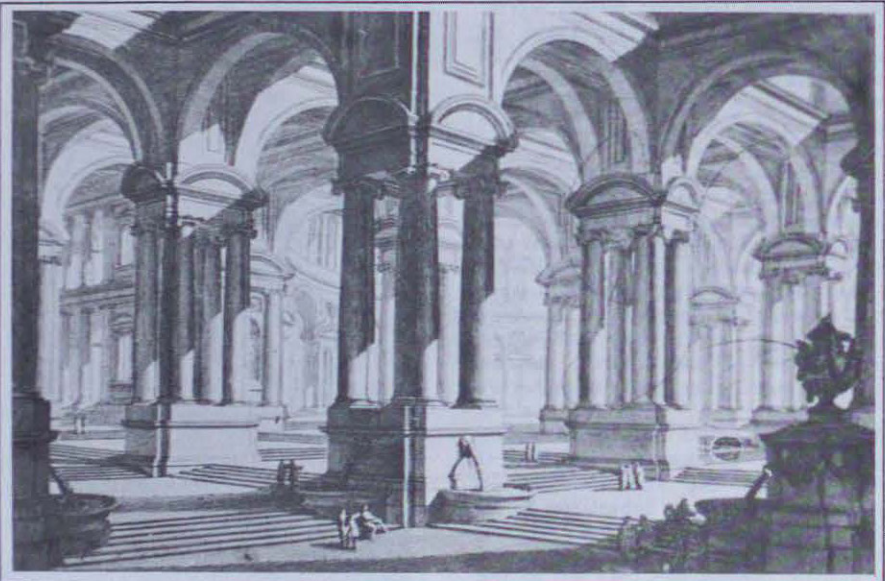
One theme considers the relations of object and space within the graphic image. Plates such as the diagonally receding view of the 'Ancient Mausoleum' focus on the building as a monumental object. The 'Ancient Forum', 'Ancient Capitol' and 'Group of Stairs' emphasize a perspective spatial structure defined by the architecture.

top left: Great Gallery
top right: Ancient Temple of Vesta
middle: Group of Stairs
bottom: Magnificent Bridge



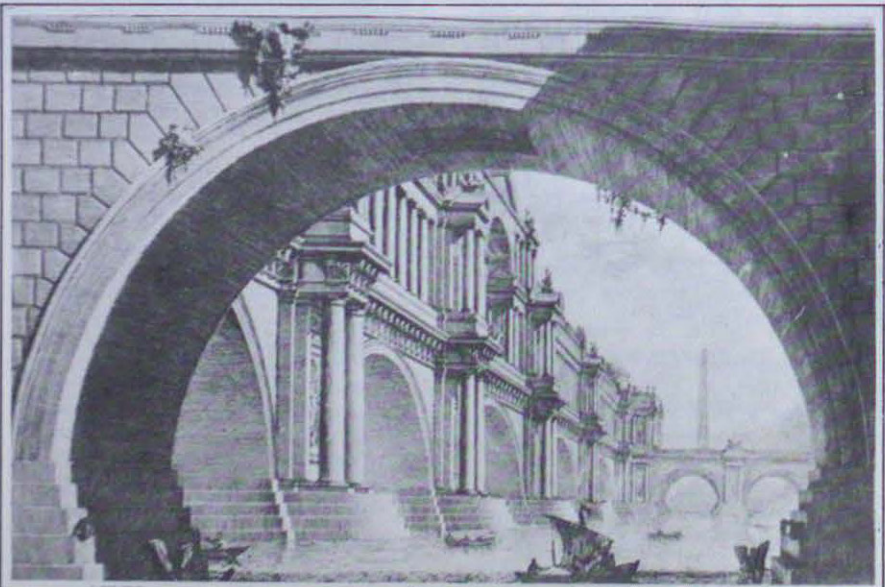
The architecture in turn acts as a setting for objects.

In some plates the focus is unclear. The 'Ancient Forum' focuses as much on the framed space in the foreground as on the object in the background. The reverse is true of the 'Magnificent Bridge' where the bridge competes with the space framed by its arch. In the 'Great Gallery' the central group of columns vies with the space surrounding it for our attention. In 'Ancient Roman Room' space exists both before and beyond the planar object of the pedimented portico. The graphic structure of the 'Great Gallery' is similar to the central region of the 'Group of Stairs' which more or less asserts the perspective structure of the space.



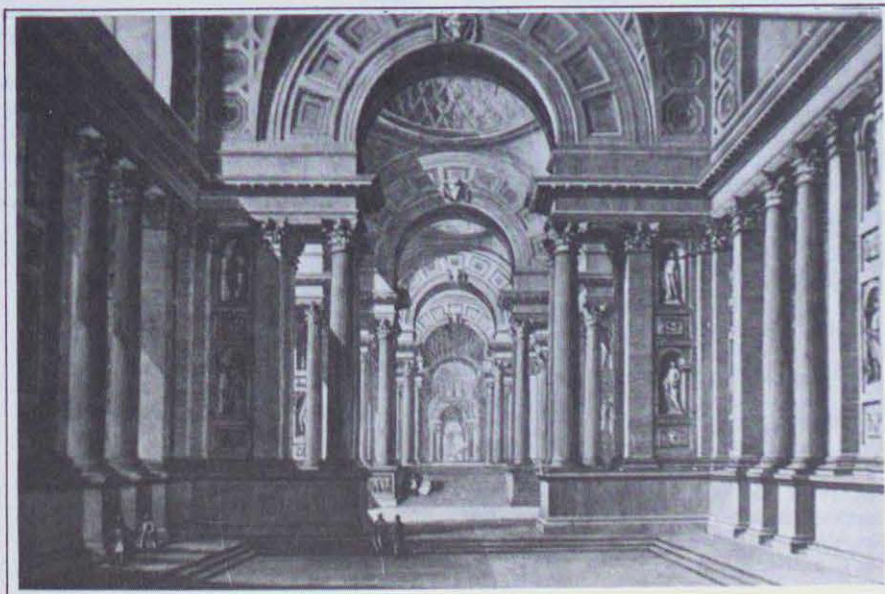
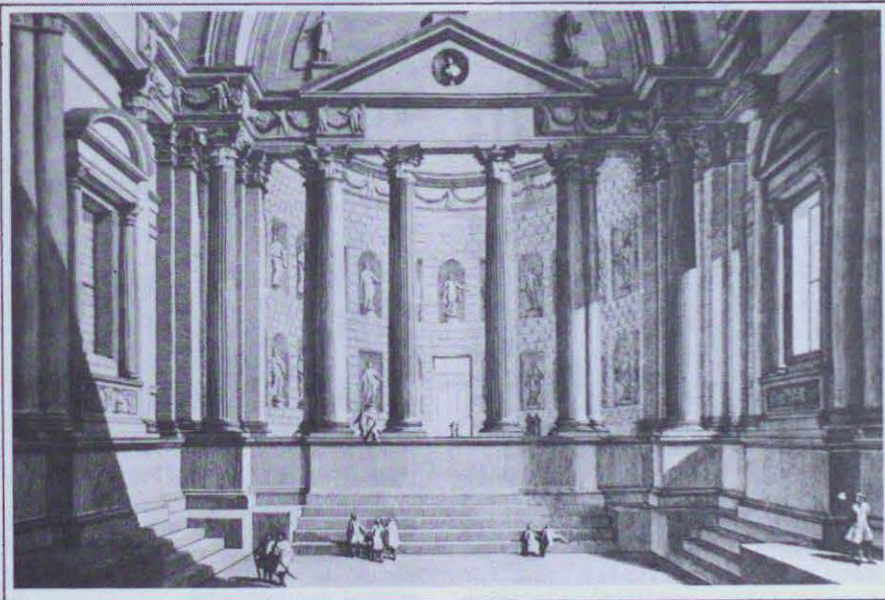
Another theme explores the principles of ordering objects within the view. Three distinct principles are apparent. First is the precise location of individual objects within a rigid perspective spatial structure. One can easily imagine reconstructing the plan layout of the monuments in the 'Ancient Capitol' or the column groups in the 'Group of Stairs' from the information given in the perspective view. Another principle is the creation of a centre around or about which objects are regularly disposed. The 'Temple of Vesta' for example assembles the circular colonnade of the reconstructed temple, a circular stair, and the hemispherical dome of the pantheon. The third principle is apparently complete randomness where objects are simply piled up with no centre or perspective structure. The 'Ruins of Ancient Buildings' and 'Ruins of an Ancient Tomb' are both of this type.

A close examination of these plates however reveals certain discrepancies between the actual and the apparent order. The 'Group of Stairs' in fact cannot be rationalized into plan form as has been shown by Piranesian scholar Ulya Vogt-Goknil. In the 'Temple of Vesta' the centres defined





top left: Ruins of an Ancient Tomb
top right: Ruins of an Ancient Building
middle: Ancient Roman Room
bottom: Ancient Temple



by the various elements do not actually coincide. The lack of a cohesive spatial ordering principle turns this 'reconstruction by direct quotation' into a pile of incoherent objects, destroying both historical and spatial perspective.

These discrepancies are hardly errors. Rather they are calculated challenges to the validity of **linear** perspective and centrality as ordering principles.

The next theme involves principles of ordering the space of the view. In all of the plates, save those where objects are simply piled up, linear perspective is the spatial organizing principle. Of these plates there are three types of perspective views. The 'Ancient Temple' presents us with a pure frontal view and a central vanishing point. In this view Piranesi actually 'constructs' the vanishing point while in 'Ancient Roman Room' he obscures it by the curved wall at the rear. The 'Magnificent Bridge' is similar but with an oblique frontal view and a single eccentric vanishing point. The third type is an 'aggressive' oblique view with orthogonals receding to vanishing points left and right. This graphic structure is usually employed to emphasize objects as it gives prominence to their leading vertical edge. Piranesi however uses it to explore also spatial depth as in the 'Group of Stairs' and 'Carcere Oscura'.

The apparent rhetorical order of the perspective space of these drawings is also subject to scrutiny. Linear perspective, by definition, is a focussed system. In the 'Magnificent Bridge' however, the centres defined by the frontal view of the bridge arch, the vanishing point of this arch, the vanishing point of the receding buildings to the left, the vanishing point of the arches in the background, the planimetric centre of the colonnade in the background, and the base of the obelisk, do not coincide.

right: Carcere Oscura
left: Group of Columns

The final theme concerns rendering style or technique, of which there are two. The forms in the title page and other drawings of ruins are built up out of shadows indicated by loose organic lines in the manner of the later *groteschi*. The ruins are tentative forms with a fragmentary existence in the Eighteenth Century - a once grand order fallen into ruin. The other style has the crisp prismatic appearance of a neoclassical engraving. Buildings in a newly constructed state are geometrically delineated with shadows indicated by a series of relatively even weight parallel lines. The two styles together give the impression of an historical perspective with distance in time rather than distance in space causing the *sfumato* atmospheric distortion of the lines in the ruins.

In summary, these plates, are a systematic putting to the test of two organizing principles. These are:

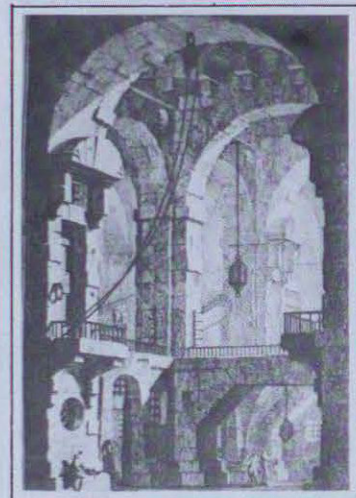
- i) the continuing debate on 'centrality' carried over from the traditions of Palladio and Montano, and here applied to the graphic organization of objects; and
- ii) the graphic convention of linear perspective, which is not the structure of space but a rhetorical artistic device used to create the illusion of real space. Linear perspective, and indeed all drawing, is fictional and independent of reality. As such it all has critical value.

This publication, which translates as 'First Part of Architecture and Perspective' belongs to the established tradition of architectural treatises which are prefaced by graphic essays on either geometry and perspective or the orders of classical antiquity. The latter are treatises modelled on Palladio (who actually took it from Serlio's fourth book) and the former are modelled on Serlio himself. Immediate precedents to Piranesi's



publication include the works on architecture and perspective by the Bibiena, a Bolognese family of stage designers. Piranesi's spatial constructions display similar scenographic qualities providing settings for objects and human actions. The horizon or viewpoint of the observer is set approximately one third of the way up the page at the base of the architecture, similar to the Bibiena drawings. The horizon line divides the plane of human action - flat surfaces, stairs, water, etcetera - from the upper region occupied by the building. The figures appear as miniature actors below the observer while the grand buildings tower above him. In addition, these scenographic views are framed by dark elements in the foreground that recall the proscenium stage.

The "Prima Parte" however, is a major departure from the aforementioned tradition. Its purpose is not to give instruction on the methods of linear perspective construction, but to actively use it as an expressive tool, perhaps in a virtuoso performance, and in any case to reveal its fallacies and its contradictions. These are



Piranesi's critical ideas on perspective and architecture as presented in his drawings. He uses the autonomous fictional world of the drawing as a virtual form with which to make his critical commentaries. □

Notes

1. Validity is a function of internal consistency.
2. The idea - the design - belongs to the subject. The drawing merely exhibits this design. The substance of the design is not exclusive to the drawing itself.
3. The terms of this likeness need not be visual similarity.

De la Réforme

Par Michel Nadeau

Michel Nadeau est un étudiant à l'Ecole d'Architecture de l'Université McGill.

Le XIXe siècle, finalement, développa son style - au XXe siècle...

LA PERIODE circonscrite par la rubrique 'Movements de Réformes' s'étend sur cent cinquante ans, de 1750 jusqu'à l'aube du XXe siècle, et peut-être calibrée d'assez près par les conditions socio-politiques et économiques d'Europe pendant cette époque. Depuis la Révolution Industrielle en Angleterre, en 1750, jusqu'aux changements de formes de gouvernement dans divers pays du continent, toute la période contribue à donner à l'Européen du XIXe siècle l'impression qu'il est libre et maître de son destin. Ces conditions favorise les changements des désirs et des normes en Architecture. La nouvelle classe bourgeoise devient protectrice de l'architecture, changeant ainsi les définitions de style, bon goût et convenance.

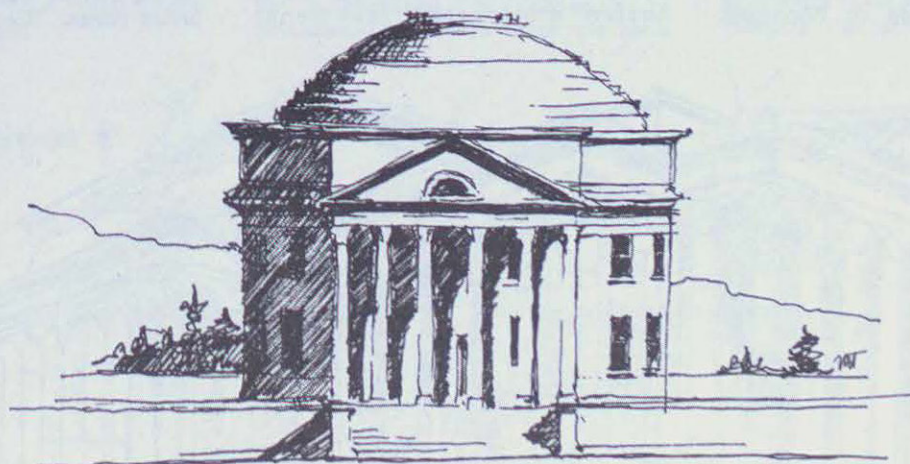
Le baroque et le rococo, pierres d'angles de l'architecture bourgeoise, sont conduits vers des excès sans précédents, excès qui donneront envie aux plus érudits de retourner vers des sources purs de formes architecturales.

Les Français, menés par des sentiments nationalistes se sont rapidement tournés vers François Mansart, tandis qu'en Angleterre, les 'gentlemen-architects', faisant face aux mêmes problèmes, mais sans motivations patriotiques, choisirent Palladio comme modèle à imiter. Palladio fut sélectionné. Pour deux raisons: il avait écrit un livre alors traduit en Anglais et, en tant que dessinateur d'un groupe d'intellectuels vénitiens, il devait avoir étudié les précédents romains. L'évolution

logique d'un retour en arrière jusqu'à Palladio, qui influençait aussi Le Vau, fut d'utiliser directement les ruines romaines.

Tandis qu'en France on construisait le Petit Trianon et qu'en Allemagne l'Enemalienburg était érigé, les mouvements de réformes aggrandaient leur cercle d'influence. En Amérique, la bibliothèque de l'Université de Virginie s'élevait comme une copie du Panthéon de Rome alors que Jefferson, pendant qu'il était en France, recommandait que le Capitole de Richmond en Virginie soit érigé sur le modèle de la Maison Carré à Nîmes.

En réaction à la totale liberté, pendant la période Baroque,



la bibliothèque de l'Université de Virginie



Maison Carrée - Nîmes

d'articulation d'éléments tectoniques, la Réforme Romaine les asservis complètement aux règles établies par Vitruve dans ses "Dix Livres sur L'Architecture", et aux précédents des ruines, souvent en désaccord avec l'autre.

L'utilisation extensive de ruines comme précédents introduit en Europe du Nord la notion de pittoresque, exploitant la mégalomanie et l'affection romantique des choses anciennes.

Vitruve mentionnait, dans ses livres, l'utilisation des édifices grecs dans l'établissement de ses principes. Ce que Vitruve rapportait semblait entrer en conflit direct avec les temples de Paestum, colonie grecque sur la péninsule italique, que Soufflot, alors à l'Académie, à Rome, venait de mesurer. La seule autre source de connaissances de la Grèce antique était le travail de Travols, alors vieux de plus de mille ans. Avec l'affaiblissement de l'Empire Ottoman, les portes de la Grèce s'ouvrent aux Européens et Julien Darib Leroy est le premier à visiter Athènes. Il rapporte de sa visite de l'Acropole,

des documents démontrant la différence entre Paestum et le cœur de la culture grecque.

La suprématie architecturale attribuée au Parthénon n'était basée que sur les 'Marbres d'Elgin', un groupe de statues que le comte d'Elgin avait fait enlever du fronton du temple. La collection avait été jugée supérieure au travail de Praxitèle, sculpteur grec d'environ 400 avant J.C. et reconnue comme le meilleur artiste de l'histoire de la Grèce. L'excellence des travaux de Praxitèle, que Rome avait essayée d'égaler, mais sans réussir, était suffisante pour faire du Parthénon la dernière œuvre architecturale correcte avant la décadence de la Grèce.

Une des règles de base des défenseurs de la Réforme Grecque demandait que l'intercolumniation soit, ou entièrement close, ou entièrement ouverte. Cette notion d'intégrité les menât



Capitol de Richmond en Virginie

directement au concept de forme pure qu'ils basaient sur la sculpture nue, la forme du corps humain, sans altération de mode.

Le champ d'étude des réformistes greco-romains s'est vu largement étendu par la découverte de Pompéii. Robert Adams fut le premier à réaliser les parallèles entre les intérieurs pompéiens et ceux du rococo français. L'utilisation des miroirs dans les intérieurs menât Adams et d'autres à l'utilisation des parallaxes dans les plans d'ensembles extérieurs.

Le pittoresque joue un rôle important dans tous les mouvements de réformes et son extrapolation mena, éventuellement, à la réforme gothique. L'emprise du pittoresque fut tel que l'architecture fut redéfinie, pour un temps, comme étant ce qui donne de belles ruines. Ceci fut exprimé dans



St. George's Hall - Liverpool



Nouveau Louvres - Paris

la présentation architecturale par la fréquente addition de dessins à haut contraste du bâtiment en ruines, comme ce fut fait par un étudiant de John Soane pour sa nouvelle Banque d'Angleterre.

En France, vers 1850, on voit apparaître un mouvement de Réforme de la Renaissance. Parallèle à la haute architecture victorienne en Angleterre, la Réforme Renaissance prend une richesse plus grande que son équivalent anglais, comme on le voit dans la façade du Nouveau Louvres (1852-57). En 1864, l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts est mise en tutelle par le gouvernement français. Avec l'étude des précédents anciens, l'emphase est placée sur les plans axiaux, comme le démontre l'Opéra de Paris. Cet édifice fait un tel pas en avant en qualité de design et en termes de richesse qu'il initie, pour certains, une forme de néo-baroque.

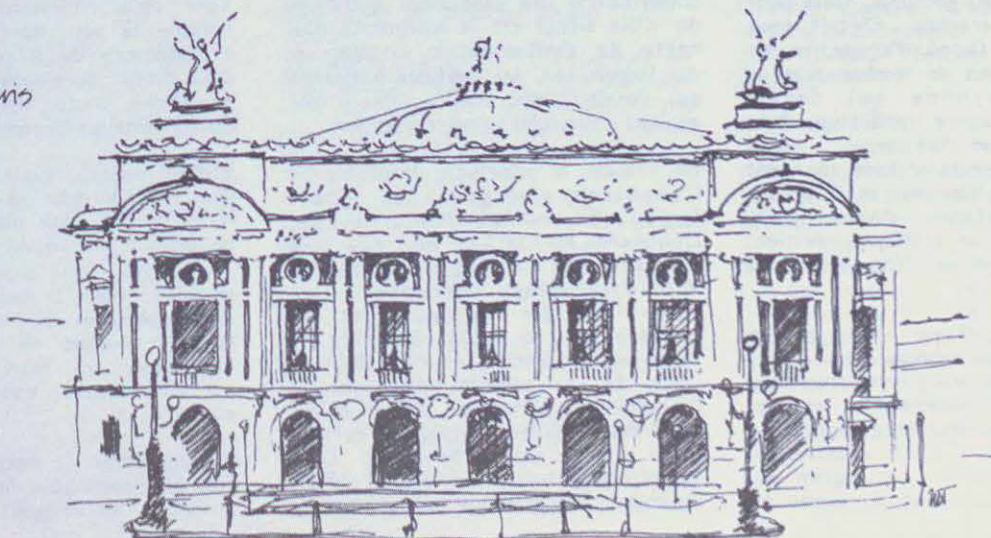
Contrairement aux réformes précédentes, le talent des architectes de la Réforme Renaissance ne se situe pas dans la création de façade à haute précision archéologique mais dans la liberté de son utilisation du vocabulaire tectonique mis à sa disposition. Dans sa description du Reform Club de Londres, César Dali déclare que le bâtiment de Charles Barry transcende le mariage inerte des matériaux pour atteindre la complexité des organismes vivants irrigués par de complexes systèmes de circulations. James Ferguson crédite les architectes de ce mouvement pour avoir réintroduit le bon sens en Architecture.¹ La Réforme de la Renaissance a dégénérée, en Autriche et en Allemagne en un mouvement d'éclectisme bordant souvent sur la copie pure et simple.

En Angleterre, le retour à la renaissance a générée toute une série

de mouvements de courtes durées et aux origines complexes. La construction du Foreign Office en 1860 par Sir Gilbert Scott apparaît comme un indicateur de ces mouvements qui ont laissés des formes typiques, telles les cheminées massives et la maçonnerie variée du style 'Queen Anne'. Toute cette succession culmine en 1890 avec la création d'un néo-baroque par John Belcher dans son "Institute of Chartered Accountants" à Londres. Equivalent en expression à l'Opéra de Paris, il laisse prévoir des tendances qui dureront, en Angleterre, jusque dans les années 1920, manifestées par l'observation des principes classiques sans l'utilisation des détails des réformes.

Parallèlement, à partir des années 1840, on voit apparaître, en France et en Angleterre, une Réforme Gothique. En Angleterre, ce mouvement naît de quatre idéaux: Romantique, Politique, Religieux et Technologique. A.W.N. Pugin est largement responsable du détournement de la population de l'architecture classique vers l'architecture gothique. Il a écrit plusieurs livres dans lesquels il compare l'architecture et la vie des

L'Opéra de Paris





London Law Courts

époques moderne et médiévale, toujours à l'avantage du Moyen-Age. Dans "The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture" de 1841, il présente une théorie rationaliste de design avec les mêmes résultats: pour lui une bâtiment doit exprimer sa structure et le gothique nous offre les seuls précédents valable de ce genre. John Ruskin, de son côté, réclamait aussi le retour au gothique, mais pour des raisons différentes. C'était, pour lui, la seule façon d'empêcher les hommes modernes de tomber dans la débauche payenne qui devait inévitablement suivre l'utilisation d'une architecture non-chrétienne. Après 1850, les précédents utilisés changent du gothique anglais pour se fixer sur le gothique italien d'abord puis, finalement, sur le gothique vénitien, sous l'influence de "The Stones of Venice" par Ruskin.

L'architecture gothique a été rendue populaire par son association avec les systèmes légaux et gouvernementaux anglais, particulièrement dans les pays possédant un gouvernement totalitaire, tel la France. L'association du gothique avec la religion du Moyen-Age a contribué à convaincre

les représentants des Eglises d'Europe que le gothique était la bonne architecture.

La rénovation de Newstead Abbey par Lord Byron marque un point tournant dans la popularisation du gothique en infusant une notion de prestige dans les ruines anglaises.

L'assymétrie des élévations gothiques du XIXe siècle est la marque la plus nette de l'influence du pittoresque. Au Moyen-Age, les édifices gothiques qui devaient être vues de l'extérieur étaient construits symétriquement.

En France, le principale défenseur de l'architecture gothique était Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. Débutant sa carrière en 1854 sous l'égide de Prosper Mérimé, Viollet-le-Duc entreprend les renovations des Carcassones et des cathédrales de Laon, Vézelay et Saint-Savin. Partenaire de Labrousse lors de la construction de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Viollet-le-Duc deviendra l'influence la plus importante de la seconde moitié du siècle. Dans de multiples travaux écrits, il décrit l'architecture gothique en termes de

rationalisme structural, et déclare que tout bon design doit se baser sur une construction rationnelle. Viollet-le-Duc fut l'un des principaux défenseurs de l'utilisation des nouveaux matériaux de construction comme moyen d'arriver à une architecture du XIXe siècle.

Viollet-le-Duc et A.W.N. Pugin étaient très proches en théorie et en pratique. Tous deux considéraient le gothique comme la seule base possible à une architecture du XIXe siècle et tous deux sûrent développer le genre en un système structural logique se conformant au béton et à la fonte.

Viollet-le-Duc n'avait que deux règles dans son approche au design. D'abord, il ne doit y avoir aucun élément sur un édifice qui ne soit nécessaire à la convenance, à la construction ou à la propriété (ceci le reliant aux théories de Laugier et de Vitruve). Ensuite, tout ornement ne doit être qu'un enrichissement, qu'une enluminure sur un élément essentiel de la construction.

En Angleterre, le mouvement s'élève à son plus haut sous la construction du nouveau Parlement à Londres par

Barry dans les années 1840 et, dans les années '60 et '70, par la construction par Burges de châteaux tel Cardiff Castle et Castle Coch pour culminer, entre 1871 et 1882, dans la construction, par G.E. Street, du nouveau "London Law Courts".

L'utilisation de la polychromie à travers tous les mouvements de réformes a d'abord été introduite par Butterfield pour remédier à la monotonie des villes anglaises. Il y a trois théories de polychromie: John Ruskin s'est inspiré des palais vénitiens et s'est justifié par le hasard de la coloration dans la nature, tandis que G.E. Street s'est inspirée des églises de l'ouest de l'Italie et s'est justifié par la coloration structurale. La troisième théorie est basée sur les traces de peintures découvertes à l'extérieur des temples grec du cinquième siècle avant J.C.²

L'architecture académique et le style Beaux-Arts dominèrent le continent de 1870 jusqu'à la fin du siècle. Le résultat fut une étrange combinaison de précédents antiques, d'échelle baroque et de richesse impériale, donnant lieu à des édifices tel le monument Victor Emmanuel II à Rome.

La Hollande et la Scandinavie tendèrent, sous l'influence de Viollet-le-Duc, vers une architecture plus rationnelle, plus humaine qui les menât, entre autres, à la réintroduction de la brique comme principal matériau de construction. Ce mouvement a mené, à travers Nyrop au Danemark, Ostberg en Suède et Eeliel Saarinen en Finlande, à la mise en place des fondations de l'architecture du XXe siècle dans ces pays.

En Angleterre, la Réforme Vernaculaire encouragea l'utilisation de matériaux locaux et de corps de métiers traditionnels, particulièrement dans les années 1880 et 1890 sous le "Arts and Crafts Movement".

La fin du siècle fit place à plusieurs mouvements qui ravivèrent l'espoir de voir le XIXe siècle développer un style. Les structures hybrides de fer et de verre laissait entrevoir une lueur, tandis qu'en Espagne, dans les années '80, Antonio Gaudí, travaillant avec le béton armé, créait des édifices aux formes nouvelles, organiques, souvent associées, bien qu'à tort, avec les formes encore à venir de l'Art Nouveau. Ce mouvement, sortie des ateliers de Victor Horta, dans les années '90 en Belgique, utilise la malléabilité du fer forgé pour créer des formes sans précédents. Le vaste intérêt que reçut l'Art Nouveau fut probablement dû à un dernier espoir de trouver une architecture du XIXe siècle.

La bataille des styles a eu pour principal effet de soulever la question de l'expression d'un édifice. Dépassant le simple besoin d'exactitude archéologique, l'architecte devait maintenant sans cesse se questionner. Un bâtiment devait-il exprimer sa structure, la partie physique, palpable de son existence, ou devait-il exprimer une vérité plus intellectuelle, plus près de l'âme? Au prise avec ces questions, le XIXe siècle s'est éteint sans laisser de réponse claire.

Cependant, que serait l'architecture du XXe siècle si Leroy et Elgin ne nous avait pas permis de faire du Parthénon la quintessence de l'architecture, pivot des arguments de LeCorbusier dans "Vers une Architecture"? Sur quoi aurait-il basé son système Do-mi-no si ce n'était du système de grille de Jean Nicholas Louis Durand et du travail de Joseph Monier, François Coignet et François Hennebique?

Les grands architectes du début du XXe siècle tel LeCorbusier, Gropius, Aalto et Mies Van der Rohe ont tous basé leur travaux sur les résultats des expériences du XIXe siècle.

L'apparente nudité de nos édifices modernes qui semble manifesté le bris

le plus radicale entre les deux siècles est pourtant le résultat direct des mouvements d'ecclésiastismes en Allemagne et en Autriche qui permirent à Adolph Loos d'écrire en 1906, un article intitulé "Ornament and Crime". Cet article est largement reconnu comme la cause principale de la transmutation du symbolisme de l'ornement vers un symbolisme de la puissance et de la fonction. C'est cette mutation qui permit à Walter Gropius d'écrire, en 1935, dans "The New Architecture and the Bauhaus" que le but ultime de l'architecture moderne était la création composite mais inséparable de l'oeuvre d'art dans laquelle il serait impossible de différencier entre le monumental et l'ornemental.

Architecturalement, donc le XXe siècle est inséparable de XIXe, et il nous faut voir comme un seul ensemble l'évolution de l'architecture moderne à partir des prises de positions du XIXe siècle. □

Notes

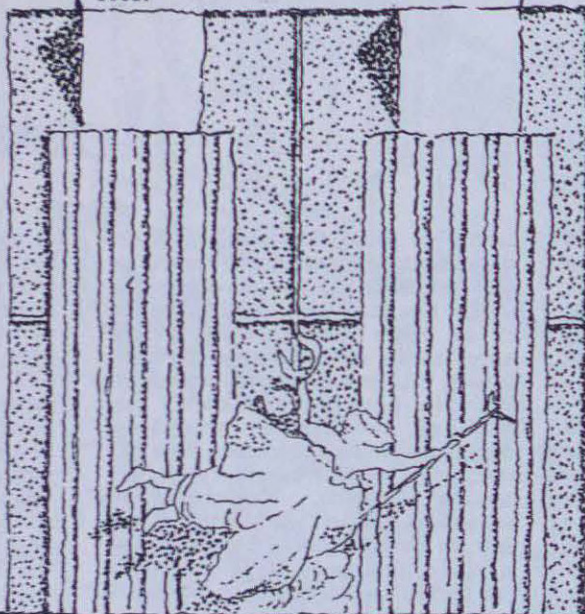
1. Peter Collins, "Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture"
2. Sir Banister Fletcher, "A History of Architecture"

Références

- Peter Collins, "Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture"
 Sir Banister Fletcher, "A History of Architecture"
 Walter Gropius, "The New Architecture and the Bauhaus"
 LeCorbusier, "Towards a new Architecture"
 Nikolaus Pevsner, "Pioneers of Modern Architecture"; "The Sources of Modern Architecture and Design"
 John Ruskin, "The Seven Lamps of Architecture"
 John Summerson, "Heavenly Mansions and other essays on Architecture"

GRAVES' NEW WORLD

Architect Michael Graves was interviewed by William Mark Pimlott of THE FIFTH COLUMN in April 1981.



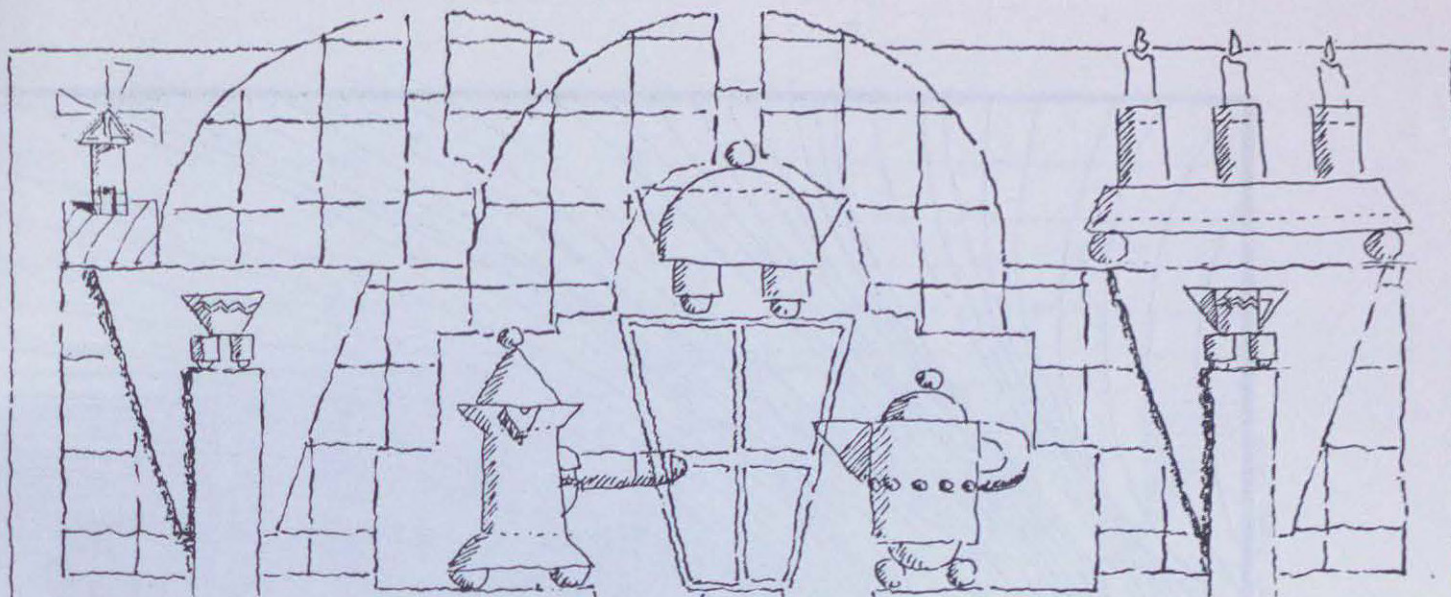
THE FIFTH COLUMN: You have been growing and evolving a style rather subtly over the last fifteen years and throughout that time your work seems to have anticipated or gone along with contemporary movements - from the Linear City thing of the mid-sixties that you wrote with Peter Eisenman, through the Late-Modern work like Hanselman House right to your present stage which started with your Warehouse or the Claghorn House. The words and their messages seem so completely different. What are your feelings about this as you look back over that rather short period of your evolution?

MICHAEL GRAVES: Yes, it does appear to be different. I find that over those fifteen years that there has been a very very slow, gradual change in the work. It's not something that happened overnight nor something that isn't very considered on my part. If Claghorn was the manifestation of that full blown, there are nevertheless those like Snydermann, Alexander, my Warehouse and even Hanselmann that included thematic references. What I had not done at that point is realize that the thematic thing that one was attempting to employ makes the work narrative or textual had to go to a more explicit configuration to be read, to be understood. Hanselmann and Benaceraff suffer a bit because their

language is primarily geometric and abstract, and later works like Portland and Fargo-Moorhead are more figurative. And if you look at the first work and the last work, yes, you see almost two different hands, but the architectural concerns were the same. I simply didn't have the ability or the means or... I didn't have the practice to make the connection between the figurative and the theme, and the theme and the geometry in the early work, as a mis-connect, which I think I do in the later work.

TFC: Drawing seems to be an important design tool for you. Could you expound a bit on the 'levels of drawing' as you seem to have defined them and maybe on the drawing-design process?

GRAVES: The thing that I've realized lately - very strange that it comes so late - is that you really can't make an architecture if you don't draw. There are a number of good architects who don't draw. We know that they work in their offices as hard as I work, they are as serious about their work as I am about mine and they might offer alternatives to some sort of diagrammatic proposition or part to people in the office to work out - and they might act as critics, and their work comes out splendidly well. I think one can think of lots of



instances where that's true, but I don't think you can really fine-tune the building, fine-tune the object and the ideas simultaneously if you don't draw. Drawing or modelling, or any way of describing for yourself the compositional relationships, the pieces of the puzzle, and if you look at the history of architecture, you see that great architecture is only made by the relationship of building and drawing, and not one or the other; not paper architecture on the one hand or just building on the other.

TFC: What do you think about your drawings and how they are doing at the Max Protech Gallery - the prices they are fetching, it must be quite heady.

GRAVES: Quite what?

TFC: Heady.

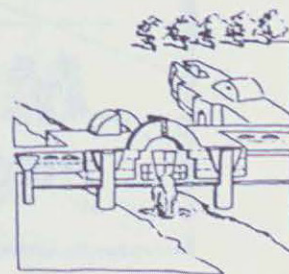
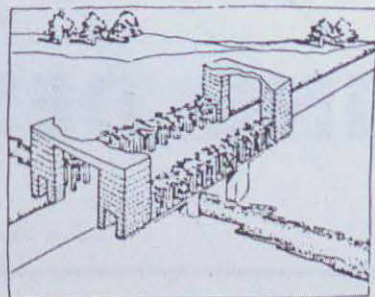
GRAVES: I don't know. It might surprise you, but I'm really sorry to see the drawings go. I would like to have them. I would like to own them. I could of course, but it would make life in the office very difficult, in that the sale of drawings over the last few years has helped support the office. Projects like Portland are now picking up the slack, but I also have some faith that tomorrow there will be another drawing, and that it's a matter of public record now and I don't have to have the object (drawing) in a drawer somewhere - but in my heart of hearts I'd just love to own all of them. But, in a way, we must sell them in order to continue

exploring other projects to the degree that we do. I mean, we have a kind of losing proposition in our office in a monetary sense, so we need all the support that one can muster from royalties on furniture and fabrics and things like rugs and other objects that we make, to the sale of drawings. All of that goes to supporting people who are fine-tuning those other issues in the larger scheme of things in our office. So, I don't know where all of that will end, I don't know why architects' drawings have not always been for sale. Maybe one should explore that for a while, why its only been the province of the painters and the sculptors. I also think that one of the reasons that there is an interest in architectural drawings today is that in the painter's world, which is primarily non-figurative, there is very little to love. People are looking at architects' works as something that has both content and identity to it, in a way that other elements of the art world do not.

TFC: The translation of drawing to building, in your case, seems to leave a lot of people dissatisfied. They complain about your buildings' flimsiness, about the notion of cardboard architecture, about the lasting quality of your architecture. How do you regard yourself as a builder?

GRAVES: I don't know quite how to answer that... I guess it's their problem and not necessarily mine. There are... I mean, Peter Eisenman talks about cardboard architecture in positive terms, because Peter wants it very clear that the idea of architecture dwells primarily in the mind. That's Peter Eisenman's interest. Mine would be not only that, but also in the tactile sense. I've always been interested in making things. I wouldn't be practising today if my buildings were leaking... or falling down, or any other thing that anyone would want to criticize me or others for. Even 'Johnny Technocrat' has troubles with his buildings, because it's such a medieval process of putting something like that together. If your Chevrolet leaks, and they put together millions and millions and millions of them, surely you'd think they would be dry by now, but they aren't, and they are fancy machines. Building is by comparison, as I said before, medieval. And maybe it shouldn't be, but each time out, it's a new ballgame. We share experiences with the thing before, and there are good principles of pragmatic practice. But, the chances of failure are pretty great. This doesn't mean that when one tries something conceptually, that you can't also keep the building dry. There's always somebody out there who will say, "If you do one you can't do the other". I'm pretty impatient with that and I don't think it's worth discussing much.

The above drawings have been reprinted from Michael Graves' sketch books from the last few years.





MURDOCH LAING DESIGN

mcgill university 1981

An urban house for the principal
Excerpts are shown from the prize-sharing entry
as well as those of Randy Cohen,



Layout: Johanne Beland, Sebastiano Campanella, Eugenio Carrelli

COMPETITION

al of a distinguished university.
ries of Tony Zinno and William Mark Pimlott,
Howard Davies and Duncan Swain.

The most misunderstood of movements in Architecture, Mannerism, has a modern-day counterpart. It is not Post-Modernism, but rather, **A NEW MANNERISM**, which like Mannerism, is elusive and seen as a **CRISIS**. Is it?

by William Mark Pimlott
William Mark Pimlott is a student architect working in the Montreal office of Peter Rose.

A CRISIS, we are led to believe, results when normally ordered institutions and activities become helplessly out of control. It begins with a quiet rumble, but such rumblings tend to be infectious and invariably, grow to be of epidemic proportions or influence.

Architectural historians tell us of numerable crises, the most notorious being, perhaps, the Mannerist crisis. Architects were supposedly self-indulgent, blissfully ignorant of Renaissance dogmae which they were 'blaspheming'. One might say that mannerism was a 'popular' activity, an animal borne of popular culture. Such beasts are traditionally destined for derision, probably because, in hindsight, they are seen to be contradictory or detrimental to society's more serious culture. For years, Mannerist architecture has been spoken of with disfavour because of its 'pop culture' leanings. In fact, the majority of work called 'Mannerist' was extremely good. It has been the selected removal of excellent architects from that classification, and their placement elsewhere (Late Renaissance, etcetera), that has let Mannerism wallow so long in the annals of popular culture.

As we saw (Mannerism, The Fifth Column, vol.1, no.4), Mannerists concerned themselves with a search for pleasure through variety: of form, expression, space and colour. Included

in this was an attitude which attempted to 'distort' or change the rules of Renaissance architecture. It is only too evident, in light of discussions of contemporary architecture, that current practitioners of the art argue for similar change as well.

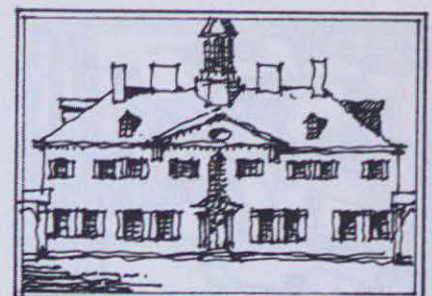
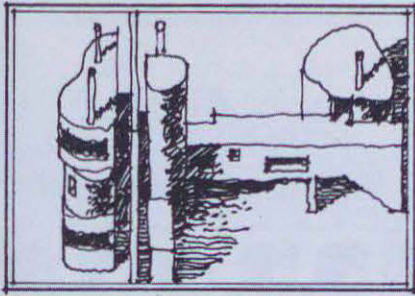
Judging by the widespread attention given to these arguments by various journals of architecture, lecture series and panel discussions, their acceptance has reached 'epidemic' proportions. However, there remain many voices who cry 'crisis'. Their greatest concern is a perceived rejection of serious architecture and its replacement by popular architecture or worse, Post-Modern Architecture.

'Post-Modernism', as such, does not exist at all, except in the minds of devout Modernists, Neo-Rationalists and a few outspoken individuals. It has been a convenient umbrella phrase which throws all architectural movements into one rather murky broth. Consequently, those placed in that group voice their dissatisfaction whenever Post-Modernism is mentioned. They certainly do not wish to be associated with anything so amorphous, and many find difficulty with populism. Seeing very few similarities to each other, they have placed themselves, or have been placed into many categories, few of which are particularly meaningful. Criticism of Post-Modernism never

addresses any of these specific categories, rather, it addresses the nebulous concept of 'Post-Modernism'. It is thus necessary to define a common ground within which thrusts of the critical sword may be parried. The particular difficulty lies in the fact that Post-Modernists, if one may pardon the expression, are reluctant to admit that such a common ground exists. The various camps seem so rigidly defined and so diametrically opposed, that such ground appears to be shaky. However, I share the opinion that all of this work represents a **Mannerism** of sorts - a 'New Mannerism'. A brief outline of the characteristics of Mannerism (via illuminations from Frederic Hartt and John Shearman), as well as an attempt at a comparative parallel with current movements, should begin to breach the gaps.

Briefly, Mannerists seemed to seek and achieve:

- a. **varieta** (the human pleasure derived from variety) as a rejection of Renaissance **invarieta** (logic, order and the Platonic absolutes)
- b. a mannered re-interpretation of what had preceded - Renaissance or otherwise - in architectural or artistic expression (achieved through what many call distortion and a few describe as the 'humanising' of Renaissance composition, detail and colour)
- c. an architecture which was vastly more personal, yet more public oriented, than ever before (a popular



John Hejduk, *Bye House*; Robert Venturi, *Brant-Johnson House*; Alan Greenberg, *'Mount Vernon'*

architecture for 'a more cultured age'). Ensuing from this were unusual containments and proportional inversions (Laurentian Library, Michelangelo); humorous distortions and manipulations of architectural detail, and 'fantasy' spaces (Palazzo del Te, Giulio Romano); fragile layer-on-layer classicism (Palladio); and a few extreme distortions - with mixed results (Casino dello Zuccheri, Frederico Zuccheri).

Mannerism was that creature borne of some muscle flexing following a long period of order and restraint; flux within a period of transition. Many have cried 'crisis' with respect to it, and there are those who still do. In "Mannerism" (The Fifth Column, vol.1, no.4) I forwarded the objecting notion that the Mannerist Crisis was not a crisis at all. The conclusion was based upon the fact that Mannerist architecture did not reject the principles of a 'Good Architecture'. That its expressions, derived from the creative, personal **instincts** of each artist did not harm the art, but, rather, enhanced it through the liberation of ideas.

The new Architecture makes similar gestures. Its nature of multiplicity of thought makes the perception of its purpose so difficult, and conversely, allows criticism of it based on its capriciousness so easy. A category, which represents a group of ideas, makes multiplicity coherent. The new Architecture, defined in the context of Mannerism can therefore begin to become so.

a. VARIETA

There is indeed a new **varieta** although it is seen in many different ways by the Whites, the Greys and the Neo-Classicists.

i. The Whites

These architects are profoundly influenced by the work of Le

Corbusier, particularly the early period. This enclave began in the late 1960's as 'The New York Five': Charles Gwathmey, Richard Meier, John Hejduk, Peter Eisenman and Michael Graves. When the monograph "**Five Architects**" was released, there was a definite distortion of Corb's white work. In Gwathmey's case, Corb was filled out more, becoming more volumetric - rigid external forms were more or less maintained. Meier modeled his efforts on Corb's earliest work (Villa Savoy), but has produced caricatures of it in a bitterly antiseptic series of projects. Hejduk has expanded on Corb's sculptured volumes within the grid through multiplications (the curvy rooms increase in number like rabbits), by taking these volumes out of the context of the grid and letting them hang in space as independents. Eisenman's work bears little resemblance to Le Corbusier's and can only be described as an abstraction of some notions that he is preoccupied with (rotation and translation). It is an intensely personal exercise, meant for no-one but himself. It seemed, too, that before Michael Graves developed into a classicist of sorts, a fixation with both early and later Corb existed, utterly concluded by the Snydermann House, which appears to be rather alot like the blob in the gilded cage.

ii. The Greys

Robert Venturi pioneered the Greys' search for **varieta**, when he forwarded the statements "I like complexity and contradiction in architecture" and "Less is a bore". Without "Complexity and Contradiction" there would be no broohaha, no fighting between Whites and Greys nor amongst Greys; for that matter, there would be no such thing as a 'Post-Modern Crisis'. While there are those who seek genuine American architecture (again), a more publicized group searches for that same goal through the roots of popular culture. The proponents of this

methode, Venturi, Charles Moore, Robert A.M. Stern and many others, all peddle this notion in varying directions and degrees of intensity. Their position has caused a tremendous stir - both in North America and abroad. It has borne most of the vituperous commentary from Modernists, the Whites and some, like Stanley Tigerman, who draw abuse from those who are just a shade of grey apart from him. The Rationalists in Europe say even worse things. This exchange is known as Rationalist vs. Realist: where Maurice Culot calls Charles Moore "Mickey Mouse". However, past all the abuse and mudslinging from within and without, there remains one common thread running through the work of the Realists - it is American (and Americans like fun). The Europeans howl alot about this.

iii. The Classicists

These are simply the architects who presently carry on a classical tradition in architecture and urban planning. Among this group are Alan Greenberg, Michael Graves, Quinlan Terry, Leon Krier and Maurice Culot. Sometimes included is Robert Venturi, and many would wish to posthumously include Sir Edwin Lutyens. They seek variety in architecture in the sense perhaps closest to the Mannerists - through simple pleasures to be derived from details, colour, proportion and planning gestures.

B. MANNERED REINTERPRETATION

i. The Whites

It almost goes unsaid that each headstand that is done in order to achieve that variety we have spoken of, must be, within this White Theatre, nurtured by the form-giving Le Corbusier. Either a direct quotation or a contortion of these forms constitutes a reinterpretation of them. Each architect's personal translation is an idiosyncrasy - a



mannerism.

ii. The Greys

It is from the interpretation of historical forms that the Greys have received such wide attention and at the same time, provoked such abundant criticism. No Period has been left untouched by those who have been called 'Post-Modern'. Yet, within this camp, there is a feeling that what is being done is right - for the peoples' enjoyment. Others believe that it is a free ticket to magazine publicity.

iii. The Classicists.

Like the Mannerists, the Classicists (the Neo-Neo-Classacists) cannot leave Classical Architecture alone without a bit of form-giving input. After all, overdressed sameness was a major contributor to the decline of Neo-Classical Architecture in the United States and elsewhere. So, those like Alan Greenberg distort or manipulate or invent mannered details and plans; while those like Michael Graves 're-invent' Classicism in a personal manneristic language which attempts to represent its stylistic intentions. There is always however, personal affectations which make this architecture quite different from Classicism.

C. A PERSONAL, PRIVATE ARCHITECTURE

All three of these camps in North America encourage the development of a 'style' which is very personal, yet somehow tied into the roots of the history of architecture. (As the White School is directly tied to Modernism as an historical phenomenon, it avoids the central elements of debate which form the remaining discussion). The public's accessibility to each of these styles is dependant upon its subconscious architectural tradition of experience. Presumably, accessibility to what is being expressed should

VITRUVIUS: FIRMITAS, UTILITAS, VENUSTAS

result in work that is well received and enjoyed. And, if the expression is related to a significant segment of the historical continuum, then its appeal will acquire a stature of permanence, and its 'personal and private' nature will become insignificant.

'POST-MODERNISM IS MANNERISM' - Omer Akin

It seems that at the very least that our contemporary condition is a descendent of Mannerism, and that in certain instances is quite identical to it. Longing to replace that meaningless term (Post-Modernism) with one that has the quality of having definite characteristics, 'New-Mannerism' seems to suit the qualifications.

Like Mannerism, New-Mannerism shall certainly have to endure ridicule now and many years from now. It is, unavoidably, an architecture of a transitional period. 'Permanent' New-Mannerist buildings do not exist in appreciable numbers yet, nor are represented in connection with large scale public functions.

There are, without too much extrapolation, many New or Neo-Mannerists. And those who they have left behind in stylistic interpretation, the Modernists, are not particularly happy about what they are doing. The Modernists, say they are completely immersed in style: an elitist preoccupation. They say that consideration of the user has been forgotten. They say that the notion of a building being at first functional has been lost. And, that the New-Mannerist architecture is narcissistic, and offensive; at best, regressive. The contention has arisen that New-Mannerist Architecture is not architecture at all, but merely academic acrobatics concealing incompetence.

THEN...

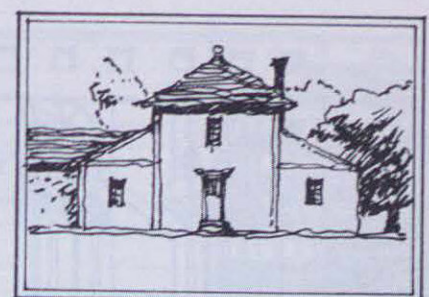
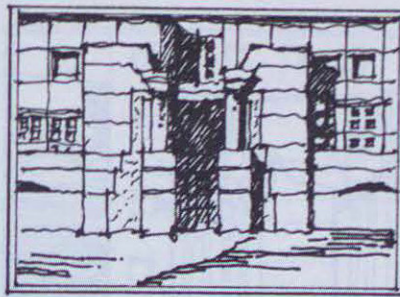
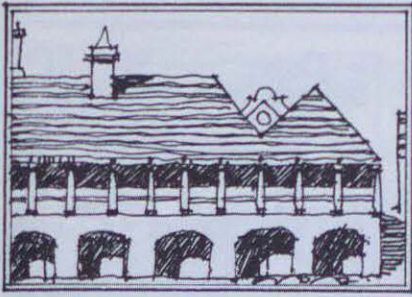
WHAT IS GOOD ARCHITECTURE?

A list of criteria which has always qualified the above query is that given to us by Vitruvius: UTILITAS, FIRMITAS and VENUSTAS, or Commodity, Firmness and Delight.

Modern architects say that their work fulfills all of the above requirements and make a pledge to society that a better world will result from their work. New-Mannerist architects say exactly the same thing.

If we can ascertain just who does actually fulfill the very important requirements of a 'Good Architecture', then we may determine if there is a New-Mannerist Crisis, no crisis at all, or one which has been with us for longer than we wish to believe.

Facing page, from left.
Venturi and Rauch, Brant House,
Bermuda, 1979; Michael Graves,
Plocek (Keystone) House 1977-9
Quinlan Terry, No 7 Frog
Meadow, Dedham, 1980.



'FIRMNESS, COMMODITY AND DELIGHT' ARE CONSTITUENT PARTS OF A GOOD ARCHITECTURE.

THE NEW-MANNERISTS

A. COMMODITY

i. Function

Does New-Mannerist Architecture work? Certainly, one cannot answer this directly without making unsound generalizations. However, in the spirit of 'good architecture', shown are three plans for houses representative of varied methods:

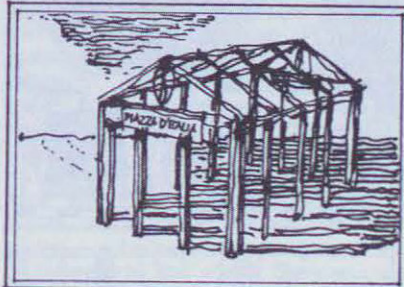
All of these houses work, by virtue of the fact that their plans are derived from traditional bases of relationships. They are not particularly complex, but rather, straightforward and 'easy'. Perhaps the most significant thing about them is that anyone could walk into these houses and know where to go to get to each important part. There is a logic inherent in these plans which has to do with the sequence of rooms and spaces.

ii. Contextualism and Social Duty

A major premise of the New-Mannerists' work, particularly the Greys, has been **contextualism**. The intervention of new buildings into any context should, they insist, reinforce the existing fabric, rather than be at odds with it. And in the circumstance of a deteriorated fabric, the new building should attempt to re-establish those qualities that have been lost. This position is truly essential to the

Greys' cause and allows them to attempt the 'saving' of the modern city.

Implicit in their efforts are the inclusion of man in the scheme of their architecture; in terms of his compatibility with it, his traditions of experience, and finally his enjoyment of it. Thus, the 'frivolous architecture' that is Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia is no longer frivolous at all, but a serious exercise in social architecture which seems to work extraordinarily well.



The logic behind the resurrection of these principles is simple. If man has lived happily in the past with certain constants, why has Modernism, from its birth, openly rejected them?

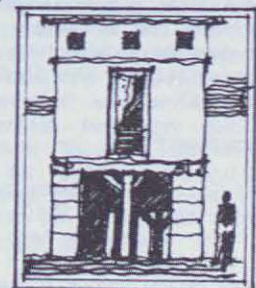
B. FIRMNESS

There is no pretentious rhetoric about structure being wielded by New-Mannerists. The buildings are built in accordance with methods that have been used in the past for

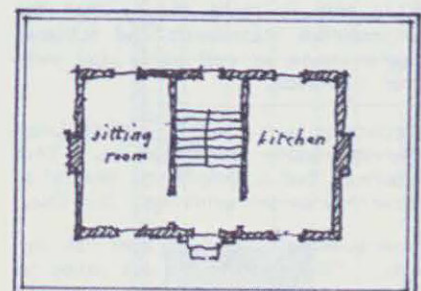
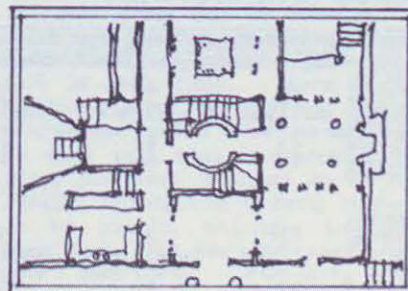
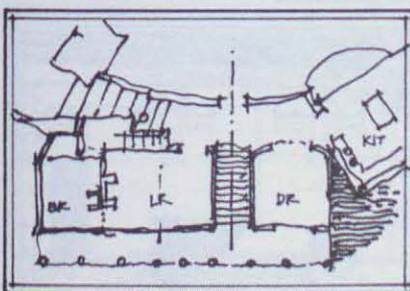
centuries. Gravity goes downwards: walls bear on walls, walls bear on columns and beams and columns bear on walls or the earth. As all have always done.

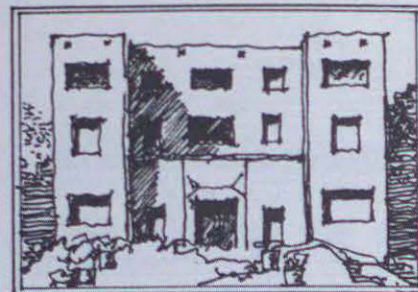
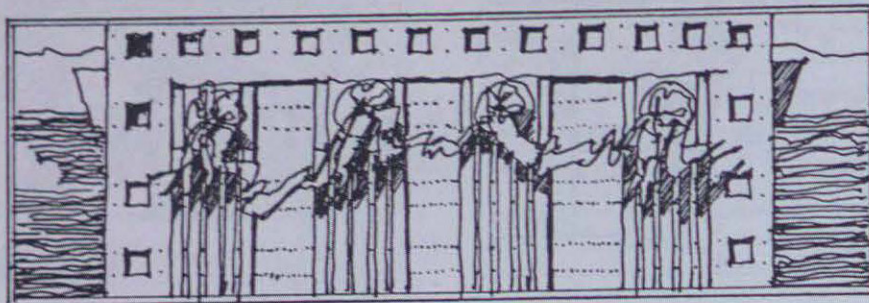
C. DELIGHT

It has been said that beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder, and this adage, although hackneyed, must be taken quite seriously by the architect, whose art indeed must be the most accessible of all to the public at large. The Grey architects and the Neo-Rationalists in Europe (adamantly Non-Mannerist) seem to think that accessibility is attained through balanced composition, a reintroduction of the principles of symmetry, and archetypal reference. In other words, beauty can be achieved through reference to experiences we have known.



The Greys believe that ornamentation is a part of our tradition of experience. They see this issue as the original Mannerists might have. Decoration or ornamentation is





something which may beautify architecture through its rendering of: the plasticity of a surface, the play of light, and its introduction of variety, which presumably encourages a reaction of pleasure. It is the allowance of ornament which permits architecture to become eclectic, personal and lovingly flawed; or to become expressive of some hierarchy, placing us at a suitable distance.

The Neo-Rationalists reject ornament in favour of European urban archetypes, which differ according to local vernacular plans, proportions, profiles and materials, which retain a nature of public accessibility.

The Modernists, alternatively, reject both ornament and archetypology, and instead, introduce an exclusive visual language which, when at its best, speaks to but a few aesthetes. Is the public or populist architecture of the New Mannerists, as the Modernists insist, obscene?

THE MODERNISTS

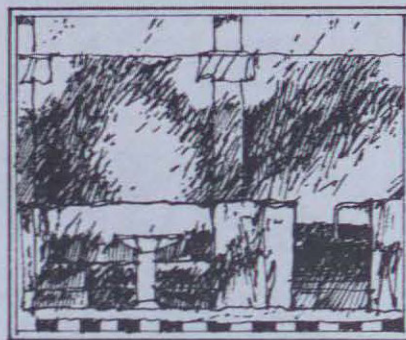
For all of the vast promises made by the Modernists from 1910 to the present, their success in both social reform, and the architecture which they claimed would induce it, has been abysmally limited. They did succeed in instituting an architecture void of colour, the expression of material and that could be related to by no-one but themselves. It became the element of debate solely in avantgarde circles. It is only in these circles that the preposterous statements and schemes that we know so well could have even been tolerated.

"Ornament is a crime" - Adolf Loos. Oh, Mr. Loos, you hypocrite. Your American Bar is simply too 'pretty' to allow you to say something like this.

"Less is more" - Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. This is where we are asked to throw away all of our worldly possessions to live in a glass room

with nothing in it but a solid onyx wall. Luxury in Poverty.

Project: City for 6,000,000 inhabitants. Le Corbusier (changed his name to seem more like the 'answer'). A proposal that was so radical that it could not possibly be taken seriously.

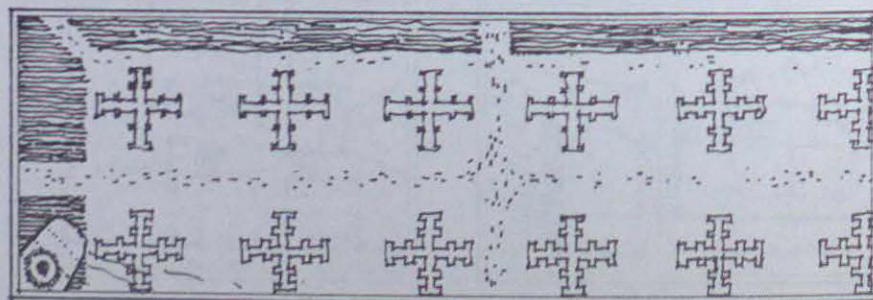


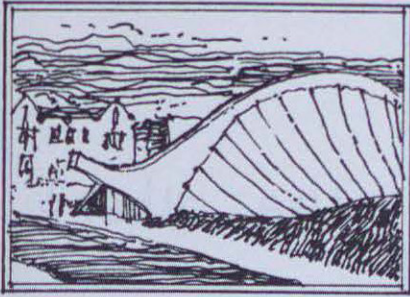
Graves, garlands on Portland; Loos, Steiner House, American Bar; Curling up with Mies van der Rohe, circa 1927;

Yet, it somehow became the model for the Modern City. Its message still sits very well with Modern architects and cities all over the world have suffered greatly because of it. Not only does Corb's scheme ignore the notion of existing city fabric; it obliterates it. "We must throw out all that has gone before, because it is meaningless".

Modernism has been the only artistic movement which has actually had the audacity to proclaim such nonsense and to assure us that their artists, musicians and architects could fill the 'gap', so to speak, and more. All of these saviours of culture, of course, numbered no more than a few score individuals, who all knew of each other very well. They met at parties and conferences and the like, and if there ever was an academic elite pounding out the dogmae of architectural thought, the Modernists were that elite. It was so extreme that to them, it simply was not good enough to be sympathetic to their righteous causes, one had to follow their method precisely. Through the discretion the Modernists developed in selecting just who would or would not be among them, they began to see themselves and their work, as rigorous, honest, no-nonsense and functional. This then, was what really counted. It was Utilitas.

Le Corbusier and 6 million neighbours.





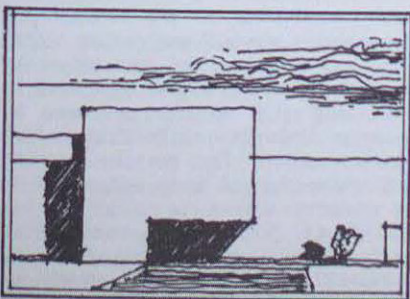
Beauty or beasts? Saarinen, Mies, Pei and our own WZMH.

As for Firmitas, the Moderns have maintained a commitment to structure as a separate entity, born when Architecture gave birth to Engineering as a profession unto itself. Their subsequent partnership was based upon a faith in the possibilities of the New Age - a 'Renaissance' which would expand knowledge and expose truth for the good of all men.

However, time has shown that the efforts of the partnership have not been innocent of deception, and the motivations towards the 'honesty' of structure have occasionally become obscure. 'Excitement' attained through the abnormal disposition of structure, all too often becomes one-line architecture - a commercial gimmick which is not very honest at all.

As an aside, it should be noted that the Moderns who were really good, never went out on any structurally unsound limbs, and never became lost in what Modernism was supposed to mean. These architects did indeed produce buildings which remain original, at times exciting, and when isolated, beautiful. These works unfortunately remain few.

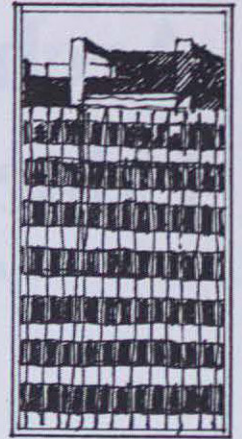
And Venustas? There is a constant



search for beauty that runs through Modern Architecture, a beauty that yearns to appeal to all Mankind. This, for the Modernist of today, has its roots in Cubism, which has to do with an **impression** of reality, and importantly, one that is distorted or abstract. Although Architecture is an Art, it, unlike its 'free' companions, is responsible to legibility and intimately linked to the world of reality. Therefore, architecture's sculptural abstraction intended to merely evoke some emotive response, is Sculpture, and is ignorant (with few exceptions) of its legibility, and importantly, its role, imposed upon it by its membership in a greater urban context. The manifests are objects of 'dumb' beauty - acontextual, egocentric and aggressive. However, what seems the most regrettable, is that the notion of 'architectural beauty' has lost significance (save the work of Aalto, Kahn, Mies and Scarpa). In a city, where there must be Architecture, and where there are only weak practitioners of a soulless Modernism, this loss has been catastrophic.

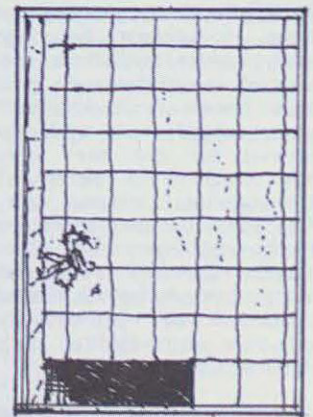
CRISIS?...WHAT CRISIS?

If we are asked to assess the state of architecture, are we urged to say that there is a crisis? Have things gone out of control? Certainly, there is confusion, borne of the multiplicity of ideas and means, but its intent and the ends are clear. These ends have finite parameters, so the future of architecture and of our cities becomes a known rather than an unknown. If there was any time to reaffirm faith in the 'basics' of a Good Architecture, now is that time. There is an awareness about the good and evil of intervention and a conscious attempt to work with what is proven to be good, not what is hoped to be so. Finally, Architecture is being allowed to be public, popular, fun and meaningful - to everyone, not just a select few.



It is my contention that the question of a crisis in Architecture may be turned around. By that timeless common ground of judgement, the Vitruvian principles, the New Mannerism is a Good Architecture. The debates waged by the New Mannerists are those which foster the growth of **values** and **morals**. This leads me to believe that we should not worry about a New Mannerist Crisis. However, perhaps we should seriously question the authority of those who contend that Architecture's 'New Deal' is formal and futile.

From beginnings in the backwaters of academia, the Modernists developed an attitude that would destroy our cities, try to forget our place, and attempt to establish our faith in the most temporal entity - our time itself. I would forward that their 'parti' was, and remains to be, one monstrous mistake. Their rejection of the rejuvenated spirit of 'good architecture' as manifested in New Mannerism severely darkens the proverbial 'light at the end of the tunnel' for Architecture, and leads me to believe that the 'crisis' ultimately lies with the legacy and acolytes of the Modern Movement. □



Architectural Education — one way or the other?

by John Meunier

A search for commitment to explanation, action and understanding in architectural education...

John Meunier is Director of the School of Architecture and Interior Design at the University of Cincinnati.

WHEN I FINALLY convinced my parents that I did not want to be an accountant, a profession that they knew was valued by society and appropriately remunerated, it was agreed that we should look into my education to be an architect. Their natural reaction was to find a local architect to whom I might be 'articled'. This was a form of apprenticeship in which a young man, straight out of high school, joined a professional's firm to work and to learn under his guidance. For that privilege the young man paid a 'premium' which distinguished him from the paid assistants as someone who had the right to expect some more or less structured education directly from his "principal". It was the normal mode of education not only in architecture but in most professions well into the twentieth century, and particularly for accountants.

When we visited a local architect, with the intention of negotiating my 'articles', he gently drew my parents' attention to the fact that only sixteen miles away was the Liverpool University School of Architecture, the first University School of Architecture in Great Britain and, as I was later to find out, the school where James Stirling had been studying under Colin Rowe. So I missed the opportunity to learn architecture from the vantage point of a practitioner, a system under which most of the architects of the past learned their trade, and found myself for the next seven years learning it in schools at two Universities, Liverpool and Harvard. Slipped in between there were a few months of 'internship' with firms in London and New York, remnants of the old system, but on the whole, like most of my readers, my formal education was in 'Schools of Architecture'.

I started at my first School when I

was just seventeen. I built my first building when I was twenty-eight. For eleven years architecture was for me primarily drawings, models, photographs, and words, whose relationship to the experiential reality of buildings only occasionally came to life, as when I visited the newly finished Jaoul houses in Neuilly and the Hollyhock house in Los Angeles.

Now I find myself running a School of Architecture and Interior Design, which admittedly is closer to the 'articles' system of education than my own was, because of the cooperative education method used here, but which perpetuates the tradition of an academic preparation. For most of my students, too, architecture is primarily drawings, models, photographs, and words.

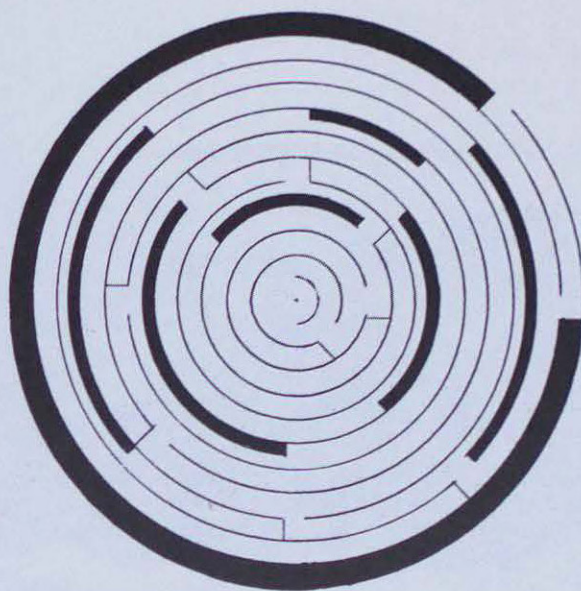
The question I ask myself is, "Is this a defensible method, on any grounds other than economic?"; because it is clearly cheaper to have students pay a few thousand dollars to make their mistakes on paper than it is to have them make them for real with buildings that would cost many thousands of dollars and at the end of the day be too dangerous, ugly or useless to keep.

My answer to my own question is a very qualified "yes". I have two major qualifications which, if they are ignored, leave me with very serious doubts as to the value of an academic education for architecture. One qualification demands the clear-eyed recognition of its limitations, the other demands a recognition of its potential virtue. If either, or both, are ignored I have little faith that anything other than harm is being done to one who wishes to become an architect.

First it must be recognized that those drawings, models, photographs and words are not architecture. They may

have the capacity to make us think of architecture, but each is strictly limited in its capacity to represent architecture. Let me use the word 'model' in a more precise sense. Each of these are 'models' of architecture. Models are valuable. They are usually manipulable and testable. They select the characteristics you might wish to study. They are economic in terms of time, effort, and resource. But by definition they cannot represent all the characteristics of the object to which they relate. If they did they would no longer be models, they would be the object itself. It is essential that we recognize the limitations of these 'models' of architecture. We must learn to relate them to the reality they represent in the same way that a musician can learn to hear the music when he reads a score. We must resist their capacity to seduce us as aesthetic objects in their own right. The musician is fortunate in that he is unlikely to mistake the beauty of the graphics of a score for the beauty of the music; we all too often succumb. He also has the advantage, as long as he has not written a piece for a full orchestra and a thousand voices, that the transformation of his score into music will not be too time consuming and expensive. We usually have to wait many years before our designs assume their architectural reality in any substantial way.

It is therefore of great importance that a student of architecture learns the conventions of the relationship; between his 'models' and reality. That can be achieved in two ways: by building some of his designs, and by reversing the normal sequence by making 'models' of buildings which already exist. For me it is vitally important that as early as possible in a student's career he builds or has built at full size something architectonic that he has designed. Inevitably it has to be small and cheap, probably no bigger than a tent,



a porch, a gazebo, or a room, but even that will give him the fulfillment of realizing technically the implications of his design work. He will experience it with all his senses and understand the aesthetic significance of construction, detailing, and workmanship. Problems of economics and time and process will impinge on his design intentions.

'Measured drawings' used to be a part of the syllabus of every architecture program. Under the Beaux Arts it usually meant the re-drawing of a major monument from a survey which required you to crawl all over it. By the time I did it we were recording the cast-iron nineteenth century buildings of Liverpool. There are clear benefits from this process of the reduction of experiential reality back to drawings. More recently in schools with strong Building Science curricula surveys now include the measurement of building performance in ways other than the visual and spatial. Light, sound, temperature, humidity, and energy usage are also reduced to "models".

These few comments then about the limitations of architectural education in a university and what we might do to counteract them. What about the advantages? The major advantage of the ambience of the University should be its traditions of 'explanation'. The University is devoted to 'understanding'. If we work within its traditions we should end up by 'understanding' architecture. We would

use science to understand it in one way, and history to understand it in another. We might even attempt to understand it philosophically.

There is an aspect of most architectural curricula called 'theory'. There are some schools that don't have it at all, there are others that have very little else. What is it? Anything that doesn't fit into the technologies or history, but which should nonetheless be taught, is what it often is.

There are two kinds of theory, as I see it. There are theories of **explanation**, and there are theories of **action**. Universities usually concern themselves with the first. Schools of architecture usually concern themselves with the second. That is why architecture students are so different from most of the other students; why they are on the one hand envied and admired as men and women of creative action; and why on the other hand they are the butt of academic derision because they know so little, even about their own field.

The answer to my question, "Is the education of architecture students in a University defensible?" is, as I said a highly qualified "yes". Yes, but only if the experiential reality of architecture is clearly kept in sight, and; yes, but only if the drive towards the explanation and understanding of the world, which is normal to the university, is sustained. Which is not to say that as places

where designers are educated schools of architecture do not have a duty to teach theories of action. Of course they do, but they are likely to be no more than recipes to reproduce the most recent cliché if they are not based upon the principles of intellectual understanding.

If my son were to ask me how he should become an architect, would I put him in 'articles' or in a University School of Architecture? The choice would not be automatic. If I could find a Street or a Soane, a Pugin or a Schinkel, I would be tempted. I would probably resist however and send him to a University School, but I'd have a good look at their curriculum first. If all I found was a large scale apprenticeship to a bunch of second-rate principals disguised as University professors then I would dig into my pocket and pay the 'premium' for the 'articles'. If I found a genuine University department, committed to explanation as well as action, and a design education which understood and controlled the relations between 'models' and reality, then I would happily surrender him to the academy.

The ideal, of course, is the combination, where the student is close to the creative world of a leading practitioner who happens to be a member of a University faculty which sustains the scholarly traditions of the university. Would that all Schools of Architecture were like that. □

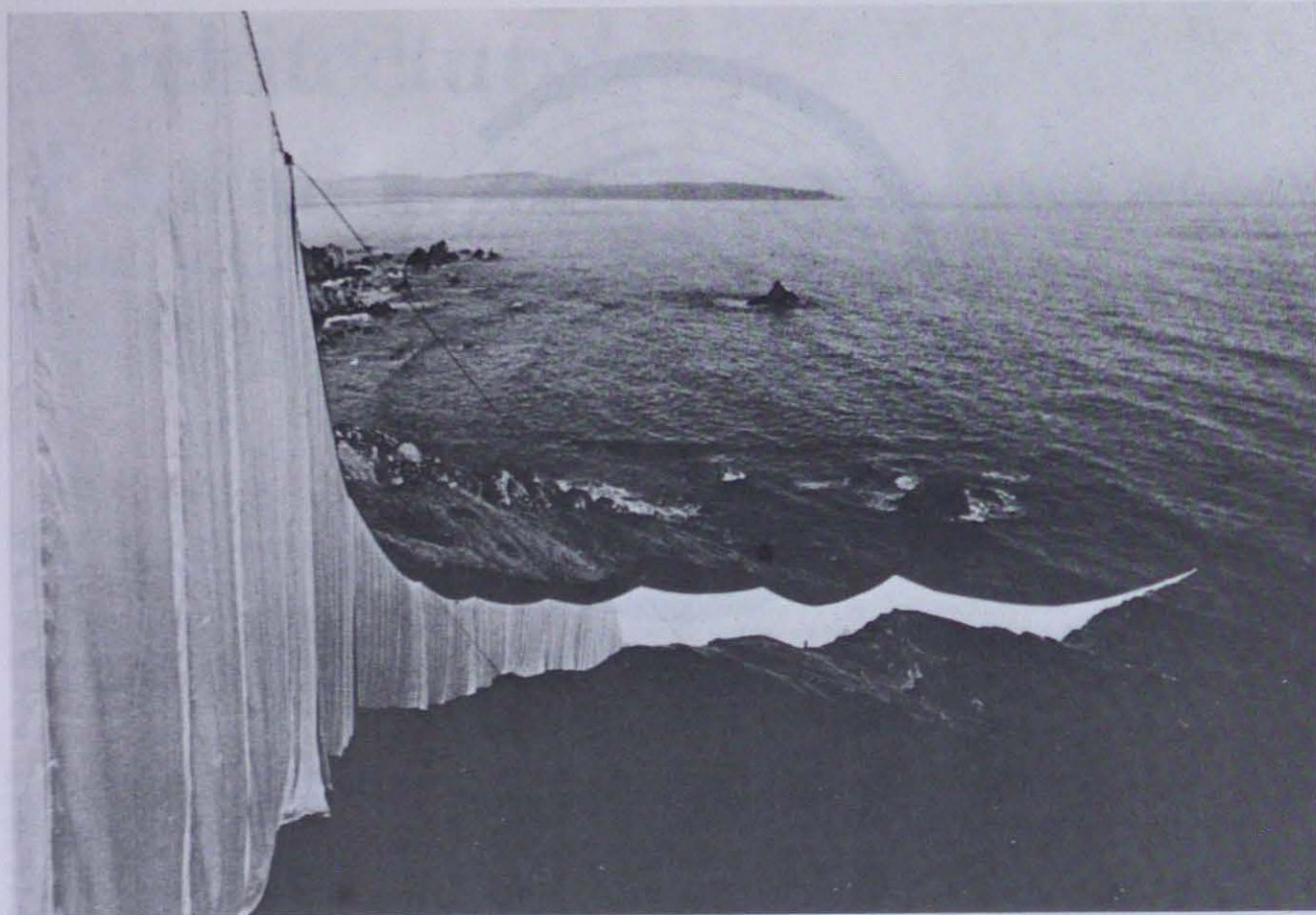


Photo: Wolfgang Voltz

Running Fence et Corridart à Montréal

*Le paysage des arts sociaux et politiques:
comparaison d'approches et réactions...*

par Daniel Durand

Notons dès le départ que ces deux oeuvres d'art sont étroitement apparentées à l'architecture. Leur réalisation a nécessité les étapes traditionnelles de conception, d'élaboration, de financement, d'approbation, et de mise en oeuvre. Pourtant, on a prévu leur démantèlement après l'exposition, acceptant de plein gré, la durée relative des choses. Tout ce qui nous reste de ces deux oeuvres, ce sont les souvenirs et les documents d'archives.

Le musée d'Art Contemporain nous présente donc cette oeuvre de Christo, réalisée entre 1972 et 1976. L'exposition fait surgir des ressemblances avec l'événement montréalais de **Corridart** qui continue de faire les manchettes. Le parallèle est principalement axé sur le concept de ces deux oeuvres, le processus de leur réalisation et l'intervention physique faite dans l'environnement. Les deux projets nous offrent aussi un similitude importante sur le plan de

leur impact social et de la polémique suscitée sur leur valeur artistique et esthétique.

Dans l'ensemble, ces projets suscitent une réflexion sur l'interaction de l'environnement pris au sens large et des interventions successives que nous y effectuons. Les tendances actuelles très contextualistes et urbaines de l'architecture devront demeurer présentes à l'esprit du lecteur, puisque ces deux oeuvres s'inspirent du même souci.

On se rappelle aussi que les années 60 nous ont permis de voir l'évolution vers une approche participatoire de l'architecture, celles de 70, un retour apparent vers une intensification du rôle significatif des formes physiques. Les recherches présentes pour une amélioration de la qualité de vie dans les villes, thème électoral maintenant devenu rentable, tiennent compte de plus en plus des différents niveaux de discours et d'interactions avec le public.

Certains courants de l'art contemporain, qui tentent d'intégrer une expérimentation concrète de l'objet, ont parfois comme objectifs de provoquer une perception plus



consciente et de générer des meilleurs rapports sociaux.

L'importance de **Running Fence** provient de son envergure physique, du vif débat social suscité, et des nombreuses démarches effectuées auprès des organismes officiels de l'Etat de Californie, avant sa réalisation.

Une présentation de l'oeuvre de Christo permettra une meilleure appréciation du parallèle proposé. Oeuvre d'envergure, **Running Fence** aura nécessité 2050 panneaux de nylon blanc de 68 pi x 18 pi de haut, fixés à autant de poteaux d'acier et ancrés au sol par 13,000 ancrages, l'ensemble formant un ruban de 39 kilomètres; il aura aussi fallu 144 kilomètres de câble d'acier et 312,000 crochets pour assembler ces 165,000 verges de nylon; et enfin, 480 personnes et de l'équipement spécialement conçu auront été employés.¹

Tout comme en architecture, l'idée globale s'articule autour d'un concept formel et d'une préoccupation sociale et culturelle. Le projet a ses limites intrinsèques qui en justifient la longueur: l'espace compris entre l'Autoroute 101 (Mexique - Alaska) et

l'océan Pacifique; les deux constituant des symboles de l'infini. La clôture parcourt un terrain en colline où se détachent des bâtiments et des bosquets de grands arbres, datant de la fin du 19^e siècle, et on la décrit en ces termes:

...un dessin autonome dont la ligne suit parfois les contours du sol, mais très souvent en modifie l'aspect, enlaçant le sommet des collines, inscrivant en surimpression un paysage visionnaire plus doux.²

Les réalisations de Christo naissent de son impulsion pour l'échelle gigantesque, mais son art s'associe aussi aux influences de l'accidentel et des forces incontrôlables. Au monumental s'ajoute l'éphémère comme second élément de travail. La destruction de l'oeuvre est pour lui indispensable afin que les photographies, livres, dessins, collages puissent partager avec la mémoire, la perte de l'irrécupérable.³ En s'engageant ainsi à une rapide démolition, Christo tente de s'opposer à l'héroïsme et au gigantisme, en proposant une forme d'antithèse aux oeuvres monumentales.

Photomontage du projet de Melvin Charney, "The Site Altered: les maisons de la rue Sherbrooke" préparé pour l'évènement Corridart.

Par sa méthode, il vise une technique de mise en oeuvre où la phase ultime sera déployée rapidement, créant ainsi un mouvement d'enthousiasme à l'égard du processus qui distrait les gens de l'esthétique. Cette préoccupation déjà manifestée dans les oeuvres antérieures de l'artiste, s'inscrit partiellement dans les mouvements de l'art-performance des années 70, par l'imagination qu'il met à trouver ce processus de déploiement où le public devient spectateur actif et élément dominant de l'atmosphère. (On se rappellera que l'an dernier, la ville de Chicoutimi a accueilli parallèlement au Symposium de la sculpture environnementale, un festival Performance dont le succès a intimidé les artistes.).

C'est aussi dans ces moments de distraction que l'on oublie le coût de \$3 millions de ce projet. Même si l'argent provient de collectionneurs européens, on demeure en droit de se demander quelle est la valeur de ce geste, en rapport avec l'investissement sous toutes ses formes? **Corridart**



Une technique de mise en oeuvre ou la phase ultime par son intensité crée une distraction.

Un peu à l'inverse, Corridart, "le musée de la rue dans la rue-musée", conçu dans l'intention de redonner à la rue Sherbrooke ses diverses significations et d'intégrer à la rue-musée, des oeuvres d'art spéciales, fut démantelé dans la nuit du mardi 13 juillet 1976, avant que les gens aient pu faire connaître leurs vues. Michel Lemay a riposté à cette ingérence par une lettre ouverte dans laquelle il formulait, en ces termes, le rôle de l'exposition:

...c'est d'abord pour nous mettre en face de nous-mêmes, plutôt que de viser une fausse réalité et dépenser l'énergie et l'argent du monde ordinaire pour une illusion qu'il ne partage pas dans sa vie de tous les jours.⁷

La partie intéressante des processus de ces oeuvres éducatifs est la transposition du concept de l'oeuvre, en quelque chose qui peut être expérimenté en termes qualitatifs par un public.

La perception ainsi générée de l'oeuvre 'Running Fence' nous offre une multitude d'interprétations; chaque panneau est solidaire de l'environnement et inversement, chaque point du paysage est en relation avec le mur opaque. Tout apparaît à la fois réel et abstrait. C'est comme si Christo avait temporairement asservi le paysage; les choses ne peuvent plus être perçues autrement qu'en rapport avec le rideau blanc.⁸

Pour sa part, Corridart n'est pas étranger aux recherches personnelles de Melvin Charney et J. C. Marsan. La forme journalistique de la présentation, une série de documents rappelant des événements du passé, qu'ils soient populaires ou officiels, reliés entre eux par le parcours que constitue la rue Sherbrooke, appelle une participation ultérieure du public. La perception humaine et sensible de la ville ainsi produite nous lance vers le futur et nous amène à percevoir la ville d'un oeil neuf ainsi qu'à envisager

pour sa part aura exigé une subvention de l'ordre de \$350,000 distribué à un groupe d'artistes.

Par ses préoccupations sociales et culturelles, Christo recherche une approche dialectique; il cherche à mettre continuellement en jeu les forces hostiles ou indifférentes à l'art.⁴ Il précise en ces mots sa pensée:

This is art of the twentieth century because the process of creating it brings in political and social issues of our times just as mediaeval art brought in religious themes that were important then.⁵

La force de ces projets vient de leurs difficultés; *Running Fence* aura été débattu en cour Supérieure de l'Etat trois fois, après avoir reçu l'assentiment du 'Board of Supervisors', du 'State Land Commission' et du l'U.S. Army Corps of Engineers'. Malgré tout on a craint jusqu'au

dernier instant que la section située près du littoral ne soit frappée d'une injonction. On a aussi exigé qu'une commission indépendante étudie les incidences sur l'environnement; dans son rapport, elle s'est déclarée favorable au projet sous réserve de certaines précautions, dont le contrôle de l'afflux touristique et la présence d'installations publiques.

Au cours des débats et par les médias d'information, la population a pu exprimer sa conception de l'art et de l'esthétique, tout comme elle a pu saisir le sens de l'oeuvre 'Running Fence'. Au départ, la critique populaire était virulente et Christo, appuyé par les 55 propriétaires de terrains dont il avait obtenu des ententes individuelles, aura su bien mettre en valeur l'intérêt économique, philosophique pour la région et ainsi que son concept social de l'art, puisque le 10 septembre, 1976, l'exposition s'ouvrait pour deux semaines.

C'est comme si Christo avait temporairement asservi le paysage...

des formes et des solutions nouvelles. On voit que sur ce point, Corridart, en faisant appel à des souvenirs touchants, a procédé différemment de Christo qui, par le moyen de la participation, cherche à fabriquer des souvenirs.

Afin de renforcer le caractère évident de son oeuvre, Christo est intervenu dans un environnement sain. Melvin Charney, par des moyens plus modestes, nous a servi une critique d'un environnement malsain par sa façade en contreplaqué érigée à l'angle des rues Sherbrooke et St-Urbain une oeuvre maintenant fréquemment citée.

On a vivement débattu la dimension artistique et esthétique de ces deux oeuvres, mais on n'a peut-être pas suffisamment réfléchi sur la critique et les répercussions sociales de cette image que nous renvoyait Corridart. Jean-Claude Marsan a clairement résumé le geste de l'administration Drapeau en soulignant que "la mémoire de la rue" présentait une vision renouvelée de la société et de la culture québécoise, et une conception de la ville qui constituait une négation de celle des dirigeants actuels.⁹

Nos artistes qui possèdent une puissance conceptuelle égale et dans certains cas, supérieure à celle de Christo, ont fait preuve d'un engagement total dans leur réalisation axée sur l'âme collective de la communauté; tandis que dans 'Running Fence', Christo s'attaque aux frontières de l'utopie. Je crois que ces exemples montrent aussi de façon probante que la production d'objets aux facettes réelles, permet l'émergence de valeurs empiriques plus nettes et suscite un débat à plusieurs niveaux; la situation généralement obtenue réussit à atteindre l'objectif d'un impact plus grand. Derrière toutes ces réalisations monumentales, se dresse aussi la facture à payer, et il faudrait imaginer des procédés et concepts qui sachent intégrer cet aspect sous une forme critique.

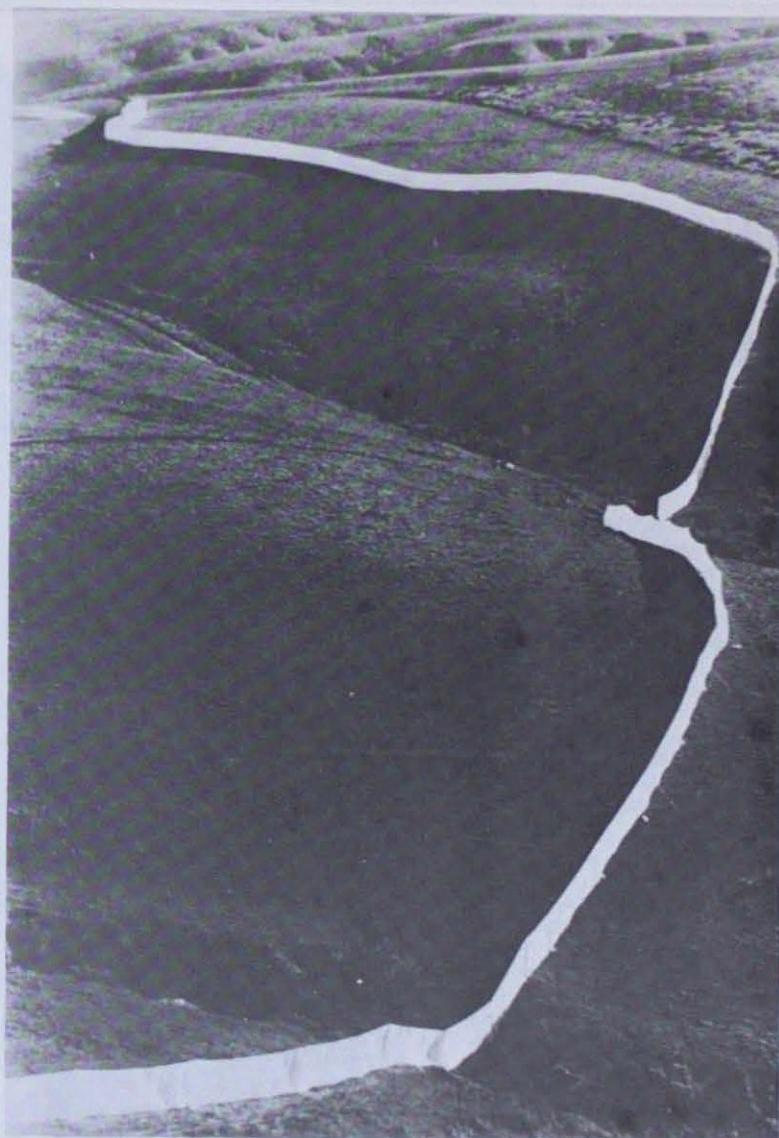


Photo: Wolfgang Volz

En conclusion, j'aimerais préciser que l'intention n'est nullement de proposer une forme d'art plus populaire, mais plutôt d'amener chacun à réfléchir sur la manière dont on pourrait tirer pleinement profit de telles expériences dans nos réalisations architecturales. Les concepts d'architecture de participation n'ont pas encore trouvé un cadre d'action défini, ni un processus efficace de réalisation. Très souvent, les solutions présentées en architecture urbaine se limite à une gamme de stéréotypes, tout comme dans le domaine de l'habitation populaire. Une plus grande réceptivité à l'environnement et un engagement plus dynamique ne saurait gêner cette recherche consciente d'un milieu de vie meilleur et plus équitable. □

Daniel Durand est un étudiant à l'Ecole d'Architecture de l'Université de Montréal.

Notes

1. Werner Spies, Wolfgang Volz, *The Running Fence Project - Christo*, col.7-10
2. op. cit., col.3, traduction libre
3. op. cit., col.11-16
4. op. cit., col.17-18, traduction libre
5. op. cit., col.23
6. Le Devoir, "Corridart, le musée de la rue-musée...", par Angèle Dagenais, 10 juillet, 1976, p.18
7. Le Devoir, "L'affaire Corridart", lettre de Michel Lemay, 31 juillet 1976, p.4
8. op. cit., col.38, traduction libre
9. Le Devoir, "Corridart: a-t-on voulu tuer la mémoire", par Jean-Claude Marsan, 21 août 1976, p.20

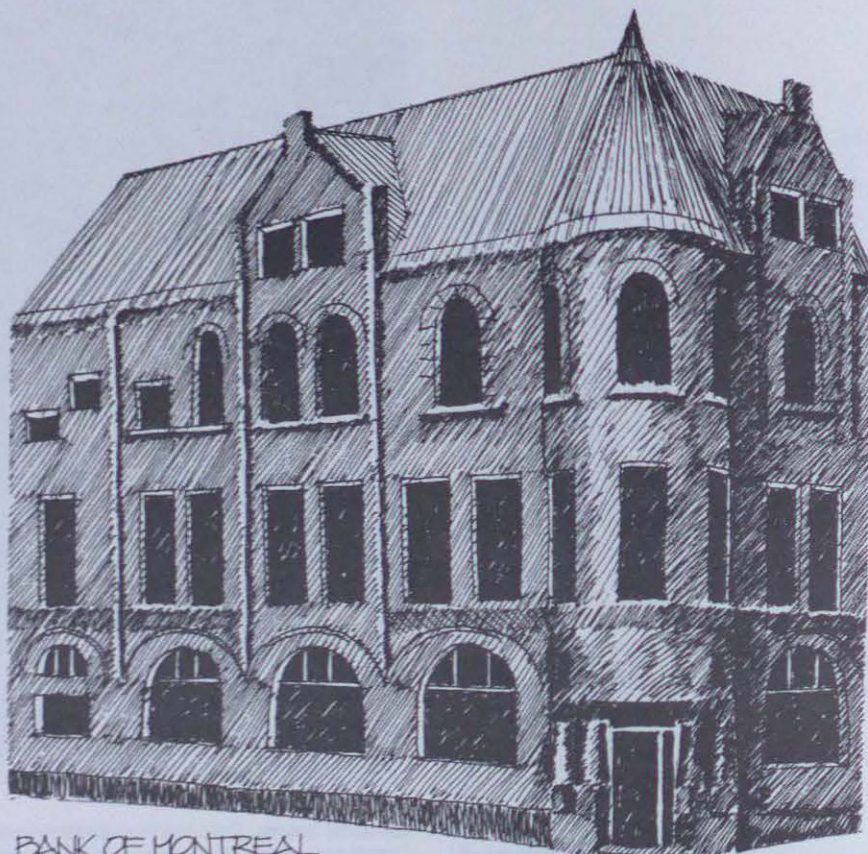
*Refining tradition and shaping the character
of a burgeoning university...*

MCGILL'S LATE GREAT VICTORIAN ARCHITECT **SIR ANDREW TAYLOR**

by John Bland

*John Bland is Professor Emeritus of
Architecture at McGill University and
director of its Canadian Architecture
Collection.*

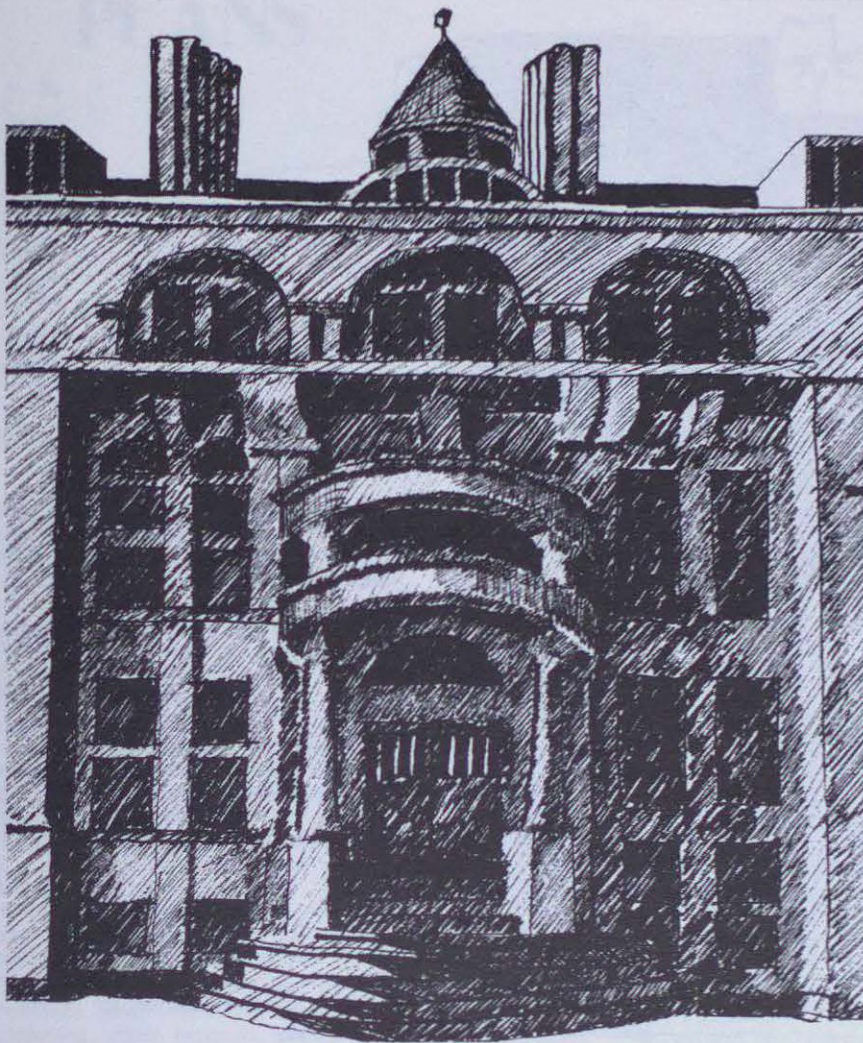
ON DECEMBER 6, 1937, under the heading "Sir Andrew Taylor - Architecture in Canada", the *Times* reported the death of Andrew Thomas Taylor at his home at Hampstead at the age of 87, noting that he had practised for 20 years in Canada where he gained many competitions and medals and was architect to the Bank of Montreal, the Merchants Bank of Canada, and Molson's Bank, and designed many important buildings, including McGill University. However surprising the last mentioned may seem now, when Taylor left Montreal in 1904, McGill had eight buildings and Taylor had designed six of them. Only three survive - the Macdonald Physics Building (1892), now being refitted for the Physical Sciences - Engineering Library; the Redpath Library (1893), the reading room of which now serves as a ceremonial hall; and the MacDonal Chemistry and Mining Building (1896), Taylor's last job for McGill. In addition to these three, in 1904, there were - the original MacDonal Engineering Building (1890), which burned in 1907 and was almost immediately replaced by Percy E. Nobbs on its old foundations; behind it stood the Workman Building (1891), which has been altered so often it can no longer be considered Taylor's; there was also his Medical Building (1894), the forepart of which was destroyed by fire in 1907, leaving the rear part in use until 1966.



BANK OF MONTREAL
HANEFIELD AND STE CATHERINE

All six of Taylor's McGill buildings were designed between 1890 and 1896, in what seems to have been the short peak period of his professional career. All had marked stylistic differences - the Engineering and the Chemistry buildings were symmetrically composed and, like the Arts and Museum buildings that preceded them on the campus, classically derived; whereas the Physics and Library buildings were asymmetrical and vaguely Richardsonian; on the other hand, the Workman and Medical buildings, in the background of the main group, were plain compositions that depended on proportion and structural rhythms for their melodies instead of such combined with the motifs of a familiar style. Nevertheless, all had agreeable common qualities. Like the

first buildings on the campus, they were built of grey stone, although generally lined with brick rather than painted plaster. All had a consistent scale, derived from the limitations of normal masonry-cum-timber construction, and restraints imposed by daylighting the interiors and using stairs for access to the various floors. Finally, all shared a common rational organization of parts, and uncomplicated relationships to their sites (prominent entries; principal rooms and stairways directly accessible; less frequented spaces accommodated on upper floors; service activities in basements; service entries ample and discrete; and natural differences in surrounding ground levels cleverly exploited).



MACDONALD PHYSICS BUILDING

Taylor was evidently a gifted architect and that he had been well trained is indicated in the accounts of his life. Born the son of Thomas Taylor, a publisher in Edinburgh in 1850, he began his architectural studies in the office of Pilkington and Bell; later he worked with Joseph Clarke in London, the diocesan architect and surveyor of Canterbury. He studied in the architectural school of the Royal Academy under Phene Spiers. He was twice a Royal Institute medallist and once gained a Soane Medallion. He practiced briefly in London. *The Builder*, May 14, 1881, illustrated one of his works, Memorial Hall and School, Dover, which was recognized as a brilliant solution to an awkward site. The fact that he obtained second place and premium in competition for the Glasgow Municipal Building, in which over 116 competitors took part proves he had a good deal more than usual ability. In addition, he was most fortunately connected to people in Montreal who found plenty of work for him to do

when he came to Canada in 1883. Taylor's mother, Agnes Drummond, was a sister of Sir George Drummond, the leading industrialist and banker in Canada, and of Jane Drummond, the second wife of John Redpath. When Taylor came to Montreal he lived with Mrs. Redpath at Terrace Bank, and opened his studio on St. Francois-Xavier Street in John Redpath's Estate office building. His uncle, George Drummond, was the president of the Bank of Montreal; one cousin, Peter Redpath, was a governor and benefactor of McGill, another, Henry Bovey, was McGill's Dean of Engineering. When he married in 1889, he became an 'in-law' of William Dawson, the son of McGill's Principal, and of Bernard Harrington, the head of McGill's chemistry department.

Among Taylor's first works in Montreal were three Queen-Anne like houses in the apple orchard of Terrace Bank for his Redpath cousins Charles J. Fleet, H.T. Bovey and Francis R. Redpath.

While the Fleet house has been demolished, the other two still stand on the east side of the Avenue du Musée. In 1888, Taylor experimented with the popular romanesque revival when he built a spectacular house for his uncle George Drummond. This house stood on the site of the present I.C.A.O. Building and invariably appears in illustrated accounts of Montreal at the end of the 19th century. In the same spirit and using similar materials - red stone, granite and slate - he built the West End Branch of the Bank of Montreal at Mansfield and Ste. Catherine Streets, which although shorn of its roof ornaments and any projecting masonry that could be assumed a hazard to pedestrians, remains a fair example of Taylor's early romanesque. Shortly after these exercises and preparatory to designing the Redpath Library, he travelled to the United States to study such buildings, where it has been assumed he became influenced by one of Richardson's celebrated libraries, not only in the organization of its elements but in the treatment of the romanesque, as the composition of the Physics Building and the book stack wing of the Redpath seems to imply. It is also possible that the uncluttered strength of Bruce Price's Windsor Station, an inescapable example of majestic masonry construction that had just been completed in Montreal, had attracted him. Or perhaps the change to a broader less fussy treatment may have been the result of using hard grey limestone rather than the softer sandstone of the earlier work. Whatever the reason the later buildings are mature works of a high order.

The Physics Building rewards examination, 1) for the compactness of its composition, the suitability of its materials and its solidity; 2) for its proportions, patterns and functional expression; and 3) for the appropriateness of its often witty ornament. Its strong masonry walls are firmly capped by a simple roof,



REDPATH LIBRARY

surmounted by well shaped chimneys and a fine central cupola. Its materials were not only selected for strength and durability but, specially in the interior, for their texture, colour and permanence. Clearly, Taylor preferred to obtain richness and interest without the use of plaster or paint. It is worth noting too, how the arrangement of the big windows in no way detracts from the feeling of strength of the walls but through their frequently arched and blunt cornered openings, the depth and power of the structure is well revealed. Moreover, their size and position, responding to the needs of the rooms they serve, give the facades much interesting pattern and functional expression. Other operational requirements, neatly and decoratively expressed, are the big corbelled balconies, two covered and one opened to the sky, which provided the laboratories with outdoor working spaces. Similarly, a few well shaped projecting window sills, which permitted experiments to be mounted in daylight, sunlight or low

temperature, add considerable interest to the facades. The building's carved ornament deftly includes ancient symbols related to physics or the names of physicists to be remembered; even the two columns of the portico, marked Power and Knowledge, suggest an equivalence worth contemplating.

Aspects of the design of the Redpath Library, building, furniture and fittings, indicate Taylor was a pioneer in the arts and crafts movement, that had the objective of making the production of a building the work of a team of artist craftsmen as opposed to the work of hired men strictly following instructions. For example, stone and wood carving in the Redpath show freedom to modify given patterns. the caps of the buttresses are all different and individual; the repetition of a standard form was clearly not expected. The carvers of the hammer beams were not only free to make each grotesque head uniquely fierce but to make one with sideburns to resemble Peter Redpath and one

with a full beard, Andrew Taylor, work not likely to have been in the specifications.

Taylor foresaw the wave of Classicism that followed the Chicago Fair in 1893 when he wrote, "Whatever may be the result of the Exhibition on the industrial life of the world, I am convinced that the architecture of the Fair will have a powerful influence on the architecture of this continent for good or evil for some time to come". It was not long after that one of the star performers of the Exhibition, C.F. McKim, was invited to Montreal to join him in the reconstruction of the head office of the Bank of Montreal. The results can be seen on Place d'Armes: a triumph for the ideas of McKim and an eclipse for those of Taylor.

In 1904, Taylor retired from practice and returned to England where, with characteristic energy, he devoted himself to public life in the administration of schools, colleges and eventually the University of London, and in local government and in the government of London. At various times he was a governor of Dulwich College, the Haberdasher's Schools, Roedean School. He became a member of Senate of the University of London, chairman of the Managing Committee of University College of which he was an Honorary Fellow, chairman of the Slade Committee and of the Bartlett School of Architecture. He lived in Hampstead, became its mayor and for many years its representative on the London County Council. In 1923 he became vice-chairman of the Council and when he retired he received a knighthood for his public service. A few days after the *Times* listed his impressive achievements in the obituary referred to above, a correspondent wrote to say it was all very well, but what Taylor really brought to bear in his public life was an aesthetic perception and a sense of tradition. The same could be said of his work at McGill. □



CALGARY

Centralization versus Decentralization

November 13: lecture by Peter Hemingway, Edmonton architect. Room 1056, Earth Sciences Building, Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Calgary. 12:30 pm.

Brian Kilpatrick

November 27 Lecture by Brian Kilpatrick of Chandler, Kennedy Architects, Calgary. Room 1056, Earth Sciences Building, Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Calgary. 12:30 pm.

MONTREAL

Le Centre Urbain

Opening October 6: Heritage Montreal resource centre on urban conservation; including urban renewal, planning and development, protection of heritage buildings, civic spaces, renovation, energy conservation. Features reference centre, bookstore, and exhibits. 406 Notre-Dame East.

Cities 1981 Lectures

A series of lectures presented by the Groupe d'Animation Urbaine of the Montreal YMCA and the School of Urban Planning of McGill University. H. Noel Fieldhouse Auditorium, Stephen Leacock Building, McGill University. 6:00 pm.

November 4: **Humanizing the city core**, by Lloyd Sankey, architect and planner, Montreal.

November 11: **Venice - Carnival of knowledge**, by Gianni Longo.

November 18: **Spatial use and usable space**, by Tony Pheiffer.

November 25: **Why cities work**, by Brendan Gill.

Photography into Print:

Opening November 17: an exhibition of the work of Desbarats and Leggo, producers of first half-tone photographs in a commercial newspaper, 1869. McCord Museum, 690 Sherbrooke West. For information: (514) 392-4778.

OTTAWA

Forum Lecture Series

Lectures held in The Pit at the School of Architecture, Carleton University. 7:00 pm.

November 11: **Sinan**, a lecture on the Turkish architect by Hans Egli, architect, Philadelphia.

November 18: **An Artist's View of Architecture**, by Cheryl Russell, artist, Mericville.

Carleton Exhibitions

At the School of Architecture, Carleton University.

November 16 - 27: **Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini**.

October 21 - 30: **Werkbund**.

December 1 - 15: **Architectural Sculpture**, by Cheryl Russell, artist, Mericville.

TORONTO

Ballenford Exhibitions

Ballenford Architectural Books, 98 Scollard Street, (416) 960-0055.

November 9 - December 12: **Jack Diamond**, drawings.

University of Toronto Exhibitions

Department of Architecture, 230 College Street.

October 26 - November 13: **A.J. Diamond & Associates**, architects, Toronto.

November 16 - December 3: **Gerry and Leila Englar**, landscape architects.

December 7 - December 31: **Joseph Lluis Sert**, former Dean, Harvard School of Graduate Design.

University of Toronto Lectures

Lecture series organized by the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture and sponsored by the Toronto Masonry Promotion Fund and the Ontario Association of Architects. Auditorium, Medical Sciences Building, University of Toronto. 8:15 pm.

November 12: **Jack Diamond**, architect, Toronto.

November 19: **Diane Agrest**, architect, New York.

December 3: **Restructuring Urban Space**, by Roger Trancik.

December 10: **Joseph Lluis Sert**, former Dean, Graduate School of Design, Harvard.

VANCOUVER

Alcan Lectures

Robson Square Media Centre. 6:00 pm. For information: (604) 683-8588.

November 10: **Designing with People**, by Charles Moore, architect.

November 25: **Bruce Goff**, architect, lectures on his work.

December 8: **Aldo Rossi**, architect, lectures on his work.

January 8: **Douglas Cardinal**, architect, lectures on his recent work.

WINNIPEG

University of Manitoba Presentations

Centre Space of the John A. Russell Building, Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba.

November 2 - November 12: **Structures**, a display by M.S. Yolles & Partners, Toronto.

November 13: **Architecture of the Maya**, an afternoon lecture by Nicholas Hellmuth, Director, Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research, Yale University.

November 24: **Donald C. Smith**, an evening lecture by the Design Partner at S.O.M. New York.

December 1: **Investigation into Collective Form**, an evening lecture by Fumihiko Maki. □

Making Plans items should be sent to THE FIFTH COLUMN, 3480 University Street, Montreal, Quebec H3A 2A7 or telephoned in to (514) 392-5407. Please submit items for January to April 1982 before December 1981.

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